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Friday, September 7, 2018

Evening Echo

Cork Sports World

Pictured at the launch of the Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Camogie Championship Finals in Croke Park were (L-R) Shelly Farrell (Kilkenny), Deirdre Ashe, Liberty Insurance, Kathleen Woods, President of the Camogie Association and Aoife Murray (Cork).
Picture: INPHO/James Crombie



Cork eye Croker double

FIONNNUALA CARR



BIG DAY... Fionnuala Carr is excited about playing Cork this weekend and a return to Croke Park

Finals are about the buzz

This week is a slightly different one than I have been used to in recent years and one which I am enjoying every minute of. This Sunday Down camogs will take on Cork in the All Ireland intermediate camogie finals and to say it will give the county a lift for not only Camogie but GAA in general would be an understatement.

The year itself hasn't all been plain sailing and like every team we have experienced a few challenging times along the way.

To me it isn't the challenges that define a team as such but it is how a team responds to those challenges that defines them. For us it would have been too easy to drop our heads and give up on the year, but we didn't and every time we had a setback we responded positively. When you're working within a small panel numbers and bodies at trainings can be restrictive when compar-

ing yourself to a men's team or the Kilkenny's, Cork and Galway's but we took the attitude that no matter who was at training you only worry about yourself and you work hard to get the maximum value out of the session.

This is something that has stood by us this year and has helped create the comradery that we experience now. The group of camogs we have this year has been one of the most enjoyable years to be involved in and it feels more like a club team than a county team.

Having an All Ireland at any level within your county creates a great buzz but when your part of the group it's a really special feeling. The desire to get to training, that extra pep in your step when your taking to the field, the smiles and enjoyment of everyone else around you is uplifting and inspiring. Returning to training after the result against Tipperary in the All Ireland semi final

was slightly different but the training we have put in since that game has been second to none and despite the off the field activities that have to be done in the build up to a final the group has remained focused on the task at hand. I have had this week planned in my head for two weeks now, each waking minute and decision is made with Sunday's match in mind, planning my diary in work, limiting my travel and keeping myself busy while not overexerting can be a fine act to balance but when you have the carrot of an All Ireland final everything seems to fall into place.

The generosity of people and businesses in order to support us on our run to the final has been extremely humbling and I would like to take this time to thank each and every person, family, business and club who has generously donated to us in our run to Croke Park.

To EOS and Club Down I am de-

lighted that this team has given you the opportunity to be showcased in Croke Park on an All Ireland final day.

Perhaps if I had one negative from the build-up is the Down GAA board fixing club championship football matches for Sunday especially when one of the teams involved has three girls playing in the Camogie. I do understand that the sports are different codes and that fixtures have to be made for the greater good but I question the decision making behind these fixtures when people we know would be at the game but are forced to choose.

It is the same in my own club when they fixed a challenge match for Sunday and are forcing some fellows to miss out on supporting their sisters, cousins and friends in order to play a game that could have been fixed for a different day or a different time.

I don't doubt that we have their

backing and support but the biggest thing for female sports at the minute is getting people to the matches and to do this we need the help and support of all parties.

Sunday is a big day for Down camogie and one we are all really looking forward to, our story has one final chapter and one we hope has a happy ending.

• On a last note I would like to mention Timmy Doyle who passed away suddenly at the end of last week. They say that only the good die young and Timmy was one of the good ones, he was someone that lit up a room when he walked in. Full of craic and devilment he was a friend to many none more so than my Dad and he will be sorely missed especially by his brother Mickey, his two sisters Rosemary and Julie, partner Debra and wider family circle.

May he Rest in Peace.



Cork's better balance should see them to victory

Eoghan Cormican

Match preview

Tomorrow marks a third consecutive All-Ireland final meeting of Cork and Kilkenny — their fourth in five years.

Cork lead that count 2-1, but going back to the league final in April, it was Ann Downey's Cats who prevailed.

Kilkenny, by virtue of the examination they received from Galway in the All-Ireland semi-final, hold a distinct advantage over their opponents heading into tomorrow's decider.

Nobody has troubled Cork this summer, Paudie Murray's charges boasting an average winning margin of 18 points across their six-game journey to the final. They'd have been glad of a proper test before renewing acquaintances with their arch-rivals.

Kilkenny went extremely defensive against Galway last time out and while they did limit the Tribeswomen to two scores from play, they were not shooting the lights out at the other end. They had only seven points on the board when Katie Power scored the crucial goal in the 48th minute.

Rena Buckley's retirement has left a huge void in the Cork full-back line but Kilkenny won't enjoy any success exploiting Cork's last line of defence if they persist with a two-woman full-forward line.

With such a spread of attack-minded players, including the excellent Denise Gaule, Katie Power, Julie Ann Malone and the Farrell sisters, you'd have to wonder why Kilkenny build their game-plan around a heavily packed defence.

No doubt Downey will have picked up on the fact that there is not a huge amount of experience on the flanks of the Cork defence. Pamela Mackey aside.

This is the route they will travel for scores, as opposed to going down the centre where Gemma O'Connor will stand sentry.

That aforementioned Kilkenny rearguard, which welcomes back Edwina Keane after an injury lay-off, will look to close down the movement and scoring threat of Cork's half-forward trio of Amy O'Connor, Orla Cronin and Orla Cotter.

There's also Brieghe Corkery to factor in. She'll be introduced sooner rather than later.

Cork's ability not to over-complicate matters sees them get a most hesitant nod.

Verdict: Cork

players when we should be saying, 'what athletes, aren't they great ambassadors for the sport'. The Camogie Association released their master plan in November, so did the LGFA even look at our fixtures because that is the camogie semi-finals weekend.

"It is just a pity that two negative things got the most publicity. It would frustrate you," says the holder of eight All-Ireland medals.

"If we are left play the game, the game will sell itself. If the game is let flow, it will sell himself. Sometimes, though, we have to take what we get. 'Maybe, we can't complain until we get 30,000 on All-Ire-

land final day or 5,000 down in Páirc Uí Rinn for a camogie match."

The Camogie Association are expecting a crowd of 20,000 for the third consecutive final meeting of Kilkenny and Cork. Last year's attendance of 20,438 was the largest at a camogie final, excluding the four years where the decider was played on the same day as the U21 hurling final, since 2004.

The Fine Grain Property employee, who's in her 17th season with Cork, is a regular at the ladies football finals. She and her friends, mind you, would normally leave it until quite late in the afternoon to

get their tickets, but would typically end up in the middle of either the Hogan or Cusack Stand given demand would not be massive. Last year, though, was different, a record-breaking 46,286 through the turnstiles.

"We wound up somewhere in the Davin End. I was looking around and going, this is absolutely phenomenal.

"I've never played the game to have people watch me, but, at the same time, what are ladies football doing to get that many people in and what are we not doing."

So, what does the Cloughduv native think?

"Lidl has come in and

TRIPLE-HEADER: (L-R) Jackie Horgan (Kerry), Emer Keenan (Dublin), Aoife Murray (Cork), Shelly Farrell (Kilkenny), Sarah Harrington (Cork) and Fionnuala Carr (Down) set to battle it out in the Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Championships Finals.

Picture: James Crombie

pumped millions into ladies football. I go to my local Lidl and all the tellers have their jerseys on. I do think Liberty Insurance are pulling up their socks and are getting better. The All-Star trip was the first big step.

"Locally, we have a lot to do. We played an All-Ireland championship game in Páirc Uí Rinn at 5pm this summer and because we didn't have mini-games at half-time, there was virtually nobody there. I

could spot each player's parents.

"For the All-Ireland semi-final, we had girls playing at half-time. That brought 80 alone up from Cloughduv. Maybe, we need to make it more of a social occasion. There is nothing worse than running out onto the pitch and hearing diddly-eye music. Have stalls and bands outside, like the hurling. Make it more of a norm for people to go and support women's matches."

Corkery set for bench role in her 23rd All-Ireland final

Eoghan Cormican

For the first time since she was a teenager, Brieghe Corkery will begin tomorrow's All-Ireland camogie final on the bench.

Corkery, who gave birth to her son Tadhg at the end of March, returned to the Cork panel in July and was used off the bench in the closing stages of last month's All-Ireland semi-final. Manager Paudie Murray has opted to keep faith with the same 15 who eased past Tipperary in the penultimate round, meaning Corkery's run of having started 20 All-Ireland finals

in-a-row will not extend to 21. Limerick hurler Richie McCarthy, it has been confirmed, has torn his cruciate and is likely to miss Limerick's 2019 Munster SHC campaign.

CORK (All-Ireland senior camogie final): A Murray (Cloughduv); N O'Callaghan (Sarsfields); L Treacy (Killeagh); P Mackey (Douglas); L Coppinger (St Colums); G O'Connor (St Finbarrs); C Sigerson (Killeagh); J White (Douglas); A Thompson (Milford); A O'Connor (St Vincent's); O Cronin (Enniskeane); O Cotter (St Catherine's); K Mackey (Douglas); N McCarthy (Inniscarra); H Looney (Killeagh).

Subs: A Lee (Na Piaras); L O'Sullivan (Glen Rovers); A Sheehan (Inniscarra); L Homan (St Vincent's); L Collins (Courcey Rovers); B Corkery (Cloughduv);

S Hutchinson (Eire Og); L Hayes (St Catherine's); S McCarthy (Courcey Rovers); S Beausang (Killeagh).

KILKENNY (All-Ireland senior camogie final): E Kavanagh (Rower Innislig); C Dormer (Paulstown/Goresbridge); C Foley (Windgap); G Walsh (Tullaroan); C Phelan (Lisdowney); A Dalton (St Lachtains); D Tobin (Emeralds); A Farrell (Thomastown); M Farrell (Thomastown); JA Malone (Mullinavat); K Power (Piltown); D Gaule (Windgap); S Farrell (Thomastown); M Quilty (Mullinavat); M Walsh (Tullaroan).

Subs: J Frisby (Ballyhale Shamrocks); M Teehan (James Stephens); J Clifford (Dicksboro); E Keane (St Martins); K Doyle (Piltown); D Morrissey (Conahy Shamrocks); A Doyle (Piltown); G O'Donnell (Young Irelands); R Phelan (Conahy Shamrocks); N Deely (James Stephens).

CORK (All-Ireland intermediate camo-

gie final): A Lee (Na Piaras); L Weste (Ballycollig); S Harrington (Fr O'Neill's); N Ni Chaoimh (Killeagh); S Hutchinson (Eire Og); J Barry (Bride Rovers); L Callanan (Glen Rovers); S Buckley (Ballycollig); K Hickey (Blackrock); L Hayes (St Catherine's); F Neville (St Catherine's); S McCarthy (Courcey Rovers); C Sugrue (Ballynascorthy); M McCarthy (Sarsfields); C Collins (Ballynascorthy).

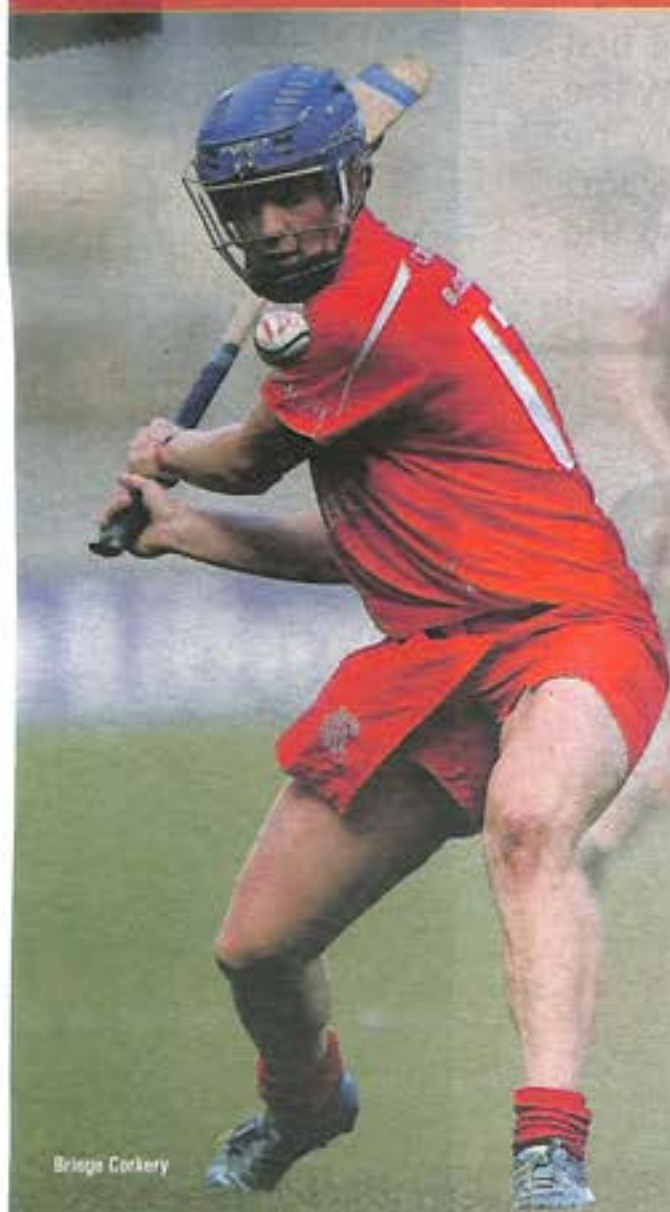
DOWN (All-Ireland intermediate camogie final): M McNally (Portlerry); C McGuigan (Clonduff); A Savage (Ballygalget); N Kelly (An Ríocht); B Savage (Ballygalget); F Carr (Clonduff); D Magee (Liatroim); C Rocks (Bredagh); P Gribben (Clonduff); D Savage (Ballygalget); A McAleenan (Liatroim); S Carr (Clonduff); S Sands (Portlerry); N Mallon (Portlerry); O Gribben (Clonduff).

KERRY (All-Ireland junior camogie final): A Fitzgerald (Clanmaurice); L Houlahan (Clanmaurice); N Leen (Clanmaurice); M Costello (Clanmaurice); A

O'Connor (Clanmaurice); S Murphy (Clanmaurice); E Harrington (Clanmaurice); O Young (Clanmaurice); P Diggins (Clanmaurice); C Shanahan (Causeway); L Collins (Clanmaurice); A Behan (Clanmaurice); J Fittell (Clanmaurice); J Horgan (Clanmaurice); N Casey (Clanmaurice).

DUBLIN (All-Ireland junior camogie final): K Kartounia (Naomh Uinsionn); E O'Riordan (Naomh Jude); N Gleeson (Na Fianna); S Murphy (Cuala); E Barron (Naomh Jude); D Johnstone (Naomh Uinsionn); C Ni Mhaolagáin (St Oliver Plunkett Eoghan Ruadh); H O'Dea (Cuala); L O'Shea (Ballyteer St John's); C Dawson (Naomh Jude); A Dillon (Naomh Mearnóg); S Wylde (Cuala); L Quinn (St Oliver Plunkett Eoghan Ruadh); A Bugler (St Oliver Plunkett Eoghan Ruadh); A Walsh (Naomh Jude).

Talking Tactics: Daragh Ó Conchúir breaks down the areas which will decide tomorrow's senior final



Briege Corkery



CONGESTION

There will be a lot of traffic around the middle third. Getting on top here is the key to the game. While both teams have serious firepower, last year's final was low scoring and this is likely to be the same, due to the respect both camps have for that power. A goal in a game of this nature could be significant, given the emphasis both sides will place on not conceding one. Under the coaching of former All-Ireland-winning hurler Kevin Murray – brother of manager Paudie and captain Aoife – Cork have played a more expansive brand of camogie this year. Their tallies (an average of 3-20 in the group stages and 21 points in the semi-final) and number of individual scorers (15 by the end of the round-robin phase) confirms that. But you have to take the opposition into account for context and you can expect them to be a little more wary tomorrow. It would certainly be a surprise if they went gung-ho from the start – and maybe for that reason, this is what they will do. Paudie Murray has mentioned Kilkenny's defensive set-up a few times in the last few weeks. Rebecca Hennelly's late penalty goal in the semi-final was the first throughout the championship. Kilkenny manager Ann Downey is rightly unapologetic about being hard to break down but Cork have always emphasised that quality under Murray too, which is why the battle between the two 45s will be critical. Ashling Thompson (Cork) and Meighan

Farrell (Kilkenny) have the physicality to prosper in this type of environment. The collisions there could be extreme. Gemma O'Connor (Cork) and Anne Dalton (Kilkenny) will have similar roles, looking to intercept and deliver with accuracy. Orla Cotter, Chloe Sigerson, Libby Coppinger, Julia White and Hannah Looney are others who will spend a lot of time fighting for dirty ball in this area for Cork. Denise Gaule, Davina Tobin, Katie Power, Claire Phelan, Anna Farrell will fight for Kilkenny. It will be a ferocious battle.



ATTACKING PLAN

At some stage, we can probably expect Kilkenny to try isolate Michelle Quilty and Shelly Farrell close to the Cork goals, probably tracked by Laura Treacy and Pamela Mackey. These two are small, quick and deadly finishers. Given how improbable it is that it will be two-on-two that close to Aoife Murray's posts, the likeliest route to goal is on the counter. Katie Power's match-winning goal in the semi-final after good work by Julianne Malone and a Davina Tobin surge was right out of the play book, creating an overlap and delivering a rapier thrust. Katrina Mackey started life as a deadly finisher in the full-forward line. Nowadays, she tends to run onto things from a deeper position and picks up a lot of scores that way. Niamh McCarthy will play a big role at full-forward on Catherine Foley. An impressive newcomer last year, she has gotten among

the scores more herself but her industry and selflessness has been particularly beneficial to the likes of Mackey and Julia White, scorer of four goals so far this year.



FREES

If it isn't high scoring, Orla Cotter (Cork) and Denise Gaule (Kilkenny) may decide the destination of the O'Duffy Cup. They are two of the best freetakers in camogie. Gaule had a rare off day in the semi-final against Galway. She cannot afford a repeat. Given how little is likely to be between them, the pressure on this duo is significant but they have both been here before and should handle it.



JOKER IN THE PACK

Both managements would love to do something to scupper the best laid plans of their counterparts. At some stage, Briege Corkery will enter the fray. That is what Kilkenny will expect. Nonetheless, there is an unpredictability surrounding the event. And that unpredictability is dangerous for Kilkenny. Will she line out at full-forward? Will she roam? Will she take up a marking brief? How close to peak condition, physical and skill-wise can she be in, six months after having a baby, two years after last performing on this stage? When one of the greatest Rebel sportspeople enters the fray, she will lift the crowd and she will lift the team. And if she makes a positive play, it will be worth double. That could be significant in a game of inches.

Super Sandie set the standard

Eoghan Cormican

Before winding back the clock with Sandie Fitzgibbon, I got in touch with two of her old Cork and Glen Rovers teammates, Therese O'Callaghan and Linda Mellerick, to obtain greater insight into the woman who won six All-Ireland senior camogie medals and almost 70 basketball caps for Ireland.

In a telling sign of the respect both women hold for Sandie Fitz, O'Callaghan sent back a lovely email shortly after being contacted, while Mellerick also took time out to put her thoughts down on paper despite being overseas.

Long before Mary O'Connor, Briege Corkery or Rena Buckley arrived on the scene, Fitzgibbon threw in her dual player status, juggling camogie and basketball throughout the eighties and nineties, and for the odd summer, she also brought herself down to Mayfield to kick a bit of soccer with Cork Celtic.

Camogie and basketball regularly overlapped, with Mellerick drawing attention to one particular fortnight in November 1990 where Fitzgibbon was faced with the busiest of schedules.

On the second Saturday of that November, Sandie, who was playing basketball for Blarney at the time, took to the court in Galway city to



Cork's Sandie Fitzgibbon clears out of defence against Kilkenny in Páirc Uí Rinn. Picture: Des Barry

harked back to a particular few weeks in the eighties when Sandie used to arrive into club training wearing loads of layers as Irish basketball players were preparing for a game in a much hotter climate than Blackpool.

Again, we'll let the woman herself flesh it out.

"It was 1987 or '88. I am useless for dates I'd so much going on. We were training for the pre-Olympics which were being held in Ipoh, Malaysia. When the squad was in Dublin, we'd wear extra gear when training and they'd turn up the heat in the hall. So, when I was back down in Cork training with the Glen, I used to put on a load of extra gear."

"We were well beaten out in Malaysia, but it was still a great experience."

Still living in Cork City and presently working for Janssen Pharmaceuticals in Little Island, the camogie team of the century half-back routinely trained with the Irish basketball team on a Saturday in Dublin, coming back down on the Sunday to play camogie.

On the basketball front, the point guard won five national leagues (four with Blarney and one with Tralee) and three national cups (two with

face local side Corrib in a top-tier clash. Once the basketball was done and dusted, her Glen Rovers teammate Rose Mackey hired a car and drove the pair north, overnighing in Donegal ahead of Glen Rovers' All-Ireland club semi-final against Swatragh the following day in Derry.

We'll let Sandie take up the story from here.

"The morning of the camogie match, Rose was driving and now she was driving lively enough. We came up over a hill too fast and before we knew it the border checkpoint was in front of us. We got

the fright of our lives when we came up over the hill, the guns pointing at us.

"After explaining ourselves, we were let carry on through."

The Glen won through to the decider on a scoreline of 1-9 to 0-0, but instead of pointing the car for Cork after a shower and a quick bite to eat, Rose ferried Sandie to Dublin airport where she linked up with the Irish basketball team ahead of a nine-day camp in the States. "We played six games out there against various colleges, two in Boston, two in New York and two in

Philadelphia," Fitzgibbon recalls. "We came back on the Thursday before the All-Ireland club final."

The Glen captured a second All-Ireland club crown that Sunday, St Paul's of Kilkenny overcome by 4-13 to 2-7. The match report in the following day's *Cork Examiner* said 'Sandie Fitzgibbon was outstanding at centre-back'.

The fairly hectic fortnight clearly had had no impact on her. As Mellerick remembers, "She was incredible. There was never a fuss, just found a solution every time."

Therese O'Callaghan

Blarney and one with Tralee). There was 10 county championships and four All-Ireland club titles with Glen Rovers, having joined the club's senior team at 12.

"You had to be 14 to get into the ceiling down in the club. Now, I was only 12, but I'd tell the woman at the door that I played senior camogie. Of course, she was having none of it."

She was the first camogie player to win three All-Ireland minor (then U16) medals. There was also an All-Ireland senior colleges title with North Presentation under the watchful eye of Canon O'Brien, or Fr O'Brien as he was at the time.

Her fondest memory is captaining Cork to All-Ireland senior glory in 1992, at Wexford's expense. At the end of 1997, having pocketed her sixth senior medal, she stepped away from the inter-county scene. She did it all, won it all.

"My body is paying for it now because I have aches and pains," she jokes.

"For a good chunk of the year, you would have been going six and seven evenings a week. There were a good few times when you'd have two matches on the one day. I loved it. It started when I was a kid. If I wasn't training, I'd be out on the street playing something."

'Mam's my rock, she made me promise not to quit sport when she got cancer'



CLIONA FOLEY

INTRANSIGENT, intractable or just plain stubborn.

Whatever you call it, that's not a bad personality trait to have as a defender and Kilkenny's Colette Dormer admits she's got it in spades.

A couple of years ago, when her job as an architectural technician saw her based inside enemy lines, she was pucking in the ball alleys in Douglas one night when who turned up only the Mackey twins, Pamela and Katrina.

They're two of the anchor tenants on the Cork team who are the Cats' arch-rivals so there was absolutely no way Dormer was surrendering the better of the two courts to them.

"I am not leaving until they're leaving!" she hissed vehemently to her boyfriend.

So, eh, exactly how long did you stay? "Nearly two hours! We were there a good bit before them," she reveals, chuckling at the lunacy of it.

That trait may also have contributed when herself and Cork's Hannah Looney got involved in a bit of shoving during the pre-final handshakes two years ago, about which she now looks a bit sheepish.

"I honestly don't know what happened. We were just so hyped up for the game. Thankfully I didn't get too much bad abuse for it but Hannah did (online) and that was terrible."

She "reached out" to Looney at the subsequent All-Stars do and the hatchet was promptly buried.

Yet that stubborn streak, a personality trait she reckons comes from her Laois mum - "well that's what Dad says any-

way" - is something that has probably served both of them well.

Dormer is one of the players featured in Liberty Insurance's current 'Camogie Made Me' campaign and her video is particularly poignant when she sits down to study some photos with her mother.

"Mam was diagnosed with cancer in 2007, a tumour behind her eye," she explains.

"It was the week that I was starting college in Waterford IT, and the night she told me she had cancer she made me promise not to give up sport."

"She had radiation, chemo, surgeries, the lot. She's had a long tough battle but is healthy now thank God, but they were a tough two years. She is the rock of the family, still does everything for us all. She's my real inspiration."

"She really didn't want me to lose camogie at the time and she was so right. It was my outlet and it was the (camogie) girls who came around me and kept me going at that time."

Refusal

Dormer's refusal to take a step back has also helped her maintain her relevance in a team where she is now a 29-year-old veteran and sometimes has had to battle hard for a starting place.

The Paulstown defender was only 17 when she joined the county seniors over a decade ago, already an All-Ireland U-16 and double minor champion.

She won four Ashbourne Cups with WIT where her team-mates included Cork's Laura Treacy, but like many of the current Kilkenny team, a senior inter-county All-Ireland took a long time coming.

She is ideally placed to assess all five of their recent finals and their duels with Cork. They lost to Cork in 2009 when "we had a lot of young players and they gave us a bit of a lesson".

"We beat Cork in the 2013 semi-final and then met Galway and maybe we looked a bit too far ahead after beating them. As much as we were disappointed, that was the game where (Galway's) Therese Maher finally won."



A year later the Cats were back and facing Cork again.

"That was a tough one to take. I always remember the dressing-room afterwards and Ann Dalton saying to 'bottle the hurt'."

Two years on they returned with one significant change which helped their undoubted talent to finally bridge Kilkenny's surprising 22-year wait.

"We had Ann (Downey, manager) back in 2016. She really pulled the panel together and brought in a lot of new players, freshened it up and drove it on."

Last year's third Kilkenny-Cork final in four years was a goal-less arm-wrestle in horrible conditions but climaxed sensationally when Cork's Gemma O'Connor equalised from downtown and Julia White's 67th-minute wonder-shot edged the Rebels home.

Was Dormer within tackling distance of her?

"I think everyone was," she groans. "We were looking at a picture of it after and honestly couldn't understand how none of us got to her."

Dormer may not always be an automatic pick but she has no problem with that.

"I'm not one that's put down on the page first, you'd struggle at times but that's a good thing, that makes you work twice as hard to try and hold a position down."

"Ann picks who is playing well in training which makes each training session a real battle," she says.

So a bit like the Kilkenny hurlers' notoriously feisty sessions, then?

"Ah no, we haven't got to fists at training yet!" Dormer grins, well primed for the latest instalment of this fascinating camogie rivalry.

Kilkenny's Colette Dormer eyes All-Ireland glory once more

All-Ireland camogie final previews

Cliona Foley

SENIOR: CORK v KILKENNY

Croke Park, tomorrow, Live, 4.15, RTÉ2. JULIA WHITE'S extraordinary strike in the seventh minute of injury-time was all that separated them last year.

Only a point, in Kilkenny's favour, divided them again in this year's league final and this is their third consecutive All-Ireland final so it will be hugely tactical. Cork are noticeably less dependant on Orla Cotter for scores now.

White is back starting and Chloe Sigerson's long-range shooting from wing-back is another asset.

With Rena Buckley now retired, Gemma O'Connor (above) remains Cork's

defensive general and Anne Dalton's sweeper role is equally vital for Kilkenny.

Two tough games against Galway mean Kilkenny arrived battle-hardened.

What part Brioge Corkery, just back after a two-year hiatus, could play is fascinating and it might be in defence. Just one point could

nick it again and don't rule out a draw.

Verdict: Kilkenny

INTERMEDIATE: CORK v DOWN

Croke Park, tomorrow, Live, 2.0, RTÉ2. CORK are desperately hoping it's third time lucky after losing the last two finals,

including a replay last year.

They won Division 2 this year and have beaten Down twice this season.

Down, who won the premier junior four years ago, shocked Tipp in the semis but they face a team who cannot countenance defeat.

Verdict: Cork

PREMIER JUNIOR: KERRY v DUBLIN (12.0)

DUBLIN are looking to avenge last year's defeat by Westmeath and win their first junior since 2006.

Kerry are looking to make history in their first visit to Croke Park.

They won Division 3 this year, something Dublin did last year.

Verdict: Dublin

SEPT.

2018

Time for female sports to accentuate the positives and eliminate the negatives



All-Ireland senior camogie final Cork v Kilkenny

Tomorrow: Croke Park, 4.15pm
Referee: Eamon Cassidy (Derry)
TV: Live on RTE2
Bet: Cork evens, Kilkenny evens, Draw 15/2

Eoghan Cormican

camogie in a sports bulletin is, more often than not, tied to a dressing-room bust-up, boardroom ineptitude or a dual player conundrum.

She accepts coverage of the game has grown immeasurably since she joined the Cork set-up in 2002 but knows that "negative stories" is what has people talking about female Gaelic games.

"It is just a pity it is always negative. If we are let play the game, camogie will sell itself," Murray insists.

The Cork goalkeeper, though not of her own making, has first-hand experience of the controversy which she finds so irritating.

Last autumn, this newspaper revealed one of the reasons behind the forced departure of the 2017 Galway senior camogie management was the county board's disapproval of selector Niall Corcoran conducting training sessions with Murray and others in Dublin.

"It is normally negative news which sells camogie," she continues. "And I'll tell you one thing, a lot of it isn't our own doing."

Although she did not read the recent Sports Chronicle piece penned by the woman she succeeded as Cork captain, Rena Buckley, Murray gives a knowing nod when passages are recited to her during our chat at the Rochestown Park Hotel.

Buckley, who retired earlier this year (Murray gave "consideration" to such but isn't yet ready to find out who she is without camogie), expresses her annoyance at how



GAMEZone Cork v Kilkenny

A Murray (Cloughduv)	1 E Kavanagh (Rower Inistoge)
N O'Callaghan (Sarsfields)	2 C Dormer (Paulstown/Goresbridge)
L Treacy (Killeagh)	3 C Foley (Windgap)
P Mackey (Douglas)	4 G Walsh (Tullaroan)
L Coppinger (St Columa)	5 C Phelan (Lisdowney)
G O'Connor (St Finbarrs)	6 A Dalton (St Lachtains)
C Sigerson (Killeagh)	7 D Tobin (Emeralds)
J White (Douglas)	8 A Farrell (Thomastown)
A Thompson (Millford)	9 M Farrell (Thomastown)
A O'Connor (St Vincents)	10 JA Malone (Mullinavat)
O Cronin (Enniskeane)	11 K Power (Piltown)
O Cotter (St Catherine's)	12 D Gaule (Windgap)
K Mackey (Douglas)	13 S Farrell (Thomastown)
N McCarthy (Inniscarra)	14 M Quilty (Mullinavat)
H Looney (Killeagh)	15 M Walsh (Tullaroan)

SUBS: A Lee (Na Patsburg), L O'Sullivan (Glen Rovers), A Sheehan (Inniscarra), L Homan (St Vincents), L Collins (Courcey Rovers), B Corkery (Cloughduv), S Hutcherson (Eire Dg), L Hayes (St Catherine's), S McCarthy (Courcey Rovers), S Beausang (Killeagh)

SUBS: J Frisby (Ballyhale Shamrocks), M Teehan (James Stephens), J Cliftford (Dicksboro), E Keane (St Martins), K Doyle (Piltown), D Morrissey (Conahy Shamrocks), A Doyle (Piltown), G O'Donnell (Young Irelands), R Phelan (Conahy Shamrocks), N Deely (James Stephens)

women's sport can be portrayed by the media.

She references Kilkenny's Collette Dormer and Cork's Hannah Looney pushing off one another when they should have been shaking hands during the 2016 All-Ireland camogie final pre-match formalities. The incident overshadowed the decider and no doubt many can still recall the handbags episode - which became a social media hit - but struggle to remember the result of the game.

It was the same story for that September's ladies football decider. Carla Rowe's first-half point, which was incorrectly flagged wide, domi-

nated post-match discussion, not the fact that Cork had gone and done six in a row.

"Media coverage of female Gaelic games is making genuine strides but it seems like controversy is required to create more attention," wrote 18-time All-Ireland medal winner Buckley. "We are going in the right direction but I want to see the game itself given more attention than the subplots."

In the past couple of months, Ladies Football has been again front and centre for the wrong reasons with the walkout of 12 players from the Mayo ladies football squad, the ejection of Carnaon from the Mayo championship and

their subsequent reinstatement. Earlier this week the Mayo squad released a statement alleging the 12 players opted out because of a "failed coup".

Then there was the old chestnut of dual players being presented with a fixtures schedule which had them playing two matches on the same day. Murray's teammates Hannah Looney and Libby Coppinger were initially looking at having to choose one code over the other when their All-Ireland camogie and ladies football semi-finals were both fixed for Saturday, August 18. The LGFA eventually moved their game

back a week.

During a summer where Gemma O'Connor and Murray moved within one hour of a ninth All-Ireland camogie medal, where 17-time All-Ireland medal winning dual player Brieghe Corkery returned to action a few months after giving birth and where the Cork ladies footballers reached a 12th All-Ireland decider in 14 years, Murray laments that two "negative stories" garnered most press.

"The biggest issue in women's sport is that girls are not participating in sport beyond 18. Yet here we are, with this negative media storm around two dual



CROKE PARK FORECAST



"The weather will be okay. Temperatures ranging from 15-18 degrees. It will be mostly dry with moderate westerly winds and some outbreaks of sunshine towards the end of the game."

Met Eireann spokesperson
Joanna Donnelly



CORK

No. of All-Ireland Titles: **27**

1934, 1935, 1936, 1939, 1940, 1941, 1970, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1978, 1980, 1982, 1983, 1992, 1993, 1995, 1997, 1998, 2002, 2005, 2006, 2008, 2009, 2014, 2015, 2017

Path to Final:

Group 2: June 9: Cork 1-19 Wexford 0-7; June 24: Cork 4-15 Dublin 2-3; July 7: Tipperary 1-12 Cork 1-27;
July 14: Meath 0-6 Cork 3-21; July 22: Cork 6-18 Offaly 3-4;
Semi-Final: Aug 18: Cork 0-21 Tipperary 0-9.

Senior Stats and Facts: Strongest Attack: Cork: 15-121 (166 points; 6 matches- 27.6 points per game)

Strongest Defence: Kilkenny 1-43 (46 points; 5 matches- 9.2 points per game) Most Goals Scored: Cork (15)

Least Goals Scored: Kilkenny (1) Highest Total Scored in One Match: Cork 6-18 (36 points) v Offaly



KILKENNY

No. of All-Ireland Titles: **13**

1974, 1976, 1977, 1981, 1985, 1986, 1987, 1988, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1994, 2016

Path To Final:

Group 1: June 9: Limerick 0-11 Kilkenny 2-18;
June 30: Waterford 0-10 Kilkenny 1-13; July 14: Kilkenny 4-13 Clare 0-2; July 22: Kilkenny 1-17 Galway 0-13;
Semi Final: Aug 18: Galway 1-7 Kilkenny 1-10.

Top Scorers:

	Scores	Points
Cait Devane, Tipperary	(4-46)	58
Beth Carton, Waterford	(3-36)	45
Carrie Dolan, Galway	(1-33)	36
Niamh Mulcahy, Limerick	(0-34)	34
Siobhan Flannery, Offaly	(5-19)	34
Denise Gaule, Kilkenny	(2-27)	33
Jane Dolan, Meath	(0-29)	29
Katrina Mackey, Cork	(3-20)	29
Linda Bolger, Wexford	(1-24)	27



GAA

Christy O'Connor

A COUPLE of months back, Liberty Insurance filmed a series of video clips on a number of camogie players, focussing on the theme, 'Camogie made me ready for the real world.'

Some of the players involved — Collette Dormer (Kilkenny), Gemma O'Connor (Cork), Michaela Morkham (Offaly) and Mags Darcy (Wexford) — spoke about how their personal struggles off the pitch, hardened them, mentally as much as physically, for life on the pitch.

"Whether I'm struggling through some specialised training exercise, or I'm hiking 20 miles with new recruits, or I'm far away from home in the Lebanon, or in the deserts of Chad, I know I have the resources within to draw on," said O'Connor.

"I know I can rely on that doggedness, that mental toughness to help me succeed."

"I know that I'm tough enough to overcome almost anything."

"Camogie made me strong."

O'Connor, one of the game's most cherished modern warriors, has certainly shown that mental strength in recent years.

Her late mother Geraldine passed away at 55, shortly after the 2015 All-Ireland final win against Galway.

O'Connor has spoken in the past about her struggles to cope with her mother's loss but the last few years were also challenging in other ways for O'Connor.

Sent off in the 2016 All-Ireland final defeat to Kilkenny, O'Connor suffered a torn medial cruciate ligament (MCL) in last year's All-Ireland semi-final.

Yet she was back within three weeks for the final against Kilkenny. With some heavy strapping on her left knee, O'Connor lasted the full game, managing a monstrous equalising point from the half-way line in the 60th minute before Julia White landed the winner.

It secured O'Connor her eighth All-Ireland senior medal but the win was notable for a number of landmarks; Cork overtook Dublin at the top of the roll of honour; Rena Buckley lifted the O'Duffy Cup on a day where she collected an incredible 18th All-Ireland senior medal; Buckley also became the first woman to captain her county to All-Ireland victory in both camogie and Ladies football.

Yet the victory was sweeter still because, after losing the previous year's final to their great rivals, Cork wanted to beat Kilkenny as badly as any Cork team ever had before.

A year on, and the tables have certainly turned.

There may not be the same focus or serrated edge to the rivalry that there was heading into last year's final but a fourth final meeting in five years certainly harks back to the time when Cork and Kilkenny dominated the camogie world.

The big difference this time around is that Kilkenny are now trying to crack Cork in the same way that Cork spent so long desperately trying to break Kilkenny; when they won seven-in-a-row between 1985-91, Kilkenny defeated Cork in four of those deciders.

That desperation from Cork added an edge to the rivalry decades ago.

Kilkenny did beat Cork two years ago but three All-Ireland final defeats in five seasons — and a potential fourth All-Ireland defeat to Cork in 10 seasons — has turned the gun on Kilkenny.

With just one All-Ireland in the last 24 years, that desperation from Kilkenny now is even more acute because of the bad blood which has simmered between these two groups over the last couple of seasons. The competition is far more open now than it was when Cork and Kilkenny was the only camogie show in town.

Between 1970 and 1995, the two shared 23 of the 26 titles on offer. Galway and Wexford have also won All-

Rivalry built on serious resilience



Cork's Gemma O'Connor signs the shirt of Ciara O'Driscoll from Enniskeane, as Enniskeane Camogie Club hosted the Cork Senior team for an Open Training Session, in association with New Ireland Assurance, as they prepare for the weekend's All-Ireland final.

Picture: Jim Coughlan



Hannah Looney of Cork in action against Grace Walsh of Kilkenny, supported by teammate Collette Dormer.

Picture: Piaras Ó Midheach/Sportsfile

Irelands this decade; Dublin and Waterford reached the All-Ireland quarter-finals this season.

Camogie has never had a higher profile. All knockout games were televised live on RTE during this championship while the game had a constant presence, and dedicated slot, on The Sunday Game evening show throughout the summer.

Attendance figures have gone up but the game still appears to be at a crossroads.

There is a sense that the standard and skill levels have dropped, and that the game is becoming too defensive.

The recent Kilkenny-Galway semi-final produced just seven scores from play.

Kilkenny eventually won by 1-10 to 1-7.

Both Kilkenny and Cork operated with sweepers during last year's All-Ireland decider.

The weather was a factor but, with heavily packed defences on either side,

there were only seven scores in the first half.

It didn't get much better after the break; the final score was 0-10 to 0-9.

Sunday's final could be another low scoring dogfight but the spikiness to the Cork-Kilkenny rivalry has still given the game the kind of profile and attraction camogie needs.

"We're very lucky that a crunch rivalry has developed between Cork and Kilkenny," said Camogie Association spokesman Cian Nelson during the week.

The Cork-Kilkenny rivalry always meant something but Kilkenny are driven now by the same manic desire and hunger for success that propelled Cork for years, when they were manically hunting — and craving — what the other crowd had.

"We've reached five All-Ireland finals and only won one," said Collette Dormer in one of those video clips.

"We're well versed in loss at this stage. But you learn to pick yourself up again, to push through that heart-break and pain, to keep moving."

"You learn not to see your losses as a weight holding you down but as fuel — fuel to succeed."

And that is the kind of onslaught that Cork will now need to meet head on in Sunday's final.

Briege happy to be back for last hurrah

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

EVERY team has its special person — a character both on and off the field, someone who invariably always produces the goods on the big day.

Last year, as Cork celebrated on the pitch after Julia White's last-gasp point saw them snatch victory over Kilkenny in the dying seconds of the Liberty Insurance Camogie final, for some reason my attention was caught by something happening up in the corner of the front of the Hogan Stand, near the Davin Stand end.

A dynamic character for many years on the playing fields was battling her way over the railings and onto the pitch and she came thundering down the field, only this time not toggled out in her playing gear but with a handbag flying off her shoulders as she ran to embrace her friend and long-time playing colleague Rena Buckley.

Enter one Briege Corkery.

This time she was in the role of supporter and as she battled with a steward to get through the cordon onto the pitch, someone told him who she was.

"Hey, that's Briege Corkery. She's a legend. Let her in there to go down to the Cork girls."

And to be fair, he duly obliged.

Her name is certainly legendary and why not with 17 All Ireland medals to her credit, eleven in football and six in camogie, but she makes little or nothing of her huge sporting status and is modest in all things she does and so it was as she stepped away ever so quietly at the end of 2016 and she explained why:

"I just didn't enjoy inter county at all in 2016. It was a strange year. Coming home from matches, I'd be scrutinizing myself about how I'd played. I'd be looking at the papers to see how they said I played, something that was just so out of character for me. I never even looked at the papers before. I'd be cranky coming home from training and matches, and I'd never been like that before either, where I'd be annoyed about so many things. In the end I just felt it wasn't worth that, so I slipped away from it all."

Slipped away was the operative word. Cork lost to Kilkenny and the football team won a week later and when both teams resumed training in January there was no sign of Briege, but a lot had changed in her life since the early days when as a carefree youngster she joined both the camogie and ladies football panels.

Many things led to Briege's decision to slip quietly away but in reality the main one was that she was just worn out from it all. Briege was now running a dairy farm with her husband, Diarmuid Scannell, and was getting up at the crack of dawn and working a long 12-hour day. At the height of the championship season, she would be heading to training with the camogie and football panels five or six nights a week and also with a match or sometimes two at the weekend plus she was trying to be loyal to her club's commitments as



Cork players Linda Collins and Briege Corkery after the Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Senior Camogie Championship semi-final match between Cork and Tipperary at Semple Stadium in Thurles, Tipperary.
Picture: Matt Browne/SportsfileMF

well and, in the end, it all finally caught up with her.

"My days were long and I just felt I had no time to myself and I didn't miss it at all last year. I definitely didn't miss travelling in and out for training. I loved playing with my club and giving them my time and on the days of Cork games I enjoyed sitting in the stand and just watching. My plan was to have a good year with the club, spend more time with my husband, a bit more time on the farming and then maybe start a family."

Things were to change though and when Briege took up a job with Bank of Ireland last year Paudie Murray began to call, asking if she had any interest in returning to the panel.

"I honestly didn't think I'd be coming back, and I suppose at that stage I wouldn't have thought that they'd ask me back, but Paudie would ring me and he put it in to my

mind. That January, when the girls played their first league game, it was kind of weird and really I just felt it would be nice to be back out there. By then I'd taken a break from the farming and Bank of Ireland offered me a job so the hours were easier — it was nine to five or six compared to being up at six or seven and still going twelve hours later. Maybe it was just when I had more time to myself that that's when I missed it."

Briege made up her mind and finally told Paudie that yes she would go back but two days later she found out she was pregnant so that put her return on hold.

Beautiful baby Tadhg arrived in April and is their pride and joy and now with her hands full as a new mother Briege wasn't so sure there would be much space in her life for camogie but the pull was again strong so it was time for a re-think.

"After having Tadhg I was so unfit, I missed the level of fitness that I had before and I started missing the intensity of it all too. Paudie just said to go on the fitness programme with Cork back in June and see how it went, see how I was feeling and we'd take it from there. It gave me a good challenge — the only way of knowing where you are is when you go back training. It was a bit strange at first. Going back, the one thing I said to Paudie was that I didn't want to put anybody out, I wasn't going to go back if any of the girls felt that way. It took me a week or two to feel comfortable but the girls have been great, they put me at ease. It was nice when they'd come up to you after or send you a text and say 'it's nice to have you back', so once I knew they were happy I was happy too."

Life has definitely changed since Tadhg arrived, Briege can no longer

run out the door as she used to, now sometimes a babysitter has to be organised and she laughs as she explains.

"Sure you know me, I was always running and racing but I'm very lucky Diarmuid and myself have great parents and families and with so many nieces and nephews they are all only too willing to lend a hand and we really appreciate that."

Baby Tadhg was in Thurles as Briege made her appearance in the latter stages of the semi final and he will be there again on Sunday next with Diarmuid and the extended family as one of camogie's most decorated and pleasant players takes her place on the Cork panel and in her usual humble way she sums up how good it feels:

"It's the rest of the girls that have got us to the final, they've been brilliant. If I can contribute in some way if I get on, then I'll be happy, but they have done all the work. But it's good to be back and I have really enjoyed it. It was all just about feeling I wanted to give it a last hurrah."

Welcome Back Briege It Good to See you Back in the Red and White.

“It's good to be back and I've really enjoyed it. It was all just about feeling I wanted to give it a last hurrah.”

Rebels bid to do the double this time

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

EVERYTHING is ready for the trip to Croke Park tomorrow.

Cork once again bid for the double, as they have done for the last three years. In 2016 we came home empty handed as Kilkenny captured both titles. Last year our senior team defied the odds to snatch the title with a late rally but our intermediate side left it behind them as Meath came back to force a draw.

The intermediate side will be bidding to breach 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 Sarah Harrington.

This competition was inaugurated in 1992 with Corn Uí Phluirséil being presented to the winners but it was discontinued in 2005 and replaced by the All-Ireland Senior B Championship in 2006 and 2007 but in 2008 it reverted to the intermediate championship.

Cork have lost finals in 2008, 2009, 2016 and 2017. The heart-break of this side losing two finals is very much on the minds of everybody as they bid to reverse the results of 2016 and 2017.

For players such as Finola Neville, Sarah Harrington, Leah Weste, Sara Buckley, Niamh Ni Chaoimh, Lauren Callanan and more a victory tomorrow would mean so much.

Last year Cork edged ahead of Dublin on the roll of honour with 27 senior titles.

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 for a few years, the journey was hard as a new force emerged in Tipperary, annexing five titles in a six-year spell.

Cork bounced back and regained control in 2005 and 2006 but we 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 2015 but were rocked by Kilkenny in 2016.

Last year they got their revenge but left it very late. Tomorrow is another huge ask. Kilkenny will be bursting to get revenge, Cork determined to prove last year was no flash in the pan, it promises to be a classic.

Cats desperate to regain the title



Camogie

Linda Mellerick

KILKENNY captain Shelly Farrell was right during her Q&A session with Lauren Flynn during the week.

These Cork and Kilkenny teams know each other inside and out at this stage. But they also know each other very well off the field. Many of these players attend or attended college together or met during Ashbourne Cup weekends and are friends in this capacity.

Those friendships will be put on the backburner tomorrow.

It was different in my day as a player. Personally, I didn't have that relationship with players from other counties as I only went to college during my mid-twenties.

Not every player went to college back then. Most do today. Plus, with social media the unfamiliarity is no longer there.

Shelley spoke about Kilkenny's preparations and the battles with Cork.

"We're looking at it as a new game each time. Every All-Ireland final that we've played against Cork has been different so we're just going to treat it like it's another championship match."

"I know that can be difficult as the game itself has the added pressure and hype because it is an All-Ireland final, but we're used to playing each other now and both teams have come to know each other inside out."

"We know that we need to manage our emotions and hopefully we'll come out with the right result on the day."

The Cork intermediate side make their third attempt at grabbing their much desired All-Ireland title and let's hope it's tomorrow.

They've gone through their fair share of heartache, but looking back on it, I'm sure they'll acknowledge that on both occasions, as a team, they didn't reach the heights they're capable of and that's the ultimate disappointment for any player.

Surely tomorrow they'll throw caution to the wind and just go out and play. Forget the hype, the anticipation, the dinner that evening.

That dinner is a lonely place if you've lost. These players just need to go out and play like they're in the training ground.

They're in a privileged position and you need to grab that privilege.

Linda Collins made a good point last week when I was chatting with her. She doesn't get fazed by the occasion.

She said that she took up the game for enjoyment so why should she stop enjoying it ahead of, or during, a big game.

Wise words on young shoulders. I admit to letting nerves get the better of me far too often in my career.

People used to say to me 'enjoy the weekend'. I would respond, 'Are you mad? Enjoy it? I hate it!'

Of course, I absolutely loved it at 5pm if we won. Then I just wanted to relive it.

But you can't do that, except in your head. Win or lose, the day is gone. Enjoy this girls, give it your best and let's see what 3.15pm brings for you.



Kilkenny's Shelly Farrell and Danielle Morrissey with Cork's Libby Coppinger in last year's final at Croke Park. Picture: INPHO/Oisín Kenney



Julia White, signing autographs for Grace Twomey and Ruby O'Leary who were at Douglas GAA club to wish her the best of luck. Picture: David Keane

The day will start with a 12pm throw-in between Dublin and Kerry in the junior final. This grade is still a big deal for Dublin as they try and build a strong senior squad, their last senior title being in 1985.

We've previewed both Cork teams, Kilkenny and Down this week. So, what of this junior final?

Dublin suffered defeat at the hands of a strong Westmeath unit last year. This time around, they are back with a strong Division 2 League campaign behind them.

They have lost Emer Keenan with a cruciate knee ligament injury, but welcomed back last year's Premier Junior Player of the Year, Aoife Bugler for their semi-final win over Offaly, having suffered the same injury.

Aoife was on fire against Offaly, scoring 1-3 from play, and she is sure to improve for the runoff, after such a

lengthy absence.

In the meantime, Aoibhe Dillon has been added to the attack from last year's minors and is proving a real addition from placed balls and general play, the top scorer providing 1-5 of the 3-12 tally in their semi-final.

Caragh Dawson is another who will take watching.

Kerry's improvement has been consistent in recent years and they are coming into this as Division 3 League champions.

That was a welcome win as they haven't enjoyed the best of luck in major finals, losing at junior A and B level in recent years, while Clannmaurice, who are, in effect Kerry, lost the All-Ireland junior club final in a replay last December.

In Patrice Diggin, they possess a player whose talents deserve to be on the big stage. A multiple Ashbourne

"Every All-Ireland final that we've played against Cork has been different..."

Cup winner, Kerry will be looking to her for the majority of their scores.

Patrice struck 10 points in the 10-point semi-final win over Roscommon, who they had also beaten in the League Final.

It was a strong second-half effort from the Kingdom, as they trailed by a point at the break. After Roscommon moved two ahead, they were unable to register another score as the Kerry defence proved impossible to breach.

At the other end, Jackie Horgan provided vital support to Diggin and Laura Collins grabbed the goal that ensured the Green and Gold were bound for Croke Park.

Having done well in Division 2, Dublin will be favourites to garner a sixth crown at this grade, but Kerry have shown tremendous resolve in recent years and will be looking to cause an upset.



Cork's Aoife Murray and Kilkenny's Shelly Farrell with the O'Duffy Cup ahead of tomorrow's All-Ireland final.

Picture:INPHO/James Crombie

Sides need to improve in final



Camogie

Mark Woods

ONE thing is certain ahead of this Sunday's All-Ireland Senior Camogie final.

Both sides will require a much-improved performance on their semi-final victories over Tipperary and Galway.

Cork ended up scoring 21 points and on any day that's a good return but there's a lot more in them and Paudie Murray didn't hold back after the game in his assessment of his side's work ethic.

The Kilkenny / Galway game was very poor in terms of scoring return.

For the score to read seven points apiece on 42 minutes — it's not senior inter-county standard.

I don't believe you can lay the blame for that at the fact that Kilkenny played a sweeper system. Many teams are adopting that approach and it's up to the opposition to counteract it.

Galway also had a sweeper in Tara Kenny.

You'd wonder did both teams plan one or did Kilkenny initiate it and therefore by default we had one on the other side.

Galway played the ball into Kilkenny sweeper territory too often and failed to attempt to score from distance.

At this level you expect players to be picking off points or at the very least attempting them, from midfield. Kilkenny weren't much better, scoring 1-5 from play.

Kilkenny will more than likely play a sweeper system against Cork.

They'll attempt to play one full forward, another in front of that again, leaving the corners free and they'll play three out around the '45.

While Cork don't use a sweeper system they do crowd the middle third as they too try to maximise space inside and utilise the speed of Amy O'Connor, Katrina Mackey and Linda Collins. They will hold their six defenders in their traditional positions.

Cork are the one side that are very ca-



Cork's Aoife Murray reacts during their Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Senior Championship Round 4 against Tipp at The Ragg, Co Tipperary.

Picture:INPHO/Dan Sheridan

pable of taking points from great distance. Chloe Sigerson, Gemma O'Connor, Orla Cotter and Ashling Thompson won't shy away from having a go. How will Kilkenny cope with that? Cork won't do what Galway did and make Kilkenny's sweeper a player of the match contender.

Cork won't worry too much about not getting goals if they can continue the high point scoring return they've achieved all championship, scoring a massive 121 points from six games. Cork have conceded six goals in this championship, against significantly weaker opposition. Is that a concern heading into a final against Kilkenny who have the ability to split defences right through the middle? Cork have scored 15-121 and conceded 6-41. Kilkenny have scored 9-71 and conceded 1-43, with one game less.

Grace Walsh had an outstanding semi-final as did Edwina Keane, Denise Gaule and Anna Farrell. Gaule however, will need to take every placed ball opportunity on Sunday.

Kilkenny, I feel will need goals to beat Cork. They are a side capable of getting them, and they'll hope to do this on the break and create the overlap.

Kilkenny's semi-final was level on 47 minutes before that trademark goal,

through the middle, creating the overlap, the ball changing hands four times before Katie Power hand-passed to the net.

Mark ups were important last year. Cork went player for player from the throw in. They got their mark ups right with Gemma O'Connor 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.

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 Anne had a better second half Orla finished the game with three points.

Undoubtedly both managements have studied each other's set up this past few weeks. Tactically they'll both be focusing on creating space inside while at the same time blocking off routes to goal. For this reason, we could have a low scoring, defensive final. If it does become a game of defences, Cork's distance scoring may be what separates the sides. But Kilkenny must be chomping at the bit after the devastation of last year. There's nothing like a defeat in Croke Park to bring out the animal in you. It's another hard one to call.

LIBERTY INSURANCE ALL-IRELAND SENIOR CAMOGIE FINAL

CORK V KILKENNY

CROKE PARK, 4:15pm, (tomorrow)
Ref - Eamon Cassidy (Derry), Live on RTÉ 2

CORK (probable)

1	A Murray	
2	N O'Callaghan	3 L Treacy
4	P Mackey	
5	L Coppinger	6 G O'Connor
7	C Sigerson	
8	J White	9 A Thompson
10	A O'Connor	11 O Cronin
12	O Cotter	
13	K Mackey	14 N McCarthy
15	H Looney	

LAST FIVE CHAMPIONSHIP CLASHES

2017: Cork 0-10 Kilkenny 0-9 (All-Ireland final)

2016: Kilkenny 1-13 Cork 1-9 (All-Ireland final)

2015: Cork 4-10 Kilkenny 1-10 (All-Ireland semi)

2014: Cork 2-12 Kilkenny 1-9 (All-Ireland final)

2013: Kilkenny 2-12 Cork 2-11 (All-Ireland semi).

FACT: Cork have scored 15-121 (in six matches) this summer compared to Kilkenny's 9-71 (five games) but Kilkenny have conceded only 1-43 compared to Cork's 6-51.

KILKENNY (probable)

1	E Kavanagh	
2	C Dormer	3 C Foley
4	E Keane	
5	C Phelan	6 A Dalton
7	D Tobin	
8	D Gaule	9 M Farrell
10	S Farrell	11 K Power
12	J Malone	
13	E Keane	14 A Farrell
15	M Quilty	

Unbreakable bond of Downey twins adds extra layer of support to set-up

COMMENT

SINEAD KISSANE



When Ann Downey knew she was going to take the job of Kilkenny senior camogie manager in November 2015, it took her a few weeks to break the news to her twin sister Angela.

After they finished playing with a tally of 12 All-Ireland senior medals each, Angela told Ann to take time out for herself. But spending four or five hours walking a golf course did nothing for Ann. She was jumping back in and she wanted her sister there with her.

There are peas in a pod and then there's Ann and Angela Downey. When they were kids, Angela went to boarding school after they finished the Inter Cert but Ann didn't.

"I suppose I was my father's pet so I

wasn't going any place," Ann recalls.

"Once she went, I missed her so much that they realised I was lost without her and I ended up going to boarding school with her."

In 2004, Angela - widely recognised as the greatest player in camogie history - was named in the 'Team of the Century' but she didn't attend the banquet because Ann wasn't included.

Ann and Angela ring each other every morning just after 8.0am and visit each other every day. Ann drops her dog, Jack, into Angela's home on her way to work and when Angela is off school during the summer, Ann goes to her home every day for lunch.

"If I hadn't heard from her or if she hadn't rang at a certain time, I'd be worried," Ann says about her twin.

Ann, who was born before Angela, knew the best way of bringing Angela on board with Kilkenny camogie again was by first asking Breda Holmes.

Angela and Breda played together in the forwards for the Kilkenny team which won seven All-Irelands in a row between 1985 and 1991.

"The work they do, it makes my life easier," Ann says. "I don't have to think about collecting the milk, the jerseys,



Kilkenny manager Ann Downey (right) with her twin sister Angela Downey
MATT BROWNE / SPORTSFILE

getting the water. They're great to give a word of encouragement, especially with the forwards."

Angela is on the sideline with water bottles during games.

"I'm just a minor in the background. But I do, I get totally wrapped up in it. I'm kind of hitting every ball, I'm roaring like a fish woman and probably saying the wrong things," Angela says.

"I might say 'drive it' and they're not supposed to drive it, they're supposed to carry it and pass it off."

Does Ann ever tell you to be quiet on the sideline?

"She does. Two years ago, we were playing Cork in a league game. And she came up the line and said: 'shut up, you're telling them one thing and he's telling them another thing, so shut up'. So, I duly shut up," Angela laughs.

Of course, sisters get away with saying stuff to each other that they wouldn't dare say to anyone else.

This week Angela has said to Ann how wrecked she looks because of the amount of work she's doing before tomorrow's All Ireland final.

All summer Angela has been on to Ann about taking a holiday but Ann didn't

want to because she's taken a week off in previous summers.

"She's always trying to do something better than last year," Angela says.

Only those closest to managers and players see the unseen work.

When Ann sends a WhatsApp message to the players asking them what they would like to eat before a game, Angela gives out to her if she frets over not hearing back from a player.

Angela sees her sister trying to organise pitches for the girls to train, sees her organising food, sees the girls put €2 each into the kitty at every training session, she sees all the kind of things an inter-county men's team would never have to worry about.

And Kilkenny are seen as one of the well-supported camogie teams when it comes to the relationship with the men's county board.

However, Kilkenny camogie still don't have their own training pitch, no place to call home. They remain dependent on clubs like James Stephens for facilities or her own club Ballyragget which gave them the use of their pitch for a championship game earlier this summer.

Angela believes ladies' football is "leaving camogie sitting on their

backside" with the kind of sponsorship and TV exposure it gets.

She remembers the picture of herself on the front page of a national newspaper the day after they won the 1989 All-Ireland final, with the headline: 'Cat with her skirt down'.

"It wasn't the fact that we were playing in an All Ireland final, it was the fact that I had no skirt on!"

Angela smiles at the memory of her celebrating a goal and then looking down and realising her skirt had been taken off by the corner-back.

As they hope for a repeat of 2016, when they beat Cork in the final, Angela just wants to be there for the team and her sister.

"If I say the wrong thing I might upset her. And inevitably I'll put my foot in it, so I'm there if she wants me," Angela says. And just as she says it, Ann is ringing her on the phone.

The first time Angela played in an All Ireland final in 1972, as a 15-year-old, Ann didn't make the Kilkenny panel but was there to cheer on her sister. Tomorrow the twins are once again back in Croke Park.

A lot has changed but some things stay the same.

SISTER ACT... Down county Chairman Sean Rooney pictured with his nieces Sara-Louise and Fionnuala Carr at last week's Down camogie All Ireland final press night at Mayobridge GAC



Pictured: Sean Rooney, Sara-Louise Carr and Fionnuala Carr

Riveting rivalry too close to call

EAMONN SWEENEY



THE All-Ireland camogie final has been overshadowed by its football counterpart in recent years. The emergence of a charismatic Cork team, their thrilling rivalry with Dublin and the soaring attendances, last year's massive 46,286 in particular, have seen ladies' football enjoy a much higher profile than camogie.

Camogie wasn't always the poor relation. In 2007 a whopping 33,154 turned out to see Wexford defeat Cork. Not until 2016 would football surpass this attendance. Back in the 1980s Angela Downey was a household name in a way that no-one on the record-breaking Kerry ladies' football side of the time was.

And in the last couple of years camogie has seen the development of one of the most intriguing rivalries in Irish sport. It began in earnest two years ago when a Kilkenny side given little chance of preventing a Cork three in-a-row shocked everyone with a seven-point victory that gave the county a first title in 22 years.

For most of last year's decider it looked as though Kilkenny were about to confirm their status as the new queens of camogie. But, in perhaps the most remarkable finish of the year, two magnificent injury-time points from Gemma O'Connor and Julia White saw Cork through by 0-10 to 0-9.

Today it's round three. There is no denying that this pairing has caught the public imagination, last year's final

ALL-IRELAND FINALS INFO...

■ Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Senior final: Cork v Kilkenny, 4.15, E Cassidy (Derry) Live RTETwo & RTE Player

■ Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Intermediate final: Cork v Down, 2.0, J. Dermody (Westmeath) Live RTETwo & RTE Player

■ Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Premier Junior final: Dublin v Kerry, 12.0, A. Doherty (Laois) Live RTE Player

■ Tickets will be available to purchase today at the Ticket Office at Gill's Corner on Jones' Road.

attendance was the biggest since 2009. Cork's victory that day seemed to show that, like their football comrades, this team could carve out a victory if there was any opportunity at all of doing so. There's something uncanny about the ability this generation of Cork players have displayed in tight finishes.

A defeat like last year's can crush a team. Yet Kilkenny bounced back to win a League final when they had a point to spare over their Cork rivals. They've won all five matches on their way to this final, enjoying an average winning margin of over 10 points. The Rebels have been more ruthless still, they've gone six for six and their winning average is almost 18 points.

These aren't just the two best teams in camogie right now, they're probably the best two there's been in some time. With the score in All-Ireland finals at 1-1 it feels like there's something pivotal about today's game. The winners could



Cork's Gemma O'Connor in action against Kilkenny duo Denise Gaule and Katie Power during last year's All-Ireland final. Photo: Piaras Ó Midheach

go on to dominate for the next couple of years. It's one of those contests which, as the identical bookies' odds for both teams shows, really is too close to call.

They're two very different sides. Cork are going for a fourth title in five years and have survivors from the team which played in eight successive finals in the noughties. Gemma O'Connor, one of the greatest players in the history of the sport, is going for a ninth All-Ireland medal. So is Aoife Murray, while Orla Cotter and the

indomitable Briege Corkery, who came off the bench in the semi-final, are looking for a seventh.

Kilkenny, on the other hand, spent over two decades languishing behind the likes of Cork, Tipperary and Wexford. Hence the extraordinary hunger they displayed two years ago after losing both the 2013 and 2014 finals. The likes of Katie Power, Denise Gaule, Michelle Quilty and the magnificent Anne Dalton are entitled to feel somewhat under-rewarded by com-

parison to today's opposition.

Cork's unparalleled competitive spirit might seem to give them the edge. But then there is the sense that Kilkenny could be the coming team. Under normal circumstances you'd imagine they'd also have the edge in terms of hunger were it not for the fact that this Cork team is full of players who never seem to tire of winning. Camogie's golden era may well have been the years from 2004 to 2009 which saw the four biggest final attendances in competi-

tion history. The last two deciders between Cork and Kilkenny ranked as number five and six after a number of disappointing years. This is a rivalry to really revive the country's most under-rated game.

Only four times in the camogie final's 86-year history has there been a draw. There hasn't been one since Cork and Limerick drew in 1980. In the year of the hurling draw, might another one be on the cards today between these two perfectly matched teams?

RENA BUCKLEY had to make peace with her legend. She is the most successful figure in GAA history, with 18 senior All-Ireland Championship wins split between 11 in football and seven in camogie.

She was honoured as an All-Star 10 times in her career, picked five times on football teams and five on the camogie selection.

When she led Cork to the camogie title last September, on what was her last appearance in Rebel red before retirement, she became the first person to captain a county to football and camogie Championship victories.

On five occasions in her career, she won football and camogie All-Ireland doubles in the same season.

Her status within Gaelic games is eloquently expressed in a display celebrating her achievements in the GAA Museum. It includes the jersey she wore in 2005 when, as an 18-year-old, she won her first All-Ireland, a football one.

Also featured is the jersey she

cousins younger than you? Do you have neighbours younger than you, or younger brothers and sisters? I hope you realise that you're a role model for them".

"She was saying that everybody is a role model for somebody. No matter how big a role model you are or how small a role model you feel you are, you're still a role model for people, so you should conduct yourself appropriately, regardless of whether you're in the media or not.

"After that I was much more settled about it. It settled my mind hugely. I thought about it and said, 'That's a great point'. Everybody is actually a role model. It's just maybe there are a few more taking notice of me.

"Everybody should take their role seriously."

Buckley is one of the transformative figures in the history of women in the GAA. In 2015, she and Brieghe Corkery broke the record for individual All-Ireland wins when surpassing the 15 won by Kay Mills with the Dublin camogie side between the 1940s and early 1960s.

A year later, Buckley moved out on her own with that valedictory camogie win, her contribution to that final glory recognised when she was named the Player of the Year.

It isn't coincidental that the profile of camogie and ladies football have grown in tandem with the extraordinary career enjoyed by Buckley and her generation of Cork team-mates.

The footballers, in particular, are the most extraordinary side in Irish women's sport. Rena Buckley never lost an All-Ireland football final, her record 11 wins from 11 appearances (on four occasions she was on a losing camogie team on final day).

How could she not inspire the generations coming after her?

"My biggest female role model when I was younger was Sonia O'Sullivan," she says. "I'm not putting myself in that category at all, but look at the role models we've had in our society, like Sonia and Katie Taylor.

