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Evening Echo

# Cork Sports World

## Rena has eyes on lifting cup

Cork primed for Croke  
Park battles: P8-16



Cork camogie captain Renan Buckley with the O'Duffy Cup, which she will hope to get her hands on when the Rebels face Kilkenny in Sunday's All-Ireland Senior Camogie final at Croke Park.  
Picture: INPHO/James Crombie



# Hunger the key to rebel success

Meath manager relishing Cork clash

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman



Camogie

Linda Mellerick

**CONOR Phelan, coach to the senior Kilkenny camogie team, is widely respected within the game, primarily for guiding Waterford IT to six Ashbourne cup titles in seven years, 2009-2015.**

He became involved with Kilkenny in 2016. Catching up with him the week before the All-Ireland Camogie final he wasn't going to give too much away to a Cork woman but he was friendly and chatty and gave an insight into how things are in the Kilkenny camp and his respect for Cork camogie.

"I think there's a good sense of rivalry between us over the years, in the sense that Cork have been the kingpins, and been ambassadors for camogie for a long time — in sport in general when you look at the ladies footballers as well and a lot of them have played both codes.

"I think Cork have been huge ambassadors for Gaelic Games and I suppose our girls are just trying to get to that standard and be competitive as much as they can, and if the results come, then brilliant.

Last season's right half-back, Claire Phelan (no relation), missed Kilkenny's semi-final win over Dublin with a hamstring strain picked up in a club game. Conor provided an update on the status of that injury.

"There's still a niggle on it. With a hamstring, it's hard to know. Claire is training but not overly so, to give her every chance of recovery."

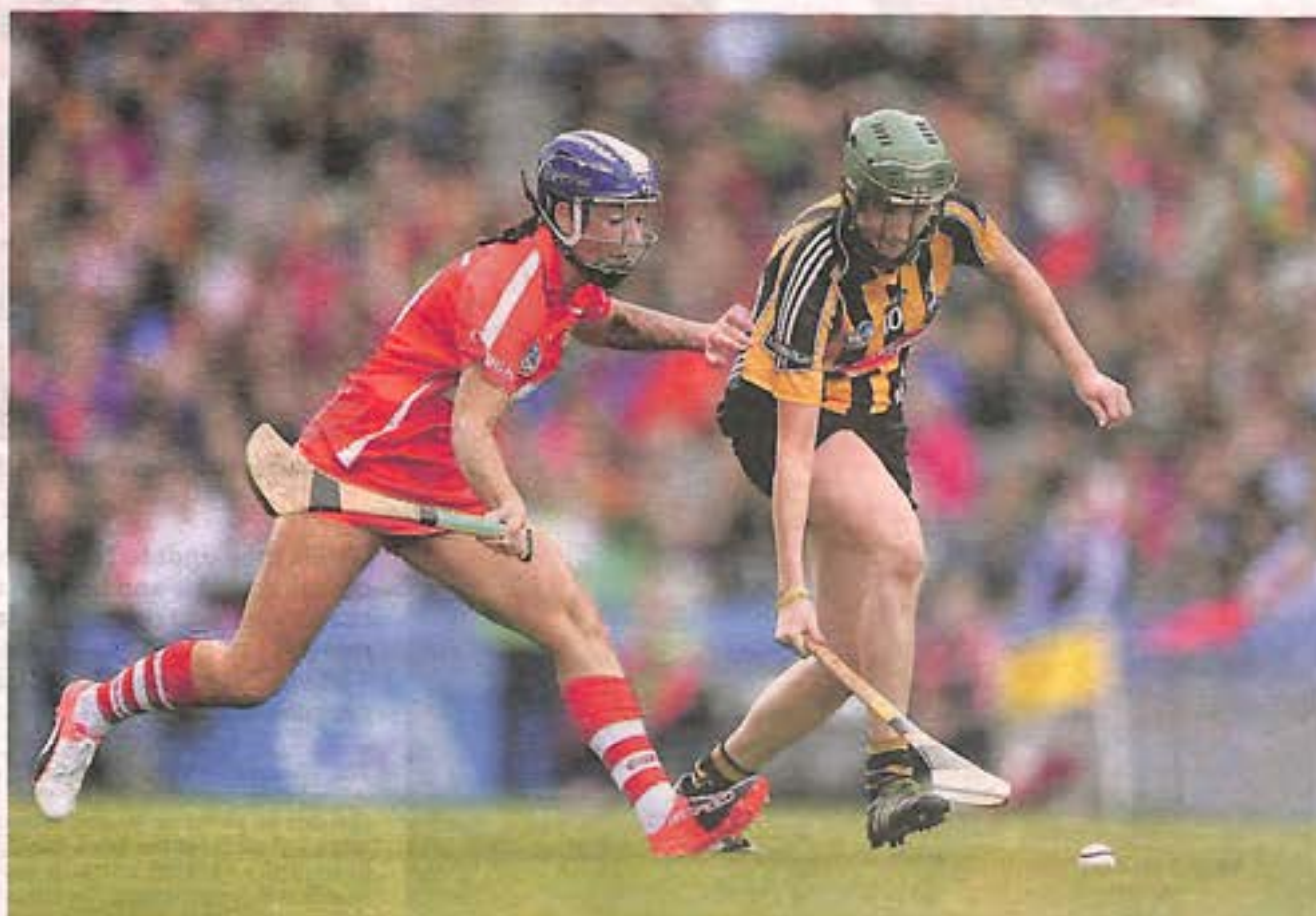
The experienced Collette Dormer, left corner-back in 2016 was an able replacement in the semi-final and that is a testament to the strength in depth that Kilkenny have in their squad.

"Yeah, having a strong panel is good and competition for places is key in any competitive environment. Collette has come in and done well, Ashling Dunphy has come in and done well. There's a couple of other younger girls who have come in and are performing well at training so it gives us options."

It's a different run in for Kilkenny this year. How will it play out with them now going into the game as All-Ireland champions and back-to-back National League champions. Cork are surely going to be the hungrier this year?

"I think it's natural enough when you're competitive, even if you were playing five-a-side soccer, that if you lose on a Saturday you want to go out the following week and win. But it's a valid point because the key for us is to keep it fresh and have an environment where the girls can express themselves; to have a competitiveness in training in trying to get on the squad first, then the team.

"I think we've about six girls which are new on the panel this year. A couple of experienced players that took a year out and have come back in (Catherine Foley, Jenny Reddy), another couple of girls have come in from last year's Intermediates and others



Denise Gaule of Kilkenny in action against Ashling Thompson of Cork at Croke Park. The rematch between the Rebels and Cats is this Sunday.

Pictures: Piaras Ó Midheach/Sportsfile



Cork players looking dejected after last year's loss to Kilkenny.

have come straight in and they've all added something different, whether it's in training or in the dressing room, they've added that atmosphere.

"So, we're creating that bit of hunger there. Like any squad you're going to pick up injuries and it's trying to have girls there that will be used to playing at those levels. We tried to give girls as much of a run in the Leinster Championship and the league to get them up to the standard of playing the likes of Cork and Galway.

"You can't just expect to throw them in on the big day and expect them to perform."

Obviously, the injury to Gemma O'Connor was a topic of discussion and Conor was honourable in his response.

"You want the best players on the field and you wouldn't wish that on any player, especially a player of Gemma's calibre. We would certainly want Gemma playing."

Trying to determine where the game will be won and lost, Conor, as ex-

pected, gave a general overview.

"I think they are two well-balanced teams. There's been little between them in league and championship form.

"Whoever gets a good start. We've got good starts before though. Three years ago, we were nine points up against Cork and ended up losing by five or six so it's trying to be consistent and be competitive all over the field.

"You look at Cork the last day, they seemed to be motoring well, hurling wise as well as physically, so it's trying to match them there and then trying to get a break or two. It's hard to call.

"The Cork squad has huge experience on and off the field, mixed in with youth and Kilkenny are the same way. I was impressed with Galway all year and then Cork dismantled them with ease in the first half of their semi-final. I was impressed with that."

In the short space of 12 months, an intense rivalry seems to have been born between both counties. Conor

**"A lot of the girls would know each other from college which adds a bit of competitiveness"**

feels though that it is the media that has created that more so than the teams themselves.

"A lot of the girls would know each other from college which adds a bit of competitiveness to it. But nastiness? No."

The 'handshake' from the 2016 final and the criticism that Cork took after they gathered in a private huddle while Kilkenny were being presented with the league cup are the two focal points.

"I think 100% the media have highlighted and blown this up, it's a media thing, something to write about. None of us would have even realised that (what went on). It was just afterwards when the media started blowing it up it took on legs of its own."

So, all is good in the Kilkenny camp? "Yes, we've a couple of niggles but other than that all is good. We just need to get them in the frame of mind where they'll perform and hopefully it'll be a good battle."

DESPITE being in his 10th year in the job Meath manager John Davis is still enjoying the role and is looking forward to his side's meeting Cork on Sunday in the Liberty Insurance Intermediate final.

"They are a great group to be involved with and they make the job easy, we have had a great year to date and Sunday will tell a lot. Cork are a fine side. They won the national league and were impressive and they will be hard to beat."

Davis feels the experience gained by Cork in last year's final will be something that they will have over his side.

"Most of the Cork girls were there last year and they will still be hurting having lost in a game they should have won. I was at that game and they were by far the better team but they left it behind them."

Davis and most of his side are no strangers either to Croke Park, having won the Junior title in 2008 they were promoted to premier junior. On a memorable day for the county, they became the first Meath camogie team to capture a title in Croke Park with John at the helm.

"A lot of the girls from 2012 are still involved and would have played in Croke Park on that day but we have a few new faces in as well."

Meath took the decision to play in the Division 1 National league this year and it is something that has helped them with their preparations for championship.

"I suppose it was bold decision but one we felt would stand to us as a team, we got some excellent games against quality opposition and, whilst we didn't set the league alight, we were very happy with our performances."

Good performances were key to his side topping the group in championship but having drawn two games John feels there were times when they needed to be better.

"In our last few games we didn't really play to our full potential. We played for 15 minutes and then were inclined to switch off, we were then waiting for something to happen and trying to get ourselves back into the game. If we allow that to happen on Sunday against Cork we will be in trouble."

The main worry in the week leading up to Sunday has been dual players and whilst the county football sides are not involved in games a few of his side will have club football commitments during the week.

"It's very hard when players try to juggle sports, we lost one of our dual players, earlier in the year Fiona O'Neill with a hip injury and she has been a loss to the sides all season."

"Fingers crossed we will have a clean bill of health come Sunday."



# Murray keeping the



Aoife Murray takes the penalty against Kilkenny last season at Croke Park



Aoife Murray with Chloe Sigerson at the Cork Camogie open day at Castle Road.  
Picture Eddie O'Hara

**WHEN** they update the history of Cork camogie and bring in up to this year, and probably a few more yet to come, the name of Aoife Murray is sure to feature prominently.

The Cloughdun keeper has been involved with the Cork senior side for the last 16 years or so and her calming influence at the back has seen her trophy cabinet contain seven senior All-Ireland title, five league titles and countless other trophies over the years.

On Sunday, the Dublin-based chartered surveyor will be hoping to add another medal to her trophy cabinet as they take on Kilkenny in the All-Ireland final.

Two years ago Cork got the better of Galway in the final, but last year they lost out to Kilkenny.

Considering the form of the two sides it is no great surprise to see them taking each other on in the final on Sunday, something that Aoife agrees with. But she is not too concerned about who they are playing, as long as Cork are there.

"Shure you have to play somebody and I suppose it's the final that many people predicted at the start of the championship.

"It's probably the game that a lot of neutral fans would have wanted, but I think others hype up the Cork v Kilkenny clashes more than either side does.

"They are the champions and are the best team around at the moment and there is no other way you would want it for a final.

"But that said we have been run closer and closer in the last few years by other teams and it's going closer and harder to come out on top every year and I can certainly see that changing in the next few years and it won't be the same pairing in the final in the next few years.

"The semi-final against Galway was a really tough game. I thought they were superb and I have watched it back and I don't think they got the credit they deserved. It was all about us not scoring and not how well they played.

"When we went a few points up Galway teams of the past maybe would have signed off, but they didn't. They are well managed and well coached and all the girls has bought into the way they wanted to



"It was the biggest challenge mentally and physically, we had faced and despite people talking about us not scoring we still could have had another 2-3 or 3-3 with a small bit of luck.

"We dropped one or two balls at the crucial time, Katriona Mackey had shot that went just wide and Hanna Looney had another that clipped the top of the bar and could as easily have gone under so it was only when I watched it back that I realised wasn't too bad after all."

Two first-half goals were big scores for Cork in that game, with Orla Cotter getting one and Aoife the other from a penalty.

"I suppose you don't think about till afterwards when you realise there was only a few points in it. We were just happy to do it and to be honest the credit must really go to others for their hard work to set the opportunities.

"I know Meabh Cahalane and Niamh McCarthy did a huge amount of work for the penalty and I think credit should go to them more than me for that score."

Commenting on the crucial penalty she said: "Yea I wish I could connect with the ball the way I did that shot all the time but it doesn't work like that. We practiced them that week and thankfully went in."

"I said during the week that if I pick up right and they stop it I play to them."

"For me I don't have to think about where I have to put the sliotar. I had picked my spot during the week and stuck to that when the penalty was awarded to us."

"By having that decision made ready it takes away one thing you have to think about as you run up to take the shot. By the time I get there I try to make sure I control breathing and get some air back in the lungs."

"I try to concentrate and make sure I place the ball correctly and then it's all about the nick."



# faith for the Rebels



CLASS ACT: Aoife Murray consoles Niamh Hanniffy of Galway after the All-Ireland semi-final.

Picture: INPHO/Bryan Keane

## Aoife on captain, Rena Buckley

"RENA is a great role model and has no time for the special mention, despite all she has achieved in camogie and ladies football. She is so calm on the pitch and always leads by example.

"She never concentrates on medals she has won, it's all about the next one and the next challenge and that rubs off on players around her. When they see that drive and ambition they want to be part of it.

"I don't do it for the free pass into nightclubs or for the car with the logo on the side or to be stopped on the street and neither does Rena.

"But I look at the likes of her and can't figure out how she is not getting more from Cork. Considering what she has achieved I don't understand why she hasn't been at the very least offered some of the

things that some male players get, like the car or other sponsorships.

"But in fairness to Rena that is not what she is in the game for. She just loves playing and I am lucky to be able to call her a friend away from the game as well.

"To see her lift the O'Duffy Cup would be brilliant and if we win she would create yet another little bit of history. She would set a record as the first player to captain both ladies football and camogie senior winning All-Ireland sides, along with leading the table with the most senior All-Ireland medals.

"But as soon as the game is over, she will start thinking about the next challenge and getting ready for that and that is what makes her the great player and inspirational player she is."

battle is won, if you don't then you are struggling. So that is what is going on in my head as I run up and prepare to take the shot.

"I had decided on the idea of picking the spot ahead of the game and looked at how they set up for penalties. We looked at the Galway keeper, who is a talented young keeper, and I decided we were going to go down the centre against her to test her out and thankfully it worked out in our fa-

vour."

Looking back over the year and in particular the Munster championship which didn't end well for Cork Aoife has mixed emotions, but also felt it showed them all about having their attitude right.

"I could never see us winning the Munster final against Limerick. We were there down on a tight pitch Charleville and couldn't buy a free. After about five minutes I felt we

would have been better off playing club championship games. I certainly would have gotten more out of it than that game.

"We were never going to win it, there were 40 odd frees and Limerick could take lumps out of us and we couldn't touch them. But you know sometimes when you are down in the gutter after a game like that the only way is up and we certainly regrouped after that.

"We looked at our training and started having a bit more fun and if anything it probably took the pressure off of us. It meant people weren't paying us as much attention and we got to concentrate on ourselves a bit more.

"With the way the All-Ireland championship is set up that final showed us that if you don't have the right attitude then you are in trouble, when you compare how we played against them in that final and the All-Ireland series.

"It was a great lesson for us and look the Munster championship has a place, but I look back at the year so far and we have only played one club game and for me, it would have been nice to have played some club games in May, rather than just letting all the club players waiting around for whenever we win or lose in championship.

"To be fair to the clubs, they made a decision they wouldn't go ahead with games after we reached the final to give us a chance to prepare properly for it and maybe back then was a time we could have played some club

games.

"We have a tight panel and normally there is a month between the semi and final, but this year there is only three weeks so fair play to the clubs for making that decision.

"I personally feel there is more pressure on me when I play with the club that with Cork because these girls have been training without you for so long and the last thing you want to do is go out and give a bad performance.

"I know they are expecting so much from me and also I wouldn't be where I am without the club and you want to give so much back because of this."

Being based in Dublin for work Aoife is up and down road for training and also for her club commitments with Cloughduv.

So what keeps her going at this stage to keep doing this, considering all she has achieved in the game?

"I have to acknowledge my family are part of the management set-up (brothers, Paudie, Kevin and Damien and her cousin, Noel Collins does the stats) so it would be a pretty awkward family gathering if I wasn't," she joked, "but really it's all I know. I could take the easier option and transfer to a club up here, but I couldn't do that as the club means so much to me. I wouldn't be doing the club justice and all the great people who have trained me over the years.

"There is nothing like the buzz of putting on a club jersey and it's hard to replicate that if you transfer to another club that you don't have all

that history with."

Sunday sees the Cork intermediate team in their respective final as well which also happened last year and with Paudie managing both teams it means the day is not structured the same maybe as other teams as he is off looking after that side ahead of the senior final, instead of being with them.

But Aoife feels that they have learnt from last year and you have to concentrate on yourself and forge ahead about the other team.

"The two teams were there as well last year and we can't let it distract us. We know the story now and been through it, so if it does it's nobody's fault but our own.

"Of course it's a good sign for Cork camogie to be there in both finals and we would love to see them win a well. But we have to get our attitude right and whether they win, lose or draw we have to get ourselves right for our game.

"I felt that we didn't do the jersey justice last year and we want to put it right this year. But we know what we are facing in Kilkenny. They aren't the All-Ireland champions for nothing and you don't win the title with just a few good players. They have a panel of them and have five or six subs as well that would make most other inter-county starting teams.

"So it's going to be a huge challenge on Sunday, but we are looking forward to it and we are where any team wants to be and we just have to go out and give it everything and see what happens then."



Rebels  
have to  
keep the  
faith

## CAMOGIE

■ Éamonn Murphy

WHILE the rumour mill is rife with speculation over Gemma O'Connor's availability for this Sunday's All-Ireland final against Kilkenny, Paudie Murray has insisted that she's out.

The colossal centre-back would have been at the heart of the Rebel challenge against the Cats, but was injured in the semi against Galway.

"She's ligament damage in her ankle and her knee and she's hobbling coming in to training. You're asking her to log out in an All-Ireland final... next to impossible. We've ruled her out and we've concentrated on getting ourselves right and giving it a bash.

"I geared everything for this and had it planned out and then you're missing Gemma. Being honest we're that bit flat and the buzz isn't there.

"All the girls of course still think she has a chance. Some people think I'm playing games but if you look back at the match it's horrendous the way her knee bent back."

It'll now be up to other experienced players, like captain Rena Buckley, keeper Aoife Murray, and the dynamic Ashling Thompson to drive on the Rebels.

"I have to rejig things in Gemma's absence, and when the going gets tough she's your warrior. She fears nothing and people fear her. It's important we regroup because we've a duty to everyone — inside the squad and in Cork camogie — to go up and give a performance."

Without dwelling on the negatives, dual legend Briege Corkery, who slipped quietly into retirement this season, is another big loss now September is here.

"Briege brings her own personality to the dressing room. When she puts on her game face there's no-one better. She's an inspiration, 17 All-Irelands, and look back at extra time against Wexford last year and who was taking the ball out of defence time and again? Who else?"

Yet Murray feels his players have never, in his six years at the helm, put more in.

"The players have been magnificent. Training, attitude, spot on. Last year was probably a bit messier. It's important not to get too caught up with it being Kilkenny. Certain things were in our control in both finals last year and we let them slip.

"Control the controllables... looking back, that really annoys me. There's no benefit in looking at other factors. Grand there's the Gemma issue, but there are a lot of other things within our control, and we can't have those distractions this time.

"The hurt of last year can't come into it though. We'll concentrate on getting ourselves right and may the best team win after that."

# At the cutting edge



Paudie Murray at the Rochestown Park Hotel ahead of Sunday's All-Ireland final double bill.

Picture: Jim Coughlan.



Douglas's Conor McCarthy is tackled by Doheny's Paudie Murray in 2004.

Picture: Eddie O'Hare



Cloughduv's Paudie Murray taking on St Vincent's back in 2000.

Picture: Richard Mills.



Camogie

Éamonn  
Murphy

ON the weekend of the All-Ireland semi-finals, Paudie Murray left his house at 10.30am on Saturday.

Between the trip to Limerick for the seniors' victory over Galway, the match itself, and food after, following a delay as two players were drug tested, it was 2.30am when he arrived back in the door. It was around 4am when he nodded off.

He got more of a power nap than a night's sleep because he was up at 6.30am for a bus journey to Ashbourne, an intermediate clash with Derry — and the all the accompanying drama — returning home for around 9pm.

Of course because Cork were victorious in both semis, setting up Sunday's All-Ireland double-header at Croke Park — the intermediates against Meath, the seniors versus Kilkenny — there's been no let-up since. Murray manages both teams, with little crossover between the panels, so it's been a relentless build-up, which included a change of hotel and all the logistics that go with that, plus the distraction of a knee injury which looks set to keep powerhouse Gemma O'Connor out.

Last September Cork reached both finals as well, but after losing to Kilkenny twice, it's hard to imagine how it was worth it all.

Murray, self-employed and the father to two girls, laughs when we suggest he must be mad to juggle work, family and two inter-county teams.

"How many times does a manager get to have two teams in an All-Ireland at Croke Park? I've gone to seven All-Irelands and you can't have it every way. There are plenty would love to be in my position.

"The day will be wrecking but we'll tweak things slightly from last year. Maybe I was a small bit flat last year because in the week leading up to it there was a lot of energy expended on other things.

"I think we can get it right for both teams but obviously Gemma is the big one and I'd love to be going to take on Kilkenny with a full deck of cards."

At this juncture, O'Connor's injury notwithstanding, planning for Croker is where it's at. Still last winter, five years in and with a couple of All-Irelands to his name, Murray must have been tempted to walk away?

"I'd my mind made up last year that was it. The All-Ireland didn't go the way I wanted it but I'm a competitive guy.

"I'd my mind made up pretty soon after and even though I'd options inside and outside the county I wanted to have a crack again."

Getting another crack off Kilkenny, who also beat the Rebels earlier this year in the league final, must have been an incentive. There's a real tension to the rivalry between the counties, after an incident during the handshakes before last year's final, accusations from Nore side that Cork were disrespectful during the speeches at Croker last year, and the Leesiders' assertion Kilkenny are a physical, defensive outfit.

Murray insists that's not the case. He simply loves being immersed in the Rebel cause. He might unwind by watching his daughter at gymnastics, having a laugh with other GAA fathers, the Glen's Seanie McGrath and the Rockies' Aidan Ryan. Yet the next camogie session or game is never too far away.

The intermediates and seniors train the same night, one after the other, with



# of management

Underage results are a concern for future

## CAMOGIE

■ Éamonn Murphy

ON THE most basic level, camogie in Cork couldn't be in better health according to senior boss Paudie Murray.

The experienced coach, whose youngest daughter pulls on the St Finbarr's colours, believes there are more playing the game than ever before at underage on Leeside.

"The underage has gone very strong. Eire Og, Ballinora, those type of clubs, you've the usual like Sars and Douglas and more than that all across the county. I was at the Deccie Crowley U10 Tournament in Ballinhassig recently and the standard was excellent."

Yet despite the strength in depth in terms of clubs, Murray does agree the Rebels are underachieving at inter-county. Since minor moved from U16 to U18 in 2006, Cork have never won it – though they did reach finals in 2013 and '14 – while Kilkenny have collected the cup six times. The U16s haven't been victorious either, only reaching one of the last nine finals, in 2015, having lost three in a row from 2006 to '08.

In his view, Cork need to target former players to get involved to raise the standard of coaching, from club level up and look again at development squads.

"There's an issue with coaching alright and you can see that in Cork's lack of underage success for 10 years now. We need more former greats involved with their clubs and then on to Cork. That's just common sense."

"It's not a money issue but people who have something to offer must be targeted. You can argue being dependent on GAA clubs for pitches doesn't help, but let's get the coaches in first. I certainly think the players are there."

Murray admits this year's minors did make a mark, pushing a crack Galway outfit all the way in the semi-final.

"This year's minor team ran a very good Galway team close, and the U16 team did the same, but we're only punching away without winning any trophies. We haven't won an All-Ireland U16 since Anna Geary's time (in 2003)."

While Murray is alarmed by the lack of silverware at the top, he argues clubs, nurturing male and female players, should prioritise skills not winning.

"Get your technique right, work on the skills, keep as many playing as you can and then bring that bit of intensity when they're teens. Shouting and roaring on the line doesn't make any boy or girl a better player. Win at all costs underage never pays off."

"How many good players drift off to soccer because they've less pressure, more matches, the league format instead of championship where on loss and the whole season is basically over."



Cork manager Paudie Murray talks in the team huddle before the intermediate win over Derry.

Picture: INPHO/Oisin Keniry



Gemma O'Connor and Paudie Murray after last year's disappointment at the hands of Kilkenny. Picture: Eóin Noonan/Sportsfile

Sean Cremin handling a chunk of the work with the first group. Liam O'Reilly, known for his work with Olympian Rob Heffernan, was involved in the strength and conditioning earlier in the campaign, with Martin O'Brien, a county football medalist with Clon, also on board.

He has a strong but focused backroom, including his brothers, with Kevin well-known as a match-winner for the Cork hurlers in 1999. Their sister Aoife is the All-Star goalie.

Everyone plays their part and Murray certainly doesn't entertain hangers-on. "I believe in management and specific roles. I don't believe in selectors per say. You need your goalkeeping coach, video stats and fellas on the pitch match day that have roles to fulfil, but that's the

way we'd work it."

While there has long been a disparity between the funding of male and female sport, this Cork camogie set-up is cutting edge. They have a modern approach to preparation. And tactics, given they often sit deep and counter from the middle.

"We do a lot of stats-based feedback. At the start no one liked it because it's telling them something they don't want to hear. Stats don't lie."

"We've GPS this year with both teams and no sooner has the game finished and players are screeching at us for their results."

"Balance is key because you don't want to get bogged down in it. Six years ago it was 'give a rattling speech and off

**"I believe in management and specific roles. I don't believe in selectors per say. We do a lot of stats-based feedback."**

you go."

During Murray's tenure, Cork have brought in video analysis and strength and conditioning. Some players can cover up to 10km in a 60-minute game.

"If you don't have legs now at inter-county, not to mind in Croke Park, then forget it. It's a very unforgiving place."

"The fitness results we have are as good as any men's team and for the best counties the pace is incredible. That's the difference with the top teams."

"Kilkenny have Paddy Mulally, former senior hurler, on their set-up. The level of themselves, Galway and Dublin, who have David Herity the ex-Kilkenny goal on board, is quality."

Some would suggest camogie was better in a more traditional style, but

Murray insists the standard and pace has risen. He'd like to see changes to improve the game further, including a proper link-up with ladies football, after the debacle of a semi-final fixture clash for dual player Libby Coppinger.

"A player, coming from Kealkil, is already doing 100 miles five days a week, and the decisions up in Dublin don't even consider it. There are serious problems between the associations because there is no joined up thinking."

"They need to be under the GAA umbrella."

He also finds the standard of refereeing hugely frustrating.

"We played Down in an intermediate match and there was 51 frees. The free count was even but it was ridiculous. You pay €10 for that and it'll put you to sleep."

"Then you can have the complete opposite, like last year's All-Ireland final, which was just hurling rules really."

"We normally get referees in to tell us what you can and can't do but during games then that goes out the window."

"In the league final of 33 minutes of camogie there was seven frees. Clearly he wanted to leave it flow. Let's change the rules and have it flowing then."

"The rules need to be broken down and rewritten again. Female athletes deserve it."

That clearly is a motivating factor.

He loves sport but values player development. He started out as a footballer with Dohenys but only took up hurling for Cloughduv in his teens when he went to Farranferris.

In the article on the right, he argues for an emphasis to be put on developing coaches as well as players.

That could be his role in the future, but first up is another one of those crazy weekends. Only this time on the greatest stage of them all.



# Unsung Cotter steps into the limelight

## CAMOGIE

■ Darragh Ó Conhúir

**UNDERSTATED** and for a long time underrated.

For a number of years, Orla Cotter went largely unnoticed about her business, helping others shine in trademark selfless fashion.

In the end, it took having the free-taking responsibilities thrust upon her after Jenny O'Leary's retirement to put the St Catherine's woman in the spotlight and for people to recognise her broader range.

The tall St Catherine's woman has won an All-Star in each of the last three seasons, the tally of four now much more in keeping with her ability.

One of the cleanest strikers around, she has an uncanny knack of scoring from distance but combines application with her more aesthetic skills and is a key element of the Cork method of suffocating the opposition in the middle third of the pitch, combining industry with guile.

This is her 12th season at senior level. She won the first of five All-Ireland medals while minor captain in 2006 and has been a key component of the red machine for most of the intervening period. She is Cork's leading scorer going into Sunday's Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Senior Camogie Championship final against Kilkenny.

One was reminded once more of Cotter's importance in the National League final, which she sat out until the interval due to a lingering hamstring issue.

Cork had been very poor in the first half but the Irish and PE teacher at Midleton College sparked a renewed effort with three points, including two from play, in the third quarter. It wasn't enough to deny Kilkenny but it left an imprint on the mind.

So did her goal towards the end of the first half of the Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Championship Semi-Final against Galway.

Cotter had seemed attracted to the sliotar like a magnet in that opening period as the Leesiders dominated and so it was when she fetched a long Aoife Murray delivery from over the head of Róisín Black just around the 45.

The Ballynoe native turned and made a bee line for the Galway goal and while the finish might not have matched the build-up for style and precision, and by no means did the simple, a green flag was raised. There were seven points clear as a result of a game they won by three. It was a goal that was on her mind from the moment she turned. "I'm sure, it kind of opened up for me, it kept going," comes the reply of someone who doesn't need to be told she's a star but would never do otherwise.

"Don't let me down — my manager is telling me I need to be a star. By the skin of my teeth, in the end, it dribbled in and I'll take it. We as a team have to work on our finishing of the game. Hopefully we'll be throwing



Orla Cotter shoots from Wexford's Amy Cardiff during the Liberty Insurance All-Ireland senior camogie championship tie at Páirc Uí Rinn. The St Catherine's player is the main attacking outlet for the Rebels, and an expert free-taker to boot. Picture: Eddie O'Hare



Cork senior camogie player Orla Cotter with Tom and Anna Fennell, Watergrasshill. Picture: Eddie O'Hare

in a few (against Kilkenny)."

Was she trying to pass it to Hannah Looney initially?

"I don't know what I was trying to do really! I thought I saw Hannah half-free out of the corner of my eye but sure by the time I went to pass it, it kind of spilled out of my hands — but sure it all came off. There was a bit of luck there I think."

She leaves out the soaring catch and run but that is typical. It is all about the end result with Cotter. Her placed-ball routine is a case in point. It isn't classical — she is a left-handed player taking frees on her

right — put her conversion rate is high. She is Cork's leading scorer once more going into the decider.

While emphasis has been placed on them scoring just three points in the second half against Galway, there was much to admire about the Rebels' win, particularly off a five-week lay-off.

"We started well but when we reflected on the game we were disappointed with our second half. Galway showed their worth in that second half, they really came back at us. But nothing is ever over at half-time and they kept fighting 'til the very end

“We started well but when we reflected on the game, we were disappointed with our second-half.”

and to be honest, we were lucky to come out on top at all.

"We were under pressure and to be fair to Chloe Sigerson, Laura Treacy, Rena Buckley and a few others, they've all stood up. We stood our ground and we ground it out for the last 10 minutes.

"We just need to work on getting the ball out of defence to set up an attack. We were playing defensively towards the end which made it really difficult for our forwards. We were low in numbers towards the top but as long as the scores aren't going in at the other end you'll get by."

The totemic Gemma O'Connor left the fray mid-way through that encounter with damaged knee ligaments, having gone into it with an ankle problem. Manager Paudie Murray has ruled her out of the equation for Sunday and Cork are preparing to take on Kilkenny without her. The St Finbarr's legend is doing everything she can to possibly make some contribution according to Cotter, who leaves you in no doubt with her words and the tone they are delivered, about the impact O'Connor's absence will have.

"Gemma's injury is a big loss at the moment. We're trying to pick it up again. We're a small bit hopeful but you never know. At the moment we're taking it that she's out."

Cork were denied a three-in-a-row by Kilkenny 12 months ago and though there were only four points between them at the final whistle the gulf in performance was wider. That has been a massive motivation this year.

"You don't mind losing once you've given it your best but a lot of us felt we didn't perform to our best ability. We felt we didn't really do ourselves justice. All credit to Kilkenny, they were the better team on the day, they wanted it more than us on the day and they were worthy winners by all means.

"Then we met them in the National League final and we were only dying to play them again but they still go the better of us.

"We've one more chance to get it right."



# Losing to the Cats in final still haunts Hannah



Hannah Looney celebrates after the semi-final.  
Picture: INPHO/Bryan Keane



Camogie

Barbara  
O'Connell

**FOR the past 12 months one game and one thought has occupied the mind of 20-year-old Hannah Looney.**

That game was last year's All-Ireland final defeat to Kilkenny and the thought has been about getting back to another September showdown to right that wrong.

On Sunday Kilkenny once again stand in their way.

The full-forward knows it won't be easy. She and the team know they will have to be much better than they were in their narrow win over Galway in the semi-final and she believes they will be.

"Against Galway it was worrying that we had very low scoring but thankfully we were lucky enough to grind out the result, said Looney. Galway are a serious side though so we never expected it to be easy. However, we know that our performance must be increased immensely if we are to have any chance of beating Kilkenny.

"Since our game against Galway, there is obviously a lot of things that we have worked on however I think every aspect of our game will have to be at 100% against Kilkenny, anything less than that will not do."

Since that defeat in last year's All-Ireland final, the 20-year-old UCC student and the squad have focused on putting that right and as they have taken step by step, being back in this year's final is exactly where they wanted to be and where they have worked so hard on getting to.

"I think it's fair to say since the end of last season, both players and management have revolved our lives on getting to the All-Ireland final. Coming home on the train after losing last year and all we wanted was a second chance and now we have it.

"This is exactly where we wanted to be and now that we're there, this is only the beginning for us. Performing and going one step further than last year is our only focus."

A close encounter in the semi-final against Galway had a lot of supporters worried and for Looney and her team the feeling and anticipation of hearing the final whistle was something she hopes won't happen in this weekend's final.

"The final few minutes against Galway were so nerve wrecking. By God, I don't know how Aoife Murray keeps her nerve in goal for so many years, especially in such a close game. Being at the other end of the pitch as a forward to where the ac-



Cork's Hannah Looney under pressure from Miriam Twomey of Dublin.

Picture: Cathal Noonan

tion is, can be more nerve-wrecking at times. You're just praying that the girls can clear the ball up the pitch.

"And to be fair to them, they kept their composure and did exactly that. Let's hope we won't experience the same tense moments again."

The final against Kilkenny is expected to be Cork's toughest game to date and Looney believes work rate will play a huge role in the success of the winners.

"We expect an extremely physical and fast paced game against Kilkenny. Without a doubt it will be our toughest game to date. Kilkenny have an excellent defensive set up that will be really hard to break down.

"They also have plenty of scoring threats that will need to be watched and are playing some top class camogie at the moment. We have full faith in the management to prepare us for this game in the best way possible and after that it is up to us to give it

everything on the field.

"I believe what will win it for us on the day will be our work rate. We need to bring intensity and a work rate greater than anything we have brought before."

The Aghada woman is in her fourth year with the senior set up and in that time she has seen a lot of youth come onto the team in which she believes is hugely important to balance the mixture of youth and experience.

"This year we have had some great additions to the squad. Chloe Sigeron and Niamh McCarthy, two new girls on the team this year and you'd swear they have been there for years with the outstanding camogie they have been playing. I am so thrilled that Niamh has the opportunity to play in an All-Ireland final in Croke Park. She has battled through the most horrific injuries and has missed out in a whole underage career and much more and to come

back and be in this position now, it's inspiring.

"The blend of youth and experience is spot on this year. The likes of Gemma (O'Connor), Aoife (Murray), Orla (Cotter), and Rena (Buckley) have years of experience in their pockets and it is great to be able to feed off that and learn from them.

"The stalwarts like Gemma, Orla and The Mackeys continue to excel for us this year but it is encouraging and great to see that every player on the team now has the ability to lead for us.

"For example, it would be unusual for all six forwards not to appear on the scoresheet and Orla Cronin has really found her form in the center forward position this year.

"It's hard to believe this year is my fourth year involved in the setup. I jumped on the bandwagon in 2014 and have had plenty of highs and lows but above all, I'm fortunate enough to get the opportunity to go

out and play what I love with some of my best friends. This year I have been playing a role in the full forward line throughout the championship.

"I suppose it is the dream to line out for your county in an All-Ireland final in Croke Park and I hope I get the opportunity to do so. Competition is extremely fierce this year and no one really knows what team will go out and start for the final. Training sessions will always be competitive. However, at the same time we all back each other up because we all have the same end goal.

"Obviously we didn't have the best start to our season losing both the league final and the Munster final but we'd be reasonably happy with some of our performances throughout the All-Ireland series. As I've said though, it is going to take an awful lot more than what we have displayed to overcome Kilkenny, but we are ready for it."



# Niamh proud to lead Rebel charge

Callanan hoping for third time lucky

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

AS the countdown to Croke Park continued for Cork, the minor captain of 2013 Lauren Callanan was hoping this year it's third time lucky for her.

Having lost out to Kilkenny in the minor replay in 2013 she is hoping this time out she will reap the rewards.

"Hopefully now on Sunday we will be on the right side of the result, it's hard to lose out in a final and something that really hurts."

A member of the senior panel in 2015 that won the title Lauren opted out last season due to study commitments but when Paudie Murray asked her to rejoin the intermediate squad again this year she decided to give it a go. The Glen Rovers girl turned in a magnificent display as Cork took the league title defeating Derry and has done well in all the games to date.

"I wasn't involved last year when the girls lost out in the Intermediate final so hopefully now this year we will reverse that result, everybody is working really hard and it would be great to win it."

Lauren has huge praise for her club who make it very easy for herself and Leanne O'Sullivan who is on the senior panel to be part of the Cork senior and intermediate set-ups.

"This year there are two of us on the Cork senior and intermediate panels and it is great to get the support from our club they don't put any pressure on us at all and it is great to have that support, the girls are fantastic and even when we are not training they understand and that it is all about."

"They are girls you come up the ranks with they are your clubmates and friends, our mentors and committee are great to us they always give us huge support."

At club level, Lauren has always been to the fore in all teams as a youngster. Amongst the honours won are two county minor championship and league medals, senior B county league and championship, U16 league and championship. A player-of-the-match accolade was also picked up in 2013 as the Senior B county title was won for the first time in the club's history.

However, she knows Meath will be tough.

"They beat us earlier in the year and they are strong we need to really be at our best to win this one but we will be hugely determined to do so."

Determination is one thing Lauren Callanan is not short of. She may be small in stature but the heart, determination and huge will to succeed is in everything she does. Currently a student in UCC she applies huge detail to her study and sport and hopefully on Sunday that will be rewarded with a Cork victory and it couldn't happen for a nicer girl.

## CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

A YEAR down the line with a lot of experience and a national league title to her side's credit Cork captain Niamh Ni Chaoimh once again leads her team to Croke Park.

The huge honour of doing so is not lost on the primary school teacher in Gael Scoil Ui Riordáin Ballincollig as captaining Cork in Croke Park for the second year in a row is a dream come true.

"Getting to play in an All-Ireland final in Croke Park is so special, it was great to be captain last year and heart-breaking to have lost but to captain Cork against this year I am so proud to do so."

"It's a huge honour and one I really appreciate, I have huge faith in our team and I know we will give it everything to bring the title back."

Niamh comes from a family who are very much involved in all things GAA. Dad Denis is an Erin's Own man through and through and is also very much involved in the ladies football club.

"My Dad is vice chair of the ladies football and he was also chairman of the boys juvenile club a few years ago, my dad was the one who got us all playing hurling and football his love for the game filtered down to us."

The "us" Niamh speaks about are her two older brothers Shane and Mark.

Shane is now eight years in Australia and Mark is now in New Zealand having previously lived in Canada for two years so it's just Niamh and of course her beloved dog Charlie at home with mum and dad, but soon she will be taking a short trip away also.

"I just love teaching but I'm taking a short career break to travel after the All-Ireland. It will only be short as I don't intend being away for long."

Charlie, the madra, is the primary school teacher's biggest fan, a title held jointly with dad Denis who can be seen at every single game and at venues everywhere with the faithful family pet in tow. Mum Ann is also a big supporter of Niamh's and goes to all the games.

At this stage Charlie is the team mascot.

Niamh played U16 with Cork and won Munster honours. In 2014 she was a member of the Intermediate side that took the Division 2 National League title but last year's defeat in the All-Ireland final is one that is remembered and still hurts.

"We went into that game against Kilkenny very well prepared and really just a puck of a ball separated us but looking back we were a bit green. We know what to expect this year we are all a year older and we have learned from losing at final at that level and we also have the experience of winning the league title this year."

Wise words from someone who's professional life is imparting knowledge, a primary school teacher in Gaelscoil Ui Riordáin Ballincollig where she is permanently employed the last two years.

Niamh spent three great years in Scoil Insearatha Little Island before se-



CAPTAIN'S CALL: Niamh Ni Chaoimh, Cork, and Claire Coffey, Meath, ahead of their showdown at Croke this weekend.

Picture: INPHO/James Crombie



Niamh Ni Chaoimh with youngsters at the Cork camogie open day at Castle Road.

Picture Eddie O'Hare

curing her permanent role in Ballincollig.

Niamh is well known for her love of the Irish language and always insists that her name appears as Gaelige on all programmes and match reports.

"I went to primary school in Glounthaune and I then went on to Coláiste an Phiarsaigh as I have a lover for the Irish language and it was great there."

"I went on to college Mary Immaculate and I just always wants to teach in a gaelscoil."

Despite playing her camogie with Killeagh Niamh is an Erin's Own woman through and through.

"I consider Erin's Own my home club, I play football there and I started my camogie with the club with Hilda Keohane in charge when I was about seven or eight."

"We won a Junior C championship

when I was around 16 but after that the team faded away and we didn't have any adult team. I was playing senior with Imokilly at the time and I was told I had to have a club to continue playing. I knew a lot of the Killeagh girls from playing with Imokilly so I just went and joined Killeagh."

"Kevin O'Connor was in charge of the team and made me so welcome I love it there I'm six years playing with Killeagh."

Niamh still charts Erin's Own progress and is glad to see camogie at underage level back in the club:

"It's great to see camogie there again and to see all the young girls lining out in the club colours."

Having picked up the Rochestown Park 96/103fm Award for April Niamh says it was a huge honour.

"I was stunned to get the call and I

**"Niamh still charts Erin's Own progress and is glad to see camogie at underage back..."**

accepted it not just for myself but for a great group of girls and mentors, it great to see camogie getting recognized at these awards as a lot great players have been honoured with it and I am humbled to have been chosen."

Sunday's opposition are no strangers and the Cork leader knows they will be tough.

"Meath are very strong they played senior league this year and it stood to them, they did well against a lot of the strong teams and they be no push over but we know what to expect having lost out to them earlier in the year."

Hopefully on Sunday, Niamh and her team will get the day off to a perfect start for Cork and she will be the one making the trip up the steps to collect the Jack McGrath Cup to add to the National League trophy sitting proudly at home.





Cork intermediate captain Ali Brennan with Ella, Brid and Kate Finn and Aoife O'Brien all from Ballymacoda at the Cork camogie open day at Castle Road. Picture: Eddie O'Hare

## Determined Cork on a mission to claim glory in Croke Park

THE two teams that have made it to the Liberty Insurance Intermediate championship final both qualified from the same group.

Meath secured top spot in a tight race for the top with Cork as both teams took an unbeaten record into their third round meeting where Meath edged it in a thriller where they had to survive intense late Cork pressure. A late Jane Dolan goal ensured Meath prevailed but they had to survive five added minutes to take the victory by the minimum.

This was the only game this Cork side have lost since they were defeated in last year's All-Ireland final and with a good league campaign under their belts, they went into championship focused and ready. They overcame Galway in their opening game as they racked up 2-12 and held Galway to nine points to get their campaign off to the perfect start. Goals from Rachel O'Shea and Caroline Sugrue giving them the vital edge.

Carlow were next on the journey and again the Cork defence held solid as they stopped Carlow from finding the net in a close 1-11 to 0-7 clash. Cork had eight points to spare over Laois before turning in an impressive display as they overcame down.

Since last year's final defeat at the hands of Kilkenny this Cork side has lost just once and all through this year, they have been focused on getting back to Croke Park. A hugely impressive league campaign saw them take the title as they defeated Derry and from day one we have seen the determination in this team.

2017 has been a historic year for Meath camogie as it marked their first appearance in Division 1 of the Littlewoods National League where they lost out to Limerick, Clare and Galway. They did however run Offaly to two points and that gave them a huge boost as they got their intermediate championship campaign up and running.

The continued improvements in the county has seen them move steadily up the ranks from participating in Division 4 to Division 1 and there is an abundant supply of talented young players coming through from the under-age ranks. Along with the more experienced players such as Megan Thynne, Cheyenne O'Brien, Aoife Mi-

### CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

nogue, Claire Coffey, Jane Dolan and the standard is improving consistently.

They got their championship off to a winning start against Laois hitting 4-15, but they were lucky to draw with Laois in round two before defeating Galway with four points to spare in a round three contest. Defeating Cork was a huge boost to them but they were rocked back as Down battled to the finish to secure a draw in round four. A confident performance in their last game gave them the points needed to top the group as they overcame Carlow with a 3-10 to 0-4 score line.

This is Meath's first choice side and they will go as very slight favourites on this basis alone, in 2012 they were crowned Premier Junior All-Ireland champions and since then they have worked towards Sunday.

Cork despite fielding the county's second adult team have always put huge effort into this competition. They head the roll of honour with three titles won in 2000, 2002 and 2006 and have been runners-up on five occasions.

Last year, without doubt, was the most disappointing of all when they lost out to Kilkenny by a point in a game they looked to be in total control of but a lapse in concentration proved costly as Kilkenny hit them with late goals to edge it.

Last year's defeat will stand to Cork and the experience gained will be invaluable all but two of the sides played last year, Lauren Callanan and Roisin Killeen, are into the team this year and both are huge additions and neither will be unduly worried about their first appearance in Croke Park.

Cork will need to go at Meath from the throw-in and if they can get fast ball into Linda Collins she is capable of causing huge problems for the Meath defence.

All through this campaign Cork have been racking up an impressive tally of points in all games and they will need to continue this. The Cork defence has been excellent in all games and if they can maintain their focus they should have the upper hand on the Meath attack.



Kilkenny's Claire Phelan tries to stop Cork's Eimear O'Sullivan in last year's All-Ireland final.

Picture: Piaras Ó Midheach/Sportsfile

# All to play for as stakes high



Camogie

Linda Mellerick

**TWELVE months is a very long time in sport.**

When I sat down to write an All-Ireland preview between Cork and Kilkenny in 2016 the ranking of both teams in advance of that final was very different to the status they hold today as they go head to head again on Sunday.

Cork were heading for three in a row of senior titles and looking to top the leader board with 27. Kilkenny were appearing in their third final in four years, having lost the 2013 and 2014 deciders to Galway and Cork.

I felt the pressure was all on Kilkenny, Cork in a more relaxed position, with happy, recent memories of Croke Park on All-Ireland final day. None of the Kilkenny squad had a senior medal, the Cats' last victory being in 1994.

Here we are heading into Sunday's final with Kilkenny as All-Ireland champions, National League champions for the second successive year and favourites to make it back to back championship titles.

So where did it go so right for Kilkenny and so wrong for Cork? I'll start with Cork. The key reason they lost the 2016 title was because they didn't want it enough. The game seemed to pass a lot of them by. Most of the 50/50 balls, Kilkenny won.

The four-point winning margin flattered Cork, an injury time Orla Cotter goal, from a free, giving a better reflection on the game.

Hunger plays the biggest role in any game and Kilkenny had it in abundance. They played with an aggression and confidence they hadn't shown in the past. When Cork came at them with three successive points early in the game, Kilkenny responded with four. That was the difference to previous years.

Kilkenny's high fielding is impressive.



Cork's Rena Buckley; Deirdre Ashe, Liberty Insurance; Camogie president Catherine Neary and Anna Farrell with the cup ahead of Sunday's All-Ireland final. Picture: Inpho/James Crombie

They are, in full flight, exciting to watch; running at speed, overlapping and giving pin-point passes.

One All-Ireland victory can propel you into a super team. How the mindset can change with that win is staggering and Kilkenny are sure to run onto Croke Park with a greater swagger than last year.

Kilkenny's game plan was to minimise the influence of Gemma O'Connor at centre-back. They played it wide with every ball and certainly Gemma didn't control the game the way she typically does.

Kilkenny don't seem to have to worry about Gemma this time around as she is almost certainly out for Sunday's final due to a knee injury picked up in the semi-final. She was advised of six weeks recovery, having only three to play with, and Cork's management had to come out early and rule her out.

Otherwise, it would have left too much uncertainty within the camp. They had to drive on with a different centre-back and game plan and keep the players focused on just the final alone.

Both camps have improved this season, with greater options on the bench. Catherine Foley and Jenny Reddy have come back into the Kilkenny squad after a year out, the former a massive addition in the full back line and Jenny scoring one of Kilkenny's two goals in their semi-final

victory. Jenny Clifford and Roisin Phelan have stepped up from the intermediate squad while Danielle Morrissey and Ashling Nolan have moved from minor, straight in.

Danielle is a true find and is a regular now at left corner-forward, scoring 0-3 in the semi. Defensively Kilkenny have a number of changes with Claire Phelan, Grace Walsh and Ashling Dunphy in the typical starting 15. Phelan missed the semi-final due to a hamstring strain but has been training since.

The introduction of Niamh McCarthy, the progression of Chloe Sigerson and Libby Coppinger and the return of Julia White has also given Cork greater options than they had in 2016. Sigerson has maintained the left half back position which has freed up Emer O'Sullivan as a great impact sub. Cork have of course lost the services of Brieghe Corkery who took a year out from playing both codes while she ponders her future.

Will Cork go ultra-defensive in the absence of Gemma? Will they go player for player? Tactics will once again play a big part.

I feel this is the hardest of All Ireland final to call in recent years. If both teams bring their 'A' game, it's difficult to separate them. What a team needs after that is a bit of luck on the day. It could just come down to that.





# Meath Intermediate Camogie

## PAULA DORIN

**Club:** Boardsmill.  
**Position:** Forward.  
One of many students in the panel, this talented player is one to watch out for in the future.

## MAIRE KEOGH

**Club:** Kildalkey.  
**Position:** Midfield.  
Long-time member of the panel, Maire has League Div 4 and Div 2 medals in her collection.

## BEVERLY LYNCH

**Club:** Kildalkey.  
**Position:** Forward.  
A student and a very talented player who has already collected u-16 Leinster and u-17 All-Ireland medals.

## ELLEN CONNEELY

**Club:** Kildalkey.  
**Position:** Defender.  
Another student and also from the great Kildalkey club, she has an u-17 All-Ireland medal in her collection.

## EMMA COFFEY

**Club:** Na Fianna.  
**Position:** Defender.  
Big success at county level with National Lge Div 2 and Leinster C'ship titles plus u-16 and u-18 All-Irelands.

## CHEYENNE O'BRIEN

**Club:** Kiltale.  
**Position:** Midfield.  
A lifeguard and a student, National League Div 2 medal and was on 2012 All-Ireland winning team.

## AINE KIRBY

**Club:** Na Fianna.  
**Position:** Forward.  
Student nurse, has had involvement curtailed due to injuries, but now back to her best.

## ERIN LEDDY

**Club:** Na Fianna.  
**Position:** Forward.  
Maintaining representation from her club, she has an under-17 All-Ireland title to her credit.

## MAEVE CLINCE

**Club:** Dunboyne.  
**Position:** Defender.  
Emerging talent with Div 2 League as well as under-age Leinster and All-Ireland honours.



## AISHLING KEANE

**Club:** Blackhall Gaels.  
Currently on the injured list has to hobble around with the aid of crutches, aiming to return for county in 2018.

## SOPHIA PAYNE

**Club:** Na Fianna.  
**Position:** Wing-back.  
One of the younger players, has Leinster and All-Ireland under-age medals.

## AEDIN SLATTERY

**Club:** Na Fianna.  
**Position:** Wing forward.  
Young player in the panel, under-age provincial and All-Ireland camogie medals.

## CAROLINE QUINN

**Club:** Boardsmill.  
**Position:** Forward.  
A young player who has made a big impact, a u-17 All-Ireland to her credit and can get vital scores.

## AOIFE MAGUIRE

**Club:** Killyon.  
**Position:** Centre-back.  
A strong defender with two All-Ireland medals, Div 2, 3, 4 Leagues and three Leinster Championships.

## AMY GAFFNEY

**Club:** Ratoath.  
**Position:** Forward.  
One to watch, under-age Leinster and All-Ireland medals, Div 2 League and Leinster Intermediate

## MEGAN THYNNE

**Club:** Kilmessan.  
**Position:** Forward.  
The current Meath young sportsperson of the year and a multi-talented player

## JANE DOLAN

**Club:** Blackhall Gaels.  
**Position:** Wing-back.  
Top player with League and All-Ireland medals, five Soaring Stars



# mogie Panel 2017

All-Ireland Intermediate Camogie Final

Meath v Cork

Sunday 10th September Croke Park

## HELEN MURPHY

Club: Blackhall Gaels.  
Position: Wing-back.  
First year on the panel for this dual performer who has lots of talent in both codes.

## KRISTINA TROY

Club: Blackhall Gaels.  
Position: Forward.  
A tough opponent, she has Div 2, 3 and 4 Lge medals, and was on the 2012 All-Ireland winning team.

## EMILY MANGAN

Club: Blackhall Gaels.  
Position: Goalkeeper.  
A poc fada champion, Div 2, 3, 4 League medals, and two All-Ireland titles - a top shot-stopper.

## SINEAD HACKETT

Club: Dunboyne.  
Position: Forward.  
One of the stalwarts of the team, Sinead has two All-Ireland medals and a Soaring Star award.

## CLAIRE COFFEY

Club: Na Fianna.  
Position: Full-back.  
The captain, has Div 2, 3, 4 League medals, a Premier Junior All-Ireland and a Soaring Star.

## MAGGIE RANDLE

Club: Donaghmore / Ashbourne.  
Position: Goalkeeper.  
The reserve goalkeeper, she can boast a Purcell Cup and All-Ireland with DIT.

## GRACE COLEMAN

Club: Killyon.  
Position: Forward.  
Flying the flag for Killyon, attacker Grace has a Div 2 League, Leinster u-16 and Minor B All-Ireland medals.

## AOIFE MINOGUE

Club: Dunderry.  
Position: Forward.  
A Purcell Cup C'Ship and a player of the match award, a Div 2 League with Meath and under-age honours.

## LOUISE DONOGHUE

Club: Kiltale.  
Position: wing-back.  
Top player who won a 2009 Soaring Star, Purcell Cup in '07 and '09, All-Ireland in 2012 plus Div 2, 3, 4 League medals.



## ELLEN BURKE

Club: Dunboyne.  
Position: Defender.  
Solid defender, with a bright future, Div 2 League and Leinster Intermediate C'Ship medals.

## FIA O'BRIEN

Club: Kiltale.  
Position: Forward.  
Under-age Leinster and All-Ireland medals plus Div 2 League and Leinster Intermediate medals.

## MAIRE KIRBY

Club: Na Fianna.  
Position: Forward.  
A good eye for scores and also a student with a Leinster Intermediate medal and a Div 2 League medal.

## KATIE HACKETT

Club: Boardsmill.  
Position: Midfield or forward.  
Won All-Ireland in 2012, has Div 3 and Div 4 League medals and four Leinsters.

## AIDEEN SMITH

Club: Kiltale.  
Position: midfield or half-back.  
Talented star named player-of-the-year with her club in 2016. Plays football with Moynalvey.

## AINE KEOGH

Club: Kildalkey.  
Position: Wing-back.  
Experienced player, Div 2, 3, 4 League medals, five Leinsters, All-Ireland 2012 and a Soaring Star award.

## FIONA O'NEILL

Club: Dunboyne.  
Position: Defender.  
Injured, won All-Ireland in 2012, also has enjoyed National League success.

## PAULA DUNNE

Club: Blackhall Gaels.  
Position: Forward.  
A valuable member of the panel, Paula also plays for the Meath ladies football team.





# ALL-IRELAND INTERMEDIATE CAMOGIE CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL

# MEATH v CORK

Sunday, 10th Sept 2017 - Croke Park

## THYNNE TO SHINE

Megan Thynne - in action for Meath against Cork in the qualifying group game at Trim last July - will be a key player for the Royals on Sunday.  
- Interview P42.

## EYES ON THE PRIZE

### CONALL COLLIER

POTENTIALLY, it's the Irish sports story of the decade.

Meath camogie manager John Davis will send his team out at Croke Park on Sunday for the All-Ireland Intermediate decider.

However, the road to Croke Park had an unlikely baptism on a day that will go down as a turning point, all 47 of them, in Ratoath on Sunday 25th June 2006.

Meath faced Dublin's second team in the All-Ireland Junior Camogie Championship - they scurried off the pitch after losing by 47 points (0-3 to 10-20).

Two teenagers who started that day have journeyed with the team since.

For Dunboyne woman Sinead Hackett and Kiltale's Louise Donoghue (below), the challenge of facing Cork in the All-Ireland Intermediate Camogie final at headquarters is a far cry from that chastening experience in Ratoath in 2006.

Then, the teenagers were new faces on a team that had rarely won a game of any consequence.

Drafted into the starting 15 from promising under-age teams, the duo recalled that Ratoath debacle at last week's media night.

There is a ring of confidence about the Meath panel ahead of Sunday's televised decider against Cork - a belief that Meath can make the leap to the top grade.

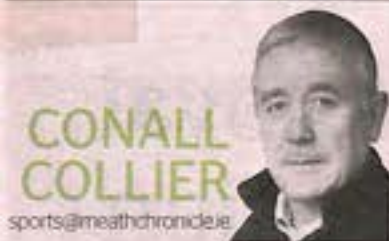
It would complete a remarkable journey that started for Meath at the final whistle on that dark day in Ratoath in 2006.

»

READ THE FULL STORY - PAGE 46.







**CONALL COLLIER**  
sports@meathchronicle.ie

## MY VERDICT

CONALL COLLIER

Last year's beaten finalists Cork hold the high ground ahead of Sunday's All-Ireland Intermediate Camogie Championship final against Meath at Croke Park, 2pm.

Meath will be facing Cork's second team on Sunday and if the Munster side win there will be no promotion to the senior grade.

Cork will be eager to atone for last year's final defeat by Kilkenny (1-11 to 3-6) as they make a sixth appearance in the decider of a competition that was introduced in 2006 as a replacement for the Senior B. Cork won that inaugural intermediate title, but have since lost four finals.

The live television curtainraiser will give Meath with an opportunity to step up to the senior grade on a big day for the Camogie Association at headquarters that will feature the senior final between Cork and Kilkenny at 4pm.

The day's curtainraiser at 12pm will feature the Premier Junior final between Westmeath and Dublin.

Five years ago Meath won the Premier Junior title, a success they added to the Junior crown they won in 2008, but the third tier championship didn't, and still doesn't, merit the attention of the live television cameras. It's an anomaly that should be addressed.

An extra burden for Cork on Sunday is that Paudie Murray is the manager of both the senior and intermediate teams.

"It's a very challenging role when both teams are in finals on the same day at the same venue, but with a very supportive backroom team everything will be taken care of to ensure each team is well prepared to take to the field," Cork Camogie PRO Shirley Moloney told the *Meath Chronicle*.

"Having two teams in the final again this year shows the determination of each panel to put in the work and commitment needed to get back into each final. The players have experience from last year so that is beneficial and they can draw on that," she added.

Cork's second string won the Div 2 league title this year with a 2-16 to 1-5 victory against Derry, the team they also defeated in the semi-final of the championship, but they will adopt a cautious approach to Meath after they lost by a point in a group game last July at Trim.

On that occasion Meath secured top spot in the race for qualification from their group with a hard-earned 4-9 to 0-17 victory.

# MEATH CAN THWART CORK'S BID TO ATONE

## PREVIEW Royals ready for Rebels recovery mission



Meath displayed significant battling qualities to survive intense late Cork pressure and a 60th minute Jane Dolan goal was the crucial score.

Dolan's performance will be important, but the progress the team has made is reflected by the fact that there are other players capable of inflicting damage on the scoreboard if Cork adopt tight-marking tactics on the Blackhall Gaels player.

Dolan is usually targeted 'for special treatment' by defenders and it will be up to the referee to deal promptly and correctly with any issues that arise on that front.

Players of the calibre of Aoife Minogue, Megan Thynne, Cheyenne O'Brien and Kristina Troy will also pose major problems for the Cork rearguard.

Meath defenders will have to curtail the likes of Katelynn Hickey, Rachel O'Shea, Keva McCarthy, Maeve McCarthy and Caroline Sugrue and it's expected that the Cork selectors will have a full-strength panel to choose from.

"There are a few injury worries, but the players will undergo fitness tests in the coming days to ensure they are fully fit in the run up to the final," added the Cork PRO.

Meath manager John Davis knows

## PATHS TO THE FINAL

### FIRST ROUND

Meath 4-15, Laois 1-8  
Cork 2-12, Galway 0-9

### SECOND ROUND

Meath 1-15, Galway 2-7; Cork 1-11, Carlow 0-7.

### THIRD ROUND

Meath 3-9, Cork 0-17.

### FOURTH ROUND

Meath 1-14, Down 0-17; Cork 1-18, Laois 2-7.

### FIFTH ROUND

Meath 3-10, Carlow 0-4; Cork 3-11, Down 0-9.

### SEMI-FINALS

Meath 1-12, Kildare 1-10  
Cork 2-11, Derry 0-7

### NATIONAL CAMOGIE LEAGUE FOCUS

#### DIVISION 1

First round - Meath 0-7, Limerick 0-18.

Second round - Meath 1-9, Clare 2-14.

Third round - Meath 1-5, Galway 3-15.

Fourth round - Meath 2-6, Offaly 2-8.

#### DIVISION 2

First round - Cork 0-13, Galway 0-6.

Second round - Cork 0-17, Westmeath 0-5.

Third round - Cork 5-12, Armagh 0-5.

Fourth round - Cork 1-12, Kildare 1-8.

Fifth round - Cork 0-21, Antrim 2-7.

Semi-final - Cork 0-18, Carlow 1-7.

Final - Cork 2-16, Derry 1-5.

the strengths and weaknesses of his team and is also aware that experience will be a key factor.

Emily Mangan, Claire Coffey, Aine Keogh, Louise Donoghue, Troy, Dolan, Hackett and Aoife Maguire all featured in that 2012 All-Ireland Premier Junior success and they all know what is required to win at Croke Park.

Curtailling Cork's ability to run from deep positions will be vital and if Meath can achieve that it will be a major plus in their bid to earn a place in the top tier.

The right result for the Camogie

Association would be a win for Meath instead of a second team taking the title again.

If the Meath players can deliver one more match-winning performance it will complete a marvellous transformation from the backwaters of the fourth tier championship to the top grade under the tutelage of a manager who never seeks the limelight.

Davis has achieved some significant upsets during his near 30-year role patrolling sidelines for Meath hurling and camogie, to win one more game would complete the journey.

"There's wonderful people working in Meath camogie, so many people working hard, passionate about the sport and what they do and I would love for the county to get behind them, to support the team in Croke Park on Sunday," stated Davis.

### MEATH (PROBABLE)

Emily Mangan; Emma Coffey, Claire Coffey, Ellen Burke; Aine Keogh, Aoife Maguire, Louise Donoghue; Cheyenne O'Brien, Kristina Troy; Megan Thynne, Aoife Minogue, Amy Gaffney; Caroline Quinn, Jane Dolan, Sinead Hackett.



# Treacy and Cork in search of glory – and atonement

## Buckley aims for medals record



Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Senior Camogie Final

**CORK V KILKENNY**

Sunday: Croke Park, 4pm  
Referee: Owen Elliott, Antrim  
TV: RTE Two

**Eoghan Cormican**

## O'Sullivan replaces O'Connor

**Therese O'Callaghan**

There is one change to the Cork senior camogie team for Sunday's Liberty Insurance All-Ireland final against Kilkenny at Croke Park (4pm) with Eimear O'Sullivan starting in place of the injured Gemma O'Connor.

O'Sullivan is selected to play at midfield with Ashling Thompson reverting to centre-back. O'Connor picked up a serious knee injury in the All-Ireland semi-final against Galway.

Cork will also contest the intermediate final. They are up against Meath with a 2pm throw-in.

**Cork senior team:** A Murray, P Mackey, R Buckley (Capt), L Treacy, M Cahalane, A Thompson, C Sigerson, L Coppinger, E O'Sullivan, A O'Connor, O Cronin, O Cotter, H Looney, N McCarthy, K Mackey.

**Cork intermediate team:** A Lee, L Weste, S Harrington, N Ni Chaoimh (Capt), R Killeen, S Buckley, L Callanan, F Neville, J Barry, K Hickey, K McCarthy, M McCarthy, R O'Shea, L Collins, C Sugrue.

For Gemma, for themselves, and for the regrets that have lingered during the past 12 months.

Cork camogie manager Paudie Murray insisted this week that his team didn't build on their All-Ireland win of 2015. The following year's campaign became about the three in a row and nothing else. The focus wasn't what it should have been, neither was their preparation. Attitudes weren't right. The net result: The three in a row never materialised.

Laura Treacy was left corner-back on the Cork team which fell to Kilkenny by four points in the 2016 decider. The warning signs, says the Kill-eagh defender, had been flashing right throughout the summer. Wexford had taken them to extra-time in the All-Ireland semi-final. Had Cork been right, they would have had that result wrapped up well inside the regulation 60 minutes.

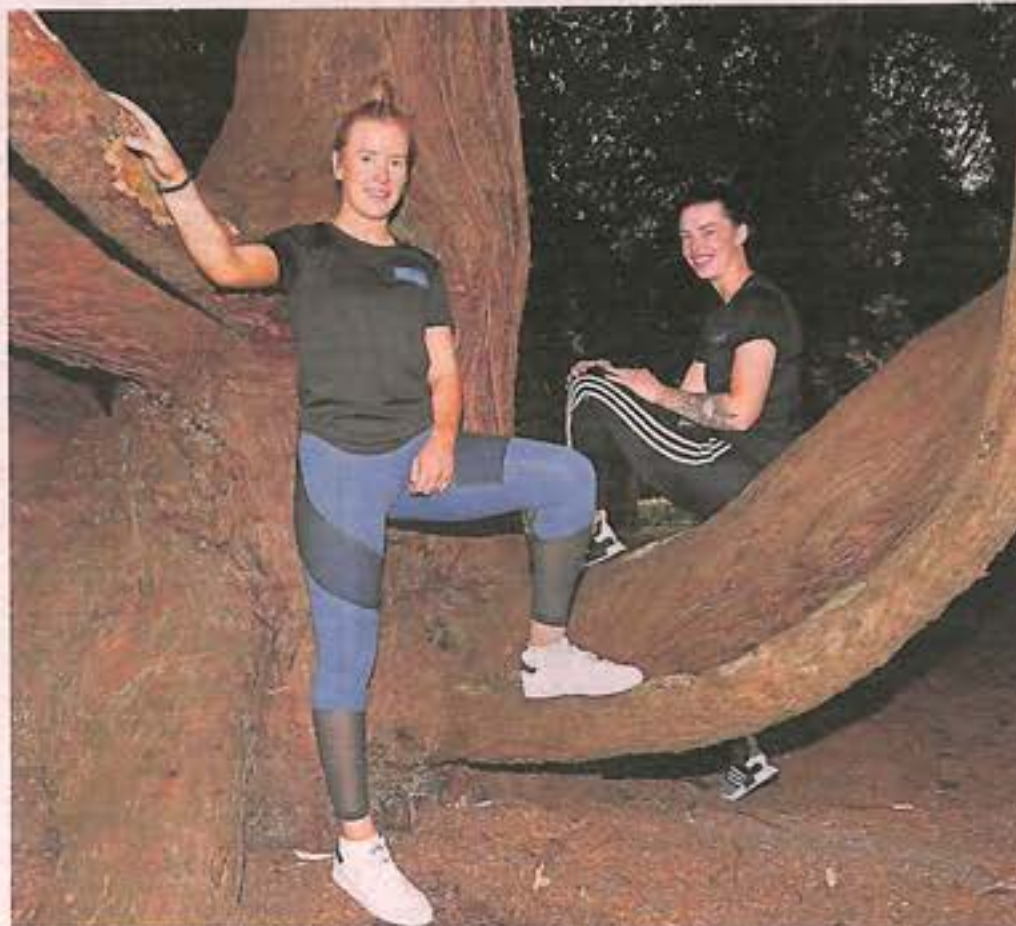
"2016 flopped," says the 22-year-old. "We weren't fit enough going into the final. I was trying to convince myself I was ready for the game when I don't think I really was. We were trying to convince ourselves we were going well when, in reality, there was so much more in us."

"We trained hard and we said to ourselves we were training hard, but we weren't training hard enough. The workrate we brought in 2014 and 2015 was phenomenal. We just didn't end up getting that gear going in 2016. We didn't do ourselves justice and, as a

result, a load of us have regrets. I think a lot of older girls came back because of how 2016 finished. If we had won, a couple of them might have slipped away."

Whereas last year centred on the three in a row, Sunday is about atonement. As Paudie Murray remarked in this paper a fortnight ago, there has been only one team in their heads all year. Kilkenny and Cork, to a lesser extent, have pulled marginally clear of the pack and if they avoided each other at the All-Ireland semi-final stage, then this was always the likely final pairing.

To reserve the current order, Cork are going to have to reach a gear not yet found in 2017. Ann Downey's Cats have won league titles either



**CALM BEFORE THE STORM:** Laura Treacy, left, and Ashling Thompson chill out outside the Rochestown Park Hotel in Cork last month. Treacy is desperate to win Sunday's camogie decider for the injured Gemma O'Connor.

Picture: Jim Coughlan

side of reclaiming the O'Duffy Cup and in championship fare, they haven't been troubled since Cork stopped them in the 2015 semi-final.

"We just want to get the performance out of ourselves we know is in there," says Treacy.

"Thankfully, the games have been going well enough throughout the year. Kilkenny are a super team and have been the team to beat this year. We have said to ourselves if we could work hard enough, hopefully, we'll have enough in the bag that will come out on matchday. We want to bring the work-rate that we lacked last year."

"This year, whatever the result might be, we don't want any regrets. Last year, there

was something missing."

As much as they'll want to right the wrongs of last year, this is an All-Ireland they are trying to win for Gemma O'Connor. The long-serving Cork player suffered medial ligament damage during the semi-final win over Galway and so won't feature at GAA HQ on Sunday.

Ashling Thompson is set to be named at centre-back in O'Connor's absence, with either Eimear O'Sullivan or Julie White coming into the starting team. "Somebody has to step in and they are big shoes to fill. Gemma is a legend of the game. I have looked up to her since I was so small. She is such a leader. She is an absolutely massive loss."

"Collectively, we're going to

have to drive it on to make sure Gemma gets the All-Ireland medal she deserves. She deserves it more than anybody given what she has been through the last couple of years."

"When I joined the squad as a 17-year-old in 2012, Gemma was one of the older players who really made me feel welcome and really made me feel at home. It was no different when I broke onto the team for the 2014 championship, she was one of the more experienced players who'd always be looking out for you on the field."

"It will be a massive challenge without Gemma. It is a challenge we are looking forward to. If we work hard, the performance will come."

**Mary White**

Former dual star Rena Buckley could become the most decorated player in GAA history on Sunday should Cork claim back the O'Duffy Cup.

The Inniscarra player will bid for an incredible 18th senior All-Ireland medal when she takes to the field in Croke Park, and should Cork defeat Kilkenny, the 30-year-old will officially become the most decorated player in GAA history, male or female.

In doing so, she will surpass her friend and former teammate Briege Corkery, who holds 17 Celtic Crosses – 11 in football and six in camogie.

Buckley is set to make history regardless as she will become the first player ever to captain Cork to both a senior camogie and football All-Ireland final. In 2012, she lifted the Brendan Martin Cup with the ladies footballers, defeating Kerry in the final, and should she lift the O'Duffy Cup on Sunday, she'll make double history.

Buckley replaced Aisling Thompson as captain of the Cork senior camogie side this year having helped Inniscarra to the Senior Cork Camogie Championship title against Milford last winter, and in doing so she opted out of Ephie Fitzgerald's squad to focus her efforts as camogie captain. Her experience was missed during the footballers' All-Ireland semi-final defeat to Mayo in last Saturday's All-Ireland semi-final in Brehin Park – just the second ever defeat for Cork since bowing out in the 2010 All-Ireland quarter-final against Tyrone.

Buckley was the Cork captain that day in 2010, but she will be hoping the same fate does not befall her troops on Sunday, in what is a repeat of the 2016 senior All-Ireland camogie final.

The Donoughmore footballer already has numerous accolades to her name, including multiple All-Stars in both codes, and senior All-Ireland club championships which she won alongside former three-time All-Ireland-winning captain Juliet Murphy.



