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# Moloney's rise to the top began at home

Cork intermediate camogie captain Ashling Moloney of Courcey Rovers on her journey with club and county

BY GER MCCARTHY

'HARD work beats talent if talent doesn't work hard' – that's a piece of advice Courcey Rovers and Cork's Ashling Moloney has adhered to throughout her career.

Camogie players can possess all the skill in the world but it counts for nothing if you are not willing to put in the work. Just ask Courcey Rovers. The Ballinspittle club ended a 21-year wait at senior level for county final glory just last year.

Moloney played a crucial role in that triumph and has since graduated to the Cork intermediate ranks, a team she now captains.

So, where did that hard work mantra emanate from? And how did it help cultivate the skills to become a county-winning player and inter-county captain? The answers lie at home.

The Moloney family home-stand is situated in Ballinspittle village and by Ashling's own tongue-in-cheek admission, on the right side of the border with Kilbrittain.

The current Cork intermediate camogie captain grew up in a busy household that is only a stone's throw from Courcey Rovers club grounds. It was obvious that camogie was going to play a major role in her life.

The youngest of six children to her mother Imelda and father Raymond, five older brothers and sisters – Shirley, Gary, Rachel, Killian and Gavin – made for a lively household. Everyone played GAA with sister Rachel making her mark at inter-county level with Cork, winning All-Ireland senior medals in 2008 and 2009 plus three All-Stars.

'Growing up, I would have been Rachel's little mascot and going around the

Cork captain Ashling Moloney.

**'When it came to playing camogie at home, there was nothing spared just because I was the smallest' – Ashling Moloney**

place with my little Cork camogie jersey with Moloney emblazoned across the back of it,' Ashling said.

'Looking back, I idolised Rachel and was lucky that she trained us when I first started playing camogie with Courcey Rovers at the age of six. She would have been my coach all the way up to U16.

'There are seven years between my brother Gavin and I, the next oldest, so yeah, I was the baby of the family. Shirley was always very good to me growing up too and I had her plus a lot of others minding and looking out for me. Once I was a bit older, certainly when it came to playing camogie at home, there was nothing spared just because I was the smallest! That didn't matter and if you got a knock, it was a case of you'll be fine, get over it.'

At club level, Courcey Rovers provided an outlet to display Moloney's numerous talents before eventually getting the call-up to wear the famous Cork jersey. Once again, a family connection helped her attain underage success.

'There were only seven girls playing camogie in my class when I was growing up and I'm the only one still playing today,' Moloney explained.

'That's why it was even more impressive that Courceys managed to keep going and

remain competitive at the A and B underage grades. I remember qualifying for an U12 final against Blarney, only to lose. Next, we reached the U14 Féile final only to lose again, this time to Inniscarra. The memories of those two defeats have never left me.

'Courceys did follow that up with a Cork U14B championship, a U16 league and then county minor A championship against Douglas in Carrigaline. What made that extra special is the fact my sister Shirley was training us that year.

'We had my other sister Rachel in charge of us up to U16 before Shirley took over at minor. Of course, there was a sisterly bond but I was treated no differently than any of the others, something I appreciated. I received the same treatment as everyone else if I wasn't performing. There was never any preferential treatment.

'In fairness, I did have to listen to both Rachel and Shirley all the way home in the car! Moloney's rise to the Cork intermediate starting line-up took the versatile player through the county's underage ranks. She represented Cork at U14, U16 and minor level but it wasn't until the Ballinspittle club finally achieved county final glory that Moloney made her intermediate inter-county debut.

Courcey's recent ascension to the top of the Cork camogie ranks has been rewarded with Linda Collins donning the senior's armband and now Moloney is wearing the county intermediate's equivalent.

'We lost the 2018 senior county final to Inniscarra but I did enough to get called up to the Cork intermediate panels at the beginning of 2019,' Moloney explained.

'This is my third season with Cork. I was honoured to become captain in 2021, especially after Courceys won our first senior county. Playing at senior club level was the best possible preparation for that even though that is another step up in quality. Going up against the likes of Rena Buckley, the



Courcey Rovers' Ashling Moloney is the captain of the Cork intermediate camogie team.

Mackey's from Douglas and St Catherine's Orla Cotter at club level helped prepare me.'

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Whatever about attaining success at inter-county level, nothing is ever likely to top the moment Courcey Rovers claimed their first-ever county senior camogie championship in September 2020.

An iconic photograph taken minutes after victory over Inniscarra shows sisters Ashling and Shirley embracing. Taking in the moment their club had finally achieved the ultimate goal was made even more special by having two family members playing such critical roles. Ashling starred at centre-back with Shirley a selector on the management team and creator of some famous Zoom training sessions.

'We might have been four goals up heading into the closing minutes but there was still a seed of doubt in my mind as Inniscarra are such a formidable team,' Moloney admitted.

'It was sheer elation when the whistle finally went. I remember Shirley running on to the pitch and hugging her with both of us



Ashling Moloney (right) and her sister Shirley celebrate after Courcey Rovers won the 2020 county senior camogie final.

bawling crying. I raced down the opposite end to our goalkeeper Sinead O'Reilly as she was on her own before hugging everyone else in sight!

'We went up senior in 1999 before finally winning a county. It took us a while but the set-up that our trainer Mike Boland brought in and the expectations he set made the difference. Seeing Mike travel three nights a week from Carrigtwohill for our training sessions showed the girls how much he believed

in us. 'Maybe that self-belief is something we were missing time until Mike came along. His saying that we deserve to dine at the top table resonated with us from day one and look what happened.'

Whatever the reasons, hard work and talent earned Courcey's county final success, Moloney a senior club medal and place on the Cork intermediate team. The best is yet to come from a natural leader.



# U16 and minor All-Ireland title defences to begin almost two years on

## CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

It's strange to be opening the defence of a title that was won almost two years ago, but that is the position for Cork U16s and minors, with All-Ireland competitions at those grades to resume. Last year, there was huge disappointment for both squads, and particularly for the minors, as they were three quarters of the way through their All-Ireland series when play was stopped. After the lockdown, the decision not to go ahead with the competition caused widespread disappointment and despite the efforts of all the counties, the Camogie Association was resolute.

The U16s were in a different situation, as competitions had not begun, but preparations were under way and provincial competitions had started, so there were a legion of former U16s and minors who have never got the chance to play in an All-Ireland championship.

Luckily, 2021 is going to be a better and brighter year for both panels and, recently, the U16 management announced their plan for their championship campaign, which gets under way on June 13.

Nine counties will battle it out for the U16 A title and there are three groups of three: In Group One, it's Dublin, Wexford, and Kilkenny; Group Two, Galway, Limerick, and Clare; and in Group



Former All-Ireland-winning captain Joanne O'Callaghan presents a First Aid kit to the Cork U16 panel on behalf of Pharma Care Distributions at Castle Road on Sunday last.

Three, Cork, the defending champions, will take on Tipperary and Waterford. Games get under way on June 13 and it's a home venue for Cork, as they host Tipperary. Dublin will be at home for their meeting with Wexford, and Galway host Limerick.

On June 20, Wexford are at home for their clash with Kilkenny, Clare travel to Limerick, and Waterford head to Tipperary. Dublin head to Kilkenny on June 27, Galway go to Clare, and Cork will head to Waterford.

Every game will be vital and a good start will ensure a quarter-

final spot for the winners. Six teams will advance, with the group winners and runners-up qualifying.

Two group winners will be drawn to advance to the semi-finals, with the remaining group winner contesting the quarter-final with the three group runners-up. Quarter-finals are down for decision on July 4, the semi-finals will be played on July 11, with the All-Ireland final pencilled in for July 18. In the event of a draw in the final, the replay is scheduled for July 25.

The management of the U16 sides includes manager/coach

Donie Daly (Youghal), and his selectors and backroom team are selector/coach John Moloney (Newtownshandrum) and Mossie O'Sullivan (Ballincollig). Goalkeeping coach is Michelle Gould (St Vincent's) and strength-and-conditioning coach is Stephen O'Mahony. First Aid are Colette O'Neill (Erin's Own) and Roberta Crowley (Ballygarvan), with Darina Foley (Middleton), the county board's liaison officer.

They recently announced a panel and preparations have been going well, ahead of their opening game. Nineteen clubs

are represented on the panel and training is currently on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays. On Sunday last, the girls had a surprise visit from former All-Ireland-winning captain Joanne O'Callaghan, who was representing Pharma Care Distributions, on whose behalf she presented a First Aid bag for the forthcoming campaign.

Joanne spoke to the girls and took part in a questions-and-answers session, which was enjoyed by all the young players and the mentors.

PANEL: Alex Cashman (Youghal), Amy McCarthy (Clonakilty), Amy O'Sullivan

(Mallow), Amy Sheppard (Cloughduv), Andrea Brislane (Inniscarra), Aoihe Daly (Youghal), Aoibhinn O'Neill (Erin's Own), Ava Fitzgerald (Sarsfields), Bronagh O'Shaughnessy (Blackrock), Caoimhe O'Donoghue (Bishopstown), Caoimhe Sheehan (Milford), Edel Sheehan (Eire Og), Eimear Duignan (Mallow), Ellen Crowley (Inniscarra), Emily O'Donoghue (Bishopstown), Emma Cantillon (Douglas), Fiona Twohig (Valley Rovers), Grainne Finn (Fr O'Neill's), Grainne O'Mahony (Eire Og), Grainne O'Neill (Fr O'Neill's), Jennifer Sheehy (Ballygarvan), Jill Connaughton (Middleton), Kate Fennessy (Sarsfields), Kate Nolan (Clonakilty), Keelley Goulding (Rockban), Maedhbh De Burca (Carrigtwohill), Millie Condon (Ballinascorthy), Rachel Roche (Sarsfields), Sinead Hurley (Sarsfields), Shauna Sheehan (Eire Og).

# Mixed bag of results in the league, so far

ISN'T it funny how league games can play out? Too much is read into results. When Cork won league titles in 2012 and 2013, they fell short of All-Ireland success.

Kilkenny won three league titles between 2016 and 2018, winning the All-Ireland championship in 2016, after losing the '17 and '18 finals.

This year, Dublin gave Kilkenny a tight game of it in the first round, 1-8 to 0-6. Then, Offaly beat Dublin and at weekend Kilkenny troubled Offaly 4-21 to 0-8. So, a mixed bag.

Denise Gaule shot 1-7 and Mary Connell hit five points, as Kilkenny had outstanding operators, not least Davina Tobin in an unyielding defence.

By the time Kate Kenny landed a fantastic, wind-assisted point from distance, towards the end of the 10th minute, to get Offaly off the mark, the visitors had a goal and four points on the board.

O'Connell flew out of the traps, with the first three points from play, and, after Gaule converted a placed ball, Miriam Walsh poached an

eight-minute goal to put the All-Ireland champions in the box seat.

The full forward was in quickly as Michaela Kenneally's shot dropped short, flicking the sliotar away from goalkeeper, Mairéad Jennings, before lifting sharply and creating sufficient space under pressure to rifle to the net from close range.

Susan Earnar's outfit tied and were more competitive for a period. Dual star Grainne Egan slotted two frees, but Gaule added four points to make it 1-9 to 0-4 at half-time.

A goal three minutes after the restart, from Aoife Doyle, ended any thoughts Offaly may have had of a fight back.

Katie Nolan registered the third goal, midway through the second half, after Jennings had saved Gaule's drive, and Gaule provided the final blow in injury time.

Galway dispensed with Limerick, 3-13 to 0-7, in Kilmallock to claim top spot in Group 1.

In the evening throw-in, they came out on top of an open and fast-paced affair.



## CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick

Pat Ryan will have taken plenty of positives from the first half, with Caoimhe Costelloe and dual star Aine Cunningham threatening, but Galway were stunning at times and two superb goals had them 2-4 to 0-6 in front at half-time.

The teams were level, on 0-2 apiece, when Carrie Dolan launched a long free in the eighth minute towards Orlaith McGrath, who gathered, left two defenders in her wake, and drew one more, before handpassing to Ailish O'Reilly. Enjoying the return to her natural habitat at full-forward, O'Reilly made no mistake, having blasted a shot off the crossbar a little earlier.

Siohán McGrath was at the end of

a brilliant move for the second goal, in the 21st minute, which started with a block by Niamh Kilkenny and also involved Orlaith McGrath and O'Reilly.

Kilkenny weighed in with what will be in the running for goal of the year, towards the end of the third quarter, the former 'player of the year' taking a pass from Annmarie Starr in her own half and going on a trademark run that took her deep into opposition territory.

She exchanged passes with O'Reilly, flicked the sliotar over the head of a Limerick defender, and finished off the sod for a sensational goal and there was no way back for the home side.

Cork received a pass direct to the semi-final, where they will face Galway, while Kilkenny and Limerick and Tipperary and Offaly will pair off in the quarter-finals.

Cork's test against Galway will be one to watch, following their facile wins in the league.

The association were delighted to announce that the Littlewoods Lea-



Cork's Amy O'Connor celebrates the first of her two goals against Clare, during the Liberty Insurance All Ireland senior camogie championship quarter final at Páirc Uí Chaoimh. Picture: Eddie O'Hare

land league final, in Croke Park on June 20, will be a test event for the safe return of spectators to sport.

"This is a huge honour for the Camogie Association and an endorsement of the immense effort from our fantastic volunteers and staff team across the country, to ensure that camogie players safely returned to training and play, amid Covid-19 restrictions this year.

"We are very grateful to the ministers, Martin and Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, Sport Ireland, and all of our colleagues in the working group, for the safe return of spectators to sports stadia, particularly to the GAA and Croke Park, who have worked tirelessly over the past year to enable these test events to happen, planning safely for the return of sports fans to live games.

"We look forward to welcoming fans back to Croke Park to witness the talent and skills of our camogie players."

And so, early all of us



## Kilkenny 2-10 Limerick 0-13

By Daragh Ó Conchúir

KILKENNY survived a tough examination by a young Limerick side to edge Thrilling Littlewoods Ireland Camogie League Division 1 quarter-final.

Indeed, the Treaty women might have won this but for two brilliant saves by Kilkenny goalkeeper Aoife Norris, and two strong runs and assists by Miriam Walsh for goals from Mary O'Connell and Aoife Doyle goals.

Denise Gaule showed her leadership and experience in the second half and weighed in with six points but Cats manager Brian Dowling will know his crew, while displaying great character, were fortunate to escape a shock defeat.

Limerick led for most of the contest and were full value for that lead, as they exposed weaknesses in a Kilkenny defence without Davina Tobin and Claire Phelan. That was down to a relentless workrate and a directness of play.

Kilkenny hit the front early on with a point from Laura Murphy but their opponents were playing with confidence and were soon two clear. Rebecca Delee equalising after Sophie O'Callaghan had won possession and Caoimhe Costelloe shot the first two of her seven points.

Delee, Caoimhe Lyons and Aine Fitzgerald certainly made life uncomfortable for Kilkenny. Judith Mulcahy and Niamh Ryan were dominant in the Limerick half-back line while Megan O'Mara covered the ground at either end of the pitch.

O'Connell's 19th-minute goal came against the run of play and it began with a tremendous fetch by Kellyann Doyle from Laura O'Neill's puckout following Murphy's second point.

When the slotar was sent forward, it was gathered smartly on the flank by Walsh who drifted out from full-forward.

The speed of her spin certainly caught Muireann Creamer unaware. She moved towards the danger zone and drew Mulcahy before executing the hand-pass perfectly for O'Connell to finish with ease.

It said much for Limerick's resilience that they shook off the setback and registering four of the next five points. Costelloe (two), O'Callaghan and O'Mara raised white flags to make it 0-8 to 1-4 at the interval.

It might have been even better as Delee had a glorious goal chance after Deborah Murphy and O'Leary had pierced the Cats' defence but Norris left her line to block out the danger.

Gaule levelled it up from an early free at the start of the second period but three more points from play by Costelloe, Cunningham and Niamh Ryan

**RESISTANCE:**  
Kilkenny's  
Colette Dormer  
is held up by Aine  
Cunningham



# Norris saves Cats from a shock defeat

moved Limerick three ahead.

All-Ireland champions Kilkenny managed to dig deep and they shot the next goal and four points in the game's defining period.

Dowling and his management team deserve some credit, as they switched Walsh to a deeper role in a bid to gain more possession and nullify the influence of Mulcahy, who had been the best player in action.

The Ahane totem continued to win plenty of possession but it was a Walsh foray through the middle that set up the critical second major. Again she attracted the cover and slipped a pass, this time to Katie Nolan. Her shot was brilliantly stopped by O'Neill but Aoife Doyle was on hand to finish first time with a ground stroke.

Gaule added a pair of points, including

a magnificent score from play on the left flank, to push four ahead but Pat Ryan's challengers continued to pour forward, Norris being forced into another smart save from Cunningham's ground shot.

They did get it back to two, courtesy of a Costelloe 45 from that stop and another neat finish by Dearbhla Egan but Kilkenny had given themselves enough breathing space and ground it out with Nolan having the final say.

**KILKENNY:** A. Norris; M. Teehan, G. Dorman, M. Dandridge; K. Doyle, G. Walsh (5 Fitzgerald 45); M. Farrell; N. Dwyer, L. Murphy; D. Gaule, M. O'Connell (2 Walsh 54); A. Prendergast (L. Fitzpatrick 43); M. Kennedy, M. Walsh, A. Doyle.  
**Scorers:** D. Gaule 0-6 (3fs, 1 45), M. O'Connell, A. Doyle 1-0 each; L. Murphy 0-2; M. Walsh, K. Nolan 0-1 each.  
**LIMERICK:** L. O'Neill; M. Quaid, M. Creamer, R. Ambrose; M. Ryan, J. Mulcahy, N. Ryan, K. O'Leary (N. Curran 45); M. O'Mara; D. Murphy, S. O'Callaghan (D. Egan 52); R. Delee (A. Scanlon 50); A. Cunningham, G. Costelloe, C. Lyons.  
**Scorers:** C. Costelloe 0-7 (5fs, 1 45); R. Delee, M. O'Mara, S. O'Callaghan, A. Cunningham, N. Ryan, D. Egan 0-1 each.  
**Referee:** J. Dermody (Westmeath).



Kate O'Keeffe in full-flight for Cork against Down. Picture: Alf Harvey

## Down have the edge as Cork miss out on a place in semi-final

Down 0-18  
Cork 2-8

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

DOWN booked their place in the last four of the Littlewoods Division 2 National League with four points to spare over Cork in O'Moore Park on Saturday.

Playing against the wind in the opening half, Down led 0-9 to 1-4 at the interval thanks in the main to the excellent free-taking of Sarah Louise Graffin, who was on target with three long-range efforts.

Through the opening 30 minutes, Down created three goal chances, but Cork's defence, who were coming under huge pressure, kept them at bay.

At the other end, Cork grabbed the lone goal chance they created, Finola Neville setting up Kate O'Keeffe with a superb pass at a stage in the game when Down led 0-5 to 0-1.

Hayley Ryan opened the Cork account with a third-minute point but with ref. Barry Nea penalising Cork several times for throwing the ball, Graffin was content to pop over the points. All Smith with two and Kate O'Keeffe ensured Cork were still within touching distance as they trailed by two at the break.

On the restart, Smith immediately cut the deficit, but a tough Down defence dropped back in numbers and held Cork scoreless for 17 minutes.

Down regrouped and hit three points in a row before the second water break; Paula O'Hagan, Sorcha McCartan and Niamh Mallon putting them four points clear.

Sub Katie Walsh narrowed

the gap with a Cork point and with both sides digging deep they swapped points through O'Hagan and Smith. Down began to push forward and held their composure enjoying a productive spell which produced four in a row and a 0-17 to 1-7 lead.

Cork battled on in the closing stages. Hayley Ryan pointed a free and when Michele Murphy was pulled down in the square Finola Neville confidently slotted the penalty to trim the gap to three points. Cork needed to win the puck-out, but Down sub Anna Rogan won possession and slotted over from 65 metres out to send her side safely through.

In the other quarter-finals Wexford defeated Westmeath, Antrim overcame Galway, and a last-minute goal saw Meath beat Kilkenny by a point.

**Scorers for Down:** P. O'Hagan 0-7 (0-6 f), N. Mallon 0-6, S. L. Graffin 0-2, C. Fitzpatrick, A. Rogan, S. McCartan 0-1 each.  
**Cork:** K. O'Keeffe 1-1, A. Smith 0-4 (0-2 f), F. Neville 1-0 pen, H. Ryan 0-2 (0-1 f), K. Walsh 0-1.

**DOWN:** C. Mc Gourty; C. Caldwell, D. Magee, E. Rafferty; B. Fitzpatrick, P. O'Hagan, K. McMillen, A. Keown, D. Savage; A. McAleenan, S. L. Graffin (c); S. McCartan; N. Mallon; C. Fitzpatrick, C. Cowen.

**Subs:** A. Rogan for A. McAleenan (38), R. Smyth for K. McMillen (62).

**CORK:** S. Beausang; G. Hannon, D. Carroll, A. Crowley; C. Daly, A. O'Callaghan, K. Kilcommins; L. Callanan, M. Murphy; K. O'Keeffe, A. Smith, R. Harty, H. Ryan, F. Neville, A. Hurley.

**Subs:** K. Walsh for K. O'Keeffe (45), C. Finn for A. Hurley (47), E. Flanagan for L. Callanan (55), C. O'Leary for A. Smith (59).

**Referee:** Barry Nea (Westmeath).



Coach Darragh O'Callaghan has the last few words for Cork.

## Mullaney thrilled with impressive Tipperary's development

Littlewoods Ireland  
Camogie League

Tipperary 4-17  
Offaly 0-13

Daragh Ó Conchúir

Tipperary manager Bill Mullaney was thrilled with the manner of his side's victory over Offaly (4-17 to 0-13), which sets up a Littlewoods Ireland Camogie League Division 1 semi-final with Kilkenny at Nowlan Park next Sunday.

Galway and Cork complete a mouth-watering double-header at the Kilkenny venue.

Grace O'Brien (2-4) and Cait Devane (2-5) were the stars of the show, but Mullaney was hugely impressed by the collective display. He reasoned: "From the starting 15, it was a great performance from them. We're improving in every game — but we have to. We have to be learning lessons from every game and applying them the next day out."

"This was a good team per-

formance and a good panel performance. The backs, as a unit, were very good. The subs that came on did well. Some of the scores and some of the link play was exceptional, but we have to do it every week if we want to keep progressing."

"You have to have other forwards scoring. Cait is a brilliant player, I'd pay the money just to see her warming up; she's fabulous, but you can't be a one-trick pony either. You have to have other options around the field. I think we have spread the scoring a bit

better and we need to, and we need to improve on that and be a bit sharper taking scores."

Offaly were competitive for 40 minutes or so, with Aisling Brennan and former Tipp player Mairead Teehan among the star turns. They are at the beginning of a journey Tipperary started a long time ago and that was evident in their tendency to want one more touch in attack as well as how they tired in the final quarter, against a very well-conditioned outfit.

"We're disappointed with

the scoreline, but I'm happy they never gave up," said manager Susan Earner. "One of the girls looked completely out of gas, but she kept making the runs, trying to do the right things. That's what we're trying to get the girls to do, keep trying to do the right things and someday things will start clicking."

**Scorers for Tipperary:** C. Devane (2-5, 3fs, 1-0 pen); G. O'Brien (2-4); E. McGrath (0-3); R. Howard, E. Fryday, M. Campion, N. Walsh, J. Kelly (0-1 each).

**Scorers for Offaly:** G. Egan (0-6, 4fs, 2 45s); A. Brennan, M. Teehan (0-2 each); K. Kenny, M. Morkan (0-1 each).

**TIPPERARY:** A. Slattery, J. Bourke, M. Ryan, E. Loughman, A. McGrath, M. Evison, S. Fryday, E. Fryday, R. Howard, E. McGrath, N. Walsh, N. Treacy, G. O'Brien, C. Devane, C. McIntyre.

**Subs:** M. Campion for Treacy (41), C. McCarthy for E. Fryday (40), J. Kelly for McIntyre (45), L. O'Dwyer for Ryan (56), S. Delaney for Evison (58), C. Hennessy for E. McGrath (59), L. Loughman for Loughman (60+1).

**OFFALY:** M. Jennings, S. Walsh, L. Keena, S. Shanahan, A. Byrne, A. Brennan, M. Morkan, R. Egan, D. Kirwan, E. Mulrooney, K. Kenny, G. Dolan, S. Harding, G. Egan, M. Teehan.

**Subs:** S. Flannery for Mulrooney (44), C. Cleary for Harding (46).

**Referee:** J. Heffernan (Wexford).





# LITTLEWOODS IRELAND CAMOGIE LEAGUE DIVISION 1 Cork v Galway



## Meabh is taking it one game at a time



Cork dual star Meabh Cahalane.

### Dual star has camogie and football Division 1 league semi-finals this weekend

BY KIERAN MCCARTHY

MEABH Cahalane is not fazed by the thought of playing two national league semi-finals in two different codes within 26 hours this weekend.

This is the life of a dual player, but she is well used to juggling both camogie and football commitments at inter-county and club levels.

'What works for me is taking it one game at a time. Focus on Saturday's match first, then as soon as that is over focus on the recovery straightaway and on the game on Sunday,' Cahalane explains.

The Cork footballers are first up. Ephie Fitzgerald's squad – including Éire Óg footballer Cahalane – travel to Tuam on Saturday for a Lidl NFL Division 1 semi-final against Donegal (3pm throw-in). On Sunday, St Finbarr's camogie star Cahalane will be with the Cork senior camogie team for their Littlewoods Ireland Camogie League Division 1 clash with Galway in Nowlan Park, Kilkenny (5pm throw-in).

With little time between games for rest and recovery, and travel time included too, preparation during the week holds the key for Cork's dual stars – Cahalane, Hannah Looney and Libby Coppinger.

'It's important to not over-

load at training during a week like this. You have to be so focussed on your recovery and your hydration and nutrition because that all adds up,' explains Cahalane, who lines out in defence for both county teams.

She's enjoying dividing her time between both Cork set-ups, helped enormously by the strength and conditioning coaches in both camps – Michelle Dullea with the footballers and Kevin Dunne on the camogie side. They have helped make the life of this dual player a lot easier after she returned to the camogie set-up last season.

'I only went back playing both at inter-county level last year after the club season was finished,' Cahalane explains.

'I wasn't sure whether it would work and if it was possible to juggle both, but both strength and conditioning coaches are continuously in contact, making sure that we have the correct amount of recovery and that we are not overloading with training, especially with all the games. They are the experts in what they do and make sure we do everything right.'

'I have found it a bit easier doing both now. It's worked well so far.'

Meabh – from the famous Cahalane dynasty with its roots in

**'It's important to not overload at training during a week like this' – Meabh Cahalane**

Castlehaven – had found it challenging to combine both camogie and football at inter-county level when she was working in Dublin with KPMG, but since March 2020 she has been working from home in Cork city.

'Because I'm based in Cork again, it's easier to play both. I'm not spending hours every day stuck in rush-hour traffic commuting to and from work, and home in Cork is pretty close to where both teams train so that helps as well,' Cahalane says.

'When I was in Dublin it wasn't possible to play both, but I'm at home for now so I have more flexibility.'

'We had the club season last year and I really enjoyed playing in the camogie championship with the Barrs. I was asked back in with Cork and I am really enjoying it so far. It was the right decision to go back in.'

She's ready, too, for Cork camogie team's toughest test of the season when they meet 2019 All-Ireland winners Galway in the league semi-final on

Sunday. In recent seasons Galway and Kilkenny have come out on top of big games with Cork and that's a record that the Rebels are keen to right, especially a few weeks out from the championship.

'Sunday's semi-final is a great opportunity for us to see where we are at right now,' Cahalane says.

'You look at Kilkenny and you look at Galway, and they are the benchmarks for this year so this game is a chance for us to see how we measure up ahead of the championship.'

'Personally, I'll be up against some of the best forwards in the country so it's a chance for me to see where I am at as well.'

The Cork camogie team is coming off the back of league wins against Tipperary and Waterford that will need to step it up against the 2020 beaten All-Ireland finalists Galway, who are also defending league champions.

Before Cahalane can concentrate on Galway, her attention will be on the Cork footballers' Division 1 league semi-final against Donegal in Tuam the day before. Cahalane started in the half-back line as Cork stuttered to a less-than-convincing win away to Waterford last weekend so they know

they need to raise their game against the Ulster side.

'There were patches in the Waterford game that we know that we need to improve on, and that will be our focus this week. We set standards for ourselves and we didn't achieve those goals so we know we need to do better, and we have to against a team like Donegal,' she says.

It's a busy weekend ahead but Cahalane will take it all in her stride.



Meabh Cahalane in action for the Cork footballers.





Cork camogie manager Paudie Murray: 'We have nothing to be afraid of' against Galway in the semi-final.

Picture: INPHO/Laszlo Geczo

# Bring it on says Murray



CAMOGIE

Linda  
Mellerick

**SUNDAY**  
Littlewoods Ireland League Division 1  
semi-final: Cork v Galway,  
Nowlan Park, 5pm

LAST February, after his ratification for another two years — with the option of a third — Galway senior and intermediate camogie manager, Cathal Murray, said the Tribeswomen had "unfinished business" in both grades.

In December 2020, the 2019 senior champions, Galway, were dethroned by Kilkenny in the All-Ireland decider at Croke Park, while, earlier in the season, his intermediates had the rug pulled out from under them when it was deemed that counties' second-string sides were not 'elite' teams and, so, were not permitted to field under pandemic restrictions.

Understandably, in the aftermath of a disrupted, strange, and energy-sapping campaign — mentally and physically — Murray took time out to reflect.

"Last year was disappointing on both fronts, with the seniors losing the final and for the intermediates not to be able to go ahead with their championship after all the training they did," Murray said.

"Both were awfully disappointing. So, I'd just feel there is, probably, unfinished business there and that there is a lot of potential in the group. I just want to be part of it for the next few years," he said.

Given that Murray's ratification did not take place in January, there was concern that the Sarsfields man — who has raised the professionalism of the set-up in Galway since taking up the role; initially as caretaker boss in the summer of 2018 — may have been considering his position. He assures that was not the case.

"No, I think I was always going to go back; you just need to make sure you have a backroom team that is good enough to attack an All-Ireland, for want of a better way of putting it," Murray said.

"As well, I needed to sit down with the



Cork's Hannah Looney scores a goal against Dublin.

Picture: INPHO/Ken Sutton

board and make sure we were on the same wavelength and make sure that all the things that need to be in place will be in place."

Galway and Cork both finished top of their groups in the league tables and headed straight to the semi-final, Kilkenny the third name out of the bowl to play Limerick in a quarter-final, which they won.

With respect to Tipperary, Waterford, Clare, and Limerick — the teams in groups 1 and 2 with Cork and Galway — this is the game that both Paudie Murray and Cathal Murray will use for comparison.

Galway and Cork have similar scoring machines, if you look at their league tallies from just two games. Cork struck 6-29, Galway 6-24. Defensively, Cork have given up 1-29 to 0-22 for Galway's back six.

Nothing to be frantic about for either side there and considering Cork have been experimenting with a new defence, I wouldn't read too much into anything.

Of those 29 points, 13 were from placed balls. The challenges Cork faced against Tipp and Waterford were weaker than expected.

They looked very impressive, particularly from midfield up, but Sunday will be the game that will tell us just how good.

I'm looking forward to this, as both sides play an attacking style.

This won't be an intense game of chess like we got in the past, when teams feared Cork and played defensively. Galway will go all out.

Paudie Murray has the concern of Hannah Looney, Libby Coppinger, and Meave Cahalane being out with the ladies' footballers in Tuam on Saturday against a Donegal team that Cork will need to be in good form to beat.

That game aside, it's a long trip before you add in the fact that the girls will then travel to Nowlan Park on Sunday.

The late 5pm start is good in that regard for Cork; every hour helps.

Paudie Murray is looking forward to the challenge that awaits his team in trying to reach a league final.

"We probably got the hardest draw possible. Galway are the best team around at the moment."

"Kilkenny are missing players that will be back for championship. I say: Bring it on!"

"We've trained well. We should have nothing to be afraid of. There's been nothing between us these past few years."

"If the players realise that they're good enough to win it, they'll win it."

"We have to sit down and pick a team that will curtail Galway, who will possibly play a two-player full-forward line."

"This is what we've been training for and we're ready for it."

## 'I was like: My God, this is Gemma's jersey, I better play well'

### Camogie

#### Daragh Ó Conchúir

Laura Treacy messaged an old friend on the day she made her debut at centre-back for the Cork senior camogie team.

"I texted Gemma after I put on the No 6 jersey for the first time and I was just like: 'I hope I did the jersey proud'," she recalled. "I was putting it on and Orla Cronin and Chloe Sigeron were sitting next to me in the dressing room, and I was like: 'My God, this is Gemma's jersey, I better play well.'"

Such reverence is not surprising. The Gemma in question is Gemma O'Connor, who

won a staggering nine All-Ireland and 11 All-Stars in an illustrious career. Not alone was she one of the finest centre-backs in the game but an ever-present since Treacy made her debut. Or she was until her retirement in February, the latest star to hang up the boots.

"Gemma O'Connor, Aoife Murray, Orla Cotter, and Brieghe Corkery will go down in the annals of their sport as supreme players and leaders. Pamela Mackey is a significant loss too as a four-time All-Star defender who has taken a year out of the game," Treacy said ahead of tomorrow's National League final

against Galway in Nowlan Park.

"All these big names and leaders are gone. It is a new challenge for someone like me, Orla Cronin, and Amy O'Connor to try and fill their boots and represent them and Cork the best we can."

Not that it has been all smooth-sailing. Treacy's stock and trade was as a full-back but was reallocated to O'Connor's old stomping ground earlier in the league. The experiment came to a sudden halt six minutes into their group tie against Waterford when she suffered a head wound while jostling under a ball with Niamh Rockett.

"I was split just between my eyebrows. It's kind of like a Harry Potter sign so all the girls are laughing at me at the moment. I went back to training on Tuesday night so they all thought it was hilarious and singing the Harry Potter songs and stuff. I've known Niamh for many a year. We would be good friends. There are no hard feelings, it was just one of those things."

Her outlook should come as no surprise, given the 26-year-old is a nurse specialising in colposcopy at St Finbarr's Hospital, as an associated unit of the Cork University Maternity Hospital.

"I would be dealing with a

lot of people who are probably around my age. I see the worst of what is out there. I would see everybody who would have an abnormal smear test. The majority of people don't have abnormal smears, but it does get into your head that there are so many people with them. That change of rolling out the HPV vaccine has made it more of a common talking point with young people."

"When I was in school, I was probably one of the first group of girls who would have been rolled out with that HPV vaccine. I feel like cervical cancer has been discussed with girls since then, and now everybody who is 12, in first

year of school, is getting the HPV vaccine, girls and boys."

"So it is more normal because all of these 12 and 13-year-olds are talking about cervical cancer, talking about HPV. When before, there would nearly have been a stigma around HPV because it is technically sexually transmitted, well it is skin to skin, but it is sexually transmitted mainly. People think then it is an STD or something when it is not. It is a virus, it is like catching a cold or the flu."

"It is just about making things normal and then the awareness then comes around after that once people are talking about it at all."





Cork Lord mayor Joe Kavanagh and Lady Mayoress Stephanie marking their recent visit to the Glen Rovers camogie academy with officers of Glen Rovers camogie club.

## Confusion reigns as championship dates yet to be announced

WITH Cork's Division 2 league campaign ending in O'Moore Park on Saturday last, they are now beginning preparations for championship which, we believe, will begin on the weekend of July 23.

At the moment, the Camogie Association still has not released a championship calendar and this must be very disappointing for all inter-county managers as they begin to look ahead.

Four sides will contest the Division 2 league semi-finals.

Down recorded a 0-18 to 2-8 victory over Cork and Antrim had a goal to spare over Galway at 1-13 to 1-10. Wexford fielded their first 15 and proved much too strong for Westmeath as they enjoyed a 2-23 to 1-5 win. A goal with the last puck of the game gave Meath a sensational victory over Kilkenny, 3-7 to 1-12.

The pairings for the semi-finals are Down versus Wexford and Meath versus Antrim.

Both of these games will go ahead this weekend.

For the championship, Wexford and Down will participate at senior level, but we can still expect a very competitive championship.

It would be of huge benefit if the association made the draws and gave the counties an idea of who they will be facing, as at this stage the managers will be anxious to plan their campaigns.

Mark McCarthy and his fellow mentors will be disappointed not to have got another two games out of the league campaign, but qualifying out of their group and reaching the quarter-final was a huge achievement, and the test provided by a very strong Down side will stand to this Cork side, many of whom are participating at adult inter-county level for the first time.

There is better clarity for managers Jerry Wallace and Donle Daly at minor and U16 level, as their sides have championship dates and are ready to go.

Meanwhile, Cork minors will be defending the titles won in 2018 and 2019.

There are three groups of three, and the top two in each group will advance, with two of the top teams going to the semi-finals and one drawn to join the three runners-up in the quarter-finals.

Group One is Dublin, Galway, and Tipperary; Group Two comprises of Kilkenny,

### CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

Waterford and Wexford, with Cork, Clare and Limerick making up Group Three.

Games begin on July 3 with Dublin hosting Galway, Wexford travelling to Waterford, and Cork away to Clare.

On August 1, Galway are away to Tipperary, Waterford are at home for their meeting with Kilkenny, and Cork host Limerick.

Round three is on August 8.

Tipperary are home for their clash with Dublin, Kilkenny are at home against Wexford, and Limerick head to Clare.

There are no dates yet for the quarter-final, semi, or the final, and we live in hope that these might be issued shortly.

All the underage inter-county focus is on the Cork U16 this weekend as they return to the playing fields after a 12-month gap. Tipperary will provide the opposition as Cork set about defending the title they won in 2019.

Nine counties are divided into three groups of three. In Group One it's Dublin, Wexford, and Kilkenny; Group Two has Galway, Limerick, and Clare and in Group Three it's Cork, Tipperary, and Waterford.

Also on Sunday, Dublin are at home for their meeting with Wexford, and Galway host Limerick.

On June 20, Wexford are at home against Kilkenny, Clare travel to Limerick, and Waterford head to Tipperary.

Dublin travel to Kilkenny on June 27, Galway go to Clare, and Cork will make their way to Waterford.

A good start will ensure a quarter-final spot for the winners at the very least.

Six teams will advance, with the group winners and runners up qualifying.

Two group winners will be drawn to advance to the semi-finals, with the remaining group winner contesting the quarter-final with the three group runners-up.

Quarter-finals are down for decision on July 4. The semi-finals will be played on July 11 with the All-Ireland final pencilled in for July 18.

In the event of a draw in the final, the replay is scheduled for July 25.

It's all to play for tomorrow as the underage inter-county season finally gets under way in Castle Road at 2pm.



Limerick goalkeeper Laura O'Neill makes a save despite Kilkenny's Katie Nolan closing in.

Picture: INPHO/Laszlo Gecz

# Keeper keeps Cats in game

### CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick

BRIAN Dowling, manager of All-Ireland champions Kilkenny, has admitted that his charges have a lot to work on.

He also tried to focus on the positives, while praising the Limerick fervour, last weekend after his side were caused many problems before they dug out a 2-10 to 0-13 victory the Division 1 league quarter-final in Birr.

That sets up a semi-final with Tipperary at home in Nowlan Park today, a double-header with Cork and Galway which throws in at 5pm.

Dowling was pleased with the fighting spirit of his team that were short Davina Tobin and Claire Phelan.

Goalkeeper Aoife Norris made a couple of brilliant saves to keep her side in the game when Limerick were dominant, while Miriam Walsh was the catalyst for the goals from Mary O'Connell and substitute, Steffi Fitzgerald, the latter the pivotal score of the game in the 49th minute.

"Limerick are a very good team," Dowling noted. "They brought huge intensity and their work rate was fantastic all over the pitch. We weren't able to match it for a long time to be honest. We stuck at it and the goal in the second half was a huge score. We were lucky enough to get through, but we'll take it."

"The goals were crucial. Even in the first half, we weren't going well, and the goal kept the scoreboard ticking over. Obviously, the second goal was huge for us."

"There's days like this, you're not gonna play brilliantly every day and you're not gonna play fancy hurling. I know it was a league quarter-final, but it felt more like a championship match."

"The intensity was brilliant and in fairness to the referee, he left it go a good bit. The tackles were coming in, there were hooks and blocks and I think anyone watching the game would have really enjoyed it."

"We're delighted to come away with the



Tipperary's Clodagh McIntyre scores a point against Waterford.

Picture: INPHO/Bryan Keane

win. We want as many games as possible. We're learning so much about our players. I said last week I didn't care if we came out of the draw in the quarter-finals, I was nearly happy with it. If we won today, it was giving us an extra game. We would have been training at home and thinking we were flying it maybe."

"We've a huge amount to work on but I said to the girls, huge character that stuck up in the end, and I thought the subs that came on made a difference as well."

It was extremely tough on Limerick. They had the All-Ireland champions in all kinds of trouble but could not press home their advantage despite creating some gilt-edged opportunities, Norris' saves from Rebecca Delee and Cunningham in particular among the tie's key moments.

Their response to both Kilkenny goals was perhaps the most impressive aspect of their performance and having shown their ability to perform at such a high level for more than an hour, they will be greatly respected by any opposition in the summer.

"It was a great game," said Limerick boss Pat Ryan. "It was so intense. The girls gave it everything. When you're playing that kind of tempo, it's so hard to keep going for 63 minutes."

"I'm so disappointed though. We said at half time we didn't want moral victories. We wanted to win. But they can hold their heads high, and we just have to drive on and get ready for the championship."

Grace O'Brien hit 2-4 from play while Cáit Devane contributed a total of 2-5 as Tipperary pulled away in the second quarter-final for a comfortable 4-17 to 0-13 triumph over Offaly.

While the 16-point margin is harsh on Offaly, who battled hard for much of proceedings before running out of steam, there was no questioning the merit of Tipp's success.

Manager Bill Mullaney is pleased with the progress, but he knows that the curve will need to continue rising if his crew is to threaten the big guns.

"I'm very happy with the performance overall. We knuckled down, played better, worked harder but it was a tough game. I know the scoreline looked one-sided, but it was tough all over the field."

"I think we're improving in every game, but we have to. If we're meeting the likes of Cork, Kilkenny, Galway, Offaly, Limerick, and Waterford, we have to be improving every game ... learning lessons from every game, and applying them the next day out."



## INTERVIEW

By Daragh Ó Conchúir

**W**HEN Sarah Fryday put in a starring display as Tipperary defeated Offaly and booked a place in today's Littlewoods Ireland Camogie League Division 1 semi-final against Kilkenny at Nowlan Park, it felt a little bit like a second coming.

Big things were expected of Fryday when she was introduced to the Premier County's senior panel not long after celebrating her 16th birthday. That was ten years ago now and while Tipperary have made consistent gains in recent years, the now 26-year-old's contribution to that progress has been fitful for a variety of reasons.

Lightning quick and with all the skills, she was on a Tipp side that weren't making an impact at that time as they bedded in young talent.

Between 2016 and 2020, she suffered two cruciate ligament injuries. The first of those prompted three volunteer stints for Nurture Africa to Uganda, something she regards as life-changing experiences.

While she travelled with the full blessing of manager Bill Mullaney, those trips abroad and injuries stymied her chances of making an impact at inter-county level.

'After I went to Uganda in 2017, I went back in with Tipp the year after but I also went away to Uganda for three weeks. Bill was very supportive at the time... When I went away and came back, I wasn't starting obviously because I was away,' she recalls.

'I made my way back in 2018 to starting the All-Ireland semi-final against Cork. But I do remember thinking that year that I was after taking a girl's place for the All-Ireland semi-final after she had been training all year. So when I decided I was going again in 2019 and going travelling beyond that, I decided to remove myself from the panel fully. I couldn't bear that, walking back into a panel.

'I was gone in 2019 and then 2020 fully ready for a new year and then of course the cruciate happened.'

She has spoken before of how much the cheeriness of the Ugandan people impacted upon her, giving her an element of life context but was impossible not to be floored by the latest setback though.

'It was tough enough mentally more than physically. I was part of the Tipperary Ladies' senior foot-

# You blame yourself - was I doing too much?

Injuries and travel disrupted Sarah Fryday's Tipp career, now she's making up for lost time...

**'I DECIDED TO REMOVE MYSELF FROM THE PANEL TOTALLY'**

fittest I could have been, in very good shape. Then for this to happen in January, when coronavirus was still only being whispered about.

'All of these things are going through your head blaming yourself, were you doing too much and all this kind of stuff. That was the toughest when it happened. Then

once you get the operation and everything is going up from there, you have a milestone every week, every month. You are back walking, you are back running, you are back cutting, all of a sudden you are back in non-contact training and all that.'

So last Sunday's performance felt like a release - and a statement. Starring in a new role at wing-back-suited her strengths to such a degree that she was selected as player of the match by analyst, Elaine Aylward.

Given her misfortune, nobody would begrudge Fryday the recognition, but the opportunity might never have come about but for the cruciate knee ligament injury suffered by her best friend, Clonoulty-Rossmore clubmate and housemate, Clodagh Quirke.

Like Fryday, this is Quirke's second.

'There is plenty of advice to be got in the house. It is crazy. Whatever is thrown at Clodagh she will

take it. She is waiting to get her appointment for Santry and once she gets that it is going to be head down and working hard again. Anything that is thrown at her she will manage it.

'She is so important to have inside with Tipp at the moment because she is respected so much from all the players and management alike. A lot of girls would look up to her as a girl who started off on the bench and then through sheer hard work, she got herself onto the team and captained Tipperary. She won't be going anywhere.

'I think the last time I played wing-back was an Under 14 boys' county final in 2008 against Toomevara. Clodagh was at the other wing that same day. If you asked me what my favourite position was, I might say midfield but I would always be put into the forwards.

'But it happened by default really just in a training match one day. We were down a few backs at the time

as well. Clodagh was after doing her cruciate unfortunately. And Karen Kennedy was also out. It just happened. It's trial and error really at the moment. You are only as good as your last game. We will see how the next one goes.'

Fryday is an accounting and business teacher in the Presentation Secondary School in Thurles, where teammate Cáit Devane and Cian Treacy, manager of Tipp's intermediates, are also staff members.

It's a hectic time of year for Fryday who is currently supervising Leaving Certificate exams, she helps takes charge of the local U16 team as well as looking after the club's U7s.

'Just making a small impact on one person's life it's massive. There is a good crew of us rowing in with the club,

creating a culture of giving back, helping out with underage teams. That is all part of the same thing just on a larger scale in Uganda. It is about giving back and just creating something that is sustainable. Trying to get the best out of everybody from a young age up to an old age.'

It's all done with sincerity too, and as part of this interview, she asks if mention can be made of the players wearing black armbands in honour of Noreen Ferncombe, the mother of selector Dinny, who passed away recently.

'It is a family that we have in there and when one person is feeling it, we are all feeling it. Hopefully the win against Offaly upped the spirits a little bit.'

Taking Kilkenny's scalp would put a real pep in everyone's step.



## CAMOGIE

**Littlewoods Ireland National Leagues**  
Division 1 semi-finals: Kilkenny 3-12; Tipperary 0-19; Cork 1-17; Galway 1-19;  
Division 1 relegation play-off: Clare 1-17; Dublin 2-11; Division 2 semi-finals: Antrim 0-12; Meath 1-8; Down 0-18; Wexford 2-10; Division 2 relegation play-off: Dublin 2-9; Laois 3-11; Derry 3-19;  
Tipperary 2-9; Division 3 semi-finals: Armagh 5-11; Carlow 3-11; Limerick 1-05; Wexford 3-12; Division 4 semi-finals: Cavan 3-12; Mayo 0-7; Roscommon 1-14; Tyrone 1-11.

**All-Ireland Senior Championship**  
Draw: Group 1: Tipperary, Wexford, Limerick, Offaly; Group 2: Cork, Waterford, Dublin, Down; Group 3: Galway, Kilkenny, Westmeath, Clare.

**All-Ireland Intermediate Championship**  
Group 1: Meath, Dublin, Galway, Carlow; Group 2: Antrim, Kildare, Kilkenny, Cork; Group 3: Laois, Kerry, Derry, Tipperary.

**All-Ireland Premier Junior Championship**  
Group 1: Armagh, Waterford, Wexford; Group 2: Roscommon, Clare, Kildare; Group 3: Cavan, Antrim, Down, Limerick.





Orla Cronin and Emma Helebert battle. Picture: INPHO/Bryan Keane

**'We're disappointed, but happy with our progress in the league'**

CORK manager Paudie Murray was obviously disappointed not to be bringing his young charges to a league final in Croke Park next Sunday.

The experience would have been invaluable to many developing players, however.

There were a lot of positives to take from Cork's two-point defeat to Galway, and you could see from his demeanour that he was quick to recognise that.

"I think the first 15 minutes killed us really," he said, on a sun-trampled Nowlan Park which saw 80 minutes of intense hurling.

"I thought we lacked composure then, but after that, I thought we were outstanding for the remaining 45 minutes [of normal time] — as good as we've played, I think. "In extra time, I think we had our chances.

"We've an area to brush up on, on our frees, also probably inside taking the wrong decision every now and again, but I think there were massive performances from some of the players there today as well.

"I thought our full-back line was outstanding. To concede 1-4 from play in normal time, you'd be happy with that. The frees killed us [Carrie Dolan scoring eight from frees].

From the outset, the intensity of this game was immense, with strong hits coming thick and fast, and that's something Cork haven't had experience of in the league thus far.

In particular, the newcomers to the squad would not have been used to that, and it takes a few years of strength and conditioning in order to reach that level.



Cork manager Paudie Murray. Picture: INPHO/Bryan Keane

Camogie

Linda Mellerick

"It will bring us on massively," said Murray.

"We would have liked to be going to Croke Park, but we're playing Tipp to two weeks in Cork, and that's a massive game for us, based on how Tipp went today against Kilkenny. So it's now going to be a huge game for us.

"I don't think we're going to be short of games, I think the key thing now is that we develop again and try to get everyone to the next level. I suppose I'm gutted that we lost, but you know, I'm delighted with certain individuals that we wanted to see do well, do so.

"There are others that need to brush up, but that's normal when you go into these games, you're not going to get everyone to that level on the same day."

Asked if Katrina Mackey be OK after going off injured, he replied: "I think she will. She has a sore leg and she's been carrying that the last two weeks, so I hope she will be OK."

Cork's attention will now turn to preparing for the championship in July, the groups for which were announced yesterday. In a weakish group alongside Waterford, Down, and Dublin, Cork will need to find strong challenge games elsewhere or within their own camp to ensure they are ready for another heavy battle.

Galway and Kilkenny are again in the one group with semi-finals and quarter-finals to be decided. There's a lot to work on, but a lot of positivity in the camp also.



Galway's Sarah Dervan is tackled by Laura Hayes and Katrina Mackey of Cork.

Picture: INPHO/Bryan Keane

# Cork lose out in tight affair



CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick

Galway 1-19 Cork 1-17 (aet)

THEY may not have reached a league final, but Cork will have learned a lot from yesterday's league semi-final in Nowlan Park.

From the outset, Galway's work-rate was at a level of intensity Cork haven't been used to in the league to date.

Frees were plentiful, 11 inside the opening 17 minutes, with a number of stoppages preventing any real flow to the game.

Galway's Aoife Donoghue was playing very deep. Galway played too deep at times during the first half, Cork's full-back line often outnumbering them.

A defensive error gave Galway their opening goal, a lateral side-line went to no man's land and Siobhan McGrath was the one to collect and strike it past Amy Lee.

Carrie Dolan was playing well, but two frees from difficult angles went wide, which would have pushed Galway six points ahead. With an unusual style of almost having her back to goal, the better option would surely have been to find a teammate.

Referee Liz Dempsey was very picky on steps, and Orla Cronin struck Cork's fourth point as a result on 25, leaving a goal between the sides.

Amy O'Connor had seen little ball. Suddenly she sprang, chasing and dispossessing Galway as they came out of defence and was on hand to receive the pass inside from Ashling Thompson. With still plenty to do from 35 yards out, her pace won out and it was a brilliant finish to the net.

Laura Hayes then mounted a torpedo over the bar to put Cork back in the lead.

Mackey was finding space around the middle as Carrie Dolan missed a scoreable free which would have seen Galway level instead of trailing 1-7 to 1-6 at the break.



Amy O'Connor of Cork celebrates after scoring her goal.

Picture: Matt Browne/Sportsfile

Galway missed two scoreable points on the restart, Orla Cronin hit over before two Dolan frees brought the game level.

It's notable that Galway weren't really making headway up front. With 40 minutes on the clock, they had 1-3 from play. As Cork try to settle a full-back line, they may have found it in Ellen Murphy, Libby Coppinger, and Meabh Cahalane.

A flash of brilliance by Aoife Donoghue produced a big moment, winning a penalty on 50 minutes, but Carrie Dolan opted to hit it over the bar.

Cork introduced three substitutes for the final 10 minutes, which swung the pendulum.

Saoirse McCarthy hit a wonderful point, Izzy O'Regan went through, got hooked, and Ashling Thompson won a penalty. Two points down with three minutes remaining, Chloe Sigerson unfortunately struck wide.

Mackey brought it down to one after Carrie Dolan again took the wrong decision with a difficult free. A second bad wide could have seen the game out for Galway, but then Cliona Healy rescued Cork with a wonderful strike to push the game to extra time.

Aoife Donoghue moved to the inside line and caused massive problems, hitting

two. Sigerson replied and Rebecca Hennelly made the distance three at the end of the first half of extra time.

Again, Donoghue scored. Mackey went off with an injury and Carrie Dolan saw the line for a second yellow. Cork now seemed to be everywhere. It was down to two. But Cork missed a free, converted another, but in injury time Galway won a 45 to close the game out.

Scorers for Cork: O Cronin 0-4 (0-3 f), A O'Connor 1-1, K Mackey 0-3, C Healy 0-3 (0-2 f), L Collins, L Hayes, A Thompson, F Keating, S McCarthy, S Sigerson 0-1 each.

Galway: C Dolan 0-12 (0-7 f, 0-1 pen, 0-1 45), S McGrath 1-0, A Donoghue 0-4, R Hennelly 0-2 (0-1 45), N Kilkenny 0-1.

CORK: A Lee, L Coppinger, E Murphy, M Cahalane, H Looney, L Treacy, L Hayes, K Mackey, A Thompson, C Sigerson, O Cronin, C O'Sullivan, F Keating, A O'Connor, L Collins.

Subs: C Healy for L Collins (46), Izzy O'Regan for C O'Sullivan (50), Saoirse McCarthy for H Looney (51), I Sheehan for K Mackey (70, inj).

GALWAY: S Healy, S Dervan, S Gardiner, R Black, E Helebert, T Kenny, A Donoghue, N Kilkenny, N McGrath, O McGrath, S Spellman, C Dolan, S McGrath, A O'Reilly.

Subs: C Finnerty for O McGrath (11, inj), A M Starr for S McGrath (40), D Higgins for A O'Reilly (55), R Hennelly for N McGrath (61), S McGrath for S Gardiner (61), N McGrath for S Spellman (70), A O'Reilly for S McGrath (80).

Referee: Liz Dempsey (Kilkenny).



# Gritty Cats pounce late to topple Tipperary

**Littlewoods Ireland Camogie League**

**Kilkenny 3-12**  
**Tipperary 0-19**

**Daragh Ó Conchúir**  
UPMC Nowlan Park

Two goals in a minute from the inspirational Denise Gaule and Katie Nolan, five minutes from the end of normal time, snatched victory for Kilkenny in a dramatic Littlewoods Ireland Camogie League Division 1. It was a cruel blow for Tipp,

and Cáit Devane, in particular, given how they had bossed much of this thrilling contest at Nowlan Park.

The early exchanges were extremely cagey, despite Gaule opening the score from a free after just 41 seconds for the All-Ireland champions.

Devane illustrated the soundness of her striking with a brilliant conversion of a 50m free out on the left, but scores from Nolan and a stunning point on the run by Aoife Doyle on either side of a Devane effort swung the momentum towards the shots.

A pair of points within a

minute by Devane just before the water break gave Tipperary a 0-4 to 0-3 lead and they were completely dominant when play resumed, with Devane, Eireana Fryday and Nicole Walsh to the fore.

Then out of nothing, Kilkenny had a goal on the half hour, with Gaule converting a penalty after she was fouled by Aoife McGrath. But Tipp refused to be unsettled and points from Devane (free) and Emer McGrath left 0-11 to 1-3 at the interval.

Kilkenny came out with all guns blazing on the restart but Tipp weathered the storm.

Points from Grace O'Brien, Sarah Fryday and McGrath, and then a Devane brace in response to two Gaule scores, opened a five-point gap in the 54th minute.

All changed with Gaule's goal a minute later, which flew into the net off the fingers of All-Star Aine Slattery.

Devane hit back with her 11th point and fifth from play immediately but, from that puckout, Nolan was able to finish with a low shot and the teams were level.

Even then, Tipp showed plenty of character. First Eireana Fryday and then Orla

O'Dwyer, introduced at half-time for her first appearance since winning an AFLW title in Australia, put the Premiers in front, but Gaule was unerring at the other end, levelling on each occasion from frees.

And it was the Noreiders, who have been in similar situations often in the past, who found the decisive scores. Gaule calmly pointed two more frees to bring her tally to 2-8 and secure a famous victory.

**Scorers for Kilkenny:** D Gaule 2-8 (0-8fs, 1-0 pen); K Nolan 1-2; M O'Connell, A Doyle 0-1 each.

**Scorers for Tipperary:** C Devane 0-

11 (6fs); E McGrath 0-2; R Howard, S Fryday, E Fryday, N Walsh, G O'Brien, O O'Dwyer 0-1 each.

**Kilkenny:** E Kavanagh, M Teahan, D Tobin, M Bambrick, K Doyle, M Farrell, G Walsh, N Deely, L Fitzpatrick, K Nolan, M O'Connell, M Kenneally, A Doyle, M Walsh, D Gaule.

**Subs:** L Murphy for Fitzpatrick (ht), S Fitzgerald for Kenneally (43), S Crowley for A Doyle (51), A Prendergast for G Walsh (52).

**Tipperary:** A Slattery, M Eviston, E Loughman, M Ryan, A McGrath, K Kennedy, J Bourke, E Fryday, R Howard, E McGrath, N Walsh, S Fryday, G O'Brien, C Devane, C McIntyre.

**Subs:** O O'Dwyer for McIntyre (ht), C McCarthy for S Fryday (45), J Kelly for O'Brien (50), M Campion for A McGrath (60+3).

**Referee:** John McDonagh (Galway)



Camogie League Division 1 semi-final  
**GALWAY 1-19**  
**CORK 1-17 (aet)**

**Daragh Ó Conchúir**  
UPMC Nowlan Park

Cathal Murray hailed the "Aoife Donohue effect" in the full-forward line and signposted an intent to use more of his squad through the summer, as Galway eked out a 1-19 to 1-17 victory over Cork to set up a floodlit Littlewoods Ireland Camogie League Division 1 final with Kilkenny.

Murray knows all about the Noreiders, having beaten them when the league decider was last played two years ago and repeated that success in the All-Ireland final the following September.

Kilkenny garnered revenge in last December's All-Ireland and the teams were drawn in the same group of the All-Ireland Championship yesterday too, but the Galway boss insists that he won't be hiding his light under a bushel with silverware on offer.

Donohue shot four points from play and was an increasing threat as the supply into her improved. Both Carrie Dolan and Orla Cronin had off-days from frees, but Dolan still shot 12 points.

Siobhán McGrath shot an early goal for Galway, but

## Galway show character to set up All-Ireland rematch



Galway's Aoife Donohue is tackled by Cork's Saoirse McCarthy in their clash at Nowlan Park.

Picture: Bryan Keane/Inpho

Amy O'Connor responded with a tremendous major just before half time.

And though Galway looked to exert some pressure early in the second half, the Cork bench had a big impact. Dolan opted to take a point from a penalty and Chloe Sigerson drove wide from a penalty at

the other end, but Cork fought like tigers and a point from Cliona Healy brought the game to extra time.

Galway outscored Cork 0-4 to 0-1 in the first period of extra time, and that gave them the breathing room to survive Dolan's dismissal and see out the win.

"It was a great game," said Murray. "We probably felt we were in a really good position at half time. We were really happy. We felt we had the chances in the second half to win it in normal time, but Cork are a huge team and they showed great character."

"If they got the penalty, it

would have been a hard way back for us. Once it goes to extra time it's about character and workrate. We showed a huge amount of character. It's brilliant to win it and great to be in a league final."

"There's not going to be any shadow boxing. You get to a league final, you want to win

it. You get to Croke Park, you want to win any game you play there, and Kilkenny will be the same way."

Paudie Murray said he was satisfied with what his players provided, despite the defeat.

"We're disappointed to lose it," said the Cork boss. "I'm proud of the effort at the same time. We probably started poorly, but showed great composure after that, and I thought we really took the game to Galway."

**Scorers for Galway:** C Dolan 0-12 (8fs, 1-4s, 1 pen); A Donohue 0-4; S McGrath 1-0; R Hennelly 0-2 (1f); N Kilkenny 0-1.

**Scorers for Cork:** A O'Connor 1-1; K Mackey, O Cronin (fs), C Healy (2fs) 0-3 each; L Hayes, A Thompson, C O'Sullivan, F Keating, L Collins, S McCarthy, C Sigerson 0-1 each.

**Galway:** Sarah Healy, S Dervan, Shauna Healy, T Kenny, R Black, E Hebert, S Gardiner, N Kilkenny, N McGrath, C Dolan, S Spellman, A Donohue, S McGrath, A O'Reilly, O McGrath.

**Subs:** C Finnerty for O McGrath inj (12), AM Star for S McGrath (47), D Higgins for O'Reilly (55), R Hennelly for N McGrath (ft), S McGrath for Gardiner (ft), N McGrath for Spellman (68), O'Reilly for S McGrath (80+2).

**Cork:** A Lee, M Cahalane, L Coppinger, E Murphy, H Looney, L Treacy, L Hayes, K Mackey, A Thompson, C Sigerson, O Cronin, C O'Sullivan, F Keating, A O'Connor, L Collins.

**Subs:** C Healy for Collins (47), I O'Regan for O'Sullivan (51), S McGrath for Looney (52), I Sheehan for Mackey inj (ht et).

**Referee:** Liz Dempsey (Kilkenny)

## Twohig points the way to victory for Cork over Tipperary

**Cork 6-15**  
**Tipperary 2-12**

**U16 camogie All-Ireland championship**

**Mary Newman**

**GOALS** provided the difference as Cork cruised past Tipperary in the opening group game in the Tesco All-Ireland U16A championship at a sun-drenched Castle Road on Sunday.

Cork hit four goals in the opening half playing with the aid of the breeze that helped cool all those in attendance.

In the second half, they kept the scoreboard ticking over as they continuously troubled the Tipperary defence.

Fiona Twohig was impressive as she notched 1-8 - including eight points from play - while full-forward Emily O'Donoghue and Grainne O'Mahony hit two goals each as the young Rebels got the best possible start to a campaign that will see Waterford provide

their next opposition.

A close opening quarter saw the sides level on two occasions. A goal from Grainne Finn came after a Tipperary defender deflected the ball to the net.

Grainne O'Mahony added a second as Tipp stayed in touch with points but a blistering second quarter saw Cork hit three goals without reply.

The third dispatched to the net from the penalty spot by Twohig and with Emily O'Donoghue also finding the net it was 4-6 to 1-7 in Cork's favour at the break.

Tipperary battled hard through the second half. A Celine Guinan goal from the penalty spot gave them a glimmer of hope but with Fiona Twohig leading the way up front ably assisted by Emily O'Donoghue

who grabbed their fifth goal and one from substitute Ellen Crowley, the result was never in doubt.

**Scorers for Cork:** F Twohig 1-8 (1-0 pen); E O'Donoghue 2-1; G O'Mahony 1-1; G Finn, E Crowley 1-0 each; C Sheehan 0-3 (0-1f); S Sheehan 0-3; A Fitzgerald 0-1.

**Tipperary:** C Guinan 1-6 (0-5fs); D Ryan 1-2; L Flannery 0-2; A Fitzgerald K Francombe 0-1 each.

**Cork:** A Bislane; A O'Sullivan, S Hurley, E Cantillon; M Gordon, K Goulding, E Sheehan; E Duignan, A Fitzgerald; G O'Mahony, F Twohig, S Sheehan, C Sheehan, E O'Donoghue, G Finn.

**Subs:** C O'Donoghue for E Cantillon (21); A O'Neill for E Duignan (35); G O'Neill for G O'Mahony (53); E Crowley for E O'Donoghue (59); M De Burca for C Sheehan (58); J Sheehy for G Finn (58); A McCarthy for F Twohig (58); B O'Shaughnessy for A Fitzgerald (61).

**Tipperary:** K Meehan; L Purcell, S Heffernan, P Quirke; A Ryan, N Pranks, R O'Mara; E Horgan, K Fercombe; D Ryan (Boherlane); K Ralph, D Ryan (Annacarty); A Fitzgerald, I Corbett, C Guinan.

**Subs:** H Cleere for R O'Mara (26); L Flannery for I Corbett (41); J Heffernan for K Ralph (53); M Purcell for E Horgan (55).

**Referee:** Justin Heffernan (Wexford)

Galway's Sar Park yesterday



# Blink-and-you-miss-it highlights did camogie classics little justice

**L**IKE many GAA fans, I settled down at 9.30pm on Sunday evening in a state of suspense. It's the same coin-toss at the end of every weekend, whether it's *Allianz League Sunday* or *The Sunday Game*. What will be up first — the hurling or the football? Which of our national games has the national broadcaster decided will take precedence this week?

Actually, last weekend, nothing happened at 9.30pm. The Euros were on, so *Allianz League Sunday* was pushed back to 10.10pm. I made another cup of tea and flipped over to Dermot Bannon to kill 40 minutes. When I checked back, Seán Cavanagh and Pat Spillane had joined Joanne on the big semi-circular couch. Back to Dermot so.

To be fair, there are some Sunday evenings when I'll happily watch the big ball as the curtain-raiser to my true passion, hurling — but after 10pm on a school night, I was low on patience. And I'm sure I'm not alone in this. Even in Cork, where hurling and football are both held in high esteem, you'd be hard pressed to find someone who loves both equally. We all have a fave.

In fact, part of me wonders — does it make sense to bundle the two sports together in a Sunday night highlights show? Maybe there's a case to be made for two separate Sunday Games — one for hurling and one for football. It's not as if there isn't enough content for two shows, or that there wouldn't be an audience for both.

Of course, I say this as a hurling person, after a weekend where football got an hour of coverage and hurling got 20 minutes. Some weekends, the balance would be tipped in hurling's favour, and you'd hardly hear me complain then. But in a weekend with six decisive league matches, 20 minutes isn't nearly enough.

Perhaps most regrettable of all, last Sunday's camogie league semi-finals got a scant two minutes of coverage in total. Both games — Kilkenny versus Tipperary, and Cork versus Galway — were thrilling affairs. Cork and Galway was a gritty down-to-the-wire battle that went to extra time; Tipp and Kilkenny an emotional rollercoaster. In fact, they may well have been the most exciting games of the weekend, but when they're given so little time, the average TV watcher will never know. When the highlights pro-

**When the highlights programme only has seconds to feature you, most of your heroics disappear into the void**

gramme only has seconds to feature you, most of your heroics disappear into the void.

Ursula Jacob was given the unenviable task of summing up the riveting Kilkenny-Tipperary clash in 10 seconds or less, which called for broad strokes: Tipp were gallant and pushed Kilkenny hard, but ultimately the All-Ireland champions showed their class and experience, which enabled them to clinch it in the end. There was no time to dig in to what actually happened, which is that Tipp dictated the game from the start, and that Kilkenny were fortunate to emerge with the win in injury-time, having led the game only once in the early stages.

As a Tipp woman, I am admittedly exercised about this, but Tipp's dominance throughout was no fluke. They hunted in packs, pinged

balls into space, and backed themselves to take long-range points, with some outstanding scores from Roisin Howard and Cait Devane in particular. New additions to the management, Denis Kelly and Angelo Walsh, seem to have the team bursting with confidence. While Tipp will be kicking themselves for letting two goals slip by them in the crucial closing minutes, it's not as if the heads dropped — they got their noses in front twice more with points from play from Eirena Fryday and Orla O'Dwyer. However, Denise Gaule converted three frees in a row to secure the win for Kilkenny.

A crucial moment arrived earlier in the match — Kilkenny's first-half goal from a penalty. Tipp were leading 0-9 to 0-3 at that stage, and the goal kept Kilkenny in touch at the break. Denise Gaule raced in on goal with Aoife McGrath on her heels and took a shot. Mary Ryan showed patience and precision to block the shot, and emerged with the ball in her hand. The whistle went and Gaule slotted home the resulting penalty with a perfectly-judged bouncing shot. But watching back, it's hard to see where the foul was, and it's frustrating to see good defending penalised.

So often, the narratives that we use around sport serve to reinforce the status quo. When we say that a team 'showed why they're champions', what we're really saying is that they deserved to win because they have won before. When we praise a strong, successful team for their experience or character, we're implying that their opponents — often an emergent team — did not display these qualities. It's rarely that simple.

Credit to Kilkenny, they sound like they know they have many questions to answer, both after the Tipp game and their tight quarter-final grapple with Limerick. 'We were struggling everywhere,' said manager Brian Dowling, with commendable honesty, after the match. 'I don't know how we did it.'

As for Tipp, it might well suit them to go into championship as underdogs, as the plucky side who nearly caused an upset in the league. But on the evidence of their performance last Sunday, they look stronger than they have in years, and real contenders for the championship.

Were I calling the shots at RTE, there'd be an hour-long hurling programme of a Sunday night, with camogie matches getting equal time and analysis as their hurling counterparts. But until then, the two brilliant semi-finals can be viewed on the Camogie Association's YouTube channel — well worth a watch. Roll on the Galway-Kilkenny showdown on Sunday night.

## Sunday night final no issue for Cats' Walsh

Paul Keane

All-Star Kilkenny attacker Miriam Walsh says the All-Ireland champions have no issues with Sunday's 7.30pm throw-in time for the Littlewoods Ireland Camogie League final.

RTE TV will broadcast the latest meeting of rivals Kilkenny and Galway from Croke Park and Walsh believes it will be a terrific opportunity to showcase the game.

The Tullaroan star referenced research conducted by competition sponsors Littlewoods Ireland which revealed that 89% of the population cannot name a current camogie player.

"It was mind blowing, the 89% figure. It's sad really that our own population don't know us as players," said Walsh, who believes Sunday's prime-time TV slot will help promote the game.

"I think you're going to have more people tuning in on the TV. During the day, people might be off doing other things. I think 7.30 is a good time really.

"We just absolutely love it. As a player, I genuinely don't think it really matters to us. Like, we'd have training on a Sunday anyway. I don't really think the time is an issue to us.

"Obviously it might be annoying coming home late or whatever but we've all been looking forward to getting back playing for so long that we're just really looking forward to the match now on Sunday. Playing in Croke Park is a bonus."

Walsh admitted Kilkenny are fortunate to be in the final having fired two late goals in last weekend's semi-final against Tipperary to progress narrowly.

She said: "I don't know how we won that, to be quite honest. Tipperary probably deserved it. I don't know if it is the pressure from last year that is getting to us but it is still early in the year too and we have plenty of time to work on it.

"I suppose the likes of Anne Dalton and Katie Power are huge losses too. It's up to the likes of me and a few of the younger girls to step up and try to be leaders though it is hard to fill Anne Dalton's place. But look, it's still early in the season."

It'll be the fourth meeting of Kilkenny and Galway at Croke Park in three seasons having also contested the 2019 league final and the 2019 and 2020 All-Ireland finals there. Galway won the first two but Walsh and Kilkenny finally turned the screw in last December's All-Ireland decider.

"That was a really tough, physical game and we were lucky to come out the right side," said Walsh. "It's just all on the day I think and to be fair it's been a really competitive league overall. It's good to see the likes of Limerick and Tipperary doing quite well and they nearly beat us in the last two games so it is great to see new teams featuring too, not just the Galways, the Corks and the Kilkennys."

Sunday's Division 1 decider will be a test event for the reopening of sport generally to fans with 5,000 spectators permitted to attend.

"It will be great, all my family are heading up," said Walsh. "They're really looking forward to it and it will add to the atmosphere. It was strange not having a crowd there when we played the All-Ireland last December. And as I say, it's on at a brilliant time as well so I'm hoping that most of the country will tune in and hopefully our camogie name will get out there more."



**Eimear Ryan**



Galway's Sarah Healy, left, Kilkenny's Miriam Walsh and Padraig Walsh and Galway's Shane Cooney at the launch of the Littlewoods Ireland Camogie Leagues finals and All-Ireland SHC at Croke Park yesterday. The Littlewoods Ireland Division 1 Camogie League final is live on RTE this Sunday at 7.30pm. The All-Ireland SHC begins on Saturday, June 26. Picture: Sam Barnes/Sportsfile





# LITTLEWOODS IRELAND CAMOGIE LEAGUE DIVISION 1 Cork v Galway



Cork miss out on final spot but Murray says league was still a success

**GALWAY** 1-19  
**CORK** 1-17

(after extra time)

**DARAGH Ó CONCHÚIR**  
REPORTS

DISAPPOINTED to bow out at the penultimate stage, and miss out on a Littlewoods Ireland Camogie League Division 1 final appearance, Cork boss Paudie Murray still feels his side got what they wanted from the league.

It took extra time to separate Galway and Cork in this league semi-final at Nowlan Park on Sunday, and as the Connacht team advances to the floodlit final against Kilkenny this weekend, the Rebels reflect on what they learned from the league.

'We're disappointed to lose it,' Cork manager Murray said.

'I'm proud of the effort at the same time. We probably started poorly but showed great composure after that and I thought we really took the game to Galway.'

'If we were a little bit more clinical, we probably should have won it in normal time. We ran out of steam in extra time to be honest but we'd three girls playing football (on Saturday) as well so that doesn't help.'

'But I think we got what we wanted out of the league. We've areas to brush up. We knew that going in here but we're still disappointed to be going back down to Cork losing that game.'

This semi-final wasn't pretty at times but the relocation of Aoife Donohue to the inside line was just about the deciding factor as Galway grinded it out in a war of attrition against Cork. It was a scrappy affair with lots of frees, many of which were missed, and just a lack of accuracy in passing, control and shooting. The exchanges were robust, to say the least.

Katrina Mackey had a point for Cork after 15 seconds but Galway's Carrie Dolan shot the next three points, including two from placed balls, before Siobhán McGrath goalied for Galway in the 13th minute.

Cork's 26th minute goal

## REBELS BOW OUT



Cork's Amy O'Connor on the run against Galway.

Cork's Orla Cronin and Galway's Emma Helebert compete for this ball during the Division 1 semi-final at Nowlan Park. (Photos: Bryan Keane/INPHO)

got them back into the fray however, and it was something they would have been working towards, getting Amy O'Connor into space and utilising her Olympian speed.

Paudie Murray will be delighted that it started with O'Connor's workrate as she dispossessed Sarah Healy 50 metres out and tight to the right sideline. Fiona Keating provided back-up to gather possession and transferred to Ashling Thompson, who spotted O'Connor on the move. Once the hand-pass found its target, O'Connor was able to solo almost 30 metres with Emma Helebert chasing, before unleashing a shot that flew beyond Sarah Healy.

Laura Hayes and Niamh Kilkenny swapped points afterwards, then Orla Cronin and Dalton slotted

**'I think the girls showed massive character. This is a very young team compared to Galway' - Paudie Murray**

frees before Thompson stole forward well just before the short whistle and split the posts confidently to make it 1-7 to 1-6 at the break.

It was Galway that found a bit more rhythm after the restart, even if Ciara O'Sullivan extended the margin to two early on.

Although it was three points from Dolan that moved Galway ahead by the 40th minute, that was as a result of increased pressure and they were definitely more threatening at this juncture.

Aoife Donohue was now situated in the left corner and her point, within seconds of Dolan's third placed ball, was a testament to economy with a neat finish.

Cork offered a reminder to what they were capable of when creating a glorious goal chance but on this occasion, Thompson was unable to source O'Connor with her stick pass. Keating cleared the black spot, however. The Rebels were going nowhere.

Dolan pointed from play before Donohue was fouled for a penalty in the 49th minute after a glorious bit of skill, and

Dolan opted to take a point from the resulting award.

It was frantic stuff in the closing minutes, as Cork poured forward, their bench having a significant impact.

Substitute Saoirse McCarthy had a point, after a heavy tackle on goalbound O'Connor went unpunished. Siobhán Gardiner made a brilliant hook on Izzy O'Regan.

With two minutes left Cork were awarded a penalty for a foul on Thompson but Sigerson's low drive found the advertising hoarding rather than the net. Mackey made it a one-point game however, before another sub Cliona Healy, hitting a delicious point over her left shoulder, the sliotar dropping over off the inside of the upright.

There was a chance late on for a winner as Sigerson bore down on goal but her hand pass couldn't find a teammate and we were headed for an additional 20 minutes. Having gone so close to losing it, Galway outscored their opponents by four points to one in the first period of extra time, Donohue providing two of them. Dolan was given her marching orders for a second yellow card in the 74th minute and Cork sensed an opportunity.

O'Connor and Healy (free) left just the minimum between the sides but just as everyone was considering the prospect of another chapter, Rebecca Hennelly slotted her second point after coming on at the start

## THE HIGHLIGHTS

**Our Star:** Galway forward **Aoife Donohue**, when moved to the full-forward line, caused Cork plenty of problems with her pace and mobility.

**Star moment:** Amy O'Connor's first-half goal was a thing of beauty – the Cork speed merchant started and finished a terrific move, flying in from 30 metres out before finishing to the net.

**Talking point:** Drama galore here, but, yet again and in keeping with recent times, it's Cork that miss out against Galway and Kilkenny who are the big two right now.

**What's next?** Galway move on to Sunday's league final whereas Cork now prepare for the championship – they've drawn Waterford, Dublin and Down in Group 2.

of extra time to ensure that Cathal Murray's squad would progress to this Sunday's league final.

'I think the girls showed massive character. This is a very young team compared to Galway. Galway have been around a long time. People will say that some of our players have been around but they're all only 25 years of age. I think a player comes into their own at 27 years of age,' Paudie Murray said. 'I thought we showed massive character. 45 minutes I'm very happy with, the first 15 I'm not and I think that killed us.'

### Scorers

**Galway:** C Dolan 0-12 (8f, 145, 1 pen); A Donohue 0-4; S McGrath 1-0; R Hennelly 0-2 (1f); N Kilkenny 0-1.  
**Cork:** A O'Connor 1-1; K Mackey, O Cronin (3f), C Healy (2f) 0-3 each; L Hayes, A Thompson, C O'Sullivan,

F Keating, L Collins, S McCarthy, C Sigerson 0-1 each

**Galway:** Sarah Healy; S Dervan, Shauna Healy, T Kenny; R Black, E Helebert, S Gardiner; N Kilkenny, N McGrath; C Dolan, S Spellman, A Donohue; S McGrath, A O'Reilly, O McGrath.

**Subs:** C Finnerty for O McGrath (inj, 12), AM Starr for S McGrath (47), D Higgins for O'Reilly (55), R Hennelly for N McGrath (ft), S McGrath for Gardiner (ft), N McGrath for Spellman (68), O'Reilly for S McGrath (80+2).

**Cork:** A Lee; M Cahalane, L Coppinger, E Murphy; H Looney, L Treacy, L Hayes; K Mackey, A Thompson; C Sigerson, O Cronin, C O'Sullivan; F Keating, A O'Connor, L Collins.

**Subs:** C Healy for Collins (47), I O'Regan for O'Sullivan (51), S McCarthy for Looney (52), I Sheehan for Mackey (inj, ht et).  
**Referee:** Liz Dempsey (Kilkenny).



Cork's Cliona Healy reacts to missing a penalty in normal time.



# 'Camogie is here to stay in Bandon'

Club's first adult team gives young guns a target to aim for

BY KIERAN MCCARTHY

CAMOGIE is here to stay in Bandon – that's the message from Bandon Camogie Club Chairperson Caroline McSweeney as its new adult team gives the club's young guns a target to aim for.

Nineteen players, ranging from 19 to 44 years of age, have already signed up for Bandon camogie's adult team that held its first training session recently.

The reaction has been so positive that, already, the adult players want to double their training sessions per week, from one to two.

'The focus for this team is on fun and fitness for the

summer,' McSweeney explains.

'This is a team for anyone in Bandon who wants to play camogie. Half of the players on our new adult team have played before while the rest had never picked up a hurley before their first training session a few weeks ago. You don't have to have any experience at all.

'So far everyone is loving it, we're delighted with the response and we're still confident that more players will join us in the weeks ahead.'

While fun is the name of the game for Bandon's adult team this season, the creation of this side is an important moment in the young club's history. Started in 2017 with U8, U10 and U12 teams, each year Bandon Camogie Club has grown and developed by adding another team. It now has teams from U8 all the way up to U17. With the addition of an U17 side, the committee feels it's crucial that the club's players has an adult team to aim for.

'We have an U17 team and we felt we needed to have something for them to progress on

to, and to try and stop player fall-off. The young players now know that the club has an adult team so they can continue to play camogie here in Bandon after the U17 team,' chairperson McSweeney explains.

'The club currently has 209 members, including 40 kids at U8 alone and there is a real appetite for camogie in Bandon. The numbers in the club are strong, and we have great coaches and a fantastic committee driving this on. We are moving in the right direction – and by adding our adult team we've showed that camogie is here to stay in Bandon.'

Bandon's adult team will compete at junior C level this season and will have its first game, against Kinsale, later this month. The focus, though, is on having fun.

'We want to pro-

**'There is a real appetite for camogie in Bandon'**  
– Caroline McSweeney

mote camogie locally and get as many women as we can involved,' McSweeney explains.

'As well as have fun and improve your fitness, there is the social aspect to this as well, and that's very important. This is a chance to meet new people and make new friends – and get some fresh air and exercise at the same time.

'We felt this year was the best time to create the adult team because a lot of people might be around this summer. So far, the response has been very encouraging. The club has grown every year and this was the next natural step.'

With Stuart Reid and Denis Coffey coming on board as coaches, the reports from training sessions have been



Caroline McSweeney, Bandon Camogie Club Chairperson, with the club's jersey sponsor, Donal Kelleher, Copper Grove, Bandon.

very positive and, as Caroline McSweeney says, the only way is up for Bandon Camogie Club.

• If you are interested in joining Bandon Camogie

Club's adult team then contact the club through its Facebook page, Bandon Camogie Club. The team trains on Wednesday nights.



Members of Bandon Camogie Club's new adult team pictured at training. (Photos: Martin Walsh)

Twin sisters Kate (left) and Aisling O'Connor of Bandon Camogie Club.



Members of Bandon Camogie Club's U15 and U16 teams.



Members of Bandon Camogie Club's U12 team with their mascot Darragh Fleming.



# Donohue the driving force as Galway survive epic contest

Defiant Murray's charges set up National League showdown against Kilkenny

GALWAY	1-19
KILKENNY	1-17 (AET)
CORK	

ANNA O'REILLY  
AT NOWLAN PARK

THE Galway senior camogie team came through an epic extra-time battle with Cork to book their place in the National League final after outlasting the Rebels at Nowlan Park on Sunday. On a scorching hot day in Kilkenny, Cathal Murray's side showed tremendous resolve to edge out a battling Cork team, who matched the Tribeswomen score for score for most of the 83-minute contest.

A victory of this nature will surely stand to Murray's charges in the long term, with Galway's hunger, athleticism and fitness all thoroughly tested on Sunday evening. The character of the Galway players also shone through, particularly in the second period of extra-time, when they closed out the game while down to 14 players.

The amount of energy expended in Nowlan Park may not have been ideal with Sunday's league final in mind, but in terms of squad morale and confidence, this victory was invaluable.

The exchanges were intense from the throw in. Cork's Katrina Mackey opened the scoring inside the 20 seconds, before Carrie Dolan equalised with her first pointed free. The Clarinbridge forward was very sharp and landed a fine point two minutes later, after a good pass from Siobhán McGrath. Dolan soon put Galway 0-3 to 0-1 ahead, after pointing a free which she drew herself.

Cork replied with a point from Linda Collins before Galway were dealt an early injury blow. Orlaith McGrath was forced off with a dislocated shoulder and replaced by Catherine Finnerty. The Mountbellew forward soon got involved in the action, intercepting a loose ball in the Cork defence, before passing inside to Siobhán McGrath, who finished to the net. Cork replied with Orla Cronin pointing her first free of the afternoon.

Dolan pointed a '45 three minutes later to give the Tribeswomen a four-point lead at the water break. Cork lifted their game on the resumption, scoring 1-2 in a four-minute spell. Cronin pointed her sec-

ond free, before Amy O'Connor managed to break through the Galway defence and fire to the net. A long-range point from wing-back Laura Hayes then put the Rebels ahead.

Niamh Kilkenny scored an excellent individual point for Galway to equalise before Cronin's third free put Cork ahead again. The exchanges were hard and physical throughout the field, with neither side giving an inch. Dolan equalised with her fourth placed ball, before a point from Ashling Thompson gave Cork a one-point lead at half time.

Cork opened the second half scoring with a good point from Cronin, but Galway soon took over. They drew three consecutive fouls in attack, each pointed by Dolan, to retake the lead. Aoife Donohue then got an excellent score, after a great delivery from Niamh McGrath.

Cork reduced Galway's lead to the minimum with a point from Fiona Keating just before the water break. Dolan pointed next after a good pass from Allish O'Reilly. Donohue then produced a moment of brilliance, showing marvellous skill to break inside two Cork defenders, before being brought down in the square for a penalty.



**IT TOOK A PHENOMENAL EFFORT TO OVERCOME A TEAM LIKE CORK AND THEY DESERVE HUGE CREDIT FOR BATTLING IT OUT**

Dolan opted to take a point from the penalty, giving Galway a three-point lead. Cork replied with an impressive team move, which ended with Mackey pointing to reduce the deficit. The exchanges were frantic in the last ten minutes as the finishing line beckoned for both sides. O'Reilly drew a foul, which Dolan converted in the 52nd minute. The Rebels refused to be beaten however, and hit the final three points of normal time.

First, Saoirse McCarthy landed a good score for Cork, before a ball which should have been cleared by Galway ended up in the hand of Thompson,



Galway's Aoife Donohue comes under pressure from Cork's Ellen Murphy during Sunday's National Camogie League semi-final at Nowlan Park. PHOTOS: INPHO/BRYAN KEANE

who was adjudged by Liz Dempsey to have been fouled in the square. The Tribeswomen got a let off when Chloe Sigeron's penalty flew past Sarah Healy's right-hand post and narrowly wide.

Cork showed impressive composure to take two late points, first from Mackey and then from Cliona Healy in injury time to force extra time. On a very humid evening, fitness and conditioning were key factors as the sides faced an additional 20 minutes to decide the contest.

Galway opted to play with the wind in the first period and two early points from Donohue put them in the driving seat. Sigeron replied with a point for Cork before Dolan pointed her eighth free of the afternoon. Shortly after, a long ball from Sarah Healy broke to Rebecca Hennelly, who took a good score to put Galway three points ahead at the interval.

Early in the second period, a good move involving Kilkenny and Hennelly ended with Donohue getting a vital point. A four-point lead was significant in the context of such a close game. Cliona Healy replied for Cork with a pointed free, before a potentially game changing incident occurred. Carrie Dolan was shown a second yellow card by Dempsey, after committing a foul near the side-line.

O'Connor soon pointed for Cork to reduce the margin to two points. With time running out, Sarah Dervan was penalised, very harshly it appeared, for a tackle on Hayes. Healy pointed the free for Cork to leave the minimum between them. Galway reorganised impressively, however, and closed down any chance for Cork to shoot an equaliser.

When Emma Helebert cleared a ball into the right corner, Siobhán McGrath did extremely well to win a '45 off Maeve Cahalane. Hennelly pointed the injury time '45 to send Galway into the league final, after a mammoth contest.

Galway boss Cathal Murray was delighted that his players came through such a tough test, citing their character and composure as the vital components on the day.

"The girls showed huge character. I'm just so proud of them today. It took a phenomenal effort to overcome a team like Cork and they deserve huge credit for battling it out. We showed great composure in extra time, under serious pressure. We played with the wind in the first half (of extra time) and got a few scores, which was vital. We're thrilled to come out of here with a win today and this game should stand to us ahead of the final next week."

Aoife Donohue was one of



Galway team manager Cathal Murray.

Galway's heroes on the day, and the Mullagh star was delighted for all of her teammates after a titanic contest. "We're all out on our feet after that. It was such a tough battle; Cork are a great team, and it could have gone either way out there. It's a credit to all the girls and the work they've done to come through a test like that. Hopefully, this game will stand to us now going forward. I was lucky enough today [to score 0-4]; the girls got some great ball into me and all I had to do was finish off the scores," she concluded.

Galway: Sarah Healy, S. Dervan, Shauna Healy, T. Kenny, R. Black, E.

Helebert, S. Gardiner, N. McGrath, N. Kilkenny (0-1); C. Dolan (0-12, 0-8 frees, 0-1 '45, 0-1 pen), S. Spellman, A. Donohue (0-4); S. McGrath (1-0), A. O'Reilly, O. McGrath. Subs: C. Finner for O. McGrath (INJ. 11), A.M. Starr for S. McGrath (46), D. Higgins for O'Reilly (54), S. McGrath for N. McGrath (FT), R. Hennelly (0-2, 0-1 '45) for Gardiner (FT), N. McGrath for Spellman (68), O'Reilly for S. McGrath (83).

Cork: A. Lee, E. Murphy, L. Coppinger, M. Cahalane, H. Looney, L. Treacy, L. Hayes (0-1), K. Mackey (0-3), A. Thompson (0-1), C. Sigeron (0-1), O. Cronin (0-4, 0-3 frees), C. O'Sullivan, F. Keating (0-1), A. O'Connor (1-1), L. Collins (0-1). Subs: C. Healy (0-3, 0-2 frees) for Collins (47), I. O'Regan for O'Sullivan (51), S. McCarthy (0-1) for Looney (52), I. Sheehan for Mackey (INJ. HT ET).

Referee: Liz Dempsey (Kilkenny)



## NATIONAL CAMOGIE LEAGUE FINAL

# Galway blow as McGrath ruled out of league final

Galway bidding for sixth league title

EANNA O'REILLY

THE Galway senior camogie team will be striving to turn the tables on All-Ireland champions Kilkenny in the National League final at Croke Park on Sunday evening (7:30pm).

Having come through a titanic struggle with Cork at Nowlan Park last weekend, an even bigger test now awaits Cathal Murray's side in the shape of the Cats. The match is a repeat of last December's All-Ireland final and indeed, a repeat of the last league final to be played, in 2019.

Galway are the last county to lift the National League trophy with that victory over the Cats in March of 2019. The Tribeswomen were victorious on that occasion on a scoreline of 0-16 to 2-8. That win set Galway up for a highly successful

season which culminated in their All-Ireland victory over the same opposition.

With the 2020 league final falling by the wayside due to Covid 19, no county received the trophy last year, leaving Gal-



**WE DON'T WANT TO GO UP TO CROKE PARK ON THE DAY AND LOSE TO THEM AGAIN**

way as the current holders of the National League title. Having gotten the better of Kilkenny twice in 2019, Galway suffered defeat to the Cats in the All-Ireland final last year, in a game which could have gone

either way.

It was Kilkenny's hunger and determination to end their losing streak in All-Ireland finals (having lost the previous three) which propelled them to victory on that occasion.

Very little has separated the counties in recent meetings, with the last four encounters between the sides resulting in two wins each. The average margin of victory in those four games was three points, indicating how evenly matched the two teams are. Sunday's league final is unlikely to be any different, with both sides going unbeaten through their respective campaign's this season.

Brian Dowling's Kilkenny side, however, were certainly less than convincing in their last two outings. The Cats scrapped through a dogged challenge from Limerick in the quarter final, coming away with a three-



Galway's Catherine Finnerty and Ellen Murphy of Cork in a race for possession during Sunday's National Camogie League semi-final at Nowlan Park. PHOTO: INPHO/BRYAN KEANE.

point win. Having trailed the Shannonsiders for most of the game, two late goals from Mary O'Connell and Aoife Doyle rescued the result for Kilkenny. They also had their goalkeeper Aoife Norris to thank for making two excellent saves during the game.

In last Sunday's semi-final, Tipperary dominated the Cats for the majority of the match, only for a late scoring burst from Dowling's side to swing the outcome dramatically. Once again, Kilkenny hit two late goals, this time in the dying minutes, from Denise Gaule and Katie Nolan. Gaule's goal was the result of a poor error from Tipp 'keeper Aine Slatery, which was certainly a slice of luck from a Kilkenny point of view.

Despite those struggles,

Kilkenny are capable of turning on the style on Sunday and will relish the chance to add the league title to their All-Ireland crown. Sunday's match represents a huge challenge for Galway, particularly after they exerted so much energy against Cork in last weekend's extra-time battle.

Galway's biggest casualty from that game was 2020 All-Star winner Orlaith McGrath, who dislocated her right shoulder in the first half. A consistently top-class performer, McGrath is a huge loss to the Galway attack. It remains to be seen if Niamh Hanniffy and Caitriona Cormican will be fit for Sunday's match, but the availability of either of them would be a huge bonus.

Galway manager Cathal Murray was hoping their win over

Cork would stand to them ahead of their Croke Park showdown with the Cats.

"It's great to be in a league final, but it's no good now unless we can go on and win it. It's a final against Kilkenny and we are all about winning it now, to be honest. We don't want to go up to Croke Park on the day and lose to them again. For the players and everyone involved now, it's really important that we go on and win this final and that's what we are aiming for," he concluded.

Whether or not Galway can recover their energy levels sufficiently by Sunday evening may well be the decisive factor in the outcome of this game. If they can, Galway can take advantage of Kilkenny's stuttering form to win their sixth National League title.

## CAMOGIE CHAMPIONSHIP DRAWS

## Galway and Kilkenny set to collide again

EANNA O'REILLY

THE 2021 All-Ireland camogie championship draws has pitted the Galway senior team in Group 3, alongside their opponents in Sunday's league final; Kilkenny. Completing the group group will be Clare and 2019 All-Ireland intermediate winners Westmeath. The championship will get underway on July 24.

Galway will certainly expect to be one of the two teams to qualify for the knockout stages. The Cats will be strongly favoured to qualify with them, and the group clash between the two sides will be an intriguing one. The last championship group encounter between the counties took place on the

opening day of the title race in June of 2019. On that occasion, Kilkenny came to Athenry and defeated the home side on a 1-13 to 0-14 scoreline.

Interestingly, Galway had defeated the Cats in the league final two months prior to that encounter. Of the three meetings between the sides in 2019, the match in Athenry proved to be the least important, with the other two games being finals at Croke Park. Both finals saw Galway take home the silverware.

The championship draw is unlikely to have any effect on Sunday's league final, with a title on the line which both teams will be highly motivated to win. However, it will be interesting to see how the group encounter plays out later this summer. With a strong likeli-



Galway defender Sarah Dervan trying to break past the challenge of Cork's Amy O'Connor at Nowlan Park.

hood of the teams meeting again at the business end of the

in the group game.

Clare will certainly be no pushovers in the group and are capable of mounting a major challenge as Galway learnt in their league meeting with the Banner last month in Athenry. Clare have some talented players, with the likes of Chloe Morey, Laura McMahon, Orlaith Duggan and Eimear Kelly in particular. They also have the inside track on Galway with coach Conor Dolan, having been part of the Galway management for the previous three years.

Having come up from the intermediate ranks in 2019, Westmeath competed impressively in the 2020 All-Ireland senior championship. In their first game last year, the Midlander's upset the odds to

record a famous victory over Limerick. Westmeath went on to acquit themselves well against Kilkenny and Waterford in their subsequent group games. They did experience some poor results in this year's league, however, losing to Kildare and crashing out against Wexford with a 21-point defeat.

The Galway intermediates, meanwhile, were drawn in Group 1, alongside three Leinster counties; Dublin, Meath and Carlow. In their ill-fated championship campaign last Autumn, Galway defeated the Dubs in Pearse Stadium on a 3-19 to 0-5 scoreline. Both teams were subsequently removed from the championship in a controversial move by the Camogie Association.



Goalkeeper Sarah Healy who's ready to help Galway defend their National Camogie League title against Kilkenny at Croke Park on Sunday evening.

# CATS IN THE WAY AGAIN

Galway defend camogie league title in latest clash with Kilkenny ➤ 46

## Healy relishing fans at Croke after 'eerie' 2020 experience

Paul Keane

When Sarah Healy got her hands on the Littlewoods Ireland camogie league trophy in March of 2019, she was still a Leaving Cert student. Six months later, the teenage Galway goalkeeper shut Kilkenny out again at Croke Park in front of nearly 25,000 to add the All-Ireland and finished the season as an All-Star.

"That whole year was like a dream come true," recalled Healy who has endured a very different 18 months or so since.

No crowds, no titles. And the pain of returning to an empty Croke Park last December and losing an All-Ireland final to Kilkenny.

"It was kind of eerie," said Healy of that mid-winter experience. "The match was on late as well, under lights, so it was dark and it was cold and there was nobody there. People say Croke Park is a lonely place when you lose but it's worse when you lose and there's nobody there around you. It was dead quiet."

Galway and Kilkenny will do battle all over again at GAA headquarters on Sunday (7.30pm, RTE Two) and while the experience will be familiar, two great rivals meeting in another national final, the occasion promises to be a one-off.

The game is on the list of government test events for the phased return of supporters to stadiums and up to 5,000 are permitted to attend.

It won't be the 25,000 that Healy played in front of in 2019 but it won't be the dead quiet of last winter either.