"The biggest thing that they've shown and why they're such great role models, is because they've shown their weaknesses. They're very human.

"That's made me realise that you need to be yourself. Everybody has weaknesses, and I think that's what society needs.

"I'm not perfect. I certainly have weaknesses and flaws and everything but as long as you have good values and you're doing your best, I think people will respect that."

That integrity was forged in a childhood in Inniscarra, a parish lying to the west of Cork city. Her

mother Helen and father Tim raised her brother Jerry, Rena and her twin sister Mary in a household that was not immersed in the GAA.

"My mother, there would have been zero GAA in her house.

"My father would have played a little bit, but very, very little.

"They are hugely supportive and got on board. My father would have trained us all the way up, but he had to learn it as he went.

"He's chairman of the camogie club at home now and puts in huge time and effort, but it was only out of our interest that it started."

In 2004, at the age of 17, she played in her first All-Ireland final, losing the camogie showpiece to Tipperary.

That first exposure to defeat would be fleeting. The football Championships came in two great gushes, a five-in-a-row between 2005 and 2009, followed by six-in-a-row from 2011 to 2016. Camogie wins came in three double spurts in 2005-2006, 2008-2009 and 2014-2015, before the closer last

18

IT'S little wonder that Cork legend Rena Buckley has become such a role model. In her time with the Rebelettes, playing both codes, she has won 18 All-Ireland titles, 11 in football and seven in camogie, picking up 10 All-Stars in the process (five in football and five in hurling).

wore when winning title No18 last September.

Her success makes her a towering figure not only in the GAA but in Irish sport.

And yet despite all that, she had to get used to her greatness. It took time to make sense of the place to which her deeds elevated her.

"I was struggling with it for ages," she remembers now. "Then there was a Females in Sport day in a school in Fermoy. Fiona O'Driscoll, the former Cork camogie player, was there as well.

"She had trained me and was one of the people I looked up to when I was young. Someone asked her about being a role model, and Fiona put it back on the person who asked the question.

"She said, 'Do you have first

LEGEND:
Cork's Rena Buckley has an amazing track record

IF YOU'RE DOING YOUR BEST THEN PEOPLE WILL RESPECT THAT

This year's temporary exhibition at the GAA Museum reflects on the changes over the past 20 years since it first opened its doors. One of the greatest stories in this time was the success of Rena Buckley. The exhibition includes the jersey from her first All-Ireland Football win in 2005 to her last All-Ireland Camogie success in 2017.

Rena

1904



1942



PICS COURTESY OF THE GAA MUSEUM



2017

CORK'S 0-10 to 0-9 victory over Kilkenny in the All-Ireland Senior Camogie final at Croke Park last year set the county up for their 27th win in the competition.

It was a seventh camogie title for Rena Buckley (pictured left with her teammates).

Kathleen Mills won her first All-Ireland with Dublin in 1942 (above). Also pictured is the 1904 Cúchulainn team from the capital (above, left).

September.

The early wins were, she recalls, understated in the coverage they received. The profile grew in step with the victories, but in those early years, they were largely left to themselves to celebrate.

'I was actually chatting to a girl from Galway (before the hurling final), and she was booking the day after the final off work hoping they'd win, after the madness of the celebrations last year.'

'And she said, "Sure you must be well used to that". And I was thinking back to coming home from All-Irelands in the early days, when nobody really knew us, and (the celebrations) were mad!'

'And then as you get a bit older and people started to know you, you had to behave yourself!'

Those great Cork sides were distinguished by their conduct as well as their triumphs.

In her case, Rena Buckley attributes it to playing with older teammates. It was commonly the

way in the ladies games that notable young talents were promoted to senior teams in their mid-teens.

'I think a huge part of it, and something that is changing in GAA now, but when I was younger you'd be playing up ages an awful lot,' she says.

'I think that's really good to mature you, because you're around older people all the time. I never had a rebellious teenage phase, because I was hanging around with people who were five or six years older.'

Rena Buckley is something a great deal more important than that. She laughs in recalling a club-mate who was standing in front of her display in the GAA Museum when his telephone rang and he saw her name on the screen.

She is hoping to get in to see it for herself.

'Thankfully, Cork got to the camogie and ladies football finals, and I'll definitely go to them,' she says. 'I'll probably call in then alright.'

**INTERVIEW
BY SHANE
McGRATH**



PICS COURTESY OF THE GAA MUSEUM

KATHLEEN MILLS was carried off the pitch by jubilant teammates when Dublin beat Galway to win the All-Ireland camogie title in 1961.

It would be the last match the 38-year-old (above) would play for her county – and she was retiring a legend.

The Galway victory was the 15th All-Ireland triumph for Mills over a 20-year inter-county career. Her remarkable record stood until Rena Buckley and Briege Corkery overtook it in 2015, and Buckley moved out on her own in 2016, finishing last September with 18.

Kathleen Mills, better known as Kay, was born in Inchicore in west Dublin in 1923. Her mother died when she was 18 months old and she was raised by her maternal grandmother. She showed an aptitude for a number of sports as a child but settled on camogie, making her senior debut for Dublin in 1941 when she was 17.

She played her first final that year and lost, but won three-in-a-row between 1942 and 1944. A dispute saw Dublin fail to compete in the All-Ireland series in 1945 and 1946, but she won her fourth in 1948. Six-in-a-row would come between 1950 and 1955, with five-in-a-row between 1957 and 1961. Mills only came to public prominence in 2013, 17 years after her death in 1996. She was on a shortlist for the honour of having a bridge in Dublin named after her. In the end, the activist Rosie Hackett was chosen, but Mills endures as a GAA great.

Kathleen Mills' medals are on view in the GAA Museum – they include All-Ireland Championship, Inter-Provincial and Dublin club honours accolades.

**JACK LYNCH AND
HURLING'S GREATS**

Go to pages 18 & 19

Battling against the odds to spread the camogie gospel

MARIE CROWE

WHEN the Kerry camogie team take to the pitch today for the All-Ireland Premier Junior final, it will be a unique occasion: there is only one senior club represented, meaning they are essentially a club team stepping up to represent their county.

Caoimhe Shanahan, from the Causeway club, is the only player not from Clanmaurice in the starting 15 for the Kingdom today as they face Dublin, the county with the largest population in the country.

It is only just over a decade since Kerry camogie really started to develop with Mary O'Connor, now CEO of the Federation of Irish Sport, at the helm.

"I did some research and drove down to Kerry. I called to primary schools with notices about meetings," explained O'Connor who was working for the Camogie Association at the time. "I went to parishes, I put notices in newsletters, I got it called out from the altar at Mass, all old-school methods, things were different back then."

"I went around to different people like chairpersons of GAA clubs to see if they would be amenable to camogie clubs using their facilities. They agreed to welcome them, so that was a big thing."

"Essentially I organised nights in community halls and hoped and prayed that they would turn up and they did. It's quite



Kerry's Patrice Diggin: 'It was great playing in college. The girls made it so easy.' Photo: Ken Sutton

an equipment-heavy sport so we created a bank of hurleys and helmets so parents wouldn't have to worry about that.

"There was a lot of coaching going in from the Kerry County Board for hurling that girls could avail of too, but we needed something for them for after school."

"So I went down and gave a presentation, asked the people at the meetings if they were interested in setting up the club and asked them to volunteer for roles

and that was the start of it. The Limerick County Board were very helpful and they facilitated the Kerry clubs playing in their competitions."

At that time, Patrice Diggin took up the sport. Prior to that she had hurled with the boys but she never had a team of her own to play with. Now Diggin isn't just the best player in Kerry, she is one of the best in the country and her three Ashbourne Cup medals are a testament to that. Throw in

a Player of the Match award in the 2016 final, as well as her captaining the team, and there is no doubting that she can mix it with the best.

"It was great playing camogie in college, the girls made it so easy," said Diggin. "They weren't looking down on you because you were from Kerry or anything, they were so helpful and really enabled me to play to my potential."

"There was two of us from Kerry and

the first two or three sessions we were so nervous we just stood back from everyone, but once we got into the swing of it we were happy out. We were still only coming with Kerry at that point, and when I was in UL I was able to learn things that I could bring back to the club and the county."

Last year Diggin was named Munster GAA's Camogie Player of the Year after leading her club Clanmaurice to an All-Ireland final and replay.

Although it was a great achievement it also means that with the club and the county being one, the players pretty much train all year round. Diggin would love to see her team win today and move up to the next grade, but it won't be easy for them, even if that happens. They no longer play in Limerick so there is a lack of opportunity and games for the girls in the county.

"Our problem is that we don't have the competitions and therefore the numbers underage coming through the ranks are limited. There is always going to be just one senior team. At the moment there won't be two club teams because we don't have the competition here, and because there are no competitions we are losing girls at 15 and 16 and we are not getting them back."

"They are trying their best but it's the lack of competition, we were playing in Limerick up along, but that's gone. I know girls who this year have played no camogie, there are a few of them playing with the county — once they leave under-14 there is nothing until they play senior again."

"Ideally I'd like to be playing in Limerick still but that's not what they want, they think we should be standing on our own feet. Our club had got up to senior there. We weren't winning much but every girl was getting a match, whereas now a girl sitting on the sideline today might have got very little game time this year because of that."

Diggin feels very strongly about the future of the sport in her county, but today she is focused on one thing and one thing only — winning an All-Ireland.

ALL-IRELAND FINALS: CORK v KILKENNY (4.15); DOWN v CORK (2.0); DUBLIN v KERRY (12.0)

Kingdom resolve will ensure Dublin don't have it easy

PREMIER JUNIOR FINAL
DUBLIN v KERRY. 12.0

DARACH O CONCHÚIR

THERE is nothing like a Dublin-Kerry final at Croke Park to get the blood pumping, though this is the first time the two old GAA rivals have crossed swords in a camogie championship decider on the hallowed sod.

Dublin make a quick return having suffered defeat at the hands of a strong Westmeath unit last year. This time around, they are here with a strong Division 2 League campaign behind them, after annexing the Division 3 title in 2017.

They have lost Emer Keenan with

a cruciate knee ligament injury but welcomed back last year's Premier Junior Player of the Year, Aoife Bugler for their semi-final win over Offaly, having suffered the same injury.

Bugler was on fire against the Faithful, scoring 1-3 from play, and she is sure to improve for the runout after such a lengthy absence. In the meantime, Aoibhe Dillon has been added to the attack from last year's minors and is proving a real addition from placed balls and general play, the top scorer providing 1-5 of the 3-12 tally in the clearance of the penultimate hurdle. Caragh Dawson is another who will take watching.

Kerry's improvement has been consistent in recent years and they are coming into this as Division 3 League champions. That was a welcome win as they haven't enjoyed the best of luck in major finals, losing at junior A and B level in recent years, while Clanmaurice who are, in effect, Kerry,

lost the All-Ireland Junior Club final in a replay last December.

In Patrice Diggin, however, they possess a player whose talents deserve to be showcased on the biggest stage. The flame-haired artist is a multiple Ashbourne Cup winner who Kerry will be looking to for the majority of their scores. Diggin struck 10 points in the 10-point semi-final win over Roscommon, who they had also beaten in the League final.

It was a strong second-half effort from the Kingdom, as they trailed by a point at the break. Roscommon moved two ahead, but they were unable to register another score as the Kerry defence proved impossible to breach. At the other end, Jackie Horgan and Laura Collins grabbed the goal that ensured the green and gold was bound for Croke Park.

Having done well in Division 2, Dublin will be favourites to claim a

sixth crown at this grade but Kerry have shown tremendous resolve in recent years and will be looking to cause an upset.

PATHS TO THE FINAL

DUBLIN

Group 2

July 14: Dublin 0-22, Armagh 1-8
July 22: Roscommon 0-5, Dublin 2-9

Semi-Final, August 18:

Dublin 3-12, Offaly 1-3

KERRY

Group 1

July 14: Kerry 2-11, Clare 0-6
July 21: Kerry 1-15, Limerick 0-8
August 4: Offaly 3-6, Kerry 1-9

Semi-Final, August 18:

Kerry 1-15, Roscommon 1-5



Kerry's Jackie Horgan and Dublin's Emer Keenan. Photo: James Crosbie



Cork have a slight edge in what promises to be a thrilling decider

URSULA
JACOB



THE focus in many sports in recent years, including Gaelic games, has been largely on tactics and, more often than not, the team who wins that battle takes the spoils. We've seen some amazing encounters that might not have been the most breathtakingly spectacular in terms of skills and scores, but have been compelling nonetheless. And I expect today's All-Ireland senior camogie final to be one of those games. There's nothing between Kilkenny

and Cork. They contested the last two All-Ireland finals, winning one each, and it is fitting that this year's decider pits the two best teams in the country against each other. There are also plenty of sub-plots that will add to the appeal of this game — the match-ups, the managers and the rivalry all enhance the intrigue of the encounter. I think it's going to be an extremely tight and tense affair. I don't expect it to be high-scoring, but what it lacks in scores it will make up for with intensity.

Both teams play quite a similar style, they will be trying to crowd it out around the middle of the field and around the half-forward and half-back lines — the aim being to stop delivery of ball to the inside lines. Cork's half-forward line could have a big influence on the game. In the semi-final against Tipp, Amy O'Connor, Orla Cronin and Orla Cotter played there and these are crucial players who can perform on the big day. A lot of the talk ahead of the game has been about Kilkenny's Anne Dalton, who is one of the best players camogie has ever seen and she plays that sweeper role so well. I expect her and Cronin to have another titanic battle, as they did in last year's final when the Cork forward had a massive game, with three points from play. Kilkenny and Dalton will have learned a lot from that day, however. They will know that you can't give Cronin space or she will punish you.

She's a runner, she's athletic and she is well able to hurl and shoot from distance. Kilkenny have only conceded one goal in the whole championship but this won't worry Cork because they know their players in the half-forward line can get the vital long-range scores. They also have an unerring free taker in Cotter — she got seven from seven in the semi-final and she's not one to be fazed by the big day. The key for Kilkenny will be their full-forward line. They will probably have Shelly Farrell and Michelle Quilty playing a two-woman full-forward line. Those two are a dangerous pairing — they are pacey and quick hurlers and they know how to score goals. But they will need the right ball delivered to them, coming into the space so they are able to run at it and do damage with it. Both teams know each other so well. It's the same core groups of girls

in both panels and while they will be collectively doing battle, there will also be some individual duels and this will just add to the intensity. The two managers, Paudie Murray and Ann Downey, and their tense relationship also brings an extra edge to the game. They are similar in their approach, they are ruthless characters and will want to win at almost all costs. Although the action is on the field, it will be interesting to keep

an eye on their body language on the sidelines throughout the game. Paudie and Ann are born winners; losing today is not on their agenda. Ultimately, it will be a battle and a fascinating one at that. We know what these sides can do. They have both been consistent all year, they won their respective provincial titles, they contested the League final where Kilkenny came out on top, they topped their groups in championship and now they are back to meet again in the All-Ireland final. I think it will be very close, but I think Cork will shade it. They are even more ruthless than before and, regardless of who they have been playing, they have been driving on and never letting up. They have such a spread of scorers as well, so they will be hard to contain. Throw in the bench they have too, with the likes of Briege Corkery, and it's impossible to look past them.

The key for Kilkenny will be their full-forward line

Downey insists her players are not out looking for revenge

By Mark Gallagher



IN WITH A SHOUT: Kilkenny's Katie Power

NOTHING creates interest in a sport like an old-fashioned rivalry and camogie is fortunate at present to have, in Cork and Kilkenny, two teams that keep pushing each other to new heights. Kilkenny claimed the League title earlier this year, exacting some revenge on the Rebels for their smash-and-grab in last year's All-Ireland final.

There has never been more than a score or two between the sides and that's the reason the camogie Association are confidently predicting more than 20,000 will come to Croke Park today and the crowd should surpass the 20,348 that were in attendance last year, which was the fifth highest in the game's history. This is the fourth time in five years that these two teams have met in the decider, with Cork leading the count 2-1, but it's the memories of last year's final, and Julia White's splendid late winning point, that had added spice to this afternoon's match. But Kilkenny legend Ann Downey, who ended 22 years without the O'Duffy Cup for her county back in 2016, says that her players won't be thinking of what happened last September when they ran out onto Croke. 'You can't go out trying to win a match, looking for revenge for the year before,' Downey (inset above) insists. 'That's not the way it works. You can't change history. You have to play what's in front of you and move on.'

The Kilkenny players met at the start of the year, reviewed a video of last year's final and decided, collectively, to not speak of it again. Last year's final, which Cork won 0-10 to 0-9, was the first camogie final in eight years that didn't have a goal. Cork have bucked that trend this summer, scoring a sensational 15-121 in six games on their way to today's final, in stark contrast to Kilkenny's tally of 1-43 from their five games, although Downey says that her side are only playing to their strengths. 'Trust me, I'd love to see more goals but we have to play to our strengths. You have to look at the opposition and see the calibre of players they have. Cork have some great forwards so we will sit down and make a defensive plan,' Downey says, also insisting that her team's win in the League final in Nowlan Park will mean nothing today. 'It's a different game, different

Today's Croker action

Liberty Insurance All-Ireland camogie Senior Championship final: Cork v Kilkenny, 4.15, Eamon Cassidy (Derry), Live: RTE 2
Liberty Insurance All-Ireland camogie Intermediate Championship final: Cork v Down, 2.0, John Dermody (Westmeath)
Liberty Insurance All-Ireland camogie Premier Junior Championship Final: Dublin v Kerry, 12.0, Alan Doherty (Laois)

that this year's League final will matter little, Cork will take great heart that they came within a point of Kilkenny despite having captain Aoife Murray sent off in the second-half. This is likely to be another close encounter and both benches might come into play. Given that Cork can call on players like the experienced Briege Corkery and Linda Collins, that may just swing things to the defending champions. Meanwhile, Cork also contest the Intermediate final against Down, who have reached their first All-Ireland final in 20 years. There was surprise that the Mourne girls have got this far but in players like the talented Niamh Mallon, they will pose problems for Cork though the Leesiders should complete the first of a two-part All-Ireland double. Meanwhile in the junior final curtain-raiser, old GAA rivals Dublin and Kerry will meet with the Dubs favourite.

'I was a little annoyed that I hadn't been brought on earlier. I wanted to do something'

MARIE
CROWE



CORK camogie star Julia White is a real-life sporting hero. Fresh from the bench in the sixth minute of injury time in last year's All-Ireland senior final in Croke Park, when the game was deadlocked, she expertly sent over a point to secure the win for her county.

In the aftermath, she graced the back pages of newspapers and her name was up in lights. Sports fans wanted to know how she held her nerve with so much at stake. Her feat, and the timing of it, are exactly what dreams are made of.

White teaches in Christ King Secondary School in Cork, a girls' school with close to 900 students. Today she will play again for her county, on the biggest stage, as they try to defend their All-Ireland title against the mighty Kilkenny.

Yet her extraordinary achievements last year and the magnitude of today's game resonate with only a small number of her students, as sport doesn't hold the interest of the majority of young girls. White is a hero in their midst and they have no idea.

"Most of the girls wouldn't know that I'm playing in a final," says White. "The staff would know and the few girls who play camogie with the club would know, but most of them wouldn't know that I'll be playing in Croke Park or on the TV. They have some idea that I play sport but they wouldn't understand the gravity of an All-Ireland final."

"Ireland soccer player Saoirse Noonan was with us, she has just done her Leaving Cert. The staff knew about her achievements but it didn't seem to register with the students."

"I don't think it's the school's issue, I just think that unless you are involved in sport, then they wouldn't know about it and that's something that could be worked on; — helping increase the profiles of women who play sport."

White teaches PE and loves it, even though it's a struggle to get numbers to participate in class. Recent research carried out by Lidl showed that one in



Julia White: 'I know the Kilkenny team very well, it's an amazing county. I even taught a few of the girls who are on the panel.'

Photo: Daraagh Mc Sweeney

every two girls gives up sport by the age of 13 and this trend is something that the Cork player can most definitely vouch for.

"The dropout in sport is pretty shocking and even trying to get the girls to do PE is very hard. You would think in an all-girls school the embarrassment factor wouldn't be there, but so many don't want to do it. In a class of 27 or 28, I could have 10 not participating," she explains.

"They would have notes from their parents and they wouldn't have good reasons in them, so when the parents aren't supporting what we are trying to do, it becomes even harder. I send a note back home but there isn't really much I can do."

"I think one of the big problems is that we are only seeing the girls once a week, and for a lot of them that could be all the activity they are getting. Watching all the influencers on YouTube, Snapchat and Instagram is what they do. It's a different environment now."

The low participation numbers have forced White to think outside the box for her classes and the way she teaches PE. She knows that many of the students shy away from competitive sports so she offers things such as running clubs, dance and yoga as alternatives.

White goes on: "It's a big challenge trying to increase participation and I don't know if there is a simple solution. As well as the likes of basketball and tennis, we do dance and gymnastics and HRA (health related activities) — that is learning about fitness. We bring them swimming but again that poses challenges as we could bring 50 swimming and 25 would have notes."

"I think any type of activity they want to do we should let them do it for a while anyway just to get them enjoying it. Any time we put on Just Dance from YouTube on a projector they all do it. It might seem like the teacher is taking the easy way out, but every single child will do it and they enjoy it."

"I think it's about getting them to enjoy being active without even realising they are doing it. The minute some girls hear sport or PE they turn away. Any of the ball games, just forget about it. When I was in school I would have noticed girls opting out of PE myself but now I feel it's got much worse."

While in college, White spent a lot of time looking at body image and did her final year project on the subject. During her teaching practice she surveyed her students, asked them a range of questions about their body image and their ideals.

"We did a scrapbook session and they had to cut out their perfect body and it was all big bums and big lips like Kim Kardashian and then at the end of the six weeks we did the scrap session again and there were some normal looking bodies there. I think at the end of it they started to understand that being strong and fit is good but the main thing was understanding that everyone is different and looks different."

"Every day we spoke about how they were feeling at the start of class then we would do activities and at the end of class speak about how they were feeling again. They don't understand healthy, they see what type of body they want and they don't know then what is good

for you and what is not.

"So we worked on explaining to them about what is healthy. I think they have this idea that if they do sport they will get really muscular — they don't understand."

"I've seen young girls go to the gym all the time to try and lose weight, even though they didn't have any to lose. So I was trying to educate them on what was normal and what was healthy."

Being surrounded by women and

'We could bring 50 girls to swimming and 25 would have notes from their parents'

girls who play sport has shown White first-hand the benefits of being active. Her team-mates are fit, healthy and strong and, as a result, they are body confident because they know that their bodies are working and performing at a high level.

White has had to overcome some physical challenges of her own. Three bouts of glandular fever since embark-

ing on her inter-county career at 16, a ruptured Achilles in 2015 and a fractured foot last year that kept her out right up until the All-Ireland semi-final.

However, the resilience and determination that sport has instilled ensured that the then 26-year-old never stopped battling to get back on the pitch. And when she got the chance in last year's final, White made it count, winning the game for the team and earning her fifth All-Ireland medal.

"I was a little annoyed I hadn't been brought on earlier and frustrated," she reveals. "I was full of adrenaline and anger I wanted to do something. I can't really remember but it was in my mind [that] I was going to do something here. It was only two days after that it sunk in. It was nice, the hard work paid off, we won."

Fast forward 12 months and Cork are back in Croke Park facing their familiar foes, Kilkenny, who would love nothing more than to knock the reigning champions off their perch, just as Cork did to them last year.

"We know each other inside out now," White says of the two sides. "I taught there for two years and I loved it there. I know the Kilkenny team very well, it's an amazing county. I even taught a few of the girls who are on the panel."

"It is always very close between us. I'm a little bit worried that we haven't had the biggest tests but I don't think we will know where we are at until we step out there and I'm really looking forward to that. It's what we work hard for all year."

Ahead of the All-Ireland semi-final

White. "A few of us were asked how did we feel about her coming back. We were delighted. We had been asking her to come back before she did, so we had nearly given up hope. She had been working away before that anyway, so she was in good shape."

"Brieghe is coming back to play so that adds to the competition for places. It's a good thing though, she keeps us on our toes. It's a good worry to have going in to an All-Ireland final. There is no complacency and she has 17 All-Ireland medals."

"She is so modest and humble and was so conscious of coming in late [that] she spoke to us and thanked us for having her back and accepting and she wants to help in any way."

"She is such a competitor. I've never met anyone as competitive as her. Everyone loves her personality so that makes it easier to come back. She came back in decent shape and has been on an upward curve. The baby is at every training session, her two nephews come along and mind him and if we are going for breakfast or anything, he comes too. It's lovely to have him around, it's such a nice touch."

On the pitch, White has achieved an incredible amount; she's a natural leader and positive thinker. It's clear that her work off the pitch is just getting started. She's keen to make a difference, to help guide the next generation. No better woman.

PATHS TO THE FINAL

CORK

GROUP 2

JUNE 9
Cork 1-19, Wex-

ford 0-7

JUNE 24
Cork 4-15, Dublin

2-3

JULY 7
Tipperary 1-12,

Cork 1-27

JULY 14
Meath 0-6, Cork

3-21

JULY 22
Cork 6-18, Offaly 3-4

SEMI-FINAL, AUGUST 18
Cork 0-21, Tipperary 0-9

KILKENNY

GROUP 1

JUNE 9
Limerick 0-11,

Kilkenny 2-18

JUNE 30
Waterford 0-10,

Kilkenny 1-13

JULY 14
Kilkenny 4-13,

Clare 0-2

JULY 22
Kilkenny 1-17, Galway 0-13

SEMI-FINAL, AUGUST 18
Galway 1-7, Kilkenny 1-10



Cork's Chloe Sigerson



Kilkenny's Katie Power

Clár an Lae

12noon Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Premier Junior Championship Final

Dublin v Kerry

Kathleen Mills Cup

12.32pm Mini Games

2.00pm Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Intermediate Championship

Cork v Down

Jack McGrath Cup

2.32pm Under 14 County Development Squads Parade
(Led by the Artane Band)

3.42pm Introduction of an Taoiseach le Ard Stiúrthóir an Cumann Camógaíochta

4.02pm Introduction of Uachtarán na hÉireann le Uachtarán an Cumann Camóga

4.08pm Senior Team Parade

4.13pm Amhrán na bhFiann

4.15pm Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Senior Championship Final

Cork v Kilkenny

O'Duffy Cup

4.47pm Entertainment Act - The Hit Machine

& the Liberty Insurance 'Camogie Made Us' Challenge

Meet the Match Officials



Senior Final
Cork v Kilkenny

REFEREE:

Eamon Cassidy

(Derry)

Club:

Limavady Wolfhounds



Intermediate Final
Cork v Down

REFEREE:

John Dermody

(Westmeath)

Club:

Lough Lene Gaels Camogie Club



Premier Junior Final
Dublin v Kerry

REFEREE:

Alan Doherty

(Laois)

Club:

Naomh Eamann Camogie Club

CORK Group 1

16/08/2018 Cork 5-18 Carlow 0-6 (W)
23/06/2018 Cork 3-23 Laois 0-6 (W)
07/07/2018 Derry 0-11 Cork 0-11 (D)
14/07/2018 Down 0-6 Cork 0-18 (W)

Semi-Final

18/08/2018 Cork 0-14 Galway 0-9 (W)

DOWN Group 1

16/06/2018 Down 0-18 Derry 1-15 (D)
23/06/2018 Carlow 0-14 Down 2-13 (W)
14/07/2018 Down 0-6 Cork 0-18 (L)
04/08/2018 Laois 1-10 Down 1-15 (W)

Semi-Final

18/08/2018 Down 1-13 Tipperary 2-8 (W)

SEPT. 2018

Cork, Senior



RENAULT

SEMPLE STADIUM



Back Row Left to Right:

Stefanie Beausang, Orla Cotter, Orla Cronin, Linda Collins, Ashling Thompson, Gemma O'Connor, Chloe Sigerson, Katrina Mackey, Pamela Mackey, Leanne O'Sullivan, Amy Lee, Aoife Murray (Captain)

Front Row Left to Right:

Niamh McCarthy, Aileen Sheehan, Niamh O'Callaghan, Julia White, Hannah Looney, Amy O'Connor, Laura Treacy, Lauren Homan, Brieghe Corkery, Libby Coppinger

CORK
SENIOR TEAM

Corcaigh - Dearg & Bán



IONADAÍ

16 Amy Lee
A. Ní Laoi
Na Flanagáin

17 Leanne O'Sullivan
L. Ní Shúilleabháin
Clen Rovers

18 Aileen Sheehan
A. Ní Shiocháin
Iniscarra

19 Lauren Homan
L. Homan
St. Vincent's

20 Linda Collins
L. Ní Choleáin
Country Rovers

21 Brieghe Corkery
B. Ní Chonca
Cloughduv

22 Siobhán Hutchinson
S. Ní Uistín
Éir Óg

23 Laura Hayes
L. Ní Aodha
St. Catherine's

24 Saoirse McCarthy
S. Ní Corthaigh
Country Rovers

25 Stefanie Beausang
S. Beausang
Kilnagh

TEAM OFFICIALS

Bainisteoir:
Maor Faine / S & C Coach:
Hurling Coach:
Performance Analyst:
Goalkeeping Coach:
Physio:
Physio:
Maor Uisce:
Maor Uisce:
Sports Science Intern:
Liaison Officer:

Faolán Murray
Martin O'Brien
Kevin Murray
Niall Collins
Teddy O'Donovan
Liam O'Reilly
Orla Coughlan
Damien Murray
Seán Cremin
Carole Ryan
Marian McCarthy



Kilkenny, Senior



RENAULT RENAULT

LIBERTY INSURANCE CAMOGIE CHAMPIONSHIP



CAMOGIE ASSOCIATION



Liberty Insurance

EST. 1887

Back Row Left to Right:

Anne Dalton, Grace Walsh, Catherine Foley, Aoife Doyle, Edwina Keane, Claire Phelan, Róisín Phelan, Denise Gaule, Niamh Deely, Kellyann Doyle, Julie Ann Malone, Emma Kavanagh, Miriam Walsh, Davina Tobin

Front Row Left to Right:

Jacqui Frisby, Michelle Teehan, Colette Dormer, Danielle Morrissey, Shelly Farrell (Captain), Anna Farrell, Grace O'Donnell, Michelle Quilty, Jenny Clifford, Katie Power, Meg Farrell



KILKENNY SENIOR TEAM

Cill Chainnigh - Dubh & Omra



IONADAI

- 16 Jacqui Frisby
S. Nic Fhairbhíogh
Ballyhale Shamrocks
- 17 Michelle Teehan
M. Ní Theacháin
James Stephens
- 18 Jenny Clifford
S. Nic Rífeartaigh
Dicksboro
- 19 Edwina Keane
E. Ní Chéin
St. Martin's

- 20 Kellyann Doyle
C. Ní Dhúghaill
Piltown
- 21 Danielle Morrissey
D. Ní Mhuiréasa
Conahy Shamrocks
- 22 Aoife Doyle
A. Ní Dhúghaill
Piltown
- 23 Grace O'Donnell
C. Ní Dhúghaill
Young Ireland's

- 24 Róisín Phelan
R. Ní Fhaoilín
Conahy Shamrocks
- 25 Niamh Deely
N. Ní Dhúghaill
James Stephens

TEAM OFFICIALS

- Bainisteoir: Ann Downey
- Maor Foirme: Paddy Mullally
- Roghndír (1): Liam Egan
- Roghndír (2): Conor Phelan
- Roghndír (3): Mark Cooney
- Physio: Nicola Aylward
- Dochtúir: Fergus Heffernan
- Dochtúir: Martin O'Brien
- Dietician: Noreen Roche
- Camán/luisce: Anna Walpole
- Camán/luisce: Breda Holmes
- Camán/luisce: Angela Downey

Player Profiles - Kilkenny



Player Profiles - Cork

Senior



Emma Kavanagh - The Rower-Inistioge
Teacher
Goalkeeper
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, 4 Nat League titles, 4 Leinster Senior C'ship titles, All-Stars Award.



Colette Dormer - Paulstown/Goresbridge
Architectural Technologist
Defender
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, All-Ireland Inter C'ship title, 5 Nat League titles, All-Ireland Minor C'ship title, All-Ireland U16 C'ship title, 5 Leinster Senior C'ship titles, 4 Ashbourne Cup titles, 2 All-Stars Awards.



Catherine Foley - Windgap
Quality Controller
Defender
3 Nat League titles, 3 Leinster Senior C'ship titles, All Stars Award, Soaring Stars Award.



Grace Walsh - Tullaroan
Nurse
Defender
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, 4 Nat League titles, All-Ireland Minor C'ship title, All-Ireland U16 C'ship title, Leinster Senior C'ship titles.



Claire Phelan - Lisdowney
Teacher
Defender
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, 4 Nat League titles, All-Ireland Minor C'ship title, 3 Leinster Senior C'ship titles.



Anne Dalton - St. Lachtain's Freshford
Bank Official
Defender
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, 5 Nat League titles, All-Ireland Minor C'ship title, 6 Leinster Senior C'ship titles, 3 Ashbourne Cup titles, 5 All-Stars Awards.



Davina Tobin - Emeralds
Hair Stylist
Defender
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, 4 Nat League titles, All-Ireland Minor C'ship title, 4 Leinster Senior C'ship titles, Leinster Minor C'ship title.



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



Michelle Quilty - Mullinavat
Accounts Assistant
Forward
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, 5 Nat League titles, 3 All-Ireland Minor C'ship titles, 2 All-Ireland U16 C'ship titles, 7 Leinster Senior C'ship titles, 2 All-Stars Awards.



Jacqui Frisby - Ballyhale
Stock Controller
Goalkeeper/Defender
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, 6 Nat League titles, All-Ireland Junior C'ship title, 4 Leinster Senior C'ship titles, All-Stars Award.



Michelle Teehan - James Stephens
Student
Defender
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, 3 Nat League titles, All-Ireland Minor C'ship title, 2 Leinster Senior C'ship titles.



Jenny Clifford - Dicksboro
Sales Assistant
Forward
All-Ireland Inter C'ship title, 2 Nat League titles, All-Ireland Minor C'ship title, Leinster Senior C'ship title, Leinster Minor C'ship title, Soaring Stars Award.



Aoife Doyle - Piltown
Student
Forward
3 Nat League titles, Leinster Senior C'ship title.



Denise Gaule - Windgap
Student
Forward
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, All-Ireland Inter C'ship titles, 4 Nat League titles, 2 All-Ireland Minor C'ship titles, 2 All-Ireland U16 C'ship titles, 5 Leinster Senior C'ship titles, 4 Ashbourne Cup titles, Players' Player of the Year, All-Stars Award.



Meighan Farrell - Thomastown
Early Childhood Practitioner
Midfield
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, 4 Nat League titles, All-Ireland Minor C'ship title, 3 Leinster Senior C'ship titles, 3 Leinster U16 C'ship titles, 2 All-Stars Awards.



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, 3 Leinster Senior C'ship titles, 2 Ashbourne Cup titles, All-Stars Award.



Katie Power - Piltown
Receptionist
Forward
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, 5 Nat League titles, 3 All-Ireland Minor C'ship titles, 2 All-Ireland U16 C'ship titles, 6 Leinster Senior C'ship titles, 4 Ashbourne Cup titles, 3 All-Stars Awards.



Julie Ann Malone - Mullinavat
Nurse
Forward
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, 3 Nat League titles, 3 Leinster Senior C'ship titles.



Miriam Walsh - Tullaroan
Teacher
Forward
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, 4 Nat League titles, All-Ireland Minor C'ship title, 3 Leinster Senior C'ship titles, All-Stars Award.



Danielle Morrissey - Conahy Shamrock
Student
Forward
3 Nat League titles, Leinster Minor C'ship title, Leinster U16 titles.



Róisín Phelan - Conahy Shamrocks
Student
Defender
All-Ireland Inter C'ship title, 2 Nat League titles, All-Ireland Minor C'ship title, 3 Leinster Senior C'ship titles, Leinster Minor C'ship title.



Edwina Keane - St. Martin's
Farm Relief Services
Midfield
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, 5 Nat League titles, 3 All-Ireland Minor titles, 2 All-Ireland U16 titles, 3 Leinster Senior C'ship titles, Ashbourne Cup title, All-Stars Award.



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



Niamh Deely - James Stephens
Student
Midfield
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, 3 Nat League titles, Leinster Senior C'ship titles.



Kellyann Doyle - Piltown
Student
Forward
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, Nat League title, All-Ireland Minor title, Leinster U16 C'ship title.



Aoife Murray - Cloughduv
RE Portfolio Director
Goalkeeper
8 All-Ireland Senior C'ship titles, All-Ireland Inter C'ship title, All-Ireland Junior C'ship title, 5 Nat League titles, 10 Munster Senior C'ship titles, Munster Inter C'ship title, Munster Junior C'ship title, 7 All-Stars Awards.



Leanne O'Sullivan - Glen Rovers
Student
Defender
3 All-Ireland Senior C'ship titles, 2 Nat League titles, 5 Munster Senior C'ship titles, Munster Inter C'ship title, Munster Junior C'ship title.



Laura Treacy - Killeagh
General Nurse
Defender
3 All-Ireland Senior C'ship titles, 4 Munster Senior C'ship titles, Ashbourne Cup title, All-Stars Award.



Pamela Mackey - Douglas
Student
Defender
4 All-Ireland Senior C'ship titles, 2 Nat League titles, 8 Munster Senior C'ship titles, 3 All-Stars Awards.



Libby Coppinger - St. Colums
Student
Defender
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, Munster Senior C'ship title, Munster Inter C'ship title, Munster Minor C'ship title.



Gemma O'Connor - St. Finbarrs
Soldier
Defender
8 All-Ireland Senior C'ship titles, 2 All-Ireland Senior C'ship titles, 2 All-Ireland Minor C'ship titles, Munster Senior C'ship titles, 10 All-Stars Awards.



Katrina Mackey - Douglas
Student
Forward
4 All-Ireland Senior C'ship titles, 3 Nat League titles, 8 Munster Senior C'ship titles, Munster Inter C'ship title, Munster Minor C'ship title, 4 All-Star Awards.



Niamh McCarthy - Inniscarra
Student
Forward
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, Nat League title, Munster Senior C'ship title.



Hannah Looney - Killeagh
Student
Forward
3 All-Ireland Senior C'ship titles, 4 Munster Senior C'ship titles, Munster Inter C'ship title, 2 Munster Minor C'ship titles.



Amy Lee - Na Piarasigh
Student
Goalkeeper
2 All-Ireland Senior C'ship titles, 3 Munster Senior C'ship titles, 2 Munster Inter C'ship titles.



Aileen Sheehan - Inniscarra
Teacher
Midfield
Munster Inter C'ship title, Munster Minor C'ship title, Ashbourne Cup title.



Lauren Homan - St. Vincents
Student
Defender
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, Nat League title, Munster Senior C'ship title, Munster Minor C'ship title.



Siobhán Hutchinson - Éire Óg
Trainee Accountant
Defender
Nat League title, Munster Senior C'ship title.



Chloe Sigerson - Killeagh
Student
Defender
All-Ireland Senior C'ship title, All-Ireland U16 C'ship title, Munster Senior C'ship title, Munster Inter C'ship title, Munster Minor C'ship title, Soaring Stars Award.



Julia White - Douglas
Teacher
Forward
5 All-Ireland Senior C'ship titles, 2 Nat League titles, 7 Munster Senior C'ship titles.



Ashling Thompson - Milford
Student
Midfield
3 All-Ireland Senior C'ship titles, Nat League title, 5 Munster Senior C'ship titles, 2 All-Stars Award.



Amy O'Connor - St. Vincents
Student
Forward
3 All-Ireland Senior C'ship titles, 3 Munster Senior C'ship titles, Munster Minor C'ship title.



Orla Cronin - Enniskeane
Student
Defender
3 All-Ireland Senior C'ship titles, 3 Munster Senior C'ship titles, Munster Inter C'ship title.



Linda Collins - Courcy Rovers
Student
Forward
2 All-Ireland Senior C'ship titles, Munster Senior C'ship title, Munster Inter C'ship title, Munster Minor C'ship title, Soaring Stars Award.



Laura Hayes - St. Catherines
Student
Forward
All-Ireland Minor C'ship title, Munster U16 C'ship title.



Saoirse McCarthy - Courcy Rovers
Student
Forward
All-Ireland Minor C'ship title, 2 Munster U16 C'ship titles.



Niamh O'Callaghan - Sarsfields
Teacher
Defender
2 Nat League titles, Munster Senior C'ship title, 2 Munster Inter C'ship titles.



Orla Cotter - St. Catherines
Teacher
Forward
6 All-Ireland Senior C'ship titles, All-Ireland C'ship title, 4 Nat League titles, 10 Munster Senior C'ship titles, 3 All-Stars Awards.



Stefanie Beausang - Killeagh
Customer Services Advisor
Goalkeeper
3 Ashbourne Cup titles.



Brieghe Corkery - Cloughduv
Farmer/Bank of Ireland
Forward
6 All-Ireland Senior C'ship titles.

Cork retain title after tight, nervy and dreary affair



Malachy Clerkin
at Croke Park

For the sport as a whole, this encounter felt like another dip in the graph

Camogie can't keep having finals like this. For the second year in a row, Cork beat Kilkenny by a point in a tight, nervy game where no goal was scored and the overwhelming majority of the points came from placed balls.

Orla Cotter and Chloe Sigerson landed a free each – both questionable – in the dying minutes from opposite sides of the pitch to buy the reigning champions a 0-14 to 0-13 victory in front of a crowd of 21,467. Cork won't care how it was done, only that it was.

But for the sport as a whole, this felt like another dip in the graph. After a few years of blazing finals around the turn of the decade, the showpiece of the sport has become a dreary day out for all concerned.

Kilkenny and Cork know each other's game to the last chain of their respective DNA – this was their third final in 12 months including the league decider and each of them has been decided by a single point.

Norhythm

Any excitement suggested by such small margins was offset here by a game that never got into any sort of rhythm. Referee Eamon Cassidy had a day where he seemed to be involved in almost every passage of play – it looked inevitable from a good distance out that the result would be decided by whichever team managed to draw a free when the game was on the line. When Cotter went down under an imperceptible touch in the 71st minute, she didn't need a lot of dusting off to ready herself for the clincher.

"I've had a look at it in the dressingroom with our stats people and, without criticising Eamon, definitely Orla was already falling," said Kilkenny manager Ann Downey afterwards. "Our players were around her but hadn't touched her. I thought it was a harsh enough free as you saw from my reaction on the line."

"I thought the free against Davina [Tobin, a minute earlier] as well – there were two hard calls on us. Eamon will have to look at his own performance and judge himself, I'm not going to give out about him."



Cork's Laura Treacy celebrates at the final whistle after victory over rivals Kilkenny in the All-Ireland senior camogie final at Croke Park; left: Cork captain Aoife Murray lifts the O'Duffy Cup. Photographs: Laszlo Geczo/Inpho

It is what it is. It's not going to change the result, we have to be able to take it on the chin and move on."

Though the crucial frees went against Kilkenny at the end, you wouldn't say Cassidy favoured either side. In his defence, it was a game refereed to the absolute letter of the law.

Frustrating

Camogie is, in rule, a non-contact sport and at times it didn't take a lot more than a dirty look to find yourself whistled up. It made for a frustrating game, stop-start and bitty throughout.

"Look it, we can all talk about the refereeing of camogie," said Cork manager Paudie Murray afterwards. "Does it need to be tidied up? Yes, it does. I've said that a number of times. I

think the way the rules are at the moment makes it impossible for a referee to referee the game."

"Eamon Cassidy is probably one of the top two referees in the country but there is so much in relation to the contact area, what is a free, what isn't a free, that it's next to impossible [to judge]. If a player charges with a shoulder, it's just impossible. I don't think it's going to change too easy."

"I think they have to – and I've said it before – that the rules have to change and go more towards the hurling and let contact be there. I certainly would think that the majority of players I have spoken to would be in favour of that and I think then you would have more of a flow to your game. We sit down with our players and talk to

them about what they should and should not be doing and we try to train for it but it's next to impossible."

Of the 27 points scored in the game, 0-18 came from placed balls. Cork took just six shots

"I don't know what way it is to look at, sometimes you'd wish the play would open up a small bit, but you just want to win at all costs, that's the bottom line."

from play across the whole afternoon. The quality of the

free-taking was terrific – Cotter, Sigerson and Kilkenny's Denise Gaule were the game's outstanding players as they potted balls from all distances and angles.

Open play

Ultimately, Cork had more threat from open play. With both sides setting up defensively and stringing five across their half-back lines, forwards were starved all day. Katrina Mackey and Amy O'Connor swished a couple of points each whereas the Kilkenny inside line was easily outnumbered by the massed Cork defence. It meant Gaule had to carry the bulk of the scoring burden for Kilkenny and when the late calls went against them, they couldn't muster an equaliser.

"We knew it'd be a tight

game from start to finish," said Cork veteran Gemma O'Connor after winning her ninth All-Ireland medal. "The championship has been quite open but we knew the final would be so defensive, we don't give each other an inch. I don't know what way it is to look at, sometimes you'd wish the play would open up a small bit, but you just want to win at all costs, that's the bottom line."

"Sometimes you'd like the game to be a bit more free-flowing, that would only do wonders for the game. I think he [the referee] did stop-start it a bit too much. But look, we're on the better end of it, I can't complain too much."

Cork prove their credentials whatever terms of engagement

Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Premier Senior camogie final
CORK.....0-14
KILKENNY.....0-13

John Fogarty
 Croke Park

Another cold war All-Ireland final and camogie faces an existential crisis but there's no such concern for this Cork group today.

Once more Paudie Murray's charges demonstrated they can win regardless of the terms of engagement.

Nine of the 27 scores yesterday came from play, an indictment of just how the game between the elite teams is played as it is officiated.

In Chloe Sigerson and Orla Cotter, Cork had snipers so sharp and unerring that it didn't matter how far Kilkenny kept them from their posts.

Cotter's winner was a controversial one and won't sit easy with the losers as much as the penalty call against them in the first half.

Profligacy, though, is what cost Kilkenny as much as anyone else.

Eight wides to Cork's four including Claire Phelan's one which followed Cotter's winner, responsibility for this narrow defeat must weigh on their shoulders as much as anyone else.

The one true goal chance did fall to Kilkenny in the 54th minute but Aoife Murray was level to Anna Farrell's attempt and while the Cats went ahead with the follow-up 45 — one of nine placed balls converted by Denise Gaule — Cork never let up.

The champions scored the next two points with Amy O'Connor finishing off a nice move before Sigerson landed a trademark long-range effort.

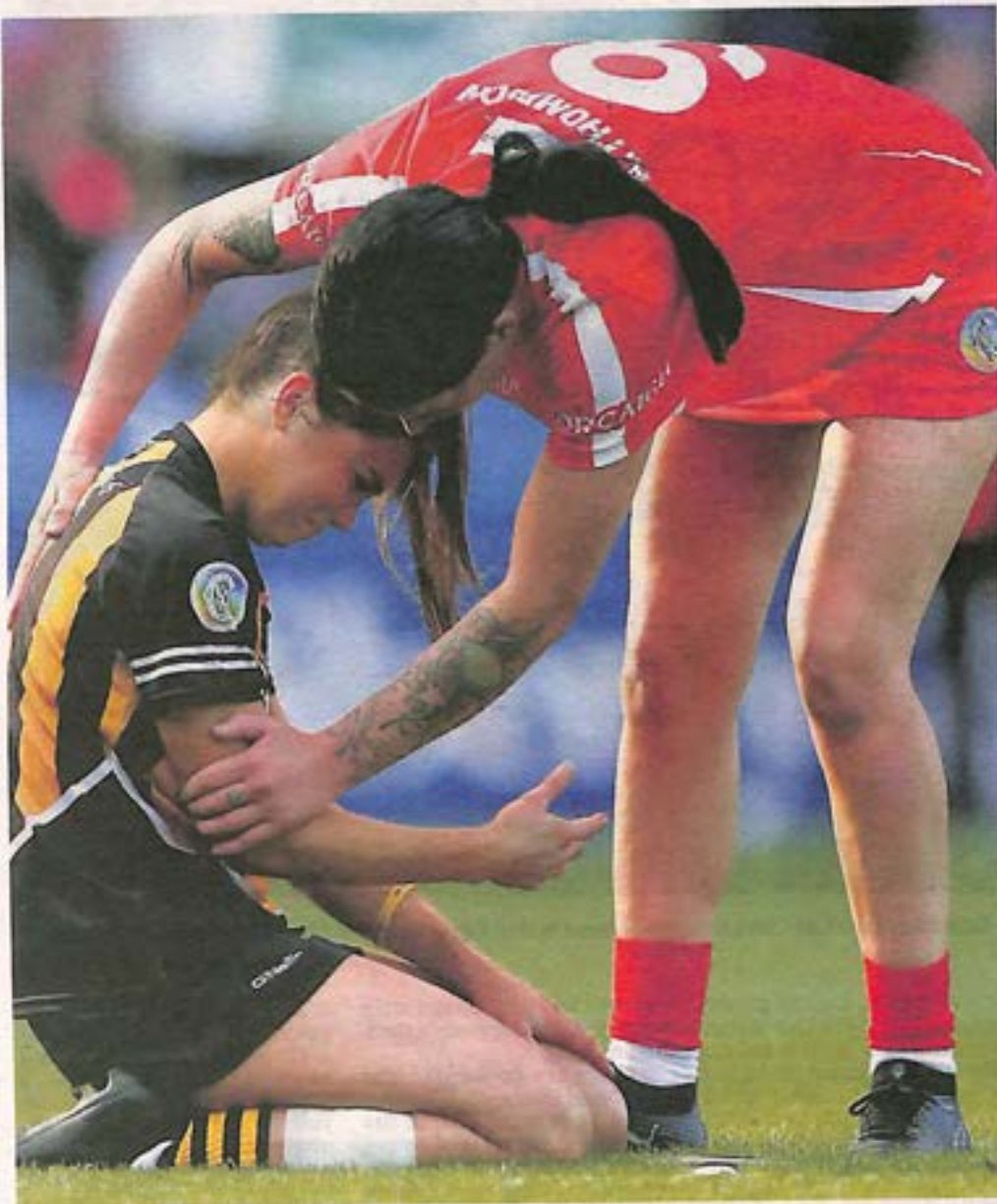
Gaule did level the game for an eighth time in the 59th minute after Anna Farrell seemed to fall easy when challenged by Laura Treacy but Cotter was able to convert the free, which she won after Cassidy appeared to gesture that she had been tripped.

It was obvious from a long way off that frees were going to define this game. Cotter did miss one earlier in the second half as Gaule did in both halves but their marksmanship was deadly and it had to be given the way frees were being thrown out like confetti.

This was camogie from a distance although Paudie Murray wasn't taking any of the blame for that.

"We've always gone to play open hurling," he said.

"If you look at our scores



HELPING HAND: Cork's Ashling Thompson consoles Kilkenny's Katie Power after yesterday's Liberty Insurance All-Ireland senior camogie final.
 Picture: Inpho/James Crombie

this year, we've put up big scores. It's not our problem if somebody goes with a sweeper against us.

"I read reports and it sickens me that we use a sweeper — we have never used a sweeper. We have never gone to play a sweeper — our centre-back doesn't move out of the position. I can't deal with the opposition and what they do. If you look at it, they had five on one side of the field and seven on the other."

Sigerson was exquisite with three low-percentage frees and Murray revealed she had been pinpointed as an asset in a game such as yesterday.

"We have spent a lot of time working with Chloe over the last two or three years. She's probably one of the sweetest strikers of a ball playing the game and certainly we did a lot of work in our long-range frees because we felt we were being fouled outside the scoring range a lot and we felt we could always pick off one or two points in and around the 65 so we developed that."

In front of a 21,467 attend-

ance, the teams went into the Hogan Stand tunnel level pegging, 0-8 apiece, after Orla Cronin had sent over the last two points of the half.

"I was getting worried at that stage and those two points were key because we were going in that more relaxed at half-time," said Murray.

Kilkenny had looked keener in general play for most of the half but the margin was never more than two points and Cork bettered them in shooting efficiency, registering two wides to four.

"We missed too many chances," said Ann Downey. "We had too many balls that fell into the goalkeeper's hand. We missed a few frees and drove a few wides that we shouldn't have."

"It's not all down to a referee, it's down to the game management when the girls get onto the pitch and on big days it's hard to expect them to hurl the whole 60 minutes and use their brain."

"At times in the heat of battle you do things that you wouldn't normally do. But

overall I thought our girls were magnificent. Their hooking, blocking and work-rate. Probably just the finish let us down."

Cork were handed a penalty in the eighth minute after Cassidy's umpires informed him Amy O'Connor was brought down in the area although footage indicated the call was harsh on Gaule whose momentum took her into the Cork forward.

Murray blasted the ball over the bar and was in a role reversal at the same Davin Stand goalposts deep into the second half as she stopped Farrell finding the net.

"I didn't see it," Paudie Murray said of his sister and captain's intervention.

"The game has passed me by. Obviously, we were trying to get ourselves set up correctly. I've heard it was a good save. That's what she's there for, really."

A goal would have been out of sync with a game whose narrative was wholly predictable. In light of their habit for such finales, that Cork ended on the right side of it wasn't all

How they lined out

1. A Murray	17. L O'Sullivan
4. P Mackey	13. S Farrell
11. K Power	
3. L Treacy	
15. H Looney	5. L Coppinger
13. S. Farrell	14. M Quilty
7. C Sigerson	10. JA Malone
6. G O'Connor	9. A Thompson
12. D Gaule	9. M Farrell
8. J White	11. O Cronin
2. C Dormer	18. J Clifford
12. O Cotter	10. A O'Connor
5. C Phelan	4. G Walsh
6. A Dalton	
13. K Mackey	20. L Collins
7. D Tobin	3. C Foley
1. E Kavanagh	

IT MATTERED

The free awarded to Orla Cotter at the end, one which seemed to puzzle her as much as anybody else. Referee Eamon Cassidy infuriated the Kilkenny sideline with the call. It was one of several borderline calls.

CAN'T IGNORE

The refereeing. If this doesn't prompt a change to how the game is judged then nothing ever will. Cork and Kilkenny have outgrown the game. "Sometimes you'd like the game to be a bit more free-flowing, that would only do wonders for the game," said Gemma O'Connor. "I think he (the referee) did stop-start it a bit too much, but look, we're on the better end of it, I can't complain too much."

GOOD DAY

No officiating can overshadow another day when Cork were far more clinical than the Cats. Kilkenny manager Ann Downey acknowledged that afterwards and it's something after the fury about the officiating that will remain with them.

BAD DAY

Is camogie in crisis? When players speak openly about the game being more physical despite the game being a non-contact sport, do the powers-that-be realise it is at a crossroads?

SIDELINE SMARTS

At the outset, the Cork forwards gathered in and around the Kilkenny

penalty area where they were followed by their markers. Murray denied his team played a sweeper, keen to point out that they had a defender freed up by Kilkenny's decision to flood the defence. Murray pointed out that the teams knew each other so well that tactics proved easier than usual.

PHYSIO ROOM

There didn't appear to be anybody suffering the ill effects of yesterday's final.

BEST ON SHOW

The marksmanship of Orla Cotter and Denise Gaule was so impressive and yet the latter will be kicking herself that she missed a couple. Julia White and Chloe Sigerson gave sterling shows.

MAN IN THE MIDDLE

Fussy. Pedantic. Overzealous. A lot of criticisms have been aimed at Cassidy since the final whistle but he must be commended at least for giving good advantage at times. However, he had created such a zero tolerance environment that by the end players were lining up to sell him fries and he was buying a lot of them. The penalty call, on the basis on his umpires' judgement, was a bad one too.

NEXT UP?

The 2019 league will be up and running come mid-January. Kilkenny now know beating Cork in the competition as they did this year doesn't count for much in the long run.

John Fogarty

that surprising either.

Scorers for Cork: O. Cotter (0-5, frees); C. Sigerson (0-3, frees); K. Mackey, O. Cronin (0-2 each); A. Murray (pen), A. O'Connor (0-1 each).

Scorers for Kilkenny: D. Gaule (0-10, 7 frees, 2 45s); M. Quilty, J.A. Malone, M. Farrell (0-1 each).

CORK: A. Murray (c); P. Mackey, L. O'Sullivan; L. Treacy, H. Looney, L. Coppinger, C. Sigerson; A. Thompson, G. O'Connor; J. White, O. Cronin, A.

O'Connor; K. Mackey, L. Collins.
Subs for Cork: L. Homan for L. Collins (50); N. McCarthy for A. O'Connor (60-44).

KILKENNY: E. Kavanagh; C. Foley, D. Tobin; A. Dalton; G. Walsh, C. Phelan, J. Clifford, C. Dormer; M. Farrell, D. Gaule, J.A. Malone, M. Quilty, S. Farrell (c); A. Farrell, K. Power.

Sub for Kilkenny: M. Walsh for M. Quilty (33).

Referee: E. Cassidy (Derry).

THE TOP!



JOY AND DESPAIR: Leanne O'Sullivan, Laura Treacy, Aoife Murray and Hannah Looney celebrate Cork's win; (right) Katie Power of Kilkenny is left dejected



DELIGHTED: Dublin players celebrate with the Kathleen Mills Cup after their victory over Kerry

Ploughman: It's fabulous!

SHANE PLOUGHMAN hailed the determination of his squad to come back from the heartbreak of losing last year's Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Premier Junior final and make amends in style against Kerry.

"It's absolutely fabulous," he said. "To come here last year and walk away so hurt, we thought we had enough, came up against a very good Westmeath team.

"We really did promise ourselves we'd dust ourselves off and do whatever we had to do to get back here today."

Ploughman agreed that the 15th minute goal by Aoife Bugler, who had only returned from a cruciate knee ligament injury for the All-Ireland semi-final victory over Offaly, was a critical score.

It was a cracking finish

Dublin 1-12 Kerry 0-6 All-Ireland Jnr Camogie Final

by the full-forward, the result of an astute delivery by Laoise Quinn.

Dublin led by 1-6 to 0-2 at half time and were able to see it out, finishing off with a point from captain Emar Keenan.

DUBLIN: K. Kantoona, E. O'Riordan, N. Gleeson, S. Murphy, E. Barron, D. Johnston, C. Ni Mhaolagáin, H. O'Dea, S. Wyllie 0-2, C. Dawson 0-1, A. Dillon 0-3fs, A. Dooley, A. Walsh, A. Bugler 1-3 (0-2f), L. Quinn 0-2 (0-1f), Subs: L. O'Shea for Dillon (38), E. Twomey for Dooley (56), L. Walsh for Bugler (60+2), E. Keenan 0-1 for Walsh (60+5).

KERRY: A. Fitzgerald, L. Houlahan, N. Leen, M. Costello, A. O'Connor, S. Murphy, E. Harrington, O. Young, P. Duggin 0-5fs, C. Shanahan, L. Collins 0-1, A. Behan, J. Fitzell, J. Horgan, N. Casey, Subs: R. McCarthy for Harrington (41), E. Ryan for O'Connor (41), A. Whelan for Casey (48), K. Buckley for Shanahan (55), J. O'Keefe for Fitzell (59).

BOSSSES SAY RULES NEED TWEAK



OPPOSING bosses Paudie Murray (left) and Ann Downey were united in their view that the rules of Camogie need to be looked at, as a controversial stoppage-time free clinched a 28th O'Duffy Cup for Cork.

Victorious Cork chief Murray said: "I think the way the rules are at the moment makes it impossible for a referee to referee the game.

"Eamon Cassidy is probably one of the top two referees in the country but there is so much in relation to the contact area, what is a free, what isn't a free, that it's next to impossible (to judge). If a player charges with a shoulder, it's just impossible.

"The rules have to change and go more towards the hurling and let

Tony CONSIDINE reports

contact be there. I certainly would think that the majority of players I have spoken to would be in favour of that and I think then you would have more of a flow to your game."

Having seen her team lose a second consecutive final by the slimmest of margins, Downey was dignified in defeat but agreed things must change.

Physical

"Something will have to happen because it is a contact sport and physical game. A few times he had his hand up for advantage and no advantage accrued to us and nothing

came of it. That was a bit disappointing as well," she said.

"It's either an advantage or it isn't and it's up to the referee to call it back and give the free if nothing has come. That happened us two or three times in the second half. But look, we missed too many chances as well.

"We'd too many balls that fell into the goalkeeper's hand. We missed a few frees and drove a few wides that we shouldn't have. It's not all down to a referee, it's game management."



OVERJOYED: Cork players (from left) Sarah Harrington, Kate Wall, and Katie Barry celebrate

Collins makes it third-time lucky

CORK made up for two showpiece losses in a row to finally claim Intermediate glory.

Caitriona Collins shot 1-6 and minor star Saoirse McCarthy four points from play against a Down side who were seven points in arrears when ace forward Sara-Louise Carr was sent-off for a second yellow card in the 50th minute.

Cork's Fiona Neville said: "We've been fighting for this, to get over the line and get up the steps of the Hogan Stand for so long and it's just unbelievable. It's a great feeling."

Parity

Down began brilliantly, with early points from Carr and Saoirse Sands. However, they failed to score in the second

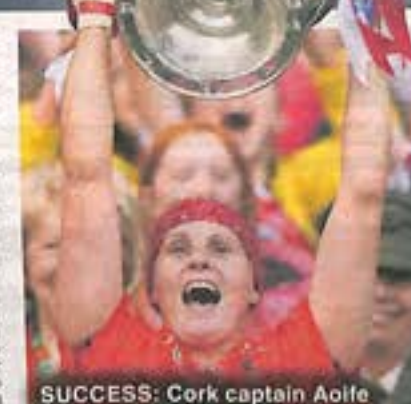
Cork 1-13 Down 0-9 All-Ireland Intermediate Final

quarter and Cork went into the dressing rooms leading by 0-7 to 0-5.

Mallon and Sands restored parity within five minutes of the restart but it was all Cork from there.

CORK: A. Lee, N. Ni Chaoimh, S. Harrington, J. Barry, S. Hutchinson, L. West, L. Callahan, S. Buckley, K. Hickery, L. Hayes, F. Neville, S. McCarthy 0-4, C. Collins 1-6 (0-4fs), M. McCarthy, C. Sugrue 0-2; Sub: C. Healy 0-1 (f) for McCarthy (39), R. O'Callaghan for Sugrue (60), R. Killeen for Callahan (60+2).

DOWN: M. McNally, N. Kelly, A. Savage, C. McGinnigan, B. Savage, D. Magee, C. Rocks, P. Gribben 0-1, D. Savage, S. L. Carr 0-1, N. Mallon 0-4 (2fs), A. McAleenan, S. Sands 0-2, F. Carr 0-1, O. Caldwell, Subs: O. Gribben for Magee (14), C. Gribben for Caldwell (29), C. Cowan for McGinnigan (52), REF: J. Dermody (Westmeath).



SUCCESS: Cork captain Aoife Murray lifts the O'Duffy Cup

nut to crack.

Cork levelled after great play from 2017's heroine, Julia White set Amy O'Connor up for the equaliser with three minutes left.

While the stop-start nature of the game had been frustrating for all involved, the drama ramped up in the final stanza with a huge Sigerson point from inside her own half putting the girls in red ahead.

However, the decision to award the free once again raised eyebrows, with the call to penalise Davina Tobin for barging looking somewhat harsh.

Once again, their opponents

rallied and Gaule's 10th point of the day brought the sides level for the eighth time of the afternoon.

Two minutes stoppage time had just been announced when the game's turning point finally arrived.

Pressure

The ball had found its way to Cotter way out on the left sideline who hit the deck under pressure from a number of Kilkenny defenders.

Kilkenny boss Ann Downey's reaction on the sideline indicated that she thought there was nothing in it but the ref thought otherwise and blew for the free.

Cotter still had plenty to do as she dusted herself down but she made no mistake splitting the posts to clinch Cork's 28th title and leave Kilkenny broken-hearted once again.

CORK: Aoife Murray (0-1 pen); Leanne O'Sullivan, Laura Treacy, Pamela Mackey, Libby Coppinger, Gemma O'Connor, Chloe Sigerson (0-3, 3f); Julia White, Ashling Thompson; Amy O'Connor (Blairh McCarthy 0-2), Orla Cronin (0-2), Orla Cotter (0-6, 64 mins), Orla Cronin (0-2), Orla Cotter (0-6, 64 mins), Orla Cronin (0-2), Orla Cotter (0-6, 64 mins), Orla Cronin (0-2), Orla Cotter (0-6, 64 mins), Orla Cronin (0-2), Orla Cotter (0-6, 64 mins).

KILKENNY: Emma Kavanagh, Colette Doherty, Catherine Foley, Grace Walsh, Claire Phelan, Anne Dalton, Davina Tobin, Anna Farrell, Meghan Farrell (0-1), Julie Ann Malone (0-1), Katie Power, Denise Gaule (0-10, 7f, 2'65), Shelly Farrell, Michelle Quilty (0-1) (Miriam Walsh 34 mins), Edwina Keane.

No classic but great

Double delight as ice-cool Cotter secures victory

A FEW months ago I sat down to talk to Ashling Thompson after she was one of the quarterly winners of the *Evening Echo* Ladies Sports Star awards.

The first surprising factor was her absolute delight at winning the award, as she pointed out that she hasn't received too many individual ones over the years.

That in itself was a surprising factor considering just what a massive and influential player she has been for Cork now for several years.

The second, and in this context more important one, was the absolute determination to try and put back-to-back All-Ireland titles together.

That conversation wasn't long after they had lost the league final to Kilkenny and though there was some time before the All-Ireland series started you could tell she was itching to have another pop off them.

That sentiment was one that was there for all the squad and the way the All-Ireland groups were set out there was likely only going to be one place to gain a bit of revenge for that loss.

Like all good sides, they use that loss to motivate them, in what was an extraordinary game in many ways.

By half-time Cork were so far behind it was embarrassing and they knew it.

But these players have plenty of character, self-belief, and trust in their ways. They knew it wasn't acceptable they way they had played and after half-time their true spirit and skill levels came to the fore.

In the end, they were a little unlucky to lose out by just a point, considering they were nine points down at one stage and looked dead and buried.

Two major positives Cork took from that game into the Munster championship first and then the All-Ireland series.

First of all the magnificent spirit they have and their never-say-die attitude that shone through.

Secondly, it was a warning shot at Kilkenny that, no matter what the score is and at what stage the game is at, the Rebels are never beaten until that final whistle sounds.

Just look at last year's final when have no doubt some Kilkenny fans were starting to plan the celebrations before Gemma O'Connor hit the equalising point and Julia White scored in injury-time to break their hearts.

Of course that loss earlier this year was only in the league and either side was far from their best and that was obvious when the All-Ireland series started.

There can be little argument they are the top two sides in the country and are likely to be for the next few years.

Yesterday was always going to be a battle



Orla Cotter nails a free yesterday.

Picture: Piaras Ó Midheach/Sportsfile



Match analysis

Rory Noonan

and a game impossible to call beforehand.

It was no great surprise that there was only a point in it again and at this stage don't be surprised if the same two are back again next September for the fourth year in-a-row.

Yesterday's game was far from a classic and one that won't live long in the memories of most. But finals are for winning and that's all that matters.

