



Eimear O'Brien, St Catherine's, makes a clearance against Ella Woods, Sarsfields, in the SE Systems Cork County Senior Camogie Championship quarter-final at Castle Rd. Picture: Larry Cummins

Superb team display as St Catherine's knock out Sarsfields

St Catherine's 2-10
Sarsfields 1-11

CAMOGIE

Rory Noonan

St Catherine's are through to the semi-final of the SE Systems Cork Senior Camogie Championship following their win over Sarsfields at Castle Rd on Saturday.

This was a superb team performance for the winners, who battled for every ball as if their lives depended on it. They were led by their Cork star Laura Hayes, but plenty of others stood out for them. Ally Mulkerrins, Eimear O'Brien, Aoife Hurley, and Meabh Fitzgerald were also outstanding.

Sars were without the Mullins sisters, Orlaith and Clare, with the former out of the county through college and the latter injured. Clare did come on late in the game, but it was obvious that she wasn't fully fit.

Kate Fennessy opened the scoring for Sars from a free and from the restart they regained possession to see Rachael Roche add their second. With eight minutes gone they stretched their lead further when they were quickest to react after the ball came back off the post. Fennessy gained possession and she set up Maeve McCarthy to find the back of the net, to make it 1-2 to no score.

Ava Fitzgerald added another point before Catherine's got off the mark after 13 minutes. Former Cork star Orla Cotter pointed from a free, with Ally Mulkerrins getting their second as they started to come more into the game.

Fennessy pointed from a free for Sars, after 19 minutes, but this proved to be their last score of the half.

Another Cotter free reduced the gap and when she pointed from a 45 it was 1-4 to 0-4.

Just before half time she scored from another free to

put only two between them at the break, 1-4 to 0-5.

Fennessy got the first score of the second half, but with 33 minutes gone the sides were level. Cotter set up Mulkerrins to goal for Catherine's, with Hurley adding a point to put them in front for the first time, 1-6 to 1-5.

As expected Sars responded with Fennessy scoring from another free to level it.

She hit two more frees and a 45 to put her side three in front again after 45 minutes.

Mulkerrins pulled a point back for Catherine's to put two between them.

With 50 minutes gone Catherine's were awarded a penalty for a foul on Fitzgerald and Hayes made no mistake, to make it 2-7 to 1-9.

Hurley added a point, with Hollie Herlihy replying for Sars. Cotter kept two between them before Catherine's had keeper Yvonne O'Neill to thank when she saved superbly to deny Lucy Allen a goal.

Fennessy pointed from the 45 but Cotter scored from a free in injury time to seal the win for Catherine's and their passage to the semi-final.

Scorers for St Catherine's: O Cotter 0-6 (0-5 f, 0-1 45), A Mulkerrins 1-2, L Hayes 1-0 pen, A Hurley 0-2.

Sarsfields: K Fennessy 0-8 (0-6 f, 0-2 45), M McCarthy 1-0, R Roche, A Fitzgerald, H Herlihy 0-1 each.

St Catherine's: Y O'Neill, F Sheehan, C Motherway, M Murphy, C Hayes, L Hayes, F Neville, E O'Brien, M O'Keeffe, T Murphy, O Cotter, A Hurley, N O'Regan, A Mulkerrins, M Fitzgerald.

Sub: C Galvin for T Murphy (57).

Sarsfields: M Lynch, C Lynch, S Hurley, L Dunlea, T Elliott, O McAllen, K Barry, R Roche, A Fitzgerald, L Allen, H Herlihy, C O'Donovan, K Fennessy, M McCarthy, E Woods.

Subs: M Sheehan for L Dunlea (h-t), C Mullins for C O'Donovan (51).

Referee: Cathal Egan, Glen Rovers.



St Finbarr's Eimear Hurley celebrates after scoring her team's fourth goal in the Senior Camogie Championship quarter-final against Killeagh. Picture: Chani Anderson

Barrs push on into last four

St Finbarr's 4-20
Killeagh 0-13

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

Champions St Finbarr's advanced to the SE Systems Senior Camogie semi-finals with a victory over Killeagh at the superb MTU venue on Saturday.

The scoreline doesn't reflect the efforts of a young Killeagh, who in the opening half went toe to toe with the Barrs and took the game to them. St Finbarr's went in as raging hot favourites but Killeagh were not intimidated.

Conditions were ideal as the sides went at it from the throw-in. Killeagh signalled their intentions and they took the game to the champions and opened up a two-point lead after five minutes.

They moved the ball fast and went at the St Finbarr's defence. Chloe Sigerson pointed after Hannah Looney did all the hard work and Looney added a second. Nicole Olden had St Finbarr's on the scoreboard but Ava Fitzgerald replied as Killeagh held the lead.

Orlaith Cahalane left the Killeagh defences in her wake as she rifled the net to edge Barr's in front on nine minutes and twice the sides swapped points at the end of the first quarter. The Barrs hit a purple patch and had three points in a row from Cork star Sorcha McCartan.

Sigerson had one back but with St Finbarr's finishing the half impressively, they led 1-8 to 0-8 at the interval.

Killeagh needed a good start to the second half but it was the Blues who stretched their lead with Keava McCarthy, Kate Wall, and Cahalane on target. Orlaith Murphy had one back for Killeagh but with the St Finbarr's defence now much tighter, they were finding it hard to make headway.

The Barrs began to find space and Killeagh were finding it hard going.

Points from Cahalane, McCarthy, and Wall had the city side seven points in front before McCartan finished to the net.

St Finbarr's now upped it a gear. Killeagh battled to find something but it was tough. Looney split the posts but the Barrs kept the scoreboard ticking over before two goals from super sub Eimear Hurley after 53 and 56 minutes wrapped the victory.

A ruthless second half from the Barrs but a gutsy display from the East Cork team overall.

Scorers for St Finbarr's: S McCartan 1-7 (0-4 f), E Hurley 2-1, O Cahalane 1-2, K McCarthy, N Olden, K Wall 0-3 each, C Golden 0-1.

Killeagh: C Sigerson 0-6 (0-4 f), H Looney 0-3, A O'Regan 0-2, A Fitzgerald, O Murphy 0-1 each.

ST FINBARR'S: C Hurley, S Punch, S Daly, A O'Neill, A Shannon, M Cahalane, C Golden, E Olden, H O'Leary, K McCarthy, K Wall, E Wiggington-Barrett, O Cahalane, N Olden, S McCartan.

Subs: G Cahalane for E Olden (inj 10 min), E Hurley for E Wiggington-Barrett (39), L O'Donovan for A Shannon (47), A Egan for S Daly (49).

KILLEAGH: C Lane, A Kelly-Budds, C Barry, A Ashman, E Brenner, N Ni Chaoimh, E Barry, L Treacy, R Sheehan, C Sigerson, H Looney, A O'Regan, T Holland, A Fitzgerald, O Murphy.

Subs: M O'Donovan for E Barry (43), S Kent for A Kelly-Budds (43), S Beausang for T Holland (45), A Brenner for O Murphy (46).

Referee: Diarmuid Kirwin (Éire Óg).



Lucy Allen battles to hold possession for Sarsfields against St Catherine's. Picture: Larry Cummins



St Finbarr's Ciara Golden fires the sliotar down the field. Picture: Chani Anderson



Killeagh's Ava Fitzgerald controls the sliotar with her foot. Picture: Chani Anderson



Blackrock's Maeve Coffey and Ballinora's Aoife Quirke with their eyes on the sliotar in the air during the Senior Camogie Championship quarter-final at MTU.
Picture: Chani Anderson

Blackrock see off Ballinora after extra-time cracker

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

Blackrock	2-19
Ballinora	1-19
(after extra time)	

It took extra-time to separate Blackrock and Ballinora in an exciting camogie quarter-final at MTU on Saturday, before the city side set up a meeting with champions St Finbarr's.

There was never much between them, but Blackrock looked like they'd done enough with a Cliona O'Callaghan's point two minutes into added time.

However, it was disallowed by referee John Horgan, who awarded a free following consolation with his umpires.

In the end, they still prevailed.

Blackrock took the lead in extra-time with Juliet O'Keefe and Kaitlin Hickey points.

Ballinora hit the post with a Jennifer Murphy goal shot and then points from Hayley Ryan and O'Keefe put the Rockies four in front.

Rachel Murphy did narrow it to 2-17 to 1-17, but Blackrock were four up at the start of the second half of extra-time before a strong Ballinora finish saw them narrow the gap to two, through Rachel Murphy and Kate Dooley.

It took Kate O'Sullivan's score to seal the Rockies' last four spot.

Ballinora started well and looked lively. Rose Murphy and Grace Keohane had early points before Hayley Ryan converted two Blackrock frees and stuck from play.

Then came a brilliant Dooley goal after she outpaced her marker and Ballinora hit the next three points to open up a 1-5 to 0-3 lead after 15 minutes.

Hickey sent a long-range strike from play between the post and but Dooley responded.

Ryan was busy and winning a lot of possession for Blackrock, clinical from frees while their defence began to tighten up. Blackrock drove forward and earned frees in row which Ryan converted.

The gap was cut to a point six minutes before the break and when Ryan set up Cliona O'Callaghan to finish to the net Blackrock hit the front. Michelle Murphy added a



Ballinora's Judy Murphy looks for an opening as she is chased by Blackrock's Cliona O'Callaghan.
Picture: Chani Anderson

point and they led 1-9 to 1-6 at half-time.

Ballinora narrowed the gap with two Rachel Murphy points but a Ryan goal after good work from O'Callaghan had Blackrock back in control, leading by four.

Still, Ballinora were finding gaps and two Murphy points trimmed the margin to two.

Play swung from end to end as Blackrock clung to their lead. Hickey split the posts while Murphy and O'Callaghan scored again.

Ballinora pressed and won a penalty and a bit of hesitation about who would take it, Meabh Murphy's shot was saved by Anna Kearney.

A huge boost with nine minutes remaining, but Ballinora showed real character.

Rachel Murphy converted two frees and struck the equaliser from play on 60 minutes.

O'Callaghan then thought she'd won it in added time but it ultimately took extra-time.

Scorers for Blackrock: H Ryan 1-10 (0-5 f), C O'Callaghan 1-2, K Hickey 0-3 (0-2 f), J O'Keefe 0-2, M Murphy, K O'Sullivan 0-1 each.

Ballinora: Rachel Murphy 0-12 (0-9 f, 0-1 45), K Dooley 1-3, Rose Murphy 0-2, G Keohane, C Dooley 0-1 each.

BLACKROCK: A Kearney, M Ryan, M Cashman, L Guerin, A Hegarty, R de Faolte, O Grimley, K Hickey, J O'Keefe, M Murphy, H Ryan, E Curtin, C O'Callaghan, L McKeogh, M Coffey.

Subs: S McCarthy for McKeogh (40), J Murphy for Curtin (40), K Lyons for Guerin (54), K O'Sullivan for Coffey (67).

BALLINORA: T O'Donoghue, A Conway, S O'Keefe, J Murphy, E McAuliffe, M Murphy, E O'Driscoll, A Quirke, Rose Murphy, G Keohane, Rachel Murphy, K O'Shea, C Dooley, J Mehigan, K Dooley.
Subs: N Kingston for McAuliffe (47), J Murphy for Mehigan (50), A Murphy for O'Driscoll (inj 73).
Referee: John Horgan.



Glen Rovers' Emma Murphy heads goalwards and away from Ally McGrath, Éire Óg, with Abbey Lynch O'Shea providing back-up at Castle Rd.
Picture: Martin Walsh

Éire Óg edge out Rovers

Éire Óg	2-13
Glen Rovers	1-14

Éire Óg booked their place in the semi-finals of the SE Systems Cork Senior Camogie Championship, where they will meet Blackrock, after they defeated Glen Rovers at Castle Rd.

This game went down to the wire with the scoreline reading 1-13 to 1-12 in favour of Glen Rovers. With time running out, Isobel Sheehan set up Emily McGrath for Éire Óg's second goal which put the Muskerry side in the driving seat. Emma Murphy replied with a point from play for the Blackpool side, which left a single point between the sides. Clara Murphy pointed a free three minutes into stoppage time for the winners.

This game was dictated by the wind, and scoring opportunities for Éire Óg were at a premium, while the second half was more open for both sides. Glen Rovers outscored the Muskerry side by 11 points to 1-5 in the second half.

The Blackpool side made the better start as Emma Murphy slotted over a pointed free in the game's opening minute. Glen Rovers continued to have Éire Óg pinned back as Emma Murphy sent Katie Walsh on a solo run to score the game's opening goal and give the Blackpool side a four-point advantage.

Éire Óg began to get to grips with the

CAMOGIE

■ John Leonard

game as persistent fouling was proving to be Glen Rovers' undoing. Clara Murphy converted two frees to reduce the deficit to two points.

Clara Murphy slotted over Éire Óg's first point from play, and Walsh replied for the Blackpool side, before the Mid Cork side began to seize the initiative. Roisin Murphy and Clara Murphy each tagged on points from play. Clara Murphy also converted two frees as Éire Óg led by 0-7 to 1-2.

Walsh responded with her second point from play to leave the minimum between the sides, but this was cancelled out, as Clara Murphy added a point from play for the Muskerry side.

Wayward shooting was proving to be Glen Rovers' undoing in this period, but at the other end, their net-minder Denise Luby was pulling off some spectacular saves. The Blackpool side's puck-outs were also going astray, but Éire Óg's shots drifted wide of the posts.

Six minutes into stoppage time, Clara Murphy drilled home a goal from a free to give Éire Óg an interval lead of 1-8 to 1-3.

With the elements in Glen Rovers' favour for the second half, Emma Murphy tagged on a point within seconds of the restart. Clara Murphy pointed a free, before Éire Óg found themselves on the back

foot. Emma Murphy tagged on a hat-trick of points, including a free and Sophie O'Sullivan also scored a point to leave the minimum between the sides.

Clara Murphy and Erin Healy each added points for the Mid-Cork side. Emma Murphy replied with a point for Glen Rovers.

Persistent fouling was proving to be Éire Óg's undoing as Emma Murphy converted three unanswered frees for the Blackpool side and she also added a point from play.

In the 57th minute, with Glen Rovers leading 1-13 to 1-11, Clara Murphy tagged on a point from play for the Muskerry side to leave the minimum between the sides, before the scene was set for a dramatic final.

Scorers for Éire Óg: C Murphy 1-11 (1-4 f), E McGrath 1-0, R Murphy, E Healy 0-1 each.

Glen Rovers: E Murphy 0-11 (0-4 f), K Walsh 1-2, S O'Sullivan 0-1.

ÉIRE ÓG: M Gleeson, G Young, F Murphy, K McCarthy, E Quigley, I Sheehan, A Whelton, A McGrath, R Murphy, C Murphy, O Cremin, F Twohig, R Sheehan, E Sheehan, E Healy.

Subs: E McGrath for R Sheehan, C O'Brien for Twohig (both 51), L Murphy for R Murphy (54), S Hutchinson for F Murphy (58).

GLEN ROVERS: D Luby, E O'Meara, K Falvey, C Martin, K O'Regan, S Murphy, A Lynch-O'Shea, L O'Sullivan, A Akinkuolie, T McCarthy, E Murphy, I O'Meara, A Wallace, K Walsh, S O'Sullivan.

Subs: K O'Halloran for Lynch-O'Shea (40), A O'Halloran for Akinkuolie (48).

Referee: Niall O'Neill (Midleton).



Éire Óg's Erin Healy slips past Glen Rovers' Emily O'Meara.
Picture: Martin Walsh.



Éire Óg's Allannah Whelton and Glen Rovers' Sophie O'Sullivan chase possession.
Picture: Martin Walsh.



Eire Óg's Óralith Cremin has Glen Rovers' Sarah Murphy for company in the Cork SE Systems Senior Camogie Championship quarter-final at Castle Rd.
Picture: Martin Walsh

Unbeaten Ballinhassig looking to continue unbeaten run to semi

The SE Systems Premier Intermediate Camogie Championship semi-finals will see neighbours Ballygarvan and Ballinhassig battling it out in Shamrocks GAA pitch in Shanbally today.

The second semi-final sees Ballincollig take on Newcestown in Coachford (both 2pm). Throughout this campaign Ballincollig, Ballygarvan, and Ballinhassig have remained unbeaten, while Newcestown lost out in one of the group games to Ballinhassig.

In the quarter-final Ballincollig had an impressive victory over Fr O'Neill's; Ballinhassig overcame Clonakilty, Ballygarvan defeated Enniskeane, and Newcestown overcame Brain Dillon's.

Former Cork senior Eimear O'Sullivan will spearhead the Ballinhassig challenge and she will be able assisted by Mille Lombard, Aoife Cottrell, and Geraldine Collins.

Ballygarvan will be looking for big performances from Sarah Ahern and Cliona O'Leary and their experienced captain Catriona Kelly.

Newcestown have battled to make it through to the closing stages.

They are without their Cork senior player Ciara O'Sullivan, who is out with an injury, but they have fine players in Claire Kingston, Karen O'Sullivan, and Sarah Burrows and they will give it everything to reach the final.

Ballincollig have been impressive through the group stages with strong performances. Linda Dorgan continues to line out and her experience is hugely important to a side that also included other long-time experienced campaigners Leah Weste and Elaine Casey and they will fancy their chances of making it to the final.

The SE Systems Intermediate championship continues this weekend with Valley Rovers meeting Douglas.



Clodagh O'Donovan in action for Sarsfield's as Ciara Hayes, St Catherine's chases in the quarter final of the SE Systems Cork County Senior Camogie Championship at Castle Rd.
Picture: Larry Cummins

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

Sarsfields take on Sliabh Rua, and with one round to go next weekend Sliabh Rua are top followed by Newtownshandrum and Ballinascahy.

Sarsfields are in fourth and with Valley Rovers in fifth.

Bishopstown and Aghada booked their place in the SE Systems Premier Junior Championship final which is down to take place on October 5.

Bishopstown overcame Tracton on a 2-11 to 1-9 scoreline. Tracton led by a point 0-6 to 0-5 at the interval, but a goal from Emily O'Donoghue within two minutes of the restart gave Bishopstown the lead. As the sides battled it out, little divided them, but a strong finish saw Bishopstown close it out with a late goal from Máire Ní Fhirghil consolidating their lead until full-time.

Aghada defeated Mallow to advance; they trailed 0-6 to 0-4 at half-time, but on the resumption Aghada took over with Ali Smith, May Collins, Aoife Healy, and Clare Walsh on target with points, and a goal and a point from Abigail Ring they were on their way to the final.

In the SE Systems Junior A Camogie Championship Blarney and Youghal are through to the semi-finals and with one game to have been played midweek it will determine who goes through to join them with Buttevant, Bride Rovers, and St Fanahan's all in the hunt.

Barryroe had a semi-final victory over Kilworth to secure their place in the SE Systems junior B camogie final, whilst Kilbree defeated Nemo to make it to the final on October 5.

The SE Systems Junior C camogie final goes ahead today in Castle Rd at 1.30pm with Laochra Óg taking on Castlemartyr.



Sile Golden, president Cork Camogie Board, presents 'The Echo' Player-of-the-Match award to Ava McAuliffe after Castlemartyr's victory in the SE Systems Junior C Camogie final

McAuliffe inspires Castlemartyr to Junior championship success

Castlemartyr 1-14
Laochra Óg 0-6

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

Castlemartyr took the SE Systems Junior C Camogie championship title with an impressive 1-14 to 0-6 win over Laochra Óg at Castle Road.

Ava McAuliffe was named *The Echo* Player of the match after an excellent display which saw her hit 10 points of her side's tally. Castlemartyr held the upper hand in the opening half and built up a 0-11 to 0-2 interval lead with Ava McAuliffe, Ciara O'Brien, Roisin Kelly, Lily Hayes-Nally and Sarah Rose Cusheen all prominent.

Whilst Darcy O'Brien and Ava McSweeney were on target for Laochra Óg, Laochra Óg worked hard throughout the second half but found it hard to break down the strong Castlemartyr defence. Darcy O'Brien, Ava O'Connell, Aisling O'Leary and Ava McSweeney all added to their tally with points, but Castlemartyr put the seal on victory with a late second half goal from Ciara O'Brien to run out winners.

Castlemartyr will now go on to contest a provincial competition organised by the Kerry Camogie Board with the Mai O'Connell Plate due to be played in November.

BALLYGARVAN AND BALLINCOLLIG THROUGH TO PREMIER INTERMEDIATE FINAL

Ballincollig and Ballygarvan are through to the SE Systems Premier Intermediate camogie final as they overcame Newcestown and Ballinhassig in two close semi-finals last weekend.

It took extra time to separate Ballincollig and Newcestown after it ended level 1-9 to 0-12.

A tight game with both sides battling for every score. Newcestown led at half time 0-6 to 0-2 a lead they held until the 50th minute but Ballincollig upped the pace and momentum swung to them. Twice, Ballincollig levelled with Newcestown wrestling back the lead in between, but Ballincollig were resolute and took it to extra time and they finished stronger with a point a piece in either half from Tara Goulding and Keeley Goulding, both from play, to run out 1-11 to 0-12 winners and book their place in the final.

It was close all through as Ballygarvan and Ballinhassig battled for a place in the final. Twenty minutes in the sides were level at three points apiece.

Ballinhassig hit the front with an Eimear Daly goal and a point from Grace Healy.

Ballygarvan worked hard and at the break it was 1-06 to 0-07 in Ballinhassig's favour.

Ballinhassig had the better start to the second half.

Eimear O'Sullivan with two points stretched their lead but Catriona Kelly and Rachel O'Regan points reduced the gap to a point.

A Molly Kelleher goal had Ballygarvan two ahead but again Ballinhassig cut the gap with a Grace Healy point before Ballygarvan stretched it to three again, but an Aisling Lombard goal had the sides level going into injury time.

Late on, Catriona Kelly pointed a free and this edged Ballygarvan home but not before Ballinhassig had two chances sail narrowly wide.



Ellen Hayes-Nally and Caoimhe Murphy are presented with the SE Systems junior C camogie trophy by Padraic Treacy, chairman Cork Camogie Board after their side's victory.

All-Star trailblazer Saoirse excited for Africa adventure

BY GER MCCARTHY

AFRICA-BOUND Saoirse McCarthy is once again in the national spotlight – nominated for a fourth PWC Camogie All-Star and preparing for a life-changing trip to Uganda.

The Courcey Rovers star is among 11 Cork players short-listed for this year's All-Stars, and she's also in the running for the prestigious Senior Player of the Year award.

Already a three-time All-Star (2022, 2023 and 2024), McCarthy's consistency and influence continue to set her apart.

For the 25-year-old, the honour never loses its shine.

'I was only going through the list and you always pick out the girl who's been nominated for the first time, so I'm delighted for Emma Murphy and I think it's going to be a big occasion for her,' McCarthy told *The Southern Star*.

'It's a huge achievement for Cork to have 11 nominations, even though we lost this year's All-Ireland final. It's a testament to the quality of our squad. We can go and enjoy the evening and reflect on the year that has gone by. It is all about winning and losing but, at the end of the day, we're all in it together. We can celebrate on that night anyway.'

Joining McCarthy on the Cork shortlist are Amy Lee, Méabh Cahalane, Libby Copping, Laura Hayes, Laura Treacy, Ashling Thompson, Orlaith Cahalane, Katrina Mackey, and Amy O'Connor. They will all gather at Croke Park on Saturday, November 15th, for the lavish awards ceremony.

Naturally, memories of the All-Ireland defeat to Galway will linger.

'Losing this year's All-Ireland final still stings – I don't know if it will ever not sting, to be honest,' she admitted.

'When you lose by such a small margin you're looking at tiny, tiny details, moments where you could have won it. It's not good for the health! So look, we'll gather ourselves up and go again in 2026, but I don't think the sting will ever go away.'

If the All-Stars represent recognition of McCarthy's sporting brilliance, her next venture highlights her determination to make an impact far beyond the pitch.

In November, she will travel to Uganda as part of the GAA's annual 'Warriors For

Humanity – Plant the Planet Games' initiative. Alongside 50 other inter-county players McCarthy will help plant one million trees across Africa providing long-term food and income for local communities.

'Travelling to Africa is something I have wanted to do for years,' she explained.

'I remember seeing Ashling Thompson and other Cork girls go to Uganda over the last couple of years. Fiona (Keating) and I actually signed up to do it last year, but between going back to complete my Masters and the fundraising involved, it just wasn't possible. Fiona went, but asking two girls from the same Ballinspittle parish to raise €20,000 between them would have been a hard ask as well.'

'My Dublin roommate, Roisin McCormack, also travelled last year. I remember dropping them off at the airport and saying to myself, "I wish I was going!" The year has flown by though and the trip has come around so quickly.'

Now working full-time with Keary's Motor Group while finishing her Masters in Digital Marketing and Content Creation at TU Dublin, McCarthy is balancing professional, sporting and fundraising commitments. Each player must raise €10,000 for the trip, something she admits is daunting but worthwhile.

'I'm fundraising at the moment – €10,000 is no mean feat – but it should be an unbelievable experience and I am really looking forward to it.'

Her fundraising efforts can be followed and supported via Instagram at @saoirse_mccarthy24.

Cork ace
Saoirse
McCarthy.





Meabh Fitzgerald, St Catherine's, is chased by Katie McCarthy, Éire Óg, in the SE Systems Cork Camogie Senior Championship semi-final at Castle Road. Picture: Larry Cummins

St Catherine's book their place in senior camogie showdown

St Catherine's 1-15
Éire Óg 0-11

CAMOGIE

■ **John Leonard**

St Catherine's booked their place in the decider of the SE Systems Cork Senior Camogie Championship after they defeated Éire Óg before a sizeable attendance at Castle Road. St Catherine's have earned themselves a meeting with champions St Finbarr's on October 12.

Scoring opportunities were at a premium for Catherine's in the opening quarter while Éire Óg played a more open game. The Imokilly side got the decisive goal within two minutes of the start of the second half, where they restricted Éire Óg to five points.

St Catherine's Orla Cotter and Éire Óg's Clara Murphy exchanged pointed frees, before Fiona Twohig got the game's first score from play for the Muskerry side.

Persistent fouling was proving costly for Éire Óg as Cotter converted her second free. Twohig and Clara Murphy slotted over two unanswered points from play for Éire Óg to give their side a lead of 0-4 to 0-2.

The tide turned in St Catherine's favour, who were aided by the elements in the opening half. Meabh Fitzgerald and Ally Mul-kerrins got the Imokilly side's first two points from play, to level matters at four points apiece. St Catherine's had the Muskerry side pinned back for most of the second quarter as two points, including a free by Cotter and a point by Aoife Hurley gave them a lead of 0-7 to 0-4.

Éire Óg responded with a point by Clara O'Brien, followed by a pointed free by Clara Murphy. Cotter pointed her fourth free deep into stoppage time at the

end of the first half. This left the Imokilly side leading 0-8 to 0-6 at the break.

St Catherine's put the game beyond Éire Óg's reach within two minutes of the restart as Mul-kerrins set up Hurley for the game's opening goal. Cotter slotted over her fifth pointed free to stretch the margin to 1-9 to 0-6, before Orlaith Cremin responded with a point from play. Cotter converted the game's only 45 for St Catherine's, before Isobel Sheehan replied with a pointed free.

Clara Murphy and Hurley exchanged points from play and this was followed by Isobel Sheehan's second pointed free for Éire Óg.

In the final quarter, St Catherine's outscored the Muskerry side by four points to one, with Erin Healy getting the Muskerry side's only point of this period. Niamh O'Regan got two points and Fitzgerald also added one. Cotter converted her sixth free, three minutes into stoppage time.

Scorers for St Catherine's: O Cotter 0-8 (0-6f, 0-1-45); A Hurley 1-2; N O'Regan, M Fitzgerald 0-2 each; A Mul-kerrins 0-1. **Éire Óg:** C Murphy 0-4 (0-2f); I Sheehan 0-2f; F Twohig 0-2; C O'Brien, O Cremin, E Healy 0-1 each.

St Catherine's: Y O'Neill; F Sheehan, C Motherway, M Murphy; C Hayes, L Hayes, F Neville; E O'Brien, M O'Keeffe; N O'Regan, O Cotter, T Murphy; M Fitzgerald, A Mul-kerrins, A Hurley. **Subs:** C Galvin for Mul-kerrins (56, inj); L Kenneally for F Sheehan (60+).

Éire Óg: M Gleeson; K McCarthy, F Murphy, E McGrath; E Quigley, I Sheehan, A Whelton; A McGrath, R Murphy; C Murphy, O Cremin, F Twohig; R Sheehan, E Sheehan, E Healy.

Subs: C O'Brien for E Sheehan (24, inj); E McGrath for R Sheehan (42); A Hennessy for F Murphy (48).

Referee: Andrew Larkin (Ballygarvan).



Kate Wall, St Finbarr's, in action against Blackrock at the Senior Camogie Championship semi-final at MTU.

Picture: Larry Cummins

Barrs ease their way into decider

St Finbarr's 2-15
Blackrock 0-9

CAMOGIE

■ **Mary Newman**

Champions St Finbarr's booked their place in the SE Systems Senior Camogie final after an all-city clash at MTU.

Blackrock battled for every ball and were well in contention in the opening half, but once the holders found their rhythm, they were the better side.

Sorcha McCartan was superb with 1-8, 1-4 from play. She was a constant threat up front. Kate Wall worked hard and won a lot of ball.

The Barrs' movement and awareness off the ball was excellent. McCartan, in particular, caused headaches for the Blackrock defence with her awareness.

A close opening half with both sides deploying an extra player in defence, ensured both attacks had to work hard. They were level on three occasions inside the opening quarter and both looked nervous, hitting five wides apiece.

Hayley Ryan's free three minutes in had Blackrock on the scoreboard. Barrs had two wides before McCartan settled them with a free.

Aishling Shannon and Ryan swapped before Juliet O'Keeffe edged Blackrock ahead. The Barrs were the busier of the two defences coming under a lot of pressure, but with Meabh Cahalane marshal-

ling a strong unit, they held their composure.

Wall and McCartan were deep at times to help relieve the pressure. Michelle Murphy and O'Keeffe were winning good possession for Blackrock but they failed to stretch their advantage.

McCartan hit three without reply, one from play. The favourites began to open up. Twice they saw goal chances go wide but they finished the half strongly with points from McCartan and Nicole Olden to lead 0-7 to 0-3.

Blackrock needed a good start to the second half, but it was St Finbarr's who got it. Hannah O'Leary scored before the opening goal in a move that was started in defence. Gráinne Cahalane found Keava McCarthy who off-loaded to McCartan and she made no mistake.

With plenty of possession in the middle third and a good supply, Orlaith Cahalane was always a threat with her turn of pace. McCarthy and Cahalane kept the scoreboard ticking for the Barrs.

Blackrock were still working hard. Ryan converted a free and Maeve Coffey had one from play, but with McCarthy

and McCartan picking off points, nine separated the sides at the end of the third quarter.

O'Keeffe split the posts and the Rockies came close to a goal. However, the sliotar was scrambled to safety.

McCartan and Kaitlin Hickey swapped scores, but quick as a flash, the Barrs had the ball in the net again.

Cahalane outpaced her marker and found McCartan, who sent a precision pass to Ella Wigginton-Barrett to finish to the net.

Blackrock did have a goal chance hit the upright with seconds remaining, but the champions were well on their way to the final.

Scorers for St Finbarr's: S McCartan 1-8 (0-4 f), K McCarthy 0-3, E Wigginton-Barrett 1-0, A Shannon, N Olden, H O'Leary, O Cahalane 0-1 each.

Blackrock: H Ryan 0-4 (0-3 f), J O'Keeffe 0-2, M Coffey, S McCarthy, K Hickey 0-1 each.

ST FINBARR'S: C Hurley; S Punch, S Daly, A O'Neill; G Cahalane, M Cahalane, C Golden; E Olden, A Shannon; H O'Leary, K Wall, K McCarthy; O Cahalane, N Olden, S McCartan.

Subs: E Hurley for E Olden (38), E Wigginton-Barrett for N Olden (45), A Egan for S Daly (48), L O'Donovan for H O'Leary (54), K Cahalane for A O'Neill (57).

BLACKROCK: A Kearney; A Hegarty, M Ryan, M Cashman; L Guerin, R de Faoite, O Grimley; K Hickey, J O'Keeffe; M Coffey, H Ryan, M Murphy; E Curtin, L McKeogh, C O'Callaghan.

Subs: J Murphy for L Guerin (37), S McCarthy for L McKeogh (37), A O'Farrell for E Curtin (48), K O'Sullivan for M Coffey (55).

Referee: Cathal Egan (Glen Rovers).