"Even for the parents, siblings, it was hell the last year, leaving them at home and you're going off to play the match," she said. "Obviously they'd want to be there but even for us as players as well, just to hear the cheers and to get the atmosphere because



Kilkenny's Miriam Walsh and Galway's Sarah Healy ahead of this weekend's Littlewoods Ireland Camogie Leagues finals at Croke Park. The Division 1 Camogie League final will be shown live on RTE tomorrow at 7.30pm. Picture: Sam Barnes/Sportsfile

there's nothing like a loud crowd in Croke Park so it's great for everyone."

Healy will return to the goals in front of the Hill 16 terrace where she was beaten by a 58th-minute Denise Gaule penalty rocket in December. Galway had fought back to level terms when Katie Nolan was fouled, teeing up Gaule for the penalty heroics. It was the score that won Kilkenny the All-Ireland, though Healy didn't beat herself up about it.

"I'd be proud of myself if I had blocked that one. I don't

think many people would have been able to block it," she said of Gaule's arrowed low shot to the 'keeper's right corner. "I shook it off really, I wouldn't be the type of person to dwell on it. Like I said, it was a well taken penalty so I wouldn't have spent too much time thinking about it."

Still, she wouldn't be human if she didn't allow the R word to creep into her mind in the buildup to tomorrow's rematch.

"I don't know if it's revenge because we've played Kilken-

ny loads in the last couple of years and I'm sure we'll meet them again along the line. There's silverware on the line, that's really what it's about. We're going out to win it."

A win could even pave the way for a repeat of that landmark 2019 campaign.

"We won the league and then we won the All-Ireland and just that whole year, in general, was brilliant but it was 2019, it's two years ago now and we're just trying to move on from that and to get

back there again this year, to try to make up for what we did wrong last year in the final and to improve really, try to have the same success in 2021 as we had in 2019."

Littlewoods Ireland is proud to support both Camogie and Hurling for a 5th year running. The Littlewoods Ireland Camogie League final is live on RTE TV tomorrow at 7.30pm while the Division 2, 3 and 4 finals will be streamed live on LWI GAA Twitter. #StyleOfPlay.





Cork's Cliona Healy fires a shot against Galway last weekend. Picture: INPHO/Bryan Keane

# How ready are Cork a month from the start of the championship?

CORK bowed out of the national league last Sunday, but where are the team ahead of championship, which throws in on July 17?

There are 12 teams, in three groups of four. Of the group winners, two will go into the semi-finals and one to the quarter-finals, along with the group runners-up.

Cork have drawn Waterford, Dublin, and Down. It's not the greatest of groups, but outside of the top four (Tipperary included, after last Sunday's display), there is no serious championship challenge from the other counties. Galway and Kilkenny are again in the same group with Westmeath and Clare and all that's to be determined there is who will finish first or second.

There's always one group where it's all to play for and it's group 1, where you have Tipperary, Wexford, Limerick, and Offaly. You'd imagine Tipp and Limerick to reach the knockout stages, with Tipp favourites to top.

My mindset hasn't changed much from two weeks ago, when I said I was impressed with Cork in the league. Granted, they had played poor teams and it was always going to be when they met Kilkenny or Galway that a true picture would become apparent.

I'm glad they met Galway, and not Kilkenny, last Sunday. I thought Kilkenny were very poor and that they beat Tipp is remarkable. But you have to credit Denise Gaule.

Cork could well have got an inflated opinion had they met Kilkenny in the semi-final. As it was, they met a really tough Galway side and Cork's newcomers will certainly have felt the physical step-up.

Cork's full-back line of Ellen Murphy, Libby Coppinger, and Meabh Cahalane could work; however, plenty more needs to be done.

Orla McGrath's loss through injury in the 11th minute was a blow to Galway. Their forwards played deep, particularly Aoife O'Donoghue, and that suited Cork.

Once O'Donoghue moved to the inside line, in extra time, he swung the game. Granted, Cork would have been tiring, but I did say, last week, that the real test will only come if the opposition play an inside line and directly challenge Cork's defence.

Hannah Looney played a full football game against Donegal the day before and



CAMOGIE  
Linda Mellerick

she must have been shattered. Libby Coppinger and Meabh played 30 minutes and the journey and mental preparation also take a toll. But that's the status with dual players.

Ashling Thompson is working very hard in the middle of the park. Sometimes, that hard work doesn't manifest itself as well as it can.

Ashling can create and score inspirational points from distance, both left or right. She is falling between an attacking and defensive midfield role, and I feel her role could be more specific. Is Ashling to defend and Katrina Mackey to go forward, or is it left to the run of the game?

It's a long time since Cork have had goalscorers like Irene O'Keefe, Fiona O'Driscoll, and Lynn Dunlea. Amy O'Connor has filled the space, scoring brilliant goals in almost every game now. We need more in the mould of Amy, particularly when our scoring boots aren't on further out the field.

I'm not convinced Cork are getting the best from Chloe Sigerson at wing forward. She was consistently outstanding at wing back. It reminds me of Waterford's Austin Gleeson, who never had a defined position, and it nullified his quality at times.

I speak a lot about leadership. It's a key component in the make-up of a player.

Laura Hayes has become a massive part of this Cork team. She is like a seasoned campaigner, despite only being a regular since 2020. She is leading and we need more of that circulating.

We have All-Ireland medals and All-Stars in the team and that needs to be evident. Gemma O'Connor is gone and her presence, on the field, training ground, and in the dressing room, needs to be replaced.

Cork's substitutes did well and that is encouraging for management. Saoirse Noonan took up wing back in place of Hannah Looney, in a new position for her.

From a defender to wing-forward and a forward to wing-back: Maybe, sometimes, it works.



VICTORY DELIGHT: Galway's Ailish O'Reilly, Niamh Hanniffy and Roisin Black celebrate their National Camogie League semi-final win over Cork at Nowlan Park last Sunday.



Kilkenny's Katie Nolan with the PwC GPA Women's Player of the Month Award in camogie for June at St Martin's GAA club, Kilkenny.

# Cats can prevail in repeat of All-Ireland 2020

Allianz Division 3 football final Derry v Offaly, Croke Park 5pm (S. Lonergan, Tipperary) Live 'G4'.

Derry will be all the better for the rest they received from Limerick last weekend. Before that, things had come far too easy for Rory Gallagher's side.

As much as Offaly pushed for this game and will not want to falter in Croke Park with silverware on the line, subconsciously at the very least they must be thinking of the following weekend. John Maughan did argue that the

league was Offaly's Championship this year but there's a traditionalist in everyone and seasoned men in the Faithful group will have as much consideration for the knock-out game as this one. Derry, on the other hand, can go at this close to full throttle. Verdict: Derry.

Allianz Hurling Division 3A. Armagh v Tyrone, Athletic Grounds 2pm (C. McDonald, Antrim).

An improved campaign for Armagh can be finished with a

third win. Verdict: Armagh. Monaghan v Sligo, Grattan Park, Innsikeen 2pm (C. Flynn, Westmeath). Sligo will want to keep their winning run going. Verdict: Sligo.

TOMORROW Littlewoods Ireland NHL Division 1 final: Galway v Kilkenny, Croke Park 7.30pm. Live RTE. There's no question that the throw-in time here is an unusual one regardless of the "maximum

exposure" reason behind it. As Sunday games become less and less attractive to players, there is a welfare matter bringing them to Dublin so late on a Sunday when many have work and possibly exams the following morning. Supporters mightn't be too keen on the time either but then many of the 3,000 permitted to attend will appreciate the opportunity to watch the game in person. Like the ladies football finale, this is a repeat of the 2020 All-Ireland final but both teams will be looking for marked improvements on their

semi-final displays. Yes, semi-finals are only for winning but Kilkenny were fortunate to beat Tipperary while Galway were presented with a stiff challenge by Cork, which required extra time. Another week to recover and Galway would be in prime condition to get one over the 2020 champions but Kilkenny, led by Denise Gaule, can take advantage of their let-off against Tipperary to prevail. Verdict: Kilkenny. Words: John Fogarty



Denise Gaule: Leading Kilkenny against Tipperary tomorrow.





Castle Road at Glen Rovers U14s training. Picture: Jim Coughlan

## Castle Road hosting 2020 deciders with big issues still to be settled

With the season up and running and the 2021 league under way at U12, U14 and U16 levels, a lot of the players' thoughts this year are reverting back to the 2020 finals and one final from 2020.

Many of these young players have waited since October to play these finals as they were fixed for the week that the rug was pulled out of all games.

Now, at long last, they will have their chance to contest a final and it is a credit to the judges, committee and county that they are playing all these games.

Proceedings got underway last night when the first of the finals took place when the U12B final and Castle Lyons played in the U12B plate final. There will be three games in the U12B final today and three in tomorrow.

Proceedings got underway today at 12.30 when the U12B final took place between the U12B champions, Buttevant and Ballyvaughan. They will battle it out to decide the destination of the trophy.

At 1.30pm it's the U16 Premier Plate final and in an all-Ireland final, Eire Og take on their near neighbours in the U16B final.

At 3.30pm it's the Premier Plate final and in an all-Ireland final, Eire Og take on their near neighbours in the U16B final.

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At 3.30pm it's the Premier Plate final and in an all-Ireland final, Eire Og take on their near neighbours in the U16B final.

### CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

of huge disappointment for all the players and mentors.

In advance of the games the board have issued the following guidelines for all clubs, mentors and parents to be aware of.

Total number of people outside of team and mentors at venues will be one hundred.

Each head coming into the pitch will be counted.

Parents are asked to note that children will be counted as a spectator regardless of age.

Clubs have each been allocated tickets for distribution before the games to their supporters.

It is up to each club how they distribute these tickets but again these are only available from clubs and each person entering the grounds must be named by the club - this is to help the board with contact tracing should the need arise.

The dressing rooms will not be available for changing so teams are asked to arrive at the venues ready to play and not to arrive more than forty minutes prior to their game's start time.

This is to allow the exit of other teams who are playing in the previous finals and to minimise congregations, as there will be trophy presentations after each final this is important to keep in mind.

Eight mentors will be allowed with each team and again they must all have a pass to gain entry to the grounds and it is a strict 'no entry' unless they are a holder of a pass.

This is the responsibility of the club to ensure their mentors have their entry passes and club mentors outside of those involved with the participating teams are asked don't come to the gate unless you have a pass.

It's sad that the young participants will not have the big crowds and the excitement usually generated by underage county finals; usually Castle Road is a hub of excitement on day such as these.

We must be thankful that the county board made the decision to ensure these young players got their chance to play their finals and we wish each and every one of the players the best of luck, enjoy the occasion and the buzz that playing in a county final brings.



Amy O'Connor celebrates after scoring against Galway in the National Camogie League Division 1 semi-final.

Picture: Matt Browne/Sportsfile

# Character is a vital element

### CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick

What a thrilling couple of games we had in Nowlan Park last Sunday.

Cork and Galway went to extra time, and I use the word thrilling despite Kilkenny being poor because the excitement in the last fourteen minutes of their clash with Tipperary was edge of your seat stuff.

Tipp were highly impressive from the throw in. They beat Kilkenny easily in the 50/50 battles.

Cait Devane gave Davina Tobin a torrid time of it and Kilkenny persisted with the pairing.

Tobin being one of their best defenders I suppose they had to. And Davina did get on top in the second half.

Tipp were dragging Kilkenny all over the place and with Kilkenny player marking you'd wonder if that game plan was the best strategy.

They were at sixes and sevens, and maybe to hold their back six and drop back their lines might have crowded things out a bit and stopped the onslaught. Kilkenny at the other end were playing deep, it seems to be the norm now to play a two-player full forward line.

Yet when the ball went forward the space did them no good, Tipperary were still winning the runs and Kilkenny didn't score from the eleventh minute to the 31st, a converted penalty by Denise Gaule.

As can happen when teams are playing snappy hurling and lording it over their opponents, the tendency to take too much out of the ball creeps in and that's what Tipp did which led to the penalty.

It was a soft enough penalty, Gaule winning it herself when Aoife McGrath, coming in from the left, spread the hurley across her.

McGrath had pressurised Gaule well and the penalty came against the run of play. That score kept Kilkenny in touch, 0-10 to 1-3 behind at the break, with 1-1 coming from placed balls.



Kilkenny's Aoife Doyle and Mary Ryan of Tipperary.

Picture: INPHO/Bryan Keane

Kilkenny's attacking stats soared in the second half, but they were five points behind with ten minutes remaining.

When the run of play looked as if Tipperary would see it out, you can never underestimate All-Ireland champions.

It takes one moment to turn a game. Gaule's pile driver should have been dealt with by keeper Aine Slattery.

Her attempted catch was a disaster, and it spurred Kilkenny on. From the puck out Katie Nolan finished a second goal and it was hard to believe that it was level on sixty minutes with four minutes additional time called.

With free takers of the calibre of Gaule and Devane discipline was going to be the key factor.

You could physically see the droop in Tipp's shoulders after those two goals, emotionally the energy was sapped out of them. With that came the tiredness and two frees given, won by Gaule, which were duly converted, and it was game over.

"I'll be very honest," said Kilkenny manager Brian Dowling afterwards.

"I didn't see it coming. We were struggling everywhere really. I thought in different patches after half-time we pushed on a little bit, but Tipp got the upper hand on us again.

"The one thing I'll say is these girls have huge character. They don't like losing matches and we just stayed going.

"We found some way to win it today. I don't know how we did it. Players like Denise Gaule really stood up there and were counted, won a few crucial frees. You win the free but then she has to put the ball over the bar as well which showed the leader she is.

"We're disappointed with our performance and last Saturday as well. Limerick deserved to beat us last Saturday and Tipperary were probably the better team today.

"It is the league; we want to keep improving. We know that performance won't be good enough next Sunday night in Croke Park but we're there. We've a lot to learn. It's good to be learning winning rather than losing. The league is about finding out about our players and we're learning a lot.

"There's huge character in this team and maybe that belief has come from winning (the All-Ireland) last year.

"We know we're not playing as well as we're not hitting big scores in games and that's something we need to improve on but another week to go to the league final and we're looking forward to that and then look forward to the championship.



By Mark Gallagher



**V**ERA PAUW was back on her favourite hobby horse this past week following her Ireland side's disappointing performances against Iceland. The women's soccer manager felt that the only way young Irish players would improve was by 'training and playing with boys'.

Miriam Walsh is testament to the benefits of girls mixing with boys on the playing field. When she was growing up, there was no underage camogie in Tullaroan. While some of her friends sought out the nearest club, she played on underage boys teams, hurling in an Under-14 Féile competition along with her cousin, Kilkenny star Pádraig.

'I remember starting at full-forward on that Féile team,' Walsh recalls with a smile. 'I don't know if I was any good or not, I might have been making up the numbers. But I

**'I WAS TOO STUBBORN TO GO OFF AND PLAY WITH ANOTHER CLUB'**

played with the boys right up to U14 and actually for a small bit of U16 too before eventually we got a camogie team going.

'A few of the girls from the local area, they would have gone and played with other clubs that were near us. But I was stubborn. I didn't want to play for another club.'

'I wanted to stay with Tullaroan so I don't think I had a choice but to play with the boys.'

She didn't know any different. Miriam lived next to her cousins, Pádraig and Grace. Hurling matches were organised for the back garden where no quarter was given.

'You can't even describe the battles we used to have in the back garden. They were so competitive, they used to be literally blood, sweat and tears,' Walsh recalled earlier this week.

This evening, she will take her place alongside cousin Grace in the Kilkenny side that faces Galway in the Littlewoods camogie final at Croke Park. She believes those garden scrapes with the boys have helped them both to mature into better players.

'It was girls and boys playing against each other and we would play on the same under-age teams.'

'You were treated as a boy when we were younger and I suppose that has definitely added to our games. Myself and Grace definitely benefited from that.' Pádraig Walsh is now one of the



**STAR IN STRIPES:** Miriam Walsh and Kilkenny face Galway tonight

# Walsh owes her drive to mixing it with the boys

key cogs of Brian Cody's Kilkenny side, slipping seamlessly into the role once played by his brother, the legendary Tommy. He remembers well the battles at the back of the house with Miriam.

'Yeah, when we were growing up, nearly every day, we would be going down to Miriam's house or she would be coming over to ours and we had a fair few battles in the garden. And the girls would be hitting as

hard as we did.' Pádraig is accustomed to the fame and profile that comes with wearing the black and amber around the Marble City.

Camogie lingers in hurling's shadow but he feels that the game is growing, and the latest instalment of the Kilkenny-Galway rivalry tonight will help to grow it more.

'It is great to see the Kilkenny side getting a higher profile, because they certainly deserve it,' he says. 'I saw a stat last week where

one in two saw a hurling match last year and one in five saw a camogie game. So, it is growing and there is more promotion put into it.'

'In the last few weeks, I was able to watch the Kilkenny girls play against Limerick, Offaly and Dublin, games which normally wouldn't be on TV.'

'But they were streamed and it was great to have them on the laptop and be able to text into the family WhatsApp group, because we were all watching the girls playing.'

If there had been a hurling league final, it would also have involved Kilkenny and Galway, and tonight's game could have been part of a double-header, which Pádraig feels would also enhance the profile of camogie. 'I think it would be great



**RECOGNITION:** Pádraig Walsh

for the game, and it would get even more people interested, if there were more of these double-headers. There would be a great buzz and it would give camogie even more recognition.'

Despite the strides made in promotion and marketing, recognition remains a problem. Recent research shows that 89 per cent of the general public didn't know a camogie player – the helmets probably don't help in that regard, an issue that hurling also has to contend with.

'It was mind-blowing, that it was as high as 89 per cent,' Miriam admits. 'It's sad that our own population don't know us as players. But look, Littlewoods Ireland are doing a great job in trying to promote it and hopefully, this time next year, our own population will recognise that bit more.'

'Even the fact that we are getting featured on The Sunday Game, people from around Kilkenny are getting tuned into what we are doing and starting to get behind the camogie team.'

'We train just as hard as the men, so it's important to get that equality as well.'

Rivalries tend to help grow sport and this one between Kilkenny and Galway is evolving into a real humdinger.

With throw-in at 7.30 tonight, Walsh is hopeful that more casual fans will tune in and see what it is

**'IT IS SAD THAT OUR OWN PEOPLE DON'T KNOW US AS PLAYERS'**

all about. 'We have become big rivals over the past few years, and we always have brilliant battles and there will be battles all over the pitch again. And the games between us are always so close that you couldn't pick who is going to win.'

Miriam Walsh has come a long way from the young girl who was hurling with her cousins in the back garden and travelling up to Croke Park to watch her cousin Tommy do his thing in the greatest hurling side to have graced the game, one day dreaming that it would be her.

That dream has long since come true and in front of a few thousand spectators in Croke Park this evening, cousins Miriam and Grace Walsh will be planning to add to the family's glittering medal collection, with the roots of their ambitions nurtured in those back garden battles.

## Dublin retain Division 1 status after Flanagan seals thrilling victory

A POINT from Emma Flanagan as the clocked ticked into the 60th minute, secured a vital 1-11 to 1-10 victory for Dublin over Waterford at St Brendan's Park in Birr, Co Offaly, yesterday.

The win cemented their Division 1 status in the Littlewoods National Camogie League by the narrowest margin, and sent Waterford down in the process.

The Suiisiders hit the front thanks to a super Niamh Rockett point off her left eight minutes from time but they weren't to score

By Daragh Ó Conchúir

again, while Dublin were back on terms almost immediately via a pointed free by the excellent Aisling Maher before Flanagan's heroics grabbed the spoils for Adrian O'Sullivan's crew.

The drama didn't end there however, as Beth Carton had an opportunity to bring the relegation final into extra time but the multiple All-Star, who has been the

Waterford saviour so many times, dragged her strike wide across the face of the posts from a 45m free – and Dublin survived.

While there was never very much between the teams once Waterford had got back on terms after a blistering Dublin start, the winners had only trailed twice in the course of the 64 minutes and probably would have counted themselves unlucky to lose.

Match-winner Flanagan started as she finished, slotting on the run off her left after just 50 seconds. Clara O'Sullivan and Shona

Curran, from long-distance frees, scored points for Waterford – but Maher and Finnegan doing likewise to give Dublin a 1-6 to 1-4 interval advantage.

The physicality was ramped up in the second half, as both sets of players threw everything into the fray and Waterford pushed Dublin all the way until Flanagan's late intervention.

**DUBLIN SCORERS:** A Maher 1-7 (9 pts); E Flanagan 1-2, K Finnegan 0-2  
**WATERFORD SCORERS:** B Carton 0-6 (6 pts); V Falconer 1-0; N Hooker 0-1; A Flynn, C O'Sullivan, S Curran (0-0 each).





Kilkenny's Melghan Farrell lifts the trophy after victory over Galway in yesterday's Littlewoods Ireland Camogie League Division 1 final in Croke Park last night. Picture: Inpho/Ryan Byrne

#### DIVISION 1 FINAL

**KILKENNY** 1-18  
**GALWAY** 1-15

By DARAGH Ó CONCHÚIR

**K**ILKENNY overcame another poor first-half performance by rocking Galway with a goal and five points straight after half-time to add the Littlewoods Ireland Camogie League Division 1 title to the All-Ireland they banked against the same opposition.

The teams provided an enthralling encounter that ebbed and flowed in Croke Park, but it was Kilkenny that were able to find another gear when it mattered most.

Even in the dying minutes, after Galway had managed to recover from the shock of that third-quarter blitzing to draw themselves level in the first minute of injury time, their rivals responded immediately through a wonderful Steffi Fitzgerald score and further points from a Denise Gaule free and Mary O'Connell left them three ahead at the final whistle.

It was an open affair, with Galway starting with Aoife Donohue in the full-forward line and Galway were clearly keen to run at a Kilkenny defence that had been troubled by both Limerick and Tipperary in the quarter- and semi-finals respectively.

But the Cats attack had caused Galway plenty of problems in the All-Ireland final last December and gave a number of reminders of that in the opening quarter especially.

Indeed they had the better of the opening exchanges, finding space a little more easily, and though Carrie Dolan shot the first of her seven first-half points early on, Katie Nolan and Grace Walsh, venturing forward to take a pass off the shoulder from Miriam Walsh edged Brian Dowling's team in front.

Donohue levelled after a trademark Niamh Kilkenny run but two more Dolan scores, including one from play, either side of Nolan's second point had Galway in front 0-4 to 0-3 at the first water break.

Sarah Spellman and Catherine Finnerty were exerting a greater influence in the Galway attack and

Hunted down: Kilkenny's Michaela Kenneally offloads under pressure; (below) winning captain Melghan Farrell lifts the cup INPHO



# Cats claw their way to victory

## Galway are beaten again in League decider

while Siobhán McGrath wasn't on the scoresheet, she was causing concern with her direct running.

A number of Galway frees came from such forays and Dolan put the majority of them over, although there were a couple that went astray.

Denise Gaule brought the sides back to parity but it was Galway on top for the last 10 minutes of the half, Niamh McGrath raising a white flag and Dolan supplementing her tally with three points to put four between them.

It could have been even better for Cathal

Murray's crew but Meighan Farrell got a brilliant hook on Dolan to force a mis-hit shot that was deflected away by Kilkenny goalie Aoife Norris, four minutes from the break.

Aoife Doyle did split the posts from an almost impossible position for Kilkenny to leave it 0-9 to 0-6 at the change of ends, and the Noreiders certainly with more to work on. Not for the first time, they resumed in blistering fashion, and while they were aided by a strengthening wind, there was a considerable step up in application and intent.

Remarkably, they turned that three-point deficit into a five-point advantage.

O'Connell shot her first point immediately after the resumption but it was Aoife Doyle's sensa-

tional score that provided the real lift as she picked the sliotar up on the 40 and drove forward with coruscating pace before blasting an unstoppable shot to the roof of the net.

She had a point soon after, after good work by Miriam Walsh, Gaule added another monster score from outside the 65 and when Michaela Kenneally and O'Connell did the business, it was 1-11 to 0-9.

Galway showed their mettle, however, and did not quit with Kilkenny leading the resistance, her brilliant 40th minute goal ensuring an exciting finale.

The Tribeswomen kept chiselling away at the deficit and it was Donohue that finally brought them level, though she had a runner on her inside who might

have been in on goal had she seen her.

The Cats won the next ball however, Fitzgerald fetched and drove over brilliantly and they built on that to claim the silverware.

**GALWAY:** Sarah Healy, T Kenny (D Higgins 37), S Dervan, Shauna Healy, S Gardiner, E Helebert (C Cormican 42), R Black, N McGrath, N Kilkenny, C Dolan, C Finnerty (A M Starr 46), S Spellman, A O'Reilly (N Hanniffy 54), A Donohue, S McGrath.  
**Scorers:** C Dolan 0-10 (8fs), N Kilkenny 1-1, A Donohue 0-2, N McGrath, S McGrath 0-1 each.

**KILKENNY:** A Norris, C Dormer, D Tobin, M Teehan, K Doyle (M Bambrick 59), M Farrell, G Walsh, A Prendergast (L Murphy 37), N Deely, D Gaule, M Kenneally (K Power 51), M O'Connell, A Doyle, M Walsh (S Fitzgerald 48), K Nolan.  
**Scorers:** D Gaule 0-6 (5fs), A Doyle 1-2, K Nolan, M O'Connell 0-3, G Walsh, N Deely, M Kenneally, S Fitzgerald 0-1 each.  
Referee: Justin Heffernan (Wexford).



# Bal are crowned county champions

BRILLIANT Ballinascarthy were crowned 2020 county U16B camogie champions after a tour-de-force performance in the final at Castle Road last Saturday.

With just 15 players available and despite carrying some injuries, this talented Bal team convincingly beat Buttevant by 9-9 to 0-2 to bring the cup back to Ballinascarthy.

This panel of Bal players, the majority of whom have played together since U8, had previously lost two county finals by a single point over the last number of years.

Determined not to be on the losing side, they started in very impressive fashion with a Maeve Kingston goal in the first minute followed with superb goalkeeping by Ella Kingston keeping Buttevant from scoring, before goals from Emma Galvin, Siofra Pattwell and Maeve Kingston allowed Ballinascarthy build a healthy lead at half time.

Millie Condon was her usual industrious self, providing the ammunition to the forwards. It must also be said that Michelle O'Driscoll and Rachel Cahalane both deserve special mention for their hard work, tenacity and overall attitude that epitomises this talented team.

In the first half, Maeve King-



The Ballinascarthy team that won the county final. Back from left, Imelda Cahalane (mentor), Michael Pattwell (manager), Elaine Galvin (coach), Mischa Pattwell, Jane Twomey, Kate Ryan, Emma Galvin, Ella Kingston, Michelle O'Driscoll, Ella Cullinane (captain), Maeve Kingston, Muireann Fadian, Siofra Pattwell, Rachel Cahalane, Mairéad Galvin (coach) and Aidan Cahalane (coach). Front, from left, Nicole Prochniak, Aoife Kingston, Shauna O'Driscoll, Ciara Heverin, Aoibhinn Ryan, Grace Flynn, Millie Condon and Ella Cahalane.

ston scored 3-2 and Emma Galvin racked up 3-1, while Siofra Pattwell (1-2), Millie Condon (0-2) and Shauna O'Driscoll (0-1) were all on target. In the second half, Muireann Fadian and Maeve Kingston added further goals, and Siofra Pattwell tagged on another point to their impressive final tally.

The Bal management includes Michael Pattwell, Aidan Cahalane, Mairéad Galvin and

Elaine Galvin.

'I have been involved with training this bunch of girls over the past number of years, since they were all very small, alongside Michael Pattwell, Aidan Cahalane and Mairéad Galvin,' Elaine Galvin explained.

'Something all four of us would agree on, without a doubt, is what an amazing bunch of girls we have. Every one of them is an essential asset

to the team with not only their outstanding camogie skills, but also their unwavering team spirit and positive attitudes.'

'They have come through what was undoubtedly a strange and difficult season to not only make it to their county final and play it so long after the last match of the season, but to come out with a win like this one I believe is a true show of the skill and dedication these

girls possess for the game.

'A victory like this will be a memory the entire team will hold on to forever, and proves that only more great things are yet to come.'

Ballinascarthy Camogie Club would like to say a special word of thanks to Justin Galvin for sponsoring the Finbarr Galvin Ltd jerseys for this team. Justin's wife Mairéad played camogie in her younger days

with Ballinascarthy, and so did Elaine, and both are now coaching this very talented U16 team.

The Ballinascarthy team as follows: Ella Kingston, El Cahalane, Kate Ryan, Aoibhinn Ryan, Maeve Kingston, El Cullinane (captain), Ciara Heverin, Millie Condon, Michelle O'Driscoll, Shauna O'Driscoll, Muireann Fadian, Emma Galvin, Rachel Cahalane, Grace Flynn and Siofra Pattwell.

# Barryroe crowned county U14 camogie champions

BRILLIANT Barryroe were crowned county U14B Cup camogie champions after a terrific 5-6 to 3-3 victory in the final against St Fanahan's at Castle Road on Sunday.

In this delayed 2020 decider, it was St Fanahan's, playing with the wind in the first half, who had the better start and led by two points at the first water break. Barryroe's response was impressive, as goals from Emma Collins and Lucy Kirby gave the Carbery team a three-point lead at half time. While Barryroe had more possession in the opening half, the St Fanahan's goalkeeper pulled off a number of excellent saves.

In a roller-coaster game, St Fanahan's started the second half in determined fashion with a key moment being Denise Fleming's goal-line block from a 20-metre free. Barryroe's lead was reduced to one point by the second water break, but coming down the home straight Barryroe came into their own



The talented Barryroe camogie team that won the U14B Cup final against St Fanahan's last Sunday.

and reeled off an unanswered 2-2 in the last quarter.

Clardha McCarthy and Sarah Harte excelled at midfield while Ellen O'Donovan, Maeve O'Sullivan and Mia O'Driscoll kept the speedy St Fanahan's forwards at bay and were ably

supported by Jill McCarthy and Caoimhne Ni Bhuachalla.

In the forwards Emma Collins scored three goals, super sub Lucy Kirby came on to score 1-1 while Aimy Marot, Rianna Collins, Olive O'Flynn and Aoibhinn McKeogh fought for

every ball. Captain Mia O'Driscoll accepted the cup.

On the return to Barryroe there was a parade of cars through the parish covering Butlerstown, Lisle, Lislevane, Grange and Courtmacsherry where the locals came out in

force to congratulate these local heroes. The victorious Barryroe squad included Saoirse Whelton, Denise Fleming, Ellen O'Donovan, Jill McCarthy, Meabh O'Sullivan (0-2), Caoimhne Ni Bhuachalla, Mia O'Driscoll (captain), Sarah

Harte (1-0), Clardha McCarthy (0-3), Aoibhinn McKeogh, Emma Collins (3-0), Olive O'Flynn, Aimy Marot, Rianna Collins, Loren Hitz, Alanna Sexton, Lucy Kirby (1-1), Rachel Flynn, Lola O'Donnell, Or Ryan and Ella McSweeney.



Courcy Rovers won the Munster camogie senior title against Limerick last weekend. Some of the players were (from left): Saoirse McCarthy, captain Linda Collins and Fiona Keating.





Cork's Ashling Thompson and Tipperary's Sarah Fryday and Cait Devane in action during the Munster Senior Camogie Championship semi-final at Páirc Uí Rinn. Picture: Jim Coughlan

# Paudie unhappy with middle part of game

CORK manager Paudie Murray was smiling as he emerged from Cork's dressing room on Sunday evening having reached the Munster final after defeating Tipperary.

Why was he so happy?  
"The first 15 and the last 15 minutes were outstanding," Murray said.

"But it was a mixed bag in between. We lost our shape in between, probably retreated back, much similar to the All-Ireland semi-final last year, and drew Tipp on us rather than going at them the whole time.

"We had three other chances of goals that we should have taken, and we'd have been out of sight, so some good, some bad points from the game."

Leading 2-5 to 0-3, 18 minutes in, Cork did lose their shape, Tipp hitting the next six points, four from play.

## CAMOGIE

■ Linda Mellerick

From there the game was a battle until the last quarter where Cork resumed the fast-attacking style of play that saw them dominate the first quarter.

"I think we changed a few things. Hannah coming on midfield gave us a massive lift.

### Lift

"Mackey going into full-forward gave us a massive lift there, Amy moving out. So, the couple of switches we made worked a treat for us and really brought us back into a game where at one stage you could have feared the

worst and you look at the positives — we showed good character, this was a good game for us.

"It would have been worse if we had won the game by 20 points and not learn anything.

"The few positional changes will give us things to think about over the next few days as to what way we line up for Limerick."

There are plenty of options for Cork arising from the league campaign and this Munster Championship win.

"We were down a few and it gave us the opportunity tonight to look at a few more.

"We're going away tonight saying that they're up to playing at this level so again that's very, very good.

"I thought Katrina's movement at full-forward was outstanding so that's

another thing that will put us thinking."

Katrina Mackey is another who likes to hit the net, alongside Amy O'Connor, and that could be a good combination for the rest of the year.

"It certainly gives us other options. I think the other player that should be mentioned is Fiona Keating.

"She was outstanding at centre-forward, to hold Karen Kennedy to the level of possessions she had was very good and then to hit three points on top of it.

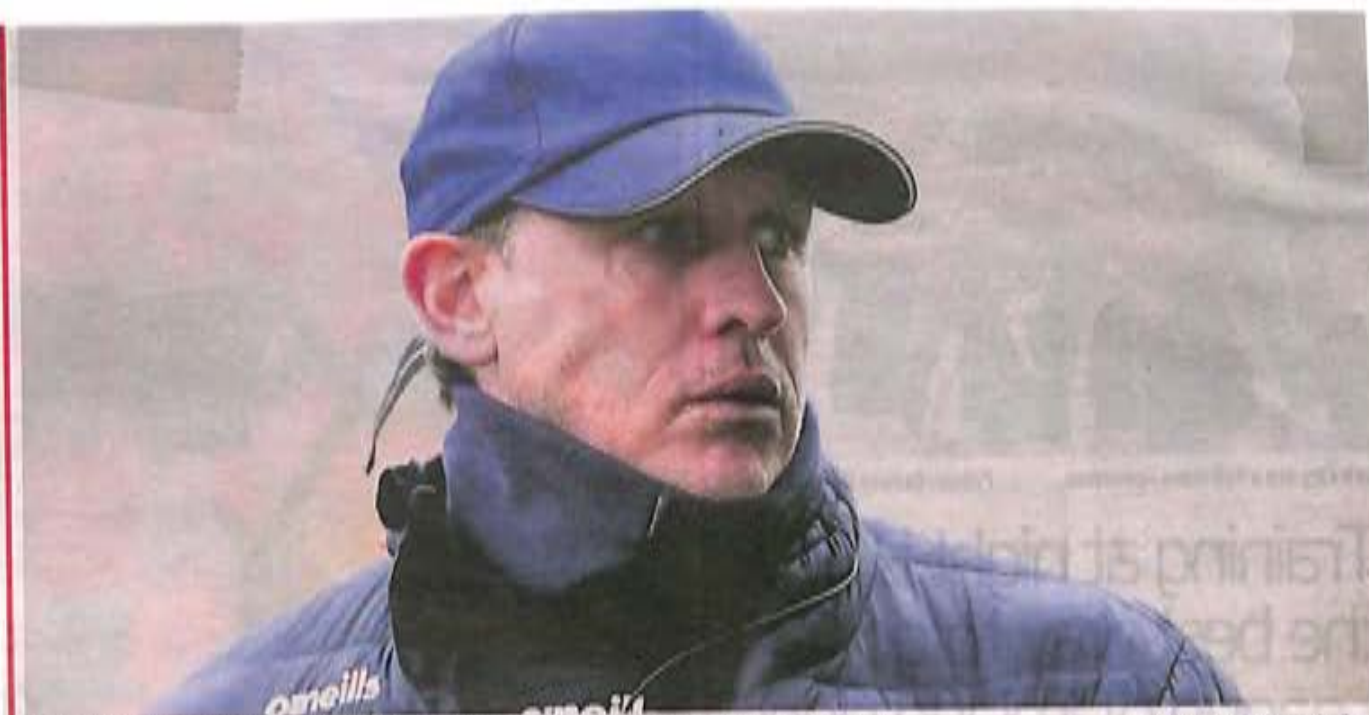
"So, look, we're going away tonight having learned a lot.

"One part of me is saying we should have been out of sight after 15 minutes but then another is saying would we have learned what we did if that had been the case?"



The Bandon camogie junior ladies team posed out in their Copper Grove-sponsored jerseys for their Carbery League match against Clonakilty.





Cork camogie manager Paudie Murray's team face Tipperary in a semi-final dash on Sunday.

Picture: ©INPHO/Laszlo Geczo

# Tipp continue to rise to challenge of the top three



CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick

**SUNDAY: Munster Senior Championship semi-final: Cork v Tipperary, Páirc Uí Rinn, 7.15pm.**

FOUR weeks ago, the prospect of Cork playing Tipperary in a Munster semi-final wasn't the most appealing of fixtures.

Cork had played Tipp in their opening group league fixture in Páirc Uí Chaoimh mid-May, winning 3-14 to 0-16.

The game as a challenge was over long before that, with Tipp finishing strongly with five points on the bounce to bring a more respectable finish to the game.

A short few weeks ago Tipperary looked like they had so much work to do, any serious challenge to the top three of Kilkenny, Galway, and Cork seemingly just a dream.

But their performance against Kilkenny in the league semi-final was like looking at a different side. The confidence with which they played in Nowlan Park certainly made me sit up.

Their physicality was impressive. They look like they spent the entire winter working on their strength and conditioning and it only suddenly displayed itself.

They beat Kilkenny easily in the 50/50 battles, in the opening half in particular, and they dragged Kilkenny all over the field.

Cait Devane and Clodagh McIntyre played a two-player full forward line and Devane ran riot in the open space.

They competently managed Kilkenny's tendency to run at goal by smothering them as Tipp were spreading more and picking off points from distance.

Despite Kilkenny attacking the game with all they had in the second half, Tipp



Tipperary manager Bill Mullaney acknowledged the strides his team have made.

Picture: Laszlo Geczo, Inpho

were keeping a steady distance. What was disappointing for them was that they led by five with under 10 minutes remaining and lost the game.

It was a hard pill to swallow but another lesson learned.

Manager Bill Mullaney was obviously hugely disappointed after the game but acknowledged the strides his team were making.

"I can't find too much fault with anything around the field," Mullaney said. "They gave everything, they committed to everything, they ran at everything, they worked at everything, from the no 1 all the way up to no 15 and the players that came in as well. Absolutely tremendous stuff."

"I thought we were impressive going forward. We put up 19 scores. And not to come away ... we might have made a couple of mistakes but who doesn't? We just got punished for them and that was the difference in the end."

"If I was to be honest I would say we were the better team over 60 minutes, but

we didn't get the result. And that often happens in hurling or camogie.

"That's the love-hate relationship with the game. Today now, we're on the hatred side of it, that we didn't get the result. We are sickened, we're gutted and devastated but we're here."

"There's no such thing as hard luck anymore. You've to make your own luck and we didn't. That's it."

"We're experienced now. We've been around. We're improving. We have to improve another small bit and keep going but it's in us. I think if we get one, we'll be a few, but it's getting that one."

"I think last year, if we'd got to play the final (Tipp had qualified before the league was cancelled due to Covid), even if we'd lost it, it would have crowned us, and we'd have turned another corner."

"But our ladies today were absolutely fabulous. They left everything on the field. And if you lose after leaving everything on the field, you can't complain."

"The belief is there. They'll be devastated for a week but they're all athletes, they know the give and take of this, and they'll get back around themselves."

I think Tipp need a really strong performance against Cork on Sunday and I hope they bring it to the table, not just for themselves but Cork could do with another tough game.

Paudie Murray spoke before their league semi-final against Galway that they were playing the best team in the country. Well Kilkenny put paid to that thought last weekend after a thrilling second half display.

That puts Cork in third position for the championship, a place they won't worry about too much at this juncture in the season but with a weakish championship group, despite analysts building them up, Sunday is a game they'll want a real test from with championship throwing in the weekend of July 17.

Cork have yet to settle on a starting championship 15 with two or three positions still up for grabs.

## Enniskeane to meet Douglas in opening championship tie

### 2021 SENIOR CAMOGIE

BY KIERAN MCCARTHY

ENNISKEANE will begin life in the county senior camogie championship with a round-two tie against 2020 semi-finalists Douglas.

County intermediate champions last season, Enniskeane will campaign in the senior ranks for the first time this year as they mix it with the big names of Cork camogie. It's a tough opening tie against the city side who lost the 2020 semi-final to eventual champions Courcy Rovers, but did dethrone Sarsfields along the way.

Courcys, meanwhile, begin the defence of their crown in round two against Ballincollig, and it will be interesting to see if Courcys can build on their magnificent 2020 season. They've gone from challengers to champions, and now they are the team that everyone else wants to beat.

There is plenty of local interest, again, in this year's senior championship and Newcestown, 2019 intermediate champions and who played three games in last year's maiden senior campaign, must wait a little longer to see who their round-two opposition is. Newcestown play the winner of the round one game between Sarsfields and Milford.

It's great, too, to see that the Carbery divisional side is back this season, having taken a break last year because of Covid and the demands on its club players during a shortened club window. Carbery, now minus its Enniskeane contingent, take on another divisional side, Muskerry, in round two.

In all, there are 19 teams in the senior championship. There is a back-door for the losing teams in round two, who will be joined in the losers' round by the loser of the round-one game between Sarsfields and Milford.

**The senior camogie championship draw is:**

Round 1 – Sarsfields v Milford.  
Round 2 – A. Newcestown v Winner of Round 1; B. Imokilly v Ballygarvan; C. Douglas v Enniskeane; D. Glen Rovers v Eire Óg; E. Ballincollig v Courcy Rovers; F. Seandun v St Catherines; G.

Inniscarra v St Finbarr's; H. Cloughduv v Killeagh; I. Muskerry v Carbery.

Elsewhere, in the county intermediate camogie championship, Clonakilty will take on Valley Rovers in the opening round, while Kilbrittain Timoleague meet Aghabullogue, who lost the 2020 decider to Enniskeane.

**Intermediate Championship:** Round 1 – A. Ballyhea v Watergrasshill; B. Brian Dillon v Na Piaras; C. Newtownshandrum v Carrigaline; D. Blackrock v Fr O'Neills; E. Clonakilty v Valley Rovers; F. Aghabullogue v Kilbrittain Timoleague.

**Junior A Championship:** Round 1 – A. Slabh Rua v Charleville; B. Ballinora v Tracton; C. St Vincent's v Castlelyons; D. Ballinhassig v Mallow; E. Barter v Sarsfields 2; F. Cloughduv 2 v Ballinascorthy.

**Junior B Championship:** Round 1 – A. Youghal v I. O'Neills 2; B. Blarney v Ballincollig 2; C. Millstreet v Bishopstown; D. Courcy Rovers 2 v Cobh; E. Inniscarra 2 v Rockban; F. Barryroe v Bric Rovers; G. Aghada v Killeagh.

**Junior C Championship:** Round 1 – A. Aghabullogue 3 v Kilbree; B. Castlelyons 2 v K. worth; C. Kinsale v Midleton; D. Castlemartyr v Buttevar; E. Cobh 2 v Carrigrohilly; F. Fanhans v Laochra Óg.

**Junior 13-a-side:** Group – Erins Own, Aghada 2, Ner Rangers, St Colum's; Group – Tracton 2, Grenagh, Durourney.

**Junior B second teams:** Inniscarra 3 v Glen Rovers; B. Clonakilty 2 v Brian Dillon; C. St Catherines 2 v Slabh Rua 2; D. Na Piaras 2 v Finbarrs 2; E. Douglas 2 v Enniskeane 2; F. Valley Rovers 2 v Newcestown 2; G. Kilbrittain/Timoleague 2 v Aghabullogue 2; H. Blackrock v Sarsfields 3; I. Newtownshandrum 2 v Eire Óg.



Cork camogie star Orla Cronin will be a key player for Enniskeane as they join the senior ranks for the first time.





Newtownshandrum's Aoife Twohill breaks from Na Piarsaigh's Emily Buckley during the Cork camogie Junior 'A' championship final at Castle Road. Picture: Eddie O'Hare

## Cork U16 side target top spot with difficult test against Waterford

ROUND three of the Tesco All-Ireland U16 championship will see Cork travel to WIT tomorrow (Sunday) for a meeting with the home side at 2pm.

Cork opened their campaign with a superb 6-15 to 2-12 victory over Tipperary but Tipperary bounced back to get their campaign back on track with a 1-15 to 1-8 win over Waterford in round two.

With two teams going forward to the latter stages both Cork and Tipperary are now safe, but the push will be on to secure the top spot and maybe grab one of the two semi-finals places on offer.

There are three groups of three and the top two in each group will advance with two of the top teams going to the semi-finals and one of the top teams will be drawn to join the three runners up in the quarter-finals.

In group one, Dublin and Kilkenny meet in Kilkenny and both are also safely through as both beat Wexford in their opening games. In group two, Galway travel to Clare, already Galway have a win under their belts overcoming Limerick in round one.

Limerick defeated Clare in their opening game so a win for Clare would see all three sides on equal points but Galway will be favoured to be too strong for Clare and it would be expected that themselves and Limerick advance.

Cork turned in a superb display as they overpowered Tipperary, the visitors made the early running but once Cork settled they picked off their scores and showed huge composure.

In attack, Fiona Twohill was hugely influential as was Emily O'Donoghue, Grainne O'Mahony, Caoimhe Sheehan, and Shauna Sheehan.

In defence, Cork dealt with anything Tipperary threw at them but no doubt they will, as the weeks progress, receive stronger challenges.

Hayleigh Acheson, Alannah McNulty, Katie O'Neill, Clara Sherlock and Ava Fitzpatrick will lead the Waterford challenge and manager Dave Acheson and Colin Brehony will be looking for a big performance to keep the Waterford hopes alive.

This weekend sees the Munster championship at senior and junior levels taking place and with the provincial competitions played on a separate basis to the All-Ireland

### CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

championship it's a chance for the senior management to maybe give some of their fringe player's game time.

For the Cork Junior squad it's the one competition they participate in as Cork participate at Senior and Intermediate All-Ireland level this is the only opportunity to wear a county jersey most of these girls will get.

Cork head to Lixnaw this evening for a 7pm start against a Kerry side that had a preliminary round game against Limerick last weekend and they recorded a 0-16 to 1-6 victory.

Most of this Kerry side will have participated on the Division two sides that did so well in the national league where they finished on level points with Cork and Galway but lost out narrowly on qualifying for a quarter final spot on scoring difference.

This was a huge step up for Kerry but they handled it with huge confidence as they recorded victories over a strong Galway side before defeating Tipperary.

They are hugely experienced and growing in confidence with every game Patrice Diggin continues to be their stand out performer and last weekend she contributed twelve points of their total from both frees and play.

They have excellent performers in Aoife Fitzgerald, Elaine Ryall and Laura Collins whilst they also welcomed back Sara Murphy to their panel for last weekend's encounter.

The Cork side will be captained by Aoife Twohill from county junior champions Newtownshandrum and the panel includes Lorraine Collins, Christine O'Neill, Courtney O'Keeffe, Fiona Nelligan, Lucy Wallace and Eimear Hurley.

It will be a big task for Cork as they take on a strong Kerry side but with a lot of experience in their line out they will put up strong resistance as they bid for a place in the final.

The first of this year's U14 development games with two Cork teams playing Limerick in Castle Rd at 11am and 12.45 today (Saturday) 26th also today the third Cork U14 development squad are away to Waterford.



Kilkenny's Davina Tobin and Niamh Kilkenny of Galway in action at Croke Park.

Picture: INPHO/Ryan Byrne

# Cats swing it after thriller

### CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick

AFTER a fairly flat opening half in the Littlewoods national league final between Kilkenny and Galway, we had an enthralling second 30 minutes in Croke Park last Sunday.

Tenacity, brilliant scores, resilience, and belief were the hallmarks of a second half that ebbed and flowed.

Trailing 0-9 to 0-6 at half time it was incredible to see Kilkenny lead 1-10 to 0-9 seven minutes after the restart, a seven-point swing. Where did Galway's midfield go? They completely lost their shape.

Niamh Kilkenny had a quiet semi-final and it looked as if that was going to repeat itself, but she sprung into the game to stop the Kilkenny onslaught with a good goal. Kilkenny were in possession, lost the ball and it brought Galway back into the fray. Mary O'Connell hit a point. A wayward pass by the goal getter could have given Galway a point which would have brought it down to one. As it was Denise Gaule won a free from the lost possession and slotted it over to give Kilkenny a three-point advantage again.

It was nip and tuck when on fifty-one minutes Aoife Donoghue has options to pass inside which could have led to a Galway goal. Instead, a free was won and Carrie Dolan made it 1-14 to 1-12.

Kilkenny goalkeeper Aoife Norris won the player of the match accolade. It's always encouraging for a losing team when the opposition's keeper wins that. It seals the fact that you had chances. Norris narrowed the angle well on 56 minutes to deny a goal which would have given Galway the lead and if they had got their nose back in front who knows what the outcome could have been. Kilkenny responded with a point, a four-point swing. Little moments, small margins.

I've been impressed with substitutions that all teams have brought on from the semi-finals through to the final. Steffi Fitzgerald's brilliant point showed in-



Fans socially distanced in the stands at the camogie league final.

Picture: INPHO/Ryan Byrne

credible calm and confidence to give Kilkenny the lead two minutes into additional time, and it was the way she took the score more so that it gave her side the minimum of leads, that led you to believe Kilkenny were going to win this game.

When pressure is on, and the clock is ticking, you need composure. Galway had possession in defence. Siobhan Gardiner had space and was driving out. Good distribution could have given Galway one last chance to bring the game to a replay. In front of the posts, she caught the ball three times and with it Kilkenny were crowned league champions.

Collette Dormer, who had missed the semi-final through injury, made a huge difference to the Kilkenny defence. Despite the fact that Brian Dowling himself said that both Limerick and Tipperary should have beaten them on their way to the final, Niamh Kilkenny's goal was the only goal Kilkenny conceded in the league.

Is that tremendous defending or a sign of how the game is focusing more on scoring from distance? 1-18 to 1-15 was good scoring in a final where the first half was cagey. Galway again brought an incredible work rate and intensity to their game. They needed to maintain it.

Instead, they completely lost their way after half-time for too long and it cost them. It was often the case in the past with Galway that they couldn't see games out when in the driving seat. That trait had left them and while half-time certainly couldn't be classed as being in the driving seat, they will need to ensure they have the psychological ability to dig their heels in, they still had chances and that will encourage them.

I thought Justin Heffernan from Wexford did an okay job. Catherine Finnerty had every right to feel aggrieved when a strike forced the hurley out of her hand and a free was given against her for dropping it. That's happening too often. I mentioned a year ago that it was causing issues, teams were discretely pulling hurley from hand. Finnerty got a wallop on her hand so don't know how that wasn't caught.

These two sides will meet again in the group championship stage in a few weeks' time. They know each other inside out.

Cork play Tipperary tomorrow in Páirc Uí Chaoimh in the Munster semi-final. It's not a competition anyone really cares about winning anymore but it's a game both sides will want a strong challenge from.





## MUNSTER SENIOR CAMOGIE CHAMPIONSHIP Cork v Tipperary



BY NOEL HORGAN

WHILE describing Cork's performance as a 'mixed bag', manager Paudie Murray still felt there were a lot of positives to be taken from the win over Tipperary.

He said the game was a very useful test in the lead-up to the All-Ireland championship, and he was encouraged by the way the team responded when their backs were to the wall midway through the second half.

Making the point that, for a number of reasons, Cork didn't field at full-strength, he was grateful for the opportunity to run the rule over a few fringe players, and he was happy enough with the way they showed up.

'We still have a lot of work to do, there is no question about that, but this was good preparation for the All-Ireland, and we're out again now against Limerick on Saturday night, which is going to be another tough match,' Murray said.

'That's what we expected from Tipp coming in tonight, but our first 15 minutes were excellent, and we were so dominant you'd think we might have the game wrapped up before half-time.

'When you have three goal chances and you fail to take any of them, you are leaving the door open for the opposition to get back in, and it was disappointing we lost our shape a little in the second quarter,' he admitted.

Murray was quick to dismiss the idea that Tipp's slow start might have been because they



# Murray wary of 'tricky' Treaty test

Cork face Limerick in Munster final on Saturday night

'Bringing Hannah on at midfield gave us a huge lift' - Paudie Murray

that happened in this one.'

Murray stressed it was a good day at the office for Cork overall, notwithstanding the fact that losing their shape the way they did was a bit of a worry.

'It's something we need to work on, but at the moment I'm reasonably happy with how we're fixed as the All-Ireland championship draws near, and we expect the Munster final against Limerick to be another worthwhile exercise.

'Limerick did well against Kilkenny (in the league quarter-final), they were extremely competitive, and they appear to be going great guns under a new management team. It's going to be a tricky assignment for us, but it's one we're looking forward to, and the hope is we'll show some improvement on what we produced against Tipp tonight,' he concluded.

were a bit overawed by the task of taking on Cork, referring to their achievement in running All-Ireland champions Kilkenny to three points in the league semi-final.

'Tipp are a top four team at this stage, and they certainly weren't slow out of the blocks when they met Kilkenny, so there's no way they'd have been overawed by Cork,' the Cork boss said.

'We just played very well in the first-quarter, I thought our

shape and our movement was excellent, and the message to the players at half time was to go back out and perform the way they had been instructed beforehand.

'We got it hot and heavy for long parts of the game,' Murray acknowledged, adding that it wasn't until substitute Hannah Looney scored their third goal with about ten minutes to go that the match swung firmly back in their favour.

'Bringing Hannah on at mid-

field gave us a huge lift, and I thought we were excellent again in the closing stages.

'There was only a point in it at one stage in the second half, but to have to cope under pressure is a healthy thing going forward, it helps to build character within a team, and it was pleasing to see the players stick at it until the final whistle tonight.

'These games are almost always going to be close, but the space usually opens up towards

the end, and, thankfully, we made the most of it when



Dual star Hannah Looney made a difference when she came on.

## Goals key as Rebels book Munster final spot

CORK 4-13  
TIPPERARY 0-16

NOEL HORGAN REPORTS

THEY looked a class above Tipperary for the first 20 minutes, and they won decisively in the end, but there's no denying Cork were sternly tested in the Munster senior camogie championship semi-final at Páirc Uí Rinn last Sunday evening.

They were certainly under pressure midway through the second half when the up-and-coming Tipp side had trimmed an eight-point deficit to the minimum and were playing well enough to suggest they'd go on to take the spoils.

That Cork got back on track owed much to the introduction of Hannah Looney at midfield, while the management's decision to switch Katrina Mackey from there to the full-forward line also paid off handsomely in the closing stages.

Her involvement with the Cork ladies footballers in the

Division 1 league final the previous night was the reason why Looney didn't start, as was also the case for selected corner-back Meabh Cahalane, while ace attacker Orla Cronin was rested due to a niggling injury.

It seemed as if Cork would be well-equipped to make light of that trio's absence after they hit the ground running, with a well-taken goal by Ciara O'Sullivan inside a minute giving

them a tonic start.

Amy O'Connor bagged another to make it 2-1 to 0-1 in the ninth minute, and they could

have had three more before the break but for the heroics of Tipp goalkeeper Caoimhe Bourke, who denied

Chloe Sigerson, O'Connor and Izzy O'Regan in turn.

As it was, Cork led by 2-5 to 0-3 with 18 minutes gone, and they appeared to hold all the aces, not least in the half-back line where Saoirse McCarthy, Laura Treacy and Laura Hayes excelled.

After Grace O'Brien posted Tipp's first score from play in the 23rd minute, however, the visitors became a transformed team,

Cork forward Fiona Keating scored 0-3 against Tipperary.

tacking on four more points before hard-working Cork centre-forward Fiona Keating broke the sequence to leave the Rebels 2-6 to 0-9 in front at the interval.

Saoirse McCarthy, with a fine point from distance, drew first blood for Cork on the turnover, and Amy O'Connor - who didn't have things all her own way against Tipp's All-Star full-back Mary Ryan - showed her quality with a quick brace in the third-quarter.

Still, Tipp, just a point adrift, 2-9 to 0-14, approaching the last ten minutes, continued to shape up promisingly until Hannah Looney was sprung from the bench to remedy Cork's obvious problems at midfield.

Fittingly, Looney, fed by Katrina Mackey, bagged the goal that pushed Cork 3-10 to 0-14 ahead and took the wind from Tipp's sails in the 53rd minute. Mackey fired in another before the finish to set the seal on a victory that, in the final analysis, wasn't as convincing as the

scoreline suggests.

**Scorers**

Cork: K Mackey 1-4 (2f, 145); A O'Connor 1-2; C O'Sullivan, H Looney 1-0 each; F Keating 0-3; I O'Regan, A Thompson, C Sigerson, S McCarthy 0-1 each.

Tipperary: C Devane 0-10 (8f, 145); E Fryday 0-2; G O'Brien, N Walsh, K Kennedy, M Campion 0-1 each.

Cork: A Lee; E Murphy, L Coppinger, A O'Neill, S McCarthy, L Treacy, L Hayes; K Mackey, A Thompson; C Sigerson, F Keating, C O'Sullivan; I O'Regan, A O'Connor, L Collins.

Subs: H Looney for O'Sullivan (46), E Murphy for Sigerson (59), H O'Leary for Collins (59), C Dooley for O'Neill (63), A Egan for Coppinger (65).

Tipperary: C Bourke; J Bourke, M Ryan, E Loughman; A McGrath, K Kennedy, M Eviston; S Fryday, E Fryday; E McGrath, N Walsh, R Howard; G O'Brien, C Devane, E Heffernan.

Subs: M Campion for Walsh (ht), J Kelly for Heffernan (49), K Blair for O'Brien (50), C Hennessy for E Fryday (55).

Referee: A Hogg (Clare).

### THE HIGHLIGHTS

**Our Star:** Not too many of the Cork players were especially consistent, but the half-back line performed admirably overall, and Saoirse McCarthy can feel well satisfied with her contribution in this sector.

**Star moment:** After latching on to a Laura Treacy delivery in the right corner, Amy O'Connor smartly slipped her marker before completing an incisive run with an inspirational second goal for Cork.

**Talking point:** Of the three Cork dual players involved in the ladies' football league final against Dublin the previous night, only Libby Coppinger, who rarely put a foot astray at full-back, started in this tie.

**What's next?** Cork take on Limerick in the Munster championship decider this Saturday at the Ragg GAA in Tipperary (3pm).





Elimear Loughman tugs at Amy O'Connor. Picture: Jim Coughlan

## Goals to the four as Cork move past Tipp into Munster final

Cork 4-13

Tipperary 0-16

A BLISTERING opening goal by half-forward Clara O'Sullivan gave Cork the perfect start in their Munster senior semi-final clash with Tipperary in Páirc Uí Chaoimh on Sunday.

Cork dominated the opening 18 minutes, leading by 2-5 to 0-3. Tipp's three points from Cait Devane's accurate free taking. Cork's use of the ball from defence was excellent, accurate and at deadly pace.

With Cork's wing-forwards O'Sullivan and Chloe Sigerson playing deep as additional midfielders, the space and speed were causing havoc for Tipp's defence. Amy O'Connor controlled brilliantly, left her marker behind with incredible pace and batted to the net for a clinical finish on eight minutes to keep her goal-per-game stat intact.

Tipp goalkeeper Caoimhe Bourke brought off two fine saves against O'Connor and Izzy O'Regan.

Tipperary's distribution wasn't as clinical as Cork's, with passes going to no man's land. It was all going Cork's way 18 minutes in. However, their next score didn't come for another 10 minutes as Tipp started to get to grips around the middle of the park, winning two Cork puck-outs and spreading their play better.

Grace O'Brien got Tipp's first point from play on 23 minutes, and from there Tipp hit another four to put two points between the sides coming up to half time, Fiona Keating responding to leave it 2-6 to 0-9 at the break.

Saoirse McCarthy looked good at wing-back in place of

CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick

Hannah Looney, and Laura Treacy and Laura Hayes were dominating.

The game didn't flow in the first 10 minutes of the restart, and three in a row from Tipp between the 13th and 16th left just the minimum between the sides.

Hannah Looney was introduced and Katrina Mackey moved into full-forward. The move had an immediate impact. Hannah drove forward to initiate a free, which Mackey pointed. Mackey then gathered possession and off-loaded to the in-running Looney, who finished to the net.

The momentum was with Cork, back in front 3-12 to 0-14 entering the final minutes, the game beyond doubt after a brilliant run by O'Connor drew four defenders, and Mackey made no mistake from close range.

**Scorers for Cork:** K Mackey 1-4 (0-2 f, 0-1 45), A O'Connor 1-2, C O'Sullivan 1-0, F Keating 0-3, H Looney 1-0, A Thompson 0-1, C Sigerson 0-1, I O'Regan 0-1, S McCarthy 0-1.

**Tipperary:** C Devane 0-16 (0-8 f, 0-2 45), E Fryday 0-2, G O'Brien, N Walsh, K Kennedy, M Camplon 0-1.

**CORK:** A Lee, E Murphy, A Egan, A O'Neill, S McCarthy, L Treacy, L Hayes, K Mackey, A Thompson, C Sigerson, F Keating, C O'Sullivan, I O'Regan, A O'Connor, L Collins.

**Subs:** H Looney for C O'Sullivan (45), C Healy for I O'Regan (52), H O'Leary, E Murphy for C Sigerson and L Collins (59), C Dooley for A O'Neill (62), L Copping for A Egan (65).

**TIPPERARY:** C Bourke, J Bourke, M Ryan, E Loughman, M Eviston, K Kennedy, A McGrath, S Fryday, R Howard, E Fryday, N Walsh, E McGrath, G O'Brien, C Devane, E Heffernan.

**Subs:** M Camplon for N Walsh (h-t), Karin Blair for G O'Brien (45), J Kelly for E Heffernan (49), C Hennessy for E Fryday (55 in).

**Referee:** Aaron Hogge (Clare).

## FÉILE FUN



Kate Crowley, Kate Cotter, and Abbie Howell from Buttevant, enjoying the sunshine at the Cork Camogie Féile in Carrigtwohill recently.



Cork's Clara O'Sullivan scores the second goal. Picture: Jim Coughlan



# Cork firepower will beat Treaty



CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick

**SATURDAY**  
Cork v Limerick, Munster senior final, Drom & Inch, Tipperary, 3.45pm

FRESH from their Munster senior semi-final win over Tipperary last Sunday evening, Cork face Limerick in the final tomorrow in Drom and Inch at 3.45pm.

The game was originally set for 7.15pm, but a change was made to avoid a clash with the Munster semi-final hurling game in Thurles between the same two counties.

The game is in Tipperary as part of a double header with the intermediate Munster final between Cork and Tipperary at 12pm.

Cork's win over Tipperary was very impressive for half of the 60 minutes. Cork were dazzling in the first and final quarters.

In between, they seem to disappear around the middle of the park, and it put fierce pressure on Cork's half-back line, leading to rushed passes, which broke down.

Hannah Looney was introduced into midfield in the last 15 minutes, with Katrina Mackey moving to full forward, and both players excelled.

That's when the wave changed direction again.

Hannah wasn't started due to her involvement with the ladies' footballers the night before, in what was a tough league final. Meabh Cahalane likewise, while Libby Coppinger played both games and must have felt tired on Monday morning.

Tipperary are improving, and if they had Orla O'Dwyer — who is heading back to Brisbane in August — and the hugely talented Aishling Moloney — out for 12 months with a cruciate injury, even though she hadn't yet committed to the Tipperary side — they would be a big threat.

However, from their 16 points scored, just six were from play, and Amy Lee saw little of the ball in between the posts.

Cork will be hoping that their final



Ciara O'Sullivan scores a goal in the opening seconds of Cork's semi-final clash against Tipperary, despite pressure from Karen Kennedy, Julianne Bourke, and Mary Ryan. Picture: Jim Coughlan

against Limerick is another good challenge for them. I can't see Limerick getting a victory, but the manner of how they approach the game should be exciting.

They overcame Clare and Waterford — Waterford having a really tough season, recently relegated to Division 2 of the league for 2022.

What has been most encouraging for Limerick to date was their league quarter-final performance against champions Kilkenny.

It was a game they should have won, and would have, but for two brilliant saves by Kilkenny goalkeeper Aoife Norris.

It would have been a shock defeat for Kilkenny. Limerick led for most of proceedings, and were full value for that lead as they exposed a Kilkenny defence without Davina Tobin and Claire Phelan.

That was down to a relentless work rate all over the pitch and a directness of play, either through lengthy deliveries or pacy running right down the middle. They brought huge intensity, which Kilkenny weren't able to

match, but the win was simply a bridge too far.

This is the type of challenge Cork would relish as they try to settle their full-back line.

The other end will tell a lot, as to whether Limerick can hold the open space and speed of Cork's forward line. Ciara O'Sullivan did well in the semi-final, and will hold her spot at left-half-forward.

Rebecca Delea and Caoimhe Costelloe are familiar names on this Limerick side that no longer have the magnificent Niamh Mulcahy.

They are a young side, and developing, and maybe that's why they gave Kilkenny such a scare.

They hold no fear of opponents such as Cork.

Limerick will be bidding for just their second Munster title, their first memorable win back in 2017 at the expense of Cork in what was a shock result.

But Cork went on to win the All-Ireland, and will also use this game as preparation for bigger summer days ahead.



Amy O'Connor, Cork, on her way to scoring a goal, under pressure from goalkeeper Caoimhe Bourke, Tipperary in their Munster Senior Camogie Championship semi final at Páirc Uí Rinn. Picture: Jim Coughlan

## Full schedule ahead for Cork sides across the grades

IT'S a busy few days for Cork camogie teams as the senior, intermediate, U16 and minors all in action.

It's a Munster final for the intermediates and seniors, a first round Munster championship for the minors and it's an All-Ireland quarter final for the U16s.

The U16 head to Nenagh where despite topping their group they contest the quarter final while Kilkenny and Galway were allocated semi-final spots.

Cork will take on a Dublin side that defeated Wexford 2-18 to 1-4 in their group game but lost out to Kilkenny 2-11 to 2-5 last weekend.

Cork controlled matters as they overcame Tipperary and Waterford in tremendous fashion and they will travel to Dublin in confident form.

Sinead Hurley, Edel Sheehan, Shauna Sheehan, Fiona Twohig, and Caoimhe Sheehan have been to the fore in this campaign but Dublin have strong performers in Kerri Austin, Clara Finn and Kate Watson and on home ground they will test Cork to the limit.

A double-header at The Ragg GAA grounds tomorrow sees the intermediates open the bill at 12 noon in a Munster final repeat of their opening National

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

league clash with Tipperary.

Only two counties entered the Munster Intermediate championship, so it's straight into a final they go.

Both sides will welcome a competitive game before championship gets under way and with a title up for grabs it is an added incentive.

Mark McCarthy's side made it to the quarter final of the national league losing out to Down and he will be hoping to get a provincial title under their belts before the championship.

Tipperary had a disappointing league and will be looking for a much improved performance with the championship looming. When the sides last met two goals separated them at the full time whistle and it took a huge effort from Cork to hang on as Tipperary totally dominated the latter stages of the contest.

Cork need to get back on winning ways and they will be looking to Ali Smith, Aoife Hurley Lauren

Callanan and Kate O'Keeffe to lead the way.

Katie Walsh showed pace when introduced against Down in the quarter final and this is something that could trouble the Tipperary defence if she starts.

The Cork minors head to Waterford on Tuesday evening in the first round of Munster championship.

This is their first competitive outing and Cork will be glad of the provincial championship which is organised on a separate level to the All-Ireland and as holder of the All-Ireland titles since 2019 (2020 didn't take place) the push is on to retain the crown.

Jerry Wallace is ready to go and is all set and ready to give it another shot with the Cork minors with a new back room team this year he is joined by coach Michael Boland the Carrigtwohill native who led Courcy Rovers to their first senior title in 2020.

A word of praise where it's due to the Munster Camogie council who have changed the starting times of the Senior (3.30pm) and Intermediate (12 noon) finals today in order not to clash with the big hurling game of the year as Cork taking on All-Ireland champions Limerick in Thurles at 7pm.

## Grace tips balance in Premier's direction

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

**Tipperary 1-15**  
**Cork 0-12**

TIPPERARY captured the Munster Intermediate title, out-manoeuvring a Cork side that struggled to get to grips at The Ragg GAA grounds on Saturday.

The greater physical power of the home side was evident with Jenny Grace, Deirdre Dunne and Mary Burke hugely prominent, especially when Cork came at them in the opening quarter of the second half.

Grace, with 1-8 to her credit, slotted home a 12th-minute penalty and it gave Tipperary a cushion they held to the end.

Tipperary led 1-7 to 0-5 at the interval, Katie Walsh with Cork's only score from play as they relied on frees from Ali Smith and Hayley Ryan to keep them within touching distance of Tipp who had Deirdre Dunne and Jenny Grace on target.

Despite Deirdre Dunne extending Tipperary's lead with an early second-half point, Cork began to get a grip and points from Smith, Rachel O'Shea, Finola Neville and Hayley Ryan had the lead down to a goal.

It was 1-10 to 0-10 as the second water break loomed.

A collision involving a player from either side saw play held up for five minutes and it killed the Cork momentum.

Crucially, they missed a chance to cut the lead to two, and with Sinead Meagher adding to Tipp's tally they led by four at the second water break.

Cork were now chasing the game and four points in a row from Grace, three from frees and one from play gave the home side a huge boost. Cork battled hard and points from Ryan and Smith cut the deficit as Tipperary ran out winners with Grace named as Player of the Match after a superb display.

**Scorers for Tipperary:** J Grace 1-8 (0-7 f, 1-0 pen), D Dunne 0-5, S Meagher 0-2.

**Cork:** H Ryan 0-5 (0-4 f), A Smith 0-4 (0-2 f, 0-1 45), K Walsh, F Neville, R O'Shea 0-1 each.

**TIPPERARY:** S Quigley, M Quigley, C Brennan, N Long, Clara Ryan, G Fox, E Carey, Courtney Ryan, J A Quirke, N Loughnane, J Grace, S Meagher, D Dunne, M Burke, C Hogan.

**Subs:** C Browne for JA Quirke (45), L Heffernan for C Hogan (48), R O'Donnell for S Meagher (52), S Larkin for N Loughnane (54).

**CORK:** S Beausang, N O'Leary, A O'Callaghan, A Crowley, K Kilcommins, C Kingston, L Callanan, M Murphy, R Harty, K O'Keeffe, F Neville, R O'Shea, K Walsh, H Ryan, A Smith.

**Subs:** A Hurley for C O'Leary (39), R O'Shea for K O'Keeffe (39), C O'Callaghan for K Walsh (52), E Flanagan for C Kingston (52).

**Referee:** Kevin O'Brien (Limerick).





Martin O'Donovan, Director UN1F1ED2 Global Packaging makes a presentation to Janelle O'Callaghan, Chairperson and Maria Foley, Coach Development Officer Carrigtwohill camogie club.

## Carrigtwohill camogie club is going from strength to strength

CLUBS all over the country are reporting a huge surge in numbers post lockdown as youngsters flock to join local clubs and take up sport.

Camogie is enjoying a huge increase in interest with lots of clubs welcoming in members from the age of three upwards.

Promoting the game is key for clubs, and with local schools and social media hugely important in getting the message across, clubs are working hard to ensure everybody knows where they are and how to join.

Cork camogie recently welcomed two new clubs with the birth of camogie in St Patrick's, Skibbereen and Lisgoold and it is great to see new clubs spring up in all corners of the county as the games continues to grow.

Equally so, a lot of clubs are reporting a re-emergence and a return to play of players who previously played and had drifted away.

For one such club in east Cork they have risen to the challenge of promoting the game in an area where the first recorded game of camogie was played in Carrigtwohill, it being a cultural event for the Gaelic League way back in 1913.

Over the years the club has been there and went on more than a few occasions and it didn't survive more than eight or nine years at a time and this was until 2007 when two young girls who were watching a county hurling final expressed an interest in bringing camogie back to the club and the rest they say is history.

Linda Cashman took on the role of chairperson with secretary Sharon O'Rourke, treasurers Phil Sheehan and Karen Horgan, PRO Sheila Boland, and registrar Esmi Stanier.

With the support of the secretary of the Cork Camogie Board, Tracey Sheehan and the support of the county executive, the Carrigtwohill camogie was once again reborn and with the help of the GAA club, who stepped up providing resources and equipment, the show was back on the road.

In the first year the clubs fielded from U6 up to U12 and in the following years they put together a minor and junior team, but these older age

### CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

groups were short-lived and the club struggled to maintain numbers after a year or two. Despite that, in the first five years they won titles at Imokilly and county levels.

In 2019, for the first time in the history of the club, their PRO team secured sponsorship with UN1F1ED2 Global Packaging who have been a huge support to them since.

In 2020 the club signed up to the 20x20 charter; this was the first movement of its kind in Ireland and set about creating a cultural shift to recognise that girls and women in sport are strong, valuable, and worth celebrating.

Since 2020 every role in the club's committee has been filled by females and this year 60% of their coaches are women.

They were one of seven Cork clubs to be selected for the inaugural MNA programme which is focused on sustaining women's involvement at a grassroots level of clubs and it proved a wonderful success for them.

The club has appointed a coaching development officer to further promote the game within their catchment areas and with registered numbers up on 2020 they are now in the position to field more than one team at underage, with two teams entered at U12 this year.

After a nine-year lapse Carrigtwohill are once again fielding a minor team and for the first time in 10 years they have also entered a junior team, this is because a lot of girls have returned to play and the club is seeing a lot of the players who played in 2007 on their underage teams coming back to play.

The current club officers are chairperson Janelle O'Callaghan, secretary Rita Callan, treasurer Aoife Murphy, Registrar Gina Murphy, PRO Rosie Lane, assistant PRO June Scriven, coaching development officer Maria Foley, child welfare Laura O'Callaghan, MNA mentor Lorraine O'Connell, and fundraising Anne Shine-McCarthy.

The club has embraced the rebirth of the game and the support is ensuring the future of the club is looking very bright.



Cork's Chloe Sigerson gets her shot off while under pressure from Tipperary's Mairead Eviston during their Munster Senior Camogie Championship semi-final. Picture: Jim Coughlan

# Cork still seeking the right line-up

### CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick

WHAT are Galway, Kilkenny, and Cork reading into their teams ahead of the championship opener in two weeks' time?

Galway defeated Cork, Kilkenny defeated Galway and yet, according to Cats' manager Brian Dowling, they were lucky to even reach a league final.

Of the three, will Cork feel they are the furthest away?

I'm sure they will, but they remain feared by the top two and there will be little between all three counties come August and September.

Galway manager Cathal Murray will be focusing on goals and a defence he feels is struggling this season.

Failing to convert goal opportunities was a major contributor in his side's defeat to Kilkenny in the league final.

Galway engineered several goalscoring opportunities, with midfielder Niamh Kilkenny's effort proving to be the only one that could get past Kilkenny keeper Aoife Norris.

Murray says their wastefulness in front of goal harmed their chances of winning. "Kilkenny had us in trouble in the half-back line. But when we got ball into our forwards, we ran at them, had them in real trouble, and created two or three goal opportunities and didn't take them."

"We need to take our chances. If you create two or three goalscoring chances against Kilkenny and don't take them, you're not going to win the match."

Galway were missing some key players due to injuries. Orlaith McGrath was named to start in the match programme, but was a late withdrawal for Catherine Finnerty.

She will be side-lined for the next few weeks according to Murray, while experienced defender Heather Cooney is out for



Cork's Amy O'Connor fields a high ball as Tipperary's Julianne Burke closes in during their Munster Senior Camogie Championship game. Picture: Jim Coughlan

contenders?

Cork are still playing around with their squad, trying to find the right 15.

There are still a couple of positions up for grabs. What is more of a challenge is trying to find the right positions to get the maximum from players. Katrina Mackey and Aisling Thompson as a midfield pairing looked like the golden ticket at the start of the league, but it hasn't consistently produced dominant performances in that area.

When Mackey moved into full-forward for 15 minutes last Sunday she was magic. So, is the Douglas player on the move again?

Hannah Looney came in at midfield. With Saoirse McCarthy looking a good fit, even though it's early days, at right half-back, does that free up the attacking Looney to move forward?

It's an important decision with Cork's full-back line already inexperienced, Meabh Cahalane aside. Cork need more from their inside six too.

Amy O'Connor is flying it; Fiona Keating is coming stronger with each game, but others are finding it hard to find stable form.

I was excited with Ciara O'Sullivan's strength and play at left-half forward.

Her confidence to score Cork's opening goal against Limerick with a great run from the throw-in was impressive.

We'll keep the writer's curse away from her for a while. Orla Cronin missed the Munster semi-final through injury but should be fine.

Have you noticed how the scoring average per game is rising this season as teams open up play and apart from the odd sweeper we aren't thankfully seeing ten players behind the ball?

Today's Munster semi-final is another game which will give Cork's management room for thought.

There comes a time when you'll stop wanting surprises, particularly negative ones.

Options are always a good thing, but players need settlement in their game, and it's now they'll require it.



## Murray thrilled with Cork display

MATCH REACTION

Linda Mellerick

A comprehensive win for Cork in the Munster camogie final at the expense of Limerick on Saturday and manager Paudie Murray acknowledged the impressive performance.

"For long parts of it I thought we played very, very well. We took our scores and our movement was good so I think a professional job done and happy with the win."

He was particularly happy with the first half, 1-13 to 0-5 was a good return.

"Yeah it was. We spoke to them all week about playing to our structure and we did that very well. I suppose the third quarter, outside the shooting part of it, (referring to the number of wides Cork had as they took chances from distance), we were very good."

"On the left side of the field, the wind was coming across and it wasn't easy to score from there and probably we were stuck from too deep, from outside the scoring zone, but outside of that, you'd have to be happy with it."

Cork's play was direct, into what is a pacy forward line.

"Yeah it was and Katrina Mackey going in there now adds something else as well. Everyone knows that she's able to finish and 2-8 she came out with today so we're very happy with that and while it's not a move we've settled on yet, certainly we'll be looking at it."

The two goals were quality in the second half, both from Mackey.

"Yeah we moved the ball well down the side of the pitch. I'm being really critical here as there was probably another two that we really need to be making as we go along. It gives us two weeks now to get ready for championship, so, good preparation."

Giving credit to Limerick, they kept plugging away and they got two decent goals late in the game.

"Look, Limerick were always going to bring that, they're determined people up here and we were expecting nothing else today. They're certainly better than what they were last year and that's obviously a good sign and I think they can look forward to championship as well."

Two weeks out from championship is Murray is happy with the position he is currently in with regards preparation and form.

"I suppose yes, but you'd want to be better always and the key now is that we go forward with every game. We have three and we need to improve in every one of those and if we're doing that we won't be in bad shape going into a quarter-final."

There remains one injury to forward Orla Cronin.

"Fiona Keating has done well at centre-forward and we're hoping that Orla will be back training next week with us."

# Slick Cork are too good for Limerick



CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick

Cork 4-20  
Limerick 2-9

THERE were no surprises in Drom & Inch GAA grounds on Saturday afternoon as a slick display by Cork saw them win another Munster championship title at the expense of Limerick.

At half-time, leading 1-13 to 0-5, Cork had seven scorers on the board, some of them very classy points.

Cork's defence were well on top, all playing their part, led by Laura Hayes and Laura Treacy. Saoirse McCarthy is playing with tremendous confidence at right half-back and behind her, Ellen Murphy, Libby Coppinger and Meabh Cahalane controlled Limerick's attack, despite Caoimhe Costelloe and Caoimhe Lyons being two top players.

Hannah Looney, now lining out at midfield, made a couple of piercing runs, her first creating a point for Katrina Mackey two minutes in after Chloe Sigerson had opened Cork's scoring.

On 12 minutes, brilliant defending led to Cork playing the ball up the field with great off-the-shoulder support and Ciara O'Sullivan finished a tremendous move to the net.

It was all Cork. The game was fast and open. Player of the match Mackey was denied her first goal on 24 minutes by a wonderful Laura O'Neill save and she made another fine effort three minutes later to deny Amy O'Connor after she was put through by Aishling Thompson.

Cork's superiority and class was epitomised with a brilliant point by their captain Linda Collins coming up to half-time. Good defensive work by Ellen Murphy and McCarthy saw the latter deliver a long high ball. Collins caught brilliantly, turned and pointed and Cork were well on their way to winning this game.

The second half started in much the



Cork players with the cup after the Munster Senior Camogie final win over Limerick at Drom & Inch GAA. Picture: Matt Browne/Sportsfile

same fashion. Mackey gathered and, leaving several markers in her wake, billowed the net.

Cork could be forgiven for starting to take chance shots from distance and difficult angles and hitting a number of wides. The wind was swirling but now was the time to try things.

Mackey (6), O'Connor and Thompson pushed Cork further ahead before an absolute rocket of a goal from the left side from Mackey had Cork a commanding 3-16 to 0-8 in front on 47 minutes.

With the allowance of eight subs, Cork took full advantage. Aoife O'Neill and Isobel Sheehan were first on the pitch. Fiona Keating, Thompson, Mackey, and McCarthy hit another four points. Cliona Healy, Izzy O'Regan, and Cliona Dooley were next to make an entrance along with Han-

nah O'Leary.

Credit to Limerick, they never gave up and started to make headway as Cork lost their shape a bit.

Laura Stack found the net on 59 minutes. That was following up by an absolute gem of a goal from Judith Mulcahy before Stack added another point.

It certainly put a better reflection on the scoreline from a Limerick point of view, as Keating had the final say for Cork for a comprehensive win.

Cork may not have learned too much from the game but certainly, the positioning of Saoirse McCarthy at wing back, Ellen Murphy in the corner, Fiona Keating at centre-forward and Ciara O'Sullivan at left wing is pleasing for Cork. They are growing with every game.

Championship is around the corner

with Cork out on July 17 with a home game to Dublin. On the basis of this performance, Cork are in a strong position despite tougher days ahead.

Scorers for Cork: K Mackey 2-8 (0-5 f), A Thompson 1-2, C O'Sullivan 1-1, L Collins, F Keating 0-2 each, A O'Connor 0-2, H Looney, C Sigerson, S McCarthy 0-1 each.

Limerick: C Costelloe 0-6 (0-5 f), L Stack 1-1, J Mulcahy 1-0, S O'Callaghan, C Lyons 0-1 each.

CORK: A Lee; E Murphy, L Coppinger, M Cahalane, S McCarthy, L Treacy, L Hayes, H Looney, A Thompson; C Sigerson, F Keating, C O'Sullivan, K Mackey, A O'Connor, L Collins.

Subs: A O'Neill for L Coppinger (48), I Sheehan for H Looney (48), C Healy for A O'Connor (49), O'Regan for L Collins (49), C Dooley for K Mackey (51), H O'Leary for C O'Sullivan (57), A Egan for F Murphy (63), M Lynch for A Lee (63).

LIMERICK: L O'Neill; M Quaid, M Creamer, R Ambrose, M Ryan, J Mulcahy, N Ryan; K O'Leary, M O'Mara, J D Murphy, S O'Callaghan, R Delee; A Cunningham Costelloe, C Lyons.

Sub: M Curtin for Megan O'Mara (46).

Referee: Aaron Hogg (Clare).



Ashling Thompson of Cork in action against Marian Quaid of Limerick.

Picture: Matt Browne/Sportsfile



Fiona Keating of Cork shoots from Judith Mulcahy and Muireann Creamer of Limerick.

Picture: Matt Browne/Sportsfile



# Cork power past a brave Limerick side



Munster senior camogie final

**CORK**..... 4-20  
**LIMERICK**..... 2-9

**Therese O'Callaghan**

The Ragg



Contrasting fortunes in the Ragg on Saturday in the Munster senior camogie championship final.

Cork, with a few new faces, demonstrated they are well up for the challenge of regaining the O'Duffy Cup. They didn't

put a foot wrong in this 17-point victory with so many outstanding showings. Katrina Mackey was the Player of the Match, while they had nine different scorers.

All four goals — Mackey (2), Ashling Thompson and Ciara O'Sullivan — were well-worked and Cork could have a few more only for good defending by Limerick and their goalkeeper Laura O'Neill.

And there was a nice touch too from Paudie Murray to substitute the dual players once the result was secure.

So disappointment for Limerick who were expected to do better, especially after a promising league campaign with manager Pat Ryan saying his side will have to learn from the loss ahead of the All-Ireland championship.

"It makes the Wexford game

## Amazing Grace inspires Tipp

**Munster Intermediate Camogie Final**

**Tipperary**..... 1-15  
**Cork**..... 0-12

**Therese O'Callaghan**  
The Ragg

Tipperary claimed the Munster intermediate championship title, their first since 2016, fully deserving of their six-point victory.

Tipperary claimed the Munster intermediate championship title, their first since 2016, fully deserving of their six-point victory. Captain Jenny Grace, Deirdre

Dunne, Sinead Meagher and Nicola Loughnane were hugely influential up front — with Grace firing home a 12th-minute penalty.

**Scorers for Tipperary:** J Grace (1-8, 1-0 pen, 0-7 frees), D Dunne (0-5), S Meagher (0-2).

**Scorers for Cork:** A Smith (0-5, 0-3 frees, 0-1 45), H Ryan (0-4, 0-3 frees), K Walsh R O'Shea and F Neville (0-1 each).

**TIPPERARY:** S Quigley; N Long, C Brennan, Ciara Ryan; M Quigley, G Fox, E Carey; C Hogan, M Burke; Courtney Ryan, J Grace (Capt), J A Quirke; D Dunne, S Meagher, N Loughnane.

**Subs:** C Browne for M Quigley (bs 38-40), C Browne for J A Quirke (45), L Heffernan for C Hogan (48), R O'Donnell for S Meagher (57), S Larkin for N Loughnane (61).

**CORK:** S Beausang; N O'Leary, A O'Callaghan, A Crowley; K Kilcommins, C Kingston, L Callanan; M Murphy, R Harty; K O'Keefe, F Neville (Capt), C O'Leary; K Walsh, H Ryan, A Smith.

**Subs:** J O'Leary for R Harty (bs 38-39), A Hurlley for C O'Leary, R O'Shea for K O'Keefe (both 40), C O'Callaghan for K Walsh (55), E Flanagan for C Kingston (56).

**Referee:** Kevin O'Brien (Limerick).

trouble. One more win, the mindset changes again.

"We actually froze. The better team won by a long shot. Cork are probably the

best team in the country."

Sub Laura Stack and Judith Mulcahy netted their majors at the death.

**Scorers for Cork:** K Mackey (2-8, 0-6

frees), A Thompson (1-2), C O'Sullivan (1-1), L Collins, A O'Connor and F Keating (0-2 each), S McCarthy, C Sigerson and H Looney (0-1 each).

**Scorers for Limerick:** C Costelloe (0-6 0-5 frees), L Stack (1-1), J Mulcahy (1-0), S O'Callaghan and C Lyons (0-1 each).

**CORK:** A Lee; L Coppinger, E Murphy, M Cahalane; S McCarthy, L Treacy, L Hayes; H Looney, A Thompson; C Sigerson, F Keating; C O'Sullivan; K Mackey, A O'Connor, L Collins (Capt).

**Subs:** I Sheehan for H Looney, A O'Neill for L Coppinger (both 48), C Healy for L Collins, I O'Regan for A O'Connor (both 50), C Dooley for M Cahalane (54), H O'Leary for C O'Sullivan (60), A Egan for E Murphy (62), M Lynch for A Lee (63 in).

**LIMERICK:** L O'Neill; M Quaid, M Creamer, R Ambrose; M Ryan, J Mulcahy, N Ryan; K O'Leary (Capt), M O'Mara; D Murphy, S O'Callaghan, R Delee; A Cunningham, C Costelloe, C Lyons.

**Subs:** N Curtin for M O'Mara (46), L Stack for S O'Callaghan (47), A Scanlon for C Lyons, S McManara for D Murphy, O Kelliher for K O'Leary (all 51).

**Referee:** Aaron Hogg (Clare).

## West Cork's role in camogie success

BY GER MCCARTHY

WEST Cork representatives have played important roles in Cork camogie's recent Munster U16 and minor championship triumphs.

2021 has proven a fruitful year for Cork camogie with the county claiming senior, minor, U16 A and U16 B Munster titles.

Dungarvan was the venue for a Munster U16 final double-header on the August bank holiday weekend. Donie Daly's Cork squad had already won the All-Ireland U16A championship and were anxious to add the Munster title.

Joint-captains Millie Condon (Ballinascearty) and Fiona Twohig (Valley Rovers) led a talented Cork side into battle against Tipperary with Clonakilty's Amy McCarthy and Kate Nolan the other West

Cork players involved. Sinead Hurley, Ava Fitzgerald and Grainne Finn scores helped Cork build a narrow 0-6 to 0-3 interval lead. Shauna Sheehan (two) and Fiona Twohig points helped extend Cork's advantage early in the second period and it was 0-11 to 0-5 in the Rebels' favour at the final water break.

Tipperary fought back impressively and two quick-fire goals left a point between the teams. Cork withstood a late fightback however and saw out the closing minutes to register a 0-13 to 2-5 victory.

Cork U16 A co-captains Millie Condon from Ballinascearty and Fiona Twohig from Valley Rovers were relieved at getting over Tipperary.

"It was unreal, there are 30 of us on the panel and there is nothing between any of the players. We could put out any

15 players on any given day and they would do a job for you and come out with a win," Condon said.

"The experience of winning a U16 All-Ireland helped us. Tipp scored a few quick goals and that brought them right back into it. We just had to keep our head in the game and keep going."

"Every year there is great rivalry when it comes to getting on the Cork camogie team," Fiona Twohig added.

"The standard is getting higher every year with more and more girls coming through. The increasing number of players is raising the standard of Cork camogie."

Not content with claiming the U16A Munster crown, Cork added the U16 B equivalent on the same afternoon. Once again, there was West Cork interest in the Munster B

decider against Tipperary with Niamh Kennedy (Clonakilty), Danielle O'Neill (Enniskeane), Aoife Whelton (Clonakilty), Niamh McCarthy (Kilbree) and Ciara White (Clonakilty) on this year's panel.

The Cork minors set the tone for the county's U16 A and B Munster final double success with a notable 3-19 to 0-3 defeat of Limerick in the Tesco Minor All-Ireland Championship. That result came hot on the heels of an equally impressive 2-21 to 1-10 win away to Clare.

Yet another panel blessed with emerging talent and under the tutelage of Jerry Wallace, the Cork minors showed what they are capable of having al-

ready captured the provincial title earlier this year. West Cork players on the minor panel include Emma O'Driscoll (Enniskeane), Eimear O'Brien (Enniskeane), Grace Ryan (Newcestown), Emile O'Donovan (Kilbree) and Caoimhe Murphy (Kilbree).

Back-to-back group wins has all but guaranteed Cork a place in the Tesco Minor All-Ireland Championship semi-finals. Based on their recent performances, Cork has every chance of claiming top honours in a year the county's U16 and minor squads improved with every outing.



Millie Condon has co-captained the Cork U16 camogie team to Munster and All-Ireland glory.



The Ballinascearty U13 camogie team pictured after they won the West Cork U13B Shield on Sunday morning, defeating Clonakilty in the final. Back row from left, trainer Paul Kingston, Clara McManamon, Emily Walsh, Dylan Twomey, Karen Lucey, Rachel Buttmer, Amber Bishop, Emilee Hansberry, Ava Crowley, Jane Twomey and trainer Helen McManamon. Front from left, Ashling Kingston, Clara Cashman, Clara Hayes, Aoife Kingston (captain), Aine Fadian, Rachel Prochniak, Elaina Crowley, Nicole Prochniak and trainer Clara Crowley.





Sarsfields captain Clodagh O'Donovan is presented with the Premier U16 championship cup by board Chairperson Maire Donovan.

## Rapid-fire goals from Mullins proves crucial in Sars' U16 triumph

**Sarsfields 3-7**  
**Aghabullogue 0-9**

**CAMOGIE**

**Mary Newman**

SARSFIELD retained the U16 Premier Championship title for 2020 when they finally got to meet Aghabullogue in Castle Road recently.

It's been a long wait for the young players to get to play the underage finals final but both sides showed little signs of rustiness as they battled to the finish to be crowned champions.

Two first half goals on 28 and 29 minutes from Orlaith Mullins proved vital as they gave Sarsfields a 2-6 to 0-2 interval lead after an opening half where Aghabullogue matched them in all sectors.

Evie Twomey opened the scoring with a Sarsfields point but Kelly Honohan had the side's level in reply.

With Katlyn Sheehan and Aoife Twomey swapping points it was level pegging but two apiece from Katlyn Sheehan and Cliona Lynch had Sars leading 0-6 to 0-2 as the half-time whistle loomed, but the double strike before the break knocked Aghabullogue back as they trailed by 10 points at the break.

It looked all over as the sides came out for the second half with Sarsfields in the driving seat but all credit to Aghabullogue who came out fighting in the second half and took the game to Sarsfields. They dominated the third quarter as they cut the Sars lead with six point without replay Aoife Twomey, Ellie Buckley, Orna Cahill all on target.

Pressing hard to maintain their momentum they were rocked again with Katlyn Sheehan relieved the pressure on Sarsfields with a goal before Evie Twomey added a point as Sars began to breathe again.

Aghabullogue refused to die, Aoife Twomey converted a free but despite battling to the finish they failed to narrow the gap as Sarsfields hung on to retain the title but not before a stern test from a determined Aghabullogue side who gave an outstanding second half display as they held their opponents to just two late second half scores.

For Sarsfields, Orlaith Mullins, Katlyn Sheehan and captain Clodagh O'Donovan were prominent whilst Aghabullogue had excellent performers in substitute Ellie Buckley, Rachel Barrett and Orna Cahill.

**Scorers for Sarsfields:** O Mullins 2-0, K Sheehan 1-3, E Twomey 0-2, C Lynch 0-2 (45%).

**Aghabullogue:** A Twomey 0-5 (f's), E Buckley 0-2, O Cahill, K Honohan 0-1 each.

**Sarsfields:** S Hurley, L Sheppard, I Kelly, A Mc McCarthy, E O'Brien, C Lynch, T Elliott, E Twomey, C O'Donovan (c), C Galvin, K Sheehan, C O'Sullivan Hegarty, O Mullins, M Sheehan.

**Subs:** H Murray for O Mullins (h/t in), E Hogan for C Galvin (55).

**Aghabullogue:** E Downey, L Corkery, C O'Connell, M McCarthy, A O'Shea, A Barrett, R Bowen, R Barrett, M Buckley, A Twomey, N Barry-Murphy, O Cahill, C Daly, K Honohan, A Dineen.

**Sub's:** E Buckley for A Dineen (h/t), M Leahy for C Daly (45).

**Referee:** Andrew Larkin (Ballygarvan).



Carrigaline captain Aoife McIver is presented with the U16B plate by board Chairperson Maire Donovan.

# Carrigaline edge out Castlelyons in final thriller

**CAMOGIE**

**Mary Newman**

**Carrigaline 4-8**  
**Castlelyons 4-5**

IT WAS nip and tuck all the way in this U16 plate final in Castle Road as Carrigaline and Castlelyons battled it out for the title.

Both sides gave it everything with Carrigaline opening a lead only for Castlelyons to peg them back as all through it was close with little dividing the sides.

Carrigaline eventually did pull away in the second half but a battling Castlelyons fought back to see just three points divide the sides at the full time whistle and it was two second half goals from substitute Kathlyn Mee that proved vital as it helped get Carrigaline over the line.

Carrigaline led at the break 2-2 to 1-3 first half goals from Grace Deasy and Fódla Ní Bhradaigh and points from Eva O'Herlihy and Sarah O'Connell helping to keep them in front as Ciara Morrison hit a goal and two points for Castlelyons to keep them within touching distance.

Carrigaline added to their tally with a point but Ciara Morrison replied with a point added to by a Robyn Hickey goal which had the side's level at 2-3 apiece.

Carrigaline upped the pace with Aoife McIver, Aine Barrett, Grace Deasy and Eva O'Herlihy to the fore but battling on Castlelyons stayed within touching distance all the time with Leah Hallihan converting two pointed frees and with Ciara Morrison driving them on at every opportunity.



Roisin Murphy, Éire Óg captain is presented with the U16 A shield by Mairead Donovan, chairperson Cork camogie board.

Two second half goals from substitute Kathlyn Mee were a vital cushion for Carrigaline as Castlelyons threw everything at them to narrow the gap to three points before the full time whistle after an exciting contest where both sides gave it their all.

**Scorers for Carrigaline:** K Mee 2-0, G Deasy 1-1, F Ní Bhradaigh 1-0, A McIver, A Barrett, E O'Herlihy 0-2 each, S O'Connell 0-1.

**Castlelyons:** C Morrison 3-3, R Hickey 1-0, L Hallihan 0-2 (f's).

**Carrigaline:** A McIver, C Noll, A Blyth, E Barrett, H Daly, R Foley, R Patterson, S O'Connell, E O'Herlihy, E Gleeson, F Ní Bhradaigh, G Deasy, A Healy, C Middleton, A Barrett.

**Subs:** K Mee for A Healy, J Barr for C Middleton.

**Castlelyons:** E O'Brien, S Hussey, J O'Leary, E Quirke;

M Griffin, C O'Riordan, M Hallihan : Hallihan, M C hie : S K Reals, C Morrison, A Verling, A O' Hickey, S O'Shea.

**Referee:** John Morgan (Glan Na Laoi).

**Éire Óg**

**Inniscarra**

The sides were level in this U16 plate final at 1-4 each but a strong second half ensures Éire Óg ran out winners. Grainne O'Mahony, Orlaith Crlaoise Murphy, Lisa Murphy all on score sheet.