The history books will show Cork are champions and it was the cool head of Orla Cotter that ensured the O'Duffy Cup stays in the Rebel county for another year.

When asked afterwards about what was running through her mind when taking the free she put it simply: "Please go over the bar."

"That's all I could think really, just please go over the bar and thankfully it did. It's fantastic to win two-in-a-row. There was nothing in it last year and it was the same thing, just a puck of a ball and it was the same again this year."

"No doubt it was absolute heartbreak for Kilkenny but it was brilliant for us as we knew that this was going to be a battle and it would come down to the wire."

"It's a great day for Cork camogie to win the senior and intermediate titles and we will enjoy the celebrations now. Add in the minor win as well and it has been a great year for the county and hopefully one we can build on going forward."

"But for now we will enjoy the few days and it's just a brilliant feeling to have retained the cup," concluded Orla.

And that's a feeling that they can now savour for the next year as winning an All-Ireland is never an easy task and for Paudie Murray to win two in the one day is some achievement as a manager.

Great credit must be given to him and his backroom team for all their work, not just this year, but over the last number of years for the strides he has made with the senior and intermediate sides.

Cork have come a long way under his management and now the difficult bit is to keep it going.

So yes the game was far from a classic, but the cup will be on Leaside tonight and in finals winning is all that matters and for the 28th time, the Rebels have won the senior title.



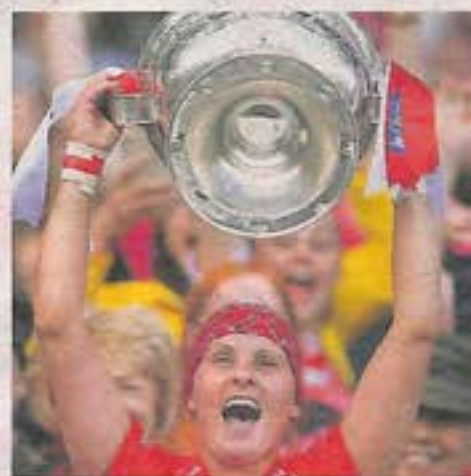
Gemma O'Connor of Cork, right, celebrates with team mates after they beat Kilkenny in yesterday's Senior Camogie Championship final.

Picture: Piaras Ó Midheach/Sportsfile



Julia White and Colette Dormer of Kilkenny do battle.

Picture: INPHO/Bryan Keane



Cork captain Aoife Murray lifts the O'Duffy Cup.

Picture: Piaras Ó Midheach/Sportsfile

Story of the game

KEY SCORES: The two Orlas, Cotter and Cronin, hit vital scores for Cork. Cronin hit two excellent points just before the break to bring Cork back on level terms.

Cotter's pointed free a minute into injury time, as she held her nerve to edge the Rebels back in front, was one of the most vital frees she will ever hit for Cork.

REF WATCH: So often we crib about refs, and again yesterday the official did nothing to help the game. He was constantly blowing for frees, penalising any little tip or tap. He ruined the game, never allowing it to flow or develop, and 34 frees over the hour was way too many.

ENTERTAINMENT

VALUE: Save for the final minutes, which were nail-biting as both sides pushed for victory, the game was not a classic.

Kilkenny turned very defensive, as they have done so often in the past, and at times we had three Cork defenders coming to the ball with time to spare.

Still, job done for Cork.

result for Rebels



Cork manager Paudie Murray after the game. Picture: Inpho

Murray a picture of happiness after win

MATCH REACTION

■ Mary Newman

SPORTING a nice cut over the right eye following an accidental collision with a cameraman snapping his celebrations at the final whistle, Cork manager Paudie Murray was beaming from ear to ear and delighted that his side had retained their title.

"I'm delighted that we got over the line. It was tough, but our girls showed huge character and played with huge intensity," he said.

"We knew Kilkenny would come at us and we were ready and that is down to all the hard work the lads have put in behind the scenes.

"There is huge credit due to our backroom team as well — they spend hours and hours working to get it right."

Murray was happy with the way Cork responded when Kilkenny came at them, particularly in the second half when Kilkenny edged ahead.

"I suppose we have been here before and have a lot of experience and when they took the lead on 53 minutes we didn't panic — we stuck to our task and ground out a win and I'm delighted for each and every one of the players.

"They worked so hard for this win and huge credit must go to them for the character they showed again today."

Mentioning character and nerve, Murray was asked about the last free, one minute into injury time, from the long-serving Orla Cotter.

"Yes it was certainly a pressure free, but in fairness to Orla, up to today's game she has only missed one, I think, all year, and whilst she did miss a long-range one a bit earlier, she showed huge calm and skill to strike the crucial one straight between the posts."

Murray initially attempted to play down the huge pride he felt at seeing his sister Aoife captain Cork to All-Ireland glory.

"Ah sure she is only another player on our panel... but yes, of course, I'm delighted, especially for my parents."

"It's a huge and special day for them."

"I know they are very proud of her," he said.

"They both deserve huge credit for everything they have done for us all and it's great that they are both here today in Croke Park with us," he added.

Rebels abú! The jubilant Cork team with the O'Duffy Cup at Croke Park yesterday.

Picture: INPHO/James Crombie

Cork	0-14
Kilkenny	0-13

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

CORK retained their All-Ireland title and made it four victories in five seasons thanks to late scores from Orla Cotter and Chloe Sigerson after another hard-hitting battle with their great rivals at Croke Park.

Before the game even started, the gauntlet was thrown down that this one was not going to be won easily.

There was a comical situation of a huge group of Kilkenny players jostling and surrounding the Cork forwards before the ball was thrown in. At one stage there were at least eight players standing in front of the Kilkenny keeper toe-to-toe before the linesman finally sorted it out and got them into formation.

It was obvious then that this Liberty Insurance Senior final was going to be in-your-face stuff.

When the sides finally settled down Kilkenny continued to be hugely defensive as they dropped back players in an effort to stop the Cork attack and prevent any kind of a running game.

Cork dominated the early stages despite Michelle Quilty opening the scoring, giving Kilkenny an early lead, and Sigerson and Cotter edged Cork in front, converting two frees.

Cork were denied a certain goal when Linda Collins was foiled en route to goal. Aoife Murray pointed the resulting penalty and when Cotter pointed a long-range effort, Cork were three clear.

With an over-fussy referee awarding frees for minor indiscretions, the game was stop-go. Denise Gaule converted a free before Aoife Murray denied Kilkenny at the expense of a 45, which Gaule duly converted, and with Kilkenny enjoying their best spell, they levelled with a Julie Ann Malone point.

An unsporting incident saw Cork keeper Murray go down injured and Katie Power threw away her hurley, receiving a yellow card for her trouble. Cork stretched it to two again with Sigerson and Katriona Mackey pointing, but Gaule pushed Kilkenny two in front with three pointed frees and one from play.

The fourth was a beauty from her own half of the field but it was Cork who finished the half stronger with two excellent Orla Cronin points and it was level pegging 0-8 each at the break.

The second half was tight. On four occasions the sides were level and at times the game went dead due to the sheer intensity on display. Every puck counted, every free was vital, and every ball so important.

Cork hit the front with a Mackey point and it was level on four occasions throughout the next half-hour as both sides dug deep.

Gaule again levelled it from a free as the game was spoiled with constant stoppages with free after free.

Cotter levelled and pushed Cork back into the lead. Meaghan Farrell and Gaule tied the game up again before Gaule converted a 45 after Murray denied Power with a brilliant save on 51 minutes.

As Kilkenny threw everything at them, the Cork defence stood firm and was superb as the Cats pushed to stretch their lead. The final three minutes plus four of injury time were hectic. Amy O'Connor tied it up with three minutes remaining and, winning a free, Sigerson landed a huge effort between the posts to give Cork the lead.

Soon after Gaule had it all-square again. With two minutes of injury time announced, a draw looked on the cards but the champions were not giving up their title easily.

As they did last year, they once

again struck late. Tearing downfield, Cotter won a free and confidently standing over what was possibly the most important free she has ever taken, the Cork stalwart sent it sailing towards Hill 16 to roars from the huge Cork crowd in attendance.

With one hand now on the O'Duffy Cup, Cork just needed to hold their composure. This they did to the full-time whistle, as defending one last Kilkenny attack, they retained their title by the narrowest of margins.

A classic it certainly was not, and the performance of referee Eamon Cassidy was frustrating throughout as he blew for every little niggles and held the game up constantly — but that won't worry Cork, who are champions for the 28th time.

Scorers for Cork: O Cotter 0-51, C Sigerson 0-31, K Mackey, O Cronin 0-2 each, A Murray (pen), A O'Connor 0-1 each.

Kilkenny: D Gaule 0-10 (0-7 f, 0-2 45), M Quilty, J A Malone, M Farrell 0-1 each.

CORK: A Murray, L O'Sullivan, P Mackey, L Treacy, H Looney, L Coppinger, C Sigerson, G O'Connor, A Thompson, K Mackey, O Cronin, O Cotter, L Collins, J White, A O'Connor.

Subs: L Homan for Collins (51), N McCarthy for A O'Connor (64).

KILKENNY: E Kavanagh, C Dormer, C Fley, G Walsh, C Phelan, A Dalton, D Tobin, D Gaule, M Farrell, J A Malone, M Quilty, A Farrell, S Farrell, K Power, E Keane.

Sub: M Walsh for Quilty (35).

Referee: E Cassidy (Derry).

Three reasons the Rebels retained their title

The desire to prove themselves

Last year a lot was spoken about Cork's win and that they were lucky. Yesterday they went out and were determined to make it back to back titles and cement their status as the top team in Ireland. The hunger to win was evident as the game came down the home straight with players such as Gemma O'Connor, Orla Cotter, Katriona and Pamela Mackey and captain Aoife Murray driving them on.

Kilkenny's approach:

Again Kilkenny played a hugely defensive game and it was ideal for Cork. They tried to blot out the Cork attack but it suited Cork, who had the luxury of extra defenders who used the ball superbly. Gemma O'Connor was hugely effective.

Cork's defence was superb

When Kilkenny did come at them the Cork

defence was magnificent and played as a unit all through, their positioning and reading of the game as they turned defence into attack numerous times was superb.

There were little shots for goals but the two that did happen were superbly dealt with by Aoife Murray. She stopped a Kilkenny attack 15 minutes in as she turned the ball out for a 45 and in the second half she denied Katie Power at a crucial time with nine minutes remaining.



Cotter delivers under pressure to seal late triumph for Cork

St Catherine's player's late free earns Rebels the trophy for the second year in a row

Champions make the big plays at the most important moments to deny Kilkenny again

Cork 0-14
Kilkenny 0-13

For the second year in a row, Cork broke Kilkenny's hearts with an injury-time winner to claim their 28th Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Senior Camogie title.

This time, it was Orla Cotter who delivered the rapier thrust with a magnificent finish from a pressure-laden 60 metre free in the 61st minute in front of an attendance of 21,467 – the highest since 2004.

The St Catherine's player had won the free herself after two sublime pick-ups and swivels, though Kilkenny were unhappy at the award.

There was still much to do, particularly as Cotter had missed what was for her, a very easy opportunity not too long earlier but the 30-year-old was unerring when it counted most, to ensure her seventh All-Ireland, just months after getting

married.

The win also moved Brieghe Corkery level with her long-time colleague Rena Buckley as the most garlanded player in Gaelic games history with 18 All-Ireland senior medals between Camogie and ladies football, although the Cloughduv player, who returned to the squad after giving birth to a baby boy last March, did not see any game time.

Double

This also meant that the senior/intermediate double was achieved for the first time since 2013, with Paudie Murray emulating Galway's Tony Ward as manager of both the victorious sides. Wexford's JJ Doyle had achieved the feat with Wexford two years earlier.

You would have to feel for Kilkenny, who gave so much and seemed to have timed their run to perfection when hitting the front for only the second time in the game in the 52nd minute.

But for the second year in suc-

cession, they were denied in the cruellest circumstances, as Cork made the big plays at the most important moments.

This was a game that had everything and even if 18 of the scores were from placed balls this was an intriguing affair nonetheless that had a pinch of everything.

It was always going to be interesting from a tactical viewpoint and space was at a premium for attackers, with both defensive units buttressed by supplementary personnel and the middle third swamped.

It was very physical, there

“Kilkenny were again denied in the cruellest circumstances

were some magnificent moments of bravery, skill, scoring and defending, and a small hint of controversy too.

Kilkenny will have regrets. They had so much possession and wasted chances but Cork's shooting wasn't flawless either and the pressure on the shooter incredible.

There were fantastic performers all over the pitch. Chloe Sigerson, Pamela Mackey and Cotter excelled for Cork. Grace Walsh, Meighan Farrell and Denise Gaule for Kilkenny.

Anne Dalton shone like a beacon with no end to her energy as she constantly drove her side forward.

Winning captain Aoife Murray made three big saves, one a fantastic double effort though Kilkenny felt they should have had a penalty from that chain of events in the 52nd minute, though Gaule edged the Cats in front from the resultant 45.

Murray also pointed a penalty, though she would have been disappointed by that having travelled the length of the field.

Strange decision

It was the ninth minute and there was a lot of time remaining but that award was a strange one, with Denise Gaule's momentum taking her into Amy O'Connor, although she wasn't looking at her and the Cork forward had actually run the sliotar out of play.

It was all part of the drama in an encounter that ebbed and flowed and had the supporters on the edge of their seats throughout.

The game began with the unusual sight of four Cork attackers buzzing around Kilkenny's small parallelogram – why the officials decreed that they should remove themselves to a more orthodox formation was baffling.

Kilkenny hit the opening point through Michelle Quilty but it was Cork with the wind in

their sails and they soon led by two, Sigerson, Murray and Cotter (two frees) all raising white flags from their respective placed balls.

The challengers settled though and a 19th minute point by Julie Ann Malone brought the teams level, Murray having made her first smart stop from the always outnumbered Katie Power from which Gaule landed the resultant 45 earlier.

Sigerson and Katrina Mackey opened up a two-point gap in favour of Cork once more but Gaule hit a purple patch with four points, including a fantastic score from a 66m free, followed by a better one from play from a similar position and suddenly Kilkenny were two clear.

Response

Significantly though, Cork responded, last year's player of the match Orla Cronin coming up with two points to send the teams in on 0-8 apiece at the change of ends.

Paudie Murray's charges carried on that momentum into the second half and led by two by the three-quarter mark, Katrina Mackey finishing coolly after a good run and after Gaule equalised from a free, Cotter landing two frees of her own – one from 20m and one from 65.

But back came Kilkenny. Meighan Farrell inspired her side with a stunning point on the run in the 48th minute.

Julia White of Cork is tackled by Kilkenny's Shelly Farrell during yesterday's All-Ireland camogie final at Croke Park. PHOTOGRAPH: LASZLO BECZONPHOTO

Gaule found the target from two placed balls and the Ann Downey's crew had their noses in front.

Back and forth, this pulsating affair continued to sway. Amy O'Connor and Sigerson, from a mammoth free, slightly to the right of the centre of the field, restored Cork's advantage in a matter of seconds, but Gaule made it all square again in the 59th minute when Eamon Cassidy did well to spot a jersey pull away from the play.

A minimum of two minutes of added time were announced – around four and change were played – but the defining moment came in the first of them.

There was no way back for Kilkenny this time. Cork had prevailed once more.

CORK: A Murray (0-1, pen), L O'Sullivan, P Mackey, L Treacy, H Looney, L Coppinger, C Sigerson (0-3, three frees), G O'Connor, A Thompson, K Mackey (0-2), O Cronin (0-2), O Cotter (0-5, five frees), J Collins, J White, A O'Connor (0-1), Subst: L Horan for Collins (51 mins), N McCarthy for A O'Connor (80+4).
KILKENNY: E Kavanagh, C Dorner, C Flay, G Walsh, C Phelan, A Dalton, D Tobin, D Gaule (0-10, seven frees, two 45s), M Farrell (0-1), J A Malone (0-1), M Quilty (0-1), A Farrell, S Farrell, K Power, E Keane, Subst: M Walsh for Quilty (55 mins).
Referee: E Cassidy (Downy).

IT'S O'DUFFY' AT

MATCH ANALYSIS

GALWAY

(IRISH CRYSTAL)

PLAYER of the MATCH

ORLA COTTER
(CORK)

COTTER was superb from the dead-ball all game and showed nerves of steel to split the posts from out wide in stoppage time.



YOU CAN QUOTE ME ON THAT

"I THOUGHT it was a harsh enough free as you saw from my reaction on the line. I thought the free against Davina as well, there was two hard calls on us. Eamon will have to look at his own performance and judge himself, I'm not going to give out about him. It is what it is. It's not going to be able to change the result, we have to be able to take it on the chin and move on."

Kilkenny boss Ann Downey

DUEL of the GAME

THE ENTIRE All-Ireland final proved to be a duel of the free-takers — with Orla Cotter and Chloe Sigerson both shining as they shared duties for Cork, while Denise Gaule can count herself really unfortunate to hit 0-10 and still end up on the losing side.

TURNING POINT

IN A game as nip and tuck as this, it was hard to see where the turning point was coming from.

Unfortunately, it eventually turned on Eamon Cassidy's (pictured) decision to award a free for what looked an innocuous challenge on Orla Cotter in stoppage time.

SCORE of the GAME

WHILE Orla Cotter's winning free from out wide will get the headlines this morning, the pick of the bunch was Denise Gaule's huge point from play in the 30th minute.

Picked out by Anne Dalton 70 metres from goal, the Kilkenny forward nailed a long-distance point that displayed her class.

MATCH STATS

CORK	KILKENNY
(0) 0	GOALS 0 (0)
(8) 14	POINTS 13 (8)
(2) 4	WIDES 8 (4)
(8) 15	FREES 11 (4)
3	YELLOW CARDS 2
0	RED CARDS 0
REF: E CASSIDY (DERRY) ATT: 21,467	



CORK 0-14
KILKENNY 0-13

All-Ireland Senior Camogie final

CORK cemented their position as the team of the age as they retained their All-Ireland title against Kilkenny by the slimmest of margins for the second year running.

But the victory wasn't without its controversy, as a stoppage-time point by Orla Cotter from what many felt to be a very soft free proved the decisive score.

The sides were meeting in the decider for the third consecutive year after the Rebelettes had taken the O'Duffy Cup back from the Cats last season.

And there was a real sense that there was more at stake than 'only' the 2018 crown as the sides began the pre-match parade with the Game of Thrones theme tune booming around Headquarters.

Both sides showed changes from the teams named on Friday with the Rebelettes' Leanne O'Sullivan and Linda Collins in for Niamh O'Callaghan and Niamh McCarthy while Edwina Keane getting the nod ahead of Miriam Walsh for the Cats.

There's been little between the sides in recent years and that closeness seemed to go to the next level before throw in as 11 players descended into the Kilkenny box for some pushing and shoving that took the ref a couple of minutes to calm down.

Seconds

When the throw in finally came, it was Kilkenny that were first to settle with Michelle Quilty opening the scoring within the first 20 seconds.

Yet, that simply set the tone for the see-saw nature of the contest as frees from Chloe Sigerson and Cotter in quick succession put Cork in front on six minutes.

The first major drama of the day quickly followed as Cork's Amy O'Connor's surging run towards the Kilkenny goal was stopped in its tracks by a superb hook from Anne Dalton.

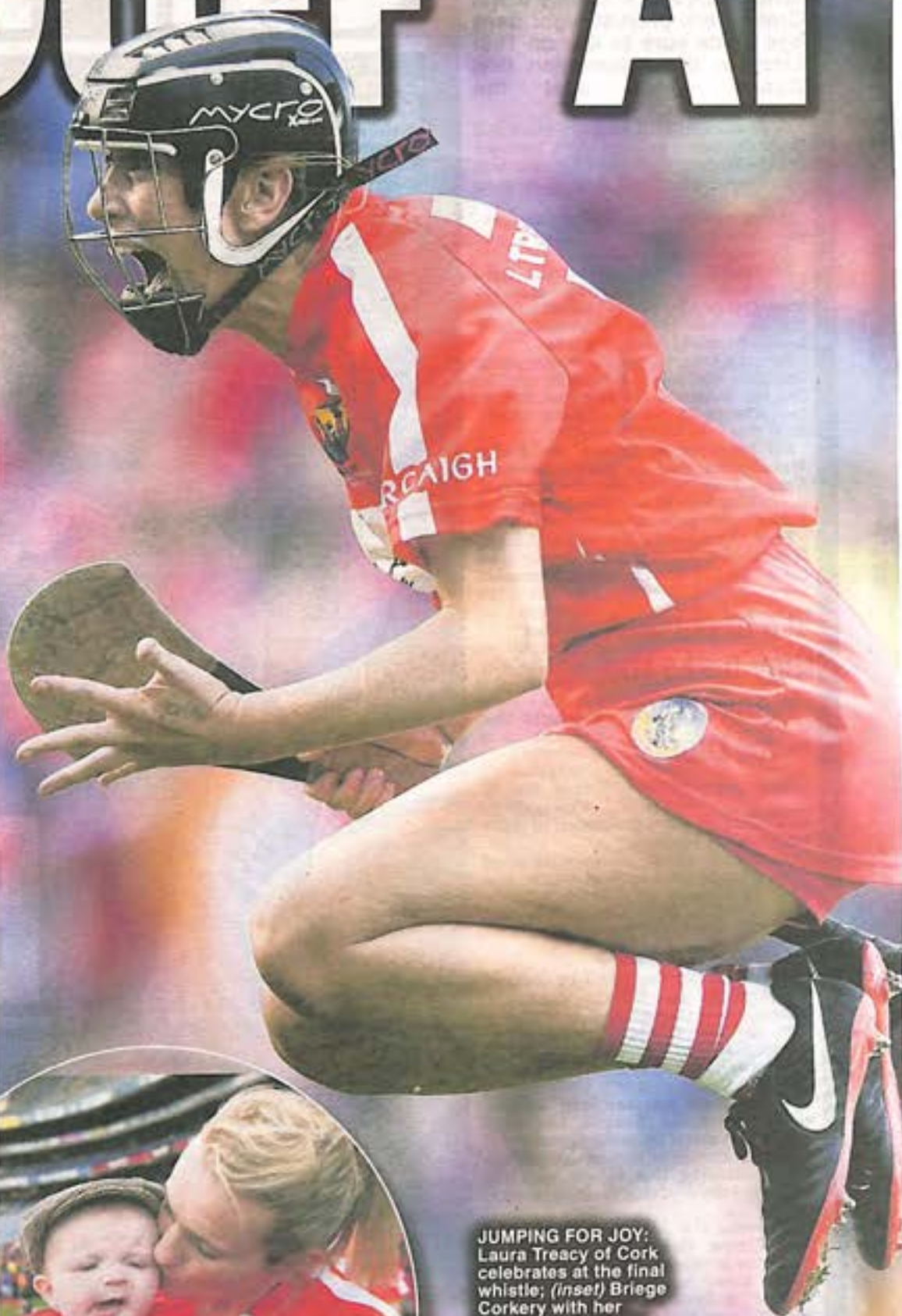
With Denise Gaule tracking back, the sudden stop seemed to catch her by surprise as she collided with Dalton but the clash looked accidental.

Yet, while O'Connor was receiving treatment, referee Eamon Cassidy consulted with his umpires and decided the challenge was worthy of a penalty — to the amazement of the Kilkenny bench.

Their ire was dimmed somewhat when Cork keeper Aoife Murray blazed the sliotar over the bar to extend their advantage to two points rather than four.

With frees in plentiful supply, Cotter and Gaule exchanged points before the pendulum swung back to the Cats with a further Gaule 45 and a well worked point from Julie Ann Malone bringing the sides level on the 18-minute mark.

The constant stop-start nature of the game meant that it was



JUMPING FOR JOY: Laura Treacy of Cork celebrates at the final whistle; (inset) Briege Corkery with her five-month-old son Tadhg Scannell



Cotter ensures Cork retain title

difficult for much free-flowing play to break out, meaning the crowd had to rely on some super long range dead balls from Sigerson and Gaule for entertainment.

A Katrina Mackey point had proved to be Cork's only score from play as half time approached but just as another couple of huge Gaule points had put Kilkenny in front for the first time since the third minute, the Rebelettes came roaring back with two stoppage-time scores from Orla Cronin to leave the sides all square at 0-8

each at the break.

The second half continued in similar fashion with the free takers to the fore.

Mackey had pushed Cork in front on 32 minutes but that was the last point from play for 15 minutes as Gaule and Cotter kept the scoreboard ticking over.

Occasion

While Cork edged ahead occasion, the gap never stretched beyond two and points from Megan Farrell and Gaule tied the game once again at 0-11 apiece as

it entered the final 10.

It was looking as if a goal would win it — and it was Kilkenny who came closest to that breakthrough.

Anna Farrell lost her hurl as she bore down but booted the sliotar goalwards only to find Murray standing tall for the initial shot and the rebound.

Gaule pointed the resultant 45 to edge Kilkenny ahead as momentum seemed to shift to the Cats with the clock running down but, as last year's final proved, this Cork team are a seriously tough

Heart-stopping and controversial, but Cork bask in glow of victory

A stop-start final and a heart-stopping finale? Forgive the assonance, but the highlights in yesterday's All-Ireland senior camogie final were in short supply. There were 21,467 in attendance, the biggest crowd since 2004, and they had to wait for thrills: the excitement, and the winning score, came in added time, just as they did last year.

Cork beat Kilkenny by the bare minimum, 0-14 to 0-13, just as they did last year.

Julia White's late match-winning of 2017 was emulated by Orla Cotter yesterday, the St Catherine's player showing the requisite ice in the veins to nail a difficult free from the sideline. It was a decision that enraged the Kilkenny management, and of a piece with referee Eamon Cassidy's handling of the match.

This was an All-Ireland senior final marred by finicky officiating at the best of times: when one of the winning players makes that point about the referee, as happened after the game, you know it's an issue.

Perhaps said referee was on edge — few pre-match pleasantries are scrutinised as closely as those between these sides, after all. A couple of years

ago we had a bout of aggressive prodding between Cork and Kilkenny before the game even began, with many applauding the ironists on both teams for carrying on during the "give respect, get respect" handshake.

Consequently, since then we pick over every formality between the teams but are usually disappointed. Hopes were raised before the actual throw-in itself yesterday as there was a slight delay to the proceedings while both sides grouped together in opposite sides of the field — duelling

huddles? A huddle-off? — before taking up positions.

Cork had Laura Treacy sweeping, and Gemma O'Connor further upfield than usual. Kilkenny rotated their free player — Grace Walsh at puck outs — but neither side was able to establish dominance. Kilkenny cut off Cork's attacks with extra bodies in the half-back line; Cork cut off the supply to the Kilkenny inside line.

On the quarter hour it was 0-4 to 0-3, all the scores but one coming from placed balls. Cork had had a sniff of goal in the form of a seventh-minute penalty, and clearly brought goalkeeper Aoife Murray the length of the field to find the net, but the captain blasted the ball over the bar.

Eamon Cassidy booked Katie Power on 20 minutes after tangling with Aoife Murray; the Cork captain was treated by the medics after that but from Cassidy's hand gestures suggested it was for flinging Murray's hurley away. Denise Gaule hit a towering lead point from a free on the halfway line and added a better on one the puck out — Orla Cronin narrowed the gap to the minimum and then levelled with Cork's last attack, 0-8 apiece at the half. The game didn't catch fire on the resumption either, but



for much of that second half Kilkenny looked to have the advantage.

Their defenders looked sharper to the ball, frequently beating their opponents to long, cross field deliveries, while Anne Dalton at centre-back processed a world of ball and ensured Cork got no sight of goal.

For all that, Cork were two up on 45 minutes thanks to Orla Cotter's free-taking; Gaule levelled with her own frees entering the final minutes, when the game was decided. Aoife Murray saved a Shelly Farrell effort for a 45 which Gaule converted; Chloe

Sigerson hit a long-range free to nudge Cork ahead; and Gaule, again, levelled the game.

Then we had Cotter's match-winner.

In truth, the standard was poor in yesterday's game, and not all of that was down to the tactics. It could hardly be put down to inexperience either: with two teams accustomed to the biggest stage, seeing pick-ups fluffed so regularly was a surprise.

Also somewhat surprising was the generosity of each manager to the opposing side,

given previous skirmishes between the two.

Kilkenny boss Ann Downey didn't agree with the match-winning free awarded to Cork late on, but she also pointed to the two sides' approach to nullifying each other: "That's the nature of the game that both of us are playing. You have to look at the strengths of both teams — ours against theirs and try to stop them playing their game as they try to stop us playing ours."

"For the last three years, really, there has been nothing between us, a point in every game we've played. The standard of camogie has improved



Michael Moynihan

Croke Park

Famous day for Murray family while Corkery

Famous day for Cork, Cloughdun and Corkery

Yesterday ended in absolute joy for manager Paudie Murray after Cork cemented their status as the best teams in this year's senior and intermediate championships. He couldn't have asked for more from his charges.

It was a huge day for the Murray household as he was joined in management by his brothers Damien and Kevin, and of course his sister Aoife who went up the Hogan Steps

Therese O'Callaghan

Comment



to collect the O'Duffy Cup.

There was also the matter of an 18th All-Ireland medal for Aoife's Cloughdun clubmate Brieger Corkery. Although she was confined to a bench role,

having been introduced against Tipperary in the semi-final, she equals her friend Rena Buckley's record.

"It is sweet to do back-to-back titles and to do the double," said Paudie.

"We worked hard on that for the past few weeks. Tactically we got it right, great credit to Niall Collins [performance analyst].

"It is also great for my parents, a reward for all the work they have done for us. They are gone back down the road to Cork happy."

"I had my mind made up at the beginning of the year this was it."

What are the chances of him staying on for three-in-a-row?

A special few weeks for Dublin

Last week it was Stephen Cluxton who raised the Sam Maguire. Yesterday Emer Keenan lifted the Kathleen Mills trophy and next week it will be the turn of their ladies footballers who will defend their title against Cork.

Keenan didn't start in yes-

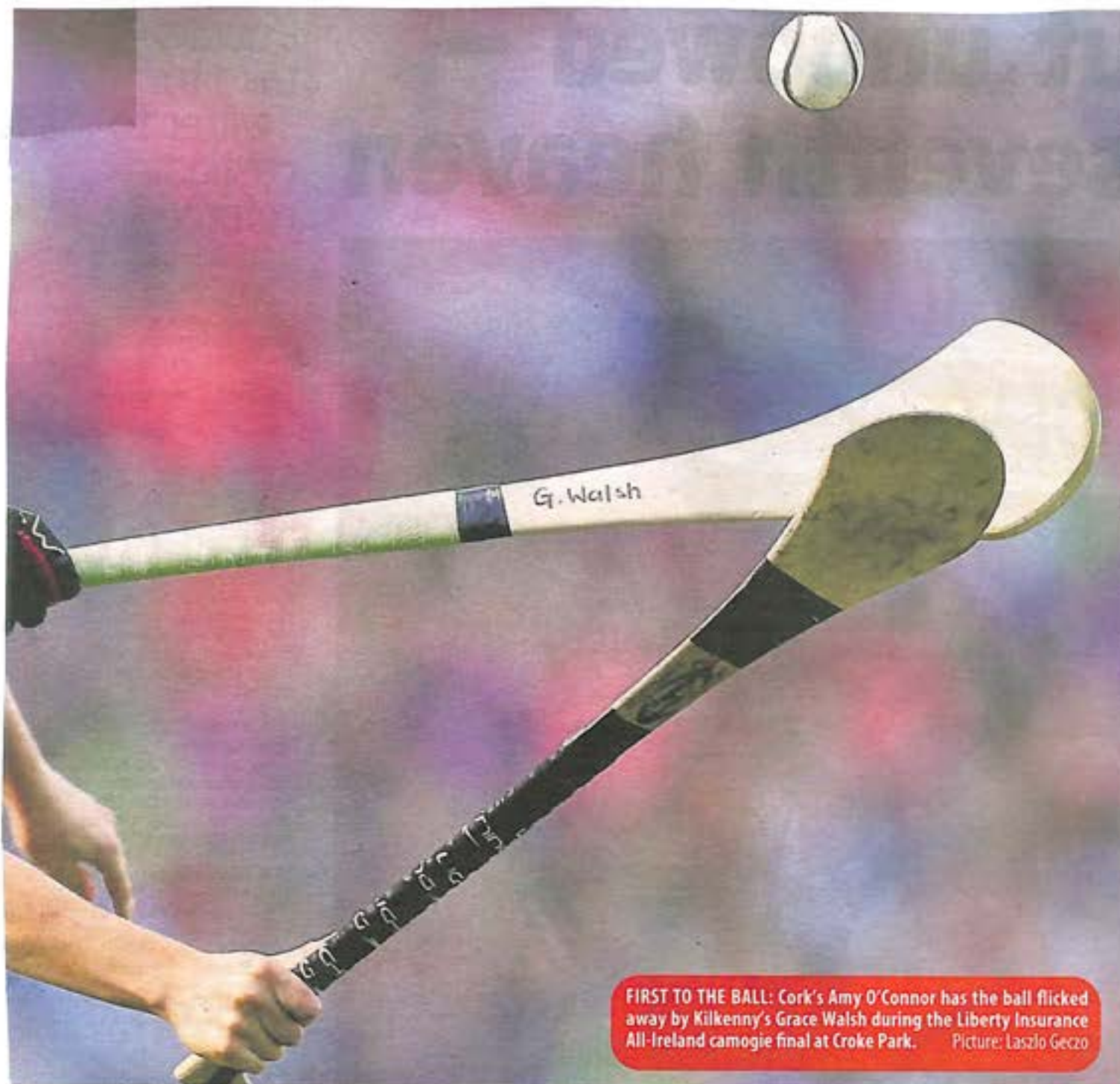
terday's Premier Junior final because of a cruciate injury she picked up in the Leinster final, but she was happy to play her part from the sideline. The Lucan Sarsfields player was ready when she got the call to come on. Even though it was in stoppage time, she had her say, firing the last point of the match.

The Dublin fairytale continues. Full-forward Aoife Bugler suffered a similar injury, and only returned last month. She netted the most important goal of the hour.

Keenan said watching was not easy. "Now I know what parents and families and friends go through. Your heart is in your mouth the whole time. It is like time goes backwards." Talking of times past, Ann Colgan was a selector with this victorious side. She was captain of their All Ireland winning senior team in 1984 — the last time Dublin won the title.

Leah Weste says it was well worth the wait

Cork finished second best in



FIRST TO THE BALL: Cork's Amy O'Connor has the ball flicked away by Kilkenny's Grace Walsh during the Liberty Insurance All-Ireland camogie final at Croke Park. Picture: Laszlo Geczo

Rebel players hail 'we before me' team attitude

Michael Moynihan

Cork reaction

If it'll be remembered, it'll be remembered for one passage of play. Why not begin with the woman who hit the free that won it?

"I'll take it," said Orla Cotter, who nailed the match-winner.

"Some fella told me it was a controversial free, I didn't mind. I'd take it either way — we could probably have claimed a few more controversial frees during the day.

"Look, we'll take it, it went over the bar. I missed an easier one earlier. I knew there was only a minute or so left. But I was just praying it went over, and it did.

"Myself and Chloe [Sigerson] put plenty of time in before training most days, practising our frees, and she hit some lovely ones today as well. It's fantastic."

Cotter was joined by Gemma O'Connor, who'd put in another huge shift for the champions.

"I don't know why we do it to ourselves, a point in it... at half-time the message was to keep our composure.

"Beforehand you're trying to get yourself riled up, to get into the right frame of mind, the fighting attitude — then at half-time it's all about 'this is where we are now and we need to be composed'. It's no time to lose your head.

"We knew it'd be a tight game from start to finish. The championship has been quite open but we knew the final would be so defensive, we don't give each other an inch. I don't know what way it is to look at, sometimes you'd wish the play would open up a small bit, but you just want to win at all costs, that's the bottom line."

Was this year more satisfying than last season?

"Yeah, last year was magic," said O'Connor. "I think it's a sign of a great team to be able to replicate it when the pressure is on — when it's almost easy to throw your hat at it and give in. There's nothing left in the tank and you're trying to stay as composed as you can. It paid off for us today.

"There's no room out there for hotheads. Sometimes I get a bit hotheaded but we've learned down through the

years. We've worked on this the last few years, to keep composed, to keep going, that at the right time the right player will step up. And for us today it was Orla, who scored a great point."

Cotter herself was keen to share the credit: "For me it was every player, really. Aoife Murray saved a goal just a couple of minutes beforehand, someone else got a hook or a block in.

"It was a team performance, and we've been working on that with management. It's the 'we before the me', and we've been working on that even last year — it doesn't matter who scores, who saves, we all defend and attack together.

"That's what stood to us towards the end. It's heart-breaking for Kilkenny, two years in a row, and you have to acknowledge that as well. They're a fantastic team and it could have gone any way towards the end."

A point in two All-Ireland finals. Why is it so hard to separate the two sides?

"I don't know," said Cotter. "We meet each other quite often now and they've gotten the better of us in two league finals now. I think we'll take the win in the championship any time. The rivalry is there between Cork and Kilkenny for years."

O'Connor attributed the narrow margins in part to the new tactics in camogie.

"Starting out it was 15 on 15, you minded your own patch, your own player, and you capitalised on what happened next. Now it's so tactical... I wouldn't say it's a negative thing, Kilkenny are at it, the lads footballers are at it, the hurlers are at it, it's about out-smarting your opponent.

"But at the end of the day it's also about the player on the ball, the decision-maker, and the players making the run to create space, running to the corner flag so the ball can be hit into space.

"It's about smart people making smart decisions. This game is all about decision making.

"You asked why it's so tight between Cork and Kilkenny — I think it's because we're so similar, the teams are physical, skilful, the panels show extreme skill, talent and workrate. That's why there's so little between us."

but for us today, our standard was probably only at 80%. We had to get it up to 100% to get over the line.

"All I can do is congratulate Cork. Briege Corkery winning her 18th medal — it's a great testament to them that they can lose Rena Buckley from last year and still come back and win it again.

"They are a great side with great players but for us, we'll have to go to a new level to try and beat them."

Cork manager Paudie Murray had to survive a savage tackle from a cameraman to speak to the media afterwards, and he was also gener-

ous to his opponents.

"Kilkenny and ourselves have advanced the game dramatically over the last four or five years. I think both counties should be congratulated for that," he said.

"I came into the camogie not to continue it the way it was; I came in to train the players like the hurlers and the footballers in our county and we pride ourselves on that.

"We want to be the best prepared team and that's the way things are going at the moment and Kilkenny would be the same way. Girls are fitter, they're stronger, their skill levels are better, they're being

prepared better from a mental and a tactical point of view."

Murray was sounding a slightly defensive note on the need for Cork and Kilkenny to be congratulated, one that's understandable in view of the poverty of the spectacle. But as his centre-back pointed out, tactical arm-wrestling isn't just the preserve of camogie — Gemma O'Connor simply stated that the same happens in hurling and (male) football.

Could one suggest an element of sexism, even, in presuming that camogie would stay a naive matter of open, fifteen-on-fifteen shoot-outs? Would that explain the sur-

prise at the relatively dour encounter yesterday?

Perhaps, though Cork will hardly be concerned by that this morning. Back to back All-Ireland titles, each won by a point, will warm Monday mornings all over Leaside.

Some of the more experienced Cork players were taking in their surroundings on the field long after the final whistle yesterday, and it was easy to conclude that for a few it was goodbye rather than au revoir.

For them, as the poet said, the place for a lifetime glows with noon. And for others it glows because of them.

joins Buckley in record books

the last two All Ireland intermediate finals. Sport can be cruel, and you wouldn't blame anyone for walking away. Leah Weste, from the Ballincollig club and who teaches in Crosshaven Girls NS, thought about it but decided to give it another shot.

"I'm 11 years waiting. The intermediates last won the All Ireland in 2006. I came on to the team the following year. We lost three in a row in '07, '08 and '09.

"The heartbreak has always been with me. I have a senior

medal, but this is my first intermediate medal. I always wanted to come back and try and get the one that went away from us.

"At the start of the season I wasn't going to come back after the hurt from last year. It took me a long time. I came back at the end of the league when my head was right. It was only because of management and the girls I gave it another go.

"Thankfully, I did, because I don't think I would ever forgive myself if I walked away."

They journeyed up by bus from Cork yesterday morning.

"The last few years we travelled up the night before, and our heads were not screwed in. We were playing the occasion. Not playing the match.

"We were up at 6am and met at 7.30am. We met Paudie and the seniors in Dublin. It just settled our nerves. We made the right call with that."

Cups going home

The Jack McGrath Cup (Inter-

mediate) presented to Sarah Harrington — Jack, who is a member of the Crosshaven club, was born in Fair Hill on the northside of Cork City. He was educated at North Monastery CBS and played hurling with Glen Rovers.

The Kathleen Mills Cup (Premier Junior) presented to Emer Keenan — Kathleen, a holder of 15 All Ireland senior medals with Dublin, was one of the greatest exponents of the game.



Cork's Hannah Looney, Orla Cotter, Chloe Sigerson, Laura Treacy, Libby Coppinger, Orla Cronin and Gemma O'Connor with the O'Duffy Cup.

Ref comes under fire as Rebelettes secure the two-in-a-row

Controversial free is all that separates sides after another battle of minds and defences

CLIONA FOLEY

CORK 0-14
KILKENNY 0-13

ALL-IRELAND SENIOR CAMOGIE FINAL

ONE point – an Orla Cotter free in the first of two minutes of added time – was all that separated Cork from Kilkenny for the second year in a row to win their 28th All-Ireland senior camogie title.

However, while there was drama and beauty in the way last year's final exploded into life in its dramatic last minutes, yesterday's denouement felt much more like a damp squib, especially as it was decided by a particularly contentious decision.

Cotter hit the deck in a scrum of Kilkenny players as time ebbed away and few were sure why she got a free.

Referee Eamon Cassidy indicated afterwards that her trailing leg had been fouled, but it was a call that left many scratching their heads and Kilkenny furious.

Cotter still had to score the free from long-range and showed all of her lead-

ership and composure to do it, breaking the Cats hearts for a second year in-a-row.

"Some fella told me it was a controversial free, I didn't mind. I'd take it either way and we could probably have claimed a few more controversial frees during the day," she said afterwards.

The losers subsequently had a good long-range chance themselves to equalise when Anne Dalton took a quick free to Claire Phelan, who shot wide from inside her own half.

But, not for the first time when these two clashed in Croke Park, it was the Rebels who held their nerve better when it mattered most in another suffocating tussle, and some heroic defending from Aisling Thompson and Gemma O'Connor helped them to close it out.

As expected, despite bright dry conditions, this was another arm-wrestle with little flair hurling or open scoring between two sides intent on cancelling each other with crowded defences.

Even before throw-in there was some bizarre mind-games on display. Match officials had to call both sides out of their huddles and before throw-in Cork had all of their forwards huddled, like sheep, in the Kilkenny square, marked tightly by their Cats counterparts.

AT A GLANCE

PLAYER OF THE MATCH ORLA COTTER



With the game in the melting pot, Cotter had the tenacity to drive Cork on. She won and scored the free that ultimately separated the teams at the final whistle.

TALKING POINT

Should the free for Cotter's winning point have been awarded or not? Kilkenny certainly felt it shouldn't have been, and they also queried the 'charge' given against Davina Tobin prior to that which Sigerson pointed.

MAGIC MOMENT

Difficult to find one in a match of such suffocating marking, but Hannah Looney made a brilliant run and lay-off to create a vital equaliser for Orla Cronin just before the half-time break.

REF WATCH

Eamon Cassidy was heavily criticised for blowing too much but the rules on contact in camogie are so strict that, in such tight, defensive tussles it's a hapless task unless more contact is allowed.

Match statistics

Wides

Cork: 4 (2)

Kilkenny: 8 (4)

Frees

Cork: 17 (8)

Kilkenny: 16 (6)

Yellow Cards

Cork: 3 (Thompson 43, O'Connor 54, Cronin 56)

Kilkenny: 1 (Power 20)

Red Cards: 0

Attendance: 21,476.

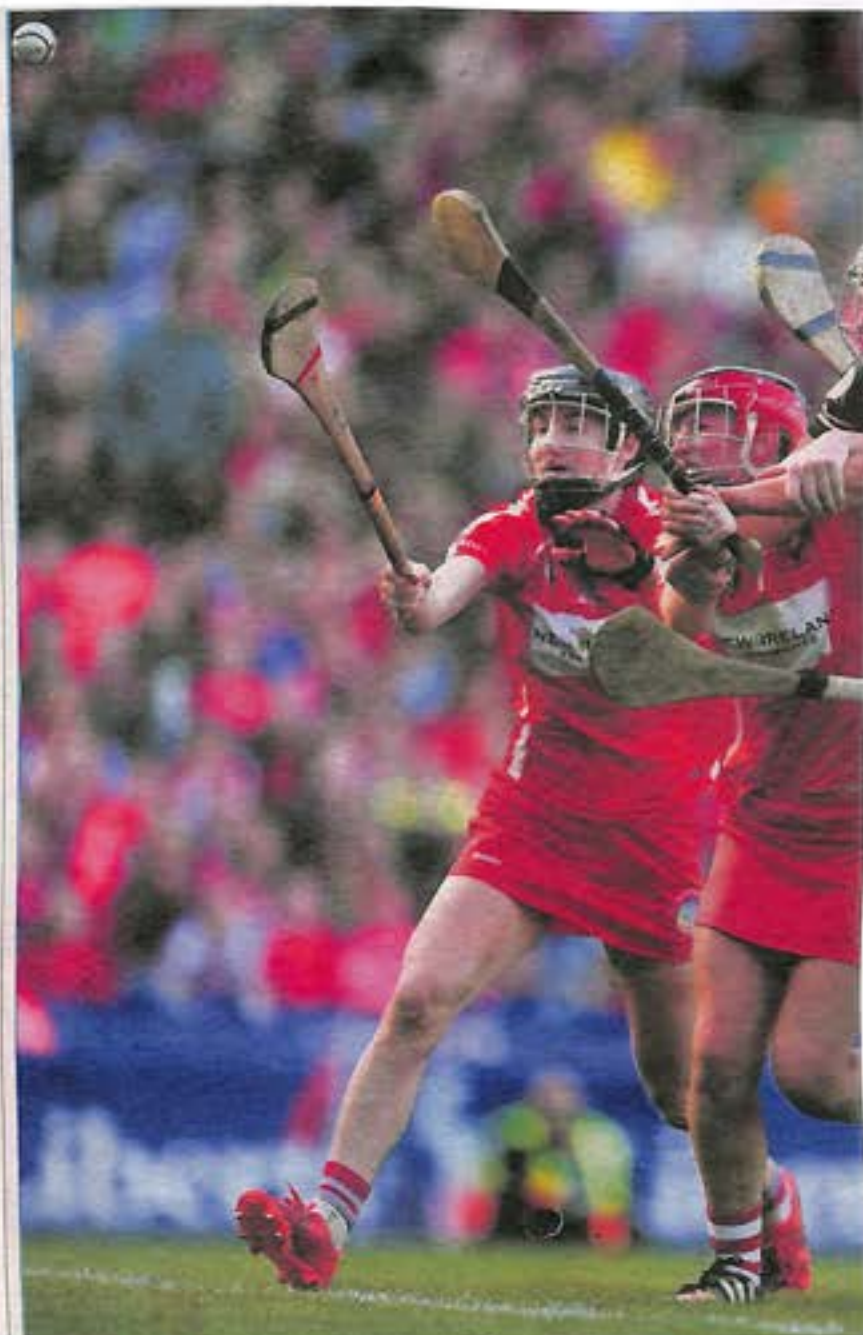
Given that only eight of the game's 27 scores came from play you'd wonder why there's such cloak-and-dagger stuff about positions and line-ups.

Kilkenny were desperately dependant on Denise Gaule's free-taking, which was largely exemplary.

Some blamed referee Eamon Cassidy for blowing far too much, but 33 frees in 64 minutes was not unusually high.

Even in the first quarter he was under the microscope for awarding Amy O'Connor a questionable penalty, which Cork goalkeeper and captain Aoife Murray struck over the bar.

And Kilkenny were unhappy that some of his most contentious decisions went against them.



"I've had a look at it in the dressing room and, without criticising Eamon, definitely Orla was already falling," said Cats manager Ann Downey of Cotter's last free.

"Our players were around her, but hadn't touched her. I thought it was a harsh enough free as you saw from my reaction on the line."

Downey was also critical about the previous free when Davina Tobin was called for 'charging', and Cork wing-back Chloe Sigerson struck over from a huge distance to equalise.

"There was two hard calls on us," Downey said. "Eamon will have to look at his own performance and judge himself, I'm not going to give out about him. It is what it is. It's not

going to be able to change the result, we have to be able to take it on the chin and move on."

Even winning manager Paudie Murray, who said he didn't see the two biggest calls in the game, suggested that the 'non-contact' element of camogie's rules needs to be changed if the players skills and fitness is to be showcased.

Neutrals feel similarly, especially as defensive tactics which ape hurling seem to have contributed to less flow and open scoring in the modern game.

Irrespective of Cassidy's decision-making, the players also seemed more than happy to wade in and concede frees.



Caitriona Collins rifles home Cork's second-half goal despite the efforts of Down's Allannah Savage in yesterday's intermediate final. PHARAS Ó MIDHEACH/SPORTSFILE

Collins the driving force as Cork

CORK 1-13
DOWN 0-9

ALL-IRELAND INTERMEDIATE FINAL

CAITRÍONA COLLINS proved the match-winner with a superb haul of 1-6 as Cork put the agony of two consecutive defeats at the last hurdle behind them to become Liberty Insurance All-Ireland intermediate camogie champions at Croke Park.

The Rebels – who were also grateful for four points from play from minor star Saoirse McCarthy – had to stave

off a wonderful effort by Down, who had Niamh Mallon and Saoirse Sands in fine form.

But once Collins found the net in the 40th minute to put six points between the teams, it was an uphill struggle for Martina Rooney's crew.

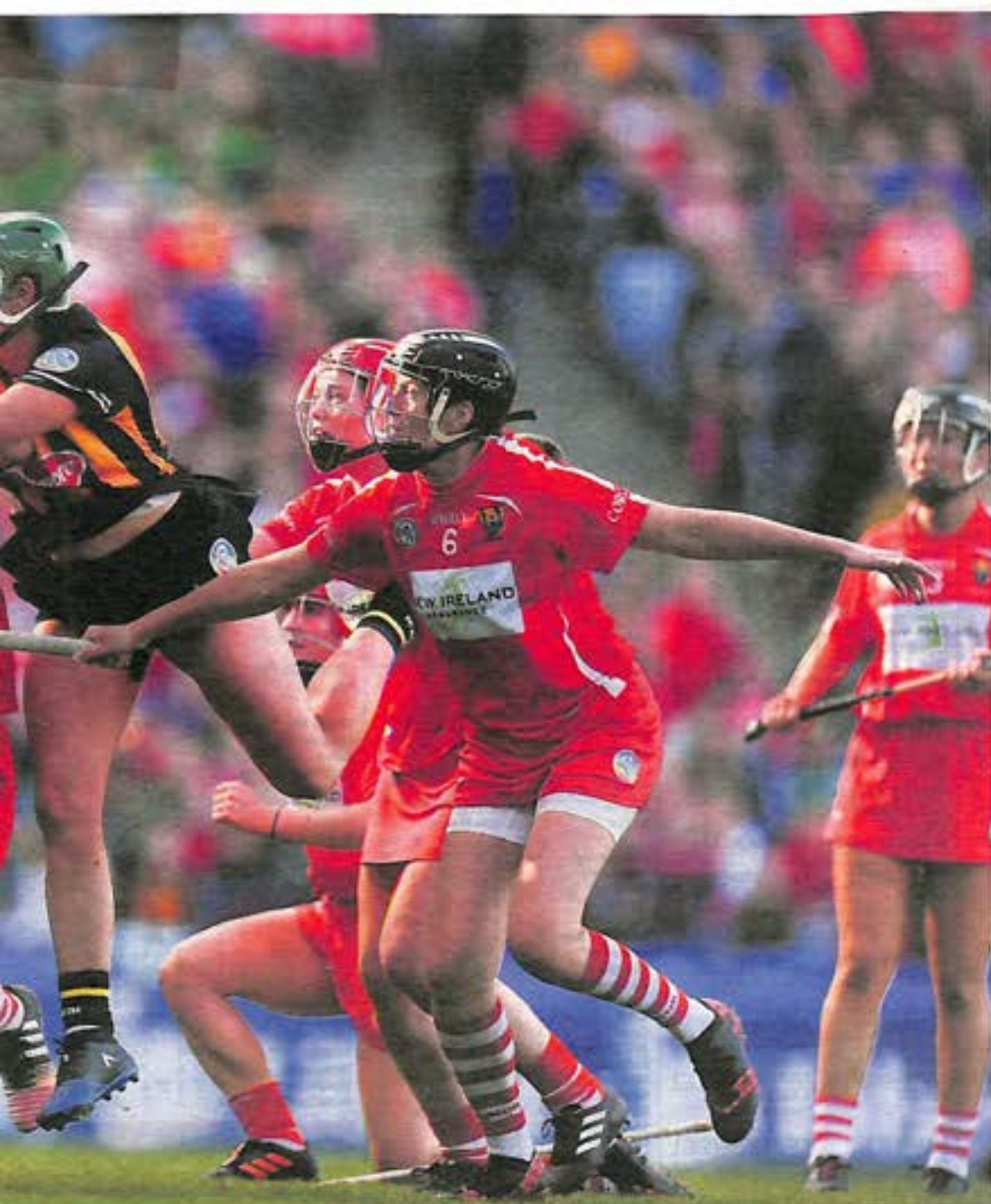
Their cause wasn't helped by the sending-off of Sara-Louise Carr 10 minutes later. The reason for the Clonduff attacker's second yellow card wasn't obvious from the stands, or to the player herself, who was distraught.

Down started the game with skipper Fionnuala Carr at full-forward, which was surprising given that the tactic had failed in the semi-final and that

their comeback that day had been propelled by Carr's relocation to centre-back.

She was unable to influence proceedings from the edge of the square on this occasion, and Down missed her commanding presence in the middle of the half-back line.

They began very confidently, however, points from Sara-Louise Carr and Sands getting them on their way. McCarthy – who along with Laura Hayes and Cliona Healy was winning her second All-Ireland medal in a few months having enjoyed U18 glory – got a chance to show her pace and the subsequent player of the



Close encounter: Despite being surrounded by five Cork defenders, Miriam Walsh of Kilkenny gets in an effort on goal which was subsequently saved by Cork goalkeeper Aoife Murray during yesterday's Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Senior Camogie final at Croke Park. **DAVID FITZGERALD/SPORTSFILE**

Bugler strike sets up title win as camogie revolution in capital hits fever pitch

DUBLIN	1-12
KERRY	0-6

Daragh Ó Conchúir
ALL-IRELAND PREMIER JUNIOR FINAL

A GOAL from Aoife Bugler in the 15th minute set Dublin on their way as the camogie revolution in the capital continued with victory yesterday in Croke Park.

It was redemption for the victors after losing last year's decider to Westmeath and while the pain of defeat will linger, this is only the beginning for the Kingdom, their first Croke Park appearance coming less than a decade after the inauguration of a county team.

This day was about the Dubs, though. Bugler was just one of an impressive attacking cast in which Player of the Match Caragh Dawson, Laoise Quinn and the pacy Caragh Dawson shone. At the other end Deirdre Johnstone led an unyielding defensive effort, much to the delight of Dublin manager Shane Plowman.

Hurt

"It's absolutely fabulous" said the Dubs boss. "To come here last year and walk away so hurt, we really did promise ourselves we'd do whatever we had to do to get back here today."

"It's a credit to the girls, they left nothing out there. It's great for the girls and great for Dublin camogie going forward. We tried to put down a marker, we wanted to go at them from the start and in fairness, they kept at us. They're a good team and they will be back."

Bugler suffered a cruciate knee ligament injury shortly after last year's final and only returned for the Blues' semi-final win over Offaly last month, in which she scored a goal and three points. She matched that tally on this occasion, but this was an excellent team display.

Shane Plowman had his team set up to pull out and leave space in front of his front three, and then it was about the supply.

They were well drilled in this

regard and Bugler's goal was a product of it; Quinn drilling a low ball in front of her that she gathered neatly, before turning Niamh Leen and firing high to the far corner.

She almost had another from the next attack, but Leen got back well to deny her and, indeed, held her own in a brilliant individual duel.

Patrice Diggin settled Kerry with a couple of pointed frees, but Aoibhe Dillon did likewise at the other end. Dublin, though, had more firepower and added three points from play, the highlight a splendid score by Bugler that combined subtlety, strength and accuracy.

They led by 1-6 to 0-2 at the break and though Kerry were much improved in the second-half and Laura Collins' point after sublime stickwork from Jessica Fitzell offered a glimpse of their capabilities, they never looked like getting the goal they needed.

Bugler took over the free-taking duties to good effect when Dillon was substituted and the gap remained comfortable.

Kerry boss Stephen Goggin took the opportunity to give as many of his players as possible a taste of headquarters on All-Ireland final day, in the hope that it might stand to them in the long term.

Plowman did the same and managed to get skipper Emer Keenan on in the dying seconds, having been sidelined by a cruciate ligament injury four months ago.

Within minutes, Keenan was lifting the trophy named in honour of Dublin's greatest player Kay Mills, and offering classy words of comfort to Kerry, before the celebrations were on in earnest.

SCORERS - Dublin: A Bugler 1-3 (20); A Dillon 0-3 (37); S Wylde, L Quinn (10) 0-2 each; C Dawson, E Keenan 0-1

KERRY: P Diggin 0-5 (51); L Collins 0-1

DUBLIN: K Kantounis, E O'Riordan, N Gleeson, S Murphy, E Barron, D Johnstone, C Ní Mhuirí, H O'Dea, S Wylde, C Dawson, A Dillon, A Dooley, A Walsh, A Bugler, L Quinn. **Subs:** L O'Shea for Dillon (38), E Twomey for Dooley (56), L Walsh for Bugler (50-2)

Kerry: A Fitzgerald, L Houlihan, N Leen, M Costello, A O'Connor, S Murphy, E Harrington, O Young, P Diggin, C Shanahan, L Collins, A Behan, J Fitzell, J Horgan, N Casey. **Subs:** R McCarthy for Harrington (25), E Ryall for O'Connor (40), A Whelan for Casey (46), K Buckley for Shanahan (55), J O'Keefe for Fitzell (59)

REF: A Doherty (Laois)

In such packed defences it is increasingly hard whenever these two meet to find enough space to get good shots off and it doesn't make for the most entertaining spectacle for supporters.

Cork's only real goal chance was that early penalty, while Kilkenny's sole opportunity for a green flag came in the third quarter when Anna Farrell burst through and got off a kicked shot which Murray saved.

Kilkenny, who operated with just a few forwards in the first-half, certainly threw more up in the second-half, but couldn't break Cork down and Pamela Mackey did a particularly good marking job on Katie Power.

The margins were tight on both sides but the winners made better

decisions. Kilkenny only had eight wides and dropped a few shots short but Cork, noticeably, only had two wides in each half.

When Cork needed leaders to stand up they really had them, like Cotter and the Mackey twins - Katrina and Pamela. Orla Cronin scored two particularly crucial points before half-time to leave it 0-8 apiece at the interval.

Cork's victory saw the legendary Briege Corkery equal Rena Buckley in winning her 18th All-Ireland senior medal (both codes), even though she didn't come off the bench yesterday.

Manager Murray, who finished the day with a split eye after running into a television camera on the final whis-

tle, said their next target will indeed be a three-in-a-row.

"To retain a title is important. It takes a good team to win back-to-back All-Irelands. That was our goal all year and we knew it was going to take a great effort," he said.

SCORERS - Cork: O Cotter 0-5 (51), C Sigeron 0-3 (36), O Cronin and K Mackey 0-2 each, A O'Connor 0-1, A Murray 0-1 (pen). **Kilkenny:** D Gaulie 0-10 (71, 2'45s), M Farrell, J Malone and M Quilty 0-1 each.

CORK: A Murray (Capt) 8; L O'Sullivan 7; L Treacy 7; P Mackey 8; L Coppinger 7; G O'Connor 8; C Sigeron 8; J White 7; A Thompson 8; A O'Connor 8; O Cronin 8; O Cotter 8; K Mackey 8; L Collins 6; H Looney 6. **Subs:** L O'Sullivan for Collins (51), N McCarthy for O'Connor (63).

KILKENNY: E Kavanagh 7; C Dorrner 8; C Foley 6; G Walsh 7; C Phelan 6; A Dalton 6; D Tobin 6; A Farrell 7; M Farrell 6; J Malone 6; K Power 6; D Gaulie 8; S Farrell 7; M Quilty 6; E Keane 6. **Subs:** M Walsh for Quilty (35).

REF: E Cassidy (Derry)

make up for previous heartache

match had the teams level in the blink of an eye with a wonderful brace.

Down enjoyed their best period at this juncture and moved three points clear, with two from Mallon, who was also involved in the move for Paula Gribben's score. Mallon's point off her left from 60 metres, in particular, was a thing of beauty.

They didn't score for the entire second quarter, however, and Cork went in at half-time leading by 0-7 to 0-5, Collins slotting three points to bring the teams level before Caroline Surge and McCarthy also hit the target.

parity within five minutes of the restart but it was all Cork from there, Paudie Murray's crew leading by three when Collins fired to the net.

It was a fantastic finish at the end of a move that had its genesis in a stunning fetch from the clouds by Siobhán Hutchinson. Finola Neville took the ball forward and drew the cover before timing her pass to do the rest.

For Neville, the win was well overdue. "The hunger was there. We knew coming back each year, we were there or thereabouts. We were unlucky in the last four years but our hunger

had the players.

"There's a huge workrate and a huge bond, as Sarah Harrington said in her speech. We're best friends. When we got knocked down, we were coming back to get that title."

SCORERS - Cork: C Collins 1-6 (0-46); S McCarthy 0-4; C Sugrue 0-2; C Healy 0-1 (7). **Down:** N Mallon 0-4 (26); S Sands 0-2; P Gribben 0-1; S L Carr; F Carr (0) 0-1 each.

CORK: A Lee, N Ní Chaoimh, S Harrington, J Barry, S Hutchinson, L Weste, L Callanan, S Buckley, K Hickey, L Hayes, F Neville, S McCarthy, C Collins, M McCarthy, C Sugrue. **Subs:** C Healy for McCarthy (39), R O'Callaghan for Sugrue (60), R Killeen for Callanan (60-2).

DOWN: M McNulty, N Kelly, A Savage, C McGilgan, B Savage, D Maguire, C Rocks, P Gribben, D Savage, S L Carr, N Mallon, A McKeenan, S Sands, F Carr, O Caldwell. **Subs:** O Gribben for Maguire (34-28), Gribben for Caldwell (29), C Cowan for McGilgan (52).

REFEREE: J Doherty (Westmeath)



Emer Keenan and Laoise Quinn celebrate Dublin's victory over Kerry in the Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Premier Junior final. **DAVID FITZGERALD/SPORTSFILE**

Cork, Intermediate



Back Row Left to Right:

Maeve Lynch, Katie Barry, Keelagh Cullinane, Rebecca Keane, Caroline Sugrue, Emily Buckley, Cliona Healy, Rachel O'Callaghan, Finola Neville, Siobhán Hutchinson, Kate Wall, Moira Barrett, Rachel O'Shea, Katie McCarthy, Katelyn Hickey, Lauren Callanan, Amy Lee, Stefanie Beausang

Front Row Left to Right:

Maeve McCarthy, Jennifer Barry, Caitriona Collins, Clara McCarthy, Niamh Ni Chaoimh, Sarah Harrington (Captain), Saoirse McCarthy, Leah Weste, Sarah Buckley, Laura Hayes, Keeva McCarthy, Róisín Killeen, Eimear Hurley

CORK
INTERMEDIATE TEAM

Corcaigh - Bín & Dearg



IONADÁI

- 16 Stefanie Beausang (S. Beausang, Killeagh)
17 Rachel O'Callaghan (R. Ní Cheallaigh, St. Catherine's)
18 Katie McCarthy (C. Ní Carthaigh, Aghabullogue)
19 Cliona Healy (C. Ní Eilí, Aghabullogue)
20 Róisín Killeen (R. Ní Chéillín, Ballyhea)

- 21 Keeva McCarthy (C. Ní Carthaigh, St. Finbarr)
22 Moira Barrett (M. Barrett, Ballinacraig)
23 Rachel O'Shea (R. Ní Sheá, Carrigrohane)
24 Kate Wall (C. de Bhal, Kibristown/Timoleague)
25 Clara McCarthy (C. Ní Carthaigh, Aghabullogue)

- 26 Eimear Hurley (E. Ní Uírhúile, St. Finbarr)
27 Rebecca Keane (R. Ní Cheim, Juncaross)
28 Keelagh Cullinane (C. Ní Chuilleanáin, Fr. O'Neill)
29 Maeve Lynch (M. Ní Lomáigh, Naracottown)
30 Katie Barry (C. de Barra, Sanfield)

TEAM OFFICIALS

- Bainisteoir: Pádraic Murray
Hurling Coach: George Fitzgibbon
Maor Foime: Brian O'Sullivan
Management: Frances Killeen
Management: Mollie O'Sullivan
Performance Analyst: Niall Collins
Maor Uisce: Anthony O'Neill
Maor Uisce: Terence O'Leary
Logistics: Damien Murray
Physio: Orla Coughlan
Liaison Officer: Marian McCarthy

Down, Intermediate



Back Row Left to Right:

Saoirse Sands, Catherine Rocks, Lizzy Wilson, Marie McNally, Dearbhla Magee, Aimee McAleenan, Fionnuala Carr (Captain), Paula Gribben, Sara-Louise Carr, Niamh Mallon, Beth Fitzpatrick, Alannah Savage, Bláiníad Savage.

Front Row Left to Right:

Deirbhile Savage, Clare McGilligan, Caitlin McCartan, Catherine O'Hare, Orlagh Caldwell, Orla Gribben, Nicole Kelly, Maria Higgins, Eimear Rushe, Katie McGilligan.



DOWN INTERMEDIATE TEAM

An Dún - Dubh & Dearg



IONADAÍ

16. Orlagh Caldwell
O. Ní Conluain
Mayobridge

17. Maria Higgins
M. Ní Uiginn
An Ríocht

18. Lizzy Wilson
L. Ní Liam
Clonduff

19. Catherine O'Hare
C. Ní le
Ballyle

20. Clara Cowan
C. Ní Chomhain
Clonduff

21. Eimear Rushe
E. Ní Rois
Ballyholand

22. Caitlin McCartan
C. Ní Artáin
Lisnain Fontenoy

23. Beth Fitzpatrick
B. Ní Giolla Phádraig
Clonduff

24. Katie McGilligan
K. Ní Ghriollagáin
Clonduff

25. Cassie Fitzpatrick
C. Ní Giolla Phádraig
Clonduff

TEAM OFFICIALS

Bainisteoir: Martin Rooney
Maor Foinne: Derek Dunne
Physio: Marie Sherry
Caimín/Uisce 1: Charlene Lively
Caimín/Uisce 2: Orla Maginn
Caimín/Uisce 3: Kevin Dowd

Player Profiles - Down



Maria McNally - Portaferry
Dental Nurse
Goalkeeper
All-Ireland Junior C'chip title, Nat League title,
Ulster Senior C'chip title, Ulster Shield title.