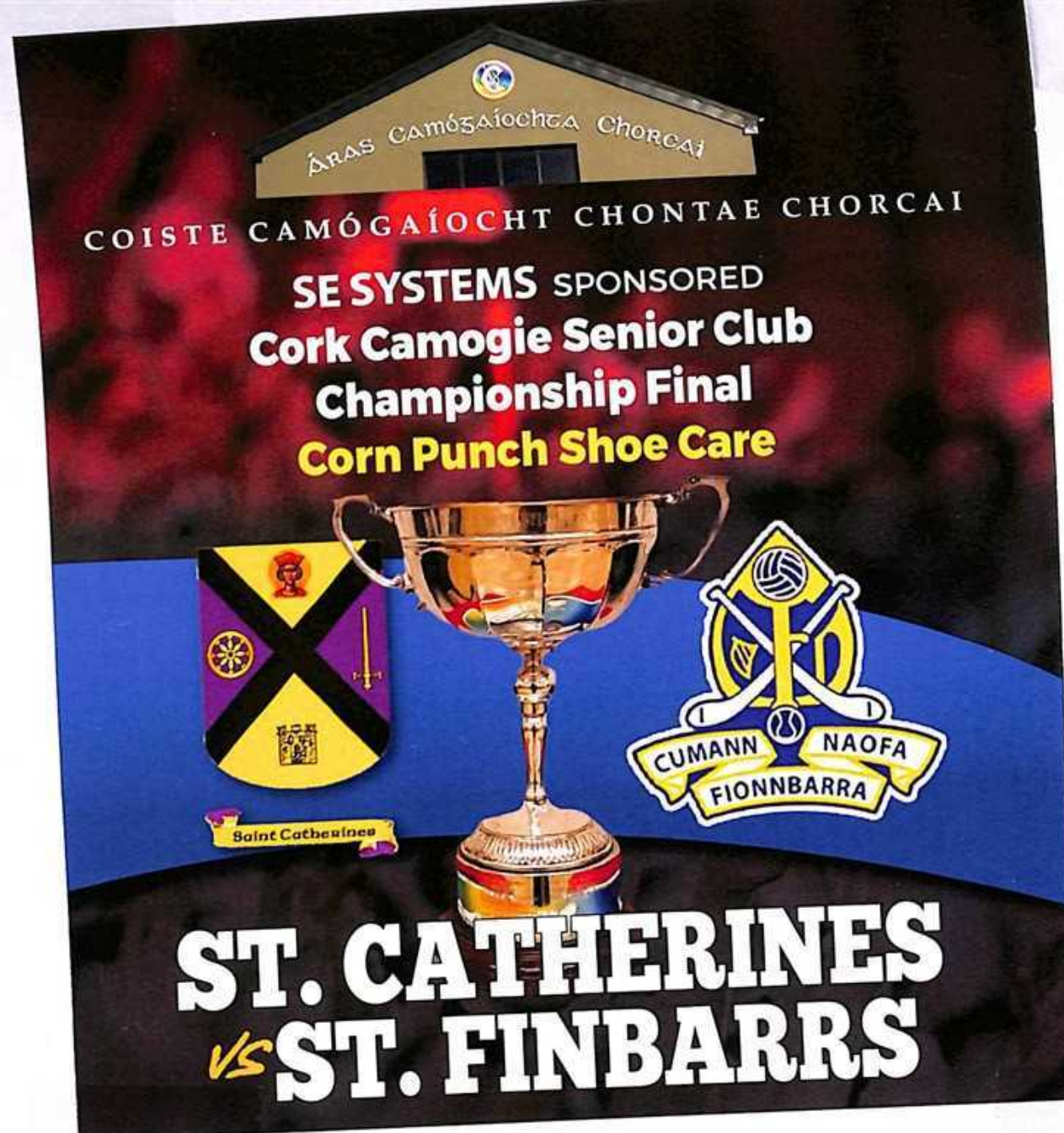
Fiona Twohig, Éire Óg, battles for possession. Picture: Larry Cummins



Michelle Murphy in action for Blackrock as Aisling Shannon and Aoife O'Neill give chase. Picture: Larry Cummins



Hayley Ryan scores the opening point at MTU. Picture: Larry Cummins



ST. CATHERINES



Yvonne O'Neill



Maire Murphy



Carolyn Motherway



Sara Mai Clancy



Faye Sheehan



Eimear O'Brien



Laura Kenneally



Laura Hayes



Maeve O'Keeffe



Ciara Hayes



Ally Mulkerrins



Orla Cotter



Finola Neville



Niamh O'Regan



Aoife Hurley

16. Chloe Draper (Capt.)
17. Méabh Fitzgerald
18. Teegan Murphy
19. Sophia O'Sullivan
20. Caoimhe Galvin (Vice Capt.)

MANAGEMENT PANEL

Shane Mulkerrins
Irene Kenneally
Colm Burke

21. Linda O'Donnell
22. Amy O'Connell
23. Orla Morrison
24. Jill Hurley
25. Tessa Condon

Pat Clancy
John O'Meara (Medic)

ST. FINBARRS



Ciara Hurley



Stephanie Punch (C)



Sofia Daly



Gráinne Cahalane



Aoife O'Neill



Méabh Cahalane



Ciara Golden



Emma Olden



Aisling Shannon



Sorcha McCartan



Kate Wall



Keeva McCarthy



Orlaith Cahalane



Nicole Olden



Hannah O'Leary

SUBS

16. Gillian Fitzgerald
17. Aisling Egan
18. Kate Cahalane
19. Liz O'Donovan
20. Ella Wigginton Barrett

MANAGEMENT TEAM

Brian O'Sullivan
Marian McCarthy
Anthony O'Neill

21. Eimear Hurley
22. Aoife Byrne O'Riordan
23. Meg Twomey
24. Farrah Geasley
25. Natasha Varian

Paul Harte
Clíodhna Sargent
Graeme Browne

26. Aoife O'Connor
27. Elizabeth Dillon
28. Holly Fitzpatrick
29. Alex Moynihan
30. Cara O'Neill

Dylan Byrne
Denis Harrington



Ballygarvan goalkeeper Sarah Aherne breaks from Ballincollig's Olivia O'Leary during the Cork intermediate camogie final. Picture: Eddie O'Hare

Ballygarvan level late against Ballincollig to set up final replay

Ballincollig 0-10
Ballygarvan 0-10

CAMOGIE

Rory Noonan

Ballincollig and Ballygarvan will have to do it all again as their SE Systems Premier Intermediate Championship final ended all square at Castle Rd on Saturday.

In the end, it was probably a fair result, with the sides level on five occasions in the first half and once early in the second half, before Ballygarvan scored late on through Cliona O'Leary to see it go to a replay.

O'Leary played in Rachel O'Regan to open the scoring for Ballygarvan, with Tara Crowley adding a second to increase their lead. Ballincollig got off the mark in the ninth minute, when Leah Weste played in Sorcha McCarthy to split the posts.

From the restart, Weste regained possession and this time she set up Olivia O'Leary to level it at 0-2 each.

The Village side took the lead in the 12th minute, when Tara Goulding was on target, before Molly Kelleher had the sides level for the third time, 0-3 each.

Elle Kelleher put Ballygarvan in front and Hayley Sweeney put two between the sides.

Back came Ballincollig, with Goulding narrowing the gap and in the 29th minute McCarthy had the sides level again, 0-5 each.

A free from Catriona Kelly put Ballygarvan back in front, but just before half time Ballincollig's Keeley Goulding scored from a free to see them level at the break, 0-6 each.

Catriona Kelly put Ballygarvan in front early in the second half, but with 34 minutes

gone they were level again, this time McCarthy levelling for Ballincollig.

The Village then enjoyed their best spell, with a Keeley Goulding free putting them back in front. She hit a second to increase their lead, to make it 0-9 to 0-7 with 41 minutes played.

Two minutes later and Linda Dorgan split the posts for Ballincollig, but this proved to be their last score.

Kelly narrowed the gap and she hit another free with four minutes to go to put one between them, 0-10 to 0-9.

All of Ballygarvan's second-half scores were from placed balls and O'Leary levelled in the closing stages.

Both sides had chances to snatch a winner, but a draw was the fairest result as they got to do it all again next weekend.

Scorers for Ballincollig: K Goulding (0-2 f), S McCarthy 0-3 each, T Goulding 0-2, O O'Leary, L Dorgan 0-1 each.

Ballygarvan: C Kelly 0-4 f, C O'Leary (f), R O'Regan, T Crowley, M Kelleher, E Kelleher, H Sweeney 0-1 each.

BALLINCOLLIG: A Hartnett; A Cotter, M Healy, C O'Sullivan; O Keating, L Weste, E Hickey; K Goulding, A Scanlon; S Healy, N O'Brien, O O'Leary; S McCarthy, L Dorgan, T Goulding.

Subs: L Collins for N O'Brien, B Cunniffe for O O'Leary (both 49).

BALLYGARVAN: S Aherne; S Lyons, K Dorney, SJ Brady; A Bowen, E O'Regan, L Casey; C O'Leary, E Kelleher; R O'Regan, C Kelly, M Buckley; T Crowley, M Kelleher, H Sweeney.

Subs: E Casey for E Kelleher (48), SA O'Halloran for S Lyons (59).

Referee: Cathal Egan, Glen Rovers.



Ballincollig's Linda Dorgan is tackled by Ballygarvan's Amy Bowen. Picture: Eddie O'Hare



St Finbarr's celebrate their win against St Catherine's, at MTU Stadium.

Picture: Jim Coughlan

Barrs retain their camogie crown in a hard fought victory

St Finbarr's 0-15
St Catherine's 0-9

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

St Finbarr's made it back-to-back SE Systems Senior Camogie titles with six points to spare over St Catherine's after a tough final at MTU on Sunday.

The Barrs were made fight hard for it by Catherine's, who turned in a magnificent second-half display. They pinned the favourites in and narrowed the gap to just one point, but the Blues rallied and wore them down in the fourth quarter.

The underdogs will look back and rue their 15 wides struck over the hour. They looked nervous in the opening half and allowed St Finbarr's rule proceedings, but their second-half display was one of spirit and passion.

Barrs led by six points at the interval, 0-9 to 0-3, but St Catherine's were guilty of hitting 10 wides in that period as they squandered some good scoring chances. Their opponents were much sharper with just two wides as they availed of almost every opportunity.

Inside 21 seconds, Orlaith Cahalane had St Finbarr's in front. Keava McCarthy added their second point before Aoife Hurley opened St Catherine's account from play.

Catherine's were winning possession, but were wasteful and with Sorcha McCartan (2), Orlaith Cahalane and Kate Wall clinical at the other end the gap was

five points.

St Catherine's had a goal chance go narrowly wide before Sorcha McCartan stretched the Barrs' lead to six points with a free. The East Cork side then hit three wides in a row as they continued to press but couldn't make it count.

Twice the sides swapped points. St Catherine's were beginning to settle.

Ali Mulkerrins fired over two points while Orlaith Cahalane and Nicole Olden had one each for St Finbarr's. Olden's effort was a magnificent strike from a tight angle to send them to the dressing rooms six in front, 0-9 to 0-3.

Catherine's came out for the second half full of fire. Niamh O'Regan had a point inside 20 seconds of the restart.

Olden responded but the Barrs were now on the back foot with Cork star Laura Hayes driving her side on.

Catherine's were winning possession all over the field and it took a good save from Barrs keeper Ciara Hurley to deny Aoife Hurley a goal. They kept pushing and now in the driving seat they hit five points without reply as they held Barrs scoreless for 14 minutes.

Three points from Orla Cotter and one each from Laura Hayes and Aoife Hurley had just a point between the sides.

Olden steadied the Barrs' nerves with a point and with McCartan moving out around the middle, they got a grip on pos-

session and began to rally.

She hit a long-range point to edge the Barrs three ahead and boosted by this score, they pushed for more.

McCartan converted a long free and while St Catherine's were battling to find a response, St Finbarr's defence held firm.

Kate Wall pointed from play to push the margin to four. With the full-time whistle looming, the Barrs earned a free which McCartan sent between the posts to ensure the title was retained.

With a six-point contribution, McCartan was named *The Echo Player* of the Match.

Special mention must go to the Cahalane sisters, who helped Eire Og to their first senior ladies football title on Saturday in the replay against Aghada, before securing the camogie silverware again a day later.

Scorers for St Finbarr's: S McCartan 0-6 (0-4 f), N Olden, O Cahalane 0-3 each, K Wall 0-2, K McCarthy 0-1.

St Catherine's: O Cotter 0-3 (0-1 45), A Mulkerrins, A Hurley 0-2 each, L Hayes, N O'Regan 0-1 each.

ST FINBARR'S: C Hurley; S Punch, S Daly, G Cahalane; A O'Neill, M Cahalane, C Golden; E Olden, A Shannon; S McCartan, K Wall, K McCarthy; O Cahalane, N Olden, H O'Leary.

Subs: E Hurley for H O'Leary (37), L O'Donovan for E Olden (40), E Wigginton-Barrett for N Olden (58), A Egan for G Cahalane (59).

ST CATHERINE'S: Y O'Neill; M Murphy, C Motherway, C Hayes; F Sheehan, L Hayes, F Neville; E O'Brien, M O'Keefe; A Hurley, O Cotter, M Fitzgerald; N O'Regan, A Mulkerrins, T Murphy.

Sub: SM Clancy for F Sheehan (46).

Referee: Diarmuid Kirwin (Eire Og).



Sorcha McCartan, St. Finbarr's, receives The Echo Player of the Match from Mary Newman. Picture: Jim Coughlan



Stephanie Punch, St Finbarr's captain, with Padraig Treacy, chairperson Cork Camogie and Lord Mayor Cllr Fergal Dennehy. Picture: Jim Coughlan



Rita O'Brien and Niamh Whelton present the Lily Grant Junior Camogie Championship trophy to Aghabullogue captain Diane Dennehy.

Aghabullogue hang on against Midleton to take home junior trophy

Aghabullogue	2-10
Midleton	1-7

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

Aghabullogue took the Lily Grant Junior camogie championship title as they overcame Midleton in Castle Road recently.

The sides were evenly matched in the opening half and it was Aghabullogue that held a two-point lead at half time, thanks to Cork U16 player Lexi Manley, who hit all of her side's opening half scores.

Amy O'Connell hit a goal and two points for Midleton, and with Aoise Woods adding two points and one from Leah Griffin, they were in touch all through.

The sides battled hard throughout the second half, crucially, for Aghabullogue, they added a second goal thanks to Cornelia Buckley.

The Midleton defence limited Lexi Manley to two points and with Siobhan Murphy adding one, Aghabullogue held on to their lead.

Gabrielle Smith and Roisin McManus had second half Midleton points, but they were unable to breach the gap as Aghabullogue ran out winners.

Scorers for Aghabullogue: L Manley 1-9, C Buckley 1-0, S Murphy 0-1.
Midleton: A O'Connell 1-2, A Woods 0-2, L Griffin, G Smith, R McManus 0-1 each.

Inniscarra	1-7
Barryroe	1-7

The Premier 1 U14 championship camogie final ended all square in Castle Road.

Barryroe led by two points, 1-6 to 0-7 at the break, a Kate Collins goal giving them the edge.

In a low scoring second half,

with only one score for either side, play swung from end to end. Aine Harte edged Inniscarra in front with a goal, but Barryroe replied with a Megan O'Regan point to ensure it finished level.

THREE FINALS THIS WEEKS

The SE Systems Lilly O'Sullivan Junior camogie final gets a busy weekend of adult finals off to a start today in Castle Road at 1pm when Glen Rovers and Ballinora meet.

Glen Rovers had to go to extra, extra time to get the upper hand on Ballincollig, whilst Ballinora had a point to spare over Cloughduv.

At 4pm, it's the SE Systems Junior A Camogie final with Blarney, who overcame Buttevant to reach the decider, taking on a Youghal side, who overcame Bride Rovers.

Tomorrow, in the SE Systems Intermediate Camogie final Sliabh Rua meet Ballinascorthy at 4pm.

UNDERAGE FINALS

The juvenile board have a weekend of underage finals as championships reach their conclusion.

Today, Saturday, in the U14 B2 final Crosshaven and Glen Rovers meet in Castle Road at 10.30am.

In the U14 B2 final for second teams, Carrigaline 2 play Bride Rovers 2 in Na Piarasigh at 1.30pm and at 3.30pm in Brinney, Sarsfields 2 meet Eire Og 2 in the U16 B2 final for second teams.

Tomorrow, at 10.30am in Castle Road, Douglas 2 meet Valley Rovers 2 in the U16 B2 "2" final for second teams.



Sarah Harte, 'The Echo' Player of the Match in the SE Systems Junior B Camogie Championship final, with Mary Newman.



Ballinascorthy captain Moira Barrett is presented with the intermediate camogie championship cup by Padraic Treacy after her side's victory over Sliabh Rua

Ballinascorthy add an intermediate title to 2024's junior success

Ballinascorthy	3-7
Sliabh Rua	1-9

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

One year on from winning the SE Systems Premier Junior Camogie Championship Ballinascorthy were crowned SE Systems Intermediate County Camogie champions when they overcame Sliabh Rua at Castle Road on Sunday last.

Despite the deluge of rain all day Saturday, the Cork camogie grounds was in impeccable order and with ideal overhead condition it made for a fast-flowing contest.

From the start Ballinascorthy showed huge drive and determination and they had opened up a nine point lead by the end of the first quarter as they put Sliabh Rua under huge pressure.

Moira Barrett had the game opening score with a point eight minutes in and adding to their tally with a second point she helped settle her side.

With their defence on top, with Millie Condon and Grace Flynn, solid Ballinascorthy held the upper hand, and a Moira Barrett goal on 14 minutes helped stretch their lead.

Siofra Patwell then converted a free before grabbing their second goal on 16 minutes to extend the lead.

Sliabh Rua had a Caoimhe O'Donnell point to which Ballinascorthy replied, but applying more pressure, Sliabh Rua began to press forward and won two frees, which Emma McSweeney converted, they had the gap down to seven points at the interval where Ballinascorthy led 2-4 to 0-3.

The sides swapped early second half points.

Moira Barrett and McSweeney again found the range, and when McSweeney added her second of the half the gap was down to six.

Ballinascorthy were strong around the middle, and with Patwell and Clara Crowley winning a lot of possession, they held the upper hand.

Sliabh Rua worked hard. Kate Redmond was hugely impressive as they battled to find something, but up front they failed to make headway and were reliant on McSweeney's free taking.

Ballinascorthy hit their third goal on 47 minutes when

captain Moira Barrett finishing to the back of the net well.

Sliabh Rua were still pressing, and converting two frees, they were still in touch with eight points between the sides with nine minutes remaining.

Caoimhe Horgan had it down to seven points before a superb pass from Kate Redmond saw Horgan finish to the net two minutes into injury-time to put four between the sides, but it came a little too late for Sliabh Rua as time ran out to ensure Ballinascorthy ran out winners.

Barrett leading by example, contributing 2-3 to her side's tally and was named as *The Echo* Player of the Match.

Ballinora	3-11
Glen Rovers	4-1

In a deluge of torrential rain and gale force winds last Saturday, the players from Ballinora and Glen Rovers battled it out for the Lillie O'Sullivan Cup in horrific conditions.

Glen led at the break 3-0 to 1-2 after playing with the aid of the strong wind.

Their goals came from Juliet Horgan, Sinead Collins, and Odhrna Hurley.

Karen Lane replied for Ballinora with a goal and two points.

Throughout the second half Ballinora hit back, and aided by the elements, they pressured the Glen defence and four points, two from frees, and two from play, had them on level terms.

They hit the front with a Lane goal, but Glen responded with an Ali O'Connell goal.

With the elements in their favour and Glen reduced to 14 players, following the dismissal of a player after two yellow cards, the pressure began to tell.

Lane pointed two frees before a Ciara Quirke goal put the game out of reach.

Aoife Martin had a Glen point, but with Ballinora adding three more points they ran out winners with Brid Holmes selected as *The Echo* Player of the Match.

Camogie due international exposure, says Manley

Brian Barry

Managing his country may be new territory for Ger Manley, but Saturday won't be the Corkman's first involvement in an international rules contest against Scotland.

The Middleton clubman pulled on the Irish jersey for the hybrid sport as a player, and is now preparing to lead a camogie selection as manager this weekend. National camogie and hurling teams will face their Scottish shinty counterparts in a double-header in Inverness.

"It's great to be asked to manage a team. Representing your country," Cork boss Manley says. "It's not every day you get to manage your country. It's a new experience for the players and myself. I'm just delighted to be involved."

"The profile of camogie is going up, and it's great now that we're going with the lads for a double-header."

"The standard in camogie has gone to new heights in the last three or four years. Ourselves, Galway, Tipperary, Kilkenny, Waterford, and all the counties are raising standards, so it's great for camogie."

"It's getting more marketable. The girls are getting more elite, as athletes and sportspeople. It's good to get a bit of exposure. The lads get a lot of exposure, it's nice to see the girls getting it."

Preparations have been ongoing, with trials and training sessions for both the men's and women's panels taking place in Abbotstown over the last four weekends.

The hybrid game doesn't necessarily come as second nature to players.

"It's different. The skills are different. I suppose we'll see what the game brings. I've been watching it on YouTube, the Scottish game. It's a bit strange for the girls, not catching the ball," Manley notes, ahead of the double header, which will be broadcast live on the BBC Alba YouTube channel.

"I played it back in the 1990s, we played them up in Scotland. It's different. Handling the ball is a big thing now in camogie, possession wise. A couple of weeks of training there and they're definitely getting used to it. It's going to be a bit different, until it happens."

Nine counties and all four provinces are represented on the panel, and Manley has been impressed by the spread of talent: "We've a good representation from all the tiers of camogie. It's good to see some of the top players playing with the girls that you wouldn't hear of too much."

"As I always say, the camogie skills are the same everywhere. It's just the speed. It's good for girls from Division 1 to play with girls from Division 2 and 3, and then vice versa."

After this weekend, focus will turn back to the inter-county scene for Manley, who has recently signed up for another year as Cork manager.

Next year brings a chance to bounce back, after the Leesiders fell to Galway in August's epic All-Ireland final.

"You're disappointed after it," he reflects on the 1-14 to 1-13 defeat. "The final, the more I look back on it and reflect on it, we played so well in the second half to come back into the game with 14 players, so huge respect for our own players, and huge respect for Galway. Galway won it in the end, they're an exceptionally good team, they have great players."

"We've had a great rivalry with them the last couple of years."

"No team is entitled to win any final or any championship match. We're getting back together, probably a bit of a new management team. There are a few changes. It's just to get the right people involved. We've been very lucky with the fellas I have worked with and girls I have worked with in the last couple of years."

"We'll have the majority of the panel (back again). We'll have a few new players on the panel, after the club championship."

"We're looking forward to it. Our aim every year is to win the All-Ireland, the same for every team that competes."



Lesley Cashman, Youghal captain is presented with the Junior A championship cup by chairman Cork Camogie Board Padraic Treacy.

Youghal have the edge on Blarney to land junior A camogie title

Youghal	1-6	CAMOGIE
Blarney	0-7	

Mary Newman

Youghal got the better of Blarney in the SE Systems Junior A Camogie Championship final in appalling weather conditions in Castle Road recently. It was a battle for the players to play this final, but they gave it their all despite having to contend with the conditions. Blarney got off to the better start as they settled quickly with early scores. Youghal battled their way into the game and a first-half goal proved to be crucial; from that point they showed determination to edge ahead and despite Blarney drawing level early in the second half, Youghal, with the wind in their favour, ran out winners. Blarney, played with the strong wind in the first half. and Lucy O'Connell was on target with a point set up by Katie Kelleher. Both sides hit wides as Blarney held their one-point lead and it was 10 minutes in before O'Connell added a second point to stretch Blarney's lead. As the rain poured down and the strength of the wind increased Grace Hughes added to Blarney's tally to put them three points in front. Youghal were working hard and they were on the scoreboard on 19 minutes with a point from Leah Broderick and two minutes later they hit the front with a Ciara Crowley goal. Blarney responded with O'Connell pointing a free and with Youghal's Sam Swaine slotting over from a free it was Youghal who led at the break, 1-2 to 0-4. From the restart, with the rain pouring down and playing

against the wind, Blarney were on level terms thanks to Katie Kelleher with a point from play. Youghal hit two points in a row, one from Ciara Crowley from play and a Swaine free to edge two clear, but Blarney continued to battle again the strong wind and with excellent defending, they stayed in contention. Hughes cut the Youghal lead to a point. Jenny Doyle and Swaine replied and had the gap at three points again. Blarney applied pressure. O'Connell pointed a free to put just two point between the sides. Blarney battled hard, but Youghal stood firm. Both sides have to be complimented for their resilience in what can only be described as a horrendous afternoon of rain and wind in an orange weather warning. After an excellent display, Jenny Doyle from Youghal was named as *The Echo Player Of the Match*. **Scorers for Youghal:** Ciara Crowley 1-1, S Swaine 0-3 (0-2 fs 0-1 45), L Broderick, J Doyle 0-1 each. **Blarney:** L O'Connell 0-4 (0-2fs) G Hughes 0-2, K Kelleher 0-1. **Youghal:** K McCarthy; R Kennedy, D Coleman, R Murray, L Cashman (c), A Cashman, J Doyle; A Cashman; S Ni Laoire, L Broderick, T Ahern; C O'Connell, C Crowley, S Swaine, S O'Connell. **Subs:** A O'Connell for S Ni Laoire, A Daly for T Ahern, L Buckner for C Crowley, H O'Keeffe for S O'Connell. **Blarney:** N Mullane; F Murray, J Murphy, A Bannon; E Sheehan, A Cotter, S Donoghue; S Forrest, C Hurley; E Power, L O'Connell (c), G Hughes; K Kelleher, M Murphy, D O'Neill. **Subs:** Niamh Power for C Hurley, M Keane for D O'Neill, E Murphy for K Kelleher, Y Abadan for M Murphy, L Shine for E Power.



Brid Holmes, The Echo Player of the Match in the Lillie O'Sullivan Junior final presented with her award by Padraic Treacy, chairman Cork Camogie Board.

Cork dual stars weigh up options for next year

BY KIERAN MCCARTHY

CORK'S camogie and football dual stars are weighing up whether they can combine both codes again in 2026, says Cork ladies football manager Joe Carroll.

St Colum's Camogie All-Star Libby Coppinger, as well as Hannah Looney and Aoife Healy have juggled both codes in recent years, but given the commitment involved Cork football boss Carroll has revealed they are mulling over whether their dual future.

'We have a few dual players who are just considering whether they can give the commitment to both codes, and I fully understand that,' said Carroll, when asked about the make-up of the Cork LGFA squad for 2026.

'It's hard on the body to keep it going. (Cork camogie boss) Ger Manley and myself worked very well together, giving the players as much help as we could, but I do understand it's a big commitment to play both. We are one of the few counties that still have dual players. We'd like it to continue for another bit because they are very talented players, and we are losing players we'd love to have involved.'

In the summer Carbery camogie trailblazer Coppinger – a starter on both teams – admitted she was closer than ever to committing to just one code.

'The decision is closer than I'd like it to be, but we're gonna keep going for as long as we can anyway,' she said, adding that playing both is 'just getting that bit harder.'

Libby Coppinger.



Hat-trick hero Saoirse leads Ireland to victory

AHEAD of the Ireland v Scotland camogie-shinty clash on Saturday, Saoirse McCarthy joked how her dad was delighted telling everyone that his daughter was captain of Ireland.

He will be even prouder this week after Cork camogie star Saoirse inspired Ireland to a 5-3 to 2-0 victory in Inverness.

The Courcy Rovers' woman was the best player on the pitch, and scored a hat-trick of goals in her 3-1 haul. Captain Fantastic Saoirse scored two goals in the first and a third just after the restart, and Scotland couldn't handle her athleticism and touch.

Another Cork star, Ashling Thompson, also impressed for Ger Manley's team, who led 2-1 to 2-0 at the break before pulling clear in the second half. Speaking ahead of the clash,

Saoirse said getting to grips with the rule was the biggest challenge. 'The rules take getting used to, and I don't know if we're fully used to it yet! But I think the hardest thing for us is not being able to catch the ball, especially when you're running. If you're soloing, and you need to catch the ball to look up... that's been the hardest learning curve for me. Kicking it as well – you can't kick it.'

Ireland Camogie Shinty captain Saoirse McCarthy. (Photo: Piaras O Midheach/Sportsfile)



AIB Munster Camogie Semi-final

St Finbarr's v Newcastle-West on Saturday in Togh at 1pm

A historic Saturday afternoon in Togh where for the very first time, a Munster Championship game will be played at that splendid complex.

It's been a few weeks since the 'Barrs retained the Cork title and after a disappointing campaign last year, they will be determined to improve on that this time round and especially with home advantage.

The Limerick girls do have the benefit of a QF where they defeated Clare champions Inagh-Kilnamona 1-10 to 0-9 in a game in which Roisin Mann, Karen O'Leary, Hazel Horgan, Grace Lee and Mia Smith played well.

Barr's impressed in the Cork championship and when St Catherine's looked like causing an upset in the final, they had the capacity and key players to get them over the line.

Sorcha McCartan was their leading player and with Meabh and Orlaith Cahalane despite having played a football final that went to extra-time the day before, Keeva McCarthy, Stephanie Punch, Kate Wall, Nicole Olden and Ciara Hurley doing the hard graft to secure the win.

Despite Cork's standing at inter-county level, the record in recent years in this championship has not been good. Milford were the last team from the county to make an impact, but the Barr's look well equipped to win this one.

Thurles-Sarsfields and De Le Salle Waterford meet in the other semi-final.



The Cahalane sisters, Sarah, Ella and Rachel celebrating with the cup after the intermediate county final.



Sorcha McCartan in action against Aileen Corkery, Cloughduv, during the SE Systems Cork camogie championship. McCartan will be a key player for St Finbarr's tomorrow against Newcastle West in the Munster championship. Picture: Jim Coughlan

Barrs begin Munster camogie campaign with home game

St Finbarr's camogie senior side will be hoping to continue the good run of form for the club tomorrow.

They take on Newcastle West, Limerick, in the semi-final of the Munster championship, throw-in 1pm at Togher.

They will be hoping a big home support will help them get over the line against a side that won't fear travelling to Cork.

They won't be taking their opponents lightly and such is the strength of camogie in Newcastle West that they have two sides in action in the Munster championship in the coming weeks.

But the Barrs have plenty of experienced players in their side and, with more than eight present or former Cork senior players in their ranks, they can be confident in their own ability to advance to the final.

When you have the likes of Sorcha McCartan, Stephanie Punch, the Cahalane sisters (Meabh, Orlaith, Kate, and Grainne), Aoife O'Neill, and Kate Wall to call on, then they will be a challenge for any club side in the country.

Manager Brian O'Sullivan said they are looking forward to tomorrow but are aware of how tough an opponent they are facing.

"We had a bit of a break since we won the county final. So training is going well. To have home advantage is great, so we are looking forward to it now," said Brian.

"We're expecting a tough encounter with Newcastle West. They had a good win over Inagh-Kilnamona a week or so ago in tough conditions away from home.

"They're no strangers to travelling, so I don't believe they will have much fear of coming to Cork to play us.

"We're looking forward to

CAMOGIE ■ Rory Noonan

it, really, more than anything and kind of just focusing on ourselves in the build-up to tomorrow.

"I saw them against Inagh-Kilnamona but, other than that, we did a small bit of research and we don't know a huge amount about them, really.

"But we have tried to concentrate on ourselves mainly, to be honest, just to try to get ourselves right.

"We haven't come across them before. We played a couple of teams from Tipp and Clare over the years, so it's a bit going into the unknown.

"But I think if we focus on ourselves and just prepare as best as we can to get ourselves right, then we'll be in with a shout."

Last year, winning the county after 18 years was huge for the Barrs and having to play a Munster quarter-final relatively soon afterwards wasn't easy for them. Brian said the longer break this year has definitely helped with their preparations for tomorrow.

He added: "Last year, winning the county was massive for the team and for the club. I'd like to feel we prepared ourselves as best as possible for Munster but I suppose there was a bit of the unknown. We hadn't been there in quite a while, so I suppose this year we kind of know what's what, what's ahead of us, to an extent.

"We had a bit more time between our county final and the game because we've gone straight to the semi-final. So preparations, we feel, have gone well enough. So we are fully focused on Newcastle West. We'll see how it goes."



Joy for St Finbarr's after they beat Newcastle West in the AIB Club Championship semi-final at Togher. Picture: Larry Cummins

Barrs book place in final after double extra-time win over Limerick side

St Finbarr's	2-19
Newcastle West	3-14
(after extra, extra time)	

It was drama all the way to the final whistle as St Finbarr's won their AIB Munster Camogie senior club championship semi-final clash with Newcastle West at Togher on Saturday.

The Cork champions looked like they had the game won until Kate Ambrose scored a goal with the final shot in normal time to take it to extra-time. When she scored another goal in extra-time, it looked like being the winner.

However, the Barrs showed all their resilience to score two late points to take it to another period of extra time. And again it was another late score, this time from Sorcha McCartan, that secured the Barrs' passage to the Munster final in two weeks. McCartan was just one of many outstanding performances on the day, with Aisling Egan and Aoife O'Neill in good form in defence, with Keeve McCarthy and Kate Wall working hard up front. As usual their captain, Stephanie Punch, led by example in what was an outstanding team performance by the Barrs.

Early points from McCartan had them in front, before Ambrose hit back for Newcastle West. By the 26th minute the Barrs were in front by two, before points from Ambrose and Hazel Horgan had the sides level.

Just before half-time McCartan goaled from a free to see the Barrs lead by 1-7 to 0-8 at the break.

Two McCartan rees increased their lead before a goal from Eimear Hurley looked like securing the win for the Barrs.

But massive credit to Newcastle West they hit back with Karen O'Leary scoring a goal. Ambrose pointed from a free and deep

CAMOGIE ■ Rory Noonan

into injury-time the Barrs led by 2-10 to 1-10.

Newcastle had one last chance from a free and Ambrose's long-range effort found the back of the net to level it and take it to extra-time.

Three points from Rebecca Delee, were answered by scores from McCartan and McCarthy for the Barrs, to see the Limerick side lead by 2-13 to 2-12 at half-time in extra-time.

Hurley and McCarthy put the Barrs back in front, before Ambrose found the back of the net, to make it 3-13 to 2-14.

But Orlaith Cahalane and McCarthy struck late to level it and take it to extra, extra-time. Ciara Golden and Cahalane put the Barrs in front, before Delee hit back to make it a one-point game again.

But McCartan scored late to seal the win and a meeting with De La Salle in the Munster final in two weeks.

Scorers for St Finbarr's: S McCartan 1-9 (1-6 f), E Hurley 1-1, K McCarthy 0-4 (0-3 f), O Cahalane 0-3, K Wall, C Golden 0-1 each.

Newcastle West: K Ambrose 2-7 (0-7 f), R Delee 0-4, K O'Leary 1-0, R Ambrose 0-2, H Horgan 0-1.

ST FINBARR'S: C Hurley, S Punch, S Daly, G Cahalane, A O'Neill, M Cahalane, C Golden, E O'Brien, A Shannon, S McCartan, K Wall, K McCarthy, O Cahalane, N O'Brien, H O'Leary.

Subs: E Hurley for N O'Brien (36), L O'Donovan for S Daly (45), E Wigginton Barrett for H O'Leary (67), K Cahalane for A O'Neill (90).

NEWCASTLE WEST: A Corbett, G Lee, R Mann, Y Lee, R Ambrose, L O'Brien, E Woulfe, K O'Leary, D Murphy, K Ambrose, R Delee, E Whelan, H Horgan, GM O'Kelly, M Smith.

Subs: E Collins for E Whelan (44), I O'Brien for GM O'Kelly (70), GM O'Kelly for G Lee (85), E Whelan for M Smith (87).

Referee: Johnny Dooley, Tipperary.



Sorcha McCartan fires over a point to seal the win in the second period of extra-time. Picture: Larry Cummins



Donnacha Broderick, chairman Cork Camogie Juvenile Board, presents the Kearys U16 Cup to Sarah Foley and Aoife Ring, Aghbullogue joint captains.

Underage deciders dominate fixture list

Plenty of underage camogie action recently as the juvenile board have been busy playing their finals.

It has been non stop with games at U14 and U16 championship level, plus the senior board are also finishing their minor camogie championships.