**Cork's Libby Coppinger and Ann Marie Starr of Galway.** The dual ace already picked up a football All-Ireland at senior level last year.

Picture: INPHO/Bryan Kean

**RENA BUCKLEY**  
BSc (Physiotherapy)  
2009



Camogie player, Gaelic footballer and physiotherapist, Rena Buckley surpassed

her own record with another All-Ireland win in football last year. Buckley, who holds 17 senior All-Ireland medals, relinquished football this summer to focus on running her physiotherapy practice, studying for her MSc in Sports Physiotherapy and captaining Cork's camogie team. In 2015 she was presented with a UCD Alumni Award.



# Leavy hopes past heartbreak can drive Westmeath girls to glory

COLINDUFFY

WESTMEATH senior camogie captain Fiona Leavy can't wait for a rare day out in Croke Park as the Lake County side gear up for Sunday's All-Ireland Premier Junior Championship final against Dublin on Sunday at GAA HQ (2 noon).

This is a breakthrough for Westmeath's wielders of the camán, who have already beaten Dublin in the group stages, but only just.

"This particular squad have never played in Croke Park so it's great to help put Westmeath camogie back on the map," she said.

"The underage structure has been there and this is just a great event and opportunity for us on Sunday so we're really looking forward to it."

When asked why things are coming right for Westmeath camogie this year, firstly Fiona reflects on last year. "We lost the semi-final by a point after extra-time to Carlow, who went on to win last year. In the last few years we have been there or thereabouts, but this year we have a very big squad and really good players in with us. I think the management really earned from being in with us last year as well."

"Losing the semi-final last year was heartbreaking, but I think it's days like that, that ring about the want to go on and try and win an All-Ire-



Westmeath's Fiona Leavy and Dublin's Emer Keenan pictured close to Croke Park ahead of this Sunday's Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Premier Junior Championship Final. PICTURE: INPHO/JAMES CROMBIE.

land, which is never easy to do."

Dublin stand between Westmeath and the Kay Mills Cup. There's been a huge resurgence in camogie in the capital - particularly in 2017, with the senior side advancing to their first All-Ireland semi-final in 27 years.

And Leavy is fully aware of the challenge that Dublin will pose. "Dublin are doing great, and if other counties were to look at them, what they have done for camogie

is incredible. They are really putting in the effort, and they are really getting the rewards as well as a result of it."

"We played them a few weeks ago in the group stages and we won by a point. It was a very close game, and they are a very good team, so we won't be taking anything for granted come Sunday, and I suppose neither will they."

"We know each other, but that doesn't mean anything - on the day it's an All-Ireland final and it's Croke Park."



Mailead, Joanne and Edel McCormack at training as Westmeath prepare for their All-Ireland camogie final clash against Dublin. PHOTO: JOHN MCCAULEY.

Sometimes it's the players that might not have got the media attention that shine on All-Ireland final day."

Looking back on the year, Westmeath plied their trade in Division 2 of the Littlewoods Ireland National Camogie League, and while Dublin were a division below, they did come away with Di-

vision 3 silverware.

Raharney's Leavy - who has also played ladies' football for Westmeath, and played her part in All-Ireland success - says there's not much between the divisions.

"Division 2 this year was absolutely brilliant. Going out in January we weren't sure if we would be competitive and

to be honest we were. We had a great victory over Kilkenny and another win over Kildare, so that all stood to us. Those games were absolutely brilliant for us as a squad, but when you look back it feels like a lifetime ago now. It's all about September and playing in an All-Ireland final now though," Fiona added.

**CAMOGIE: LIBERTY INSURANCE ALL-IRELAND PREMIER JUNIOR FINAL PREVIEW**

## Westmeath boss wants players to leave Croke Park with 'no regrets'

PAUL HUGHES

WHEN Westmeath's senior camogie side take to the hallowed Croke Park turf for their All-Ireland premier junior championship final against Dublin on Sunday (12pm), it will be a first for the entire panel.

Given the sheer amount of experience in the panel - names like Dinah Loughlin, Pamela Greville and Denise McGrath come to mind - manager Johnny Greville says that it's "amazing to think they haven't put one foot on the grass".

For that reason, the Raharney man - who has been in charge of Westmeath's senior camogie set-up since last year - has put a lot of work into getting his charges ready for the cauldron of emotion that is GAA headquarters.

"It's fantastic, but at the same time, you have to deal with it and make sure the emotions don't overawe them," Johnny said, during last Friday's pre-final 'meet and greet' with local camogie fans in TEG Cusack Park.

"It's important that we go out and stick to our plan. We've gone through things in fine detail over the last few weeks, but we've put a fair bit of work into ensuring that the girls can cope with the occasion."



Westmeath senior camogie manager, Johnny Greville. PHOTO: KEITH WISEMAN.

to be emotion, and there are going to be mistakes made on the day, but it's about dealing with them and making sure they're not the overriding factor on the day. You can always recover, don't look back and don't look forward, think about the next ball."

Getting to Croke Park was the target at the start of the year for Greville and the Westmeath girls. "We should have done it last year," said the manager, looking back ruefully on a semi-final defeat to Carlow. Getting past Armagh in this year's corresponding fixture allowed his troops to breathe "a huge sigh of relief".

Looking back on a relatively successful season, Greville



At the All-Ireland camogie finals photocall at Croke Park L-R: Fiona Leavy, Westmeath (Junior); Claire Coffey, Meath (Intermediate); Rena Buckley, Cork (Senior); Deirdre Ashe, Liberty Insurance; Camogie Association President Catherine Neary; Anna Farrell, Kilkenny (Senior); Niamh Ni Chaoimh, Cork (Intermediate); and Emer Keenan, Dublin (Junior). PICTURE: INPHO/JAMES CROMBIE.

said that a sobering 0-17 to 0-5 league defeat to Cork in a rain-soaked St Loman's last February was a "huge learning curve" for Westmeath.

A very positive Division 2 campaign was the springboard for a tremendous crack at the Leinster intermediate camogie championship. In that competition, Westmeath upset the odds to dismantle Wexford and Kilkenny, before they eventually lost out to Laois in the final.

"Those wins really stood to us going into the All-Irelands, and we had a couple of handy wins against Wicklow, Waterford and Offaly, before getting across the line against Dublin, and then beating Armagh."

As for Dublin - who Westmeath defeated by a point in the championship's group stage - Greville is expecting a fierce battle between two evenly matched teams.

Since the sides met in August, Dublin have benefited from the regrading of a number of unused senior players. However, Westmeath were also understrength when they saw off the Metropolitans in Parnells.

"They had great movement, height and physicality," Greville said of the Dubs. "They had a lot of top class attributes. The goalkeeper had a huge puckout, they're brilliant from long range frees. Their full-forward, Aoife Bolger, scored 2-2

on the day. They have threats all over the field, and we feel we have the same. And we were missing a few players on the day ourselves, but they have strength in depth like us. I think they don't fear us, like we don't fear them."

"The girls have come on mentally and physically throughout the year, and we have a very versatile panel with a great balance between youth and experience."

"As far as we're concerned, we're concentrating on ourselves and our own game. But we're not being naïve and totally dismissing the opposition as regards preparation. We have to do our homework and tick those boxes, but generally

when it comes to finals, if you get your own house right, you won't be too far off the mark."

Greville is delighted to have a fully fit panel of 26 ready for the final, and gives huge credit to his backroom team of Jimmy Greville, Jim Bob Baker, Frank Mullen (selectors), John Gilligan (strength and conditioning), Tomas Mount (stats), and Keith Begley (performance) for having the panel so well prepared.

The key thing for his panel of players, Greville insists, is to leave Croke Park on Sunday, having no regrets.

"It's a big occasion," he continued. "You see all the kids here today - if it does good for Westmeath camogie, it'll definitely propel it to the next level."

"At club level, there's a lot of brilliant players. The U16s won an All-Ireland last year, and we won a Minor 'B' this year. The players are there and the future is bright, but it's really important that we go out and perform, and if we bring the cup home, it'll really push it on further."

"Finals are so hard to win, especially when you go to the ultimate arena. I'll be saying one thing to the girls - don't have any regrets come Sunday night. For some of them, it may be their last opportunity."

"We're hoping to go out and perform, and I think that if we go out and perform, we'll win," added Greville.



It was a moment made for A Season of Sundays. After Cork got over the line against Galway in the All-Ireland camogie semi-final, a heartbroken Aoife Donohue knelt crumpled on the pitch. She'd had an enterprising game, coursing up and down the field from her corner-forward position and chipping in with four points. But despite not scoring for 28 minutes in the second half, Cork gritted their teeth and held on. Pivotal to their defence of their slim lead was midfielder Ashling Thompson, who dropped deep and helped fill the gap left by the injured Gemma O'Connor. At the final whistle, Thompson went over and pulled Donohue to her feet, hugging her. It was a moment of pure empathy – Thompson knows what it's like to be on the wrong side of a result – and of respect, given that the two have met numerous times with their county sides down the years, as well as with their clubs, Milford of Cork and Mullagh of Galway.

It was a fitting way to close a tense and hard-fought match. Tomorrow, Cork face Kilkenny in a rematch of last year's senior final, the main difference being that this year, Cork go into it underdogs rather than favourites. Having won both league and championship last year, Kilkenny are gunning for the double-double: this year's league is already under their belts. Cork, meanwhile, will have their 27th All-Ireland title if they win, edging them past Dublin to become the most decorated camogie county of all time.

Kilkenny have been impressive all year, beating a young, determined Dublin side last month. Dublin, who were in their first semi-final appearance since 1990, did an admirable job of keeping Kilkenny's goal threat at bay, an early clinical penalty by Denise Gaule notwithstanding. In response to Dublin's swarming defence, Kilkenny simply picked off long-range points all afternoon, anchored by centre-back Ann Dalton's flawless ball delivery.

# Hoping a stellar season ends on a high



At Croke Park ahead of Sunday's Liberty Insurance All-Ireland camogie finals were, from left, Westmeath's Fiona Leavy (junior); Meath's Claire Coffey (intermediate); Cork's Rena Buckley (senior); Deirdre Ashe, director of personal lines, Liberty Insurance; Camogie Association president Catherine Neary; Kilkenny's Anna Farrell (senior); Cork's Niamh Ni Chaoimh (intermediate) and Dublin's Emer Keenan (junior). Cork and Kilkenny face off in a repeat of last September's senior final in which the Cats claimed their first All-Ireland title in 22 years. The Rebels are aiming to become the most successful county in the history of the championship by topping the roll of honour with a 27th title. Cork will also contest the intermediate final against Meath, with Westmeath playing Dublin in the junior decider. Picture: James Crombie

Dublin hung in there through Aisling Maher and Faye McCarthy's free-

**Eimear Ryan**

taking, but a scorching injury-time goal from substitute Jenny Clifford gave Kilkenny some breathing space. In all, nine of Kilkenny's players scored from play.

This will be Cork's challenge: how will they curb the influence of Dalton, who effortlessly picks out forwards? How will they disrupt the almost preternatural understanding between Kilkenny's midfield sister act, Anna and Meighan Farrell? How do you

minimise the scoring of a team who will happily throw over long-range points from all angles, or outlast a squad whose forwards are so fit they regularly track back to help the full-back line?

Unfortunately for Cork, they'll have to do it without their centre-back and playmaker, O'Connor who sustained a serious knee injury against Galway. Rena Buckley or Ashling Thompson would be ideal picks to slot in at

centre back, but O'Connor's physicality, cool head and impeccable striking will a loss.

Having said all that, Cork can take huge positives from their semi-final win over Galway, arguably a tougher semi-final test than Kilkenny's. Galway had the momentum for much of the second half, and with ten minutes remaining it was a two-point game. It took the defence a while to settle after O'Connor's departure, and Galway substitute

Niamh Hanniffy showed great initiative and footwork to nip in for a goal in the 49th minute. For the remainder of the match, however, the defence held out, with Chloe Sigerson, Laura Treacy and Rena Buckley in particular rock-solid. Katrina Mackey's well-worked point at the end of normal time gave them a three-point cushion.

While Cork's 28-minute dry spell in the second half will be a worry going into the final, they can take great confidence from their gutsy defence of their slim lead. They'll also take heart from strong showings from their forwards, in particular Orla Cotter, whose strength in the air, work ethic and attacking instincts paid off with a vital goal just before half-time. Full-forward Niamh McCarthy, a 2017 find, also showed impressive physicality and instinct on the edge of the square.

"It won't be one for the spectator," said Cork manager Paudie Murray, wryly predicting a low-scoring game against Kilkenny. His forwards may have something to say about that.

A final word for any new camogie spectators this weekend: because the Camogie Association has always been on a different track from the GAA, rules diverge on occasion. Think of the differences not so much as specific 'camogie rules' as hurling rules from a different era. For example: while the GAA phased out the handpass goal in the late 1980s, presumably to the delight of goalkeepers everywhere, camogie kept it in. Expect to see some hand-passed finishes this weekend, though one can only hope that camogie will soon phase out this awkward rule (I say this as someone who has probably scored more handpass goals than struck goals in my career).

Here's one for the traditionalists. More recently, camogie and hurling rules diverged again when the GAA changed the penalty format, but camogie kept the established three-on-a-line style. You can still cross the 21 while taking a penalty in camogie; while no one is yet doing it with Anthony Nash's gusto, the set-piece often remains a keeper's speciality – see Aoife Murray coolly roofing it against Galway in the semi-final.

Finally, and most importantly: enjoy the game. This has been a wonderful year for camogie and women's team sports in general – let's see it out with a bang.

## Loss of centre-back O'Connor a massive blow for Rebels

(The Key battles)

**Therese O'Callaghan**

**The centre-backs.**

The loss of Cork centre back, Gemma O'Connor, cannot be overstated. Her ability to dictate the play has been a key weapon in the Rebels' arsenal over recent years, but so, too, have her leadership and calm under pressure on the biggest of days. The injury to O'Connor has meant a re-jig by the Cork man-

agement team — Eimear O'Sullivan is selected at midfield, which frees Ashling Thompson to sit back into O'Connor's regular role. Thompson should slot in there without too much disruption and will lead by example.

Ann Dalton is the Kilkenny number six and is a hugely influential cog in Ann Downey's side. She usually plays deep and is an excellent reader of the game. Her work-rate is relentless and she is in tremendous

form again this year. Whichever side dominates this vital position will go a long way in deciding the destination of the O'Duffy Cup.

**Midfield** Because of the shuffle, there is a new Cork midfield pairing, with O'Sullivan linking up with Libby Coppinger. An experienced performer, O'Sullivan is the holder of four All-Ireland senior medals — her first in 2008 — and is an All-Star recipient, so is no stranger to the big day. She

came in for O'Connor, when she was injured in the Galway game. She was inspirational in the 2014 final, when she was awarded the player of the match. Coppinger, from the St Colum's club, was on the Cork intermediate side that lost to Kilkenny last season (she was introduced as a substitute in the senior final) and has taken the step-up to the higher grade in her stride. So, there is a nice blend of youth and experience in this sector. But, they will need

to be at their best, as they are likely to come up against dynamic sisters, Anna (captain) and Meighan Farrell, who have shown tremendous form in the champions return to the All-Ireland final. Whoever comes out on top, here, will have a major say in determining the outcome. **Orla Cotter v Denise Gaule** Two forwards who are on the top of their game. Orla Cotter remains a formidable player for the Rebels, while 2016 player of the year, Denise Gaule, is criti-

cal for the Black and Amber. Cotter has, so often, been the heartbeat of this team. She has the ability to shoot from distance and struck 1-3 in the semi-final. Likewise, 2016 player of the year, Denise Gaule, heads up the Kilkenny attack. The scorer of 1-2 in their penultimate round, she produces the goods time and again and is a strong and powerful player. Both women are capable of driving their counties to success.



# Camogie like a religion for Kilkenny's great sister act

The Farrell sisters are full of fun but take their chosen sport very seriously, as **Cliona Foley** discovers

WHETHER religious conviction or mere rites of passage are the motivation, most Irish families celebrate Holy Communion and Confirmation, when every child is licked spick and span and on their best behaviour.

Those days just usually ended less decorously on the Farrell dairy farm in Thomastown.

"Whenever we were having family gatherings with all the cousins – like Communion or Confirmations – everyone was just told to bring their huris with them," reveals Kilkenny senior camogie captain Anna Farrell.

"We'd have proper games out in the garden afterwards and they weren't friendly because we were

all so competitive. There was no holding back!"

Wexford hurlers Diarmuid and Ciarán Lyng were usually in the thick of them. "They were a fair bit bigger than us," she grins, the twinkle in her eye hinting that the Farrell sisters relished any chance they got to clatter into their famous first cousins from across the hurling border. They've found fame themselves since and three of them will start when Kilkenny hope to retain their All-Ireland senior title against Cork tomorrow.

Their only brother Jonjo (29) also plays senior for Kilkenny and, like most GAA dynasties, there's another one coming up fast on the rails. Eimear is still only 17 but starred off the bench when Thomastown won their first Leinster senior club camogie title last winter. Their father won a Kilkenny senior title with Thomastown and their mother, from Bennettsbridge, also played

underage for the county. Their parents are still immersed in the club and supporting them, even on those crazy days when their talented brood tips the family petrol-tank into the red.

"In the last two years a lot of our matches have been on the same day," Shelly says. "They travelled from one of our games in Galway this year straight down to Semple Stadium to watch Jonjo."

Their daughters suffered a heap of heartbreak before Kilkenny broke their 22-year-old All-Ireland senior duck a year ago.

Shelly lost back-to-back senior finals in 2013-'14 and the three of them lost two All-Irelands in one day in 2014, though defeat to Limerick in that intermediate final pushed Anna and Meighan on to the next level. Anna and Shelly shared a house with county teammates Katie Power and Denise Gaule for two years but the girls are living back home at present.



Anna Farrell is hoping that she and sisters Shelly and Meighan can help Kilkenny to victory INPHO

Anna is a fraud analyst with Bank of Ireland in Loughboy, Shelly is an accounts technician with local accountancy firm Cullinane O'Neill Duncan and Meighan has just finished a degree in early childhood studies at WIT. Meg and Jonjo are more likely to volunteer on the farm. "Myself and

Anna sometimes have to step into the gaps if they need to move the cows," Shelly chirps.

"Or cover the silage," interrupts Anna in mock-horror. "Dad always finds us for that. I think he deliberately waits until we come home to do it. You'd be trying to say you're injured or something!"

They are the best of friends barring one small area of contention. "Clothes. That's the only thing we fight over," Shelly says. "That's because everyone's wearing mine and won't buy their own!" "It's true," Anna giggles. "She's half the size of us but we still do it. I just don't like buying clothes whereas she loves it."

On-pitch they do completely different jobs for Kilkenny.

Anna (26) is the wiry midfield general, Shelly (25) is the zippy corner-forward and half-back Meighan (22) is unshakeable, in every sense of the word. "Meg is pretty laid-back but when she's playing she is just dogged, a terrier," Anna says. "It's impossible to get away from her. No one ever wants to mark her in training."

Of herself she concedes: "I don't think any of us likes to lose, we're all very competitive, but I'd probably be the worst loser."

Does being siblings help them click on a pitch? "I think we link up well together," Shelly reckons. "One of the girls would always be running off my shoulder and I'd know I'm getting the ball inside."

"But I give out a few harsh words to them," she confesses ruefully. "I'm the worst for that, even with the club. 'Yes!' Anna

chuckles. "Shelly doesn't suffer fools gladly, though when it's your sister you don't take it to heart."

They're bubbly and great fun off the pitch but all three have the sort of relentless drive and work ethic on it that mirrors doughty Cats manager Ann Downey in her prime. "Shelly's best characteristic is her absolute determination in everything she does," Anna remarks. "If she's only on one leg she'll still drive on." And hers?

"She gets on with everyone wherever she goes and especially now she's captain," Shelly remarks. "The new girls on the team would always say Anna is so nice and approachable."

They felt the public tide turning last summer, and not just because they rose as the county's hurlers sank. "Having the semi-finals before the men's replay with Waterford was the change," adds Anna. "Both went to extra-time, lots of people saw our second half and I think that opened people's eyes to camogie in Kilkenny."

And Shelly's favourite moment? The photo hangs on the wall at home: three sisters lifting the O'Duffy Cup together. A special moment for the Farrells and all the hurling cousins who loved those Holy Communion games.

All-Ireland Camogie Finals Live, RTÉ 2, tomorrow, 1.30pm

## Record-breaker Buckley focused on captaining Cork to more glory



**Mary Hannigan**  
Nine-time All Star could make it 18 All-Ireland winners' medals tomorrow

It was back in 2004 that a 17-year-old Rena Buckley played in her first senior All-Ireland final, the day ending in heartbreak when Cork lost to reigning camogie champions Tipperary by eight points. She wondered if she'd get a second chance, if there'd be another day in Croke Park.

As it happened, there were to be plenty.

When she leads Cork on to the pitch tomorrow it will be her 22nd appearance in a senior All-Ireland final since 2004, 11 each in camogie and football,

winning 17 of them. There has been only one year in the last 13 that she hadn't a final to prepare for, and in nine of those she had two. The road to Croke Park, then, has become a familiar one.

The numbers are mind-boggling, but one person who's not that all that fussed about them is, well, Rena Buckley.

"Ah sure," she tends to say when she's reminded of her record, putting it down to good fortune, her team-mates and management. Anyone but herself, really.

But if Cork were to avenge last year's defeat to Kilkenny then Buckley is likely to have to field questions about another number: 18.

That's how many winning medals, in football and camogie, she would have amassed, moving her one ahead at the top of the roll of honour of her long-time buddy Brieghe Corkery, who took this year out. She would also become the first woman to captain her county to victory in both camogie and football, having led the footballers to success in 2012.

History-making, though, is

something she'll reflect on when the boots are hung up.

"Myself and Brieghe would have got a lot of attention last year [when they won their 17th medals], but sure, we lost the camogie final and it was all about Kilkenny after. It will be nice to look back on it, but for the moment it's all about this Cork team doing well."

"The captaincy is a huge honour, I'm lucky to be involved with two greats clubs, Donoughmore in the football and Inniscarra in the camogie, and they've given me the opportunities. It's really special for me, to be representing my club and my family, I'll be proud to be playing in Croke Park as captain."

Inniscarra's winning of the county title, and Buckley's subsequent appointment as Cork camogie captain, helped her decide on which code to focus on in 2017, an increasingly busy life meaning she couldn't play both this year.

"I just physically didn't have the time to be keeping it up, so I had to make a choice," she says. "Between work [she's a physio-therapist in Macroom] and stud-

**21**

The number of All-Ireland finals, in camogie and football, she has played in – it'll be 22 tomorrow

**17**

Senior All-Ireland-winning medals – camogie (six) and football (11)

**9**

All Star awards – football (five) and camogie (four)

**6**

The number of years she's won both the camogie and football All-Irelands

**1**

The numbers of years, since 2004, she has failed to reach either a camogie or football final



■ Rena Buckley: an increasingly busy life meant she couldn't play football and camogie this year.

PHOTOGRAPH: JAMES CROMBIE/INPHO

ying for a masters in sports physio [in UCD], it just wasn't possible to do the two."

Did you feel lazy this year?

"I did," she laughs. "It was definitely different alright. It was so strange watching the footballers on television, you'd love to have been part of it, but there comes a time. There was a five-week lay-off earlier in the summer for the camogie team, so that was a weird experience."

"I'd have been used to having a match every couple of weeks

anyway. But we'll see at the end of the year," she says, not ruling out a return to football, one that would be warmly welcomed by the team after they saw their winning streak ended by Mayo in this year's semi-finals.

And the camogie team have their own defeats to ponder. Kilkenny getting the better of them again in April's league final to retain their title, confirming their standing as the country's top side having ended that 22-year All-Ireland-winning

drought last September.

"Once you get that monkey off your back, you can really kick on. I played in a Cork football team that never even got to Croke Park, then we won our first All-Ireland and went on to win five in a row. Kilkenny knew they were good enough, they just had to get a run of matches together and they did that last year. We thought we were going great going in to that final, but then everything fell apart on us. Kilkenny came at that game with fierce intensity, they played exceptionally well, we'd no complaints. We were second best of the day."

"They're hard to play against, their set-up is quite defensive so there's very little space for our forwards. And they break so quickly you have to be sharp as a back, they can really punish you. They were excellent last year, and same again in the league final. Again, quite defensive, but when they attacked they punished us, they pounced on a couple of opportunities. They know how to win games."

"So it was back to the drawing board this year. It's not the

only final I've lost in Croke Park, and you tend to remember the ones you lost better than the ones you win. They stick in your mind. But you have to learn from them. We came back from those losses and we can do it again."

They got the mother of all frights, though, in the semi-final against Galway when, having gone eight points clear, they failed to score for close to half an hour. Galway's late rally testing Cork's nerve.

And they suffered a significant blow in that game too, seven-time All-Ireland winner Gemma O'Connor sustaining an ankle injury that rules her out of the final.

"She's a huge loss, she's central to our game, really," says Buckley. "She's been a stalwart of Cork camogie for so long, we'll certainly miss her experience. But it's a team sport, that's why there's a panel of players, we just have to get on with it and give it our best."

And when it comes to numbers, the only ones she's interested in are those on the scoreboard come the end of tomorrow's game.



# Lure of captaincy helped dual star Rena choose camogie



Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Senior Camogie Final

## CORK V KILKENNY

Tomorrow: Croke Park, 4pm  
Referee: Owen Elliott, Antrim  
TV: RTE Two

Eoghan Cormican

**T**he more things change, the more they stay the same.

Forgive us for not being overly inventive with our intro, but we couldn't think of a more appropriate line when summing up the year that has been for Rena Buckley.

On the fourth Sunday of this month, Dublin and Mayo will contest the All-Ireland ladies football final. It is the first time since 2010, and just the second occasion since 2004, that Cork are not involved in the decider.

She won't thank us for saying this, but it is hard not to find correlation between Cork's failed seven-in-a-row bid and Buckley's absence from the set-up in 2017 – her decision to concentrate solely on camogie brought the curtain down on 13 years of unbroken service to the county's senior football team. Equally significant, we should add, was the choice of Buckley's partner in crime, Briege Corkery, not to link up with the Cork ladies either.

The time she had free of study and running her physiotherapy clinic in Macroom, Buckley devoted to the small ball. And September simply wouldn't be September if we didn't catch a glimpse of the 30-year-old tearing around Croke Park, history hot on her heels.

Indeed, before a single sliotar is struck at GAA HQ tomorrow, the Inniscarra defender will have already broken new ground. Having led the footballers to All-Ire-



land glory in 2012, she is to become the first player to captain Cork in separate codes on All-Ireland final day.

There's also the small matter of chasing an 18th All-Ireland medal in what is her 22nd final.

No question but the captaincy played a significant role in Buckley opting for camogie. Had it not been on the table, then the choice of which master she'd serve would have been a hell of a lot more difficult. Why she had to make a decision in the first instance goes back to September of 2015 when she returned to UCD to begin a two-year part-time Masters in sports physiotherapy.

Year one ended in May of 2016 and with no course work to attend to that summer, Buckley was free to line out for both county teams. She knew, though, something would have to give in 2017. Exams in May and a thesis due in August. There simply weren't enough hours in the

day to uphold her dual status. And as you'd expect of a woman with 10 All Star awards, she doesn't do half-measures.

On October 28 of last year, Inniscarra and Milford met in the Cork senior camogie decider. The latter were chasing a fifth consecutive county title and were expected to comfortably overcome their opponents. The underdogs stunned the reigning All-Ireland club champions to claim a famous 4-10 to 2-13 win and with tradition dictating the Cork captaincy be awarded to a player from the county championship winning team, Inniscarra nominated Buckley for the role.

"That was a huge part of my choosing," says the 17-time All-Ireland medal winner.

"It was difficult to park the football, but I had to be realistic as well. I physically couldn't have done both. Football has been such a huge part of my life. Just watching the games on television this

summer, I've been on edge. "I've never really gone travelling or on massive holidays. I've always played football and camogie for Cork. I've really enjoyed those choices. I don't feel I've missed out in any way. I have had a brilliant time throughout my twenties playing with Cork and I'll cherish that for the rest of my days."

"I'm happy with the choice I made this year. That's for this year. We'll see again at the end of the year."

The respective Cork managers were informed of her plans back in January. Her final college exam was on May 12 and she told football boss Ephie Fitzgerald she'd review her position once that was done.

"It is harder to recover as you get a little bit older. We are training Tuesday and Thursday and to then try and put a hard session in on the Wednesday just makes it so tricky."

"You're conscious also that

when it comes to the business end of the season, you'd have matches on the Saturday and Sunday. That becomes harder as you get older. I thanked Ephie in May and wished them the best of luck."

One of the first people she contacted was Briege. The pair are as different as night and day, yet will be forever entwined for their exploits in the red shirt. Should Paudie Murray's charges achieve redemption against Kilkenny, Buckley will move one medal clear of her former team-mate.

"I would have phoned her before saying anything to anyone about what my plans were for 2017 with Cork."

"We've been paired together for so long. Even at the open day for supporters there last week, some mother said, 'this is Briege Corkery'. I couldn't stop laughing."

"I definitely miss her around. We're fierce friends, but we obviously can't be doing the same things together all the time. Life moves

Rena Buckley becomes the first player to captain Cork in separate codes on All-Ireland final day.

Picture: INPHO

## GAMEZone

Cork v Kilkenny

A Murray 1	E Kavanagh
P Mackey 2	C Foley
R Buckley(c) 3	D Tobin
L Treacy 4	G Walsh
M Cahalane 5	C Donohoe
A Thompson 6	A Dalton
C Sgerson 7	A Dunphy
L Coppinger 8	H Farrell
E O'Sullivan 9	A Farrell(c)
A O'Connor 10	J Malone
O Cronin 11	K Power
O Cotter 12	D Gaule
H Looney 13	S Farrell
N McCarthy 14	M Walsh
K Mackey 15	D Morrissey

■ Cork ■ Kilkenny

on."

Indeed it does. But for the moment, Buckley's focus remains on September silverware. Nothing new there.

It is 13 years since she lined out in her first All-Ireland camogie final at the tender age of 17. From the starting team named for tomorrow, just she and goalkeeper Aoife Murray remain. Six finals have been won, four have been lost. The excitement of it all has never dimmed, however. Dad and mam still get nervous as throw-in approaches and even though their daughter has a "few finals" under her belt, she's not immune to match-day jitters either.

"When you're young, you're carefree. As you get older, you think about things a bit more and you do get a bit more nervous because you realise there won't be too many more. A time will come when you won't be there. I suppose you have to try and enjoy it too."

"To captain Cork in a second final is nice. It would be nicer to win and nicer for everyone if we did. We have had great captains in the past. You remember the winning feeling, though. That's the main thing."

## Cats have forward power to secure successive titles for first time since 1991

### TOMORROW

Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Senior Camogie Final, Cork v Kilkenny, Croke Park, (O Elliott, Antrim), 4pm

Paudie Murray was right to say this final won't be one for the spectators. Cork will operate with a two-woman full-forward line, deploying the third inside forward out the field. And with Gemma O'Connor absent from the centre-back slot, the Cork management are likely to station an extra body between full-back Rena

Buckley and stand-in number six Ashling Thompson.

Ann Downey insisted last week that she doesn't tell her players to get behind the ball, but there can be no questioning the counter-attacking nature of their set-up. Midfielders Anna and Meighan Farrell sit very deep, so Cork will again have to deal with five black and amber shirts in the Kilkenny half-back line. This frustrated Cork in last year's final and the league decider back in April. Their success

in this department will hinge largely on the quality of ball coming out of defence and from the midfield pair of Eimear O'Sullivan and Libby Coppinger.

Cork went almost half an hour without posting a score in the second-half of their All-Ireland semi-final. They know that won't cut it here. In what will be a low-scoring grind, you'd fancy the Kilkenny forwards of Denise Gaule, Shelly Farrell, Katie Power and Julie Ann Malone to come up with the

necessary goods and secure back-to-back titles for the No-residents for the first time since 1991.

Verdict: Kilkenny

Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Intermediate Camogie Final, Cork v Meath, Croke Park (L Dempsey, Kilkenny), 2pm

The Cork team shows 11 starters from the side which fell to Kilkenny in the 2016 decider. Full-forward Linda Collins was their top scorer in that game,

hitting 1-5, and she remains their chief scoring threat having hit 2-1 during the 10-point semi-final win over Derry. Meath are appearing in their first intermediate final.

They spent this spring operating in Division 1 of the league and scored a 3-9 to 0-17 victory when today's opponents travelled to Trim on July 8. Jane Dolan has long been acknowledged as one of the most dangerous forwards in the land and she will be ably assisted by Kristina Troy, Megan

Thynne, Aoife Minogue and Cheyenne O'Brien.

Verdict: Cork

Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Premier Junior Camogie Final, Dublin v Westmeath, Croke Park (P McDonald, Cavan), 12pm

Shane Plowman's Dublin are looking to round off what has been a hugely progressive year for camogie in the capital.

Verdict: Dublin

— Eoghan Cormican





GAA

Christy  
O'Connor

**AFTER** the camogie league final in April, Kilkenny manager Ann Downey was clearly delighted with her side's narrow win but she didn't want to let the moment pass without having her say on Cork's attitude after the final whistle.

Downey expressed disappointment at Cork's decision to undertake their warm-down while Meighan Farrell was being presented with the trophy. The Cork players continued their warm-down as Farrell delivered her acceptance speech at the Gaelic Grounds.

A simmering rivalry had clearly been brewing for a while. That rivalry first made headlines last September when Kilkenny's Collette Dörner and Cork's Hannah Looney engaged in a bout of shoving during the pre-match handshake.

"It just doesn't happen, to be quite honest," was Ann Downey's response on KCLR when asked about 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."

However, Cork manager, Paudie Murray, responded the following day by claiming that there is no substance to the storyline about disrespect shown towards the winners. Murray firmly believed his players were gracious in defeat and acted accordingly throughout the post-match formalities.

"To be honest, I don't know where it's coming from," he said. "One thing that we always say to our players is you shake hands with your opponent and your team-mate after the game. It was certainly done. I know I came into the middle of the field and all our players congratulated their opponents."

"We were in a circle in the middle of the field, granted the PA system wasn't great so it was very difficult to understand or hear any of the speeches, but I don't know where it is coming from. It's from someone that has very little to do on a Monday morning."

There is clearly a real edge now between these groups as they get ready to meet in Sunday's All-Ireland final again. That was especially evident when the sides met in a regular league meeting in early April, prior to the league final.

Neither side needed the win to advance to the semi-finals but that didn't matter. Only one point separated the teams at the final whistle in Dunmore.

"It didn't diminish the rivalry and bite that exists when Cork and Kilkenny meet," wrote Linda Mellerick in her *Evening Echo* match report afterwards. "Cork held firm to record an important win, regardless of what the table already said."

The Cork-Kilkenny rivalry always meant something but it evaporated during the late 90s and noughties as Kilkenny slipped in the rankings. But it's firmly back now.

Historically, there has always been an edge to the rivalry, especially from a Cork perspective, primarily because they always struggled to beat Kilkenny. Despite joint-topping the roll of honour with 26 titles, Cork only managed to beat Kilkenny in four of those finals.

On the other hand, of Kilkenny's 13 titles, nine were won in finals against Cork. When Kilkenny won seven-in-a-row between 1985-'91, they defeated Cork in four of those deciders.

When Cork finally defeated Kilkenny in the 1995 final for the first time in

# Real edge to the two sides' rivalry



Cork's Aisling Thompson tries to break free from Katie Power of Kilkenny. That was in a league final defeat back in the spring, which came on the back of last September's Rebel heartbreak.

Pictures: Inpho/Morgan Treacy



Cork's Amy O'Connor is hounded by Julianne Malone and Denise Gaule of Kilkenny.

six final meetings over the previous 20 years, it was the sweetest victory Cork camogie had ever tasted. Cork looked dead and buried with 10 minutes to go but they charged back and a goal by Mellerick with 30 seconds of normal time remaining secured the win.

"Words cannot describe what it is like beating Kilkenny in a final," said Mellerick afterwards.

Kilkenny went into decline afterwards but that 1995 game also ended a remarkable sequence of Cork-Kilkenny camogie dominance. Between 1970 and 1995, the two shared 23 of the 26 titles of that period.

When RTE first started showing

highlights of camogie finals in the 1980s, Cork and Kilkenny always seemed to be the only two counties competing, such was their dominance.

Some of those finals created iconic moments. Kilkenny's second goal in the 1989 final was one of the most famous scored in Croke Park, for reasons other than just the green flag. Angela Downey scored without her hurley, after losing her skirt, when Liz O'Neill's desperation tackle removed some of Downey's clothing.

The footage and photographs were the subject of comment and some controversy pertaining to the coverage of women's sport. Speaking of the inci-

dent 20 years later Angela Downey said: "the only time I ever made the front page of the *Irish Times* was because I had lost my skirt."

On the same afternoon, Cork tried a tactical innovation with a sweeper, long before the term became so popular in hurling or camogie.

The relationship between the counties changed dramatically after Kilkenny went into decline at senior level. On the other hand, it was still highly active at underage level, which Kilkenny dominated.

The All-Ireland minor camogie championship was only set up in 2006, where previously the U16 grade was considered 'minor'. Cork have never won the competition while Kilkenny have dominated, winning six titles. At U16, Kilkenny captured four-in-a-row from 2005 to 2008, beating Cork in three of those deciders.

Those games helped hone the rivalry as many of those players met at senior level but the edge has really been sharpened in recent years, with Sunday being the sides' third final meeting in four seasons.

A win on Sunday would see Cork overtake Dublin at the top of the roll of honour but that won't be on Cork's minds entering the game. They just want to beat Kilkenny, as badly as any Cork team have before.

And, given the heartbreak Cork often endured at the hands of Kilkenny in the past, that is saying something.

## Geary: Cork have to bring 'ferocity' to dethrone Cats

Alan Waldron

**FORMER** Cork camogie star Anna Geary has called on Paudie Murray's charges to adopt a ferocious attitude as they bid to turn the tables on Kilkenny and claim All-Ireland glory on Sunday.

Kilkenny stunned Cork in last year's final to shatter the Munster side's three-in-a-row bid and end the Noreiders' 22-year wait to reclaim the coveted O'Duffy Cup.

Since then, Ann Downey's side have consolidated their position as the top side in the country with a league final win against their bitter rivals earlier this year.

Geary, who called time on her inter-county career in May 2015 at the age of 27, believes Cork must at least match Kilkenny physically if they are to dethrone the favourites at Croke Park this weekend (4.0).

"Cork need to adopt a ferocity because Kilkenny will bring that. Kilkenny bring a bit of swagger with them but they match it on the field," she said. "While Cork have it in their heads, I just hope they are willing to take the hits and they're willing to go in hard because I expect that's Ann Downey's game-plan - to hit Cork hard."

"You can really see there is an intense rivalry starting to brew between the sides. Last year's All-Ireland final was very unique in that Kilkenny hadn't been at the top for a long, long time so they were coming in as massive underdogs."

### ABSENCE

The almost-certain absence of centre-back and nine-time All-Star Gemma O'Connor through injury puts a major dent in Cork's ambitions to win the All-Ireland for a 27th time, with Geary predicting that Ashling Thompson may switch from midfield to No 6 in a reshuffle.

The likely loss of O'Connor, the fulcrum of the Cork defence, who was sent off in last year's decider, swings the pendulum further towards the black and amber. However, how Kilkenny handle having a target on their backs could have a significant impact on the outcome, Geary believes.

"I think Gemma's absence, and my understanding is that she can play no part, is obviously a massive blow for the girls, particularly the younger girls who probably look to Gemma to give her the ball, and also for leadership," the four-time All-Ireland winner added. "But Cork have a composure that comes from playing in All-Ireland finals."

"They're never dead. They could be six, seven points down and they never panic and you can't learn that. You see the likes of Orla Cotter, Rena Buckley, Aoife Murray... these girls know how to win games, they know how to close out games and that's something that they will have over Kilkenny."

"I'm interested to see how Kilkenny cope with that favourites' tag. There's a pressure on now that they wouldn't have had. Kilkenny won the All-Ireland last year and it was brilliant and full credit to them. But the respect comes when you've done it a few times."



## Plenty of action on the minor schedule

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

THE SE Systems Minor Championship first-round took centre stage for most clubs in the week gone by.

There were five first-round minor A games down for decision.

Ballygarvan signalled their intent when they overcame holders Sarsfields with an impressive 2-17 to 0-8 win. Glen Rovers and Killeagh played out a good contest at Glen Rovers before the Glen girls won 2-18 to 1-10.

League champions Newcestown had to battle to the finish for their one-point victory over a determined Courcy Rovers sides, 0-14 to 2-7.

There was another high scoring contest between Carrigaline and Kilbrittan/Timo- league with four points separating the sides in Carrigaline's favour, 2-16 to 2-12.

Milford/Ballyhea were to meet Mallow/Buttevant but they received a walkover.

The draws for the losers rounds were made and will be as follows — Kilbrittan/Timo- league will meet Killeagh, Courcy Rovers will take on Sarsfields. The winners of the losers round will advance to round two with the winners of the opening rounds, the draws for these to be made after the backdoor ties completed.

The SE Systems Minor B Championship produced a lot of tight clashes.

Charleville had a three-point victory over Inniscarra in a low-scoring 1-8 to 1-5 clash in Charleville. Four points separated Ballincollig and St Catherine's at Conna, 1-19 to 2-9 in Ballincollig's favour.

It was close between Eire Og and Na Piarsaigh with the Owens girls just about getting over the line. St Finbarr's proved way too strong for Ballinhassig as did league champions Aghabullogue against Enniskeane while Aghada defeated Cloughduv.

The backdoor draw is as follows: Ballinhassig get a bye to round two as there is an uneven number of teams, Cloughduv v Na Piarsaigh, Enniskeane v Inniscarra, St Catherine's v Bride Rovers or Douglas.

All first-round game in the SE Systems Minor C Championship were decided. Youghal overcame Bishopstown, Ballinascarty were too strong for Valley Rovers, while Fr O'Neill's won at Blarney. Tracton had too much for Barryroe, Sliabh Rua recorded a win over Blackrock, while Ballinora had the upper hand on Castlelyons.

In a high-scoring game which produced 15 goals, Millstreet and Clonakilty went to extra-time before the former came away winners on a 9-14 to 6-18 scoreline.

The losers found are as follows: Castlelyons get a bye to round two, Blackrock will play Bishopstown, Blarney will meet Valley Rovers and Barryroe take on Clonakilty.



Cork camogie player Amy O'Connor with Emily and Amy O'Connell giving her a send-off from St Vincent's camogie club before tomorrow's game.

Picture: Ger Bonus

# All set for a great day in Croke Park

EVERYTHING is ready for the trip to Croke Park tomorrow.

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

Bus loads of underage camogie players will gather in club car parks from early morning to board and head to Dublin. Many clubs will make the trip by rail and Cork will have a big following when they run out on the pitch to begin their bid go top of the honours list.

All-Ireland camogie final day is special one and it gives families a chance to get to the final and savour the Croke Park atmosphere without the hassle of grappling for tickets as would be the case for a hurling final.

Nothing beats having Cork in a camogie All-Ireland final. The buzz is un-

believable and when we are there on the double, well it's going to be some day out.

Before the senior final the Cork intermediate side will be bidding to bridge an 11-year gap and bring the county's second intermediate title.

Cork won the inaugural title in 2006 and it would be a great start to the day to see Cork man Jack McGrath present his trophy to Niamh Ni Chaoimh.

The senior game is without doubt the centre-piece of the day. Level on the roll of honour with Dublin on 26 titles, it would be a huge achievement

to go top of the pile.

Remarkably only seven counties have lifted the O'Duffy Cup. Trailing Cork and Dublin with 13 titles are Kilkenny, Wexford are on seven, Antrim, who have been out of the limelight for a long time, are on six, one above Tipperary, with Galway on two.

Kilkenny took centre-stage for a while and were dominant before Cork returned to the top. Then a new force emerged when Tipperary burst on the scene. They got their break, I always think somewhat by chance. A late goal from Kilkenny in 1999, four minutes into injury-time sent Cork crashing out at the semi-finals.

It opened the door for Tipperary to slot in and take their first title. From here they proceeded to dominate, an-

nexing five titles in a six-year spell where they established themselves as the queens of camogie.

Cork bounced back and regained control in 2005 and 2006 but they failed to make it three in a row and Wexford seized their chance to grab the title in 2007.

Cork were back again in 2008 and 2009 but a blistering three years saw Wexford make it three on the trot 2010, 2011 and 2012. Galway took a title in 2013 as they shocked a fancied Kilkenny side.

Cork made it back-to-back titles in 2014 and 15 but were rocked by Kilkenny last year. Tomorrow is time to put the record straight as Cork bid to go top of the pile.

Rebels abú.

## Back door to provide more games in championship

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

THE U16 championships are always hotly contested, as are the U14 championships.

This year, the juvenile board have decided to implement a backdoor in the U16 A, B and C championships, thus ensuring plenty of games at this level.

Holders Ballygarvan will defend their crown with a first-round meeting against Newcestown and, travelling away, this could be a tricky opener for Ballygarvan.

Enniskeane will meet Ballinhassig in a home tie for the west Cork side, Blackrock are at home to Kilbrittan-Timo- league, and Courcy Rovers will host St Finbarr's.

Ballinora, having already secured their place in the last four in the U16 A league, will be hoping to bring their good form into championship when they host Milford-Ballyhea.

Sarsfields are at home to a Ballincollig side that reached the quarter-finals of the league.

Glen Rovers will host Eire Og. Carrigaline have secured a league semi-final spot and they will travel to Aghabullogue for their championship opener.

Inniscarra's first team, who are also into the league semi-final, will be at home to Bride Rovers in the championship.

Aghada have a home venue when they meet Charleville, who had an impressive league campaign. In the B Championship, Sliabh Rua are at home to Douglas, Killeagh host Bishopstown, Ballinascarty meet Blarney, and it's an all northside affair as Na

Piarsaigh welcome Brian Dillon's.

Cobh will meet Fr O'Neill's, Barryroe make the trip to Ballyanley to meet Inniscarra's second team, Youghal will meet Kerry club Cillard, who are participating in Cork competitions, and Cloughduv host Banteer.

In the C Championship, Kerry club Causeway will head to Kilbree, Grenagh will welcome Nemo Rangers, Clonakilty make the trip to Midleton while Dungourney host Mallow.

St Colum's have a trip to Watergrasshill and Erin's Own are at home for their meeting with Tracton. Buttevant take on St Finbarr's in Buttevant, Millstreet make the journey to Castlemartyr, and St Catherine's have a home venue for their clash with Rockbá as do Castlelyons when they meet Valley Rovers.





Pamela Mackey drives up field away from Ailish O'Reilly of Galway.

Picture: INPHO/Bryan Kean

# Mackey glad to be in final



Camogie

Barbara  
O'Connell

**ON THE camogie panel since 2009 but now an experienced and established player, Pamela Mackey is relishing the opportunity of playing in Croke Park again tomorrow.**

After last year's disappointment against Kilkenny, reaching another final has been the main focus since January.

"These days don't come around too often so I think you have to enjoy the experience. You never know this could be your last game in Croke Park so you just have to relish that opportunity."

Looking back on their semi-final clash with Galway, Mackey believes the team learned a lot but must up their performance against an excellent Kilkenny side.

"Galway were such a great team so I don't think you can under-estimate the challenge they posed. We were up by eight points so they were obviously going to throw the kitchen sink at us in the second half."

"I think the main thing is we kept our heads and we defended superbly in those dying minutes so that's a massive positive. We probably lost our shape in the second half. I think that is key, keeping our shape and structure. Not losing sight of the gameplan. We learned a lot from that game so that can only help us on Sunday."

A huge task lies ahead for the chemistry student and her team, however, Mackey is confident that her side are ready for the challenge that lies ahead.

"Kilkenny are obviously a fantastic team. All-Ireland, League and Leinster champions, they are a team on top form. They have some really outstanding players with the likes of Ann Dalton, Denise Gaule and Katie Power."

"They have strength and skill all over the pitch so it's going to be a huge challenge. They have some really dangerous forwards who are quick and goal scorers. I



Pamela and Katrina Mackey with Isabelle and Sam O'Connor at Castle Road. Picture Eddie O'Hare

think our defence is key, we will have to stick to our gameplan to nullify the threat of their forwards."

Like all team sports, a mix of youth and experience is key to success and Mackey believes this is the case for the squad.

"We have a small panel this year which I feel has worked well. Every team needs a mix of older and younger players. The older players bring that experience from previous finals but the youth bring a no-fear attitude which is great. They are not afraid to express themselves and challenge some of the older players which definitely drives you on as a player."

"Different players have shone in every game this year for us. Everyone is really enjoying playing this year so I think that has helped and allowed players to express themselves more which has suited a lot of the younger players from 2014 and 2015."

Having broken her leg before the league final, Mackey was out of the game for almost three months, but she's now fitter and hungrier than ever.

"I broke my leg before the league final so unfortunately I missed the Munster championship and first two championship matches. At the moment I'm really enjoying playing. I feel great and I'm probably the fittest I've ever been."

"So far, I think it's been a great year. We

put the disappointments of the league and Munster finals behind us and moved on."

"We knew there was bigger and better things ahead. Each game has presented us with new challenges and I think we overcame them very well as a team. What we worked on in training has translated on the playing field which is a big positive."

Sunday is another huge day for the Mackey household with both Pamela and twin sister Katrina lining out for the side and the desire to win the game will have a huge bearing on the result states Mackey.

"All-Ireland finals can be won or lost by the puck of a ball. Not everything will go right for us as players on the day. Mistakes will be made but we have to keep our heads and keep working until the final whistle and then I think we are in with a great chance."

"The difference in skill level and athleticism is minimal at inter-county level. At the end of the day, you have to really want it, want it badly enough and if everyone believes that I think we can win. My family are very proud of me and my sister particularly my mother."

"She was the person who first brought us down to the street leagues in Douglas so it's a very proud day for her to see us playing in Croke Park."

Let's hope it will be a memorable one.



# Kilkenny equipped to retain their title after intense battle

## ATSLINN CONNOLLY



**A**LL-IRELAND finals are addictive, once you get to play in one you keep wanting more. Cork and Kilkenny will arrive into Croke Park this afternoon with one thing on their minds and that's glory.

They won't be fazed by the big day and all that goes with it. The Garda escort, Croke Park in all its beauty, the fanfare and the crowds are all part of the routine now. It will be impossible to distract them from the task at hand.

Having that focus comes with experience and both sides can now stand up and say, 'I've been there and done that'. They have both tasted success, the days of dreaming about it now belong to others.

Kilkenny are the defending champions. They whetted their appetites last year with their historic win and today will be hungry for more.

Last September they knocked Cork

off their perch in the final and stopped them winning three in a row, so Paudie Murray's team will be on a mission to reclaim the All-Ireland crown.

Kilkenny learned a lot from last year, that much is obvious from the way they have been conducting themselves on the pitch this season. Winning that elusive All-Ireland took the edge off and it instilled a lot of belief in that group of players.

Because of that they will be very confident going into the game, knowing they are there on merit and knowing they have what it takes to win.

Ann Downey is a big believer in hard work and there is no shortage of that in this Kilkenny side.

On the other hand Cork will be determined and ruthless, they want to be kingpins again and they set their stall out early in the season. But they have been dealt a massive blow with the loss of Gemma O'Connor.

She is such an influential player for them and centre-back is such an important role. She is solid, leads by example and she can change the flow of the game. Ashling Thompson looks set to fill her role but moving her back means they have a hole to fill elsewhere.

In the position where Cork will be left vulnerable, Kilkenny will be at their strongest with Anne Dalton holding court. She has been their go-to player all season. She lines out at as a traditional number six but has been playing sweeper all year and has been executing it like she was born to do it.

Against Dublin, she was super, nothing could get past her. She has a brilliant camogie brain so she can read the play; she has great vision too and rarely gives a poor pass.

Kilkenny are the only team in the country playing a sweeper system and this is testament to how innovative Ann Downey is. We know from watching so many hurling teams try it that it is not easy to get it right. It takes a lot of coaching and practice and it is not something you can turn on for one game.

Cork will have to adapt to playing against the sweeper which isn't easy when you aren't doing it regularly. I'm sure they have done plenty of analysis on it. They will have looked at Dalton and how she plays in the role but the

issue they will have is that with every passing game she gets better at it. Cork will have to nullify her and cut out her brilliant distribution of ball to the Kilkenny forwards if they are to win today.

Another key area will be the forward units of both teams. Cork will have been horrified to go 28 minutes without a score in the second half in the All-Ireland semi-final against Galway. Between then and now they will have been working extremely hard on their point-taking especially.

Kilkenny have pacey forwards, the likes of Shelley Farrell, Katie Power and last year's player of the match Julianne Malone, who are all lively and will be hard to keep tabs on in the wide open spaces in Croke Park. Denise Gaule, their sharpshooter from placed balls, is strong in the air and a key player Cork need to watch.

I'm sure there was a lot of relief felt

## Cork will have to adapt to the sweeper which isn't easy

in that forward pack when the news broke that O'Connor would be out. She marshals the half-back line and like Dalton has great vision and presence of mind.

Undoubtedly an intriguing contest awaits, they are two evenly-matched teams who will play contrasting styles. It will be interesting to see which team manages to successfully implement their tactics. Both managers will have something up their sleeves so the battle on the line will also be fascinating.

From the outside looking in it seems there is a rivalry there between the two teams. An intense rivalry indeed, especially since Kilkenny prevented Cork from three-in-a-row glory last year and have already beaten Cork in the league final this year. Last year's handshake controversy also fuelled this rivalry.

Overall, I think Kilkenny have been the stronger side this season. Their backs have been performing well, their forwards are lively and their bench has got more depth to it than Cork's.

Kilkenny were fighting for so long to get over the line and that win last year will have delivered more than just a trophy, it will have brought a new mentality and belief too. GAA fans everywhere know how hard it is to stop the Cats when they are on a roll and I can't see today offering anything to prove that wrong.

**CORK SENIOR TEAM**

Corcaigh - Dearg & Bán

1. Aoife Murray (A. Ni Mhuirí, Cloughduv)  
2. Pamela Mackey (P. Ni Mhaca, Douglas)  
3. Rena Buckley (C) (R. Ni Bhaoithé, Inisuaire)  
4. Laura Treacy (L. Ni Therasaigh, Kilsogh)  
5. Eimear O'Sullivan (E. Ni Shuilleabháin, Ballinacraig)  
6. Gemma O'Connor (G. Ni Chonchúir, St. Finbarr)  
7. Chloe Sigerson (C. Nic Siothair, Kilsogh)  
8. Libby Coppinger (L. Coipíní, St. Columba)  
9. Ashling Thompson (A. Nic Thomáis, Milford)  
10. Amy O'Connor (A. Ni Chonchúir, St. Vincent)  
11. Orla Cronin (O. Ni Cháidín, Enniskeane)  
12. Orla Cotter (O. Nic Oláir, St. Catherine's)  
13. Hannah Looney (H. Ni Lannigh, Kilsogh)  
14. Niamh McCarthy (N. Nic Carrighaigh, Inisuaire)  
15. Katrina Mackey (C. Ni Mhaca, Douglas)

**2017 Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Championship Finals**

**KILKENNY SENIOR TEAM**

Cill Chainnigh - Dubh & Omra

1. Emma Kavanagh (E. Caomhánach, Rossmore)  
2. Catherine Foley (C. Ni Fhoghlú, Windgap)  
3. Davina Tobin (D. Tobin, Emeralds)  
4. Grace Walsh (G. Bhreathnach, Tullamore)  
5. Claire Phelan (C. Ni Fhaoilín, Lisdorney)  
6. Anne Dalton (A. Dalton, St. Lachair's Freshford)  
7. Aisling Dunphy (A. Ni Dhonnacháin, St. Brigid's Ballyallen)  
8. Meighan Farrell (M. Ni Fhearáil, Thomastown)  
9. Anna Farrell (C) (A. Ni Fhearáil, Thomastown)  
10. Julie Ann Malone (J. A. Ni Mhacáilín, Mullinavat)  
11. Katie Power (C. de Paor, Piltown)  
12. Denise Gaule (D. Nic an Ghall, Windgap)  
13. Shelly Farrell (S. Ni Fhearáil, Thomastown)  
14. Miriam Walsh (M. Bhreathnach, Tullamore)  
15. Danielle Morrissey (D. Ni Mhuirí, Conahy Shamrocks)

### IONADAÍ

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 16 Amy Lee (A. Ni Laoi, Na Piarraigh)                   | 20 Lauren Homan (L. Homan, St. Vincent's)      |
| 17 Meabh Cahalane (M. Ni Chatháin, St. Finbarr)         | 21 Finola Neville (F. Ni Níá, St. Catherine's) |
| 18 Leanne O'Sullivan (L. Ni Shuilleabháin, Glen Rivers) | 22 Róisín Kileen (R. Ni Cholláin, Ballyheale)  |
| 19 Julia White (S. Ni Bhreathnach, Douglas)             | 23 Jennifer Barry (S. de Barra, Glen Rivers)   |

### TEAM OFFICIALS

- |                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Bainisteoir: Paudie Murray          | Maor Foirne / S & C Coach: Martin O'Brien |
| Hurling Coach: Kevin Murray         | Performance Analyst: Niall Collins        |
| Selector: Terence O'Leary           | Goalkeeping Coach: Teddy O'Donovan        |
| Physio / S & C Coach: Liam O'Reilly | Maor Uisce: Damien Murray                 |
| Maor Uisce: Seán Cremin             |   |

### IONADAÍ

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| 16 Ann Marie Lennon (A. M. Ni Leannáin, Blacks & Whites) | 21 Sarah Crowley (S. Ni Chualaoich, Moonevin)        | 26 Jenny Clifford (J. Nic Rífeartaigh, Dickshov)            |
| 17 Collette Danner (C. Ni Dhuirí, Paultown / Corbridge)  | 22 Sarah Kent (S. Ceann, Danganfort)                 | 27 Aoife Doyle (A. Ni Dhuighall, Piltown)                   |
| 18 Michelle Quilty (M. Ni Chaoite, Mullinavat)           | 23 Laura Murphy (L. Ni Mhurchú, O'Loughlin Gault)    | 28 Róisín Phelan (R. Ni Fhaoilín, Conahy Shamrocks)         |
| 19 Miriam Frisby (M. Nic Fhíorthúigh, Mullinavat)        | 24 Michelle Teehan (M. Ni Theacháin, James Stephens) | 29 Jacqui Frisby (S. Nic Fhíorthúigh, Ballyheale Shamrocks) |
| 20 Stacey Quirk (S. Ni Choiric, St. Martin's)            | 25 Jenny Reddy (S. Ni Ruidhí, Thomastown)            | 30 Grace O'Donnell (G. Ni Dhonnáil, Young Ireland)          |

### TEAM OFFICIALS

- |                            |                             |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Bainisteoir: Ann Downey    | Maor Foirne: Paddy Mullally |
| Rogheoir (I): Conor Phelan | Rogheoir (J): Angela Downey |
| Camánáisce: Mark Conney    | Camánáisce: Liam Egan       |
| Camánáisce: Breda Holmes   | Physic: Nicola Aylward      |
| Doctóir: Fergus Heffernan  | Doctóir: Martin O'Brien     |



# Cork, Senior



Back Row Left to Right:  
Katrina Mackey, Amy Lee, Meabh Cahalane, Lauren Homan, Hannah Looney, Gemma O'Connor, Ashling Thompson, Pamela Mackey, Finola Neville, Julia White, Orla Cotter, Laura Treacy, Aoife Murray

Front Row Left to Right:  
Chloe Sigerson, Leanne O'Sullivan, Amy O'Connor, Rena Buckley (Captain), Niamh McCarthy, Eimear O'Sullivan, Orla Cronin, Libby Coppinger

## Player Profiles - Cork

Senior



**Aoife Murray** - Cloughduv  
Chartered Surveyor  
Goalkeeper  
7 All-Ireland Senior C'ship titles, All-Ireland Inter & Junior titles, 2 All-Ireland Minor C'ship titles, 5 Nat League titles, 6 All-Star Awards, 7 Munster Senior C'ship titles, 2 Munster Minor C'ship titles.



**Pamela Mackey** - Douglas  
Student  
Defender  
3 All-Ireland Senior C'ship titles, 3 All-Star Awards, 7 Munster Senior C'ship titles, 2 Munster Minor C'ship titles.



**Rena Buckley** - Inniscarra  
Physiotherapist  
Defender  
6 All-Ireland Senior C'ship titles, 3 Nat League titles, 4 All-Star Awards, 10 Munster Senior C'ship titles.



**Laura Treacy** - Killeagh  
Student  
Defender  
2 All-Ireland Senior C'ship titles, Nat League Div 1 title, 3 Munster Senior C'ship titles, Ashbourne Cup title, 2 Ashbourne All-Star Awards.



**Eimear O'Sullivan** - Ballinacorney  
Senior Financial Analyst  
Defender  
4 All-Ireland Senior C'ship titles, All-Ireland Inter C'ship title, Nat League Div 1 title, All-Star Award, Munster Senior C'ship title, 3 Munster Minor C'ship titles.



**Gemma O'Connor** - St. Finbarrs  
Soldier  
Defender  
7 All-Ireland Senior C'ship titles, 2 All-Ireland Minor C'ship titles, Nat League titles, 9 All-Star Awards, Munster Senior C'ship titles, WCPA Player of Year Award.



**Chloe Sigerson** - Killeagh  
Student  
Defender  
Soaring Star Award, Munster Senior C'ship title, Munster Inter C'ship title, Munster Minor C'ship title.



**Libby Coppinger** - St. Colums  
Student  
Midfield  
Munster Senior C'ship title, 2 Munster Inter C'ship titles, Munster Minor C'ship title.



**Ashling Thompson** - Milford  
Student  
Midfield  
2 All-Ireland Senior C'ship titles, Nat League Div 1 title, 2 All-Ireland Senior Club C'ship titles, 4 Munster Senior C'ship titles, All-Star Award.



**Amy O'Connor** - St. Vincents  
Student  
Forward  
2 All-Ireland Senior C'ship titles, 2 Munster Senior C'ship titles, Munster Minor C'ship title.



**Orla Cronin** - Enniskeane  
Student  
Forward  
2 All-Ireland Senior C'ship titles, 2 Munster Senior C'ship titles, Munster Inter C'ship title, Munster Minor C'ship title.



**Orla Cotter** - St. Catherines  
Teacher  
Forward/Midfield  
5 All-Ireland Senior C'ship titles, All-Ireland Inter C'ship title, 4 All-Star Awards, 9 Munster C'ship titles.



**Hannah Looney** - Killeagh  
Student  
Forward  
2 All-Ireland Senior C'ship titles, 2 Munster Senior C'ship titles, Munster Inter C'ship title, Munster Minor C'ship title.



**Niamh McCarthy** - Inniscarra  
Student  
Forward  
Nat League Div 2 title, Munster Senior Club C'ship title.



**Katrina Mackey** - Douglas  
Student  
Forward  
3 All-Ireland Senior C'ship titles, 2 Nat League titles, 3 All-Star Awards, 7 Munster Senior C'ship titles, Munster Minor & U16 C'ship titles.



**Amy Lee** - Na Piarsaigh  
Student  
Goalkeeper  
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, 2 Munster Senior C'ship titles, Munster Inter C'ship title.



**Meabh Cahalane** - St. Finbarrs  
Student  
Defender  
2 All-Ireland Senior C'ship titles, 3 Munster Senior C'ship titles.



**Leanne O'Sullivan** - Glen Rovers  
Student  
Defender  
3 All-Ireland Senior C'ship titles, 2 Nat League titles, 4 Munster Senior C'ship titles, Munster Inter C'ship title, Purcell Cup title.



**Julia White** - Douglas  
Teacher  
Forward  
4 All-Ireland Senior C'ship titles, 2 Nat League Div 1 titles, 6 Munster Senior C'ship titles.



**Lauren Homan** - St. Vincents  
Student  
Forward  
Munster Minor C'ship title.



**Finola Neville** - St. Catherines  
Sports Rehabilitator & Athletic Therapist  
Midfield  
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, Nat League Div 1 title, Nat League Div 2 title, Munster Senior C'ship title, Munster Inter C'ship title.



**Maeve McCarthy** - Sarsfields  
Student  
Forward  
Nat League Div 2 title.



**Jennifer Barry** - Bride Rovers  
Student  
Midfield  
Nat League Div 2 title, Munster Senior C'ship title.



**Róisín Killeen** - Ballyhea  
Student  
Defender  
Nat League Div 2 title.



**Rachel O'Shea** - Carrigaline  
Student  
Forward  
Nat League Div 2 title, Munster Inter C'ship title, Munster Minor C'ship title.



**Linda Collins** - Courcy Rovers  
Student  
Full-Forward  
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, Soaring Star Award, Munster Inter C'ship title, Munster Minor C'ship title.



# Kilkenny, Senior



## Back Row Left to Right:

Grace O'Donnell, Michelle Teehan, Aoife Doyle, Jenny Reddy, Claire Phelan, Stacey Quirke, Anne Dalton, Aisling Dunphy, Denise Gaule, Davina Tobin, Sarah Crowley, Miriam Walsh, Jacqui Frisby, Ann Marie Lennon, Michelle Quilty, Catherine Foley, Miriam Frisby, Ciara Phelan

## Front Row Left to Right:

Sarah Kent, Laura Murphy, Jenny Clifford, Meighan Farrell, Shelly Farrell, Danielle Morrissey, Anna Farrell (Captain), Grace Walsh, Collette Dormer, Julie Ann Malone, Katie Power, Emma Kavanagh, Aisling Nolan, Róisín Phelan

## Player Profiles - Kilkenny



**Emma Kavanagh** - Rower-Inistioge  
Teacher  
Goalkeeper  
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, 3 Nat League titles, All-Star Award, 3 Leinster Senior C'ship titles, Leinster Minor C'ship title.



**Catherine Foley** - Windgap  
Student  
Defender  
Nat League title, Leinster Senior C'ship title.



**Davina Tobin** - Emeralds  
Hair Stylist  
Defender  
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, 2 Nat League titles, All-Ireland Minor C'ship title, 2 Leinster Senior C'ship titles, Leinster Minor C'ship title.



**Grace Walsh** - Tullaroan  
Student Nurse  
Defender  
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, 3 Nat League titles, All-Ireland Minor & U16 C'ship titles, Leinster Senior C'ship titles, Leinster Minor & U16 C'ship titles.



**Claire Phelan** - Lisdowney  
Teacher  
Defender  
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, 2 Nat League titles, All-Ireland Minor & U16 C'ship titles, 2 Leinster Senior C'ship titles.



**Anne Dalton** - St. Lachtain's Freshford  
Bank Official  
Defender  
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, 3 All-Ireland Senior Club C'ship titles, 4 Nat League titles, All-Ireland Minor C'ship title, 4 All-Stars Awards, 5 Leinster Senior C'ship titles.



**Aisling Dunphy** - St. Brigid's Ballycallan  
Student  
Defender/Forward  
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, 3 Nat League titles, 5 All-Ireland Minor & U16 C'ship titles, 4 Leinster Senior C'ship titles.



**Meighan Farrell** - Thomastown  
Student  
Midfield  
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, 2 Nat League titles, All-Ireland Minor C'ship title, All-Star Award, 2 Leinster Senior C'ship titles.



**Anna Farrell** - Thomastown  
Fraud Analyst  
Midfield/Forward  
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, Nat League title, 3 All-Ireland Minor C'ship titles, Leinster Senior C'ship title.



**Julie Ann Malone** - Mullinavat  
Student  
Forward  
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, Nat League title, Leinster Senior C'ship titles.



**Katie Power** - Piltown  
PA/Reception  
Forward  
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, Nat League title, 2 All-Star Awards, 3 All-Ireland Minor C'ship titles, 2 All-Ireland U16 C'ship titles, 4 Leinster Senior C'ship titles.



**Denise Gaule** - Windgap  
Student  
Forward  
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, All-Ireland Inter C'ship title, 3 Nat League titles, 2 All-Ireland Minor C'ship titles, 2 All-Ireland U16 C'ship titles, All-Star Award, 4 Leinster Senior C'ship titles.



**Shelly Farrell** - Thomastown  
Account Technician  
Forward  
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, All-Ireland Inter C'ship title, 3 Nat League titles, 2 All-Ireland Minor C'ship titles, 2 All-Ireland U16 C'ship titles, All-Star Award, 3 Leinster Senior C'ship titles.



**Miriam Walsh** - Tullaroan  
Teacher  
Forward  
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, 3 Nat League titles, All-Ireland Minor C'ship title, All-Star Award, 2 Leinster Senior C'ship titles.



**Danielle Morrissey** - Conahy Shamrocks  
Student  
Forward  
Nat League title, Leinster Senior C'ship title, 2 Leinster U16 C'ship titles.



**Anne Marie Lennon** - Blacks & Whites  
Store Manager  
Goalkeeper  
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, All-Ireland Inter C'ship title, 3 Nat League titles, All-Ireland Minor C'ship title, All-Ireland U16 C'ship title, 2 Leinster Senior C'ship titles.



**Collette Dormer** - Paulstown/Goresbridge  
Architectural Technologist  
Defender  
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, All-Ireland Inter C'ship title, 4 Nat League titles, 2 All-Ireland Minor C'ship titles, All-Ireland U16 C'ship title, 2 All-Star Awards, 4 Leinster Senior C'ship titles.



**Michelle Quilty** - Mullinavat  
Fitness Instructor  
Forward  
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, 3 Nat League titles, 3 All-Ireland Minor C'ship titles, 2 All-Ireland U16 C'ship titles, 2 All-Star Awards, 5 Leinster Senior C'ship titles.



**Miriam Frisby** - Mullinavat  
Teacher  
Midfield/Forward  
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, 2 Nat League titles, Leinster Senior C'ship title, 2 Leinster Minor C'ship titles.



**Stacey Quirke** - St. Martin's  
Paediatric Nurse  
Defender  
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, 3 Nat League titles, All-Ireland Minor C'ship title, All-Ireland U16 C'ship title, 2 Leinster Senior C'ship titles, Leinster Minor C'ship title.



**Sarah Crowley** - Mooncoin  
Student  
Defender  
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, 2 Nat League titles, Leinster Senior C'ship title, Leinster Minor C'ship title.



**Sarah Kent** - Danesfort  
Student  
Defender  
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, All-Ireland Minor C'ship title, 2 Nat League titles, Leinster Senior C'ship title, Leinster Minor C'ship title.



**Laura Murphy** - O'Loughlin Gaels  
Student  
Defender  
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, All-Ireland Minor C'ship title, 2 Nat League titles, Leinster Senior C'ship title, Leinster Minor C'ship title.



**Michelle Teehan** - James Stephens  
Student  
Defender/Forward  
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, All-Ireland Minor C'ship title, Nat League title, Leinster Minor C'ship title.



**Jenny Reddy** - Thomastown  
Teacher  
Midfield/Forward  
All-Ireland Inter C'ship title, Nat League title, Leinster Senior C'ship title.



**Jenny Clifford** - Dicksboro  
Sales Assistant  
Forward  
All-Ireland Inter C'ship title, All-Ireland Minor C'ship title, Nat League title, Soaring Star Award, Leinster Senior C'ship title, Leinster Minor C'ship title.



**Aoife Doyle** - Piltown  
Student  
Midfield/Forward  
Nat League title, Leinster Senior C'ship title.



**Róisín Phelan** - Conahy Shamrocks  
Student  
Defender  
All-Ireland Inter C'ship title, All-Ireland Minor C'ship title, Nat League title, Leinster Senior C'ship title, Leinster Minor C'ship title.



**Grace O'Donnell** - Young Irelands  
Student  
Forward  
Nat League title, Leinster Senior C'ship title.



**Jacqui Frisby** - Ballyhale  
Accounts Payable  
Defender  
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, All-Ireland Junior C'ship title, 4 Nat League titles, All-Star Award, Leinster Senior C'ship titles.



## Preview

### Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Senior Camogie Championship Final

by Daragh Ó Conchúir

#### Cork v Kilkenny

THIS is a repeat of last year's decider in which Kilkenny put paid to Cork's three-in-a-row bid with a four-point victory, and of the National League Division 1 Final, which went the Noreiders' way too. There were just three points separating them at Semple Stadium but just as in September, the sense was that the victors were more comfortable than the margin suggested.

Add the fact that they are now one step from a fourth consecutive national title, a 'Double-Double', and there is no doubt that Ann Downey's side have established themselves firmly as the undisputed number one outfit of the game.

That will rankle with Cork, not least because they have failed to sparkle in those last two major clashes, due to a combination of Kilkenny's quality and their own underperformance. Being accustomed to a place on the top step of the podium, they will want it back.

Neither side pulled up trees in their Semi-Finals. A portion of this can be accredited to the longer lay-offs (five weeks for Cork, four for Kilkenny) compared to facing teams

buoyed by Quarter-Final triumphs a fortnight previously but it would be wrong to minimise the efforts of the players and managements of both Dublin and Galway in terms of performance and tactical application.

Kilkenny did not have it all their own way in the group phase, needing a point from 2016 Player of the Year Denise Gaule to escape with a share of the spoils against Clare in Nowlan Park on July 1st. As has been customary under a management set-up that has always learned lessons from mild setbacks, and a roster that has applied them well, they came out the next week and were full value for a five-point win over Galway in Athenry that helped cement their direct progress to the last four.

They got off to a perfect start against Dublin with a goal from a penalty by Gaule two minutes in, but were still only five points clear by the time substitute Jenny Clifford sent a rocket to the Dublin net in injury time, having struggled with the high intensity and physicality of the Metropolitans, and the direct running of the likes of Siobhán Kehoe. The Stripecrowns' much vaunted attack spluttered and there were only glimpses of the counter-attacking game from deep that has yielded such dividends.

