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ANNA GEARY



Defeat is cruel, but a source of many vital life lessons

MAGNANIMOUS IN DEFEAT TO INNISCARRA, MILFORD'S ANNA GEARY REFLECTS ON THE LESSONS TO BE LEARNED FROM THE GAMES THAT GET AWAY

SPORT is cruel. Losing never gets less painful. This could end up being one of the easier articles to write...not because the topic is easy to write about, but rather it's still so fresh to recall, it's still raw.

On Friday October 28, 2016 the magical journey ended for the women of North Cork. We emerged under the lights as the county champions, ready and willing for the battle ahead. The scene was set. It was like something out of my favourite book, aptly titled Friday Night Lights. The stand swelled with adoring fans, hopeful and zealous, excitement growing as the throw in edged closer. The night was mild, the darkness closed in, all supporters blending in - blue and white hats, flags and headbands. Who was who? No one knew, no one really cared. The tension was palpable, the stakes the high.

The game was like a series of moments strung together that made little sense at times. I think back on all the phases of play and many were a blur, such was the intensity of the action. It was tit-for-tat all the way through, end-to-end stuff. Silly errors made it an uphill struggle for us but you have to

contend with that happening. You must have a back-up plan. But in a flash the opportunity to rectify the situation was gone, our turn was over.

Did you ever catch yourself getting lost in your own thoughts? I found myself replaying the game all week, thinking about all the instances where we, and I, could have done something different.

I speak to people about the notion of adaptability and how crucial it is in sport, in life too. We were missing 5 of the starting 15 that lined out in the All Ireland Club Final in March. Of those remaining many were held together with tape - a common sight in the sporting world. Inniscarra could have been in the same boat for all I know.

We had devoted ourselves ardently to the quest of capturing the title for the fifth time in as many years. But "the will to win is not enough, to succeed you must refuse to be beaten".

Perhaps we lacked a little freshness in our legs and a little ruthlessness in our hearts. You cannot underestimate the power of sheer hunger. Hunger facilitates a 'win at all costs' mentality. It reminds me of Bri-



Aoife Galvin, Milford, dignified in defeat after Inniscarra's victory in the Cork County Senior A Camogie Final on Friday - at the CIT Sports Grounds. Picture: Jim Coughlan.

an Cody's words, "it's not about being willing to die in order to win, it's about being willing to kill". Full credit to Inniscarra, they had copious amounts of hunger and determination.

I contemplate many things in the aftermath of the final. I think about our corner back, one of my closest friends, who missed out on the chance to line out for that final (after years of service to our team), because the date of the final was changed and subsequently clashed with her honeymoon.

I reflect on the fragility of our health and how an injury can strike you down so fast, without warning; I won-

der about a cracked rib and a punctured lung, replaying the circumstances in which it was sustained, incredulous at the idea of it being a fair challenge; most of all, I ponder the fact that we can never fully prepare ourselves for disappointment.

Life resumes as normal the next day and as amateur sportspeople we have to move on and silently endure the heartache. But that doesn't mean we stop keep giving the best of ourselves to all that we do. You can't think about failing or holding something back to justify a loss. It's all or nothing. It has to be, or else what's the point?

I am not going to be a key-

board warrior criticising and reacting negatively.

It would be pointless, and quite frankly, a waste of energy as the outcome cannot be changed. Also, most know where I live so it wouldn't be wise!

Sport is cruel. Losing never gets less painful. In the end, we play because, never fully knowing the outcome is exhilarating.

That's the risk we all take and when it pays off there is no better reward. Today's article isn't about 'what ifs', today's article belongs to respecting our triumphant competitors. Friday was Inniscarra's day.

Inniscarra have since marched

on and reached the Munster Club Final. I acknowledge their work over the past few years.

In 2014, we faced each other in the county final and the score was 2-17 to 0-8 in our favour. Last weekend, they showed that perseverance does pay off, just like it did for us back in 2012.

It was history repeating itself, but this time a different crest appeared on the blue and white jersey.

Like the Take That song goes "someday this will all be someone else's dream" and now it is. We wish them well in the final. Extend the fleeting moment to ensure it lasts as long as possible.

LIFE RESUMES AS NORMAL THE NEXT DAY. WE HAVE TO MOVE ON AND SILENTLY ENDURE THE HEARTACHE.. AND KEEP GIVING IT OUR BEST

Sacred Heart in seventh heaven

Clonakilty school captures All-Ireland camogie crown

BY BRENDAN WALSH

SACRED Heart Clonakilty are in seventh heaven this week after their junior camogie team was crowned All-Ireland Camogie 7s champions in Ashbourne, Meath last Saturday.

Having won the Munster competition at the beginning of the month, the provincial champions followed this magnificent win by capturing the All-Ireland trophy.

The Sacred Heart girls, captained by Daire O'Brien and coached by Brian Daly, first played three group games against St Louis of Ballymena, Castlecomer of Kilkenny and Clare Galway from Galway.

The Clonakilty school defeated St Louis 9-3 to 3-1 in their opening game, inspired by solid defensive play from Kellie O'Gorman and Leanne Sheehy, while Anna Flynn from Ballinscarthy proved to be a handful with her direct running, and she was ably assisted by the inform Barryroe native Grace Tobin.

The second group game against Leinster champions, Castlecomer from Kilkenny, was very tight. Castlecomer raced 1-1 to no score ahead but then Hannah Sexton from Timoleague took control of the game. Clonakilty were back in the match when captain Daire O'Brien billowed the net after a sustained period of pressure.

The Clonakilty revival was now well underway with Claire Kingston and Emma O'Driscoll magnificent in defence, Annie Condon and Hannah Sexton dominating midfield and the speedy Jessica McCarthy making a difference up front. Scores were hard to come by however until Katelyn Dineen fired

over two points of high calibre. Castlecomer levelled late on in this 1-2 apiece draw.

The final group game – against Clare Galway from Connacht – was business as usual from the students of Sacred Heart with Eimear O'Brien, younger sister of Daire, scoring two goals in this 3-3 to 2-1 win. Jessica Sweeney netted late in the first half and this was followed by scores from Katelyn Dineen (goal) and a great point from the flying Anna Flynn.

With Sacred Heart and Castlecomer on top of the table on equal points after the group stages, both teams automatically qualified for the final. The Clonakilty students adopted a different approach to the drawn match, which was to be decisive.

Acknowledging the strong defence of the Kilkenny students, coach Brian Daly directed the team to play a more expansive game on the wings. This was to prove the masterstroke as it stretched the Leinster champions and cracks began to appear.

With Claire Kingston lording the defence, Hannah Sexton partnered by Annie Condon again punishing the Kilkenny midfield with their strong running and the two O'Brien sisters on fire up front, the Clonakilty students dominated the first half scoring 1-5, the goal coming from young Eimear O'Brien.

After the interval, the Clonakilty students got out of the blocks quickly with Daire O'Brien and Anna Flynn chipping over for points. Then a long ball from midfield saw first year student Kellie O'Gorman, normally a back, win a ball that she had no right to win. She



Simply the best: The Sacred Heart Clonakilty team that won the All-Ireland Junior Camogie 7s title last weekend.



Three cheers: Sacred Heart were worthy winners of the All-Ireland camogie crown.

turned her defender using her low centre of gravity and finished to the net. Two pointed

freed from Daire O'Brien put the game beyond the Kilkenny team, as Sacred Heart won 2-8



Presentation: Captain Daire O'Brien receives the All-Ireland cup from Catherine Neary, Camogie Association President.

to 2-2 – and were crowned All-Ireland champions. The All-Ireland winners were

presented with the cup by President of the Camogie Association, Catherine Neary.



MC Marty Morrissey alongside Tipperary hurler Brendan Maher, Dublin footballer Denis Bastick, Cork footballer Brid Stack and Kilkenny camogie star Collette Dormer at the New York GPA dinner at the Plaza Hotel. It was the first time Valerie Mulcahy saw all four All-Ireland senior trophies together.



At the 2016 camogie awards, in Association With Liberty Insurance, at the Citywest Hotel, Dublin, were: Kilkenny's Denise Gaule, Camogie Association/WPGA Players' Player of the Year; Kilkenny's Ciara Holden, Intermediate award, and Carlow's Eleanor Treacy, Junior Players' Player of the Year, with Alan Johnston, Liberty Insurance; Catherine Neary, Camogie Association President, and Aoife Lane, Chairperson WPGA.

Kilkenny the big winners at camogie All-Stars

Tony Leen

All-Ireland Senior champions Kilkenny dominated the Liberty Insurance-sponsored Camogie All-Stars, with more than half the team announced Saturday night.

The Cats picked up eight All Stars, beaten finalists Cork received three along with semi-finalists Galway, with Wexford completing the line-up with one award.

Amongst the winners for the Cats in defence were goalkeeper Emma Kavanagh, left corner-back Collette Dormer, as well as Anne Dalton and Meighan Farrell in the half-back line. Miriam Walsh was selected in midfield whilst in the forwards Denise Gaule and Julie Ann Malone were selected in the half-forward line with their captain Michelle Quilty selected at right corner-forward.

Wexford's Kate Kelly collected an incredible ninth All-Stars Award to equal Gemma O'Connor at the top of the All-Stars Roll of Honour. The Wexford legend took the full-forward spot after an outstanding year which saw her finish as the Championship's top scorer with an amazing tally of 5-49.

The Mackey twins, Pamela and Katrina of Cork, completed an All-Stars double for the second time by capturing the right corner-back and left corner-forward spots respectively. It is their third All-Stars

Award each, having achieved the feat together in 2012 as well. Midfielder Orla Cotter completed the Cork contingent, winning her fourth All-Stars Award in the process.

Kilkenny manager Ann Downey was named as Manager of the Year after guiding the Cats to their first Senior title in 22 years, having played in all of Kilkenny's previous 12 All-Ireland successes.

Denise Gaule of Kilkenny also collected the Camogie Association/WPGA Senior Players' Player of the Year award.

Ciara Holden of Kilkenny was the recipient of the Intermediate accolade whilst Eleanor Treacy of Carlow was chosen as the Junior Players' Player of the Year.

Camogie All-Stars: E Kavanagh (Kilkenny, 1st time winner); P Mackey (Cork, 3rd); S Dervan (Galway, 4th); C Dormer (Kilkenny, 2nd); R Henneley (Galway, 1st); A Dalton (Kilkenny, 4th); M Farrell (Kilkenny, 1st); O Cotter (Cork, 4th); M Walsh (Kilkenny, 1st); D Gaule (Kilkenny, 1st); J A Malone (Kilkenny, 1st); A Donohue (Galway, 1st); M Quilty (Kilkenny, 2nd); K Kelly (Wexford, 9th); K Mackey (Cork, 3rd).

2016 Intermediate Soaring Stars: L Collins (Cork, 1st); C Sigerson (Cork, 1st); J Clifford (Kilkenny, 1st); C Holden (Kilkenny, 1st); A Burke (Laois, 1st); J Dolan (Meath, 5th).

2016 Junior Soaring Stars: C Donnelly (Armagh, 1st); B Murray (Armagh, 2nd); E Treacy (Carlow, 2nd); C Quirk (Carlow, 1st); K Hopkins (Roscommon, 2nd); D Loughlin (Westmeath, 2nd).

Senior Players' Player: D Gaule (Kilkenny); **Intermediate Players' Player:** C Holden (Kilkenny); **Junior Players' Player:** E Treacy (Carlow).

Clon camogie team ready to spring a shock in final

SATURDAY is a red-letter day for the Clonakilty U16 camogie team that will take on Ballinhassig in the county U16 C final at Castle Road, Cork.

This will be the team's first-ever county final and while they will enter the game as underdogs against a very strong Ballinhassig side, they have improved in leaps and bounds all during a hectic season.

The county championship began in September with a strong finish against St Colum's giving Clon a place in the quarter-final against arch-rivals, Barryroe. The sides met several times during the season with never more than a puck of a ball between the sides and it was no surprise when a cracking game ended all square. The replay again provided another thriller with an improving Clon side just scraping through.

Opponents in the semi-final were Castlelyons in Castle Road and the physically strong East Cork side really tested the Clon

girls. A narrow half-time lead, after a slow start, widened to a final score of 4-6 to 2-4 and the team was through to its first-ever final.

Midfielders, Leah Geaney and Méabh O'Donovan have been the stars of the campaign, Geaney is a top-class scorer, especially from placed balls, while O'Donovan's defence-splitting solo-runs have been a strong feature of every game. Clon will be hoping for top performances from these players again on Saturday.

Full back Karina Lavery, who will captain the side, and centre back Eimear Walsh will backbone a defence that has really settled during the season and up front, Niamh Ni Rinn will be expected to provide strong leadership.

Others who have impressed in the campaign are Abbey Wycherley, Kelly O'Gorman and Chloe Allman.

A number of these players were involved in the Sacred



Making headlines: The Clonakilty camogie team that will compete in the U16 county final this weekend.

Heart Convent team that recently won the All-Ireland junior camogie seven-a-side com-

petition and this has been a huge boost. They know they will be up against it in a Ballinhassig

side that figured strongly in the B grade in recent times but they have had great community sup-

port in all their games to date and will be hoping for more of the same on Saturday.

Ballinora Camogie Club

U14 CAMOGIE GIRLS CLINCH UNIQUE DOUBLE - LEAGUE & CHAMPIONSHIP



Junior Team that won Junior C championship. C Hourihan K O'Halloran C O'Keefe N Mc Carthy A Junior C championship winning team: M Geth J O'Donnell K Nic Abhair J Murphy A Nic Abhair L Walsh L O'Shea A Murphy K Hogan S O'Riordan J Murphy (L) K O'Shea G Hourihan D Hourihan S Donoghue F Fitton K Dooley M Holmes K Lane L O'Hara G Beasley A O'Donovan Jennifer Sorenson G French M Fitzgerald M Murphy M O'Shea.

BALLINORA camogie club is enjoying a fantastic 2016 to date. The club has 162 members from ages from 5 years to adult and fields teams from u6 to junior level.

Off the field, the club had a busy year with events such as 'Come Hurl With Me' in which 10 camogie mums/dads completed a coaching

course, to more recently in September we took 105 kids and parents to the camogie all Ireland final and played 3 challenge games in Naas where new friends were made.

On the juvenile front, the club was alive with activity with our u6s, u8s and u10s playing non-competitive games while our u12s played

in a league. A lot of good work is being done by our coaches in these teams and we look forward to seeing them playing in the adult ranks in years to come. Our u13 team reached the Garda plate final and had a strong Muskerry divisional showing while our Minors were beaten in the championship QF. Our

u16s are due to play the championship semi-final in the coming weeks and we wish them well.

Double Success

The u14 team recently clinched the league and championship double by winning the first ever run 'A' championship in Ballinlough GAA

grounds against Sarsfields. Geridine Downey presented the new Peter Downey Memorial Cup to Brid Holmes, Ballinora's Captain, following an emotional and heart-warming speech. Sarah O'Keefe, Ballinora's full back, was deservedly named player of the match. This marked an exceptional year as this group had already won the regional Feile in Abbotstown in July. Also in July, the team captained by Katie Ann Cream won the league and Cliona Dooley was the recipient of the Player of the Match on that day following an outstanding display by her. This fantastic bunch of players are looked after by an equally committed group of coaches consisting of Tom Lincham, Brendan O'Shea, Jennifer O'Brien, Gina O'Donoghue, Brian Meighan and Donna-cha O'Riordan.

On the Adult front, our Junior team, is growing successfully with every season due to their dedicated coaches of Denis Hinks Dineen and Avril Walsh. This talented team played in 3 competitions and were finalists in all 3. Having narrowly being pipped in the league by



Coaches Session

Castlelyons and Summer cup final by junior A side Na Pairsaigh, they deservedly won out the Junior C championship in Castle Road. Captained by Jennifer Murphy, the girls were fabulous on the day against Castlelyons. They fought hard, and displayed fantastic skill. A real team effort saw us victorious with Caoimhe O'Keefe, from Ballinora was named Player of the match.

We are looking forward to 2017 already and new players and coaches are always welcome. Please contact 086 2458746 for further information.

Nov.
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CAMOGIE KILKENNY DOMINATE ALL-STAR TEAM

All-Star evening was icing on cake for our camogie queens

WRITTEN BY

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The season 2016 just keeps on giving to Kilkenny camogie.

The all conquering Cats completed the senior/intermediate All-Ireland double.

The county was the big winner again at the annual camogie All-Stars awards in the City West Hotel in Dublin on Saturday.

Kilkenny came home with two intermediate soaring stars, eight senior All-Stars and two player of the year awards, plus the Manger of the Year awards.

The night began with the Junior Soaring Stars awards that saw Carlow secure two of the six awards on offer with Eleanor Treacy and Ciara Quirke claiming the All Stars.

Armagh claimed two and Westmeath and Roscommon made up the remainder.

SOARING STARS

Next up was the Intermediate Soaring Stars awards that saw six of the All-Ireland champions, Kilkenny up for gons.

Ciara Holden (Mullinavat) and Jenny Clifford (Dicksboro) claimed two of the six awards on offer, with Cork taking two and Laois and Meath claiming the other two All Stars.

Next up were the Player of the Year awards.

Eleanor Treacy took the junior Player of the Year award.

Ciara Holden and Jenny Clifford, who claimed intermediate awards earlier, competed for the intermediate award.

The Mullinavat player (Holden) got the nod from her peers to claim the intermediate Player of the Year award.

DENISE WINS

Next up was the senior player of the year award. Denise Gaule found herself nominated for the senior award with Orla Cotter (Cork)

and Kate Kelly (Wexford).

Denise Gaule got the vote of her fellow players to claim the senior honour for 2016.

The next award on the night was the Manager of the Year. Here Ann Downey up against Mark Brennan of Carlow and Paudie Murray of Cork.

Much to the delight of the Kilkenny crowd, Ann Downey was granted the honour in recognition of reclaiming the O'Duffy Cup for Kilkenny for the first time in 22 years.

THE ALL STARS

The main part of the evening then got underway with the senior All Star team for 2016 being announced with all 15 of the Kilkenny team being nominated.

First up was goalkeeper with Emma Kavanagh up against Aoife Murray (Cork), and Mags D'Arcy (Wexford). The Rower-Inistioge net minder claimed the award for the All-Ireland champions.

The full-back line was next up with Collette Dormer, Jacqui Frisby and Davina Tobin getting the nomination along with Rena Buckley (Cork), Pamela Mackey (Cork), Laura Treacy (Cork), Sarah Dervan (Galway), Jean Brady (Offaly), Aoife McGrath (Tipperary).

The right back award went to Pamela Mackey of Cork. The full back award went to Sarah Dervan of Galway with Collette Dormer of Paulstown getting the left corner back award.

Next up was the half back line with Anne Dalton, St Lachtain's, Meighan Farrell, Thomastown, Edwina Keane, St Martin's and Claire Phelan, Lisdowney up against Gemma O'Connor (Cork), Rebecca Hennelly (Galway), Siobhán Flannery (Offaly), Patricia Jackman (Waterford), Sarah O'Connor (Wexford).

The right half-back award went to Rebecca Hennelly of Galway.

FOURTH WIN FOR DALTON

The centre-back award went to Anne Dalton of St Lachtain's, which was her fourth award and Meighan Farrell of Thomastown finished up the back line with the left half-back award earning her her first All Star.



CAMOGIAE STARS - pictured is the 2016 All-Star camogie team. Photo: ©INPHO/Ryan Byrne

Next up were the midfield nomination that saw Anna Farrell, Thomastown and Miriam Walsh, Tullaroan up against Orla Cotter (Cork), Ashling Thompson (Cork), Teresa Ryan (Tipperary) and Shelley Kehoe (Wexford).

The first midfield award went to the Rebel County with Orla Cotter claiming the award.

Miriam Walsh of Tullaroan claimed the fifth award for Kilkenny.

The next awards went to the half forward line that saw Denise Gaule, Windgap and Julie Ann Malone, Mullinavat up against Hannah Looney (Cork), Niamh O'Dea (Clare), Aoife Donohue (Galway), Niamh Mulcahy (Limerick), Michaela Morkan (Offaly), Mary Ryan (Tipperary), with Nicole Walsh (Tipperary) finishing the nominations.

The right half-forward award went to Denise Gaule of Windgap.

JULIE ANN A WINNER

The centre-forward gong went to Julie Ann Malone of Mullinavat with Aoife Donohue of Galway claiming the left half-forward award.

Next up was the full forward

line that saw Shelly Farrell, Thomastown, Katie Power, Piltown and Michelle Quilty, Mullinavat up against Briege Corkery (Cork), Katrina Mackey (Cork), Ailish O'Reilly (Galway), Tina Hannon (Offaly), Orla

O'Dwyer (Tipperary), Kate Kelly (Wexford) making up the nominations.

The right corner-forward award went to Michelle Quilty of Mullinavat.

Kate Kelly of Wexford claimed the full-forward

award while Katrina Mackey of Cork finished up the All Star team for 2016 in claiming the left corner forward spot.

The All Star awards evening really was the icing on the cake after a terrific year for Kilkenny camogie.



DENISE THE BEST - Denise Gaule, Windgap was nominated for the senior player of the year award and she walked away with the trophy, which was presented by Kilkenny woman, Catherine Neary, the President of the Camogie Association. Photo: ©INPHO/Ryan Byrne

Charleville	5-5
Fr O'Neill's	1-4

CHARLEVILLE made all the running in the first half of the SE Systems Minor C championship final on Saturday in Castle Road on an excellent surface both sides must be credited for the superb game they produced.

Two committed sides gave it their all but in the finish it was Charleville thanks to an opening half that saw them notch up 4-4 without reply that ran out winners.

Fr O'Neill's were unlucky not to have got on the scoreboard in the opening half. They concentrated a lot on defending against the strong wind but in the second half when they moved Ciara O'Neill further out field she caused problems for Charleville.

Grace Galvin found the net to settle Charleville into the game and with Laure Doyle adding a second goal they were in a good position. With the O'Neill's defence mopping up a lot of pressure it was tough and three Charleville points from Fiona Nelligan, and Laura Doyle (2) saw O'Neill's fall further behind.

O'Neill's did enjoy a lot of possession in front of goal but strong defending helped Charleville stand firm.

With Ciara O'Brien hugely impressive as they stopped Fr O'Neill's gaining any ground. Two Sophie Hudner goals and a Fiona Nelligan point before the break gave Charleville a 16-point interval lead and it was going to be tough for O'Neill's to peg it back.

Ciara O'Neill had Fr O'Neill's on the scoreboard with an early second half point. Laura Doyle replied but Ciara O'Neill again got one back as her side began to enjoy a lot more possession.

Fiona Nelligan had a goal as the game entered the third quarter but it was to be Charleville's last score of the game as Fr O'Neill's began to play with a lot more determination.

Chloe O'Keefe converted a 45 before Rebecca O'Brien grabbed a Fr O'Neill's goal with eight minutes remaining.

Chloe O'Keefe converted a free as Fr O'Neill's still battled on but the clock ticked towards full time much to Charleville's relief after a contest where they were grateful to their opening half performance which helped them take the title.

Fiona Nelligan, who played a huge role in her side's victory, was presented with the Evening Echo Player of the Match award.

Scorers for Charleville: S Hudner 2-0, L Doyle 1-3, F Nelligan 1-2 (0-1 45), G Galvin 1-0.
Fr O'Neill's: R O'Brien 1-0, C O'Neill 0-2, C O'Keefe 0-2 (0-1 45, 0-1 f).

CHARLEVILLE: C Reynolds; C O'Brien, E Moloney, K Dore, M Murphy, M Jones (c), C Sheehan; E O'Flynn, T Collins; G Galvin, F Nelligan; Corrigan; J Moloney, L Doyle, S Hudner.

Subs: L Costello for G Galvin (48), R O'Carroll for S Hudner (52), C O'Neill for J Moloney (54), O O'Donnell for L Corrigan (54).

FR O'NEILL'S: A Bernard; J O'Sullivan, S Broderick, S O'Sullivan, K O'Dwyer, C O'Neill, A Higgins; E O'Keefe (c), D Corcoran; M Steele, A Millerick, N Cowhip; A McAllister, H Belton, C O'Keefe.

Sub: R O'Brien for K O'Dwyer (45).

Referee: John Horgan (Glean Na Laoi).

It is another a busy weekend for the juvenile board as they continue to work towards completing their fixture programme.

Weather has been kind and games

Charleville do the early damage



Clare Mullins with the Evening Echo Player of the Match award presented by Sheila Golden, vice-chair of the Cork Camogie Board. Picture: Colbert O'Sullivan.

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Cork camogie gears up for a night at the dogs

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

THIS year Cork Camogie celebrates 110 years in existence.

Over the past few years, the Cork Camogie Board have developed a magnificent pitch in Castle Road for the benefit of all clubs, and we are now delighted to announce that building has just recently commenced on club house facilities with an expected completion date of April 2017.

As part of the fundraising drive to support this development the Board will hold A Night at the Dogs in Curraheen Park this Saturday.

Anyone interested in nominating a dog (€50), advertising (full page €100 and half page €75) or purchasing admission tickets for €10 - please contact the camogie board.

Support is greatly appreciated as we continue on our ambitious development drive to enhance our Camogie facilities in Castle Road.

This development is vital for the continuous growth of our game in Cork and will give all our players the facilities they deserve.

Furthermore, one of the core philosophies is that this project must be sustainable so that it can be enjoyed by generations to come.

Therefore, they need help to raise funds that will go directly towards the cost of this development.

To date, the 'Sponsor a Block' drive, at €50 a block, has generated significant income and the board sincerely thanked the people who have supported this fundraiser.

Anyone wishing to sponsor a block can contact the Camogie Board as they strive to reach our target of €50,000.

They are calling on camogie members, the wider GAA family and friends of camogie to support this ambitious project that will ensure Cork camogie will have a facility that we can be proud of and enjoyed by all.

CONTACT: Mary McSweeney or Marian McCarthy on chairperson.cork@camogie.ie or treasurer.cork@camogie.ie.

KILBREE

U14 Camogie: The U14 camogie girls continued their great run in the U14 championship. They defeated Watergrasshill, Buttevant and Tracton in the previous rounds. Brian Dillon provided the opposition for the county semi-final, in Brinny. Kilbree got a great start with a couple of early goals. They were dominant particularly in the first half. Kilbree defended exceptionally well and kept supplying the forwards with quality possession. The girls now meet Cobh in the U14 final. The final is scheduled for Saturday 12th November.

Team: Heather Brimble, Cara Collins, Kate O'Donovan, Jessica O'Driscoll, Maeve O'Neill, Sarah O'Donovan, Alice Twomey, Emily O'Donovan, Leanne Sheehy, Rachel Deasy, Mairead Crowley, Mary Murphy, Aife O'Neill, Caoimhe Murphy, Rebecca Hurley, Margaret Collins, Orlagh O'Neill Callanan and Niamh McCarthy.

KILWORTH

A date for the Diary After what has been a wonderful first year for Kilworth Camogie, the focus now turns to next year as

we get ready to host our AGM on Thursday November 24th in the GAA clubrooms at 7.30pm. You are all very welcome to attend this meeting - players, members and parents alike. It would be brilliant to get a few new faces involved in the committee or in the juvenile side of things for the coming year so please don't hesitate to let us know, we would love to hear from you! Every little or big job goes a long way towards making sure the club is run as smoothly and professionally as possible. Let's make 2017 a bigger and better year! Be sure and mark the date in the diary, spread the word and we will see you all on the 24th.

SARSFIELDS

Sarsfields were crowned Minor A Champions when we overcame Killeagh in a close tough affair with two evenly matched teams. Killeagh won the toss and chose to play into the wind and, as result got the better start with a well taken goal and a point before Sars settled, and eventually came to terms with Killeagh's sweeper system. Lucy Kelly and Clare Mullins cut the deficit to two points before Killeagh's Chloe Si-

Camogie club notes

gerson converted a free to leave a goal between the sides.

Meabh Mullins at centre back regrouped her charges and ensured a steady flow of ball into our hard working half forward trio of Donna Kerrigan, Clare Mullins and Ruth McCarthy. This line came more into the game-winning crucial ball, with our defence at this stage on top in nearly all sectors. Centre-forward, Clare Mullins in particular breached Killeagh's defence more than once setting up Kelly Lyons and winning a scoreable free which Lucy Kelly easily converted. All the while Jessie Lyons was doing an effective marshalling job on Killeagh's Chloe Sigeron. Killeagh pulled one back before Sars finished the half with a spectacular score from midfielder Sarah Costello to leave it level pegging at half time, Killeagh 1-03 Sars 0-05.

With nothing between the teams & Killeagh playing with the wind to their backs

it meant Sars had the more difficult task ahead, but in somewhat similar circumstances to the first half it was Sars who got off to the better start with a cracking goal and a point from Clare Mullins. At this stage Edel Lonergan and Meabh Mullins thundered into the game making vital clearances from defence. Killeagh converted a free to leave it 1-7 to 1-4. Sars missed a few goal scoring opportunities before a Lucy Kelly point from play put a little daylight between the teams to show a scoreline of 1-08 to 1-04 in favour of Sars. Not for long though as Killeagh responded soon after to cut the deficit to just a goal. However, soon after Clare Mullins again found the range to give Sars a four-point cushion.

With stoppages and required extra time it was near impossible for the players to see the ball. Goalkeeper, Molly Lynch coped well with the late onslaught on her goal and well into injury time, Kil-

leagh laid on the pressure forcing a 45 with the resultant attempt going wide, leaving Sars to hold on to win by 1-09 to 1-06. Forced to play without key injured player, Michelle Barry, Sars had to dig deep on numerous occasions with the character of the team shining through on more than one occasion. Their tough semi-final battle with Ballyhea/Millford stood them in good stead. Player of the match was awarded to U16 player, Clare Mullins.

Team: Molly Lynch, Jane McAllen, Edel Lonergan, Ciara O'Sullivan, Rebecca Morgan, Meabh Mullins (c), Jessie Lyons, Sarah Costello, Kelly Lyons, Ruth McCarthy, Clare Mullins, Donna Kerrigan, Ellen Twomey, Lucy Kelly & Ashling O'Brien Subs Used: Grace Jones for Rebecca Morgan (inj), Rebecca Morgan for Grace Jones, Rionna O'Mahony for Ashling O'Brien

ST CATHERINE'S

All-Star glory: St Catherine's camogie club are celebrating this week after receiving the news last Saturday night that our own Orla Cotter had received one of the highest accolades of the sporting

year, the much sought after Camogie All-Star. Orla was nominated in her midfield position, sharing the category with Anna Farrell (Kilkenny), Miriam Walsh (Kilkenny), Shelley Kehoe (Galway), Teresa Ryan (Tipperary) and fellow Cork player, Ashling Thompson.

Orla was one of three Cork senior players to receive an All-Star, sharing the stage with Pamela Mackey for corner-back position and Katrina Mackey for corner-forward. Orla is a huge inspiration to all the young ladies in the club for her scoring skill, her ability to consistently convert frees, cool-headed approach and all the while playing a good clean sporting game. With her talent the envy of many, it's no great surprise then that this was her fourth occasion to scoop an All-Star. Heartfelt congratulations Orla from all at St. Catherine's Camogie club.

Congratulations also this week to our other Cork senior player, Finola Neville who last week celebrated her graduation from Carlow IT. Whilst studying in Carlow, Finola captained their very successful camogie team.

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Cork County Senior Camogie final player of the match, Joanne Casey, Inniscarra, collects her award at Reardens, Washington Street. Also Joanne Casey, Inniscarra, (centre) holding her Reardens Trophy, with her family, dad John, mum, Maureen, brother Colm and sister Geraldine.
Picture: Jim Coughlan

Inniscarra go to Cahir in search of a Munster senior club crown

TOMORROW
Munster Senior Club final:
Inniscarra v Burgess Du-
harra, Cahir GAA Grounds,
2.45pm

■ Linda Mellerick

CAHIR GAA Club will host an enticing camogie double header tomorrow.

At 12.30pm Nenagh's Éire Óg will face Gailltír of Waterford in the Munster intermediate club final while at 2.45pm Inniscarra take on Burgess-Duharra of Tipperary in the senior decider.

Burgess are stating that they enter their provincial final as underdogs and have appealed for support from the Tipperary public against "opposition of real pedigree".

Burgess-Duharra recently registered a fifth successive county senior title and sixth in seven years thanks to a replayed final win over Borris-Isleigh (2-13 to 1-9).

They then progressed to beat Limerick champions Granagh-Ballingarry.

In Cork, Inniscarra beat highly regarded Milford, who were also seeking a fifth successive county title, and for that reason Burgess have oceans of respect for the team they are about to face.

That's no surprise but it must also provide Burgess with a spring in their step now that Milford have been eliminated and this will surely increase their intensity and belief of claiming the Munster title.

They certainly have a lot of talent to boast about.

Gemma Grace, Jenny Grace and Caoimhe Maher all line out with Tipperary's senior side while Ciardha Maher won the All-Ireland minor title with Tipp and lines out for the intercounty intermediate team.

After a superb display Inniscarra won their county title with a hard fought 4-10 to 2-13 three-point winning margin. Three days later they played a provincial semi-final and, to their credit, made the long journey to Clare and beat Inagh-Kilnamona 1-10 to 0-7.

Inniscarra won their first Cork county title in 2010 before adding a provincial title and reaching the All-Ireland club final, during a ground-breaking season for the club.

Due to a plethora of injuries that seemed to plague the squad it has taken them until this season to prove themselves a fine side again.

Those injuries and the fact that they lost out in the past

three seasons to Milford, who went on to win Munster and All-Ireland titles in 2013 and 2015, meant that they didn't fulfil their potential over the past five years. That has changed now.

Darrell Tucker (Burgess), who is joined on the Burgess-Duharra management team by Timmy Maher and James McGrath (Toomevara), knows that the challenge posed by Inniscarra is a serious one.

"It's a massive challenge," Darrell said "Milford are after winning the last four Munster senior titles. So, to take a scalp like that you would have to be respected. And we will certainly be respecting Inniscarra on Saturday. We just have to look after our own performance. If we can perform to our own ability hopefully it will be enough to get us over the line," Darrell added.

"This is where you want to be. You want to get to a county final and then, if you can, progress to a Munster final. This is a massive challenge for us, but we are actually really looking forward to it. Hopefully things will go well." Burgess-Duharra lost last year's provincial final to Milford, but got this year's Munster campaign off to an encouraging start when beating Granagh-Ballingarry (5-17 to 1-9) two weeks ago in Ballingarry's home pitch.

"Following the match I was pleased enough," Darrell Tucker explained as his thoughts turned to the impressive 20-point win over a side who had brought Burgess-Duharra's 2014 campaign to a crushing end.

"I was pleased with the score that we put up, but there are a lot of things that we can improve on," Tucker added before praising his players for their focus, intensity in training and dedicated to the cause this season.

"They seem to be very focused this year — there have been no distractions; they are focused on the job in hand and there is no looking past the next game; 'We are just taking it one game at a time.'

I am delighted by the way they are applying themselves in training and by their focus coming up to match time," Tucker said.

Extra time will be played in the event of a draw.



Denise Gaule with her parents Dinny and Joan at the All Ireland Final in Croke Park



ANN HONOURED - Kilkenny senior camogie team manager, Ann Downey was honoured as Manager of the Year at the camogie All-Stars function sponsored by Liberty Insurance. She is pictured with Camogie President Catherine Neary and Alan Jonston (Liberty Insurance). Photo: ©INPHO/Ryan Byrne



The U14 team recently clinched the league and championship double by winning the first ever 'A' championship in Ballylough GAA grounds against Sarsfields. U14A Orlaith O'Shea, Denise Murphy, Sarah O'Keefe, Aoife Murphy, Gemma Lincan, Maibh Murphy, Caoimhe Murphy, Bríd Holmes, Katie Ann Cron, Rose Murphy, North Maher, Cliona Dooley, Orla O'Brien, Aoife Quirk, Kate O'Shea, Laura Conway, Maibh Hughes, Emer O'Donoghue, Evelyn Mahigan, Katie O'Riordan, Kate Farrell, Aidan O'Driscoll.



Pictured are Presentation Secondary School Sevens camogie team who were recently crowned Leinster champions after defeating Loreto Kilkenny in the final.

Burgess
happy to
see end of
heartache

REACTION

■ Linda Mellerick

BURGESS DUHARRA manager Darrell Tucker was ecstatic on Saturday when the final whistle blew.

He has been with his side for five years and they had suffered a lot of heartbreak in Munster but they looked on top from the outset?

"Yeah we probably were but it's never over. We've been in this position before and it isn't over until the final whistle. We've been working on that over the past couple of weeks, just see out games, finish them out no matter what the score is."

"We've had a lot of heartbreak. We've come up against good teams. Milford were an excellent team and Inniscarra beat them in the county title so huge respect to Inniscarra. We knew they'd come up with a serious test so we had to bring our A game today."

On the other side Inniscarra manager Ger Dinan couldn't hide his disappointment but was gracious in defeat. "Ah yeah, look I only came in in July and the stall was always to win the county championship and everything was a bonus after that. To get to a Munster final, we were delighted, but today Burgess were just outstanding. They worked so hard and gave our girls no chance. But look our girls still won Cork this year so we'll re-energise the batteries and hopefully have a crack next year at it again."

"When we lost the first round to St Catherine's that was my first day with the girls and if you'd said in July that we'd still be playing in November people would have thought we were mad. But look we're immensely proud of the girls. That night in CIT can't be taken away from us, to beat Milford, and we'll enjoy it and regroup for next year."

"Today hurts but the girls, we're all immensely proud of them, the committee and everyone in Inniscarra is immensely proud of them."

Inniscarra spent time in a huddle after the final whistle and I asked Ger what was the message amongst them?

"Yeah just stand up and be proud, that they represented the club and county well. We're so proud that they represented Cork and Inniscarra so well. We gave it a go today. It just didn't come off for us and these days happen. There has to be a winner and a loser."

One had to appreciate what Burgess had gone through for the last five years.

"They're a very experienced team. They were so hungry today. They looked like us in the county final. We were hungry too for it but things just didn't fall for us on this day. But we'll regroup and well done to Burgess Duharra. They'll represent Munster very well in the All-Ireland championship."

Burgess break Inniscarra hearts



Camogie

Linda
Mellerick

Burgess Duharra 2-10
Inniscarra 0-6

AFTER suffering Munster Club heartbreak for the past five years, Burgess Duharra finally achieved their dream on Saturday when they claimed the title at the expense of Cork champions Inniscarra.

Twelve months ago, Burgess were denied by Milford with an injury-time point scored in extra-time, and they carried the pain of that right through to the final whistle in Cahir where the euphoria and relief was clear to see when referee Philip Dee called for full-time.

Burgess Duharra's experience at this level was very evident. Their physicality, teamwork, and dogged performance proved too much for an Inniscarra side that just couldn't match them on the day.

Winning the county final was everything Inniscarra wanted for 2016, and anything after that was always going to be a bonus. But when you're in a Munster final, you want to win it and clearly Inniscarra were disappointed. But it's been a fantastic year for them and when the disappointment of Saturday subsides they'll remember that.

In soft, underfoot conditions, the game never really excited the large attendance. Throw-in was held up for 10 minutes to allow the crowd to enter the grounds.

Referee Philip Dee was very picky on the whistle and failed to allow advantage, which didn't help the game's flow. But it was a tough, dogged battle with scores hard to come by.

Burgess were very strong on paper, with several inter-county players and with Emer McDonnell, at 36 years of age, still displaying moments of brilliance, Burgess had too much power up front for Inniscarra to cope with.

Trish O'Halloran immediately made



Inniscarra's Rena Buckley breaks past Burgess/Duharra's Ruth Barry and Tara Kennedy during the AIB Munster Senior club camogie final in Cashel.
Picture: John D Kelly

an impact at centre-back and with Ciardha Maher, Jenny Grace, and Amy Kennedy powerful, the first couple of points went to the Tipperary side before Joanne Casey levelled the game with two frees.

Up until the 18th minute the scoreboard was dominated by frees.

Inniscarra did receive a let-off on 10 minutes after Tara Kennedy hit the net, but the referee failed to give advantage and called play back to where Grace converted the resultant free.

With Burgess leading 0-5 to 0-3 McDonnell got one break. Spotting a gap, with a one-handed pick and incredible speed she bore down on goal. Sinead Ni Riain, to her credit, advanced well, but McDonnell rattled the

net with a direct strike from the hurley.

Further points from Grace and Clara McKeogh and Burgess took a 1-7 to 0-3 lead into the dressing room.

Inniscarra's intensity increased in the second half. To their credit they fought very hard, but just couldn't overcome a very solid Burgess Duharra performance.

With scores difficult to get, Casey and Grace swapped frees, three-a-piece, as the game moved towards the final five minutes.

McDonnell put Tipp's name on the cup when, gathering 50 metres out, she burst down the middle, drew Inniscarra's defenders and offloaded to Kennedy who finished to the net to put any

hope of an Inniscarra comeback to bed.

Scorers for Burgess Duharra: J Grace 0-7 (5), E McDonnell 1-1 (0-1 f), T Kennedy 1-0, C McKeogh, A Kennedy 0-1 each.

Inniscarra: J Casey 0-6 f.

BURGESS DUHARRA: C Holohan; E King, G Grace, A Egan; M Moloney, T O'Halloran, U Quigley; Caoimhe Maher, Ciardha Maher; R Barry, J Grace, C McKeogh; T Kennedy, E McDonnell, A Kennedy.

Subs: A Gillespie for U Quigley (59), L Reid for R Barry (62).

INNISCARRA: S Ni Riain; M Buckley, L Hayes, R Quigley; R O'Mahony, C Looney, A Sheehan; R Buckley, A Kavanagh; R Keane, E Looney, T McCarthy; J Casey, L Brennan, N McCarthy.

Subs: A Dineen and C Cronin for L Brennan (in) and M Buckley (55), A O'Reilly for T McCarthy (56), N Lombard for R Keane (58), S Walsh for E Looney (62).

Referee: Philip Dee (Limerick).



Inniscarra's Liz Hayes breaks past Burgess/Duharra's Tara Kennedy during the AIB Munster Senior club camogie final in Cashel.
Picture: John D Kelly



Burgess/Duharra's Jenny Grace finds her path blocked by Inniscarra's Rena Buckley during the Munster senior club camogie final in Cashel.
Picture: John D Kelly

Munster glory at last for Burgess-Duharra

Burgess-Duharra
(Tipperary) 2-10
Inniscarra (Cork) 0-6
AIB Munster Club Senior camogie final

Therese O'Callaghan
Cahir

After recently claiming their fifth Tipperary senior county title in succession, Burgess-Duharra were crowned AIB Munster Club champions for the first time in Cahir on Saturday. They can now set their sights on All-Ireland glory, seeking to follow in the footsteps of Cashel – the last Premier club team to win the Bill Carroll Cup in 2009. First though, they must overcome Ulster and Derry victors Slaughtneil in an All-Ireland semi-final early next year.

They laid the foundation for victory when one of the county's most decorated players, Eimear McDonnell, pounced for a crucial goal in the 19th minute. The former Tipp star – holder of five All-Ireland senior medals between '99 and '04 – is still delivering on the big stage.

"It is fabulous for the club, for the mentors and the people involved," she said. "They deserve it more than anything. I am just so proud to be part of this team. These are the girls you grow up with. Different things went against us over the last few years. We felt hard done by to lose to Milford last year but we will enjoy this because this is a huge achievement."

Following a competitive first quarter, the sides were tied 0-3 apiece, but when McDonnell goaled, after being put through by Caoimhe

Maier, a pattern was beginning to establish. By the short whistle, Burgess-Duharra were 1-7 to 0-3 clear.

Accurate free-taking from respective captains Joanne Casey and Jenny Grace providing the bulk of the scoring. Casey and player-of-the-match Grace traded points after the break. But, despite never giving up the fight, scores were at a premium for Inniscarra. They had to rely on Casey for their six points, and they all came from placed balls. Massive credit then to the winner's defence, who were relentless as well against Granagh/Ballingarry in the last round.

In contrast, midfielder supreme Rena Buckley had to switch to centre-back in the first-half, as Inniscarra attempted to curtail the influence of the Burgess-Duharra attack. With the game entering the closing stages, the Tipperary champions were still seven points to the good. Gemma Grace and Tishy O'Halloran were solid at the back, while the impact of Ciardha and Caoimhe Maier's was a big plus at midfield.

Tara Kennedy then clinched the win for Burgess-Duharra when she hand-passed their second goal two minutes from time. The corner forward was picked out by McDonnell, who 17 years after winning her first All-Ireland with the Blue and Gold, still has a great eye for goal.

Scorers for Burgess-Duharra: J Grace (0-8 frees), T Kennedy and E McDonnell (1-0 each), C McKeogh and A Kennedy (0-1 each).

Scorers for Inniscarra: J Casey (0-6 frees).

BURGESS-DUHARRA: C Holohan; A Egan, G Grace, E King, M Moloney, T O'Halloran, U Quigley, Ciardha Maier,



NO WAY THROUGH: Burgess/Duharra's Jenny Grace finds her path blocked by Inniscarra's Rena Buckley during the Munster Club Senior Camogie final in Cashel. Right: Burgess/Duharra players celebrate their first Munster Club Championship victory.
Picture: John D Kelly

Caoimhe Maier; C McKeogh, J Grace (Capt), R Barry, A Kennedy, E McDonnell, T Kennedy.

Subs: A Gillespie for U Quigley (60); L Reid for R Barry (63).

INNISCARRA: S Ni Ráin; M Buckley, L Hayes, R Quigley; R O'Mahony, C Looney, A Sheehan; R Buckley, A

Kavanagh; R Keane, E Looney, L Brennan; T McCarthy, N McCarthy, J Casey (Capt).

Subs: A Dineen for L Brennan (56); A O'Reilly for T McCarthy (58); C Cronin for M Buckley (58); N Lombard for R Keane (59); S Walsh for E Looney (60).

Referee: Philip Dee (Limerick).



Impressive Kilbree U14s sink Cobh in titanic camogie battle

KILBREE U14s were crowned county champions after a great performance against Cobh on Saturday.

Four first-half goals saw Kilbree lead 4-4 to 1-2 at half-time, as Mairead Crowley scored a hat-trick and Caoimhe Murphy also found the back of the net.

The second half was a much tougher battle and the Kilbree girls were tested in every area of the field but Leanne Sheehy and Sarah O'Donovan stood up and helped Kilbree to a 4-6 to 2-4 win.

The girls add the county title to the Carbery championship title that they won in August. Mairead Crowley was awarded the Player of the Match award; she also received the inaugural U14 championship

cup. Thanks to Deirdre O'Leary, Anna O'Neill, Aidan O'Shea, Tony O'Neill and Marie Dorgan for their great work with this team.

2016 has been an historic year for Kilbree camogie. The following titles have been won: U14 county championship, U14 Carbery championship, U12 county league and U12 Carbery league.

Many girls are on many both panels and have won four medals. Four girls – Mary Murphy, Caoimhe Murphy, Kate O'Donovan and Rachel Deasy – have won six medals. They also played with the U12 hurling and football teams that won the West Cork leagues.

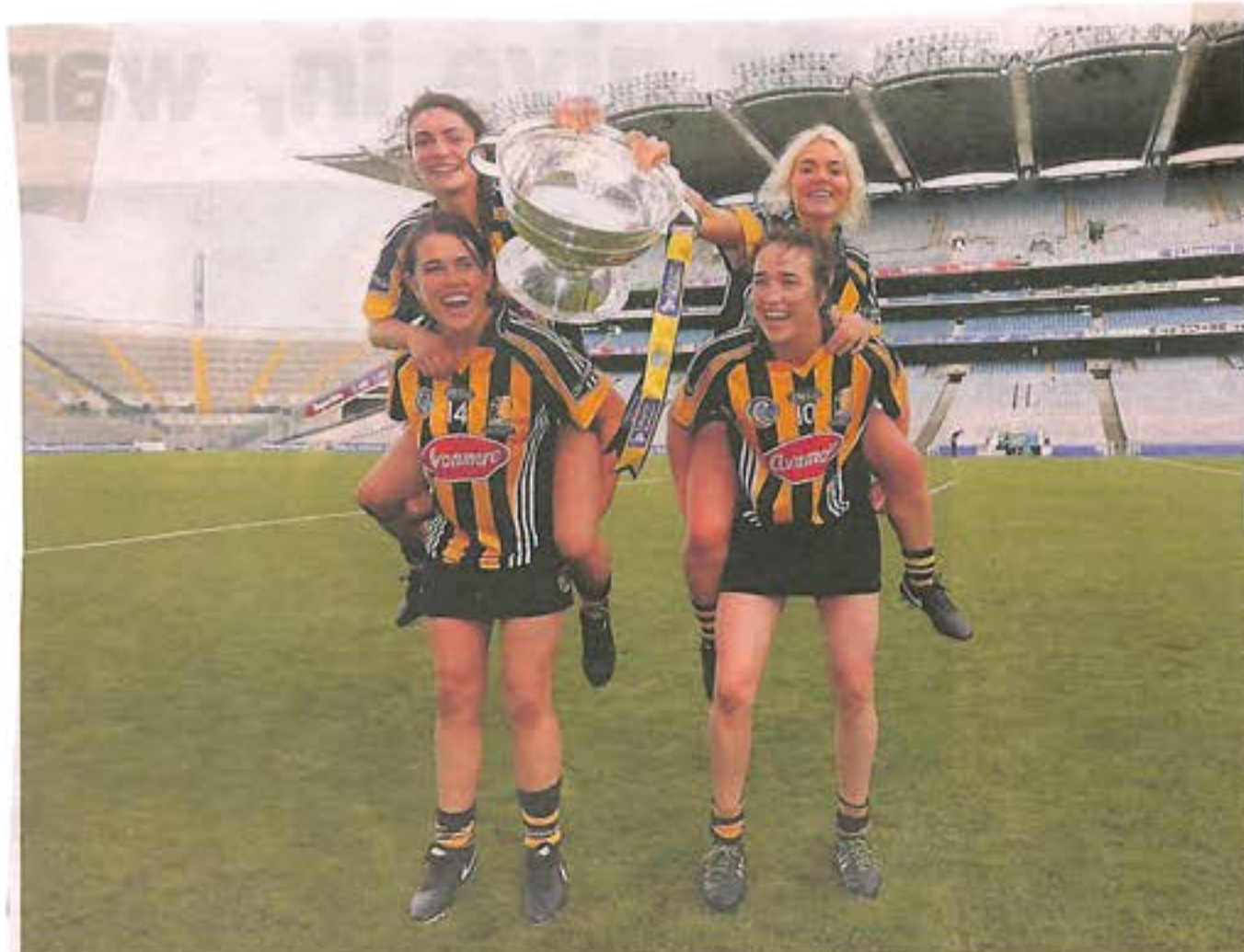
The U14 panel included: Heather Brimble, Cara

Collins, Kate O'Donovan, Jessica O'Driscoll, Maeve O'Neill, Sarah O'Donovan, Alice Twomey, Leanne Sheehy, Emily O'Donovan, Rachel Deasy, Mairead Crowley, Mary Murphy, Aife O'Neill, Caoimhe Murphy, Rebecca Hurley, Margaret Collins, Alison Collins, Sinead O'Sullivan, Orlagh O'Neill Callanan and Niamh McCarthy.

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Niamh Murphy, Heineken, presents the camogie player of the year award to John Casey on behalf of his daughter Joanne Casey at the Reardens awards.
Picture: Eddie O'Hare



Kilkenny celebrate after defeating Cork in September's All-Ireland Senior Camogie final in Croke Park.

Picture: Inph

Cats face Déise in opening round

Therese O'Callaghan
Camogie

All-Ireland senior camogie champions Kilkenny will begin the defence of their title in 2017 against neighbours Waterford.

The Liberty Insurance All-Ireland championship draws, which were made in Dublin yesterday evening, have thrown up some interesting pairings, including that of defeated finalists Cork against fellow Munster side Tipperary in their opening round match.

After years of heartbreak, Kilkenny regained the

O'Duffy Cup last September, bridging a gap of 22-years since current manager Ann Downey captained the side to glory. They claimed their 13th title, emerging with four points to spare over Cork. The Cats had agonizingly lost six finals in the intervening years.

Ten teams will participate in next year's championship, consisting of two groups of five.

The first rounds will get underway in June, with the quarter-finals and semi-finals due to take place in July and August respectively.

The Déise — who were crowned All-Ireland intermediate champions in 2015 — will play host to the title-holders in Group 1, a group that also includes Clare, Dublin and Galway.

In Group 2, the Premier County will entertain the Rebels, while Limerick, Offaly and Wexford complete this line-up.

Meanwhile, the intermediate championship which Kilkenny also claimed this season, sees the Black and Amber drawn in Group 1.

In an all-Leinster clash, they are up against Wexford in

their opening round, with Antrim, Derry, Kildare and Tipperary completing the group.

In Group 2, runners-up Cork will face Galway in the opening round, whilst the current premier junior All-Ireland champions Carlow are paired with Down in their first game at intermediate level. Laois and Meath complete the line-up.

The Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Camogie Finals at senior, intermediate and premier junior level form part of a treble header in Croke Park in September.

■ See Digest for draws

CAMOGIE

2017 Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Senior Camogie Championship Draws

Group 1: Clare, Dublin, Galway, Kilkenny, Waterford

Group 2: Cork, Offaly, Limerick, Tipperary, Wexford

Round 1 Fixtures - Saturday June 10th 2017:

Group 1: Dublin v Clare; Waterford v Kilkenny

Group 2: Limerick v Offaly; Tipperary v Cork

2017 Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Intermediate Camogie

Championship Draws

Group 1: Antrim, Derry, Kildare, Kilkenny, Tipperary, Wexford

Group 2: Carlow, Cork, Down, Galway, Laois, Meath

Round 1 Fixtures - Saturday June 10th 2017:

Group 1: Antrim v Tipperary; Derry v Kildare; Wexford v Kilkenny

Group 2: Cork v Galway; Down v Carlow; Meath v Laois

2017 Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Premier Junior Camogie Championship Draws

Group 1: Dublin, Offaly, Waterford, Westmeath, Wicklow

Group 2: Armagh, Clare, Kerry, Roscommon

Round 1 Fixtures - Weekend of July 1st 2017:

Group 1: Waterford v Dublin; Wicklow v Westmeath

Group 2: Armagh v Kerry; Roscommon v Clare



St Vincent's Secondary School student, Lauryn Homan, who has been selected for the Irish U15 basketball development squad.



Inniscarra's Joanne Casey gets in her shot under pressure from Burgess/Duharra's Amanda Egan during the AIB Munster senior club camogie final in Cashel.

Pic: JohnD Kell

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WOMAN OF STEEL

Cork camogie star Ashling Thompson, who captained the side to All-Ireland victory last year, credits her sport with turning her life around after depression, the suicide of her on-off boyfriend, and some badly chosen friendships threatened to derail her. Since then, she tells **Emily Hourican**, she has learned that, in the bad times 'it's about holding on' and that there is no weakness in asking for help. Photography by **Kip Carroll**. Styling by **Liadan Hynes**

I feel like I'm made of steel," says Cork camogie star Ashling Thompson. She looks it, too. Unsmiling, with the kind of steady gaze that means she probably rarely has to actually say the words: "Don't mess with me". It's written all over her, from her Amazonian height and strength, to the tattoos that snake across her forearm. It's there, too, in her history, as a fierce player, hard tackler and outspoken commentator.

But she's vulnerable, too. Twice during the interview, she nearly breaks down in tears, talking about the "dark times" that lie behind her. Mostly what she is, though, is passionate — about sport, and what it has done for her.

"I know it was my sport that ended up saving my life," she says, without a hint of exaggeration. "I went through a few struggles some years ago, depression and a few different things, and it was my sport I always held on to, and it was that that dragged me through, and picked me back up. There were individuals along with it, but sport literally saved my life."

Which is why Ashling is a supporter of the Irish Life Health Schools' Fitness Challenge, now in its fifth year, with 60,000 secondary-school children so far having taken part. "When I play my sport, the benefit is 50pc physical, and 50pc mental. When your emotions are getting the better of you, there's probably nothing worse," she says. "I couldn't imagine, if I wasn't playing camogie at the time... I don't know where I'd be right now. I was in such a dark place, such a low point in my life."

The dark days started, for Ashling, with a car crash in 2009, near her home in Newtownshandrum on the Cork-Limerick border. She was 19 and in her first year at college. Before that, she was, she says, a perfectly happy, sports-mad teenager. "I was always playing at the highest level. I was on the Cork senior camogie team when I was in secondary school. I was gifted naturally as a young girl. I never struggled to get on the

highest-level team, which was great. I was engulfed in sport growing up. I was a pure fairy. I just wanted to play sports all the time.

"I was real smart at school, but had no interest whatsoever. The teachers thought I was a bit of an eejit, like: 'So much potential, really good in class, but...' We always got on really well, and I'd always do my homework, but when it came to studying, I hated being cooped up in a classroom. I needed to be physically active."

Did she never have a teenage moment when boys took precedence over sport? "Never. I was a tomboy. I don't think I wore make-up until I was in first year in college."

And so, for Ashling, the impact of the car crash was devastating far beyond her physical injuries. "I had no broken bones," she says, "no life-threatening injuries, but I had severe muscle damage to my neck and back. I was used to getting bangs in games, and, at first, I said, 'I'll be totally fine'. But in the hospital, the physio said, 'There's no way you can go back playing, and you probably won't be right for a long time'. So when it came to that realisation, it hit me like a ton of bricks. That car accident set me back for about three years."

It was, she admits, very much her response to it that was the problem. "I could have prevented it from being prolonged, but the impact it had on my mental health and my feelings... I stopped talking to my friends. I would be cooped up in my room 24/7. I stopped eating; I lost so much weight. I should have been 10 stone, but I was seven-and-a-half stone. I was skin and bone. It all was so overwhelming, and I didn't know how to cope with it. I was just so sick, physically and mentally sick, at the thoughts of it. Your whole identity comes to a stop," she explains. "It was like it was taken away from me, and there was nothing I could do. It was so disheartening, and I started to get really angry then."

The anger was very much directed at herself, because it was Ashling who was driving the day she crashed. "I was angry at myself — 'Why did I go out that day? There was no need to go. If only I hadn't.' Clearly, she already had a bad temper — at

one point, she talks about her two older brothers, saying with a laugh, "They would have been half afraid of me. I'd such a temper. I'd lose it in a second if you said the wrong thing..." — and it doesn't take a degree in psychology to begin to understand the effect of all that anger, bottled up and turned inwards.

"I didn't have a clue what was going on in my head. And I was someone who was really hard to read, so it was very difficult for my parents to read what was going on in my head. I might go out and drive around and they would think, 'she's with her friends', but I wasn't. I would drive around on my own, or go for walks on my own, trying to figure out what was going on in my head. And eventually, that got the better of me. I became depressed, but didn't have a clue about depression, the signs or symptoms, so I was constantly beating myself up: 'Why am I feeling this way?'"

Ashling is pretty matter-of-fact about all this — and, because she never really spoke to a professional about what was going on, saying, "I never found the right person" — she doesn't have the language of therapy to explain herself. Instead, it comes out, entirely in her own words, and all the more raw for that. "My mam had no control over me. Nobody would have had control of me. I went through the whole thing on my own. I didn't want to listen to anyone. And I was so angry that if my parents or my friends gave their opinion, I'd say, 'It's none of your business, I know what I'm doing!' I thought I'd be showing weakness if I said anything. I couldn't say anything to my mam. I was embarrassed, I was ashamed. I felt, 'She's not going to know anyway, she's not going to help'. And I didn't want her worrying about me."

And so Ashling bottled up the anger and the hurt, talking to no one, taking no antidepressants. "I think it was just that I've been brought up to fend for myself. That's just the way I was brought up, and it wasn't a bad thing. We'd kill for each other, but there was no 'I love you', and hugging. We weren't soft. We're all athletes. My mother was an athlete, my dad was a hurler, my brothers are athletes.

Everybody was involved in GAA; it was a tough atmosphere.

"Growing up in a sporting environment, you've got to be tough as nails. My two older brothers, we're really close; if someone ever upset me, they'd be straight in there, but they couldn't understand it, they'd never experienced it before. And depression, even then, was such a taboo subject. Even I didn't have a clue what was going on. I never said that word to myself."

When Ashling did go back to training and playing, the anger came with her. "My sport suffered," she says. "My anger showed throughout my performances. I started to retaliate a lot on the field. I was involved in a lot of physical altercations, and that's where my identity changed from being this super-athletic child and teenager, to being this hothead. I'd get targeted then in every game. Everyone wants to target someone who is going to lose the head, especially if they're effective. I was never the same athlete or player I used to be, and it felt like I'd lost that."

It is at this point that her eyes fill with tears. "It makes me emotional now, because I get flashbacks... I knew I'd lost myself...," she says, before making a visible effort to pull herself together, "Sorry, I haven't cried in a while."

"I got so fed up, because it was like I was fighting a losing battle. Things started getting sour in the camp. Trainers would leave me on the bench because I was such a liability. That was a first for me. And I made it worse then." A kind of self-fulfilling prophecy? If you think I'm bad, I'll be the worst? "Exactly. I started not going to training. I would be so low I wouldn't get out of bed." When she describes the situation as "a ticking time-bomb," it's easy to feel the growing rage, frustration and loneliness that built within her, the lack of an effective outlet, or any real handle on what was happening to her.

Instead, Ashling acted out, as so many young people do, by choosing to distract herself. "I started to crave attention from a different light, I went on a really bad path and started doing stupid things out late at night, not coming home."

What kind of stupid things, I wonder?

Nov.
2016



The Sarsfields team who won the 2016 Minor A Championship title last weekend at Castle Road after a tough test against Killeagh. It was a meeting of the last two champions, with Sars winning the crown in 2014, and Killeagh last season. Picture: Colbert O'Sullivan

Sarsfields	1-9
Killeagh	1-6

TWO evenly-matched sides battled it out for the SE Systems Minor A championship title in Castle Road.

It was the clash of the champions, in effect, as the holders Killeagh and 2014 winners Sarsfields went head-to-head for the 2016 crown.

Little divided the sides all through the opening half and indeed right through the game as the battle to gain the upper hand continued.

It was level pegging at the break as neither Sarsfields nor Killeagh could gain the upper hand in a close 30 minutes where the lead changed hands after a good start by the holders.

Killeagh settled quickly into the game with two early scores. Courtney Horgan gave them the perfect start with a goal to opening the scoring. Sarsfields replied with a Lucy Kelly point but, working hard, Caoimhe Harney kept Killeagh in front, adding to their tally with a point.

Sarsfields ensured Killeagh were not going to get away from them and they replied with a Clare Mullins point to stay on their tails.

Chloe Sigerson pointed a Killeagh free and with Caoimhe Harney added another from play they kept their lead.

With the Sars attack piling on the pressure, Kate Mary Cullinane had to be at her best in the Killeagh goal to deny them a goal — but they found their range, striking four points without reply.

Donna Kerrigan, Lucy Kelly Lyons, and Sarah Costello were all on target as they got themselves back on level terms and at the half.

Mullins fires Sars to minor glory

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

time whistle it was 1-3 to 0-6 as the sides remained deadlocked. It was all to play for as the sides took to the field for the second half and Sars edged in front with an early point from Clare Mullins.

With play swinging from end to end, both defences held firm with scores hard to come by as Sars clung to their point lead.

Ten minutes into the half, Sars moved further ahead with a Claire Mullins goal. Sigerson pointed two frees to keep the pressure on the Sars defence and with just two

points between the sides the game was still there for the taking.

Sars stretched their lead to three points with a point to which Lucy O'Gorman replied pointing a 45 but responding Sars were back three point clear thanks to Claire Mullins.

Killeagh applied huge pressure in the fading light as both sides threw everything into the closing minutes, but the goal Killeagh needed didn't arrive as Sarsfield's huge on to take the title.

The Evening Echo Player of the Match was awarded to Clare Mullins of Sarsfield's who had a splendid hour.

Scorers for Sarsfields: C Mullins 1-3, L Kelly 0-3 (0-1 f), D Kerrigan, K Lyons, S Costello 0-1 each.

Scorers for Killeagh: C Sigerson 0-3 f, C Horgan 1-0, C Harney 0-2, L O'Gorman 0-1 45.

SARSFIELDS: M Lynch, J McAllen, E Loneragan, C O'Sullivan, R Morgan, M Mullins (c), J Lyons, S Costello, K Lyons, R McCarthy, C Mullins, D Kerrigan, E Twomey, L Kelly, A O'Brien.

Subs: G Jones for R Morgan (inj), R Morgan for G Jones, R O'Mahony for A O'Brien.

KILLEAGH: MK Cullinane, M Aherne, R Fogarty, N O'Brien, E Treacy, L O'Gorman, A Benaim, C Sigerson, G Tyrell, C Barry, K Aherne, D Coleman, S Landers, C Harney, C Horgan.

Meanwhile, today in Ballinlough at 11am Douglas and Eire Og meet in the U16 B Championship final and this will be followed at 1.30pm by the U16 A final where Courcy Rovers and Ballygarvan meet to decide the destination of the last two championship titles for 2016.

Dominant Carrigaline dig deep to hold on to lead

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

Carrigaline	5-11
Ballincollig	3-3

DESPITE playing against the strong wind in the opening half Carrigaline set the tone early in the SE Systems Minor B championship final at Castle Road.

Ground conditions underfoot were superb and this helped the flow of the game as the sides got down to business. Two early points settled Carrigaline into the game and converting a free they went 0-3 to 0-1 ahead.

A Molly Barrett goal and a Rachel O'Regan point stretched the lead as Ballincollig battled to stay in touch with Chloe O'Halloran and Niamh O'Brien impressing up front.

At the break it was Carrigaline who led by seven points 1-6 to 0-2 and turning to play with the wind advantage they went to the dressing room happy.

Ballincollig applied the pressure early in the second half and working hard they had the lead down to a point 1-7 to 2-2, after O'Halloran grabbed two goals.

Having to dig deep Carrigaline held their focus and picking off some excellent points they went 2-9 to 2-2 ahead.

A point from Emma Cooney and a Lisa Kiely goal gave Ballincollig a mountain to climb.

The sides swapped goals but with Emma Cooney grabbing Carrigaline's fifth goal the momentum was now firmly in their favour and it was a delighted Becky O'Shea who accepted the trophy on behalf of the team mates.

Carrigaline's Molly Ryan was named Evening Echo Player of the Match after a superb display for the newly crowned champions.

Scorers for Carrigaline: L Kiely 2-4, E Cooney 1-2, R O'Regan 0-4, M Barrett 1-1, M Ryan 1-0.

Ballincollig: C O'Halloran 2-0, N O'Brien 1-1, O McCarthy 0-2.

CARRIGALINE: J Horgan, K O'Leary, R Long, K O'Connell, L Deasy, B O'Shea, A Ryle, M Ryan, G Condon, C Murphy, E Cooney, K Hughes, R O'Regan, L Kiely, M Barrett.

Subs: S Lally for K Hughes, C Kearney for R O'Regan.

BALLINCOLLIG: K Jones, A O'Mahony, L Murphy, D O'Sullivan, O Keating, S Keating, C Donovan, M Tarnaud, H O'Leary, C O'Halloran, C Healy, E O'Sullivan, O O'Leary, E Jordan, N O'Brien.

Subs: A Kelly for D O'Sullivan, O McCarthy for C Healy, E O'Brien for L Murphy, S Buckley for E O'Sullivan, I Kennelick for M Tarnaud, K Healy for H O'Leary.

Role model Collins gets due recognition with Soaring Star award

Courcy Rovers Camogie

CAMOGIE CLUB NOTES

Shirley Moloney

Huge congratulations to Linda Collins, who won a Soaring Star award at the Camogie All Stars at Citywest, Dublin, on Saturday November 5.

Linda played a huge part in the Cork Intermediate Camogie team this year, scoring 1-05 in the All-Ireland final, where Cork narrowly lost out to Kilkenny. Linda plays with our senior camogie team and junior football team. She is studying in Mary Immaculate College Limerick, where she plays camogie. She assisted in coaching younger players in

our club this year and is a leader with the local Foróige club. She is a fantastic role model, someone who any young person in the locality and beyond can look up to.

We are so proud and pleased for her on her well-earned success. The future is extremely bright!

Kilbree Camogie

Kilbree U14's were crowned county champions after a great performance against Cobh on Saturday. Kilbree got

off to a great start with a goal from a free by captain Mairead Crowley. Cobh's response was swift, grabbing a goal and point of their own. Kilbree kept their composure and fought hard for every ball, and goals from Mairead Crowley and Caoimhe Murphy put a considerable distance between the sides at half-time — Kilbree 4-04 to Cobh's 1-02.

The second half was a much tougher battle as Kilbree's defence had to withstand attack after attack. A Cobh goal midway through the second half could have turned this final, but Kilbree's fitness ensured Cobh would only manage to

score another two points. Sarah O'Donovan was a leader in the defence and drove on her troops to pressurise Cobh into many wides in the second half.

There were great scenes of celebration at the final whistle when Kilbree were crowned county champions on a final score of 4-06 to Cobh's 2-04.

The girls had added the county title to the Carbery championship title that they won in August. Mairead Crowley was named player of the match award, and also received the inaugural U14 championship cup.

The girls defeated many

strong teams such as Watergrasshill, Buttevant, Tracton, and Brian Dillons in this county championship. It is an incredible achievement as the majority of girls on this squad are still under the age of 12.

Thanks to Deirdre O'Leary, Anna O'Neill, Aidan O'Shea, Tony O'Neill, and Marie Dorgan for their great work. Thanks to Anna for the fitness coaching, which made a huge difference in every match.

It has been a historic year for Kilbree camogie, winning the U14 County Championship, the U14 Carbery Championship, the U12 County League, and the U12 Carbery

League. Many girls are on both panels and have won four medals.

Four girls — Mary Murphy, Caoimhe Murphy, Kate O'Donovan and Rachel Deasy — have won six medals.

They also played with the U12 hurling and football teams that won the West Cork leagues.

U14 panel: Heather Brimble, Cara Collins, Kate O'Donovan, Jessica O'Driscoll, Maeve O'Neill, Sarah O'Donovan, Alice Twomey, Leanne Sheehy, Emily O'Donovan, Rachel Deasy, Mairead Crowley, Mary Murphy, Aife O'Neill, Caoimhe Murphy, Rebecca Hurley, Margaret Collins, Alison Collins, Sinead O'Sullivan, Orlagh O'Neill, Callanan and Niamh McCarthy.

Ahern in top form as Ballygarvan win title

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

Ballygarvan	3-5
Courcey Rovers	1-6

BALLYGARVAN were crowned U16 A county champions at Ballinlough on Saturday last and in the process, engraved their names on the Majella O'Callaghan Memorial Trophy for the first time as they overcame a determined Courcey Rovers side.

Even though it was cold, the superb surface ensured both sides got to perform to the height of their ability, and given the lateness of the year, it was only fitting that a game of such high calibre was played in good conditions.

Cliona O'Leary pointed an early Ballygarvan free to give her side the lead, but Fiona Keating replied for Courceys and, with the sides evenly matched, they battled to settle into the game.

Indeed Courceys should have had the opening goal of the game as they were narrowly wide with the first attack before coming back to grab a point.

Ballygarvan's Elizabeth Guinane found the net for a peach of a goal when she first-timed the ball past Ellen Maguire with an unstoppable shot.

Working hard, Courceys kept applying pressure and they responded with a point from their captain, Saoirse McCarthy.

Ballygarvan grabbed their second goal to extend their lead when captain, Shannon Wynne's long-range free from the halfway line dropped short in front of the Courceys goalmouth and Rachel Crowley reacted quickest to finish well to the net.

With both sides working hard, the level of skill on display was superb and, battling with all their might, Fiona Keating narrowed the gap with a Courceys point and it took an excellent point-blank save from Sarah Ahern to deny Saoirse McCarthy as they pressed to narrow the gap.



The Ballygarvan U16 camogie team after their recent success against Courcey Rovers in the U16 A county final.

Molly Kelleher and Cliona O'Leary pointed as Ballygarvan extended their lead while in between Saoirse McCarthy got one back, pointing a Courceys free.

Again, it took a good save from Sarah Ahern to deny Courceys as the half-time whistle loomed and it was Ballygarvan who had the lead, 2-4 to 0-5, at the break.

From the start of the second half Courceys attacked and when Saoirse McCarthy sent a long ball into the Ballygarvan square, Sarah Ahern was again at her best.

With their defence superbly marshalled by Shannon Wynne, ably as-

sisted by Sinead and Niamh Lyons, and Liadh Murphy, Ballygarvan held firm. And when a superb clearance from Wynne was gathered by Rachel Crowley, she took on and beat the Courceys defence before firing to the net.

Scores were sparse in the second half. Siobhan O'Donovan pointed as Courceys pushed for something. Cliona O'Leary responded to ensure the gap remained at seven points. With six minutes remaining, Fiona Keating first-timed the ball to the net as she connected with Saoirse McCarthy's long-range free.

With five points between the sides,

and five minutes remaining, the game was still there to be won and the pressure was on. To their credit Ballygarvan had to be at their best as Courceys gave it their all in the hope of grabbing a second goal.

The Ballygarvan defence was strong, breaking up attack after attack and got the ball away from the danger zone as they held out to the full-time whistle, to be crowned champions.

There were many superb displays on the day, but the player of the match was Ballygarvan goalkeeper, Sarah Ahern who was superb all through a game where she denied

Courceys on numerous occasions over the hour.

Scorers for Ballygarvan: R Crowley 2-1, C O'Leary 0-4 (0-1 f), E Guinane 1-0, M Kelleher 0-1.

Courcey Rovers: F Keating 1-3, S McCarthy 0-2 (0-1 f), S O'Donovan 0-1.

BALLYGARVAN: S Ahern, L Murphy, S Lyons, N Lyons, E Murphy, S Wynne (c), SJ Brady, E O'Regan, K Dorney, C O'Leary, R Crowley, M Kelleher, I Lyons, E Guinane, S Eliffe.

Sub: A Finnegan for S Eliffe (49).

COURCEY ROVERS: E Maguire, M O'Donovan, M Collins, C Hannon, M Collins, D O'Reilly, L Helbrow, S McCarthy (c), S O'Sullivan, L Collins, C O'Reilly, C Galvin, S O'Donovan, F Keating, L Patton.

Subs: A O'Donovan for M Collins (h-t), E Payne for L Helbrow (53), AM Collins for L Patton (54).

Referee: Billy O'Sullivan (Bishopstown).

Twomey hits three goals in Éire Óg title win Douglas camogie notes

Éire Óg	6-8
Douglas	1-0

ÉIRE Óg signalled their intentions from the throw-in of the U16 B championship final in Ballinlough on Saturday last, writes **MARY NEWMAN**.

Three goals from Niamh Twomey laid the foundations for victory. They applied huge pressure on a Douglas defence struggling to cope with the intensity of the Éire Óg attack.

By the half-time whistle, Éire Óg had notched up 4-5, with a goal and a point from Emma Cleary, three points from Isobel Sheehan, and a point from Aoibhe O'Brien.

This put them in the driving seat,

as their defence held the Douglas attack.

Five minutes before the break, Éire Óg lost the services of midfielder, Kate Sheehan, due to an injury, but they failed to let it upset them. They came out focused for the second-half.

Douglas fought hard, but could find no way through a solid Éire Óg defence.

With Niamh Twomey and Emma Cleary adding points, the mid-Cork side increased their lead.

Douglas gave it everything and were rewarded with an Aoife Hosford goal.

Sarah Power and Maebh Kelly added to the Éire Óg goal tally, and Isobel Sheehan added a point. They were well on their way to taking the

title. The player of the match was Éire Óg's Niamh Twomey, who notched up an impressive 3-1 of her side's tally.

Scorers for Éire Óg: N Twomey 3-1, E Cleary 1-2, I Sheehan 0-4, S Power, M Kelly 1-0 each, A O'Brien 0-1.

Douglas: A Hosford 1-0.

ÉIRE ÓG: O Lynch, M Coffey, F Murphy, C McCarthy, C Sheehan, G Collins, R Sheehan, I Sheehan, K Sheehan, E Quigley, E Cleary, C Sheehan, A Murray, N Twomey, G O'Shea.

Subs: A O'Brien for K Sheehan (inj), M Kelly for A Murray, R Healy for C Sheehan, S Power, G O'Shea.

DOUGLAS: A Cummins, C Merritt, A Cottrell, J Cashman, C O'Sullivan, S Brennan, S Nagle, J O'Mahony, K Holland, C St Leger, D Harrington, R O'Keefe, T Costello, C Walsh, J Collins.

Subs: A Barry for T Costello, A Hosford for R O'Keefe, R Wall for J Collins.

Referee: William Wallis (Aghada).

HARD luck to the Douglas U16 camogie team that were defeated in the county final against Éire Óg last weekend.

Well done on recent championship victories over Brian Dillon's and Ballinora.

U10

On Sunday, November 13 in Douglas Community School, Douglas played very exciting U10 camogie games against Ballinlough in the last Go Games matches of the year. With two matches running at the same time and 35 girls in action, it was a great morning of Camogie action for all involved.

The weather conditions were excellent for the time of year and the playing surface was superb for Camogie. Douglas had 21 girls in action in total with both teams performing very well and were more than a match for the very strong Ballinlough teams.

Well done girls, great progress has been made with the U9s and U10s this year with 21 matches played by this group in 2010.

There were some superb skills on show from both sides. A feature of the game was the superb long range free taking and the hip-to-hip challenges all over the pitch in both games.

Douglas Girls: Sophie O'Meara, Heather Cunningham, Faye Nodwell, Aisling Dorgan, Kate Hourigan, Anna Butler, Grace O'Keefe, Kate O'Mahony, Orlaith Morrissey, Meave Chapman, Emma O'Driscoll.

Douglas Dubh: Sarah Murphy, Laura Reen, Rebecca Downey, Sarah O'Mahony, Aoife Keenaghan, Anna Lecane, Belle Cotter, Cara O'Leary, Clodagh Morrison, Ella Lesniak.

U9 and U10 camogie training continues on Mondays at 6-7pm in the GAA sports hall, for all girls born in 2006 and 2007.

U6, U7 and U8 camogie training continues on Mondays at 4.45pm-5.45pm in the GAA sports hall, for girls born in 2008, 2009, 2010.

New starters always welcome.

All you need is a trackout and runners.

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Accolades will be out for best of the year

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

IT'S that time of the year again when awards and accolades are handed out and on Tuesday evening next camogie players will join with the hurlers, footballers and ladies footballers of Leaside, as Reardens announce their All-Star teams and pick a Camogie Player of the Year and a Ladies Footballer Of the Year.

Again this year the standard of camogie at all levels was high with some great games in the senior county championship as Milford made a bid for five in a row, and 13 clubs and one division battled to knock them from their perch. As the championship got up and running we had some great games with teams giving it their all to win games and other hanging on to just about get over the line.

The first round meeting between Inniscarra and St Catherine's gave us a flavour of what we could expect as St Catherine's held on for a two-point win but on that evening looking at Inniscarra we knew they had plenty left in the tank. We were proved right as they made it to the final and showing tremendous strength and a will to win they were crowned champions as they ended Milford's reign holding on despite huge pressure in a thrilling final.

When we sat down to analyse the performances during 2016 several names came to light but in the finish three stood out and it is from these three that our Reardens Player of the Year will be chosen. And as they say in the Oscars, the nominees are...

Inniscarra's captain Joanne Casey had a great year as her side took league and championship honours, leading by example the corner-forward was the scourge of defenders as she notches up vital scores in all of the Mid Cork teams outings and such was her influence on final day that she was named Evening Echo Player Of The Match.

St Catherine's Orla Cotter has and continued to be a leader both at club and county level. The midfielder again delivered through the year as St Catherine's battled through a campaign that saw them lost out at semi-final stage to Milford but without a doubt Orla was one of the game's stand out performers.

Rosie O'Mahony was vital in the Inniscarra set-up as she played with huge passion and drive. Lining out in the heart of their defence she drove forward and attacked and played a roving role turning defence into attack time out of number. A player in the mould of Briege Corkery, O'Mahony is a player who if she could commit would be huge asset to Cork.

These are our three nominees, but who is the winner? Join us in Reardens on Tuesday night from 7pm when all will be revealed.



The St Finbarr's camogie team that won Seandún U15 silverware recently.

Golden moment for young Barrs

THE Seandún division have been busy in the last few weeks with their U13 A and B and U15 A and B finals and recently Ballinlough the home of the city division was a beautiful setting as the division hosted two great finals day.

In the U13 A final St Finbarr's with Ella Wigginton-Barrett being named Player of the Match as she was in superb form they overcame Glen Rovers to take the title jointly captained by Katie Lee and Ciara Golden.

Douglas were led by captain Katie Hartnett who helped them overcome Bishopstown to take the U13 B title,

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

with Katie Lee named Player of the Match. All four sides were complimented on their efforts on a day when the Seandún division were to be complimented on the superb organising of their finals.

The focus then shifted to the U15 finals and in the U15 A final between Blackrock and St Finbarr's, the Barrs came out on top in a contest where Emma Olden, having played superbly, was named Player of the Match.

Blackrock started strong with Anna Lucey opening the scoring but as the game progressed St Finbarr's began to

gain a grip and three goals without reply boosted the Barr's as they led 5-7 to 0-2 at the interval.

Blackrock came out fighting in the second half and showed great spirit but having laid a solid foundation in the opening half St Finbarr's had done enough to run out 6-9 to 3-4 winners. St Finbarr's captain Lily O'Connell accepted the trophy for her side from Donnacha Broderick.

In the U15 B final, Bishopstown and Glen Rovers came face to face and it was Glen Rovers who ran out winners with Emma Murphy named Player of the Match after a superb display.

Playing against the strong wind in the opening half Glen Rovers led at the interval after an early Jennifer Mackey goal and with Emma Murphy

adding to the tally they were in a good position as they took to the field for the second half. With their defence strong they held their lines and didn't allow Bishopstown any room whilst up front with Emma Murphy and captain Cliona Martin piling on the pressure they ran out winners on a 3-7 to 1-1 score line.

The U13 Shield was contested between Brain Dillon's and Na Piarsaigh and in a close encounter Brian Dillon's ran out winners on a 1-1 to 0-2 score line with Ellen Brady named as the Player of the Match.

Seandún also fielded a team in the interdivisional blitz hosted and organised by the Muskerry division where they took on Muskerry, Imokilly and Avondu.

Tina and Jan step down from juvenile camogie board

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

At the helm of the Cork juvenile board, the long-serving secretary, Tina Sheehan, and vice-chair, Jan Foster, both stepped down at the board's annual convention, on Wednesday evening, at the Rochestown Park Hotel.

Tina Sheehan, will take a break from the role, but will continue on the GPC, while Jan, who has a young family, is retiring from the administrative role.

Both will be a huge loss to a board that oversaw all underage activities in Cork camogie, from the highly successful U8 Go Games right up to U16. Championship and league competitions at U14 and U16 at three grades, plus U12 championships, ensure the board are going nonstop from late January to November, and it is to their credit that every competition was completed by mid-November this year, thus ensuring a break for mentors and officials.

Tina Sheehan presented a detailed secretary's re-

port that showed 63 clubs participated in underage activities on the playing fields. The convention report covered all levels of leagues and championships, and also elected a full complement of officers and GPC to serve for the year ahead.

Outgoing chair, Mary O'Sullivan, from the Brian Dillon's club, continues in the role she has held for the last two years, while the board elected a new vice chair, with Wayne Carroll, from St Finbarr's, taking over.

Tracey Sheehan, who for the last two years has been board treasurer, takes over as board secretary, a role she previously filled with the senior board and

the experienced Sarsfield's official brings huge experience to a very important position.

The board elected a new treasurer, with Sandra Corcoran, from St Finbarr's, joining the top table. She is another official who brings huge experience, having served previously as a delegate to the Cork GAA board, for her home club of Enniskeane.

Linda Egan, from Sliabh Rua, takes over as PRO, and she is another new officer. Maria Dinan, Sarsfield's, was re-elected as the children's officer, while Eileen Healy, from Aghabullogue, continues in the role of registrar.

The board's general purposes committee, which works hand in hand with the officers, is a vital part of underage activities and new faces joining Billy O'Sullivan, Bishopstown, and Gerard Corcoran, Enniskeane, who were both re-elected, include East Cork referee, William Wallace, Tina Sheehan (Douglas), and Bernard Aherne (Ballygarvan).

We love Glasheen Girls' NS



At Glasheen Girls' National School, School Avenue, Glasheen, Cork, are members of the winning Sciath na Scol camogie team, with the cup.

Picture: Jim Coughlan



ON THE MARCH: At the launch of the Littlewoods Ireland three-year sponsorship deal were, from left, Waterford hurler Austin Gleeson, former Cork camogie star Anna Geary and former Kilkenny hurler Jackie Tyrrell in Croke Park. Littlewoods Ireland are a new top-tier partner of both the Gaelic Athletic Association and the Camogie Association. The online department store has signed a three-year deal with the GAA which sees them become both the All-Ireland SHC and Camogie National League sponsor until 2019.

Picture: Stephen McCarthy

Munster honours McGrath and Mulcahy

Cian Locke

John McGrath capped a stellar breakthrough year in the Tipperary senior set-up by winning the Hurler of the Year award in the 2016 Munster GAA Awards. And Limerick's Niamh Mulcahy has been rewarded for an outstanding season — in which she was the second highest championship scorer — by being crowned Camogie Player of the Year.

Unsurprisingly, Ballyea's maiden Clare and Munster senior hurling championship wins have been marked with

the Club of the Year prize.

They took the Clare hurling world by storm winning their first senior title after a replay against Clonlara.

And they continued their good run in the Munster campaign with a thrilling win over Thurles Sarsfields after extra-time and then defeated Glen Rovers in the Munster decider.

Munster and All-Ireland winners Jake Morris of Tipperary and David Clifford of Kerry were recognised for minor hurling and football respectively.

And the Handball award went to Aishling O'Keeffe of the Ballydesmond GAA Handball Club, who won two Senior All Ireland titles and two Senior Munster titles in 2016.

McGrath, from the Loughmore-Castleiney club, made his full championship debut for Tipperary in the Munster quarter-final win over Cork, scoring a point and cementing his place in Michael Ryan's exciting forward line.

He also scored a point in the semi-final win over Limerick and was at his explosive best in the Munster final win over

Waterford, shooting 3-2 and scooping the RTE Man of the Match Award.

Munster GAA Chairman Jerry O'Sullivan said: "I would like to congratulate John, Niamh, Aishling, and Ballyea on their well-deserved awards following their outstanding displays during 2016. They have set very high standards of achievement in their varied contributions to the family of Gaelic Games."

The awards will be presented on Saturday night at a gala dinner at the Rochestown Park Hotel in Cork.



John McGrath: Outstanding debut season in championship hurling



Niamh Mulcahy: Magnificent season with the Shannonside

Jennifer O'Leary

The voice of experience tackles the topics that matter



Rising stars offer Cork hope

Eight-time All-Star outlines five reasons why Cork camogie can look forward to 2017

HERE we are in December, Christmas closing in fast and a new year full of fresh opportunities is just around the corner.

It's a time to reflect and also look forward, and it will also be an important winter for Cork camogie following All-Ireland defeats for both the senior and intermediate teams, both to Kilkenny last October.

Having been in that position in the past, I know all members of both Cork panels will be extremely disappointed with the way the year finished, with both teams losing out to the Kilkenny stronghold.

No one remembers the hard-working team who reached the final and lost, but you always remember those who were victorious.

However, on closer inspection, Cork camogie has many reasons to be positive leading into the year ahead.

Young and new players: I thought many of Cork's younger players had an impressive league and championship campaign, most notably Amy O'Connor from St Vincent's and Hannah Looney of Killeagh.

What these players have in abundance is confidence and a strong will to win. They stood up to the mark when Cork needed them most and they showed leadership at 19 and 20 years of age. Amy O'Connor also worked hard to gain more muscle over the past year as she recognised the need to be stronger and more enduring on the field. She gave up playing soccer at European level because of her love for camogie — this commitment and dedication is a great sign for the future.

Another player who I feel will have a role to play in the year ahead is Linda Collins from Courcy Rovers. She had a phenomenal year for the Cork intermediate team, scoring 1-5 in the final. She was the shining light of the team and really stood out for me at full forward. Linda deserved her nomination for Intermediate Player of the Year after a fantastic league and championship campaign and is now a proud recipient of an Intermediate Soaring Star Award 2016.

I feel that these players will have a huge role to play in the years ahead for Cork camogie and we need more youth to make the step up and realise that to make it to the top, you need to work hard and sacrifice your time.

The Cork intermediate camogie team: Having just lost out to Kilkenny by a solitary point in the All-Ireland final, the Cork intermediates



One to watch: Cork's Amy O'Connor, in action in the All-Ireland semi-final win against Wexford in August, is quickly emerging as a force in Cork camogie, says eight-time All-Star and four-time All-Ireland winner Jennifer O'Leary.

should be proud of their achievements. They were beaten by a side that took their goals; as we all know, goals wins games. However, they can look ahead and believe that they are within touching distance to achieving their ultimate goal — An All-Ireland title. They will take this into the year ahead.