In the premier Under A plate Sars "2" defeated St Finbarr's in a close contest and in the U14B plate Banteer were strong for Carrigaline's second team.



Sarsfields premier U16 championship winners.





Sarsfields captain Clodagh O'Donovan is presented with the Premier U16 championship cup by board Chairperson Maire Donovan.

## Rapid-fire goals from Mullins proves crucial in Sars' U16 triumph

**Sarsfields 3-7**  
**Aghabullogue 0-9**

SARSFIELD retained the U16 Premier Championship title for 2020 when they finally got to meet Aghabullogue in Castle Road recently.

It's been a long wait for the young players to get to play the underage finals final but both sides showed little signs of rustiness as they battled to the finish to be crowned champions.

Two first half goals on 28 and 29 minutes from Orlaith Mullins proved vital as they gave Sarsfields a 2-6 to 0-2 interval lead after an opening half where Aghabullogue matched them in all sectors.

Evie Twomey opened the scoring with a Sarsfields point but Kelly Honohan had the side's level in reply.

With Katlyn Sheehan and Aoife Twomey swapping points it was level pegging but two apiece from Katlyn Sheehan and Cliona Lynch had Sars leading 0-6 to 0-2 as the half-time whistle loomed, but the double strike before the break knocked Aghabullogue back as they trailed by 10 points at the break.

It looked all over as the sides came out for the second half with Sarsfields in the driving seat but all credit to Aghabullogue who came out fighting in the second half and took the game to Sarsfields. They dominated the third quarter as they cut the Sars lead with six point without replay Aoife Twomey, Ellie Buckley, Orna Cahill all on target.



Sarsfields premier U16 championship winners.

**CAMOGIE**

**Mary Newman**

Pressing hard to maintain their momentum they were rocked again with Katlyn Sheehan relieved the pressure on Sarsfields with a goal before Evie Twomey added a point as Sars began to breathe again.

Aghabullogue refused to die, Aoife Twomey converted a free but despite battling to the finish they failed to narrow the gap as Sarsfields hung on to retain the title but not before a stern test from a determined Aghabullogue side who gave an outstanding second half display as they held their opponents to just two late second half scores.

For Sarsfields, Orlaith Mullins, Katlyn Sheehan and captain Clodagh O'Donovan were prominent whilst Aghabullogue had excellent performers in substitute Ellie Buckley, Rachel Barrett and Orna Cahill.

**Scorers for Sarsfields:** O Mullins 2-0, K Sheehan 1-3, E Twomey 0-2, C Lynch 0-2 (45's).

**Aghabullogue:** A Twomey 0-5 (f's), E Buckley 0-2, O Cahill, K Honohan 0-1 each.

**Sarsfields:** S Hurley, L Sheppard, I Kelly, A Mc McCarthy, E O'Brien, C Lynch, T Elliott, E Twomey, C O'Donovan (c), C Galvin, K Sheehan, C O'Sullivan Hegarty, O Mullins, M Sheehan.

**Subs:** H Murray for O Mullins (h/t inj), E Hogan for C Galvin (55).

**Aghabullogue:** E Downey, L Corkery, C O'Connell, M McCarthy, A O'Shea, A Barrett, R Bowen, R Barrett, M Buckley, A Twomey, N Barry-Murphy, O Cahill, C Daly, K Honohan, A Dineen.

**Sub's:** E Buckley for A Dineen (h/t), M Leahy for C Daly (45).

**Referee:** Andrew Larkin (Ballygarvan).



Carrigaline captain Aoife McIver is presented with the U16B plate by board Chairperson Maire Donovan.

# Carrigaline edge out Castlelyons in final thriller

**CAMOGIE**

**Mary Newman**

**Carrigaline 4-8**  
**Castlelyons 4-5**

IT WAS nip and tuck all the way in this U16 plate final in Castle Road as Carrigaline and Castlelyons battled it out for the title.

Both sides gave it everything with Carrigaline opening a lead only for Castlelyons to peg them back as all through it was close with little dividing the sides.

Carrigaline eventually did pull away in the second half but a battling Castlelyons fought back to see just three points divide the sides at the full time whistle and it was two second half goals from substitute Kathlyn Mee that proved vital as it helped get Carrigaline over the line.

Carrigaline led at the break 2-2 to 1-2 first half goals from Grace Deasy and Fódla Ni Bhraidaigh and points from Eva O'Herlihy and Sarah O'Connell helping to keep them in front as Clara Morrison hit a goal and two points for Castlelyons to keep them within touching distance.

Carrigaline added to their tally with a point but Clara Morrison replied with a point added to by a Robyn Hickey goal which had the side's level at 2-3 apiece.

Carrigaline upped the pace with Aoife McIver, Aine Barrett, Grace Deasy and Eva O'Herlihy to the fore but battling on Castlelyons stayed within touching distance all the time with Leah Hallihan converting two pointed frees and with Clara Morrison driving them on at every opportunity.



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**Scorers for Carrigaline:** K Mee 2-0, G Deasy 1-1, F Ni Bhraidaigh 1-0, A McIver, A Barrett, E O'Herlihy 0-2 each, S O'Connell 0-1.

**Castlelyons:** C Morrison 3-3, R Hickey 1-0, L Hallihan 0-2 (f's).

**Carrigaline:** A McIver, C Neff, A Blyth, E Barrett, H Daly, R Foley, R Patterson, S O'Connell, E O'Herlihy, E Gleeson, F Ni Bhraidaigh, G Deasy, A Healy, C Middleton, A Barrett.

**Subs:** K Mee for A Healy, J Barr for C Middleton, Castlelyons: E O'Brien, S Hussey, J O'Leary, E Quirk.

M Griffin, C O'Riordan, M Hallihan; Hallihan, M O'Donoghue; S K Reals, C Morrison, A Verling; A Quirk, Hickey, S O'Shea.

**Referee:** John Horgan (Glan Ma Laol).

**Éire Óg**

**Inniscarra**

The sides were level in this U16 premier plate final at 1-4 each but a strong second half ensures Éire Óg ran out winners with Grainne O'Mahony, Orlaith Crem, Laoise Murphy, Lisa Murphy all on the score sheet.

In the premier Under A plate Sarsfield "2" defeated St Finbarr's in a close contest and in the U14B plate Banteer were strong for Carrigaline.



# Ella leads her team in style to U16B title



Ballinascorthy captain, Ella Cullinane, with Buttevant captain, Rachel Brosnan, and referee, Aoife Walsh, before the U16B championship final.

CAMOGIE	
■ Mary Newman	
Ballinascorthy	9-9
Buttevant	0-2

FROM the throw-in in this final, Ballinascorthy showed huge determination and they took the U16B championship title in impressive fashion.

They were the stronger side all through and, despite a spirited display from Buttevant, who never allowed their heads to drop, Ballinascorthy showed huge strength all over the field.

From one to 15, Ballinascorthy were balanced, though the scoreline does not do justice to the huge efforts put in by the Buttevant girls, who contested and fought for every ball. A Maeve Kingston goal in the first minute settled Ballinascorthy into the game and it took superb goalkeeping from Ella Kingston to keep Buttevant from scoring, as they applied pressure.

Battling hard to get on the score sheet, Buttevant had to give way to the strength of Ballinascorthy and with Millie Condon working hard, the Ballinascorthy inside line enjoyed a lot of possession and they used it well.

First-half goals from Emma Galvin, Siofra Pattwell, and Maeve Kingston helped Ballinascorthy build up a comprehensive lead and they maintained the pressure with first-half points from Maeve Kingston, Shauna O'Driscoll, Emma Galvin, Millie Condon, and Siofra Pattwell and at the half-time whistle they were well in control. Buttevant, to their credit, never gave up and they were rewarded with points from Lauren Dunlea, but, again, they found it tough against a very strong and well-balanced Ballinascorthy defence.

Up front, Ballinascorthy had the fire power to get scores and with Muireann Fadian and Maeve Kingston adding to



Ballinascorthy U16B captain, Ella Cullinane, with the trophy after the presentation in Castle Road.

their goal tally, and Siofra Pattwell adding a point, the title was always heading to Ballinascorthy, but huge credit to the Buttevant girls, who, despite trailing from the start, played with their hearts on their sleeves and did their club proud.

Having previously lost two underage finals a few seasons ago, the Ballinascorthy girls were determined to succeed and they did it in style, with Michelle O'Driscoll, Millie Condon, Emma Galvin, Maeve Kingston, and Rachel Cahalane to the fore, as they were crowned champions.

Scorers for Ballinascorthy: M Kingston 4-2, E Galvin 3-1, S Pattwell 1-3, M Fadian 1-0, M Condon 0-2, S O'Driscoll 0-1.

Buttevant: L Dunlea 0-2.

Ballinascorthy: E Kingston; E Cahalane, K Ryan, A Ryan, M Kingston, E Cullinane (c.), C Heverin; M Condon, M O'Driscoll; S O'Driscoll, M Fadian, E Galvin; R Cahalane, G Flynn, S Pattwell.

Buttevant: N McGuckin; S Dunlea, R Lenahan, L Daly; D Cronin, R Brosnan, S O'Connell; A Enright; G Cronin; S Curran, L Dunlea, J Guerin; A Shinnick, N Guinane, A Jenks.

Subs: O'Connor for S Curran, K Cremen for A Shinnick, S Curran for G Cronin, A Shinnick for L Daly.

Referee: Aoife Walsh (St Vincent's).



Maureen Donovan, chairperson Cork Camogie Board, presents Glen Rovers captain Ella Buckley with the U16 A championship trophy after her sides win over Midleton.

## Glen class proves the difference against a battling Midleton side

CAMOGIE	
■ Mary Newman	
Glen Rovers	3-7
Midleton	1-5

A FLAWLESS display saw Glen Rovers lift the U16A camogie championship title as they defeated Midleton in a thrilling decider in Castle Road.

Both teams left everything on the field as they battled for supremacy but the Glen Rovers girls were determined from the throw in as they attacked from the start.

With Rachel O'Halloran a towering figure in their defence and their six defenders as a unit on top they controlled matters at the back.

Ella Buckley pointed and early free to which Abbie Foley replies and at the first water break it was still one score each as both defences stood firm and in particular Midleton goalkeeper Jill Connaughton denied the Glen Rovers girls in the opening quarter with some excellent saves.

Glen Rovers took a hold on the game in the second quarter and four points without reply from Juliet Horgan, Sinead Roche, Meaghan Martin and Abbie Lynch-O'Shea put them in the driving seat.

Just before the break Abbie Foley had one back for Midleton and it was 0-5 to 0-2 at the interval.

Glen Rovers set the pace of the second half as they struck for two goals before the water break a long ball from Ella Buckley going all the way to

the net before the same played added a second goal to extend their lead but Midleton hit back with an Abbie Foley goal on the water break.

The Glen girls dug deep and a Meaghan Martin goal had them ten point clear with 10 minutes on the stop watch and they had to be at their best to deny Midleton who began to creep into the game as they narrowed the deficit with two points in a row with Saoirse Ni Theangana and Rachel Ryan keeping the Glen defence on their toes.

As the clock ticked towards full time, the Glen Rovers girls upped the pace again with Meaghan Martin striking two points in a row they were not going to be denied as the title was heading to their way and the final whistle was greeted by huge celebrations.

Scorers for Glen Rovers: E Buckley 2-1, M Martin 1-3, A Lynch O'Shea, J Horgan, S Roche 0-1 each.

Midleton: A Foley 1-3, S Ni Theangana R Ryan 0-1 each.

Glen Rovers: K O'Neill; A Mulcahy, C Halpin-Hurley, O Hurley; L Egan, R O'Halloran, S Murphy; S K O'Meara, A Akinkolie; E Buckley, A Lynch-O'Shea, M Martin; S Roche; A McCarthy, J Horgan.

Midleton: J Connaughton; E McManus, R Hennessy, M Ni Chonchubhuair; L Goulding, Y Abernethy, A Fitzgerald; I Nestor, S Ni Theangana; M Tarrant, A Foley, K Quirke; R Ryan, E O'Sullivan, C Garde.

Subs: J Fitzgerald for M Tarrant (h/t), K O'Sullivan for C Garde (37).

Referee: Diarmuid Kirwin (Eire Og).



Glen Rovers U16 A championship winners.



# New camogie club, St Patrick's, is catering for over 70 girls

BY GER MCCARTHY

BASED in Skibbereen, fledgling St Patrick's Camogie Club is building for the future and hoping to harness the enthusiasm of local West Cork areas.

Setting up a GAA club, let alone a sports club, is an arduous but worthwhile task. Kilmacabea, Ilen Rovers, Tadhg MacCharthaigh and O'Donovan Rossa came together to form St Patrick's hurling club back in 2013. Since then, additional players from Clann naGael and Castlehaven signed up and the club is thriving.

Building on that success, St Patrick's camogie is now catering for over 70 girls and seeking similar success on and off the pitch.

'Some of our youngest girls would have always trained with the St Patrick's (boys) hurling club,' St Patrick's Camogie's Mary Coakley told The Southern Star.

'Girls from the Kilmacabea, Ilen Rovers, Tadhg MacCharthaigh, O'Donovan Rossa and Castlehaven areas were permitted to train alongside the boys up until the U12 age-grade.

'It wasn't until 2019 that enough people got together to form an official St Patrick's camogie club. I started coaching the girls that year but was a complete novice and indebted to Alice O'Neill McCarthy who, thanks be to God, came along to help out. Ciarán O'Driscoll from Ilen Rovers also joined up with us soon after and the three of us have been coaching the

girls ever since.'

The amalgamated St Patrick's hurling club proved a huge help to Mark Coakley and her fellow coaches in getting their new camogie venture off the ground.

'St Patrick's hurling club was absolutely amazing to us,' Coakley stated.

'Alice Foley, Con O'Hallahan, Tom Kelly and many other club members have helped us every step of the way. Camogie began training in 2019 with a mix of age-groups between seven and 11-years-old. We all trained together in the beginning as there would only have been about 20 girls involved.

'There has been increased interest this year, definitely, so we went and formed a committee and formally created St Patrick's camogie. Since May, we are part of the Carbery division set-up and now catering for over 70 players. Once we put the word out, interest quickly grew and numbers increased in a very short period of time.'

'It is all go but everyone involved is enjoying the experience. We played a few challenge matches against Clonakilty recently and the players were delighted to be out on a pitch and representing the club.'

It is clear St Patrick's are going to cater for growing numbers drawn from different townlands over the coming years. That's hardly surprising when you consider camogie's growing popularity. It is something Coakley hopes her fledgling club can build on.



Members of the newly-formed St Patrick's Camogie Club at training in Skibbereen last week.



U7 members of St Patrick's Camogie Club in action at training in Skibbereen last week.

'The hope is to continue training and grow the numbers of girls that want to come and play camogie,' Coakley explained.

'This year, we are unlikely to play any competitive matches but there is more than enough interest to keep training and be ready for whenever that time

**'The most important thing right now is that all the kids who come to our training sessions have fun and enjoy the whole experience' – Mary Coakley, St Patrick's Camogie Club**

comes. Playing challenges, like we did with Clonakilty recently, will help us get better organised and give us a better feel for what we have.

'The most important thing right now is that all the kids who come to our training sessions have fun and enjoy the whole experience. All those games will come soon enough. After Covid and everything last year, we just want the girls to come out and play, have fun and enjoy an hour running around the pitch. That's the way the coaches are approaching things at the moment. It is not all about the winning, at least for now anyway.'

'We are only back out on a

pitch together training since May so there is a lot of work to be done. We are hoping, at the start of next season, to hold a competition where the best drawing entered would be chosen as the camogie club's first-ever club crest.

'I have to say, once again, that St Patrick's have been so fantastic to us and allowed us to use their jerseys as well until we have our own set. The support we have received from all the parents involved as well as the local schools has been fantastic. We have been able to borrow equipment like helmets for the kids trying out camogie for the first time from the local schools which has been a massive help.'



# West Cork's newest camogie club destined for big and bright future



U11 panel members of St Patrick's Camogie Club at training in Skibbereen. (Photos: Anne Minihane)

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## MUNSTER SENIOR CAMOGIE CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL Cork v Limerick



**CORK** 4-20  
**LIMERICK** 2-9

BY KIERAN MCCARTHY

DECISIONS, decisions, decisions. Cork camogie manager Paudie Murray has a few tough calls to make ahead of the county's All-Ireland senior championship opener on July 18th – but they are welcome headaches.

The Cork boss feels his current squad is stronger than the 2020 version and that was highlighted in last Saturday's Munster senior camogie championship final hammering of Limerick at the Ragg GAA grounds in Tipperary.

Murray and his management team have been in experimental mode during the provincial series and the results have been impressive.

Katrina Mackey has been moved from midfield to the full-forward line – and the Douglas woman scored 2-8 in a player-of-the-match performance against Limerick. Dual star Hannah Looney has been pushed into midfield, alongside Ashling Thompson, and her physicality and direct running look suited to here.

'Katrina might feel she is better in midfield, but to me Katrina Mackey is an out-and-out scorer. The closer you get her to goal, the better. In the two games she has racked up a big total so that gives us another option inside,' Cork boss Murray explains.

Then there's Courcy Rovers forward Saoirse McCarthy who is being trialled at right wing back. It's a role, Murray feels, that McCarthy can excel in.

'We have tried Saoirse at wing back and that seems to be working at the moment,' the Cork manager told *The Southern Star*. 'It was something in our thoughts last year. If you look at Saoirse, she is athletic, she has very good hands and she has a very good strike off left and right. Her defensive duties still need improving but you'd hope throughout the championship that would



# REBELS RULE IN MUNSTER

Cork young guns putting their hands up for championship selection

Newcestown star Ciara O'Sullivan in action for Cork in the Munster final win against Limerick.

improve. Saoirse is doing well there, adapting well and it's important she continues to improve. If she does it gives us a good option there.'

'Options' seem to be the key word with Paudie Murray right now. Take Fiona Keating as an example. With injured All-Star Orla Cronin missing the two Munster championship games – wins against Tipperary and Limerick – the Courcy Rovers ace has slotted in at centre forward. She scored 0-5 from play over both matches.

'The way we can look at it is that we now have another option at centre forward in Fiona Keating – that's important because last year we didn't,' Murray explains.

'It keeps the opposition thinking as well because it just gives us other options. This time last year everyone would have predicted that Orla Cronin would be our centre forward



Cork captain Linda Collins holds the cup after the Rebels won the Munster senior camogie final on Saturday.

(Photos: David Ribeiro)

### CRONIN'S DUE BACK

All-Star Orla Cronin is expected to return to training this week after missing the Munster championship because of a shoulder injury.

The return of the Enniskeane woman will boost Cork's options even more ahead of the championship opener on Sunday week against Dublin.

'Hopefully Orla will be back training this week,' Cork boss Paudie Murray said.

Cronin, who has made the centre-forward slot her own, has emerged as one of Cork's key performers in recent seasons and her form was rewarded with her first All-Star award earlier this year.



Cork star Orla Cronin has missed the last two games through injury.

whereas now we have two options there. In the last couple of games Fiona has done quite well, she is growing with every game and we are very happy with her progress.'

Another West Cork young gun who is finding her feet at senior level is 19-year-old Ciara O'Sullivan from Newcestown. This is her second year on the Cork senior panel and she's getting better and better. She started at wing forward in both championship games, scored 1-1 against Limerick last weekend to follow up from her goal against Tipperary. Her good form puts her firmly into the championship starting team conversation.

'Munster has been good to Ciara, she's had two games and she has played very, very well,' Cork boss Murray says.

'She is only 19 years of age so people must take that into account. She will have ups and

downs, but we're very happy with what we are seeing and how she is developing. Ciara knows there's more to come. She can improve and over the three championship games that will be key because we could be in a quarter-final against either Kilkenny or Galway – and that will be an extremely tough game.'

Murray has been pleased with what he's seen in the last two weekends as Cork conquered Munster, and they made light work of Limerick in the final. Ciara O'Sullivan's first-half goal pushed the Rebels into a 1-13 to 0-6 half-time lead and it was one-way traffic in the second half. Katrina Mackey (2) and Ashling Thompson added second-half goals as Cork cruised to provincial glory.

'I look at Munster as the second most important competition, it's straight before the championship and we have al-

ways treated it as a very important competition,' Murray says.

'The two games have been very good to us. We need tough games because people feel we have an easy enough draw in the championship so every tough game we get, the better.'

Cork have been drawn with Waterford, Dublin and Down in Group 2 of the championship and will begin their campaign on Sunday, July 18th. Ahead of that opener, Murray has decisions to make, but these are the headaches he likes.

'Our squad is strong and we want everyone pushing for places from now on,' he says, as the Rebels look to close the gap on the leading duo, Kilkenny and Galway.

#### Scorers

Cork: K Mackey 2-8 (5f); A Thompson 1-2; C O'Sullivan 1-1; L Collins, F Keating, A O'Connor 0-2 each; H Looney, C Sigerson, S

McCarthy 0-1 each.

Limerick: C Costelloe 0-6 (5f); L Stack 1-1; J Mulcahy 1-0; S O'Callaghan, C Lyons 0-1 each.

Cork: A Lee; E Murphy, L Coppinger, M Cahalane; S McCarthy, L Treacy, L Hayes; H Looney, A Thompson; C Sigerson, F Keating, C O'Sullivan, K Mackey; A O'Connor, L Collins.

Subs: A O'Neill for L Coppinger (48), I Sheehan for H Looney (48), C Healy for A O'Connor (50), I O'Regan for L Collins (50), C Dooley for K Mackey (51), H O'Leary for C O'Sullivan (58), A Egan for E Murphy (60), M Lynch for A Lee (60).

Limerick: L O'Neill; M Quaid, M Creamer, R Ambrose; M Ryan, J Mulcahy, N Ryan; K O'Leary, M O'Mara; D Murphy, S O'Callaghan, R Delee; A Cunningham, C Costello, C Lyons. Subs: M Curtin for M O'Mara (46), L Stack for S O'Callaghan (47), A Scanlon for C Lyons (51), S McNamara for D Murphy (51), O Kelliher for K O'Leary (51). Referee: Aaron Hogg (Clare).





The Cork U16 team that defeated Tipperary to qualify for Munster camogie final.

## Rebels facing toughest of tests with semi-final clash against Galway

IT'S down to the last four in the hunt for the Tesco All-Ireland U16A championship title and tomorrow Cork take on Galway at 1.30pm in the Ragg GAA grounds, whilst Tipperary meet Kilkenny in Banagher at 2pm to battle it out for a place in the final.

With the 2020 championship not being held, Cork are defending champions as holders of the 2019 title and there is huge determination to hold onto a crown won in tremendous fashion and a win that was badly needed in the county.

Galway have enjoyed huge success at this level they had a marvellous run as they made it four in a row from 2015 to 2018.

Always strong opponents the rivalry between the counties at this level is always intense and we can expect the same tomorrow, looking at the form of the four sides remaining in contention Cork and Galway look the strongest contenders to take the crown.

What a pity they have been pitted together at semi-final stage but such is the luck of the draw.

Huge work has gone in with the sides since training resumed and Cork confidently topped their group with flawless displays as they overcame Tipperary and Waterford.

In both of their group game Cork have went on scoring spree.

They racked up 6-15 against Tipperary and went on to hit 3-17 against Waterford.

Despite topping the group Cork were the sides drawn to contest a quarter final but the game will no doubt stand to them as last weekend they overpowered a Dublin sides that went through as runners up from their group with Cork hitting an impressive 4-16 as the Dubs had no answer to their sharp-shooting forwards.

In defence, Cork conceded 2-12 against Tipperary but they were much tighter against Waterford and Dublin holding Waterford to 1-3 they only conceded 1-5 to the Dublin attack.

Equally so, the Galway stats have also been impressive they hit Limerick with 3-17 whilst conceding 1-10 they went on to defeat Clare 4-19 to 3-9 and having got one of the two semi-final spots on offer they will be two weeks without a game when they take on Cork tomorrow.

With no previous meeting

### CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

between the sides to go on it is hard to judge the sides but in the last few years there has always been very little between the counties at under 16 and minor levels.

Galway are managed by Kevin Connolly and his mentors are Conor Dolan, Betty Coleman, Aoife Jones, Darragh Connolly and Marie Nixon.

They have assembled a strong panel of 35 players and included in their sides is Clara McGrath from the famous camogie and hurling family from the Sarsfields club, lining out in attack she has been impressive in their outings to date.

Others players to watch out for include Caoimhe Callaghan, Sophie Flynn and Mia Flannery in attack, whilst in defence Grace Leen, Maya Loftus and Sinead McManus command a strong defence.

Cork are a well-balanced side with a lot of strength throughout the lines and it will take a good side to beat them.

They have excellent players in Shauna Sheehan, Caoimhe Sheehan, Fiona Twohig, Sinead Hurley and Edel Sheehan, Emily O'Donoghue, Ellen Crowley, Grainne Finn and Grainne O'Mahony.

Cork manager/coach Donie Daly and his selectors and back room team of John Moloney, Mossie O'Sullivan, Michelle Gould and Stephen O'Mahony have all the hard work done now just sixty minutes rests between their squad and an All-Ireland final appearance.

Tipperary were runners up in the same group as Cork and they secured their semi-final spot with a quarter final victory over Limerick, they come up against a Kilkenny side that impressed topping group one with a 6-11 to 1-4 victory over Wexford before being made work hard by Dublin to securing a 2-11 to 2-5 win.

Tipperary will look to Celine Guinan, Danielle Ryan, Kate Fercombe and Isabelle Corbett to lead the way.

Kilkenny have had strong performers to date in Rose Kelly, Rachel Dowling, Ava Brett, Lauren Ronan and Caoimhe Keher-Murtagh and they will need more of the same to stop the Tipperary girls advancing.



Cork's Gemma O'Connor, behind, celebrates with Briege Corkery after the 2016 senior championship semi-final. Picture: Piaras Ó Midheach/Sportsfile

# Cork clubs set for battle

### CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick



IT'S little wonder the Cork Senior Club Camogie Championship is recognised as the toughest in the country, and so it's also little wonder Cork are always there or thereabouts in the quest for All-Ireland glory.

Nineteen clubs/divisions competing for the 2021 championship is a remarkable number, and the Punch Cup is up for grabs with a number of teams capable of taking it back to their clubhouse.

Will Courcy Rovers retain their title? Will Inniscarra reach the heights again, having competed in the last five finals, claiming three in a row, and losing the last two?

It's been a long road for the West Cork club, and it may take a few years for their young guns to come through, but you can be sure that they will.

What of Sars? When they won in 2019, everyone thought that was the start of their dominance. But Emer Fennell was too hard to replace, and maybe it was hard to achieve the same motivation in 2020 after winning your first title in 30 years.

A lot of this Sars team are used to winning, their U14s, U16s and minors are used to winning. A winning mentality is priceless, but it can also lend itself to an expectation of continued success and a lack of desire.

I think that the pain of last year's loss against the backdrop of exuberance 12 months previously could be the makings of the Glanmire team.

Enniskeane have made the step up. Their opening round against Douglas isn't the worst scenario for them if Pam Mackey and Julia White aren't lining out for their club this year.

They might yet. Managing Katrina (no need for a surname here) will be a massive task, but if they can do that, they are balanced and have Orla Cronin and Orla Coughlan who will do damage.



Waterford's Clara O'Sullivan with Cork's Orla Cronin.

Picture: Patrick Browne

St Finbarr's came so close to the final last year, losing by just a goal to Inniscarra in the semi-final.

They needed more firepower, and it seems like that gap could be answered this year with Down centre-forward Sorcha McCartan, having secured a work placement in Cork. She is a massive addition.

Down won the All-Ireland intermediate title in 2020, and Sorcha was selected for a Soaring Star award after a Player of the Match display in the semi-final.

St Finbarr's and Cork star Gemma O'Connor is getting married today to Aoife O'Crualaol, and we wish them every happiness for the future.

Seandún and St. Catherine's could be the pick of Round 2. It's a shame Amy O'Connor hasn't made herself available for the divisional side. But it is difficult to fit everything in.

Seandún looked so impressive in their opening victory over Imokilly in 2020, but lost a tight battle to Glen Rovers in round 4 after extra time, 2-18 to 3-13.

St Catherine's are never found wanting and there's no reason to suspect anything less of them for the forthcoming season. A six-point defeat to eventual champions Courcy Rovers in the quarter-final was no mean feat.

Killeagh expected a lot of themselves last season and were bitterly disappointed to be at the receiving end of a heavy defeat to St. Finbarr's in the quarter-final.

The positioning of Chloe Sigerson at full-forward didn't work out as well as they hoped. Cloughduv and Killeagh should serve up a battle.

Elre Óg would have been disappointed with just two games in 2020, despite winning their opening round. Recently promoted, a bye to the quarter-final, which they lost to Douglas, probably wasn't what they wished for.

Newcestown had a nice first year up with three strong games against seasoned teams that will have benefitted them. They'll have a tough opening round against the winners of Sars or Milford.

Ballygarvan are young and it may take another while yet, but they are coming of age with each season. Glen Rovers will be in with a shout again.

It's all to play for.

SE Systems Cork Senior Championship Round 1: Sarsfields V Milford

Round 2: Newcestown V Winner of Round 1; Imokilly V Ballygarvan; Douglas V Enniskeane; Glen Rovers V Elre Óg; Ballincollig V Courcy Rovers; Seandún V St. Catherine's; Inniscarra V St. Finbarr's; Cloughduv V Killeagh; Muskerry V Carbery.





# ALL-IRELAND SENIOR CAMOGIE CHAMPIONSHIP Cork v Dublin



BY GER MCCARTHY

CIARA O'Sullivan is turning heads with the Cork senior camogie team this season.

The Newcestown teenager caught the eye in Cork's recent successful Munster senior championship campaign with boss Paudie Murray impressed by what he has seen from the talented forward.

'Munster has been good to Ciara, she's had two games and she has played very, very well,' Murray told the *Star*.

'She is only 19 years of age so people must take that into account. She will have ups and downs, but we're very happy with what we are seeing and how she is developing.'

This is just O'Sullivan's second season on the Cork senior panel and her first year (2020) was disrupted by Covid, so it's this campaign where she is really finding her feet – and she's flourishing.

In both the league and Munster championship, the 19-year-old saw plenty of action, and her performances at wing forward in the provincial series – she scored 1-0 against Limerick and 1-1 v Limerick – puts her firmly in the conversation to start in this Sunday's All-Ireland championship opener against Dublin at Páirc Uí Rinn (2pm).

While the national league didn't go Cork's way, it was still a valuable learning curve for the rising Newcestown star.

Life has been hectic but the UCC second year finance student is enjoying it all.

'I was really grateful for the experience I gained during the league,' O'Sullivan told *The Southern Star*.

'That was my aim coming into this year so the fact I was starting matches was a huge bonus. I was delighted to feature so often and have learned a lot. I couldn't have asked for more game time than I got and am thankful for that.'

'I had only come out of minor two years ago and was straight into a senior high-performance set-up where I was one of the youngest players. Then Covid hit and I didn't really get much of a look in. This year was when I began to learn and develop as a player.'

O'Sullivan is not your average Cork senior camogie player. She is already a two-time All-Ireland minor winner (2018 and 2019) and was player of the match in Newcestown's 2019 county intermediate final win, as well as owning a Black Tip belt in taekwondo. She means business on and off the pitch.

She might be a relative rookie in the senior Cork camogie set-up – and was the youngest player on the panel in 2020 – but knows what it takes to be successful at inter-county level having claimed back-to-back

## Ciara's turning heads at senior level

Newcestown teenager (19) wants to show what she can do in the championship

**'The mental jump from minor to senior is absolutely huge. No one talks about it' – Ciara O'Sullivan**

All-Ireland minor titles with her county.

The Newcestown woman knows, too, what's needed to make it the top of her chosen sport or at least thought she did before moving into an intense high-performance environment with the Cork seniors.

So how has she found the mental pressure of moving from minor to senior?

'To this day, even when I walk into the Cork dressing room and see the likes of Amy O'Connor, Laura Treacy and Ashling Thompson, I have to

take a step back and realise where I am!' O'Sullivan said.

'I agree that the mental jump from minor to senior is absolutely huge. No one talks about it. No one talks about how much goes into turning up half an hour before every single senior training session or about eating the right food two or three days before a match. There is a lot more to it than the underage set-up.'

'You have to be constantly aware of so many things which is great really because no stone is left unturned when it comes to playing for the Cork seniors. This year, I'm realising how much I'm taking on compared to when I played underage and minor.'

With their national league and successful Munster championship campaign behind them, Cork's senior camogie

team's focus has turned towards the All-Ireland championship. Beginning with Dublin on Sunday, Cork will also face Down and Waterford in the group stage.

Cork will still need to produce three consecutive performances of the highest quality but the lack of a Kilkenny or Galway in the opening group phase means O'Sullivan and her teammates will miss out on what would have been a useful test against two of this year's other All-Ireland contenders.

'It's dangerous for anyone to assume Cork are just going to turn up and win our next three games,' O'Sullivan said.

'Personally, I would have liked to have faced a Kilkenny or Galway just so we could get another tough match under our belts. It would have been beneficial to play either of those two teams.'

'Having said that, the only

thing Cork can concentrate on right now is the next game against Dublin. We cannot take our eye off that match and the challenge Dublin will pose. The same goes for Down and Waterford when we come to play them.'

Once again, matches are coming thick and fast because of this year's reduced camogie league and championship structure.

Cork are coming off a welcome Munster championship success and O'Sullivan is a fan of the current format because it means more games over a short period of time.

'I don't know how the other girls feel but I really like it (camogie championship structure) anyway!' O'Sullivan said.

'To be fair, I am new to the Cork senior panel and wasn't there when they would previously have had to deal with long gaps between their cham-

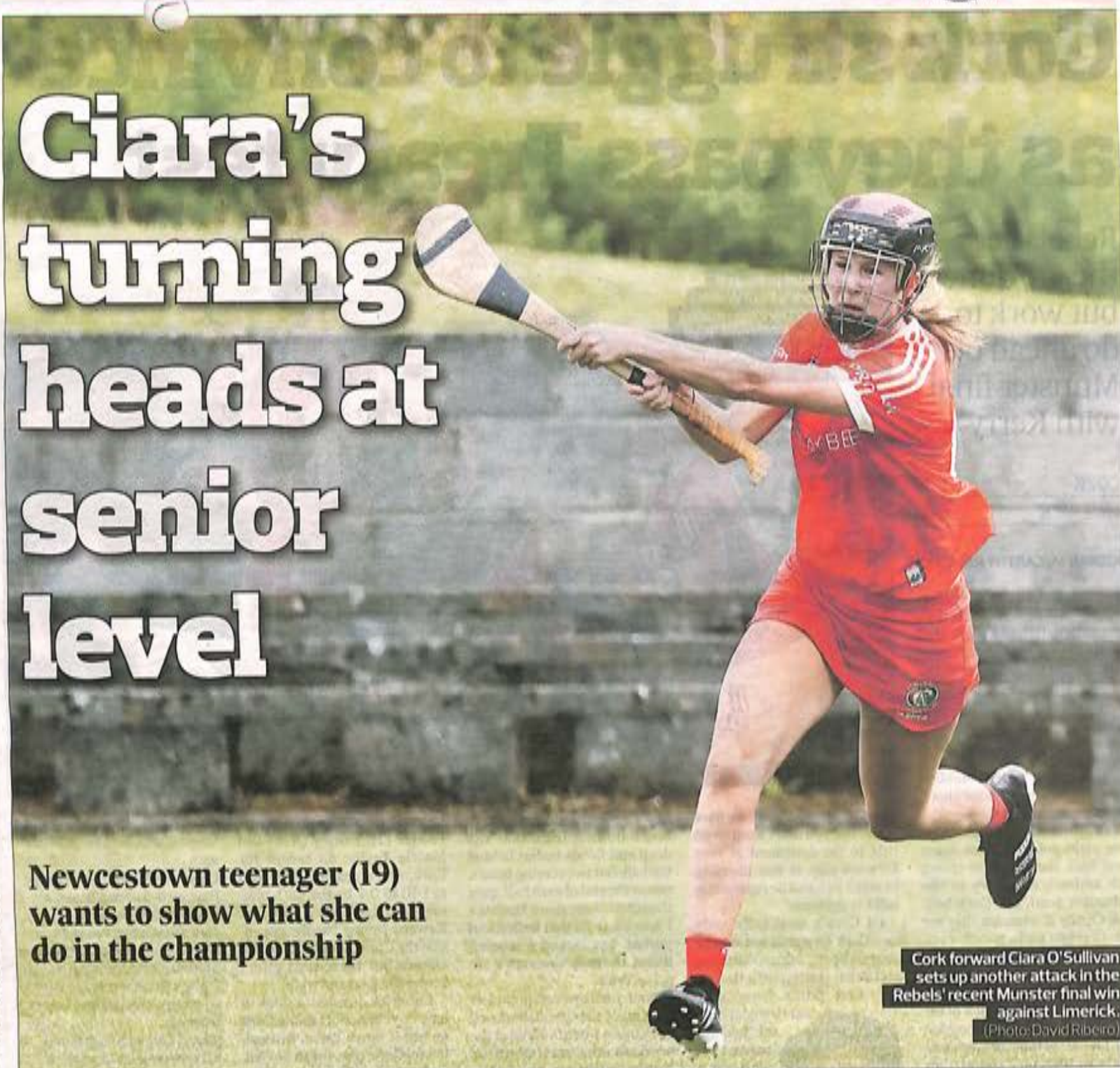
pionship matches. Experiencing a rush of matches is normal to me.'

'Playing league and championship during the summer is great, too. Having all these matches helps bring focus to our training sessions as well. The other thing is playing so many matches doesn't give you time to be dwelling on what's just happened.'

'You have to switch focus to your next game as it might be only four or five days away.'

'Look, I'm really enjoying the experience of playing senior for Cork. I've worked so hard to get here. Right now, all my focus is on Dublin and no one on the Cork panel is looking beyond that game.'

O'Sullivan has adjusted well to life at senior inter-county level and she's keen to push on now and show what she is capable of, starting this Sunday against Dublin.



Cork forward Ciara O'Sullivan sets up another attack in the Rebels' recent Munster final win against Limerick. (Photo: David Ribeiro)



# Meeting of old rivals will determine who will be U16A champions

## CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

IT'S down to the last two in the hunt for the Tesco All-Ireland U16 A championship title and old rivals Cork and Kilkenny will battle it out tomorrow for the crown in Birr at 4.30pm. With no championship played in 2020 due to Covid, Cork go into this final as holders having taken the honours in 2019 when they breached a 16-year gap to take the trophy. Kilkenny enjoyed a superb run from 2005 to 2008 as they made it four in a row and this will be the first final Kilkenny have reached since 2016 when they lost out to a Galway side who retained their title and went on to record four in a row. Both Cork and Kilkenny have come through their respective campaigns as group winners. Kilkenny topped group one with a 6-11 to 1-4 victory over Wexford before being made work hard by Dublin to securing a 2-11 to 2-5 win. Last weekend they overcame Tipperary in a tough encounter they lead from the throw-in but a strong rally saw Tipperary cut the deficit to a point but they weathered the storm and ran out



The Cork U16 camogie team that will contest the Tesco All-Ireland final against Kilkenny.

4-17 to 4-11 winners. Manager Seamus Kelly has an experienced backroom panel that included Adrian Ronan, Tommy Wall, Brian Brophy, Ann Marie Hoynes, Seamus O'Brien, Kate Kelly, Aoife Lanigan and Mary Wall and with a panel of 37 players, they are determined to restore Kilkenny's dominance at underage level. They have a well-balanced side with Lauren Ronan Caoimhe Keher-Murtagh grabbing the vital goals last weekend, Julie Lennon, Rachel Dowling Ava Brett and Rose Kelly have also been to

the fore on the score sheet whilst Ali Kennedy, Siofra Meegan and captain Sofia Kerr have been prominent as Kilkenny continued their march to the final. The Cork management includes manager/coach Donie Daly (Youghal) and his selectors and backroom team are selector/coach John Moloney (Newtownshandrum) and Mossie O'Sullivan (Ballincollig). Goalkeeping coach is Michelle Gould (St Vincent's) and strength and conditioning coach is Stephen O'Mahony, first aid are Colette O'Neill (Erin's Own) and Roberta Crow-

ley (Ballygarvan), with Darina Foley (Midleton) the county board liaison officer and they are equally as determined to retain the title. Cork were very impressive last weekend as they brushed the challenge of Galway aside in superb fashion, from the throw in the result was never in doubt as Cork tore into the game and never allowed Galway settle. Strong in all areas they have an excellent goalkeeper in Jill Connaughton who denied Galway with four point-blank saves, her positioning and reading of the

game is excellent and she commands her defence with huge authority. Up front Emily O'Donoghue and the hard-working Fiona Twohig caused huge problems for the Galway defence and with Caoimhe Sheehan, Grainne Finn, Ava Fitzgerald and Sinead Hurley joining them on the score sheet Cork ran out 3-15 to 0-10 winners. Cork manager Donie Daly is looking forward to the challenge Kilkenny will pose to his charges: "The girls have done everything

we have asked of them, they are well prepared and know what to expect from Kilkenny on Sunday. The girls have improved with every game and have played excellently in a range of weather conditions. "We are particularly impressed with the composure being shown in defence but also our ability to punish mistakes. The level these girls are performing at, with just over eight weeks of collective training is actually astonishing. We would be happy with a team playing like this if we had them for 10 months."

**CORK:** Jill Connaughton (Midleton), Amy O'Sullivan (Mallow), Sinead Hurley (Sarsfields), Caoimhe O'Donoghue (Bishopstown), Millie Condon (Ballinacorney), Keeley Goulding (Rockban), Edel Sheehan (Eire Og), Eimear Duignan (Mallow), Ava Fitzgerald (Sarsfields), Grainne O'Mahony (Eire Og), Fiona Twohig (Valley Rovers), Shauna Sheehan (Eire Og), Caoimhe Sheehan (Ballyhea), Emily O'Donoghue (Bishopstown), Grainne Finn (Fr O'Neill's), Andrea Brislane (Inniscarra), Maedhbh d'Burca (Carrigtwohill), Bronagh O'Shaughnessy (Blackrock), Aoibhe Daly (Youghal), Grainne O'Neill (Fr O'Neill's), Aoibhinn O'Neill (Erin's Own), Amy McCarthy (Clonakilty), Jennifer Sheehy (Ballygarvan), Emma Cantillon (Douglas), Amy Sheppard (Cloughduff), Ellen Crowley (Inniscarra), Alex Cashman (Youghal), Kate Nolan (Clonakilty), Rachael Roche (Sarsfields), Kate Fennessy (Sarsfields).

## CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick

# Parrock's return to give Wexford a lift

THE All-Ireland senior championship commences this weekend with a number of games from the three groups.

Today, Limerick host Wexford, Down travel to Waterford, Clare host league champions Kilkenny, while Westmeath make the trip to Galway.

Tomorrow Cork are at home in Páirc Uí Rinn at 2pm against Dublin while Tipperary make the trip to Offaly.

I fancy Cork, Galway, Kilkenny, Waterford (although newcomers Down will be fairly content with their opening pairing), Tipperary, and I'm going to give Limerick the nod over league division 2 side Wexford.

Limerick gave Kilkenny a real fright in the league quarter-final, a game they could have won, and Kilkenny went on to win the league.

Cork annihilated Limerick a fortnight ago in the Munster final, 4-20 to 2-9, with Limerick's two goals coming in the closing minutes. So, who knows what Limerick side will show up against Wexford.

I haven't seen Wexford play this year, but the reputable Kevin Tattan has taken over and they have Katrina Parrock back, so it'll be interesting to see their progression.

Katrina who is a four-time All-Ireland winner and three-time All-Star, had reached a point in 2017 where she'd had enough of camogie. She'd been playing the sport since she was three.

But after 11 years of inter-county service, she needed a big break away from it. She hoped to have a sport-free year.

But then Wexford Youths coaxed her back to soccer, her second passion. She ended that year with three major titles; an FAI cup medal along with national league and development shield honours.

Parrock scored the only goal in that FAI Cup decider against Peamount United and picked up the Player of the Match award.



Katrina Parrock of Wexford is on the comeback trail.

Picture: INPHO/Cathal Noonan/CN

The invitation to come back to camogie was never far away. Manager Kevin Tattan had been reaching out to her inquiring about a comeback and the 2021 season seemed like the right time for her to embark on her second coming.

"I suppose at the time, I wasn't ready," she told The42 about previous occasions.

"I maybe wasn't fit enough as well,



Hannah Looney of Cork in action against Niamh Ryan and Judith Mulcahy of Limerick in action recently. Picture: Matt Browne/Sportsfile/D

now I feel I'm fitter than I have probably ever been. I've been putting in a lot of hard work and it's really paid off.

"Then, I said I'd go out and puck the ball around. I couldn't even look at a hurl (before), it was gone that bad that I just had to take a step away from it.

"I got the hurl out and I was really enjoying it.

"I think the love has never left me for camogie. It's great to be back and I'm really looking forward to the year ahead."

The ambition for the year ahead is clear for Parrock — bring her 11 years of inter-county experience to the table and allow the future generations to benefit from her insight.

Inspiring younger girls to pursue their dreams in sport is a major

theme of her life. She wrote an intriguing piece last year entitled 'Looking Ahead' in which she recounted the many accolades she earned during her career and her hopes to present herself as an encouraging example for young female athletes.

That philosophy will be even more crucial to the Wexford players as the county continues its rebuilding process. The inter-county landscape is different to the one that Parrock came into as a teenager.

After just turning 17, she was sprung from the bench in the 2018 All-Ireland final where she helped her side to a victory over Cork. She wishes she could remember more about that milestone in her career after then manager Stella Sinnott cautioned her to be ready to come during a warm-up before the game.

An All-Ireland three-in-a-row followed between 2010 and 2012 in which was a golden period for the county.

Wexford's time in the spotlight came to an end soon after. After Parrock stepped away in 2017, she has watched much of their struggles as a fan.

"Look it was hard to see. There came a time where Wexford came was rebuilding and we're seeing now."

"Kevin is doing a huge job with that. It's a very young side and can bring anything to that table. Probably the bit of quality that I'm bringing to the team is my experience of playing in All-Ireland finals."

"Anything I can bring that will benefit the team, I'll be happy to along with young girls growing up. I can help them along. I'll be happy with that."





Amy O'Connor action against Limerick.

Picture: Matt Browne

## O'Sullivan looking to tap into tradition as Dublin come to face Cork

**SUNDAY**  
All-Ireland senior camogie championship, Group 2, first round: Cork v Dublin, Páirc Uí Rinn, 2pm

CORK begin their All-Ireland championship campaign this Sunday against visiting Dublin. You wouldn't expect Dublin to be a threat to Cork but what they will bring is huge work rate and a determined challenge.

Adrian O'Sullivan was appointed as the new Dublin senior camogie manager back in January, replacing Cuala's John Treacy who was in charge for just one campaign.

What many teams have pointed to as a reason for the lack of success has been the turnover of managers in recent years.

The likes of Cork, Galway and Kilkenny have continuity, and it shows. It takes time to get to know the personalities of your squad both on and off the field and certainly time to develop a game plan that works for you and plays to your strengths. What is noteworthy is that O'Sullivan has been appointed for a three-year term alongside Donie Fox and Sarah O'Donovan.

And that's great to hear. O'Sullivan led UL to back-to-back Ashbourne Cups in 2018 and 2019, while he worked as hurling coach with Westmeath (2016, 2017) and Kildare (2019) under Joe Quaid.

He won an All-Ireland Minor A camogie championship title with Limerick in 2014, their first ever, and the intermediate championship with Limerick and Kilkenny in 2014 and 2016. O'Sullivan coached Thomastown to the Kilkenny senior camogie title in 2020 and was coach as Clonkill won the senior hurling championship crown in Westmeath the year before.

He has undoubtedly earned his coaching badge.

Adrian knows his camogie. He was the lead in what was a great podcast called "Women's hurling" which previewed and reviewed championship games and picked their All-Star team for 2020.

Fox is head coach. He has a deep background in GAA, having represented both Galway and Dublin in hurling.

He is the current manager and head coach of the St. Jude's senior camogie team and is the current Athletic Development officer for St. Jude's where his role oversees the education of coaches and the implementation of athletic development practices club wide.

O'Donovan has a long involvement with camogie with Cork



Linda Mellerick

and Dublin winning All-Ireland titles. It was a surprise Dublin faced a league final relegation battle with Waterford. But with a non-training winter and early spring they had literally no time to get to know each other.

They would have been happy with their opening league encounter with Kilkenny, where they lost by just five points to the All-Ireland champions in a very low scoring game; 1-8 to 0-6.

Their leaking of four goals cost them dearly against Offaly where they scored fifteen times, 1-14 and conceded 11 but four of them were goals, 4-7. Adrian wants to play top opposition, even in challenge games, to ensure his side are always learning and feeling the heat against the big guns.

A drop down to intermediate level would have been a massive disappointment so they were obviously over the moon to secure a winning point on 60 minutes to maintain their Division 1 status for 2022. Their group and relegation run gave them four games.

You have to admire Adrian's belief in the job at hand and the respect he is showing it, referring to the Dublin job being the biggest job in camogie. He explains why.

"Yeah a few people rolled their eyes when I said that, but Dublin are second in the Roll of Honour with 26 titles.

"Ok, it's been a while since they've won anything but they've a rich heritage and are only a generation away from that.

"A lot of these girls' mothers, aunts and grandmothers at a stretch would have been involved in these All-Ireland winning teams and I suppose we want to tap into that and give the giant a poke and wake it up a little bit. There are four senior adult teams in Dublin and two of them are the All-Ireland champions (both football titles). We want to tap into the winning culture that's in Dublin and that we're surrounded by."

They'll travel with the intent to win the game of course and take it minute by minute. But in truth, a good performance and obvious progress is what will put a smile on their faces heading home.

## Murray says his side must respect their opposition

CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick

AHEAD of Cork's opening championship game against Dublin at Páirc Uí Rinn on Sunday afternoon, Cork camogie manager Paudie Murray is very clear on what he wants to get out of his team.

"We will expect to win all our games but only if we respect the opposition."

"We will take every game seriously and we want to top the group. That's the target."

He addressed the issue regarding the gap that's there between the top four and the rest.

"The biggest issue out there is that the physicality that has come into the game with the new rule has widened the gap further due to the conditioning element of the top teams."

"If you look at the Limericks, the Clares, all these teams, they are a long way off from a conditioning point of view."

"And if they're going to get to the top table they're going to have to put massive hours into improving that side."

It's hard to do that when a management team is constantly changing, such as in Limerick?

"That's a fair point but this has to be driven by their county boards."

Unlike GAA and the funding that's been there to now, this doesn't get driven by camogie boards.

Conditioning at underage, such as minor isn't on their radar with funding a hindrance.

It's the manager that comes in and starts the process and if it isn't continued throughout the grades under new and various managers then it'll fall down.

It took Paudie a few years to get his teams to where he wanted and he finds that as players step up to the senior grade they have an awful lot to do to catch up to their teammates who are in their third plus seasons.

"Cork must stay on top of that or we will get left behind," he said.

As regards who he feels will emerge from the respective three groups, Paudie made these predictions.

"The groups for the top tier are predictable enough, obviously Cork, Galway, Kilkenny with it being a toss of a coin between Galway and Kilkenny as to who tops group 3."

"You'd expect Tipperary to top their group. So we could be playing Galway or Kilkenny in a quarter-final as the top of each group go into one bowl, two will go straight to a semi-final and the third ball goes back to select two quarter finals with the three runners up."

"So one of those teams is going to be Galway or Kilkenny. I'd fancy Wexford to get through as I rate Kevin Tattam highly."

"So our focus must be on a possible quarter final with Galway or Kilkenny."

"And to get there we must first do a job on Sunday against Dublin and that's where our short term focus is at present."

## Cork U16s power past Galway into final

U16 A CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

Cork	3-15
Galway	0-10

FROM the throw-in on Sunday afternoon, Cork were the sharper of the sides in this Tesco All-Ireland U16 A championship semi-final at The Ragg to set up a showdown with Kilkenny.

Emily O'Donoghue hit two goals for the Rebels and finished with 2-1 while Caoimhe Sheehan also raised a green flag in the first half, and added 0-3 from play for good measure, a tally matched by Fiona Twohig, who chipped in with a pair of frees as well to take her tally to 0-5.

All over the pitch though, Cork dominated and with goalkeeper Jill Connaughton in superb form, Galway could not find a way through even when the Tribe did get chances.

Three times in the opening half she brought off point-blank saves denying Galway from the penalty spot 10 minutes in they searched for their opening score.

Cork had by now set the tempo with an Emily O'Donoghue goal and points from Fiona Twohig, O'Donoghue and Sinead Hurley as they settled into the game.

Galway got off the mark when Jade Whelton pointed a 45 and with Alanna Fahy adding two and Aoibheann Barry another, the Tribe were finding the feet.

Again Connaughton denied them bringing off a superb save from Caoimhe Kelly and it helped rally Cork who struck for two goals in as many minutes, Caoimhe Sheehan and Emily O'Donoghue finishing well as the Cork attacked linked up well.

Again Galway were denied a goal as Jill Connaughton stood up and was counted and with Caoimhe Sheehan adding to the Cork tally before Galway replied with two points, Cork led 3-4 to 0-6 at the interval.

On the turn over, Cork maintained their dominance and picked off some excellent scores they remained in control to the full-time whistle as they booked their place in the final where they will play Kilkenny who recorded a 4-17 to 4-11 victory over Tipperary.

**Scorers for Cork:** E O'Donoghue 2-1, C Sheehan 1-3, F Twohig 0-5 (0-2 f), G Finn 0-3 (0-2 f), A Fitzgerald 0-2, S Hurley 0-1 f.

**Galway:** A Barry 0-3 (0-2 f), A Fahy 0-2 (0-1 45), C Mc Grath, J Whelton, C Kelly, K Madden, S Flynn 0-1 each.

**CORK:** J Connaughton; A O'Sullivan, C O'Donoghue, S Hurley; M Condon, K Goulding, E Sheehan; A Fitzgerald, A Sheehan; G O'Mahony, F Twohig, E Duignan; G Finn, E O'Donoghue, C Sheehan.

**Subs:** E Crowley for G O'Mahony (30), A Sheppard for A O'Sullivan (32), A O'Neill for E Duignan (44), G O'Neill for S Sheehan (inj), A Mc McCarthy for F Twohig, B O'Shaughnessy for G Finn, R Roche for E O'Donoghue (54).

**GALWAY:** C Hickey; A Crowe, K Coleman, K Scully; A Carr, M Loftus, G Leen; K Madden, A Collins; A Fahy, J Whelton, C McGrath; H Tarpey, A Barry, C Kelly.

**Subs:** C Glynn for K Scully (36), M Flannery for J Whelton (40), S Flynn for A Fahy (52), L Murphy for M Loftus (54), E Fitzgerald for K Madden (inj 56).

**Referee:** Justin Heffernan (Wexford).



# Galway itching to buck Cats pattern

Camogie

Cliona Foley

If Oscar Wilde was around and a camogie buff he'd be quick to remind Galway that losing one final to Kilkenny is unfortunate but losing two in six months looks careless.

Their four-time All-Star forward Ailish O'Reilly makes no secret that avoiding a third final loss in a row is providing them with serious motivation ahead of the All-Ireland Senior Championship.

The Oranmore-Maree poacher famously nabbed two of three first-half goals that dented the Cats in the 2019 All-Ireland final.

Since then, her side have lost last year's final and this year's thrilling Littlewoods League decider to the stripey women, leaving the Tribe with a pattern they're now bitterly anxious to break.

"Yeah, losing two finals in a row is not easy to take," O'Reilly admits.

"But we saw something

similar happen to Kilkenny and they bounced back. And we saw it with Galway too in 2011-2012."

As a primary teacher she's quick to absorb lessons and points out there's still only "a throw of a dice at the end of the day between the top three or four teams. The fact we're there or thereabouts means we know we've a serious chance. That makes it that bit easier to come back and give it a go. I thought we should have been up more at half-time in the league final."

"In fairness to Kilkenny they came back and absolutely blitzed us after half-time and when we drew back level they found an extra gear we didn't have. But as long as we learned from it, that's the most important thing."

Spice is added to this intriguing rivalry by the fact they're in the same Championship group and meet next on July 31. Cathal Murray's side noticeably now includes the legendary Therese Maher in its backroom.



READY TO GO: Galway's Ailish O'Reilly, Niamh Hanniffy, and Roisin Black after their league win over Cork last month. O'Reilly makes no secret that avoiding a third final loss in a row is providing them with serious motivation this season. Picture: Inpho/Bryan Keane

Her niece Carrie Dolan is usually chief scorer and they open their All-Ireland campaign against Westmeath today.

They also have another huge motivation — the loss of defensive stalwart Heather Cooney who suffered a cruciate injury in their league game with Clare.

It took a torn ACL to finally put a stop to Cooney's remarkable gallop of 76 or 77 consecutive games in maroon.

"Heather's a massive loss. I don't think she's missed a

single game or a session since I started and is a player that doesn't get half enough credit," says another survivor of Galway's 2013 All-Ireland victory about whom the same could be said.

She revealed that Cooney is very much still part of the squad and noticeably adds "we can't do anything about it now but only drive on and win it for her".

O'Reilly reckons the proximity of 2021 league and championship is ideal, especially after 12 months that

uniquely produced an All-Ireland in December and a league decided late on a Sunday night.

"We're used to usually a three or four-month break between February and June, so just four weeks between them is great and giving us plenty of motivation," O'Reilly says.

"A lot of the league games felt like Championship, they were so intense and fast-paced and played in dry weather and ground."

The thrilling climax, when Aoife Donoghue put Galway

ahead in extra-time only for super-sub Steffi Fitzgerald to strike back brilliantly and Kilkenny to tag on two more scores, has certainly whetted the appetite for a summer in which Tipperary are expected to run camogie's big three closest.

**Round Robin groups:** 1: Tipperary, Wexford, Limerick, Offaly. 2: Cork, Waterford, Dublin, Down. 3: Galway, Kilkenny, Clare, Westmeath Round 1 (today, Sat): Limerick v Wexford, Waterford v Down\*, Clare v Kilkenny, Galway v Westmeath.

**Tomorrow:** Cork v Dublin\*, Offaly v Tipperary. (\*live streaming).



NIP AND TUCK: Waterford's Clara Griffin is tackled by Cassie Fitzpatrick of Down

## Carton's late free breaks Down hearts

A POINTED free in the sixth minute of injury time by Beth Carton rescued a 0-16 to 0-15 victory for Waterford over Down at Walsh Park.

It was a redemptive strike for Carton, who missed an opportunity at the death last month to force extra time in the Division 1 League relegation play-off.

The point denied Down a famous result after an outstanding performance in sweltering heat on the Mourne side's first All-Ireland senior Championship appearance for 22 years.

Carton clocked up a total of nine points, with her long-time attacking sidekick Niamh Rockett weighing in with six from play.

Down did not wilt in this Group 2 tie despite the onslaught from the two All-Stars though. When Niamh Mallon shot the eighth of her nine points, Derek Dunne's team led by four with seven minutes of normal time remaining.

Last year's intermediate victors and current Division 2 League titleholders looked extremely assured from the outset, Mallon slotting two points from play before adding a third from a

### CAMOGIE

By Daragh Ó Conchúir

placed ball before Rockett could get Waterford off the mark after 11 minutes.

It was 0-8 to 0-6 at half-time but when Sorcha McCartan arrowed a sideline over for a two-point return and Aimee McAleenan supplemented it, the margin was four. And that was how it was still when Mallon responded in kind to a Carton double.

Waterford's big two dragged them ahead, only for Mallon to arc over a stunning equaliser to level with time almost up. Carton caught Brianna O'Regan's puckout however, and when Justin Heffernan decreed that Caitriona Caldwell had fouled Rockett, Carton had the easiest opportunity to snatch the spoils.

In Group 3, All-Ireland champions Kilkenny were made to sweat by Clare, who showed fight in their 0-22 to 0-16 defeat at Sixmilebridge.

Chloe Morey racked up 11 points for the hosts. Reigning Player of the Year Denise Gaule weighed in with 10 for the Noreiders, however, and had a superior supporting cast, Katie Nolan hitting three early points and finishing with four, and Katie Power's brace offering evidence of her enduring class.

Kilkenny led 0-8 to 0-2 after the first quarter. Clare outscored their opponents in the remaining period to half-time, five points from Morey making it 0-12 to 0-8 at the interval.

That was as close as Ger O'Connell's crew got though, Gaule, Power and Mary O'Connell finding the target to open a nine-point lead. Clare finished well, Morey and Becky Foley raising white flags by way of consolation.

Elsewhere in the group, last year's beaten finalists and recent League runners-up Galway cantered to a 3-16 to 1-5 victory over Westmeath at Kenny Park. Cathal Murray made a number of changes with some stellar names on the bench including Niamh Kilkenny and Sarah Dervan but Westmeath are in a rebuilding

## as Cats swipe Clare aside

phase under new boss Darren McCormack, the legendary Pamela Greville having retired along with former captain Mairéad McCormack and Denise McGrath.

The visitors held their own early on and trailed by just three points after 10 minutes, Carrie Dolan slotting a pair of frees and Catherine Finnerty also hitting the target.

When Aoife Donoghue goaled just before the water break, it sparked a flurry of scores upon the resumption, Ailish O'Reilly, Dolan, the industrious Niamh McGrath and her sister Siobhán all splitting the posts before Donoghue grabbed her second major. Hannah Core and Megan Dowdall were on target for Westmeath but they trailed by 2-8 to 0-3 at the interval.

The manner in which they contested the early part of the second half gave cause for optimism. Core fired into the net while the Lakesiders also had a penalty saved.

But Galway have an array of firepower the envy of most counties and with more gaps appearing as the opposition tired under

the draining sun, Noreen Coen nabbed a third goal.

Meanwhile, a 67th minute goal from a penalty by Chloe Foxe gave Wexford a dramatic and hugely significant 2-12 to 1-13 win over Limerick in Newcastle West. Fortunes ebbed and flowed as each side held the upper hand on occasion but just as the Shannonsiders thought they had chiselled out the hardest of earned wins, Foxe shook the rigging and it was Wexford's day.

A Caoimhe Lyons goal edged the home team ahead at the break, 1-5 to 0-6. Foxe's accuracy keeping Kevin Tattan's outfit well in touch. They led in the second half with Katrina Parrock goaling 20 seconds after her introduction, but a Caoimhe Costelloe point left it delicately poised at the second water break, 1-9 apiece.

Remarkably, the scoring rate increased in spite of the pressure and the searing elements. Points from Rebecca Delee, Costelloe and Sinéad McNamara moved Pat Ryan's charges two ahead but there was a sting in the tail, delivered with venom by Foxe.

ARD			
CAMOGIE			
All-Ireland SFC - Group 1 Round 1			
WEXFORD	2-12	LIMERICK	1-13
Group 2 Round 1			
WATERFORD	0-16	DOWN	0-15
Group 3 Round 1			
KILKENNY	0-22	CLARE	0-16
GALWAY	3-10	WESTMEATH	1-4



# Rockett helps Waterford break stubborn Down resistance

## Camogie

### Daragh Ó Conchúir

Waterford manager Derek Lyons is hoping that the last-ditch one-point triumph of his team over a Down unit making its county's first appearance in the All-Ireland Senior Camogie Championship in 22 years, will provide the necessary confidence boost to spark a summer to remember.

With seven minutes of this Group 2 tie to play at Walsh Park on Saturday, the hosts were trailing by four points, Niamh Mallon having already scored eight of her nine points and Sorcha McCartan after slotting a two-point sideline.

Waterford possess plenty of leadership though, in returning Lorraine Bray and her fellow All-Stars Niamh Rockett and Beth Carton. Rockett finished with six points from

play as the Déise girls dragged themselves to the lead, and after Mallon restored parity with a sensational point over her right shoulder while falling to the ground, the skipper was adjudged to have been fouled right in front of the posts. Beth Carton split the posts for her 10th point to snatch a 0-16 to 0-15 victory.

"We needed a win, whatever way we dug it out," said Lyons. "The one thing that

wasn't missing was honesty of effort and endeavour ... they never gave up."

On Saturday, a hat-trick of goals from Orla O'Dwyer, who finished with 3-3, was the highlight in Group 1 as Tipperary put Offaly to the sword by 3-23 to 1-12.

A sensational second-minute goal from Katrina Mackey after a brilliant run and pass by Hannah Looney sent Cork on the way to a 2-19 to 0-12 f

win over Dublin at Páirc Uí Rinn. Amy O'Connor raised a green flag in the second half and with points coming from all over the field, Cork were too strong for a Dublin side that kept plugging away.

In Saturday's other games, a 67th minute goal from a penalty by Chloe Foxe gave Wexford a dramatic and hugely significant 2-12 to 1-13 win over Limerick in Newcastle West. Foxe shook the rigging

deep in stoppage time.

In Group 3, All-Ireland and League champions Kilkenny were made sweat by Clare but despite Sixmilebridge star Chloe Morey scoring 0-11 on her local pitch, Denise Gaule had 10 for the Noreiders, who prevailed by 0-22 to 0-16.

Elsewhere in the group, two goals from Aoife Donohue and one by Noreen Coen helped Galway to a 3-16 to 1-5 triumph over Westmeath.



The Cork team celebrate after beating Kilkenny to win the All-Ireland U16 camogie title yesterday.

Picture: ©INPHO/Tom O'HanlonBE

# Cork are All-Ireland U16A champions

Cork	2-12
Kilkenny	2-10

## CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

A rip-roaring contest in the searing heat at St Brendan's Park Birr saw Cork crowned Tesco U16A All-Ireland champions after a tough exciting battle with Kilkenny.

Level on three occasions in the opening half Cork went to the dressing rooms leading by two points 1-8 to 1-6 after the sides had exchanged goals in a 30-second spell just before the break.

With the sides tied on three points each inside the opening eight minutes Cork hit a purple patch with three points in a row from Grainne O'Mahony, Caoimhe Sheehan and Grainne Finn giving them an early advantage.

Kilkenny responded in the challenge with points from Amy Cody and Ava

Brett but two in a row from Fiona Twohig restored Cork's two point advantage.

Kilkenny hit the front with a superb rose Kelly goal but from the puck out Fiona Twohig blasted to the net and with the sides swapping points it was advantage Cork at the break.

Kilkenny won a penalty inside two minutes of the restart but a poor effort from Rachel Dowling saw Cork weather the storm and points from Finn and Hurley edged them further ahead.

Kilkenny narrowed the gap with three points as Cork replied with one

and an Emily O'Donoghue goal just after the water break put Cork five ahead but Kilkenny were not going to die easily.

Ava Brett and Emily O'Donoghue swapped points and applying huge pressure Kilkenny grabbed a goal Julie Lennon setting up Lauren Ronan who blasted to the net.

Now it was Cork that were under pressure and they certainly had to stand tall as Kilkenny pushed for a winner and awarded a close in free they went for it but the Cork defence cleared their lines.

As the sides played out the injury time Kilkenny still laid siege to the Cork goal, Cork keeper Jill Connaughton had to stretch to pluck the ball out of the air as Kilkenny went for the top corner of the net, but crucially Cork cleared under huge pressure and

held their line to retain the title won in 2019.

Fiona Twohig, who was superb grabbing 1-3 of the Cork tally was named as player of the match.

**Scorers for Cork:** F Twohig 1-3 (0-1f), E O'Donoghue 1-1, G Finn 0-3 (f's), C Sheehan 0-2, G O'Mahony, A Fitzgerald, S Hurley (f) 0-1 each.

**Kilkenny:** L Ronan 1-2 (0-2f's), R Dowling, A Brett 0-3 each, R Kelly 1-0, A Cody 0-2 (0-1f).

**Cork:** J Connaughton; A O'Sullivan, S Hurley, C O'Donoghue; M Condon, K Goulding, E Sheehan; E Crowley, A Fitzgerald; G O'Mahony, F Twohig, S Sheehan; C Sheehan, E O'Donoghue, G Finn.

**Subs:** E Duignan for E Crowley (35), A O'Neill for S Sheehan (43), M De Burch for S Hurley (63).

**Kilkenny:** A Kennedy; S Meegan, M O'Keefe, L Phelan; A Carroll, S Kerr, L Walsh; R Kelly, A Donohy; A Cody, A Brett, R Dowling, L Ronan, C Kehir-Murtagh, C Dunne.

**Subs:** E Corr for L Walsh (inj 31), J Lennon for E Corr (43), L Cooney for A Cody (55), A Ryan for C Kehir-Murtagh (58).

**Referee:** John Darmody (Westmeath).





Cork's Katrina Mackey handpasses to Ciara O'Sullivan against Dublin.  
Picture: Eddie O'Hare



Cork's Hannah Looney bursts past Dublin's Roisin Baker at Páirc Uí Rinn.  
Picture: Eddie O'Hare

# Cork ladies sizzle against the Dubs



CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick

**Cork** 2-19  
**Dublin** 0-12

UNDER the searing sun at Páirc Uí Rinn, Cork overcame Dublin to take full points in the opening round of their All-Ireland Senior Camogie Championship campaign.

In early control with 1-1 after three minutes, Cork maintained their lead for the duration.

You felt there was another gear in Cork if needed as they dominated most positions.

Cork's full-back line didn't see a lot of possession in the opening half, Dublin finding it hard to get past Cork's midfield and half-back line.

Ashling Thompson and Hannah Looney covered a huge amount of ground, both in top form, Thompson breaking down Dublin attacks, doing trojan work and scoring a wonderful point on 29 minutes.

Looney caused massive problems for Dublin running forward, a brilliant burst cutting through several defenders to pick out Katrina Mackey who finished to give Cork their opening goal on three minutes.

Amy O'Connor and Muireann Lee were having a great battle, O'Connor winning some frees from the tussles. Amy Lee continues to do nothing wrong since she took over the number one spot.

Her confidence under the dropping ball while under pressure, her alertness off her line, her deliveries and puck-outs very strong.

Dublin favoured short puck-outs where pressure from Cork turned them over on occasion or forced frees for overcarrying.

Cork had six wides by the twenty-fourth minute and that is something that will concern them.

One of the highlights of the opening half was the quality of free taking, Aisling Maher from the visitors and some nice scores from Chloe Sigerson and Katrina Mackey.



Cork's Linda Collins points against Dublin during the All-Ireland championship at Páirc Uí Rinn.  
Picture: Eddie O'Hare

Amy O'Connor sprinted towards goal on 27 minutes when a cynical foul by Orla Gray stopped her in her tracks, thankfully she could play on and Gray received a yellow.

Ashling Thompson continued her dominance with Looney also very effective around the middle as the second half commenced.

Cork led 1-11 to 0-6 and it could have been more, seven wides at this point and a couple of passes slightly over-shot killing off further scores.

Mackey (a free) and Fiona Keating with two quick points extended Cork's lead to 10 points. And it got worse for Dublin.

A defensive slip-up when looking in control was snapped up by Amy O'Connor and typical O'Connor style, she had just goal on her mind, and she clinically finished to the net.

Dublin needed to up their game, but nerves seemed to linger as they jitters

balls they should have claimed. As Cork continued to drive forward Katrina Mackey was held back on 36 with the goal at her mercy, but the referee failed to see it.

It followed with a goal opportunity for Dublin which might have revitalised them, but Kerri Finnegan blasted over the bar.

With Cork in complete control 2-15 to 0-8 at the second water break on 45 minutes, Dublin needed to speed up their play to avoid Cork crowding them, but their first touch didn't help matters.

It was 52 minutes before Cork began introducing some subs, Orla Cronin and Izzy O'Regan replacing Hannah Looney and Ciara O'Sullivan, Looney alongside with Thompson two contenders for the player of the match.

Overall a good display from Cork, wides aside, with seven players again getting on the score sheet.

Emma O'Byrne and Ali Twomey did what they could as Dublin never gave up the fight, five wides not helping their cause, but it was a task too big.

Cork travel to Newry next weekend to play Down who lost their opening game to Waterford by a point on Saturday.

**Scorers for Cork:** K Mackey 1-7 (0-6 f), L Collins 0-2, C Sigerson 0-5 (0-3f), A O'Connor 1-1, A Thompson 0-2, F Keating 0-1, O Cronin 0-1 each.

**Dublin:** A Maher 0-7 (0-5 f, 0-1 '45), N Gannon 0-2, A Twomey, K Finnegan, E Flanagan 0-1 each.

**CORK:** A Lee, E Murphy, L Coppinger, M Cahalane; S McCarthy, L Treacy, L Hayes; H Looney, A Thompson; C Sigerson, C O'Sullivan, F Keating, A O'Connor, L Collins, K Mackey.

**Subs:** O Cronin, I O'Regan for H Looney and C O'Sullivan (52), I Sheehan for A Thompson (55).

**DUBLIN:** C Tierney, O Gray, E O'Brien, M Kelleher; E O'Byrne, G Quinn, H Hegarty; E Flanagan, R Baker; A Maher, J Couch, A Whelan; A Twomey, K Finnegan; N Gannon.

**Subs:** E Jamelson Murphy for O Gray (h-t), C Nicoletti for A Whelan (42).

**Referee:** Kevin O'Brien - Limerick

## Murray always looking to improve

REACTION

Linda Mellerick

CORK manager Paudie Murray had mixed feelings after the resounding win over Dublin on Sunday.

"Some good play and some not so good," he said. "We looked a bit rusty, dead, particularly around the middle of the field and probably guilty of a couple of wides, so I suppose heat plays a factor as well."

When asked if the intense heat took its toll on players, he said: "Yeah, I suppose it does, but every day you go out you'd like to do things better, so there's patches of that game that would disappoint us."

Cork got the perfect start with a great goal instigated by Hannah Looney for Katrina Mackey who played 52 minutes and showed great energy throughout after playing with the footballers on Saturday.

"Yeah, Hannah is very dangerous when going forward like that. I suppose being greedy you'd like more of it from her, because every time she does it, she causes massive chaos in defence. So you'd like to get her on a weekend when she has only one game rather than two, and that's the biggest problem with Hannah at the moment."

Cork hit some lovely long-range points from Ashling Thompson and Chloe Sigerson, and even though Cork were guilty of 11 wides, some of the scoring was top class.

"I think Chloe had one of her better games this year," said Murray. "I thought she moved into some great scoring positions. OK, she was probably guilty of a few wides in the first half, but other than that I'd be very pleased with her overall display. It's very important that you score from distance in the modern game, and I think that's one of the pleasing things."

The points by Fiona Keating and Katrina Mackey just after half time and the goal by Amy O'Connor showed what they are capable of doing.

"Yeah, I suppose the only thing is that you'd like to have kicked on from there," said Murray. "I think we scored 1-8 in the second half against 1-11 in the first. It should be the other way around."

"So, I suppose not kicking on in the second half is the one thing that would annoy us."

Cork's style of play was very effective; good use of the ball out of defence and long, direct ball into what is a very pacy full-forward line, obviously something management is working on?

"Yeah it is, but when you have forwards like that inside, they need to get the ball, and it's something we've been working on, and we've two wings backs that can deliver the ball as well."

"Probably at times the ball should have stuck better inside, but you'd be hoping as the summer moves on that we get better on those things."



# Cats almost caught on the hop by Westmeath

By Kevin Egan

FOR long stretches in TEG Cusack Park in Mullingar yesterday it looked as if the story of the 2021 All-Ireland senior camogie championship was unfolding, with the All-Ireland champions Kilkenny pushed to the wire by Westmeath.

The home side continued to hold a lead over their opponents right up until the second-half water break, when a goal from Miriam Walsh finally set the Cats on the way to a 2-17 to 1-11 victory.

Denise Gaule was uncharacteristically inaccurate with a series of frees and several other Kilkenny players underperformed in the early stages of this tie, as evidenced by the fact that manager Brian Dowling used four of his five subs by the 37th minute.

The other side of the story was a brilliant performance by Westmeath, arguably their best since gaining promotion to senior on the back of their 2019 intermediate title. Hannah Core fired in their goal after five minutes, and two points from Sheila McGrath as well as four points (including three frees) from Megan Dowdall gave them a 1-8 to 0-7 interval lead.

Nine minutes into the second half both sides had added just two points each and the home crowd really started to believe something magical was happening — until Walsh's goal ended that dream.

Katie Nolan scored 1-1 in a final quarter where Kilkenny showed their strength in depth and their scoring power, but it wasn't the form they would have wanted ahead of next week's clash with Galway.

The Tribeswomen themselves also had something of a 15-minute purple patch when they took on Clare at Kenny Park in Athenry and prevailed by 2-12 to 2-6. They did their damage in the third quarter, outscoring their opponents

**TIGHT TUSSELE:** Kate Wall of Cork in action against Nicole Malcolmson of Kildare during the All-Ireland intermediate match in Newbridge yesterday. Cork would go on to win the game 1-15 to 0-7.



by 2-3 to 0-1. Niamh Kilkenny's long range effort was spilled to the net by Clare goalkeeper Doireann Murphy, before Siobhán McGrath tapped home after some unselfish play by Catherine Finnerty in the build-up. This seemed to end the game as a contest, with both sides emptying their benches, but a late goal from a Chloe Morey free brought the gap back to six points approaching injury-time.

On the next attack, a long Morey ball dropped behind the Galway defence and fell kindly for substitute Aine O'Loughlin to finish to the net, but Cathal Murray's

charges maintained their composure with late scores from Aoife Donohue, Ailish O'Reilly and Kilkenny sealing Galway's win.

Wexford are almost certain of their place in the quarter-finals after they beat Offaly by 4-10 to 0-15 at Chadwicks Wexford Park in the only game in Group 1.

The game was barely underway when a powerful run from Orla Sinnott was matched by an equally dextrous flick into the path of Joanne Dillon, who duly slammed the ball to the Offaly net. With seven minutes gone, Anais Curran had a second goal for Wexford and

the home side were eight points to the good.

Offaly gradually worked their way back into the tie and were more in touch at half time, 2-7 to 0-8 adrift. They were heavily dependent on Mairéad Teehan's freetaking as she contributed 0-6 in that opening period, all from dead balls.

The scoring dried up a little after that and while the Model County always held a lead, it was only in the final five minutes that Wexford made the game safe, with first a Lisa Bolger penalty and then a low finish from a tight angle by Mag

Byrne beating the impressive Mairéad Jennings in the Offaly goal.

There were blisteringly hot conditions in Newry for Cork's visit to Down in Group 2, where the heavily-fancied Rebels did enough to pick up a 1-13 to 0-10 win without ever really exploding into life in the way they did in round one against Dublin.

Orla Cronin, Laura Hayes and Izzy O'Regan picked off good points from play in a competitive contest before Fiona Keating's goal five minutes before the short whistle put a little bit of daylight between the sides. Cork had five different scorers in the second half as they kept Down at arm's length.

Arguably the game of the day in terms of significance with regard to quarter-final qualification was at Skerries Harps, where the expected tight game never really materialised. Dublin made a strong start against Waterford, pointing the first three scores through Jody Couch, Aisling Maher and Kerrie Finnegan, but the wheels came off a little bit after that as Waterford gradually reeled them in and then took over.

Beth Carton was as strong as always for the Déise with four of their first six points as they took the lead by the 23rd minute, then put daylight between the sides thanks to a good finish by Niamh Rockett for the game's first goal.

With the Dubs on the ropes, a second goal from Abby Flynn deep in first half injury time (of which there was over eight minutes due to Sibéal Harney's early injury and withdrawal) left it 2-10 to 0-7 at the break.

Dublin shot just two points in the second half as Waterford cruised to a 2-17 to 0-9 win, meaning that they and Cork have wrapped up the top two spots in the group, with Dublin and Down both winless going into their clash next weekend.

## Impressive Tipp march on

Camogie

Daragh Ó Conchúir

Bill Mullaney described the performance of his Tipperary team as "awesome at times" but both he and player of the match Grace O'Brien noted areas where improvement was required, not least a lack of economy that gave Limerick some hope for a brief period in the second half.

Eventually, however, the home team put the game to bed, winning 2-20 to 1-11 in the All-Ireland senior camogie championship tie at Éire Og, Nenagh.

Tipp are now through to the knockout stages; indeed the entire sextet is known after two rounds, with next week's ties determining group winners — two will move directly to the semi-finals, with the rest making up two quarter-finals — and the three

teams that will be involved in the relegation play-offs.

All-Ireland champions Kilkenny, Galway, Wexford, Cork, and Waterford also qualified, but the ever-evolving Tipperary have been the most impressive team of the competition. They followed a 20-point defeat of Offaly with this 12-point success.

"We were awesome at times but we need to be consistent too," cautioned Mullaney. "We played well, we were putting it away, and then as usual — maybe it is a Tipperary thing — we let Limerick back into the match and gave them the opportunities. We needed to be clinical but I think we upped it again in the last 10 minutes and saw it out very well."

"But these are the ups and downs of it, you can't dominate a game for 60 minutes, especially against a team like Limerick. But I thought we

coped well with their comeback and at times we were very good, both forwards and backs."

Goals from Niamh Rockett and Abby Flynn featured as Waterford blew Dublin away by 2-17 to 0-9 to dish out significant revenge for their league relegation play-off defeat to the same opposition.

Former Republic of Ireland underage basketball star Flynn was modest about her own major, created by the high-scoring Beth Carton. "The girls did great to work out the ball," Flynn said. "Beth had the ball in the corner and there were about five of them around her and she just had to flick it out. God, I only had to put it in the net after the work she had done so I was just thankful to see it hit the back of the net."

A Miriam Walsh goal finally broke the stern resistance of Westmeath as Kilkenny



Tipperary's Orla O'Dwyer battles with Limerick's Orlaith Kelliher. Picture: Laszlo Geczo/Inpho

ground out a 2-17 to 1-11 victory. A Hannah Core goal had helped the visitors lead at the break by 1-8 to 0-7 but Walsh's goal was a turning point and Katie Nolan added a major to seal the deal.

Goals from Joanne Dillon, Anais Curran, Lisa Bolger (penalty), and Mag Byrne were the fuel for a resurgent Wexford, who got the better of Offaly by 4-10 to 0-15.

A fortuitous goal from long

range by Niamh Kilkenny followed by a tap-in for Siobhán McGrath opened an insurmountable gap for Galway over Clare in the third quarter. Late goals by Chloe Morey and Aine O'Loughlin brought Ger O'Connell's charges to within three points but points from Aoife Donohue, Ailish O'Reilly, and Kilkenny confirmed a 2-12 to 2-6 result.

The Rebels laid the ground-

work for their 1-13 to 0-10 win over Down in the first half. Fiona Keating's goal five minutes before the break the key score. Siorcha McCartan, who has been training with Leeside giants St Finbarr's as she is based in Cork City due to work, registered two points for Down in that period, while Niamh Mallon, who finished the game's top scorer with seven points (three from play) was also on the mark.



# Keating fires Cork to victory



Courtesy Rovers star Fiona Keating scored the only goal of the game as Cork beat Down in Newry last weekend.

**'Whoever wins will finish top of the group and so it is important that Cork finishes first' – Paudie Murray, Cork manager**

## Rebels are ready for winner-take-all clash with Waterford

### SENIOR CAMOGIE

BY GER MCCARTHY

PAUDIE Murray wants every Cork player to hit their individual targets in this Saturday's All-Ireland camogie senior championship showdown with Waterford.

Cork warmed up for their final Group 1 match with the Déise by travelling North to defeat Down 1-13 to 0-10 last Saturday. This win means that Cork are already through to the knock-out stages with one game to spare, as are Waterford. It also sets up this Munster derby at Páirc Uí Rinn (5pm) as a winner-take-all encounter because whoever emerges vic-

torious will progress directly to an All-Ireland semi-final.

Cork manager Murray was happy with the win away to Down but would have preferred a stiffer challenge.

'It was a good result after such a long journey and good to get it over with,' Murray said.

'Looking at the match itself, we will learn an awful lot from it. Granted, the weather conditions and the fact some people were on a bus for five hours have to be taken into account. The (Newry) playing surface was appalling, probably the worst I've seen. Not a blade of grass to be seen and then you play against a team with eight

defenders and four across the middle of the field.

'The game created its own test for a pretty young Cork team. I thought we acquitted ourselves well though and never panicked. To be fair, it was very frustrating but we stuck to our task. From that point of view, I'm very happy.'

A tight first half was highlighted by a superb Fiona Keating goal which enabled Cork to build a five-point interval advantage. Their opponents remained in defensive mode throughout the second period but the Munster side still managed to run out comfortable 1-13 to 0-10 winners.

'The way our inside three forwards were marked by Down's defence, it was important for those playing outside of them to get on the scoreboard,' the Cork manager explained.

'I thought we worked the ball into our scoring zones well enough. Look, if you were really

going to be critical of that performance, you'd say we should have tagged on four more points. I think you have to allow for the fact the ground didn't allow players to pick up the ball as fast as they would normally do. Sometimes it took three or four attempts.

'For free-taking, it was next to impossible to lift the ball off of the ground. So, those things have to be taken into account. I have watched the match back and the more I look at it, maybe in the past, we might have blown up so I'm quite happy with the outcome.'

Waterford are Murray's charges next opponents in their final Group 2 match. In terms of form, the Déise edged Down by a point at Walsh Park before defeating Dublin 2-17 to 0-9 at Parnell Park last Saturday. The two side's previous meeting at the end of May saw Cork register a 3-15 to 1-13 Division 1 league triumph away from

home.

'We are working off a system that requires us to hit various targets on match day,' Murray said, looking ahead this weekend's clash with Waterford.

'The girls were told during the group stages that they are playing against themselves with certain targets to be achieved. It will be no different the next day against Waterford. It is a winner-take-all match so they will be coming to win it as well. Whoever wins will finish top of the group and so it is important that Cork finishes first.'

Scorers

Cork: F Keating 1-1; K Mackey 0-4

(3f); L Hayes 0-2; A O'Connor, O Cronin, I O'Regan, L Collins, H Looney, C O'Sullivan 0-1 each.  
Down: N Mallon 0-7 (4f); S McCartan 0-3.

Cork: A Lee; E Murphy, A Egan, L Coppinger; S McCarthy, L Treacy, L Hayes; H Looney, O Cronin; I O'Regan, F Keating, C Sigerson; K Mackey, L Collins, A O'Connor.

Sub: C O'Sullivan for A Egan (48).

Down: C McGourty; C Caldwell, A Savage, B Fitzpatrick; D Savage, B Savage, C Rocks; D Magee, K McMullan; A McAleenan, A Keown, S McCartan; N Mallon, L Clarke, A Rogan.

Sub: C Cowan for A McAleenan (52).

Referee: G Donegan (Dublin).

### SENIOR CHAMPIONSHIP GROUP 2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	SD	Pts
Cork	2	2	0	0	41	22	+19	6
Waterford	2	2	0	0	39	24	+15	6
Down	2	0	0	2	25	32	-7	0
Dublin	2	0	0	2	21	48	-27	0

## Camogie Association launches new skills tool online

THE Camogie Association have recently launched Skill Evolution, designed to be a useful tool for coaches.

Skill Evolution is a suite of videos which provides coaches, teachers, parents, and players a modern look at the technical skills of the game and their progression across the player's phased development.

This resource provides an easily accessible tool which they hope will help to maximise skill practises within camogie's youngest players in their formative years and through to the adult player who continues to improve their skills in preparation for competitive action at club level and beyond.

At the launch of the initiative in Croke Park, the Camogie Association's Liam Clancy explained the concept.

'The Games Development team looked first at the changing and differing learning needs of the modern coach and player,' he said.

'We wanted to create something which lent itself to the modern player and something that would stimulate a

### CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

clear vision of where a player/group of players are in their development, where they are going, and give direction in getting there through their practices.

'As a team, we wanted to produce something which was easily accessible and provided the short, sharp information, and visual that's required. Skill Evolution does that, and provides an anchor of support to the viewer, be they a player themselves or someone involved in the development of players within the game of camogie.'

'We looked across various sporting contexts in the search for resources which subtly blend the phases of player development and the coaching of such, but had little success.'

'Skill Evolution depicts the smooth transition from phase to phase in the one place, at the one time.'

Skill Evolution exhibits 15 of the technical skills of the game of camogie, with U8, U12, U16, and adult players acting as signposts, providing a visual representation of the skill as well as coaching cues through the voiceover of Clara Doyle from Scariff-Ogonelloe in Clare.

The Camogie Association's Louise Conlon expressed delight at the new initiative.

'It is our great pleasure to publish such a modern resource for the use of our members,' she said.

'Skill Evolution can be utilised by all our members in a variety of ways, be it volunteering at underage Go Games level, involvement in speed leagues at youth level, or incorporating it as part of our many existing programmes such as the MNA Hurl With Me Programme.'

'Skill Evolution offers viewers a vibrant insight into the modern-day camogie player, as they progress through the phases of the Gaelic Games Player Pathway.'

The Skill Evolution video is available to view on the Camogie Association website.

**HURLEY** (Glasheen, Cork): On July 25 2021, unexpectedly, at Cork University Hospital, KITT (nee Barry Murphy), beloved wife of Donal and dear mother of Diarmuid, Doncha, Orla and Brian. Sadly missed by her loving family, grandchildren Shane, Eimear and Clara, daughter-in-law Collette, brothers John and Pat, sister Joan, brothers-in-law, sister-in-law nieces, nephews, relatives and friends. May she rest in peace. In accordance with current government guidelines the funeral will be private. Kitty's Requiem Mass will be streamed on tomorrow (Wednesday) at 11.00am on [www.churchservices.ie/thelough](http://www.churchservices.ie/thelough) Messages for Kitty's family may be left on the condolence link on rip.ie.



Kilbree's Caoimhe Murphy and Emily O'Donovan celebrate Cork's Munster minor camogie championship success.





Aoife Hurley of Cork in action against Ellen Morgan of Kildare.  
Picture: Daire Brennan/Sportsfile

## Cork will be eager to maintain form against a tough Antrim side

A BIG one for the Cork intermediate camogie side as they welcome All-Ireland runners-up and 2021 Division 2 League finalists Antrim to Castle Road at 1pm today for a game that has the potential to decide who tops the group and grabs a semi-final spot.

Cork had a superb victory over Kildare last weekend and Mark McCarthy will be hoping to continue the good form shown by his side. Cork were fast out of the traps and up front Kildare found the going tough against the attacking threat posed by Aoife Hurley, Kate Wall and Rachel O'Shea as Cork laid down an early marker and led from the start.

Boosted by a good start they confidently pushed on and with Lauren Callanan and Jacinta Crowley adding to the score sheet they held their lead to the final whistle.

The hard working Katie Walsh again proved a hand full for the Kildare defence as she showed huge pace. Rachel O'Shea continued to slot over the scores from frees and this is vital, in defence Niamh O'Leary, Aoife O'Callaghan and Grainne Hannon continue to show good form.

Cork, having lost out to Tipperary in the provincial final, needed this victory and the manner in which it was achieved will please Mark McCarthy and his management, boosted by a good start it is now vital to maintain the momentum and the challenge that Antrim will pose is one of the strongest Cork will face.

Antrim got their campaign off to a flying start as they overcame Kilkenny 2-13 to 1-12 on Sunday last in a tough contest where the sides were level on several occasions before Antrim finally shook off the challenges posed by a gritty and determined Kilkenny sides.

Before the throw-in, the Antrim management were hit with the withdrawal of four players due to a Covid contact which meant they had to bring four players into their starting 15 and re-adjust their team with a lot of positional changes.

They settled into the game with early points from Maeve Kelly, Nicole O'Neill and minor player Aine Magill, who has been playing superbly. She confidently hit four points from play and Cork will have to keep a close eye on her, as given any sniff

### CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

of a score she will punish any defence.

Katie McAleese Carey made a return to the county set-up after a two-year absence when introduced for the second half and the former county captain made her presence felt as she grabbed a vital goal that ultimately proved to be the score that saw Antrim over the line.

Her experience is a welcome boost for Antrim and she is a huge asset to a group of players that were hugely disappointed to lose both the All Ireland final and the national league decider.

The return from injury of both Chloe Drain and Maeve Connolly have strengthened the side and debutante Aine Magill showed she is well able for the challenges at the higher level Katie Carey's performance when introduced will give see Antrim manager Paul McKillen with plenty of competition for places in his starting team.

All through this year's league they have been impressive victories over Galway and Meath saw them take on Down and in a close league decider where it finished 3-8 to 1-12, the hurt from these defeat is driving them on and they are no doubt one of the sides being mentioned to be there come the closing stages of championship and they will come to Cork determined to succeed.

### MINOR

Cork got their Minor campaign off to a flying start as they overcame Clare in their opening game last weekend and they continued their campaign when they host a Limerick side opening their campaign tomorrow in the Tesco All Ireland championship in Castle Road at 2pm.

The sides met recently in the provincial decider where Cork recorded 2-19 to 0-7 victory to claim the title and on the form shown Cork will go in as favourites to turn in a repeat performance but this is All-Ireland championship and Limerick will want to reverse that result.

They will come to Cork with all guns blazing in a bid to get their campaign off to a good start.



Tipperary manager Bill Mullaney: Has guided his team to the championship quarter-finals.

Picture: INPHO/Laszlo Geczo

# Buoyant Tipp in last eight

### CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick

TIPPERARY manager Bill Mullaney shows his players huge respect. He refers to them as athletes and in defeat he'll always pick the positives.

When Cork defeated them in the league, 3-14 to 0-16, Mullaney focused on the last 15 minutes, which he felt Tipp won.

That positivity is paying off, as Tipp join Cork, Wexford, Waterford, Galway, and Kilkenny in the quarter-finals. After two games, Limerick, Offaly, Down, Dublin, Clare, and Westmeath are out of this year's championship, having failed to win.

The Premier county clashed with Limerick for the first time in the championship since the 2019 quarter-final, which they won, and they are a superior outfit now, while Limerick have regressed.

This 12-point success follows a 17-point victory over Offaly and were it not for the heroics of Limerick goalie, Laura O'Neill, who made three excellent saves, the margin would have been greater. Cait Devane and Caoimhe Costelloe swapped early scores, but Clodagh McIntyre, Nicole Walsh, Eimear McGrath, Róisín Ambrose, and Grace O'Brien moved Tipp five ahead.

Costelloe hit a couple of points for Limerick, but Tipperary shot the last seven points of the half to leave it 0-12 to 0-3 at half-time. Devane blasted a penalty beyond O'Neill in the 34th minute and the blue and gold had a 15-point advantage.

Pat Ryan's charges fired 1-5 without reply to reduce the deficit to seven. Tipp took the wind out of the threatened fight-back, Devane converting two frees and Karin Blair raising another white flag.

Just as Cork didn't have a comprehensive win over Down, Kilkenny didn't have it all their own way against Westmeath. The All Ireland and national league champions were pushed to the wire in Mullingar.

The home side held the lead until the second-half water break, when a goal



Tipperary's Orla O'Dwyer.

Picture: INPHO/Bryan Keane

from Miriam Walsh set the Cats on the way to a 2-17 to 1-11 victory.

Denise Gaule was uncharacteristically inaccurate from frees and several other Kilkenny players underperformed, such that the manager, Brian Dowling, had used four of his five subs by the 37th minute.

The other side of the story was a brilliant performance by Westmeath, arguably their best since gaining promotion to senior on the back of their 2019 intermediate title.

Hannah Core fired in their goal after five minutes, and two points from Sheila McGrath, as well as four points (three frees) from Megan Dowdall, gave them a 1-8 to 0-7 interval lead.

Nine minutes into the second half, both sides had added just two points each, as the home crowd started to believe something magical was happening, but Walsh's goal was a turning point.

Galway had a 15-minute purple patch against Clare at Kenny Park, in Athenry, and prevailed 2-12 to 2-6. They did their damage in the third quarter, outscoring their opponents 2-3 to 0-1.

Niamh Kilkenny's long-range effort was spilled to the net by Clare goalkeeper, Doireann Murphy, before Siobhan

McGrath tapped another home.

This seemed to end the game as a contest, with both sides emptying their benches, but a late goal from a Chloe Morey free brought the gap back to six points approaching injury time.

On the next attack, a long Morey ball dropped behind the Galway defence and substitute Aine O'Loughlin finished to the net, but Cathal Murray's charges maintained their composure, with late scores from Aoife Donohue, Ailish O'Reilly, and Kilkenny sealing Galway's win.

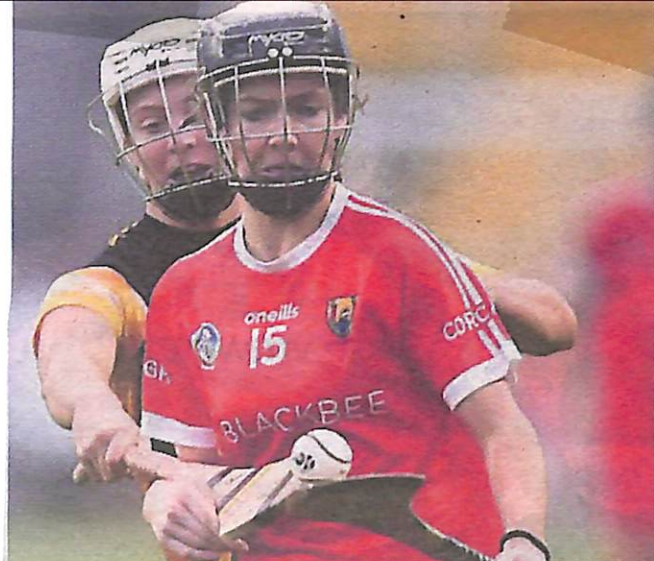
Wexford beat Offaly 4-10 to 0-15 at Chadwicks Wexford. The game was barely under way when Joanne Dillon slammed the ball into the Offaly net. With seven minutes gone, Anais Curran had a second goal for Wexford and the home side were eight points to the good.

Offaly gradually worked their way back into the tie and were more in touch at half time, 2-7 to 0-8 adrift.

They were heavily dependent on Mairead Teehan's free-taking, as she contributed 0-6 of their 0-8.