Once more though, one expects that there will be an improvement and that Downey will be happier that her charges were put through the ringer rather than enjoying the cakewalk many had predicted. The depth of the panel was advertised once more too with the continuing blossoming of newcomer Danielle Morrissey, and the impact off the bench of Clifford and Jenny Reddy.

Kilkenny have serious operators in every line, from Emma Kavanagh in goal, right through Anne Dalton, who was

magnificent against Dublin, captain Anna Farrell, Katie Power, Gaule and Shelly Farrell to name just a few. Many of those will be smarting from quiet outings last time out and it is reasonable to expect a response.

Whereas the Cats ground it out in the second half in their Semi-Final, Cork were hanging on against Galway but this was always expected to be a stern challenge given the talent at the westerners' disposal. It said much therefore, that Cork were leading by eight points early in the second half and it could have been much more had they not spurned four goal chances.

What was notable too was that they found a way to win, as they have done so often over the years. Galway had all the momentum in the final quarter but Cork stemmed the tide, thanks to the likes of Chloe Sigerson, Rena Buckley and Ashling Thompson. Like Kilkenny, some stars did not enjoy their best of days but Hannah Looney and Niamh McCarthy stood up to the plate and Orla Cotter was exceptional in the first half in particular. Apart from the aforementioned, Aoife Murray and Katrina Mackey are key operators.

The message coming from the Cork camp all summer has been that they are playing catch-up on Kilkenny, even as they cruised through their group with a 100% record. Paudie Murray continued the theme after the Semi-Final but beating a team as strong as Galway after a five-week lay-off was no mean feat. Again, one can expect the engine to be running more smoothly on the biggest day of all.

Kilkenny's hunger remains insatiable despite their recent success while Cork's appetite is ravenous after some of the recent reverses. The teams play similar styles, attempting to cut off space in their own halves and to create it in the opposition's, harnessing the speed at their disposal to fashion scoring opportunities.

What measures might be taken to neutralise the opposition strengths will be intriguing.

We cannot wait.



Kilkenny's Michelle Quilty with Dublin's Eve O'Brien



Cork's Emma O'Connor with Galway's Niamh Kilkenny and Aoife Donohue



Cork's Aoife Murray with Kilkenny's Danielle Morrissey and Miriam Walsh

### Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Senior Camogie Championship Paths to the Final 2017



Cork's Rena Buckley and Kilkenny's Anna Farrell

#### CORK Group 2

10/06/2017 Tipperary 1-7 Cork 1-16  
24/06/2017 Cork 1-27 Limerick 0-11  
01/07/2017 Cork 3-18 Wexford 0-9  
15/07/2017 Offaly 0-11 Cork 1-13

#### Semi-Final

19/08/2017 Cork 2-9 Galway 1-9

#### KILKENNY Group 1

10/06/2017 Waterford 0-6 Kilkenny 2-15  
01/07/2017 Kilkenny 1-14 Clare 3-8  
08/07/2017 Galway 1-8 Kilkenny 2-10  
22/07/2017 Kilkenny 3-13 Dublin 0-8

#### Semi-Final

19/08/2017 Kilkenny 2-11 Dublin 0-9

### Meet the Match Officials



Senior Final  
Cork v Kilkenny

REFEREE:  
OWEN ELLIOTT (Antrim)  
Club: All Saints, Ballymena



Intermediate Final  
Cork v Meath

REFEREE:  
LIZ DEMPSEY (Kilkenny)  
Club: Thomastown



Premier Junior Final  
Dublin v Westmeath

REFEREE:  
PHILIP McDONALD (Cavan)  
Club: Bailieborough Shamrocks



# Cork, Intermediate



Back Row Left to Right:  
Lisa Lynch, Haley Ryan, Diana Kelleher, Jennifer Barry, Sarah Ahern, Maeve Lynch, Sarah Fahy, Jacinta Crowley, Finola Neville, Amy Lee, Lauren Callanan, Katelyn Hickey, Maeve Lynch, Rebecca Sheehan

Front Row Left to Right:  
Lucy Kelly, Róisín Killeen, Caroline Sugrue, Sarah Harrington, Linda Collins, Leah Weste, Niamh Ní Chaoimh (Captain), Sarah Buckley, Michaela Buckley, Rachel O'Shea, Niamh O'Callaghan, Keeva McCarthy

## Player Profiles - Cork Intermediate



**Amy Lee** - Na Piarsaigh  
Student  
Goalkeeper  
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, Munster Senior C'ship title, 1 Munster Inter C'ship titles.



**Leah Weste** - Ballincollig  
Teacher  
Defender  
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, 2 Nat Div 1 League titles, 2 Nat League Div 2 titles, Leagues, 4 Munster Senior C'ship titles, Munster Inter C'ship title, 3 Munster Minor & U16 C'ship titles, Interprovincial title.



**Sarah Harrington** - Fr. O'Neills  
Student  
Defender  
Nat League Div 2 title, Purcell Cup title.



**Niamh Ní Chaoimh** - Killeagh  
Teacher  
Defender  
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, 2 Nat League Div 2 titles, 2 Munster Senior C'ship titles.



**Róisín Killeen** - Ballyhea  
Student  
Defender  
Nat League Div 2 title.



**Sarah Buckley** - Ballincollig  
Trainee Accountant  
Defender  
2 All-Ireland Senior C'ship titles, Nat League Div 1 title, 2 Nat League Div 2 titles, Munster Senior C'ship title, Munster Inter C'ship title.



**Lauren Callanan** - Glen Rovers  
Student  
Midfield/Defender  
Nat League Div 2 title.



**Finola Neville** - St. Catherines  
Sports Rehabilitator & Athletic Therapist  
Midfield  
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, Nat Div 1 League title, Nat League Div 2 title, Munster Senior C'ship title, Munster Inter C'ship title.



**Jennifer Barry** - Bride Rovers  
Student  
Midfield  
Nat League Div 2 title, Munster Senior C'ship title.



**Katelyn Hickey** - Blackrock  
Student  
Forward  
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, 2 Nat League Div 2 titles, Munster Senior C'ship title, Munster Inter C'ship title.



**Keeva McCarthy** - St. Finbarrs  
Student  
Forward  
All-Ireland U16B C'ship, Nat League Div 2 title, 2 Munster Minor C'ship titles.



**Maeve McCarthy** - Sarsfields  
Student  
Forward  
Nat League Div 2 title.



**Rachel O'Shea** - Carrigaline  
Student  
Forward  
Nat League Div 2 title, Munster Inter C'ship title, Munster Minor C'ship title.



**Linda Collins** - Courcy Rovers  
Student  
Forward  
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, Soaring Star Award, Munster Inter C'ship title, Munster Minor C'ship title.



**Caroline Sugrue** - Ballinascahy  
Teacher  
Forward  
2 Nat League Div 2 titles, 3 Munster Senior C'ship titles.



**Sarah Ahern** - Ballygarvan  
Student  
Goalkeeper  
Nat League Div 2 title, Munster Minor C'ship title, 2 Munster U16A C'ship titles.



**Sarah Fahy** - Douglas Camogie  
Student  
Forward/Midfield  
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, Nat League Div 2 title, 2 Munster Senior C'ship titles, Munster Inter C'ship titles, 2 Munster Minor C'ship titles.



**Jacinta Crowley** - Courcy Rovers  
Trainee Accountant  
Defender/Midfield  
2 Nat League Div 2 titles, Munster Inter C'ship title.



**Maeve Lynch** - Newcestown  
Student  
Defender  
Nat League Div 2 title, Munster Minor Shield title.



**Michaela Buckley** - Ballygarvan  
Student  
Forward  
Munster Minor C'ship title.



**Lucy Kelly** - Sarsfields  
Student  
Midfield/Forward  
Nat League Div 2 title, Munster Minor C'ship title.



**Niamh O'Callaghan** - Sarsfields  
Teacher  
Defender  
Nat League Div 2 title, Munster Inter C'ship title.



**Hayley Ryan** - Blackrock  
Student  
Forward  
Nat League Div 2 title, 2 Munster Inter C'ship titles.



**Lisa Lynch** - Cloughduv  
Student  
Defender  
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, Nat League Div 2 title, Munster Senior C'ship title, 3 Munster Minor & U16 C'ship titles.



**Rebecca Sheehan** - Douglas  
Student  
Defender  
All-Ireland U16 C'ship title, Nat League Div 2 title, Munster Inter C'ship title, 2 Munster Minor C'ship titles.



**Diana Kelleher** - Watergrasshill  
Trainee Solicitor  
Goalkeeper



Cork, Intermediate

**Who has been the biggest influence on your career so far?**  
My family as a whole but particularly my Mom, Dad, Nana and Granda who are the driving force behind everything I do, along with the coaches in both my club and with Cork who have always supported me and believed in my potential.

What has been your sporting moment of 2017?  
Cork winning the Munster hurling final in Semple Stadium.

**Who has been your toughest opponent this year?**  
I have come up against many tough opponents this year but our defenders in training will never leave you in for an easy score!

**What is your favourite venue to play in and why?**  
Pitch 1 in my club the Barrs is up there with any of the venues that I have played in - it's like my second home!

**What does it mean to you to wear the county jersey?**  
Wearing the red and white of Cork is a huge honour and in doing so I am proud to represent my family, club and county while playing alongside some of my closest friends.

**What other Camogie player would you look up to outside of your county?**  
Beth Carton, Waterford. We have had many shootouts during our underage years with our respective counties - she's an incredible talent.

Apart from Camogie, what sports people do you look to for inspiration?  
Joe Canning, Cora Staunton and Paul O'Connell.

**Off the pitch, what do you do to relax?**  
Spare time can be rare but I try to catch up with friends and my favourite TV shows.

**What is your favourite song at the moment?**  
Anything from Niamh Ni Chaoimh's pre-match playlist, but a special shoutout for "Party in the USA" by Miley Cyrus.



**Meath's Claire Coffey at Cork's Niamh NI Chaoimh**

## Group 2

10/06/2017 Cork 2-12 Galway 0-9  
24/06/2017 Carlow 0-7 Cork 1-11  
08/07/2017 Meath 3-9 Cork 0-17  
22/07/2017 Laois 2-7 Cork 1-18  
12/08/2017 Cork 3-11 Down 0-9

### Semi-Final

20/08/2017 Cork 2-11 Derry 0-7

### Group 2

10/06/2017 Meath 4-15 Laois 1-8  
01/07/2017 Galway 2-7 Meath 1-15  
08/07/2017 Meath 3-9 Cork 0-17  
22/07/2017 Meath 1-14 Down 0-17  
13/08/2017 Carlow 0-4 Meath 3-10

### Semi-Final

20/08/2017 Meath 1-12 Kildare 1-10



**CORK**  
INTERMEDIATE TEAM

Corcaigh - Dearg &amp; Bán



## IONADA|

16 Sarah Ahern  
S. Ní hEathain  
Ballygarvan

17 Sarah Fahy  
S. Ní Fhathagha  
Douglas

18 Jacinta Crowley  
S. Ní Chruaílaith  
Courcy Rivers

19 **Maeve Lynch**  
M. Ní Lomghaigh  
Newcastle

20 **Michaela Buckley**  
M. Ní Bhualacháin  
Ballygarra

21 **Luty Kelly**  
L. Ní Cheallaghaigh  
Sandyford

22 **Niamh O'Callaghan**  
N. Ní Cheallaghaigh  
C. Carr

23 Hayley Ryan  
H. Ni Riam  
Blackrock

24 Lisa Lynch  
L. Ní Longfugh  
Cloughdar

25 Rebecca Sheehan  
R. Ní Shéacháin  
Douglas

26 Diana Kelleher  
D. Ní Chéilleachair  
Watercoursehill

## TEAM OFFICIALS

Bainisteoir	Pádraic Murray
Maor Foirne	Wesley O'Brien
Hurling Coath	Seán Crehan
Selector	Mossie O'Sullivan
Selector	Ernest Fennell
S & C Coath	Marín O'Brien
S & C Coath	Liam O'Reilly
Performance Analyst	Niall Collins
Goalkeeping Coath	Teddy O'Donovan
Physio	Orla Coughlan
Maor Uisce	George Fitzgibbon
Maor Uisce	Matthew Twomey
Maor Uisce	Kieran Mural



# Meath, Intermediate



Back Row Left to Right:  
Paula Dorain, Máire Keogh, Beverly Lynch, Ellen Conneely, Emma Coffey, Cheyenne O'Brien, Aine Kirby, Erin Leddy, Maeve Clince, Helen Murphy, Kristina Troy, Emily Mangan, Sínead Hackett, Claire Coffey (Captain), Maggie Randle, Grace Coleman, Aoife Minogue, Louise Donoghue

Front Row Left to Right:  
Sophia Payne, Aedin Slattery, Caroline Quinn, Aoife Maguire, Amy Gaffney, Megan Thynne, Jane Dolan, Ellen Burke, Fia O'Brien, Máire Kirby, Katie Hackett, Aileen Smith, Aine Keogh, Fiona O'Neill

## Player Profiles - Meath



**Emily Mangan** - Blackhall Gaels  
Leisure Centre Manager  
Goalkeeper  
2 All-Ireland Junior C'ship titles, Nat League Div 2 title, Nat League Div 3 title, Nat League Div 4 title, Soaring Star Award, 5 Leinster C'ship titles.



**Emma Coffey** - Na Fianna  
Leisure Centre Manager  
Defender  
All-Ireland U16 C'ship title, All-Ireland Minor C'ship title, Nat League Div 2 title, Leinster Inter C'ship title.



**Claire Coffey** - Na Fianna  
Medical Lab Aide  
Defender  
All-Ireland Junior C'ship titles, Nat League Div 2 title, Nat League Div 3 title, Soaring Star Award, Leinster Inter & Junior C'ship titles.



**Ellen Burke** - Dunboyne  
Student  
Defender  
Nat League Div 2 title, Leinster Inter C'ship title.



**Aine Keogh** - Kildalkey  
Account Assistant  
Defender  
2 All-Ireland Junior C'ship titles, Nat League Div 2 title, Nat League Div 3 title, Nat League Div 4 title, Soaring Star Award, 5 Leinster C'ship titles.



**Aoife Maguire** - Killyon  
Secondary School Teacher  
Defender  
2 All-Ireland Junior C'ship titles, Nat League Div 2 title, Nat League Div 3 title, Nat League Div 4 title, Soaring Star Award, 3 Leinster C'ship titles.



**Louise Donoghue** - Kiltale  
Legal Assistant  
Defender  
All-Ireland Junior C'ship title, Nat League Div 2 title, Nat League Div 3 title, Nat League Div 4 title, 5 Leinster C'ship titles, 2 Purcell Cup titles.



**Cheyenne O'Brien** - Kiltale  
Lifeguard & Student  
Midfield  
All-Ireland Junior C'ship title, Nat League Div 2 title, Leinster Inter C'ship title.



**Megan Thynne** - Kilmessan  
Student  
Forward  
2 All-Ireland Minor C'ship title, All-Ireland U16 C'ship title, Nat League Div 2 title, Leinster Inter C'ship title, 3 Leinster Minor & U16 C'ship titles.



**Amy Gaffney** - Ratoath  
Dublin Airport Search Unit  
Forward  
2 All-Ireland Minor C'ship titles, All-Ireland U16 C'ship title, Nat League Div 2 title, Leinster Inter C'ship title, 3 Leinster Minor & U16 C'ship titles.



**Kristina Troy** - Blackhall Gaels  
Teacher  
Forward  
2 All-Ireland Junior C'ship titles, Nat League Div 2 title, Nat League Div 3 title, Nat League Div 4 title, Soaring Star Award, 5 Leinster C'ship titles.



**Aoife Minogue** - Dunderry  
Student  
Forward  
2 All-Ireland Minor C'ship titles, Nat League Div 2 title, Leinster Inter C'ship title, Purcell Cup title.



**Caroline Quinn** - Boardsmill  
Student  
Forward  
All-Ireland U17 title.



**Jane Dolan** - Blackhall Gaels  
Property Surveyor  
Forward  
2 All-Ireland Junior C'ship titles, Nat League Div 2 title, Nat League Div 3 title, Nat League Div 4 title, 3 Soaring Star Awards, 5 Leinster C'ship titles, Purcell Cup title.



**Sínead Hackett** - Dunboyne  
Fulfillment & Inventory Co-Ordinator  
Forward  
2 All-Ireland Junior C'ship titles, Nat League Div 2 title, Nat League Div 3 title, Nat League Div 4 title, Soaring Star Awards, 5 Leinster C'ship titles.



**Maggie Randle** - Donaghmore Ashbourne  
Student  
Goalkeeper  
All-Ireland Junior C'ship title, Nat League Div 2 title, Leinster Inter & Junior C'ship titles, Purcell Cup title.



**Grace Coleman** - Killyon  
Dental Nurse  
Forward  
All-Ireland Minor B title, Nat League Div 2 title, Leinster U16 C'ship title.



**Máire Keogh** - Kildalkey  
Physiotherapist  
Midfield  
Nat League Div 2 title, Nat League Div 4 title, Leinster Inter C'ship title.



**Aedin Slattery** - Na Fianna  
Student  
Forward  
2 All-Ireland U17 titles, Leinster U16 Shield title.



**Maeve Clince** - Dunboyne  
Student  
Defender  
All-Ireland Minor C'ship title, All-Ireland U16 C'ship title, Nat League Div 2 title, Leinster Inter C'ship title, Leinster Minor & U16 C'ship titles.



**Erin Leddy** - Na Fianna  
Student  
Forward  
All-Ireland U17 title.



**Fia O'Brien** - Kiltale  
Lifeguard & Student  
Forward  
All-Ireland Minor C'ship title, All-Ireland U16 C'ship title, 2 Nat League Div 2 titles, Leinster Inter C'ship title, Leinster Minor & U16 C'ship titles.



**Beverly Lynch** - Kildalkey  
Student  
Forward  
All-Ireland U17 title, Leinster U16 Shield title.



**Aileen Smith** - Kiltale  
Credit Analyst  
Midfield



**Máire Kirby** - Na Fianna  
Student  
Forward  
Nat League Div 2 title, Leinster Inter C'ship title, Leinster U16 C'ship title.



**Aine Kirby** - Na Fianna  
Student  
Forward



**Sophia Payne** - Na Fianna  
Student  
Defender  
2 All-Ireland U17 titles, Leinster U16 Shield title.



**Katie Hackett** - Boardsmill  
Event Co-ordinator  
Midfield  
All-Ireland Junior C'ship title, Nat League Div 2 title, Nat League Div 4 title, 4 Leinster C'ship titles.



**Ellen Conneely** - Kildalkey  
Student  
Defender  
All-Ireland U17 title.



**Helen Murphy** - Blackhall Gaels  
Health & Safety Advisor  
Defender



# Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Intermediate Camogie Championship Final

by Daragh Ó Conchúir

## Cork v Meath

MEATH are appearing in their first Intermediate Final, while Cork are returning to the scene of the crime after being edged out by a point by Kilkenny in last year's deciding outcome.

It has taken the Royals a little while to establish themselves in the second tier after enjoying Croke Park glory when annexing the Premier Junior crown in 2012. They showed that they had found their feet when winning the National League Division 2 title last season however and spent the spring this term in the rarefied atmosphere of Division 1.

There were some tough outings as they failed to collect anything in terms of points but the experience of operating at a quicker level and higher intensity than anything they would have been accustomed to was invaluable.

John Davis' crew finished the campaign positively, losing by just two points to Offaly, who missed out on making the knockout stages of the Senior Championship on score difference by one point. Meath carried that form right through the Championship. Although drawing to Down, they had earlier edged out Cork in a cracker by 3-9 to 0-17 in Trim, assuring themselves of top seeding in the Semi-Finals.

There the Royals met old rivals Kildare. Buoyed by a quick goal from Kristina Troy and a strong final quarter that yielded seven successive points after falling two points behind, they were able to concede a late goal and still prevail by two.

Jane Dolan has long been acknowledged as one of the most dangerous forwards in the land but she has strong support in the likes of Troy, Megan Thynne, Aoife Minogue and Cheyenne O'Brien.

Cork will be concerned by the three goals they conceded when the sides met on July 8th but apart from that, they have enjoyed a flawless season. The League ended with a 14-point defeat of Derry and they repeated that win over a side that had been campaigning in the top tier for the previous four years in the Championship Semi-Final.

The margin this time around was 10 points. Linda Collins, who scored 1-5 from play in last year's All-Ireland and played along with Jennifer Barry in this year's National League Division 1 decider, did the damage with two goals. Finola Neville, Lauren Callanan and Amy Lee are just some of the others with Senior experience. Keava McCarthy and Maeve McCarthy are other threatening attackers capable of scuppering Meath's dreams.



Cork's Caroline Sugrue with Derry's Aileen McCusker



Meath's Kristina Troy with Kildare's Clodagh Flanagan

## Player Interview

### Aoife Minogue Meath

**Who has been your biggest influence on your career so far?**  
My family, but my Dad in particular as well as my local club Dunderry.

**What has been your sporting moment of 2017?**  
Winning the Purcell Cup with DIT back in February in Abbotstown.

**Who has been your toughest opponent this year?**  
Cork.

**What is your favourite venue to play in and why?**  
Croke Park, it's the one pitch that everyone who plays any form of GAA wants the opportunity to play on.

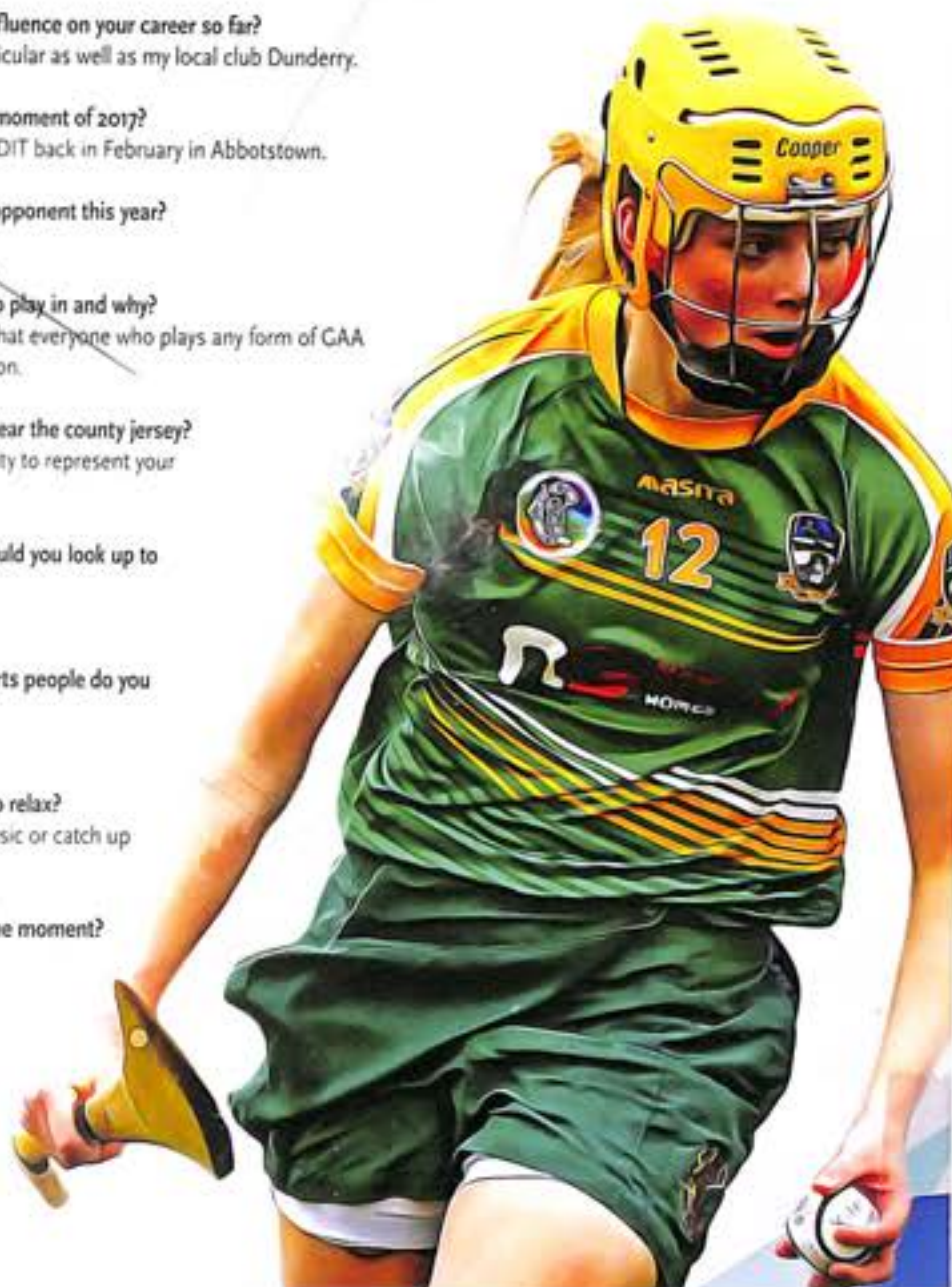
**What does it mean to you to wear the county jersey?**  
It's the sense of pride, the ability to represent your club at the highest level.

**What other Camogie player would you look up to outside your county?**  
Catherine Foley, Kilkenny.

**Apart from Camogie, what sports people do you look to for inspiration?**  
Katie Taylor.

**Off the pitch, what do you do to relax?**  
I go to the cinema, listen to music or catch up with my friends and family.

**What's your favourite song at the moment?**  
Mama by Jonas Blue.



### MEATH INTERMEDIATE TEAM

An Mhí - Glas & Or



### IONADAÍ

16. Maggie Randle (M. Randal, Donaghmore Ashbourne)  
17. Grace Coleman (C. Ní Chalmáin, Killybeg)  
18. Máire Keogh (M. Ní Eochaidh, Kildare)  
19. Aedin Slattery (A. Ní Shláitara, Na Fianna)  
20. Maeve Clince (M. Clince, Dunboyne)

21. Erin Leddy (E. Ní Lúí, Na Fianna)  
22. Fia O'Brien (F. Ní Bhríain, Kildare)  
23. Beverly Lynch (B. Ní Loingsigh, Kildare)  
24. Aileen Smith (A. Ní Gabhann, Kildare)  
25. Máire Kirby (M. Ní Chárba, Na Fianna)

26. Aine Kirby (A. Ní Chárba, Na Fianna)  
27. Sophia Payne (S. Paghan, Na Fianna)  
28. Katie Hackett (C. Ní Eochaidh, Boardmill)  
29. Ellen Connolly (E. Ní Chonghaile, Kildare)  
30. Helen Murphy (H. Ní Mhurchú, Blackhall Garb)

### TEAM OFFICIALS

Bainisteoir: John Davis  
Maor Feime: Katie Mullen  
Roghndóir (H): Christy Mangan  
Roghndóir (H): GT Troy  
Roghndóir (H): Teresa Clince  
Roghndóir (H): Ronan McWilliams  
Roghndóir (H): Una Burke  
Roghndóir (H): Christine Fagan  
Roghndóir (H): Margaret Burke  
Roghndóir (H): Edel Guy



# Westmeath, Premier Junior



Back Row Left to Right:  
Mairéad McCormack, Aoife Corcoran, Sheila McGrath, Muireann Scally, Fiona Keating, Julie McLoughlin, Sarah King, Edel McCormack, Aoife Higgins, Pamela Greville, Meadh Scally, Niamh Horan, Fiona Leavy (Captain)

Front Row Left to Right:  
Joanne McCormack, Aoife Doherty, Laura Doherty, Elaine Finn, Louise O'Connor, Aoife Boyle, Dinah Loughlin, Denise McGrath, Katie Layde, Hannah Core, Ciara Corcoran

Missing from photo: Caoimhe McCrossan & Jade McKeogh

## Player Profiles - Westmeath



**Fiona Keating** - Cullion  
Teacher  
Goalkeeper  
All-Ireland Junior A C'ship title, Nat League Div 3 title, Nat League Div 4 title, Fr. Meagher Cup.



**Sarah King** - Delvin  
Teacher  
Defender  
All-Ireland Junior A C'ship title, Nat League Div 3 title, Nat League Div 4 title, Fr. Meagher Cup.



**Edel McCormack** - Castletown Geoghegan  
Teacher  
Defender  
National League Div 3 title.



**Julie McLoughlin** - Crookedwood  
Student  
Defender  
All-Ireland Ashbourne Cup title.



**Elaine Finn** - Raharney  
Midwife  
Defender  
6 County C'ship titles.



**Fiona Leavy** - Raharney  
Science Teacher  
Defender  
National League Div 3 title.



**Laura Doherty** - Raharney  
Student Teacher  
Defender  
All-Ireland Snr School title.



**Joanne McCormack** - Castletown Geoghegan  
Speech & Language Therapist  
Midfield  
All-Ireland Junior A C'ship title, Nat League Div 3 title, Nat League Div 4 title.



**Caoimhe McCrossan** - Lough Lene Gaels  
Student  
Midfield  
National League Div 3 title.



**Mairéad McCormack** - Castletown Geoghegan  
Administrator  
Forward  
National League Div 3 title.



**Denise McGrath** - Delvin  
Midwife  
Forward  
All-Ireland Junior A C'ship title, Nat League Div 3 title, Nat League Div 4 title, Soaring Star Award, All-Ireland Schools Inter-provincial title.



**Dinah Loughlin** - Clonkill  
Administrator  
Forward  
All-Ireland Junior A C'ship title, Nat League Div 3 title, Nat League Div 4 title, 2 Soaring Star Awards.



**Sheila McGrath** - St. Munnas  
Student  
Forward  
All-Ireland U16B C'ship title, All-Ireland U16C C'ship title, Féile Div 3 title, Leinster Minor B title.



**Pamela Greville** - Raharney  
Office Manager  
Forward  
All-Ireland Junior A C'ship title, Nat League Div 3 title, Nat League Div 4 title, 2 Soaring Star Awards.



**Hannah Core** - Raharney  
Student  
Forward  
All-Ireland U16B C'ship title, All-Ireland U16C C'ship title, Féile Div 3 title, All-Ireland Senior School title, All-Ireland U16 School title, Leinster Minor B C'ship title.



**Katie Layde** - Cullion  
Global Marketing Assistant  
Defender  
County Junior C'ship title.



**Muireann Scally** - Crookedwood  
Strength & Conditioning Trainer  
Midfield  
All-Ireland Junior A C'ship title, Nat League Div 3 title, Nat League Div 4 title, Fr. Meagher Cup.



**Aoife Higgins** - Lough Lene Gaels  
Pharmacist  
Defender  
All-Ireland Junior A C'ship title.



**Aoife Doherty** - Raharney  
Student  
Midfield  
All-Ireland Junior C'ship title, 2 All-Ireland School titles, Féile Div 3 title, Leinster U16B C'ship title.



**Louise O'Connor** - Brownstown  
Carer  
Forward  
All-Ireland Junior A C'ship title, Nat League Div 4 title, All-Ireland U16C C'ship title.



**Meadh Scally** - Clonkill  
Student  
Defender  
All-Ireland U16B C'ship title, All-Ireland U16C C'ship title, Féile Div 3 title, Leinster Minor B title, Leinster school title.



**Aoife Boyle** - Raharney  
Student  
Forward  
All-Ireland Junior A C'ship title, Nat League Div 3 title.



**Ciara Corcoran** - Castletown Geoghegan  
Teacher  
Defender  
All-Ireland Junior A C'ship title, Nat League Div 3 title.



**Aoife Corcoran** - Castletown Geoghegan  
Student Nurse  
Forward  
All-Ireland Féile Skills title, All-Ireland U16C C'ship title.



**Niamh Horan** - Delvin  
Student Pharmacist  
Defender  
National League Div 3 title.



**Jade McKeogh** - Raharney  
Student  
Midfield  
All-Ireland C'ship school title, All-Ireland & Leinster U16 School titles.





## WESTMEATH PREMIER JUNIOR TEAM

An Iarmhí - Marín & Bán



### IONADAI

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 16 Katie Layde<br>C. Ni Laidé<br>Cullin               | 20 Louise O'Connor<br>L. Ni Chonchúir<br>Brownstown         | 24 Aoife Corcoran<br>A. Ni Chorcáin<br>Castletown Geoghegan |
| 17 Maireann Scally<br>M. Ni Scalai<br>Cookstown       | 21 Meadh Scally<br>M. Ni Scalai<br>Clonkill                 | 25 Niamh Horan<br>N. Ni hÓráin<br>Delvin                    |
| 18 Aoife Higgins<br>A. Ni hUiginn<br>Lough Lane Gaels | 22 Aoife Boyle<br>A. Ni hUiginn<br>Raharney                 | 26 Jade McKeogh<br>J. Ni hUiginn<br>Raharney                |
| 19 Aoife Doherty<br>A. Ni hUiginn<br>Raharney         | 23 Clara Corcoran<br>C. Ni Chorcáin<br>Castletown Geoghegan |   |

### TEAM OFFICIALS

- |                   |                 |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| Bainisteoir:      | Johnny Greville |
| Maor Foirne:      | Jimmy Greville  |
| Roghndóir (1):    | Frank Mullen    |
| Roghndóir (2):    | Jim Bob Baker   |
| Maor Uisce/Camán: | John Gilligan   |
| Maor Uisce/Camán: | Una Leonard     |
| Maor Uisce/Camán: | Orla Leonard    |
| Physio:           | Gerry O'Malley  |
| Physio:           | Jackie Kelly    |

## PREVIEW

# Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Premier Junior Camogie Championship Final

by Daragh Ó Conchúir

## Dublin v Westmeath

DUBLIN Camogie is on the crest of a wave right now. The Seniors, Minors and U16s all made All-Ireland Semi-Finals but the Premier Juniors took it one step further. The overall picture is one of blooming health in the Capital County.

Shane Plowman's outfit took all before them in the League on the way to Division 3 honours but now they are crossing swords with a unit that played well in Division 2.

Indeed Westmeath only missed out on a place in the last four on score difference, finishing just five points worse off than Kildare, who also reached the Intermediate Semi-Final. Indeed the Lakesiders defeated the Lilywhites in the round-robin phase as well as another Intermediate side Antrim, and only lost by a point to Galway.

Both had already qualified when they faced off in the final Group 1 game so it is difficult to know what to take from that. On face value, we can say that there will be a puck of the ball in this, as Westmeath prevailed by the minimum.

A goal from Evelyn Twomey seven minutes into the second half broke the Kerry resistance as Dublin moved to within 60 minutes of a sixth title at this grade with six points to spare. Aoife Bugler and skipper Emer Keenan will be among the players they will need to perform if they are to achieve it.

Dinah Loughlin, Pamela Greville and Denise McGrath stood out once more for Westmeath, although they had a couple of anxious moments as last year's runners-up Armagh launched a late rally and closed to within a point by the time the final whistle was blown.



Dublin's Gráinne Free with Kerry's Jessica Fitzell



Westmeath Captain Fiona Leavy, Deirdre Ashe of Liberty Insurance, Uachtarán on Cumann Camógachia Catherine Neary and Dublin captain Emer Keenan at the Captain's Day Finals Launch



Westmeath's Caoimhe McCrossan with Armagh's Róisín Murray

## Player Interview

# Muireann Scally Westmeath

**Who has been the biggest influence on your career so far?**  
There has been so many over the years from managers to players but I would probably say the biggest influence has been my family. They are always there to drive and push you on and there's always a bit of constructive criticism thrown in then so you don't get too carried away!

**What has been your sporting moment of 2017?**  
Getting picked for the Leinster Interprovincial team and playing against the other provinces was a huge honour but getting to the Intermediate Leinster Final was also a huge achievement this year.

**Who has been your toughest opponent this year?**  
Cork in the League gave us a big beating earlier this year but we have learned so much from that and improved from it and it has really stood to us in the long run.

**What is your favourite venue to play in and why?**  
I love playing in Clonkill. It's not my club pitch but I practice up there all the time. I love playing matches up there because I'm so used to the pitch.

**What does it mean to you to wear the county jersey?**  
It's an honour and privilege to wear the county jersey. When you wear the jersey you're not only representing your county but also your club. It also shows all the hard work that you have put in to get that far.

**What other Camogie player would you look up to outside of your county?**  
Siobhán Flannery from Offaly is a class act of a player and I was lucky enough to play with her in college!

**Apart from Camogie, what sports people do you look to for inspiration?**  
I think Jessica Ennis-Hill is a phenomenal sportswoman and athlete. She was the best athlete in the world and the training, commitment and determination she had to get to the level is inspiring. I also look at Joe Canning, Henry Shefflin and DJ Carey for inspiration. Their skill level and hurling abilities are unreal!

**Off the pitch, what do you do to relax?**  
I like to go out on the horses. We have a few at home and it's good to go out and get some fresh air!!

**What is your favourite song at the moment?**  
I'm not really into music as such but I love when a good song comes on the radio and you can "sing" along to it in the car!



Westmeath's Fiona Leavy and Dublin's Emer Keenan





# Dublin, Premier Junior



Back Row Left to Right:  
Shane Plowman (Manager), Gráinne Power, Aishling Spillane, Aoife Dooley, Emer Keenan (Captain), Eimear O'Riordan, Caragh Dawson, Aoife Walsh, Emma Young, Deirdre Johnstone, Sinéad Wylde, Aoife Bugler, Laura Walsh, Róisín Drohan, Róisín Baker, Chloe NI Cheallaigh, Willie Braine (Maor Foirne), Ann Colgan (Roghndóir).

Front Row Left to Right:  
Kate Mulvey, Gráinne Free, Emma Barron, Nicole Burnett, Ciara Carolan, Sinéad Nolan, Laoise Quinn, Nadine Murphy, Ciara Buchanan, Róisín MacLoughlin, Emma O'Flynn, Niamh Gleeson, Evelyn Twomey

## Player Profiles - Dublin



**Aishling Spillane** - Skerries Harps  
Genetic Technologist  
Goalkeeper  
Nat League Div 3 title, Nat League Div 4 title,  
Leinster U16 C'ship title.



**Ciara Buchanan** - St. Finians  
Student  
Defender  
Nat League Div 3 title.



**Niamh Gleeson** - Na Fianna  
Student  
Defender  
Nat League Div 3 title, Leinster Shield title.



**Róisín MacLoughlin** - Naomh Olafs  
Student  
Defender  
Nat League Div 3 title.



**Emma Barron** - Naomh Jude's  
Nurse  
Defender  
Nat League Div 3 title.



**Deirdre Johnstone** - Naomh Uinsionn  
Teacher  
Defender  
Nat League Div 3 title, Nat League Div 4 title.



**Gráinne Free** - Na Fianna  
Teacher  
Defender  
All-Ireland Junior A C'ship title, Nat League Div 3  
title, Nat League Div 4 title.



**Gráinne Power** - Naomh Mearnóg  
Neonatal Nurse  
Midfield  
Nat League Div 3 title.



**Róisín Drohan** - Naomh Uinsionn  
Teacher  
Midfield  
Nat League Div 3 title.



**Aoife Dooley** - Raheny  
Medical Lab Technician  
Forward  
Nat League Div 3 title.



**Róisín Baker** - Na Fianna  
Student  
Forward  
Nat League Div 3 title.



**Evelyn Twomey** - Naomh Uinsionn  
Student  
Forward  
Nat League Div 3 title, Leinster Shield title.



**Laoise Quinn** - St. Olivers Plunketts Eoghan R.  
Associate Operations Specialist  
Forward  
All-Ireland Junior A C'ship title, Nat League Div 3  
title, Nat League Div 4 title.



**Aoife Bugler** - St. Olivers Plunketts Eoghan R.  
Teacher  
Forward  
Nat League Div 3 title.



**Emer Keenan** - Lucan Sarsfields  
Customer Journey Analyst  
Forward  
All-Ireland Junior A C'ship title,  
Nat League Div 3 title.



**Chloe NI Cheallaigh** - Naomh Olafs  
Student  
Goalkeeper  
Nat League Div 3 title.



**Sinéad Nolan** - Naomh Jude's  
Physiotherapist  
Forward  
Nat League Div 3 title.



**Eimear O'Riordan** - Naomh Jude's  
Student  
Defender  
Nat League Div 3 title.



**Sinéad Wylde** - Cuala  
Student  
Forward  
Nat League Div 3 title, Leinster Shield title,  
All-Ireland U16 C'ship title.



**Laura Walsh** - Naomh Mearnóg  
Student  
Defender  
Nat League Div 3 title.



**Nadine Murphy** - Naomh Uinsionn  
Student  
Forward  
Nat League Div 3 title.



**Caoimhe NI Mhaolagáin**  
- St. Olivers Plunketts Eoghan R.  
Student  
Midfield  
Nat League Div 3 title.



**Emma O'Flynn** - Lucan Sarsfields  
Student  
Defender  
Nat League Div 3 title.



**Ciara Carolan** - St. Olivers Plunketts Eoghan R.  
Student  
Forward  
Nat League Div 3 title, All-Ireland U16 A C'ship  
title.



**Kate Mulvey** - Whitehall Colmcille  
Student  
Forward  
Nat League Div 3 title, Nat League Div 4 title.



**Emma Young** - Cumann Baire Chaoir  
Student  
Forward  
Nat League Div 3 title.



**Aoife Walsh** - Naomh Jude's  
Student  
Forward  
Nat League Div 3 title.



**Caragh Dawson** - Naomh Jude's  
Student  
Forward  
Nat League Div 3 title.



**Nicole Burnett** - Naomh Uinsionn  
Student  
Goalkeeper  
Nat League Div 3 title, Leinster Minor C'ship  
title, Leinster U16 C'ship title.





## DUBLIN PREMIER JUNIOR TEAM

Baile Átha Cliath - Gorm & Dubh Gorm



### IONADAÍ

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| 16. Chloé Ní Cheallaigh (C. Ní Cheallaigh, Naomh Olaf) | 21. Nadine Murphy (N. Ní Mhurchú, Naomh Uinsionn)                                  | 26. Emma Young (E. Ní hOgáin, Cumann Baire Chasimh) |
| 17. Sinéad Nolan (S. Ní Nualláin, Naomh Iúdaí)         | 22. Caoimhe Ní Mhaolagáin (C. Ní Mhaolagáin, St. Oliver's Plunkett's Eoghan Ruadh) | 27. Aoife Walsh (A. Bhreathnach, Naomh Iúdaí)       |
| 18. Eimear O'Riordan (E. Ní Riordáin, Naomh Iúdaí)     | 23. Emma O'Flynn (E. Ní Fhloinn, Lucan Sanfield)                                   | 28. Caragh Dawson (C. Ní Dabhlú, Naomh Iúdaí)       |
| 19. Sinéad Wylde (S. Wylde, Cúis)                      | 24. Clara Canlan (C. Ní Chearúlláin, St. Oliver's Plunkett's Eoghan Ruadh)         | 29. Nicole Burnett (N. Burnett, Naomh Uinsionn)     |
| 20. Laura Walsh (L. Bhreathnach, Naomh Mairtín)        | 25. Kate Mulvey (C. Ní Mhaolmhaigh, Wexford Colmcille)                             |   |

### TEAM OFFICIALS

Bainisteoir: Shane Plowman  
Maor Foinne: Willie Braine  
Roghndóir (1): Ann Colgan  
Roghndóir (2): Nollaig Ryan  
Physio: Dee Quinn

## Laura Treacy Cork Senior



## Player Interview

### Sinéad Wylde Dublin

Who has been the biggest influence on your career so far?  
Fintan Quill and Paul Beecher.

What has been your sporting moment of 2017?  
Beating Tipperary in injury time in the Minor A Championship earlier this year.

Who has been your toughest opponent this year?  
Clare.

What is your favourite venue to play in and why?  
Dr. Cullen Park - I played my first ever match for Dublin there at half-time of the Ladies All-Ireland Football Semi-Finals when I was 12 and have had good luck playing there ever since.

What does it mean to you to wear the county jersey?  
It's an honour to get to represent my club at the highest level.

What other Camogie player would you look up to outside of your county?  
Mags D'Arcy - a brilliant role model for players both on and off the pitch.

Apart from Camogie, what sports people do you look to for inspiration?  
Michael Oher - American Football (The Blind Side).

Off the pitch, what do you do to relax?  
Walk my dalmatians or go for a dip in Seapoint.

What is your favourite song at the moment?  
Wagon Wheel by Darius Rucker.



## Catherine Foley Kilkenny





# White lightning strikes for Cork in thrilling finale

Supersub fires over injury-time winner to break Cats' hearts and clinch Rebels' record 27th title

CLIONA FOLEY



**CORK** 0-10

**KILKENNY** 0-9

LIBERTY INSURANCE ALL-IRELAND SENIOR CAMOGIE FINAL

IT MAY not have been one for the purists but the climax, at least, of this Liberty Insurance All-Ireland senior final was so sensational that you could forgive anything that prefaced it.

In the 60th minute Gemma O'Connor, the great Cork veteran who wasn't even expected to line out due to a serious knee injury, stepped up to hit a Hail Mary shot from the 65-metre line and equalised to exclamations of 'Holy God!'

When six minutes of added time were then announced, the tension became unbearable.

## TICKED

A replay looked inevitable as both sides emptied their tanks and traded chances before Cork substitute Julia White produced a miraculous winner out of a hive of stripy women just as the clock ticked into minute 67.

After a 22-year wait for their title last year, defending champions Kilkenny were never going to give up without a fight and it took those two magnificent clutch shots to get past them.

Hurt is so often the difference between teams as tightly bound as these two and Cork had the monopoly on it yesterday.

They were not only hurt by losing a three-in-a-row to the Cats last year but particularly hurt at the un-Cork way they had relinquished their crown.

O'Connor, who damaged her medial

## GAME AT A GLANCE

### PLAYER OF THE MATCH

**Orla Cronin (Cork)**  
Ashling Thompson was another major contender in the pivotal defensive role but Cronin not only restricted Anne Dalton's influence for so long but scored 0-3 and led the Cork attack throughout.

### TALKING POINT

Cork's Gemma O'Connor not only starting the game but lasting the full distance and scoring a magnificent equaliser after being such an injury doubt beforehand.

### MAGIC MOMENT

Julia White's miracle winner in the 67th minute. Everyone else in the stadium was ready to settle for a draw after a thrilling conclusion to the game but not her.

### REF WATCH

Owen Elliot did well, played lots of advantage and correctly made a tough 'charging' call in the dying minutes.

### MATCH STATISTICS

#### WIDES

Cork 5 (2 in first half)  
Kilkenny 7 (3)

#### FREES

Cork 10 (3 in first half)  
Kilkenny 15 (7)

#### YELLOW CARDS

Cork 0  
Kilkenny 1 (Malone 49)

#### RED CARDS

Cork 0  
Kilkenny 0

**ATTENDANCE**  
20,438

knee ligaments in the semi-finals, spent the last three weeks on a monumental intensive rehab programme to make it back.

And White had more hurt than most after a nightmare two years.

First she ruptured her Achilles which cost her the guts on one season and then she broke a bone in her foot in April.

"Since 2015 I've played about 15 minutes of championship camogie, today included," said Cork's game



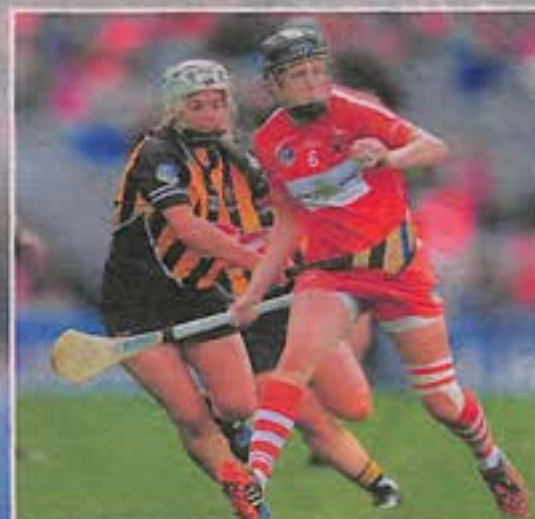
Rena Buckley

winner.

"I knew where the goals were and that we had about 30 seconds left, so I was thinking we had nothing to lose but I waited and made sure (it went over)," she grinned. "I think it probably was my first touch."

Her late, late winner sealed history on several fronts.

Cork's 27th title finally pushed them ahead of Dublin on the all-time senior honours list and also



Ashling Thompson discards her helmet as the celebrations begin in Croke Park and, inset, Thompson embraces Cork team-mate Leanne O'Sullivan. Inset above: Gemma O'Connor of Cork gives Kilkenny's Shelly Farrell the slip.



Westmeath players celebrate with the Kathleen Mills cup

# McGrath on target as ruthless

**WESTMEATH** 1-10

**DUBLIN** 1-6

Daragh Ó Conchúir

LIBERTY INSURANCE ALL-IRELAND PREMIER JUNIOR FINAL

WESTMEATH made their first visit to Croke Park one to remember as they claimed their maiden Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Premier Junior title. In a strange game, both sides

endured long scoring droughts, while Dublin certainly had the greater share of the possession over the hour.

The spoils go to the team that scores the most, however, and though they probably held the upper hand for little more than a quarter of an hour, Westmeath were ruthless with their scoring opportunities.

They took a little while to settle and fell behind to two pointed frees inside four minutes by Aoife Bugler.

They continued to look more

assured, but failed to translate time on the ball into numbers on the scoreboard and paid the price as their opponents hit 1-8 without reply.

Sheila McGrath and Dinah Loughlin (free) brought them level and even when Hannah Core put them ahead at the end of the first quarter, it was probably against the run of play.

Johnny Greville's crew were beginning to exert control by now, however, and had added two points when Denise McGrath drilled a low shot off the rain-





meant that Rena Buckley made GAA history. Not only did she pocket her 18th All-Ireland medal (11 football, 7 camogie) but she became the first player, of either gender, to captain her county to All-Ireland senior titles in two codes.

She made some vital blocks in the dying minutes and afterwards spoke of Cork's desire to show more passion than in 2016.

"Had we lost the game today at least we'd put in a very honest effort and fair play to Kilkenny they died in their boots," Buckley (30) said.

With trademark modesty, she said her dual captaincy "was not something I've put a huge amount of thought into" but she did allow herself some excitement at her 18th medal.

"I never imagined it, I don't know how you'd describe it but it's been a fantastic period in my life. I don't hail from a massive GAA house," she said, borne out by her revelation that she keeps her medals "in a press at home".

Orla Cronin kept Anne Dalton (centre-back and quasi-sweeper) unusually quiet and, without her pulling the strings, Kilkenny struggled badly in the first half, scoring just 0-2 (one free).

#### NERVY

The half-time scoreline of 0-5 to 0-3 reflected a nervy game not helped by some awful weather. Neither side ever created a decent goal chance but, with both teams' defences on top and Ashling Thompson outstanding in Cork's, the Rebels' half-forward line stood out early on.

But on the resumption Kilkenny scored four points to one via Denise Gaule (free), Katie Power and two from the excellent Meighan Farrell to take their first lead of the game in the 39th minute.

Yet the way Cork bounced back immediately, with an Orla Cotter free and Cronin's third point, indicated that they were up for this fight.

Points from Julie Ann Malone, and a cracker from Miriam Walsh, moved Kilkenny a point clear again and then came those final frenetic six minutes of guts and glory.

"We're bitterly disappointed, no point in saying anything else," admitted Kilkenny manager Ann Downey. "We probably didn't turn up in the first 20 minutes. I don't know why but, in fairness, the girls died with their boots on in the second half."

"All I can do is congratulate Cork and congratulate Rena on captaining her camogie and football teams to All-Irelands. No other player has done it and it's brilliant. I congratulate herself and Gemma on their careers."

**SCORERS** - Cork: O Cronin 0-3, A O'Connor, O Cotter 0-2 each; O'Connor, K Mackey, J O'Connor 0-1 each. **Kilkenny**: M Farrell, D Gaule, JA Malone 0-2 each; K Power, S Farrell, M Walsh 0-1 each. **CORK** - A Murray 8; P Mackey 7, R Buckley (capt) 8, L Treacy 9, E O'Sullivan 7, O O'Connor 8, C Sigerson 7, L Coppinger 8, A Thompson 9, A O'Connor 8, O Cronin 9, O Cotter 8, H Looney 8, N McCarthy 6, K Mackey 8. **Subs**: L Horan 6 for Looney (52), J White 7 for Sigerson (50).

**KILKENNY** - E Kavanagh 7, C Foley 7, D Tobin 8, G Walsh 8, C Dorrer 7, A Dalton 7, A Dunphy 7, M Farrell 8, A Farrell (capt) 8, JA Malone 7, K Power 8, D Gaule 6, S Farrell 6, M Walsh 8, D Morrissey 5. **Subs**: M Quilty 6 for Morrissey (9-11), J Reddy 6 for Malone (58), REF - O Ellett (Antrim)

## Thynne and Meath get second shot at wasteful Rebels

<b>CORK</b>	<b>1-9</b>
<b>MEATH</b>	<b>1-9</b>

LIBERTY INSURANCE ALL-IRELAND INTERMEDIATE CAMOGIE FINAL

CORK and Meath will have to do it all over again on October 1 as 63 minutes of play were unable to separate them in the Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Intermediate Camogie final.

The magnificent Megan Thynne was on the attack for Meath and in the throes of unleashing a shot at glory when referee Liz Dempsey called time on the play, allowing Cork supporters to breathe a sigh of relief.

The Rebels would have been extremely disappointed had they let it slip for a second consecutive year, however, as they led for the majority of proceedings and wasted a couple of gilt-edged opportunities, with some dreadful wides in the final quarter in particular.

It would have been hard on Meath to lose out, too, however, as they showed tremendous grit to drag themselves back level after falling four points behind in the first half, and then recovering from the concession of a goal just before the break to reel in a similar deficit in the second period.

Both full-forward lines came into the game as the strongest sections of each unit and they advertised their talents, especially in a more fluid opening period, although they were shackled well in a cagier second half.

Rachel O'Shea opened the scoring for Cork and by the 10th minute, her colleagues on the inside line, Caroline Sugrue and Linda Collins, had also gotten off the mark.

Keeva McCarthy shot a brace, the second a really well-crafted score after good work by Sugrue and Collins, as Cork went 0-6 to 0-2 ahead, but Meath responded with four in a row, Jane Dolan converting three frees and Sinéad Hackett slotting well.

McCarthy was on target once more for Cork, however, before Katelyn Hickey finished brilliantly to the corner of the Meath net to make it 1-7 to 0-6 at the change of ends.

The second half lacked the fluidity of the first, although it had a rip-roaring start, with Amy Gaffney pointing directly from the throw-in, and then Kristina Troy blasting a goal just over a minute later.

#### POWERFUL

That score was all about Aoife Minogue, however, as the young Dunderly forward drew the cover with a powerful run through the middle and timed her pass to perfection. Troy made no mistake despite Amy Lee, who had a fine game, closing in.

Player-of-the-match Finola Neville and O'Shea moved Cork ahead quickly, but the Leesiders failed to score in the last 26 minutes, including three of injury time.

Dolan halved the gap in the 52nd minute, but it wasn't until the second minute of injury time that she was able to hit the leveller, just after Hickey had been sent off for a second yellow card offence.

**SCORERS** - Cork: R O'Shea (6), K McCarthy (2) 0-3 each, K Hickey 1-0, F Neville, L Collins, C Sugrue 0-1 each. **Meath**: J Dolan 0-5 (3), K Troy 1-0, S Hackett 0-2, A Gaffney, A Minogue (5) 0-1 each.

**CORK** - A Lee, L Weste, S Harrington, N Ni Chaoimh, R Kileen, S Buckley, L Callanan, F Neville, J Barry, K Hickey, K McCarthy, M McCarthy, R O'Shea, L Collins, C Sugrue. **Subs**: J Buckley for M McCarthy (48), S Fahy for O'Shea (50).

**MEATH** - E Mangion, E Coffey, C Coffey, E Burke, A Keogh, A Maguire, L Donoghue, C O'Brien, M Thynne, A Gaffney, K Troy, A Minogue, C Quinn, J Dolan, S Hackett. **Subs**: A Slattery for Quinn (43).

**REF** - L Dempsey (Kilkenny)



Meath's Claire Coffey attempts to dispossess Cork's Katelyn Hickey during yesterday's intermediate final at Croke Park. PÍARAS Ó MÉIDEACH/SPLASH

## Westmeath put name on title

slickened sod to the far corner for a goal that appeared to deflate Dublin completely.

McGrath put over her second point and Loughlin provided three more to put the margin at nine at the break, 1-8 to 0-2.

Shane Plowman made two substitutions at half-time and Dublin contested much better throughout the field for the entire second period.

This was best illustrated by the increase in aerial possession, with Róisín Baker, sub Sinéad Wylde and captain Emer Keenan

displaying their high-catching prowess.

Baker gave them a real boost with a goal 37 seconds after the restart. Bugler slotted a brace of points, but the return was not commensurate with the number of incursions inside Westmeath's '45.

Credit for that should go to the defensive efforts of Edel McCormack and Fiona Leavy, while Caoimhe McCrossan was in player-of-the-match form.

Pamela Greville finally registered Westmeath's first

score of the second half in the 55th minute and though Dublin kept pouring forward, creating a couple of half-chances for goals, they had left themselves too much of a mountain to climb.

**SCORERS** - Westmeath: D Loughlin 0-4 (2), D McGrath 1-0, S McGrath, H Core 0-2 each, P Greville, A Higgins 0-1 each.

**Dublin**: A Bugler 0-5 (3), J 45), R Baker 1-1.

**WESTMEATH** - F Keating, S King, E McCormack, J McLoughlin, E Finn, F Leavy, L Doherty, J McCormack, M McCormack, C McCrossan, D McGrath, D Loughlin, H Core, P Greville, S McGrath. **Subs**: A Higgins for D McGrath (51), M Scally for M McCormack (58).

**DUBLIN** - A Spillane, R MacLoughlin, N Gleeson, C Buchanan, D Free, D Johnstone, E Barron, G Power, R O'Han, A Dooley, R Baker, E Twomey, L Quinn, A Bugler, E Keenan. **Subs**: S Nolan for Power (9-11), S Wylde for Quinn (9-11), C Carolan for Twomey (48), E O'Riordan for Gleeson (58).

**REF** - P McDonald (Cavan)



# Dramatic ending as heroic White just beats the clock



Liberty Insurance All-Ireland senior camogie final

**CORK..... 0-10**  
**KILKENNY..... 0-9**

**Brendan O'Brien**

Croke Park

For 60 minutes yesterday the two best camogie teams in the country suffocated each other with defensive tactics on a wet mop of a day at Croke Park but the six minutes of injury-time provided a clean slate.

It was everything the rest of the game wasn't.

Supporters screeched and the rain fell in sticky sheets as sticks swung and the ball flew around the vast expanse of the pitch like a pinball paddled by flippers on all sides. It took two moments of preternatural calm and class amid the mayhem to win it.

Both emanated from Cork.

Gemma O'Connor had been a story all week. Replaced with a knee injury during the semi-final win over Galway, she had been deemed a certain non-starter. Manager Paudie Murray was telling RTE as much just ten minutes before throw-in.

O'Connor played and what a part. A defensive rock alongside Ashling Thompson all day, the classy St Finbarr's defender launched a monster equaliser from all of 65 yards out just as the clock dipped into the red.

The drama was only starting.

Where the officials got six minutes extra was something of a mystery but it took every one of them and a few seconds more for the thing to be settled. Julia White would do the honours with what was effectively her first play.

A former captain who has endured two years of injury torment, White was on only mere seconds when she wound her way through a thicket of bodies to pop over what would be the winning score and one that would give Cork a record 27th All-Ireland senior title.

If the game itself was mostly sour then this was sweet.

Kilkenny had stalled Cork's three-in-a-row bid the year before with a four-point win in the decider and the Leinster side were everyone's favourites to make it back-to-back wins against an opponent that had also lost a league final to them earlier this year.

Instead, it was Rena Buckley and not Anna Farrell climbing up the Hogan Stand steps to claim the O'Duffy Cup. In doing so, she became the first player to captain her



native county to All-Ireland senior glory in both codes.

Oh, and it was her 18th All-Ireland medal between the camogie and football, too. A good day's work, that.

Some storylines for the ages, then. The game itself — injury-time aside — will likely lie untroubled in the vaults after the manner in which both sides cancelled themselves out with the use of extra bodies at the back.

It wasn't unexpected. Cork manager Murray had given notice of a low-scoring affair after the respective semi-finals but the resulting game was still a disappointment, especially given the heightening tensions surrounding these two camps in recent times.

Cork goalkeeper Aoife Murray played down any burgeon-

ing rivalry with Kilkenny at the start of the summer, comparing it unfavourably to the duels enjoyed between her county and Tipperary back in the early noughties, but this may change that landscape going forward.

Twenty-three of the players who started the 2016 decider took the parade again here yesterday. Among them were Hannah Looney and Colette Dormer who indulged in some 'pushy-shovey' while shaking hands 12 months ago.

The rituals were uneventful here. A sign of things to come.

In fairness, Cork were all business from the off. Up by four points to one after 13 minutes, they had taken the game to Kilkenny, their drive and determination borne of a belief that they had been too standoffish a year ago.

O'Connor and Thompson were superb in and around the half-back line, Chloe Sigerson an able lieutenant alongside. And Orla Cronin was diluting the influence of Kilkenny's pivot Anne Dalton at the other end while picking off the odd point, too.

She would end the game with three, all from play.

By half-time though, Cork had only the five points to Kilkenny's two. Both teams were prioritising solidity at the back over the business of scores at the far end but Kilkenny inevitably fashioned a more secure grip in the game after the interval.

The Farrell sisters, Anna and Meighan, provided the foundation in midfield and

Ann Downey's side broke free of the game's strictures long enough to claim five of the first six points after the interval. They even took the lead for the first time by the 38th minute.

It wasn't typical of what had come before. Or what would follow. Neither side had managed a score from the 19th minute to the 30th and the rate of scoring constricted again as the cost of a single error soared. Nobody so much as sniffed at a goal all afternoon.

They would draw level four times before O'Connor and White produced the sparks of magic that a drab game and afternoon had been crying out for. Cork won't care about that. Kilkenny neither. Finals are about winning. Finding a way.

This isn't the first time Cork managed that.

**Scorers for Cork:** O Cronin (0-3); A O'Connor (0-2); O Cotter (0-2 frees); G O'Connor, K Mackey and J White (all 0-1).

**Scorers for Kilkenny:** M Farrell and JA Malone (both 0-2); D Gaule (0-2 frees); K Power, S Farrell and M Walsh (all 0-1).

**CORK:** A Murray; R Buckley, L Treacy, L Coppinger; P Mackey, G O'Connor, C Sigerson; E O'Sullivan, A Thompson; A O'Connor, K Mackey, O Cotter; H Looney, O Cronin, N McCarthy.

**Subs:** L Horan for Looney (52); J White for Sigerson (52).

**KILKENNY:** E Kavanagh; C Foley, A Dalton, G Walsh; A Dunphy, C Dormer, D Tobin; M Farrell, A Farrell; JA Malone, D Gaule, K Power, D Morrissey, S Farrell, M Walsh.

**Subs:** M Quilty for Morrissey (HT); J Raddy for Malone (59).

**Referee:** O Elliott (Antrim).

Cork's Hannah Looney is challenged by Kilkenny's Colette Dormer as she attempts to get a shot away in yesterday's All-Ireland senior camogie championship final in Croke Park.

Picture: Inpho/Gary Carr

## THE 60 SECOND REPORT

### IT MATTERED

It must be every manager's dream to call in the sub that comes up with the winning score and Julia White made Paudie Murray and his brains trust look pretty damn good by landing that crucial injury-time point.

### CAN'T IGNORE

What a day — again — for Rena Buckley. An 18th All-Ireland medal across the two codes and the first person, male or female, to captain their county to All-Ireland senior titles in both codes.

### GOOD DAY

Rain pelted down, the autumnal cold settling in and yet the game yesterday still attracted 20,438 punters to HQ. It's the biggest crowd for camogie's banner day since 2009 and the fifth largest ever.

### BAD DAY

There's no getting away from the fact that this wasn't a fantas-

tic advertisement for the game though. Two defensively-minded teams cancelled each other out on a day when the wind and rain made play that bit more difficult again. The ending will have helped.

### SIDELINE SMARTS

Defenders here, more there. Both sides shuffled their packs away from what was once the norm in Gaelic games and it made for a confusing tableau and one that didn't offer much in the way of attractive play.

### BEST ON SHOW

Orla Cronin claimed three points from play while diluting the influence of Kilkenny's key player, Anne Dalton, but the claims of Ashling Thompson, a colossus around the middle third and at centre-back, are just as strong.

### MAN IN THE MIDDLE

This was Owen Elliott's first time officiating the senior All-Ireland final and the Antrim man got the job done. Hard to pinpoint too many decisions, or lack of them, that turned the game's tide.

Brendan O'Brien

## GAMEZone

Cork v Kilkenny

1 A Murray		
3 R Buckley	4 L Treacy	8 L Coppinger
14 M Walsh	13 S Farrell	15 D Morrissey
2 P Mackey		
11 K Power	6 G O'Connor	7 C Sigerson
	12 D Gaule	10 JA Malone
5 E O'Sullivan		
	9 A Thompson	
	9 A Farrell	8 M Farrell
10 A O'Connor	15 K Mackey	12 O Cotter
3 D Tobin	17 C Dormer	7 A Dunphy
13 H Looney	11 O Cronin	14 N McCarthy
4 G Walsh	6 A Dalton	2 C Foley
1 E Kavanagh		

Cork

Kilkenny



# WHITE GOLD

# MONDAY Sport

Irish Independent

Monday 11 September 2017 www.independent.ie/sport

Rebel supersub hits injury-time winner to break Kilkenny hearts in thrilling finale

PAGES 56-57



Julia White keeps her eyes on the prize to hit the winning point for Cork during yesterday's All-Ireland senior camogie final at Croke Park

## All-Ireland Intermediate Camogie Final

### Dolan earns Meath a replay

Meath	1-9
Cork	1-9

Jane Dolan hit an injury-time equaliser to give Meath a deserved second bite of the cherry against Cork in the Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Intermediate final at Croke Park yesterday.

While Cork were ahead for most of the game, Meath had shown a lot of doggedness to keep in touch and come back from four points down on two occasions.

The Rebels went 0-6 to 0-2 in front, with Keeva McCarthy, Rachel O'Shea, Caroline Sugrue and Linda Collins on the mark.

Meath responded with four points on the trot however, including three frees from Jane Dolan to draw level.

#### Response

McCarthy responded with a point before Katelyn Hickey goalied just before the break and it was 1-7 to 0-6.

The Royals were level within two minutes of the restart though, Amy Gaffney pointing from the throw-in and Kristina Troy profiting from good work

by Aoife Minogue to blast the levelling goal.

Cork drove on once more with points from player-of-the-match Finola Neville and O'Shea but the wasted some good chances to go further ahead.

Dolan made it a one-point game eight minutes from time and she held her nerve admirably to restore parity in the 63rd minute of the thrilling encounter to ensure a replay on October 1st.

**CORK:** A Lee, L Weste, S Harrington, NN Chaoimh, R Kileen, S Buckley, L Callaghan, F Neville (0-1), J Barry, K Hickey (1-0), K McCarthy (0-3, two frees), M McCarthy, R O'Shea (0-3, one free), L Collins (0-1), C Sugrue (0-1). **Subs:** M Buckley for M McCarthy (46 mins), S Fahy for O'Shea (60 mins).  
**MEATH:** E Mangari, E Coffey, C Coffey, E Burke, A Keogh, A Maguire, L Donoghue, C O'Brien, M Thynne, A Gaffney (0-1), K Troy (1-0), A Minogue (0-1), C Quinn, J Dolan (0-5, all frees), S Hackett (0-2). **Subs:** A Slattery for Quinn (43 mins).  
**Referee:** L Dempsey (Kilkenny)

## All-Ireland Premier Junior Camogie Final

### Westmeath take their chances

Westmeath	1-10
Dublin	1-6

Westmeath made the most of their opportunities to claim a first Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Premier Junior Camogie title at Croke Park yesterday.

Dublin started well with two Aoife Bugler points but somehow found themselves trailing at the end of the opening quarter despite dominating.

Westmeath were dominant from then to the interval however, Denise McGrath's brilliant goal giving them the upper hand.

Dinah Loughlin added three points, including one from play as Westmeath recorded 1-8



Denise McGrath's brilliant goal gave Westmeath the upper hand

without reply to lead by 1-8 to 0-2 at half-time.

Dublin began the second half even better than the first, with a goal after 37 seconds from Róisín Baker.

Unlike the opening period, they maintained their dominance but crucially found it more difficult than their opponents had during their period of ascendancy to register scores. Bugler hit three points but it just wasn't sufficient and though it took Westmeath 24 minutes to shoot their first score, courtesy of Pamela Greville, they had done enough to take the spoils.

**WESTMEATH:** F Keating, S King, E McCormack, J McLoughlin, E Finn, F Leavy, L Doherty, J McCormack, M McCormack, C McDermott, D McGrath (1-0), D Loughlin (0-4, two frees), H Core (0-2), P Greville (0-1), S McGrath (0-2). **Sub:** A Higgins (0-1) for D McGrath (51 mins), M Scully for J McCormack (56 mins).  
**DUBLIN:** A Spillane, R MacLoughlin, N Gleeson, C Buchanan, G Free, D Johnston, E Barron, D Power, R Drohan, A Dooley, R Baker (1-1), E Twomey, L Quinn, A Bugler (0-5, three frees, one 45), E Keenan. **Subs:** S Nolan for Power, S Wylder for Quinn (both 11), C Carolan for Twomey (49 mins), E O'Riordan for Gleeson (56 mins).  
**Referee:** P McDonald (Cavan)





# White seals dramatic victory as Cork turn tables on Kilkenny

Buckley secures an 18th All-Ireland senior medal after titanic tussle

Cork come from point down in injury-time to snatch win with two late scores

**Cork** 0-10  
**Kilkenny** 0-9

**DARAGH Ó CONCHÚIR**  
at Croke Park

Julia White put two years of injury torment behind her yesterday to snatch a dramatic winner as Cork put the disappointment of last year's Liberty Insurance All-Ireland senior camogie final defeat to Kilkenny behind after a titanic tussle laced with talking points.

After weeks of speculation and despite being ruled out offi-

cially, Gemma O'Connor started and played the entire 66 minutes or so.

What's more, the St Finbarr's legend sent over a towering equaliser as the game moved into injury time.

That looked like being the story of a game but White had the final say to move Cork one clear of Dublin to the top of the roll of honour with 27 titles.

## Frustrating year

"It's an unbelievable feeling" said White. "I've had a frustrating year in terms of injuries and so on, so I was delighted to have the option of getting on and getting a point. I know it was only

one point and there were loads more, but it's definitely a great feeling after being out for the last two years."

White was effusive in her praise of O'Connor's contribution, giving a little insight into how important it was for the Leesiders that the 33-year-old was able to line out. "Oh my God, the point she got was unbelievable. You could never write her off. She was probably in agony for the whole match but she was unbelievable, as usual, and it was worth it, definitely, taking the risk on her."

Rena Buckley moved clear of Briege Corkery in the individual stakes, claiming her 18th All-Ireland senior medal.

It was all about the team for the Inniscarra woman, who concentrated on camogie this year. "It's great, it's absolutely fantastic" said Buckley, talking about the victory rather than any personal achievement. "We came up here last year, we had high expectations, we were going for three-in-a-row and we

were kind of taught a lesson by Kilkenny really.

"They played with huge aggression and they really knew how to score and how to break us down.

"We had to work very hard, we went back early this year

**"Oh my God, the point she got was unbelievable. You could never write her**

and we played Kilkenny in the league final and felt we had a lot of work put in but that day they beat us as well.

## Huge help

"So we really put our shoulder to the wheel, we came up against a very strong Galway team in the semi-final, which was a huge help I think.

"And thankfully today the fruits of our work were shown

on the field."

Cork were well on top in the first half, Amy O'Connor and Orla Cronin showing extremely well, while Ashling Thompson thundered into the physical exchanges with customary relish.

Kilkenny could get no change from a magnificent Cork rearguard and must have been delighted going in at the break trailing by just 0-5 to 0-2, Amy O'Connor (two) top-scoring and Julie Ann Malone responsible for Kilkenny's only score.

A response was inevitable from the Noresiders and it came in the third quarter as the game opened up. Within 10 minutes of the restart they had moved ahead, Meighan Farrell slotting two points, her sister

**■ Cork's Ashling Thompson blocks the shot from Kilkenny's Davina Tobin during the All-Ireland camogie final at Croke Park.**

PHOTOGRAPH: OISIN KENRY/INPHO

Shelly another and Katie Power and Denise Gaule also finding the target.

Crucially, Orla Cotter stemmed the tide from an important free and it was a fiercely fought tight encounter once more from there to the end.

Cronin and Malone exchanged points before Miriam Walsh registered a brilliant score five minutes from time.

It looked like it might be their day but O'Connor and then White had the final say.

**CORK:** A. Murray, L. Treacy, R. Buckley, L. Coppinger, G. O'Connor (0-1), P. Mackey, C. Sigerson, E. O'Sullivan, A. Thompson, A. O'Connor, O. Cronin (0-3), O. Cotter (0-2, frees), H. Looney, N. McCarthy, K. Mackey (0-1). **Subs:** L. Homan for Looney (52 mins), J. White (0-1) for Sigerson (60+1 mins).  
**KILKENNY:** E. Kavanagh, C. Phelan, C. Foley, G. Walsh, A. Dunphy, A. Dalton, D. Tobin, M. Farrell, A. Farrell (0-2), J. A. Malone (0-2), K. Power (0-1), D. Gaule (0-2, frees), D. Morrissey, M. Walsh (0-1), S. Farrell (0-1). **Subs:** M. Quilty for Morrissey (19), J. Reddy for Malone (58 mins).  
**Referee:** O. Elliott (Antrim)



# Magic moments for the Rebels

## ALL-IRELAND CHAMPIONS DUE A REBEL ROAR



Cork captain Rena Buckley lifts the O'Duffy cup at Croke Park yesterday.