There will be players from this team that should make the step up to the senior side after their performances last year. Players like the already mentioned Linda Collins, Chloe Sigerson, a midfielder from Killeagh, and Rachel O'Shea should gain confidence after their year and will hopefully push themselves even harder to make the grade at senior A level. The step up from intermediate to senior is very noticeable with the speed of ball coming at you, the intensity in training and the physicality demanded of you.

Hunger: Every team needs motivation to drive them on to the year ahead. The best type of hunger, I believe, is

emotional hunger. It can't just be that you want to win a game or that you love playing camogie, there has to be something in your life that has inspired you or spurred you on. It has to make you emotionally connected to the game and it usually comes in the form of some heartache or upset.

In 2014, my desire to play surfaced from the fact that my mother was sick with cancer. Knowing that camogie could provide a release for my family, and me as well, was so important. I also had a strong gut feeling that we would win that year, so the thought of a positive lift was in the back of my mind.

The hunger needs to be both a personal and a collective team hunger in order to get the very best out of every player. The losses from this year will cause a stir in the hearts of the girls, they will use this, but they will also need to summon something else from within, and I've no doubt they will.

The burden of three-in-a-row no

longer exists: It's difficult to comprehend but when it comes to camogie and talks of three-in-a-row, we don't seem to cope very well with it. There seems to be some form of mental block, not in the form of thinking straight in a very important exam, but a blockage that won't allow Cork teams to elevate their performances to new heights when it comes to the final.

The prospect of three-in-a-row does nothing for extra motivation. In fact, you burn so much mental and physical energy just erasing it from your memory that it just exhausts you. In the year ahead, Cork won't have to worry about the dreaded curse that is synonymous with the three-in-a-row.

Another year, another opportunity: With any new year, brand new opportunities are presented to teams around the country. Cork will be trying to pounce on these as they present themselves.

There are players who may make

a return to the Cork set-up. Players like Julia White who was injured last season will hopefully make a return as she was one of the most influential Cork players in 2015. Her return will be a major boost to Cork.

Also, Kilkenny will now have to deal with the pressure and expectations of retaining their All-Ireland crowns. Can they cope with all this responsibility? The hardest All-Ireland to win is the one following a victorious year. Now that Kilkenny have broken their long absence from the victory books, it will be interesting to see how their story will be told this time next year.

A brand new year brings different players, different injuries, different circumstances and it is never plain sailing, no matter what team you are. Cork need to look ahead and seize every opportunity they can to the best of their ability. They have been in this situation before and have come back stronger than ever. Positivity is key.

Nov.
2016

Scheme looks to recruit new referees

GAA

■ Mary Newman

WHISTLE4FEILE A new initiative launched recently by the camogie Association is aiming to recruit new referees.

The new initiative is called "Whistle4Feile" and one which is hoping to recruit new referees from all counties who will officiate at National Feile Na NGael Feile Na NGael the national U14 competition and will take place in Kilkenny, Carlow and Wexford from June 16-18, 2017.

The Whistle4Feile is a programme aimed at increasing the number of referees available to referee Camogie for the Feile weekend.

With this in mind the Camogie Association recently launched a new programmes aimed at members who are aged 18 or over and are already registered members of camogie clubs.

The programme is open to male and female members and no previous refereeing experience is needed.

As part of the programme the camogie association will provide a referee training course free of charge, access to a referee mentor who will help and guide the new ref through their paces.

The new recruits will also be given practical pre refereeing experience pre Feile thus ensuring they are well versed and able to ref at Feile Na NGael level come June.

Those who successfully complete the course will receive a camogie referee certificate and gear and if they wish they will be added to their counties referee list if they wish to continue refereeing within their own county.

The Whistle4Feile is just one of the many new camogie initiatives introduced under the guidance of Caroline Murray Project and Initiatives Co-ordinator of the Association.

Anybody interested in the "Whistle4Feile" can contact Caroline at 0871251269 or by email to caroline.murray@camogie.ie.

Meanwhile, the 2017 Cairde Camogie Season ticket which provides access to all rounds of the 2017 Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Camogie Championships and the triple header All-Ireland Finals on September 10th in Croke Park is now on sale.

The season ticket is priced at €45, however if you purchase your ticket before December 31 you can avail of a discounted price of just €40. In addition, 20% of each ticket sale goes directly to a County Camogie Board. Cairde Camogie represents excellent value over the course of the Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Championship.

Buy your Cairde Camogie Ticket online at Tickets.ie by following the link: Cairde Camogie 2017 Cairde Camogie Tickets can also be purchased from the following Centra and SuperValu outlets nationwide gaa.ie/tickets/where-to-buy/



Glen Rovers, Seandun, under 15B Winners.

Camogie gets a new sponsor

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

AS the on field activities concluded, thoughts turn very much to off the field activities and a big boost for camogie was announced last Tuesday as online retailer Littlewoods Ireland was unveiled as a new top tier partner of both the Camogie Association and the GAA.

The fashion, electrical and home wares retailer has signed a three-year deal with the GAA which will see them become both the Camogie National League and the GAA Hurling All-Ireland Senior Championship sponsor until 2019.

The company has also signed two style ambassadors, with former Cork player Anna Geary and retired nine-time All-Ireland winner Jackie Tyrrell from Kilkenny.

Both took part in a V by Very Winter fashion shoot at Lough Dan in County Wicklow which was unveiled at the launch in Croke Park. Also in attendance was Waterford's Austin Gleeson as the double-hurler of the year was also unveiled as part of the Littlewoods Ireland GAA team for 2017.

Littlewoods Ireland has won a number of national and international

marketing awards this year and the company says it plans to bring its expertise to bear as part of an "innovative sponsorship campaign with a strong digital focus".

Littlewoods Ireland MD, Geoff Scully, said: "We are delighted to be announcing our new partnership with both the GAA and the Camogie Association."

Speaking at the launch, president of the Camogie Association, Catherine Neary said: "We in the Camogie Association are delighted to partner with Littlewoods Ireland as the new sponsors of our National League. The popularity of camogie continues to grow and it is an exciting prospect for us to be associated with Ireland's leading online department store."

Neary said the deal marked the first occasion that the National League has had a title sponsor. "The Camogie Association is delighted that this national competition will receive a greater profile as a result of this partnership. I am very much looking forward to the start of the Littlewoods Ireland Camogie Leagues in February and it promises to be another exciting year of top quality intercounty Camogie."

Uachtarán Cumann Lúthchleas Gael Aogan Ó Fearghail commented: "I look forward to the support they will offer us in the promotion of the games in the months and indeed years ahead."

The Camogie Association also confirmed that Liberty Insurance will remain on as Championship sponsors.

Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal put in big effort to win

Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal (Blarney)	1-8
Maria Immaculate Community College (Dunmanway)	1-6

COLLEGES INTERMEDIATE CHAMPIONSHIP

■ Mary Newman

JUST two points separated the sides after a highly entertaining contest where Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal Blarney had to dig deep and call on all their resources to shake off a determined Maria Immaculate Community College Dunmanway side before capturing the Cork Colleges Intermediate championship in difficult conditions in Kilmurray recently.

The foundations for victory were set in the opening half as the Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal girls started the game well and settling into the contest they struck five points without replay with Orla Cremin notching up two and Emma Murphy, Fiona Bourke and Sábha McCarthy all on the score sheet inside the opening quarter.

Maria Immaculate Community College settled into the game and replied with three points on the trot to cut the deficit, but rallying Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal replied an Eabha O'Donovan point.

With the Dunmanway College applying huge pressure, Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal had to be at their best.

However, with Eve Mullins and Emer O'Reilly winning a lot of midfield possession, and their defence closing down the Dunmanway attack they held their lines and at the break they led 0-6 to 0-3.

Maria Immaculate Community College started the second half in determined fashion and again applied huge pressure, and with play swinging from end to end, both sides were working hard.

Both added to their tally with points but the Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal defence was superb with Aisling Buckley, Niamh Twomey and Emily Buckley to the fore as they stood tall under severe pressure, clearing their lines as Dunmanway searched for a score, goalkeeper Meghan Holland was called on to make several saves, and as the half progressed Dunmanway grabbed a goal.

With the sides level 0-7 to 1-4, the title was there for the taking.

Orla Cremin grabbed 1-1 as the game entered the last quarter.

Huge Dunmanway pressure for the closing ten minutes saw Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal defend with everything they had but with Karen O'Farrell, Aoife Cronin and Jen Murphy working hard they held their lines and their two point lead to the full time whistle to be crowned champions amid great scenes of jubilation.



Munster GAA Awards: Back row (left to right), David Nugent, Jake Morris, Michael Ryan, John Quane, David Clifford, Jamie Lee and Michael Hurley. Front row (left to right), Micheál MacConmara, Robbie Hogan (manager, Ballyea Senior Hurlers), Pat Moylan (chairman, Ballyea GAA Club), Niamh Mulcahy, Jerry O'Sullivan (Munster GAA chairman), Aisling O'Keeffe, Liam Lenihan (Munster GAA vice-chairman), Charlie McCarthy. Missing from photo: John McGrath, Austin Gleeson, Rena Buckley and Paul Geaney.

CAMOGIE

2016 saw yet another action-packed year of camogie action with some old and new faces lifting the all-important pieces of silverware.

A thrilling Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Championship culminated with Kilkenny ending their 22-year wait for a senior title to win the O'Duffy Cup on an historic day which also saw their Intermediate team complete an incredible double, defeating Cork in both finals. The Premier Junior final saw Carlow collect the honours with a victory on their Croke Park debut against Armagh on what was a great day's action in front of a bumper crowd of over 20,000 in Croke Park.

The Cats also claimed the Irish Daily Star National League Division 1 crown in May with victory over Galway in the final in Semple Stadium, whilst Meath won the Division 2 title and Armagh took home the Division 3 honours.

In March, Milford of Cork claimed a third AIB All-Ireland Senior Club Championship title in four years defeating Killimor of Galway in the final, while in the Intermediate decider, Cahir of Tipperary won their very first All-Ireland title seeing off Eyrecourt of Galway.

2017 promises to be yet another great year for the Camogie Association.



MUNSTER COUNCIL 2016 AWARD WINNERS: Charlie McCarthy (Cork) – Hurling Hall of Fame, John Quane (Limerick) – Football Hall of Fame, Micheál Mac Conmara (Clare) – Special Service Award – contribution to Scór, Michael Hurley (Cork) – Under 21 Football, Austin Gleeson (Waterford) – Under 21 Hurling, David Conroy (Clare) – Intermediate Hurling, Jamie Lee (Limerick) – Junior Football, Jake Morris (Tipperary) – Minor Hurling, David Clifford (Kerry) – Minor Football, Niamh Mulcahy (Limerick) – Camogie, Rena Buckley (Cork) – Ladies Football, Aisling O'Keeffe (Cork) – Handball, Ballyea (Clare) – Club, John McGrath (Tipperary) – Senior Hurling, Paul Geaney (Kerry) – Senior Football, Michael Ryan (Tipperary) – Manager.

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Esther O'Leary, Munster Colleges Camogie, presents the trophy to Hazelwood College captain Chloe O'Brien after Hazelwood defeated Scariff Community College 1-7 to 1-5 in the Munster Senior B Camogie final in Dromcollogher on Saturday. Picture: Press 22

Start of U14s was a highlight of the year

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

A TOTAL of 63 clubs entered the various competitions under the auspices of the Juvenile Board.

And one of the biggest highlights was the introduction of a new championship at U14 level.

Clubs were well catered for, with the U12 League at three levels A, B and C, and U14 and U16 League in three grades also.

Championships at U14 and U16 A, B and C made for a hectic year.

As the year draws to a close, we take a look back at some of the highlights at U14 levels that caught the eye in 2016.

For the first time, the Féile na nGael was run under the auspices of the Juvenile Board.

Three divisions saw 16 teams compete in Division 1, 12 teams contest Division 2 and 17 teams battle it out in Division 3.

The Division 1 final was between Sarsfields and Ballinora, and in a totally thrilling contest Sarsfields came out on top.

Sarsfields then went onto play Thomastown in the National Féile All-Ireland final and did Cork proud by taking the title of Féile na nGael All-Ireland title, a great achievement. Well done to Sars.

This Division 2 final was contested between Killeagh and Ballygarvan with Ballygarvan running out the winners.

Ballinascorthy and Nemo Rangers made it to the Division 3 final with Ballinascorthy winning out.

The U14 championship was eagerly contested and in the A final Ballinora reversed the result of the Féile final as they were crowned winners and in the process became the first winners of the U14 A championship trophy dedicated to the memory of the late Peter Downey.

Peter's wife Geraldine presented the trophy with the extended family present on a lovely day in Ballinlough.

The U14 B final was a thrilling contest where Ballinascorthy overcame Youghal to running out winners. In the U14 C final between Kilbree v Cobh Kilbree were too strong for a Cobh side that battle to the end.

The U14 A league was a repeat of A Féile final with Sarsfield's and Ballinora again facing each other and it was Ballinora that ran out winners on a day when they worked so hard to achieve their aim.

Na Piarasigh and Killeagh met in the Under 14 B league final where Na Piarasigh took the title.

The U14 C final was a thrilling game which saw Rockbawn hold on to win out and be crowned champions.

All in all an action packed season of U14 activities.



Blackrock Camogie Club during their recent visit to Lord Mayor Cllr Des Cahill.

Blackrock girls pay a visit to City Hall

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

BLACKROCK Camogie Club celebrated a superb year when they recently paid a visit to the City Hall, where their victorious intermediate team were honoured by Lord Mayor Des Cahill with a reception to mark their fantastic achievements.

The club made it a never-to-be-forgotten season as they annexed the league and championship titles and, in the process, bridged a gap of 34 years since they were last playing at senior B grade.

The team, their mentors, and representatives from the various club com-

mittees were warmly welcomed to the Lord Mayor's chambers where tributes were paid to the club on their successful year. The Lord Mayor is a huge supporter of all sports and was thrilled to see the titles return to his home parish.

Eugene Grimley, chairman of Blackrock Camogie, thanked the Lord Mayor for his invite and he paid tribute to the hard-working players and mentors who made the year such a special one for the club.

On the night, tales of rigorous train-

ing sessions and tough battles on and off the field were spoken of and it is with a great sense of pride that the club will be competing at senior B level in 2017 for the first time in 34 years.

This victory has had a huge impact on camogie in the parish, and the numbers at underage have been increasing steadily for a number of years. They are fielding teams from U6 up to U16, minor, and adult levels.

More and more young girls are interested in getting involved and for the vast majority of these girls who try camogie, they come to training and they stay and join the club who have noticed that it is the friendships they make that keeps them coming back.

The club are lucky when it comes to

volunteers and committee. Each year, more and more parents and coaches are getting involved and the club is going from strength to strength.

The support the camogie section gets from Blackrock Hurling Club and local businesses has only encouraged the club to build for the future and they are looking ahead to 2017 with renewed enthusiasm as Louise Weldon explained.

"We are in a fortunate position that we have good people around us and huge potential. We are looking forward to the challenges ahead in 2017."

Certainly, given the performances in 2016, the club is well equipped for the challenges participating in the senior B grade.

Get your submission in for Camogie Media Awards

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

SUBMISSIONS are invited for the Camogie Association Media Awards which will be presented in conjunction with the Camogie Association Volunteer Awards on Saturday, February 4.

The Volunteer of the Year is chosen in each county and will receive a presentation and invitation to a lunch in Croke Park with the volunteers from each county on All-Ireland club final day.

Clubs are invited to nominate somebody who they think is deserving of the honour. Submissions can be forwarded to the Cork Camogie Board at secretary.cork@camogie.ie.

The Association Media Awards will also be selected shortly and club and counties are invited to send in submissions for these awards.

Among the categories for the counties is PRO of the Year. The winner will be selected based on consistent output of work; an ability to utilise print, radio, and social media to promote camogie; presen-

tation in terms of publications, such as match programmes; and level of effort and innovation to raise the profile of the game.

Match programmes: Submissions will be judged on the accuracy of information, presentation, and lay-out, correct branding, photography, and overall content.

Local media (radio and print): Submissions will be judged on the accuracy, consistency, quality, and variety of coverage, match reporting, interviews, live updates for games and events, the impact, colour and appeal of pieces, locally and nationally as well as the presentation of the content. Here, samples of work must include details on the relevant events covered.

Digital promotion: Based on the consistency, regu-

lar updates and innovative use of digital media (social media, website, online videos, photography, marketing campaigns etc).

Best media innovation: Submissions will be based on outstanding contributions to the promotion of camogie by journalists, clubs or counties who have pioneered an innovative campaign, published an exceptional article etc. Samples of work can be across either print or digital media.

Photography: The submissions will be judged on subjectivity, good taste, good reflection on the game/association, context, composition, and the emotional appeal of the photo. Two samples of work only are required. Submissions are invited from amateur photographers only.

Samples of work for all categories must be posted to the Camogie Association, Croke Park, Jones Road, Dublin 3 and include a cover note detailing the content included, by no later than Friday, January 13.

A winner of 17 All-Ireland football and camogie medals, Briège is happiest in the

Briège Corkery, at ease on both playing and farming fields

Denis Lehane

It was a wild, wet and wintry December morning when I arrived on Michael Bateman's farm in Crookstown, Co Cork, in search of Briège Corkery. But alas Briège was nowhere to be found. At least, that is, nowhere in the vicinity of the house.

And so, bracing myself for the elements, I headed up to the yard, seeking the 17-time All-Ireland winning football and camogie star and, sure enough, I soon find her up to her armpits in work. In oil skins, drying off cows, and generally in the thick of it.

Briège is an outdoor girl; it's where she is happiest.

"Yeah, we're drying off some cows right now alright," Briège says. "It's quickly becoming a quieter time of the year."

And it certainly is a quieter time for a girl who spent her summer playing a full-time role on the pitch and also in the milking of a 540-cow herd.

With many dairy herds expanding to extraordinary levels since the collapse of the milk quota wall, milk production partnerships have become very popular. Briège and her husband Diarmuid Scannell are involved in such a dairy partnership enterprise with Crookstown-based dairy farmer, Michael Bateman.

A 36-unit herringbone milking parlour delivers the goods from the Jersey-cross cows, with the milk supplied to Dairygold Co-Op.

"We share the production costs and get a percentage of the milk cheque. It simply means more responsibility around the yard and encourages you to work harder. It's a partnership that is working well, for all of us on this farm," Briège says.

Briège began her working life as a stone mason.

"I was never one for the office job, as you might guess," she says with a laugh.

"I have always loved the outdoors and I enjoyed my time with Kieran Lehane as a stone mason, but unfortunately due to the downturn in the economy a few years ago, I had to leave it behind."

And from the hammer and

“When it comes to playing matches I like to stick to routine. It keeps me grounded. Milking cows on the morning of a match makes it feel like any other day, and then heading off to the match is no problem as far as I’m concerned”



Briège Corkery and Hernandez the dog with her husband Diarmuid Scannell (second from right), who are share milkers on the farm, with farm workers Aileen Corkery (Briège's niece), Ambrose Kenneally, and Michael Bateman, owner of the farm near Crookstown, Co Cork.

Picture: Denis Minihane

farm in Crookstown to get into shared milking. Diarmuid and I decided to go for it."

So now she finds herself back on a farm, familiar ground really for a lady who grew up on a dairy farm just a few miles from Macroom. Briège is the second youngest of a family of 10 — her brother Sean now runs the family farm.

"When I was younger I always loved farming. Any chance I got I would be outside helping my father and brothers. I have always liked working with animals, and driving the tractor, when I got the chance."

"Like many other families growing up, we all had our chores to do, girls were mostly kept inside, but I'd always be looking to skedaddle outside."

And what is her view on

about it, just do it and give it 100%. At the end of the day, it's what makes you happy that is the most important thing."

I read a report during the summer which claimed that Briège had no difficulty in milking the 540 cows before heading off to play a match. I asked her about this. Was it true or was it the ravings of a mad journalist?

"When it comes to playing matches I like to stick to routine," Briège says. "It keeps me grounded. Milking cows on the morning of a match makes it feel like any other day, and then heading off to the match is no problem as far as I'm concerned."

And looking beyond the parlour, indeed looking beyond the playing fields, I ask about the future. Has she done any thinking about life after sport, perhaps going into the bar or pub business like many more sporting heroes down through the years?

"My sister Catherine and her husband Jason run a pub, and from time to time, I've done bar work. I enjoyed it. But I also enjoy sitting at the other side of the counter."

"At the moment with work and sport commitments, it's a non runner. Perhaps sometime in the future. But for now I'm very happy where I am."

Deep hatred of losing is All Ireland winner's

"It's not that I have a great desire to win, it's more the hatred of losing that drives me on," Briège Corkery tells me when we discuss her motivation on the playing field. "And this is really the motto for the team, we simply don't like to lose."

And her love of sport began at home with her father Mike Joe Corkery, who played

"Gerard promoted football and camogie at our national school even though it wasn't a very big school. Rushreen school at the time had about 30 pupils enrolled."

"I was in first class and they were short a player for the Sciath na Scol. So he asked me could I play camogie with the school team. And sure to

farming fields are calmer at this time of the year, Briège is still on the move.

I met her at Macroom Mart on Saturday doing a spot of celebrity auctioneering, and spreading a bit of Christmas cheer for charity in the process. She was on hand to sell cattle donated by farmers in aid of Temple Street Children's Hospital, Dublin's Children's

And how did she do with the auctioneering in Macroom mart on Saturday you might wonder. Well she performed just as good as she does in Croke Park. In a nutshell, she did a lot better than many well seasoned men in the auctioneering game.

"Here we have an animal with a fine ass, a bit like my own," she quipped to the cheers of



thick of work on the farm



Cork ladies football and camogie star Briège Corkery and her husband Diarmuid Scannell at the milking parlour on the dairy farm near Crookstown, Co Cork.

Picture: Denis Minihane

secret to success



Dairy is the day job for ladies GAA star Briege Corkery

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NO QUARTER; Aoife Donoghue of Galway pulls hard but Kilkenny's Meighan Farrell ain't giving an inch during the Liberty Insurance Senior Camogie Championship semi-final at Semple Stadium in Thurles.

Picture: Ray McManus, Sportsfile

Inniscarra tops as Milford's dominance ends



Inniscarra's Joanne Casey and Liz Hayes after the win against Milford. Picture: Jim Coughlan



CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick

From the outset of this year's camogie championship Milford were favourites to retain the Cork championship and achieve five in a row of senior titles.

Generally, many clubs felt that if Milford's dominance was to be unseated it would have to be in the early stages of the championship as they get stronger as the season progresses.

Inniscarra was the name occasionally thrown out there as the team capable of causing an upset but two things made that a slim possibility last July. Firstly, Milford and Inniscarra weren't paired to meet in the earlier rounds and Inniscarra lost their opening championship game to St. Catherine's 1-16 to 2-12. Three months later Inniscarra were Cork camogie champions for the second time in their club's history.

On July 24 Inniscarra just fell short in a tight contest where St Catherine's finished strongest to overcome their challenge. A Laura Hayes goal gave St. Catherine's a goal lead at the break, 1-6 to 0-6. Two points separated the sides 12 minutes into second-half when Joanne Casey pushed Inniscarra ahead with a superb goal. St. Catherine's gained parity and then went four ahead. Despite Joanne Casey dispatching a penalty to the net it was too late to affect the outcome as St Catherine's had done enough.

Scorers for Inniscarra: J Casey 2-6 (1-0p, 0-3f, 0-1'45), N McCarthy, K O'Mahony 0-2 each, R Buckley, T McCarthy 0-1 each.

A flawless display saw Inniscarra recover from their opening defeat with a powerful display against Ballinhassig. From the throw in they were firing on all cylinders with corner-forward Joanne Casey ending up with a tally 3-13.

Niamh Mc McCarthy, Rebecca Keane, Treasa Mc McCarthy and Erin Looney all got on the score sheet and Rena Buckley and Aoife Kavanagh were in control at midfield. This display pushed Inniscarra into the 'serious contenders' bracket.

Scorers: J Casey 3-13 (0-6fs), N Mc McCarthy 2-2, R Keane 0-3, T Mc McCarthy 0-2, E Looney 0-1.

In wet, slippery conditions Inniscarra advanced to the quarter final of the SE Systems Senior A championship. They found it difficult to find their flow however, as defensively Ballygarvan did well, swarming any attack and curtailing



Linda Mellerick presents the Player of the Match to Inniscarra's Joanne Casey after their victory over Milford in the Cork County Senior A Camogie Final at CIT Sports Grounds, Cork. Picture: Jim Coughlan.

the threat of Joanne Casey. With Aileen Sheehan excellent at left half back and Erin Looney tremendous for the hour around the middle of the park Inniscarra led 0-7 to 0-3 at the break; Looney getting three.

Inniscarra lead by four with 10 minutes left and Ballygarvan's challenge was over two minutes later when Casey tapped over the line after good work by Niamh McCarthy.

Scorers: J Casey 1-9 (0-7f, 0-1'45), E Looney 0-3, R Keane, N McCarthy 0-1 each.

In their quarter final against Courcy Rovers Inniscarra laid the foundations for victory in the opening half playing against the wind. Full-forward Niamh McCarthy proved the star player as she netted all her sides' five goals.

Scorers: N Mc McCarthy 5-0, J

Casey 0-7 (0-5f, 0-1'45), R Keane, A Sheehan 0-1 each.

Ten minutes into the second-half Inniscarra trailed by a point in the first of a semi-final double header in Castle Road. But they struck 2-4 in the remaining 20 and held Douglas scoreless to end up nine point victors. It was all Inniscarra at the outset. Niamh McCarthy, sitting on the edge of the square, struck 1-1 in-

Inniscarra's path to title glory

First Round: St. Catherine's 1-16 Inniscarra 2-12.
Losers round: Inniscarra 5-21 Ballinhassig 1-4.
Second round: Inniscarra 1-14 Ballygarvan 0-9
Quarter final: Courcy Rovers 1-8 Inniscarra 5-9.
Semi-final: Inniscarra 3-12 Douglas 1-9
Final: Inniscarra 4-10 Milford 2-13.

side a minute and Joanne Casey hit over three, two from frees, to give Inniscarra a six-point lead.

But it became the Katrina Mackey show for the second quarter. The pendulum swung in Douglas's favour and they gained a grip on the game. Just a point separated the sides at the short whistle, 1-7 to 0-9.

Mackey goaled after half time to give Douglas the lead for the first time since the third minute. They failed to score again.

Mary Buckley was excellent at right corner back for Inniscarra, Aileen Sheehan moved over on Mackey and Aoife Kavanagh and Rena Buckley started to get control of midfield. Erin Looney and Mags Cosgrave worked their socks off, with Joanne Casey and Niamh McCarthy constant tormentors and Inniscarra took off.

Fifty-two minutes in Joanne netted a penalty. The nail was hammered in with a minute of normal time remaining when Casey's high delivery was caught brilliantly by McCarthy and she turned to hand pass to the net.

Scorers: N McCarthy 2-1, J Casey 1-5 (1-0p, 0-4f), R Buckley 0-2 (0-1f), T McCarthy 0-2, R Keane, E Looney 0-1 each.

Cork Camogie had new senior champions after a pulsating final in CIT grounds in a gripping encounter in front of a packed stand. The game was the best seen in several years and full credit to both Inniscarra and Milford for that.

Level six times, it was 4-6 to 2-12 with 10 minutes of normal time remaining but four excellent points from Joanne Casey (3), who finished the game with 2-8, and Niamh McCarthy, closed the game out for Inniscarra and after giving a display of passion, intensity and confidence it was no more than they deserved. Inniscarra had that something special on the night. It was a top-class performance from start to finish and they are worthy champions.

Scorers: J Casey 2-8 (1-6 f), T McCarthy 1-1, N McCarthy 1-1.

Ex-camogie PRO reveals abusive text messages

Peter O'Connell

Brid McNamara, who stepped down as public relations officer of Clare camogie at the board AGM on December 5, has revealed that she was the subject of abusive and explicit text messages during her time in the post.

She said many of the messages were too graphic to detail but admitted that some were

critical of the level of media coverage of camogie in Clare — suggesting that there was too much.

The last message was sent on the weekend of November 27, when Scariff-Ogonnellloe contested an All-Ireland junior camogie final.

"I was very shocked at the first couple and at the nature of some of them, which were explicit," said McNamara.

"I was female and sports journalism is regarded as being male. Suggestions were being made as regards what favours were given to garner the coverage.

"The questions I'd like to ask are: 'What do you do yourself in the GAA? Are you an armchair supporter or do you get out there and do something?'" McNamara told *The Clare Champion*.

"The texts are coming from a few individuals. You can laugh them off but it is disappointing to see that. This is 2016. It's the centenary of a very fine moment in our history.

"Women were to the fore back in 1916 in the Rising. Women in Clare are coming to the fore in sport and that there are archaic, Neanderthal opinions and people objecting

to coverage of women in sport is disappointing," said the Ruan women.

Many of the messages suggested that camogie was receiving local media coverage in Clare at the expense of GAA.

McNamara, who served as PRO for six years, said she received practical and consistent support from the GAA during her time in the post.

"The support from Clare GAA that I and Clare camogie have received is superb. I cannot speak highly enough of Syl O'Connor, Seán O'Halloran, and Tom Sheehan in Bórd na n-Og.

"If I ever rang them for advice, they were always there. There is a good relationship between the two organisations but then you get this tripe coming in on text messages."

DEC.
2016

Mallow, Clon do well in Senior B

Camogie

■ Mary Newman

The S E Systems Senior B camogie championship is a competition that never fails to generate excitement and the 2016 competition didn't fail to keep followers busy.

There were many twists and turns in the round-robin section games with the eventual finalists Mallow and Valley Rovers both losing games along the way.

At the start of the season many favoured Brian Dillon's to lift the crown but they lost out to Valley Rovers at semi final stage in a game where the winners led from start to finish and were full value for their four-point victory.

Eire Og were another name on a lot of lips but Mallow worked hard to get over them in their semi and they were happy to come away with a goal to spare to set up a final meeting with Valley Rovers.

Both sides had over the years failed to lift the crown despite a lot of attempts. Valleys fell at the final hurdle on a few occasions but Mallow having lost out in the final of 2015 to Sarsfield's had a point to prove this time.

In an exciting final a first-half goal three minutes into injury time helped edged Mallow into a lead they held to the full-time whistle in a game that went down to the wire.

A late Valley Rovers rally saw them hit three wides in added time as they pressed to get something from the game but in the finish it was two Kathleen O'Brien first-half goals that gave Mallow the cushion they needed when the pressure came to help them secure victory.

Mallow had a lot of superb performances on the day but defender Katie Healy was superb as her side came under huge pressure especially through the closing stages when Mallow had to dig deep to hold on. Such was her performance that she was named as *Evening Echo* Player of the Match after a display in the heart of defence.

And so it's senior status for Mallow in 2017 and they and their mentors will look forward to another challenge with confidence.

The Senior B league decider drew a lot of interest as neighbouring clubs Kilbrittan / Timoleague and Clonakilty battled it out at the picturesque Bandon venue in soaring temperatures. Despite the heat both sides gave it everything they had and in a classic encounter it was Clonakilty who hung on to take the title but not before a huge Kilbrittan / Timoleague effort that just saw them fall short as Clonakilty ran out winners with four points to spare.

As we look ahead to championship and league 2017, intermediate champions Blackrock will make the step up and join the Senior B ranks where they will battle it out for honours.



Ciara Ring, Inniscarra was the player of the Match in the U16A League final.

Cork look set up for bright future

CORK are fortunate to have such a wonderful underage set up and at U16 level the competition was as fierce as ever in 2016.

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

Eighteen teams participated in the U16 A league; sixteen teams took to the pitches in the U16 B league competitions whilst fourteen teams contested the under 16 C league. This is an age group where a lot of players are involved in exams but competitions got off to an early start and ran like clockwork and after the summer break it was all systems go as we looked towards finals.

In the U16 A league final played in Ballinlough it was an all Mid Cork clash with Inniscarra and Ballincollig

meeting and here it was Inniscarra who took the title with Ciara Ring awarded the Player of the Match.

The U16B league final was part of a double headed on the day of the A final and Enniskeane defeated Fr O'Neill's to be crowned champions as Kaitlin O'Donovan led the way with a player of the match display. Buttevant with Mairead Shinnick named player of the game took the U16 C title when they proved too strong for Castlelyons.

CHAMPIONSHIPS

With no back door at under 16 cham-

pionship level it's very much all on the night and as September dawned thoughts turned to championship action. Sixteen teams went into the hat at U16 A level.

Twelve teams competed for the U16 B championship crown twelve clubs also battled it out for the U16 C title.

Courcey Rovers booked their place in the U16 A final when they edged out St Catherine's in high scoring contest just two points separating the sides as Courcey Rovers notched up 5-11 to St. Catherine's 4-12. In the second semi final Ballygarvan proved too strong for Charleville.

In the B semi finals Eire Og got the upper hand on Enniskeane and Douglas edged out Brian Dillon's and in the U16 C semi finals in a close contest just

a point separated Ballinhassig and Buttevant as Ballinhassig booked their place in the final on a 3-2 to 2-4 score line. Clonakilty made it to the final as they were too strong for Castlelyons 4-6 to 1-8 the full time score here.

The A and B finals were played in superb conditions on November 13th and in a thrilling A decider Ballygarvan took their first ever title in the grade as they overcame Courcey Rovers.

Eire Og held all the aces from the throw in the B final as they overcame Douglas with player of the match awarded to Eire Og's Niamh Twomey who notched up an impressive 3-1 of her sides tally. Ballinhassig were too strong for Clonakilty in the U16 C final as Evelyn Collins impressed.

Interested in tutoring coaches? Now's your chance

Camogie

■ Mary Newman

THE continued call for coaching courses has put a strain on the camogie association. Tutoring new people to get involved is a vital part of the game, as it is here that new coaches, many of whom are parents, get their first real taste of taking charge of a team.

To have coaches we must have tutors to deliver the courses, and with this in mind the Camogie Association, as part of their Coach Education programme will be holding a course on five weekends, beginning in February. The five weekends will begin on the weekend of February 4/5, and will continue on the following weekends February 25/26, March 25/26, April 8/9 and the weekend session on May 6/7.

Applicants must be aged 23 and over by January 1, 2017 and tutors must be free to attend all course weekends.

Overnight accommodation on the Saturday night only will be at the Camogie Association's expense. The association is asking all applicants to consider

their availability to tutor on courses post completion of the five weekends, as this is the main objective, to have more qualified people available to coach. It is vitally important for anybody considering doing a tutor course that once out there tutoring the delivery time requirements for tutors giving a foundation course is eight hours this excludes travel and preparation time. To deliver a level 1 course is a 12-hour-time requirement, and again this excludes travel and preparation time, so those qualified must be prepared for giving this time to delivering courses. The majority of Camogie Coach Education courses take place in the evening time, or at weekends, and the association is asking all applicants to note this before applying, as each tutor, once qualified, must deliver

a minimum of five foundation courses within 12 months of finishing the tutor course in May 2017.

A financial commitment must be made by each applicant on acceptance onto the course in advance of participating in the course and this will be reimbursed to all qualified tutors once they fully comply and attend each course weekend and on qualifying deliver the a minimum of five foundation courses within 12 months of finishing the tutor course in May 2017. Once these stipulations are met the reimbursement will commence.

Each tutor who successfully completes the five weekends will receive a recognised Coaching Ireland Tutor qualification. Anybody interested can apply by complete a 2017 Coach Tutor Application Form which is available on the national camogie web site and return application to yvonne.byrne@camogie.ie Only applications received by e-mail will be accepted.

Mullins on song for the Sars minors

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

THE minor championships produced some splendid games in 2016.

Two evenly matched sides battled it out for the SE Systems Minor A championship title in Castle Road as the holders Killeagh and 2014 champions Sarsfield's went head to head for the 2016 crown.

Little divided the sides all through and it was level pegging at the break, 1-3 to 0-6.

Killeagh settled quickly into the game with two early scores and with the Sars attack piling on the pressure Kate Mary Cullinane had to be at her best in the Killeagh goal to deny them.

It was all to play for in the second half and Sars edged in front with an early point from Clare Mullins.

Ten minutes into the half, Mullins then grabbed a goal. Chloe Sigerson pointed two frees to keep the pressure on and with just two points between the sides the game was still there for the taking.

Sars stretched their lead to three points, with Lucy O'Gorman replying with a 45.

Killeagh battled to hold their title but Sarsfield's hung on with the Evening Echo Player of the Match going to Mullins.

MINOR B TITLE:

Despite playing against the strong wind in the opening half of the SE Systems Minor B championship final, Carrigaline made all the early running in their showdown with Ballincollig.

Two points settled them into the game and converting a free they went 0-3 to 0-1 ahead.

A Molly Barrett goal and a Rachel O'Regan point stretched the lead as Ballincollig were under pressure.

Chloe O'Halloran and Niamh O'Brien worked hard to get Ballincollig into the game but they trailed by seven points, 1-6 to 0-2, at the interval, and faced a really tough task to recover from the early setback.

To their credit, Ballincollig came out with all guns blazing in the second half and they ate into the Carrigaline lead.

They trailed by just a point after their efforts, 1-7 to 2-2, as they pressurised the Carrigaline defence.

Carrigaline showed what they were made of and held their focus and never panicked, picking off some excellent points they went 2-9 to 2-2 ahead.

A point from Emma Cooney and a Lisa Kiely goal gave Ballincollig a mountain to climb as Carrigaline, with wind advantage, piled on the pressure. The sides swapped goals but with Emma Cooney grabbing Carrigaline's fifth goal the title was secured.

Carrigaline's Molly Ryan was named Evening Echo Player of the Match after a superb display for the newly crowned champions.



Bernie Murphy presenting the Minor C Championship trophy in memory of her late daughter Shirley to Michelle Jones, captain of Charleville, who defeated Fr O'Neill's.

Nelligan is best for Charleville champs

THE minor championship titles at C and D level found homes in Charleville and Bride Rovers respectively as the hard work put in through a long season came to fruition at the end of November.

MINOR C TITLE FOR CHARLEVILLE: Unseasonal weather ensured the Castle Road pitch was in pristine order as Charleville made all the running in the first half of the SE Systems Minor C championship final against Fr O'Neill's.

Two committed sides battled hard but in the end it was Charleville that were crowned champions thanks to an opening half that saw where they

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

notch up 4-4 without reply.

Fr O'Neill's were unlucky not to have got on the scoreboard in the opening half they concentrated a lot on defending against the strong wind.

Grace Galvin found the net to settle Charleville into the game and with Laure Doyle adding a second goal they were in a good position. With the O'Neill's defence mopping up a lot of pressure Charleville added three points through Fiona Nelligan and Laura Doyle ensuring O'Neill's fell further behind.

O'Neill's did enjoy a lot of possession

in front of goal but strong defending helped Charleville stand firm with Ciara O'Brien hugely impressive. Two Sophie Hudner goals and a Fiona Nelligan point before the break gave Charleville a 16-sixteen point interval lead.

Ciara O'Neill had Fr O'Neill's on the scoreboard with an early second half point Laura Doyle replied. Fiona Nelligan had a goal as the game entered the third quarter but it was to be Charleville's last score of the game as Fr O'Neill's began to play with a lot more determination. Chloe O'Keefe converted a 45 before Rebecca O'Brien grabbed a Fr O'Neill's goal with eight minutes remaining.

Fiona Nelligan who played a huge role in her side's victory was presented

with the Evening Echo Player of the Match Award.

■ Bride Rovers captured the SE Systems Minor D Championship title with two points to spare over Rockbawn.

Aisling O'Connor gave Bride Rovers an early led but Rockbawn grabbed a goal and a point. Sally McCarthy, with three points, and Grace Culloty had the sides level and with the same players adding to their tally Bride Rovers led 1-6 to 1-3 at the break.

Rockbawn reduced the deficit to a point but player of the match Sally McCarthy settled Bride Rovers, before she added goal. Rockbawn fought back with a goal and had it down to a point before Siobhan O'Sullivan had it back to two for a Bride side who hung on to take the title.

Milford-Ballyhea stand firm to become minor league champs

A COMBINATION side took the minor A league title, when Milford-Ballyhea faced Sarsfield's as many had predicted.

Both struggled to get into a contest that only sparked to life in the closing stages after Milford-Ballyhea dominated for three quarters. Rain and slippery conditions made it hard for players and certainly did nothing for a game that failed to ignite except in closing minutes as a late rally saw Sars hit 1-2 without reply.

Sarsfield's hit the front with Lucy Kelly converting early 45 but a goal from Laura Stack helped the combination side gain the upper hand and from here to the half-time whistle they were in control with Roisin Killeen Chloe Dundon and Rachel Harty all prominent.

Harty and fired home a goal and a point without reply. Maebh Mullins pointed a Sarsfield's free but Chloe Dundon replied for Milford-Ballyhea. With

eight minutes remaining Sarsfield's sprung to life and when Mullins shot deflected off a defender and nestled into the back of the net it was the boost they needed. Now it was all Sars' and there was five points between them with eight minutes remaining. Lucy Kelly found the range and suddenly just two points separated the sides.

Sars battled for a winner but Milford-Ballyhea were stood firm.

Meanwhile, the all city clash in the minor B league final was a thriller St Finbarr's went into the game as hot favourites having recorded comprehensive victory in the early stages of the league but this time out Na Piarsaigh made them fight to the finish before securing victory.

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

St Finbarr's made the better start with three points in row, Keeva McCarthy twice and Megan Fitzpatrick. Na Piarsaigh battled for every ball and persistence paid off as Emily Buckley dispatched a 45 to the net to level the game. Na Piarsaigh hit the front with an Emily O'Sullivan point but with McCarthy adding three from play and one from a free, St Finbarr's were ahead 0-7 to 1-1 at the break.

An early McCarthy point settled St Finbarr's but Na Piarsaigh converted three frees. Kelsey O'Donovan had the sides level and for five minutes the ball flew up and down the field.

Ciara Keating broke the deadlock with an excellent point as St Finbarr's edged back in front but Na Piarsaigh won a penalty, which Emily Buckley opted to tap over and it was all square with six minutes remaining. From the puck-out Na Piarsaigh attacked but failed to grab the lead and Keeva McCarthy pointed twice to edge the Barrs two clear.

Heartbreak and tears but Niamh is battling back



Niamh McCarthy coaching during the Kellogg's GAA C&I Camp at Inniscarra GAA Club.
Picture: Denis Minihan

Camogie



Linda Mellerick

WHAT do you do when, at 14 years of age, your life revolves around sport; you're an international basketball player, a senior camogie club player, the most exciting prospect in Cork's camogie circles, and it's all taken away from you?

That's what Inniscarra's Niamh McCarthy endured.

She suffered three cruciate injuries, two actuals with the third a bewildering 'phantom' cruciate.

However, this modest, shy, talented player is back on the playing fields. She was instrumental in Inniscarra winning their second county senior title in October and while Niamh's confidence and inner belief may not yet have recovered from years of cruel injuries, she remains, at 20 years of age, one of Cork's most exciting camogie prospects.

It was two weeks before Inniscarra's All-Ireland final appearance in Croke Park in March 2011 when Niamh's nightmare began.

At U15 international basketball training she went over on her knee. Despite the short-term agony, Niamh tried to walk it off, the All-Ireland and Croke Park huge to her even at such a young age. She went back training but her knee was collapsing. Her dad brought her to several specialists and they all said it was fine. Niamh went to see her physiotherapist, teammate Rena Buckley, and to Rena's credit she highlighted something was wrong. When the MRI announced a cruciate injury there was widespread shock. Niamh was devastated.

Despite putting on a brave face in front of her teammates she cried endlessly at home.

The All-Ireland final passed in a blur, where she regrets not having enjoyed the occasion, despite Inniscarra's defeat.

Even now Niamh finds it hard to think or speak about that time. Sport was her life and when that was taken away she didn't know what to do, as she explains.

"You don't know what to do with yourself. You're too young so you don't have a job. I couldn't go to Irish college because I was on crutches. I couldn't do what my friends were doing. It was just awful. My whole group of friends changed. I walked around with a lump in my throat for



Niamh McCarthy, Laura Barrett, Orla O'Reilly and Sinead O'Reilly of the Ursulines College, Blackrock basketball team who won the All Ireland U-16 B Basketball final at the National Arena, Tallaght, Dublin.
Pic: Gavin Browne

so long," McCarthy said.

It was 12 months before Niamh got back onto the pitch. Seven minutes into her first game she went over on the same knee and it swelled like a balloon.

An MRI showed up a second cruciate injury. She was 15. With hospital policy preventing them from carrying out this procedure on someone so young Niamh joined a waiting list and Dr James Harty commenced his operation on Niamh in August of 2012.

As Dr Harty considered Niamh's knee he informed her there was nothing wrong, her knee was perfect, there was no cruciate damage.

She had wasted a whole summer. The emotion of it all must have been incredible.

Back Niamh went to the pitch. Incidentally, she never took to the basketball court again. She takes up the story.

"I played again and thought I was back to my best. My speed hadn't gone. We won the county in the

school. Everything was good and then three months in my other cruciate went. Knowing what I had to face this time, this was worse. I was 16. It happened in July.

"I was in fifth year when I had my operation in November and missed the following season again. I said anyway that I wasn't playing camogie again. I had enough.

"I couldn't even go to a game. I was devastated. I went into leaving cert and concentrated on that but I always rehabbing my knee, maybe at the back of my mind I intended going back."

Back she did come, thanks to her dad, Andrew McCarthy, a former inter-county footballer, and support from the likes of Colin Lane and Aidan Kelleher. Her dad took her to Ballyanley pitch and with a stopwatch and cones, put her through her paces, turning and twisting.

After her Leaving Cert, her mother, former renowned international basketball player Rose Breen,

encouraged her to attempt playing again and, just to get back socialising with her Inniscarra team-mates, Niamh gingerly toggled off in 2015.

Roll on 2016 and the physically stronger Niamh McCarthy scored 10-7 in this season's senior championship.

She is on the UCC camogie panel, where she studies Pharmacy, and has just received a call from Cork manager Paudie Murray to join his 2017 set up.

Surprisingly, well maybe unsurprisingly considering what Niamh has gone through, she doesn't understand why she got the call from Paudie, doesn't realise how good she is and, in fact, thought that because she's 20 years of age, having missed underage inter-county camogie, that her chance had passed.

She explains: "I knew I was good when I was 14, I felt I must have been

Niamh McCarthy factfile

Age: 20

Club: Inniscarra

Position: Forward

Honours won: Two senior county titles, one Munster club title.

Coach's comment:

"Niamh is a great player with a great attitude. What she has overcome so far in her career would have stopped many, but her determination to get back playing was inspirational to everyone who saw her go through her rehab. She is a great person to have on your team."

"She never stops working and is the first to arrive and last to leave every training session."

"She deserves to have an injury-free career from what she has had to endure up until this point."

good, but now I'm surprised if I make it through, if I get on a team. I was surprised last year when I was brought on as a sub to the Ashbourne team, that team was full of inter-county players.

"I was proper terrified this year when the club scene started again. I'm happy to get the call from Paudie but I'm not sure I'll get a game."

She gives her parents full credit for where she is today.

"My dad is probably the reason I'm back playing. My mum has just driven me everywhere."

She is extremely grateful to the many specialists she received treatment from.

Dr Wesley O'Brien and Niamh McCarthy have given her a special programme in UCC and work with her, understanding the type of training her body needs.

Niamh has bounced back. There are no guarantees, but she is special talent. We wish her the very best and look forward to seeing her in action for many years to come.

Ballyhea got the better of neighbours

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

IT WAS the battle of neighbours in the SE Systems Junior B championship final last year where a strong second half display that by Ballyhea grabbed two vital goals as they overcome Charleville.

It was always going to be close and at the break just a point separated the sides as Ballyhea led 0-4 to 0-3, after playing with the aid of a very strong wind in the opening half. A lot of us wondered would it be enough and felt if Charleville could get enough ball to their inside line, and in particular to Fiona Nelligan, they would cause problems.

From the restart Ballyhea showed huge determination as they closed down the Charleville attack, with player of the match Elaine Crowley leading the way.

They had added a point to their half time tally and when Sarah O'Keeffe reacted fast to Karen O'Leary's long delivery Ballyhea were now five points in front.

Charleville worked hard and it took an excellent save from Chloe Keogh to deny Nelligan. A goal deep in injury time from Mairead Shinnick ensured the title was going to Ballyhea.

JUNIOR C CHAMPIONSHIP

Having lost out in the league final to the same opponents, Ballinora went into the SE Systems Junior C Championship final in determined form.

Castletions took an early lead but Aoife Nic Abhaird replied quickly levelled matters. Castletions had edged ahead again before Katie Hogan had the game's opening goal after 18 minutes. Castletions were back level with two pointed frees.

Castletions hit the front with a goal just before the break to give them a 1-4 to 1-1 interval lead.

Ballinora cut the deficit quickly in the second half with a Siobhan O'Regan pointed free and when the same player found the net for a goal they were in the lead and were growing in confidence.

Continuing to pressurise the league champions Jennifer Murphy made no mistake as she first timed to the net.

Ballinora were in control and they pushed to close the game out Abbey Murphy added to their tally with a long range point from play but Castletions hit back with three points without reply.

Then a goal with nine minutes remaining gave them a huge lift.

Sub Kate Dooley notched up three vital points before Jennifer Murphy added a goal and a point and the title was heading the way of Ballinora, with Caoimhe O'Keeffe deserving named *Evening Echo* Player of the Match.



Newtownshandrum's Claire Griffin raises the trophy after defeating Na Piarraigh in the 2016 camogie Junior A championship final. Picture: Eddie O'Hare

Newtown won a junior A thriller

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

NORTH Cork sides featured prominently as the junior A and B championship titles found homes in the division.

Three of the four teams that contested the A and B championship finals hailed from the North Cork division with Newtownshandrum, Ballyhea and Charleville all in the hunt on final day.

In the SE Systems Junior A final Newtownshandrum captured their first adult title in a while when they overcame Na Piarraigh.

It was a game that ebbed and flowed all through but in truth with eight minutes remaining Na Piarraigh looked to have done enough as they led by three

points. Failure to add to their tally and stretch their advantage was to prove costly as they were hit with a strong Newtown finish that yielded 1-2 without reply. This was enough to swing the game in the North Cork side's favour and give them the title.

Newtownshandrum started well and controlled matters early three points without reply giving them the upper hand before Leona Crowley caught the Newtown defence off guard sending a 20-metre free to the net to level the game. The sides were level by the midway stage and twice Na Piarraigh went

in front and they held it to the break and with the strong wind in their favour for the second half Na Piarraigh were in a good position.

The sides swapped early second half points but Newtown hit two points without reply to level matters. Sarah Roche edged Na Piarraigh ahead but Maria Reidy tapping over a point and we were back level, but Na Piarraigh went three points clear with eight minutes on the stopwatch.

Newtown needed something and they made a vital switch which was to have a big bearing on the game, moving the pacey and talented Cliona O'Callaghan further outfield and switching Maria Reidy to full-forward. O'Callaghan pointed a free to edge them to within two points before Re-

becca Sheehy grabbed a goal with five minutes remaining as they hit the front.

From the puck-out, they pressurised again and splitting the Na Piarraigh defence open with a great run O'Callaghan parted to Maria Reidy who made no mistake from the edge of the square.

With victory in their grasp they defended as Na Piarraigh searched for a score but it was Katie Coughlan who added to the Newtown tally with a pointed close in free as they finished strong being crowned champions.

The *Evening Echo* Player of the Match was Cliona O'Callaghan, who had a superb hour for the North Cork side in what was one of the best finals of 2016.

Na Piarraigh honour the memory of Josie McDonnell

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

NA Piarraigh Camogie Club recently held the finals of their annual Josie McDonnell memorial tournament.

Young players from the club participate each year to honour the memory of one of the club's founders. The competition is now in its 30th year and once competitive Go Games are completed, the Na Piarraigh camogie section set about organising games on a league basis and six teams from U6 to U10 took part.

Close on 60 girls play in games starting in November and finishing with the finals in December. Each team was named after founder members or organisers in the club: Josie McDonnell, Peggy Twohig, Joan Goggin, Anne Coade, Joan Guest and Ca Martins.

After weeks of hard training, the tournament was run on a league basis and was held in the club's indoor arena.

The tournament is in memory of a woman who

was truly dedicated to Na Piarraigh camogie club. The late Josie's legacy is being carried on in the club by her family and they were on hand to play a big role on the day and indeed are very involved in all aspects of the club.

Members of the U16 and minor teams all get on board and manage the teams and as is usual every year Ca Martin and Joan Guest were there to keep a close eye on everything. They were presented with bouquets of flowers on the day of the finals to acknowledge their involvement in the tournament.

The winning team were the Joan Guest team and their captain Emma O'Mahony was presented with the Josie McDonnell Shield by Ber McDonnell, who thanked the club for once again honouring the mem-

ory of the late Josie. Also present on the day was Josie's son Thomas.

Huge thanks was expressed to the club's U8 management team of Anthony O'Mahony, Lorraine Buckley and Paula Bourke and the U10 management team of Catherine Sloane, Eoin Murphy and Carol Casey, who do huge work in the club's underage section throughout the year.

The day was rounded off with a visit from Santa Clause who ensured on the day that all the kids were presented with medals, and of course the much-welcomed selection boxes.

All those who were involved in running the tournament were singled out for special mention and all participants were encouraged to keep playing camogie and to keep the hard work at training.

Another successful conclusion to a tournament that is very dear to the hearts of all in Na Piarraigh Camogie club.

SARSFIELDS SENIOR CAMOGIE CHAMPIONS



2016

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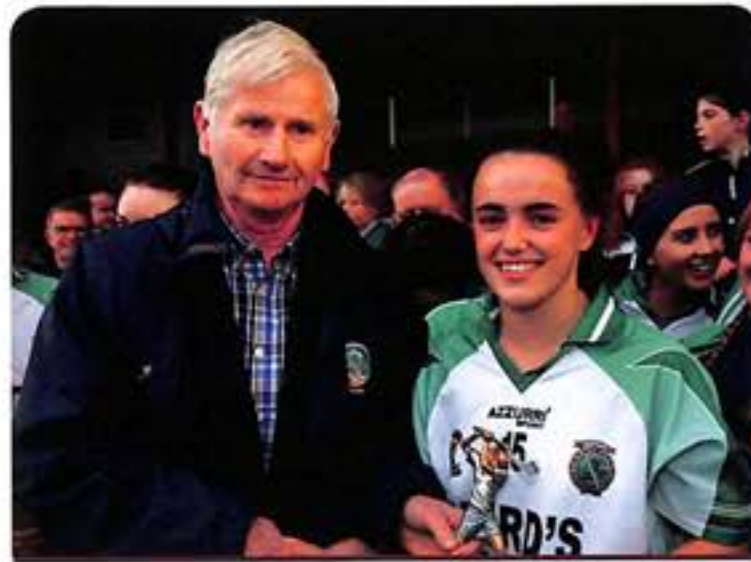
SARSFIELDS WINNERS

Back Row: (left to right) Denise Gormally, Sarah Glynn, Sorcha Noone, Maria Cooney, Aisling Spellman, Gemma Flynn, Kate Gallagher, Niamh McGrath, Klara Donohue, Erica Leslie, Stephanie Cannon, Melinda Earls, Yvonne Lyons, Hannah Curley, Sinead Cannon, Ailbhe Duhan and Laura Glynn.

Front Row: (left to right) Karina Cannon, Karen Earls, Grainne Ryan, Ciara Keane, Rachel Murphy, Sarah Spellman, Orlaith McGrath, Clodagh McGrath, Tara Kenny, Ciara Ward, Siobhan McGrath, Laura Ward (Mascot: Oisín Helebert), Eimear Larkn, Sarah Gallagher, Rachel Earls.



Una McDonagh, Lough Rea Hotel, (sponsors), presenting the Catherine Donnellan Cup to Orlaith McGrath.



Frank Duane, Galway Camogie Chairman, presenting the Player of the Match Award, to Sarsfields Siobhan McGrath.



Sarah Dervan



Rebecca Hennelly



Aoife Donohue

2016 CAMOGIE REVIEW DARREN KELLY



2016

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While Galway didn't qualify for the All-Ireland senior camogie final, it was still a busy season for the maroon and white with three titles secured and Sarsfields creating history by picking up a first county senior championship.

The year began with Killimor's quest for national silverware as they travelled to Clones to take on Antrim's Loughgiel Shamrocks. Goals for Susan Keane and Brenda Hanney put Tommy Callagy's charges to the front as they secured a third Croke Park appearance in five years and a repeat of the 2013 decider against Cork's Milford.

Eyrecourt were also on the campaign trail as Galway intermediate champions with Cora McEvoy, Laura Loughnane and Laoise Stones getting the green flags in a comfortable semi-final win over Tyrone's Eglis. Unfortunately, All-Ireland club final day didn't materialise successfully for the Galway clubs but there would be victorious days over the year.

St. Brigid's College, Loughrea finally ended years of hurt by picking up the All-Ireland senior schools title in March after a 2-6 to 0-9 victory over Loreto, Kilkenny with Aisling Connolly and Katie Manning netting. For the first time since 2008, Connacht were Gael Linn Interprovincial champions in May.

For Galway, it was a positive season under new manager Ollie Bergin as the Tribeswomen qualified for the National League Final before going down agonisingly in the All-Ireland senior semi-final to Kilkenny. During the spring, Bergin used his panel to full effect with five group victories before five Niamh Kilkenny points and an Aoife Donohue goal helped them to a 1-11 to 0-13 win over Limerick.

The final in Semple Stadium to Kilkenny was a poor day but they responded with four group wins before the match with the Noreiders in front of the live TV cameras. Again, Galway had to battle from behind but Ailish O'Reilly's goal in injury time completed a memorable comeback to force the extra 20 minutes. However, a fortunate Ann Dalton Kilkenny goal tipped the balance back in the Leinster side's favour as they crept over the line. But Galway's exploits on the field were rewarded with

three All-Stars for Sarah Dervan, Rebecca Hennelly and Aoife Donohue.

Galway's future looks bright with Tony O'Donovan's under 16s retaining the All-Ireland crown in August and Lorraine Larkin's young minors just fell short in their All-Ireland final replay.

Two Chloe Quinn-Reilly goals and 1-3 for Siobhan McGrath helped the O'Donovan's outfit to a 3-14 to 1-11 win over Kilkenny in Leixlip on a day that sadly clashed with Galway's All-Ireland hurling semi-finals in Croke Park but didn't dampen the enthusiasm of the strong tribal support. A Sarah Spellman goal put Galway's minors back in contention against Tipperary in April before they came up just short in the replay.

Galway's intermediates also had a positive spring making the National Division Two League final coming up just short against Meath after goals for Rachel Monaghan and Marie Farrell. But injuries took their toll for Brian Griffin's charges come the summer, as they didn't qualify from the group stages.

On the domestic front, it was year of big victories across the five adult grades as Kiltormer, St. Dominic's and Kilconieron picked up the three Junior titles while Cappataggle finally qualified for the top tier of Galway camogie when they got the better of Ahascragh/Caltra in the intermediate decider.

But the year belonged to Sarsfields as, along with the under 16 and minor crowns, they won their first ever County Senior Camogie title. On two memorable occasions, Michael McGrath's charges and Mullagh delivered two classics in Kenny Park and Duggan Park. Aoife Donohue turned the drawn match on its head with a great goal as Madge Kennedy's side looked set to close out Mullagh's sixth title only for Niamh and Orlaith McGrath to get the saving points to force another day out.

In the replay, a strong Sarsfields defence came good in the second half after Patricia Manning's goal put Mullagh back in contention before Siobhan McGrath finally managed the space to run at the opposing defence for a Sarsfields goal that sparked celebrations in the parish and set themselves and Cappataggle up on Leinster opposition in the New Year.

DEC.
2016

SECOND LEVEL CAMOGIE 2016

2016 was a successful year for Clare schools with St Annes Killaloe capturing first ever titles at Munster and All Ireland level; Scariff Community College did likewise and St Josephs Secondary School Tulla took Munster Senior A honours and Gaelcholaiste Inis claimed Munster honours also.

Hayes Munster Intermediate Final

Gaelcholaiste an Chlair(Inis) 5 - 13
Scoil Pol, Kilfinane 2 - 1

The game was played in Martinstown, near Kilmallock and in the opening half the players had to contend with the very cold weather conditions with rain, hailstones and sleet. This was a great team performance by Gaelcholaiste, Inis and from the start they held the upper hand with Grainne Ni Nuallain and Aoibheann Ni Dhugain dominating at midfield. Grainne was all over the pitch helping out the defence and creating numerous scoring chances for her teammates. Gaelcholaiste opened up a three point lead before Aoibheann Ni Dhugain scored her sides opening goal. Scoil Pol replied with a goal to open their account before the score of the game followed. The Gaelcholaiste cleared the ball out to Grainne Ni Nuallain who struck the ball down the wing to Ciara Ni Dhugain and she hit it into Ciara Ni Fhaolain who on the turn drove the sliotar to the back of Scoil Pol's net. Scoil Pol did not give up and grabbed a goal and a point which was deflected over the bar from a 20m free. Shannen Ni Dhonnabhain grabbed her sides third goal to leave the halftime score at 3-7 to 2-1. Both teams welcomed the halftime break and the chance to try and warm up in the dressing rooms. When the teams emerged for the second half it was dry and the Gaelcholaiste continued to keep the pressure on their opponents. Ciara Ni Fhaolain and Shannen Ni Dhonnabhain grabbed a goal each and a couple of points to stretch their lead. Scoil Pol tried in vain but the winners defence were relentless and refused to concede in the second half to capture the Munster Intermediate Schools title. Gaelcholaiste panel: Muirne Ni Chonaill (Doora-Barefield) Clodagh Ni Dhomhnaill CClarecastle) Meghan Ni Chruadhloich (Kilmaley) Lily Ni Chonchubhair (Ruan) Leah Ni Thailtigh (The Banner) Roisin Ni Fhalluin (Ballyea) Siofra Ni Chonaill (Doora-Barefield) Grainne Ni Nuallain (Eire Og) Aoibheann Ni Dhugain Clooney/Quin) Sarah Ni Cheallaigh (Kilmaley) Aoife Ni Sheannain (Doora-Barefield) Ciara Ni Dhugain (Doora-Barefield)

Shannen Ni Dhonnabhain (Ruan) Ciara Ni Fhaolain (Doora-Barefield) Sinead Ni Ruanaidh (Kilmaley) Saidhbhin Ni Cheallaigh (Kilmaley) Elena Sanz (The Banner) Niamh Ni Eadvhaird (Eire Og) Nicole Ni Thailtigh (The Banner)

O'Neills All Ireland Post Primary Junior C Final

Venue: Duggan Park, Ballinasloe

Scariff Community College,
Clare 6-7 Banagher College, Offaly 0-2



Scariff Community College, All Ireland Junior C winners



Scariff Community College Joint Captains Ciara Doyle & Amy Barrett with the Cup

Scariff Community College ensured their place in the history books on Saturday afternoon with a comprehensive win over Banagher College in the O'Neills Post Primary Junior C Final. A 2-6 to 0-1 advantage at half time was further added to with an additional four green flags in the second half to ensure victory went the way of the East Clare school. Both sides came into the game having netted 7 times each in their semi finals, however on Saturday

afternoon in Duggan Park Ballinasloe, it was Scariff who poached goals almost at will to garner a first ever All Ireland title.

Scariff laid down a firm marker right from the throw in, Louise O'Callaghan winning possession at the throw in and launching forward to finish over the bar. Banagher had the chance to equalise a minute later, but Chloe Reillys shot was agonisingly short. Banagher were immediately on the attack from the puck out and a timely interception by centre back Amy Barret saw Scariff win back possession. Barrett sent her shot to O'Callaghan whose strike was well handled by the Banagher goalie Louise Corcoran and cleared from danger. A brace of frees from Ciara Doyle had Scariff ahead 0-3 to 0-0 with five minutes on the clock. Wing forward Alannah Moloney with a decisive strike raised Scariffs first green flag in the 6th minute. Banagher regrouped immediately and again it was Reilly who was to the fore for the Offaly side as she dropped her shot into the Scariff danger area wher Ava Quigley gathered and cleared from danger. Reilly opened the Banagher schools account in the 10th minute when she converted from placed ball. Scariffs next attack was wide of the mark before Doyle added for the East Clare outfit in the 14th minute. Scariff playing the advantage of a slight breeze laid siege on the Banagher danger area with their next attack and Corcoran denied them with three quick saves in succession before Laura Clancy carried the ball from danger. Doyle converted from placed ball again in the 17th minute, O'Callaghan having been fouled in possession as she drove forward. Dominating in vital areas of play, Scariff fed the ball forward and in a goal mouth scramble, Doyle got the last touch to secure her sides second green flag in the 22nd minute. Barrett in her role as joint captian led by example in the half back line and again was to hand to intercept from Banaghers Roisin Daly and clear from danger. Scariffs next two attempts at adding to their tally were wide of the mark before Lorna McNamara pointed, the diminutive corner forward turning almost on a sixpence and firing over from an awkward angle. Roisin McMahon in midfield won the puckout for Scariff and following a thirty yard run, laid off a pass to Doyle who split the posts to see Scariff go in 2-7 to 0-1 at the break.

Scariff picked up where they had left off at the restart of the second half, Doyle with the first attack and though Doyle ran into trouble on the wing, the young Bodyle native picked out the unmarked Amber Nolan dead straight in front of goal. Nolan with time on her side made no mistake and gave Corcoran no chance as she struck home to the back of the net. Banagher upped the tempo and bore down on the Scariff danger area, with sub Aine Doorly sending the ball high into the area which was neatly collected by Scariff netminder Shauna Canny and cleared back downfield by Barrett. Lorna McNamara raised Scariffs fourth green flag in the 38th minute and Nolan added her second and Scariffs fifth goal with a strike from the 21 yard line just a minute later. Though the game may have been effectively over at this stage, credit has to go to the Banagher players who contested every ball and fought for every opportunity. Reilly was denied a green flag by Canny in the 41st minute, and converted the resulting '45. Likewise Doorlys attempt midway through the second half was well collected by Canny and the Killanena club player who is as comfortable outfield as in the goalmouth, demonstrated that with a run to the 30 yard line before striking from danger down the wing. Lorna McNamara struck for Scariffs sixth goal and ultimately the last score of the game in the 46th minute. The Scariff College mentors Marie Kenneally and Marie Lynch emptied the bench for the closing 10 minutes and though Banagher had their opportunities the finely tuned machine that was Scariff dispensed with all attacks to take their first ever win at National level.

Scariff were well served all over the field, and the scoreline doesn't reflect on the intensity which Banagher brought to the field, their goalie Corcoran in particular who worked hard throughout. On another day, it may have been the Leinster Champions' day but on Saturday there was no denying Scariff Community College. With any number of the Scariff players in contention for the Player of the Match accolade it was double celebrations for Amy Barret to whom the honour was bestowed shortly after her lifting the cup with co-captain Ciara Doyle from the Camogie Associations Miriam O'Callaghan.

Scariff Community College: Shauna Canny; Ava Quigley, Róisín Minogue, Ella McNamara; Rachel Minogue, Amy Barrett J/Capt, Greta Hickey; Róisín McMahon, Louise O'Callaghan; Alannah Moloney, Ciara Doyle J/Capt, Amber Nolan; Lorna McNamara, Aoife O'Brien, Aoife Maloney

Subs: Aisling Corry for Nolan 51 mins, Jennifer O'Meara for L McNamara 56 mins, Claire McNamara for Doyle 58 mins, Shauna Doyle for Maloney 58 mins

Banagher College: Louise Corcoran; Heather Moran, Kaitlyn Kennedy, Laura Clancy; Karla Corcoran-Lynch, Amy Byrne, Olivia Mannion; Louise Mannion-Capt, Helen Healy; Shauna Duane, Róisín Daly, Chloe Reilly; Allison Rosney, Hannah Larkin, Nessa Dolan

Subs: Aine Doorly for Rosney H/T, Dearbhla Kelly for Moran 58 mins

Referee: Liz Dempsey, Kilkenny

Player of the Game: Amy Barret, Scariff Community College

O'Neills Post Primary Junior D All Ireland Final

St Annes Community College Killaloe 4-6
Presentation de la Salle, Bagenalstown 0-4



St Annes Killaloe All Ireland Junior D winners



Captain Aoife Power accepts the cup from James Moynihan

St Anne Camogie team wrote their name into the schools history books on Friday afternoon when winning the schools first ever All Ireland camogie crown. A spirited tenacious display from the East Clare school saw them add the All Ireland title to the Munster Junior D and Munster Intermediate titles won back in January. St Annes put in a composed display throughout the 60 minutes and never looked like capitulate to the Leinster champions.

Aoife Power opened the scoring in the 3rd minute when she pointed from play. St Annes were on the attack immediately, winning the puckout and moving play back to the danger area, only for Presentation to gather and clear from danger. St Annes next effort was wide of the mark however Maeve Óg O'Leary won the resulting puckout, sending the ball straight back in between the posts. A Power free in the 10th minute saw the Clare school ahead 0-3 to 0-0. The mid field pairing of Lynda Daly and Holly McGee were dominant, with McGee adding St Annes 4th point in the 12th minute. O'Leary grabbed St Annes first goal mid way through the first half to put the Ailish Minogue managed side well in control. Presentations Tara Bermingham landed her sides first score in the 16th minute, when she split the posts from a free. Presentation could have been further ahead but some wayward shooting proved costly. O'Leary who ended the game with a tally of 3-3 earning her the Player of the Game accolade converted a free in the 21st minute to further extend St Annes lead. Presentations Emma Cody won the battle for the puckout and drove forward, intent on raising a green flag but was denied by Rachel Daly in the St Annes goalmouth. Emma Byrne pointed for Presentation just before O'Leary converted a '45 to see St Annes go in 1-6 to 0-2 ahead at the break.

Weather conditions which had been dry in the opening half changed to driving rain in the second half, however there was no change in the determination displayed by St Annes. O'Leary had her second green flag to give St Annes the ideal restart to play inside the opening minutes. Lauren Kelly pulled a point back for Presentation with a converted free just 2 minutes later. Cody who was prominent for Presentation throughout broke through again intent on goal but was intercepted by Claire Maguire, who along with Susan Daly were impressive in the back line throughout. O'Leary wrote her own name into the history books with her third green flag in the 39th minute to make it St Annes 3-6 Presentation 0-3. Bermingham converted from placed ball for her sides last score in the 41st minute. Presentation battled hard for the remainder but up against a determined St Annes side whose supporters provided plenty vocal encouragement, the Carlow school just couldn't break through for the scores they needed. Jennifer Daly entered the fray to replace the injured Power with the game in the closing minutes, and had enough time to gather and rifle home to the net for St Annes fourth goal to see the Clare school take victory on a

final scoreline St Annes 4-6 Presentation 0-4. Camogie Association vice President James Moynihan did the honours in presenting O'Leary with the Player of the Game award before presenting the Cup to a jubilant St Annes captain Aoife Power amid scenes of great delight from the large travelling support.

St Annes: Rachel Daly; Claire Maguire, Susan Daly, Anna Spaight; Aoife Graham, Moya Marsh McMahon, Alison McGee; Lynda Daly, Holly McGee 0-1; Anne Lee Marsh, Aoife Power Captain 0-2, Ellen Lane; Hazel McMahon, Maeve Óg O'Leary 3-3, Emily Clarke

Subs: Anna McNamara for Graham, Sarah Lane for H McMahon, Jennifer Daly 1-0 for pwer inj

Presentation de la Salle: Emily O'Hara; Chantelle Kelly, Helen Roche, Ellen Murphy; Ali Cushen, Orla Bolger, Róisín Meany; Emma Byrne, Emma Cody; Sarah Kelly, Eve Sinnott, Shauna O'Neill; Chloe Beck, Lauren Kelly, Tara Bermingham

Subs: Georgie Byrne for L Kelly, Orla McDonagh for Sinnott.

Player of the Game: Aoife Power, St Annes Community College



THIRD LEVEL CAMOGIE 2016

UL 3-12 UCC 4-07
Ashbourne Cup Final 2016

Hosted by NUIG,
Final played in Gort GAA Grounds

The game got off to a slow start with both teams showing some expected nerves in the opening few minutes as both registered wides. Patrice Diggin opened UL's account for the afternoon scoring 3 frees from various angles before UCC registered their opening score. UCC's star player Katrina Mackey goaled shortly after, leaving the Leaside College with the narrowest of leads. Amidst a short but vicious hailstone shower, Aoife Keane, one of four dual players on the panel, pointed expertly off the left before another Diggin free put UL a single score ahead. Sarah Fryday, goalscorer in UL's mammoth win over 2015 winners WIT on Saturday in Ballyhaunis, then struck to the net before UCC hit 2 points to leave 2 points between the teams at half time, UL 1-5 UCC 1-3.

The second half provided as much entertainment as has been seen on any field so far in 2016. Kerry star

Patrice Diggin opened the scoring once again for UL with a free, cancelling out a UCC score. Through Diggin and Keane, UL opened up a four point lead which was shortly reduced back to 2 by some fine long-range shooting by the UCC forwards. With 16 minutes left, Niamh Ryan, who bravely played the final with a severe injury to her arm, saw Clare woman Niamh O'Dea move into space. O'Dea caught the sliotar and drove at the UCC defence before popping the ball to Sarah Fryday who made no mistake and buried it past the helpless UCC custodian. Both teams traded scores before Mackey's second goal brought life back to the Mardyke club. A great clearance off the goal-line by Ciannait Walsh ensured UL kept a 3 point lead (2-10 vs 2-7) with seven minutes remaining.

Hannah Looney then netted to draw the teams level. After a difficult game on Saturday and the battle against UCC, the impact of substitutes was always going to be crucial. Ciara Murphy and Emma Buckley both entered the cauldron with 6 minutes remaining replacing the excellent Niamh Ryan and Aoife McGrath respectively.

Diggin and O'Dea put UL two points clear with 2 minutes of normal time remaining. As the game was entering injury time, UCC really began to apply the pressure on the Shannonsiders goalmouth. UCC won a free 25 metres out in the first minute of injury time which was deflected out by a combination of UL hurleys. The ball was hit back into the square and landed straight into Mackey's hands who hammered the ball into the net to put UCC ahead by the bare minimum 4-7 to 2-12.

Those who travelled to support the girls from UL clad in white were distraught and thought they were about to experience similar heartbreak to 2015. However, they had a plan! UL won a free on the touchline on the 45m line. Everyone knew it was to be the final play of the match; 25 bodies landed in towards the UCC goalmouth before Player of the Match Patrice Diggin landed the ball in. It was completely fitting that the inspirational figure of team captain Laura McMahon would rise highest to flick the ball to the net, leading to surreal celebrations both inside and outside the wire!

UL successfully negotiated the final remaining seconds of the final to capture the Ashbourne Cup 2016, allowing Laura McMahon of Clare the honour to collect the cup on behalf of her outstanding teammates and management. It is unbelievably difficult to single out an individual player from the final as they all deserve fantastic recognition. A massive congratulations to everybody involved with the victorious team.

Team in full: Roisin Breen, Ciannait Walsh, Laura McMahon (C) (1-0), Sinead Gaffney, Niamh Ryan, Caoimhe Maher, Debbie Flynn, Eirena Fryday, Patrice Diggin (0-8), Eimear Kelly, Niamh O'Dea (0-1), Clodagh McGrath, Aoife Keane (0-3), Aoife McGrath, Sarah Fryday (2-0). Ciara Murphy for Ryan, Emma Buckley for A McGrath, Niamh Hanniffy for Kelly, Aisling McCarthy for C McGrath.

Ashbourne Cup Semi Finals

UL 1-11 V WIT 1-05
'CC 2-09 V MIC 1-07

Final

UL 3-12 UCC 4-07

Purcell Cup Semi Finals

CIT4-05 v DIT 2-06
Maynooth University 2-09 v IT Carlow 3-04
Final: CIT 1-12 Maynooth University 0-4

Fr Meachair Cup Semi Finals

Fr Meachair Cup Semi Finals
AIT 3-07 v IT Tralee 0-03
Trinity 8-07 v Limerick IT 0-03
Final: Trinity 1-10 AIT 0-8

UL camogie team 2016, Ashbourne Cup Champions 2016,

Ciara Murphy (Galway), Ciana Ni Churraoin (Galway), Claire Keating (Limerick), Niamh Murphy (Galway), Deanna Considine (Clare), Fiona Ni Bhriain (Waterford), Chloe Purcell (Kilkenny), Niamh Hanniffy (Galway), Sarah Fryday (Tipperary), Mary O'Callaghan (Limerick), Niamh Ryan (Limerick), Caoimhe Maher (Tipperary), Niamh O'Dea (Clare), Ciara Holohan (Tipperary), Aoife Keane (Clare), Grainne Egan (Offaly), Ellen Horgan (Clare), Aideen Hogg (Clare), Emma Buckley (Tipperary).

Eimear Kelly (Clare), Aoife McGrath (Tipperary), Roisin Breen (Kilkenny), Lisa Gorman (Offaly), Aishling McCarthy (Tipperary), Laura McMahon (Clare, Captain), Eirena Fryday (Tipperary), Ciannait Walsh (Tipperary), Clodagh McGrath (Galway), Sinead Gaffney (Galway), Debbie Flynn (Offaly), Patrice Diggin (Kerry), Breege Nolan (Carlow).

First ever Third level All-Stars awards ceremony

The CCAO third level camogie All-Stars were awarded in May at the very first joint All-Star event with the HEC and the WPGA.

Hosted at the beautiful Hudson Bay hotel Athlone, fifteen camogie players from around the country were honoured for their performance from the Ashbourne, Purcell and Fr. Meachair Cup respectively.

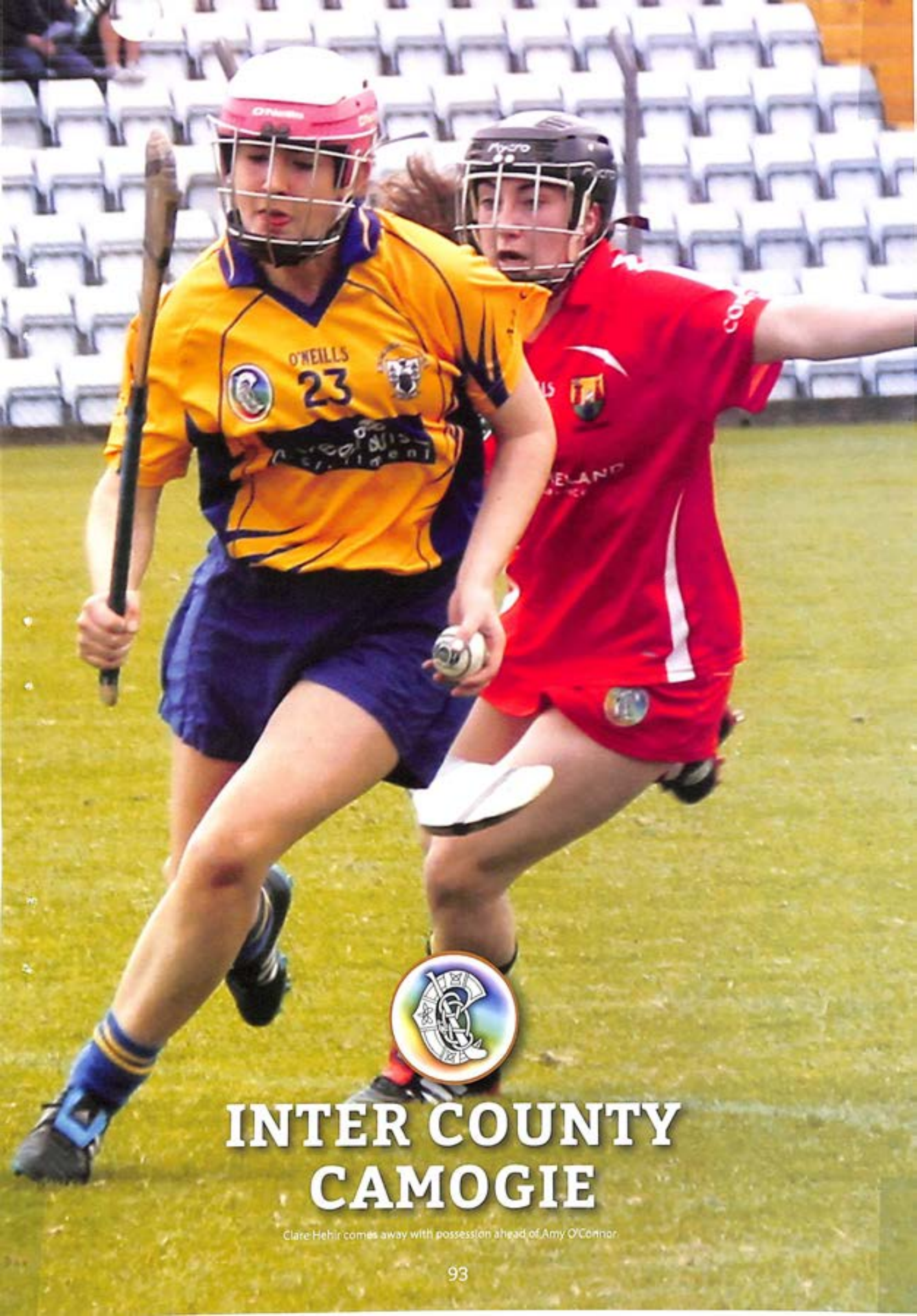
Nine counties were represented on the night with five Cork players, two Clare, two Tipperary and



GLORY DAY: Ursuline, Thurles with the trophy after their victory over Presentation, Thurles, in Sunday's Munster Colleges Senior A camogie final in Templeuoehy.

CAMOGIE

Munster Post Primary Schools Senior
A Camogie final: Presentation Thurles
0-5 Ursuline Thurles 0-6



INTER COUNTY CAMOGIE

Clare Hehir comes away with possession ahead of Amy O'Connor.

St Mary's on the Hill is special

JAN
2017



Camogie and ladies football players Claudia McSweeney, Erica Lynch O'Shea, Lauryn O'Connor, Jineice Wyse and Sophie Liu in the school colours of Scoil Mhuire ar Cnoc na hAoine, St Mary's On the Hill, Knocknaheeny.



UCC's Amy O'Connor bursts past Cork IT's Aine Crowley in last night's Ashbourne Cup clash at Cork IT.

Picture: Jim Coughlan

Talented UCC book quarter-final spot

UCC 3-15
Cork IT 0-12
Ashbourne Cup

Therese O'Callaghan
CIT

Last year's runners-up UCC secured their place in the Ashbourne Cup quarter-final following victory over Cork IT at the host's grounds last evening. Two wins out of two now for the UCC girls and if they can get the better of DCU in their final Group One game in Dublin, a spot in the semi-final awaits.

Winning manager Dr Wesley O'Brien, who has former Cork hurler Niall McCarthy among his backroom team, said the

main ambition is to get to the Cup weekend.

"We have a strong panel. We have 25 senior inter-county players in our panel of 30. We have invested a lot of time in fitness, we have done 12 weeks consistently and I think it showed tonight. Their work ethic has been incredible." Cork IT are the Purcell Cup victors of 2016. And while this competition is a step up, their second-half performance must be commended, as they fought all the way to the full whistle.

Trailing 2-12 to 0-5 at the interval, manager Barry Day can take a lot of heart from how strong his side finished. They entertain NUIG in their next match also in two weeks' time, and if they overcome the westerners they will go

through to the last eight. Two first-half-goals from Amy O'Connor ensured the UCC dominance. Libby Coppinger and Pamela Mackey were so influential in the heart of the defence while Hannah Looney clipped a few lovely points from her berth at midfield. And, up front, the pace and running off the ball of O'Connor and Katrina Mackey was significant.

To their credit, Cork IT outscored UCC in the second half. Rachel O'Shea making no mistake from the dead ball and from play, and she was well supported by Katelyn Hickey. This was despite Orla Cronin restarting the match with a well-taken goal for UCC after being put through by Katrina Mackey.

Scorers for UCC: A O'Connor (2-3), K

Mackey (0-5, 0-1 free, 0-1 45m), O Cronin (1-1), H Looney (0-4), N McCarthy (0-2).

Scorers for Cork IT: R O'Shea (0-6, 0-5 frees, 0-1 45m), K Hickey (0-2), L Bolger and J O'Shea (0-1 each).

UCC: (Cork except where stated): K Fox (Tipperary); S McNamara (Limerick); L Coppinger, R Phelan (Kilkenny); J Hosford, P Mackey, Y Murphy; H Looney, E Murphy; A Malone (Clare); O Cronin, N McCarthy; A O'Connor, K McCarthy, K Mackey.

Subs: M Cahalane for E Murphy (injury); L O'Dwyer (Tipperary) for J Hosford; M McCarthy for N McCarthy (both 40); H Ryan for K McCarthy (42); I Heffernan (Waterford) for S McNamara (52).

Cork IT: (Cork except where stated): A Leo; A Walsh, G Sheehy, A Crowley; L Lynch, E Sharpe, S Murphy; J O'Shea, L Bolger (Wexford); K Hickey; J Cronin, R O'Shea, J Leo, E Looney, M Murphy.

Subs: R Hurley for J Cronin (43); K Coughlan for J Leo, K Lane for E Looney (57).

Referee: Cathal Egan (Glen Rovers).

Push is on to finish work at Castle Road

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

THE drive to complete the Castle Road development continues as the Cork Camogie Board work to get their club house and changing rooms and complex built.

Last September the building work got under way when CField Construction arrived on site and since then work has continued at a steady pace.

Foundations were laid, brick laid and now with all walls up the whole complex had taken on a superb look and a life of its own. It will be the home of Cork camogie for many future generations and it is a credit to all who have worked hard down through many many years as the dream becomes reality.

For 111 years the game has prospered and thrived in Cork and the many voluntary people who put their shoulders to the wheel in good times and bad through those years would be so proud today of where the game they strove so hard to keep going is now at.

While the board has welcomed grants from various sources with National Lottery, provincial councils and local council grants all being availed of the majority of the complex project in also firstly developing a superb pitch and now this latest undertaking has been funded by fundraising projects. Clubs also have rowed in with a contribution of a year levy but this is only a tiny drop in a huge ocean.

In order to continue to fund the massive undertaking the Cork Camogie Board have organised a fundraising bingo session tomorrow afternoon Sunday, January 22nd at St Finbarr's Hurling and Football Club, Toghra at 4pm.

They hope that the day will be a huge success and they are offering a prize fund of €2,000 and a guaranteed jackpot of €500 which must be won on the day. There will also be lots of spot prizes throughout the day as well as a raffle.

With the development progressing at a great pace April is the expected completion date.

Since early this year the sponsor-a-block campaign has helped raise a lot for the board and they are still asking for support for this with purchasing of a block.

Anybody who does will have their names inscribed on a special board in the new complex. Blocks are €50 each and can be purchased by contacting any county board officer or any club official who will point you in the right direction.

With the huge GAA project going on a few miles away from their headquarters the Cork Camogie fraternity must be congratulated on their huge efforts to totally fund their own project and they deserve every bit of support with their latest fundraising ventures.



Winners of the camogie section of the St Vincent's Dave McCarthy Memorial Poc Fada were Trudy O'Halloran, Michelle Gould and Gemma Lynch, receiving their awards from Frances McCarthy, Cllr Joe Kavanagh, Cllr Mick Nugent and William Walsh.

Picture: Mike English

Changes at top of Munster executive

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

THERE were changes at the top table in Munster camogie when the counties gathered recently for their annual convention where they elected a new chairman, vice chair, secretary and PRO.

Outgoing chairman James Moynihan from Limerick, having completed his three-year term in the role, stepped down and was replaced by Tipperary native John Foley. Having served in the role as vice-chairman during the last three years Foley is an experienced administrator and ready for the task ahead.

The outgoing chairman's experience will not be lost to Munster council as

he has taken on the role of the vice-chair and will be there to assist John as he settles into his new role.

The Munster Council also elected a new secretary with two names nominated for the role that of outgoing secretary Fiona Casey from Kerry, who had also in previous years served in the role of PRO and Bridget Stanley Limerick. Before the election, Fiona withdrew her name leaving Bridget to assume the office.

Outgoing PRO Sarah, from Kerry, also withdrew her name with the only other nominee former Clare and prov-

incial PRO Brid McNamara returning to the office she previously held.

Joe O'Donnell, Clare continues in the role of treasurer joined by his fellow county colleagues Bridie O'Looney who was elected registrar with Cork Colleges Rob Lotty continuing in the role of Development Officer.

The full Munster executive is as follows: Hon President: Rose Malone, Cork, Chairperson: John Foley, Tipperary Vice Chair: James Moynihan, Limerick Secretary: Bridget Stanley, Limerick Treasurer: Joe O'Donnell, Clare PRO: Brid McNamara, Clare Registrar: Bridie O'Looney, Clare Development Officer: Rob Lotty, Cork Delegate to Ard Chomhairle: Marie Kearney, Cork.

Convention made the draws for the

Munster championships which get underway on February 26 with the U16 competitions.

In U16 A championship Cork will meet Waterford with the winners meeting Limerick. In U16 B just Cork and Clare will battle it out for the title.