The scoring dried up a little after that and while the model county always held a lead, it was only in the final five minutes that Wexford made the game safe, finishing 4-10 to 0-15.





Cork's Saoirse McCarthy is tackled by Kilkenny's Niamh Deely.

Picture: Eddie O'Hare

## Cork's game with Waterford to decide who tops Group 2

**SATURDAY: All-Ireland camogie championship: Cork v Waterford, Páirc Uí Rinn, Saturday, 5pm.**

CORK have qualified for a quarter-final spot in this year's senior camogie championship, with their home game against Waterford tomorrow determining who finishes top of Group 2.

Cork and Waterford lead the group, on six points each, Cork in command with a plus 20-point scoring difference.

Waterford stunned Dublin last weekend, 2-17 to 0-9. Cork defeated Dublin 2-19 to 0-12 the previous week.

After losing a league relegation playoff to Dublin by a point, 1-11 to 1-10, in mid-June, no one expected Waterford to turn that around so heavily on a Dublin team that had a spring in its step since the introduction of Adrian O'Sullivan as manager and a new backroom team.

That Waterford recorded this win in the capital, at Skerries Harps, is even more commendable.

Beth Carton kept the scoreboard ticking over and goals from Niamh Rockett and Abby Flynn, after outstanding vision by Carton, opened a nine-point margin, and with Dublin only managing two points after the change of ends, it was a cruise for Derek Lyons's outfit.

With regards quarter-final qualification, that win was significant for Waterford: They cannot be caught by either Dublin or Down. Cork will be favourites to finish top of their group by Saturday evening, meaning Waterford will finish second and go into a quarter-final.

Indeed, even if Cork top their group, they, too, could be drawn into a quarter-final situation, as the top-placed in each of the three groups is drawn from a bowl, with the first two heading straight to a semi-final and the third going into a quarter-final playoff with second-placed in each group.

### CAMOGIE

■ Linda Mellerick

Cork will have washed the tiredness out of their bodies, after their trip to Newry last Saturday. It might not have been a convincing performance, but Cork did enough, and victory was never in doubt.

With the Cork ladies' footballers also playing Waterford, in their quarter-final on Sunday, Cork's game is fixed for Saturday at 5pm. An earlier start would have suited the dual players better.

Cork's management have a welcome selection headache, particularly up front. Ciara O'Sullivan and Fiona Keating are both performing well.

Ciara has a very strong work rate and Fiona has done a great job in nullifying the influence of centre backs.

Orla Cronin has recovered from injury and has been a leader in Cork's forward line the past few seasons.

Add in Linda Collins, also showing well, Amy O'Connor, Katrina Mackey, Chloe Sigerson, and Izzy O'Regan and you have eight players for six positions.

O'Regan will most likely be an impact sub; she has done well since her introduction to the panel.

It's difficult to select between the other seven for a starting position. Management may stick with experience, but how girls are performing at training should also be a deciding factor.

With Saoirse McCarthy doing well at wing-back, Paudie Murray may well want to hold her there and free up Hannah Looney for midfield.

She's setting up numerous scores with her runs forward and the opposition are struggling to curtail her when in full flight.

It would be beneficial for Cork to get a strong fight from Waterford tomorrow, as we head into August and the end of the championship season gets ever closer.

## Rebels not tested by Limerick minors

MINOR A CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

Cork 3-1

Limerick 0-3

CORK topped their group in the Tesco Minor A Championship with a comprehensive win over Limerick on Sunday afternoon.

In a strange move, Limerick lined out with an extra midfielder and defender allowing Cork the luxury of two extra defenders playing against the stiff breeze blowing in Castle Road.

Lizanne Boylan pointed an opening minute 45 to give Limerick the early lead, but it was short-lived as Cork, moving the ball well, hit five points in a row to lead at the first water break 0-5 to 0-1 with Orlaith Mullins, Rose Murphy, Meadhbh Ring and Orlaith Cahalane all on target.

Limerick pushed forward a bit on the restart and Lizanne Boylan pointed to cut the Cork lead.

That saw an instant reply from the lively Cork attack with two goals inside three minutes.

Orlaith Cahalane won possession and spotting Orlaith Mullins unmarked, she sent across a perfect pass for Mullins to rattle the net.

From the puck out Cork attacked again and it was Cahalane who this time finished to the net and on the stroke of half time it was 2-6 to 0-2 in Cork's favour as they turned to play with the wind in the second half.

Cork got the second half off to the perfect start with a Rose Murphy goal and from there on Cork ran out easy winner.

**Scorers for Cork:** O Mullins 1-5 (0-2f's), R Murphy 1-3, A Morgan 0-5 (0-2f's, 0-45), O Cahalane 1-2, M Ring, M Murphy 0-2 each.

**Limerick:** L Boylan 0-2 (0-1 45) S O'Brien 0-1.

**Cork:** E Goggin; A Cashman, M Healy, C Lynch; E O'Driscoll, A Healy, O M Allen; M Murphy, C Golden; A Morgan, R Murphy, O Mullins; C Murphy, M Ring, O Cahalane.

**Subs:** N Olden for C Murphy (33), O'Donovan for A Cashman (h/t), G Ryan for C Lynch (h/t), J Doyle for M Ring (43), K Redmond for R Murphy (43).

**Limerick:** N Ryan; M Leahy, R Corbett, M Walsh; E Woulfe, A O'Tietnaigh, M Butler; E Madigan, Kerins; E Hession, Boylan, C O'Riordan; C Ryan, A Burke, L Frawley.

**Subs:** S O'Brien for A Burke (h/t), C Mullins for N Ryan (h/t), E Frawley for M Walsh (41), M English for C O'Riordan (53).

**Referee:** Justin Heffernan (Wexford).



It was a busy afternoon in the All-Ireland Senior Camogie Championship with Dublin, Clare and Limerick the happiest teams after they secured senior status for 2022, while Galway travelled to Kilkenny and picked up a win against the reigning All-Ireland champions.

Despite playing with 14 players for 45 minutes in the battle to top their group, Galway edged a thrilling game with Kilkenny at John Keane Park in Callan on a 1-13 to 0-15 scoreline and secured an automatic semi-final place.

Both sides had already secured their place in the knockout stages thanks to prior wins over Clare and Westmeath, but Galway secured a huge psychological advantage against their main rivals as they overcame the dismissal of corner-forward Catherine Finnerty to pick up an away win.

Ultimately, Galway's 1-3 on the bounce after half-time, which helped them turn a three-point deficit into a three-point lead, proved

## 'SOME HEROIC DEFENDING HELPED THE TRIBESWOMEN HANG ON'

be the decisive period of this game. Siobhán McGrath found the net early in the second half to help her side into the lead after an evening half in which they failed to score from play. However, the 19 All-Ireland champions owed their attacking threat to the net with Niamh Kilman and Ailish O'Reilly adding scores to help them establish a lead.

Denise Gaule was accurate from number of frees while Mary Connell and Aoife Doyle also added the target to keep Kilkenny the game and set up a dramatic finish.

The Leinster side almost found a way through in injury time but the heroic defending during the last minutes of additional play kept Galway hanging on to take the trophy.

Work will join the Tribeswomen in the winner of tomorrow's game between Tipperary and Wexford in

# McGrath's strike puts Galway into the semis

ON TARGET: Katrina Mackey netted for Cork



the pot for automatic semi-final places after they overcame Waterford by 2-19 to 3-8 at Páirc Uí Rinn.

The Rebels didn't have things all their own way and fell behind to two early goals, but green flags from Katrina Mackey and Amy O'Connor in first-half stoppage time turned the tide Cork's way, and strong scoring performances from Fiona Keating, Orla Cronin

and Mackey in the second half ensured Waterford never threatened an upset.

Limerick secured their senior status and condemned Offaly to the relegation play-offs thanks to a two-point win at the St. Rynagh's club in Banagher, with late scores from Caoimhe Costelloe and Mairéad Ryan proving crucial in a 0-17 to 2-9 victory for the Shannonsiders.

Costelloe shot eight points (seven frees) over the course of the hour and was a constant threat with Caoimhe Lyons and Aishling Scanlon posting three points each for the victors. Orlagh Kirwan's goal kept Offaly in touch at half-time, 0-8 to 1-4, but Limerick burst out of the traps at the start of the second half with three scores from Scanlon and Lyons.

Siobhán Flannery replied for Offaly and the Faithful women stayed in touch until Mairéad Teehan's goal drew them level with eight minutes to play.

Limerick edged in front but Laura O'Neill had to make a crucial save to deny Offaly a third goal. However Flannery levelled the tie once again, setting up a dramatic injury-time finale.

The contest at Cusack Park in Ennis was another Munster vs Midlands clash with relegation at stake, Clare eventually prevailing by 2-12 to 0-12 thanks to first half goals from Eimear Kelly and Aine O'Loughlin against Westmeath.

The Banner women started well and led by 2-3 to 0-1 after the first quarter, with the sides adding three points each after the water break. Alongside the two goalscorers, Chloe Morey was the only other scorer for the hosts in the half, with only Siobhán Ni Chonail adding her name to the scoresheet as they kept Westmeath at arm's length.

They denied the visitors the clear-cut goal chance that they badly craved to get back into the game and prevent their involvement in the relegation play-off scrap.

The third relegation play-off of

the day was at Páirc Esler in Newry, where a goal from Aisling Maher with five minutes of normal time remaining was the crucial score in a 1-9 to 0-11 win for Dublin that preserves their senior status for another year.

Dublin underperformed in round two against Waterford and they failed to raise their levels in the first half of this game.

Points from Anna Rogan, Saoirse McCartan and Niamh Mallon helped Down to an 0-5 to 0-4 interval lead, with Dublin goalkeeper Faye McCarthy having to be sharp to keep her side in the game.

Down continued to lead throughout the second half until a long ball broke to Maher and the St. Vincent's player was sharp and on target with her finish, pushing Dublin a point in front.

Mallon replied to cut the gap to the minimum from a close-range free and had possession again at the end chasing what would have been a crucial equaliser, but time ran out for the hosts.

NET GAIN: Galway's Siobhán McGrath

## GAA SCOREBOARD

### HURLING

#### All-Ireland SHC Quarter-finals

WATERFORD..... 6-20 TIPPERARY..... 2-27  
CORK..... 2-26 DUBLIN..... 0-24

#### Nicky Rackard Cup Final

MAYO..... 2-27 TYRONE..... 0-14

#### Lory Meagher Cup Final

FERMANAGH..... 3-20 CAVAN..... 0-17

### FOOTBALL

#### Ulster SFC Final

TYRONE..... 0-10 MONAGHAN..... 0-15

#### All-Ireland U20C Semi-final

OFFALY..... 3-10 CORK..... 0-14

#### Connacht MFC Semi-final

ROSCOMMON..... 2-17 GALWAY..... 1-10

### CAMOGIE

#### All-Ireland SC - Group 1

LIMERICK..... 0-17 OFFALY..... 2-9

#### All-Ireland SC - Group 2

CORK..... 2-10 WATERFORD..... 3-8  
DUBLIN..... 1-9 DOWN..... 0-11

#### All-Ireland SC - Group 3

CLARE..... 2-12 WESTMEATH..... 0-12  
KILKENNY..... 1-13 GALWAY..... 0-15

#### All-Ireland IC - Group 1

GALWAY..... 2-10 DUBLIN..... 0-6

MEATH..... 0-14 CARLOW..... 0-13

#### All-Ireland IC - Group 2

KILKENNY..... 3-24 KILDARE..... 0-17

CORK..... 2-16 ANTRIM..... 2-11

#### All-Ireland IC - Group 3

DERRY..... 3-17 KERRY..... 0-9

LADIS..... 3-11 TIPPERARY..... 0-12

#### All-Ireland Premier Jnr Group 1

WEXFORD..... 1-17 WATERFORD..... 2-4

#### All-Ireland Premier Jnr Group 2

CLARE..... 1-10 ROSCOMMON..... 0-9

#### All-Ireland Premier Jnr Group 3

IMPERIAL..... 2-13 DOWN..... 0-16

## Ryan delight as Tipperary set up date with Déise

### Camogie

#### Daragh Ó Conchúir

Tipperary did not come out of the hat for another semi-final appearance but Mary Ryan and Bill Mullaney are focusing on the countless positives of winning all three group games, with Waterford standing in their way of a return to the last four in the All-Ireland Senior Camogie Championship.

The other quarter-final, which takes place as part of a double header at Páirc Uí Chaoimh on August 21, will involve Wexford and Kilkenny.

"At the end of the day job done," said Ryan after Tipp's 4-11 to 1-11 triumph over Wexford. "Delighted to get the win. Three out of three. We just said there we can't do any more than that. We are thrilled with the win. Very tough battle. Wexford put up a physical battle in a big open field. For us job done and we are delighted to top the group."

"We would rather not be so busy in defence like we were today. They kept us on our toes, they kept us under pressure. It was very uneasy for us most of the game and that was testament to them and the pressure they put on us. The girls pulled out the goals to-

wards the end of the game and we pulled away thank God."

"We had three or four girls making their Championship debuts and they really threw their hands up. It's fantastic for us to see. Younger faces coming in. Eimear (McGrath) and Clodagh (McIntyre) took their goals well when they came back in. Three busy weeks ahead of us and we have a lot to prepare for."

Galway defeated Kilkenny by 1-13 to 0-15 despite losing Catherine Finnerty to a first-half red card. "We are delighted in the end," said Galway's Aoife Donohue. "It was a fair battle between the two teams and I think we really bring out

the best in one another. You want to be playing the top teams so it will bring the two teams on going forward into the knockout stages of the Championship."

"We've picked up a lot of injuries along the way and it just opens up opportunities for other players to come in and nail down a place in the team. We are lucky enough that we have a really strong panel. Going down to 14 we were all absolutely out on our feet and it's just a credit to the girls."

"It was unfortunate for Catherine (Finnerty) as she has been flying it so we will look at it and hopefully she will be

back with us for the next day."

Cork didn't have things all their own way against Waterford at Páirc Uí Rinn and fell behind to two early goals, but green flags from Katrina Mackey and Amy O'Connor in first-half stoppage time turned the tide Cork's way as they prevailed by 2-18 to 3-9.

Aisling Maher's goal with five minutes of normal time to play at Páirc Esler in Newry was the crucial score in a 1-9 to 0-11 win for Dublin that preserves their senior status for another year.

Clare had just three scorers in their 2-12 to 0-12 win over Westmeath at Cusack Park in Ennis, but two of them — Ei-

mear Kelly and Aine O'Loughlin — found the net in the first half to give the Banner women a solid platform and set up a junior and senior double for the county over the weekend.

Limerick travelled to Banagher and while they led the whole way through the game, goals from Orlagh Kirwan and Mairéad Teehan kept Offaly in contention. It was tied at 0-15 to 2-9 before Caoimhe Costelloe's eighth point of the game and another from Mairéad Ryan sealed the win.

Meanwhile in the relegation play-offs, Down will play Offaly with the loser of that fixture going on to play Westmeath.





Cork's Katie Walsh celebrates her goal against Antrim during the All-Ireland intermediate camogie championship at Castle Road. Picture: Eddie O'Hare

## Cork hold off Antrim late rally to go top of intermediate group

Cork 2-14  
Antrim 2-11

INTERMEDIATE CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

CORK go top of their group after they held off a late Antrim rally to make it two wins from two in the All-Ireland Intermediate championship at Castle Road.

Cork were fast out of the blocks and hit Antrim with two early goals and by the first water break.

They lead by 10 points, 2-5 to 0-2, as they outpaced the visitors with their running game causing problems for an Antrim defence who were under severe pressure. Aoife Hurley and Katie Walsh hit goals in the ninth and 11th minutes and with Aoife Hurley, Katie Walsh, Kate Wall and Hayley Ryan troubling Antrim they continued to concede scores.

Antrim got the upper hand after the water break and slowly began to pick off points with Catriona Dobbin, Nicole O'Neill and Maebh Kelly driving them on they cut the deficit and it took two magnificent saves from Sarah Ahern to deny Antrim.

Three minutes from the interval they breached the Cork defence with a long delivery from Aine Magill was blasted to the net by Roisin McCormack, McGill added a point before the interval as Cork led 2-8 to 1-8.

As they did in the opening quarter Cork again took a grip on proceedings and with their defence confident and assured they held Antrim scoreless and with their midfield ensuring plenty of supply to the inside lines they punished Antrim with Kate Wall, Rachel O'Shea on target from play and frees they extended their lead 2-14 to 1-8 at the second

water break. Antrim found a second gear as play resumed and for the remaining 15 minutes they troubled Cork and they conceded scores.

Lucian Mc Naughton pointed with five minutes of normal time remaining and a minute into added time and Roisin McCormack gave Antrim a lifeline evading several Cork tackles before finishing to the net.

The same player added a point from a free and now just a goal separated the sides.

As the clock ticked into the fifth minute of added time Antrim won a close in free but the Cork defence stood firm. From the puck-out they won a second free and again there was a frantic scramble as the Cork rearguard cleared to safety to the sound of the full-time whistle. The result puts Cork in a good position as they take on Kilkenny in next weekend's last game in the group.

**Scorers for Cork:** R O'Shea 0-6 (0-2 f, 0-1 45), A Hurley 1-2, K Wall 0-4, K Walsh 1-0, H Ryan 0-2.

**Antrim:** R McCormack 1-1 (0-1 f), M Kelly 0-4, L McNaughton, C Dobbin 0-2 each, A McGill, N O'Neill (f) 0-1 each.

**CORK:** S Ahern, N O'Leary, G Hannon, A Crowley, A O'Callaghan, A Moloney, K Kilcommins, L Callahan, M Murphy, K Walsh, H Ryan, R Harty, A Hurley, K Wall, R O'Shea.

**Subs:** D Carroll for A Crowley (11), F Neville for R Harty (44), M Barrett for K Walsh (inj 53), E Flanagan for A O'Callaghan (55), C Finn for A Hurley (56).

**ANTRIM:** C Graham, K Mc Kellop, C Drinn, M Lynn, M Connolly, C Conlon, C Mc Kellop, L McNaughton, A Boyle, A McGill, C Lavery, M Kelly, E McCormick, N O'Neill, C Dobbin.

**Subs:** C Patterson for K Mc Kellop (15), N Donnelly for C Mc Kellop (19), K Carey for N O'Neill (45), A Connolly for C Lavery (45).

**Referee:** Conor Guinan (Galway).



Cork's Hannah Looney racing away from Waterford's Kate Lynch and Shauna Fitzgerald during their camogie clash at Páirc Uí Rinn. Pic: Eddie O'Hare

# Cork too good for Waterford



SENIOR CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick

Cork 2-19  
Waterford 3-8

CORK topped Group 2 in the All-Ireland camogie championship after a win over Waterford in Páirc Uí Rinn.

A welcome addition back to the Cork panel is All-Star Pamela Mackey. Pam had taken a year out but missed the buzz of intercounty camogie and re-joined the panel just this week.

Management obviously wanted to bring Pam back up to championship speed as quickly as possible and placed her at left half-back in place of Laura Hayes. She provides cover for Cork in a number of positions and as Cork head into August it's a big plus for the panel to have her back.

In the preview, we mentioned that Cork were spoilt for choice up front with eight possible starters for six positions, always a healthy position to be in. On this occasion captain Linda Collins, who has been playing well, lost out on the starting 15.

That's a further two changes to the team which lined out against Down the previous week and so Cork's starting 15 is a moving feast.

Waterford had a resounding win over Dublin last weekend and brought that same intensity to Páirc Uí Rinn.

This time they started without star forward Beth Carton, who pulled her hamstring in the warmup. Still, they held their own with Cork and led up to the 33rd minute. A nice Waterford crowd were in attendance, supporters deciding to stay on after their hurlers defeated Tipperary in Páirc Uí Chaoimh earlier in the afternoon.

Orla Cronin named at left corner forward raced into a third midfielder position as soon as the ball was thrown in.

Cork split Waterford's defence on five minutes but Fiona Keating just mistimed the ball in full flight. Waterford made no



Cork's Katrina Mackey is tackled by Waterford's Keeley Barry. Picture: Eddie O'Hare

mistake at the opposite end three minutes later when an astute Abby Flynn pass inside to Niamh Rockett was brilliantly finished to the net.

A recurring hamstring strain saw Izzy O'Regan replace Ashling Thompson on fifteen minutes, O'Regan coming in at left half-forward and Chloe Sigerson pushing out to midfield. Cork had four wides by the first water break as Waterford led 1-2 to 0-3.

It will be a concern for cork how their defence was so easily prised open in that opening half. Rockett had converted, Abby Flynn raced through the middle, but Shauna Fitzgerald failed to connect into the net and five minutes later Vicky Falconer again prised Cork open, running straight down the middle, and beat Amy Lee with a low shot to the corner.

The O'Connor-Mackey show kicked into action and a number of one/two's saw the duo hit 2-2 between them to push Cork four points to the good at half time: 2-8 to 0-4.

Cork went into a 2-12 to 2-6 lead before Vicky Falconer's pace again proved too much for Cork as she hit Waterford's third goal. It will be a concern for Cork that

they conceded three goals, a rare achievement for any side against the Rebels.

Cork pulled away to win by eight as Waterford tired. With both sides having already qualified for the knockout stages this game was another chance to learn lessons. Waterford will be relatively happy with their performance until the final quarter while Cork will focus on those goals and their scoring boots where again a number of scores went begging.

**Scorers for Cork:** K Mackey 1-4, O Cronin 0-6 (0-3 f, 0-1 45), A O'Connor 1-2, C Sigerson 0-3 (0-2 f), F Keating 0-2, C O'Sullivan, L Collins 0-1 each.

**Waterford:** V Falconer 2-1, N Rockett 1-4 (0-1 45, 0-3 f), A Flynn 0-3.

**CORK:** A Lee, E Murphy, L Coppinger, M Cahalane, S McCarthy, L Treacy, P Mackey, H Looney, A Thompson, C Sigerson, F Keating, C O'Sullivan, K Mackey, A O'Connor, O Cronin.

**Subs:** I O'Regan for A Thompson (15, inj), L Collins for H Looney (45), L Hayes for E Murphy (46), E Murphy for A O'Connor (62, inj).

**WATERFORD:** B O'Regan, K Lynch, I Heffernan, K Barry, C Carroll, D Hickey, L Bray, C Griffin, S Curran, C O'Sullivan, N Rockett, A Flynn, S Lacey, S Fitzgerald, V Falconer.

**Subs:** C Whyte for K Barry (23), A Gordan for S Fitzgerald (36), S McGuckian for I Heffernan (36), F Morrissey for C O'Sullivan (56).

**Referee:** Barry Nee - Westmeath



Cork's Aoife Hurley celebrates her goal against Antrim.

Picture: Eddie O'Hare



# Enniskeane crowned county champions

ENNISKEANE won the 2020 county minor championship title for the first time in the club's history when they defeated Kilbrittain/Timoleague by 1-18 to 0-5 on Friday night in Brinny.

Enniskeane got off to a great start with points from Daire O'Brien and her sister Eimear before Lauren Corcoran poached a goal coming up to the first water break. Meabh Ryan then opened Kilbrittain/Timoleague's account.

With Clara O'Donovan, Deirdre Browne and Daire O'Brien to the fore, Enniskeane stayed out in front. Player-of-the-match Emma O'Driscoll was sweeping magnificently at centre back

while Katelyn Sheehan, Saoirse Fleming, Aine Corish, Deirdre Browne and Daire O'Brien kept piling on the pressure.

Kilbrittain/Timoleague kept battling all through but Enniskeane stayed on the front foot in the second half as Ellen Murphy and Caitlyn Dineen added four points from play and frees, with Saoirse Fleming, Daire O'Brien, Eimear O'Brien and Lauren Corcoran all on target, too, for the winners.

**Enniskeane:** Kate Corcoran (captain), Labhaoise McCarthy, Emer Hurley, Katelyn Sheehan, Hazel Browne, Emma O'Driscoll, Danielle O'Neill, Daire O'Brien (0-4), Saoirse Fleming (0-1), Deirdre Browne

(0-2), Lauren Corcoran (1-1), Clara O'Donovan (0-2), Eimear O'Brien (0-8), Aine Corish, Aoife Sheehan, Clara Duggan, Laura Cullinane, Rachel McCarthy, Caragh Hennessy, Lauren Buttimer, Eibhlin Mangan, Emily Corcoran.

**Kilbrittain/Timoleague:** Chloe McCarthy, Ella Burke, Julie Sheehy, Clara O'Neill, Etain Coughlan, Mary Butler, Elaine Butler, Kate O'Neill, Caitlyn Dineen (0-1), Clara O'Shea, Ellen Murphy (0-3), Rachel Butler, Jess Harrington, Shannon Ahern, Meabh Ryan (0-1), Katie Ryan, Stephaine Hodge, Katie Murphy, Margaret Sexton, Caoimhe Moore, Hannah Sexton.



The Enniskeane team that won the 2020 county minor camogie championship title last Friday



REBEL ROAR: Cork players celebrate their win over Kilkenny in the camogie U16A final at St Brendan's Park, Birr, Co Offaly yesterday. Picture: Inpho/Tom O'Hanlon



The previous week he had become a father for the second time when his wife, former Limerick camogie player Sarah Carey — daughter of Claran and cousin of Cian Lynch — gave birth to daughter Ellie.

FAMILY AFFAIR: Tom Condon with his wife Sarah Carey and their son Nicky. Of his time with Limerick, he says: 'We enjoyed going out and playing the way we wanted to play and winning. You just wanted to do it the whole time.' Picture: Diarmuid Greene/Sportsfile





# Murray wants more ruthless edge

Rebels keep their 100 percent record and have received bye to last four in championship

**CORK** 2-19  
**WATERFORD** 3-8

NOEL HORGAN REPORTS

IT wasn't all plain sailing for Cork in the All-Ireland senior camogie championship Group 2 clash with Waterford at Páirc Uí Rinn last Saturday, but there's no disputing their superiority was very much in evidence at the same time.

They certainly drove it home in the last quarter, as they outscored the visitors by 0-7 to 0-2, much to the satisfaction of manager Paudie Murray, who felt they were 'outstanding' in this period.

'We probably should have gone for the jugular more often in the closing stages instead of popping the ball over the bar, and I think we'll need to do that against better opposition, so it's probably something we'll have to look at,' the Cork boss suggested.

The most disappointing fea-

ture of Cork's performance, however, was the fact that the defence conceded three goals, all of which should have been prevented, according to Murray.

'The one thing that stands out about those three goals was that they were down to our own mistakes because our defending wasn't up to scratch.

'Take the goals out of it and it would have been an easy win for us, but there are definitely positives to be taken from today as well, and, from an offensive point of view, a tally of 2-19 is good scoring any day of the week.

'We also took the opportunity to freshen up the team, because we feel it's important to rotate the players as much as possible in the group stage of the championship.

'It was good to see Orla Cronin coming into her own today in just her second game back after a lay-off,' remarked the Cork boss.

The result enabled Cork to

Cork's Orla Cronin gets this shot away during their All-Ireland senior championship group win against Waterford on Saturday (Photos: David Ribello)

**'It was good to see Orla Cronin coming into her own today in just her second game back after a lay-off' – Paudie Murray, Cork manager**

complete a hat-trick of wins to top their group, something that was always on the cards as they are rated a bit above Dublin, Down and Waterford in camogie's current pecking-order.

As with Cork, Waterford – having gained maximum points from their previous two outings – were guaranteed a place in the championship's knock-out stages prior to this contest, and they showed from the outset they were hell-bent on upsetting the odds against the Rebels.

Aided by goals from Niamh Rockett and Vikki Falconer, they led by 2-3 to 0-5 with 27 minutes. They could have had another major score in the bag at that stage but for full-forward Sheena McGuckian's failure to connect on a defence-splitting pass from the impressive Abby Flynn.

That Cork found it difficult to cope with Waterford's determined efforts is beyond dispute, and it wasn't just their defence that struggled for much of the first half. Hannah Looney had her moments to keep the flag flying at midfield, but the fact is the forwards registered just two points from play, courtesy of Katrina Mackey and Amy O'Connor, before O'Connor did the spadework for a goal from Mackey which made 1-6 to 2-3



Cork forward Amy O'Connor battles for possession against Waterford.

three minutes into stoppage time.

It prompted Cork to raise the tempo to such an extent that they finished the first half 2-8 to 2-4 to the good, with their second goal coming from O'Connor after Mackey had delivered a low ball into the danger-zone.

In the wake of Cork's late flourish before the break, there was always a sense of inevitability about the outcome, although Waterford remained in with a shout after Vikki Falconer bagged their third goal to leave them trailing by 2-12 to 3-6 with 40 minutes gone.

The difference in class became increasingly apparent once Cork clicked into top gear in the last quarter, performing with admirable swagger in all sectors to leave Waterford trailing in their wake. Centre-back Laura Treacy backboned a defence that came up with most of the answers, the ubiquitous

Orla Cronin sparked around the middle where Chloe Sigerson also made her presence felt, while Amy O'Connor, Katrina Mackey and Fiona Keating were most effective up front.

Ciara O'Sullivan, Mackey (2), Keating, substitute Linda Collins, Cronin and O'Connor all chipped in with tasty scores from play as Cork tightened the screw on the run-in. In the end, they weren't flattered to run out winners by eight points, with an excellent save by Waterford goalkeeper Brianna O'Regan inside the last ten minutes preventing Mackey, fed by O'Connor, from embellishing the home side's victory with a third goal.

## Scorers

**Cork:** K Mackey 1-4; O Cronin 0-6 (3f, 145); A O'Connor 1-2; C Sigerson 0-3 (2f); F Keating 0-2; C O'Sullivan, L Collins 0-1 each.  
**Waterford:** V Falconer 2-1; N

Rockett 1-4 (4f); A Flynn 0-3.  
**Cork:** A Lee (Na Píarsaigh); Ellen Murphy (Sarsfields); L Cobbing (St Colum's); P Mackey (Douglas M Cahalane (St Finbarr's); L Treacy (Killeagh); S McCarthy (Courcey Rovers); H Looney (Killeagh); A Thompson (Milford); C O'Sullivan (Newcestown); F Keating (Courcey Rovers); C Sigerson (Killeagh); K Mackey (Douglas); A O'Connor (St Vincent's); O Cronin (Enniskeane).  
**Subs:** I O'Regan (Ballygarvan) for Thompson (Inj. 15); L Hayes (St Catherine's) for Looney (44); L Collins (Courcey Rovers) for Murphy (45); Emma Murphy (Gle Rovers) for O'Connor (Inj. 63).  
**Waterford:** B O'Regan; K Lynch; I Heffernan; K Barry; C Carroll; O Hickey; L Bray; C Griffin; S Curran; C O'Sullivan; N Rockett; A Flynn; Lacey; S McGuckian; V Falconer.  
**Subs:** C Whyte for Barry (Inj. 22); A Fitzgerald for O'Sullivan (37); A Corcoran for McGuckian (37); F Morrissey for Heffernan (56).  
**Referee:** B Nea (Westmeath).

## THE HIGHLIGHTS

**Our Star:** In setting Katrina Mackey up for a goal and bagging another herself, Amy O'Connor swung the tie irrevocably in Cork's favour nearing half-time.

**Star moment:** O'Connor's goal was a fine individual effort, and fittingly it gave Cork the lead, 2-7 to 2-4, that they never relinquished.

**Talking point:** That O'Connor and midfielder Ashling Thompson were both forced off with leg injuries was obviously a source of concern for the management in the immediate aftermath of Cork's triumph.

**What's next?** Cork top the group and then in the draw received a bye to the semi-finals, along with Galway, while Tipperary will meet Waterford and Kilkenny will play Wexford in the quarter-finals on August 21st.





ALL-IRELAND SENIOR CAMOGIE CHAMPIONSHIP Cork v Waterford



# Murray wants more ruthless edge



Goalkeeper Murray wants to bring more ruthlessness to his team during their All-Ireland senior championship group win against Waterford on Saturday.





The Cork U16 B camogie panel after landing the Munster title.

## Cork camogie is flying with U16s and minors both landing titles

CORK go into their last game today, in Kilkenny, in Group 2 of the Intermediate All-Ireland Championship, protecting an unbeaten record.

They've two wins from two, over Kildare and Antrim. Last weekend's win over Antrim was important. The Ulster side came to Cork on the back of beating Kilkenny and reached the All-Ireland and the national league finals in the last 12 months. They are one of the strongest teams in the grade.

Cork got off to a flying start and led by 10 points, before the Antrim machine kicked into gear and Cork had to call on all their resolve to deny Antrim taking a share of the spoils. Twice Antrim came close, but the Cork defence stood strong.

While happy with the result, Mark McCarthy will be concerned at how his side almost let it slip and they will need to learn to stay focused for the 60 minutes.

Kilkenny kept alive their hopes of a place in the knock-out stages with a victory over Kildare last weekend. John Scott's side knew a win was a must and they played with huge intensity as they disposed of Kildare, 2-24 to 1-7.

Clara O'Keeffe got the opening goal for Kilkenny and their superior strength in attack stood out, with points from Sophie O'Dwyer and Hannah Scott giving them the lead at the break. They continued their dominance through the second half, in all sectors.

Kilkenny know only a win today will guarantee them a place in the quarter-finals. Antrim will more than likely defeat Kildare and if Cork were to lose to Kilkenny, we could end up with three teams on six points and scoring difference would come into play. Cork are on plus 13, with Kilkenny on plus 16. Antrim are on plus one, but this weekend's games will see a change in these scoring averages.

Sitting on top, on six points, Cork are in the best position, but any slip-up could be costly.

Kilkenny are an experienced outfit: Leanne Fennelly, Clara Phelan, and Sinead Farrell have impressed through league and championship. Sophie O'Dwyer has continued to feature prominently on the score sheet in each game, Clara O'Keeffe notched up an

### CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

Impressive 1-6 from play against Kildare, and Hannah, Scott Eva Hynes, Danielle Quigley, Ciara Phelan, and Tara Ronan all added to their tally.

Cork have improved immensely and they have now put the disappointment of losing the Munster final to Tipperary behind them, having enjoyed a good run in the national league, before losing to Down at the quarter-final stage.

They were bitterly disappointed to lose to a Tipperary side they defeated in the league, but the focus has been superb in their two championship outings and particularly on Saturday last, when they stood up to the Antrim challenge. Up front, the Cork attack worked hard and was fast off the mark. Katie Walsh has pace to burn and she caused huge trouble for the Antrim defence, with good distribution, which resulted in scores.

Rachel O'Shea, Hayley Ryan, Kate Wall, and Aoife Hurley picked off some superb scores. The midfield pairing of Lauren Callanan and Michelle Murphy worked hard and never allowed Antrim to get a grip around the middle, whilst their defence had impressive performances from Grainne Hannon, Niamh O'Leary, and captain Aisling Moloney. More of the same is needed today, as the battle for the top spot continues.

### MUNSTER U16 DOUBLE

The Cork U16s signed off on a great year, as they added the Munster U16 A and B titles to the U16 A All-Ireland, with wins over Tipperary A and B.

The B side recorded an impressive 6-21 to 0-3 victory, with Megan Sheehan, Laura O'Brien, Laoise Murphy, Erin Curtin, and Nicola Guinane all to the fore.

The A side had to battle to the finish to secure the title. They led at the break, 0-6 to 0-3, with Grainne Finn, Sinead Hurley, and Ava Fitzgerald on target.

Shauna Sheehan (45), Fiona Twohig, and Ellen Crowley stretched the lead, but Tipperary hit back with a goal.

Determined to add the provincial crown to their All-Ireland title, Cork held on, 0-13 to 2-5.



Beth Fitzpatrick of Down in action against Izzy O'Regan of Cork.

Picture: Brendan Monaghan/Sportsfile

# Cork off until end of month

### CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick



THE quarter-finals for the 2021 All-Ireland senior championship see Tipperary meet Waterford and Kilkenny play Wexford in a double-header on August 21 in Páirc Uí Chaoimh.

Just as in the league draws, Cork didn't get pulled into a quarter-final round, yet I think it's one they would have again wanted.

As it stands, they now won't have another championship game until the weekend of August 28 and that's a long four weeks. If the semi-finals are a draw the replay is September 4-5 with the final on September 12.

It's very tight for recovery from any niggles. We can only assume that the three-week gap before the quarter-finals was to allow for a potential group championship postponement in case of a Covid strike to a team.

Down will play Offaly in the relegation play-off, with the loser of that fixture going on to play Westmeath, Dublin, Clare, and Limerick all secured senior status for 2022 last weekend.

It was irrelevant from a championship perspective who won between Galway and Kilkenny last weekend as both had already advanced. However, it forced Kilkenny into second place and a confirmed quarter-final bout, but having drawn Wexford they're undoubtedly welcoming the extra game. Psychologically Galway's one-point win having played with 14 players for 45 minutes of the game is a big result though.

Catherine Finnerty saw red but Galway's 1-3 without reply after half-time, which helped them turn a three-point deficit in to a three-point lead proved to be the decisive period of this game.

Siobhán McGrath found the net early in the second half to help Galway lead after an opening half in which they failed to score from play. That's a frightening stat-



Cork manager Paudie Murray during the match against Waterford.

Picture: Eddie O'Hare

istic in hurling, to not score from play for 30 minutes at senior inter-county level.

However, the 2019 All-Ireland champions rattled the net, with Niamh Kilkenny and Ailish O'Reilly adding scores to help them establish a lead.

Denise Gaule was accurate from a number of frees while Mary O'Connell and Aoife Doyle also found the target to keep Kilkenny in the game. Kilkenny almost found a way through in injury time but some heroic last-ditch defending during the four minutes of injury time helped Galway hang on to take the victory.

None of Kilkenny, Galway or Cork are on fire this season, the former two in particular very hit and miss with performances. For that reason, the All-Ireland title is still achievable for Cork.

Whether all three teams will find form now the group stages are behind them we'll see. But you can't flick it on like a switch.

Tipperary didn't come out of the hat for another semi-final appearance, but they'll be relatively content with a pairing against Waterford, albeit Waterford have impressed in the past couple of weeks with a win over Dublin, who forced them into relegation in the league, and then with a very impressive performance

against Cork last Sunday.

We expected Tipp to win three from three in what a weakish group and they delivered. Late goals from Clodagh McIntyre and Eimear McGrath added gloss to the scoreline as Tipperary beat Wexford by 4-11 to 1-11 at Semple stadium. They were quick to settle into the job, with Cáit Devane finding the net in the fourth minute in response to two early Wexford points.

Nicole Walsh and Karin Blair hit the target for Tipperary from distance to edge them six points clear, only for Chloe Foxe to strike a goal from a penalty and put the result back in the melting pot yet again just before half-time.

The second half was a tense and tight affair, with Eireanna Friday increasingly influential after coming off the Tipperary bench, and it took a superb save from Wexford's Laura Brennan to deny McGrath a goal and keep the visitors' hopes alive going into the latter stages.

McGrath made no mistake on the hour mark when she was picked out by a wonderful pass from Devane, and with Wexford's resolve broken, McIntyre was able to tack on a fourth goal in stoppage time to confirm the win and top spot in the group in the process.





Cork's Hayley Ryan and Kilkenny's Clara O'Keefe and Clara Phelan battle for possession in the All-Ireland Intermediate camogie championship in Callan.  
Picture: Patrick Browne

## Heartache for Cork intermediates who exit on scoring difference

**Kilkenny 2-7  
Cork 0-9**

**CAMOGIE**

**Linda Mellerick**

HEARTBREAK for Cork in Callan late Saturday afternoon as a four-point defeat to Kilkenny saw them exit this year's All-Ireland Intermediate Championship on scoring difference.

In what was the toughest of the three groups, Cork, Kilkenny, and Antrim all finished on six points, but with Antrim inflicting a 3-17 to 1-7 defeat on Kildare earlier in the day Cork needed at least a draw in Kilkenny to advance.

It wasn't to be, but it was a game Cork could have won.

Two points behind at half-time having had a blustering wind at their backs, Cork had it all to do, but when they went in front at the end of the third quarter, it looked as if the day could go their way. Kilkenny hit over the next three points however as Cork failed to take advantage of scorable opportunities.

Still, just two points separated the sides on 59 minutes, but an awful refereeing error sealed the deal for the home side.

With Cork on the attack 30 yards from goal, a blatant pull on the jersey with the ref standing inches away was ignored.

As Kilkenny cleared and were awarded a soft free, Hannah Scott buried the ball in Cork's net and it was game over. A four-point swing.

But these things happen in sport and Kilkenny's second goal aside, Cork had enough possession to win the game.

Unfortunately, Kilkenny's defence was too physically strong for Cork's forward division and Cork failed to make any real impact in general play in that section over the hour.

Finola Neville added strength when introduced, but Kilkenny smelt victory and when they went three up on 51 minutes, they battered down the hatches. Despite coming back out to face a really strong wind, the game was still there for Cork at half-time with the sides evenly

matched.

Cork were getting stronger after a jittery start, but they needed to find a way through Kilkenny's tall and strong full-back line in a defence where space was at a minimum with Kilkenny dropping an additional two back to protect against that strong wind.

Both defences were busy with Cork's Niamh O'Leary, Grainne Hannon, Aoife O'Callaghan, and Aisling Moloney excellent in the opening period.

At midfield Lauren Callanan was outstanding, but Cork were, at times, found wanting around the middle on loose players.

Rachel O'Shea picked off two nice points from play, one in particular from distance, and Cork needed more of that with the elements at their back, as Kilkenny were winning the physical exchanges.

Four wides to Kilkenny's one meant this game was very much 50/50 at the 30-minute whistle. Cork's wide tally increased in the second half when they needed to take every opportunity that presented itself.

Kilkenny, however, won the final quarter while also hitting a number of wides as in the end the Cats deserved their victory and march on to at least a quarter-final spot.

**Scorers for Kilkenny:** E Hynes 0-4 (0-2 f), D Quigley 1-0, H Scott 1-0, S O'Dwyer 0-2 (f), L Hegarty 0-1.

**Cork:** R O'Shea 0-3 f, R Harty 0-3, F Neville 0-2, L Callanan 0-1.

**KILKENNY:** S Farrell; N Leahy, R Phelan, C Murphy; S Crowley, L Fennelly, T Fitzgerald; L Hegarty, C Phelan; E Hynes, S Walsh, C O'Keefe; S O'Dwyer, H Scott, D Quigley.

**Subs:** A Phelan for S O'Dwyer (38), R O'Keefe for C O'Keefe (55), J Leahy for L Hegarty (60).

**CORK:** S Ahern; N O'Leary, D Carroll, G Hannon; A O'Callaghan, A Moloney, K Kilcommins; L Callanan, M Murphy; K Walsh, H Ryan, R Harty, A Hurley, K Wall, R O'Shea.

**Subs:** F Neville for K Wall (37), C Daly for G Hannon (43), C Kingston for K Kilcommins (50), C Finn for K Walsh (54).

**Referee:** Mike Ryan (Galway).



Cork's Rachel Harty gets away from Kilkenny's Clara Phelan.

### CAMOGIE

#### All-Ireland IC - Group 1

DUBLIN.....4-11 CARLOW.....2-9

#### All-Ireland IC - Group 2

ANTRIM.....3-16 KILDARE.....1-7

KILKENNY.....2-7 CORK.....0-9

#### All-Ireland IC - Group 3

DERRY.....1-17 TIPPERARY.....0-9

KERRY.....2-11 LAOIS.....0-5

#### All-Ireland Premier Junior - Group 2

CLARE.....P KILDARE.....P

#### All-Ireland Premier Junior - Group 3

CAVAN.....1-11 DOWN.....1-3



## Plenty of interesting matches in all grades

**FORMALLY**, at this time of year it's all about championship for club players.

But the split season has seen a change to this and club players have been enjoying playing league games which began recently, and are now almost all at concluding stages as the inter-county championship for the county senior and minor sides continue in the coming week. All eyes were on championship draws for adult competitions from senior down to minor which took place recently.

In pre-Covid years only the senior championship was played on a back-door basis with the losers of round one getting a second chance, all other championship were played on a league basis. Again this year with a condensed season, all championship formats will be played on a back-door system with first round winners going to round three and losers playing off in round two for a second chance to get back into championship. There are some interesting games to look forward to in all grades.

This week we look at draws for the Intermediate and Junior levels and next week we will focus on minors and under age.

**INTERMEDIATE**  
Twelve clubs will battle it out and last season's defeated finalists Aghabullogue will be determined to go one better this year. They will take on Kilbrittain/Timo-  
league in round one.

Watergrasshill will be hoping to make progress and they face a Ballyhea side that are in their second season at Intermediate having won the junior A title in 2019 they made it to the semi-final last season and they will be hoping to build on that this year. In an all-city clash, Northside rivals Brian Dillon's and Na Piar-saigh will go head to head.

Fr O'Neill's lost out to eventual winners Enniskeane in last season semi-final and they face a tough opening against a strong Blackrock side. Clonakilty are a side who are putting huge work into their underage structure and it is coming through at adult level and they will meet Valley Rovers in round one.

Newly-promoted Newtownshandrum make the step up to Intermediate following a tremendous Junior A championship victory in 2020 and they will look forward to meeting Carrigaline on their return to the intermediate grade after an absence of a number of years.

**JUNIOR A**  
Twelve teams will contest the Junior A Championship and we

### CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

have a few interesting clashes in prospect.

Tracton, who lost out in last season's final have a tough opening when they meet Ballinora.

Charleville who are enjoying an excellent league run meet Sliabh Rua.

St Vincent's face last year's Junior B champions Castlelyons, Ballinhassig meet Mallow, Banteer and Sarsfields and Cloughduv versus Ballinascahy are the ties that are sure to evoke a lot of interest.

### JUNIOR B

The draw has thrown up a lot of interdivisional rivalry. Fellow East Cork clubs Youghal and Fr O'Neill's were first out of the hat, followed by another clash of neighbouring clubs with the Mid-Cork pairing of Blarney and Ballincollig.

This was followed by Aghada against another East Cork neighbouring club, Killeagh.

Rockban will meet Inniscarra, Millstreet play Bishopstown and Courcy Rovers face Cobh.

### JUNIOR C

Aghabullogue are going well and are fielding three adult teams and they will play Kilbree. Castlelyons second team take on Kilworth.

Kinsale are also making huge strides with their adult section and they meet Middleton who are also building on their success at under age level and participating now at junior.

Cobh's second team meet Carrigrohilly back competing at junior for the first time in nine years. St Fanahan's meet another up and coming club when they face Laochra Og who are playing junior for their first time also.

### JUNIOR SECOND TEAMS

A lot of clubs chose to participate in the second teams championships and there have been excellent league clashes.

We look forward to the same in championship.

Inniscarra met Glen Rovers, Clonakilty face Brian Dillon's, St Catherine's meet Sliabh Rua, Na Piar-saigh take on St Finbarr's, Douglas meet Enniskeane, Valley rovers will play Newcestown, Kilbrittain versus Aghabullogue, Blackrock meet Sarsfields third team and Newtownshandrum play Eire Og.

### JUNIOR THIRTEEN A SIDE

Junior thirteen a side is two groups played on a league basis, group one is Erins Own, Aghada 2, Nemo and St Colm's, while group two is Tracton, Grenagh and Dungourney.

# Play-off would be much better option

Cork's Finola Neville is challenged by Kilkenny's Sarah Crowley during the Intermediate Camogie Championship. Picture: Patrick Browne



I WAS very disappointed for the Intermediate players and management last Saturday when they exited this year's All Ireland championship by virtue of scoring difference.

After two great wins over Kildare and Antrim (the All-Ireland favourites), one loss to Kilkenny and the team went out on scoring average.

Being in such a tough group each game really was a knockout. I'm not a fan of scoring difference. If you consider it, it's a deterrent to giving substitutes an opportunity during games. If the game is all about racking up as many scores as you can, then where's the incentive if your team is on fire and you're comfortable in a game to give others a run. I'd prefer a play-off and there was enough time allocated in the championship window for this.

The relegation play-off is this weekend. A qualification play-off could also have been placed in there ahead of the quarter finals on the weekend of August 21st. Yes, you'd end up playing four weeks on the trot to advance to a quarter final, five to a semi-final, but I'm sure Cork would have grabbed that with both hands.

The three teams finished on six points. Kilkenny topped with +20, Antrim +16 and Cork +9. Kilkenny could have gone straight through as table toppers and Antrim and Cork fight it out. Maybe it's something the association would consider for 2022.

The groups were far clearer cut in the senior championship. Cork, Galway, and Tipperary all topped with three wins

### CAMOGIE



Linda Mellerick

from three. That was predicted. The only question was whether Galway or Kilkenny would top and that came down to who would win between their clash, Galway winning by a point.

It's the same old story with who's left standing in the knockout stages and I find the gap widening. You might get the odd great showing from the challengers but when it comes to the serious end of business there isn't a hint of a shock. A one season wonder, and that means just reaching a semi-final, isn't progress unless you back it up.

Cork manager Paudie Murray believes that with the introduction of the 'more contact' rule that the gap has widened due to the strength and conditioning of the top three/four teams over the rest. I'm not so sure that has made that much of a difference, I'm not seeing a big difference in the physicality of games in the past two seasons, they haven't become physical battlefields. What I am seeing though is less frees awarded. That means the rule change has been a success. A hint of a touch before and a picky ref could blow. There could still be improvements

of course with inconsistency still a factor and some referees not allowing the advantage rule on occasion, but certainly we have a better flowing game.

Something needs to be done to assist in the development of camogie in Wexford, Limerick, Offaly, Clare, Dublin, Down and Westmeath. Wexford have four senior titles to their credit between 2007 and 2012 but have slipped massively down the pecking order since. So, they've experience in what it takes. But I've said it before, and I'll say it again, if the schools are strong in camogie the county is strong. And school camogie is generally weak. Local schools supporting clubs is the key driver and until those county boards get funding for full time coaches into schools then they'll never catch the big guns. The strong counties need to do it too of course, to try and stay on top and compete as the gap narrows.

With improved government and sports council funding this is where key resources need to be placed. Development officers are well and good, and they certainly have a place, but they are too sporadic. Schools need development officers on their pitches at least twice a week.

Waterford and Wexford are in the quarter final on August 21st meeting Tipperary and Kilkenny respectively. Tipp and Kilkenny will be favourites to advance. Orla O'Dwyer was due to fly back to Brisbane in August for AFL pre-season training. At this stage its unknown if she'll still be around to help Tipp to a semi-final.

## Linda Mellerick Camogie

Cork camogie legend knows the game inside out

Every Saturday in Echo Sport

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## Therese O'Callaghan

It is nine years since Wexford welcomed home their three-in-a-row All-Ireland senior camogie heroes. Now they are looking to banish those barren years when they meet reigning champions Kilkenny in the All-Ireland senior quarter-final at Páirc Uí Chaoimh on Saturday.

It is a tall order, but Anais Curran says they are there "to win".

"If you would have asked anyone at the start of the year would Wexford be here, I don't think many would have said that we would be in the knockout stages. But it is positive so far. Our junior girls are doing well too, so the depth is there for Wexford camogie. The footballers are in the All-Ireland final which is brilliant, some of them play camogie as well.

"We didn't perform as well as we could in the league so we had to lift it come the championship. We haven't hit our stride yet, we are still working on things. There is no better way than being thrown in at the deep end against the champions.

"I think it is going to be a good, competitive game."

The Slaneysiders have freshened things up with new management which is reaping rewards. "Kevin Tatton and the lads have made such a change. It is so much more professional. They have looked after us very well. And that gives us a foundation to build on. The bond is really good, something that has been missing for a long, long time.

"Having Katrina Parrock back (All-Star with four All-Irelands and a link to the 2007 winning team), her experience when the matches get

# Wexford 'in it to win it' against might of Kilkenny



At the launch of the 2021 Camogie Association knockout stages of the All-Ireland Camogie Championships were from left: Linda Collins (Cork); Amy Cardiff (Wexford); Niamh Hanniffy (Galway); Hilda Breslin, Camogie Association president; Meighan Farrell (Kilkenny); Niamh Rockett (Waterford), and Cait Devane (Tipperary).

Picture: Inpho/Tommy Dickson

tough pulls you through. She has been in the situation so many times and her success speaks for itself."

Kilkenny, however, are a seasoned side. Claire Phelan has been recuperating from

injury, so had to watch from outside the whitewash during the league. And she has enjoyed what she is seeing for a distance. "It was great to get back to Croke Park and get another win (league final against

Galway).

"We are just getting ourselves right, everyone is rowing in behind everyone else. There is a good, tough intensity in training. We slacked off towards the end of some

games and that is what we have been trying to focus on."

She also insists Brian Dowling's charges won't feel extra pressure being league and championship holders.

"It is a nice way to be

coming in. We are happy to be in this position. We have been coming in on the opposite side of it for long enough. It was a great year last year but that is a memory now."

There will be no Anne Dalton either for Kilkenny.

One of the greatest players of the modern era retired after collecting her second All-Ireland medal last December.

"Anne Dalton was a huge leader. Probably one of the best to have played camogie in the last number of years. There was always going to be a time when Anne was going to retire, so it is up to other people to step up and thankfully other people are stepping up. New leaders are emerging. We have plenty of younger girls pushing us on, some of whom have been there for a long time."

■ This year, the Camogie Association are proudly supporting ISPC Childline through the final stages of the 2021 All-Ireland senior, intermediate and premier junior championships. Childline, Ireland's 24-hour active listening service for all of those aged up to and including 18, is always there to listen to and support any child or young person around any issue which might be on their mind.

## Therese O'Callaghan

Just two years after claiming the All-Ireland Premier Junior title, Kerry camogie continues to progress with a trip to St Rynagh's Park, Banagher tomorrow for an All-Ireland intermediate quarter-final against last year's beaten finalists Antrim.

Along the way, they recorded impressive group victories, including one over Laois which exacted revenge for 2020.

Aine O'Connor says they didn't lack incentive.

"It was a big result a few weeks ago and it put us back where we want to be in an All-Ireland quarter-final. We were obviously very disappointed with the defeat in extra-time against Laois last year. We definitely had a point to prove. We are very much looking forward to the challenge against Antrim this weekend.

"We won the Premier Junior in 2019 and it definitely gave us a taste for the big days in Croke Park. The aim is to get to Croke Park but we cannot look beyond the quarter-final."

The Kingdom have garnered plenty of experience over the years and will look to take their good form into this crunch tie.

"We are delighted to be competitive in the intermediate championship having just come up from Premier Junior two years ago. Last year was our first year in intermediate

## Progressive Kerry don't lack incentive

and this year some of the stronger camogie counties are back in again (they didn't compete due to Covid-19).

"We have seen what the likes of Antrim have done getting to the final last year and how Down (winners) have progressed to senior. We don't fear the bigger teams, we go out and play our own game. Training is going well and we

have a very competitive panel, and with a lot of underage girls coming in this year we have strength in depth."

Camogie in Ulster is currently playing to a high standard with many teams still involved in the business end of championships. Chloe Drain says the competition within the province is driving them on. They too are ready for the test.

"We got to the intermediate final last year and lost to Down. We have reflected on that and want to push on this year. Camogie is very strong in the county and we want to move on."

"We have the best players out for the first time in a long time and there is good camaraderie among the team as well."

"We look at Down, and maybe we are aspiring to be like them."

"They are competitive at senior level. But at the same time, we are on our own journey too."

"Derry are another team doing well in Ulster. They have been unbelievable too this year, they really have turned things around. Look at the results they have posted the past few weeks."

## LGFA unveil triple-header final details

## Colm O'Connor

The TG4 All-Ireland Ladies SFC final between Meath and Dublin is fixed for Croke Park on Sunday, September 5. The game will throw in at 4.15pm. It will be the third decider to be played at the stadium that afternoon — the JFC final (Antrim/Carlow v Limerick/Wicklow) will get the action underway at 11.45am with Westmeath and Wexford contesting the intermediate showpiece at 1.45pm. The Croke Park triple-header will be shown exclusively live on TG4. Ticketing information will be released early next week.

# 'Panel is king' Premier motto, says McGrath

## Therese O'Callaghan

Aoife McGrath describes the absence of Sarah Fryday and Clodagh Quirke as 'two massive losses' for Tipperary ahead of their All-Ireland senior camogie championship quarter-final against Waterford in Páirc Uí Chaoimh on Saturday.

However, the Drom-Inch player is confident of the squad's strength in depth.

"Clodagh (injury) has been a massive leader for us. She is one of our top defenders, so to lose her in the league was very disappointing. "Sarah was recovering from

injury and was really flying but unfortunately has gone abroad with work.

"Those are two massive losses, but Bill Mullane (manager) has said that 'the panel is king' and he has that drilled into us. You need a strong panel to be successful. In the championship, we got three wins from three — Offaly, Wexford, and Limerick. We were disappointed how the league semi-final ended against Kilkenny. Still, we took a lot of confidence from it."

The aforementioned Kilkenny are reigning league and championship holders, and along with Galway and Cork remain the standard-bearers

in the sport. McGrath acknowledges same, but also believes every game is played on its own merit.

"They are that step ahead. But the gap is narrowing. Hopefully, in the not-so-distant future we will get a proper breakthrough. Every game is there to be won and anything can happen on any given day."

Waterford, meanwhile, have recovered from a below-par Division 1 league campaign to set up a repeat of the 2020 quarter-final, which Tipperary won.

Shona Curran admitted: "We had a disappointing start to the year, it just didn't go our way. We parked that. Every-

one's focus is always championship. We had two tough games in Down and Dublin. We were happy with our performances more than anything and to get the wins was brilliant. We are still involved in the business end and that was our aim."

"Everyone knows when you have a bad run of games, they start to chip away at your confidence. It was a massive game against Down, they are very physical and tough. The way we stuck at it and ground out the result was huge. It definitely gave the whole team, management and panel a lift we needed. We drove on and built on that against Dublin."

"Last year the most disap-

pointing thing for us was our performance. It boiled down to intensity. I felt Tipperary were better at the breaking ball and that was the difference. We have worked on that all year and have brought it to every game. Both teams know each other inside out. It can come down to small things that turn a game."

Waterford are without the injured Sibéal Harney. Curran said: "If you were to pick any player out against Down, she was outstanding. If she didn't have the game she had that day, I wouldn't be here talking to you."

"But you have to have a strong panel. The 15 that start are not the 15 finishing."

## Mackey back in Cork squad

## Therese O'Callaghan

All-Ireland winner Pamela Mackey has returned to the Cork camogie squad. Mackey (28) took a break from inter-county action earlier in the year but is now back in training ahead of the All-Ireland semi-final. "Pamela Mackey has come back, she had stepped out at the start of the year. It is great to have her back," confirmed teammate and captain, Linda Collins, on Tuesday. "She is a great defender and has never lost it. It is great to have her there for the experience as well. There are lots of people putting up their hands for places. We have a lot of young girls too who have won minor All-Ireland medals and they are playing with no fear, which is great to see. They are so enthusiastic."



# Major push on to get underage camogie fixtures as soon as possible

## CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

THE draws for minor and underage championships were made recently. Already clubs have got their games under way at U14, 16 and minor levels with round one played last weekend. As the Cork minors will be out in the All-Ireland semi-final on the weekend of the 29th, the push is on to get at least two rounds completed before the minor All-Ireland championship resumes. Tonight we take a look at the minor and U16 championship draws.

## MINOR

In the premier grade there are four groups with three teams in each group, the top teams in each group will play in the inaugural Premier Championship the second and third placed teams in each group will go to the Premier 2 Plate Open draw for quarter and semi-finals after round robin championship. Group one is Aghabullogue, Kibree and Ballinora, Group two Sarsfields 1, Cobh and Castlemartyr, group three Eire Og, Aghada, and Inniscarra and group four is St Finbarr's, Enniskeane and Midleton.



The Munster minor camogie championship winners Cork.

In the minor A championship we have twenty teams and here we have five groups with four teams in each group the top five teams come out for quarter final and the best placed second team from all the groups will join them. This will be decided on aggregate score for and against. The next four second placed teams will play for a place in the quarter finals. Group one is Courcy Rovers, Buttevant, Charleville, and Blackrock, group two Glen Rovers, Cloughduv, Castlelyons and Ballygarvan, group three Ballincollig, Youghal, Mal-

low and Fr O' Neill's, group four Newcestown, Bishopstown, Ballyhea-Milford and Sarsfields 2 and group five is Valley Rovers, Kilbrittain/Timoleague, Rockban and Na Piarasigh. In minor B championship there are thirteen teams and here there is one group of four and three groups of three, the top team of each section go to the quarter finals and will play the second team of different section. Group one is Sliabh Rua, Banteer, Killeagh and Ballinhassig, group two Millstreet, Ballinascahy and Carrigaline, group three Dungourney, Tracton and

Bride Rovers and group four is Blarney, Carrigwohill and Douglas. In the Minor C championship there are nine teams and here we have three groups of three with the top two teams progress to semi-finals and based on points plus aggregate scores the third top team and three second place teams will go to the quarter finals. Group one is Grenagh, Fermoy and Watergrasshill, group two is Nemo Rangers, Erin's Own and Kilworth and group three St Fanahan's, Barryroe and Brian Dillon's.

## UNDER 16

At Under 16 level the group stages are under way and are being played on a league basis, in Premier 1 Clonakilly, Sarsfields, Eire Og and Inniscarra are the sides who will battle it out. In Premier 2 Group one is Aghabullogue, Erins Own, Rockban and Cobh, group two is Blackrock, Glen Rovers, Ballygarvan and Cloughduv and group three is Valley Rovers, Ballinora, Fr O' Neills and Midleton. In Under 16A Group one we have Douglas, Ballinhassig, Na Piarasigh and Mallow, Group two

Enniskeane, Carrigwohill, Laochra Og and St Finbarr's. Group three Youghal, Castlemartyr Ballinascahy and Blarney and in group four its Bishopstown, Sarsfields 2, Ballincollig and Newcestown. U16B there are six groups of three, in Group One Kilbrittain/Timoleague and Bride Rovers, Aghada, group two Bandon St Fanahan's and Castleyons, group three Killeagh, Buttevant and Tracton, group four is Grenagh, Newtownshandrum and Carrigaline and in group five Barryroe, Courcy Rovers and Millstreet. In group six we have St Catherine's, Sliabh Rua and Milford. The Under 16C has four groups. In Group 1 its Ballyhea, Brian Dillon's, Fermoy and Charleville, group two is Nemo Rangers, St Colm's and Kilworth, group three Watergrasshill, Dungourney and Kinsale and in group four Banteer, Kibree and St Vincent's. There is and U16B2 competitions for second teams in clubs and this is just one group of four with participating teams Aghabullogue 2, Douglas 2 Clonakilly 2, Blackrock 2. As the night shortens the push is on to get as many championship game as possible played and clubs are making a huge effort to get them completed.



## CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick

IT was a tremendous honour for Courcy Rovers when Linda Collins became captain of the Cork senior team for 2021 at the start of the season.

It was the icing on the cake for a club that won its first senior county title in 2020 and now have one of their players leading the senior inter-county side.

24-year-old Linda is coming into her prime and you can see that in her performances this year.

With maturity and experience, the confidence she now feels is evident in her play.

Such is her maturity that being substituted a couple of times this season does not play on her mind. Linda is aware that it's a squad effort and that anyone who can do a job on the field needs to get on to do it.

When I asked if those substitutions affect her, her response was quick.

"Absolutely not," Collins said. "I think that's a negative that can be there at times, that people taken off are deemed not to be playing well."

"Look at the Limerick hurlers: Any of them can be taken off on a given day because they've put in a really good shift."

"I find, even from looking at my GPS, that I have put in a good shift and my view is that I've contributed my bit and now it's time for someone else to come on to do their bit."

"I think forwards are often the first to be taken off, at times, but it doesn't affect me in any shape or form. You do your best while you're on the pitch and if that's all you can give, and if others can come on and freshen things up, then that's the way it is."

"I'm giving as much as I can when I'm on the pitch."

Reflecting on the captaincy, Collins doesn't feel any extra burden on her shoulders.

"I feel really good," Collins said. "Coming on the back of our county final win with Courcy's last year, I'm really enjoying the game."

# Collins not fazed to be Cork captain



Cork's Linda Collins in action against Down's Allannah Savage and Dearbhla Magee during the All-Ireland Senior Camogie Championship match in Newry.



At the launch of the 2021 Camogie Association knockout stages of the All-Ireland Camogie Championships were Linda Collins (Cork), Amy Cardiff (Wexford), Niamh Hanniffy (Galway), Meighan Farrell (Kilkenny), Niamh Rockett (Waterford), and Cait Devane (Tipperary).

Picture: INPHO/Tommy Dickson

"As you get older, you gain more experience of playing big games and embrace them and I'm really enjoying my camogie this year."

"We've a lovely group. Everyone seems to be enjoying it, it's very positive in the camp, and I don't feel any added pressure because of being captain. There is no differentiation between us with Cork."

"There are so many experienced

players and leaders in the panel that I don't find that they're depending on me or waiting for me to say something."

## Privilege

"It's a huge privilege for me and for my family and I do embrace that, but I'm enjoying the season and I'm not feeling any additional pressure," Collins said.

I asked Collins if she has visualised walking up the steps of the Hogan stand yet?

"I try and stay away from that," she said.

"But it is definitely on the 'to do' list."

Collins's leadership style is to ensure that the entire panel feel welcome, feel part of the group, feel valued, and to get the best out of every-

one. She's not much of a talker and prefers to lead on the pitch.

The All-Ireland quarter-finals are on in Páirc Uí Chaoimh today.

Cork won't figure as, just as in 2020, they got drawn straight through to the semi-final.

It's Kilkenny versus Wexford and Tipperary versus Waterford. While an extra game would have been welcomed, it is what it is, says the Cork captain.

"You always want games, but, at the same time, we're nearer the All-Ireland final. We're 60 minutes away from one again."

"It'll be nice to watch the quarter-finals. It'll be four weeks since we played Waterford and that's a big gap, but we have good, intense games between ourselves and are doing the best we can with the situation that we're in."

"Just looking forward to the semi-finals now."

Collins herself won't go to the Páirc to watch the games. She'll quietly do that at home.

It's three years since Cork were in the All-Ireland final. That won't be in Cork's thought process, however, going into the semi-final, next Saturday, August 28.

For this weekend at least, the panel will sit back and watch who their potential opponents will be.



# TIPP UP THE GEARS

**..while Cats show their class in dismissal of Wexford**

By Alan Morrissey

TIPPERARY moved through the gears in the second half to pull away from Waterford and book a place in an All-Ireland senior camogie semi-final for a fourth consecutive season with a six-point win.

It was a fourth straight defeat for the Déise girls at this stage of the competition and though they were extremely competitive in the first half with the wind, they just could not get their speedy attackers into the play in the latter period.

Their hopes had been blown off course before the sliotar was thrown in when it was announced that talisman, leading scorer and multiple All-Star Beth Carton would not be toggling at Páirc Uí Chaoimh out due to a hamstring injury.

Despite that hurdle the Déise still led at the end of the first quarter by 0-5 to 0-4 and were well in the game at the interval, trailing by just one, 0-8 to 0-7.

Niamh Rockett took over freetaking duties to good effect and had three points in that opening period, including a fantastic score from play, but it was the pace of former underage basketball star Abby Flynn that really discomfited the Tipp defence in that period, the De La Salle flier grabbing two points.

Things might have been even better for Waterford but for a sensational block by Mary Ryan to deny Shona Curran what seemed a certain goal.

The long-serving Moneygall defender had to depart with an injury early in the first half, and was seen getting treatment on her elbow and a strapping on her upper leg. Tipp will need her in next week's semi-final in Croke.



**BLOCK PARTY:** Waterford's Anna Corcoran is harried by Aoife McGrath and Mary Ryan of Tipperary

Cáit Devane converted four of her seven points from frees in that first half but Róisín Howard's brace from full-forward was crucial, with Eirena Fryday and Orla O'Dwyer also getting on target in that first half.

One felt that the Premier outfit had more scope for improvement and they found it, stepping up another level, a level Waterford couldn't match.

Aoife McGrath and Fryday were monumental around the middle third. It is an indication of their progress as a unit that five of the six forwards got on the scoresheet, Emer McGrath and Clodagh McIntyre firing second-half braces.

This used to be an Achilles heel, with Tipp having an over-reliance on Devane but now the Clonoulty-Rossmore colossus can draw defenders, and lay ball off for others to score.

Howard's workrate when she ventured out the field was phenomenal as Tipp hit five points in a row after a Rockett point from a free had brought the teams level on 0-9 apiece, the highlights being two tremendous points by Fryday and Emer McGrath.

That broke the Waterford resistance and it is Tipp that move forward to the final four, winning by 0-17 to 0-11.

Elsewhere, Kilkenny turned Wex-

ford's dream All-Ireland quarter-final day into a nightmare, as they inflicted a harsh lesson with a ruthless first-half exhibition en route to a 3-19 to 1-12 victory also.

The All-Ireland champions were fantastic from the start in Páirc Uí Chaoimh - playing into a very strong wind - and there was no doubt about the result as the teams went off at the break with the scoreboard reading 2-13 to 0-6.

Kevin Tattan will be delighted with how his charges improved their intent in the third quarter, a period in which they outscored their vaunted opponents into the stiffening elements by six points to five.

The loss of Kellyann Doyle with an apparent shoulder injury will be a concern for the semi-final as the Piltown speedster looked in a lot of pain but it wasn't an issue on this occasion as with all six forwards on the score board, they were in cruise control.

Ciara and Sarah O'Connor fired over two outstanding points for Wexford while Chloe Foxe was unerring from placed balls.

You feared for Wexford in the second half and that they avoided the annihilation that seemed on the cards is to their credit.

But Kilkenny move onwards and upwards in their pursuit of another O'Duffy Cup.



**EYE ON THE BALL:** Orla Cronin takes a free during the All-Ireland Senior Camogie Championship Semi-Final match between Cork and Kilkenny at Croke Park. Cork face Galway in the final on Sunday. Come on Cork! PHOTO: PIARAS Ó MIDHEACH/SPORTSFILE



# Cats overpower Wexford to set up date with old foes

## All-Ireland camogie quarter-final

Kilkenny 3-19  
Wexford 1-12

Therese O'Callaghan

Inspirational play from Kilkenny in the opening 30 minutes at Páirc Uí Chaoimh on Saturday saw them easily advance to an All-Ireland senior camogie championship semi-final meeting with old foes Cork in Croke Park on Sunday. Thirteen points ahead at the interval, they maintained that advantage to the end.

Dominant in most positions, first-half goals fired by Aoife Doyle and Mary O'Connell, helped them into a 2-13 to 0-6 interval lead. Denise Gaule scored their third goal from distance six minutes from time.

Wexford did rally after the break and matched Kilkenny's score of 1-6 — substitute Katrina Parrock snatched a late goal while free-taker Chloe Foxe picked off seven points (six from placed balls).

All in all, a good day's work for the champions.

Manager Brian Dowling, however, will have a nervous wait on injured wing-back Kellyann Doyle. There was also a red card received by substitute Miriam Bambrick at the death.

"Kellyann's shoulder injury kind of sucked the energy out of the game," he said. "We are hoping she might be okay but we will have to assess it. I thought she had a super game, everything good we were doing was coming from her making runs through the middle which she is brilliant at."

"I didn't see the red card. We will have a look at it and see if it is worth appealing." On the game itself, he said: "The first 20 minutes, probably the best we have played all year. Dropped off a bit in the second half. It is some-



## Draw for semi-finals

All-Ireland Senior Camogie Championship semi-final draw:

Kilkenny v Cork  
Tipperary v Galway

Fixtures to take place Sunday, August 29 at Croke Park.

Kilkenny's Katie Power evades Wexford's Louise O'Leary.

Picture: Inpho/Laszlo Geczo

thing to work on for next week."

He also explained the recall of Anne Dalton to the squad. "Emma Kavanagh (sub-keeper) got a serious knee-injury so we needed back-up. Our intermediates are in the All-Ireland semi-final so we didn't want to take a player off

them. We asked Anne and she said yes straight away."

**Scorers for Kilkenny:** D Gaule (1-6, 0-3 frees, 0-1 45), M O'Connell (1-3), A Doyle (1-0), K Nolan and M Walsh (0-3 each), G Walsh and K Power (0-2 each).

**Scorers for Wexford:** C Foxe (0-7, 0-5 frees, 0-1 45), K Parrock (1-0), C O'Connor, J Quigley, L Walsh, S

O'Connor and L Bolger (0-1 each).

**KILKENNY:** A Norris; C Dormer, D Tobin, M Teehan; C Phelan, M Farrell (Capt), K Doyle; G Walsh, D Gaule; M Walsh, K Nolan, M O'Connell; S Fitzgerald, K Power, A Doyle.

**Subs:** N Deely for K Doyle (20 inj), M Kenneally for S Fitzgerald (46), L Murphy for K Nolan (50), L Norris for A Doyle (52), M Bambrick for M Teehan (55).

**WEXFORD:** L Brennan; S Harding, A Lacey, M Sinnott; L O'Leary, S O'Connor, E Walsh; A Cardiff (Capt), O Sinnott; A Curran, C O'Connor, J Quigley; K Kirwan, C Foxe, J Dillon.

**Subs:** L Bolger for O Sinnott (20), K Parrock for K Kirwan (36), M Byrne for A Curran (46), L Walsh for A Cardiff (46), A Guiney for J Quigley (52).

**Referee:** Andy Larkin (Cork).

## 'We need to take one of the big three'

## All-Ireland camogie quarter-final

Tipperary 0-17  
Waterford 0-11

Therese O'Callaghan

Tipperary will travel to Croke Park on Sunday to face Galway in the last four of the All-Ireland senior camogie championship after they slowly got to grips with Waterford's challenge in Páirc Uí Chaoimh on Saturday.

A strong second-half demonstrated their resilience, their six-point winning margin fully deserved.

They had to work hard and

will take confidence into next weekend. They've come undone at this juncture in the last three seasons, including to the westerners last year.

Manager Bill Mullaney said nobody remembers the beaten semi-finalists.

"There is nothing for the semi-finalists that lose. People forget it very quick. Everybody deserves a break, we are probably due one. We just need to push on and take one of the big three (Cork, Kilkenny and Galway). This is where we want to be."

"Today, we expected a tough battle from Waterford and that is what we got."

"When we got going, we

opened up and ran off the shoulder. We got a bit more aggressive and a bit more involved. Our decision making improved a lot more. Everybody at stages made big contributions."

"Karen Kennedy, an All-Star and probably one of the best players in the country and Eirena Fryday when she got going — her work-rate. All over the field. Miriam Campion coming in made a very important contribution. Clodagh McIntyre as well."

"We mightn't have got a full 60 minutes out of them but at various stages when they were needed, they produced. Emer McGrath's point off the

ground was excellent as well."

Wind-assisted Waterford, without injured double All-Star Beth Carton, were a point adrift at half-time 0-7 to 0-8.

They should have been in a better position but were denied two good goal chances.

Tipperary full-back Mary Ryan outstanding, as was dual star Róisín Howard. Ryan, however, is a concern having been withdrawn with an arm injury.

The Premier County lifted themselves and hit the front in the 38th minute and their scoring spread was encouraging, outstripping Waterford eight points to two.

**Scorers for Tipperary:** C Devane (0-7

frees), E Fryday, E McGrath, R Howard, O O'Dwyer and C McIntyre (0-2 each).

**Scorers for Waterford:** N Rockett (0-6, 0-4 frees, 0-1 45), A Flynn (0-2), C O'Sullivan, S Lacey and V Falconer (0-1 each).

**TIPPERARY:** C Bourke; J Bourke, M Ryan, E Loughman; M Eviston, K Kennedy, A McGrath (J-Capt); G O'Brien, E Fryday; E McGrath, R Howard, O O'Dwyer; C McIntyre, C Devane (J-Capt), N Walsh.

**Subs:** K Blair for M Ryan (37 inj), M Campion for G O'Brien (40), S Delaney for N Walsh (52).

**WATERFORD:** B O'Regan; K Barry, I Heffernan, K Lynch; C Carroll, O Hickey, L Bray; C Griffin, S Curran; C O'Sullivan, N Rockett (Capt), A Flynn; S Lacey, A Corcoran, V Falconer.

**Subs:** S Fitzgerald for A Corcoran (50), S McGuckian for C O'Sullivan (54), C Whyte for K Lynch (58), J McCarthy for S Lacey (59).

**Referee:** Liz Dempsey (Kilkenny).

## CAMOGIE

**All-Ireland Senior Championship quarter-finals:** Kilkenny 3-19 Wexford 1-12, Tipperary 0-17 Waterford 0-11. **Intermediate Championship quarter-final:** Antrim 4-19 Kerry 1-7. **Relegation play off:** Carlow 2-19 Tipperary 3-11. **Junior Championship quarter-final:** Armagh 1-16 Limerick 3-8. **Nancy Murray Cup semi-finals:** Tyrone 1-11 Wicklow 0-8, Mayo v Louth OFF. **Minor A Championship quarter-finals:** Kilkenny 1-27 Limerick 1-8, Dublin 1-13 Waterford 1-10. **Minor C semi-final:** Cavan 13-21 Louth 0-1.



Galway's Siobhan McGrath who will be crucial to their hopes of defeating Tipperary in Sunday's All-Ireland camogie semi-final at Croke Park.



# ALL ON THE LINE

## Big weekend for Galway camogie as seniors take on Tipp

JOHN MCINTYRE

IN a largely forgettable GAA championship season for Galway, it's down to the county's camogie teams to salvage some silverware.

Though the county intermediates and minors are in semi-final action this weekend, the big focus will be on the

fortunes of the Galway seniors in their Croke Park battle with Tipperary on Sunday (2pm).

The Tribeswomen will be chasing a third consecutive All-Ireland final appearance and are strong favourites to advance despite the absence of long-term injury victims Heather Cooney and free-taker Carrie Dolan.

All-Ireland champions in 2019, Galway

came through their group with a 100% record, including a psychologically boosting victory over title holders Kilkenny in Callan.

In a further lift to Galway's hopes, Catherine Finnerty is available for the All-Ireland semi-final after the successful appeal against her red card in that Kilkenny game.

► 46-47

## EYES FORWARD!

Kilkenny's Katie Power keeps her eye on the sliotar while fending off a challenge from Wexford's Sarah Harding Kenny during the All-Ireland senior camogie championship quarter-final in Pairc Uí Chaoimh. A blistering first half performance teed the Cats up for victory and a semi-final meeting with Cork See inside for more on the game PICTURE: LASZLO GECZO/INPHO





## ALL-IRELAND SENIOR CAMOGIE CHAMPIONSHIP

# First half blitz sees Kilkenny advance

**KILKENNY**  
**WEXFORD**

3-19  
1-12

**Robert Cribbin**  
at Páirc Uí Chaoimh, Cork

It was as emphatic as the scoreline suggested, with Kilkenny having 13 points to spare over Wexford in last Saturday's All-Ireland senior camogie championship semi-final.

Coming into the game on the back of a defeat to Galway and sketchy performances over Clare and Westmeath there was a few question marks hanging over the Kilkenny but the answer in Páirc Uí Chaoimh couldn't have been more pronounced for the All-Ireland champions as they eased past their Leinster neighbours.

The first half display was particularly impressive as they notched two quickfire goals via Aoife Doyle and Mary O'Connell while Denise Gaule looked very much back

in her groove and Wexford had no answer to the Cats.

Kilkenny led at the break on a 2-13 to 0-6 scoreline while playing against a sizeable breeze and while they did ease off a little in the second period they were still on top throughout with Gaule getting a goal herself as she rounded off on a tally of 1-6.

Katrina Parrock netted late on for Wexford but it was only something of a consolation with Kilkenny's attention already firmly set on a semi-final date with Cork in Croke Park this weekend.

### BLISTERING START

Wexford were big underdogs heading into the game and to have any chance of causing an upset, the thought was they needed a strong start and with the win behind them there was a possibility of them staying in the game.

In truth though the exact opposite happened and Kilkenny ended the game as a contest by half-time.

Denise Gaule got the scoring underway with an opening minute free before the current player of the year assisted the opening Kilkenny goal when she hit a long free in towards the Wexford square. When the ball wasn't cleared properly Aoife Doyle mopped up possession before shooting past Laura Brennan.

Wexford responded with points from Clara O'Connor and Sarah O'Connor to reduce the gap to two, but four further points on the bounce had the Cats six points clear by the 10th minute.

Gaule, Mary O'Connell, Katie Nolan and Miriam Walsh all knocked over points during that period while Doyle almost got a second goal as Kilkenny took complete control.

Jackie Quigley then scored from play for Wexford but by the time of the opening water break it was 1-8 to 0-3 in favour of Kilkenny after



Kilkenny's Mary O'Connell shrugs off the challenge of Sarah O'Connor during Saturday evening's All-Ireland Quarter-Final at Páirc Uí Chaoimh. PICTURES: LASZLO GECZO/INPHO

points from Gaule, Nolan and Grace Walsh.

It was always going to be an uphill battle for Wexford at that stage and quickfire points from Gaule and Nolan almost had the Cats out of sight.

Chloe Foxe hit back with the first of seven frees on the day for Wexford but moments later Katie Power fed Mary O'Connell who gleefully placed the sliotar beyond the reach of Brennan in the Slaneysiders goal and it was a 12 point game.

Gaule, Power and O'Connell once more all

added to the tally in the following minutes and while Wexford added on points courtesy of Foxe and Anais Curran, the game was as good as over at the half-time break.

One setback for Kilkenny in that opening period was Kellyann Doyle going down with injury and she had to be replaced by Niamh Deely after only 20 minutes of play.

Kilkenny looked like a side whose mind had already wandered to further challenges down the track or were still in the dressing room for the early minutes of the second half as Wexford full forward Foxe knocked over a trio of frees to give optimism to some sort of comeback.

That always looked unlikely and O'Connell and Miriam Walsh steadied the Cats with points from play.

Foxe converted another free for Wexford in response as Brian Dowling's side led 2-15 to 0-10 at the second half water break.

Grace and Miriam Walsh then extended the margin back to 13 points as Kilkenny tagged on scores every time Wexford threatened to get close and there was further evidence of this when back to back efforts from Foxe and Leah Walsh found the target for Wexford but again Kilkenny hit back just as quick with Gaule knocking

over a rather routine looking free.

The Windgap half-forward then found the net with seven minutes left on the clock after a long range effort for a point dropped short but instead of Laura Brennan collecting the sliotar she misread the flight of the ball and after colliding with the post the ball ended up over the line.

### JOB DONE

Wexford did rally somewhat late on and after Aoife Norris denied Kevin Tattan's side just moments earlier with a great save, they eventually got their just reward when Katrina Parrock flicked the ball to the net after a long ball from Leah Walsh hung around the Kilkenny goalmouth.

That put a bit of respectability on the scoreboard for Wexford as Katie Power rounded off the scoring with a late point.

There was still late drama though after Kilkenny sub Miriam Bambrick was given a straight red card in stoppage time for a late foul on a Wexford player that will see her miss this Sunday's semi-final with Cork.

For now though the Cats will be content in the knowledge that they are on the way back to Croke Park and 60 minutes away from another All-Ireland final as they seek to retain their title.

**Sunday's semi-finals will be a direct repeat of the clashes in 2020 as Kilkenny and Galway look to get back to the final**

Kilkenny wing back Collette Dormer gets to the ball ahead of Wexford's Joanne Dillon during Saturday's all-Ireland affair in Cork. PICTURE: LASZLO GECZO/INPHO







Kilkenny's Denise Gaule is presented with the Player of the Match Award



Katie Nolan keeps Wexford's Sarah O'Connor in her sights during Saturday's quarter-final

## Kilkenny v Wexford: Analysis

### MAIN PLAYER MARY O'CONNELL (KILKENNY)

Continuing on from a stellar 2020, the Clara centre forward was in inspired form as she scored 1-3 from play. O'Connell pulled the strings in the Kilkenny attack and like she has been all year she was a huge threat to the Wexford defence. Helped by an incisive pass from Katie Power, O'Connell rounded off her performance with a superb opening half goal. While the Cats weren't pushed to the limit there were still other notable performers with the likes of Denise Gaule, Katie Nolan and Grace Walsh all standing out.

### TURNING POINT

Hard to pick out any specific moment that turned the game as Kilkenny were in full control throughout but goals always play a crucial part and Aoife Doyle's effort two minutes into the game really laid the platform for the Kilkenny success and in truth Wexford were chasing shadows afterwards as a result.

### TALKING POINT

Kilkenny's form in the championship had been pretty patchy prior to Saturday but they definitely stepped up the performance levels in a devastating opening half where they had Wexford in a spin.

Even looking back at the victorious league campaign, knockout camogie is something that seems to really suit this Kilkenny side and nobody will fancy playing the defending All-Ireland champions from this point on, Cork included. Brian Dowling and his management team may just be timing their run to perfection.

### HIGHLIGHT

On a day when Kilkenny ran out easy winners, it was probably the perfect day for Katie Power to come in for a start as the Piltown star took her place in the team for the first time in almost 18 months and while she was understandably rusty at times she still notched on two points from play while also setting up Mary O'Connell's goal. She could be a big asset for the Cats as they head for Croke Park this weekend.

### LOWLIGHT

On a day when you win by 13 points, there are going to be very few negatives but there was one with Miriam Bambrick getting a straight red card in stoppage time.

### WHAT NOW?

Kilkenny will now go forward to play old rivals Cork in the All-Ireland semi-final at Croke Park next Sunday while Wexford must lick their wounds on a heavy defeat after a productive 2021.



## HOW THEY LINED OUT

### SCORERS

**Kilkenny:** Denise Gaule (1-6, 0-3 frees, 0-1 45); Mary O'Connell (1-3); Aoife Doyle (1-0); Miriam Walsh and Katie Nolan (0-3 each); Grace Walsh and Katie Power (0-2 each).  
**Wexford:** Chloe Foxe (0-7, frees); Katrina Parrock (1-0); Leah Walsh, Jackie Quigley, Anais Curran, Sarah O'Connor and Ciara O'Connor (0-1 each).

### TEAMS

**Kilkenny:** Aoife Norris; Michelle Teehan, Claire Phelan, Davina Tobin; Kellyann Doyle, Meighan Farrell, Collette Dormer; Steffi Fitzgerald, Grace Walsh; Denise Gaule, Mary O'Connell, Katie Power; Katie Nolan, Miriam Walsh, Aoife Doyle. Subs: Niamh Deely for K Doyle, 20 mins; Michaela Kenneally for Fitzgerald, 46 mins; Laura Murphy for Nolan, 49 mins; Aoife Prendergast for A Doyle, 52 mins; Miriam Bambrick for Teehan, 54 mins.

**Wexford:** Laura Brennan; Sarah Harding Kenny, Aine Lacey, Louise O'Leary; Meave Sinnott, Ciara O'Connor, Emma Walsh; Amy Cardiff, Orla Sinnott; Anais Curran, Jackie Quigley, Kate Kirwan; Sarah O'Connor, Chloe Foxe, Joanne Dillon. Subs: Linda Bolger for O Sinnott, 19 mins; Katrina Parrock for Kirwan, 35 mins; Mag Byrne for Curran, 46 mins; Leah Walsh for E Walsh, 46 mins; Aoife Guiney for Quigley, 50 mins.

Referee: Andy Larkin (Cork)



Kilkenny's Miriam Walsh battles with a Wexford defender for possession of the ball



Kilkenny manager Brian Dowling was pleased with his team's performance in the victory over Wexford on Saturday. PICTURE: LASZLO GECZO/INPHO

## Dowling and Power turn focus to Rebels

Robert Cribbin  
robert.cribbin@kilkennypeople.ie

Kilkenny are on their way back to Croke Park! Cats boss Brian Dowling was delighted with how his side performed in the first half of their impressive quarter-final victory.

"We were very happy with the first half performance and especially in the first 20 minutes," he said in the aftermath of Saturday's win over Wexford.

"I thought we were really motoring well and it was probably our best period of play all year. While we dropped off in the second half, that happens when you are so far ahead, but that's something we will have to work on for next week as we won't get away with that in an All-Ireland semi-final," he said.

"We wanted to start well and we thought if we gave Wexford a good start it may give them a lot of confidence so in fairness to the girls they got two early goals and we are happy with that so we will take it."

The big news ahead of the game was the return of Anne Dalton to the panel and Dowling confirmed afterwards the reasoning for calling her back into the squad.

"Emma Kavanagh got a serious injury a couple of weeks ago in training so we needed backup in goals," he said. "In fairness that sums Ann up and the type of person she is and she'll give everyone a lift around the dressing room as she's a great character and she's a role model to everyone."

"The intermediates are in their own semi-final so we didn't want to take any of their players and Ray Challoner, one of the backroom staff advised it," he added. "We asked Anne and, in fairness, she said yes."

"She's not a goalkeeper or anything but she has good hands," he added. "We hope that she won't need to play - we'll have to wrap up Aoife Norris in cotton wool for the next while!"

Elsewhere Katie Power made her first start for Kilkenny in many months and she was relieved to be back.

"It was tough going," the Piltown star said. "I was like a deer in headlights for most of the match but it's great to be back out there."

"I've waited a long time to be at this stage," she added. "The last two years have been tough going but it's days like this that you keep

thinking of when times are tough so it was brilliant to be back out with the girls."

"The lads have managed my workload very well and they've looked after me."

"The plan was to get 60 minutes into me throughout the group games and it worked out as three 20 minutes and then try to kick on for the quarter-finals."

"I've had a few good weeks since the Galway game now and hopefully that will stand to me a good bit and I'll take that as I'm just delighted to be back," Power said.

Kilkenny are now in an All-Ireland semi-final against Cork and the Piltown star admits all their attention is on that game now.

"It's great to get to Croke Park but if we don't win next weekend it won't mean anything and it's not about me, it's about the team and the panel," she added.

"Getting back to an All-Ireland final is the big aim and we are all focussed on that job in hand this week."

"We've never had the strength in depth that we have now and the training matches have been ferocious in the last few weeks and that can only help us ahead of next weekend."



# Murray is facing big mileage as Galway teams seek final spots

■ Vital 24 hours ahead of Tribeswomen

EAANNA O'REILLY

GALWAY manager Cathal Murray is looking forward to the prospect of a huge weekend for Galway camogie, with three teams from the county just one step away from All-Ireland Finals.

Murray has two teams to focus on as manager, with the intermediate side travelling to Clones on Saturday evening, while the seniors line out the following afternoon at Croke Park. Both teams have their eyes on top honours this year and navigating the penultimate stage is a crucial step on the road to silverware.

"Semi-finals are for winning, that's all we're thinking about at the moment" he said. "It's no use getting to this stage and going out before the final. They're two big games [this weekend] and these are the games that show you how good you really are. You've no sec-

ond chances, its knockout championship now and this is where you want to be. These are the days the girls have trained so hard for all year and now it's about performing as well as we can on the day."



**WE'RE CERTAINLY NOT HAPPY ABOUT HAVING TO GO TO CLONES ON A SATURDAY EVENING TO PLAY ANTRIM**

As regards the senior team, Murray is expecting a major test for his side in the shape of Bill Mullane's Tipp outfit. Murray believes that having knocked on the semi-final door in recent years, it's only a matter of time until the blue and gold make it

back to camogie's biggest occasion.

"Tipp are a quality side; they've been consistently getting to semi-finals in the last few years, and they will certainly make the breakthrough at some stage. They looked sharp against Waterford, and we know we will have to be on our game on Sunday. We've trained well during the last few weeks, but you never really know where you're at until you're actually playing in a championship game."

"There's been little between ourselves and Tipp in recent years. They have talented players in every position, and they'll have huge hunger to get to the final. They're a very strong unit and we expect them to test us everywhere on the pitch. That's the challenge we have to be ready for and hopefully the girls can give a good performance on the day."

The Galway management will be clocking up huge mileage over the weekend, with a trip to



Team manager Cathal Murray who faces a busy 24 hours with both the Galway senior and intermediate camogie teams in All-Ireland semi-finals.

Clones on Saturday preceding Sunday's outing in the capital. The Galway intermediates face off against an Antrim side who defeated them in the league quarter final on June 5. Murray was impressed by the Saffrons in their 21-point hammering of Kerry in last weekend's quarter final. The Galway boss sees Saturday's semi-final as a huge challenge, with the chosen venue also adding to the task.

"We're certainly not happy about having to go to Clones on a Saturday evening to play Antrim. It's really not fair at all on our girls. For a neutral

venue, it's hard to understand how they came up with Clones. It's going to make it harder for us with the length of the trip on top of everything else. But look, we have to just get on with it now."

With a 385-kilometre round trip facing the Galway intermediates on Saturday, the manager certainly has a point about the venue. It is undoubtedly an advantage to the Ulster side in what is sure to be a very tight affair. Murray is well aware of the capabilities of the Antrim players, having seen them first-hand already this year.

"Antrim are a serious team, they turned us over in the league, so we know all about them. There will be nothing between us and we'll have to put in a top performance on the day. Having said that, we are confident in the strength of our [intermediate] panel."

"We've had a lot of injuries in this panel since the start of the year, but everyone who has come in has really added to it. Things have gone well in the championship so far, but again, it will count for nothing unless we get the result on Saturday," he concluded.

## GALWAY INTERMEDIATE AND MINOR CAMOGIE TEAMS ALSO CHASE ALL-IRELAND FINAL PLACES

EAANNA O'REILLY

THE Galway intermediate team travel to Clones on Saturday (5pm) for an All-Ireland semi-final clash with Antrim. The Tribeswomen go into the game after an impressive group campaign, which saw them record three wins from three. Cathal Murray's side ran up impressive scoring totals in their group encounters against Carlow (4-19), Dublin (2-16) and Meath (5-13).

The Galway side undoubtedly contains huge talent in their ranks. Captained by Mullagh's Clara Donohue, the likes of Laura Ward, Kate Screene, Lisa Casserly, Caoimhe Mahon and Rachael Hanniffy (having a brilliant season so far) are all classy defenders who give little away. Fiona Ryan has also provided a solid presence behind them in goals. Going into Saturday however, Screene is an injury doubt in the full back line.

The Skehana player would undoubtedly be a loss. However, Galway have quality replacements to call upon, if necessary, with the likes of Katie Manning and Sarah McCartin, who didn't start in

their last group game against Meath, more than capable of stepping into a defensive role.

Molly Burke has been an influential presence in midfield, while Sinéad Coleman and Tegan Canning have also featured in the middle third, so it will be interesting to see which combination is selected for Saturday's game. The Galway half forward line contains major pace, skill, and athleticism. Molly Mannion, Ava Lynskey and Elisha Broderick are three superb athletes, while they also provide strength in the ball winning stakes, as well as a scoring threat.

Full forward Máiréad Dillon's goal scoring touch is a huge asset for Galway. The Kilconieron star has raised four green flags in three championship matches so far. The Tribeswomen have a selection of highly talented corner forwards in their ranks, with the likes of Tara Rutledge, Cora Kenny, Niamh Niland and Chloe Reilly all good options in attack.

Meanwhile, the name on everyone's lips this season has been 19-year-old Áine Keane. The St. Thomas' player has scored a staggering 5-19 (5-6 from play) in three championship matches so far. Keane's

form will be crucial if Galway are to qualify for a second All-Ireland intermediate final in three years. At her best, the corner forward has been almost unmarkable, with exceptional pace, skill, ball control, incisive running and score taking of the highest order, marking her out as a tremendous talent.

Galway's opponents Antrim had a comprehensive quarter final win over Kerry last weekend. The Saffrons ran riot on the day, putting 4-19 on the scoreboard and recording a 21-point win over the Kingdom. The Ulster side reached last year's intermediate All-Ireland, where they were defeated by Down, and will certainly have eyes on going one step further in 2021.

The sides met in the league quarter final on June 5, when Galway went down to a three-point defeat on a 1-13 to 1-10 scoreline. On that occasion, Maeve Kelly, Amy Boyle, Nicole O'Neill, Caltrín Dobbin and Róisín McCormack were Antrim's stand out players. The weather conditions had a major bearing on that game, with Galway failing to maximise the advantage of a strong wind in the first half.

Having learned the lessons from that

defeat and with their eyes on the prize of an All-Ireland final place, the Tribeswomen can book their place in Croke Park in September, all going well on the day.

The Galway minors, meanwhile, face Kilkenny in Abbotstown on Saturday afternoon (1:30 pm). Like Galway, the Cats are unbeaten and come into the game on the back of a 19-point win over Limerick in last weekend's quarter final. Prior to that game, Kilkenny drew with Waterford and defeated Wexford in their group matches. They will undoubtedly provide a stern test for Aaron Fox's side.

Nevertheless, Galway are a very strong outfit with many aces in their hand. They showed great quality in their group wins over Dublin and Tipperary. Galway's strength is built on an impressive half back line, consisting of Caoimhe Starr (Killimor), Clara Hickey (Davitt's) and Katie Anna Porter (Davitt's).

Salthill's Laura Kelly has been outstanding in midfield, while the likes of Niamh McInerney (Shamrocks), Sabina Rabbittie (Athenry), Chloe Farragher (Davitt's) and Katie Gilchrist (Shamrocks) have been in fine scoring form up front.



ALL-IRELAND CAMOGIE SENIOR SEMI-FINAL

# Odds favour Galway to repeat last year's win over Tipperary

■ Tribeswomen set their sights on reaching third consecutive All-Ireland final

EANNA O'REILLY

IN a huge weekend for Galway camogie, the Galway senior team face off against Tipperary in the penultimate stage of this year's championship on Sunday at Croke Park (2pm). Cathal Murray's side are hoping to reach their third All-Ireland senior final in succession. On Saturday meanwhile, the Galway intermediate team travel to Clones to take on Antrim (5pm), hoping to reach the final for the second time in three years.

Completing the weekend line up are the Galway minors, who face Kilkenny at the penultimate stage of the All-Ireland minor championship, on Saturday in Abbotstown (1:30 pm). It has the potential to be a great weekend for Galway's flagship teams, with three All-Ireland Final places on offer. Reaching all three would be an enormous achievement for Galway camogie and a hugely positive reflection of the strength of the game in the county.