In the Kearys U16 Premier 1 final, Aghbullogue and Newtownshandrum played out an exciting final with Aghbullogue taking the title with five points to spare.

In the U16 Premier 2 final, Barryroe beat Clonakilty 5-5 to 0-10.

The Kearys U16 A1 final saw Ballincollig and Courcy Rovers battle it out with Ballincollig coming out on top.

In the Kearys U16A2 decider, the title was won by Fermoy who beat Mallow.

Youghal took the Kearys U16 B1 title with a victory over Bride Rovers.

Charleville and St Vincent's went to extra-time before Charleville ran out winners in the U16B2 decider, and Barryroe took the Kearys U16P2 when they beat Clonakilty.

In the Kearys U16C decider, it was an all-city final with Brian Dillon's running out winners over Na Piarsaigh, 2-12 to 2-6.

The Kearys U16 C2 decider saw Grenagh overcome Rockban by four points.

In the Kearys U16B2 1 final for second teams, Sarsfields defeated Eire Og to take the honours.

And in the U16 B 2 final Valley Rovers overcame Douglas.

Inniscarra and Barryroe will have to meet again after they ended level in an exciting Kearys Premier 1 U14 final where it finished 1-7 each.

Barryroe led by two points, 1-6 to 0-7 at the break, and in a low-scoring second half, with only one score for either side, play swung from end to end.

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Inniscarra edged in front with a goal, but Barryroe replied with a point to ensure it finished level and it's back again to Castle Road, today at 2pm for the replay.

The U14 Premier 2 camogie final saw Milford come out on top, defeating Mallow.

In the U14A 1 final, Newtownshandrum were winners over Ballincollig.

The U14 A2 final was won by Banteer who beat Newcestown. Courcy Rovers and Cobh battled it out for the U14 B1 title, with Courcys' coming out victors.

Crosshaven had a point to spare over Glen Rovers in a close U14B2 final.

Aghada were the winners of the U14C 1 final as they defeated Ballinascarthy.

Enniskeane took the U14 C2 title when they beat Laochra Og.

The SE Systems Minor camogie championships are also reaching their conclusion.

In the premier championship, the semi-final pairings are Aghbullogue versus Eire Og and Sliaibh Rua versus Sarsfields.

In the premier plate semi-finals, Inniscarra will meet Douglas and Ballinora taking on Newtownshandrum or Killeagh.

The SE Systems Minor A camogie semi-finals will see Kilbrittain/ Timoleague meet St Catherine's and Middleton will play Clonakilty.

The last round of group games in the Minor B championship are on this weekend, with the semi-finals to be played on the weekend of 15/16.

The SE Systems Minor C camogie final is in Castle Road tomorrow (2pm) when Duncannon meet Youghal.



Aoife O'Neill, of St Finbarr's, clears from Killeagh's Ciara Daly during the SE Systems Cork senior camogie championship. O'Neill has been outstanding in the Barrs defence all season. Picture: Howard Crowley



Barryroe, winners of the Kearys U16 Premier 2 Camogie Championship

Donohue leads charge in Tribes' redemption year

Daragh Ó Conchúir

This time last year, Aoife Donohue was struggling to elicit much enthusiasm about being nominated for the PwC Camogie Player of the Year award.

She left proceedings in Croke Park with a fifth All Star but the memory of a narrow Glen Dimplex All-Ireland final loss to Cork down below on the pitch was fresh and it was raw.

"I think this is gonna hurt for a long time," she said in an interview earlier that day.

The losses in 2015 and 2020 weren't a picnic, but she was still young the first time, and Kilkenny just neutralised too many of their big guns in the Covid decider and afterwards, there was an acknowledgement within the camp that they had not done enough to be worthy of retaining the title.

The times probably placed some context on a game of camogie back then too, though anyone that has ever seen Donohue play, or tried to haul her off a training pitch even, knows how highly the teacher has always prioritised camogie.

The victories in 2019 and 2021 were a decent return but that gap from the most recent triumph was expanding, and being so close, getting so much right against Cork and still missing out, made 2024 just hard to take.

Fast-forward 12 months and the shoe is on the other foot. It was the Rebels who were on the wrong side of a tight margin, one point this time, after a final that pulsed and throbbed, and ebbed and flowed, and offered all that is good about contemporary camogie.

This time, it was Donohue who was named Glen Dimplex player of the match, following a performance of scintillating pace, ethereal skill but also real edge — right on the edge. A reminder once again that it is never about the size of the dog in the fight.

And this time, it is Donohue who was crowned PwC camogie player of the year for the second time, having been the propeller and engine of Galway's last All-Ireland victory. The sixth All Star for the 32-year-old was a formality.

"All the All-Irelands are very different in their own way. This one was probably, I'd say, a little bit more sweeter and probably more special, particularly after losing last year," Donohue acknowledges.

Galway just knew that they had to be in Cork's faces from the outset, that they had to knock them out of their stride. They knew the champions would be able for that, would not go away, were well



PwC camogie player of the year Aoife Donohue typified Galway's on-the-edge approach in their All-Ireland final win over Cork.

equipped for different challenges and certainly for a physical exchange.

But the league final offered stark evidence of what Ger Manley's players could and would do if allowed to impose their will on the game, even if Galway were nowhere near their peak preparation. The Leesiders had been showing it all year, looking unstoppable.

So the Tribeswomen came out with a wildness that was just mind-boggling. The smallest player on the pitch, Donohue thundered into everything, got scores at one end, gave away a penalty at the other, and just about stayed on the right side of the law. She chuckles at the mention of the mania.

"Obviously, every game we go out playing, we go out to work as hard as we can, and we obviously knew coming into the All-Ireland that regardless of our talent and our skills, if we weren't able to match Cork's work-rate, and the way that they're able to work the ball through the lines, if we didn't work as hard as we could, and bring a huge intensity to the game, that we were going to be well beaten. We knew if we matched them in those terms, we'd have a chance.

"But yeah, even looking back on it now, the intensity and the ferocity in it, it was insane early on when you look back at it, but it was for both sets of players as well.

"Ourselves and Cork, we bring out the best in each other and we did again in August."

Players have spoken before of being lost in an other-world when a game is taking that path. So many tight margins, so many 50-50 calls, so many hits, so many blocks, so many runs, so many scores.

Can you enjoy it? My God, Aoife Donohue loves it.

"You wouldn't be playing it if you didn't enjoy it. And I suppose the team is a big part of that, how close we are with one another. I'm probably enjoying it now more than I ever did, to be honest, and particularly with the group that's there now. We live for it. We love it."

Which is why the individual honour, while lovely, is accepted on their behalf, on behalf of the Galway management, on behalf of everyone at Mullagh that gave her the tools, and on behalf of her family.

"It's a huge honour. Obviously, at the start of the year, the goal is to win the All-Ireland and the individual awards then are a bonus. Maybe when I finish playing camogie, I'll look back and think it's kind of cool. But as of now, I'd say my family and my club probably appreciate it more.

"The night is all about Galway camogie and it's great to be well represented, but I wouldn't be there only for the group. I'm one player. I play a very small part in it and there's a lot of parts that go with it, but it is nice to be recognised."

Small in stature only. Absolutely gargantuan in contribution.



The Cork All-Star winners Ashling Thompson, Libby Coppinger, Amy O'Connor, and Saoirse McCarthy with Siobhán Hayes representing her daughter Laura Hayes, and Camogie Association Uachtarán Brian Molloy. Picture: Inpho/Dan Clohessy

Five Rebels included in camogie All-Stars

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Rory Noonan

The Camogie Association, in partnership with PwC, announced the winners of the 2025 PwC Camogie All Stars awards, celebrating the outstanding achievements, dedication, and skill of the game's top performers over the past season.

Five Cork players were named on the team; Libby Coppinger, Laura Hayes, Ashling Thompson, Saoirse McCarthy, and Amy O'Connor were all honoured.

Six other Cork players were nominated but Amy Lee, Laura Treacy, Meabh Cahalane, Orlaith Cahalane, Katrina Mackey, and Emma Murphy were not selected for overall honours.

Cork Camogie congratulated the winners for their 'richly deserved awards and the recognition for everything they brought to camogie this year'.

They also commiserated with the others, saying: "You will always be stars in our eyes. We're incredibly proud of everything you've achieved this year, your effort, attitude, and consistency have been exceptional."

It was an unforgettable evening for All-Ireland senior champions Galway, who were rewarded for their superb season, claiming eight All-Star awards in total.

Tipperary and Waterford both came away with one award each, for the Premier

County's defensive stalwart, Mairéad Eviston, and the Déise's leading light in attack, Beth Carton.

In addition to the All Stars, the coveted PwC GPA Camogie Player of the Year awards were presented across three grades; senior, intermediate, and premier junior.

Galway's Aoife Donohue was named the senior player of the year.

Offaly's Grace Teehan (Offaly) picked up the intermediate award while Laois's Aimée Collier was voted premier junior player of the year.

Galway's Cathal Murray was awarded the manager of the year gong, recognising his success with the Galway senior team.

This year's success for Galway was their third senior title (2019, 2021, 2025) under Murray's watch, while he also steered the county to the inaugural U23 A All-Ireland title in July.

PwC Camogie All Stars

Sarah Healy, Galway; Shauna Healy, Galway; Libby Coppinger, Cork; Dervla Higgins, Galway; Mairéad Eviston, Tipperary; Clara Hickey, Galway; Laura Hayes, Cork; Aoife Donohue, Galway; Ashling Thompson, Cork; Saoirse McCarthy, Cork; Beth Carton, Waterford; Ailish O'Reilly, Galway; Niamh Mallon, Galway; Carrie Dolan, Galway; Amy O'Connor, Cork.



All Star nominee Meabh Cahalane at the PwC Camogie All Star awards in Croke Park on Saturday. Picture: Inpho/Dan Clohessy



Linda Dorgan, Ballincollig captain lifts the Cup after they won the SE Systems Cork Camogie Premier Intermediate Club final replay. She will be hoping life the Munster Cup today. Picture: Jim Coughlan



Sorcha McCartan will be a key player for St Finbarr's in the AIB senior camogie club championship final today. Picture: Larry Cummins

Barrs in search of Munster glory

Weather played havoc with fixtures as games were rescheduled

The weather played havoc with last weekend's camogie fixtures with the Premier Minor and Minor A championship finals postponed.

Also postponed was the Munster Intermediate club championship final between Ballincollig and Moycarkey Borris and the Munster Mai O'Connell junior A championship game between Youghal and Wolfe Tones Shannon.

MUNSTER JUNIOR CLUB A, B AND C UPDATES

In the Munster Mai O'Connell Junior B preliminary round game Barryroe got the upper hand on Newcastlewest to progress to the next round on a score line of 3-9 to 1-9.

Barryroe set the foundations for victory with a strong opening half performance where they led 3-7 to 0-4.

First half goals from Emma Deasy, Aileen O'Riordain and Roisin Ni Bhuachalla helping give them an opening half lead.

Newcastlewest battled back in the second half and holding Barryroe to just two points, they pressed and pressed as they added to their scoreline but thanks to their strong opening half display Barryroe did enough to run out winners.

Tomorrow, Sunday at 11am, they travel to take on Moyle Rovers from Tipperary who defeated Ballyduff Upper in their preliminary round game.

Castlemartyr and Adare also got their Munster Mai O'Connell Junior C preliminary round game played where Castlemartyr proved way too strong for the Limerick Junior C champions as they ran out comprehensive winners on a 7-14 to 0-1 scoreline.

Castlemartyr where in control from the throw in and with Ellen Hayes Nally grabbing town goals, and Ava McAuliffe one, they opened up a 3-7 to 0-1 interval lead.

Castlemartyr continued to

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Mary Newman

dominate the second half with Ciara O'Brine adding four goals to their tally, and with Aobh Mohally and Sarah Rose Cushen also on target with points, they was always going to be one winner as Castlemartyr progressed to a semi-final tomorrow at 1pm in Castlemartyr when they will meet Sixmilebridge from Clare, who overcame Kerry representatives Killarney/Ceann Mara.

In the Munster Junior A Championship Youghal and Wolfe Tones Shannon will meet in Youghal tomorrow at 1.30pm.

MUNSTER INTERMEDIATE FINAL REFIXED

Ballincollig and Moycarkey Borris will meet this afternoon in Mallow at 1pm in the rescheduled Munster Intermediate camogie final and no doubt both sides will be raring to go as they battle it out for the title.

Ballincollig have strong performers in the experienced Leah Weste and Linda Dorgan.

Leah Hennigan, who made a huge impact in their victory over Ballygarvan as she contributed five points when introduced as a half time substitute and went on to take *The Echo* player of the Match award will be sure to cause problems for the Moycarkey Borris defence.

It took a late goal to see Moycarkey Borris crowned Tipperary champions the experienced Ciara Shelly coming to the rescue as they edged out Boherlahan Dualla inter-county star Ciara Corcoran, who captained Tipperary to minor glory in 2024.

Emma O'Sullivan, Ciara Shelly and Kate Ralph will be players to watch out for as the Tipperary champions battle for the title.

Today St Finbarr's senior camogie side make the journey to FBD Semple Stadium as they take on De La Salle from Waterford in the AIB Munster senior camogie championship final.

Throw-in is at 1pm for what should be another close game between two top-class sides.

The 'Barr's retained their Cork title some time ago, before getting the better of Newcastle West in the Munster semi-final, in a game that was full of drama right to the final whistle.

It took 90 minutes to separate the sides before the Toghier outfit advanced to today's decider.

That battle with the Limerick champions will stand to them as they take on a De La Salle team full of Waterford inter-county stars.

Beth Carton will be the name that will come to most people's minds first, but you can add in others, like Brianna O'Regan, Allannah McNulty, Keeley Corbett Barry, Maggie Gostl, Abby Flynn, and Alex Healy, to name a few.

All were part of the Waterford side that ran Cork close in the Glen Dimplex All-Ireland semi-final for long periods, before the Rebels pulled away to win.

Add in John Mullane as one of their selectors and you see the class of the side the 'Barr's are up against.

On the opposite side, the 'Barr's can call on plenty stars of their own, led by the likes of Sorcha McCartan, Kate Wall, and Orlaith Cahalane in attack.



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Defensively, Meabh and Grainne Cahalane, along with Aoife O'Neill and Aisling Egan, will all play their part. Lining out at corner-back will be their captain, Stephanie Punch, another to never let them down.

Hoping to mastermind a Munster championship win is manager Brian O'Sullivan, who says it's a great day for all involved.

"It's great, it's great for the club and particularly great for the players and the camogie section. It's something we're really looking forward to, especially with it being played at Semple Stadium," said O'Sullivan.

"It's a venue they deserve to be honest to showcase their skills, so it's fantastic."

O'Sullivan feels that the Newcastle West semi-final, where it took two periods of extra-time to separate the sides, will stand to his side today.

"We always knew we were going to be up against it taking on Newcastle West. They're a really strong side and I think they have won three-in-a-row in Limer-

ick. It was a really tough battle, and there were a lot of sore bodies after the game.

"That was a good test, and particularly in those conditions as well (rain and windy). We haven't played in conditions like that in a while, so just to get over the line was great really.

"I think, at 61 minutes we were six points up, and you're like, 'we're nearly there', and credit to Newcastle West, they came back to take it to extra-time.

"But credit our players, they showed great resilience after those blows to come back and win it. It shows the strength of their character and mental strength. They never feel that type of pressure, and they just keep going at it, and they got their just rewards."

Looking at De La Salle, O'Sullivan knows who they can all on, and says they have prepared as best they can.

"We just prepare the right way for ourselves, and we'll have a look at a few things. I think there's only six or seven teams left in the country, at his stage, in competitions like this, so you're going to be playing a top side no matter who you are up against at this stage.

"De La Salle had a great win over Thurles Sarsfields, they really pulled away in the second-half, so we know what we are up against.

"We're looking forward to it, really, if you said to the girls or management at the start of the year you'd be in the Munster final, you'd be thrilled. We're there now and hopefully can do the business."



Kate Wall will be one of the forwards the 'Barr's hope will be on form today. Picture: Larry Cummins



Beth Carton, pictured in action for Waterford, will be one of several players the 'Barr's will have to keep a close eye on. Picture: Noel Ranauna



St Finbarr's celebrate with the cup after their Munster triumph.

Picture: INPHO/Tom O'Hanlon

Munster camogie glory for a brilliant St Finbarr's side

St Finbarr's 3-11
De La Salle 2-12

Absolute delight for St Finbarr's as they won the AIB Munster Senior Camogie championship for the first time at FBD Semple Stadium on Saturday.

It was a battle from beginning to end as they recovered from a poor start to take the title as they showed all their battling skills when it looked like it was going against them.

Inspired by the likes of Kate Wall, Sorcha McCartan, and Meabh Cahalane, the Barrs came good to win the title for the first time.

De La Salle got off to a dream start as Abby Flynn scored within 30 seconds. She picked up the ball out near the endline and took on the Barrs defence, beating several players, before finding the back of the net.

That lead increased in the second minute, when another of their danger players, Beth Carton, pointed as the Barrs had yet to settle.

The Barrs first chance came after four minutes, when McCartan played Nicole Olden in, but Brianna O'Regan was quickly off her line to deny a goal chance.

Carton increased their lead as the Barrs were finding it hard to get going.

Flynn was on target again to make it 1-3 to no score with 10 minutes gone.

A minute later, and the Barrs were off the mark, with McCartan involved again.

Her long free in was flicked overhead to



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Rory Noonan

the net by Orlaith Cahalane, to make it 1-3 to 1-0.

But De La Salle soon wiped out the goal, with Carton getting her third point and she added another from a free, to make it 1-5 to 1-0 after 15 minutes.

Flynn added another, before McCartan got the Barrs first point. Carton pointed another free, with Kate Wall replying for the Barrs, to see the Waterford side lead by 1-7 to 1-2 after 22 minutes.

However, with 27 minutes gone the Barrs got the boost they needed. Wall got on the ball from a long shot in and, despite being surrounded by several defenders, managed to score her side's second goal, to make it 2-2 to 1-7.

A minute later and there was only a point in it, when McCartan scored from a free, but they could have had a goal.

Wall had the ball in the back of the net, but the referee had blown the whistle for a free, when he could have played advantage, much to the frustration of the Barrs.

That free was the last score of the half as De La Salle led by a point at the break, 1-7 to 2-3.

Three minutes in to the second half and the Barrs were back on level terms, when McCartan scored from another free.

Carton put her side back in front, with Nicole Olden levelling it again.

Another Carton free put the Waterford side ahead, before McCartan said 'anything you can, do I can match', as she scored a magnificent free from distance.

With 44 minutes gone, the Barrs were in front for the first time when Wall was on target again, to make it 2-7 to 1-9.

That became a two-point lead when McCartan scored from a 45. No surprise to see De La Salle hit back, with Carton scoring again.

De La Salle hit the front again when Maggie Gostl got their second goal, but it didn't last long, with Wall making it 2-10 apiece, after 51 minutes.

Flynn put the Waterford side back in front as they led by a point with four minutes to go. But the Barrs showed all their fighting spirit as Orlaith Cahalane set up Wall for their third goal, to make it 3-10 to 2-11. Carton knocked over a free, but McCartan replied to make it a two-point game again. That proved to be the final score as the Barrs hung on for the win.

Scorers for St Finbarr's: K Wall 2-4, S McCartan 0-6 (4f, 0-1 45), O Cahalane 1-0, N Olden 0-1.

De La Salle: B Carton 0-9 (0-6 f), A Flynn 1-3, M Gostl 1-0.

ST FINBARR'S: C Hurley, S Punch, A Egan, A O'Neill, G Cahalane, M Cahalane, S Daly, K Wall, K McCarthy, A Shannon, C Golden, N Olden, O Cahalane, S McCartan, H O'Leary.

Subs: E Hurley for H O'Leary (40), L O'Donovan for N Olden (50), E Wigginton Barrett for S Daly (55).

DE LA SALLE: B O'Regan, S Condon, A Healy, M O'Connor, T Healy, A McNulty, E Kennedy, K Corbett Barry, L Browne, C Healy, B Carton, H Ryan, A Mullane, A Flynn, M Gostl.

Subs: N Power for A Healy (h-4), I Boland for C Healy (53).

Referee: Michael Ryan, Tipperary.



St Finbarr's Kate Wall celebrates after scoring a goal in the AIB Munster Club Senior Camogie Championship final at FBD Semple Stadium.

Picture: INPHO/Tom O'Hanlon

Kate the Wonder Wall for the Barrs in their Munster triumph

It was a day that they will simply never forget for St Finbarr's senior camogie players on Saturday.

The Togher side won the AIB Munster Senior Camogie Championship for the first time in a superb game.

Massive credit to the Barrs who recovered from a poor start, where they went 1-3 to no score down to win by 3-11 to 2-12 in the end.

There were many key elements to their win, including their defence stepping up when they looked in trouble.

Up front Sorcha McCartan started to use her physicality against a very physical De La Salle side.

But above all that, up stepped Kate Wall as she showed why she is part of the Cork senior squad and it was no great surprise to see her named Player of the Game afterwards.

Her tally of 2-4 was crucial as she helped to drive her side to glory.

Speaking after the game she said that it was unbelievable to have won.

"It's actually unbelievable, I think we all just burst into tears at the final whistle," said Kate.

"I don't know, it's just such an incredible feeling and it's just shows that the hard work and all that is just so worth it. I'd love to bottle it, it's incredible."

De La Salle started at blistering pace and before the Barrs knew what hit them they were 1-3 to no score down. But they regrouped and by half-time there was only a point between the sides.

"They started really well and they're an excellent side.

CAMOGIE

■ Rory Noonan

But I don't think we panicked because we've been there before. We've been down six points and we've brought things back and like the game is long.

"I always say it like just steady out and keep going and that's what we did. We kept playing and we're never beaten until the final whistle as these girls never give up.

"The goal from Orlaith (Cahalane - their first score to put three between them) kind of settled us and I don't know if she meant that flick or not, she says she did, but it ended up in the net and that's all that mattered.

"Then I just realised that once we ran at them there were opportunities there. We pushed up our backs, went player on player and I thought our full-back line was incredible. They like we're so tight, and I just think we started to win our battles and it just clicked for us at the end.

"I just felt that every time I got the ball there was space in front of me. I could hear the lads scream at me to run it, and we did, and then it just opened up.

"But I wouldn't have scored that second goal if it wasn't for the pass from Orlaith, it was a bounce pass. When players give you a ball like that you have to score and thankfully I did and we managed to win.

"We will enjoy the celebrations but we out again next weekend in the All-Ireland semi-final so it will be back to training on Tuesday and prepare for that."



Joy for the Barrs.

Picture: INPHO/Tom O'Hanlon



St Finbarr's Kate Wall scores a goal.

Picture: INPHO/Tom O'Hanlon



Kate Wall is presented with the Player-of-the-Match award.



Ballincollig celebrating their victory over Moycarkey Borris in the AIB Munster Intermediate Camogie Championship Club final at Mallow. Picture: David Keane

Strong finish in Mallow sees Ballincollig land Munster camogie title

Ballincollig 2-7
Moycarkey Borris 1-5

CAMOGIE

■ **Mary Newman**

A strong second half from Ballincollig, the excellent goalk-keeping of Ana Hartnett and 2-2 from Leah Hannigan saw them crowned AIB Intermediate Camogie Club Champions at Mallow on Saturday.

Moycarkey will wonder how they let this one slip with the missed goal opportunities but all credit to Ballincollig, who dug it out in tough conditions.

A low-scoring opening half with both defences on top saw Moycarkey Borris up by a point, 0-3 to 0-2, at the break.

The Tipp side's keeper Molly O'Dwyer was in action from the throw-in as she denied Tara Goulding with an excellent save. Kate Ralph had the game's opening score from play on three minutes and with Ailish Scanlon converting a Ballincollig free, the sides were level.

Heavy conditions made for a lot of rucks but both sides battled for every ball. Goulding and Emma O'Sullivan exchanged points as the sides remained deadlocked. We had to wait 17 minutes for the next score as both defences coping with a lot of pressure.

Kate Dowling and Lucy Callanan were impressing in the Moycarkey Borris defence, while Cara O'Sullivan and Aoife Cotter in the heart of the Ballincollig defence were mopping up everything.

Moycarkey Borris upped the pace and had three goal chances in the closing 10 minutes of the half. Alisha Kearney's ground shot screamed past the upright before Ana Hartnett denied them twice with two excellent saves, the second a one-on-one with Sarah Corcoran.

Alisha Kearney did get a point to edge the Tipp cham-

pions in front as the half time whistle sounded.

Sub Blaitheann Cunniffe had Ballincollig quickly back level inside two minutes of the rest-art and a Keeley Goulding free edged them in front. The lively Kate Ralph responded before Moycarkey Borris squandered another goal opportunity as Emma O'Sullivan kicked wide from close range.

Ballincollig upped the gears and in the blink of an eye went two goals clear. Leah Hannigan, Cork U16 captain this year, struck twice inside 30 seconds and it was suddenly advantage Ballincollig.

Moycarkey Borris were now under pressure but Sarah Corcoran get the final touch to bring them back to within a goal. Again it took an Ana Hartnett save to deny Moycarkey Borris an equaliser.

The brilliant Hannigan had two Ballincollig points in quick succession, Ciara Shelly replied with one but a Ballincollig free relieved the pressure as they help out to record a famous victory.

Ballincollig goalkeeper Ana Hartnett was picked as AIB Player of the Game after a superb display.

Scorers for Ballincollig: L Hannigan 2-2, K Goulding 0-2 (f), A Scanlon (f), B Cunniffe, T Goulding 0-1 each.

Moycarkey Borris: S Corcoran 1-0, K Ralph 0-2, A Kearney, E O'Sullivan (f), C Shelly 0-1 each.

BALLINCOLLIG: A Hartnett; A Cotter, M Healy, C O'Sullivan; O Keating, L Weste, E Hickey; A Scanlon, S Healy; K Goulding, L Hannigan, O O'Leary; C McCarthy, L Dorgan, T Goulding.

Subs: B Cunniffe for O O'Leary (h-t), N O'Brien for S Healy (50), I Fleury for S McCarthy (52).

MOYCARKEY BORRIS: M O'Dwyer; A Callanan, C Shelly, A McGovern; J O'Keefe, K Dowling, L Callanan; A Kearney, S Corcoran; E Ralph, E O'Sullivan, M Kinane; K Ralph, C Shelly, S Coughlan.

Referee: Dan McKenna (Limerick).



St Finbarr's Kate Wall is chased by De La Salle's Leah Browne during the AIB Munster Club Senior Camogie Championship Final, FBD Semple Stadium. Wall will be one of the players the Barrs will look to tomorrow in the All-Ireland semi-final. Picture: INPHO/Tom O'Hanlon

St Finbarr's prepare for crucial All-Ireland camogie semi-final

CAMOGIE

■ **Rory Noonan**

Tomorrow is one of the biggest days ever for the St Finbarr's senior camogie team.

They head to Meath to take on Loughgiel Shamrocks from Antrim in the AIB All-Ireland club championship semi-final, throw-in 2pm.

It's unknown waters for the Barrs as they have never been in an All-Ireland semi-final before, coming on the back of their first-ever Munster championship title a week ago.

This is a team packed full of talented players and one thing is for sure, it won't be for lack of effort if they don't reach the decider at Croke Park.

But as well as stars on the pitch they have others on the sideline who are involved in helping the team and one of them is Gemma O'Connor.

A star of the game and a legend of the Barrs she it back now helping out this side as they bid to add the All-Ireland title to their Cork and Munster crowns.

It's the type of game Gemma relished playing in and said they are looking forward to what they know will be a tough challenge.

"Being in a club All-Ireland semi-final is such an achievement in itself," said Gemma.

"I don't think people ever thought that they could do it. I suppose if you ask people at the start of the year that you would make a Munster final and win it and then into an All-Ireland semi-final, you'd be over the moon.

"I think probably the difference in this team compared to maybe the last couple of years was getting over the county final last year. It was kind of the big stepping stone and then it was kind of like the

world was their oyster.

"Then after that they got over the line again this year and they have shown fierce grit and resilience all this year. Like if you even if you look at the Newcastle West game (Munster semi-final), to go to extra extra time and come out on top that shows massive character.

"It's a testament to the team and to the management to do it again against a very aggressive, strong De La Salle team in the Munster final.

"It will be another tough battle against an Ulster side tomorrow. We know they are a physically strong team and I suppose it's about getting the match-ups right. They'll do the same with us no doubt.

"But you got to relish it, these girls are so looking forward to tomorrow. As I said, imagine being told at the start of the season you would be in an All-Ireland club semi-final, you'd be loving it. They are giving it everything, they're proving their work and they're there on merit, which is probably the most important thing."

Last Saturday they came from 1-3 to no score down to win the Munster title, with Kate Wall leading by example, along with the likes of Sorcha McCartan, Meabh Cahalane, Aoife O'Neill and Keeva McCarthy.

It's another massive challenge for the Togher side tomorrow and they will need another all-round team performance like the Cork and Munster finals if they are to reach Croke on December 14.

Barrs claim the spoils for junior crown against a battling Éire Óg side

St Finbarr's and Éire Óg battled it out for the Barry O'Sullivan junior camogie championship title on a bitterly cold night in Riverstick. It was St Finbarr's, who ran our winners by 0-9 to 0-3. They led 0-6 to 0-2 at the short whistle.

Points from Holly Fitzpatrick, Alex Moynihan and Farrah Geasley and three from Aoife Byrne helped set the tone of the opening half as Laoise Murphy and Kate Murphy replied for Éire Óg. On the resumption, Aoife Byrne and Natasha Varian added points as St Finbarr's extended their lead.

Éire Óg battled hard but found the going tough against a strong St Finbarr's defence. Laoise Murphy pointed to narrow the gap but thanks to a strong opening half, St Finbarr's ran our winners 0-9 to 0-3, with Aoife Byrne named as *The Echo* Player of the Match.



Mary McSweeney, Treasurer, Cork County Camogie Board presents *The Echo* Player-of-the-Match award in the Barry O'Sullivan Junior final to Aoife Byrne.

CAMOGIE

■ **Mary Newman**

MAI O'CONNELL JUNIOR MUNSTER COMPETITIONS

The Mai O'Connell Munster Camogie Cup, Shield and Plate competitions for Junior A, B and C clubs continued last weekend. Youghal recorded a victory over Wolfe Tones, Shannon, to set up a semi-final meeting today against An Rinn from Waterford in An Rinn at 1pm. Youghal hit the ground running and by the half time break they led 1-10 to 0-2.

A Sam Swaine goal helping to set the foundations for their half time lead.

On the resumption, Wolfe Tones tightened up but Youghal added on six points to their tally to run our winners with Taylor Aherne, Amy Lyons, Avril Cashman, Chloe O'Connell Jenny Doyle, Lauren Ryan and Shauna O'Connell all on the score sheet. In the Mai O'Connell Junior B shield semi-final, Barryroe took the lead inside two minutes with a Cliona Harte point.

Moyle Rovers responded with a goal and they led 1-1 to 0-3 at the end of the opening quarter. Róisín Ní Bhuachalla replied with two Barryroe points. Barryroe began to gain control and finished the half stronger as they led by a point 0-7 to 1-3 at the interval.

Róisín Ní Bhuachalla stretched the lead with a point before Emma Deasy struck for a goal and adding her second Barryroe were seven points in front. Moyle Rovers battled back and with ten minutes remaining three points separated the sides as Barryroe clung to their lead. They added two points without

reply. Moyle Rovers were within touching distance and they threw everything at the Barryroe defence, who withstood seven minutes of added time to run out winners with a point to spare in a 2-9 to 2-8 heart stopping contest. Barryroe will meet Kilmaley today at 1.30pm in Cappamore GAA grounds.

In the Mai O'Connell Junior C competition, Castlemartyr had 12 points to spare over Sixmilebridge where it finished 1-14 to 0-5.

Inside the opening minute, Ava McAuliffe pointed an early free and points from Ellen Hayes-Nally, Faye McGrath, and Ava McAuliffe extended their early advantage.

Sixmilebridge battled hard, but Castlemartyr were in control. Ava McAuliffe was unerring from placed frees to push them ahead and with Ciara O'Brien and Faye McGrath also on target, Sixmilebridge were in trouble as Castlemartyr held a comfortable half time advantage.

The second half saw Castlemartyr continue to dominate to the final whistle with Róisín Kelly finishing to the net for the game's only goal.

Tomorrow will see St Patrick's Tipperary provide their opposition for Castlemartyr.

MINOR CHAMPIONSHIP FINALS:

The SE Systems Premier Minor Camogie championship final goes ahead today at 2.30pm.

Sliabh Rua take on Éire Óg. In the Minor A final, Midleton take on St Catherine's in the final tomorrow at 2.30pm. Both finals are on in Castle Road.



Ballincollig players Leah Hannigan and Ella Hickey show their delight.



St Finbarr's Aoife O'Neill celebrates after their win over De La Salle. O'Neill has been in outstanding form for her club all season.



Ballincollig's Leah Weste is tackled by Ballygarvan's Catriona Kelly during the SE System's Cork Intermediate championship camogie final at Castle Road. Picture: Eddia O'Uss



Ciara Golden of St Finbarr's in action in Saturday's All-Ireland semi-final.
Picture: Moya Nolan

Golden: I knew I had to score or that could be it for us

Picture the scenario, it's into injury-time in extra, extra-time and the ball breaks to you on the wing.

You're playing at half-back and would be the first to admit you're not one of the top scorers for your side and in most games tend not to score. But you know that if you point, the chances are you will send your side to Croke Park and their first ever club senior camogie All-Ireland final.

Miss and it goes to a shootout, and anything can happen there. That's what Ciara Golden faced when the ball broke to her on the wing as St Finbarr's took on Loughgiel Shamrocks in the AIB All-Ireland senior club camogie championship semi-final at Donoghmore Ashbourne GAA Club in Meath on Saturday.

Keeping a cool head, she arrowed the ball between the posts and the rest as they say is history as the Barrs won by 3-15 to 3-14. Reflecting on what had just happened and what her score meant Golden was almost lost for words.

"It's just an amazing feeling to be in the final and it's just such a special day for all involved, it's unbelievable really," she said. Asked what was going through her head when the ball broke to her Ciara added: "I knew I needed to score and it just had to go over."

"I knew that the clock was ticking. I was saying, like, if this doesn't go over, it could be it. I was thinking after we fought and fought, you know, there's no going back now and it has to go

REACTION
Rory Noonan

straight over the bar and thankfully it did. "I knew I was kind of close, and I was saying, Jesus I have to just turn now and go for it. When it went over there is just no feeling like it."