At minor level, Cork will meet the winners of the Clare versus Waterford preliminary round game.

Cork are junior champions and they will defend the title when they meet Clare in their opening round game, the Cork senior team will take on the same opposition in the Munster championship.

As Cork are the only county to have entered the intermediate championship it is as yet unclear if there will be a provincial competition.

Ashbourne Cup finals to be staged in Abbotstown

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

WITH the third level colleges season well under way, thoughts of Ashbourne Cup are foremost in the minds of players.

In what is a new departure from normal, the Ashbourne weekend will not be hosted by a college this year. The superb national sports centre in Abbotstown will be the venue for the event, which for the first time ever will be hosted by the CCAO themselves.

This is no doubt a huge undertaking but given the numerous pitches needed to host both the Ashbourne Cup and Shield semi-finals and finals, as well as the Purcell Cup, it makes perfect sense to go to a venue with such superb facilities.

Already two rounds of the group series have taken place and with two groups of four teams in each every game is crucial.

In section one in round one UCC had comprehensive victory over NUIG on a 7-27 to 0-1 score line be-

fore overcoming CIT 3-15 to 0-12, the clash between CIT and DCU was a much closer affair with DCU winning out 1-16 to 0-9.

In section two round one UL ran out 8-17 to 0-3, winners over MIC whilst WIT hit 3-15 in their victory over UCD who were on target with 1-3.

With students well settled into college life, CCAO recently held their AGM and elected a lot of new faces to guide the fortunes of third level camogie for the season ahead. Now in his second term as president Stephen Hoary was re-elected to a position he plays an active role in.

Helena Jacob was elected as vice-president an active camogie person on and off the field Jacob has managed both Wexford camogie teams and WIT and

played with her club Oulart-The Ballagh where she has won many honours.

Former secretary Michelle Molloy has stepped down from her post due to work commitments and Grainne Ryan who lines out with Dublin at senior level was elected secretary. Ian Mitchell of Wexford was elected as assistant secretary with UL and Tipperary camogie player Sarah Fryday elected treasurer with Dublin and Lucan Sarsfield's Mairi Moynihan as assistant treasurer.

Ann Marie Guinan remains on in the role of PRO. Kilkenny senior player and former Ashbourne All-Star with WIT Colette Dornier was elected registrar. The development office role has been filled by Denis Forde from Marino Institute of Education.

Round three of the Ashbourne Cup is down for decision on the week starting January 30: UL v WIT, MIC v UCD, UL v WIT and MIC v MIC v UCD.

The quarter-finals will take place on February

Inniscarra camogie is looking to the future

CAMOGIE

John Tarrant

INNISCARRA head into a new camogie season in an optimistic mindset in the hope of remaining a dominant force in county circles.

From a productive past year, Inniscarra rekindled the drive and passion that had already brought them to the summit in the past on regaining a hold of the County Senior Championship in a memorable campaign, earning manager Frank O'Mahony recognition at the North City District Sports Star Award at a function in the Maldron Hotel.

During 2017, Inniscarra celebrate their 50th anniversary, one of the biggest units in the country, fielding two teams at U12, U14, U16, and adult level.

Inniscarra have won 14 county titles and four Féile na nGael accolades in a rewarding journey.

On and off the field, Inniscarra personnel have made a great contribution to the game of camogie. The late Mary O'Callaghan became national president; Sheila Golden, county vice-chairperson, also served as county chairperson, county president, and county secretary; with Con Hayes and Tim Buckley officers of Cumann Camógaíochta na nOg at its formation.

One of Inniscarra's most famous players, Irene O'Keeffe, won five All-Ireland senior medals with Cork, with Rena Buckley holding six All-Ireland senior camogie medals and 11 in ladies football to become one of the most decorated Gaelic players in the modern era.

Ger Casey enjoyed All-Ireland senior and junior medals and her sister Joanne holds two senior



Robert McCarthy, general manager Maldron Hotel presents the North City and District Sports Star Award to Inniscarra senior camogie manager Frank O'Mahony in the presence of Deputy Lord Mayor, Cllr Joe Kavanagh; Mary McSweeney, chairperson, Cork Camogie Board; Tim Buckley, Inniscarra camogie; Lisa Lawlor, Red FM, Inniscarra team manager and players.

Picture John Tarrant.

medals.

Playing facilities are key to the success to Inniscarra camogie.

A hundred years after the first official camogie game was played in Navan in 1904, a proud day for Inniscarra saw camogie national president Miriam Uí Cheallacháin, officially declared Páirc Camógaíochta Inis Cartha in Ballynaly open for business.

"This was the culmination of an extraordinary feat for the Inniscarra club in the historic centenary year of camogie, the first pitch in County Cork and only the third in the

country to be dedicated to camogie only," said current team manager Frank O'Mahony.

"It was the first camogie pitch in the country to be bought and developed to completion by a camogie club."

The success rate continues for Inniscarra on overcoming defending champions Milford in the 2016 county senior decider.

"Milford were seeking their fifth county title in a row from a side featuring established stars, but we were determined to erase the disappointment of recent years," O'Mahony

said.

"In doing so, Inniscarra clinched their second outright title and followed up on the historic victory from 2010."

Subsequently, Inniscarra progressed to the provincial final only to come up short to a strong Burgess/Duharra team from Tipperary.

After winning only their second county title, the big question is can Inniscarra further elevate their game to the level required for back to back honours.

"The level of competition within the county is incredibly high, that's

evident by the success of Milford and Cork reaching the past three All-Ireland finals," said O'Mahony.

"We've a mix of experience and new talent, hopefully capable of repeating the terrific success from last season."

Deputy Lord Mayor Cllr Joe Kavanagh and Robert McCarthy, general manager of the Maldron Hotel, extended congratulations to Inniscarra camogie and Frank O'Mahony on collecting the North City and District Sports Star Award in conjunction with Singletons SuperValu, Hollyhill.

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JENNIFER O'LEARY

2002 & 2014 winner | Barryroe | Camogie

She's the only woman to win the West Cork Sports Star of the Year Award twice but Cork camogie legend Jennifer deserves to see her name in the history books after her exploits for Cork. Eight All-Stars and four All-Ireland wins say it all.

These days the Barryroe woman lives in Middletown in Armagh and she teaches PE and English at St Louis Secondary School in Carrigmacross, Monaghan.

Having retired from inter-county camogie, she has played club camogie with Middletown and ladies football with Emyvale – and this all-round star is also making a name for herself in the athletics world.

"Our football manager Owen McNally has roped a few of us into taking our running a bit more seriously and has enlisted us in a number of cross-country competitions over a six-month period," Jennifer said.

"I've ran a few 5km park runs, ran the roads around home repeatedly and competed in my first All-Ireland cross-country competition in November. I like running but this four kilometre was cruel, I was surrounded by athletes who train in this area about four times a week. It was a baptism of fire. I finished but can't say I enjoyed it."

"We have a team race in an Ulster intermediate competition in a few weeks so I will give it another go and see what happens."

Jennifer added: "Last season was disappointing both in camogie and football. We underachieved in both. For 2017 my goals are to build a hunger for camogie again, to test out other sports and enjoy a little more time; it certainly has been a while!"



Cork U16 camogie panel is selected

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

THE Cork Under-16 selectors have been busy over the last few weeks as they held several trial games in the hunt for talent in preparation for what will be a busy season ahead.

Once again, Cork will participate at two levels, with teams entered in both the provincial and All-Ireland championship at A and B levels.

Games will get under way on February 12 for the U16 A squad, when the Munster championship starts. Cork will travel to Waterford in the only preliminary round game of the championship. The winners will meet Limerick on February 26 in the Munster semi-final, with the final down for decision on March 12.

The open draw All-Ireland championship series will not be getting under way until July 2 when exams are completed. Every competitive game that Cork can get in Munster is vital as nothing beats competitive games.

At this stage, it looks as if the Under-16 B squad will have only one game in Munster as just two counties, Cork and Clare, have entered this competition, therefore they will contest the final on March 12.

The Cork management team — Mike Boland, Pauline O'Regan and Ger Horgan — have announced a panel of 52 players for the Munster championship competitions and this will be reviewed again before the All-Ireland series.

Training is continuing every Tuesday and Thursday in CIT and is reported to be going exceptionally well.

The panel announced for the Munster championship is as follows:

Claire Ring (Inniscarra), Claire Murphy (Carrigaline), Fiona Keating (Courcey Rovers), Ali Smith (Midleton), Miriam Cotter (Aghabullogue), Anna Lucey (Blackrock), Orla Cremen (Blarney), Laura Doyle (Charleville), Clodagh Finn (Fr O'Neills), Aine Mullins (Sarsfields), Lisa O'Riordan (Glen Rovers), Aoife O'Neill (St Finbar's), Hannah O'Leary (Ballycollig), Caoimhe Buckley (Inniscarra), Aine O'Regan (Inniscarra), Lauren McCarthy (St Finbar's), Ciara O'Sullivan (Newcestown), Mairead Crowley (Kilbree), Cliona O'Leary (Ballygarvan), Emma Murphy (Glen Rovers), Emma Murphy (Blarney), Sarah Sheehan (Milford), Molly Lynch (Sarsfields), Sarah Roche (Kilkeigh), Kate Dorney (Ballygarvan), Lucy Wallace (Midleton), Hannah Sexton (Kilbrittain/Timoleague), Katie Ann Crea (Ballinora), Elena Kelleher (Kilkeigh), Sinead Hurley (Enniskeane), Eimear Hurley (St Finbar's), Molly Barrett (Carrigaline), Sally McCarthy (Kildorrery), Sinead O'Donnell (Newtownshandrum), Julie Tarrant (Aghabullogue), Cliona Dooley (Ballinora), Jennifer Murphy (Blarney), Claire Bernard (Slabh Rua), Eve O'Connor (Brian Dillon's), Aine Keating (Kildorrery), Eva Rose Boylan (Aghada), Orlaith Cummins (Slabh Rua), Ellen Murphy (Inniscarra), Siobhan O'Donovan (Courcey Rovers), Casey Coleman (Na Piaras), Kathleen O'Reilly (Charleville), Kate Corcoran (St Finbar's), Kaitelyn Holland (Douglas), Isobel Sheehan (Eire Og), Tara McCarthy (Glen Rovers), Jade Hooper (Ballyhea), Clionadh Casey (Dungourney).



Some of the Ballygarvan U10 camogie team pictured with their coach Fintan O'Keeffe at the annual Ballygarvan awards in the Cork International Hotel.

Picture: Howard Crowdy

Sigerson's goal swings the final

St Mary's, Midleton 1-4
Rice College, Ennis 0-6

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

ST Mary's, Midleton edged it in a thrilling Munster Colleges Senior B League final recently with a point to spare over Rice College Ennis in a contest that had supporters on the edge of their seats to the full-time whistle.

The sides were evenly matched with the result in doubt to the end — but, in the finish, it was St Mary's who held out against a strong second half comeback from Rice College.

The teams were evenly matched all over the pitch and St Mary's were grateful to have grabbed the game's only goal and one that was to prove so important.

Captain Chloe Sigerson led by example as she pointed to open St Mary's' account after being denied an early goal. Chloe Neylon levelled matters for Rice College and with Chloe McNamara stretching their lead they set the early pace of the game.

Ally Smith had the sides level before the crucial score came 23 minutes into

the half when Chloe Sigerson opted to go short with a free and was on hand for the return pass to finish high to the net. As the battle for possession continued, both sides added points to their tally each. Chloe Sigerson for St Mary's and Sinead Power for Rice College on target to leave a goal between the sides at half-time, St Mary's 1-3 Rice College 0-3.

Ally Smith added a point for St Mary's at the start of the second half after good work by Deirdre Corcoran and this was to be their only score of the half as Rice College came storming into the game.

Sinead Power converted a 45 to leave a goal between the sides and, piling on the pressure, they tested the St Mary's

defence as the same player added another point for Rice College. Power converted a free for Rice College with five minutes remaining.

Rice College battled hard in the closing minutes to get an equaliser but the St Mary's defence stood firm against strong pressure to be crowned champions.

ST MARY'S: K M Cullinane, K Aherne, M Steele, C Barry, M Stafford, A Smith, K Mc Evoy, D Corcoran, C Sigerson Capt, L Wallace, E O'Keeffe, A McGrath, C Walsh, R Fogarty, H Belton.

Subs: A O'Driscoll for H Belton (inj), A McGrath for C Walsh.

RICE COLLEGE: M Roughton, S O'Brien, E Cahill, E Towey, C Casey, E Whyte (c), C Towey, C Kennedy, C Neylon, P Boateng, S Power, R Martin, C McNamara, Gráinne Glynn, A Lenihan.

Sub: S Warren for C Kennedy.

Milford's Fitzgibbon takes over as Rebel minor boss

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

AS the All-Ireland minor competition enters its 12th season, Cork are still hunting for that elusive first title in the grade since the competition's inception in 2006.

To date, Kilkenny hold six minor titles, followed by Tipperary and Galway with two each, and Limerick with one.

So many times Cork have come so close, losing out in finals that went to replays, but each season brings fresh hopes and 2017 will be no exception.

In appointing George Fitzgibbon as manager, Cork have somebody who is hugely experienced. A shrewd operator, George has been involved with the Cork senior team as a selector during Milford's reign as county champions where he was a member of Paulie Murray's successful senior All-Ireland winning backroom teams.

Harboursing a desire to get involved with the Cork minor side George was selected by Cork to take the

helm this season.

So far he has been joined by Frances Killeen from Ballyhea as a selector while county champions Sarsfields are to name a selector to join the setup and it is not established yet if there will be others joining the backroom team.

Never the less it's all systems go with the opening round game of the All-Ireland championship looming very close on the horizon. Cork will open their challenge to advance from their group of the round robin series of games with a home game against Dublin on February 18.

A week later they face a stern test when they travel to meet All-Ireland champions Tipperary. Boosted by their victory last season Tipperary on home turf

will pose a big threat and it will be a good indication of just where Cork are at.

Two weeks later on March 26, Cork will have a home venue against Offaly and their last game in the group is on April 1 when they take on Waterford. Every game will be vital but if Cork could get at least three wins under their belts it would secure a semi-final spot.

Again this season the Munster championship will not take place until after the All-Irelands series with Cork down to play either Clare or Waterford on July 19.

Preparation are reported to have been going well and a squad of 32 players have been working hard with several games already played in preparation as the opening game against Dublin looms.

Whilst the panel was not available for print at the time of going to press management will hopefully be in a position to announce it to us shortly.

Slaughtneil bid for treble glory begins

Eoghan Cormican
Camogie

Slaughtneil's bid to reach three All-Ireland finals this spring begins tomorrow, with the club's senior camogie team squaring off against Burgess-Duharra in the All-Ireland semi-final (Inniskeen, 2pm).

With their hurlers and footballers in semi-final action over the coming weeks, Slaughtneil's all-conquering camogie side will look to get the ball rolling with victory over the Munster champions.

Burgess-Duharra manager Darrell Tucker says his players must not get distracted by their opponents' remarkable story.

"They are a huge club and what they did last year has to

be really respected," Tucker admitted. "They are on a roll and we'll be trying to stop that on Sunday. We know the challenge so we have to be on top of our game."

The Tipperary outfit are chasing their own fairytale ending having finally secured a first Muster title before Christmas - Jenny Grace, Tara Kennedy and Eimear McDonnell were to the fore in their 2-10 to 0-6 win over Inniscarra.

"There was massive relief after winning Munster," Tucker continued. "We'd won five-in-a-row in Tipperary and had been knocking on the door in Munster for a number of years, falling short to Milford on a couple of occasions. It was fantastic to get the win and advance to a first All-Ire-

land semi-final. It is a huge occasion for our club, but we must concentrate on this challenge. If you look back over recent years, the teams that have come out of Ulster have run teams close."

"There was only a point in it a couple of years back between Eoghan Rua (Derry) and Milford. Last year, there was nothing in it between Killimor and Loughgiel. Hopefully, we can keep our show on the road."

In the second semi-final at Birr, the four eldest daughters of former Galway hurler Michael Hopper McGrath - Niamh, Clodagh, Orlaith and Siobhan - lead Sarsfields against Leinster champions Thomastown, themselves led by the Farrell sisters, Shelly, Meighan, Anna and Eimear.

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Slaughtneil's treble All-Ireland dream lives on

Daragh Ó Conchúir
Camogie

Sarsfields will play Slaughtneil in the AIB All-Ireland senior camogie final after Niamh McGrath slotted an injury-time point for the westerners to give them a 0-8 to 0-7 win over Thomastown after a real dogfight, while the Derry champions pulled off a shock 3-8 to 3-6 victory over Burgess-Duharra in a cracker to keep their club's remarkable treble bid alive.

And in the intermediate decider, Myshall will continue their remarkable rise, as well as that of Carlow camogie, by playing English from Tyrone.

Slaughtneil have already made history by bagging senior provincial titles in camogie, hurling and football and they were full value for this win against quality opposition who fought all the way to the wire but could never get their noses in front.

Burgess had beaten an Inniscarra team that had accounted for All-Ireland champions Milford to claim Munster honours but they suffered for a lethargic start. In contrast, Slaughtneil flew out of the traps and that gave them just enough breathing space as the Tipperary representatives threw everything at them.

The switch of Louise Dougan from her normal midfield role back to a more defensive position proved a masterstroke as she had a wonderful game. Goals from Mary Kelly, Denise McGuigan, and Therese Mellon did the damage at the other end of the pitch.

They had a greater spread of scoring too, with seven players in total contributing, while Burgess-Duharra's tally was compiled by just Eimear McDonnell (2-2) and Jenny Grace (1-4 from frees), although Gemma Grace, Maeve Moloney, Ruth Barry, and Caoimhe Maher also stood out.

Sarsfields had to come back from a 0-5 to 0-1 interval deficit to book their berth in Croke Park.

McGrath, who clocked up seven points, opened the scoring after 13 minutes but it was all Thomastown from there to the end, as Niamh Donnelly (two), Anna Farrell (two) and Jenny Reddy found the target to give the Kilkenny crew a merited advantage.

'Hopper' McGrath managed to rejuvenate his charges at the interval and, with Maria Cooney and Clara Donohue to the fore and Kate Gallagher enjoying a wonderful tussle with Farrell at midfield, they grinded their way back into the game with three McGrath frees.

Her sister Clodagh levelled before she gave them the lead from 60m, but Donnelly levelled with eight minutes remaining and, after an exchange of points between the two free-takers, it was 0-7 each entering injury time.

And it was McGrath that settled the tense battle and broke Thomastown's hearts by nervelessly converting from a 45.

Kilmeen-Kilbree GAA

Heroes of 2016 honoured

LAST Friday, a very successful awards night for the camogie and underage clubs took place in the Parkway Hotel.

Cork senior camogie star Aoife Murray, whose father hails from Clouneargeen, was guest of honour and among those receiving medals from her were her cousins Lucy Collins, Ava Murray and Jason Murray.

MC Marie Dorgan thanked camogie club secretary Deirdre O'Leary and underage club secretary Connie Murphy for their immense work. Following the dinner the medals were presented to the underage groups of boys and girls.

Those involved with the boys' underage teams were Noel Young, Ger Collins and Gavin Twohig. Deserving of thanks for work with the camogie teams include Geraldine Twohig, Brendan McCarthy, Mary Roche, Margaret McCarthy, Geraldine O'Donovan, Denis O'Donovan, Deirdre Nyhan, Grace McCarthy, Deirdre O'Leary, Anna O'Neill, Aidan O'Shea, Tony O'Neill and Marie Dorgan.

Four girls - Mary Murphy, Rachel Deasy, Caoimhe Murphy and Kate O'Donovan - won six cups during the year, including two titles with the boys. A special award was presented to U14 camogie captain Mairead Crowley to mark her great achievements with the Cork squad. The team of the year award was presented to the U14 camogie team and Leanne Sheehy and Sarah O'Donovan accepted this accolade on behalf of the team.

All of the children enjoyed a disco after the medals presentation, on this most successful and memorable night.



A great night: Cork camogie goalkeeper Aoife Murray (centre) pictured at the camogie and underage club's awards night with four girls who won a record six cups last year, from left, Caoimhe Murphy, Mary Murphy, Rachel Deasy and Kate O'Donovan.

The Kilbree camogie AGM will take place on Friday at 9pm in the club rooms. All parents and players are invited to attend.

Renewal of club membership and annual lotto tickets takes place on Friday from 7.30-9pm at the club rooms. All members are encouraged to attend.

Congratulations to the both the ballad and instrumental groups who qualified for the Carbery final of Scór na bPáistí in Rossmore on Sunday evening. Amy Girdwood, Sinéad Bennett, Ciara Bennett, Katie O'Donovan and Peter O'Sullivan did the club proud and we wish them the very best of luck in the final!

There was no winner of this week's lotto jackpot. The numbers drawn were 5, 30 and 33. The lucky dip winners were Colman Daly, Kieran Coakley and Sean Murray. Next week's jackpot will be €1,900.



Talented: U14 camogie captain Mairead Crowley receives a special award from Aoife Murray to mark her achievements with the Cork U14 panel.



TWO OUT OF THREE AIN'T BAD

Since 2002, only Wexford have managed to win three All-Ireland Senior Camogie Championships in succession, the Model County achieving that feat with victories in 2010, '11 and '12.

Tipperary had managed the three-in-a-row from 1999-2001 while the notion of a county winning seven on the trot, as Kilkenny had done between 1985 and 1991, seemed other-worldly. It was in this landscape that Cork began the 2016 season, aiming to win a third in succession – something the county hadn't managed since the four-in-a-row of 1970-73.

Cork were boosted in their quest by the retention of the same management team, led by Paudie Murray, which had guided them to the O'Duffy Cup for the previous two years, though the absence of star forward Julia White was a blow while the year began with goalkeeper Aoife Murray – the manager's sister – sticking to her pledge to retire after the 2015 season.

The positive from the point of view of the team and management was that places were up for grabs in the national league campaign, where Cork were in Group 2 of Division 1 alongside Derry, Kilkenny, Limerick and Waterford. Unfortunately, the opening game on February 21 against Limerick in Rathkeale put the Rebels under pressure. With the hosts having a brilliant start, Orla Cotter's frees brought Cork to within four points by half-time but Sinéad McNamara's second-half goal for Limerick was the crucial score, 1-11 to 0-9 the final score.

A 12-point win against Derry got them off the mark and Katrina Mackey's goal was key in the 1-9 to 0-11 win over Kilkenny. Waterford were seen off by 3-18 to 2-9 to leave Cork on three points ahead of the final round of games, in which they weren't involved. A Limerick win over Kilkenny would have been enough for Murray's side to qualify in second but Kilkenny's 2-12 to 0-14 win allowed them to top the group on scoring difference and left both Cork and Limerick level with differences of plus-20, necessitating a play-off to see who would reach the semi-finals.

Mallow was the venue on April 2 but home advantage wasn't a help to Cork as the Shannonsiders repeated their earlier win, albeit by a larger margin, winning this time by 1-11 to 0-7. Perhaps helpfully, there wasn't any time for Cork to dwell on that loss as the Munster championship opener was a week later and frustrations were taken out on Clare, who were beaten by 3-21 to 0-10 in Meelick. Mackey scored 1-3, Cotter had five points and the other goals came from Hannah Looney and Orla Cronin.

That meant a semi-final with Tipperary a month later at Castle Road and, while they trailed 0-4 to 0-1 early on, they soon took command. Cotter and Mackey had points as they led by 0-9 to

0-5 at half-time and the final score was 2-17 to 1-10, with Amy O'Connor and Briege Corkery finding the net. Limerick beat Waterford in the other semi-final to set up a third meeting of the year with Cork in Kilmallock on May 21.

It would be a tense and tight affair, with Limerick leading by 0-7 to 0-6 at half-time. Gemma O'Connor was superb at centre-back for Cork while Cotter and Eimear O'Sullivan found their range. While Cork pushed ahead, Niamh Mulcahy had Limerick level at 0-10 each with four minutes remaining, but deep in injury time Mackey popped up with two points to give Cork victory, the county's 59th provincial title.

There was a month to prepare for the All-Ireland series, where Clare, Limerick, Offaly, Waterford and Wexford would join Cork in Group 1. Captain Ashling Thompson was very impressive as Cork – with Murray back in goal – began with a 2-16 to 0-9 win over Waterford at Walsh Park on June 18, with Cotter scoring 1-8 while Corkery got the other goal. A week later in Páirc Uí Rinn, Clare were seen off relatively easily, 5-19 to 0-10 the final score. Corkery again netted and O'Sullivan and Mackey had goals within a minute of each other in the second half before Mackey added two more, giving her a tally of 3-3.

Fermoy was the venue for the third game, and with Offaly having won their first two games, a tough test was expected but instead Cork were again on song. They were ahead by 1-7 to 0-3 at half-time, Orla Cronin getting the goal, and Mackey and O'Sullivan also raised green flags, Cotter scoring four points and O'Connor three as a 3-14 to 1-5 win was achieved.

A trip to Wexford Park would definitely not be as easy, and so it proved. Cotter and Wexford veteran Kate Kally exchanged scores for much of proceedings, and Amy O'Connor's point as the end neared made it 0-9 each only for Una Leacy to give the Model County victory. That loss meant that the margin for error was absent ahead of the final group game, a fourth clash of the year with Limerick, at CIT on July 16.

Cork were better for most of the first half, but Chloe O'Brien's goal meant that Limerick were in touch at half-time, trailing by 0-11 to 1-5. Cork pushed on in the second period, however, and Mackey and Thompson were all among the points while Amy O'Connor got two goals and Cotter the other in a 3-17 to 1-9 win. Once again, Cork ended in a three-way tie at the top, but this time scoring difference was to their advantage and so they progressed directly to the semi-finals with Wexford and Offaly going into the quarter-finals.

After Wexford overcame Tipperary there, they were to provide Cork's last-four opposition in Thurles on August 13. It would

be very similar to the previous encounter, with two points the largest lead either side had over the hour. Gemma O'Connor and Thompson were to the fore as Cork led early but Wexford were level at 0-8 each by half-time. In the second half, Corkery might have had a goal but for a Mags D'Arcy save, however Mackey and Cotter looked to have done enough as Cork led by 0-11 to 0-9 with time almost up.

Kelly and Katrina Parrock pointed to send the game to extra time and the game was still tied after the first half of the additional period, 0-14 each. Kelly put Wexford ahead, but Cork's qualities shown in winning the last two Irelands were clear to see as Cotter, Mackey (two), Looney and Corkery left it 0-19 to 0-15 at the end. The other semi-final between Kilkenny and Galway also required extra time, with the Cats ultimately advancing.

Since that seven-in-a-row, Kilkenny had only won one more All-Ireland, in 1994, but that drought was ended in Croke Park on September 11. Ann Downey's side got their tactics right, frustrating Cork, and almost got a great chance when Miriam Walsh had a goal chance inside 20 seconds. While Cork did trail 0-3 to 0-1, Cotter, Mackey and O'Sullivan put them in front, but it would prove to be the only time they led. Kilkenny took over and though Cork won a 22nd-minute penalty, Aoife Murray's shot was tipped over the bar.

It was 0-8 to 0-6 for Kilkenny at half-time, and Denise Gaule and Julie Ann Malone pushed them clear on the resumption before Shelly Farrell's goal on 42 struck a hammer-blow to Cork. At one stage, Kilkenny led by nine and though Cork did reduce the gap slightly, the necessary goal didn't come until very late when Cotter found the net from a free. It finished 1-13 to 1-9, giving Kilkenny their second win of the day as the Cork intermediate team – also managed by Paudie Murray – had lost to their Cats counterparts by 3-6 to 1-11.

Domestically, Milford's quest for five county championships in a row was ended as they lost to Inniscarra – the 2010 champions – in the final at CIT on October 29. Captain Joanne Casey was outstanding for Scarra, scoring 2-8 in a 4-10 to 2-13 win, while county star Rena Buckley was immense, as was Liz Hayes at full-back. They led by 3-5 to 1-10 at half-time, Casey with two goals and Treasa McCarthy with the other while Maria Watson had the Milford goal.

Niamh McCarthy had a fourth Inniscarra goal early in the second half but Milford stayed with her and Ashling Thompson's goaled free helped them to draw level, with many expecting them to then push on. However, Inniscarra accelerated towards the line and couldn't be caught.

Cork Senior Camogie 2016

NCL DIVISION 1 GROUP 2

Limerick 1-11 Cork 0-9
Derry 0-9 Cork 1-18
Kilkenny 0-11 Cork 1-9
Cork 3-18 Waterford 2-9
Play-off
Limerick 1-11 Cork 0-7

MUNSTER SCC

Quarter-final
Cork 3-12 Clare 0-10
Semi-final
Cork 2-17 Tipperary 1-13
Final
Cork 0-12 Limerick 0-10

ALL-IRELAND SCC GROUP 1

Waterford 0-9 Cork 2-16
Cork 5-19 Clare 0-10
Cork 3-14 Offaly 1-5
Wexford 1-9 Cork 0-0
Cork 3-17 Limerick 0-9

Semi-final

Cork 0-19 Wexford 0-15 (aet)

Final

September 11, Croke Park

Kilkenny 1-13 Cork 1-9
CORK: A Murray (0-1f); L O'Sullivan, R Buckley, L Treacy; M Cahalane, G O'Connor, P Mackey; O Cotter, A Thompson; E O'Sullivan (0-1), H Looney (0-1), K Mackey (0-2); A O'Connor, O Cronin (1-2, 1-1f), B Corkery. Subs: L Coppinger (0-1) for L O'Sullivan (48), J Hosford for Cronin (57).
Referee: E Cassidy (Derry).

Jennifer O'Leary

The voice of experience tackles the topics that matter



My top ten players of all-time

Six Cork camogie legends make the cut in this 'who's who' list of GAA greats

THE *Southern Star* Sports Editor certainly knew how to blow away my January cobwebs.

'I want to know who your top ten camogie players of all-time were,' he said.

There was no time for entertaining those January blues, it was straight down to business – and this wasn't an easy job.

In the end, I got there, my top ten, and my search criteria was simple: each and every one of them had that star quality, the magic, a drive and determination to achieve their maximum potential, and their list of achievements is staggering.

In total, my top ten have won 69 All-Ireland senior camogie titles between them. I know it's not all about winning – believe me, I'm well aware of this – but this group of women are winners because they are special in so many different ways. Enjoy.

(All-Ireland senior camogie medals won in brackets.)

10. Sandie Fitzgibbon (6)

A speedy and athletic midfielder and centre back, Sandie would have played on Cork teams in the 1980s and 90s and I remember going to Cork games and being excited to see her engine on the pitch. My first real encounter with her was in 2000 when she was a selector on the Cork senior camogie management team. I was just starting out and she had this ability to make you feel so welcome and relaxed. She may have been quite petite on the pitch but her work rate and natural ability stood out a mile. A talented individual, a team player and a Cork camogie legend.

9. Therese Maher (1)

Therese was a player who was guaranteed to be on the opposing Galway team come league and championship, year in year out. She persevered in the game for 16 years until she finally achieved her goal of winning a senior medal in 2013. I admire her never-give-up attitude, her mental strength and belief to keep coming back year after year. I respect her even more for sticking with the team and bringing youth along with

her in the process. She had a major impact on Galway's win and will remain a well-known centre back for years to come.

8. Kate Kelly (4)

Kate is a native of Wexford and a name that is synonymous with top quality camogie. Some people say she plays like a hurler – I don't quite know what they mean by this, girls are hurlers and can do everything a man can do in the game, but I think they are trying to emphasise how fluid and natural her swing is and how effortless her play is. Kate is still playing today at a very high level and achieved her ninth All-Star last year.

7. Aoife Murray (6)

An extraordinary goalkeeper with incredible reactions, Aoife feels no pain: she leaps across the goal-mouth, throwing her body like a puppet into the air, often landing heavy on the ground, but she won't wince once. I've seen her application to improving her game by introducing various training methods to progress minor aspects of her game in order to make the major aspects work for her and the team. A true professional, she's the best goalkeeper in the game.

6. Briege Corkery (6)

Briege was recently named as one of the greatest GAA sportspeople of all-time, along with the fantastic Rena Buckley. Briege has 17 inter-county All-Ireland senior medals to her name for both camogie and football, but if you had a conversation with her about those achievements, she would quickly try and deflect the attention away. She doesn't look for praise, she trains harder than anyone I know and has high expectations of herself in both codes. This constant search for betterment is what makes Briege so successful, and her modesty allows her to remain grounded and focused on what really matters. Her ability to suddenly change a game with her solo runs at immense pace is what makes this player so exciting to watch.



Clearing her lines: Cork goalkeeper Aoife Murray, pictured in action in the 2016 All-Ireland senior camogie final against Kilkenny, is described as the best in the business by our columnist Jennifer O'Leary, an eight-time camogie All-Star and four-time All-Ireland winner.

5. Gemma O'Connor (6)

A rock solid individual in every way, Gemma is a stalwart of camogie and a girl I had the pleasure of playing alongside at inter-county level for many years. Gemma has it all: skill, power, intelligence, stamina and sheer determination. She has managed to balance her tough job in the army with the demands expected of you at senior inter-county level. Gemma has achieved so much and will continue to play for as long as her body will allow it. She looks after herself so there's still more to come.

4. Mary O'Connor (6)

Mary is a legend of the game and a credit to the game of camogie, not just in her decorated playing days but now also in her progressive role within the Camogie Association. Her unbelievable point scored off her weaker side in the 1997 final in full flight from 50 yards out is a talking point for those

who mention her name. I knew her as the solid and dependable centre back and remember talking to her following her retirement where I asked her to reconsider her decision. She certainly had a major impact on me as a player growing up and she was someone I wanted to emulate on the camogie pitch.

3. Fiona O'Driscoll (6)

I'll never forget the 2002 All-Ireland final when Fiona was on absolute fire; I was there on the pitch alongside her. She was completely revved up and if she got her hand on another few balls they would have certainly had goals written all over them. She scored a hat-trick that day, and while she was always known as 'the pocket rocket' with an incredible first touch, she really shone brighter than ever on the field of play that day. Fiona was awesome, an accurate free taker with a low centre of gravity and a really driven individual. When I

think of Cork camogie and its successes, I automatically think of her.

2. Kathleen Mills (15)

I never saw her play but she had to get on this list. She was a name I had seen and heard many times before in camogie circles and I was taken aback when I researched all that she won with her county, Dublin. Kathleen Mills played from 1941 until 1961 and her collection of 15 medals outlines just how good she was. With a career in camogie spanning a 20-year period, she is regarded as one of the greatest players of all-time and no other player in camogie, hurling or football in an individual code has equalled this record. She has been compared to legends such as Christy Ring and Nicky Rackard – that highlights how gifted she really was.

1. Angela Downey (12)

A twin whose sister Ann was also a great talent in the game,

'A true professional, Aoife Murray is the best goalkeeper in the game'

Angela Downey is a sports-woman who resonates with me most from my childhood days. Maybe it's because she also played in the forward line like me and I recall watching her on TV re-runs when I started getting interested in the game. Angela's inter-county career spanned over 25 years and she made her debut on the senior Kilkenny side at corner forward at just 13 years of age. While this would never happen now, it certainly did not happen too often in the past – that shows what a serious talent she was. She was lethal in the forward line and could easily put teams away in the first half. She is famous for her camogie prowess but many may remember her as the Kilkenny player who in 1989 lost her skirt while scoring a goal in the All-Ireland final! She was the complete package as a camogie player, displaying sheer skill and a fierce athletic ability. An icon of the game and an inspiration to future players.

Blarney side made to work for their title

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal, Blarney 3-13

Ard Scoil Dungarvan 4-7
(after extra time)

SCOIL Mhuire Gan Smal, Blarney added to their trophy haul securing a Munster U18½ title to go with their Cork Colleges Intermediate championship title which they won recently.

In a game that went down to the wire, the Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal girls had to go to extra time before overcoming the challenge of a strong Ard Scoil Dungarvan side.

It's to their credit that they dug deep to fashion out a three-point win in a game that could easily have slipped away from them in the opening 60 minutes.

With 12 of their side on the U16 team that had lost out in a final earlier in the week the Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal side had to focus and they had to be at their best against a Dungarvan side that started the game well with two early goals.

Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal didn't enjoy the best of opening halves as they struggled to get into the game scoring only one point from play.

Four pointed frees from Orla Cremin and one from Emily Buckley saw them stay in contention and trail by just three points at the break 2-3 to 0-6.

Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal dug deep from the restart and began the second half well and an excellent goal from Hollie Fitton and another Orla Cremin point edging the Scoil Mhuire girls into the lead.

Now in the driving seat, they pushed for more a point from Emily Buckley and a goal from Orla Cremin stretched the lead and with Jen Murphy, Aisling Buckley, Eve Mullins, Aoife Cronin, Eimear O'Reilly and Emma Murphy all working hard they were in good position.

However, Ard Scoil Dungarvan were not going to die easily and they grabbed a goal in the dying seconds to level matters and bring the game to extra time on a score line of 2-9 to 3-6.

Ard Scoil Dungarvan started extra time as they began the opening half as they struck for and early goal and added a point.

A great point by Fiona Bourke and a goal from Orla Cremin had Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal back in the game.

Amidst huge excitement and with the game there to be won, it took three long-range frees from Player of the Match Emily Buckley to seal the win for Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal.

Huge credit must go to the players and management for fashioning out such a tremendous victory.

The school is on a roll at the moment, which is great for Cork camogie.



Cork's Caroline Sugrue with Niamh Sweeny of Kilkenny battle it out in last year's intermediate All-Ireland final. Who will make this year's decider?

Picture: INPHO/Donall Farmer

Plans for coming season shape up

AS THE evenings lengthen, thoughts inevitably turn to the playing fields and the countdown is well underway to the return to the action for the Cork teams as the throw-in for the Littlewoods National Leagues beckons.

Cork will again field two adult teams in both league and championship with the second team participating in the Division 2 league and the intermediate championship.

Paudie Murray is finalising a Division 2 selection committee, while the strength and conditioning for both the senior and intermediate teams will be overseen by Liam O'Reilly. To date,

Last season, Cork did not participate

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

Sean Cremin and Mossie O'Sullivan are on board and Paudie is expected to announce a full management team in the coming week.

Their league campaign promises to be a tough one, as participating in group two they will have five games and, as has happened so often in the past, Cork seem to have drawn the short straw with only two home games and three away. The away games are to Kildare, Westmeath and Antrim and they will be at home to Galway and Armagh.

Last season, Cork did not participate

in the earlier stages of the league due to controversy surrounding the re-grading of players. However, they did participate in the last two games and were comfortable winners.

Later in the season, they enjoyed a superb championship campaign reaching the All-Ireland final where on the day they most defiantly should have taken the honours in a game they dominated for 50 minutes before they allowed Kilkenny grab the initiative.

February 19 is when it all begins again when Cork host Galway the following weekend it's off to Westmeath and there is a break until March 12 when Cork host Armagh. March 19 will see them on the road again when they travel to Kildare and on April 2 it's off to face Antrim for the last game

their league campaign.

Championship will get underway on June 6 and, again just an observation here, Cork will have five more games and yes you guessed correctly, they must travel for three of them.

Surely the powers that be should have ensured that out of a total of 10 games, five in the league and five in the championship, Cork should have had five at home and five away. It is ludicrous to expect a county to travel to six games and only have four at home, but I suppose nothing surprises us now.

June 10 and Cork host Galway in round one, then it's off to Carlow on June 24 and on July 8 Cork hit the road again for a trip to Meath.

On July 22, Cork head to Laois and on August 12 Cork host Down.

Camogie Legends tournament has grown with success

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

FROM little acorns come big trees; is very much the case with the Camogie Legends tournament, which has grown and expanded over the years.

The idea began when a few former inter-county players got together and organised a tournament on the All-Ireland weekend, and counties such as Cork, Kilkenny and Tipperary were very active in their involvement. One of the main supporters of the event was Tipperary mentor Biddy Phillips. Sadly Biddy passed away in July, 2010, and the following year her family donated a trophy for the legends tournament in her memory.

By now, the tournament had become an official competition, promoted by the Camogie Association and other counties such as Antrim, Galway and Limerick are taking part in an event which is now played on the weekend of the All-Ireland Club finals.

The tournament is a great opportunity for past players to take to the field again and indeed over the

years a lot of former inter-county players still active at club level have played and this is raising the standard to a very high level. Former Cork greats such as Eithne Duggan, Ger Mc Carthy, Viv Harris, Denise Cronin, Linda Mellerick, Mags Finn, Fiona O'Driscoll, Irene O'Keeffe, Paula O'Connor and Sandie Fitzgibbon have all participated.

Such was the growing interest in the competition a shield competition was introduced in 2015 with Antrim winning it in 2015 and 2016.

A Player of the Tournament award was introduced in 2016 and this named in memory of one of Cork's late great players, Kathleen Costine, who passed away in 2015. Kathleen was an inspirational person and player who participated in the Legends Tourna-

ment over a number of years.

Indeed whilst battling illness Kathleen lined out in goal for the Cork Legends and gave an inspirational display in her spot between the posts. An aunt to former Cork hurling goalkeeper Donal Óg Cusack, Kathleen was a wonderful person and a great friend to all camogie people.

Galway's Sandra Tannion became the first player to receive the award last year.

Cork and Tipperary are joint leaders on the roll of honour. Kilkenny took the Biddy Phillips Cup in 2011 but Cork were to the fore in 2012 and 2013. The three, in a row was stopped by Tipperary, who were thrilled to bring the trophy named after one of their finest home in 2014.

They made it back to back titles in 2015 and last season Galway won it for the first time. It's time to do it all again and the call is going out to counties to register for what is sure to be another great weekend.

Camogie Rebels head to Waterford

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

THE first Cork team to take to the field on the inter-county stage in 2017 will be the county U16 A side who head to Waterford Institute of Technology tomorrow for the preliminary round of the Munster championship.

The Rebels have a meeting with Waterford where a throw-in time for the game has, of yet, to be finalised.

Since early January the Cork mentors have had 50 U16 players in training.

With two U16 squads currently participating in Munster and All-Ireland championship competition, the workload is huge.

For tomorrow's clash the Cork backroom team of Mike Boland, Ger Horgan, and Pauline O'Regan have selected 24 players to travel from their training panel of 50 and through the campaigns this will change from game to game as they endeavour to get the balance right.

The first day out is always hard, but Cork have prepared well.

They are current Munster champions following a great campaign in 2016, but once again the elusive All-Ireland still has yet to be captured.

Whilst the Munster championship is played on a separate basis to the All-Ireland series, it will help the Cork mentors get the best possible 15 onto the field and ensure they are ready for the All-Ireland series.

Waterford school have featured prominently at colleges levels in recent months with Ard Scoil Dungarvan and Ursuline's taking the spoils, add in the success of Gaultier who were crowned Munster Intermediate club champions and you have a county where the game is most defiantly on the rise.

Cork have named a 24-player panel for Sunday's clash as follows:

Orla Cremin (Blarney), Lisa O'Riordan (Glen Rovers), Molly Lynch (Sarsfield's), Aine O'Regan (Inniscarra), Ciara Murphy (Carrigaline), Aine Keating (Kildorrey), Sarah Sheehan (Millford), Eileen Murphy (Inniscarra), Clodagh Finn (Fr O'Neill's), Cliona Dooley (Ballinora), Emma Murphy (Glen Rovers), Hannah O'Leary (Ballincollig), Sally McCarthy (Kildorrey), Fiona Keating (Courcey Rovers), Aine Mullins (Sarsfield's), Ciara O'Sullivan (Newcestown), Isobel Sheehan (Eire Og), Laura Doyle (Charleville), Cliona O'Leary (Ballygarvan, c), Ali Smith (Midleton), Aoife O'Neill (St Finbarr's), Ciara Ring (Inniscarra), Miriam Cotter (Aghabullogue), Casey Coleman (Na Piarasigh).

Meanwhile, Mattie Donnelly has been ruled out of Tyrone's Allianz League clash against Dublin at Croke Park this evening.

The two-time All-Star suffered his second concussion in seven months during last weekend's 0-18 to 1-9 opening round victory over Roscommon in Omagh.

Donnelly has been excluded from Mickey Harte's match-day panel for the meeting with the reigning league and All-Ireland champions at headquarters.



Aine Crowley and Emma Sharpe, CIT, watch as Amy O'Connor, UCC, shoots, in a match last month.

Picture: Jim Coughlan

Abbotstown host Ashbourne Cup

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

THIS is a first for camogie as the new National Sports Campus in Abbotstown becomes the first venue outside of a university to host the Ashbourne Cup competitions this weekend.

The weekend will be a busy one for the CCAO organising committee, as also on the calendar of events are the Purcell and Fr Meachair cup competitions. During the last week the committee received a huge boost with the announcement Irish company Cúl Sliotars are the official sponsor of the Ashbourne weekend.

Speaking ahead of the Ashbourne, CCAO President Stephen Hoary ex-

pressed his delight at the development. "We're thrilled to have Liam, Neill and the team at Cúl Sliotars on board as associated sponsors for Ashbourne weekend. They have been working very closely with camogie clubs and produce quality products for our games. We are certain that this is the start of a long and fulfilling arrangement for us all."

Close on 400 camogie players will descend on the impressive new centre on Saturday afternoon for the six semi-finals in the three competitions. Many of the players in action are already in-

involved in inter-county camogie while for a lot of players it will be a huge privilege to represent their college on such a prestigious stage.

Down through the years, many players have made the break through to inter-county camogie thanks to their efforts in Ashbourne and Inter county managers will be out in force keeping an eye on proceedings.

Last season UCC were piped at the death when a last-gasp goal gave UL the title after UCC looked to have done enough. This year's semi-final draw has pitted them on opposite sides UCC take on WIT at 2pm, with UL in action against UCD at 3pm.

Cork are well represented in the semis with UCC fielding a strong side that will feature All-Stars Katriona

and Pamela Mackey, Keeva McCarthy, Lauren Callanan, Niamh McCarthy, Jennifer Hosford, Orla Cronin, Amy O'Connor, Hannah Looney and Meabh Cahalane. Cork interest on the other teams includes Cork full-back Laura Treacy who lines out with WIT. Also in the WIT line out are Kilkenny duo Julianne Malone and Denise Gaule. Tomorrow, all eyes will be focused on the Ashbourne, Purcell and Meachair cup finals and the Ashbourne shield final where CIT meet DCU.

It's been 14 years since UCC were victorious, can they breach the gap? It's down to the last four and having slipped up last year they won't want to make the same mistake. This year Dr Wesley O'Brien is at the helm and he has his side in top shape.

Champions Coachford College retain their crown

Coachford College

2-7

Sacred Heart, Clonakilty

1-1

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

COACHFORD COLLEGE retained the Cork Post-Primary Camogie Junior A title as they overcame the challenge posed by Sacred Heart Clonakilty in Castle Road recently.

Coachford started well with Leah Dineen converting two early frees before Maedhbh Ring, finished a long range clearance from Marguerite Lyons to the Clonakilty net.

Clonakilty dug deep and responded with a Katelyn Dineen point and they worked hard to stay in touch. Julie Tarrant added a point to the Coachford tally before the break and it was still all to play for as the sides took the field for the second half.

Roisin Dullea, Hannah Sexton and Eimear O'Brien battled hard for Sacred Heart but with Ciara

Ring superb for Coachford at centre back driving her sides forward the Mid Cork side were on top.

Clonakilty's Katelyn Dineen sent a close in free to the net but with Ciara Ring adding a goal and two points to the Coachford scoreline they were in the driving seat. Coachford defenders Brid Cotter, Emer Barry Murphy and Miriam Cotter were solid and reliable and dealt efficiently with anything Clonakilty threw at them.

Time out of number Clonakilty tried to set up attacks but the Coachford side were focused on the job in hand and with Ciara Ring, Miriam Cotter, Marguerite Lyons and Leah Dineen to the fore they retained their crown whilst Hannah Sexton, Katelyn Dineen and Claire Kingston battled to the finish for

Sacred Heart Clonakilty.

Coachford, having already won the Munster Junior A plate title where they overcame St Joseph's Tulla (the school's senior squad), now turn their attention to their bid to retain their Cork Senior A title when they meet rivals St Mary's Charleville next week in what promises to be another great encounter.

Scorers for Coachford: C Ring 1-2, L Dineen 0-4, M Ring 1-0, J Tarrant 0-1.

Sacred Heart Clonakilty: K Dineen 1-1.

COACHFORD: L Cooney, B Cotter, M Cotter, E Barry -Murphy, M Twomey, C Ring, M Lyons, J Burke (c), J Tarrant, E Foley, C Sheehan, L M Ring, L Moynihan, L Dineen, K Dennehy.

Subs: C Barrett for K Dennehy, C O'Shea for E Barry Murphy, L Buttimer for L Moynihan.

CLONAKILTY: D O'Brien, G Tobin, E O'Driscoll, L Geaney, R Dullea (c), C Kingston, A O'Riordan, A Condon, H Sexton, A Flynn, E O'Brien, K Dineen, M O'Donovan, J McCarthy, A Tobin.

Referee: Diarmuid Kirwin (Eire Og).



At yesterday's launch of the Littlewoods Ireland Camogie National Leagues were, from left: Shelly Farrell, Kilkeny; Kelley Hopkins, Roscommon; Anna Geary, Littlewoods Ireland ambassador and ex-Cork camogie player; Siobhan Flannery, Offaly, and Sarah O'Donovan, Dublin. Picture: Sportsfile

CIT claim first ever Ashbourne Shield

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

CIT	1-8
DCU	0-9

A GREAT day for CIT in Abbottstown as CIT captured the Ashbourne Shield with a point to spare over DCU in a tough hard encounter that went down to the wire.

Katie Coughlan opened scoring with a CIT goal crucially the score that would give the Cork College the cushion they needed as the pressure came on. Kaitlin Hickey and Rachel O'Shea kept the score board ticking as DCU applied huge pressure and points from the pair were enough to keep CIT in touch to the half time whistle.

On the turn over Wexford's Linda Bolger pointed to stretch the CIT lead Kaitlin Hickey added point but again DCU replied with a point. Bolger converted a CIT free again DCU responded with Eimear O'Reilly on target.

With the pressure on, DCU pressed for an equaliser but with Jess O'Shea and Kaitlin Hickey pointing, CIT stretched their lead to three. DCU added two points from O'Reilly to their tally just one separated the sides. But Kaitlin Hickey added a point to their tally and they held out to take their first ever Ashbourne Shield amid huge celebrations led by the hard working coach Barry Day.

Scorers for CIT: K Coughlan 1-0, K Hickey 0-4, L Bolger 0-2 (0-1f), J O'Shea 0-1 R O'Shea 0-1 (f).

DCU: E O'Reilly 0-7, C Mc Crossan 0-2.

UL 2-8 UCC 1-7

UL retained their Ashbourne Cup title as they defeated UCC for the second year in row in dreadful weather conditions in Abbottstown.

UCC got off to a great start with a Lauren Callanan goal but it was quickly cancelled out with Eirena Fryday grabbing a UL goal in the eight minute. Aoibheann Malone edged UCC back into the lead and with Katriona Mackey pointing a free they took the lead.

Carton and Roisin Howard gave U.L. the upper hand but a Hannah Looney point before the break cut the deficit and it was UL who held a slender 1-5 to 1-4 half time advantage.

On the resumption, Carton and Mackey converted frees but a Caoimhe Lyons goal right minutes into the half gave UL a massive boost after Beth Cartons attempt had been blocked.

Again UCC battled back Katriona Mackey pointing two frees.

Twice UL were denied by the cross bar before Aoife McGrath and Patrice Diggins with points last in the game ensured heartbreak once again for UCC.

Scorers for U.L.: B Carton 0-4 (0-3fs), E Fryday, C Lyons 1-0 each, P Diggins 0-2, R Howard A McGrath 0-1 each, UCC: K Mackey 0-5 (fs), L Callanan 1-0, H Looney A Malone 0-1



The Mick Dunne Memorial Award for PRO of the Year at the Camogie Association Volunteer and Media Awards in Croke Park was won by Shirley Moloney of Cork. Included are Camogie Association president Catherine Neary and Moira Dunne. Picture: Inpho

CAMOGIE

LORETO KILKENNY are back in the final of the O'Neill's Post-Primary Senior 'A' Camogie Championship after their 1-14 to 1-8 victory over Presentation Athenry.

A few early points from Eimear Keoghan, who also registered their goal, put them on the front foot early.

The Cats side will now face Ursuline, Thurles after they triumphed against Cross and Passion, Ballycastle in Raharney by 4-5 to 0-8.

CAMOGIE

Ashbourne Cup: (final) UL 2-8 UCC 1-0; Ashbourne Shield: (final) CIT 1-8 DCU 0-9; Purcell Cup: (final) CIT 1-8 Maynooth University 1-6; Fr Macghair Cup: (final) Athlone IT 1-3 DCU St Pats 3-0; Post Primary Senior A: (final) Ursuline, Thurles 4-5 Ullster 0-8; Senior B: (final) St. Josephs Rochfortbridge 2-8 Portlanna Community School 0-5; Senior C: (final) Borrisokane Community College 2-1 St. Patricks, Rensdy 1-8; Presentation Wexford 1-8 Castleknock Community School 2-0; Senior D: (final) Scoil Mhuire, Trim 0-11 Holyfaith, Clontarf 1-1; Junior C: (final) St. Wolstans, Kildare 0-4 Abbey Community College 2-8.

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Minogue takes the plaudits in DIT cup victory

DIT	1-8
MAYNOOTHUNIV	1-6

PURCELL CUP FINAL

DIT were made to dig deep before emerging victorious in a tight Purcell Cup Final at Abbotstown.

Melissa Lyons was excellent here for Maynooth, but was edged by player of the match, Aoife Minogue.

Points were traded before Minogue got a goal from a free and followed up with a point from a '45.

There were four points between the sides when Lyons hit the target three times to get that down to the minimum, making it 1-3 to 0-4 at half-time. And the Kildare star wasn't done, slotting an equaliser after the break before smashing the sliotar to the DIT net.

Maynooth were unable to deny Minogue though and she shot some remarkable points to reel in the deficit and edge DIT to the win.

SCORERS - DIT: A Minogue 1-6 (0-4ft, 1-45); M Thymie 0-2; Maynooth University: M Lyons 1-6 (4ft).

DIT - M Randal, M Walsh, C Foley, S Lyons, S O'Leary, S Nagle, C Rigney, D Beagan, E McGovern, A Twomey, C Carolan, L O'Mahony, M Thymie, A Minogue.

MAYNOOTH UNIVERSITY - N Doyle, K Dobson, K Lillis, S Fahy, K Nolan, E Burke, T Leary, C O'Brien, A Whitty, D Byrne, A Ryan, F O'Brien, M Lyons, A Porschitzko, C Donoghue.

REF - G Donegan (Dublin)

UL retain Ashbourne Cup

University Of Limerick retained the Ashbourne Cup and made it two wins in three seasons when recovering from the concession of an early goal to record a deserved 2-8 to 1-7 victory over University College Cork at Abbotstown yesterday.

This was a repeat of last year's final, where UL snatched the famed trophy from their rivals' grasp with an injury-time goal from Laura McMahon, but there was no need for such a dramatic intervention this time round as goals from Eirena Fryday and Caoimhe Lyons proved the difference.

Meanwhile the Ashbourne Shield will spend the year at Cork IT after they edged out DCU 1-8 to 0-9.

Scorers for UL: B Carton, P Diggin 0-3 each; E Fryday, C Lyons 1-0 each; R Howard, A McGrath 0-1 each.

Scorers for UCC: K Mackey 0-5 (3ft); L Callanan 1-0; A Malone, H Looney 0-1 each.

UL: R Breen, C Walsh, L McMahon, C Hehir, E Kelly, G Maher, N Ryan, E Fryday, P Diggin, A Keane, N Hanratty, G O'Brien, C Lyons, B Carton, R Howard.

UCC: C O'Leary, R Phelan, L Coppinger, M Cahalane, Y Murphy, P Mackey, J Hordford, H Looney, K O'Keefe, A Malone, O Cronin, L Callanan, A O'Connor, N McCarthy, K Mackey.

REF - L Downey (Kilkenny)

Fryday inspires UL glory

UL	2-8
UCC	1-7

ASHBOURNE CUP FINAL

UNIVERSITY Of Limerick retained the Ashbourne Cup after recovering from the concession of an early goal to record a deserved victory over UCC at Abbotstown.

This was a repeat of last year's final, where UL snatched the famed trophy from their rivals' grasp with an injury-time goal from Laura McMahon but there was no need for such a dramatic intervention this time around.

Lauren Callanan found the net for UCC soon after the throw-in but before long, the Shannonsiders were ahead, as the player of the match Eirena

Fryday breached the UCC defences with a good goal.

Beth Carton was revelling in her debut Ashbourne campaign and she brought her tally to three points as UL opened up a two-point lead at the break, 1-5 to 1-3, with UCC also missing a penalty.

After the break, Caoimhe Lyons' goal proved decisive for UL. Katrina Mackey got UCC back to within a point before Patrice Diggin grabbed two insurance scores for UL.

SCORERS - UL: B Carton, P Diggin 0-3 each; E Fryday, C Lyons 1-0 each; R Howard, A McGrath 0-1 each; UCC: K Mackey 0-5 (3ft); L Callanan 1-0; A Malone, H Looney 0-1 each.

UL - R Breen, C Walsh, L McMahon, C Hehir, E Kelly, C Maher, N Ryan, E Fryday, P Diggin, A Keane, N Hanratty, G O'Brien, C Lyons, B Carton, R Howard.

UCC - C O'Leary, R Phelan, L Coppinger, M Cahalane, Y Murphy, P Mackey, J Hordford, H Looney, K O'Keefe, A Malone, O Cronin, L Callanan, A O'Connor, N McCarthy, K Mackey.

REF - L Downey (Kilkenny)



WE DID IT: UL's Aoife Keane and Patrice Diggin celebrate their Ashbourne Cup final win over UCC (UL 2-8 UCC 1-7) at the National Sports Campus.

Picture: Tommy Grealy

Kathleen Woods unopposed as President Elect of Camogie Association

By Camogie Press
Posted 22/02/2017



Kathleen Woods is unopposed as the new President Elect of the Camogie Association ahead of the Camogie Association Annual Congress on 25th and 26th March in Croke Park.

A former player with St. Mochua's Derrynoose as well as representing Armagh and Ulster, Kathleen has been a member of Ard Chomhairle for the past eight years; seven years in her role as Ulster Chairperson and one as Ulster Delegate.

Previously she acted as Armagh County Board Secretary for 1 year as well as being the Orchard County's first Children's Officer. She has also served as Children's Officer to Ulster Camogie Council for 4 years and Vice-Chairperson for 3 years prior to becoming Chairperson.

Kathleen also currently sits on the Association's National Child Welfare and Protection Sub-Committee.

Kathleen will be in place as President Elect until 2018's Annual Congress where she will succeed the current President Catherine Neary.

Aileen Pierce (UCD), Alish Whitty (Wexford) and Roberta Farrell (Kildare) were also nominated unopposed for the positions of Treasurer, Coaching and Games Representative to Ard Chomhairle and PR and Communications Representative to Ard Chomhairle respectively.

Rena new Cork camogie captain

CAMOGIE

John Bohane

CORK ladies dual star Rena Buckley has been appointed captain of the Cork senior camogie team for the new season.

The Inniscarra player, who played a key role in propelling Inniscarra to senior county glory last season, is thrilled to receive the accolade for the 2017 season.

"It is a very proud moment for me. It is a great honour both for myself personally and for my club Inniscarra. It is a huge honour.

"I am delighted to be bestowed with the captaincy for the season ahead. We suffered a disappointing end to last season (losing in the Munster series) but we are hopeful of a successful campaign this year," revealed the talismanic dual ace.

Rena plans to return to camogie training with the Cork senior team this week. She won't return to the football fold until a later date due to intense college and work commitments at present.

Rena, who plays her club football with Donoughmore, admits it can be tough combining both codes.

"It can be tough alright. I suppose when you are in school or in college it is easier as you have more time to commit to both codes as opposed to when you are working it is much trickier.

"Thankfully I have been very fortunate down through the years to have had very considerate management teams for both club and county who have been so accommodating towards my dual code needs.

"All the various managers I have had the pleasure of playing under over the years have been really understanding which has helped me play both football and camogie."

Rena is lavish in her praise for the role Ephie Fitzgerald has played with the Cork senior football ladies team since he took over from the previous managerial incumbent Eamonn Ryan.

Rena was impressed with the smooth transition in the management set-up.

"Ephie had a really tough job taking over at the start of last year from Eamonn who was a brilliant manager for us for a number of years. Eamonn was a superb trainer.

"Ephie settled into his new role with great ease. He brought in great assistants with him such as James Masters and Derek O'Gorman who has served as the goalkeeping coach, while Michael O'Carroll has come in as strength and conditioning coach.

"He has assembled a great backroom team, while he maintained a link to the old regime by maintaining Frank Honohan, Pat O'Leary and Bridget O'Brien which was great.

"The atmosphere in the camp is great. We enjoyed a great season last year and hopefully we can enjoy another good campaign this season."

The Cork senior ladies footballers have captured the All-Ireland senior football championship title in each of the last six seasons.

Rena, who has played an integral role in every one of their triumphs,



Rena Buckley was outstanding for Inniscarra when they denied Milford a fifth successive county. As a result Buckley is the Cork captain for 2017. Picture: Larry Cummins



The O'Donovan Rossa U16 ladies football team with Cork dual star Rena Buckley.

puts their unprecedented success down to hard work.

"Our success is definitely built on hard work. No matter what time of the year be it January, April or August, we are training hard and I think that shows when the games are sometimes in the melting pot as we drive on and grind out a narrow win. We train in a very diligent fashion.

"The effort everyone puts in is unreal. I suppose another factor might be the success we have enjoyed in recent years gives you the confidence and self-belief to win even when not playing to your full potential.

"In my opinion it all comes back to being diligent in everything we do.

"We work hard in training and we all mind ourselves off the pitch. That has been a big factor in our success."

Rena was guest of honour recently at an awards ceremony held in Skibbereen in recognition of their U16

team claiming county glory last season. Rena is thrilled with the rise in popularity in ladies football throughout West Cork.

"West Cork has always been a very strong area for producing top quality players from a male perspective.

"It is great to see in recent years that ladies football is coming on in major strides.

"There are more clubs starting up in the area which helps ensure more competition and more players playing which is great.

"There are a number of new players on the Cork senior squad this season who hail from West Cork and Beara which is great.

"They have made big impacts so far. All the new players who have come into the squad this season have very bright futures ahead of them."

A former playing colleague of Rena's was Castlehaven native Nollaig Cleary

Success is definitely built on hard work.

who, for a number of years, was the standard bearer for West Cork ladies football. Rena has great memories of playing alongside Nollaig.

"She was an outstanding player and a great role model. She is a great girl, hugely committed to football.

"She is a proud West Cork woman. She was a great player for Cork.

"It was a joy to play alongside her."

Rena, who along with Brieger Corkery hold a record 17 All-Ireland senior championship titles amassed in both codes, still retains the hunger to achieve more in her incredible career.

"I really enjoy leading a healthy lifestyle, I really enjoy the competitive element of it and the craic is really superb. It is a mix of everything.

"It is really rewarding to take part with a great group of girls and enjoy so much success.

"I will keep playing while I still enjoy it."

Sarah's coming home

Innishannon woman will line out for Dublin in Sunday's national league opener

BY KIERAN MCCARTHY

ON Sarah O'Donovan's Twitter biography, it reads #SecondChance #Sunday.

Not many people get a second chance to play camogie at the top level – but this Innishannon woman has, with a different county, and she's grasped it.

Back in 2005 when Fiona O'Driscoll was in charge of the Cork senior camogie team, Sarah was brought into the set-up but these days she lines out with Dublin, having swapped Rebel red for light blue.

This Saturday in the opening round of Littlewoods Ireland Camogie League Division 1, Sarah and Dublin travel to Leaside to take on Paudie Murray's Rebels, the latter smarting from relinquishing their All-Ireland crown to Kilkenny last September.

It's the first time Sarah will have played against Cork on home soil.

'I'm expecting a warm welcome!' she laughed.

'It will be weird, my first time going home to play in Cork with the Dublin jersey, and I hope I don't start roaring "Come on Cork!" during the game.'

The match itself will be a testing examination for Dublin and their new manager David Herity, who took over in September 2016 from Shane O'Brien, the man who invited Sarah into the set-up in late 2014.

'Cork are back training since December, they have decided to take the league incredibly seriously, they have done a lot of work,' explained Sarah.

'In previous years Cork wouldn't have taken the league as seriously and saw it as a chance to blood new players, so you might have an easier day going down to Cork.'

'I expect them to show exactly where they are now, which means we will have a tough day on Saturday – but I think that's a good thing for us.'

'We have a new manager in David Herity, he has put in a lot of work with us over the last

few months but it's very hard to know where you are until you get a game like this. This will be an education for us to see how much we have come on in the last few months and how much work we need to do to compete in this year's championship.

'We want to go out and win it but Cork are smarting and hurting from last September.'

Sarah (32) plays her club camogie on Dublin's northside with St Vincent's and she's been beaming in the bright lights of the capital since 2013, but she hasn't lost any of her Cork accent.

It's as strong as it was during the days she spent here at home, playing senior, junior and minor camogie with Cork, as well as making a name for herself as captain of the Ireland U19 soccer team that competed at the 2002 European championships.

A law graduate, she couldn't resist the lure of the big smoke four years ago, leaving Innishannon and home behind her.

Currently working as the engagement & communications lead for the Mark Pollock Trust, she had thought her camogie days were behind her.

In recent years and before the move to Dublin, she lined out with Cork City Women's FC in the Women's National League – but once settled in the capital, a friend from Ballygarvan, Emer Dillon, convinced her to sign up with St Vincent's. It was the start of her second chance.

'Emer was playing with Vincent's, I was living on the Southside and I should have gone to Ballyboden because they would have been my closest club,' she explained.

'Ballyboden had a monopoly on the senior championship and Emer convinced me to go northside to Vincent's to help break the hold of Ballyboden.'

'We got to the county final in October of 2014, and lost. That week, Shane O'Brien, who was



Determined: Sarah O'Donovan (32) made her comeback to inter-county camogie in 2015 with Dublin, having previously lined out with Cork at senior, junior and minor grades.

taking over the Dublin team, rang me to ask me would I come in for a trial with the county team.

'It's something that I hadn't thought about.'

'I rang dad at home and he said, "Well, Cork aren't looking for you, you're 30 years of age and they're very unlikely to come looking for you again". He told me to go for it.'

'When Shane O'Brien came in he had massive backing from the county board, he brought in an entirely new culture.'

'Dublin went to Cork in July of 2014 to play in the championship and they lost by 37 points; they were beaten out of the gate. That was my background to Dublin camogie when Shane asked me to come in.'

'We put the head down in December 2014 and January 2015 and then we played Cork in Parnell Park in February where we lost by five points – but that was a 32-point turnaround since the previous meeting.'

'That was the start of everything with me and Dublin, I saw that they were on the right track and that it was a cause to commit to.'

Sarah had effectively retired from camogie without actually saying it.

Soccer in recent years had seen her veer away from camo-

gie – but Emer Dillon, St Vincent's and Dublin offered her a second chance.

'When I was writing for *The Examiner* and *The Evening Echo*, watching matches in Croke Park and in places like Macroom and Milford at games, I was retired and happy,' said Sarah, who was also a sports journalist in a past life.

'I think that winning so much with Cork when I was younger gave me a sense of accomplishment and I thought it was enough, that I was done with it.'

'Getting the opportunity to play camogie in Dublin and in Parnell Park and get that chance to reinvent myself is why it was so attractive. This is my second chance.'

In 2015 and 2016, Sarah has lined out for Dublin and she made such an impact in her first full season that she was nominated for an All-Star award in 2015 and won the player-of-the-match award in the infamous 'coin toss' game between Dublin and Clare that summer.

She's enjoying every moment of this second coming with Dublin.

'I would be different to a lot of people,' Sarah said.

'I grew up with Brieghe (Corkery), Rena (Buckley) and Anna (Geary), played with them, they're friends of mine and they are also synonymous with Cork GAA – but they would consider it alien to even think about play-

ing with another county.

'Because I played soccer for so long – and with soccer you can play with numerous teams and put on different jerseys – you end up committing to a team culture rather than an emblem or a crest.'

'When I was playing with

Cork City or Ballincollig or whatever team, you buy into the team itself rather than the name.'

'In Dublin everyone was so welcoming, I bought into team culture and what the team was trying to do, rather than the colour of the jersey.'



Big launch: Innishannon's Sarah O'Donovan, right, who plays with Dublin is pictured at Littlewoods Ireland and the Camogie Association's launch of the national leagues. Also pictured, from left, Shelly Farrell (Kilkenny), Kelley Hopkins (Roscommon), Anna Geary (Littlewoods Ireland Ambassador and ex-Cork camogie player and Siobhan Flannery (Offaly) (Photo: Brendan Moran/Sportsfile)

Cork need more competition

Cork need more competition for places if they want to reclaim the O'Duffy Cup this year, according to former Rebel senior and current Dublin star Sarah O'Donovan.

Then three-in-a-row chasing Cork lost the All-Ireland senior championship final to Kilkenny last September in Croke Park, and in the curtain raiser that same day Cork's intermediate day also lost their All-Ireland final to the Cats.

'I think Cork stretched themselves too thinly last year trying to win two All-Irelands in two grades on the same day,' O'Donovan said.

'They had such a small pool of players that there was very little competition for places.'

'They need more competition for places in training and if they can create that competition again they will win the All-Ireland.'

Camogie

Ciarán Gallagher

Anna Geary believes her former Cork teammates to bounce back from their All-Ireland final loss to Kilkenny.

Three-in-a-row chasing Cork lose by four points to the Cats last September. Paudie Murray's side return to competitive action on Saturday against Dublin in the opening round of the Littlewoods National League.

The loss marked the sixth time the Rebels failed to claim a three-in-a-row since the county last achieved the feat in 1973 (en route to a fourth

title on the bounce the following year).

While Geary does not believe the pressure of claiming a third title on the spin was to blame for Cork's loss, the Milford woman reckons it may have been a distraction. She said: 'I know the players in that camp, they weren't focusing on three in a row... but there is some part of you that is thinking about that.'

Geary, part of the Cork side that lost the 2007 final to Wexford, having claimed back-to-back titles, said: 'People would be lying and players will be lying if they said that it wasn't factored in... Perhaps outside the camp it was some-

thing that was being mentioned, but it is very hard not to let that filter in. You're only human and you can have the best mental toughness in the world but when it comes to All-Ireland final day and you're thinking, 'God, this could be our chance to win three in a row', then it may or may not affect you.'

Geary speculates that Cork may have peaked too soon ahead of their final defeat to Kilkenny. Just three points separated the sides before Cork's effort faltered, with Shelly Farrell's 42nd-minute goal and the loss of Gemma O'Connor to a second yellow hitting Murray's side.

'I just think overall, Cork will look back on it disappointed because Kilkenny were the hungrier team but Cork looked flat,' said Geary. 'Maybe they trained too much, that's something that they're going to have to look at, but getting to an All-Ireland final still means that they weren't too far off.'

'If they can replicate what they did last year and just tweak one or two things then they'll definitely be there or thereabouts again.'

Geary is backing Murray's side to get back on track starting with Saturday's league opener against Dublin. 'Cork, the team that I know, some of



the girls that I played with are still there and they're a resilient bunch.

'If anything, they won't let that knock their confidence. They'll use it as a motivator to

players and worry about performance rather than whether or not they're winning losing games,' said Littlewoods Ireland ambassador

Anna Geary: 'Cork will be there or thereabouts again this year.'

drive them on. She expects Murray to use the league "as an opportunity for transition".

'Bring in players in and experiment with them. We can't afford to be complacent with our performance.'

Cork minors playing Dublin

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

IT may only be the third weekend in February, but it's championship time.

First into the All-Ireland ring are the Cork minors. They play Dublin this afternoon in Mallow, at 1pm.

It's a curtain-raiser to the Littlewoods Division 1 clash between the same counties.

What a pity we couldn't have had all three games this evening in Páirc Uí Rinn, where the hurlers meet Dublin in the Allianz league, but such are the fortunes of the camogie players.

They are always the bridesmaids.

Cork are bidding for a first title as the minor competition enters its 12th season since the age limit was changed to 18 from 15, in 2006.

Kilkenny have landed six minor titles, followed by Tipperary and Galway with two each, and Limerick with one.

So many times Cork have come so close, losing finals after replays, but each season brings fresh hopes and 2017 will be no exception.

George Fitzgibbon is the man in charge this year and he is hugely experienced.

He has been involved with the Cork senior team as a selector since Milford's reign as county champions.

He was a member of Paudie Murray's successful senior All-Ireland winning back-room team.

Desire

Harbouring a desire to get involved with the minor side, Fitzgibbon was selected by Cork to take the helm this season and preparation has been going exceptionally well and they are looking ahead with huge expectations.

He is joined by Frances Killen, from Ballyhea, and the experienced former Cork senior selector, Billy Dillon, from Ballygarvan, along with Frank McCormick, who is responsible for fitness.

Grainne Fitzgibbon is team masseuse.

The first championship game is always a hard one to call, but home advantage is a boost, and given that Cork have been based in Mallow for their preparations, it will be a settled and familiar atmosphere for the girls and mentors.

Cork will not name their starting 15 until just before throw-in, but we can expect Ruth McCarthy, Aoife Hurley, Katie Walsh, Lauren Homan, and Saoirse McCarthy to all be in the running.

Dublin will be hoping to get their campaign off to a good start, as 15 clubs are represented in their panel of 32 players and their management team of Robbie Lewis, Joe Leonard, John Meagher, Niall Mullen, and Georgina McClelland has prepared its charges well for what they expect will be a tough encounter.



The Mick Dunne Memorial Award's PRO of The Year winner was Shirley Moloney, Cork, with camogie president Catherine Neary and Moira Dunne.

Picture: INPHO/Donall Farnie

Ballincollig ladies back under lights

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

AFTER a lapse of a year, the Ballincollig under lights senior camogie tournament is back up and running again.

It was launched recently at the Ballincollig GAA club where the draws were made for the ties which feature Douglas, Ballygarvan, Ballincollig, Glen Rovers, Sarsfields and senior B club Eire Og.

Since the first tournament in 2009 the competition has provided great pre-season games for clubs getting back into training as the main aim is to get teams back onto the playing fields. The family of the late Brendan Butler have come on board sponsoring a Cup for the competition and this adds to the

prestige of the event to have such a beautiful trophy for the winning team.

The late Brendan was an officer of Ballincollig Camogie Club when he passed away four years ago. He was a huge character in the club and always had a word for everyone and he is still fondly remembered by everyone in the club. His wife Liz and two daughters Kate and Anna were present on the night to present the cup to the club.

Their support has given the competition a boost. Organisers from the Ballincollig club were present on the night and vice chairman Breda Barry

welcomed everybody and outlining details of this year's event to a large gathering at the launch of the tournament at the Ballincollig GAA club.

"This is an ideal opportunity for clubs to get their season up and running, this year we have six teams, five senior and one senior B competing, and since the tournament began clubs look forward to it every year and we thanks all the clubs for coming along and making the competition so special.

"At this time of the year, it is all about getting back into training and with each club guaranteed a minimum of three games it will help enormously as clubs are trying to getting back into action and get the feel of the pitch after the long winter break.

"I am sure that which every club

comes out on top this year will be closely watched to see can they make it to the top in their respective championship campaign."

Breda thanked the club for allowing the competition go ahead under lights and paid tribute to the Butler family for their generous sponsorship.

Round one got under way on Wednesday with wins for Sarsfield's over Eire Og, 2-5 to 1-6, and Ballygarvan got the upper hand, Douglas 1-9 to 0-4.

FIXTURES

WEDNESDAY: Ballincollig v Glen Rovers, 6.30pm; Eire Og v Ballygarvan, 8pm.

March 1: Douglas v Glen Rovers, 6.30pm; Ballincollig v Sarsfield's, 8pm.

March 8: Douglas v Sarsfield's, 6.30 pm; Eire Og v Glen Rovers, 8pm.

March 15: Ballincollig v Ballygarvan, 6.30pm.

Cork intermediates open league campaign tomorrow

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

THE first game of the year for the intermediates in Castle Road takes place this Sunday at 2pm as Galway travel to take on Cork in the Littlewoods Division 2 National League.

Having retained all bar one of last year's side that reached the All-Ireland final, Cork will be looking for a good league campaign and no doubt the ultimate goal will be to reach Croke Park again and make amends for losing out in a final last season that was left behind. Leah Weste, Amy Lee, Niamh O'Keeffe, Finola Neville and Linda Collins are amongst the players who should be in the Cork line out, as well as Lauren Callan, who enjoyed a great Ashbourne campaign with UCC, and former senior Claire Shine, who re-graded to intermediate and is back playing camogie.

Paudie Murray is again at the helm of both the Division 1 and 2 teams and training has gone well. Cork are in a tough group, away to Kildare, West-

meath and Antrim and at home to Galway and Armagh. Every game is crucial and Murray's charges having the experience of last season behind them will be ready for whatever is thrown at them.

With the senior side fielding a very strong team today for the opening round of the Division 1 National League against Dublin, a lot of the Division 2 players will not be playing two games over the weekend and that is important that they are fresh and ready to go.

Galway have promoted the successful All-Ireland winning minor manager Lorraine Larkin to guide the fortunes of the Division 2 side this year. Gerry Helebert from the Ballinadreen club has taken on the role of team coach and they are joined by selectors

Kevin Connolly and Marie Porter, with Liam Walsh also on the back room team.

Galway are captained by Lorraine Coen from St Thomas's club. Amongst the players who will travel to Cork are Clíodhna Walsh who was a member of the DCU/St Pat's team that won the Fr Meagher Cup last weekend, Patricia Manning, Karen Kennedy, Moira Connaughton and Michelle Skehill. With Sarsfield's contesting the All-Ireland senior club final there is a great buzz around Galway and they are determined to build on the success of their minors and bring them to the next level.

Last season, Cork travelled to Galway and recorded a 0-16 to 0-9 victory. A result that gave them a place in the All-Ireland final. Galway will be out to reverse that result and get their league campaign off to a winning start but Cork will have other ideas.

If you have a free afternoon tomorrow head to Castle Road and lend your support to the Cork girls.



THE KIERAN SHANNON INTERVIEW

Despite winning 12 All-Ireland medals herself, Ann Downey has always lived in the shadow of her sister Angela, one of the greatest camogie players of all time. But returning Kilkenny to the top has secured her standing as a special figure in her own right

The good gets better

Well, Shem, is this the good one or the bad one? Ann Downey was just a schoolgirl when the man infamously walked into her father's butcher shop and crudely blurted out a distinction that, in her innocence, she had no idea existed.

Up to that point, she hadn't seen herself as any worse than Angela and Angela hadn't seen herself as any better than Ann.

That's the way her father saw it too, or at least that's what he'd tell his insensitive customer for the benefit of his blushing daughter.

"Ah, now, they're equally as good," he'd say, trying to laugh it off, but once the man finally went about the rest of his day, a certain realisation dawned on Ann. Why is someone asking that? It would be wrong to say it scarred her but fair to say it stung her. It was one thing to be largely known as Shem Downey's daughter, another now to have to live in the shadow of her sister.

Such would be her twin's pre-eminence over the years, any mention of a Downey from Kilkenny inevitably triggered a certain first name.

"I played squash for Ireland," says Ann matter-of-factly, "and I could be up in the heart of Protestant Belfast in a boat club and someone would say to me, 'Thanks, Angela.' Angela never played squash in her life and they wouldn't have seen camogie in their lives. Even if they had heard of the Downey sisters, Angela would spring to mind a lot quicker than Ann."

Angela Downey wasn't just a "good one". She was the Great One. Shem Downey had the distinction of marking Christy Ring in the 1946 All-Ireland final and then beating him and Cork a year later, yet Shem would come to be a lot more familiar with camogie's equivalent of Ring, considering she lived in his own house. For more than a decade there, from the mid '70s into the early '90s, people used to routinely load up in cars and buses on September Sundays to head to Croke Park, just to see what Angela Downey would and could do, the way Railway Cup finals on St Patrick's Day was a pilgrimage for a previous generation, flocking to catch Ring in the flesh.

Ann Downey would turn out not to be "a bad one". She was winning All-Irelands at 17 and still playing in them at 42. Just like her sister she'd win 12 senior All-Irelands with Kilkenny, as well as seven club All-Irelands, nine league medals and three Player of the Year awards. As a back and a midfielder, her job was more to avert any danger, while her sister's upfront was to pose it. Were her sister anyone other than the best to ever lace them up, Ann would be remembered as a Tomás or Marc Ó Sé to Angela's Darragh.

Instead, she'd to settle for being Venus to Angela's Serena. Even on two of the occasions she walked away with the Player

of the Year award, she'd to share the honour with her sister, the pair of them having been declared joint winners.

More recent events though have surely secured Ann Downey's standing as a unique and special figure in her own right.

When Kilkenny were looking for someone to manage the county team to help win their first O'Duffy Cup since Downey herself lifted it in 1994, they turned to her. The so-called bad one would prove to be the right one. This weekend, when Kilkenny commence their National League campaign, they do so as reigning league and All-Ireland champions.

Downey would be the first to say it's a team effort, generously naming throughout our conversation a range of people in her management setup as well as several others who've helped it. Conor Phelan, the selector and coach, would be one of those, but when he himself was interviewed for the recent Kilkenny GAA yearbook, he could only rave about the person who brought him in.

"Ann Downey. What a woman. Heart on sleeve. Huge passion. Lives it and breathes it. Phone calls at 11.30pm or midnight, talking about this team or that player."

Taking and making calls concerning players is central to Downey's approach to management. Texting her that you can't make training is unacceptable. Ring her. But if you're struggling with anything, ring her then as well. She'll be there for you, or at least find someone who'll be able to help.

"I would say, in fairness to the girls, they respect me because they know I don't do the shadow boxing thing. If you have a problem, tell me. Just don't tell me a lie."

Back in her playing days, you wouldn't even think of someone else's emotional well-being. You took care of yourself and that was it. There were no team meetings, no arm-around-the-shoulder chats or a follow-up call checking in to see how you were.

Even as one of the team's leaders,

Kilkenny boss Ann Downey celebrates at the final whistle against Cork in the All-Ireland camogie final at Croke Park last year.

Picture: Ryan Byrne/Inpho



Downey wasn't exactly looking out to see how some rookie was acclimatising to the setup. Her clubmate Marina Downey – no relation, though Ann jokes she was allowed to be a first cousin when she played well – tells the story of the first time she came up to training. Ann Downey's first interaction with her was to bark for her to go back behind the goals and puck back out the balls.

"You were all individuals," concedes Ann. "You went to training, then you went to Delaney's for a bag of chips on the way home and then you went home." Now you have to be much more sensitive about a player's mental health, especially when you're the manager. It's one of the reasons why she brought Dr Fergus Heffernan on board her setup. A player could be struggling with the stress of an upcoming exam. At one stage last year, a player was struggling with the breakup of a relationship. He was there to hear and guide them because she was willing to care.

"There might be a girl who I know isn't good enough to make the 30 but I'd still keep her on for the year because it would be good for her mental health. This year we could have 35 or 36 players and I'll say, 'Look, you might not make the panel, you can go if you want, but you're more than welcome to stay and learn and you'll get the same coaching as everyone else.'"

Her duty of care extends beyond that. Back when she and Angela were growing up in Ballyragget, they could go 15 minutes pucking along the main street without having to let a car pass. Now there are all kinds of distractions, like other sports, JTs, Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram...

"You're trying to get them to realise that social media ain't always a good thing. That they could be out socialising and then do something stupid and it's there for life; down the road they could be looking for a job and all someone has to do is pull up their Facebook. You're just educating them to be careful. And to remember, they're representatives of Kilkenny."

Even someone as mature and as mentally tough as Downey has keenly felt how testing and turbulent life can be. Five years ago she lost her job. She was site manager for the waste management company Greenstar when she was told she was one of 19 people around the country being let go.

"I suppose it was a fierce dent to your ego, your confidence. We were making money, good money, but suddenly they decided to make cuts and I was the only one let go in Kilkenny. You'd question yourself, 'What was going wrong? What did I do wrong? What's wrong with me?' 'I found it hard. For four months there you had no income coming in, you weren't meeting people. You were just at home with Dad. There were times when you'd find it hard to get out of bed.'"

Like so many things though, in the long term, it would work out fine. The rival waste company in town, Doheny Wheel

Bins, run by Martin Doheny, rang and asked if she'd like to meet for lunch. When they met for lunch he asked if she wanted a job. Now she'd want to work nowhere else.

"The time Daddy was dying (in 2013, aged 91), he had been sick for awhile but we only learned a month beforehand that he had cancer. Two weeks before he passed away, I had gone into work and Martin and his wife Joan were there and they said, 'What are you doing here? Go home.' So I was able to be there for the last two weeks of Dad's life which was a huge comfort for him because he'd got to the stage where he didn't want to be alone. I don't think I would have been able to do that if I had been with a bigger company."

"It's the same with the camogie. Before I took the Kilkenny job, I had the conversation with Martin. 'It'll mean taking phonecalls at work. I might be missing.' He said he had no problem at all. When we won the league final last year, he rang me while I was still on the pitch in Thurles. 'Ann, take those girls out for a meal and I'll sort it out with you.' I love going into work. I couldn't be happier there."

There's a lot of goodwill out there for her and this Kilkenny camogie team, she finds. Through the years – Downey was also over the team in 2009 to 2011 – Brian Cody has always been happy to come in to talk to the team. Whenever they've asked for a pitch on the men's centre of excellence in Dunmore, the men's county board have never refused them. Their own camogie board regularly book out the pitch in James Stephens when plenty of other counties are scrambling around for some place to train.

The Kilkenny public has embraced the team since it would have caught the climax of last year's semi-final against Galway in Thurles as the curtain-raiser to the men's epic All-Ireland semi-final replay against Waterford. Thanks to their generosity and the girls' own creative ways of fundraising, the team will be able to go on a holiday next week for four days in Malaga. Back when Downey was a player, she and Angela were sometimes invited on a few trips abroad on the coat-tails of a travelling men's team, but there was never anything for their teammates. Something like Malaga is progress, she supposes. But there's a lot more that could be done for the girls. A lot, lot more.

It would be nice, for instance, if the camogie association would donate something towards a holiday fund. Downey knows it's hardly awash with money but some kind of gesture, even €5,000 would go a long way.

She admires the way the current player is more assertive. "Back in our time, when you got to an All-Ireland, you got a bag and you got your tracksuit. The girls won't ac-



cept that now. They want training gear, they want food and their drinks after training because they're aware of what the lads are getting."

Something far more fundamental she feels has to be tackled by the WGPA, the Camogie Association – and the GAA itself. Too much remains the same.

"Even when we were winning club All Irelands, we'd have had to be off the main pitch by 7pm for the lads. And that's still the case today all around the country. You'll get the odd club like Shelmaliers in Wexford where there's a good pitch for every team but that's the exception. I know from helping my own club only a few years ago we'd either have to train early on the good pitch or else use a small seven-a-side pitch that they were after picking the stones off. There was no such thing as us saying 'Well, this week we want to be the ones training at 7pm and the lads can go at 6pm.' Because we're not fully part of the GAA. We're a separate identity."

"From juvenile right up to senior, girls are not being treated equally. It's a case of 'You're on that pitch, you can't have this one.' Either the lads are using it or they're minding or cutting the pitch."

"I don't like it. It's not right, in this day and age. I'd love to see the GAA and the camogie amalgamate. I really would. I think camogie and the GAA itself would be much the better for it."

She turns 60 this year but she's strikingly fresh and active. She still plays a bit of squash, regularly walks the dog, and finds mentoring this Kilkenny team energises her a lot more than it drains her.

Again, she'll stress, it helps to be surrounded by good people. Like Conor Phelan and Paddy Mullally who would have won All-Irelands in the early Cody years. And also there in the background to help out is Angela; she was part of the back-room on All-Ireland final day as well.

They're as close as twins can get. Ann hasn't married but Angela's two kids are

nearly as if they were her own; the only disruption to our 90-minute chat is when she takes a call from her nephew who is studying in UCC.

Ann didn't mind that Angela was viewed as the best player. She understood that Angela was a genius, while she was more a workhorse. There was no one else they'd rather go into the arena with.

"The first time we were separated was after our Inter Cert. Our parents said that we were all going to boarding school in Callan. I said, 'No, that ain't going to happen for Ann.' So Angela and Maria went to boarding school and I went back to Castlecomer. But actually, a friend of ours who was the principal at the time saw that I was lost without her. He said it to my parents who then told me I was going to Callan after Halloween. I told them I wouldn't but sure once I went to boarding school, that was the making of me. Because she was there."

It hurt whenever she wasn't there. Back when the late Brendan Fullam would ask former hurlers to write a few words for his

Ann Downey was winning All-Irelands at 17 and still playing in them at 42.

Picture: Pat Moore

Hurling Giants series of books. Eighteen of the 19 All Irelands Ann won were with Angela also on the pitch, but it says something about Ann that it was the one in which Angela wasn't there that informed most of her essay for Fullam.