Picture: Inpho/James Crombie

THE All-Ireland winning Cork senior camogie team will arrive home to the city tonight, with large crowds expected at the homecoming.

Cork beat Kilkenny by a single point to claim the O'Duffy Cup in Croke Park yesterday, with substitute Julia White scoring the win-

### Grainne McGuinness

ning point six minutes into injury time. In leading the Rebels to victory, Rena Buckley became the first person to captain their county to All-Ireland success in both codes. It was an incredible 18th All-Ireland medal for the Inniscarra woman, her seventh senior camogie All-Ireland win.

She and the team can expect a rousing welcome when they arrive by train to Kent Station at 7.30pm, before making their way to the South Mall for a reception outside The Imperial Hotel.

■ See Page 3 and Supplement.

CORK and Rena Buckley made history at Croke Park yesterday after a nail-biting finale against Kilkenny.

The Rebels dug out a 0-10 to 0-9 victory thanks to late points from Gemma O'Connor and super-sub Julia White at the end of a ferocious battle against their great rivals to dethrone the Cats. In doing so Cork moved one clear of Dublin on the camogie roll of honour with 27 All-Irelands, while captain Buckley picked up her 18th medal.

The dual legend now has one more senior title than Briege Corkery, who didn't play this season, and became the first player to captain her county to glory in both codes.

In upsetting the odds, Cork won the O'Duffy Cup for the third time in four years, with manager Paudie Murray getting his tactics spot on, helped by the availability of warrior Gemma O'Connor in the half-back line, despite her medial knee ligament injury.

Number 11 Orla Cronin, from Enniskeane, was the RTE Player of the Match after hitting three points from play, but keeper Aoife Murray, corner-back Laura Treacy, midfield duo Ashling Thompson and Eimear O'Sullivan and wing-forward Amy O'Connor all shone as well.

It was Buckley's seventh All-Ireland camogie triumph yesterday, to go with her 11 in football,

## CAMOGIE

■ Éamonn Murphy

while Murray and Gemma O'Connor have won eight camogie finals apiece.

"I've been fierce lucky," said Buckley in playing down her incredible achievements. "I captained the ladies football because Donoughmore won a county and I was nominated for the county because Inniscarra won the camogie last year.

"I'm lucky in where I'm from and it's been a great period of GAA for the women. You have to get a bit of luck on your side."

Far from being a lucky general, Buckley was as solid as ever at full-back and her unassuming leadership and dedication should be an inspiration to everyone on Leeside. The 30-year-old actually played on the last Cork camogie team to land a minor All-Ireland, back in 2003, and she has now lost just four of the 22 senior All-Ireland finals she's played in.

Buckley leads Cork back to Leeside tonight for a homecoming outside the Imperial Hotel on the South Mall, with team due in to Kent Station at 7.30pm.

■ See inside for an eight-page special.



The Cork team celebrate with the O'Duffy Cup after yesterday's Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Senior Camogie Final victory over Kilkenny at Croke Park. Julia White, a former Cork captain who has endured two years of injury torment, was on the pitch only seconds when she struck the score that would give Cork a record 27th All-Ireland senior title, while captain Rena Buckley secured a record 18th All-Ireland medal. SEE: Monday Sport

Picture: Matt Browne/Sportsfile

## Cork saved as contentious late call denies Meath



Liberty Insurance All-Ireland intermediate camogie final

CORK ..... 1-9  
MEATH..... 1-9

Brendan O'Brien  
Croke Park



Cork and Meath will have to do it all over after a controver-

sial end to the Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Intermediate camogie final in Croke Park yesterday.

Deep in injury-time, Meath's Megan Thynne was winding up to shoot a winner when referee Liz Dempsey blew the final whistle.

The decision sparked anger on social media with book-making firm Paddy Power tweeting that they would pay out on a Meath win.

It would have been rough justice on Cork who led for the majority of proceedings and wasted a couple of gilt-edged opportunities with some

dreadful wides in the final quarter in particular.

Rachel O'Shea opened the scoring for Cork and by the 10th minute, her colleagues on the inside line, Caroline Sugrue and Linda Collins had also gotten off the mark.

Keeva McCarthy shot a brace, the second a really well-crafted score after good work by Sugrue and Collins as Cork went 0-6 to 0-2 ahead but Meath responded with four in a row, Jane Dolan converting three frees and Sinéad Hackett also on target.

McCarthy was on target

once more for Cork however before Katelyn Hickey finished brilliantly to the corner of the Meath net to make it 1-7 to 0-6 at the change of ends.

The second half lacked the fluidity of the first, although it had a rip-roaring start, with Amy Gaffney pointing directly from the throw-in, and then Kristina Troy blasting a goal just over a minute later.

That score was all about Aoife Minogue however, as the young Dunderry forward drew the cover with a powerful run through the middle

and timed her pass to perfection. Troy made no mistake despite Amy Lee, who had a fine game, closing in.

Player of the match Finola Neville and O'Shea moved Cork ahead quickly but the Leesiders failed to score in the last 26 minutes, including three of injury time.

Dillon halved the gap in the 52nd minute but it wasn't until the second minute of injury time that she was able to hit the equaliser, just after Hickey had been sent off for a second yellow card offence.

Scorers for Cork: R O'Shea (11), K

McCarthy (26) 0-3 each; K Hickey 1-0; F Neville, L Collins, C Sugrue 0-1 each

Scorers for Meath: J Dolan (0-5, all frees); K Troy (1-0); S Hackett (0-2); A Gaffney, A Minogue (0) 0-1 each.

CORK: A Lee, L Weste, S Harrington, N Ni Chacimh, R Kileen, S Buckley, L Callanan, F Neville, J Barry, K Hickey, K McCarthy, M McCarthy, R O'Shea, L Collins, C Sugrue.

Subs: M Buckley for M McCarthy (46), S Falty for O'Shea (60).

MEATH: E Mangan, E Coffey, C Coffey, E Burke, A Keogh, A McGuire, L Donoghue, C O'Brien, M Thynne, A Gaffney, K Troy, A Minogue, C Quinn, J Dolan, S Hackett. Sub: A Slattery for Quinn (43).

Referee: L Dempsey (Kilkenny)



Gemma O'Connor of Cork grabs the ball ahead of Denise Gaule of Kilkenny during the Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Senior Camogie Camogie final at Croke Park in Dublin.  
Picture: Piaras Ó Midheach/Sportsfile



# Cork grab their chance





Late hero Julia White holds the cup aloft afterwards.

Picture: INPHO/James Crombie



Cork's Niamh McCarthy gets away from Catherine Foley of Kilkenny.

Picture: INPHO/Bryan Keane

# White strikes down the Black and Amber

**PLAYED two, won one and drew one are the stats from Cork's day out at Croker yesterday.**

The intermediate side had a close tussle with Meath all through their encounter and will be glad to get the chance to do it all again.

They were superb in the first half, but will know their second-half display wasn't up to the high standards they expect from themselves.

In that half, they only scored two points, with Meath scoring 1-3 to see it end 1-9 each, with the replay set for October 1.

On the plus side for the senior side was the fact that unlike last year, they weren't going out after a Cork team had been beaten.

For a long time it looked like it was going to be the same for the seniors before Julia White popped up with the winning score, in the 66th minute, and the rest, as they say, is history.

Afterwards, Julia said she didn't remember much about it, only that it went over the bar.

"I don't remember much, to be honest, I remember striking the ball and it going over the bar. I couldn't remember who passed it to me and Katrina Mackey reminded me afterwards that it was her. But I don't remember that all I can remember is seeing the black and yellow



Camogie

Rory Noonan

coming towards me and I decided to hit it and thankfully it went over.

"But it's all about the rest of the team and the way they played, I was only on for a few minutes. Gemma got an unbelievable point to equalise.

"If the game had ended there it would be her that everybody would be talking about. But it's not just about one player, we are a panel and there were some great scores before that for others as well so everybody should be remembered for their contribution, not just today but right through the championship," concluded Julia.

So the O'Duffy Cup will be making its way to Leeside tonight, with the team expected outside the Imperial Hotel around 7.30pm.

An appeal has gone out to ask fans to turn out to welcome the team home, it's the least they deserve.



The Cork team huddle before the game.

Picture: INPHO/Bryan Keane



Cork's goalkeeper Aoife Murray clears the sliotar despite Miriam Walsh of Kilkenny.

Picture: INPHO/James Crombie



Orla Cotter and Meighan Farrell of Kilkenny in action yesterday.

Picture: INPHO/Bryan Keane



# Murray and White reflect on victory

## REACTIONS

■ Mary Newman

ALMOST as cool as she looks between the posts, Cork's long-serving goalkeeper Aoife Murray confidently spoke after Cork's victory and gave her insight into the lead-up to this record-breaking win.

"We were way fitter this year and it stood to us. Last year's defeat hurt, as we knew we hadn't played well or done ourselves justice," Murray said. "We went out today very determined to give it our all and if we lost well that was that at least we would have given everything we had."

Murray had huge praise for long-serving Gemma O'Connor, who played despite a serious injury which looked that would rule her out of the final.

"Gemma is unique. She is a super athlete. She has great heart and determination and to look out the field and see her battling for every ball was inspirational. She trained on Thursday night and got through it well and we knew she would play a part today. To be honest, we didn't know if it would be ten minutes or the full hour, but we knew she would give it everything. That's Gemma, she is an inspirational player for us all."

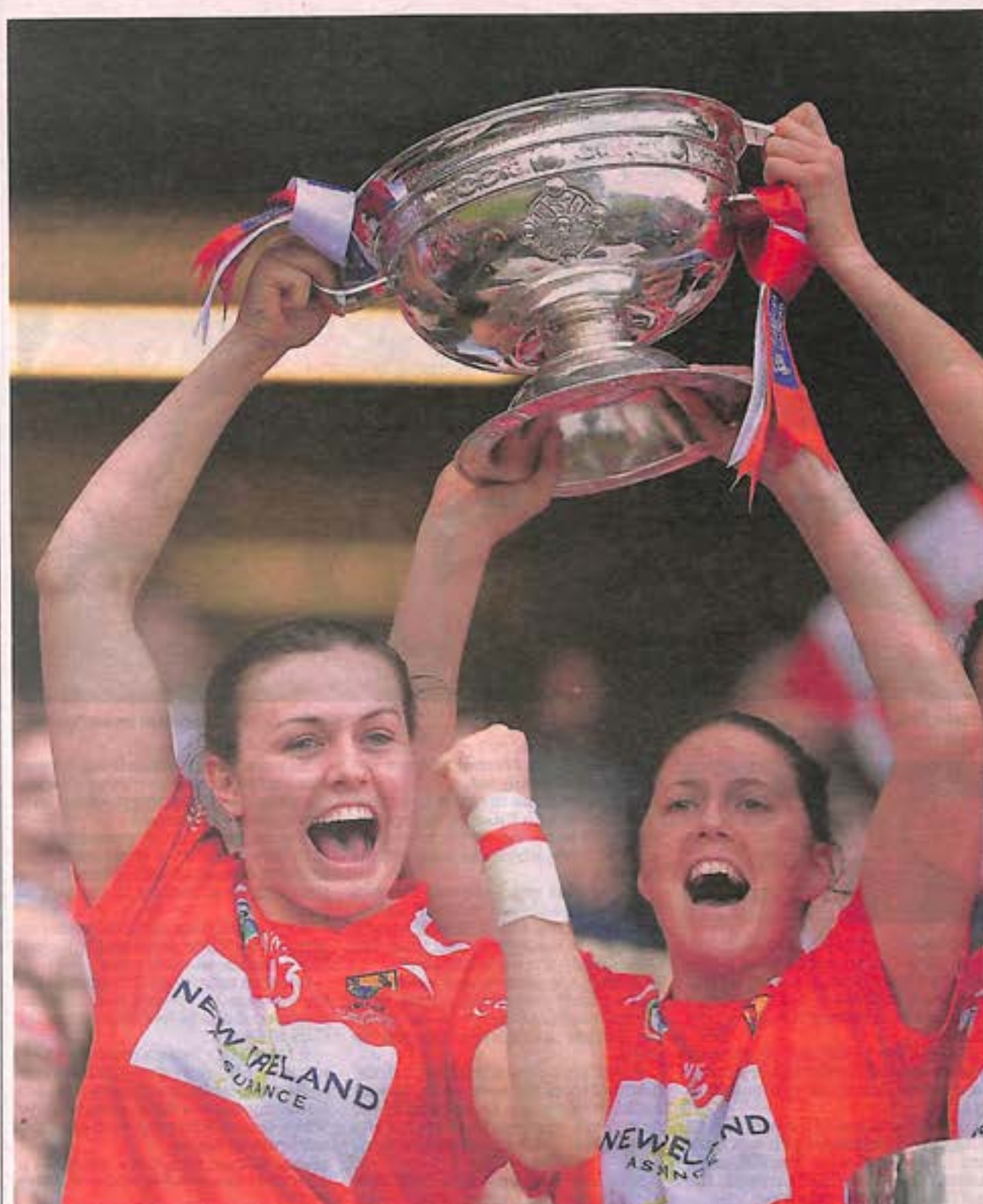
"I was rooming with her and I was saying 'a sure, you're grand, your knee is fine, once the match starts you'll be grand.' I even got my own knee bandaged up as well just to be bandage buddies."

Heroine of the hour Julia White, who grabbed the winning point, was thrilled to have played her part.

"I hadn't a clue how much time was left, but I just went on and hoped to maybe get one chance and thank God I did and that it went over," White said. "I picked up a ruptured Achilles tendon injury in 2015 and have been injured since. I came back playing early this year and picked up a stress fracture in my foot. It's been so hard. It happened in April and I only got back in August but I just hung in there and I suppose kept the faith. The management were brilliant and kept encouraging me."

"I think overall I have played just one hour's camogie in two years. I played in my club's championship game and came on for a short time in the semi final against Galway. Even though I was only on a short time that day I found the going hard but put my head down and worked at it. I'm delighted to have played a small part today — I think it was the only time I touched the ball."

Having worked for two years in Loreto Kilkenny as a PE teacher, one of her former pupils, Miriam Teehan, was on the Kilkenny panel. White has since returned to work in her old school, Christ King in Turner's Cross. "I'm delighted to be back in Cork and hopefully, now I will push on and remain injury free. Today is a step in the right direction."



Hannah Looney, left, and Gemma O'Connor celebrate with The O'Duffy Cup.

Picture: Piaras Ó Midheach/Sportsfile



Eimear O'Sullivan and coach, Kevin Murray, bask in the glory.

Picture: INPHO/Oisín Keniry



Chloe Sigerson holds up Kilkenny's Miriam Walsh.

Picture: INPHO/Oisín Keniry

# There was no

Camogie

Éamonn Murphy

GEMMA O'CONNOR. Cork's own Wonder Woman. Warrior. Legend.

She didn't need yesterday's heroic fort at Croke Park to confirm her status as one of the greatest Rebels of all-time male or female, in either code. The Finbarr's native has long delivered enough big games to merit a slot in TG4's *Laochra Gael* show.

In years to come, however, her significance, to save Cork, will be remembered as one of her finest moments. When Cork were behind in injury time, the iconic number-six launched a majestic shot that reeled Kilkenny in, before super-sub, Julia White, snatched victory at the death.

What was more impressive was that O'Connor was lining out at all. There were few players as motivated all season, after her red card a year earlier, in a frustrating loss to Kilkenny, but a knee injury in the semi-final, against Galway, left her hopes of appearing in the final hanging by a thread.

Not only did she make it for throw-ins despite not being named when the line-ups were announced, but she hurled relentlessly as ever. Orla Cronin and Amy O'Connor shared 0-5 from play. Laura Treacy was a colossus in the back line, Aoife Murray was as assured as ever in goal, and Eimear O'Sullivan and Ashling Thompson dynamic in the field.

But O'Connor's reading of the break and her power were critical in upsetting the odds. "I can't really explain this special this is," she said afterwards in the tunnel, as 'We Are The Champions' boomed out lustily in the winning dressing room. "I was devastated coming in. It was a freak accident in the semi-final, but only for the physio, Col Lane, I probably wouldn't be playing."

"In the first-half, it was kinda difficult, but, sometimes, you can forget about the injuries and just go for it. I'm not young, I'm 32 years of age, and you don't get too many opportunities, but I lasted five minutes or 50 minutes, so it."

Despite the injury, manager, Paul Murray, tasked her with shutting down Kilkenny ace, Denise Gaule, whom she held scoreless from play.

And it wasn't just a case of popping in the right place at the right time — that point. Cork anticipated a low-scoring joust, in which scores from distance could be decisive. "We were hoping for a self or Ash or Orla Cotter might get a chance, if we recycled possession around midfield. Thank God I did and put that ball over the bar."

"I've learned to trust my hurling experience. We worked hard all year that if the forwards get the ball, but can't penetrate the defence, which can happen against Kilkenny, to recycle, cycle, recycle. And Julia, then... what way to win it."

If O'Connor and Julia White were key figures in the breathless final, Cork's energised opening 10 minutes they went three points ahead — a manic intensity were just as influential.

"We've always been nice hurlers and dunno, maybe a bit too naive and honest... with the kind of physicality you get from Wexford and Kilkenny. They outmuscled us. We weren't going to be bullied or shoved off balls. It could have gone either way. We were patient and paid off."

"There was a lot of negative press."



# stopping Gemma

## How they rated...

**Aoife Murray:** Aoife's pull down in the first half when the ball was heading over the bar, her flick out the wing with the sun in her eyes, her varied puck outs, distribution, and composure was brilliant. 8.

**Pamela Mackey:** Did a very good job on Kilkenny's most influential forward, Katie Power. 8.

**Rena Buckley:** Made some crucial interceptions when Kilkenny were piling the pressure on. 8.

**Laura Treacy:** Covered a lot of ground, was strong in the tackle, broke out of melees with the ball, cut off Kilkenny's running forwards. 9.

**Eimear O'Sullivan:** What an engine and what pace. Covered miles. 9.

**Gemma O'Connor:** Won the first 50/50 balls on Denise Gaule. Gaule went roaming after that. Her levelling point was masterful. 9.

**Chloe Sigerson:** Did her job in a quiet and efficient manner. Julie Ann Malone, player of the match 12 months ago was substituted. 8.

**Libby Coppinger:** What a performance. Named at mid-field but operating in defence she won the race for every ball with Shelley Farrell. Was hugely influential in keeping Kilkenny out of the danger area. Brilliant interceptions. 8.

**Ashling Thompson:** A close runner for Player of the Match. Her blocking, hooking, physicality, and passion were immense. Top class performance. 10.

**Amy O'Connor:** Scored two excellent points which settled Cork. Found the going tougher in the second half when play became bunched but was always a threat. 8.

**Orla Cronin:** My Player of the Match. Led the way from the start. Sublime points, first to the ball, excellent first touch, winning frees, off-loading well. Minimised the threat of a player who has launched Kilkenny to many victories, Ann Dalton. 10.

**Orla Cotter:** This may have been one of her quietest days in terms of being on the ball. But she worked extremely hard off it. Never stopped roaming. Set up the move for Julia White's winning point. 7.

**Hannah Looney:** Found the going tough on Grace Walsh but there's no shame in that. Walsh is a top-class defender and has great speed. Substituted for Lauren Homan. 7.

**Niamh McCarthy:** Didn't get too much ball during the hour. Worked hard as always against a strong Kilkenny full back line. 7.

**Katrina Mackey:** Great opening 15 minutes when space was at a premium. Scored a point and hit the crossbar with another. Play bunched in the second half but caused problems when in possession. 8.

**Lauren Homan:** Replaced Hannah Looney on 51 minutes. Wasn't on long enough to get into a fast-paced game. 7.

**Julia White:** Only on the pitch five minutes but how can you not give a score of 8 after a point like that to win the game for Cork six minutes into injury time. 8.



Gemma O'Connor bursts past Shelly Farrell, of Kilkenny, at Croke Park.

Picture: Piaras Ó Midheach/Sportsfile



Cork backroom staff, Martin O'Brien and Liam O'Reilly, are overjoyed.

Picture: INPHO/Oisín Keniry



Anna Farrell and Rena Buckley shake hands at the end of the game.

wards us this year. We knew what we were capable of. It wasn't great, but mentally we were tougher. It came down to a psychological battle. Patience is a virtue."

Two letters scribbled on her arm summed her own approach: CA - controlled aggression.

"That means controlled aggression, be on the ball, and have that bit of control. I was devastated, after getting sent off last year. It was a message (to) 'keep composed'. I always wear my heart on my sleeve and try and go out and give it my all. By no means am I a dirty player, but I sometimes feel I'm a bit targeted and that I've to hold back or I'll get pulled for frees."

"I remember, against Wexford at Páirc Uí Rinn, earlier this year, and I got hit off the ball numerous times, and, sometimes, players are targeted, but I didn't react. You can have that aggression to get on the ball and to hit it with conviction, but don't give away silly frees or get drawn out."

Captain, Rena Buckley, was the record-breaker, with her 18th senior All-Ireland victory, but O'Connor and Aoife Murray were winners for the eighth time in a camogie final. Some going, too, and the sweetest in her eyes.

"Coming into this, I'd won seven and lost five and you can concentrate on the negatives, the games you lost. Last year, we never got going, we failed to get into the game and, physically and mentally, we weren't ready. This time, we were. In the second-half, Kilkenny got on top. It could have been a draw, but this is the sweetest one alright."



THE SAINTS: Amy O'Connor celebrates with Lauren Homan (both are from St Vincent's club).

Picture: INPHO/Gary Carr



Katrina Mackey, Laura Treacy, and Pamela Mackey are on a high.

Picture: INPHO/James Crombie

— Linda Mellerich



# The Rebels get their

## Tears after a final that had it all

AS a player, I've never cried in victory.

I've cried many times in defeat. But when the final whistle blew yesterday, I admit to shedding a tear.

What a heart-stopping final. It may not have been a classic, but for sheer endeavour by both teams, it was everything a final should be.

Before I go into my analysis of the game, I want to start with Gemma O'Connor.

Twelve months ago, she was sent off in Croke Park for a second yellow offence.

Three weeks ago, she took a nasty knock to her knee.

It wasn't mind games. Gemma genuinely was up against the clock, but as a friend of mine said after the semi-final: if it takes a typical player six weeks to recover from that injury, it'll take Gemma three.

She lined out yesterday, and what an impact she had on the game.

Her point to level it on 60 minutes, well... only Gemma could have done that.

Such composure, such confidence under such pressure.

Cork hadn't scored in 18 minutes. Few people gave Cork a chance yesterday. Someone mentioned in an interview during the week that they had "stumbled into the final".

Well, we stumbled up the steps too at 5.15pm. This win was so crucial.

Cork have won three of the last four finals. But it wasn't about that. Had Kilkenny won back-to-back titles, I believe we would have found it very hard to knock them off their throne.

Paudie Murray has taken a lot of stick during his six years in charge.

He has been immense. Three titles in six seasons; what manager wouldn't be happy with that?

Cork went player-for-player from the throw-in. They got their mark-ups right, with Gemma picking up Denise Gaule, Pam Mackey marshalling Katie Power, Rena Buckley on Miriam Walsh, Libby Coppinger marking Shelley Farrell, Laura Treacy on Danielle Morrissey, and Chloe Sigerson taking Julie Ann Malone.

Cork started well. They were composed in working the ball out of defence and then gave good, fast deliveries inside.

We had Kilkenny rattled but we still only went in at the break three points to the good, and that was a concern.

Emer O'Sullivan, having got the nod to start during the week, was covering massive ground in the middle of the field and giving good distribution.

Orla Cronin was just outstanding. She became a leader yesterday.

Libby Coppinger — how many times did she win the race for the 50/50 ball; how many times did she get the hurley in for that crucial touch?

Laura Treacy had her best game in the Cork jersey.

Ashling Thompson wore her heart on her sleeve again. A double block down on 12 minutes, a hook she had no right to get in on 28; that's why Cork are All Ireland champions again.

Our half forwards were winning the battle. Orla Cronin, Amy O'Connor, and Katrina Mackey, playing deep, were running Kilkenny and we had space.

At other end, Kilkenny were trying to drag Cork out and they weren't budging, hence Kilkenny's one point from play in the opening 30 minutes.

Despite their dominance, Cork struck just five points, four from play. But credit Kilkenny's defence for that, where Grace Walsh in particular was excellent.

Aoife Murray intelligently varied her puck outs, going short and long.

Kilkenny couldn't read what she would do next.

A hugely important aspect of Cork's opening half dominance was how Orla Cronin nullified what is typically a dominant Anne Dalton at centre back.

While Dalton had a better second half, Orla finished the game with three points, won frees, gave great passes, and without doubt won that duel.

Cork didn't score from the 16th minute to half time, and while Julie Ann Malone hit just one for Kilkenny, the champions did seem to be settling and they finished the half strongly.

Half time didn't do Cork any favours.

They were on the back foot for the opening 10 minutes of the second half as Meighan Farrell (2), who had a very good hour, Katie Power, Shelley Farrell, and Denise Gaule rattled off points.

Orla Cronin hit a beauty in return but Kilkenny took the lead for the first time in the game on 39 minutes.

They had changed tactics, now pushing forward, and with their pace, Cork were under pressure.

But Laura Treacy and Libby Coppinger were just brilliant during that pressure period.

Ashling Thompson drifted back and won huge ball, including an important free. Gemma was so composed with her deliveries.



Ashling Thompson celebrates with Laura Treacy after the game. Picture: INPHO/Gary Carr



Linda Mellerick

### Match analysis

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Ashling Thompson drifted back and won huge ball, including an important free. Gemma was so composed with her deliveries.

We became static up front, often bunching on the 40, and that played into Kilkenny's hands.

Orla Cronin again stepped up to settle Cork with another sublime point.

Katie Power levelled it for the Cats and in a low-scoring game, when Miriam Walsh put them one in front with six minutes remaining, it was simply nerve-wracking.

But what heart from Cork.

Gemma's absolute beauty levelled the game on the stroke of full time.

Six minutes additional time.

Kilkenny won a soft free on 64.

It was a let-off for Cork as Denise Gaule struck wide.

We were heading for a draw.

But Cork could smell that victory was there. No way were they going to settle for that, let's finish the job.

Orla Cotter to Katrina Mackey to Julia White to hit a point that will be relived for decades by the people of Cork.



Julia White scores the winning point late in injury time after coming off the bench in the closing stages. Picture: INPHO/James Crombie



Orla Cronin in action in Croke Park. Picture: INPHO/Bryan Keane



Katrina Mackey and Martin O'Brien celebrate. Picture: INPHO/Gary Carr

## Story of the game

### PLAYER of the game:

Take your pick from a number of players on the Cork side. Laura Treacy was outstanding in defence as was Orla Cronin up front. But for her overall performance and work-rate Ashling Thompson gets the nod.

Score of the game:

It comes down to two really, either Gemma

O'Connor's for the equaliser or Julia White's for the winner. For the fact that Gemma knew what was at stake if she missed her effort from long distance to tie up the game has to be the pick of them.

### Turning point:

With nothing between the sides for most of the second-half it was always going to

be close right to the end and the game literally only swung in the Rebels favour when White slotted over and there was no time for a comeback for Kilkenny.

### Referee watch:

All credit to Owen Elliott from Antrim he led the game flow and didn't blow for a free until he really had to.



# revenge over Cats



Cork manager, Paudie Murray.

**Murray:**  
We had to  
work hard  
for our win

REACTION

Rory Noonan

FOR Cork manager, Paudie Murray, it was a mixed day yesterday.

He came away from Corker undefeated in two games, but with only one trophy.

His intermediate side drew with Meath in their final and will have to do it all again on October 1, but the seniors dramatically came out on top against Kilkenny.

Afterwards, he reflected on the game and was naturally delighted to be senior All-Ireland champions again.

"I'm delighted to win it and, this year, we had to work very hard for this title, right from the group stages to the semi-final and out there today.

"It was a huge boost to us, when we found out, on Thursday, that Gemma was going to be able to start and it gave a huge lift to all the players, when they saw her arrive into training.

"We started the game well, but I felt we could have been further ahead at half-time. But I know that it wasn't easy to score out there, as the wind was swirling and it was making it difficult for players on both sides.

"I was disappointed with the way we set up at the start of the second-half and our midfield and half-forward line retreated back towards our own goal a bit too much and we were trying to get them to push forward, as I thought we had the legs on them.

"They got a good start to the second-half, but we spoke about that, as we knew they would have their purple patch and it was all about hanging in there and I thought we stayed composed the whole time.

"With the game so tight, no better woman than Gemma O'Connor to step up and get a score like that and, if you asked her, I would have no doubt she would say it is the best, and most important, one she has got for Cork.

"When the board was put up then, for six minutes of injury-time, I said I could be thankful to him for that and it turned out I was.

"It was great to see Julia scoring, as she has had a lot of setbacks in the last few years and, in fairness to her, she has trained a lot in the last six weeks to be ready for today.

"It was a great score and I'm just over the moon that it saw us come out on top," said Pau-



The Cork team celebrate with the O'Duffy Cup at Croke Park.

Picture: Matt Browne/Sportsfile

**Cork** 0-10  
**Kilkenny** 0-9

**IT WAS** a hearts in the mouth finish as Julia White wrote herself into the history books as Cork defeated Kilkenny in the All-Ireland senior camogie final at Croke Park yesterday.

The Douglas player was hardly on the pitch when, with her first touch, she split the posts to secure the win for Cork when the game looked like going to a replay.

That followed a sublime point from Gemma O'Connor to equalise for the Rebels and it looked like they were going to join the intermediate side and seeing it end level.

That came in the 60th minute, but when it was announced that there were going to be at least six minutes of injury-time you knew the drama wasn't over yet.

Both sides had opportunities to win it, but credit to both defences they stood strong and it took a moment from White to see the O'Duffy Cup head back to Leaside and gain a bit of revenge for their loss to the Cats in last year's final.

Cork started much the better of the two sides and they deservedly were in front after three minutes when Amy O'Connor scored after some good



Camogie

Rory  
Noonan

build-up play. They added a second when Orla Cotter scored from a free and O'Connor was on target again, after seven minutes as the Cats didn't know what hit them in the early stages.

It took them 12 minutes to get their first score when Denise Gaule pointed from a free, but Cork responded in style.

Orla Cronin made a great run to point after 13 minutes and it was third time lucky for Katrina Mackey, as he pointed with her third attempt, the first two going narrowly wide.

Kilkenny's first score from play finally came in the 20th minute when Julie Ann Malone was on target, but Cork were still dominating the exchanges.

They were unlucky not to go further ahead when Mackey's shot came back off the post and Kilkenny cleared the danger.

Despite being the better side, Cork weren't creating any real clear-cut chances and a brilliant run by Eimear O'Sullivan came to nothing, as again

some last ditch defending from the Cats kept the Rebels out.

Both sides failed to create any other real chances with Kilkenny dropping a few balls in on top of Cork keeper, Aoife Murray, which she dealt with at her ease.

At the other end, Cork never looked like scoring a goal in this half, as the last score came with Kilkenny's point from play in the 20th minute, to see the Rebels lead 0-5 to 0-2 at half-time.

Though the scoring was low it was still a highly entertaining half, with the physicality of the two sides showing neither was giving this one up easily.

As Cork got off to a great start in the first-half then the same could be said for Kilkenny in the second and in the first three minutes they scored the same as they did in the entire first-half.

Meighan Farrell got their first, with Katie Power also scoring, with Cronin on target for Cork, top make it 0-6 to 0-4, just three minutes into the second-half.

Kilkenny had their best spell of the game, with points from Shelly Farrell and Meighan Farrell putting them back on level terms. They took the lead for the first time, after 39 minutes, when Gaule scored from a free.

But Cork responded in style, with Cotter scoring a long-distance free and Cronin on target again to put the Rebels back in front.

However, at this stage it was almost becoming score for score, with Meighan Farrell putting the sides level again, after 44 minutes.

The next score didn't come until the 55th minute, with a combination of brilliant defending and, at times, poor finishing contributing to the lack of scores.

A great ball from Anne Dalton set up Miriam Walsh to point and it looked like being the winning score.

But then up stepped O'Connor in the final minute and scored what must be considered one of her best points for Cork to level it.

It looked like being a draw but three minutes into injury-time Kilkenny had a chance to go in front from a free, but Gaule missed and three minutes later White slotted home and soon after the celebrations began.

**Scorers for Cork:** O Cronin 0-3, A O'Connor 0-2, Cotter (2) 0-2 each, K Mackey, G O'Connor, J White 0-1 each.

**Kilkenny:** D Gaule (2), J A Malone, M Farrell 0-2 each, K Power, S Farrell, M Walsh 0-1 each.

**CORK:** A Murray, P Mackey, R Buckley, L Treacy, E O'Sullivan, G O'Connor, C Sigerson, L Coppinger, A Thompson, A O'Connor, O Cronin, O Cotter, H Looney, N McCarthy, K Mackey.

**Subs:** L Homan for H Looney, J White for C Sigerson.

**KILKENNY:** E Kavanagh, C Foley, D Tobin, G Walsh, C Dorrner, A Dalton, A Dunphy, M Farrell, A Farrell, J A Malone, K Power, D Gaule, S Farrell, M Walsh, D Morrissey.

**Subs:** M Quilty for D Morrissey, J Reddy for J A Malone.

**Ref:** Owen Elliott, Antrim.

## Three reasons why Cork are All-Ireland champions

### 1: HEART:

Right from the first minute Cork let it be known that they weren't going to be beaten easily. They were in the faces of the Kilkenny players and made it difficult for them to get any clean ball.

They showed they had learned from last year's loss and the determination not to come away empty-handed again was plain to see.

### 2: AOIFE MURRAY:

In a lot of games, the goalkeeper can be the hero

or sometimes the villain. In this instance, she was definitely the hero of the hour. Whilst she didn't really have a direct shot to save on goal it was her ability to deal with the high ball dropping in that was masterful from her.

She stopped one shot from going over the bar and on another instance raced off her line towards the sideline get to the ball before Shelly Farrell, who looked certain to score had she gained possession.

Some of her puck-outs were also pin-point accu-

rate and on more than one occasion defenders played the ball back to her so she could launch the sliothar up the field. No doubt for those in front of Aoife it was great to turn around and see her cool and calming presence between the posts behind them.

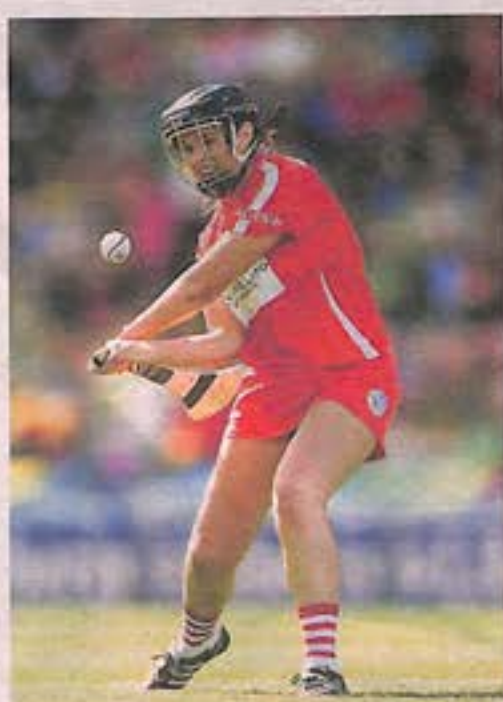
### 3: GREAT START:

Cork couldn't have asked for a better start and to keep Kilkenny to just one point from play for the first-half says it all.



# Draw will feel like a

## Fussy ref didn't help, so expect more from Cork in replay



Cork's Keeva McCarthy of Cork takes a free during the Intermediate Camogie Final.

Picture: Piaras Ó Midheach/Sportsfile



### Match analysis

Éamonn Murphy

fray with a defiant haul of 1-1 inside two minutes: 1-7 apiece.

Credit to the Rebels and their management team, with Seán Cremin and Wesley O'Brien the most prominent on the line yesterday as bainisteoir Paudie Murray was double-jobbing with the seniors, they regained the momentum.

Neville landed the score of the game and, after a turnover by Ó Chaoimh, a one-two on the sideline saw Keeva McCarthy set up O'Shea for a point to make it 1-9 to 1-7.

Meath were held scoreless for over 20 minutes until free-taker Jane Dolan split the posts but Cork missed some very scoreable point-chances across that period, from play and placed balls.

They never get a return from the dangerous Linda Collins at 14.

The wide count was eight to five in the end, and in such a tight tussle, that was a significant factor in Cork's failure to seal the deal.

The closing stages were lively, with Hickey dismissed, Meath levelling through a free, their sixth, and then pushing hard to snatch the trophy. Given the circumstances, Cork seemed as relieved as they were annoyed at the draw. In the eyes of midfielder Neville, it was "disappointing to let it slip." By the same token she accepted there wasn't much between them.

"Meath are a tough, physical side. It was a great result in a way to hold on and get the draw. It could have gone either way in the end. "We've a lot of room for improvement. Absolutely. We didn't take all our chances but we worked really hard. We'll go again."

You'd certainly love to see them pull it off next month, given the controversy at the start of the 2016 campaign when nine players were deemed ineligible to play at the intermediate grade by the camogie association.

Of the nine players — Sarah Fahy, Niamh Ni Chaoimh, Amy Lee, Katelyn Hickey, Leah Weste, Sarah Buckley, Finola Neville, Lauren Callanan, and Rebecca Walsh — seven started yesterday with another coming on.

When a second team takes on a first team, it's pretty rare they'll get any breaks from the referee. There was a bit of that here.

And their opponents will often rip into them because they're seen as a major scalp. That won't satisfy them though. Which is why you'd back them to drive on for the replay.



Meath's Kristina Troy clashes with Amy Lee of Cork as she scores a goal in their Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Intermediate Camogie Championship final in Croke Park, Dublin.

Picture: INPHO/Gary Car



Cork's Katelyn Hickey closes down Cheyenne O'Brien of Meath.

Picture: INPHO/Bryan Keane



Cork's Finola Neville breaks from Megan Thynne of Meath.

Picture: INPHO/Bryan Keane

## Story of the Game

**Score Of the Game:** Cork's Kaitlin Hickey's goal a minute into injury time was a gem, great work by Linda Collins, who left her marker for dead after a good ball in from Rachel O'Shea.

**Player Of Match:** Cork's Finola Neville was the choice of the judges and no one could argue with the choice.

Meath's Sinead Hackett was another who impressed, whilst Jane Dolan's accuracy from frees was noteworthy.

**Turning Point:** Cork missed a free 18 minutes into the second half to go three points clear this gave Meath a breather and gave them a life line which allowed them back into the game.

**Entertainment Value:** Because of the referee's failure to allow the game flow as a contest the stop start nature of the game was one of sheer frustration.

Towards the end, it was exciting and tense as Cork dug deep to hang on and Meath battled to grab an equaliser but followers were left frustrated. 5

A DRAW was probably the right result in the All-Ireland intermediate final.

Neither side got into any great rhythm, as the fussy refereeing of Kilkenny's Liz Dempsey ensured it was a stop-start hour, interrupted by soft frees.

There was more 'chops' than in a karate competition. While technically the ref was doing her job to the letter of the law, allowing it to flow would have benefited both teams.

Cork goalscorer Katelyn Hickey was sent off late on for a second yellow for charging.

It was an extremely harsh call. Meath were then in possession in the 63rd minute and seeking a dramatic winner when Dempsey blew up before a shot could be taken.

At least the replay on October 1 will offer the players another chance to show what they're capable of.

No doubt many of the Rebels and Royals will be looking to up the gears the next day out.

Captain Niamh Ni Chaoimh, who really came into the game after half-time, summed it up well after.

"Whatever happens in a game you always feel there are things you can do better.

"That's definitely how you feel after a draw.

"There was nothing between us in the league, they won by a point, and the same today.

"We know we'll have to improve."

Simply put there was no one took a grip of this arm-wrestle when it was there to be won.

Certainly not on an individual basis where even though Finola Neville was the official Player of the Match, there was no obvious MVP.

And collectively both teams played in bursts, reflected by the low scoring - 1-9 apiece - and the fact the biggest lead was four points.

Meath could have broken through for another goal in the second half to go with Kristina Troy's effort after the break and lobbed a few dangerous balls into the square.

Jennifer Barry pulled off a timely flick to deny Meath on the 20-metre line at one stage.

The assured keeping of Amy Lee between the posts was crucial in ensuring the Leinster side didn't raise a second green flag.

Indeed the Na Piarasigh netminder was a candidate for the Player of the Match.

Cork were in the driving seat coming up to half-time, with Hickey finishing calmly to the net after a sizzling run by the impressive Rachel O'Shea.

Neville, Jennifer Barry and Leah Weste, following Jane Dolan out from the inside line to midfield, had a grip in the centre and Meath were penned back in their own half.

Had Cork nabbed the first score on the restart they would probably have been crowned champions, but instead Meath returned to the



# missed chance



Bobhan Fay from Liberty Insurance presents Cork's Finola Neville with the Player-of-the-Match award after the draw with Meath in the Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Intermediate Camogie Championship final in Croke Park, Dublin.



Cork's Niamh Ni Chaoimh, referee Liz Dempsey and Claire Coffey of Meath.

## Both sides think they could have won final

REACTION

■ Mary Newman

AS WITH all drawn games both camps felt they had chances to win and lost it but both captains were happy to get another day out.

Cork captain Niamh Ni Chaoimh was relieved and disappointed at the result but never the less gathered her emotions to look back on it as a contest.

"I suppose we have to be a bit disappointed that we didn't build on our four point interval advantage," Ni Chaoimh said.

"We took the lead at a great time in the game just before half time the goal was a huge boost just before half time but they never panicked and they had it back to level so fast."

The Cork captain knows her side has a lot of work to do for the replay which will be on October 1st.

"I thought it would be next weekend so I'm relieved to hear we have a bit of time we know we will have to up our game if we are to win."

"Meath are a good side they proved it today they dug deep and got themselves a draw."

"It's always been close between us just a point separated us in the round robin stages of the championship when the beat us."

"We were lucky to get away with a draw today but we will regroup and dig deep and give it everything we have."

Meath captain Claire Coffey was like Niamh relieved and disappointed also with the outcome.

"I was delighted to hear the full-time whistle and relieved I suppose are the immediate reactions, but when we look back I suppose a draw is a fair result and an accurate reflection of a game neither side dominated."

"Cork had a four point half time lead but we got back on level quickly and that was a huge boost."

"Like Cork we will head back and look at it and see where we might find some where to gain the upper hand we live to fight another day."

Player of the match Finola Neville acknowledged that her side could as easily have lost out in the end.

"We almost left it behind but thank god we lived to fight another day."

"They got back into the game and we had to soak up huge pressure, but we will come back again and go for 100 per cent."

Cork 1-9  
Meath 1-9

CORK will possibly see this as a chance lost after Jane Dolan's late free gave her side a second chance in the Liberty Insurance Intermediate final in Croke Park yesterday.

Cork's failure to score from the seventh minute of the second half allowed Meath off the hook added to its eight score able chances going wide at crucial stages in the second half saw Cork lose their grip after they went in four points ahead at the interval.

A lot of question marks also hang over referee Liz Dempsey's decision to award a free against Cork's Kaitlin Hickey and issue her with a second yellow card followed by a red two minutes to added time as the Cork forward on possession and went to go goal wide.

Dempsey deemed her to have barged with her shoulder and to the amazement of everybody deem it a yellow card, earlier in the game Hickey

## CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

had received a yellow and the issuing of the red brought huge shouts of disapproval from the stands.

The game was spoiled by the constant stoppage in play, with the 35 frees in total ruining it as contest as two evenly matches teams struggled to get any bit of momentum going.

Rachel O'Shea had Cork on the score board pointing an early free to which Aoife Minogue replied and it was score for score as the sides settled into the game.

Both opted to play a sweeper system in front of their respective full back lines and it led to a lot of defensive play at both ends added to this the constant stoppages for needless tips and taps stops the flow and energy of the game totally.

Keeva McCarthy edged Cork in front at the end of the opening quarter pointing a free and with Rachel O'Shea and Keeva McCarthy adding to the score line with points from play Cork went three clear.

Meath kept the pressure on and winning frees Jane Dolan cut the deficit

showing great accuracy and with six minutes to the break Sinead Hackett had the sides level as Meath continued to pressurise the Cork defence.

Keeva McCarthy edged Cork back in front with a pointed free and with injury time looming Cork grabbed the games opening goal when Linda Collins best her marker won possession and off loaded to the in running Kaitlin Hickey, who made no mistake to give Cork a four point interval cushion, 1-7 to 0-6.

Inside a minute of the restart Meath were back on level as they hit Cork with huge intensity, Aoife Minogue pointed and from the puck out Meath came again but it took a mistake in the Cork defence for Kristina Troy to win possession after Jennifer Barry looked to have the ball under control and lost it to Troy who gave Amy Lee no chance from close range.

With the sides on level terms it was backs to the wall for both defences but Cork edged back in front points from Finola Neville and Rachel O'Shea but they were not to score again for the remainder of the half as they hit wide after wide seven in total from frees as play.

To their credit the Cork defence had to absorb huge pressure as Meath

came at them and it was twenty-two minutes since Meath had scored before Jane Dolan narrowed the gap pointing a free, still Cork hung on to their slender point lead and twice they hit wides before Dempsey's decision to dismiss Kaitlin Hickey as the Cork forward went in search of the insurance score for her side.

Meath swept down the field and again the Cork defence stood firm but numerical advantage proved vital as they drew a late free which Dolan slotted it over to give her sides a second bite of the cherry.

Cork know they will need to improve for the replay which was announced for October 1.

Scorers for Cork: R O'Shea 0-3 (0-15), K Mc Carthy 0-3 (0-27), K Hickey 1-0, L Collins, F Neville, J Barry, K Hickey, K Mc Carthy, M Mc Carthy, R O'Shea, L Collins, C Sugrue.

Sub: M Buckley for M Mc Carthy (46), S Fahy for R O'Shea (60).

MEATH: E Mangan, E Coffey, C Coffey(c), E Burke, A Keogh, A Minogue, L Donoghue, C O'Brien, M Tynne, A Gaffney, K Troy, A Minogue, C Quinn, J Dolan, S Hackett.

Sub: A Slattery for C Quinn (42).

Referee: Liz Dempsey (Kilkenny).

## Three reasons why Cork drew Intermediate All-Ireland final

### 1: Failure To Take Chances:

The failure of Cork to close it out as they led by two points with seven minutes remaining. Time out of time they attacked, but they failed to make headway against a solid Meath defence.

Failure to convert three close in frees proved costly, while Meath had only one free wide as Jane Dolan was again hugely accurate from frees.

### 2: The referee:

Liz Dempsey disrupted the game as a contest,

35 frees in total stopped the game flowing. She picked up on every little flick or tip and failed to allow the game develop.

The decision to dismiss Kaitlin Hickey for a second yellow card was one of the worst decisions I have seen at a camogie game.

Yes she may have gone forward with a bit of intensity, but it was an All-Ireland final with minutes remaining, there was absolutely no reason to call a free, yet Dempsey saw fit to do so and amazingly

issue a card.

### 3: Neither side took their chances

Both sides failed to score for long periods of the second half. Cork went from the seventh minute to the full time whistle without registering a score.

Meath went 22 minutes without a score, but without doubt it was Cork who had a lot more opportunities.

Sloppy shooting in front of goal from frees and placed balls proved costly.



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**Liberty Insurance**

**Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Senior Championship Top Scorers**

**O'NEILLS 10**

**Supernatural**

Ailish O'Reilly (Galway) 3-37 (46)

Chloe Morey (Clare) 0-37 (37)

Niamh Mulcahy (Limerick) 0-33 (33)

Siobhán Flannery (Offaly) 2-25 (31)

Orla Cotter (Cork) 1-28 (31)

## 374,000 Tune-in for thrilling Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Championship Finals

By Camogie Press  
Posted 11/09/2017



374,000 viewers tuned into RTE 2 for this year's Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Senior Championship Final (Croke Park, Sunday September 10<sup>th</sup>) which culminated in Cork claiming the O'Duffy Cup for a record 27<sup>th</sup> time to top the Roll of Honour. This was an increase of 46,000 on the peak of 328,000 viewers who tuned in for the 2016 Finals.

An average of 276,800 viewers tuned into the live coverage of both the Intermediate and Senior Finals, representing a 30% share of the market an increase of 60,400 and 4% on the 2016 Finals.

A bumper crowd of 20,438 people descended on Croke Park for the finals and witnessed three thrilling matches with Westmeath taking the Premier Junior honours, whilst Cork and Meath will require a replay to decide the Intermediate title.

This made it the fourth highest attendance for a stand-alone Camogie All-Ireland Final since 1932 and the highest attendance since 2006 for a stand-alone Camogie Final when 20,685 spectators watched Cork complete a two-in-a-row against Tipperary.

## Remembering Mary Lynch



Uachtarán Mary Lynch with Uachtarán na hÉireann Dr. Patrick Hillery at the 1985 All-Ireland Camogie Championship Finals

## Uachtarán an Cumann Camógaíochta 1985-1988

by Mary Moran

Mary Lynch, the only Monaghan lady to hold the position of President of the Camogie Association, passed away last April. Mary brought a wealth of experience to the job. A former All-Ireland winning player with Dublin, intercounty referee, county team coach, county and provincial Cathaoirleach, she was familiar with and well-practiced in all aspects of the organisation.

As Mary Kelly, she learned the basics of the game at St. Louis, Carrickmacross and made the Monaghan county side while still a schoolgirl. She accepted an appointment in the Land Commission in Dublin and joined the Celtic Camogie Club. The Dublin selectors called on Mary to fill a midfield role on the Dublin team that won the All-Ireland Senior Championship in 1949.

On the occasion of her marriage to Willie Lynch, Mary returned to Carrickmacross. She passed on her love of Gaelic Games to her three sons, Brendan, Bill and Tony, who hurled for Monaghan and her daughter, Marion, who played in the Ashbourne Cup with UCC.

Mary made a determined effort to revive the game in County Monaghan and place it on a sound footing. She filled the role of county chairperson and guided the revival. She progressed to the Ulster Council where she held each officer position in turn.

It is, perhaps, as a referee that Mary was best known. She travelled the country officiating at all levels and competitions.

As President she journeyed to the four corners of the country to promote Camogie. In addition to the normal heavy schedule, she supervised the initial Coiscéim, Medical/Coaching Seminar and Youth Convention. At the direction of Congress, she appointed a commission to examine all aspects of the Association. She lent support and encouragement to the members in their efforts to plan the development of the organisation. The work of the commission led to many new initiatives being introduced.

Mary served as Trustee of the Camogie Association from 1994 to 2004. When she stepped back from the national Camogie scene, she devoted her time to local social services, Care of the Aged, and youth organisations where her kind, sincere and friendly character was widely welcomed.

A Mhuire na nGael guí uirthi.

## Celebrating Cork's triumphant two-in-a-row Jubilee Team!

Today we celebrate the 25th anniversary of Cork's back-to-back All-Ireland Senior Championship titles in 1992 and 1993.

The players and backroom team from these teams join us today for a lunch to celebrate their achievement and an opportunity to reminisce and share stories from this buoyant time for Cork Camogie.

Managed by the late Joe McGrath, the 1992 Final saw Cork overcome Wexford in the Final by 1-20 to 2-6 to end a 9 year wait for the county to claim the O'Duffy Cup. They returned in 1993 to successfully defend their crown and it was Galway that were put to the sword in a 3-15 to 2-8 victory.

The players and management team from those teams were:

Breda Kenny  
Paula Goggin  
Therese O'Callaghan  
Liz Towler  
Linda Mellerick  
Sandie Fitzgibbon  
Denise Cronin  
Irene O'Keefe  
Liz O'Neill  
Colette O'Mahony  
Fiona O'Driscoll  
Irene O'Leary

Liz Power  
Rose Desmond  
Clare McCarthy  
Mags Finn  
Lynn Dunlea  
Kathleen Costine (RIP)

Manager: Joe McGrath (RIP)  
Selectors: Miriam Murphy  
née Higgins, Marie Mackey  
& Marian Sweeney



Cork All-Ireland Senior Champions 1992

Back Row Left to Right:  
Therese O'Callaghan, Liz Towler, Kathleen Costine (RIP), Paula Goggin, Liz O'Neill, Linda Mellerick, Colette O'Mahony

Front Row Left to Right:  
Irene O'Leary, Denise Cronin, Fiona O'Driscoll, Sandie Fitzgibbon (Captain), Breda Kenny





Cork's Rena Buckley eyes the trophy.

Picture: INPHO/Gary Carr

## Buckley's brilliant achievement shows she really is special

THERE'S only one person with whom we can start this week's column.

Winning an All-Ireland title is a creditable achievement, as it shows you are part of a team which has proven itself to be better than all of its peers.

It's something which can never be taken away from that person and it becomes a central identifier.

That's if you win one.

To claim more than one marks you out as a cut above the rest, showing the ability to come back and prove yourself all over again.

Not too many people have done it, and naturally the number decreases as you go further up the scale.

We're honestly not sure how best to describe somebody who has won 18 All-Ireland senior medals, as Rena Buckley now has after Cork's All-Ireland camogie final win over Kilkenny last Sunday.

In doing so, the Inniscarra camogie and Donoughmore ladies' football player became the first person to have captained senior All-Ireland-winning teams in both codes.

The consistent excellence is probably something that we take for granted and it probably won't be until Rena has retired that her career will be properly appreciated.

This year, she had to make a decision to focus on just one code and opted for camogie over football, with the captaincy one of the deciding factors in that.

Running a physiotherapy business in Macroom and undertaking a Master's degree in the discipline too meant that something had to give.

As she said before the All-Ireland though, it wasn't as if she had a load of free time all of a sudden.

"In one sense, it's nice that you're at all the sessions, you're in with everything, you're not flying off and worried about matches clashing or anything like that but obviously, I miss the football gang."

"I would say, though, even if you are only playing one, you're still doing an amount of training, so it's not like I'm sitting at home in the evening drinking tea and saying, 'I'd love to be out playing football'."

Cork's win was a great response to being dethroned by the Cats last year.

GAA

■ Denis Hurley

O'Connor was sent off late on and this time around it seemed that she would miss out due to an injury sustained in the semi-final win over Galway.

She was passed fit though and tasked with marking Kilkenny star Denise Gaule.

On top of that, she also landed the monster score to tie the game before Julia White — whose absence last year denied Cork a key presence — got the winner.

It was just reward for Cork and manager Paudie Murray — like Buckley, a business-owner yet still capable of devoting time to this endeavour, and doing so successfully — as they got back to the top of the tree.

And of course it shouldn't be forgotten that player of the game Orla Cronin may be from Ballineen, but she hails from good Kilbrittain stock.

Next week, barring a draw, will see another All-Ireland title handed out as Dublin take on Mayo to determine the winners of the male senior football championship.

Obviously, Dublin have taken the game to a new level and have been very impressive in winning the Sam Maguire Cup for the last two years but surely there is nobody who would begrudge Mayo finally ending the long wait that goes back to 1951.

Given how they have reached the final, drawing three games — Derry, Cork and Kerry — and beating the Kingdom for the first time since 1996 in the championship, it would be the culmination of a sweet journey, especially given how they were written off on more than one occasion.

Next Monday, there will be a train departing Connolly at 12.05pm.

Currently, there are four seats on that train booked under the names of Mayo greats like Willie Joe Padden and Ciarán McDonald, just as they have been for the Monday after all of Mayo's recent final appearances, by four Mayo fans exiled in the capital.

The four seats have yet to be filled, but perhaps they will be next Monday and I can elaborate on the story behind it.



Cork's Eimear O'Sullivan celebrates winning with her nieces and nephews on Sunday.

Picture: Jim Coughlan

# The sweetest of them all



GAA

Éamonn Murphy

**SOME All-Ireland victories are worth more than others.**

There's no shortage of medals in the Cork camogie camp, Gemma O'Connor and Aoife Murray leading the way with eight senior wins apiece since their first in 2002.

Rena Buckley is only one behind that duo, with 11 on the football front for that record-breaking haul of 18.

Eimear O'Sullivan has a growing collection herself; Sunday was her fifth time climbing the steps of the Hogan Stand. Make no mistake though this was the best of the lot courtesy of Gemma O'Connor and Julia White's late points.

"The manner we won it made it the sweetest. The character we showed in the last five minutes, with Gemma's point and then Julia's to win it was unbelievable."

"The way the game was going the momentum was with Kilkenny and in other years we may have thrown in the towel. Julia had some guts to put that ball over the bar."

O'Connor's participation had been in doubt, while White had endured a torrid run of injuries across two seasons.

"I know what it's like to not be starting and doing your own thing. I'd be cruciate a few years ago. The team almost forget about you in a way and they have to get on with it so you've to be disciplined yourself to be able to get back."

"Julia was so determined. The work she did on her own, I saw it, I'm delighted for her."

O'Sullivan, one of eight kids, was surrounded by family and well-wishers last night at the Imperial. Her older sister Linda played for Cork too, while her brothers are involved with Ballinhassig's premier intermediate hurlers who meet Kanturk in a semi-final on Saturday. The day after the Haggis's senior B camogie



Lord Mayor Cllr Tony Fitzgerald and Cork Camogie captain Rena Buckley lead the crowd in singing 'The Banks' on the South Mall last night.

Picture: Jim Coughlan

team take on Valley Rovers.

"The reception is great and having all your family around you. Coming in here is the first time you see them properly and that's always special."

Sunday night at the Crowne Plaza was magical too, the pain of defeat to Kilkenny 12 months earlier when three in a row was on the line erased. It was O'Sullivan's third time getting the better of the Cats in September, though she conceded the game hinged on a few small moments.

"There's nothing between us, similar styles, but I think we got our tactics right. The counteracted us in the second half, keeping their midfielders wide to open up the game, but we had set ourselves up in the first half."

"Having Ashling Thompson so deep in the second half wasn't really planned but again she was well able to do that role and won so much ball."

Cork needed a lot to go right to regain the O'Duffy Cup, especially as Kilkenny had beaten them in this year's league final too. However, the dynamic midfielder, whose piercing runs down the flanks were a major asset on Sunday, said their only focus had been on championship.

"Up to the league final our training was all about our touch, we weren't doing match specific work and it was only in May we got ready."

"Our training was then game-based. We were match-orientated so that we knew what the pressure was like on big days. We were being tested at training."

Paudie Murray and his backroom had the Rebels fine-tuned for the big stage.

"This year we were on the track pre-season doing 200s and 400s, which we wouldn't have done before. Kevin (Murray) looked after the hurling, but Martin O'Brien was the physical trainer, with Liam O'Reilly involved too. They were experienced and brought a different element. Liam has been there and done it with Rob Heffernan."

Even with Gemma O'Connor available, Cork significantly rejigged their line-up. O'Sullivan wearing the five geansaí but hurling at midfield. She felt the energy and adaptability of the rookies was crucial to the approach.

"Paudie brought Chloe Sigerson, Niamh McCarthy and Libby Coppinger through the league, and there are very experienced senior B players who were involved, so we used that part of the season to bring something new."

"Libby is very similar to Brieghe. She's strong, athletic with a great work-rate and she played midfield all year but went back corner-back against Kilkenny. That's something new in camogie, that versatility."



# Crowds turn out to welcome victorious camogie team home



Captain Rena Buckley walks on stage on the South Mall, Cork, with the O'Duffy Cup as the Cork Senior Camogie team returns home after winning the All-Ireland Final against Kilkenny.

Picture: Jim Coughlan

## Catherine Shanahan

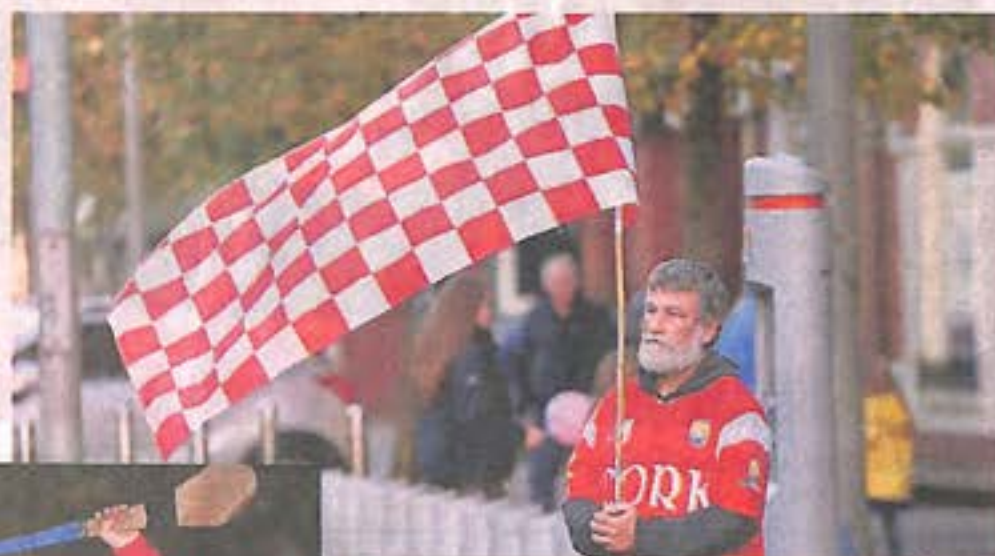
They christened a bridge after Christy and bored a tunnel in the name of Jack, so surely it's time to rename the Inniscarra Dam in honour of the local legend, the most decorated player in GAA history.

Any landmark would do well to bear the name of Rena Buckley, holder of 18 All-Ireland senior medals, 11 for football, seven for camogie, the most recent earned at the weekend, when Rena captained the team to a one-point win against Kilkenny.

Speaking last night at the homecoming on the South Mall in Cork, team manager Paudie Murray said it struck him driving around the city that Jack had the tunnel and Christy had the bridge, "so it's about time now that something was named after Rena".

The roars of approval for the unparalleled achievements of the 27-year-old Inniscarra woman could surely be heard in nearby City Hall where debates about what-should-be-called-after-who regularly take place. Jamie Forde, who celebrates his 12th birthday today, was among the crowd welcoming home the 27-time All-Ireland winners, a success that edged them just ahead of Dublin on the camogie roll of honour.

Jamie, wheelchair-bound,



Stephen Hayes from Blarney, Co Cork welcomes home the heroines on South Mall.

Picture: Jim Coughlan



Una Doherty, from Douglas, on the South Mall, for the homecoming.

Picture: Jim Coughlan

was straining to get a glimpse of his heroines and was rewarded for his perseverance when Captain Fantastic herself handed him the O'Duffy Cup and posed for the cameras.

"Is this a press conference?" he asked when asked what his name was. His friends Claire O'Connell and her daughter Shauna, 14, were on standby to look out for the young lad from Fairhill who couldn't believe his good fortune. Claire had taken daughter Shauna to Croke Park for the match and she was delighted with the overnight and the day off school as well.

Chloe Cremin, seven, from Carrigaline and her friend Robyn O'Mahony, seven, were toggled out at Kent Station, shouting a welcome for the ladies, along with Robyn's brother Seán, 11. They were particularly enthusiastic about Gemma O'Connor who managed to line out on the day and score a vital equaliser, despite being officially ruled out of the game with a knee ligament injury.

There were many emotional tweets about her contribution, perhaps the most telling vis-a-vis her dedication "I knew Gemma O'Connor couldn't not play, even if she was injured".

Chloe and Robyn and Seán were part of a 75-strong crowd that travelled from Carrigaline to Croke Park at the weekend, primarily to support local girl and intermediate team player Rachel O'Shea. Rachel will have to do it all again against Meath

in three weeks in the intermediate All-Ireland replay after the sides drew 1-9 on Sunday. Over on South Mall, lord mayor Tony Fitzgerald was getting into the groove with Tina as 'Simply the Best' boomed out to welcome the champions who arrived by open top bus after a Garda escort from Kent Station.

He described the girls as "fantastic ambassadors" and kept his speech brief, acknowledging he could "never compete with Rena". Bishop of Cork and Ross, John Buckley, said he had challenged the girls to put in a superhuman effort and they had delivered. He couldn't explain how Gemma O'Connor had played through her injury — "All of a sudden, she was passed fit" — but he thought it might be attributed to a certain priest, henceforth to be known as a miracle worker.

SEE: Tuesday Sport



Captain Rena Buckley presents the O'Duffy cup to Jamie Forde from Farranree at Kent station.

Picture: Kevin Dal...



Cork's Laura Treacy with sisters Miriam and Catherine Griffin and mum Rosarii Griffin as camogie champions Cork visit Our Lady's Children's Hospital, Crumlin, Dublin.

Picture: Cork...



# Champions

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Cork senior camogie team captain, Rena Buckley, lifts the O'Duffy Cup, at the homecoming, on the South Mall. Picture: Jim Coughlan

## ■ Inniscarra celebrate

IT was a night of great celebration for Inniscarra GAA as club legend Rena Buckley brought the O'Duffy Cup back to Leeside, while their minor hurlers captured a county title.

There was also great joy for Glen Rovers, with their minors landing

the Premier 1 hurling trophy, offering the club faithful a massive pick-me-up following their seniors' defeat to Na Piarsaigh over the weekend.

The victorious Rebel camogie team arrived back to Cork to a great reception after their stunning one-point win over Kilkenny on Sunday. After a stop in Mallow, Paudie Murray's squad were hailed as heroes at a homecoming on the South Mall, be-

## ■ Heroes' return for Cork

GAA

■ Éamonn Murphy

fore adjourning to Inniscarra, home of Rena Buckley.

After securing her 18th senior All-Ireland by beating the Cats, Buckley was the deserved centre of attention

from the Cork fans in The Imperial Hotel last night. Gemma O'Connor and Julia White also soaked up the cheers from the royal camogie faithful, with the gutsy nature of the victory a source of huge pride for all involved.

# Murray: We wanted to show more passion this year

Michael Moynihan

Cork camogie 'keeper Aoife Murray described Sunday's one-point win in the All-Ireland senior final as "the best drug ever — if you could bottle it we'd be very rich people".

Cork took the title with a Julia White point six minutes into injury-time, avenging last year's defeat by the same opposition.

"Every kind of hyperbole you could think of, you could use," said Murray.

"The overriding feeling is one of sheer happiness. It's just hard to describe."

Was it all the better because of White's late, late winner?

"Immediately afterwards, yes, but we were probably in a bit of shock just then. I knew there was going to be a result, I felt someone was going to win it, that there'd be another opportunity."

"When I saw Julia come on I was pretty confident a bit of space would open up because of her speed. I'm so thrilled for her, it couldn't have happened to a nicer girl."

"And I wouldn't have expected anything less. She's so calm, so relaxed, at times you'd worry — 'is she clued in here?' — and then one touch and she's gone, and you think, 'fair enough'."

"I was thrilled for her because of all her work to come back. An achilles is a pretty horrific injury to come back from, anyone who's had one will tell you that, and she had more knocks this year."

"Any kids watching, to see her come on as a sub after 60 minutes and do that, she's an absolute hero for them."

Another hero was Gemma O'Connor, who overcame a

knee ligament injury sustained in the semi-final to line out.

"She trained on the Thursday and was moving well, so we all presumed she'd start," said Murray. "But we didn't know if it'd be ten minutes or 15 minutes or what."

"We all felt that if there was one player who deserved the honour of the march around and starting the game, it was her."

"Seeing the work she's put in over the last three weeks, she's an absolute inspiration."

"I was rooming with her so I was trying to be super-positive with her — 'there's nothing wrong with your knee, it's grand', and then I said I'd tape my knee as well to be knee buddies."

"Gemma's phenomenal. And one of the funniest girls you'll ever meet."

Murray said Cork wanted to show more passion this year than last September: "We agreed we needed to show a bit of passion, that last September we didn't show that passion which people mightn't like Cork for sometimes."

"That annoyed us to a certain extent. It wasn't losing, because there's always a winner and a loser."

"I looked at the clock after Julia scored and thought, God, when did that happen? where did the six minutes go. We wanted to give it a go and if we lost at least we'd hold our heads up going back to Cork."

"At half-time we said they'd have their purple patch, their ten or 15 minutes, and that it'd be all about the composure. We knew we had the fitness, and when you believe you're fit, that you have the legs, then if you go two or three behind



ALL SMILES: Members of the All-Ireland winning Cork senior camogie team with Aaron Brennan, Dublin, during their visit to Our Lady's Children's Hospital, Crumlin, yesterday. Picture: Gary Carr/Inpho

you feel it'll still open up for you."

"Then you see the likes of Julia and Lauren coming on... we always had the belief that we'd walk away with our heads held high."

"Last year... when you lose and you play well, just look at the hurling final... Waterford gave everything they could and that's what made it a great final."

"I know the (camogie) final wasn't high-scoring, we knew

it wouldn't be, but our motto was to keep working — you never know where you might be at the end of it."

"We were fitter, too. We weren't fit enough last September and probably overdid it trying to catch up. But this year even at half-time we were smiling at each other, enjoying each others' company more than we did last year."

"I think when you're under pressure then being better teammates can help you pull it

out of the fire."

And the history woman herself? Rena Buckley made it 18 All-Ireland senior medals and is now the only person in GAA history to captain her own county to senior All-Irelands in two codes.

"If you asked her she'd probably pretend it's not true. She's gas, so unassuming, that she'll probably be embarrassed people will be saying that about her."

"There was something

going around on social media about the first woman to captain football and camogie, but she was keeping the head down."

"That's Rena. She doesn't roar and shout, she's very calm, but what she says she means, and that probably hits people more than me roaring and shouting."

"She's completely honest on and off the pitch, what else would you want from a captain?"



# O'Connor's steely focus, White's comeback from injury and Buckley's 18th All-Ireland

Cork goalkeeper Aoife Murray praised her teammates after their big win on Sunday

BY DARAGH Ó'CONCHÚIR | TUESDAY 12 SEP 2017, 8:14 AM | [HTTP://THE42.IE/3593268](http://the42.ie/3593268)

CORK GOALKEEPER AOIFE Murray has hailed the efforts of Cork's two injury-time heroes to even make it onto Croke Park for Sunday's Liberty Insurance All-Ireland senior camogie final.



Source: Inpho

Match winner Julia White ruptured her Achilles tendon last year and then broke her foot in April, and had played little camogie at club or county level in the past two seasons.

"When I saw Julia come on I was pretty confident a bit of space would open up because of her speed. I'm so thrilled for her, it couldn't have happened to a nicer girl.

"I wouldn't expect anything less from her. Julia is just calm. There's not ups or downs with Julia. She's just really relaxed the whole time. You'd worry at times, wondering 'Is she clued in here?' Then one touch and she's gone and you're going 'Fair enough.'

"I'm delighted for her and it just shows all her hard work because it was a pretty horrific injury. Anybody that's had an Achilles will tell you it's very hard to come back. She's had another couple of knocks this year. It just goes to show any kids out there looking at this, the fact that she was a sub, to come on and do that in the 66<sup>th</sup> minute, she's an absolute hero."

Murray was the epitome of perpetual motion between the posts, a jack-in-the-box constantly pumping her fists, leaping in the air and issuing rallying cries to those in front of her. Being goalie can be tough, with few chances to crash into opposition bodies to release the tension and pent-up fury, but Cork had resolved to not just mean business, but to display that in their body language at every opportunity.

"You use as much energy as everyone else, but we agreed we needed to show a bit of passion, that last September we didn't show that passion. That annoyed

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Cork's evening newspaper since 1892

## Champions and record breakers

TO beat Kilkenny with the last puck of the game. It is the stuff that dreams are made of.

For Cork teams, it doesn't get much better than that.

Unless, of course, the game is an All-Ireland final.

And unless the victory moves your county past Dublin to the top of the roll of honour, with 27 All-Ireland senior camogie championships.

And unless it makes your captain the player with the highest combined tally of All-Ireland senior medals, bringing her total to 18.

Now that's as good as it gets, and on Sunday that's what Cork and Rena Buckley achieved.

Rena has long gone beyond being just a legendary female athlete.

She is one of the greatest Cork GAA players of all time, an Irish sports icon.

With Briege Corkery not playing this season, the Inniscarra camogie star landed her 18th senior All-Ireland on Sunday, between football and camogie, putting her out in front as a record-breaker.

It was her seventh senior camogie victory, to go with her 11 on the football front, and Rena became the first player to captain her county to glory in both codes.

She's a humble leader, preferring when the spotlight is on the team, which only magnifies her status as a role model for all.

Of course Cork had no shortage of heroes at the weekend.

Goalkeeper Aoife Murray, who works in Dublin and travels back to play for her beloved Cork, and Gemma O'Connor, who defied injury to start, picked up their eighth senior camogie medals at Croke Park.

Super-sub Julia White was the unlikely match winner having missed most of the past two years through injury.

The players hail from all over Cork, as Orla Cronin, from Enniskeane, Killeagh's Laura Treacy, Milford's Ashling Thompson, Ballinhassig's Elmeare O'Sullivan and northsider Amy O'Connor, from St Vincent's, were all outstanding.

The victory was a huge credit to manager Paudie Murray, who was also in charge of the intermediate side that drew with Meath, and his backroom team.

They ensured Cork were prepared for the physicality and class of champions Kilkenny, taking the O'Duffy Cup from Noreaside to Leeside, the third Cork All-Ireland win in four seasons.