Clare McGilligan - Clonduff
Student
Defender
All-Ireland Junior C'chip title, Nat League title,
Ulster Senior C'chip title, Ulster Intermediate
C'chip title, Purcell Shield title.



Alannah Savage - Ballygalget
PhD Student
Defender
Ulster Senior C'chip title, Purcell Shield title.



Nicole Kelly - An Ríocht
Master Assembler, Aerospace
Defender
Ulster Senior C'chip title.



Bláiníad Savage - Ballygalget
Student
Defender
All-Ireland Minor C'chip title, numerous underage
titles.



Fionnuala Carr - Clonduff
Contracts Manager
Defender
All-Ireland Junior C'chip title, Ulster Senior C'chip
title, 2 Purcell Cup titles, 3 Soaring Star Awards.



Dearbhla Magee - Liatroim Fontenoy's
Student
Defender
All-Ireland Junior C'chip title, Ulster Senior C'chip
title, Ulster Inter C'chip title.



Orla Gribben - Clonduff
Teacher
Forward
Ulster Senior C'chip title.



Orlagh Caldwell - Mayobridge
Marketing Assistant
Defender
Ulster Senior C'chip title.



Maria Higgins - An Ríocht
Beautician
Forward
All-Ireland Minor C'chip title, Ulster Senior C'chip
title, Ulster Minor C'chip title.



Lizzy Wilson - Clonduff
Student
Defender
2 All-Ireland Minor C'chip titles, Ulster Senior
C'chip title, Fr. Meachair title.



Catherine O'Hare - Ballela
Student
Defender
Ulster Senior C'chip title, Purcell Shield title.



Clara Cowan - Clonduff
Student
Forward
Ulster Senior C'chip title.



Eimear Rushe - Ballyholland
Student
Forward
All-Ireland Minor C'chip title, Ulster Senior C'chip
title.



Catherine Rocks - Bredagh
Teacher
Defender
All-Ireland Minor C'chip title, Ulster Senior
title, Fr. Meachair title.



Paula Gribben - Clonduff
PE Teacher & Fitness Instructor
Midfield
All-Ireland Junior C'chip title, All-Ireland U
C'chip title, Ulster Senior C'chip title, Ash
Cup title.



Deirbhile Savage - Ballygalget
Student
Forward
All-Ireland Junior C'chip title, All-Ireland U
C'chip title, All-Ireland U16 C'chip title, Ul
Senior C'chip title, Fr. Meachair title, Ulster
C'chip title.



Aimee McAleenan - Liatroim Fontenoy's
Student
Forward
All-Ireland Junior C'chip title, Ulster Senior
title, Ulster Inter C'chip title, 3 College All-
Ireland Awards.



Sara-Louise Carr - Clonduff
Risk Officer
Forward
All-Ireland Junior C'chip title,
All-Ireland Minor C'chip title, Nat League 1
Ulster Senior C'chip title, Ashbourne Shield
Ashbourne All-Star Awards.



Saoirse Sands - Portaferry
Student
Forward
Ulster Senior C'chip title.



Niamh Mallon - Portaferry
Student
Forward
All-Ireland Junior C'chip title, Ulster Senior
title, Ulster Minor C'chip title, 3 Ashbourne
Star Awards, 3 Soaring Star Awards.



Caitlin McCartan - Liatroim Fontenoy's
Classroom Assistant
Forward
2 All-Ireland Minor C'chip titles, Ulster
C'chip title.



Beth Fitzpatrick - Clonduff
Student
Forward
Ulster Senior C'chip title.



Katie McGilligan - Clonduff
Student
Forward
Ulster Senior C'chip title.



Cassie Fitzpatrick - Clonduff
Accountancy Student
Midfield
Ulster Senior C'chip title.

Player Profiles - Cork

Intermediate



Amy Lee - Na Piarasigh
Student
Goalkeeper
2 All-Ireland Senior C'chip titles, 3 Munster Senior
C'chip titles, 2 Munster Inter C'chip titles.



Leah Weste - Ballincollig
Teacher
Defender
All-Ireland Senior C'chip title, 5 Nat League
titles, 4 Munster Senior C'chip titles, 2 Munster
Inter C'chip titles, Munster Junior C'chip title,
Interprovincial title.



Sarah Harrington - Fr. O'Neills
Teacher
Defender
3 Nat League titles, 3 Munster Inter C'chip titles,
Fr. Meachair title, Purcell Cup title,
Soaring Stars Award.



Niamh Ni Chaoimh - Killeagh
Teacher
Defender
All-Ireland Senior C'chip title, 2 Nat League titles,
2 Munster Inter C'chip titles, Fr. Meachair title,
Soaring Stars Award.



Sarah Buckley - Ballincollig
Accountant
Midfield
2 All-Ireland Senior C'chip titles, 4 Nat League
titles, Munster Senior C'chip title, 2 Munster Inter
C'chip titles, Soaring Stars Award.



Siobhán Hutchinson - Éire Óg
Trainee accountant
Defender
Nat League title, Munster Senior C'chip title.



Saoirse McCarthy - Courcy Rovers
Student
Midfield
All-Ireland Minor C'chip title,
2 Munster U16 titles.



Jennifer Barry - Bride Rovers
Teacher
Defender
All-Ireland Senior C'chip title, 2 Nat League
Munster Inter C'chip title.



Lauren Callanan - Glen Rovers
Student
Defender
All-Ireland Senior C'chip title, 2 Nat League
Munster Inter C'chip title.



Katie McCarthy - Aghabullogue
Student
Defender
Nat League title.



Rachel O'Callaghan - St. Catherines
Nurse
Forward
Nat League title, Munster Senior C'chip title.



Laura Hayes - St. Catherines
Student
Forward
All-Ireland Minor C'chip title, Munster U16 tit



Caroline Sugrue - Ballinascorthy
Teacher
Forward
3 Nat League titles, 3 Munster Senior C'chip t
2 Munster Inter C'chip titles.



Finola Neville - St Catherines
Sports Rehabilitator & Athletic Therapist
Forward
3 All-Ireland Senior C'chip titles, 3 Nat League
titles, Munster Senior C'chip title, Munster In
C'chip title.



Caitriona Collins - Ballinhassig
Teacher
Forward
Nat League title, Munster Inter C'chip title,
Munster Minor C'chip title.



Eimear Hurley - St. Finbarrs
Student
Goalkeeper
Nat League title, Munster Inter C'chip title,
Munster U16 C'chip title.



Stefanie Beausang - Killeagh
Customer Services Advisor
Goalkeeper
3 Ashbourne titles.



Maeve McCarthy - Sarsfields
Student
Forward
All-Ireland Senior C'chip title, 2 Nat League titles,
Munster Inter C'chip title.



Keeva McCarthy - St. Finbarrs
Student
Forward
2 Nat League titles, All-Ireland U16 C'chip title,
Munster Inter C'chip title, 2 Munster Minor
C'chip titles, Soaring Star Award.



Cliona Healy - Aghabullogue
Student
Forward
All-Ireland Minor C'chip title, Munster Inter
C'chip title, Munster U16 C'chip title.



Róisín Killeen - Ballyhea
Student
Defender
All-Ireland Senior C'chip title, 2 Nat League titles,
Munster Inter C'chip title.



Rebecca Keane - Inniscarra
Student
Forward
Nat League title, Munster Inter C'chip title.



Katie Barry - Sarsfields
Student
Defender



Moira Barrett - Ballinascorthy
Student
Forward
All-Ireland Minor C'chip title, Munster Inter
C'chip title, 2 Munster U16 C'chip titles.



Keelagh Cullinane - Fr. O'Neills
Student
Forward
Nat League title, All-Ireland U16 C'chip titl
Munster Inter C'chip title.



Maeve Lynch - Newcestown
Student
Defender
2 Nat League titles, Munster Inter C'chip t



Kate Wall - Kilbrittain/Timoleague
Student
Forward
Nat League title, Munster Inter C'chip title,
Munster Minor C'chip title.



Rachel O'Shea - Carrigaline
Student
Forward
All-Ireland Senior C'chip title, Nat League t
Munster Minor C'chip title, Munster U16 C
title, Purcell Cup title.



Katelyn Hickey - Blackrock
Student
Midfield
All-Ireland Senior C'chip title, 3 Nat League
Munster Inter C'chip title.



Ciara McCarthy - Aghabullogue
Student
Forward

Cork's Hannah Looney and Stefanie Beusang celebrate their All-Ireland Senior Camogie Championship win over Kilkenny at Croke Park yesterday and, inset, Katelyn Hickey, right, Saoirse McCarthy, centre, and Katie Barry enjoy Cork's Intermediate win over Down.

Monday, September 10, 2018

Evening Echo Cork Sports World



Double joy for Cork

Intermediate side dig

Rebels finally get their big moment in Croke

THE expression third time lucky is probably one that will be used many times over the coming days as Cork finally lifted the All-Ireland intermediate cup yesterday.

They lost out in the finals in the last two seasons, after a replay last year, in a game that they left after the first day.

But all credit to the squad they regrouped and ensured they were back in Croke yesterday to try and end that drought.

Cork's last win was in the inaugural competition in 2006 and since then they have featured in more than their fair share of finals.

So considering those factors it's more a case of relief than lucky to see the cup heading south tomorrow night.

No doubt there were plenty of motivating factors for the side, from the disappointment of the last two years to a determination to end that drought.

In that time members of the intermediate side would have had to attend the after-match function with the senior side and it must have been difficult to watch them celebrating as you drowned your sorrows.

Of course, they would have been delighted for the senior players, with several of them subs on that panel, but at the back of your mind is always the fact you came up short in your own game.

As the second side in any county, it's not an easy task to reach a final and these girls deserve massive praise for doing so on the consistent basis they have since 2006.

In that time they have featured in nine finals (including 2006), making them the most consistent side in this competition.

It shows the strength of camogie in Cork at present and hopefully for many years to come. The Rebel county is probably the only one that could produce two teams to these high standards over this time and going forward is the only one likely of doing so for some time.

Of course, others have had good years, but none at the level of Cork and no matter what the result was today that consistency must be acknowledged and applauded.

In the league they showed they were going to be the form side as captain, Sarah Harrington got to lift the cup to set them up nicely for the All-Ireland series.

But when you are taking on a side you have already beaten this season there is always a fear factor.

Time and time again we have seen how difficult it can be to defeat a team for the second time. Just look at the Cork senior hurlers over the last two years, losing out in the semi-final of the All-Ireland series to a side they had either beaten or drawn with previously.

The same happened to the Cork U21 hurlers, who had a great win over Tipperary in the Munster final, but then lost out to them in the All-Ireland final.

Thankfully that didn't happen yesterday as Sarah got the chance to lift another cup in



Leah Weste celebrates with her teammates after the game. Picture: INPHO/Bryan Keane



Match analysis

Rory Noonan

what was a deserved win for Cork.

They took their time to settle and in the early stages, you might be forgiven for thinking it could be another one of those days. Down settled far quicker and were the better side for the first 10 minutes or so.

But Cork started to settle with Jennifer Barry leading by example at centre-back and Harrington solid out behind her.

Katelyn Hickey and Sarah Buckley started to get a grip at midfield and up front, the likes of Caitriona Collins, Saoirse McCarthy and Caroline Sugrue started to torment the Down defence.

By half-time the Rebels were in front and it looked like there was only going to be one winner, though credit must go to Down who started the better of the two sides again and were back on level terms five minutes in.

But when you need big players to step up then Cork have them in abundance and Collins showed she wasn't going home empty-handed again this year.

She rattled off two magnificent points, both from long range frees, to settle the nerves and when Sugrue put three between them the Rebels could start to relax and enjoy the occasion.

The key moment came in the 41st minute and it was a goal worthy of winning any final.

A magnificent catch by Siobhan Hutchinson in defence started the move and she put Finola Neville on her way.

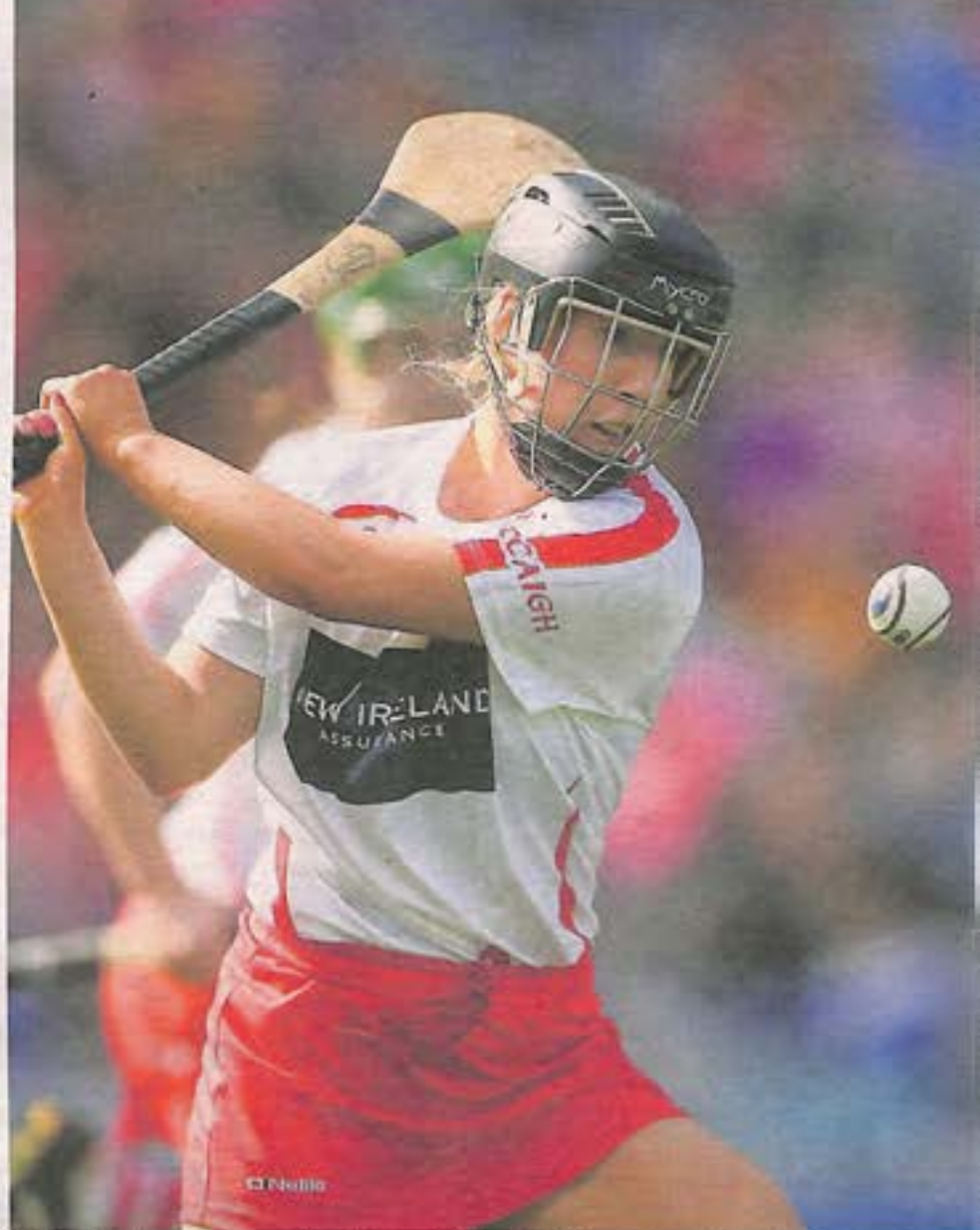
Neville popped the sliothar to Collins and when given an opportunity like that she doesn't miss.

Afterwards selector, Brian O'Sullivan, who was the man on the sideline as Paudie Murray was split between the teams, was proud of Cork's efforts and delighted for the squad.

"It was great to win and I thought the girls were brilliant out there today. We took a while to settle but once we did I thought we played some great camogie."

"Our defence was outstanding and they haven't conceded a goal all year and managed to do the same today. As a unit, they have been outstanding and set the platform for us."

"The goal was a big score and in fairness, Caitriona never lets us down. It's great to win after the last two years and we will enjoy the celebrations now," concluded Brian.



Caitriona Collins of Cork scores her side's goal despite the efforts of Alannah Savage of Down.

Picture: Piaras Ó Midheach/Sportsfile



Sarah Harrington, Niamh Ni Chaoimh and Sarah Buckley celebrate after the final whistle.



Saoirse McCarthy receives the Liberty Insurance Player of the Match Award from Deirdre Ashe.

Picture: INPHO/Bryan Keane

Story of the Game

SCORE OF THE MATCH:

As well as being a pivotal score, Caitriona Collins' 41st-minute goal was also the most eye-catching on the day. After Finola Neville's blistering run initially placed Down on the back-foot, the Ballinhassig forward fired emphatically beyond the reach of Maria McNally.

REFEREE WATCH:

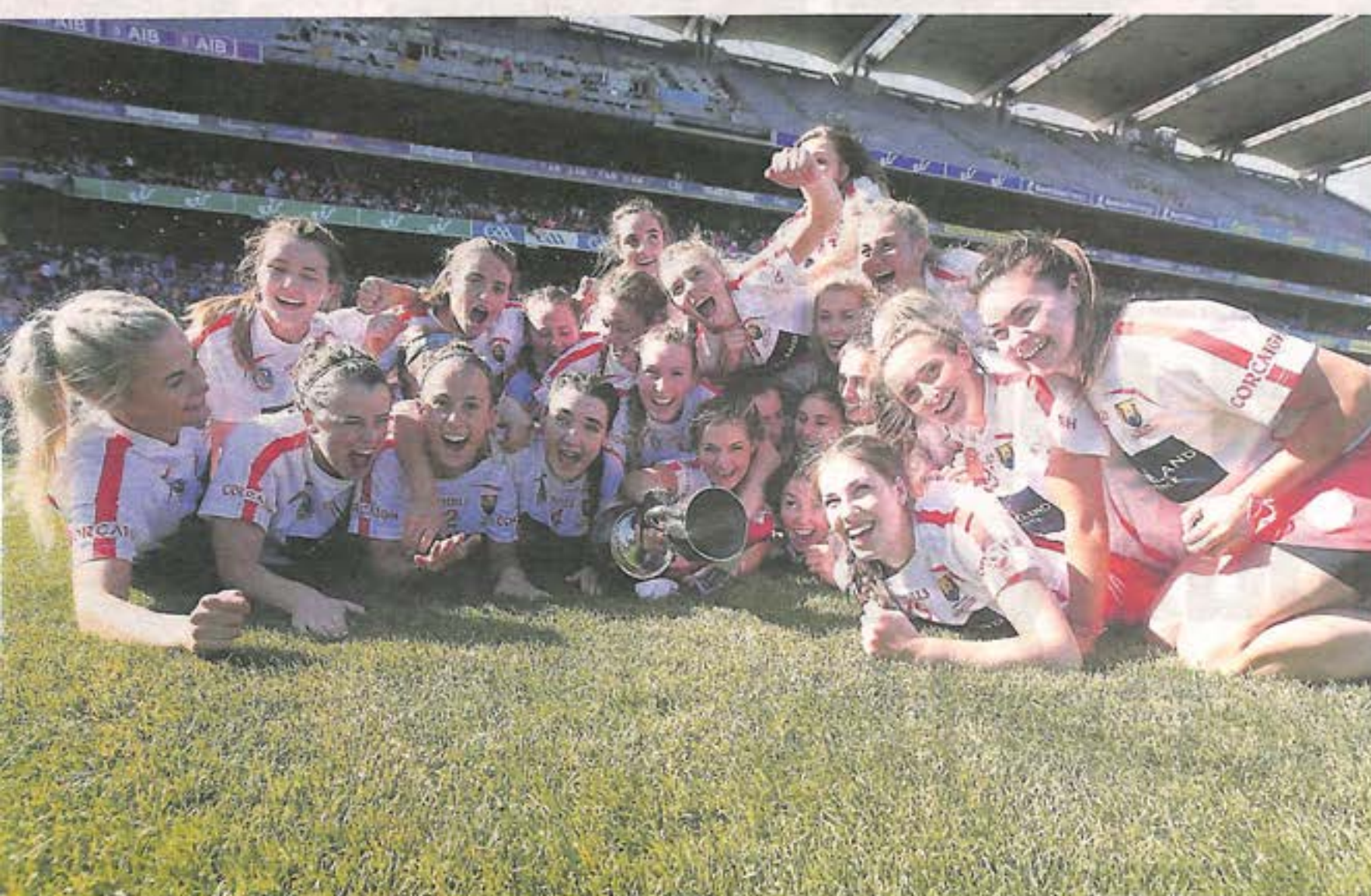
Westmeath referee John Dermody had a relatively quiet afternoon, until he gave Down's Sara-Louise Carr her marching orders on 49 minutes. It seemed a harsh call at the time, but the Ulster outfit's challenge was already starting to fade.

TURNING POINT: With Down storming back on the

restart, Collins (2) and the understated Caroline Sugrue registered three points without reply to create daylight for Cork.

KEY PLAYER: Saoirse McCarthy was a deserving recipient of the player of the match award. The Courcy Rovers ace finished with an impressive personal tally of 0-4.

deep for victory



The Cork intermediate Camogie team celebrate with the Jack McGrath Cup after their thrilling All-Ireland victory over Down.

Picture: INPHO/Bryan Keane

Cork	1-13
Down	0-9

PLAYER of the match Saoirse McCarthy and Caitriona Collins registered a combined tally of 1-10 at Croke Park yesterday to propel Cork towards their first All-Ireland Intermediate Championship title since 2006.

Following heartbreaking final defeats to Kilkenny and Meath (replay) in the past two seasons, the Leesiders overcame a shaky opening at Jones' Road to get the better of Down in a competitive affair.

Trailing by three points in the 16th minute, Cork dug deep to ultimately bring a 0-7 to 0-5 cushion into the interval. Even though Down remained in contention on the resumption, a third-quarter goal from Collins meant that Cork, who like their senior counterparts are managed by Paudie Murray, brought their 12-year wait for a second-tier crown to a convincing end.

After Down had broken the deadlock early on through Sara-Louise Carr — daughter of two-time All-Ireland winner Ross — and Saoirse Sands,

CAMOGIE

■ Daire Walsh

Cork responded with a brace of McCarthy points.

The dependable Niamh Mallon (two) and Paula Gribben fired over at the opposite end to leave Cork staring into a 0-2 to 0-5 deficit, and consequently place their mental resolve under intense scrutiny.

It was at this juncture in the play that Collins really came into her own, though. In addition to a routine free on the stroke of 20 minutes, the Ballinhasig attacker was also on target when Down netminder Maria McNally batted away a Laura Hayes delivery.

With their northern rivals losing a grip around the middle third, Cork were ready to turn the game on its head. Collins restored parity with her fourth of the tie and, thanks to additional contributions by Caroline Sugrue and McCarthy, they were in a position of strength for the beginning of the second period.

Eager to make their first final appearance at this grade a memorable one, Down quickly cancelled out Cork's lead with back-to-back points from Mallon and Sands. Yet, just when the sides appeared to be delicately poised, the Rebels recorded 1-3 without reply to effectively put the outcome beyond doubt.

The dynamic inside duo of Collins (two) and Sugrue built momentum with white-flag efforts, before Finola Neville's powerful surge through the heart of the Down defence set up Collins for a cool finish into the bottom right-hand corner.

An Aimee McAleenan point closed the gap slightly, but when Carr was dismissed for a second yellow card offence on 49 minutes, the prospect of a late fightback by the Mourne had effectively evaporated.

Cork conceded a paltry 0-38 in their six games en route to this decider, and skipper Sarah Harrington once again marshalled a formidable Cork rear-guard. She kept tabs on Fionnuala Carr for much of the action and it was the Down captain who cancelled out McCarthy's fourth of the day inside

the final quarter.

Collins had brought her personal haul up to 1-6, but passed on free-taking duties to substitute Cliona Healy in the 56th minute. The Aghabullogue star effortlessly stroked between the uprights to bring the curtain down on a thoroughly-deserved Cork triumph.

Scorers for Cork: Caitriona Collins 1-6 (0-4f), Saoirse McCarthy 0-4, Caroline Sugrue 0-2, Cliona Healy 0-1 (f).

Down: Niamh Mallon 0-3 (1f), Saoirse Sands 0-2, Fionnuala Carr (f), Paula Gribben, Sara-Louise Carr, Aimee McAleenan 0-1 each.

CORK: Amy Lee; Niamh Ni Chaoimh, Sarah Harrington, Jennifer Barry; Lauren Callanan, Leah Weste, Siobhan Hutchinson; Sarah Buckley, Katelyn Hickey; Laura Hayes, Finola Neville, Saoirse McCarthy; Caroline Sugrue, Maeve McCarthy, Caitriona Collins.

Subs: Cliona Healy for M McCarthy (39), Rachel O'Callaghan for Sugrue (60), Roisin Killeen for Callanan (62).

DOWN: Maria McNally; Nicole Kelly, Alannah Savage, Clare McGilligan; Bláiní Savage, Dearbhla Magee, Catherine Rocks; Deirbhle Savage, Paula Gribben; Sara-Louise Carr, Niamh Mallon, Aimee McAleenan; Orlagh Caldwell, Fionnuala Carr, Saoirse Sands.

Subs: Orla Gribben for Magee (14-28, blood), O Gribben for Caldwell (30), Clara Cowan for McGilligan (52).

Referee: John Dermody (Westmeath).

Katelyn Hickey gets her pass away.

'A huge weight off their shoulders'

MATCH REACTION

■ Daire Walsh

FOLLOWING recent final heartache in GAA HQ, Cork intermediate selector Brian O'Sullivan was delighted to see the Leesiders get over the line against Down in the All-Ireland camogie final.

With reversals to Kilkenny and Meath still fresh in the minds of the majority of the squad, he admitted there was a sense of relief within the ranks.

"For a few of these girls, it's a huge weight off their shoulders. In fairness, a lot of new blood came into the squad this year as well," O'Sullivan said.

"Just overall, fantastic for the girls. We were only concentrating on today really, as opposed to the previous years."

While Cork were worthy 0-18 to 0-6 winners when the teams met in the group stages in July, this was always likely to be a tougher assignment. Down threatened an upset when they led by three points (0-5 to 0-2) in the 16th minute before Cork hit a purple patch that O'Sullivan believes was a crucial factor in their success.

"We expected nothing less from Down to be honest. We knew they'd come out all guns blazing. They're a very proud camogie county. They're a strong, physical team, but we knew once we gained our composure and settled."

"Thankfully, we went in two points up. We re-grouped at half-time and gave a good performance in the second half. Overall, just delighted for the squad in particular."

Because manager Paudie Murray was already turning his attention to the senior decider, O'Sullivan assumed post-match media duties. Cork's triumph over Kilkenny in the day's showpiece event made it a day to remember for all associated with Cork camogie and O'Sullivan praised both squads for their application throughout the season.

"For the girls involved with this team and the senior team, they push each other on the whole time. They're role models for any young girls to be honest. Their work rate, their effort, throughout the whole year, is outstanding."

"Days like today are fantastic for them, and in particular the girls coming through minor as well, winning All-Irelands. It's great for Cork camogie in general," O'Sullivan added.

Three reasons Cork were victorious at Croker

Heartbreak of previous final defeats

Since defeating Galway to claim the 2006 crown, it has been a long road back to the intermediate promised land for Cork. Three final reversals on the bounce followed that success, while they came off second-best to Kilkenny and Meath (replay) in the past two seasons. The pain of these showpiece reversals was a key motivating factor on their path back to yesterday's final and it helped them to overcome the challenge posed by the Mourne county.

Scoring prowess of Collins and McCarthy

Although Cork's mean defence ensured that they went through the whole championship without conceding a goal, they also possessed a clinical streak in attack. Caitriona Collins and Saoirse McCarthy blossomed all the way through the contest, registering a combined haul of 1-10 for the Leesiders. With Down struggling for scores beyond the first quarter, they created a sizeable gap between the teams with a series of fine scores.

Emphatic response to early Down surge

When they trailed by three points, 0-5 to 0-2, with 16 minutes gone, the mental strength of this Cork squad was truly put to the test. However, thanks to five points in succession, they had swung the pendulum back in their favour by the end of the opening period. Even though Down levelled matters on the restart, Paudie Murray's side had developed an attacking rhythm that they maintained for the remainder of the action.

Cotter.
We had
worked on
our free
taking a
lot lately'

There's no better

ORLA Cotter, now with seven senior All-Irelands to her credit, was savouring the moment as if it was her first as we caught up with her pitch-side after the final whistle writes RORY NOONAN.

"I'm really thrilled to have won it again and to be honest, I suppose it could have gone either way, it was level so many times. We were lucky again I suppose to snatch it at the death, just like we did last year.

"I know that Kilkenny are gutted. I suppose really you would have to feel sorry for them — we know what it is like to lose and it's hard but we are so thrilled."

Standing over the last free, a long-range effort to win the game, what was going through Orla's mind having seen one sail narrowly wide earlier?

"I just steadied myself and prayed it would go over.

"We worked on free-taking a lot over the last few weeks and myself and Chloe (Sigerson) were practicing them a lot so thank God it went over. In fairness, Chloe hit excellent frees today as well and every ball counted."

Every ball did count and Cotter paid tribute to the Cork defence, who were superb.

"All year our defence have been brilliant, and today they were great. They came under ferocious pressure but they stuck to their task and were excellent."

Leanne O'Sullivan was beaming and surrounded by ecstatic supporters as she enjoyed the after-match mood on the pitch. "Thank God we got over the line. It was tough all through but we knew it would be," she said. "They really made us work for it but every one of us was so determined we were going to win."

"It's great, especially with the intermediate team also winning."

With four senior medals now in her possession, Leanne savoured yesterday's victory.

"Last year I lost my place in the starting team. I was delighted we won but I vowed I would not be sitting watching again this year. I changed a few things and got myself right and worked really hard and I am delighted that the management gave me a chance and I'm thrilled with the win."

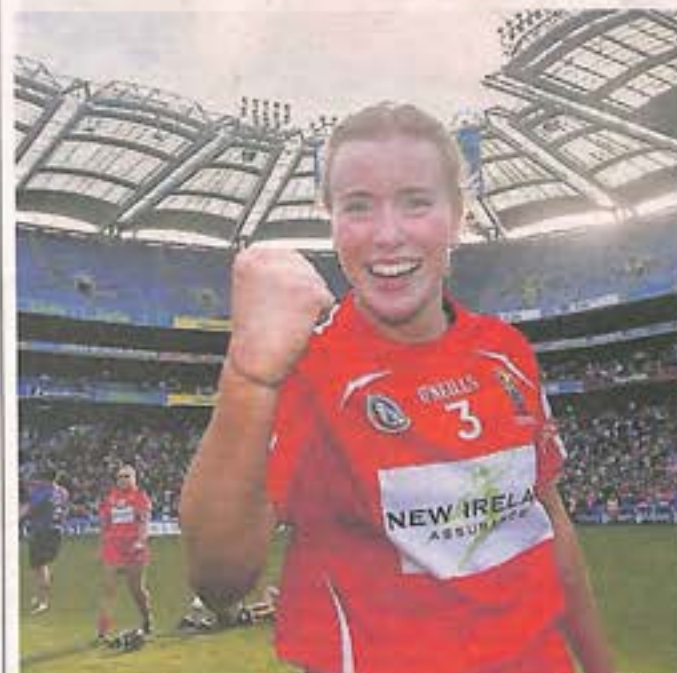
Last year's player of the game, Orla Cronin, wasn't as prominent as in last year's final but she worked so hard over the hour and her two points in the two minutes of injury time in the first half were very important.

"We were two down as half time approached but I got the chances and I went for it. To be honest, they were hard-earned but I was delighted that they both went over and



Molly and Martin O'Brien with the O'Duffy Cup.

Picture: INPHO/Bryan Keane



Fist pump time for Laura Treacy.

Picture: INPHO/Bryan Keane



Orla Cotter scores a late point from a free to secure the victory.

THEY'RE always sweeter when they're against Kilkenny.

Nothing personal (well I'll say that anyway) but we lost some awful games to them in the 1980 and early 90s. Memory doesn't always fade with age.

A single point again!

Before the game, the pre-match change from the Kilkenny camp was Edwina Keane coming in for Miriam Walsh, a defender for a left corner-forward, leading us to believe Kilkenny were again going to play a sweeper against Cork. But general talk was that Keane was always going to start and Kilkenny had a plan.

Well, you'd expect that, wouldn't you. But it didn't happen. Kilkenny played as they did in the semi-final and didn't deserve to win this title. If you're not going to go all out to attack a game, you don't deserve to win it.

Two changes were announced for Cork, Niamh O'Callaghan and Niamh McCarthy making way for Leanne O'Sullivan and Linda Collins. But these four players have shared the starting positions over the campaign, so you couldn't say anyone was dropped. Cork's panel just have options.

It was like a scene from *Dancing with the Stars* before the ball was thrown in with six to eight players shadowing each other almost on top of Aoife

Referee Eamonn Cassidy had to hold up throwing the ball in so the appropriate number of players were in their own halves. I've never seen that before. Did we really expect an open game with a start like that?

It was a strange opening half. Many of Cork's players didn't get on much ball. Katrina Mackey scored their first point from play on 23 minutes to go two ahead before Denise Gaule struck four on the trot, one from play.

Level at the break wasn't a surprise. It was a poor opening half which had opened up in the last five minutes. The referee! To be honest, they are just too much a focal point in our game.

It's fine to say that it's an amateur game and that you shouldn't have a go at the referee, but you can't ignore it. Fussy, inconsistent, not allowing advantage. There's something wrong.

I fully expected Kilkenny to change tactics and attack this game from the outset. Playing a sweeper and then opting at times to deliver long puck-outs



which Cork do. It was obvious to isolate Kilduff, Pam N. Why then over the field? I at only Kilkenny metre line. N game on her. Kilkenny a the second chance in the but Aoife Mu That was a d critical stage I thought

"Mental strength and cool Cork's victory yesterday."

Way to win a final

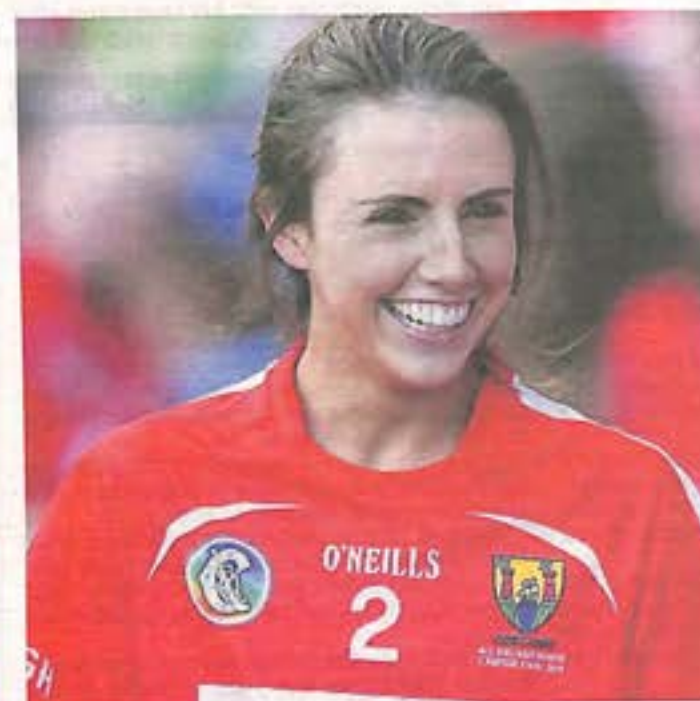
Player ratings



Picture: INPHO/Tommy Dickson



Brieghe Corkery of Cork celebrates with her son Tadhg Scannell, age five months.
Picture: Piaras O Midheach/Sportsfile



Niamh O'Callaghan after the game.

Picture: INPHO/Laszlo Geczo

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lent, so too Pam, Gemma O'Connor, Orla Cotter and Leanne O'Sullivan. Chloe Sigerson hit three mighty points. Up front Orla Cronin again struck two great points to bring the sides level at half time and that was vital. Katrina Mackey struck two and really put herself about.

Was it a great final? No. But who cares.

I'd prefer to win this one than lose a thriller. It was tension stuff all through as we've come to expect from these finals. A cagey, intense affair, we were hopping again in the press box with anticipation of what was going to come next.

Mental strength and coolness were two crucial attributes of Cork's win yesterday. A goal was going to win this game, but one didn't look like coming from either side (Power's attempt aside), so every point was crucial.

Denise Gaule missed two fairly simple frees, always looking uncomfortable when taking a slight angled

shot from the right on her left-hand side. She missed one on 43 minutes to draw Kilkenny level, Cotter responded with a beauty to put Cork two up. Cotter missed one herself on 51 minutes, Gaule pointed a 45 straight after, Kilkenny again ahead by one.

It really was such a tension-filled game that every mistake was greeted with a groan. And Cork made some under pressure but that doesn't matter now.

What a killer point from Orla Cotter. She made Julia White's winner 12 months ago. She was the hero yesterday.

She won the ball twice before winning that free out on the sideline. The free was sticking in Kilkenny throats after the game, strongly feeling it wasn't one.

The referee post the game said it was for a 'trailing leg'. There are days decisions go for you and others they don't. We'll take it! Cotter was immense.

There was a lot of tears in the Kilkenny dressing room after the game. It's a hard one to take for them losing two in a row by a point. But from a red and white perspective, it's the sweetest.

A double for Cork in Croke Park. Minor, intermediate and senior titles in 2018.

I think the last time Cork did that was

■ **Aoife Murray 8:** As dependable as ever. Puck-outs strong and measured. Brought off a difficult save on 52 minutes. It didn't seem much, but it was a crucial one.

■ **Laura Treacy 9:** Played the type of game that has made her one of the best full-backs in the country. Teak tough, calm, doesn't give away needless frees, distribution excellent.

■ **Leanne O'Sullivan 8:** Tidy and efficient, never over fussy on the ball. Having lost her place in 2017, Leanne's 2018 efforts were rewarded yesterday.

■ **Pamela Mackey 9:** Outstanding again yesterday on Kilkenny's most lethal forward, Katie Power. Pam had her in her pocket. Power failed to score. Job done.

■ **Libby Coppinger 7:** Sometimes games pass you by and for a few Cork players yesterday that happened. Libby did nothing wrong. Kilkenny scored just four points from play.

■ **Gemma O'Connor 9:** Another memorable performance in the red and white jersey. Swept up a huge amount of ball. Tracked back and played a sweeper role to great effect.

■ **Chloe Sigerson 9:** Scored three excellent frees. To have a long distance accurate free-taker is rare in camogie. Composed in general play, good distribution.

■ **Julia White 7:** Covered a lot of ground but didn't get on as much ball as she would have liked, primarily due to Kilkenny's defensive strategy. Always a threat which is why Kilkenny played seven defenders.

■ **Ashling Thompson 7:** Tried hard and put herself about a lot but things didn't always go her way. Intercepted a great ball at the end which had she missed would have given Kilkenny a most certain draw.

■ **Amy O'Connor 8:** Worked extremely hard, tracked back the field whenever Kilkenny had possession. Was marked by arguably the toughest corner-back in the game, Grace Walsh.

■ **Orla Cronin 8:** Two excellent points just before half-time had a huge bearing. Kilkenny hit four in a row and had turned a two-point deficit into a two-point lead. The sides went in level.

■ **Orla Cotter 9:** In 2017 Orla gave a top class pass to Julia White to clinch the title. Yesterday she took on the mantle herself. Scored five frees, won the ball twice on the sideline before earning the free and coolly slotted over from close on 60 yards to win the game.

■ **Katrina Mackey 8:** It was difficult to find space, but Mackey struck Cork's first point from play on 23 minutes, scored another just after half time, drew frees and worked her socks off.

■ **Linda Collins 7:** Tried hard and on a couple of occasions nearly found a way through but Kilkenny's defence are dogged and denied Linda getting the space she required.

■ **Hannah Looney 8:** Hannah intercepted some good Kilkenny attacks and burst forward on a number of occasions. Physically her strength is precious to Cork. When in possession she's rarely disposed.

■ **Lauren Homan 7:** On the field for about 14 minutes including additional time. Not too much ball came her way.

■ **Niamh McCarthy:** Introduced

re two crucial attributes of



Minor momentum means third time's a charm for Rebels



Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Premier Intermediate camogie final

CORK.....1-13
DOWN.....0-9

Daragh Ó Conchúir
Croke Park

Finola Neville was grinning from ear to ear and unsurprisingly so, having been a part of the Cork team that lost the last two Liberty Insurance intermediate camogie finals, and 12 months ago after a replay. They made no mistake this time, Caitriona Collins shooting 1-6 and Minor star Saoirse McCarthy four points from play against a Down side who were excellent in the first half but had fallen seven points in arrears when ace forward Sara-Louise Carr was harshly sent off for a second yellow card in the 50th minute.

Cork were sharper for longer though and deserved the honours.

"Unbelievable," said Neville, who set up Collins' crucial 40th-minute goal. "I was just saying to the girls, 'Is this after happening? Is it real?' We've been fighting for this, to get over the line and get up the steps of the Hogan Stand for so long and it's just unbelievable. It's a great feeling."

"The hunger is there. We knew coming back each year, we were there or thereabouts. We were unlucky over the last few years but we knew we had the players."



Katelyn Hickey, Saoirse McCarthy, and Katie Barry celebrate Cork's victory over Down in the Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Intermediate Camogie final at Croke Park yesterday.

"There's a huge workrate and a huge bond, as Sarah Harrington said in her speech. We're best friends. When we got knocked down, we were coming back to get that title." She had a particular word of praise for the members of the All-Ireland-winning minor team that clearly added an X-factor on the biggest stage. "They were fantastic today."

Laura (Hayes), Saoirse played unbelievable on the wing, player of the match today. Cliona Healy came on in the semi-final and probably saved us. There's a great future there for Cork camogie and the minors really stood up today, which was very important. Down manager Martina Rooney was proud of her

charges but displeased with some of John Dermody's decision-making. "There are no words right now," said Rooney. "We were going well in fits and starts. We seemed to get things a lot tougher than the opposition. They were getting maybe frees a lot easier than we were. "As for the sending off...

It'll be interesting to see that again. I don't think either one of them were yellow cards not to mind the second one — I thought it was a free for us. A yellow card offence, most definitely not. "We never gave up, we fought to the bitter end and kept at it. I suppose Dearbhla (Magee) going off [with a blood injury] unsettled us a wee bit."

We had come out of the block really well. "I'm incredibly proud of the girls. I couldn't ask any more of them. Not all fairytales have happy endings. To be here and part of the occasion is amazing. We'll maybe not appreciate it today or tomorrow or next week but the girls will look back on this and learn from it and come back stronger."

Down began brilliantly with early points from Carr and Saoirse Sands, and in Niamh Mallon, had a player fitting of a showpiece affair. McCarthy had the team level but Down moved three ahead with Mallon on fire, her point from tight on the left 60m out from the posts a wonder score.

They failed to score in the second quarter though and Cork went into the dressing rooms leading by 0-7 to 0-5.

Mallon and Sands restored parity within five minutes of the restart but it was all Cork from there, Paudie Murray crew leading by three when Collins rocketed the net and there was no way back.

Scorers for Cork: C Collins (1-6, frees); S McCarthy (0-4); C Sugrue (0-2); C Healy (0-1 free)

Scorers for Down: N Mallon (0-6, frees); S Sands (0-2); P Gribben, S Carr, F Carr (1) (0-1 each)

CORK: A Lee, N Ni Chaoimh, S Harrington, J Barry, S Hutchinson, L Weste, Callanan, S Buckley, K Hickey, L Hayes, F Neville, S McCarthy, C Collins, McCarthy, C Sugrue

Subs: C Healy for McCarthy (39), O'Callaghan for Sugrue (60), R Killeen for Callanan (60+2)

DOWN: M McNally, N Kelly, A Savage, McGiligan, B Savage, D Magee, Rocks, P Gribben, D Savage, S L Carr, Mallon, A McAleenan, S Sands, F Carr, O Caldwell

Subs: O Gribben for Magee blood (128), Gribben for Caldwell (29), C Cowley for McGiligan (52)

Referee: J Dermody (Westmeath)

Determined Dubs erase last year's heartbreak



Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Premier Junior camogie final

DUBLIN.....1-12
KERRY.....0-6

Daragh Ó Conchúir
Croke Park

Shane Ploughman hailed the determination of his squad to come back from the heartbreak of losing last year's Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Premier Junior final and make amends in style. The Dublin manager took time to commend Kerry on

their first appearance at Croke Park and predicted that their day will come.

"It's absolutely fabulous," said Ploughman of the nine-point victory.

"To come here last year and walk away so hurt, we thought we had enough (to win), came up against a very good Westmeath team."

"We really did promise ourselves we'd dust ourselves off and do whatever we had to do to get back here today. It's a credit to the girls, they left nothing out there. It's great for the girls and great for Dublin camogie going forward."

"We tried to put down a marker, we wanted to go at them from the start and in fairness, they kept at us, they wouldn't let us get away from them. They're a good team and they will be back."



Dublin's Hannah O'Dea tries to block down Kerry's Laura Collins during the All-Ireland Junior Camogie final.

Bugler, who had only returned from a cruciate knee ligament injury for the All-

Ireland semi-final victory over Offaly, was a critical score.

"They were holding us out, we were trying to get the ball into Aoife (Bugler) — their full-back (Niamh Leen) was a good player, a real handful for Aoife but once she got the turn on her there was only one place it was going and it took a big lump of energy out of them. It gave us a chance to get a few more points and push forward."

It was a cracking finish by the full-forward, the result of an astute delivery by Laoise Quinn, who along with player of the match Caragh Dawson and centre-back Deirdre Johnstone had huge games.

Kerry had no shortage of top performers too, with Leen magnificent at full-back and Patrice Diggin taking it to Dublin at every opportunity.

Dublin had too much firepower though. They led by 1-6 to 0-2 at halftime and were able to see it out, finishing off

with a point from captain Emer Keenan, on the field matter of seconds after suffering her own cruciate knee ligament injury four months previously.

Scorers for Dublin: A Bugler 1-3 (0-2), A Dillon 0-3 (fs); S Wyld, L Quinn (15) each; C Dawson, E Keenan 0-1.

Scorers for Kerry: P Diggin 0-5 (fs); Collins 0-1.

DUBLIN: K Kantounia, E O'Riordan, Gleeson, S Murphy, E Barron, D Johnstone, C Ni Mhaolagáin, H O'Dea, Wyld, C Dawson, A Dillon, A Dooley, Walsh, A Bugler, L Quinn

Subs: L O'Shea for Dillon (38), E Twomey for Dooley (56), L Walsh for Bugler (60+2), E Keenan for Walsh (60+5)

KERRY: A Fitzgerald, L Houlihan, Leen, M Costello, A O'Connor, Murphy, E Harrington, O Young, Diggin, C Shanahan, L Collins, A Behan, J Zell, J Horgan, N Casey

Subs: R McCarthy for Harrington (25), E Ryan for O'Connor (41), A Walsh for Casey (48), K Buckley for Shanahan (55), J O'Keefe for Fitzgerald (58)

Referee: A Doherty (Laois)



Saoirse McCarthy and Ashling Thompson celebrate after the senior victory. Picture: Piaras Ó Midheach/Sportsfile



Katelyn Hickey celebrates Cork's victory over Down at the final whistle. Picture: INPHO/Laszlo Gecz

Award tops glorious year for McCarthy

SOURCEY ROVERS star Saoirse McCarthy capped an unforgettable year when she was named player of the match in Cork's All-Ireland Intermediate Camogie Championship success over Down at Croke Park yesterday.

Having already secured an All-Ireland minor crown with the Leesiders, McCarthy amassed four points over the course of the hour to help Paudie Murray's side end a 12-year wait for the second-tier crown.

She was also named on the Cork bench for their heart-stopping senior triumph against Kilkenny in the showcase event at Jones' Rd and was quick to pinpoint the special bond that exists between both squads.

"We train on the same pitch, the same nights. We're always in contact with them."

"With those people on that team. Ashling Thompson, Briege Corkery, and Gemma O'Connor, they're all

CAMOGIE

■ Daire Walsh

superstars," McCarthy explained in the players' tunnel after the game.

"They're all All-Stars. Coming onto that team at the start of the year was mental. They're an inspiration to everyone."

While they had seven points to spare (1-13 to 0-9) over the Mourne county in the end, it was a much closer affair than their comprehensive group stage win at the expense of the same team in July.

The gap was 12 points (0-18 to 0-6) on that occasion, but McCarthy felt Cork's superior fitness was one of the key reasons why they were able to push on in the second half.

"We knew that they were going to put it up to us," she said.

"At the end of the day, I kind of knew we were going to have the legs on them."

"I wasn't confident, but I was definitely not afraid. I knew how to work our way around them."

Give this was her first year on the panel, McCarthy didn't suffer the heartache of final defeats to Kilkenny and Meath in the past two seasons. She is acutely aware of what this win means for the older members of the squad, however, and also believes it can be a stepping stone for greater achievements in the years to come.

"The girls definitely deserved this and I'm so happy for them. Especially the older ones, who have lost the couple in the last couple of years."

"The intermediate team is very young yet. There are loads of girls like me and we're all minors. We have many years ahead hopefully," McCarthy added.



Saoirse McCarthy of Cork in action against Dearbhla Magee of Down during the intermediate final. Picture: David Fitzgerald/Sportsfile



Aisling Ní Chanáin drives out with the sliotar on her hurley. Picture: INPHO/Bryan Keane



Cork goalkeeper Amy Lee celebrates her side's goal at Croke Park yesterday. Picture: INPHO/Laszlo Gecz



JUDITH:
Cork's Gemma O'Connor (right) celebrates with teammates at the final whistle. Left: Hannah Looney of Cork throws the O'Duffy Cup in the air. Far left: Dejected members of the Kilkenny team. Photos: David Fitzgerald/Caroline Quinn



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Fans go through wringer as Rebels edge out Cats for two-in-a-row triumph

Laura Lynott
AT CROKE PARK



THEY had been here before, but for their nervous fans that didn't make it any easier. The ladies of Cork and Kilkenny squared up for their third All-Ireland Senior Camogie Final in a row and an almighty, nail-biting battle was guaranteed.

By the time the final whistle blew, the 21,000 fans in Croke Park had been put through the wringer, with barely a nail or a breath left.

Cork retained the title but, for the second year, victory was theirs by the tightest of margins – just one point.

The sides were level no fewer than eight times during the thrilling match.

The raw emotion of Cork captain Aoife Murray was evident as she lifted the O'Duffy Cup. But she was here not for fame or sporting glory, but for the girls and women of Cork.

"It's immense pride for me to stand here with some of the finest women, it's an immense honour for me to stand here and I hope we did you justice," Aoife told RTE Sport.

"I couldn't be prouder of you, girls. I know we are going to make the most of this. I really am living my childhood dream."

Wearing a red bandanna, Murray looked every inch the rebel as she paid tribute to the Cats "for bringing out the best in us".

But as the Rebels posed for photographs and provided the perfect shot for the morning papers, with Briege Corkery's young son sitting in the cup, it was all a little too much for the battle-worn Cats, who lay strewn across the pitch.

For the exuberant Cork fans, the journey up to Dublin had paid off handsomely – although many said just being there to support the players was reason enough to make the trip.

Little Easkey Duggan (2) and her mother, Carrie Budels, had travelled from their home in Youghal.

While delighted with the result, for Carrie it was "vital" to be in Croke Park so Easkey could see the women in action.

"Easkey is two and she loves all sport. She watches rugby, hurling, football, but I want her to see women playing at the highest level so she can see women to look up to and know it's possible to get there."

Also up from Youghal were the O'Brien family – dad Olly and his son Finn and four-year-old daughter Tara.

"Today is Tara's day," said Olly. "It's great for my daughter to be at the women's final, to see girls at the pinnacle of sport and she's very excited to see Cork win."

James Mulcahy (7) had travelled from Middleton to support his teacher at Ballintotis National School in Castlemartyr, Niamh O'Callaghan.

"It's great that James is getting to see his teacher play," said his dad Tony.

"But being here today is about much more. Boys and men need to support women's sport. It's been a fantastic year for Irish women's sport and it's getting better."



Cork's Finola Neville and Niamh Ni Chaoimh celebrate after the intermediate win.

CORK Group 2

- 09/06/2018 Cork 1-19 Wexford 0-7 (W)
- 24/06/2018 Cork 4-15 Dublin 2-3 (W)
- 07/07/2018 Tipperary 1-12 Cork 1-27 (W)
- 14/07/2018 Meath 0-6 Cork 3-21 (W)
- 22/07/2018 Cork 6-18 Offaly 3-4 (W)

Semi-Final

- 18/08/2018 Cork 0-21 Tipperary 0-9 (W)

KILKENNY Group 1

- 09/06/2018 Limerick 0-11 Kilkenny 2-18 (W)
- 30/06/2018 Waterford 0-10 Kilkenny 1-13 (W)
- 14/07/2018 Kilkenny 4-13 Clare 0-2 (W)
- 22/07/2018 Kilkenny 1-17 Galway 0-13 (W)

Semi-Final

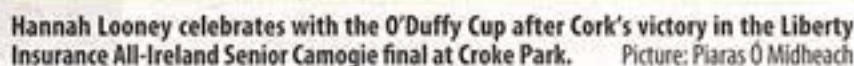
- 18/08/2018 Galway 1-7 Kilkenny 1-10 (W)

Thank goodness for September Sundays. Even though the hurling championship, in its new compressed, more efficient form, no longer involves a September day out, we still have camogie. It's the pinnacle of the year, in which the women's code takes over Croker for the day and the RTE TV schedule while they're at it. Yesterday, the junior, intermediate and senior titles were all decided on that immaculate plaid-striped pitch.

In the end, the final was nearly a carbon copy of last year's tight, dogged, point-for-point affair. Last year's attendance was the biggest ever at 20,438; this year shaded it with 21,453. Last year's game was the first goalless final since 2009. This year repeated that clean-sheet statistic — though were it not for Aoife Murray's cool head and quick reactions in the 52nd minute, saving both a kicked and handpassed

Eimear Ryan

Kilkenny's defensive setup meant that often their only option was to run at the Cork defence and hope to draw a free. They hit plenty of high



The entertaining intermediate final, which saw a brilliant young Cork team end years of hurt, had one bitter note: the sending off of Down's Sara-Louise Carr in the 48th minute.

In the long run, the rulebook is something that the Camogie Association will have to look at. The fact that shoulder-to-shoulder contact is still technically prohibited shows the need for an update. Jostling is an inevitable part of the sport — whether the players are male or female, U12 or senior, club or intercounty. Please don't ask our female players to hold back when all they want to do is drive on.

Collins helps drive Cork to end intermediate torment

That didn't affect the result however but scuppered any hopes Down had of making it back. They started the game with skipper Fionnuala Carr at full-forward, which was surprising given that the tactic had failed in the semi-final and

Down enjoyed their best pe-

Down couldn't threaten Amy Lee's goal and Cork was finally able to end their intermediate torment.

Bugler's early goal proves crucial in Dublin victory

Bugler, who was premier junior player of the year last season, was named to the team.

Pointed frees
Patrice Diggin settled Kerry with a couple of pointed frees but Aoibhe Dillon did likewise at the other end, showing good composure in doing so having missed two early opportunities.

Within minutes, Keenan was lifting the trophy named in honour of Dublin's greatest player Kay Mills.

CORIC: A Lee, N N Chao, S H Harrington, J Barry, S Hutchinson, L Weste, L Callanen, S Buckley, K Hickey, L Hayes, F Neville. **5-McCarthy (0-4), Collins (1-0, 0-4 free), M McCarthy: C Surge (0-2), Sub: C Healy (0-1, free)** for McCarthy (58, R) Callaghan for Surge (60, R) Wilson for McCarthy (60+2).

DOWN: M McNally, N Kelly, A Savage, C McGilligan, B Savage, D Magee, C Rocks, **P Gribben (0-1), D Savage, S Carr (0-1), N Mallon (0-4, two free), A McAlzean, S Sands (0-2), F Carr (0-1, free), O Caldwell, Sub: J Gribben for Magee blood (14-28), Gribben for Caldwell (29), C Cowan for Caldwell (30).**

Reference: J Dermody (Westmeath).

DUBLIN: K Kantoria, R Riordan, N Gleeson, S Murphy, E Barron, D Johnstone, C Ní Mhaoldúin, O Dine, S Wylie (0-2), C Dawson (0-1), **Addison** (3-3, free), A Dooly, A Walsh, **Aughran** (1-3, 0-frees), **L Quinn** (0-2, one free), **Subject**, L O'Shea for Dillon (58), E Twomey for Dooly (58), L Walsh for Aughran (58-2).

KERRY: A Fitzgerald, L Houldhan, N Linn, M Costello, A O'Connor, S Murphy, E Harrington, O Young, P Diggin (0-5, frees), C Shanahan, **L Collins** (0-4), A Behan, J Fitzell, J Horgan, N Cooney, Subrs R McCarthy for Harrington (25 mins), E Ryall for O'Connor (41), A Whelan for Cooney (46), K Buckley for Shanahan (55), J O'Keefe for Fitzell (55).

Referee: A Doherty (Lisak).

Dublin, Premier Junior



Back Row Left to Right:

Ciara Carolan, Laoise Quinn, Caragh Dawson, Niamh Gleeson, Louise O'Shea, Shauna McBride, Aoife Bugler, Caoimhe Ní Mhaolagáin, Aoife Dillon, Sinéad Murphy, Aoife Walsh, Ciara Buchanan, Evelyn Twomey, Kathryn Kantounia, Laura Walsh, Rachel Noctor.

Front Row Left to Right:

Gráinne Power, Aisling Spillane, Aoife Dooley, Emma Barron, Emma O'Flynn, Emer Keenan (Captain), Deirdre Johnstone, Nadine Murphy, Sinéad Nolan, Chloe Ní Cheallaigh, Hannah O'Dea, Eimear O'Riordan, Gráinne Free, Sinéad Wylde.



DUBLIN

PREMIER JUNIOR TEAM

Baile Átha Cliath - Corm & Dubh Gorm



IONADAÍ

16 Aisling Spillane
A. Ní Spalláin
Skerries Harps

17 Chloe Ní Cheallaigh
C. Ní Cheallaigh
Naomh Olaf

18 Aoife Dooley
A. Ní Dhuiláir
Raheny

19 Nadine Murphy
N. Ní Mhurchú
Naomh Uinsionn

20 Gráinne Power
G. de Paor
Naomh Mearnóg

21 Evelyn Twomey
E. Ní Thuama
Naomh Uinsionn

22 Gráinne Free
G. Ní Shairé
Na Fionna

23 Laura Walsh
L. Bhreathnach
Naomh Mearnóg

24 Emma O'Flynn
E. Ní Fhlann
Lucan Sarsfields

25 Ciara Carolan
C. Ní Chearúillán
St. Oliver Plunkett English Road

26 Sinéad Nolan
S. Ní Nualláin
Naomh Jude

27 Rachel Noctor
R. Ní Chomhghair
Kilmacud Crokes

28 Shauna McBride
S. Ní Brighde
Naomh Uinsionn

29 Emer Keenan (C)
E. Ní Chardán
Lucan Sarsfields

30 Ciara Buchanan
C. Ní Bhucháin
St. Finians

TEAM OFFICIALS

Bainisteoir: Shane Florman

Maor Foime: Willie Braine

Roghndóir: Ann Colgan

Physio: Dee Quinn

Camán/Uisce: Georgina Florman

Camán/Uisce: Roisin Baker

Camán/Uisce: Aisling Carolan

Kerry, Premier Junior



Back Row Left to Right:
Aoife Fitzgerald, Alannah Whelan, Eilish Harrington, Aoife Behan, Michelle Costello, Liz Houlihan, Orla Young, Megan Weir, Julianne O'Keeffe, Jessica Fitzell, Kate Buckley, Emma Lawlor, Rachel Burke, Elaine Ryall, Aine O'Connor.

Front Row Left to Right:
Rachel McCarthy, Katelyn O'Connor, Patrice Diggin, Laura Collins, Jackie Horgan (Captain), Sara Murphy, Caoimhe Shanahan, Norette Casey, Niamh Leen, Niamh Rid.
Missing from Photo: Alanna Maunsell, Brid Horan.



KERRY PREMIER JUNIOR TEAM

Ciarraí - Glas & Or



IONADAÍ

16. Elaine Ryall
E. Ní Raghallaigh
Clannaurice

17. Rachel McCarthy
R. Ní Chárthaigh
Clannaurice

18. Julianne O'Keeffe
S. Ní Chasáin
Clannaurice

19. Kate Buckley
C. Ní Bhuidéalla
Cassway

20. Alannah Whelan
A. Ní Fhaoilín
Clannaurice

21. Katelyn O'Connor
C. Ní Chonchúir
Cassway

22. Rachel Burke
R. de Búrca
Clannaurice

23. Megan Weir
M. Ní an Mhaoin
Clannaurice

24. Emma Lawlor
E. Ní Leathlobhain
Clannaurice

25. Alanna Maunsell
A. Máinúil
Clannaurice

26. Brid Horan
B. Ní Órlaín
Cassway

27. Niamh Rid
N. Rid
Clannaurice

TEAM OFFICIALS

Bainisteoir: Stephen Goggin
Maor Foime: Gary O'Brien
Roghnaí: Pete Young
Physio: Erin Sheehan
Camán/Uisce: Danny Guerin
Camán/Uisce: Anthony Fealy
Camán/Uisce: Joanne Diggin

Player Profiles - Dublin



Aoife Dooley - Raheny
Medical Laboratory Technician
Forward
Nat League title.



Aoibhe Dillon - Naomh Mearnóg
Student
Forward
Nat League title.



Aoife Bugler -
St. Oliver Plunketts Eoghan Ruadh
Teacher
Forward
Nat League title, Soaring Stars Award, Players' Player of the Year.



Aoife Walsh - Naomh Jude
Student
Forward
Nat League title.



Aishling Spillane - Skerries Harps
Genetic Technologist
Goalkeeper
All-Ireland Junior C'ship title, 2 Nat league titles, Leinster U16 C'ship title.



Caoimhe Ní Mhaolagáin -
St. Oliver Plunketts Eoghan Ruadh
Student
Defender
Nat league title, Leinster Minor C'ship title.



Caragh Dawson - Naomh Jude
Student
Forward
Nat League title.



Chloe Ní Cheallaigh - Naomh Ola
Student
Defender
Nat League title.



Ciara Buchanan - St. Finians
Student
Defender
Nat League title.



Ciara Carolan -
St. Oliver Plunketts Eoghan Ruadh
Student
Forward
Nat League title, All-Ireland U16 title.



Deirdre Johnstone - Naomh Uins
Múinteoir Bunscoile
Defender
Nat League title.



Eimear O'Riordan - Naomh Jude
Student
Defender
Nat League title.



Emer Keenan - Lucan Sarsfields
Digital Customer Journey
Forward
All-Ireland Junior C'ship title, Nat league



Emma Barron - Naomh Jude
Oncology Nurse
Defender
Nat League title.



Louise O'Shea - Balinteer St.
Student
Midfield
Leinster U16 title.



Nadine Murphy - Naomh Uin
Student
Forward
Nat League title, Leinster Minor Shi



Niamh Gleeson - Na Fianna
Student
Defender
Nat League title, Leinster Minor Shi



Rachel Noctor - Kilmacud Cr
Teacher
Defender
All-Ireland Junior C'ship title.



Shauna McBride - Naomh Uin
Nurse / Student Teacher
Defender



Sinéad Murphy - Cuala
Student
Defender



Sinéad Nolan - Naomh Jude
Physiotherapist
Forward
Nat League title.



Sinéad Wylde - Cuala
Student
Forward
2 Leinster Minor Shield titles.



Emma O'Flynn - Lucan Sarsfields
Student
Defender
Nat League title, Leinster Minor Shield title.



Evelyn Twomey - Naomh Uinsionn
Student
Forward
Leinster Minor Shield title.



Gráinne Free - Na Fianna
Teacher
Defender
All-Ireland Junior C'ship title, Nat league title.



Gráinne Power - Naomh Mearnóg
Nurse
Midfield
Nat League title.



Hannah O'Dea - Cuala
Student
Midfield
Leinster U16 title.



Kathryn Kantounia - Naomh Uinsionn
Head of Operations at Facebook
Goalkeeper



Laoise Quinn -
St. Oliver Plunketts Eoghan Ruadh
Student
Forward
Nat League title, All-Ireland Junior C'ship title.



Laura Walsh - Naomh Mearnóg
Student
Forward
Nat League title.

Player Profiles - Kerry



Aoife Fitzgerald - Clanmaurice
Apprentice Plumber
Goalkeeper
Nat League title, Munster Junior C'ship title.



Liz Houlihan - Clanmaurice
Fitness Instructor
Defender
Nat League title, 2 Munster Junior C'ship titles.



Niamh Leen - Clanmaurice
Student
Defender
2 Nat League titles, 2 Munster Junior C'ship titles.



Michelle Costello - Clanmaurice
Teacher
Defender
2 Nat League titles, 2 Munster Junior C'ship titles.



Áine O'Connor - Clanmaurice
Student
Defender
2 Nat League titles, 2 Munster Junior C'ship titles.



Sara Murphy - Clanmaurice
Administrator
Defender
2 Nat League titles, 2 Munster Junior C'ship titles.



Eilish Harrington - Clanmaurice
Student
Defender
Nat League Div 3 title, Munster Junior C'ship title, Minor All-Ireland Shield title.



Orla Young - Clanmaurice
Administrator
Midfield
2 Nat League titles, 2 Munster Junior C'ship titles.



Patrice Duggin - Clanmaurice
South Kerry Hurling GDA
Midfield
2 Nat League titles, 2 Munster Junior C'ship titles.



Caoimhe Shanahan - Causeway
Student
Forward
Nat League Div 3 title, Minor All-Ireland Shield.



Laura Collins - Clanmaurice
Self Employed
Midfield
2 Nat League titles, 2 Munster Junior C'ship titles.



Aoife Behan - Clanmaurice
Student
Forward
2 Nat League titles, 2 Munster Junior C'ship titles.



Jessica Fitzell - Clanmaurice
Student
Forward
2 Nat League titles, 2 Munster Junior C'ship titles.



Jackie Horgan - Clanmaurice
Student
Forward
2 Nat League titles, 2 Munster Junior C'ship titles.



Norette Casey - Clanmaurice
Student
Forward
Nat League title, Munster Junior C'ship title, All-Ireland Minor Shield title.



Elaine Ryall - Clanmaurice
Bus Driver
Defender
2 Nat League titles, 2 Munster Junior C'ship titles.



Rachel McCarthy - Clanmaurice
Student
Defender
Nat League title, Munster Junior C'ship title, All-Ireland Minor Shield title.



Julianne O'Keeffe - Clanmaurice
Student
Forward
2 Nat League titles, 2 Munster Junior C'ship titles.