"The biggest disappointment was the treatment of Angela by Central Council and some of her self-professed fans who suspended her in 1988 [for the All Ireland club final]," she'd write at the time. "No loss of any game could ever come near the profound sorrow I felt for one of the greatest players I'll ever have the privilege to play alongside."

She still stands by it. In the semi-final win over Killeagh down in Cork, Ann had been involved in a bit of "handbags" with an opposing player. "The two of them fell to the ground and when Angela got another belt, one of their mentors roared in, telling her to get up. 'Come on, you queen, who did you think are?'"

Afterwards in the showers, Angela was in a state because of the verbal abuse she was after taking.

Structuring the perfect schedule

Richie Hogan would love it. Six games — and not just the usual three — to reach an All-Ireland final.

Matches coming thick and fast at the height of the summer, against the other top teams in the country.

Ann Downey largely likes how the camogie championship is structured too.

But there are a few things she'd alter. For one, she'd have more of those

games on Sundays. "I disagree with championship matches being on a Saturday," she says.

"The previous time I was involved, a number of players had to say to me, 'No, I can't commit, Ann. There are matches on Saturdays. I work on Saturdays. I'm a student. I need the money.'"

"It's that way for a number of players around the country. And I also think it affects crowds. People might be working all week, they're off on a Saturday catching up, and then Sunday is the day they go to matches."

That's not all. She'd like if the pool games were staggered out a bit more. A bit like Hogan's perfect scenario — a championship game every two

weeks. In the camogie, a team could be out four consecutive weeks.

"I like the idea of the round robin in general but I don't like idea of being out every weekend, one after the other. Injuries happen in sport but they're more likely to happen with a schedule like that, and if someone does get injured, even one that's not that serious, they could miss two or three games when, if the schedule was staggered a bit more, they'd miss only the one game."

"I'd prefer if there were more cases where you had a fortnight between group games. It would give coaches more time between games to correct things from the previous game."

Kieran Shannon

"The day before the final the two of us were coming back from our mother's grave when our father said, 'The game is cancelled.' We said, 'Who's dead?' He said, 'No one. Angela, you've been summoned to a Central Council meeting next week.'"

"Angela and her opponent were both suspended for six months. Even though Angela wasn't red-carded, her name wasn't taken, she didn't even go into the referee's book. We went on and played the final without her. She had to stand outside the wire."

Q

quarter of a century later, Angela would reciprocate such loyalty, refusing to attend the Team of the Millennium function after Ann was overlooked. How did Ann feel about such a gesture?

"It wasn't that I didn't make the team. It was that I wasn't even nominated. For me, it kind of went back to the man in the shop. You might pull the wool over someone's eyes once or twice and get an All-Ireland as a sub."

"But to win 12, we just felt there was a vendetta against me, because I'd have been known for speaking my mind. If I didn't agree with a referee, I'd tell a referee, though that didn't mean I wouldn't be friendly with them after. So though she was put in a position that she didn't want to be in, Angela just felt that she should let them know she didn't agree with what was happening."

The love and respect has come in due course. When the Irish Sportswoman of the Year awards scheme was founded at the turn of the last decade, the two Downeys were the second entries into the Hall of Fame.

The Greatest and The Great.

A new season awakes new hope

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

A NEW season is about to get under way and for the Cork Division 2 team it will be a year when they finally get to participate fully in the Littlewoods National League.

The fiasco that was last year's league is well behind them when a dispute over re-grading saw them only play the last two league games and they will look with confidence to giving a good account of themselves in this season's competition.

Last year in the championship they reached the All-Ireland final and in all truth it was a game thrown away.

Leading for most of the contest they allowed Kilkenny dictate the closing stages of a contest the Rebels looked to have in total control. Cork led by four points at the break but Kilkenny hit them with three second half goals and cork never recovered. They did have chances at the finish but by now panic had set in. What's done is done and gone and it is time to look ahead with a positive attitude.

Paudie Murray reports that trainings is going exceptionally well and his side from last season are still eligible bar one, Libby Coppinger, who came on in the senior final.

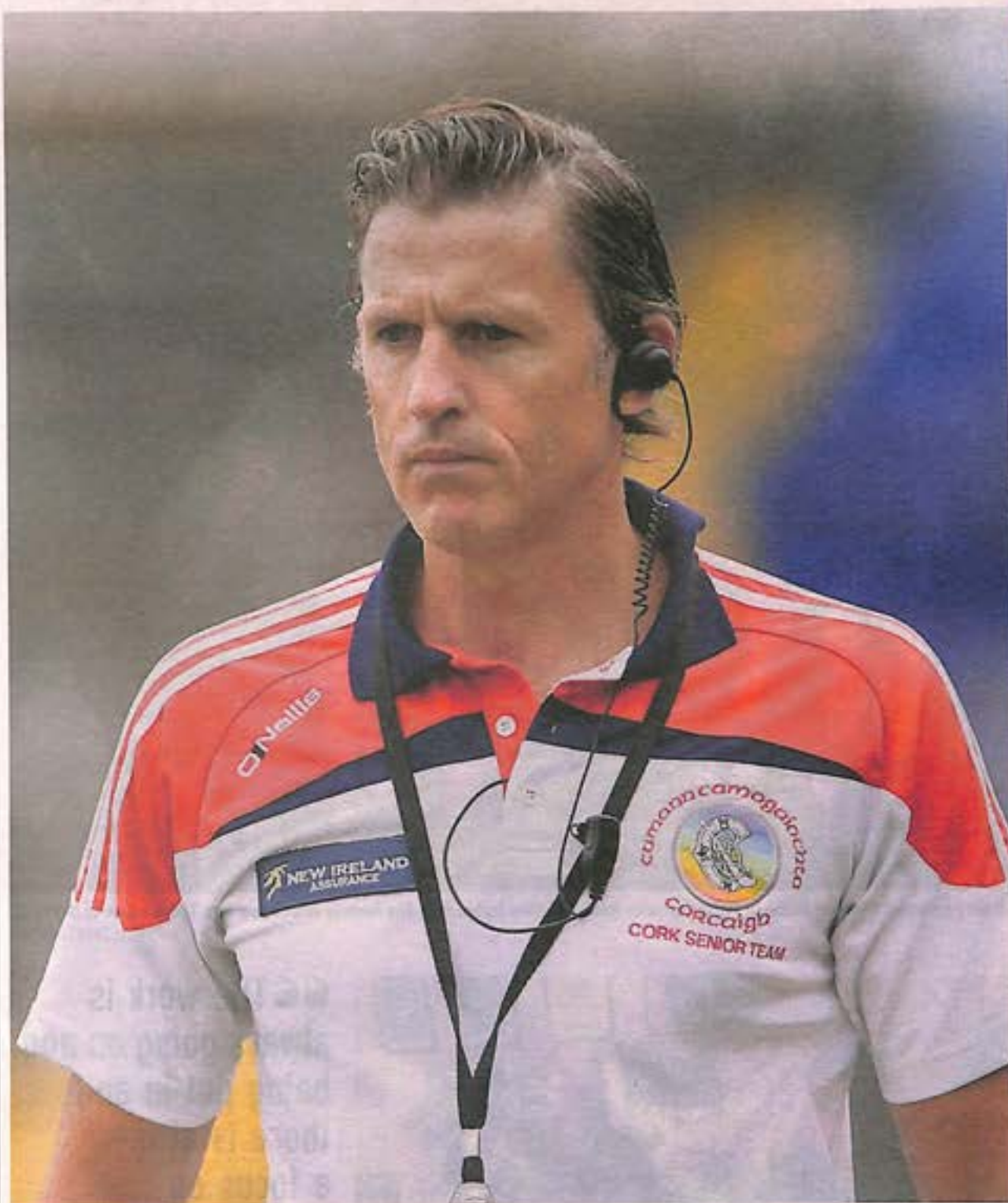
Additions to his panel this year include; Lauren Callan, who enjoyed a great Ashbourne campaign with UCC. Former senior player Claire Shine, who hasn't played senior inter county in over three years and is re-graded to Intermediate. Her inclusion will be a huge boost to the panel. Also joining the panel are Rachel Killeen and Lauren Homan, both who were on last season's minor squad.

Paudie Murray is looking ahead with huge confidence in a side he knows should have got over the line in Croke Park last season. "I suppose we left it behind us alright but the girls have really got stuck into training and are really looking forward to the National League where we will get lots of good games. Nothing beats matches and these will help us in our championship preparations so we are really looking forward to a good season ahead." Liam O'Reilly is doing the strength and conditioning with both Cork sides whilst Sean Cremin and Mossie O'Sullivan are on board as selectors.

Their league campaign promises to be a tough one, Cork will have five games making trips away to Kildare, Westmeath and Antrim and they will be at home to Galway and Armagh.

Everything is ready and Cork are raring to go. The National League will give us a good indication of where they are at but one would expect this Cork side to most definitely be at the business end of both league and championship campaigns as the season progresses.

Return to winning



Cork manager Paudie Murray during the Liberty Insurance Senior Camogie Championship Semi-Final game between Cork and Wexford at Semple Stadium in Thurles, Co Tipperary.



Cork manager Paudie Murray with Gemma O'Connor after the defeat by Kilkenny in the All Ireland senior camogie final last year.



Cork manager Paudie Murray stands with the players after the defeat by Kilkenny during the All-Ireland senior camogie final at Croke Park.

Pictures: Eddie O'Hare



Camogie

Linda Mellerick

AHEAD of Paudie Murray's sixth season at the helm of Cork Camogie I met with the Cork manager to reflect on 2016 and his hopes for 2017.

We started with 2016 and how it ended for Cork's seniors and intermediates in Croke Park last September.

A year that promised so much, with the seniors aiming for three-in-a-row and a historical Rebel double to boot, how did it all go wrong?

"I don't think too much went wrong with the weekend", Paudie reflected.

"I thought we had it planned very well.

"Kilkenny came with a game plan. Their game plan was quite clear. They fouled us coming out of defence. I think they gave away 19 frees, 13 of those were between both 65s. So, under no circumstances were they going to allow us run at them.

"When we did run at them the success rate from scores was very high.

"So, they concede 13 frees and I suppose then you're waiting on someone to take action. One player gave away six frees. You would expect that if you gave away six cynical frees you would be warned at some stage. So, I think their game plan worked for them. I think that we didn't play our game plan."

Change

But if Kilkenny didn't allow you to play to your plan how could you do it and should Cork have changed tactics?

"If I look back on last year I would certainly think that, and maybe it comes with winning, that we as a group, and I must say we as a group, moved away from our game plan a bit.

"We became less reliant on it when it had been very successful to us and I don't think that we believed in it as much as we should have.

"And I think if you look at the All-Ireland final most certainly we didn't play it and there were probably other times during the year as well that I think players went out and played their own style."

What about the fact that Kilkenny kept the ball away from Gemma O'Connor at centre back and she wasn't as influential as she otherwise might have been?

"I don't agree with that because if you look at it, and we have analysed it in detail since, Gemma was still our joint top performer on the day with what she did with the ball."

But when she had possession?

"Yes but, and I'm not sure of the number of possessions she had exactly, but I know it was certainly her average if not slightly above her average. When we analysed it she was one of our top performers."

Paudie admitted he was worried at times.

"I think the most worrying part of it for us was the amount of 50/50 balls we were beaten to that day and the figure is quite staggering when you look at it.

"So quite simply Kilkenny wanted that ball more than we did.

"I think if I look back, we didn't start well last year.

"Our pre-season wasn't good.

"We came back late and I think we paid the penalty for it.

"Also, and I don't want to be critical of any player as such because they have served Cork well, but if we look at

ways is Cork plan

Herity takes over the Dub girls

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

AS the intercounty camogie seasons begins to get under way a lot of counties have made changes at the helm.

It's a new dawn in Dublin as David Herity, a five All-Ireland Hurling championship winner with Kilkenny, taking the manager's post.

Shane O'Brien stepped down after Dublin lost out on a place in the quarter-finals of the championship on score difference and David has stepped into the role, with Michael O'Grady and Sandra Tarr joining him as selectors.

They will face Cork in their first game and he will be confident of making a big impact on his charges first outing.

There are nine different clubs represented on the panel with 13 new players added.

Dublin have been close to making that breakthrough in the championship over the past two seasons. They entered the last group game in the championship last season needing to win by twenty six points against Derry to reach the quarter-finals and lost out narrowly by three points a hard way to exit the championship.

Paudie Murray remains at the helm in Cork and he is as enthusiastic as ever. Having lost out in his bid for three in a row Murray is determined to make amends. He is joined in the Cork back room by Matthew Twomey Not surprisingly, Ann Downey remains at the helm in Kilkenny having guided the county to their first senior in 22 years.

Former player Patricia O'Grady continues to guide Clare's fortunes and they will be hoping for a better season having promised so much in 2015. They did little to impress in 2016. Mark Dunne takes over in Galway after Ollie Bergin stepped down after just one year and he will be hoping to go one better after they lost out in the National League final to Kilkenny.

Limerick had an excellent League campaign in 2016 and secured a spot in the semi-finals by defeating Cork and have made it to the semi-finals for the past two years and they will be hoping that they can go one better in 2017 with John Tuohy at the helm.

In Offaly they have joint responsibilities with Paddy Kirwin, Joe O'Connor Anne Hootor sharing it and looking to improve on a solid year in 2016 which saw them competitive in both the League and All-Ireland Championship.

Tipp are making strides again they suffered a heart-breaking extra-time defeat to Kilkenny in the semi-final last year and with Brian Boyle again at the helm Tipp will be hoping to bring the county back to the top.

Wexford have changes with John Kelly and Matty Flynn O'Connor hoping to get them back to the winner's enclosure.



Cork manager Paudie Murray and Niall McCarthy console players Leanne O'Sullivan and Katrina Mackey after the defeat by Kilkenny during the All Ireland senior camogie final at Croke Park. Picture: Eddie O'Hare

it, our starting 15 in the All-Ireland final last year trained twice together out of possibly 90 sessions.

"So, that tells its own story."

So, what's going to change for 2017? "Well the first thing is that we are 7 weeks into our training now."

"We are training very well. Our turnouts are very good."

"And probably maybe I tolerated excuses last year that won't be done this year. I suppose the attitude of the girls is better. The defeat put manners into us all."

Will Cork's approach to the league, which begins with a home game to Dublin tomorrow, be more serious that it has been?

"Well my approach has always been to go out and win every match."

"My approach last year was to win all the league games."

"Every team I put out I expected to win with them to be honest."

"The same approach this year. We're back earlier so we should be that bit better prepared."

Paudie as he has always done has brought in some new faces to his management team in a bid to keep things fresh. He has two conditioning coaches in Liam O'Reilly and Martin O'Brien and two hurling coaches in Niall McCarthy and Kevin Murray.

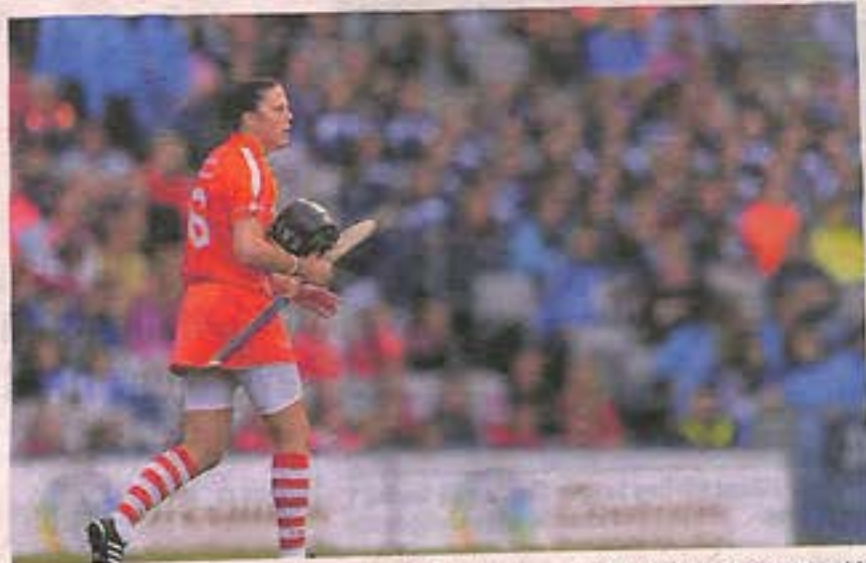
Paudie explains the set up.

"The two conditioning coaches will be looking after both teams which I think is important because I think if you're trying to bring a girl from intermediate to senior I think it's important that the fitness levels are similar."

Many felt last year that Paudie's management of both teams was a mistake.

How does he feel?

"If I look back at All-Ireland final day I think the day, from an organi-



Gemma O'Connor of Cork leaves the field after being sent off by referee Eamon Cassidy during the Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Senior Camogie Championship final

sation point of view, ran very smoothly.

"Ok, could I have had a little bit more energy for the senior game? Probably could!"

"But I don't think at the end of the day... if the team doesn't want it the team doesn't want it and it came down to hunger."

"People might say that I kept players back for the intermediate side."

"I don't think I did to be honest."

"The way I look at it, and I'm very conscious of this."

"If you bring on girls at senior for a run the very likelihood is it's going to be two to three years before she's eligible to go back playing intermediate so if you've a girl of twenty years of age you may kill her career."

"So, my view is that her development is more important. I think you always bring on a player to make an impact, not for the sake of it."

"I'm a real believer in that. If they're good enough then you bring them up."

Paudie is going to slightly alter things this time around however.

"I'm going to separate it this year with my hurling coaches in that I'm going to have two at intermediate and two at senior so training wise... you know you can always do things a bit better."

Paudie had planned to call it a day at the end of 2016 and he has been approached on several occasions to move on to pastures new however there seems to be unfinished business for him.

"Every team I put out I expected to win with them to be honest."

"I had my mind made up to go to be honest."

"But I suppose you probably don't like to go out on that note."

"I didn't want to go out that way. I don't mind losing a game if you go down fighting but what annoyed me more was the lack of fight within us and only losing by four points."

"I'm not taking away from Kilkenny. You have to congratulate them."

"They did their homework, went out with a game plan."

"It worked. They beat us fair and square but I suppose if I look at it... with a little bit more desire"... he ponders as he trails off.

In a nutshell Paudie's plan for 2017 is the same as it has always been...

"Quite simply to win every game."

Wexford withstand Déise's late rally

Daragh Ó Conchuir
Camogie

Wexford hung on by the skin of their teeth after Beth Carton led a late rally for 14-woman Waterford that almost saw them reel in their south east neighbours in a Littlewoods Ireland Camogie League Division 1 encounter at WIT that really came to life in the final quarter.

The Déise girls fell just short though and their visitors made the short journey up the Coast Road with the vital points, 1-11 to 1-10.

Wexford laid the foundation for their Group 1 victory in the first half, chiselling out a 0-7 to 0-4 lead at the interval when playing into the wind. Chloe Foxe was excellent while the inspirational defender Ciara Storey was unyielding.

Linda Bolger goaled soon after the resumption and matters took a turn for the worse for the hosts when Clare Whyte was sent off after for a second yellow card offence. Bolger and Foxe added points and it was 1-11 to 0-6 with nine minutes of normal time remaining.

That was a fair reflection of proceedings at that juncture but the prodigious Carton really went into overdrive, scoring a goal and four points without replay. The goal came right on the hour to bring her personal tally to 1-8 but her long-distance effort for an equaliser from a free just drifted wide.

On Saturday, All-Ireland and league champions Kilkenny had an overwhelming victory over neighbours Tipperary at the MW Hire Training Centre in Kilkenny.

Tipperary, who had gone so close to beating Wexford in last year's All-Ireland quarter-final, stood toe-to-toe with their vaunted opponents for the opening 20 minutes but Ann Downey's charges gradually imposed themselves and



Waterford's Emma Hannon-Roche battling with Wexford's Chloe Foxe in yesterday's Camogie League first round game at the WIT Arena, in Waterford. Wexford won by 1-11 to 1-10. Picture: Inpho

goals either side of half time from Jenny Clifford and Michelle Quilty pushed them clear, despite the best efforts of Nicole Walsh.

The Noreiders have a powerful forward line and they recorded a couple more goals from Katie Power to secure an emphatic success, with the score finishing 4-13 to 0-8.

In the other Group 1 tie, Cork came out on top after a stern challenge from Dublin in Mallow on a scoreline of 1-7 to 0-4. The Dubs fought tooth and nail in the opening period and in a real dogged affair, the sides shared six points evenly through the first half.

David Herity's team gave little away after the resumption either but Cork managed three points, while the visitors

were unable to have any impact. It remained very uncomfortable for the Leesiders however, even with Rena Buckley leading the way and it wasn't until an injury time goal that their supporters could relax.

There were wins in Group 2 for Limerick and Galway, with the Munster side having too much firepower for top-tier newcomers Meath and streaking to a 0-18 to 0-7 win in Rathkeale. The hosts streaked to a seven-point interval lead. Meath kept in touch as Aoife Minogue and Jane Dolan raised white flags but once again, Niamh Mulcahy contributed massively to the Limerick cause and her 10 points pulled them clear once more.

And finally in Division 1, Galway recovered from a slow start to get the better of Clare

by 1-22 to 0-7. The home side shot the first two points in Whitegate courtesy of Zoe McInerney and Regan Conway but Ailish O'Reilly, who finished with nine points including three from play, and Aoife Donohue, who scored five points from play, were on fire as the westerners struck eight consecutive points to lead by six at the change of ends.

Things didn't get better for the home team in the second half. Noreen Coen and Rebecca Hennelly were among the scorers and despite five pointed frees by Chloe Morey, there was nothing Clare could do to hold Galway at bay and Ciara Murphy found the net in the 58th minute to make it an 18-point game at the final whistle.

Scrappy but off to winning start

CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick

"SCRAPPY enough I think," was Cork manager Paudie Murray's reaction at the full-time whistle in Mallow on Saturday after Cork had beaten Dublin in their national league game.

"I don't think you'd want to be paying to come and watch that to be honest but look it's the first game back," Paudie Murray said.

"For a lot of these girls it's their first game so you'd expect things to be rusty. The underfoot conditions were far from ideal so this time of the year all you're looking for is the attitude and the work rate and I thought that was very good to be fair to them."

Dublin are always a dogged team, hunting in packs and they kept up the intensity right to the end?

"Oh, they did and I suppose you know, we're trying a few things. It's not going to come off day one and we know that."

"It'll probably be eight or nine matches in before we become fluent in it and I'm happy enough overall."

The team seemed to be playing a bit more direct than previously seasons. Was that the intent?

"Yeah well, we're just trying that at the moment. With the likes of Niamh McCarthy and Linda Collins and Gemma in the forward line as well it gives us the option of going a bit more direct now and again."

Cork had a few positional switches compared to what we've come to expect over the past couple of seasons and Katrina did well out midfield with a lot of running?

"Yeah, I think Katrina could make that position her own to be honest with you", Paudie felt.

"Because her fitness levels, I think she's one of the fittest on the team and she likes to run onto a ball as well so it might give more freedom."

"Obviously, today wouldn't be the ideal match for here with the underfoot conditions."

"If it was dry conditions the ball would be coming that bit faster. So, we'll look at it. Julia White coming back; it's good to have her there."

"She's looking a bit sharp as well and I think she'll make a difference this year."

Cork brought on three subs in Jennifer Barry (Bride Rovers), Finola Neville and Julia White.

"Yeah, look I think we have to build a panel of 20. That's the goal. And I suppose it's up to every player to take their chance and we'll probably have far more competition this year for places, keeping the pressure on everyone, than last year."

"You bring in a sub to make an impact and that's what we want."

Cork had practically their full panel at their disposal on Saturday, outside of Briege Corkery and Emer O'Sullivan.

Minors off to a good start in Mallow

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

Cork 2-9
Dublin 0-6

A WINNING start for the Cork Minor camogie team in the opening round of the All-Ireland Minor championship in Mallow on Saturday.

The score line is somewhat flattering to Cork given that the game was in the melting pot for almost 50 minutes, the crucial goals coming in the last ten minutes.

At the break just two points separated the sides 0-5 to 0-3 in Cork's favour and on three occasions in the opening half Dublin pinned Cork back to as they applied huge pressure.

In the opening quarter it was the Cork defence who ensured no way through as they closed down every attack and never allowed the strong Dublin attack shooting room. Cork were also on top at mid field and it was here that the link up play was superb as there

was always a player available to help out an under pressure back line clear to safety. Katie Wall and Claire Mullins helped Cork open up a two point lead before the Dub's hit back Eimear O'Leary on target from a 45. Lauren Homan and O'Leary swapped scores twice and the final act of the half was left to Aoife Hurley with an excellent point.

Three times the sides swapped points in the third quarter but with the Cork attack working hard and breaking up and turning over a lot of possession the pressure was on Dublin. Laura Hayes had Cork three points clear as the game entered the closing 10 minutes and with Dublin coming close on two occasions to grabbing a goal it was still anybody's game. Working hard to find the score to pull away Cork availed of their chance when Ciara Crowley emerged with possession from a scramble and bearing straight down on goal she made no mistake finding the net. Ten minutes of intense pressure saw the Cork defence at its best as they allowed Dublin little time on the ball.

With a minute remaining Lauren Homan fired a low shot to the net to seal a well deserved victory for Cork who will take on Tipperary in round two next week end.

Scorers for Cork: L Homan 1-5 (0-2fs 0-1 45), C Crowley 1-0, K Wall C Mullins, A Hurley, L Hayes 0-1 each.

Dublin: E O'Leary 0-4 (0-2fs, 0-145), N Rock 0-2(fa).

CORK: Molly Lynch; R Mc Carthy, R Killen, E Loneragan; K Mc Carthy, Maeve Lynch, S Mc Carthy; M Ryan, L Hayes; C Mullins, A Hurley; K Walsh, L Homan, Clara Crowley.

Subs: Ciara Crowley for Clara Crowley (27), M Barrett for C Mullins (29), R Keane for A Hurley (52), F Nelligan for K Walsh (57).

DUBLIN: M Thomas; J O'Sullivan, N Gleeson, E O'Byrne; O Gray, R Brennan, S Meagher; E Twomey, N Rock; E O'Leary, N Hetherington, S Wyldie, K Finnegan, A Andrews, C Mullen.

Subs: A Dillon for A Andrews (41), E Kerran for S Wyldie (59).

Referee: John Dolan (Clare).

O'Neills All-Ireland Post-Primary Schools Senior Finals Venues & Referees Announced

By Bronagh Gaughan
Posted 28/02/2017



O'Neills All-Ireland Post-Primary Schools Senior Finals Venues & Referees Announced

Saturday 4th March 2017

Senior A Final

Unsoline, Thurles Tipperary v Leneto Kilkenny

Venue: St Brendan's Park, Birr

Time: 3pm

Referee: Jenny Byrne

Senior B Final

Coláiste Iosaiglin Dublin v St Joseph's Rochfortbridge Westmeath

Venue: Donaghmore/Ashbourne GAA

Time: 2pm

Referee: Alan Doherty

Senior C Final

Castleknock Comm Sch Dublin v St Patricks, Keady Armagh

Venue: Iniskeen Grattans

Time: 1pm

Referee: Alan Lagnan

Senior D Final

John the Baptist Comm Sch Limerick v Scoile Mhuirne, Trim Meath

Venue: St Brendan's Park, Birr

Time: 1pm

Referee: Gavin Donagan

Line: Gerry Mc Gough

Line: John Mc Donagh

FEB
2017

Job done, but it was dogged, dour

Cork see off Galway in opening round

Camogie

Mary Newman



Camogie

Linda Mellerick

Cork 1-7
Dublin 0-4

THE best you can say about Cork's opening league encounter with Dublin in Mallow last Saturday was that it was a win for the home side.

After several months break from competitive action one never really knows how an opening game will go.

To win the game, and at the same time try out a few things, is the goal, and Cork achieved that.

Despite a pleasant afternoon, underfoot conditions were heavy, with the pitch soft and thereby lumpy.

First touch was off and the game was more of a dogfight than a free-flowing spectacle. But it's February.

While 12 of Cork's All-Ireland lineout of 2016 started, their positioning was interesting.

Ashling Thompson was placed at centre back. Katrina Mackey took to midfield to collaborate with Orla Cotter while Gemma O'Connor lined out at centre forward.

New panellist Niamh McCarthy debuted at full forward, flanked by Hannah Looney and Linda Collins, while Libby Coppinger wore the number four jersey joining Leanne O'Sullivan and Laura Treacy as Cork's first line of defence.

From the outset, Katrina Mackey looked lively and seemed to enjoy her newfound freedom. Gemma O'Connor played deep, leaving a three-player half forward line and two inside, to see if the space would suit Cork and the scores flow.

But in a scrappy game and with players first touch off, speed wasn't paramount in the game. Certainly, Cork did play more direct from outfield but the ball deadened too easily in the heavy ground.

Mackey got Cork off to a good start with two points inside six minutes and it was the 14th minute before Dublin levelled it, after two impressive points by Mari Moynihan and Claire Donnelly.

In a very low scoring opening half Niamh McCarthy was pulled down in the square as she attempted to hand-pass to the net on 28 minutes.

Aoife Murray ran the pitch to take the resultant penalty but hitting it into the ground took the sting out of the shot and Dublin cleared.

With the wind picking up and Cork against it, Gemma O'Connor and Allison Maguire swapped points to leave it three points apiece in a fragmented 30 minutes.

The tightness of the affair didn't lighten up in the second period, despite Cork seemingly having greater possession.

Hannah Hegarty was impressive in defence as was Dublin's hard working midfield and half forward line.

Despite Cork playing a sweeper style game, leaving just two forwards inside and dropping a player back, it was



Cork's Hannah Looney gets a shot away despite the pressure from Dublin's Siobhán Kehoe in the Littlewood Ireland Camogie League, Division 1 game at Mallow. Picture: Cathal Noonan



Cork's Orla Cotter gets past the challenge of Dublin's Miriam Twomey. Picture: Cathal Noonan

Cork's Aoife Murray that was the busiest of the two goalkeepers, under a lot of dropping balls, struck in from outfield by Dublin. But Murray was as competent and alert as ever.

With the swirling wind, Cork were guilty of several wides, nine in total to Dublin's four, and couldn't shake of the Dublin challenge until late in the game.

Cotter and Maguire swapped points, Linda Collins struck over, with Katrina Mackey striking her third of the day with six minutes of normal time remaining to leave it 0-6 to 0-4.

Dublin battled hard, making a number of substitutes, but Cork were finishing strongest.

Mackey went on a couple of penetrating runs, splitting Dublin at the back and she pointed again before an Orla Cotter free from the right wing landed in the square and was finished by Gemma O'Connor to put any hopes

of a Dublin shock victory over Cork to bed. While not firing on any cylinders, Cork did enough.

They play Tipperary in round two next Sunday in Tipperary.

Scorers for Cork: K Mackey 4, G O'Connor 1-1, O Cotter, L Collins 0-1 each.

Dublin: M Moynihan, C Donnelly 0-1 each, A Maguire 0-2.

CORK: A Murray, L O'Sullivan, L Treacy, L Coppinger, R Buckley, A Thompson, P Mackey, O Cotter, K Mackey, A O'Connor, G O'Connor, O Cronin, H Looney, N McCarthy, L Collins.

Subs: J Barry for O Cronin (h/t), F Neville for A O'Connor (48), J White for L Collins (56).

DUBLIN: G Quinn, A Woods, A Carolan, E M Elliot, L Butler, H Hegarty, E O'Brien, D Mullany, S Kehoe, C Donnelly, A Maguire, E Flanagan, M Twomey, M Moynihan, E McGovern.

Subs: S O'Donovan for D Mullany (43), A Twomey for E Flanagan (46), Z O'Donoghue for C Donnelly (54), A Cushen for E O'Brien (56), E McGovern for S Kehoe (59).

Ref: R Kelly - Kildare.

Elsewhere, All-Ireland and Littlewoods Ireland Camogie League Divi-

“While not firing on any cylinders, Cork did enough. First touch was off and the game was more of a dogfight than a free-flowing spectacle. But it's February.”

sion 1 champions Kilkenny got their season off to the perfect start with an overwhelming victory over neighbours Tipperary at the MW Hire Training Centre in Kilkenny.

Tipperary, who had gone so close to beating Wexford in last year's All-Ireland quarter-final, stood toe-to-toe with their vaunted opponents for the opening 20 minutes but Ann Downey's charges gradually imposed themselves and when Jenny Clifford found the net just before half time, it opened up a five-point gap, 1-7 to 0-5.

That sucker-punch was augmented by another, in the form of a Michelle Quilty goal soon after the resumption and despite the best efforts of Nicole Walsh, the gap continued to increase. The Noreiders have a powerful forward line and they recorded a couple more goals from Katie Power to secure an emphatic success, with the score finishing 4-13 to 0-8.

A GOOD performance from Cork saw them comfortably dispose of the challenge posed by Galway in the opening round of the Littlewood's Senior Division 2 National Camogie League in Castle Road yesterday.

This was Cork's first outing since losing out in the All-Ireland Intermediate final to Kilkenny last September and they played with huge determination in all sectors.

Up front Rachel O'Shea at corner forward was lively and her contribution of six points three from play and three from frees was an excellent return over the hour.

Keeva McCarthy, Finola Neville and Jacinta Crowley were all on target as Cork opened up a comfortable interval lead of 0-7 to 0-2 Michelle Skehill ensuring Galway were on the score board with two points.

All through the Cork defence were solid and they held a tight reign on the Galway attack where Michelle Skehill was the main threat with good support but little return on the score board from Tara Rutledge and Amy Caulfield.

Rachel O'Shea helped Cork stretch their interval lead with three points in a row on the restart.

Michelle Skehill replied with two. O'Shea added another brace with Louise Brennan squeezing in one for a Galway side who failed to make any headway against a Cork defence that dealt with anything that was thrown at them.

Sarah Fahy and Rachel O'Shea had brought the Cork tally to 13 points before the Michelle Skehill pointed a late free for Lorraine Larkins charges.

A good start for Cork to their campaign with a trip to Westmeath next on the agenda on Sunday next.

Scorers for Cork: R O'Shea 0-6 (0-3f's), K McCarthy 0-3, J Crowley 0-2 (0-1f), S Fahy, F Neville 0-1 each.

Galway: M Skehill 0-5 (0-2f's), L Brennan 0-1.

Cork: A Lee, A Kelleher, L Weste, N Ni Chaoimh (c), L Lynch, S Buckley, C Sigerson, J Barry, J Crowley, K Hickey, K McCarthy, F Neville, R O'Shea, S Fahy, C Sugrue.

Subs: L Callanan for J Barry (h/t), M Buckley for C Sugrue (h/t), N O'Callaghan for F Neville (45), R Walsh for J Crowley (45), S Harrington for N Ni Chaoimh (51).

Galway: S Hestly, C Hanley, L Coen (c), E Gilmore, C Donoghue, M Connaughton, S Kearney, K Kennedy, M Dunphy, T McNally, M Skehill, L Brennan, C Walsh, T Rutledge, A Caulfield.

Subs: S Ridge for T McNally (h/t), R Hanniffy for M Dunphy (h/t), K Stephens for C Hanley (49), C Bredrick for A Caulfield (50).

Referee: John Desmond (Westmeath).

Rena new Cork camogie captain

CAMOGIE

John Bohane

Cork ladies dual star Rena Buckley has been appointed captain of the Cork senior camogie team for the new season. The Inniscarra player, who played a key role in propelling Inniscarra to senior county glory last season, is thrilled to receive the accolade for the 2017 season.

"It is a very proud moment for me. It is a great honour both for myself personally and for my club Inniscarra. It is a huge honour."

"I am delighted to be bestowed with the captaincy for the season ahead. We suffered a disappointing end to last season (losing in the Munster series) but we are hopeful of a successful campaign this year," revealed the talismanic dual ace.

Rena plans to return to camogie training with the Cork senior team this week. She won't return to the football fold until a later date due to intense college and work commitments at present.

Rena, who plays her club football with Donoughmore, admits it can be tough combining both codes.

"It can be tough alright. I suppose when you are in school or in college it is easier as you have more time to commit to both codes as opposed to when you are working it is much trickier."

"Thankfully I have been very fortunate down through the years to have had very considerate management teams for both club and county who have been so accommodating towards my dual code needs."

"All the various managers I have had the pleasure of playing under over the years have been really understanding which has helped me play both football and camogie."

Rena is lavish in her praise for the role Ephie Fitzgerald has played with the Cork senior football ladies team since he took over from the previous managerial incumbent Eamonn Ryan.

Rena was impressed with the smooth transition in the management set-up.

"Ephie had a really tough job taking over at the start of last year from Eamonn who was a brilliant manager for us for a number of years. Eamonn was a superb trainer."

"Ephie settled into his new role with great ease. He brought in great assistants with him such as James Masters and Derek O'Gorman who has served as the goalkeeping coach, while Michael O'Carroll has come in as strength and conditioning coach."

"He has assembled a great backroom team, while he maintained a link to the old regime by maintaining Frank Honohan, Pat O'Leary and Bridget O'Brien which was great."

"The atmosphere in the camp is great. We enjoyed a great season last year and hopefully we can enjoy another good campaign this season."

The Cork senior ladies footballers have captured the All-Ireland senior football championship title in each of the last six seasons.

Rena, who has played an integral



Rena Buckley was outstanding for Inniscarra when they denied Milford a fifth successive county. As a result Buckley is the Cork captain for 2017. Picture: Larry Cummins



The O'Donovan Rossa U16 ladies football team with Cork dual star Rena Buckley.

role in every one of their triumphs, puts their unprecedented success down to hard work.

"Our success is definitely built on hard work. No matter what time of the year be it January, April or August, we are training hard and I think that shows when the games are sometimes in the melting pot as we drive on and grind out a narrow win. We train in a very diligent fashion."

"The effort everyone puts in is unreal. I suppose another factor might be the success we have enjoyed in recent years gives you the confidence and self-belief to win even when not playing to your full potential."

"In my opinion it all comes back to being diligent in everything we do."

"We work hard in training and we all mind ourselves off the pitch. That has

been a big factor in our success."

Rena was guest of honour recently at an awards ceremony held in Skibbereen in recognition of their U16 team claiming county glory last season. Rena is thrilled with the rise in popularity in ladies football throughout West Cork.

"West Cork has always been a very strong area for producing top quality players from a male perspective."

"It is great to see in recent years that ladies football is coming on in major strides."

"There are more clubs starting up in the area which helps ensure more competition and more players playing which is great."

"There are a number of new players on the Cork senior squad this season who hail from West Cork and Beara

Success is definitely built on hard work

which is great.

"They have made big impacts so far. All the new players who have come into the squad this season have very bright futures ahead of them."

A former playing colleague of Rena's was Castlehaven native Nollaig Cleary who, for a number of years, was the standard bearer for West Cork ladies football. Rena has great memories of playing alongside Nollaig.

"She was an outstanding player and a great role model. She is a great girl, hugely committed to football."

"She is a proud West Cork woman. She was a great player for Cork."

"It was a joy to play alongside her."

Rena, who along with Briege Corkery hold a record 17 All-Ireland senior championship titles amassed in both codes, still retains the hunger to achieve more in her incredible career.

"I really enjoy leading a healthy lifestyle, I really enjoy the competitive element of it and the craic is really superb. It is a mix of everything."

"It is really rewarding to take part with a great group of girls and enjoy so much success."

"I will keep playing while I still enjoy it."

Bare Orchard holding their own

Niall
Gartland

CAMOGIE: DIVISION TWO
ARMAGH V KILDARE
Sunday, TBC, 2pm

DESPITE being down to the bare bones, Armagh camogs gave it one hell of a lash in their opening round defeat to Antrim.

Paddy McArdle only had 16 players at his disposal and despite producing a promising display, they slumped to a 2-9 to 0-11 away defeat. Not the start his newly promoted side would've wanted, but the Middleton man said they surprised themselves with the positive nature of their performance.

"Between going up a division and travelling with 16 players, they thought they were going to be up against it. They surprised themselves with how well they hurred for large parts of the game. It could've gone either way.

"We lost our centre-half back Eimear Hayes with about 20 minutes gone, she's been playing right through with her university and she's been massive in the last while. We had no subs with 10 minutes to go in the first-half."

The Orchard camogs are missing some key performers, including Ciara and Leanne Donnelly who are preparing for English's All-Ireland Intermediate final against Myshall on March 5. That's the backdrop to Sunday's second round clash against Kildare, who are something of an unknown quantity to McArdle.

He said: "We have eight or nine



UNLUCKY...Armagh camogs lost their opening league encounter to Antrim by five points

players still injured. The High school are still playing and we have a fair amount of them on our panel. We have a couple of girls away on holidays and one of them got married.

"We played next weekend against Kildare at home and there's a gap after that. We haven't played Kildare in I don't know how long. We'll try to do

our homework this week and get a bit of info. But with regards to Armagh and Kildare, we haven't played in a while.

"We're up a division and at a higher level now. We're going up against teams we don't know much about."

Armagh's 2016 season came to a disappointing close in an All-Ireland

Junior final defeat to Carlow at Croke Park. It stained an otherwise promising year, and McArdle believes playing in Division Two could leave his troops better readied heading into the Championship.

"We were disappointed in how we played, we had a chat about it and we thought the occasion got to us. At the

end of the day we have no complaints. Carlow were by far the better team on the day. It is what it is, we were beaten by the better team.

"Hopefully the ultimate goal is get back there. We're playing in the junior again and hopefully with playing in a higher league hopefully it stands to us going into the Championship."

CAMOGIE NATIONAL LEAGUE

Antrim aim to make it two from two as they meet Galway

AIDAN McKeown's Antrim are the only Ulster side with points on the board in the Camogie National League following their weekend win over Armagh.

A new-look Antrim side clinched a five-point win over the Orchard country in their first round Division Two clash at Glenariffe, and they just about kept Armagh at arm's length from start to finish.

Late in the first-half, Niamh O'Neill finished an intricate team move and they held a 1-4 to 0-4 lead at half-time. A second-half goal from Niamh Donnelly set them on the way to victory, and next up is Galway's second-string outfit on Sunday. Galway are still searching for their first win after their weekend loss to Cork.

Derry, who ply their trade in Division Two Group One, take on Laois this Sunday (Mountmellick, 2pm). They fell just short in their opening encounter to last year's All-Ireland Junior champions Carlow, who fended off a late Derry comeback. Ciaran Cunningham's side have been relegated to intermediate status following a nightmare Division One cam-

paign last year and there has been a dramatic turnaround in personnel. They face a Laois side who are also chasing their first points of the campaign following a 4-6 to 2-10 defeat to Wexford.

Fellow Division Two Group One side Down are under new management this season. Declan Napier's side fell just short in a 2-13 to 0-17 defeat to Kilkenny at the weekend. Niamh Mallon didn't deserve to be on the losing team - she scored 14 points of Down's tally. This Sunday they take on Wexford at Naomh Eanna, Gorey at 1.30pm.

Tyrone are the fourth and final camogie side in action this weekend, taking on Dublin on Sunday (Carrickmore, 2pm). Rejuvenated after a three-year absence, the Red Hands travelled to Kerry on Sunday for their first league outing in Division Three. Unfortunately it was a one-sided affair - Kerry won out by 5-17 to 0-3, but it should be borne in mind that Tyrone are missing their English contingent, who are preparing for an All-Ireland Intermediate final against Myshall on March 5.



A GOOD START...The Antrim side that overcame Armagh in their Division Two league win on Sunday

Anna: It's always nice



Abha O'Leary Fitzpatrick, president of Junior Chamber International Cork, left, with award winners Ciara Judge and Caroline O'Driscoll and guest speaker Anna Geary, right, at the Ten Outstanding Young Persons awards ceremony at the Vienna Woods Hotel, Glanmire, Co Cork. Picture: David Keane



Camogie

Rory Noonan

BRIGHT, bubbly, highly intelligent and always smiling sums up Anna Geary in a nutshell.

The enthusiasm and energy she approaches any task with has seen her fast becoming one of the most recognised personalities in the media, with regular appearances on TV and radio.

Amongst Anna's roles are as a coach on RTE's hit series, *Ireland's Fittest Family* and *Operation Transformation*, an offshoot of which is 'It's Your Move Campaign'.

Anna is involved in this, which targets teenage girls, encouraging them to be active.

She is also now working with Sky Sports as an athletes ambassador, a role which sees Anna coaching and speaking to groups of young people to help and encourage them to develop within and outside of sport.

But away from her work in the media Anna is still one of the top camogie players in the country and was recently named the player of the game as Milford won their third All-Ireland camogie title.

This achievement saw Anna named as one of the first quarter winners of the *Evening Echo* Ladies Sports Star Awards.

Anna has countless accolades to her name and was delighted to add this award to her many achievements. "It's always nice to get recognised for your achievements and I am honoured to have been chosen as one of the first quarter winners," said Anna.

"I am well aware of the prestige of these awards and the high regard they are held in by all the winners. I would like to congratulate the other two winners and to all the award winners over the past number of years," said Anna.

The former Cork captain always seems to have a smile on her face and many an opponent have been fooled by this. Because once Anna crosses that white line there isn't a more tenacious player in the game.

You can add in plenty of skill as well as after all, without it you don't make your debut for Cork at 12 years of age on the U16 side.

But that's exactly what Anna did and so began her love affair with the red jersey and it with her.

She may no longer be with the Cork panel, her last game was when she captained them to All-Ireland success in 2014, but she is still a huge player for Milford and you can be guaranteed she won't let them down.

Before she could walk Anna had a hurley in her hand and it wasn't long before it was off down to the pitch of her beloved club, Milford, and from that day forward there was only one sport for Anna.

"From the day I picked up a hurley I have always loved playing camogie



At the launch of the SuperValu Good Food Karma Project in the Mansion House getting a selfie before Getting Ireland Cooking were celebrity ambassadors Bernard Brogan, David Gillick, Anna Geary, Martin Shanahan and Kevin Dundon. Picture: Marc O'Sullivan



Anna Geary, left, celebrates Milford's All-Ireland camogie success with team-mate Elaine O'Riordan. Picture: Piaras Ó Midheach / Sportsfile

Evening Echo

LADIES SPORTSTAR AWARDS

NEWBRIDGE
silverware

RPH
ROCHSTOWN PARK
HOTEL

to get recognition



Blanchardstown's Anna Geary sings the National Anthem with her team-mates before All-Ireland Senior Camogie Club Championship Final.

Picture: Piaras Ó Midheach / SPORTSFILE

and that hasn't changed," said Anna. "It's the best feeling in the world to be running onto the pitch with your team-mates, be it club or county, and preparing to do battle with your opponents."

"I was very lucky and had some great coaches when I was very young that helped me get the basics of the game right from the start. People like Ann Watson and Sheila Thompson, amongst others, were a huge influence and without them I wouldn't have been able to get the opportunities I have today."

With her reputation growing, it wasn't long before Cork came calling.

"I got a call up to the Cork U16 squad and it was a dream come true for me. I started at corner-back in the Munster final against Tipperary and though we lost it was an unbelievable experience to play for my county."

Anna has always seemed to have luck on her side as teams she has been involved with win titles after title, 10 All-Ireland titles with St Mary's of Charleville, just one example.

But you make your own luck and it's the hard work and dedication you put in that pays off and Anna certainly doesn't come up short in that department.

"I'm very fortunate in that I have a family steeped in the proud tradition of GAA and I have grown up with



Maol Muire Tynan from AIB, presents Anna Geary with the Player of the Match award for her outstanding performance in the All-Ireland final win over Killimor.

friends playing GAA. But nobody should be excluded from sporting activity if they don't like a particular sport.

"I want to empower people, telling them that they don't have to conform to the norm. There is something out there for everybody."

"I get energy from people. You can be drained of energy if you're around negative people. Equally, you can be energised by being around positive people."

On top of her various commitments, she is also doing a life coach-

ing course, giving herself other career options.

"Some people might have thought I was crazy to leave my secure job with Dell. I also retired from the Cork camogie team and moved to Dublin. But I think life is there to be cracked. If I make a mistake, I'll learn from it."

"Dublin is different. There's a settling in period. It's difficult to immerse myself in Dublin because I'm still very much committed to training with Milford. So that's a two and a half hour journey from Blanchardstown once or twice a week."

"When I come to Cork, I try to make the trip productive, organising any meetings I have down here."

"I was seven years working in industry and business before I decided to move to the media and broadcasting world. What I learned from my business degree at the University of Limerick I still use, despite the fact I'm not specifically in the business environment."

"From my involvement in camogie, I got to work on the other side of the fence, promoting camogie and being an ambassador for the camogie association. I really liked that work. It involved working with the media, interacting with people and building relationships."

Through her profile in camogie and work, Anna was appointed the Irish Ambassador for Youth on the Move, a role she was delighted to take on.

Basically this role sees Anna encouraging young people to go abroad for an Erasmus Mundus year.

The Erasmus Mundus programme aims to enhance the quality of higher education and promote dialogue and understanding between people and cultures through mobility and academic cooperation, allowing students to travel abroad for a year to go to college or on a work placement.

So why was Anna asked to get involved?

"When I was a student at Univer-

sity of Limerick we were told about this programme and I jumped at the opportunity to get involved," said Anna.

"For my year I went to Luxembourg and without doubt, it was one of the best years of my life."

"I learnt an awful lot about myself and I feel I came back a better and stronger person because of it."

"I had to learn skills from simple things like furnishing an apartment, to negotiating a highly detailed contract, written in French, as this was the main language of the company I was doing my work placement in."

"That certainly was an eye-opener, but like the others I just had to get on with it and that's what we all did."

"I was approached to become the Irish Ambassador for the programme and I was delighted to accept the position."

"It is a wonderful experience and one I would recommend to all students."

But above all her highlights comes lifting the O'Duffy Cup at Croke Park in 2014 as captain of her county, a memory she will never forget.

"To captain Cork to an All-Ireland title was beyond my wildest dreams and it's a day I will never forget as long as I live."

"It was one of the proudest days of my life and one I will always treasure."

'It was horrible afterwards, not so much for me but for my family'

Hannah Looney is a Cork camogie player who has won two senior All-Irelands (2014, 2015). A second-year chemical engineering student at UCC, Hannah has also played football for Cork and lines out at club level for Killeagh and Aghada.

Cork play Tipperary in the second round of the Littlewoods Ireland Camogie League tomorrow.

Interview by Daragh Ó Conchúir

Q: After losing last year's All-Ireland final to Kilkenny, what is the mood like in the camp now, with the League getting underway last weekend?

A: The last few years I was involved the League was more an experimental thing but this year, there's a buzz around the camp that we want to go out and win the League, win Munster and win the All-Ireland. It's how Kilkenny went last year and it worked for them. We just want to win every game. We'll still be trying new people and trying people in new positions but winning is a good habit. We've been back training a bit longer too, since December, so we're taking it very seriously. Maybe if we'd have won the All-Ireland last year, the likes of Gemma O'Connor, Rena (Buckley) and Aoife Murray might have packed it in, and maybe (manager) Paudie (Murray) too. But it just hurt so much. I don't know are we a bit embarrassed with the way we played? Kilkenny deserved the win but we didn't turn up on the day. It hurt a lot of people.

Q: Did you talk about it? Have you any idea why it happened?

A: We were so flat. It's only now that people are putting it behind them. The last few months we've been really low, dwelling on what we could have done, what we should have done and what happened. It's really hard to put our finger on it. Even when we went in at half-time we felt we would come out in the second half and step it up but it never happened.

Q: Footage of 'The Push' involving you and Colette Dormer during the handshake prior to the game went viral. What was that like?

A: It was horrible. I had thought nothing of it until after the game and I turned on my phone. It was just the heat of the moment. I didn't mean any harm. There were two of us in it and I met Colette Dormer at the All-Stars. It's nothing you'd hold against anyone. But it was horrible afterwards, not so much for me but for my family. They took it fairly badly, seeing all the online abuse. I just ignored it but it did get a bit out of hand and it wasn't nice to see. My parents and my brother would still be very hurt over it.

Q: People were judging you as a person on the basis of that two seconds.

A: The majority of these people never watched a camogie game in their life or have no interest in it. It wasn't nice.

Q: It was a tough end to a season that had been going so well. You scored five points from play in a tight semi-final that went to extra-time, and were involved all year with the footballers including playing in their semi-final. You were looking forward to two All-Ireland finals and it all went wrong.

A: It was really one of the most disappointing years on a personal level. The year had been going great for me, then the camogie All-Ireland was a disaster, and then



to get dropped off the football panel for the final just made it really hard. The season could have been one of the best of my life and it ended so badly.

Q: What's the situation with the football now?

A: I got a phone call I think the Tuesday before the football All-Ireland to say that I hadn't made the panel and I haven't heard from management since so I'm concentrating on the camogie with Cork at this stage. I think I deserved a little bit more respect than the management showed me but I really do want to play football for Cork again, and am playing with the college and Aghada. If I get the invitation again I will be delighted to play. But it will be interesting to see how I progress in my camogie by concentrating on that because it was really hard at times last year. When you're trying to jump between the two, you're never able to give your all to one and I was struggling a bit with my Achilles during the summer as well. Briega (Corkery) and Rena have been doing it for years though, so it's obviously possible, but it will be interesting to see if my camogie improves.

Q: You set a standard for yourself in last year's semi-final.

A: That's it but I know I have more than that to give too. The last few years people were saying 'She's only a young one' but there's none of that now. I have established myself and now I really need to drive on this year. That's the goal.

Q: And get Cork back on top of the tree again

A: We want to set a marker in the League. There are really good vibes and it's great to see Gemma, Rena and Aoife back and playing the League. They're gunning to not let Cork camogie be remembered by the 2016 final. We totally underperformed and that really hurts. It's something that will surely drive us on this year. Since I was on the panel, we won in 2014, we won in 2015 and there was no real game throughout that campaign where we didn't perform. It

Q: You said in an Evening Echo interview that Joanne O'Callaghan welcomed you your first time in with the seniors. You're only 19 but this is your fourth season with the seniors. Are you conscious of making the newcomers more comfortable?

A: Definitely. There's a good bunch of young people in there like myself, Orla Cronin, Laura Treacy and Méabh Cahalane, coming into our third and fourth year on the panel.

We're not the older crew yet but we've been there a little while and the new girls coming in might find it easier to talk to us as we're closer in age to them. It's very important to make sure you're bringing them along; it made such a difference for me in my first year. You have the likes of Chloe Sigerson who'll definitely be seen in the League. It will be great to see how they get on.

Improving Tipp will test Rebels



Camogie

Linda Mellerick

SUNDAY
Littlewoods Ireland National League Division 1: Cork v Tipperary, The Ragg, 2pm.

TIPPERARY, the fast-improving senior side, had an impressive 2016 league and championship campaign before both came to an agonising end.

They lost the league semi-final after extra-time to Kilkenny before progressing to an All-Ireland quarter-final which the Premier County lost by a single point to Wexford.

Last Saturday, Tipperary launched their Littlewoods Ireland league campaign away to Kilkenny — the defending league and All-Ireland champions.

In advance of the game manager Brian Boyle commented: "What has really been noticeable so far is the ambition (of the players), but also the recognition that in countless sports you will find teams who get that far, think they are ready to knock on the door and all of a sudden find themselves back down at the bottom again."

He spoke about this in a positive way, that 2016 was gone and it would mean nothing unless his side kicked on. Certainly, Tipp have the ambition. They have been reared on winning. Only one player out of a panel of 43 hasn't won an underage All Ireland medal, a rare and impressive statistic. Brian, now in his third year is impressed by the commitment and drive of his squad.

"They have all been driving it on. There's no sense of resting on laurels. It has been fantastic. What I have noticed about them is that there is a commitment there, but there is also a realisation that ambition on its own is not worth anything unless you put in the work. That is plain and simple."

"The pool of talent we have at our disposal is huge — it's as good and as big as anything that the top four teams have. It's just a case of bringing all of that together, having the right ambition and, hopefully, the right blend of everything. Then, hopefully, we will see the benefit of it."

Preparations for the league campaign had been hindered a little by Burgess-Duharra's involvement in the All-Ireland club series (losing out in a shock defeat to Slaughtneil of Derry in the semi-final) and a host of players having been tied up in Ashbourne Cup action.

"During the early part of the year we are usually dictated to by the college competitions in terms of where we are and what we can do," Brian Boyle explained.

"It usually takes us two weeks to get up and running. We have the two best teams in the country in the first two rounds of the league and it will be brilliant just to see where we are. We will be taking on those teams head on — okay, we won't have as much hurling done as we would have liked to, but we will be looking for a terrific attitude



Cork manager Paudie Murray before the win over Dublin in Mallow last weekend.

Picture: Cathal Noonan



Cork's Hannah Looney battles for possession against Eve O'Brien and Leah Butler of Dublin.

Picture: Cathal Noonan

going out against those two teams," Boyle said.

Despite the pre-season talk, Tipp took a comprehensive hiding from Kilkenny last Saturday. Brian knew that he was up against the best team in the country in their opening round and that Kilkenny always up an extra gear when playing Tipp but he must have been truly disappointed with their 4-13 to 0-8 defeat.

Tipperary, stood toe-to-toe with their opponents for the opening 20 minutes but Ann Downey's charges gradually imposed themselves and when Jenny Clifford found the net just before half time, it opened up a five-

point gap, 1-7 to 0-5.

The gap was augmented by another, in the form of a Michelle Quilty goal soon after the resumption and despite the best efforts of Nicole Walsh, the gap continued to increase. The No-residers have a powerful forward line and they recorded a couple of more goals from Katie Power to secure an emphatic success.

Undoubtedly, Tipp are coming good again. Cahir were also All-Ireland Intermediate club champions in 2016. Cork may take some of the retribution for Kilkenny on Sunday when they take on Tipp in round 2 in the Ragg. As Kilkenny rise to the Tipp challenge,

"Cork's 1-7 in last weekend's opener with Dublin was a dismal scoring return and they'll certainly be looking to improve on that."

Tipperary always rise to Cork.

The Rebels rarely get it easy in the Ragg and with the weather the way it has been for the past couple of weeks, expect a really heavy ground on what is a very tight pitch.

That'll suit Tipp. They'll want to stop Cork's runners up front.

Cork's 1-7 in last weekend's opener with Dublin was a dismal scoring return and they'll certainly be looking to improve on that. They are experimenting, as most teams are, and the league is the time to do the searching.

Yet at the same time you are wanting to win every game and get to the final stages so it's getting the balance right. Expect Sunday to be a close affair

Minors head to Tipp for tough tie

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

IT will be another busy camogie weekend of inter-county action with the two senior teams in national league action, the minors contesting the second round of the All-Ireland championship and the U16 A side in a Munster championship semi-final.

The minors head to Tipperary on Saturday for their second game in the All-Ireland series and it is a tough encounter for them as they take on the All-Ireland champions on their home patch.

Cork had a good opening round victory over Dublin last weekend whilst Tipperary had ten points to spare over Offaly as they confidently got their campaign up and running. A victory for either side on Saturday would be a huge boost going into round three in two week's time.

Cork know this is going to be a game that will test them to the limits. Tipperary have five of last season's team on duty and the experienced gained last year will be invaluable. Last weekend Cork impressed against Dublin their defence superb as they battled it out to gain control. They showed great fighting spirit and huge determination and a repeat of this performance is needed to go top of the group and with games against Waterford and Offaly to come it would set them up nicely.

It's week two in the Littlewoods Division 2 National league and a road trip to Westmeath for Cork.

Last weekend Westmeath produced the shock of the weekend as they defeated a strong Kildare side with a six-point margin separating them at the full-time whistle. Cork overcame Galway in a contest they never looked like losing and having contested last season's All-Ireland final Cork would be expected to have too much strength for a Westmeath side who will participate in the Premier Junior All-Ireland championship.

A lot of pre-season work has been done in Westmeath and boosted by last weekend win they will put it up to a Cork side that may be minus a few players gave that the division one side are playing Tipperary at the same time on Sunday.

We have a provincial semi-final already and it's only February but the Cork U16 A are there and ready to go.

They overcame Waterford in their preliminary round game in a low scoring contest where it finished 1-4 to no score in Cork's favour.

TOMORROW

All-Ireland Minor Championship Round 2: Cork v Tipperary, Tipperary Camogie Grounds, The Ragg 2pm.

SUNDAY

Littlewoods Division 2 National League: Cork v Westmeath, Coralsown, Kinnegad, 2pm.

Munster Under 16A semi-final: Cork v Limerick, Cork Camogie Grounds, Castle Road, 2pm.

'You'd follow Rena into battle,' says Murray

Cork camogie manager delighted that Rena Buckley selected as new captain

BY KIERAN MCCARTHY

RENA Buckley is the ideal choice for Cork senior camogie captain this year, insists manager Paudie Murray.

The six-time All-Ireland camogie winner was nominated by her club, county champions Inniscarra, to lead the Rebels this season and she got off to the ideal start with victory against Dublin (1-7 to 0-4) in their Littlewoods Ireland Camogie League Division 1 opener last Saturday in Mallow.

'If I sat down to pick a captain at the start of the year, Rena would be right at the top of the list,' Murray said.

'I am very happy with the choice.

'If you were going to war in the morning, you want her in your side. You would follow her into battle. When she talks people listen.'

Reflecting on the win against Dublin, Murray wasn't reading too much into the performance but was happy to get the league campaign off to a winning start.

'It was only our third day on a pitch this year and the ground conditions were horrendous - but what we were looking for was the reaction and attitude of the girls and overall we are happy enough with that,' Murray said.

Katrina Mackey scored four points, Gemma O'Connor hit 1-1 while Orla Cotter and Linda Collins finished with one point apiece for Cork, with Murray casting his net wide this year to increase competition for places in the squad.

'We've brought in a few new

girls because we want a bit more competition for places then we had last year,' said Murray.

'The only one we are really waiting on is Brieghe (Corkery) but I would be hoping that she will be back in six weeks' time. Eimear O'Sullivan is away with work commitments but she should be back in a few weeks. Meabh Cahalane is away in college in France but she has been back and forth. Against Dublin we played Niamh McCarthy from Inniscarra who had a very

good season with her club last year; that was her first senior appearance. Linda Collins, who played well in the intermediate last year, played well last weekend. Jennifer Barry, one of the better players in intermediate last year, did very well when she came on, and we have Julia White back from injury and that's a big help.'

Cork came up short in last year's All-Ireland final against Kilkenny but will look to hit the ground running this season. Next up in the league is



Captain: Rena Buckley.

a second round game away to Tipperary this Sunday; Tipp lost to All-Ireland champs Kilkenny last weekend, 4-13 to 0-8.

Mary O'Toole is First Commercial Manager for Camogie Association

By Camogie Press
Posted 23/02/2017



Mary O'Toole will join the Camogie Association on April 25th 2017 as the Association's first Commercial Manager.

Mary joins the Association just 12 months after the launch of the Association's new National Development Plan, Our Sport Our Future. This Plan includes a new focus to grow and diversify the Association's income through commercial development to generate new investment in growing the game even further.

Mary is moving to the Camogie Association from Musgrave Wholesale Partners, where she was responsible for the development of the own brand product strategy and the co-ordination of the buying teams in delivery of own brand financial goals.

Previously Mary worked in the Superquinn Head Office for seven years.

Mary holds a degree in management and marketing from DIT and is a passionate Camogie player with the Thomas Davis Camogie Club in Dublin.

Impressive Wexford shock Cats

Camogie

Daragh Ó Conchúir

First-half goals from Nicole Fortune and Brid Gordon laid the foundation as Wexford inflicted a first defeat since last April on Littlewoods Ireland Camogie League Division 1 and All-Ireland champions Kilkenny.

Linda Bolger added nine points at the Naomh Eanna facility in Gorey as the home side prevailed 2-11 to 0-9.

Beth Carton lit up Parnells GAA in Coolock with a wonderful display of shooting, the UL first year scoring nine points, including the last four, as Waterford beat Dublin 0-11 to 0-7.

Eva Marie Elliott was sent off late on but the Déise girls were on top by that stage and Carton had made full use of chances from placed balls.

The hosts recovered from an early deficit, Ali Maguire's opener being replied to by four Carton points.

Maguire (who finished with 0-5), Miriam Twomey, and Siobhán Kehoe gave Dublin the lead again but it was nip and tuck from there until the final 10 minutes, when Waterford found another gear.

The other Group 1 game between Tipperary and Cork was postponed, as the pitch at The Ragg was unplayable.

In Group 2, Galway came away from Birr with a 1-11 to 1-4 win. Much of the action came in the first quarter, with Galway getting the scoring underway through Catherine Finnerty, making her first start since the 2015 All-Ireland final, and Niamh Kilkenny.

Siobhán Flannery's point narrowed the gap before a foul on Arlene Watkins led to a penalty, but

Flannery's shot was repelled by Sarah Dervan.

Galway's lead was four when Offaly were awarded a second penalty, and this time Michaela Morkan stepped up to rocket a shot to the roof of the net.

Ailish O'Reilly was Galway's top scorer with five points and she set up Aoife Donohue for Galway's goal to put them 1-7 to 1-2 ahead at the break. O'Reilly and Noreen Coen nabbed early Galway points in the second half and Offaly's cause was not helped after Patrice Delaney received a second yellow-card at the three-quarter mark.

Elsewhere Chloe Morey hit 1-12 in Clare's 2-14 to 1-9 defeat of Meath. Niamh O'Dea scored the other goal and that was enough to resist the Royals, who had Jane Dolan (1-2) and Aoife Minogue (0-4) contributing most.



Trish Coleman, Catherine Allen, Club President, Brenda McDonnell and Catherine Allen of Na Píarsaigh H&F Club.

Cork's Keane edge helps them to a valuable win

Cork	3-5
Tipperary	1-8

CAMOGIE
■ Mary Newman

THREE goals from full-forward Rebecca Keane ensured that Cork came away with a valuable victory in round two of the All-Ireland Minor Championship played at the Tipperary Grounds in The Ragg on Saturday.

Both sides came into this clash with good opening round victories last weekend, and in a battle to go top of the group, it was Cork that carved out a valuable win.

Conditions were hard underfoot and the heavy going made it difficult for the players, but all credit to a Cork side that dug deep and held their composure after the home side had opened up a 0-4 to 0-1 lead with six minutes to the break.

The game's opening goal came on 27 minutes when

the quick thinking of Keane ensuring her hand pass to the net got Cork on level teams and they edged in front to lead 1-2 to 0-4 at the interval.

On the resumption the sides battled hard to gain control Cork with Katie Wall and Nora O'Riordan on target kept their noses in front as Tipperary, with Aisling Meagher, Emma Flanagan, and Ailish McDonnell finding their range, stayed in the hunt and 10 minutes in, just a point still separated the sides.

Stretched

As the game entered the last quarter, Cork had stretched their lead with a second Keane goal Meagher pointed to cut the lead to three points, but with two minutes left on the stop watch, the result

was secured with a third Cork goal before Caoimhe Purdue had an injury-time goal for the current All-Ireland champions. The victory sees Cork nicely placed on top of group one and with games to come against Offaly and Waterford, they are in a good position to push on and book a semi-final spot.

Scorers for Cork: R Keane 3-0, N O'Riordan 0-2 (f's), K Wall 0-2, S Mc Carthy 0-1.

Tipperary: A Meagher 0-6 (f's), C Purdue 1-0, E Flanagan, A McDonnell 0-1 each.

CORK: M Lynch, R Mc Carthy (c), R Killeen, E Lonergan, K Mc Carthy, M Lynch, S Mc Carthy, M Ryan, L Hayes, K Walsh, K Wall, A Hurley, C Mullins, R Keane, N O'Riordan.

Subs: C Crowley for K Walsh (h/t), C Hamey for M Ryan (h/t), I Keegan for A Hurley (50), M Barrett for C Mullins (50).

TIPPERARY: M Og O Leary, A Quigley Brennan, A Gavin, R Hassett, H Mc Auliffe, M Burke, J Kelly (c), C Ryan, E McDonnell, C Hennessy, M Coffey, C Purdue, C Burke.

Subs: E Flanagan for C Brown (h/t), S Meagher for K Burke (40).

Referee: Liz Dempsey (Dublin).

U16 A and Division 2 camogie sides win

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

Cork 0-17
Westmeath 0-5

CORK took the journey to Westmeath and the switching of the game to an astro-turf pitch at St Loman's in their stride as they gained two valuable points in the Littlewoods Division 2 National League and go top of the group with two wins from two games.

Cork quickly adjusted to the pace of the underfoot surface and led 0-10 to 0-3 at the interval with impressive displays from their attack where Rachel O'Shea, Keeva McCarthy, Caroline Sugrue and Jacinta Crowley were all to the fore as they kept the pressure on the Westmeath defence.

Through the second half Cork didn't take their foot off the pedal and added to their tally with seven points and with their defence closing down the Westmeath attack they limited them to just two points but their attack just could not get the upper hand on a strong Cork defence that allowed them little space.

This is a serious Cork side with huge potential to go the distance and with three games to go against Armagh, Antrim, and Kildare they are in a good position.

Scorers for Cork: J Crowley, R O'Shea 0-4 each, C Sugrue 0-3, K McCarthy 0-2, R Fahy, K Hickey, M Buckley, F Neville 0-1 each.

CORK: A Lee; N Ni Chaoimh (c), L Westa, A Kelleher, S Harrington, S Buckley, L Lynch; J Crowley, L Callanan; F Neville, K McCarthy, K Hickey, C Sugrue; S Fahy, R O'Shea.

Subs: M Buckley for S Fahy, R Walsh for J Crowley, N O'Callaghan for L Lynch, H Ryan for K Hickey, M McCarthy for L Callanan.

Cork 6-20
Limerick 0-1

AS the scoreline indicated this was very much one-way traffic from start to finish as the Cork U16 A side comfortably advanced to a Munster final at a blustery Castle Road yesterday.

Cork who signalled their intentions with Clodagh Finn notching up 1-1 inside the opening six minutes. All over the pitch Cork held the upper hand and they opened up a 3-7 to no score interval lead with Fiona Keating Ellen Murphy and Finn all on the score sheet. Over the hour Keating helped herself to 4-7, while Ellen Murphy, Sally McCarthy and Aine Mullins all added points. A much stronger challenge awaits when they will meet either Clare or Tipperary whose semi-final yesterday was postponed.

Scorers for Cork: F Keating 4-7, Ellen Murphy 1-7 (0-3 f), C Finn 1-2, A Mullins 0-2, S Mc Carthy 0-2 (0-1 45).

CORK: M Lynch; C Ring, M Cotter, C Murphy, A Smith, C O'Leary, A Keating; C O'Sullivan, I Sheehan; A Mullins, Emma Murphy, S Mc Carthy; Ellen Murphy, F Keating, C Finn.

Subs: L O'Riordan for M Lynch, A O'Regan for M Cotter, M Barrett for C O'Sullivan, S Sheehan for I Sheehan, C Coleman for C Finn (all 45).



At the Blackrock camogie victory dinner in the Hurling Club Pavilion on Church Road were vice-captain Aoife McCurtin, Sheila Golden of Cork Camogie County Board, and Kate O'Brien, captain. Picture: George Hatchel



The Women's Gaelic Players Association presented its third level scholarships for 2017 yesterday in Kildare. A total of 32 scholarships have been awarded to third-level students who are also inter-county ladies football and camogie players. Players from 20 different counties, studying both undergraduate and postgraduate courses have been awarded by the WGPA. Pictured are, back row, from left: Leah Caffrey; Karen McDermott; Shauna Burke; Niamh Richardson; Sarah Rowe, and Orla Cronin; front row, from left, Aisling Tarpey; Emer Ni Eafa; Aisling Moloney; Doireann Hughes and Deirdre Foley. Picture: Seb Daly/Sportsfile

Slaughtneil still chasing All-Ireland double dream

Alice O'Leary

Camogie

An All-Ireland double is still on the cards for Derry's Slaughtneil as they bid to land a first camogie club title on Sunday at Croke Park.

The Derry club lost its All-Ireland Club SHC semi-final last Saturday to Cuala of Dublin, but are in the club football final against Dr Crokes of Kerry on March 17.

This weekend, the club's camogie squad bids to create its own piece of history — indeed four clubs involved in the senior and intermediate finals are bidding for a maiden All-Ireland success.

The finals, which will be streamed live on aib.ie/gaa and on the AIB YouTube channel for the first time, see Slaughtneil take on Sarsfields of Galway in the senior

decider, while the intermediate final features Tyrone's Eglish and Myshall from Carlow.

On the live stream, Maol Muire Tynan of sponsors AIB said: "We are excited to team up with innovative TV service LocalStreaming.club to stream all the live action from Croke Park to camogie fans across the world for the very first time."

Tickets for the camogie club finals can be purchased from www.tickets.ie or via selected SuperValu and Centra outlets nationwide.

Senior final: Sarsfields (Galway) v Slaughtneil (Derry), 3.15pm; **Intermediate final:** Eglish (Tyrone) v Myshall (Carlow), 1.30pm.

FEB
2017

Empowering Female Sport conference is launched

THE aim of increasing female participation in Gaelic games is set for a significant shot in the arm on Saturday, March 11 as Ulster GAA hosts the Empowering Female Sport conference at the Armagh City Hotel.

The event is part of a wider programme of activity, supported by the Department for Communities, that is aimed at females interested in the various sports that fall under the Gaelic games umbrella.

The conference launch took place in Belfast recently and was attended by representatives from Ulster Ladies Gaelic, Ulster Camogie and Ulster GAA Handball.

The conference aims to help boost participation through raising the profile of female Gaelic athletes and raising the skill set of Ulster's volunteers.

A full house is expected as players and officials will converge on

Armagh for the event that will provide a unique opportunity for ladies footballers, camogs and handballers to come together in one forum to showcase the impact of female Gaelic athletes as role models in our communities.

Keynote addresses will be delivered by Ann Downey (Kilkenny) and Juliet Murphy (Cork), two ladies with unrivalled experience in their fields, who will bring a guaranteed high level of quality to the day.

Downey, the current Kilkenny camogie manager, has 12 All-Ireland camogie titles and Murphy is the holder of eight All-Ireland football medals. Additional guest speakers will include Aisling Reilly, two-time World GAA Handball Champion, and Aoife Ni Chaiside, AIB Ulster Senior Club Camogie Championship winner with Slaughtneil.

Registration has now opened and people are urged to sign up early to avoid disappointment as places will be reserved on a first come, first served basis.

Delegate costs are £15/€18 per person and special discounts will be available for groups and schools by contacting Julie or Ronan at 028-37517180.

A series of practical workshops will be delivered by high-profile coaches and professionals on topics including:

- Mental Health Awareness
- Strength and Conditioning
- Player Retention/Post Playing involvement
- Disability Inclusion

There will also be sport-specific workshops for ladies football, camogie and handball.

To book your place now visit www.ulstergaa.ie/conferences2017.



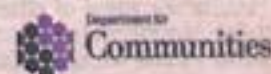
HOLDING COURT...Aisling Reilly, World GAA Handball champion and Paula Clarke, representing Ulster GAA Handball



LAUNCH...Gerry Doherty, Secretary Ulster Ladies Gaelic, Claire Collender, Ulster Ladies Gaelic, and Ronan McCarthy, Ulster Ladies Gaelic



NEW GROUND...Aoife Cassidy, Slaughtneil camogie player, Rosemary Hughes-Merry, secretary/assistant treasurer Ulster Camogie, Kathleen Woods, chairperson Ulster Camogie and Rachael Merry, Armagh/QUB, at the launch of the conference



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Saturday 11th March, Armagh City Hotel

WORKSHOPS //

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Keynote
Speakers
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Kilkenny Camogie Manager & 12-time
All-Ireland Camogie Winner

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BOOK NOW >>

ALL-IRELAND SENIOR CAMOGIE CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL
EGGLISH (TYRONE) V MYSALL (CARLOW)
 Sunday, Croke Park, 1.30pm

CAMOGIE



CAMOGIE ALL-IRELAND INTERMEDIATE CLUB FINAL

CAM ON GIRLS... Eglish will be hoping to strike a significant blow for Tyrone camogie



History beckons Tyrone camogie giants

Alan Rodgers



Eglish duo back bidding for All-Ireland glory 27 years on

THE historic nature of a first-ever appearance at Croke Park for Eglish will be set to the one side in the quest for an All-Ireland Intermediate title that marks the culmination of a particularly long journey for two of their players.

It's 27 years since a Tyrone team last appeared at the GAA headquarters. The county's Junior team lost the All-Ireland final to Cork that year, but Eglish will be aiming to go one step further when they take to the field on Sunday at 1.30pm against Mysall from Carlow.

This is the club's third All-Ireland final and holds special significance for Brenda Horsfield and Leona Gallagher. Both players form the backbone of the current backline, with Leona lining out in goals.

Amazingly, the two of them were also involved as players when the club last reached the final back in

1991. Defeat was their lot on that occasion, but the duo have fond memories of a golden period in the club's history.

"Almost half of the current team weren't even born when the club last played in an All-Ireland final," said Leona Gallagher.

"Brenda and I both played in that 1991 final. Camogie has always been a great passion of mine and over the years I have helped coach several of these girls at underage level.

"For me personally, I feel very fortunate to be playing along with my family and friends in such an historic match for the club."

One of the younger players on the team is the current captain, Clara McGready, who is excited about the prospect of playing on the famed Croke Park pitch. It's a dream come true for her and the rest of the players who are aiming to make history by bringing a first ever club or county All-Ireland title to Tyrone.

"It's a great honour for me to be captain of the team and getting to the final means everything. It shows how hard we have worked all year to get to this stage," she said.

"The commitment and determination shown by everyone has been outstanding. We have been training harder than ever since the semi-final and the hunger and passion within the squad is at an unbelievable level.

"We'll be doing our best to go out and win. There's a great buzz in the village with it being decorated black



ON THE VERGE OF HISTORY... Eglish head to Croke Park chasing All-Ireland honours

and green and the support shown by the people of Eglish and beyond has been very humbling for us as players."

Nevertheless, while the build-up to the game is being relished, the job at hand is being treated with the utmost seriousness. A top class display will be required to overcome their Leinster opponents and win a title that eluded them almost 30 years ago.

While the club is very rooted in the community, their management team is a real family affair. The team manager, Martin Curry, will be guiding their fortunes on Sunday alongside his two sons, Nathan and Odhran. Unsurprisingly, he has nothing but praise for the efforts of the players and is well aware of the importance of the opportunity which is being pre-

sented to them at the weekend.

"It's a privilege to be involved with this group of players and heading in to an All-Ireland final. They have worked extremely hard to get to this stage and have made a lot of personal sacrifices," said Martin.

"We don't know a lot about our opponents, but they, like ourselves, are in this All-Ireland final on merit. Hopefully the team can give of their best and bring the title home to Eglish on Sunday evening.

"It's important that we thank the committee for their dedication to our preparations and all the supporters and everyone who has so kindly helped the club along the road to a magical journey to Croke Park."

In the All-Ireland semi-final, Eglish edged past their Waterford oppo-

nents by 1-5 to 1-4 to clinch their place in the final. It's no surprise that the past five weeks have proven to be very exciting for everyone involved in the club.

On that occasion, Brenda Horsfield was among their top players, shading her personal duel with Waterford All-star, Trish Jackman.

Now the stage is set for their clash against Carlow outfit, Mysall, who have never suffered a championship defeat for 16 years in the county championship. In addition, they have also claimed two All-Ireland Junior camogie titles in recent years.

So, the task facing Eglish is a significant one, but they will enter the final with a plenty of confidence of completing the long journey to national glory.



ALL-IRELAND SENIOR CAMOGIE CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL
SARSFIELDS (GALWAY) V SLAUGHTNEIL (DERRY)
Sunday, Croke Park, 3.15pm

CAMOGIE



CAMOGIE ALL-IRELAND SENIOR CLUB FINAL

Dreams coming true for Slaughtneil camogs

BY RONAN MCSHERRY

SLAUGHTNEIL camogs are pinching themselves as they prepare to run out on the hallowed turf of Croke Park for Sunday's All Ireland club final against Galway aces Sarsfields.

However, it is not the first time that Emmets' star forward Mary Kelly has graced Croke Park on All-Ireland final day.

She played in the half-time game at the 2004 All-Ireland hurling final along with 'keeper Jolene Bradley when they were still at primary school.

That day they lined out in front of 82,000 supporters, as Mary donned the Kilkenny jersey while Bradley was between the posts for the team representing Cork.

It was a fabulous experience for two girls who dreamt of returning to play in an All-Ireland final.

That dream has come true for the camogs of Slaughtneil who are now focused on bringing the All-Ireland crown to the south Derry club that has captured the imagination of the country for their camogie, hurling and football exploits.

"It is mental here," said Kelly, "and with the footballers in the All-Ireland final, it is a huge boost for us. The hurlers also had a fantastic year winning their first ever Ulster Championship. There have been a lot of sacrifices to get here and very little socialising over the last few months but to be at this stage... it is all worth it."

"You dream of walking out in Croke park on All-Ireland final day and it is far better with your club than the county. The club means so much more as you are going out there with your friends and all your family and community is cheering you on from the stands."

Recognised with a Gaelic Life Ulster Club All Star award, the season



ATTACKER... Mary Kelly is preparing for Slaughtneil's All-Ireland final appearance



SUPPORT... Slaughtneil fans are heading to Dublin again this weekend

just gets better and better for the corner forward whose sensational late goal helped Slaughtneil to their first-ever provincial crown. That win over their great rivals Loughgiel in a replay was greeted with scenes of euphoria by the Slaughtneil faithful.

Recalling that goal the 24-year-old added, "I would have gone for a point but the 'keeper was coming out and might have blocked me so I flicked it over her. I couldn't believe it. Thinking about it and watching the DVD afterwards sent shivers down my back. After winning the Derry title our aim was Ulster. Thank God we achieved that and we went down to the All-Ire-

land semi-final as underdogs but we have a very astute manager in Dominic McKinney who has great faith in us. He has a brilliant knowledge of the sport and had us well prepared for the All Ireland semi-final against Burgess-Duhara of Tipperary.

"It was always neck-and-neck but we won by two points in the end. It was another great moment for the players and the supporters when the final whistle went."

On the senior team since she was 15, Mary is also a regular with Derry and has come up against a number of Sunday's opponents from Galway.

"I know a few of the Sarsfield play-

ers at county level. The McGrath sisters are fantastic players. There is a good quality of club camogie in Galway so we have no doubts about the task ahead of us. We knew some of the Burgess-Duhara players as well from playing against Tipperary, however we don't focus too much on the opposition. We just go out and play our camogie and not get caught up in what the other side will bring."

A win for Slaughtneil on Sunday would be a major boost for camogie in Ulster as well as Derry. They will also enjoy the support of Tyrone Gaels as Eglish bid for the All-Ireland junior title.

"It would be a massive achievement for Derry and Ulster if we win on Sunday. People wrote us off after winning Ulster and this would be a lift for camogie in the province. We are all flying the flag for Ulster."

"We had a 'meet-and-greet' night in the hall on Friday and there was more than 400 people came to wish us well. It was great signing tops for the kids. It is an encouragement for them to aspire to what we have done. Everyone is buying hats and scarfs and our families are proud of what we have done. It is so good to know they will be there. The place is absolutely buzzing. We told them to get down for the first game and cheer for Eglish. I'm sure the Eglish and Tyrone supporters will also cheer us on."

Dreams do come true and reflecting on her 10-minute cameo at the 2004 All Ireland hurling final, the Slaughtneil star added, "It is remarkable to be going back to play in Croke Park with Jolene. This is what we dreamt of as children."

"You dream of walking out in Croke park on All Ireland final day and it is far better with your club than the county. The club means so much more as you are going out there with your friends and all your family and community is cheering you on from the stands."

Jennifer O'Leary

The voice of experience tackles the topics that matter



You know when it's time to go

As the debate over the future of some of Cork's greatest ladies' GAA players continues, here's my advice to those who are thinking of retiring. It's not an easy decision. Trust me, I know

I KNEW the exact moment when I decided to retire from inter-county camogie with Cork.

It happened for me days after the 2014 All-Ireland final that Cork won – our first title win since 2009.

That was a fairy-tale ending to my inter-county career because after years of hard work and coming close without winning, finally everything fell into place that Sunday in September 2014. A huge weight had been lifted off my shoulders.

I was content and a bigger percentage of me was certain that this would be the ideal and smart time to retire.

While there will always be reservations swirling around your head and an ongoing debate of 'will I, won't I?', realistically it all boils down to that gut feeling that is strongly in favour of one (time to go) over the other (give it another year). It's instinct.

Don't get me wrong, as some of you may know I was one of those who retired twice! Let's just call the first attempt a prime example of my terrible judgement and an almost impulsive response to answer a question posed by someone one day in passing. Without even thinking I said I was retiring, but I knew I lied as soon as the words left my lips.

I know there are inter-county players around the country right now – and even here in Cork – struggling to answer the burning question themselves: will I, won't I?

Believe me, it may not be as easy a task as you may think. Retirement can be comparable to a riveting novel. The novel represents your life in sport, your accolades, your sporting memories, your best friends, and the journey. However, you find yourself at a cul de sac. In the blink of an eye you are at the end of the book that enthralled you from the front cover to the final creased page, as you carefully turn it over to reveal the ending....

You have read it all, you have

experienced the journey and now you are saddened that it has come to an end.

But you can look at it in a number of ways. Be satisfied and content with the ending that is your inter-county career. Reflect on the plot and storyline and focus on the many lessons the novel has taught you. Or you can continue to pick faults and become driven once again to make up for them by maybe changing the ending to the not yet finished product. Try again for another year.

Back in late 2014, I chose to be overwhelmingly content with my ending. While my body felt like I still had a few years left in me, I was satisfied with the story camogie helped etch out on paper for me.

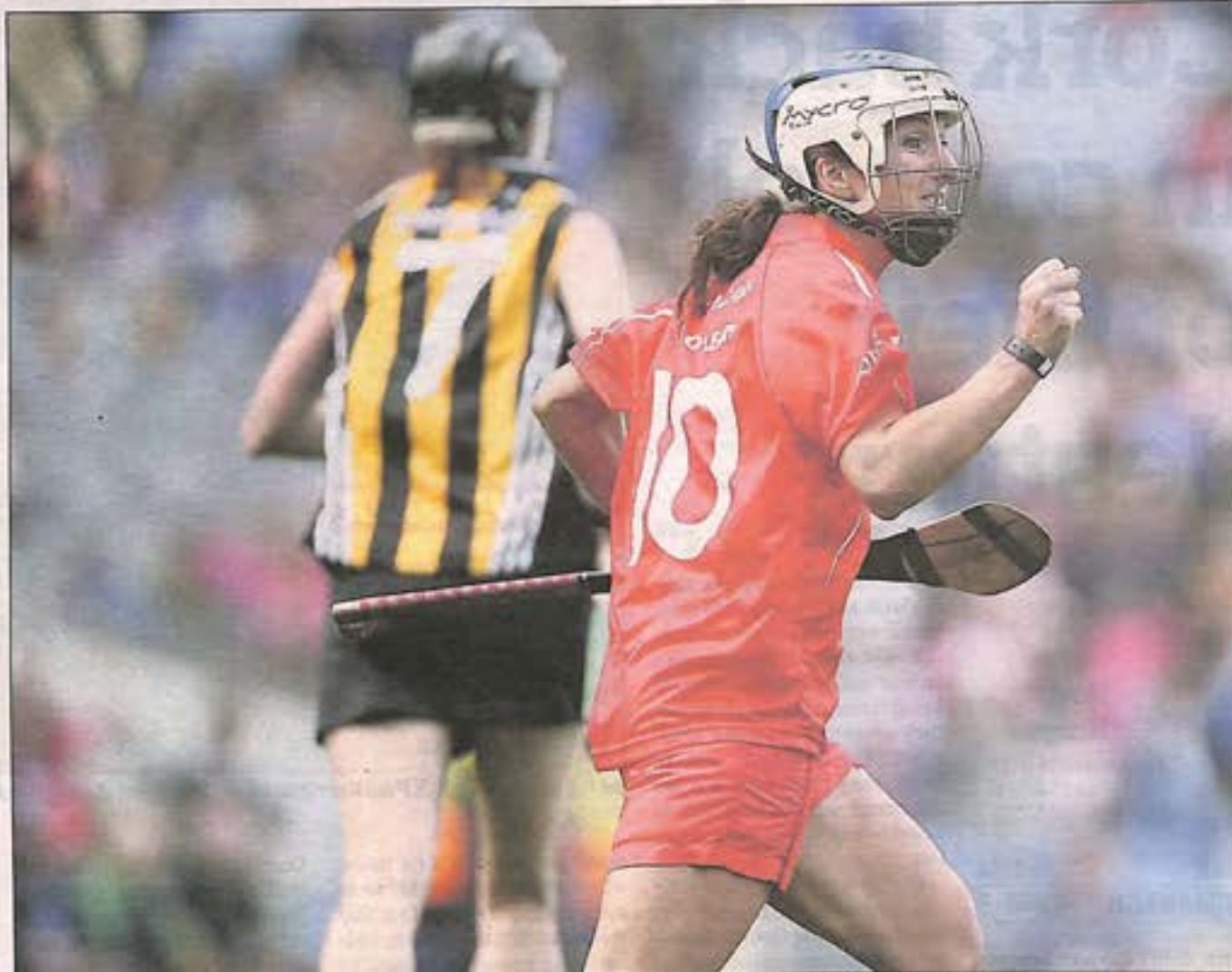
There was another novel to be written in another facet of my life that I am still working on; let's call it a work in progress, an exciting life adventure.