The game itself was a battle from start to finish, with both sides enjoying periods of dominance and both looking at different times like they had it won.

The Barrs had been down the road of extra extra time in the Munster semi-final against Newcastle West and Golden felt that stood to them on Saturday.

"There's great character in this team, I think that's the thing about us. We just keep going and fighting and fighting for each other and even then, with the girls that are coming on they add to that. No matter who's on the pitch, we just fight and fight till the end because we know that's what we must do to win."

Their Munster final win came just a week ago and a week later they find themselves heading to Croke on December 14 for an All-Ireland final.

"It doesn't get much better than that, to be going up there with the Barrs it's just going to be an unbelievable experience. We never won Munster before not to mind heading to Croke Park so it's something to look forward to. We'll enjoy celebrating this win first and then start preparing for the final."



St Finbarr's Grainne Cahalane gets a pass away against Loughgiel Shamrocks' Orlagh Lavery at Ashbourne.
Picture: Moya Nolan

Barrs have to dig deep again to book place in All-Ireland

St Finbarr's	3-15
Loughgiel Shamrocks	3-14
(After extra, extra time)	

Ciara Golden was the hero for the Barrs as they won an unbelievable game to see them advance to the final of the AIB All-Ireland Senior Camogie Championship.

Similar to their Munster semi-final, it took extra, extra-time to separate the sides with Golden scoring late on to see her side win by the narrowest of margins.

It was a game that the large crowd present won't forget as both sides gave it everything with just the narrowest of margins in it at the end.

Sorcha McCartan opened the scoring for the Barrs in the first minute as they were playing with a slight wind advantage.

She had the chance to add a second, but her effort from a free was blocked by the Antrim's side keeper, Emma McAlister.

Eight minutes in and the Barrs got the opening goal from Orlaith Cahalane.

A long ball in from a sideline by Keeva McCarthy was caught superbly by Cahalane who turned to fire to the back of the net to make it 1-1 to no score.

Shamrocks opened their account when Roisin McCormick scored from a free and they added a second from the restart, with Marie Lavery pointing.

Cahalane put three between them again when she pointed with McCormick replying from a free at the other end.

With 16 minutes gone it was 1-3 to 0-3, with McCormick missing a chance to narrow the gap from a free.

Shamrocks' first goal chance came after 21 minutes when Amy Boyle played Cairtin Dobbin in, but Ciara Hurley was quickly off her line to block and send it out for a 45.

McCormick pointed from the 45, but from the restart the Barrs had their second goal. A long ball out of defence was



CAMOGIE

Rory Noonan

caught by McCartan who gave McAlister no chance of saving, to make it 2-3 to 0-4.

A great run up the wing by Lucia McNaughton saw her point for Shamrocks to reduce the deficit.

It was the last score of the half as the Barrs led by 2-3 to 0-5 at the break.

Less than a minute into the second half and the Barrs had Hurley to thank again, this time denying Katie McKillop a goal.

With 33 minutes gone there was only three between the sides when Dobbin pointed as Shamrocks were now making use of the wind.

Another long goal shot was stopped by Hurley, with McCormick pointing the resulting 45 to make it a two-point game.

The Barrs needed a score to settle into the second half and McCarthy duly obliged, but the momentum was with Shamrocks.

Annie Lynn put two between the sides again and with 50 minutes gone the Antrim side led for the first time.

McCormick picked up the ball from the restart, burst past several defenders to score a goal and put her side in front, 1-8 to 2-4.

McCarthy pointed from another free and with seven minutes to go the sides were level, 2-5 to 1-8.

Cahalane put the Barrs back in front as the game proved to be what most expected — a battle to the end.

Another McCarthy free stretched the Barrs lead to two, before a 45 from McCormick has one between the sides with two minutes left.

Deep into injury-time Boyle levelled it to take it to extra-time.

A superb point from McCartan put the Barrs back in front, after she blocked a defender's clearance to regain possession and score.

Five minutes into extra-time and Shamrocks got their second goal, with Lynn scoring to make it 2-10 to 2-8.

McCarthy replied for the Barrs with McCartan on target again to see the sides level at half time of extra-time, 2-10 apiece.

McCormick put her side back in front before Dobbin got Loughgiel Shamrocks' third goal.

McCarthy put three between them with seven minutes to go and a minute later they were level. Cahalane set up Eimer Hurley for their third goal and extra, extra-time was looking a possibility.

Another McCarthy free put the Barrs back in front with just 20 seconds left.

But two minutes into injury-time saw it level again to take it to extra, extra time.

Neither side scored in the first half of extra, extra-time as players were visibly tiring.

Hurley put the Barrs in front with McCormick replying at the other end and with a minute left the sides were still level.

McCormick put her side back in front with Cahalane levelling it again.

Deep into injury-time, Golden pointed to see the Barrs win an epic battle.

Scorers for St Finbarr's: K McCarthy 0-7 (0-6 f), O Cahalane, S McCartan 1-3 each, E Hurley 1-1, C Golden 0-1.

Loughgiel Shamrocks: R McCormick 1-9 (6f, 0-2 45), A Lynn, C Dobbin 1-1 each, M Lavery, L McNaughton, A Boyle 0-1 each.

ST FINBARR'S: C Hurley, S Punch, A Egan, A O'Neill; G Cahalane, M Cahalane, S Daly; K Wall, K McCarthy; A Shannon, C Golden, N Olden; O Cahalane, S McCartan, H O'Leary.

Subs: L O'Donovan for S Daly (37), E Hurley for N Olden (39), E Wigginton Barrett for K Wall (55), K Wall for H O'Leary (75), K Cahalane for A Egan (80).

LOUGHGIEL SHAMROCKS: E McAlister; C Campbell, M McGarry, K Lynn; L McNaughton, E McFadden, C McKillop; A Boyle, A Connolly; K McKillop, R McCormick, C Lavery; C Dobbin, A Lynn, M Lavery.

Subs: K McKendry for C Lavery (44), O Lavery for K McKillop (70), M O'Hara for C Campbell (75), K McKillop for M Lavery (80).

Referee: Liz Dempsey, Kilkenny.



St Finbarr's Liz O'Donovan in action against Loughgiel Shamrocks.
Picture: Moya Nolan

Brilliant Barryroe conquer Munster



The Barryroe team that won the Mai O'Connell Tournament Junior B final. (Photos: Munster Camogie Facebook)

Barryroe race out of the blocks to complete Munster and Cork double

BARRYROE	1-11
KILMALEY	0-3

BY MATTHEW HURLEY

BRILLIANT Barryroe are the champions of Munster, and they captured the Mai O'Connell Munster Junior B Camogie title in style.

Having led Clare side Kilmaley 1-5 to 0-1 at the break playing with the breeze, Barryroe outscored their opponents 0-6 to 0-2 in the second half to power past the finishing line in Cappamore, Limerick.

Most impressive of all from the West Cork club was that they didn't concede a score from play in the entire game.

'It was superb. The celebrations are still going. The girls went to Barryroe and Timoleague schools on Monday morning. It's great for the girls,' manager Tom Farrell told *The Southern Star*.

'We were in control after ten minutes, we were 0-3 to nil up. Before half-time, we made a switch in putting Hannah Whelton in full-forward. The first ball she got ended up in the net. We were seven up at half-time then and we got to use most of the bench. It was great.'

The Sky Blues were favourites coming into the game and stamped their authority early. Hannah Whelton opened the scoring inside a minute before Roisín Ní Bhuachalla and Grace Tobin had them firmly in the driving seat.

Player of the match Ní Bhuachalla pointed a monster free from beyond the 65 on 20



Barryroe joint captains Emma Deasy and Kate Whelton with the Munster Junior B cup.

Before half-time, we made a switch in putting Hannah Whelton in full-forward. The first ball she got ended up in the net'

minutes, and Ellen O'Riordan made it 0-5 to no score after 27 minutes.

The game was very much put to bed when Emma Deasy – who scored two goals in their semi-final win over Newcastle West – floated the ball into the danger zone, allowing Whelton to fire home. Kilmaley finally got on the scoreboard courtesy of an Ava McGuane free, leaving it 1-5 to 0-1 at the break.

'Before the girls left the dressing room for the second half, I asked for ultimate concentration. The job wasn't done. Against the breeze, we ran at them rather than taking potshots. Cliona Harte was a huge addition in coming on, she was a fresh addition,' Farrell added.

It was substitute Healy and O'Riordan who continued Bar-

ryroe's scoring spurt. O'Riordan added her third point to an already impressive showing. Forwards were given more of a free roam in this final and it worked a treat.

'We always inter-change. If a player isn't getting a ball inside, we get her out into the 40 to get her involved. Look at the corner-forward Ellen O'Riordan. She got 0-3 but got no score in the semi-final. We brought her out and she started getting involved in the game. We'll always mix up the six forwards. We'd never leave them in one position. It just keeps them ticking over,' the Barryroe boss explained.

Harte hit over another score late on before Ní Bhuachalla finished off what was a great day for the club. The attackers may get the plaudits but the backline deserve enormous praise.

'My player of the match was Lucy Kirby,' Farrell said.

'It could have been Jill McCarthy, Aileen O'Riordan or Kate Whelton. They were unbelievable. They (Kilmaley) had scored three goals in every championship game. I said to the defence,

'if we keep them to one, maybe two goals, we'd probably win the game.' Our hooks and blocks were off the wall altogether.'

Some key figures in the Barryroe backroom team were crucial, too. It was a whole-team effort.

Before the match, Maria O'Donovan, a Barryroe inter-county player who is out injured, and Sile Burns, part of the management team and a former Cork player, delivered rousing pre-game talks.

'We would have taken the county all day long. When we got relegated last year, I said to them that there would be other teams with their eyes on the county,' Farrell said.

'I would put a big part to play this season down to Paul Fitzpatrick, the S&C coach. He is going with Courcy Rovers this year but he is going to stay with us as well. Once the camogie club came back, we upped our training from twice to three times a week. A fair bit of that was S&C, so we had a fair block done.'

The key now for the West Cork club is to push on in Junior



Roisín Ní Bhuachalla with the player of the match award.

A next year. We have already seen what the likes of Ballinascarthy can do with momentum behind them, and Barryroe will hope to blaze their own trail

'I'm a great believer in not looking behind. Keep looking forward,' Farrell said.

'We will work on strength and conditioning again. We have a coach there that worked on a new programme to work on for two months individually, then they'll come back as a group. Every three or four weeks, we'll be making sure that everyone is doing their bit.

'We have great additions to our panel next year; two or three girls are coming back into the fold. There are a lot of U16s coming up with quality too,' Farrell added, as Christmas came early to Barryroe's all-conquering camogie team. Cork champs, now Munster winners too.

Scorers
Barryroe: Roisín Ní Bhuachalla 0-4

(fs); Hannah Whelton 1-1; Ellen O'Riordan 0-3; Cliona Harte 0-2; Grace Tobin 0-1.

Kilmaley: Ava McGuane 0-3 (fs).

Barryroe: Meabhdx Sexton; Sarah Harrington, Kate Whelton (joint-captain), Lucy Kirby; Sarah Harte, Jill McCarthy, Eimear Whelton; Aileen O'Riordan, Grace Tobin; Ailbheann McKeogh, Hannah Whelton, Roisín McCarthy; Roisín Ní Bhuachalla, Emma Deasy (joint-captain), Ellen O'Riordan.

Subs: Cliona Harte for S Harrington; Meabh O'Sullivan for E Deasy; Sarah Harrington for R McCarthy; Caoimhe Ní Bhuachalla for A McKeogh; Aisling Coakley for S Harte; Sinead Walsh; Seodhna Walsh; Louise Coleman.

Kilmaley: Alanagh Meaney; Leona Grace, Mollie Casey, Lisa Kennedy; Nora O'Rourke, Ruth Neylon, Jenny Williams; Alda Griffey, Arabelle McGauley; Grace Doherty, Aine Slattery, Ava McGuane; Amy Clancy, Edie McGuane, Olivia Neylon.

Referee: Daniel O'Donnell (Limerick).

Jerry Wallace returns to Cork camogie as U23 manager

HURLING

■ Mary Newman

Cork Camogie have appointed Jerry Wallace as Cork U23 manager for the 2026 season.

The decision was ratified at Wednesday's County Convention at Castle Rd.

The Midleton native is vastly experienced. He has worked for multiple counties, age groups, and levels in both hurling and camogie, having established himself in the mid-noughties with the last Cork team that won the Liam MacCarthy.

He managed the Cork minor camogie team from 2018 to 2023, guiding Cork to four All-Ireland titles and re-establishing the county as a dominant force at underage level.

His inter-county experience includes serving as senior manager of Waterford Camogie from 2024-2025, as well as earlier roles, such as manager of the Antrim senior hurling team, trainer with both the Cork and Limerick senior hurlers, and director of Limerick's underage hurling academy, where he oversaw back-to-back Munster minor titles.

At club level, he has delivered championship success in Kerry and led senior teams in Cork, Wexford, and elsewhere. This breadth of coaching and leadership experience places Jerry among the most seasoned and versatile figures in Gaelic games.

Wallace is thrilled to be involved with Cork camogie again. The Rebels reached the All-Ireland final in the new grade this year, but lost the decider to Galway.



Jerry Wallace was involved with Waterford earlier this year, but is now back in the Cork fold.

Picture: Eddie O'Hare

"I am delighted and honoured to be back involved in Cork Camogie," Jerry said. "I will be looking forward to working and participating with the officers of Cork Camogie, our senior manager, Ger Manley, and his management team, the club players who will represent Cork for 2026 at U23, the sponsors and, of course, the great families and supporters of Cork Camogie."

"My vision for our Cork U23 squad is to assist in building a high-performing team through empowerment and support, creating a positive culture pathway for players to develop to senior. Competitively reaching both the Munster and All-Ireland finals will be our goal and, with a wee bit of luck, some silverware will follow."

Cork chairperson Padraig Treacy said: "We are delighted to welcome Jerry on board for the 2026 season. The U23 panel is an important development pathway for Cork Camogie, and we firmly believe that someone of Jerry's calibre, experience, and leadership will bring real momentum to this group. His track record at inter-county level speaks for itself, and his commitment to player development aligns perfectly with the long-term vision of Cork Camogie."

He added: "We received strong interest in this position, which, once again, highlights the strength and reputation of Cork Camogie and the appeal of working within our structures. It is encouraging to see so many high-quality coaches eager to be involved."



Emma McSweeney, *The Echo* player of the Premier Minor Championship Camogie final, is presented with her trophy by Mary Newman.

Sliabh Rua pip Éire Óg to land their first minor championship

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

Sliabh Rua	2-8
Éire Óg	2-7

In an exciting SE Systems Premier Minor Camogie Championship final, Sliabh Rua captured their first title at this level as they overcame Éire Óg in Castle Road last Saturday. The excellent underfoot surface of the county camogie grounds was a credit to the county board and it led to a thrilling contest. Sliabh Rua led 2-3 to 1-2 at the interval thanks to two quick goals.

Éire Óg led 0-2 to 0-1 at the end of the opening quarter. The two Éire Óg's goal came from Clara Murphy, but with Caoimhe Horgan and Emma McSweeney grabbing goals for Sliabh Rua, they gained control to lead at the break by four points.

The game's intensity continued through the second half with both sides matching each other.

Sliabh Rua extended their lead with points from Caoimhe Horgan, Emma McSweeney (2) and Kayleigh Murphy. In between, Clara Murphy had one back for Éire Óg.

As Éire Óg began to come more into the game the Sliabh Rua defence was coming under a lot of pressure, and points from Clara Murphy and Clodagh Fitzgerald narrowed the gap.

Keeping the pressure on, Éire Óg struck with an Emily McGrath late goal to close the gap to a point. Now coming under enormous pressure, Sliabh Rua had to be at their best and they showed composure and didn't panic as Éire Óg pressed for an equaliser, but Sliabh Rua held firm to secure victory.

Emma McSweeney, who contributed enormously to Sliabh Rua's victory was named *The Echo* player of the match.

Midleton	0-10
St Catherine's	0-6

Midleton got the upperhand on a determined St Catherine's side in the S E Systems Minor A Camogie Championship final.

St Catherine's set the early pace and had opened up a four-point lead at the break, 0-6 to 0-2.

Lucy Murphy and Faye Dunlea with points ensuring Midleton stayed within touching distance.

Midleton came back strong in the second half and as the weather began to turn, heavy rain and wind began to take its toll, but both sides gave it everything they had.

The Midleton defence was superb as they stood firm against St Catherine's attacks.

Faye Dunlea was in excellent form as she hit five points for Midleton.

Sarah Goulding added two points and Roisin McManus had one as the tide turned in Midleton's favour. They kept their foot on the pedal to the final whistle to run out winners with a standout performance from Rebecca Cronin, who was named *The Echo* player of the match.

Munster Mai O'Connell competitions

Barryroe	1-11
Kilmaley	0-3

In the Mai O'Connell Munster Junior B Camogie Tournament final, Barryroe were 1-11 to 0-3 winners over Kilmaley. Barryroe were in control of the game from the start, leading 1-5 to 0-1 at half-time.

Throughout the second half, they continued to hold the upper hand, adding to their tally and containing Kilmaley to just points as they ran out winners.

Roisin Ní Bhuachalla was the player of the match following a superb display for Barryroe.



Aisling Shannon St Finbarr's, moves past Loughgiel Shamrocks' Katie McKillop in a nail-biting All-Ireland Club Championship semi-final.

Picture: Moya Nolan

Shannon will be a key player for St Finbarr's in Athenry showdown

CAMOGIE

■ Rory Noonan

The St Finbarr's run to the AIB All-Ireland senior camogie final has been built on top-class team performances as well as some outstanding individual displays. One of their most consistent players has been midfielder Aisling Shannon. She is the type of player that doesn't often get the accolades she deserves, but talk to her teammates and they will tell you about the vital role she plays in game after game. Shannon has been playing with the Barrs since she was five years old, and the primary school teacher has seen it all with the club in that time. She won her first senior medal in 2024 and this season added a second as well as a first Munster title.

On Sunday at Croke Park (4.15pm), against Athenry, she will be hoping to add an All-Ireland medal to her tally.

"It's a massive achievement for us as a club, we've never got there before," Shannon said.

"A lot of us have been playing since we were four or five, and I've been involved with seniors since I was 15. I've seen the good and bad days, a lot of bad days to be honest, so it's great to be on the good side of it now." Winning last year's championship was massive for the club and it was the catalyst for the run to Croke this year.

"We were always there and thereabouts, and we knew we had girls coming in to strengthen the squad. The younger girls coming in have been pure gold, the likes of Nicole Holden and Liz O'Donovan, and others have been a huge asset to us this year."

"Then you've got others like Sorcha (McCartan) and Kate (Wall), coming as well, which is great. "We've always been building on

the panel that we have. And I suppose last year was the icing on the cake. To finally get it after 18 years was unbelievable." Defending a title is never easy, but Shannon said that the win gave them massive confidence coming into this year's campaign.

"We knew that everyone wanted to beat us this year, we were the ones to beat. So I felt for every game, we went out knowing every team wants to beat us now."

"So getting past Cork was kind of a huge thing because I feel like Cork is probably one of the hardest counties to really get out as it's so competitive."

"In Munster we knew what was against us from last year. I feel like we weren't as prepared last year. I feel like we were just on the high from the county win, but going in this year, we really knuckled down and gave it everything."

"We met, as we always do, at the start of the season at the Rochestown Park Hotel, and Brian (O'Sullivan, their manager) said that we should be aiming to reach the All-Ireland final. He wanted us to be ambitious, but at the same time not take anything for granted."

"We were thinking could this actually happen? And look at it is actually happening so we're absolutely elated that we're actually there."

"But we know that Athenry are going to be another step up from the games we have played already and to have any chance of winning we will have to be at our best and hopefully we can finish the season on a high."



Faye Sheehan, St Catherine's, tracking Aisling Shannon, St Finbarr's, at Castle Road.

Picture: Jim Coughlan



Ballincollig Camogie Club will play against Camross in the AIB All-Ireland Intermediate Club final in Croke Park this Sunday.

Picture: Paul Lundy Sports Photography

Camogie side to make Croke history for Ballincollig

Ballincollig Camogie Club has already made history this season, earning its place in the All-Ireland Intermediate Club final, and this Sunday it will become the first Ballincollig camogie team ever to play at Croke Park.

Michelle Finnerty, chairperson of the club, told *The Echo* that making the final marked a proud moment for the club's players, families, and the entire community.

"Following on from recent county and Munster final successes, this achievement highlights the extraordinary dedication, commitment and spirit of our players and their management team over the past number of years," she said.

"This All-Ireland final is a celebration of Ballincollig camogie and our wider club com-

munity and an opportunity to participate in one of the most exciting camogie events of the year in Croke Park.

"The players have worked tirelessly to reach this stage, and we hope they enjoy the experience of playing in Croke Park and share this experience with the wider club community who plan to attend."

Reflecting on the forthcoming game, intermediate team manager Mike O'Brien said the club was proud to represent its community on the biggest stage in club camogie.

"This group has shown unbelievable commitment, resilience, and heart all season."

"Reaching the All-Ireland final in Croke Park is a special achievement, and we're fully focused on delivering a performance worthy of the Ballincollig supporters who have been behind us every step of the way," he said.

Linda Dorgan, captain of Ballincollig Camogie Club, said every player dreamed of

reaching an All-Ireland final.

"It's a privilege to captain this incredible group of players."

"What makes this team so special is the blend of youth and experience – our younger players bring energy and fearlessness, while our more mature players offer leadership and calmness," she said.

"That balance has been one of our greatest strengths. Our management team has supported us brilliantly and created an environment where everyone can thrive, and our families and the club has lifted us every step of the way this year."

"We're proud to represent Ballincollig and ready to give it everything on the day."

The All-Ireland Intermediate Club final takes place at 2pm in Croke Park on Sunday, December 14, and will see Ballincollig take on Camross from Co Laois.

Tickets are available at www.camogie.ie.



Ballincollig manager Mike O'Brien.

Picture: Inpho/Tom O'Hanlon

Steering Ballincollig to Croke Park is a dream come true for O'Brien

A native of Knockainey in Limerick, Mike O'Brien relocated in Ballincollig 25 years ago.

On Sunday he will lead the Village to Croke Park for the AIB All-Ireland Intermediate Camogie final against Camross from Laois. It's an exciting time for all sections of the club, the first team to reach Croke Park.

"Never in my wildest dreams would I ever have imagined I would be involved in such a huge occasion. Having followed Limerick in good days and bad, and indeed the fortunes of Cork, when sitting in the stand in such a magnificent stadium it will be incredible to be patrolling the sideline."

He got involved with Ballincollig camogie when his daughter Niamh began playing with the underage section in 2015.

"I hurled with the club at home up to 2001 but travelling up and down just got too much. The love of the game was always there so when I was asked to help out in the camogie club I was delighted."

He was previously a selector with the adult team in 2021-22. In 2023, following a few tough seasons at senior, Ballincollig re-graded to intermediate. Premier intermediate was introduced by the board with Ballincollig placed in that tier.

"We really weren't sure what to expect but did well reaching the quarter-final in our first year in the grade."

They have a good blend of youth and experience, from this year's Cork U16 captain Leah Hannigan to captain Linda Dorgan and Leah

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

Weste.

The return to the fold of former Cork minor Miriam Healy was a massive addition.

"Miriam has been out of the country studying in Holland but is back home on placement. Her return was a huge boost to us at the start of the campaign, her presence at full back is huge."

O'Brien, who has former Cork U23 coach Danny Morrissey involved in the set-up, feels the veterans have been crucial to their run, which included a county final replay against Ballygarvan.

"Linda Dorgan is a superb athlete and a leader. She has two young children but she is a huge role model and a great example to all the younger players on the panel."

"Leah Weste is another of our more established players also a mother of two young children. She is totally committed as is Aoife Cotter another stalwart who leads by example."

"Last season, some of the older players were injured and carrying knocks, but thank God this year they are all in great form. That is down in no small way to our S&C coach Dave Galvin."

Looking ahead to Sunday he knows it won't be easy.

"Two of the best teams are there battling for the ultimate prize. We know Camross are a good side, they have a lot of inter-county players, but we are focused and ready for what they will throw at us. Hopefully we won't be overwhelmed by the occasion."



St Finbarr's Sorcha McCartan celebrates scoring a goal against Loughgiel Shamrocks in their epic win after extra time in their All-Ireland semi-final. PHOTO: INPHO/LEAH SCHOLES



Ballincollig's Ailish Scanlon with English's Emma Holmes in action.



AIB ambassadors Kate Wall of St Finbarr's and Dervla Higgins of Athenry at the launch of the AIB All-Ireland camogie club final, which takes place on Sunday.
Picture: Andrew Conan/Inpho

Wall hopes Barrs push right buttons

CAMOGIE

■ Rory Noonan

When you need big players to stand up, they normally do and show why they are top class at their chosen sport.

When St Finbarr's needed someone to do that in this year's AIB Munster Senior Camogie final, that's exactly what Kate Wall did.

It was a close game all through, bar the start when the Barrs had to come from 1-3 to nil down before coming out on top.

Wall was one of the players that drove her side on that day and her contribution of 2-4 was telling, with her second goal winning the game for her side.

That win saw the Barrs win their first ever Munster senior camogie title but Wall said they took it step by step, and retaining their county title was the only thing on their minds at the start of the season.

"We met as a group at the start of the year, and we were setting out our goals for the year. One thing we all said was we just really wanted the county," said Wall.

"Obviously we won the county last year and maybe some people would be looking ahead of that whereas that was our first goal and our main goal.

"We hadn't ever done it before it's a huge thing to win back-to-back counties. You could always say you aspire to getting to an All-Ireland final.

"But it wasn't our focus, because Cork is really competitive and there's good teams so you have to keep your eye on Cork first before anything else.

"If you don't win the Cork championship then the rest doesn't happen, so you keep your focus on it.

"We broke it down and focused on the league first and did well to win that. You get a lot of game time into players, you build your panel and then come championship, you have a squad.

"That's the one thing that we felt about last year, players maybe might not have had as much game time compared to this year. You can see in the games, we've such a panel, there's girls on the sideline that could start, and that's kind of the difference I think with people coming on finishing games.



St Finbarr's Kate Wall breaks away from De La Salle's Leah Browne during the AIB Munster Club Senior Camogie Championship final at FBD Semple Stadium. Picture: Tom O'Hanlon/Inpho

"We learned a lot from last year going out into Munster we said we had to be more physical. We focused on our gym work, we know we did it the year before, but we put more emphasis this year on our strength and conditioning work.

"We found that games in Munster were tough physical games, and you had to be prepared for that. The Newcastle West game was a physical battle and maybe last year we might have lost a game like that.

"When we look back now like I think that game really made us it. It just bonds you so much as a team. There's no skill involved, it's pure heart.

"Then when we came to the same situation against Loughgiel Shamrocks in the All-Ireland semi-final, I genuinely had no doubt in my mind we would win. We went down a goal and a point, four points in extra time.

"Most teams would think it's over, but I still didn't think we'd lose. We didn't panic and I think that was testament to the Newcastle West game.

"In a game, a moment can help, even if it's light-hearted. As we were going out for the second half of extra, extra time against Loughgiel, one of the girls, I think it was Eimear Hurley, started singing a song. We love the Sugababes *Push the Button*, that's one of our songs and she sang a bit of it and everyone just relaxed and then Ciara [Golden] scored the winning point it was just unbelievable.

Now Wall heads back to Croker

where she hopes this visit will have a better ending than her last trip there with Cork, when they lost to Galway: "I think you must be excited, you can't pretend that it's not important because it's so important.

"But you must manage your energy, a day like this can zap your energy and that's one thing that I would say as advice to people. On the pitch, you just focus on small moments. You focus on your first touch of the ball and then on the first 15 minutes to try and make sure the game doesn't run away from you.

"It's brilliant to be going there, it's just really exciting and you have to look forward to days like this."

But Wall could be back there in the not-too-distant future as her twin brother, Philip, will be part of the Kilbrittain hurling team that are playing in an All-Ireland junior semi-final a week later.

"The lads are doing unreal and they've had huge success this year, winning the Cork Premier Junior County and then the Munster championship," she said.

"Phillip and I are so close, we'd always be together and talking about GAA nonstop and I'm delighted for him and all the lads, they really deserve it. My older brother Jamie has been heavily involved as well. I'm just delighted that they're getting the rewards from all their hard work over the last few years."



St Finbarr's manager Brian O'Sullivan: There was a target on our backs from winning the Cork championship last year.
Picture: Inpho/Leah Scholes

O'Sullivan: Croker date will be fantastic occasion for the club

Next Sunday will be a special day for Brian O'Sullivan and his management team.

They will take to the pitch at Croke Park for the AIB All-Ireland senior camogie final against Athenry, throw-in 4.15pm.

He has been involved now with the senior side for several years and in 2024 guided them to the league-and-championship double.

This year, so far, they have retained those titles and have added the Munster title to the trophy cabinet.

Now, on Sunday, he will be hoping for ultimate honours as they aim to win the All-Ireland title.

Like others involved, he will be creating his own bit of history as he is the first manager to guide the Barr's camogie side to an All-Ireland final.

"On the personal side of the thing, it's more about the club and the players. It's a fantastic occasion for the club to go in to the final on Sunday," said O'Sullivan.

At the start of the year, when he set out his hopes for the season, reaching the All-Ireland final was mentioned, but he knew there were a lot of tough hurdles to overcome to get there.

"With the talent within the group, there's no reason why we shouldn't be looking towards that. I mentioned a few times what our goals were, and the county championship was the first one.

"There was a target on our backs from winning it last year, and to do back-to-back titles was fantastic for this group.

"It was a target that we set ourselves, and then, once we got out of Cork, which is always a tough task, you're always looking forward towards the next game. Then, we won Munster, it's been an incredible journey so far."

In the Munster championship, their first game was against Newcastle West, a game some would say made

CAMOGIE

■ Rory Noonan

this team for this year, giving them the confidence to get to where they are now.

"Yeah, possibly. It was a massive test, psychologically as well as physically. We were two goals up at 61 minutes, and you would think the game was over. But, in fairness to Newcastle West, they got two goals. The next thing was extra time, but our girls didn't panic and showed the mental strength they have.

"It was a good test for us, particularly out in Munster, as it was a bit of the unknown, and it stood us in good stead going to Thurles for the final.

"That was a different type of game, because we didn't have a quick start, and they came out of the blocks. They got a goal after 30 seconds. But like that again, there was no panic or distress to the team, we just got on with it, and I think we got it back to a point by half-time.

"We regrouped at half time and said, 'there's another half an hour here'. But like, as I said, these girls are made of steel, mentally and physically, and it's player-driven. We're just very fortunate, as a management team, to have the opportunity to work with them."

Of their opponents, O'Sullivan added: "They're a formidable side. You know, for them to come out of Galway after beating Sarsfields (of Galway), who are All-Ireland champions, tells its own story.

"We're just going to try and focus on ourselves as best as possible and try to give a good account of ourselves.

"But we're under no illusions it's going to be another epic battle. They had a fantastic win over Dicksboro in the semi-final, another top-class side.

"At this level, you know you're facing a quality side and have to be at it from the start."

McCartan eyes dream end to Barrs

Sorcha McCartan landed on Leaside in June of 2021. College work placement at Stryker had taken her five hours down the road from home in Castlewelling. She didn't hang about in finding a new home. A camogie one, that is.

Consideration was given to joining St Vincent's on the northside of Cork City. Douglas, on the southside, was also in the frame. Both had their attractions. Amy O'Connor fronts the former, the Mackey twins and Julia White led the latter.

In the end, the Barrs won out through an old and distant link to home in Castlewelling.

Blues legend Gemma O'Connor had officially launched the Castlewelling camogie club in the mid-2000s. Over a decade later, in 2021, they still had a contact number for O'Connor and so contact was made.

Another Barrs camogie stalwart, Marian McCarthy, went and collected McCartan to ferry her to Togher for her first training session.

To have watched the Down native's abrasive and authoritative on-field nature during the Barrs run to Sunday's All-Ireland is to think it impossible that she could ever be a bag of nerves where camogie is concerned.

"I'd say I nearly gave Marian a heart attack in the car when she brought me to that first training because I kept saying, 'oh my God, I'm so nervous'. She was like, 'you'll be grand', but I was screaming," the 24-year-old McCartan

All-Ireland Senior Club Camogie Championship final



Athenry (Galway) v St Finbarr's (Cork)

Sunday: Croke Park, 4:15pm

Referee: Ray Kelly

TV: RTÉ2

Eoghan Cormican



laughingly recalled this week.

McCarthy was of course right. The new girl had nothing to worry about. The welcome mat of her new home was put down by many.

"Everyone was accepting. They weren't frosty or anything, it didn't take any time to get involved with them. They took me to the beach like a week later, and after that is history," she said. "This group of girls are different. There's obviously a few of us that have come in because it is a city club, that happens, but they treat us as if we've been there since we were young'uns."

"This club is just filled with amazing people. Obviously sport's a huge part, but they actually care about you as a person. I can recall John Neville when he found out I was going into the Cork

panel (in 2022), he was our S&C, I remember him taking me out during December, out of his own time, to come and train me to get my fitness and touch up.

"Whatever you need, the people in this club will never leave you wanting." Neither has she left them wanting in this dizzying run to Sunday's All-Ireland decider.

The free-roaming forward was the county championship's top-scorer from play with 4-17. She's since added 1-7 to that tally across the Munster and All-Ireland series.

Her total for a year still running is 6-53 (1-29 from the placed-ball). It's a total and run of form she attributes to the freedom of the club stage.

"With inter-county, you have a job to do. You know that if you're not pulling your weight, there will be someone to come in and take that jersey off you," she said. "Whereas with the club, you're more free to express yourself, so you can kind of make more mistakes, and not be afraid to make mistakes."

"I don't know if this is the same for anyone, but I just think I'm less tense and I'm just going out and playing."

There's a possibility that McCartan's next chapter may see her say goodbye to St Finbarr's and Cork in 2026. If that is to be the case, and it might prove not, Sunday silverware would be the perfect sign off.

"I know camogie is such a big part of it and it's not going to be there forever,



Sorcha McCartan has hailed the warm reception she received when joining St Finbarr's.

but neither are your 20s, so I'm going to have to just go out and see," she said.

"But look, if it comes to February or March, whenever it is, and I want to

come back again, I'll see when the time comes. It would be a dream come true (to win on Sunday). I never foreseen joining this club, so to be here in this

Barrs camogie on the brink of history

All-Ireland Senior Club Camogie Championship final



Athenry (Galway) v St Finbarr's (Cork)

Sunday: Croke Park, 4:15pm

Referee: Ray Kelly

TV: RTÉ2

Eoghan Cormican



Brian O'Sullivan called the St Finbarr's camogie panel to the Rochestown Park Hotel last February. Their first get-together of the year. Targets set out and ambitions aired.