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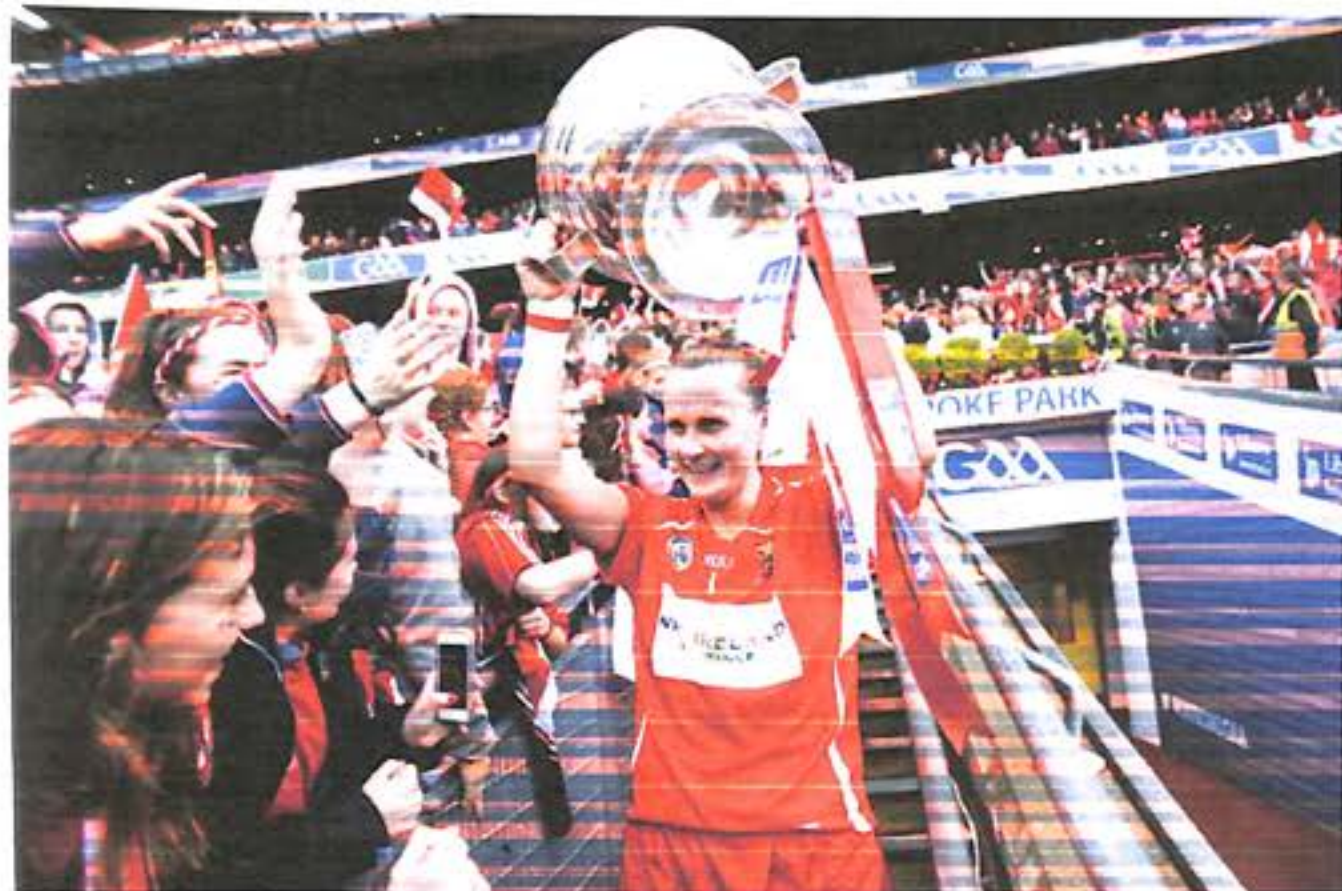
Meanwhile, Gemma O'Connor, who sent over a raking equaliser just as regulation time concluded, was in doubt right up to the final whistle, although the rumour mill had it that the St Finbarr's talisman would be starting despite not being named in the team.

Murray roomed with O'Connor the night before and even taped her knee in solidarity with her long-time teammate

"She did the training on Thursday and she was moving quite well so we all kind of presumed that she was gonna start but we didn't know would it be 10 minutes? Would it be 15 minutes? But we all felt if there was one player or one teammate that should get the honour of doing the march and starting that match it would be Gemma and I think we were all very happy to give her whatever she needed.

"When you see the work that she's put in over the last three weeks... Just seeing her tog out was an absolute inspiration.

"Listen, Gemma's phenomenal."



Source: Gary Carr/INPHO

White is probably the polar opposite to O'Connor in terms of steely-eyed focus before a game. Her nature has helped her deal with plenty of setbacks, even if the fractured foot this year did test her resolve, coming so soon after going through the mill to get back from a potentially career-threatening injury.

us to a certain extent. It wasn't losing, because there's always a winner and a loser.

"I looked at the clock after Julia scored and thought, 'Jesus, when did that happen', where did the six minutes go. We wanted to give it a go and if we lost at least we'd hold our heads up going back to Cork."

Her final word was for the skipper Rena Buckley, who has won every major inter-county medal in both codes with Cork from underage upwards, as well as all the ones at club level apart from an All-Ireland in camogie, getting close when Inniscarra reached the final in 2011.

On Sunday, the 30-year-old Buckley was bagging a record 18<sup>th</sup> All-Ireland senior medal for the Rebels and her seventh in camogie. She became the first person of either gender in Gaelic games history to captain her native county to All-Ireland glory – Mary Geaney was the trailblazer with an even more unique feat of leading Kerry to football success in 1975 before repeating the feat with the Cork camogie team five years later – and gave her victory speech entirely in *ár dteanga dúchais*.

"She's gas, so unassuming, that she'll probably be embarrassed people will be saying that about her.

"That's Rena. She doesn't roar and shout, she's very calm, but what she says she means, and that probably hits people more than me roaring and shouting. She's completely honest on and off the pitch. What else would you want from a captain?"



WINNER ALL WHITE FOR CORK IN DRAMATIC FINISH

Posted by sportsnews on 11 days ago 10 Comments



Liberty Insurance All Ireland Senior Camogie Championship Final, Croke Park, Dublin 10/9/2017  
Cork vs Kilkenny, Cork's Rena Buckley lifts the O'Duffy cup. Credit ©INPHO/Bryan Keane

By Daragh Ó Conchúir at Croke Park

Cork 0-10

Kilkenny 0-9

CORK reserved their best performance of the past 12 months to record an extraordinary victory over champions Kilkenny and move past Dublin on the roll of honour with 27 Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Senior Camogie Championships.

In a game that had everything, it was super sub Julia White, only on the pitch a matter of minutes, who shot the winner with the clock reading 66 minutes and 16 seconds.

Gemma O'Connor had flighted a soaring equaliser from 65m right on 60 minutes, having played the entire game despite being considered a major doubt with a knee injury beforehand and not being named in the team earlier in the week.

White, a former Cork skipper who has endured a torrid two years after tearing her Achilles tendon and then breaking her foot, was introduced immediately afterwards to spectacular effect.

The players tore into every exchange as the rain began to pour down once more, putting their bodies on the line with a minimum of six minutes of injury time announced.

Scores had been hard to come by throughout however and it took White to provide the definitive one with her first touch.

"It's an unbelievable feeling" said White afterwards. "I've had a frustrating year in terms of injuries and so we use cookies to ensure that we give you the best experience on our website. If you continue to use this site we will assume that you are happy with it. So I was delighted to have the option of getting on and getting a point."

"I know it was only one point and there were loads more, but it's definitely a great feeling after being out for the last two years."

White's intervention also moved Rena Buckley clear of her long-time colleague Briege Corkery as the player with the highest combined tally of All-Ireland Senior medals, bringing her tally to 18.

"It's great, it's absolutely fantastic" smiled the Inniscarra woman, talking about the victory rather than any personal achievement. "We came up here last year, we had high expectations, we were going for three-in-a-row and we were kind of taught a lesson by Kilkenny really. They played with huge aggression and they really knew how to score and how to break us down."

"We had to work very hard, we went back early this year and we played Kilkenny in the League Final and felt we had a lot of work put in but that day they beat us as well."

"So we really put our shoulder to the wheel, we came up against a very strong Galway team in the semi-final, which was a huge help I think. And thankfully today the fruits of our work were shown on the field."

Cork were by far the superior team in the first half but somehow only led by 0-5 to 0-2 at half time. They were in command in most sectors, with Orla Cronin proving a real handful for Anne Dalton, O'Connor looking comfortable and Ashling Thompson covering acres of ground while throwing herself into the physical battles with relish.

It was by no means free-flowing but the Rebels scored the first three points, Amy O'Connor book-ending a converted free by Orla Cotter. They should have been further ahead, as Katrina Mackey hit the upright and they wasted some tremendous opportunities.

Denise Gaule freed Kilkenny's first score from a free in the 11<sup>th</sup> minute but Cronin and Mackey stretched the gap before Julie Ann Malone hit the Cats' first score from play before the break.

Ann Downey must surely have fired a rocket at her charges at the interval and they thundered into the fray straight from the resumption.

After such a tight first half, the teams shared nine points inside 14 minutes before returning to arm wrestle status.

Kilkenny shot five of the first six, Meighan Farrell throwing over two, with Katie Power, Shelly Farrell and Gaule (free) moving them ahead.

This was a crucial period in the game and Cork batted down the hatches. Cotter found the target from a free to stop the bleeding before Cronin sent over majestically from tight on the left to put Cork ahead once more, only for Malone to level again.

That was in the 44<sup>th</sup> minute and it was another 11 before the next score arrived. It was a tremendous solo effort by Miriam Walsh, who controlled the sliotar brilliantly before turning back inside and clearing the black spot off her left from the right flank.

For a while, it looked like the Double Double would be Kilkenny's. But Cork found a little bit more. And that was enough.

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Multi-talented Mary made her own All-Ireland history



Killarney Golf Club Senior Ladies captain Mary Geaney shows off the Irish Senior Cup.  
Picture: Sally MacMonagle

Colm O'Connor

Mary Geaney's phone began to hum as Cork camogie captain Rena Buckley climbed the Hogan Stand steps to collect the O'Duffy Cup on Sunday afternoon.

The commentators and analysts proclaimed history made as Buckley became the first person to skipper All-Ireland winning sides in two codes.

Buckley had in fact become the first person to achieve the feat with her native county on Sunday - incredibly almost

four decades earlier Geaney had the honour of leading both Cork and Kerry to championship glory in camogie and ladies football respectively.

"I was getting calls at the end of the game," Geaney smiled yesterday, "with a few people telling me that Marty Morrissey had his facts wrong!"

Geaney, now a sprightly 64, captained Kerry to All-Ireland ladies football glory in 1976, beating Offaly 4-6 to 1-5 in Littleton, Co Tipperary. She scored 3-2.

Four years later she was in Croke Park, this time with the Cork camogie side which defeated Limerick (1-8 to 2-2) in a replay.

So how did a Kerry woman end up captaining Cork in an All-Ireland senior final?

"When I started out with Castleisland it was all camogie, it was only when the camogie club folded there that we began to concentrate on ladies football."

Geaney quickly found a new home for her camogie talents. "I had gone to boarding school

in Ursuline in Cork so I knew a lot of the girls down there. I ended up playing with Eire Og things progressed from there and I ended playing and captaining Cork."

"I was thrilled for Rena and for Cork, it was a double bonus for them to win the All-Ireland by beating Kilkenny in the final."

Geaney's sporting talents didn't end with GAA - she was also an accomplished hockey star, winning 61 international caps while also enjoying provincial and national

success as a badminton player. Nowadays, golf is her first love - "I'm still playing enough to keep me out of harm's way" - but her history-making achievements show no sign of ending.

Earlier this month she managed a young Killarney team to the Irish Senior Cup with a 4-1 win over Royal Portrush.

It was Killarney's first national title in the grade.

And one more historic destination reached on Mary Geaney's trail-blazing journey through sport.



Liberty Insurance All Ireland Senior Camogie Championship Final, Croke Park, Dublin 10/9/2017  
Cork vs Kilkenny, Cork's Gemma O'Connor with Julie Ann Malone of Kilkenny. Credit ©INPHO/Gary Carr



Liberty Insurance All Ireland Senior Camogie Championship Final, Croke Park, Dublin 10/9/2017  
Cork vs Kilkenny, Cork's Julia White scores the winning point late in injury time. Credit ©INPHO/James Cronin



# Rena's special place in Irish sporting history

BY DENIS HURLEY

WE'LL forgive Rena Buckley for telling us a small white lie ahead of the All-Ireland camogie final.

At the very end of her interview with *The Southern Star* ahead of the All-Ireland final, we asked the Cork captain (30) if she had much of a speech prepared in case Cork did win.

'I certainly would have points written down of the people to thank but it's not keeping me awake or anything,' she said at the time, 'you don't want to forget anyone, that'd be the main thing.'

She was underselling herself, of course, as her excellent speech as Gaelge proved last Sunday.

But then, she has never felt the need to blow her own trumpet, despite what is now a haul of 18 All-Ireland senior medals across camogie and ladies' football.

*Star* columnist Jennifer O'Leary - no stranger herself to doing the talking on the pitch - sums up Buckley's character to a tee with a vignette from the celebrations in the wake of the win over Kilkenny.

'She is so humble and modest,' O'Leary says, 'and if you talk to her she goes "Oh yeah, I've been lucky".'

'She has a great attitude. You never come across her in a bad mood. She gives her heart and sole to camogie and football; she just loves the games.'

'She is a living legend. I think she'll keep going for another few years. This isn't the end of what she will achieve. There's even more to come.'

'I went to the Cork team hotel on Sunday night when I was on the way back up to Armagh and I caught up with them for an hour. And there was Rena, "Yeah, yeah, it's great", and I didn't realise she had just been named Sunday Game Player of the Year. She wouldn't say it. She's coolness personified, the must

modest person you will ever meet.'

The decision to only focus on the one code this year was no doubt a tough one but running a physiotherapy business in Macroom and undertaking a Master's degree in the same discipline in UCD - necessitating a 5.30am start once a week - meant something had to give.

Camogie captaincy in the wake of Inniscarra's county title last year meant that the balance tipped towards the small ball. Not that that meant she was inundated with free time.

'In one sense, it's nice that you're at all the sessions, you're in with everything, you're not flying off and worried about matches clashing or anything like that but obviously, I miss the football gang.'

'I would say though, even if you are only playing one, you're still doing an amount of training, so it's not like I'm sitting at home in the evening drinking tea and saying, "I'd love to be out playing football".'

Earlier this year, we asked Juliet Murphy to sum up Rena's levels of dedication.

'I used to cycle to training, thinking that I was going above and beyond what was required, but one night Rena, as part of her cross-country training, did 16 laps before we started properly.'

'That really, for me, sums up why Rena has been able to do what she has done. Even at that age, she was so driven and so focused in whatever she was doing that it was 100 percent.'

That focus has given her a special place in Irish sporting history and yet you'll never hear

her boast about it. For certain, we can say that she'll only be truly appreciated after she retires.

**Captain fantastic: Rena Buckley.**

# Orla flies West Cork flag



**Star quality:** Deirdre Ashe, Director of Personal Lines, Liberty Insurance, presents the Player of the Match award to Orla Cronin after her fantastic performance in the win against Kilkenny last Sunday.

(Photo: James Crombie/INPHO)

ORLA Cronin wasted little time in telling the watching world last Sunday night that she's from West Cork.

The Enniskeane star was named player of the match as she helped Cork regain the All-Ireland senior title at Croke Park, with Orla scoring three points in the dramatic 0-10 to 0-9 win against Kilkenny.

When interviewed by Marty Morrissey on *The Sunday Game* live on TV on Sunday night, after winning the coveted player of the match award, a thrilled Orla didn't forget her roots here in West Cork.

'It's a huge honour to be representing West Cork on the Cork team,' UCC student Orla said.

'There is a huge bunch of camogie players in West Cork. We're not known for our camogie, we're known for more football in that direction.'

'There's myself, the Murphys, Liam O'Reilly, Libby Coppinger, we're all representing West Cork and we're all delighted!'

# This is the sweetest one yet

BY DENIS HURLEY

IT'S quite the luxury to be able to rank your five All-Irelands in terms of enjoyment.

Ballinhassig's Eimear O'Sullivan is in just such a position after last Sunday and she thinks that this one is definitely top of the list in terms of the way Cork won.

Julia White's late point gave Paudie Murray's side a 0-10 to 0-9 win and O'Sullivan believes that it was the sweetest.

'We could have settled for a draw,' O'Sullivan said, 'but I don't think anybody really wanted that, it would have been tough to go back into three more weeks of training and Kilkenny would definitely have been better in the replay.'

'I'm so delighted for Julia, it couldn't have happened to a nicer girl, she showed great composure to get the winner and it was just such a wonderful feeling.'

'This is the sweetest one - yet, anyway!'

Cork had lost their title to the Cats last year and also fell to

but O'Sullivan doesn't believe that any feelings of inferiority had set in with regard to the black and amber.

'It was something we were talking about before the final,' she says.

'We had played them seven times over the past two years and we had won five of those, so there wasn't a feeling that they were a lot better than us.'

'Obviously, they had won last year but we under-performed that day. A big thing for us was to stick with them for as long as we could and not let them get early scores too easily.'

'We dictated a lot of the first half and that cushion then meant that when they had the purple patch we were still in it and not having to try and play catch-up.'

'We did get a point behind but then Gemma got that monster point, it was absolutely the right person in the right place. She gets those every game, it's like second nature to her now.'

The next while is about relaxing and reflection on a great year, but of course it won't be long before thoughts turn to



**High five:** Cork's Eimear O'Sullivan celebrates winning her fifth All-Ireland medal with Sean Cremin after Cork's win last Sunday.

(Photo: Oisín Keniry/INPHO)

2018.

'Things are just on a high this week,' O'Sullivan says, 'it's good to look back on a championship where we got better as it went on, I think we did improve with every game going back as far as the start of the round-robin.'

'The performance against Galway in the semi-final mightn't have been the best but it was still one where we had to hold our composure and

make sure to get the result and that definitely helped us the against Kilkenny in the final.'

'Next year seems a long way away at the moment but it'll be around soon and with a relatively young team we'll be keen to go again.'

'The intermediate team have their replay in a couple of weeks and you'd assume that they'll be pushing hard for a place in the senior squad then, so it has

## TWEETS OF THE WEEK

You'd nearly see why Orla Cronin started ahead of me on the U12 hurling team in fairness!

@NiallLombard

Well done Orla Cronin, @CorkCamogie on winning player of the game. It's a pity @MartyM\_RTE was wearing more fake tan than her!

@bbarrymurphy

Orla Cronin, when Cork were rudderless up front in the second half, she carried the game to Kilkenny. Three points from play in tight encounter.

@paddysexton79

Orla Cronin deserves huge credit for today. Neutralised the threat of Ann Dalton, and still scored some superb points from play.

@ElaineBucko



# ALL-IRELAND SENIOR CAMOGIE FINAL

## Murray hails the injury time heroes

BY DARAGH Ó CONCHÚIR

CORK goalkeeper Aoife Murray has hailed the efforts of Cork's two injury-time heroes to even make it onto Croke Park for Sunday's Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Senior Camogie Final.

Match winner Julia White ruptured her Achilles tendon last year and then broke her foot in April, and had played little camogie at club or county level in the past two seasons.

Meanwhile, Gemma O'Connor, who sent over a raking equaliser just as regulation time concluded, was in doubt right up to the final whistle, although the rumour mill had it that the St Finbarr's talisman would be starting despite not being named in the team.

Murray roomed with O'Connor the night before and even taped her knee in solidarity with her long-time teammate.

"She did the training on Thursday and she was moving quite well so we all kind of presumed that she was gonna start but we didn't know would it be 10 minutes? Would it be 15 minutes? But we all felt if there was one player or one teammate that should get the honour of doing the march and starting that match it would be Gemma and I think we were all very happy to give her whatever she needed.

"When you see the work that she's put in over the last three weeks... Just seeing her tog out was an absolute inspiration. Listen, Gemma's phenomenal."

White is probably the polar opposite to O'Connor in terms of sleepily-eyed focus before a game. Her nature has helped her deal with plenty of setbacks, even if the fractured foot this year did test her resolve, coming so soon after going through the mill to get back from a potentially career-threatening injury.

"When I saw Julia come on I was pretty confident a bit of space would open up because of her speed. I'm so thrilled for her, it couldn't have happened to a nicer girl. I wouldn't expect anything less from her.

"Julia is just calm. There's not ups or downs with Julia. She's just really relaxed the whole time. You'd worry at times, wondering 'Is she clued in here?' Then one touch and she's gone and you're going 'Fair enough.'

"I'm delighted for her and it just shows all her hard work because it was a pretty horrific injury. Anybody that's had an Achilles will tell you it's very hard to come back. She's had another couple of knocks this year. It just shows

hero."

Murray was the epitome of perpetual motion between the posts, a jack-in-the-box constantly pumping her fists, leaping in the air and issuing rallying cries to those in front of her.

Being goalie can be tough, with few chances to crash into opposition bodies to release the tension and pent-up fury, but Cork had resolved to not just mean business, but to display that in their body language at every opportunity.

"You use as much energy as everyone else, but we agreed we needed to show a bit of passion, that last September we didn't show that passion. That annoyed us to a certain extent. It wasn't losing, because there's always a winner and a loser.

"I looked at the clock after Julia scored and thought, 'Jesus, when did that happen', where did the six minutes go. We wanted to give it a go and if we lost at least we'd hold our heads up going back to Cork."

Her final word was for the skipper Rena Buckley, who has won every major inter-county medal in both codes with Cork from underage upwards, as well as all the ones at club level apart from an All-Ireland in camogie, getting close when Inniscarra reached the final in 2011.

On Sunday, the 30-year-old Buckley was bagging a record 18th All-Ireland Senior medal for the Rebels and her seventh in Camogie. She became the first person of either gender in Gaelic games history to captain her native county to All-Ireland glory - Mary Geaney was the trailblazer with an even more unique feat of leading Kerry to football success in 1975 before repeating the feat with the Cork Camogie team five years later - and gave her victory speech entirely in *ár dteanga dúchais*.

"She's gas, so unassuming, that she'll probably be embarrassed people will be saying that about her. That's Rena. She doesn't roar and shout, she's very calm, but what she says she means, and that probably hits people more than me roaring and shouting. She's completely honest on and off the pitch.

"What else would you want from a captain?"



The Cork team celebrate with The O'Duffy Cup after the Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Senior Camogie Final match between Cork and Kilkenny at Croke Park in Dublin. Photo by Matt Browne/Sportsfile

## White strikes late

ALL IRELAND SENIOR CAMOGIE FINAL

Cork 0-10  
Kilkenny 0-9

DARAGH Ó CONCHÚIR  
Croke Park, Dublin

CORK reserved their best performance of the past 12 months to record an extraordinary victory over champions Kilkenny and move past Dublin on the roll of honour with 27 Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Senior Camogie Championships.

In a game that had everything, it was corner sub Julia White, only

the entire game despite being considered a major doubt with a knee injury beforehand and not being named in the team earlier in the week.

White, a former Cork skipper who has endured a torrid two years after tearing her Achilles tendon and then breaking her foot, was introduced immediately afterwards to spectacular effect.

The players tore into every exchange as the rain began to pour down once more, putting their bodies on the line with a minimum of six minutes of injury time announced.

Scores had been hard to come by throughout however and it took White to provide the definitive one with her first touch.

there were loads more, but it's definitely a great feeling after being out for the last two years."

White's intervention also moved Rena Buckley clear of her long-time colleague Brieghe Corkery as the player with the highest combined tally of All-Ireland Senior medals, bringing her tally to 18.

Buckley also becomes the only player, male or female, to captain her county to All-Ireland titles in football and camogie / hurling as a result of this success.

"It's great, it's absolutely fantastic," smiled the Inniscarra woman, talking about the victory rather than any personal achievement.

"We came up here last year, we had high expectations, we were going for three in-a-row and we

played Kilkenny in the league final and felt we had a lot of work put in but that day they beat us as well.

"So we really put our shoulder to the wheel, we came up against a very strong Galway team in the semi-final, which was a huge help I think. And thankfully today the fruits of our work were shown on the field."

Cork were by far the superior team in the first half but somehow only led by 0-5 to 0-2 at half-time. They were in command in most sectors, with Orla Cronin proving a real handful for Anne Dalton, O'Connor looking comfortable and Ashling Thompson covering acres of ground while throwing herself into the physical battles with relish.



## to seal crown

**"We really put our shoulder to wheel, we came up against a very strong Galway team in semi-final, which was a huge help I think**

Ann Downey must surely have fired a rocket at her charges at the interval and they thundered into the fray straight from the resumption.

After such a tight first half, the teams shared nine points inside 14 minutes before returning to arm wrestle status.

Kilkenny shot five of the first six, Meaghan Farrell throwing over two, with Katie Power, Shelly Farrell and Gaule (free) moving them ahead. This was a crucial period in the game and Cork battered down the hatches.

Cotter found the target from a free to stop the bleeding before Cronin sent over majestically from tight on the left to put Cork ahead once more, only for Malone to level again.

That was in the 44th minute and

clearing the black spot off her from the right flank.

For a while, it looked like Double Double would be Kilkenny's. But Cork found a little more. And that was enough.

Scores

CORK: O Cronin 0-3; A O'Connor, C Cotter (fs) 0-2 each; K Mackay, G O'Connor, J White 0-1 each

KILKENNY: M Farrell, J A Malone, C Gaule (fs) 0-2 each; K Power, S Farrell, L Walsh 0-1 each

CORK: A Murray, L Treacy, R Buckley, L Coppinger, G O'Connor, P Mackey, Sigerson, E O'Sullivan, A Thompson, O'Connor, O Cronin, O Cotter, H Lohan, McCarthy, K Mackay, Saba, L Horan, Looney (52), J White for Sigerson (60+1)

KILKENNY: E Kavanagh, C Phelan, Foley, G Walsh, A Dunphy, A Dalton, Tobin, M Farrell, A Farrell, J A Malone



# Libby keen to bring the cup home to Kealkil!

BY DENIS HURLEY

LIBBY Coppinger's mother Maureen wasted no time on Sunday evening.

At the Cork senior camogie team's post-match banquet in the Crowne Plaza Hotel, the mother of West Cork's newest All-Ireland medallist made a bee-line for manager Paudie Murray, eager to arrange a date for the O'Duffy Cup to visit Kealkil.

'We'd be fairly hopeful of it coming down soon alright, Mam was straight on to Paudie to try to sort out a date!' Libby laughed as the team returned on Monday evening, just after a quick stop in Mallow to change trains before the team arrived into Kent Station for their homecoming.

While the St Colum's star was reluctantly placed at the centre of a fixtures-clash in August and then featured as the Cork ladies'

football team lost their crown to Mayo, Sunday was a dream end to her inter-county year.

'With the way we started, I felt that we weren't going to lose,' she said.

'We were just really primed and we put ourselves in a great position. Kilkenny came back at us and they were probably always going to do it because they're such a great team.'

'It was great for Gemma [O'Connor] to get the equaliser and then Julia [White] to get the winner after last year, when Gemma was sent off and Julia was out injured.'

'I can't even really describe what it was like afterwards, I was 'bated' out after the effort of playing the game but it's such a great feeling, you get more energy when you win.'

'The celebrations then on Sunday night were brilliant, it's just been an excellent couple of days.'



Pride of the west: St Colum's star Libby Coppinger celebrates with her friends and family after helping Cork win the All-Ireland senior title at Croke Park last Sunday. (Photo: Bryan Keane/INPHO)

Libby, a public health student in UCC, was due back in college on Monday but played truant as the team returned home, having made the traditional All-Ireland winners' visit to Our Lady's Children's Hospital in Crumlin, and she did acknowledge that Tuesday was in doubt, too.

High achievers don't tend to

take too many shortcuts though and you can bet that if she did miss Tuesday then she put in the extra hours on Wednesday. Such levels of dedication are what have won her senior All-Irelands in both codes now, and the ever-present humility is demonstrated by how she views the achievement in terms of her club.

This year, Colum's amalgamated in camogie and ladies' football and Libby is grateful for the support received.

'The club sent up a bus to Dublin, which was brilliant,' she said, 'and I met other people who had made the trip as well, I'm delighted and really honoured that they all made the effort.'

'There is such great work going on behind the scenes that I'm glad that everyone was able to share in it and I just want to thank them all for the effort in helping me get to where I am.'

'It's great that younger girls joining can see that they can make it on to the Cork panel because of the structures the club have in place now.'

## Cork camogie hero Orla came of age

Eight-time All-Star Jennifer O'Leary hails Enniskeane star Orla Cronin's performance



ORLA Cronin came of age last Sunday.

When she came on the scene with the Cork seniors four years ago, it was my final season so we had one campaign together.

I knew she had talent. She was shy, new on the scene, feeling her way into her new surroundings but now, in her fourth season and after her best year yet, Orla has shown she belongs at the very top.

She was terrific last Sunday, scoring three points and winning the player of the match award.

Orla looked so confident on the ball. Her touch was superb.

Even when she was under pressure, she did all the right things and kept her head up all the time. She is such a clever player. She never gave the ball away. If the shot was on she took it. If not she gave it to someone in a better position.

She looked so confident and so mature as a player. She has grown into this team and it's fantastic to see a West Cork woman shine on the big stage like she did, and so did Libby Coppinger, too; she swept up a lot of loose ball and was very effective.

I watched the game at home in Barryroe but I called into the

Cork team hotel, the Crowne Plaza, on Sunday night when I was on the way back up to Armagh and I caught up with the team for an hour or so. Orla was in great form, modest as ever, and it was the same with Rena Buckley, our captain fantastic who won her 18th All-Ireland senior medal.

Rena is a living legend. I think she'll keep going for another few years. This isn't the end of what she will achieve. There's even more to come. What a prospect that is.

This was the sweetest one yet for Cork. It's the way they won it. People fancied Kilkenny to defend their title and get the better of Cork again, but the Rebels had something to prove - and they did that.

I had a gut feeling during the week that Cork would win, I felt they wanted it more than Kilkenny and you could see how relentless they were on Sunday. They were ravenous.

Cork set their stall out from the start. We hadn't seen

that in their previous games this season. But they hit four unanswered points on Sunday and that showed they meant business.



Kilkenny seemed shell-shocked. Maybe seeing Gemma O'Connor lining out spooked them but something got into their heads. It was different to last year when Kilkenny caught Cork. Roles were reversed on Sunday.

You can't underestimate the boost Cork got from Gemma lining out. It was only a few weeks she suffered knee ligament damage in the semi-final win against Galway, and the official line was that she was out of the All-Ireland final.

Anyone who knows Gemma will tell you that she doesn't come off in games so I knew it was a bad injury.

Final hero: Orla Cronin.

Talking to her Sunday after the game, she didn't know herself until Thursday night at training whether she would be good to go. She had a fitness test and did the whole session, and the knee held up. I had a feeling she would play some part but I was surprised to see her start. But knowing Gemma, she will do anything possible to line out for Cork - and that was her 13th final. Incredible.

While she wasn't as influential as she usually is, she still came up with a huge moment late on to level the game.

I was worried if Gemma was out that Cork would have no one to solo up the field and take a score from distance like she can - but she came up with the goods when the need was greatest.

And the same can be said for the heroes on every line of this team. They were all composed and calm, and deserved their win.

Cork are back on top. And West Cork played its role in that.

The West is awake!



# Cork should honour Inniscarra's Rena Buckley says camogie boss

CORK should consider honouring its record winning All-Ireland dual star Rena Buckley from Inniscarra by naming some road or piece of infrastructure after her - just as they have done with Christy Ring and Jack Lynch, according to All-Ireland winning camogie manager, Paudie Murray.

Cloughduv born Mr Murray paid tribute to his fellow Mid-Cork star when he took to the podium on the South Mall on Monday for the homecoming after Cork, captained by Rena Buckley, defeated Kilkenny by 0-10 to 0-9 to move to the top of the Roll of Honour with 27 All-Ireland titles.

"To our senior team for the effort, they put in - we spoke about a couple of things coming into this game, we spoke about composure, we spoke about desire and finally wearing the Cork jersey and the duty they have to that jersey and yesterday they carried out that duty brilliantly."

"Finally to our captain, Rena - what can I say about her - what a warrior - you know, I drive around the city here a lot and I see the Christy Ring Bridge and the Jack Lynch Tunnel and I think maybe it's time we name something after her," he said before also thanking the clubs for their support.

Rena - who plays camogie with Inniscarra and ladies football with Donoughmore - concentrated this year on camogie with Cork but the decision proved the right one as she became the only player in the history of Gaelic games to win 18 All-Irelands - seven in

camogie and eleven in ladies football.

Among those to pay tribute to her was the Bishop of Cork and Ross, Inchigeelagh born Dr John Buckley who said great credit was due to both Rena and her teammates for the way that they had come back to defeat Kilkenny who had pipped them in last year's decider.

"It took a superhuman effort to win and the team showed great determination and boundless energy and we congratulate them on their magnificent victory and in congratulating them, we congratulate in particular Rena Buckley, cousin of the bishop!" he declared to loud laughter.

"What an achievement on Rena's part - yesterday she won her 18th All-Ireland medal between camogie and ladies football and that achievement will remain indelible in the annals of the sporting history of not just Cork, but indeed of Ireland," added Bishop Buckley.

Earlier the Lord of Mayor of Cork, Cllr Tony Fitzgerald and Mayor of Cork County Cllr Declan Hurley had welcomed Rena and her team mates on to the podium with the O'Duffy Cup to thunderous cheers from the hundreds of fans gathered on the South Mall.

It fell to Rena - who works as a physiotherapist in Macroom - to pay tribute to the fans for travelling to Croke Park in such numbers to cheer them on against Kilkenny and then to turn out back in Mallow and Cork to welcome the team home after their thrilling victory.



Cork captain Rena Buckley lifts The O'Duffy Cup after the Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Senior Camogie Final match between Cork and Kilkenny at Croke Park in Dublin. Photo by Piaras Ó Midheach/Sportsfile

"The one thing about this Cork camogie team is we are a very tight unit and I think this year everyone put their shoulder to the wheel and backed everyone up from December all the way to the top of the Hogan Stand yesterday - well done to everyone and I'm so proud of you all."

## Replay needed as Cork and Meath can't be separated

### INTERMEDIATE CAMOGIE

CORK 1-9  
MEATH 1-9

BY DARAGH Ó CONCHÚIR

CORK and Meath will have to do it all over again on October 1st, as 63 minutes of play were unable to separate them in the Liberty Insurance All-Ireland intermediate camogie final at Croke Park last Sunday.

This game, however, had a controversial end as with the sides level, Meath's Megan Thynne was on the attack and in the throes of unleashing a shot at glory when referee Liz Dempsey called time on the play, allowing Cork supporters to breathe a sigh of relief.

The Rebels would have been extremely disappointed had they let it slip for a second consecutive year however, as they led for the majority of proceedings and wasted a couple of gilt-edged opportunities with some dreadful wides in the final quarter in particular.

It would have been hard on Meath to lose out too however, as they showed tremendous grit to drag themselves back level after falling four points behind in the first half, and then recovering from the concession of a goal just before the break to reel in a similar deficit in the second period.

Both full-forward lines came into the game as the strongest sections of each unit and



Ball control: Cork's Rachel O'Shea gets away from Meath's Aoife Maguire during the Liberty Insurance All-Ireland intermediate camogie championship final at Croke Park last Sunday. (Photo: Gary Carr/INPHO)

they advertised their talents especially in a more fluid opening period although they were shackled well in a cagier second half.

Rachel O'Shea opened the scoring for Cork and by the tenth minute, her colleagues on the inside line, Caroline Sugrue and Linda Collins had also gotten off the mark.

Keeva McCarthy shot a brace, the second a really well-crafted score after good

work by Sugrue and Collins as Cork went 0-6 to 0-2 ahead but Meath responded with four in a row, Jane Dolan converting three frees and Sinéad Hackett slotting well.

McCarthy was on target once more for Cork however before Katelyn Hickey finished brilliantly to the corner of the Meath net to make it 1-7 to 0-6 at the change of ends.

The second half lacked the fluidity of the first, although

it had a rip-roaring start, with Amy Gaffney pointing directly from the throw-in, and then Kristina Troy blasting a goal just over a minute later.

That score was all about Aoife Minogue however, as the young Dunderry forward drew the cover with a powerful run through the middle and timed her pass to perfection. Troy made no mistake despite Amy Lee, who had a fine game, closing in.

Player of the match Finola Neville and O'Shea moved Cork ahead quickly but the Leesiders failed to score in the last 26 minutes, including three of injury time.

Dillon halved the gap in the 52nd minute but it wasn't until the second minute of injury time that she was able to hit the leveller, just after Hickey had been sent off for a second yellow card offence.



SEPT  
2017



In control: Cork's Orla Cronin gets away from Kilkenny's Meighan Farrell during last Sunday's Liberty Insurance All-Ireland senior camogie championship final at Croke Park. (Photo: Bryan Keane/INPHO)

# Box office Orla hits high notes for West

ORLA Cronin loves music, musicals, pantos, the works, so it's fitting that she delivered her greatest hit on the big stage last Sunday.

In college in UCC (a fourth year student in physiology), she works part-time at the Opera House in the box office – but delivered a show-stopping performance of her own to inspire Cork to the Liberty Insurance senior camogie championship title in Croke Park.

Orla looked every inch a star.

Finishing with three points from play and nullifying the threat of Kilkenny danger woman Ann Dalton, the Enniskeane woman was the easy choice as player of the match.

She went straight to the top of the charts.

And on *The Sunday Game* hours after the final, when she was named player of the match, Orla took her chance to remind the watching world that she's from West Cork – and is so proud of that.

'It's a huge honour to be representing West Cork on the Cork team,' she beamed, focussing the spotlight on West Cork camogie and giving it a welcome boost.

Not since the legendary Jennifer O'Leary from Barryroe – an eight-time All-Star, four-time All-Ireland winner and six-time national league winner – retired from the inter-county scene after the 2014 season have we seen a West Cork camogie player dominate the local and national headlines

at the business end of the season.

Orla's performances this season, and in last Sunday's final, will elevate her to a new level, and also give her a profile that she hasn't had before – but it also helps raise the profile of camogie here in the west of the county.

She's a great ambassador for the sport. Only 22 years old she has already won three senior All-Irelands in four seasons. And there's more to come.

'In West Cork you're not known for your hurling or your camogie, it's a lot of football down here,' she told us last week, but her eye-catching performance in the All-Ireland senior final shows that West Cork can produce talented camogie stars.

Libby Coppinger from St Colum's is another example, she started last Sunday's All-Ireland final and played an important role in the win.

Then you have Inniscarra's Niamh McCarthy whose parents hail from West Cork, her mother is former Irish international basketball player Rose Breen from Skibbereen and her father is Andrew McCarthy from Drimoleague. (Incidentally, Niamh's first cousin, rising young rugby star Enya Breen won gold with Ireland U18 girls' sevens in the recent UK School Games; they're a talented family).

'There's a lot of work going on at ground level in West Cork,' *Star* columnist Jennifer O'Leary told us this week.

There is a loyal camogie following here and there was a big West Cork contingent at the game on Sunday. A bus travelled to Dublin from Barryroe and there wasn't even anyone from the club involved!

To see Orla and Libby play like that on the big stage, it's fantastic promotion for the game here. They are so young, there's more to come from them and that's a great thing for West Cork camogie.

'It will get even more people playing camogie.'

There is a stronghold of football in West Cork but Orla and Libby are showing that it is possible to play camogie in West Cork and play at the highest level.

'There is a pathway there that shows we have players who can come through and make an impact on a big day like an All-Ireland final. That's brilliant for young players to see.'

In the coming weeks, expect both Orla and Libby to bring the O'Duffy Cup to West Cork and Cork camogie powers-that-be need to take advantage of the new-found fame of the West's best because there is plenty of talent here that can be harnessed and moulded.

Orla Cronin's number one right now and her best years are yet to come. And as she watched Jennifer O'Leary in her prime, other young girls are now watching her with the same awe. And the big winner here is West Cork camogie.

## Two games down for decision

CAMOGIE

■ Linda Mellerick

SATURDAY

SE Systems Cork Senior A Camogie Championship  
Ballincollig v St Finbarr's,  
Castle Road, 5.45pm.

SUNDAY

SE Systems Cork Senior A Camogie Championship  
Glen Rovers v Ballygarvan,  
Castle Road, 5.45pm.

WITH the club senior championship taking a three-week sabbatical ahead of the All-Ireland final it's back into the action this weekend with two ties down for decision.

With the intermediate All-Ireland replay set for October 1, other club games planned will be decided if the sides involved don't have a player on the intermediate panel.

It's a second bite at the cherry for Ballincollig, St Finbarr's, Glen Rovers and Ballygarvan after all four lost their opening rounds.

Ballygarvan received a lesson in point scoring against a rampant Douglas side. They trailed by 13 points at half time and lost by twelve; 0-23 to 2-5, having found the net twice in the second period. There is better in Ballygarvan, who succumbed to a hardworking Douglas, and this meeting with Glen Rovers should prove a closer affair.

But the Glen have a strong, balanced team with plenty of runners and are slight favourites to advance. That first senior championship win has eluded them since they stepped up to the grade. They've put in a huge effort and desperately want this one. Marshalling Catriona Kelly will be the crucial factor.

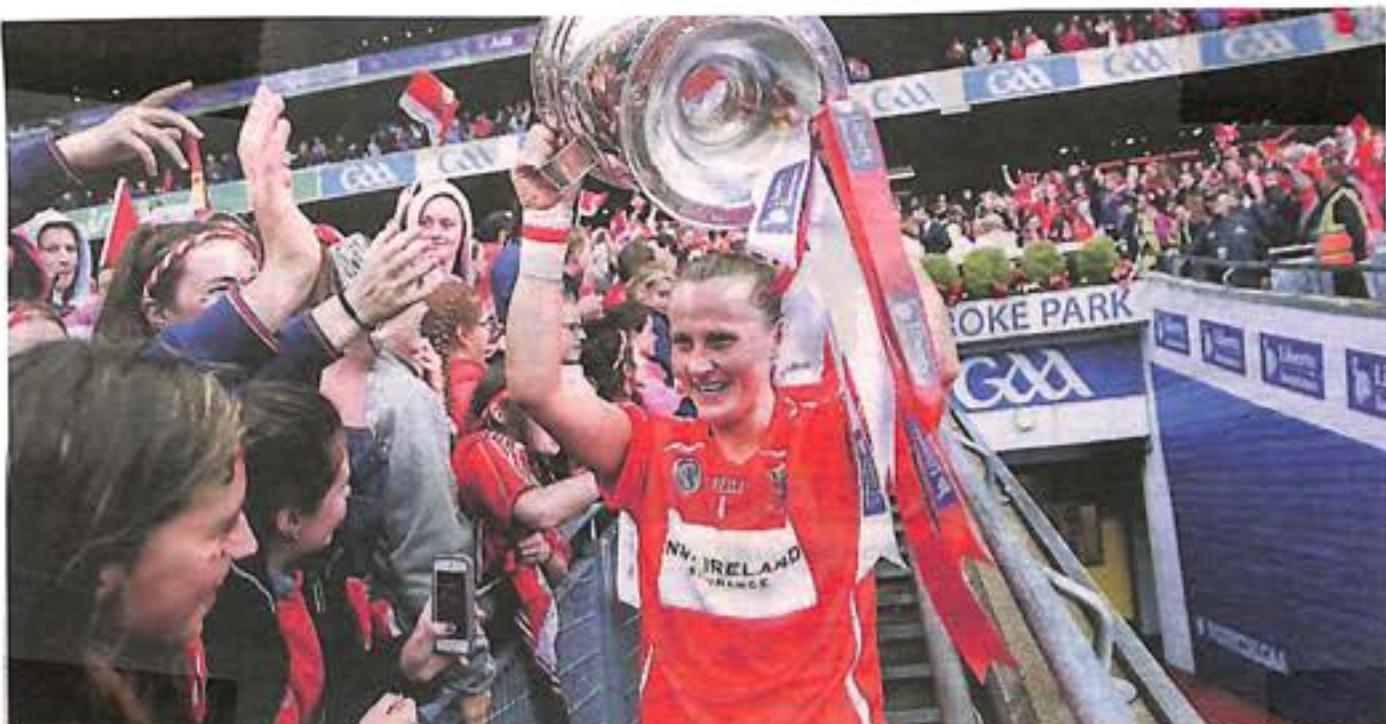
St Finbarr's also took a heavy defeat from Milford in their opening round. Again, we witnessed the first-round problem of a side failing to get into their rhythm. You would expect more this time around.

The Barrs played Gemma O'Connor up front and one wonders if they would be better off leaving her drive the team from centre-back. In Keeva McCarthy, Ciara Keating, and Rachel Myers, St Finbarr's have forwards that can score and with Lynda O'Connell maybe operating at mid-field they could push forward and create opportunities.

Ballincollig are a team that has underachieved the past few years. On paper, they're an impressive side but they've failed to date to find the formula that would see them seriously challenge for the title.

Last season saw them exit the championship at the quarter-final to Milford and while Milford were the champions and subsequent county finalists, the gap should not be as wide as it was with Milford inflicting a 2-22 to 0-8 defeat on them. Hopefully, things are better in the Ballincollig camp in 2017.

A victory here is critical for them.



Cork's Aolfe Murray lifts the trophy after their All-Ireland Senior Camogie Championship Final victory.

Pic: INPHO/Gary Carr



## All hail Rena the Great as she joins pantheon of sport's elite

**E**IGHTEEN All-Ireland medals. Just think about that for a minute. Now consider that last Sunday, Cork's Rena Buckley became the first human being in history to captain an All-Ireland winning side in two codes. That just blows our Rebel minds!

Your man Edmund Hillary, who was the first human to climb Mount Everest, or Neil Armstrong, the first man on the moon, are only trotting after her. When you step back and look at their so-called achievements (a bit like the way you'd look up at the Spike in Dublin with Shandon Bells on your mind), you have to admit they are not even remotely close to the beautiful result Buckley has achieved for Cork.

At no point did Neil Armstrong have three demented Kilkenny players harassing him as he tried to exit the lunar landing module. On top of that, his famous 'one small step' speech as he put his foot on the moon wasn't even as Gaelic as Rena's impressive victory speech on Sunday.

Hillary might have climbed a big mountain but Buckley has climbed 18 of them, and he wouldn't have known a thing about the duties of a full back under breaking ball in Croke Park.

They say it was tough on the great mountaineer because of the lack of oxygen at the top of Everest. Go way ouddat. Did you watch the lung busting intensity of the last few minutes of the All-Ireland camogie final? There was more oxygen in the gills of a River Lee mullet than there was on the field in the run up to Julia White's incredible match clincher.

Former soccer great Pelé is the only person to have won three soccer World Cups and is one of the most celebrated sportsmen of all time, but did he go on and win a masters at Augusta or lead Brazil to victory in men's volleyball at the Olympics? Content with just three medals at the top of his sport, he shuffled off into a life of celebrity endorsement while Buckley just keeps notching them up.

Usain Bolt is another who falls well short of Cork's Rena. Fans point out that the Jamaican sprinter has medals in two codes, the 100m and 200m dash, but does running twice the length of a race you're already good at count as a separate code, now?

That's like telling us Kerry men are adept at two codes because they show up for the second half of a hurling match. Promoting the small



**EYES ON THE PRIZE:** Cork captain Rena Buckley prepares to lift the O'Duffy Cup on Sunday

ball game in the Kingdom is like handing a Rubik's cube to a donkey — stick to the big ball and the bat catching, Derry.

Bolt is quick and has clocked up a few medals but come back to us when he wins a few golds at the bobsleigh or has made some headway into the Sunday road bowling scene.

What's that you said, Kilkenny? Serena Williams has won 23 tennis Grand Slams including seven at Wimbledon, is it?

Oh right. Was that 12 in tennis and 11 at the shot put or the hammer throw? Serena and the sister aren't fit to undo the strap on Rena's helmet with their meagre achievements that bear no comparison to 18 All-Ireland medals in two codes — even Roger Federer is still two grand slams behind Rena and he hasn't even

decided what other sport he's going to take up if he's to come anywhere close.

And this is probably a good point to remind ourselves that Kilkenny have just 13 camogie titles versus Cork's 27. We now move ahead of Dublin, who haven't even been in a final since 1986.

In fact, when it comes to the small ball, it is only right to add senior men's and women's titles together to see which county is truly the greatest at that game at the highest level.

Kilkenny have slipped ahead in the men's but because of the huge gulf in the women's titles, the combined title count is Cork 57, Cats 49.

That's some fine breathing space. Not that we need it.

### Cork Person of the Year

Rena is surely a shoe-in for Cork Person of the Month in September, but given the scale of her achievement, it is only right to give her the award for the other three months left in the year too.

If she doesn't bag Cork Person of the Year we'll have to intervene. Militarily.

Freedom of the City is also guaranteed but she must be given Freedom of the County as well. And just to be sure, we'll award her a special 'Freedom of the McKinnon Report Bits' as well, just in case the councils can't sort out the issue and places like Ballincollig and Outer Douglas have to set up their own mini states.

All hail Captain Rena and her camogie comrades. They are the pride of Leaside.

### AWARD Murray marvel



**Safe hands:** Cloughduv's Aolfe Murray is the winner of the Muskerry GAA/Auld Triangle Sports Star Award for August after the Cork goalkeeper helped the Rebels win back the O'Duffy Cup with victory in the All-Ireland final against Kilkenny.



## SENIOR CAMOGIE ALL-IRELAND FINAL

# Late Rebel rally leaves title-chasing Cats in tears

There was heartbreak for the Kilkenny senior camogie team as Cork fought their way to the title, reports Trevor Spillane



**CORK**  
**KILKENNY**

0-10  
0-9

Croke Park

It was a dramatic day of highs and lows but, at the final whistle, the only emotion the Kilkenny senior camogie team felt was heartbreak.

A year on from finally climbing the steps of the Hogan Stand to lift the O'Duffy Cup, the Cats found themselves watching on from the pitch as old rivals Cork collected the spoils.

It was the manner of the defeat that stung the most. After a slow start Ann Downey's side had dragged their way back into the game, then stormed ahead in the closing stages, only to be hauled back before an unceremonious dethroning deep, deep into stoppage time.

Julia White did the damage, holding her nerve when a pocket of space opened up to strike the sliotar between the Hill 16 End posts as the game ticked into a seventh minute of injury-time.

For a split-second there was bedlam in Croke. The Munster side knew they were within touching distance of the title. For Kilkenny, it was all about scrambling for a match-saving score, but it never came.

It was a gut-wrenching finish for the Cats, who had shrugged off a below-par first half performance to really force their way back into the

game. Cork flourished in the first quarter, taking a big lead as they threatened to squeeze Kilkenny out of the fray.

The reason for their success came in a reshuffled side. Cork went with two players in their full-forward line, bringing Katrina Mackey further out the field. Eimear O'Sullivan was moved from the half-back line to midfield, allowing Ashling Thompson to drop in behind and mop up any loose ball that came her way.

It was a simple tactic, but an effective one that frustrated the Cats for some time. They struggled to get to grips with the game, falling

behind as Amy O'Connor (2) and Orla Cotter (free) got Cork moving.

### FRUSTRATION

Kilkenny did get off the mark with a Denise Gaule free on 11 minutes, but the point failed to spark them into full flow. A large part of their frustration lay in the way they were corralled into the centre, Cork refusing to let their rivals find space on the flanks in which to wreak havoc.

Cork's game-plan continued to work to their advantage, Orla Cronin and Katrina Mackey picking off more scores to leave four between the sides as the game



OUT OF MY WAY! Julie Ann Malone (Kilkenny) breaks forward during the Senior Camogie Final PICTURES: PAT MOORE

moved into the second quarter (0-5 to 0-1).

At that stage things looked ominous for Kilkenny – could they find their form? Julie Ann Malone led the charge, dashing left across the 45m line to fire a morale-boosting point on 20 minutes.

That seemed to steady the ship. Kilkenny didn't add any more scores to their tally but, crucially, they didn't let Cork increase their lead either – some excellent defensive play from Grace Walsh saw to that. The Cats trailed by three at the break, with everything

still to play for (0-5 to 0-2).

It was a different Kilkenny team who came out for the second half. First half nerves had been banished, replaced by a confidence that saw them take the game to Cork.

They hit the ground running, Meighan Farrell



Davina Tobin (Kilkenny) gets away from Amy O'Connor (Cork)



Aisling Dunphy (Kilkenny) is chased by a posse of Cork defenders during Sunday's senior camogie All-Ireland final in Croke Park



# SENIOR CAMOGIE ALL-IRELAND FINAL



## HOW THEY LINED OUT

### SCORERS:

**Cork** - Orla Cronin (0-3); Orla Cotter (0-2, frees); Amy O'Connor (0-2); Gemma O'Connor, Katrina Mackey, Julia White (0-1 each).

**Kilkenny** - Denise Gaule (0-2, frees); Julie Ann Malone, Meighan Farrell (0-2 each); Katie Power, Shelly Farrell, Miriam Walsh (0-1 each).

### TEAMS

**Kilkenny** - Emma Kavanagh (Rower-Inistioge); Catherine Foley (Windgap), Davina Tobin (Emeralds), Grace Walsh (Tullaroan); Collette Dormer (Paulstown/Goresbridge), Anne Dalton (St Lachtain's), Aisling Dunphy (St Brigid's); Meighan Farrell (Thomastown), Anna Farrell (Thomastown); Julie Ann Malone (Mullinavat), Katie Power (Piltown), Denise Gaule (Windgap); Shelly Farrell (Thomastown), Miriam Walsh (Tullaroan), Danielle Morrissey (Conahy Shamrocks). Subs: Michelle Quilty (Mullinavat) for Morrissey, 31 mins; Jenny Reddy (Thomastown) for Malone, 59 mins.

**Cork** - Aoife Murray, Pamela Mackey, Rena Buckley, Laura Treacy; Maebh Cahalane, Aisling Thompson, Chloe Sigerson; Libby Coppinger, Eimear O'Sullivan; Amy O'Connor, Orla Cronin, Orla Cotter; Hannah Looney, Niamh McCarthy, Katrina Mackey. Subs: Lauren Homan for Looney, 52 mins; Julia White for Sigerson, 60 mins.

**Referee** - Owen Elliott (Antrim). **Attendance** - 20,438.



FOCUS: Kilkenny duo Denise Gaule and Katie Power keep their full focus on the sliotar as Cork's Gemma O'Connor makes the catch during Sunday's All-Ireland final. PICTURE: PAT MOORE

## "We'll learn from this"

**Trevor Spillane**  
tspillane@kilkennypeople.ie

She was gracious in defeat, but there was no getting away from the fact that Ann Downey felt the Cats hadn't performed to the best of their abilities in Sunday's senior camogie All-Ireland final.

"It wasn't meant to be," the Kilkenny manager (left) said with a wistful smile which barely hid the hurt felt at suffering such a dramatic loss.

"We probably didn't turn up in the first 20 minutes, whether it was nerves or what I don't know, but the girls died with their boots on in the second half."

"They really put everything right," she added. "They pegged back the three points we were down and took the lead."

Kilkenny couldn't hold on to their advantage, with Cork hauling them back late on, before Julia White's injury-time point sunk the Cats.

"On the 60th minute, when it was a draw, I thought maybe there'd be three or four minutes of extra-time," said Downey. "The six minutes was probably too long for us, but you'd have to put your hand up and say Cork wanted it more on the day."

"Gemma O'Connor's point to equalise and Julia White's point to win it, they were two great scores," she added. "You have to say the best team always wins. We'll just have to learn from this."

The Kilkenny manager was at a loss to explain where the day got away from her team, but felt that the Cats weren't able to get their usual rhythm going.

**RUSHED**  
"The day felt rushed," she said. "With the other finals you couldn't go out on to the pitch until such a time, you have a warm-up and then you've to go meet the President - whether or not we had enough time with them before the throw-in, I'm not sure."

"I can't put my finger on what happened us in the first half," she added. "We didn't use the ball well; we were dropping balls and our first touch was off."

Cork contained Kilkenny in the first half, not letting them impose their style on

the game.

"They worked hard in the first half," she said of the Rebelettes.

"There was a stage in the first half where the Cork forwards were up with our forwards, so there was definitely no room for us to play."

"Our use of the ball wasn't good in the first half but the girls grew into the game in the second half and put that right. We didn't have to say anything at half-time - they drove it on. You couldn't compare the halves, such was the contrast."

"However, you couldn't fault the girls for the effort they put in in the second half," she added. "They were probably the better team then but overall, Cork wanted it more."

The ending was at total odds with how most of the second half had played out. The Cats were cruising at one stage, playing with a confidence that grew and grew. Miriam Walsh's late point showed as much - it was a score that seemed certain to win the game.

"It was a brilliant point," she said. "I felt we had the winning of the game in the second half. The players were finding each other with the ball, but maybe it was the few scoring chances that dropped short which cost us in the end."

rushing forward from the throw-in to snipe a point. She turned provider soon after, working the ball on for Katie Power to grab a point after a storming run out of defence from Ann Dalton.

Dalton had a greater say in the second half, finally finding the space which she had been denied in the opening 30 minutes. She wasn't the only one; Kilkenny began to find more room in vital parts of the pitch and used it to turn the game their way.

### DARED TO TRY THINGS

With the scores came confidence, and a daring to try things. One such move saw Denise Gaule show some quick-thinking, tapping a free into the centre for the unmarked Shelly Farrell to turn over the bar.

Hard work, the hallmark of their performances all year, saw them level the game by the 37th minute, Anna Farrell winning a puck-out before offloading the sliotar to sister Shelly. Two minutes later the comeback was complete, Gaule punishing Cork with a composed free.

The lead didn't last for long. Cork shook themselves

into life, Orla Cotter (free) and Orla Cronin quickly snapping up points to edge their side ahead again with 18 minutes to play (0-8 to 0-7).

Kilkenny didn't panic. Julie Ann Malone showed good awareness to chase down the sliotar after it broke her way, circling back for a 44th minute point.

The score marked a change in Kilkenny, who seemed to have turned things their way. Miriam Walsh made it look as much, gathering Ann Dalton's arrowed pass down the right before coolly splitting the Canal End posts from the tightest of angles.

It was a score that would have been good enough to win any game - but it wouldn't do it for this one.

Cork, perhaps spurred on by the hurt of losing last year's final, raised their game one last time. Gemma O'Connor stormed up from half-back to find an equaliser in the last seconds of normal time. Then, with the game on the brink of a replay, they found their winner as White struck.

What a cruel finish for the Cats.



Miriam Walsh (Kilkenny) aims for the posts during Sunday's All-Ireland final. PICTURE: PAT MOORE



# Late Dolan point earns a replay for battling Meath

## ALL-IRELAND CAMOGIE FINAL

Royal County stand strong against determined Cork challenge

Meath  
Cork

1-9  
1-9

CONALL COLLIER

JANE Dolan's late pointed free earned Meath an All-Ireland Intermediate Camogie Championship final replay against Cork at Croke Park on Sunday following a tough encounter.

Meath supporters were unhappy that Megan Thynne's late effort, in the fourth minute of added time, didn't count because referee Liz Dempsey ended the contest before the Kilmessan player struck the sliotar goalwards under the shadow of the Cusack Stand.

Three minutes added time had been announced and had clearly elapsed on the big screen in the stadium, so from that perspective the Kilkenny official was technically correct with her decision.

And a draw was probably the fairest outcome following an enthralling encounter that, at times, was low on excitement levels, but was an excellent advertisement for the progress that this Meath team has made since they won the All-Ireland Premier Junior title in 2012.

This was a tough encounter, an accurate description of the fare that the teams served for the hour and in the much-debated added time.

Cork supporters weren't too happy with the red card that was brandished to Katelyn Hickey, a second yellow, on 60 minutes and it seemed harsh.

From a Cork perspective, they will have to look at their own performance, especially in the second-half when they squandered some easy-looking opportunities from frees.

Cork also found that Meath did not roll over, and just like the previous outing in Trim in a group game last July, the Royals stood strong and displayed great character to bounce back from the concession of a goal in first-half added time.

Rachel O'Shea pointed Cork into a fifth minute lead from a free, but Aoife Minogue had Meath on terms soon after from a placed ball.

There was nothing between the sides during those opening exchanges with Caroline Sugrue and Linda Collins trading further points with Sinead Hackett and Jane Dolan (free) before the Munster women enjoyed a brief spell of superiority.

Points from Keeva McCarthy (two) and O'Shea gave Cork the lead, but battling against the elements, Meath responded with a brace of Dolan frees that reduced the deficit to the minimum.

The closing stages of the half saw Sinead Hackett's point draw the sides level before a late Cork surge produced a pointed McCarthy free and a Hickey goal in the added time.

That goal boosted Cork to a 1-7 to 0-6 interval advantage, but within a minute of the resumption it was level.

Meath had an Amy Gaffney point on the board 12 seconds after the resumption and then Kristina Troy finished to the net following a surging Minogue run from midfield.

Cork recovered quickly and carved out points from Finola Neville and O'Shea as the tempo slackened ahead of a 14-minute barren spell on the scoreboard.

By the end of the third-quarter Cork were ahead by 1-9 to 1-7 as both teams tried to get the upper hand, crucially the Munster side failed to score again and Meath gradually got back into contention.

Dolan won a free when she was hauled down with eight minutes remaining and she duly converted while at the other end Cork missed a good chance from play and also from a close-range Keeva McCarthy free.

Meath earned another day out from Dolan's late leveller.

**Meath** - Emily Mangan (Blackhall)



Cork corner back Niamh Ni Chaoimh tests the quality of the Meath jersey as she gets a grip of Aedin Slattery in the second-half during Sunday's All-Ireland Intermediate Camogie final at Croke Park. PHOTO: JOHN QUIRKE / WWW.QUIRKE.IE



Sinead Hackett surges forward for Meath.

Gaels; Emma Coffey (Na Fianna), Claire Coffey (Na Fianna), Ellen Burke (Dunboyne), Aine Keogh (Kildalkey), Aoife Maguire (Killyon), Louise Donoghue (Kiltale), Cheyenne O'Brien (Kiltale), Megan Thynne (Kilmessan); Amy Gaffney (Ratoath 0-1), Kristina Troy (Blackhall 1-0), Aoife Minogue

(Dunderry 0-1 free); Caroline Quinn (Boardsmill), Jane Dolan (Blackhall 0-5 frees), Sinead Hackett (Dunboyne 0-2). Sub - Aedin Slattery (Na Fianna) for Quinn 42 mins.

**Cork** - Amy Lee; Leah Weste, Sarah Harrington, Niamh Ni Chaoimh; Roisin Kileen, Sarah Buckley, Lauren Callanan; Fiona Neville (0-1), Jennifer Barry; Katelynn Hickey (1-0), Keeva McCarthy (0-3 one free), Maeve McCarthy; Rachel O'Shea (0-3 one free), Linda Collins (0-1), Caroline Sugrue (0-1). Subs - Micheala Buckley for M McCarthy 45 mins, Sarah Fahy for O'Shea 59m.

Referee - Liz Dempsey (Kilkenny).



## ...OF THE MATCH

## MOVE

Scarcely a minute into the second-half Meath's Aoife Minogue won possession in the Cork half and set off on a scorching run towards the Hill 16 end. She timed her pass to perfection and released Kristina Troy who rifled the sliotar to the back of the Cork net.

## PLAYER

Lots of contenders for this accolade and team captain Claire Coffey gets the nod for her tremendous determination over the hour. She made some excellent clearances and dispossessed Cork players on a number of occasions also.

## SCORE

Jane Dolan's late equalising point was the top score. It looked like a relatively easy chance, but Cork had missed a number of easier looking chances at the other end. It wasn't exactly the last puck of the game, but it was the last score.

## REFEREE

Kilkenny official Liz Dempsey wasn't afraid to use her whistle and at times she could have let play flow instead of calling it back and awarding a free. She was consistent and was quite clear with her decisions, but will be remembered mostly by Meath supporters for the timing of her final whistle.



Meath's Amy Gaffney surges forward despite the attentions of Cork's Maeve McCarthy (12) and Katelynn Hickey.



Meath goalscorer Kristina Troy collides with Cork goalkeeper Amy Lee during Sunday's All-Ireland Camogie final at Croke Park.

## ALL-IRELAND FACTFILE

## CHAMPIONSHIPS RESULTS

## FIRST ROUND

Saturday 10th June - Meath 4-15, Laois 1-8; Cork 2-12, Galway 0-9

## SECOND ROUND

Saturday 24th June - Cork 1-11, Carlow 0-7; Saturday 1st July - Meath 1-15, Galway 2-7

## THIRD ROUND

Saturday 8th July - Meath 3-9, Cork 0-17

## FOURTH ROUND

Saturday 22nd July - Meath 1-14, Down 0-17; Cork 1-18, Laois 2-7

## FIFTH ROUND

Saturday 12th August - Cork 3-11, Down 0-9; Sunday 13th August - Meath 3-10, Carlow 0-4

## SEMI-FINALS

Sunday 20th August - Meath 1-12, Kildare 1-10; Cork 2-11, Derry 0-7

## FINAL

Sunday 10th September - Meath 1-9, Cork 1-9

## REPLAY

Sunday 1st October - venue TBA





GAA

Barry  
O'Donovan

IF there's a defining characteristic that links all great sporting teams, away from the obvious places of genuine star quality and serious management of course, it must be this proper hatred of losing that runs through everything they do.

A true hatred that presents itself as a real love of winning, and it was possible to spot that last Sunday afternoon in Croke Park, basically throughout the entire All-Ireland camogie final. There was a remarkable hunger to everything Cork did, from the savage intensity of the work-rate to the conviction in the game-plan.

There was something in the explosion at the final whistle that told the story of a team that now has three All-Irelands in four seasons but managed to play with the sort of edge you'd imagine Mayo footballers will play with this weekend, like a team that hadn't won anything for decades.

In a sporting environment where we can sometimes be too quick to make a call on legacies, it actually feels like we've underestimated the credits here with this Cork camogie group, that we're only realising now the brilliance of a group of players that are defining an era and the excellence of the management of Paudie Murray to find fresh motivations to perform and new ways to take on an beat challenges.

It was a triumph for small details, even if there were conspicuous items in tandem. The reveal of Gemma O'Connor starting and her influence as the heart and head of the team, Libby Coppinger's ability to move back to defence, Ashling Thompson's energy and sense for being in the right area to make tackles and collisions happen, were all clearly pronounced factors.

Cork just generally being able to get several bodies in the vicinity of every Kilkenny player in possession almost every single time so they were really rarely allowed space to do what they wanted on the ball was another readily identifiable note. Yet there were stand-out moments.

Julia White's match-winner seemed to signify all the gumption and attitude of the team. White's barely played in two years because of injury and still when the game was deep in that time where everyone expected a replay, she managed to locate a do-anything-not-to-lose moment and then follow up with a do-anything-to-win moment.

With the game level, Kilkenny's sub Jenny Reddy managed to work a little space on her right side about 50 metres from goal and just as you expected her to shoot or at least find a pass, White hustled back to shut off the space, force Reddy to turn and Cork won back possession.

Seconds later, Julia White tore onto a pass with All-Ireland winning kind of speed, broke a tackle and changed direction and then got off a shot with Kilkenny jerseys closing in.

Or take Orla Cronin, player of the match with three points from play and an overall influence on the game at just twenty-two years old, a perfect illustration of the evolution and improvement that's gone on in this Cork team. Cronin has always had the skills - her underage coach Dermot Curtin has testified to that - and she was in the panel in 2014, won an All-Ireland as a starter in 2015. She had one point from two previous finals though and had been sort of swallowed up in last year's like everyone else.

Last Sunday her movement and awareness of space was top class. She drifted back to help and had the mentality for the work-rate necessary to not give Kilkenny an inch in that middle third.

She occupied the Kilkenny centre-back Ann Dalton and used the open

# Rebels just refused to lose again



Orla Cronin of Cork in action against Catherine Foley of Kilkenny at Croke Park. She has developed into a top-class forward due to Paudie Murray's management and her own ability.

Picture: Matt Browne/Sportsfile



Cork's Libby Coppinger celebrates winning with her friends and family after the win last Sunday.

Picture: INPHO/Bryan Keane

areas of the field perfectly when Cork were on the attack.

Her first point came from a Cork counter, a hopping ball down the left wing where she turned inside and outside before settling on a shot off her right (inside).

Her second point was another pass down the left wing into spaces, which she fumbled before hitting a really lovely score off her left on the run.

Third point she presented as an option for a pullback from the end-line, feinted left and then cut inside to hit off the right, a full showcase of her skills as a forward on the toughest day to produce that sort of technical display.

We remember an interview with Paudie Murray back around the end of 2015 where he referenced having to trust the likes of Cronin, to throw them into championship to allow them learn even if the first game or two don't work exactly.

Or in his own words at the time: "We had to be patient and give the new girls a chance."

If we went out in the first championship game and Orla Cronin is getting cleaned at centre-forward, the worst thing you could do is take Orla Cronin off. If you leave her on she has to either figure her way out of it or continue to allow herself be cleaned."

That kind of thinking has made Cronin a leader and it's only one little example in the list of small details that Paudie Murray has brought to the table and is really turning this into one of the most noteworthy management jobs of the past number of years.

The big picture factor is no less remarkable or impressive. When Orla Cronin started playing a little over a decade ago with St Mary's it was a handful of girls joining in with the boys or scraping around for enough numbers for games and if the mention on the *Sunday Game* referenced the absence of West Cork in Cork camogie, you can imagine the level of interest now.

Libby Coppinger is blazing a trail in her area.

The Cork ladies football team of the last 12/13 years more or less completely changed the game itself, a once-in-a-lifetime mix that raised interest and standards and made ladies footballers stars to try and emulate and made it impossible for any sportsperson to ignore just how decent ladies football could be.

This Cork camogie team journey has something similar, a modern leaning to the players and the people involved and the way they play that would make it difficult for any young girls watching to not want to be a part of.

This Cork side edge towards greatness in many different ways.



# Back door rounds making progress

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

THE U14 championship backdoor rounds have been continuing.

Inniscarra beat Ballygarvan, Charleville had five points to spare over Valley Rovers, while Ballyhea had a four-point win over Aghada.

The draws for round two have Éire Óg meeting Newcestown tomorrow at 2pm in Newcestown, and Ballinora and Inniscarra are in action in Inniscarra on Wednesday at 6.15pm. The remaining round two games to be confirmed, will see Cloughduv travelling to take on Charleville and St Finbarr's will be at home for their meeting against Milford/Ballyhea. Youghal headed to Enniskeane today for a 1pm start and earlier in the week Sarsfields 1 had a win over Aghabullogue.

In the U14 B backdoor games, Cobh got the upper hand on Fr O'Neill's, Kilbree defeated Inniscarra 2, and Douglas had two goals to spare in their meeting with Millstreet. Bishopstown defeated Buttevant, while Na Piarasigh and Mallow will have to do it all again after their draw. The replay is on tomorrow in Na Piarasigh at 12pm.

Courcey Rovers overcame Carrigaline, and Ballincollig defeated Blackrock. Sliabh Rua meet Bishopstown tomorrow at 5pm in Riverstick. Castlelyons travel to meet Kilbree next Saturday at 2pm. Middleton take on Cobh on Wednesday next at 5.30pm. Glen Rovers await the winners of the Mallow/Na Piarasigh reply. Killeagh face Douglas at a date to be confirmed.

In the U14 C, Erin's Own overcame St Fanahan's 3-6 to 1-5, Clonakilty edged out St Catherine's 3-3 to 2-3 and Dungourney defeated Barryroe.

The draws for the next rounds will see St Vincent's meeting Bride Rovers and Carrigwohill taking on Clonakilty. Blarney host Kilworth tomorrow at 5pm, and Ballinascarty head to Tracton next Saturday at 4.30pm. Inniscarra 3 met Brian Dillon's last night, Dungourney will face Banteer on a date to be confirmed, Ballinhassig hosted Castlemartyr today at 11.30am, while Erin's Own head to Grenagh at 5.30pm.

## CASTLE ROAD BUILDING

The camogie board were celebrating during the week with the handing over of the keys to their building in Castle Road. It's another step in the right direction to get the complex completed, but now another huge amount of work needs to be done, and the board is hoping that the goodwill of camogie parents and supporters will once again be forthcoming.

In the weeks ahead, the push is on to get work done inside the building. Anybody who can give voluntary help with painting and to get the building up and running can contact the board officers.



UNESCO delegate Catherine Asego, Kenya, tried camogie when the Cork Education and Training Board hosted a learning showcase event as part of the UNESCO International Conference on Learning Cities 2017, at Terence MacSwiney Community College. Picture: Jim Coughlan

# Changes made to games' schedule

**FOLLOWING the draw in the Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Intermediate final, the schedule of games in most grades of the SE systems Championships had to be altered.**

As a result, all games scheduled for this weekend have had to be postponed and re-fixed. These changes include the two quarter-final games which were to go ahead tomorrow Killeagh versus Glen Rovers, and St Catherine's versus Carbery both falling by the wayside. Also cancelled was the second round games Ballincollig against Milford, while the Cloughduv versus Inniscarra game goes ahead on September 30.

WITH all of the first round and backdoor game in the SE Systems Minor Championship moving along swiftly the draws for the remaining rounds were made recently.

Just to quickly recap on the results from the opening rounds in minor A action, Ballygarvan overcame Sarsfields, Glen Rovers proved too strong for Killeagh, Newcestown overcame Courcey Rovers, Milford/Ballyhea received a walkover from Mallow/Buttevant, Carrigaline defeated Kilbrittain/Timoleague.

The backdoor draws have pitted Killeagh against Kilbrittain/Timoleague and Sarsfields will meet Courcey Rovers.

These games are down for decision on Monday and Wednesday next week.

The draws for round two were made as follows... the combination team of Ballyhea/Milford will play the winners of the Kilbrittain/Timoleague v Killeagh

## CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

tember 30. Sarsfields will meet the winners of the Milford/Ballincollig game, so that also had a change of date.

A lot of the SE Systems Senior B Championship games have also been scheduled. The game between Ballinhassig and Valley Rovers was postponed due to bereavement, as was the meeting of Éire Óg and Fr O'Neill's earlier in the round robin series, and these games will see the programmes completed. Ballinhassig take on Valley Rovers tomorrow at 12.30pm in Castle Road. The SE Systems Intermediate championship final will be between

Enniskeane and Newcestown but it's now on hold. As are the junior A championship semi-finals which will see Na Piarasigh meeting neighbours St Vincent's and Ballyhea taking on Watergrasshill.