My decision to retire was not made without the huge support of my family. Having told them in 2013 that I was moving to Armagh and retiring, they reacted the same way as when I told them, 'Actually, I've decided I'm going to make the 250-mile journey down to Cork for training and matches every so often, I'm coming out of retirement.'

They never called me a fool or a crazy person. And the same process happened after our 2014 win when I said: 'I'm really retiring this time'. There was no big show made. It was calm and it felt totally right.

No matter what facet of life you retire from, of course it's never easy. My father, Joe O'Leary, retired from his job on February 24th this year, the day of his birthday. His career spanned a 43-year period and while he said he is looking forward to retirement, he loved every minute of his job and will miss it. He has made fantastic friends who will support him on his new life adventure and he is looking forward to the freedom that retirement brings.

This is one aspect of retire-



Her final hurrah: Jennifer O'Leary celebrates scoring the first goal of the game in the 2014 All-Ireland senior camogie final as Cork beat Kilkenny in Croke Park; this was the Barryroe woman's last game for her county as she decided to retire shortly afterwards.

ment that I embraced wholeheartedly – the free time, the holidays I could finally take and the friends who once again became visible on my calendar, the opportunities that would come my way if I embraced them and didn't get lazy, and the extra time for sports at a lower stress level I would experience.

The year I retired from Cork camogie just happened to coincide with about 14 family and friends weddings. I had justification and due cause for my decision, a means of backing up and reassuring me on my choice.

My close friend Joanne

Browne (O'Callaghan) retired the same year as me and funnily booked an amazing holiday away to Dubai around the time of the All-Ireland final so she could not change her mind. My husband and I took a sun holiday that summer in 2015 and I couldn't understand how the streets in Portugal were so busy with tourists. It was peak season of course; I hadn't experienced a holiday like that since my youth.

The most important advice I would give to people contemplating retirement is to do what is right for you. Take some time to yourself and ask yourself if this decision is putting you first

or the team first. Is it satisfying others needs above your own? Have you achieved what you set out to achieve and what is it you want to do now that leads you to want to retire?

You must have a plan, something to look forward to; not just short term, as holidays are only temporary. Having a long-term goal that you intend on fulfilling post retirement is essential and important for the body and mind. You need to keep busy as there will be a huge void in your life following retirement.

Inter-county training would have given you structure, a drive, a close camaraderie with your teammates. There can't

be 80 per cent of you in favour of retiring and the other 20 per cent not certain. If there is an overwhelming doubt the lesser will more often win and you will find yourself becoming bitter and really not sure about your choice once again.

If you feel like you still have a burning desire to return to inter-county, don't feel ashamed or silly, I did it. I still get a mocking over it but at least I can generate some laughter in my story.

The decision, at the end of the day, should be easier than harder, do what your gut says and believe that the choice you make is the right one for you.

Camogie facility is a joy to behold

Camogie

■ Mary Newman

TWO weeks ago the first games of 2017 took place in Castle Road when Cork and Galway got the Littlewoods Division 2 National League up and running.

On a lovely day for a game it was wonderful to see the great changes in Castle Road since the last game there in late 2016 and to see the building of the dressing rooms progressing.

Cork Camogie's dream to have a home of their own was fulfilled with the opening of the with the superb playing facility at Castle Road thus ensuring games are played one of the best facilities and playing surfaces in the country. The facility came about thanks to the huge efforts that were put in with fundraising and the securing of valuable grants which ensured Cork Camogie own the facility and could push on with fundraising for the third and final phase of the project.

This is by far the biggest phase of the project with the construction of dressing rooms and a club house. Camogie has been played in Cork since 1905 without a break and continues to grow with 65 clubs now registered in the county and with membership of in excess of 10,000 to have a home of its own is a huge achievement when one considers everything that is there has been put in place thanks to the huge voluntary efforts of camogie personnel.

At the moment the board have to allow three hours between games to ensure teams can get changed and ready before and after games. Croke Park won't allow senior league games be played on the best surface in Ireland because the facilities don't meet their requirements. The building of dressing rooms would alleviate this problem and ensure more high-profile games could be played on what is a superb pitch.

To help fund the new development the Camogie Board have a 'Sponsor a Block' fundraiser ongoing. The cost of sponsoring a block is €50 and they are calling on all past and present players, officials, clubs, the wider GAA family, businesses and supporters to get behind this fundraising event which they are hoping will generate significant funds and will ensure Cork Camogie will have a facility that it's 10,000 members can all be proud of in the years ahead.

When one sees the magnificent Páirc Uí Chaoimh and the massive amount of money it is costing, what the camogie girls need is a drop in the ocean, but they must raise every cent themselves.

■ Payment for sponsorship can be sent to any of the camogie board officers or can also be lodged to the board's Development Bank Account details as follows: AIB, 66 South Mall Cork - BIC AIBKIE2D - IBAN IE98AIBK93417877079339



The Seandún U14 team who recently won the first Avondhu Camogie Blitz.

City girls come out on top in blitz

SEANDÚN were the winners in the latest camogie blitz.

The Avondhu division recently organised an U14 interdivisional tournament and it was a huge success with all six divisions participating.

Charleville was the venue for the inaugural event and the trophy for the winning division was sponsored by Rob Lott, who is development officer with Munster and a coach in the Coachford Community College.

The divisions were split into two groups, with Seandún, Imokilly and Avondhu in one group and Muskerry, Carrigdhoun and Carbery in the second group. In group one in the first game it ended level between Imokilly

and Avondhu in the second game Seandún met Imokilly with the city division running out winners.

The third game in section one was between Seandún and Avondhu and while the players were evenly matched goals from Olivia Gibson and Ella Buckley lifted the Seandún girls who finished the group stages as the only division to win both group games.

Avondhu and Imokilly had to play extra time to decide who would go through as runners-up and it was a determined Avondhu side that won out to book a place in the B final.

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

In section two Muskerry, Carrigdhoun, Carbery were the sides pitted tighter and the first game Muskerry versus Carrigdhoun was a close affair with the Muskerry girls shading it by a point.

Carbery overcame Muskerry and Carrigdhoun got the upper hand on Carbery and all of these games were very close encounters with excitement at fever pitch as the sides battled to the full-time whistle.

When all was done and dusted it was Carrigdhoun who advanced to the A final with Muskerry advancing to a meeting with Avondhu in the B decider.

In an exciting contest Seandún and Carrigdhoun battled it out in the A final and Seandún ran out winners to

take the trophy for the first time.

The B final was another very close encounter with Avondhu winning by a narrow margin.

The A cup was presented to Seandún captain Aoife Byrne-O'Riordan whilst the B trophy was presented to Avondhu captain. The B cup was presented to Avondhu captain Vicky O'Connell.

Well done to the Avondhu division for a well organised tournament special mention referees Ger Sheehan and Alex Gibbons and to Donal O'Brien who sponsoring the trophy.

It was great to see the divisional sides so well organised so early in the season and to the players who gave it their all goes a very big well done.

Charleville tournament will offer U16s game time

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

FIVE clubs hit the road early today and travel to Charleville where they will join the home club in a pre-season U16 tournament.

The event will be under the guidance of organisers Shane Liddy and Mark Kavanagh who saw an opportunity to get in some pre-season games before the juvenile board league competitions get under way.

Shane explained the idea behind the tournament. "It's hard to get players together at this time of the year and when they begin training it is hard to keep interest going until the league gets under way."

"You can only do so much training and then the players want games and we came up with the idea of holding a one-day tournament and we invited five clubs to participate."

"To be honest we didn't know what reaction we would get but it was great every one of the clubs in-

vited were thrilled to take part and as a result we have six very good teams participating. We would know a lot of the club thought playing each other down through the years and we know they are all really looking forward to the day."

It is noticeable that Charleville have a nice mix of representation from a spread of the divisions with Participating clubs from the city division Glen Rovers and Blackrock, from Mid-Cork we have Ballincollig, from the East Cork division we have Sarsfield's and Carrigaline from Carrigdhoun and of course the host club Charleville from the Avondhu division.

The competition will be a huge help to the Cork U16 selectors as they continue to keep an eye to

both their panels and to watch out for new emerging talent.

The teams are divided into groups of three and clubs are guaranteed three games each, games will be twenty minutes a half for group games and the finals are 25 minutes a half.

The top team in each group with play off in the cup final the second team in both groups and the third teams in each group will also play each other thus ensuring each club get three games.

The timetable for the day is as follows:

Group One: Charleville Ballincollig, Glen Rovers. Group Two: Sarsfield's, Blackrock, Carrigaline.

10.30am: Charleville v Ballincollig; Sarsfield's v Blackrock. 11.10am: Ballincollig v Glen Rovers; Blackrock v Carrigaline. 11.50am: Charleville v Glen Rovers; Sarsfield's v Carrigaline. 1pm: Third teams play-off. 2pm: Cup final two top teams.

Here's hoping for a great day of camogie best of luck to all participants.

A couple of surprises after opening rounds



Camogie

Linda Mellerick

WITH only two rounds played, the Littlewoods National League Division 1 table is already showing up some surprising results.

Wexford hung on by the skin of their teeth after Beth Carton led a late rally for Waterford at WIT in a round one fixture that really came to life in the final quarter.

Wexford laid the foundation for victory in the first half, chiselling out 0-7 to 0-4 lead at the interval when playing into the wind. Chloe Foxe was excellent while inspirational defender Ciara Storey was unyielding. Linda Bolger goaled soon after the resumption and matters took a turn for the worse for the hosts when Clare Whyte was sent off after for a second yellow-card offence. Bolger and Foxe added points and it was 1-11 to 0-6 with nine minutes of normal time remaining.

That was a fair reflection of proceedings, but the excellent Carton went into overdrive, scoring a goal and four points without reply. The goal came right on the hour to bring her personal tally to 1-8 but her long-distance effort for an equaliser from free just drifted wide.

Despite Wexford's 'seeding' dropping significantly over the past few years, that narrow victory was a surprise and left me feeling that they had slipped even further.

But then, they turned around last weekend and inflicted a first defeat since last April on All-Ireland champions Kilkenny. It just goes to show how unpredictable the league can be.

Linda Bolger added nine points in the second half as the home side prevailed by 1-11 to 0-9. Michelle Quilty opened the scoring for the Noreiders. Wexford kicked the sliothar to the net before Kilkenny shot another four points without reply to ease ahead. Bolger steadied the ship with a brace of points and when they hit the net for the second-time, Wexford took a lead they never looked like giving up. They led 2-4 to 0-7 at the interval and Kilkenny could make no inroads in the latter period, managing just two points as the Wexford defence, in which Ciara Storey excelled again, held firm while Bolger split the posts regularly to cement the victory.

Kilkenny will possibly view that defeat as a much-needed awakening after going 10 months without defeat. They had a resounding success over Tipperary in round one, 4-13 to 0-8, scoring goals at ease.

Dublin have suffered two defeats on two. As expected, they gave Cork a stern challenge in Mallow in round one. A low scoring game in very poor underfoot conditions still saw an underperforming and experimental Cork side take the points.

Waterford took the points from Dublin last weekend. Beth Carton was again in fine form, shooting nine points, including the last four, as Waterford won out 0-11 to 0-7.



Cork's Hannah Looney was this week presented with a Women's Gaelic Players Association third level scholarships for 2017 at the Killashee Hotel in Kildare.

Picture: Seb Daly/Sportsfile



Waterford's Beth Carton scores a goal against Wexford.

Picture: INPHO/Ken Sutton

“Wexford turned around last weekend and inflicted a first defeat since last April '16 on All-Ireland champions Kilkenny.”

For the second week in a row, however Waterford, had a player sent off and it's something their management team are going to have to focus and improve on very quickly. Eva Marie Elliott received her marching orders late on, but the Déise girls were on top by that stage and Carton made full use of the placed-ball opportunities to take the points. Seven of Carton's scores came from frees.

Cork's second-round tie with Tipperary was postponed due to The Ragg being unplayable. That wasn't a surprise and the game shouldn't have been fixed there in the first

place. With the weather conditions the way they have been for the past fortnight, and the Cork and Tipperary minors playing there last Saturday, the pitch was never going to hold two games. I credit Liz Dempsey (who was the designated referee for both games) for making the decision on Saturday afternoon that Sunday's game would not go ahead.

That re-fixture is down for decision today in Carrignore, Waterford Institute of Technology at 2pm. Tipperary will bring a better performance to this game than they did two weeks ago against Kilkenny. That is

almost guaranteed.

In group two, Limerick proved too strong for newcomers Meath, with a 0-18 to 0-7 victory in the Munster side's favour. Niamh Mulcahy carried on where she left off last season, scoring 10 points. Galway unsurprisingly overcame Clare in round one, 1-22 to 0-7. I'm really concerned for the future of Clare at senior level and I wouldn't be surprised to see them drop back down to division two.

In their round two fixture, Galway came away from Birr with a 1-11 to 1-4 win.

Clare did take Meath last week,

2-14 to 1-9, but had they not, it would have been the nail in their coffin one suspects. Chloe Morey hit 1-12.

Apart from Cork's re-fixture there are no league games down for decision this weekend.

The seventh Annual 'Legends' tournament takes place at Na Fianna GAA Grounds, ahead of the All-Ireland club finals tomorrow where the whole country (except Galway) will be rooting for Slaughtneil of Derry against Sarsfields of Galway in the senior final.

Myshall of Carlow take on Eglishe of Tyrone in the intermediate final.

MAR.
2017

Cassidy the man inspiring Slaught

Paul Keane
AIB Club camogie final

Thomas Cassidy took off from Slaughtneil in Derry for Inverness a few years back, the company of his children sustaining him for the long haul trip to the Scottish highlands where the annual Hurling/Shinty international was taking place.

The match was on the Saturday yet on the Sunday he could be found along a motorway in the Republic of Ireland, ferrying a couple of his daughters to a camogie game. According to local lore, there was no chance of a man steeped in hurling missing either of the ties.

Cassidy, father of Eilis, Aoife and Brona, all of whom will line out for Slaughtneil in the AIB All-Ireland club camogie final against Sarsfields (Galway) at Croke Park tomorrow (3.15pm), passed away before last October's drawn Ulster final with Loughgiel Shamrocks.

Slaughtneil beat Loughgiel after a replay and club chairman Sean McGuigan commented how the three Cassidy girls, with Aoife as captain, had delivered in the most testing of circumstances.

"I don't know where they have got the strength to achieve what they have in each and every game this year with all that was happening at home," said McGuigan.

Dominic McKinley, the former Derry hurling manager and current joint boss in Antrim, is in charge of the Slaughtneil camogs and reckoned Cassidy, who enticed him to the club, was looking down that day.

Yet as Aoife said this week, it's the county final win over Ballinascreen that she looks back on most fondly from the club's remarkable journey which has taken them all the way to Croke Park.

"He was on that much medication that week that he wasn't right with himself," revealed Aoife but, sure enough, "at the end of the game, when I was getting presented with the cup, he was coming walking across the pitch."

The man who once sold a family car to buy a bus to help out at the club will be looking down again tomorrow when they face the Galway champions.

The Slaughtneil hurlers' journey ended at the semi-final stage last weekend but the girls are still standing.

"I'd say he was out loads of money over the years, actually I'm convinced of that, but he never asked for a penny," said McGuigan of his late pal. A win tomorrow and the debt will have been more than repaid.

The match will be preceded by the intermediate club final (1.30pm) between Eglis of Tyrone and Carlow's Myshall.

Camogie All-Ireland senior club championship



Fairytale journey ends in ultimate glory for Slaughtneil

Slaughtneil (Derry) 1-10
Sarsfields (Galway) 0-11

A record attendance witnessed an Ulster team winning the All-Ireland Camogie Senior Club Championship for only the second time as Slaughtneil proved strongest on the home straight after a ding-dong battle with a resolute Sarsfields.

An aggregate of 6,123 came through the Croke Park turnstiles, Slaughtneil's presence undoubtedly had a lot to do with that, the club having secured an historic three-timer at senior level in Ulster, while the footballers are also in an All-Ireland final on St Patrick's Day.

This was had extra resonance though, as joint manager Thomas Cassidy had passed away just before the drawn Ulster final, having been the leading light in the development of camogie and hurling in the club.

It was Cassidy who enticed Antrim legend Dominic McKinley to join him and Damian McElowney and the latter duo steered the ship magnificently through an emotionally testing period.

Cassidy's three daughters Aoife, Brona and Eilis played two days after burying their father and were magnificent on the biggest stage of all.

As captain, Aoife had the honour of lifting the Bill & Agnes Carroll Cup before delivering a memorable speech entirely as Gaeilge in what was probably the ultimate tribute to her father, who fostered a love of the native tongue and culture in all his children.

Provincial decider

Slaughtneil started well with points from Graham and Louise Dougan but Sarsfields settled and with Niamh McGrath slotting four points from frees, they led entering the second quarter.

The hero of the replayed provincial decider, Mary Kelly gave a reminder of her threat when hitting the upright in the 19th minute and Eilis Cassidy's follow-up was smothered on the line by Yvonne Lyons.

Orlaith McGrath slotted two excellent points on the run but Dougan landed a pair of massive frees from around 55m out and tight to the Hogan Stand sideline to give Slaughtneil a marginal interval advantage, 0-7 to 0-6.

Slaughtneil wasted a number of good opportunities early in the second half but the vital goal came five minutes in when Eilis Cassidy showed tremendous vision to hit a reverse pass off the sod while running away from goal, back towards Kelly and the corner-forward made no mistake.

"Hopper" McGrath's crew dug deep though and the switch

2

This is just the second time an Ulster side has won the All-Ireland camogie senior club championship

of the manager's youngest daughter (there were four on the pitch), the 16-year-old Siobhán to the half-forward line had a significant impact as she flourished in the space and shot three points.

The Galway club drew level but crucially they could not

Sarsfields' Yvonne Lyons collides into the post during the All-Ireland camogie senior club championship final at Croke Park.

PHOTOGRAPH: TOMMY DICKSON/INPHO

edge ahead despite having the upper hand. It was in this period that Dougan and Graham really showed their worth, repelling attack after attack.

After Graham was fouled, Dougan restored Slaughtneil's lead in the 59th minute, ending a lengthy period for her side without a score from the time Eilis Cassidy had exhibited tremendous stickwork to point deftly towards the end of the third quarter.

And it was the centre-forward who had the last say, driving over spectacularly while on the move and wide on the left.

■ Ciara Quirke scored 1-9 as Carlow's Myshall beat Eglis of Tyrone 1-10 to 1-9 to win the Intermediate title at Croke Park yesterday.

SLAUGHTNEIL: J. Bradley, J. McMullan, B. Ni Chiosáide, Dervagh McGuigan, G. Kane, A. Ni Chiosáide, C. McGrath, L. Dougan (D-6 frees), S. Graham (D-1), S. McKaigue, E. Ni Chiosáide (D-3), Denise McGuigan, M. Kelly (I-0), S. Mellon, T. Mellon. **Subs:** B. McAister for Denise McGuigan (48), F. Burke for S. Mellon (58), C. Mulholland for T. Mellon (60+3).
SARSFIELDS: Y. Lyons, R. Murphy, L. Ward, A. Spellman, T. Kenny, C. McGrath, E. Leslie, N. McGrath (D-4, D-3 frees, D-145), K. Gallagher, S. Spellman (D-1), O. McGrath (D-3), N. Donohue, S. Cannon, M. Cooney, S. McGrath (D-3).
Referee: R. Kelly (Kildare).

Slaughtneil's finest hour

Slaughtneil (Derry) 1-10
Sarsfields (Galway) 0-11

Daragh Ó Conchúir
AIB All-Ireland Senior
Club Camogie final

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It is a first success for a Derry side but just further torment for Galway, as it represented a fifth consecutive final defeat for the county's representatives.

An aggregate of 6,123 came through the Croke Park turnstiles, and for the finals to attract a highest attendance ever while the games were also being streamed bore testimony to an increasing appeal.

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Cassidy's three daughters Aoife, Brona, and Ellis played two days after burying their father and were magnificent on the biggest stage of all.

As captain, Aoife had the



Dervagh McGuigan, Mary Kelly, and Ellis Ni Chaiside celebrate at the final whistle after their All-Ireland Camogie Senior Club Championship final victory over Sarsfields at Croke Park yesterday.

Picture: Tommy Dickson/Inpho

honour of lifting the Bill & Agnes Carroll Cup before delivering a memorable speech entirely *as gaeilge* in what was probably the ultimate tribute to her father, who fostered a love of the native tongue and culture in all his children.

Ellis must have gone very close to being named player of the match, as must sweeper and ace freetaker Louise Dou-

gan but there could be few arguments either against the award to Shannon Graham, who covered every blade of grass and emerged from countless rucks with possession.

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second quarter.

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They found the likes of Erica Leslie and Laura Ward in the Sarsfields rearguard in equally unyielding mood but after Graham was fouled, Dougan restored Slaughtneil's lead in the 59th minute, ending a lengthy period for her side without a score from the time Ellis Ni Chaiside had exhibited tremendous stickwork to point deftly towards the end of the third quarter.

And it was the centre-forward who had the last say, driving over spectacularly while on the move and wide on the left.

Scorers for Slaughtneil: L Dougan 0-6(5s); E Ni Chaiside 0-3; M Kelly 1-0; S Graham 0-1

Scorers for Sarsfields: N McGrath 0-4(3fs, 1-45); O McGrath, S McGrath 0-3 each; S Spellman 0-1

SLAUGHTNEIL: J Bradley, J McMullan, B Ni Chaiside, Dervagh McGuigan, G O'Kane, A Ni Chaiside, C McGrath, L Dougan, S Graham, S McKaigue, E Ni Chaiside, Denise McGuigan, M Kelly, S Mellon, T Mellon.

Subs: B McAlister for Denise McGuigan (48); F Burke for S Mellon (58); C Mulholland for T Mellon (60+3)

SARSFIELDS: Y Lyons, R Murphy, L Ward, A Spellman, T Kenny, C McGrath, E Leslie, N McGrath, K Gallagher, S Spellman, O McGrath, K Donohue, S Cannon, M Cooney, S McGrath
Referee: R Kelly (Kildare)

Cork's second-half show too much for Tipperary

Daragh Ó Conchúir

Second-half goals from Katrina Mackey and Niamh McCarthy helped Cork see off a considerable challenge from Tipperary, prevailing 2-14 to 1-12 at Carriganore in Waterford to make it two from two in Group 1 of Division 1 of the Littlewoods Ireland Camogie League.

This tie was a victim of the inclement weather conditions last week and the WIT pitch had to pass an inspection before it could go ahead at the second time of asking.

Tipperary stepped up considerably on their first-round efforts when, after a decent showing in the opening 40 minutes, they fell apart completely in suffering a 17-point reverse at the hands of Kilkenny.

They were more competitive this time and led 1-7 to 0-9

at the break thanks to Megan Ryan's 12th-minute goal. Four minutes later, Róisín Howard shot the wrong side of the crossbar when looking certain to raise a green flag and had that gone in, the wind would have been in Tipp's sails.

They had come back well from a three-point deficit after Julia White, Mackey and Orla Cotter had shot some good scores but Ryan's goal, allied to points from Ryan, Howard and Nicole Walsh enabled them to get their noses in front.

Paudie Murray called in the heavy artillery at the interval, bringing on midfield dynamo Ashling Thompson for Orla Cronin. It was Mackey who sparked the turnaround though when grabbing the sliotar from Gemma O'Connor's long delivery and she made no mistake to shake the rigging and put Cork in

front. Campion and Walsh restored parity but Cork moved three clear once more, thanks to Amy O'Connor, Cotter and Mackey, and when McCarthy's shot from a tight angle looped into the Tipperary net, the destination of the precious points was finally confirmed.

In Division 3, Dublin recorded a highly impressive win over Tyrone in another rescheduled match at Carrickmore, taking the honours 7-13 to 1-5. It was 3-7 to 0-4 at the interval and the verdict was never in doubt from that juncture despite the hosts' game efforts.

The weather continued to play havoc with the fixtures, with another Division 3 tie between Roscommon and Clare, as well as the four O'Neills Post Primary Senior Finals, postponed due to unplayable pitches.

Quirke the star as Myshall hold out for famous victory

Myshall (Carlow) 1-10

Eglis (Tyrone) 1-9

Daragh Ó Conchúir

Croke Park

AIB All-Ireland
Intermediate Club final

Ciara Quirke hit 1-9 as Carlow's Myshall secured the AIB All-Ireland Camogie Intermediate Club title at Croke Park.

It is only four years since Myshall claimed a second consecutive All-Ireland Junior Club title.

While Myshall had the upper hand for long spells, they had to withstand a determined rally from Eglis that fell narrowly short. Their star, Ciara Donnelly, had a chance from a free to equalise, with 30 seconds of the allotted three minutes of injury time

remaining, but pulled her shot wide.

Myshall dominated the opening exchanges and it took a tremendous save from Leona Gallagher to deny Emma Coogan from close range. Gallagher though when Quirke, who landed six points from placed balls in the first half, rifled a bullet to the roof of the net soon after.

At the other end, Méabh McHugh shot wide under pressure from the advancing goalkeeper Joanne Joyce.

Quirke's goal gave Myshall a 1-6 to 0-4 interval lead. However they appeared to invite their opponents onto them on the restart as they withdrew into an increasingly defensive formation. Niamh McNulty's 46th minute goal, after a strong run by Donnelly, changed the game, leaving three between the sides and though Carlow had a penalty

three minutes later, Quirke elected to take the point. Eglis poured forward and Donnelly shot three consecutive points to leave the minimum between them.

Quirke scored what proved the winner on the hour, lofting a free imperiously over from 64m but Donnelly replied in kind before the dramatic conclusion.

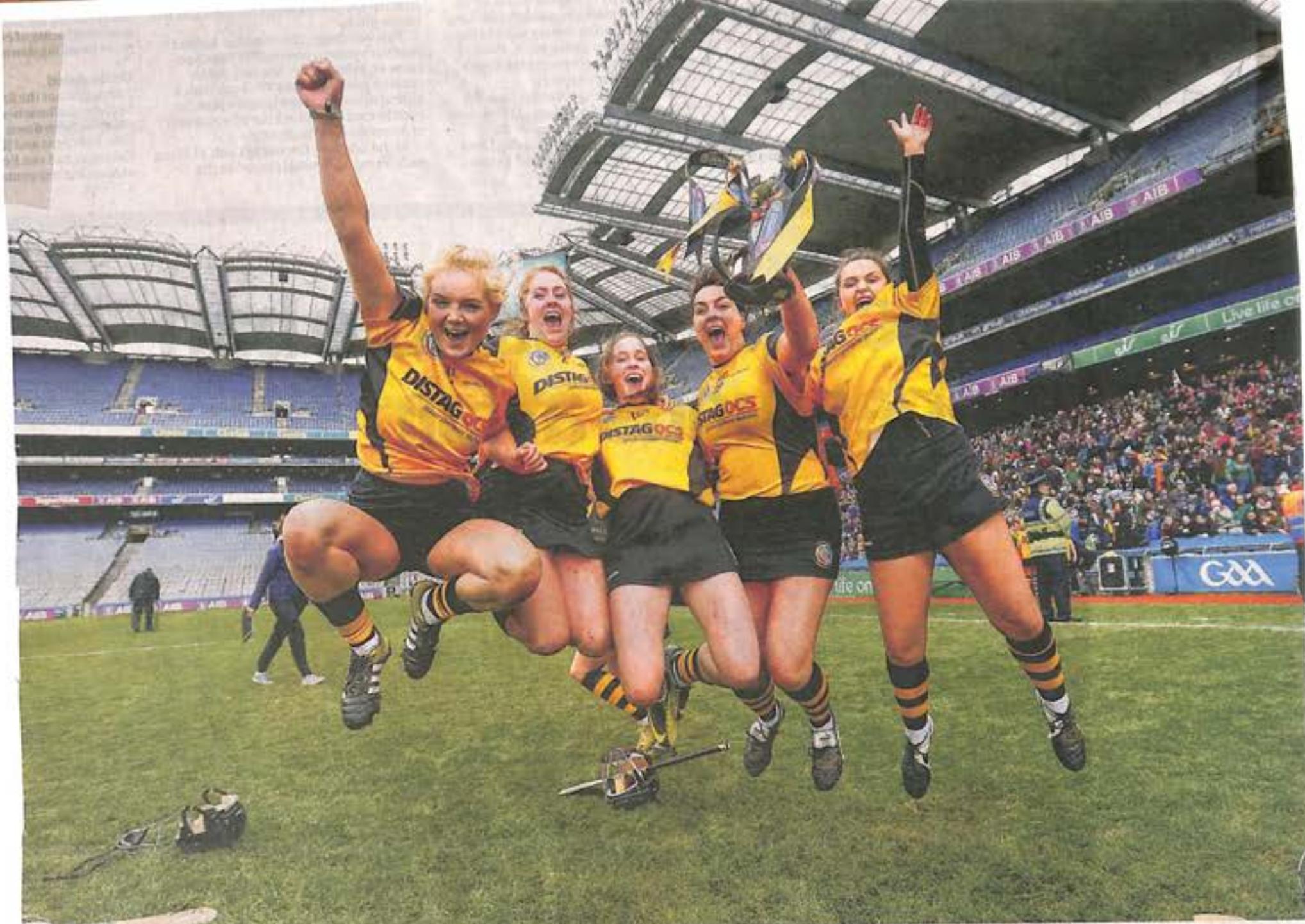
Scorers for Myshall: C Quirke 1-9(0-6fs, 0-2 45s, 0-1 pen); E Coogan 0-1

Scorers for Eglis: C Donnelly 0-9 (7fs, 1-45); N McNulty 1-0

EGLIS: L Gallagher, L Mason, B Horsfield, Cathy Jordan, Claire Jordan, C McGready, A Donnelly, S Jordan, A Jordan, C Donnelly, C Cuddy, N McNulty, M Haughey, M McHugh, L Donnelly. Subs: J Lagan for McHugh (39), A Barrett for Haughey (53).

MYSHALL: J Joyce, P Whelan, N Quirke, M Nolan, B Nolan, K Nolan, Mairéad Doyle, C Mullins, T Wilson, O Jordan, A Ruschitzko, Marian Doyle, E Coogan, C Quirke, L Nolan.

Sub: K Crooks for L Nolan (58).
Referee: F McNamara (Clare).



High Fliers Myshall's magic moment

■ Myshall's Ruth Foley, Katherine Crooks, Michelle Nolan, Leanne Nolan and Breege Nolan celebrate after winning the All-Ireland Intermediate Club Camogie final against Eglis at Croke Park yesterday by 1-10 to 1-9. Camogie: Page 11. PHOTOGRAPH: TOMMY DICKSON/INPHO

Slaughtneil deliver emotional victory on record day for Camogie

By Camogie Press
Posted 06/03/2017



By Daragh O'Conchuir

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REFEREE: R Kelly (Kildare)



Coachford Community College were ecstatic after defeating St Mary's, Charleville, in the Cork Colleges Senior 'A' Merriman Cup final at Castle

GAA President Award for Eithne

Eithne Allen, of Sarsfield Camogie club, will be presented with the prestigious GAA President Award at a banquet tomorrow night, where sports stars from across the four provinces will be honoured by GAA president, Aogán Ó Fearghail.

Allen was born into a family steeped in the history of Sarsfields GAA Glanmire. Her late father, Jack, won a senior county medal winner with Sars in 1951 and was a selector when the club won the county championship in 1957.

As a youngster, she played camogie with Sars and progressed to winning two county medals (senior and intermediate) and an All-Ireland medal in the senior colleges, in Croke Park, with her school, St Aloysius, which was coached by the late Canon Michael O'Brien.

She has been an officer of Sars camogie club since her late teens and has held various positions, since then until present day. She was part of efforts to set up Cork's first Primary Schools Coaching Scheme, in 2002.

This coaching initiative has been adopted by many clubs since then. Under her watchful eye, the club has grown in recent years to a membership of 300.

The awards will be shown on TG4, from 7.30pm tomorrow night.



Cork's Ashling Thompson under pressure from Doireann Mullany and Emma Flanagan of Dublin.

Picture: Cathal Noonan

Discipline letting down the Déise

SUNDAY,
Littlewoods National
League Division 1
Cork v Waterford,
Carriganore, 2pm.

WITH two wins from two and topping group 1 of the Littlewoods National Division 1 League, Cork will travel to WIT, Carriganore, with plenty of confidence on Sunday.

Waterford gave Wexford a fright in round one, losing by a point after Beth Carton scored 1-4 without reply in the final quarter, bringing her tally to 1-8. She had an opportunity to equalise

CAMOGIE

■ Linda Mellerick

with a free from distance but it unfortunately drifted wide. Still, Waterford would have been pleased with that performance and took it into a second-round victory over Dublin, 0-11 to 1-7.

Discipline is something Waterford need to be mindful of, having had a player sent off in both games for second yellow offences. It's difficult enough to compete for a relative newcomer at senior level without bringing unnecessary hardship on yourself.

Cork received a stern challenge from Tipperary last weekend, only shaking them off in the final quarter.

That wasn't a surprise and the two points were well deserved. Cork's second half performance was very impressive, with a strong work rate.

Ashling Thompson was outstanding when introduced for the second 30 minutes, having arrived late due to exam commitments. Amy O'Connor also impressed with Linda Collins showing well. Niamh McCarthy, with limited possession, was effective while Julia White is getting stronger with every outing.

Orla O'Dwyer's positioning as a third midfielder midway during the opening half unsettled Cork a little but once they came to terms with it, moving Pamela Mackey out as a marker in the second half, there was only going to be one winner.

So, things are shaping up okay for Cork even though this weekend sees a strain on numbers available. Orla Cotter and Hannah Looney are doubtful due to strains they currently have. With the intermediate side playing Armagh in Cork on Sunday at 1.30pm and they too having their share of starting doubts, Paudie Murray is left balancing his resources. Briege Corkery and Emer O'Sullivan have yet to partake in the league and with a few injuries here and there it doesn't take much to deplete a squad.

Still Cork should have enough in the tank to overcome Waterford. Another three points would be welcomed. Kilkenny host Dublin and Wexford enjoy home advantage over Tipperary, also on Sunday.

MAR.
2017

Slaughtneil united in quest for double



Camogie

Linda Mellerick

"NÍ NEART go cur le chéile!"

Those were the words spoken by victorious captain, Aoife Ní Chaiside, at the end of an acceptance speech delivered in Irish, following Slaughtneil's magnificent AIB All-Ireland Camogie Senior Club final victory over Sarsfields, last Sunday.

The phrase means 'There is no strength without unity' and it is a perfect motto for the club championships.

It was stitched on the jerseys of the Slaughtneil camogie team that won the first of what they hope is a Croke Park double, with the footballers returning to HQ on Friday week. What Slaughtneil brought to Croke Park last Sunday was priceless. The 6,000 in attendance was the highest on record for an All-Ireland club camogie final.

It would have been significantly smaller if Slaughtneil hadn't been 50% of the senior attraction. Just as with Mayfield, a few weeks ago, there wasn't a soul left in the parish and its boundaries. It was a tremendous final, too, which often isn't the case on pressure days.

Slaughtneil's homecoming, and the story of the now famous club, brought tears of pride.

We all hoped for the fairy-tale ending for Slaughtneil. The hurlers lost out, but the girls have triumphed and the footballers can do the double. This victory was huge for camogie and gives small clubs and parishes hope and belief that they too can achieve great things.

How emotional it must have been for the three Ní Chaiside sisters. Aoife was sure to have been thinking of her late father, Thomas, as she received the cup, the joint manager who died five days before the drawn Ulster final, after a long battle with cancer.

He had been to the forefront of the establishment of 'An Carn' and the philosophy surrounding it. An Carn offers a wide range of facilities and activities within the rural setting of Carnogher. The Carnogher mountain watches over a small rural community of about 200 households, just outside Maghera, Derry.

Thomas also developed camogie and hurling in the football stronghold, and would have been thrilled that the hurlers did their bit, as the club achieved an historic Ulster senior championship treble. His sons, Seán and Eanna, were part of that panel, while Aoife was joined by Bróna and Ellis in strengthening the spine of the camogie team.

I found myself nodding in agreement, listening to Aoife's comments after the game: "There are many, many hours in our legs. We have been training together, this particular group, with our management, for three years now. The fitness builds over a period of years, the experience builds. We've stuck together, we've been selfish in the past three years. We've had to sacrifice our social lives. We've had to sacrifice".

Those words are so true. You will



Aoife Ní Chaiside, of Slaughtneil, in action against Sarah Spellman, of Sarsfields, at Croke Park last weekend. Picture: Seb Daly/Sportsfile



Slaughtneil's Sinead Mellon flicks the sliotar away from Sarsfields' Clodagh McGrath. Picture: INPHO/Tommy Greal

hear every great sportsperson say that they are selfish. You have to be. Your time, your training, your disciplined lifestyle is the choice you make to be the best that you can be. When part of a team, you need similarly minded individuals to achieve a goal.

For many clubs, however, the desire, the willingness to sacrifice, isn't there. But more rural clubs are achieving what seems like the impossible, because it's a community effort and almost every social outing revolves around the club.

Everyone is involved. Training and matches are part of the social scene.

It often surprises me when players say they miss socialising, because of training and matches. Just because it is without make-up or beer doesn't

mean it isn't socialising.

You often hear Briege Corkery say that training with the Cork lady footballers is where she socialises, it's where she meets her friends. It isn't a chore.

We had our fair share of nights out when I was playing. But we knew when to do it. Some of my most precious memories are of training hard, winning big games, and socialising afterwards, feeling on top of the world. It does take more discipline today, that's for sure. But, to me, it's a more exciting discipline.

There is so much more to learn, so many new ways to analyse, train, and improve. I'd love to be competitively training today.

Myshall won the All-Ireland Inter-

"Just because it is without make-up or beer doesn't mean it isn't socialising"

mediate title. Another fantastic win for a non-traditional camogie and hurling stronghold. Carlow are so enthusiastic about camogie and it is fantastic they got this reward. It will, undoubtedly, have a positive knock on.

What of Galway? Four different Galway clubs have contested the last five All-Ireland senior finals: Killimor (2), Ardahan, Mullagh, and Sarsfields. They've lost all five and that's tough, but, I'm wondering, how is it that?

Galway can't win more All-Ireland senior titles with those club players. 1996 and 2013 are their two titles to date.

I didn't rate them hugely in 2013, but they won and full credit to them.

They've failed to achieve another. There's something wrong there.

Unbeaten Cork host luckless Armagh

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

Littlewoods Division 2 National Camogie League: Cork v Armagh, 2pm.

ARMAGH make the long journey south on Sunday to take on a Cork side that lead section two in Division 2 of the Littlewoods National League.

Armagh have just one game played as their round two clash with Kildare was postponed due to bad weather and having lost out to neighbours Antrim in round one they will be anxious to get points on the board.

Cork, with wins over Galway and a fancied Westmeath side, are in a strong position and a win on Sunday would set them up nicely with just two games to go, away to Kildare and Antrim.

Cork are the only county to have recorded two victories and the counties with just one game played to date Kildare and Armagh both lost as well. Even at this stage a glance at the scoring stats puts the Cork tally way ahead of the other counties with a massive plus 19 points to their credit something that could come in handy was there to be a tight finish at the end.

Defensively Cork have stood strong, conceding just six points to Galway and five to Westmeath, whilst up front players like Rachel O'Shea, Keeva McCarthy, Jacinta Crowley and Sarah Fahy have all tormented defences as they notched up 13 points against Galway and 17 against Westmeath.

Armagh will participate in premier junior for the All-Ireland series they lost out in their opening league game to Ulster Senior champions Antrim by just four points and they will have taken a lot of positives from their display on the day something that pleased their management team.

Manager Jim McCormac was optimistic after their first game in Division 2. "This was a tough game at a higher level for Armagh and has set us up for similar games in the future. This should ensure we get a tough set of game to get us ready for the Summer Championship campaign."

Joint manager Paddy McArdle was pleased with the game. "What was pleasing was the fact that we were way behind our intended schedule but the girls competed right until the end of the game and put Antrim under huge pressure for large periods of time. Had we of been a bit more clinical in front of goal and with our decision making I've no doubt we would have come away with the win."

Armagh lost out in the premier junior All-Ireland final to Carlow but they have fine players Ciara Colette McSorley, Rachael Merry, Bernie Murray and Eimear Smyth.

Cork will go in as favourites but will need to tread carefully as it won't be easy against an experienced Armagh outfit.

Mar
2017

Cork and Clare direct to Munster U16B final

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

CORK and Clare are in a Munster U16 B final without having pucked a ball.

They are the only two counties to have entered the Munster B competition. With the Cork U16 A team already through to the provincial decider, and awaiting their opponents, who will be either Clare or Tipperary, the focus is on the U16 B sides.

The B panel have worked side by side with the A squad and preparations have gone well, with several practice games played and the Cork mentors and players are looking forward to Sunday's contest. Unfortunately, at the time of going to print, the provincial council were awaiting a time and venue.

The Cork panel is:

Caoimhe Buckley (Inniscarra), Jade Hooper (Ballyhea), Jennifer Murphy (Blarney), Kate Dorney (Ballygarvan), Hannah Sexton (Kilbrittan/Timoleague), Lucy Wallace (Midleton), Claire Bernard (Sliabh Rua), Eva Rose Boylan (Aghada), Katelynn Holland (Douglas), Sinead Hurley (Enniskeane), Mairead Crowley (Kilbree), Orlaith Cummins (Sliabh Rua), Eimear Hurley (St Finbarr's), Sinead O'Donnell (Newtownshandrum), Kathleen O'Reilly (Charleville), Kate Corcoran (Enniskeane), Sarah Roche (Killeagh), Eve O'Connor (Brian Dillon's), Sarah O'Keeffe (Ballinora), Emma Murphy (Blarney), Katie Ann Crean (Ballinora), Elena Kelleher (Killeagh), Siobhan O'Donovan (Courcey Rovers), Tara McCarthy (Glen Rovers), Clionadh Casey (Dungourney), Lauren McCarthy (St Finbarr's).

Ballincollig tournament:

The Ballincollig underlights tournament has proved to be a huge hit once again. Fixtures in week two were postponed, due to pitch conditions, but everything continued as per schedule this week. Results to date indicate close clashes in all games.

In the opening week, Sarsfield's had two points to spare over Eire Og in a tough battle, Ballygarvan got the upper hand on Douglas. Onto week two and Eire Og got themselves a win, as they had a point to spare over Ballygarvan.

And the second game the same evening proved equally exciting, as Glen Rovers and Ballincollig finished level.

This week, Sarsfield's continued their good run with a win over Douglas, whilst Glen Rovers had a win over Eire Og, with five points to spare. There is just one game on the fixture list next week, on Wednesday, when Ballincollig meet Ballygarvan at 7.30pm, and the following Wednesday it is Douglas versus Glen Rovers, at 6.30pm.

A date for the last game, Sarsfield's versus Ballincollig, is yet to be announced.



Eimear O'Gorman, Charleville, is tackled by Coachford's Katie McCarthy, Jenny Burke and Ella Foley.

Picture: Eddie O'Hara

Coachford girls retain the title

Coachford College 1-6
St Mary's, Charleville 0-5

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

COACHFORD College retained the Cork Colleges Camogie Senior A Merriman Cup as they recorded a four-point victory over St Mary's, Charleville at the Cork Schools Pitch on Castle Road.

In a hard fought contest Ciara McCarthy pointed an early free to give Coachford the lead. St Mary's responded quickly to level matters before Ciara McCarthy slotted over a 45 after

a good save from Chloe Keogh in the Charleville goal.

Fiona Nelligan again edged the North Cork school in front and working hard they applied huge pressure but a Ciara McCarthy goal gave the Coachford girls an important lead which they extended quickly with a Cliona Healy point.

With their defense holding a tight hold on the Charleville attack they maintained the upper hand and with Miriam Cotter, Clara Ring, Tara Clif-

ford and Aileen Buckley strong in defense Coachford stood firm under a lot of pressure.

Caitlin O'Brien and Clara McCarthy traded points and with Cliona Healy added her second and Katie McCarthy adding one Coachford maintained their lead to the finish and they were not going to be denied. In an exciting contest, both teams gave it their all.

Best for Coachford were Ciara Twomey, who had an excellent hour, Miriam Cotter, Tara Clifford and Katie McCarthy whilst for St Mary's, Fiona Nelligan, Chloe Keogh and Kate Kilcommins battled to the finish.

Earlier in the season Coachford's junior side recorded a double when

they annexed the league and championship titles and this was the icing on the cake for the Mid Cork school.

Scorers for Coachford: K Ciara McCarthy 1-2, K McCarthy, C Healy 0-2 each.

St Mary's, Charleville: C O'Brien, E Morrissey 0-2 each, F Nelligan 0-1.

COACHFORD: C Twomey, A Buckley, M Cotter, T Clifford, A Hennessy (c), C Ring, Callie McCarthy, K McCarthy, J Burke, C Sheehan, Clara McCarthy, E Foley, C Healy, L Moynihan, L Dineen.

CHARLEVILLE: C Keogh, C Sheehan, E O'Gorman, M Fitzgibbon, L Doyle, A Galvin, M Jones, F Nelligan, Mary C Carroll, T McNamara (c), E Hogan, C O'Brien, E Morrissey (c), K Kilcommins, B O'Neill, E O'Flynn, J Hooper, S Shanahan.

Meanwhile, the Venue for tomorrow's Littlewoods Division 2 National League clash between Cork and Armagh has been confirmed as Fr O'Neill's pitch in Ballymacoda with a 2pm throw-in.

Draws made for adult and minor camogie contests

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

THOUGHTS turn to the league with the draws for the adult and minor competitions made recently and with a date of the first week in April. The following are the groups and grading of clubs from senior down to junior C. Next week, we will have the minor and underage groupings. Fixtures for the league will be distributed to clubs in the coming week.

Senior:

In group one of the senior league, Courcey Rovers, Douglas, Ballygarvan, newly promoted Mallow, Cloughduv, and Glen Rovers are paired together. In group two, county champions and league holders, Inniscarra, will be joined by Killeagh, St Catherine's, St Finbarr's, Sarsfield's, and Ballincollig.

Senior B/Intermediate:

The senior B league has three sections, one with six clubs and two with five teams. They will be joined by the intermediate clubs for the league competitions. As there are only five intermediate clubs, it is

better for them to participate in the senior B league. The two intermediate clubs who record the most victories in the senior B league will contest the intermediate league final. The senior B league groups are holders Clonakilty, Kilbrittan/Timoleague, Eire Og, Aghabullogue, Newtownshandrum, and Newtown. Group two: Valley Rovers, Brian Dillon's, Barryroe, Carrigaline and Tracton. Group three: Fr O'Neill's, last year's intermediate champions making their senior B debut, with Blackrock, Ballinhasig, who this year have re-graded down from senior, and Enniskeane.

Junior:

The junior A league is in two groups of four. Watergrasshill, with four new signings, will be the team to

watch. The inclusion of former Cork senior player, Marie O'Neill, who has transferred back from Millford, former All-Ireland-winning captain, Catriona Foley, formerly Cloughduv, Aisling Whooley, ex-Sarsfield's, and former Waterford player, Deirdre Nugent, makes the Hill a force.

The three clubs that make up the group are Na Piarasigh, Ballyhea, and Youghal, while the other group is St Vincent's, Bride Rovers, Bishopstown, and Banteer. At junior B, there are 11 teams in the league and its two groups. Group one: Ballinascorthy, Ballincollig, Charleville, Castelyons, Ballinora, and Glen Rovers. Group two: Cobh, Douglas, Inniscarra, Sarsfield's and St Finbarr's will bid for the two top spots on offer. Junior C group one is made up of Blarney, Kilworth, Kinsale, Cobh, Millstreet, Mallow, and Castlemartyr. Group two is Clonakilty, St Fanahan's, St Vincent's, Aghada, and Na Piarasigh.

Cork make it three out of three

Storming win by the gale-force Rebels

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman



Camogie

Linda Mellerick

Cork 3-19
Waterford 0-9

A RESHUFFLED Cork side overcame Waterford to make it three wins from three in the Littlewoods National League Division 1 in WIT yesterday.

This was without the injured Orla Cotter, as well as Hannah Looney and Libby Coppinger, who were both in action with UCC's footballers over the weekend.

Playing with a very strong wind it was a surprise that Waterford immediately went into defensive mode, packing at least eight players behind the ball with just four in attack. It was clear that their intent was to stop Cork from scoring more so than go out and attack the game themselves. With Gemma O'Connor starting in midfield and alternating her role between defender and attacker and Ashling Thompson dropping between Cork's half and full back lines Waterford were never going to make much headway.

They relied heavily on the free-taking of Beth Carton. So, outnumbered, they could hardly have expected anything better than the result they got. It's no surprise they finished with just nine points, three from play. Against the wind, Cork were still dominant, but putting height into their striking led to a few wides with the swirling wind, and Waterford were first to score through Niamh Rockett.

Katrina Mackey replied before Linda Collins, who had a storming afternoon, put Cork ahead after a great strike from the right angle. Collins is growing more confident with every game. Her first touch, strength, and ability to score points on the back foot, under pressure and from difficult angles is impressive.

Cork looked hungry and lively. Julia White showed well and Cork are beginning to look like they could have a selection headache once they have their full compliment of players back. It's a welcome sight after Cork's first 15



Cork's Niamh McCarthy with the sliothar against Waterford's Fiona Morrissey during the game in Carriganore, Waterford.

Picture: Sean Byrne/Deise Sport

more or less selected themselves during 2016. The Cork players looked to be enjoying themselves with some good passages of play. Their work rate continues to be strong.

Waterford led by one entering the second quarter but once Cork got their noses in front they failed to gain parity after that. Collins got inside the corner back, judging the bounce of the ball perfectly, and despite Tracey Kiely initially saving well, she flicked the rebound to the net. Further points from Collins, the two O'Connor's-Gemma and Amy and Katrina Mackey, Cork led 1-6 to 0-7 at the break.

It would be remiss of me not to mention the contribution of Beth Carton for Waterford during the opening half. Her free taking was impeccable and

she forced a fine save from Aoife Murray. After having little support, she somehow got through Cork's defence. She's a very talented player.

Now with the wind, although it did ease, Cork, as expected, opened the floodgates during the second half. Collins continued her excellent performance with 1-3 as eight players in total got on the scoresheet.

Defensively, Chloe Sigerson did well as Cork emptied their limited bench, due to the Division two side also in action. Rachel O'Shea pointed after being introduced with Finola Neville, Lauren Homan and Roisin Killeens also slotting in well.

It was a disappointing Waterford performance, it must be said. But Cork had a job to do and did it well.

It's three wins from three for the seniors with a home game next Sunday against Wexford.

Scorers for Cork: L Collins 2-5, K Mackey 1-5 (0-3), G O'Connor 0-3 (0-2), A O'Connor 0-2, J White, O Cronin, R O'Shea, L Treacy 0-1 each.

Waterford: B Carton 0-7 (0-6), N Rockett 0-2.

CORK: A Murray, L O Sullivan, R Buckley, L Treacy, P Mackey, A Thompson, C Sigerson, J Barry, G O'Connor, A O'Connor, O Cronin, J White, K Mackey, N McCarthy, L Collins.

Subs: F Neville for J Barry (38), R O'Shea for J White (48), L Homan for A O'Connor (53), R Killeen for Leanne O'Sullivan (53).

WATERFORD: B O'Regan, A Power, F Morrissey, C Whyte, M Power, J McCarthy, M Russell, A Landers, V O'Brien, K McMahon, N Rockett, S Kiernan, C McGlone, B Carton, I Heffernan.

Subs: A Glavey for I Heffernan (45), C Twomey for M Russell (48), N Aherne for K McMahon (55), B Kavanagh for S Kiernan (56).

Referee: Fintan McNamara (Clare).

Second half was a big improvement says boss Murray

CORK BOSS Paudie Murray wasn't too impressed with Waterford's approach to yesterday's league fixture in WIT but was pleased with how his players handled the situation.

"If you look at the first 20 minutes I think we moved the ball quite well," he said.

"I think we had 17 attacks during that period. Our first touch left us down at times. I'd say the last ten minutes of the first half was disappointing.

"There was a lack of intensity and movement with our team. It's difficult to play with a nine-man defence really.

"The second half was much better. 3-19 is a good score.

"Again, I'm repeating myself, we only have three or four days done on a pitch so you'd have to be happy enough, with two big games to come."

Cork struck from distance with Waterford's defence packed to capacity. The swirling wind was in-

REACTION

■ Linda Mellerick

Initially difficult to judge but when Cork settled there was a great spread of scorers.

"Yeah, I think towards the end of the first half we started our attack too deep, whereas in the first 20 minutes we were taking the ball to midfield and we were working it from there.

"So, it's something we spoke about at half time, to bring the ball a bit further and work it and switch it from there.

"And I think we used the ball that bit better in the second half.

"I think a lot of what we'll call 'the newcomers' are starting to show up a bit as well which is pleasing."

Linda Collins' performance deserves a mention.

"Yeah, her touch is incredible to be honest," stated

the Cork manager.

"In the game today she's probably up there with the best of them in terms of her first touch and that gives her a bit of time then; her striking is good.

"Chloe Sigerson played well, Jen Barry and Niamh McCarthy are going well so you know, I'm quite happy.

When you consider the players Cork were down today things do look positive?

"Yes. We've Emer Sull back Tuesday night, Orla Cotter, maybe Briege in another few weeks."

Is it starting to create competition for places?

"Well that's what we want this year. We want 20 payers to be showing up well.

"I thought Rachel O'Shea did quite well when she came in and Luran and Roisin didn't look out of place either. We've the two big ones to come so next week is a vital game really."

Tipperary strike for late revenge over Wexford

Daragh Ó Conchúir
Littlewoods
Camogie Leagues

There was no doubt about the standout tie in this weekend's Ireland Camogie Division 1 League, as Wexford and Tipperary faced off at St Patrick's Park, Enniscorthy.

It was a repeat of last year's thrilling All-Ireland quarter-final, where the Premier had their more fancied opponents on the rack only to be reeled in at the death.

They were denied on that occasion by an injury-time

point from Kate Kelly but this time around it was their turn to strike the dagger blow in extra time to record a 1-9 to 0-11 win and claim the prized scalp of a side that inflicted a first defeat for 10 months on Kilkenny two weeks ago.

The home team were heavily reliant on Linda Bolger, who scored 10 points, with Shelley Kehoe providing the other. Walsh provided 1-6 for Tipperary, who were well in touch at the break, trailing by 0-6 to 0-4.

Although Orla O'Dwyer and Mairead Teehan were also doing well in the half-forward

line, it looked like Bolger's free-taking would decide the verdict but Walsh had the final say.

Former Kilkenny hurling keeper David Herity brought his Dublin team to Tom Ryall Park but it wasn't a homecoming to remember as goals from Davina Tobin and Katie Power and nine points from Michelle Quilty helped last year's double champions ease to victory by 2-14 to 0-4.

Tobin scored a goal in the third minute after Aisling Dunphy had raised the opening white flag, and though Ali Maguire shot two points in

reply, Dublin were punished for defensive indiscipline by Quilty, who converted three frees and then followed up with another point from play. Power found the net before the break to make it 2-5 to 0-3.

It was one-way traffic after the resumption as Quilty racked up another five points, while Power, Dunphy, Kellyann Doyle and Jenny Reddy also contributed. Maguire registered Dublin's only second-half score but it was an impressive response by Kilkenny after their loss to Wexford.

In the final Group 1 game, Cork stayed top when making

it three from three. A stunning second-half was the key to their 3-19 to 0-8 success at Carriganore. Only two points separated them at the break (1-6 to 0-7) but Cork cut loose after the restart and are in a very strong position ahead of crunch ties against Kilkenny and Wexford.

In Group 2, Galway maintained their progress, and Ailish O'Reilly her scoring exploits, the Oranmore-Maree player providing 1-10 in the 3-15 to 1-5 defeat of top-tier newcomers Meath. Galway had the wind in the first half but didn't score for 15 minutes

and led by three at the break after Grace Coleman's overhead just before half time made it 0-9 to 1-3.

Galway brought on An Marie Starr and Niamh Kilkenny at half-time and Starr was involved as Niamh Hanniffy scored a goal in the opening minute. Jane Dolan and Sinead Hackett hit point for Meath but two goals from Laura Loughnane and O'Reilly confirmed the result.

In the group's other game, Limerick finished with the last three points to keep their semi-final hopes on track, beating Offaly by 0-15 to 0-12.

The Peter Downey Referee Academy Unveiled

By Camogie Press
Posted 10/03/2017



The Peter Downey Referee Academy was unveiled last Sunday, March 5th, at a special event on the morning of the All-Ireland Club Championships Finals where the first referees from the academy were also honoured.

The late Peter Downey was a highly regarded Camogie and GAA referee. A proud Iniscarra and Cork man, he was the chairperson of the Camogie Association's National Referee Committee for a number of years. To honour and remember Peter and his legacy the Camogie Association have officially named the National Referee Academy in his name, *The Peter Downey Referee Academy*.

Peter was highly innovative and was instrumental in setting up the first National Camogie Referee Academy. Peter drove the Referee Academy on, helping and guiding many referees along the way. He cast a great listening ear to those who needed advice on and off the field of play. He had a great integrity and passion for the game which was evident to those who had the pleasure to meet and get to know him.

Peter helped develop the Camogie Association's Referee Pathway which was launched in 2015. Peter worked tirelessly to promote refereeing and his knowledge of Camogie and GAA was unequalled. He has left an indelible mark on the game of Camogie and in the hearts of those who knew him.

The 7 referees from the first Peter Downey Referee Academy were:

Julie O'Neill (Armagh)
Jenny Byrne (Dublin)
Grainne Coulter (Down)
Eamon Cassidy (Derry)
Ray Kelly (Kildare)
John McDonagh (Galway)
Peter Dowd (Meath)

Links Community Sd

CAMOGIE: O'Neills Post Primary Junior A final: Cross & Passion-Antrim v Loreto Kilkenny, Naomh Peregrine-Blakestown, 2pm.
O'Neills Post Primary Junior B final: Banagher College-Offaly v St Angelas Ursuline, Waterford, St Lachtains GAA-Freshford, 3pm.
O'Neills Post Primary Junior C final: Borrisokane Community College v Abbey Community College, St Lachtains GAA-Freshford, 1pm.

Camogie:
NCL Div 1 Grp 1: Kilkenny 2-14 Dublin 0-4, Waterford 0-8 Cork 3-19, Wexford 0-11 Tipperary 1-9;
Grp 2: Galway 3-15 Meath 1-5, Limerick 0-15 Offaly 0-12;
Div 2 Grp 1: Down 0-5 Derry 3-15, Kilkenny 2-11 Wexford 2-7, Laois 0-3 Carlow 0-5;
Grp 2: Cork 5-13 Armagh 0-5, Galway 1-9 Westmeath 0-11, Kildare 0-16 Antrim 0-9;
Div 3: Clare 1-3 Dublin 1-10, Roscommon 0-8 Kerry 3-07;
All-Ireland MACC: Wexford 1-3 Kilkenny 3-10.

MAR.
2017

Kelly runs riot as Loreto return to winner's enclosure

By Camogie Press
Posted 13/03/2017



LORETO Secondary School, Kilkenny returned to the summit of schools camogie when blasting their way to a 6-19 to 1-4 defeat of Ursuline Convent, Thurles in the O'Neills Post Primary Senior A Final at Conahy Shamrocks on Saturday.

The win moves Loreto to outright third in the roll of honour with five titles, just ahead of fellow Marble City school Presentation Secondary School (four) and only behind St Raphael's of Loughrea (eight) and Charleville's St Mary's (seven).

It was a welcome return to the top spot on the rostrum, having lost last year's final to another Loughrea school, St Brigid's.

It was notable that despite Loreto garnering their four previous titles in consecutive seasons (2010-2013), many astute local commentators were labelling this unit, which has Cork star Julia White as a member of their management team, as among the most talented every produced by the famed academy.

They certainly lived up to the billing and had this settled by half time, when they led by 3-11 to 0-3. Ursuline did manage a goal in the second half from Eimear McGrath and the junior starter was responsible for the entire Thurles tally.

Scarily for those planning to topple Loreto in the future however, they have their own prodigious talents. The Kelly twins, Hannah and Rachel, are integral members of the team that will compete in the Junior A final next week and indeed, were part of the panel that reached the senior decider 12 months ago.

Hannah was named player of the match and it was impossible to argue with that decision, as the James Stephens neophyte plundered 3-5. She had 1-4 in the opening period, the goal coming from a penalty after a foul on Aoife O'Carroll.

O'Carroll and Eimear Keogh also found the net before the short whistle and in the second half, it was more of the same as Kelly converted another penalty, awarded after Sophie O'Dwyer was illegally halted, and blowed the Ursuline net from play. All her five points came in open play as well. O'Dwyer registered the sixth goal.

On Friday, Castleknock Community School became only the fourth Dublin school after pioneers St John of God, Artane (1993), Maryfield College, Drumcondra (1994) and St Dominic's College, Cabra (2015) to annex a senior PP crown when they found another gear in the second half to overcome St Patrick's, Keady by 2-7 to 0-4.

It was just 0-4 to 0-2 at the interval but goals from Aoife Whelan and Deirdre McCarthy broke the resistance of a Keady unit who had the game's outstanding performer in player of the match, Leah McGoldrick.

The D final took place this evening and saw John the Baptist Community School come out on top against Scoil Mhuire, Trim 3-10 to 1-8. The first half was quite an open affair with the Hospital side leading by 3-5 to 1-7. Defences got on top after the resumption but John the Baptist fared best in that regard too to prevail.

Five-goal Rebels raid the Orchard in style

CORK 5-13
ARMAGH 0-5

BY SHIRLEY MOLONEY

THREE first-half goals in quick succession put Cork on the front foot in this Littlewoods NCL Division 2 clash at Ballymacoda on Sunday.

Between the tenth and 15th minutes, Katelyn Hickey struck for two goals while Hayley Ryan also waved a green flag, just as visitors Armagh were showing signs of settling and getting a handle on the game.

Cork showed great teamwork and, with Keeva McCarthy in fine free-taking form, notching six points from placed balls as well as three from play, the hosts were too strong. By half-time, the scoreboard read 3-8 to 0-1 in favour of the Rebels.

Armagh didn't let Cork have it all their own way and on the

resumption showed a spirited intent, however their lack of conviction in front of the posts proved costly. They did score four points in the second half, two from frees and one from play through Rachel Merry, and one fine long-range effort from Grainne Kelly.

Cork picked off some very well worked scores, and played some excellent teamwork, making it very difficult for Armagh to breakdown the Rebel attack. Caroline Sugrue had a part to play in three of the five goals and rattled the net with one of her own up front.

The Orchard County were awarded a penalty on 55 minutes, but Colette McSorley saw her shot on goal stopped by Amy Lee between the Cork posts. At the very end, Ryan got her third goal and Cork's fifth to round off a very impressive performance.

Cork top the Division 2 Group 2 table and next up is an away trip to Kildare this Sunday.

Scorers

Cork: K McCarthy 0-9 (5f, 145), K Hickey, H Ryan 2-1 each, C Sugrue 1-1, S Fahy 0-1.
Armagh: R Merry 0-4 (2f), G Kelly 0-1.

Cork: A Lee (Na Piarsaigh); R Walsh (Fr O'Neills), S Harrington (Fr O'Neills), N Ni Chaoimh (Killeshall); L Lynch (Cloughduv), S Buckley (Ballincollig), J Crowley (Courcey Rovers); N O'Callaghan (Sarsfields), L Callanan (Glen Rovers); M McCarthy (Sarsfields), K McCarthy (St Finbarr's), M Buckley (Ballygarvan); H Ryan (Blackrock), K Hickey (Blackrock), C Sugrue (Ballinascorthy).

Subs: S Fahy (Douglas) for O'Callaghan (38), L Kelly (Sarsfields) for Buckley, M Mullins (Sarsfields) for Callanan (both 50).

Armagh: C Devlin; C O'Hare, L McGoldrick, C McKinley; A Murphy, G Kelly, C McCooley; C Casey, S



Surrounded: Cork's Caroline Sugrue (Ballinascorthy) in action against Armagh in the Littlewoods Ireland League Division 2 fixture last Sunday.

(Photo: Denis O'Flynn)

Woods; E O'Kane, B Murray, L Donnelly; C McSorley, C Donnelly,

R Merry, Subs: E Smyth for McKinley, L

Loughran for McCooley, Referee: A O'Brien (Wexford).



Cork's Linda Collins has her effort blocked by a Waterford defender during their Littlewoods Ireland Camogie League Division One game in Carriganore, Waterford. The Rebels face third-placed Wexford this Sunday at CIT. Picture: Sean Byrne/Deise Sport

Wexford will be eager to stop Cork

SUNDAY
Littlewoods Ireland National
Camogie League Division 1: Cork v
Wexford, CIT, 2pm.

WITH Cork leading their Division 1 Group 1 table and Wexford trailing by three points after their defeat to Tipperary last Sunday, this Sunday's tie between the two is particularly crucial for Wexford, sitting in third behind Kilkenny.

If they don't take the points they are effectively out of the chance of making the semi-finals.

CAMOGIE

■ Linda Mellerick

Kilkenny play Waterford also on Sunday and are expected to come through that challenge. Should they do so then Cork and Kilkenny's final game in the group, pitted against each other on April 1st, will just decide who sits first and second in the table.

If Kilkenny lose to Waterford, then it could throw others a lifeline particularly if Cork then beat them but there's a lot of doubtful 'ifs' there.

Wexford are not the team they were and don't look like they'll strengthen

again anytime soon. Everyone will play them up, particularly Cork, as that's what you do.

A one-point victory over Waterford in round one and a loss to Tipperary last Sunday shows just where Wexford are in the pecking order.

Yes, they had a surprise 2-11 to 0-9 win over Kilkenny in round two. But Kilkenny had just returned from a sun holiday on the back of their All-Ireland success last September.

An injury time point by Kate Kelly denied Tipperary a championship semi-final spot last year.

Last Sunday's victory showed that wasn't a fluke for the Premier County. Wexford were heavily reliant on Linda

Bolger, who scored 10 points.

With home advantage and in good early season form, Cork should take their fourth win on the trot, provided they bring the same work rate to CIT that they have shown to date.

Libby Coppinger and Hannah Looney, on O'Connor cup duty with UCC last weekend, return. However, Cork's intermediate squad also travel to Kildare so it will once again be a balancing act with resources for Paudie Murray as he tries to keep the division two squad's unbeaten record intact.

In addition to the Cork and Wexford and Waterford and Kilkenny ties on Sunday, Tipperary travel to Dublin. Dublin have yet to take a point.

CAMOGIE

WINNER: Beth Carton | Waterford

Waterford have started their 2017 campaign with renewed intent to make a mark on Division One, with Carton in particular to the fore, turning in some determined performances. In their opening game, the Deise lost out by a single point to Wexford on a 1:11 to 1:10 scoreline, Carton contributing 1-8, including an unanswered 1:4 in the last 10 minutes which nearly overturned the game. In their next game out against Dublin, Waterford recorded a 4 point win (11 points to 7) in tough conditions and while it was a solid team performance, the De La Salle ace proved the difference in the two sides, contributing 9 points, 7 of which came from frees. The Munster side are showing continued development and will hope Carton's irresistible form can make a serious impact this year.

Other Nominees:
Chloe Morey - Clare
Ciara Storey - Wexford



PLAYER OF THE MONTH AWARD

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Elverys

#WGPApotm

Camogie:
NCL Div 1 Grp 1: Cork 0-16 Wexford 0-4; Dublin 2-10 Tipperary 2-11; Waterford 0-14 Kilkenny 2-12;
Grp 2: Clare 1-12 Limerick 1-13; Meath 2-6 Offaly 2-8;
Div 2 Grp 1: Carlow 0-9 Wexford 0-6; Derry 2-10 Kilkenny 2-7; Laois 2-11 Down 2-7;
Grp 2: Armagh 2-4 Galway 2-6; Kildare 1-8 Cork 1-12; Westmeath 1-9 Antrim 1-7;
Div 3: Kerry 1-15 Clare 1-4; Tyrone 0-5 Roscommon 2-6.
Handball:

MAR. 2017

Season can drag on for Cork clubs



Camogie

Linda Mellerick

A FIXTURES review was established by An Uachtarán Catherine Neary to critically review camogie's current fixture structures.

Part of the terms of reference outlined the need: "to ensure that our players can participate in a fixture schedule which maximises their opportunity to play as many games as possible at a level that is competitive, age appropriate and reflects their skill set."

Extracts from the committee's report were as follows: Since 2009 at intercounty level there has been a significant increase in the number of fixtures. This has led to a very vibrant intercounty scene, promoting our game at the highest level. However, it cannot be ignored that each increase at intercounty level has an impact on our clubs and our club players. Since we all recognise that our clubs are the bedrock of the Camogie Association, it is incumbent on us to respond, to continue as is, is not an option. It is widely recognised across all Gaelic Games that the club player needs to be equally valued. This dictates that club fixtures cannot be 'shoehorned' into either end of the intercounty schedule.

The findings and recommendations were split into three areas:

1. Player Eligibility:

The Camogie Association rules permit players who are over 15 on the 31st of December in the previous year to play adult club competition and over 16 to play adult intercounty competitions (Rule 28.4). This eligibility has implications for player welfare and burnout, fixture congestion and the retention of adult players.

The current eligibility rules permit underage players to play across several grades including the adult grade. Many young players are participating in numerous training sessions and games across a number of grades. The evidence is that our minor intercounty players who play adult intercounty are also predominately training at adult level.

The situation is replicated at club level and this focus on the short term gains for teams is detrimental in the long term to our players and game.

The Committee gave careful consideration to the higher prevalence of minors playing on adult intercounty teams at lower grades and in counties with fewer registered adult players. Although these minors still represent a very small percentage of overall registered adult players, we consider that it would be sensible to phase the introduction of changes in rule 28.4.

Recommendation on player eligibility Proposal to Congress 2017: Amend Rule 28.4 From 2018 - A player must be over 16 to play Adult Club Competition From 2018 - A player must be over 17 to play Adult intercounty Competition From 2019 - A player must be over 18 to play Adult intercounty Competition

2. Intercounty Competitions Structures:

"The current Minor All-Ireland



Coachford Community College's Aileen Hennessy gathers the ball from Fiona Neligan, St Mary's, Charleville, during the Cork Colleges Merriman Cup camogie final at Castle Road.

Picture: Eddie O'Hare



At the Blackrock Camogie victory dinner were Lord Mayor Cllr Des Cahill, Kate O'Brien, Fergal Ryan, Aoife McCurtin, Louise Weldon and Ger Coughlan.

Picture: George Hatchell

competition is scheduled from the middle of February to end of April, with some counties participating during this period or later in the year in a provincial competition. This competition is the culmination of a players intercounty underage career, the last opportunity to play together on teams that have progressed through the age grades. The proposal is to run the round robin stages from end of February. The Provincial finals would take place at the end of April with provincial finalists entering a knockout All-Ireland semi-finals and finals in July."

The one positive for clubs with the inter-county minor championship was that it was finished in April. The proposal is to extend the playing year from April to mid-late July has a huge effect on clubs. They will go through critical months without their key players. The issue for clubs isn't just match day.

They can't get their hands on their players for training or challenge games and the whole dynamic of their group is gone. In Cork the restrictions placed on intercounty club players is over the top. A two-week pre-championship restriction (for every round) on club players across almost all grades is wrong.

And often, it's placed on players sitting on the intercounty bench.

3. Club Competitions Structure:

One recommendation I liked under this heading with regards the inter-county adult competitions was scheduled breaks in competition during the championship to allow club competitions to continue during the optimal playing season (April to September).

The report focuses primarily on player burn out more so than the volume of inter-county games which as the article says 'shoehorns club games into either end of the intercounty season'.

It focuses on the inter-county players and their burn out.

It is up to intercounty managers and clubs to ensure their players aren't overtrained or burnt out and that for the most part happens today as opposed to years ago, when you'd often train twice in one evening. Adults tend to speak up if they're feeling pulled in too many directions and parents should intervene for minors.

It's hard work training an underage club team in Cork. The season in longer than the inter-county one.

I coached Brian Dillon's at underage. One year we lost the minor semi-final the week before Christmas, the following year our season ended December 6.

We had started training in February. If you don't start training, at least by March, you run the risk of losing players to other sports.

Kids want to play.

"If you don't start training by March you run the risk of losing players to other sports..."

Cork are hitting top speed in the league

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

TOMORROW
Division 2 Littlewoods National Camogie League
Cork v Kildare,
Hawkfield, Newbridge, 2pm

KILDARE host Cork in what is for them a vital Division 2 Littlewoods National League game on Sunday.

Having lost out in their opening game to Westmeath by six points 3-6 to 0-9 their round two games versus Armagh was postponed due to weather conditions. They bounced back last weekend to record a victory over Antrim round three.

Cork are enjoying a superb campaign they have toppled Westmeath, Galway and Armagh with strong performances and they are sitting pretty on top of group two. Cork have a massive plus 41 points of a scoring difference to the other sides in the group this is no surprise given their high tally of points in all three games. They hit 13 points against Galway, 17 against Westmeath and notched up 12 against Armagh.

A win again on Sunday will see them guaranteed a semi-final spot but again another strong statement is needed to keep the momentum going. Cork has introduced a lot of new faces to their line up.

Again this weekend the senior team are playing at the same time as the intermediates so we can expect to have a few players tied up with the senior squad. However, the intermediates showed last Sunday they are a strong side with plenty of back up. Kaitlin Hickey, Keeva McCarthy, Hayley Ryan, Caroline Sugrue and Sarah Fahy were all on the score sheet while in defence Cork held the Armagh attack to just two points from play.

Kildare appointed Tipperary native Dinny Cahill as their intermediate camogie manager for the 2017 late last year. Dinny is well known in the hurling world and was involved with both Antrim and Limerick hurlers previously whilst he also trained Portumna hurlers from Galway with huge success.

He was also trainer of the Killmore club camogie team in Galway and was at the helm for them when they won the All-Ireland club championship title when they overcame Cork side Inniscarra.

Against Westmeath it was nip and tick all through but two late goals saw Cahill's side lose out.

Having bounced back to overcome Antrim they will be looking to players such as Róisín O'Connell, Siobhán Hurley, Aine Conway and Louise Keatley to keep them in the hunt against a Cork side currently on the crest of the wave and hell bent on securing themselves a place in the last four.

Cork win to secure Division 2 semi-final

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

Kildare 1-8

Cork 1-12

KILDARE led by two points in this Division 2 Group 2 Littlewoods National League clash in yesterday in Hawkfield, Newbridge, but a strong second-half statement from Cork saw them record an important four-point victory.

Cork came to Newbridge with three wins from three games and this one guarantees them a place in the last four as they stretched their advantage at the top of section 2.

Irrespective now of the result of next weekend's away clash with Antrim they have done enough to guarantee themselves a semi-final spot.

Kildare led 0-6 to 0-4 at the interval after playing with the advantage of the wind. Points from Melissa Lyons, Siobhán Hurley and Emer Reilly helping them hold the advantage as a hard working Cork stayed in touch with good play from Keeva McCarthy, Jacinta Crowley, Maebh McCarthy and Caroline Sugrue.

Keeva McCarthy was unerring for Cork notching up five points from frees and with Claire Shine making a return to the inter-county camogie scene, notching up two points on her introduction, Cork were pushing for home.

Kildare kept in touch with Siobhán Hurley, Leah Sutton and Aine Conway keeping the score board ticking over. Melissa Lyons grabbed a Kildare goal but when Kaitlin Hickey won Sarah Fahy's long delivery Hickey made no mistake rattling the net for a vital Cork goal.

With qualification secured Cork selector Seán Cremin was happy with his charges display.

"We ground out a good result again today and that's what we asked them for, each week the confidence is growing and to have our semi-finals spot secured with a game to go is a good indication of the commitment we are getting from the girls.

"We will go to Antrim next weekend and aim to finish on a high and look forward to the latter stages of the competition.

"Today we got the win and it's job well done."

Scorers for Kildare: S Hurley 0-4 (0-3 f), M Lyons 1-1, E Reilly, A Conway, L Sutton 0-1 each.

Cork: K McCarthy 0-5, K Hickey 1-0, J Crowley, C Shine, M McCarthy 0-2 each, C Sugrue 0-1.

KILDARE: S A Hyland, K Perkin, C Nolan, F Trant, N Hegarty, A Trant, C Flanagan, L Keatley, A Conway, L Sutton, E Reilly, S Hurley, D Byrne, M Lyons, R O Connell.

CORK: A Lee, A Kelleher, S Harrington, L Lynch, N O'Keefe, S Buckley, J Crowley, S Fahy, F Neville, M McCarthy, K McCarthy, M Buckley, H Ryan, K Hickey, C Sugrue.

Subs: N O'Callaghan for J Crowley, C Shine for H Ryan, L Kelly for M McCarthy.

Referee: Jonny Byrne (Dublin).

Rebels win again to make semis



Camogie

Linda Mellerick

Cork 0-16

Wexford 0-4

FOUR wins from four and Cork are through to the Littlewoods Ireland National League Division 1 semi-final with a game still to play against Kilkenny in two weeks.

In CIT yesterday they accounted for Wexford with a score line that didn't flatter, such was their superiority. Cork dominated proceedings in the opening half and should have been more than seven points ahead at the break.

But, their work rate was once again excellent and even if a move didn't come off the thought process was good.

Cork's style of still working the ball out of defence but then letting it in long to their forwards has created a faster attacking approach and a bit of an impetus in the players. With such speedy forwards in the returned Julia White, Amy O'Connor, and Niamh McCarthy one would expect that Cork's speed of play will only get better as the months' progress.

Wexford played a third midfielder, leaving Ashling Thompson for the most part unmarked, and she swept up, with good distribution. She seems to be enjoying her new role at centre-back and equally Gemma O'Connor has added a new buzz and energy around the middle of the park. Rena Buckley, Leanne O'Sullivan, and Laura Treacy ensured Aoife Murray had a quiet opening half, yet the seasoned outstanding keeper did treat us to an acrobatic dive on the stroke of half time to deflect a certain point.

With the wind swirling in the opening half, it favoured Cork slightly towards the end of it. Niamh McCarthy, marked by the teak tough Siona Nolan had a good afternoon, finishing with three points.

Amy O'Connor, bruised after the encounter I would expect, ran tirelessly and with Orla Cronin and the skillful stick of Katrina Mackey, Cork hit five points on the trot to lead 0-13 to 0-1 entering the final quarter.

Mag's Darcy, not to be outdone by Murray, made a superb save from Mackey as Wexford scrambled and dived to stop Cork from adding to their tally.

Wexford emptied their bench with the allotted eight substitutes and it strengthened their challenge, with Mary and Una Leacy, two of the eight to be sprung. Mary pointed with a big hit from 60 metres and Linda Bolger hit two from frees. But the hour undoubtedly belonged to Cork.

Scorers for Cork: K Mackey 0-6 (0-4 f, 0-1 pen), N McCarthy 0-3, A O'Connor 0-2, G O'Connor 0-2, J White, O Cronin 0-1, E O'Sullivan 0-1 each.

Wexford: L Bolger 0-2 (f), C Foxe, U Leacy 0-1 each.

CORK: A Murray, L O'Sullivan, R Buckley, L Treacy, P Mackey, A Thompson, C Sigerson, G O'Connor, J Barry, A O'Connor, O Cronin, J White, K Mackey, L Collins, N McCarthy.

Subs: R O'Shea for J White (52), L Coppinger for L O'Sullivan (23), E O'Sullivan for J Barry (54).

WEXFORD: M Darcy, C Storey, S Nolan, K Atkinson, S O'Connor, A Leacy, S Sinnott, A Cardiff, S Kehoe, N Fortune, C Foxe, L O'Leary, B Gordon, L Bolger, S Kehoe.

Subs: U Sinnott and L Walsh for A Cardiff and S Kehoe (43), M Leacy for S Sinnott (46), S Cousins and U Leacy for S Kehoe and L O'Leary (46), J Dillon for B Gordon (53), K O'Connor and E Walsh for A Leacy and C Foxe (56).

Referee: Ray Kelly (Kildare).



Cork's Chloe Sigerson and Wexford's Shelly Kehoe in action in yesterday's game.

Picture: INPHO/Ken Sutton

ter the final quarter. Mag's Darcy, not to be outdone by Murray, made a superb save from Mackey as Wexford scrambled and dived to stop Cork from adding to their tally.

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Referee: Ray Kelly (Kildare).



Cork's Niamh McCarthy takes on the Wexford defence.

Picture: INPHO/Ken Sutton

Rena pleased as Cork prepare for Cats league test

CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick

CORK captain Rena Buckley was happy with her side's performance against Wexford yesterday, while acknowledging that it's very early days yet.

"Yeah, a good win. I suppose we were looking forward to this game. Wexford have always been a very tough game for us, so I look I suppose we got the scores but the work rate Wexford brought was excellent.

"It was a tough game and we'll definitely learn from it."

Cork seem to have a spring in their step.

The work rate from for this time of the year is very good and the players seem to be enjoying their hurling.

"Yeah I think we went back training a bit earlier and I think we're probably playing with a little more freedom this year and you know there's a good buzz there.

"I suppose we'll learn a lot against Kilkenny in two weeks time, to see exactly where we're at but so far

so good, we're learning away and we're happy enough with how things are going."

Referring to Cork's faster style of play, Rena agreed they are looking to improve in that regard.

"Yeah, we're certainly striking it (the ball) a bit more which is great.

"Look we were shown up in the final last year. It was hard for us to get over the semi-final last year and when we got to the final we were well beaten on the day, so we really have to work hard this year if we've any notions of doing anything, we're very aware of that.

"There's nothing like a good beating in an All-Ireland final to bring you back down to earth.

"I think people are just working away hard and we

won't be jumping to any conclusions or anything like that but we are happy with how things are going so far.

The defeat last September seems to have brought a new urgency.

There seems to be a hunger there.

"Yeah and you clipped on it earlier; we've brought a few new players onto the panel this year and there will be a fight for places and that's outstanding.

"Training is going well, the matches that we've played so far have gone well. I think people are happy with our style of play so we'll try and keep our shoulder to the wheel.

"We'll see where we're going in two weeks time but it's not the end of the world either.

"We'll just keep up the work and please God by the summer we'll have a good panel of players, we'll be playing well and we'll have a lot of work put in.

"That's what we're looking for at the moment."

When your mother is your number one fan

They've stood on almost every sideline, washed hundreds of dirty kits and fuelled up their hungry sports-mad children with nourishing home-made meals — CHRIS DUNNE talks to the mothers of two of Cork's greatest sports people, ahead of Mother's Day

MUMS Marie O'Callaghan and Kitty Corkery don't see themselves as legends. But both Cork women have raised sporting legends. Marie's second youngest is rugby star Donncha O'Callaghan and Kitty's second youngest is Gaelic Football All Star, Briege Corkery.

"Yes, I did all the fetching, carrying, dropping and ferrying," says Marie, who has four boys, and one daughter.

"My crowd got very big," adds Marie, who found herself a young widow when her husband Hughie died suddenly at the age of 40.

"I reaped from what I put in. People used to say, how did you do it? How did you feed them all? Let's just say there were a lot of potatoes peeled in my kitchen!"

The Cork mothers fed, washed, laundered, cleaned and chauffeured for their children for endless days, months and years.

Donncha, 37, and Briege, 30, who lived 38.9 kilometres from each other, would go on to bring honour and glory to their county, their country, their families and to themselves, in different sports.

"Briege was never to be found in the house," says Kitty, who is the mother of 10 children — Siobhan, Marie, Sean, Denis, Michéal, Katherine, Donal, Jeremiah, Briege and Mairead. They live in Rusheen, Macroom.

"She was always outside around the farm. Briege wanted to help with the animals and drive the tractor. She never played with dolls. She only played games with balls. She hit balls for hours on end outside in the garden and in the fields. There was plenty of scope and she had lots of team-mates," says Kitty. "Briege was a real tomboy."

She had her mother's genes. Kitty won an Intermediate County medal with Canovee in 1973. Briege's sisters, Katherine and Marie, both camogie players, toggled out for Cork.

"Her first match was at the age of seven in the 1995 Scaith na Scoil semi-final," says Kitty of Briege.

"Her sister Katherine was in 6th class at Rusheen National School and Briege was in first class. Briege scored a goal by running under bigger girls' legs and striking a ball into the net. It was an accident more than anything!"

Briege's first taste of many future victories came in the same competition in 1998 when she was vice-captain of the Scaith na Scoil team. The taste of success whetted her appetite. Briege wasn't just hungry for the thrills and spills of camogie and Gaelic football — she was ravenous.

Kitty was up to 90.

"The washing-machine was going non-stop," she recalls. "I used to dread Fridays because the piles of endless laundry never seemed to get smaller. My lads were into sport too as well as the girls. Dirty kits and the washing and drying of them in 24 hours were all part and parcel of the household."

"The cooker was on full steam ahead. Big pots of potatoes were always on the boil. I had help but there was never a let-up in the house; cooking, cleaning and washing."

Briege was a natural born winner, winning six All-Ireland Senior camogie medals, as well as 11 All-Ireland Senior Gaelic Football medals, six camogie All Stars and 10 Ladies Football All Stars. She is arguably the greatest GAA sportsperson of all time.

"Briege stuck with camogie and Gaelic football when her career took off," says Kitty.

"Her dad, Mike, played football with Aghinagh in his younger days. But then the farm took over all his free time."

Kitty's free time was spent on the road, embarking on long car journeys to training, to matches, and to cheer on her daughter from the side-lines.

"We'd pack the flask and a basket of sandwiches and off we'd go," she says. "Even when the going got tough and the venues were further and further away we got up early in the morning, rain, hail or snow and took to the road."

"In those days we'd all pile in to the car. There were no such things as seat-belts. We'd have a car-full of children, as many as could fit, and head for the match," says Kitty.

"The fun was massive. We all had a great time and we had a great social life and we made lots of friends all over the country."

There was a lot of driving involved. Briege played for club and county.

"I spent 30 years driving to camogie and football matches," says Kitty. "The lads would cycle to local venues for their matches. The weekends were hectic."

"I grew to love Monday mornings when some semblance of normality would come back and I might even get a rest for an hour or so."

The clock ruled the roost.

"Everyone watched the clock," says Kitty. "As soon as the homework was done, they were up and out hitting balls in all directions."

There were a lot of hurleys and boots put through the wringer. "Briege went through loads of hurleys and boots," says Kitty.

"She still does."

Briege was totally committed to her sport. Her mother was behind her all the way.

"I was always on the side-line," says Kitty. "In recent years I've been to Croke Park twice every year. But the first time I went to Croke Park, it was something special. And winning the first Cork All Ireland Football final in 2005 was unbelievable."



NUMBER ONE FAN: GAA player Briege Corkery in the company of her mum Kitty. Picture John Tarrant

Was she nervous?

"I was very nervous," says Kitty. "I was nervous of injuries too. Briege broke her ribs once and her hand when she fell at home. But she always bounced back."

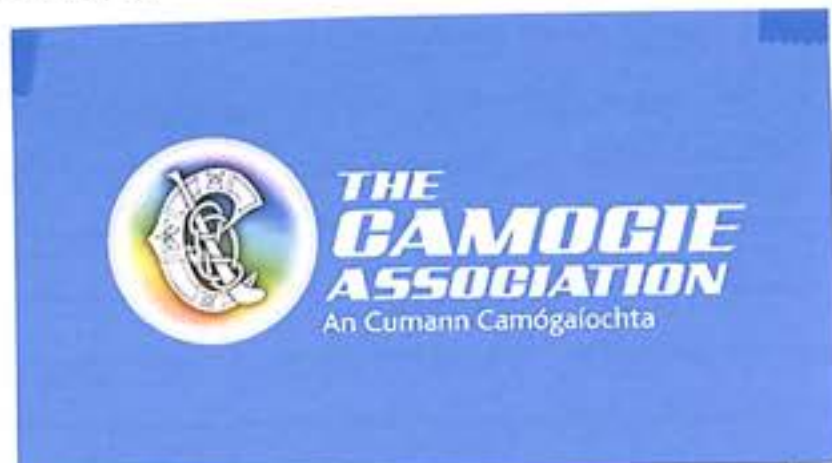
"Briege never gives up. She always comes back. Now she is back outdoors where she is happiest. Herself and her husband, Diarmuid, are in a milk production enterprise with Crosshaven-based dairy farmer, Michael Bateman. She has achieved great things on the field of sport but she is still the local girl. And she is great still to help out on the farm at home."

Marie O'Callaghan could have done with some help too.

MAR. 2017

Loreto maintain Junior stranglehold and cement dream double

By Camogie Press
Posted 19/03/2017



LORETO Kilkenny completed an incredible season of camogie for the secondary school when annexing the O'Neills All-Ireland Post Primary Junior A title, just a week after claiming the Senior A crown.