The Barrs were late convening for the 2025 season. Given the campaign previous had delivered a first county title in 18 years and ran to the end of October, O'Sullivan saw no need to hurry them back.

The 2024 season informed conversation at the Rochestown Park Hotel. They'd had a taste of Munster fare, fleeting though it was. They wanted more. They wanted to go beyond Munster and all the way to the last day.

The aspiration was set out to reach the All-Ireland club final.

February words have become a December reality. The Barrs are off to Croker this Sunday, only the third Cork club over the past 30 years — Inniscarra and Milford the other two — to secure involvement in the decider.

"Just with the talent within the group, there's no reason why we shouldn't be looking towards that," said Barrs boss O'Sullivan when reflecting

on the standard-setting meeting of 10 months ago.

To aspire is one matter, to believe is another.

"With the potential in the squad, I probably did, but it's a minefield," O'Sullivan continued.

"Getting out of Cork, even getting out of your group in Cork, because some of the clubs in Cork are fantastic. If you look at Cork over the last few years, they've been competing at senior, U23, intermediate, minor level.

"All those top inter-county players are dotted across all the clubs, so even to get out of Cork is a magnificent achievement.

"It's one of the toughest counties in the country but you have to start pushing. You have to raise your ambitions to see where you can get to.

"Someone has to get there, so why couldn't it be us, particularly with the squad that we have."

The squad O'Sullivan speaks of contains three starters — Sorcha McCartan and the Cahalane sisters, Méabh and Orlaith — from the Cork team that came up short in August's All-Ireland final. A fourth Barrs player, Kate Wall, was a second half sub in. A fifth, Aoife O'Neill, was an unused sub. A sixth, the returning-from-injury Gráinne Cahalane, was on the fringes of the set-up.

Four more — Ciara Hurley, Ella Wigginton Barrett, Ciara Golden, and Nicole Olden — were on the bench the afternoon Cork came up short in July's All-Ireland U23 final.

The aforementioned Hurley, along with Aisling Egan and Hannah O'Leary, were part of Cork's All-Ireland winning intermediate panel in 2024.

Their stacked panel has been on a sensational journey. If it hasn't already crossed your path, the following is just some of the craziness they've been involved in and come through.



Kate Wall celebrates her match-winning goal against De La Salle last month.

Brought to extra time by Newcastle West in the Munster semi-final, when the Limerick champions goaled twice in second-half injury-time. A pair of Barrs points then brought extra time to extra, extra time.

Kate Wall's 60th-minute goal delivered the Blues a famous come-from-behind Munster final win over De La Salle before double extra time again visited their corner.

Eight minutes into the second five-minute period of extra, extra time, the Barrs trailed Loughgiel Shamrocks by 3-14 to 3-13. Back-to-back points in the 93rd and 94th minute from Orlaith Cahalane and Ciara Golden saw them edge another epic.

"These girls are made of steel, mentally and physically," O'Sullivan said. "The Newcastle West match here, a lot of people would say that that was the match that made this team this year. That gave them that confidence to get to where they are now."

Where they are now is one hour from bringing a sixth All-Ireland club crown, and first in camogie, back to Togher.

Regrading leads to Ballincollig's shot for glory at Croke Park

Intermediate Camogie final



Ballincollig v Camross

Sunday: Croke Park, 2pm

TV: RTÉ Player

Referee: Joseph Mullins

Therese O'Callaghan



Just a short few years ago, radical action was required as Ballincollig struggled to survive at senior camogie level.

They've come a long way since, breaking fresh ground as they count down to Sunday's AIB All-Ireland Intermediate Camogie Club Championship final in Croke Park (2pm).

The village is buzzing, in anticipation of their clash with Camross of Laois.

"There is good buy-in and good excitement, the shops are displaying the colours," says Ballincollig manager Mike O'Brien. "I believe it is the first time for any Ballincollig GAA team to be in an All-Ireland final. I don't think there was even a Munster in the club before us at adult level, so it is a huge occasion. The men's side of the club has rowed in behind us as well."

Requesting to play at a lower level was a difficult choice.

"In 2022, we had a very poor championship, and we asked to be regraded. 'Ourselves and Douglas asked to go down. That wasn't an easy decision, but we were at a turning point where we felt we had older players who couldn't carry the can any longer on their own, and we had younger players coming through who weren't ready to play senior. So, we went down to rebuild."

"We've brought in Danny Morrissey from Na Piarsaigh and S&C Dave Galvin. Danny and Dave work together."

It was a challenging time for the club, but incredibly, three of those more ex-

perienced players are still performing at the highest level.

"Linda Dorgan is our elder stateswoman at 42. She is a warrior, really. We made her captain this year because she's been a role model. She says very little, but her work ethic at training is phenomenal."

"Leah Weste and Aoife Cotter are in their mid-30s. Keeping them three in jury-free this year has been a huge asset. They've all had babies in the last three or four years."

"Linda and Leah have two each, and Aoife has one. Ages two to seven. No easy, juggling all of that."

Player of the Match awards picked up by Linda and Leah in the last two games is testament to their input.

"We've two 16-year-olds on the panel. Leah Hannigan was captain of the Cork U16s, and she has been very influential. Bláithín Cunniffe is the other U16. Two very talented players, both Cork minors 2026."

Mike — who is originally from Knockainey and joined the Ballincollig camogie set-up when his daughter Niamh started to play U14 in 2015 — is of the opinion that sport must be enjoyed. However, stepping out onto the big stadium can be daunting. The Mid Cork club cannot afford to get caught up in the grand occasion, especially against a team that was well represented when Laois claimed All-Ireland premier junior honours at Croke Park in August.

"It's getting a balance between enjoying the occasion, but not letting that become the focus. We've a little bit of experience in Linda and Leah, who have won All-Irelands there."

"We've asked other players who've been there on what can go wrong on the day. It can be intimidating for all of us, because it is so different to the way we prepare for other matches. I've never stood on the sideline either in Croke Park, so it is a first for a lot of us."

"We would have done a bit of analysis on Camross. We have pegged them as the best team we will play this year. Like any trip to Croke Park, it is going to be the team that handles the occasion better."

"Hopefully we do ourselves justice."

Family affair as Cahalanes eye glory

Eoghan Cormican

There was not a shred of doubt. Spectating from defence, Méabh Cahalane privately forecast the outcome. The younger sister did not disappoint.

The All-Ireland semi-final was 93 minutes old. The second period of extra, extra-time was drawing to a close. Light was fading in Ashbourne. The Barrs found themselves behind by the minimum.

A sideline cut on halfway. SORCHA MCCARTAN arrowed possession in the direction of their attacking light-house. We'll let Méabh pick up the action from here.

"Orlaith got on the ball, and I just knew. I said in my head, she'll nail it, because that's just the type of player she is," says the older sister.

The provider of the leveling score raced out to midfield for the ensuing puckout. Taking a pass from Ella Wigginton Barrett, she spotted Ciara Golden inside and mailed the perfect delivery onto the centre-forward's hurley. An assist befitting the winning white flag that followed.

The Barrs posted 3-15 to edge Loughgiel Shamrocks. Orlaith Cahalane contributed 1-4 off her own stick, assisted 1-2, and was fouled for two converted frees.

"Even though she's only 21, she nearly has an old head on her shoulders. The same as the All-Ireland final this year where she stood up and took the goal, which nearly got us over the line; she's very clever and just gets herself into positions that, at times, can be the difference between winning and losing," said Méabh.

"She's just a different player, and I'm so lucky that I get to play with her at club and county level, but since she was three to four years of age, you could tell that she was going to be unbelievable, if she stuck at it. She just seemed to have the knack of it straightaway.

"Her performance the last

day was no surprise to me, to be honest."

All four Cahalane sisters were on the field at full-time in Ashbourne. Centre-back Méabh, who turned 30 on Thursday, is the eldest. Fellow half-back Gráinne is 26, Orlaith we've covered, while the youngest Kate, an extra-time sub two weeks ago, is 18.

The Barrs will travel by train to Dublin tomorrow morning. When the venues carry a more local Eircode, the four Cahalane sisters will squeeze into Méabh's Mini.

"I drive, otherwise I don't know if we'd arrive on time! We're all packed in, so the gearbags would be lined up against the window and everything.

"To see how Gráinne has come back from her injury last year and how she's grown in confidence as this run has continued. Kate is coming on in games and has a great future ahead of her, so for me looking at them playing, I'd be really proud of the performances they've put in, but I don't think we really tell each other at home much."

The birthday girl was last in Croke Park on All-Ireland final Sunday in mid-August. As the defeated Cork captain, it is a day that never leaves her.

The Barrs' journey to a seventh All-Ireland club final — first in camogie — has succeeded in leaving little time to sit alone with one's thoughts.

"Winning the county and then Munster for the first time was incredible, so not that it makes you forget anything, but it probably just makes dealing with the loss that bit easier.

"We are so lucky with Cork that every year we are competing. Any year you don't get to Croke Park with Cork is a disappointing year, but now to have the opportunity to go there with your club is unbelievable."

Even more so going there with each one of your sisters.



Athenry's Jessica Gill dejected at the end of the All-Ireland club camogie intermediate final in March 2018.

Picture: Tommy Dickson/Inpho

All-Ireland Senior Club Camogie Championship final



**Athenry (Galway)
v St Finbarr's (Cork)**

Sunday: Croke Park, 4.15pm

Referee: Ray Kelly

TV: RTÉ2

Eoghan Cormican



Reeling in the years. Rolling back the decades. The mummies are still moving and conjuring magic.

Athenry scored 1-9 to win their All-Ireland semi-final two weeks ago — 36-year-old mother-of-three Jessica Gill struck the game's only goal, 44-year-old mother-of-three Therese Donohoe struck a first-half point into the gale.

Therese Donohoe is of course Therese Maher. An all-time camogie great. After 17 years toiling on the inter-county stage, Therese got her storybook ending in September 2013. She got her All-Ireland senior medal.

She's now seeking the same final chapter in club colours to tie the bow on a

career of phenomenal longevity and leadership.

Jessica Gill is still chasing her storybook ending. She's still chasing an All-Ireland senior medal. Her inter-county chapter a decade finished, Athenry is the last remaining avenue to reward a career of exceptional early promise and enduring perseverance.

Rewind 20 years, a child superstar, a 15-year-old midfielder in Athenry's one-point county final defeat, a teenage tower in the four-in-a-row of Galway titles that followed.

Gill was Camogie's Young Player of the Year in 2007. The provider of 2-6 in Athenry's All-Ireland semi-final stunning of four-in-a-row chasing St Lachtain's. Match footage can be found on YouTube. Go marvel at the sideline she cuts over. Go marvel at her power.

Top scorer, at 18 years young, in the 2008 All-Ireland senior final; top scorer across the entire '08 championship; All-Star half-forward.

Limitless potential, Gill was a fresh face and leading force in Galway's re-emergence as camogie contenders.

Unfinished business

It's Monday of All-Ireland final week. Gill is thanking us for thinking of her and remembering her. Two of the kids are at home with her at lunchtime. There's the usual health warning that she may have to depart the call at any unknown moment.

Gill and her husband, Jonathan, have three children. Jack is 11, Alfie six, and Poppy two. The middle one asked mammy the other day how many All-Irelands she has. If the answer was different and she'd something to show Alfie, we might not be having this conversation. She might not be still turning out for Athenry.

A roll call of regret and frustration. All-Ireland senior final defeats in 2008, '10, '11, and '15. All-Ireland senior club final defeats in 2007 and '09. She was a 46th-minute introduction for the latter of those, having done her cruciate a few weeks earlier. Add All-Ireland intermediate club final defeat in 2017-18.

Gill fought her way back from a second cruciate rupture in four years to rejoin the Galway set-up in 2013. Becoming pregnant with

Jack meant she had departed long before September's famine-ending final victory over Kilkenny.

"The 2009 club final was a particularly hard one to take because I was at the peak of my camogie at that stage," says Gill of her curtailed involvement on the last occasion Athenry reached this stage.

Such a statement reflects the cruel uncertainty of sport. Her 20s were but a few weeks old. Her best years already behind her, her limitless potential interrupted.

She said: "After both cruciates, I found it very hard to get back to where I was, mainly because I had to work very hard to get fit. I would never have been a player that you looked at and said, 'she is super fit'. I was known more for my strength and power.

"But coming back, I did feel I still had more to offer with Galway. Even in later years and after having Jack, I thought I had a bit to offer."

At 36, and two cruciates and three kids later, slack continues to be infrequently cut. She still demands of herself: "I definitely put it on myself that even though you've had kids you should

Loughgiel Shamrocks' Katie Lynn tackles St Finbarr's Orlaith Cahalane in the All-Ireland Club camogie semi-final in Ashbourne.



Ballincollig's Linda Dargan, Orla Keating, and Ailish Scanlon celebrate after their semi-final win over Eglish.

Picture: Tom O'Hanlon/Inpho

Barrs look to emulate Milford and Glen Rovers on the All-Ireland stage

When Frank Flannery took over the Milford senior camogie team in the early part of the last decade, he was going into a group that had been utterly dominant at underage but who had hit a wall at senior level.

Milford had never won a county senior title, but there was obvious potential in the group.

They lost three finals between 2004-'11, but one of Flannery's first acts was to tell the players that they were eight steps away from an All-Ireland final in Croke Park.

"We were thinking, lads above, is he mad, like," recalled Aisling Thompson in her TG4 episode of *Laochra Gael*.

"We were beaten in the quarter-final of the county last year and this fella thinks we're eight steps from an All-Ireland. I said, 'this guy is mad anyway, we'll get knocked out in the first round of the championship'."

They weren't because there was total method to what the Milford players had initially deemed to be Flannery's madness. When Milford won their first county senior title in 2012, they hammered St Catherine's in the decider by 25 points.

Within a few months, Milford were All-Ireland club champions. Flannery turned that Milford side into a machine.

Of the four successive Cork titles they won between 2012-'15, Milford's aggregate winning margin was 77 points.

The North Cork side went on to win three All-Ireland titles in four years.

Milford won four successive Munster titles and only narrowly missed out on reaching four All-Ireland finals in a row after losing the 2014 semi-final to Mullagh.

After Milford lost the 2016 county final to Inniscarra by three points, that great team never came back. Inniscarra just picked up the baton and ran with it, winning three-in-a-row in Cork between 2016-'18.

Inniscarra won a Munster title in 2018 but were subsequently beaten in the All-Ireland semi-final by St Martin's.

The Wexford side were in turn beaten by a dominant Slaughtneil team that bagged three All-Irelands in a row between 2016-'18.

Milford are the joint-fourth most successful club on the roll of honour, but their incredible success over such a short period was also reflective of the trend of the All-Ireland club camogie championship; the vast majority of the 10 most successful clubs in the history of the All-Ireland camogie championship won those titles in a blitzkrieg



Milford players before an All-Ireland winning display at Croke Park in 2015.

Picture: Piaras Ó Midheach/Sportsfile

fashion. St Paul's Kilkenny, who top the roll of honour with eight All-Irelands, are an outlier because they accumulated that haul over two separate periods. After bagging five in nine years between 1968-76, St Paul's returned with a new team to win three in-a-row between 1987-89.

A core of that group returned to win another title in 1994 under the banner of their new name, Lisdowney.

Buffers Alley from Wexford reached seven successive All-Ireland finals between 1978-84, winning five titles, while Pearses from Galway secured five All-Irelands in seven years between 1996-2002.

Glen Rovers mined four All-Irelands from six final appearances in a nine-year period between 1986-94, while Sarsfields from Galway won four titles from eight finals between 2016-24.

Slaughtneil and St Lachtain's Freshford both won three in a row while Granagh-Ballingarry won three All-Irelands in five years.

It took Oulart-the-Ballagh longer to win their three All-Irelands, but they were still accumulated in a nine-year period.

Two of the three clubs with two All-Irelands — St Patrick's Glengoele (Tipperary) and Austin Stacks (Dublin) — won them back-to-back, while Cashel won two in

three years between 2007-'09.

Milford's success was one of the great modern camogie stories because they came from never having won a county senior title to dominating the national landscape with what felt like the snap of a finger.

They created a unique tradition, but the most successful Cork club on the national stage — Glen Rovers — have long been the traditional powerhouse, having won 22 county titles from 33 final appearances.

The Glen's two most glorious periods was when they won seven in-a-row between 1962-68 and 1990-96, but the 1990s was even more glorious for how the Glen translated that success into three All-Irelands between 1990-'93.

It would have been four in five years if the Glen hadn't lost the 1994 decider to Lisdowney.

Having won their first All-Ireland in 1986, Glen Rovers are Munster's most successful senior camogie club with four All-Irelands.

They are also on top of the roll of honour in the province with nine titles but the Glen still followed the pattern of a club winning All-Irelands over a short sustained period.

When a club arrives on the All-Ireland stage, they usually stay around. And yet, the last three All-

Ireland finals have still been contested by clubs appearing in a first senior decider; Loughgiel Shamrocks (2022), Dicksboro (2023), and Truagh-Clonlara (2024).

St Finbarr's are appearing in a first final tomorrow when they take on Athenry. Similar to Glen Rovers, Buffers Alley and Sarsfields (Galway), Athenry have won All-Ireland senior titles in hurling and camogie.

Yet the Barrs have a chance now to write a whole new level of history again.

A win tomorrow would see the Barrs become the first club to win senior All-Irelands in hurling, football and camogie.

For decades, St Finbarr's were the only club to have won All-Irelands in hurling and football before Cuala finally managed it last year, winning the football eight years after they'd won successive hurling titles.

A number of clubs have won All-Irelands in either hurling, football, camogie and ladies football, but no club has managed it across three levels.

A week after the Barrs devastating Munster final loss to Dingle, and less than a year after another club finally achieved what only St Finbarr's had managed, the Toghher club suddenly have the capacity to stand out all on their own again.



Stephanie Punch makes a clearance for St Finbarr's during their clash with Newcastle West in the AIB Munster Camogie Championship. She will have the honour of leading out the Barrs in the All-Ireland final tomorrow. Picture: Larry Cummins

Stephanie: It's a huge honour to captain this side

CAMOGIE

■ Rory Noonan

Tomorrow Stephanie Punch will have the honour of leading her side out on a historic day for St Finbarr's Camogie Club.

She is captain of the side and will lead them out at Croke Park for the AIB All-Ireland Club Camogie final against Athenry from Galway, throw-in 4.15pm.

It's a day that all players dream about and now Punch and her team-mates get that opportunity.

This squad have already written themselves into the history books of the famed Toghher club, having won the Munster camogie final for the first time a few weeks ago.

Now they have the chance to end the season as All-Ireland champions which would be unbelievable said Punch.

Like all clubs they set out their stall at the start of the season and getting to the All-Ireland decider was the ultimate aim.

"It's funny, when we met in February at the Rochestown Park Hotel Brian (O'Sullivan, manager) had this aspiration for us. He said it a few times to us," Punch said.

"He had aspirations higher than a county for us, but obviously there was no disrespect meant to any teams in Cork, because winning the county is extremely hard to do.

"To be honest we kind of laughed it off at the time. But we were only saying the other day — you know what, he was right, so we should believe him more.

"Really he was making the point of us driving ourselves on and demanding more from each other for the season ahead."

To get to Croker they first had to retain their Cork title and then win the Munster championship, not an easy task.

"I'd say throughout the whole of the Cork championship there was no easy game, you know it's mentally and physically challenging, and it does take it out of you.

"The Cork championship is getting more competitive every year, so it really set us up for Munster.

"We had a fantastic game against Newcastle West in the

Munster championship, and I think all those games that we've played, they've been tough, tough teams and they've set us up now for the final."

Croke Park can be a daunting place, with many of her side not having played there before and managing the day itself can be difficult.

"Managing the day is something that we will have to do to ensure we are ready to go at 4.15pm, but some of the girls and our management team have a lot of experience up there. To have that experience of knowing how the place runs and what to expect is great.

"The players that have been there with Cork are a huge support and I suppose the whole year we've said play the game, not the occasion.

"So that's kind of something we've instilled in everyone. But look, we're really privileged to have so many people that are familiar with the grounds and they're giving us advice and you know they've been fantastic."

From a personal viewpoint Punch considers it a huge honour to captain the Barrs and was delighted when O'Sullivan asked her to continue in that role this season.

"In 2024 when Brian asked me to be captain it was a huge honour and for him to ask me to stay on in 25 was incredible.

"I suppose it shows the faith he had in me. But it's not about personal honours. I'm just privileged to be part of such a fantastic team.

"But when I do step away from it and look back at what has happened over the last two seasons it will be something that I'll be extremely proud of for the rest of my life."

As for Athenry Punch knows what lies ahead.

"It'll be a huge battle. We know they're a very physical side, but I think the games that we've gone through this year when we really have had to dig in will stand to us.

"It will be another titanic battle, but we're just looking forward to it now."

Donohue drags Athenry to unlikely comeback

All-Ireland Senior Camogie Club Championship final



St Finbarr's 0-15

Athenry 1-12

Eoghan Cormican

Croke Park

cycled possession. Gill to Sabina Rabbite to Eva McGlynn to Madden. Eighteen seconds past the allotted four minutes of injury-time, the Barrs were caught again.

"There's been that way all year," said Athenry boss Joe Rabbite.

"Today, she really stood out with her work rate. Cormac Ward, our strength and conditioning coach, would be in Therese's ear a lot and making sure she is in the condition she is in because it's very hard to replace players like that.

"She is working so hard off the ball. Her leadership in the dressing room and on the pitch, you don't get players like that too often."

Six behind four minutes from the end of the regulation hour and having not scored in the 14 minutes previous, Athenry were ecstatic at the finish. They are the team who make for Christmas with a smile.

"It's going to galvanise the group," Rabbite continued. "It's really a thing that if we can embrace it and use it the right way — because we were dead and gone but came back to draw it, it's something if we can work it, then it will be to our advantage."

To the blue corner. For the third time in four outings, they were caught right at the end of regulation time. For the second time in four outings, they failed to protect a late six-point lead.

The same as the Munster semi-final against Newcastle West and All-Ireland semi-final against Loughgiel Shamrocks, the Barrs held a winning hand deep in second-half injury-time. Not holding out will hurt and haunt.

Points courtesy of Kate Wall and sub Eimear Hurley sandwiched a mammoth Sorcha McCartan free from beyond halfway for a 0-15 to 0-9 lead on 56 minutes.

It was a lead fully merited. They were bouncier. They had the better spread. They were more intelligent in their movement and passing. But they will have regrets.

The aforementioned Hurley had an injury-time chance to push them three clear. Dervla Higgins dived across the shot and the sliotar limped wide. They now have to gather themselves over Christmas and prepare for a replay they know they should have clinched first time out.

Falling 0-3 to 0-1 behind early on, the Barrs announced



themselves through five unanswered points. Orlaith Cahalane, as she had done for their opener, assisted the opening score of this sequence. Ciara Golden and Nicole Olden sniped a pair, before McCartan did likewise from the placed-ball. Their full-back line was equally impressive.

An 0-8 to 0-6 interval lead was swollen further by McCartan and Cahalane. For the second Sunday in succession, Barrs supporters

watched a healthy lead wither and disappear.

One or two Barrs players have travelling plans. Returning Athenry sweeper Olwen Rabbite is nursing a damaged cruciate. Injuries and itineraries are put on ice. Hold the Christmas Day dessert.

Scorers for St Finbarr's: S McCartan (0-6, 0-4 frees, 0-1 '45); N Olden (0-3); O Cahalane (0-2); C Golden, K McCarthy, K Wall, E Hurley (0-1 each).

Scorers for Athenry: S Rabbite (0-4, 0-2 frees, 0-1 '45); T Donohue (0-3); A Jordan (1-0); K Madden, K O'Driscoll (0-2 each); E McGlynn (0-1).

ST FINBARR'S: C Hurley; S Punch, A Egan, A O'Neill; G Cahalane, M Cahalane, S Daly; C Golden, A Shannon; N Olden, K McCarthy, K Wall; H O'Leary, O Cahalane, S McCartan.

Subs: L O'Donovan for Daly (38); E Hurley for O'Leary (45); E Wigginton Barrett for Olden (59).

ATHENRY: L Freaney; K Screene, D Higgins, T Kilkenny; L Casserly, O Rabbite, S Feeney; N Feeney, K Madden; J Gill, T Donohue, E Keane; C Burke, S Rabbite, K O'Driscoll.

Subs: E McGlynn for N Feeney (HT); A Jordan for C Burke (43); M Noone for Keane (52).

Referee: R Kelly (Kildare).

Barrs boss O'Sullivan opts to stress positives

Eoghan Cormican

The Barrs were brilliant. Then they were bewildered. Bouncing, then befuddled.

Disbelief replaced second-half domination. A six-point lead on 55 minutes had become an All-Ireland final replay on the opening weekend of January.

The Barrs had overwhelmingly been the better side for the opening 25 minutes of the second half. A two-point interval lead had swollen to six.

And yet the post-match conversation with Barrs manager Brian O'Sullivan and captain Stephanie Punch focused almost exclusively on what happened in the eight minutes right at the end when they were hemmed in and their lead hounded.

"We had chances to win it. We were comfortable enough at times, but the nature of sport, and we've been on the other side of it, is that you are playing for 62, 63, 64 minutes," began O'Sullivan.

Was there disappointment? Surely there had to be disappointment.

pointment.

"No, not at all," O'Sullivan continued.

"I suppose you might be disappointed that you didn't win it, but we still have a chance. We are still there. We've another crack at it, so it doesn't really bother me, to be honest.

"I'd say they were disappointed going in at half-time, but you kind of have a range of emotions throughout the game. It is pointless thinking about what way the result went, we take our lessons learned from it, and drive on again."

He was similarly steadfast when asked if there will be a job to manage a group who had one hand on the silverware but must now wait three weeks for another attempt to take hold of that same silverware.

"Not at all," he repeated himself.

"These guys are experienced. I keep going back to the Newcastle West game. We were six up and they got two goals, and we went out the next day against De La Salle



Stephanie Punch: 'I am proud of the team.'

and it didn't phase those girls at all.

"We've played in games that were complete chaos and we've dealt with it, either getting draws or coming out on top. I don't think [they'll need managing].

"We'll review the tapes and get our couple of lessons

learned, but we did an awful lot of positive things too. There's a lot of good to be taken from it, as well."

Captain and corner-back Stephanie Punch was sitting beside her manager.

An ice pack strapped to her right leg was the battle scar of a fine individual performance.

"We probably are disappointed in how we did finish the game," she conceded.

"We are well aware we left a few chances behind us. They came back at us hard. I am proud of the team. We defended like dogs there at the end. We could very well be coming in and talking about us having lost by a point."

Would she have preferred a third extra-time outing in their last four games?

"They had all the momentum at the end, so I am not too sure to be honest. It would have been great to have it done on the day, but they'll have taken huge heart finishing out with 1-3, so it is fair enough that we both have another crack at it in January."

Athenry keep their All-Ireland dreams alive with late equaliser



Gordon Manning
at Croke Park

Finbarr's foiled at death as Madden point sends decider to a replay

Athenry (Galway) 1-12
St Finbarr's (Cork) 0-15

Kayla Madden fired over an equalising score with the last play of the game as Athenry staged a sensational Croke Park comeback to send the All-Ireland senior club camogie final to a replay.

Athenry trailed St Finbarr's by six points with four minutes of normal time remaining, but the Galway champions – propelled by the towering Therese Donohue – scored 1-3 without response to earn a replay on the weekend of January 3rd-4th.

St Finbarr's, playing in their maiden All-Ireland final, had led the contest from the 17th to the 65th minute, when Madden received the ball on the edge of the D and showed ice-like composure to flick over the equaliser.

Four minutes of added time had been announced and when the ball sailed over the crossbar at the Canal End, the clock showed 64 minutes 18 seconds. The final whistle sounded on the resulting puckout. Ecstasy and agony, but no winner.

"We're delighted to still be in the All-Ireland final," said Athenry manager Joe Rabbitte afterwards.

St Finbarr's were the better team for much of the game but

this is now the third time in their last four outings that they have ended regulation time deadlocked with their opponents.

Athenry's only previous All-Ireland title in this competition was mined in 1977, and it appeared they were on course to lose an eighth decider before their late show at Croke Park on Sunday.

It wouldn't have been possible without Donohue – the 44-year-old mother of three was the standout player, and it was her relentless determination that led to the crucial 56th-minute goal that changed the trajectory of the game.

She drilled a hole through a forest of blue and gold jerseys and when she finally got off a shot it dropped just short, hitting the crossbar but bouncing back out in front of the goal where Anna Jordan

was waiting to smack home, 0-15 to 1-9.

Sabina Rabbitte, whose dad Joe is the Athenry manager, arrowed over a difficult free from under the Cusack Stand

1977

The year Athenry's only previous All-Ireland title in this competition was won

moments later to reduced the gap to just two points. From nowhere, St Finbarr's were suddenly on the back foot.

When Eimear Hurley – who played in goal for Dublin this year – made it 0-15 to 0-9 to the Cork champions in the 55th minute, it would have taken a brave punter to wager on Athenry getting anything out of the game.

But that was to be their last score of the evening and following Athenry's quick-fire 1-1, all the momentum was with the Galway side. Kerri O'Driscoll had a wide soon after Rabbitte's free while St Finbarr's goalkeeper Ciara Hurley had to produce a strong save from a goal-bound shot from Jessica Gill in the first minute of injury-time.

Clawback

Athenry looked like scoring with every attack, it was just a matter of whether they would have enough time to claw back the two-point deficit.

Rabbitte showed her steel with a nicely executed 45 in the 63rd minute to reduce the gap to the minimum – setting up a high-drama finale.

The 'Barrs, to their credit, defended ferociously in the closing stages but when Eva

McGlynn flicked the ball out to Madden, the Athenry number 10 had enough space to split the posts. Draw.

"My immediate reaction is that we have another chance, we have a game on the 3rd or 4th of January and we'll have another rattle off it then," said St Finbarr's manager Brian O'Sullivan.

St Finbarr's led 0-8 to 0-6 at half-time and Sorcha McCartan put in a storming third quarter to help extend their advantage to four within nine minutes of the restart in slotting over three points.

Donohue popped over a point to make it 0-12 to 0-9, but when St Finbarr's replied with three on the bounce – from Kate Wall, McCartan and Hurley – it felt as though the Cork side had broken Athenry's resolve. How wrong we were.

If Donohue was the catalyst for Athenry's comeback and Madden was the hero with the equaliser, special mention must also go to centre back Olwen Rabbitte who played despite suffering a cruciate injury in the Galway county final.

ST FINBARR'S: C Hurley, SPunch, A Egan, G Cahalane, A O'Neill, M Cahalane, S Daly, C Golden (0-1), A Shannon, N Olden (0-3), K Wall (0-1), K McCarthy (0-1), H O'Leary, O Cahalane (0-2), S McCartan (0-6; four frees, one 45). Subs: L O'Donovan for Daly (38 mins); E Hurley (0-1) for O'Leary (45); E Wiggington Barrett for Olden (60).
ATHENRY: L Freney, D Higgins, K Screene, T Kilkenney, L Casserly, O Rabbitte, S Feeney, K Madden (0-2), N Feeney, J Gill, T Donohue (0-3), E Keane, C Burke, S Rabbitte (0-4; two frees, one 45), K O'Driscoll (0-2). Subs: E McGlynn (0-1) for N Feeney (ht); A Jordan (1-0) for Burke (44 mins); M Noone for Keane (52).
Referee: Ray Kelly (Kildare).

Athenry's Kerri O'Driscoll and Aisling Egan of St Finbarr's keep their eyes on the sliotar at Croke Park. Photograph: James Crombie/Inpho





Ballincollig's Leah Weste and her daughter Mollie watch on as Camross lift the trophy at Croke Park.
Picture: INPHO/James Crombie

Ballincollig camogie players are a 'credit to club and county'

Huge disappointment but great pride in Ballincollig after their 1-14 to 1-10 loss to Camross in the AIB All-Ireland Intermediate Camogie final.

The Village put in a massive effort at Croke Park but, despite leading by a point at half-time, they found it harder to impose themselves in the second half explained manager Mike O'Brien.

"Camross closed us down and didn't allow us execute our game plan the way we wanted to. We felt we were well on top for the opening quarter but they definitely closed us down and made it very hard for us."

O'Brien and his management team felt the players left it all out there.

"The girls gave their all and look a couple of things didn't come off for us and these things happen but we are very proud of them."

The Camross defence was very strong and he acknowledged they got the upper hand, particularly in the second half when Ballincollig failed to score from play.

"Their defence was strong and particularly in the second half. We struggled as they closed us down and never gave us any room. We were trying to get ball to our inside line and we tried our best but they had it over us. Our inside line couldn't shake them off and

REACTION

■ Mary Newman

get any clean possession.

"We were struggling bit as well at midfield as we tried to break them down and get ball into our forwards. We tried to remedy it and we started bringing inside forwards out but we really didn't get an awful lot out of it."

Two superb saves from Ballincollig goalkeeper Ana Hartnett in the opening minutes of the second half kept Camross at bay before Sarah Ann Fitzgerald finally found the net.

"We were under a lot of early second-half pressure but fair play, our defence were great and they held them at bay. Ana made two excellent saves before they finally grabbed the goal that was probably the decisive score as it made a huge difference."

"When we were a point or two in front we felt we had a certain amount of control but once we lost the lead Camross closed the door and we were unable to break them down after that."

Despite losing, O'Brien said the year has been hugely successful.

"To win the county championship after a replay and go straight into a Munster final and win the title was a dream come true for us."

"And to reach Croke Park and play in an All-Ireland final was something that never crossed our minds so while we are hugely disappointed, we are so so proud and no doubt the experience gained will stand to these girls who have been a credit to our club and county."

Camross manager Adrien Delaney had huge praise for his side but also paid tribute to Ballincollig.

"It was a superb game and firstly I want to pay huge credit to Ballincollig, it was a fine clean game not a bad stroke all day and that is as it should be."

"We got the goal after their keeper had denied us with two great saves and it began to put daylight between us but we still had to stand firm as they applied pressure. I am delighted for the girls they deserve all the credit."



Linda Dorgan of Ballincollig in action against Fiona Scully of Camross at Croke Park.

Picture: Seb Daly/Sportsfile

Ballincollig's hopes dashed

Camross	1-14
Ballincollig	1-10

Heartbreak for Ballincollig as Camross were crowned AIB All-Ireland Intermediate Camogie champions in Croke Park.