Kate Buckley - Causeway
Student
Forward
Nat League title, All-Ireland Minor Shield title.



Alannah Whelan - Clanmaurice
Student
Forward
Nat League title, Munster Junior C'ship title, All-Ireland Minor Shield title.



Katelyn O'Connor - Causeway
Student
Midfield
Nat League Div 3 title, Minor All-Ireland Shield title.



Rachel Burke - Clanmaurice
Student
Defender
Nat League title, All-Ireland Minor Shield.



Megan Weir - Clanmaurice
Student
Forward
2 Nat League titles, 2 Munster Junior C'ship titles.



Emma Lawlor - Clanmaurice
Student
Defender
Nat League title, All-Ireland Minor Shield.



Alanna Maunsell - Clanmaurice
Medical Scientist
Goalkeeper
2 Nat League titles, 2 Munster Junior C'ship titles.



Brid Horan - Cillard
Student
Forward
Nat League title, All-Ireland Minor Shield title.



Niamh Rid - Clanmaurice
Student
Forward
Nat League title.



Cork's secret is that they care more than anyone else

Single-point victory showcased Rebelettes' unrivalled ability to stay calm under pressure

ALL the single-point victory ladies put their hands up. Cork's minimum margin win over Kilkenny makes them the first team in camogie history to capture successive All-Ireland finals by one point.

It's an unprecedented achievement but not an entirely unexpected one. The single point All-Ireland final win was the signature triumph of the Cork ladies football team which managed five between 2006 and 2016.

Something in the Rebelette psyche relishes such denouements. When the sides entered the closing stages neck and neck yesterday, the writing was on the wall for the women from Kilkenny.

The Cork football team's achievements have tended to overshadow those of their camogie colleagues.

But this victory is the fourth in five years for the latter, something only four other sides have managed in the past half-century. They possess a sangfroid, a ruthlessness and an ability to deliver under pressure which makes them remarkable.

Cork are a great team but this was far from a great final. Both teams were hampered by the fussy performance of Derry referee Eamon Cassidy.

Cassidy's Whistle Concerto in CP meant the game largely proceeded in fits and starts. The mildest of physical challenges brought a free, the advantage rule was rarely used and both sides looked frustrated by the jagged rhythm of the game.

Yet, crucially, it was Kilkenny who suffered most at Cassidy's hands. The early penalty he awarded to Cork was dubious and two yellow cards imposed on Kilkenny players



Ashling Thompson of Cork shows her determination as she gets away from Kilkenny's Katie Power. PHARAS O'NEILL/SPORTSFILE

not much less so. More questionable still were the two frees which yielded Cork's final scores.

When Davina Tobin was penalised for charging two minutes from time the free could have gone the other way or not been awarded at all. Chloe Sigerson converted it superbly but you felt this would be a very unsatisfactory way to decide an All-Ireland final. Denise Gaule equalised but,

as the game moved into injury-time, there was further controversy.

Cassidy indicated that Orla Cotter had been tripped on the right wing though the Cork forward seemed to slip as she sought to elude defenders. Kilkenny manager Ann Downey was incensed. Cotter got up and scored the match-winning free.

Had such a borderline call decided a men's game of similar importance

we'd have been in booing, ref jostling and garda escort territory. Camogie is too civilised for that but the controversial decisions are sure to haunt Kilkenny. It's not been the best of weekends for male officials in women's sport.

Yet you can't say the Derry maestro cost Kilkenny the game. Enough time remained for Claire Phelan to shoot wide when she might have

Their cup runneth over



Five-month-old Tadhg Scannell, son of Cork star Brieghe Corkery, is less than impressed at the county's victory in the All-Ireland Senior Camogie Championship final at Croke Park yesterday. Corkery, who had retired from playing, made a dramatic and popular return to the panel during the championship and played in the semi-final, though she was not on the field yesterday as her team-mates saw off Kilkenny 0-14 to 0-13 to retain their title. SEE: Monday Sport

Picture: INPHO/James Crombie

Bloodied but unbowed – Murray in seventh heaven

Cork reaction

John Fogarty

Paudie Murray admits he is tempted to stay on as Cork senior manager with the aim of guiding them to a third consecutive title in 2019.

Murray decided earlier this year that this, his seventh season, would be his last but he might be persuaded to remain on if experienced players like his sister Aoife, Orla Cotter and Gemma O'Connor make themselves available again.

After guiding the intermediates to All-Ireland glory too, he said: "I'd kinda made up my own mind earlier this year that this was it but from the players' point of view, every player wants to be considered a great player and every team... to do that you need three-in-a-row."

"A lot will depend on Aoife, Gemma and Orla Cotter, whether they stay around but it's something that hasn't been done by this team. If those three players want to be considered among the greats of the game that's important for them. I'm seven years there now, four or five dealing with two teams so it isn't easy as I have a job as well so it's very difficult. Camogie's gone much similar to hurling and football now, the level of hours that go into it is frightening at this stage, you're just flat out."

"Niall Collins (performance analyst) spends 14 hours breaking a game down – that'll tell you the time that's going into it."

"I'll sit back and chill out for a few weeks and make up my own mind. I'll certainly be involved in a team next year. I am ambitious so I'd like to do something else, you know."

Murray, who cut his eye against a camera in the celebrations at the final whistle, didn't see the winning free awarded to Orla Cotter.

On the subject of the refereeing, he reiterated his view that the game has to change.

"Look it, we can all talk about the refereeing of camogie and does it need to be ti-



BLOOD AND BANDAGE: Cork manager Paudie Murray has a wound dressed by Cork conditioning, strength, and movement coach Liam O'Reilly, after an accidental collision with a cameraman following the final whistle in Croke Park yesterday.

Picture: Inpho/Tommy Dickson

died up? Yes, it does. I've said that a number of times.

"I think the way the rules are at the moment makes it impossible for a referee to referee the game. Eamon Cassidy is probably one of the top two referees in the country but there is so much in relation to the contact area, what is a free, what isn't a free, that it's

next to impossible [to judge]. If a player charges with a shoulder, it's just impossible. I don't think it's going to change too easy."

"I think they have to – and I've said it before – that the rules have to change and go more towards the hurling and let contact be there."

"I certainly would think

that the majority of players I have spoken to would be in favour of that and I think then you would have more of a flow to your game. We sit down with our players and talk to them about what they should and should not be doing and we try to train for it but it's next to impossible."

Cork and Kilkenny have

pushed beyond the boundaries of camogie and that fact needs to be reflected, says Murray.

"I think both counties should be congratulated for that. I came into the camogie not to continue it the way it was; I came in to train the games like the hurlers and the footballers in our county and

Pundits take to Twitter to castigate referee

Former Kilkenny hurling stars Eoin Larkin and Richie Power were among the Twitter pundits unhappy with the performance of referee Eamon Cassidy.

■ **Linda Mellerick?**
@LMellerick

Minor intermediate and senior titles for Cork but absolutely appalling refereeing @OfficialCamogie. Getting really fed up with this.

■ **Eoin Larkin @11larky**
From corks penalty to Katie powers yellow card to kks penalty call to the last free. There was any amount of decisions... but that won't make kks disappointment any easier

■ **Richie Power @power_richie**
For 2 teams to put in that much effort all year and to have that on all Ireland final day is so wrong it's not worth talking about.

■ **Conor.mortimer @Conmort**
I would be livid if I was from Kilkenny.

■ **Mark Poland? @polle11**
Common sense has just disappeared from all refereeing.

■ **Seoirse Bulfin? @SeoirseBulfin**

I've never been more thankful for @officialgaa referee's than I have after watching that first 40 minutes of the @OfficialCamogie final #Camogie

we pride ourselves on that. We want to be the best prepared team and that's the way things are going at the moment and Kilkenny would be the same way. Girls are fitter, they're stronger, their skill levels are better, they're being prepared better from a mental and a tactical point of view so you know..."

Downey: We came out the wrong side of a lot of calls

Kilkenny reaction

John Fogarty
Croke Park

No amount of complaining will change the result, but Kilkenny manager, Ann Downey, said Eamon Cassidy's refereeing was harsh on her team. Downey was livid when Cassidy signalled a late free to Orla Cotter and believes that it was not an infringement, having watched it again in the dressing room.

Downey said: "Without

criticising Eamon, definitely, Orla was already falling. Our players were around her, but hadn't touched her. I thought it was a harsh enough free, as you saw from my reaction on the line. I thought the free against Davina (Tobin), as well, there was two hard calls on us."

"Eamon will have to look at his own performance and judge himself. I'm not going to give out about him."

"It is what it is. It's not going to be able to change the result; we have to be able to take it on the chin and move on."

She continued: "Well, it's disappointing and devastating for the girls. We've trained so hard, as hard as Cork did for the last number of months, to come out on the wrong side, for the second year in-a-row, by one point and for what I would consider two bad decisions, but, again, it's not all down to the referee. It is what it is."

"Maybe the Camogie (Association) might have a look at it and decide that, maybe, they'll get in James McGrath, now that he's free!"

"He might do a coaching

course, or something, with the referees, I don't know. I don't know what the answer is, but I think, maybe, we're just too strict on the whole physical thing and maybe too many soft frees are awarded."

"Something will have to happen, because it is a contact sport and physical game. A few times, he had his hand up for advantage and no advantage accrued to us and nothing came of it. That was a bit disappointing, as well."

"It's either an advantage or it isn't and it's up to the referee to call it back and give the

free, if nothing has come. That happened to us two or three times in the second-half."

Going back to the penalty against Denise Gaule, Kilkenny had reasons to lament their fortune. "I thought that (was harsh), to be quite honest. Again, we looked back on it and I think it was Colette (Dormer) got a flick of the ball and she never touched the player. But these things happen: a referee, like the players, is not going to get everything right. I thought, maybe, we came out the wrong side of a lot of calls."



Ann Downey: says refereeing was harsh on Kilkenny.

Cork camogie heroes



Full-back Laura Treacy celebrates with supporters after Cork's win over Kilkenny in the Liberty Insurance All-Ireland senior camogie championship final at Croke Park yesterday. See eight-page supplement in centre and Echo Sport for more.



Young fans celebrating after Cork's double win at Croke Park yesterday.



Linda Collins and Laura Treacy celebrate the win over the Cats.



Orla Cotter, who scored the winning point, with her niece Fia O'Tuama.



A joyous Ashling Thompson after the final whistle went.



Senior captain Aoife Murray lifts the O'Duffy Cup (left) and Intermediate captain Sarah Harrington lifts the Jack McGrath Cup (right) in a day of double camogie delight for Cork in Croke Park yesterday. Main picture: Chloe Sigerson, Hannah Looney, Laura Treacy, Orla Cotter, Libby Coppinger, and Gemma O'Connor relax with the O'Duffy Cup after the Senior Camogie Championship Final. Picture: Piaras Ó Midheach/Sportsfile

Heroic homecoming for Cork's All-Ireland-winning teams

Conall Ó Fátharta

If the Cork hurlers have been the nearly men in recent years, the ladies are the every-year women.

They say winning is a habit and the Cork camogie team certainly seem to prove that.

Sunday's dramatic injury-time victory over Kilkenny made it two in a row. Only that pesky loss to arch rivals Kilkenny in 2016 and this would have been five in a row.

Hey, four out of five ain't bad, though.

If you want records, Cork camogie is stacked with them. Most All-Ireland wins of any county? That would be Cork. The most decorated player in GAA history? Well, Cork have both of them — Rena Buckley and, as of Sunday, Briege Corkery have 36 All-Ireland medals between them.

Not only that, Cork won the senior and intermediate championships this year — both managed by Paudie Murray; his sister Aoife is the senior captain.

Let's face it, things are looking rosy in the Cork camogie world.

A large crowd braved what was a miserable night to greet their heroes on South Mall last night. And not just women and young girls; men who have seen a fair few All-Irelands come this way also braved the weather.

Men were talking about the "fierce belief" of the team and their nerves going into the last 10 minutes. These women are what the Kilkenny hurlers were a few years back. They look invincible.

As both teams came on the back of the truck on South Mall last night, Briege got the biggest roar of the night but preferred to stay at the back and out of the limelight.

It was the same with Ashling Thompson, who sat by the side of the stage and looked the picture of contentment, happy to see others take centre stage.

The team left the speeches to others but the crowd were treated to plenty of hits. As Queen's 'We are the Champions' and Cyndi Lauper's 'Girls Just Wanna Have Fun' blasted out, it was the intermediate team making sure that the stage was bouncing while the seniors have seen it all before.

There was more than one quip about the men needing to pull the finger out and get back to Croke Park for a crack at taking back the Liam MacCarthy but this was a night for women of all ages.

As Bishop of Cork John Buckley said: "Where would we be without the women?"

"As I often say, if you want a job done, ask a woman. If you want someone to talk about it, ask a man."

Judging by the amount of young girls with hurleys turning out to see their heroes, Cork has a few more heroes yet to come.



Aoife Murray and Sarah Harrington, the Cork senior and intermediate camogie captains, show off the O'Duffy and McGrath Cups to the large faithful on the South Mall in Cork City last night. Picture: Cathal Noonan



Young supporters welcome the winning Cork camogie teams back home last night.



A snapshot of the large crowd that gathered on South Mall, on a miserable Monday night, to welcome home the two-in-a-row winning Cork senior camogie team.



Cork senior camogie coach Paudie Murray with his family Elena, Isabella, and Jennifer at last night's homecoming.



The Cork senior camogie team arrive on South Mall last night.

Pictures: Michael Mac Sweeney/Provision

Murray: Emotions ran high

John Fogarty

Her Cork future is something she will decide another day but captain Aoife Murray was happy if emotional to reveal a key motivating factor for her on Sunday.

Sporting tape around her wrist with the initials S.A. along with those of her mother and father, she divulged it was in honour of her late friend Sally Anne Shannon who passed away following a car accident near Macroom almost 19 years ago. Shannon was a Cloughduv club-mate of Murray and her memory has accompanied Murray in every game.

"I always put her on my wristband. It just keeps her going. Sorry, I'm getting emotional talking about her. But it just reminds me, sometimes in the heat of battle you can lose the head and I look down to it, she always made me laugh for the 17 years that she was alive. She always made me laugh because she did something stupid or said the wrong thing at the extremely right time.

"It just reminds me to look down at her and kind of bring a bit of reality to the situation, and I always smile when I see it. Unfortunately, she passed at a very young age but we all made a promise that we'd keep her going. She would certainly have been in the thick of things today, she would have been keeping the celebrations going."

Emotions were bound to run high on Sunday as Murray was first to walk up the famous Hogan Stand steps. That there were a few glitches in her acceptance speech was perfectly understandable.

"I don't know what hit me going up the steps but I started bawling crying. I was like 'Jeez, pull this together, you've dreamt of this all your life, don't mess it up.' Then a couple of my cards got stuck together and one of those was congratulating the intermedi-



Cork Senior camogie captain Aoife Murray with the All-Ireland trophy at last night's homecoming at the South Mall, Cork.

Picture: Michael Mac Sweeney/Provision

ates. It is better to just keep talking because there were a few moments when I just took a breath and I was looking around going 'Jeez, is this reality or is this Friday night and I'm dreaming of it?' So yeah it's a moment that probably comes and goes too quickly but I'm sure there are enough photographs there to remind me of it." Given Murray worried last year's success might be her last final she had every reason to let the significance of the one-point win over Kilkenny wash over her. "I've been carrying an injury with my knee for the last two years and

I knew that when I went to Santry that it was going to be a big question of whether I can do it again or not.

"When the captaincy came about, look it's something I always dreamed about as a kid and I think anybody who says they didn't are completely lying to you. So when that opportunity came about I said I'd always have a 'what if' if I don't go and do it. Okay, the first four or five months were extremely difficult, the knee just never seemed to settle down.

"I suppose I was very lucky with the likes of Eanna Falvey and Ray Moran and all those

guys in Santry that they persevered and stopped me from blowing up on the field on different occasions. Yeah, it's been a mad 12 months, it's amazing what can happen in 12 months and isn't that the beauty of sport.

"I left Croke Park last year probably saying I might never get the chance to do that again. As we said in the dressing-room we are extremely fortunate to get the opportunity to live this life."

Murray took the chance in her address to aim back at those who had criticised her brother and manager Paudie earlier in the year. Murray

had a public row with UCC boss Shane Ronayne about player availability while he has also suffered some stick for the style Cork were playing.

"I think management are always criticised. If you've tactics these days, people always give out. I know with Paudie at the start of the year there was a few little dual clashes and there were people on Twitter having a go off of Paudie and I think he answered all those.

"He places a lot of demands on us but only because he knows we can do it. If he didn't maybe we wouldn't have had the bit of steel to get us over

the line. We all had to be soldiers out there, we'd all love to be artists but sometimes soldiers get you over the line.

"I don't know too many defensive teams that can put up 4-27. Or 3-22 or whatever we scored. I don't think defensive teams have 15 scorers on one particular day. So how could we be defensive if we've been completely offensive? We've been conceding more because we've been extremely attacking. We weren't going to be allowed to do that today.

"We'd love to have a shut out, wouldn't that be just brilliant. But you have to play what's in front of you."

SEPT. 2018

Liberty Insurance Players of the Match 2018



John Coffey of Liberty Insurance presents to Niamh Kilkenny of Galway v Clare 09.06.2018



John Coffey of Liberty Insurance presents to Camie Dolan of Galway v Waterford 16.06.2018



Michael Skelton of Liberty Insurance presents to Cait Devane of Tipperary v Wexford 23.06.2018



Eoin Lennon of Liberty Insurance presents to Michelle Quilty of Kilkenny v Galway 23.07.2018



John Coffey of Liberty Insurance presents to Orla O'Dwyer of Tipperary v Waterford 04.08.2018



John Coffey of Liberty Insurance presents to Sarah Dervan of Galway v Dublin 04.08.2018



Jonathan Ferry of Liberty Insurance presents to Katie Power of Kilkenny v Waterford 30.06.2018



Hazel Broderick of Liberty Insurance presents to Orla Conboy of Cork v Tipperary 07.07.2018



Seán Brett of Liberty Insurance presents to Róisín Egan of Offaly v Tipperary 14.07.2018



Daire Ashe of Liberty Insurance presents to Chloe Sigerson of Cork v Tipperary 18.08.2018



Daire Ashe of Liberty Insurance presents to Anna Farrell of Kilkenny v Galway 18.08.2018

Rule changes are needed in camogie



Camogie

Christy O'Connor

IN THE 60th minute of Sunday's All-Ireland camogie final, Orla Cotter picked up a ball on the sideline just in front of the Hogan Stand.

Cotter stepped inside Claire Phelan but was bottled up and tried to kick the ball away.

The ball went loose but when Cotter picked it up again, she tried to go past Julie Ann Malone before ending up on the ground.

When the referee Eamon Cassidy awarded the free, the Kilkenny bench went ballistic.

Ann Downey, the Kilkenny manager, made her feelings known to Cassidy. Paddy Mullally, the trainer, made his way on to the pitch to remonstrate with the referee.

Cotter still had to slot a difficult free but, once she did, the game was effectively up for Kilkenny.

The vanquished always have regrets after a one-point defeat but the refereeing was an issue throughout the match.

Cork were awarded an early penalty for what looked a really harsh call.

"I felt there was no free there," said Rena Buckley in her half-time analysis.

"You'd be delighted with your own defender if they did something like that."

Yet in the second half, Kilkenny had a clear penalty turned down after Anna Farrell had her hurley pulled out of her hand.

Cassidy may have been playing the advantage because Farrell's kicked effort was saved by Aoife Murray, before Murray also saved the follow up shot.

Yet Kilkenny still had cause for grievance.

"Given the calls that the referee made all day on the frees, I couldn't see why that one wasn't given," said former Kilkenny player Elaine Aylward afterwards.

"It was definitely a penalty and it would have been a huge turning point."

"We knew the game would be decided by small margins but I don't think it should be by refereeing margins."

Throughout her co-commentary, Anne-Marie Hayes bemoaned the inconsistency of refereeing.

"It's very frustrating," said Hayes, the former Galway player, on three different occasions.

At half time, Ursula Jacob, the Wexford player, said that Cassidy was too "fussy" and that some of his decisions were "silly".

She also said afterwards that the late free was dubious.

"It was a very tight call," said Jacob.

"It was a pity that the game came down to a free. It was an incredible score but I don't think it was a free."

Cork fully deserved to win.

Kilkenny set up very defensively but they still managed to have the only three goal chances in the game.

Kilkenny had more shots (26-21) but Cork were more composed and more economical.

Any discussion about the referee or the late free is not to detract from



Cork's Orla Cotter scores the winning point, from a free, during the Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Senior Camogie Championship final at Croke Park in Dublin on Sunday.
Picture: Piaras Ó Midheach/Sportsfile



Cork's Orla Cotter celebrates with Hannah Looney after winning the Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Senior Camogie Championship final at Croke Park.
Picture: INPHO/Laszlo Geczo

Cork's win because it is part of a wider discussion that camogie needs to have.

Over the 60 minutes, there were 35 frees awarded, which is the average now in camogie.

Much of that is bound up in the rules, the inconsistency of their application, and the inconsistent standard of refereeing.

"The referees vary too much but the refereeing is absolutely appalling," said Linda Mellerick in an interview last week.

"You often can't blame the referee because the rules are appalling. I'm at games and you have 45 or more frees."

"We are north of 35 frees in nearly every game. It changes a little come All-Ireland final day but the games don't flow enough."

The camogie rulebook is different to hurling. Shouldering and "moving into an opponent's body" are not allowed, which makes it very difficult for referees to judge what is a foul and what isn't.

During the recent documentary *The Game*, some of the slow-motion camera shots of camogie matches showed how physical and hard-hitting the game has become.

That was inevitable in an increased strength and conditioning and fitness culture but camogie almost appears caught in a bind because of that culture.

"The rules are too stringent because they are trying to keep camogie a feminine and non-contact sport," said Mellerick.

"If a player is soloing with the ball and you flick it off the hurley, it's a fantastic skill. But up to 60% of referees in camogie blow for that."

"It's very frustrating. Some rule changes have been up for debate at Congress but they've been turned down."

"This might seem abrupt but I wonder if we have dinosaurs voting? Some rules just have to change."

Mellerick said she would allow

"shouldering", and "contact in the tackle once it's not dangerous."

After Sunday's game, Downey called for similar changes. "Something will have to happen because it is a contact sport and physical game," she said.

Paudie Murray also believes those changes are necessary for the game.

"I think the way the rules are at the moment makes it impossible for a referee to referee the game," he said.

"Eamon Cassidy is probably one of the top two referees in the country but there is so much in relation to the contact area — what is a free? What isn't a free? It's next to impossible (to judge)."

Cotter's late free was a case in point.

"I've had a look at it in the dressing room with our stats people and, without criticising Eamon, definitely Orla was already falling," said Downey.

"Our players were around her but hadn't touched her."

The refereeing inconsistency is doing the game no favours.

After the game on Sunday, Mellerick tweeted: 'absolutely thrilled. Minor, Intermediate and senior titles for Cork but absolutely appalling refereeing @OfficialCamogie. Getting really fed up with this'.

Mellerick has always had the bigger picture in mind.

When Cork won the 1995 All-Ireland final against Kilkenny, she was interviewed on TV by Marty Morrissey afterwards.

Mellerick was ecstatic after finally beating Kilkenny in an All-Ireland final but she was still looking at that bigger picture.

"Camogie cannot be a non-contact sport," she said.

"If we want to promote camogie, they have to let the game flow."

Cork are All-Ireland champions again after beating Kilkenny but 23 years on from Mellerick's comments, those words have never rang truer.

Or louder for the game of camogie.

It's a special day when we beat the Cats

IT DID not sit easily with a lot of GAA fans in this county that a heavy championship programme in both codes clashed with the All-Ireland camogie final in Croke Park last Sunday.

Cork County Board Chairperson Tracey Kennedy explained last week why this had to be so because of the condensed club season.

Fair enough, but it was still a pity that so many people did not get the opportunity to watch these wonderful girls retaining their title and continue to bring so much honour and glory to the county.

In any sporting code, a collision between Cork and Kilkenny evokes huge interest and, given the rivalry that has been built up by these two counties in recent years, the edge is always intensely cutting.

There isn't a puck of a ball between them, there wasn't last year either and, in all probability, there won't be either next season.

And be certain sure that Kilkenny will move heaven and earth to try and deny this magnificent Cork team a hat-trick of All-Ireland titles.

When it's Cork and Kilkenny there is never any sorrow in the winner's camp for the other and, in fact, the one-point win makes it all the sweeter.

At all levels of the game down through the years we, here on Leeside, have suffered great pain at their hands and it has been a similar tale on No-reside.

The final at headquarters last Sunday was no classic, the bulk of the scores from both sides came from the placed ball but that should not dilute the victory.

The emphasis on tactics is now key, just as it is in hurling and far more in football.

Most of the excitement was condensed into the final, nerve-jangling minutes when everything was on the line.

There was far more at stake in those final sequences than there has been for many a long time, Kilkenny seeking desperately to atone for last season's heartbreak and Cork holding on to their one-point advantage as injury time seemed to go on forever.

Injury-time is becoming a bone of contention in every hurling game now, we have had games when five, six and seven minutes are added on and it's difficult to understand where those minutes came from.

Cork held their nerve, in the end, to manufacture maybe a win that was sweeter than last season.

On both occasions, there was a match-winning hero, last season it was Douglas girl Julia White, this time it was Orla Cotter from St Catherine's.

Cotter's marksmanship was crucial and in the white heat of Croke Park on All-Ireland final day that was some match-winning point that secured the victory.

She might have been the scoring hero at the end but there were Cork heroes strewn across the great theatre on Sunday.

And none more so than that ageless wonder behind the sticks, Aoife Murray from Cloughdub.

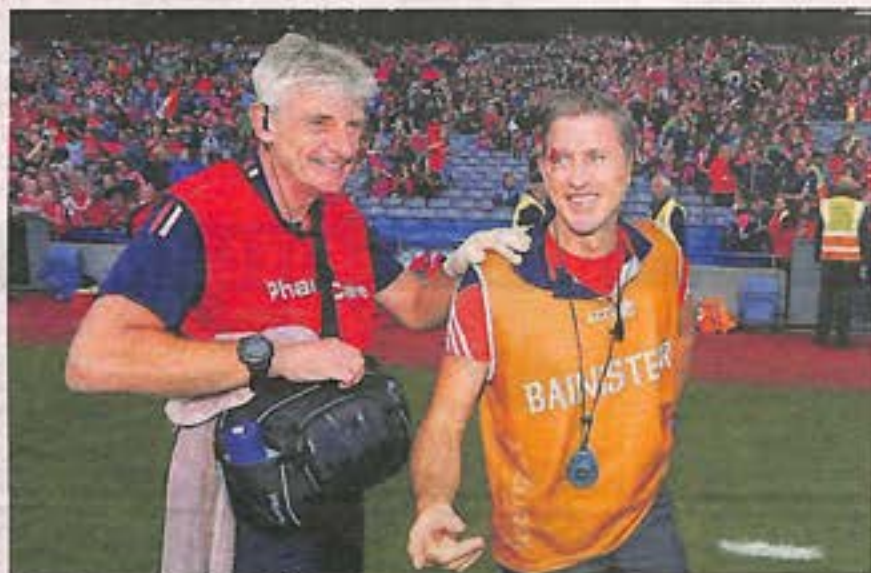
For so long now she has been an inspirational presence between those two long sticks and it was only right and fitting that she was first up those famous Hogan Stand steps to receive the O'Duffy Cup. A just reward for a wonderful servant.

How long more she will remain Cork's last line of defence remains to be seen but if she decided to sign off on this winning note there would be no dissenting voices.

Having her brother Paudie as team boss added so much lustre to the occasion and it could be said that this was a Murray day out in Croke Park with two more of her brothers, Kevin and Damien playing key roles as well.



Cork keeper, Aoife Murray's brothers, from left, logistics manager Damian, coach Kevin and manager Paudie Murray lift the cup following the Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Senior Camogie Championship final against Kilkenny at Croke Park in Dublin. Picture: Sportsfile



Cork manager Paudie Murray is treated by Liam O'Reilly after the game for a cut received in the immediate celebrations at the final whistle. Picture: INPHO/Tommy Dickson

It probably does not happen too often these days but can you imagine what the conversation is about around the breakfast table in that household.

But it's never about one person or one family because every All-Ireland winning team is a family on its own.

That type of spirit must exist if you are to cross that winning line and Paudie Murray, as team boss, has brought this spirit into this Cork bunch of great girls.

Going back to Sunday and this was after viewing the game on a video recorder because of commitments elsewhere, it was too much of a stop and start game.

The referee did not get every call

right and there were a few contentious ones but the rules of the game decree this.

But that's a lot more down to the now outdated rules of the game. The fact that shoulder to shoulder contact is still technically prohibited is just one example why there needs to change and why the rules of hurling need to be applied to a far greater extent.

Some of these girls as just as street-wise as their hurling counterparts are on big days like this.

The days of asking them to hold back are long gone and referees must be allowed far greater latitude when applying the rules.

Cork finished that bit stronger on Sunday as they did last year and again the management must take huge credit for that, never flinch for a second when the prize is within your grasp.

What servants some of these Cork girls are, Aoife the great custodian, nine medal Gemma O'Connor, Amy O'Connor, Orla Cotter, Orla Cronin and so on.

Briege Corkery didn't get on the field on Sunday but one has no doubt that here inspirational presence in the dressing room had its own desired effect.

But then again Cork has always produced some of the game's greatest players, Deirdre Sutton, Marie Costine, Sandie Fitzgibbon, Linda Mellerick, Therese O'Callaghan, Fiona O'Driscoll, Denise Cronin, the great Rena Buckley, Marian Sweeney, Cathy Landers, to mention just a couple and omitting just as many more because of space restrictions.

And one has no doubt either that the list will continue to grow as the years go by because the structures in the county are now better than ever.

A trip down to the headquarters on Castle Road and the brand new clubhouse that has been erected is an illustration of that.

In this town and in the great rural clubs that are scattered across the county new heroes continue to emerge.

This All-Ireland double-winning team of girls are now the wind beneath the sails of all the youngsters that are being brought to training every Saturday morning.

We should be so that the jersey they wear is the Rebel red.

Worthy champs refused to blink



Camogie

Linda Mellerick

FOR the second year in a row Cork are All-Ireland Senior Camogie champions.

By the narrowest of margins, they once again broke Kilkenny's hearts with an injury time winning score.

Those games are so sweet to win and so despairing to lose. Cork deserved this All-Ireland title.

Kilkenny didn't.

I say that because of the way Kilkenny lined out.

Kilkenny have talented forwards, but they must have little faith in their defence.

They obviously have huge admiration for Cork's forward division and why not after this side clocked up 15-121 in six games to reach the decider.

Reviewing the year gone by it began for Cork in sun-drenched Páirc Uí Chaoimh on June 9th as they comfortably accounted for Wexford.

When they played direct and fast Cork were a pleasure and once again they took some very impressive scores after working the ball out fast from the back.

They took their foot off the pedal and were guilty of taking too much out of the ball particularly in defence.

Cork's second-half play was far more direct.

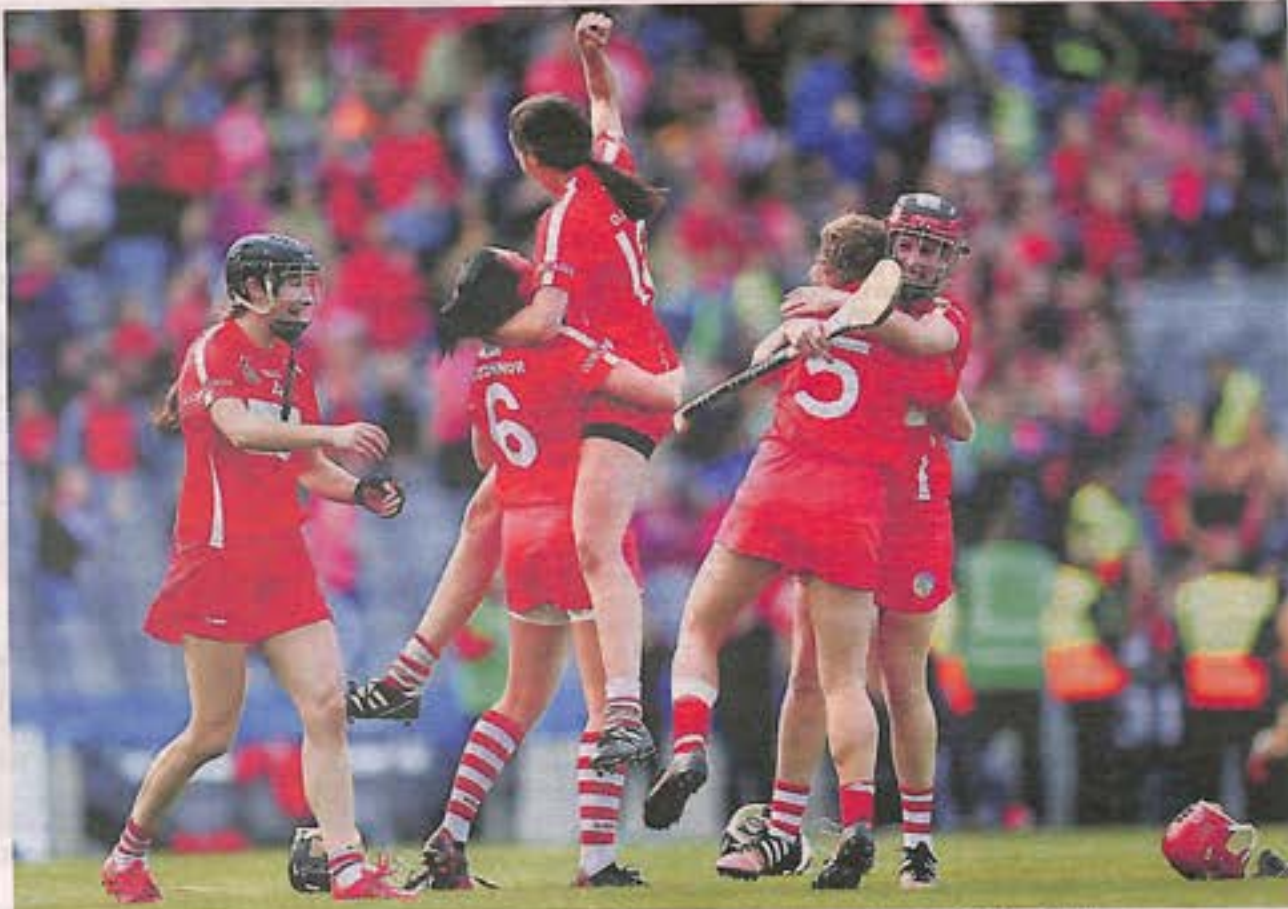
On sixty-two minutes they had their nineteenth point and finished the game with a magnificent strike, low to the net, by Katrina Mackey.

In round two against Dublin, at half-time Cork led by double scores 2-6 to 1-3, with Linda Collins goaling on 33 after a great Orla Cronin run.

Cork had led by just three points but the goal just before the break was a killer blow for the visitors to Páirc Uí Rinn.

The second half didn't start any better for Dublin. Cork went nine points up, used their pace impressively and pulled away.

On July 7, the Rebels continued their seemingly unstoppable progress towards the senior championship



Pamela Mackey, Gemma O'Connor, Orla Cotter, Libby Coppinger and Leanne O'Sullivan celebrate after beating Kilkenny.

Picture: INPHO/James Crombie

semi-finals after a 1-27 to 1-12 win over Tipperary in a top-of-the-table clash at The Ragg.

Cork established their supremacy early on with Amy O'Connor slotting two points, and Orla Cronin, Ashling Thomson and Orla Cotter – back from her recent marriage – on target for Cork to lead early by 0-5 to 0-1.

Cáit Devane found the target to bring it back to 0-7 to 0-4 but Julia White accelerated onto a Niamh McCarthy pass before finishing clinically for a goal to put six between the teams. Cork were on fire, finishing with 11 different scorers.

They made it four wins from four a week later as they ran out 3-21 to 0-6 winners over Meath in Trim. Orla Cotter hit two points for Cork in that

first half, as did Ashling Thompson and Julia White. It was 0-10 to 0-2 at the change of ends.

Cork upped the tempo and added a goal and three points within five minutes of the resumption for a comfortable 3-12 to 0-6 victory.

Cork were racing ahead as leaders of Group 2, amassing a massive scoring tally.

Their final game against Offaly was a foregone conclusion as regards emerging top of their group and heading straight to the semi-final.

As expected they comfortably took Offaly at home to finish top with 15 points from five games.

On to the semi-final against Tipperary in Thurles and it turned out as expected.

Cork utilised their full substitution allowance of five in the second half with Briege Corkery receiving a warm welcome back.

Cork weren't tested, learning little if anything from the game.

They had won every single game this year comfortably.

They hadn't had an intense challenge.

Was this going to be a problem heading into the final against Kilkenny who had defeated Galway?

Not so. The final was intense, edgy, physical and tactical but Cork are deserving All-Ireland champions.

Not just for Sunday but for consistent top performances all seasons, far above all their challengers.

Even Kilkenny



John Coffey of Liberty Insurance presents the Liberty Insurance Player of the Match Award to Cork's Orla Cotter.

Picture: INPHO/Tommy Dickson



Laura Treacy was outstanding for Cork in defence all through the season and delivered again at Croke Park on Sunday.

Picture: INPHO/John Garry

Champions get hero's welcome

THE Cork sporting public welcomed home its heroes last night as the double-winning camogie teams were introduced to supporters on the South Mall, after first receiving the traditional welcome with a stop in Mallow.

Both teams arrived on an open-top bus from Kent station and were greeted by the Lord Mayor Cllr Mick Finn, Bishop John Buckley, and Mark Kenny representing sponsors New Ireland Assurance.

Addressing the supporters, Mary McSweeney, the chairperson of the Cork Camogie board, expressed Cork people's pride in the teams.

"They are wonderful role models for all of our young girls playing camogie," she said.

Mary didn't forget the county minor team either, who earlier in the season brought the All-Ireland minor title to Cork for the first time.

"We now have the Senior, Intermediate and Minor All-Ireland titles here where they belong, and we congratulate all three panels for giving us such a wonderful year."

Manager Paudie Murray thanked the supporters who gave the teams huge backing on Sunday.

"Your support is vital at every game and yesterday we really appreciated it," he said.

He also paid tribute to his players and backroom team

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

and county board: "I have to pay tribute to the players and my backroom team, who worked so hard to bring the double home yesterday."

"I must also thank our county board who do everything in their power to ensure we get the best and the work they do for the game must not go unnoticed and I thank them here this evening."

Mark Kenny from Sponsors New Ireland was thrilled with the success of both sides.

"We are on board with Cork Camogie now for four years and this year we are celebrating our one hundred year in business," Kenny said.

"What a fantastic present we got yesterday from the Cork Intermediate and Senior camogie teams."

And so as the formalities were concluded and both teams headed to Cloughduv, the club of captain Aoife Murray for what promised to be a huge welcome and a great party.

■ See P47/52/53 for more.



Senior captain Aoife Murray and Intermediate captain Sarah Harrington hold aloft their All-Ireland trophies at the South Mall.

Picture: Michael Mac Sweeney/Provision



LINING OUT: Cork camogie's Aisling Thompson brings the O'Duffy cup out onto the pitch at Musgrave Park during half-time at the PRO14 game between Munster and Ospreys.

Picture: Dan Sheridan

SEPT. 2018

OLD-SCHOOL TIES Orla leads list of Coláiste na Toirbhirte winners



Enniskeane's Orla Cronin was one of five past pupils of Bandon's Coláiste na Toirbhirte to claim All-Ireland camogie medals in Croke Park on Sunday. Seen here talking to Cork Camogie PRO Shirley Moloney - another alumnus of the school - Orla was central to the senior win over Kilkenny, while four more CnT past pupils - Caltriona Collins (Ballinhassig), Maeve Lynch (Newcestown), Kate Wall (Kilbrittain/Timoleague) and Caroline Sugrue (Ballinacorney) were on the junior team that beat Down.

(Photo: Tom Russell)

Camogie

For several players involved in the winning of the historic double in Croke Park, it's back into action this weekend when the SE Systems Senior Championship resumes.

First up on Saturday it's Glen Rovers vs Ballygarvan at 5.30pm. It's a repeat of last year when the Glen won on their way to the final. Cork players Leanne O'Sullivan, Lauren Callanan, along with Emma Murphy and Lydia Cunningham are in good form and the Blackpool side should win.

There's a real cracker in prospect on Sunday at 1pm when champions Inniscarra meet Sarsfields, and with Rena Buckley and Niamh McCarthy leading, the holders will be expected to win. The final game of the weekend is the meeting of Muskerry and Courcy Rovers, with the latter favourites to advance. All these matches will take place in Castle Road.

Heartiest congratulations to all who helped make last Sunday a special day - players, management and also the board officers who work behind the scenes. The three main All-Ireland titles all now reside on Leeside - no mean achievement.

Special thanks to the team managements for their help and co-operation; now Paudie, it's on to the three-in-a-row!

Croke Park turns into 'Heartbreak Hotel' for Kilkenny camogie

CORK 0-14, KILKENNY 0-13

by John Knox 9 Sept 2018
Email: @kilkennypeoplesport

It may be a wonderful arena, but Croke Park is turning into something like a 'Heartbreak Hotel' for *Kilkenny*

(<https://www.kilkennypeople.ie/news/sport/334681/kilkenny-jhc-dunnamaggin-make-hard-work-of-it-but-they-get-by-kilmacow.html>) on All-Ireland camogie final day.

For the second year running the Cats were beaten by an injury time point by Cork, who claimed their 28th O'Duffy Cup title today after a tight, tense and tactical senior final.

In the end a point from a free by Orla Cotter with 60 minutes 53 seconds showing on the clock won the game. The awarding of the decisive free appeared a harsh call, but it was just one of many decisions that baffled on an afternoon when Kilkenny gave their all and ended up with nothing again.

There was one time during the first half when the free count ran 6-0 against Kilkenny, and they had a decent claim for a penalty turned down in the 52nd minute. As Anna Farrell bore down on the Cork goal the hurley appeared to be pulled or knocked from her hand.

There was no call. Instead, Cork escaped with the concession of a 45.

The score was level at 0-8 each at half-time after Cork had led most of the way although the opposition had use of the wind. Kilkenny's game was more open and free flowing afterwards, and with Anne Dalton in wonderful form and driving the team on from center-back, they really took the game to the champions.

The scores were level at 0-9 and 0-11 each and then came the Kilkenny goal chance, with Farrell threatening first with a booted effort and then Miriam Walsh having a follow up hand-passed effort turned around the post. Denise Gaule pointed the 45 to edge Kilkenny 0-12 to 0-11 ahead.

Cork hit back for the equaliser in the 56th minute, Julia White putting Amy O'Connor clear to score. There was an exchange of points from frees between Gaule and Orla Cotter after that before Cotter's late free decided it.

Play in the opening half was very tactical, with both sides trying to contain or out-fox the opposition. Kilkenny, who attacked the Hill 16 end, had the first score from Michelle Quilty after only 30 seconds.

Cork drew level with a long range point from a free by Chloe Sigerson and on they roared into a best of half lead of 0-4 to 0-1 after 12 minutes. Kilkenny, who were operating with Katie Power as the lone attacker on the full-forward line, looked very nervy during this period, with the deadly Dalton already setting the high line in terms of performance.

The Cats second score came from a free by Denise Gaule following a foul on Katie Power, and they eventually got back level at 0-4 each. They fell behind again, but after they regained terms at 0-6 each they drove into the lead with two great minors from Denise Gaule as half-time approached.

However, Cork hit back for two 'lost time' points from Orla Cronin to leave it all square at the break, 0-8 each.

What followed was real defiance from Kilkenny, but the day ended in heartbreak....again.

SCORERS: Cork - Orla Cotter (0-5, frees); Chloe Sigerson (0-4, three frees, one penalty); Orla Cronin, Katrina Mackey (0-2 each); Amy O'Connor (0-1). Kilkenny - Denise Gaule (0-10, seven frees, two 45s); Anna Farrell, Julie Ann Malone, Michelle Quilty (0-1 each).

Cork - Aoife Murray; Leanne O'Sullivan, Laura Treacy, Pamela Mackey; Libby Coppinger, Gemma O'Connor, Chloe Sigerson; Julia White, Ashling Thompson; Amy O'Connor, Orla Cronin, Orla Cotter; Katrina Mackey, Linda Collins, Hannah Looney. Subs - Lauren Homan for L. Collins; Niamh McCarthy for A. O'Connor.

Kilkenny - Emma Kavanagh; Colette Dormer, Catherine Foley, Grace Walsh; Claire Phelan, Anne Dalton, Davina Tobin; Anna Farrell, Meighan Farrell; Julie Ann Malone, Katie Power, Denise Gaule; Shelly Farrell, Michelle Quilty, Edwina Keane. Subs - Miriam Walsh for M. Quilty.

Referee - Eamon Cassidy (Derry).

For more on Kilkenny People sport read [here](#)

Camogie Cats can bounce back, but handbrake must be taken off

by Enda McEvoy 14 Sept 2018
Email: @kilkennypeoplesport

SEPT. 2018

share



You can say that *Kilkenny* unfortunate in the All-Ireland final at Croke Park on Sunday. You can say that the referee played way more than the allotted minute of injury time at the end of the first half, upon which Cork hit two rapidfire points and thus retired level instead of going in two points down. You can say that the free that gave them the winning point was a soft one and it certainly looked that way. You can say that the free that put them 0-13 to 0-12 ahead a few minutes earlier was preposterous, though not nearly as preposterous as the yellow card for Davina Tobin – who was taken head high in possession – that accompanied it. You can say that the winners' penalty was harmless. Most people did. You can say that the wides count (Kilkenny 7, Cork 4) indicated which team enjoyed the majority of the shooting chances, though obviously shooting chances don't amount to much when they're squandered. You can say that allowing Denise Gaule to take a free six minutes from the end, just after she'd been fouled and floored, was unwise. Sure enough, the slotar fell short and Cork cleared it. You can say that to lose two All-Ireland finals in a row by a late point is heartbreaking beyond belief, which of course it is. And then, after all of that, and if you wanted to be strict yet not unfair, you could say that Kilkenny didn't do quite enough to win on Sunday and thus left themselves vulnerable to the whims of fate and the referee. It's what happens when a team employs a highly calculated gameplan. Last year's decider was awful, and awfully lowscoring: 0-10 beat 0-9. This year's was not much better: 0-14 beat 0-13. Kilkenny, in other words, have hit 0-22 in successive All-Ireland finals. Not hectic, is it? Nine of their 13 points here came from placed balls converted by Denise Gaule. Only three Kilkenny players not named Denise Gaule scored, and none of the three hit more than a point. Even in an era of sweepers and blanket defences, that's not enough.

Assisted by the elements? Then try to maximise the advantage. This means playing a less studied game. It means using the length of the field, keeping one's full-forward line near to goal, getting the ball in quickly to them, asking questions of the opposition defence and preventing them playing their way out. (No spare defender.)

Kilkenny didn't. They scarcely employed the last 30 metres of turf. What was the object of deploying Katie Power as a target woman if there was no support to feed off her?

The challengers needed to undo their corset just a little in the first half. To open their shoulders and hurl with their hearts and lungs as well as with their heads. It was all a little too studied, a little too mannered.

The upshot was that they failed to compile a lead to carry into the second half by way of a bulwark. Then they could have dragged bodies back into defence and invited Cork to come at them.

As a result they spent the opening 20 minutes of the second half hanging in there, and now they didn't have the advantage of the wind to allow them use the length of the pitch as well as the width. Although Meighan Farrell's monster point from midfield was a beauty, it came about because she lacked outlets inside and thus had to fire the gun herself.

It wouldn't have taken much for Ann Downey and her troops to be celebrating three All-Irelands in a row this week. On the plus side, it shouldn't take much for them to be celebrating an All-Ireland in 2019. But first they have to take off the handbrake.

For the second year in a row the game was lost in the first half despite wind advantage. For the second year in a row the girls in black and amber hurled in the same register in both halves of the proceedings.

Right, the wind never won a match. We know that. But even a team deploying a sweeper shouldn't play the same way with the breeze as against it.

Elements

Kilkenny camogie: players will take a long time to get over Cork defeat

SEPT 2018



players will take a long time to get over the heartache and disappointment after Sunday's second defeat in-a-row in the All-Ireland camogie final.

Ann Downey's charges hit Croke Park to challenge defending champions, Cork, with the chance of a National League and Championship double within their grasp, but they left empty handed after suffering an agonising one point defeat for the second year running.

Horrible place

"They will take months to get over this," suggested Kilkenny manager, Ann Downey in a soft voice dripping with pain after seeing the O'Duffy Cup slip away yet again.

"It is a horrible place to be," she added.

"There is not an awful lot you can say to them to lift them or get them to a better place. Defeat hurts, it really hurts.

"Some will be disappointed with a number of aspects of their game, but they have put so much into camogie and for Kilkenny. They will need time to get over this."

The last time Kilkenny lost back-to-back finals was in 2013 (beaten by Galway) and 2014 (beaten by Cork), and they didn't feature in the decider the following season.

The last time any county bounced back for victory after a double whammy of defeats was Cork in 2005 having lost the finals of 2003 and 2004.

"Hopefully they will regroup again," was the wish expressed by Ann Downey.

The manager felt Kilkenny would regret some missed chances, especially as the divide at the finish was a point.

"We will be saying if we had done this or that things might be different.

"When you cross that white line on All-Ireland final day you have to have experience to be able to hold your head and be clinical in your decision making," Ann reminded.

"Maybe we didn't do that at times. Oh, what can you can," she said as she drew a breath.

"You have to take it on the chin and try and learn from it again. It is hard to take to be honest."

When it was suggested it was a very tactical match, with both sides packing their defence, she said the stakes were high and both sides knew

each other well and there was massive respect all round.

No one was willing to take chances, it appeared.

"In the second half we ran more and missed a few opportunities," added the former 12 times All-Ireland medal winner.

Hard

"If the ball had gone over the bar we could have been three or four points out. I thought maybe the two frees, especially the one against Davina (Tobin) and especially the last one, I thought it was a bit hard on us."

She said Kilkenny had looked at the replay of the final free, and as far as they could see there was no contact to merit the awarding of a free.

"In the heat of battle I wasn't happy with some of the performances, but I don't want to take from Cork's winning effort," Ann continued.

"If I give out about the referee it can sound like sour grapes, and I don't want things to be that way.

"I could go on to national radio and criticise the referee who is going to do an All-Ireland the next day, and hope things will turn in our favour. That is not what I am about.

"You have to take what is thrown at you. Unfortunately one or two of the decisions were harsh on us."

Clubs will help

Kilkenny shot selection, she suggested, might not have been the best at times. On top of the misses, a number of efforts were dropped short into the hand of the goalkeeper.

"All those things added up on the day," she felt.

When the subject of the referee was brought up again she didn't want to go into details, but she felt Kilkenny might have been awarded a penalty.

"When the girls get back to their clubs and back playing again it might ease the pain," the manager continued.

"Let them have a long break and see what they want to do next year.

"They are capable of winning the All-Ireland. They are very young. Without doubt the talent is there."

Cork scored their 28th O'Duffy Cup win on Sunday. Kilkenny were chasing their 14th title.

Cotter holds her nerve as lightning strikes twice for Cork against Cats

CORK 0-14
KILKENNY 0-13

ALL-IRELAND CAMOGIE FINAL

DARAGH Ó CONCHÚIR
REPORTS

IT WAS eerie how similarly events unfolded to 12 months ago.

It wasn't two points turning around a one-point deficit but it was an injury-time winner nonetheless for Cork in the Liberty Insurance All-Ireland senior camogie final.

Instead of Julia White it was Orla Cotter landing the killer blow – a stunning free from the left wing, 60 metres out in the 61st minute.

The win also moved Brieghe Corkery level with her long-time colleague Rena Buckley as the most garlanded player in Gaelic games history with 18 All-Ireland senior medals between camogie and ladies football, although the Cloughduv player, who returned to the squad after giving birth to a baby boy last March, did not see any game-time.

Cork star Gemma O'Connor admitted that her nerves were frayed by it all.

'I don't know why we do it to ourselves, a point in it,' she said after winning her ninth title.

'At half-time, the message was to keep our composure. Beforehand, you're trying to get yourself riled up, to get into the right frame of mind, the fighting attitude – then at half-time it's all about, "This is where we are now and we need to be composed." It's no time to lose your head.

'We knew it'd be a tight game from start to finish. The championship has been quite open but we knew the final would be so defensive, we don't give each

other an inch. I don't know what way it is to look at, sometimes you'd wish the play would open up a small bit, but you just want to win at all costs, that's the bottom line.'

In front of an attendance of 21,467 – the highest since 2004 – this was a game that had everything and if 18 of the scores were from placed balls, this was an intriguing affair nonetheless that had a pinch of everything.

It was always going to be interesting from a tactical viewpoint and space was at a premium for attackers, with both defensive units buttressed by supplementary personnel and the middle third swamped.

It was very physical, there were some magnificent moments of bravery, skill, scoring and defending, and a small hint of controversy too.

Kilkenny will have regrets. They had so much possession and wasted chances but Cork's shooting wasn't flawless either and the pressure on the shooter incredible.

Winning captain Aoife Murray made three big saves, one a fantastic double effort, though Kilkenny felt they should have had a penalty from that chain of events in the 52nd minute.

Murray also pointed a penalty, though she would have been disappointed by that having travelled the length of the field. It was the ninth minute and there was a lot of time remaining but that award was a strange one, with Denise Gaule's momentum taking her into Amy O'Connor.

Kilkenny had hit the opening point through Michelle Quilty but it was Cork with the wind

in their sails and they soon led by two, Sigerson, Murray and Cotter (two frees) all raising white flags from their respective placed balls.

The challengers settled though and a 19th-minute point by Julie Ann Malone brought the teams level. Sigerson and Katrina Mackey opened up a two-point gap in favour of Cork once more but Gaule hit a purple patch with four points, including a fantastic score from a 66m free, followed by a better one from play from a similar position and suddenly Kilkenny were two clear.

Significantly though, Cork responded, last year's player of the match Orla Cronin coming up with two points to send the teams in on 0-8 apiece at the change of ends.

Paudie Murray's charges carried on that momentum into the second half and led by two by the three-quarter mark, Katrina Mackey finishing coolly after a good run and after Gaule equalised from a free, Cotter landing two frees of her own – one from 20 metres and one from 65.

But back came Kilkenny. Meighan Farrell pointed on 48 and Gaule found the target from two frees to put them in front.

Back and forth, this pulsating affair continued to sway. Amy O'Connor and Sigerson, from a mammoth free, slightly to the right of the centre of the field, restored Cork's advantage in a matter of second, but Gaule made it all square again on 59.

A minimum of two minutes of added time were announced – around four and change were played – but the defining moment came in the first of them.



Cork captain Aoife Murray lifts the O'Duffy Cup after her side overcame Kilkenny by a point in Sunday's All-Ireland final at Croke Park.

There was no way back for Kilkenny this time. Cork had prevailed once more.

Scorers

Cork: O Cotter 0-5f, C Sigerson 0-3f, K Mackey, O Cronin 0-2 each, A Murray (penalty), A O'Connor 0-1 each.

Kilkenny: D Gaule 0-10 (7f, 2 45), M Quilty, JA Malone, M Farrell 0-1 each.

Cork: A Murray, L O'Sullivan, P Mackey, L Treacy, H Looney, L Coppinger, C Sigerson, G O'Connor, A Thompson, K Mackey, O Cronin, O Cotter, L Collins, J

White, A O'Connor. **Subs:** L Homan for Collins (51), N McCarthy for A O'Connor (60).
Kilkenny: E Kavanagh, C Dormer, C Fley, G Walsh, C Phelan, A Dal-

ton, D Tobin, D Gaule, M Farrell, JA Malone, M Quilty, A Farrell, S Farrell, K Power, E Keane. **Sub:** M Walsh for Quilty (35).

★ THE HIGHLIGHTS

Our Star: With five points, including the all-important winner, **Orla Cotter** was the key to Cork's win. **Star moment:** Just like last year, a late point secured it for Cork, with **Cotter** the hero.

Talking point: Paudie Murray was

giving little away about his future plans after – but the lure of three-in-a-row is likely to keep him in charge.

What's next: Cork's stars face into the closing stages of the county championship.

Third time lucky as intermediates get over Down

CORK 1-13
DOWN 0-9

BY DARAGH Ó CONCHÚIR

HAVING lost the previous two finals – last year's after a replay – Cork made no mistake as they claimed All-Ireland intermediate glory at Croke Park on Sunday.

Caitriona Collins shot 1-6 for Paudie Murray's side and minor star Saoirse McCarthy hit four points from play against a Down side who were excellent in the first half but had fallen seven points in arrears when ace forward Sara-Louise Carr was harshly sent off for a second yellow card in the 50th minute.

Cork were sharper for longer though

and deserved the honours.

'It's unbelievable,' said Cork star Fiona Neville, who set up Collins' crucial 40th minute goal.

'We've been fighting for this, to get over the line and get up the steps of the Hogan Stand for so long and it's just unbelievable. It's a great feeling.'

'The hunger is there. We knew coming back each year, we were there or thereabouts. We were unlucky over the last few years but we knew we had the players. "There's a huge workrate and a huge bond, as Sarah Harrington said in her speech. We're best friends. When we got knocked down, we were coming back to get that title.'

She had a particular word of praise for the members of the All-Ireland-winning minor team that clearly added an x-factor on the biggest stage.

'They were fantastic today. Laura (Hayes), Saoirse played unbelievable on the wing, player of the match today. Cliona Healy came on in the Semi-Final and probably saved us. There's a great future there for Cork Camogie and the Minors really stood up today, which was very important.'

Down began very confidently, points from Sara-Louise Carr and Sands getting them on their way. However, McCarthy, got a chance to show her pace and the subsequent player of the match had the teams level in the blink of an eye with a wonderful brace.

Down enjoyed their best period at this juncture and moved three points clear, with two points from Mallon, who was also involved in the move for Paula Gribben's score.

Mallon's point off her left from 60

metres in particular was a thing of beauty and Down were flying.

They didn't score for the entire second quarter however and Cork went in leading by 0-7 to 0-5, Collins slotting three points to bring the teams level before Caroline Surge and McCarthy also found the target.

Mallon and Sands quickly restored parity within five minutes of the restart but it was all Cork from there, Paudie Murray's crew leading by three when Collins rocketed the net.

It was a fantastic finish at the end of a move that had its genesis in a stunning fetch from the clouds by Siobhán Hutchinson. Finola Neville took the ball forward and drew the cover before timing her pass to perfection, leaving Collins to do the rest.

Down tried hard to respond but they

couldn't threaten Amy Lee's goal and Cork were able to end their torment.

Scorers

Cork: C Collins 1-6 (4f), S McCarthy 0-4, C Sugrue 0-2, C Healy 0-1 (f). **Down:** N Mallon 0-4 (2f), S Sands 0-2, P Gribben, SL Carr, F Carr (f) 0-1 each.

Cork: A Lee, NNI Chaoimh, S Harrington, J Barry, S Hutchinson, L Weste, L Callanan, S Buckley, K Hickey, L Hayes, F Neville, S McCarthy, C Collins, M McCarthy, C Sugrue. **Sub:** C Healy for McCarthy (39), R O'Callaghan for Sugrue, R Killeen for Callanan (both 60).

Down: M McNally, N Kelly, A Savage, C McGilligan, B Savage, D Magee, C Rocks, P Gribben, D Savage, SL Carr, N Mallon, A McAleenan, S Sands, F Carr, O Caldwell. **Subs:** O Gribben for Magee (14-28, blood), Gribben for Caldwell (29), C Cowan for McGilligan (52).
Referee: J Dermody (Westmeath).

Team ethic saw Rebels to glory

CAMOGIE

Barbara O'Connell

SELFLESSNESS is a common theme in most teams that win habitually and the Cork Camogie squad basking in the glow of being Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Senior Camogie champions this week cannot claim exclusivity on it.

Indeed the outfit they defeated by an injury-time point for the second consecutive year possesses a number of players willing to take on the role asked of them, whether it is thankless, as was the case with Katie Power regularly battling three Cork defenders at full-forward, or it forces them to rein in their natural inclination to release the shackles, as has been the story for centre-back Anne Dalton in recent years, but who added to her phenomenal catalogue of excellence with another colossal showing.

And they boast plenty of operators like Meighan Farrell, who as usual, put her nose to the grindstone, throwing herself into every ball, eschewing personal safety for the cause.

It is a very prominent theme of the Cork set-up though.

In a conversation a couple of weeks ago, team coach Paudie Murray emphasised how important it was, and how he would never focus on his sister Aoife being captain and possibly lifting the O'Duffy Cup, which she did two days after her 35th birthday.

Yes, this happening, with brothers Paudie (manager) and Damien (logistics) involved was nice for the family but it would always be about everyone involved striving to produce a better collective.

In truth, Orla Cotter has lived this approach her entire career, happy to toil to make teammates look better than her.

When Jenny O'Leary retired, the tall St Catherine's player took over the placed ball duties and emerged from the shadows in which she had been more to operate as a result.

The scoring returns went through the roof and this increased profile made us notice her general play more too: the classy touches, the workrate, the clever passing.

Remember that it was Cotter who gave the perfect stick pass to Gemma O'Connor for that outrageous equalising point in last year's decider, with two seconds of regulation time remaining.

She is one of the most accurate shooters in Camogie but that was the better ball.

And what was lost in the controversy over whether or not she should have had the free from which she struck the winner from that left-hand side, close to 60m out, were two roll lifts and in the same motion of each one, the spin away.

It was sublime skill in the maelstrom of battle, bodies and hurleys crashing into one another.

The only time she put herself first was when choosing to go on honeymoon after getting married to Mark in May.

It was a dream trip that meant she missed training and the start of the Championship.

In more than a decade as a Cork player, she had never been away despite as a teacher, having three months holidays.

"You only, hopefully, get married once so we just said we'd do it" she said in an interview last month.

Cotter was back in the fold by the



Cork substitutes look on as Orla Cotter of Cork prepares to score the winning point, from a free, during the Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Senior Camogie Championship final match between Cork and Kilkenny at Croke Park in Dublin. Pictures Piaras Ó Midheach/Sportsfile



Cork's Orla Cotter scores the winning point at the All-Ireland final

time she celebrated her 30th birthday in July but there has been no slipping in standards. In truth, she looks to be getting better.

"Orla Cotter's freetaking was immense today" said an appreciative Paudie Murray.

"I think one free she has missed in the whole Championship, which says it all really."

Kevin Murray spoke a few weeks ago about the work he has done with Cotter, about not messing with the completely individual style she has, almost genuflecting as the left knee bends, left hand over right à la Joe Deane as a left-handed player that feels more comfortable striking off her right.

He wanted to give her a process though, and ensure that it would hold up under mental and physical duress.

"I generally try not to change their method but I what I try to do is make sure they have a routine" the coach ex-

"She has her own style and is very comfortable in that style and I'm not one for changing that – it's very functional."

plained.

"I've worked a lot with Orla Cotter, down to timing, how long it takes her to take a free, or building up to taking a free from the minute we receive a free."

"We just put in routines that it's very solid. If she goes past that routine, she's smart enough to step away and reset again, it's that sort of composure."

"She has her own style and is very comfortable in that style and I'm not one for changing that – it's very functional."

"It's a unique style, is very effective, she has a routine and she's very meticulous. I know who I'm dealing with."

"I can understand what Orla is like in the way she likes to set up. I just tweak a few things to get her more confident in what she's doing."

"I would think that her numbers are pretty high in relation to her percentages and therefore then, when she's extremely confident in her routine, my job in training is to pressurise that confidence."

There are various stages to that, including making her take a couple of frees after a break in play in an eight v eight in-house training game, when

her heart rate is up after an intense period of play.

That work is done for moments like the 61st minute of an All-Ireland Final.

Holding her niece Fia (who was intent on bringing the reporter's Dictaphone home with her), Cotter was standing just a matter of feet away when from where she stood with the eyes of the Camogie world and many more on RTE television watching sporting immortality on the line.

What was she thinking?

"Please go over the bar!" exclaimed Cotter with that a laugh.

The technique and routine had her up.

"You practice a lot and you're just delighted when they go over the bar. Having missed what for her, was a easy opportunity earlier in the half – stood out because it was actually shock to learn that she isn't a robot over a dead ball – you wonder if it played on her mind?"

"You just try and forget about it and think of the next ball, or next free. Get it out of your head straight away."

It would horrify her to be claim credit as the match winner, though it notable that Julia White responded similarly 12 months ago.

Cotter had the class to think of Kilkenny too but most of all she thought of her fellow warriors. In a one-point game, every touch counts.

"It could have gone anyway. It been the way with our battles with Kilkenny the last number of years."

The League Final, last year's All-Ireland, this year's Final. Kilkenny are superb team.

"Every score, every block, every ball counted. Every little thing that every player did. Aoife Murray made an unbelievable save towards the end there."

It was a team effort and we're delighted to come out on top in the end.

Cork: Winners because they make it happen



Cork goalkeeper Aoife Murray talks to Red FM after the game. Picture: INPHO/Laszlo Geczo

THERE'S an odd and potentially misleading period around the end of every season where we look for reasons why some teams ends as winners and some as not winners.

It's undeniably an obvious thing to do, to search for patterns and details behind each successful team and basically hope to locate something to copy, even if learnings tend to become oversimplified.

France won the World Cup because of players developed on the pitches of the banlieues; Dublin won the All-Ireland because of advantages of funding and access to superior coaching; that kind of generalising.

The analysis tends to be dominated by two categories: the team who won because their players were better and the team who won because their coach/manager/tactics were better. And then there's the reality, the team who managed to find the most effective mix of both, who took the right group of players with the required talents and created the most effective environment for them to reach the necessary levels of excellence.

It's almost impossible to separate this Cork camogie group's winning momentum this past few years from the story of their management.

That wonderful Cork ladies football team found a perfect facilitator for them at that time of their emergence in Eamonn Ryan back in the mid-noughties.

This Cork camogie group have happened across the perfect management team at their stage of development here also, the level of detail and technical and tactical coaching work from Paudie Murray and his backroom group that's allowed them to dominate opponents and become the pre-eminent team of this era.

Check out any interview with a Cork player this past while where almost every aspect of their performance finds a reference back to some work done behind the scenes by the coaching team.

Ask about their long-distance shooting and you'll find that they specifically targeted long-distance shooting as an area to work on and improve as more and more opposi-



GAA

Barry O'Donovan

tion crowded the scoring zone in front of goals.

Ask about their ability to pick out the right pass to keep possession rather than belting it down the field and you'll find that sort of decision making is drilled into them from constant reinforcement in training games.

In the build-up to the match on radio one of the pundits mentioned that Kilkenny might have an advantage in a tight game as they'd more experience of those all year while Cork had been blitzing everybody; it was interesting then to hear Cork players and management talk afterwards how they were always confident if they were in touching distance in the last five minutes due to all the work done on mental toughness and replicating those conditions in training.