The successive marks the completion of a three-in-a-row at this level for the college and an incredible eighth success in nine seasons.

Cross and Passion were victors in 2008, the season before Loreto embarked on their remarkable run, and at half time, looked like they might be on the way to repeating that win when leading by 2-8 to 2-2.

They only managed a point in the second half though, while Loreto found another level, pulling away to win by 3-11 to 2-9.

They were able to call on Hannah Kelly, player of the match in the Senior A final, after scoring 3-5, and her twin sister Rachel, who shot a point last week. This time around, it was Rachel who took the scoring honours, slotting seven points, while Hannah provided two.

As important as the James Stephen duo were though, goals win games and Rebecca Cuddihy, who like the Kelly siblings was a member of the senior panel not just this year, but last year too when they were defeated in the All-Ireland final, pounced for a pair of them. Maddy Lawson, who also raised a green flag in the semi-final, repeated the trick on the biggest stage to help extend Loreto's sensational winning run.

Charley McCarry and Carla McCarry's goal helped Cross and Passion establish that six-point interval advantage, while Róisín McCormick and player of the match Maeve Kelly slotted three points apiece but they just couldn't hold Loreto off in the second half.

In the Junior B final, St Angela's Ursulines steamrollered Banagher College 3-16 to 1-4. The Offaly outfit were highly competitive in the opening period, at which stage they trailed by only two points, 1-3 to 0-4. They had no answer however to the firepower of their Waterford rivals, who pulled away inexorably as the game wore on.

Borrisokane Community College and Abbey Community College will have to do it all over again after finishing on 3-9 and 1-4 in the Junior C final.

The game ended in a welter of excitement as Abbey skipper Caroline Kennedy goalied three minutes from the end of normal time to put the Ferrybank unit in front. Before the cheers of their supporters died out however, Laura Shinnors ended a blistering run with an equalising goal, bringing her tally for the game to 3-5 and ensuring a replay.

It needed something special to beat Abbey goalie Aoife Slattery, who had made three brilliant saves in the second half. And while Shinnors was the game's top scorer, Abbey's Alton Grace wasn't far off, registering 1-8.

Shinnors' heroics ensured that Borrisokane led by 2-7 to 1-5 at the change of ends, Emma Hewetson, goaling for Abbey and the Suirsiders turned it around brilliantly after the change of ends. Grace displayed her accuracy time and again and also had a goal as they drew level, before Kennedy's strike put them ahead.

There was still time for Shinnors to have the final say though and the teams will resume rivalries next Saturday.



FAMILY CONNECTION: Mick O'Regan and wife Christina — his father used to deliver crates to her family home when she was a little girl

Mackey points way as Cork take semi spot

Camogie

Daragh Ó Conchúir

Katrina Mackey scored six points to confirm Cork's spot in the Division 1 semi-finals of the Littlewoods Ireland Camogie League with victory over Wexford (0-16 to 0-4) at CIT.

The Leesiders set the tone for the match in the first half, with Mackey, Niamh McCarthy and Orla Cronin among the scorers as they galloped into a 0-8 to 0-1 lead.

McCarthy, Gemma O'Connor, Mackey and Cronin then heaped further misery on the visitors after the restart.

Though Wexford introduced the legendary Leacy siblings, Mary and Una, and the latter did manage to get on the scoresheet, the game was effectively over by that juncture.

Kilkenny are in second

position in Group 1 after defeating Waterford 2-12 to 0-14 at Carriganore.

Sensational teenager Beth Carton shot three of her 13 points but goals from Miriam Walsh and Denise Gaule gave the visitors the local bragging rights.

Tipperary followed up their victory over Wexford last weekend with another one-point success, defeating Dublin 2-11 to 2-10.

Miriam Campion shot the winner at DCU, her point a minute into injury time her side's first score for a quarter of an hour, when she goalied to put five points between the sides.

An Ali Maguire goal helped the Dubs reel Tipp in but they were left broken-hearted by Campion's late intervention.

In Group 2, Limerick finished strongly to deny Clare 1-13 to 1-12 in Clonlara while Offaly edged out Meath, 2-8 to 2-6.

Clinical Rebels advance to semi-finals

Camogie

Mary Newman

Cork	2-8
Offaly	0-4

CORK maintained their position leading group one in the round robin series of the Minor All-Ireland championship with a good victory over Offaly at St Catherine's yesterday.

Cork, without setting the world on fire, got the victory they needed, and as a result have guaranteed themselves a semi-final spot before their last outing versus Waterford on Saturday next.

The crossfield wind made it hard for both sides but such was Cork's dominance that they held Offaly scoreless from play.

Leading 1-7 to 0-2 at the interval, Cork had to work hard in the second half to protect their lead as a determined Offaly held them to just two scores.

Crucially for Cork, they grabbed a goal in each half. Lauren Homan scored the first one eight minutes in, after Offaly keeper Megan Thomas had made an excellent save, but saw the ball hit the upright and bounce over the line for a goal.

With Homan, Caoimhe Harney, and Saoirse McCarthy on the scoresheet, Cork made all the running as Sarah Harding scored two points for Offaly.

The second half was a battle but credit the Cork defence who held firm under a lot of pressure, Sarah Harney had the half-opening score and it was 18 minutes into the half before we had the game's next score, Rebecca Keane finishing to the net from close range.

Clare Crowley and Harding exchanged scores but having done enough in the opening half, Cork were content to see out the game with the result needed to see them through.

It's a fantastic that these young Rebels are through with a game to go.

Scorers for Cork: L Homan 1-5 (0-11, 0-14), R Keane 1-0, S McCarthy 0-1 (0), C Harney, Clara Crowley 0-1 each.

Offaly: S Harney 0-4.

CORK: M Lynch; R McCarthy, R Killeen, E Loneragan; K McCarthy, M Lynch, G Hannon; I Keegan, S McCarthy; L Homan, K Wall, A Hurley; C Harney, R Keane, Clara Crowley.

Subs: Clara Crowley for Clara Crowley (0-0), K Walsh for A Hurley (44), F Nelligan for K Wall (47), N O'Riordan for R Keane (54), M Barrett for I Keegan (59).

OFFALY: S Kehoe; H Healy, A Whelan, T Feenane; A Byrne, A Roddy, C Brennan; A Bracken, K Kennedy; E Kimartin, O Maher, S Harding; L Mannion, O Plunkett, S Guinan.

Subs: B Bryant for O Maher (29), D Hanerty for O Plunkett (37), N Campbell for S Guinan (47), S Shanahan for A Roddy (48), A Hogan for L Mannion (50).

Referee: John Dolan (Clare).

Littlewoods Ireland Camogie League Div 2: Armagh 2-10 Kildare 5-11.

All Ireland Minor Camogie Championship: Minor A: 2-8 Offaly 0-4 Cork; Tipperary 4-14 Waterford 2-6; Kilkenny 2-12 Clare 2-11; Limerick 0-07 Wexford 1-10; Minor C: Cavan 1-3 Carlow 4-11; Roscommon 3-18 Tyrone 3-10.

My dad boxed clever with crates sideline

Jessica Casey

IN the 1960s, enterprising Corkman Dermot O'Regan had a nice little earner going as he travelled the region selling crates salvaged from the Ford factory.

His son, Mick, remembers how his father sold the boxes for "small money" at creameries and farms throughout Munster — at one point even delivering a Ford box to the home of a girl called Christina who would go on to become Mick's wife.

"My wife, who I married 30-odd years ago, remembers him coming up to her yard when she was a little girl, delivering a Ford box," Mick says. "Small world! I ended up marrying her afterwards but not because of the box, mind you — but it possibly helped."

His father, Dermot, had been a cook in the Irish army during World War II and later got part-time work at Ford.

"He used to work in the office, cleaning it in the evenings," says Mick. "He was obviously working in the office and spotted an opportunity for a little bit of work."

The crates were used to ship motor parts to Cork from Dagenham and Dermot realised they had a sell-on value, while Ford wanted to be rid of them.

"He bought a lorry and the lads used to load it up with boxes in the yard," says Mick.

"The lads in the yard would have been very good to my dad and he used to help them out as well."

"He'd have a fine load going out of there then. He'd go off down the country in the mornings to the creameries, stand outside them, and farmers would come and buy the boxes and he'd deliver them."

"Hopefully he'd get his load emptied before he had the day over, if he didn't he'd maybe do a deal with some farmer."

"He covered most of Munster as far as I know, at a time when roads were far worse than they are now."

"He used to come back in the evening then and drop the lorry back down to Ford, go back in to clean the office and the lads would reload it again and off he'd go, the process would continue again."

"Back then, everybody had a number of trades. If you didn't have a job that was fully paying or you weren't able to feed your family, you'd do whatever you could."

Mick says it was a smooth business, apart from one infamous incident.

"My father was taking the corner there on the Grand Parade in Cork city one time, and the lorry tipped over. He'd a load of boxes in it that fell on top of the car. There was nobody injured, the car was damaged. The incident made the newspapers."

Dermot might make a profit of £10 daily for the whole lorry.

"The load might be 40, 50 pounds, but for a box you might get a fiver," says Mick.

"The farmers certainly got the benefit of some very good timber."

"A number of people had Ford boxes and possibly still have them, because they were so durable. I'd say they're still all over Munster, if you went looking you'd find them."

"You're talking about a sheet of plywood, you'd probably pay 50, 60 euro now for half of one."

Dermot's business eventually came to an end when Ford changed its practice regarding the crates.

"They wanted to get the yard cleared every day, the likes of my dad and others like him coming in with their lorries was fine but they wanted to get one guy to do the whole lot," Mick says.

"So they put it out to tender and the guy that got it then got to clear the yard every day and he brought the timber out to somewhere like Bishopstown, as far as I know, and the likes of my dad would have to buy it from him."

"My dad decided to give it up. The next part of his life then he was delivering milk."

Eventually, the Ford crates sideline came to an end entirely, when the motor parts were transported in steel containers instead of wooden ones.

Jennifer O'Leary

The voice of experience tackles the topics that matter



Our amazing women share incredible stories. We need to hear more of these

Her heart stopped four times, the stuff of nightmares, but Janet Gray lived to tell her tale

THERE are countless inspiring stories around the country from Irish women in sport – and we need to hear more of them.

I was one of a number of speakers at Ulster GAA's Empowering Female Sport conference held in Armagh City Hotel last month, and it was an eye-opening experience.

The verb 'empowering' can be defined as giving (someone) the authority or power to do something. It also has the ability to make (someone) feel stronger and more confident. This conference certainly achieved that. It was empowering in every sense.

We need to give more women the platform to share their incredible stories and experiences, the challenges they have overcome, the triumphs they've enjoyed. The recent conference captured all that.

It was an inspiring day and a great innovative idea by Ulster GAA to showcase all the fantastic talented women we have in abundance. Their progressive attitude and forwarding thinking as a province allowed motivating women in sport to highlight their individual or team sports for the public to gain an insight into their world for just a few hours.

It was such a feel good day, an event that could become an annual date on the calendar. And more of these should be rolled out around the country.

Speakers on the day were from many different codes in sport, from Juliet Murphy recalling her Cork ladies football playing days, to Aoife Cassidy, a recent senior camogie All-Ireland club winning captain with Slaughtneil, to a moving speaker called Janet Gray who is a blind water-skier and world champion.

I spoke myself about my camogie career, the teams I have been involved with and also how it's important to now give something back to the sport.

While I didn't get the opportunity to hear everyone speak, I did talk to the guest speakers to hear their stories and thoughts on the day itself. It was refreshing to hear so many recall their sporting memories and recent experiences with a happy heart. The overwhelming consensus by all was that there were no regrets.

Juliet spoke about her role in coaching now and how the break from playing football has been a positive aspect in her life. She has a phenomenal calming aura about her that just draws you in. Unassuming and modest, she felt very humbled to be asked to speak at this event. Little does she know the upbeat effect she has on so many young players and coaches who look up to her.

Aoife Cassidy, just 22, captained her club (Slaughtneil, Derry) to lift the All-Ireland senior camogie club title weeks ago when they defeated the favourites Sarsfields (Galway) in an epic encounter (1-10 to 0-11). She's so mature and level headed for her age.

A very composed and confident girl, what struck me the most was her strength of character. Playing alongside her two sisters, a week before their Ulster final they lost their father who suffered a long illness. He was a constant in their camogie lives and a huge void was left following his death but she used this loss as determination to continue their winning ways for him, and so they did. Their win captured the hearts of the country, a feel good factor followed because deep down we knew a win would be what they needed at this time in their lives.

Ann Downey, camogie legend for Kilkenny and present Kilkenny senior camogie manager, was one of the key speakers on the day. Bumping into her at the beginning of the event was special for me as Ann and her twin sister Angela were two players I watched and looked up to enormously when



Legendary: Eight-time All-Ireland winning former Cork ladies footballer Juliet Murphy was one of the speakers at last month's Ulster GAA's Empowering Female Sport conference held in Armagh City Hotel.

We need to give more women the platform to share their incredible stories and experiences, the challenges they have overcome, the triumphs they've enjoyed. The recent conference captured all that.

I was a young camogie player.

Her motto is: 'If you are ever going to do anything at all, do it right, or if you are not going to do it right don't even bother.' It's simple, yet effective advice.

Like Slaughtneil's run of wins in camogie, football and hurling this year, Kilkenny too have had their fair share of victories, especially with camogie winning the senior title last year – but it's not just victory they have in

common, both Aoife Cassidy and Ann Downey professed that all their teams within the GAA are all supported equally.

Slaughtneil camogie were given the same treatment as their male counterparts when it came to providing teams with gear, use of training facilities, etc. The same could be said of Kilkenny county where Ann Downey says that there is a strong mutual respect for all

the county teams, no matter if they are male or female, and she hasn't been treated any differently because she is a female manager. It was satisfying to hear these close links do exist within the GAA today.

While all the speakers left a lasting impression, one lady who made me vow to try my very best to never complain again was a woman called Janet Gray, a blind water-skier.

Her story was incredible and made me ask myself if I have ever really pushed myself to my very limit in any area of my life?

At the age of 21 she went completely blind due to an irreversible eye disease. This turned her life upside down but instead of merely learning to cope with this disability, she decided to learn to water ski, blind.

What was even more amazing was the fact that she became very good at it, so much so that she became a world champion in a number of different water skiing events.

For me, this was almost unfathomable, but from hearing her story, it was clear that she was no ordinary woman, she was the most determined and resilient I have ever met.

But it didn't end there. She suffered a life-threatening accident a few years into the height of her sporting career and was left on life support with her heart stopping four times in the process. They were nightmare moments. But she was there to tell the tale.

While everyone told her she would never walk again, she defied all the odds and not only walked again, but took the brave step to water ski again at a high level.

This is just a snapshot of her story and it certainly left the room in total silence. She defied all odds, overcame every obstacle and showed resilience like no one I have ever known.

This idea of empowering people in a public arena such as this is something more provinces should adopt. There is so much talent to explore, so many stories to hear and many ways in which people can learn to be inspired and grow in confidence by people in sport.

I hope other sporting organisations around the country will follow suit as an event as worthwhile as this can only bring out the best in people and leave you feeling blessed that you are involved in sport, no matter what it is.

Expect plenty of bite against Cats



Camogie

Linda Mellerick

TOMORROW
Littlewoods Ireland National League Division 1 Round 5 Cork v Kilkenny, MW Hire Training Centre, Kilkenny, 2.30pm

EVEN though there is little at stake for Cork and Kilkenny in Saturday's Littlewoods Ireland National league final group game, that won't reduce the intensity between the sides, such is their rivalry.

Cork sit at the top of the Group 1 table on twelve points, Kilkenny second on nine.

Even if Cork drop the three points, it is hard to see them losing by fourteen points and that is the scoring difference between the two sides as it stands.

Kilkenny, to be certain of a second placed spot will be eager to take the points on offer, but again, even if third placed Wexford beat Dublin they would need to do so by 33 points to pip the Cats.

While Dublin have yet to register points in the league their losing margins weren't embarrassing (except maybe to Kilkenny where they lost 2-14 to 0-4), therefore one would expect them to be somewhat competitive again. The semi-finals are down for April 9th and Cork will face either Galway or Limerick, after this weekend's fixtures.

While it would be nice to win the league of course, Cork would look on that as a bonus. They are again using the league to blend in newcomers and with Niamh McCarthy, Linda Collins, Jennifer Barry, and Chloe Sigerson getting consistent game time they are most definitely getting up to speed and hopefully can make a difference at senior level come championship time.

Kilkenny likewise have utilised a significant number of typical division two players throughout the campaign. Yet Kilkenny and Cork still top group 1 which shows the gap between the top teams and the others.



Cork's Amy O'Connor takes on Wexford's Sarah O'Connor in the Littlewoods Ireland Camogie League Division 1 game at Cork IT recently. Her driving runs will be important for Cork against Kilkenny tomorrow. Picture: Inpho/Ken Sutton

Kilkenny dropped two points in their second-round tie to Wexford but if you're going to catch the All-Ireland champions, just back after their spring break is the time to do it.

Cork's league preparations were slow to get underway in 2016 and they paid the price, losing twice to Limerick, the last outing a play off, as they failed to advance to the semi-finals. While much notice wasn't taken of it at the time, maybe the signs were there that the year wasn't going to play out as Cork would have hoped.

This year, training resumed a lot earlier and there is a spring in the step of the players at present. I think a factor in that is that the players are playing with more freedom and initiative, while still keeping somewhat to a game plan. Sometimes the best approach to a

game is to just let the players at it. While losing the league didn't upset Cork in the slightest in 2016, I think looking back they would have appreciated a couple more competitive games, and more importantly against stronger opposition.

Kilkenny of course are the National league and All Ireland champions. Cork's lineout will more than likely be the same as that which lined out against Wexford two weeks ago.

The familiar posture of Aoife Murray will stand between the post. Glen Rovers' Leanne O'Sullivan, Captain Rena Buckley and Laura Treacy will line out in front of her with Pam Mackey, Ashling Thompson and Chloe Sigerson holding down the half back line positions. Gemma O'Connor and Jennifer Barry line out at 8 and 9 while

Cork have two fast wings forwards in Amy O'Connor and Julia White flanking Orla Cronin at centre.

Katrina Mackey, Niamh McCarthy, Linda Collins will complete Cork's starting fifteen. Orla Cotter continues to give her leg time to heal. Cork are in no rush to bring her back to the playing field.

They're quite content to give their new breed of players time on the pitch. The return of Emer O'Sullivan to the panel is a welcomed sight, even if she is unavailable for tomorrow.

Cork are doing well to-date in both the Division one and two leagues, unbeaten in both. There is nothing like an All-Ireland defeat to put the bite back into your game.

Tomorrow's battle will hold a lot of it.

U16 camogie team back in business

THE junior hurlers played St Colum's in the JAHL on Sunday in Rossmore but unfortunately ended up losing by 3-9 to 1-7.

For the first time in many years, Kilbree Camogie Club have entered an U16 team to compete in Carbery and county competitions. The first outing for this team was an away fixture against a very strong Ballinascorthy side and though the young Kilbree side lost, it was a historic occasion and they will improve as they play more games.

Panel: Heather Brimble, Deirdre Nyhan, Kate O'Donovan, Jessica O'Driscoll, Maeve O'Neill, Sarah O'Donovan, Rebecca Hurley, Leanne Sheehy, Mairead Crowley, Emily O'Donovan, Aife O'Neill, Caoimhe Murphy, Rachel Deasy, Alice O'Donovan, Mary Murphy, Alison Collins, Margaret Collins.

There was no winner of this week's lotto jackpot, the numbers drawn were 13, 24 and 34. The lucky-dip winners were Denis and Eileen Burke, Tara O'Donovan and Dessie McCarthy. Next week's lotto jackpot will be €2,700.



Great news: Kilbree Camogie Club is fielding an U16 team for the first time in many years. They took on Ballinascorthy away last Sunday.

Munster double for Cork U16s

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

THE CORK U16 camogie squad recorded a double in Ballyagran yesterday as the Munster U16 A and B titles were won with victories over Clare and Tipperary.

Finishing Cork 2-11 to Clare 2-8, the B final had to go to extra time before the title was secured after a free from Eva Rose Boylan levelled the game in normal time.

Clare led 1-3 to 1-2 at the end of the opening 30 minutes before Eva Rose Boylan (2) and Orlaith Cummins helped put Cork in front.

Slobhan O'Donovan and Sinead O'Donnell were on target in extra time, before a Sinead O'Donnell goal and an Orla O'Brien point put Cork 2-9 to 1-8 in front.

Scores from Boylan and Mairead Crowley helped seal the win.

Scorers for Cork: ER Boylan 1-5 (0-3 f, 0-1 45), S O'Donnell 1-1, S O'Donovan 0-2, S Hurley, O Cummins, M Crowley 0-1 each.

CORK: C Buckley, J Hooper, J Murphy, C Bernard, H Sexton, L Wallace, K A Crean, E Boylan, K Holland, S Hurley, M Crowley, O Cummins, S O'Donovan, S O'Donnell, K O'Reilly.

Subs: T McCarthy for K O'Reilly, E Hurley for M Crowley, E Kelleher for O Cummins and M Crowley for T McCarthy.

Cork 2-12
Tipperary 2-7

CORK laid the foundation for victory in the U16 A final with a solid opening-half performance, facing a stiff breeze.

Leading 1-8 to 1-5 at the interval, they worked hard to hold their lead through a tough second half, with captain Cliona O'Leary leading by example from defence.

Points from Ellen and Emma Murphy had Cork in front in front early before an Ellen Murphy goal.

Keeping the ball moving proved vital for Cork as they drove everything they won to their inside lines. Ellen Murphy pointed a 45 after a good save by Aine Slattery denied Emma Murphy a goal. Emma Murphy and Emer Mc Grath swapped points and Tipp searched for a goal but the Cork defence again denied Tipp's late efforts.

Cork played out the added time with a five-point lead that was enough to give them the title. Ellen Murphy was named player of the match.

Scorers for Cork: Ellen Murphy 2-6 (1-2 0-1 45), Emma Murphy 0-3, H O'Leary, Finn, S McCarthy 0-1 each.

HE minors experienced little difficulty in the last game in the round robin series of the All-Ireland, beating Waterford 12 to 1-1.

Lauren Homan and Katie All hit second-half goals.

Scorers for Cork: L Homan 2-6, K Wall 1, L Hayes, N O'Riordan, S McCarthy 0-1 each.

CORK'S intermediates made a long journey to Ballymena north while to top their Littlewoods Division 2 National league group with a 0-21 to 2-7 victory over Antrim.

Rivalry rekindled as Cork quell cats



Camogie

Linda Mellerick

Kilkenny 0-11
Cork 0-12

THE fact that neither side needed the win last Saturday to advance to the Division 1 semi-finals of the Littlewoods Ireland National league didn't diminish the rivalry and bite that exists when Cork and Kilkenny meet.

That rivalry is going back 40 years. It evaporated during the late '90s and noughties as Kilkenny slipped in the rankings, but it's back with a bang, particularly after last September's All-Ireland final.

Just a point separated the sides in Dunmore after a tough, physical encounter. Cork were only itching for another game against the Cats. It didn't matter that the outcome was meaningless in the table rankings — Cork were motivated and worked their socks off. Kilkenny likewise, hence the low scoring game in a right battle.

We could well have the same pairing in league final action in three weeks time as Cork face Limerick and Kilkenny take on Galway next Sunday.

There were brief moments of very good play with some precision tackling, interceptions from Laura Treacy, Aoife Murray and Gemma O'Connor spring to mind.

While Cork had strong performances all over the field, Katrina Mackey must be singled out for what was a top-class display. Finishing with eight points, three from play, from both placed balls and free play she was unerring.

Cork played with wind advantage for the first period. Sixteen minutes in, they led 0-3 to 0-1. By the 22nd it was four points apiece.

Ann Dalton and Ashling Dunphy were doing well for Kilkenny in the middle of the part yet so too was Gemma O'Connor. The Cats looked fresh, full of running and confident — an All-Ireland win will do that to you.



Orla Cronin (Cork) breaking clear during the league match in Kilkenny.

Picture: Pat Moore

They at times again showed flashes of brilliance with Miriam Walsh unlucky not to finish a cohesive move to the net, but Cork's defence were excellent, covering each other well. Cork weren't letting Kilkenny out of their own defence too easily either and despite the strong work of Meighan Farrell, Kelly Ann Doyle and Dalton Cork were coping admirably.

Kilkenny had 11 wides in total, six in the opening half. Many of them however were forced errors due to strong Cork pressure.

It was score for score. Cork pushed two ahead on two occasions in the first half and with Mackey scoring her sixth point on the stroke of half time, that was the margin at the break.

The latter started the second as she finished the first, giving Cork their

biggest lead throughout the game in three points. Julianne Malone made two dashing runs from the right corner and bore down on goal but for the first Aoife Murray was composed and forced Malone to foul, winning a free out. For the second, Cork swarmed and cleared. Ashling Dunphy struck over with Julianne adding another on fifty minutes. Just three points scored in twenty minutes doesn't make for exciting reading but such was the intensity in the game it was enthralling.

Julia White pointed before two Michelle Quilty frees made it 0-10 to 0-9.

Finola Neville, on the pitch just three minutes, confidently pointed with Mackey adding her eighth to give Cork that three-point advantage again entering the final minute. A few stoppages however led to five minutes' ad-

ditional time. Miriam Walsh pointed twice and Kilkenny then chased the equaliser. But Cork held firm to record an important win, regardless of what the table already said.

Scorers for Cork: K Mackey 0-8 (0-5 f), C Sigerson 0-1, A O'Connor 0-1, J White, F Neville 0-1 each.

Kilkenny: D Gaulie 0-2 (0-1 f), M Quilty 0-2 (f), M Walsh 0-2, J Malone 0-2, A Dalton 0-1, K A Doyle, C Dunphy 0-1 each.

CORK: A Murray, L O'Sullivan, R Buckley, L Treacy, P Mackey, A Thompson, C Sigerson, G O'Connor, Barry, A O'Connor, O Cronin, J White, K Mackey, M McCarthy, L Collins.

Subs: L Coppinger for L O'Sullivan (44), F Neville for L Collins (55), R O'Shea for P Mackey (inj 57).

KILKENNY: E Kavanagh, A Nolan, C Foley, C Walsh, C Phelan, M Farrell, M Teehan, A Dalton, C Dunphy, J Reddy, M Walsh, M Quilty, J Malone, K A Doyle, D Gaulie.

Subs: L Murphy for G Walsh (43), G O'Donnell for A Doyle (inj 47), J Clifford for M Quilty (55).

Referee: Ray Kelly (Kildare).

A Cork-Kilkenny final on April 24 would be a prospect

REACTION

■ Linda Mellerick

"Our newcomers, again, stood up today. This was going to be a strong test and I think they stood up to the mark, all four of them (Niamh McCarthy, Linda Collins, Jennifer Barry, Chloe Sigerson).

"I think, come championship, they'll have a fierce say in matters.

"So, from that point of view, you'd have to be happy. Look, we were qualified, so today's result wasn't going to be major.

"But, again, what we're looking for is for those girls to step up to the mark".

Cork's three substitutions also played their part, with Finola Neville getting an important point, not long after taking to the field.

"Yeah, well that's what subs are there for, to come

in and make an impact and Finola's trained hard, Rachel (O'Shea) has trained hard, too, so they deserved a run-out."

Referring to the work-rate of the squad, Paudie said: "Well, work-rate is what we're built on and if you look back at last year's All-Ireland final, it certainly wasn't there, so I think it's one of the key things we need to keep driving on this year.

"There's nothing between the teams. I know Kilkenny were missing a few today and we were missing a few, so there's probably little in it, you know.

"There's every possibility we could meet each other in a league final in a few weeks' time. I don't know who we're playing, yet, but we'll concentrate on next week and see where we go from there."

Enquiring about Pamela Mackey, who injured her calf late in the game, Paudie confirmed: "Yeah, we just think it's a knock and bruising so, hopefully, she'll be ok."

U16 Rebels target a double win

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

TOMORROW

Munster U16 A final: Cork v Tipperary, Ballyagran, 3pm.

AFTER recording a comprehensive victory over Limerick in the semi-final, the Cork U16 A side take on Tipperary in the second game of a double-header of Munster U16 finals in Ballyagran tomorrow.

As the 6-20 to 0-1 semi-final scoreline against Limerick indicates, this was very much one-way traffic from start to finish as the Cork girls comfortably advanced into the Munster final.

Tipperary had it much closer as they had to battle all the way before knocking out Clare, in the finish five points separated the sides in a 3-3 to 0-7 contest.

The Rebels have put in a huge effort with both their U16 A and B panels and they have prepared well for this final.

Against Limerick, Fiona Keating was the star of the show notching up an impressive 4-7 while Ellen Murphy added 1-7. Clodagh Finn, Aine Mullins and Sally McCarthy were all to the fore in a rampant Cork attack.

The Cork backroom teams of Mike Boland, Ger Horgan, Pauline O'Regan and Mike O'Gorman are sensible enough to know a much sterner test waits against Tipperary.

Having come through a tough test against Clare they will be going all out to take the title from Cork, Laura Shinnors, Roseanne O'Donnell, Gill Ann Quirke and Karin Blair were the players to catch the eye for them in their semi-final outing and they will be the ones to watch out for.

As this is the last competitive game before the All-Ireland series gets under way after the exams both sides will be hoping for a good result to boost their championship preparations.

TOMORROW

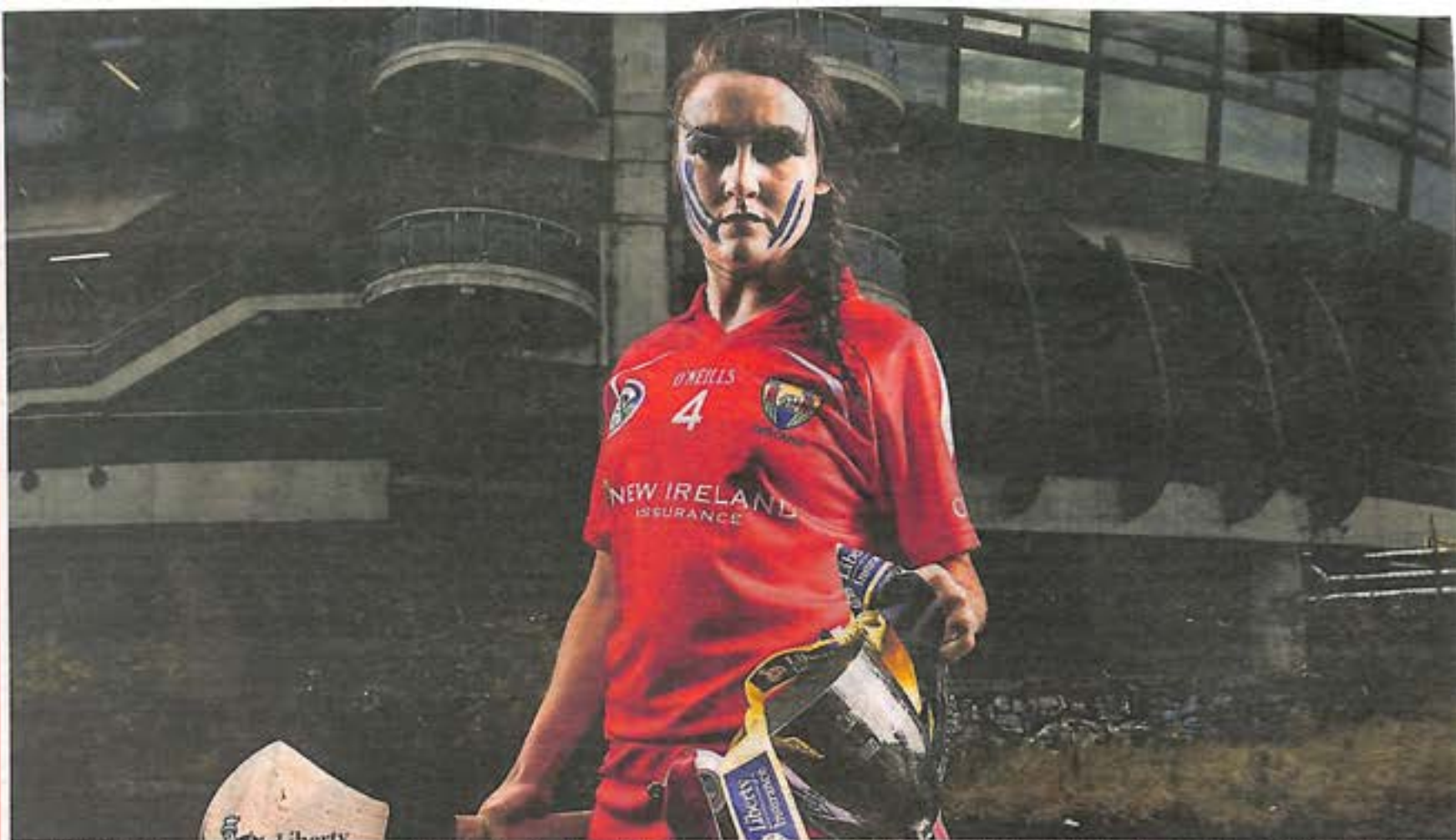
Munster U16 B final: Cork v Clare, Ballyagran, 1pm.

Cork and Clare find themselves in the unusual position of being in a Munster U16 B final tomorrow without having pucking a ball.

As the only two counties to have entered the Munster B competition they find themselves battling it out for the title.

With the Cork U16A team already through to the provincial decider in the second game of the double header in Ballyagran against Tipperary the focus is firstly on the U16 B sides to get the day off to a good start.

The B panel have worked side by side with the A squad and this has proved a huge success, preparations have gone well with several practice games played and the Cork mentors and players are looking forward to Sunday's contest.



Niamh Ni Chaoimh, captain of the Cork intermediate team, has been in excellent form so far this year in the Littlewoods Division 2 National League. Picture: INPHO/Billy Stickland

Cork aiming to finish as leaders

TOMORROW

Littlewoods Division 2 National League: Cork v Antrim, Ballymena, 2pm.

CORK'S division 2 panel make the long journey to Ballymena for the last game in the round robin series in the Littlewoods Division National League comfortable in the knowledge that their semi-final spot is already secured.

They will be determined to finish as group leaders in group two and clinch a semi-final spot with the runners-up of group one and this is the section that

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

will go down to the wire.

Irrespective of the result, Cork should top the group even if they lose to Antrim and Galway beat Kildare as Cork have a better scoring average.

In group one, Derry, Kilkenny, and Carlow are level with one game to go Wexford are behind them with three points less and this weekend Kilkenny play Laois, Derry host Wexford and Down entertain Carlow. It will come down to the wire before a winner and runner-up is decided with results vital tomorrow. Cork have enjoyed a superb campaign and are growing in confi-

dence with every game, they are a strong unit with plenty of back-up and it is good to see competition for every position. These are the players who will backbone Cork in the future and it is good to see players emerging from minor and settling into adult inter-county competition confidently.

Keeva McCarthy, Rachel O'Shea, Kaitlyn Hickey, Sarah Fahy, Amy Lee and Niamh Ni Chaoimh have featured to date and should be in the line-out tomorrow.

To date, Cork have accounted for Galway, Westmeath, Armagh, and Kildare, Antrim got their campaign off to a winning start with a 2-7 to 0-9 victory over Armagh, but were defeated by Galway 2-12 to 1-7.

Against Kildare they conceded 16

points and lost out as they notched up nine points, they ran Kildare close before a late goal gave Kildare a two-point victory.

With nothing to play, for Antrim may use the game to try some of their fringe players as it will be the last opportunity of a competitive game before championship. However we can expect to see them backed by regular Nicole O'Neill, Emma Connor, Niamh and Kathryn Donnelly and captain Katie McAleese.

It's a long way to go for Cork but they will approach the game with the same determination they have shown in all of this campaign. They are focused and aiming to go all the way this season and a league title would see them up nicely for championship.

A strong work ethic has stood to Cork minors

TODAY

All-Ireland Minor Championship: Cork v Waterford, WIT, 2pm.

WITH three wins from three games it's a nice position to be in this afternoon as the Cork Minor side head to WIT for the last game in the group stage of the All-Ireland minor championship.

Last weekend they overcame Offaly in their third game and again it was a game where they worked hard to grind-out a win.

By no means was it a classic, far from it, but to their credit Cork worked hard and got stuck in on a blustery day where the cross field wind made it difficult for both sides.

Their work ethic has been excellent throughout, particularly against Dublin when their backs were to the wall they hung in there and carved out a great win, Roisin Killeen, Lauren Homan, Molly Lynch

Molly's Lynch's puck-out against the wind particularly were excellent and were of huge advantage and this is something that Cork have used to their advantage turning defence into attack with long delivery to their inside lines.

Already, All-Ireland champions Tipperary have fallen victims to Cork and having tucked away Dublin in their opening game last weekend's result ensured Cork of a semi-final place.

Champions Tipperary are depending on results to keep them in the running as they have completed their schedule of games. If Offaly were to defeat Dublin Tipp would go through, either as runners-up if Cork get a victory over Waterford or they could end

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

Waterford were edged out by a point by Dublin 1-10 to 0-7 and this was a Dublin side that made Cork fight to the death before victory was secured. Five points separated Offaly from Waterford in a high scoring 10-10 to 1-14 clashes but last weekend champions Tipperary battling to keep their qualification hopes alive recorded a 4-14 to 3-6 win.

Kaiesha Tobin has been Waterford's stand-out player in this campaign while Annie Fitzgerald, Margaret Ann Boland, Shauna Fitzgerald and Kate Lynch have all worked hard for a side that are unlucky not to have gotten more out of this campaign.

With nothing but pride at stake today, Waterford will go out determined to get something out of the game and they will be looking to the provincial championship later in the year.

Cork safe in the knowledge they are through will be aiming to finish in the top spot, therefore, we can

Cork book league semi-final date with Limerick

Camogie

Daragh Ó Conchúir

Neither Tipperary nor Wexford managed to achieve the unlikely mathematical feats required to deny Kilkenny a place in the Littlewoods Ireland Camogie League Division 1 semi-finals.

It means that the Cats will play Galway on Sunday, with Cork facing Limerick in the

other semi. Kilkenny fell to their second defeat of the campaign as Katrina Mackey notched eight points to give Cork a narrow win — 0-12 to 0-11.

Kilkenny started well but points from Chloe Sigerson, Amy O'Connor and Mackey edged Cork three clear.

That was still the margin with two minutes remaining but the Noreiders finished strongly with a brace of points

from Miriam Walsh but they couldn't source an equaliser.

Wexford, who inflicted the first loss of the season on the All-Ireland champions last February, needed to beat Dublin by at least 32 points at Innovate Wexford Park but were unable to prevent the visitors from recording a coveted first victory by 0-16 to 1-8.

There was never much be-

tween the sides but Wexford held a narrow advantage for three quarters of proceedings thanks to Linda Bolger's early goal.

When Una Leacy and Brid Gordon pointed the margin was four. Emma Flanagan and Aisling Maher responded for Dublin and it was 1-5 to 0-5 at half-time. David Herity's girls edged back into the tie though and once they drew level, found another gear with

points from Aisling Maher, Ali McGuire and Zoe O'Donohue seeing them home.

Tipp would have had to finish 49 points clear of Waterford at The Ragg to deny Kilkenny the last berth from Group 1. That was never realistic but they did manage to grab the 1-18 to 0-9 win to finish third in the table.

Galway and Limerick had already qualified to the last four from Group 2 so there

was little at stake in their final rubber apart from the desire to maintain momentum and it is the Connacht outfit that came out on top in the Shannonside derby, 1-13 to 0-9.

In the other game, goals from Ann Marie Guinan and Patrice Delaney ensured Offaly third position and the 2-12 to 0-11 verdict against a Clare side that was overly-reliant on Chloe Morey, who scored seven points.

CAMOGIE QUEENS Inniscarra celebrate win



Simply the best: County senior camogie champions Inniscarra celebrated their win in style at their victory dinner at the Oriel House Hotel recently. (Photo: Mike English)

Camogie club was one of the first

CAMOGIE

■ Diarmuid Sheehan

MANY GAA clubs have encouraged girls to play the national games, but some were more progressive than others.

Ballincollig has long been one such club. In 1974, the local women founded the Ballincollig Camogie Club.

This was the first in the area to cater exclusively to girls and Fr Kieran Twomey started training their first team at the GAA Grounds.

The first underage team were the U14s, and the club has since grown into one of the strongest in the county.

In the late 70s, the club had their first county board officer, Lillie O'Sullivan (RIP), who was county PR, before becoming County Board registrar in the 1980s. Since then, the club has been represented by a number of officials at County Board level, at both senior and juvenile.

In the 1980s, the camogie club's colours became green and white to mirror the local GAA club.

The club was growing along with the village population, with founder members, Nell Hennigan, Helen Coughlan, Lillie O'Sullivan, and many new adult mentors, all bringing the club on year after year.

Hennigan, who has been hugely influential over the years, is the present club president, and her daughters and granddaughters all represent the club, both on and off the pitch.

History

The club also made history at county board level, with the first mother-and-daughter officers, Lillie O'Sullivan and her daughter, Mairead. This was more proof that Ballincollig Camogie Club works hard at all levels to promote the sport to all.

In 2009, the club secured the Senior B County title, and reached the Senior A County final in 2013.

They were narrowly defeated by an all-conquering Milford.

The club's promotion to senior was a fantastic achievement — all that is left now is that elusive senior title.

At the younger grades, the club has continued to achieve: it won the U14 County final in 2015, and the minors reached the county final the following year.

The club has 200 juvenile players and 40 adults.

The ethos of the Ballincollig Camogie Club has always been inclusion, with the club going the extra mile to make sure that all members feel they are part of a family.

Many of the wonderful people who gave a huge amount of their time and hearts have now passed on, but their input has remained and has kept the club strong, active, and striving to be the best it can be.

Progressive Cork can see off Galway challenge

SUNDAY,

All-Ireland Minor A Championship semi-final: Cork v Galway, Semple Stadium, 2pm.

CORK topped their group to claim their spot in this Minor A All-Ireland semi-final finishing with a 100% record with victories over Dublin, holders Tipperary, Offaly and Waterford.

They will be hoping of continuing their good form to reach the final as they look to claim a first Minor A title. Cork will be concerned that they have not had any really hard games in their group.

They easily disposed of the challenges posed by Offaly, Waterford and their hardest tests came in their opening game against Dublin and the second against Tipperary. To their credit, they stood up there and were counted when the need arose. Lauren Homan has been in good form up front while Katie Wall, Rebecca Keane, and Roisin Killeen have all worked hard.

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

Galway finished second in their group but it was only on scoring difference after a three-way tie for top spot with Clare and Kilkenny. They just edged out Kilkenny by beating them in their final group match in a high scoring 5-18 to 2-15 encounter.

They lost out in their opening game to Clare when despite notching up twelve points they conceded 2-9, they regrouped but had to cling on to the finish against an improving Wexford who pushed them all the way before Galway ran out the winners by two points. They had four points to spare over Limerick before reserving their finest hour for their clash with Kilkenny where they needed every score to secure their passage through.

They come into the minor championship on the

back of two hugely successful U16 campaigns, having been All-Ireland champions in 2015 and 2016. At U16 level when the sides met two years ago Galway powered to victory.

They have superb players, including Siobhan McGrath, who was, without doubt, one of the stars of the show in the All-Ireland senior club final in Croke Park as her club Sarsfield's fell short to Sloughneill in a superb final.

Captain Leanne Helebert, Carrie Dolan, Shannon Ridge, Molly Mannion and Ciara Helebert are hugely experienced players who have tasted a lot of inter-county success.

This is a Galway side that will be tough and physical and Cork will have to dig in from the throw-in, 60 minutes is between them and a place in the final and this is possibly the hardest test they will get.

In the second semi-final Dublin and Clare meet on Saturday in Birr.

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Confident Cork maintain 100 per cent record

CORK 0-12
KILKENNY 0-11

CAMOGIE LEAGUE

BY SHIRLEY MOLONEY

CORK will play Limerick in a semi-final of the Littlewoods Ireland Camogie League Division 1 this Sunday (9th) after the Rebels topped their group following five wins in a row, the latest against Kilkenny.

In this rematch of last year's All-Ireland final at the MW Hire Training Centre in Kilkenny last Saturday, Cork went about their business with a steely determination against the reigning champions.

Katrina Mackey settled the Leesiders with two frees inside the opening five minutes and

while Denise Gaule had a response for Kilkenny with a 45, Mackey restored Cork's two-point advantage.

Anne Dalton was instrumental at midfield for the Cats, and she picked out Julianne Malone with a great pass which was slotted over before Dalton herself got on the scoreboard with a fine long-range effort.

On 20 minutes Cork were let off the hook when Dalton found herself at the edge of the square and her batted attempt on goal went just wide of the target. Mackey pointed a fine score from a tight angle to put Cork ahead by one be-

fore Kelly Ann Doyle responded to tie the sides.

Mackey once again split the posts on 25 minutes before Chloe Sigerson pointed on 28 to see Cork two ahead. Not to be outdone, Gaule split the posts with a tight angle shot to pull one back for Kilkenny before Amy O'Connor and Mackey pointed to see Cork 0-8 to 0-5 to the good at half time.

Mackey, on form from placed balls, slotted over her fourth on 37 minutes while Aisling Dunphy fired over a minute later to cut Cork's lead to three. Malone cut the lead to two when she pointed on the run from 30

metres before Julia White cancelled it out with a fine effort in front of the posts.

With 10 minutes remaining and a goal between the sides both teams were contributing to a tough outfield battle. Kilkenny scored from three placed balls over the hour with two of those coming from the stick of Michelle Quilty on 30 metres in the 52nd and 54th minutes. Finola Neville, fresh off the bench, pointed before Mackey fired over a 30m free on 58 minutes to see Cork a goal clear with full-time looming.

Miriam Walsh rounded off a fine game when she picked off two super scores on 60 and 62 to bring Kilkenny to within one of Cork but it wasn't enough and Cork held out to

Camogie League Div 1 Group 1

	P	W	L	D	F	A	Diff	Pts
Cork	5	5	0	0	86	42	44	15
Kilkenny	5	3	0	2	83	55	28	9
Tipperary	5	3	0	2	73	81	-8	9
Wexford	5	2	0	3	57	66	-9	6
Dublin	5	1	0	4	47	69	-22	3
Waterford	5	1	0	4	55	88	-33	3

secure the win.

Scorers

Cork: K Mackey 0-8 (4f, 145), A O'Connor, C Sigerson, J White, F Neville 0-1 each.

Kilkenny: M Walsh, J Malone, D Gaule (1f), M Quilty (2f) 0-2 each, KA Doyle, A Dunphy, A Dalton 0-1 each.

Cork: A Murray, L O'Sullivan, R Buckley, L Treacy, P Mackey, A Thompson, C Sigerson; G

O'Connor, J Barry, A O'Connor, O Cronin, J White; K Mackey, N McCarthy, L Collins.

Subs: L Coppinger for O'Sullivan (45), F Neville for Collins (52), R O'Shea for P Mackey (58, injured).

Kilkenny: E Kavanagh, A Nolan, C Foley, G Walsh, C Phelan, M Farrell, M Teehan, A Dalton, A Dunphy, J Reddy, M Walsh, M Quilty, J Malone, KA Doyle, D Gaule.

Subs: G O'Donnell for Doyle (47), J Clifford for Quilty (55, injured). Referee: R Kelly (Kildare).

Cork need to be wary of Limerick



Camogie

Linda Mellerick

SUNDAY
Littlewoods Ireland National League Division 1 semi-final: Cork v Limerick, Páirc Uí Rinn, 4pm (ET in the event of a draw).

THE Limerick senior camogie squad raised the bar in 2016 when they reached the semi-finals of the Division 1 National League.

They didn't do this by fluke. They beat Cork not just once, but twice along the way.

For 2017, Limerick were in group 2 that consisted of Galway, Meath, Clare and Offaly so it would be fair to say that apart from Galway the only real threat that should have come their way was from Offaly. They overcame this by three points 0-15 to 0-12. Yet they also received a scare from Clare, pulling through by the narrowest of margins; 1-13 to 0-12.

Limerick's only defeat, therefore, was to Galway, who face Kilkenny in the semi-final in Semple Stadium. Meanwhile, it's Limerick v Cork in Páirc Uí Rinn on Sunday in the second semi and Limerick manager John Tuohy is clear where his side's ambitions lay.

"They are ambitious and always want to go a step further. We know that we are capable of beating any of the top teams on a day and now we know what we need to do to beat them consistently," he said at the commencement of this year's campaign.

"After last year the girls know where the bar is and they have bought into everything that we have asked of them like diet and nutrition and everything is very professional."

Star player for Limerick, Niamh Mulcahy, captains the side with two vice-captains in Fiona Hickey and Sarah Carey. Limerick rely hugely on Niamh but at times the support she requires isn't there. Consistently averaging seven to eight points a game she is undoubtedly their talisman.

Cork took a 1-11 to 0-9 defeat to Limerick in their opening round last sea-



Pamela Mackey in action during the league match in Kilkenny. Next up is a semi-final with Limerick at Páirc Uí Rinn this Sunday.

Picture: Pat Moore

son. Limerick were aggressive and hungry, something that Cork in truth lacked for the most part in 2016. If you don't have those ingredients, then all the skill in the world won't count for much. Cork scored just four points from play.

The way the league played out Cork and Limerick ended in a play-off for the semi-final spot and in truth we all expected Limerick's earlier victory to have been a one-off and for Cork to advance. Not so. Their winning margin this time was seven points as Cork bowed out.

Let's be honest though, when it comes to championship Cork are a different side and when the sides met in July Cork ran out 3-17 to 1-9 victors.

That's why the league is so important to Limerick. They are making strides, unquestionably, but they

aren't All-Ireland contenders yet. They are league contenders though and to reach a league final would be massive progression for them over the past two seasons.

Certainly, there seems to be more intent in Cork's approach to the league this year compared to last. Not so much in that winning the league is significantly important to them but in their approach in general after last September's All-Ireland final defeat.

Five wins from five is as good as you can get but Cork know they are far from the finished article.

Paudie Murray may be forced to make a change for Sunday's game with Pamela Mackey still recovering from a knock to the back of her leg from the game against Kilkenny. If she fails to make it Emer O'Sullivan will be the likely direct replacement. The team

wasn't selected at the time of writing but Cork were defensively exposed a little against the Cats so there could well be additional changes there.

At midfield and up front Cork will likely keep numbers eight to 15 of Gemma O'Connor, Jennifer Barry, Amy O'Connor, Orla Cronin, Julia White, Linda Collins, Niamh McCarthy, and Katrina Mackey, with Mackey on fire last Saturday.

Cork's intensity and work rate is currently good, it has been good throughout the league all over the pitch. They'll need to bring that to Páirc Uí Rinn.

After last season, Limerick are no longer a team to be taken lightly.

They'll relish this challenge in Cork's stadium and with the weather predicted to be perfect for hurling, we could be in for a great game.

Semi-final is perfect remedy for Amy after testing week

Michael Moynihan



Amy O'Connor has a league semi-final appointment tomorrow with the Cork camogie team.

Limerick in Páirc Uí Rinn (4pm) is a welcome relief after a week of pharmacy exams, she says.

"Training's going well, from the start of the year we said we'd try to win every game and it's been going well so far."

"A semi-final is different, obviously, and we'll be expecting Limerick to come out all guns blazing tomorrow. We're confident, but we won't be complacent, certainly. Limerick are progressing, definitely. They won the intermediate All-Ireland a couple of years ago and they're doing well in senior — we always seem to be drawn against them — they're young and they're learning and improving all the time."

Along with her All-Ireland senior camogie medals, O'Connor has bright memories from another sport — she played in a UEFA U19 European Championships semi-final, after all.

She hasn't pored over the details surrounding the Irish Women's team and their stand-off with the FAI, but she can draw on her experience in the green of Ireland for comparisons.

"Camogie was my first love, so I went with that rather than the soccer, but to be honest I couldn't praise the FAI enough for the way we were treated all the way up. I thought we were treated very well."

"Yes, we gave back track-suits at the end of a tournament, that was the way it was."



Cork's Amy O'Connor, a former Ireland U-19 soccer player, praised the FAI for the way she and her team-mates were treated. "We stayed in the best of hotels and got the best of gear."

Picture: INPHO/Ken Sutton

“Look, if the men are getting more it's not fair, so it's good if it's more equal, fair play to them

"There can be an attitude of 'let's get on with it' to an extent with women in sport, and that may not be the right attitude either."

"In Cork the male players would have sponsored cars, expenses paid. Aisling (Thompson) has a sponsored car, which is fair enough, but how many All-Irelands have Briege Corkery and Rena Buckley won?"

"I think the attitude among women may be 'that's the way it is and we won't cause a fuss'."

"So maybe they (the Ireland senior soccer team) are right to kick up a fuss. We're putting in as much time on the field as the men are."

"The WPGA was a good step, for instance. It all helps, every step is a step forward."

There's another step forward tomorrow — the Kilkenny-Galway semi-final is being live-streamed via the Camogie Association's and Littlewoods Ireland digital channels. "It's good," says O'Connor. "Normally with the camogie nobody is really watching the games until you get to the All-Ireland semi-final stage, so that's another good move, definitely."

When I was in sixth year I missed 11 weeks of school travelling with the Irish team, and we stayed in the best of hotels, got the best of gear — fair enough, we gave some of it back — but at the end of a tournament you kept the green jersey."

"Look, if the men are get-

ting more it's not fair, so it's good if it's more equal, fair play to them (the current squad)."

"I can only talk about my own experience, and maybe we weren't treated as well as the boys, I don't know, but I couldn't complain."

"You could be at a tourna-

ment for three full weeks and you wouldn't have to pay for as much as a sock."

"Don't forget, too, that in a sport like basketball the players have to raise money to play for their country. We never had to do that."

"If the wider point is 'why shouldn't we be treated as well

as the men', obviously that's a fair point to make. I'm not involved in it anymore obviously, and even this week I had enough on my plate with these exams, so I wasn't paying that much attention to it!"

The disparity in profile between men and women isn't that far away for O'Connor:

FANTASTIC FIVE Carbery powers Cork team



Flying the Carbery flag: The Cork minor A camogie girls from the Carbery division that will be involved in the All-Ireland semi-final against Galway this Sunday, April 9th, in Semple Stadium, Thurles (2pm), after emerging victorious over Tipperary, Dublin, Offaly and Waterford. From left, Molra Barrett (Ballinascarthy), Clara Crowley (Ballinascarthy), Kate Wall (Kilbrittain/Timoleague), Maeve Lynch (Newcestown) and Zerica Griffin (Newcestown).

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GARVAN (Douglas and California): On March 23, 2017, peacefully, following a long illness, bravely borne, DEIRDRE, daughter of the late Peadar and Pat. Sadly missed by her loving partner Robert, sisters Marie (Jolly), Liz, Berenice and brother John, niece Yvonne, nephew Peter, grandniece Kara, brothers-in-law Roy and Christopher, members of The Adisiam Community, relatives and friends. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass will be celebrated in her memory in St. Joseph's S.M.A. Church, Blackrock Road on Monday, April 24, at 12 noon. May she rest in peace.

APR. 2017

Rebels tasting a lot of success

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

SOMETIMES when things go right for you, everything just falls into place and that certainly has been the case since the season began for the Cork camogie teams.

The Rebels have enjoyed a wonderful run of success in recent months and, to date, every team from U16 up to the senior side have successfully negotiated every competitive game they have contested.

It's certainly good days at present with the senior and intermediate teams qualified for their respective Littlewoods Division 1 and Division 2 National League semi-finals.

Both came through their group stages unbeaten which is a huge credit to players and managements of both sides.

The senior team meet Limerick tomorrow at 4pm, with the intermediate team out next weekend against Carlow.

The county minor sides, with four victories under their belts over Dublin, Tipperary, Offaly, and Waterford, topped their group to ensure a spot in the All-Ireland semi-final tomorrow, when they will meet Galway in Semple Stadium at 2pm.

Last weekend it was a superb day in Ballyagran as Cork were crowned Munster champions on the double with the A and B teams taking the honours in two exciting games.

Cracker

The B final was a cracker and it took extra-time to determine a winner, but in the extra-time, the young Cork side showed huge resolve to carve out a tremendous victory.

The A team had a tough battle with Tipp, but they went in front and held their lead despite huge pressure.

These were two great victories for Cork and all credit must go to the management team who are looking after both teams. It is not an easy thing to do, but the dedication and commitment was so evident in every player and mentor and all credit to everybody for the manner in which they were organised.

As the opening game, the B final, went into extra-time physio Rob Morey was busy getting the A side tuned in and ready. As soon as the final whistle went, the mentors just had time for the presentation of the trophy before turning their full attention to their A charges.

Well done Mike Boland, Ger Horgan, Pauline O'Regan, Mike O'Gorman, Seamus O'Leary and Rob Morey for a job well done.

The U16 side will now turn to the All-Ireland campaign, which will get under way as soon as exams are completed with a first game down for both A and B teams on July 2.

For now they can bask in the glory of a double provincial success.



The Laochra Óg camogie team from Muskerry who participated in the Caman to Munster event.

Cork teams enjoy Munster event

SIXTEEN Cork clubs were chosen to be part of the Munster Camogie Caman To Munster initiative, with an U12 Go Games day, which this year was held in Mallow.

Aghabullogue, Brian Dillon's, Douglas, St Vincent's, Clonakilty, Blarney, Carrigrohilly, Kilbree, Kilbrittan/Timoleague, Mallow, Nemo Rangers, Tracton, Valley Rovers, Middleton, Laochra Óg, and Sarsfield's were the clubs drawn to attend.

The whole day centred on enjoyment and playing games and the youngsters who took part all had a wonderful day.

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

The day was a big one for the Cork clubs chosen to participate and this was done by Kathleen Egan, who is the Club and Education Support Co-ordinator, and her team, who invited clubs to register their interest.

A draw was then made and 48 club teams from across Munster were chosen to head to Mallow. A total of 800 players participated and it was a superb day.

The growth of the game in Kerry continues and it is wonderful to see the

players from the Tralee Parnells flying the flag for Kerry camogie.

Ten clubs from Tipperary, eight from Limerick, four from Clare and three from Waterford all converged on Mallow for the event and with each of the clubs having been allocated a different starting time, varying from 10am to 2pm, it ensured a continuous stream of arrivals and departures.

Young referees were given a chance to shine when they stepped up and took charge of the games.

Each club had to bring a young referee who helped out with the overall running of the day.

It was arranged that no two clubs from the same county were in the same

group, thus ensuring the players get to participate against clubs from different counties.

Kathleen Egan was thrilled with the event.

"It's been a huge day for the association and for camogie in Munster. The clubs that were chosen were very appreciative of the opportunity to play and the weather was kind to us and the young players really enjoyed every second of the day."

The next big event will be the Caman to Croke which the association will host in May and clubs will be eagerly looking forward to the draw with bated breath to see if they are the lucky ones chosen to head to Croke Park.

Ballincollig host Underlights Tournament decider

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

TONIGHT is a big night for Ballincollig camogie club as they host the final of the Ballincollig Underlights Senior Camogie Tournament.

Since the first tournament in 2009, the competition has provided great pre-season games for clubs that are getting back into training and the main aim in organising the event was to get teams back onto the playing fields.

Down through the years, clubs such as Inniscarra, Douglas and Ballincollig have all taken the spoils.

This year is a special one for the club, as the family of the late Brendan Butler came on board with the Ballincollig Camogie Club and donated a memorial cup for the competition. This has added to the prestige of the event, to have such a beautiful trophy for the winners. Brendan was an officer of Ballincollig Camogie Club when he passed away four years ago.

He was a huge character and was always at the hub of everything and involved in all things to do

with the camogie club. Anytime you went to a game in Ballincollig, Brendan had a word for everyone and he is still fondly remembered by everyone in the club and beyond.

His wife, Liz, and two daughters, Kate and Anna, and the extended families will be in attendance this evening to see Sarsfield's and Glen Rovers battle it out for the trophy in his memory and their support has given the competition a boost.

Since the tournament's inception, Glen Rovers have been in attendance every year, while this is Sarsfield's fifth tournament and both clubs have been huge supporters of the event.

Club chairman, Mike O'Brien, is looking forward to welcoming everybody to Ballincollig and is hoping

to see many of the clubs that participated, come out to the final and join them afterwards in the clubhouse for refreshments when the Butler family will present the trophy to the winning team captain.

"The tournament was a great success and I want to thank all the clubs who participated, Ballincollig, Glen Rovers, Eire Óg, Ballygarvan, Sarsfield's and Douglas were all here with us. The weather was not always kind to us and we lost one whole week of fixtures, but the clubs showed great co-operation and we got the games completed."

"We are looking forward to the final now and wish both teams the best of luck. It is our first year having the trophy in honour of one of our late mentors and we hope we have done his memory proud with the organising of the event."

Throw-in is at 8pm with Eddie O'Sullivan from Inniscarra refereeing, it promises to be a wonderful occasion.

Galway
leave it late
with win
over Cork

CAMOGIE

■ Darren Kelly

Galway 0-14
Cork 0-8

A STRONG last quarter saw Galway finally wear down the challenge posed by Cork as they advance to the minor A All-Ireland final with four points to spare in Semple Stadium yesterday.

The six point margin is somewhat flattering, as it was only in the late closing stages that Galway closed the contest out.

In a close opening half it was score for score as the sides were deadlocked on six occasions the accuracy of both free takers crucial as both battled to gain control. Aoife Hurley gave Cork an early lead with a point from play which Siobhan McGrath replied.

Carrie Dolan and Lauren Homan exchanged points and with both defences tight scores were hard to come by. Two pointed frees by the end of the opening quarter momentarily edged Galway into the lead but a pointed Lauren Homan free had the sides tied up again at four point each.

It continued in the same vein with Cork edging ahead and Galway levelling and so it stayed to the interval where it was six points each.

Lauren Homan edged Cork into an early second half lead with a pointed free but three points in a row two from Carrie Dolan and one from Siobhan McGrath saw Galway open up a two point lead.

Now finally beginning to wear down the Cork challenge Galway applied the pressure Dolan pointed a free and McGrath had one from play as they increased their lead went to four points.

Lauren Homan converted Cork free but a strong finish from Galway with two Mairead Dillon points and one from on form free taker Carrie Dolan ensured it was Galway, who advanced to a final meeting with Clare in a few weeks time.

Scorers for Galway: C Dolan 0-8 (0-5 0-1 45) S McGrath 0-4 M Dillon 0-2

Cork: L Homan 0-6 (0-4 1's) S McGrath 0-1 each.

Galway: S Healy, S Cannon, L Burke, Leslie, C Garvey, L Hebert (C), M Hannon, S Ridge, N Homan, E Broderick, Spellman, C Hebert, M Dillon, S McGrath, C Dolan.

Subs: K Screane for S Spellman (50), L Dea for C. Hebert (60).

Cork: Molly Lynch, R McCarthy (C), R Leen, E Loneragan, K McCarthy, Eve Lynch, S McCarthy, G Hannon, Hayes, K Walsh, C Harney, A Hurley, Wall, R Keane, L Homan.

Subs: C Growley for K Walsh (27), K Daly G Hannon (37), C Mullins for R Homan (47).

Cork set up final date with Cats



Camogie

Linda Mellerick

Cork 3-15
Limerick 0-12

Cork were always in control of this national league semi-final yesterday in Páirc Uí Rinn and maybe that's why this game lacked excitement.

With their half-back line of Emer O'Sullivan — who replaced the injured Pam Mackey after five minutes — Ashling Thompson, Chloe Sigerson, and the excellent Gemma O'Connor on top, Cork's front six got a plentiful supply.

Their half time return of 1-8 didn't do justice to Cork, who, when they played it fast, had Limerick at sixes and sevens with their interplay.

At times, maybe Cork were a bit casual, lacking the killer finish, but they were still full value for their five-point half-time advantage. Six Cork players registered on the scoreboard, Cork's opening half goal coming from Niamh McCarthy after 10 minutes, when a good pass from Amy O'Connor put her through and she shrugged off three markers to finish.

With Rebecca Delee in fine form in Limerick's half-forward line, finding space, running through, and picking off three long-range points, and Mairead Fitzgerald and Orla Curtin notching up a brace, Limerick hung in there. Niamh Mulcahy, uncharacteristically, struck a couple of frees wide.

Cork got the perfect second-half start, when a free from the left wing by Mackey went under the crossbar to the net, after Limerick should have dealt better with it. Limerick were now struggling to get scores from play, relying on placed balls from Mulcahy.

Katrina Mackey moved up another gear and picked off five lovely points, three from play.

Limerick's threat was over on 52 minutes, when Julia White's long-range strike was stopped by Claire Keating, but not cleared, allowing McCarthy in for her second goal.



Cork's Orla Cronin looking for options during yesterday's Littlewoods Ireland Camogie League 1 semi-final win over Limerick at Páirc Uí Rinn. Cork will face Kilkenny in the final on April 23, after the Cats yesterday beat Galway by 1-14 to 0-11. Picture: Cathal Noonan

Player of the match Gemma O'Connor struck her third top-class point with nine minutes remaining, as Cork completely took over.

Limerick lost their pace and Cork ran out convincing winners.

In the other semi-final at Semple Stadium, Kilkenny defeated Galway by 1-14 to 0-11, setting up a Rebels versus Cats final again on April 23.

Scorers for Cork: K Mackey 1-8 (1-5 1's), N McCarthy 2-0, G O'Connor 0-3, J White 0-2, O Cronin, A O'Connor, 0-1 each.

Limerick: N Mulcahy 0-5 (1's), R Delee 0-3, O Curtin 0-2, M Fitzgerald, C Costelloe 0-1 each.

CORK: A Murray, L Treacy, R Buckley, L Coppinger, P Mackey, A Thompson, C Sigerson, G O'Connor, J Barry, A O'Connor, O Cronin, J White, L Collins, N McCarthy, K Mackey.

Subs: H Looney for L Collins (43), F Neville for C Sigerson (52) R O'Shea for J White (54).

LIMERICK: C Keating, S McNamara, M Creamer, M Quaid, K O'Leary, F Hickey, M Ryan, C Costelloe, D Murphy, L Stack, R Delee, O Curtin, M Fitzgerald, C Lyons, N Mulcahy.

Subs: C Lane for L Stack (38), C O'Brien for M Fitzgerald (45), L Leonard for C Lyons (55).

Referee: Owen Elliot-Antrim



Niamh McCarthy, who scored two goals as Cork ran out easy winners over Limerick in the Littlewoods Ireland Camogie League 1 semi-final. Picture: Cathal Noonan

Murray hoped for a stiffer test from Limerick

SPEAKING with Cork manager Paudie Murray post their semi-final victory he took both positives and negatives from his own side's performance.

Was he disappointed that Limerick's challenge wasn't stronger?

"Yeah I suppose you would like to get a stiffer challenge. From our perspective, we're trying to do the right thing, it's only April and I wouldn't be at all critical of them (the players) even if probably we overdid it and tried to work the ball into the goal too much. I think there were a few more scores there and against better opposition we'd want to be a bit more clinical. Defensively as well we need to tighten up. We've a lot of work to do, facing Kilkenny.

"The girl's attitude is good. As I said, it's only April. We know what's needed. We're well aware

REACTION

■ Linda Mellerick

going into a final against Kilkenny that our intensity and work rate has to come up. The way I look at Kilkenny, when they've everyone back they're by far the best camogie team out there so we'll be under pressure."

The game did open with Limerick pulling Cork out and a big space opening in around Cork's own 45-meter line? "Yeah and they had players coming through. So, it's an area that would be of concern to us this evening. We've two weeks to sort it out. We're probably adjusting to a new system as well so that's going to take time, that doesn't come overnight.

We're well aware of that but against better opposition like Kilkenny they'd have you cleaned out if we played like that.

"Still 3-15 was a good return from Cork and having suffered two league defeats to Limerick last year the league turnaround was impressive, maybe going so far as to say that Cork are in a better place than twelve months ago? "Yeah and I repeat what I said last week. The newcomers are going well. Two weeks' time will tell us a lot of where we are with those girls. But they've improved in every game so far so I'm happy enough with that."

And Cork v Kilkenny again? "Yes, I think Kilkenny have 35 players used in the league. A serious, serious outfit and we'll under pressure the next day but that's why we play the game, to test ourselves."

Cork face Kilkenny in showdown

Daragh Ó Conchúir



Kilkenny and Cork progressed to the Littlewoods Ireland Camogie League Division 1 final on April 23 after overcoming the challenges of Galway and Limerick respectively.

This is a repeat of September's All-Ireland final, which saw the Black and Amber prevail comfortably to end a 22-year drought and in the process, seal a wonderful double, having garnered League honours earlier in the season.

Cork came out on top by a point when the teams met in the group stages in Kilkenny on April 1 and have emerged from that phase of the competition with a 100% record with victory in Páirc Uí Rinn yesterday.

A goal after eight minutes from Danielle Morrissey gave Kilkenny an early lead at Semple Stadium and Meighan Farrell pointed to open a four-point gap. Galway were under-terred however and shot the next four points, three from leading scorer Ailish O'Reilly and another from Niamh McGrath.

It was nip and tuck for the next 10 minutes or so, with Miriam Walsh and Denise Gaule finding the target for Kilkenny. O'Reilly and McGrath



Cork's Amy O'Connor battles with Limerick's Fiona Hickey during the Littlewoods National Camogie League semi-final clash at Páirc Uí Rinn. Picture: Matt Browne

doing so for Galway. Mark Dunne's crew finished strongly though with a pair of points from the excellent O'Reilly and that left them

leading deservedly at half time by 0-9 to 1-4. Ann Downey has inculcated a real never-say-die element in this squad though and al-

lied with the belief that comes from accumulating silverware. Denise Gaule (two), Katie Power and Walsh registered points to turn things

around and though Niamh Kilkenny stopped the rot to reduce the margin to the minimum, it was a momentary relief for Galway as Gaule drove

over a trio of points (she finished with six), and Walsh and Julie Ann Malone added scores to secure a 1-14 to 0-11 victory.

Limerick opened the scoring in the other semi-final at Páirc Uí Rinn thanks to a Rebecca Delee point but Julia White levelled quickly for Cork and Orla Cronin edged them ahead before Niamh McCarthy continued the impression she has created since coming into the Rebels' lineup this year by hand-passing to the net after 10 minutes.

Mairéad Fitzgerald, Orla Curtin and Delee lofted points for the Shannonsiders, the latter bringing her tally to three with an outstanding solo score after a powerful surge, but Katrina Mackey slotted three of her own on the way to registering a tally of 1-8, while Amy O'Connor and Gemma O'Connor also did the business to make it 1-8 to 0-6 at the break.

Niamh Mulcahy reduced the margin to four from a free on the restart but once Mackey's attempt from 35m dropped into the net two minutes later, it was always going to be difficult for Limerick.

To give John Tuohy's girls credit, they showed plenty of character, with Mulcahy keeping the scoreboard ticking over and Curtin also hitting a point but Mackey and the regal Gemma O'Connor had impressive replies before McCarthy removed all doubt with her second goal eight minutes from time, leaving it 3-15 to 0-12 at the final whistle.

Passing of Iar-Uachtarán an Cumann Camógaíochta Mary Lynch

By Camogie Press
Posted 10/04/2017



THE CAMOGIE ASSOCIATION
An Cumann Camógaíochta

The Camogie Association is saddened to announce the passing of Iar-Uachtarán an Cumann Camógaíochta Mary Lynch.

Mary was elected as President of the Camogie Association in 1995, becoming the first Monaghan woman to hold the position. She played Camogie at St. Louis, Carrickmacross and later with the famed Celtic club and won an All-Ireland title with Dublin in 1949. As a referee she officiated over Minor, Junior and Senior All-Ireland Finals.

Mary had a lifetime involvement in Camogie and was instrumental in reviving Camogie in Monaghan. She held numerous administrative positions including Chairperson of Monaghan Camogie Board and Ulster Council and was a Trustee of the Camogie Association until 2004.

Uachtarán an Cumann Camógaíochta Catherine Neary stated 'It was with great sadness that I learned of Mary's death and on behalf of the Camogie Association I wish to extend my deepest sympathies to Mary's family and friends. Mary played a huge role in the development of Camogie throughout her life as a player, referee and as a volunteer, particularly in Monaghan and Ulster Camogie.'

Ar dheis Dé go raibh a h-anam d'Uí.

Funeral Arrangements:

Reposing at the residence of her son Tony in Lisavisk on Sunday (9th) from 7pm to 9pm and on Monday from 2pm until removal at 6:30pm on Monday (10th) evening to St. Joseph's Church, Carrickmacross, arriving at 7pm. Requiem Mass on Tuesday morning at 11am followed by burial in St. Joseph's Cemetery.

UCC Sports Stars 2015-16: Phil Healy (Athletics); Adrian O'Sullivan (Basketball); Orla Cronin (Camogie); Ian McGuire (Gaelic football); Emma Barber (Hockey); Michael Breen (Hurling); Dolreann O'Sullivan (Ladies football); Robert O'Donovan (Rugby); Sean McLoughlin, Daniel Pender (Soccer).

Galway and Antrim claim All-Ireland Minor titles

By Camogie Press
Posted 22/04/2017



GALWAY waltzed to their second All-Ireland Minor A Camogie title, producing a thunderous second-half performance in which they kept Clare scoreless on their way to a 4-14 to 0-5 victory at MacDonagh Park, Nenagh.

Clare were the victims when the Galway last took the honours in 2010 after a replay and this loss is the Banner County's fourth in a final, since the introduction of the U18 grade in 2006.

There was no hint of the one-sided nature the affair would eventually become in the first half, and Clare trailed by just 1-5 to 0-6 at half time but they conceded four goals in the second half to leave their hopes in tatters.

Laura Foley had three points for the Munster representatives and Aoife Power two but Mairéad Dillon's goal in the 15th minute proved the difference between the sides.

Clara Helebert hit Galway's second major after 41 minutes and that appeared to knock the stuffing out of their opponents. Carrie Dolan and Siobhán McGrath kept the scoreboard ticking over and hard though Clare goalkeeper Clara McCarthy tried, there was little she could do to hold the relentless Maroons at bay.

Dolan hand-passed to the net from a rebound after McCarthy made a good save nine minutes from the end of regulation time and she repeated the trick in injury time, again showing her predatory instincts after another McCarthy stop.

Antrim claimed the B championship for a second time too and remarkably, they also managed to keep the opposition scoreless in the latter period before winning 3-11 to 2-5 at the Inishkeen Grattan's grounds in Monaghan.

The Lilywhites led by 2-5 to 0-4 at the change of ends, thanks to goals from Caoimhe Maher and Caoimhe Sheridan and three points from Leah Sutton, but Antrim's defence kept evicting the resurgent Lilywhites.

Derry boosted by the return of Slaughtneil star

A Division Two National League final beckons for the Oak Leaf camogs

NATIONAL LEAGUE DIVISION TWO
SEMI-FINAL
DERRY V KILDARE
Sunday April 16, 2pm Inniskeen Grattans GAA

A YEAR which has seen them gain experience against some of the top camogie counties reaches another significant milestone for the Derry senior camogie side this weekend.

Inspired by the success, of course, of Slaughtneil in the All-Ireland club, the Oak Leaf county have been making their own progress.

This Sunday Inniskeen is the venue for their National League Division Two semi-final meeting against Kildare. It's a game which comes after

an encouraging campaign for the team manager, Ciaran Cunningham, and the players.

It climaxed recently when they defeated Wexford by 3-18 to 2-10 in the final round.

In that game, a strong second half performance helped them overcome a seven-point deficit at half-time.

One setback came at the end of March when they lost out to Limerick by 2-15 to 1-8.

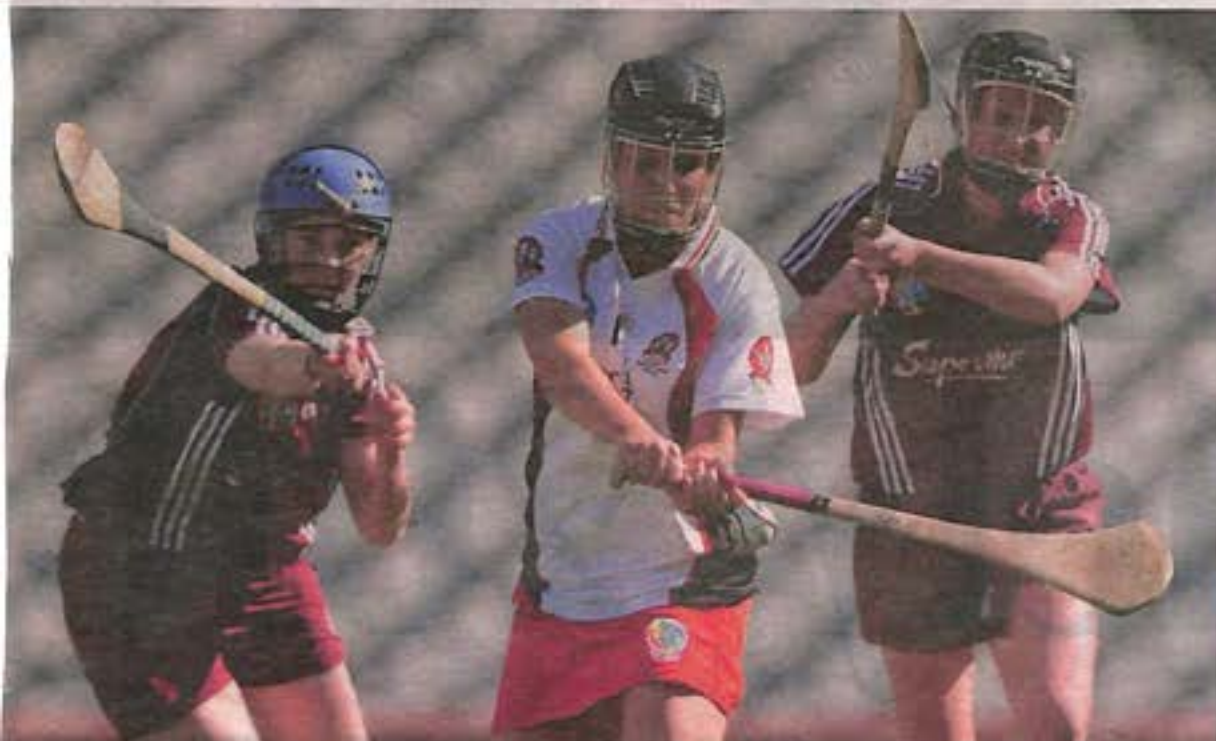
Now the tantalising prize of a place in the final and the promise of early silverware in 2017 awaits them.

The side has been boosted by the return of Slaughtneil's team captain, Aoife Ní Cháiside, to the ranks fol-

lowing their historic Croke Park victory in February.

Among those who have been doing well for them during this campaign are Dervla McGuigan and Aileen McCusker in the defence, Karen Kieft, Grainne McNicholl and Aoife Shaw. Mairead McNicholl has also been to the fore up front alongside the experienced Katie McAnenly.

They'll be hoping for more big performances from their key players and the rest of the team whose experience of playing in the All-Ireland Intermediate championship last year has certainly stood to them for the challenge of Division Two of the league this year.



ABOVE: Katie McAnenly has been a stalwart for Derry during recent seasons and has also been displaying good form this season.
BELOW: Aileen McCusker's performances for Derry during the current National League campaign earned her a nomination as camogie player of the month for March.



AWARDS ULSTER GAA WRITERS



TROPHY... Barney and Claire Graham accepting the March Monthly Merit Award from Seamus McMahon, Quinn Building Product Sales and Marketing Director (right), on behalf of their daughter Shannon. Back: UGAAWA Chairman John Martin (left) and Slaughtneil Chairman Sean McGuigan. Picture by John McIlwaine.

Brilliant season capped by latest award for Slaughtneil

A BRILLIANT All-Ireland winning season for the camogs of Slaughtneil has been further recognised when their team captain received the Ulster GAA Writers Merit award for March.

It was the Emmetts who blazed the trail to success with a nail-biting 1-10 to 0-11 defeat of Galway champions Sarsfields.

Many players made their mark on that memorable occasion at Croke Park. Any one of the victorious team, though, could have been considered for the Quinn Building Products-UGAAWA Merit Award for March.

However, the globe trotting Shannon Graham who eventually got the nod after her five star performance in the final as she inspired her colleagues with her midfield mastery.

At present, Shannon is in New Zealand and, obviously, unable to personally collect the award but, when notified of being the winner, she was delighted and stressed: "I wish I could be there." Her dad and

mum, Brian and Claire, were happy to stand in.

Team captain Aoife Ní Cháiside wasn't able to attend, either, but paid a glowing tribute to Shannon. "She never stops running during a game and in the All-Ireland final she was an inspiration to us all. Her own play, her promptings and her encouragement to all around her keeps us all going."

As her award, Shannon Graham receives an engraved Belleek Living Vase, specially hand-crafted jewellery from Carlingford Design House, training gear from O'Neill's International Sports plus two tickets to the next Ulster GAA Writers' Association annual presentation function.

Shannon's parents, Brian and Claire, accepted the award on her behalf at a presentation in Quinn's Corner, Co Tyrone, on Monday, April 10 from Quinn Building Products Sales and Managing Director Seamus McMahon.

Murray's wary of Cats ahead of league final

CAMOGIE LEAGUE DIV 1

CORK 3-15
LIMERICK 0-12

BY SHIRLEY MOLONEY

CORK camogie manager Paudie Murray was happy, but would have preferred more of a test, after his side advanced to the final of the Littlewoods Ireland NCL Division 1 on Sunday.

The Rebels saw off Limerick at Páirc Uí Rinn in their semi-final without too much stress to set up a final showdown with reigning All Ireland champions Kilkenny in two weeks' time. There were a lot of positives for Murray to take, but he was keen not to get carried away either.

'We were better prepared than we were against Limerick last year,' he said, 'but we definitely expected a sterner challenge.'

'All we could do was to make sure that the attitude was right, which it was, and to do the right things. We did that for the most part but I wouldn't be too happy about conceding 12 points. We'll have to be very tight against Kilkenny in the final.'

The final is a repeat of last year's All-Ireland decider, won by the Cats as they denied Cork three in a row. The counties met in a regular league game a fortnight ago, with Cork win-

ning, perhaps quenching talk of revenge somewhat, but Murray wouldn't deal in such parameters anyway.

'If you start looking at that kind of stuff, you take your eye off the ball,' he said.

'We're concentrating on ourselves and doing things right. I'm not sure if the result will be all important, we've won league finals and lost the All-Ireland later that year and done vice-versa as well.'

'The main thing is that we're going in against a seriously strong team, I think they've used 35 players in the league so far and they've had a lot of underage success. If we don't show up, we'll get annihilated.'

'There are a few younger girls in the team and it's certainly one way of finding out if they're up to it.'

Cork will hope to have Eimear O'Sullivan, Orla Cotter and Pamela Mackey fit for the final, while Maeve Cahalane's return is a bit further away. That just leaves Brieghe Corkery to return, with Murray 'hopeful that she'll come back too'.

Even without such names, dominated throughout against Limerick, with Gemma O'Connor especially impressive. Looking comfortable in her new berth at midfield, O'Connor registered three su-



On the charge: Cork's Orla Cronin (Enniskeane) makes her move during the Littlewoods Ireland national camogie league Division 1 win against Limerick last Sunday in Páirc Uí Rinn.

perb long-range efforts.

While Limerick's Rebecca Delee opened the scoring inside two minutes, Cork soon got on top. Two well-worked from Julia White and Orla Cronin had them in front and on the ten-minute mark Niamh McCarthy broke through the Limerick defence to handpass to the net, opening up a four-point lead.

The sides traded points for much of the rest of the first half, with Mairead Fitzgerald and Orla Curtin on target for Limerick while the hosts had points from Katrina Mackey and Amy O'Connor.

Cork led by 1-8 to 0-6 at half-time and resumed the second half with the same form of calculated teamwork and determined defence when they held Limerick to six points with just one of them coming from play through Orla Curtin.

Niamh Mulcahy, operating top of the right, was quiet by her normal standards but registered the remaining five points from frees. Cork, however, pushed on and when Mackey's free from 35m dipped and landed in the net it ended the



Kind words: Cork's Linda Collins (Courcey Rovers) and Limerick's Caoimhe Costello share a few words after the game.

game as a contest. Cork saw out the game with some fine scores from an industrious Mackey, O'Connor and a goal from McCarthy.

Scorers:

Cork: N McCarthy 2-0, K Mackey 1-8 (1-4f, 145), G O'Connor 0-03 (1f), J White 0-2, A O'Connor, O Cronin 0-1 each.

Limerick: N Mulcahy 0-5 (3f), R Delee 0-3, O Curtin 0-2, M Fitzgerald, C Costelloe 0-1 each.

Cork: A Murray, L Treacy, R Buckley, L Coppinger, P Mackey, A Thompson, C Sigerson, G O'Connor, J Barry, A O'Connor, O Cronin, J White, K Mackey, M McCarthy, L Collins.
Subs: E O'Sullivan for Mackey (5, injured), H Looney for Collins

(43), F Neville for Sigerson (52), R O'Shea for White (53).

Limerick: C Keating, S McNamara, M Creamer, M Quaid, K O'Leary, F Hickey, M Ryan, C Costelloe, D Murphy, L Stack, R Delee, O Curtin, M Fitzgerald, C Lyons, N Mulcahy.
Subs: C Lane for Stack (38), C O'Brien for Fitzgerald (45), L Leonard for Lyons (54).
Referee: O Elliott (Antrim).

Cork will hope to have Eimear O'Sullivan, Orla Cotter and Pamela Mackey fit for the final, while Maeve Cahalane's return is a bit further away. That just leaves Brieghe Corkery to return, with Murray 'hopeful that she'll come back too'.



Risam Uile recipients: The camogie team's Aoife Walsh, Killeagh and racket ball team member, Cono Skehan, Waterford, at the 2016-2017 Cork Institute of Technology Sports Awards. Picture: Darragh Kan.



Carmel Harkin, Tipperary Camogie Chairperson presenting flowers to Sharon Ralph, Moycarkey/Borris for volunteer of the year 2015.

Schools skills are crucial for game



Camogie

Linda Mellerick

The organisation of the Cork Camogie Golf Classic, in aid of the clubhouse development in Castleroad, is underway with the call out to players, supporters, clubs, families, and friends to enter a team or sponsor a tee box.

The event is on Friday July 7th. Your support would be greatly appreciated. Contact Billy Dillon on 087 3287340 to book a tee time that suits you.

Cork and Kilkenny will resume rivalries once more, this time in the Littlewoods Ireland Camogie League Division 1 Final tomorrow week after they overcame the challenges of Galway and Limerick respectively.

A repeat of last September's All-Ireland final, which saw the Black and Amber prevail to end a 22-year drought and in the process, seal a double, having garnered League honours earlier in the season.

Cork came out on top by a point when the teams met in the group stages in Kilkenny on April 1st and emerged from that phase of the competition with a 100% record, so the latest rematch will be highly anticipated.

A goal after eight minutes from Danielle Morrissey gave Kilkenny an early lead at Semple Stadium and Meighan Farrell pointed to open a four-point gap.

Galway were undeterred however and shot the next four points, three from leading scorer Ailish O'Reilly and another from Niamh McGrath.

It was nip and tuck for the next 10 minutes or so, with Miriam Walsh and Denise Gaule finding the target for Kilkenny, O'Reilly and McGrath doing so for Galway.

Mark Dunne's crew finished strongly though with a pair of points from the in-form O'Reilly and that left them leading deservedly at half time by 0-9 to 1-4.

Ann Downey has inculcated a never-say-die element in this squad and aided with the belief that comes from accumulating silverware, Denise Gaule (2), Katie Power and Walsh registered points to turn things around. Though Niamh Kilkenny stopped the rot to reduce the margin to the minimum, it was a momentary relief for Galway as Gaule drove over a trio of points (finishing with six), and Walsh and Julie Ann Malone added scores to secure a 1-11 to 0-11 victory.

Limerick opened the scoring in the other semi-final at Páirc Uí Rinn thanks to a Rebecca Delee point but Alia White levelled quickly for Cork and Orla Cronin edged them ahead before Niamh McCarthy continued the impression she has created since coming into the Rebels' line-up this year by hand-passing to the net after 10 minutes.

Mairéad Fitzgerald, Orla Curtin and Delee lifted white flags for the Shannonsiders, the latter bringing her tally



Cork's Amy O'Connor helps to keep the scoreboard ticking over for Cork.

Pic: INPHO/Cathal Noonan



Captains, Rena Buckley of Cork and Niamh Mulcahy of Limerick with referee Owen Elliot during the coin toss.

Pic: INPHO/Cathal Noonan

to three with an outstanding solo score after a strong surge, but Katrina Mackey slotted three of her own on the way to registering a tally of 1-8.

Amy O'Connor and Gemma O'Connor made it 1-8 to 0-6 at the break.

Niamh Mulcahy reduced the margin to four from a free straight after the restart but once Mackey's attempt for a point from the wing at 35m dropped into the net two minutes later, it was always going to be difficult for Limerick.