The new schedule of dates is:

■ SE Systems Senior Championship round two Cloughduv and Inniscarra will meet on September 30 with the winners facing Douglas two weeks later.

■ The quarter-finals tie between Killeagh and Glen Rovers will go ahead on Wednesday, October 4. St Catherine's will meet Carbery on October 8, with the Sars/Ballincollig/Milford quarter-final on October 14, when the other semi-final will also take place. The second semi will be on October 21.

■ The rescheduled date for the remaining games in the SE Systems Senior B Championship will be on October 8 when Éire Óg and Fr O'Neill's meet and Ballinhassig take on Valley Rovers. The Senior B semi-finals will go ahead on October 15 with the final on October 29.

■ The SE Systems Intermediate final Enniskeane versus Newcestown down to go ahead on October 7. The SE Systems Junior A semi-finals are Ballyhea versus Watergrasshill, on October 7, and Na Piarasigh against St Vincent's on October 8.

■ The final either on October 14 or 21 depending who is involved.

■ The SE system Junior C final between Blarney and Millstreet is down for decision next Friday.

## Killeagh set to meet Kilbrittain in backdoor draw

### CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

clash. Ballygarvan will meet Glen Rovers. The winners of the Courcey Rovers/Sarsfields game will play league champions Newcestown.

As there were seven teams in the draw, Carrigaline were the team to get a bye to the semi-finals.

In the SE Systems Minor B championship opening rounds Douglas overcame Bride Rovers, St Finbarr's were too strong for Ballinhassig, Éire Óg defeated Na Piarasigh, Charleville beat Inniscarra, Ballincollig defeated St Catherine's and Aghada got the upper hand on Cloughduv while Aghabullogue overcame Enniskeane.

Onto the backdoor Cloughduv overcame Na Piarasigh, while Enniskeane will play Inniscarra this weekend with the winners meeting Ballincollig.

Éire Óg will take on Aghabullogue, Charleville and Aghada are drawn to meet, with St Catherine's taking on Bride Rovers and the winners meeting Ballinhassig.

In an all city clash St Finbarr's will be in opposition to Douglas, the winners of the Éire Óg/Aghabullogue game meet Mid Cork neighbours Cloughduv.

In the minor C championship backdoor games, Blackrock overcame Bishopstown, Blarney had a win over Valley Rovers and Clonakilty were too strong for Barryroe.

The draws for round two is as follows: Blarney will meet Blackrock, Tracton are in opposition against Cobh, Youghal take on Sliabh Rua and Castlelyons meet Ballinascarty. The winners of the Castlelyons/Ballinascarty game face Fr O'Neill's, and the winners of the Youghal/Sliabh Rua game are in opposition to Ballinora, while Clonakilty meet Millstreet.



# Cork are market leaders in camogie

Nelligan stars as Charleville land title

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

**Charleville** 3-10  
**Ballinora** 1-8

CHARLEVILLE took the first championship title of 2017 when they were crowned SE Systems Junior B champions in Blarney where they overcame a Ballinora side who were competing at B level for the first time this year, having won the C championship in 2015.

Ballinora got a great start with an early goal from Jennifer Murphy and when Lisa O'Shea added to their tally with a point, they were controlling matters.

Charleville settled into the game with points from Sinead Dennehy and Fiona Nelligan, but in reply, Siobhan O'Regan pointed a 45 for Ballinora.

Charleville were level when a lobbed shot from Nelligan dropped in under the crossbar to the net, but again, O'Regan pointed a free to edge Ballinora ahead.

It was nip and tuck as Charleville edged in front with two points in a row. O'Regan again showed her accuracy, pointing a free to cut the deficit.

Charleville hit a purple patch and added to their tally with a Maebh Buckley goal and a Natalie O'Brien point to put them in front.

Ballinora stayed in touch with O'Regan on target and at the break it was Charleville who led 2-6 to 1-6.

The sides swapped early second-half point, but a Charleville goal from Caitlin Sheehan extended their lead to six. As Ballinora battled to stay in the contest, Charleville added to their tally with a point from a Nelligan free and a 45.

They were now dictating matters and held a solid grip on the Ballinora attack.

Again, the sides swapped points, but a solid Charleville defence never gave the Mid Cork side the leeway they needed to make inroads into their lead, which they held to the final whistle.

Charleville's Lauren Corrigan was named Player of the Match following a solid display for the new junior B champions.

**Scorers for Charleville:** F Nelligan 1-4 (0-2 f, 0-1 45), M Buckley 1-2, C Sheehan 1-0, S Dennehy 0-1 f, L Corrigan, L Doyle, N O'Brien 0-1 each.

**Ballinora:** S O'Regan 0-7 (0-5 f, 0-1 45), J Murphy 1-0, L O'Shea 0-1.

**CHARLEVILLE:** C Reynolds; K Dore, E Moloney, J Moloney; M Murphy, M Jones, L Corrigan; E O'Flynn, A O'Keefe (c); F Nelligan, N O'Brien, C Sheehan; N Savage, M Buckley, S Dennehy.

**Subs:** L Doyle for N Savage, S Hudner for S Dennehy, G Galvin for M Murphy.

**BALLINORA:** C Hourihan; N McCarthy, J Cronin, K O'Halloran, A Fitzgerald, J O'Donnell, J Murphy; A Nic Abhaird, S O'Regan; L Walsh (c); L O'Shea, K Lane, K Dooley; J Murphy, F Fison.

**Subs:** A Murphy for J Cronin, J McAuliffe for K Dooley, K Hogan for F Fison, C O'Keefe for N McCarthy.

**Referee:** John Kirby.

Camogie

Linda Mellerick

**CORK** now top the roll of honour of senior camogie All-Ireland championship titles.

We were tied two weeks ago with Dublin at 26. We now hold 27.

Reading through the honours list, I think it'll be a long while before Cork are brought back to level pegging or indeed surpassed.

Dublin, despite a good season, don't look like All Ireland contenders yet. Kilkenny sit in third place with 13 titles, Wexford seven, Antrim six, Tipperary five, and Galway have two.

Dublin's 26th title was won in 1984. At that time Cork had 14 titles.

In the intervening 33 years Cork collected another 13 titles while Dublin fell by the wayside. To overtake Dublin meant a huge amount to longstanding Cork members and supporters.

Counties come and go in camogie, except for Cork. We have been incredibly consistent over the past 86 years.

We've appeared in 47 All-Ireland finals, spread over the years. Dublin dominated from the All-Ireland inauguration in 1932 up until 1967, appearing in 28 finals.

They then showed up intermittently until 1984 and haven't appeared in a final since.

Kilkenny's haul of 13 primarily relates to the Downey era when they won 12 titles in 1974, 1976, 1977, 1981, a seven-in-a-row from 1985 to 1991, and another title in 1994. It's no surprise that they were also at the helm in 2016 when Kilkenny won, with Ann as manager and Angela as assistant.

But from 1994 to recent times, Kilkenny all but disappeared from the big stage with Galway, Tipperary and Wexford taking over.

Galway — how they have just two titles still beggar's belief.

I would suggest that they are the most consistent county over the past 30 years or so after Cork. But all too often they fell at the semi-final stage.

They've appeared in just 15 finals since 1932 and just eight in the last 30 years. Their most successful period was from 1996 (where they won their first title) to 1998, appearing in three finals. Their second title came in 2013.

Next came Tipperary, who were never on the honours list. That is until a crop of players, led by Michael Cleary, took five titles between 1999-2004.

They only had sporadic All-Ireland final appearances prior to that, their previous one being 1984 and haven't appeared in a final since 2006.

Wexford got in on the act in 2007 winning the title after a lapse of 30 years. Previously to that, they had eight final appearances. They won three in a row between 2010-2012 and since then, have heavily regressed.

So, Dublin, Kilkenny, Galway, Tipperary and Wexford all came good at various stages and when they did, they seemed to dominate for a few years.

But when time caught up with those teams, they found it hard to follow the



**BATTLE LINES DRAWN:** Cork's Katrina Mackey and Julie Ann Malone of Kilkenny in action. The two counties have dominated camogie for a long period.  
Picture: INPHO/Bryan Keane



**GUARDING TRADITION:** Cork's Laura Treacy, Ashling Thompson and Orla Cronin celebrating the All-Ireland win.  
Picture: INPHO/Gary Carr

success up.

Cork, however, remain the most consistent county in the history of our game and that doesn't look like slipping anytime soon.

Who knows where the O'Duffy Cup will reside for the winter of 2018/2019. You would assume that it'll be between Cork and Kilkenny again.

And maybe it'll be every second year for these teams as regards taking the title home. But we'll think about that next year. For now, we'll enjoy the throne we sit on.

What about last Sunday's football final?

Sport can be so cruel. There are more important things in life and as you get older you become more aware of that, but that isn't to say that last Sunday's defeat for Mayo wasn't heart-breaking for those involved.

That title consumed those players and management for the past 12 months.

They are some bunch of players to keep coming back from their defeats. What characters those men must have become because of it.

There were three senior club championship games in the past week with Ballincollig, Glen Rovers, and Inniscarra overcoming St Finbarr's, Ballygarvan and Courcey Rovers, who have seen the end of championship action for 2017.

Most other planned games for this weekend and next have been postponed due to Cork's All-Ireland intermediate final replay tomorrow week. It really has been an incredibly long season for club players and at this time of the year, every year, I mention about how it should change.

“Cork remain the most consistent county in the history of our game and that doesn't look like slipping anytime soon”



# Murray hails heroes' efforts

## CAMOGIE

■ Darragh Ó Conchúir

**CORK** goalkeeper Aoife Murray has hailed the efforts of Cork's two injury-time heroes to even make it onto Croke Park for Sunday's Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Senior Camogie Final.

Match winner Julia White ruptured her Achilles tendon last year and then broke her foot in April, and had played little camogie at club or county level in the past two seasons.

Meanwhile, Gemma O'Connor, who sent over a raking equaliser just as regulation time concluded, was in doubt right up to the final whistle, although the rumour mill had it that the St Finbarr's talisman would be starting despite not being named in the team.

Murray roomed with O'Connor the night before and even taped her knee in solidarity with her long-time teammate. "She did the training on Thursday and she was moving quite well so we all kind of presumed that she was gonna start but we didn't know would it be 10 minutes? Would it be 15 minutes? But we all felt if there was one player or one teammate that should get the honour of doing the march and starting that match it would be Gemma and I think we were all very happy to give her whatever she needed.

"When you see the work that she's put in over the last three weeks... Just seeing her tog out was an absolute inspiration.

"Listen, Gemma's phenomenal." White is probably the polar opposite to O'Connor in terms of steely-eyed focus before a game. Her nature has helped her deal with plenty of setbacks, even if the fractured foot this year did test her resolve, coming so soon after going through the mill to get back from a potentially career-threatening injury.

"When I saw Julia come on I was pretty confident a bit of space would open up because of her speed. I'm so thrilled for her, it couldn't have happened to a nicer girl.



Cork's goalkeeper Aoife Murray clears the sliotar despite Miriam Walsh of Kilkenny.

"I wouldn't expect anything less from her. Julia is just calm. There's not ups or downs with Julia. She's just really relaxed the whole time. You'd worry at times, wondering 'Is she clued in here?' Then one touch and she's gone and you're going 'Fair enough.' 'I'm delighted for her and it just shows all her hard work because it was a pretty horrific injury. Anybody that's had an Achilles will tell you it's very hard to come back. She's had another couple of knocks this year. It just goes to show any kids out there looking at this, the fact that she was a sub, to come on and do that in the 66th minute, she's an absolute hero."

Murray was the epitome of perpetual motion between the posts, a jack-in-the-box constantly pumping her fists, leaping in the air and issuing rallying cries to those in front of her. Being goalie can be tough, with few chances to crash into opposition bodies to release the tension and pent-up fury, but Cork had resolved to not just mean business, but to display that in their body language at every opportunity.

"You use as much energy as everyone else, but we agreed we needed to show a bit of passion, that last September we

didn't show that passion. That annoyed us to a certain extent. It wasn't losing, because there's always a winner and a loser.

"I looked at the clock after Julia scored and thought, 'Jesus, when did that happen', where did the six minutes go. We wanted to give it a go and if we lost at least we'd hold our heads up going back to Cork." Her final word was for the skipper Rena Buckley, who has won every major inter-county medal in both codes with Cork from underage upwards.

On Sunday, the 30-year-old Buckley was bagging a record 18th All-Ireland Senior medal for the Rebels and her seventh in Camogie.

She became the first person of either gender in Gaelic games history to captain her native county to All-Ireland glory in both codes.

"She's gas, so unassuming, that she'll probably be embarrassed people will be saying that about her. That's Rena. She doesn't roar and shout, she's very calm, but what she says she means, and that probably hits people more than me roaring and shouting. She's completely honest on and off the pitch. What else would you want from a captain?"

## Champs Inniscarra power into semis

GAA

■ Mary Newman

<b>Inniscarra</b>	<b>3-15</b>
<b>Cloughduv</b>	<b>1-5</b>

THE defending senior camogie champions are safely through to a semi-final meeting with Douglas after they had too much experience for a young Cloughduv side in Castle Road in the SE Systems championship on Saturday.

Inniscarra signalled their intentions early courtesy of Rena Buckley. Rebecca Kane and Erin Looney added to the scoreline with points before Joanne Casey's probing shot across the goal found the net with a little help from Niamh Dilworth who may have got the slightest touch on it.

Aoife Murray then conceded a penalty, earning herself a yellow card for bringing down the advancing Niamh McCarthy Cloughduv. Joanne Casey drilled it to the net.

Ciara O'Leary pointed for Cloughduv but with Inniscarra firing on all cylinders they were going to be hard to break down. In defence they dealt with any attacks Cloughduv produced whilst up front the threat posed by Niamh Dilworth and Niamh McCarthy was always there and with Jenny Burke, Joanne Casey and Niamh Dilworth all pointing before the break the margin was at 2-10 to 0-2. Ciara O'Leary having added to the Cloughduv tally with a pointed free.

The second half was a closer affair as Cloughduv closed down the Inniscarra attack. Twice the sides swapped points but a Niamh McCarthy hand passed goal with 12 minutes remaining finished the game as a contest.

Cloughduv lost Aoife Murray with a back injury after she looked to have collided with McCarthy en route to goal, but credit to her replacement, young Ciara Twomey who handled well under pressure and is surely a player for the future.

Cloughduv never gave up the chase and were rewarded with an Ann Marie Ryan goal but it's the champions that advance to the last eight and meeting with Douglas.

**Scores for Inniscarra:** J Casey 1-4 (1-0p 0-4 f's), N Dilworth 1-4, N McCarthy 1-0, R Keane 0-2, K O'Mahony, G Heffernan, J Burke, E Looney, J Buckley 0-1 each.

**Cloughduv:** AM Ryan 1-0, N O'Leary 0-2 (0-1f 0-1 45), C O'Leary 0-2 (0-1f).

**INNISCARRA:** S Walsh; M Buckley(c), C Looney, R McCarthy; A Kavanagh, A Sheehan, A Dineen; R Buckley, K O'Mahony; J Burke, E Looney, J Casey; N McCarthy, N Dilworth, R Keane.

**Subs:** O Healy for A Dineen(40), A O'Connor for M Buckley(40), G Heffernan for J Burke(47), A O'Reilly for N McCarthy(55).

**CLOUGHDUV:** A Murray; A Buckley, L O'Riordan, J Bateman; A Corkery, A Kelleher, M Kelleher; M Corkery, C Hughes; S Bateman, N O'Leary, R Hurley; J Down, G O'Leary, K Verling.

**Subs:** J Verling for K Verling(41), A M Ryan for R Hurley(49), N McCarthy for N O'Leary(51), C Twomey for A Murray(inj 56), R Walsh for A Buckley(62).

**Referee:** Andrew Larkin (Douglas).



## Title Cork's if they have right attitude

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

SUNDAY

Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Intermediate final replay; Cork v Meath; Gaelic Grounds, Limerick; October 1, 1.30pm.

IT'S back to the drawing board for Cork and Meath. They play again on Sunday to decide the destination of the Liberty Insurance Intermediate All-Ireland title.

Three weeks is a long time to wait, considering it was the only final that ended level, but the powers that be had a pre-arranged replay date and stuck to it.

Cork threw away a great chance to win the title, taking the lead nine minutes into the second-half. They failed to add to their tally, with scoreable chances going begging.

They will rue the four frees they hit wide in the closing stages. Meath failed to score for twenty two minutes in the second-half, but grabbed an equaliser two minutes into injury time.

There were many talking points in that game, including the referee's tendency to call play back for simple frees and Meath's fury that she blew for full-time when they had a chance to grab a late winner from play. The call was to penalise and issue a red card to Cork player, Kaitlin Hickey, with the game entering injury time.

That decision amazed everybody in attendance. That is now in the past, as we look ahead to where either side may get the vital edge on Sunday.

Cork will need to tighten up in defence and close down Meath runners, as, last day out, they caused a bit of bother.

Cork will have to take every chance that comes their way. Sloppy shooting will be punished, and, as we saw last time out, they also need to get fast ball into their inside line, which has the potential to cause bother for the Meath defence.

In defence, Cork will have to be clued-in. A lapse in concentration, one minute into the second-half, was the turning point the last day and this should never have happened, as Cork lost what looked like a simple ball in defence. Meath turned it over smartly, with Kristina Troy racing through the middle and firing the ball into the net.

This is the third meeting of these sides. In the round robin series, Meath were the only team to defeat Cork. They did it that day with three goals. In the final, Cork limited them to one. Cork looked nervous last day out. Maybe with the game out of Croke Park, they will be more relaxed.

To add the intermediate title to the senior one is a huge incentive, but are Cork good enough to do it? Yes. If their approach is right, the title is there for the taking.

# 'I'm playing no bones about it'

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

TO play in an All-Ireland final is a dream come true for any player.

Right now the big priority for Cork camogie intermediate full forward Linda Collins is to be fit for the Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Intermediate final replay on Sunday in the Gaelic Grounds in Limerick.

The Courcy Rovers full forward suffered a broken finger 15 minutes into the drawn final against Meath and now it's a race against time to be right for Sunday.

"I went up for a ball that Caroline Sugrue sent in and as I tried to grab it I got a slap across the hand," Linda Collins said.

"The ball half spilled away from me but thankfully, Keeva McCarthy picked it up and fired it over the bar."

"I didn't realise how bad it was and at half time they strapped it up but as the second half went on I found it hard to catch the ball."

"I suppose with the adrenalin of the game I took no real notice of it until the full time whistle."

"On the Tuesday afterwards, I went to get it x-rayed and there were two breaks in it."

Collins is a huge player for her club Courcy Rovers and having to sit out their meeting with county champions Inniscarra in last week's SE Systems Senior county championship was heartbreaking for her.

"I was gutted not to be able to play I felt so bad letting down the girls but I knew there was no way I could possibly play."

"I tried catching the ball the day before and it was just so sore I could not even grasp it into my hand."

"But hopefully, with another 10 days recovery added to it now I will be ok for Sunday."

"It was awful to miss the game the club are just brilliant to us all and to be injured for the championship was so disappointing for me."

Collins first came to prominence as a young player with Courcy's under age teams and her potential was quickly spotted as she graduated to the Cork U16 and then the minor's squads and she quickly became a player to keep an eye on.

Fast to the ball, her reaction time is superb, and her movement, when in possession, makes her a hand full for any defender.

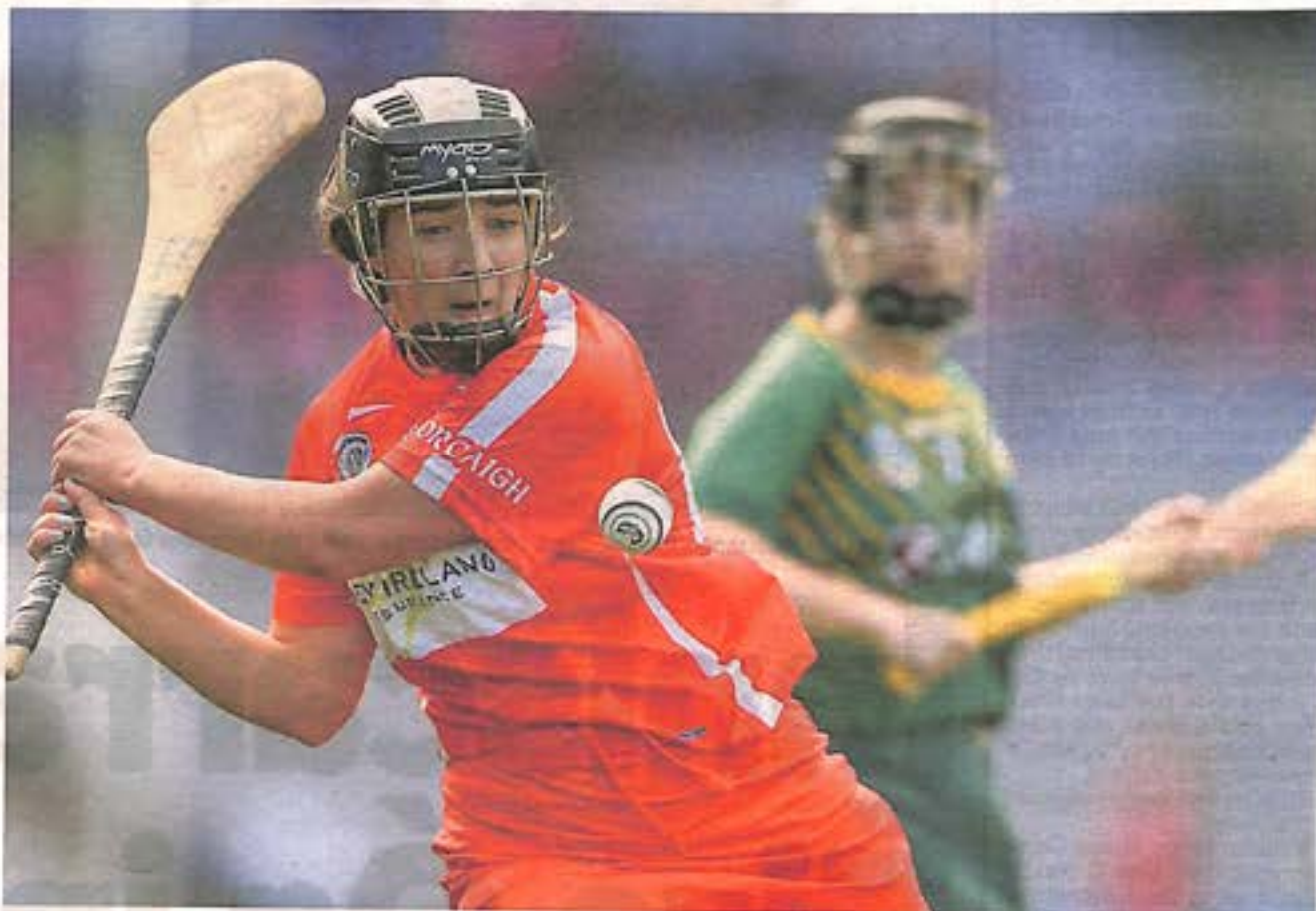
She has a wonderful eye for goal and once in possession is very hard to stop moving at lightning speed she has a fast and deceivingly fast and skilful burst of speed.

Linda is no stranger to All-Ireland finals going the distance despite lining out in four All-Ireland finals and six really if you factor in the replay of the Minor replays of 2013 and 2014.

The big prize still has allured her. "We got to the All-Ireland minor finals in 2013 and 2014 and both ended in draws and we lost the replay Kilkenny in 2013 and then Limerick in 2014."

"So, hopefully, now Sunday will be a different story."

A lot of the players who featured on those minor teams of 2013 and 2014 are still team mates with the minor captain of 2013 Lauren Callanan, Kaitlin Hickey, Rachel O'Shea and Amy Lee all part of the Cork Intermediate side



Cork's Linda Collins of Cork during the Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Intermediate Camogie Championship final against Meath at Croke Park. She is in a race to be fit for the replay. Picture: Piaras Ó Midheach/Sportsfile



Linda Collins: A huge break for her club and county. She is determined to line out in the replay against Meath, despite breaking two bones in her finger.

**"I was gutted not to be able to play I felt so bad letting down the girls but I knew there was no way I could possibly play"**

that will be battling to overcome Meath on Sunday.

Linda is a third-year student in Mary I in Limerick but she began her camogie in Ballinaspittal National school where along with most of her classmates she to join the local camogie club.

"My sister Therese had played a bit of camogie and my brother Liam played with the club but other than that we would have had no real background in the GAA."

"I really only went along with all the other but I quickly realised just how enjoyable it was and I really love playing."

Despite the family having no real connections in the game, Linda's mum Geraldine is now very much involved and is a member of the clubs senior selections committee and also acts as a delegate to the county board.

"I suppose she just got dragged along with us driving here and there

but she loves the involvement so it is great."

Looking ahead to Sunday and her battle to be in the starting line out she is determined not to miss out.

"It's in a splint now three weeks and every day it is getting better."

"I am determined to play and sure fellas have played with broken fingers before so sure it will be grand," and after a brief pause ... she says "Hopefully" with a laugh.

Looking back on the final three weeks ago Linda feels the occasion may have got to Cork.

"I think despite most of us having been there last year and knowing what to expect we were still very nervous."

"Having lost to Kilkenny in 2016 the fear factor was still there a little bit."

"This time out I think we will have to have more confidence in our own ability."

"I think maybe the day got to a few of us, we also allowed ourselves to be bul-

lied a bit we need to stand up now and be counted and now allow them dictate matters."

"We cannot stand back and allow them come at us we have to go out and win it."

Speaking to Linda one gets the sense that she is focused and determined this one is not going to slip away.

To many times she has stood and watches as other teams climbed the steps to collect the big prize and having tasted success earlier this year as Cork took the Division 2 National league title the determination is there to finish the job.

"Meath are the only team to have defeated us this year so really it is very much in our own hands."

"If we want it badly enough we will have to produce the goods on Sunday."

With the spirit and determination being shown by their leading forward, one thinks this Cork side will not lack motivation.





Pride of the west: Enniskeane's Orla Cronin won the player of the match award in the recent Liberty Insurance senior camogie championship final against Kilkenny in Croke Park.

## 'My midfield partner at U12, Niall Kelleher, ran the show'

It's been a busy few weeks for Cork camogie star Orla Cronin, named player of the match in the All-Ireland senior final win. Pausing for a moment we caught up with the Enniskeane ace

**Kieran McCarthy (KMC):** Three All-Irelands in four seasons, and you're still 21, can you get your head around that?

**Orla Cronin (OC):** It's crazy alright. I've been very lucky. The first two years were almost like a dream because I almost knew nothing other than success with Cork. After losing the 2016 final, you remember that you need to appreciate the good days as they can be taken from you far too easily. So winning this September again was the sweetest feeling.

**KMC:** Apart from meeting Marty Morrissey at the after-match function, what was the highlight of the celebrations?

**OC:** The week was just a constant high but Inniscarra on the Monday night was a great laugh. There was almost as big a homecoming down there as there was on the Mall. You can never beat a session out in the country, Ballynaly and The Wayside Inn exceeded all expectations!

**KMC:** Sticking with Marty for a moment, he's well-groomed at the worst of times – but which of you Cork teammates' fashion sense leaves a lot to be desired?

**OC:** Hannah Looney's, nothing short of floral and printed pieces. She's even admitted she could set up her own fashion line called Not Real Clothing!

**KMC:** You roomed with Meabh Cahalane the night before the All-Ireland, what did you do to stay relaxed?

**OC:** It's easy to stay relaxed around Meabh, she's the most lax person you could meet! But in a good way. I suppose the two of us wouldn't be great for being organised too early or anything, so between getting our gear ready for the next day and just general procrastination, the time seems to pass quickly enough.

**KMC:** The best way to stay relaxed before a big game?

**OC:** I think everyone has different ways to deal with how they're feeling before a game. Some people like to keep busy to avoid over-thinking it, others just like to keep to themselves. I just like to focus on what I'll eat and drink and make sure I have all my gear/kit right, etc. Music then is obviously great too for the bus journeys.

**KMC:** Funniest moment of this year?

**OC:** There are loads of them but one in particular would have been Liam O'Reilly's sessions up in the indoor astro hall in Na Piarsaigh at the start of the year. Doing all sorts of bizarre – but tough – exercises with the likes of Bon Jovi blaring in the background. It may not have been that funny at the time but looking back at it now it'd make you laugh!

**'Funnily enough, I had the job of picking tunes for the All-Ireland final weekend, so the first one I had playing in the dressing room after we won was You Want Me by Tom Zanetti. What a tune!'**

**KMC:** You like your music, so if you could have picked any tune to play in the dressing-room afterwards, what would you choose?

**OC:** Funnily enough, I had the job of picking tunes for the All-Ireland final weekend, so the first one I had playing in the dressing room after we won was You Want Me by Tom Zanetti. What a tune!

**KMC:** Sticking to the music theme so, and seeing as you work in the Opera House part-time, what's your favourite musical (and why)?

**OC:** Les Misérables. It's a goodie – patriotic and all that.

**KMC:** Switching the spotlight back to camogie, what was the difference between Orla Cronin 2016 and this year's version?

**OC:** This year I'm a more confident, fitter player. When you're confident in the work you've done and have the belief, it's a lot easier to play with freedom and express yourself and thankfully things went well.

**KMC:** You might have missed this, but Niall Lombard said on Twitter that he can see now why you started ahead of him an U12 level with St Mary's. Niall aside, who

was the best local underage player you played with?

**OC:** My midfield partner at U12, Niall Kelleher, used to run the show for us!

**KMC:** You've a county intermediate final for Enniskeane coming up – against Newcestown on October 7th. But what was your favourite game for Enniskeane?

**OC:** I wouldn't be able to pinpoint any one game but 2013, the year we won the junior A county, would stand out. We also had some tough encounters with the likes of Newcestown, Kilbrittain and Clon that year in West Cork competitions and did well when we were at a lower grade than them. Those games really stood to us in the years that followed.

**KMC:** Any plans afoot to bring the O'Duffy Cup back to Enniskeane in the coming weeks?

**OC:** Nothing set in stone yet but hopefully there'll be a weekend where it will pay a visit to Cookies again. We might tie it in with a weekend to Libby (Coppinger)'s part of the county, Kealkill.

**KMC:** Finally, if you could bring one former Cork player out of retirement to play with, who would it be?

**OC:** Jenny O'Leary. I played with her briefly in 2014 and just from watching then, her work ethic and attitude was so admirable. She's still fit as a fiddle and would be such an asset to any team.

## Favourites Killeagh will face test from Glen

CAMOGIE

■ Linda Mellerick

TONIGHT

SE Systems Cork Senior Camogie Championship quarter final: Glen Rovers v Killeagh Carrigtwohill, 7.30pm

THE first of the senior camogie quarter-finals takes place this evening when Killeagh and Glen Rovers take to the field in Carrigtwohill.

Killeagh head into this game as favourites against a Glen Rovers side back at senior status this past four years and winning their first championship game in the losers round against Ballygarvan recently.

Laura Treacy is a key figure in this Killeagh side and with her recent All-Ireland championship colleagues Hannah Looney and Chloe Sigerson in addition to Leah McEvoy, they have the household names.

Killeagh will however be without Niamh Ní Chaoimh who left yesterday for a teaching post in Dubai, a position she put on hold a number of times due to Cork's Intermediate Championship run.

The Killeagh panel isn't just about their Cork players.

They had a very impressive opening round victory against Courcy Rovers, a side who on their day can make matters tough for their opponents.

Killeagh hurled with hunger and were strong in all sectors. It will take a balanced side to overtake the Glen as they too are balanced throughout. Hannah Looney will take stopping at full forward if she is fed enough.

Kelly Falvey may hold that full back spot but don't be surprised if the city selectors opt to place Hannah's Cork colleague Leanne O'Sullivan at number 3.

Glen Rovers' win over Ballygarvan will have done a lot for the confidence of the Glen girls who have come agonisingly close in the past few years of getting championship wins but never could get over the line.

The monkey is off their back now and they should play with more freedom and enjoyment. They won't fear their opponents.

Killeagh are always strong physically and the Glen will need to match that.

They are slight in certain positions but at the same time possess good speed and they'll have to play to those strengths and not let the game get crowded if they hope to come out on top.

The Glen have two games behind them, their most recent against Ballygarvan under three weeks ago. Killeagh on the other hand, haven't played since July 24.

That may or may not make a difference but they'll be glad to be back in the thick of things.

Killeagh go into the game as favourites but this game could be a lot closer than people think.

## Rebel O'Shea hoping to end season with dream double

**All-Ireland intermediate camogie final replay**

Cork v Meath, Sunday, 1.30pm, Gaelic Grounds, Limerick

**Daragh O'Conchuir**

With Cork reaching both the intermediate and senior deciders of the All-Ireland Championships this year, the spotlight has invariably centred on Páidie Murray as manager of both teams. On each occasion, there

have been players involved in the two games as well, however. On September 10, Rachel O'Shea was one of those.

Though still a teenager, O'Shea was a key operator as the Rebels' second team made it to Croke Park 12 months ago, scoring six points in the semi-final win over Laois and shooting four in the agonising one-point defeat to Kilkenny that left her in floods of tears.

She had done enough to warrant an introduction to the senior squad for this year's

National League, however, to give her a glimpse of what that environment was like. In the meantime, she propelled Cork to the Division 2 title, giving a player-of-the-match performance in the final by scoring six points in the defeat of Derry.

She was also a central figure three weeks ago scoring three points in the intermediate showpiece Cork looked destined to win before being reeled in by a stunning late Meath surge. When the final whistle blew, O'Shea headed

to the senior dressing room which was counting down to their final against Kilkenny. It meant she had little time to dwell on the what ifs, butts, and maybes of the previous 75 minutes at Croke Park.

"It's an honour to be on both panels," says the 20-year-old from Carrigaline. "After the match, I just went into the dressing room. I gathered myself first because you have to remember you're going into a dressing room where they haven't even gone out onto the

pitch yet. You have to be positive. It has to be you came in and nothing has happened and focus for that match."

In one of the most dramatic finals of the modern era, Cork snatched victory thanks to Julia White's winner in the sixth minute of injury time. But O'Shea found it hard to celebrate. "My focus again (after the senior final) was straight away on the next game, getting the mentality right, resting up, getting hydrated after the match. We

have another shot, we haven't lost it, so 100% I was focused on that, not on celebrating."

The third-year recreation and leisure management student at Cork IT is accentuating the positives as she looks forward to Sunday's replay at the Gaelic Grounds. "We're such a close-knit team, we get on very well. It's another three weeks with your best friends, back to what we love doing. We'll have loads of time in the winter to rest up so we're delighted to be back."



# Camogie lags behind football



Camogie

Linda Mellerick

LAST Sunday's attendance at the Ladies Football final was a great occasion for women's sport.

It doesn't matter that it was ladies football and my own sport is currently trailing behind in the same regard. For women in sport, it was a great occasion. To have close to 50,000 at the game was fantastic.

The rise of ladies' football has been incredible. And as I've said before, Cork have played a more than significant role in that. But a lot of credit must also go to their association and the magnificent sponsors they have secured over the years. Lidl has been worth its weight in gold. Outside of the money pumped in, in every store you'll see local stars.

Sport needs money to grow. Look at what sponsorship has done for Dublin football. But it's not just about pumping money in. How that money is spent is critical and Dublin have got it right. How Lidl has invested their money is paying dividends already. Because they're not just pumping it into marketing, they're pumping it into the growth of the game nationwide at grassroots level.

How many new young players travelled to Croke Park this year for the first time I wonder? Young players with stars in their eyes. Would I just love camogie to get those sorts of attendances? Absolutely. But equally I'd love to see our female Irish rugby team, our International soccer team and any other female sports get them too.

So why aren't those sports getting such crowds? Camogie is my sport so I'll concentrate on that. Camogie will possibly never get the attendances that Ladies Football enjoy, primarily because it's spread isn't as wide. Like our male counterparts, football is played in more counties and by and large football championship games throughout the season enjoy greater attendances than hurling. It isn't written about regularly but it is noted. Every now and again hurling pundits will worry about the decline of hurling and are jumping out of their seats when their championship witnesses a really good season, as in 2017.

Undoubtedly Dublin brought a huge crowd to Croke Park last Sunday. They love their football. The fact that the All-Ireland champions of the week before were also in attendance is sure to boost the girls' following even further. If those local heroes think the game is worth watching, then you can be sure it'll have a knock-on effect.

I wonder if the Dublin camogie players were in the All-Ireland final would as many have made the effort. Probably not as hurling takes second place in Dublin. Hurling comes first in the likes of Kilkenny, Tipperary, Galway, Wexford and Cork. But they don't all travel in such great numbers. Dublin football in Croke Park will always draw big crowds but I wonder if Cork and Tipperary met in the All-Ireland camogie final in Páirc Uí Chaoimh



Cork's Finola Neville with Megan Thynne of Meath in the intermediate All-Ireland final draw in Croke Park back in early September. Picture: INPHO/Gary Carr



Katelyn Hickey of Cork in action against Áine Keogh. The replay of the intermediate All-Ireland is tomorrow in the Gaelic Grounds. Picture: Piaras Ó Midheach/Sportsfile

what the attendance would be.

It's not as if camogie doesn't capture the nation's interest. Certainly, Cork and Kilkenny did this year. Over 300,000 people tuned into watch it – another record.

People just don't seem to make the effort to travel in significant numbers. And it all depends on who is playing. In 2007 over 30,000 attended the camogie final between Cork and Wexford.

That was huge at the time and I'm sure was probably a female European record too. But that was because Wexford were involved and they brought a huge crowd. That attendance figure hasn't been seen since.

TG4 has done wonders for ladies' football – broadcasting games along with 'look back' moments and interviews all year round. There are so many games shown that even if some are poor, it doesn't matter because overall the level of competition is high

and games are close. Camogie turned down TG4s offer of televised games years ago. No point in regrets there and it's great news that they are televising the intermediate final tomorrow.

In recent times we have had a couple of opportunities a year to showcase our game on TV and people's perception of the game is determined by those two hours. Three people told me they switched the intermediate final off this year within 10 minutes because the frees frustrated them so much. Only one of them tuned back in for the senior final. In that group we lost 66.67% viewership. Would they travel to a game?

Senior camogie doesn't have as many competitive games. If they are there, it's mostly between the weaker counties. There are ten counties playing senior camogie and the gap between Cork, Kilkenny, Galway and the

“We can't pump money into the sport at the right level because we don't have sponsors with deep pockets”

others is significant. Yes, Dublin had a great season but they weren't All-Ireland contenders. Cork had +50 points scoring difference over their nearest rival in the group stages. By and large the standard of senior inter-county camogie has dropped.

We aren't pumping money into the sport at the right level because we don't have sponsors with deep pockets. Starting off, camogie can be frustrating. For that reason, we need to find initiatives to keep kids playing, to find that element of enjoyment for them at the outset. We need a better inter-county/club balance. We need a massive shift in the rules and a better standard of refereeing.

We need a massive marketing drive all year round, not just for two weeks in September. Our players need to be recognised walking down the street. Because of the helmet/faceguard, we need to work harder to achieve that.

## GAA youth forum an exciting day out

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

THE GAA has put out a call to young players, female and male aged between 12 to 21, who would like to attend the free GAA youth forum, supported by Sky Sports.

It is open to anyone who would like to improve their performance as a player, like to learn how to balance the demands of study and sport, or would like to get inside the minds of some of the top inter-county players in the country.

The GAA youth forum is designed by young players for young players and it will be fun and informative with a mix of interactive exhibitions, workshops, high profile speakers, and a question and answer session.

There will be workshops designed for three specific age-grades – 12 to 15, 16 to 18, and 19 to 21 – and the intention is that players will leave the forum having learned invaluable tips that will help them develop as a player and as a person.

There will be a number of activities at the forum including exhibition zone, where there will be everything from preparing healthy lunches to hurling care and repair.

Diarmuid Lyng will open the forum with the assistance of musicians from Rhythm Corporation.

Workshops with expert coaches and players will address a range of issues from fuelling performance to injury prevention and recovery, to juggling the demands in a young player's life. Lunchtime laughs with Rory's Stories where Rory O'Connor will bring characters to life in an interactive comedy gig.

The questions and answers session will include a range of experts and high-profile players answering the young attendees' questions on a number of topics.

They will ensure that all in attendance keep their energy levels high and everybody will enjoy the best Croke Park has to offer all for free.

The forum takes place on Saturday, October 28 and anybody intending to attend is reminded to apply quickly as it is envisaged it will fill up fast with 600 delegate places available. The online application process is now open at <http://www.gaa.ie/my-gaa/getting-involved/gaa-youth>

There are two ways to apply: A young player can complete an individual application form online and identify an adult in their club who endorses their application or online application by a club; or a club can complete an application form to nominate young players from the club to attend the forum, a maximum of four players per club.

The closing date for applications is Friday, October 6, and successful applicants will be informed by Friday, October 20.



# Camogie is making its mark abroad

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

CAMOGIE continues to grow, as overseas clubs become stronger.

We are seeing second-generation young girls taking up the game in the USA, Britain, Dubai and Asia and a lot of these youngsters are children of girls who would have emigrated and continued to play in their new surroundings.

Now these girls have made permanent homes in these countries and they are beginning to set up camogie for their daughters and they, in turn, are bringing along friends, some of whom would have no Irish connections.

Middle Eastern clubs include the Dubai Celts, Al Ain and in Britain clubs such as Tara, Wolfe Tones, Fullen Gaels, Brother Pearces, Tomas McCurtain's, Erin Go Brath, Green Isle, John Mitchells, and Fr Murphy's are continuing to prosper.

Through the Irish and UAE Embassies, Gaelic games have been adapted into PE lessons in schools and in Ontario, Canada, similar work has Gaelic games on the curriculum, something which is sadly lacking in a lot of our own schools.

In the final of the All British Junior Championship, Fullen Gaels, based in Manchester, overcame Wolfe Tones, who are based in Liverpool, on 5-11 to 4-3 scoreline.

On the Fullen Gaels side was Cork intermediate player Sarah Fahy, who is based in Manchester where she is studying nursing.

Having transferred from her native Douglas to Fullen Gaels in recent months, she is continuing to play and enjoy camogie and commuting home at weekends as Cork prepare for tomorrow's All-Ireland replay with Meath.

As the British Camogie Association continues to promote the game to the younger generation, the Hurl with Me programme has begun in earnest as the work to get more youngsters involved and playing continues in every club.

The programme aims to support the development of the underage clubs and is being rolled out in conjunction with Britain Camogie Development Officer, Michelle Maher. The aim of the programme is to give parents, many of whom have never played hurling or camogie, the opportunity to learn the basic skills of the game in a fun and supportive environment.

The parents will then have the skills and, in turn, can practice with their daughters, increasing the enjoyment for the child and including the parents in understanding the game.

Long term, it is hoped this may be the first step in parents becoming more involved in the club through coaching, an officer role or as a player with the adult section of the clubs.



Aoife Murray, Cloughduv and Cork Camogie receiving the Muskerry GAA/Auld Triangle Sports Award for August from Stephen O'Leary in the presence of members of her family.

Picture: Mike English

# U16 schedule is moving along well

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

AS the U16 championships continue in all grades, things are moving along nicely.

A lot of clubs are also tied up in U14 and minor championships while many would have their 16-year-olds playing at senior, intermediate and junior levels. For the clubs still remaining in any of these competitions its very much all systems go.

For clubs with lights, they have an advantage as the evenings are getting dark early and many girls are in supervised study until late.

Clubs are going at full speed to try and get everything played. Mid-term break is also looming and this is a time when many clubs find it difficult to field teams.

A look at the games in the backdoor

of the U16 A grade shows Ballincollig recording a victory over Ballinhassig to get back into the mix.

Ballincollig, who got over Ballinhassig in their losers round game, will take on Aghada with the winners meeting Glen Rovers in the quarter-final. Eire Og bounced back after losing their opening round to defeat Bride Rovers 3-12 to 2-7.

Courcey Rovers overcame Kilbrittan/Timoleague, 5-7 to 2-3, while Charleville knocked out Newcestown, 2-10 to 0-7. Inniscarra had a victory over Aghabullogue.

Eire Og will now face Ballinora, Courcey Rovers and Ballygarvan are set to meet in Ballygarvan, Charleville have a home venue for their meeting with Enniskeane, while St Finbarr's travel to Carrigaline on Monday night at 7pm. Sarsfields host Blackrock today at 2pm.

In the U16 B Championship, Inniscarra's second team were too strong for Cobh, Blarney defeated Douglas, and Banteer overcame Bishopstown.

Round two will see Inniscarra 2 travelling to Youghal, Blarney hosting Sliabh Rua, Barryroe head to Banteer and Brian Dillon's will host Fr O'Neill's today at 2pm.

Na Piarasigh and Cloughduv will meet in one quarter-final while Killcagh have already secured their place

in the semi-final as they edged out Ballinascorthy, 4-4 to 3-6.

In the U16 C Championship, Millstreet defeated Kerry side Causeway, 5-6 to 2-2, Tracton overcame Watergrahill 6-6 to 1-1, Dungourney had a win over Castletyons, 2-2 to 0-3.

The remaining games in the backdoor to be played will see Rockbawn hosting Nemo next Wednesday at 6pm, while St Fanahan's and Middleton were fixed to meet last night.

The quarter-finals have Buttevant hosting Millstreet today, Dungourney will take on Erin's Own in Caherlag, Tracton will host Castlemartyr, Grenagh travel to St Catherine's on October 6 at 6.45pm. Clonakilty have already secured their semi-final place with a 4-9 to 1-9 win over Kilbree.

# Neighbours set to meet in intermediate title clash

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

THIS weekend is a quiet one with one senior championship game today as all thoughts are on the Intermediate All-Ireland replay, but next weekend it is all systems go as championships continue.

It will be the clash of neighbours as Enniskeane and Newcestown battle it out for the SE Systems Intermediate title on Saturday next in Brinny at 2pm.

Many of the players are divisional colleagues with Carbery and will line out side by side 24 hours later as the divisional side take on St Catherine's in the Senior Championship quarter-final.

Enniskeane have battled hard to capture this title but it has continued to elude them. They took the junior title in 2013 and have worked hard since then to take the next step. Last year they reached the final only to lose out to Blackrock, who defeated Newcestown in the semi-final. The sides have met twice already this year. Newcestown took the league title with a 2-14 to 1-8 victory, in the round robin series in

championship Enniskeane had a 4-6 to 1-11 victory, but next Saturday is the one they both want.

Newcestown re-graded in 2015 to junior A and blazed a trail of glory to capture the league and championship titles that year they have a strong underage structure in place and the winning of the Minor A league title to add to the Intermediate league crown has been a huge boost to the club.

Captained by Frances Deasy they have strong players in Colette Desmond, Suzanne Deasy and Evelyn Crowley, Aishling O'Donovan and Maeve Lynch. John Cronin who enjoyed huge success with Cork and Cloughduv is part of their backroom team that also includes Conor Condon, Sean Twomey, Finbarr O'Callaghan and Lisa O'Sullivan.

Enniskeane have also enjoyed huge underage success in recent years and they are also putting in tremendous work at all levels.

Enniskeane will look to Player of the Match in the All-Ireland final Orla Cronin to lead the way and she will get plenty of support from captain Oral Coughlan, Sinéad Hurley, Caitlin O'Donovan, Sinéad Curtin, Danielle Carroll and Slobhan O'Driscoll.

They will be minus the services of Claire O'Mahony, who has recently gone travelling. All season she has been outstanding in the Enniskeane defence and she will be a huge loss to the side.

Their back room consists of Brian Daly, Daniel Cronin, Dermot Curtin, Humphrey Cronin and former Kilkenny senior star Elaine Aiyward who is now resident in Enniskeane but is still playing her club camogie at home in Kilkenny.

It promises to be a great occasion as both sides battle for the title.



# Cork fail to ignite as

## A big day when too many big players just didn't perform

CORK can have no complaints from the Gaelic Grounds yesterday after a display they'd rather forget.

I'm not going to hold back here. It was a very poor Cork performance. Our play was scrappy and disjointed. We had no leaders whatsoever. Seven scores in an All-Ireland final, two from play, and outscored nine points to two from the 16th minute — what other way was the outcome going to go?

What is really frustrating me is how we left so many players that were clearly underperforming on the pitch. Making a couple of token substitutes coming up to full time wasn't good enough. We had 11 players sitting on the bench. I know some of those players, they were surely worth a run when it was clear that we were living off scraps.

We were jittery and poor all over the field. Particularly in the second half. Four balls in a row Kristina Troy plucked out of the sky from our puckouts. We lost almost every puckout. Amy Gaffney ran riot, deservedly being named player of the match.

We went 26 minutes without scoring and then only struck two further frees. We wondered at half-time, after enjoying a strong wind, if the two-point advantage was going to be enough.

Of course, you would suggest it wasn't but Meath weren't setting the world alight either and we were still expecting Cork to up their game. There was little crisp hurling from either side.

Meath were tapping the ball to each other from about 10 yards, trying to edge themselves closer to goal to get a strike in. Against the wind maybe they could be forgiven for that approach but it was evident that their striking wasn't the best. They got stronger as the game went on and the two Amy Gaffney points which put Meath in the driving seat entering the closing stages were top class.

The game was clustered around the middle of the field as Meath opted to play four in that section and Cork went player for player. There were plenty of melees in the opening half. Meath challenged hard but Cork stood strong and came out on top in a lot of them.

But in the second half Meath won that section hands down and we continued to feed the cluster.

Cork led 0-3 to no score after five minutes and looked to be taking the game to Meath with a strong wind supporting them. But their rhythm faded and with it any real scoring opportunity. The only goal chance we had, and it was only a half chance, was on 46 minutes when Linda Collins's shot went across the goal and wide.

Keeva McCarthy started brilliantly with placed balls, scoring three in the opening



Meath's Cheyenne O'Brien with Caroline Sugrue of Cork battle it out. Picture: INPHO/Tommy Dickson



Linda Mellerick

### Match analysis

quarter, each one impressive as she calmly took her time. Her luck ran out however for the remainder of the half with three wides, the wind hard to judge. Cork had double the Meath wide count with six inside those opening 30 minutes.

The game was scrappy and the standard was poor. The free count ended up around the 40 mark. Five bookings took place early on. Lauren Callanan's and Aoife Minogue's were harsh but while the free count was once again too high there can be no complaints from Cork.

In fact, they were fortunate that John Dermody ruled that Jane Dolan fell too easily in the square and made no attempt to play the ball on 30 minutes when a penalty could so easily have been awarded.

You must give Meath credit for their second-half performance. For too long we continued to puke the ball on top of Troy who was masterful. Meath hunted every ball as the game moved closer to full time. Their belief grew. And unquestionably they were the better team and deserved their victory.

When we had the wind, we failed to capitalise but a lot more than that contributed to Cork's downfall. We too were guilty of passing the ball to a player only feet away when the better option was to switch and spread the play.

It's the second All-Ireland defeat in a row for this group of players. I thought we'd see better from them yesterday.

Big players play on big days and we didn't have any. I had mentioned after the drawn game that Meath had impressed me in patches and that Cork would need to show up second time around. They didn't show up and once again Meath's second half was their strongest.

The camogie association undoubtedly are thrilled that Meath took the title and there's nothing wrong with that. That win will do a lot for Meath.

For Cork, they won the 2017 league and if any positive at all is to be taken from yesterday's defeat it's that this team will stay together for next year and wear the Cork colours again. Had they won they would have been ineligible.

If you don't perform on the big day you'll have plenty of regrets and both players and management will have a lot of them this afternoon.



Cork's Jennifer Barry drives past the challenge of Meath's Kristina Troy during their Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Intermediate Camogie Championship final replay at the Gaelic Grounds, Limerick.

Picture: INPHO/Tommy Dickson



Cork's Rachel O'Shea is dejected after the game. Picture: INPHO/Tommy Dickson



Meath's Claire Coffey lifts the trophy. Picture: INPHO/Tommy Dickson

## Story of the Game

**Player of the Match:** Two players stood out. Both from the newly crowned champions Meath. Kristina Troy and Amy Gaffney were superb.

Troy won huge possession as she plucked and drove ball after ball out of the air to her inside line. Amy Gaffney took the game to Cork scoring four points out of

her side's 10 and this deservedly earned her Player of the Match.

**Score Of the Match:** Amy Gaffney's point which stretched their lead to three points with five minutes remaining, winning possession she raced through the middle and showed great skill and determination hitting over a classy and cru-

cial point at a stage in the game.

**Turning Point:** With 14 minutes remaining and the game level, Cork missed a chance of a goal. Linda Collins did everything right as she evaded her marker and got behind the Meath defence but her shot went across the face of the goal and wide.



# Meath claim title



Cork manager Paudie Murray.

## Manager Murray gutted for the players

REACTION

■ Mary Newman

A **HUGELY** disappointed Cork manager, Paudie Murray, was as gracious in defeat as he is always in victory.

"I suppose on the day the better team won. They seemed to want it more than us."

"We got a good start but we never built on it as we failed to add to our tally."

"We went 0-5 to 0-1 ahead but then we didn't score again for 26 minutes and you cannot afford this trying to win an All-Ireland."

"We settled into the game early but seemed to lose our way and we needed to be further ahead turning to play against the strong wind."

"They were two down at half time and got back level quickly on the restart and we were chasing it all through the second half."

### Effort

Paudie was quick to acknowledge the huge effort put in by his players.

"I'm gutted for the girls to have lost. For some of these players it is the second year in-a-row to lose out in the intermediate All-Ireland final."

"Last year we lost to Kilkenny and with Meath having grabbed a late equaliser the last day in Croke Park it so disappointing for them to lose out again today."

"The huge effort they put into trying to win this All-Ireland cannot be underestimated and I want to pay tribute to each and every one of them."

"They worked so hard in the lead up to the final and again for the replay and to lose is so disappointing for them. want to thank them for their efforts."

"We must remember also that we won the national league earlier in the year but it would have been nice to add the All-Ireland title to that but it wasn't to be today and we congratulate Meath on taking their first intermediate title."

Meanwhile, Kilcoo have made it six Down SFC successes in-a-row following a two-point victory over Burren today.

The Páirc Esler scoreboard read Kilcoo 0-13, Burren 0-11 at the end of a closely-fought encounter which saw the Magpies claim their 16th senior crown overall.

The Paul McIver coached side overturned a one point half-time deficit (0-6 to 0-7) to take home the spoils.



Cork's Niamh Ni Chaoimh battles with Fia O'Brien of Meath during their Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Intermediate Camogie Championship final replay at the Gaelic Grounds.

Picture: Inpho/Tommy Dickson

Meath	0-10
Cork	0-7

## CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

**NO QUESTION** about it this time round, as Meath claimed the Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Intermediate title in Gaelic Grounds Limerick yesterday in a replay that failed to ignite. In truth, it was a bad game and Cork's failure to score from the 16th minute of the opening half, despite having the aid of the strong wind, is a reflection on their performance.

Cork can have little complaints as time and time again they failed to win their own puck outs, with Kristina Roy allowed pluck the ball out of the r unchallenged on numerous occasions. With the game slipping away from them they continued to play ball to crowded areas and never availed the space where they may just have had the little bit of extra pace on the Meath defence.

Cork started well with Keeva McCarthy pointing two frees in the first and third minute and with Caroline Sugrue pointing from play Cork had opened up a three point lead before Jane Dolan had Meath's opening score pointing a free.

Aided by the gaelforce wind in the opening half Cork failed to avail of their advantage as the Meath defence closed them down, chasing in packs, and never allowing them any space to get quality ball to their forwards.

Keeva McCarthy extended the lead, pointing a free, and with Kaitlin Hickey adding another Cork led 0-5 to 0-1 entering the second quarter. But for the remainder of the half Cork failed to add to their tally and it was Meath that made all the running, the excellent Amy Gaffney pointed and as they continued to win vital breaks they had Cork under pressure.

### Narrowed

Jane Dolan narrowed the gap with a pointed free and Meath were infuriated when their claim for a penalty was overruled and a free out awarded when Dolan looked to have been in, but it was Meath that went to the dressing rooms at the break happier, despite trailing by two points 0-5 to 0-3.

On the resumption Meath were fast out of the traps as the applied huge pressure and bombarded the Cork defence. Winning break after break they were quickly on level terms, Amy Gaffney hitting a point from play as she showed tremendous pace before swinging the ball between the posts. Twice they won frees but were narrowly wide before Jane Dolan found the range and pointed a free and it was game on.

Keeva McCarthy edged Cork back in front with a pointed free but from the puck-out Meath won possession and won a free, which Jane Dolan duly converted. It remained deadlocked.

Cork lost a glorious opportunity to grab a goal with 14 minutes remaining when Linda Collins evaded her marker but sent her attempt across the face of the goal and wide.

Struggling to get any real quality ball to their inside line, Cork were in big trouble and it was Amy Gaffney who grabbed the game by the neck for Meath. Winning the resulting puck out she outpaced three Cork players to send the ball between the posts. Four minutes later she did the same and one sensed the game was slipping away from Cork.

With Meath leading by three points, Cork needed a goal but they never looked like getting one.

Jane Dolan and Keeva McCarthy exchanged pointed frees and Cork did have a chance with a late long range effort but it failed to materialise as the ref deemed the Cork forwards to have been in the square as the ball was in flight. A free out was awarded and it was game over as Cork's last chance of an equaliser evaporated.

So a disappointing end to a season that saw Cork take the national league title in great style.

**Scorers for Meath:** J Dolan 0-5 (0-4fs), A Gaffney 0-4, A Minogue 0-1.

**Cork:** K McCarthy 0-5 (fs), K Hickey C Sugrue 0-1 each.

**CORK:** A Lee, L Weste, S Harrington, N Ni Chaoimh(c), R Kileen, S Buckley, L Callanan, F Neville, J Barry, K Hickey, K McCarthy, M McCarthy, R O'Shea, L Collins, C Sugrue.

**Subs:** M Lynch for R Kileen (41), M Buckley for C Sugrue (56), S Fahy for R O'Shea (59).

**MEATH:** E Mangan, E Coffey, C Coffey(c), E Burke, A Keogh, A Minogue, L Donoghue, C O'Brien, M Tynne, A Gaffney, K Troy, A Minogue, F O'Brien, J Dolan, S Hackett.

**Sub:** M Keogh for E Coffey(h/t), C Quinn for F O'Brien(50).

**Referee:** John Dermody (Westmeath).

## Three reasons Cork failed to beat Meath again

### 1. WHY FAILURE TO SCORE:

As in the first game Cork started superbly and taking the game to Meath they led 0-5 to 0-1 at the end of the opening quarter.

Yet once again they seemed to hit a wall and despite having a huge wind gusting down the pitch in their favour they never added to their tally. You simply cannot go from the 16th to the 43rd minute of an All-Ireland final without scoring and expect to win.

### 2. MEATH'S PHYSICALITY:

Meath were a physically stronger side and the heavy underfoot conditions suited them.

They held off the Cork attack and closed them down whenever they won possession hunting in packs they forced Cork to overplay the ball and make errors which they punished with excellent free-taking from Jane Dolan.

On numerous occasions in the second half, they used their strength tellingly.

### 3. HUNGER TO SUCCEED:

On the day, Meath appeared to want it more. They were the hungrier side and played with huge intensity. Playing against the strong wind in the opening half they never panicked and despite going 0-5 to 0-1 in arrears they kept working away and had reduced the deficit to two by the break.

On the resumption they took they took the game to Cork and looked winners from a long way out, slotting over five points in a row.

## Davis works magic again as Meath step up in style

**Liberty Insurance All-Ireland intermediate camogie final replay**

Meath	0-10
Cork	0-7

**Daragh Ó Conchúir**  
Gaelic Grounds

John Davis has worked the oracle once more as Meath won the Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Intermediate camogie final replay at the

Gaelic Grounds and secure their place at the top tier next year.

The 69-year-old has steered the Royals from Junior B to senior level along with bringing them from Division 4 to Division 1 of the National League. Amy Gaffney was the driving force for Meath with four points from play as they earned a deserved victory over a Cork side that failed to build on a strong opening. Gaffney had a very deep supporting cast though with Megan Thynne, Ellen Burke,

Jane Dolan and Aoife Maguire all impressing.

Cork, wind the wind, started brightly as three tremendous Keeva McCarthy frees had them 0-5 to 0-1 ahead by the 17th minute.

But then Dolan provided the spark for Meath. She won possession before being fouled and made no mistake from the resultant placed ball 40m out. The fired-up Lauren Callanan was unfortunate to be shown a yellow card for the indiscretion but had an outstanding first half otherwise.

The Glen Rovers girl was fouled for McCarthy to claim her third point and Katelyn Hickey made it a four-point game thanks to an assist by Rachel O'Shea.

Gaffney slotted her first after a fantastic block by Thynne and Dolan converted a stunning free to make it 0-5 to 0-3 at the break.

The sides were level within seven minutes of the restart thanks to points for Gaffney and Dolan (free). McCarthy slotted her fourth free five minutes later to end that half-

hour barren scoring spell but Dolan restored parity on the three-quarter mark and Meath, who had definitely wrested control with the elements in their favour, stretched clear.

Aoife Maguire, Gaffney (2) were all on target as Meath were motoring. McCarthy gave Cork some hope with another pointed free but the Rebels never looked like producing the goal they needed to avoid a second consecutive final defeat.

**Scorers for Meath:** J Dolan (0-5 all

frees), A Gaffney (0-4), A Maguire (0-1).

**Scorers for Cork:** K McCarthy 0-5 (all frees), C Sugrue, K Hickey (0-1 each).

**MEATH:** E Mangan, E Burke, C Coffey, E Coffey, A Keogh, A Maguire, L Donoghue, C O'Brien, M Thynne, A Gaffney, K Troy, A Minogue, F O'Brien, J Dolan, S Hackett.

**Subs:** M Keogh for M Coffey (ht), C Quinn for O'Brien (51).

**CORK:** A Lee, S Harrington, L Weste, N Ni Chaoimh, R Kileen, S Buckley, L Callanan, F Neville, J Barry, K Hickey, K McCarthy, M McCarthy, R O'Shea, L Collins, C Sugrue.

**Subs:** M Lynch for Kileen (41), M Buckley for Sugrue (56), S Fahy for O'Shea (60).

**Referee:** J Dermody (Westmeath).





**CORCAIGH • CORK**  
DEARG AGUS BÂN • RED AND WHITE

1 A Ni Laoi AMY LEE Na Píarsaigh	3 S Ni hArrachtáin SARAH HARRINGTON FR. O'NEILLS	4 N Ni Chaoimh NIAMH NI CHAOIMH (C) KILLEACH
2 L Weste LEAH WESTE BALLINCOLLIG	6 S Ni Bhuachalla SARAH BUCKLEY BALLINCOLLIG	7 L Ni Chuilleanáin LAUREN CALLANAN GLEN ROVERS
5 R Ni Chillín ROISÍN KILEEN BALLYHEA	8 F Ni Nía FINOLA NEVILLE ST. CATHERINES	9 S de Barra JENNIFER BARRY BRIDE ROVERS
10 C Ni hÍc KATELYN HICKEY BLACKROCK	11 C Nic Carthaigh KEEVA MCCARTHY ST. FINBARRS	12 M Nic Carthaigh MAEVE MCCARTHY SARSFIELDS
13 R Ni Shé RACHEL O'SHEA CARRIGALINE	14 L Ni Choileáin LINDA COLLINS COURCEY ROVERS	15 C Ni Shiocháin CAROLINE SUGRUE BALLINASCARTHY

16 • Sarah Ahern • S. Ni hEathir • Ballygarvan  
17 • Sarah Fahy • S. Ni Fhathaigh • Douglas  
18 • Jacinta Crowley • S. Ni Chruaioich • Courcsey Rovers  
19 • Maeve Lynch • M. Ni Loingsigh • Newcestown  
20 • Michaela Buckley • M. Ni Bhuachalla • Ballygarvan  
21 • Lucy Kelly • L. Ni Cheallaigh • Sarsfields  
22 • Niamh O'Callaghan • N. Ni Cheallacháin • Sarsfields  
23 • Hayley Ryan • H. Ni Ráin • Blackrock  
24 • Lisa Lynch • L. Ni Loingsigh • Cloughduv  
25 • Rebecca Sheehan • R. Ni Shiocháin • Douglas  
26 • Diana Kelleher • D. Ni Chóileacháin • Watergrasshill

Manager • Paudie Murray  
Selectors • Mossie O'Sullivan, Emmet Fennell  
Hurling Coach • Sean Cremin  
S&C Coaches • Martin O'Brien, Liam O'Reilly  
Performance Analyst • Niall Collins  
Goalkeeping Coach • Teddy O'Donovan  
Physio • Orla Coughlan  
Maor Uisce • Kevin Murray, Damien Murray



**AN MHÍ • MEATH**  
GLAS AGUS ÓR • GREEN AND GOLD

1 E Ni Mhongáin EMILY MANGAN BLACKHALL GAELS	3 C Ni Chofaigh CLAIRE COFFEY (C) NA FIANNA	4 E de Búrca ELLEN BURKE DUNBOYNE
2 E Ni Chofaigh EMMA COFFEY NA FIANNA	6 A Nig Uidhir AOIFE MAGUIRE KILLYON	7 L Ni Dhonnchú LOUISE DONOGHUE KILTALE
5 A Nic Eochaidh AINE KEOGH KILDALKEY	8 C Ni Bhriain CHEYENNE O'BRIEN KILTALÉ	9 M Ni Theimhin MEGAN THYNNE KILMESSAN
10 A Ni Chamhna AMY GAFFNEY RATOATH	11 C Ni Throithigh KRISTINA TROY BLACKHALL GAELS	12 A Ni Mhuineog AOIFE MINOGUE DUNDERRY
13 C Ni Choinne CAROLINE QUINN BOARDSMILL	14 S Ni Dhúláin JANE DOLAN BLACKHALL GAELS	15 J Nic Eachaigh SINEAD HACKETT DUNBOYNE

16 • Maggie Randle • M. Randal • Donaghmore Ashbourne  
17 • Grace Coleman • G. Ni Cholmáin • Killyon  
18 • Máire Keogh • M. Nic Eochaidh • Kildalkey  
19 • Aedin Slattery • A. Ni Shlatara • Na Fianna  
20 • Maeve Clinse • M. Clinse • Dunboyne  
21 • Erin Leddy • E. Ni Lidi • Na Fianna  
22 • Fia O'Brien • F. Ni Bhriain • Kiltale  
23 • Beverly Lynch • B. Ni Loingsigh • Kildalkey  
24 • Aileen Smyth • A. Nic Gabhann • Kiltale  
25 • Máire Kirby • M. Ni Chiarba • Na Fianna  
26 • Aine Kirby • A. Ni Chiarba • Na Fianna  
27 • Sophia Payne • S. Paghan • Na Fianna

28 • Katie Hackett • C. Nic Eachaidh • Boardsmill  
29 • Ellen Connolly • E. Ni Chonghaile • Kildalkey  
30 • Helen Murphy • H. Ni Mhurchú • Blackhall Gaels

Manager • John Davis  
Maor Fóime • Katie Mullen  
Selectors • Christy Mangan, GT Troy, Teresa Clinse  
Trainer • Ronan McWilliams  
Physio • Una Burke  
Maor Camán / Uisce • Christine Fagan, Margaret Burke

# Davis entitled to shed a tear at Royals' victory

Fergus Jayes

John Davis didn't attempt to hide his emotions at the Gaelic Grounds on Sunday afternoon.

And rightly so.

The 69-year-old Meath manager had just seen his team defeat Cork in the replay of the Liberty Insurance All-Ireland intermediate camogie championship final.

The victory was another rung in the incredible ladder of achievement overseen by Davis. The achievement has been staggering and would be front-page news in any other sport: Davis has steered the Royals from Junior B to senior status and from Division 4 to the top flight of the National League.

The tears shed at the final whistle in Limerick were all the more understandable, given the trials and tragedy faced by Davis off the field over the past decade.

He explained: "My son Derek was 26 when he was diagnosed with a brain tumour and he died four years later. Just 15 months ago, my wife Theresa passed away and the girls stuck with me throughout that difficult time. She would always be at the games and the girls all knew her. We were playing Down in the league before the hurlers in the replayed final of the Christy Ring Cup and the girls wanted to cancel, as Theresa was being buried that day, but I couldn't let them do that. It is not every day you get to play in Croke Park and I preferred they go out and enjoy it and I knew Theresa would have wanted that too."

The weekend win against a highly rated Cork outfit was, he admits, one of the most defining moments of an illustrious managerial career which also includes a stint at the helm of the Meath senior hurlers in the '90s.

"Cork are a very strong side and we just set out a plan to stop them playing their hurling and it paid off."

"Playing in a televised game in Croke Park [in the drawn



**"We were playing Down and the girls wanted to cancel, as Theresa was being buried that day, but I couldn't let them do that. It is not every day you get to play in Croke Park"**

Meath manager John Davis rejoices with Fia O'Brien and Louise O'Donoghue after the win over Cork in the All-Ireland Intermediate Camogie Championship final replay. Davis has steered the Royals from Junior B to senior status and from Division 4 to the top flight of the National League, along the way suffering the death of his son and wife and says 'the girls stuck with me throughout that difficult time'. Picture: Tommy Dickson

game], the girls will take that with them for the rest of their lives.

"It has been great to have underage coaching coming on leaps and bounds, also, even after the girls winning at the weekend."

"I remember a few of our youth co-ordinators telling me the turnout on Monday morning for training was the highest it has been."

"They all want to be like the girls!"

Davis was a successful player for his local side Brownstown in Westmeath where he brought them to three senior championships, the first two as a player/manager. He admitted the side he now coaches were in difficulty when he appeared.

"When I first arrived, we were struggling at the lower

level and weren't getting much help. We had football taking precedence, along with college and injuries being difficult to manage, but credit to the girls, the effort from them in the last few years has been phenomenal. Winning against Cork at the weekend really showed the progress that has been made with the girls playing at the top tier of camogie now."

When asked on his future, Davis admitted: "I've never looked for a job in my life and I don't plan to start now. I've always gone for the smaller clubs and tried to bring them up rather than going straight into a finished product, there's no challenge in that. I owe a lot to the girls, and it's a pleasure every day I get to work with them in their development."



# Spanish treat for All-Star winners



Camogie

Linda Mellerick

THE camogie All-Stars will go on tour for the first time this year, with Madrid the destination for the travelling party.

Madrid might seem a strange choice, but I'm sure the girls are quite happy with it, and as the tour is designed to reward players for their achievements and to spread the game to new audiences in Europe, then why not Madrid?

It's long overdue. Oh, to be a player today! We had no All-Stars, no trips and little gear. But we were more than happy with our lot at the time and it's great to see the off-field matters improving all the time.

The tour will take place from November 29 to December 2 and will see two teams comprising of the winning senior All-Stars from both the 2016 and 2017 awards ceremonies. The 2017 awards are on in the Citywest on November 4 and the sides will face each other in an exhibition match in the Spanish capital. I'm wondering how that's going to play out as Cork and Kilkenny dominated the 2016 awards and will do so again for 2017.

How will they make two teams from a similar bunch? Maybe they'll take a few old ones with them. Must check the diary just in case!

Deirdre Ashe, director of personal lines for Liberty Insurance said: "The tour that we're announcing builds on our continued commitment to the promotion of women in sport and rewards the 2016 and 2017 All-Stars, each of whom are role models in their communities, for their dedication, skill and commitment."

"The trip to Spain is deserved recognition for the country's finest athletes and provides an opportunity to showcase the game to new audiences."

Cork have 11 nominations this year. No surprise there. Goalkeeper Aoife Murray, defenders Rena Buckley, Pamela Mackey, Gemma O'Connor, Eimear O'Sullivan and Laura Treacy. Ashling Thompson has been nominated at midfield while Orla Cronin, Orla Cotter, Katrina Mackey and Amy O'Connor are nominated among the forwards.

Gemma is seeking an incredible 10th award. It just goes to show how impressive Eimear O'Sullivan was in the final. After not seeing a significant amount of game time during the year, she still received a nomination. Her performance in Croke Park sealed it.

Kilkenny received nine nominations. Goalkeeper Emma Kavanagh, defenders Anne Dalton, Catherine Foley and Grace Walsh. Meighan Farrell is nominated at midfield, while Denise Gaule, Julie Ann Malone, Katie Power and Miriam Walsh are nominated among the forwards.

Dublin got seven because of their run to the semi-finals; goalkeeper Faye McCarthy, defenders Eva Marie Elliott, Hannah Hegarty, Eve O'Brien and Aine Woods, midfielder Eimear McCarthy, and forward Aisling Maher.

Galway have six. Defenders Heather Conroy and Tara Kenny, midfielders



Willie Coleman, president Ballinacorney GAA, congratulating club member, Eimear O'Sullivan, on winning an All-Ireland Camogie medal, when she brought the O'Duffy Cup to the club's fundraiser at Curraheen Park. Picture: Mike English



Cork's Laura Treacy showing the type in intensity in the tackle that earned her an All-Star nomination. Picture: Matt Browne/Sportsfile

Niamh Kilkenny and Ann Marie Starr, and forwards Aoife Donohue and Ailish O'Reilly.

Clare got the nod five times with defenders Máire McGrath and Róisín McMahon, midfielder Orlaith Duggan, and forwards Aoife Keane and Chloe Morey.

Wexford received four nominations; defenders Brid Gordon and Sarah O'Connor, forwards Chloe Foxe and Shelley Kehoe. Limerick, Tipperary and Waterford receive one nomination each with Limerick's Niamh Mulcahy, Tipp's Orla O'Dwyer and Waterford's Beth Carton all named among the forwards.