Take Orla Cotter, who managed to score the matchwinning free in an All-Ireland final and make it all feel fairly routine, nailing a pretty tricky shot in injury-time (it was tougher than say Dean Rock's winning kick in last year's All-Ireland final with Mayo which received an awful lot of post-match reverence on the character and process involved) and in truth never looked like not nailing it.

The nature and nurture element was taken care of by years of pucking around with her brothers in the back garden or the GAA field in Ballynoe.

Cotter took over on frees when Jenny O'Leary left a few years back and has added that extra bonus to her game with the same kind of care and pursuit of excellence you'd expect from a player that's always had that kind of technical ability.

The striking style is very much hers and the routine is more or less the same once she's locked into it - forward knee slightly bent, couple of



Cork's Gemma O'Connor celebrates with Orla Cotter at the end of their Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Senior Camogie Championship Final win over Kilkenny at Croke Park. Picture: INPHO/James Crombie

glances at the goal, left hand over right and struck off the right side, though she did give herself a little forward momentum for distance by standing a yard back for one or two of the further out ones.

Watch back any of those five frees now and there really is no feeling in the world other than that she's completely comfortable in the task. The pureness of the strike for the last winning free was especially sweet, nothing less than total conviction in the process and her ability to deliver in that situation. There's work to back that up of course.

One of the coaches, Kevin Murray, spoke before the final about techniques for the freetakers, about not wanting to interfere too much with Cotter's natural rhythm but on wanting to push her at the same time to

develop a proper routine and stick with it. Murray mentioned how his work with tennis players helped him in his work with Cotter's free-taking.

Creating the pressures of a last-minute All-Ireland winning free at Croke Park is difficult but there was a reference to frees taken in a training towards the end of a particularly tough eight-v-eight game so that the tiredness and heartache were at similar levels to what they were last Sunday in the 61st minute.

By the way, almost forgotten in the hoopla about the circumstances of that late free was Cotter's absolutely technically perfect pick and roll in the toughest of conditions at that stage of the game to get possession and get a move started when the game was there for the taking by either team - even if they hadn't won

the free Cork had the ball moving towards the Kilkenny goal.

Again, the kind of skill execution that becomes normal only through constant exposure to those kind of conditions in training.

Think Aoife Murray's save near the end which could come from years spent out in the grass playing with her brothers and sisters (those Murray family games must have been damn competitive) or hours at the ball wall up in Kilmacud with Niall Corcoran or all the drills in training or probably through some mix from them all.

You could run through almost every play Cork made last weekend and find the same balance of individual history and team training which made it possible. Cork are winners because they made it happen.

Camogie: Orla Cronin

In 2012, at the tender age of 16, Orla Cronin got the call-up to Cork's senior camogie team.

Cronin had been playing with her club in Enniskene and been involved with the county's minor team.

In 2012, when manager Paudie Murray called her up to his senior side, Cork were



Cork star Orla Cronin is the holder of four All-Ireland senior medals.

defeated in the final by Wexford.

Cronin was listed as one of the substitutes for the final and her player profile in the match programme simply read: "Secondary school student, member of the Cork minor panel."

Fast-forward six years and Cronin is the holder of four All-Ireland senior medals, from 2014, 2015, 2017, and 2018. In each of these finals, she has been both a points scorer and named player of the match.

All of this has been accomplished while playing camogie for UCC, studying for a degree in physiology, and working part-time, though college, in Cork Opera House.

Cronin's typical training involves two to three sessions a week, one ball alley practice, and either a match or another training session come the weekend. She has said the most challenging part of her life is juggling the demands of sports, college, and work, but that the best part about being an inter-county player is playing at the highest standard and making friends for life.

The best piece of advice she has ever been given? "Keep your squats low and your standards high."



Intermediate camogie captain Sarah Harrington lifting the Jack McGrath Cup after her side defeated Down in the final.

SEPT.
2018

National heroes switch focus to the club front

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

WITH the All-Ireland final taking centre stage last weekend, it was quiet on the local front, but now it's back to business.

It is very much all systems go as we look forward to a very busy few weeks of adult championship games at all levels.

Glen Rovers and Ballygarvan meet today in Castle Road at 5.30pm in round three of the SE Systems Senior Championship. Tomorrow, Sarsfields will take on county champions Inniscarra in Castle Road at 1 pm, followed at 5pm by Muskerry versus Courcy Rovers.

On Wednesday next it's the losers round replay between St Finbarr's and Douglas at 7.30pm. This will go ahead under lights at Na Piarasigh.

On September 23, the winners of St Finbarr's-Douglas will meet Carbery in round three. On the same day, three of the four quarter-finals will be down for decision with the winners of Muskerry versus Courcy Rovers meeting Killeagh, the winners between Glen Rovers and Ballygarvan facing Ballincollig, and it's Cloughduv taking on the winners of the Sarsfields-Inniscarra third round game.

On September 29, the last of the quarter-finals will be decided as Douglas/St Finbarr's or Carbery meet Milford.

The SE Systems Intermediate Championship is down to the quarter-finals and today in Brinny Clonakilty take on Éire Óg at 5pm.

The second quarter-final goes ahead in Bandon at 6.15pm with Carrigaline meeting Aghabullogue. There is a section play-off between Newcestown and Enniskeane today to determine who goes forward to one semi-final.

Fr O'Neill's have secured their place already, against Carrigaline or Aghabullogue. That takes place on September 22, while the second game will be Newcestown or Enniskeane versus Clon or Éire Óg.

In the SE Systems Junior A Championship, there is one game remaining in Section B with Tracton meeting St Vincent's tomorrow in Blackrock at 10.30am and this game will determine who will qualify from the section B with Banteer.

Watergrasshill and Ballyhea have booked their semi-final spots, qualifying from section A, and the last game will determine who goes through with Banteer.

The semi-finals will see Banteer against Ballyhea and Watergrasshill meeting St Vincent's or Tracton.

Today in Castle Road at 2.15pm, the SE Systems Junior C final will be decided between Castletyons and Aghada. The junior 13-a-side final between Grenagh and St Colum's has yet to be fixed.

The back door rounds of the minor championship at A, B, C, and D were also drawn at Wednesday night's last board meeting and they are as follows. Ballincollig versus Sarsfields in Sarsfields, Carrigaline will meet Glen Rovers in Carrigaline, with Newcestown or Aghabullogue getting a bye to the next round.



The Cork intermediate camogie team with Fr O'Neill players, Cork captain Sarah Harrington and Keelagh Cullinane, with their fellow team-mates and the large crowd at homecoming in Fr O'Neill's.



Niall and Mairead with Barra (2) and eight-month-old Rua Buckley meet Aisling Thompson at Our Lady's Children's Hospital, Crumlin. Picture: INPHO/Morgan Treacy

In the Minor B Championship, Balinhassig will meet Aghada, Douglas will face St Finbarr's, the amalgamated combination of Brian Dillon's/St Vincent's will play Killeagh.

In the SE Systems Minor C Championship back-door rounds, Cobh received a bye and will advance to

round three. The remainder of the draw will see Youghal meeting Castletyons, Clonakilty will travel to Rockbawn and Bishopstown are at home to Millstreet.

It would be remiss of us not to look back on what was a great weekend for Cork camogie when the inter-

mediate and senior teams brought home a fantastic double.

The hard work and effort that goes into making days like this possible has to be acknowledged.

It's not easy to keep a show on the road and the constant headaches of fitting in games, giving players time

between matches coping with injuries, fixture chaos and everything else that goes on behind the scenes has to be done in order for the glory days to be achieved.

A huge well done to the management, players and county board for the superbly well-organised machine they have in place, a happy camp is winning camp and it was so obvious that everybody worked away in their own little corner doing their own job and combined this helps garner success.

The bond and respect that is there between the players and their county board was also plain to be seen when on Monday night last, as county chairperson Mary McSweeney was called to speak on the South Mall, the players began to chant: "there is only one Mary McSweeney".

A nice touch by the players and one which I am sure the chairperson really appreciated. It was a tribute to her and her fellow officers for the hard work from the players and managers had not gone unnoticed.

An interesting stat, and another first for Cork, is that we are now the first county to win senior, intermediate and minor All-Ireland titles in the same year.

Many have done the senior/intermediate or senior/minor double, but not the treble.

Take a bow Paudie Murray, Jerry Wallace and your respective backroom teams and players.

Glen seek
atonement
for defeat
to Milford

CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick

WITH all inter-county games behind us, and thankfully no replay this year, it's back to all-time club action with round three of the senior championship this weekend and the replay of St Finbarr's and Douglas in round two next Wednesday.

The weekend's game's throw in with Glen Rovers and Ballygarvan this evening. This has the potential to be a cracker. County finalists Glen suffered a six-point defeat to Milford in the first round, but that defeat didn't do justice to the tight game that it was.

They'll surely have learned from it, realised that it's a 60-minute game and go all out to maintain a high intensity approach for the entire tie.

Mallow had to withdraw from round two so the Glen moved into round three where they face a Ballygarvan side that looked a little off the pace in their opening round, but turned around to give a blistering display against Valley Rovers.

That showed Ballygarvan's true potential. This should be an open and fast paced game. County champions Inniscarra, who had a good win over Cloughduv, are without star forward Joanne Casey for the year, while Aoife Kavanagh is out with a cruciate injury and both are huge losses.

They'll find the going particularly tough against a young, fast and confident Sarsfields side who started well in their quarter-final 12 months ago against Milford, but couldn't deal with the physicality and pace of their opponents in the second half.

A year older, wiser, and stronger, it'll be interesting to see how much they've progressed. You couldn't judge much from their opening encounter against Mallow. So, this will be a good test for Sars and, on the flip side, it could be a banana skin for Inniscarra.

Courcey Rovers, with Saoirse McCarthy and Linda Collins in their line-up, face Muskerry who had a very good opening round victory over St Finbarr's. Again, this is a hard one to call which makes for an interesting weekend of games.

Eire Og and Aghabullogue are in action in the intermediate championship tonight so that could have an impact for the divisional side, but then again when you're on a roll it incentivises and Muskerry could be buoyed by that first-round win. If Muskerry are at full strength, they are possibly tipped to take this, but Rovers are an up and coming side and, on form, could advance.

TODAY

SE Systems Senior Championship: Glen Rovers v Ballygarvan, Castleroad, 5.30pm.

TOMORROW

SE Systems Senior Championship: Inniscarra v Sarsfields, Castleroad, 1pm; Muskerry v Courcey Rovers, Castleroad, 5.30pm.

Cats paid price for negativity



Camogie

Linda Mellerick

FORGET that I'm from Cork as I write these next few lines. I'm going to wear a neutral hat as I analyse Kilkenny's performance last Sunday. It beggars belief how they went about this All-Ireland final.

If I was from Kilkenny I'd be absolutely fuming at how such talented players are being stifled by their current management. This bunch of players won numerous minor titles.

Their skilful, stylish, attacking, goallscoring approach is what won those titles for them. When they defeated Cork in the senior final of 2016 they had an attacking style.

Yet they now have a forward line a pale shadow of what they once promised. I still can't get my head around Katie Power at stages being the only Kilkenny forward inside the 60-metre line.

At times Cork defenders were looking at each other as if to say, 'Which one of us will take this ball?'. There must surely be unrest in Kilkenny after Sunday's tactic.

I said last week that if Kilkenny went defensive against Cork that Cork would win the game, but if Kilkenny played 15 on 15 then I'd be slightly worried.

We have no idea had Kilkenny gone on the attack if they would have beaten Cork, as if they had opened up Cork too would have had far more room to display their flair. It doesn't matter. Cork are All Ireland champions.

Why has Ann Downey and her management gone down this negative route? They must greatly respect Cork's pace and running game while at the same time have no faith in their own back eight outfield players.

In camogie you will never win a game with so many players behind the ball. I've no issue with a sweeper but holding 14 players between your own end-line and 65-metre mark, rarely going inside the oppositions 45?

This isn't football, you will never consistently defend, recycle and achieve on the break.

I don't think there has ever been as much reaction to a referee's performance as there was last Sunday. There was plenty of feedback on social and print media about Eamonn Cassidy having an awful game, while some stated that he refereed within the rules of the game. He didn't.

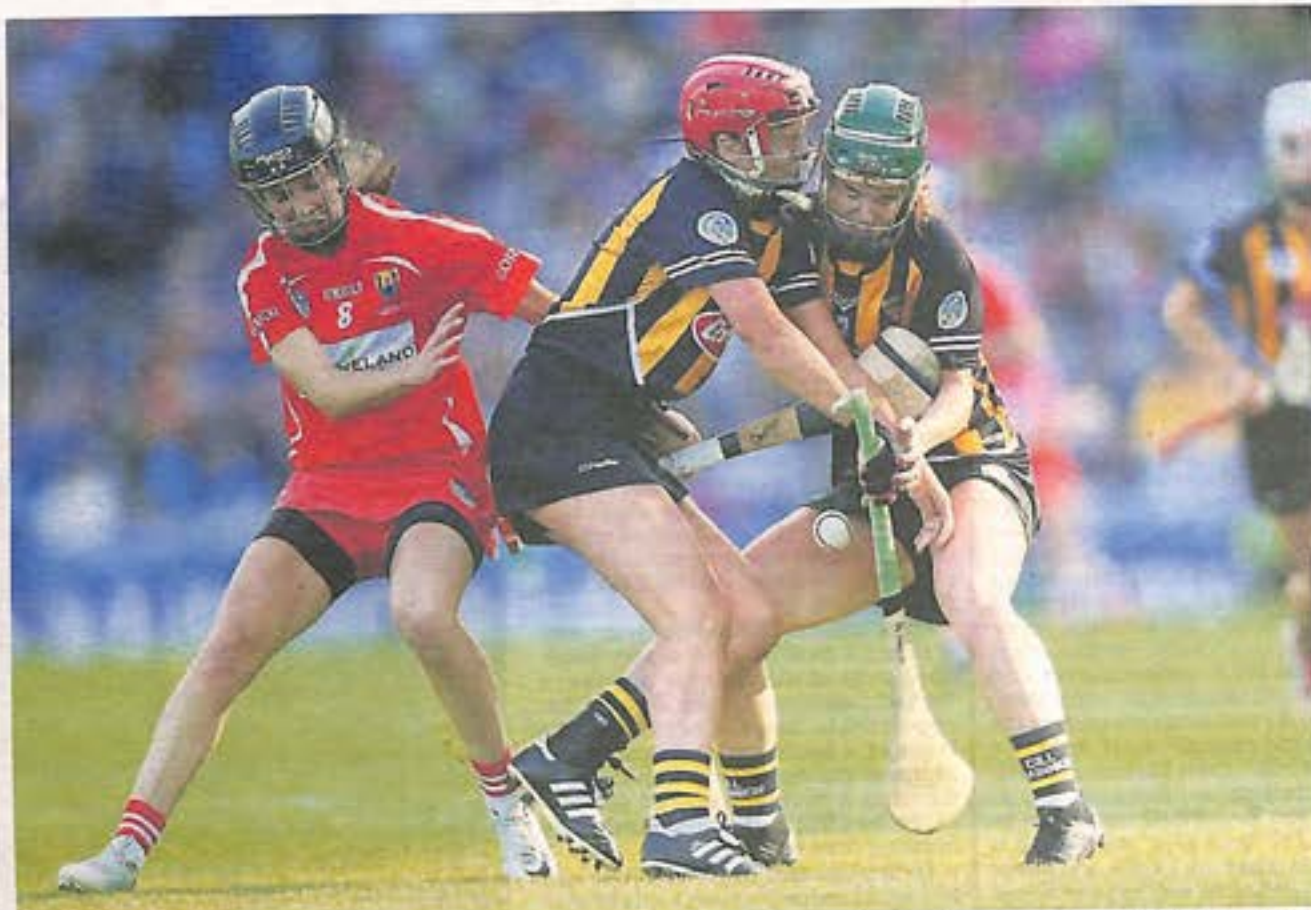
Forget the odd controversial decision. Those happen in every game and that's not the focal point here. The point is the impact he had on preventing a free-flowing game.

He failed to allow the advantage rule. That rule is the most important one in the rule book in my opinion.

Honouring that is what allows our game to flow. And too many referees don't do it.

On three occasions within the first five minutes he blew immediately when a foul was committed. In two of those Cork won the free but had broken away with the ball.

They still had possession and he



Cork's Julia White with Collette Dormer and Grace Walsh of Kilkenny at Croke Park last weekend.

Picture: INPHO/Tommy Dickson



Michael O'Sullivan, Rearden's, with Libby Coppinger, Laura Treacy, Gemma O'Connor and Aoife Murray when they called in with the O'Duffy Cup this week.

out. In the third Orla Cotter had the ball all alone and he called play back.

I could go on. That trend continued for the entire game. Cassidy played a big part in this game failing to live up to expectations.

I'm glad the stop-start nature of the game provoked a reaction which may also provoke a change in certain rules that will stop the finicky discretion of referees. Rules such as allowing a 'shoulder'.

But unfortunately, as it stands playing rules can only be tabled every three years and motions were submitted for change in Congress 2018.

A motion to change that rule is the first thing that needs to happen. Do we really have to wait until 2021? Our attendances in Croke Park may not fall much as kids still love the day out, but they certainly won't increase, and television viewership will fall

Our current players need to step up here and not leave such critical decisions to administrators of the game who don't typically take an interest in areas like this. They aren't concerned about the growth of our game. Most attendees at Congress are there with their own club in mind. The bigger picture doesn't concern them.

Two Brian Dillon's delegates, who are current players, made the effort to attend Congress this year. They voted for a 'shoulder' to be allowed.

They were the small minority in the room and almost made to feel uncomfortable that they would suggest such an act. Workshops were held nationally during 2017 in advance of Congress asking members what they wanted to change.

I attended one of those workshops in Mallow and was stunned that, from a list of 1-10, not one representative referred to the playing rules or the

standard of refereeing as a need for change.

The above aside, I was thrilled for the Intermediate side, they had gone through so much heartache. Congratulations to them and their management team and to our gallant senior players and management. What a great weekend it was.

Our County Board must also take much credit for Cork's success. They have presided over an incredibly successful year in 2018.

Reaching two U16 All-Ireland final a minor, intermediate and senior title. They've presided over four senior titles in five years.

People often criticise and don't give credit where its due. Yet the work of this small group put in, people like Mary McSweeney, Marian McCarthy and Sheila Golden, amongst others, should be widely acknowledged and applauded.

"You'll never win a camogie game with so many players behind the ball and no faith in your backs"

Courceys unfazed by Muskerry challenge

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

Courcey Rovers 4-15
Muskerry 1-7

COURCEY ROVERS experienced little difficulty advancing to the quarter-final of the SE Systems Senior championship as they totally outclassed Muskerry in Castle Road.

From the throw in, the club side looked the sharper and even if it must be acknowledged that several of the divisional team were involved in the SE Systems Intermediate championship the day before, they can have no complaints.

In all sectors, Courceys were the better side and with the excellent Fiona Keating spearheading their attack superbly assisted by the pacy Linda Collins, Grainne Hannon and the hard-working Jacinta Collins and Christine O'Neill, they held all the aces.

Crowley edged Courceys into an early lead converting a 45 and Keating signalled she was going to be a handful in the corner when she blasted the ball to the net inside three minutes.

Collins and Cliona Healy swapped points but Courceys were controlling matters and with Keating and Collins firing over three points between them they extended their lead.

Ciara McCarthy got one back for the divisional side but continuing to control matters Grainne Hannon finished to the net at the other end.

As they continued to apply huge pressure Courceys hit five points without reply to stretch their lead 2-9 to 0-3.

Muskerry enjoyed their best spell in the closing 10 minutes of the opening half, Margaret O'Herlihy hand-passed to the net and followed up with two frees to narrow the gap.

On the resumption, Keating grabbed her second goal and from here to the full-time whistle Courceys were never going to be caught.

Scorers for Courcey Rovers: F Keating 2-5, L Collins 1-5, J Crowley 0-3 (0-2 f, 0-1 f), G Hannon 1-0, C O'Neill 0-2.

Muskerry: M O'Herlihy 1-3 (0-3 f), C McCarthy 0-2, C Healy 0-2 (0-1 f).
COURCEY ROVERS: S O'Reilly; M O'Donovan, K Keohane, C Hayes; K Lynch, A Moloney (c), O Twomey; J Crowley, S McCarthy; C O'Neill, E O'Reilly, A O'Reilly; F Keating, G Hannon, L Collins.

Subs: E Moloney for K Lynch (h-t), S Hayes for S Hannon (50), A Hannon for C Hayes (55), L Collins for S McCarthy (50), M O'Donovan for A O'Reilly (53).
MUSKERRY: J Murphy (Blarney); M Cotter (Aghabullogue); K McCarthy (do), A Hennessy (Eire Og); G Collins (do), M Gleeson (do), E Flanagan (Aghabullogue); S Hutchinson (Eire Og), A Nic A Bhaird (Ballinora); C Healy (Aghabullogue); C McCarthy (do), ME Desmond (Eire Og); E Murphy (Blarney); M Herlihy (Eire Og); E Tarrant (Aghabullogue).

Subs: Aoife Hennessy (Eire Og) for A Hennessy (in 37), E Crowley (Eire Og) for E Tarrant (41), J Tarrant (Aghabullogue) for E Murphy (50), K McCarthy (Eire Og) for Aoife Hennessy (in 50), K Dooley (Ballinora) for M O'Herlihy (in 51).
Referee: Cathal Mc Allister (Aghada).

Buckley goal wins it for Ballygarvan



Camogie

Linda Mellerick

Ballygarvan 1-11
Glen Rovers 0-11

A MICHAELA BUCKLEY goal on 52 minutes swung the game in Ballygarvan's favour in this SE Systems third round senior championship tie with Glen Rovers.

Glen Rovers a strong wind advantage in the first half, and while they'll rue going in only level at half-time Ballygarvan too failed to make the elements really count on the scoreboard in the second.

Ballygarvan played defensively as you'd expect in that opening half, leaving the Glen with two free players at the back. Ballygarvan went into a four points to one lead after eight minutes.

Ballygarvan 'keeper Sarah Ahern puckouts were really strong. Ellen O'Regan was causing the Glen problems at midfield, making a number of runs forward.

Isabelle O'Regan, Rebecca Murphy and Cliona O'Leary were prominent, Ballygarvan's interplay was good and they were full value for their lead.

The Glen were very jittery, their touch was off, and they struggled to find the rhythm that their opponents were enjoying. Still, three points from Denise Luby (f), Nora O'Riordan and Ashling Wallace had the sides level on twenty minutes, and it was that way at the break at seven points each.

Ballygarvan kept one sweeper for the second half and the Glen weren't spreading their inside players enough so as to find space.

Isabelle O'Regan got Ballygarvan off the mark again before the Glen finally found their stride. Four points on the trot, two excellent ones by Katie Walsh on the right wing, and the Glen moved into an eleven to eight-point lead with 12 minutes remaining.

Cliona O'Leary pointed her fourth free before the turning point came. A long Shannon Wynne free high into the square was met with swinging hurleys and it was Michaela Buckley who connected to the net.

Equally as important was her follow



Leanne O'Sullivan, Glen Rovers, Kate Dorney, Ballygarvan in the Cork Senior Camogie Championship, Round 3 game at Castle Road. Picture: Jim Coughlan

up point a minute later and Ballygarvan were in the driving seat, two points up but still with seven minutes to go.

The Glen tried everything but a strong, confident save by Ahern denied Ashling Wallace with three minutes remaining and you felt that was going to be the Glen's last chance. It was.

Cliona O'Leary wrapped up the victory with another free on full time and Ballygarvan celebrated a big senior championship win.

Scorers for Ballygarvan: C O'Leary 0-7 (0-5 f, 0-1 f), M Buckley 1-1, I O'Regan 0-2, R Murphy 0-1.
Glen Rovers: D Luby 0-4 (f), K Walsh 0-3, E Murphy 0-2, A Wallace 0-1, N O'Riordan 0-1.

BALLYGARVAN: S Ahern; K Dorney, E Ryan, A Keohane; L Kennelick, S Wynne, E Bateman; E O'Regan, A Moynihan; M Buckley, I O'Regan, R Crowley; C O'Leary, R Murphy, S J Brady.
Subs: C Keohane for R Crowley (55), M Moynihan for S J Brady (57).

GLEN ROVERS: L O'Riordan; K O'Connell, K Falvey, S Fahy; L O'Sullivan, S Hayes, L Callanan; L Cunningham, K Buckley, N O'Riordan, N O'Brien, E Murphy; A Wallace, D Luby, K Walsh.
Subs: T McCarthy for K Buckley (35).
Referee: John O'Leary (Mallow).



Lauren Callanan, Glen Rovers, Isabelle O'Regan, Ballygarvan in the Cork Senior Camogie Championship, Round 3 game. Picture: Jim Coughlan

Inniscarra blitz inexperienced Sars' side to claim win

Inniscarra 5-12
Sarsfields 1-6

A POWERFUL display by Inniscarra blitzed a young Sarsfields side in the first of two senior championship games in Castleroad yesterday.

Sarsfields failed to really put any cohesive moves together as the physical strength and experience of Inniscarra proved just too much.

Inniscarra showed no effects of losing players the calibre of Joanne Casey and Aoife Kavanagh as Niamh Dilworth, back to her best, and Niamh McCarthy gave a masterful scoring display. With Katie O'Mahony outstanding around the middle, after the initial seven minutes they thundered into the game and scores came fast and furious.

The first of McCarthy's hat-trick came on 13 minutes when she gathered and burst through a wall of

defenders to hand-pass to the net. Her second was at the end of a brilliant team move where Inniscarra's high fielding was outstanding, their passing game top class and again McCarthy finished with a hand-passed goal.

A touch was got to Niamh Dilworth's penalty on thirty-two minutes, but it parried into the goal and Sarsfields had a mountain to climb at half time, 3-8 to 0-4. But Sars had come from back from a similar position last year to beat Inniscarra by a point.

There was no such turnaround this year as a real killer blow came within a minute of the restart when again Dilworth stood up over the placed ball and her low free shot to the net, after Sarsfield's again got a touch.

All over the field Inniscarra were impressive, their

work rate for the hour very strong, with some great defending and blocking all over the field.

A imposing victory for them on a day when Sarsfields failed to bring their best to the pitch, in part due to Inniscarra's high intensity performance.

Scorers for Inniscarra: N Dilworth 2-7 (1-3 f, 1-0 pen), N McCarthy 2-2, E Murphy 0-1, K O'Mahony, A O'Connor 0-1 each.

Sarsfields: E Fennell 0-4 (f), L Allen 1-2.
INNISCARRA: S Walsh; A O'Regan, C Looney, R Quigley; R Keane, Buckley, R O'Mahony; E Looney, K O'Mahony, T McCarthy, N Dilworth, A Sheehan; J Burke, N McCarthy, E Murphy.

Subs: C Keane for A Sheehan (47), M Buckley for R Buckley (50), O'Connor for N Dilworth (57, in), A Dineen for K O'Mahony (60).

SARSFIELDS: M Lynch; J Murphy, E Loneragan, K Barry; N O'Callaghan, E Casey, E Murphy, C Casey, L Kelly; M McCarthy, M Mullins, Holland, E Fennell, L Allen, C Mullins.
Subs: R O'Mahony for C Holland (h-t), B Morgan for E Casey (43, in), K Walsh for E Loneragan (48), C Ahern for M Mullins (53), E Twomey for M McCarthy (55).
Referee: Cathal Egan (Glen Rovers).



Paddy and Florrie Cullinane, parents of Keelagh Cullinane, with Sarah Harrington, and her parents Nora and Thomas Harrington at the homecoming for the Cork intermediate camogie team at Fr O'Neill's club.

Fr O'Neill's Cork stars get a hero's welcome on their home turf

IT'S a long-standing tradition that an All-Ireland winning captain across the GAA landscape brings the trophy to his or her native place on the Tuesday following the final.

The host club put out the welcome mat for their captain and the rest of the squad who make the journey as well.

Last Tuesday night the Fr O'Neill's club in east Cork had the opportunity to welcome their own Sarah Harrington and her team-mates to their complex in Ahavine and it was a joyous occasion for all.

Another member of the club, Keelagh Cullinane, was also on the squad and she too was welcomed back with open arms to the proud east Cork club last Tuesday.

Last Sunday's win over Down signposted the way for the senior team to retain their title at Kilkenny's expense, making it a day of great joy for all Cork camogie followers.

The intermediate team's victory was a case of third time lucky, having lost the last two finals to Meath and Kilkenny.

"To lose in a replay to Meath last season and to Kilkenny the year before was heart-breaking, but we will put that behind us now and focus on this year," Sarah said in an interview before last Sunday's decider.

They certainly did that and she led by example all the way as Cork clinched the title and in doing so further embellished the state of the game in the county.

The Cork captain comes from a strong GAA background with her mother and father steeped in the game as are the rest of her family.

Her brother Daniel Harrington is a key member of the O'Neill's team now bidding for Cork County PIHC honours while another brother, Shane, also lines out with the club.

Her sister Kate was also a player of renown, but injury has curtailed her career though she continues to be a source of great inspiration.

For the Fr O'Neill's duo that were involved in Croke Park last Sunday, it was very much a case of following in the footsteps of some of the greatest Cork camogie players of all time, fellow club members Mags Finn and Fiona O'Driscoll.

The big night in the club began with Patrick McCarthy from the Youghal Pipe Band leading the girls on to the

GAA

John Horgan

pitch where a huge crowd had gathered.

A guard of honour was provided by the younger members of the club who will surely hope to follow in their illustrious footsteps as the years go by.

Ann Marie Griffin, chairperson Fr O'Neill's camogie, welcomed Sarah, Keelagh, and the Cork team along with Mary McSweeney, chairperson of the Cork Camogie Board, Sheila Golden, vice-chairperson, and Marion McCarthy, treasurer, to the homecoming.

They saluted all the girls for their wonderful achievement and, in particular, the two local heroes.

"It was a huge occasion for our club and we were delighted to be able to salute the two girls who did us so proud," Ann Marie told the Echo.

"Nearly the entire Cork panel came down with Sarah and Keelagh and that was really appreciated.

"We got great support too from the other camogie clubs in east Cork on the night and a few of the Fr O'Neill's hurlers were there too, Deccie Dalton, Ger Millerick and others.

"Our club is 41 years old this year and we have now got 200 members playing camogie.

"Sarah and Keelagh used to look up to Mags and Fiona when they were growing up, now the youngsters will be looking up to them and trying to emulate their achievement.

"It was a great Sunday in Croke Park and when you have two of your own players involved, it really adds to the whole thing. We are really proud of them."

Also present in Ahavine were Bridie Finn and Joan O'Driscoll, honorary presidents Fr O'Neill's Camogie Club, Margaret Hyde, president Fr O'Neill's Camogie Club, Michael Hegarty, chairman Fr O'Neill's GAA Club, and Aidan Healy, chairman Ballymacoda/Ladysbridge Community Council.

Presentations were made to Sarah and Keelagh by former club and county players, Fiona O'Driscoll and Mags Finn.

Afterwards, the players signed autographs and posed for photos and selfies with their large legion of fans.

Mackey seals the win for Douglas

CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick

Douglas 1-14

St Finbarr's 1-12

DOUGLAS advanced to the third round of the SE Systems Senior Camogie Championship after a pulsating game with St Finbarr's in Na Piar-saigh's last night.

In a game which ebbed and flowed from start to finish, Douglas managed to keep their nose in front. On 51 minutes, just a point separated the sides but two brilliant Katrina Mackey points, one from play, saw them claim the win.

It looked as if Douglas would begin to pull away after Julia White goaled entering the final quarter to put five between the sides but from the puck-out St Finbarr's won a free and Keeva McCarthy finished to the net to make it game on again.

St Finbarr's piled on the pressure, but Douglas's defence were excellent, marshalled by the brilliant Pamela Mackey but equally supported by Emma Kavanagh and Niamh Ni Chuanachain.

Douglas seemed to find it easier to get scores, Aisling O'Brien getting them off the mark with two well-taken points. With Katrina Mackey in scintillating form they pushed into a 0-5 to 0-3 lead 14 minutes in.

The quality of scores taken from both sides was superb. The accuracy of Keeva McCarthy ensured the minimum was the gap at the break, Douglas leading by one.

It was edge of your seat stuff for the second half with the ball ferociously fought for. The Mackeys and Gemma O'Connor were just top class but club players from both sides were brilliant. Aoife O'Neill, Meabh Cahalane and Lynda O'Connell for St Finbarr's, Douglas's full-back line, Julia White, Eimear McAndrew and Chloe Nason working their socks off.

The injured Eimear Ryan was a big loss to the Barrs. She was missed as they primarily relied on McCarthy and O'Connor for scores. While Katrina did the majority of the scoring for Douglas, her forward team-mates were winning good possession and creating them.

Nothing was left on the pitch by both sides. In a gripping encounter, one of the best of the championship to date.

Scorers for Douglas: K Mackey 0-9 (0-4 ft), J White 1-1, A O'Brien 0-2, K Holland, P Mackey 0-1 each.

St Finbarr's: K McCarthy 1-7 (0-4 ft, 0-1 45), G O'Connor 0-2, A Shannon, C Keating, G Cahalane 0-1 each.

DOUGLAS: J Kavanagh, S Mulrooney, N Ni Chuanachain, S Long, E Kavanagh, P Mackey, A Curtin, M Mulrooney, E McAndrew, R Sheehan, K Mackey, C Nason, K Holland, A O'Brien, J White.

Sub: J O'Mahony for C Nason (55). ST FINBARR'S: E Hurley, S Punch, A Egan, A O'Neill, R Finn, G O'Connor, L O'Connell, A Shannon, M Cahalane, E O'Brien, K McCarthy, C Ryan, C Sargent, E Browne Ryan, R Myers.

Subs: C Keating for R Finn (19, inj), G Cahalane for E Browne Ryan (45).

Referee: John Horgan (Gleann na Laoi).

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Cáit Devane (Tipperary) 4-46 (58)

Beth Carton (Waterford) 3-36 (45)

Carrie Dolan (Galway) 1-33 (36)

Niamh Mulcahy (Limerick) 0-34 (34)

Siobhán Flannery (Offaly) 5-19 (34)

#GoTogether



THE CAMOGIE ASSOCIATION
An Cumann Camógachta

Senior Championship is really starting to hot up

WE'RE down to the last nine of the SE Systems Cork Senior Championship.

Ballygarvan, Ballincollig, Inniscarra, Cloughduv, Killeagh, Courcsey Rovers and Milford are all at quarter-final stage while Douglas and Carbery face off in round three to see who will advance to take up the last quarter-final spot. The Douglas and Carbery game is a week behind schedule due to the second round draw between Douglas and St Finbarr's, the outcome of which was determined last Wednesday evening after a fierce battle.

Champions Inniscarra went the

direct route to this quarter-final defeating Cloughduv in round one and Sarsfields. They face Cloughduv again on Saturday after Cloughduv had a one-point victory over St Catherine's in round two.

Just three points separated the sides in round one, 0-11 to 0-8. With a lot more, work done in both camps since, except this game to be higher scoring and a faster pace. Inniscarra have physical strength up front in Niamh Dilworth and Niamh McCarthy and this was a key factor in their third-round victory over Sars last weekend. Cloughduv's work ethic has been

CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick

hugely impressive to date but Inniscarra also gave a solid hour's performance seven days ago. Expect both sides to wear their heart on their sleeve and battle it out.

Ballygarvan and Ballincollig kick off the weekend's action. Ballygarvan had a much-valued win over Glen Rovers after losing their opening round to Carbery. Ballincollig went the direct route

but only after a first-round replay win over Douglas. They received a bye to the quarter-final which means they haven't played in a number of weeks and it could take them time on Saturday to get back to championship pace.

Confidence will be high in Courcsey Rovers after a resounding victory over Muskerry last weekend. Killeagh too haven't had a game in two months. They impressed in their opener with Valley Rovers but with Valley being senior debutants it's difficult to determine if Killeagh have found their mojo.

To round off the weekend's senior games, Douglas face Carbery, who on paper have a very strong team. How the divisional side cope with the dynamic Mackey's will be key. Douglas have again found their club work ethic on the pitch which has been missing for a while. Newcestown are in intermediate semi-final action on Saturday so this will impact Carbery.

TOMORROW:

Ballygarvan v Ballincollig, Castleroad, 2pm; Inniscarra v Cloughduv, Castleroad, 5pm.

SUNDAY

Courcsey Rovers v Killeagh, Castleroad, 2pm; Douglas v Carbery, Castleroad, 5pm.

Why Cotter delivered when it counted the most

BYDARRAGH Ó CONCHÚIR

SELFLESSNESS is a common theme in most teams that win habitually and the Cork Camogie squad basking in the glow of being Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Senior Camogie champions this week cannot claim exclusivity on it.

Indeed the outfit they defeated by an injury-time point for the second consecutive year possesses a number of players willing to take on the role asked of them, whether it is thankless, as was the case with Katie Power regularly battling three Cork defenders at full-forward, or it forces them to rein in their natural inclination to release the shackles, as has been the story for centre-back Anne Dalton in recent years, but who added to her phenomenal catalogue of excellence with another colossal showing.

And they boast plenty of operators like Meighan Farrell, who as usual, put her nose to the grindstone, throwing herself into every ball, eschewing personal safety for the cause.

It is a very prominent theme of the Cork set-up though. In conversation a couple of weeks ago, team coach emphasised how important it was, and how he would never focus on his sister Aoife being captain and possibly lifting the O'Duffy Cup, which she did

two days after her 35th birthday. Yes, this happening, with brothers Paudie (manager) and Damien (logistics) involved was nice for the family but it would always be about everyone involved striving to produce a better collective.

In truth, Orla Cotter has lived this approach her entire career, happy to toil to make teammates look better than her.

When Jenny O'Leary retired, the tall St Catherine's player took over the placed ball duties and emerged from the shadows in which she had been more to operate as a result. The scoring returns went through the roof and this increased profile made us notice her general play more too: the classy touches, the workrate, the clever passing.

Remember that it was Cotter who gave the perfect stick pass to Gemma O'Connor for that outrageous equalising point in last year's decider, with two seconds of regulation time remaining. She is one of the most accurate shooters in Camogie but that was the better ball.

And what was lost in the controversy over whether or not she should have had the free from which she struck the winner from that left-hand side, close to 60m out, were two roll lifts and in the same motion of each one, the spin

away. It was sublime skill in the maelstrom of battle, bodies and hurleys crashing into one another.

The only time she put herself first was when choosing to go on honeymoon after getting married to Mark in May. It was a dream trip that meant she missed training and the start of the Championship. In more than a decade as a Cork player, she had never been away despite as a teacher, having three months holidays. "You only, hopefully, get married once so we just said we'd do it," she said in an interview last month.

Cotter was back in the fold by the time she celebrated her 30th birthday in July but there has been no slipping in standards. In truth, she looks to be getting better.

"Orla Cotter's freetaking was immense today" said an appreciative Paudie Murray. "I think one free she has missed in the whole Championship, which says it all really."

Kevin Murray spoke a few weeks ago about the work he has done with Cotter, about not messing with the completely individual style she has, almost genuflecting as the left knee bends, left hand over right à la Joe Deane as a left-handed player that feels more comfortable striking off her right. He wanted to give her a process though, and ensure that it would

hold up under mental and physical duress.

"I generally try not to change their method but I what I try to do is make sure they have a routine" the coach explained. "I've worked a lot with Orla Cotter, down to timing, how long it takes her to take a free, or building up to taking a free from the minute we receive a free. We just put in routines that it's very solid. If she goes past that routine, she's smart enough to step away and reset again, it's that sort of composure."

"She has her own style and is very comfortable in that style and I'm not one for changing that - it's very functional. It's a unique style, is very effective, she has a routine and she's very meticulous. I know who I'm dealing with. I can understand what Orla is like in the way she likes to set up. I just tweak a few things to get her more confident in what she's doing."

"I would think that her numbers are pretty high in relation to her percentages and therefore then, when she's extremely confident in her routine, my job in training is to pressurise that confidence."

There are various stages to that, including making her take a couple of frees after a break in play in an eight v eight in-house training game, when her heart rate is up

after an intense period of play. That work is done for moments like the 61st minute of an All-Ireland Final.

Holding her niece Fia (who was intent on bringing the reporter's Dictaphone home with her), Cotter was standing just a matter of feet

away when from where she stood with the eyes of the Camogie world and many more on RTE television watching, sporting immortality on the line.

What was she thinking? "Please go over the bar!" exclaimed Cotter with that a laugh. The technique and routine

had held up.

"You practice a lot and you're just delighted when they go over then."

Having missed what for her, was an easy opportunity earlier in the half - it stood out because it was actually a shock to learn that she isn't a robot over a dead ball - you wonder if it preyed on her mind.

"You just try and forget about it and think of the next ball, or next free. Get it out of your head straight away."

It would horrify her to be claiming credit as the match winner, though it's notable that Julia White responded similarly 12 months ago. Cotter had the class to think of Kilkenny too but most of all she thought of her fellow warriors. In a one-point game, every touch counts.

"It could have gone anyway. It's been the way with our battles with Kilkenny the last number of years. The League Final, last year's All-Ireland, this year's Final. Kilkenny are a superb team."

"Every score, every block, every hook counted. Every little thing that every player did. Aoife Murray made an unbelievable save towards the end there. It was a team effort and we're delighted to come out on top in the end."



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Cork's Linda Collins and Laura Treacy celebrate after the Rebels claimed the county's second All Ireland camogie title in as many years

Photo by Inpho

Sport

THE BACK PAGE PHOTO

Cork captain Aoife Murray lifts the O'Duffy Cup following the Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Senior Camogie Championship Final match between Cork and Kilkenny at Croke Park in Dublin
Photo by Piaras O Midheach / Sportsfile

GLORY DAYS ARE HERE AGAIN

CORK DO IT BACK-TO-BACK

ALL-IRELAND **INTERMEDIATE** CAMOGIE FINAL

Cork 1-13 Down 0-9



Cork team celebrate after the game with the Jack McGrath Cup after winning the Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Intermediate Camogie Championship Final in Croke Park. BELOW: Finola Neville, Niamh Ní Chaoimh celebrate after the game.
Photos by INPHO

Cracking games at all underage levels

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

THE underage championships have continued to be the focal points for most clubs in the last few weeks.

Premier

In the opening rounds of games, Ballinora got the upper hand on Charleville, Eire Og proved too strong for Blackrock, and Aghabullogue had too much for Ballygarvan.

Sarsfields were much too strong for Inniscarra, while the clash between Enniskeane and Glen Rovers was close with Enniskeane edging it with a point to spare.

The losers from round one plus Kilbrittain/Timoleague, who received a bye in round one, went into the hat and will now meet in round two.

It will be an all-city clash when Blackrock travel to Glen Rovers tomorrow (5pm) in Glen Rovers.

Charleville are down to meet Ballygarvan, while Inniscarra got their campaign back on track as they overcame Kilbrittain/Timoleague.

In the quarter-finals, Ballinora will meet Blackrock or Glen Rovers, Eire Og will take on Inniscarra, Sarsfields will meet Charleville or Ballygarvan, and Enniskeane meet Aghabullogue.

U16 A

In the U16 A championship opening rounds, Ballinascorthy overcame Valley Rovers, Kilbree got the upper hand on Killeagh, and Aghada were too strong for Ballincollig.

Fr O'Neill's defeated Tracton, while Castlelyons and Cobh finished level in a high scoring game, 3-14 to 6-5, and in the replay it was Cobh that came out on top, 5-8 to 2-6.

Youghal defeated the combination side of Milford/Ballyhea and St Finbarr's defeated Newcestown.

In the round two clashes, Killeagh received a bye and Tracton got back on track with a win over Castlelyons. Valley Rovers and Ballincollig finished level 2-10 to 4-4 and with the replay tomorrow at 5pm in Brinny. Newcestown had a win over Milford/Ballyhea.

Round three had Kilbree heading to Tracton tomorrow (11.30am) for a clash with the home side, St Finbarr's will play either Valley Rovers or Ballincollig, and Killeagh will travel to Newcestown.

Ballinascorthy, Aghada, Fr O'Neill's, Cobh and Youghal plus the winners for the round three games go forward to the quarter-finals.

U16 B

Sixteen teams were in action in the U16 B championship opening rounds. Castlemartyr got their campaign off to a good start as they hosted Banteer and ran out winners, Sliabh Rua proved too strong for Blarney, Inniscarra's second team had a 1-5 to 0-3 win over Douglas, and Courcey Rovers got the upper hand on Mal-

Rockbá and Midleton played out a thriller as Rockbá held firm to edge it, 3-8 to 3-7. Na Piarsaigh travelled to Bishopstown and overcame the home side, St Catherine's defeated Clonakilty, and Cloughduv overcame Carrigaline.



Young supporters were delighted to welcome Cork camogie players Aileen Sheehan, senior team, Emily Buckley, intermediate team and Orla Cremen, minor team with the All-Ireland cups to Gaelscoil Mhuscraí an Bhlarina. Picture: David Keane

In round two, Douglas had a win over Blarney, Mallow won by a point, 1-8 to 0-9, at Midleton's expense, while Banteer didn't field against Bishopstown.

It's down to round three where Castlemartyr will travel to meet Bishopstown, Mallow head to Inniscarra to meet their second team tomorrow (5pm). Douglas are down to meet Rockbá and Na Piarsaigh will travel to Carrigaline. The winners of these games will go forward to the quarter-finals where Courcey Rovers, St Catherine's, Sliabh Rua and Cloughduv await.

U16 C

Sixteen teams were to contest the U16 C championship, but with three teams failing to field it was down to 13.

Little divided Erin's Own and Balinhassig all through an exciting game, but at the final whistle it was Erin's Own who led 4-8 to 4-7. Dungourney were too strong for Watergrahill, Nemo Rangers and Laochra Og enjoyed an excellent battle with Nemo Rangers, advancing on a 3-3 to 0-5 scoreline.

Buttevant hosted Kilworth and ran out 3-5 to 1-4 winners, St Colum's, Barryroe, and Brian Dillon's advanced after walkovers from Grenagh, St Fanahan's and St Vincent's

who did not field.

In round two Kilworth and Laochra Og received byes to round three, while Watergrahill overcame Balinhassig.

In round three, Kilworth are to meet St Colum's, Barryroe will meet Watergrahill tomorrow at 12.30pm and Brian Dillon's will face Laochra Og on Wednesday at 6.30pm at home.

The winners from round three will join Erin's Own, Dungourney, Nemo Rangers, Buttevant, and Millstreet in the quarter-finals.

U14 A

In U14 A championship Inniscarra defeated Tracton, Sarsfields overcame Youghal, Eire Og were too strong for Ballygarvan and Aghabullogue edged it in a tight contest with Kilbree.

It's down to the semi-finals and on tomorrow in Ovens at 4pm, Sarsfields will meet Eire Og and on Sept 30 it's Inniscarra versus Aghabullogue in Aghabullogue at 12pm.

U14 B

In the U14 B championship, 26 teams battled it out in the first round games.

Clonakilty had a 6-4 to 2-2 victory over Cork Division 2 Féile winners Rockbá while Sarsfields' second team had a 4-3 to 2-2 victory over Millstreet.

Aghada signalled their intent in this championship with a 7-6 to 0-2 victory over Kilbrittain/Timoleague and Mallow were too strong for Killeagh.

There were plenty of goals in the Ballyhea/Milford versus Blarney game, 14 in total, as Blarney got the upper hand in an exciting contest which ebbed and flowed all through as play swung from end to end.

Bishopstown had a victory over Castlemartyr and Fr O'Neill's defeated Douglas. Courcey Rovers travelled to Carrigaline and came away with a win, Blackrock were too strong for Castlelyons, Cobh defeated Na Piarsaigh while Midleton hosted Ballinascorthy and secured a win on home ground.

Glen Rovers overcame Newcestown, Cloughduv travelled to Charleville and came away with a win.

As in the A grade, one losing team got a bye to round three and it is Ballyhea/Milford were the team drawn for this, the other 12 teams went on to the losers rounds and resulted as follows.

Rockbá got the upper hand on Millstreet, Castlemartyr defeated Douglas, Killeagh overcame Castlelyons, and Ballinascorthy defeated Carrigaline.

Kilbrittain/Timoleague beat neighbours Newcestown and Na

Piarsaigh had a victory over Charleville.

Six winners from the losers rounds plus Ballyhea/Milford plus one team from the winners, which was Blackrock, made up eight teams who will play in the next round of four games.

The winners from the four games plus the 12 first round winners make up the 16 teams who that contest the next round.

Ballyhea/Milford defeated Kilbrittain/Timoleague, Rockbá overcame Killeagh, Blackrock defeated Ballinascorthy, and Castlemartyr overcame Na Piarsaigh.

On to round three and a win for Midleton over Milford/Ballyhea, Rockbá overcame Courcey Rovers, Fr O'Neill's overcame Glen Rovers, Bishopstown got the better of Cloughduv, Castlemartyr defeated Na Piarsaigh.

The quarter finals saw Midleton record a 2-6 to 1-5 victory over Rockbá, Clonakilty had a 4-6 to 2-0 win over Bishopstown, Aghada knocked out Fr O'Neill's 4-11 to 4-2, and Blackrock defeated Castlemartyr 6-6 to 2-2.

The semi-final pairings are Midleton versus Clonakilty and Aghada versus Blackrock this goes ahead on September 30 at 6pm.

Gráinne drives Castle girls to victory

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

Castlelyons 1-10
Aghada 0-5

HAVING experienced heartbreak on a number of occasions, Castlelyons finally got to reap the rewards of their hard work as they captured the SE Systems Junior C Championship title.

They overcame a young Aghada side at Castle Road in an entertaining game.

It's a huge tribute to Aghada to have reached the decider and their efforts in their bid to capture the crown must be applauded as they battled to the final whistle.

On the day, they met a very determined Castlelyons side who dug deep to carve out a splendid win.

There were many heroes over the hour and many who contributed enormously to the victory, but Gráinne McCarthy was named *Evening Echo* Player of the Match following a splendid display.

She contributed 1-5 of the Castlelyons' tally, and 1-3 for that was from play.

Castlelyons set the foundations for victory in the opening 30 minutes and they led at the interval 1-7 to 0-3 with McCarthy, Megan McNulty, Melissa O'Sullivan and Albhinn O'Sullivan all to the fore.

Aghada stayed in touch with Ali Smith and Aine McGrath battling hard and they stayed in touching distance to the short whistle.

On the resumption, McCarthy was very much the driving force as her side made the final push for home.

Aghada battled hard but it was an overall team effort and a huge desire to win that saw Castlelyons finally achieved their dream in taking the Junior C championship crown.

Aghada have made huge strides in reaching the Junior C final in just their second year playing at adult level and they can look ahead with huge confidence.

Scorers for Castlelyons: G McCarthy 1-5 (0-2 f), M McNulty 0-2, I Fenton, M O'Sullivan, A O'Sullivan 0-1 each.

Aghada: A Smith 0-3 (0-2 f), A McCarthy, ER Boylan (f) 0-1 each.

CASTLELYONS: A O'Brien, M Hartnett, N Barry, S O'Sullivan, C O'Flynn, M O'Sullivan, C McCarthy, Shannahan, A Greaney, M Murphy, A O'Sullivan, M McNulty, G McCarthy, Z Power, N McCarthy.

Subs: I Fenton for Z Power, M Daly for M Murphy, L McGinn for S O'Sullivan.

AGHADA: M Stafford, A Crowley, K Farrell, A Rose, M Leahy, A McGrath, A Horgan, C Thomas, S Leahy, A Smith, A McCarthy, M Culligan, M Rutledge, C Dwyer (c), C Walsh.

Subs: ER Boylan for C Thomas, K Terry for M Rutledge, C McGrath for A Smith, A Smith for M Culligan.

All of last-eight can win the title



Camogie

Linda Mellerick

THE Cork senior club championship looks to be wide-open, based on the quarter-final pairings down for this weekend.

I imagine there's going to be an added bite to today's and tomorrow's games, because all of the remaining teams will feel they have a chance of the title.

Milford and Inniscarra are still there, the two clubs that have shared the cup between them over the past six seasons.

Were there any surprises so far? Yes. St Catherine's bowing out after round 2, after two defeats by a single point, was tough. Both winning points, by Courcey Rovers and Cloughduv, were scored in injury time and from frees, which I felt were hard calls.

A point from a Jacinta Crowley free, two minutes into injury time, gave Courcey Rovers the tightest of victories over St Catherine's, in an enthralling first-round tie. Level five times from the 27th minute, it looked as if the game would head to extra-time.

It's what the crowd appeared to want, based on the silence that greeted the final whistle.

Against Cloughduv, St Catherine's can have no complaints. They didn't play at their best, because of an extremely determined Cloughduv, who battled intensely for every ball.

Last year's county finalists, Glen Rovers, lost to Ballygarvan in round three and that was also a surprise. Though that game was never going to be easy, one would have expected Glen to advance, particularly after impressive periods of play against Milford, in their opening game.

I think Glen Rovers' failure to push up the field in the first-half, with the aid of a very strong wind, provided the basis for their defeat. By the 11th minute, goalkeeper Sarah Aherne had comfortably cleared her line three times, under no pressure.

But you must give credit to Ballygarvan, who thundered out of the blocks against the wind and battled right through, particularly when three points down, in the 53rd minute.

Obviously, teams get stronger the more into a championship they progress.

Sarsfields caught Inniscarra last year, by a point, in the opening round. No such result last weekend, in round three, where the county champions pressed home their status.

Courcey Rovers continued their good scoring run, against a weak Muskerry side. They've clocked up 7-29 from two games and whatever about the divisional side, scoring 3-14 against St Catherine's was a very good return.

It's tough on those who received a 'bye' into the quarter-finals. This is going to be like a first round all over again and that could catch some teams.

Ballincollig, Killeagh, Milford, and Carbery haven't played since July. You'd expect Douglas to be the sharpest, when they face Carbery, after a titanic battle with St Finbarr's on Wednesday last. I don't believe it'll affect them too much and they'll be buzzing after that performance.



Douglas's Chelsea Noonan and St Finbarr's Gillian Fitzgerald, in action in the SE Systems Cork Camogie Senior Championship, at Castle Road. Picture: Gavin Browne



Sinead Fahy, Glen Rovers, battles Isobelle O'Regan, Ballygarvan. Picture: Jim Coughlan

It's difficult for divisional sides when their intermediate players are still involved with their own clubs and when the games are so close to each other.

Newcestown play Éire Óg today in the intermediate championship semi-final. Six Newcestown players took to the field for Carbery's opener against Ballygarvan.

Apart from tired legs, depending on today's result, their enthusiasm for a senior championship match tomorrow may not be where it should be.

Expect both Inniscarra and Clough-

duv to leave everything on the field today. These are two teams with a great work ethic, so space will be tight and hooking and blocking, one of the beautiful sights in a match, will be plentiful.

Ballincollig are very experienced, and with Linda Dorgan back in the side, they will be a tough test for Ballygarvan. But in the quarter-final of any championship, would you expect any less?

Killeagh will have their hands full with Courcey Rovers. But with Hannah Looney, Chloe Sigerson, Laura Treacy, Niamh Ni Chaoimh and Jessica O'Shea, Killeagh could prove a handful in this championship. Will to-

“Milford and Inniscarra are still there, the two clubs that have shared the cup between them over the past six seasons

morrow be the time? It could be a cracker.

SE Systems Senior Championship Round 1: Inniscarra 0-11 Cloughduv 0-8; Ballincollig 2-14 Douglas 1-17 (AET); Ballincollig 2-8 Douglas 0-5 (replay); Carbery 0-13 Ballygarvan 0-11; Sarsfields 10-9 Mallow 0-4; Killeagh 4-22 Valley Rovers 0-5; Muskerry 3-14 St Finbarr's 2-9; Milford 2-16 Glen Rovers 0-16; Courcey Rovers 3-14 St Catherine's 5-7.

Round 2: Ballygarvan 2-21 Valley Rovers 0-3; Glen Rovers Mallow (walkover to Glen Rovers); Cloughduv 2-6 St Catherine's 0-11; Douglas 2-7 St Finbarr's 0-13; Douglas 1-14 St Finbarr's 1-12 (replay).

Round 3: Ballygarvan 1-11 Glen Rovers 0-11; Inniscarra 5-12 Sarsfields 1-6; Courcey Rovers 4-15 Muskerry 1-7; Douglas Carbery.

Quarter-finals: Inniscarra v Cloughduv; Ballygarvan v Ballincollig; Killeagh v Courcey Rovers; Douglas or Carbery v Milford.

Inniscarra	1-13
Cloughduv	0-6

HOLDERS Inniscarra advanced to the last four and kept their bid for a three-in-a-row alive when they overcame neighbours Cloughduv in the SE Systems Senior Championship quarter-final in Castle Road on Saturday.

Despite what the scoreline suggests, the holders didn't have things all their own way and, indeed, were made fight hard for every ball by a Cloughduv side that got the worst possible start when they conceded a soft opening goal.

Cloughduv played with an extra player at the back and this suited Inniscarra as their opponents, with the aid of the wind in the first half, had plenty of possession but found themselves battling against an extra player in their bid for scores.

Cloughduv had Briege Corkery at centre-back, and well capable of holding the line, and they didn't need the extra defender. Had they pushed forward more, they may have been closer at half-time when trailing 1-6 to 0-3.

Inniscarra got the perfect start when Ellen Murphy's long range shot was handled well, but slipped from Aoife Murray's hand and over the line for the game's opening score.

Cloughduv got off the mark after Ciara O'Leary's shot for goal hit the crossbar and bounced back into play, forcing Inniscarra to cough up a 45 which Niamh O'Leary converted.

As the teams traded points, Inniscarra kept their noses in front, and with Niamh Dilworth unerring from four frees and a 45, and Katie O'Mahony adding a point, Inniscarra held a six-point interval lead, but with Cloughduv applying a lot of pressure around goal, the Inniscarra defence certainly were not idle in the opening half.

Throughout the second half, Inniscarra were just that bit smarter and quicker to the ball. They added to their tally with three points while Suzanne Bateman had one in between for a Cloughduv sides who battled hard.

As the game entered the final quarter, it was 1-9 to 0-5 and, upping the tempo, Inniscarra closed the tie out with Claudia Keane, Niamh McCarthy, and Dilworth finding the range before Niamh O'Leary had a late Cloughduv point.

Inniscarra now meet Ballincollig in the semi-final next weekend.

Scorers for Inniscarra: N Dilworth 0-8 (0-5fs, 0-1 45), E Murphy 1-0, N McCarthy 0-2, K O'Mahony, C Keane, R Keane 0-1 each.

Cloughduv: S Bateman 0-3, N O'Leary 0-3 (0-145).

INNISCARRA: S Walsh Buckley Looney, A O'Regan, R O'Mahony, R Buckley, R Keane, C Keane, N Dilworth, T McCarthy (c); J Burke, N McCarthy, E Murphy.

Sub's: A O'Connor for E Murphy (51), G Heffernan for A O'Regan (56), A Dineen for R Buckley (58).

CLOUGHDUV: A Murray, A Corkery, N McCarthy, M Twomey, M Kelleher, B Corkery, N Dennehy, C Hughes, M Corkery (c); N O'Leary, A Barry-Murphy, C O'Leary, R Hurley, A Kelleher, S Bateman.

Sub's: A M Ryan for R Hurley (44), A Buckley for M Twomey (53), A Twomey for C O'Leary (50).

Ref: Cathal Mc Allister (Aghada).

In the SE Systems Intermediate Championship semi-finals, played on Saturday, Eire Og and Aghabullogue set up and all Mid-Cork final when they overcame Newcestown and Fr O'Neill's respectively.

Aghabullogue had a 1-11 to 2-6 over O'Neill's while Eire Og defeated Newcestown 2-12 to 1-5.

Inniscarra battle hard for victory



Niamh McCarthy, Inniscarra finds her route to goal blocked by Cloughduv defenders during the SE Systems Cork Camogie Senior Championship quarter final at Castle Road on Saturday.
Picture: Larry Cummins



Niamh McCarthy, Inniscarra tries to block down a clearance by Briege Corkery, Cloughduv.
Picture: Larry Cummins



Ellen Murphy, Inniscarra, gets her shot away despite Cloughduv pressure.
Picture: Larry Cummins

Casey's strike and Buttimer free deliver semi spot

Ballincollig	1-8
Ballygarvan	1-7

A TOP-CLASS strike by substitute Elaine Casey gave Ballincollig a dramatic 62-minute equaliser in this SE Systems quarter final in Castleroad on Saturday.

A Trish Buttimer pointed free a minute later and Ballincollig reached the county semi-final.

Ballygarvan will feel aggrieved with a few decisions but leading by four points in injury time, they should have closed the game out. During the eight minutes additional time played Linda Dorgan was instrumental for Ballincollig, driving forward, willing her inside forwards to answer the call.

It was a low-scoring game, with both sides guilty of not taking points when the chance presented itself and with both defences playing brilliantly, with tremendous blocking, few opportunities then arose.

CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick

* The sides were level at the break, the excellent Cliona O'Leary getting all of Ballygarvan's scores, one from play, while Ballincollig had four different scorers. With Michaela Buckley more prominent in the second period alongside Rebecca Murphy, Isabelle O'Regan and Cliona O'Leary, they were putting plenty of attacks together.

In turn Ballincollig pushed forward but again with Ann Keohane excellent Ballygarvan's defence stood tall. Six points apiece on forty minutes, little was ever going to separate these sides. A good point by Catriona Keohane gave Ballygarvan a one-point lead which they held for eleven minutes before excellent work by Isabelle O'Regan saw her delivery finished home by Keohane to give Ballygarvan the biggest

lead in the game so far, 1-7 to 0-6 on fifty-two.

But Ballincollig, feeling the game slipping, upped gears and piled huge pressure on, driven by Dorgan. A point by substitute Orla McCarthy, Hannah O'Leary delivered a free into the square and it was brilliantly doubled on by Casey to the roof of the net, completely knocking the light out of Ballygarvan. Buttimer's point and it was game over.

Scorers for Ballincollig: C O'Leary 0-5 (0-4f), C Keohane 1-1, R Murphy 0-1 Ballygarvan: A Lovett 0-3 (0-2f), E Casey 1-0, T Buttimer 0-2 (0-1f), S Coomey, O O'Leary, O McCarthy 0-1 each.

BALLINCOLLIG: A Hartnet, M O'Leary, S Keating, O Keating, M O'Donoghue, L Weste, A Cotter, S Buckley, H O'Leary, S Coomey, L Dorgan, D Cronin, O O'Leary, T Buttimer, A Lovett.

Subs: O McCarthy for D Cronin (45), E Casey for A Lovett (54).

BALLYGARVAN: S Ahern, L Kennelick, E Ryan, A Keohane, K Dorney, S Wynne, S J Brady, E O'Regan, A Moynihan, C O'Leary, R Murphy, I O'Regan, C Keohane, M Buckley, R Crowley.

Subs: M Moynihan for R Crowley (45).
Ref: Cathal Egan - Glen Rovers

Courceys cruise to win over Killeagh

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

Courcey Rovers	1-1
Killeagh	0-0

COURCEY Rovers were full value for their six-point victory margin in this SE Systems Senior championship quarter-final at a windy Castle Road yesterday.

The gale blowing towards Mahon Point made conditions hard on both teams but it was Courceys that mastered the best. They led by six points at the interval and never allowed Killeagh room to get back in it. Three opening-half points from the excellent Fiona Keating added to the hard shift put in by players such as Christine O'Neill, Ashling Moloney and Jacinta Crowley deserve mention.

Killeagh dropped a player back in an effort to curtail the Courcey attack against the wind but this left Ashling Moloney isolated at centre-back and she mopped up superbly.

Saoirse McCarthy struck an early point to give Courceys the lead but Chloe Sigerson levelled with a Killeagh free. However it was to 23 minutes before Killeagh scored again and they found it hard to get ball to their forwards.

Courceys regained the lead with Crowley striking a long range free and then scoring from play. The excellent Fiona Keating was causing problems on the right wing for Killeagh slotting over her three scores in an 11-minute spell to put Courceys five in front.

Linda Collins fired over a point and while Sigerson replied after a Killeagh attack a goal earned them a free, the last play of the half saw Crowley make it 0-8 to 0-2.

Turning to play with the wind Killeagh pushed forward but now it was Courceys who deployed an extra player in defence. Collins was in a real role and the Killeagh defence was dragged around.

The lively McCarthy, Keating and Crowley ensured Courceys continued to hold firm grip on the game.

Jess O'Shea had an early Killeagh point after the break but Courceys held them at bay until Collins weaved her way towards goal and unleashed an unstoppable shot to the net.

That was it really, despite Killeagh earning a few frees in the latter stages.

Scorers for Courcey Rovers: J Crowley 0-6 (0-5f), L Collins 1-1, F Keating 0-3, McCarthy 0-1.

Killeagh: C Sigerson 0-6 (0-5f), R Sheehan (f), J O'Shea 0-1 each.

COURCEY ROVERS: S O'Reilly, E Moloney, K Keohane, C Hayes, A O'Reilly, Moloney (c), O Twomey, J Crowley, Elaine O'Reilly, S McCarthy, C O'Neill, Eimear O'Reilly, F Keating, L Collins, Hayes.

Subs: S O'Donovan for S Hayes (40).

KILLEAGH: S Beausang, C Barry, Walsh, N Ni Chaoimh, R Fogarty, Sheehan, E Treacy, J O'Shea, C Sigerson, C Daly, L Treacy, C Harney, Ahern, H Looney, N O'Donovan.

Subs: S Burns for N O'Donovan (39), O'Gorman for K Ahern (45).

Referee: Diarmuid Kirwin (Eire Og).

Douglas battle to the end to conquer Carbery

Douglas

1-13

Carbery

1-12

THERE was a thrilling end to an enthralling senior championship game in Castleroad last evening.

Trailing for the game, a mighty Katrina Mackey pointed free put Douglas ahead for the first time on 55 minutes. Orla Cronin replied, but up stepped the hardworking Eimear McAndrew to clinch the winner in injury time.

With another five minutes of additional time played both sides had chances. Eimear White pulled off a great save from Mackey while Carbery had a couple of wides before the final whistle blew.

Aided with a first-half breeze Carbery were three points to the good at half time. Having an impressive forward line of inter-county players such as Orla Cronin, Caroline Sugrue, Moira Barrett and Kate

CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick

Wall it looked as if the Douglas defence would have their hands full. They coped brilliantly, Amy Curtin, Seosai Mulrooney, Emma Kavanagh and Niamh Ni Chuanachain coming to terms with their opponents.

Facing into the second half with the wind at their backs, Douglas chased the game and it was point for point before three without reply gave them the lead.

Moira Barrett was outstanding for Carbery, working her socks off on the right flank, equally assisted by Meabh Lynch and Caroline Sugrue. Carbery had nine wides and will rue them. Douglas were more clinical. Aine Crowley had a good game on the lethal Katrina Mackey but one just has to admire the brilliant twins, Pam and Katrina, alongside their inter-county teammate Julia White, who once again con-

trolled the game when it mattered most.

Mackey's point from an acute angle to go one up was from the top drawer.