The Galway seniors certainly have major expectations on them, as they look to overcome a Tipp side who have been sticky opponents in recent times. Bill Mullane's side were very competitive in last year's All-Ireland semi-final meeting with the Tribeswomen, while they recorded a notable win over Galway in the 2020 National League.

Tipperary had a quarter final win over a dogged Waterford side last Saturday, on a 0-17 to 0-11 scoreline at Páirc Uí Chaoimh. The blue and gold were solid without being spectacular and will need to up their game against the Tribeswomen on Sunday. Nevertheless, Tipp have major quality in their ranks, with defenders Mary Ryan, Karen Kennedy and Aoife McGrath providing them with a strong rear-guard.

Midfielder Eireana Fryday impressed against Waterford, while the Tipp forward line will provide a major threat. Cáit Devane needs little introduction as a top class attacker, while dual player Orla O'Dwyer, fresh from a victorious AFLW campaign with the Brisbane Lions, is also a key player for Tipp.

Full forward Róisín Howard, another dual star, picked up the player of the match award against Waterford, while Emer McGrath and Clodagh McIntyre have also been impressive in attack. All told, they will give Galway plenty to think about on

Sunday and should have the advantage of being sharp from the outset, after last weekend's outing in Cork.

With Galway's last outing coming four weeks ago, when they laid their recent Kilkenny hoodoo to rest in Callan, they should go into this game fresh and in confident mood. Having played three group games in 14 days, the last few weeks have given them time to re-energise and deal with any issues of fatigue. In terms of personnel, the Tribeswomen have been boosted by the return to fitness of the versatile Caitríona Cormican in recent weeks.

Orlaith McGrath has also made a full recovery from a dislocated shoulder and after getting game time against Kilkenny, the Sarsfields' forward should be in contention to start in Croke Park. Catherine Finnerty is also available for Sunday's match, having had her red card from the Kilkenny game successfully appealed.

Galway's resources have certainly been stretched this season, with numerous players from the senior panel being on the treatment table at different stages. Long term injury victims Heather Cooney and Carrie Dolan remain unavailable, while team captain Sarah Derivan, Emma Helebert and Niamh Hanniffy are hoping to recover from some recently sustained knocks in time for Sunday's game.



**IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN WHETHER LAURA GLYNN OR SARAH HEALY WILL START BETWEEN THE POSTS**

With a physical and athletic Tipp side in mind, Galway's team selection will be interesting. Tipp's half back line of McGrath, Kennedy and Máiréad Eviston are a very strong unit. Galway will have to ensure that Tipp's half back trio don't dominate the skies and become a launchpad for attacks, as they very often are.

Fryday and Grace O'Brien are an athletic midfield pairing, but Galway certainly have the personnel to physically dominate the ball winning stakes here. Any two from the trio of Hanniffy, Niamh Kilkenny and Niamh Mc-



Galway's Catherine Finnerty, pictured in action against Clare's Róisín McMahon, has had her red card rescinded following her dismissal in the group championship tie with Kilkenny.

Grath can provide the necessary strength and guile to dominate the middle third. Another area Galway can look to exploit is testing the pace of the Tipp full back line, which appears to be a weakness based on the Waterford game.

The Galway midfielders must supply their pacy full forward line with possession whenever possible. The likes of Ailish O'Reilly, Finnerty and the McGrath sisters are in top form this year and are more than capable of doing huge damage, whichever trio is selected. Slobhán McGrath is Galway's top scorer this season, hitting 6-14 in this year's league and championship so far.

O'Reilly (2-14) and Aoife Donohue (2-12) have also excelled in the scoring stakes in 2021. Niamh Kilkenny has also contributed hugely, with 3-7 from midfield already this season. Kilkenny's scoring prowess could be utilised to an even greater extent closer to goal, and it will be interesting to see if she features in a more advanced position at any stage.

One area Galway must improve on from their win over Kilkenny is in the puck out win-

ning stakes. The Tribeswomen struggled to secure possession from their own puck outs for the majority of the contest in Callan. With the strength of the Tipp half back line in mind, Galway must have a couple of aerially strong players in their half forward line on Sunday.

It remains to be seen whether Laura Glynn or Sarah Healy will start between the posts. Glynn made her first championship start at senior level against Kilkenny and capped off the game with an outstanding save in the dying minutes to secure the win. Healy, meanwhile, is a proven keeper of top quality at the highest level. Either way, it's a position where the Tribeswomen have excellent options.

Galway's back six have been solid throughout the season so far, with Dervla Higgins doing a highly impressive job at number four, in the absence of injured stalwart Heather Cooney. Tipp's forward unit will provide a significant test for the Tribeswomen, but the experience and quality of Sarah Derivan and her defensive colleagues should be sufficient to deal with the blue and gold threat.



Galway's Dervla Higgins who has impressed in defence.

With the heatwave set to continue over the weekend, conditions should allow for an open and high paced game at GAA HQ. Playing in testing temperatures is something Galway have already experienced in this year's championship. It will certainly be a contrast to last year's semi-final clash with Tipp, which took place on a bleak winter evening

in Páirc Uí Chaoimh last November. Galway triumphed on that occasion on a 1-11 to 0-8 scoreline.

All things considered, Galway are likely to have too much class on Sunday for an improving Tipp side, and if they perform at their best, the outcome should be a straightforward win for Murray's charges.



# Cork show great heart to win semi

## CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

Cork	0-15
Dublin	1-11

HEART, determination, and a will to win saw Cork book their place in the Tesco All-Ireland Minor Championship final as they edged out Dublin in a cracking contest in St Lachtains GAA Grounds, Kilkenny.

Playing for 45 minutes with 14 players after they lost Kate Redmond to a harsh second yellow card, Cork had to pull out all the stops to carve out this victory. How they responded though; their fitness was first class and in the searing heat they simply worked their socks off and never allowed Dublin to gain a grip.

Orlaith Cahalane, Rose Murphy and Orlaith Mullins hit 0-9 from play between them, which was vital in such a tight game, while the team as a unit were hugely resilient.

Dublin settled quickly into the game as they won early possession and put Cork under pressure.

### Level

Ten minutes in, Dublin led 0-5 to 0-2 but Cork settled and with Cahalane, Aimee Morgan, and Eimear O'Brien on target it was level at the first water break. It was score for score, as the sides swapped points and at the interval, it was still level 0-8 apiece, though Cork were down to 14.

Meadhbh Ring and Mullins edged Cork two points clear, but Dublin continued to find space and they hit the front with a long Annabelle Timothy delivery going all the way to the net and when Aishling O'Neill added a point the gap was two.

Cork's response was top class as they worked hard and, applying huge pressure, they won a 45. Morgan converted and keeping the foot on the pedal, Cork added three in a row the excellent Murphy, Cahalane and Morgan restoring the lead 0-14 to 1-9 with eight minutes remaining.

As the scorching heat took its toll Cork hooked, blocked, and never allowed Dublin an inch.

Roisin Ni Chathasaigh cut the deficit with a point, but Mullins replied. Digging deep, Dublin won a free that Ellie Young converted in injury-time.

Crucially Cork won the puck out and



Cork's Rose Murphy and Dublin's Niamh Crowley and Roisin Ni Chathasaigh battle for the ball in the All-Ireland camogie semi-final.

Picture: Patrick Browne

holding possession in their own half they closed it out to keep the three-in-a-row minor bid alive on Leaside.

Kilkenny overcame Galway 3-21 to 1-25 in the other semi-final where it went to extra-time.

**Scorers for Cork:** E O'Brien 0-3 (0-2 f, 0-1 45), O Cahalane 0-3, A Morgan 0-3 (0-1 f, 0-1 45), R Murphy, O Mullins 0-2 each, M Ring (f), C Golden 0-1 each.

**Dublin:** E Young 0-4 (0-2 f, A O'Neill 0-3, A Rafter, A Gannon, R Ni Chathasaigh 0-1 each.

**CORK:** C Hurley, A Cashman, M Healy, C Lynch, E O'Driscoll, A Healy, O Mc Allen (c); M Murphy, C Golden; A Morgan, R Murphy, K Redmond; E O'Brien, M Ring, O Cahalane.

**Subs:** O Mullins for E O'Brien (28), C Walsh for E O'Driscoll (45).

**DUBLIN:** E Mooney, R Buckley, S Codd, N Crowley; A Ryan, C Gannon, M Reid; N Donnellan, A Lambie, A Gannon; A Timoney, R Ni Chathasaigh, A O'Neill, E Young, A Rafter.

**Subs:** J Vaughan for A Ryan (28), S Daly for N Donnellan (h-t), E Doran for M Reid (37), A Curraoin for N Crowley (56).

**Referee:** Liz Dempsey (Kilkenny).



Cork's Aoife Healy and Dublin's Aine Rafter.

Picture: Patrick Browne

## Wallace full of praise for players who had to dig deep

CORK minor camogie manager Jerry Wallace had huge praise for his charges after they showed huge resolve to overcome Dublin and book their place in the Tesco All-Ireland final.

It was nip and tuck all through as the sides swapped score for score, but in the finish it was Cork who prevailed, 0-15 to 1-11.

Cork won the last two minor titles, in 2018 and 2019, so as there was no championship last summer, the county is now on course for three in a row, albeit against a classy Kilkenny outfit in the decider.

"We had to battle to the finish, Dublin are an excellent side and they showed it," said Wallace.

"They had a game last weekend when they defeated Waterford while we hadn't played in three weeks, Dublin were quick out of the blocks and they settled fast, but all credit to our girls, they never

### MATCH REACTION

■ Mary Newman

panicked."

Cork lost a player to a second yellow card but to their credit, they worked hard.

"The girls stood up to the test and they worked and worked and gave us 100%, all over the pitch we had to be at our best but the heads never dropped we stayed focused to the finish.

### Pressure

"Dublin applied huge pressure on our defence especially in the closing stages, but we stood firm; the performance was superb, we couldn't have asked for more they gave it everything they had."

Conditions were hard, but Cork didn't let it bother them.

"In the intense heat it was tough especially with 14 players, but our fitness stood to us and at the full-time whistle we were still flying; the girls really wanted to win this and they were not going to let it go and it's great now to be in another final."

Looking ahead to next weekend's final, Wallace knows that a bigger test awaits.

"We will be playing Kilkenny and Cork and Kilkenny always produce great games, they went to extra-time today before they overcame Galway and no doubt they will be boosted by their victory, it was a high scoring game as well."

"We will regroup and work on it now for the week and look forward to next weekend and the challenge Kilkenny will bring."



**2021**

**All Ireland Minor A**

**Semi Final**

**2pm, 28 August 2021**

**Cork V Dublin**

**Referee Liz Dempsey (Kilkenny)**

**St. Lachtain's GAA,**

**Freshford, Co. Kilkenny**

**1. Ciara Hurley**  
(St. Finbarrs)

**2. Avril Cashman**  
(Youghal)

**3. Miriam Healy**  
(Ballincollig)

**4. Cliona Lynch**  
(Sarsfields)

**5. Emma O Driscoll**  
(Enniskeane)

**6. Aislinn Healy**  
(Aghada)

**7. Olivia McAllen**  
(Captain Sarsfields)

**8. Neabh Murphy**  
(Ballinera)

**9. Clara Golden**  
(St. Finbarrs)

**10. Aimee Morgan**  
(Castlemartyr)

**11. Rose Murphy**  
(Ballinera)

**12. Kate Redmond**  
(Slabh Rua)

**13. Eimear O'Brien**  
(Enniskeane)

**14. Meadhbhling**  
(Aghabullogue)

**15. Orlaith Cahalane**  
(St. Finbarrs)

**16. Eadain Goggin**  
(Kilbeggan)

**17. Grace Ryan**  
(Newcestown)

**18. Clara Walsh**  
(Carrigtwohill)

**19. Jenny Doyle**  
(Youghal)

**20. Shama Hayes**  
(Bride Rovers)

**21. Emily O'Donovan**  
(Kilbeggan)

**22. Ava Halihan**  
(Castletyons)

**23. Amy McNamara**  
(Sarsfields)

**24. Ella Wigginton**  
(Barrett St. Finbarrs)

**25. Leah Mulligan**  
(Castletyons)

**26. Anna Fahy**  
(Tralee)

**27. Ciara Murphy**  
(Kilbeggan)

**28. Lucy McNulty**  
(Castletyons)

**29. Nicole O'Brien**  
(St. Finbarrs)

**30. Orlaith Mullins**  
(Sarsfields)

**Management Team**

**Ballisteoir**  
Jerry Wallace

**Coaches**  
Michael Boland  
Mark O'Sullivan

**Fitness Trainer**  
Senya Walsh

**Logistics/Maor Caman**  
Lucy Wallace

**Liaison Officer**  
Orla Hallihan

**Covid Officer**  
Ryanna Power

**Medical Officer**  
John Daly

**County Board Liaison**  
Louise Weldon



**BLACKBEE**



**TESCO**

**All-Ireland Minor Championships**



Cork minor camogie backroom team members Mark O'Sullivan, Sonya Walsh and Mick Boland.

## Cork minors have an All-Ireland final place in their sights

**Tesco All-Ireland Minor camogie semi-final: Cork v Dublin, Freshford, Kilkenny, 2pm**

IT'S down to the last four in the hunt for the Tesco All-Ireland minor title as Cork take on Dublin on Saturday in Freshford, while Kilkenny will battle it out with Galway in Abbotstown for a place in the final.

Cork confidently came through group three with victories over Clare and Limerick, while Dublin were runners-up in group one to Galway and had to contest a quarter-final last week where they overcame Waterford in a close contest.

Cork have been waiting since August 1, when they played their last group stage game, while Dublin with a week under their belts last week, will have been involved in competitive action.

With no U16 or minor championships played in 2020 Cork are the holders of the minor All-Ireland title having won back-to-back honours in 2018 and 2019 and in effect they are going for three-in-a-row.

Jerry Wallace and his backroom team have put in huge work with their squad and they will be looking for a similar performance to what we have seen in the group stages as they bid for a final spot.

In their opening game against Clare, Cork were convincing 2-21 to 1-10 winners with Rose Murphy, Meadhbhling, Eimear O'Brien, Orlaith Cahalane, Aimee Morgan, and Clara Golden all contributing to their tally.

Against Limerick, it was a similar story as cork outclassed their opponents to run out 3-19 to 0-3 winners.

In the provincial championship which was played on a separate basis to the All-Ireland series, Cork took the title as they again overpowered Limerick, but the big test awaits as they step into the later stages of their All-Ireland campaign and Dublin will be tough opponents.

Dublin pushed Galway to the limits in their group stage meeting where they were unlucky to lose out by a point in a 1-14 to 3-9 clash and in their second game they demolished Tipperary 3-21 to 1-13.

**CAMOGIE**

**Mary Newman**

Galway secured their victory thanks in no small way to two first-half goals which kept the side in touch with a Dublin side that threatened to pull away in the latter stages of the first half, and indeed they had a late attempt for an equaliser drift wide of the post.

They have excellent performers in Ellie Young, Aisling Gannon, Annabelle Timothy, Aine Rafferty, Chloe Faragher have all been huge threats up front for them and are all capable of getting vital scores.

In defence, Claire Gannon is a strong presence at centre-back and she is not shy to come forward and has been prominent in all their outings to date.

Dublin manager John O'Connell and his backroom team of Helen Cosgrave, Donal Ryan, and Sandra Tarr are in their second season with this minor side, in the 2020 All-Ireland Championship, they made a superb start winning their first two games before Covid put a halt to the championship.

Having retained the majority of his side he has continued to make progress and it comes as no surprise to see them in the semi-final.

While a lot of Cork's 2020 panel are no longer available, they are coming off the back of a hugely successful 2019 where the All-Ireland U16 title was secured after a lapse of 16 years when they stopped Galway's bid for five in a row.

With many of that side now progressing to minor level, Cork have a lot of experience of winning big games.

Jerry Wallace has Mick Boland, Mark O'Sullivan, and Sonya Walsh at his side and the work they are putting in is huge and they have left no stone unturned in their attempt to retain the title.

Captain, Olivia McAllen and her squad, which includes players of the calibre of Eadain Goggin, Miriam Healy, Cliona Lynch, and Meabh Murphy will give it everything in a bid to get Cork back to another minor final.



**NIAMH KILKENNY**  
Galway Camogie Player



# Tipp face uphill battle to experience the winner effect



Tipperary's Orla O'Dwyer goes for a point under pressure from Waterford's Katie Lynch in the All-Ireland senior camogie championship quarter-final in Páirc Uí Chaoimh. Picture: Inbo/Lazio/Getty

**I**N his 2012 book, *The Winner Effect*, psychologist Ian Robertson explores the neuroscience behind success and failure. The 'winner effect' is a term used in biology to describe how an animal that has won a fight against a weaker opponent is much more likely to win a subsequent fight, even against stronger opposition. Success breeds success, essentially — and of course, this applies to humans too. Winning changes the brain: makes you more focused, more confident, and more aggressive.

In sport, we know the winner effect by other names, like 'belief', 'experience', or 'character'. It explains how we end up with dynasties like the Kilkenny hurlers, Dublin footballers — and conversely. It also explains how difficult it can be to break through, especially when playing against a dominant team.

That's the uphill challenge facing the Tipperary camogie team in this Saturday's All-Ireland semi-final against Galway. It's their fourth consecutive year in the top four, but they're yet to clear that next hurdle of getting into an All-Ireland final. Their fellow travellers in the other semi-finals are Cork, Kilkenny, and Galway — three counties who, for the better part of the last decade, have been steadily rotating the O'Duffy Cup between them.

This Tipp team has never even played in Croke Park — with the exception of full-back Mary Ryan, who came on as a sub in the 2006 final and is in the form of her life in her 17th season. They should have had their collective Croker debut last year, having qualified for the league final, but the pandemic had other plans and the fixture was cancelled. Then they led All-Ireland champions Kilkenny into injury time in this year's league semi-final, only to be caught at the death. It's been hard.



Eimear Ryan

earned, this Croke Park appearance, and one hopes that they will enjoy it and get the best out of themselves, rather than being overawed by the occasion.

Having topped their group for the second year in a row, Tipp might have con-

sidered themselves unlucky to be drawn in last weekend's quarter-final. In retrospect, though, the game against Waterford was a chance to blow off the cobwebs. In the first half, Tipp didn't look quite as commanding as they had in their group matches earlier in the summer; however, they steadied up and pulled away towards the end, with Eimear McGrath's stun-

ning 'look ma, no hands' point an indication of the team's confidence.

The Waterford game will have benefitted Tipp's heads. If not their bodies, a number of Tipp players, including Ryan, may be carrying over knocks and niggles from last weekend. Still, they have more players at their disposal heading into this semi-final than they did for the same fixture last November. On that occasion, the latter stages of the championship overlapped with the AFLW pre-season, which meant that Tipp were without Orla O'Dwyer's engine up front. Nicole Walsh and Eirena Fryday were also missing through injury. Tipp's biggest disappointment

that day was their lack of firepower, managing just four scores from play. By contrast, their spread of scorers has been a feature of their play this year, with five of their forwards and midfielder Fryday popping up for vital points against Waterford.

They'll face a determined, focused, and businesslike Galway, who will feel that the All-Ireland was theirs for the taking last December, only to have been decided in the closing minutes by a Denise Gaule penalty. They will have exorcised a few demons by edging out Kilkenny by a point in the last of their group games in July, and their eyes will very much be on the prize of an All-Ireland final spot on September 12. Key battles here will be Cait Devane and Sarah Derivan, while Fryday and her midfield partner Grace O'Brien will be trying to minimise Niamh Kilkenny's trademark attacking runs.

**O**VER the winter, both Cork and Kilkenny lost talismanic players to retirement in Gemma O'Connor and Anne Dalton. While many of us assumed that one or both of them wouldn't be too long in returning in a coaching or backroom team capacity, Dalton's sudden reappearance as Kilkenny's sub-goalie has caught everyone by surprise. It'd be like if Joe Canning ran onto the pitch without warning next February with number 16 on his back and a bag of slibtors. With usual sub-keeper Emma Kavanaugh injured, the decision not to call up intermediate keeper Siobhán Farrell is surprising, but Dalton's presence in the dressing room alone is probably worth the goalkeeping gamble.

The champions looked impressive in their quarter-final against Wexford, in particular the long-range point-scoring of their midfielders and half backs, and their ability to pick

the Tribeswomen and came on as a sub in each of the three championship group games throughout before finally getting her hands on a starting berth.

"I was like a deer in headlights for most of the match. It was great to be back out there. I've waited a long time. The last two years have been tough going so it's brilliant to be back out with the girls."

The lads have managed my load unreal. They've looked after me. The plan was to try get 60 minutes into me throughout the group games and try kick on for the

quarter-finals. I've had a good few weeks since the Galway game under the belt and hopefully the full game will bring me on a small bit. I was fairly rusty but I'm just delighted to be back."

Power cried bitter-sweet tears of joy and sadness when the final whistle blew on last year's All-Ireland final, where Kilkenny ended a series of heart-breaking decider defeats with victory, once again, over Galway. But she will be removing emotion from the equation on Sunday.

"It's great, but at the end of the day if we don't win it's not going to mean anything. It's

not about me. It's about the team. It's about the panel and it's getting back to an All-Ireland final. (I'm) trying to take that sentiment out of things I suppose and the emotion, and just focus on the job at hand. We've a big job in hand."

Her long-time sister-in-law, Anne Dalton, made a dramatic return to the squad three weeks ago after goal-keeper Emma Kavanaugh suffered a knee injury. Given her own history, it's no wonder Power has sympathy for the long-serving neimhínder, who had won back her place after losing out to Aoife Norris

last year. Having 'Queen' Dalton back in the dressing room is always welcome, however. "It's under unforeseen circumstances that Emma is injured. She was back in goal for the last few championship games and absolutely hurting out of her skin. "Sport is cruel at times and she got a tough injury, so we needed a sub-keeper and who else to call on only The Queen herself! "All week, (she's had) a few little words here and there and she's a great person to have in and around the dressing room."



All-Ireland Senior Camogie Championship semi-final

Cork v Kilkenny

Sunday 4pm, Croke Park

Referee: TBC

TV: Live on RTE2

**Daragh O Conchúir**



Katie Power has admitted that playing her first full game in almost two years for Kilkenny




**ALL-IRELAND SENIOR CAMOGIE CHAMPIONSHIP**
**Cork v Kilkenny**


Cork take on reigning champions Kilkenny in mouth-watering Croke Park Sunday showdown

Kilkenny's Denise Gaule and Mary O'Connell compete with Cork's Laura Treacy and Niamh O'Callaghan for possession during the 2020 All-Ireland semi-final.

# REBELS TO RAISE THEIR GAME



BY GER MCCARTHY

PAUDIE MURRAY is under no illusions as to the challenge facing Cork in Sunday's All-Ireland senior camogie semi-final against reigning champions Kilkenny in Croke Park (4pm throw-in).

Unlike their semi-final opponents, Cork have had to wait a full month since their last All-Ireland championship outing. Cork defeated Waterford 2-19 to 3-8 at Páirc Uí Rinn on July 31st to finish top of Group 2 and book a semi-final berth.

The Rebels have not played a competitive match since while Kilkenny have the benefit of an extra quarter-final game, seeing off Wexford 3-19 to 1-12 at Páirc Uí Chaoimh last weekend. On the plus side, being out of the public eye for close to a month means the spotlight is off Cork heading into the most important match of the season.

'Everyone's talk during the year is that it was going to be a Kilkenny and Galway All-Ireland final so I suppose we are going into this semi-final as outsiders,' Murray says.

'I was down at Kilkenny's quarter-final and probably came away more impressed after it than what I was beforehand. Speaking to a lot of the Kilkenny people coming out of the ground afterwards, they

**'We are going to have to play better than what we did over the last couple of years to have a chance' – Paudie Murray, Cork manager**

feel this is the best team that have had in a number of years. We will have it all to do.

'As for the month-long gap, the only thing we could do was make things competitive in training. This weekend will tell whether we have managed that or not.

'There were a few injuries after the Waterford game so in one way we didn't want a quarter-final. On the other hand, that extra game always helps. We will just have to see how the semi-final goes to see whether we got it right or not.'

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Murray makes a valid point about Cork being underdogs when taking on the reigning All-Ireland champions. Gal-

way may have registered a one-point victory over Brian Dowling's team earlier in this year's championship but Kilkenny are not the current league and All-Ire-

land trophy holders for nothing.

The reigning champions also defeated Cork 2-10 to 1-11 at the same juncture of last year's championship. All that before ending three consecutive years of All-Ireland final misery and defeating Galway to lift the O'Duffy Cup last December.

'Make no mistake, Kilkenny – who had the legendary Anne Dalton back in the ranks last weekend, albeit as a back-up goalkeeper – are the team to beat and Cork boss Murray knows it. Galway, Tipperary and Cork represent a trio of contenders who reached the penultimate stage of last year's All-Ireland and are back again in 2021.

'Looking at the league, you would have to say there really isn't that much between the four or five contenders,' the Cork manager explains.

'Kilkenny are probably that bit stronger with

Katie Power coming back into the side plus a few more. They certainly look to be far more settled than where they were this time last year. I think their support play has improved greatly compared with 2020.

'Last year, Kilkenny were very direct. This year, they can certainly go long or short. We are going to have to play better than what we did over the last couple of years to have a chance.'

The fact both of this weekend's All-Ireland semi-finals will be staged at Croke Park represents another positive step in promoting camogie to a wider audience. Irrespective of the setting, Murray and his players eyes are firmly fixed on their opponents rather than the venue.

'We have no problem going to Croke Park as our record there has been exceptionally good there over the last number of years,' Murray says.

'There is no difficulty playing there. It just means we will be on the road earlier in the morning to get there than if it was on in Thurles or Páirc Uí Chaoimh. I have always said that I prefer to be away from home for these big games because the players tune in that bit earlier rather than playing at home.

'Our message to the players is not going to change because

I don't think you can change it at this late stage of the championship. We will look after ourselves, our own principles and just give it everything.'

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In terms of injuries, Cork are reporting a clean bill of health ahead of their trip to Croke Park even through a number of players are carrying knocks following the Leicesters' previous championship win over Waterford.

'We have one or two concerns but would hope that they would have cleared up before Sunday,' Murray says.

'It is probably no different to Kilkenny after their game with Wexford. So, fingers crossed that, when we sit down to pick a team on Friday evening, we will have a full squad to select from.'

Murray has been in the job long enough to offer an honest assessment of the senior game.

camogie championship's overall quality. Increased print and media coverage coupled with growing TV and online audiences means camogie is in a healthy state.

'I think that the general play has improved,' Murray says.

'I still think there is a massive gap but that physicality and fitness levels have improved greatly over the last two years since they changed the rules. The game has changed. You look at the scores, definitely the scoring is far higher than it was a number of years ago.

'If you want to be critical, the one area we are massively behind in is consistency of refereeing. Looking at the Kilkenny game the last day, they scored their goal despite (the scorer talking) 11 steps. It is an area that has not improved over the last number of years. To me, that's the greatest worry to our game.'

## ON THE BIG STAGE

For the first-time ever, the All-Ireland senior camogie championship semi-finals will be held in Croke Park this Sunday, August 29th. It's an historic occasion for the Camogie Association. Cork will take on reigning champions Kilkenny (4pm throw-in) in a repeat of last year's semi-final while 2020 beaten finalists Galway will meet Tipperary in the other semi-final (2pm). This is the fourth consecutive year that these four teams have contested the senior championship semi-finals, with Tipperary the only team of the four not to reach a final in those four years.

Cork

manager  
Paudie Murray.





media engagements, from the game. This is not someone who will be wasting mental energy worrying about how an article is going to read.

But then she won't be stressing either about what will unfold from 4pm tomorrow in the All-Ireland senior camogie semi-final against Kilkenny at Croke Park, which is part of RTE2's televised double-header with the first semi involving Galway and Tipperary.

This phlegmatic approach has developed through experience and has led to an upsurge in performance.

Three years ago, Collins spoke about the periods of doubt that had dogged her in 2017. A three-year minor who was involved in two gut-wrenching All-Ireland final replay losses at that grade who also played in two intermediate decider defeats, she was part of the senior squad that claimed ultimate honours in 2015 and 2017, but peers such as Amy O'Connor, Orla

**Cork captain Linda Collins lifts the cup after last month's Munster Senior Camogie final win over Limerick at Drom & Inch GAA in Tipperary. 'Croke Park is amazing and is a serious venue,' she says. 'And that's the place you want to be playing.'**

Picture: Matt Browne/Sportsfile

Cronin, Libby Coppinger, Laura Treacy, and Hannah Looney had become established members of the team.

She concluded that she was getting in her own way. Not backing herself and thinking about all that might go wrong rather than focusing on that visceral love for camogie that existed ever before lining out for Cork on Jones' Road was a consideration.

The proof was in the intermediate final in 2016, when a broken thumb almost ruled her out. Collins missed loads of training and didn't get worked up about the game because she wasn't expecting anything of herself. Although the Rebels fell short, Collins was named player of the match, scoring 1-5 in a brilliant display. Her mind had set her free.

Armed with this new weapon, Collins was greeting

the dignitaries as a starter in the 2018 decider and that third Celtic Cross is undoubtedly the sweetest as a result.

Moving forward three years and it is evident that the bright and breezy Collins remains wedded to a more chilled-out approach, without ever compromising on her desire and commitment.

"I don't mind being captain at all," Collins declares. "It's just a title really in one sense. It's obviously a great honour and achievement for my club and my family. I am privileged to have it. But I don't feel any added weight or any added pressure because I just feel there are so many other leaders on the team like Laura Treacy and Ashling Thompson and people like that. There are different things like this (interview) now as well that I would have more to do on the weeks of championship, but I

am just going out and doing my job that I do every day and the girls around me make it so much easier as well.

"I feel I am very relaxed and I am really enjoying playing camogie at the moment. And I just love going out packing the ball off the wall and meeting the girls at training and everything. Just doing your best when you are there.

"I feel like you kind of learn this when you get older. I am only 24, but I suppose I have been on the panel now since 2015. But you kind of learn that at the end of the day it's a hobby and you are playing camogie because you love it. It's so enjoyable, at the end of the day."

It was Courcey Rovers' historic county final success that has provided her with the captaincy, an occasion when she scored a goal and five points.

"It was honestly the best

feeling in the world. We had never won a senior championship; the whole parish was just buzzing for weeks after. Pity we couldn't celebrate it like we should have been able to. And I suppose it brought us back to just enjoying camogie and playing camogie with the people that you grew up with; the people that you played Sciath na Scol and primary school camogie with."

There was a time when such an enormous occasion might have weighed her down. Now, she embraces it, stripping it all back to that joy in playing and will remind her teammates that have never lined out at headquarters, that it is nothing to get hung up on.

"These big games, people can get overwhelmed with them. But at the end of the day you know you are going out onto green grass and you are playing with a white sliotar.

Corkery, and Kena Buckley have also departed in recent years. One key member of the backroom set-up has returned, however. Esteemed coach Kevin Murray — All-Ireland-winning hurler and brother of manager Paudie and former netminder and All-Ireland-winning captain Aoife — is back in the fold and Collins is delighted.

"Kevin is brilliant. His trainings are just new level. He doesn't like cones laid out or anything. I just love training under Kevin because you come out of training and you are not only physically wrecked but you are mentally wrecked from trying to make decisions on the ball and trying to figure out the drills in different conditions. No, he definitely challenges you. And they're really enjoyable.

"If you need help, he is there for you. He trusts in his players as well... he trusts that we will be able to make our decisions too, which is good."

## Galway and Kilkenny can prevail to renew their All-Ireland final rivalry

**All-Ireland senior camogie championship semi-finals**

**Galway v Tipperary, Croke Park, 2pm**

Defeated All-Ireland finalists Galway topped their group and received a bye to the All-Ireland semi-final.

In their three round-robin championship games, they scored a total of 6-41.

One of these was a one-point victory over Kilkenny, which is hugely encouraging for Cathal Murray's side.

Last year the Tribeswomen overcame Tipperary by six points in a low-scoring encounter. But that was in the depths of winter; tomorrow in Croke Park will be a different experience.

The four-week break since their last competitive match could be a factor. However, it also gave the westerers time to overcome a few injuries. Their team selection will be interesting. Carrie Dolan one of those players fighting to be fit. One they won't have however, is corner-

back Heather Cooney who picked up a cruciate injury in the league.

Athenry's Dervla Higgins could fill this position alongside Shauna Healy and captain Sarah Dervan.

Midfield will be key where Niamh Kilkenny and possibly Niamh Hanniffy will look to get the upperhand.

This is an area Tipperary must win if Bill Mullaney's team is to reach their first All-Ireland final since 2006.

Ereema Fryday wore the number nine jersey against Waterford. Her contribution was vital. She notched two valuable points and her work-rate was immense.

A greater array of scorers is noticeable too. Roisin Howard, Eimear McGrath, Orla O'Dwyer, Nicole Walsh and Clodagh McIntyre along with stalwart Cailt Devane have been supporting each other.

At the other end of the field, they will need full-back Mary Ryan to be fully fit. She was forced off last Saturday against Waterford

with an elbow injury and she also received attention to her quad. The Moneygall defender does a lot of hard work. She is an All-Star and a link to Tipperary's last visit to headquarters in the mid-noughties.

**Verdict:** Galway.

**Cork v Kilkenny, Croke Park, 4pm**

Champions Kilkenny renew their rivalry with Cork. The Leinster side were awesome in the first-half of their quarter-final against Wexford on Saturday. Granted, the Purple and Gold are only beginning to find their feet again, so how much we can read into their 3-19 scoreline is questionable.



**Niamh Kilkenny: Crucial influence for Galway in midfield.**

What we do know is that they weren't as convincing in the second-half. Then again, they were 13 points up at half-time and were on the road to victory.

That was a point noted by manager Brian Dowling afterwards who wasn't overly worried by the drop off and will be happy to have something to work on. If they can produce that opening performance for the 60 minutes, they will be hard to beat.

Kilkenny have more depth this year and Dowling has moved players around into different positions, proving their versatility.

Denise Gaule lined out at midfield and bagged 1-6 — whoever comes up against her, this will be a huge test.

Goal scorers Mary O'Connell and Aoife Doyle are ones to watch and the return of Katie Power is a major plus. The

two Walsh's Grace and Miriam were on the scoresheet too.

There remains an injury doubt about wing-back Kellyann Doyle who was forced off against Wexford.

Cork have been waiting for this last-four tie since topping their group at the end of July, amassing 5-51 in those three outings. They too had a few knocks but it is believed most have cleared up. While it is unfortunate for the dual players to have lost the football semi-final to Meath, on the plus side they were able to focus solely on this fixture.

The return of Pamela Mackey to the panel will add to Paudie Murray's resilient backline which Laura Treacy has anchored very well. Ashling Thompson is another impressive performer, the midfielder will be central to getting as much supply going forward as possible. Hannah Looney will be another the Rebels will look to. Forwards Amy O'Connor and Katrina Mackey are vastly experienced and will have to deliver once more if Cork are to reach their first final since 2018.

**Verdict:** Kilkenny

Therese O'Callaghan



# 'At the end of the day you're playing because you love it'

**Daragh Ó Conchúir**



**L**ISTENING to Linda Collins speak, you get a sense that captaincy rests easily on her slim shoulders. A teacher at Summerville National School in Kinsale, she is a naturally good communicator and you don't get the impression she is one for histrionics.

Common sense is the default setting and allied with a ferocious workrate as well as ability to produce on the pitch, makes her a perfect candidate for the armband.

A key trait too is the healthy mindset surrounding the game, which means that she can separate the duties of captaincy, including the slew of



You maybe don't know, as a forward, who's marking you. That is probably the only thing you can't control. But other than that, we're playing camogie because we enjoy it and we started because we love to play the sport. It's just reminding yourself of these things before you play games and just go out and absolutely enjoy it because you never go back and regret enjoying a game. Just do your very best on the pitch. There is nothing more you can do after that.

"Obviously Croke Park is amazing and is a serious venue. And that's the place you want to be playing. And we haven't been up there in two years. So it will be great, the open, big pitch is where you want to be playing."

The panel has undergone a significant change in recent years. Gemma O'Connor was the latest to call time on a legendary career, but Orla Cotter, Aoife Murray, Briega



# On-form Cork can dethrone Kilkenny



CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick

THE decibel level may not be as loud in Croke Park tomorrow, but there will be a lively atmosphere in the all-ticket games between Galway and Tipperary, at 2pm, and between Cork and Kilkenny, at 4pm, in the All-Ireland camogie semi-final double header.

By Wednesday there was no information on the camogie website about purchasing of tickets, at least not that I could find.

Doing an internet search took me to the Association's Facebook page, where a link directed me to the GAA ticket website.

I'm not sure of the capacity permitted, but tickets were available for purchase.

The pairings are the same as in Páirc Uí Chaoimh last November.

Six points was the gap between Galway and Tipp and just two separated Cork and Kilkenny.

Cork enjoyed a six-point lead after eight minutes, but trailed by one at the break, and despite holding Kilkenny scoreless for 21 minutes in the second half and dominating possession, couldn't score to see the game through.

Gemma O'Connor and Anne Dalton are the two key players retired from either side and that balances things out, so this game will go down to the wire again.

Anne Dalton appeared on the bench for Kilkenny's quarter-final last Saturday, out of the blue, as a sub goalkeeper, because of an injury to Emma Kavanagh.

Kilkenny won comprehensively, beating Wexford 3-19 to 1-12, which was very good scoring. There is a big gap, as I've repeated regularly, between the top four and the others and all the voiced plaudits of 'the others' is sounding very fake at this stage.

We all want to build up the profile of our game, but it's embarrassing the number of inflated compliments that are directed at the weaker counties. This is going on too long. They need to step up.



Cork's Ashling Thompson and Kilkenny's Michelle Teehan. The counties meet in the All-Ireland camogie semi-final at 4pm at Croke Park tomorrow.

Picture: INPHO/Laszlo Geczo

Kilkenny know that the real battle is tomorrow. Their backs were tight last week, their full-back line and Meighan Farrell looking very strong.

If Cork get a six-point lead this time around, Kilkenny may not recover and so a fast start is crucial for them.

Just who will mark Denise Gaule in the middle of the park? She'll possibly be named at right-half forward, but play deep.

Her work rate, vision, and distribution are on song this year. She'll help out her defence one minute and hit over a point the next. She'll need a permanent marker, and I think Pam Mackey could be the one to follow

Gaule wherever she goes.

With Kilkenny's strong forward division, Cork's management may not want to pull Mackey out, but stopping the supply, first and foremost, is king.

Cork will need to be at their best to dethrone the All-Ireland champions, but it is in them to do so.

Kilkenny don't believe they have peaked yet.

Cork didn't have too much intensity in their three group games, winning all comfortably.

It's their intensity on the training ground that will see them through to the final, their first in three years.

It's all about peaking at the right

time, isn't it? Limerick peaked last Sunday in the men's senior hurling final. But that's not to say that Cork's timing wasn't right as well.

My heart went out to the Cork players and management.

Most teams will have experienced a game where everything went right for the opposition, and nothing went right for them.

And when that happens, it's so deflating.

For it to happen on All-Ireland final day, well, it doesn't get much worse than that. Limerick were resoundingly better, no disputing that, but even when Cork did look in control of situations, a miss-hit pass, a

ball fumble, or a slip, and possession was lost.

Nothing, just nothing, went right, and the last 25 minutes must have seemed like an hour as things got increasingly worse.

It was a lonely place at the final whistle and the heavy/empty feeling that inevitably followed for days afterwards is unenviable.

They deserve our thanks for an exciting season and a pat of encouragement for 2022 and beyond again.

For our senior girls tomorrow, we hope it's a day when everything goes right for them and if it does, then we have every chance of being in another senior final in 2021.



## Linda Mellerick Camogie

Cork camogie legend knows the game inside out

Every Saturday in Echo Sport

Echo LIVE The Echo



By **Daragh Ó Conchúir**

**I**T IS often said that you should be careful what you wish for and Ailish O'Reilly smiles when reminded that she was often frustrated at having to wait for supply in the full-forward line. The greater involvement that came from being relocated further out the field last year has come at the expense of the goals that were taken as a given when she lined out on the edge of the square.

The two-goal heroine of the 2019 All-Ireland final, and scorer of the only goal in Galway's previous success six years earlier, is likely to alternate between the two positions against Tipperary in the first of today's All-Ireland senior camogie semi-finals (live on RTE2, 2pm throw-in). She has also taken up the free-taking duties due to the injury suffered by Carrie Dolan in the opening championship outing against Westmeath on July 17.

If you put store in omens, this alchemy of jobs will lead to a fifth All-Star for the Oranmore Maree marksman, given that she has picked up the end-of-year gong every second season since earning her first in 2013.

Nothing could be further from O'Reilly's mind of course. With a return to work as a primary school teacher tomorrow, she was relieved to get her second Covid-19 vaccination two weeks ago - 'just for a bit of comfort'.

Camogie has been a great distraction throughout the pandemic. Reminded of her frustrations as an inside forward, just a matter of months after playing such a big role in Galway's most recent All-Ireland triumph, she nods and repeats.

'It would test your patience in there at times. But thankfully this year I got to come out a little bit, out to 11. If I am switched in and out, I am happiest, just to try and get into the game. There's nothing worse than the game passing you by and you feel like you are doing nothing to help,' she insists.

The flip side is the reduction in that rush of adrenaline that comes with hitting the back of the net.

'I haven't scored half as much goals this year as I have previous years. But each game is kind of different.

'There could be some days I might get loads and the next day I mightn't touch it. It's the same if I come out to 11. It totally depends on the day, some days they go for you some days they don't.



# O'Reilly is relishing roving role in attack...

**Galway star takes aim at another All-Ireland**

'We have Siobhan (McGrath) inside now as well and Noreen (Coen) and Orlaith (McGrath) and whoever is coming on. It's a funny one between the two positions. They are completely different roles. I am not even sure if I have

**'THERE IS NOTHING WORSE THAN A GAME PASSING YOU BY'**

got a goal this year yet. I don't think I have.'

But given the different requirements of the jobs, the expectation isn't on her to raise green flags.

'Yeah, that's the least of my worries at the moment. We are still winning and it's about the team at the end of the day.'

There isn't a forward line in the country that has such competition for places, with Aoife Donohue's return to the attacking sextet, albeit with Niamh McGrath reverting to midfield.

'Absolutely savage, it's actually unreal. I actually don't envy the management trying to pick a team. You've such versatility in nine or ten places. I wouldn't like to be in their positions. I'd play anywhere. Anywhere!'

O'Reilly jokes that she is feeling old now, though she is only 27. She has been around a long time though, winning All-Ireland minor and Under 16 titles in 2010 and adding a second minor medal two years later, before making an instant impact at senior level in her maiden season.

To date, she has been fortunate with injuries and touching all the wood she can find, suggests that she has been extremely lucky to have had a clear run.

Perhaps her involvement in bas-

ketball has helped in some way. An All-Ireland winner at schools' level with Calasactius College, she played for Ireland at underage level and has won two Basketball Ireland All-Stars lining out for Maree and NUIG Mystics in the National League.

As an indoor sport, basketball has suffered badly through the coronavirus restrictions so she hasn't played for two years and doesn't know if there will even be a team in Galway this year.

'I hope I'm not finished with it yet. I am dying to go back,' she declares enthusiastically.

That is for later though. As good as she was shooting hoops, camogie was always number one.

Galway losing their title to Kilkenny after a humdinger last December still hurts, but it is the feeling that they never replicated the flow of the previous term that irks most.

'Workrate is the only thing that's going to win it. And I think that

showed the last day against Kilkenny with 14 players (for 45 minutes, after Finnerty was sent off in the final group game, though a successful appeal means she is available this afternoon). Would we have won it with 15? I really don't know. The workrate out of the 14 was just unbelievable. We beat Cork in 2011 (in the semi-final) and that was purely on workrate as well.

'Nothing in particular was said in the dressing room. We just did for Finners at the end of the day. None of us seen what happened. But she is not that type of player. So thankfully now we have her ready to go.'

Having the semi-finals at Croke Park is a significant event for camogie, though not before time according to O'Reilly.

'I do think it's only right to be honest. Central, neutral venue for all teams. The ladies football obviously upped it with theirs in Croke Park. It's great that we are on par that way with them.'

# Rebels ready to roar

THE Cork camogie team will take centre-stage this weekend, facing Kilkenny in the All-Ireland semi-final at Croke Park.

Sunday's clash is a repeat of last year's semi-final pairings with Galway taking on Tipperary in the opening game of a double-header.

Kilkenny had a two-point victory over Cork, 2-10 to 1-11, and Galway defeated Tipperary 1-11 to 0-8. The only player missing from Cork's lineout that day is the legendary Gemma O'Connor, who scored Cork's only goal.

On the Kilkenny side, Anne Dalton has retired, albeit she returned at the 11th-hour in last weekend's quarter-final to stand in as a sub goalkeeper. She's a huge loss to the Cats; so often the player that pulled games out of the fire for them.

Her goal gave Kilkenny the lead just before half-time last November; a game that Cork dominated early on, leading 1-3 to no score after eight minutes, and in the latter stages, holding Kilkenny scoreless for 21 minutes of that second half. Yet they couldn't find the target when they needed it most. Kilkenny went on to win the All-Ireland and that must have sickened Cork.

Cork should have confidence going into this game. Their direct play into their pacy forwards has improved. Katrina Mackey and Amy O'Connor will thrive if they can get space and fast ball. How to curtail that space is something Kilkenny manager Brian Dowling will be trying to mastermind in advance.

Cork have selection choices to make. Orla Cronin and Fiona Keating are two good centre-forwards, and curtailer centre-back Meighan

**Cork girls heading to Croker for semi-final**

**CAMOGIE**

■ **Linda Mellerick**

Farrell must be a key component of their approach, whoever is selected there.

Ciarra O'Sullivan is a hard grafter on the wing and as we all know your off the ball work is as important as when on it. Linda Collins and Chloe Sigerson are Cork's other potential starters at corner and wing-forward respectively.

How Kilkenny approach their attack will go a long way to deciding the outcome. If Ellen Murphy starts, she will try and expose a player settling into her first championship season. With Pam Mackey back in the fray, she has to start somewhere in that defence.

Aoife Doyle is very experienced at left corner-forward and in the opposite corner is Katie Nolan, who's not afraid to take a pop and possesses very good stick work. Mary O'Connell and Miriam Walsh are very strong physically at 11 and 14.

Katie Power, is back from injury, but I'm not sure she's back to her best yet. She seems to be dragging a little, but last weekend's quarter-final will stand to her and she's always a threat.



Cork's Orla Cronin scores a free against Waterford during the All-Ireland Senior Camogie Championship at Páirc Uí Rinn. Picture: Eddie O'Han





Cork's Katrina Mackey and Amy O'Connor celebrate with winning point scorer Linda Collins at the final whistle. Picture: INPHO/James Crombie

## Once again Cork girls have to win it the hard way

FOR the second day in a row Cork showed what it means to win the hard way.

Just like their minors 24 hours earlier, the seniors had to win with 14 players, throw everything they had on the line, and dig deep to overcome champions Kilkenny before booking their place in the All-Ireland senior final.

Losing Orla Cronin to a red card on 57 minutes with the sides level, it was captain Linda Collins who showed the way as she fired her side into their first final in three years with a point three minutes into injury-time to seal victory. The captain came on as a substitute on 50 minutes and immediately she was buzzing around and winning possession.

She showed her experience being involved in a lot of moves as Cork pushed to get over the line.

The Rebels made a great start and from the throw-in took the game to Kilkenny with Saoirse McCarthy firing over the opening score inside the first minute.

Cork's movement was excellent with Chloe Sigerson, in particular, hugely influential and was always available to take a pass. She supported and worked hard linking up with the Cork defence, showing constantly for ball. She was always available as they delivered quick ball out and turned defence into attack all through the opening half.

The Cork defence was superb as they dealt with the threat posed by the Kilkenny attack, particularly in the second half when Kilkenny began to get a grip, and time and again they turned the Cats over and, getting in the vital interceptions, thwarted the threat that Kilkenny posed.

When Mary O'Connell got through for the game's only goal and Denise Gaule had the sides level at the second water break and Cork looked to be in trouble.

To their credit, they edged back in front, but with Katie Power and Gaule putting them two clear, Kilkenny battled to gain a grip.

The Cork defence mopped up everything that was thrown at them. Working the ball out, they found their

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

players and when Amy O'Connor was fouled on 57 minutes, Cronin tapped over and now a point separated the sides.

Katrina Mackey, who had a ferocious battle with Colette Dormer over the hour, began to show for vital ball and moving out around the half-forward line, she was move involved and was winning possession; it was from her shot on goal that Fiona Keating won the rebound and levelled matters.

Cork lost Cronin to a red before the puck-out, but showing great composure, they used the ball well and held possession before Collins' hit what must surely be the sweetest of scores she has ever struck.

Cork will be happy with the display of their defence who, over the hour, only conceding 1-4 from play; the performance of Libby Coppinger at full-back, holding Katie Power to just two points, was vital, but overall as a unit they were superb.

With Hannah Looney and Ashling Thompson at midfield winning a lot of possession they kept the ball moving forward, particularly in the opening half and at the break, they were full value for their five-point lead.

Twice in the second half, when Kilkenny looked to be getting a grip, Cork didn't panic and they just stuck to their game plan and kept working away, even in the third quarter, which Kilkenny won, Cork never let the heads drop.

With six scorers on the scoresheet it was a good return, nine points from play over the hour with six from placed balls; Chloe Sigerson was superb firing over four from play and none from a free, while Orla Cronin had six, five from placed balls and it will be a huge concern for Cork if she is unavailable for the final.

On the plus side, captain Collins, on her introduction, showed her class and she is someone who will be pushing for inclusion on the starting 15 when Cork take on Galway on September 12.



Linda Collins scores the winning point for Cork in injury time, having come on as a late substitute. Picture: Piaras Ó Midheach/Sportsfile

# Collins' point topples Cats

CAMOGIE	
	Linda Mellerick
Cork	0-15
Kilkenny	1-11

IN dramatic style, Cork dethroned the All-Ireland champions Kilkenny in Croke Park, setting up a clash with Galway in two weeks' time.

Fittingly, Cork's captain Linda Collins, a late sub, scored the winning point after a pulsating second half.

It was as good a first half from Cork as we've seen. Kilkenny tried to create space inside, take on Cork's full-back line and go for the jugular from the outset. But from the second minute, when Amy Lee blocked down Aoife Doyle, and Laura Hayes and Co blocked the follow-through, Cork laid down a marker.

Saoirse McCarthy got Cork on the scoresheet after just 28 seconds and the Rebels held the lead until the 45th minute.

Cork's entire defence was exceptional, their tracking, blocking, support play, and distribution superb. Ashling Thompson and Hannah Looney were supporting both ends of the pitch, Looney highly influential, and Kilkenny couldn't cope with the movement of Cork's half-forward line.

Chloe Sigerson was back to her brilliant best. When on song, her long-distance point-scoring has no equal. Cork always seemed to have a free player off their shoulder as they ran Kilkenny ragged.

Inside, Katrina Mackey and Colette Dormer were having a right battle.

Mackey and Amy O'Connor were alternating but O'Connor was often hindered in making bursts by consistent jersey-pulling, something the umpires should have brought to referee John Dermody's attention on a number of occasions.

Cork's workrate up front was as good as it was defensively and they were full value



Cork players celebrate after their victory in the All-Ireland Senior Camogie Championship semi-final against Kilkenny. Picture: Piaras Ó Midheach/Sportsfile

for their lead at the break. Five points down, Kilkenny had to go for broke in the second half. Denise Gaule pointed a free, cancelled out by an Orla Cronin 45 on 37 minutes.

However, by the 50th minute, Cork had scored just one further point as Kilkenny dominated, with the wind at their backs.

Libby Coppinger at full back was having a storming game but Kilkenny are goal-conditioned and kept trying to break Cork down. Their efforts were rewarded when Miriam Walsh put Mary O'Connell through, and she blasted to the net on 44.

The game was level for the first time a minute later as Denise Gaule converted a free. Cronin then pointed a free.

Three points in a row between the 50th and 53rd minutes and Kilkenny went two up. It was a nervous time. Now Cork had to answer the call.

Cronin pointed another free and the final minutes brought huge drama. On 57, Collins put Mackey through on goal. It was blocked.

Fiona Keating pointed the return to level it and Cronin was sent to the line for an off-the-ball offence. Collins, who had made her entrance on 50 minutes, was prominent and it was her brilliant point for Cork on 63 that was the deciding

factor. It was a game Cork deserved to win, showing great character after being five up, going two down, to come back and win the game.

In the other semi-final, Galway had a 1-13 to 0-12 win over a Tipperary side that made them fight all the way.

Tipperary will have a lot of regrets after a game they could have won, having enjoyed plenty of possession, but at times taking the wrong option in front of goal.

There was just two points in it when goalkeeper Caoimhe Bourke dropped a seemingly harmless delivery into the net in the blinding sun and their challenge was over.

**Scorers for Cork:** C Sigerson 0-5 (0-1 f), O Cronin 0-6 (0-4 f, 0-1 '45), S McCarthy 0-1, K Mackey, F Keating, L Collins 0-1 each.

**Kilkenny:** D Gaule 0-7 (f), M O'Connell 1-0, K Power 0-2, K A Doyle, K Nolan 0-1 each.

**CORR:** A Lee; P Mackey, L Coppinger, M Cahalane; S McCarthy, L Treacy, L Hayes; H Looney, A Thompson; C Sigerson, F Keating, C O'Sullivan; A O'Connor, O Cronin, K Mackey.

**Sub:** L Collins for C O'Sullivan (50).

**KILKENNY:** A Norris; M Teehan, C Phelan, D Tobin; K A Doyle, M Farrell, C Dormer, S Fitzgerald, G Walsh; D Gaule, M O'Connell, K Power; K Nolan, M Walsh, A Doyle.

**Subs:** L Murphy for S Fitzgerald (38), N Deely for M Teehan (48), M Kennelly for A Doyle (55).

**Referee:** John Dermody (Westmeath).



Dowling's Cats would weather yet another storm, but they were held scoreless until the end as a youthful Cork came of age to reel off three points in a row with captain Linda Collins landing the winner.

## Finishing

Murray made the tough call to keep Collins in reserve to provide a finishing kick and the Courcy Rovers super-sub didn't disappoint with her 63rd-minute point proving the difference as the 28-time champions booked their final place.

All and sundry can see the enormity of the challenge that an athletic and well-drilled Cork side will pose Galway in the final, but Murray attempted to instead heap pressure in the opposite direction.

"It's our goal (to get to the final). We are going to be under pressure with that Galway team, you just look at their bench today and a lot of those girls would be playing in any other inter-county team so they've got a

phenomenal squad," Murray said. "We are going to be under pressure. A lot of people are saying this is Galway's All-Ireland and they're nailed on to win it, we can only control ourselves but we're going to be under pressure. I just want the girls to give it a shot and see where it takes us."

Cork were brilliant in possession and stuck to their running game, even in tight spots. They refused to fire the ball aimlessly into attack and worked it out to the middle of the park before delivering neatly inside.

They tore into the breaks and landed several momentum-shifting blocks in the opening period with Chloe Sigerson delivering a tour de force as her four points from play saw them hold a commanding 0-10 to 0-5 lead at half-time.

Hannah Looney excelled in the middle of the park for a slick Cork outfit and Kilkenny simply had no answers,

until they re-emerged for the closing half with a different attitude and O'Connell's expertly-taken goal had them level by the three-quarter mark.

It looked like the writing was on the wall when Denise Gaule (free) and Katie Power sent Kilkenny two ahead, but the drama had only just begun.

Orla Cronin sent over a free to leave just one in it before Katrina Mackey had the goal at her mercy in the 57th minute only for Meighan Farrell to produce a last-gasp tackle.

Crucially, the move did not go unrewarded as Fiona Keating sent over the levelling point when the ball was recycled out the pitch but the tension rose even further when Cronin was shown a straight red card for a striking offence on Grace Walsh.

The numerical disadvantage would not deter them, though, with Collins firing over the match-winner as Murray hailed their nerve in the final

moments after a poor third quarter. "That third quarter is annoying me, it nearly killed us. But then we regrouped and went again. We've spoken about the game ebbing and flowing and it's just about hanging in there during those periods and trying to push on then," Murray said.

"Kilkenny were always going to have their period of dominance so I thought we showed great composure and great character."

"We have had big characters in the dressing-room that have left over the last number of years but this team is starting to develop its own character."

Dowling bemoaned Lady Luck deserting Kilkenny in the final moments as their crown slipped, but he had only praise for his charges as they "died with their boots on".

"It wasn't easy for these girls to lose three All-Irelands; it would have been easy to pack it in and retire but

players like Colette Dormer, Denise Gaule and Katie Power - what she's gone through to get on the pitch is unbelievable.

"They'll do anything to play, injections, whatever," he said.

"Kellyann Doyle was only passed fit last night. How she was able to play that match I'll never know. She couldn't raise her arm on Friday evening. I can't speak highly enough of these girls, they'd die for Kilkenny."

**SCORERS** - Cork: O Cronin 0-6 (4), 0-1 (45); C Sigerson 0-5 (17); S McCarthy, K Mackey, F Keating, L Collins 0-1 each. Kilkenny: D Gaule 0-7 (7); M O'Connell 1-0; K Power 0-2; K Nolan, K Doyle 0-1 each.

**CORK** - A Lee; P Mackey, L Coppinger, M Cahalan; L Hayes, L Treacy, S McCarthy; H Looney, A Thompson; C Sigerson, O Cronin, C O'Sullivan; F Keating, A O'Connor, K Mackey. Subs: L Collins for O'Sullivan (50).

**KILKENNY** - A Norris; M Teehan, D Tobin, C Dormer; C Phelan, M Farrell, K Doyle, D Gaule, G Walsh; M O'Connell, K Nolan, M Walsh; A Doyle, K Power, S Fitzgerald. Subs: L Murphy for Fitzgerald (38), N Deely for Teehan (48), M Kennedy for A Doyle (55).

**REF** - J Dermody (Westmeath)

## All-Ireland senior camogie Semi-finals

# Collins point helps Cork set up final clash with Galway

Cork	0-15
Kilkenny	1-11

Cork captain Linda Collins shook off the disappointment of being left out by scoring a sensational winning point just seconds from the end to book a place in the final.

Kilkenny had been second best for most of proceedings but Mary O'Connell's 44th-minute goal after Miriam Walsh's excellent assist having gathered Claire Phelan's delivery breathed life into Brian Dowling's outfit. They had their best period thereafter, hitting four of the next five points to move two clear. Denise Gaule, who was hampered by a finger injury in the closing stages, landed three frees and Katie Power a

stunning score and it looked for all the world that we were in for a third consecutive Kilkenny-Galway decider.

But that was to reckon without the character of this youthful Cork side. Though it was the likes of the Ashling Thompson, Pamela Mackey and Hannah Looney that drove them on in that period, Saoirse McCarthy was a revelation at half back too and points from Orla Cronin and points from Orla Cronin from a free and Fiona Keating brought them level just before the end of regulation time.

Keating's score came after Meighan Farrell came from nowhere to deny Katrina Mackey a goal, after Collins, who had come on in the 50th minute for Ciara O'Sullivan, put her in.

There was a sting in the tail though when Cronin was sent off for what seemed like a push into the faceguard of Grace

Walsh. Not even that could deny the Rebels roar, and it was Collins who came up trumps in the most dramatic fashion.

Galway	1-13
Tipperary	0-12

Galway had to withstand a heroic effort by Tipperary but a fortuitous goal on the hour by Orlaith McGrath gave them the breathing space to advance to the decider on September 12th.

They will be sweating on the availability of corner back Dervla Higgins, who was sent off three minutes before that following the intervention of his umpires but manager Cathal Murray indicated afterwards they will be pursuing a case of mistaken identity to ensure her availability for the decider.

Galway led 0-8 to 0-4 at the



■ Cork's Linda Collins scores the winning point against Kilkenny

change of ends and that was a fair reflection of a half that never took off, though Niamh Kilkenny's second score after deadening a difficult ball brilliantly and then moving effortlessly to her right before finishing from 50 metres was a real highlight.

Tipperary were the better team in the second half, with Mary Ryan and Julieanne

Bourke leading from the back.

The blue and gold contingent will regret getting no return from three further goal opportunities all involving Clodagh McIntyre.

Galway had their chances too, Caoimhe Bourke twice denying Siobhán McGrath and then forcing the Sarsfields attacker to pop over from close

range. Unfortunately for the goalkeeper though, she allowed a shot for a point from Orlaith McGrath to drop from her hand into the net that ended the hopes of Bill Mullaney's game crew, though they kept driving forward to notch up points from Grace O'Brien and Devane.

**CORK** - A Lee; P Mackey, L Coppinger, M Cahalan; L Hayes, L Treacy, S McCarthy (0-1); H Looney, A Thompson; C Sigerson (0-5, one free), F Keating (0-1); C O'Sullivan; A O'Connor, O Cronin (0-6, five frees); K Mackey (0-1). Subs: L Collins (0-1) for O'Sullivan (50 mins).

**KILKENNY** - A Norris; M Teehan, C Dormer, D Tobin, K Doyle (0-1), M Farrell, C Phelan; D Gaule (0-7, three), G Walsh, M Walsh, K Nolan (0-1), M O'Connell (0-0); S Fitzgerald, K Power (0-2), A Doyle. Subs: L Murphy for Fitzgerald (38 mins), N Deely for Teehan (48), M Kennedy for A Doyle (55).

**Referee** - John Dermody (Westmeath)

**GALWAY** - Sarah Healy, Shauna Healy, S Derran, D Higgins, S Gardiner, E Helebert, C McCormack; H Haniffy, N Kilkenny (0-2); C Finnerty, S Spellman (0-1), A Donohue (0-3); S McGrath (0-1), O McGrath (1-2), A O'Reilly (0-4, 3 frees, one 45). Subs: N McGrath for Finnerty (38 mins), R Hennehy for Haniffy (48), N Coen for Spellman (58), AM Star for S McGrath (58), M Conroy for O'Reilly (60+).

**TIPPERARY** - C Bourke, M Ryan, M Eviston, J Bourke, E Loughman, K Kennedy, A McGrath; E Fryday (0-1), C Devane (0-6, 5 frees); E McGrath, M Walsh (0-1), O O'Dwyer (0-2); C Molloy, R Howard, G O'Brien (0-1). Subs: M Campion (0-1) for E McGrath (42 mins), K Blair for Fryday (55), S Delaney for Eviston (58).

**Referee** - Ray Kelly (Kildare)



# Collins comes up trumps for Cork

Murray plays down final hopes as Cats lose grip on camogie crown

MICHAEL VERNEY



CORK	0-15
KILKENNY	1-11

SENIOR CAMOGIE CHAMPIONSHIP SEMI-FINAL

CORK haven't gone away, you know. They watched the last two All-Ireland finals through gritted teeth after being narrowly denied at the penultimate hurdle, but they roared back in thrilling fashion at Croke Park yesterday.

Paudie Murray's side deservedly led after each of the first three quarters, but Mary O'Connell's 44th-minute goal seemed to have swung momentum in favour of Kilkenny as the defending champions kicked two ahead in the final quarter, 1-11 to 0-12. All signs suggested that Brian





# Collins comes up trumps for Cork

Linda Collins celebrates after scoring the winning point in injury-time for Cork during yesterday's All-Ireland camogie semi-final at Croke Park.  
PIARAS O'NEILL/PA

## Galway claim red card was case of mistaken identity

Manager Cathal Murray said Galway will be appealing the red-card issued to corner-back Dervla Higgins in yesterday's All-Ireland senior camogie championship victory over Tipperary in Croke Park, as he believes it may be a case of mistaken identity by referee Ray Kelly.

The Athenry defender was sent off in the 59th minute. "Ray's umpires told him so he had no choice but to send her off but Dervla is adamant she didn't do anything," he said. "I don't think you deserve to miss an All-Ireland over that so hopefully it'll be sorted out. Hopefully RTE pick up something and the red card will be rescinded."

Last season's finalists got nothing easy from Tipperary, the critical score came in the 59th minute when Orlaith McGrath's strike from distance failed to be dealt with by Caoimhe Bourke. This victory, though, was built around



All-Ireland senior camogie semi-final  
**Galway ..... 1-13**  
**Tipperary ..... 0-12**

**Therese O'Callaghan**  
Croke Park

a solid defensive display with the full-back line of Shauna Healy, captain Sarah Dervan, and Higgins repeatedly shutting up shop.

It was yet another, agonising semi-final loss for Tipperary — their fourth in as many years — and they will have huge regrets not to have capitalised on a number of goal opportunities, particularly in

the second half.

Galway led 0-8 to 0-4 at the short whistle. But it was the Premier County that made the better start, two points to one up after seven minutes. They fell away somewhat as Galway outscored them seven points to two, while securing a four point interval lead.

Tipperary started the second half in a higher gear. Three Devane points narrowing the gap to one with Galway not scoring until Orlaith McGrath pointed in the 45th minute.

When O'Dwyer and Sarah Spellman swapped points, Galway's advantage read 0-10 to 0-8.

The fourth quarter was action-packed. Goals went abegging at both ends, but Tipp will feel the more aggrieved.

Galway went 0-13 to 0-10 up when Orlaith McGrath's shot found the net, much to the dismay of Caoimhe Bourke. It was the decisive score.

While Murray was delighted to be in the final for the third consecutive year, he feels the structure doesn't favour group winners.

"We topped the group and then you're sitting on your heels for four weeks getting ready for an All-Ireland semi-final. That's not an advantage. What's the point in having those groups and having a team bursting to top it and then not getting that advantage? You cannot have a four-week break. It's impossible to manage."

"Tipperary had a game last week and you could see they were rusty last week and they still shot 17 points but it brought them on an awful amount for this weekend. I felt when we were on top in the first half and playing really well, that bit of rustiness was really there."

"But we managed it. Today was about winning. I know that's a cliché, semi-finals are

about winning. It wasn't a vintage performance but it doesn't need to be. I don't care if it's a vintage performance in the final either as long as we win it."

Losing manager Bill Mullane admitted to being "devastated" for his players.

"You couldn't ask any more of them. They were absolutely unreal. And Galway punished us, took their chances when they were on though they had a lot of wides too, don't forget. But inside, we could have pulled the trigger earlier or tapped them over. We were giving that extra pass to try and make the perfect goal."

"So I'm devastated for the players. We'd oceans of chances. Maybe getting carried away going for the kill, we could've ticked them over, got back level, got a point in front because we were dominating that end of the field in the second half. I was delighted with the way they were playing. I

thought we were playing excellently. We just didn't take the scores when they were on. We were trying to go for the big score when all we needed was one or two because there wasn't much between us."

**Scorers for Galway:** O McGrath (1-2), A O'Reilly (0-4, 0-3f, 0-1 45), A Donohue (0-3), N Kilkenny (0-2), S McGrath and S Spellman (0-1 each).

**Scorers for Tipperary:** C Devane (0-6, 0-5f), O O'Dwyer (0-2), N Walsh, E Fryday and G O'Brien and M Campion (0-1).

**GALWAY:** Sarah Healy; Shauna Healy, S Dervan (Capt), D Higgins; S Gardiner, E Healy; C Cormican; N Hanniffy, N Kilkenny; C Finnerty, S Spellman, A Donohue; S McGrath, O McGrath, A O'Reilly.

**Subs:** N McGrath for C Finnerty (39), R Hennelly for N Hanniffy (49), N Coen for S Spellman (56), AM Star for S McGrath (59), M Cooney for A O'Reilly (61).

**TIPPERARY:** C Bourke; M Ryan, M Evison, J Bourke; E Loughman, K Kennedy, A McGrath (J-Capt); E Fryday, C Devane (J-Capt); E McGrath, N Walsh, O O'Dwyer; C McIntyre, R Howard, G O'Brien.

**Subs:** M Campion for E McGrath (41), K Blair for E Fryday (50 inj), S Delaney for M Evison (59).

**Referee:** Ray Kelly (Kildare).

## CORK LADIES STORM INTO FINAL



Cork players Aoife O'Neill, Isobel Sheehan, Ciara O'Sullivan, Laura Hayes and Orla Cronin celebrate after winning their All-Ireland Senior Camogie Championship semi-final match against Kilkenny at Croke Park. See Echo Sport for more.  
Picture: ©INPHO/James Crombie



# 'This team is starting to develop its own character'

## Reaction

### Therese O'Callaghan

In the end, the responsibility fell to captain Linda Collins to shoot the winning point for Cork.

The Coursey Rovers player came into the thick of the action with 10 minutes remaining and manager Paudie Murray explained her introduction off the bench.

"It was unfortunate on Linda, in one way that she

didn't start but we put a lot of thought into it. We wanted an impact off of her and I think we got it. I think it panned out quite well. We looked at things probably over the last two years, we didn't get a kick towards the end of games. I think last year, we felt if we had someone to come in with 10 or 15 minutes to go, we probably would have come out winners."

The one downside to the memorable afternoon at Croke Park was the straight

red card received by Orla Cronin in the closing stages. "I didn't see the incident but a lot of the guys are saying it is harsh. Certainly, we should have got a penalty before that when Katrina Mackey was taken down. I would have to see it again before I could make a comment on it."

On his overall assessment of the game, Murray feels that this team is beginning to develop its own character.

"I thought our first half was good, but our third quarter

killed us. We spoke about a lot of things during the week and I think some of them went out the window. That 15 minutes really annoyed us. But I suppose Kilkenny were always going to have their period of dominance so I thought we showed great composure and great character. I think the team is starting to develop its own character."

"We have had big characters in the dressing room that have left over the last number of years — the likes of

Aoife (Murray), Gemma (O'Connor), Rena Buckley, Briege Corkery, and Orla Cotter. It takes a small bit of time for a new team to develop a new personality in the dressing room and new characters. I think they are starting to do that."

"This is a very young team. Clara O'Sullivan is 19, Fiona Keating 20, we have a lot in around the 21/22 years."

"This is a big day out for them. I thought we managed it very well."



Paudie Murray: 'We showed great composure and great character.'

# Classy Collins plays the captain's role to perfection



All-Ireland senior camogie semi-final  
Cork ..... 0-15  
Kilkenny ..... 1-11

### Therese O'Callaghan

Croke Park

A cracking All-Ireland senior camogie championship semi-final eventually went the way of Cork, with captain Linda Collins shooting the winning point three minutes into stoppage time.

It was a non-stop affair, and with Cork down to 14 players after the late dismissal of Orla Cronin to a straight red-card, the Rebels survived this titanic battle against the 2020 All-Ireland champions, Kilkenny, and will be heading back to Croke Park for the decider against Galway on Sunday week.

It will be Cork's first final in three years.

Cork were the better team over the hour. They bossed the opening half, but were made to fight to the bitter end by the champions.

Chloe Sigerson was immense as Cork headed to the half-time dressing room 0-10 to 0-5 in front — the Killeagh attacker posted five great points (four from play) with the breeze to her back. As well, Ashling Thompson and



Cork's Katrina Mackey and Amy O'Connor celebrate with winning point scorer Linda Collins at the final whistle of the All-Ireland senior camogie championship semi-final in Croke Park yesterday. Picture: Inpho/James Crombie

Hannah Looney were unrelenting, up against Denise Gaule and Grace Walsh.

Denying Kilkenny's Aoife Doyle a goal in the early minutes also laid down a marker for the red and white.

Kilkenny came out a different team in the second half, and between the 39th and 45th minute struck 1-2 — the goal well worked from Claire Phe-

lan to Miriam Walsh, who set up Mary O'Connell.

With seven minutes remaining, Kilkenny built on that momentum and moved 1-11 to 0-12 to the good. Gaule was accurate from placed balls (4) and there was one from play courtesy of Katie Power.

Orla Cronin and Fiona Keating levelled on 57 minutes. The crowd hardly had time to

draw a breath when Katrina Mackey's shot at goal was brilliantly blocked by Meighan Farrell, and it appeared extra time might be required.

Cork and Collins, however, had other ideas.

The straight red card shown to Cronin in those dying minutes means at the moment she misses the All-Ireland final.

Kilkenny manager Brian

Dowling said, while disappointed not to push on when they went ahead in the second half, he has nothing but admiration for his team.

"We came back this year and we backed up the All-Ireland and won the league. But it's not easy to win All-Irelands, it's not easy to get to them and Kilkenny, Galway, and Cork have been the top

three teams over the last number of years.

"Any time we've played in league or championship, there's been nothing between us, and you don't have a deserved right to be in an All-Ireland final, and unfortunately we're not going to be there."

"It wasn't easy for these girls to lose three All-Irelands; it would have been easy to pack it in and retire, but players like Collette Dormer, Denise Gaule, and Katie Power — what she's gone through to get on the pitch is unbelievable — they'll do anything to play."

"Kellyann Doyle was only passed fit last night. How she was able to play that match I'll never know. She couldn't raise her arm on Friday evening. I can't speak highly enough of these girls — they'd die for the Kilkenny jersey. There's a great bond in that group, but it's so disappointing when you lose. You learn a lot more when you lose, so you have to move on from here."

**Scorers for Cork:** O Cronin (0-6, 0-4 free), C Sigerson (0-5, 0-1 free), S McCarthy, K Mackey, L Collins and F Keating (0-1 each).

**Scorers for Kilkenny:** D Gaule (0-7 free), M O'Connell (1-0), K Power (0-2), K Doyle and K Nolan (0-1 each).

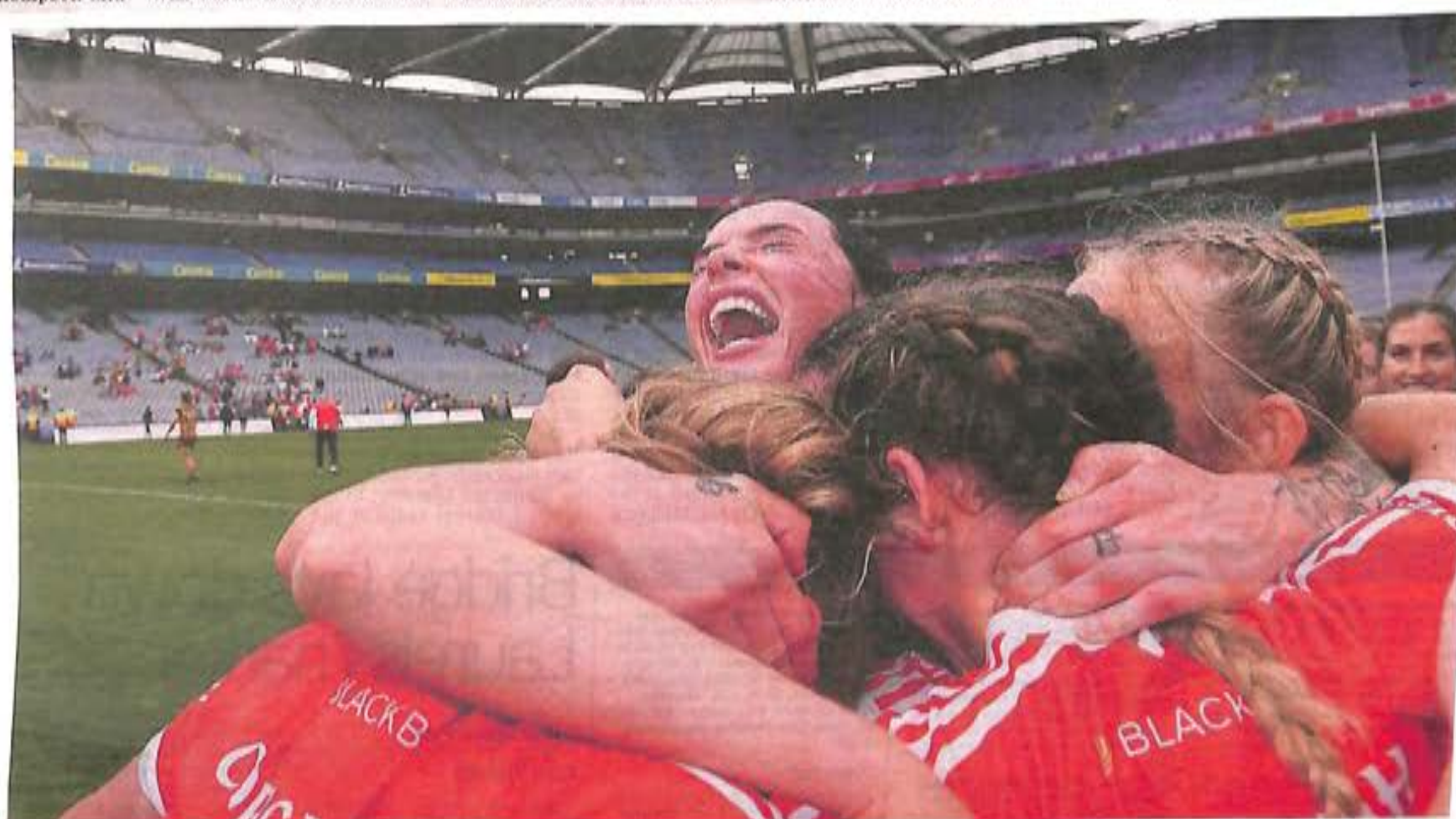
**CORK:** A Lee; P Mackey, L Coppinger, M Cahalane; L Hayes, L Treacy, S McCarthy; H Looney, A Thompson; C Sigerson, F Keating, C O'Sullivan; A O'Connor, O Cronin, K Mackey.

**Subs:** L Collins for C O'Sullivan (50).

**KILKENNY:** A Norris; M Teehan, C Dormer, D Tobin; K Doyle, M Farrell (Capt), C Phelan; G Walsh, D Gaule; M Walsh, K Nolan, M O'Connell; S Fitzgerald, K Power, A Doyle.

**Subs:** L Murphy for S Fitzgerald (38), N Deely for M Teehan (48), M Kenneally for A Doyle (55).

**Referee:** John Dermody (Westmeath).



Cork's Ashling Thompson celebrates with team-mates after their win over Kilkenny in the All-Ireland Senior Camogie Championship semi-final at Croke Park yesterday. See Page 9. Picture: Piaras Ó Midheach/Sportsfile



# Benched Collins makes her point with last-gasp winner

ALL-IRELAND SEMI-FINAL

**CORK** 0-15  
**KILKENNY** 1-11

By DARAGH Ó CONCHÚIR

CORK manager Paudie Murray explained the decision to leave out skipper Linda Collins as a requirement for impetus from his bench and that call proved a masterstroke, as the Courcy Rovers forward struck a dramatic winner as the clock just wound into the fourth and final minute of injury time.

It was a stunning conclusion to a riveting affair that Cork dominated for the most part, the wonderful Chloe Sigerson shooting five points as they led by double scores, 0-10 to 0-5 at half-time.

They looked in cruise control until Mary O'Connell's 44th minute goal suddenly woke Kilkenny from their reverie and the champions would register four of the next five points to move two clear.

Cork would respond, with Orla Cronin and Fiona Keating drawing them level and not even the 57th minute dismissal of Cronin following an altercation with Grace Walsh could deny them, as Collins joined Julia White and Orla Cotter in the annals of Rebel rousers that inflicted injury-time agony on the Cats in recent years.

'It was unfortunate on Linda in one way that she didn't start but we put a lot of thought into it,' Murray explained.

'We wanted an impact off of her and I think we got it. I think



Big impact: Replacement Linda Collins strikes the winner

it panned out quite well. We looked at probably over the last two years, we didn't get a kick towards the end of games.

'I think last year, we felt if we had someone to come in with 10 or 15 minutes to go, we probably would have come out winners.'

On the red card for Cronin, he professed to not have seen the incident but felt that Katrina Mackey should have had a penalty when Meighan Farrell came from nowhere to deny the full-forward a goal.

'I thought our first half was good, but our third quarter killed us. We spoke about a lot of things during the week and I think some of them went out the window.'

'That 15 minutes really annoyed us. But I suppose Kilkenny were always going to have their period of dominance so I thought we showed great

composure and great character. I think the team is starting to develop its own character.'

**CORK:** A Lee, P Mackey, L Coppinger, M Cahalane, L Hayes, L Treacy, S McCarthy, H Looney, A Thompson, C Sigerson, F Keating, C O'Sullivan, A O'Connor, O Cronin, K Mackey. Sub: L Collins for O'Sullivan (50).

**Scorers:** O Cronin 0-6 (5fs); C Sigerson 0-5 (1f); K Mackey, F Keating, S McCarthy, L Collins 0-1 each.

**KILKENNY:** A Norris, M Teehan, C Dorrer, D Tobin, K Doyle, M Farrell, C Phelan, D Gaule, G Walsh, M Walsh, K Nolan, M O'Connell, S Fitzgerald, K Power, A Doyle. Sub: L Murphy for Fitzgerald (38); N Deely for Teehan (48); M Kenneally for A Doyle (55).

**Scorers:** D Gaule 0-7 (5fs); M O'Connell 1-0; K Power 0-2; K Doyle, K Nolan 0-1 each. Referee: John Dermody (Westmeath).

## Galway's spirit in defence is backbone for edging over line

ALL-IRELAND SEMI-FINAL

**GALWAY** 1-13  
**TIPPERARY** 0-12

By DARAGH Ó CONCHÚIR

IN THE end, Galway got over the line, a victory that owed much to a fortuitous goal on the hour by Orlaith McGrath and a monumental contribution to their full-back line.

This was Tipperary's fourth consecutive All-Ireland senior camogie semi-final defeat but it is a measure of the incremental improvement they have made that this was the first time they were truly competitive, and that they must have departed HQ with a slew of regrets.

Galway led at half-time by 0-8 to 0-4 without ever hitting their stride but it was Tipperary that dominated the second half, playing with an intensity and intelligence that had been missing in the opening period.

They were back within one after three Cailt Devane points inside four minutes after the change of ends but never could get level, despite Clodagh McIntyre creating four goal chances. Mullane felt that experience might have seen some of



Lucky strike: Galway's Orlaith McGrath

those chances pointed rather than accruing zero return but his counterpart, Cathal Murray hailed the last-ditch interventions of his full-back line of Shauna Healy, Sarah Dervan and Dervla Higgins to ensure that Sarah Healy was never beaten.

Higgins was sent off late on after Ray Kelly took the advice of one of his umpires but Murray insisted that the Athenry defender maintained her innocence and indicated that he would be looking to have the decision overturned.

'I thought the full-back line were heroic,' Murray said. 'Hopefully Dervla gets off. I think it's mistaken identity

and I hope that's the case. A few of the subs made a real contribution. Becky (Hennelly) caught a brilliant, brilliant ball near the finish when we were under real pressure and needed someone to win a ball.'

Mullane's sense of regret was evident. 'We'd oceans of chances,' the Tipp manager stated. 'Maybe getting carried away going for the kill, we could've ticked them over. We just didn't take the scores when they were on.'

**GALWAY:** Sarah Healy, Shauna Healy, S Dervan, D Higgins, S Gardiner, E Helebert, C Cormican, N Hanniffy (R Hennelly 49), N Kilkenny, C Finnerty (N McGrath 39), S Spellman (N Coen 56), A Donohue, S McGrath (AM Starr 59), O McGrath, A O'Reilly (M Cooney 60+).

**Scorers:** O McGrath 1-2; A O'Reilly 0-4 (3fs, 1 45); A Donohue 0-3; N Kilkenny 0-2; S Spellman, S McGrath 0-1 each.

**TIPPERARY:** C Bourke, M Ryan, M Eviston (K Blair 59), J Bourke, E Loughman, K Kennedy, A McGrath, E Fryday (K Blair 51), C Devane, E McGrath (M Camplon 42), N Walsh, O O'Dwyer, C McIntyre, R Howard, G O'Brien.

**Scorers:** C Devane 0-6 (5fs); O O'Dwyer 0-2; N Walsh, E Fryday, G O'Brien, M Camplon 0-1 each. Referee: Ray Kelly (Kildare).

### CAMOGIE INTERMEDIATE SEMI-FINALS

Kilkenny 0-13 Meath 0-9  
Antrim 2-13 Galway 1-13

### CAMOGIE PREMIER JUNIOR SEMI-FINAL

Armagh 2-13 Clare 1-6

### TODAY'S FIXTURES

**ALL-IRELAND SENIOR CAMOGIE SEMI-FINALS:**

Galway v Tipperary, Croke Park, 2pm

Cork v Kilkenny, Croke Park, 4pm

**CAMOGIE PREMIER JUNIOR SEMI-FINAL:**

Roscommon v Wexford, Clane, 3pm

### Kilkenny face Antrim for Intermediate title

Kilkenny and Antrim will meet in the ISPCC All-Ireland Intermediate Camogie Championship final and they will be joined at Croke Park on September 12 by Armagh, who are an hour away from retaining their junior title. Cavan won the Tesco minor C title, while Cork and Galway qualified for the A final.

Kilkenny's leading scorer, Sophie O'Dwyer, hit 0-9 in her side's 0-13 to 0-9 semi-final triumph over Meath in Nowlan Park while Antrim came out on the right side of a cracking battle with Galway by 2-13 to 1-13 at St Tiernach's Park.

## Cronin's red 'extremely harsh,' says Cork boss

BY KIERAN MCCARTHY

CORK boss Paudie Murray feels Orla Cronin's red card in their epic All-Ireland senior camogie semi-final win against Kilkenny was 'extremely harsh'.

The Cork star received a straight red card late on against the Cats and if it stands, the Enniskeane woman will miss the All-Ireland final against Galway on September 12th.

The All-Star forward's absence would be a huge blow to the Rebels.

Cronin got in a tangle with Kilkenny's Grace Walsh in a tense climax to this Croke Park thriller as the Rebels struck late to dethrone the reigning champions - but Murray insists the West Cork woman did not deserve to be sent off.

'I have looked at the incident, and from a number of different angles, and I think it's an extremely harsh sending off,' Murray told *The Southern Star*.

'If that was applied to every challenge, I don't think anyone would be left on the field.'

'I said after the game on Sunday that we should have had a penalty. Looking at it again when the (Kilkenny) goalkeeper puts her arms around Katrina Mackey, who was in possession of the ball, certainly to me that was a penalty. Then Orla Cronin got shouldered in the back, that had to be a yellow card. They are two incidents that weren't dealt with and I'm disappointed with.'

'As for Orla, she has played 80 times for Cork and has a total of six bookings - that shows the player that she is.'

'If we are down Orla for the final against Galway then we are really under pressure to get the result that we want.'

Analysing Cronin's red card on *The Sunday Game* Limerick camogie player Aoife Sheehan commented: 'To miss an All-Ireland final for that is harsh.'

Cork captain Linda Collins struck the match-winning point in injury-time as the Rebels won 0-15 to 11.

• Read pages 4-5 for more



Cork's Orla Cronin is red carded by referee John Dermody during the All-Ireland senior camogie semi-final against Kilkenny on Sunday.

(Photo: James Crombie/INPHO)





Galway's Emma Helebert (left) and Dervla Higgins block the path of Tipperary's Nicole Walsh. PÍARAS Ó MÍDHEACH/SPORTSFILE

# Murray hails heroic defence as Galway squeeze through

<b>GALWAY</b>	1-13
<b>TIPPERARY</b>	0-12
ALL-IRELAND MINOR 'A' CAMOGIE FINAL	
Conchúir	

At the end, Galway got over the line, a victory that owed much to a fortuitous goal in the fourth by Orlaith McGrath and an extraordinary contribution by their full-back line.

This was Tipperary's fourth consecutive All-Ireland senior camogie semi-final defeat but it is a measure of the incremental improvement they have made annually that this was the first time they were truly competitive, and they have departed HQ with a slew of regrets.

Higgins was sent off late on and Dervla Kelly took the advice of one of the referees but Cathal Murray insisted that the Athenry defender maintained her innocence and indicated that he was looking to have the decision overturned.

"Hopefully Dervla gets off, I think it's an identity and I hope that's the message," Murray said.

"I thought she played really, really well and she doesn't deserve to miss an All-Ireland over that."

The umpires told him so he had no choice but to send her off but Dervla is adamant she didn't do anything. I don't think you should miss an All-Ireland over that so hopefully it'll be sorted out. Hopefully RTE pick up something and the card will be rescinded."

Galway led at half-time by 0-8 to 0-4 without ever hitting their stride but it was Tipperary that dominated the second half, playing with an intensity and

intelligence that had been missing in the opening period.

They were back within one after three Calt Devane points inside four minutes after the change of ends but never could get level, despite Clodagh McIntyre creating four goal chances.

Tipp boss Bill Mullaney felt that experience might have seen some of those chances pointed rather than accruing zero return but his counterpart, Murray hailed the last-ditch interventions of his full-back line of Shauna Healy, Sarah Dervan and Higgins to ensure that Sarah Healy was never beaten.

"I thought the full-back line were heroic. Tipperary were really good today and only scored 12 points. That's a massive sign of our backline," Murray said.

"A few of the subs made a real contribution. Becky (Hennelly) caught a brilliant, brilliant ball near the finish when we were under real pressure and needed someone to win a ball."

**Advantage**

"They'd a big advantage having the match last week and hopefully the match today brings us on for the next two weeks. It needs to."

The reference to Tipperary's advantage of a game led to Murray questioning the worth of winning a group and having to wait four weeks for the next outing.

"We'd a brilliant win down in Callan and then you're sitting on your heels for four weeks getting ready for an All-Ireland semi-final. That's not an advantage for a team that wins a group. What's the point in having those groups and having a team bursting their hole to top it and then not getting that advantage? A four-week break is impossible to manage."

"Tipperary had a game last week and you could see they were rusty last

week and they still shot 17 points but it brought them on an awful amount for this weekend.

"I felt when we were on top in the first half and playing really well, that bit of rustiness was really there. It should be three weeks."

"But we managed it, we did really well. Today was about winning it. I know that's a cliché, semi-finals are about winning. It wasn't a vintage performance but it doesn't need to be. And I don't care if it's a vintage performance in the final either as long as we win it."

Mullaney has always expressed pride in his players and he was bursting with it again under the stands in Croke Park but the regret was evident.

"We'd oceans of chances," the Tipp manager stated.

"Maybe getting carried away going for the kill, we could've ticked them over, got back level, got a point in front because we were dominating that end of the field in the second half."

"I was delighted with the way they were playing. I thought we were playing excellently. We just didn't take the scores when they were on."

"We were trying to go for the big score when all we needed was one or two because there wasn't that much between us."

**SCORERS** - Galway: O McGrath 1-2; A O'Reilly 0-4 (3fs, 1 sh); A Donohue 0-3; N Kilkenny 0-2; S Spellman, S McGrath 0-1 each. Tipperary: C Devane 0-6 (5fs); O O'Dwyer 0-2; N Walsh, E Fryday, G O'Brien, M Campbell 0-1 each.

**GALWAY** - Sarah Healy, Shauna Healy, S Dervan, D Higgins, S Gahane, E Helebert, C Cormican, N Hennelly, N Kilkenny, C Devane, S Spellman, A Donohue, S McGrath, O McGrath, A O'Reilly, Subst: N McGrath for Finnerty (39), R Hennelly for Russell (49), N Conn for Spellman (56), AM Score for S McGrath (55), M Cooney for O'Reilly (56+0).

**TIPPERARY** - C Bourke, M Ryan, M Eviston, J Bourke, E Loughman, K Kennedy, A McGrath, E Fryday, C Devane, E Walsh, N Walsh, O O'Dwyer, C McIntyre, R Howard, G O'Brien, Subst: M Campbell for E McGrath (42), K Blair for Fryday (50), S Cooney for Eviston (59).

**Ref** - Ray Kelly (Widare)

## Galway's Helebert cannot be sanctioned

Eoghan Cormican

Galway centre-back Emma Helebert will not miss Sunday week's All-Ireland senior camogie final as the camogie rulebook does not allow for retrospective citation.

Whereas the GAA's Central Competitions Control Committee has the power to cite a player whose infraction was inadequately dealt with by match officials for whatever reason, the same practice does not exist within the game of camogie. Thus, Helebert will escape punishment for her strike on Tipperary's Eimear Loughman that led to Galway corner-back Dervla Higgins being red-carded at the end of Sunday's All-Ireland semi-final.

In a case of mistaken identity, referee Ray Kelly, following a discussion with his umpires, issued a straight red card to Higgins, rather than Helebert, in the 59th minute.

Video footage clearly shows Higgins is innocent of any striking action and that it was Helebert who clashed with Loughman following a clumsy challenge by the latter.

Galway are appealing Higgins' red card and it is inevitable she will be cleared for the September 12 final meeting with Cork.

Galway will have their full complement of defenders available for the decider as Helebert won't be retrospectively cited. Moreover, Helebert is unlikely to be mentioned in Kelly's referee's report submitted to the Camogie Association this week as referees are encouraged to issue a report reflecting how they refereed a game and not to be influenced by any footage that comes to light after the game has concluded.

Elsewhere, Cork are expected to appeal the red card shown to centre-forward Orla Cronin during the second half of Sunday's All-Ireland semi-final with Kilkenny.

It remains unclear if Cronin was sent off by referee John Dermody for swinging the hurley at Grace Walsh or touching the faceguard of the Kilkenny midfielder.

Cronin was following the play late in the second half when Walsh barged into the Cork centre-forward from behind. Cronin swung back her hurley while still on the ground and then touched Walsh's faceguard as she got back to her feet.

Striking an opponent with the hurley and interfering with an opponent's faceguard are both listed in the camogie rulebook under 'Aggressive Fouls, Dangerous Play, and Abusive Language'. Both are red card offences.

"I didn't see the incident but a lot of the guys are saying it is harsh. Certainly, we should have got a penalty before that when Katrina Mackey was taken down. I would have to see it again before I could make a comment on it," said Cork manager Paudie Murray after the game.

## Sharp-shooting Barcoe leads Kilkenny to minor victory

<b>KILKENNY</b>	2-12
<b>CORK</b>	0-12
ALL-IRELAND MINOR 'A' CAMOGIE FINAL	

KILKENNY were crowned Tesco All-Ireland minor camogie champions as Sarah Barcoe led them to a six-point victory over Cork in Limerick's LIT Gaelic Grounds.

It was the Rebel County who had the better start, as two early Cork points put them into the ascendancy, with Orlaith Mullins and Aimee Morgan finding the target. Barcoe then slotted over Kilkenny's first score, though Ciara Golden responded quickly.

Emma Shorthall's effort split the uprights before Barcoe found the net for the game's opening goal, with a neat finish to put Kilkenny ahead for the first time.

Morgan replied with a decent score for Cork as the Munster side trailed at the first water break, with Kilkenny holding a one-point lead after an exciting opening period.

Kilkenny dominated in the period from the water break to half-time, scoring three unanswered points with Amy Clifford (2) and Barcoe finding the target, as Mike Wall's side held a 1-5 to 0-4 interval lead.

Emma Manogue opened the second-half scoring for Kilkenny to stretch the gap to five before Cork responded with four scores to reduce the deficit to the minimum. Claire Doheny and Meadhbh Ring swapped scores as Kilkenny held a 1-7 to 0-9 lead at the second-half water break.

Kilkenny were phenomenal in the final quarter as Asha McHardy, Amy Clifford, Barcoe and Shorthall added scores to restore Kilkenny's five-point lead.

**Contest**

Shorthall's 52nd-minute goal all but ended the game as a contest, as it left eight between the sides heading into the final stages and Kilkenny were never going to relinquish that advantage.

Wall praised his side's composure when Cork came back in the third quarter and the Kilkenny manager said the message to his side at the second-half water break was to keep calm and hold their shape.

"There were no major words. Our main thing was not to panic. When we went ahead we never went behind. I think that was the big thing for us. All we really said was keep doing what we're doing. We knew we had the backs," the Kilkenny manager said.

This was Kilkenny's first title at minor level since 2015, though they hold the record for the most All-Ireland minor titles won and this was their seventh success.

The All-Ireland minor 'B' Championship final will have to be replayed as Offaly and Antrim played out a draw, in Inniscree Grattans GAA grounds. The full-time score was Offaly 0-13 Antrim 2-7.