Paudie Murray (Cork), John Davis (Meath) and Johnny Greville (Westmeath) are among the nominees for Manager of the Year, which will be announced on the night along with the 2017 All-Stars team.

The nominees for the Intermediate Soaring Stars will be announced shortly.

Nominees for the Camogie Association/WGPA Senior, Intermediate and Junior Players' Player of the Year Awards, sponsored by Liberty Insurance, will be announced next week.

As the focus already turns to 2018, Dublin manager David Herity has set an early market with the announcement that he is to stay in charge of the capital side and build on the progress made over the past couple of seasons.

## Camogie All-Stars 2017 nominees list

**Goalkeepers:** Aoife Murray (Cork), Faye McCarthy (Dublin), Emma Kavanagh (Kilkenny).  
**Full-Back line:** Máire McGrath (Clare), Rena Buckley (Cork), Laura Treacy (Cork), Eve O'Brien (Dublin), Áine Woods (Dublin), Tara Kenny (Galway), Catherine Foley (Kilkenny), Grace Walsh (Kilkenny), Sarah O'Connor (Wexford).

“The trip to Spain is deserved recognition for the county's finest athletes and provides the opportunity to show the game to new audiences”

**Half-Back line:** Róisín McMahon (Clare), Pamela Mackey (Cork), Gemma O'Connor (Cork), Eimear O'Sullivan (Cork), Eva Marie Elliott (Dublin), Hannah Hegarty (Dublin), Heather Cooney (Galway), Anne Dalton (Kilkenny), Brid Gordon (Wexford).

**Midfield:** Orlaith Duggan (Clare), Ashling Thompson (Cork), Eimear McCarthy (Dublin), Niamh Kilkenny (Galway), Ann Marie Starr (Galway), Meighan Farrell (Kilkenny).

**Half-Forward line:** Aoife Keane (Clare), Orla Cronin (Cork), Orla Cotter (Cork), Katrina Mackey (Cork), Amy O'Connor (Cork), Denise Gaule (Kilkenny), Katie Power (Kilkenny), Niamh Mulcahy (Limerick), Shelley Kehoe (Wexford).

**Full-Forward line:** Chloe Morey (Clare), Aisling Maher (Dublin), Aoife Donohue (Galway), Ailish O'Reilly (Galway), Julie Ann Malone (Kilkenny), Miriam Walsh (Kilkenny), Orla O'Dwyer (Tipperary), Beth Carton (Waterford), Chloe Fox (Wexford).

**Manager of the Year:** Paudie Murray (Cork), John Davis (Meath), Johnny Greville (Westmeath).

## Millstreet lift junior C title after a goal fest

LADIES FOOTBALL

Mary Newman

Millstreet	4-15
Blarney	5-8

MILLSTREET led 1-12 to 1-6 at the interval in the SE System Junior C championship final played in Ovens on Friday evening last.

In an opening half that produced some excellent scores, Marie Ellen O'Connor, Kate O'Keeffe, Emily Ring, Alanna Barry and Claire O'Keeffe all found the range with Millstreet points and a goal from Kate O'Keeffe helped them hold a six-point interval lead.

Blarney stayed in touch as Orla Cremen opened their scoring with a goal followed by a point from play from Megan Murphy and Olivia Murphy. Megan Murphy added a pointed free to their tally and with Stephanie Murphy and Olivia Murphy pointing from play before a Murphy free ensured they were well in contention as the half-time whistle approached.

Blarney came out in determined fashion for the second half and they grabbed the first two scores of the half as they struck for two goals to get themselves back on level.

Megan Murphy notched up the first goal from play and Jennifer Murphy from a long-range effort from a free went all the way to the net the sides were on level.

With the sides deadlocked it was score for score. Marie Ellen O'Connor, Alanna Barry and Aileen Buckley were all on target with Millstreet scores but Blarney were equal to the challenge.

Megan Murphy found the net with a free for her side's fourth goal followed by points from frees from Jennifer Murphy and Megan Murphy. Claire O'Keeffe, Marie Ellen O'Connor and Kate O'Keeffe kept the pressure on with Millstreet points as the play swung from end to end.

An Emma Murphy goal with five minutes remaining put Blarney into a one-point lead and now battling to hold their advantage.

A strong finish from Millstreet saw them add 1-2 without reply with Kate O'Keeffe pointing a free and then adding a goal before a Marie Ellen O'Connor point helped secure victory and the title for Millstreet.

**Scores for Millstreet:** ME O'Connor 0-8 (0-2 f), K O'Keeffe 2-2 (0-1 f), C O'Keeffe 1-1, A Buckley 1-0, E Ring, A Barry 0-2 each.

**Blarney:** M Murphy 2-4 (1-3 f), J Murphy 1-1 f, O Cremen, E Murphy 1-0 each, O Murphy 0-2, S Murphy 0-1.

**MILLSTREET:** D Looney, J Tarrant, S Dennehy, M Ring, D O'Reilly, L O'Reilly, L Kieley, C Collins, M E O'Connor, A Barry, E Ring, C O'Keeffe, A Barry, K O'Keeffe (c), E Lawlor.

**Subs:** A Buckley for A Barry (36), U Buckley for D Looney (50).

**BLARNEY:** S Bannon; K O'Keeffe, J Murphy, A McCarthy; S Dennehy, E O'Regan, N Twomey; S McCarthy, Y Hogan, T Martin, E Murphy, O Murphy; O Cremen, M Murphy, S Murphy.

**Subs:** A Cotter for A McCarthy (20 in), M Hayes for S Dennehy (20 in).



# All set for ball in junior semi-finals

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

THE SE Systems Junior championship continues this weekend and it's down to the semi-finals as Ballyhea, Na Piarsaigh, Watergrashill and St Vincent's are the four remaining teams left to battle it out for the title.

In the round robin series of games, Na Piarsaigh came through with victories over Ballyhea Banteer and Bride Rovers. Watergrashill defeated St Vincent's, Youghal and Bishopstown to book their place in the last four.

Wins over Bishopstown and Youghal were enough to ensure Vincent's grabbed a semi-final place. Likewise for Ballyhea, despite losing out by two points to Na Piarsaigh they advanced with wins over Banteer and Bride Rovers.

The meeting of north sides neighbours Na Piarsaigh and St Vincent's is one that will catch the eye, while Watergrashill and Ballyhea will also be a lively encounter.

Watergrashill were defeated in last season's semi-final by Newtownshandrum but are considerably strengthened this season by the transfer back of Marie O'Neill, who returns following several successful years in the Milford colours.

Former Rockbán and Cloughduv player Catriona Foley who captained Cork to senior All-Ireland success had transferred her allegiance to Watergrashill as has Aishling Whooley, who has moved from Sarsfields and former Waterford player Deirdre Nugent and these are four huge acquisitions for them.

Ballyhea are continuing to make good progress they won the junior B championship last season and to reach the semi-final in their first year in the grade is a huge achievement. They have excellent players in Rosin Killeen, Mary Claire Carroll, Elaine Crowley, Rachel Harty and Niamh Killeen and they will battle hard against Watergrashill to reach the final.

Na Piarsaigh contested the final last year but lost out to Newtownshandrum who stormed into the game with a late rally to deny Na Piarsaigh the title. With a year's experience behind them Na Piarsaigh will fancy their chances of taking the title this year. Orla Bourke, Rebecca Rourke, Lisa Burns, Casey Coleman and Emily Buckley will lead their challenge for a place in the final.

St Vincent's will go into this clash in confident form with Cork senior Amy O'Connor and Lauren Homan leading their forward division, they have good players in Leah Cambridge, Amy Wilson and Nicole Crean and they will be determined to put one over on their neighbouring club.

Watergrashill v Ballyhea today at 11.30am in Castle Road. St Vincent's versus Na Piarsaigh tomorrow at 11.30am also in Castle Road.



Leah Weste, Ballincollig, and Louise O'Flynn, Milford, in action in the county final four years ago. The teams clash again today.

Picture: Larry Cummins

# Carbery colleagues clash in inter final

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

IT'S back to local action this weekend, with lots of games on the agenda, following last weekend's All-Ireland replay.

This afternoon in Brinny it's a clash of neighbours as Enniskeane and Newtownshandrum battle it out for the SE Systems Intermediate title at 1.30pm.

Many of the players are team-mates with Carbery and they will line out together side by side 24 hours later as the divisional side take on St Catherine's in the senior championship quarter-final tomorrow in Castle Road at 5pm.

The winners of this will meet Glen Rovers in the semi-final after the city outfit overcame Killeagh on Wednesday last, 1-12 to 0-8, to be the first team to book a semi-final spot.

Today the second quarter-final will

see Ballincollig bid to overcome Milford when the clubs at 2pm in Castle Road.

The winners will meet Sarsfields in the quarter-final on October 14 and on the same day, Douglas and Inniscarra will battle it out for a semi-final spot.

This morning in Castle Road the first of the SE Systems Junior A championship semi-final took place when Watergrashill and Ballyhea clashed.

The second semi-final goes ahead tomorrow when Na Piarsaigh face their neighbours St Vincent's.

Valley Rovers and Ballinhassig have

already secured their semi-final places in the SE Systems Senior B Championship and they will be hoping that the last of the round robin series of games, which sees Eire Óg taking on Fr O'Neill's tomorrow in Castle Road at 2pm, will take place.

This will give them an indication of who they will play in the semi-finals.

A win for Eire Óg or Fr O'Neill's will put them through to a semi-final meeting with Valley Rovers and give Blackrock the second semi-final spot with Ballinhassig.

A draw will put a different complexion on matters as it would see a three-way play-off between Blackrock, Eire Óg and Fr O'Neill's in a battle for the semi-final spot, so it's still all very much to play for.

■ IMPORTANT MEETING FOR CLUBS: Away from the playing fields the county board will hold a special meeting on Monday next in the Rochestown Park Hotel, 8.30pm.

The board will take up their annual collection at the county hurling final on Sunday, October 22 in Páirc Uí Chaoimh and this year there are strict guidelines and rules in place which the board must adhere to, therefore it is important that they are well organised in advance. The collection is a vital source of income each year for the board and particularly this year with the new development in Castle Road.

Clubs are asked to be in attendance to discuss and plan the collection and the board are appealing to all clubs to send a representative to this meeting.

# U14 and U16 championships making early progress

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

THE U14 and U16 championships in A, B and C grades have progressed along with the opening round and back door rounds now almost all completed.

In the U14 A grade Youghal and Sarsfields have reached the semi-final, the quarter-finals will see Eire Óg meeting Inniscarra in an all mid cork clash of neighbouring clubs, Cloughduv are down to meet Milford/Ballyhea with the winners of both meeting in the second semi-final.

The U14 B has one third round game to be played Na Piarsaigh will meet Glen Rovers on Wednesday in the Glen at 5.45pm, with the winners facing Sliabh Rua in the quarter-final.

Courcey Rovers and Ballincollig are in action tomorrow Sunday at 12 noon in Courceys. Sarsfields' second team will meet Cobh and Castletyons must play Kilbree with the winners taking on Killeagh in the quarter-final.

In U14 C Rockbán will play the winners of the St Vincent's versus Bride Rovers game. Banteer play Castlemartyr in Castlemartyr next weekend while Brian Dillon's travel to meet Clonakilty and Ballinasally are scheduled to meet Blarney.

In the U16 championship, Eire Óg and Ballinora meet today, Courcey Rovers and Ballygarvan meet this Monday in Ballygarvan, Charleville and Enniskeane are meeting on Sunday week. Carrigaline are through to the quarter-final having defeated St Finbarr's while Sarsfields overcame Blackrock.

The quarter-finals line up is as follows Glen Rovers will meet Ballincollig who had an excellent victory over Aghada, the winners of the Eire Óg/Ballinora game will play Courcey Rovers or Ballygar-

van, Carrigaline will meet Charleville or Enniskeane and Sarsfields are down to meet Inniscarra.

In the U16 B grade, Blarney will meet Sliabh Rua and Inniscarra 2 will play Youghal with the winners of both meeting in the semi-final. Fr O'Neill's and Banteer will clash with the winners playing Barryroe. Na Piarsaigh and Cloughduv will square up in the last quarter-final with the winners playing Killeagh in the semi.

The U16 C championship is almost down to quarter-finals. Nemo Rangers will play Rockbán with the winners meeting Valley Rovers in the quarter-final.

Middleton play Mallow tomorrow in Mallow in a quarter-final. St Colum's are scheduled to meet Millstreet, Dungourney will play Erin's Own, and these are both quarter-finals games. St Catherine's and Grenagh will clash with the winners going to a quarter-final against Clonakilty.



# Second chance for Carbery, Catherine's

CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick

Carbery 2-11  
St Catherine's 1-14

AN exciting finish to a highly entertaining senior championship quarter-final in Castle Road last evening saw the sides finish all square.

A draw was the fairest of results after a first half which saw St Catherine's on top and a second where Carbery were slightly the better side.

St Catherine's were hugely impressive in the opening 30 minutes. Their hurling was sharp, crisp and snappy. Moving the ball fast and finding each other well, they led by 0-6 to 0-2 after 12 minutes.

Orla Cotter was outstanding in the middle of the park and with Aoife Hurley displaying great skill and speed, the pair notched up six between them.

Carbery were lacking the intensity and teamwork of Catherine's, not uncharacteristic of a divisional side. But they were keeping in touch thanks to Caroline Sugrue, Sile Burns, and the free-taking of Orla Cronin.

Carbery opted at times for a short puck-out and it often went against them. It was a surprising ploy considering the distance Eimear White has in her puck-outs.

With good play all over the field, St Catherine's were full value for their 0-12 to 0-7 half-time lead.

A fine point by Eimear O'Brien stretched their lead to six but Carbery's purple patch was coming. Orla Cronin pointed a free before a high ball by Caroline Sugrue defied goalkeeper Denise Twomey in the fading light. It gave Carbery the impetus they required and a brilliant Sile Burns strike three minutes later saw them lead by a point.

But what a response from the championship's most exciting forward. Aoife Hurley, showing brilliant speed and composure, left players in her wake and rattled the net to regain the lead for Catherine's.

It was end-to-end. Burns was in on goal again but her shot down for goal was denied by Twomey, who stood tall. Rachel O'Callaghan put Catherine's two up on 51 minutes but two from Sugrue and Cronin levelled it, giving both sides a second chance.

**CARBERY:** E White (Barryroe); M Copinger (St Colum's); D Carroll (Enniskeane); E O'Neill (Kilbrittan/Timoleague); M Lynch (Newcestown); A Crowley (Kilbrittan/Timoleague); M Murphy (Kilbrittan/Timoleague); L Copinger (Clonsilla); C Crowley (Ballinasally); C Sugrue (Ballinasally); O Cronin (Enniskeane/c); C Sexton (Barryroe); C Murphy (Kilbrittan/Timoleague); S Burns (Barryroe); S Burke (Kilbrittan/Timoleague).

**Subs:** K Wall for S Burke (57).  
**ST CATHERINE'S:** D Twomey; A M O'Connell; M Walsh; Y O'Neill; L Hayes; O O'Rourke; M O'Keefe; O Neville; O O'Rourke; E Ronayne; E O'Brien; Hurley; R O'Callaghan; A Fitzgerald.  
**Subs:** M O'Regan for E O'Brien (47); M O'Connell for A Fitzgerald.

# Newcestown shine in the second half

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

Newcestown 1-13  
Enniskeane 3-4

A **STORMING** second-half performance where they outscored their opponents by eight scores to one was the springboard for Newcestown's victory in an entertaining SE Systems Intermediate Championship final in Brinny on Saturday.

The game was eight minutes old before we had the opening score, Suzanne Deasy converting a Newcestown free. Danielle Carroll showed her pace as she took on the Newcestown defence to level the scores and with Siobhan O'Driscoll adding to their tally they hit the front. Enniskeane squandered two chances from frees and they found themselves in arrears as Colleen Twomey converted for Newcestown.

With their defence closing down attack after attack, Enniskeane grew in confidence and with their attack troubling the Newcestown defence they hit the front with three goals in a seven-minute spell. Megan O'Regan hit the first finishing well to the net before captain Orla Coughlan, won possession and showed pace as she passed defender after defender to finish well from the edge of the square. Battling to get something Colleen Twomey pointed but Enniskeane grabbed their third goal with Sinéad Hurley on target.

The sides swapped points but Newcestown finished the half stronger. Maria Kenneally and Colette Desmond pointed to narrow the gap before the break when Enniskeane led 3-3 to 0-6.

On the resumption Enniskeane could find no way through to extend their advantage. Therese McCarthy and Maria Kenneally cut the deficit to a point before Ciara O'Sullivan got the last touch over the line in a goal mouth scramble to give Newcestown the lead.

Colleen Twomey pointed a free to level matters and driven on by the excellent Colette Desmond, Zerica Griffen and Colleen Twomey they availed of every opportunity. Colette Desmond pointed, Danielle Carroll levelled it and again Desmond edged her side in front. Colleen Twomey showed her accuracy converting two frees to



Megan O'Regan, Enniskeane, goes down following a challenge from defender Maeve Lynch Newcestown in the first half of the SE Intermediate Final Nano Nagle Cup in Brinny. Picture: Larry Cummins

push the lead to three. Enniskeane applied pressure but needed their players to push forward more as Newcestown crowded them out and quelled any hope they had of finding an equaliser as they held on to take the title.

Colette Desmond was named as Evening Echo Player Of the Match following a superb display as she won her first adult championship medal.

**Scorers for Newcestown:** C Twomey 0-6 (0-4's 0-1 45), C Desmond 0-3, C O'Sullivan 1-0, M Kenneally 0-2, S Deasy (f), T McCarthy 0-1 each.

**Enniskeane:** M O'Regan, O Coughlan, S Hurley 1-0ea, D Carroll 0-2, T Sheehan, S O'Driscoll 0-1ea.

**Newcestown:** O Dinsin; M Mc Sweeney, F Deasy(c); A Crowley; M Lynch, S Deasy, A O'Donovan; E Crowley, Z Griffen; M O'Donovan, M Kenneally, H O'Mahony; M O'Donovan, C Twomey, C O'Sullivan.

**Subs:** T McCarthy for H O'Mahony (h/t), R Desmond for A Crowley (42).

**Enniskeane:** C O'Donovan; K O'Shea, C Nyhan, K Scannell; S Curtin; C O'Donovan, A O'Driscoll; O Cronin, O Coughlan(c); M O'Regan, S O'Driscoll, L Mannix; K Hennessey, D Carroll, S Hurley.

**Subs:** T Sheehan for K Hennessey (23), R Scannell for K O'Shea (h/t).

**Referee:** Cathal Egan (Glen Rovers).



Anxious moments for Newcestown substitutes as they trail 3-3 to 0-6 points at half time. Picture: Larry Cummins

# Watson's goals make life easier for Milford in end

Milford 3-12  
Ballincollig 0-11

MILFORD'S more economical use of the ball in attack was what separated them from Ballincollig's strong challenge in Castle Road on Saturday.

For 40 minutes Ballincollig kept pace with the 2015 champions but 2-3 in 11 minutes and Milford were heading for a quarter-final tie with Sarsfields.

This was a tough, clean, physical game. A tight opening, there was little open hurling due to both teams' high work-rate.

Maria Watson did what she does best, finding the net on eight minutes after three Ballincollig defenders allowed her run through relatively easily.

Milford were that bit sharper on the breaking ball and went into a 1-6 to 0-3 lead on 23 minutes.

Yet Ballincollig started to take the game to Milford

instead of just chasing them and three points from Ashley Lovett (two frees) and Patricia Buttimer put them in a stronger position at the half-time whistle.

But Milford were exceptional in defence, as always, with keeper Rebecca Duggan and Elaine O'Riordan thwarting many a threat.

Elaine O'Riordan took the ball off the line on 41 minutes after a point-blank save by Duggan and Ballincollig had a goal disallowed on 44 after referee Dave O'Connell had blown for a free believing their advantage to have evaporated.

Milford were that bit more composed and with Ashling Thompson very prominent at midfield striking good diagonal balls in, Maria Watson, Rebecca Finn and Emer Watson were making good use of the

supply.

Thirty-nine minutes in Finn put Maria through for her second goal and she hit the net herself nine minutes later to put the game beyond Ballincollig's reach at 3-10 to 0-8. Ballincollig never gave up the fight but Milford were always heading for the next round.

**Scorers for Milford:** E Watson 0-8 (0-6's), M Watson 2-0, R Finn 1-0 Thompson 0-2, L Stack 0-2.

**Ballincollig:** A Lovett 0-7 (0-6's), P Buttimer 0-2, Cronin 0-2.

**MILFORD:** R Duggan; A Galvin, E O'Riordan, D Hayes; L Hanley, Watson, S Sexton; O O'Mahony, A Thompson; L Stack, R Finn, E Watson; M Watson, K Galvin, E O'Gorman. Subs: D O'Brien for K Galvin (42), S Sheehan for R Finn (49), M Kavanagh, M K Finn for S Sexton, O'Gorman (56), M Fitzgibbon for A Galvin (61).

**BALLINCOLLIG:** L M O'Mahony; A Kiely, L Wieste, A Cotter; K O'Donoghue, S Buckley, S Keating; D Cronin, E Casey, K Jones, P Buttimer; S O'Callaghan; A Lovett, M O'Donoghue, S Coomey.

**Subs:** O O'Leary for K Jones (37), E Lording for M O'Donoghue (5).  
**Referee:** Dave O'Connell (Glen Rovers)



# 11 nominations for camogie team

**Louise Cashell**

lcashell@corwindependent.com

Camogie player Gemma O'Connor is in line for her tenth All-Star award after she was named among the nominees yesterday.

11 members of Cork's All-Ireland winning camogie team have been nominated for All-Star awards altogether.

Paudie Murray, who managed the team to victory, has also been nominated for Manager of the Year.

As well as O'Connor, goalkeeper Aoife Murray, defenders Rena Buckley, Laura Treacy, Pamela Mackey, Eimear O'Sullivan, midfielder Ashling Thompson as well as forwards

Orla Cronin, Orla Cotter, Katrina Mackey and Amy O'Connor were all chosen in the 45 player shortlist for the All-Star Team of the Year. The team will be announced on 4 November at the Citywest Hotel.

Along with Cork's 11 nominations, beaten finalists Kilkenny have nine nominations, Dublin and Galway have seven and six respectively with Clare (5), Wexford (4), Limerick (1), Tipperary (1) and Waterford (1) completing the 45 player list.

This year marks the first year that a camogie team will embark on an All-Star tour with the 2016 and 2017 teams travelling to Madrid from 29 November to 2 December.



**Gemma O'Connor (right) with Hannah Looney after winning the All-Ireland Senior Camogie Final. Gemma is in line to collect her tenth All-Star Award. PHOTO: SPORTSFILE**

**DROMEY (Cork):** On October 7, 2017, peacefully, in the tender loving care of the staff at Beaumont Residential Care, MAUREEN (nee Hegarty), Tramore Lawn, Douglas, dearly loved wife of the late Barry and much loved mother of John, Helen, Trish, Jimmy and stepson Paul, loving grandmother of Stephen, Laura, Elena, Chris, Michael and Joanna. Lying in repose at the Temple Hill Funeral Home, Boreenmanna Road of Jerh. O'Connor Ltd. Removal at 6.30pm on tomorrow (Tuesday) evening to St. Columba's Church, Douglas. Requiem Mass at 11.00am on Wednesday. Funeral afterwards to St. Finbarr's Cemetery. "May she rest in peace".



**Enniskeane captain Orla Coughlan bears down at speed before firing home an excellent individual goal against Newcestown. See P45 for the report. Picture: Larry Cummins**

OCT  
2017

## CAMOGIE

**Camogie Soaring Stars Awards 2017 sponsored by Liberty Insurance, nominees list:** Goalkeepers: A Lee (Cork), N McQuillan (Derry), E Mangan (Meath); Full-Back Line: S Harrington (Cork), N Ni Chaoimh (Cork), L Weste (Cork), M McNally (Down), N Leen (Kerry), C Colley (Meath), K Byrne (Wicklow); Half-Back Line: E Brennan (Carlow), S Buckley (Cork), G McNicholl (Derry), G Free (Dublin), A Trant (Kildare), A Keogh (Meath), L Doherty (Westmeath); Midfield: F Neville (Cork), P Diggins (Kerry), E Reilly (Kildare), C O'Brien (Meath), C McCrossan (Westmeath); Half-Forward Line: E Treacy (Carlow), K Hickey (Cork), K McCarthy (Cork), A Gaffney (Meath), M Thynne (Meath), K Troy (Meath), D McGrath (Westmeath); Full-Forward Line: L Collins (Cork), N Mallon (Down), A Bugler (Dublin), J Dolan (Meath), A Minogue (Meath), K Tobin (Waterford), S McGrath (Westmeath).

**A MATCH MADE IN HEAVEN....** Popular Hilltown couple Darren O'Hagan and Paula Gribben leave St John's Chapel, Ballymaghery on Saturday last to a full guard of honour from the Clonduff camogs. Darren was this year's Down senior football captain and his new wife Paula held the same position for Down senior camogs. Both are members of the Clonduff club. Picture: Brendan Monaghan



**Amy O'Connor and Lauren Homan, St Vincents and Cork senior camogie player, with the O'Duffy Cup are welcomed at Gurranabraher Credit Union Open Day 2017 by girls from Sundays Well Girls NS and St Vincents camogie.**





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# JUNIOR CAMOGIE



ULSTER JUNIOR CAMOGIE CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL BRIDINI OGA



SAFFRON COLOURS...The Bridini Oga team (wearing the Antrim colours because of a colour clash) who beat Down champions Castlewellsan in last weekend's Ulster Junior Camogie semi-final at Fr Maginn Park, Glenravel. Pic by Dylan McIlwaine

## Bridini Oga step into the unknown

The Glenravel side are 60 minutes away from making history in the Ulster Junior final

ULSTER JUNIOR CAMOGIE  
CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL  
**BRIDINI OGA V CROSSERLOUGH**  
Sunday, 2.15pm, Tattysreagh

BRIDINI OGA manager Rodney Kerr admits that what they know about their Ulster final opposition Crosserlough could fit on the back of a postage stamp.

They're one step away from a first ever Ulster Junior Championship title following their impressive semi-final win over a talented Castlewellsan outfit.

Niall  
Gartland



The Edgar sisters, Kirsten and Victoria, were stand-out performers as they came out on top by 3-9 to 2-9. Their dogged work-rate all over the pitch was another key factor in their victory.

They'll have their work cut out, however, against a Crosserlough side with more experience of playing at this level. Kerr says they are resorting to some old-fashioned sleuthing to discover more about their Cavan opposition.

"It's very hard to know what to expect in Ulster. At least whenever you're playing Derry teams, you can gather a bit of information as they're next door. It was a great win though we know very little about Crosserlough."

"We've seen no footage of them."

We'll be running around on their Facebook trying to find out whatever we can, but teams are getting very cute that way too."

The Glenravel side are back-boned by a squadron of players still in their teens, including the massively talented Laoise McKenna. Kerr says they are more experienced than their age profile suggests.

"We won the Bridie McMenamin last year. This is our first time. It's an exciting time, we have a strong U16 team coming through, we're trying to get ourselves established in Division

One.

"A lot of them young girls were college all-stars, most of them are around 18 or 19 but it seems like they've been around forever as they've been playing as soon as they were eligible to play."

"The likes of Laoise McKenna who is 19 would be one of our key players, it seems like she's been there forever."

"All seems to be going good. Another year behind us we'll have a really good squad of U16s coming through."

ULSTER JUNIOR CAMOGIE CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL CROSSERLOUGH

## Crosserlough camogs embracing their busy schedule

The Cavan side have had a dramatic run to this year's Ulster Junior Championship final

BY NIALL GARTLAND

THE games are coming thick and fast for a Crosserlough side on the verge of their second Ulster Junior Club Championship title.

Sean Reilly's side edged dramatic clashes against Granemore and Derrygloughan in the past fortnight, setting up this weekend's clash against Antrim outfit Bridini Oga.

They won both matches by a single point and the entire parish is rowing in behind their gutsy

camogs, according to their team boss.

"We've had both scenarios now for the last two weeks where we were behind all the way against Granemore and now this week we were fighting to keep our lead."

"They're just a great bunch of girls and have a never-give-up attitude. I think the hardest-working team work both games. The support yesterday was unbelievable. Since the win in Granemore the whole parish are definitely behind us."

Crosserlough are a dual club and that brings its own challenges. Six of their camogs started for the ladies side that won their first ever Ulster Championship match last Saturday, when they overcame Tyrone side Aghyaran.

Nevertheless, Reilly is welcoming the chance to play their third Ulster Championship match in as many weeks.

"We're loving it, we'd rather keep them coming and keep the momentum going. There's a great buzz

around the parish, our Ladies' footballers are through to an Ulster semi-final. Six of them started yesterday."

Crosserlough won the Ulster Junior Championship title in 2012 but there has been a significant turnover of player in the last five years. There are still a few stalwarts remaining, including their full-back Sinead Coyle and captain Erin Galligan.

He said: "We won it in 2012. There would be a lot of new faces, there are

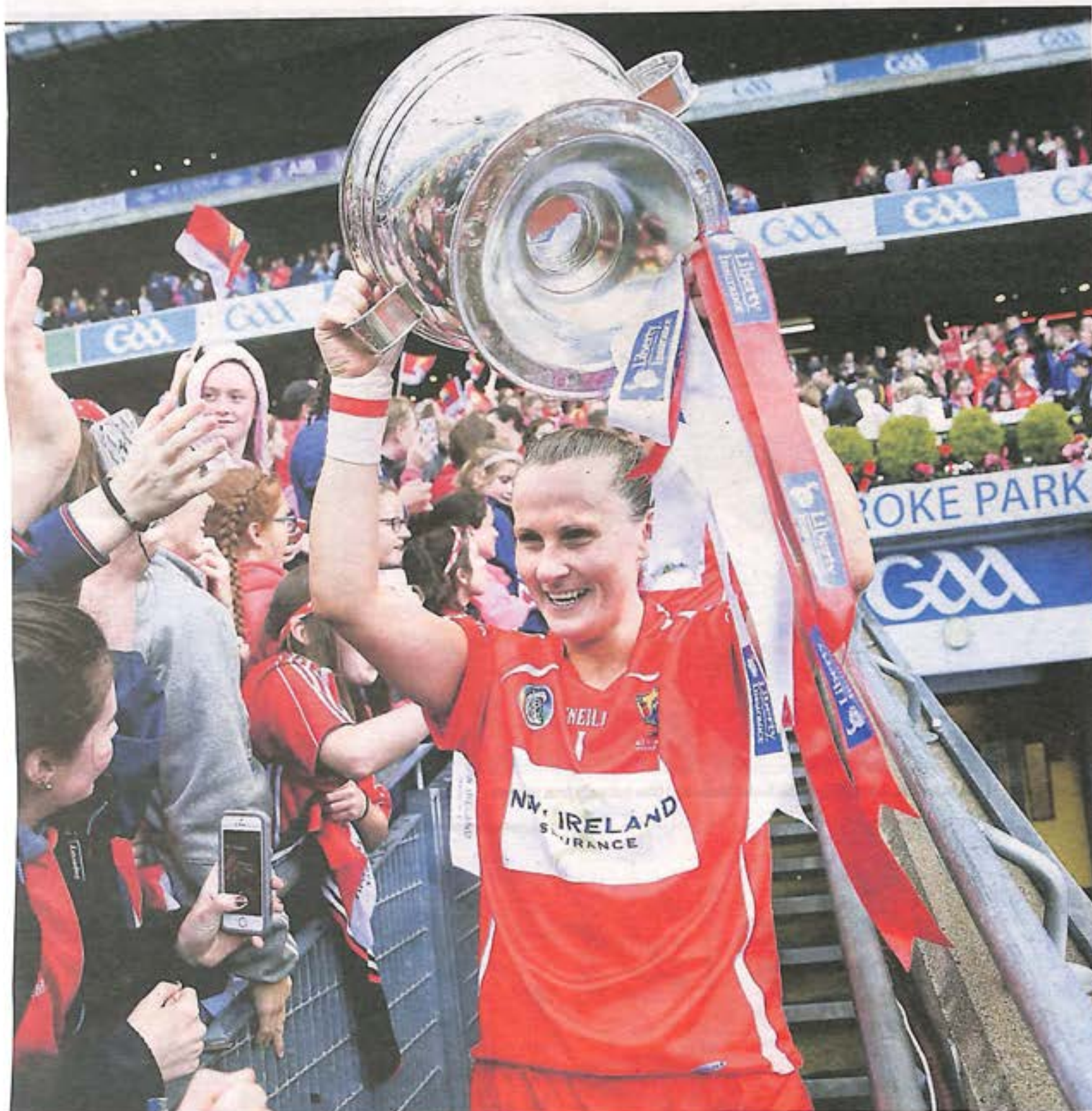
still a few there but there are a lot of young players who have come through in the last few years."

They've already made amends for losing last year's semi-final to Tullysaran, and Reilly also reports Emer McVeety has recovered from injury in time for this weekend's final.

"To be honest, we were very disappointed last year with ourselves and we set our goal of getting back and trying to get one step further this year which was the Ulster final."



# 'I'll always remember



Aoife Murray lifts the trophy after Cork win the All-Ireland Senior Camogie Final.

Picture: Inpho/Gary Carr



Camogie

Mark Woods

IT'S only now our winner, Aoife Murray, can really begin to enjoy Cork's record-breaking 27th All-Ireland camogie victory after that nail-biting win over Kilkenny.

It was the star goalkeeper's eighth medal in a glittering career, starting with her first in 2002 and including six All Stars and three county championships with Cloughduv.

Aoife, who only recently turned 34, works in property in Dublin, where she's been 'exiled' for the last six years, so making her more recent successes all the more praiseworthy.

Following on from 02, Aoife collected more medals in 05, 06, 08, 09, 14, 15 and this year and was decorated by the All Stars in 04, 08, 09, 12, 14 and 15.

Where does this year's one-point win over Kilkenny fit in?

"I genuinely don't think you can rank the All-Irelands because something different happens every year, whether it's camogie-related, personal life, or work life.

"There's always something about a season which makes it hard, so it's very difficult for me to say this was the sweetest of them all.

"At the moment it is because it's so close to the bone, but I will always remember my first medal in 2002.

"I still remember the fight I had to do to get the number 16 jersey and play with girls who were my heroes growing up. That was equally special for so many different reasons. I was only 18 at the time," Aoife said.

To the outsider looking in, you'd imagine a big part of the motivation this year was to make up for losing to the same opponents 12 months ago, but Aoife's take on that is interesting.

"People were saying you were back to get revenge, but for me personally, there was no revenge.

"I couldn't begrudge Kilkenny their win last year because they performed and we didn't, to be cold and practical about it.

"I never had that sense of getting one back on them. It just didn't feel like that.

"Overall we have it over Kilkenny in terms of All-Irelands won (27-13) and that's how I'd look at it.

"If that was us and Dublin and we were both on 26 titles, I'd certainly want to get one over them.

"I'd never put Kilkenny camogie in the same bracket at Cork camogie because if you look back over the history of the game, the record books show where we are at.

"Some of the younger girls might have had revenge on their minds and that's fine because they play each other at college level, so I don't have that side of it."

Making that twice weekly return Dublin to Cork trip made it all worthwhile for Aoife, who admitted it wasn't easy at times.

"I'd normally come down on Tuesdays and again at the weekends. Sometimes, I'd travel on Thursdays instead and work from home on Fridays, but it would always be just once during the week.

"When the body is good and the head is good you don't mind it at all, but, when they're not in synch, I find it an awful chore.

"It was grand during the summer and yet I suppose overall, it's part and parcel of being an inter-county



Cork's Aoife Murray clears the sliotar despite the best efforts of Kilkenny's Miriam Walsh during the All Ireland Senior Camogie Final.

Picture: Inpho/James Crombie



Faye McCarthy and Aoife Murray launching the M. Donnelly GAA All-Ireland Poc Fada Finals in Croke Park at the start of the summer.

Picture: Inpho/Bryan Keane



# my first medal in '02'



Aoife Murray: 'I'd never put Kilkenny camogie in the same bracket at Cork camogie because if you look back over the history of the game, the record books show where we are at.'

Picture: Inpho/James Crombie



Aoife Murray clears ahead of Wexford's Nicole Fortune in the Camogie League Division 1.

Picture: Inpho/Ken Sutton



Aoife Murray congratulated by nephews and nieces James, David, Louise and Cara Murray and Shannon Holmes following the presentation of the Muskerry GAA/Auld Triangle Sports Award for August.

Picture: Mike English

camogie player.

"The worst part would be the journey back early on Wednesday morning and then come 3.30 in the afternoon."

And when you consider a long-standing back injury, it adds to the impressive dedication and commitment shown by Aoife.

"I have had an issue with my back for a while and then I had a nasty fall in the 2013 All-Ireland semi-final against Kilkenny."

"The initial advice from the

medics was to do nothing for 12 months, but like every other sportsperson I sought a second opinion hoping to hear what I wanted to hear.

"We managed to win two All-Irelands in 2014 and 2015, so I considered I had rode my luck and was fortunate to have achieved what we did."

"I retired after 2015, but, then, when the clocks go forward and the long evenings arrive you begin to think about playing again. The opportunity to play for Cork again came up so I decided to give it one

more bash. I'm enjoying it, so why not?"

The night before the final, Aoife roomed with Gemma O'Connor, another warrior who was considered unfit to start because of a knee injury sustained in the semi-final.

She didn't travel with the team on the Saturday, having worked in Dublin on Friday, adding to the uncertainty of her availability.

"Gemma was saying the only disappointing thing about training on Thursday was that it didn't go on

long enough.

"Hearing that gave me a bit of hope and I was thinking 'she'll do the warm-up and see how it goes'."

"I was saying she might be able to give us 10-20 minutes or whatever she can do at the start."

"I felt Gemma was one person who worked hard enough over the years to deserve the honour of going in the parade before the match."

"Then, after playing the whole match, it showed what a trooper she really is."

Away from sport, Aoife is involved in charity work and it proved an eye opener.

"I don't do enough to be completely honest about it. Child Fund Ireland has a partnership with the Camogie Association and I was lucky enough to be asked to come along and be an ambassador for it."

"I spent some time in Ethiopia to see the work they do on the ground and I must say it is phenomenal. They were promoting bikes for young girls and that suited the camogie ethos."

"I'm still listed as an ambassador, but between work and camogie it's very hard to find the time to do more."

"I'm also not so social-media savvy, which is an area I do fall down in because I could be pushing Child Fund Ireland a bit more. I tweet very occasionally, but don't get the hash tag thing." Aoife's future between the posts for Cork isn't going to be decided anytime soon.

"For the moment I'm just trying to concentrate on enjoying the victory as much as possible."

"We were straight back with Cloughduv, but lost recently, so I can enjoy the winter now."

"I've a few niggling things as well from the year, so I can go back to the gym and get those sorted. I don't think now is the time to make any decisions," Aoife concluded.





At the presentations to the Evening Echo Ladies Sports Star Autumn Quarterly award winners in association with the Ambassador Hotel, were award winners, Aoife Murray, camogie, Cork, Sharon Semchiy, swimming, Sunday's Well Swimming Club and Louise Scannell, basketball, Glanmire Basketball Club with Evening Echo deputy marketing manager, Lisa Coughlan, Eoin Daly, manager and Aoife Lohse, marketing, Ambassador Hotel. Picture: Dan Linehan



Aoife Murray, Eoghan Dinan, deputy editor of the Evening Echo, Louise Scannell and Sharon Semchiy at the awards ceremony yesterday. Picture: Dan Linehan

# Trio of Cork sports aces are honoured

## AWARDS

■ Éamonn Murphy

A TRIO of talented Leesiders were honoured in yesterday's *Evening Echo* Ladies Sport Star Awards function at The Ambassador Hotel.

Swimmer Sharon Semchiy, basketballer Louise Scannell and camogie icon Aoife Murray were the three brilliant athletes recognised by the *Evening Echo* and The Ambassador Hotel as the third quarter winners.

This is the 11th year of the scheme, the leading awards for female sport stars in the country, and there were a number of contenders for the three slots covering July, August and September.

Naturally, camogie was going to be to the fore in this quarter, after Cork pushed clear of Dublin on the roll of honour with their 27th title at the expense of great rivals Kilkenny. Aoife Murray was immense in the decider against the Cats, but had been equally impressive in the tough semi-final against Galway.

Murray picked up her eight senior All-Ireland when walking up the steps of the Hogan Stand to lift the O'Duffy Cup, and also has three



At the presentations to the Evening Echo Ladies Sports Star Autumn Quarterly award winners in association with the Ambassador Hotel, were award winner Cork camogie player Aoife Murray with her brothers, Damien, Paudie and Kevin and her first cousin Niall Collins. Picture: Dan Linehan

county championships to her name with Cloughduv, along with six — and you'd imagine soon to be seven — All-Stars. Murray's dedication can be measured by the fact she works in Dublin and commutes home for training, and took time off to join her family at yesterday's function.

There has been a strong basketball flavour to this year's *Evening Echo* Ladies Sport Star Awards, with Claire Rockall and Gráinne Dwyer winners already in the first two quarters. That's because Irish women's basketball is flying high and that's why Louise Scannell was

picked.

The Glanmire player was immense for the Ireland U18s when they defied the odds to reach the final of the European Championship, which were staged in Dublin. In doing so they gained promotion to the top tier of the game. Amy Murphy and Anna-

lieise Murphy were the other Cork-onians on the U18 panel.

The third award winner on hand yesterday was swimmer Sharon Semchiy. A 16-year-old fifth-year student at Regina Mundi, she excelled for Ireland in the Home International Schools meet in England.

A member of Sunday's Well Swimming Club, where Richard Cassidy is her coach, while her parents Yuri and Iryna are a major support. She trains in the pool every morning from 6am, while after school she works out in the gym at the Mardyke Arena, where Sharon is a member of their Emerging Talent Programme.

*Evening Echo* Sports Editor John McHale paid tribute to the dedication and achievements of the trio.

"When you're the best in Cork you're usually the best in Ireland and often the best in the world as well. It's fantastic that we have been able to honour three sport stars from very different sports who are taking on the best in the business and winning."

**Evening Echo 2017 Ladies Sport Star winners:** Gráinne Dwyer (basketball), Saoirse Noonan (soccer), Emma White and Victoria Burns (hockey), Claire Rockall (basketball), Denise Walsh (rowing), Jill Hodgins (running), Aoife Murray (camogie), Louise Scannell (basketball), Sharon Semchiy (swimming).



# Junior A semi kicks off a busy weekend

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

LAST weekend's results decided the semi-finalists for the SE Systems senior B championship and for one of the junior A finalists.

However, we will have to wait until tomorrow to learn who the second team to contest the junior A final will be, as Ballyhea and Watergrasshill have to play again after drawing on Saturday last.

It will be all systems go from early morning in Castle Road, tomorrow, as part of a busy triple-header.

The Ballyhea and Watergrasshill replay of the SE Systems junior A semi-final is at 11:30am. The winners will meet Na Piarsaigh, who booked their place in the final with a 2-11 to 1-12 win over St Vincent's last weekend.

Eire Óg had the upper hand in Fr O'Neill's in the last game in the senior B round-robin series of games, winning 1-14 to 1-4.

The result secured a semi-final spot for Eire Óg and ensured there would not be a three-way play-off.

The semi-finals go ahead tomorrow in Castle Road. Ballinhassig take on league champions, Blackrock, who are in their first season at senior B, having won the intermediate grade last season. Blackrock have impressed in this campaign, with victories over Barryroe, Carrigaline, and Fr O'Neill's, but they were held to a draw, in their opening game, by Eire Óg.

Ballinhassig are experienced. They regraded down to senior B this season and they have done well to reach the last-four. They overcame Donakilly and Valley Rovers, but lost to Aghabullogue in the round-robin series and they will look to their excellent Cork senior, Eimear Sullivan, to lead them to a final spot.

Valley Rovers and Eire Óg have been knocking at the door of the senior B championship for several years. Valleys contested the final last year and lost to Mallow.

It's 2013 since Eire Óg were here, but, this season, they have worked hard and they will fancy their chances of getting to the final. After a draw with Blackrock in their opening game, they went on to remain undefeated, as they beat Carrigaline, Barryroe, and Fr O'Neill's.

Ballinhassig versus Blackrock throws in at 11.45am, and will be followed by Valley Rovers versus Eire Óg, at 3pm.

**COUNTY HURLING FINAL COLLECTION:** Clubs are reminded that the county board must have the names of collectors for the county hurling final before the collection on Sunday week.

Names must be with county board by next Tuesday, at the latest. Please contact any county board officer, if you



Loretta Hanley, Milford, tries to block Laura Hayes, St Catherine's, in last year's championship clash.

Picture: Jim Coughlan

# Milford must be ready for Sars

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

**TODAY: SE Systems Senior Championship quarter-final: Milford v Sarsfields, Castle Road, 3.30pm.**

WITH one big scalp under their belts in the SE Systems Senior Championship, Sarsfields go in search of another this afternoon. They are bidding for a place in the last-four against Milford, in Castle Road.

Having caused the first shock of the championship on opening night, in round one, when they hit Inniscarra with late goals, they will be looking for a repeat performance.

After victory in their opening-round tie, they are one of the four teams to have advanced directly to the quarter-finals and it must have been hard to have been inactive in the champion-

ship since July 26.

Milford, having overcome St Finbarr's in round one, were one of the winning sides that were drawn in round two and here they beat Ballincollig last weekend.

In that outing, Milford showed they are as strong as ever and, again, it was goals that proved crucial, with Maria Watson their trump card. Milford won 3-12 to 0-11, with the experienced forward notching up two goals. They are very experienced outfit, with players

such as Rebecca Finn, Elaine O'Riordan, Deirdre Hayes, Sarah Sexton, and Cork senior, Ashling Thompson, who had a super hour on Saturday last.

Milford will have welcomed that game, as nothing beats competitive championship. They do not participate in the county leagues and they show little of their hand until championship comes around.

They lost to Inniscarra in last year's final, as their bid for five-in-a-row was quashed and they are determined to get back on top.

Sarsfields, in their second season back at senior level, showed huge persistence to fashion a splendid win over Inniscarra.

Trailing at one stage by 12 points,

they never gave up the fight and staged a massive comeback to shade it by the slimmest of margins.

They hit 3-6 in the second-half, limiting the champions to just three points. They have excellent young players in Clare Mullins, Edel Loneragan, Lucy Allen, and Lucy Kelly, while the experienced Emer Fennell continues to give great service to them.

They play with huge confidence and maturity and they won't fear the champions of 2015. With the scalp of the 2016 champions to their credit, they will be hunting to add another one to their collection.

This one will go down to the wire, with the result in the balance to the final whistle.

# Champions Inniscarra are expected to edge past Douglas

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

**TODAY SE Systems Senior Championship quarter-final: Inniscarra v Douglas, Castle Road, 1pm.**

CHAMPIONS Inniscarra are in action again today when they take on Douglas in a bid to secure a semi-final spot in the SE systems senior county championship.

Following on their round one victory over Ballygarvan on July 26, Douglas have been inactive since whilst Inniscarra having lost out in the opening round to Sarsfields have had two games in the backdoor.

You have to wonder is it better to win the opening round or lose out as nothing beats having good championship games and the inactivity may just be an issue as it is hard to keep players focused.

Douglas were in flying form in their clash with Ballygarvan as they hit an impressive 0-20 to Ballygarvan's 0-5 in their form in the lead up to championship

was not good. Their league results were poor as they struggled in all sectors but championship always brings out the best in teams and this was the case as they fired on all cylinders with all of their players lining out.

Their Cork trio of Katriona and Pamela Mackey and Julia White led the way with plenty of support from Chloe Nason, Jess Kavanagh and Denise Harrington.

Inniscarra were hit with late goals as Sarsfields overcame them in round one but they have been hugely impressive since as they got their campaign back on track with an impressive backdoor victory over league champions Courcey Rovers. They then advanced to a meeting with neighbours Cloughduv

where they recorded another impressive victory.

They are strengthened this season by the inclusion of Niamh Dilworth to their full-forward line. She is a huge asset to a scoring division that has excellent players in Cork senior Niamh McCarthy and Joanne Casey. And when you add in Cork captain Rena Buckley to their lineup you cannot but be impressed by them.

They are strong in all sectors and players such as captain Mary Buckley, Caitlin Looney, Rebecca Quigley and Aileen Sheehan have all stood up and been counted as the champions continue the defence of a title they won in such impressive style last season.

Douglas will go in as underdogs to this one but that will not worry them to much they will, of course, look to their inter-county players to lead the way but they have good youngsters too. You would expect the champions to advance all the same.



# Top clubs can show their class



Camogie

Linda Mellerick

GLEN Rovers are the first and only side yet through to the senior county championship semi-final.

There are three games between today and Monday night to determine the remaining spots.

Inniscarra take on Douglas and Sarsfields and Milford face each other in Castleroad today, while on Monday evening St Catherine's and Carbery meet again to separate the sides. Of the championship games I've watched to date, the St Catherine's and Carbery game has been the highlight for me. It was the one game that was fast and flowing with some very good teamwork and skill on show.

There are inter-county players that don't always shine for their club but you can never say that about Orla Cotter. What performances she has given over the years and last Sunday's first-half display was up there with the best of them.

She quietened a bit in the third quarter and that's when Carbery's resurgence began. But Orla came strong again and it ended all square.

You must give great credit to Denis Walsh and Catherine's. Their consistency over the past number of years has been excellent.

They've lost two key players in Joanne O'Keeffe and Michelle Tobin, who have travelled abroad, and still produced the goods last Sunday. Their opening 30 minutes was truly very impressive with fast, sharp, snappy passing.

And for those of you who saw young Aoife Hurley perform, that was a treat. What an exciting forward.

Her speed, skill and finishing reminded me of Inniscarra's Niamh McCarthy when she set the championship alight in 2010. Aoife was very highly thought of at minor level and here's hoping she'll have a bright future.

Carbery had a difficult task, facing St Catherine's a day after the intermediate championship final where Newcestown had the better of Enniskeane. But only three players from those clubs started and finished the game so maybe the impact wasn't as strong as some expected it to be.

Orla Cronin was one of Carbery's best players on the night, having been on the losing side the day before. It was probably the best medicine for her after her disappointment.

Collette Desmond and Orla Coughlan were unavailable last Sunday. One wonders if they'll be with the team on Monday. Kilbrittain/Timoleague had the majority of players on the starting 15, with seven.

Sile Burns still has the touch. Her physical strength was always a threat and she scored a great goal. If she had more of a supply she would have caused more damage.

This replay is hard to call. Orla Cotter is abroad with the WPGA and returns tomorrow.

A Monday evening game can bring its own problems and I personally feel that a working day isn't the best time



At the presentations to the Evening Echo Ladies Sports Star Autumn Quarterly award winners in association with the Ambassador Hotel, were, Rory Noonan, Evening Echo, with award winner for Aoife Murray. Picture: Dan Linehan



Danielle Keane, Enniskeane, in action against Newcestown in last weekend's intermediate final. The clubs also represent Carbery. Picture: Larry Cummins

to be playing important games.

But with time against Cork due to the Munster championship fixtures the county semi-finals must go ahead next weekend with the final set for the October bank holiday weekend.

Sarsfields had a tremendous win over champions Inniscarra in round one, 3-13 to 2-13. Good scoring and a result that was unquestionably a shock.

Inniscarra have regrouped with two strong wins over Courcy Rovers and Cloughduv while it's just under three months since Sars played. It seems to me that you're better of losing your first round.

Sarsfields face Milford. Milford are still strong and impressive.

They may not be the force they once were but they still rank in the top three as county championship favourites. The loss of Marie O'Neill last year was a big one and Anna Geary has now decided to play her club camogie in Dub-

lin where she lives.

The team are on the road a long time, longer than the county and All-Ireland honours they won in 2012/2013. Milford remind me a lot of Glen Rovers when we had our great run.

It's sad when it starts to break up and we too had one or two leavers a season whereby we were still strong enough to win county titles but possibly not strong enough to win the All-Ireland. And then finally the bubble bursts.

Our last county title win was in 1996. The Watsons are still big players. It's a pity Cork wasn't for them in recent years. Ashling Thompson is currently playing great camogie and Elaine O'Riordan is still one of the best full-backs in the championship.

Sars could be the next Milford in time. Certainly, they have the underage credentials.

Their work-rate must be a key com-

ponent of their play today if they want that sooner rather than later.

All three games should be good to watch and that's how it should be at the quarter-final stages.

Rena Buckley, Ashling Thompson and Kilkenny's Ann Dalton are short-listed for the Senior Inter-county Player of the Year award.

This shortlist is selected by the camogie association and the WPGA. Congratulations to all three.

I'm sure Rena or Ashling will be the recipient.

I'm wondering what Aoife Murray must do to be recognised? It's the goalkeeper syndrome. They never get the credit they deserve.

Well, we appreciate her here locally. She was the recipient of the Evening Echo Ladies Sport Star Award on Wednesday and on Monday next she'll receive the 96FM September award in the Rochestown Park Hotel.

## Rooney's grá for camogie honoured

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

TWELVE months ago the camogie and GAA families were plunged into mourning following the untimely passing of well-known referee Dominic Rooney, who took ill and collapsing while officiating at an U16 camogie championship game between Douglas and Brian Dillon's, which was going ahead at the at Douglas Community School grounds.

The well-known East Cork official who was a member of the Carrigtwohill club and was native of Newbridge, Kildare. A sergeant attached to the Engineering Corps at Collins Barracks in Cork, he had served abroad with the UN.

Players, mentors and parents were all shocked at his passing. He was a hugely popular referee with mentors and players alike and to describe him as a gentleman is a very fitting description.

Always chatty and always smiling, his first priority always was for the players and he always showed huge concern with any injuries. An abiding memory of him will be one of his sayings when a player got injured: 'The clock is stopped, take as long as ye want'.

The Carrigtwohill camogie club have decided to honour his memory in the best way possible and tomorrow they will hold the inaugural Dominic Rooney Memorial Tournament, which will now be an annual event and going forward they hope that it will grow year on year.

For this year four U12 teams will participate and they are all from the East Cork division.

Proceedings get under way at 11am and the home club Carrigtwohill will play Duncorney, while at the same time Castlelyons will take on Aghada. The final will go ahead at 12.30pm and there will also be a playoff between the two losing semi-finalists. Therefore all teams will play two games on the day.

The club are delighted that Dominic's wife Margaret and sons David, Adam, Eoin and Cillian will be attending on the day to present the Cup to the winning team and join everybody in honouring the memory of a great man.

It is testament to the high regard Dominic was held in that the club has had a massive band of people ready to help out on the day. They are delighted with the response from his refereeing friends for coming together to help out on the day and they want to give particular thanks to PJ Ahern for organising this for them.

They also acknowledge and thank Johnny O'Connell who has been in regular contact offering help in any way he can. They extend an open invitation to anyone who wishes to come down tomorrow and join them in honouring Dominic's memory.

“Orla Cronin was one of Carbery's best players despite losing with her club.”



## Inniscarra push champs to replay

CAMOGIE

■ Linda Mellerick

Inniscarra	0-14
Douglas	0-14

COUNTY champions Inniscarra still retain their title status, but only just after a hard battle with Douglas ended all square last Saturday in the SE Systems Senior Camogie Championship.

Inniscarra opened with two points from Niamh McCarthy and Joanne Casey but the outstanding Katrina Mackey had Douglas level on nine minutes and when the hardworking Joy Leo gave Douglas the lead at the end of the first quarter Inniscarra just couldn't get themselves back in front.

Katie O'Mahony drew the sides level entering additional time and with it came a replay.

From the outset, Douglas worked their socks off and while yes, they had their superstars again in the Mackey's and Julia White, it was players such as Amy Curtin, Joy Leo, Jessica Kavanagh, Rebecca Sheehan and Katelyn Holland who can also take much of the credit.

In the opening half, Inniscarra were finding it hard to get a supply into their forward division. Joanne Casey ended up playing deep to win possession. Niamh McCarthy was on her game but equally, Amy Curtin did a tremendous job of keeping her to four points.

Once or twice Inniscarra split Douglas down the middle and pointed when to keep going might have given a greater return. But Jessica Kavanagh was tremendous in goal for Douglas so finding the net wasn't going to be easy.

The teamwork of Julia White and Katrina Mackey was a joy to watch and with the latter in top form, finishing the game with 12 points, Inniscarra just couldn't get their noses back in front.

Douglas led by two at the break, 0-8 to 0-6 and pushed the gap to three on two occasions in the second half.

Inniscarra continued the pressure but every time they pulled the game back to a point Mackey would reply.

The game was level for the third time on 58 minutes.

Mackey gave Douglas what may have been the winner only for O'Mahony to stop their celebrations and have another bite at the cherry.

**Scorers for Inniscarra:** J Casey 0-8 (0-5 f), N McCarthy 0-4, K O'Mahony 0-1, A Sheehan 0-1.

**Douglas:** K Mackey 0-12 (0-5 f), J Leo, J O'Mahony 0-1 each.

**INNISCARRA:** S Walsh; M Buckley(c), C Looney, R Quigley; A Dineen, A Sheehan, A Kavanagh; R Buckley, K O'Mahony; T McCarthy, J Casey, E Looney; R Keane, N Dilworth, N McCarthy.

**Subs:** O Healy for M Buckley (35), G Heffernan for T McCarthy (48).

**DOUGLAS:** J Harrington; A Curtin, A O'Brien, S Long; R Sheehan, P Mackey, N Ni Chuanachain; J White, S Fahy; J Leo, K Mackey, S Mulrooney; J O'Mahony; C Kavanagh, K Holland.

**Subs:** R O'Halloran for C Kavanagh (52), R Swanton for S Long (64).

**Referee:** John O'Leary (Mallow).

## Cork ace Thompson powers Milford past Sarsfields

Milford	2-15
Sarsfields	0-11

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

A POWERFUL second-half display ensured Milford booked their place in the last four of the SE Systems Senior Championship in Castle Road on Saturday. Trailing by a point at the interval, they held their opponents scoreless for the second half, and firing on all cylinders they hit 1-9 without reply as they showed their class.

Cork senior Ashling Thompson had a superb game at midfield, particularly in the second half, but it was their display as a unit that impressed.

They found each other with pinpoint passes and their excellent handling and distribution was a feature of their game, as they showed their experience against a young Sarsfields side.

Aided by the strong wind in the opening half Sarsfields made good use of their advantage and they showed no fear of Milford as they went for every ball with confidence as they opened up a two-point lead before Milford got back on level terms.

Emer Watson edged Milford ahead, pointing a free, but Sarsfields enjoyed a good spell where they hit six points to Milford's one, as they opened up a 0-7 to 0-4 lead.

Katie Galvin hit a point as Emer Fennell converted a free either side of it.

Sars held their advantage, but with five minutes to the break Milford were gifted a goal after the Sars 'keeper failed to clear her lines, Maria Watson finished smartly to the net. Again the sides traded points and the last say was with Sars as they edged two points clear, 0-11 to 1-6, at the break.

It was going to be tough for Sarsfields to defend against the strong wind in the second half but nothing could have prepared them for the intensity of Milford's display.

From the restart Ashling Thompson took control around the middle firing over a point and Marie Wat-

son had them quickly on level terms.

As they continued to win all the vital areas and they did what they do best, drove for home. Points from Emer Watson (3) and Marie Watson extended their advantage before substitute, former Limerick senior Dymna O'Brien, grabbed a goal, and they added three more points to their tally. The champions of 2015 showed they mean to have a big say in this championship again.

**Scorers for Milford:** M Watson 1-4, E Watson 0-5 (f), D O'Brien 1-1, A Thompson 0-3, L Stack K Galvin 0-1 each.

**Sarsfields:** E Fennell 0-7 (0-6 f), M Barry 0-2, M McCarthy C Mullins 0-1 each.

**MILFORD:** R Duggan; A Galvin, E O'Riordan, D Hayes; L Hanley, A Watson, S Sexton; O O'Mahony A Thompson; L Stack, R Finn, E Watson; M Watson, K Galvin, E O'Gorman.

**Subs:** D O'Brien for E O'Gorman (42), S Sheehan for S Sexton (52), A Dillon for E Watson (59), K Reidy for R Finn (59).

**SARSFIELDS:** M Lynch; E Loneragan, K Barry, J Murphy; E Casey, M Mullins, N O'Callaghan; E Farrell, L Kelly; H Herlihy, M McCarthy, C Holland; C Mullins, L Allen, M Barry.

**Subs:** N Hickey for E Loneragan (39), C Aherne for C Holland (40), E Twomey for H Herlihy (49).

**Referee:** Cathal Egan (Glen Rovers).



Cork camogie captain, Rena Buckley, receives the North City and District Sports Star Award from Joe Kennedy, General Manager, Clayton Silversprings Hotel in the presence of Lord Mayor, Cllr Tony Fitzgerald; Onoir O'Brien, Red FM and County Mayor, Cllr Declan Hurley. Picture: John Tarrant

RENA BUCKLEY'S standing as the country's most talented female sporting performer is recognised by her position on the top of the roll of honour, having won her 18th All-Ireland senior medal last month.

The Inniscarra club person was in typically inspirational form in the All-Ireland camogie final against Kilkenny, leading Cork to the O'Duffy Cup for their 27th title. In doing so, she has become the first woman to captain Cork to success in both camogie and football, only the second female to raise both trophies as captain following Mary Geaney who led Kerry to win football in 1976 and Cork camogie four years later.

Continuing to set new targets, Rena emerged a worthy recipient in the monthly Northside and District Sports Awards hosted at the Clayton Silversprings Hotel. Following Inniscarra's county senior camogie title last autumn earned her nomination as Cork captain for 2017.

As a result, Buckley decided to focus solely on camogie and away from football after winning 11 All-Ireland senior medals since 2005.

"I've been really lucky, playing on good teams, the clubs have been a huge help in terms of propelling me onto Cork teams. And in terms of injury, I've been very lucky too and I've gotten great support at home from my family," she said.

Buckley has played a huge part in the county's All-Ireland tour de force passage towards regaining the O'Duffy Cup after a roller coaster campaign.

Defeat by Kilkenny in the League final and Limerick in the Munster decider, out of adversity came progress for Cork in the group stages to the All-Ireland Championship. Cork issued a reminder that they were far from a spent force yet defending champions Kilkenny stood in their path.

# New notch in awards list for Rena

CAMOGIE

■ John Tarrant

"We learned immensely from the earlier defeats by Kilkenny and Limerick, it stood to us in the group stages in the championship where matters got tight in the semi against Galway. And fortunately in the decider, we got a good start against Kilkenny, they came back and thankfully, we availed of late chances to win," said Rena.

"We came up to Croke Park last year going for three-in-a-row and we were taught a lesson by Kilkenny. We really put our shoulder to the wheel, thankfully the fruits of our work were shown on the field to regain the championship title."



President Michael D Higgins meets Cork captain, Rena Buckley, prior to the All-Ireland final against Kilkenny. Picture: Inpho/James Crombie

OCT  
2017





ULSTER SENIOR CAMOGIE FINAL  
LOUGHGIEL SHAMROCKS V SLAUGHTNEIL  
Sunday, Armagh, 2pm

# ULSTER CAMOGIE



CAMOGIE ULSTER SENIOR FINAL

## Loughgiel camogs bidding for revenge

The Antrim champions narrowly missed out on last year's Ulster title against Slaughtneil but have a chance to make amends

EVEN the most silver-tongued Loughgiel native would find it hard to downplay the revenge factor in Sunday's Ulster final against reigning champions Slaughtneil.

Their manager Connor Campbell makes no attempt at hiding the reality of the situation. Slaughtneil snatched last year's provincial title away from Loughgiel when Mary Kelly goalied in the final few minutes, securing a 1-8 to 1-5 victory in their Ulster final replay.

The rest, as they say, is history. Kelly's late intervention proved the launchpad for their eventual success in the All-Ireland series as Slaughtneil soaked up the plaudits for their continued success across football, hurling and camogie.

Loughgiel were left licking their wounds but they are back in the Ulster decider after clinching the four in-a-row in Antrim, inflicting a heavy defeat on Ballycastle in the final.

Niall Gartland



Campbell says they are determined to wrestle back the Ulster title while adding that they harboured no bitterness about Slaughtneil's All-Ireland win.

"It's probably one of the driving factors this year. After last year being so close, we definitely thought we left it behind. We're a different team and so are they with a couple of people in and a couple of people out."

"I suppose after we got beaten in the Ulster final, we would've liked to see Slaughtneil go on and win it. I was at the semi-final and the final."

"With the way they played it was

good to see them win it and they deserved it in fairness to them, it was good to see an Ulster team win it as well."

There is one thing that seems to rankle with Campbell. Loughgiel have introduced fresh homegrown talent to the team as midfielders Shauna Devlin and Charlene Campbell are unavailable at the moment.

He notes that they didn't have to sign anyone from elsewhere, a pointed reference to Slaughtneil's Offaly-born player Tina Hannon, who is Patsy Bradley's girlfriend.

"We've a couple not there, Shauna Devlin, Charlene Campbell, she's only back after having a baby, so that's our two midfielders from last year."

"There are a couple of younger girls just coming through, we haven't signed any girls from other counties."

Loughgiel is a club in rude health. They have three senior camogie teams and they recently won the In-

termediate title, overcoming Bridini Oga in the decider.

Campbell says having three teams ensures that everyone gets adequate playing time.

"To be fair, number wise for a small parish we've great numbers, we'd three teams at senior level this year. You're talking 45 plus girls playing at senior level."

"It keeps everybody at it. If you've three teams playing every week they're all able to get games."

The Shamrocks clinched the O'Duffy Cup in Antrim with a resounding 4-13 to 0-6 win over a young Ballycastle side.

Loughgiel raced into a 3-6 to 0-2 lead, leaving the rest of the match something of a formality.

They were still pushing hard in the closing stages and finished with a flurry of 1-2, the goal coming from a volley from Emma McMullan a minute from time.

Lucia McNaughton, Aisling McFadden and Racquel Murphy led the way in the scoring stakes as they secured their 20th title, and Campbell was naturally pleased with his side's performance.

"We had a good run in Antrim this year. One of our aims at the start of the year was to get back to the Ulster final, the four in a row was a great achievement as well."

"I was happy enough with the performance, especially in the conditions, it was a wet and windy day. I was happy enough on the day to be fair."

Loughgiel have had almost a month to prepare for this weekend's decider. They have a clean bill of health and Campbell says they are ready to go.

"I'm happy with how preparations have gone, I couldn't really ask any more from the girls in terms of attitude and effort."

Captain fantastic...Loughgiel captain Emma McFadden with the Antrim Championship cup





# Slaughtneil on course for two in-a-row

Niall Gartland



SLAUGHTNEIL just keep on rolling on.

Their camogs have made it back to the Ulster final despite missing two of their most talented players, Gaelic Life Player of the Year Shannon Graham and goal-scoring supremo Mary Kelly.

Graham is in New Zealand while Kelly, who scored the winning goal in last year's final against Loughgiel, is working in Scotland.

A double hammerblow that would ruin lesser teams, but the reigning champions are one step away from completing the two in-a-row in Sunday's decider against Loughgiel.

Damien McEldowney, a member of the Slaughtneil management team, says that others have stepped up in the absence of two of their best players.

"Obviously we're missing two of the best camogs in Ireland, Mary

scored a goal in every championship match last year and Shannon was voted player of the year. Wee Bridin McAllister has stepped up in defence, she's come on a lot and forced her way into the starting 15."

Their most influential addition, however, has been Tina Hasson, who scored 1-6 in their Derry final win over Ballinascreen. McEldowney says that they are a stronger unit than the class of last year, who memorably clinched the All-Ireland title.

"Tina Hannon's come into the team. She's Patsy Bradley's girlfriend and she's from Offaly originally.

"We've one or two others and the younger girls are pushing on. We almost have a stronger squad this year despite losing Shannon and Mary.

"The younger girls that were with us last year have picked up a lot from our run to the All-Ireland. We have more options on the bench than we've ever had."

Slaughtneil face Loughgiel in a repeat of last year's Ulster final, which the Emmet's won after a replay. McEldowney is conscious that the Antrim camogs will be hell-bent on revenge.

"We know what we're coming up against, a hungry team and I'm sure seeing how well we got on last year is



WINNING HABIT...The Slaughtneil camogs are pictured after winning the Derry title

going to be a driving force for them.

"They were the closest team to us all year. The first game was a draw and we won the replay with a goal in the last couple of minutes.

"They'll be thinking they could've won an All-Ireland and that's some motivation for a team."

Dominic 'Woody' McKinley was unable to commit earlier in the year but is back on the sidelines. McEldowney

says they welcomed him back with open arms when his schedule freed up.

They form a four-man management team alongside Mickey Glover and Sean McEldowney.

He said: "Initially Woody had stepped away. He always said to the girls he'd never mess them about and we'd all said our goodbyes.

"But as the year progressed he had

a bit more time on his hands. He wanted to get back involved. You don't turn away someone of his credentials and history."

It's been another fantastic year already for the Slaughtneil club, who won the Derry senior titles across football, hurling and camogie. All are still in contention for provincial honours despite having short off-seasons after the exploits of last season.

"It's been another great year in the three codes. They haven't got much of a rest with all the training done for the All-Irelands. The fitness and all has been there, we've been trying to keep everyone as injury free as possible."

McEldowney was also pleased with his side's Derry final win over Ballinascreen. After a slow enough start, they improved after the break to record a 5-17 to 2-9 victory.

"We knew it was going to be a tough game, 'Screen at the moment are next to us in the county.

"They asked us a lot of questions in the first-half. We picked up an injury and things were looking a wee bit dodgy at times. We got the girls composed at half-time and came out in the second half and showed how we can play."

## Clonduff boss wary of dangerous English

BY NIALL GARTLAND

ULSTER INTERMEDIATE CAMOGIE FINAL  
**CLONDUFF V EGLISH**  
 Saturday, Granemore, 2.30pm

CLONDUFF will hope to summon the spirit of 2014 in Saturday's Ulster Intermediate final against reigning champions Eglish.

While Eglish are bidding for the three in-a-row in Ulster, Clonduff can take heart from their provincial final win in 2014 against the same opposition.

Clonduff joint-manager Damien Farnon admits they are wary of the talented Tyrone outfit, who fell to an agonising defeat in last season's All-Ireland final against Carlow outfit Tyshall.

"We'd be very wary of them. We haven't seen them play in the last couple of years, we're very wary of that we're gonna get."

"We would've been pretty confident all through the year but with our injuries it's stretching the panel. You still would like your strongest team out to play, it'll not be easy."

"Four or five of our first 15 are carrying knocks. They're all forwards, the defence is alright at the minute."



VICTORS...The Clonduff camogs celebrate their win over Ballygalget in the Down final

In positive news, legendary Down camogie Fionnuala Carr should be fit to play after recovering from a broken foot and torn ankle ligaments earlier in the year.

"She's back to normal, she is playing brilliantly at the minute, she was out for a couple of months. She's back and she's flying, she has a bit of

a knock but hopefully she'll play."

Carr is one of a raft of Clonduff players who lined out for Down this year, including Claire McGilligan, Paula Gribben, Cassie Fitzpatrick, Sara Louise Carr, and Nicola O'Hagan. Megan O'Reilly is away travelling, however.

"There's seven or eight on the

county panel this year. Megan O'Reilly is away travelling and she's a big miss for us, she went away after the county final."

Farnon flew up the ranks managing hurling teams in the club. He says a different approach is needed to coaching the girls, but adds that their commitment isn't in doubt.

"I can see a big difference, even just the way you talk to the girls."

"Other than that, the training and all is the same. Our girls are every bit as committed - I'd say they're more committed than some of the hurling teams I've taken."

"From the start of the year we're having nearly 20 at most trainings. A lot of them travel up and down, they put in a big effort and with a bit of luck it'll pay off on Saturday."

"There's no senior football in the club this year, that has helped us a lot as they're not doing both, they've been able to concentrate on the camogie."

Clonduff, who are celebrating their 50th anniversary this year, qualified for the Ulster final with a senior county final win over Ballygalget. Farnon was relieved to come out on top, even if it wasn't the perfect performance.

"We didn't think we played that overly well on the day, we were carrying a few injuries into it. I thought we were lucky enough to get out of it in the end of it."

"Ballygalget were the best team we played all year and we knew it was going to be tight, we were glad to get out of it."



# Eire Og are into semis after win over rivals

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

THE U14 and U16 Championships are down almost down to the concluding stages.

In a close U14 A contest, Eire Og overcame rivals Inniscarra to book their semi-final spot and they will meet another neighbouring club after Cloughdun defeated Milford/Ballyhea.

Youghal secured their semi-final spot with a one-goal victory over Enniskeane and they will meet Feile Na nGael All-Ireland champions Sarsfields today in Castlemartyr.

In the U14 B championship, Cobh advanced to the semi-final at the expense of Sarsfields 2 and they will meet Killebree who defeated Killeagh. A point separated Sliabh Rua from Glen Rovers in an exciting contest and Sliabh Rua will now meet Ballincollig who had four points to spare in their clash with Courcey Rovers.

In the U14 C championship, Brian Dillon's edged out Clonakilty to set up a semi-final clash with either Blarney or Ballinascarty. Castlemartyr will meet Rockban today after they defeated Banteer whilst Rockban got the upper hand on Erin's Own.

In the U16 A Championship, Ballincollig defeated Aghada before going on record a quarter-final victory over Glen Rovers. Ballinora booked their quarter-final spot as they defeated Eire Og.

Courcey Rovers are into the last eight after they had two points to spare in a tight contest with Ballygarvan. Charlieville had a one-point win over Enniskeane Carrigaline defeated St Finbarr's, Sarsfields overcame Blackrock and Inniscarra proved too strong for Aghabullogue.