Mulcahy kept the scoreboard ticking over with Curtin also hitting a point but Mackey and the majestic Gemma O'Connor had impressive replies before McCarthy removed all doubt with her second goal eight minutes from time, leaving it 3-15 to 0-12 at the final whistle.

Gemma O'Connor incidentally won the 'Style of Play' title for the week for her magnificent second half long

range point, her third beauty of the day.

Galway's minors came up trumps against Cork by 0-14 to 0-8 at Semple Stadium to win a place in the All-Ireland 'A' final against Clare.

Carrie Dolan was the star as the westerners got to last year's decider and she scored seven points to ensure another stab at crossing the finishing line, with the excellent Siobhán McGrath adding five.

Lauren Homan registered six points for Cork.

The six-point winning margin didn't do justice to Cork's attempts to reach another minor final and full credit to their management team.

Unless our secondary schools get strong again we may never win another minor title. It all starts with the schools. I don't believe that the clubs solely drive it.

By and large clubs have benefited

“We need school development officers because volunteerism isn't as strong as it was

from local schools. Schools are the feeders. Strong schools have always led to strong intercounty minor teams; St. Mary's Charleville, St. Patrick's Gardiner's Hill, North Pres, Sacred Heart.

When the schools were strong we won three minor All Ireland titles in row in the eighties (U16 at the time) 1983-1985, five in six seasons in the nineties and early noughties - 1992-2003.

Go back to the seventies and we had another five in six years - 1975-1980.

We were throwing off U18 Munster titles all through the decades (the competition didn't go beyond Munster).

We haven't won an U16 title since 2003 or a Minor title since it's All Ireland inauguration in 2006.

We need development officers as volunteerism in schools isn't as strong as it used to be.

Seandún coaching session for next Friday

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

THE Seandún camogie committee have been busy recently and once again are in the process of organising two coaching sessions to take place on Friday, April 21.

Coach the Coaches sessions will be held in the Blackrock Hurling Club with the first session from 6.45pm to 8pm and this is fundamentals for coaches of players from U6s U8s up to and including U10s.

This session will take the coaches through the basic skills for those age groups and will be of particular interest to young and new coaches who feel they may learn something new that they can use in their sessions with the young beginners in particular.

The second session is from 8.15pm to 9.30pm and is for coaches of the players from U10s up to and including the U14s and this will go through the basics for goalkeeper coaching.

This will be a great session to pick up ideas to make this position a bit more appealing for young players.

Every club at some level seems to have problems with this role with a lot of children refusing to play in this position.

How often have we seen children with huge potential simply refuse to play in goal yet this is possibly the best position for the child yet a lot of the coaches are hitting a brick wall.

This session will take coaches through the basics and maybe give some ideas how to encourage players to make the position their own.

Both sessions are subsidised by Munster Council and Seandún are asking for just €5 per person for each one and these must be booked in advance by contacting the Seandún secretary at secretary.seandun.cork@camogie.ie

Clubs in the Seandún division are asked to encourage their coaches to attend. For some it might be their first course, for others it could work as a refresher but as in everything there is always something new to pick up.

The division have been very active in recent weeks they held a superb first aid course recently where over twenty coaches attended and went through a very interesting session given by Padraic Treacy from St John's Ambulance. All who attended had huge praise for the whole evening which was most informative.

Another initiative has been the school coaching programme and during the coming week's city schools in different areas will be availing of a six week coaching sessions again this initiative was funded by the Munster council.

Certainly Seandún are working hard at all levels and must be congratulated.



Professor Patrick O'Shea, President UCC, presents Orla Cronin (Camogie) with her award, also included are Linda Ryan, Bank of Ireland and Ruairi O'Connor, General Manager The River Lee Hotel. Picture: Jim Coughlan

Carlow test for Leeside ladies

SUNDAY
Little woods Division Two
National League Semi Final
Cork v Carlow
WIT, 2pm

THE Cork Division two side bid to join their Division 1 counterparts in the Littlewoods National League final when they take on Carlow tomorrow at Waterford IT in a battle for a place in the last two.

Camogie in Carlow is on the rise and last weekend their minor the counties second All-Ireland Minor C title with a superb 4-10 to 0-12 victory over

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

Roscommon.

Club side Myshall were crowned Intermediate club champions recently and with the Premier Junior title having been captured last September the mood in the county is one of huge optimism.

Carlow finished second in their group on score difference having finished behind Derry and ahead of Kilkenny with four wins from five games.

Their only defeat came at the hands of Kilkenny who failed to make it to the last four.

Cork dominated their group with a

one hundred per cent record as they topped the table. Cork won the Division 2 title in 2014 and to reach the final would be another step in the right direction for a side that has worked hard all season.

Carlow will provide a strong test Eleanor Treacy had been their stand out player through this campaign and Cork will have to close her down, whilst Ciara Quirke and a game-changing co Rachel Sawyer Niamh Cavanagh captain Grainne Nolan and Anna Breen have all contributed enormously as Carlow continue to impress in the higher grade this year.

They lost out in last year's semi final to Meath and will be battling to go a step closer this year. Cork have been hugely impressive all year confidently

taking each game as they came they overcame Galway, Westmeath, Armagh and Kildare before hitting an impressive twenty one points in their last game against Antrim.

Topping their group has been a boost and with the division one side already safely through to the final, there are injury concerns to Aisling Kelleher and Leah Weste but other than this there is a have a full squad available.

Paudie Murray is wary of the challenge Carlow pose to his sides ambitions of reaching the final.

"We have a tough hour ahead of us but if we can get our focus right we will be a match for anyone so hopefully come Sunday evening we will have both our teams in the National League finals."

Mary was one of the great ambassadors for game

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

THE Camogie Association lost one of its oldest members last week with the passing of one of the Associations vice presidents Mary Lynch.

A great ambassador for the game she always worked hard to promote and develop camogie.

Never slow to let her thoughts be known she was fair and honest in all her dealings within the various roles she held and as someone who started out playing the game as youngster she attained the highest office in the association and was hugely proud to have done so.

Mary made history when she was elected as President of the Camogie Association in 1985 Congress in Ballinasloe as she becoming the first Monaghan woman to hold the position.

A great administrator she became affectionately known as Mary "Monaghan" and for her term in office was always very much to the fore in all matters camogie and gaelic games.

Mary played her camogie starting out as Mary Kelly at St Louis Carrickmacross and in later years when she worked in the Office of the Land Commission in Dublin she joined with the famed Celtic club in Dublin.

She went on to play at mid field and win an All-Ireland medal with Dublin in 1949.

On the occasion of her marriage to Willie Lynch Mary returned to live in Carrickmacross and was instrumental in reviving camogie in Monaghan and she went on to become chairman of the Monaghan Camogie Board and Ulster Council.

She was a Trustee of the Camogie Association from 1994 to 2004.

Mary had a lifetime involvement in the game of camogie and was.

She held numerous administrative positions including Chairperson of Monaghan Camogie Board and Ulster Council and was a Trustee of the Camogie Association until 2004.

Uachtarán Cumann Camógaloichta Catherine Neary paid tribute to Mary and said;

"It was with great sadness that I learned of Mary's death and on behalf of the Camogie Association I wish to extend my deepest sympathies to Mary's family and friends."

"Mary played a huge role in the development of Camogie throughout her life as a player, referee and as a volunteer, particularly in Monaghan and Ulster Camogie."

Mary was predeceased by her husband Willie and is survived by her sons, Brendan, Bill and Tony and daughter Marianne and their families.

Ar dheis Dé go raibh a h-anam dílis.

Limerick lose out to Cork in camogie semi-final

CORK 3-15
LIMERICK 0-12

BY LEADER REPORTER
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LIMERICK suffered defeat in the semi-final of the Littlewoods Ireland National Camogie League semi-final when they came up against a strong Cork side.

After a good campaign saw John Tuohy's side get wins over Clare, Offaly and Meath, they end the league season with a second consecutive defeat after losing to Galway in the last round of the group stage.

Goals from Katrina Mackey and Niamh McCarthy (2) helped Cork secure the victory, in what was a comfortable win in the end.

Limerick battled hard throughout though with Niamh Mulcahy, Rebecca Delee and Orla Curtin impressing for John Tuohy's side.

Limerick opened the scoring thanks to a Rebecca Delee point but Julia White levelled quickly for Cork and Orla Cronin put them ahead before Niamh McCarthy bundled Limerick keeper Claire Keating over and hand-passed to the net after 10

minutes.

Limerick responded well with an excellent Mairéad Fitzgerald point from a very tight angle. Orla Curtin and Rebecca Delee also raised white flags for Limerick but Cork kept the scoreboard ticking over maintaining their lead through Katriona Mackey, Amy O'Connor and Gemma O'Connor.

Rebecca Delee brought her tally to three with an outstanding solo score after a powerful run from midfield just before the break to keep Limerick just about in touch 1-8 to 0-6 at the break.

Limerick again opened the scoring in the second half through a Niamh Mulcahy free but once Katriona Mackey's attempt for a point from a free dropped into the net Limerick were in truth left with a mountain to climb.

Despite the back-to-back losses to end the campaign, Tuohy said he was happy with the spring that his side put down ahead of the championship.

"We were in the top four in the National League, which is where we want to be," Tuohy reflected after the defeat.

"Cork have come on leaps and bounds. They are taking the league very seriously," he added as the Lee-siders set

up a meeting with Kilkenny in the final - a repeat last year's All-Ireland decider.

Despite the disappointing nature of the defeat, Tuohy is happy with the campaign overall as his side prepare for a Munster Championship clash with the winners of Tipperary and Waterford.

"At the end of the day, the league is a secondary competition," he said. "We still wanted to get to the final, but we are happy with getting to the semi, being in the top four," he said, admitting that another crack at the Rebels in a Munster final would be

ideal championship preparation.

Ahead of the provincial championship in May, and the All-Ireland Championship in June, the Patrickswell man will take time to reflect, and look to add to his panel of players.

"We definitely have a much bigger, stronger panel. We will call more players in the next week or so," he said.

Limerick also have the likes of Niamh Richardson, Sarah Carey and Judith Mulcahy to come back into the fray after they missed this contest and Tuohy is happy

with how the squad is shaping in the run up to the Championship.

Between the Munster and All-Ireland Championships, Limerick are guaranteed at least five games over the summer.

The All-Ireland competition is run off on a round-robin basis, a structure that Tuohy says suits his side.

"They say it (round-robin) suits the big teams, which is true, but it suits Limerick as well," he said.

"It gives us four matches, it's not knock-out so we will get a chance to try out

players," he added.

SCORERS: Limerick: Niamh Mulcahy 0-5 (0-5 Free), Rebecca Delee 0-3, Orla Curtin 0-2, Mairéad Fitzgerald, Caoimhe Costelloe 0-1 each. Cork: Katriona Mackey 1-8, Niamh McCarthy 2-0, Gemma O'Connor 0-3, Julia White 0-2, Orla Cronin, Amy O'Connor 0-1 each.

LIMERICK: Claire Keating (Cappamore), Sinéad McNamee (Na Piansaigh), Muireann Creamer (Cappamore), Marian Quaid (Bruff), Karen O'Leary (Newcastle West), Fiona Hickey (Granagh Ballingarry), Mairéad Ryan (Clooney Quin), Caoimhe Costelloe (Adare), Deborah Murphy (Knockaderry), Laura Stack (Milford), Rebecca Delee (Newcastle West), Orla Curtin (Ahane), Mairéad Fitzgerald (Granagh Ballingarry), Caoimhe Lyons (Monaleen), Niamh Mulcahy (Ahane). **Subs:** Cliona Lane (Adare) for Laura Stack; Chloe O'Brien (Ballygran) for Mairéad Fitzgerald; Lisa Leonard (Cappamore) for Caoimhe Lyons.



Limerick's Fiona Hickey in action against Niamh McCarthy of Cork during the Littlewoods National Camogie League semi-final fixture at Pairc Ui Rinn on Sunday last



The Limerick squad which lost to Cork in the Littlewoods Ireland National Camogie League semi-final at Pairc Ui Rinn on Sunday last



Limerick's Karen O'Leary battles for possession with Orla Cronin of Cork during the Littlewoods National Camogie League semi-final

Cork finish well to stem Carlow fightback and book final spot

Cork 0-18
Carlow 1-7

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

A STRONG second-half display from Cork in WIT yesterday, ensured the division two team join their senior counterparts in the Littlewoods National League camogie finals where they will meet Derry, who beat Kildare.

In an amazing stat from the game the free count was 20 to nine in Carlow's favour as an over-fussy official did no favours for Cork. Nevertheless, Cork weathered the storm as Carlow came at them in the second half and cut their lead to a single point and it was here that Cork really opened up stepping up a gear to hold Carlow scoreless for the last 18 minutes.

Aided by a strong wind, Cork led 0-8 to 0-5 at the interval. Rachel O'Shea converted four frees and one from play with the effective Maebh McCarthy hitting

two from play. Eleanor Treacy and Rachel Sawyer kept the scoreboard ticking over for a Carlow side, who would have been happy to just trail by three at the break.

On the resumption, Kaitlin Hickey and Michaela Buckley stretched Cork's lead with two excellent points inside five minutes, but Carlow enjoyed their best spell from the fifth to the 12th minute as they came at Cork.

Michelle Nolan got a touch to Tara Wilson's long range free to grab the game's only goal and an Eleanor Treacy 45 left a point between the sides, 0-10 to 1-6.

Cork knuckled down and struck seven points from play without reply — Linda Collins with three, Maebh McCarthy, Sarah Fahy, Michaela Buckley,

and Kaitlin Hickey all on target as a solid Cork ensured no way through for Carlow.

Eleanor Treacy did convert a late Carlow free, but there was no way back as Cork by then had booked their place in the final.

Scorers for Cork: R O'Shea 0-6 (0-4 f), M McCarthy, K Hickey, L Collins 0-3 each, M Buckley 0-2, S Fahy 0-1, Carlow: E Treacy 0-5 (0-3 f, 0-1 45), M Nolan 1-0, R Sawyer 0-2.

CORK: A Leo, R Kileen, S Harrington, N Ni Chaoimh, L Lynch, S Buckley, J Crowley, F Neville, S Fahy, K Hickey, K McCarthy, M McCarthy, R O'Shea, L Collins, H Ryan.

Subs: M Buckley for H Ryan (h-f), L Kelly for M McCarthy (55), R Sheehan for J Crowley (55), M Mullins for L Lynch (56), N O'Callaghan for K McCarthy (58).

CARLOW: N Doyle, S Foley, G Nolan, A Ryan, N Canavan, E Brennan, M O'Shea, T Wilson, E Treacy, M Doyle, L Abbey, R Sawyer, A Breen, A Dowling, S Kavanagh.

Subs: M Nolan for A Dowling (29), E Byrne for S Kavanagh (44), N Quirke for S Foley (55).

Referee: Liz Dempsey (Kilkenny).

Cronin's excited as Cork regroup

CAMOGIE LEAGUE FINAL

BY KIERAN MCCARTHY

LEGENDARY Green Bay Packers coach Vince Lombardi once said, 'It's not whether you get knocked down, it's whether you get up'.

Orla Cronin knows what he meant.

Those weeks after losing last September's All-Ireland senior camogie final to Kilkenny were tough to deal with, a period of reflection and soul-searching, but the Enniskeane woman (21) and her teammates have got back up, regrouped and are more determined than ever this season.

That defeat to Kilkenny was a shock to the system. In the previous two seasons Cronin

had won two All-Ireland senior titles but the Cats shattered the dreams of the three-in-a-row as they instead completed a league and championship double.

Cork were knocked off their perch by the team they'll meet again this Sunday in the Littlewoods Ireland Camogie League Division 1 final at the Gaelic Grounds.

'The way last year finished was a huge disappointment for myself and all the players, and you want to come back stronger and better from an experience like that,' said Cronin, who is in her third full year with the senior panel.

'It's hard to take a defeat like that when you've put in a year's work and trained so much for

it. You think you've trained the right way and done everything you can so when you don't get the result you want, that's hard to deal with it.

'After any loss, and especially losing an All-Ireland final, you have to think about things a little bit more to see where you went wrong and what you can do better.

'When you lose in a big game like we did, it does make you hungrier and you can sense that this year, the determination to improve. We're starting from scratch, just focusing on our-

selves and we're fairly open-minded too.

'But I'm definitely after coming back more dedicated and more excited about this year, I'm going to keep pushing myself and I'm working on the little things to get better, even if it's just a small improvement.'

Cork's response in this year's Division 1 league has been impressive. Cronin says that they have a target of trying to win every game and that's on track so far; they've a 100 per cent record in this campaign. Wins against Dublin (1-7 to 0-4), Tip-

perary (2-14 to 1-12), Waterford (3-19 to 0-8), Wexford (0-16 to 0-4) and Kilkenny away (0-12 to 0-11) set-up a semi-final against Limerick that they also won, 3-15 to 0-12.

Now they face league champs Kilkenny this Sunday in the league final and it's a chance to lay down an early marker ahead of the championship.

'I suppose it is (a chance to lay down an early marker) but you can't forget that it's only April, the real business doesn't start until the championship,' Cork star Cronin pointed out.

Focused: Enniskeane's Orla Cronin on the move in Cork's Littlewoods Ireland Camogie League Division 1 semi-final win against Limerick at Páirc Uí Rinn.

(Photo: Cathal Noonan/INPHO)



'It will be a good test for us at this stage of the year, to show us where we're at. Kilkenny are a great side at the moment, they have great players and are playing well but we're going to keep doing what we've been doing during the league, working hard and focusing on ourselves and see where that takes us.'

There's a strength in depth in the Cork senior squad that wasn't there last year, and wasn't there when Cork turned to the bench in last year's All-Ireland final - but manager Paudie Murray has looked to fix that by promoting players from last year's intermediate side.

'The competition for places was probably something that we were missing last year,' third year UCC physiology student Cronin admitted.

'Between the two panels (senior and intermediate) we probably didn't have a strong enough panel on our senior side.'

'The intermediates had a good season last year and you can see now the likes of Jen Barry, Linda Collins, Chloe Sigeron coming through from that team that was in the All-Ireland final - that experience has stood to them and they're making the step up to senior now.'

'It's great to be able to add strength and diversity to our panel this year, you need that if you want to go places and compete for the big trophies.'

Sharing the big stage

The Littlewoods Ireland Camogie Leagues Division 1 final between Cork and Kilkenny this Sunday, April 23rd, will be held in the Gaelic Grounds, Limerick, at 1.30pm, live on TG4. It will form part of a double-header with the Division 1 Hurling League final between Tipperary and Galway at 3.30pm.

Kinsale junior camogie team ready to write their own history

BY KIERAN MCCARTHY

LATE last year, the history of Kinsale GAA Club was captured in a fantastic new book, *Heroes Past and Present - A History of Gaelic Games in Kinsale, 1886-2016*.

The ink is barely dry in that page-turner and already new chapters are being written, this time by the club's first-ever ladies junior camogie team.

Last Wednesday night on home turf, the very first Kinsale junior camogie team took to the field in their first competitive outing, a junior C league game against Cobh.

It was a moment of history for Kinsale GAA and while the result didn't go their way, it was the first step into adult camogie for the club.

This is the third season for Kinsale Camogie Club and now it caters from U6 up to junior level, as Noel O'Sullivan explains.

'The camogie club started three years ago with U12s, and before this adult team, the girls who were U12 and U14 had no team to aim for, no team above them so the decision was made to start an adult team.'

'The response has been fantastic,' O'Sullivan said.

A meeting was held before Christmas to gauge the interest in a junior ladies camogie team and with an enthusiastic turnout, it was given the green light, with O'Sullivan, Eithne Fitzpatrick and Brian Murphy all involved.

'The atmosphere for our first game against Cobh was amaz-

ing,' O'Sullivan said.

'The goal we set at the start of the year was that we lose no player and that everyone enjoys it and has fun.'

'There are a few girls involved who never played with Kinsale GAA Club before and they are loving it now. There's no pressure on anyone.'

Last year Kinsale's junior ladies footballers won Cork and Munster titles and reached an All-Ireland final as they put the club on the map, and there is a crossover between the two teams with a number of the footballers now also playing camogie.

The squad involved against Cobh included Christina Broderick, Eadoin O'Leary, Trish Ryan, Niamh Steinson, Rachel Kiely, Aoife O'Leary, Emma



History makers: The first-ever Kinsale ladies camogie team pictured before their league game at home to Cobh.

McAuliffe, Aoife Keating, Cara O'Dwyer, Emma O'Brien, Aisling Lee, Hester McCa-

rthy, Selina O'Donovan, Jacqui Lynch, Niamh Heffernan, Jacinta O'Callaghan, Dervla

Kelly, Sinead Keating, Caoimhe O'Callaghan and Ann Marie Queva.

Rena is relishing a Cats' challenge



Linda Mellerick

SUNDAY: Littlewoods National League Division 1 final: Cork v Kilkenny, Gaelic Grounds, Limerick, 1.30pm.

YOU couldn't ask for a better pairing in the Littlewoods Ireland National League Division 1 final in the Gaelic Grounds on Sunday.

Cork and Kilkenny are the two best teams in the country, by a distance, and that's who you want to see in a final.

It's a game to look forward to, not just for supporters, but for the teams themselves.

Catching up with Cork captain, Rena Buckley, after a lively training session in Castleroad last Tuesday, she rubber-stamped how the players were feeling.

"Yeah, we're looking forward to it. I suppose we were satisfied that when we played Kilkenny a few weeks ago it was great to get a win away, but we're very aware as well that they were missing a few players.

"I don't think they were at full strength and I think they had a team holiday not too far back either. So, we know it's a huge challenge for us and it'll be great to see where we're at and what to work on going forward."

It's clear to see that Kilkenny have raised the bar since their All-Ireland victory.

"Ah definitely. The one thing, if you went through their team versus ours, they've a lot more medals from underage, but they were always missing that senior win and a win in the senior All-Ireland must have given them confidence.

"But at the same time, we've had experience of beating them as well so we shouldn't have a whole pile to fear, but certainly it's going to be a huge ask."

Despite Cork beating the Cats in their home patch in early April, a new found physical confidence was evident in the Kilkenny team, a point Buckley agrees with.

"Absolutely. It brings them on hugely. I can't remember how many players they used in the league campaign, but they used a very high number, so they'll have fierce competition within their own squad to get into the team so anyone that gets a start the next day will be hoping to hold on to that jersey."

While Kilkenny have added to their senior squad, so too have Cork. It's been a while since they could call on impactful additions, but this season has seen a shift and it has created that extra buzz in the Cork camp.

Niamh McCarthy, Linda Collins, Jennifer Barry, Chloe Sigerson and the return of Julia White is a great boost.

"Definitely," said the Cork captain. "Compared to last year there is competition for places. Orla Cotter is back on Sunday from injury too, so it's good that the management have a few headaches to pick the team. Last year that



Niamh Mulcahy of Limerick in action against Rena Buckley of Cork during the Littlewoods National Camogie League semi-final at Páirc Uí Rinn. Picture: Matt Browne/Sportsfile



Wexford's Linda Bolger and Cork's Rena Buckley. Picture: INPHO/Ken Sutton

really wasn't the case so yes, it's a great place to be in. Knowing that there will be fresh legs to come in with 20 minutes to go, that's something to look forward to," added Buckley who is captaining the side for the second time in her career.

"I was captain in 2011. It was slightly different in that we were slow in getting a management team that year. We had a very talented bunch and jeez we could have gotten to the All-Ireland afterwards, but we didn't."

Smooth

"Things just weren't as smooth maybe that year, so I'm very happy with how things are going so far. The main thing is that people are putting in a huge effort."

"Whether we'll be good enough or not on the day, I don't know, but that's all you can ask for."

Time becomes more precious as you

get older with more demands on your time. Owner of Rena Buckley Chartered Physiotherapy Clinic in Macroom, and doing a Master in Sports Physio, Rena found it a little more difficult to get back to the field this year, purely because of the pressure for time.

"I'm working and studying so I'm caught for time. I go to Dublin once a week, every Friday. But I'm nearly finished with that. I just have three more trips to do so I can't wait (to be finished). It's a killer."

That, of course, is the easy part. I put to her, the study time to be undertaken is immense.

"Yeah," laughs Rena. "Friday is almost a lovely day compared to that. But I must say I'm really enjoying the training. I'm really enjoying the games. That level of enjoyment when I'm on the field is definitely the same as ever. It's just getting to the field is the hard part."

"I'm working and studying so I'm caught for time. I go to Dublin once a week, but I'm nearly finished with that"

Now back in the thick of it she wouldn't be anywhere else, though.

"Yeah, I realise I'm a little bit behind. I missed a nice bit of training, but I'd be hoping in June I'll have bridged that gap a small bit."

Rena's hope for Sunday is that the team just play to their potential. The disappointment last September was that they didn't.

"No not at all. But I mean if you were to ask everyone that was involved, did we really do our best in the run-up to the final I don't think we did."

"Kilkenny were much better on the day, you have to give it to them, hands down. And I think they're an extremely talented side, but hopefully we'll give them a rattle this year."

"Look we'll see where we're at come the weekend. I know there's a national title at stake, a cup at stake, but everyone is going to have one eye on the championship as well."

Cats 'absolutely up against it' against Cork, warns Dunphy

Daragh Ó Conchúir
Camogie

Aisling Dunphy says All-Ireland champions Kilkenny will be "absolutely up against it" when they face Cork in the Littlewoods Ireland League Division 1 final this weekend.

The final, which will be broadcast on TG4 from 1.25pm, is part of a double-header with the men's National Hurling League Division 1 final between Tipperary and Galway at 3.30pm.

Dunphy was a key component as Kilkenny upped their levels in the second half to defeat Galway in the Littlewoods Ireland League Division 1 semi-final. They did so with almost half of the team that started the All-Ireland final either unavailable or on the bench.

The competition for places is fierce with the chance to play a high-flying Cork team

in the decider the prize.

"You can never get enough experience of big days; playing in front of crowds when the pressure comes on and dealing with it," says Dunphy. "So it's good that we're getting to semi-finals and finals and the newer players are getting game time against the stronger teams like Galway and Cork for sure."

"We're going to be absolutely up against it. We beat Cork in last year's All-Ireland

but they're clearly after regrouping and are on form at the moment. They beat us on our home ground (three) weeks ago and they're flying it. It's going to be all to play for."

After a 22-year absence and six final defeats, the Cats upset the odds to claim the All-Ireland crown from Cork last year to claim a league and championship double.

It seems an age since St Bridgid's Ballycallan attacker

Dunphy got the call from Ann Downey as a 16-year-old at the beginning of 2009 but she only turns 25 next week and has plenty to offer. It was brilliant to finally win an All-Ireland but Dunphy spent the summer last year playing catch up. Not this year though.

"I had played in three All-Irelands that we lost in. Because it was my first year in medicine, I didn't really go back with Kilkenny until I was finished in May and missed

the league. I didn't plan it. I just kind of went with it because I was quite busy in January."

"The girls were flying it and I was delighted to just get on at the end. When you miss time like that, you're going to be on the back foot and we have such a strong panel, which we showed in the final. I was delighted to go back in but it was nice this year getting in early and getting a good go at it and so far it's going okay."

Years-old rivalry still simmering



Camogie

Linda Mellerick

IT'S not that Cork camogie manager, Paudie Murray, and his Kilkenny counterpart, Ann Downey, are playing down their own chances in their league.

It is that both acknowledge that there is nothing between the teams and that the game can go either way. It is the 2016 National League and All-Ireland champions, Kilkenny, versus the 2014 and 2015 All-Ireland champions, Cork. It is a Cork team that defeated Kilkenny in Kilkenny three weeks ago.

Cork topped their group, with five straight wins. Kilkenny shipped an opening round loss to Wexford, after a team vacation, and lost in their final round by a single point to Cork.

Cork won back-to-back league titles in 2012 and 2013. They lost the 2012 All-Ireland final to Wexford and lost the 2013 All-Ireland semi-final to Kilkenny.

Failing to win the league between 2014 and 2016 didn't do Cork any harm, as they won back-to-back All-Ireland titles in 2014 and 2015, losing to Kilkenny last September as they bid for three in a row.

Kilkenny took league titles in 2014 and 2016, lost two All-Ireland finals in a row, in 2013 and 2014, and bounced back to win the double last season. This is a national title, but either side would take a defeat if there was little in it, knowing that there is possibly a round three between them later in the year and it'll be all to play for again.

Cork just want to do themselves justice and play to their potential. They were rocked by last September's defeat, having been fancied to do the three-in-a-row.

It isn't easy to pick yourself back up, but Cork are doing it, slowly but surely, as Rena Buckley explained earlier in the week: "The win against Kilkenny, three weeks ago, was a good win for us. Without a doubt, I'd say the final, last year, did knock our confidence, myself included. It knocked a lot of people's confidence, so I suppose we're just going through a bit of a process, at the moment, to try and claw that back and we clawed a little bit back that day against Kilkenny."

There was huge rivalry between Cork and Kilkenny during the 1980s and 1990s. Its origins were in the 1970s, but Kilkenny became a huge thorn in Cork's side in the late 1980s, defeating them in three All-Ireland finals in a row, between 1987 and 1989. They defeated cork in the semi-final in 1990 and the final in 1991. Cork took control in 1992, winning five All-Ireland titles in seven seasons.

So, the history runs deep. After a long spell in the wilderness, Kilkenny are back and it looks like the Cork/Kilkenny rivalry could be embarking on a new era.

Paudie says it's anyone's title. "Kilkenny are an extremely talented team. They have significant strength in depth. They're the All-Ireland champions. It's hard to be at our best



Anna Farrell, of Kilkenny, with Julia White, of Cork, ahead of the league final this Sunday.

Picture: INPHO/Morgan Treacy



Cork's Eimear O'Sullivan was among those disappointed after last year's All-Ireland final loss to the Cats.

Picture: INPHO/Ryan Byrne

"I'd say the All-Ireland final last year did knock our confidence..."

to beat them. It's going to be a huge task, but we're looking forward to it," says Ann.

"The league has been very good for us. It's given us an opportunity to test a lot of our younger players and no better team than Cork to face in the final."

"You're coming up against some of the great camogie superstars in recent years," the Kilkenny manager says.

"It's going to be a great test. They are a super team and we know we'll have to play out of our skins, if we are to beat them, but that's where you want to be."

"It's great to be in a league final, especially when it looked like we

wouldn't make it there, at one stage."

Cork scored 6-68 from their group games and 3-15 in their semi-final win over Limerick (total of 9-83). Kilkenny racked up 8-59 in their five group games, adding a further 1-14 (total of 9-73) in the semi-final win over Galway. So that just shows the consistency and small margins between these two top teams.

The manner of Kilkenny's scores pleased Ann Downey the most.

"The team have worked hard for each other," she says.

"The motto is that it doesn't matter who gets the score, as long as the team can produce a goal or a point. They've progressed nicely, especially the

younger girls who have come into the panel. They've been given a great opportunity and they've taken that chance. We've been able to use them to build a strong panel," she says.

"We have had a lot of injuries, but the girls who came in have really stepped up to the plate."

Kilkenny camogie is on a high, boosted by last year's All-Ireland success.

"The hard work is paying off. It has been great for camogie in Kilkenny," Downey says.

"The girls are role models now and they carry that mantle really well. It's great to see that they are household names."

Ballygarvan make it three from three

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

LEAGUE competitions at all levels are well under way and at adult level most of the leagues games are up to date.

At senior level both sections are proving most competitive, in section one Ballygarvan are setting down a marker as they have three good wins under their belts. They got their campaign under way with a win over promoted Mallow before overcoming Cloughduv and Douglas to go top.

Courceys have two wins from two games, overcoming Mallow in their opening game, while they carved out a victory over a Glen Rovers side that were undefeated up to this with wins over Cloughduv and Douglas. On Wednesday next Ballygarvan Glen Rovers meet while Courceys still have Ballygarvan, Douglas and Cloughduv to play.

In section two St Catherine's have two wins from three, having got their campaign off to a great start with a victory over St Finbarr's they lost out to Sarsfields but regrouped and got back on track with a win over Killeagh.

Holders Inniscarra were held to a draw in their opening game with Killeagh before bouncing back to get two points on the board with a win over St Finbarr's. Ballincollig got off to a great start with a win over Killeagh and they followed it up with a victory over county champions Inniscarra in a high scoring 4-13 to 2-8 encounter.

Sarsfields versus Ballincollig didn't take place due to an unplayable pitch while Sars and St Finbarr's are down to meet tomorrow. With two full rounds to go it makes for an interesting last fortnight before the cut off date.

In the senior B league there are three sections and in section one Éire Óg and Newcestown are leading the way each with two wins from two games.

Éire Óg overcame Aghabullogue before notching up a big score against Newtownshandrum and they will face Kilbrittan/Timoleague in round three next week.

Newcestown opened their campaign with a win over Newtownshandrum before defeating Kilbrittan/Timoleague. Clonakilty have games to play against Kilbrittan/Timoleague and Aghabullogue in round one and two.

In section two Brian Dillon's recorded a win over Valley Rovers but Valley's got the better of Carrigaline in round two whilst Barryroe also recorded a win over Carrigaline in their opening game.

In section three Enniskeane edged out Ballinhassig on a 2-9 to 0-14 scoreline but they were held to a draw by Fr O'Neill's in round two.

There were better fortunes for Ballinhassig in round two where they had a 2-9 to 1-6 win over Sliabh Rua. The opening round game Blackrock versus Fr O'Neill's did not go ahead.



The Nemo Rangers U12 camogie team enjoyed their trip to Croke Park.

Eight Cork clubs get day at HQ

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

FOLLOWING the success of the Inaugural Camán to Croker in 2016 the Camán to Croker returned this year once again to Croke Park.

Oon Easter Monday GAA headquarters was again full to the rafters as 64 clubs from across every corner of Ireland were in attendance.

On this occasion, 1,200 girls took to the hallowed turf of Croke Park to enjoy the games based blitz event for U12 club teams. A unique occasion and most memorable experience for these girls which it is hoped will keep them playing long into the future. From dawn they began the journey from the four corners of the country with club mentors, parents and supporters get-

ting involved and taking part in a day that will live long in the memories of the young eager participants.

Eight Cork clubs were lucky to be amongst those chosen Valley Rovers, Laochra Óg, Tracton, Mallow, Douglas, Aghabullogue, Midleton and Nemo Rangers made the journey.

The day took a lot of organising and huge credit to the camogie association who had everything organised so professionally. From early morning coach loads of clubs converged on the Cusack Stand car park and the day was structured in such a way that every club had

a time slot for arriving, thus ensured that clubs did not all arrive together.

Groups had staggered arrival and departure times and everything was superbly organised. Importantly each club was instructed to arrive togged out and ready to play thus alleviating chaos and time wasting in pre-match preparation.

Once clubs arrived in the proximity of the grounds stewards were visible outside the grounds issuing instructions and guiding buses to the parking facility under the Cusack Stand.

On arrival the youngsters and their mentors were spoke to as a group and welcomed to Croke Park and spoke of the great feat it was for them and their clubs to play in such a wonderful venue. Teams were then taken to view

the area where players do post match interviews and then each group got to visit the dressing rooms and sit and get team pictures taken, from here they were led out onto the tunnel and waited in line for a steward to call their names once this happened they made that run up the steps where each team sat and got pictures taken.

Games ran at the same time as the clubs were divided into groups and allocated a coloured zone on the pitch each group had a co-ordinator assigned to them who met them after their photograph and guided them to their area in the Cusack Stand where they were seated. Excitement was at fever pitch as parents and families gave encouragement and the whole day was a success from start to finish.

Féile na nGael begins today at eight Cork venues

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

CORK Féile na nGael, the division 2 competition, begins today at eight venues through the city and county.

Thirty five clubs will participate. When the dust settles this evening, eight clubs will have qualified for the quarter-finals, which are scheduled for Sunday, with the semi-finals down for next Saturday and the final on Sunday. Next weekend, the division 1 Féile will begin on the Saturday.

In today's division 2 competition, there are three sections of five teams and five sections with four teams.

In the section of five teams, games will be 12-minutes-a-side, and in the sections of four teams, games will be 15-minutes-a-side. The host clubs are Fr O'Neill's, Glen Rovers, Na Piarasigh, Carrigaline, Newcestown, Brian Dillon's, Ballincollig, and Courcey Rovers.

The sections are as follows:

Section 1 has a starting time of 12.30pm and this will be hosted by Fr O'Neill's. They are joined by Castlelyons, Cobh, Kilbrittan/Timoleague, and Mallow.

Section 2 will be hosted by Glen Rovers, with a starting time of 10.30am, and in their group are Charleville, St Vincent's, and Douglas.

Section 3, starting at 11am, will be hosted by Na Piarasigh, and in this group are Tracton and Cloughduv. Games are 20 minutes aside.

Section 4 is starting at 11.15am. Hosts Carrigaline will welcome Kilbree, Sliabh Rua, and St Catherine's. Section 5 is starting at 11.30am, with hosts Newcestown welcoming Blackrock, Ballinhassig,

and Rockbawn.

Section 6, starting at 2pm, is hosted by Brian Dillon's. Because clubs have withdrawn, they will play one full game, against Midleton. Section 7 is starting at 10.30am in Ballincollig, with Carrigtwohill, Killeagh, and Castlemartyr. Section 8, starting at 2pm in Ballinspittle, is hosted by Courcey Rovers, with St Colum's, Ballinascorthy, and Bishopstown.

The quarter-final pairings are as following: winners of section 1 v winners of section 4 winners; winners of section 3 v winners of section 2; winners of section 7 v winners of section 6; winners of section 5 v winners of section 8.

Féile is a huge occasion for girls and boys and in Cork it is a rite of passage for young players. We wish the best of luck to all competing teams and to all the host clubs.

We will have updates from the quarter-finals and semi-final pairings in next week's camogie page.

'The hardest part was just not playing'



Littlewoods Ireland Camogie League Division 1 Final

Cork v Kilkenny

Tomorrow: Gaelic Grounds, Limerick, 1.30pm

Referee: O. Elliott, Antrim

Daragh Ó Conchúir

There was a time, even as she had barely entered her teens, when it seemed inevitable that the Niamh McCarthy would play for Cork.

There was a time too, when it appeared certain that the youngster would never pick up a hurley again. That McCarthy is lining out for the Leesiders in tomorrow's Littlewoods Ireland Camogie Leagues Division 1 Final is a testament to her bravery and character, to her love of playing and of scoring goals.

She was a prodigy. In 2011, McCarthy was playing a central role as Inniscarra reached the All-Ireland senior club final. She was just 14.

But a fortnight before the decider she suffered her first cruciate knee ligament injury during a game of basketball.

The thought of missing an All-Ireland was dreadful but it wasn't one game itself that stood out in the ensuing months, and indeed years.

"All I did was play sports. Every evening would be a training session on two. I loved it. So it was terrible but I thought I'd get my knee right and be out a year. But it wasn't like that at all."

The healing process was tortuously slow. She was out for more than two years before she finally got the green light to return.

After two months, McCarthy was starting to feel good about her game again. She was just turning 17 when disaster struck the other cruciate. The rehab went smoothly this time but the psychological scars would prove more problematic.

"I knew if I didn't try to come back that I would always wonder what could have happened," says McCarthy. "I was an up-and-coming player when I was 14 but I never got the chance to see what might happen. When you're sporty, and you're 15 or 16 and can't play on the team with all your friends, it's hard. When you're on a team, you're all in it together. The recovery is something you have to do alone. No-one else is going to do it for you. But the hardest part was just not playing. You're on Facebook and people are talking about games..."

Her recollection of the first day back is vivid.

"I was terrified. I wanted to play and I wanted to be part of the team but I just didn't want to have to go through any of that again. I hadn't played since I was 14, apart from when I was back for two



Cork's Niamh McCarthy: 'I knew if I didn't try to come back that I would always wonder what could have happened.'

Picture: Cathal Noonan

months before my other knee went. I'm delighted now. I'm delighted to be back playing with my club, with UCC and with Cork. I never played underage for Cork apart from U14. It was something I always wanted to do. When I was brought into the panel, there were a lot of girls my age but I didn't know any of them because I had missed out on so much."

They only knew her as "that poor girl" she laughs. It was her form with UCC in the Ashbourne Cup last year and then as Inniscarra ended the Milford monopoly in the county championship that convinced Paudie Murray she was worthy of the step up, and she has carried that through the League. Having clubmate Rena Buckley around proved

a tremendous comfort and still does.

"It's been easier for me to transition in with girls I didn't know, knowing that Rena is there. When I was playing with Inniscarra first, I was the baby and she wouldn't have been one of the older girls then but she'd have been good like that, talking to you. And she looks after my knee as well, she's a physio and she understands that there are times when maybe I can't train. She's also good to speak to you before a match." She has done well, scoring goals as she had always done. But sometimes her expectations get the better of her.

"I put pressure on myself. I expect it to be like when I was playing U14 and U16, to be able to win every ball but you're

not because you're playing against the top players. I also feel like I want to make up for the time I missed. But I'm still learning. I missed out five years; I'm only back playing a year and a half. Even through the League, I have learned so much from playing against top players and alongside top players." Given that she lost out on such two or three complete phases of development, it is quite remarkable that McCarthy is flourishing so quickly.

It is only reasonable to assume that she will improve further but the learning curve is steep. Cork beat Kilkenny by a point at the beginning of the month but it was an illuminating experience. Meanwhile, the culture within the squad cultivated by the likes

of Buckley, Gemma O'Connor, Aoife Murray, Ashling Thompson other long-serving members is one that appeals. "They want to win so much. Everyone has bought into the way we're playing. Training is going good, there are new players there and everyone is pushing each other forward. When the Championship comes, even after the League Final, there'll be some fight for places. You have to perform in training. Anyone could start. That makes training very good. The physicality that Kilkenny brought, I don't think any other team that we had played against had brought it. It was way more physical than any game I had played before. So I'm looking forward to (tomorrow). It's exciting."

CILL CHAINNIGH

ROGHNÓIRÍ ANN DOWNEY (BAINISTEOR), Paddy Mullally, Conor Phelan, Angela Downey, Breda Holmes



1 E. Caomhánach
EMMA KAVANAGH
Rower Inistioge

3 C. Ní Fhoghlú
CATHERINE FOLEY
Windgap

6 A. Daltúin
ANNE DALTON
St. Lachtain's

8 A. Ní Dhonnchaidh
AISLING DUNPHY
St. Brigid's

10 D. Ní an Ghaill
DENISE GAULE
Windgap

13 J. Ní Mhaoileoin
JULIANNE MALONE
Mullinavat

16 AM. Ní Leannáin
ANNE-MARIE LENNON
Blacks and Whites

17 S. Ní Chruaíoch
SARAH CROWLEY
Mooncoin

18 M. Ní Fhírlisigh
MIRIAM FRISBY
Mullinavat

19 S. Ní Chóir
STACEY QUIRKE
St. Martin's

20 A. Ní Fhionnain
ÁINE GANNON
Rower Inistioge

21 L. Ní Mhurchú
LAURA MURPHY
O'Loughlin Gaels

22 S. Ceannit
SARAH KENT
Danesfort

23 J. Ní Rifeartaigh
JENNY CLIFFORD
Dicksboro

24 N. Ní Dhuighiolla
NIAMH DEELY
James Stephens

25 D. Ní Mhulreasa
DANIELLE MORRISSEY
Conahy Shamrocks

4 G. Bhreatnach
GRACE WALSH
Tullaroan

7 C. Ní Fhaoláin
CLAIRE PHELAN
Lisdowney

12 S. Ní Roidigh
JENNY REDDY
Thomastown

15 S. Ní Fhearrail
SHELLY FARRELL
Thomastown

26 G. Ní Dhéanail
GRACE O'DONNELL
Young Irelands

27 R. Ní Fhaoláin
ROISÍN PHELAN
Conahy Shamrocks

28 C. Ní Dhuighiolla
COLLETTE DORMER
Paulstown Goresbridge

29 E. A. Ní Chéin
EDWINA ANN KEANE
St. Martin's

30 A. Ní Dhuighail
AOIFE DOYLE
Piltown

2 L. Ní Shúilleabháin
EIMEAR O'SULLIVAN
Ballinhassig

5 P. Ní Mhaca
PAMELA MACKEY
Douglas

10 A. Ní Chonchúir
AMY O'CONNOR
St Vincent's

13 C. Ní Mhaca
KATRIONA MACKEY
Douglas

IONAIDAI

16 A. Ní Laoi
AMY LEE
Na Píarsaigh

17 L. Ní Shúilleabháin
LEANNE O'SULLIVAN
Glen Rovers

18 F. Ní Níla
FINOLA NEVILLE
St Catherine's

1 A. Ní Mhuiri
AOIFE MURRAY
Cloughduv

3 L. Ní Threasaigh
LAURA TREACY
Killeagh

6 G. Ní Chonchúir
GEMMA O'CONNOR
St Finbarr's

8 A. Ní Thomáis
AISLING THOMPSON
Milford

11 O. Ní Chroínín
ORLA CRONIN
Enniskeane

14 N. Ní Carthaigh
NIAMH MCCARTHY
Inniscarra

19 O. Ní Oitir
ORLA COTTER
St Catherine's

20 C. Ní Sioghair
CHLOE SIGERSON
Killeagh

4 L. Coipingeir
LIBBY COPPINGER
St Colm's

7 R. Ní Bhuachalla (C.)
RENA BUCKLEY
Inniscarra

9 S. de Barra
JENNIFER BARRY
Bride Rovers

12 S. Bhanáin
JULIA WHITE
Douglas

15 L. Ní Choileáin
LINDA COLLINS
Courcy Rovers

21 S. Ní Luanaigh
HANNAH LOONEY
Killeagh

22 R. Ní Shé
RACHEL O'SHEA
Carrigaline

CORCAIGH

PAUDIE MURRAY (BAINISTEOR), Kevin Murray, Seán Cremin, Damien Murray, Terry O'Leary, Teddy O'Donovan ROGHNÓIRÍ





TOUGH TEST: Cork's Aisling Thompson with Katie Power of Kilkenny at full tilt.
Picture: INPHO/Morgan Treacy



Cork's Amy O'Connor with Julianne Malone and Denise Gaule of Kilkenny.
Picture: INPHO/Morgan Treacy

Kilkenny win by a contentious goal



Camogie

Linda
Mellerick

Kilkenny 2-7
Cork 0-10

A CONTROVERSIAL goal in the 41st minute was the deciding factor in Kilkenny's three-point victory over Cork to take back-to-back National league division one titles in the Gaelic Grounds, Limerick yesterday.

The foul on Gemma O'Connor was ignored, and then Miriam Walsh took six or seven steps before hand-passing to the net to give Kilkenny a six-point advantage.

It was a cruel and telling blow, but on the other side of that she should never have been allowed to barge her way through on the touchline the way she did.

It was a game that on balance Kilkenny probably deserved to win. They were the better team in the opening half as Cork's first touch and over-stretched passes let them down. As expected, the middle of the park was crowded. Kilkenny played a sweeper, left just two inside and Cork were pulled out.

Up front Cork still found space but they weren't clinical enough.

Players shunned responsibility, opted to pass instead of attempting a point and scoring moments were lost. When they did shoot for the posts their distance let them down with four balls falling comfortably into goalkeeper Emma Kavanagh's hand. They managed just one point from play in the opening half.

Denise Gaule opened Kilkenny's scoring with a goal on three minutes with a hand pass over the head of Aoife Murray.

A long-distance Gemma O'Connor point got Cork on the road before Gaule and Katie Power struck three between them to lead 1-3 to 0-1 at the first quarter stage.

It was point-for-point after that leav-



BREAKING THROUGH: Kilkenny's Meighan Farrell with Jennifer Barry of Cork in action in yesterday's league final in Limerick.

Picture: INPHO/Donall Farmer

ing Kilkenny five points to the good at the break.

One difference between the sides which struck home was the superior handling of Kilkenny. Their ball to hand fielding whether it came high or low was excellent, which led to confident stick work. Several high balls poured down on Kilkenny's defence where excellent centre-back Anne Dalton broke them down as defensively Kilkenny were on top.

Orla Cotter replaced Linda Collins just after half-time and certainly she added bite to Cork's play where they had seemed to lack real intensity. Katrina Mackey and a Cotter free had the gap to a goal before Walsh's forty-first-minute hand pass. But it was now Cork who dominated the possession stats. They didn't get the scoring return that afforded them however, with some poor shooting.

Cotter struck two from play to put four between the sides on forty-seven

minutes. A gilt-edged opportunity fell to Amy O'Connor to rattle the net but her striking speed cost her by a milli-second and the chance was gone. Another chance came her way a minute later as she tore in from the left corner but she was well-marshalled by Kilkenny defenders who did well to force the ball wide.

Cork were certainly winning the second half battle, with six points, five from play. Apart from Walsh's 41st minute goal Danielle Morrissey pointed a free with three minutes of normal time remaining.

Cork substitutes Libby Coppinger and Hannah Looney pointed in injury time but it was Kilkenny's title at that stage.

The refereeing wasn't up to scratch for the final where inconsistency in the advantage rule and over-carrying was something Cork could feel aggrieved about. But outside of that, the title wasn't what it was all about yes-

terday, and Cork have a lot to take away and work on from the game.

Kilkenny will take a long hard look at their second half display, but it's their second national final win over Cork in seven months, and they'll be happy with that.

Scorers for Kilkenny: D Gaule 1-2, K Power 0-2, M Walsh 1-0, D Morrissey 0-1 (f), J Malone, A Dunphy 0-1 each.

Scorers for Cork: K Mackey 0-4 (0-3f), O Cotter 0-3 (0-1 f), G O'Connor, L Coppinger, H Looney 0-1 each.

CORK: A Murray, L Treacy, R Buckley, P Mackey, E O'Sullivan, A Thompson, C Sigerson, G O'Connor, J Barry, A O'Connor, O Cronin, J White, K Mackey, N McCarthy, L Collins.

Subs: L Coppinger for P Mackey (inj 19), H Looney for J White (49), F Neville for J Barry (55).

KILKENNY: E Kavanagh, M Teehan, C Foley, G Walsh, A Nolan, A Dalton, C Phelan, A Dunphy, M Farrell, D Gaule, M Walsh, J Reddy, J Malone, K Power, D Morrissey.

Subs: A Doyle for A Nolan (46), E Keane for A Dunphy and J Clifford for D Morrissey (57).

Referee: Owen Elliot (Antrim).

Kilkenny again get tactics spot on



Littlewoods Ireland Camogie League Division 1 Final

KILKENNY 2-7
CORK 0-10

Daragh Ó Conchúir
Gaelic Grounds

Kilkenny retained their Littlewoods Ireland Camogie League Division 1 title with a fine all-round performance that augurs well for the Championship.

Just as in the All-Ireland final last September, Cork were unable to break down the Kilkenny strategy. Ann Downey and her lieutenants Conor Phelan and Paddy Mullally must get huge credit for the tactics that stifled the previously high-scoring Cork attack, while creating the space that delivered two priceless goals of their own.

The players in black and amber carried out the plan to a tee, especially in the first-half, when they won the vast majority of the individual battles around the pitch. And there were battles aplenty, with the physicality of the exchanges notable from start to finish.

Cork did improve in the second-half, the introduction of Orla Cotter a welcome boost after the brilliant St Catherine's stickwoman had missed most of the spring through injury. They began to match Kilkenny's intensity too but they failed to trouble Emma Kavanagh.

The nearest they got to a goal that would have put a different slant on proceedings came in the 48th minute, when Amy Connor fielded Katrina Mackey's crossfield delivery, cut inside a Kilkenny defender and unleashed a shot from inside the 13m line.

Out of nowhere however, Catherine Foley arrived to produce a sensational block and the sliotar was cleared.

Even in the first-half, when they were a clear second best, they spurned some good chances and dropped too many balls short but they could have few complaints.

Kilkenny often played with just one player inside their opposition 45. That had the dual consequence of cutting out the space in their own end, while backing their ability to have an impact with strike runners from deep.

The set-up got them a goal by the third minute, when

Denise Gaule advanced on a delivery by Miriam Walsh and hand-passed over the advancing Aoife Murray.

Gemma O'Connor responded with a point for Cork but Kilkenny had three of the next four points including a brace from Katie Power.

Power and Walsh were flying and such were the Rebels' defensive difficulties that Paudie Murray substituted three-time All Star Pamela Mackey after just 20 minutes.

O'Connor's score was Cork's only one from play in that opening period, as Katrina Mackey converted three frees but Aisling Dunphy, Julie Ann Malone and Gaule all managed points from play and Kilkenny were full value for their 1-6 to 0-4 lead at half time.

The Leesiders were better after the restart and looked much sounder defensively. Meanwhile, Cotter was having a real impact, scoring three points including two from play. But the key moment came in the 41st minute. It was slightly strange as Owen Elliott awarded a free to Kilkenny but Cork believed the decision had gone their way. Gemma O'Connor trotted out to stand over the sliotar but once the official confirmed his call, the alert Gaule ran to the mark and almost on the run, took a quick free to Danielle Morrissey that caught the opposition napping.

O'Connor did get back to actually gather possession but was dispossessed and Walsh powered past the challenges of Rena Buckley and Aoife Murray before hand-passing to the net. That ensured Kilkenny had vital breathing space and late points from Libby Coppinger and Hannah Looney, the latter a fizzing shot that just cleared the crossbar, came too late.

Scorers for Kilkenny: D Gaule 1-2 (0-10); M Walsh 1-0; K Power 0-2; A Dunphy, J A Malone, D Morrissey (f) 0-1 each.

Scorers for Cork: K Mackey 0-4 (3fs); O Cotter 0-3 (1f); G O'Connor, L Coppinger, H Looney 0-1 each.

KILKENNY: E Kavanagh, M Teehan, C Foley, G Walsh, A Nolan, A Dalton, C Phelan, A Dunphy, M Farrell, D Gaule, K Power, J Reddy, J A Malone, M Walsh, D Morrissey.

Subs: E Keane for Dunphy (59); J Clifford for Morrissey (59).

CORK: A Murray, L Treacy, P Mackey, R Buckley, E O'Sullivan, A Thompson, C Sigerson, G O'Connor, J Barry, A O'Connor, O Cronin, J White, K Mackey, N McCarthy, L Collins.

Subs: L Coppinger for P Mackey (21); O Cotter for Collins (33); H Looney for White (50); L O'Sullivan for Barry (55).

Referee: O Elliott (Antrim)



Great result: The Enniskeane & District camogie team that won silver medals at the national finals in 2016.



Antrim Camogie
Cumann Camógaíochta Aontroma

HOME ID / NEWS / ANTRIM ARE ALL IRELAND CHAMPIONS AGAIN

Antrim are All Ireland Champions again!

23 Apr 2017

All-Ireland Minor championship final

Antrim 1-11 Kildare 2-5

Things looked bleak for Antrim at half-time in Saturday's All-Ireland Minor championship final in Inniskeen; no noticeable wind factor and down by 2-5 to 0-4 having been outplayed by a hungry Kildare side for the opening half.

Antrim however proceeded to turn the whole game on its head, clawed their way back by keeping Kildare scoreless for the duration of the second half and nailed only their second ever title at this level with three late points from the Loughgiel trio of Roisin McCormick, Charley McCarry and Kirsty McKendry.

Roisin McCormick's introduction to midfield as a substitute at half-time changed the dynamic of the game. She fired over three 45m frees during the third quarter as a time when the Saffrons couldn't find scores and her bursts through the centre kept Kildare's defence under constant pressure.

Indeed three second half subs contributed 1-5 to the game and it was something manager Sean Paul McKillop touched on at the end.

"Through the competition, we have been introducing substitutes to make an impact on the game and today was no exception.

"We were poor in the first half, listless and second to nearly every ball. The girls who came in put the pressure firmly on Kildare, who in fairness didn't give up their lead easily. But we pressed on until we got level and then fired the late points to take the title.

"We have got the name of a being a second half team, but it has always been about using the panel and bringing in players who can make a difference. It's a big win for us."

Despite Emily Falloon racing through for the opening point inside 25 seconds, Antrim were caught cold by Kildare's first attack that delivered a goal for Caoimhe Maher after Lea Sutton's initial effort was well saved by Caitriona Graham.

Graham, the Antrim captain, was in inspirational form during that opening half, but she and her full-back line were too often exposed by Kildare who withdrew their half-forwards to midfield to create a lot of space inside.

At the other end, Antrim were wasteful with six first quarter wides. They had pulled back to 1-0 to 0-3 after 7 minutes however and Kildare had only accumulated 1-2 when Méadhbh McCormick stabbed over their fourth point in the 22nd minute.

However the Lily Whites hit form between then and half-time, with their second goal from Caoimhe Shanahan in the 29th minute a little fortuitous after an awkward bounce in front of Graham.

Down by 2-5 to 0-4, Antrim responded with four points from 45m frees, the only scores of the third quarter, during which the Kildare goal lived dangerously on a few occasions.

Maeve Kelly then came on as sub in the 43rd minute and five minutes later she crashed home a goal to level the game at 2-5 to 1-8.

The next nine minutes were scoreless with again Antrim camped inside the Kildare half of the pitch. Eventually however Roisin McCormick raced through from the back of midfield to take a brilliant lead point and a minute later Charley McCarry flashed over another from the left corner.

Kildare pushed forward in search of a late goal and had a couple of frees that they dropped into the area. However Antrim now had the upper hand all over the pitch and broke in injury time for Clíodhna Donnelly to set up another sub Kirsty McKendry for a point.

Caitriona Graham along with the full-back line and Ellen Hynds kept Antrim's effort going particularly during that difficult first half and were in charge after the break.

The difference between the first and second halves was like night and day, but shining out was the industry of Amy Boyle and Siobhan McKillop and all four subs made a big impact when introduced.

Antrim will now go into the Ulster championship in a fortnight's time as clear favourites to retain their title, but they will not want a repeat of Saturday's first half. Player of the Match Award went to Siobhan McKillop (Ruairí Óg)

Antrim: Caitriona Graham capt., Sian McNeill, Katie Lynn, Kirsty Lavery, Catherine McShane, Clíodhna Donnelly, Ellen Hynds, Amy Boyle, Caoimhe Conlon, Aine Devlin 0-2 frees, Siobhan McKillop, Emily Falloon 0-1, Caoimhe Wright 0-1, Méadhbh McCormick 0-1, Charley McCarry 0-1.

Sbs: Roisin McCormick 0-4, 0-3 frees for C Conlon (ht), Maeve Kelly 1-0 for E Falloon (43), Aine Donnelly for A Devlin (45), Kirsty McKendry 0-1 for M McCormick (55), Caoimhe McNeice, Méabh O'Neill, Finola McVeigh, Rebecca Hargan, Bronagh Devlin, Anna Connolly, Torie Edgar.

Kildare: Aoife Morrisson, Lily Evans, Sarah Cullen, Eimear Finn, Maria Doyle, Laoise Dunne, Aoife Fitzgerald, Siorcha Gilman, Tara Glynn, Caoimhe Sheils, Lea Sutton 0-3 frees, Holly Tynan 0-1, Caoimhe Shanahan 1-0, Emma Kieley capt. 0-1, Caoimhe Maher 1-0.

Cork's warndown sees rivalry heat up

Eoghan Cormican

Tensions between the Kilkenny and Cork camogie camps show little signs of easing after Sunday's National League final.

Kilkenny camogie boss Ann Downey yesterday expressed disappointment at Cork's decision to undertake their warndown while Meighan Farrell was being presented with the trophy following their 2-7 to 0-10 win over the

Rebels. The Cork players continued their warndown as Farrell delivered her acceptance speech at the end of Sunday's Division 1 decider at the Gaelic Grounds.

The rivalry between the counties made headlines last September when Kilkenny's Collette Dormer and Cork's Hannah Looney engaged in a bout of shoving during the pre-match handshake. That game also saw Cork's Gemma O'Connor sent off for two yellow card offences.

"It just doesn't happen, to be quite honest," was Ann Downey's response on KCLR when asked for her appraisal of Cork's actions during the presentation.

"We can't control what the Cork people will do or what the Cork players will do. You wouldn't want to see it happening too often, to be honest.

"We just hope that our own team would always show respect to the opposition. I think

they have done that.

"With their All-Ireland win last year, the girls have really matured and they have brought a lot to camogie in Kilkenny with all the visits they have made to try and promote camogie. We are very proud of the young panel we have."

Cork boss Paudie Murray, speaking to RedFM, didn't hold back in his assessment of Cork's performance. "Players have to make up their own

mind about where they go because that is not good enough. They've been given instructions and it is up to them to carry it out on the pitch. To score only 10 points, we had a number of bad wides and to drop the ball into their keeper's hand four or five times is disappointing.

"The way we conceded the two goals was disappointing. The second one, I think the referee has questions to answer there."

APR. 2017



CAMOGIE: DIVISION TWO FINAL
DERRY V CORK
Sunday, Corralstown Kinnegad, 3.30pm

CAMOGIE GAA

CAMOGIE DIVISION TWO FINAL

MARRIED LIFE... Aileen McCusker got married recently but is available for Derry's National League final



Thou Shalt Not Pass

Derry camogie assistant Brian McFall is confident ahead of Sunday's Division Two final against Cork

DERRY's unyielding defense has been at the heart of their run to Sunday's Division Two final against Cork, according to assistant boss Brian McFall.

The Oak Leafers were laid siege but ultimately came out on top in their hard-fought semi-final win over Dinny Cahill's Kildare. A Mary Hegarty goal was the difference on the scoreboard – the game ended 1-11 to 0-11 – but ex-Saffron hurler McFall made a point of highlighting the influence of their defensive rearguard.

"Dinny Cahill was taking them and I knew he'd have them going well. The girls were outstanding in defence. It's a bit of both, you have the quality, Aileen McCusker has been imperious and the defence have been outstanding in every game they've played.

"When the backs were against the wall they all dug deep. Karen [Kieft] coming back into the set-up has been massive as well. Everyone's been improving."

Niall Gartland



Derry are led on the line by Antrim trio Ciaran Cunningham, Brendan McGibbon and McFall. Last year was disappointing in all respects – Derry floundered in Division One and lost their grip on the Ulster title at the death against Antrim. They've fared better at Intermediate level this year and McFall makes no bones about their desire to reclaim the Ulster title.

"We were playing in Division One and we didn't do too badly. Come championship we were being beaten by 20 points and I don't think it was doing us much good. I think going down to Intermediate has helped. I'll not say that's the level they're at, maybe they weren't good enough for

division one but they're holding their own in division two.

"I definitely think we could go the whole way, we have the Cassidys back as well. If we had everybody out playing it'd be ideal, there's a lot of girls who are not there. We'd like to get our Ulster title back. They [Antrim] just got a goal at the end last year and it was a bit of a sickener. Hopefully we'll get a good run in the championship and we'll be there or thereabouts."

By 'the Cassidys', he means Slaughtneil sisters Ellis, Aoife and Brona. They formed the backbone of Slaughtneil's run to the All-Ireland title, and McFall admits he wouldn't have minded if a few more of their colleagues were available for selection. Either way, he is happy with the players at his disposal.

"The three ni Chaiside girls are involved, they're great girls. There's a few others we would've loved to have but they just couldn't commit unfortunately. I think that's the same

across the board but wouldn't it be great to have them all. We have to get on it with."

Derry have a number of injury concerns heading into Sunday's final against Cork, who topped the table in Division Two Group B. In happier news, the Derry management have drafted in a number of talented young players this year, while Aileen McCusker is back after her honeymoon.

"Cork were on the other side of Division Two so we don't really know too much about them. We won't worry about them, we'll worry about ourselves.

"We're not going too bad. We've a couple of injuries. Grainne McNicholl came off last week, she's didn't play in the semi-final, and she's been playing very well. Derbaila O'Kane also, while Emer McGuigan broke her hand in a league match the other hand.

"There's a couple of young girls who have done well. Rebecca Bradley

and Aine McAllister have been very very good. They've really stood out, but those two started off really well in the league."

Inniscarra plays the

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

It was a night of nostalgia and celebration recently at the Oriel House Hotel in Ballincollig when more than 250 people celebrated the Golden Jubilee and county championship winning success of Inniscarra Camogie club.

2016 was a hugely successful year for the club with their senior team halting All-Ireland club champions Milford's bid for five in a row of senior county titles and annexing for themselves their second senior title.

For good measure the club's senior team were also winners of the county league whilst their under 16 team were league winners in what was a wonderful year of the Mid Cork club.

The senior success was the second title for Inniscarra the first was in 2010 when they also took the Munster title and went all the way to Croke Park only to lose out to a strong Killmore side from Galway.

Present at the function was captain of that historic first team Margaret Noelle O'Sullivan and she along with former and current players enjoyed a wonderful night as all present paid tribute to the club's many mentors and players who since 1967 have made Inniscarra the success story it has become.

Also present were members of the 1976 Junior Team including their Captain Nora Moriarty (nee O'Brien), the club's 1994 junior winning team, the 1996 Intermediate and 1998 Senior B Winning teams including former Cork Star Irene O'Keefe.

Memorabilia

On the night a huge amount of club memorabilia was displayed with newspaper reports and photographs of years gone by. Guests travelled from near and far to be in attendance with many coming from overseas to enjoy the special occasion.

Chairman Tim Buckley opened the night and paid tribute to the foresight of founders of the club many of whom were who in attendance and to all who have and are working to fashion the club into one of Cork's strongest.

Guests included Sheila Golden who is member of the club and she spoke on behalf of the county board and paid tribute to Inniscarra for a wonderful achievement.

The senior team led by their captain Joanne Casey were presented with their county championship and league medals by two members of the team management Seamus Coffee and Ger Dinan.

Under 16 success

The Under 16 team mentors Martin Murphy, Ann Dineen, Brian Farmer, and Mona O'Brien presented the medals to their charges and it was a special occasion for Ann Dineen who was a member of the 1994 Junior winning team as she watched her daughters Joanne a member of the victorious Under 16 team and Aoife was a member of the Senior panel receiving their county medals.

On the night Aisling Punch was presented with the club Person of the Year for all her work at all levels in the club.

As Inniscarra reflected back on 50 great years they can look ahead to the next chapter in their history with huge pride.



The Kavanagh family, Aoife with trophy, Shauna, Ger, and Rita and Mike Power celebrated Inniscarra's Cork Senior Camogie Championship win at Oriel House. Pic: Mike English



Aoife Kavanagh and Liz Hayes, Senior Camogie Championship winners with Inniscarra in 2016 celebrate in style at the club's victory dinner at Oriel House Hotel. Picture: Mike English



Inniscarra players, cousins, Laoise Lombard and Rebecca Keane pose with their proud granny, Marie Twomey. Picture: Mike English

generation game



Geraldine Keohane, Yvonne Healy, Catherine O'Leary, Niamh O'Brien, Margaret Noelle O'Sullivan, Nicola Buckley, and Evelyn Moynihan recalled their 1994 Feile and Under 14 County Championship wins of 1994 when they met up at the Inniscarra Club's victory dinner. Picture: Mike English



Teresa McCarthy, with trophy, celebrated Inniscarra's win with sister, Roslyn and parents, Joe and Therese. Picture: Mike English



Anne Dineen (right) who won a Junior Championship medal with Inniscarra Camogie in 1992, photographed with her daughters, Aoife, winner of Senior medal in 2016 and Joanne, who collected an under 16 medal in 2016.



Inniscarra's Aileen Sheehan, and Philip O'Leary celebrate the club's success at their victory dinner at Oriol House Hotel. Picture: Mike English



Members of the Inniscarra under 16 county champions camogie team. Picture: Mike English



Joanne Casey (centre) captain of Inniscarra, with members of the management team, Tim Cronin, Ger Dinan, Seamus Coffey, Frank O'Mahony (Manager), Tim Buckley (Chairman), Aisling Punch and Brid O'Keeffe.



Inniscarra, County Senior Camogie Championship winners, celebrated their win in style at Oriol House Hotel. Picture: Mike English

Last weekend Kilkenny won the National Camogie League. Against the clamour of a weekend of rugby and hurling and soccer, this victory went largely unremarked. It is a reminder of the enduring struggle of camogie to carve out a significant place for itself in the sporting life of the island – even within the GAA itself.

When the GAA was founded, it was pledged the new Association would be open to men of every class. Speaking at the inaugural meeting of the Association, Maurice Davin made particular reference to men from poorer backgrounds, whom, he told the meeting, seemed to be condemned to a life which was little more than an endless round of labour. That women might also have wished to play the sports established and organised by the GAA does not seem to have crossed the minds of the founders.

The birth of camogie was an initiative which was framed by the involvement of women in the Gaelic League. The Gaelic League was founded by Douglas Hyde in 1893. The promotion of the Irish language was its principal objective, but branches of the League were also committed to the promotion of all aspects of Irish culture. Many of the male members of the League were involved with the GAA.

The Keating Branch of the Gaelic League in Dublin already had prominent hurling and football teams for its male members, when in 1903 a group of its women members, including many who had travelled from various parts of Ireland to work in Dublin, determined to play the game of hurling.

Led by university graduate Máire Ní Chinnéide, a code of rules based on hurling was devised. The rules of hurling were amended in ways that were considered to make the game more suitable to women – and this game was renamed *camoguidheacht* (or *camógaiocht*), roughly translated as 'junior hurling', but more commonly abbreviated to 'camogie' in common English-language usage.

Hurleys and sliotars were to be smaller and lighter than those used by the men. The pitch was shortened so that its dimensions were to stand between 60 and 100 yards in length and between 40 and 60 yards in width. The number of players per team was set at 12 (in recognition of the possible difficulties in getting sufficient numbers of women to play). Unique among the rules was one which cited as a foul the deliberate stopping of the ball with the long flowing skirts then fashionable among early players. The women of the Keating Branch began practising in the summer of 1903, first in Drumcondra Park, and later in the Phoenix Park. The founding of

Camogie's struggle to establish itself has never truly been won



GIRLS GOT GAME: A group of camogie aces in a promo shoot for the Liberty Insurance Camogie Championship season. Included in this 2015 shot were: Wexford's Shelley Kehoe, Galway's Sarah Dervan, Clare's Carol O'Leary, Kilkenny's Kate McDonald, Derry's Grainne O'Kane, Cúit Devane of Tipperary, Offaly's Sheila Sullivan, Limerick's Sarah Carey, Cork's Ashling Thompson and Dublin's Elaine O'Meara. Kilkenny retained their league crown after beating bitter rivals Cork last weekend. Picture: Inpho/Cathal Noonan

another club, Cúchulainns, in Dublin in early 1904, allowed for the staging of the first recorded camogie match in July of that year. The game was played at the Meath Agricultural Society Grounds (later Páirc Tailteann), and Keating's claimed victory by a single goal to no score. Camogie was spreading quickly: By the end of 1904, there were five teams playing in an organised league in Dublin. The progress was sufficient to allow for the formal establishment of An Cumann Camógaiochta (the Camogie Association), with Máire Ní Chinnéide as president, at 8 North Frederick Street in Dublin on February 25, 1905.

It was a struggle to spread the game, however. There were hostile attitudes to women playing it. Early camogie players were pioneers who flew in

the face of public opinion; many of them hid their huris under their coats as they travelled to play, in order to deflect ridicule from the wider public. One of the men who did much to assist the development of camogie in Dublin, Seán O'Duffy, a Mayo native who was a leading hurler and official with Crokes club, wrote to the press the growth of the game was largely 'unaided and unorganised', and hindered by 'adverse circumstances'. The challenges faced by those trying to promote camogie were legion, and were not always overcome. Even when progress was made, it was sometimes lost at a later date. For example, the league which was started in Dublin in 1904, fell into abeyance and the cup which had been presented initially went missing. By 1910, the sport had drifted into stagnation in Dublin.

In April 1911 letters to the Dublin newspapers signalled a new attempt to put camogie on a sound footing. A letter from one player, Cáit Ní Dhonnchadha, outlined the motivation for their endeavour: 'We want something to supplement the ballroom and the skating rink. We want to organise the womanhood of Ireland into one grand body, whose sole

object, under that of national emancipation, would be the raising of the sex from the slough of a false and foreign civilisation.' The letter went on to invite women to a meeting at the Calaroga Hall on Rutland Square, with a view to reorganising the association, revising its rules and restoring health to the game.

On April 21, 1911, An Cumann Camógaiochta was relaunched in Dublin. Eleanor, Dowager Countess of Fingal, was appointed president at a meeting attended by 13 Dublin clubs. Accepting the position, the Countess wrote: 'I will be delighted to do anything I can to help what I consider a splendid work, for I believe if we could make the boys' and girls' lives in Ireland more happy and cheerful we would keep many more of them at home.' The chairman of the reorganised association, Mrs Hamilton, told the meeting she believed ladies should have their own form of recreation which would give healthy exercise, counteract the evils of living in a city and make them better and nobler living. The idea that the game offered a great opportunity to improve women's health was stressed in the newspapers: 'This healthy game, which suggests a blend of hurling and hockey, was introduced a few years ago in Dublin and it provoked some most interesting contests between local clubs. Only a little organisation should be needed to preserve it as a means of recreation for many hundreds

of indoor workers in Dublin.' This time a determined effort was made to establish the game on a nationwide basis and by the middle of 1912 camogie matches were being played regularly in each of the four provinces.

The game was dominated by single women, who were students, graduates or out at work. The first official inter-county game was played in that summer of 1912, when Dublin defeated Louth 2-1 to 0-0 at Jones's Road. It says much for the presence of the game in Dublin city that when newspapers published photographs of the two teams who played the match, the caption referred to 'Irish ladies' new Gaelic game'.

The match was played as a part of a wider *aeridheacht* involving music and song and dance. By the time the camogie match started at 5.30pm there were an estimated 4,000 people present. Dublin was considered much the stronger team, playing more scientifically, although all the players were hampered by constant slipping caused by having no studs.

The Camogie Association had a strong nationalist outlook. A letter from Cáit Ní Donnchadha and Seán O'Duffy to the *Evening Telegraph* newspaper outlined the broader vision which underpinned the game: '...it is obvious that the country at large, and the city of Dublin in particular, would be strengthened and purified by our women cherishing and practising games of native

origin and growth. The energy displayed by so many Irish ladies in advocating women's rights proves that active forces are still to be won over to national objects. I would respectfully suggest to those ladies to devote portion of their organising energy and resources towards ameliorating the lot of their less fortunate sisterhood, who toil in vitiated shops, stores, warehouses, etc. and whose social life needs brightening. ...

'The realisation of such an ideal would naturally give rise to a more independent and more self-respecting race. When we have secured national freedom – which is the goal of all true Irish women, no matter how they may differ in trivial matters – let us have our own national pastime as an essential element of our existence as a nation.'

This ambition camogie should have a meaningful place for itself within Irish society is a battle to which generations of Irish women have committed so much of their lives. It is a battle that continues year after year. That the game should thrive as it does in so many places is a tribute to their efforts – that it does not flourish more spectacularly is largely a reflection of the nature of Irish society and the enduring difficulties of ensuring that women's sport is accorded some semblance of support and respect that it deserves. And when it comes down to it, the struggle of camogie to establish itself has never truly been won.



Paul Rouse

Antrim camogs beat Kildare to win All-Ireland title



The Antrim Camogs beat Kildare last weekend in the All-Ireland minor B Camogie Championship final at Inniscree Monaghan. Picture: Tom Beary/NPHQ

All still to play for in Cork senior leagues

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

IT'S moving along nicely in the senior league as we head into the last rounds next week.

In section one, Sarsfields had a win over St Finbarr's on Sunday, 3-6 to 0-11, but they lost out to Inniscarra by the narrowest of margins.

St Finbarr's overcame Killiney in a high scoring 4-14 to 4-13 contest to take their first points in the league. St Catherine's continued their good run with a win over Ballincollig.

As it stands, Inniscarra and St Catherine's are on top on five points each, closely followed by Ballincollig and Sarsfields on four each. As we head into the last round the semi-finals spots are still very much up for grabs.

In section two, Glen Rovers travelled to Ballygarvan and came away with the points on a 3-8 to 3-5 scoreline to give them three wins out of four having lost out to Courcsey Rovers the previous week. They are scheduled to meet Mallow on Wednesday next in their last game.

Courcsey Rovers are the only side in section two on full points after they defeated Cloughduv on Wednesday but they have two games to play against Douglas and Ballygarvan. It is very much a three horse race between Courcsey Rovers, Ballygarvan and Glen Rovers for the two semi-final spots on offer.

Taking a look at the junior A league, St Vincent's with wins over Banteer, Bishopstown and Bride Rovers have secured their semi-final spot, while Bride Rovers and Bishopstown look to be the sides that will either go through with them. In section two Na Piarasigh had a great win over a strong Watergrasshill side 1-8 to 1-4 but Watergrasshill bounced back to overcome Ballyhea so it's all still very much to play for here.

With exams looming the push is on to get the section games completed at minor level in the A grade in section one Glen Rovers recorded their second win with a victory over Ballygarvan. Kilbrittan/Timoleague took the points with a win over Sars.

Milford/Ballyhea have three games to play and with one victory over Kilbrittan/Timoleague are still in the hunt.

In the minor B league Aghalaha had a win over St Catherine's. Na Piarasigh are going well with wins over Ballincollig and Inniscarra. St Catherine's overcame Enniskeane. In minor C Ballinora defeated Youghal, Castletyons and Ballinora ended level, and Eire Og overcame Ballinhassig. Youghal defeated Blarney in a high scoring game.

Mixed fortunes for Fr O'Neill's as they had a win over Bishopstown before losing to Tracton and Blackrock. Blackrock also had a good win



Lydia Cunningham, Glen Rovers, gets away from Rachel Keohane, Ballygarvan, in the recent senior league clash in Ballygarvan.

Clubs in quest for Féile qualification

WITH the group stages and quarter-finals of division two completed, thoughts turn firmly this weekend to the group stages in division one of the Féile.

It will be a busy weekend for 10 clubs as they battle for the right to represent Cork at National Féile, which will be hosted by clubs in Wexford, Kilkenny and Carlow on the weekend of June 16-18.

Féile continues to grow and develop, and this year there will be 88 hurling teams hosting the 88 visiting teams.

Similarly, in camogie, the event is growing and there will be 56 host and visiting team pairings.

Today the clubs battling for the right to represent Cork are Enniskeane, Eire Og, Aghabullogue, Ballinora, Valley Rovers, Ballygarvan, Inniscarra, St Finbarr's, Youghal, and current national Féile champions Sarsfield's.

There will be two venues, one in Enniskeane and one in Youghal, and games get under way at 11am in both venues and will be 12-minutes a side. From these groups, two teams will qualify from each section for the semi-finals.

The winners of section one will play the runners-up of section two and the winners of section two play the runners-up in section one. The semi-finals will go ahead tomorrow in Castle Road, one on the county pitch and one on the colleges pitch, both at

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

This represents the largest ever Féile tournaments in what is one of the GAA biggest youth events.

In hurling, there are 11 divisions and in camogie there will be seven and in total over 8,000 U14 girls and boys will participate at national level and 40 finals will be contested over the weekend.

Before all this can happen, clubs must win through their respective county competitions, which brings us back to the Cork division one competition.

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to represent Cork are Enniskeane, Eire Og, Aghabullogue, Ballinora, Valley Rovers, Ballygarvan, Inniscarra, St Finbarr's, Youghal, and current national Féile champions Sarsfield's.

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11am, with the final at 2pm in the afternoon after the division two final, which is at 12.30pm.

Schedule

Section 1: (Enniskeane) Enniskeane, Eire Og, Ballinora, Aghabullogue, Valley Rovers. 11 am, Enniskeane v Eire Og; Aghabullogue v Ballinora. 11.40am; Valley Rovers v Enniskeane; Eire Og v Aghabullogue. 12.20pm, Ballinora v Valley Rovers; Enniskeane v Aghabullogue. 1pm; Eire Og v Ballinora; Valley Rovers v Aghabullogue. 1.40pm; Enniskeane v Ballinora; Eire Og v Valley Rovers.

Section 2: (Youghal) Ballygarvan, Inniscarra, St Finbarr's, Youghal, Sarsfield's. 11am; Ballygarvan v Inniscarra; St Finbarr's v Youghal. 11.40am; Sarsfield's v Ballygarvan, Inniscarra v St Finbarr's. 12.20pm; Youghal v Sarsfield's; Ballygarvan v St Finbarr's. 1pm. Inniscarra v Youghal; Sarsfield's v St Finbarr's. 1.40pm; Ballygarvan v Youghal; Inniscarra v Sarsfield's.

Four teams battle for Féile na nGael division 2 title

FROM early on Saturday morning last, eight venues were hives of activity as U14 camogie players, mentors, and families converged for the battle of the Cork Division 2 Féile na nGael title.

When the tallies were in from the eight venues, Carrigaline, Charleville, Na Piarasigh, Brian Dillon's, Newcestown, Bishopstown, Ballincollig, and Kilbrittan/Timoleague remained standing. The quarter-finals were played on Sunday.

Charleville returned to the city, having been in Glen Rovers on Saturday, and it was off to Na Piarasigh they went, for a meeting with the home club. After a titanic battle, Charleville came away with a semi-final spot secured, as they just about edged it, with four points to spare, 1-6 to 1-2.

Ballincollig, who had a busy day on Saturday, hosting Féile, and also holding a fundraising day, hosted their quarter-final with Brian Dillon's and

they turned in a strong performance to ensure themselves a place in the last four.

Carrigaline were on home soil as they faced the challenge of Kilbrittan/Timoleague. Carrigaline won with two points to spare, 0-6 to 1-1. Bishopstown headed to Newcestown, where a strong performance from their opponents ensured a semi-final place.

Just four teams remain in the hunt for the title and it's been a week of rest for them as they prepare for another busy weekend of games to reduce them to two.

The semi-finals are down for decision today, in

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

Castle Road, with the winners returning again on Sunday to contest the final, which will be played before the Division 1 final.

The pairings for the semi-finals are as follows: Charleville will meet Carrigaline at 12.30pm, and this will be followed by the meeting of Ballincollig and Newcestown, which has a 2pm throw-in.

Charleville came through a tough group and they will look to Teresa Dore, Shona O'Neill, and Molly Jackman to be at their best against a Carrigaline side that will look to captain Sinead Gaffney, Zoe O'Herlihy, Laoise Greally, Tamzin Murray, and Robyn Foley.

Ballincollig are captained by Miriam Healy and she will have plenty of support from Caoimhe Gleeson, Molly Lordan, Alannah O'Sullivan, and Lily May O'Farrell, as they battle to overcome Newcestown.

Cork need to dig deep to succeed

Rebels can overcome Derry challenge

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

SUNDAY: Littlewoods Division 2 National League final: Cork v Derry, Kinnegad GAA, 3.30pm. Cork's second team can win the Littlewoods Division 2 National League title on Sunday.

Derry edged through in a thriller against Kildare 1-11 to 0-11 in the semi, and last won the Division 2 title in 2012.

They had been in the top tier for a while, but are now back on track having dropped down. They have the experience gained in Division 1 behind them and with players of the calibre of Karen Kieft, Emer McGuigan and Aine McAllister they'll be in confident form. Against Kildare they were without two key players, captain Aileen McCusker and Grainne McNicholl, and they will be expected to have both available for selection this weekend.

Cork hit an impressive 18 points as they overcame Carlow with eight points to spare. Rachel O'Shea, Katelyn Hickey and Linda Collins were very much to the fore for a focused Cork side. Having lost the Division 1 final to Kilkenny, Paudie Murray will be hoping for better here. Cork took the Division 2 title in 2014 against Down and they go into Sunday's final after topping their group comfortably.

Derry camogie is on a high at club level and with five of the All-Ireland club champions in the county side they'll be hard to stop. Claire McAtamney, Aoife Quinn, Grainne McNicholl, Derval O'Kane and Mairead McNicholl have gained huge experience as their club's fairytale continued all the way to Croke Park.

This is a Cork side that is very united, having experienced a lot of turmoil last season because of the re-grading saga. They rallied to reach an All-Ireland final, one which was most definitely left behind. Experience gained here will stand to Cork, and Niamh Ni Chaoimh continues as captain in the Cork defence.

The team has not been named as yet and with Jennifer Barry and Niamh McCarthy who lined out in the Division 1 final eligible for inclusion, it remains to be seen if they will start. Lauren Callanan, who was absent for the semi-final due to illness and Caroline Sugrue, who was on holidays, are also available.

Cork have had strong performances from Keava McCarthy, Rachel O'Shea and Linda Collins in attack, while Sarah Fahy, Sarah Buckley, Roisin Killeen, Maeve McCarthy and Finola Neville have all contributed enormously. Picking their starting 15 and getting it right is something the selectors will be pondering. Current form swings the pendulum in favour of Cork but Derry will be determined to take the silverware north of the border.

Camogie

Linda Mellerick

I THINK the most disappointing aspect to come from last Sunday's National League final was how, again, Kilkenny seemed to want the title more.

In the larger picture, it didn't matter that a league title was lost, and if Cork's approach was against any other team, you'd almost forgive it.

But this was Kilkenny, the team that had denied them the three-in-a-row last September. I can't fathom how the sparks weren't almost visibly bouncing off their chests.

Maybe for some, the rivalry hasn't hit home yet, although listening to the negative post final comments for the second time in seven months, you'd wonder how they've escaped it.

It's been sensationalised and created almost overnight.

Cork's first-half display was dreadful, so let's not beat about the bush. Their first touch and distribution was very poor. They're far better than that. We know it.

It was an off 30 minutes. That happens. But the players looked extremely nervous and that's something that management are going to have to work on.

Kilkenny are a very good team. We knew it was coming. For several years I criticised their lack of aggression and desire and stated that once they brought those facets into their game they'd be a force.

Well they have both now, in addition to a soaring confidence after their All-Ireland victory.

However, let's not hand them the 2017 All-Ireland title yet. Let's look at a few positives from Cork's perspective.

■ 1. Despite Cork's opening performance, Kilkenny couldn't shake them off. Apart from the third minute goal, there were two points between the sides for the remainder of the half.

■ 2. Without having the stats, I believe that Cork enjoyed the lion's share of possession and Emma Kavanagh had a far busier hour than Aoife Murray.

■ 3. Cork won the second-half battle. They struck six points. Kilkenny's only score of the second half, if you take the goal that should have been disallowed out of it, was a pointed free.

■ 4. Cork had two goal chances. The first should have hit the net. The second was well defended. But they got through Kilkenny and into the danger area.

Orla Cotter made a significant impact when she came on just after half-time. Why? Because she took responsibility.

Showing no fear of her opponents, she attacked the game and struck three points, two from play.

Cork's inside six need to take on greater responsibility. Their first instinct should be a score, not a pass. Absolutely pass if a team-mate has a goal opportunity or is better placed, but other than that take the point. I noticed on a few occasions that we didn't even look at the post.

The mentality was, get it and pass,



Cork's Orla Cronin gets a great tackle in on Emma Kavanagh of Kilkenny in last weekend's league final in the Gaelic Grounds.

Picture: INPHO/Morgan Treacy



Cork's Gemma O'Connor is hauled back by Danielle Morrissey and Miriam Walsh of Kilkenny.

Picture: INPHO/Donall Farmer

often laterally, with no advantage gained, just a slowdown of play, giving Kilkenny time to cover. The nervousness I referred to earlier was evident here.

When we did strike, the shots didn't seem to hold conviction. Four times I counted the ball dropping comfortably into Emma Kavanagh's hands.

Leadership is a word echoed every day in business and sport. It shouldn't lose its significance because of repeated use. It is critical. It's fine to be a leader against the likes of Dublin, Clare, Tipperary and Wexford. But it's when your team are struggling, when there's a dip in form, that's when true leaders rally the troops by their own actions.

It doesn't need to be a spectacular

score. It needs incredible work rate and will, throwing your body out there, rising your team.

If I was to pick two of my favourite hurlers over the past decade they would be Tommy Walsh and John Mulrane. And the latter doesn't have any senior All-Ireland medal. It's all about heart.

Cork, I'm sure, are aware of their shortcomings and what they need to work on. If they can sort out a few areas, and I believe they can, they are still very much All-Ireland contenders.

Amy O'Connor did a lot of damage. While the finish may not have been there on the day, that can be worked on and then watch this space.

Unquestionably, Cork and Kilkenny

“Let's not beat about the bush. Their first touch and distribution was very poor.”

are the kingpins of camogie right now. Certainly, the rivalry has captured the interest of the public. There's another chapter in this novel for 2017. With both in opposite groups for the championship, if they both top them it'll be in an All-Ireland final.

It could be a semi-final meeting if one tops and the other comes second. However, there's plenty of camogie to be played beforehand and Kilkenny need to be pushed to the back of players' minds now.

There can't be any slip-ups. Every game is important. It all kicks off on June 6 with an away trip to Tipperary.

The Cork Intermediate side are in the league final tomorrow against Derry. It would be great to take that silverware and we wish them luck.

Kilkenny have the edge over Rebels again

KILKENNY 2-7
CORK 0-10

DARAGH Ó CONCHÚIR
REPORTS

JUST as in the All-Ireland final last September, Cork were unable to work Kilkenny out, this time as the Cats retained their Littlewoods Ireland Camogie League Division 1 title last Sunday with an all-round team performance that augurs well for the championship.

Kilkenny must get huge credit for the tactics that stifled the previously high-scoring Cork attack, while creating the space that delivered two priceless goals of their own.