Scorers for Douglas: K Mackey 1-5 (0-5), J White 0-4, E McAndrew 0-2, P Mackey, S Fahy 0-1 each.

Carbery: C O'Sullivan 1-1, C Sugrue 0-4, K Wall 0-2, O Cronin 0-3 (0), M Barrett 0-1, C Murphy 0-1 each.

DOUGLAS: J Kavanagh, S Mulrooney, N Ni Chuanachain, S Long, E Kavanagh, P Mackey, A Curtin, M Mulrooney, E McAndrew, R Sheehan, K Mackey, C Nason, J White, A O'Brien, K Holland.

Subs: S Fahy for S Long (9), L Keating for A O'Brien (55), A Walsh for K Holland (58).

CARBERY: E White (Barryroe), A O'Donovan (Newcestown), D Carroll (Enniskane), M Coppinger (St. Colums), M Murphy (Kilbrittain/Timoleague), A Crowley (Kilbrittain/Timoleague), M Lynch (Newcestown), C Crowley (Ballinacathry), L Coppinger (St. Colums), M Barrett (Ballinacathry), C O'Sullivan (Newcestown), K Wall (Kilbrittain/Timoleague), C Sugrue (Ballinacathry), O Cronin (Enniskane), S Burke (Timoleague/Timoleague).

Subs: C Murphy (Kilbrittain/Timoleague) for S Burke, C Sexton (Barryroe) for K Wall (43).

Referee: Frank O'Dwyer (St Finbarr's).

Intriguing clash of Milford and Courceys

CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick

Sunday: SE Systems Cork Senior Camogie Championship semi-final: Milford v Courcey Rovers, Castleroad, 1.30pm.

It's the clash of the old guns versus the rising stars in the second senior semi-final in Castleroad on Sunday.

Milford, now in the twilight of a memorable run with a great side, take on the energy and enthusiasm of a young Courcey Rovers. Of course, age wise Milford aren't past their prime, but this side have been on the road a long time, 14 years in fact when a very young side reached their first county final back in 2004.

Surprisingly it took them until 2012 to win their first title, but that's sport. Four county titles in a row and three All-Ireland titles followed before Inniscarra took their title from them in 2016 and beat them again at the death in last year's semi-final.

Over the years Milford lost key players to emigration, relocation and retirement. Regina Curtin gave 100% in every game, Anna Geary, a leader, moved to Dublin, and Marie O'Neill returned to Watergrasshill. Of course, in came players like Ashling Thompson and Laura Stack.

Milford showed in the first half against Douglas last weekend that they are still a solid side. Their second half will concern them as they scored just one point from play. It became too bunched up front for them and they'll have to work on spreading out their inside line and giving Maria and Eimear Watson, Rebecca Finn and Laura Stack more room.

Courcey Rovers will play an attacking style with both sides similar in that regard. They have been hit a massive blow however with Cork star Saoirse McCarthy, this month honoured with the WPGA Player of the Month for September, out for the game having suffered from appendicitis. Her loss is enormous. Saoirse's speed, work ethic and scoring capabilities are what is needed against Milford. Grainne Hannon however is back for the side having missed the quarter-final through illness.

Rovers won't be found wanting and still have plenty of talent. Ashling Moloney leads the attack from centre-back. Jacinta Crowley and Fiona Keating are big players and they'll need another big performance on Sunday.

Linda Collins of course is Courceys' key woman up front. She has hit the net four times to date and struck six points. She typically takes up the corner position.

Will Milford move their defence around to mark the lethal forward or will they trust Christine O'Connor to do the job, who had a fine game last Saturday, and leave Elaine O'Riordan in the square minding the house?

Ace Gemma targets Cats and 11th All-Star

GEMMA O'CONNOR is in line for her 11th All-Star but All-Ireland camogie champions Cork have received fewer nominations than their defeated rivals Kilkenny.

The Rebels, who won a record 28th title this year by the narrowest of margins, received 12 nominations, including three in midfield, where O'Connor is in the mix along with Julia White and Libby Coppinger.

Aoife Murray is a leading candidate to get the nod in goal, while Laura Treacy, Pamela Mackey, Hannah Looney and Chloe Sigerson are shortlisted in defence.

Up front Pamela's twin sister Katrina is in contention, as well as Orla Cotter, Orla Cronin and Amy O'Connor.

Kilkenny have 14 players shortlisted, including eight defensive players who contributed to the Cats conceding a mere 1-57 across six games (an average of 10 points per game).

The dominance of the top-two counties leaves 19 nominations for the remaining counties, with losing semi-finalists Galway and Tipperary (five each) best of the rest.

There's four for Waterford, three for Dublin and two for Offaly.

Dublin's Premier Junior manager Shane Plowman joins Paudie Murray (Cork) and Angela Downey (Kilkenny).



Cork's Gemma O'Connor and Meighan Farrell of Kilkenny.

CAMOGIE

Eamonn Murphy

ny) as the nominees for Manager of the Year.

CORK NOMINATIONS:

Goalkeeper: Aoife Murray.

Full-Back Line: Laura Treacy, Pamela Mackey.

Half-Back Line: Hannah Looney, Chloe Sigerson.

Midfield: Gemma O'Connor, Julia White, Libby Coppinger.

Half-Forward Line: Orla Cotter, Orla Cronin, Amy O'Connor.

Full-Forward Line: Katrina Mackey.

Manager of the Year 2018 sponsored by Liberty Insurance: Paudie Murray (Cork), Shane Plowman (Dublin), Ann Downey (Kilkenny).

McMahon tasked with developing Dublin camogie

Daragh Ó Conchúir

Camogie

Dublin footballer Philly McMahon is to oversee the strength and conditioning programmes of the county's camogie sides.

Capital camogie chiefs yesterday confirmed a partnership with McMahon's company BeDo7 to oversee all squads from U14 to adult.

Dublin chairperson Jenny Byrne said: "I am thrilled that Philly has come on board with Dublin camogie. He sees the great potential within Dublin camogie to win All-Ireland. In conjunction with Philly, the Dublin executive have decided to put a structure in place where strength and conditioning is paramount in our training."

"It's also about educating our players about injury prevention and having the right mindset as female athletes."

McMahon said: "I saw the

opportunity to get involved to try and support the great volunteers that are part of Dublin camogie. I always wanted to get involved with a team giving 100% commitment into something and what better than Dublin camogie."

"When I first met Jenny and the committee I sensed that they had an open-mindedness to my ideas and I think that was the big thing for me, I wanted to get involved and I had the company so it was - can I get involved with a group of people that I can learn from but also be expressive in my ideas. The committee as I said are very open to new things and you've got to do new things to create success, we can't keep doing the same things and expecting different results so I think it's a great fit."

SEPT. 2018



Current St Vincent's and Cork Senior Camogie All-Ireland winners, Amy O'Connor and Lauren Homan, were honoured by their club at a special 75th Anniversary Certificate of Achievement presentation. Included are William Leahy, President; William McCarthy, Chairman Anniversary Committee and Thomas Gould, Chairman.

Picture: Mike English

Rebel County star O'Connor in running for 11th All-Star gong

Camogie

Cian Locke

Cork camogie star Gemma O'Connor is in with a chance of an incredible 11th All-Star award when this year's selection is made next month.

Beaten All-Ireland finalists Kilkenny lead the shortlist for this year's All-Star selection, with 14 nominations, while champions Cork have picked up 12 nominations.

For Kilkenny, goalkeeper Emma Kavanagh, defenders Grace Walsh, Anne Dalton, Catherine Foley, Edwina Keane, Colette Dormer, Claire Phelan and Davina Tobin are nominated. Meighan Farrell is nominated at midfield, while Denise Gaule, Katie Power, Anna Farrell, Shelly Farrell and Michelle Quilty are among the forwards.

Cork, who won a record 28th senior All-Ireland title last month, receive a dozen

nominees. Goalkeeper Aoife Murray, and defenders Pamela Mackey, Hannah Looney, Chloe Sigerson and Laura Treacy are nominated. Gemma O'Connor, Julia White and Libby Coppinger are nominated in the midfield sector. Orla Cotter, Orla Cronin, Amy O'Connor and Katrina Mackey are Cork's forward nominees.

Semi-finalists Tipperary and Galway have received five nominations each. Galway

have goalkeeper Sarah Healy, defenders Shauna Healy and Sarah Dervan, midfielder Niamh Kilkenny and forward Carrie Dolan in the hunt for gongs. Tipperary defenders Mary Ryan and Karen Kennedy are joined by forwards Orla O'Dwyer, Cait Devane and Grace O'Brien on the list.

Waterford receive four nominations: Defender Aine Lyng, midfielder Lorraine Bray and forwards Niamh Rockett and Beth Carton.

Dublin have three — defender Hannah Hegarty and forwards Orla Beagan and Siobhán Kehoe — and Offaly two in defender Róisín Egan and forward Siobhán Flannery.

The final team will be announced at the 15th annual Camogie All-Stars Awards banquet at the Citywest Hotel on Saturday, November 3.

Camogie Association president Kathleen Woods congratulated the nominees for

helping "to light up, not out, the camogie championship but a fantastic summer sport".

Paudie Murray (Cork) and Shane Plowman (Dublin) are among the nominees for the manager of the year award, to be announced on the night.

The nominees for the 20th Soaring Stars Awards for the intermediate and premier junior championships will be announced later this week.

Brilliant Ballinascorthy crowned champs

Junior A camogie awaits Bal next season

BRIDE ROVERS 1-10
BALLINASCORTHY 1-11

SHIRLEY MOLONEY REPORTS

CAROLINE Sugrue held her nerve to score an injury-time point that clinched the SE Systems Cork Camogie junior B championship title.

The Ballinascorthy forward came up trumps with two late points as her side came from behind to earn a deserved win against Bride Rovers in a thrilling encounter.

The West Cork side held the lead on five occasions and took advantage of the strong breeze to hold a five-point lead for a large part of the first half.

However, Bride Rovers showed a resurgence when they cut the lead to the slimmest on the cusp of half time via the influential Jennifer Barry who pointed and a Sarah Murphy goal.

Indeed, it was Bride Rovers who opened the scoring via Grace Kearney, but two Caroline Sugrue placed balls in quick succession had Ballinascorthy ahead after eight minutes.

Bride Rovers were then awarded a penalty, however Saoirse McCarthy's shot was brilliantly saved on the line and cleared out for a 45-metre free which she fired over to level



The Ballinascorthy team that won the county junior B camogie final. Front from left, Niamh Sugrue, Martina O'Brien, Clare Kingston, Anna Cullinane, Clara Crowley, Siobhán McCarthy, Siobhán Hennessy (captain), Michelle Dullea, Moira Barrett, Annie Condon, Anna Flynn and Breda McCarthy. Back from left, Hannah O'Donovan, Sarah Cahalane, Kate O'Donovan, Ella Murray, Helen Harrington, Caroline Sugrue, Sinéad McCarthy, Lisa Hegarty, Elaine O'Brien, Lisa McCarthy, Cara Deasy, Marie Phayer and Kaela O'Driscoll.

CORK JUNIOR B CAMOGIE

proceedings.

The Ballinascorthy defence, marshalled by Martina O'Brien between the posts and spearheaded by Claire Kingston at centre back, proved resilient in restricting Bride Rovers from scoring until the 23rd minute.

In the interim, the unerring Sugrue pointed three placed balls whilst the hard-working Moira Barrett fired over two impressive points to push the West Cork side five clear after 20 minutes.

Bride Rovers then cut the deficit to four and five minutes

later Ballinascorthy were dealt a blow when their hard-working defence was penetrated by Murphy who fired low to the net past O'Brien to cut the deficit to just one.

Ballinascorthy responded via Sugrue when she collected a long ball in from player-of-the-match Michelle Dullea and, showed the defence a clean pair of heels to goal, she fired Ballinascorthy into a four-point lead on the cusp of half time.

Bride Rovers cut the lead to three when Murphy pointed under pressure, as Bal led 1-7 to

1-4 at half time.

Three unanswered scores from Bride Rovers within six minutes of the restart had the sides level for the third time. Sugrue pushed Ballinascorthy ahead when she pointed a 45 metre free, but a McCarthy point had the sides level after 41 minutes.

It was Sugrue who nudged Ballinascorthy one clear on the three-quarter mark when she pointed a 20-metre free in front of the posts but it was to be ten minutes before a response was registered via McCarthy when she pointed a free to tie up the sides for the fifth time.

With Bride Rovers playing with the advantage of the

strong wind, the Ballinascorthy rearguard remained tenacious with Sinéad McCarthy, Kingston and captain Siobhán Hennessy unwavering.

However, with four minutes left, Bride Rovers took the lead for the first time since the fourth minute when McCarthy pointed a 45-metre free.

It was to be shortlived however, as Sugrue levelled with a free and then pushed her side one clear in injury time when she split the posts with the match-winning point to ensure her side victory and junior A status for 2019.

Scorers

Ballinascorthy: C Sugrue 1-9 (7f),

MBarrett 0-2.

Bride Rovers: S McCarthy 0-6 (3 24s), S Murphy 1-1, J Barry 0-2, Kearney 0-1.

Ballinascorthy: M O'Brien; S McCarthy, K O'Driscoll, H O'Donovan; L Hegarty, C Kingston, S Hennessy (c); C Crowley, K O'Donovan; M Barrett, M Dullea, Condon; B McCarthy, C Sugrue, E O'Brien.

Sub: A Flynn for B McCarthy (ht).

Bride Rovers: K O'Connor; J Cahill, Larkin, E Barry; E Collins, C O'Flynn (c); T O'Sullivan; M Hazelwood, A Keating; A O'Connor, S O'Sullivan, S McCarthy; G Kearney, S Murphy, J Barry.

Subs: K Quirke for T O'Sullivan (49), C Hazelwood for A Keating (60).

Referee: Frank O'Dwyer.

Coppinger hails 'incredible' Colum's camogie win

BY KIERAN MCCARTHY

LIBBY Coppinger has the Midas touch when it comes to camogie finals, it seems.

Just a couple of weeks after winning an All-Ireland senior camogie title with Cork, Rebel dual star Libby helped her club St Colum's win the county junior C13-a-side championship final against Grenagh.

It was the club's first championship final since the adult team formed earlier this year, so history was made with the 2-7 to 0-10 win under lights at Na Piarasigh's home ground.

"It was brilliant. It was a great occasion for the club, for the girls to win a county title, for people like Eilis (Nyhan) and Tony (Coppinger) who have been involved since the start when they first got the club going," Libby said.

It was also a special occasion for Libby who won her first piece of championship

silverware together with her sister Maggie.

"We had won bits and piece at school but this year was the first year we won titles together with St Colum's — and this is the first championship we've won together."

Colum's won the final of the county junior C 13-a-side league earlier in the year, also against Grenagh, so it's been a very successful season for the Colum's camogie team.

"It's incredible for everyone involved," Libby said.

"It's great for the minors involved too, to play in a county final at junior level, and they can use that experience and the confidence they got from it when they play in their county final this weekend."

The minor team has qualified for the county D final and in keeping with St Colum's Ladies and Football Club's success this season, the minor footballers are through to the last eight in



The St Colum's camogie team that won the county junior C13-a-side final.

the county and they will also play Courcy Rovers in the West Cork B final. There's a big cross-over between both teams.

The county camogie success will live long in the memory, with Paula O'Mahony scoring 1-3, Aisling Murnane scoring an important goal. Libby

Coppinger finished with two points and both Emma Burke and Maggie Coppinger scored one point each. The management team includes Tony Coppinger (manager), Sean O'Shea and Joe O'Connell, and Aileen Murnane and Eilis Nyhan. The St Colum's

starting 13 included Rachel Murnane, Claire O'Sullivan, Nell Coppinger, Rebecca Harrington, Ali O'Connell, Katie Dineen, Libby Coppinger, Maggie Coppinger, Emma Burke, Paula O'Mahony, Ciara Manning, Aisling Murnane (captain), and Libby Murnane.

Subs used were Louise Burke (captain) for Aisling Murnane, Emily Barrett for Jackie Moore and Jane Hourihane for Emma Burke. Subs not used on the night included Niamh Crowley, Donna O'Regan, Emma O'Sullivan, Tara O'Riordan and

Watergrasshill grab junior title at last

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

Watergrasshill 1-10
Ballyhea 0-6

TEARS of joy were wept on Sunday in Castle Road at the sound of the full-time whistle as Watergrasshill finally got over the line and reached their goal as they captured the SE Systems Junior A Championship title but not before a stern test from a strong and determined Ballyhea side.

It was only in the closing stages that Watergrasshill could finally rest easy as Ballyhea made their fight to the finish before they finally banished many years of heartbreak to finally be crowned champions.

Last year they looked to have done enough but were pipped at the post by Na Plarsaigh. This time out they were not going to allow a repeat of that.

It was Watergrasshill who put on the final push to confidently get over the line as they closed the game out in the last five minutes. A Coleen Foley goal gave them a five-point cushion on the run up to the final whistle, which allowed them breathing space.

Playing with the aid of the strong wind in the opening half Ballyhea lead 0-5 to 0-3 at the interval, Elaine Crowley and Amy Fowler had given them a two-point advantage before Marie O'Neill pointed a free to get Watergrasshill on the scoreboard.

Ballyhea regained the lead with an Amy Fowley point but with Marie O'Neill finding the range from play it was level pegging.

Ballyhea, with the wind to their backs, enjoyed a lot of possession and they put the Watergrasshill defence under pressure.

However, with captain Edel Murphy doing a lot of work at mid-field, ably assisted by a strong half-back line of Arleen Fouhy, Ruth Kaiser and Mairead Foley, Watergrasshill had a strong base. Points by Roisin Killeen and Rachel Harty edged Ballyhea back in front and at the break they held a two-point lead but facing into the strong wind it was going to be difficult.

Michelle Sheehan narrowed the gap with an early Watergrasshill point but Killeen replied with what was to be Ballyhea's only score of the second half as she pointed a free to stretch the lead to two.

Now applying a lot of pressure on the Ballyhea defence Watergrasshill began to find gaps and driven on by O'Neill, Colleen Foley and excellent substitute Cliona Cronin they were quickly on level terms.

Cronin split the posts before Laura Crowley had the sides level and when O'Neill nailed a free at the three-quarter stage, Watergrasshill were ahead for the first time. O'Neill struck a long-range effort to extend the advantage before Foley struck for the only goal, after she made her way through the Ballyhea defence.

Now five points in front, Watergrasshill were not going to allow their lead slip.

Cronin, who had a superb game when introduced as a sub, fired over a point and the last say was with



The Watergrasshill camogie team celebrate winning the SE Systems Junior A Championship title at Castle Road last weekend.

Picture: Belinda Sullivan



Cork Camogie Chairwoman Mary McSweeney presents the Junior A Championship trophy to Watergrasshill captain Edel Murphy.

Picture: Belinda Sullivan

O'Neill as she converted a free to ensure the title was finally on its way to Watergrasshill.

Watergrasshill captain Edel Murphy was named as Evening Echo Player of the Match after an excellent hour at the heart of the action.

Scorers for Watergrasshill: M O'Neill 0-6 (0-4 f), C Foley 1-0, C Cronin 0-2, M Sheehan, L Crowley 0-1 each.

Ballyhea: A Fowler 0-2, R Killeen 0-2 (0-1 f), E Crowley, R Harty (f) 0-1 each.

WATERGRASSHILL: A Carr; N Mulholland, M Buckley, K Hegarty; A Fouhy, R Kaiser, M Foley; E Carey, E Murphy (c); M O'Neill, M Sheehan, C Cashman; L O'Reilly, C Foley, M Dorgan.

Subs: L Crowley for M Sheehan (29), C Cronin for

M Dorgan (38); C Fouhy for C Cashman (43); E Fitzgerald for K Hegarty (43).

BALLYHEA: M Shinnick; K McNamara, MC Carroll, I Mortell; J Hopper, S Dunlea G O'Leary; E Crowley, R Killeen; L Dundon, C Dundon, A Fowler; C Harty, R Harty, T O'Sullivan.

Subs: A O'Neill for C Dundon, N Healy for T O'Sullivan.

Referee: Dave O'Connell (Glen Rovers).

Carrigtwohill tournament

Tomorrow is a special day in the Carrigtwohill camogie club as they will honour the memory of Dominic Rooney when they hold the U12 Memorial tournament.

This is the second year of the event

and it is in memory of late referee Dominick, who tragically passed away two years ago whilst officiating at a camogie game.

The club is hoping to have eight teams participating and defiantly confirmed as taking part are Carrigtwohill, Aghada, Glen Rovers, Castletyons, Castlemartyr and Midleton whilst the club are awaiting two clubs to confirm attendance.

There will be two groups with two games each and the top two in each group plays in the final for the Cup and Plate.

The day starts 10.45am with a

“It was Watergrasshill who put on the final push to confidently get over the line.”

parade of teams with the All-Ireland senior and Intermediate cups led by a piper with the Cork team with cups and all the teams following. Games start at 11 am with the finals at 1.15pm.

It is a 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.

Cork deserve all 12 nominations

Mid-Cork rivals battle for Nano Nagle title

Camogie

Mary Newman

TOMORROW SE Systems Nano Nagle Cup: Eire Og v Aghabullogue, Castle Road, 4.30pm.

CASTLE Road hosts an all-Mid-Cork battle tomorrow, in the SE Systems Nano Nagle Intermediate Championship final. Neighbours Eire Og and Aghabullogue will battle it out for the title.

Eire Og have battled long and hard to get back to senior level and have lost two finals. They have a thriving underage structure and have a nice blend of youth and experience in their current side.

Long-serving Margaret O'Herlihy is one of their standout players, as is Cork intermediate ace Siobhan Hutchinson.

They have huge talent in Aileen Hennessy, Rachel Murray, Grace Collins, and Maebh Ellen Desmond. They overcame holders, Newcestown, in their semi-final outing, 2-12 to 1-5, and have been hugely impressive to date.

Aghabullogue edged past Fr O'Neill's in a close semi-final, with a point to spare in a thriller, to book their place on a 1-11 to 2-6 score.

They will look to the excellent Cliona Healy to lead the way. She was hugely impressive with both the Cork minor and intermediate sides that took All-Ireland honours.

Katie McCarthy, Julie Tarrant, Ciara McCarthy, Emma Flanagan and Joanne Crowley will also be vital, as they bid to bring the title to Aghabullogue.

This year, there were changes in the grades of competitions, as the county board executive's proposal to dispense with the senior B grade was unanimously accepted by the clubs.

Over the last few years, the third adult grade of intermediate had only had five clubs battling for the league and championship titles, and with two clubs seeking to re-grade down to junior this season, the board was faced with a big decision.

A lot of discussion took place and, surprisingly, it centered on the hugely successful senior B grade, which, over the years, had served up some superb games and thrilling finals.

The thought behind the move was that the winners of the second-tier competition will now be competing in the Munster Intermediate Championship, with clubs at that level.

Previously, the winners of the senior B didn't have a provincial competition to participate in. Yet, by effectively changing the name from senior B to intermediate, clubs are now afforded the opportunity to take part in a provincial championship.

It comes as no surprise, therefore, that two clubs who previously held senior B status have reached the final.

Camogie

Linda Mellerick

ALL-IRELAND finalists, Cork and Kilkenny, lead the Camogie All-Stars Awards 2018 shortlist.

The final team will be announced at the 15th annual Camogie All-Stars Awards banquet, sponsored by Liberty Insurance, in Citywest Hotel, on Saturday, November 3.

Kilkenny received 14 nominations. Goalkeeper Emma Kavanagh, defenders Grace Walsh, Anne Dalton, Catherine Foley, Edwina Keane, Colette Dormer, Claire Phelan and Davina Tobin are amongst the nominees for the Cats. Meighan Farrell is nominated at midfield, while Denise Gaule, Katie Power, Anna Farrell, Shelly Farrell and Michelle Quilty are nominated amongst the forwards.

Cork, who won a record 28th senior All-Ireland title, got 12 nominations. Goalkeeper Aoife Murray and defenders Pamela Mackey, Hannah Looney, Chloe Sigerson and Laura Treacy are amongst the nominees.

Gemma O'Connor has been nominated at midfield and is seeking an incredible 11th All-Star award, while Julia White and Libby Coppinger are also nominated at midfield. Orla Cotter, Orla Cronin, Amy O'Connor and Katrina Mackey receive the forward nominations from Cork.

Tipperary and Galway both receive five nominations, as a result of their run to the semi-finals. Galway have goalkeeper Sarah Healy, defenders Shauna Healy and Sarah Dervan, midfielder Niamh Kilkenny, and forward Carrie Dolan. Tipperary defenders Mary Ryan and Karen Kennedy are joined by forwards Orla O'Dwyer, Cait Devane, and Grace O'Brien on the list.

Waterford received four: defender Aine Lyng, midfielder Lorraine Bray, and forwards Niamh Rockett and Beth Carton.

Dublin have three: defender Hannah Hegarty and forwards Orla Beagan and Siobhán Kehoe. Offaly received two nominations, in defender Róisín Egan and forward Siobhán Flannery.

I don't think you can argue with Cork's 12 nominees. But I am surprised by Kilkenny's 14. They didn't win the All Ireland. They scored 111 points from six games (avg 18.5) and conceded 60 (avg 10). Cork scored 180 (avg 25.7) in seven games and conceded 72 (avg 10.2).

Julie Ann Malone is the only player to lose out. She must feel aggrieved. Tell me how Michelle Quilty, who was taken off in both the semi-final and final, is nominated? She was way below par in both games.

President of the Camogie Association, Kathleen Woods, congratulated the nominees: "The Camogie All-Stars Awards celebrate the outstanding performances of our players, all of whom have helped to light up not only the camogie championships, but a fantastic summer of sport."

"To be nominated for an All-Star Award highlights the skill, commitment, athleticism and sportsmanship of our players and it is truly deserving for these tremendous role models to receive such recognition for their ef-



Cork's Libby Coppinger and Kilkenny's Julie Ann Malone. Malone is the only one of the Cats' starting 15 who wasn't nominated for an All-Star this season.

Picture: INPHO/Bryan Keane



Cork's Orla Cotter and Tipperary's Orla O'Dwyer in the All-Ireland semi-final. Both are in the mix for All-Stars.

Picture: INPHO/Bryan Keane

forts."

Speaking on behalf of Liberty Insurance, Deirdre Ashe said: "Our heartfelt congratulations to all those who have been nominated for a prestigious Camogie All-Star Award. The Camogie All-Stars Awards celebrate the outstanding performances of the players who have helped to light up this year's championship."

"To be nominated reflects the skill, commitment, and athleticism of the players; their nomination is deserved recognition for their performances throughout the season."

"Our 'Camogie Made Me Ready for the Real World' campaign, during the summer, was designed to showcase how the skills gained on the camogie pitch can be applied off the field in other aspects of players' lives. The players that featured in the campaign, no less than the Camogie All-Star nominees today, are role models in

their communities, whose accomplishments inspire girls and young women to participate and stay involved in sport for years to come. We wish each of them the very best of luck on November 3."

Paudie Murray (Cork), Shane Plowman (Dublin Junior), and Ann Downey (Kilkenny) are amongst the nominees for 'manager of the year', which will be announced on the night, along with the 2018 All-Stars team.

The nominees for the 2018 Soaring Stars Awards for the Intermediate and Premier Junior Championships weren't announced at the time of writing.

Nominees for the Camogie Association/WGPA senior, intermediate, and junior Players' Player of the Year Awards will be announced next week.

Camogie All-Stars Awards 2018 sponsored by Liberty Insurance, nominees list:
Goalkeepers: Emma Kavanagh (Kilkenny), Aoife

"I don't think you can argue with Cork's 12 nominees. But I am surprised by Kilkenny's 14. They didn't win the All Ireland"

Murray (Cork), Sarah Healy (Galway).

Full-Back Line: Mary Ryan (Tipperary), Laura Treacy (Cork), Grace Walsh (Kilkenny), Shauna Healy (Galway), Catherine Foley (Kilkenny), Edwina Keane (Kilkenny), Sarah Dervan (Galway), Pamela Mackey (Cork), Colette Dormer (Kilkenny).

Half-Back Line: Karen Kennedy (Tipperary), Hannah Looney (Cork), Hannah Hegarty (Dublin), Claire Phelan (Kilkenny), Róisín Egan (Offaly), Anne Dalton (Kilkenny), Davina Tobin (Kilkenny), Aine Lyng (Waterford), Chloe Sigerson (Cork).

Midfield: Niamh Kilkenny (Galway), Gemma O'Connor (Cork), Lorraine Bray (Waterford), Meighan Farrell (Kilkenny), Julia White (Cork), Libby Coppinger (Cork).

Half-Forward Line: Orla Cotter (Cork), Orla O'Dwyer (Tipperary), Siobhán Flannery (Offaly), Katie Power (Kilkenny), Orla Cronin (Cork), Denise Gaule (Kilkenny), Amy O'Connor (Cork), Anna Farrell (Kilkenny), Niamh Rockett (Waterford).

Full-Forward Line: Orla Beagan (Dublin), Carrie Dolan (Galway), Cait Devane (Tipperary), Shelly Farrell (Kilkenny), Katrina Mackey (Cork), Michelle Quilty (Kilkenny), Beth Carton (Waterford), Grace O'Brien (Tipperary), Siobhán Kehoe (Dublin).

Manager of the Year 2018 nominees list:
Paudie Murray (Cork), Shane Plowman (Dublin), Ann Downey (Kilkenny).

Sugrue secures title with late points

■ Mary Newman

Ballinascarthy 1-11
Bride Rovers 1-10

A POINT two minutes into injury time gave Ballinascarthy the SE Systems Junior B Championship title as they edged out a Bride Rovers.

It was always close and aided by the strong wind in the opening half Ballinascarthy opened up a five-point lead only to let it slip as Bride Rovers grabbed a goal but managing to get one back before the break Ballinascarthy led by three points at the interval.

Aided by the win in the second half Bride Rovers controlled matters and by the mid way stage began to get the upper hand but they lost two chances to close it out before Ballinascarthy held their composure to draw level and then hit the front to run out winners.

A close opening quarter saw the sides level on 0-2 each inside 10 minutes but with Caroline Sugrue and Moira Barrett on target with five points between them, Ballinascarthy went 0-7 to 0-2 in front.

With Jennifer Barry operating in at corner-forward Bride Rovers found it hard to get ball into their main forward against the wind. However, seizing an opportunity she pointed before Sarah Murphy sent the ball to the net to bring Bride Rovers to within a point.

A minute into added time Caroline Sugrue found a gap in the Bride Rovers defence and bearing down on goal made no mistake to restore the Ballinascarthy lead to four points.

Sarah Murphy cut it with a point and it was 1-7 to 1-4 in Ballinascarthy's favour at the interval.

Sally McCarthy, who had a superb hour for Bride Rovers, pointed two early second-half frees as Bride rovers applied huge pressure and with Jennifer Barry causing a lot of bother for Ballinascarthy she pointed to level the game.

Sugrue and McCarthy swapped points twice as it remained deadlocked but in between Bride Rovers missed two chances to pull away, sloppy shooting costly as they battled to close the game out. With three minutes remaining, they won a 45 which McCarthy converted to edge them in front.

For five minutes they held their lead and defending well it looked as if they would survive.

Ballinascarthy won a free which Sugrue pointed and it was level again,



Selfie glee! County Junior B camogie champions Ballinascarthy celebrate in the dressing room in Castle Road after their victory over Bride Rovers last weekend.

with both sets of supporters now hoping for a full-time whistle and another bite of the cherry.

There was still more action though. Sugrue won possession and fired the ball between the posts to edge Ballinascarthy into the lead.

Bride did have a chance to draw level but again they failed to convert as Ballinascarthy held on to take the title with Michelle Dullea named as *Evening Echo* Player Of The Match.

Scorers for Ballinascarthy: C Sugrue 1-9 (0-7 f, 0-1 45), M Barrett 0-2.

Bride Rovers: S McCarthy 1-6 (0-3 f, 0-2 45), S Murphy 1-1, J Barry 0-2, G Kearney 0-1.

BALLINASCARTHY: M O'Brien; S McCarthy, K O'Driscoll, H O'Donovan; L Hegarty Kingston, S Hennessy (c); M Barrett, M Dullea, A Condon; B McCarthy, C Sugrue, E O'Brien.

Sub: A Flynn for B McCarthy (34-6).

BRIDE ROVERS: K O'Connor, J Cahill, E Larkin, E Barry, E Collins, C O'Flynn (c), T O'Sullivan; M Hazelwood, A Keating; A O'Connor, S O'Sullivan, S McCarthy; G Kearney, S Murphy, J Barry.

Subs: K Quirke for T O'Sullivan (20), C Hazelwood for M Hazelwood (61).

Referee: Frank O'Dwyer (St Finbarr's).

Meanwhile, Limerick may not take part in the 2019 Munster Hurling League due to the fact that the squad will be on holidays when the competition starts. If, as expected the Munster SHL starts on the same dates as it did this year then, Limerick will be on their team holiday.

The All-Ireland champions are due to fly out of Shannon on December 27 and are not due back until January 7.

The Munster Council are set to meet at the end of November to decide on the fixtures for the early season competi-

tion, but it is expected to start at the end of December/first week of January. This would mean that Limerick would miss the opening round or possibly two. As defending champions and regular participants in the provincial competition, Limerick have a decision to make in the coming weeks.

In other news, the aim of hosting a number of high profile music concerts at Pearse Stadium is set to be discussed by Galway GAA chiefs.

It has been revealed that the two Ed Sheeran gigs held at the Salthill venue saw the Galway County Board make just €76,000. The figure was announced to delegates at the latest county board meeting and despite both nights being sold out, the profit made surprised many.



Inniscarra captain Treasa McCarthy lifts the cup after their SE Systems Senior Camogie final win over Courcy Rovers. See P44-45.



The rain did not dampen the three-in-a-row celebrations for champions Inniscarra at the SE Systems (Energy Efficient Solutions) Cork Senior Camogie Championship Final.

Picture: Larry Cummins

Saoirse savouring



Cork's Saoirse McCarthy receives the Liberty Insurance player of the match award from Deirdre Ashe of Liberty Insurance following Cork's victory over Down in the Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Intermediate Camogie Championship final at Croke Park in September. Picture: Bryan Keane



Camogie

Barbara O'Connell

WINNING one All-Ireland medal is usually more than enough for any sports star in any year.

Winning three in the space of a few months is an incredible achievement.

Throw in the fact that this special person, Saoirse McCarthy of Courcy Rovers, won the player of the match award in the minor and intermediate wins over Galway and Down respectively, and she was a sub in the senior success over Kilkenny, and it's obvious why she is one of the *Evening Echo* Autumn Ladies Sport Star winners.

The 17-year-old from Ballinspittle has had an incredible year, not only in camogie, but also in soccer, winning a league title with Wilton.

With 2018 being the biggest year in her sporting career, it's understandable that she hopes she can emulate that success next season.

"It's been a fantastic year for me regarding sport," said McCarthy. "To be fair, it's definitely one of the best and most successful years I've had, sporting-wise. Winning two All-Irelands, getting player of the match in both, being a sub for the seniors, and winning the U18 soccer league with Wilton was much more than would have ever expected, to be honest. Winning the WGPA player of the month award was also very special for me and my family."

For McCarthy, picking up her first All-Ireland medal was a moment she will treasure.

Amazing

"Winning my first All-Ireland with the minors was just amazing. If I didn't achieve any more after that this year, I would still have been happy, so to achieve so much since has just been a massive bonus, really."

While playing senior camogie for Cork was new to McCarthy, she has been around the set up for many years. The athletic youngster has been on Cork squads since the age of 12 and has always been marked out as a player with great potential, which she is fulfilling, shining brightly in every game.

"I've been on the Cork panels since the age of 12, starting out with the development squads, and it's something I've always wanted to be part of and I am thrilled to be given the opportunity each year. Every year, that's my goal and thankfully, through hard work, I achieve this goal."

"I know there are a lot of talented girls in Cork, so talent is not always enough. I know I need to put in the hard work, like every other girl trying to make those panels, and thankfully all the hard work has paid off to date."

"Putting up the Cork jersey is a huge honour for me, which I don't take for granted. I love every game I go out to play and I always try to be the best for my teammates."

"Playing in Croke Park for the first time was an unbelievable experience for me and my family. I was both nervous and excited and I'll never forget that day. It was just perfect and will live in my memory forever."

Training with the seniors for just a few months before that big day in Croke Park, McCarthy can



Down's Sara-Lousie Carr is challenged by Cork's Saoirse McCarthy in last month's Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Intermediate Camogie Championship final.



Laura Hayes, St Catherine's, evades the challenge of Courcy Rovers' Saoirse McCarthy during the SE Systems Senior Camogie Championship clash in July. Picture: David Keane

a very special year



Courcey Rovers' Saoirse McCarthy wins possession under pressure from St Catherine's Eimear O'Brien during the SE Systems Senior Camogie Championship first-round clash at Castle Road in July.

Picture: David Keane



Camogie Association president Kathleen Woods presents Cork's Saoirse McCarthy with her player of the match award after the All-Ireland Minor A Camogie final in April.



Cork's Saoirse McCarthy, left, and Ashling Thompson celebrate beating Kilkenny in last month's All-Ireland Senior Camogie Championship final.



Wilton players Olivia Gibson, Hazel Walsh, Shauna McCarthy, Saoirse McCarthy, Lauren Walsh and Karla O'Driscoll with the CWSSL U18 Div 1 trophy at the CWSSL Medal Presentation Night in the Cork International Hotel in August.

Picture: Howard Crowdy

remember those scary first few nights mixing it with the senior stars, but those sessions have helped her become a better player.

"Training alongside the seniors was massive, really. They were so much quicker. It was frightening, really. It was a lot more intense than what I ever imagined.

"I remember saying after my first senior training session that there was no way I was going to be able to keep up with the pace. Everyone of them was so fast.

"Although I've improved massively while training with them and

the pace is not as far off, there is still a big difference, however I really enjoyed it and I know it will help me when I eventually make that step up full time to the senior squad.

"The experience was fab and to get to train alongside the greats, such as Brieghe Corkery, who would have been one of my idols, that's surreal. Having Brieghe come back on the panel was great for me, as I am in awe playing alongside her."

McCarthy, who is just out of hospital after having her tonsils removed, joins an illustrious list of camogie players who have won an Evening

Echo Ladies Sport Star award, such as Gemma O'Connor and her idol Brieghe, and she was absolutely thrilled and grateful to all that helped her win the award.

"I was both surprised and honoured to accept this award, but as I do, I just want to thank everyone who has helped me become the person I am today, from my family, friends and parents Leonard and Cella, without whom I couldn't get anywhere or do anything."

McCarthy also expressed gratitude to her schools, "Ballinspittle National School and Ann-Marie Hur-

ley, who put a hurley in my hand on day one, [and] Kinsale Community School, through my coaches, PE teachers and my own teachers. They have supported me all the way.

"My club, of course, Courcey Rovers, without them I don't know who I would be. They would do anything for anyone in that club and I hope they know we appreciate it. We are our own little family down there.

"I would like to thank all the girls on the minor, intermediate, and senior teams, because everyone of those girls do it for the love of the

sport and the smile on their faces from the snow in spring to glory in September, these are friends for life.

"To all the trainers, managers, selectors — and baby George — who have to organise training as well as being there.

"They all do huge work behind the scenes and I hope they know how much we appreciate everything they do, and to the county board members, whose hard work and dedication often goes unseen, and a final thank you to all the supporters who went to every game and cheered us on."

It's three-in-a-row for

Inniscarra overcome setbacks to retain county crown



Team captain Treasa McCarthy receives the cup from John O'Leary of competition sponsors SE Systems. Picture: Larry Cummins



Match analysis

Linda Mellerick

I wonder was there a tracker on Katie O'Mahony? I'd like to know how many miles she covered and how many times she struck the ball in that opening half. She was awesome. Courcsey's were now finding it difficult to get the ball up the field.

Linda Collins moved out to half forward for a spell to try and get some action. Inniscarra would have been happy with that.

Half time needed to come for Rovers. It did. They regrouped and during the third quarter they were back in this game. Inniscarra looked to be tiring a little around the middle third as Courcsey's had their period of supremacy. They narrowed the gap to four points after Niamh Dilworth had stretched Inniscarra's lead to six just after half time.

Still in defensive mode, Rovers should have pushed more players forward.

They were outnumbered up front, often just three present from six, and where Inniscarra were playing intensely as a unit, Rosie O'Mahony being very influential.

This period was where Inniscarra's composed work ethic was crucial. Treasa McCarthy worked all day like a beaver.

As she fell back and carried the ball forward chances again came Inniscarra's way and Courcsey's ascendancy was stopped in its tracks when Dilworth and Aileen Sheehan pointed within the space of thirty seconds. Twelve minutes remaining, it was a delating blow to Rovers.

Substitutes had come into the fray for both sides. The last quarter was time for fresh legs.

The biggest impact came from Inniscarra's Claudia Keane. Her presence was immediate. In the last 10 minutes, getting stuck into rucks, holding that ball up front when you're enjoying a five-point lead, is worth a score.

Having worn down Courcsey's resurgence Inniscarra dominated the final seven minutes.

Two frees by the excellent Niamh Dilworth, the first a brilliant effort from an acute angle and Inniscarra could now breathe easy.

Claudia Keane's long-range effort lobbed under the crossbar for the only goal of the game on 64 minutes and she followed it up with a lovely point for Inniscarra to run out comfortable winners.

The 1-13 to 0-5 gap didn't do justice to Courcsey's efforts but there can be no denying the superior team on the day. Three in a row. Inniscarra, take a bow.



Team captain Treasa McCarthy lifts the cup after the presentation to her by John O'Leary of sponsor SE Systems after their Cork Senior Camogie Championship final win over Courcsey Rovers. Pictures: Larry Cummins



Ellen Buckley with a hug for daughter, Rena Buckley.



Ellen Murphy, Inniscarra, in action at left corner forward against Courcsey Rovers.

Story of the game

ENTERTAINMENT VALUE

CERTAINLY not a game to write home about, it lacked excitement or drama and failed to live up to what a lot had expected it to be. At half time it was 0-7 to 0-2 and with 15 minutes played we had just three scores on the score board so from a neutral point of view it was not great. 5/10

REFEREE WATCH

GIVEN the awful weather conditions on the day this was going to be a hard game to referee, but credit to John O'Leary, he did a good job allowing for the obstacles faced by both sides. He wasn't over-fussy and applied the advantage rule well, there was no complaints afterwards from either side.

VITAL SCORES

We had no score that set the game alight, but we did have excellent free taking from Inniscarra's Niamh Dilworth, who converted six places balls two from acute angles. It was wet and slippery and add in a heavy sliotar and you have a battle on your hands but Niamh converted six of eight in total.

COUNTY senior camogie champions for the third year in a row.

When you consider the calibre of players Inniscarra lost this season, it makes this achievement all the more admirable.

What character, what composure, what heart!

From the outset of this season's championship, Inniscarra's demeanour on the pitch has been what caught the eye.

In every game; not a single distraction-just a 100% focus on the ball.

On Saturday, their work ethic was again a highlight. From the throw in there was no let up.

Courcsey Rovers came to Castleroad with belief. They had every right to believe.

They had a tremendous campaign and certainly went into this game 50/50. But as the game wore on the life was being sucked from them.

Their enthusiasm and energy were sapped minute by minute by a physically stronger, more experienced outfit, who were relentless.

Conditions were difficult. The rain poured down, particularly during the opening half.

It had an effect on striking as hurley's slipped and twisted in player's hands. It was heavy on the legs.

I think it suited Inniscarra more, they had the extra strength in key areas. Niamh McCarthy in particular epitomising that.

She may have scored just a point from play but the amount of ball she won, the amount of times she dispossessed Rovers as they tried to break out with the ball, was a text book display of forwards needing to be your best defenders.

Inniscarra got their match ups right. Rena Buckley picked up Linda Collins, Rebecca Keane-Fiona Keating. Courcsey's tried to create space inside, they pulled players out.

Siobhain O'Donovan again, named at right half forward, played deep. Inside, Collins tried to capitalise on the nine-year age gap.

She darted left and right, kept moving. Rena was shadow boxing, patient, calm and unruffled. Outstanding!

Twenty minutes in it was two points apiece. Courcsey's were very much in the game.

Fiona Keating had struck two beautiful points, the second going for the net only for a deflection over by Sheila Walsh.

But Niamh Dilworth swung matters strongly in Inniscarra's favour up to half time.

Three points, two excellent ones from play, in between scores from Treasa McCarthy and Niamh McCarthy and Inniscarra went in five up.

Around the middle of the park Inniscarra thrived.

Sinead O'Reilly, against the wind, was finding it hard to get her puckouts to the 65-metre line.

Captain Treasa McCarthy, Dilworth, Aileen Sheehan and Katie O'Mahony swooped like Eagles to prey.

mighty Inniscarra



SINGING IN THE RAIN: The rain did not dampen the three-in-a-row celebrations for champions Inniscarra after their SE Systems (Energy Efficient Solutions) Cork Senior Camogie Championship final victory over Courcey Rovers at Castle Road.



Linda Mellerick presents The Evening Echo Player-of-the-Match Award to midfielder Katie O'Mahony, Inniscarra.

Condition were a worry says O'Mahony

REACTION

Mary Newman

PLAYER of match Inniscarra Katie O'Mahony was delighted with her club's success and thrilled to be chosen as our Evening Echo Player of the senior county camogie final.

"We are just delighted to have won it, we knew it would be tough there today and it was," O'Mahony said.

Weather conditions were appalling and Katie admitted they were worried by it.

"The rain was non stop and we were worried when we saw the conditions but we are a strong physically side and we knew we would have to work hard given the weather there today.

"To be fair each and every one of the girls gave it everything and we are just happy to have got over the line."

Looking ahead to the Munster club championship Katie had this to say.

"We will enjoy the win for a few days and then it's back to training again."

"We will give the Munster championship a right cut this year."

"Last year it was the day after the county final and it was hard but now we have two weeks to the game so it's great."

Inniscarra Selector Joe McCarthy was thrilled with his side's win and it was a special day for the McCarthy family with daughter Treasa the captain of the side.

"We are delighted to retain the title and yes I suppose it is special with Treasa as captain," Joe said.

"It's funny really it was lucky 13 for her, today is October 13th her birthday."

"She wore number 13 and we scored 1-13 so it must be our lucky number."

Whilst there are winners there unfortunately have to be losers and for Courceys, there was huge disappointment losing out in their first final appearance, and coach Michael Boland summed up their feelings.

"We're very disappointed we simply didn't turn up at all today," Boland said.

"All through the year we really turned up but today don't think we did. We were extremely nervous before the game and really we never got going at all."

"In your first county final it's hard not to be nervous."

Inniscarra 1-13
Courcey Rovers 0-5

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

INNISCARRA were crowned SE Systems senior camogie champions for the third time in a row at a rain-battered Castle Road on Saturday.

They overcame the challenge of a Courcey Rovers side appearing in their first final, who on the day never really got going.

It was a poor game but the scoreline doesn't do justice to Courceys efforts as they tried to the bitter end, however, it was Inniscarra's day as they held to much craft and experience for the challengers.

Weather conditions didn't help matters as continuous rain made life very difficult for both sides and it was Inniscarra who coped better with their experience campaigners Rena Buckley, Niamh Dilworth, Niamh McCarthy and captain Treasa McCarthy leading the way.

Courceys found it difficult to get scores, with their scorer in chief Linda Collins well policed by the experienced Rena Buckley who won every duel between the two. Named to line out at centre back it came as no surprise that Buckley dropped into full back to mark Collins and with their main scoring threat curtailed Courcey's found the

going tough.

At the other end Niamh McCarthy at 14 was excellent on the inside line for Inniscarra winning a lot of possession she off loaded fast and also won frees which Niamh Dilworth converted whilst at mid field Katie O'Mahony was magnificent and gave a Player of The Match display that gave Inniscarra a huge boost.

Courceys hit the first two scores of the game with Fiona Keating pointing on 12 minutes before she forced a brilliant save from Sheila Walsh a minute later as Walsh turned a rasping shot just over the crossbar for a point.

We expected a good start to boost the challengers but they weren't to score again until nine minutes into the second half as Inniscarra took a firm grip on the game with Niamh McCarthy opening their account with a 13th minute point and they added to their tally with Niamh Dilworth, Treasa McCarthy and Niamh McCarthy adding to points. Courcey's keeper Sinead O'Reilly denied Jenny Burke's effort for goal with a good save and with Dilworth failing to convert the resulting 45 Courceys were off the hook.

With Katie O'Mahony hugely influential at mid field for the champions the Courcey's defence was under huge pressure but Aisling Moloney and Ciara Hayes continued to impress as they worked to contain the strong Inniscarra attack but dropping players back to stem the tide Courcey's found it hard to get ball to their inside line.

With five minutes to the break Courcey's switched Linda Collins to centre forward and winning the first ball she won a free but they failed convert and it was 0-7 to 0-2 in Inniscarra's favour at the break.

Despite Inniscarra stretching their lead with a pointed Niamh Dilworth free inside seven minutes of the restart, it was Courceys who enjoyed the better of the early second half exchanges and with 12 minutes played Fiona Keating and Jacinta Crowley had pointed to cut the Inniscarra lead to four but with 10 minutes remaining it was back to six Niamh Dilworth and Aileen Sheehan on target.

Still, Courceys continued to drop back deep and it was strange given that they needed scores to at times see two Inniscarra defenders standing unmarked. With the Inniscarra attack battling and still getting the upper hand on several defenders at this stage maybe Courceys should have reverted to going one on one as they needed

scores.

Jacinta Crowley pointed a free on 21 minutes and with five points still between them it was still possible for Courceys but despite now finally pushing players forward the momentum wasn't there.

Niamh Dilworth pointed a free to steady the ship and she added one from play before substitutes Claudia Keane's long range shot for a point found the net and adding a point shortly afterwards the youngster crowned a dream first senior final introduction as Inniscarra made it three in a row.

Inniscarra midfielder Katie O'Mahony was tremendous all through and was deservedly named the Evening Echo Player of The Match.

Scorers for Inniscarra: N Dilworth 0-8 (0-6's), C Keane 1-1, N McCarthy 0-2, T McCarthy, A Sheehan 0-1 each.

Courcey Rovers: F Keating 0-3, J Crowley 0-2 (1's).
INNISCARRA: S Walsh, A O'Regan, C Looney, R Quigley, R O'Mahony, R Buckley, R Keane, A Sheehan, K O'Mahony, T McCarthy (c), N Dilworth, E Looney, J Burke, N McCarthy, E Murphy.

Sub: C Keane for E Murphy (42).
COURCEY ROVERS: S O'Reilly, C Hayes, K Keohane, E Moloney, A O'Reilly, A Moloney (c), O Twomey, E O'Reilly, J Crowley, S O'Donovan, C O'Neill, E O'Reilly, F Keating, L Collins, G Hannon.

Subs: S Hayes for E O'Reilly (45), Lorraine Collins for O Twomey (55), K Lynch for R Moloney (63), A Hannon for F Keating (63), M O'Donovan (63).

Referee: John O'Leary (Inniscarra).

Three reasons why Inniscarra are champions again

WORK RATE

THE Inniscarra work rate was phenomenal they backed each other up and were dogged and determined all through.

Rena Buckley was a commanding figure in defence, Katie O'Mahony worked her socks off at mid-field. Aileen Sheehan was also strong as was captain Treasa McCarthy, who led by example driving forward taking on the Courcey defence whilst Niamh McCarthy at full forward was out quickly to the ball and moved it smartly along either scoring, finding a player to off load.

EXPERIENCE

YOU can't buy experience and with several of this Inniscarra side winning their fourth senior county championship medal they had it in abundance.

Players of the calibre of captain Treasa McCarthy, Rena Buckley, Niamh McCarthy, Niamh Dilworth, Sheila Walsh, Caitlin Looney and Rosie O'Mahony have been there before and know what it takes to win a championship.

Their team work and link play was superb. When one of them was in trouble there was somebody on their shoulder ready and waiting to help.

MATCH-UPS SPOT-ON

INNISCARRA had their home work done to perfection, and they knew the huge threat Linda Collins would pose to their defence therefore it was vital they stop the threat she would cause as in possession the Cork ace is unstoppable.

Inniscarra needed a strong tight marker on Collins and in deploying Rena Buckley to do this job they go it spot on.

Strong and light-footed, she was as fast to every ball and holding Linda Collins scoreless was a huge feat given her excellence.

Brilliant Inniscarra make it three in a row

INNISCARRA 1-13
COURCEY ROVERS 0-5

SHIRLEY MOLONEY
REPORTS

THOUGH her inter-county days may have come to an end, Rena Buckley's knack for picking up silverware shows no signs of abating.

On Saturday at Castle Road, the 18-time All-Ireland senior medallist helped her club Inniscarra to a third straight SE Systems Cork county camogie title as they pushed on in the second half to see off Courcey Rovers.

'Playing with the club is very special,' she said.

'We're going through a nice patch at the moment and it's great that we can make hay and have a few cups to show for it.'

The teams that are out there are fantastic and I keep saying that it's one of the best championships in the country.

'I think it's a brilliant, brilliant championship, it was a new pairing in the final again and we're delighted, we're absolutely thrilled.'

'We've had some years where we weren't competitive at all so it's great to be competitive and it's fantastic to be bringing home cups.'

While the scoreline would indicate a procession for the mid-Cork side, it wasn't until sub Claudia Keane scored a late goal and point that they were full out of sight of Courceys, who were playing in their first final.

Ultimately, Buckley felt that the greater experience of Inniscarra was a key factor.

'We've been in the final the last couple of years and that's definitely a help,' she said.

'We had the advantage of watching Courceys and Milford in the semi-final, knowing that we'd be meeting the winner in the final and that's a help too.'

'Courceys are a good, young team, they have a strong spread of players and a lot of players coming through. I've no doubt at all that they'll be back again.'

In an eight-minute spell late in the first half, Inniscarra put the wet conditions to one side and notched up six without re-



Inniscarra celebrate winning the county senior camogie championship title for the third year in a row after victory over Courcey Rovers on Saturday.

(Photos: Trevor Patchett)

CORK CAMOGIE FINAL

ply to take the lead and hold a 0-7 to 0-2 lead at half-time. Scores had been hard to come by early on and Courceys had had the better start, Fiona Keating twice scoring points, the latter having to be deflected over by goalkeeper Sheila Walsh.

By the 19th minute, Inniscarra were level thanks to Niamh McCarthy and Niamh Dilworth and then they went into overdrive with their purple patch with Dilworth and McCarthy each contributing two points, while captain Treasa McCarthy also got on the scoresheet.

In the early stages of the second half, with both defences holding firm, it took eight minutes for the deadlock to be broken and it was Dilworth who pointed a 35-metre place ball to give Inniscarra a six-point advantage.

Keating pulled one back for Courceys, when she fired over after a strong run at defence, and Crowley had the Inniscarra

lead cut to four on 42 when she pointed a 40-metre free. With the rain continuing to fall, Courceys launched themselves forward, however they could not make any inroads in a defence where Rosie O'Mahony, Rena Buckley and Caitlin Looney held firm.

At the other end, the Courcey rearguard were working hard under pressure with captain Ashling Moloney and Karyn Keohane holding their own. However, the south-east side struggled to mount any formidable attack with Inniscarra duo Katie O'Mahony and Aileen Sheehan controlling midfield and proving difficult to permeate. Sheehan had six between the sides on 47 when she split the posts before Crowley once again pulled one back to keep Courceys in pursuit when she put over a long-range free to make it 0-10 to 0-5 with ten minutes left.

Inniscarra showed their ex-

perience in the final four minutes when they struck 1-3 without reply to put the seal on the performance and extinguish a courageous Courcey effort. Two Dilworth placed balls followed by 1-1 from Keane, the goal coming from a probing long ball which dipped under the cross bar to deceive Sinead O'Reilly, ensured that the three in a row was secured. Inniscarra now face Limerick's Ahane in the Munster championship.

'We'll enjoy this,' Buckley said, 'the Cork county championship is the main aim and we're delighted to get that.'

'Certainly, from tomorrow, we'll look to the Munster championship. You don't always have a good team but we have a good team at the moment so we'd love to have a crack off it.'

Scorers

Inniscarra: N Dilworth 0-8 (6f), C Keane 1-1, N McCarthy 0-2, T McCarthy, A Sheehan 0-1 each.
Courcey Rovers: F Keating 0-3, J Crowley 0-2f.

Inniscarra: S Walsh, A O'Regan, C Looney, R Quigley, R O'Mahony, R



Inniscarra's Rosie O'Mahony gets away from Eimear O'Reilly, Courcey Rovers, during the county final.

Buckley, R Keane, K O'Mahony, E Looney, T McCarthy, N Dilworth, A Sheehan, J Burke, N McCarthy, E Murphy.

Sub: C Keane for Murphy (51).

Courcey Rovers: S O'Reilly, C Hayes, K Keohane, E Moloney, A O'Reilly, A Moloney, O Twomey, Elaine O'Reilly, J Crowley, S

O'Donovan, C O'Neill, Eimear O'Reilly, F Keating, L Collins, G Hannon.

Subs: S Hayes for E O'Reilly (45), K Lynch for E Moloney (54), A Hannon for A O'Reilly (54), L Collins for Twomey (55), M O'Donovan for Keating (55).

Referee: J O'Leary (Mallow).

McCarthy wants to make an impact in Munster

BY SHIRLEY MOLONEY

INNISCARRA captain Treasa McCarthy is keen to target Munster glory with Inniscarra after the club claimed the Cork title for the third successive year.

After the Mid-Cork side's maiden county championship in 2010, they made it to the All-Ireland club final, losing out to Killimor of Galway. However, the past two autumns have seen quick turnarounds for provincial outings after triumphing in Cork—in 2017, they had to play the following day,

losing out to Clare's Inagh-Kilnamona.

Now, with a two-week gap before taking on Ahane from Limerick, McCarthy wants to make an impact.

'It's brilliant,' she said, 'we have two weeks.'

'Really, what we want to do is represent Cork now and do it right.'

'Last year, we had less than 24 hours, this year that's not the case and we've no excuses.'

'We'll be back in training on Wednesday and we can't wait to get back to it.'

While 11 points separated the teams

on the scoreboard at the end last Saturday, McCarthy felt that it flattered her side somewhat.

'The scoreline definitely wasn't a reflection of the match,' she said, 'it was the toughest game we had all year.'

'It's disappointing that the score didn't reflect the game but the matchups were an absolute credit to the management, they were unbelievable, they knew exactly where to place people and that's a huge reason why we won.'

'It was incredibly tough today, Courceys were a great opposition, it was a miserable day and difficult con-

ditions.'

'We just got it over the line and we're delighted.'

It was certainly one that had to be earned, especially in a tight first half, according to McCarthy.

'We didn't score for a while, they didn't score for a while, it was very touch-and-go in the first half,' she said.

'It was hard to get a good game of camogie out of it but we hit a purple patch and we drove on. We got a couple of points in a row and that gave us a bit of enthusiasm and drive and we kept going from there.'

Leading by 0-7 to 0-2 at half-time, Inniscarra were keen to ensure that that advantage wasn't eroded in the second half.

'If we go into a dressing room and we're ahead, we always say that it's back to nil-all and we have to start again,' McCarthy said.

'We're always told not to look at the scoreboard and to start every second half as if it's level and that's what we did. We put our heads down and worked hard and we hit our purple patch in the second, we drove on and kept going.'

Three times the fun for Inniscarra

CAMOGIE

■ Linda Mellerick

CAPTAIN and birthday girl Treasa McCarthy's voice shook with emotion at times as she delivered her acceptance speech upon receiving the cup from championship sponsor John O'Leary of SE Systems on Saturday afternoon.

In what was a great speech, Treasa took her time and thanked the many people who have Inniscarra camogie where it is today.

In training conditions from snow to ice cream, breakfasts to ice baths you could tell that this was a very united Inniscarra group with the relationship between players and management something special.

Aoife Kavanagh got a special mention, side-lined to a cruciate injury, as did the entire backroom team. Kevin Murphy left no stone unturned and Dad Joe McCarthy was as ever the caring father figure to the girls, always checking in. Joe, a selector with the side, has been involved with Inniscarra camogie on and off in various roles for over 25 years. A thorough gentleman 'I'm sure they've sick of hearing my voice', he said.

Reflecting on the game in the immediate aftermath Joe praised the effort of the team. "I suppose indeed we were missing Joanne (Casey) from last year, who was our main free taker and what became a loss to us which we got over today was Aoife Kavanagh with her cruciate ligament (injury). A second one unfortunately but I think the girls put in the effort for her as well today". All over the field, the battling qualities that Inniscarra possessed was significant. Every time they lost possession they hunted in packs. There was tremendous heart in the side? "Well I think you summed it up after the Ballincollig match where you said that Inniscarra 'hounded' them. I think that was our motto from the start. Never give up, never give in, fight for the ball and that's what has gone through every match and particularly today".

Inniscarra got their match ups right on the day, particularly Rena Buckley picking up Linda Collins and Rebecca Keane on Fiona Keating? "Yeah we put a lot of thought into it. I suppose it was important to get our match ups, that's what it's all about whether its hurling or football or camogie, at whatever



SHARING THE FUN DOWN UNDER: Inniscarra's Sheila Walsh and Aileen Sheehan get a congratulatory call from Joanne Casey in Australia after their SE Systems (Energy Efficient Solutions) Cork Senior Camogie Championship final win against Courcy Rovers at Castle Road.

Pictures: Larry Cummins

level. It's about getting your match ups right and thanks be to God they worked for us today".

Outside of the more prominent names on the team Inniscarra's overall display, from every player, was excellent. The likes of Caitlin Looney, Aine O'Regan, Rebecca Quigley, Erin Looney and Jenny Burke all did a truly competent job.

Of course, there's no prouder man on the field than a father after his daughter has won such a prestigious medal and Joe was no different. Treasa celebrated her 34th birthday. What a day is was for her. Joe was beaming; "Yeah, it's her birthday today and there's a number of coincidences. Today was the 13th, she was number 13 and we scored 1-13".

Before the players, mentors, family and friends headed off for a meal and back to the clubhouse for a night of celebration there was a certain matter of a Munster championship game to discuss. "Yes, we've a Munster championship game now in two weeks' time and we're looking forward to that because I suppose two years ago we had to tog out two



Inniscarra Team manager Kevin Murphy with his family, Aisling, Sarah, Kevin and Elaine Murphy with the cup after the presentation.

days after (the county final) and last year it was 22 hours so hopefully we'll represent the County well and also do the Club justice". I'm sure they will.



Inniscarra sisters Claudia and Rebecca Keane with mum Annemarie and grandparents John and Marie Twomey.



The three youngsters 'babies' of the team, 16-year-old girls Ellen Murphy, Aine O'Regan and goalscorer Claudia Keane with the cup.

O'Riordan has a long career ahead of her

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

CORK and Munster U16 Camogie Long Puck winner Lisa O'Riordan was recently honoured as a monthly Youth Sports Award winner which is sponsored by The Metropole Hotel Cork in association with John Buckley Sports.

The youth award is now in its eighth year and every month a young sportsperson is honoured and already this year camogie has been to the fore. At just 16 years of age, Lisa O'Riordan from the Glen Rovers club is already carving out a name for herself on the camogie circuit having taken the Cork and Munster U16 Long Puck titles.

She came in a close second place in the All Ireland Long Puck in the Cooley Mountains just two pucks behind last year's runner-up Maeve Muldoon from Galway in a titanic battle where Muldoon just edged it clearing a tricky ravine to secure the title.

Lisa is a member of the Glen Rovers camogie club since the tender age of five and learned the skills of the game at the club's underage academy and she has won honours with the club at U13 and U15 levels.

She was named as Player of the Match in the Seandún Championship finals at both U13 and U15 levels on three occasions and she captained her club's U16 side to honours this season in the Blackrock tournament where she gave an outstanding display at full-back.

Cool and confident under pressure she lined out in goal this year for the club's senior team where she stepped into the boots worn in the past by such greats of the club who lined out in goal.

The confidence shown by Lisa as she guarded the senior goal was carried through to the Cork Long Puck competition where she took the title before going onto the Munster competition in Thurles where she held off strong opposition to bring home the Munster crown.

A fifth-year pupil in Coláiste an Chroí Naofa Carraig na bhFear where she has won championship and Munster honours with the school side. Lisa played Sciath Na Scoil with Scoil an Athar Tadhg where she won Sciath na Scoil titles.

She was a member of the Cork U16 teams in 2017 and 2018 that took the Munster titles and she also holds U14 and U15 honours with Cork.

This year she lined out with her club's U16 and minor teams in championship she started the 2017 season in the clubs junior team before quickly establishing herself in goal with the senior team and nailing down the position as her own.

Club chairperson Mary Sheehan had huge praise for Lisa.

"Lisa is hugely committed to camogie and is a great girl, we are delighted with the success she has brought in winning the Cork and Munster long puck titles and they are a just reward for all the hard work she puts into her game.

"It's a huge honour for Lisa her family and for our club that she has been named as a monthly Youth award winner and we thank the



Camogie star Lisa O'Riordan with her parents Veronica and Dan and sister Debbie at the Metropole Hotel Youth Sports Award. At just 16 years of age, Lisa O'Riordan from the Glen Rovers club is already carving out a name for herself.



Scoil Eoin teacher, Orla Meaney, who won an intermediate county for Éire Óg, with pupils, Alex Rose and Kevin O'Leary, when the Ballincollig intermediate hurlers visited the school this week.

sponsors for recognising camogie."

Amongst the guests at the function were Glen Rovers camogie club president Nora Newman, chairman Mary Sheehan, vice chairman Tom Luby and his wife Bridget, treasurer Deirdre Coleman and Lisa's club and county team-mate Tara McCarthy.

Also in attendance were Lisa's parents Dan and Veronica her sister Debbie and grandparents, former Cork camogie president Kay Dunne and a host of guests.

Lisa's dad Dan is also involved with the club and is with the club's junior and minor teams and is a huge

support to her in all aspects of her game.

Lisa said: "It's a huge honour to get this award and thanks to Metropole Hotel and John Buckley Sports for selecting me. I want to especially thank my club Glen Rovers and everybody who have helped me since I started playing camogie."

Award sponsor John Buckley paid tribute to Lisa as did Rodger Russell General manager Metropole Hotel who both acknowledged her superb achievement in winning both the Cork and Munster titles.

Meanwhile, minor and underage

competitions continue this weekend with championships continuing.

Today in Carrigaline in the SE Systems Minor A Championships semi-final Aghabullogue meet Newcestown and in the quarter-final Carrigaline play host to Inniscarra at 5pm. The winners will play Ballygarvan.

In the SE Systems Minor B Championship, Aghada are through to the semi-final after they recorded a 4-13 to 1-7 victory over Cloughduv last weekend. St Catherine's booked their semi-final spot as they defeated Na Piarasigh 1-10 to 2-2.

In the remaining two quarter-fin-

"Cool and confident under pressure she lined out in goal for the Glen seniors."

als Enniskeane play Killeagh tomorrow in Killeagh at 4pm and Ballinora will meet playing Fr O'Neill's on Tuesday in Ballincollig at 8pm.