Despite a spirited effort, Ballincollig will know that their failure to score from play in a second half where they only managed three frees, was costly.

Opting to play against the strong wind in the opening half, Camross trailed at the interval by a point, a Leah Hannigan goal on eight minutes giving the Cork side a lead they held to the short whistle.

In an even opening quarter, the sides were level twice. Aimee Collier clipped a lovely score before Ailish Scanlon replied with a Ballincollig free. Erin Walsh edged the Laois winners back in front before Niamh Dollard denied Ballincollig a goal after Linda Dorgan set up Tara Goulding.

Scanlon converted a free before Goulding's clever pass allowed Hannigan to raise a green flag.

While Camross hit back with two points without reply, Collig were beginning to gain the upper hand. Three scores in a row from Linda Dorgan, Scanlon, and the lively Sorcha McCarthy had them four clear.



Leah Daly of Camross and Cara O'Sullivan of Ballincollig battle for the sliotar.
Picture: James Crombie/Inpho

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

With a sweeper at both ends, Camross were finding it hard to get the ball to their inside line. Long-range points from Kristine Keenan and Collier kept them in touch.

Scanlon's frees put the Village back in control before the outstanding Sarah Ann Fitzgerald nailed two efforts to leave just a point in it at the break and the Laois side had the wind to come.

Camross applied massive pressure from the restart. Twice Collig keeper Ana Hartnett denied them with excellent saves, while at the other end, Scanlon converted a tricky free after Hannigan was fouled.

The goal finally arrived when Sarah Ann Fitzgerald struck first time to the net when a clearance was blocked down to edge Camross in front after 39 minutes.

Beginning to gain the upper hand around the middle and driven on by Premier Junior Player of the Year Aimee Collier, Camross extended their lead with a Collier point from play.

A Scanlon free kept Ballincollig in touch but they couldn't get enough quality possession in the attacking third. Fitzgerald slammed over a long-range

effort before Camross hit their first wide.

They were more clinical overall than Ballincollig, who twice missed efforts to narrow the gap as both teams gave everything but began to tire.

Upping the pace once more, with Grainne Delaney and Erin Walsh doing huge work around the middle, Camross pressed and points from player of the match Fitzgerald and Andrea Scully put the Leinster champions in the box seat.

Scanlon bagged another free but as the game entered the three minutes of added time, Camross led by four.

Ballincollig pushed forward. However, they needed a goal and couldn't engineer an opening.

Scorers for Camross: SA Fitzgerald 1-7 (0-6 f), A Collier 0-3, E Walsh, G Delaney, A Scully, K Keenan 0-1 each.

Ballincollig: A Scanlon 0-7 (1, L Hannigan 1-0, S McCarthy 0-2, L Dorgan 0-1).

CAMROSS: N Dollard; M Burke, A Burke, F Scully; A Collier (c), D Mortimer, E Cuddy; L Delaney, A Collier; L Daly, G Delaney, A Scully; E Walsh, SA Fitzgerald, K Keenan.

Subs: S Burke for L Daly (56), A Guilfoyle for M Burke (62), T Lowry for E Walsh (63).

BALLINCOLLIG: A Hartnett; A Cotter, M Healy, C O'Sullivan; O Keating, L Weste, E Hickey; A Scanlon, S Healy, K Goulding, L Dorgan (c), O O'Leary; S McCarthy, T Goulding, L Hannigan.

Subs: B Cunniffe for O O'Leary (42), N O'Brien for S Healy (42), I Fleury for S McCarthy (60).

Referee: Joe Mullins (Clare).



Ballincollig's Leah Hannigan celebrates after scoring her goal.
Picture: James Crombie/Inpho



Sorcha McCarthy of Ballincollig in action against Luisne Delaney of Camross. Picture: Seb Daly/Sportsfile

Fitzgerald the standout as Camross dash 'Collig hopes

CAMOGIE

All-Ireland club Senior final: Athenry (Galway) 1-12 St Finbarr's (Cork) 0-15;
All-Ireland club Intermediate final:
Camross (Laois) 1-14 Ballincollig (Cork)
1-10; All-Ireland club Junior final: Brí-
díní Óga (Antrim) 1-8 St Dominic's (Ros-
common) 1-5; All-Ireland club Junior B
final: Eire Óg, Carrickmore (Tyrone) 2-7

All-Ireland Intermediate Camogie Club Championship final



Camross (Laois)1-14
Ballincollig (Cork)1-10

Therese O'Callaghan
Croke Park

On the final day of the club championships, Camross delivered a masterful second-half display to overcome Ballincollig by four points in a tightly-fought AIB All-Ireland intermediate camogie final in Croke Park yesterday.

The destination of the Agnes O'Farrelly Cup still hung in the balance against a battling Cork side who trailed by two points and the fourth quarter yet to play. But Camross drove at them courtesy of a late flurry of points.

However, the actual shift in power came just before half time, when the new champions rallied and went to the dressing room just a point behind.

Laois legend Sarah-Anne Fitzgerald was the star performer with 1-7, her goal nine minutes after the break being crucial.

"They definitely had it over us in the second half," was Ballincollig manager Mike O'Brien's assessment of the Camross victory.

"We couldn't seem to get our inside forwards free. We weren't getting the ball in quick enough to them. We struggled a bit at midfield to get good clean balls into the forwards. We started bringing them out to try to remedy that. "Camross got the decisive goal, which switched over the lead. Once we lost the lead, Camross definitely closed the door. We didn't seem to be able

to penetrate after that. We tried our best. The dream was to get to Croke Park and win — we did half of it."

The Laois and Leinster champions were made to work for it, though.

With the sides level at two points apiece, and Niamh Dollard forced to save from Tara Goulding, it was the southern outfit that set the ball rolling.

Sixteen-year-old Leah Hannigan was at the end of a quick exchange started by Ailish Scanlon and Goulding, and her eighth-minute blast to the net put them 1-2 to 0-2 up. The young emerging talent took her score so well.

And it got better for Ballincollig with Scanlon flashing over a long free after Camross were guilty of over-carrying.

Captain Linda Dorgan found the range and Sorcha McCarthy pointed to put them ahead by double scores, 1-5 to 0-4, and the final 10 minutes left to play.

Camross hadn't scored in 12 minutes but, when they needed a fillip, it came in the guise of a Fitzgerald free. They

would produce their best period of the half from there to the break, with Fitzgerald unerring from placed balls and Premier Junior player of the year Aimee Collier landing her second point. Kristen Keenan also found the range.

By the halfway mark, they trailed by the minimum 1-7 to 0-9 but they had renewed energy with wind assist to come.

And they re-emerged with real purpose. Ana Hartnett was forced into two point-blank saves from Andrea Scully and Erin Walsh.

However, at the third time of Camross asking, a first-time ground shot from Fitzgerald flew all the way to the far corner of the net, this despite great work by Leah Weste, but it was the brave block by Keenan that enabled the ball to break favourably for Fitzgerald in the 39th minute.

Camross regained a lead they had held in the third minute. Collier stretched that to two on the three-quarter mark, 1-10 to 1-8, and they looked to be in a good position, defiant at the back as well,

leaving Ballincollig with just two converted frees in a fiercely-fought third quarter. With sweepers operating at either end, space was at a premium but, significantly, Camross were taking control.

The magical Fitzgerald, who had to leave the field for three minutes as a temporary blood sub, rolled back the years, adding white flags from play and frees.

Ballincollig couldn't improve their situation due to a defiant Camross defence and their only score was a third second-half Scanlon free.

The winners defended in numbers, with Ella Cuddy, Donnagh Mortimer, and Andrea Scully in particular defending their lead.

Scorers for Camross: S A Fitzgerald (1-7, 0-6 frees), Aimee Collier (0-3), G Delaney, A Scully, K Keenan, and E Walsh (0-1 each).

Scorers for Ballincollig: A Scanlon (0-7 frees), L Hannigan (1-0), S McCarthy (0-2), L Dorgan (0-1).

CAMROSS: N Dollard; M Burke, A Burke, F Scully; Aoife Collier (Capt), D Mortimer, E Cuddy; L Delaney, Aimee Collier; L Daly, G Delaney, A Scully; E Walsh, S A Fitzgerald, K Keenan.

Subs: T Lowry for S A Fitzgerald (52-55 temp), S Burke for L Daly (56), A Guilfoyle for M Burke (63), T Lowry for E Walsh (63).

BALLINCOLLIG: A Hartnett; A Cotter, M Healy, C O'Sullivan; O Keating, L Weste, E Hickey; A Scanlon, S Healy; K Goulding, L Dorgan (Capt), O O'Leary; S McCarthy, T Goulding, L Hannigan.

Subs: B Cunniffe for O O'Leary (42), N O'Brien for S Healy (49), I Fleury for S McCarthy (61).

Referee: Joe Mullins (Clare).



PITCH PERFECT: Sarah-Anne Fitzgerald of Camross celebrate after their win over Ballincollig in the All-Ireland Camogie Intermediate Club Championship final at Croke Park.

Stalemate stirs the pot for exciting 2026 reunion



ALANNA CUNNANE

Christmas will look a bit different to what was anticipated for the camogie players of Athenry and St Finbarr's, with yesterday's All Ireland club final concluding in a draw — after a dramatic closing period.

Six points down with five minutes to go, Galway's Athenry will be relieved that they live to fight another day.

Six points up with five minutes to go and still in with another chance come the replay on the first Saturday or Sunday of January, Cork's St Finbarr's will be relieved that they, too, still have the chance to finish the job.

In the cold light of day, however, the Cork outfit, led by their familiar county stars in the Cahalane sisters, Orlaith and Méabh, as well as sharpshooter Sorcha McCartan, will surely have been frustrated to let a lead like that slip in the final minutes.

The Barrs failed to turn the screw and see out the game when it mattered most.

On the other hand, though, depending on which way you choose to view it, Athenry will be bolstered by their steely determination to never give up — epitomised by the player-of-the-match showcase from 44-year-old Therese Donohue (née Maher).

There could be some shades of déjà vu in that regard for some of the inter-county performers from both teams,

with Galway having put together a similar comeback in the All-Ireland final in the summer to topple Cork's three-in-a-row bid.

Unlike that day however, there was no such clutch Carrie Dolan score to tip the scales either way come the final whistle in this encounter, which sees the replay pushed to the new year.

The knock-on implications of that could result in a change of plans for many.

For instance, Athenry manager Joe Rabbittie confirmed post-match that his daughter, Olwen, was scheduled to undergo ACL surgery just days later, on January 7 — having valiantly pushed through to play in the weekend's clash, carrying the injury.

"She did her cruciate a month ago. She strapped it up. It's amazing, I don't know what kind of a yolk she is!" he said in the post-match press conference, still trying to make sense of what just happened, and how it alters the next few weeks.

Brilliant

"Out there today she got knocked, she got turned upside down and she kept getting back up. She was brilliant for us today now in the role she played, but I suppose it's about getting back now and keeping my head down — because I don't want to be down chatting to those surgeons until this game is over!"

Work, travel and other commitments will all undoubtedly be affected.

For all involved then, would they have preferred if it finished on the day with extra-time?

"The way things were going really, extra-time nearly suited us because we were starting to hurl," he added.

"We left a lot behind us in the first half



in terms of scores, but it's simple. I'm happy where I am at the minute now I'll tell you," Rabbittie said with relief, turning his attention to what lessons his side learned from yesterday's clash, that they might take into the second edition of the encounter in a few weeks' time.

"It's going to galvanise the group, I

suppose. It's going to be tough to pick a team again, but it's really a thing if we can embrace this now and use this the right way... we were dead and gone and we came back to draw it so if we can work it, it will be to our advantage," he added.

On the opposite side, Barrs manager Brian O'Sullivan spoke of how the replay and the extended preparation that will involve is "not ideal going into the Christmas period".

"It is what it is, though. The rules were there beforehand and everyone has another fair crack at it again."

"We've gone through our fair share of extra-times but the rules are the rules, we'll play whatever suits them," he added.

As for a potential venue, is there anywhere in particular he'd like to see it played?

"We'll play in the Barrs if they want

to play in the Barrs, but I know that's not going to happen," he joked.

"It'd be great to play it in Croke Park, or Thurles, or the Gaelic Grounds — we would like just to showcase the sport... but I'll leave that to the powers that be," he said.

With the physicality and skill on show at GAA headquarters yesterday evening, camogie fans will hope that O'Sullivan's thoughts on that come to fruition — with the opportunity to see this blockbuster unfold on a big stage once again.

Athenry have waited 48 years since their only title win in the competition, while this appearance in the final was a first for St Finbarr's. When put in that context, perhaps the first weekend of January isn't too far away after all.

And it means 2026 will start off on the best possible footing for whoever emerges victorious.

Veteran Donohue inspires Athenry fightback

ATHENRY 1-12
ST FINBARR'S 0-15

ALL-IRELAND CLUB CAMOGIE SENIOR FINAL

It will take plenty of rewatching to fully grasp this one, but the facts are clear: when Eimear Hurley came off the bench to split the posts in the 55th minute, St Finbarr's led 0-15 to 0-9 and looked destined for their first AIB All-Ireland senior camogie title.

A six-point cushion in swirling wind seemed decisive. But Athenry, who dethroned champions Sarsfields earlier this year, weren't finished. Nor were St Finbarr's strangers to drama, having edged Loughgiel Shamrocks in extra time to reach this stage.

The turning point came from Therese Donohue — "Maher" to all — the 44-year-old mother of three, 12 years retired from inter-county action.

In the fourth minute of injury time, Donohue burst past three defenders, Athenry needing a point to survive. She appeared fouled, but referee Ray Kelly waved play on. The Barrs cleared, Athenry regained, and in the fifth minute Kayla Madden struck from 35 metres for her second score — and the equaliser.

Donohue finished with three points, including the opener, and her shot off the crossbar moments after Hurley's effort led to Anna Jordan's rebound goal that flipped the contest.

Sabina Rabbittie added a long-range free, and, after Ciara Hurley saved from Jessica Gill, converted the 45.

Earlier, St Finbarr's had looked in control. They led 0-8 to 0-6 at half-time, their efficiency telling: 11 shots to Athenry's 13, with just one wide to four. Nicole Olden hit three from play, while Orlaith Cahalane, Keeva McCarthy and Ciara Golden also scored. Mad-

den and Donohue kept Athenry in touch.

The second half began with five points in five minutes, with the Cork side edging it. After Donohue's third, Athenry wasted chances before Barrs surged with three in a row — Kate Wall, Sorcha McCartan (from her own 65) and Hurley's apparent clincher. But Athenry's resilience told. No winner, no loser — and a replay set for early January.

SCORERS: Athenry: S Rabbittie 0-4 (2fs, 145), A Jordan 1-0, T Donohue 0-3, K O'Driscoll, K Madden 0-2 each, E McGlynn 0-1. St Finbarr's: S McCartan 0-4 (5fs, 145), N Olden 0-3, O Cahalane 0-2, C Golden, K McCarthy, K Wall, E Hurley 0-1 each.

ATHENRY: L Freeney, T Kilkenney, K Screene, N Feeney, L Casserty, D Higgins, S Feeney, K Madden, O Rabbittie, E Keane, T Donohue, K O'Driscoll, J Gill, C Burke, S Rabbittie. **Subs:** E McGlynn for N Feeney (41), A Jordan for Burke (44), M Noone for Keane (52).

ST FINBARR'S: C Hurley, S Punch, A Egan, A O'Neill, S Daly, M Cahalane, G Cahalane, S McCartan, N Olden, C Golden, A Shannon, O Cahalane, K Wall, H O'Leary. **Subs:** L O'Donovan for Daly (38), E Hurley for O'Leary (45), E Wigginton Barrett for N Olden (60).

REF: Ray Kelly (Kildare)

Fitzgerald strike helps Camross seize crown

CAMROSS 1-14
BALLINCOLLIG 1-10

ALL-IRELAND CAMOGIE INTERMEDIATE FINAL

Sarah Anne Fitzgerald's 39th-minute goal proved decisive as Camross edged Ballincollig in a thrilling AIB All-Ireland intermediate club final at Croke Park.

The former Laois star, later named player of the match, finished with 1-7 — with six points from frees, including a superb first-half strike into the wind.

Her goal, a brilliant angled shot from outside the square, nudged Camross ahead 1-9 to 1-8 and capped a dominant spell.

Aimee Collier opened the scoring inside 42 seconds for Camross, but Ailish Scanlon's accuracy from placed balls was reward for Ballincollig who had started brightly. Leah Hannigan struck a superb 10th-minute goal after linking with Tara Goulding, giv-

ing the Cork side a four-point cushion.

With Leah Weste commanding at half-back and Scanlon adding frees, they led 1-7 to 0-9 at the break despite Camross finishing strongly.

That late surge — points from Fitzgerald, Collier and Keenan — hinted at a shift. After the restart, Camross tightened their grip. Their work rate around the middle third forced turnovers, while Donnagh Mortimer excelled in defence. Ballincollig struggled to



supply Hannigan and Goulding as Camross carved out chances.

Fitzgerald's goal felt inevitable and gave Arien Delaney's charges the edge. Ballincollig battled gamely, Scanlon landing three more frees, but Camross always had answers. Fitzgerald (below), Collier and Andrea Scully added insurance scores as the Laois outfit became the county's first All-Ireland champions since Harps' three-in-a-row in 2008.

SCORERS: Camross: S A Fitzgerald 1-7 (0-6fs), A Collier 0-3, G Delaney, A Scully, E Walsh, K Keenan 0-1 each. Ballincollig: A Scanlon 0-7 (5fs), L Hannigan 1-0, S McCarthy 0-2, L Dorgan 0-1.

CAMROSS: N Dollard, M Burke, A Burke, F Scully, Aoife Collier, D Mortimer, E Cuddy, L Delaney, Aimee Collier, L Daly, G Delaney, A Scully, E Walsh, S A Fitzgerald, K Keenan. **Subs:** T Lowry for Fitzgerald temp (52-55), S Burke for L Daly (57), A Guilfoyle for M Burke (60-3), T Lowry for E Walsh (60-4).

BALLINCOLLIG: A Hartnett, A Cotter, M Healy, C O'Sullivan, O Keating, L Weste, E Hickey, A Scanlon, S Healy, K Goulding, L Dorgan, O O'Leary, L Hannigan, T Goulding, S McCarthy. **Subs:** B Cunniffe for O'Leary (42), N O'Brien for S Healy (49), I Fleury for McCarthy (60-2).

REF: Joe Mullins (Clare)



Gráinne Cahalane of St Finbarr's in action against Kerri O'Driscoll of Athenry at Croke Park.
Picture: Seb Daly/Sportsfile

Finbarr's must get their heads right for replay

CAMOGIE

■ Stephen Barry

In an ideal world, you'd want your season over by now to properly enjoy Christmas.

But if ever the distraction of the festive break could prove beneficial, it's for St Finbarr's to reset and recover from an All-Ireland final which slipped from their grasp.

The good news is they will get another chance to contest those honours on the first weekend of 2026. The most important angle in the three-week turnaround between now and then is psychological.

Forgetting the opportunity gone and remembering the one that awaits around the corner.

For such a battle-hardened team, it looked like the Barrs were doing their thing as they stretched six points clear of Athenry with five minutes of normal time to play. Except they haven't won anything easy along the way.

In the Munster semi-final, for instance, they held Newcastle West scoreless for 26 second-half minutes, only to let a six-point lead slip in stoppage time.

That will have felt similar to their Croke Park experience on Sunday. Athenry didn't score for almost 14 minutes as the Barrs built that lead.

The Corkonians came forward with the next attack, too, only for the shot from the impressive Nicole Olden to drop short. It would prove a sliding-doors moment.

When Thérèse Donohue's subsequent shot dropped onto the crossbar, after tenacious defending by Méabh Cahalane, Anna Jordan was rushing across to sweep home the rebound. It was game on again.

The Barrs still came up with several big plays. Liz O'Donovan ended a dangerous attack by forcing an overcarrying free.

Captain Stephanie Punch got in a terrific hook on her own 21 as the backtracking Sorchá McCartan applied extra pressure.

Ciara Hurley's quick adjustment allowed her to save from Jessica Gill in the first



Kayla Madden of Athenry in action against Kate Wall of St Finbarr's.
Picture: Seb Daly/Sportsfile

of four added minutes. Hurley was called into action twice more under dangerous balls in.

Trailing by two with 70 seconds remaining, Sabina Rabbitte briefly seemed in two minds whether to take her 45 short or go for the posts.

She chose the latter option. The subsequent minute would determine whether that was the correct choice.

Like their footballers against Dingle, the Barrs came up with possession and the lead inside the final minute. Even when they lost the ball, a sideline at the opposite end seemed a safe location.

Donohue, better known as Thérèse Maher, already has a Laochra Gael episode dedicated to her career.

Her exploits this year may yet require a follow-up edition if she is to claim a long-awaited national club medal. The 44-year-old's tireless solo run put Athenry back into scoring territory.

She hit the ground, but Ray Kelly seemed reluctant to permit any soft frees in that final play, swerving a repeat of the Cork-Galway fallout this summer.

He did allow the 18 extra seconds to complete the attack. The maroon side persisted, working the sliotar for Kayla Madden to slot the equaliser.

The Barrs were left to regret their shooting efficiency, so sharp at 80% in the first half, slipping by almost half to 44% in the second.

Would they have preferred extra-time? Given momentum, maybe not. Given their track record, maybe yes.

The Togher side have won double-extra-time epics in both the Munster and All-Ireland semi-finals.

Certainly, their stamina can't be called into question.

The defining characteristic of this Barrs team, which they will rely upon over the coming weeks, has been their response to adversity.

Against Newcastle West, they shipped a third goal in extra-time before digging out an equalising brace to trigger the second extra period, in which they finally prevailed.

Kate Wall's Munster final winning goal owed to incredible vision and calmness under pressure by Orlaith Cahalane with time almost up.

In the All-Ireland semi, Loughgiel Shamrocks twice struck goals in extra-time, only for the Barrs to come back off the canvas to force a second extra period and grind out a dramatic win.

The RTE stats summed up the fine margins of this All-Ireland final.

■ **Scoring chances:** 28 apiece.

■ **Scores from play:** 10 apiece.

■ **Wides:** Athenry's eight to the Barrs' seven.

■ **Turnovers won:** Athenry's 42 to the Barrs' 41.

The Barrs held marginally more possession. Athenry claimed marginally more puck-outs.

The start and finish belonged to Athenry. The middle section was owned by the Barrs. The replay remains very much up for grabs.

Olwen Rabbitte's cruciate ligament operation is due after the replay, which could enable her to play again.

Remarkably, she completed the hour at Croke Park with a strapped-up knee. She held the middle for a formidable Athenry defence, which kept its fifth clean sheet in eight games this season.

But having scored 22 goals en route to the final, threatening the net could be key for the Barrs in the replay.



Cork Camogie Board chairman Padraic Treacy presents the S E Systems Minor Championship trophy to Nemo captain Cassandra Fitzgerald.

Nemo bring curtain down on season with minor B win

Nemo Rangers	2-9
Ballyhea	2-3

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

The curtain came down on a busy camogie season in Castle Road where Nemo Rangers and Ballyhea battled it out for the SE Systems Minor B camogie championship crown in the last competition of 2025.

Nemo got off to a quick start with two points from Cassandra Fitzgerald, one from play and one from a free.

Roisin Walsh responded for Ballyhea with a pointed free, and an Ava Mulcahy goal on 12 minutes edged Ballyhea in front 1-1 to 0-2.

With Ballyhea threatening, the Nemo defence had to be at their best and they broke down attack after attack.

Up front, they responded well to the Ballyhea goal as they rallied and hit four points without response, 1-1 to 0-6.

Caoimhe Power pointed from a free, followed by points from play from Aoife Collins, and one from play and one from a free from Fitzgerald to put Nemo in front at half-time by two points 0-6 to 1-1.

Nemo got a great start to the second half with a Brianna Healy goal.

Ballyhea had a Walsh point as they put the Nemo defence under a lot of pressure, but they held their lines with Katelyn Collins, Mia O'Callaghan, and Saoirse Collins hugely effective.

As the sides again exchanged points, Walsh and Fitzgerald were on target as Nemo held a four-point advantage.

Power stretched it to five points before Ava Heaphy finished to the net with 10 minutes remaining to stretch the Nemo the advantage to eight.

Ballyhea fought back and, in an excellent move, Faye Ronan finished to the net to get her side back into the game with seven minutes remaining. Power steadied the Nemo nerves with a point, but Ballyhea were still battling hard but despite huge pressure they failed to break down the strong Nemo defence as they held out to take the title with six points to spare.

Nemo defender Katelyn Collins was named as *The Echo Player* of the Match following her outstanding display.

County board chairman Padraic Treacy presented the trophy to his fellow club person Nemo captain Cassandra Fitzgerald, while Mary Newman presented *The Echo Player* of the Match to Katelyn Collins.

The game brought a busy season to its conclusion with all underage and adult championship and league competitions completed by first week of December. A huge well done to all concerned.

Scorers for Nemo: C Fitzgerald 0-5 (0-3f's), A Heaphy, Ba Lynch 1-0 each, C Power 0-3 (0-1 fs), A Collins 0-1.

Ballyhea: R Walsh 0-3 (f's), F Ronan 1-0.

NEMO: M O'Connell; M O'Callaghan, I Buckley, E Barrett; C Geraghty, S Collins, K Collins; E O'Callaghan; C Power; C Moroney, A Collins, A Geary; R Murphy, C Fitzgerald (c), C Morgan.

Subs: B Lynch for R Murphy, A Heaphy for C Morgan, T McCarthy for A Geary.

BALLYHEA: A Morrissey; S Keane, R Linehan, K Mortell; S Morrissey, F Ronan, I Barrett; C Hickey, E Lynch, R Walsh, A Mulcahy, G Hickey, S Lynch, A Walsh, H Buicke.

Subs: S O'Sullivan for S Lynch, F Mortell for E Lynch, K Short for H Buicke.

Referee: Cathal McAllister.



Mary Newman presents *The Echo Player* of the Match award to Nemo Rangers camogie defender Katelyn Collins.

Libby: It's harder than ever to be a dual player

St Colum's trailblazer Libby Coppinger on her decision to focus on camogie only at inter-county level in 2026



Libby Coppinger accepts her 2025 Camogie All-Star award from Camogie Association Uachtarán Brian Molloy, and Marie Coady, PwC Markets Partner.

BY KIERAN MCCARTHY

THIS is the decision that Libby Coppinger never wanted to make, but in recent times knew she had to.

The St Colum's clubwoman has taken huge pride in playing both camogie and football at inter-county level for almost a decade, but earlier this week confirmed that she will commit to camogie only at county level in 2026.

Coppinger had feared this decision day would come and had resisted making it for as long as she could, but ultimately knew she couldn't give her all to both set-ups.

'The seasons are getting busier and the body is getting a bit older as well,' the Kealkill hero told *The Southern Star*.

'It was in the back of my mind a bit during the year, and it came to the stage where I had to decide – there was a lot of humming and hawing, and a lot of tears.'

'I have loved playing both, and that love hasn't changed. I love playing football, love the gang that's involved, and I'll miss so much of that.'

'But the way the season plays out, there is no time for anything. Even in the season just gone I had a few niggly injuries, so preparing for games has become a lot harder with the season so much shorter.'



Libby Coppinger in action for the Cork footballers.

'It's great that there are more games than ever, but as a dual player it has become so much harder.'

Perhaps the season-ending hamstring injury Coppinger suffered in May 2024 played a role in her decision.

The grade-three hamstring tear picked up in a Munster football round-robin game saw her miss both the 2024 football and camogie championship campaigns – and the latter ended in All-Ireland success for Cork.

Speaking to *The Southern Star* in January, Coppinger admitted she was more conscious than ever in 2025 of the dual workload. Her plan was to see how the season played out.

'I want to give it a go. Please God, it will work out,' she said at the time, but has now come to the realisation that it has become too difficult to play both at county level.

'It was a culmination of factors,' Coppinger explains.

'In 2024, it was slightly different in that when I had that injury my season was over, but this past season I picked up an injury playing football in the Munster championship and it was extra hard then to get back again. You end up chasing your tail for weeks, between rehab and so on.'

'Everyone has been great to me over the years, and I am so grateful that everyone –

management and team-mates – gave me this opportunity. But it is definitely harder now.'

'I wanted to give it a go this year and see what happened. For this to work you need to be fully committed to both, and it's a big commitment.'

'It was a long year with a couple of injuries, and it takes its toll.'

'There is no guarantee that you won't get injured playing just one, but it has become harder to balance both when you're trying to stay fully fit and be at your best level.'

Given the success of the Cork camogie team in recent years, winning two of the past three All-Irelands, and that Coppinger is now a three-time Camogie All-Star, it's not surprising she has decided to throw her lot in with Ger Manley's set-up in 2026. But this wasn't an easy decision – she has loved her time in a Cork football jersey.

'It was really hard to pick between the two,' the 28-year-old admits.

'I was saying at home that I would love it if football was one side of the year and camogie was on the other side so I could give the time to both. You are left thinking how things would go if you were fully able to give your time to one.'

'But the season has just got-

'It's very hard to close the football chapter. It was a decision I was wishing someone could make for me'

ten busier. From the word go, at the start of the year when you are planning out your year, there are very few weekends when you don't have a game. If you played just one you'd have a few weekends off, and that helps.

'I'll still be watching the football closely, and I'm looking forward to seeing what they can do.'

'It's very hard to close the football chapter. It was a decision I was wishing someone could make for me.'

Cork camogie will feel the benefit of having Coppinger involved for the full season, as the highly-rated defender will be present from the outset.

'I will be more present with camogie now because I would have missed various things that you then try to make up for,' she notes.

Recent events also feel like a crossroads moment for dual players with Cork. From three involved this past season, none of the trio will combine both codes in 2026 – Coppinger is focusing fully on camogie,

while Hannah Looney and Aoife Healy have both signed AFLW deals in Australia.

'It's not to say it's not possible, and the way it has ended up this year is that the three of us have all gone down different paths.'

I hope it won't stop the idea of a dual player, because I love to see people playing both. It's still manageable, but the schedule isn't helping,' Coppinger explains.

'I'd love to say that the dual player will continue at county level. At underage you have so many girls playing both, and in clubs all over the county and country there are dual players too, so I'd love to see it continue.'

'But at inter-county level it's very hard to do, and you need to have people around you who can help make it possible – and I was lucky that I had.'

'I hope it's not the end of it. I know it's gone from three dual players to none now, but there are plenty of talented players coming through.'

'Maybe it has become too hard, but I hope it hasn't. I hope it's not the end.'

For Coppinger, her Cork football chapter has closed – but there is also excitement about what impact the St Colum's woman can make with her full attention on Cork camogie.

Finbarr's dominate the team of the year



CAMOGIE

Rory Noonan

The 2025 Reardens Cork Camogie Team of the Year is dominated by St Finbarr's, with five other clubs also having players in the side.

St Finbarr's, who retained their SE Systems Cork senior championship title, and St Catherine's, the beaten finalists, have 10 of the team between them.

The 'Barr's added the Munster title to their trophy cabinet, the first time the club has won this title.

They have seven players on the team, followed by Catherine's, with three. Blackrock have two. Courcey Rovers, Glen Rovers, and Éire Óg have one each.

This team was picked on the Cork championship, and what the 'Barr's did in Munster and the All-Ireland series afterwards had no bearing.

Had those games been taken in to consideration, then several others would most likely have made their way in to the starting 15.

It was a championship in which many games went down to the wire, and the county final was no exception.

Despite being beaten late on, Catherine's can look back on a season of great progress, especially their semi-final win over Sarsfields.

For her part in that run and for some magnificent saves she made along the way, especially in that clash with Sars, St Catherine's goalkeeper, Yvonne O'Neill, gets the nod for the number-one jersey.

It was a close call between Yvonne and a few others, in particular Ciara Hurley, but the Catherine's net-minder was the choice of the judges in the end.

In the full-back line, Stephanie Punch was an obvious choice in the corner. Not the tallest player on the pitch, but what she may lack in height she more than makes up for with skill and heart.

An inter-county team-mate said that she hates marking Punch in training, as she is so hard to get the better of. Captain of the 'Barr's this season and last, she has led by example, and not too many forwards get the better of Stephanie.

She is a natural leader who continues to drive on the 'Barr's, game after game.

Alongside her is Carolyn Mother, of St Catherine's, another player who has put in a massive shift for her side all season.

Her displays at the heart of St Catherine's defence played a major part in their run to the final, and she is the type of defender that any manager wants in his team. She never lets you down and just gets on with it without any fuss.

In the other corner is Grainne Cahalane, and, like the other two, the 'Barr's defender is a 'get on with it' type of player. She is a cool head at all times and one of the most consist-



St Finbarr's Sorchá McCartan was the joint top scorer in the SE Systems Cork senior camogie championship and was a key player as her club retained their title.

Picture: Larry Cummins

ent defenders all through the championship for her side. She recovered from an Achilles tendon to play a key role in ensuring the 'Barr's retained their Cork county title.

In the half-back line is Aoife O'Neill, who was player of the game in the 2024 Cork championship final and continued that form in to 2025. She has the happy knack of being in the right place at the right time to kill off an attack and set one up for her own side. The 'Barr's defender is happy in most positions across the back six.

In the middle, or in the other half-back slot, either Laura Hayes or Meabh Cahalane could be slotted in.

Both are comfortable in either position, with Laura getting the number-six jersey this time. She was named at midfield for most games by Catherine's, but lined out in the centre of their defence and, as always, never let them down.

Meabh is one of two dual award winners, as she is also named on the football side. That versatility shows the high standards she expects of

herself and those around her. A natural leader, she anchors the 'Barr's defence game after game and sweeps across that line to quell attack after attack.

In midfield, there were plenty of players to put their hands up for the two spots, with the first going to Courcey Rovers's Saoirse McCarthy.

Her pace and her ability to get crucial scores have been key for Courcey for some time now, and add in her ability to score from placed balls and it's easy to see why she is one of the top players in the country at the moment. McCarthy consistently wins player-of-the-game awards, which says it all about Saoirse.

Alongside Saoirse is Blackrock's Cliona O'Callaghan, and with a little bit of luck her club could have gone a lot further in the championship. It certainly wasn't for lack of effort on Cliona's part as she drove her side on game after game. A great reader of the game, she pops up all over the pitch, be it in defence or attack, to help her side out.

O'Callaghan scored 3-15 for the

Rockies during their championship run, 3-11 from play, which was a great return from any midfielder.