# Tesco All-Ireland Minor A Camogie Championship Final



**Corcaigh  
Cork**

Dearg agus Bán • Red and White

- 1 C ní Mhuirthe **CIARA HURLEY** St. Finbarrs
- 2 A ní Chiosain **AVRIL CASHMAN** Youghal
- 3 M ní Éalaithe **MIRIAM HEALY** Ballincollig
- 4 C ní Loingsigh **CLIONA LYNCH** Sarsfields
- 5 E ní Dhrisceoil **EMMA O'DRISCOLL** Enniskeane
- 6 A ní Éalaithe **AOIFE HEALY** Aghada
- 7 O ní Ailín **OLIVIA McALLEN (C)** Sarsfields
- 8 M ní Mhurchú **MEABH MURPHY** Ballinora
- 9 C ní Ghoilín **CIARA GOLDEN** St. Finbarrs
- 10 A ní Mhuireagáin **AIMEE MORGAN** Castlemartyr
- 11 R ní Mhurchú **ROSE MURPHY** Ballinora
- 12 O ní Mhaoláin **ORLAITH MULLINS** Sarsfields
- 13 E ní Bhriain **EIMEAR O'BRIEN** Enniskeane
- 14 M ní Rinn **MEADHBH RING** Aghabullogue
- 15 O ní Cahaláin **ORLAITH CAHALANE** St. Finbarrs

16 • Éadaoin Goggin • E ní Gogan • Milford  
17 • Grace Ryan • G ní Riain • Newcestown  
18 • Ciara Walsh • C Breathneach • Carnigtwohill  
19 • Jenny Doyle • J ní Dhuill • Youghal  
20 • Shauna Hayes • S ní Haoda • Bride Rovers  
21 • Emily O'Donovan • E ní Dhonabhain • Kilbree  
22 • Ava Hallihan • A ní Haileachain • Castletyons  
23 • Amy McNamara • A ní Chonmara • Sarsfields  
24 • Ella Wigginton Barrett • E ní Wigginton Baroid • St. Finbarrs  
25 • Leah Hallihan • L ní Haileachain • Castletyons  
26 • Anna Fahy • A ní Fhaighigh • Tracton

27 • Caoimhe Murphy • C ní Mhurchú • Kilbree  
28 • Lucy McNulty • L ní an Ultaigh • Castletyons  
29 • Nicole Olden • N ní Dhoise • St. Finbarrs  
30 • Kate Redmond • C ní Réamainn • Sliabh Rua  
**Manager** • Jerry Wallace  
**Coach** • Michael Boland  
**Coach** • Mark O'Sullivan

Sunday, 5th September, 2021 • LIT Gaelic Grounds, Limerick @ 6:00 pm

Referee: Ray Kelly (Kildare) • Standby Referee: Gavin Donegan (Dublin)

Line: Mike Flannery (Limerick) • 4th Official: John McDonagh (Galway)

**Cill Chainnigh  
Kilkenny**

Dubh agus Ómra • Black and Amber



- 1 E ní Néill **ELLIE O'NEILL** St. Brigid's
- 2 L ní Nualláin **LAOISE NOLAN** Clara
- 3 N ní Fhaoilín **NIAMH PHELAN (Jt-C)** Dicksboro
- 4 R ní Haoileáin **RACHEL WHELAN** Clara
- 5 A ní Ciardhubhain **AINE KIRWAN** Thomastown
- 6 M ní Corcráin **MAIREAD CORCORAN** Mooncoin
- 7 S ní Siacais **SONTAE JACKSON** Windgap
- 8 E ní Mhuineog **EMMA MANOGUE** James Stephens
- 9 A ní Dhúchona **ANNA DOHENY** James Stephens
- 10 G ní Ghloinn **GRÁINNE GLYNN** Clara
- 11 A ní Ciolla Deacair **ASHA McHARDY** Dicksboro
- 12 E ní Soltéil **EMMA SHORTHALL** Clara
- 13 S Barcoe **SARAH BARCOE** St. Martin's
- 14 S ní Dhomhnaill **SARAH O'DONNELL (Jt-C)** Tullaroan
- 15 A ní Cluamhain **AMY CLIFFORD** Piltown

16 • Alison Donnelly • A ní Donnghaile • Glenmore  
17 • Rachel Brennan • R ní Bhraonáin • Tullaroan  
18 • Moya O'Brien • M ní Bhriain • St. Brigid's  
19 • Amy Brennan • A ní Bhraonáin • Conahy  
20 • Kate McCluskey • C ní Bhloscaidh • St. Brigid's  
21 • Katie Byrne • C ní Bhriain • Dicksboro  
22 • Emma Mulhall • E ní Maolchathail • Conahy  
23 • Grace Keoghán • G ní Cheocháin • Tullaroan  
24 • Claire Doherty • C ní Dhubbhchonna • St. Brigid's  
25 • Katie Ryan • C ní Riain • Clara  
26 • Leah Brett • L de Breit • St. Brigid's

27 • Ellen Gunner • E ní Gunnadóir • Conahy  
28 • Keara Ryan • C ní Riain • Clara  
29 • Maire Claire O'Dwyer • M C ní Dhuibhir • Glenmore  
30 • Carmel Maher • C ní Mheachair • St. Lachtáins  
**Manager** • Michael Wall  
**Selector** • Paula Murphy  
**Selector** • Mary Murphy  
**Selector** • Damien O'Donohue  
**Selector** • Clodagh Holohan  
**Selector** • Sinéad Melaniff  
**Selector** • Laoise Bennis

## Cork success built on strong foundations

**C**ORK have set the bar when it comes to All-Ireland senior camogie championship titles, with 28 crowns — two clear of Dublin.

Having overcome rivals Kilkenny in the semi-final, the Rebels will be looking to stretch their lead against Galway in Croke Park next Sunday afternoon.

Cork Camogie cathaoirleach Mairéad Donovan has praised the incredible work being done at grass-roots level, which is fuelling the future.

"We have nurseries in clubs, which was probably unheard of years ago. It all begins at underage level, where you teach the skills... The skills have to be perfected at U6 and then enhanced. For this to happen, you need good personnel on board."

"There are great workshops. One of these is a 'Hurl with me' workshop, where a child learns to play with their parent. You also need someone on the sideline to mind the girls — girls have different requirements to young boys, and young boys have different requirements to young girls. There is a fit for everybody in sport," said the Ballincollig club member.

"We are very fortunate that we have very hard-working and diligent divisions. They run U11, U13, and U15 to offset the county competitions at U12, U14, and U16. So there is continuity of games for all of

**Therese O'Callaghan**



the youngsters coming up.

"With our development squads, this year we launched a new initiative with our U14s and U15s, and we will be going with the new development programme of hubs into schools of excellence or, as we call it, our development academy. We build from there. "I do think quite a bit of our success is down to coaching education. There has been a huge amount put into that over the last number of years. Esther O'Leary is our development officer — it is a role I had myself before."

"The fact Cork is a successful county can be seen from our participation at national level in senior, intermediate, minor, and U16. In Munster we compete at senior, junior, minor, U16A, and U16B."

"We pride ourselves on our reputation, which was built up ever before I took on this role. When you inherit something, you have to do your best. You have to build on what people have done before you. You have to bring something a little bit different. Drive Cork to be better and even more successful than they are."

"Players are pivotal to what

we do. Our primary role as a board is to provide games for them. They give up a huge amount, both at county and club level. They are superb, physical athletes, and amazing role models."

Eleven different clubs were represented in Cork's semi-final starting 15 — the spread coming from far and wide. Courcy Rovers, who won their first senior title last season, have three. What a contribution they are making — Saoirse McCarthy, Fiona Keating and captain Linda Collins.

"Courcy Rovers are a huge example of what can be achieved. And to be fair to Courcy Rovers, they were knocking on that door and were extremely close on a number of occasions. They nailed it in 2020, and fair play to them and the work that is going on down there. The various management teams as well. What everybody must remember is, nearly all of our management teams are volunteers. They are involved at club level and then at county level. They give up a lot of time to coach at that higher level and Cork is the better for it."

"We've had successful management teams. Donie Daly with the U16s, Jerry Wallace with the minors, Mark McCarthy the intermediates, and Páidie Murray is our most experienced manager with 16 years behind him. The professionalism they bring, it is great to watch."



The Kilkenny team celebrate after victory over Cork in the Tesco All-Ireland Minor A Camogie Championship at LIT Gaelic Grounds. Picture: Brian Reilly-Troy

### Tesco All-Ireland Minor A Camogie championship

Kilkenny	2-12
Cork	0-12

#### Conor McKenna

Kilkenny were crowned Tesco All-Ireland Minor A Camogie champions following a 2-12 to 0-12 victory over Cork in the All-Ireland final in LIT Gaelic Grounds, Limerick.

It was the Rebel County who had the better start, as two early Cork points put them into the ascendancy, with Orlaith Mullins and Aimee Morgan finding the target. Sarah Barcoe slotted over Kilkenny's first score, though it was quickly cancelled out by Clara Golden.

Emma Shorthall's effort split the upstarts before Barcoe found the net for the game's opening goal, with a neat finish to put Kilkenny ahead for the first time.

Morgan replied with a decent score for Cork as they trailed at the first water break, with Kilkenny holding

## Brilliant Barcoe fires Cats to Minor A glory

a one-point lead after an exciting opening period.

Kilkenny dominated in the period up to half time, scoring three unanswered points with Amy Clifford (2) and Barcoe finding the target, as Mike Wall's side held a 1-5 to 0-4 lead at the interval.

Emma Manogue opened the second-half scoring for Kilkenny to stretch the gap to five, though Cork responded with four successive scores to reduce the deficit to the minimum. Claire Doherty and Meadhbh Ring swapped scores as Kilkenny held a 1-7 to 0-9 lead at the second-half water break. But the Cats stormed out on the restart as Asha McHardy, Clifford, Barcoe, and Shorthall added scores.

Shorthall's 52nd-minute goal all-but ended the game as

a contest, as it left eight between the sides heading into the final stages and Kilkenny were never going to relinquish that advantage.

**Scorers for Kilkenny:** S Barcoe 1-4, E Shorthall 1-2, A Clifford 0-3 (0-2 f), E Minogue, G Doherty, A McHardy 0-1 each.

**Scorers for Cork:** E O'Brien 0-3 (0-2 f) O Mullins, O Cahalane 0-2 each, A Morgan 0-2 (0-1 f), R Murphy, G Golden 0-1 each.

**KILKENNY:** E O'Neill; L Nolan, N Phelan, R Whelan; A Kirwan, M Corcoran, S Jackson; E Minogue, A Healy, O Glynn, A McHardy, E Shorthall; S Barcoe, S O'Donnell, A Clifford.

**Subs:** G Doherty for A Doherty (40); R Brennan for S Jackson (in 55); C Corran; G Hurley; A Castman, M Healy, C Lynch, E O'Driscoll, A Healy, O McAllen (c); M Murphy, C Golden; A Morgan, R Murphy, O Mullins, L Hallahan, M Ring, O Cahalane.

**Subs:** E O'Brien for L Hallahan (in 1); R Redmond for C Golden (in 1); L McNulty for G Lynch (57); G Ryan for A Castman (57); J Doyle for C Lynch (57).

**Referee:** Ray Kelly (Kildare).



# 'I backed myself when I came on,' says Cork hero

BY GER MCCARTHY

LINDA Collins' match-winning point in last weekend's All-Ireland senior camogie semi-final victory came at the end of a tumultuous week for the Cork captain.

It cannot have been easy for manager Paudie Murray to tell his captain that she wasn't starting Cork's showdown with reigning champions Kilkenny.

Admirably, although hugely disappointed, Collins accepted the decision and resolved to make her mark if called upon during the closing minutes at Croke Park.

So it proved, as the Courcy Rovers star was summoned from the bench with ten minutes left and underlined her importance by firing over the match-winning score in injury-time.

'I just thought what was the point in wasting a load of negative energy when I got the news,' Collins told *The Southern Star*.

'Obviously, I was upset after he told me. I had been training really well and people were saying you will be starting and things like that.'

'I knew myself, once Paudie had spoken to me, what my (new) role was to be in Croke Park. I knew it would be different to anything I'd previously done in years gone by having started all of my previous games for Cork.'

'Really, they made the decision for the sake of the team. At the end of the day, we wanted to win this match against Kilkenny and they said that this is the role they wanted me to play.'

'I just dealt with the decision as being handed a different role. I wasn't negative about it because I knew I had been going well. I backed myself when I came on and dealt with it (decision) as being handed a new role on that particular day.'

The mature manner in which Collins handled being dropped from the starting line-up was rewarded with a match-winning role when sprung from the bench.

'To be honest, I didn't realise how little time was left and that it was the 63rd minute (when I scored). I only heard that afterwards and thought we had a lot more time left!' Collins admitted.

'It is just as well my shot went over. As soon as I came on, I felt the ball was coming in really quick from the girls outside. Their delivery was brilliant. I



Match-winner Linda Collins. (Photo: James Crombie/INPHO)

**'I just dealt with the decision as being handed a different role'**  
— Linda Collins

was just so eager to get on the ball as soon as I came on. Sometimes that is what you need.

'Katrina (Mackey) and Amy (O'Connor) had done such hard work inside there, so full credit to them. They were in a battle for every single ball. Fiona (Keating) got the leveller before it came down to me at the end. Really, everything went so fast up until the last minute. That felt like the longest minute ever!'

It is one thing to beat the All-Ireland champions and favourites for this year's title with 15 players against 15. The fact Cork knocked Kilkenny out after having Orla Cronin red carded late in the game speaks volume for the commitment, conditioning, self-belief and sheer doggedness of this evolving Cork team.

'We were in Croke Park to do a job and everyone knew their role,' the Cork captain added.

'You talk about values. Well, my value to Cork was to come on as a substitute and try to make an impact. Other people had different roles against Kilkenny. Ciara O'Sullivan was up and down that pitch the whole day and didn't stop for all 50 minutes she was on.'

'We never panicked. When we were two points down after about 55 or 56 minutes it was just a matter of "okay, we have done this before, this game is never going to be as hard as one of Paudie's training sessions either so just get the head down and keep doing what we know how to do best."

Cork captain Linda Collins sprung from the bench and scores match-winner against reigning champions in Croke Park epic

CORK 0-15  
KILKENNY 1-11

DARAGH Ó CONCHUIR REPORTS

THE thinking behind leaving Cork captain Linda Collins on the bench for the Rebels' All-Ireland senior camogie semi-final was straightforward, manager Paudie Murray explained afterwards.

He felt his side needed an impetus from his bench. His plan worked out. In fact, it was a masterstroke as Cork shocked reigning champions Kilkenny in this Croke Park thriller.

The reward is an All-Ireland final against Galway.

Courcy Rovers forward Collins was a danger for all 14 minutes of her involvement, concluding with a dramatic winner as the clock just wound into the fourth and final minute of injury time.

'It was unfortunate on Linda in one way that she didn't start but we put a lot of thought into it,' Murray explained.

'We wanted an impact off of her and I think we got it. I think it panned out quite well. We looked at probably over the last two years, we didn't get a kick towards the end of games. I think last year, we felt if we had someone to come in with 10 or 15 minutes to go, we probably would have come out winners.'

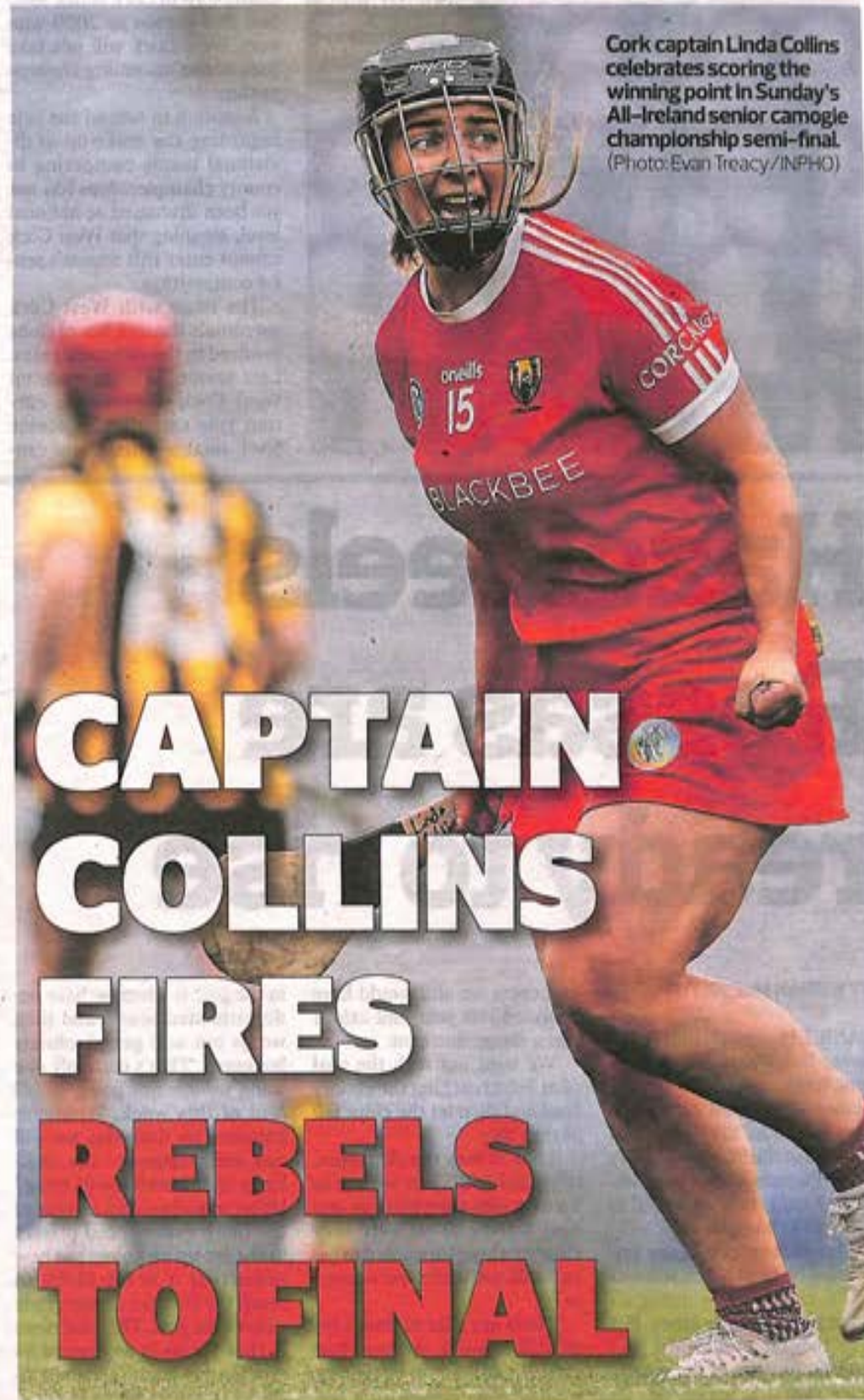
It was a stunning conclusion to a riveting affair that Cork dominated for the most part, the wonderful Chloe Sigerson shooting five points as they led by double scores, 0-10 to 0-5 at half-time.

The Rebels, underdogs heading into this contest, looked in cruise control until Mary O'Connell's 44th minute goal suddenly woke Kilkenny from their slumber and the champions would register four of the next five points to move two clear in what seemed a definitive period of dominance.

Cork's response was notable however, Enniskeane dynamo Orla Cronin and Courcy Rovers young gun Fiona Keating drawing them level. Not even the 57th minute dismissal of Cronin, a real sting in the tail, following an altercation with Grace Walsh could deny them, as Collins joined Julia White and Orla Cotter in the annals of Rebel rousers that inflicted injury-time agony on the Cats in recent years.

'I thought our first half was good, but our third quarter killed us,' Cork boss Murray said.

'We spoke about a lot of things during the week and I think some of them went out the window. That



Cork captain Linda Collins celebrates scoring the winning point in Sunday's All-Ireland senior camogie championship semi-final. (Photo: Evan Treacy/INPHO)

15 minutes really annoyed us. But I suppose Kilkenny were always going to have their period of dominance so I thought we showed great composure

and great character. I think the team is starting to develop its own character.

'We have had big characters in the dressing-room that have left over the last number of years - the likes of Aoife (Murray), Gemma (O'Connor), Rena Buckley, Brieger Corkery and Orla Cotter. It takes a small bit of time for a new team to develop a new personality in the dressing-room and new characters. I think they are starting

Cork's Libby Coppinger and Isobel Sheehan celebrate. (Photo: James Crombie/INPHO)

**'We wanted an impact off of her and I think we got it. I think it panned out quite well'** — Paudie Murray, Cork manager

to do that.

'This is a very young team. Ciara O'Sullivan is 19, Fiona Keating 20, we have a lot in around the 21/22 years. This is a big day out for them. I thought we managed it very well.'

The character Cork showed in that final quarter was telling as was the response to Kilkenny's surge. Though it was the likes of the experienced Ashling Thompson, Pamela Mackey and Hannah







# ALL-IRELAND SENIOR CAMOGIE CHAMPIONSHIP Cork v Kilkenny



Cork's Libby Coppinger tackles Katie Power of Kilkenny during the All-Ireland semi-final in Croke Park.

Looney that drove them on in that definite period, Saoirse McCarthy was a revelation at half-back too and points from Orla Cronin from a free and Fiona Keating brought them level just before the end of regulation time.

Then it was super sub Collins, who had come on in the 50th minute for 19-year-old Clara O'Sullivan, time to shine in the most dramatic fashion.

When it came to work-rate though, it was Chloe Sigerson who stood head and shoulders above all else on the pitch, with a truly phenomenal half-hour, covering so much ground but supplementing that with five points, four from play including a couple of huge scores from distance.

She was ably assisted by the athletic Looney in midfield, while Ashling Thompson was managing to nullify Denise Gaule's influence and the entire Cork defence, including the returning Pamela Mackey and Libby Coppinger, dominated their match-ups.

Meanwhile, Paudie Murray started with Katrina Mackey, Orla Cronin and Amy O'Connor in his full-forward line and they did well early on.

They got off the mark early when McCarthy raided down the left from half-back but Amy Lee made a crucial intervention in the second minute, putting her body on the line to deny Aoife Doyle a goal from point-blank range.

Gaule levelled from a free but Cork worked the ball intelligently to create spaces and crucially, finished well for the most part.

Sigerson was the star turn but Katrina Mackey and Cronin also found the target and though Kaities Power and Nolan, Kellyann Doyle and Gaule split the posts for Kilkenny, the champions went in at the change of ends trailing by 0-10 to 0-6.

The Cats couldn't alter the mood initially after the restart,



Cork's Katrina Mackey and Amy O'Connor celebrate with winning point scorer Linda Collins.

Cork playing with supreme confidence, and clearly relishing in the open spaces of Croke Park.

The goal changed that though and it looked for all the world that it would propel the Stripecy-women to another final but Cork had more in the tank and having fallen at the penultimate hurdle to Kilkenny last year, edged the verdict this time around.

## Scorers

**Cork:** O Cronin 0-6 (5f); C Sigerson 0-5 (1f); K Mackey, F Keating, S McCarthy, L Collins 0-1 each.  
**Kilkenny:** D Gaule 0-7 (7f); M O'Connell 1-0; K Power 0-2; K Doyle, K Nolan 0-1 each.

**Cork:** A Lee, P Mackey, L Coppinger, M Cahalane, L Hayes, L Treacy, S McCarthy, H Looney, A Thompson; C Sigerson, F Keating, C O'Sullivan; A O'Connor, O Cronin, K Mackey.

**Subs:** L Collins for O'Sullivan (50).  
**Kilkenny:** A Norris, M Teehan, C Dormer, D Tobin, K Doyle, M Farrell, C Phelan, D Gaule, G Walsh, M Walsh, K Nolan, M O'Connell, S Fitzgerald, K Power, A Doyle.

**Subs:** L Murphy for Fitzgerald (38), N Deely for Teehan (48), M Kenneally for A Doyle (55).

**Referee:** John Dermody (Westmeath).

## 'We must improve to stand a chance against Galway'

BY KIERAN MCCARTHY

THERE IS nothing won yet – that's the message from Cork camogie manager Paudie Murray in the aftermath of his team's shock dethroning of the reigning All-Ireland champions Kilkenny last Sunday.

The Cork team that slayed the champs, winning 0-15 to 1-11 in Croke Park thanks to Linda Collins' last-gasp winning point, now progresses to an All-Ireland final against Galway on Sunday, September 12th.

This will be Cork's first All-Ireland senior final appearance since 2018 so having missed out on the two deciders since then – both contested by Galway and Kilkenny who won one apiece – Murray is glad to have a ticket to the big dance again, but he's quick to point out the challenge in front of the Rebels.

'Over the last few years I have always called Galway a top team and I think they have underachieved a small bit,' he said of the Tribeswomen who were 2019 All-Ireland champions but lost last year's final.

'They have a phenomenal panel, they have a lot of players in their late 20s and early 30s that have been there and done that, and that carries its own pressure as well, whereas we are a very young side.'

'Look, I think it's Galway's final to lose. If we are down Orla Cronin then we are really under pressure to get the result that we want.'

Murray does feel his side will benefit from the manner of their dramatic semi-final win against Kilkenny, and how they battled back from two points down inside the final stages to eventually emerge by one. It shows the character in this group, he says, but the Cork boss also feels that their overall performance needs to move up a few levels if they are to shock Galway.

'Our management team

**'If we are down Orla Cronin then we are really under pressure'**  
– Paudie Murray, Cork manager

didn't need any convincing about the character of these players, but I think it was important that the players saw that themselves,' Murray said.

'They have shown us that character plenty of times over the years, and they all have it, but sometimes you need a game like this to convince the players themselves, and the group, that they have it.'

'With a bit of time to look back on the game now, we know that we have plenty of areas to improve on too, and that's a good position to be in because we know where we can improve. It wasn't a fantastic performance, there is room for improvement and we need to improve if we are to have any chance against Galway.'

'You would hope that our players take the positives out of Sunday and that they will be buzzing coming to training for the next week or so, but they'll know too that we need to perform a lot better than what we did against Kilkenny. The key message is that we need to up it again.'

In their All-Ireland semi-final last weekend, also at Croke Park, Galway beat Tipperary by 1-13 to 0-12, with Orlaith McGrath's goal giving them breathing room late on.

Cork manager Paudie Murray.



Clara O'Sullivan, Hannah Looney and Fiona Keating celebrate Cork's terrific All-Ireland semi-final win.

## THE HIGHLIGHTS

**Our Star:** Cork's Chloe Sigerson was phenomenal. Her work-rate was on a different level and she finished with 0-5, including four from play.

**Star moment:** It just has to be Linda Collins' match-winning point with 62:40 on the clock and just seconds left.

**Talking point:** A few, like Linda Collins' match-winner, Orla Cronin's red card and Cork's character to cause a big shock.

**What's next?** Cork will take on Galway in the All-Ireland senior camogie final in Croke Park on September 12th.





# Cork minors can expect a tough battle against old rivals Kilkenny in final

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

**SUNDAY: All-Ireland Minor Camogie final: Cork v Kilkenny, 6pm**  
Gaelic Grounds, 6pm  
CORK and Kilkenny meet for the Tesco All-Ireland minor title at 6pm tomorrow and if the semi-finals are anything to go by we are in for a battle to the finish. Cork and Kilkenny have always been keen rivals at underage level and the work going on in both counties is huge. Cork had to pull out all the stops to overcome Dublin in the searing heat last Saturday, playing three quarters of the game with 14 players. The young Rebels really showed what they were made of as Dublin piled on the pressure. The spirit and the will to win in Jerry Wallace's side shone through and they played with their hearts on the sleeve as they closed the game out. Kilkenny also had to battle to the finish before securing their spot in the final, edging out Galway in a high-scoring game which finished 3-21 to 1-25 but not before



The Cork minor camogie squad face Kilkenny in the All-Ireland final this weekend.

going to extra-time and they overcame a Galway side that was favoured to advance. Kilkenny have enjoyed huge success at this level since the competition changed to U18 grade in 2006 with six titles to their credit, the last success coming in 2015. Cork are bidding for three in a row with their first title secured in 2018 before they retained it in 2019. With last year's minor championship not

played due to Covid, the Rebel bid for three on the bounce is still on. Cork were All-Ireland U16 champions in 2019 as they ousted Galway in a thrilling final and several of that side have made the step up to minor where the winning mentality is evident with the confidence gained hugely beneficial to players such as Aimee Morgan, Orlaith Cahalane, Cliona Lynch, Ciara Hurley,

Miriam Healy, Rose Murphy, Meadhbh Ring, Ciara Golden, and captain Olivia McAllen, who also captained that U16 team. Wallace knows that a tough battle lies ahead for his charges, but he has instilled a confidence in his side that they are winners and with his trusted back room of Mick Boland, Sonya Walsh, and Mark O'Sullivan they have worked hard to get this far. In the heat last Saturday, Cork

kept going and their fitness and will to win got them over the line. All through this campaign they have been impressive, their work-rate was huge against Dublin; losing a player so early made the task even harder, but they knuckled down and took the game to Dublin despite falling behind by three points in the opening quarter. As a unit their defence is superb and the way they work with and

for each other was a major factor in getting over the line; time and again they broke up Dublin attacks and drove forward with determination and if they can find that gear again tomorrow it will be a major factor in deciding where the title goes. Kilkenny have developed a strong side and manager Mike Wall and his fellow selector Paula Murphy, Damien Donoghue, Laoise Bennett, Sinead Melaniff, and Clodagh Houlihan have a panel of 39 players who came through the group stages with victories over Waterford and Wexford to top their section. In the quarter-final they overcame Limerick 1-27 to 1-8 before facing Galway in a battle that went down to the wire with hot favourites Galway, Kilkenny showed plenty of spirit to close out the game. Amy Clifford has been a stand-out player for them through this campaign and she has plenty of support from Sarah Barcoe, Katie Byrne, Niamh Phelan Laoise Nolan, and Emma Manogue have been to the fore as Kilkenny reached their first minor decider in six years. A tough battle lies ahead, but this Cork side is no stranger to tight battles.



## OFF CENTRE CIRCLE

By Ger McCarthy

**FINAL SHOWDOWN** | Cork take on Kilkenny in the All-Ireland minor A camogie final at the Gaelic Grounds this Sunday

# Good times on all fronts for Cork camogie

**T**HERE was a symmetry to the Cork senior and minor camogie team's All-Ireland semi-final victories last weekend.

On Saturday, Jerry Wallace's minor side had to overcome the early loss of Kate Redmond to two dubious yellow card decisions before seeing off Dublin 0-15 to 1-11.

The following afternoon, Paudie Murray's Cork senior side repeated the same score-line, 0-15 to 1-11, in defeating reigning All-Ireland champions Kilkenny following an epic at Croke Park. Add in that Cork's Orla Cronin received a harsh red card and the 1980's TV show 'The Twilight Zone's' theme music could well be playing inside your head.

There is no getting away from the fact that this has been a vintage year for Cork camogie at both adult and underage level.

Considering all the Covid-19 restrictions and postponements, to have won provincial titles at the senior, minor, U16 and U18 B grades

**... have won provincial titles at the senior, minor, U16 and U18 B grades**

is a marvellous return for Cork camogie.

Add to that, the Cork Intermediates' productive campaign under Mark McCarthy allied with qualification for All-Ireland senior and minor finals.

Even more encouraging for us in West Cork is the role local players have played across the various camogie age-grades.

A 2021 U16A Munster and All-Ireland 'double' under the expert guidance of Donie Daly was richly deserved. Joint-captains Millie Condon (Ballinascorney) and Fiona Twohig (Valley Rovers) led the successful U16A side with Clonakilty's Amy McCarthy and Kate Nolan also involved.

The Cork U16Bs matched their A counterpart's provincial success by seeing off a strong Tipperary line-up in the Munster final. Niamh Kennedy (Clonakilty), Danielle O'Neill (Enniskeane), Aoife Whelton (Clonakilty), Niamh McCarthy (Kilbree) and Clara White (Clonakilty) were part of that U16B success.

Jerry Wallace has overseen a superb campaign for the Cork minors culminating in last weekend's All-Ireland semi-final defeat of Dublin. Emma O'Driscoll (Enniskeane), Eimear O'Brien (Enniskeane), Grace Ryan (Newcestown), Emile O'Donovan (Kilbree) and Caoimhe Murphy (Kilbree) will be part of the Cork minor panel heading to the Gaelic Grounds in Limerick for an All-Ireland showdown with Kilkenny on Sunday evening.

'We are looking forward to this All-Ireland final so much,' Cork manager Jerry Wallace says.



Cork's Fiona Keating and Aisling Egan celebrate their All-Ireland senior semi-final win against Kilkenny. (Photo: James Crombie/INPHO)

'In the pathway of their development, this is where any athlete that wants to aspire to anything needs to be. They want to be there on the last day of the championship, on the biggest day of the year and in an All-Ireland final.'

2021 All-Ireland senior finalists Cork also possess plenty of West Cork talent including Meabh Cahalane (St Finbarr's), Orla Cronin (Enniskeane), Clara O'Sullivan (Newcestown), Fiona Keating (Courcy Rovers), Linda Collins (Courcy Rovers, captain), Saoirse McCarthy (Courcy Rovers) plus manager Paudie Murray.

Defeating arch-rivals Kilkenny in such spectacular fashion, whilst being down to 14 players in the latter stages because of Orla Cronin's dismissal underlined the growing belief within Murray's camp that this could yet be Cork's year.

Cronin will be devastated if she misses the All-Ireland decider with Galway. One of Cork's most reliable

scorers throughout the 2021 National League and All-Ireland camogie championship campaigns, the Enniskeane stalwart's absence would be a huge blow to Cork's chances.

Yet all year, Paudie Murray has spoken of his panel's growing belief and that was never more evident than when captain Linda Collins came off the bench to wallop over the winning point. Murray has also been consistent in his assessment that Galway are one of the favourites for this year's title. The 2021 All-Ireland decider on September 12th will be an occasion to savour and one in which Cork's seniors will look to build on their minor and underage successes over the past number of months.

Win, lose or draw, this has been an unprecedented year for Cork camogie but the icing on the cake would be the sight of Linda Collins lifting the O'Duffy Cup in a fortnight's time. Cork have earned the right to dream.



Clara Golden and Nicole Olden from Presentation Secondary School, Ballyphehane, who will play for Cork in the All-Ireland minor camogie final against Kilkenny, received their Leaving Cert results. Picture: Eddie O'Hare





Emma Shortall, Kilkenny, controlling the sliotar against Cork in the All-Ireland minor camogie final.

Picture: Brendan Gleeson

# Cork lose out in minor final

## CAMOGIE MINOR A FINAL

Mary Newman

Kilkenny	2-12
Cork	0-12

KILKENNY were crowned Tesco All-Ireland minor camogie champions after an excellent display in a contest that saw them strike 2-10 of their 2-12 total from play at LIT Gaelic Grounds.

They were sharp and slick, and their work-rate all over the pitch was superb. They backed each other up and found each other with some excellent passing moves and showed a huge hunger for success.

They had the standout player in Sarah Barcoe, and she is certainly one to watch. She contributed 1-4 to her side's tally, but it was her awareness, movement on and off the ball, and her overall class that saw her shine.

She was deservedly named Tesco Player of the Match.

The opening half belonged to Kilkenny as they came from behind with a superb goal just before the water break to take the lead for the first time after Cork had started well with points from Orlaith Mullins and Amy Morgan before Sarah Barcoe opened the Kilkenny account.

Clara Golden and Emma Shortall exchanged points, but Kilkenny gradually got tightened their grip on the game, and sloppy defending from Cork saw Kilkenny hit the front.

With Cork failing to clear to safety, a superb ball into Barcoe was finished to the net by the corner-forward.

From the puckout, Cork won a free, which Morgan converted, but at the water break Kilkenny led 1-2 to 0-4.

Kilkenny took control on the restart, their defence continuously putting the Cork attack under pressure each time they came in search of scores, and that pressure saw Cork waste chances to get back on level terms.

Kilkenny continued to win 50-50 balls and find the players with ease as they pumped ball into their forwards.

The pacy Barcoe was causing huge



Kilkenny's Mairéad Corcoran is tackled by Cork's Orlaith Cahalane. Picture: Brian Reilly-Troy/Inpho

problems, and fired over a superb effort on the run.

With Amy Clifford finding the range from two frees, Kilkenny were four points in front.

Cork failed to score in the second quarter of the half, and so Kilkenny led 1-5 to 0-4 at the interval.

Emma Monogue extended the Kilkenny lead with an early second-half point, but Cork then settled and enjoyed their best period of the game.

They began to ask questions of the Kilkenny defence. Now it was their turn to take control, and they played with a lot of determination throughout the third quarter.

Rose Murphy and substitute Eimear O'Brien had points as Cork came at Kilkenny. Piling more and more pressure on the Kilkenny defence, Cork began to find space. Kate Redmond and Orlaith Cahalane made it a one-point game and now it was Kilkenny who were finding the going tough.

Substitute Claire Doherty relieved the pressure by pointing with her first touch, but Orlaith Mullins replied.

The water break came at the wrong time from Cork's point of view, they had Kilkenny on the back foot with

just a point between the sides.

The last quarter saw Kilkenny close the game out as they hit four points without reply before Barcoe set up Emma Shortall for a goal on 50 minutes, sending the ball into her path with a superb flick of the wrist.

Cork battled to get something back, but despite adding three points to their tally, the outstanding Barcoe had the final say to ensure the title was heading to Kilkenny.

**Scorers for Kilkenny:** S Barcoe 1-4, E Shortall 1-2, A Clifford 0-3 (0-2 f), E Monogue, C Doherty, A McHardy 0-1 each.

**Cork:** E O'Brien 0-3 (0-2 f), Q Mullins, O Cahalane 0-2 each, A Morgan 0-2 (0-1 f), R Murphy, C Golden 0-1 each.

**KILKENNY:** E O'Neill, L Nolan, N Phelan, R Whelan, A Kirwan, M Corcoran, S Jackson, E Monogue, A Doherty, G Glynn, A McHardy, E Shortall, S Barcoe, S O'Donnell, A Clifford.

**Subs:** C Doherty for A Doherty (40), R Brennan for S Jackson (in 55).

**CORK:** C Hurley, A Cashman, M Healy, C Lynch, E O'Driscoll, A Healy, O McAllen (c), M Murphy, C Golden, A Morgan, R Murphy, O Mullins, L Hallahan, M Ring, O Cahalane.

**Subs:** E O'Brien for L Hallahan (in 4), K Redmond for C Golden (in 4), L McNulty for C Lynch (57), G Ryan for A Cashman (57), J Doyle for C Lynch (57).

**Referee:** Ray Kelly (Kildare).

## Kilkenny and Cork seek All-Ireland minor hours

Therese O'Callaghan

Seven days after their senior teams locked horns, the minor players of Cork and Kilkenny will contest the Tesco All-Ireland A championship final at the Gaelic Grounds tomorrow, 6pm.

Cork are aiming to achieve three successive All-Ireland minor titles (2020 not played due to Covid-19).

The Rebels secured a thrilling one-point victory over Dublin last weekend, all the more impressive as this was achieved with 14 players for long stages of this semi-final.

Despite the Leinster side landing the only goal of the game and forging ahead on the home straight two points to the good, Jerry Wallace's side staged a tremendous fight-back.

Aimee Morgan made no mistake when she stood over a '45 and sent it straight between the posts. Gathering momentum, Rose Murphy raised a white flag from play

to tie the game and set up a tense and exciting finale.

Orlaith Cahalane and Morgan kept the scoreboard moving in the right direction as resilient Cork held out.

Kilkenny, meanwhile, edged out Galway after an extra-time thriller, 3-21 to 1-25.

Being on the losing side had to be particularly hard on Katie Gilchrist, who scored 1-14 for Galway, but Kilkenny had a greater overall threat and that proved decisive.

The Cats trailed at the interval, 1-9 to 0-7, and they didn't manage to get their noses in front until the second minute of extra-time. What a nail-biting affair the extra 20 minutes turned out to be.

As the scores came quick and fast, the Westerners still held the narrowest of advantages at half-time, 1-23 to 3-16.

Two late Kilkenny points were needed before they booked their place in the decider, where they will look to bridge a six-year gap since their last All-Ireland success.

## CORK

25th July 2021

1st August 2021

Semi-final

28th August 2021

Cork 2-21

Cork 3-19

Cork 0-15

Clare 1-10

Limerick 0-03

Dublin 1-11



## ALL-IRELAND SENIOR CAMOGIE CHAMPIONSHIP

# Injury-time agony leaves Cats pipped at the death

**CORK KILKENNY**

**Trevor Spillane**  
at Croke Park

**0-15  
1-11**

True to the form of champions, Kilkenny fought to the end - but a last gasp point saw their reign come to an agonising end.

Cork captain Linda Collins inflicted the final blow, striking a stoppage time score that saw Kilkenny's dreams of making it successive O'Duffy Cups for the first time in 30 years bite the dust.

It was a cruel way to bow out but, as manager Brian Dowling said afterwards, his players 'died with their boots on'. The Cats battled and fought their way through 60-plus minutes of a tense and, at times, thrilling semi-final in Croke Park, but were left feeling their pockets had been picked right at the death.

A year after going to Cork

and beating their old foes in a tight semi-final, Kilkenny came out the wrong side of similar joust this time around.

At one stage the Rebels enjoyed a five-point lead, then were four to the good close to three-quarter stage, but they could so easily have found themselves on the losing side as Kilkenny showed their claws.

The turnaround came at a stage when Cork held a four-point lead and spurned the chance to make it five, Chloe Sigerson uncharacteristically missing a 43rd minute free.

**ON THE CHARGE**  
Sensing their opportunity, Kilkenny went on the charge. Having struggled to find some real form in attack, the forward unit clicked with one move which tore Cork apart.

Miriam Walsh did a lot of damage, picking off Claire Phelan's measured ball forward, popping the sliotar

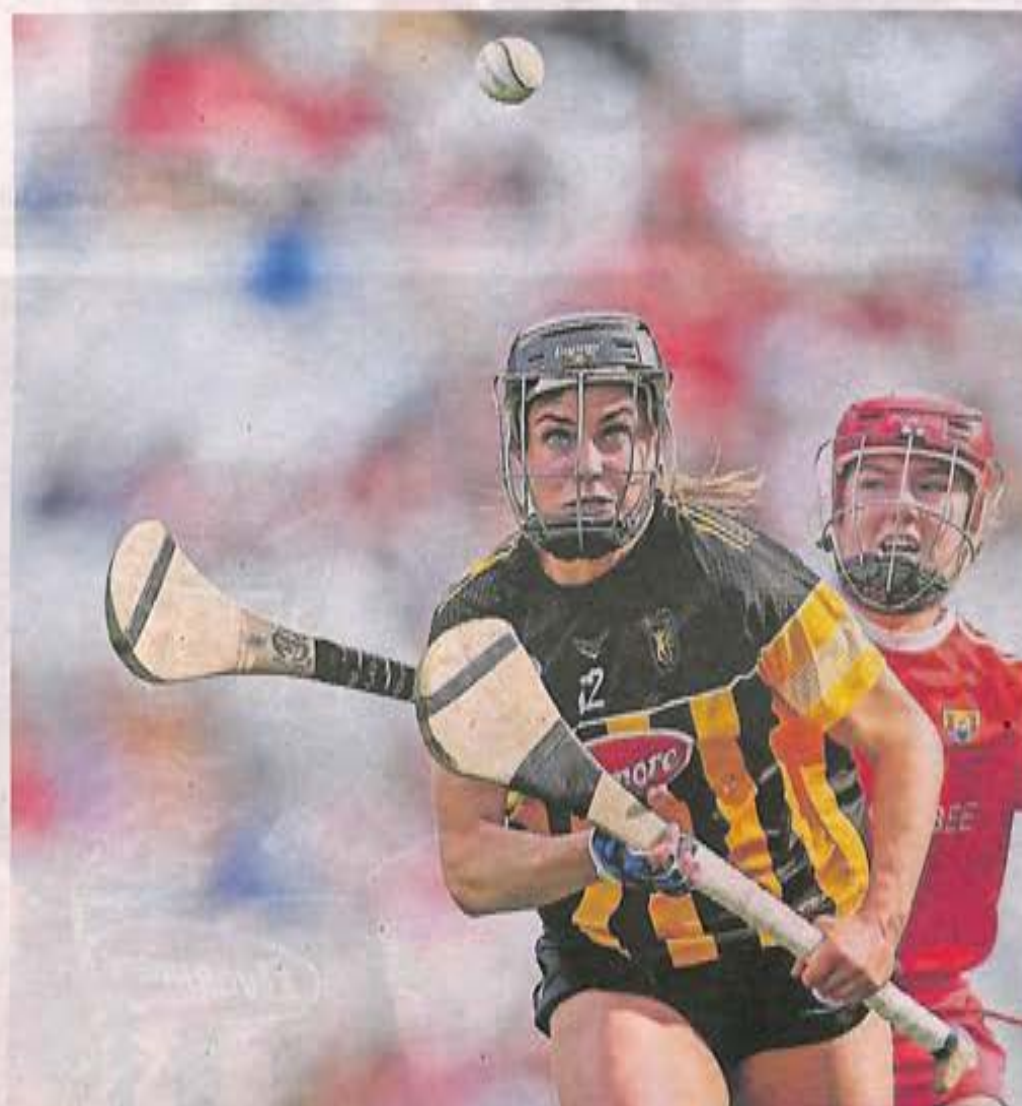
off to the free-running Mary O'Connell.

The Clara player barely broke her stride as she bore down on goal and gave keeper Amy Lee no chance with a 45th minute shot that rocketed to the net.

Kilkenny had the bit between their teeth after that, and when Denise Gaule punished Cork with a pointed free following a foul on Grace Walsh the sides were all square (1-8 to 0-11). Suddenly, it was all to play for.

The Cats could only have hoped for similar form as they took to the field for throw-in, but they couldn't replicate the devastating start that saw them breeze past Wexford in the quarter-finals.

While Cork opened the scoring with a solid point from Saoirse McCarthy, they could have found themselves behind inside two minutes. All three members of Kilkenny's full-forward line were involved in the early



Katie Power (Kilkenny) keeps her eye on the sliotar during Sunday's senior camogie All-Ireland semi-final clash with Cork. PICTURES: EVAN TREACY/INPHO

move, Katie Power skipping past Libby Coppinger and working the ball to Steffi Fitzgerald, who picked out Aoife Doyle with a pass, but Amy Lee raced from her line to make a vital block.

**STRUGGLED**

It was as close as Kilkenny would come to a goal in a first half where they struggled to find form up front. Instead it was Cork who showed a greater threat - while that didn't produce goal chances, their pace and quick passing helped them work the sliotar around into space which ended with points for the

impressive Sigerson and Cronin.

After a tense opening quarter, Cork found better form before the interval. Sigerson was the star of the show, picking off scores from frees and play (including one from close to halfway). With Cronin an able support act - between them the pair contributed eight points to Cork's first half tally.

Denise Gaule led Kilkenny's charge, hitting 0-3, but there was no denying that Cork looked good for their five-point cushion at the interval (0-10 to 0-5).

**TIRELESS BLOCKING**

Kilkenny knew a different approach would be required if they were to turn the game their way in the second half, and they duly delivered. The defensive work and tireless blocking that had helped Cork fashion their lead became Kilkenny's form after the restart, as they shut their opponents out of the fray.

With the O'Connell goal and subsequent Gaule free drawing their side level, Kilkenny looked good to go on and make the game theirs, but they could never get too far ahead of their rivals.

While a Gaule free, followed by a lightning-fast Katie Power point seconds later, gave them a two-point advantage by the 52nd minute (1-11 to 0-12) a third point - or better yet, second

goal that would have put real distance between the sides - never materialised.

Instead, Cork showed their composure as they clawed their way back to parity. Orla Cronin's close range free was followed by a point from Fiona Keating, a score that levelled the game, but came with a twist: in the build-up Cronin received a straight red card for an off the ball tussle with Grace Walsh, where the forward made contact with the Tullaroan player's faceguard.

**EXTRA PLAYER**

Despite the advantage of the extra player, Kilkenny couldn't make it count. As both sides battled for the score that could swing the tie their way, the intensity ratcheted up to nailbiting levels. Cork thought they had won it when Katrina Mackey found room to aim for the Hill 16 end posts in the first minute of injury-time - her shot tailed wide - while Kilkenny sub Laura Murphy saw her effort tail away.

Then, just when it looked like extra-time was looming, Cork struck. With one last move Hannah Looney and Fiona Keating worked the sliotar around until Linda Collins ran into shooting space.

One last shot, and victory was theirs - the exit door beckoned for Kilkenny. Sheer heartbreak.



**CAN'T CATCH ME:** Steffi Fitzgerald (Kilkenny) races away from Cork's Laura Treacy during Sunday's semi-final. PICTURE: JAMES CROMBIE/INPHO





Kilkenny's Laura Murphy in action against Cork's Saoirse McCarthy



Kilkenny's Davina Tobin gets away from Cork's Amy O'Connor



## HOW THEY LINED OUT

### SCORERS

**Cork** - Orla Cronin (0-6, 0-4 frees, 0-1 45); Chloe Sigerson (0-5, 0-1 free); Katrina Mackey, Fiona Keating, Saoirse McCarthy, Linda Collins (0-1 each).

**Kilkenny** - Denise Gaule (0-7, frees); Mary O'Connell (1-0); Katie Power (0-2); Kellyann Doyle, Katie Nolan (0-1 each).

### THE TEAMS

**Kilkenny** - Aoife Norris (Piltown); Michelle Teehan (James Stephens), Davina Tobin (Emeralds), Colette Dormer (Barrow Rangers), Claire Phelan (Lisdowney), Meighan Farrell (Thomastown), Kellyann Doyle (Piltown); Denise Gaule (Windgap), Grace Walsh (Tullaroan); Mary O'Connell (Clara), Katie Nolan (St Martin's), Miriam Walsh (Tullaroan); Steffi Fitzgerald (Young Irelands), Katie Power (Piltown), Aoife Doyle (Piltown). Subs: Laura Murphy (O'Loughlin Gaels) for Fitzgerald, 38 mins; Niamh Deely (James Stephens) for Teehan, 48 mins; Michaela Kenneally (Windgap) for A Doyle, 55 mins.

**Cork** - Amy Lee; Ellen Murphy, Libby Coppinger, Meabh Cahalane; Laura Hayes, Laura Hayes, Saoirse McCarthy; Hannah Looney, Ashling Thompson; Chloe Sigerson, Orla Cronin, Clara O'Sullivan; Fiona Keating, Amy O'Connor, Katrina Mackey. Sub: Linda Collins for O'Sullivan, 50 mins.

**Referee** - John Dermody (Westmeath).



The pain of defeat is etched on Kellyann Doyle's face

PICTURE: JAMES CROMBIE/INPHO

# 'The players are down, but we'll be back'

Trevor Spillane

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The sting of defeat was still present when manager Brian Dowling spoke in the aftermath of Sunday's All-Ireland semi-final, but there was also an air of optimism for the future.

"I've no fear these girls will be back," he said. "They've given Kilkenny a lot of joy over the last number of years. I've no doubt they'll be back."

"Any time you lose up here it's heartbreaking but especially in an All-Ireland semi-final by a last minute point," he said after the Croke Park showdown with Cork. "We wanted to get back to the All-Ireland and unfortunately we just came up short so we're extremely disappointed."

While Linda Collins' last-gasp point proved to be the winner, Cork's ability to open a sizable lead in the first half meant the Cats were chasing the game for long spells. Much of their downfall could be traced to those opening 30 minutes.

"The first half was a bit disappointing," the manager said. "I asked the girls for more energy and they brought that to Cork. In fairness to these girls over the last number of years, they've died with their boots on for Kilkenny camogie."

"I can't ask for any more of them since I've been involved with them and unfortunately there are just days like this when you come up a little bit short. We're just going to have to lick our wounds now."

Kilkenny had been second best in the first half, so knew they had to raise their game on the restart.

"I just felt our forwards just weren't working hard enough in the first half," he said. "We build our whole team on work ethic and we just weren't doing that. I think we started to win the rucks and the breaks more in the second half."



Katie Nolan and her team-mates get ready for the start of the game PICTURE: JAMES CROMBIE/INPHO

"We just started taking them on a bit more and we were a bit more direct with the ball and we were getting more joy out of that," Dowling added. "We got a great goal and we even pushed on to go a bit up but we probably needed to go three points up. Unfortunately that didn't happen today."

It was a desperately disappointing day for the Cats, but Dowling was full of praise for a side who have given their all, not just this year but for many seasons.

### CONSISTENCY

"These girls have been there for the last 10 National finals, five All-Irelands and five League finals," he said. "The consistency they've shown is just unbelievable and the hunger to keep coming back."

"It wasn't easy for these girls to lose three All-Irelands; it would have been easy to pack it in and retire but players like Collette Dormer, Denise Gaule and Katie Power - what she's gone through to get on the pitch is unbelievable."

"Kellyann Doyle was only passed fit last night," he added. "How she was able to play that match I'll never know. She couldn't raise her arm on Friday evening. I can't speak highly

**The consistency they've shown, the hunger to keep coming back, is incredible**

enough of these girls - they'd die for the Kilkenny jersey."

And Dowling is convinced that the Cats can bounce back.

"There's a lot of great talent in that group, the under-16s are in the All-Ireland final, the minors will be there and the intermediates are in the final in two weeks. There's a great bunch of players there, certainly since I've been there over the last three years. I can't speak highly enough of them."

"A lot of new players have come through, the likes of Katie Nolan and Mary O'Connell, who have become leaders of this group, but that's what you need - players like Denise Gaule, Meighan Farrell there to push them on."

And the future, he reckons, looks bright.

"When you win something it's important to build structures and to have a good relationship the whole way up through county teams," he added. "John Scott (Kilkenny intermediate manager) and myself have worked together and we have 13/14 players on the panel who are part of the intermediate set-up."

"We are anxious to bring in young players, give them a taste of senior hurling and still play with the intermediates. There are a lot of girls in that situation who will be playing in the final here in two weeks, so it's a great experience and exposure for them. Hopefully they'll push on and wear the senior jersey in a few years' time."

## Kilkenny v Cork: Talking Points

### STAR PLAYER

#### CHLOE SIGERSON

Cork's half-forward earned the player of the Match plaudits and would hard to argue with her election. The Killeagh forward was a real threat throughout for Cork, particularly in the first half when she scored five points - one scored from way out, which showed the confidence with which she played - helped Cork go in five points clear of the Cats. Kilkenny struggled to cope with Cork's running game at times, but captain Meighan Farrell stood out for her hard work throughout the first half, while Claire Phelan also put in a solid shift helping turn defence into attack at times.

### TURNING POINT

The red card could have been a decisive point in the game for both teams, but instead it carried little weight. Despite losing Orla Cronin to a straight red at a vital stage in the game Cork didn't let being a player light affect them. Kilkenny couldn't capitalise on the advantage of the extra player - if anything they seemed to be under greater pressure in the closing stages as Cork pressed for the winning point, going close with a good chance before finally nailing it three minutes into stoppage time.

### TALKING POINT

Much of the game swung on the first half performances of both teams. After a cagey start Cork opened up and began to play with pace and precision. Kilkenny struggled to get going in the opening 30 minutes - their performance was at odds with how they dismantled Wexford in the quarter-final win. While they arrested the slide somewhat in the second half - a point made by manager Brian Dowling when he asked his players for more energy from the restart - they left themselves with too much to do. Had the half-time gap been a little closer than five points, then Mary O'Connell's goal could have carried more weight in a game where goal chances were few and far between. Also, the injury to Kellyann Doyle was a factor. A week of treatment saw her passed fit, but she wasn't able to impose herself on the fray as normal.

### WHAT NOW?

For Cork, there's an All-Ireland final against Galway to look forward to on September 12. Kilkenny have reached the end of the line for 2021, but can look back on a solid season where reaching an All-Ireland semi-final and winning the National League title - not to mention having minor and intermediate teams with All-Ireland finals to look forward to - shows the game is in good stead for the future.



# SPORT

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Galway's Catriona Cormican and Shauna Healy celebrate overcoming Tipperary in Sunday's All-Ireland camogie semi-final at Croke Park. PHOTO: INPHO/JAMES CROMBIE

# FINAL HERE WE COME!

Galway do enough to edge out Tipperary in All-Ireland camogie semi-final ▶ Pages 46-47



BRIAN DILLON had a sad farewell to the passing of his vice-president.

Margaret, president at the time, was due to pass away, after a long illness, and Margaret on August 13, a shock to her friends.

In March, camogie club Ahern, Sean and John M. school team time and money club and school '80s.

In its infancy, it reached the county final.

A year later, it was back in the final again. However, it was Barr's in the

That was the year by Brian Dillon behind that his McDonnell (Watt), John Betty Deane and Frances was also an those years.

Still, to this day, the '80s remain the most highly competitive our titanic battle to the teenage afternoon, it was too many dances, the friendship.

Our streetland finals to get older and you appreciate organisation to teams and with many events ago, we can't forget the wonderful years at the time.

Even the tr





Galway's Niamh Kilkeny is chased by Tipperary's Karen Kennedy during Sunday's All-Ireland camogie semi-final at Croke Park.  
PHOTO: INPHO/JAMES



CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick

BRIAN Dillon's camogie club has had a sad few weeks, with the recent passing of president, Con Ahern, and vice-president, Margaret O'Sullivan. Margaret had become de facto president after Con's passing. She was due to be ratified. Con passed away, after a short illness, on July 20 and Margaret passed unexpectedly on August 17, which came as a huge shock to her loving family and many friends.

In March 1981, Brian Dillon's camogie club was revived by Con Ahern, Sean O'Brien, Peter Farry, and John Mulcahy. St Patrick's school teams were successful at the time and many of the girls shared club and school glory in the early '80s.

In its initial year, Brian Dillon's reached the U16A championship county final, losing to Blackrock.

A year later, the club got to the final again, but lost to St Finbarr's. However, it atoned by beating the 'Barr's in the U18A county final.

That was the first county title won by Brian Dillon's and the mentors behind that historic victory were Eily McDonnell (Lyons), Mary O'Sullivan (Watt), John Mulcahy, Con Ahern, Betty Deane, Margaret O'Sullivan, and Frances O'Riordan. Billy Barry was also an active member during those years.

Still, to this day, those of us from the '80s reminisce about the wonderful times we had in the club, from the highly competitive street leagues to our titanic battles with St Finbarr's, to the teenage disco on a Sunday afternoon, to the sweet shop we raided too many times, to the supper dances, the Pan Celtic festivals, and the friendships.

Our street leagues were All-Ireland finals to us. It's only when you get older and become a mentor that you appreciate the hard work and organisation that goes into running teams and when we look back at the many events we had as young teenagers, we can only thank those mentioned above for giving us some wonderful years. We didn't appreciate it at the time.

Even the trophies awarded at those

# Brian Dillon's club mourns two stalwarts



Eamon Ryan with Jack Corcoran, centre, and Con Ahern.

street leagues were something else. In a fight for trophy space on the sideboard at home, our brother Derek once said to Karen and me, 'For God's sake, ye get a trophy for going training'. I still get a laugh from that, and he was right. But for us, as 13- and 14-year-olds, those trophies meant everything.

The high esteem in which Con and Margaret were held was evident in the large numbers that turned out in Covid-19 conditions to form guards of honour along the streets.

Some funny stories were told, like the time Con, a carpenter by trade, helped build Santa's grotto at Dunnes Stores Ballyvolane for its

first Christmas, in 1980. At the last-minute, Santa failed to turn up and Con replaced him. The problem was that the arrival included a helicopter flight and Con hated flying.

When the helicopter landed, he got out in a foul mood and with his legs wobbling.

The Evening Echo the following



Margaret O'Sullivan was presented with an award by football legend Roy Keane at the Mayfield Community Volunteer Awards.  
Picture: David Keane.

week called him 'the grumpiest Santa ever'.

I recall many days and nights in the O'Sullivan household, the front door literally always open for anyone to walk in. Everyone was welcome and I spent many a happy hour there.

Mr O'Sullivan passed away 39 years ago, at age 39, leaving Margaret to raise five young teenagers and children. She did a magnificent job, working all types of jobs, one a cleaner in St Patrick's girls' school, where Liz and I often went on adventures during the holidays, while 'Mrs O', as she was affectionally called by everyone in Brian Dillon's, worked.

The love her family had for Margaret was immense and her loss is a pain deeply felt.

The remarkable success of Brian Dillon's is reflected in the large number of Cork players the club has produced.

Kathleen O'Keeffe, Helena Barry, and Karen Mellerick won two All-Ireland minor medals between 1983 and 1985. Liz O'Sullivan, Margaret's daughter, won minor and junior All-Ireland titles. Vivienne O'Brien won an All-Ireland minor medal, and Niamh O'Leary (Karen's daughter) captained Cork to the All-Ireland U16B title in 2013, along with dozens of other players that represented Brian Dillon's on numerous Cork teams over the years.

Con and Margaret, on behalf of all Brian Dillon's camogie players past and present, thank you so much for everything you did for us.

Go bhfanfadh siad éasca.

Picture: Brian Lougheed





Galway's Orlaith McGrath is chased by Karen Kennedy of Tipperary during Sunday's All-Ireland Senior camogie semi-final at Croke Park. PHOTOS: INPHO/EVAN TREACY

# THERE



Galway's Siobhán Gardiner breaking free from Tipperary's Clodagh McIntyre at Croke Park.

grabbed a good score from play to put Tipp in the driving seat during the third quarter. The blue and gold had a foothold in the middle third, where Grace O'Brien was prominent. Karen Kennedy and Aoife McGrath were also strong in a dominant half back line.

Tipp dominated under the dropping ball as Galway's lack of aerial strength in the half forward line was an issue. Tipp

were getting more service into Devane in attack, while O'Dwyer was a threat on the left wing. Clodagh McIntyre also began to test the Galway defence with some pacy runs.

Galway got two points to reduce Tipp's momentum before the second water break. First, O'Reilly laid off to Orlaith McGrath, who pointed impressively. Spellman then added a point after a run and pass from

Niamh Hanniffy. Tipp responded with O'Dwyer's second point to leave the score at 0-10 to 0-8 at the water break.

The lively Donohue soon drew a foul, which O'Reilly converted for her fourth score of the afternoon. Tipp replied within a minute with a score from O'Brien, underlining the incisiveness of their attacking play in the second half. At the other end, Kilkenny and Donohue combined for a point in the 47th minute, in a rare example of successful link up play in the Galway attack.

Most of Galway's scores were coming from individual exploits, rather than effective team moves. Donohue, O'Reilly and Orlaith McGrath were Galway's most creative players,

along with Kilkenny whenever she advanced up the field. But Galway's link up play broke down far too often with players getting turned over or taking the wrong option in possession.

Tipp substitute Miriam Campion fired over a point to narrow the margin to two, with ten minutes to play. Shortly after, Donohue played Orlaith McGrath in on goal, but full back Mary Ryan and 'keeper

Caoimhe Bourke denied the Galway forward. O'Brien immediately played a great delivery to McIntyre, who opened up the Galway defence before shooting when a pass to Devane was probably the better option.

Siobhán Gardiner crucially got across to make a tackle and the power was taken out of McIntyre's shot, which was easily saved by Sarah Healy. Shortly after, Campion hit a poor wide when it looked as though Tipp had a numerical advantage close to the Galway goal. The Tribeswomen were under major pressure at this stage of the contest.

The introduction of Niamh McGrath and Rebecca Hennelly substantially increased Galway's ball winning capacity and provided a superior ability to link the play in attack. This was in evidence when the three McGrath sisters combined down the right wing, opening up the Tipp defence and creating a goal chance, which Siobhán McGrath put over the bar under pressure from the advancing Bourke.

Two minutes later, Galway were down to 14 players following Ray Kelly's decision to issue

a red card to Higgins, after he misidentified the Galway player involved in the altercation with Loughman. It had in fact, been Emma Helebert who had swung out at Loughman after a bad tackle from the Tipp player, which involved a leading shoulder into Helebert's face.

Down a player for the remainder of the game, Galway then got a big slice of luck in the 59th minute. Orlaith McGrath's speculative shot resulted in Bourke's error and a goal which gave Galway some breathing space.

The next attack saw Tipp open up the maroon defence as O'Brien broke through the centre, before blasting her shot over the crossbar with the goal at her mercy. As the game went into injury time, another Tipp attack saw O'Dwyer break into the square before being penalised for turning her shoulder into Sarah Dervan.

Devane pointed her fourth free shortly after, before Galway saw out the remaining seconds to claim their place in their third All-Ireland Final in a row. That statistic was the good news story for Galway coming out of Croke Park on Sunday. The

## MURRAY RELIEVED AS MONTH LAYOFF TAKES A TOLL ON GALWAY'S DISPLAY IN WIN OVER TIPP

EANNA O'REILLY

GALWAY camogie manager Cathal Murray was relieved to get the result against a gallant Tipp side, who provided his team with a huge test during their All-Ireland semi-final clash at Croke Park last Sunday. Murray acknowledged the quality Tipp brought to the contest and their progression as a team in recent years.

"Look, I said it before the game, Tipp are an excellent side. You saw it there, the quality they have, they are serious contenders. They've gotten better every year and it's only a matter of time until they win an All-Ireland with this team, I've no doubt about that. They really made us work for everything, they were sharper, and you could see that last week's game [against Waterford] really stood to them. We are just very happy to get the result today."

As to the flatness his side experienced for spells of the game, Murray identified the four-week layoff as being very problematic in his view.

"We won down in Callan [against Kilkenny] and then we had a four-week break, which is really difficult to manage. I think it's a huge disadvantage to the team who wins the group to have that break to be honest. You could see how sharp Tipp were today and the extra game was a benefit to them. Four weeks in the middle of the championship is way too long to have to manage. It did us no favours whatsoever going into today."

Objectively however, the extent of the impact this break may have had is questionable. Cork had the same layoff prior to their semi-final against Kilkenny, yet they flew out of the blocks and



Galway team manager Cathal Murray.

performed superbly on the day. Also, Galway were not the side who struggled to settle into the game, as they actually outplayed Tipp during the first half.

Murray has bigger issues to contend with as regards player form, team selection and formation in attack.

Nevertheless, he credited his players for showing heart and composure to dig out a win in difficult circumstances.

"I thought the character we showed was brilliant out there today, under serious pressure. At the end of the day, semi-finals are for winning. It wasn't a great performance, and we have lots to improve on [for the final] but we are exactly where we want to be."

"Hopefully now we can get the cameras to clarify the incident with Dervla (Higgins). She did nothing wrong whatsoever and that was very clear to me. She absolutely should not be missing the final and we will certainly try to stop that from happening," concluded the Galway manager.

game itself, however, threw up some questions which Murray and the management will have to resolve between now and September 12.

The defensive performance was the biggest positive, with all six Galway backs giving solid displays, as did Sarah Healy behind them. Further forward however, Galway looked disjointed for long spells. The Tribeswomen may have had enough to get past Tipp, but a similar standard of performance in the final would be sufficient against the Rebels.

**Galway:** Sarah Healy, Shauna Healy, S. Dervan, D. Higgins, S. Gardiner, E. Helebert, C. Cormican, N. Hanniffy, N. Kilkenny (0-2); C. Finnerty, S. Spellman (0-1), A. Donohue (0-3); S. McGrath (0-1), O. McGrath (1-2), A. O'Reilly (0-4, 0-3 frees, 0-1 45), Subs: N. McGrath for Finnerty (38), R. Hennelly for Hanniffy (48), N. Coen for Spellman (55), A.M. Starr for S. McGrath (58), M. Cooney for O'Reilly (61).

**Tipperary:** C. Bourke, M. Eviston, M. Ryan, J. Bourke, E. Loughman, K. Kennedy, A. McGrath, G. O'Brien (0-2), E. Fryday, N. Walsh (0-1), R. Howard, O. O'Dwyer (0-2); C. McIntyre, C. Devane (0-6, 0-4 frees, 0-1 45), E. McGrath, Subs: M. Campion (0-1) for E. McGrath (41), K. Blair for Fryday (51), S. Delaney for Eviston (58).

**Referee:** Ray Kelly (Kildare).



# Collins happy to put team first



All-Ireland senior camogie final  
Cork v Galway

Sunday: Croke Park, 4.15pm  
Referee: Liz Dempsey (Kilkenny)  
TV: RTE/Sky Sports

Eoghan Cormican



Galway camogie captain Sarah Dervan with Cork's Linda Collins ahead of this weekend's All-Ireland Championships Finals at Croke Park. Collins hopes to start Sunday's final but will accept if she is used as an impact substitute once again.

Picture: Inpho/Morgan Treacy

Cork camogie captain Linda Collins has said she would "love" to start Sunday's All-Ireland final, but won't mind if her role is to again impact proceedings from off the bench.

Collins started and scored in Cork's opening two championship games this summer, but found herself on the bench for the county's final Group 2 fixture against Waterford. That was also where she began last Sunday week's All-Ireland semi-final, despite having been named in the starting team released two days before the game.

Introduced in the 50th minute, Collins smeared her fingerprints all over the semi-final during the 14 minutes she was on the field.

It was her charge towards the Kilkenny goal that almost led to a 57th minute Cork goal, the play ending with Collins' Courcsey Rovers clubmate Fiona Keating splitting the posts to level proceedings.

Fast forward to the third minute of second-half stoppages and Collins, set up by Keating, held her nerve to land the winning score.

From five possessions, there wasn't a whole pile more she could have done to argue her case for a starting berth this Sunday.

Cork manager Paudie Murray has said he and his back-room team "will spend hours" this week deliberating "what is the best combination to start with, but also, what is the best combination to end with". Central to those selection conversations will be whether to include Collins from the off or hold her until the second half.

Mind you, that decision may well be made for manage-

ment if centre-forward Orla Cronin is forced to sit out the final because of suspension, in which case Collins would automatically come back into the starting fold.

Cork are contesting the red card shown to Cronin in the closing stages of the All-Ireland semi-final, with the sending-off to go before the Camogie Association's hearings committee this evening.

The Irish Examiner under-

stands that Cronin has been charged with striking an opponent with the hurley and not for interfering with the faceguard of an opponent's helmet. Unless Cork are successful in overturning the proposed three-match suspension, the four-time All-Ireland winner will sit out the final against Galway.

The red card incident occurred 57 minutes into the semi-final, Cronin knocked to

the ground after Kilkenny's Grace Walsh barged into the Cork forward from behind. Cronin let back her hurley when rising to her feet and that appears to be the action for which the 2020 All-Star has been cited.

If Cronin's alleged infraction is upheld by the hearings committee, Cork can then take their case to the Camogie Association's appeals committee. And should any appeal

prove unsuccessful, the Disputes Resolution Authority (DRA) would represent Cork's last remaining avenue to clear Cronin for final involvement.

But irrespective of whether Collins starts or is held in reserve once more, the 24-year-old says she will embrace whatever job is asked of her.

"If they want me to start the next day, fine, I'll do that and I'd love to be starting. Or if they want me to come on for 20 or 30 minutes, or 14 minutes as it was the last day, I'm obviously you want to be playing as many [minutes] as you can but if that is the role they want for me and they trust that the other players can go so far and they'll then require fresh legs, I honestly don't mind once I know my role," remarked the primary school teacher.

This positive approach is the very same one she brought to the semi-final, the inside forward seeing no value in expending negative energy after having been left out of the first 15. Of course there was disappointment at not making the cut, but it was quickly shelved in favour of an unselfish mindset.

"For a while, I was saying 'why is it me', these kinds of things, because we are all only human, but there was no point in me spending my energy questioning everything or saying, 'I mustn't be good enough'. I just looked at it as a different role that day and I value for the team that day was to make an impact. I think even the girls were a bit taken aback by my attitude."

Neither did it go unnoticed by management.

"There is no room for a player that sulks in our set-up. Linda got a job to do and she did it very well," said Murray in praise of his captain.

The suspense now is whether her job will be this Sunday.

# Investment in youth paying off for Cork



All-Ireland senior camogie final  
Cork v Galway

Sunday: Croke Park, 4.15pm  
Referee: Liz Dempsey (Kilkenny)  
TV: RTE/Sky Sports

Eoghan Cormican



Cork's manager Paudie Murray, pictured here with his team after the All-Ireland semi-final victory against Kilkenny in Croke Park. Murray said: 'Once we got a clear run at it, we were confident that a number of these girls would step up.'

Picture: INPHO/James Crombie

Cork's All-Ireland camogie semi-final win confirmed what manager Paudie Murray had been observing all summer: the coming of age of his panel's youngest members.

Their timing, in truth, could not have been better, the team's newest recruits — on their first afternoon playing senior championship in Croke Park — displaying a level of maturity and composure far beyond their years to help dump out All-Ireland champions Kilkenny and, in the process, end Cork's three-year wait for an All-Ireland final appearance.

Cork's team for the final this Sunday will be much changed from their last side to contest the decider three seasons ago. One-third of the 2018 starting team — Aoife Murray, Leanne O'Sullivan, Gemma O'Connor, Orla Cotter, and Julia White — are no longer on the scene, with a sixth member from that year's all-conquering panel — Briege Corkery — another to have since entered retirement.

Asked to fill that sizable void has been goalkeeper Amy Lee, half-backs Laura Hayes and Saoirse McCarthy, and forwards Fiona Keating and Clara O'Sullivan.

Lee, at 24, is the eldest of the quintet who'll make their All-Ireland final debuts this weekend. Newcestown's Clara O'Sullivan is still a teenager. Fiona Keating and Laura Hayes are a year older at 20, while Saoirse McCarthy is 21.

"I was hoping they'd step up last year, to be honest," replied Cork manager Paudie

Murray when asked if the team's younger members had stepped up quicker than he expected.

"Unfortunately, Covid threw everything out the window, and with the club championship coming first last season, it meant we weren't able to get our team together earlier and start working on things."

"That is why last year you had two more settled and two more mature teams in the final [Galway and Kilkenny], whereas this year, with the

run we had, it meant we were training every Tuesday and Thursday, we could develop these girls along, and implement their own principles of play in this team."

"Once we got a clear run at it, we were confident that a number of these girls would step up. We have other girls in the panel too that, over the last six to eight weeks, have really, really come on."

If they stay developing, he added, there is a very strong Cork team coming in the next couple of years, but Murray's

focus is obviously in the present, and delivering a fifth O'Duffy Cup in his 10th year in charge.

Final opponents Galway have had the upper hand in recent meetings, coming out on top when the counties clashed in this year's extra-time league semi-final, last year's group stage championship encounter, and the 2019 All-Ireland semi-final.

Murray's summation of the Galway challenge is to describe Cork as "rank outsiders". "If you look at the

league semi-final this year, we gave them a five-point head start. Now, we brought that back level and probably should have won it in ordinary time. In normal time, we outscored them from play by 1-10 to 1-5, so we did a lot right in that game. But you simply can't give Galway a four or five-point start and expect to win a game, so there are areas there to improve on."

"We had Orla Cronin that day. If Orla is out because of suspension, we are under massive pressure, probably going in as rank outsiders. Galway are going to fancy their chances against us."

"Galway have four or five girls 30 or over. It may be a few of their players' last game in Croke Park. In that retirement might be facing them. That will be extra motivation on their side to put on a display. It is going to be their last game."

Returning to his own team, the four-time All-Ireland-winning manager has taken a dim view of the persistent fouling his inside line has been subjected to this campaign, and is hopeful forward such as Amy O'Connor will receive adequate protection from Sunday's match officials.

From seven possessions in the semi-final, O'Connor won five frees, with advantage played for a sixth foul.

"One concern we would have is the level of contact on our full-forward line," Murray said. "On the majority of occasions when our full-forward line gets the ball, they're being pulled or dragged. We hope that will be policed."



## Kilkenny stop Cork's push for three titles

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

DISAPPOINTMENT for Cork as the bid for three Tesco All-Ireland minor titles in a row fell short against a superb Kilkenny side in the LIT Gaelic Grounds on Sunday evening.

Despite making the early running with the game's opening two scores, Cork only got to the tempo of the game in the third quarter when they played with the confidence we had seen in their previous outings. Kilkenny dominated the opening half and their movement and passing was outstanding.

Cork boss Jerry Wallace who had done huge work with Cork minor sides in leading them to titles in 2018 and 2019 before Covid put a stop to the 2020 campaign was the first to heap praise on the Cats.

"They are a fine side and we have no complaints, they were the better side on the day and no matter how hard we tried we just couldn't get back level. We did have a chance when we cut their lead to a point but the water break gave them a chance to regroup and they came out and closed it out in the final quarter.

"Our girls battled to the finish and we can have no complaints they have been wonderful through this campaign we as a management could not have asked for more."

Wallace also hailed his opposite number, Kilkenny manager Michael Wall.

"I knew when Michael was back at the helm that this would be a very good Kilkenny side. The last time they won this title Michael was at the helm and he is a superb guy and the work he put into any team he is in charge of is huge.

"They had a great win over raging favourites Galway and they went all the way to extra time and got themselves over the line and this was a great help to them. I suppose they were determined today after losing out to Cork in the senior last week."

Wall said he always had faith in his side's ability to get over the line and he praised their composure as Cork hit back in the third quarter.

"At the second half water break we told them to keep



Cork's Meabh Cahalane racing away from Waterford's Abby Flynn during the All-Ireland senior camogie championship tie at Páirc Uí Rinn.

Picture: Eddie O'Hara

# Cork will stick to game plan in final

CAMOGIE

■ Linda Mellerick

ESTABLISHED Cork defender Meabh Cahalane is a chartered accountant with KPMG where she has "hopefully" as she says, just finished her final exams.

Originally based in Dublin, her career forced her to take a step back from inter-county camogie for 18 months. Covid-19 brought Meabh back to Cork and that is where she is now based full time with the prominent professional audit, tax, and advisory company. She is back in the Cork set up since the championship of 2020 and her impact is telling.

"It was great to be back home, schedule my work and make training. KPMG love you to be involved in sport and they promote it but at the end of the day their primary focus is getting

the job done for their clients, which is fair enough."

Cork's defence as a unit had a storming game in their All-Ireland semi-final win over Kilkenny. Meabh's flexibility and reliability in Cork's defence, settled for the moment at left corner back, often goes overlooked when the plaudits are circulating.

But she has consistently performed since her return. Aged just 25, the future is bright for the second born child of seven in the sporting family that is the Cahalanes. All seven as we know are massively involved with their

clubs with the three boys as well as Meabh and Orlaith representing Cork at both hurling and football.

Kate, at 14, is the youngest, following in her siblings' footsteps. With all currently living at home, it's a mad household, and one can only imagine sorting out all the gear. It's wonderful if difficult for Meabh's parents Niall and Ailish to choose between the huge number of games to attend. "They're incredible supporters and were always hugely encouraging. They spread themselves as much as they can, so they get to as many of our games between them during the year."

Cork have matured as a group in the past 12 months.

"As a unit every day we try to learn something new and that's showing

now, I think. Definitely we've come on a lot in the last few months. We're such a young team but the younger players are bringing confidence too. I mean Saoirse McCarthy and Laura Hayes; you forget that they're so young.

"The way we came back after Kilkenny went two up was very satisfying. Linda (Collins) coming off the bench was huge. If you're a defender and you're used to marking someone for 60 minutes then someone who has a different style of play comes on you, it can be very difficult.

As for Sunday's All-Ireland against Galway.

"For Cork camogie, three years is too long without being in a final but we're going to treat it like any other game and stick to our game plan."

## Up for the match



Fans Meabh and Róisín O'Shea from Middleton with Cork Camogie players Meabh Cahalane and Linda Collins with the new Cork Camogie jerseys sponsored by Blackbee. Blackbee, the Cork-based investment firm, will partner with Cork Camogie for the All-Ireland final this Sunday at Croke Park as they take on Galway in the All-Ireland Camogie Final.

Picture: Darragh Kane



# 'The bus stopped in Athlone and we walked across the Shannon with the cup'

Twenty five years on from their first All-Ireland senior camogie title the Galway team will be honoured for their achievement in Croke Park on Sunday. And Veronica Curtin will still be the youngest in the squad, writes

**Daragh Ó Conchúir**



**WHEN WEST WAS BEST:** The Galway team that won the 1996 All-Ireland camogie final. Back row, from left to right: Ann Broderick, Pamela Nevin, Louise Curry, Olive Costello, Sharon Glynn, and Olivia Broderick. Front row, from left to right: Carmel Hannon, Veronica Curtin, Imelda Hobbins, Martina Harkin, Dymphna Maher, and Denise Gilligan. Picture: Ray McManus/Sportsfile

It won't come as a huge surprise that Veronica Curtin, the former wonderkind of Galway camogie, is not a fan of the rule precluding U16s from playing adult camogie.

"I wouldn't have my All-Ireland medal if the rule was in that you have to be minor to play adult. I don't agree with it. If you're good enough, you're old enough."

Curtin will be in Croke Park on Sunday as a member of the Imelda Hobbins-captained Galway squad that won the All-Ireland senior title for the first time in the county's history, 25 years ago.

Cork were in opposition on that occasion but a four-goal burst, including two on either side of half-time by 18-year-old Denise Gilligan, turned a six-goal deficit into a healthy advantage and Galway held on for the most famous of victories.

Curtin had scored an early decisive goal in the semi-final triumph over Wexford, having made her senior debut at the same juncture 12 months previously.

She was already a junior and U16 All-Ireland winner at that point, having completed the rare double in 1994.

By then, the dogs in the street knew about the Kinvara prodigy. She had exhibited a talent from her early days, her mother told her that when she was two, she could lift a sliotar rolled to her with her miniature hurley.

Fourteen years later, she joined a special group of players in the annals of Gaelic games.

"It's hard to believe that 25 years have passed," says Curtin, now a mother of two and special education needs teacher in Portumna.

"The years have gone into each other. Every year Galway get into Croke Park you reminisce on the days you were there yourself. Now we're all going to be there, you're going to be thinking back that bit more."

"I just remember the day winning, and I just remember the elation. I didn't really understand the enormity of it until we got there and we actually won. The celebrations after it, I don't think we'll ever forget the bus stopping in Athlone and us walking over the Shannon with the cup. That stands out in my mind."

"I was only 16 at the time but my parents gave me the freedom to enjoy the celebrations. The celebrations were just enormous."

"The biggest thing for me was the realisation that this wasn't only a win for Galway, it was a win for Connacht. We were representing the province and the celebrations around the whole province were unbelievable. I remember, being the youngest player on the team, bringing the O'Duffy Cup down to Sean (O'Duffy's) house in Killawalla, Mayo. Just going to see where he actually lived and the rooms of his house. Then having a plaque memorial put

up on the primary school wall.

"So it was a huge occasion for the people of Mayo as well, not just Galway. The O'Duffy Cup was now, for the first time ever, in Connacht. I think that was a real standout moment for me, to be given the honour to go there and to bring the O'Duffy back the home place."

Tony Ward was the manager and Curtin has a vivid memory of his words after they suffered a 15-point annihilation in the league final against a Cork team captained by *Irish Examiner* writer Therese O'Callaghan, in Páirc Uí Rinn.

"We were thrashed. I know there was a few people missing with exams that same day and stuff, but there was such a gap between ourselves and Cork. But I remember Tony in the dressing room afterwards saying: 'I promise we will win the All-Ireland.' And thinking: 'Are you serious like?'"

But at her age, she was only interested in playing, making the team. That was the priority. And she did of course.

She has an easy recall of her semi-final goal.

"I just think myself, Denise Gilligan, Martina Harkin and Imelda Hobbins, we had a telepathic understanding of each other. We knew what we were thinking. The ball was going wide, and Martina Harkin put up her hurl and flicked it back in and I remember doubling on it to the net. She said afterwards: 'I knew you were going to be there.'"

The goals swung the final, Harkin and Dymphna Maher adding to Gilligan's brace.

"A goal will always give you a lift. Denise got hers before and after the break. We went in and the spirits were high in the dressing room, we can do this. Next minute she came out again, and next minute we were lifted again with another goal. Dymphna Maher was absolutely inspirational from the middle of the field. When you see someone coming down the field and scoring a goal in an All-Ireland final... it was inspirational really."

And the final whistle?

"I think Martina was the nearest to me. We just jumped at each other and rolled around the ground. It has been shown a few times on television since. I remember everyone that I knew from school — a bus came up from the local clubs — and they just being on the field afterwards. Family and friends, the enormity of it."

Because that enormity had escaped her until then.

"I was oblivious to it. There was no pressure. I remember Tony saying to me the evening before: 'How you feeling?' I said: 'Oh grand Tony, don't be worrying about me. Worry about someone else.' I was too young to feel pressure."

That would come in time and the failure to add to her

tally rankles, failing to get over the line in five subsequent deciders. She packed it in with Galway in 2012 at 32, with the long-awaited second title arriving the following year.

"To win an All-Ireland you need not only the players but you need the management and you also need the county board. It's something that we didn't have, full unity. The year we might have had the good team is the year we might not have had the manager and so on. I go through the years and I could tell you the reason we didn't win every year."

Does it haunt her? "It definitely haunts me to feel that the girls that have gone through Galway, were never afforded the opportunity to get the best out of themselves. Systems were put in place a certain year and they would be dissolved the following year. To think that the talent that we had, that we didn't make more of it."

Sunday is about the good times though, when everything was just perfect.

"Anytime we get together there's lots of banter. We got to three All-Irelands and winning one gets a team even closer. We'd a great bond, that panel in 1996. There'll be a good bit of slugging, lots of fun. There's a few characters on that team. It'll be a memorable day and one to enjoy."

## Collins set to start All-Ireland final as Cork again appeal Cronin ban

**Daragh Ó Conchúir**

Linda Collins has been named to lead Cork as they bid for a 29th All-Ireland senior camogie title against Galway at Croke Park on Sunday. Collins comes in for four-time All-Ireland winner Orla Cronin, who has had a three-game suspension imposed after being sent off late in the semi-final victory over Kilkenny.

The dismissal will be appealed to the Camogie Association's hearings committee tonight, however, in a bid to clear the Enniskeane sharpshooter. Collins was introduced in the 50th minute of the semi-final to considerable effect, being heavily involved before striking a dramatic injury-time winning point.

She is the only change to a team that boasts five All-Ireland senior final debutants: Collins' Courcy Rovers club-mate Fiona Keating, goalkeeper Amy Lee, 19-year-old Clara O'Sullivan and athletic wing-backs Laura Hayes and Saoirse McCarthy.

Former underage star Cliona Healy is a notable addition to the match-day squad.

There is no change to the Galway team that defeated Tipperary, corner-back Dervla Higgins succeeding in having her red card rescinded due to a case of mistaken identity and is able to prepare for her first senior decider. She is the only debutant in an experienced line-up. Carrie Dolan, who has not played since suffering a serious knee injury in the opening round victory over Westmeath, has been named among the subs along with long-term cruciate knee ligament victim Heather Cooney. The Tribeswomen look to add to their three titles and go one step further than last year, when they lost in the decider to Kilkenny.

**CORK (v Galway SCF):** A Lee, P Mackey, L Coppinger, M Cahillane, S McCarthy, L Treacy, L Hayes, H Looney, A Thompson, C Sigerson, F Keating, C O'Sullivan, K Mackey, A O'Connor, L Collins.

**GALWAY (v Cork SCF):** Sarah Healy, Shauna Healy, S Dervan, D Higgins, S Gardiner, E Helebert, C Cormican, N Hanniffy, N Kilkenny, C Finnerty, S Spellman, A Donohue, S McGrath, O McGrath, A O'Reilly.

**ANTRIM (v Kilkenny ICF):** C Graham, C Drain, N Donnelly, M Lynn, C Patterson, C Conlon, M Connolly, L McNaughton, N O'Neill, M Kelly, A Boyle, A Magill, R McCormick, Christine Lavery, C Dobbin.

**KILKENNY (v Antrim ICF):** S Farrell, N Leahy, R Phelan, C Murphy, S Crowley, L Fennelly, T Fitzgerald, L Hegarty, C Phelan, E Hynes, S Walsh, C O'Keefe, S O'Dwyer, H Scott, D Quigley.

**ARMAGH (v Wexford PJCF):** C Devlin, A Harvey, N Woods, S Curry, C Casey, G McWilliams, G McCann, M McArdle, L Donnelly, C Hill, C McSorley, B Murray, O Murray, C Donnelly, E Smyth.

**WEXFORD (v Armagh PJCF):** L O'Shea, C Jackman, A Halligan, S Furlong, C Donohoe, A Brennan, A Dunne, C Cashe, R Cooney, K Devereux, C Banville, A Neville, E Tomkins, E Codd, L Firman.





Cork's Hannah Looney racing away from Waterford's Shauna Fitzgerald at Páirc Uí Rinn. Picture: Eddie O'Hare

**'It was great to get to a final after two years but there's still a job to do'**

TEARS of joy flowed from Hannah Looney after John Dermody blew his whistle for the last time at Croke Park last Sunday week.

Cork had just gotten over the line by a point against Kilkenny, as they had done so many times in previous finals but in that moment, this semi-final victory felt just as good.

Looney has always worn her heart on her sleeve, but it was striking to see her so emotional about reaching the decider.

The ladies' footballers had lost their semi-final to subsequent awe-inspiring champions Meath, but to Cork, and someone like Looney, who was six years into her senior career before failing to reach an All-Ireland senior final, a three-year absence seems an eternity.

As a pure athlete with a strong physical presence and a good skill level, involving the Killeagh woman in the play as often is just sensible.

Initially a carrying attacker, Cork senior camogie mangle Paudie Murray used her in the rampaging half-back role, a few years before Kyle Hayes made it popularly and in a similar manner now illustrated by team-mate Saoirse McCarthy, another converted forward.

Midfield had been a problem in recent years though, and after trying countless pairings, Cork found chemistry in Looney and Ashling Thompson, who is approaching her best form once more this term.

Looney had a crucial role in Linda Collins' injury-time winner against the Cats.

"We were just glad to come out of it, but oh my God, what a game. The buzz was unbelievable when Linda sent that point over."

Collins is the captain and had been left out of the side. The reaction of her teammates, while a natural one for any match-winner, spoke of a real bond.

"It says a lot of the character in the squad and how united we are now, how much we will fight now. I think if that would have happened to us last year we would have collapsed maybe."

"When I think of it, I would barely have spoken to Fiona Keating and Clara O'Sullivan last year and Covid would have been the main reason for that. But this year, we can go for a coffee, or have a chat and

#### CAMOGIE

■ Daragh Ó Conchúir

get to know one another, and I think you can see that now in how we are playing and working for one another.

"Everyone was smiling, everyone was buzzing to be here, to be a part of it, to be playing for Cork camogie."

"There's such a great energy around the place that mightn't have been there the last year or two."

"Now, everyone would do that extra bit and that's a key bit. In the past, as players, we have gone out as individuals. We have been criticised for that over the past year or two. That's out the window. It's all about the team. It's all about Cork camogie."

"There's something special there. It will mean nothing if we don't get over the line (against Galway), but it was a big monkey off the back getting over Kilkenny."

She plays down the significance of her own mammoth contribution but admits to enjoying being right in the mixer, taking hits and giving them, as the game of camogie catches up with the professionalism of the players.

"The refereeing was brilliant. There was some real good physical action, shoulders, and he was letting it go and players were just getting on with it. Two years ago it would have been about who had the best free-taker, but it was a much more enjoyable game to play in as a result of it being let go more and I would imagine it was more enjoyable to watch too."

The 24-year-old chemical engineer in Carlow MSD lives in Kilkenny, which means she may have had to keep the head down a bit in the last fortnight, but she is enjoying the build-up, admitting that she missed it.

"If I'm looking back, particularly with the camogie, I wonder did I take it for granted. I joined the panel in 2014 and I was in All-Ireland finals straight through until 2019."

"There's something extra special about this one now because of the last two years. So I will relish it, I will take it all in."

"But at the same time you can't get carried away with the occasion. There's still a job to do."



Linda Collins with Grace Moran, Mae Callnan, Hanna Murphy, Grace O'Callaghan, Hazel Collins, Isobel Digna, and Sarah Barry. Picture: Larry Cummin

# Cork look all set for glory



#### CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick

IF the All-Ireland semi-final performances are anything to go by then Cork will win their 29th All Ireland senior camogie title tomorrow.

However, there is always one big game in Galway in a season. It hasn't happened yet. Will it be on Sunday?

There was no comparison between the slick, efficient play in Cork-Kilkenny and what I felt was the scrappy play of Galway against Tipperary in the semi-finals.

Galway's work of the ball in finding each other was regularly poor. Cork were certainly more economical with their possession.

Galway's distribution, in what was at times giving their teammate no more than a 50/50 chance, in addition to the too often surprising surrender of possession with panic striking out of defence, left a lot to be desired. If that doesn't drastically improve tomorrow then the result is only going one way.

I don't think I should underplay the intensity with which Tipperary brought to that semi-final and they are a good team but that's the intensity you would expect at Croke Park. It's more with what Galway did with the ball when in control.

Cork's third quarter may not have been to their management's liking against Kilkenny but when you're playing a team that is more or less on a par with you, of course it's not all going to be perfect.

Off-the-ball antics are becoming more common in camogie and in particular, I'm referring to the pulling of jerseys. It's an art done discreetly but I hope the umpires do their job and keep a watchful eye out, from both sides to be fair.

Amy O'Connor suffered significantly of that negative play in the semi-final, every time she went to make a burst, her jersey was pulled and the outcome not as effective as it could have been. This was right in front of the umpires and only once did she receive a free for the cynical play.

Orla Cronin lost her appeal against her



Anna Cambridge Hutchinson with Cork camogie player Amy O'Connor. Picture: Howard Crowley

semi-final red card on Tuesday night. I'm really sorry that this happened to her on a personal level. I'm watching Orla for years and there isn't a dirty stroke in her. She was completely taken by surprise with her legs taken from under her and I think her response was more reactive than intent. She is a huge playmaker as well as a lethal scorer from distance and a massive loss to Cork. Whether Cork disputes the outcome with the DRA (Disputes Resolution Authority) remained undecided at the time of writing.

Does Linda Collins automatically fill that slot (and she's named to start now) or will Cliona Healy, Izzy O'Regan or Isobel Sheehan come into the fray and Linda held in reserve again for an impact? The thing is that you need to be there or thereabout in the closing stages if you want to finish with a flurry. You start your best team is my opinion and hope your bench also has impactful depth.

Galway's bench is massively experienced. Competition for places at training must be intense. They're on the road a long time but need that spring in their step. I think Galway peaked in their 2019 All Ireland victory. Their performances ever since haven't quite matched that. They've beaten Cork twice since — in the

2020 group championship third round, 0-15 to 0-12 and in the league final just gone, 1-19 to 1-17 after extra time.

I wouldn't read too much into the league result. Cork are showing more improvement in the intervening months than Galway. Carrie Dolan, their reliable free-taker, should return for the final, manager Cathal Murray saying that she just missed out recovery wise for their semi. Galway's conversion rate from placed balls wasn't good against Tipp and Dolan will be a welcomed return.

Galway's full-forward line of Siobhan and Orla McGrath and Ailish O'Reilly will attempt to take on Cork's full back line at every opportunity. Cork proved more than capable of managing that against Kilkenny, particularly Libby Coppinger at full back against Katie Power.

Croke Park is a happy hunting ground for Cork. They love playing there. To win their last three visits by a single point is testament to that.

Galway on the other hand have a fractured relationship with the stadium. It has been romantic and harmonious yet equally broken their hearts so many times.

Which personality will show up this time?



## McGrath back and raring to go

Joel Slattery

With the condensed season due to the impact of Covid-19, players don't have the time to ease their way back from injury like in previous campaigns.

For Orlaith McGrath, a dislocated shoulder in the National League semi-final back in June didn't end her interest in Championship 2021, but the same can't be said for teammate Heather Cooney, while Carrie Dolan has recovered to make the bench for tomorrow's All-Ireland final clash with Cork.

The prospect of returning for the business end of the championship was all the motivation McGrath needed to get back onto the pitch and return to Jones' Road, but her thoughts are with her colleague who lost the race against time to make it back.

"I was lucky that the pain wasn't too severe when it happened," she said reflecting on the injury against Sunday's opponents. "Thankfully, Clodhna (Costello) was there to pop the shoulder back into place. I had to take seven weeks out, but I knew I could target getting back some time in the middle of the championship."

"When you look at what happened to Heather (Cooney) and Carrie (Dolan), they weren't so lucky, and the timing was awful for them. I had that target of getting back and when I came on in the second half against Kilkenny, it felt like I was never away. It [the shoulder] has been fine since, thank God."

Orlaith will line out alongside sisters Niamh and Siobhán, but she insists that the three can't help each other prepare for the sport's biggest day — each player has their own responsibility to get their head right for the game.

"Only you, yourself, can get your head right at the end of the day," she said. "You have to generate confidence from how you prepare, and trust everyone else to do the same. If everyone does that, you know you're in a strong position as a team. You can either look at this game as a huge opportunity, or let the pressure get to you. You have to realise that these chances don't come around too often and you have to make the most of them while you can."

Of the match itself, attacker McGrath doesn't need to be reminded of the strength Cork possess, especially at the back.

"Cork defend really well as a unit. They are always well organised, and they know how to carry out their roles. They are individually good defenders, but they have a very effective system and how well they work together is a huge strength for them. We will have to work really hard to get anything off them."

# Coppinger brings Junior C credentials to camogie's biggest day



All-Ireland senior camogie final  
Cork v Galway

Tomorrow: Croke Park, 4.15pm  
Referee: Liz Dempsey (Kilkenny)  
TV: RTÉ/Sky Sports

Eoghan Cormican

**T**HE instruction from Libby Coppinger, after she apologises for not being more prompt in replying to an earlier text, is to ring the Coppinger landline.

No apology was necessary on the part of the Cork full-back. She can hardly be blamed for the poor service that meant this writer's text message did not land into her phone until an hour and a half after it was sent.

"Reception down here is terrible," she says, before joking: "There are times Paudie Murray thinks I am ignoring him

because I mightn't get his text for a day or two after he sends it."

"Down here" is home. Home is Coomhola in West Cork, a short spin from both Glengarriff and Bantry for those not au fait with the local geography.

"Down here" is also football country. And while Libby is most proficient with a size 4 O'Neill's in hand, it's camogie that holds sway for this particular conversation.

"We are not known for our camogie in West Cork, we're known more for our football down that direction," said Coppinger's Cork teammate and Enniskeane native Orla Cronin when accepting the player of the match award following the county's 2017 All-Ireland final win.

Newcestown's Clara O'Sullivan is the latest West Cork addition to Paudie Murray's starting team, but marking Libby out is her against-the-odds journey that has taken the 25-year-old within an hour of a third All-Ireland senior camogie medal.