The players in black and amber carried out the plan to a tee, especially in the first half, when they won the vast majority of the individual battles around the pitch. And there were battles aplenty, with the physicality of the exchanges notable from start to finish in Limerick.

Cork did improve in the second half, the introduction of Orla Cotter a welcome boost

CAMOGIE LEAGUE FINAL

after the brilliant St Catherine's stickwoman had missed most of the spring through injury. They began to match Kilkenny's intensity too but they failed to trouble Emma Kavanagh.

The nearest Cork got to getting a goal that would certainly have put a different slant on proceedings came in the 48th minute, when Amy Connor fielded Katrina Mackey's cross-field delivery, cut inside a Kilkenny defender and unleashed a shot from inside the 13m line.

Out of nowhere however, Catherine Foley arrived to produce a sensational block and the sliotar was cleared.

Even in the first half, when Cork were a clear second best, they spurned some good chances and dropped too many balls short but they could have few complaints.

Kilkenny often played with just one player inside their opposition 45. That had the dual consequence of cutting out the space in their own end of the

field, while backing their ability to have an impact with strike runners from deep.

The set-up got them a goal by the third minute, when Denise Gaule advanced on a delivery by Miriam Walsh and hand-passed over the advancing Aoife Murray.

Gemma O'Connor responded with a point for Cork but Kilkenny had three of the next four points including a brace from Katie Power.

Power and Walsh were flying and such were the Rebels' defensive difficulties that Paudie Murray substituted three-time All-Star Pamela Mackey after just 20 minutes.

O'Connor's score was Cork's only one from play in that opening period, as Katrina Mackey converted three frees but Aisling Dunphy, Julie Ann Malone and Gaule all managed points from play and Kilkenny were full value for their 1-6 to 0-4 lead at half time.

The Leesiders were better af-



In control Cork's Amy O'Connor gets away from Kilkenny's Claire Phelan during the Littlewoods Ireland Camogie League Division 1 final at the Gaelic Grounds last Sunday.

(Photo: Donall Farmer/INPHO)

ter the restart and looked much sounder defensively. Meanwhile, Cotter was having a real impact, scoring three points including two from play.

But the key moment arrived in the 41st minute. It was slightly strange as Owen Elliott awarded a free to Kilkenny but Cork believed the decision had gone their way. Gemma O'Connor trotted out to stand over the sliotar but once the official confirmed his call, the alert Gaule ran to the mark and almost on the run, took a quick free to Danielle Morrissey that caught the opposition napping.

O'Connor did get back to actually gather possession but was dispossessed and Walsh powered past the challenges of Rena Buckley and Aoife Murray before hand-passing to the net.

That ensured Kilkenny had vital breathing space and late points from Libby Coppinger and Hannah Looney, the latter a fizzing shot that just cleared the crossbar, came too late.

Scorers

Kilkenny: D Gaule 1-2 (1f), M Walsh 1-0, K Power 0-2, A Dunphy, J A Malone, D Morrissey (f) 0-1 each.
Cork: K Mackey 0-4 (3f), O Cotter

0-3 (1f), G O'Connor, L Coppinger, H Looney 0-1 each.

Kilkenny: E Kavanagh, M Teehan, C Foley, G Walsh, A Nolan, A Dalton, C Phelan, A Dunphy, M Farrell, D Gaule, K Power, J Reddy, J A Malone, M Walsh, D Morrissey.
Subs: E Keane for Dunphy (59), J Clifford for Morrissey (59).

Cork: A Murray, L Treacy, P Mackey, R Buckley, E O'Sullivan, A Thompson, C Sigerson, G O'Connor, J Barry, A O'Connor, O Cronin, J White, K Mackey, N McCarthy, L Collins.

Subs: L Coppinger for P Mackey (21), O Cotter for Collins (33), H Looney for White (50), L O'Sullivan for Barry (55).

Referee: O Elliott (Antrim).

Supreme second-half showing seals Cork win

Cork 2-16
Derry 1-5

Littlewoods Ireland
Camogie Leagues
Division 2 final

Daragh Ó Conchúir
Kinnegad

Cork were singing in the rain at the Coralstown Kinnegad grounds, producing a power-packed second-half performance to win the Littlewoods Ireland Camogie Leagues Division 2 title.

Rachel O'Shea scored six points and was named player of the match while defenders Lauren Callanan and Sarah Buckley also stood out.

It was a good boost for Leeside camogie, with the seniors having lost the Division 1 final a week ago. They were able to call upon three of the players who started that game against Kilkenny — Jennifer Barry, Niamh McCarthy, and Linda Collins — and possessed a strength in depth that proved too much for Derry who trailed 1-3 to 0-9 at the break. Cork cut loose on the restart with Caroline Sugrue and Sarah Fahy hitting their goals.

Scorers for Cork: R O'Shea 0-6 (3fs), M

McCarthy 0-4; C Sugrue, S Fahy 1-1 each; N McCarthy, K Hickey, F Neville, L Homan 0-1 each.

Scorers for Derry: M Hegarty 1-1; K Kieft (fs), A McAllister 0-2 each.

CORK: A Lee, R Kileen, S Harrington, N Ni Chaoimh, L Lynch, S Buckley, L Callanan, F Neville, J Barry, K Hickey, K McCarthy, M McCarthy, N McCarthy, L Collins.

Subs: C Sugrue for Collins (36), L Homan for K McCarthy (49), S Fahy for M McCarthy (49), M Buckley for Hickey (50), J Crowley for Barry (54), H Ryan for O'Shea (58), A Kelleher for Kileen (58), N O'Callaghan for Neville (59).

DERRY: N McQuillan, R Bradley, C McAtamney, S Donaghy, J McGuckin, A Ni Chaiside, B Ni Chaiside, A McAllister, K Kieft, A Devin, G McNicholl, A Quinn, M Hegarty, A McCusker, D O'Kane.

Subs: E Ni Chaiside for B Ni Chaiside (33), R Cassidy for Quinn (42), N McBride for Kieft (51), N Boylan for O'Kane (56).

Referee: J Dermody (Westmeath).



Cork's Niamh Ni Chaoimh receives the trophy from Catherine Neary.

Captain Niamh leads by example

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

CORK captain Niamh Ni Chaoimh led by example on and off the field last Sunday as her side overcame Derry in the Littlewoods Division 2 National League final in Kinnegad.

Niamh, a primary teacher and a fluent Irish speaker, gave a magnificent acceptance speech totally as Gaelige and the delight in her face on receiving the trophy from Uachtarán Catherine Neary told the story of a successful spring for Cork's second team.

Said Niamh: "I am just so proud of this team. We knew we had to up the ante. Derry are a side that played at the higher level for a few years and they came into the final with huge pedigree. We had to work really hard especially in the first half against the wind but credit every single player on our panel we stood up and were counted today."

Cork needed to up the pace to take the title as the players knew their performances in the lead up were not going to be good enough.

"We did win all our group games but we knew we should have been doing better. We were just getting over teams we should have been way ahead of. Derry are a seasoned side and have huge experience."

Playing against the wind and rain in the opening half Cork laid down a marker despite Derry taking an early lead with a Mary Hegarty goal inside four minutes.

"For the first 10 minutes we were a bit at sea, but we never panicked and we settled into the game and managed to contain them for the last quarter of the first half. It was good to go in leading at half time and it was a confidence booster. We knew we would have to keep the pressure on from the restart and we did. When they came at us we responded and it was important we never allowed them get ahead of us."

The hurt of leaving the All-Ireland title behind them last year is still there with this Cork side and winning the league is a reward for their persistence and determination.

"We were gutted to lose out in the All-Ireland final, we know we should not have lost. Today makes up a little bit for that but we will drive on now and give the championship one hell of a shot."

Not having been able to contest last year's league until the latter stages because of re-grading issues, most of this side were denied a chance to win a medal. However, they showed again just what they are made of. The spirit, determination and never say die attitude they displayed last year through what was a rough few months came to the surface at the weekend as they annexed this national league title; well done to them all a title richly deserved.



Cait Devane has been nominated for an All Star Award, the Cidona GAA Award and she has been picked by Munster Camogie Council as best player in Munster for 2015.

O'Shea inspired, as Rebels roar

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

Cork 2-16
Derry 1-5

CORK were crowned Littlewood's Division 2 champions yesterday in Coralstown Kinnegad turning in a superb performance to overcome a strong physical Derry side.

Played in appalling weather conditions, where continuous rain made underfoot conditions slippery for both sides, the team worked hard and dug deep to carve out a great victory.

Despite playing against the strong wind in the opening half Cork laid the foundation for victory with an impressive defensive display as they opted to drop an extra player back to play behind their half-back line and it worked well as they dealt with the pressure Derry applied.

Linda Collins and Karen Kieft exchanged early points, but, aided by the strong wind, Derry hit the front when Mary Hegarty grabbed a long delivery on the edge of the square and blasted to the net. Niamh McCarthy pointed for Cork but two in a row from Mary Hegarty and Karen Kieft stretched the Derry lead to four points inside eight minutes of the throw in.

Cork failed to panic and settled and with their half back line strong under a lot of dropping ball they closed down the Derry threat.

Maeve McCarthy pointed twice before Rachel O'Shea, with three frees, had edged Cork in front by the end of the second quarter and working the ball well out, Cork turned defence into attack on numerous occasions as they worked tirelessly to win and hold possession. They were rewarded with points from Kaitlin Hickey and Rachel O'Shea before the break where they led 0-9 to 1-3 and turning to play with wind advantage they were in a good position.

Cork opted to hold their defensive line out for the second half and again it meant at midfield and up front they had to work hard but they did. Finola Neville and Rachel O'Shea stretched the lead with early second-half points but as they did in the opening half



Cork's players celebrate winning the league.

Picture: Inpho/Tom Beary

Derry responded.

Aine McAllister had two points in a row but this was to be their last score as a strong Cork defence where Sarah Buckley, Lauren Callanan and Lisa Lynch were magnificent never allowed them any room. They hooked, blocked and defended as if their life's depended on it and there was no way this spirited Cork side were going to be denied.

Maeve McCarthy pointed before substitute Caroline Sugrue had an instant impact grabbing a goal and a point before McCarthy and the hard working Rachel O'Shea added points.

Cork were now in the driving seat and an excellent goal from Sarah Fahy was the icing on the cake before Lauren Homan's point drew huge cheers from the travelling Cork supporters.

Rachel O'Shea was named as Littlewood's Player of the Match on a day when Cork certainly laid down a strong marker for championship season ahead.

Scorers for Cork: R O'Shea 0-6 (0-3 f), C Sugrue 1-1, M McCarthy 0-4, S Fahy 1-0, N McCarthy, K Hickey, F Neville, S Fahy, L Homan 0-1 each.
Derry: M Hegarty 1-1, K Kieft 0-3 f, A McAllister 0-1.
CORK: A Lee; R Killeen, S Harrington, N Ni



Cork's Sarah Harrington with Aoife Quinn of Derry.

Picture: Inpho/Tom Beary

Chaoimh (c): L Lynch, S Buckley, L Callanan, F Neville, J Barry, K Hickey, K McCarthy, M McCarthy, R O'Shea, N McCarthy, L Collins.
Subs: C Sugrue for L Collins (36), L Homan for K McCarthy, S Fahy for M McCarthy (49), M Buckley for K Hickey (50), J Crowley for J Barry (54), H Ryan for R O'Shea (58), A Killeher for R Killeen (58), N O'Callaghan for F Neville (59).

DERRY: N McQuillan; R Bradley, C Atamney, S Donaghy, J McGuirk, A Ni Chaiside (c), B Ni Chaiside; A McAllister, K Kieft; A Devlin, G McNicholl, A Quinn; M Hegarty, A McCusker, D O'Kane.
Subs: E Ni Chaiside for B Ni Chaiside (33), R Cassidy for A Quinn (42), N McBride for K Kieft (51), N Boylan for D O'Kane (56).
Referee: John Darmody (Westmeath).

Cork greats star in exhibition

CORK GAA greats feature prominently in the GAA Museum's new exhibition that celebrates individuals to have won All-Ireland titles as both a player and manager.

There are 13 hurlers, 11 footballers and six camogie players who have claimed All-Ireland medals as a player and manager.

Imreoir to Bainisteoir features memorabilia, film footage and imagery from the 30 players who have achieved All-Ireland success both on the field and from the sidelines.

Of the 30 well-known GAA legends that will feature, Cork will supply nine who have won All-Irelands as players and managers - Billy Morgan (1973, player; 1989, 1990,

manager), Conor Counihan (1989, 1990, player; 2010, manager), Jimmy Barry-Murphy (1973, 1976-78, 1984, 1986, player; 1999, manager); Johnny Clifford (1954, player; 1986, manager); Donal O'Grady (1984, player; 2004, manager); John Allen (1976, 1978, player; 2005, manager); Mary Moran (1970, player; 1972, 1973, manager); Denise Cronin (1992-93, 1995, 1997-98, 2002, player; 2009, manager); Fiona O'Driscoll (1992-93, 1995, 1997-98, 2002; 2005, manager).

Others to feature include legends such as Mick O'Dwyer, Kevin Heffernan, Brian Cody and Ann Downey. *Imreoir to Bainisteoir* recognises the amazing achievements of

these players and gives fans the opportunity to remember some of the most exciting players and teams in the history of Gaelic Games. Some players had also achieved All-Ireland success with their clubs including Davy Fitzgerald, John Allen, Donal O'Grady, Jimmy Barry Murphy, Pat Gilroy and Billy Morgan. Morgan has won football titles at club and county level as both player and manager. His jersey and cap worn in the 1973 All-Ireland final, as well as the match ball are on display.

is housed on the ground floor of the GAA Museum in Croke Park and will run until

KILMEEN AND KILBREE

Kilmeen NS girls are County Champions: Kilmeen National School camogie girls were crowned county camogie champions in Newcestown on Monday. They defeated Cloghroe in the final. The final score was Kilmeen NS 4-1 Cloghroe 0-0. The Kilmeen girls were very strong from the start and gave Cloghroe very little space to score. The Kilmeen scores came from Caoimhe Murphy (2-1), Róisín O'Carroll (1-0) and Niamh McCarthy (1-0). Well done to Kenneth McCarthy (principal) and everyone at Kilmeen NS for their great work with this team.
Team: Heather Brimble, Kate O'Donovan, Sinead O'Sullivan, Caoimhe Murphy, Rachel Deasy, Mary Murphy, Niamh McCarthy, Róisín O'Carroll, Oriath Kirby, Oriagh O'Neill Callanan, Ava Murray, Cionadh Crowley Debarbouille, Sinead Bennett and Rowan Hurd.

Jennifer O'Leary

The voice of experience tackles the topics that matter



I tore my hamstring after 100 metres but I ran on and caused more damage

Injuries are part and parcel of the GAA – but a positive mindset is crucial in your comeback

POP. I knew something was wrong straightaway.

The pain was immediate. And it hurt. It was like I had just been hit with something sharp, at force, to the back of the leg.

You're also hit with dread and fear because you know this won't end well.

That's what I experienced when I tore my hamstring during a school sports day back in 2012 when I was taking part in the teacher versus student relay, as a member of staff in Coláiste Choilm, Ballincollig.

I tore my left hamstring quite badly during a 200-metre relay sprint and it was totally my own fault.

I didn't have any shoes on, I wasn't warmed up properly and after the initial dagger-type feeling, I kept running until I passed the baton onto the last member of our team so he could sprint home first to the finish line. Some might say it was the competitive edge that pushed me to keep running, others will say it was sheer stupidity.

I remember making the phone call to our Cork camogie manager, Paudie Murray. We were to play a national league semi-final in two days' time. Let's just say he wasn't impressed and instead of getting an earful down the telephone, I was instead subjected to silence, which, believe me, is so much worse.

To this day I don't think he is aware of my idiotic behaviour in running through the pain. I tore it at the 100-metre mark but I still had another 100 metres to run. If he is reading this, Paudie, here is my confession!

However, deep down I think he realised that the tear I experienced couldn't have just happened as I described it to him. He got his own way back at me when he referred me onto Liam O'Reilly, the current conditioning coach for the Cork senior camogie team. The necessary torture he put me through on that physio table was 100 times worse than actually experienc-

ing tearing the muscle.

Every second day I visited his practice in Inishannon and every second day elbows were pushed into the injured area. I was practically biting the edge of the table so screams could not be heard.

In fairness, he kept talking to me to keep my mind off the pain but, to be honest, with every manipulation and movement it quickly brought me back to the agonising pain felt by the internal bleed. It was worth it though.

Through his specialist care, icing, specific exercises and a positive can-do attitude during the recovery phase, I got back playing weeks before I should have been able to. No pain, no gain, I guess.

This memory of injuries was quickly brought back to me when I recently read an article about one of the newest Cork senior camogie forwards, Niamh McCarthy from Inniscarra. After tearing both her left and right cruciates with five years in the recovery process, she has made it back onto the camogie field at the highest level.

It makes me feel very old, but Niamh was a student of mine when I taught in Ballincollig. She also was a shining light on the camogie field and stood out a mile when playing for the school. She was our star player as she could perform any camogie skill to a very high standard, she was incredibly fit and was as determined then as she undoubtedly is now.

Niamh was also resilient enough to take the knocks and tackles that a player of her calibre would unfortunately get in order to stop her. There was no way you could take her off the pitch if she was in pain, she was adamant she was playing on. This never-give-up attitude has obviously stood to her, especially after recovering from two very serious knee injuries at a very young age.

Our school junior team



Comeback: Niamh McCarthy suffered two cruciate injuries in her teens, the first when she was 14 and the second when she was 17 years old, but incredibly the Inniscarra star has battled back and impressed for the Cork senior camogie team in the league this season.

reached the All-Ireland semi-final in 2011. Hilda Kenneally and I were the coaches and we had an excellent team. Our confidence was high and training was going very well. The girls were very tuned in and prepared for a battle against St Pat's College Maghera of Derry.

The initial date of the semi-final had to be changed due to unplayable weather conditions so it was rescheduled for a week later. Luck was definitely against us and certainly against Niamh because days before we were to play our semi-final she played basketball in Dublin, and at 14 years of age, she tore her first cruciate ligament. It was devastating and while the team went on and played their hearts out in a brilliant fashion, we were missing Niamh from the starting 15 and lost.

It was a cruel blow for her at such a young age as she was impressing so many coaches both in camogie and basketball and to go from a girl who never stops, to a girl who would have to change her routine and focus on recovery must have been difficult.

I started thinking about what it takes to make a full recovery from an injury but also about how someone can face the daunting reality of re-injury. Players like Tommy Bowe and Cork footballer Brian Hurley spring to mind.

They recently suffered another major blow having seriously injured themselves with breaks and distressing hamstring setbacks even though they worked so hard to get back to full fitness.

Sadly, it is part and parcel of

sport and the high risk you take when you step out on the field. Who knows what could happen and why it happens sometimes, but it does.

How you approach an injury is so important. You can decide to dwell on the injury and let it consume you in a negative way or you can make the conscious decision to move on.

While you are injured you can look positively at the things you can do, not what you can't do. Having a good support system in friends, family and teammates also helps as an injury can have a devastating effect on the person in question.

High self motivation is key to recovery as well as understanding your injury, the prognosis and the time frame needed. Having goals is important and small steps are better than one

giant unrealistic step.

Talking to people is crucial because in a way an injury is like a loss. You have lost the ability to do what you love, which is play a sport. For some it may just be a short-term setback, but for others this may not be the case. Being there for people who are experiencing an injury is important. Let's face it, the majority of us have been there ourselves and know how awful it can be both physically and mentally.

All in all, have no fear. Take that plunge back to playing when the body feels good and you have been given the go ahead by qualified specialists in the field. We take that risk and face the possibility of injury when we play the sport we love, but never think this way, just get out and play.

Rebels turn focus toward Clare clash

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

TOMORROW
Munster Senior Championship semi-final: Cork v Clare, Castle Road, 3pm.
CORK will be hoping to put the disappointment of losing out to Kilkenny in the Littlewoods Division 1 League final behind them when they focus on the Munster championship tomorrow at Castle Road where Clare will provide the opposition.

The provincial competition provided valuable competitive games and Paudie Murray will no doubt see this as another opportunity to give game time to players his selectors may be looking at for All-Ireland championship games. Last weekend the Division 2 side gave a superb performance as they overcame Derry to take the title and in this clash several players many of whom are not on the division 1 panel at present were superb. It will be interesting to see if any of these players get the call up for tomorrow's clash.

Cork will have been disappointed to have lost out to Kilkenny especially given that only one score separated the sides on a day when a lot of the Cork sides simply did not show up or stand up and be counted.

Cork were a side hellbent on getting a goal when the option to slot the ball over the bar was a better one to take.

To her credit, on her introduction Orla Cotter did just that, striking two excellent points as Cork chased the game. What a pity we didn't opt to do this all day it certainly was an opportunity lost to get one over on an ever-improving Kilkenny, who had seven players who did not feature on the All-Ireland winning team on duty.

The clock is ticking towards All-Ireland championship with the opening round a tough encounter against Tipperary on June 10. Paudie and his backroom team will be looking for bigger and better performances from their squad starting this weekend.

Clare, after a great few seasons when they promised so much, now seem to have gone way back. Their national league form was very poor as they lost out in all game bar one. Galway inflicted a 1-22 to 0-7 defeat on them before they rallied to beat Meath 2-14 to 1-9, but this was to be their only win as they fell to Limerick on a day when they showed a lot of improvement only losing out by a point. Offaly had too much strength in the last of the group games as they overcame Clare 2-12 to 0-11.

Two years ago Clare pinned Cork to their collars in championship right now it is hard to see where it has gone wrong, maybe they can rally and get it right.

Patricia O'Grady continues at the helm with Brian Enright, Flan McInerney, Denise Lynch, and Marc McInerney.



The Cork panel that defeated Derry in last weekend's Division 2 camogie league final.

Picture: INPHO/Tom Beary

Tricky opener for promoted Mallow

ALL eyes were focused on championship matters as the draws were made for the 2017 adult competitions from senior to Junior C this week.

At senior level, 13 clubs went into the hat with promoted Mallow joining the senior ranks for the first time.

A few interesting pairings emerged, with the meeting of Milford and St Finbarr's a repeat of the 2015 opening round when the city girls pushed the then champions all the way.

County champions Inniscarra will take on an every improving Sarsfield's who are in their second year in the top grade. Last season they lost to Douglas in the opening round, before losing to

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

St Finbarr's. Inniscarra stopped Milford in their bid for five-in-a-row in a thrilling county final and they will be going all out for back-to-back titles.

Mallow will take on the only divisional side to enter the championship, Carbery, and this will be a tricky one for the debutants.

Carbery, with senior B clubs Clonakilty, Kilbrittan/Timoleague, Barryroe, intermediate sides Enniskeane and Newcestown, and junior side Ballinascarty to pick from, are coming from a strong base. In 2015 they reached the quarter-finals before

being edged out by St Catherine's. They entered championship last season but failed to field, but this year they are organised.

It will be an all Mid-Cork clash when Ballincollig and Cloughduv go head to head. Last year's defeated semi-finalists, St Catherine's, will meet Glen Rovers, and the clash of Courcey Rovers and Killeagh will be one to keep an eye on. Ballygarvan take on Douglas, who are always tough championship campaigners.

FIRST ROUND DRAW: St Catherine's v Glen Rovers; Mallow v Carbery; Milford v St Finbarr's; Courcey Rovers v Killeagh; Cloughduv v Ballincollig; Douglas v Ballygarvan; Inniscarra v Sarsfield's.

The Senior B Championship is always hotly contested and with two groups, one with five teams, one with

six, and it will be hard to predict a winner here in what is a highly competitive championship.

Teams are divided into two groups with the top two from each going to the semi-finals. Newcomers Blackrock are promoted following their intermediate championship success in 2016 and they are going well in the league. Ballinhasig have re-graded from senior this year and they will be strong. Defeated finalists last year, Valley Rovers, will be another threat.

Group One (Six teams): Carrigaline, Fr O'Neill's, Brian Dillon's, Barryroe, Blackrock, Éire Óg.
Group Two (Five Teams): Valley Rovers, Kilbrittan/Timoleague, Ballinhasig, Clonakilty.

Next week we will focus on the intermediate and junior championship draws.

Champions Cork put their title on the line at Castle Road

TOMORROW
Munster Junior Championship semi-final: Cork v Clare, Castle Road, 1pm.

HOLDERS Cork put their Munster junior championship title on the line when they meet Clare tomorrow in the opening game of a double-header in Castle Road in the semi-final of this season championship.

Last season — Cork, under the guidance of Donie Daly, took the title and it was a huge boost to the sides that really put in a huge effort.

Given that a lot of the players involved would have previously lined out at higher levels with the county it's a tribute to their dedication to the game that they are still willing to put in the effort with the county's third string and players such as Christine O'Neill, Lydia Cunningham and Michelle Browne have huge experience and are the backbone of the side again this season.

Current minor Rachel Harty, former minor cap-

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

tain Aisling Wallace, Ciara Daly, Nicole Crean, Si-nead Mills, Michaela Hyde and Nicola O'Doherty are all part of a panel who are captained by Newtownshandrum's Cliona O'Callaghan.

Previously the rules governing this competition stopped a player who had previously won a medal from participating the following year but this has now changed and with several of last season's panel still willing to commit Cork will field a strong side. Donie Daly is again at the helm leading the way and he has put in a lot of hard work with Aoife Doyle from Newtownshandrum also involved as a selector.

Cork have prepared well and have played a few games in preparation and they will not be found wanting. Clare will have the advantage of having

participated in the Division 3 National League, where despite only winning one game against Tyrone they qualified for the semi-final.

Here they met Dublin and in a tough encounter had to give best to a side who last weekend went on to take the Division 3 title with a win over Roscommon.

Six points separated them from Dublin and looking at this Dublin sides last weekend they are strong so it's an indication of where Clare are at that they managed to contain the new league champions.

They have several players with huge experiences and one to watch will be Niki Kaiser who has been catching the eye up front whilst Louise McDonnell, Tara Rynne, Niamh Mulqueen and Helen Hehir have also been prominent through their league campaign.

Cork having tasted victory last year will be determined to make it back to back titles and to do so they need to book their place in next weekend's final against the winners of the Kerry-Waterford clash.

Champs turn on the style to lower Banner

Cork ease into Munster senior camogie final

CORK 2-20
CLARE 1-10

SHIRLEY MOLONEY REPORTS

CORK bounced back from their recent national league Division 1 final defeat to cruise past Clare in a one-sided Munster senior camogie championship semi-final last Sunday at Castle Road. Paudie Murray's side only led

by four points at the break, 0-10 to 0-4, but they pulled away in the second half, helped by an early Gemma O'Connor goal that owed much to a mistake by the Clare goalkeeper Laura Solon who spilled O'Connor's shot into the back of the net.

From there on it was one-way traffic with Cork notching up a further goal and ten points in the remaining 27 minutes of the second half to win by double scores.

Orla Cotter scored three early points for Cork and Katrina Mackey also picked off a fine point but Clare stayed in touch through Niamh O'Dea and Chloe Morey (2).

Points from Cotter (free), two from Hannah Looney and another from Mackey saw Cork in control, 0-8 to 0-3, and after Rebel goalkeeper Aoife Murray pulled off a point-blank save, it set up an attack that saw Enniskeane's Orla Cronin point to put Cork seven clear with two minutes to the break.

Cork moved the ball very well and looked very comfortable in possession with Ashling Thompson playing a dominant role at centre back. O'Connor holding centre field and Mackey and Cotter on form up front.

But Clare rallied before the break with three points to trail by four at half time, 0-10 to 0-6.

In the opening minute of the



Clearing her lines: Clare's Roisin McMahon keeps an eye on the ball closely chased by Cork forward Orla Cronin during their Munster semi-final at Castle Road last Sunday.

(Photos: Caroline O'Keefe)

second half Clare goalkeeper Solon pulled off a great save from an Amy O'Connor effort. However, two minutes later she was to gift Cork a goal when the sliotar slid from her palm to the back of the net.

This was to signal the start of Cork's dominance and while Morey pointed for Clare, Cotter

and Mackey both added points before Hannah Looney struck for goal after an initial save of a Maeve McCarthy shot. Cork now led 2-12 to 0-7 and were well in control.

Morey, again, pointed for the Banner before three unanswered points from Cork through Gemma O'Connor, Thompson and a Cotter free saw Cork lead by 2-15 to 0-8. By the end, Amy O'Connor (2) and Cotter added to their totals as the Rebels eased into a provincial final against Limerick, who beat Tipperary (1-14 to 0-14) in the other semi-final last Sunday.

Scorers

Cork: O Cotter 0-9 (7f), H Looney 1-2, G O'Connor 1-1, K Mackey 0-4, A O'Connor 0-2, O Cronin, A

Thompson 0-1 each.
Clare: C Morey 1-6 (1-4), V Loughane, A O'Keefe, N O'Dea, A Keating 0-1 each.

Cork: A Murray, L O'Sullivan, R Buckley (captain), L Treacy, E O'Sullivan, A Thompson, C Sigerson, G O'Connor, J Barry, O Cotter, O Cronin, A O'Connor, K Mackey, H Looney, N McCarthy.
Subs: R Kileen for R Buckley (22, inj), M McCarthy for J Barry (ht), L Homan for N McCarthy (45), F Neville for C Sigerson (52), R O'Shea for A O'Connor (54).

Clare: L Solon, C Grogan, C O'Leary, E O'Connell, L McMahon, R McMahon, C Doyle, M McGrath, A O'Keefe, V Loughane, A Keane (captain), A Malone, O Devitt, N O'Dea, C Morey.

Subs: Z McInerney for A Malone, C Hehir for E O'Connell, A Keating for V Loughane, A O'Loughlin for A O'Keefe.

Referee: Kevin O'Brien (Limerick).

★ THE HIGHLIGHTS

Star Player: Cork star Ashling Thompson was the driving force behind this win.

Star Moment: Clare goalkeeper Laura Solon spilled Gemma O'Connor's shot into the back of the net early in the second half to give Cork the advantage and a nine-point lead.

Talking point: Cork and Limerick

are to meet in the Munster senior final for the second year in a row. There were angry scenes at end of last year's final when two injury-time Cork points snatched a win.

What's next: Cork progress to the Munster senior final against Limerick at a date to be confirmed.



Defensive duties: Cork's Roisin Kileen closes down Clare's Maire McGrath during the game.

Rampant Rebels point their way into Munster final

CORK 0-22
CLARE 0-7

SHIRLEY MOLONEY REPORTS

A RAMPANT Rebel team proved far too strong for Clare in a one-sided Munster camogie junior championship semi-final at Castle Road on Sunday afternoon.

Cork will now play Kerry in the provincial final this Sunday (14th) after the Kingdom overcame Waterford by 1-12 to 1-9 in the other semi-final.

The Rebels will head into the decider full of confidence after their latest win as they held all the aces against a Clare side that had opened the scoring af-

MUNSTER JUNIOR CAMOGIE

Lyons pointed a free - but they had to wait 20 minutes for their next score, another Lyons free.

In the intervening period Cork notched up 11 points that highlighted their dominance across the pitch.

Erin Looney operating at centre forward split the posts followed by two well-taken points by the lively Aisling Wallace playing top of the right. Rachel Harty picked off a close range point before Wallace added to the tally with a fine effort on the run to see Cork 0-5 to 0-1 ahead after only nine minutes on the clock.

With the Cork forwards

the back foot, Sinead Mills collected a short clearance to split the posts for Cork's sixth point.

Two Christine O'Neill frees either side of a close-range Looney point from play pushed Cork eight clear. Michaela Hyde pointed before captain Cliona O'Callaghan confidently slotted over after a strong run to see all six of the Cork forwards on the scoreboard ten minutes from the short whistle.

Lyons slotted over a 50-metre free to bring Clare's tally to three for the half. Cork registered two more with O'Callaghan pointing before Wallace popped over from

Clare 0-3 at half time.

The game was over as a contest when, after Clare grabbed the opening score of the second half, Cork reeled off four unanswered points through Wallace (2), substitute Orla Coughlan and Harty. It was now 0-17 to 0-4. There was still time for Cork to add five more points to complete this rout.

Scorers

Cork: A Wallace 0-8, O Coughlan 0-3, N O'Leary, C O'Callaghan, R Harty 0-2 each, C O'Neill 0-2f, S Mills, M Hyde, A Twohill 0-1 each.
Clare: K Lyons 0-3f, S Loughane 0-2, S Power, E Duggan 0-1 each.
Cork: M Hurley (Clonakilty), C O'Keefe (St Vincent's), D Carroll (Enniskeane), E Flanagan (Aghabullogue), N Crean (St Vincent's), G O'Leary (Slabh Rua), C Daly (Killeshall), C O'Neill (Carrigrohane).

L Cunningham (Glen Rovers), M Hyde (Glen Rovers), E Looney (Inniscearra), C O'Callaghan (captain, Newtownshandrum), S Mills (Brian Dillons), R Harty (Ballyhea), Aisling Wallace (Glen Rovers).

Subs: O Coughlan (Enniskeane) for C O'Neill (ht), A Twohill (Newtownshandrum) for M Hyde (ht), N Doherty (Aghabullogue) for L Cunningham (41, inj), D Cagney (Newtownshandrum) for C

O'Callaghan (45, inj), A O'Sullivan (Castletyons) for S Mills (46).

Clare: E McNamara, A Nihil, M O'Brien, D Considine, A McMahon (captain), R Kaiser, E Whyte, S Redmond, L Egan, S Power, S Loughane, K Lyons, S Lane, L Danaher, L McDonnell.

Subs: S Loughane for A Nihil (12, inj), C McMahon for L Danaher (ht), L Danaher for S Lane (47).

Referee: Philip Dee (Limerick).

Player of the League award

Ballincollig's Sarah Buckley has been nominated for a Camogie Association Player of the League award. The Cork ace starred for the Rebels in Littlewoods Ireland Camogie Leagues Division 2 and is now in the running for this inaugural award, with Karen Kleit (Derry), Niamh Mallon (Down), Siobhán Hurley (Kildare) and Sarah Anne Fitzgerald (Laois) also in the reckoning. Managers from all of the teams who participated in this year's competition were asked to choose their top three players from opposing teams from which the nominees were then identified. The player with the most nominations will be announced at a ceremony to take place in Croke Park on May 19th.

Cork hoping Corkery will be part of championship plans

Eoghan Cormican

Briege Corkery has yet to decide if she will commit to the Cork camogie team this summer.

The 17-time All-Ireland medal winner did not line out for either the Cork ladies football or camogie sides during the spring and has yet to indicate her plans to the respective management teams for the summer ahead.

Cork welcome Limerick to Charleville for today's Munster senior camogie final (3pm) and manager Paudie Murray is optimistic that he will have Corkery on board when their All-Ireland campaign swings into action on June 10.

"Briege has yet to make a decision, but I'd be hopeful she will be in with us for the All-Ireland championship," said Murray.

Cork swatted today's opponents aside by 12-points - 3-15 to 0-12 - in last month's league semi-final, but Murray is predicting a much tighter affair on this occasion as the home outfit chases a fifth consecutive provincial title.

"They were missing a few players when we met in the league semi. We will be weaker than we were at the tail end of the league as we are missing Pamela Mackey (fractured tibia), Julie White (broken bone in foot), Linda Collins (AC joint) and possibly Niamh McCarthy (knee).

"Limerick would have been kicking themselves that they lost last year's Munster final -



Cork's Briege Corkery with her dog Hernandez after the Liberty Insurance senior camogie championship semi-final at Semple Stadium in August 2016.

Picture: Cathal Noonan/Inpho

it finished 0-12 to 0-10. They had every chance to win it and they didn't. They were the better team on the day. They did everything but close the game out. We came late to win it.

"We've always treated the Munster championship as im-

portant. It is important we win. It is important we perform well. If we are looking at our schedule for the next month, we have Limerick this weekend, we have Tipperary away in the All-Ireland series and Limerick at home. Saturday is a good test and good

preparation for what is coming after that."

Murray is still aggrieved at a couple of the refereeing decisions from their 2-7 to 0-10 league final defeat to Kilkenny. He refused to be drawn on Ann Downey's comments, however, that Cork had shown

the Cats a lack of respect by warming down as Kilkenny captain Meighan Farrell accepted the league cup.

"For the first goal, Denise Gaule got the ball outside the 21-yard line and didn't play the ball until she released it inside the 13-yard line. We

counted eight steps.

"The second one was the same and Gemma O'Connor was fouled beforehand. Those two decisions had a major impact on the game. The advantage rule upset me as well. There were variations of two seconds and 15 seconds. There were positives too, mind, as we did keep them scoreless for long spells."

He added: "Our main focus this year is not to go out the way we did in the All-Ireland final last year where we didn't show up and our attitude wasn't right. This year, we want our attitude right, play to our potential and wherever that takes us, it takes us. That is key for us."

Kerry edge Cork ladies in a close encounter

MUNSTER JUNIOR CAMOGIE FINAL

KERRY 0-14
CORK 1-10 (AET)

SHIRLEY MOLONEY REPORTS

PLAYER of the Match Patrice Diggin of Kerry was the match-winner at the end of a keenly-fought Munster junior camogie final at Killeedy in Limerick on Sunday.

It took extra time to separate these two sides by just the slimmest of margins on a wet and windy afternoon, with Diggin's 35m free at the death being the decisive score.

Diggin shone for Kerry throughout, scoring all but one of the Kingdom's points.

When the teams met in the Munster semi-final last year, Cork won by five points and they led by two here after 12 minutes, Christine O'Neill (two) and Aisling Wallace on target as Diggin had Kerry's sole reply.

However, just two minutes later Kerry were level after Diggin slotted over under pressure, and Aoife Behan punished a short Cork clearance to split the posts. Four Diggin frees and a fine effort from play during a

ten-minute spell between the 14th and 24th minute saw Kerry move clear before Rachel Harty responded for Cork on 28 minutes.

With the short whistle looming, Cork won a penalty when Harty was fouled in the square. O'Neill stepped up but her low drilled shot to the right was saved by Alanah Maunsell who had a fine game between the posts for Kerry. Wallace pulled one back for Cork when she pointed from a Cliona O'Callaghan pass to see the defending champions trail by three at the break.

On the resumption, Harty pointed before O'Neill slotted over a placed ball to bring Cork to within one of Kerry and then sub Michelle Browne made an instant impact when her tight angled shot dipped over the keeper and into the net to put Cork two ahead on 37.

A Diggin free kept Kerry in touch before Harty put two between the sides again with ten minutes remaining. A super Diggin point from just inside the 65 ensured that the closing minutes provided a gripping end to the contest. Two more from her put Kerry in front, but an O'Neill free deep in injury time - after Cork looked to have had

a goal just before that, only for a throw-in to be awarded - saw the sides finish level.

In the first period of extra time, Sinéad Mills pointed which proved to be Cork's final score of the day, but it was to be Kerry's day as Diggin levelled and then scored the winner.

Scorers

Kerry: P Diggin 0-13 (10f, 145), A Behan 0-1
Cork: C O'Neill 0-4 (3f, 145), R Harty 0-3, M Browne 1-0, A Wallace 0-2, S Mills 0-1
Kerry: A Maunsell, M Costello, N Leen, L Houlihan, O Young, S Murphy, E Ryall, O Dineen, P Diggin, R McCarthy, L Collins, AM Leen, A Whelan, J Horgan, A Behan. **Subs:** J Fitzell for Whelan (47), N Casey for Behan (50), S Horgan for Ryall (55).

Cork: M Hurley (Clonakilty), C O'Keeffe (St Vincent's), D Carroll (Enniskeane), E Flanagan (Aghabullogue), N Crea (St Vincent's), G O'Leary (Sliabh Rua), C Daly (Killeagh), C O'Neill (Courcey Rovers), L Cunningham (Glen Rovers), O Coughlan (Enniskeane), E Looney (Innischarra), C O'Callaghan (Newtownshandrum), A Twohill (Newtownshandrum), R Harty (Ballyhea), A Wallace (Glen Rovers).

Subs: M Browne (Mallow) for Twohill (35), S Mills (Brian Dillons) for C Daly (42), N O'Leary (Cloughduv) for O Coughlan (47), M Hyde (Glen Rovers) for Harty (69).

Referee: Philip Dee (Limerick).

WEST CHASE 2 IN A ROW!

The Inter Divisions Championship, popularly known as the Eithne Neville and named after the legendary Craugh/Kilfinny and Limerick player and coach administrator who presented the magnificent trophy to the winners, is one of the highlights of the primary schools camogie year. It is the ambition of primary school players to make their division's Eithne Neville team and all of Limerick's top players have played in the Eithne Neville down the years.

This year's Eithne Neville takes place at the Gaelic Grounds this Thursday, with the semi-finals, West v City at 3.30pm, East v South at 4.15pm, followed by the final, West won the title in 2016 courtesy of a scoring tour-de-force by captain Muirne Lane of Mountcollins National School and an excellent

team effort, but they were pushed all the way in a very competitive and exciting final by a resolute South.

This year's Eithne Neville will be most competitive. We will once again probably be favourites but on the basis of what we have seen at U14 in this year's County League and Féile there is a power shift in Limerick camogie. This is evidenced by the emergence of Monaleen and Mungret in the city, the continued improvement of Crecora and the quality of camogie being played by Blackrock/Elfin, Galbally and Ballynagar. As usual Newcastlewest backbones the West but the Magpies side has been a little wanting and they have had to give their best to Monaleen, Galbally and Crecora in recent U14 games. For these reasons it will not be a great surprise if

the West surrenders the title they regained in 2016. Whatever the outcome and whoever is crowned the Eithne Neville champions 2017, with Limerick's 80 best young camogie players in action and giving their all for their divisions, a feast of camogie is guaranteed at the Gaelic Grounds on this Thursday. Don't miss it!

The West panel is as follows:
Hannah Sweeney, Shaunt-trade School, Adare Club; Hannah Noonan, Broadford, Killeedy, Maeve Hartnett, Raheenagh, Killeedy, Lucy O'Brien, Mahoonagh, Newcastlewest, Emily Flynn, Ballingarry, Granagh/Ballingarry, Toni Smith, Abbeyfeale Girls, Tour-nafula, Grace O'Connor, Ahalin, Knockaderry, Shaun Tierney, Dromtras-na, Templeglantine, Lily Duggan, Monagea, New-

Castlewest, Ava Banyham, Monagea, Newcastlewest, Caoimhe Smith, Killoughteen, Newcastlewest, Lauren Kelly, Scoil Iosaif NS, Newcastlewest, Lauren Ambrose, Gaelscoil O Doghair, Newcastlewest, Jodi Duffy, Ahalin, Knockaderry, Ciara McAuliffe, Gaelscoil O Doghair, Newcastlewest, Tara McGowan, Scoil Iosaif, Newcastlewest, Leah Quinlan, Gaelscoil O Doghair, Newcastlewest, Isobel Brudair, Scoil Iosaif, Newcastlewest, Siobhán Cahill, Ahalin, Knockaderry, Sarah Kate O'Connor, Raheenagh, Killeedy, Eve O'Shea, Scoil Iosaif, Newcastlewest.
Management Caitrín De Bháil, Kilcolman, manager, Caitriona Casey, Killoughteen, selector, Denise Fitzgerald, Monagea, selector, Noel O'Connor, selector, Sarah Fitzgerald, Ballingarry, physio/first aid,

MUNSTER FINAL SET FOR CHARLEVILLE

For the second year in a row Limerick and Cork will meet in the Munster Senior Camogie Final, which is scheduled to take place on Saturday in Charleville at 3pm.

Limerick are bidding to become Munster champions for the first time while Cork are seeking their 60th success in the competition. The counties met in the final in Kilmallock last year and two points in the 7th and 8th minutes of time added on saw Cork scoop the title.

No two counties have met as often recently in first class competition as Limerick and Cork, who meet for the sixth time in 18

months on Saturday after three wins to two in favour of Paudie Murray's side. They met twice in the League last year, in the group phase and in a play off, and Limerick won both. Cork turned the tables in the Munster Final and again in the All-Ireland Series group phase.

Limerick and Cork have already met this year in the league semi-final after Cork topped Group 1 and Limerick were second in Group 2. In that game Cork won in Páirc Uí Rinn 3-15 to 0-12.

En route to Saturday's final, Limerick defeated Tipperary in the semi-final in the Ragg while Cork were win-

ners over Clare in Castle Road. Respective managers John Touhy, Limerick, and Paudie Murray, Cork, will see the game as ideal preparation for the forthcoming All-Ireland series and a yardstick to measure exactly where they are in their state of readiness to challenge for the game's biggest prize.

Cork will start firm favourites but Limerick showed great grit and determination in going into Tipperary's back yard for the semi-final and coming away with a win. If Touhy's girls show the same on Saturday, they will make it difficult for the League runners up.

EITHNE NEVILLE CUP TAKES CENTRE STAGE

The 2017 Allianz Eithne Neville Shield takes place this Thursday May 18th at Páirc na nGael.

"We feel it adds to the occasion for the children when the finals are played in the Gaelic Grounds," says Joe Lyons, Cathaoirleach of Allianz Cumann na mBunscoil. "The opportunity to play in the Gaelic Grounds is a dream come true for young players all over Limerick."

The Eithne Neville Shield bears the name of one of Limerick's finest camogie players who starred in the colours of both Limerick and Dublin during a long career. Eithne now resides in Rathkeale and has attended the tournament on

occasion. The tournament is contested by teams from each of the four divisions within the county. West Limerick are the holders and have by far the best record in the competition but there is good work being done in schools throughout the city and county. Limerick City will harbour ambitions of pulling off a double as the city girls won the inter-divisional football competition, the Larkin Shield, last November.

The schedule of games is as follows:
3.30 p.m. West Limerick v Limerick City
4.15 p.m. South Limerick v East Limerick
5.15 p.m. Final



Eva O'Shea and Amy Curtin who were on the Limerick under 14 ladies football panel that won the Munster Final recently.



Caoimhe Costello, Limerick, Cork captain Rena Buckley and Mairead Ryan, Limerick who are set to feature in Saturday's Munster Final in Charleville.



Munster LGFA Intermediate Championship

LIMERICK GO DOWN TO STRONG CLARE SIDE

CLARE.....7-11
LIMERICK.....2-3

Limerick and Clare met in the first round of the TG4 Munster Intermediate Championship in Fr. John Ryan Memorial Park, Kilbreedy, on Saturday.

New-look Limerick, still rebuilding after their 2016 Division 4 success, fielded

some new faces against a Clare side which recently lost to Cavan in the Division 2 league semi-final. On a wet and windy afternoon, Limerick started the brighter, taking a two point lead. Clare, playing against the wind in the first half, worked the ball up field with a short accurate passing game. Limerick made a few handling errors in defence, and this, combined with well-timed tackles, saw Clare score a few opportunistic goals. Just before the close of the half, Limerick went back down the field and finished a flowing move with a goal to stay within touching distance of Clare trailing by 1-3 to 3-2.

However, at the start of the second half, Limerick's Mairead Kavanagh was carried off the field after suffering an injury in a challenge. This limited Limerick's options for outlet balls and Clare pushed right up on the Limerick backs, putting pressure on all kick-outs and reducing the chances for Limerick to move the ball up to the forwards with tenacious tackling and interceptions. Although there were some good individual performances in the Limerick side, Clare used their experience to ease away with well taken goals and excellent point scoring from frees and

open play. Limerick finished with their only score of the second half, a goal from a penalty with the last kick of the game.

Limerick scorers: Mairead Kavanagh 1-2; Cathy Mee 1-0; Kristine Reidy 0-1.

Limerick panel: Janet Garvey (Monagea), Emma McGuire (St Ailbe's), Ingrid Laffan (St Ailbe's), Megan O'Shea (St Brigid's), Stephanie Nunan (Groody Gaels), Aine McGrath (Ballylanders), Olivia Giltenane (Mungret St. Paul's, captain), Caroline Hickey (St Ailbe's), Loretta Hanley (Feohanagh-Castlemahon), Clíodhna Ni Chellaigh (Mungret St. Paul's), Mairead Kavanagh (St Ailbe's), Cathy Mee (Ballylanders), Kristine Reidy (Feohanagh-Castlemahon), Niamh Holland (St Brigid's), Jenni O'Malley (Mungret St. Paul's), Meabh McCarthy (St Brigid's), Kate Ryan (St Ailbe's), Sarah Ryan (St Ailbe's), Shelly Walsh (Galtee Gaels), Siobhán Moloney (Oola), Ashley Creamer (St Brigid's), Cloda Kirby (Knockakeiny), Clare O'Meara (Mungret St. Paul's), Eimear Kirby (Knockakeiny), Kate Kennedy (St Brigid's), Karen Bailey (Ballylanders), Orla Moriarty (Ballylanders), Orlaith O'Donoghue (St Brigid's).

Munster Junior Camogie Final

KINGDOM CROWNED MUNSTER CHAMPIONS AFTER EDGING CORK

KERRY.....0-14
CORK.....1-10

It took extra time to separate Kerry and Cork by the slimmest of margins on a wet and windy afternoon in the Munster Junior Championship final in Páirc Íde Naofa, Raheenagh on Sunday.

It was player of the match Patrice Diggin who sealed the deal for Kerry when she made no mistake in pointing from a 35 metre free in the dying minutes of extra time. In fact, Diggin accounted for all but one of Kerry's scores and she proved to be the difference between the sides on the day.

These two teams last met in the Munster junior semi-final in 2016 and it was Cork who has a five point win over Kerry to progress to the final on that occasion. However, it was Kerry who showed their tenacity this time out to edge Cork after extra time.

Cork bolted into a three point to one lead by the 20th minute through an Aisling Wallace point and two Christine O'Neill frees either side of a Patrice Diggin placed ball just inside the 45 metre line. However, just two minutes after Kerry were level after

Diggin slotted over under pressure, and Aoife Behan punished a short Cork clearance to split the posts. Four Diggin frees and a fine effort from play during a ten minute spell between the 14th and 24th minutes saw Kerry draw level, and then open up a five point lead before Rachel Harty moved the scoreboard for Cork with a well taken effort on the 28th minute to see the Leesiders trail by four.

With the short whistle looming Cork won a penalty when Harty was fouled in the square. O'Neill stepped up but her low drilled shot to the right was saved by Alannah Maunsell who had a fine game between the posts for Kerry. Wallace pulled one back for Cork when she pointed from a Cliona O'Callaghan pass to see the defending champions trail by three at the break, Kerry 0-8, Cork 0-5. On the resumption Harty

pointed before O'Neill slotted over a placed ball to bring Cork to within one of Kerry inside five minutes of the second half. Not long after being introduced Michelle Browne made an instant impact when her tight angled shot dipped over the keeper and into the net to put Cork two ahead on 37 minutes. A Diggin free kept Kerry in touch before Harty put two between the sides again with 10 minutes remaining. A super Diggin point from just inside the 65 metre line ensured that the closing minutes provided a gripping end to the contest. A brace of Diggin frees looked like Kerry had shaded it, however, after some confusion with the officials after what appeared to be a Cork goal, the referee gave a clash ball on the 20 metre line, before a foul was committed and O'Neill pointed the resultant free deep in injury time to see the game go to extra

time Cork 1-9, Kerry 0-12. In the first period of extra time Sinead Mills pointed which proved to be Corks final score of the day. In comparison Kerry through their reliable free taker Diggin registered two placed balls in either half to be crowned Munster champions after a hard and testing battle in Killeedy GAA grounds.

Scorers: Kerry: Patrice Diggin 0-13, 10fs, 1-45; Aoife Behan 0-1.
Cork: Christine O'Neill 0-4, 3fs, 1-45; Michelle Browne 1-0; Rachel Harty 0-3; Aisling Wallace 0-2; Sinead Mills 0-1.
Kerry: Alannah Maunsell; Michelle Costello, Niamh Leen, Liz Houlahan; Orla Young, Sara Murphy, Elaine Ryall; Olivia Dineen, Patrice Diggin; Rachel McCarthy, Laura Collins, Anne Marie Leen; Alannah Whelan, Jackie Horgan, Aoife Behan.
Subs: Jessica Fitzell for Whelan (47), Norette Casey

for Behan (50), Saidhbhe Horgan for Ryall (55).
Cork: Mary Hurley Clonakilly; Courtney O'Keefe St. Vincent's, Danielle Carroll Enniskeane, Emma Flanagan Aghabullogue; Nicole Crean St. Vincent's, Gillian O'Leary Sliabh Rua, Ciara Daly Killeagh; Christine O'Neill Courcy Rovers, Lydia Cunningham Glen Rovers; Orla Coughlan Enniskeane, Erin Looney Inniscarra, Cliona O'Callaghan (Captain) Newtownshandrum; Aoife Twihill Newtownshandrum, Rachel Harty, Ballyhea, Aisling Wallace Glen Rovers.
Subs: Michelle Browne Mallow for Twihill (35), Sinead Mills Brian Dillon for Daly (42), Niamh O'Leary Cloughduv for Coughlan (47), Michaela Hyde, Glen Rovers for R. Harty (69).
Referee: Philip Dee, Limerick

History shows why Rebels rule

Cork must keep tight rein on Mulcahy

CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick



Camogie

Linda Mellerick

TOMORROW, Cork could add another senior medal to their dominance of Munster, when they take on Limerick in Charleville.

Cork have been the kingpins of the Munster title since its inception, in 1934. Mary Moran's *Munster Camogie Story*, published in 2004, traces camogie back to its origins, and its subsequent rise as one of the leading female sports in the country.

An extract reads: "One hundred years ago (1934), Irish girls lacked a game of their own. At the time, the Gaelic League flourished. The Keating branch of the Gaelic League, in Dublin, included hurling and football in its programme of activities. Lady members of the branch bemoaned that there was no Irish game available to them. The branch committee took up the challenge and set about devising a new game, based on the ancient game of hurling".

Máire Ní Chinnéide, a graduate of the Royal University, Sean Ó Ceallaigh, afterwards minister for education in the second Dáil, Tadhg O'Donoghue, Gaelic scholar, and Dublin footballer, Seamus O'Braonáin, later director of Radio Eireann, drew up a set of rules based on hurling, but modified to suit female players.

O'Donoghue, a native of Carrignavar, suggested the name 'camoguidheacht' for the new game.

It is not surprising that 20 years elapsed between the time the GAA was set up and camogie began. Sport was a man's domain and considered socially undesirable for women. The number of females with sufficient leisure time to partake in any organised sport was limited.

The admission of women to the civil service, and the increase in the number of girls enrolling in universities and colleges, provided a pool of potential players.

Many of those girls had come to Dublin from areas where the GAA was already established. On arrival in Dublin, they joined the Gaelic League and were available to play camogie, the new pastime.

The first camogie team was composed of members of the Keating branch of the Gaelic League. A second side, which played under the name Cuchullains, soon joined them. Following practice at Drumcondra Park and the Phoenix Park, the first public camogie match was staged in Navan, as a Gaelic League game, on July 19, 1904.

Within months of the first match, camogie spread from Dublin to other provinces. The girls of Cork were very receptive to the new national game and were the first Munster county to adopt it.

The first Cork Camogie club was formed in the Blarney Street area of the city, in the summer of 1905, and was named Fainne na Lae.

Tadhg Barry (author of *Hurling and*



Cork's Laura Treacy tackles Kilkenny's Danielle Morrissey in the league final recently.

Picture: INPHO/Morgan Treacy



A group of U12s pose with coaches, Christine Moynihan and Lauren Homan, at the recent St Vincent's GAA/Camogie Camp at Pairc Uinsinn.

Picture: Mike English

How to Play It) and Sean Conlon (secretary of Lee football club) introduced the players to the basics of the game.

The second Cork club, Clan na nGael, was formed in the Blackpool area.

The way was clear for Cork's first camogie match. The eagerly awaited challenge was staged at the O'Neill Crowley Grounds, at Victoria Cross. Fainne na Lea won.

The annual convention held at the Mansion House, Dublin, in May, 1912, heard that all six Munster counties were listed as active centres.

In July, 1912, the first inter-county match was played. Dublin and Louth played at St Jones Road. In the following year, Kilkenny travelled to play

Cork. The game attracted a large attendance. Cork were victorious. However, 20 years were to elapse before the inter-county championships were set up.

Camogie took a back seat for a number of years, as political considerations dominated. For a brief period in 1916, camogie matches were listed as 'illegal assemblies', along with many other types of gatherings. The resilient Munster women picked themselves up following the Civil War, and returned to the playing fields with renewed vigour.

New clubs were formed and the standard of play showed a marked improvement.

1932 was a milestone in the history of

"Cork took the Munster title every year for the first decade. They've continued to take the lion's share of Munster titles since."

our game. The All-Ireland championship was inaugurated that year and, around this time, county and inter-divisional championships were put on a regular footing.

The GAA congress of 1933 voted to set up provincial councils.

At a meeting on May 6, 1934, the Munster Council came into being. The six counties entered the Munster championship.

Cork took the Munster title every year for the first decade. They've continued to take the lion's share of Munster titles since and will be fancied to take another tomorrow. But Limerick aren't afraid of Cork and they could bring a hunger that Cork may lack.

TODAY: Munster Senior A final: Cork v Limerick, Charleville, 3pm

IT'S Munster final day today between Cork and Limerick, yet it's passing relatively under the radar such is its insignificance in the All-Ireland championship.

At least in the hurling championship, winning Munster still means something, to lose pushes you through the back door.

But in camogie, with it being a separate competition, it's basically viewed as an experimental challenge. Nice to win it but not a tear if not.

After two successive league defeats to Limerick last year Cork turned the tables in the Munster final to win 0-12 to 0-10, a 59th Munster 'A' title.

It took two points in additional time to separate the sides during a 2016 season where every meeting between the counties was tight. It was a different affair when both met in the league semi-final last month as Cork controlled the game from the outset where their 3-15 to 0-12 victory didn't do justice to their dominance.

I expect Limerick to pose a greater challenge tomorrow but they rely too much on Niamh Mulcahy. Cork will line out with an experimental side while several key players recover from injuries and others off the back of exams.

Pam Mackey remains an absentee due to a tibia break picked up in Cork's game against Kilkenny in April.

When several weeks had passed and the injury wasn't clearing something more sinister was discovered and it'll be another four weeks before Pam is back training to full capacity. Indeed, Pam started the league final only to be withdrawn in the opening quarter.

Julia White is also side-lined with a break to her ankle, the protective boot only recently removed. A positive is Maeve Cahalane is back from college in France, training with the side, and expected to line out. Libby Coppinger should get another run alongside her defensively.

Just who will take up the mantle of holding Niamh Mulcahy at centre-forward will be interesting. She requires a 'man marker'.

Hannah Looney is training well and should line out at full forward. A few high balls into her and she should cause a lot of problems. She has a great hand and great strength.

Cork must get into the habit of bringing a controlled aggressive intensity to the field. They'll need it later in the year but it isn't something that can just be switched on.

It needs to be part of their make-up everyday, increasing with every game. We've a few short weeks before the All-Ireland championship throws in.

The time for casualness is over.

MAY 2017

Kerry beat aggrieved Cork in junior final

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

Kerry	0-14
Cork	1-10
(after extra time)	

KERRY won by a point after extra-time in the Munster junior final, in Killeady, but not before what looked like a Cork goal was disallowed in the dying seconds of normal time.

Instead, Patrice Diggin, the player of the match, gave her side victory, with a pointed free in the last minutes of extra-time.

Cork led 3-1 early. Aisling Wallace scored one and Christine O'Neill scored two frees. Patrice Diggin converted a Kerry 45. Kerry then hit two in a row, via Diggin and Aoife Behan.

Four Diggin frees and one from play gave Kerry a five-point lead. Rachel Harty got one back for Cork, before she was fouled in the square. Christine O'Neill's penalty was saved by Alannah Maunsell, who was excellent in the Kerry goal. Aisling Wallace, with a point before the break, cut the deficit to three.

On the resumption, Cork showed great determination. Rachel Harty scored a point, before Christine O'Neill clipped over a free to bring Cork to within a point. And when sub Michelle Browne's shot dipped over the goal-keeper's head, Cork led.

Patrice Diggin steadied Kerry's nerves by converting a free, but Rachel Harty put two between the sides again, with 10 minutes remaining. Again, Diggin was on hand, with an excellent long-ranger and two frees. Kerry again edged in front.

Then came the drama. The ball appeared to have crossed the line, for a Cork goal, but, after some confusion, the referee gave a clash ball on the 20-metre line. Cork won a free and O'Neill took the game to extra-time.

Sinead Mills scored a point to put Cork ahead, but two Diggin frees, one in either half, were enough for Kerry to win, but not without controversy. This is Kerry's first-choice adult team. The time has now come for them to make the next step and participate at intermediate level next season, in Munster.

Scorers for Kerry: P. Diggin 0-13 (0-10 f, 0-1 45), A. Behan 0-1.

Cork: C. O'Neill 0-4 (0-3 f, 0-1 45), R. Harty 0-3, M. Browne 1-0, A. Wallace 0-2, S. Mills 0-1.

KERRY: A. Maunsell, M. Costello, N. Leen, L. Houlihan, O. Young, S. Murphy, E. Ryall, O. Dineen, P. Diggin, R. McCarthy, L. Collins, A.M. Leen, A. Whelan, J. Horgan, A. Behan.

Subs: J. Fitzell for A. Whelan (47), N. Casey for A. Behan (50), S. Horgan for E. Ryall (55).

CORK: M. Hurley, C. O'Keefe, D. Carroll, E. Flanagan, N. Crean, G. O'Leary, C. Daly, C. O'Neill, L. Cunningham, O. Coughlan, E. Looney, C. O'Callaghan.

(c): A. Twohill, R. Harty, Aisling Wallace.

Subs: M. Browne for A. Twohill (35), S. Mills for C. Daly (42), N. O'Leary for O. Coughlan (47), M. Hyde for R. Harty (69).

Referee: Philip Dee, Limerick.



The Cobh junior camogie team, pictured under a clear blue sky before a recent game played in great conditions.

Newtown aiming for a good return

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

THE intermediate championship has just five teams and will be played on a round-robin with four emerging to play in the semi-final.

As the intermediate grade has just five teams they participated in the Senior B league with the two teams who won the most games going forward to contest the Intermediate League final.

This exercise proved a good one for the intermediate clubs as it gave them good hard league games against strong opposition.

Indeed Newtown were a club who performed exceptionally well recording some excellent victories over higher graded clubs such as Newtownshandrum and Kilbrittain/Timo-

league. Newtown and Enniskeane are the two that made it to the intermediate league final and both will be determined to lay down a marker in advance of their championship clash.

Last year's junior A county champions Newtownshandrum make a return to the intermediate grade after a short sojourn at junior A level and they will be hoping to make their mark on a grade where they previously excelled.

Enniskeane have battled over the years to take the title and having lost

out in last year's final to Blackrock. They will be focused on going one better this year they will be hoping the experienced gained during the league will help in their quest for the championship crown.

Newtown are going this year and now in their second season down at intermediate level they will be hoping to make their mark and book a return to the senior B grade for themselves, it was a big decision to take the step down in 2016 but hopes are high in the club for a return sooner rather than later.

Tracton and Sliabh Rua always battle to the finish and they will be two clubs who will be hoping to emerge from what is a very small grade with just five clubs battling for the title.

Tracton reached the final a few years ago only to lose out.

Sliabh Rua, since promotion from junior three-years ago, are working hard and adjusting well to the higher grade.

It is a pity that the intermediate grade is not more competitive as in years gone by it was one of the county's strongest grades.

Maybe the time had come for a complete overhaul to strengthen it but that's for another day as the immediate focus is on championship and despite it being a small group the determination to take the title will be there.

The intermediate teams are Newtown, Enniskeane, Tracton, Sliabh Rua, and Newtownshandrum.

It could be an all-Rovers final in the senior decider

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

HAVING battled through their league campaigns, thoughts are now turning to semi-finals at adult level where the pairings and dates have been decided.

At senior level Glen Rovers and Sarsfields will battle it out on Monday as will Courcy Rovers and St Catherine's with the final fixed for Friday next, May 26.

In Senior B there are two quarter-finals to be decided this evening. Kilbrittain/Timoleague meet Fr O'Neill's and Eire Og meet Barryroe in Ovens both at 7pm. Brian Dillon's will meet the winners of the Kilbrittain/Fr O'Neill's semi on Saturday, May 27. Blackrock will meet Eire Og or Kilbrittain/Timoleague on Friday 26th.

Enniskeane and Newtown are through to the intermediate final which will be played on Sunday,

May 28 at 12pm.

The Junior A semi-finals are down for decision this weekend with Banteer meeting Na Piarasigh in Ballyanley at 6.45pm today while tomorrow in Castle Road at 11am St Vincent's meet Watergrass-hill.

In Junior B the semi-finalists are Charleville, who will meet Cobh, and Castlelyons, who will meet Sarsfields. There were no dates set for these at the time of going to print.

In minor A Ballygarvan are through to the final following their one goal victory over Carrigaline.

The meeting between Glen Rovers and Newces-

town was postponed on Wednesday last due to a bereavement in Glen Rovers and has been re-fixed for Wednesday next in Castle Road at 7.15pm.

The Minor B semi-final between Charleville and Eire Og went to extra time in before Eire Og emerged as winners. On the other side Aghabullogue awaiting the winners of the Cloughduv and Na Piar-saigh quarter-final clash.

The Minor C quarter-finals have paired Blarney against St Colum's or Tracton, with Ballinora meeting the winners in the semi-final. Barryroe meet Fr O'Neill's with Ballinascarthy playing the winners in the second semi.

In Minor D the semi-final pairings are Castlemartyr versus Dungourney and Banteer will take on Rockbá.

It promises to be an action-packed few weeks.



The Cork team prior to the Munster Camogie Junior Final fixture at Killeedy GAA grounds last Sunday.

Goal is decisive in Munster final



Camogie

Linda Mellerick

Limerick 1-13
Cork 0-14

A FIRST-MINUTE Caoimhe Costelloe goal proved the decisive factor in this Munster championship final in Charleville on Saturday as Limerick took their first ever Senior title.

You must congratulate Limerick on a great victory, one that they deserve for the strides they've made at underage and at adult grades over the past several years. From a Cork perspective, you would have to be concerned.

This was a worrying defeat for Cork a few weeks ahead of the All-Ireland championship. Cork are struggling in a number of positions, their first touch again letting them down.

A player's first touch improves significantly with a desire to win possession and Cork don't have it.

Yes, the Munster championship is a competition that means a lot more to Limerick than it does to Cork but this isn't an isolated performance.

Kilkenny wanted the league final more and we paid the price there too.

I mentioned previously that desire needs to be in your DNA. You can't switch it on and off.

Aggression and passion needs to be part of every player's make up, it comes from within.

Management undoubtedly play a role but they can only do so much. This topic has been spoken about repeatedly in the dressing room by all involved. But the talking isn't changing anything. Leadership needs to come from the older players with the mantra filtering down to the younger members. But it's lacking.

When Cork turn it on they are very impressive. A seven-minute spell in the first half was top drawer hurling. Cork were fast, direct and picked off six points; Orla Cotter (3), Gemma O'Connor (2), Lauren Homan and Ka-



Cork's Gemma O'Connor and Judith Mulcahy in action during the Camogie Munster Senior Championship Finals in Charleville.

Picture: Liam Burke/Press 22

trina Mackey. But seven minutes won't win you a title. They led by 0-8 to 1-3 and slipped back to trail at half time 1-10 to 0-8. Cork's last score coming in the 12th minute. As predicted Niamh Mulcahy was again Cork's tormentor in chief.

She may not have scored from play but gave a masterful display of free taking from every angle, finishing with 11 points. Referee John Dolan was overly fussy and impacted a free-flowing game but he was fussy on both sides. Scores were scarce in second half. Cork conceded just 1-2 from play during the 60 minutes but only scored eight points from play and didn't at all threaten for a goal.

Orla Cotter and Laura Treacy, one of Cork's better players on the day, struck over points with Mulcahy replying. Then both sides traded points, Orla Cotter striking two in between two Mulcahy points on the 51st and

54th minutes to leave four between the sides. Time was running out, Cork rallied and made a few changes, one being the move of Gemma O'Connor to full forward as they searched for a goal. Treacy and Cotter added two more to leave the score 1-12 to 0-12 on sixty minutes. Cork tried to get a levelling score but Limerick hung on, eventually winning by two points.

With five changes to their selected team Cork will certainly be looking to considerably improve.

Julia White and Pam Mackey are two experienced players, out with injury, which were a loss, but Cork should still be getting the better of Limerick if they hope to reclaim the All-Ireland title. Cork need to win mid-field, which is hit and miss at present, and their scoring return is a concern.

Manager Paudie Murray was understandably disappointed and frustrated after the game. "There's no desire in

our game at the moment. We didn't match Limerick's intensity. No matter what hurling you have if you don't have that you're going nowhere. We were beaten for possession. Our turnover count in the first half was very low. We've a lot of work to do but look we've been here before and gathered ourselves," Murray said.

Scorers for Cork: O Cotter 0-7 (0-6), G O'Connor 0-2, L Treacy 0-2, A O'Connor, K Mackey, L Homan 0-1 each.

Limerick: N Mulcahy 0-11 (7), C Costelloe 1-1, C Lane 0-1.

CORK: A Murray, L Treacy, R Buckley, M Cahalane, E O'Sullivan, L Coppinger, C Sigerson, A Thompson, O Cotter, G O'Connor, O Cronin, A O'Connor, K Mackey, H Looney, L Homan.

Subs: M McCarthy for K Mackey (48), N McCarthy for E O'Sullivan (54).

LIMERICK: L O'Neill, F Hickey, M Creamer, S McNamara, J Mulcahy, S Carey, M Quaid, K O'Leary, C Costelloe, D Murphy, R Delee, N Mulcahy, D Egan, C Lane, C Lyons.

Subs: M Fitzgerald for D Egan (50), L Leonard for C Lane (59).

Referee: John Dolan - Clare



Action from the Camogie Munster Senior Championship Finals in Charleville between Cork and Limerick.

Picture: Liam Burke/Press 22



Limerick captain Niamh Mulcahy and Eimear O'Sullivan in action during the Camogie Munster Senior Championship Finals.

Picture: Liam Burke/Press 22

Mulcahy shines as Limerick win first provincial title

Limerick 1-13
Cork 0-14

Joel Slattery
Charleville

Munster senior camogie final

Niamh Mulcahy inspired Limerick to a first Munster senior camogie championship title with victory over Cork — who were chasing a 60th

provincial crown — in Charleville on Saturday.

Mulcahy hit 11 points for the victors with manager John Tuohy heaping praise on her efforts at the final whistle.

"It just shows the measure of the player, the person and the character that Niamh has. She got player of the game — it was long overdue. Niamh has been a stalwart of Limerick camogie for many, many years."

He added: "Camogie in Limerick is on the rise and this

group is a super, super team. I hope there's more to come from them. We fought and fought and that is the passion of this Limerick team."

Limerick led 1-10 to 0-8 at the interval after an explosive start, with the Shannonsiders goaling inside the first minute. A Caoimhe Costelloe run split the Cork defence before Caoimhe Lyons blasted the ball into the top corner of the net.

Cork then found their

rhythm and, inspired by Gemma O'Connor and Orla Cotter, they raced 0-8 to 1-3 ahead after 12 minutes.

Limerick then took command — hitting seven in a row before the interval.

Mulcahy hit six points in a row (all frees) before Caoimhe Lyons' injury time point had them five clear at the break.

Placed balls dominated the second period with all three of Limerick's points coming from Mulcahy frees.

Cotter led the charge for

Cork who couldn't find that crucial goal meaning that Limerick came away with a first ever provincial title success at senior level.

Cork boss Paudie Murray was gracious in defeat. "The team that wants it most wins and looking at it today, Limerick wanted it that much more, said Murphy. "It was their All-Ireland final and we should have matched them in that department."

Scorers for Limerick: N Mulcahy 0-11

(0-11); C Lyons (1-1); C Lane 0-1.

Scorers for Cork: O Cotter 0-7 (0-6), G O'Connor 0-2 each, L Homan, K Mackey, A O'Connor 0-1 each.

LIMERICK: L O'Neill, F Hickey, M Creamer, S McNamara, J Mulcahy, S Carey, M Quaid, K O'Leary, C Costelloe, D Murphy, R Delee, N Mulcahy, D Egan, C Lane, C Lyons.

Subs: M Fitzgerald for D Egan (50).

CORK: A Murray, L Treacy, R Buckley, M Cahalane, E O'Sullivan, L Coppinger, C Sigerson, O Cotter, A Thompson, G O'Connor, O Cronin, A O'Connor, K Mackey, H Looney, L Homan.

Subs: M McCarthy for K Mackey (48), N McCarthy for E O'Sullivan (54).

Referee: J Dolan (Clare)



CAMOGIE

Junior Interprovincials semi-finals:
Munster 3-11 Ulster 1-18, Connacht
0-7 Leinster 1-19;
Final: Ulster 3-13 Leinster 2-7.

SPARKLING PERFORMANCE:
Limerick players celebrate after
beating Cork to win their first
ever Munster camogie senior
championship final in Charleville.
Picture: Liam Burke

Ulster win Junior Interprovincial title

By Camogie Press
Posted 21/05/2017



TWO goals at either end of the interval by Ciara Donnelly, allied with eight points from the magnificent Niamh Mallon gave Ulster a 3-11 to 2-7 victory over a gutsy Leinster in the Junior Interprovincial Camogie Final at the National Sports Campus in Abbotstown.

Donnelly struck in the 28th minute and again, three minutes after the resumption to give Seán Paul McKillop's girls a valuable cushion and though Leinster tried all they could to reduce the deficit, they were unable to bridge the gap.

There wasn't much between the sides initially and Leinster actually made the better start, thanks to points from leading scorer Aoife Bugler, who finished with five points, and Dinah Loughlin.

Five points from player of the match Mallon and a brace from Niamh McNulty pushed Ulster ahead though and Donnelly's first goal made it 1-9 to 0-4 at half time.

Donnelly's second goal sent Ulster on their way but Leinster would not yield easily, as Bugler responded with three points in a row from Bugler.

The magnificent Mallon landed another brace but when Pamela Grenville goalied, the margin was down to seven with 17 minutes remaining.

Ulster's response was immediate though, Caoimhe Rafferty breaching the Leinster defences once more with a goal at the three quarter mark to remove any doubt about the result.

Patsy Hetherington's crew continued to fight and Deirbhle Byrne managed a late goal but there was no way back.

Ulster reached the final by beating Munster in a cracker, 1-18 to 3-11, while Leinster recorded a thumping win over Connacht in the other semi-final by 1-13 to 0-7.

Courcey Rovers edge it to win first senior title

Courcey Rovers 1-11

Glen Rovers 1-10

Camogie

Courcey Rovers claimed their first Senior title at Castle Road last night.

Glen Rovers pushed them all the way but were denied an equaliser with one minute remaining, when Katie Walsh's shot came off the upright. Shortly after that Lydia Cunningham was denied by a great Sínead O'Reilly save.

Glen Rovers got off to a dream start when they were awarded a penalty in the opening minute and Denise Luby rattled the Courcey net. Aisling Wallace pointed to put the Glen four clear before Courceys responded with a Jacinta Crowley 45-metre free.

On the quarter mark the Glen were in control and were 1-02 to a point up. Courceys responded and points by Crowley from placed balls either side of a Nicole O'Brien point saw the sides 1-03 to 0-03 before Collins equalised when she was on hand to bat to the back of the net.

A brace of Courcey points before O'Brien pulled one back for the Glen left it 1-05 to 1-04 at the half way mark.

Courceys had points from Crowley in the second half and a fine effort from Ashling Moloney. Glen Rovers looked to Aisling Wallace, Michaela Hyde, O'Brien and Callanan with 1 minute remaining. When Saoirse McCarthy was brought down the free was slotted by Crowley.

COURCEY ROVERS: S. O'Reilly, E. O'Regan, K. Keohane, G. Hannan, C. Hayes, A. Moloney (capt.), O. Twomey, J. Crowley, R. Crowley, S. McCarthy, C. O'Neill, Eimear O'Reilly, L. Collins, S. Hayes, Eimear O'Reilly.

Sub: A. O'Reilly for E. O'Reilly (48)

GLEN ROVERS: D. Luby, K. Buckley, K. Fahvey, N. Gowan, K. O'Connell, L. O'Sullivan (capt.), S. Fahy, L. Callanan, L. Cunningham, K. Walsh, M. Hyde, N. O'Brien, A. Wallace, B. Hackett, E. Murphy.

Subs: S. Brickley for B. Hackett (HT)
Scorers: Courcey Rovers: L. Collins 1-01, J. Crowley 0-06 (0-04), 0-0245).

Referee: Walter Cole (Buttvant)

MAY 2017



right: Anthony MacSweeney of Sunday's Well chats to Clondrohid captain Roisin Murphy

Local Meanus girls who were members of the victorious Limerick Camogie team who defeated Cork in the Munster Final: Lorraine McCarthy, Niamh Ryan and Marion Quaid



Historic Munster camogie final win

LIMERICK 1-13
CORK 0-14

By JOEL SLATTERY
e-mail: sport@limerickleader.ie
Twitter: @LmkLeaderSport

LIMERICK created history on Saturday as the senior camogie side won the Munster Championship for the first time – seeing out a tense two-point victory over defending champions, Cork.

It was the shooting of Niamh Mulcahy that inspired Limerick to victory, scoring an incredible 0-11 as her side emerged stopped a Cork side looking for an incredible 60th provincial title at senior level.

Under the cosh late on, Limerick didn't play like a team with the burden of history on their shoulders as they saw out the narrow victory.

With fresh memories of last year's final, where Cork scored two injury time points to come away with a narrow win, Limerick never lost the lead in the second half after a burst of seven consecutive scores in the first half saw them take the lead into the interval.

Limerick led 1-10 to 0-8 at the break after an explosive start, where the Shannonsiders got their goal inside the first minute.

A soaring run by Caoimhe Costelloe split the Cork defence before she laid the ball

off to Cliona Lane who then found Caoimhe Lyons with a hand-pass and the Monaleen player blasted the ball into the top corner of the net.

Despite the slow start, Cork weren't long finding their rhythm and, inspired by Gemma O'Connor and Orla Cotter they found themselves 0-8 to 1-3 ahead after 12 minutes.

In this first quarter burst of scores, the Rebelettes also had points from Amy O'Connor, Lauren Homan and the ever-dangerous Katrina Mackey.

The 2015 All-Ireland champions looked the better side at this stage, but Limerick kept fighting back, winning the midfield battle.

John Tuohy's side then retook the ascendancy hitting seven in a row before half time.

Mulcahy hit six points in a row (all frees) before Caoimhe Lyons' injury time point



Niamh Mulcahy lifts the trophy

Celebration time for Limerick camogie after their two point win over Cork in the Munster Senior Championship final in Charleville

meant that Tuohy's side led by five at the break.

Placed balls dominated the second period with all three of Limerick's points coming from Mulcahy frees.

As the tension rose after the interval, Orla Cotter and Mulcahy traded frees as the sides only scored one point each in the third quarter of the final.

Cork then moved Laura Treacy up to the forward line where she scored two points from play – the only scores from open play in the second half.

However, Cork were unable to get the crucial goal they so desperately needed. After a 12-point reversal in the National League semi-final just last month, Limerick were able to put that loss to one side as they emerged with the victory, and a first ever provincial title at senior level.

The sides will meet again next month, this time in the All-Ireland Championship where the pair are grouped with Offaly, Wexford and Tipperary.

SCORERS: Limerick: Niamh Mulcahy 0-11 (0-11); Caoimhe Lyons 1-1; Cliona Lane 0-1. Cork: Orla Cotter 0-7 (0-6F); Gemma

O'Connor, Laura Treacy 0-2 each; Lauren Homan, Katrina Mackey, Amy O'Connor 0-1 each.

LIMERICK: Laura O'Neill; Fiona Hickey, Muireann Creamer, Sinead McNamara; Judith Mulcahy, Sarah Carey, Marian Quaid; Karen O'Leary, Caoimhe Costelloe; Deborah Murphy, Rebecca Delee, Niamh Mulcahy; Dearbhla Egan, Cliona Lane, Caoimhe Lyons. **Subs:** Mairead Fitzgerald for Dearbhla Egan (50mins); Lisa Leonard

(Cappamore) for Cliona Lane (50mins). **CORK:** Aoife Murray, Laura Treacy, Rera Buckley, Meadh Cahalane; Eimear O'Sullivan, Libby Coppinger, Chloe Sigmerson; Orla Cotter, Aisling Thompson; Gemma O'Connor, Orla Cronin, Amy O'Connor; Katrina Mackey, Hannah Looney, Lauren Homan. **Subs:** Maeve McCarthy for Katrina Mackey (48mins); Niamh McCarthy for Eimear O'Sullivan (54mins). **REFEREE:** John Dolan (Clare).



Limerick's victorious panel pictured with the provincial trophy

Tuohy praise for captain fantastic Mulcahy after Munster final win over Cork

By JOEL SLATTERY
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LIMERICK camogie manager John Tuohy was full of praise for Niamh Mulcahy after Limerick won a first ever Munster Senior Camogie Championship with a two-point win over Cork.

The Rebelettes came into the game, played in

Charleville, looking for a remarkable 60th provincial title but, thanks to the unerring accuracy from Mulcahy's frees, 0-11 in all, Limerick came out on top.

"It just shows the measure of the player, the person and the character that Niamh has," an emotional Tuohy said after the game.

"She got player of the game today, it was long overdue.

Niamh has been a stalwart of Limerick camogie for many, many years."

Limerick have been an improving team over the last couple of years, but now they have silverware at senior level to show for their efforts.

"Camogie in Limerick is on the rise and this team is a super, super team, I hope there's more to come with this team," Tuohy said.

"We fought and fought and fought and that is the passion of this Limerick team. I told them at half time it was in their own hands to win this game and they certainly came good in the second half, they battled very hard, against a very, very good Cork team."

Beating the 2015 All-Ireland champions away from home added to the scope of the historic victory.

"You don't come down and beat Cork in Cork easily, no-one hands anything to you. Cork were really up for this game."

"We got a goal early on and that settles us a small bit. We lost our way for a bit in the first half and came back before the end of the half and really fought really well."

Limerick lost last year's Munster final after con-

ceding two points deep into injury time, but that controversial defeat in Kilmallock, didn't play a part of John Tuohy's preparation.

"It's just nice to win a Munster title, I don't care who we beat as long as you win a Munster title and bring the cup home to Limerick," said the Limerick senior camogie manager after the historic victory.

Courceys power into league final

CORK CAMOGIE LEAGUE

BY SHIRLEY MOLONEY

COURCEY Rovers powered past St Catherines on Monday night to qualify for the Cork camogie senior league final.

Courceys won this semi-final, 3-16 to 1-15, at Castle Road and now go forward to the senior league decider against Glen Rovers this Friday, May 26th, in Castle Road at 7.30pm.

Early points from Eimear O'Reilly and Jacinta Crowley got Courceys off the mark before Orla Cotter replied for Catherines. Linda Collins split the posts for Courceys before three unanswered St Catherines points put them one ahead after 13 minutes.

Back came Courceys and points from Christine O'Neill (2) and Saoirse McCarthy saw them move two in front - but back came Catherines with scores from Finola Neville, two Cotter frees and Michelle Tobin and they now led by two points.

Courceys' response was quick, as Crowley scored a free before Linda Collins pounced to score a goal after the sliotar came back off the upright.

The teams traded more scores before the break with Courceys in front, 1-9 to 0-10, at half time.

Sara Hayes was quick off the mark to open the second half scoring for Courceys before a Catherines' brace from Joanne O'Keeffe and Evelyn Ronayne brought them to within a point. Ronayne then goaled



Battle for the ball: Courcey Rovers and St Catherine's players compete for possession during Tuesday night's senior league semi-final. (Photo: Trevor Prachett)

as Catherines hit the front after 42 minutes - but the lead was shortlived as Hayes responded for Courceys when her deftly-struck ground shot gave O'Regan no chance in the Saints goal.

A brace of points followed from Collins and Crowley to see Courceys four to the good heading in to the last quarter.

Catherines rallied again as the teams traded points, and with four minutes left, Courceys sealed their victory with a second well-taken Sara Hayes goal after Linda Collins set her up with a great pass.

Scorers

Courcey Rovers: S Hayes 2-1, L Collins 1-4, J Crowley 0-7 (5f), C

O'Neill 0-2, Eimear O'Reilly, S McCarthy 0-1 each.

St Catherine's: O Cotter 0-8 (5f), E Ronayne 1-1, M Tobin, L Hayes 0-2 each, F Neville, J O'Keeffe 0-1 each.

Courcey Rovers: S O'Reilly, E O'Regan, K Keohane, G Hannon, C Hayes, A Moloney (captain), O Twomey, J Crowley, R Crowley, S McCarthy, L Collins, C O'Neill, Elaine O'Reilly, S Hayes, Eimear O'Reilly. Sub: A O'Reilly for Elaine O'Reilly

(60).

St Catherine's: A O'Regan, AM Rohan, M Walsh, Y O'Neill (captain), E O'Keeffe, F Neville, L Hayes, O Neville, M O'Keeffe, M Tobin, O Cotter, C Condon, A Fitzgerald, E Ronayne, M Rohan.

Subs: A Hurley for C Condon (ht), J O'Keeffe for M Rohan (ht), E O'Brien for O Neville (47), L O'Donnell for A Fitzgerald (47).

Referee: Cathal Egan (Glen Rovers).

MUNSTER CAMOGIE FINAL

LIMERICK 1-13
CORK 0-14

BY SHIRLEY MOLONEY

AN 11-point haul from Niamh Mulcahy was central to Limerick winning a first-ever Munster senior camogie title as Cork were dethroned at Charleville on Saturday afternoon.

Having fallen behind to a first-minute goal from Caoimhe Lyons, Cork came back to lead during the first half but trailed by 1-10 to 0-8 at half-time and that gap proved too large for the Rebels to bridge.

While there were aspects of Cork's performance pleasing to manager Paudie Murray, he makes no bones about the need to improve before the start of the All-Ireland championship against Tipperary in two weeks' time.

'It's certainly not great preparation, from our point of view,' he says.

'There was one stage where we rattled off eight points without reply, and it was play as good as any in my six years involved. The frustrating thing is to go from that to some bad stuff was upsetting.'

'The ref didn't help, there were 40 frees given, which must be some kind of record. The ball was only in play for 26 minutes, but the Munster championship tends to be like that, last year's final where we beat Limerick was similar.'

While Cork's Amy O'Connor responded to Lyons' early goal, Mulcahy scored the first of her frees from 40 metres and Fiona Lane had them four before a Cork revival.



Work to do: Cork manager Paudie Murray admits the Rebels have plenty to work on following their Munster final loss to Limerick last weekend. (Photo: Tom Russell)

Orla Cronin set up Gemma O'Connor while Orla Cotter opened her account and Gemma O'Connor and Lauren Homan had Cork level by the 10-minute mark.

Cotter and Katrina Mackey put them in front but Limerick came again. Mulcahy remained flawless from dead ball and shortly before half-time Lyons had what would prove to be Limerick's last score from play to leave them ahead by five at the break.

The second half as a contest wasn't to prove as lively. It took eight minutes of play in

the second half before a score was registered through a Cotter 35-metre free. Cork did show signs of rising to the challenge, outscoring Limerick 0-6 to 0-3 in the second half, however, Limerick showed great resolve and weathered the Cork attack. Laura Treacy slotted over after a quick Cotter free picked her out to bring Cork to within three with 15 minutes remaining, but the closest they would come was two points as Limerick held out.

'We're certainly not complacent ahead of the championship,' Murray says.

'I've analysed the game a lot since Saturday and some of the attacking things we did were very good, defensively we weren't so good. You can't concede 11 scoreable frees, even if some of them were questionable.'

'What is worrying is the lack of workrate, desire and emotion in our play to date. We have to get going again as quickly as possible, we have a long road to go.'

Scorers

Limerick: N Mulcahy 0-11f, C Lyons 1-1, C Lane 0-1.

Cork: O Cotter 0-7 (6f), G O'Connor 0-2, L Treacy 0-2, A O'Connor, K Mackey 0-1.

Cork: A Murray, L Treacy, R Buckley, M Cahalane, E O'Sullivan, L Coppinger, C Sigerson, A Thompson, O Cotter, G O'Connor, O Cronin, A O'Connor, K Mackey, H Looney, L Homan. Sub: M McCarthy for Mackey (49), N McCarthy for O'Sullivan (54).

Limerick: L O'Neill, F Hickey, M Creamer, S McNamara, J Mulcahy, S Carey, M Quaid, K O'Leary, C Costelloe, D Murphy, R Deane, N Mulcahy, D Egan, C Lane, C Lyons. Sub: M Fitzgerald for Egan (50), L Leonard for C Lane (59). Referee: J Dolan (Cire).

O'Connor wins award for Cork

CORK camogie star Amy O'Connor has been named the first Littlewoods Ireland Style of Play Overall Winner.

O'Connor won a public vote (which was held on Littlewoods Ireland Facebook page) that picked the winner of this competition and that recognised her impressive solo run against Tipperary during the Rebel's league campaign.

She was presented with the award at the inaugural Camogie Association Player of the League Awards held in Croke Park last Friday.