The U16 B championship quarter-finals pairings are decided. Youghal will meet Blarney, Banteer take on Fr O'Neill's and Na Piarasigh will meet Cloughdun. Killeagh have secured their semi-final spot already following on their victory over Ballinascarty. They will meet the winners of the Na Piarasigh/Cloughdun game with Youghal or Blarney taking on Banteer or Fr O'Neill's.

Millstreet are already through to the U16 C semi-final following their win over St Colum's they will meet the winners of the Middleton/Mallow quarter-final. In the other quarter-finals, Dungourney meet Erin's Own today with the winners progressing to a clash with Castlemartyr.

St Catherine's and Grenagh ended level with Catherine's winning the replay they will now meet Clonakilty who overcame Killebree.

At minor A level Newcestown will meet Sarsfields with Ballyhea/Milford meeting Killebreen, both game down for decision this weekend. Ballygarvan recorded a win over Carrigaline to continue their progress to the last three.



Blackrock's Kate Leneghan is tackled by Enniskeane's Danielle Carroll in last year's intermediate final.

Picture: David Keane.

# Rockies hold off Hassig fightback

Blackrock	1-16
Ballinhassig	2-12

## CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

BLACKROCK had to hold on tight as Ballinhassig staged a strong second-half comeback to come to within a point after trailing by 10 in this SE Systems Senior B semi-final in Castle Road.

Ballinhassig led by a point with five minutes remaining but a strong response saw Blackrock win out by a point to book their place in the final.

Catriona Collins had Ballinhassig ahead with an early point, but Blackrock responded with a Hayley Ryan point. And a lively start saw the sides level on two a piece inside three minutes of the throw-in.

Blackrock hit three without reply before Eimear O'Sullivan had one back for Ballinhassig, but a Michelle Murphy goal put six between the sides. Blackrock were left off the hook when Collins' shot came back off the posts to safety.

### Momentum

Blackrock began to gain momentum and with Ryan and Kaitlin Hickey finding their range, they looked to be in control. Two Collins points cut the

deficit and at the break, Blackrock led 1-12 to 0-5.

Ballinhassig dictated matters from the restart and five unanswered points had them within five of Blackrock inside 10 minutes.

Ryan pointed to settle Blackrock but again, Ballinhassig responded superbly with two goals, Eimear O'Sullivan driving forward to find the net before Collins levelled matters.

Collins pointed to give them the lead, but now it was Blackrock who had to respond and Hickey levelled matters with a pointed free and slotted over again to give them the lead.

Ryan extended it to two but a battling Ballinhassig responded with an O'Sullivan point.

Despite huge pressure, Ballinhassig could not breach the Blackrock defence to get on parity as they hung on to secure their place in the final.

**Scorers for Blackrock:** K Hickey 0-6 (0-5 f), H Ryan 0-6 (0-2 f), M Murphy 1-1, K Leneghan 0-2, Murray 0-1.

**Ballinhassig:** C Collins 1-5 (0-2 f), E O'Sullivan 1-4, J O'Leary, N Sheehan A Crowley 0-1.

**BLACKROCK:** C Coughlan; K O'Brien, H Ryan, A Mac Curtain, T McMahon, R de Faoite (c), A Nagle; A O'Farrell, A Kearney; K Hickey, H Ryan, K Leneghan; M Murphy, A Murray, C Meaney.

**Subs:** C O'Keefe for A McCurtain, T Cummins for C Meaney, S Carroll for K Leneghan.

**BALLINHASSIG:** K Crowley, R Reardon, E O'Donovan, M Reardon; A Casey, D Coomey, H Cullinane; E O'Sullivan, E Jordan; A Crowley, J O'Leary, Niamh Sheehan; E Collins, C Collins, Noelle Sheehan.

**Referee:** John Horgan (Gleann na Laoi).

# Deasy's late goal clinches victory for Rovers in senior B semi

Valley Rovers	1-8
Eire Og	2-3

## CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

IT was a close game, but a late goal was enough to give Valley Rovers a place in the SE Systems Senior B final, against Blackrock.

They edged out Eire Og in an exciting clash at Castle Road. Valley Rovers turned a four-point, half-time deficit into victory to set up a final with the Rockies, last year's intermediate winners.

Katie Gleeson gave Valley Rovers an early lead, but a Marie Gleeson goal got Eire Og off to the best possible start.

Lynch, scoring two points without reply, levelled the game for Valley. As the sides battled to gain control, Eire Og edged back into the lead, via Margaret O'Herlihy's free.

Again, Valley responded, with Katie Lynch finding her range. It was nip-and-tuck, as both defences ab-

sorbed a lot of pressure, but, two minutes from the interval, Eire Og hit took the lead, with Niamh Twomey scoring a goal.

A minute later, it took an excellent save on the line, from Gillian Harrington, to deny Marie Gleeson. Eire Og continued to pile on the pressure. Margaret O'Herlihy converted a 45 on the half-time whistle. Eire Og led 2-2 to 0-4.

### Possession

On the resumption, Katie Lynch converted two frees without reply, and a Connie Hawks point reduced Valley's deficit to one, as they continued to win vital possession.

Susan O'Leary landed a free from 50 metres to

level the match. With both sides battling hard, Eire Og edged in front with six minutes remaining, when O'Herlihy converted a free. But it was their only score of the half, as they failed to build on their lead.

With two minutes remaining, Valley grabbed a match winner, with Orla Deasy firing home a vital goal.

Eire Og applied pressure, but Valley's defence held their lines to book their place in the final.

**Scorers for Valley Rovers:** K Lynch 0-6 (0-4 f), O Deasy 1-0, C Hawks, S O'Leary 0-1 each.

**Eire Og:** M Gleeson, M Twomey 1-0 each, M O'Herlihy 0-3 (0-2 f, 0-1 45).

**VALLEY ROVERS:** G Harrington; S Dart-O'Flynn, C Deasy, M Cottrell; E Coughlan, S O'Leary, J Murphy; MA Hawks, L Bugler; E O'Regan, E O'Mahony, C Hawks; O Deasy, K Lynch, E Foley.

**Subs:** L Brew for E Foley, S McCarthy for E O'Mahony.

**EIRE OG:** R Murray; Aileen Hennessy, Aoife Hennessy, R Murphy; M E Desmond, S Hutchinson, K McCarthy; A Barry, E Crowley; G Collins, M O'Herlihy, M Gleeson; K Nagle, A O'Callaghan, E O'Herlihy.



# Three games in 10 days a big ask

Important fundraiser at hurling decider

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman



Camogie

Linda Mellerick

THE winners today of the quarter-final replay between Inniscarra and Douglas will play Milford next Wednesday evening, with the county final next Saturday.

It's a tough ask to play three championship games in just seven days. But due to the unavailability of Katrina Mackey, who has commenced a placement abroad, playing the replay mid-week wasn't an option.

We don't give ourselves room for manoeuvre towards the end of the season; we cram in games ahead of the Munster championship. And, again, that's down to the inter-county scene.

Last weekend, Milford advanced to the semi-final with an impressive win over Sarsfields. But Sarsfields gave a very commendable account of themselves, bringing their game to Milford in the opening half.

Physically, Milford were stronger, and their greater experience was a huge factor. I was impressed with several Sars players and I noticed that some of them have grown in height.

Physically, they'll be a force themselves, as they mature.

The camogie All-Star awards takes place on November 4.

Over the next few weeks, we'll preview our Cork stars' rivals for awards and will also profile the less-familiar players.

## Goalkeeping

(Cork) Aoife Murray: Faye McCarthy (Dublin): Breaking into the starting set-up at just 20 years of age, McCarthy has been a revelation in Dublin camogie and continues to make a name for herself, saving a crucial penalty in her side's seven-point win in the All-Ireland quarter-final.

She has built a reputation for her accuracy as much as for her shot-stopping, hitting an incredible 1-18 from placed balls throughout this year's championship.

The St Jude's player will take pride in her first All-Stars nomination, after a collection of consistent and solid performances this year.

Emma Kavanagh (Kilkenny): Last year's beneficiary receives another nomination for her displays as goalkeeper for the league and Leinster champions.

Her awareness and distribution are among the strongest in the game and she is no doubt regarded as Kilkenny's first line of attack. The Rower Instioge club player bagged her first All-Stars award last year, after the Cats claimed their first All-Ireland crown for 22 years.

## Full-back line

(Cork) Rena Buckley and Laura Reacy, Máire McGrath (Clare): The inner County nominee is one of only three Clare players to ever win a camogie All-Stars award and she looks to add a second trophy to the collection. The Sixmilebridge player was in great form again this year and is regarded as leader in the Banner county's defence. In total, it is her third All-Stars



Emma Kavanagh and Grace Walsh, Kilkenny, up against Niamh McCarthy and Linda Collins in the league. Walsh is a strong All-Star contender in defence. Picture: Pat Moore



Faye McCarthy and Aoife Murray, who are both nominated for All-Stars, with Murray the favourite. Picture: INPHO/Bryan Keane

Eve O'Brien (Dublin): O'Brien receives her first All-Star award nomination after some excellent performances in the Dublin rearguard. While having plenty of club experience behind her, the Na Fianna ace only came onto the Dublin panel in 2016.

Sarah O'Connor (Wexford): It was a disappointing season for Wexford, who lost out at the quarter-final stages in both provincial and All-Ireland championships, but O'Connor was the one stand-out player for the Yellowbellies.

The 19-year-old will be looking to go one better than last year and claim the prize.

Aine Woods (Dublin): Dublin's reliable corner-back had a season to be proud of, contributing immensely to her side's first championship semi-final appearance in 27 years.

Woods has received back-to-back GAA Scholarships with DCU, showcasing her ability on the GAA pitch, and those efforts have transferred to the county set-up, where she receives her first All-Stars nomination.

Tara Kenny (Galway): One of six Galway players nominated, Kenny has had another solid year in the maroon rearguard.

The Sarsfields player was close to All-Ireland final appearances with both club and county, missing out to Slaughtneil in the AIB All-Ireland club championship semi-final, while Galway fell short to eventual champions, Cork, in the All-Ireland semi-final. Kenny receives her maiden All-Star nomination.

Catherine Foley (Kilkenny): Despite finishing the season on a difficult note,

“The winners today of the quarter-final replay will play Milford next Wednesday evening, with the county final next Saturday”

with All-Ireland final heartbreak, Foley can still feel positive about her successes this year, claiming league and Leinster titles for the Cats and winning the Purcell Cup with her college, DIT.

The Windgap corner-back is receiving her first All-Star nomination this year.

Grace Walsh (Kilkenny): Walsh is one of the most experienced players in the Cats defence. Born into a GAA family, she has followed in her brother's footsteps, receiving All-Ireland, provincial, and league titles, while also being up for an All-Stars award.

The student nurse, from Tuillaroan, turned in numerous consistent performances and is deserving of a nomination

TOMORROW is a very important day for the camogie board as the annual collection takes place at half-time in the county senior hurling final.

As in previous years, collectors are urgently required to come down and help the board, and this year more than ever, with the new pitch development how having reached its fruition, there is ongoing expense to maintain the superb facility.

Clubs that have played on the pitch have had nothing but praise for the facility and the county board recently completed the building of the pavilion. Now they have to drive on and continue with their plans for the next phase of the development which will be the completion of the pavilion and dressingrooms and while this structure is in place, money is needed to complete the fit out, which includes furniture, flooring, painting and a general fit-out, all of which takes a lot of money.

All these plans need to be financed and while the fundraising is ongoing, the annual collection is a major fundraiser every year for the county boards.

Players, former players, mentors and supporters are urged to come along and give up just 10 minutes of their time to help in the venture.

Collectors need to get their names to the board in advance as they just cannot turn up tomorrow.

Collectors are asked to meet tomorrow at 2pm outside the city end of the South Stand the meeting place is outside the stadium close to section 101 lower tier.

A camogie board rep will meet all collectors at this point and issue official badges for admission to the stadium and will advise collectors where buckets can be picked up.

The official opening of Páirc Uí Chaoimh will take place at 2.45pm followed by the county hurling final at 4pm.

The collection will take place at half-time in the hurling final and as the board are not allowed to collect at the replay of the senior football final.

Therefore it is of up-most importance that as many collectors as possible are in attendance to help at half-time of the hurling final.

Every year the board makes a plea for help and this year is no exception with the four clubs involved in the games St Finbarr's, Nemo, Blackrock and divisional side Imokilly asked to make a special effort to get as many collectors as possible.

Anybody who can help tomorrow please contact board chairperson Mary McSweeney on 086-2399732 or treasurer Marion McMcCarthy 087-2662690 and they will put you on the list.



# First senior final for Glen in 21 years

Camogie

Linda Mellerick

**Glen Rovers 1-7**  
**St Catherine's 0-8**

GLEN ROVERS are in their first senior camogie county final in 21 years, after a tremendous battle with St Catherine's, in Castle Road, last Saturday.

Trailing by three points at the break, but turning around with wind advantage, a Micheala Hyde goal swung the game in the Glen's direction.

In an opening-half in which the Glen struggled to win ball in their half-forward line, they kept in contention with two Nicole O'Brien converted frees.

St Catherine's were winning the dirty ball, and the breaks, as the Glen took their time to get motoring.

St Catherine's were hooking and blocking well, but it appeared up-front that Nora O'Riordan and Emma Murphy were on their game, if the Glen could get a better supply inside.

It was a more attacking Glen team that came out in the second-half and the game was nip-and-tuck.

Finola Neville was outstanding for St Catherine's, covering miles of ground, but the Glen were coming more into it and Catherine's were tiring.

Their mid-week replay, against Carbery, was taking its toll.

The Glen's defence were excellent: Sinead Fahy, Karen O'Connell, and Leanne O'Sullivan led the way, while Lydia Cunningham was magnificent in midfield, ably assisted by Lauren Callanan.

The Glen started to deliver faster ball inside, and when a Nora O'Riordan delivery was tapped over the line by Micheala Hyde, in the 44th minute, to draw the game level, it was game on.

Orla Cotter again did everything she could and pointed a free to put St Catherine's one up.

Nora O'Riordan and Nicole O'Brien (f) pushed the Glen ahead again, as every ball was ferociously fought-for.

Cotter drew level again, from play, with four minutes remaining, but the final say went to the Glen, and Emma Murphy and Nora O'Riordan, to seal the deal.

**Scorers for Glen Rovers:** N O'Brien 0-4 (f), M Hyde 1-0, N O'Riordan 0-2, E Murphy 0-1

**St. Catherine's:** O Cotter 0-5 (0-4 f), E Roymane, A Hurley, F Neville 0-1 each.

**GLEN ROVERS:** D Luby, S Fahy, K Fahy, Z Buckley, K Buckley, L O'Sullivan, K O'Connell, L Cunningham, L Callanan, A Wallace, N O'Brien, E Murphy, N O'Riordan, M Hyde, K Walsh.

**Subs:** C Boland for Z Buckley (inj. 27).

**ST. CATHERINE'S:** D Twomey, A M Rohan, M Walsh, Y O'Neil, M O'Keefe, C Motherway, L Hayes, O Neville, O Cotter, R O'Callaghan, F Neville, E O'Brien, A Hurley, E Roymane, A Fitzgerald.

**Subs:** M O'Regan for O Neville (48), A O'Regan for A Fitzgerald (53).

**Referee:** Diarmuid Kieran (Eire Og).

## Official Opening of Clare's Fr. McNamara Camogie Park Club House

By Camogie Press  
Posted 23/10/2017



Clare Camogie Board officially opened their new clubhouse at Fr. McNamara Camogie Park in the Seaside with local players, administrators, representatives of both the National and Provincial Camogie Associations, and local and national Government officials all in attendance.

Chairman of Clare GAA Joe Cooney paid warm tribute to the Board on the work that had been done by so many to arrive at such a special day in their history. He spoke of the great working relationship between both bodies and wished Clare Camogie well for the future.

Minister for Trade Pat Breen congratulated all present on the work they had done to arrive at this day and he paid special tribute to the hard work done down through the years. In his address Minister Breen referenced the funding received and expressed his delight the Camogie Board were recipients of Sports Capital funding which helped hugely with the completion of the project.

Councillor Claire Collieran Molloy of Clare County Council, who was deputising for Councillor Tom McNamara also congratulated Clare Camogie on their new facilities and ended by wishing the Clare All Star nominees good luck at the upcoming All-Stars Awards in early November.

Both the Camogie Association President Catherine Neary and Ard Stiúrthoir Joan O'Flynn were in attendance. President Neary spoke of the emerging talent within Clare and the strides the county at National level in the game. She warmly congratulated Clare Camogie on the opening of the facilities and wished them well in the years to come.

As Chairperson Joe Robbins paid tribute to all those who had worked on the building plans, the completion of the works and those who had helped in any way during the years. He spoke highly of the work done by his fellow officers which allowed him focus his energies of delivering the facility.

RTÉ's Eileen Dunne was the final speaker of the day and she spoke of the love her father, the late Mick Dunne had for Camogie, and how following his death the family had worked with the Camogie Association to bring about the Mick Dunne Memorial Awards to acknowledge the work done in counties to promote the game of Camogie. She paid warm tribute to the efforts of Clare Camogie board who have been consistent recipients of these awards. She wished Clare Camogie all the best for the future and then invited those present to join her out front for the official unveiling and the cutting of the ribbon.

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## Inniscarra make semis, despite fluffing goal chances

**Inniscarra 1-12**  
**Douglas 0-14**  
(AET)

IT was high drama in Castle Road, in the second SE Systems senior camogie listed game on Saturday. The sides were level five times, there was a penalty, extra-time, and a goal in the 78th minute.

Inniscarra were denied at least three goals by the brilliant Jessica Kavanagh.

Douglas opened in flying form. Amy Curtin played a stormer at right corner back. Katrina Mackey was working both ends of the pitch and Douglas's work rate was excellent. The first-half was open hurling. Aileen Sheehan was flying at midfield, but Douglas would have been happy trailing by just two at the break, 0-8 to 0-6, and turning to play with a wind that was getting stronger. Inniscarra weren't going to let

Camogie

Linda Mellerick

the wind dictate their future. They went on the attack, only for Rebecca Keane's hand-pass attempt at goal to be blocked by Kavanagh.

Five minutes later, Niamh Dilworth was fouled in the square, but Joanne Casey's low strike was expertly saved by Kavanagh. Kavanagh made another brilliant interception from Keane in the 54th minute.

Inniscarra were guilty of not taking their points, instead of attempting goals.

Katrina Mackey, Julia White, and Jessica O'Mahony gave Douglas a point lead. Three on the trot from Inniscarra put them 0-11 to 0-9 in front.

Two frees from Katrina Mackey forced the game to extra-time. The rain came, the sky was dull, and the underfoot conditions were heavy. Still, both teams

gave it their all. It was level again at half-time of extra-time. Douglas was a point ahead when the killer blow came for them. A Niamh Dilworth strike shot off the upright and over the goal line. Mackey pointed, and Douglas did everything to force the game to a second replay. A tired Inniscarra now face Milford, next Wednesday, in the county semi-final.

**Scorers for Inniscarra:** J Casey 0-5 (f), N Dilworth 1-3, A Sheehan 0-2, N McCarthy, E Looney 0-1 each.

**Douglas:** K Mackey 0-9 (0-6 f, 0-1 '45), J White 0-2, S Fahy, K Holland, E Looney 0-1 each.

**INNISCARRA:** S Walsh, M Buckley(c), C Looney, R Quigley, A Dineen, R Buckley, A Kavanagh, K O'Mahony, A Sheehan, T McCarthy, J Casey, E Looney, R Keane, N Dilworth, N McCarthy.

**Subs:** O Healy for A Dineen (60), G Heffernan for R Keane (60).

**DOUGLAS:** J Harrington, A Curtin, A O'Brien, S Mulrooney, R Sheehan, P Mackey, N Ni Chuasachain, J White, C Nason, K Holland, K Mackey, S Fahy, J O'Mahony, J Leo, S Long.

**Subs:** C Kavanagh for S Long (39), C St. Leger for J O'Mahony (58).  
**Referee:** Cathal McAllister (Aghada).



# Sheehan's goal sends Inniscarra into final

CAMOGIE

■ Linda Mellerick

Inniscarra	2-9
Milford	2-8

ANOTHER thrilling senior camogie championship tie in Mallow last evening saw an Aileen Sheehan goal on 59 minutes ensure Inniscarra hold on to their title, until Saturday at least.

If last season's county final between the two sides was the best we'd seen in a long time, part two came last evening and it didn't disappoint. This semi-final was gripping. Physically, both teams lived on the edge and, undoubtedly, there are sore bodies today.

Inniscarra started smartly and led 1-3 to 0-1 after 13 minutes. Joanne Casey struck two frees before offloading a pass which saw Niamh Dilworth hit the net and Milford were stunned.

Eimear Watson pointed a free and when a Rebecca Finn strike from the right wing went all the way to the far post netting, Milford were back in the game. Then, what a brilliant eight minutes they had. Emer Watson struck another two frees, before a magnificent individual run and finish by Maria Watson put Milford three in front.

Laura Stack made it four. But Inniscarra remained composed, and replied with two points to leave them trailing by two at the break.

Milford enjoyed much of the possession in the third quarter, but their return was just three points. They had a couple of opportunities and, in hindsight, they should have taken their points.

They didn't, however, and despite being involved in a tough game against Douglas last Saturday, Inniscarra dug deep and began to match Milford ball for ball.

Four points separated them with 12 minutes left. Niamh McCarthy struck a beautiful point from the wing.

Casey pointed a free to reduce it to two. Rena Buckley was magnificent throughout, and all over the field Inniscarra threw bodies on the line.

Sheehan saw half a chance through a crowd of bodies and blasted to the net. There was still time for Milford, but Inniscarra's defence, as a unit, was superb and there was no way through.

**Scorers for Inniscarra:** J Casey 0-6 (0-5 f), N Dilworth 1-1, A Sheehan 1-0, E Looney 0-1, N McCarthy 0-1 each.

**Milford:** E Watson 0-5 (0-4 f), M Watson 1-1, R Finn 1-0, L Stack, A Thompson 0-1 each.

**INNISCARRA:** S Walsh; M Buckley (c), C Looney, R Quigley; A Dineen, R Buckley, A Kavanagh; G Heffernan, A Sheehan; T McCarthy, J Casey, E Looney, R Keane, N Dilworth, N McCarthy.

**Sub:** K O'Mahony for A Dineen (45).

**MILFORD:** R Duggan; A Galvin, E O'Riordan, D Hayes; L Hanley, A Watson, S Sexton; O O'Mahony, A Thompson; L Stack, R Finn, E Watson; M Watson, K Galvin, E O'Gorman.

**Subs:** D O'Brien for K Galvin (42), S Sheehan for R Finn (53).

**Referee:** Cathal Egan (Glen Rovers).

## Two competitive sides will play a humdinger of a game

Tonight: Cork County Senior Camogie Championship Semi-final: Inniscarra v Milford Mallow GAA Grounds, 7pm

IT'S going to be a humdinger in Mallow this evening as last year's finalists do battle again, this time in the championship semi-final. It's going to be a harder ask of Inniscarra after their quarter final replay against Douglas went to extra time last Saturday.

Inniscarra advance by a point when Niamh McCarthy got the final tap in for goal on 77 minutes after a Niamh Dilworth shot ricocheted off the upright and Jessica Kavanagh attempted to clear.

You would have to say that the balance tips slightly in Milford's favour. They are sure to have the fresher legs in the final quarter. But Inniscarra are sure to dig deep to hold onto their title.

After receiving a first round defeat to Sarsfields Inniscarra have beaten Courcy Rovers, Cloughduv and Douglas.

CAMOGIE COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP SEMI-FINAL

■ Linda Mellerick

Milford accounted for St Finbarr's, Ballincollig and Sars. Milford are further weakened with the departure of Anna Geary, but they are still an impressive side. They received determined challenges from Ballincollig and Sarsfields but both sides in the end couldn't cope with Milford at midfield and up front.

Ashling Thompson thrived in both games and Maria and Emer Watson were as forceful as ever in front of goal. Milford notched up 5-27 in those two games, 5-16 from play. They conceded 22 points, just nine from play.

From the side that took part in last year's decider, Milford are without the services of Anna Geary, Christine O'Connor, Brid Flanagan, Deirdre O'Reilly and Marie Walsh. They are big players to lose but

Sarah Sexton is as experienced as those mentioned, and Rebecca Finn, Katie Galvin and Eimear O'Gorman are also more than able to hold their own.

Aileen Sheehan is in tremendous form for Inniscarra this season and as a team they've maintained their fighting qualities. For the possession they've enjoyed however they should be putting more up on the scoreboard. Their attempt to round players or going for goals when points have been there for the taking could have cost them a place in the semis.

They won't find the net too easily with Aine Watson and Elaine O'Riordan minding the 'D'. They got four majors last year it must be said, albeit one or two were fortunate, so they'll believe they can get them again. When a goal is on it must be taken at this stage of the competition, but it must be on to begin with. Maria Watson is one of the best around when making those split-second decisions. And, given half a chance, she'll find the net again this evening.

## Winding road to camogie decider

Cork club final

Michael Moynihan

Today's Cork camogie county final features two clubs who've come through the hard way, Glen Rovers and Inniscarra.

The Glen lost their first-round game to St Catherine's while Inniscarra, last year's champions, had a tough start themselves, losing out to Sarsfields.

Since then both sides have refocused and driven on, with the Glen taking revenge on St Catherine's in their semi-final. For their part, Inniscarra have had probably a tougher route back to the decider. They needed to go to a replay to see off Douglas in the quarter-final, and ended up winning by the bare minimum in extra-time after that replay. They then had to take on Milford in their semi-final, a repeat of last year's decider.

The rash of fixtures in recent weeks has been driven by a couple of factors, according to close observers of the camogie scene. Cork were taken to a replay in the All-Ireland intermediate camogie final, which delayed several games, and the recent stormy weather hasn't helped the board to fulfil fixtures.

For all that, today's final is regarded as a fair reflection of where the strength lies in the county championship.

The Glen have been knocking on the door for some time, for instance, and have already been in a final this year, reaching the league decider only to lose out to Courcy Rovers.

In the other corner, Inniscarra can draw on the experience gained in winning last year's title, and also the confidence in stopping Milford's drive for five titles in a row while doing so. While they can draw on inspirational players like Rena Buckley, the question is whether that extra game — the replay and extra time against Douglas — may become a factor tomorrow afternoon, particularly as the Glen pipped St Catherine's in a driving finish and may be marginally fresher.

**SE Systems Cork Camogie Senior Championship final:** Glen Rovers v Inniscarra, Castle Road, 2.30pm.



Cork captain Rena Buckley lines out for Inniscarra tomorrow.



## Blackrock face stiff Valleys challenge

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

**SE Systems Senior B Championship Final; Blackrock v Valley Rovers; Sun Oct 28th; Castle Road; 2pm.**

Twelve months after being crowned SE Systems Intermediate champions, Blackrock are back in a county final as they chase the second biggest prize in Cork camogie in their bid to take the Senior B title.

It's been a superb year for the Blackrock girls annexing the Senior B league crown with four points to spare over Fr O'Neil's. They have grown in confidence with every game and it comes as no surprise to see them reach the final.

Valley Rovers were defeated in last year's final by Mallow. Many had fancied them to be crowned champions as they had been knocking at the door for years but they are still searching for their first title.

Blackrock edged out Ballinhassig in a semi-final where they had to be at their best to withstand a strong Ballinhassig finish as they came to within a point after trailing by 10.

A last-gasp goal was enough to see Valley edge out Eire Og as they turned a four-point halftime deficit into a one-point victory to set up a final meeting with Blackrock.

Both sides have excellent players. Kaitlin Hickey Hayley Ryan and Michelle Murphy stand out for Blackrock, while Katie Lynch, Connie Hawks, Gillian Harrington and Suzan O'Leary have been to the fore for Valleys.

It's hard to predict a winner; there is a huge determination about a Blackrock side very much on a mission, while Valleys have been here before and won't want to lose out for the second year in row.

Promotion to Senior awaits the victor and an opportunity to dine at the high table is there for whoever can produce the goods.

**SE Systems Junior A Championship Final; Watergrashill v Na Piarasigh; Sun Oct 29th; Castle Road; 11am.**

The curtainraiser to the big game on Sunday is the meeting of Watergrashill and Na Piarasigh in the SE Systems Junior A final.

Na Piarasigh lost out in last season's decider to a late Newtownshandrum rally and will be determined to make amends. Watergrashill lost at semi final stage last year and boosted by the return of Marie O'Neill to their ranks they will be hoping to take the title.

The experience gained last year will stand to the Na Piarasigh girls and they know just how close they came to being crowned champions and the determination to success is there and very much alive and they are capable of taking the title.



Inniscarra's Rena Buckley breaks past Burgess/Duharra's Tara Kennedy in last year's Munster final.

Picture: John D Kelly

# Inniscarra have to do it hard way

CAMOGIE

■ Linda Mellerick

IF INNISCARRA take the Cork Senior Championship title tomorrow, in Castle Road from 2.30pm, for the second successive year they'll have done it the hard way and will be very worthy champions.

What a two weeks it has been for them. On October 14 they played out a tough draw with Douglas. The replay last weekend went to extra time. They won by a point with a Niamh McCarthy goal on 78 minutes.

Last Wednesday an Aileen Sheehan goal on 59 minutes propelled them into tomorrow's final after what was the toughest of games with Milford.

They've had slow starts, they've taken the lead, they've lost the lead, they've bounced back, they fought to the end and on each occasion, they've

seen the game out. Those qualities show that Inniscarra don't panic.

They have a calm and sensible defence, led by Rena Buckley, a midfield where Aileen Sheehan has been shining and a forward line all capable of scoring, led by Joanne Casey, Niamh McCarthy and Niamh Dilworth.

When Inniscarra won their first senior title in 2010 the future seemed bright.

But they received their unfair share of long-term injuries and it took them until 2016 to sit again on top of the throne. Last season's final with Mil-

ford was a humdinger. A game which gave us six goals and 23 points saw Inniscarra emerge as champions by three.

Last Wednesday evening the scores may not have been as plentiful but it was as intense a club game as I've seen.

There were numerous melees, the reason being that no player gave an inch.

It takes a good team to win a county title. It takes a great team to win back to back titles. Inniscarra are a great team and they'll want to be remembered as such.

One could say that the past two weeks will have brought Inniscarra on even further. Those games are worth their weight in gold. But will tomorrow come too soon for them?

To expect these players to be at their best after 140 minutes of tough hurling in such a short space of time is a hard ask.

Despite that, when you're an hour away from a county title you'll dig as deep as you can.

Inniscarra will go into tomorrow's final as hot favourites. They're level-headed enough to know the risks here and their 140 minutes will count for nothing if they don't finish the job.

Joanne Casey is an expert free taker and the Glen will need to be very disciplined.

Glen are a young side and how they cope with the physical aspect of a county final will play a big role in their fortunes. Is it David versus Goliath? We all know how that played out.

## Good work attitude key to Glen's bid to end famine

CAMOGIE

■ Linda Mellerick

A NEW Glen Rovers camogie team is an hour away from reducing the nostalgia surrounding their 1990-1996 predecessors who had unprecedented success with the club. At the very least they'll stop the talk around the 'last Glen team to win a senior county title'. And it's very welcomed.

Those of us who were involved during those heady heights didn't think it would take 21 years for the Glen to reach another final. I'm sure the current players have enough of the wistfulness surrounding those times and are eager to make their own mark.

After knocking on the door for a long time, their hour has come. And even if the result doesn't go their way tomorrow, it has still been a fantastic year for them, one which will stand to them and the youngsters coming up behind. I hope they won't forget that.

But the Glen aren't going to just make up the numbers. They'll believe they can win this final and why wouldn't they? Leanne O'Sullivan is possibly

their better-known player as she has been on the senior inter-county squad for the past few seasons and holds three All-Ireland medals.

But she would be one of the less-known Cork players. The Glen don't have a Rena Buckley or Ashling Thompson. But what they do have is a balanced side, with a great working attitude and that can often be worth more.

Losing out to St. Catherine's in round 1 by just four points, the Glen went on to beat Killeagh, Ballygarvan and St Catherine's in the semi-final.

They will go into the game fresher than their opponents who have had an incredibly tough week. Winning their quarter-final last Saturday after extra time and coming out on top after a titanic battle with

Milford on Wednesday, Inniscarra are sure to feel it in their legs.

Glen will need to be fast out of the traps. They won their semi-final just seven days ago and were slow enough to get going and they can't afford to do that tomorrow.

They have absolutely nothing to lose. Did any of us visualise Glen Rovers in the County final this year? I don't believe anyone who says they did, unless they are from within the Glen camp of course.

They need to play with abandonment, enjoy the hour, take chances, throw caution to the wind, give it their all, have no regrets and what will be will be.

For those who have spent hundreds of hours on the pitch over the past 21 years, it's a great occasion and one which they thoroughly deserve.

Guiding their success this season is Dave Ellis, Dave O'Connell, Tara Cunningham and Ken Bulman.



# Club fixtures are a serious issue



Camogie

Linda Mellerick

WHAT a few weeks it's been in the Cork Senior Camogie Championship. Draws, replays, extra-time, and goals in the dying minutes. It really has been an exciting few weeks.

Certainly, the championship has raised the bar this year. What a pity though that it's all so condensed and that clubs aren't maximising their potential because of it.

Let's take Inniscarra for example. A quarter-final on October 14, a replay on October 21 which went to extra time. A semi-final last Wednesday evening, a county final today, and should they win, a Munster championship semi-final tomorrow.

Now if that doesn't raise an issue, I don't know what does. Firstly, let's not all rush to blame the county board. They are getting it from all sides.

Cork's management insists on two to three weeks before their championship games without club activity. Many of the players on those Cork teams support this.

They are primarily focused on Croke Park during the summer. Who can blame them for that really?

But a better balance must be struck. Cork players make up the minority of players in the county. I've heard people casually state 'era the GAA have the same problem'.

As if that makes it acceptable. It doesn't. I stand to be corrected, but I don't believe any hurling or football club has endured what Inniscarra are currently going through.

Cork won many titles in the 1980s and 90s and we had our club championship finished in July. We had to, as the All-Ireland club final was in November.

Maybe pushing that date to early March has contributed to the issue. Sometimes the more time you have, the less you get done.

There are more inter-county games today of course, with round robin formats in every grade.

Let's be honest, if we were all managing Cork, we'd look for the full commitment and focus of our panel.

But that can still be achieved. I'm all for Cork winning All-Irelands and giving them every opportunity to do so, but I think the situation should be revisited where even a minor tweak could help clubs without weakening Cork's chances in 2018.

Draws and replays are always going to be there, particularly in the latter stages of competitions, and we're not giving ourselves enough time to manoeuvre around them.

Galway is in a state of unrest again. How many times have we seen this?

For those who aren't up to speed, the shortened version is that the entire management team of 2017 claim they have been let go because a member of their backroom team, Niall Corcoran, conducted one-on-one training sessions with Cork keeper Aoife Murray.

Mark Dunne was aware



Newcestown's Colette Desmond gets the Player of the Match after their recent county final win from Mary Newman.



At the Rochestown Park Hotel, Cork keeper Aoife Murray picked up her Cork 96FM/C103 GAA Sports Star of the Month Award from Finbarr McCarthy. Picture: Tony O'Connell Photography.

some inter-county hurlers and camogie players based in Dublin and he was ok with this if there was no conflict of interest in his role with the Galway team.

Niall has done this with numerous inter-county players over the years, while being involved with county teams.

None of the Galway management had a problem with it and Aoife said that what went on in their respective camps were 'non-subjects' during their sessions, that were not up for discussion.

Dunne believes the situation was used as an excuse and that prior to their last round-robin fixture July, management considered resigning after relations broke down with the board.

Dunne alleges that board members questioned selection and tactics, provided opinion on the performance of players, claimed "at least 10 players

board have since refuted this.

We in Cork know better than anyone what damage a county board/team divide can bring about.

Thankfully, our camogie board and inter-county squads live in relative harmony, all working towards a common goal. I'm quite sure they're not always in agreement but they work it out, and privately.

Today is the biggest day in our club calendar year, the pairing of Inniscarra and Glen Rovers in the senior final. Who would have placed the Glen in this position at the start of the championship?

Some may feel this day has come too soon for them. But is it ever too soon to get an incredible experience under your belt? Inniscarra will, of course, be favourites despite their tough schedule. Best of luck to both teams.

The All-Stars takes place next Saturday and as we continue to profile the players Cork are up against, here are the midfield nominations, going

**"A better balance must be struck. Cork players make up the minority of our players in the county."**

against Ashling Thompson. Orlaith Duggan (Clare): Winning her first nomination, Orlaith showed tremendous leadership as a young Clare team took to the field.

Eimear McCarthy (Dublin): Eimear was the driving force behind the girls in blue this season, producing consistent performances and is a maiden nominee.

Niamh Kilkenny (Galway): Kilkenny is no stranger to All-Stars nominations having received consecutive nominations from 2007-2015, winning five awards.

Ann Marie Starr (Galway): Her Galway team-mates will feel she has lived up to her name this year. She has yet to win an All-Stars award, with this her second nomination.

Meighan Farrell (Kilkenny): At 22 years of age, having picked up her first All-Star award last year, she will be looking to add another to her collection, along with a colleges All-Stars award.

## Underage county glory beckons

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

TWO finals take place today as the U14 A and B championships reach their conclusion.

In the A final, Éire Óg and Sarsfields will battle it out in Coachford at 11am for the Peter Downey Memorial Trophy.

Éire Óg overcame neighbours Inniscarra to set up a final place against the Féile na nGael All-Ireland champions Sars, who had a victory over Youghal to secure their place in the final.

The U14 B Championship final is also down for decision today in Coachford with Cobh meeting Ballincollig.

Cobh overcame Kilbree while Ballincollig had to go to extra-time before defeating Sliabh Rua by the narrowest of margins.

Last weekend, the U14C championship semi-final had to be postponed due to bad weather as Storm Brian spoiled the day.

The games are re-fixed for today with Brian Dillon's, who edged out Clonakilty, meeting a Ballincollig side that defeated Blarney. This game goes ahead in Brian Dillon's today at 1pm.

Castlemartyr will meet Rockbawn in Whitechurch at 2.30pm after they defeated Banteer while Rockbawn got the upper hand on Erin's Own.

The U16 Championships are also progressing. Ballincollig booked their semi-final spot with a victory over Glen Rovers. Ballinora will meet Courcsey Rovers today at 11.45am in Courcsey. Carrigaline will host Charleville on Thursday next at 7.30pm under lights in Carrigaline.

The U16 B Championship quarter-finals pairings are decided. Youghal will meet Blarney on Monday at 11am in Youghal (Copper Alley grounds), and Banteer will travel to meet Fr O'Neill's on Sunday week.

In the U16 C Championship quarter-finals, Valley Rovers welcome Mallow to Brinny today at 1.30pm.

A few results in the minor championship. In the SE Systems Minor A grade, Sarsfields had a victory over league champions Newcestown. In a tight contest Sarsfields ran out 3-6 to 2-7 winners. Kilbrittan/Timoleague will take on Milford/Ballyhea today.

In Minor B Championship, Bride Rovers had a 2-11 to 2-7 win over Aghada to make it to the semis where they will meet Cloughduv or Aghabullogue.

In the SE Systems Minor B Championship, St Finbarr's overcame Douglas and will meet either Enniskeane or Ballincollig.



## Valleys are looking to atone for 2016 loss

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

TOMORROW is a big day for Blackrock and Valley Rovers as they battle it out for the second biggest prize in Cork camogie.

The Senior B Championship is always hotly contested and with games played on a round-robin basis, the first big push is to emerge from the group and secure a semi-final spot. From there, it's knock-out.

Blackrock have impressed all through this campaign with good results and victories over Barryroe and Carrigaline, but they were held to a draw in their opening game by Éire Óg and, again, in their last game against Fr O'Neill's.

In their semi-final against Ballinhassig, they left a 10-point lead slip and were hanging on as Ballinhassig searched for an equaliser.

They know a similar situation tomorrow will not suffice and this is something Ger Coughlan and his backroom team will be looking at, as they plot Valleys' downfall.

They cannot afford another scenario of letting a comfortable lead slip and they will know that.

It's great to see someone like Ger involved with the Blackrock team. He is chairman of the hurling club in Blackrock and that in itself is a huge commitment.

Nevertheless, he is one of the driving forces behind the resurgence of camogie in the club.

Valley Rovers lost last year's final to Mallow, despite being favourites, but early Mallow goals knocked them back and despite battling hard they never regained their composure.

A year down the line, and maybe a year wiser, they will be hoping to get it right this time out.

Both sides have excellent players. Kaitlin Hickey, Hayley Ryan, Michelle Murphy, Kate Leneghan, Aoife MacCurtain, and captain, Roisin de Faoite, will lead the Rockies' bid for their first senior B title.

Valley Rovers have plenty of talent in their ranks as well. Liz Bugler, Gillian Harrington, Connie Hawks, and Clodagh Deasy are experienced campaigners.

Susan O'Leary, Katie Lynch and Sinead Dart-O'Flynn are among the younger players who have performed well for Valleys in this championship.

Having lost last year, Valleys will be determined to go one better.

Blackrock are playing with huge confidence, something that has been evident through their league and championship campaigns, and an exciting contest awaits.



Cork and St Vincent's camogie players, brought the O'Duffy Cup to the Gurranabraher Credit Union Open day. Included are Philip Hosford; Lord Mayor Cllr Tony Fitzgerald; Georgina Fitzgerald and Michael O'Connell. Picture: Jim Coughlan

# Piarsaigh hoping to go one better

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

IT'S an early start tomorrow in Castle Road with the first ball being thrown in at 11am.

Watergrasshill and Na Piarsaigh in the SE Systems Junior A final is the curtain raiser to the SE Systems Senior B final.

Both sides will be determined to lift the silverware, especially as it's been a long time since either won the junior A title.

For Watergrasshill it was 1998 when the title last rested with the club, while Na Piarsaigh were junior A winners back in 1979.

In the interim, a junior B title came to Na Piarsaigh in 2011, and since their promotion to junior A, they have acquitted themselves well.

They contested the final last season,

losing after a late fightback by Newtownshandrum.

Watergrasshill lost at the semi-final stage last season to Newtown and they will be equally determined to go the full distance tomorrow.

On their way to the final, both have impressed. Na Piarsaigh had three victories out of three to top their group with wins over Bride Rovers, Banteer, and Ballyhea securing a semi-final spot.

Watergrasshill also topped their group with good performances over St Vincent's, Youghal, and Bishopstown.

The semi-finals were close. Watergrasshill had to go to a replay before disposing of Ballyhea.

Na Piarsaigh got the upper hand on neighbours St Vincent's in another close encounter.

At the start of the season, many tipped Watergrasshill to march through this championship with little bother, given that they were boosted by the return of former Cork senior Marie O'Neill to the club. Having won senior county, Munster and All-Ireland honours with Milford, this year she returned to her home club.

She has been a big asset, as has former Cork senior captain, Catriona Foley, who joined Watergrasshill this season, having previously lined out with Cloughduv and Rockbawn.

Having tasted defeat in last season's final Na Piarsaigh will bring all that experience with them tomorrow, boosted by a superb victory over a fancied St Vincent's side.

They have fine players in Orla Bourke, Rebecca Rourke, Lisa Burns, Casey Coleman, and Emily Buckley, who will lead their challenge.

Both sides are hungry for success. The pain of losing last year's final will still be in Na Piarsaigh's minds and they know that they have another chance to finish the job and get over the line.

Watergrasshill have put in a huge effort into this team in the last three years and the push for success is there.

It promises to be a lively affair to get the day off to the perfect start.

## Major push is on to complete Castle Road complex

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

IN the last two weekends, it was wonderful to see the dressing rooms in Castle Road open and teams emerging on to the field from a new entrance.

Since the facility opened, teams had been changing in portacabins and while they were invaluable, they weren't suitable for the needs of the growing numbers of players using the facility.

Croke Park won't allow Cork play games at the best playing surface in Ireland because the facilities don't meet their requirements.

The dressing rooms will, hopefully, alleviate this problem and ensure more high-profile games will be played on what is a superb pitch.

Last Saturday, when pitches all over the country were unplayable, Castle Road hosted a senior county semi-final and quarter-final, with the latter going to extra-time.

But while the complex is built and ready, the board cannot afford to open it fully and two dressing rooms

remain incomplete, leaving just two in operation at present. A huge amount of work remains to be done and the push is still on to get the project finished.

To help fund the development Camogfundraising is pushing their Sponsor a Block programme. The cost of sponsoring a block is €50 and they are calling on all past and present players and officials, clubs, the wider GAA family, businesses, and supporters to get behind this fundraising event, which they are hoping will generate significant money and will ensure that Cork Camogie will have a facility that its 10,000 members can all be proud of.

Given the huge volume of players playing the game and enjoying the use of the facilities, the hope is that if players or parents are not in a position to

buy a brick, they might come together and jointly buy one. To date, the fundraising target has not been reached and it is vital that everybody gets behind the venture and buys a block, or part of a block.

Without this support, the project will see a massive burden of debt on the shoulders of the Cork Camogie Board.

When one sees the magnificent structure being built in Páirc Uí Chaoimh and the massive amount of money it is costing, what the camogie girls need is a drop in the ocean in comparison. They must raise every penny themselves.

Payment for sponsorship can be sent to any of the camogie board officers or can also be lodged to the boards Development Bank Account details as follows:

AIB, 66 South Mall.  
BIC: AIBKIE2D.  
IBAN: IE98AIBK93417877079339



## Valleys come out on top in the final

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

**Valley Rovers** 2-8  
**Blackrock** 1-10

A CRACKER of a contest in the SE Systems Senior B final in Castle Road yesterday where little divided the sides over the hour.

Valleys started superbly Orla Deasy and Susan O'Leary had them two points in front and they possibly should have grabbed a goal before Kaitlin Hickey had a Blackrock point. Michelle Murphy hand passed to the net to give the Rockies the lead and twice the sides swapped points before Hayley Ryan put Blackrock four clear on the half time whistle.

With the wind in their favour for the second half Valley's got the best possible start with Katie Lynch hand passing to the net to narrow the Blackrock lead. Hickey pointed twice from placed balls to ensure Blackrock held their advantage but with every ball contested with huge determination every break was vital.

Liz Bugler was doing huge work for Valleys around the centre with Jennifer Murphy superb in defence. Hayley Ryan and Michelle Murphy were prominent for Blackrock but two points without reply saw Valleys back to within a point again.

Michelle Murphy stretched it to two but strong pressure saw Valleys win a penalty as Susan O'Leary was fouled in the small square, her effort was saved on the line but they won a free O'Leary popped it over the bar and the lead was down to a point.

Now the momentum was with Valleys as they battled for an equaliser. They won a 45 their effort came back off the post and was grabbed by Eileen Foley and she made no mistake driving the ball to the net to give them the lead with one minute remaining.

Blackrock substitute Sarah Carroll added a point in the six minutes of added time but they could not find an extra gear to get back on parity as Valley Rovers held firm to take the title after a thrilling contest that was a credit to both sides.

Valley Rovers defender Jennifer Murphy had a superb game and was named as Evening Echo Player of the Match.

**Scorers for Valley Rovers:** K Lynch 1-3, S O'Leary 0-4 (0-3f's 0-1 45), O Deasy 0-1, E Foley 1-0.

**Blackrock:** K Hickey 0-6 (0-4f's 0-1 45), M Murphy 1-1, H Ryan, K Leneghan, S Carroll 0-1ea.

**VALLEY ROVERS:** G Harrington; G Dart-O'Flynn, C Deasy, M Cottrell; E Coughlan, S O'Leary, J Murphy; MA Hawkes, L Bugler; E O'Regan, E O'Mahony, C Hawkes; E Foley, K Lynch, O Deasy.

**BLACKROCK:** C Coughlan; K O'Brien, C Ryan, A McCurtain, A Nagle, R De-Faio, T Mc Mahon; K Hickey, A O'Farrell; A Kearney, H Ryan, K Leneghan; C Meaney, A Murray, M Murphy.

**Sub:** S Carroll for C Meaney (46).

**Referee:** John Horgan (Glan Na Laol).

# Na Piarsaigh win on late goal blitz

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

**Na Piarsaigh** 3-3  
**Watergrasshill** 0-7

A LATE rally, which yielded three goals, saw Na Piarsaigh annex the SE Systems Junior A championship title at the expense of Watergrasshill in the curtain raiser at Castle Road yesterday.

Playing out 20 minutes of the second half with 14 players following the dismissal of their goal keeper for a red card offence, Watergrasshill looked to have weathered the storm but cutting the deficit to a point as the game entered added time Na Piarsaigh struck to grab it with two late goals.

It wasn't a classy game by any means and the excitement all packed into the closing minutes as Watergrasshill somehow managed to lose their shape and concentration having coped well with being reduced to fourteen.

Aided the strong wind in the opening half Watergrasshill held a four point interval lead and possibly should have been further ahead but strong defending by Na Piarsaigh plus a tendencies of Watergrasshill to go for goals was a factor in this.

Emily Buckley pointed on seven minutes to give Na Piarsaigh the lead but with Marie O'Neill prominent Watergrasshill led 0-3 to 0-1 at the end of the opening quarter. Applying a lot of pressure and distributing the ball well down the wings Watergrasshill found space and winning a penalty Marie O'Neill opted for a point to push them three clear before Cliona Cronin with an excellent strike made it four before the interval.

On the resumption both defences came under pressure but Na Piarsaigh with the wind in their favour were finding it hard to find a way past a solid Watergrasshill defence where captain Edel Murphy was superb.

It was nip and tuck as neither side could find the range to register the opening score of the second half and then came a big turning point. As Watergrasshill cleared their lines to safety as a defender emerged with pos-



Mary Newman presents the Evening Echo's Player-of-the-match award to Na Piarsaigh's Rebecca Rourke after defeating Watergrasshill in the Cork SE Systems Junior A Camogie final at Castle Road yesterday. Picture: Eddie O'Hare

session the referee's attention was brought back to the goal area where on consultation with his umpires a straight red was issued to the Watergrasshill goalkeeper.

There followed a penalty to Na Piarsaigh which keeper Amy Lee made her way up to take but a good save on the line from Catriona Foley saw Watergrasshill clear to safety.

Watergrasshill coped well with the numerical difference and still we awaited the first score of the second half as Na Piarsaigh failed to avail of their advantage.

With nine minutes remaining, Marie O'Neill edged Watergrasshill five points clean as they still held the upper hand.

Orla Bourke pointed a 45 after good pressure had forced the Watergrasshill

defence into an error and with the same player adding her second point from play a minute later Watergrasshill's led was down to three points.

Marie O'Neill rallied Watergrasshill with a point with three minutes remaining but Na Piarsaigh continued to improve and pumping long ball into the danger area they were causing problems for the Watergrasshill defence. Winning a free on the 20-metre line they opted to bring Amy Lee forward to hit it and the keeper made no mistake aiming high to the roof of the net with two minutes remaining.

As Na Piarsaigh battled for an equaliser the clock ticked into added time with two minutes played a dipping shot from Trisha Coleman out on the wing struck the end of the upright and went over the line for the lead. Water-

grasshill stunned by the late rally had no time to respond and a Casey Coleman goal on the full time whistle was the icing on the cake for Na Piarsaigh.

Rebecca Rourke Na Piarsaigh defender was named as the Evening Echo player of the Match.

**Scorers for Na Piarsaigh:** T Coleman, C Coleman, A Lee (f), 1-0 each, O Bourke 0-3 (0-1 45), E Buckley 0-1(f).

**Watergrasshill:** M O'Neill 0-6 (0-2f's), C Cronin 0-1, NA PIARSAIGH: A Lee(c); S O'Donovan, L Burns, H Fitton, R Rourke, E Buckley, L Twohig, O Bourke, A O'Sullivan, S Roche, C Mc McCarthy, C Coleman, O Connolly, E Mc Elhinney, T Coleman.

**Sub:** S Warren for E McElhinney (inj 40).

**WATERGRASSHILL:** A Carry; E Fitzgerald, A Helferman, A Fohy; N Mulholland, E Murphy(c), C Foley, E Carey, R Kaiser, C Cronin, M O'Neill, M Sheehan; L O'Reilly, L Crowley, R Carey.

**Subs:** M Kennedy for L Crowley (35), M Buckley for R Carey (40), A Whoolley for C Cronin (59).

**Referee:** John O'Leary (Mallow).



Na Piarsaigh captain Amy Lee and players celebrate after defeating Watergrasshill in the Cork SE Systems Junior A Camogie final at Castle Road yesterday. Picture: Eddie O'Hare



Na Piarsaigh's Sinead Warren and Trish Coleman celebrate a goal against Watergrasshill during the Cork SE Systems Junior A Camogie final. Picture: Eddie O'Hare



# Inniscarra retain crown



Joanne Casey, Inniscarra, receives the Player of the Match from, Linda Mellerick, from the Evening Echo. Picture: Jim Coughlan

## Both sides can take a lot from a great final

TWO things came out of Saturday's Senior County Camogie final.

Inniscarra are undisputed worthy champions and Glen Rovers are no longer the 'also rans'.

When Joanne Casey struck two goals inside the opening four minutes, many feared the worst.

Please don't let this be a landslide victory.

It was the worst possible start for the Glen.

Undoubtedly, they spoke before the game about not giving the champions a good start.

It was ball watching and inexperience which saw Casey all alone, particularly for her second goal, and from a Glen point of view the ball couldn't have fell to a worse player.

Netminder Denise Luby had no chance.

But what a brilliant 10-minute spell the Glen then had.

Showing no fear, they attacked the game, scoring five points on the trot from four different players, without reply.

You could see that in a couple of 50/50 sprints there was tiredness in Inniscarra's legs.

They looked heavy. But just as they have done so many times in the past seven days they seemed to dig deeper and deeper and get a new burst of life.

They responded to the Glen's purple patch with four, three from Joanne Casey and had a good goal chance but were denied by Denise Luby, leaving five between them at the break.

Inniscarra getting the first couple of scores after the break was just what they wanted.

They were piling on the pressure and but for Denise Luby, could have had another two goals.

The Glen were making little headway around the middle of the field now and were struggling to win possession in their half-forward line, except for Aisling Wallace who made several runs.

What struck me a few times during the game was the lack of fire in the belly in two or three Glen players.

When a ball broke they were slow to react, showed an indecisiveness on whether to go or not and when they did, it lacked conviction.

That at times was one of the differences between the sides. Inniscarra know what's it's like to lose big games, they know the hurt, they've felt the pain.

The Glen were in what many might feel was bonus territory.

They are young and the saying 'you have to lose one to win one' never seemed more apt as it did on Saturday.



### Match analysis

Linda Mellerick

The experience of Inniscarra was also a telling factor.

That bit of cuteness means so much, that only experience can buy.

The Glen will be better equipped in that next year.

One moment comes to mind in the final 10 minutes of the game.

With the Glen attacking, Rena Buckley and a Glen player (I can't recall who) sprinted to a ball in the corner.

Rena got there first, just a foot ahead. But it was enough to crouch and position herself over the ball, not only shielding the ball but also drawing a foul when she was pushed from behind.

It was a crucial free at the time when the Glen had regained momentum and had the gap down to three points.

Inniscarra have been just brilliant this past week.

I'm sure the way they've achieved this title has made it all the sweeter.

I joined the Glen after the match in the Glen club.

Despite their disappointment, they acknowledged a brilliant Inniscarra team.

The Glen can hold their heads high. It was a very good county final and they massively contributed.

They can look to 2018 with enthusiasm. Picking the Player of the Match can sometimes be an easy task and at others, difficult.

There were some fine performances from both sides.

For the Glen, Denise Luby, Kelly Falvey, Lauren Callanan, Aisling Wallace and Emma Murphy stood out at various stages.

For Inniscarra, Rebecca Keane had a fine hour, Aoife Kavanagh, Rena Buckley and Grace Heffernan hugely impressed.

Joanne Casey won the Player of the Match award in 2016 after scoring 2-8 from 4-10.

It's nice to pass the award around when a team has regular success but how could you ignore the fact that she scored 2-7 from 2-13 on Saturday, 2-3 from play?

Top class. She made the decision easy.



Inniscarra's Erin Looney and Grace Heffernan go for a high ball with Glen Rovers' Nora O'Riordan during the Cork County Senior Camogie final at Castle Road, Mahon. Picture: Jim Coughlan



Mary Buckley, Inniscarra captain, receives the cup from Mary McSweeney, chairperson Cork Camogie Board. Picture: Jim Coughlan



Niamh McCarthy, Inniscarra, Kelly Falvey, Glen Rovers. Picture: Jim Coughlan

## Story of the game

### Player Of The Match:

There could be no disputing the winner of this accolade. Although it was a great team display from Inniscarra, the role of Joanne Casey was pivotal. Her two goals and seven points were a crucial factor in the final outcome. Turning Point: Inniscarra showed their grit and character to respond at numer-

ous stages when Glen Rovers came back at them. Crucially the Mid Cork side did so right in the final stages when there was just a goal between the two sides. Referee Watch: The referee for this contest was Diarmuid Kierwan from Eire Og. On an overall level he did a very good job at handling the game. He left the girls

get on with it allowing for a free-flowing contest.

### Score Of The Match:

Joanne Casey came up trumps time and again for Inniscarra. When Glen were on a roll, she had a free from 50m was a crucial one and it showed that she could perform under pressure and when her teammates needed her most.



# after busy few days



Inniscarra celebrate their win against Glen Rovers. *rish Examiner* at the Camogie Grounds, Castle Road.



Inniscarra celebrate.

## McCarthy proud of effort put in by ladies

REACTION

John O'Shea

THE Inniscarra management team were more than proud of the outstanding effort their side put in during the game.

The Mid Cork side worked hard throughout to secure back to back Cork County Senior Camogie Championship titles, following what was a great battle and an absorbing contest with Glen Rovers on Saturday afternoon.

One of the members of the management team on the day was Joe McCarthy. Speaking to the *Evening Echo* in Castle Road after Inniscarra's victory, McCarthy said that winning the title for the second year in a row showed how great a side this is and the strong character they possess.

"From our own perspective, the team showed great heart, a great determination and a great will to win."

"We beat Milford last year, we beat them this year."

"They were a good team and today we felt that the Glen would give us a good game and that is what they did."

The lead up to the final was quite the hectic build up from an Inniscarra perspective.

They had to play their quarter final replay against Douglas, their semi-final against Milford and Saturday's final against the Glen all in the space of just a week.

Although this was far from ideal, McCarthy stated how it was a testament to this Inniscarra side that they just got on with things.

"It was their third game of the week. We played a quarter final of a county, a semi final of a county and this final all within the period of seven days."

"They never gave up. There is a never say die attitude among that team. This is their two in a row and I can tell you one thing, with some good young players coming up we will be looking to challenge again in the future."

"They have the heart and determination and they showed plenty of skill and ability when it was required."

Discussing how Inniscarra responded to the Glen onslaught on their goal during the game, McCarthy added:

"That is the kind of spirit, there is in the side. They are a very united and very unique bunch."

"It was a difficult game and we expected that the Glen would be good."

Inniscarra	2-13
Glen Rovers	1-10

**FOR the second year in a row Inniscarra were crowned the SE Systems Cork Camogie Senior Championship winners after what was a hard-earned victory over Glen Rovers.**

In what was their fourth championship outing in just the space of a mere eight days, Inniscarra once again showed that they could go to the well and produce a championship winning performance when they needed it most.

They have come through tough tests with Douglas and Milford in the quarter and semi finals respectively.

Again in this final contest the Mid Cork side responded when the Glen threw everything they had at them.

It has by no means been done the easy way whatsoever, but Inniscarra have shown through their togetherness and determination that they are deserving winners of this crown for the 3rd time in their history.

There is a good blend of youth and

## CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick

experience in this Inniscarra side and they come together to form one impressive unit.

Among the players in their squad is one Rena Buckley, who has won 18 All Ireland winners medals for Cork between Camogie and Football.

She was solid at the back at times. But this was an all round display and none of the Inniscarra players could be faulted and all put in terrific shifts.

Joanne Casey was in red hot scoring form throughout for Inniscarra helping herself to a total of 2-7.

It contributed to her deservedly being awarded the player of the match award.

Casey's two goals came in the opening minutes of the contest and that period of the play ultimately proved to be a crucial factor in the final outcome.

It provided Inniscarra with the platform and lead which they ultimately never left slip.

Casey first found the back of the net with a clinical finish after Niamh McCarthy directed the ball into her path.

The crowd had barely settled down after the celebration of that goal when Casey ended up getting a second.

This time she did well to turn and finish after a good catch from a pass by Aileen Sheehan.

Glen Rovers, in their first Senior County Final since 1996, showed the great attitude which they possess to come back into proceedings and let Inniscarra know they would have to earn this the hard way.

Glen got six of the next eight scores with Emma Murphy, Nicole O'Brien and Micheala Hyde all pointing, cutting the gap down to just two points by the 20th minute.

Inniscarra though showed no signs of tiredness from their previous week's excursions and Casey and Niamh McCarthy both pointed before the end of the opening half to leave the score at the break 2-6 to 0-7.

Casey picked up where she left off after the restart with two further well-taken scores.

As the game progressed into the latter stages, Glen Rovers once again tried to mount a fightback and set up what looked like a tense closing few minutes.

The City side found the back of the net through Emma Murphy as her effort to the left-hand corner manage to

evade the Inniscarra shot-stopper.

Despite their late rally it ultimately was not to be enough.

Make no bones about it this is a growing Glen Rovers side and if they can stick together there is no reason why they shouldn't aspire to be back at this stage next year again.

But the day ultimately belonged to Inniscarra and through further clinically taken points from Niamh Dilworth and the outstanding Casey as they finally killed off what was a brave challenge from their opposition.

This win was another vindication for the hard work which has been put in at the Inniscarra club.

They proved that last year was no flash in the pan and that this is an immensely impressive side.

**Scorers for Inniscarra:** J Casey (4) 2-7, N Dilworth 0-2, K O'Mahony, T McCarthy, R Keane, N McCarthy 0-1 each.

**Glen Rovers:** E Murphy 1-1, N O'Brien (3) 0-4, M Hyde, N O'Riordan 0-2 each, A Wallace 0-1.

**INNISCARRA:** S Walsh, M Buckley, C Looney, R Quigley, G Heffernan, R Buckley, A Kavanagh, K O'Mahony, A Sheehan, T McCarthy, J Casey, E Looney, R Keane, N Dilworth, N McCarthy.

**Subs:** None.

**GLEN ROVERS:** D Luby, S Fahy, K Fahy, Z Buckley, K O'Connell, L O'Sullivan, K Buckley, L Cunningham, L Callanan, A Wallace, N O'Brien, K Walsh, M Hyde, E Murphy, N O'Riordan.

**Subs:** C Boland for Z Buckley (29), D O'Neill for Walsh (38).

**Referee:** D Kiwan/Eire Ogi.

## Three reasons why Inniscarra are champions

### GREAT CHARACTER UNDER PRESSURE

Inniscarra are some outfit and there is something about their character which one can only be impressed by.

They responded time and again when Glen Rovers mounted a fightback during the game. One could have thought in the latter stages, when Glen reduced the gap to just three points that Inniscarra could tire after playing so many games in a few days.

But they had the fight to keep on going and se-

cure their second county title in a row.

### QUICK START

Given they had to play four championship games in just the space of eight days one felt that Inniscarra could potentially be leggy and tired in the opening stages of the game.

However, it was to be the opposite. Inniscarra came roaring out of the traps like a greyhound and they managed to get two goals in the opening minutes through Joanne Casey.

Given they were against what is a young Glen

Rovers side, Inniscarra knew a good start was vital and they duly delivered on that front.

### GREAT TOGETHERNES:

Inniscarra showed at numerous times during the match that this was a united front. When they did not have the ball they worked hard to get it back and when they had the ball, there was always an option for one player to pass to another.

Inniscarra were determined to show that last year was not a flash in the pan and they most certainly proved it was not with this terrific display.





Inniscarra celebrate beating Glen Rovers in the Cork Senior Camogie Championship final at the Camogie Grounds, Mahon. Picture: Jim Coughlan

## Casey on fire as Inniscarra show their mettle to retain senior title

### Cork Senior Camogie Championship final

Inniscarra	2-13
Glen Rovers	1-10

#### John O'Shea

For the second year in a row, Inniscarra were crowned SE Systems Cork Senior Camogie champions after a hard-earned victory over Glen Rovers.

In what was their fourth championship outing in just the space of eight days, Inniscarra once again showed they could go to the well and produce a championship-winning performance when needed.

It has by no means been easy, Inniscarra showing their mettle to be crowned deserving winners for the third time.

Joanne Casey was in red-hot form throughout for Inniscarra, helping herself to a total of 2-7.

Casey's two goals came in the opening minutes of the contest and that period ulti-

mately proved crucial.

Casey first found the back of the net with a clinical finish after Niamh McCarthy directed the ball into her path.

The crowd had barely settled after the celebration of that goal when Casey ended up getting a second. This time she did well to turn and finish after a good catch from a pass by Aileen Sheehan.

Glen got six of the next eight scores with Emma Murphy, Nicole O'Brien, and Micheala Hyde all pointing, cutting the gap down to just two points by the 20th minute.

Inniscarra, though, showed

no signs of tiredness from their quarter and semi-final exertions against Douglas and Milford and Casey and Niamh McCarthy both pointed before the end of the half to leave the score at the break 2-6 to 0-7.

Casey picked up where she left off after the restart with two further well-taken scores.

As the game progressed to the latter stages, the Glen again tried to mount a fight-back and set up a tense finale.

The City side found the back of the net through Emma Murphy as her effort to the left hand corner manage to

evade the Inniscarra shot-stopper. Despite their late rally it was not

to be enough. The day belonged to Inniscarra and through further points from Niamh Dilworth and the outstanding Casey, they killed off a brave Glen challenge.

■ It was always going to be a big ask 24 hours after clinching the Cork title and so it proved as Inniscarra went down 0-15 to 0-7 to Clare's Inagh-Kilnamona in yesterday's Munster Senior Club semi-final.

**Scorers for Inniscarra:** J Casey (2-7, 4 frees), N Dilworth (0-2), K O'Mahony, T McCarthy, R Keane, N McCarthy (0-1 each).

**Glen Rovers:** E Murphy (1-1), N O'Brien (0-4, 3 frees), M Hyde, N O'Riordan (0-2 each), A Wallace (0-1).

**INNISCARRA:** S Walsh; M Buckley, C Looney, R Quigley; G Helleman, R Buckley, A Kavanagh; K O'Mahony, A Sheehan; T McCarthy, J Casey, E Looney; R Keane, N Dilworth, N McCarthy.

**GLEN ROVERS:** D Luby; S Fahy, K Falvey, Z Buckley; K O'Connell, L O'Sullivan, K Buckley; L Cunningham, L Callinan; A Wallace, N O'Brien, K Walsh; M Hyde, E Murphy, N O'Riordan.

**Subs:** C Boland for Z Buckley (29), D O'Neill for Walsh (38).

**Referee:** D Kirwan (Eire Og)



Glen Rovers' Leanne O'Sullivan tries to block down Inniscarra's Joanne Casey.

### Innishannon

#### Camogie club

From their humble beginnings back in 1987 Valley Rovers Camogie Club climbed the lofty heights of Cork County camogie when their senior B team captured the county championship crown on Sunday last.

After an exhilarating hour they defeated last year's intermediate champions Blackrock at the camogie headquarters in Castle Road and as a result will now compete at senior 'A' level in 2018.

Defeated at four final attempts the most recent being last year when they lost to Mallow, last Sunday's final was a thriller from start to finish and at the break the city girls, having had the aid of the stiffish breeze led by four points. On the resumption Valleys got the best of starts when Katie Lynch found the net.

It was nip and tuck throughout before Valleys Eileen Foley netted to give her side a two-point lead with one minute remaining.

With six minutes of added time Blackrock narrowed the gap to the minimum and in a nail-biting finish Valleys remained solid to claim an historic victory, amid great scenes of joy and emotion, which continued on their return to Innishannon where they were greeted by a huge support, a parade through the village and reception in the parish hall. Final score, Valley Rovers 2-8, Blackrock 1-10.

**Team/Panel:** G Harrington, G Dart-O'Flynn, C Deasy, M Cottrell, E Coughlan (c), S O'Leary (0-4), J Murphy, M Hawkes, L Bugler, E O'Regan, E O'Mahony, C Hawkes, E Foley (1-0), K Lynch (c) (1-3), O Deasy (0-1), S McCarthy, M Murphy, M Forde, L Brew, E Forde, S Murphy, V O'Halloran, M O'Brien, S Lynch, S O'Dwyer, A O'Brien, E Palmer, C O'Donovan. Manager/coach, Mark Prendergast, selector, Mary Crowley.

Oct. 2017



Valley Rovers' joint-captains Ena Coughlan and Katie Lynch, lift the cup after they defeated Blackrock in the SE Systems Cork Camogie Senior B Championship final at Castle Road. Picture: David Keane



# Casey points Inniscarra to glory

Camogie champs defend their county senior crown

## SENIOR CAMOGIE FINAL

**INNISCARRA** 2-13  
**GLEN ROVERS** 1-10

**SHIRLEY MOLONEY  
REPORTS**

THEIR plight of having to play four games in eight days grabbed the headlines earlier this week – but before Inniscarra bowed out of the Munster championship on Sunday, they won back-to-back Cork senior camogie titles the previous day.

In all, Inniscarra had to play four championship games in eight days, with less than 24 hours between their county final win against Glen Rovers and their Munster semi-final defeat to Clare's Inagh/Kilnamona.

Last week Inniscarra beat Douglas and Milford in county quarter-finals and semi-finals respectively.

Two goals inside the opening three minutes from player-of-the-match Joanne Casey set Inniscarra up to retain the SE Systems Cork camogie senior championship title for 2017, but it wasn't all one way traffic for the defending champions as Glen Rovers ensured they were pushed all the way last Saturday at Castle Road.

The game sprung to life for Inniscarra on three minutes when Casey blasted to the net twice within 60 seconds. The first, a sublime shot when a move that started deep in defence was collected by Niamh McCarthy on 30 metres who spotted Casey all alone on the 20 and didn't hesitate in laying off a pass that saw Casey blast to the net.

Within a minute Casey had

the sliotar in the back of the net again, this time after collecting a ball in from Aileen Sheehan and firing home to see Inniscarra two goals up before the Glen had any chance to respond.

Nora O'Riordan and Treasa McCarthy exchanged points before the Glen began to spring into action and pull themselves into the game. In a ten-minute spell they cut the deficit to just two points with Nicole O'Brien launching the fight-back with a free on 11 minutes. Three minutes later Michaela Hyde split the posts, before O'Brien fired over a 20-metre free. Emma Murphy slit the posts with a great score on the run to see the score 2-2 to 0-5.

Six minutes later, Glen goalkeeper Luby, who showed composure and skill on the goal line, controlled and cleared to ensure the Glen didn't concede during their ten-minute purple patch.

When O'Riordan split the posts after a strong run on 21 the game was well and truly on with just two between the sides.

Inniscarra, looking tired from a week of challenging fixtures, dug deep however, and through a Casey brace there were four between the sides in as many minutes.

Niamh McCarthy fired Inniscarra five clear when she dispossessed her opponent, collected and pointed. Casey, on free-taking duty, pointed a 40-metre free before the Glen's Katie Walsh raised a white flag just on the cusp of the break. Inniscarra headed to the dressing room leading 2-6 to 0-7.

Inniscarra doubled their lead shortly after the resumption



We did it! Inniscarra celebrate after winning the Cork camogie senior championship final last Saturday.

(Photos: Trevor Patchett)

through a Casey placed ball and a Rebecca Keane tight-angled point to move 2-8 to 0-7 ahead.

Once again, O'Brien, on free-taking duty, led the way in the Glen responding when she pointed a 40-metre free on 39.

Dilworth, operating at the edge of the square, picked off a point during a period where scores were hard to come by as the outfield battle intensified.

Casey fired over a long-range free on 50 to see Inniscarra 2-10 to 0-8 to the good heading into the closing ten minutes.

However, the Glen once again showed their ability to resurrect themselves and carved into the Inniscarra lead when Murphy fired to the net on 51 minutes. Hyde pointed from close range and an O'Brien 30-metre free had the Glen within three of Inniscarra.

Once again, and proving champions die hard, Inniscarra dug deep and responded with three unanswered points through a Casey free and fine effort from play either side of a hard-earned Dilworth effort to see them successfully defend their title, but not after being pushed all the way by a young and skilful Glen side.



Star player: Inniscarra's Joanne Casey scores a point after getting away from Glen Rovers' Leanne O'Sullivan.

### Scorers

**Inniscarra:** J Casey 2-7 (4f), N Dilworth 0-2, T McCarthy, K O'Mahony, N McCarthy, R Keane 0-1 each.

**Glen Rovers:** E Murphy 1-1, N O'Brien 0-4 (4f), N O'Riordan, M Hyde 0-2, K Walsh 0-1.

**Inniscarra:** S Walsh; M Buckley (captain), C Looney, R Quigley; G Heffernan, R Buckley, A Kavanagh; K O'Mahony, A Sheehan; T McCarthy, J Casey, E Looney; R Keane, N Dilworth, N McCarthy.

**Glen Rovers:** D Luby; S Fahy, K Falvey, Z Buckley; K O'Connell, L

O'Sullivan (captain), K Buckley; L Cunningham, L Collanin; A Wallace, N O'Brien, K Walsh; M Hyde, E Murphy, N O'Riordan.

**Subs:** C Boland for Z Buckley (28), D O'Neill for K Walsh (39).

**Referee:** Diarmuid Kirwin (Eire Óg)

## THE ONLY WAY IS UP Valley Rovers will play senior camogie in 2018

Valley Rovers celebrate after their 2-8 to 1-10 victory over Blackrock in the SE Systems Senior B Camogie Championship final at Castle Road last weekend. Valleys will now compete in the senior ranks in 2018.