Before detailing said journey, context is necessary: Coppinger's Cork teammates Ka-

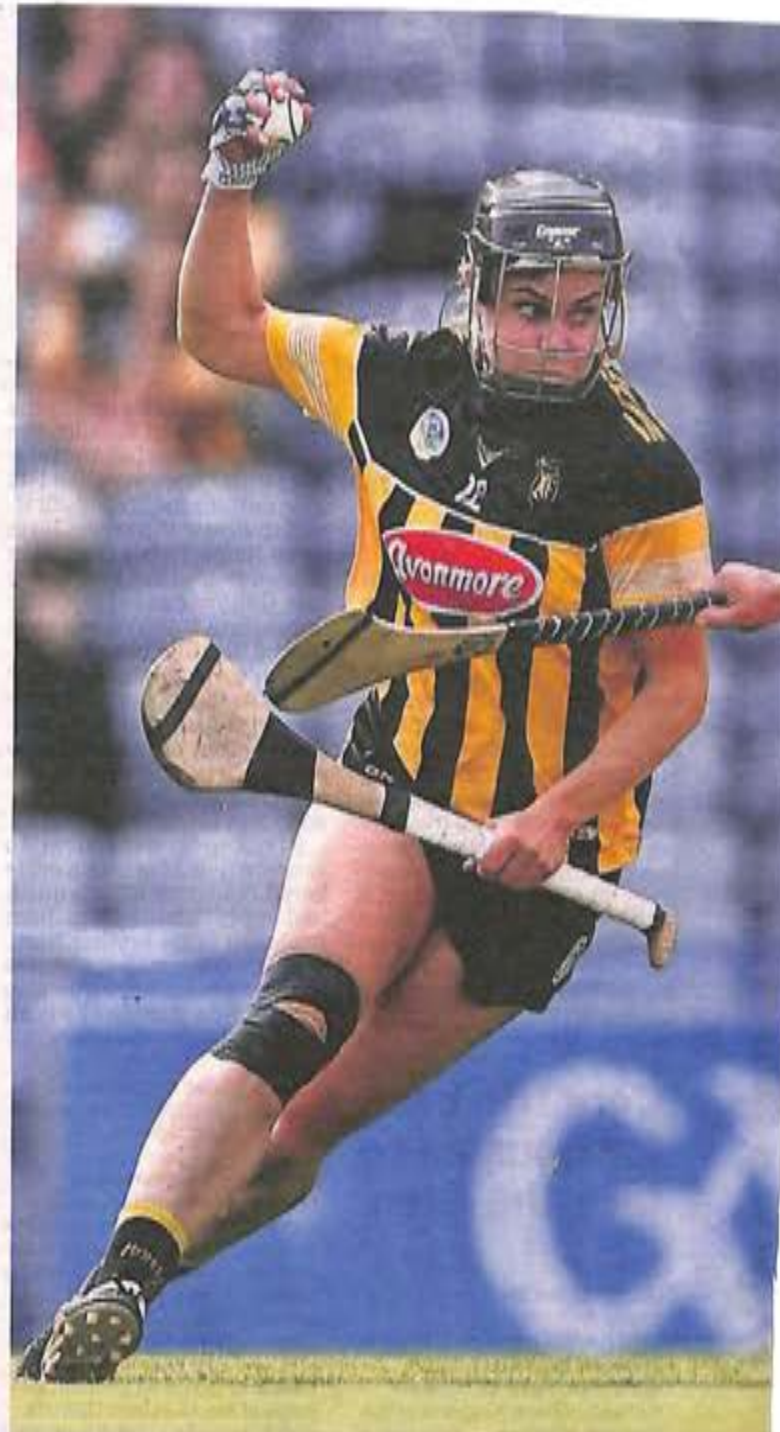
trina and Pamela Mackey pocketed their first All-Ireland senior medals in the same year — 2009 — as Libby's home club, St Colum's, began offering camogie.

With no camogie club in existence when taking her first steps with a hurley in hand, her early education in the game was as part of underage hurling teams fielded by St Colum's. Lining out with the lads, though, was not a runner as she progressed up through the age grades, so she is eternally grateful to those who got a camogie club off the ground as she entered her teenage years.

"My uncle Tony Coppinger and a lot of other people locally got the camogie club going in 2009. They have been so good in putting as much time into it as possible and getting St Colum's on the map in camogie circles."

"It would be small enough numbers-wise and we didn't have a junior team until a couple of years ago. But it is great for underage players just to have the option of playing camogie."

"Enniskeane is probably the closest camogie club to us



and that is still 40 minutes away. We have a couple of girls coming from Adrigole, Castletownbere direction and we have one girl coming to us from Goleen. They are travelling a distance, but it is great that they have somewhere they can go and play camogie."

Low playing numbers in the early years of their existence saw St Colum's amalgamate

with Clonakilty at U16 and minor, this partnership allowing Libby to line out for Clon's adult team before Colum's fielded their own junior side.

"I've toured around the place," laughs the affable dual star.

With the Kealkill club operating in the lower grades and far away from centre stage, invitations to county trials were simply non-existent. She

## Dolan offers Tribe bench option, Cronin decision may be pivotal

Match Preview

Therese O'Callaghan

When Cork, Kilkenny, or Galway lock horns, there isn't a hop of a ball between them. They know each other so well. You have to go back to 2012 (Wexford) to find a team other than the top three contesting the All-Ireland senior final.

Thankfully though, it doesn't take from the showcase event as all three are great exponents of the game.

The interesting thing about the Cork/Galway pairing is they haven't met in the final since 2015, and prior to that, it was 2008 — both results going

Cork's way.

Galway are a changed outfit now. This is their third successive decider and, having failed to retain the O'Duffy Cup last December, they won't be short on motivation.

Some argue their semi-final win over Tipperary was not of the same high standard as Cork's defeat of Kilkenny. Still, when the chips were down, they prevailed. Granted, a fortuitous goal from Orlaith McGrath put daylight between them, but they held their nerve.

Cathal Murray has named the same starting 15 which is no surprise. They will, however, be boosted by the inclu-

sion of Carrie Dolan on the panel. She wasn't named for the penultimate round as she wasn't fully recovered from injury.

It is hard to see the Clarinbridge player being left out if she is 100% fit. Of the five substitutions made in the semi-final, four were in attack.

Orla Cronin's red card and subsequent suspension is a blow for Cork. She may yet be available if her appeal is successful. Either way, her teammates won't be lacking incentive. They will have more than one reason to get over the line. Not alone will they be desperate to bridge the gap to 2018, but they will want to do it for

the Enniskeane player as well.

Paudie Murray has named Linda Collins to fill the vacancy; the captain's attitude is spot on. As for the newcomers, having already played in Croke Park will stand to them and the backroom team will be happy with the work-rate against Kilkenny, as they excelled from the start.

Tomorrow's match will be more expansive, and that should have a positive impact all around. Referee Liz Dempsey will play a big part too.

A lot will hinge on whether Cronin is available and that could be crucial in deciding the outcome.

CORK (v Galway): A Lee, P Mackey, L



Carrie Dolan: Her return offers boost off bench to Galway.

Coppinger, M Cahalane, S McCarthy, L Treacy, L Hayes, H Looney, A Thompson, C Sigerson, F Keating, C O'Sullivan, K Mackey, A O'Connor, L Collins  
GALWAY (v Cork): Sarah Healy, Shauna Healy, S Dervan, D Higgins, S Gardiner, E Helebert, C Cormican, N Harnduff, N Kilkenny, C Finnerty, S Spellman, A Donohue, S McGrath, O McGrath, A O'Reilly





Cork's Libby Coppinger keeps tabs on Kilkenny's Katie Power during the All-Ireland senior camogie semi-final at Croke Park a fortnight ago.

Picture: Piaras Ó Midheach/Sportsfile

played no U14 or U16 with Cork and it wasn't until her final year minor that a call came to go present herself in Cloughduv for a trial match. "I remember going over and being half nervous because you'd expect everyone else to kinda know each other and

you'd be the new person on the scene." From first-time Cork minor in 2014, she was introduced as a second-half substitute in the All-Ireland senior final two years later. Coppinger has been a first-team regular since the following 2017 season.

playing in a variety of defensive roles. The most recent of which sees her wearing the number three shirt. "The Cork minors was the first proper taste of, 'oh my God, this is so enjoyable to be at this standard, pushing yourself, and being around

## Cork v Galway

All-Ireland senior camogie final

A Lee	1	Sarah Healy
P Mackey	2	Shauna Healy
L Coppinger	3	S Dervan
M Cahalane	4	D Higgins
S McCarthy	5	S Gardiner
L Treacy	6	E Helebert
L Hayes	7	C Cormican
H Looney	8	N Hanniffy
A Thompson	9	N Kilkenny
C Sigerson	10	C Finnerty
F Keating	11	S Spellman
C O'Sullivan	12	A Donohue
K Mackey	13	S McGrath
A O'Connor	14	O McGrath
L Collins	15	A O'Reilly

such talented players'. It grew my love for it even more.

"You would always have dreamed of playing with Cork. But because I was playing football more throughout my life, from a younger age I would have said that is the more realistic option for me. Camogie was definitely a shock but one I was very happy to be a part of.

"It wasn't a case of I never wanted it, it was more a case of I don't know if that would ever happen for me. That it has has been a real bonus."

Tomorrow will be another proud day for St Colum's, a Junior C West Cork club represented on camogie's biggest day.

When trying to grow a sport in a particular area, it's a sizable help to have a local who has ascended to the game's top level.

"I am still in a little bit of denial about it," she says of her role model status down around Kealkill.

"Those involved in St Colum's are so good, they'd be saying to the girls, 'Libby is playing, there is no reason you can't be playing'. It is definitely great to have people close to home that are doing it and showing others that it is possible.

"If we can inspire only one or two girls to dream big and get there, you'd hope in a couple more years there might be more girls from St Colum's representing Cork at different age levels. That'd be great and I'd be happy to be a little part in that."

## Cork v Galway: The key battlegrounds

### Form guide

Cork and Galway topped their respective groups. The average winning margin was nine and eight points respectively. Cork overcame Down, Dublin, and Waterford while the westerners got the better of Clare, Kilkenny and Westmeath. The Cats were Galway's closest call, securing a one-point win. Overall Galway scored six goals, while Cork bagged five. There was just one green flag in the semi-finals and that was raised by the maroon and white.

### Cases for the defence

Defensively the two teams are really solid. And that is where each will look to find an edge. Galway's resilience is built around their full back line.

Skipper Sarah Dervan is an inspirational performer, and she is flanked by Shauna Healy and Dervla Higgins. Amy O'Connor and Katrina Mackey are Cork's most experienced forwards and they will look to dictate matters. Chloe Sigerson was the Leesiders main contributor (0-5) along with Orla Cronin (0-6) in the semi-final. Sigerson will look to dominate that bit further out the field.

Likewise, the Cork rearguard hasn't put a foot wrong. Laura Treacy is commanding at centre-back and so too is Libby Coppinger on the edge of the square. Pamela Mackey's return to the squad is another bonus, and she is going as good as ever. All six are good markers and will set out to curtail the Galway threat, especially that of the McGrath sisters

Orlaith and Siobhán, and Ailish O'Reilly. Aoife Donohue was selected Player of the Match in the Tipperary game, another to watch as evidenced by the three points she scored from open play.

### The midfield campaigners

Galway positioned Niamh Kilkenny and Niamh Hanniffy there in the semi-final while Cork's go-to partnership is Ashling Thompson and Hannah Looney. The experience provided by all four is significant, the middle third so central to the outcome.

Thompson and Looney are the driving force and love when the going gets tough. With a few new faces on the team this year, they bring those around them into play. Hanniffy and Kilkenny are not short on know-how either. Kilkenny remains one of the stand-

out midfielders and is as good now as when she started in the mid naughties. Hanniffy does trojan work too.

All four are decent finishers as well. This will be one of the key battlegrounds.

Whoever comes out on top here will play a huge part in deciding the cup's destination.

— Therese O'Callaghan



Ashling Thompson will be at midfield for Cork with Hannah Looney.



# The rebellion that turned Tribe from nearly side to behemoths

Galway's fortunes have improved in the last three years, and Murray's entrance may be key

CATHAL DENNEHY



HERE'S NO one moment that ignited this journey: the transition from very good to potentially great, from the nearly women of camogie to a group that's made a habit of hammering at the door of the champions' banquet.

To see them now, one step away from their second All-Ireland in three years, is to whitewash the memory of what Galway were just three years ago, a so-near-and-yet-so-far side that was mired in turbulence.

In the decade prior to 2018, Galway had reached five All-Ireland finals, yet the O'Duffy Cup only once (in 2013) made its way west. In 2014, they got a seven-point pasting by Kilkenny in the semi-final, while in the 2015 final that was again the chasm between them and Cork. A trio of Kilkenny goals saw their chances vaporised in the 2016 semi-final, while at the same stage in 2017 two first-half goals from Cork had the Rebels swiftly out of sight.

Inter-county players pour far too much of their lives into the pursuit to accept such results as a worthwhile return on investment, but the thing about recidivist shortcoming is that, eventually, it forces a rejection of sta-

sis, an insistence for change.

The place in the pecking order Galway inhabited back then can lead to a whittling away of desire and a raft of retirements or else it can spark a fresh fire, a demand for new leadership. It's often both.

So while no single moment can explain what they've become, the closest thing to a cataclysmic event was what happened in March 2018. That was when players unanimously passed a no-confidence vote in manager Tony O'Donovan just four months after he'd taken up the role, his resignation coming off the back of an in-depth review of their performance in the league.

## Controversial

The manner of O'Donovan's appointment was controversial to start with, the county board not sticking to its own bye-laws, while one of the candidates, Frank Browne, claimed he was offered a follow-up interview despite being told the appointment was a done deal for someone else. Browne labelled the process "farical".

That was the latest storm in a set-up that had raced through three managers in just two-and-a-half years.

In September 2017, Mark Dunne said he and his management were sacked because a member of backroom staff, Niall Corcoran, conducted one-on-one coaching sessions with Cork goalkeeper Aoife Murray. In an email, Dunne said the reason outlined by the county board for their dismissal were

## ALL-IRELAND SENIOR CAMOGIE FINAL 2021

GALWAY v CORK

### PATHS TO THE FINAL

#### CORK

Cork 2-19 Dublin 0-12 (Group 2, Round 1)  
Cork 1-13 Down 0-10 (Group 2, Round 2)  
Cork 2-19 Waterford 3-8 (Group 2, Round 3)  
Cork 0-15 Kilkenny 1-11 (All-Ireland s-f)

#### GALWAY

Galway 3-16 Westmeath 1-5 (Group 3, Round 1)  
Galway 2-12 Clare 2-6 (Group 3, Round 2)  
Galway 1-13 Kilkenny 0-15 (Group 3, Round 3)  
Galway 1-13 Tipperary 0-12 (All-Ireland s-f)

### FINAL FACTS

Both teams have an identical scoring difference record of plus 28 after playing four games apiece to reach the decider. Cork won their three group outings by a cumulative 27 points before edging out holders Kilkenny by a solitary point. Galway's scoring difference was plus 24 in their group and they followed up with a four-point win over Tipperary.

Sarah Dervan is in her fourth year as Galway captain, and this will be her third time to lead out her county on All-Ireland day - they won in 2019 only to lose last year. For Cork counterpart Linda Collins it will be a new experience, as she was appointed skipper in the wake of Courcy Rovers' maiden county senior title last season.

Come what may tomorrow, Cork will remain top of the All-Ireland senior roll of honour. They currently boast 28 titles, two ahead of Dublin. Just seven counties have achieved senior success and Galway prop up that select list with three All-Irelands.



NIAMH KILKENNY

ASHLING THOMPSON

"pathetic" and "questions the motives of certain county board officers and their intentions for Galway camogie".

While harmonious three-way relationships between management, players and county boards are as common as amicable divorces, it was into these stormy waters that Cathal Murray stepped when taking charge in 2018.

One of his first areas to target was fitness, with Robbie Lane and John Duggan working with players at various levels in Galway camogie.

Just under 18 months later, he led Galway to the All-Ireland title. During that time there had been a renewed commitment to treat his players as elites, providing post-training meals and utilising performance analysis tools.

Right when that 2019 decider looked to be going against them, Galway unlocked the weapon that had

often undone them in the past: goals. Niamh Hanniffy and Ailish O'Reilly hit the net twice in as many minutes, and that proved the difference at full-time as the Tribeswomen claimed their first victory since 2013, their third ever.

In tomorrow's final, they face a county with 28 of them. Be that as it may, no neutral observer sees it as anything other than a coin flip, even if Galway haven't hit the heights they know they're capable of this year.

They edged Cork after extra-time in the league semi-final but lost the final to Kilkenny by three in a repeat of last year's All-Ireland.

The league took its toll in other ways, Heather Cooney suffering a cruciate injury against Clare. Galway nonetheless hit the ground running in high summer, with easy wins over Westmeath and Clare in the champion-

ship's group stages before a one-point win over Kilkenny despite being down to 14 players for most of the game.

That secured their passage to the semi-finals, which Murray saw as a curse as much as a blessing given it meant a four-week break from competitive action. They seemed to be coasting at half-time in the semi-final a fortnight ago but in the end, they needed a fortuitous goal from Orlaith McGrath to keep Tipperary at bay.

"We're in an All-Ireland final for a third year in a row," said Murray. "But we'll need to improve."

The players who'll take to the field tomorrow should be undaunted by this stage. Eleven of the starting 15 from the 2019 final and 12 from last year's decider are named in Murray's starting line-up while there are three survivors - Sarah Dervan, Niamh

## Senior final should be tight affair but I think Cork can

### EXPERT VIEW

URSULA JACOB



ALL-IRELAND camogie final day, the biggest game of the year. But, at the same time, it's another game. And that's what the Cork and Galway managers will be saying to their players tomorrow.

Paudie Murray of Cork and Cathal Murray of Galway will stress to their

teams not to let the game pass them by. It can so easily happen, especially now with the match divided into four quarters. Those fifteen minutes can fly by. The priority for all the players is to try and settle into the game as quickly as possible.

It's such a huge occasion, a day when camogie can showcase the sport to the country. These are the best players in Ireland performing on the biggest stage.

They are all such superb athletes; it's a chance to see the best of the best. I think there will be a big crowd, and not only from the competing counties.

It's great that there are three All-Ireland finals on. It's a real feast of camogie. And I would encourage anybody to go along and enjoy the spectacle. I think they will be three



Lee: Solid distribution for Cork

cracking matches.

The All-Ireland Senior final between Cork and Galway is such an intriguing match. I feel it will be close and exciting. It could be low-scoring, but I'm hoping the game will flow. It has the potential to be a fabulous spectacle.

They are evenly matched, both unbeaten on their way to the final. Both topped their respective groups.

The two teams have been impressive at stages. But they both have more to give. And they realise that their respective semi-final displays won't be good enough to lift the O'Duffy Cup.

In their own way, they both have a point to prove. It's Cork's first All-Ireland final since 2018, while Galway, having lost last year, are back again, looking for their fourth title.

Cork have 28 of them, more than anybody else. And in finals, they have a good record over Galway. It should be a fascinating tactical battle, and I'm looking forward to the match-ups.

When they met in the National League semi-final, Galway won by two points. It went to extra-time. I thought

the turning point was when Galway brought Aoife Donohue to full-forward. She scored four points.

Cork possess a strong running game and have a dash of youth, while Galway look to have a stronger bench. But it's all pros and cons. The young players will come in with no fear and no baggage, but on the other hand, experience is such an asset to have in a final.

I have been impressed with Cork's defence. Amy Lee's distribution is top-notch. That's something that Galway will have to address.

I think that the defeat of Cork in the All-Ireland Ladies' Football semi-final has benefited the Rebels. Their dual players didn't have to perform a balancing act. And in the semi-final against Kilkenny, Hannah Looney was



tomorrow 4.15: Live on RTÉ2.  
Antrim v Kilkenny

## HEAD-TO-HEAD

### ASHLING THOMPSON V NIAMH KILKENNY

Here lies the prospect of a fascinating duel between two of the sport's premier midfielders. Thompson has won four All-Ireland senior medals with Cork along with two All Stars, in 2015 and '17. Kilkenny is acclaimed as one of the most gifted of her generation, her longevity in the maroon of Galway rewarded with two All-Ireland medals, six All Stars and a Player of the Year award in 2019. Thompson, though, is noted for an excellent record on the Tribeswoman – and she wasn't playing when Galway narrowly pipped the then-holders in their 2019 semi-final, when Kilkenny was player of the match. In a nutshell, if the Galway ace is kept quiet, Cork could be well on the road to victory.

Compiled by Frank Roche

# 'Steadily improving' Kilkenny ready for rematch

Niall Scully

THEY met on the opening day of the Championship. A blistering summer sun enhancing the Green Glens of Antrim.

Antrim beat Kilkenny by four points. They'll now meet again in tomorrow's All-Ireland Intermediate Camogie Championship final in Croke Park (2.0).

Armagh face Wexford in the All-Ireland Junior final (12.0), while Cork play Galway in the All-Ireland Senior Championship final (4.15).

Kilkenny captain Róisín Phelan made the long trip north for that Intermediate Championship opener against Antrim back in July.

"I think everybody will agree that you can't read too much into the result from that day," she notes.

"But, from our point of view, we gained a lot from it. It helped to set us up for the season. It brought us back down to earth.

"It showed us what we needed to improve on. And every game since, we have been steadily improving. The training that we have been



Coveted prize:

Kilkenny's Róisín Phelan and Lucia McNaughton of Antrim will be battling it out for the Jack McGrath Cup at Croke Park tomorrow (1P40)

Getting over Meath in the All-Ireland semi-final was a job and a half.

"We played them in the Division 2 league quarter-final and they got a last-minute goal to win by a point," recalls Róisín. "So going into the Championship semi-final, we were wary of the threat that they possessed.

"They are a team that never gives up. It was a good defensive performance against them and we were just delighted to get over the line."

Getting over the line to lift the Jack McGrath Cup is now the next ambition. And for Kilkenny folk on a September Sunday, there is no sweeter sound than the Rose of Mooncoin.

**ANTRIM** – C. Graham; C. Drain; N. Donnelly; M. Lyne; C. Patterson; C. Conlon; M. Connolly; L. McNaughton; N. O'Reilly; M. Kelly; A. Boyle; A. Magill; R. McCormick; Christine Lavery; C. Dobbin.

**KILKENNY** – S. Farrell; N. Leahy; R. Phelan; C. Murphy; S. Crowley; L. Fennelly; T. Fitzgerald; L. Hegarty; C. Phelan; E. Hynes; S. Walsh; C. O'Keeffe; S. O'Dwyer; H. Scott; D. Oulghley. **REF** – C. Quirnan (Galway).

Antrim v Kilkenny. Live, RTÉ2, tomorrow, 2.0

doing has really stood to us. This will be a different game altogether. Especially it being an All-Ireland final."

Kilkenny ended up topping Group 2. On a scoring difference of four points from Antrim. Kilkenny went straight into the semi-final, while Antrim had to overcome a quarter-final assignment against Kerry before defeating Galway in the semi-final.

The Kilkenny seniors won't be in the All-Ireland senior final. The

champions lost their semi-final to Cork by one point in Croke Park.

"A few of us from the Intermediate panel were involved with the senior squad. In the dressing-room after the semi-final, there was so much disappointment," reflects Róisín.

"It wasn't a great place to be. And it made us think of how lucky we are to be going into the All-Ireland final. The memory of that senior semi-final loss will make us even more determined to push on and, hopefully, get over the line."

## Buzz is back as experience helps push Armagh along

Niall Scully

AFTER Armagh had lost the All-Ireland Camogie Premier Junior Championship final to Carlow in 2016, the lights began to dim in the Orchard. The echo of that defeat lingered.

But now the birds are singing again. Last season, Armagh won the All-Ireland Premier Junior Championship title. And here they are back again in the final where they will meet Wexford (12.0).

The opening match of Sunday's Croke Park All-Ireland Camogie Championship final triple-header also sees Antrim face Kilkenny in the Intermediate final (2.0) and Cork meeting Galway in the senior final (4.15).

"I returned to the panel last year and I really enjoyed it," says Armagh's Clara Donnelly. "The buzz was back in Armagh camogie. A few more experienced players came back and that helped to push things along."

They lifted the Kathleen Mills Cup, the trophy named after the legendary Dublin player who won 15 All-Ireland senior camogie medals. Armagh beat Cavan in the final at Breffni Park," relates Clara.

"Yet it's lovely now to be going down to Croke Park for this year's final. Playing there gives the occasion that special extra touch. And having the supporters there

this time will also make a big difference to the day. There's nothing like hearing the roar of the crowd when you need that extra little lift."

The teams know each other well. They have already met this season three times! Wexford won all three. But not by much. In the Division 3 National League Group game, in the Division 3 League final and in their group.

### Chance

"I can't remember a season in which we would have met a team four times," muses Clara. "We know we weren't too far away on any of the days we played them. Those games could have gone either way. But we are back in the final now. We have given ourselves a chance. So, hopefully, it will click that bit better for us against them this time."

Following last year's success, Armagh opted to remain in the Premier Junior grade. "We felt we weren't ready for the jump to Inter. We knew the Premier Junior was going to be even tougher than last season, but we have shown that last year's win was deserved."

**ARMAGH** – C. Devlin; A. Harvey; H. Woods; S. Curry; C. Casey; G. McWilliams; G. McCann; M. McAule; L. Donnelly; C. Hill; C. McSorley; B. Murray; O. Murray; C. Donnelly; E. Smyth.

**WEXFORD** – L. O'Shea; C. Jackson; A. Halligan; S. Furlong; C. Donohoe; A. Brennan; A. Dunne; C. Castle; R. Conroy; R. Devoreux; C. Barville; A. Neville; E. Tomkins; E. Codd; L. Firman. **REF** – K. O'Brien (Limerick).

Armagh v Wexford, Live, RTÉ2, tomorrow, 12.0.

## edge it

ery sharp. There could be very little in. Two super teams, but I'll go for Cork. On a personal note, I'm thrilled to see Wexford team back in Croke Park on All-Ireland final day. 2012 was the last time we were there. That's nine long years for Wexford camogie.

Wexford play Armagh in the first match of the day, the All-Ireland Premier Junior final. It's the fourth time the sides will have met this season. Wexford have won the previous three games and their experience should see them through this time.

The All-Ireland Intermediate final could also be a tight one between Antrim and Kilkenny.

Antrim lost the final last year, but they will have learned a lot from that. They have a strong attack, so I'll give them the vote.



# Cahalane bids to uphold family honour



All-Ireland senior camogie final  
Cork v Galway

Sunday: Croke Park, 4.15pm  
Referee: Liz Dempsey (Kilkenny)  
TV: RTE/Sky Sports

Eoghan Cormican

later, these two victories sandwiching Munster U20 success with the Cork footballers.

No different, it must be noted, were his two sisters in juggling both codes at inter-county level.

A "nightmare" was Meabh's description of their All-Ireland football semi-final defeat to Meath, with Orlaith and the Cork minor camogie team also coming off second best in last Sunday's All-Ireland decider.

Damien and Conor endured similar final disappointment with the Cork hurlers and so it's left to Meabh to sign off as Jack started.

"There has been something going on the whole time, whether it is Jack hurling or playing football, Orlaith out with the minors, or the lads with the seniors. It is just great to see everyone getting to play in these big games because we all see the work that each puts in," said the 25-year-old. "Obviously, it would be a big topic in the household each week of what games are on this week and who is playing who. It is a bit of enjoyment too following all the games the others are playing in."

Following, mind you, on Twitter or on TG4 given their respective training schedules doesn't allow much time for spectating.

Case in point was the Sunday of Meabh's All-Ireland camogie semi-final at Croke Park, Cork's penultimate



Cork's Meabh Cahalane breaks away from Kilkenny's Grace Walsh and Mary O'Connell in the semi-final. She is set to become one of five Cahalane siblings set to contest an All-Ireland this season. Picture: Piaras Ó Midheach

round encounter against reigning champions Kilkenny fell on the same afternoon as Damien, Conor, and Jack pulled on the Castlehaven colours for the 2020 Cork senior football decider against Nemo in Páirc Uí Chaoimh, with Orlaith, back up the road in Mallow, in Munster minor football final action.

"You'd always have something on, so a lot of the time not all of us would get to each other's games, but we'll try to tune in somewhere."

"You'd be delighted to see them doing well. Jack has come from the Cork minor set-up and Conor was with the U21s in recent years, it obviously takes a while to transition to the next level and so it has been great this year to see Conor get a good run with the seniors. Every game you

could see his confidence getting better."

"You would be proud every time they go out, no matter if they win or lose, just once they are performing to their best and once they are enjoying it."

For all the provincial and All-Ireland medals to cross through the front door in recent weeks, the constructive criticism dished out at the Cahalane table means there's no fear of any of them losing the run of themselves.

"We would talk away after games, reflecting on what more you could have done yourself," explained Meabh, before quickly adding, "you wouldn't want to be too sensitive with some of the feedback that you might be getting!"

Having joined the Cork senior set-up in 2015 as a teen-

ager, Cahalane finished her debut season as a first-team regular and an All-Ireland medallist.

Any notions this would become the norm were flattened by Kilkenny in the following season's decider, with this Sunday's final against Galway representing Cork's first in three years.

"To get over Kilkenny in the semi-final was a massive boost to the group. With some very, very big players for Cork having moved on in the last year or two, young players such as Saoirse McCarthy and Laura Hayes have come into the team. And so for us to weather the Kilkenny storm and then for Linda Collins to come off the bench and get the winning score, it gives us a lot of confidence going into the Galway game."

## Cork star Cronin set to miss final

Eoghan Cormican and  
Therese O'Callaghan

The red card shown to Cork's Orla Cronin in the All-Ireland semi-final has been upheld by the Camogie Association's hearings committee.

The decision of the hearings committee means a three-game suspension for Cronin, which would rule her out of Sunday's All-Ireland senior final unless Cork are successful in appealing the centre-forward's 57th-minute semi-final red card.

Striking an opponent with the hurley is the infraction Cronin was cited for in the referee's report, an offence that carries a three-game ban.

Appealing the red-card decision to the Camogie Association's appeals committee or bringing their case to the Disputes Resolution Authority are Cork's remaining options in a bid to clear Cronin for All-Ireland final involvement this weekend.

Galway corner-back Dervla Higgins will feature in Sunday's decider after having her semi-final red card rescinded by the hearings committee on Tuesday evening.

Higgins was incorrectly identified by umpires as having swung her hurley at Tipperary's Eimear Loughman in the second half of Galway's All-Ireland semi-final win.

Emma Helebert — the Galway player who clashed with Loughman — will also line out this Sunday as the camogie rulebook does not allow for retrospective citation.

## Sting of past defeats driving Galway's Dervan

Eoghan Cormican

Galway camogie captain Sarah Dervan heads into her eighth All-Ireland senior final this Sunday. Five of the previous seven have ended in heartbreak. Enduring a sixth decider defeat is something she could easily do without.

Not because it is freshest in the memory, but last December's 1-14 to 1-11 final loss to Kilkenny was a particularly difficult one to stomach, and, indeed, move on from.

There were no family or friends around Jones Road to console them afterwards, no opportunity to return inside the whitewash in the early months of this year and flush the result out of their system.

"It took us a while to get over that game," admits the Galway full-back.

"It was a hard game, and then, with Covid, you didn't have your family afterwards, which was particularly hard."

The arrival of lockdown number three a fortnight later and the subsequent grounding of all Gaelic games activity

meant it was another five months before Cathal Murray's charges were in competitive action and able to begin to put the previous December's disappointment to bed.

A long winter was followed by an even longer spring, the isolation that came hand in hand with lockdown making it difficult to avoid constant replays of the three-point Kilkenny defeat and the manner in which the result went out of reach following a 57th-minute Denise Gaule penalty, when the sides were level.

"Because of the lockdown, you're not back collectively training, you're on your own, and you have to try and pick yourself up and motivate yourself to go at it again," she said.

"Training on your own is hard and lonely, and then trying to pick yourself up as well as that. It is hard to go: 'God, I have to go outside and do running', or try and do a gym session with the little equipment you have in the house. But we are a tight bunch, we kept in contact and just drove

on. We picked ourselves up and said we'd go again."

The Cats again knocked them back in the league final in June, but a significant staging post in Galway's journey to a third consecutive All-Ireland final was their group stage championship win away to Kilkenny. Despite operating with 14 players for the majority of proceedings following a first-half red card to Catherine Finnerty, the visitors eked out a one-point win.

"It was a victory we probably needed as a group. It was important that we got that win for psychological factors," said the six-time All Star.

"It's brilliant to get back to an All-Ireland final, especially after last year. We definitely know we have to up our game from the semi-final, if we're to compete with Cork. We know we have to play well."

Neither Dervan, nor any of her team-mates, has ever tasted All-Ireland senior final victory over Cork, losing to the Rebels in 2008 and again in 2015. It's a record they desperately want to correct.



# Rebel royalty

Méabh Cahalane's pride as sporting family face fifth final of the summer

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## O'Connor comes to terms with a new Cork role – as a spectator



**Therese O'Callaghan**

CORK legend Gemma O'Connor announced her retirement from inter-county camogie earlier this year after an impressive career spanning an incredible 19 seasons.

She made her victorious debut against Tipperary in 2002 – 14 All-Ireland finals later, she is the holder of nine senior medals. Not to mention numerous other accolades.

On Sunday, she will travel to Croke Park as a fan.

"I won't lie, it will be strange," she says. "In one way, I want to go up and I want to support the girls. But on a personal level, it will be hard for me to be sitting there looking at them. But I will be there, and I will be giving them my full support."

"I could have gone back this year and given it another go. I would have given it everything, but I felt I had too much to juggle. You are always going to think if I didn't bow out, would I have had another opportunity? The obvious thing is to say 'what if'. If I stayed on, would I have the opportunity to be lining out? It was quite possible, but it could be different too. Things can happen."

A sergeant with the Irish Defence Forces, the impact of Covid-19 presented unprecedented challenges, especially when planning her wedding, and an overseas trip with work on the horizon.

"I had a lot of uncertainty as to what was going ahead. Whether getting married was going to go ahead or whether I was going to be selected for overseas. They asked me to go for this summer, but I got married, so that was put on the back burner."



Cork Senior Camogie captain and special education teacher Linda Collins, with teaching colleague Ms Noonan and 5th class pupils James McDermott, Alan Smith, Kate Murtagh, and Emma Cregan of Glenville National School. Former Cork star Gemma O'Connor, inset, believes the new playing rules are adding to the game as a spectacle.

With all those things happening, I thought now was a good time to bow out.

"Covid made it more clear-cut for me, it threw a lot of things out the window. When you are getting older, you need structure, support, and routine in your life. When you are younger, you have a lot more flexibility on what you can or cannot do."

"Work commitments and getting married – they were my plans. We were out vaccinating with work, and I am going overseas to the Lebanon

in November. I made the decision based on reality."

"Last year I got injured and I ended up getting only one game. That's not saying I would have been injured this year. But look, it is all what-ifs, could-have-beens. It is what it is."

"I am delighted the girls are back in the All-Ireland final, especially after semi-final defeats to Kilkenny last year and to Galway the year before. Cork is a county that doesn't accept defeat too easily."

Looking back on her remarkable

journey: starting every year with a clean slate provided the necessary inspiration.

"I always wanted to play with Cork, and I always wanted to be a great player. I wanted to be the best player I could be, and to achieve as much as I could. I always had those personal goals. Every time I went out training, I always put my heart into it. I would always train extremely hard."

"I'd try not to get too worked up before games either. I'd try and stay



as composed and relaxed as I could. If we lost a final or won one the year before, I tried not to dwell too much on it. I treated every year as a new year, as a new opportunity."

A straight red card received by Orla Cronin in the semi-final currently rules her out – though Cork are set to appeal that decision again on Friday night.

"Obviously Orla is a big concern. She

is very experienced and she is the main free-taker. It would be a mental downer for the team not having her there. But if they are going to be without her, it is something management will have been preparing for since the semi-final. If she is playing, it will be a bonus. Orla will have been training too. In their minds, I think they will be preparing to be lining out without her."

O'Connor, who continues to play with her club St Finbarr's, believes the new playing rules are adding to the game as a spectacle.

"We have been screaming for these new rules for a long time. It is natural progress of the game. The rules have to adapt to the players. You are not looking for anything cynical or dirty. It is about allowing two players fairly contest a ball. The stop-start creates a lull. You want the game to be fast and free-flowing. It is enjoyable for spectators as well as players."

"Let players show their athleticism. I'm definitely in favour of them. It is positive, but it is a slow process. It is getting there, but some referees are still slow to let it flow. Camogie players are ferociously fit and stronger these days."

Picture: Larry Cummins





## ALL-IRELAND SENIOR CAMOGIE FINAL Cork v Galway



Libby Coppinger knows how to handle the week leading up to an All-Ireland final, as she told **KIERAN McCARTHY**

**LIBBY Coppinger is experienced enough to be able to treat All-Ireland final week like any other week.**

She's been here before. Plenty of times between camogie and football since she made her debuts for both teams in 2016. The 25-year-old knows the pitfalls these last few days before an All-Ireland final can bring, the distractions that can sidetrack a player, so she's not changing her routine this week.

'I'm working away as normal and that's a great way to keep your mind off the game,' says Coppinger, who works as a depository officer with Alter Domus Ireland. There, the Cork camogie full back, similar to her role on the pitch, protects investors.

'I'm sure they would have no problem if I wanted to take a day or two off work but I think you'd only be going stir crazy in your head, overthinking things. It's better to keep the week as normal as you can.'

Coppinger is working from home in Kealkill. She's taken over the granny flat, that's her office space and it works. The dual star's commute from West Cork to the city for training is a two-hour round trip and since the footballers lost their All-Ireland semi-final to Meath on August 15th, her mileage has halved. A silver lining to that loss – even though she would have much preferred to advance to the football final, too – is that it has allowed the St Colum's star to focus fully on camogie these past four weeks.

'As soon as we lost in football, it meant we had two weeks before the camogie semi-final and we have had another two weeks before the final. If you wanted to find a positive, it is that I have had more time with camogie in the past month,' she says.

'I was looking back at the

last few years and I've never actually had this much time to focus on the one sport. That has to help. It's great to be there for all the camogie sessions the last few weeks. The management teams in football and camogie have always been great to make sure we don't overload when the two are running side by side, but these weeks I don't feel like I am playing catch-up all the time and that's nice too.'

It also means that Coppinger has more time for rest and recovery, and all that helps.

'With the football finished, I'm only going up three days a week to Cork now so it's not as taxing on the body as it is when you are driving up and down for both. It's a lot more doable now,' she says, days out from the biggest camogie game of the year.

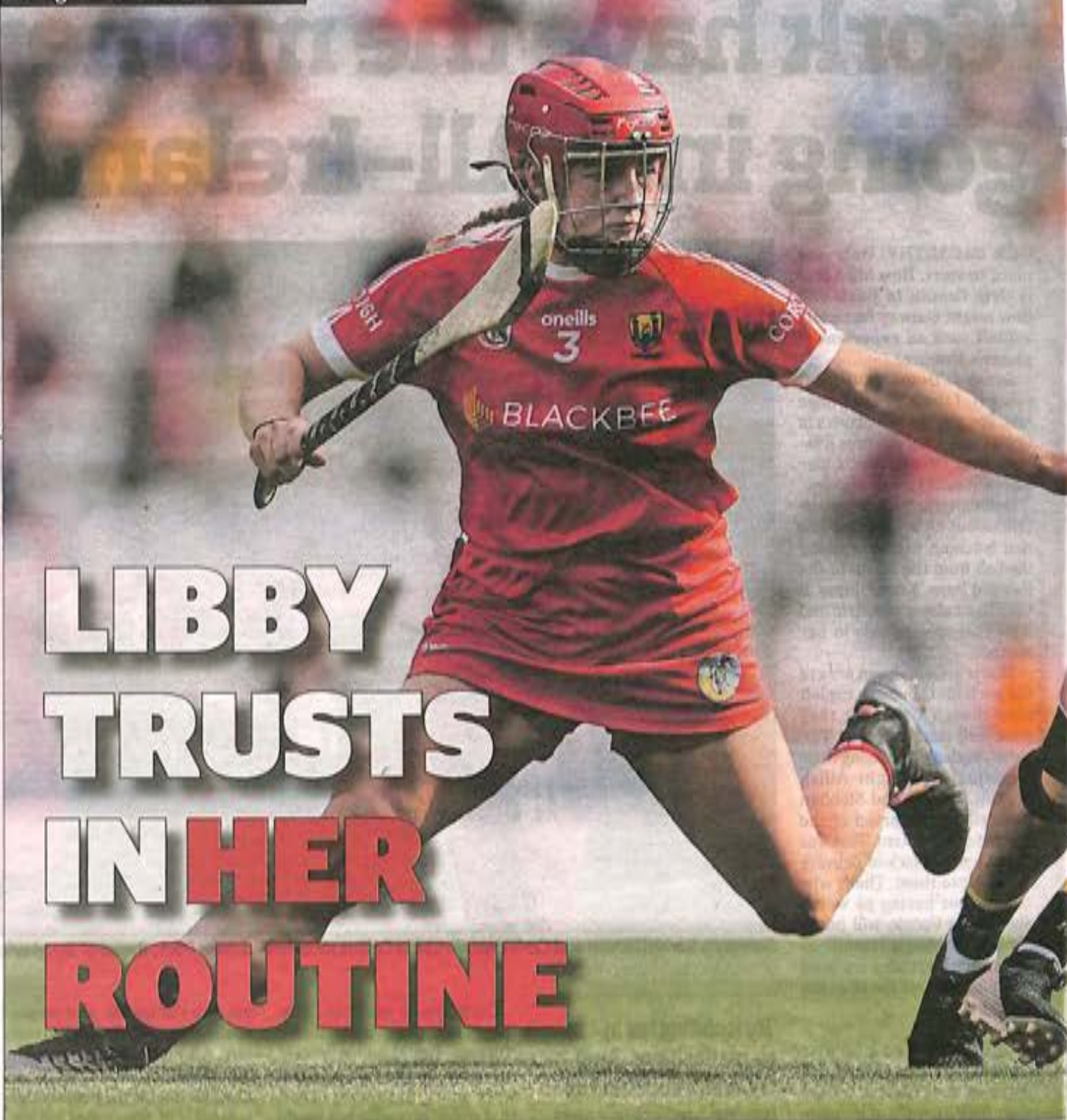
This will be her fourth All-Ireland senior camogie final. In her debut season, 2016, Coppinger came on as a sub as Cork lost to Kilkenny. The following campaign she started at corner back in the final as the Rebels beat the Cats by a point. In 2018 she started again, this time at centre back, and Cork defended their title. It's no secret she'll start this Sunday's final against Galway in Croke Park (4pm throw-in) and in a different position, again. She's manning the full back slot these days.

'It's a bit of a new role, all right,' she says.

'There is a bit more pressure back there. You can fumble a ball out the field and it's not the end of the world, but if you fumble back there it's a lot more dangerous. You want to stay as close to your goal, too.'

'Amy Lee in goal has been phenomenal. She has really led us. It's definitely reassuring when you have Amy back there, telling us "if you mess up a ball then I have

Cork full back Libby Coppinger tackles Katie Power of Kilkenny during their All-Ireland semi-final.



# LIBBY TRUSTS IN HER ROUTINE

you covered'. That's a great support to have. If you make a mistake no-one will give out to you, we are all human and we are all trying our best.'

Mistakes have been few and

far between for Cork in this run to the All-Ireland final. The Rebels topped their group that also included Waterford, Dublin and Down, keeping two clean sheets. Then came the

dramatic 0-15 to 1-11 All-Ireland semi-final win against Kilkenny at Croke Park on August 29th, as Linda Collins scored the injury-time point to dethrone the champions and

catapult the Rebels back into a first senior championship final since 2018. That was a huge result for a Cork team that had watched on as Kilkenny and Galway contested the last two

Courcey Rovers' Fiona Keating was named player of the match in the 2020 county final.



## Courceys buzzing as Linda, Saoirse and

BY KIERAN McCARTHY

SARA Hayes is a Courcey Rovers legend. She played in nine All-Ireland camogie finals and won five senior medals. She's GAA royalty and knows all about the big occasions. The former Cork star will be back in Croke Park this Sunday, supporting the Rebels in their quest for glory that will be spearheaded by three of her own club members.

The Courceys trio of captain Linda Collins (24), Saoirse McCa-

rthy (21) and Fiona Keating (20) have all played key roles in Cork's journey to the biggest game of the camogie calendar. They were also key when Courceys won the club's first-ever county senior camogie championship in 2020, and they're all now important cogs in the Rebel juggernaut.

'Those three are always present in the club, you see them all the time down at the pitch, they come to the younger teams' training sessions so there is huge pride in Courceys right now,' Hayes says.

**'Linda sets up a lot of scores, too, and I don't think she gets the credit for that' – Sara Hayes**

'Having Linda as captain is an amazing honour, too, that's the fruits of the county win last year. What I would have done to be captain of the senior team leading into an All-Ireland final'

Hayes knows the Courceys trio well. She has coached them all. She has seen them all light it up at club and county levels – and she's not surprised that all three have made an impact, with Keating a real threat in attack.

'Fiona is a very effective player. She does a huge amount of work around the field. At club level she gets more scores but her role is different at county level. She's so strong and so fast. You wouldn't believe how fast she is unless you are the one that has been left be-





### 'It's better to keep the week as normal as you can' – Libby Coppinger

ing in 2019 and in 2020. For other counties that doesn't seem like too long at all, but for us those two semi-final losses were so close, only a puck of a ball in both years, so it was huge to get over the line this time.

'It's always close with Kilkenny and it was great to be back on the right side of the result. It was a huge relief, but we know the job isn't done. We need to put in a performance against Galway on Sunday but we have taken a huge boost.'

Coppinger knows the threat the Galway attack carries. Their inside forward line is lethal, she says, so the West Cork woman will have to be on her toes. Cork boss Paudie Murray has no fears though.

'Libby has played very well this season and you can see how she has matured as a player. She is playing with far more composure than she had before but she is 25 years old now and in that age bracket where you expect players to step it up – and she has. She is a better player now than she was last season,' Murray explains.

Coppinger feels ready, too. She's been here before. All-Ireland finals in Croke Park. Big occasions. The Colum's woman is at home on the big stage.

That experience is priceless as we move closer to throw-in. She will have time to herself, too, as she drives from home to training this week.

Coppinger is the farthest Cork player west and makes the journey to the city on her own. She likes that, too. It's a bit of time to herself.

'I like having the time up and down on my own, to get you feeling right. I stayed in Cork one night for a morning session and I felt like I was nearly half asleep the next day because I didn't have the drive up on the morning to wake me up!' she says.

There's a long drive for the Cork team on Sunday morning when they set out for Dublin and Croke Park, but it's a similar routine to the semi-final against Kilkenny, so nothing new there.

Coppinger will take it all in her stride. She knows the heavy lifting is done now and it's about fine tuning before Cork take centre stage, determined to wrestle back a crown they haven't worn since 2018. Full back Coppinger is key to this mission.

She's been here before and has the medals to prove it.

**Cork's Libby Coppinger and Isobel Sheehan celebrate the semi-final win against Kilkenny.**



finals. The Rebels showed great character to battle back from two points down in the final minutes.

'We still have plenty to work on but that was a massive re-

sult for us,' Coppinger says.

'It was like we had a block getting over the semi-finals the last few years, los-

## Fiona set to light up Croke Park

hind,' Hayes explains.

Saoirse McCarthy was handed a new role at wing back this season, and has excelled, too, says Hayes.

'Saoirse is a wing forward for the club and has played mid-field. She has always been a runner. It's the way Cork are setting up now, they have running wing backs,' Hayes explains.

'It's an ideal position for Saoirse, she is a runner and really matches Laura Hayes on the other side. I'm delighted she

has done so well and she has really settled in there because it's a position she wouldn't have played in before. Croke Park really suits her too, a big pitch.'

Then there is Linda Collins, the Cork captain dropped to the bench for the semi-final but who came on to remind everyone of how good she is with a strong cameo and the winning point in injury-time.

'Linda is superb. I know she had an impact off the bench but I'd love to see her start on

Sunday,' Hayes says.

'It's important to have impact off the bench, of course, but I think Croke Park is a pitch that suits Linda's speed. She is very good to find the space and she's faster than people think. She is cute out in her play. Linda sets up a lot of scores, too, and I don't think she gets the credit for that. People are watching who put it over the bar, not who gave the pass.'

Courtesy supporters will depart en masse for Sunday's final

in Croke Park, and Hayes will be there too. She knows all about these big days in GAA HQ, so any advice?

'Don't overthink it and just enjoy it,' she says.

'I went to nine All-Irelands and, I'll be honest, I took it too seriously at times, especially the first few. What I'd say now is enjoy it all, enjoy the puck-around beforehand, enjoy the atmosphere in the dressing-room, embrace it all and express yourself.'

## Small details make the big difference,' explains Cork boss

BY GER MCCARTHY

PAUDIE Murray insists Cork must produce their best performance of the year to have any chance of overcoming Galway in Sunday's All-Ireland senior camogie final.

The Cork manager is on record, since the beginning of the season, at stating Galway were one of the favourites for this year's senior title.

When the counties clashed in the league semi-final in June, Galway won 1-19 to 1-17 after extra time, but Cork boss Murray didn't learn anything that he didn't already know about the Tribeswomen.

'We have played them a number of times over the last two or three years and Galway are a phenomenally strong squad,' Murray says.

'You just look at their bench and that is the clearest indicator to how strong Galway are. You have players like Anne Marie Starr, Tara Kenny, Roisin Black, Niamh McGrath, Rebecca Hennelly and Noreen Cohen all potentially sitting on their bench.

'Look, I have already said it. Cork will be up against it. We are a very, very young team and will have to play out of our skins to have any chance of beating Galway.'

Cork go into Sunday's final off the back of a confidence-boosting All-Ireland semi-final win as they dethroned reigning champions Kilkenny – that was a big result for this Cork team.

'I think our players can take confidence from the win over Kilkenny,' Murray says.

'They showed a lot of character. Sometimes, players look for evidence (of their ability) and it was there that day. They should be better prepared for Galway from that point of view.

'Looking at it ourselves afterwards, there were certainly areas of that game that we were not happy about. We would need a massive improvement ahead of the next day. That's what we are looking for, improvements in certain areas.

'We are saying to the players that it needs to be personal bests in the All-Ireland final to have any chance. That's what we are going after rather than an-

thing else.'

Murray knows the relevance of small marginal gains, too. Those gains are what make the difference at the business end of any All-Ireland camogie championship.

'Absolutely, it is getting the minute details right that gives you a chance,' Murray notes.

'We are going into this game the same way we went in against Kilkenny and the other games. We will just concentrate on ourselves. A lot of this Cork team are very young. Being down Orla Cronin is a huge, huge loss so it is just a case of concentrating on ourselves and producing a performance that will give us some sort of a chance.

'I think we have improved with every game. The team has developed away nicely. A lot of the younger players are starting to improve. I go back to what I said earlier, we need to play out of our skins to have a chance here. This is a very experienced Galway team with five or six players over 30 years of age. Those girls might be looking at retiring in the near future as well so there is extra incentive on their side too to win this All-Ireland. So, yes, it is going to be tough.'

Murray, in his tenth season in charge, has experienced plenty of highs and lows as Cork camogie senior team manager but does he actually get to enjoy All-Ireland final days?

'Not really because you are probably in a zone,' Murray admits.

'It is important, from a management point of view, that you don't move out of that zone. You know very little of what's going on outside that zone. It comes down to, if you win you are happy and if you don't you are not. I suppose I have experienced both so you just have to take things on the chin and move on. That's always been my view.'



**Cork boss Paudie Murray.**





Cork's manager Paudie Murray with his team after beating Kilkenny in the semi-final. Picture: James Crombie

## Eimear relishes chance to apply sports psychology with Cork

EIMEAR MCCARTHY is the performance coach working with the Cork senior camogie team ahead of their All-Ireland final showdown this Sunday.

Sports psychology has become a huge part in both professional and amateur sports over the past number of years as those with expertise help athletes overcome problems, enhance their performance, and achieve their goals. This can be as true for off the pitch as on it.

Now working towards her accreditation in Sport Psychology Eimear has a strong background.

"I started studying sports science in 2011, completing my bachelor's degree in Sport and Exercise Science in 2015. In my third year I was on work placement where I worked for Team Scotland during their Commonwealth Games and that's where I saw more sports psychology and decided that was the role I wanted to go down. When I finished in UL, I did my masters in sports psychology in Stirling in Scotland.

"Once that was completed, I went to the US for a couple of years and am back home now working towards my accreditation with the association for applied Sports Psychology."

There seems to be added pressure on children to achieve in sport across the Atlantic.

"I think with the cost of college in the US parents might invest more in their kids sport so they can improve. By doing this it can increase their chances of getting a scholarship and helping reduce the cost and the likelihood of student debt, which is massive."

Eimear is working for Athletic Evolution SPT based in San Diego and is working on creating online programs for student-athletes. She also works for Sterling Sport Mindset whose headquarters are in Kansas City.

"This role is focused on providing sport psychology support to clients. We get a lot of athletes or parents who reach out to us and are looking for help in this area."

"While the main focus is on improving sport performance, we have a focus on life outside of sport as well, helping them navigate challenges they face and how the skills they learn for sport can also be applied in their everyday lives."



CAMOGIE

Derek Daly

"It's a really great role and I love being part of such a supportive team."

It was rugby that inspired Eimear to look into the fascinating world of Sports Psychology.

"I used to find place kicking in rugby fascinating even when I was much younger, looking at the routines and how different players have their own ones really interested me."

"I guess at the time I might not have known it was a part of sport psychology, but it was what triggered my interest."

It was another arrow that Cork camogie wanted to bring to their set up. She had a chat with Paudie Murray last April and has been working with the team since.

"I'm extremely lucky in that I love what I do so to be involved with such a great group of athletes is an amazing opportunity. I work primarily on the development of mental skills, such as confidence, intensity management, composure and also developing a positive team environment."

"It is something that needs to be worked on consistently and the relationship you build with the athletes is extremely important and not something that is developed overnight."

"It's not just something you can do in a couple of sessions and expect to have incredible results."

"The most important aspect for me is being able to build a relationship with the athletes you're working with. This relationship and being able to connect with them sets the groundwork."

Where does the future of sport psychology lie?

"I'd really love to see sport psychology integrated into the undergar systems."

"Where athletes might have access to skills or strength and conditioning coaches, they'd also have sport psychology support."

"It can be extremely beneficial in life outside of sport as well which is something I think is equally as important when working with younger athletes."



Fans Méabh and Róisín O'Shea from Midelton with Cork players Méabh Cahalane and Linda Collins with the new Cork Camogie jerseys, sponsored by BlackBee. Picture: Darragh Kane

# Chasing title number 29

## CAMOGIE

Derek Daly

CORK go in search of a first All-Ireland senior Camogie title in three years at Croke Park on Sunday knowing that it will take a monumental 60-minute performance to brush aside the difficult challenge that is likely to come from 2019 champions Galway.

This is the seventh meeting of Cork and Galway in the camogie final since 1993, with the 4-8 to 1-15 Galway win in 1995 being their sole decider win in this period over Cork. For the record Cork's wins came in 1993, 1997, 1998, 2008 and 2015.

It is their first meeting in a final since 2015, when an Aisling Thompson led Cork side triumphed on a scoreline of 1-13 to 0-9, although it has to be acknowledged that Galway are a different animal six years later. They were beaten in last year's All-Ireland final, when they went down by three points to a battling Kilkenny side, so their motivation levels are bound to be through the roof on Sunday, as they look to win back the title they won by beating Kilkenny by 3-14 to 0-17 back in 2019.

Eleven of the Galway side that started the 1-13 to 0-12 semi-final victory over Tipperary were on the starting side that won the All-Ireland back in 2019, so they are clearly a very settled unit at present. And if anything they look even stronger now given that Siobhán and Orlaith McGrath, who did not feature back in 2019, are now spearheading the Tribeswomen's attack, with them running at their markers at every given opportunity.

Cork certainly have plenty of experience dotted throughout their side, but it must be accepted that there has been more of a turnover of players in their ranks in the last few years than up in Galway.

Altogether there are eight survivors from the last Cork side to win an All-Ireland when they defeated Kilkenny by 0-14 to 0-13 back in 2018. They are Pamela Mackey, Libby Coppinger, Chloe Sigerson, Ashling Thompson, Amy O'Connor, Orla Cronin, Katrina Mackey and Hannah Looney, while captain Linda Collins, off the bench, makes it nine.



Cork's Katrina Mackey is tackled by Waterford's Keeley Barry. Picture: Eddie O'Hare

While this shows that Paudie Murray has a great deal of experience to call upon, it also tells us that there has been a significant turnover in the intervening three years, and especially so in defence where Pamela Mackey and Libby Coppinger are the sole survivors. In saying that this young rearguard only shipped 1-4 in the semi-final, despite huge pressure from Kilkenny at times, so at present there is little sign that this is a weak point of this Cork team.

It is interesting to note that, while Cork have won four of the last seven titles, that only one of their All-Ireland winning captains will be in action on Sunday, in the form of midfielder Ashling Thompson, as Anna Geary, Rena Buckley and Aoife Murray are all now retired. This is a quick illustration of the experience drain from the Cork set-up, although ultimately Sunday must be seen as an opportunity for the newer members of this side to make their own history and write their own names into the rich annals of Cork camogie history.

Of course, inevitably the build-up to the decider is going to be dominated by the availability, or not, of key centre-forward Orla Cronin, after her sending off against the Cats. Given she struck six of Cork's 15

points on the day she would be a huge loss. The red card meant that Cork had to win the hard way, down to 14 players for those crucial last few championship minutes, and indeed, it was fitting that it was captain Linda Collins, sprung from the bench, who landed the winning score three minutes into injury time.

Obviously, if Cronin wasn't cleared to start then Collins can come straight in, although Cronin would be dearly missed in terms of free taking, although Katrina Mackey, who scored six frees earlier in the championship against Dublin, and three against Down, is well able to deputise.

It is also worth noting that Cork's key link player in midfield Chloe Sigerson has considerable experience in this regard, as she slotted three placed balls in the 2018 All-Ireland triumph, while this year in the group stage of the competition she scored three and two frees against Dublin and Waterford respectively.

This one could well go right down to the wire, but Cork's miserly young defence, which has shipped an average of just under 15 points a game in the championship to date should be strong enough to propel the Rebels to a record 29th All-Ireland senior camogie title on Sunday.

Linda Collins st...  
under pressure...  
Niamh Deely of...  
during the sem...  
PHOTO: PARAS O...  
SPORT STYLE



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# Cork bid for number 29

Linda Collins shoots under pressure from Niamh Deely of Kilkenny during the semi-final. PHOTO: PIARAS Ó MIDHEACH/SPORTSFILE



Finbarr McCarthy

The circumstances of Cork's dramatic one point win over Kilkenny in the semi-final was somewhat overshadowed by the harsh dismissal of Orla Cronin in the 57th minute, and as of time of writing she is ruled out of Sunday's final.

"Very harsh and to miss out on an All-Ireland Final, for a player who has never even been booked would be so tough, but look we are in the process of an appeal and hopefully we can get her cleared." That was Cork manager Paudie Murray's take on the possibility and at this stage probability that the Enniskeane player, Cork's sole All-Star will miss out.

As for her absence, Paudie had this to say: "Orla is a key player for us, our free taker but her overall work rate, running off the ball and distribution are key components of our game."

The manager is thrilled to be back in the final and says the team's character surfaced in the semi-final win. "To be fair we have been building all year and the manner in which they dug out that win was testimony to that, they stuck to the game plan and never

panicked."

Paudie knows though that Sunday will represent another serious test against a very good Galway team. "They have quality all over the field and we will need another big performance, probably our best all year if we are to win."

For Libby Coppinger Sunday can't come soon enough for the dual star. "Can't wait now really, it's been a busy few months with both codes but to be looking forward to an All-Ireland Final is great."

Libby is part of a defence that has excelled throughout the season. "It's been good, the girls have worked very hard, we stick to our job, do what practise in training and trust ourselves at all times."

Galway beat Cork in the league semi-final after extra-time - a match they could have won. "We could and probably should have won, but we just didn't do enough, hopefully we will have learned for that game and put it to right on Sunday."

Meabh Cahalane is from a family that been so busy of late with club and county, it's hard to keep track of their activities, but the Meabh wouldn't have it any other way.

"It's been unreal of late but look that is what we play for and to be getting ready for the final is special especially after the year that everyone has had and hopefully we can end the

season on a high."

The drama of the semi-final win was not lost on a defender of her quality. It was "nervous near the end but delighted to get over the line, especially when we lost Orla and to get the win shows that the work we are putting is paying off."

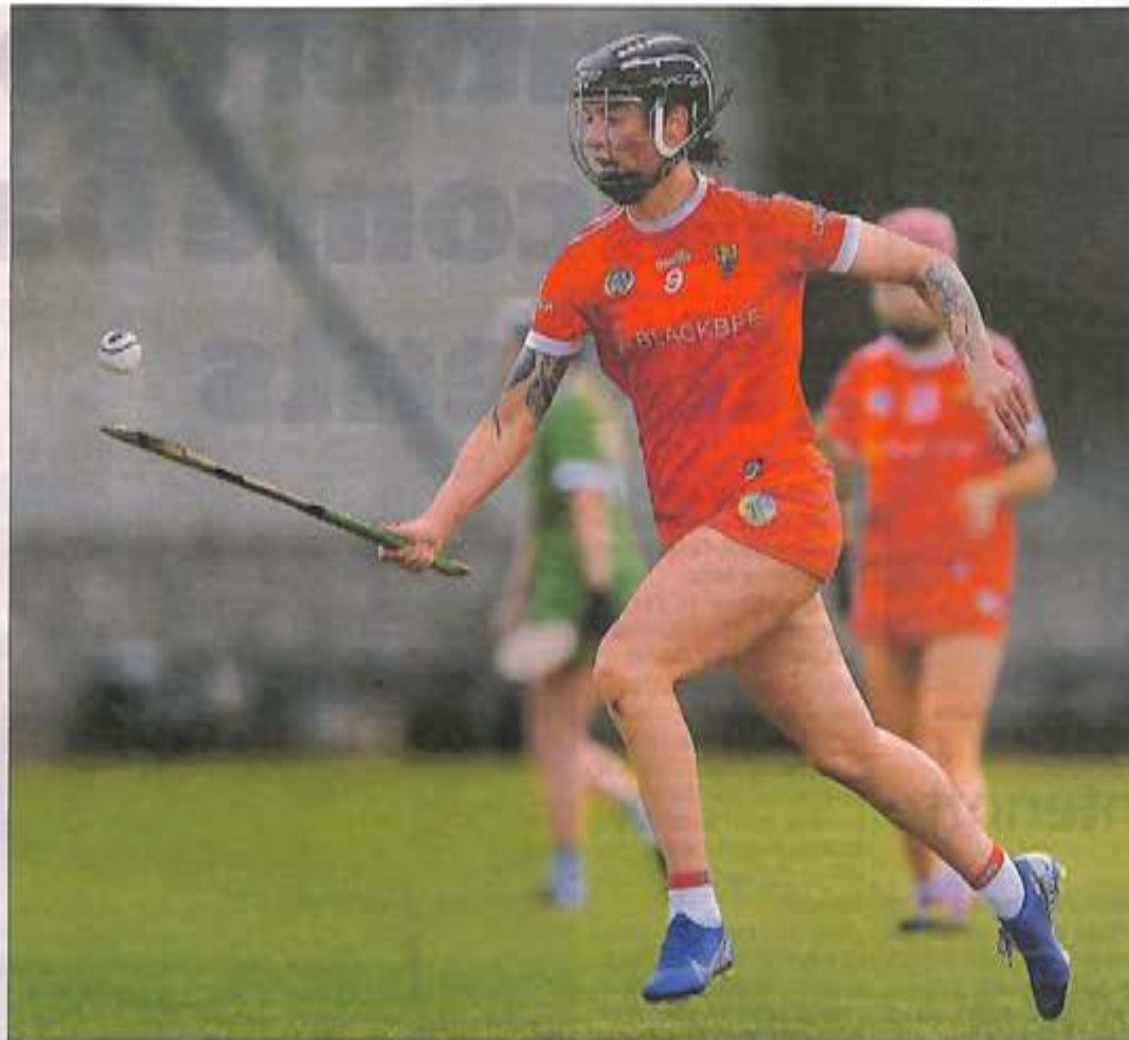
Like everyone in the squad, Meabh is aware of the talent that Galway have. "A very good team, they were champions two years ago, runners up last year and were in the league final a few months ago, so we know what to expect on Sunday and we will need to be at our best if we are to win."

When Courcey Rovers were crowned county champions for the very first time last October, Linda Collins was appointed captain and it's a role she has relished. "It's a great honour to be captain and to do so in the All-Ireland will make it a very special day for my club, but the focus is all on the game and our desire to win."

Linda was introduced in the semi-final and made an immediate impact and if it's the same on Sunday, her approach will not change. "Our aim at the outset of the year was and always is to win the All-Ireland and now we are sixty minutes away from our goal. If I don't start that will not change my approach, it's a team game and like everyone else I am part of that team and will do whatever is required."

That is the character that Paudie was talking about.

Cork had a relatively easy group and were always favourites to progress



Ashling Thompson during the Munster Senior Camogie Final win v Limerick. PHOTO: MATT BROWNE/SPORTSFILE

which they did and while at times they were unimpressive, there was a good reason as Paudie explains: "We trained very hard during the group stages on the basis that when it came to preparing for the knockout phase, we could work on our skills and game plan, and that paid off."

As for the return of Pamela Mackey to the panel: "A no brainer really. Once she indicated her availability, we were delighted to welcome back such a quality player, her

experience alone is a huge addition as was shown in the semi-final."

The semi-finals were of contrasting nature clearly the Cork v Kilkenny contest was of a much higher quality than Galway's win over Tipperary, but then last four games are for winning - the quality is irrelevant, it's a result business at that stage.

That said Galway always looked comfortable and while they also lost a player, Dervla Higgins looks set to be cleared to

play, as she was put off in a case of mistaken identity.

Defensively they looked solid but at times vulnerable when Tipperary ran at them, but they have good players in Emma Helebert, Sarah Dervan and Siobhan Gardiner.

The midfield battle should be interesting. Ashling Thompson and Hannah Looney will look to get the better of Niamh Hanniffy and Niamh Kilkenny, but the Cork pair are Trojan workers and could edge this tussle.

The McGraths Siobhan and Orlaith along with Aoife Donohue will look to test the Cork defence but will have their work cut out against this unit who have been superb all year.

Apart from Cahalane and Coppinger, Laura Treacy has hardly put a foot wrong, Laura Hayes equally so, while as mentioned by Paudie the return of Pamela Mackey has strengthened the unit, in front of Amy Lee who has grown in confidence with every outing.

The Cork attack can be very dangerous but the possible absence of Orla Cronin reduces their options and with it scoring power.

Katriona Mackey, Chloe Sigerson and Fiona Keating are dangerous forwards as is Amy O'Connor who has yet to hit the heights she is capable of. The attention she gets from some opposing defenders largely goes unpunished, hopefully on Sunday she will get that and could revel in the space that Croke Park provides.

Cork play a very structured and measured game, it's based on retaining possession, playing through the lines and running off the shoulder. It can be very good, but when it breaks down as it has and will, they can be punished, but they persist and it has paid dividends.

The availability of Orla Cronin would certainly make Cork the warmest of favourites, but on the basis that she will not play, it will alter the makeup of the attack, with Katriona Mackey likely to assume the free taking duties.

Cork will still be favoured and while Galway won the league semi-final, that's a game Cork could and should have won, but they will have learned the lessons and look well equipped to bring the O'Duffy Cup back to Leeside for the first time since 2018, and a 29th in total.

It's a 4.15pm throw-in on Sunday and it's live on C103. Go for it girls!





Paudie Murray and Niall Collins with the Cork camogie team after beating Kilkenny.

Picture: Inpho/James Crombie

# Analysing a labour of love

## CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

BEHIND every manager is a strong backroom team. While we usually only see the front man, which is the case with Cork camogie manager Paudie Murray, he has trusty lieutenants such as statistician Niall Collins.

Recording the stats in games isn't just a box-ticking part of the job — it is a key part in improving decision-making.

Dunmanway native Collins, who is also a cousin of Murray, has played a huge role in recent seasons.

A software architect, he first became involved in 2014 and, since then, the Rebels have secured four senior All-Ireland titles and one intermediate title.

"Paudie contacted me when he was putting together his management team for that year and asked if I'd like to get involved."

"My background is in computer software development and that, coupled with my interest in a wide range sports, led me to get involved in the role."

"Before that, Paudie was in charge of the Doheny's football team, where I would have worked closely with him on a lower scale for about a year."

Collins is someone who has a love for Gaelic games and he was delighted with the opportunity to get involved.

"My father has always had a strong influence on me from a GAA perspective and I've grown up loving the sport, so to get the opportunity to work with Cork camogie was something I could not turn down."

"I was delighted to accept Paudie's invitation to join his backroom team," he says.

"An opportunity to work with elite athletes on an inter-county stage and the possibility of being in Croke Park on All-Ireland final day was too good to turn down."

The workload is huge. Long after the games are played, and the hurleys and sliotars are packed away into the boot of the car, Collins is busy ensuring nothing is missed.



Amy Lee, Linda Collins, and Méabh Cahalane in the new Cork camogie gear. Picture: Darragh Kane

It's a hard task, but it is a labour of love and one he takes huge pride in. Listening to him explain the work he does, it is very plain to see his passion for the role and his attention to detail.

"Analysing each game post-game takes about 15 to 20 hours to complete all the coding of the game and then more time to analyse it in further detail."

"The process would include taking multiple camera angles of a game, coding it by using Nacsport software where each player and team event is tracked."

"Thousands of events are tracked each game and this is used as a basis for further analysis."

"Following this process for the last eight years has resulted in building up a large repository of data that is used as benchmarks of performance, assisting with setting team and player targets, and creating a greater understand of performance," Collins explains.

"All these elements help drive the coaching process in creating better decision-makers on the field."

"Along with building up a repository of data, a repository of game videos has also been created from every game through

the years, most games having multiple camera angles to aid the analysis."

"Along with having game videos, after every game each player gets a video of their specific actions in a game for them to self-review and also review on a one-to-one basis with the coaches," he continues.

Collins liaises closely with the team management and also has a team of analysts with him during games to ensure nothing is missed.

"On match day, I am one of three analysts who are actively monitoring the team and players' performances, feeding information back to the management team."

"Conor Weir and Brian Kelleher work with me in coding the games live, and Lenny Browne is on hand to video each of our games from different camera angles," he says.

When you are seen to be making a difference and getting the results, the effort going in it is worth it all.

On Sunday, Collins will take up his customary spot in the stand, away from the hustle and bustle, but very much a huge part of Cork's bid to take their first title since 2010.



# Barcoe steals the show as Cats claim All-Ireland title

**KILKENNY**  
**CORK**

**2-12**  
**0-12**

Magnificent Kilkenny captured the Tesco All-Ireland Minor Camogie final with a superb display at the LIT Gaelic Grounds, Limerick on Sunday evening.

It was Kilkenny's seventh title and the first since 2015.

This was the ultimate team performance, coming one week after Kilkenny had to battle through extra time and a testing encounter against Galway to reach last Sunday's All-Ireland Final.

To defeat Cork, Kilkenny knew that a superior work ethic would be required and at the end of a pulsating sixty minutes the efforts from the Noresiders were decisive.

The skill level from both teams was exceptional. Kilkenny were again the masters with their blocking, hooking and deft touches dispossessing their opponents time after time.

Cork dominated the opening moments of the game scoring a brace of points through Orlaith Mullins and Aimee Morgan.

With Aoife Healy dominating the centre of the Cork defence, Kilkenny had to work hard to get the ball into Sarah Barcoe at full-forward.

The Thomastown star was quickest to a delivery into the Kilkenny attack on five minutes and in a flash she split the posts with a smart strike.

Cork replied with a Ciara Golden point, but two minutes later the hard-working Emma Shortall



Kilkenny's Mairead Corcoran claims a high catch above Orlaith Cahalane of Cork during Sunday's final PICTURE: BRIAN REILLY-TROY/INPHO

narrowed the margin to the minimum.

## GOAL THREAT

Get the ball into Sarah Barcoe was the Kilkenny tactic and on 16 minutes she brilliantly controlled a delivery, turned sharply and shot a great goal.

This saw Kilkenny lead for the first time and the team stayed in front for the remainder of the game.

That goal gave Kilkenny added momentum and they controlled the second quarter with a dominant

defensive display.

The Noresiders kept their opponents scoreless during that quarter and added another point from Sarah Barcoe following a neat Emma Shortall pass.

A brace of Amy Clifford pointed frees close to half-time saw Kilkenny lead 1-5 to 0-4 at the interval.

A brace of substitutions for Cork at the interval saw Eimear O'Brien and Kate Redmond introduced and they gave Cork an edge in the third quarter.

An early Cork attack almost brought a goal and not for the first time a superb Kilkenny defence with Niamh Phelan and Aine Kirwan outstanding kept Cork at bay.

In spite of all the Cork pressing, Kilkenny got the first score of the second half through Emma Manogue, but the next ten minutes saw four unanswered points from the Leesiders to bring the margin back to a point.

The momentum was now with Cork, but back came Sarah Barcoe with a point following yet another Emma Shortall pass to steady Kilkenny once again.

Almost immediately Cork replied through Orlaith Mullins and heading into the fourth quarter the outcome was still very much in the balance.

The game was effectively decided during the opening six minutes of the fourth quarter with Kilkenny notching 1-4 without reply, with Asha McHardy, sub Claire Doherty who made a big impact when introduced, Amy Clifford (free) and Emma Shortall pointing during a dominant period from Kilkenny.

Kilkenny had one hand on the trophy on fifty-two minutes when Emma

Shortall scored a brilliant goal following a brilliant pass from Sarah Barcoe.

The deadly attacking duo scored 2-6 between them (all from play) and even with Cork deploying an extra defender they could not manage the two aces in Kilkenny's attack.

## STOOD TALL

Cork battled bravely to the finish, but they could find no way through a superb Kilkenny defence and goalie Ellie O'Neill who brought off a brilliant save on the call of full time.

This was a display to

savour from Kilkenny with the skill level shown by the players giving the team a decisive edge over their opponents all over the field.

It was the ultimate team performance with star performers in abundance on every line.

The scoring contributions of Sarah Barcoe and Emma Shortall were key with midfielder Emma Manogue and Asha McHardy, when she moved there in the second half, giving Kilkenny a dominant edge when it mattered in this sector.

Every team needs a solid defence and when Cork pressed forward in the second half in pursuit of a goal, all six Kilkenny defenders were magnificent.

Cork, the reigning champions tried hard, and very hard at times, but their efforts could not match the Kilkenny work ethic and superior skills in a highly entertaining final as the Cats won a first title since 2015.

**Kilkenny** - Ellie O'Neill; Laois Nolan; Niamh Phelan (JC); Rachel Whelan; Aine Kirwan; Mairead Corcoran; Sontae Jackson; Emma Manogue (0-1); Anna Doherty; Gráinne Glynn; Asha McHardy (0-1); Emma Shortall (1-2); Sarah Barcoe (1-4); Sarah O'Donnell (JC); Amy Clifford (0-3, Frees). Subs - Claire Doherty (0-1); Rachel Brennan.

**Cork** - Ciara Hurley; Avril Cashman; Miriam Healy; Cliona Lynch; Emma O'Driscoll; Aoife Healy; Olivia McAllen (C); Meabh Murphy; Ciara Golden ((0-1); Aimee Morgan (0-2); Rose Murphy ((0-1); Orlaith Mullins (0-2); Leah Hallinan; Meabh Ring; Orlaith Cahalane (0-2). Subs - Eimear O'Brien ((0-3, 0-2 Frees & 0-1 '65); Kate Redmond (0-1); Grace Ryan; Jenny Doyle; Lucy McNulty.

**Referee** - Ray Kelly (Kildare)



Emma Shortall goes on the attack for Kilkenny as she skips past the challenges of Cork's Meabh Ring and Ciara Golden



## INTERMEDIATE CAMOGIE ALL-IRELAND FINAL 2021

# Cats hoping to claim elusive Intermediate All-Ireland title



**ROBERT CRIBBIN**  
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It's set to be a bumper GAA weekend at Croke Park with the last four adult inter-county titles up for grabs.

Most of the country's eyes will be fixed on the football decider on Saturday when Mayo and Tyrone collide in the hope of recapturing the Sam Maguire Cup while Cork and Galway will meet 24 hours later for the senior camogie title.

After the Kilkenny camogie side relinquished their senior All-Ireland title a couple of weeks ago, it now means all local eyes will be fixed on the intermediate team that will face Antrim in the precursor to the senior decider on Sunday afternoon with a 2.00pm throw-in. It's a stage that the Kilkenny second string side haven't been used to in recent years as it will be their first Croke Park appearance since 2016 when they emerged victorious over Cork.

The Cats will face off with Antrim and after losing out to the Ulster side in the round robin series of the championship, John Scott's team will start as underdogs.



Kilkenny manager John Scott celebrates with his players after beating Meath in the All-Ireland semi-final PICTURE: KEN SUTTON/INPHO

"We are happy to be in an All-Ireland final and it was the dream at the beginning of the season in truth and while things midway through the year didn't really go our way, we still got there eventually and it took a lot of hard work to get us into this position and we can only see what happens in the final now," Kilkenny boss Scott admitted.

"The day Antrim defeated us in the opening game of the

championship proved to be a positive experience for everyone involved in the team.

"We went up and back on the bus and the girls were naturally disappointed that they were beaten so the fact that they have knuckled down and won three games since that day shows the character in this Kilkenny squad and it's only a coincidence really that it's

Antrim that stand in the way again."

Antrim ran out four point winners on a 2-13 to 1-12 scoreline over the Cats in Dunloy back in July but Scott and his management team feel they learned a lot of valuable lessons on that day.

"I've been around a long time and I keep on saying that you learn far more in defeat than you would for a victory so once the lessons are

learned it can prove to be a very positive exercise and you should be better prepared for when you face the opposition again so we will find that out on Sunday.

"Both the Antrim game and the league defeat to Meath provided us with question marks surrounding the side but they have grown into themselves in the last few weeks."

Kilkenny have had a solid look throughout the championship thus far and apart from the Kildare game where they were comprehensive winners, they have looked the part in close victories over Cork and Meath and the effectiveness of the forward line has really come to the fore with the likes of Sophie O'Dwyer, Danielle Quigley, Hannah Scott and Ciara O'Keeffe playing crucial roles.

### SOLID BASE

"All the way up from midfield to number 15 they are all moving well and getting their scores and maybe the fact that we don't rely on any one player to get the scores is working to our advantage.

"There is no star in our ranks so we just get on with it

and we are delighted with the way the girls are playing at the moment and hopefully that can continue," Scott said.

Throughout the 2021 campaign the Kilkenny boss has always mentioned how he wants the Kilkenny intermediate team to act as a development panel to the senior side and even though they are within 60 minutes of an All-Ireland title, Scott maintains that is still the number one objective.

### MAKING THE STEP UP

"The main plan for all of these girls is to hurl senior for Kilkenny and while there is a few of them on the extended squad at the moment, there is always room for a few more and they will all be aiming to impress Brian Dowling this weekend.

"The step up from minor to senior is so big that the intermediate provides the perfect middle ground for young players to learn their trade and even at this grade it's a fast game and it's tough stuff so it is very beneficial to a lot of players.

"It's a development squad for the senior panel really and you have the perfect mix here with experienced girls that are on the fringes of the senior squad added in with the blend of talented youngsters so it's gave the girls a great experience.

"For us and the here and now, it's a chance for the girls to win an All-Ireland title in Croke Park and it's a fabulous opportunity for them as they may never have a better chance again."

After something of an injury hit year, Kilkenny will travel to GAA HQ with almost an entirely fit squad to choose from as they hope to recapture the intermediate crown and build on the huge progress that they have made as a squad throughout the year.

"Everyone is available to us and while we did have a few long term knocks we are hoping they will all be ok for us on the day, Aisling Curtis broke her wrist in the Antrim game but she's out of a cast now and we'll see how she gets on in training before the final and apart from her we have everyone else fit and ready to go."

The game takes place in Croke Park at 2pm and will be live on RTE 2.

**Kilkenny have a number of players hovering around the senior squad and they will hope to make that experience count**

John Scott pictured alongside his management team ahead of Sunday's All-Ireland final PICTURE: WILLIE DEMOSEY







# INTERMEDIATE CAMOGIE ALL-IRELAND FINAL 2021

## 'Camogie is the most important thing in my life'- Danielle Quigley

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She may only be 19 years of age and a relative novice in intercounty camogie but Danielle Quigley has quickly established herself as a vital cog in the Kilkenny side.

The corner has scored freely throughout the league and championship and will go to Croke Park full of confidence this weekend.

The James Stephens star is only in her second year on the Kilkenny squad but like the majority of the side she has played with the county all through the ranks and is looking to make a name for herself in the All-Ireland final.

The softly spoken youngster is looking forward to the biggest day in her short camogie career thus far and admits it's been a great experience as she eyes up the Antrim challenge.

"It's the best feeling in the world reaching an All-Ireland final and for us even advancing from the group stages was a big thing and I've only been on the panel for two

years but I know everyone else has been waiting on this for a long time so it's good.

"It was hard coming in and being so young to try and break onto the team but the girls have really helped me along the way and I'm happy to play anywhere on the team really," she said.

"There was five or six girls that came into the squad at the same time and we all came off the minor panel directly into the intermediate squad so we all had each other's backs and the transition was made all the easier as a result.

"We are all great friends in this Kilkenny dressing room and you would be a bit terrified when you first joined the squad as it's a big step up from minor but all the girls have been so nice and it was like we were in the squad all year so it was great.

"Winning as a team brings everyone closer together and it's a great feeling going to training every night and we can't wait for the final now."

There is a lot to be said for the exuberance and enthusiasm of youth and the



Danielle Quigley (fourth from left) alongside her fellow Kilkenny players PICTURE: WILLIE DEMPSEY

facial expression on Quigley's face told you how excited she is to be playing in Croke Park for the first time.

While that is a big deal for any player, prior to the semi-final she had never played in UPMC Nowlan Park either so it's all about steps on the ladder for the Kilkenny star.

"I played in Nowlan Park

for the first time in the semi-final win over Meath and that's despite it being a home venue and a lot of the girls hadn't played there before either so going to Croke Park is a bigger step again and while it could be daunting we are treating it as a once in a lifetime opportunity as we may not get another chance like this

again and it's such a great achievement for us to even get this far so we will do whatever it takes to get the win," Quigley added.

It will be the second time in a number of weeks that Kilkenny will meet Antrim and while it's on a much bigger stage Quigley knows it's a chance for them all to showcase their talent.

"After losing to Antrim a few weeks ago we feel like we have nothing to lose and we can just go for it and at least we know what to expect and our preparation has been good so it's all about playing to the best of our abilities on the day.

"We want to prove that we are a better team and we need to get our performance right to do that so it's up to us to step up to the mark.

"Playing in an All-Ireland final will be one of the biggest days of my life so far and some people might think that's mad but camogie is the most important thing in my life and it's all I do.

"Playing camogie at intercounty level is a huge commitment and you have to enjoy it and while there will be nerves hanging around, there will be excitement there as well and we can't wait for it.

"Everybody on this team wants to play senior camogie with Kilkenny and that's the ultimate aim for everyone so Sunday gives us the perfect opportunity to show what good players we are."

## Phelan has eyes set on more success for the Cats

Robert Cribbin  
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Even at only close to her mid-20s Dicksboro star Ciara Phelan would still be classed as one of the more experienced players on the Kilkenny intermediate side.

Phelan has tasted success with her club in the recent past while she was also part of the extended Kilkenny senior panel that claimed the O'Duffy Cup last December.

She was also in Croke Park two weeks ago when Kilkenny were defeated by Cork so she is well accustomed to the big occasion and in comparison to a lot of her teammates she has seen it all before and is taking the big occasion in her stride.

"The final has come up on us quite quickly after the victory over Meath in the semi-final and we are training hard at the moment.

"It's very exciting for us all and we are really looking forward to it."

Kilkenny have had an up and down 2021, with the good mixed in with the bad but the

recent championship defeat to Antrim in Phelan's mind at least has proven to be a real turning point for the side.

### LESSONS LEARNED

"It's been a tough year for us and the league was a bit disappointing with the way it ended in losing to Meath in the quarter-final after conceding a last minute goal but we came out in the championship and performed well after the initial defeat to Antrim.

"A lot of factors contributed to that Antrim defeat and on the way back from that game we had a big chat between us and we knew there was a lot of stuff on and off the pitch that we needed to get sorted and resolved and the way things have developed it was a good time for us to lose really as we look back on that as the turning point for us in the championship," she said.

"If we had beaten Antrim that day I'm not sure we'd have got this far as we have made a lot of changes since that defeat and we've developed more leaders on



Ciara Phelan will have a big part to play for Kilkenny on Sunday

and off the pitch as a result and we knew ourselves we needed to be better than that.

"We followed it up by putting up a big score against

Kildare and the wins over Cork and Meath have given us confidence as we look ahead to the All-Ireland final."

Phelan has excelled in a roaming midfield role

throughout the championship and while she is part of a very youthful squad, there is still plenty of experience overhanging from Kilkenny's last success at the grade.

"We were in a final back in 2016 and Niamh Leahy and Sarah Walsh were starters for Kilkenny that day while myself and a few others were on the panel like Sophie O'Dwyer and a lot of the girls are only after coming from minor so there's a few more experienced players that have played in Croke Park but everyone is a leader on the team.

"Tiffany Fitzgerald stood up when needed the last day and the likes of Ciara O'Keeffe and Danielle Quigley all have their moments so age doesn't really matter to us, it's about the ability in each of the players and there is plenty of that."

### FAMILY SUCCESS

It's already being a hugely successful week in the Phelan household with Ciara's younger sister Niamh one of the joint captains on the

victorious Kilkenny minor team that beat Cork in the All-Ireland final at the LIT Gaelic Grounds in Limerick on Sunday night and in a bit of good symmetry, the win was the Cats first at that level since 2015 when Ciara and a number of her intermediate teammates tasted success against Tipperary.

The majority of those Kilkenny players have had a barren spell of success ever since that minor title but with the help of a number of the senior panel they are hoping that they will be celebrating on Sunday evening.

"It's great to be in the final and a lot of the senior girls would have said to us that you don't want to be in that situation in a Croke Park dressing room after a defeat as it's very upsetting but they are all there and they are all supporting us so it's going to be great to have them behind us when we go to Croke Park on Sunday and hopefully we can come away with the win."

Here's hoping for a double success for the Phelan sisters on Sunday.



ALL-IRELAND SENIOR CAMOGIE FINAL

# Galway must step it up to regain the All-Ireland title

■ Cork to present Tribeswomen with their toughest challenge of the championship

■ EANNA O'REILLY

ALL roads lead to Croke Park on Sunday, with the Galway senior camogie team poised for a third consecutive All-Ireland final appearance, and a showdown with Cork (4.15 pm).

It is the first time the Tribeswomen have achieved this feat since 1998, under the stewardship of Tony Ward. Galway followed up their maiden All-Ireland win in 1996 with two narrow final defeats to Cork in consecutive years.

Galway have been boosted this week by a successful appeal against the red card awarded to defender Dervla Higgins on All-Ireland semi-final day. Centre back Emma Helebert has not been sanctioned for her part in an incident with Tipperary player Eimear Loughman. Meanwhile, Cork are hoping to appeal a red card picked up by centre forward Orla Cronin in their semi-final win.

The Leesiders had a rousing victory over defending champions Kilkenny in the penultimate stage by a single point. Cork captain Linda Collins grabbed the winning score in injury time. Like Galway, the Rebels go into the final with four wins from four championship matches this season. Cork defeated Dublin, Down and Waterford, prior to their semi-final win over Kilkenny.

Cork have experience and leadership in the shape of centre back Laura Treacy, midfielders Hannah Looney and Ashling Thompson, as well as forwards of the calibre of Chloe Sigerson, Cronin, and Amy O'Connor. Cork also have classy individuals such as Laura Hayes, Fiona Keating, and the Mackey sisters, Pamela, and Katrina, in their side.

Galway manager Cathal Murray is well aware of the scale of the challenge faced by his side in Sunday's final.

"Cork are a serious, serious team and they have massive quality all over the pitch. They came through a huge battle with Kilkenny which will stand to them. They look hungry and very sharp. There's never anything between us. Two points in the league, three points last year [in the championship] and one point in the semi-final in 2019. It's a huge challenge for us, but we have belief in ourselves and experience in finals from the

last two years. So, we're really looking forward to it."

For all of Cork's strengths, Galway have the ability to at least match them in most areas of the field. Galway's back six are in outstanding form and they will be stronger than any defence Cork have faced this year. At their best, Shauna Healy, Sarah Dervan and Dervla Higgins are an almost impenetrable full back line.

Siobhán Gardiner, Emma Helebert (arguably the top centre back in the country this year) and Caitríona Cormican are an outstanding half back trio, with more than enough pace and guile to deal with Cork's talented half forwards.

At the other end, the ability of Galway's full forward line, particularly if they can keep three inside during the game, is enormous. Full forward Ailish O'Reilly has a track record of outstanding big day performances. O'Reilly's goals were vital in Galway's last two All-Ireland victories in 2013 and 2019. Either side of her, the McGrath sisters, Siobhán and Orlaith, are a lethal combination with a tremendous ability to link up close to goal.



**HANNIFFY WOULD SURELY BENEFIT FROM A RETURN TO THE HALF FORWARD LINE WHERE SHE HAS SO OFTEN BEEN EFFECTIVE**

Meanwhile, Mullagh star Aoife Donohue is potentially heading for the player of the year award. A consistent performer for many years, Donohue has had a particularly outstanding season (scoring 2-15 from play), with her move to the half forward line allowing for full utilisation of her incisive running and tremendous scoring ability.

There is no doubt that Galway hold many aces in their hand, but there are also areas of the field where they must be more effective in Sunday's final. In general, Galway will need some greater influence in the midfield and half forward units. Given their opponent's style of play, this will be particularly impor-



The Galway senior camogie team management ahead of Sunday's All-Ireland final against Cork at Croke Park. From left: Cathal Murray, Robbie Lane, Mike Finn, Therese Maher, Donal O'Rourke and Orla Kilkenny. PHOTOS: JOE O'SHAUGHNESSY

tant for their title ambitions.

Cork's playing style incorporates an effective and well-refined running game. The Leesiders typically transfer possession from defence to attack by carrying through the lines, and Galway can expect runners to come at them from deep throughout the game. Cork's midfield and half back line are significant sources of strength and are vital to their overall effectiveness as a team.

Galway must at least break even here to stop the Rebels from controlling the game. Given Cork's proficiency in retaining possession, should they dominate the puck outs and breaks in the middle third, their attacking play will be very difficult to stop as they rarely misuse or waste any ball.

Galway's ball winning and physicality must be more effective in the midfield and half forward zones. It's an area the Tribeswomen have struggled in recently, without an effective balance of personnel. Donohue's brilliance must be complemented by a couple of players with aerial strength, along with ball winning and scoring abilities.

Sarah Spellman and Catherine Finnerty demonstrate excellent work rate, but they have lacked effectiveness in this regard. Niamh Hanniffy has also struggled for form in midfield, being substituted in the last two matches.



Galway players Ailish O'Reilly, Rachel Hanniffy and Rebecca Hennelly who are geared up for the Cork challenge.

Hanniffy would surely benefit from a return to the half forward line where she has so often been effective. The Oranmore/Maree player would provide the sort of physicality and aerial strength required by them. Ardahan's Rebecca Hennelly is another option, having made an effective appearance off the bench against Tipperary.

Meanwhile, Niamh McGrath's exclusion from the starting line-ups has been difficult to comprehend, given her current form and suitability in an area of the field in which Galway have struggled to dominate. McGrath's presence would undoubtedly strengthen Galway, with herself and Niamh Kilkenny forming an effective midfield partnership in their last meeting with Cork, in the

league semi-final.

Six time All Star Kilkenny is guaranteed to be a strong and influential presence, but Galway must avoid a scenario where she is overburdened in the middle third, as has happened at times. A lack of consistent scoring threat from half forward line (Donohue aside) has also placed a greater burden on Kilkenny to contribute on the scoreboard. Cork will most likely assign the experienced Ashling Thompson to do a marking job on Galway's midfield veteran.

Given that the Tribeswomen have the components to be successful in every other area of the pitch, reducing the influence of Looney and Thompson, along with Hayes, Treacy and Saoirse McCarthy, is likely to be the de-

ciding factor in the outcome of the game. It remains to be seen if Murray will make changes in this area based on current form or stick with those who have featured in the run up to this year's All-Ireland final.

Cork on current form are a level above any opposition Galway have faced in this year's championship. The Westerners must be effective in every line, in a manner in which they haven't managed in recent matches.

Should Galway's effectiveness be limited to certain lines of the pitch, it won't be enough to defeat a top-class Cork side. Barring a change to the recent script and form book, it appears to be advantage Cork heading into Sunday's O'Duffy Cup decider.



ALL-IRELAND SENIOR CAMOGIE FINAL

# McGrath is on red alert for squad's Croke Park challenge

■ Sarsfields' star keen to seize the day

EANNA O'REILLY

IF Galway are to bring the O'Duffy Cup home across the Shannon on Monday, the success of their dangerous full forward line will undoubtedly be a huge factor. The scoring threat of Galway's inside line is one which could really catch fire against Cork at Croke Park, and the prospect of that happening on camogie's biggest day is an exciting one.

A key player for the Tribeswomen in that part of the field is Sarsfields star Orlaith McGrath, who along with her sister Siobhán and Galway stalwart Ailish O'Reilly, is part of a line which has the potential to light up the final. Nevertheless, the 2020 All Star is well aware of the

task involved in taking on the Cork full back line, who have generally been very solid this year.

"Cork defend really well as a unit. They are always well organised, and they know how to carry out their roles. They are individually good defenders, but they have a very effective system and how well they work together is a huge strength for them. We will have to work really hard to get anything off them."

Galway have already experienced a victory over Cork in 2021, which came in the league semi-final after extra time on 13 June. Having suffered a dislocated shoulder early in that game, it was a day of mixed emotions for McGrath. Thankfully however, her return has been a smooth one and when she took

to the field against Kilkenny on July 31, she knew she was ready for action.



**YOU CAN EITHER LOOK AT THIS GAME AS A HUGE OPPORTUNITY, OR LET THE PRESSURE GET TO YOU**

"I was lucky that the pain wasn't too severe when it happened. Thankfully, Clodhna (Costello) was there to pop the shoulder back into place. I had to take seven weeks out, but I knew I

could target getting back some time in the middle of the championship. When you look at what happened to Heather (Cooney) and Carrie (Dolan), they weren't so lucky, and the timing was awful for them. I had that target of getting back and when I came on in the second half against Kilkenny, it felt like I was never away. It [the shoulder] has been fine since, thank God."

At times, she has operated within a two-player full forward line alongside her sister Siobhán, with O'Reilly drifting out-field on various occasions. Whether it's this approach or a more traditional full forward line which is preferred on Sunday, McGrath is prepared for every eventuality and is ready to

adapt during the game to whatever formation the team may need to use.

"Your role does change a bit, depending which way we play [in the full forward line]. When you're playing with two, you probably end up getting the ball more often on the outside, moving out from goal. Playing in Croke Park, you know you have that extra space and that's where we try to play the ball into."

"We know we have to fight for every delivery coming in, it's our job to make the ball stick, and we're responsible for taking our scoring chances when we get them."

The familiarity of having two of her sisters (Niamh and Siobhán) involved is a positive during the lead up to these occasions,

but as far as she is concerned, individual preparation is always paramount.

"Only you, yourself, can get your head right at the end of the day. You have to generate your own confidence from how you prepare as an individual, and trust everyone else to do the same. If everyone does that, you know you're in a strong position as a team. You can either look at this game as a huge opportunity, or let the pressure get to you. You have to realise that these chances don't come around too often and you have to make the most of them while you can."

No doubt, if Orlaith McGrath shines for on Sunday, she has the ability to be a match winner for Galway in their pursuit of a fourth All-Ireland crown.



Looking ahead to Sunday's All-Ireland senior camogie final at Croke Park are Galway players, from left: Orlaith McGrath, Sarah Spellman, Noreen Coen and Siobhan McGrath.

# Dervan knows big display needed to beat Cork

EANNA O'REILLY

AHEAD of her third consecutive All-Ireland Final as team captain, Galway full back Sarah Dervan is taking the same approach to Sunday's match which has served her well throughout her career. She believes maximum performance comes from within, and being focused on internal strengths, rather than those of the opposition.

"I think the most important thing is to know your own strengths and try to play to the best of your ability. As a team, we can only control what we do and what we can bring to the game. After that, I think it's important that we really enjoy the occasion. Days like this don't come around too often and it's really important to enjoy the day as much as you can."

With her experience, Dervan can speak with authority on the ecstatic feelings that come with



Galway captain Sarah Dervan, with fellow defenders Emma Helebert and Siobhan Gardiner.

All-Ireland victories, as well as the deflating sense of loss after final defeats. The Mullagh full back suffered the taste of defeat in 2010, 2015 and in last year's final, while 2013 and 2019 brought glorious days of unrestrained joy. Dervan knows both sides of the coin very well and

appreciates the unique nature of All-Ireland Finals.

"Every year is different. We have a few players with All-Ireland's, but we don't look back to 2019 or any other year. Every year, you have a different panel, you have different opponents and different challenges,

and this year's All-Ireland is going to be a new challenge for us. I can't really compare our team [in 2021] to any other year, only that every team has their strengths, and we will be trying to bring ours into this game as much as possible."

It's clear to anyone who

watches her play that Dervan is a natural born leader. A hugely committed, composed and dominant presence in the number three jersey, it comes as no surprise that she has been such a successful team captain. A positive and enthusiastic personality, she can always be heard vocally encouraging her teammates throughout games. Her enthusiasm is evident in how she relishes every minute on the pitch.

"You have to enjoy every session, all the time you spend playing and training. We have a great panel and the management have given everyone more game time this year, which has really stood to us. We've been hit with a few injury blows [Heather Cooney and Carrie Dolan] but everyone in training has been putting their hands up for a starting jersey, which has been great to see."

Since their first All-Ireland clash in 1939, Galway and Cork

have met eight times in O'Duffy Cup deciders. Only once, in Galway's maiden All-Ireland win in 1996, have they triumphed over the Rebels on All-Ireland Final day. History will count for little however, when the ball is thrown in on Sunday, and having beaten Cork in their last three meetings, the Rebels should hold no fear for Dervan and her colleagues. Nevertheless, she is mindful of the capabilities of Paudie Murray's side.