In the half-forward line, Emma Murphy gets the number-10 spot. Many top-class players have worn the Glen Rovers jersey over the years, and Emma is fast becoming one of the greats of the famed north-side club.

Her blistering pace has seen Emma leave many a defender in her wake.

It was not a great surprise to see her nominated for an All-Star this year, and if she continues her current form then it won't be long before she wins one.

Blackrock's Hayley Ryan, the joint top-scorer in the championship with Sorchá McCartan, is picked at centre-forward.

Ryan is a quality player, who has been a model of consistency for her club now for some time. As deadly from play as she is from placed balls, no defender has an easy day when they come up against Hayley.

On the other wing is Keeva

McCarthy, one of the unsung heroes of the 'Barr's.

She probably never gets the credit she deserves. One of the hardest workers in the side, she has scored many a vital point or goal for the 'Barr's as they retained the Cork title. She is one of the first names any manager would put in his starting 15.

If ever there was a front three to scare the life out of any defence, then 13 to 15 would certainly do that.

At 13 is Orlaith Cahalane, the second player to be honoured in both the football and camogie teams. She is one of the toughest players to mark in the game, and pops up at crucial times to score for her side. A brilliant reader of the game, she is as comfortable setting up scores for others as she is at popping the ball over the bar.

In the middle is the powerhouse that is Sorchá McCartan. Many a defender has been caught out by her pace, and she was the other joint top-scorer in the Cork championship, but she led the way on the scores-from-play charts.

Her tally for the championship was 4-35, with 4-17 of that from play. She was named player of the game in the Cork final, and when it was tight she stood up and was counted to help drive the 'Barr's on to victory.

The final spot goes to Éire Óg's Clara Murphy, another attacker that scared the life out of defenders this season.

She was the driving force for Éire Óg across the championship and was the fourth-highest scorer in the championship.

So the camogie team of the year is: Yvonne O'Neill, St Catherine's; Stephanie Punch, St Finbarr's; Carolyn Motherway, St Catherine's; Grainne Cahalane, St Finbarr's; Aoife O'Neill, St Finbarr's; Laura Hayes, St Catherine's; Meabh Cahalane, St Finbarr's; Saoirse McCarthy, Courcey Rovers; Cliona O'Callaghan, Blackrock; Emma Murphy, Glen Rovers; Hayley Ryan, Blackrock; Keeva McCarthy, St Finbarr's; Orlaith Cahalane, St Finbarr's; Sorchá McCartan, St Finbarr's, and Clara Murphy, Éire Óg.



Hayley Ryan had another outstanding season for Blackrock and joined McCartan at the top of the championship scoring charts.

Picture: Chani Anderson



Clara Murphy was a key player for Éire Óg this season, and the young star is sure to feature for the Ovens side for some time to come.

Picture: David Creedon



Kate Wall of St Finbarr's in action against Tarron Kilkenny of Athenry during the AIB All-Ireland Camogie Senior Club Championship final at Croke Park last weekend. The epic match ended in a draw with the replay set for early January. PHOTO: SEB DALY/SPORTSFILE



Kate Wall with her team-mates Meabh Cahalane (right) and Elimear Hurley.

In camogie's Cork-Galway rivalry, can the Barrs

All-Ireland Senior Camogie final replay



**Athenry (Galway)
v St Finbarr's (Cork)**

Saturday: Semple Stadium, 5.15pm

Referee: Brian Kearney

TV: TG4

Eoghan Cormican



The last act of the 2025 season. The opening sentence of 2026. Either the narrative holds, or the displaced push back.

That we even have an All-

Ireland club final replay to write about is symptomatic of the game's changed order over the past six months.

A camogie team coming up the road from Cork and failing to hold a six-point lead in an All-Ireland final just does not happen, even more so again when that six-point lead is held as late as the 55th minute. Cork camogie teams don't falter, fade, or facilitate comebacks from that position.

St Finbarr's should have been no outlier in that department, not when they've six Cork seniors from last year, four more from the U23 panel, and others who've been to GAA HQ on All-Ireland final Sunday with the

county's intermediate side.

Skill and self-confidence have always been the hallmarks of Cork camogie. An unrivalled assuredness upstairs matched and backed up by actions on the field.

There have, of course, been teams and tactical approaches over the decades that succeeded in disturbing the county's dominance, in temporarily shaking their trademark confidence.

Kilkenny owned the second half of the 1980s. Tipp took five All-Irelands in the six-year period from 1999 to 2004. A generational Wexford group lifted the O'Duffy Cup on four occasions between 2007 and 2012.

The women in red pushed

back each time. The latest approach to get under the skin and inside the head of Cork players and teams is Galway aggression.

Physical, robust, hostile. The county's newly-established market-leading club is no different.

Athenry knew it would be futile to engage in a shootout with seven-in-a-row-chasing Sarsfields on the afternoon of the county final.

Instead, Joe Rabbitte's charges turned the decider into a congested ground war. They forced turnovers, won breaks.

Sarsfields posted final-day tallies of 1-17, 2-14, and 3-12 to land their three All-Ireland titles since 2022.

Athenry held them to 1-8 in a low-scoring and superbly-executed grind.

They rinsed and repeated the dose in the subsequent All-Ireland semi-final against the only other side to edge Sarsfields in a knockout fixture over the past four years. Dicksboro raised four white flags in the opening five minutes. They were then limited to just six more across the remaining 55 minutes.

The similarities between club and county are uncanny. Galway now have their own hallmark, and it is proving a harrying success.

Following her logic-defying player-of-the-match performance in last month's

drawn All-Ireland final, we watched back the 2021 *Laochra Gael* episode on Therese Maher.

It was most revealing how she perceived Cork during her own inter-county days, and how that perception is now completely swapped.

"I remember how Cork were so, so physical," she said of the 1998 All-Ireland final. Her take on the next occasion — 2008, the two counties would meet on the concluding day — was that "Cork came out and were so physical, they really hit us hard".

Those sentiments are now being uttered by Cork in respect of the westerners.

On the run into last

strike back?

month's game, "physical", "tight", and "interested in keeping the scoring low" were descriptions thrown out by one Barrs player when seeing no difference between the Athenry approach and that which thwarted Cork's three-in-a-row bid in mid-August.

The latter one-point defeat continued an annus horribilis for Cork camogie. Second-best in the U16, minor, U23, and senior All-Ireland finals. Out-thought and out-fought by the maroon in three of them. Throw in Balinacollig's All-Ireland intermediate club final defeat too.

The Barrs had a brilliant opportunity to halt the losing final run and fire a first

warning shot up West ahead of 2026. They failed to finish the job. It'll be 5.15pm today before we learn how that failure has impacted them.

Before Donal O'Rourke ever came to assist Pat Ryan and the Cork hurlers, he assisted Galway to 2021 All-Ireland camogie glory.

Two years later, he spoke of how Galway boss Cathal Murray and his strength-and-conditioning lead Robbie Lane had "changed the way camogie teams prepared" and, in the process, "changed camogie forever".

Power and physicality are Galway's weapons. Athenry pull from the same playbook. Their play in Thurles will be to shut down the



Keeva McCarthy can expect to be tightly marked.

space around Orlaith Cahalane, Sorcha McCartan, Nicole Olden, and Keeva McCarthy.

Cork-Galway is camogie's sole rivalry. Can Athenry spill 2025 maroon assertion into the new year, or can the Barrs push back for themselves and the bigger picture?



Kilbrittain's Kate Wall with her West Cork Sports Star Monthly award, pictured with her family; from left, Sheila, Jamie, Ellen, Philip and Michael

(Photos: Martin Walsh)

Méabh's rollercoaster year had glory and heartbreak

Cork camogie captain Méabh Cahalane reflects on the many ups and downs of 2025

BY GER MCCARTHY

FEW players have experienced a 12-month period of highs and lows quite like Méabh Cahalane did in 2025.

A key figure with Cork camogie at county level, and with St Finbarr's camogie and Éire Óg LGFA at club level, Cahalane captained her county in both the national league and All-Ireland finals, while also playing a central role in Éire Óg and St Finbarr's county final triumphs. There's a lot to unpack.



Cork captain Méabh Cahalane in action against Galway's Annmarie Starr during the All-Ireland camogie final in August.

BELOW: Proud granny Kathleen Cleary, from Castlehaven, with her five granddaughters – Kate, Meabh and Orlaith Cahalane, and Emma and Laura Cleary – who were on the Éire Óg team that won the county senior final in October.



issue that

resulted in the Munster camogie final between Cork and Waterford not going ahead. As county captain, Méabh found herself repeatedly asked for her views on an issue no inter-county player should have been put in the middle of.

'It was a tough couple of weeks, not only for ourselves but for every camogie team in the country,' she said.

'As an inter-county team trying to prepare for a big championship game, to be denied a fixture – especially a Munster final – was tough. We respect that competition a lot. So, to be told a day before the final that the game wasn't going ahead didn't show much respect to the players involved. Thankfully it's all behind us now.

'The skorts issue has been resolved with the best outcome for players going forward: having a choice in what they want to wear.'

AUGUST – The lowest of lows came on August 10th at Croke Park. An injury-time Carrie Dolan winner handed Galway a one-point victory in the All-Ireland senior camogie final, ending Cork's hopes of claiming

'Being so close in the end – I don't know if that makes it better or worse?'

three-in-a-row.

'It was a huge disappointment. Being so close in the end – I don't know if that makes it better or worse?' the Cork captain said.

'When you lose by the minimum, you go back over every mistake that you made as an individual and as a team.'

'Talking about going for three-in-a-row was never the top priority inside our dressing room, but it was always at the back of our minds because this is such a special group of Cork players.'

'Going in at half time, we hadn't performed and were really disappointed. We knew that wasn't what a Cork camogie performance should look like.'

'We promised ourselves going out for the second half that we'd do everything we could. It wasn't to be, but everyone died with their boots on that day.'

OCTOBER – From the despair of Croke Park to the joy of a history-making afternoon at MTU Cork. After the heartbreak of four consecutive Cork LGFA senior football final defeats, Méabh and Éire Óg finally climbed the mountain, becoming senior champions for the first time with a replay win over Aghada.

'There is such character in this group,' she said. 'Not only had we lost the pre-

had lost some real household names who put in huge shifts for us during that time as well.

'It was the young girls – the U21s and minors coming through – who really stood up for Éire Óg in the two games against Aghada. They had that winning attitude.'

'There were times it looked like it was gone from us, but everyone vowed to fight until the bitter end.'

'To finally get over the line, after all the heartache of the last couple of years, was incredible. I'm just so happy for the group as we had been on the road a long time.'

NOVEMBER – Her year finished on an unforgettable high as Méabh helped St Finbarr's retain their county title before going on to win a first-ever Munster senior camogie crown.

'Getting over the line last year and winning a first senior camogie county title in 18 years was unbelievable for us,' she said.

'We felt we wanted to go one step further this year as the Munster championship was unfamiliar territory the last time out. We learned a lot from it and were determined to give it our best shot.'

'That Munster semi-final win over Newcastle West, that went to two periods of extra-time, was like a whirlwind. It was probably the toughest game we've ever had to play together as a group.'

'It stood to us in the Munster final against De La Salle. Even when we were six or seven points down, to come out on the right side against an incredibly talented De La Salle team – can't even describe the feeling. I



St Finbarr's manager Brian O'Sullivan: ranlav.



A disappointed Aisling Shannon after the drawn All-Ireland final. She will be a key player for the Barrs again tomorrow.

APRIL – A proud day for the Cahalane family as Méabh lifted the Very Camogie League Division 1A trophy following Cork's 0-21 to 0-10 win over Galway at FBD Semple Stadium.

A first national league title since 2013, it was a timely boost heading into the All-Ireland championship.

'I was fortunate to be the one to lift the national league trophy on behalf of Cork that day,' Méabh said.

'It was a really important moment for the group as most of us had never won a national league medal before. It was also a great performance on the day against Galway.'

'Hopefully, we will go for the league again in 2026. There will be a few new additions to the panel and the league will be a chance to show what they can do.'

MAY – The first low point arrived in May with the



Cork captain Méabh Cahalane.



Munster chairperson Christine Ryan with representatives from the competing counties at the launch of the Munster minor and U16 camogie championships

Munster camogie competitions start tomorrow

There is an early start for Munster camogie competitions with the minor and U16 B championships getting under way tomorrow.

The Cork minors start their year when they take on Clare in Castle Rad tomorrow at 1pm.

Cork are defending provincial champions and just five players from last season's panel are still available for selection.

Manager Mossie O'Sullivan continues in the role and he has made some changes to his backroom set-up from last season.

Trevor Allen continues as coach, and he is joined by fellow Na Piarasigh club man Liam O'Connor, who continues as strength-and-conditioning coach.

Also continuing is selector Clodagh Deasy, from the Valley Rovers club, a former Cork intermediate player.

They are joined this year by Liam McSweeney, the representative from Premier minor county champions Sliabh Rua; Tom Linehan, Blarney; Cliona Cotter, Watergrasshill; and Leah West, Ballincollig.

Deirdre Looney, Millstreet, continues as the player liaison officer, with Orla O'Regan as the county board liaison officer. The side is captained by Millie Lombard, from Ballinhassig.

The minor panel is as follows: Katie Crowley (Courcy Rovers), Caoimhe Foley (Courcy Rovers), Millie Lombard (Ballinhassig), Cliona Harte (Barryroe), Aoife Collins (Sarsfields), Caoilainn Ryan (Newtownshandrum), Orla Troy (Newtownshandrum), Lexi Manley (Aghabullogue), Enna Duff (Aghabullogue), Eimear Barrett (Aghabullogue), Lauren O'Connor (Killeagh), Ava Ashman (Killeagh), Lea Meilouin (Inniscarra), Stephanie Dwyer (Douglas), Ciara Hayes (St Catherine's), Sophie Donohue (Blarney), Faye Ronan (Ballyhea), Gemma Classen (Erins Own), Tara O'Neill (Fr O'Neill's), Aisling O'Brien (Brian Dillon's), Karen O'Sullivan (Newcestown), Ciara Murphy (Eire Og), Sarah Galvin (Eire Og), Erin Healy (Eire Og), Ciara Roche (Eire Og), Caoimhe O'Donnell (Sliabh Rua), Aoibhinn Halpin (Sliabh

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

Rua), Rebecca Hannigan (Ballincollig), Leah Hannigan (Ballincollig), Blaitheann Cunniffe (Ballincollig).

The Munster U16 A camogie championship gets under way on January 18, when Cork meet the winners of the Clare-Waterford quarter-final clash.

The U16 B side will get their Munster campaign under way also this weekend, when they travel to meet Tipperary.

With the provincial competition played separately to the All-Ireland camogie series, the early start to the provincial competition gives mentors an opportunity to prepare for what lies ahead.

It's an early start here also as championship gets under way for the minors on the weekend of January 31/February 1, when Cork travel to meet Tipperary.

They follow that up with games against Limerick on the weekend of February 14/15t and on February 28/29 versus Galway away, March 14/15 they are away again to Dublin and on March 28/29 the last game is at home against Kilkenny.

The All-Ireland semi-finals are down for the weekend of April 11/12, with the final on April 25/26.

The U16A All-Ireland championship begins on February 7/8, when Cork are at home against Galway.

On February 21/22, they face a trip away to Kilkenny and that is followed on March 7/8 with a home again against Tipperary.

In the last two games, Cork will again have to travel, with Waterford providing the opposition on March 21/22, and April 4/5 it a trip away to play Limerick.

The semi-finals are scheduled for April 19, with the final down for May 2/3.



St Finbarr's captain Stephanie Punch lifts the Munster camogie championship cup after their win over De La Salle at FBD Semple Stadium. She will be hoping to lift the All-Ireland cup at the same venue later today. Picture: INPHO/Tom O'Hanlon

Barrs hoping for another great day at Thurles

Today, St Finbarr's camogie captain Stephanie Punch will hope it's another good day for her and her side at FBD Semple Stadium.



CAMOGIE

Rory Noonan

Several weeks ago, she lifted the AIB Munster senior camogie cup at the venue, the Barr's first win in this competition, and hopes to add the All-Ireland one today. They take on Athenry in the replay of the AIB All-Ireland senior club final, having drawn at Croke Park before Christmas, throw-in at 5.15pm.

In that game, the Barr's had to defend superbly late on as Athenry came with a surge to score 1-3 to take it to a replay. With the momentum on Athenry's side, at that stage it could easily have gone wrong for the Barr's, but they didn't panic and will be hoping to finish the job this time out.

Stephanie picked up an injury in the drawn game, but confirmed she is fully fit and ready to go. "I did have a bit of a dead leg, and it didn't turn out to be as bad as we thought. I just took a week off training and was back at it then and it has cleared up," said Stephanie.

Looking at the drawn game as well as the replay, she said both sides will have learned a lot from their first clash.

"I suppose, we're both in the position that we know how each other play now. We'll probably have to change up some-

thing going in to the replay and they might do the same.

"We watched the game to see where we did well, what we did wrong. There's always room for improvement, so we've been training hard for the last couple of weeks. We're just looking forward to the game now and getting on with it."

They trained on St Stephen's morning, a session that the players asked for, which Stephanie said shows their level of commitment.

"Brian (O'Sullivan, team manager) was giving us a few days off for Christmas. But Christmas will always be there and we don't know when another club All-Ireland final will come along.

"The girls wanted to get out and do something, so we organised the session for the morning and it was fantastic.

"Over the year, there's people who've made sacrifices and, again, today, the same, with players cancelling holidays and missing other events. This team are

so motivated, they just do everything that you need to do to get to this point and, hopefully, we will finish the job today."

Another of the key players for the Barr's today is forward Keeva McCarthy and she said they are all looking forward to getting going.

"It was good to have something to look forward to over the Christmas period and to be back out training," said Keeva.

"Obviously, there was disappointment the last day and we didn't really know how to feel once the final whistle went. We probably thought we had it when we were six points up, but, at the same time, we had to defend really hard to get the draw.

"I think we have our heads right now again and we've had a good few weeks of training there, even with Christmas thrown in to the middle of it. So, we're confident now and ready to go.

"The goal was the turning point the last day, when it hit off the crossbar and, on another day that could have been cleared. That really gave them confidence to come in to it.

"I suppose, we were probably a bit shell-shocked for a few minutes, but, I think, in the end we showed great resilience to defend the way we defended just to make sure that we didn't lose that game.

"We know it will be another battle today and will have to be at our best to get the better of Athenry, who are a top-class side."



Winners of the camogie poc fada at St Vincent's GAA Dave McCarthy Memorial event were Aoife Gould, Michelle Gould, and Chloe Murphy.



St Finbarr's Keeva McCarthy will be a key player for her side again. Picture: INPHO/James Crombie



Sorcha McCartan will be one of the players St Finbarr's will look to against Athenry. Picture: INPHO/James Crombie

Athenry dedicate All-Ireland win to the memory of Kate

All-Ireland Camogie Club final replay



Athenry (Galway) 0-14
St Finbarr's (Cork) .. 0-12

Therese O'Callaghan
Semple Stadium



JOE RABBITTE dedicated Athenry's memorable AIB All-Ireland senior camogie club victory to Kate Moran, who died tragically, aged 20, while playing with her club in 2022. "This is for Kate. Is that any good?" the manager asked. "It's all we can do. If we could get her back, we would throw back the All-Ireland medals, but that is not the way it goes. Kate will never leave our minds."

"You can only cry so much. You have to move on a bit."

"She is the 16th player. Cathal, her father, that I know very well, and Mary, he sent me a beautiful little message after the last game with a pink flower."

Saturday capped an unforgettable season for Galway camogie. High points were already achieved through All-Ireland U16, U23, and senior success. An outstanding performance in a freezing-cold FBD Semple Stadium added the Bill and Agnes Carroll Cup. They had waited since 1977 for this treasured piece of silverware, in a come-from-behind triumph.

Having led 0-7 to 0-5 at half time, they were staring down the barrel of defeat, after going four down at the end of the third quarter. They hadn't



scored since half time in a contest where every flag was earned.

St Finbarr's, meanwhile, had fired six in a row to go 0-11 to 0-7 up.

But in the 48th, 49th, 54th, 58th, and 62nd minutes, the westerners moved in front, with sisters Olwen and Sabina Rabbitte, Therese Donohue, and Kerri O'Driscoll the finishers.

When Sorcha McCartan (scored 0-6) equalised in a pulsating finish, they had to go back to the well again, 0-12 apiece.

Clodagh Burke scored her third point, and in the 65th

minute, 36-year-old Jessica Gill nailed a tricky free from distance that had the vocal crowd of 2,590 on the edge of their seats.

In the fourth quarter, plus stoppage, they outscored their opponents seven points to one.

Legends Gill and 44-year-old Therese Donohue (45 in March) would claim a first All-Ireland club medal.

"So proud of all the girls," captain Dervla Higgins said.

"The game was so close and St Finbarr's seemed to get a purple patch in the second half, but, by God, did our girls come back and finish it off in style."

"We showed the last day we can finish strong. I knew, if we could get one score to settle us, we would finish strong."

"The last day" refers to the drawn match in Croke Park before Christmas, when they dramatically scored 1-3 at the death to negate a six-point Barrs lead.

The Cork and Munster champions will see that as a missed opportunity. They had previously shown ability to overcome adversity, claiming two extra, extra-time victories in the championship.

"They died with their boots on today," St Finbarr's manager Brian O'Sullivan ac-

knowledgeled. "I don't think they could do any more. The lift they have given to the club, you couldn't fault them. I've nothing but admiration for them and the way they have conducted themselves all year. No excuses from us: It is Athenry's day."

The Athenry defensive endeavours cannot be underestimated. Alex Ferguson's famous quote that 'attack wins you games, defence wins you titles' springs to mind.

Rabbitte said: "Coming back and winning the replay is unbelievable. And to do it the way we did. We went down six points the last time and drew,

NO QUARTER ASKED: Athenry's Clodagh Burke and St Finbarr's Sofia Daly clash in the All-Ireland camogie club final at FBD Semple Stadium. Picture: Ryan Byrne/Inpho

and went down four this time and came back to win by two. It's the will and determination that the girls have. They are just a fantastic bunch. What we have to do is steer the ship and make sure that things are available for them. It is a brilliant day for Athenry camogie."

"A year of dreams," added defender Higgins, who was also nominated for a prestigious county player-of-the-year award in 2025. "When you're in it, it happens so quickly. I can't wait to sit down in a few days and look back on it and let it try and sink in."

"We always carry the Moran family with us and Kate will always be a part of our club. I'm sure she was with us every minute of today, so to do it is that bit special. Kate Moran is with us every single day."

Scorers for Athenry: S Rabbitte (0-4, 0-1 45, 0-2 frees), C Burke (0-3), J Gill (0-2, 0-1 free), K Madden, T Donohue, O Rabbitte, K O'Driscoll, E McGlynn (0-1 each).

Scorers for St Finbarr's: S McCartan (0-6, 0-5 frees), K Wall and O Cahalane (0-2 each), E Hurley and N Olden (0-1 each).

ATHENRY: L Freeney; T Kilkenny, K Screene, D Higgins (Capt); L Casserly, O Rabbitte, S Feeney; K Madden, E McGlynn; T Donohue, J Gill, E Keane; K O'Driscoll, S Rabbitte, C Burke.

Subs: A Jordan for E Keane (47), M Noone for E McGlynn (52).

ST FINBARR'S: C Hurley; S Punch (Capt), A Egan, A O'Neill; G Cahalane, M Cahalane, S Daly; A Shannon, K McCarthy; N Olden, K Wall, H O'Leary; O Cahalane, S McCartan, E Hurley.

Subs: C Golden for S Daly (half-time), E Wigginton Barrett for E Hurley (54), L O'Donovan for N Olden (58).

Referee: Brian Kearney (Kildare).

Rabbitte hails daughters after injuries during 'tough campaign'

Therese O'Callaghan

In his day, Joe Rabbitte collected three All-Ireland senior hurling club medals with Athenry. He understands what it takes to reach the 'Holy Grail'.

Shortly after guiding his club to its second All-Ireland senior camogie victory, in FBD Semple Stadium on Saturday — their first since 1977 — he gave an insight in to the past couple of months in the Rabbitte household.

His daughters, Sabina and Olwen, both All-Ireland senior winners with Galway, were central to this historic day.

They spent Christmas trying to recover from serious injuries: Sabina with a fractured foot and Olwen an ACL.

"It's been so tough since the

county final for Olwen," Rabbitte said. "I went online and I came on a cruciate strapping-up in Letterkenny and I got them to send it down. She put it on and went training after the All-Ireland semi-final and she said, 'Dad I'm not too bad'. We had a game and she played well in it."

"We had a meeting and it was four against four for playing her in the final. It kind of came down to me to decide and we played her in the final the last day."

"Then, I had to get another strapping, because the one she had had weakened. She is supposed to have her cruciate operation in two days, but it is cancelled again. I'm not saying this because she is my daughter, but she came back today and scored a point to

really bury them (take the lead 0-12 to 0-11). When someone comes up the field and scores a point like that, it really kills them."

"You're asking me what the house is like? With Sabina and the fractured foot and Olwen with the cruciate, and then you are trying to manage the team, as well. Sabina had to be brought to the cold water to try and get the healing going, because it was the main bone, the bone that all the weight goes on. It happened in the first 10 minutes of the drawn game. We came in at half time and she was up on the table and she was crying with pain. Sabina doesn't cry. We had three weeks to get it right."

"It has been a tough campaign. Eimear Keane broke her finger the last day and our

goalie (Laura Freeney) had concussion after the last day."

So, you can imagine the ecstasy when they overcame all those setbacks.

"As a father, you bring your kids through. I have two girls in the dressing-room with All-Ireland club medals and I am so proud of that. I'm so proud of all the girls that are in there. It is lovely for a parent."

And it was earned with no goals conceded in the last three games. The cherry on top.

"We brought in Pádraig Linnane earlier in the year. For me, he is the most fantastic hurling brain around, and we have Pádraig Mannion. We said we needed to shore up our backs a bit. We moved Olwen back to number six and, I suppose, it worked out for us."



SWEET SUCCESS: Manager Joe Rabbitte celebrates after Athenry won the All-Ireland camogie club title. Picture: Ryan Byrne/Inpho



Finbarr's team huddle before their game against Athenry.
Picture: Ryan Byrne/Inpho

Thanks to Barrs for some great memories

Right now, the St Finbarr's senior camogie team are hurting as any team would be after losing an All-Ireland final.

At times, in both the final at Croke Park and the replay at FBD Semple Stadium, they looked like they had it won.

But you have to credit Athenry for the way they came back on each occasion to eventually win the replay by two points, both scored in injury time.

But reflecting on the season it is one they can look back on with plenty of pride and some of the games they were involved in will be talked about for years.

Their clash with Newcastle West in the Munster semi-final and their tie with Loughgiel Shamrocks in the All-Ireland semi-final were epics.

I have been lucky enough to see most of their games this season, starting in the Cork championship and all the way to Croke Park and then Thurles for the replay and several other grounds along the way.

The joy they have brought to their growing band of supporters and the lift and pride they have brought to their club this season cannot be underestimated.

Spend a bit of time in their company and not alone do you see just how talented they are as players, but also just how great they are as a bunch of people.

They are more than just a team, they are close friends and as manager Brian O'Sullivan said after the game on Sunday, "they died with their boots on for each other".

For me, there were many highlights over the season, some which may not have been seen by many in the group stages of the SE



Aoife O'Neill of St Finbarr's.
Picture: Ben McShane/Sportsfile

CAMOGIE ■ Rory Noonan

Systems Cork championship. To see how they responded when sides like Blackrock and Inniscarra put it up to them showed just how good they are.

In the final against St Catherine's, which went down to the wire, the display of Sorcha McCartan had to be admired.

She came out around the middle of the pitch to stamp her authority on the game as they retained their title, winning it for the third time in the club's history.

But if their supporters thought the Cork championship was entertaining, then Munster brought it to a whole other level.

On a cold, wet, and windy day they took on Newcastle West in the Munster championship at Togher.

It turned into the first of two 90-minute games they ended up playing in the 2025 season. Newcastle West's Kate Ambrose scored a goal with the final shot in normal time to take it to extra-time.

When she scored another goal in extra-time it looked like being the winner for her side, but the Barrs showed all their resilience to score two late points to take it to extra time.

And again, it was another late score, this time from McCartan, to secure their passage to the Munster final.

They headed up the road to Thurles to take on De La Salle in the Munster decider, another top-class game.

Again, it was a battle from start to finish before Kate Wall scored a late goal to see the cup head to Togher for the first time.

Once they celebrations died down, they prepared for their trip to Meath to take on Loughgiel Shamrocks in the All-Ireland semi-final. Another battle, another epic and another 90-minute game.

And in dying seconds of the 90 minutes up stepped Ciara Golden to slot over the winning score to see the Barrs reach the All-Ireland decider.

Another two epic ties, it was no great surprise to see it took two late scores to separate them and Athenry.

Unfortunately, they went the way of the Galway side.

But all I can say, just like their supporters can, is thanks for the memories and hopefully there will be plenty more next season.

Cork minor side into Munster decider

CAMOGIE ■ Rory Noonan

Cork	4-16
Clare	0-10

Cork are safely through to the Munster minor camogie championship final following their comprehensive win over Clare at Castle Road on Sunday.

They took the lead after three minutes, and never looked like losing, despite the best efforts of Clare, led by Sarah McEvoy.

Ava Ashman and Caoimhe O'Donnell anchored the Rebels' defence. Caoilainn Ryan and Caoimhe Foley impressed at midfield, while up front the likes of Orla Troy, Clara Murphy, and Leah Hannigan were a handful over the hour.

But overall, this was a very impressive team display, with the eight subs introduced not weakening the side in any way.

They won't know their opponents for a few weeks, with the final scheduled for the weekend of January 24-25.

Leah Hannigan opened the scoring for Cork when she got their first goal, with points from Troy and Murphy following.

Cliona Harte added another goal, with Troy and Murphy adding points to see Cork lead by 2-4 to no score after 11 minutes.

McEvoy got Clare off the mark from a 45, and she proved to be their only scorer in the first half.

With 17 minutes gone, it was effectively over as a competition as Hannigan scored two goals in a minute, to make it 4-4 to 0-1.

McEvoy got her second point, with Murphy replying.

Two more from McEvoy closed the gap, with Troy getting the last score of the half as Cork led by 4-7 to 0-4 at half-time.

Troy added another to her tally before two apiece from Murphy and Caoimhe Foley increased Cork's lead further, 4-12 to 0-5. McEvoy added two more to bring her second-half tally to three, and Clare's to 0-7. With 45 minutes gone Murphy, Eanna Duff, and Troy kept the scoreboard ticking over for Cork before Aoibhe O'Leary pointed for Clare.

Late points from McEvoy and Sheena Beirne rounded off the scoring for Clare, but Cork ran out deserving winners.

Scorers for Cork: L Hannigan 3-0, C Harte 1-0, C Murphy 0-7 (1f), O Troy 0-5 (3f), C Foley 0-3, E Duff 0-1.

Clare: S McEvoy 0-8 (4f, 0-1 45), A O'Leary, S Beirne 0-1 each.

CORK: K Crowley (Courcey Rovers); S Donohue (Blarney); A Ashman (Killeagh); T O'Neill (Fr O'Neill's); L O'Connor (Killeagh); C O'Donnell (Sliabh Rua); M Lombard (Ballinhassig); C Foley (Courcey Rovers); C Ryan (Newtownshandrum); O Troy (Newtownshandrum); C Murphy (Eire Og); S Dwyer (Douglas); E Healy (Eire Og); C Harte (Barryroe); L Hannigan (Ballincollig).

Subs: K O'Sullivan (Newcestown) for E Healy; R Hannigan (Ballincollig) for L O'Connor (both 35); E Duff (Aghabullogue) for S Dwyer; A Halpin (Sliabh Rua) for T O'Neill (both 48); G Claassen (Erin's Own) for C Ryan; A O'Brien (Brian Dillons) for L Hannigan; C Hayes (St Catherine's) for O Troy (all 53); C Roche (Eire Og) for C O'Donnell (55).

CLARE: A Boland; A McGuane; S Ryan; C McDonnell; K Connellan; E Carmody; O Cahill; K Kennedy; S Beirne; L Pearl; A O'Leary; S Beston; S McEvoy; K Conlon; A Quaid.

Subs: J Grady for C McDonnell; A Crowe for S Beston (both ht); M Purcell for A Quaid (50); K Dowling for L Pearl (53); G Cooney for A McGuane (59).

Referee: Johnny Dooley, Tipperary.



The Cork minor camogie team that are heading to the Munster final, with Limerick standing in their way tomorrow.

Cork U16A overcome Clare to book place in Munster camogie final

Cork	1-16	CAMOGIE
Clare	1-5	■ Mary Newman

The Cork U16A camogie team joined their minor and U16B counterparts as they booked their place in the Munster camogie final, overcoming the challenge posed by Clare in Castle Road.

The opening half was tight as both sides battled to gain control.

Cork led by a point at the interval, 0-7 to 1-3.

Isabelle O'Callaghan converted three frees and added one from play, and points from Niamh O'Connor, Simone Fitzgerald, and Lauren McAuliffe gave Cork a one-point half-time lead.

Cork upped the pressure on the restart and with their defence holding firm, they closed down the Clare challenge, holding them to just two second-half points as Cork put their shoulders to the wheel and put the game out of Clare's reach.

A Clodagh Walsh goal and six points from Isabelle O'Callaghan, and two each from Simone Fitzgerald and Lauren McAuliffe, ensured Cork secured their place the final — where they will meet a Tipperary side who recorded an impressive 4-11 to 0-1 semi-final victory over Limerick.

THREE MUNSTER TITLES UP FOR GRABS

It might only still be January, but Munster camogie are already at the final hurdle with their U16 and minor championship, with five finals down for decision over the weekend.

The three main events concern Cork with the minor, U16A, and U16B teams all through to their respective Munster finals.

Both U16A and U16B finals go ahead today, in Fethard Town Park Astro pitch — with the U16A final at 12.30pm, followed by the U16B final at 3pm.

Cork are defending U16A champions and they take on a Tipperary side who were

hugely impressive as they brushed aside the challenge posed by Limerick last weekend.

Strong in all sectors, Tipperary had impressive displays from Sali O'Connor, Lily Ivors, Olivia Looby, and Lucy Lee, who were all on the score-sheet as they totally outclassed Limerick.

Cork will be hoping to provide a strong challenge in their bid to retain the title and they will look to captain Ali McCarthy, Saidhbin Ni Loinisigh-Carey, Clodagh Walsh, and Isabelle O'Callaghan to lead the way.