"Cork are a brilliant team; they had a great win over Kilkenny the last day. We know ourselves we'll need to be at our absolute best to beat them. It's always a tough challenge [against Cork] but we're really looking forward to it now. We took the positives from the Tipp game, and we are working really hard to improve from that performance. It's all about performing on Sunday now and, hopefully, we'll be on the right side of it at the final whistle," she concluded.



# All-Ireland win would crown fairytale Kilkenny return for Fennelly

**Aiming for double joy:** The Kilkenny intermediate side are looking to follow up on the minors' success

**Daragh O'Conchuir**  
sport@kilkennypeople.ie

Leann Fennelly was more than satisfied with her seven All-Ireland medals and had long given up notions of wearing the black and amber to which her family is congenitally joined it seems.

Yet here she is, after six years in Australia and 13 years after claiming the last of that cherished septet of mementos, back in the Big House as a key element of the Kilkenny side taking on Antrim in Sunday's All-Ireland Intermediate Camogie Final (2pm).

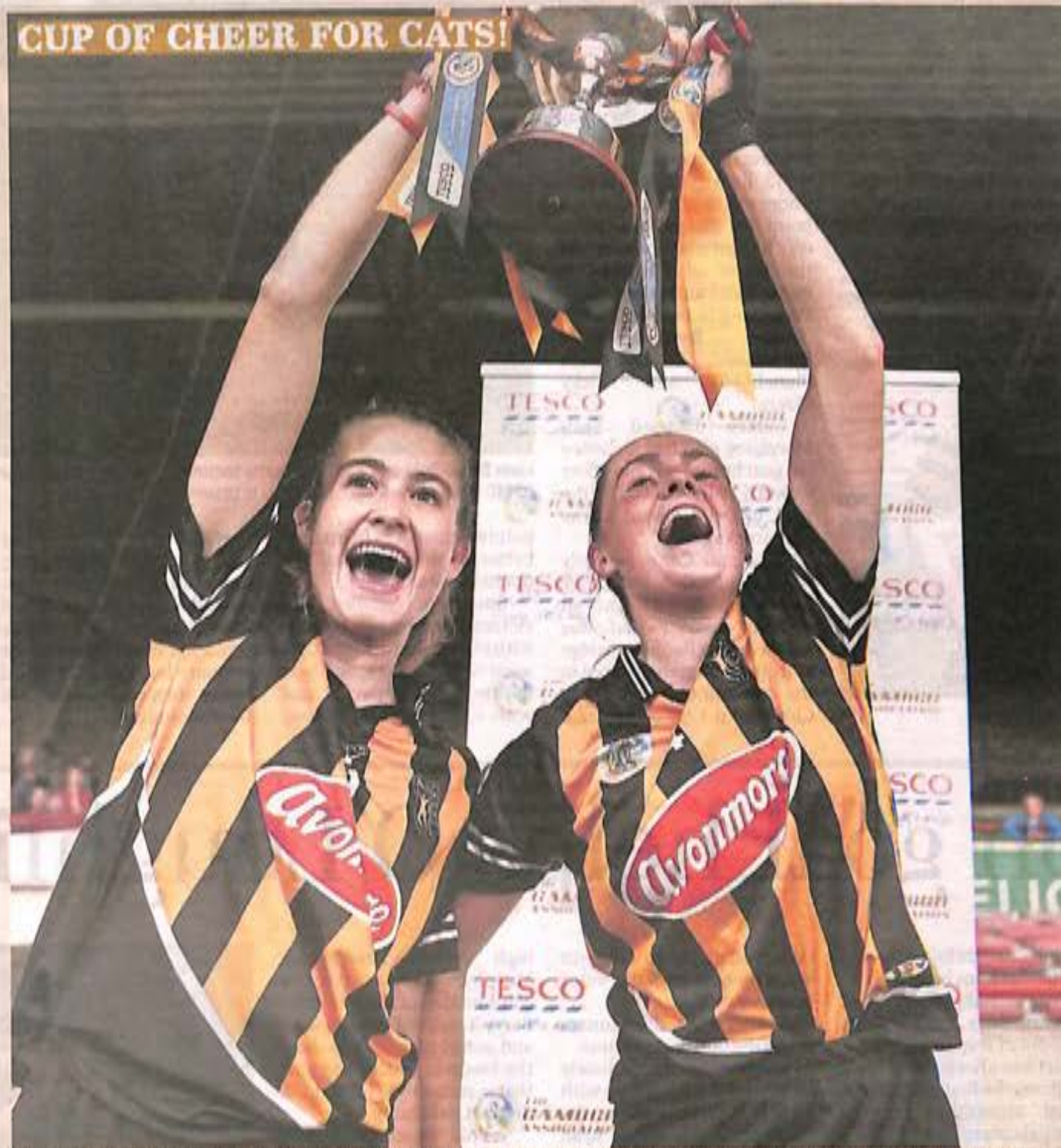
She already has a National League Division 1 medal this year as part of the senior squad but climbing the Hogan Stand steps again would be a fairytale.

Fennelly's last Celtic Cross came in this grade in 2008 and having also gathered three minor, one U16, one colleges' and the rarest of Nore side possessions, one junior ladies' football trinket by then, the teenager must have thought that it would be raining medals for the rest of her days.

Now 31, the Mullinavat titan has been acquainted with reality but is in no way scarred by it. Her love of camogie never waned as she was part of three All-Ireland final defeats at senior level, including when she was captain in 2014.

By then, she had her trip Down Under planned, initially for the customary 12 months, with the intention to return and step back into life as she had left it, sport included. But she loved it there and Gaelic games remained central to her existence. It was only last year that the hiatus ended.

"I left October 2014 and I got back then in August 2020," reveals Fennelly. "I was always coming back. (My sister) Lorraine was



Co-captains Niamh Phelan and Sarah O'Donnell lift the cup after Kilkenny's thrilling victory over Cork in the Camogie Association Minor A All-Ireland final at the Gaelic Grounds, Limerick. See inside for match report PICTURE: BRIAN REILLY-TROY/INPHO

expecting Iarlaith in April so I just stayed on an extra six months. Just to give them a hand, with being far away from home and that.

"I had planned on coming home for (my cousin) Elaine's wedding that July but ended up staying on an extra couple

of months because that was cancelled (due to Covid).

"I was going for one and yeah sure each year it turned out, 'Ah I will give it another year, I will give it another year,' and it ended up being six. Fairly early on into the first year I realised, 'This year

is going to go quite quickly.' In my head half way through the first year I said I'd do two but you get sucked in.

"The irony of it all, if it wasn't for the GAA I wouldn't have made as much friends and stayed as long. The GAA probably kept me longer in

one way. It's massive over there if you are into GAA, it's a big community and a great community to be involved in."

Based in Sydney, she played both codes with Central Coast and had a blast, paying the bills by working in

recruitment. Fortunately, she found work straightforward to come by when stepping back on Irish soil and is in a similar role for Glanbia.

Playing for Kilkenny again never even entered Fennelly's mind. She had been away too long and the game had moved on too far. Getting back into the groove with the club was more than enough. But when the call came, she didn't need to deliberate.

"It was January, I wasn't expecting it at all to be honest with you. Tommy Shefflin rang asking would I be interested and it didn't take long to decide. It's a great, great set-up. Two strong teams there as well. I was like, 'Yeah,' straight away.

"It was definitely welcome as well with Covid. It was a lifesaver in some ways. You were in the category that you could get out training sooner. It definitely wasn't on my radar to go in. I was definitely thankful the opportunity was there. It's been great I can't believe the year is nearly coming to an end.

"Coming in, my level of fitness wouldn't have been good compared to the girls on the back of winning the (senior) All-Ireland.

The management (said), 'We have a plan in place, just have patience. You will get fit, it won't happen overnight.'

They were very good in that respect. They were like, 'Just trust us, there is no need to be going off doing extra yourself. Just stick to the plan.' It felt like nearly overnight, I was like 'I'm fit!'

Before, you are training and (wondering)... there is probably a number of elements to that, my age and running around the younger ones.

But it happened, it felt like overnight. All of a sudden I was fit enough to compete."

Fennelly will be hoping to more than compete as she chases another title.



**HARD LUCK GIRLS:** Cork lost to Kilkenny last weekend in the Camogie Association Minor A Final at the LIT Gaelic Grounds in Limerick on a score of 2-12 to 0-12 after a great season. Cork's Clara Golden is pictured pursued by Sontae Jackson of Kilkenny.





## All-Ireland Senior Championships Finals Croke Park Stadium Sunday, September 12th 2021

**Armagh v Wexford**  
12:00pm  
Premier Junior Final

**Kilkenny v Antrim**  
2:00pm  
Intermediate Final

**Cork v Galway**  
4:15pm  
Senior Final

*Sinead McNulty*  
Sinead McNulty, And Sturthorpe



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**ISPCC**  
Childline

### Fáilte ón Uachtarán

I am delighted to welcome you all here this afternoon to Croke Park Stadium for our showcase event in the intercounty Camogie calendar.

The All-Ireland Camogie Finals Day is a day that every player wants to be a part of. To represent your county on the biggest stage is the highest achievement one could ask to experience.

I would like to congratulate all six counties on their run to today's finals and to congratulate all teams that have taken part and made this year's Championships the excellent spectacle that we have witnessed so far. Our four Provinces are represented today, each county carries with them the support of their provincial counterparts – Leinster, Connacht, Munster and Ulster strong in voice and strong in Camogie.

Our All-Ireland Premier Junior Championship Final features two teams who have become familiar with each other over the last four months. For the fourth time in as many months,

these two counties will face each other, and it is the second occasion this year that they are meeting in a final, with Wexford claiming the Littlewoods National League Division 3 title just a few months ago.

The three previous fixtures between the sides have all ended with small margins of victory for the Leinster side. However, Armagh are the defending Champions, and they know from recent memory what is involved in winning an All-Ireland title. The Kay Mills Cup named after one of our greatest ever Camogie player's will have worthy winners today.

In the Intermediate Championship Final, Antrim will face Kilkenny to determine who takes home the Jack McGrath Cup. It is the second occasion that these teams are meeting in this year's Intermediate Championship, having been drawn together into Group 2.

They played against each other in the opening weekend of Championship action, with the Ulster side taking home

the win on that occasion, but today's fixture will be a much different affair, as the prize on offer brings with it a pressure that is not experienced on the opening weekend of Championship action.

Our All-Ireland Senior Championship Final sees Galway face Cork in a Championship final that is certain to light up the dreams of Camogie fans around the country. Both Cork and Galway secured their place in the All-Ireland Final showdown in dramatic fashion, with Cork captain Linda Collins slotting over the winning point in injury time in their Semi-Final, while Galway required a late goal to secure their place in today's final.

I would also like to congratulate Mayo on their recent victory in the Nancy Murray Cup, an enthralling match against Tyrone saw them lift their first adult silverware – well done Mayo!

Today, we will witness the stars of our sport light up Croke Park, and we hope that our supporters enjoy being back in the stands of Croke Park watching our showcase event live. Nothing beats being there.

I would like to thank our supporters who have travelled today, we encourage you to raise your voices, the silence grounds are gone most importantly continue your support of female sports. We are rightly proud of Our Game, you will see today it played at the highest level, skills that will astound, excitement that will enthrall and role models that will shine.

May I take the opportunity to highlight the support of our charity partner ISPCC Childline and the vital work they do for families and children all over Ireland. We are delighted to play our part in highlighting and supporting the excellent work they do. Camogie is built upon communities, we have a duty to give back to all our communities where we can and we are grateful that we can do that at this time with ISPCC Childline. We believe that together we can show how #WeMakeADifference in people's lives.

Finally, I would like to say congratulations to the match officials that have been appointed to take charge of the three games today. Without our match officials, we would have no games, so I want to thank all of you for your hard work and dedication throughout the year. Your appointments today reflect your expertise, commitment and many sacrifices given to officiating our matches, so I would like to wish each of you and your teams the very best of luck. I hope you and your families all enjoy this special occasion.

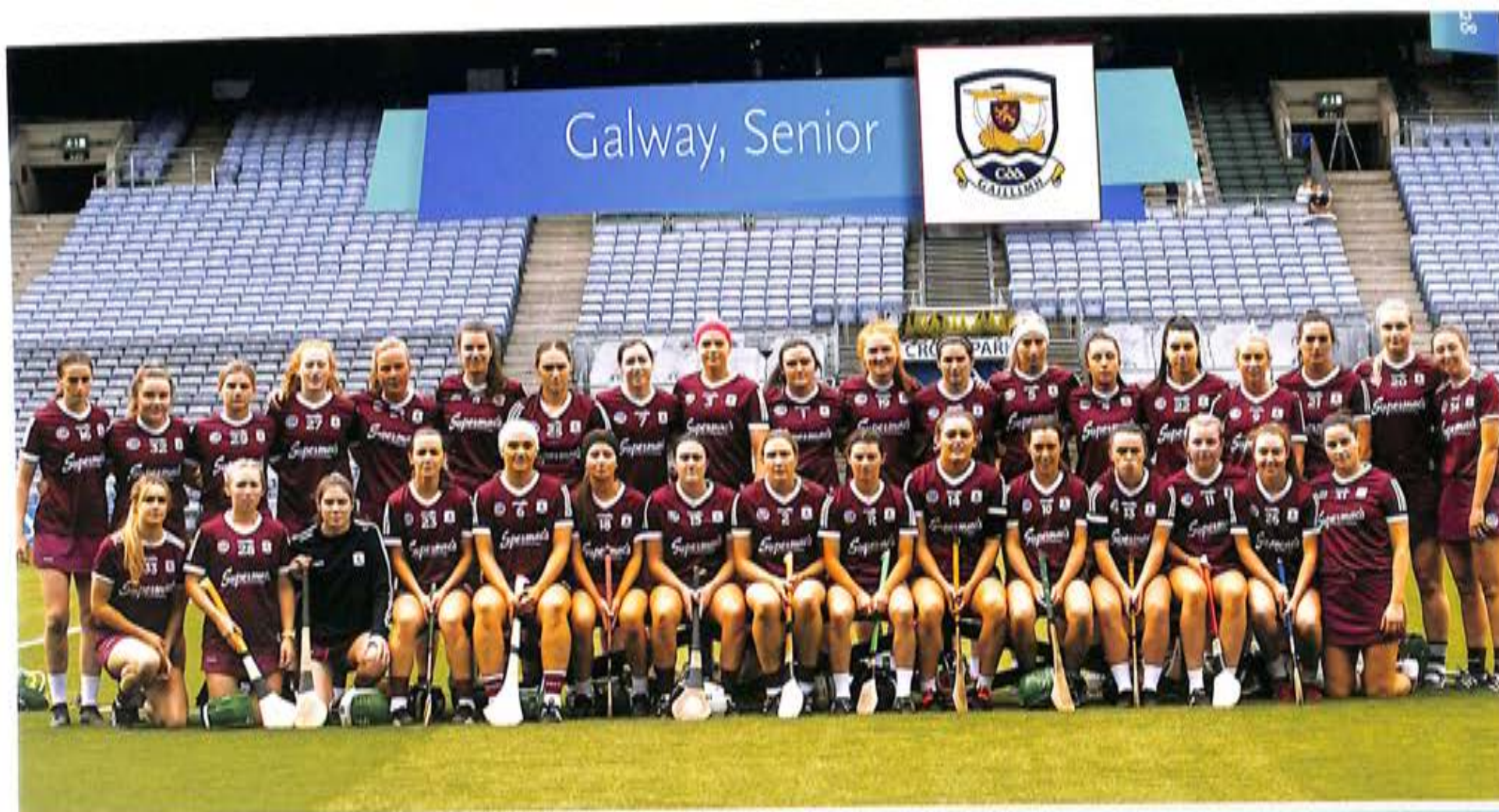
It is time for the next chapter in the history books to be written – it's time to shine.

Go n-éirí libh go léir!

*Hilda Breslin*

Hilda Breslin  
Uachtarán, An Cumann Camógaíochta





**Back Row Left to Right:**

Laura Glynn, Maria Cooney, Clara Donohue, Aine Keane, Clara Murphy, Niamh Hanniffy, Carrie Dolan, Catriona Cormican, Sarah Dervan, Sarah Healy, Róisín Black, Ann Marie Starr, Siobhan Gardiner, Dervla Higgins, Rebecca Hennelly, Niamh Kilkenny, Niamh McGrath, Maria Cooney, Lisa Casserly

**Front Row Left to Right:**

Ava Lynskey, Laura Ward, Elisha Brederick, Noreen Coen, Emma Helebert, Tara Kenny, Ailish O'Reilly, Shauna Healy, Aoife Donohue, Orlaith McGrath, Catherine Finnerty, Siobhan McGrath, Sarah Spellman, Rachel Hanniffy, Molly Mannion



**GALWAY  
SENIOR TEAM**

Gaillimh - Marún agus Bán



**IONADAÍ**

16 Laura Glynn L. Mag Fhloinn Sarsfields	21 Niamh McGrath N. Níe Craith Sarsfields	26 Rachael Hanniffy R. Ní hAinbhith Oranmore-Maree
17 AnnMarie Starr A. Starr Kilmonor	22 Rebecca Hennelly R. Ó hIonnaile Ardrahan	27 Aine Keane A. Ní Catháin St Thomas
18 Tara Kenny T. Ó Conaorth Sarsfields	23 Noreen Coen N. Ní Chadhaín Athenry	28 Laura Ward L. Ní an Bhaud Sarsfields
19 Róisín Black R. Níe Giolla Dhuibh Oranmore-Maree	24 Clara Murphy C. Ní Murchadha Clarinbridge	29 Clara Donohue C. Ní Donnchadha Mullagh
20 Maria Cooney M. Ní Cuana Sarsfields	25 Carrie Dolan C. Ní Dólaín Clarinbridge	30 Heather Cooney H. Ní Cuana St Thomas

**TEAM OFFICIALS**

Manager	Cathal Murray
Coach	Donal O'Rourke
Goalkeeping Coach	Colm Callanan
Selector	Orla Kilkenny
Selector	Mike Finn
S and C	Robbie Lane
S and C	John Duggan
Selector	Therese Maher
Stats	Conor Ryan
Kit Man	Micky Grealish
Kit Man	Frank Duane
Nutrition	Emma Brennan





**Sarah Healy**  
Goalkeeper  
St Thomas  
Student



**Shauna Healy**  
Defender  
Ardrahan  
Podiatrist



**Sarah Dervan (Captain)**  
Defender  
Mullagh  
Industrial Engineering



**Heather Cooney**  
Defender  
St Thomas Primary  
School Teacher



**Emma Helebert**  
Defender  
Ballinderreen  
Midwife



**Siobhan Gardiner**  
Defender  
Ardrahan  
Dentist



**Tara Kenny**  
Defender  
Sarsfields  
Quality Technician



**Aofis Donohue**  
Midfield  
Mullagh  
Secondary School Teacher



**Catriona Cormican (Vice Capta)**  
Midfield  
Cappataggle  
Doctor



**Niamh Kilkenny**  
Forward  
Pearses  
Secondary School Teacher



**Rebecca Hennelly**  
Forward  
Ardrahan  
Gym Owner/Personal Trainer



**Niamh Hanniffy**  
Forward  
Oranmore-Maree  
Secondary School Teacher



**Carrie Dolan**  
Forward  
Clarinbridge  
Student



**Ailish O'Reilly**  
Forward  
Oranmore-Maree  
Primary School Teacher



**Orlaith McGrath**  
Forward  
Sarsfields  
Secondary School Teacher



**Laura Glynn**  
Goalkeeper  
Sarsfields  
Athletic Therapist



**Siobhan McGrath**  
Forward  
Sarsfields  
Student



**Noreen Coen**  
Forward  
Athenry  
Secondary School Teacher



**Roisin Black**  
Defender  
Oranmore-Maree  
Primary School Teacher



**Clara Murphy**  
Midfield  
Clarinbridge  
Secondary School Teacher



**AnnMarie Starr**  
Midfield  
Killimor  
Supply Chain Planner



**Catherine Finnerty**  
Forward  
Mountbellew-Moylough  
Student



**Niamh McGrath**  
Midfield  
Sarsfields  
Solicitor



**Sarah Spellman**  
Forward  
Sarsfields  
Student



**Rachael Hanniffy**  
Defender  
Oranmore-Maree  
Student



**Dervla Higgins**  
Defender  
Athenry  
Athletic Therapist



**Laura Ward**  
Defender  
Sarsfields  
Student



**Clara Donohue**  
Defender  
Mullagh  
Behaviour Therapist



**Maria Cooney**  
Defender  
Sarsfields  
Secondary School Teacher



**Aine Keane**  
Forward  
St Thomas  
Student



**Lisa Casserly**  
Defender  
Ballinderreen  
HR Recruitment Consultant



**Molly Mannion**  
Forward  
Mountbellew-Moylough  
Student



**Mairead Dillon**  
Forward  
Kilconieron  
Student



**Ava Lynskey**  
Forward  
Ardrahan  
Student Teacher



**Elisha Broderick**  
Forward  
Castlegar  
Student



## Cork, Senior



CORCAIGH

Bord Gáis Energy



Back Row Left to Right:

Katrina Mackey, Amy O'Connor, Aisling Egan, Izzy O'Regan, Cliona Healy, Hannah O'Leary, Laura Treacy, Laura Hayes, Ellen Murphy, Ashling Thompson, Pamela Mackey, Fiona Keating, Molly Lynch, Hannah Looney, Saoirse McCarthy, Ciara O'Sullivan.

Front Row Left to Right:

Aoife O'Neill, Cliona Dooley, Isobel Sheehan, Emma Murphy, Linda Collins, Amy Lee, Orla Cronin, Meabh Cahalane, Chloe Sigerson, Libby Coppinger.

CORK  
SENIOR TEAM

Corcaigh - Dearg &amp; Bán



## IONADAÍ

16. Molly Lynch  
M. níl Liossigh  
Sarsfields
17. Ellen Murphy  
E. níl Mhuirichú  
Sarsfields
18. Aisling Egan  
A. níl hAngán  
St Finbarrs
19. Aoife O'Neill  
A. níl Néill  
St Finbarrs

20. Cliona Dooley  
C. níl Dooligh  
Ballinora
21. Izzy O'Regan  
I. níl Rhuagáin  
Ballygarvan
22. Cliona Healy  
C. níl hÍl  
Aghabullogue
23. Isobel Sheehan  
I. níl Shiochán  
Eire Og

24. Emma Murphy  
E. níl Mhuirichú  
Glen Rovers
25. Hannah O'Leary  
H. níl Laoire  
Ballincollig

## TEAM OFFICIALS

- Bainisteoir:** Paudie Murray
- Coaches:** Kevin Murray, Matthew Twomey, Teddy O'Donovan
- Performance Analysts:** Niall Collins, Conor Weir, Brian Kelleher
- Strength & Conditioning:** Kevin Dunne
- Logistics / Maor Camán:** Damien Murray, Anthony O'Neill
- Physiotherapist:** David Niblock
- Performance Coaches:** Barry Corkery, Eimear Mc Carthy
- Nutritionist:** Eoin Galvin
- Liaison Officer:** Marian Mc Carthy
- Maor Uisce:** Marian Mc Carthy
- Sports Science Intern:** Carole Ryan
- Liaison Officer:** Marian Mc Carthy



## Player Profiles - Cork

Senior



**Aisling Egan**  
Defender  
St Finbarrs  
Student



**Cliona Dooley**  
Defender  
Ballinora  
Student



**Amy Lee**  
Goalkeeper  
Na Plarsaigh  
Client Associate



**Cliona Healy**  
Forward  
Aghabullogue  
Student



**Amy O'Connor**  
Forward  
St Vincents  
Project Manager



**Ellen Murphy**  
Defender  
Sarsfields  
Teacher



**Aoife O'Neill**  
Defender  
St Finbarrs  
Student



**Emma Murphy**  
Forward  
Glen Rovers  
Student



**Ashling Thompson**  
Midfielder  
Milford  
Personal Trainer



**Fiona Keating**  
Forward  
Courcey Rovers  
Student



**Chloe Sigerson**  
Forward  
Killeagh  
Biochemist



**Hannah Looney**  
Midfielder  
Killeagh  
Engineer



**Ciara O'Sullivan**  
Forward  
Newcestown  
Student



**Hannah O'Leary**  
Forward  
Ballincollig  
Student

## 2021 All-Ireland Championships Finals



**Isobel Sheehan**  
Defender  
Eire Og  
Student



**Meabh Cahalane**  
Defender  
St Finbarrs  
Accountant



**Izzy O'Regan**  
Forward  
Ballygarvan  
Customer Success



**Molly Lynch**  
Goalkeeper  
Sarsfields  
Student



**Katrina Mackey**  
Forward  
Douglas  
Post Doctoral Researcher in UCC



**Orla Cronin**  
Forward  
Enniskeane  
Physio training



**Laura Hayes**  
Defender  
St Catherines  
Student



**Pamela Mackey**  
Defender  
Douglas  
Chemist



**Laura Treacy**  
Defender  
Killeagh  
Nurse



**Saoirse Mc Carthy**  
Defender  
Courcey Rovers  
Student



**Libby Coppinger**  
Defender  
St Colums  
Depositary Officer



**Linda Collins**  
Forward  
Courcey Rovers  
Teacher



## Preview

## The Titanic Tribe or the Rebel Revelation

by Sarah Stanley

## Cork v Galway

It has been six years since these two counties battled it out against each other for the most coveted prize in the Camogie calendar. They have met plenty of times since that final showdown, but never for the Championship crown.

In 2019, they met in the All-Ireland Championship Semi-Final, and only one point separated the teams at the final whistle. On that occasion it favoured the Tribeswomen, who just knocked out the reigning champions and put four consecutive semi-final heartbreaks behind them. That victory spurred Galway on to win the final, their first championship title since 2013.

Last year, they featured in the same championship group, with the Tribeswomen claiming the victory to earn top spot, and both teams still securing qualification to the next stages. Galway didn't stop there and went on to make two more Senior finals thereafter. But it all comes back to that 2019 semi-final victory. It felt like a turning point in Galway Camogie and since then confidence has exuded from the group.

This year feels like Cork have experienced that same fate. Those jubilant scenes we saw two weeks ago as the Rebels knocked the reigning champions out after a run of semi-final disappointments felt like a weight had been lifted from the Cork shoulders.

Should Cork claim the Senior title today, it will feel incredibly similar to what Galway experienced in 2019. It was Galway who snatched Cork's title away from them. So, Cork will know there is a right to wrong for the hurt that caused. It wasn't just losing their title; it was losing their grip on being the best Camogie team in the country, which the Rebels had managed for two consecutive years prior to that. There remains stalwarts on both sides who featured in the last All-Ireland Final showdown between the two teams in 2015.

On that day, Cork were led out by their manager Paudie Murray and captain Aisling Thompson. Their team featured Orla Cronin, Hannah Looney, Amy O'Connor, Méabh Cahalane, Laura Treacy and Pamela and Katrina Mackey. All of whom are still involved in Paudie's set up.

For Galway, their captain on the day was Niamh Kilkenny, and their starting team featured Sarah Dervan, Heather Cooney, Lorraine Ryan, Aoife Donoghue, Niamh McGrath and Ailish O'Reilly and Rebecca Hennelly. Players who have continued to give their all to the maroon jersey.

The teams have won 31 All-Ireland titles between them, so experience is not something that either team are short of entering today's final. Just look no further than the two captains – Galway's Sarah Dervan and Cork's Linda Collins. In the semi-final stages just a few weeks ago, both of these captains played a leading role in driving their side to the final. In Galway's fixture, they were under the cosh in the second-half from a Tipperary side who were desperate to find a breakthrough goal. They had a chance, too but in stepped the experienced full-back to block what would have been a certain goal for Tipperary.

The Cork captain, well I think everyone remembers how Linda played her part in Cork making today's showdown. The clock was heading for the 62nd minute of four added minutes, and up steps the Rebel captain to knock over the winning point. Both teams enter today's final boasting a 100% win record in this year's championship. Four matches each, four victories secured. Both made it safely through as group winners and avoided being drawn into the Quarter-Final stages. The nature of how both teams made the final has been impressive. Cork had a clinical opening round victory over Dublin before grinding out victories over Down and Waterford.

Their semi-final was intense, pulsating and everything you want a championship semi-final to be. The Rebels led by five points at half-time, the Cats turned the game on its head to lead so close to the end. A late red card, an injury time winning score – it was a game that had it all! Especially if you were wearing the red jersey that day! Is there a better way to prepare for an All-Ireland Final that that?

But on the opposition side stands a Galway side who have quietly and efficiently gone about their business once again. For the third year, and after the heartache of losing their title last year the Tribeswomen are back in Croke Park to settle the score. Cathal Murray's side hit 3-16 in their opening round victory over Westmeath and earned a six-point victory over Clare in round two. It was the final group fixture to determine top spot that caught everyone's attention – a repeat of the 2020 All-Ireland Senior final between Galway and Kilkenny.

There were no fireworks, just a hard-working victory over the Cats to advance to the semi-final stages against Tipperary. The Munster outfit never allowed their opponents to pull away until Orlaith McGrath's goal found the back of the net with only minutes left on the clock. So, here we are. The last two counties remain standing. It is time for these players to continue to rewrite the history books, and the very next chapter is about to begin.



Aoife Donoghue  
Galway



Fiona Keating  
Cork Senior

## All-Ireland Senior Championship Paths to the Final 2021



## CORK

Round 1 - 18th July  
Cork 2-19 Dublin 0-12

Round 2 - 24th July  
Down 0-10 Cork 1-13

Round 3 - 31st July  
Cork 2-19 Waterford 3-08

Semi-Final - 29th August  
Cork 0-15 Kilkenny 1-11



## GALWAY

Round 1 - 17th July  
Galway 3-16 Westmeath 1-05

Round 2 - 24th July  
Galway 2-12 Clare 2-06

Round 3 - 31st July  
Kilkenny 0-15 Galway 1-13

Semi-Final - 29th August  
Galway 1-13 Tipperary 0-12

## Meet the Match Officials



Premier Junior Final  
Armagh v Wexford

REFEREE:  
Kevin O'Brien  
(Limerick)



Senior Final  
Cork v Galway

REFEREE:  
Liz Dempsey  
(Kilkenny)



Intermediate Final  
Kilkenny v Antrim

REFEREE:  
Conor Quinlan  
(Galway)





MONDAY  
**Sport**

Irish Independent  
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# INTO THE WEST ONCE MORE

Galway girls show true  
grit to edge out Cork  
and regain camogie  
crown after thriller

SEE PAGES 12-13

Niamh Kilkenny and Galway  
captain Sarah Dervan with the  
O'Duffy Cup after yesterday's  
All-Ireland senior camogie final  
victory over Cork.  
PHOTOS BY FRANK O'NEILL FOR THE IRISH INDEPENDENT



# INTO THE WEST ONCE MORE

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Niamh Kilkenny and Galway captain Sarah Dervan with the O'Duffy Cup after yesterday's All-Ireland senior camogie final victory over Cork

PHOTOGRAPH BY GARY WILSON



# Camogie gets final it needed. Galway get win they craved

**Eoghan Cormican**



**A**FTER a build-up dominated by off-field matters and late-night disciplinary hearings, camogie needed a final spectacle to wrestle the conversation back inside the whitewash.

Credit so to the players of Cork and Galway. They obliged in spades.

Following on from the free-scoring Galway-Kilkenny decider of 2019 and the hard-edged arm-wrestle between the same pair last December, this final went to another level again.

Proceedings yesterday were physical, uncompromising, attritional. Relentless too, at times.

Playing her part in contributing to the above was referee Liz Dempsey, the Kilkenny official keeping her whistle tucked away for large swathes of the hour. And what a welcome change this was to the many camogie finals of the last decade overshadowed by their stop-start nature and the pernickety officiating of those in charge.

The conversation, thankfully, was much different on this occasion.

Indeed, it was to winning manager Cathal Murray's credit that, even in his emotionally spent state, he was able to look beyond their victory and realise the quality of fare at hand and Dempsey's role in facilitating such.

"There is a group of referees that are letting the game flow, and it's really contributing to the matches," said Murray.

"Fair play to Liz, I thought she had a great game. Finals are a lot better now and games are a lot better. That's a lot to do with the refereeing, with the new rules helping as well."

If Murray was complimentary of the woman in the middle, then the woman who stood in the middle of the Hogan Stand at game's end was even more effusive in her praise of Murray.

It is three and a half years since the Galway players passed a no-confidence vote in manager Tony O'Donovan four months after he'd taken up the role. The county — who had fallen adrift of pace-setters Cork and Kilkenny — raced through three managers in just two and a half years.

Into the breach stepped Murray in April of 2018, and while that season's campaign again ended at the semi-final juncture — the fourth time in five years they'd exited at this stage, the last three years have seen three consecutive final appearances, bookended by a pair of All-Ireland wins.

In her acceptance speech, Sarah Dervan said Murray had brought Galway to an elite level, a comment she was asked to expand on when chatting to reporters an hour after pocketing her third All-Ireland senior medal in this, her eighth final.

"Cathal always demands the best for us," she said.

"We always get fed, we always get treated exactly the way any county hurling team would, and I think that's huge."

"Cathal never let us down, he always fought for us. It's an elite level now and I'm just so delighted to have such a massive backroom team that have huge experience and knowledge. It's really because of them, that's why we're here on the right side of the final result two years out of three."

Dervan and those alongside her inside the whitewash did their bit too, of course.

The full-back made a vital interception early in the second half to cut out an Amy O'Connor handpass bound for Katrina Mackey. Had it stuck, Cork were through on goal. This defensive piece was mirrored in the first half by the two other members of the

Galway full-back line, Shauna Healy and Dervla Higgins both getting their hurley to Cork handpasses bound for well-placed red shirts.

These interceptions went a distance to summing up a difficult afternoon for Cork in front of Sarah Healy's goal.

Their four first-half wides were four off-target placed-ball efforts, while among their five second-half wides was an Amy O'Connor goal chance blasted the wrong side of the post.

"Their conversion rate was much better than ours," said Paudie Murray as he raked over his third All-Ireland final defeat as manager.

Cork trailed this contest from the 70th second until briefly restoring parity for less than a minute deep in first-half stoppages. They were level for only the second time on 46 minutes, and it wasn't until Katrina Mackey's 48th-minute goal that they hit the front for the first time.

What ultimately decided the contest was the reaction of both teams to this green flag.

In the remaining 12 minutes of regulation time and three additional minutes played, Galway outscored their opponents by 1-4 to 0-1, with 1-2 of this tally coming uninterrupted in the 10 minutes after Mackey's strike.

Niamh Kilkenny, Caitriona Cormican, and Sarah Dervan were part of the Galway set-up that came up short to Cork in the 2008 final. Several more of their current team-mates had arrived on the scene for the 2015 final shaded by those in red. In total, Galway have lost to Cork on seven occasions on the concluding day of action.

Yesterday was not to be the eighth, the class of 2021 following in the footsteps of the history-makers of 1996, who were honoured at half-time.

Cork's victory in front of the DRA on Saturday night was not to be followed by a second victory here.

"Years gone by, we reacted



Baby Eana Kelly, son of team physio Clona Kelly, looking proud in the O'Duffy Cup after Galway win the All-Ireland Senior Camogie final in Croke Park.

Picture: INPHO/James Crombie

in the wrong way. This year, we said that no matter what Cork threw at us, we're going to react the way we wanted to, and we drove on and got the next point, and put a little bit of belief back in us," said Dervan.

While Ailish O'Reilly's 54th-minute Hogan Stand sideline free — the first time she was asked to stand over a dead ball all afternoon following the substitution of first-choice freetaker Carrie Dolan seconds earlier — and Siobhan McGrath's subsequent goal were key Galway scores, it was Niamh Kilkenny, the same as she did in the 2019 win, who stood tallest coming down the stretch.

Providing the necessary

leadership, the six-time All Star got herself onto possession and had the vision to twice pick out Orlaith McGrath for the two injury-time points that made certain Galway's fourth O'Duffy Cup triumph.

"She's an incredible leader for the team," said Murray.

"I'd say she's the only person who saw Orlaith in so much space for the second-last point. Incredible ball across. Orlaith took it really well. And Orlaith's last point was just incredible."

"Just hugely proud of the effort — two All-Irelands in three years. I'm delighted to be working with them, hugely proud to be manager of a team like that."

**THE 60 SECOND REPORT**

## IT MATTERED

Galway's response was emphatic. Despite falling behind for the first time in the 49th minute to a Katrina Mackey goal, Galway undid the damage with a goal of their own seven minutes later from Siobhan McGrath.

## CAN'T IGNORE

Sixteen Cork players marched around the field behind the Artane Band in the pre-match parade. Cork were led by their captain Linda Collins, who didn't start, and it was also heartening to see her in the middle of the huddle.

# 'It is extra special when it is with your sisters'

**Therese O'Callaghan**

Siobhán McGrath was a water girl when Galway won their second All-Ireland title in 2013. Her sisters Niamh, Clodagh, and Orlaith were involved that day.

Yesterday the 21-year-old, who scored Galway's only goal, was joined by sisters Orlaith and Niamh.

"I am the youngest of the crowd playing today," she said. "Delighted of course, it is extra special when it is with

your sisters. Seeing them that year made me feel I would love to be there myself. I have two younger sisters coming after me as well; they are 14 and 15."

"It is nip and tuck. Every time we play Cork, there is only a score in it. But we never panicked. I always felt there was a goal in them, the way they were playing. We rode our luck a bit at times; they were running at us a good bit."

"But Cathal [Murray] said at half time, if Cork get a goal you have to compose yourself

and that is what we did. We responded really well."

That response was her 56th-minute goal.

"Ailish [O'Reilly] set it up, all I had to do was finish it. The Cork goalkeeper Amy Lee is unreal. In a group game last year, she blocked me for a similar type of goal. I knew there was no point winding up because she is straight off her line. I tried to keep the head and tip it into the corner. Thankfully it went in," she said. "And Orlaith got two

brilliant points. It was very hard for Cork to come back."

That Galway stood up this year might not have happened before.

"We added a few people into our management team and they gave us that bit of extra belief that we needed," she said. "Donal O'Rourke is an unbelievable trainer. All the way from Cappoquin, it is some commitment."

"Every single training session you did, you never wanted to slack. He is that

type of a motivator. The likes of Therese Maher came in this year. She just gives you a few small words before a match and at half time. Everything she says, you would listen 100%."

There was no distraction either from Cronin's red card.

"We actually didn't talk about it at all. You have to focus on yourself. I wasn't surprised that Orla Cronin was let off. If you want to beat Cork, you want to beat them with their full hand."



Galway's Siobhan McGrath celebrates scoring a goal. Picture: Brian Reilly-Troy/Inpho





# McGrath and Galway keep their cool when it matters most



All-Ireland senior camogie final  
**GALWAY**..... 1-15  
**CORK**..... 1-12

Therese O'Callaghan

Croke Park

**G**ALWAY'S ferocious will to win secured their fourth All-Ireland senior camogie championship title at Croke Park yesterday.

This was a terrific decider and showcase for the game; Galway needed a 56th minute goal from Siobhán McGrath to wrestle back control, and then a couple of late points in stoppage time to get them over the line.

There was plenty of drama, too, beforehand with Orla Cronin a late addition to the Cork team after the DRA granted her 'interim relief' to play. Wearing No26, she lined out at corner-forward, replacing captain Linda Collins.

Galway were quicker to settle, claiming the first four points — two from free-taker Carrie Dolan — who was also a late replacement on the Galway team instead of Niamh Hanniffy.

Cork found their rhythm through Ashling Thompson in the fifth minute. Thompson and Hannah Looney were superb for the Rebels in the middle of the park in that opening spell.

Both defences were outstanding, and it was evident from the early play that scores would be hard to come by. Shauna Healy put in a brilliant block as Cork set about trying to bridge the gap to their last win in 2018. Galway were energised again when Sarah Healy brought off a fine save from Katrina Mackey.

The game opened up when Cork reeled off the next three

points, two from Looney. At the first water-break, Galway were 0-6 to 0-4 ahead.

Again Galway had to defend fiercely. Yet, Cork's efforts were rewarded as they drew level in first-half stoppage. The score of the opening half came from Aoife Donohue, an inspiring point from out near the sideline, leaving the west-erners one clear at the interval, 0-9 to 0-8.

With some magnificent displays on both sides, a sensational point from Niamh Kilkenny after the restart pushed the lead to two — Kilkenny was central to all that was good about Galway at midfield and later at centre-forward.

Amy O'Connor had a chance of a Cork goal after Sarah Healy lost possession, but they had to settle for a Cronin free.

Siobhán McGrath had an opportunity at the other end but Looney was quick to respond. Dolan and Cronin exchanged frees to leave Galway in front, 0-11 to 0-10 at the second water-break.

Cork had introduced Linda Collins early in the second-half, and she initiated the comeback, setting up Mackey for a 49th minute goal and the lead for the first time.

Niamh Hanniffy brought some energy to Galway around the middle third and they were fast to respond, with frees from Dolan and a marvellous effort from Ailish O'Reilly to trail by one.

But crucially it was Siobhán McGrath's green flag that finally broke Cork's resistance, a

sublime finish from an O'Reilly pass.

Never-say-die Cork recovered once more — although their wiles were costly — Cronin finding the target from play. With two minutes remaining and three to be added, the Rebels couldn't regain parity. A brace from Orlaith McGrath saw Galway win by three.

For Galway coach and former Waterford hurler Donal O'Rourke, it capped a wonderful weekend.

"It was unreal. It was outstanding to get over the line with Erin's Own (coach) on Friday night against the Rockies."

"It is amazing to stand here in Croke Park, not many Waterford people get to win an All-Ireland. It is surreal to be honest."

**Scorers for Galway:** C Dolan (0-6 frees), S McGrath (1-2), N Kilkenny, A O'Reilly (0-1 free) and O McGrath (0-2 each), A Donohue (0-1).

**Scorers for Cork:** O Cronin (0-6, 0-4 frees), K Mackey (1-1), H Looney (0-2), A Thompson, C Sigerson, A O'Connor (0-1 each).

**GALWAY:** Sarah Healy; D Higgins, Shauna Healy, S Dervan (Capt); C Cormican, E Healy, S Gardiner; N Kilkenny, A Donohue; C Dolan, S Spellman, C Finnerty; O McGrath, S McGrath, A O'Reilly.

**Subs:** N Hanniffy for C Finnerty (half-time), R Henneley for C Dolan (50), AM Starr for C Cormican (60 in), N Coen for S Spellman (61).

**CORK:** A Lee; P Mackey, L Coppinger, M Cahalane; L Hayes, L Treacy, S McCarthy; H Looney, A Thompson; C O'Sullivan, F Keating, C Sigerson; K Mackey, A O'Connor, O Cronin.

**Subs:** L Collins (Capt) for C O'Sullivan (36), C Healy for F Keating (59).

**Referee:** Liz Dempsey (Kilkenny).

## McCormick and Kelly shine for Saffrons

All-Ireland Intermediate Camogie final

**Antrim**..... 2-21  
**Kilkenny**..... 2-13

Daragh Ó Conchúir

Róisín McCormick and Maeve Kelly hit 1-14 between them with Cathrine Dobbin weighing in with 1-2 as Antrim secured the silverware and promotion.

The game was decided in a matter of minutes before the second water break — after a goal from a 20m free by Sophie O'Dwyer in the 43rd minute had pulled Kilkenny within four points. But McCormick and Kelly responded immediately with points before Dobbin pounced for a goal.

**Scorers for Antrim:** R McCormick 0-9 (4fs), M Kelly 1-5; C Dobbin 1-2; N O'Neill 0-3; L McNaughton; A Magill 0-1 each.

**Scorers for Kilkenny:** S O'Dwyer 1-5 (0-4fs); S Crowley 1-0; S Walsh, E Hynes 0-2 each; C Phelan, C O'Keefe, D Quigley, T Donnelly 0-1 each.

**ANTRIM:** C Graham, C Drain, N Donnelly, M Lynn, C Patterson, C Conlon, M Connolly, L McNaughton, N O'Neill, M Kelly, A Boyle, A Magill, R McCormick, C Laverty, C Dobbin.

**Subs:** A Connolly for Laverty (38), K Carey McAleese for Magill (50), S Devlin for Patterson (60), L McKenna for Boyle (60+1), K McKillop for M Connolly (60+1).

**KILKENNY:** S Farrell, N Leahy, R Phelan, C Murphy, S Crowley, L Fennelly, T Fitzgerald, L Hegarty, C Phelan, E Hynes, S Walsh, C O'Keefe, S O'Dwyer, H Scott, D Quigley.

**Subs:** J Leahy for Hegarty (36), T Donnelly for Quigley (43), S O'Keefe for Fitzgerald (46), C Dowling for Scott (55), R O'Keefe for C O'Keefe (57).

**Referee:** Conor Quinlan (Galway).

## Cashe is queen for Wexford

All-Ireland Premier Junior Camogie final

**Wexford**..... 1-14  
**Armagh**..... 1-11

Daragh Ó Conchúir

Seven points from Chloe Cashe helped Wexford grind out victory over Armagh in a thrilling final at Croke Park.

After a number of attacks, Wexford eventually had the ball in the net via unlucky Armagh full-back Nicola Woods after an effort from Lisa Ferman hit the post.

**Scorers for Wexford:** C Cashe 0-7 (5fs, 2 4fs); N Woods own goal; C Barnville 0-2; A Brennan, A Neville, E Codd, L Ferman, M Fitzpatrick 0-1 each.

**Scorers for Armagh:** C Donnelly 0-10 (9fs); E Smyth 1-0; C Hill 0-1.

**WEXFORD:** L O'Shea, C Jackman, A Halligan, S Furlong, A Dunne, A Brennan, Donohue, R Cooney, C Cashe, M Cullen, C Barnville, A Neville, L Ferman, E Codd, E Tomkins.

**Subs:** M Fitzpatrick for Cullen (44), K Smyth for Ferman (53), K Davenport for Cooney (53), S Figgis for Codd (60).

**ARMAGH:** C Devlin, A Harvey, N Woods, S Curry, C Casey, G McWilliams, G McCann, M McArdle, L Donnelly, B Murray, C Donnelly, C Hill, O Murray, C McSorley, E Smyth.

**Subs:** E Hayes for McCann (40), K Conboy for O Murray (50), S Kiernan for McSorley (59), O Curry for B Murray (60+5).

**Referee:** Kevin O'Brien (Limerick).

### GOOD DAY

Galway's fourth All-Ireland senior title. A hard-worked and hard-earned victory that secures them the most coveted prize in camogie.

### BAD DAY

Obviously Cork's loss. It is no consolation to them that this time had everything you would want in an All-Ireland final.

### SIDELINE SMARTS

Be fair to both managements, they got their match-ups right. Shauna Healy policing Amy Connor and Catriona Cormican marking Chloe Sigerson — these one-on-ones went in Galway's favour.

### BEST ON SHOW

Siobhán McGrath.

There were so many. For Cork, Ashling Thompson and Hannah Looney played their hearts out at midfield. Galway's Siobhán McGrath makes the headlines for all the right reasons as her goal was massive. Aoife Donohue, too, was immense.

### WOMAN IN THE MIDDLE

Liz Dempsey was solid throughout. Letting the game flow contributed enormously to it as a spectacle.

### WHERE NEXT

2022 when Galway will go for back-to-back glory. Will the more experienced players who have been around since the mid-noughties remain on for the drive for five?

Galway's Siobhán McGrath battles for the ball with Cork's Libby Coppinger in the All-Ireland senior camogie final at Croke Park. Picture: Ben McShane/Sportsfile



# Murray questions disciplinary committees

Paudie Murray

Cork manager Paudie Murray has questioned the competency of those who sit on the Camogie Association's disciplinary committees.

Cork were unsuccessful in their attempts to get Orla Cronin's semi-final red card rescinded when going before the association's National Transfers, Hearing and Disciplinary Committee (NTHDC) in a National Final Appeals

day and Friday of last week, with Cronin eventually cleared on Saturday midnight by the Disputes Resolution Authority (DRA).

Murray was reluctant to comment on Cronin's fight for final involvement as he did not want to take from Galway's victory, but he did state that once Cork were done with the various Camogie Association committees, they were confident the DRA would green light her participation in the decider.

"I just don't think you have qualified enough people in these meetings to handle it correctly," he said of the various Camogie Association disciplinary committees.

"I have had an experience of the THDC. I knew where this was going no matter what. I think Orla knew that as well and she was quite relaxed about it, that these hearings are a waste of time. She always knew she was going [to the DRA]." Murray said the week-long battle to clear Cronin

had no impact on his team's preparation or performance. He also described as "outstanding" Cronin's final display, which included four converted frees and a pair from play.

"I haven't been involved in the process but I think they were quite confident that once they got in front [of the DRA] there was only going to be one result there. Orla was preparing herself really from Friday evening onwards."

Turning to the game itself,

the Cork manager said his team retreated instead of pushing on when moving three clear following Katrina Mackey's goal on 48 minutes.

"We brought Galway on us. That period of time when we went up three, we tried to defend it rather than going at it again. I thought every time we ran at them at that stage we had them in trouble. The disappointing thing from my point of view was that we just didn't kick on and put another couple of scores on the board."





# McGrath and Galway keep their cool when it matters most



All-Ireland senior camogie final

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**CORK** ..... 1-12

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**Scorers for Galway:** C Dolan (0-6 frees), S McGrath (1-2), N Kilkenny, A O'Reilly (0-1 free) and O McGrath (0-2 each), A Donohue (0-1).

**Scorers for Cork:** O Cronin (0-6, 0-4 frees), K Mackey (1-1), H Looney (0-2), A Thompson, C Sigerson, A O'Connor (0-1 each).

**GALWAY:** Sarah Healy; D Higgins, Shauna Healy, S Dervan (Capt); C Cormican, E Helebert, S Gardner, N Kilkenny, A Donohue; C Dolan, S Spellman, C Finnerty; O McGrath, S McGrath, A O'Reilly.

**Subs:** N Hanniffy for C Finnerty (half-time), R Hennelly for C Dolan (50), AM Star for C Cormican (60 inj), N Coen for S Spellman (61).

**CORK:** A Lee; P Mackey, L Coppinger, M Cahalane; L Hayes, L Treacy, S McCarthy; H Looney, A Thompson; C O'Sullivan, F Keating, C Sigerson; K Mackey, A O'Connor, O Cronin.

**Subs:** L Collins (Capt) for C O'Sullivan (36), C Healy for F Keating (59).

**Referee:** Liz Dempsey (Kilkenny).

## McCormick and Kelly shine for Saffrons

All-Ireland Intermediate Camogie final

**Antrim** ..... 2-21  
**Kilkenny** ..... 2-13

Daragh Ó Conchúir

Róisín McCormick and Maeve Kelly hit 1-14 between them with Cathrine Dobbin weighing in with 1-2 as Antrim secured the silverware and promotion.

The game was decided in a matter of minutes before the second water break — after a goal from a 20m free by Sophie O'Dwyer in the 43rd minute had pulled Kilkenny within four points. But McCormick and Kelly responded immediately with points before Dobbin pounced for a goal.

**Scorers for Antrim:** R McCormick 0-9(4fs); M Kelly 1-5; C Dobbin 1-2; N O'Neill 0-3; L McNaughton, A Magill 0-1 each.

**Scorers for Kilkenny:** S O'Dwyer 1-5 (0-4fs); S Crowley 1-0; S Walsh, E Hynes 0-2 each; C Phelan, C O'Keefe, D Quigley, T Donnelly 0-1 each.

**ANTRIM:** C Graham, C Drain, N Donnelly, M Lynn, C Patterson, C Conlon, M Connolly, L McNaughton, N O'Neill, M Kelly, A Boyle, A Magill, R McCormick, C Lavery, C Dobbin.

**Subs:** A Connolly for Lavery (38), K Carey McAleese for Magill (50), S Devlin for Patterson (60), L McKenna for Boyle (60+1), K McKillop for M Connolly (60+1).

**KILKENNY:** S Farrell, N Leahy, R Phelan, C Murphy, S Crowley, C Conlon, T Fitzgerald, L Hegarty, C Phelan, E Hynes, S Walsh, C O'Keefe, S O'Dwyer, H Scott, D Quigley.

**Subs:** J Leahy for Hegarty (36), T Donnelly for Quigley inj (43), S O'Keefe for Fitzgerald (46), C Dowling for Scott (55), R O'Keefe for C O'Keefe (57).

**Referee:** Conor Quinlan (Galway).

## Cashe is queen for Wexford

All-Ireland Premier Junior Camogie final

**Wexford** ..... 1-14  
**Armagh** ..... 1-11

Daragh Ó Conchúir

Seven points from Chloe Cashe helped Wexford grind out victory over Armagh in a thrilling final at Croke Park.

After a number of attacks, Wexford eventually had the ball in the net via unlucky Armagh full-back Nicola Woods after an effort from Lisa Firmán hit the post.

**Scorers for Wexford:** C Cashe 0-7(5fs, 2 45s); N Woods own goal; C Barnville 0-2; A Brennan, A Neville, E Codd, L Firmán, M Fitzpatrick 0-1 each.

**Scorers for Armagh:** C Donnelly 0-10(9fs); E Smyth 1-0; C Hill 0-1.

**WEXFORD:** L O'Shea, C Jackman, A Halligan, S Furlong, A Dunne, A Brennan, Donohue, R Cooney, C Cashe, M Cullen, C Barnville, A Neville, L Firmán, E Codd, E Tomkins.

**Subs:** M Fitzpatrick for Cullen (44), K Smyth for Firmán (53), K Devereux for Cooney (53), S Figgis for Codd (60).

**ARMAGH:** C Devlin, A Harvey, N Woods, S Curry, C Casey, G McWilliams, G McCann, M McArdle, L Donnelly, B Murray, C Donnelly, C Hill, O Murray, C McSorley, E Smyth.

**Subs:** E Hayes for McCann inj (40), K Conville for O Murray (50), S Kieran for McSorley (59), O Curry for B Murray (60+5).

**Referee:** Kevin O'Brien (Limerick).

### GOOD DAY

Galway's fourth All-Ireland senior title. A hard-worked and hard-earned victory that secures them the most coveted prize in camogie.

### BAD DAY

Obviously Cork's loss. It is no consolation to them that this game had everything you would want in an All-Ireland final.

### SIDELINE SMARTS

To be fair to both managements, they got their match-ups right but Shauna Healy policing Amy O'Connor and Cathrine McCormican marking Chloe Sigerson — these one-on-ones went in Galway's favour.

### BEST ON SHOW

There were so many. For Cork, Ashling Thompson and Hannah Looney played their hearts out at midfield. Galway's Siobhán McGrath makes the headlines for all the right reasons as her goal was massive. Aoife Donohue, too, was immense.

### WOMAN IN THE MIDDLE

Liz Dempsey was solid throughout. Letting the game flow contributed enormously to it as a spectacle.

### WHERE NEXT

2022 when Galway will go for back-to-back glory. Will the more experienced players who have been around since the mid noughties remain on for the drive for five?

Galway's Siobhán McGrath battles for the ball with Cork's Libby Coppinger in the All-Ireland senior camogie final at Croke Park. Picture: Ben McShane/Sportsfile



# Murray questions disciplinary committees

Eoghan Cormican

Cork manager Paudie Murray has questioned the competency of those who sit on the Camogie Association's disciplinary committees.

Cork were unsuccessful in their attempts to get Orla Cronin's semi-final red card rescinded when going before the association's National Transfers, Hearing and Disciplinary Committee (NTHDC) National Final Appeals

day and Friday of last week, with Cronin eventually cleared on Saturday midnight by the Disputes Resolution Authority (DRA).

Murray was reluctant to comment on Cronin's fight for final involvement as he did not want to take from Galway's victory, but he did state that once Cork were done with the various Camogie Association committees, they were confident the DRA would green light her participation in the decider.

"I just don't think you have qualified enough people in these meetings to handle it correctly," he said of the various Camogie Association disciplinary committees.

"I have had an experience of the THDC. I knew where this was going no matter what. I think Orla knew that as well and she was quite relaxed about it, that these hearings are a waste of time. She always knew she was going [to the DRA]." Murray said the week-long battle to clear Cronin had no impact on his team's preparation or performance. He also described as "outstanding" Cronin's final display, which included four converted frees and a pair from play.

"I haven't been involved in the process but I think they were quite confident that once they got in front [of the DRA] there was only going to be one result there. Orla was preparing herself really from Friday evening onwards."

Turning to the game itself, the Cork manager said his team retreated instead of pushing on when moving three clear following Katrina Mackey's goal on 48 minutes.

"We brought Galway on us. That period of time when we went up three, we tried to defend it rather than going at it again. I thought every time we ran at them at that stage we had them in trouble. The disappointing thing from my point of view was that we just didn't kick on and put another couple of scores on the board."



# Galway dig deep to

## Credit to Galway as fans given fantastic display in final

WHAT a tremendous game of end-to-end hurling!

It had everything, and while the result didn't go the way we wanted, we can have no complaints. Maybe the romantic side of Croke Park was there this time for Galway, maybe their jubilee team taking to the field at half time spurred them on.

Whatever the reason, Galway are the All-Ireland champions for the fourth time.

I thought we had it when Katriona Mackey billowed the net on 48 minutes to give Cork a three-point lead. They scored 1-1 immediately after the water break. You could see the intent was there as they dropped their bottles faster than Galway and flew back out onto the pitch.

Traditionally Cork finish stronger.

But credit Galway. So many times, we have criticised their ability to close out big games.

The composure with which Siobhan McGrath hit the net eight minutes after Cork goaled spoke volumes about how they went about their business all afternoon. If Cork had tapped on another point and gone four up, would Galway's heads have dropped? Maybe, but that's irrelevant now as Galway struck 1-2.

The game was played a frenzied pace from the outset. Block after block after block came in from both sides.

Galway took the game to Cork, and were four points up by five minutes. Massive hunting in packs by Galway forced turnovers. The middle third was packed, with both sets of half-forwards playing deep.

It seemed as if that was working best for Galway with long, excellent diagonal balls into the corners where the running of Ailish O'Reilly and Siobhan McGrath caused problems.

Galway dictated the early pace, but Cork got to grips with it 10 minutes in. Hannah Looney and Ashling Thompson emerged at midfield with hard work, resounding runs, frees won, and three points between them. Behind them Laura Hayes, Laura Treacy, and Saoirse McCarthy were breaking ball as puck-outs rained down on them and the midfield duo dropped back to pick up the rebounds.

I thought Galway's puck-outs could be their demise at times, landing them directly on Cork's half-back line. They were risky, but even though they weren't the cleanest of takes, Galway did win a number of the breaks.

And they stuck with them, trying to get the ball in as fast as possible to their full-forward line, where a couple of them were in the running for Player of the Match.

Yet Cork's full-back line was doing very well, Libby Coppinger in particular playing a stonewall. Galway's full-back line was also doing brilliantly on Cork's inside three.

Both lines succeeded in snuffing out goal threats. Cork shot four wides versus two for



Orla Cronin battles Dervla Higgins and Sarah Dervan of Galway. Picture: Ben McShane/Sportsfile



### Match analysis

Linda Mellerick

Galway in that opening half, and Galway were up a point. The stats show that the flicks and blocks from both defences were brilliant.

Cork had 26 shots and scored 13 times, Galway had 22 shots and scored 16.

Cork lost most of their possession in the middle third — hardly surprising as that's where most of the 30 players hung out. They lost 16 attacks up front, testament to brilliant defensive work by Galway. Cork's defence was equally impressive, losing just two possessions and dispossessing Galway 17 times with Galway also losing 15 possessions in the middle.

Hard work was the order of the day from both sides. In the opening half, the small breaks were going Galway's way. They were, however, giving away poor possession with weak sideline cuts.

All the talk before the game was about the Orla Cronin 'stay' on her three-match suspension. The debate around that is for another day. We all want to see the best players in All-Ireland finals, and we got that. Galway wouldn't have wanted it any other way.

As Galway stalwart Frank Kearney said to me before the game: "When we beat ye, we don't want ye having any excuses".

Well, we have none. And one must credit Galway for not letting all the off-field debates affect them.

They never panicked, and even when Linda Collins entered the fray, Galway weren't fazed. Dervla Higgins calmly strolled over and picked her up.

Cork had nine wides though, to Galway's four. They'll regret those.

But the match-ups worked for Galway. Shauna Healy picked up Amy O'Connor, Sarah Dervan on Orla Cronin, Dervla Higgins on Katrina Mackey, and Catriona Cormican on Chloe Sigerson. These were tremendous battles, but one would have to say that Galway came out the strongest.

Every team talks about the collective. It was a brilliant Galway performance from 1 to 15, and the three subs that came on. When Carrie Dolan, who was accurate from frees, was withdrawn on 51 minutes and Ailish O'Reilly stepped in to take a crucial free a minute later, had she missed, Galway's management would have been highly criticised. O'Reilly nailed it.

The goal followed and Orlaith McGrath's two points finished the job for Galway in style.



Laura Treacy of Cork in action against Dervla Higgins of Galway at Croke Park on Sunday.

Picture: Ben McShane/Sportsfile



Ashling Thompson of Cork clears from Carrie Dolan of Galway. Picture: Ben McShane/Sportsfile



Cork's Katrina Mackey celebrates scoring a goal.

Picture: INPHO/Laszlo Geczi

## Story of the Game

**Score of the Match:** Goals aside, there were some great points: Chloe Sigerson's second point for Cork, from distance, Hannah Looney's two, and Niamh Kilkenny's point just after the break for Galway. But the pick of them was the brilliant point by Aoife Donohue at the half-time mark to give Galway the lead.

**Player of the Match:** Aoife Donohue was named as the RTE MVP and it was thoroughly deserved. She worked hard all day and her point before half time was magical. There were others: Siobhan McGrath, Ailish O'Reilly, Shauna Healy, Libby Coppinger, Hannah Looney, and Ashling Thompson had fine games.

**Turning Point:** Siobhan McGrath's goal has to be the turning point. One down, four minutes of normal time remaining, they went two up and never looked back.

**Ref Watch:** In a game where the quality was phenomenal — and credit both sides for that — referee Liz Dempsey did a good job. It flowed.



# get win over Cork



Cork's Hannah Looney and Fiona Keating claim possession ahead of Shauna Healy of Galway.



Galway's Siobhan McGrath.  
Picture: INPHO/James Crombie

**Murray:**  
'Our win  
an ad for  
camogie'

REACTION

■ Mary Newman

GALWAY manager Cathal Murray was delighted with his side's victory.

"This is some win for Galway and some advertisement for the game of camogie," Murray said. "Cork are a very good team and it took huge work-rate and effort to get us over the line; we knew they would not be found wanting. Even though we led from the start, they battled back and got level and then hit us with that goal."

"Ten months ago, we lost out to Kilkenny and we needed to come back strong; we didn't want to lose two finals in such a short space of time."

"Cork went ahead and got a vital goal and we needed to react to it. Ailish won a great ball and took on the tackles and got the ball to Siobhan McGrath and she finished to the net to settle us again."

"Siobhan has the ability to do that. I felt we probably didn't get enough ball to her, but the one clear possession she got, she made no mistake and finished as only she can."

Murray paid tribute to his charges and in particular Carrie Dolan, who wasn't named in the starting 15, but who lined out from the throw-in.

"Carrie hit six points from frees today; she has been out injured for six weeks and it was great to have her able to line out, but we felt she was tiring, so we replaced her with a few minutes to go."

"Ailish O'Reilly stepped up to slot over a crucial free after Cork had got the goal; it was a difficult one, but Ailish was able to take it."

Player of the match, Aoife Donoghue, paid tribute to her teammates. "We are absolutely delighted and I think this is the sweetest one left. When Cork got the goal, we really had to respond, but we did."

"I'm delighted, for this was a team effort and every single player out there gave it everything to get us over the line."

"All too often, we have been criticised, but today it was a sweet victory; it was a battle to the finish and we had to dig it out and today we did. I was out on my feet. It was a battle and I'm sure it was a great game to watch. Camogie is in a great place and all year there have been great games and today was no different. I hope now this will help to grow the game," Donoghue said.

Galway	1-15
Cork	1-12

GALWAY took their fourth All-Ireland senior title with a gritty victory over Cork in a game where, despite losing the lead 18 minutes into the second half after Katrina Mackey's goal, they finished powerfully.

A Siobhan McGrath goal four minutes from full-time restored their lead before they closed it out with two late Orlaith McGrath points to seal a monumental victory for the county, and for captain Sarah Dervan who for the second time led her county to a senior title.

Over the hour they fought tooth and nail for everything and despite Cork battling to the last themselves, the Tribe showed huge character to hit back and take the honours.

Just a point separated the sides at the half time whistle with Galway maintain the lead they held from the opening minute when Carrie Dolan pointed an early free and she added to her tally on the third minute as she popped over her second placed ball as the Westerns settled quickly.

A nervous-looking Cork went further into arrears with the lively

## CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

Siobhan McGrath and Ailish O'Reilly pointing inside the fifth minute. Ailish Thompson had Cork on the scoreboard with their opening point but Galway hit back with a Siobhan McGrath point as they continued to dominate the opening stages.

Cork began to settle with Ailish Thompson and Hannah Looney gaining a grip around the middle they cut the deficit with three scores without reply, Chloe Sigerson with one and two from the excellent Looney after running hard down the centre.

At the water break, it was Galway by two as Carrie Dolan pointed a free though Cork were denied by the upright as Chloe Sigerson's attempt bounced back into play. Twice the Rebels cut the lead, Orla Cronin pointed a free but and from the puck-out, Carrie Dolan did likewise.

Amy O'Connor and Katrina Mackey helped Cork get an advantage in the attack, while the defence was now in control, Coppinger policing Galway danger-woman Siobhan

McGrath and Laura Treacy coming out with possession repeatedly.

At midfield Thompson and Looney were prominent, and with Katrina Mackey and Aoife Donoghue exchanging points, it was 0-9 to 0-8 to Galway at the interval.

The second half was tight all through, with both defences holding firm goal chances were scarce.

Niamh Kilkenny put Galway two ahead; Cronin replied pointing a free but Cork missed a chance to go level before they were let off the hook as Looney denied Carrie Dolan after two Cork defenders collided and Dolan nipped in.

At the second water break, it was still Galway who led by a point after scores from Cronin and Dolan.

On the restart, Cronin tied up the game with a point from a difficult angle and with the tempo rising Cork came at the Galway defence. Captain Linda Collins, introduced on 35 minutes, began to have an influence and when she rounded Derval Higgins and found Mackey with an inch-perfect pass the corner-forward made no mistake.

Advantage Cork with 12 minutes remaining.

The next phase was going to be key and Galway twice earned frees through hard work and huge intensity. Dolan and sub Ailish O'Reilly nailed those placed balls to trim the gap to just one.

Piling on the pressure Galway found a way through with O'Reilly offloading a perfect pass to McGrath, with flicked the sliotar to the net with a clever finish.

Cronin had it back to a point with two minutes on the clock but two points from Orlaith McGrath finally killed the Cork challenge.

**Scorers for Galway:** C Dolan 0-6, S McGrath 1-2, N Kilkenny, O McGrath, A O'Reilly (0-1) 0-2 each, A Donoghue 0-1.

**Cork:** O Cronin 0-6 (0-4 f), K Mackey 1-1, H Looney 0-2, A Thompson, C Sigerson, A O'Connor 0-1 each.

**CORK:** A Lee, P Mackey, L Coppinger, M Cahalane, L Hayes, L Treacy, S McCarthy, H Looney, A Thompson, C O'Sullivan, F Keating, C Sigerson, K Mackey, A O'Connor, O Cronin.

**Subs:** L Collins for O'Sullivan (36), C Healy for Keating (59).

**GALWAY:** Sarah Healy, D Higgins, Shauna Healy, S Dervan, C Cormican, E Helebert, S Gardiner, N Kilkenny, A Donoghue, C Dolan, S Spellman, C Finnerty, O McGrath, S McGrath, A O'Reilly.

**Subs:** N Hanniffy for Finnerty (40), R Hennelly for Dolan (51), A Starr for Cormican (60), N Coen for Spellman (61).

**Referee:** Liz Dempsey (Kilkenny)

## Three reasons the Rebels lost to Galway

### 1. WORK-RATE:

GALWAY'S intensity was astounding. From the throw-in, they swarmed Cork and never let up for the entire game.

Cork's work-rate was equally impressive, to be fair, but to hold Cork's lethal full-forward line to 1-5 from play was a job well done by Galway. Galway's defence dispossessed Cork's attack 16 times.

### 2. ECONOMICAL USE OF POSSESSION:

Cork scored 13 times from 26 attempts, Galway had 22 attempts and scored 16. They had five scorers in the second half to Cork's two.

Again, credit the Galway defence for that. Cork had just two points in the third quarter, from frees. They had three or four half chances for goals, but just couldn't get the final touch, under immense pressure.

### 3. SMALL MARGINS

In a game so closely contested, the little things

added up.

Libby Coppinger was millimetres away from intercepting Ailish O'Reilly's hand-pass for Siobhan McGrath's goal.

Carrie Dolan hadn't played since the opening round of the championship, due to injury, and came in to score six points.

Amy O'Connor had a goal opportunity and maybe if she pulled as the ball went away from goal, it might have hit the net. Cork did win a free from it.



Camogie All-Ireland Senior Final

# Powerful finish shows Galway's greatness

Paul Keane  
at Croke Park

McGrath scores the crucial goal as they rally after falling behind against Cork

Galway	1-15
Cork	1-12

Interim relief was the order granted by the Disputes Resolution Authority that allowed Cork's Orla Cronin to play in the All-Ireland camogie final and, for what you might term an interim period at Croke Park, she looked like being the match-winner.

Cronin, dismissed in the semi-final against Kilkenny and hit with a three-match ban, was dramatically cleared to play early on Sunday morning and delivered a terrific performance, shooting six points to place her team on the brink of victory.

Her 47th minute point tied the game up at 0-11 apiece before Katrina Mackey slammed home a goal that left Cork three clear.

From there, it was all about Galway's greatness, however, as the 2019 champions outscored the 2018 winners by 1-4 to 0-1 in the closing period to secure their fourth title.

Siobhan McGrath's 1-3 haul and 56th minute goal were decisive in scoring terms though for

sheer effort and inspiration, midfielder Aoife Donoghue claimed the Player of the Match award.

Beside her, Niamh Kilkenny was at her industrious best and laid on the final passes for Galway's last two points of the game.

Those were two crucial interventions and particularly the first one as Cork only trailed by a point, 1-13 to 1-12, and were on the attack when Kilkenny forced a turnover, engineering a point for Orlaith McGrath.

That left Galway with a two-point cushion and Kilkenny then picked out Siobhan McGrath for the insurance score four minutes into stoppage time.

Not that Galway manager Cathal Murray necessarily agreed with the 'greatness' comment.

## Back-to-back

"They're certainly the most successful Galway team we've had, there's no debate there," said Murray, who argued that there's an even higher bar to surpass to be considered great.

"To win two All-Irelands in three years is really, really special. But for me, any of the great teams have done it back to back, that's my own opinion. You look at Wexford and the three-in-a-row, you look at Cork in '14 and '15 and '17 and '18, they did it back to back. I think that's the challenge now for this team."

It was a difficult situation for Cronin and quite what's coming down the line now for her nobody can be sure. A statement by the DRA made it clear



Galway's Ailish O'Reilly holds on to the sliotar despite the tackle of Cork's Ashling Thompson and Meabh Cahalane. PHOTOGRAPH BY BRIAN REILLY-TROY/INPHO

that they 'made no finding on the substantive appeal' regarding her ban and had merely granted interim relief to play in the final.

Cork manager Paudie Murray said Cronin, who delivered strongly from frees and in open play, was 'outstanding' but hit out at the disciplinary process.

"I don't particularly want to

say too much because I don't want to take away from a Galway victory, it might be skewed in a certain way that I have sour grapes," he said.

"I have great time for Galway and for Cathal Murray, I think it is important to get that across but the (disciplinary process) is... fairness is the word that is being used, but it's not. I just don't think you have enough qualified people in these meetings to handle it correctly."

Galway flew out of the traps initially, roaring into a 0-5 to 0-1 lead, but a tight, tense tussle that went to the wire always seemed likely.

Both sides reached the final

with exactly 28 points to spare after four games and it was no surprise that Cork recovered to draw level late in the first-half, 0-8 apiece.

Referee Liz Dempsey contributed to the contest by allowing a free-flowing game to develop. There was plenty of heavy hits in midfield in particular where Galway's Donoghue and Kilkenny came up against Hannah Looney and Ashling Thompson.

Looney and Thompson scored three of Cork's first four points as they recovered to cancel out that bright Galway start.

But Donoghue put in a huge shift too for Galway, covering a

huge amount of turf and striking a terrific stoppage time point to leave the 2020 runners up 0-9 to 0-8 ahead at half-time.

The teams split four points evenly in the third quarter and a simmering encounter then suddenly burst into life with 1-1 from Cork.

Cork's Mackey was fed by substitute and captain Linda

Collins with a clever hand-pass on the right of goals at the Hill 16 end and thundered a shot to the net.

It left Cork 1-11 to 0-11 ahead and they remained in that position with nine minutes remaining. Surprisingly, they only scored once again as Galway, in their third consecutive final, brought all their experience to bear.

**GALWAY:** Sarah Healy, Shauna Healy, S. Devan, D. Higgins, C. Cormican, E. Helebert, S. Gardiner, A. Donoghue (0-1), N. Kilkenny (0-2), C. Dolan (0-6 frees), S. Spellman, C. Finerty, O. McGrath (0-1), S. McGrath (1-3), A. O'Reilly (0-2, one free). **Subs:** N. Hanniffy for Finerty (11), R. Henneily for Dolan (51 mins), AM Starr for Cormican (60 mins), N. Coen for Spellman (61 mins). **CORK:** A. Lee, M. Cahalane, L. Coppinger, P. Mackey, L. Hayes, I. Treacy, S. McCarthy, H. Looney (0-2), A. Thompson (0-1), C. O'Sullivan, F. Keating, C. Sigerson (0-1), K. Mackey (1-1), O. Cronin (0-6, four frees), A. O'Connor (0-1). **Subs:** L. Collins for O'Sullivan (36 mins), C. Healy for Keating (58 mins). **Referee:** L. Dempsey (Kilkenny).





# Crowning glory

Late surge seals  
camogie title for Galway

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# Galway show steel to plot their way past Rebelettes in thrilling final

Murray lays down gauntlet for his side if they are to be remembered as one of the 'great' teams

**MICHAEL VERNEY**



**GALWAY** 1-15  
**CORK** 1-12

**T**HE closing stages of an All-Ireland final is when the cream rises to the top and Galway's big guns came good when it mattered most as a sensational finale saw them crowned champions for just the fourth time in their history.

A thrilling decider looked to have swung in Cork's favour when Katrina Mackey's 49th-minute rasper sent the Rebelettes into a three-point lead, 1-11 to 0-11, but that goal ignited Galway and they would hold them to a solitary point for the remainder.

Siobhán McGrath raised a green flag seven minutes later while her sister Orlaith landed a magnificent brace of points late on as Cathal Murray's side landed the O'Duffy Cup for the second time in three seasons.

Captain Sarah Dervan hailed her

side's ability to stay calm when the game was slipping away while lauding the extraordinary turnaround which Murray has overseen since taking the Galway reins.

"You can only control how you react. In years gone by, we reacted in the wrong way and this year we said that no matter what Cork throw at us, we're going to react the way we wanted to," Dervan said. "We drove on and got the next point after their goal and it put belief back in us. We dug really deep and every one of those girls fought with their hearts."

## Future

They say good teams win one All-Ireland while great sides notch a second, but a beaming Murray already had one eye on the future when proclaiming that "we probably need to win another All-Ireland if we want to be called a great team".

"They're the most successful Galway team we've had. There's no debate there. To win two All-Irelands in three years is really, really special. For me, any of the great teams have done it back-to-back, that's my own opinion," Murray said.

"You look at Wexford and the three-in-a-row, you look at Cork in '14, '15 and

## AT A GLANCE

### PLAYER OF THE MATCH

**Ailish O'Reilly (Galway)**  
Could have been a host of Galway players with Niamh Kilkenny, Siobhán McGrath and Aoife Donohue excelling – Orla Cronin and Hannah Looney were best for Cork – but O'Reilly buzzed around from start to finish. The Oranmore-Maree attacker hit an early point from play, nailed a tough free late on as well as laying on a beautiful pass for McGrath's crucial goal and she was a thorn in Cork's side throughout.



### TALKING POINT

It looked like the O'Duffy Cup was heading back to Leeside when Katrina Mackey fired a 49th-minute goal to put them into the lead for the first time, 1-11 to 0-11, but Galway responded sensationally. The Tribeswomen outscored them 1-4 to 0-1 thereafter to seal the victory as Cork retreated.

### MAGIC MOMENT

Aoife Donohue closed the opening half with an absolute beauty from play in the 33rd minute. The Mullagh flyer collected the sliotar underneath the Cusack Stand before raising a white flag from the narrowest of angles with a sublime strike.

### MATCH STATISTICS

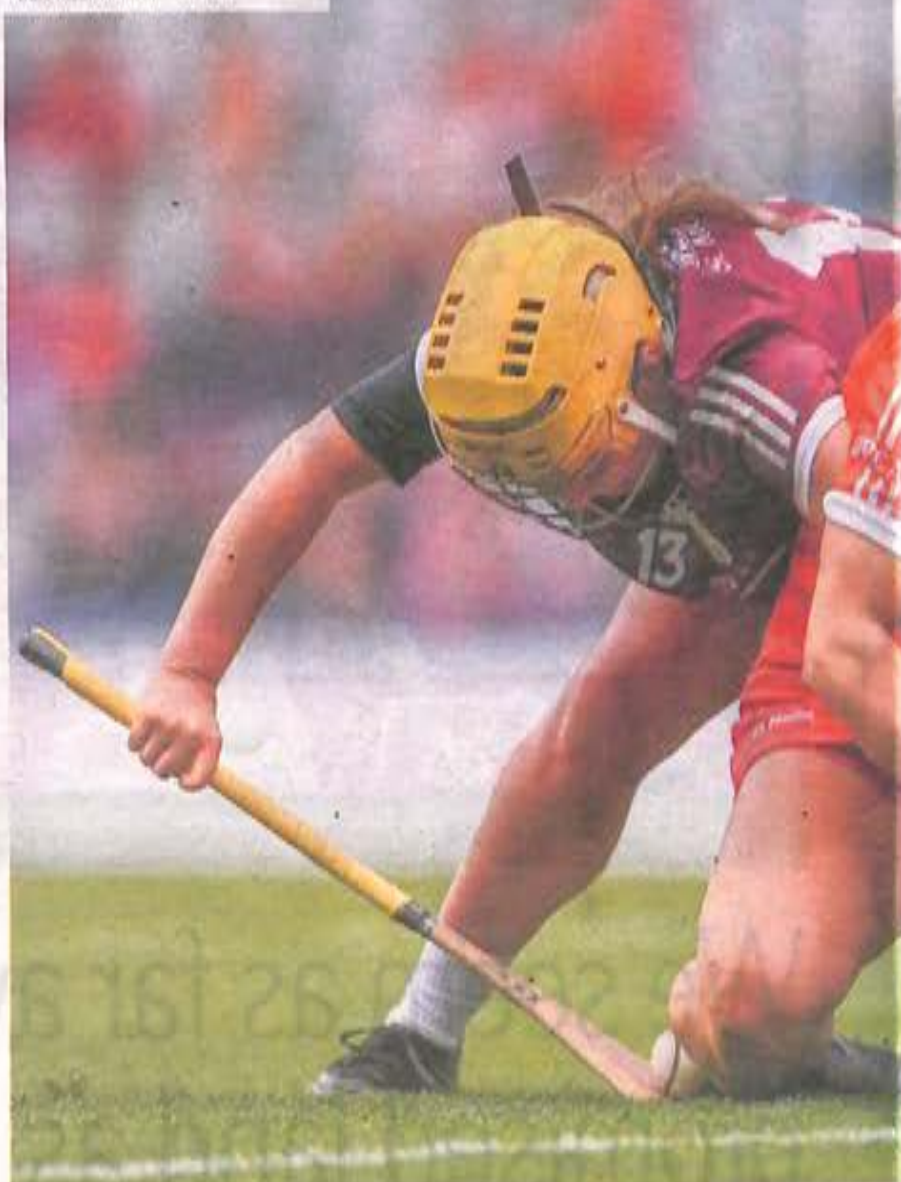
**WIDES**  
Galway 4 (2 in first half); Cork 9 (4)  
**YELLOW CARDS**  
Galway 2 (S Healy 42, S Gardiner 46);  
Cork 2 (C Sigerson 15, M Cahalane 51)  
**ATTENDANCE**  
15,500

'17 and '18, they did it back-to-back. I think that's the challenge now for this team but it's going to take a lot of work to stay ahead of the rest. It's great to be up there but we probably need to win another All-Ireland if we want to be called a great team."

A rip-roaring final started in whirlwind fashion with Galway landing the first four points in as many minutes as a brace of Carrie Dolan frees as well as points from Siobhán McGrath and Ailish O'Reilly had them off to a flier.

Ashling Thompson settled Cork's nerves soon after as Paudie Murray's charges slowly gained a foothold with Hannah Looney delivering a midfield masterclass with two points in a row.

Galway's Siobhán McGrath battles with Cork's Libby Coppinger during their All-Ireland final clash  
BEN MCSHANE/SPORTSFILE



They trailed by two at the first water break, 0-6 to 0-4, but Orla Cronin became more influential as the game wore on having been at the centre of a suspension controversy until Saturday night when cleared to play by the Disputes Resolution Authority (DRA).

Cronin fired over a brace of frees as Amy O'Connor started to cause Galway some trouble with her goal chance flashing over but Galway were still ahead going at half-time (0-9 to 0-8) following a brilliant point from Aoife Donohue.

The third quarter was a tense affair but the brilliant Niamh Kilkenny hit the opening score before 12 scoreless minutes passed with Cronin eventually responding for Cork from a free, Carrie

Dolan did likewise at the other end but another placed ball from Cronin left just one in it again with the final quarter to come, 0-11 to 0-10.

Cronin sent over her first from play upon the resumption to level affairs and when captain Linda Collins played through Mackey for a superb goal two minutes later, the tide had firmly turned in Cork's favour.

The Galway response was telling, though, with Dolan pointing a free before she was called ashore having lasted 51 minutes in spite of a knee injury while Ailish O'Reilly did likewise from a tight angle after taking over dead-ball duties, 1-11 to 0-13.

O'Reilly then did most of the work

# McCormick and Kelly the deadly duo in Antrim win

**ANTRIM** 2-21  
**KILKENNY** 2-13

ALL-IRELAND INTERMEDIATE CAMOGIE FINAL

RÓISÍN McCormick and Maeve Kelly delivered on the biggest stage at Croke Park to propel Antrim to Intermediate final glory.

The deadly duo scored a goal and 14 points between them, and with Cathrine Dobbin also weighing in with 1-2, Antrim racked up a remarkable return. The game was decided in a matter of minutes just before the second-half water break, a period that began with a goal from a 20-metre free by Sophie O'Dwyer in the 43rd minute.

That gave Kilkenny hope as they closed to within four, but McCormick and Kelly (right) responded immediately with points before McCormick set up Dobbin, who finished to the net with the coldness of an assassin.

It was only two minutes after O'Dwyer's strike, but Kilkenny's hopes were extinguished ruthlessly.

Both sets of attacks showed good economy in the first half. It was 1-11 to 0-9 at half-time and only three of those scores had come from placed balls as the teams revelled in the open spaces.

Kilkenny started well and their three half-forwards had points inside five minutes after Kelly had opened the scoring on 58 seconds. In the blink of an eye, the Cats led by three, Sarah



Walsh, Eva Hynes, Walsh again and Ciara O'Keefe splitting the posts. Beaten finalists against Down last year, Antrim were fortunate in the eighth minute when Danielle Quigley struck the butt of a post and Hannah

Scott fresh-airod from the rebound. Antrim went straight up the field for McCormick to point. The Loughgiel prodigy followed up with another couple of scores, supplemented by a Lucia McNaughton point, for the Saffrons to hit the front, a lead they held at the water break.

O'Dwyer equalised from a free, but Kelly lit up Croke Park with a brilliant individual goal in the 21st minute, picking up possession some 30 metres out, side-stepping wonderfully and staying composed to finish past Sinéad Farrell.

Kelly had a glorious point after 38 seconds of the restart and the lead was seven when O'Dwyer stunned everyone with her deadly strike. The reply told you all you needed

to know about the mentality of the Paul McKillen- and Jim McKernan-managed outfit that streaked clear with a flurry of outstanding points after Dobbin's goal. Sarah Crowley found the net in injury time for Kilkenny, but by then the verdict was in no doubt.

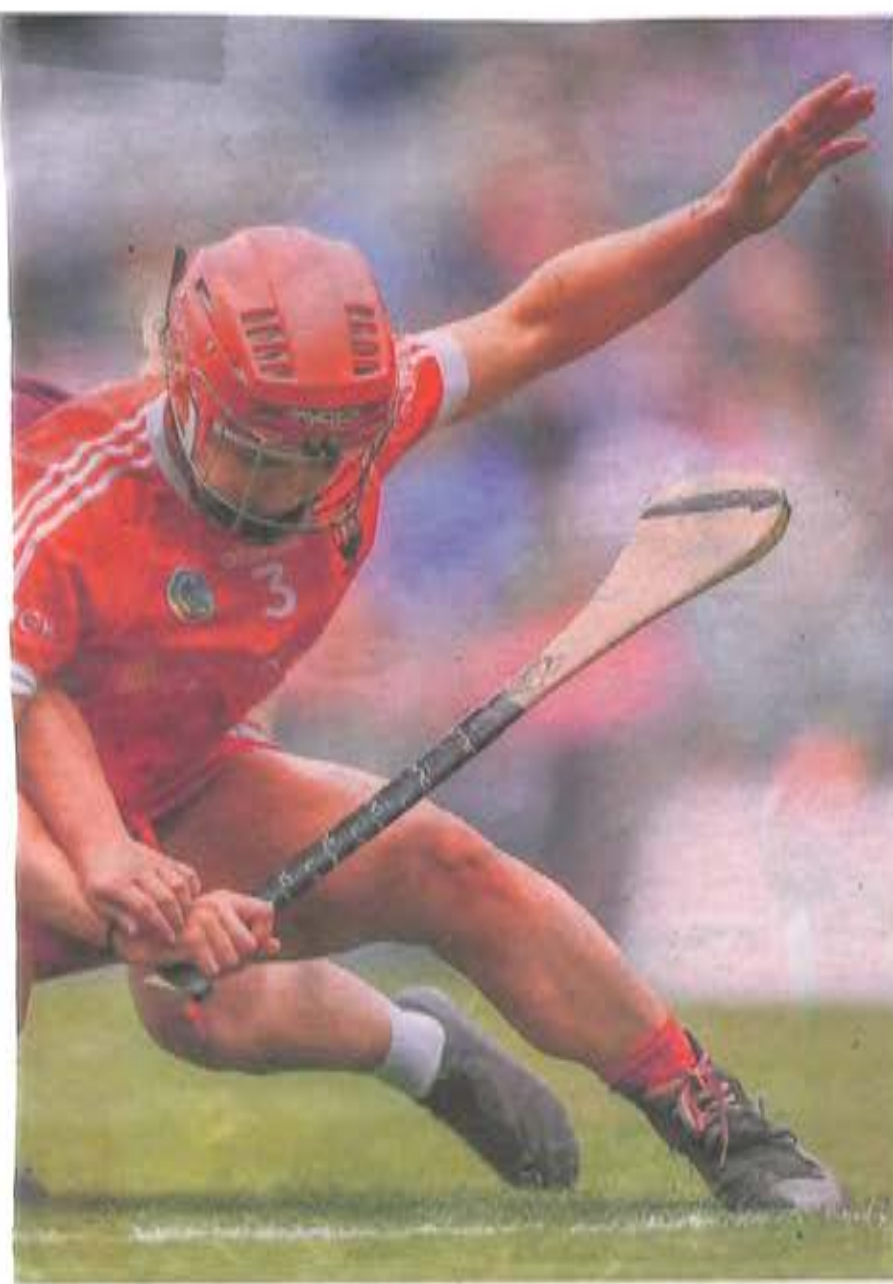
**SCORES** - Antrim: R McCormick 0-9 (8); M Kelly 1-5; C Dobbin 1-2; N O'Neill 0-3; L McNaughton, A Magill 0-1 each. Kilkenny: S O'Dwyer 1-5 (4); S Crowley 1-0; S Walsh, E Hynes 0-2 each; C Phelan, C O'Keefe, D Quigley, T Donnelly 0-1 each.

**ANTRIM** - C Graham, C Dean, N Donnelly, M Lynch, C Patterson, C Corbin, M Connolly, L McNaughton, N O'Neill, M Kelly, A Boyle, A Magill, R McCormick, C Lavery, C Dobbin. **SUBS** - A Connolly for Lavery (30), E Carey McAlister for Magill (50), S Devlin for Patterson (60), L McKenna for Boyle (60+), K McKillop for M Connolly (60+).

**KILKENNY** - S Farrell, N Leahy, R Phelan, C Murphy, S Crowley, L Fennelly, T Fitzgerald, L Hegarty, C Phelan, E Hynes, S Walsh, C O'Keefe, S O'Dwyer, H Scott, D Quigley. **SUBS** - J Leahy for Hegarty (36), T Donnelly for Quigley (43), S O'Keefe for Fitzgerald (46), C Dowling for Scott (55), R O'Keefe for C O'Keefe (57).

REF - C Guinan (Galway)





## McGraths' sister act to the fore as Tribe show a winning spirit

URSULA JACOB



It was an incredible game. It had everything. Hooks, blocks and overflowing with skill. It was end to end. And it contained so much excitement.

Both teams left it all out there. Such wonderful athletes. At the peak of their fitness. They delivered another cracking spectacle for the live television cameras.

I'd say that many young girls looking at the game on TV, or indeed at the ground, will be inspired to play for their counties after seeing such a terrific contest.

### Marvellous

It was such a marvellous advert for the sport. And Camogie has never been in a better place. There's a real flow to the game now. And that's helping to attract new fans. And new players.

The levels keep going up. And Galway and Cork have now brought it to another level.

It was anybody's game coming to the end. It could have gone either way.

Galway got the crucial scores at the crucial times. And that was the difference. But it was in doubt all the way through.

It showcased the biggest game of the year on the biggest stage. And we couldn't have asked for more.

Galway showed character when they conceded that goal to Katrina Mackey. Many in the stadium felt that the contest could be heading Cork's way.

But not the Galway girls. I was so impressed with their response. They didn't drop their heads. They kept going.

They out-scored Cork after conceding the goal. And the McGrath sisters were at the heart of the comeback. Siobhán getting the vital goal and Orlaith sending over those two late points.

I feel it was Siobhán's goal that sealed the deal, but still Cork kept going. Their manager, Paudie Murray, couldn't have asked for any more of the players.



Aoife Donoghue of Galway, 12, celebrates with team-mates Niamh Hanniffy 8, and Ailish O'Reilly after their side's victory. PÍARAS Ó MIDHEACH/SPORTSFILE

before playing through Siobhán McGrath for a crucial goal in the 56th minute as Cork began to struggle.

The defiant Cronin broke their barren spell with a point to leave the minimum in it, but Orlaith McGrath came up trumps in the dying minutes with two superb points from distance as they secured a famous win.

On the same day as the 25th anniversary of their first All-Ireland camogie crown was honoured, the west was awake again as Paudie Murray was left to rue Cork's closing spell when they retreated behind the ball with the finishing line in sight.

"We brought Galway on us. That period of time when we went up three,

we tried to defend it rather than going again. At this level, you just don't sit back and try and defend a three-point lead with 10 minutes to go," a dejected Murray said.

**SCORERS** - Galway: C Dolan 0-6 (6F); S McGrath 1-2; A O'Reilly (1F); N Kilkenny; O McGrath 0-2 each; A Donohue 0-1. Cork: O Cronin 0-6 (4F); K Mackey 1-1; H Looney 0-2; A Thompson; A O'Connor; C Sigerson 0-1 each.

**GALWAY** - Sarah Healy 7; D Higgins 7; Shauna Healy 7; S Dervan 7; C Carrigan 7; E Healy 7; S Gardiner 7; N Kilkenny 8; A Donohue 8; C Dolan 7; S Spellman 6; C Finnerty 5; O McGrath 7; S McGrath 8; A O'Reilly 8. **SUBS** - N Hanniffy 7 for Finnerty (1-0); R Hennelly 6 for Dolan (51); AM Star for Carrigan (60); N Coen for Spellman (60).

**CORK** - A Lee 7; P Mackey 6; L Coppinger 7; M Cahillane 7; L Hayes 7; L Treacy 7; S McCarthy 6; H Looney 6; A Thompson 7; C O'Sullivan 5; F Keating 6; C Sigerson 6; K Mackey 7; A O'Connor 7; O Cronin 8. **SUBS** - L Collins 7 for O'Sullivan (36); C Healy for Keating (59). **REF** - L Dempsey (Kilkenny).

They had given him their all. And Hannah Looney was absolutely immense. She gave such a fantastic performance.

She was helping out in defence one minute and then surging forward the next. What a player she is. And also Ashling Thompson, her midfield partner.

Galway were very good defensively. But so were Cork. Clear-cut chances were rare. It was hard to find any space. We were saying at half-time that the game needed a goal. And then we got two. And those goals helped to increase the drama.

I thought it was appropriate that Galway won the O'Duffy Cup on the day that their 1996 All-Ireland winning team was honoured on the pitch.

In the years since, Cork have had the upper hand on Galway in All-Ireland finals, but this victory was so much deserved.

They had so many players that stood up. And that's what you need in an All-Ireland final. Ailish O'Reilly did an

amount of work from her corner-forward position. And she converted a very important free when it was needed.

Niamh Kilkenny is so good on the ball. She possesses such speed. And when she goes on one of her solo runs the crowd are on their feet.

Orla Cronin got the green light to start. That was big news for Cork. And she had an excellent game.

Cork were so close. And they'll be back. They made such a massive contribution to what was a game to remember.

And it was an occasion to remember. Three good games. A feast of camogie. And I think the three referees deserve praise for their displays.

So often, the referees are the easy target. But they let the play flow so well yesterday. And that's what we all want to see.

I felt proud to be in Croke Park to see it all. And, on a personal level, I was a happy woman driving home after seeing Wexford lifting the Kay Mills trophy.

## Cashe's opportunism crucial in pointing Wexford to junior glory

WEXFORD	1-14
ARMAGH	1-11

ALL-IRELAND PREMIER JUNIOR CAMOGIE FINAL

SEVEN points from Chloe Cashe and a terribly unlucky own goal by Nicola Woods were among the features, but Wexford finished the stronger to grind out victory over a valiant Armagh in a thrilling junior decider at Croke Park yesterday.

From the start, Armagh looked to turn the Wexford defenders around with a direct game to the forwards - a tactic that yielded dividends, often from frees by the assured Clara Donnelly, who clocked up 10 points,

and they might have had an early goal but referee Kevin O'Brien had called the play back for a free after advantage had elapsed.

Cashe shook off an injury from the throw-in to convert a couple of frees in response to Donnelly's early salvo.

The Orchard County girls were dominant in the first quarter, but there was a large slice of luck to their goal, with Eimear Smyth's low shot slipping under Lara O'Shea's hurley to put a goal between them at the first water break, 1-4 to 0-4.

Wexford resumed with more vigour and became a constant threat with their own running game, which Armagh were unable to cope with. They ended with just one goal but how it wasn't more could be one of

life's great mysteries. They probably should have had a couple more. Twice Clara Banville found Emma Codd in isolation in front of the Armagh posts but she shot over the crossbar on both times.

Aldeen Brennan had two powerful shots saved brilliantly by Ciarraí Devlin, one being tipped over for a point.

When the goal did come, it was very fortuitous. After Lisa Firman had a shot hit the upright, Banville raced onto the rebound and got to it just ahead of Devlin. From the press box, it was clear that her ground shot was heading inches wide but the retreating Woods didn't have that luxury.

The full-back managed to jab the

sliotar away from the posts but the momentum of her sliding body shoved it into the net. Still though, Armagh were only two points behind at the interval, 1-8 to 1-6.

Within two minutes of the restart, they were ahead thanks to three converted frees from Donnelly, the last from outside the 65m line.

Ultimately, however, Wexford were able to chisel out a few more scores after Ailish Neville cut in from the right to equalise and they had edged back in front (1-11 to 1-10) by the second water break.

Clara Hill levelled in the 51st minute but Armagh didn't score again, while Wexford finished with a massive score from Brennan, another from sub Muireann Fitzpatrick and a Cashe

'45' - much to the delight of winning manager Alan Brennan.

"All our big players stood up today. There was no one played bad. A few girls probably got tired and we took them off. You need a big squad if you want to win games and that's what we have, thank God," he said.

**SCORERS** - Wexford: C Cashe 0-7 (5F, 2 45s); N Woods own goal; C Banville 0-2; A Brennan; A Neville; E Codd; L Finnan; M Fitzpatrick 0-1 each. **Armagh**: C Donnelly 0-10 (9F); E Smyth 1-0; C Hill 0-1.

**WEXFORD** - L O'Shea; C Jackson; A Halligan; S Furlong; A Dunne; A Brennan; Donohue; B Conroy; C Cashe; M Cullen; C Banville; A Neville; L Finnan; E Codd; E Tinkins. **SUBS** - M Fitzpatrick for Cullen (44); K Smyth for Finnan (53); A Devereux for Conroy (53); S Figgis for Codd (60).

**ARMAGH** - C Devlin; A Hannes; N Woods; S Curry; C Curry; G McWilliams; G McCann; M McArdle; L Donnelly; B Pihang; C Donnelly; C Hill; O Murray; C McSorley; E Smyth. **SUBS** - L Hayes for McCann (40); K Curry for O Murray (50); S Blaney for McSorley (59); O Curry for B Murray (60-1).

**REF** - K O'Brien (Limerick).