The Cork U16B side will take on Limerick.

Cork overcame Tipperary in a clash where they received a strong test.

A close opening half saw Cork lead by two at the break and a strong second-half performance saw them run out winners with five points to spare.

Ella McCarthy, Erica Power, Lucy Heaphy, Kate Clifford, and Chloe Jones were among the players to impress in what was a strong Cork performance.

Limerick defeated Clare 3-8 to 2-5 to book their place in the final.

Breife Halton and Gracie Walters were among the players that they will look to as they aim to dethrone holders Cork.

Tomorrow, it's back to Fethard Town Park at 1.30pm for the minor final as holders Cork take on Limerick.

Cork made an impressive start to their campaign as they defeated Clare.

Orla Troy, Clara Murphy, captain Millie Lombard, Caoilainn Ryan, and Caoimhe Foley will be expected to lead the way against a Limerick side who had a 1-9 to 0-6 semi-final victory over Tipperary — with Mia Smith, captain Tara Hynes, Sophie O'Grady, and Emma Doherty all leading their challenge.



The Cork U16A camogie team that will face Tipp in the Munster final.



The Cork U16B camogie team who defeated Tipperary.

Cork maintain their lead from start to finish to topple Tipperary

Cork 1-12
Tipperary 1-7

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

Huge credit must go to the young underage camogie players in Munster who played out their respective U16 and minor championship games in sub-zero conditions on Saturday and Sunday last.

In the U16B Munster semi-final on Saturday, Cork made the journey to the Raggs to take on Tipperary in the provincial semi-final and after a tough battle, Cork emerged winners.

Cork opened the scoring with a Kate Clifford and with Erica Power adding a second point Cork settled into the flow of the game quickly.

From the puck out Cork again applied pressure as Aiden O'Shea won clean possession and driving the ball quickly down the line to Aoibhinn Hudner, who picked out Ella McCarthy with a superb pass and she made no mistake finishing to back of the net for the game's opening goal.

It was to be an important score as it helped Cork hold the lead and keeping the pressure on they were making the Tipperary defence work hard. With 10 minutes gone Tipperary won a free which was converted by Nadine Guinan as they got the score board ticking over and three minutes later Nadine Guinan converted her second free to cut the Cork lead to a goal.

The sides traded points from play.

Erica Power and Niamh Gleeson were on target as Cork held their three point lead, but Tipperary were pressing hard and coming more into the game.

They had the lead down to two points by the 20th minute with a Katie Bergin point, but Cork quickly responded with two points in a row.

Tipperary stayed on their

tail and an Anna Lanigan point just before the break cut the deficit as Cork led 1-4 to 0-5 at the short whistle.

Cork hit the ground running on the restart and firing over two points in a row from Erica Power and Chloe Jones the gap was again at four points. Putting on the pressure Tipp could find no way through the Cork defence, but they won a free which was converted by Nadine Guinan.

Cork again responded with Erica Power duly converting a free at the other end.

Cork began to gain a firm grip as they were winning a lot of possession and four points without reply in a blistering three minutes spell put them a strong position as the game entered the last ten minutes.

Tipperary pulled a goal back with seven minutes on the stop watch when Anna Lanigan finished to the net.

The sides swapped pointed frees before full time as Cork ran out winners with five points to spare with Ella McCarthy, Erica Power, Lucy Heaphy, Kate Clifford and Chloe Jones all contributing as Cork maintained their lead from start to finish.

The second semi-final saw Limerick with Breifne Halton and Gracie Waters leading the way they overcame Clare 3-8 to 2-5 to book a place in the final against Cork which will go head on the weekend of January 24th /25th.

In the Munster U16 A championship quarter final goals proved vital as Clare had a 2-8 to 0-10 win over Waterford.

They now progress to a semi-final meeting with Cork on the weekend of January 18th.

In the second semi-final Tipperary will meet Limerick.



Cork U16B camogie joint captains Lucy Heaphy and Clodagh Spillane with referee Joe Mullins and Tipperary captain Saoirse Maher.

Treacy steps away from Cork

CAMOGIE

Rory Noonan

Laura Treacy has announced her retirement from inter-county camogie.

The Killeagh star has been a mainstay for more than 15 years, winning six All-Ireland titles and four All-Stars as well as Munster and league titles. She first joined the Cork team in 2014 when she was a teenager.

"Paudie Murray had me in, when I think back, 16 turning 17 that year. I had two years minor, so I was playing minor that year and had another year to play minor again. It seems like an absolute lifetime ago," said Laura.

"My first Ireland was in 2014, I was 18 turning 19, and I was a bábóg. I was so small, light in stature, but I was given a job. I remember Matthew Twomey was involved that year, and for the semi-final and final, I remember Matthew and Paudie Murray speaking to me.

"I particularly remember marking Ursula Jacob in the semi-final in Thurles. They told me, 'Ursula Jacob usually gets on X amount of possessions a game,' — I think it was seven or eight — but she tends to score from them. If you can count it down from seven or eight; you've turned her over once, you've only seven more. You turned her over again, then you've blocked her, now there's only five more."

Treacy's ability to read the play is second to none, and from centre-back she controlled many



Laura Treacy was a model of consistency for Cork.

Picture: Seb Daly/Sportsfile

a game. In 2024, when Cork last won the All-Ireland, she played a huge part, particularly late on when Galway were threatening to come back. She cleared ball after ball and declared after that win was probably the sweetest of them all.

Cork manager Ger Manley said he was disappointed to see her go and had hoped she would have stayed on this season.

"She has had a great innings and is an icon in camogie," said Manley. "She has helped bring the standards of the game to huge levels, her professionalism made her an elite player.

"Tactically, Laura was superb, and she was a great team player as well. She played last year when she had a number of injuries, and it's disappointing we lost the final as it would have been a great way for her to go.

"But she has won so many and has been around the senior panel for a good few years. For us, as a management, it's disappointing that she has gone, but I'm delighted that she is going on her own terms.

"She's been carrying that knee for a bit now, and I'm just delighted to have involved with her. Laura has helped to bring Cork camogie to the level it is at now, and she is one of the reasons why we have been up there."



Izzy O'Regan makes a welcome return to the Cork squad having been out with an ACL injury. Picture: INPHO/Laszlo Geczo

Izzy O'Regan back in contention for Cork as she returns from injury

CAMOGIE

Rory Noonan

There is still a couple of weeks to go before their first game as the Cork senior camogie panel step up their training ahead of their league opener against Waterford.

While there will be familiar faces in the panel it also is one that will see several changes, with a number of players gone for a variety of reasons.

As well as those heading abroad others won't be available through retirement from inter-county camogie and other reasons.

"We knew that Aoife Healy, Hannah Looney, and Kate Wall were going to Australia, so would be out," said Cork manager Ger Manley.

"But there are a few others that have stepped away as well. Laura Treacy has retired and, as I said before, she is a big loss to the squad. Laura was a natural leader and always led by example on and off the pitch.

"Cliona Healy is gone as, unfortunately, she has a few niggling injuries and has stepped away.

"Along with them, Sorcha McCartan is also heading away and Orlaith Mullins is currently abroad through college, but we expect her back in a few months.

"The Mackey sisters (Pamela and Katrina) are also missing for now and all the Barrs players are currently not training with us as we give them a much-needed break after their club campaign.

"So we will wait and see who we will have available for our opening league game at the start of February against Waterford.

"We will be using the league to look at a lot of new faces and see how they get on and to be fair to others, like the Barrs players, we won't be rushing them back in." With so many players leaving the squad

others have been brought back in and others have been called in.

Coming back in to the panel are the likes of Hayley Ryan and Cliona O'Callaghan, from Blackrock, with the former being joint top scorer in the club championship. O'Callaghan also impressed and also had a high scoring return from midfield for her club.

Along with them, others currently in the squad include the likes of: Orlaith Cremin, Isobel Sheehan, Avril Cashman, Niamh McNabola, and Amy Sheppard.

"We also have Izzy O'Regan back from her ACL and it's great to see her back out there training. She was a loss to us last year and Izzy is also buzzing to get back playing games.

"With some of the players we have lost it's great to see her back in contention and ready to go." Libby Coppinger had also confirmed she is only playing camogie this season and Manley said that this made it easier from a training and games perspective.

"I would also encourage and support any player that is good enough to play both codes if they want to. We have been doing this for years and it would have continued this season had it happened.

"But it does make it easier for us, and for the ladies' footballers, as we both can sort training and games knowing we don't have to worry about clashes.

"Should it arise again that a player or players decide to play football as well, we will deal with it and manage them as we have in other years. For now, we can drive on with our own plans and take it from there."



Blackrock's Hayley Ryan, who is back in the Cork senior squad after an impressive county championship campaign with her club.



Cork's Lauren O'Connor charges forward. Pictures: Brendan Gleeson

Cork retain Munster minor camogie title in hard-fought battle

Cork 2-9
Limerick 0-14

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

Cork retained their Munster minor camogie title by the narrowest of margins over Limerick in a hard-fought battle at the excellent Templeglantine venue.

After a close opening half where the sides traded score for score, the holders were up 0-9 to 0-8.

Despite only managing two scores in the second half, they survived thanks to the green flags raised by Leah Hannigan, who didn't start due to injury, and a long-range Lexi Manley free that ended up in the net.

Credit to Cork as they held out under tremendous Limerick pressure.

Manley and Caitlin Ryan had two points apiece before Limerick went three clear thanks to scores from Hazel Horgan, Anna Rose Benson, and Ryan.

Cork pegged them back with Lauren O'Connor and Manley on target, and twice the sides were level again before Manley's free on the stroke of half-time edged Cork in front.

Limerick got the second half off to a flying start with three points in a row, as Aoibhinn O'Connor grabbed one to go along with two Ryan frees.

With the Limerick defence mopping up any Cork attack, there was no way through a defence where Sophie O'Riordan and Tara Hynes were in control.

Cork introduced Hannigan on 44 minutes and with her first touch of the ball, she had it in the back of the net after a superb move involving Clara Murphy and Manley, who combined before offloading.



Cork's Lea Meillouin holds off Tara Hynes of Limerick.

Limerick applied huge pressure on the Cork defence as they battled for an equaliser.

With captain Millie Lombard and Ava Ashman leading the way, the Cork defence held firm.

Limerick hit four wides in a row as they maintained the pressure.

As the clock wound down, Cork won a free on the half-way line. Lexi Manley's effort hit a defender's hurley and dropped to the net to put Cork four clear with four minutes of injury time remaining.

Limerick pressed hard and three points without reply, two from O'Connor and one from Mia Smith, ensured a nervous finish but Cork hung on to take the title.

Manley, who contributed 1-6 of their tally, was named Player of the Match.

Scorers for Cork: L Manley 1-6 (1-4 f, 0-1 45), L Hannigan 1-0, C Murphy 0-2, L O'Connor 0-1.

Scorers for Limerick: C Ryan 0-6 (0-4 f, 0-1 45), A O'Connor 0-4 (0-1 f), M Smith 0-2, AR Benson, H Horgan 0-1 each.

CORK: A Collins (Sarsfields); S Donoghue (Blarney); A Cashman (Killeagh); T O'Neill (Fr O'Neills); C Ryan (Newtownshandrum); C O'Donnell (Sliabh Rua); M Lombard (Ballinhassig); c); C Foley (Courage Rovers); C Hayes (St Catherine's); L O'Connor (Killeagh); L Manley (Aghabullogue); C Murphy (Eire Og); L Meillouin (Innisscarra); C Harte (Barryroe); O Troy (Newtownshandrum).

Subs: E Duff (Aghabullogue) for L O'Connor (inj 33); L Hannigan (Ballincollig) for Troy (44).

LIMERICK: E Doherty; T Hynes (c); O Barrett; A Buckley; S O'Riordan; A Morrissey; C Long; AR Benson; C Ryan; I O'Brien; A O'Sullivan Hunt; M Smith; R O'Grady; H Horgan; A O'Connor.

Subs: S Maher for A Buckley (h-t); A Foley for R O'Grady (48).

Referee: Aaron Hogg (Clare).



Cork's Eabha Lynch clears from Tipperary's Molly Jones during the U16 A Munster camogie final at Castle Road. Picture: Eddie O'Hare

Tipperary too strong for Cork in U16 A Munster camogie final

Tipperary 2-15
Cork 2-6

CAMOGIE

■ Rory Noonan

Disappointment for Cork as they lost out to Tipperary in the Munster U16 A championship camogie final at Castle Road on Saturday.

The damage was done in the first half and by the break Tipp were 1-10 to 0-2 in front and it was always going to be difficult for the Rebels to come back from there.

To their credit, they never gave up and kept fighting to the bitter end, but on the day, they were simply beaten by a better side.

Tipp were outstanding all through and defensively gave the Cork forwards little or no room.

Up front, Lily Ivors was a handful but player of the game by a mile was Maria Groome.

The half-forward was superb from start to finish and a constant threat to the Cork defence. She finished with 2-2 but it wasn't just her scoring that caused the home side problems.

Her ability to run with the ball and take on defenders made her a handful and were in not for a number of quality saves from Cork keeper Kayleigh Murphy, Groome's tally could have been higher.

Ivors opened the scoring from a free, with Salli O'Connor and Olivia Looby adding to Tipp's tally before Isabelle O'Callaghan got Cork off the mark from a free.

Ivors and Groome increased Tipp's lead, to make it 0-6 to 0-1 after 20 minutes.

Three minutes later, and Groome had the first of her goals, giving Murphy no chance of saving. Ivors added two more points to make it 1-8 to 0-1 as half-time approached.

Cork's only goal chance came when Orla O'Brien's effort was well saved by Sinead Delaney.

Ivors hit two more, with O'Callaghan replying from a free to see Tipp lead by 1-10 to

0-2 at half-time.

Tipp had another goal chance at the start of the second half, this time Murphy denying Melanie Flannery.

Ivors and Lauren McAuliffe exchanged points, before Groome got Tipp's second goal, to make it 2-12 to 0-3 and with it any chance of a Cork comeback.

To be fair they tried, with Alanah Murphy pulling a goal back and points from O'Callaghan and Simone Fitzgerald reducing the deficit, 2-13 to 1-5.

Eabha Lynch got a second goal for Cork late on but it was no more than a consolation score as Tipp ran out deserving winners.

Cork will now have to regroup ahead of their All-Ireland clash with Galway in two weeks time.

Scorers for Tipperary: M Groome 2-2, L Ivors 0-9 (7f), S O'Connor, O Looby, L Lee, A O'Donnell 0-1 each.

Cork: A Murphy, E Lynch 1-0 each, I O'Callaghan 0-4 (4f), L McAuliffe (f), S Fitzgerald 0-1 each.

TIPPERARY: S Delaney; G Troy K Creedon, T Maher; K Duffy, E Ahern, T Corbett; C Kennedy, A O'Donnell; M Flannery, M Jones, M Groome; O Looby, S O'Connor, L Ivors.

Subs: LA Cleary for M Jones, L Lee for M Flannery (both 39), M Loneragan for S O'Connor (47), R O'Connor for K Duffy, A Cully for E Ahern (both 53), A Ryan for O Looby, M Kennedy for L Ivors, L Ryan for G Troy (all 55).

CORK: K Murphy (Sliabh Rua); E Donnelly (Ballinhassig); A McCarthy (Blarney); L Sheehan (St Finbarr's); Kate O'Mahoney (Kilbrittain/Timoleague); E Lynch (Blarney); L Daly (Innisscarra); E Rath (Sliabh Rua); S Carey Ni Loingsigh (Aghabullogue); O O'Brien (Cloughduv); L McAuliffe (Newtownshandrum); A Coughlan (Newtownshandrum); C Walsh (Killeagh); C Leahy (Blarney); I O'Callaghan (Cloughduv).

Subs: S Gilmore (Clonakilty) for A Coughlan, A Byerley (Clonakilty) for C Leahy, A Keane (Dungourney) for L Sheehan (all 29), A Murphy (Aghabullogue) for O O'Brien (ht), A (Sarsfields) Ryan for L Daly (34); A Kenneally (Brian Dillons) for L McAuliffe (43); S Fitzgerald (St Catherine's) for C Walsh (50); E Cafferkey (St Vincent's) for K O'Mahoney (55).

Referee: Philip Dee, (Limerick).



Cork's Evelyn Rath shoots under pressure from Tipperary's Salli O'Connor during the U16 A Munster camogie final at Castle Road. Picture: Eddie O'Hare

Cork underage sides turn their attention to All-Ireland games

It was a mixed weekend for Cork underage camogie sides in action in their respective Munster championship finals.

The weather played its part as well, with the U16 A final moved to Cork from Fethard Town Park on Saturday, but the B final remained at the Tipperary venue on their 4G pitch.

On Sunday, the minors were due to play Limerick at Fethard, but that was moved to Templeglantine in Limerick.

Conditions both days didn't favour any side playing decent camogie, and one can only wonder why these competitions are played so early in the year.

There are All-Ireland series for them all, so that may be a factor, and possibly state exams are a consideration too, but at that to play your Munster finals on January 24/25 seems a little early to me.

For the U16 A side a poor first half saw them trailing by 1-10 to 0-2, and it was always going to be difficult to recover from that.

But credit to the players, they came out fighting in the second half and gave it everything, with Alanah Murphy and Eabha Lynch hitting the back of the net to put them in with a chance.

But in the end, Tipp went back up the road with the cup after a 2-15 to 2-6 win, thanks in no small way to a player of the game performance from Maria Groome.



Cork's Lara Daly tackles Tipperary's Molly Jones during the U16 A Munster camogie final at Castle Road. Picture: Eddie O'Hare

CAMOGIE

■ Rory Noonan

This young player is one to watch for the future, and if she keeps developing and working hard, then Tipp have a future senior star in the making.

As this game was finishing up in Cork the B game was getting under way in Tipperary, and it was a pity that the weather stopped both being played at the same venue.

It split the Cork support and meant many who wanted to travel were unable to as they were needed at Castle Road.

This was a much closer affair, and all credit to the B side it was a battle all the way to the end.

However, come the final whistle, they lost out by 2-6 to 1-5 to Limerick, who also won the A shield final.

Aoibhinn Hudner 1-2, Lucy Heafey 0-2, and Ella McCarthy 0-1, were Cork's scorers in a game that was in the melting pot right up to the final whistle.

However, the weekend finished on a high as the minors came out on top in their clash with Limerick in their clash.

This was a close game all through, and it took two second-half goals for the Rebels to emerge as winners.

All three sides will now turn their attentions to the All-Ireland series with a lot of work needed to be done by all ahead of those clashes in two weeks time.



'Camogie has been my life for years'

Laura Treacy celebrates after Cork beat Galway in the 2024 Glen Dimplex All-Ireland Senior Camogie Championship final at Croke Park.

Picture: INPHO/James Lawlor

She has never been someone to shy away from difficult decisions, but Laura Treacy admitted retiring from inter-county camogie was one of the most difficult ones she ever had to make.

After 14 years as a senior player, Laura announced her retirement from the red jersey recently. It's been part of her life for many years, as before playing at senior level, Laura was also involved with U14, U16, and minor sides over the years. "In simple terms, yes, it was an incredibly difficult decision," said 30-year-old Laura.

"It has been my life for 14 seasons, but you could say I've been playing camogie since I was about six years of age.

"It was my dream, probably from six to 16, to play with the Cork senior team at some point. So I was probably driving for that for 10 years. Then, when I hit 16, I got the opportunity. I was called up by Paudie Murray that year, and I've been there since, so I guess you could say it's been a lifetime, but one that I certainly don't regret.

"It was always a dream of mine to put on the Cork jersey and to be surrounded by such unbelievable players for the years that I was there, and to be lucky to have unbelievable management teams.

"It's exactly where I wanted to be and where I wanted to continue to push myself and push standards of Cork camogie as a whole.

"I got to do that in abundance, and yes, I probably made massive sacrifices, missing trips with friends from home, birthdays and weddings, and you know, bed early and stuff.

"But looking back, since the GPA announced my retirement, the messages coming through and the phone calls, and pictures being sent on and everything. I'm looking back at it already as such a special time and such a privilege to have gotten to fulfil my dream."

There have been many highlights for Laura over the years, including All-Ireland titles, All-Stars, Munster championship and league titles, but she said one game stands out for her above the rest.

"When you look back on games, I would have been critical of my own performances and maybe the performance of the team. I would have constantly wanted the team and myself to be better. There was never a game where it's ever going to be perfect, but I guess you're striving for perfection.

"But one that really popped out of my head is the 2023 All-Ireland semi-final against Galway at Nowlan Park.



CAMOGIE

Rory Noonan

"I just think that game was as close to perfect as we were probably going to play, not hurling-wise, but how we went about it and the work rate that the girls brought that day.

"It clicked at the right time, as we had struggled to get over Galway for so long leading into that game, and we had a hard route to the final.

"We ended up playing Kilkenny in the quarter-final that year, and that was in Croke Park. We got over that, and we were really approaching it one game at a time.

"Galway were kind of a bogey team for us. Thinking back now, from my own personal performance, I think it's one that I would have always gone back on over the last few years. I suppose you're always trying to remind yourself of how you played and the positive aspects of it.

"I wasn't perfect, and I don't think I ever had the perfect performance that I was striving for, but that was close to it. And as a team to get over Galway that day, the girls really dug deep, and there were huge performances all over the pitch. I think that's probably one of the very special ones.

"They had beaten us twice already that season, and we seemed to struggle at times against them. It's not that Galway were miles better than us, but they always seemed to just be able to grind out the win.

"We really struggled like to manage them, but we turned it around for that game and yeah, that one in particular just stands out and puts a smile across my face when I think about it."

So what kept Laura playing for so long, and why retire now?

"It's kind of scary when people are saying like 14 years involved in the senior team. I have played Cork minor and U16, and U14 development and stuff. So I've been wearing a Cork jersey for longer than I haven't in my lifetime.

"But it brought me huge personal joy, trying to improve myself, my own standards, me as a player. I was always striving to be better, and I always felt like each year I could do that. It was a thought that I gave each year - can I be better, and where can I improve?

"That's probably what drove me personally. Then I have unbelievable friends from camogie, and I basically enjoyed the challenge of it every year.



Cork's Laura Treacy and Ashling Thompson lift the Sean O'Duffy Cup after Cork's win over Galway in 2024.

Picture: INPHO/Ben Brady

"I'm very lucky to have played with some phenomenal leaders, and I wanted to continue the legacy that was left behind and encourage younger girls to stay in sport number one.

"Then maybe the younger girls coming into the panel, and bring them along and give them, I guess, what older girls gave me.

"So there are probably many different factors as to why I continue to play, but I enjoyed it at the end of the day.

"But there has to come a time where a new chapter needs to start, and there has been a few little niggles in the body over the past few years that probably haven't allowed me to train as much and play to maybe the standard that I would like to play.

"So the decision wasn't a sudden one. I guess it was probably a decision that was happening over months and maybe over the last even 12 months. I thought about it a lot, and it was an extremely difficult decision for me, I would say, and probably one that will take me a while to come to terms with.

"But I just feel like it's the right time to go and see what else life can offer in other chapters and try and enjoy this new chapter to the best of my ability."

Laura also confirmed she is not sure, due to her injuries, if she will continue to play with her club Killeagh this year.

"Right at this moment, I don't have an answer, but I hope to. I would love to give back to the club. I've probably been gone for the club set up for longer than I nearly played with the club, so it would be a goal of mine to play with Killeagh, but at this moment in time, with the injuries, I'm not sure. For now, Laura is enjoying a well-earned rest and looking forward to what the next chapter will bring and said she will be at the Cork games and is looking forward to supporting them from the stand this year.



Cork players celebrate after winning the Munster minor camogie championship final.

Picture: Brendan Gleeson

Cork minors start All-Ireland campaign with trip to The Ragg

Electric Ireland All Ireland Minor Championship:
Round 1: Cork v Tipperary:
Sunday, The Ragg, 2pm.

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

Last season there was an earlier than usual start to the All-Ireland Electric Ireland Minor camogie championship which got underway on the second week of February.

Now, the powers that be have in their wisdom brought the championship start date forward by another two weeks with championship getting underway this weekend.

Minor players should be afforded the opportunity to playing on good pitches at a time of the year suitable for hurling.

To be playing All-Ireland minor camogie championship in January is certainly not helping promote the game but that is the way it is so counties have to get on with it now.

The Munster championship is already completed and with that thoughts now turn to the All-Ireland championship.

Cork get their campaign underway today when they meet Tipperary.

Two weeks later on February 14/15 Cork host Limerick in round two.

Round three is on the weekend of February 28/ March 1, when Cork travel to take on Galway, and in round four, Cork are travelling when they make the journey to Dublin on the weekend of March 14/15.

The last group game in on March 28/29 when Cork will be at home as they take on All-Ireland champions Kilkenny.

Cork will begin their campaign boosted by their victory last weekend in the Munster final where they had to dig deep to carve out a one point victory over a strong and determined Limerick side.

Tipperary fell short by just six points to Limerick in their Munster semi-final clash, and with little between these sides, we can expect a lively start to the All-Ireland campaign.

Tipperary contested the Munster Shield final and cruised to victory over Clare on a 6-18 to 1-6.

They have excellent players up front in Emma Bonner, Alice Butler, Abbie Horgan, and Isobel Kingston are all capable of notching up scores.

Their defence is marshalled by captain Ciara Cahill at centre back with Evanna Gleeson and Jess Shanahan impressing in the wing back positions last day out.

With the Munster title secured Cork are now fully focused and ready to go.

With five group games, there is a big schedule to get through and manager Mossy O'Sullivan and his backroom mentors will go in happy that their side performed so well in the provincial championship.

Having recorded a comprehensive opening round victory over Clare Cork really had to dig out their victory over Limerick, but they showed huge determination in doing so.

Leading by a point at the interval, 0-9 to 0-8, they fell behind as Limerick hit three points without reply in a third quarter where Cork failed to score.

The introduction of Leah Hannigan, who did not start due to injury had an instant impact as she finished a move involving Lexi Manley and Clara Murphy to the roof of the net to edge Cork in front.

Lexi Manley increased the lead with a long range free ending up in the net but Limerick fought back with three points in a row before the full time whistle sounded much to Cork's relief.

A cause for concern for Cork will be that they failed to score a point in the second half with only one score from play in the entire thirty four minutes of the second half.

Mossie O'Sullivan will be looking for a bigger contribution from his players with only four players on the score sheet against Limerick and he will be hoping for a better return across the side tomorrow at The Ragg.



The Cork team and selectors after winning the Munster minor camogie championship final.

Picture: Brendan Gleeson



Millie Lombard is put under pressure by Tipperary's Isabelle Kingston.

Cork push Premier to the final whistle but Tipp prevail with late points

Tipperary	1-14
Cork	2-9

Cork lost to Tipperary in the opening round of the Electric Ireland Minor Camogie Championship at MIC, Thurles.

Tipperary opened up an eight-point advantage 10 minutes into the second half but were pegged back by the Munster champions, who battled hard but fell just short.

Cork were quick off the mark with two early points, Ciara Hayes slotting over from play and Lexi Manley converting a free. Tipperary responded with two points in a row, Abbie Horgan converting a free before Alice Butler had the sides level five minutes in.

Again the sides swapped points, with play moving quickly from end to end. Horgan edged Tipp back in front but Manley replied with a free. Clare Murphy and Horgan traded points to leave it 0-4 each at the end of the opening quarter.

The hosts hit a purple patch as they went three in front with points from Alice Butler, Emma Bonner, and Horgan finding the range. Cork responded through Clare Murphy and Lea Meillouin but Evanne Gleeson's effort gave Tipperary a 0-8 to 0-6 lead at the break.

Crucially, the Premier turned around with the aid of the wind and went four points in front inside six minutes of the restart. Eva Ralph had a point from play with Horgan accurate from placed balls.

Putting Cork's defence under pressure, Tipp had the game's opening goal seven minutes into the half with Isabelle Kingston extending their lead to seven.

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

Horgan extended their lead with a point before Cork upped the pace and grabbed their opening goal as Lexi Manley hit the net. Points from Caoilainn Ryan and Leah Hannigan narrowed the gap to three but Horgan nailed a difficult free followed by an Ailbhe Treacy effort to leave the margin at five with 12 minutes left.

Cork battled back with a Hannigan goal. With just two points between the sides the game was very much in the balance. Continuing to press, Cork had it down to a one-point game on 53 minutes with a Murphy point. Tipp won a free with three minutes to go, and the reliable Horgan converted her eighth free which left Cork chasing a goal to win.

Cork pressed to the final whistle but the Tipperary defence held.

Scorers for Tipperary: A Horgan 0-8 f, I Kingston 1-0, A Butler 0-2, E Bonner, E Ralph, E Gleeson A Treacy 0-1 each.

Cork: L Manley 1-2 (0-2 f), L Hannigan 1-1, C Murphy 0-3, C Hayes, C Ryan, L Meillouin 0-1 each.

TIPPERARY: E O'Donnell; E Ryan, K Nevin, E Frend; J Shanahan, C Cahill, E Gleeson; E Bonner, E Ralph; A Butler, A Treacy; G Stapleton, A Horgan, I Kingston, K Rossiter.

Subs: E Duffy for K Rossiter (21), D Ryan for G Stapleton (45), G Cleary for I Kingston (56).

CORK: A Collins (Sarsfields); S Donohue (Blarney), A Ashman (Killeagh), T O'Neill (Fr O'Neill's); C Roche (Eire Og), C O'Donnell (Sliabh Rua); M Lombard (Ballinhassig, c); C Ryan (Newtownshandrum); C Hayes (St Catherine's); O Troy (Newtownshandrum), L Manley (Aghabullogue), C Harte (Barryroe); L Meillouin (Inniscarra), C Murphy (Eire Og), L Hannigan (Ballincollig).

Subs: E Healy (Eire Og) for L Meillouin (22), E Barrett (Aghabullogue) for C Roche (33), B Cunniffe (Ballincollig) for O Troy (38).

Cork's trip to Galway in All-Ireland final re-run

CORK will begin their quest to win back the O'Duffy Cup with an away trip to the team that beat them in last season's All-Ireland senior final.

The Rebels' three-in-a-row dream was dashed by Galway in last year's final, and first up for Ger Manley's side in this year's Glen Dimplex senior championship is an away clash with the Tribeswomen on the weekend of June 6th/7th.

Cork are on the road again in round two, facing Tipperary on June 13th/14th, before a home tie with Waterford on the weekend of June 27th/28th.

In a change to the championship structure, the senior competition is split into groups of four and six, with the 2025 semi-finalists all in Group 1, so Cork are joined by Galway, Waterford and Tipperary.

The top two sides from Group 1 progress to the All-Ireland semi-finals. Third and fourth from the group will progress to the quarter-finals, where they will face off against the top two sides from Group 2, which includes Clare, Dublin, Kilkenny, Limerick, Offaly and Wexford.

The hope is Cork will be involved in All-Ireland Finals Day at Croke Park on Sunday, August 9th.



Cork star Meabh Cahalane.

In camogie UCC ended UL's bid for a 3rd successive Ashbourne Cup title with a thrilling 2 point victory on Tuesday. It sets up a final with UCD in the DCU Complex on Sunday at 4pm.

Niamh McNabola was outstanding in that win as were Avril Cashman, Amy McCarthy, Leah Hallihan and Orlaith Cremin.

UCC have won the Ashbourne 32 times but the last triumph came in 2003 - they would dearly love to end that long wait on Sunday.



Cork's Niamh McNabola, here in action against Tipperary, will be one of the players UCC will look to tomorrow night in the Ashbourne Cup semi-final against UL.

Picture: Dan Linehan

UCC hoping to reach two camogie finals

This week is a big one for UCC camogie as they play in two major semi-finals.

They have qualified for the Ashbourne Cup semi-final after getting the better of University of Galway at the Mardyke last week.

The game was due to be played at Dangan, Galway, but upon arrival, the pitch was deemed unplayable after a pitch inspection by the referee.

So it was refixed for last Wednesday night at the Mardyke, giving UCC home advantage for what they knew was going to be a tough tie.

UCC started well with Niamh McNabola pointing from play, followed by a point from a Sophie Pembroke free. Aoife Healy, who will be heading to Australia in a few months to play Aussie Rules, was on form and from a great run pointed to keep UCC in front.

Galway's Carrie Dolan pointed from a free to get the away side up and running. Midway through the first half, a superb run from Cork's Leah Hallihan ended up with the ball in the back of the net.

Amy McCarthy was working tirelessly, as was Meave Murphy, who swept up in the backline. Abby Walsh from Clare was tasked with the job of marking Carrie Dolan and kept her scoreless from play.

Dolan did score seven points, but they were all from frees, showing the great job Walsh did for the Cork college on the night.

Galway got a goal back just before half-time as UCC led by 1-9 to 1-6 at the break.

The second half was a battle with Galway edging closer with scores back and forth. In the last minute, Dolan pointed a free to draw the game.

At the other end of the field, Orlaith Cremin passed to McNabola, who was tackled and won a free.

There was total silence at the Mardyke as Sophie Pembroke pointed the pressure free to put UCC one ahead with time now into injury-time.

However, UCC's vice-captain Avril Cashman drove the team on, and excellent scores from Sarah O'Brien and Eimear Duignan put them three to the good.

After a battle, there were great scenes on the final whistle, which saw UCC overcome a very strong University of Galway side by 1-13 to 1-10.



Aoife Healy will be hoping to win an Ashbourne Cup title with UCC before she heads to Australia.

Picture: Dan Sheridan/Inpho

CAMOGIE

■ Rory Noonan

UCC now face current Ashbourne Cup holders UL, who are hot favourites to win three in a row, in the semi-final.

The game is scheduled for 8pm tomorrow night at UL.

UCC manager Michelle Gould was thrilled with the win.

"The girls showed great character to come through this game, and their work rate was immense.

"Playing UL is always a big ask, but we have great confidence in our team and will be up for the challenge."

As well as this, UCC are also in the Purcell Cup semi-final. They secured two wins out of two in the championship, beating Ulster University away in Laois, followed by a hard-fought win away to Maynooth. This sees them play tomorrow in Dublin against Queens University Belfast, at 7pm at Abbotstown.

Ms Gould manages both teams and is very happy with how both teams are progressing.

"Having two teams in the championship semi-finals is a great achievement. The Purcell team is progressing nicely after winning the Purcell League before Christmas. This was great preparation for the championship campaign.

"We have strong coaches and a backroom team, and it shows on the pitch with the girls."



Tipperary's Eimear Ryan and Cork's Lea Meillouin chase the sliotar.