The semi-finals are down for next weekend where Killeagh or Enniskeane face Aghada and Fr O'Neill's or Ballinora meet St Catherine's.

In the SE Systems Minor final, Grenagh defeated St Colum's 3-7 to 1-6 in the final played on Wednesday.

The semi-final of the Senior Summer Cup is also down for decision tomorrow in Ballincollig at 12.45pm, where the club host Éire Óg with the winners facing Sars.

Picture: Jim Coughlan

Four U12 league finals on at weekend

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

THE Juvenile Board have a busy weekend. Four of their U12 league finals are on Saturday in Castle Road.

In the U12 C4 final, Douglas 2 play Brian Dillon's at 10am. This will be followed by the U12 C1 final, in which St Fannah's will meet Millstreet at 11.15am.

At 12.30pm, the U12 C3 final has Sarsfields 4 meeting Grenagh and, at 2pm, the U12 A final, between Newcestown and Sarsfields, brings a busy day to its conclusion.

The U16 championships are also concluding and in the U16 Premier championship, Aghabullogue will meet Mid Cork neighbours, Eire Og, today at 11.30am in Ballinora.

In the U16 A championship, Ballinascarthy meet their neighbours, Newcestown, today, at 10.30am in BallinasCarthy. Also today, Kilbree take on St Finbarr's at 10.15am in Kilbree.

Youghal have home venue tomorrow, when they meet Fr O'Neill's at 5pm. Aghada meet Cobh on Wednesday next, at 7.30pm in Aghada.

In the U16 B championship, Sliabh Rua meet Castlemartyr on Thursday, at 8pm, in Riverlick. Cloughduv host Na Piar-saigh tomorrow, at 12pm.

Courcey Rovers are at home for their meeting with Inniscarra 2 tomorrow, at 11am.

In the U16 C championship, Erin's Own meet Brian Dillon's today at 1pm, in Caherlag, and, on Tuesday, St Colum's and Millstreet clash at 7.30pm in Aughville.

The U14 leagues are drawing to their conclusion. In the U14 A league, the semi-final pairings are Aghabullogue and Kilbree, in Aghabullogue on Saturday next week, while it's Sarsfields versus Inniscarra, in Sarsfields, on Wednesday at 7.45pm.

In the U14 B League, Aghada host Clonakilly, with the winners meeting Blackrock in the quarter-final.

Fr O'Neill's are waiting in the semi-final.

The second semi-final will see Glen Rovers meeting BallinasCarthy.

In the U14 C league quarter-final, Carrigtwohill will play St Catherine's, with the winners meeting Erin's Own or Buttevant in the semi-final. The second semi-final pairs Middleton with Ballinhassig.

Meanwhile, the county children's officer is hoping to organise a safeguard-one course on Thursday, November 7.

Any club that has members who are interested in attending, please contact children's officer, Robyn Triggs, on childrensofficer.cork@camogie.ie.

All mentors must attend a course before participating in coaching.

Therefore, all clubs are asked to sign their mentors up to this course, if they have not already done one.

Inniscarra to face a stiff Ahane test



Camogie

Linda Mellerick

CORK champions Inniscarra take on Ahane of Limerick in the Munster semi-final next weekend.

While it was Ahane's first title up there, they've lost five of the last 10 finals so are certainly an experienced and strong outfit.

They were up against Granagh Ballingarry for the title in a rematch of the 2017 final and where Granagh were striving for five in a row.

Ahane collected the league crown earlier in the season, winning their first senior title in many years. That piece of silverware obviously did wonders for the side's belief.

Ahane edged out Newcastle West by a single point in the semi-final, 2-5 to 1-7.

Limerick's outstanding player of her generation, Niamh Mulcahy, has been widely recognised as one of camogie's greats. But despite the esteem in which she has been held on national and local scenes, her sideboard is surprisingly empty of silverware.

Frustration rather than success has been the story of a career that has seen her end up on the losing team more times than she cares to remember.

"Gee, I don't know how many years it has been," she commented after Ahane had just beaten off the county's most successful club to capture their first senior championship in 42 years.

"It's our fifth final in 10 years and we've finally got over the line. It's super for everyone, for the club, for all the people who put in so much work."

Niamh acknowledged the record attendance, crowding around their girls who had brought success to Limerick's most renowned hurling club after a run of disappointing seasons on the men's side as well.

"Every single girl out there on the panel put everything into this victory. We were under pressure going in, you always are against Granagh, and we had to get over losing (her county player sister) Judith to injury in the semi-final. I don't think many would have tipped us today given our history in finals."

Right from the throw-in, Ahane weren't going to let this chance pass them by and a lightning start in which Mulcahy found the target three times in the first two minutes set the foundation for victory.

"I suppose, in recent finals, I haven't exactly had the best of games. So, I had to get a good start to give me the confidence, that extra boost to finish off on the support I was getting from the rest of the team."

"Yeah, we finally performed in a final after years of letting ourselves down and not doing ourselves justice. It was great to just finally put a complete performance together."

Steeped in the traditions of club and county — her mother Vera Mackey was another Limerick camogie legend, father Ger lined out for Dromin-Athlaca, Ahane and Limerick, and grandfather John and granduncle Mick Mackey are among the giants of hurling — she was delighted to be part of



Full-forward Niamh McCarthy, Inniscarra reacts as a long range shot by Claudia Keane hits the net for a goal for Inniscarra against Courcey Rovers. Picture: Larry Cummins



Cork's Aisling Thompson and Niamh Mulcahy of Limerick battle for a loose ball last season. Picture: INPHO/Cathal Noonan

another generation delivering glory to Newgardien.

"We've always had great support from the club and now we've given them something to cheer about."

What a game Niamh had! As she has done so many times for Limerick, she led the way, finishing with nine points, four from play. The complete performance.

Forty-two years of frustration ended before a record attendance in Croagh. A whirlwind start gave Ahane a three-point cushion in as many minutes before they clinically throttled Granagh-Ballingarry's attempts to pull themselves back into contention before

half-time.

Chasing their fifth title in a row and their 25th in all, the champions responded on the restart, but such was the tigerish grip of the Ahane defence that they failed to score from play until nine minutes from the end of normal time.

By then, it was too late as Orla Curtin's goal saw them trail by 11 at the three-quarter mark and their late rally was more a case of consolation than of recovery.

Ahane, and Niamh, got moving right from the throw-in. The county star had already struck from play, from a 45 after Curtin's block on a clearance had

“It's our fifth final in 10 years and we've finally got over the line. It's super for everyone, for the club, for all the people who put in so much work”

been deflected and again from play, before the champions even got out of their own half.

Even when they did, their attack were shut out by a ravenous Ahane defence as Mulcahy stretched the gap to four.

The Knockfierna girls gave it everything they had on the restart as they pinned their opponents back in their half, but they couldn't force the openings and had to settle for two Noonan frees.

Ahane ran out 1-15 to 1-8 victors. We look forward to a great battle next weekend as our own Inniscarra take on the newly-crowned Limerick champion

'This shouldn't come across as by women for women – it's about everybody'

Mary O'Connor is chief executive of the Federation of Irish Sport. She is a former acting chief executive of the Camogie Association, holds 12 All-Ireland medals in camogie and ladies football, and is a driving force behind the 20x20 initiative.

Interview by Michael Moynihan

What is 20x20?

A. A lot of the individual NGBs (national governing bodies) had been working on different ways to raise the profile of women, to increase participation and to publicise events.

What this campaign is doing is unifying all those NGBs in the hope a rising tide will lift all boats. You have the likes of the IRFU, the GAA, the FAI, involved along with sports like baton-twirling and squash and pitch and putt, which wouldn't have the same resources or income.

The premise of the campaign is that we feel if you increase the visibility of women, not just stars but women participating in events, that helps — marathons, park runs, all of that helps because it also encourages people to go to events and encourages girls to try sport as well.

Q. The lack of advertising revealed at the campaign launch — 0.4% of global advertising goes to women's sport — was that a shock?

A. It was. Looking at the Irish market, which is flying at the moment, that figure is 1%. That's massive — and alarming at the same time, but that's what this is about, challenging the culture and trying to stimulate behaviour change in Irish society as to how they perceive women's sport at all levels.

There are a lot of men who've been involved in women's sport in the last few years and it's only when men get involved that people view women as being very good at what they do. Obviously there was a lot of work done behind the scenes to get the campaign up and running but it's not about comparing us to men, it's about saying 'this is the situation we're in now, this is where we are — we want to go somewhere else and we're calling on people to act individually, and the NGBs are each committing to act on one of the three pillars.

Q. How do the three pillars work?

A. Some have picked attendance, some participation, some have picked visibility, which involves media coverage. There are three major field sports, plus hockey, say, but there are plenty of sports out there which are seen as niche sports, or emerging sports, but have huge international membership.

You can reach the Olympics in those sports but traditionally people are more aware of Gaelic games, soccer, rugby, and so on. At least there are more opportunities out there for girls to participate in different sports than when I was growing up — growing up in Killeagh the opportunity was Gaelic games, that was it.

Now we're trying to make sure girls know they have the opportunity to try a lot of different sports and then they can pick one they like — indoor, outdoor, individual, team-based, contact, non-contact, there's a huge variety there.

Q. How does the initiative dovetail with the National Sports Policy, for instance?

A. I think the campaign is aligned with the National Sports Policy. Over the last 10 years the ISC has been doing a lot of work with the money it gets from the government on development programmes and initiatives to get women involved in sport.

This campaign is pointing up the importance of having role models — to give them the opportunity to have someone to look up to, to



The 20x20 campaign to make women more active and valued in sport is the brainchild of Sarah Colgan and Heather Thornton. Nine months ago, they approached the Federation of Irish Sport, which is now driving the 20x20 initiative.

aspire to be. Sport is not as rigid as it was, either, compared to the time when only the best got to play. There's a pathway now for everyone, which is fantastic.

Q. But the 'best' are also the role models needed, right?

A. There's been a lot of talk about obesity and so on and the aim of the campaign is to get girls participating, and that would make the nation as a whole more active.

But I'm conscious also that this shouldn't come across as 'by women for women' — it's about everybody, for adults to say 'I'm going to do something' because of the campaign. For instance, Lisa Jacobs, the retired hockey player, said on Twitter after the launch that she'd commit to going to five schools to talk about her life in sport — she's been inundated with requests to come to schools since then. We have so many fantastic female role models, great sports people, but the problem is they tend to fade into the background. Because women are so humble, and often not assertive enough, they sell themselves short, but by doing that they're selling future girls short as well.

It's probably a part of Irish culture — 'who does she think she is' — but we need people to say, 'yeah, I worked really hard and I won this and I won that, I had to try really hard and these were the challenges, but these were the benefits as well, I'd love someone else to come on and emulate that or beat it'.

Q. Are there international models worth following or should we focus on Ireland's unique circumstances?

A. There have been a lot of campaigns, and 'This girl can' was one run by Sport England. They had a budget of 10 million for that, and we don't have a budget for this, we're a non-profit organisation, but it's about getting women active, and people active.

There are organisations which advocate for women in sport all over the world, but one thing we wanted to do was to bring not just NGBs along with us regarding the campaign, but organisations like Cara, which works with sports bodies to facilitate people with disabilities and awareness of disabilities. We also went to Ireland Active, which advocates for gym owners and S&C practitioners. A lot of people engage with sport on an individual basis so we wanted to cover that aspect as well. We spoke to Healthy Ireland also because their support was important.

Q. So 20x20 has been launched. What's next?

A. Now it's about resourcing the campaign. The sponsors we've brought on board are already committed to women's sport, and even though they knew they'd be sharing the platform with many other brands, to be fair they're on board because they believe in this. We'll be getting someone in as a communications executive to try to get stories out there, as well as a live fixtures and events pages on the website.

That'll show what's on in women's sport in Ireland, from elite sports events to park runs. That was never done before — you had to go to an individual sport's website for its sport, and on and on.

This will try to get all the information from the NGBs every week, and that should help with visibility as well in that it'll be easier to find events to go to.

Murray eyes future role as a hurling boss

CORK camogie team manager Paudie Murray says he'd love to manage a hurling inter-county side sometime in the future.

In the wake of being appointed to the Rebels' post in the autumn of 2012, Murray has steered his charges to four All-Ireland senior victories in the subsequent six years, including last month's O'Duffy Cup win over arch-rivals Kilkenny.

But despite the likelihood of additional future success, the man from the football stronghold of West Cork is not putting an extended time frame on his association with the Rebels' camogie side.

In fact, in the aftermath of the victory over the Cats, Murray was weighing up his sporting career options, not being certain if he wished to serve on in the Leesiders' hot seat for another 12 months.

"I said at the beginning of this year that this would be my last year with Cork, and I'd also like to get involved at managing a county hurling team sometime down the line," he remarked on his thoughts following the All-Ireland success.

"I also felt that after being involved with the Cork camogie team for so many years there was a real danger that I would become a little stale and that this would impact unfavourably on my ability to continue to get the best out of the players.



Sophie Thornhill, captain of Rathpeacon, and the team celebrate after defeating Knockavilla in the DGF 7 final at the Allianz Sciath na Scol Choral finals at Páirc Uí Chaoimh yesterday. Picture Dan Linehan

The Sciath na Scol finals kicked off in Páirc Uí Chaoimh with four cracking games: See P44, 45

HURLING

■ Paddy Hickey

"However, when I learned that all of the senior players would be staying on again for next year, I decided that I wouldn't walk away from the position.

"Aoife (Murray, his sister) is now 35, Gemma O'Connor is 33, and Brieghe Corkery and Orla Cotter are 30, but they're all prepared to give it a go again next year.

"As well, the present bunch of players are a very elite group of athletes, and

they've bought in the way the team-management goes about its business.

"So you'd want to spend as much time as you can with these players, and you'd really look forward to working at each training session with them.

"Also, it would be much easier to walk away from the manager's job if the team didn't enjoy much success, but the fact that things have gone so well for us makes it that much more difficult to step down from the role," added Murray, who managed the Doheny's men's senior football team in 2010 and 2011 before taking on the Cork camogie role the following year.

Inniscarra try again for Munster triumph

CAMOGIE

■ Linda Mellerick

SUNDAY
Munster Senior Championship semi-final: Inniscarra v Ahane, Ballyanley GAA Grounds, 2pm.

IT'S Munster Club Championship time and Cork camogie champions Inniscarra take on newly crowned Limerick champions Ahane in Ballyanley on Sunday.

Three in a row champions Inniscarra go on the Munster trail again and will be hoping for a better outcome than their previous two seasons which, due to a clutter of local games, saw them with very little time to rest and prepare for the Munster campaign.

In 2016 they had only two days upon winning the Cork senior title after a lapse of six years before they took to the field to defeat Inagh/Kilnamona of Clare but succumbed to a strong Tipperary Burgess team in the final.

Inagh/Kilnamona gained revenge twelve months ago in a game which came less than 24 hours after Inniscarra had won back to back titles and having played four championship games in eight days.

This time around the fixture God's were doing their job and have given Inniscarra a respectable two weeks gap to celebrate their county title, regroup and refocus for this important tie with Ahane. They'll need to again give a strong performance to overcome what is a good Limerick side.

Ahane, despite winning their first senior championship title in forty-two years, have been bridesmaid to the mighty Granagh Ballingarry for the past decade. This was their fifth final in 10 years.

The fact that they finally took the scalp of their greatest opponents has seen a Gorilla jump off their back. They'll either have over-celebrated their success of two weeks ago or they'll be chomping at the bit to drive on. One imagines it'll be the latter.

It was Ahane's lightning start which stunned Granagh and once they got their noses in front they put their bodies on the line defensively and Granagh just could not find a way through.

From the throw in Intercounty star Niamh Mulcahy, who finished the game with nine points, four from play, struck from play, from a '45' and again from play, before the champions even got out of their own half. At half time they led 10 to 0-3.

Granagh Ballingarry gave it everything they had on the restart as they pinned their opponents back in their half, but they couldn't force the openings and failed to score from play until nine minutes from the end of normal time. By then, it was too late as Orla Curtin's goal saw them trail by eleven at the three-quarter mark and Granagh's late rally was more a case of consolation than of recovery.

This could be a right battle on Sunday. Strong match ups will again be key for Inniscarra, particularly with regards to Niamh Mulcahy.

Ladies line out for Evening Echo Sports Star Awards



Award winners Saoirse McCarthy, Cork camogie; Yvonne O'Byrne, Ireland hockey player, and Wilton United soccer ace, Laura Lynch, at the Evening Echo Ladies Sports Star Awards. See P48-49. Picture: Dan Linehan



Award winner, Cork camogie player Saoirse McCarthy with her parents Cella and Leonard.



CAMOGIE MATTERS

By Jennifer O'Leary

PROVINCIAL TEST | Cork champions Inniscarra take on Ahane from Limerick in a Munster senior semi-final on Sunday

Important to have checks for balance

BALANCE: the ability to evenly distribute weight and hold the body upright and steady; when different elements are equal or in correct proportions; when one is adequately consuming a variety of foods from different food groups in the right amounts.

These are just some of the ways to define it, but for me, it's about ensuring I maintain my essential mix of the physical, social, mental and emotional stimulation in my life.

Without it, I wouldn't be the best version of myself and quite frankly, lately I have been unable to find this healthy mix, this balance that I crave. It seems like there isn't enough time in the day. The balance appears to be tipped in the direction of work; the other essential elements of what makes me tick seems to be swept to the side.

What I do realise is that without the physical-sport, the mental and the emotional also suffer.

I also realise that my work will also suffer unless I make the time to look after my physical and mental well-being.

There are evenings I come home from school after training teams and find myself gobbling down the dinner that I quickly prepared, only to find my head stuck in the books once again. I go through the daily ritual of promising my husband, my dog and myself that only an hour will be spent on planning my lessons and marking various English essays, but before I even know it, the clock strikes 10pm and I am once again dragging my weary body away from my work desk to start the groundhog process all over again. Eat, sleep, work, repeat. Eat, sleep,

work, repeat. But what about my beloved exercise?

It's very common and easy to get stuck in this constant cycle of working and forgetting all of the things that you should be making time for. Life is short and it's for living.

It's time for me to have a good hard look at my past and learn from it. Many people asked me how I balanced all of my interests and responsibilities when I played with Cork. The answer is that I just don't know anymore, but I'd like to get back into that mindset of four years ago. I must tap into it and revisit what it was like because it definitely worked for me.

I had the energy and the motivation to work harder in other areas of my life and I felt like I was in perfect equilibrium, just like a balance.

So, instead of having new year's resolutions that most people never keep, I've decided I am going to set myself some ground rules starting from Tuesday (Mondays are never a good day to start with as they are usually hard enough due to the day in question).

1. Prioritise exercise

Have at least three days a week where you will make a conscious effort to stay fit. Make it a mixture of individual and team sports to keep you motivated and keep you challenged. This can also include joining in with your students to complete the bleep test several times next week and in six weeks' time!

2. Use your free periods in school wisely (time-management)

Instead of drinking in copi-



The Inniscarra team celebrates their three-in-a-row success after their recent county senior camogie championship final win against Courcy Rovers. (Photo: Trevor Patchett)

ous amounts of coffee with conversation, find a quiet area to get the majority of your work done. You can always talk over lunchtime and less caffeine is good for you!

3. Plan something to look forward to once a week

Whether it is the cinema, a nice dinner, a phone call home or a trip somewhere new, making time for friends or loved ones is always going to elevate your mood and give you more energy. After all, laughter is the best medicine, and the people closest to you in

life can provide this.

4. Replace TV and smart-phone time with a good novel or an interesting article

I'm sure many would agree that there's plenty of valuable time spent staring at a screen on a daily basis and it's very easy to get consumed by them for hours without even noticing.

Instagram has become a guilty pleasure, or nearly an obsession of mine. I think it's time to make the transition from Insta stories to thought-provoking stories found in the newspapers or books.

5. A healthy body is a healthy mind

We have all fallen off the wagon when it comes to food.

I've always loved to cook fresh food every evening but lately I have fallen into a convenience food trap. Batch cooking healthy dishes will now be a priority for me.

I will also try boosting my immune system with multi-vitamins and aloe vera gel that I have cooling in the fridge.

Holding my nose and gulping 100ml of the aloe and berry mix each morning will certainly do the trick.

Starting with just a few changes can certainly give you the kick-start you need to get back to feeling good about yourself.

Even writing this article has helped me to focus and zone in on the things that always made me enthusiastic and energetic. A simple list can often be the best starting point and while the hardest part is following through with the rules you have set out, knowing and believing the positives that come with the changes should be enough to keep your eyes on the prize, a better you.

Scrolls of honour



Four-time senior All Ireland camogie medallist with Cork and UCC Quercus sports scholar Amy O'Connor after her conferring with a pharmacy degree at UCC yesterday. Amy also played international soccer with the Irish U19 women's team. Picture: Daragh Mc Sweeney



Anna Lapot of Rearden's presents the Rearden's Player of the Match Award for the Cork Camogie Senior County Championship Final to Katie O'Mahony of Inniscarra. Picture: Larry Cummins

O'Mahony joy with treble

CAMOGIE

John O'Shea

FOR the third year in a row Inniscarra got their hands on the Cork Senior Camogie Championship title.

As recent years have showcased, the Cork Camogie championship is a right battlefield in its own right.

To win one at present is a significant achievement, let alone three in succession.

That just shows the sheer drive and will to win there is in Inniscarra right now.

Katie O'Mahony was awarded the Rearden's Bar player of the match accolade as a consequence of her brilliant efforts in the decider.

"Yeah it's great. Still on the buzz from it, it's hard to believe we have won three in a row."

"Winning three is a bit mad for us."

"It is very evident that the Cork championship is very open every year."

"We came in at the start of the year and I'd say we weren't favourites to win it again."

"There is teams that would love to be in our position. We can't believe it still at the moment."

This Inniscarra dressing room and players are a highly motivated crop.

Their desire to succeed is there for all to see.

They have 18 times All-Ireland title winner with Cork in Rena Buckley within their ranks.

This current Inniscarra side is the epitome of what she was like as a player in the Rebel jersey.

The Mid Cork side are a close-knit bunch and set their standards high.

They may have won title number three in a row, but it was one which was desired just as much as their previous two successes.

For players such as O'Mahony, it is a dressing room which is a privilege to be apart of.

"We have girls with great experience. The likes of Rena Buckley, Niamh McCarthy, Aileen Sheehan all playing with Cork and winning All Ireland's at senior level with Cork."

"So that helps us along and at the moment we are used to winning."



The Rearden's Player of the Match Award for the Cork Camogie Senior County Championship final; recipient Katie O'Mahony of Inniscarra with parents Frank and Betty. Picture: Larry Cummins

"We have had new girls coming up from underage."

"They are giving us another buzz and are giving us the will to win."

"There is young girls that have phenomenal drive and determination at training, just to try and make the team."

"They just want to be winning as well, so it's great."

Next on the agenda will be in the Munster Championship.

They only had a remarkable 22 hours to prepare for their provincial exploits last year.

With a greater preparation spell this time around, Inniscarra will be keen to have a right rattle off the provincial championship.

"There is a real buzz around the parish now at home and it is great to have the two weeks."

"We had our celebrations over the weekend. We are back training now again."

"So it just gives us a good chance for preparation and a good chance at maybe going a little bit further and maybe getting to a Munster final."

They will face Abane of Limerick in the Munster semi-final, a game that will take place on Sunday, October 28th, with a

throw in time of 2pm out in Ballyanly.

"There is a lot of people looking forward to it. It is a huge thing to be going on in the club."

"There is not many clubs in the country that get big semi-finals like that on in their own club."

"So we are privileged that way."

The journey which Inniscarra as a club have been on over the last number of years is incredible to say the least.

O'Mahony hopes what this side have achieved will leave a legacy and inspire the younger generations of girls in the Inniscarra area.

"We won our first county in 2010. I was on that team as well. I will never forget the day I won my first County inside in CFT."

"It was probably the best memory I've had on a camogie match."

"As a member of Inniscarra camogie club in general, we also have our own camogie pitch in Inniscarra."

"That was huge for us."

"There is huge work going on there."

"We have a massive underage and the involvement around the club is unreal and hopefully, these wins will make bigger and better things for Inniscarra as a club as well."

Amy swaps Cork jersey for UCC cap and gown



Four time senior All Ireland Camogie medallist with Cork and University College Cork Quercus Sports' Scholar, Amy O'Connor, pictured after her conferring with a Pharmacy degree in UCC. Amy also played international soccer with the Irish U19 women's team. Picture: Daragh Mc Sweeney/Provision

OCT 2018

Double All-Ireland camogie glory for coach Gould

Congratulations to Michelle Gould who led her school camogie team Loreto Secondary School, Fermoy to All Ireland Glory by winning the All Ireland 7's in Ashbourne, Co Meath last week.

Michelle from Cathedral Road,

District Sports Award has just added a second All-Ireland camogie title to her coaching CV. In February Michelle led her school team to win the All-Ireland Post Primary Senior Camogie title and just last week added the coveted

Michelle has been teaching in Loreto for the past six years and reformed the camogie set-up in the school. Currently a PE, history, CSPE and SPHE teacher she spends the rest of her time on the school pitches coaching teams from 1st year to 6th year.

Michelle secretary of St Vincent's Camogie Club currently coaches a number of underage teams. She came back to play championship this year after tearing a cruciate ligament in a match which resulted in the reconstruction of her knee.

Push to
get the
fixtures
through

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

THE senior and juvenile board are diligently working through their fixture programme in their bid to get all competitions completed, the good weather the last few weeks has proved welcome and this weekend it is hoped to get several more games completed.

At minor level in the SE Systems Minor A championship semi-final took place today at 12pm, where Aghabullogue faced Newcestown.

In the SE Systems Minor B semi-final on Monday, Enniskeane host Aghada at 12pm. The second semi-final is between St Catherine's and Ballinora.

Also on Monday at Castle Road the SE Systems Minor C final sees Kilbrittain/Timoleague play Sliabh Rua at 2.30pm.

The juvenile board is up to semi-final stages in the Premier U16 championship where Ballinora are scheduled to meet Sarsfields with the winners taking on Aghabullogue in the final after they edged out Eire Og in an exciting semi-final clash by a goal 2-7 to 1-7.

At U16 A it's down to semi-final after Newcestown overcame Ballinascorthy 4-4 to 4-0, St Finbarr's defeated Kilbree in a high-scoring 5-12 to 5-10 clash, Aghada were too strong for Cobh, and Fr O'Neill's edged out Youghal, a single point the difference here.

The semi-finals are Aghada versus Fr O'Neill's and St Finbarr's versus Newcestown.

In the U16 B championship, Douglas will take on Courcy Rovers with Na Piarasigh hosting Castlemartyr.

In the U16 C championship, Millstreet booked their semi-final place thanks to a 3-8 to 2-3 win over St Catherine's.

Buttevant clash with Dungourney today.

Erin's Own edged out Brian Dillon's 5-4 to 5-3 while Ballinhassig meet Barryroe. The winners will face Nemo with the winners of this meeting Dungourney or Buttevant in the semi-final.

The second semi-final will see Millstreet hosting Erin's Own.

The U16 A league is moving along with Eire Og already qualified from their group and they will be joined by either Sarsfields, Aghabullogue or Ballinora.

Charleville will play Kilbrittain/Timoleague with the winners playing either Blackrock or Enniskeane.

In the U16 B league, Inniscarra 2 will play Castlemartyr or Na Piarasigh with the winner going through to a meeting with Castlelyons.

Douglas will meet Cobh in Douglas. Fr O'Neill's host Aghada and Kilbree have home venue for their meeting with Midleton.

In the U16 C league, Barryroe meet Laochra Og in Barryroe in a quarter-final game with the winners playing Buttevant. Millstreet are at home against Watergrasshill for their quarter-final outing the winners play Brian Dillon's.

The players who shone this year



Camogie

Linda
Mellerick

AS IS customary at this time of year we preview the nominees for this year's All Stars.

It's a good thing to do as with very few televised games and supporters not travelling for neutral games many of the players outside of your own county are unfamiliar. That is unless you are from Kilkenny or Cork where many of the girls are household names now.

The Liberty Insurance All-Stars takes place in the City West on November 3.

This week the nominated goalkeepers, full-backs and half-backs are previewed.

GOALKEEPERS:

Aoife Murray (Cork): The Cloughduv shot stopper fulfilled a lifelong ambition when she climbed the steps of the Hogan Stand as captain. Murray is the best goalkeeper in the game, receiving her 13th nomination.

Emma Kavanagh (Kilkenny): The 2016 beneficiary receives her fourth nomination for her solid displays between the posts for the League and Leinster champions.

Sarah Healy (Galway): The 18-year-old who lined out for both the Seniors and Minors in 2018 had a good year between the sticks for the Tribeswomen and produced many confident performances.

FULL-BACKS:

Mary Ryan (Tipperary): The Moneygall defender produced many fine performances for the Premier County which helped them reach a championship semi-final against Cork. The four-time nominee will be hoping this is the year she wins her first All-Stars award.

Laura Treacy (Cork): The four-time All-Ireland champion from Killcagh had a stormer of a season in Cork's full-back line as she thwarted attack after attack that came her way. She claimed her first All-Star award last year and should certainly get a second.

Grace Walsh (Kilkenny): A warrior, reliable and strong. The sister of Tommy and Pádraig is due her first All-Star.

Shauna Healy (Galway): A first-time nominee, Healy had a very strong campaign in the Galway rear-guard. The Ardahan stalwart was instrumental in helping Galway reach an All-Ireland semi-final appearance.

Catherine Foley (Kilkenny): Foley was at the heart of the defence for the All-Ireland finalists.

Edwina Keane (Kilkenny): Keane has a wealth of experience. The versatile performer claimed her only All-Stars award back in 2013. This is the sixth All-Stars nomination for the St. Martins player.

Sarah Dervan (Galway): The Galway skipper can be proud of how she led her team this year after being a consistent menace for attackers throughout the country. The full-back from Mullagh claimed four solo awards consecutively from 2013-2016.

Pamela Mackey (Cork): The Doug-



Cork's Laura Treacy celebrates with the All-Ireland as she takes a selfie for supporters. While she by smiling at the All-Stars next weekend? Picture: INPHO/Laszlo Geczo



Kilkenny's Miriam Walshe and Meighan Farrell battle Hannah Looney of Cork. Picture: INPHO/Ryan Byrne

las corner-back was as solid as a rock in the Rebel defence. Mackey has been a consistent fixture in the Cork's defence for nine years. Another to have an outstanding season.

Colette Dormer (Kilkenny): The two-time All-Stars winner and three-time Ashbourne All-Stars winner pro-

duced another big championship campaign

HALF-BACKS:

Karen Kennedy (Tipperary): This is a first nomination for the Thurles Sarsfields centre-back who continues to go from strength to strength.

Hannah Looney (Cork): The versa-

tile student has earned her second All-Star nomination for her dominant and solid displays.

Claire Phelan (Kilkenny): The five-time nominee lined out at wing back for the Cats this season and produced strong and confident displays in the black and amber.

Hannah Hegarty (Dublin): It has been another great year for the 20-year-old dual star who has captained the Dublin Camogie and LGFA minor teams in the past.

Róisín Egan (Offaly): One of only two Offaly players to receive an All-Star nomination this year Egan has been instrumental in driving forward from the Offaly half-back line.

Anne Dalton (Kilkenny): A household name, Dalton is a very stylish player. The 2016 All-Ireland champion produced some of her best camogie this year, having received a Player of the League nomination in April.

Davina Tobin (Kilkenny): The Emeralds wing back has grown nicely into her wing back position for the Cats this year, having previously played as full back over the last number of seasons.

Aine Lyng (Waterford): The first Waterford nominee is the Gaultier centre-back Aine Lyng. Lyng has been a veteran on the Waterford camogie panel, having played in the All-Ireland Junior final back in 2009.

Chloe Sigerson (Cork): The 2016 Soaring Stars recipient is receiving her maiden All-Stars nomination after a string of impressive performances for the Rebels. Not only have her performances merited her with a nomination, Sigerson is also nominated for the overall Senior Player of the Year award, demonstrating her effectiveness in the wing-back position for the champions

Éire Óg camogie club is on the rise again

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

TWO of the camogie's most successful clubs come face-to-face in search of a place in the Munster Intermediate Club championship final when Cork champions Éire Óg play host to Tipperary champions Cashel tomorrow in Ovens at 2pm.

Now in its ninth year, the Munster intermediate club championship has proved to be a huge success since its inception though Waterford club have been dominating. The first winners in 2010 were Lismore from Waterford and they have been the trendsetters as they have taken the title on five occasions 2011, 2013, 2014 and they are the current holders of the title.

In between, Clare side Kilmaley were crowned champions in 2012 with Cahir in 2015 and Galtir, Waterford, on the victory rostrum in 2016. Another Waterford sides await the winners of tomorrow's semi-final with Galtir already through to the decider.

Extra time and replays have been the hallmark of Cashel's journey through the Tipperary championship they had to go to extra time before booking their place in the county final. They edged out Drom and Inch on a 3-11 to 1-12 scoreline to set up a meeting with Thurles Sars, a side they had already met twice earlier in the season with very little separating them.

Cashel's path to county final had seen victories over Drom and Inch and Thurles Sars and a defeat at the hands of Kilruane in the group stages. Having lost out in the county final of 2017 they had the incentive to go one better and return one of Tipperary's most famous club back to the senior grade.

Éire Óg were equally impressive in their path to Cork championship glory.

This year there was changes in the grading structure of the Cork competitions as the proposal of the county board's executive to dispense with the senior B grade was unanimously accepted by the clubs. Over the last few years the third adult grade of intermediate had only had five clubs battling for the league and championship titles and with two clubs seeking to re-grade to junior, the board was faced with a big decision.

A lot of discussion took place and surprisingly it centered on the hugely successful senior B grade which over the years had served up some superb games and thrilling championship finals. The thought behind dispensing with senior B and elevating intermediate to the second-highest championship was that the winners of the second tier competition compete in the Munster series. Previously, the winners of senior B did not have a provincial competition to participate in.

It came as no surprise that two clubs that up to this year had held senior B status reached the final. Éire Óg had battled long and hard to get back to senior level but were twice beaten in the senior B final.

With a good underage structure in place they finally reaped the reward with a nice blend of youth and ex-



Members of the Éire Óg U12 boys and girls section of the club.

Picture: Larry Cummins



Organisers Catherine Barry-Murphy, ladies football, Marita Murphy, juvenile, and Colette Murphy, camogie, attending the launch to announce the involvement of Éire Óg in the Liam Miller tribute game.

Picture: David Keane

perience in their side they overcame Aghabullogue in the intermediate final. In their path to the final, they beat holders Newcestown in the semi-final 2-12 to 1-5 and they were hugely impressive against Aghabullogue.

Both Éire Óg and Cashel have graced the Munster Senior Club championship in days gone by, with the Mid Cork outfit taking provincial honours in 1985. Cashel have been one of Tipperary's most successful clubs. Munster senior titles were won in 2001, 2002, 2005 2006, 2007.

They went on to win All Ireland senior club championships titles in 2007 and 2009 when amongst their ranks were household names such as Una O'Dwyer, Claire Grogan, Philly Fogarty and Emily Hayden.

Years move on and lean times hit clubs and they dropped down to intermediate grade but working hard in the interim they now find themselves about to re-join the ranks of Tipperary camogie elite with new stars emerging in the form of Orla O'Dwyer, Caoimhe Perdue, Louise Barlow, Grace O'Dwyer and Laura

Connolly, who captained the side to glory. This is a very young panel of players and from the starting 15 Ciara Dwane and Grace O'Dwyer are still U16s.

Éire Óg have tread a similar path to Cashel. Hugely successful at senior level in the past they won titles in 1977, 1978 and 1985 and they too experienced lean times which necessitated a drop down a grade. Now the good times are back and with huge work going on at underage level they are once again a force to be reckoned with.

They will grace the Cork senior

“Éire Óg were equally impressive in their path to Cork championship glory.”

championship in 2019 with great strength. They have excellent players in long-serving Margaret O'Herlihy, Maeve Ellen Desmond, Rachel Murray, Marie Gleeson, Emma Quigley, captain Siobhan Hutchinson and Evening Echo Player of the Match in the county final Emma Crowley.

With Inniscarra also in Munster senior club championship semi-final action in Ballyanley today against Limerick champions Ahane at 2pm let's hope it will be a good day for both Cork representatives.



Inniscarra's Aine O'Regan being challenged by Ahane's Orla Curtin in the Munster Camogie Championship semi-final.

Pictures: Denis Miniham

Inniscarra are back in final



CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick

Inniscarra	1-15
Ahane	1-8

THE journey for Inniscarra continues as they booked their place in the Munster club final at the expense of Ahane in Ballynaly yesterday.

Using the first half against a strong wind to work hard and wear Ahane down, they took the lead for the first time on 42 minutes and from there ran out comfortable winners.

The game firmly swung Inniscarra's way on 50 minutes. An astute move by Inniscarra's management to counteract Ahane's sweeper, they brought in forward Claudia Keane for corner-back Rebecca Quigley.

Sheila Walsh brought off a great save at one end of the field and was fouled in the process. From the free out Keane won possession and passed inside to Niamh Dilworth who rounded the keeper to palm to the net. A six-point turnaround in the blink of an eye and you could see no way back for Ahane.

The visitors got the perfect start. A high ball from Niamh Mulcahy saw two Inniscarra players collide, Rebecca Keane needing attention as a result. Suzy McGovern gathered the breaking ball with her delivery getting a final tap into the net by Aine Reynolds.

Erin Looney and Rosie O'Mahony were prominent as the lively Ahane brought a good start mentality to the game. Mulcahy was playing deep, Rena Buckley her marker but staying close to home and minding the house.

In general play Ahane were finding it difficult to get any attack going outside of delivering long from placed balls. Sheila Walsh dealt well with two Niamh Mulcahy long-range frees dropping into the square.

In the second quarter, aside from Mulcahy's frees giving Inniscarra some nervy



Inniscarra's Rebecca Quigley in a race for the ball with Ahane's Orla Curtin yesterday.

moments, Ahane were failing to create any attacks from general play. Inniscarra on the other hand were putting together some nice team moves, struck some nice points and could have had a few more.

Ellen Murphy and Aileen Sheehan hit over before Mulcahy (2) and McGovern gave Ahane a four-point lead on 12 minutes.

Inniscarra's work rate was starting to pay dividends. An Aileen Sheehan point, who had a fine game throughout, a Niamh Dilworth free and two Niamh McCarthy points saw Inniscarra trail by a point at the break; 1-4 to 0-6. Considering the early goal and coming back out with the wind at their backs it was a position they would have been content with.

Ahane turned around with a sweeper but Niamh McCarthy operating on the forty after switching with Dilworth, held up a lot of ball. Equally Ellen Murphy and Jenny Burke were doing Trojan work.

The gap was still one until Burke levelled it for Inniscarra on 39 minutes and when sharpshooter Niamh Dilworth gave Inniscarra the lead for the first time on 42

minutes, it was a lead they never relinquished. Niamh Mulcahy as ever wore her heart on her sleeve with an heroic effort for Ahane but Inniscarra's close attention and work ethic meant she was never afforded too much space.

Inniscarra won ball at times they should never have won but their willingness to make that run saw them turn over possession numerous times. Great blocks, great pressure, great flicks and Inniscarra are back in the Munster club final.

Scorers for Inniscarra: N Dilworth 1-7 (0-7 f), A Sheehan 0-3, E Murphy 0-2, N McCarthy 0-2, J Burke 0-1.

Ahane: N Mulcahy 0-6 f, A Reynolds 1-0, S McGovern, O'Meara 0-1 each.

INNISCARRA: S Walsh, A O'Regan, C Looney, R Quigley, R Keane, R Buckley, R O'Mahony, E Looney, O'Mahony, T McCarthy, N Dilworth, A Sheehan, Burke, N McCarthy, E Murphy.

Subs: C Keane for R Quigley (46), D O'Callaghan for O'Regan (60).

AHANE: S Moynihan, N Martin, R Collins, N Power, Herbert, N Flanagan, S Condon, M McCarthy, A Kennedy, A Herbert, N Mulcahy, S McGovern, R O'Meara, Reynolds, O Curtin.

Subs: E Liston for S Condon (53), A Quinn for A Kennedy (55).

Referee: Mike Ryan (Tipperary).

Carbery's finest are honoured

CARBERY GAA AWARDS

ALL-IRELAND winners were among those honoured at the recent Carbery GAA Awards' presentations for the months of May, June and August, held at Ballinascorthy Community Hall.

Winner of the award for May was Moira Barrett of the Ballinascorthy Camogie Club who captained the Cork minor camogie team to the All-Ireland title, the first time that particular title was ever won by Cork.

Joint winners of the June award were Cork football development squad mentors Daniel Cronin of St Mary's and Niall Twomey of Ballinascorthy, who led the Cork U15 and U16 squads to Munster and All-Ireland titles, unbeaten for the entire season.

Winner of the August award was Caroline Sugrue, also of the Ballinascorthy Camogie Club, who was a prominent member of the Cork intermediate camogie team which brought off a great double by winning the Division 2 league and the All-Ireland championship.

The July winners, Castlehaven GAA Club, and the September winners, Orla Cronin and Libby Coppinger, winners of All-Ireland senior camogie medals, will be presented with their awards at a later stage.

The Carbery GAA Monthly Awards are open to all branches of the GAA in West Cork, including football, hurling, camogie and ladies football. This year's gala night is planned for December 8th. Nominations for October and November are

welcome from clubs, members of the public, etc., and should be sent to the board secretary Donal McCarthy within a week of the end of the particular month.

Moira Barrett of the Ballinascorthy Camogie Club made history this year when she captained the first Cork minor team to win the All-Ireland title since that grade was changed from U16 to U18, way back in 2001.

'I have been playing camogie with Ballinascorthy since I was nine or ten years old,' Moira said.

'We had our first big win when we won the county junior B title this season.

'I have been playing with Cork squads since I was in sixth class. I actually dropped off the Cork scene when I was U14 but went back to play two years at U16 and two years at minor. So, it took four years to win this minor title. It was four nights a week with Cork before we won the final, so there's no shortage of training and games.

'We had a panel of 32 with the minors this season and we started in January. The final was in April, so the time seemed to fly by. There was no pressure on us to win just because Cork had never won at U18.

'I'll be concentrating on the Leaving Cert but the Cork intermediate team is the next step up from minor and that's a big gap. I'll keep playing with Bal and with Carbery and wait to see if Paudie (Murray, the Cork



Carbery Board Chairman Joe Crowley presents the Carbery GAA Monthly Award for August to Caroline Sugrue, Ballinascorthy.

manager) wants me.'

For Caroline Sugrue, 2018 was the culmination of a dream come true, a dream that was almost turning into a nightmare. Caroline lives on the border of Bandon and Ballinascorthy, with cousin Mark being a star player on the Bandon GAA teams.

'I've been involved with Ballinascorthy since I was U12, more years than I care to remember,' Caroline said.

'There was no underage camogie in Bandon back then, I used to play with the boys, so I fell with Ballinascorthy when they started an underage camogie club. I worked my way up through the grades with Cork and was part of the senior panel for a while. Over the last few seasons I've been involved with the intermediate team.

'This was our third time reaching the All-Ireland intermediate final and it was becoming something of a nightmare as we lost the first two. You could say it was third time lucky this year. We went to a replay last year and lost so we were determined not to let that happen again.

'This year it was the determi-

nation and the drive to make up for the past two seasons that finally carried us over the line. We were so sick of losing that it was not an option this year. We actually won the Division 2 league early in the year and Paudie (Murray) drove us on for the championship.

'It was marvellous to win the senior and intermediate on the same day in Croke Park. You would never forget something like that. We only had a week to celebrate as we were all back with our clubs immediately. I was playing with Bal and with Carbery and Bal won the county B title, so it was a good finish to a great year.'



Glen Rovers county representatives return to the club with silverware in hand.

Glen Rovers hail Cork's All-Ireland camogie success

GLEN Rovers has been celebrating its players bringing four All-Ireland camogie trophies and two Munster championship titles back to the northside.

Club players were out in force recently with plenty of red and white on view as Cork senior cornerback Leanne O' Sullivan led the procession to the stage at the club holding aloft the O' Duffy Cup to show it off to club members. She was followed by Lauren Callanan holding aloft the All-Ireland intermediate trophy with Emma Murphy proudly showing off the All-Ireland minor cup. Meaghan Martin brought along the Under-14 All-Ireland trophy whilst Lisa O'Riordan and Tara McCarthy proudly showed off the Munster Under 16 trophy. Aisling Wallace held aloft the Munster junior championship trophy and also present were Ella Buckley and Kayleigh O'Sullivan who were members of Cork under-14 and under-16 panels this year.

Chairperson Mary Sheehan paid tribute to players for their commitment to both club and county.

She said: '[These players] are wonderful role models for all our young camogie players and to see all the success they have had shows them what can be achieved with hard work. Leanne O' Sullivan spoke on behalf of the players and encouraged every one of the young girls to work hard and keep playing camogie.

'Your club is where you learnt the skills and if you keep training and working hard you will also be standing here in years to come.' Club treasurer and former Glen Rovers and Cork star Deirdre Sutton-Coleman made presentations to the Cork players on behalf of the club.



Carbery Board Chairman Joe Crowley presents the Carbery GAA Monthly Award for May to Moira Barrett, Ballinascorthy.

Classy Cotter kept her cool at Croke

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

IT HAS been a hectic few months for one of Cork Camogie's top players Orla Cotter.

On May 26, she got married to Mark and headed off on a dream honeymoon, to Canada and then onto a cruise around Alaska, before coming home to celebrate her 30th birthday in July.

Orla and Mark returned from their honeymoon on a Wednesday and the brilliant forward was back training with the Cork team the next night.

With six All-Irelands and five All-Stars safely tucked away in her back pocket, you would have excused her taking some extended downtime to adjust to the new chapter in her busy life but not Orla. It was business as usual as she helped Cork reach the Liberty Insurance All-Ireland senior final during an action-packed June, July and August where she was very much to the fore notching up crucial scores both from frees and play.

Earlier in the year she also became aunt for the first time when niece Fia arrived so it was busy all through summer.

Onto September and it was nip and tuck all through the All-Ireland final and as it headed towards full time with Cork and Kilkenny level it looked a replay was on the cards. That is until Cotter stepped up to the mark.

With an amazing sense of calm, she landed a difficult and match winning free sending it straight between the posts from almost the halfway line and with it came the final whistle. The O'Duffy Cup was coming to Leeside once more and Cork were back-to-back champions.

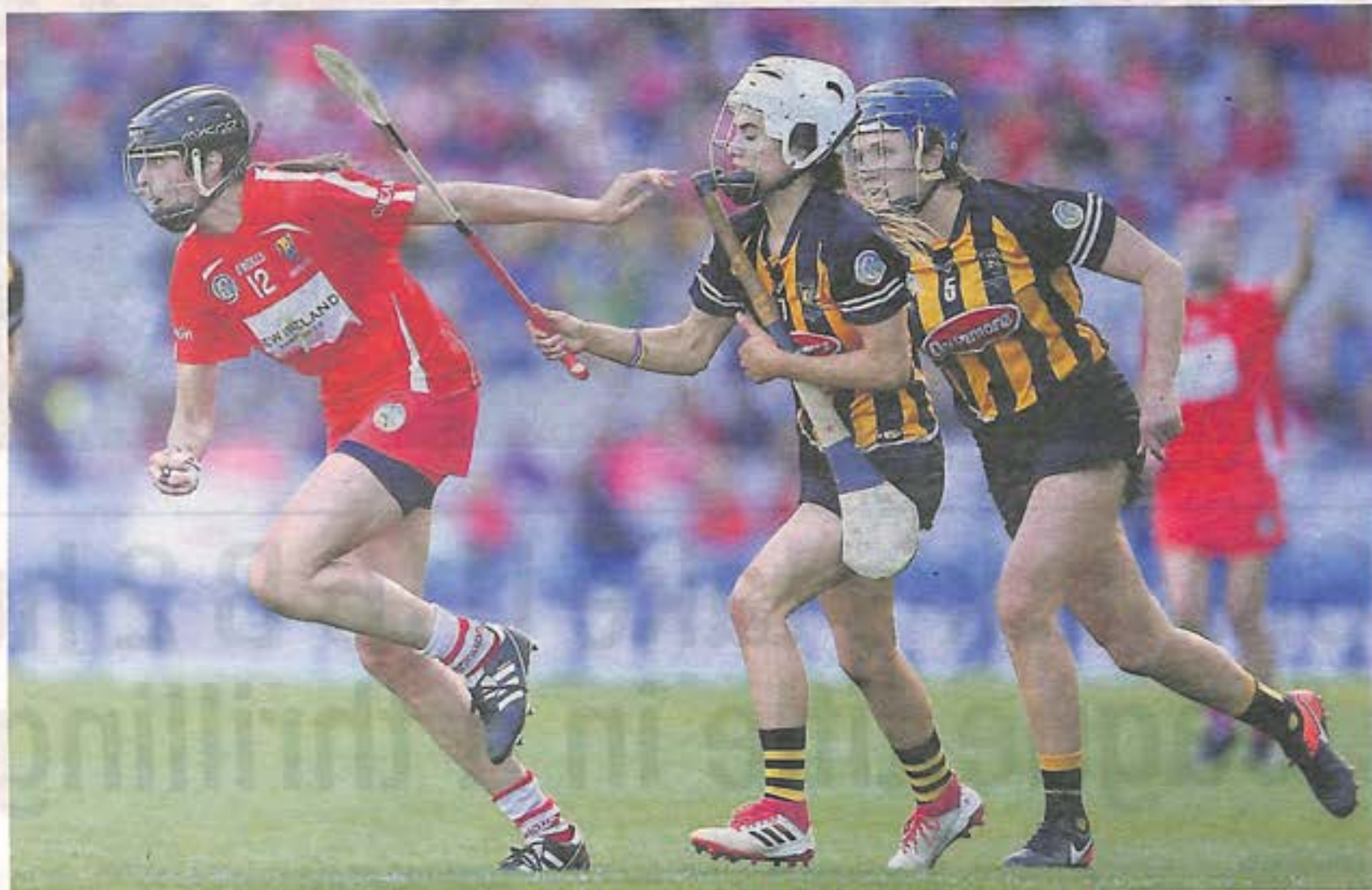
One of camogie's most decorated players, Cotter has honours with her club St Catherine's from U14 to senior B championship. She is also the holder of an All-Ireland U16 medal as well as senior B and seven senior medals.

She has won provincial silverware with Cork and has All-Ireland junior colleges honours as well as senior and junior national league medals. Cotter was the only player to actually play in two senior All-Ireland finals in the same year in 2006, winning senior B medal as Cork defeated Galway before going on to line out in the senior All-Ireland final later in the month when Cork overcame Tipp.

Cotter went on to win her first All-Star award in 2008 and she surely in the reckoning for her seventh this year when the accolades are handed out later this evening.

It came as no surprise that recently Orla was named the September winner of the 96FM/C103 GAA Star of the Month award in association with the Rochestown Park Hotel. An honour richly deserved by one of the games most unassuming people. It was the second time that Orla had won this award and the St Catherine's player was thrilled.

"I'm really delighted to be accepting this but I am doing so on behalf of the team which I am proud to be a member of. They are a phenomenal group of girls and each and every one of them are so deserving of being



Kilkenny's Davina Tobin tries to halt Orla Cotter's run in the All-Ireland final in September. Cotter was the top-scorer for the Rebels in landing another title on Jones Road.

Picture: INPHO/Tommy Dickson



At the Rochestown Park Hotel, Finbarr McCarthy presented the Cork 96FM/C103 GAA Sports Star Award to Orla Cotter. Included are Jerry Walsh, Isabel Keane, Cork manager Paudie Murray, Marion McSweeney and Tom Tobin.

Picture: Tony O'Connell Photography

“With so many medals already, you would have excused her taking some downtime.”

here today to receive this award. It's all about a team and each of us backing each other up and being there through thick and thin for each other." Orla had huge praise also for the backroom team and Cork Camogie Board for all the hard work going on in Cork camogie.

"My thanks to all who helped make it another memorable year for Cork Camogie, our backroom team led by our manager Paudie Murray do incredible work and they are also worthy recipients of all the praise, without them and the huge amount of hours they put in this would not be

possible.

"I also want to thanks the County Board and the officers, they are wonderful people volunteering their time to promote camogie in Cork, we are so lucky to have the fantastic facility that is Castle Road and it was invaluable to us in our preparations for the All-Ireland championship. They are there all the time no matter when you go to Castle Road and the work they do often goes unseen so I thank them sincerely."

Mary McSweeney, chair of the Camogie Board, also thanked the sponsors for their continued support and

promotion of camogie.

"Orla Cotter is a superb role model for all young girls playing sport, she is a wonderful player and is always readily available to help in any way she can to promote our game, down through the years he has been one of our top players and today is a fitting reward for her on behalf of the board I congratulate Orla and her family and club."

Jerry Walsh representing the Cork GAA Board said: "Your remarkable composure in the closing minutes of a high-pressure game, to hit the winning point, is testimony to your char-

acter and you are fully deserving of this award, and my thanks also to the sponsors for recognising the many talented players we have in this county."

Family and friends including her parents Brigit and John, club officers from St Catherine's Camogie and GAA were in attendance, along with Marion McCarthy and Sandra Corcoran of the Camogie Board, Mary Newman, Evening Echo Camogie, along with Paudie Murray, manager of the Cork Senior Camogie team and Niall Collins of the management team.

Will Rebels reign at the All-Stars?

Camogie

Linda Mellerick

WITH just hours remaining until we know this year's 2018 All-Stars recipients, we look at the players nominated in the midfield, half-forward, and full-forward lines.

Niamh Kilkenny (Galway): An 11th nomination for the Galway stalwart, who produced another influential championship campaign for the Tribeswomen.

Gemma O'Connor (Cork): O'Connor has been a sensation for the Rebels. The St Finbarr's star has claimed 12 All-Stars nominations and, this year, she is looking to claim her 11th award.

Lorraine Bray (Waterford): The 22-year-old produced a superb year for the Déise and deserves her maiden All-Stars nomination.

Meighan Farrell (Kilkenny): Farrell receives her third consecutive All-Stars nomination, after a resolute campaign. Farrell scored in the decider in September and is looking to win her third award from as many nominations.

Julia White (Cork): The Douglas star had another great year for the All-Ireland champions and played a key role in their All-Ireland success, through her influential performances. Julia earns her fourth All-Stars nomination.

Libby Coppinger (Cork): Coppinger was influential for the Rebels this year and she earns her maiden All-Stars nomination.

Orla Cotter (Cork): The teacher, from St Catherine's club, struck the winning free that secured a one-point victory for the Rebels to claim another All-Ireland title. Cotter, who was 'player of the match' in the decider (she scored five points), produced many effective performances throughout the campaign.

Orla O'Dwyer (Tipperary): This is a third, consecutive nomination for the Cashel star, who was instrumental in Tipperary's run to the All-Ireland semi-final stage.

Siobhán Flannery (Offaly): The Offaly ace was in tremendous form this year and finished joint fourth in the top scorers' charts, with 5-19 in total. Flannery played her 12th season with Offaly and her performances have earned her a fifth All-Stars nomination.

Katie Power (Kilkenny): The 28-year-old celebrated her tenth season playing in the black-and-amber by earning the Division 1 'Player of the League' Award in May, and now receives her ninth All-Stars nomination. She is looking to win her fourth award.

Orla Cronin (Cork): The Enniskeane sharpshooter has matured into a wonderful player and is not afraid to perform on the biggest of occasions. She is looking to win her first award.

Denise Gaule (Kilkenny): The Windgap superstar was on fire in the three finals the Cats took part in this year and deservedly receives another All-Stars nomination.

Amy O'Connor (Cork): This is a third nomination in four years for the youngster from St. Vincent's. O'Connor is looking to receive her first All-Stars Award.



Orla Cronin, of Cork, after scoring a point against Kilkenny in September. Will she be an All-Stars winner tonight?
Picture: David Fitzgerald/Sportsfile



Michael O'Connell, chairman, Gurrabraher Credit Union, presents sponsorship to St Vincent's Camogie Club, in the company of Deputy Lord Mayor Cllr Thomas Gould, Michelle Gould, Amy O'Connor, Lauren Homan, and Vincent Ahern. Picture: John Tarrant

Anna Farrell (Kilkenny): The two-time nominee lined out in midfield in the All-Ireland decider, but did lots of good work from the 45m line. She will be looking to collect her first award.

Niamh Rockett (Waterford): The St Anne's right-half forward lived up to her surname with her scoring prowess this year, as she helped the Déise to a quarter-final run in the championship. She receives her maiden All-Stars nomination.

Orla Beagan (Dublin): This is a maiden All-Stars nomination for the Lucan Sarsfield's player, who was fantastic in front of goal throughout the summer campaign.

Beagan bagged herself 1-7 against Wexford in the early rounds, and she continued to stamp her authority on the scoreboard for the Dubs.

Carrie Dolan (Galway): The right corner-forward was in clinical form for the Tribeswomen throughout this

campaign and earns her first All-Stars nomination.

Cáit Devane (Tipperary): What a year for the Tipperary star, who topped the scoring charts. Devane was devastating in most matches for Tipperary and finished the championship with 4-46 in her side's seven matches.

Shelly Farrell (Kilkenny): The Kilkenny captain led by example this year. The Thomastown lynchpin was instrumental in the Cats successes, lifting both the Division 1 League and the Leinster trophies.

Katrina Mackey (Cork): The student from Douglas has been a reliable player in the Rebel set-up and has continued to perform at a very high level. It is a seventh nomination for the reliable attacker, who will be looking to win her fifth award.

Michelle Quilty (Kilkenny): The full-forward was one of only four players on the scoresheet for the Cats in the

“Enniskeane sharpshooter Cronin has matured into a wonderful player and she could win a first All-Star.”

All-Ireland final and also scored 1-1 in the Leinster final victory over Offaly in May. She is chasing her third All-Stars Award.

Beth Carton (Waterford): The prolific attacker was instrumental in Waterford reaching their first All-Ireland quarter-final, producing red-hot performances in front of goal this year. The De La Salle star has played in her fourth season with Waterford. This is her second All-Stars nomination.

Grace O'Brien (Tipperary): One of Tipperary's consistent performers in their campaign, O'Brien was a dominant presence in the inside forward line for the Premier county.

This is a maiden All-Stars nomination for her.

Siobhán Kehoe (Dublin): Kehoe has produced consistently for Dublin over the last few years and this year was no exception. Her performances earn her a first All-Stars nomination.

Rockies capture the U12 B crown

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

IT MAY be November, but still plenty of games to keep clubs busy as the juvenile and senior board forge ahead to get their calendars cleared before the break.

The U16 B Championship semi-finals are down for decision this weekend when Na Piarsaigh have home venue at 2pm for their meeting with Castlemartyr today and tomorrow in Courcey Rovers at 11am the home side meet Douglas.

Also tomorrow in the U16 C Championship quarter-final Nemo Rangers, who are enjoying a tremendous season, take on Ballinhassig. This will go ahead at 7.45pm under lights in Nemo Rangers grounds in Trabeg.

There is also league action this weekend with the U14 B league semi-final between Ballinascorthy and Glen Rovers taking place today in Ballinascorthy at 12pm. The last of the U14 B league quarter-finals is also today at 1pm in Blackrock when they host Aghada. The winners are down to meet Fr O'Neill's.

The U14 C league semi-final between Middleton and Ballinhassig takes place in Middleton today.

The big game for the senior board this weekend is the minor A championship final where Ballygarvan, who had a one-point midweek victory over Inniscarra, take on Newcestown on Sunday in Castle Road at 2.30pm.

The minor B championship semi-final will see Ballinora face St Catherine's on Wednesday at 7.30pm in Ballynoe. The winners will meet Enniskeane in the final on Saturday at Castle Road.

The Minor C championship final between Kilbriann/Ti-moleague and Sliabh Rua was scheduled for last Monday, however, due to bereavement in Kilbriann this game was postponed.

The Seandún division also has a busy weekend planned. The U12 A development league semi-finals in St Vincent's see Bishopstown battling Glen Rovers and St Vincent's against Douglas. The final takes place after.

Last weekend Seandún held the U12 B development semi-finals and final with Blackrock defeating Nemo Rangers and Passage overcoming Na Piarsaigh.

The final between Blackrock and Passage West was an exciting game with close marking and great skills shown by both teams on a day when the drop in temperatures didn't deter two determined sides.

In the finish, it was Blackrock who claimed victory and right on cue the rain started as the presentation got underway.

Well done to all on a great day's camogie with lots more to come tomorrow in St Vincent's for the A semi-finals.

Kearney worthy of an All-Star nod



WHILE hurling and camogie are team sports, it's still pretty sweet for players to pick up individual accolades.

Nothing compares to county or All-Ireland medals but at the same time, no one is going to turn down an All-Star.

Cork did well at the PwC awards, where Patrick Horgan, Seamus Harnedy and Darragh Fitzgibbon were included. The provincial champions are generally acknowledged in the scheme, though in 2014 the Rebels were completely overlooked in the wake of a semi-final drubbing against Tipp.

Last season Horgan and Mark Coleman made the cut and this season's trio of recipients were worthy winners too and were all Hurler of the Year candidates going into the latter stages of the championship.

It was hugely disappointing Daniel Kearney missed out though. He was Cork's best and most consistent hurler last summer, where he drifted deep to control the tempo of matches while also rifling over long-range points. His departure through injury against Limerick was the single biggest factor in Cork coughing up their lead and losing in extra time.

Now it's easy to suggest a player should make an All-Star team and harder to say who they would replace. Being involved in the judging panel for Rearden's Club All-Stars makes us appreciate just how tricky it can be to find a balance between individual and collective effort when coming up with a final 15.

In this case, even if it was at the expense of one of the Cork forwards Harnedy or Horgan, Kearney merited inclusion.

On the camogie front, it was more straightforward, given the Leesiders were All-Ireland champions.

Gemma O'Connor landed a remarkable 11th camogie All-Star as Cork dominated the 2018 selections at both senior and intermediate level.



Cork hurlers Patrick Horgan, Séamus Harnedy, and Darragh Fitzgibbon at the PwC All-Stars last Friday night.

Picture: Sam Barnes/Sports

The Rebels captured a double in September, a feat which saw Paudie Murray recognised as the manager of the year for the third time, Saoirse McCarthy chosen as the Intermediate Players' Player of the Year, and 14 All-Stars handed out to Leesiders.

At senior, O'Connor — whose brother Glenn only a week earlier helped St Finbarr's to a first county football victory in 33 years — led the way, while Aoife Murray was honoured for the eighth time in goal and ace free-taker Orla Cotter for the sixth occasion. O'Connor, Murray and Cotter are bonafide Leeside legends at this stage, serial winners who thrive when the stakes are highest.

Twins Pamela and Katrina Mackey from Douglas were both included, along with first-time recipients Hannah Looney and Chloe Sigerson in the half-back line. Laura Treacy and Amy O'Connor were perhaps hard done by,

but Kilkenny were league champions and only lost the All-Ireland by a point so were going to be heavily represented too.

The Cork Soaring Stars winners were goalkeeper Amy Lee, captain Sarah Harrington and Leah Weste in the full-back line, Jennifer Barry at centre-back, Katelyn Hickey in mid-field, and Saoirse McCarthy and Caitriona Collins up front.

Being selected as the top player capped off an incredible season for Courcey Rovers' McCarthy, who also inspired Cork to a minor All-Ireland back in the summer. The 18-year-old has a velvet touch and is a very clean striker of the sliotar and should be a mainstay of Cork camogie for years.

Ballinhassig's Caitriona Collins is the sister of Rebel goalies Patrick and Ger Collins and collected a cup in Croker before her brothers.

The father of Ballincollig's Leah

Weste, Tommy, was a selector for the club's hurlers when they captured the intermediate county and it was terrific to see the family out in force to support Leah. Having seen her coming through the ranks from junior — with the sleeves on her jersey always rolled up Aussie Rules-style — she fully deserved her award.

■ Cork's senior All-Stars: Aoife Murray, Pamela Mackey, Hannah Looney, Chloe Sigerson, Gemma O'Connor, Orla Cotter, Katrina Mackey.

■ Cork's Soaring Stars: Amy Lee, Leah Weste, Sarah Harrington, Jennifer Barry, Katelyn Hickey, Saoirse McCarthy, Caitriona Collins.

■ Manager of the Year: Paudie Murray.

■ Intermediate Players' Player of the Year: Saoirse McCarthy.

■ Hurling All-Stars: Darragh Fitzgibbon, Seamus Harnedy, Patrick Horgan.



Kathleen Woods, Gemma Begley and Deirdre Ashe present Saoirse McCarthy with the Players' Player Of The Year Award.

Picture: INPHO/Tommy Dickson



The Weste family at the camogie All-Stars in Dublin last weekend: Louise, Mary, Leah, Tommy and Colin.

Eire Og are eager to claim Munster crown

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

IT'S a big day tomorrow for Eire Og and Gailtir as they battle it out for the Munster Intermediate championship title in Cashel where there is a 12.30pm throw-in.

It's a first-time appearance for the Cork champions as they chase a Munster title. For the Waterford champions it's a return to the stage they graced in 2016 when they were crowned queens of Munster and went on to lose out to Eglis from Tyrone in the All-Ireland semi-final.

They go through to the final tomorrow straight from winning the Waterford championship as there are just three counties participating in the provincial championship. Eire Og already had to battle it out to overcome the challenge posed by Tipperary champions Cashel.

The Waterford county final was a fantastic game from start to finish as Gailtir edged it with just a point to spare over a De La Salle side that had knocked out the county and Munster champs Lismore at semi-final stage to reach a first final. Player of the Match was Annie Fitzgerald, who scored nine points including six in the second half as she wreaked havoc with the De La Salle defence.

Others to impress included full-forward Aoife Fitzgerald who notched up 1-3. Gailtir made all the early running and led 1-9 to 0-5 but a strong rally saw De La Salle just four points down at the break.

De La Salle kept the pressure on and they were level by the three-quarter stage but Gailtir responded superbly with the next three points to be crowned champions for the second time in three years. They have four Waterford senior players, including All-Star nominee Aine Lyng, Ciara Jackman, Katie Lynch and Annie Fitzgerald.

Now in its ninth year, the Munster Intermediate club championship has seen Waterford clubs dominating. The first winners in 2010 were Lismore and they have been the trend-setters, taking the title on five occasions.

In between Clare side Kilmaley were crowned champions in 2012 with Cahir winning in 2015 and Gailtir on the victory rostrum in 2016.

Can Eire Og become the first Cork club to bring home the Chorn Thomas MhicDhonnacha?

Well they had a superb victory over Tipperary champions Cashel they have excellent players in Isobel Sheehan, Margaret O'Herlihy, Grace Collins, Emma Quigley, Maeve Ellen Desmond, Marie Gleeson. Cork intermediate Siobhan Hutchinson and Evening Echo Player of the Match in the county final Emma Crowley.

They are slight underdogs but won't be found wanting.

LOCAL COMPETITIONS

Ballygarvan and Newcestown will have to do it all again after they finished level in the SE Systems Minor A championship final.

Newcestown led 0-4 to 0-3 at the interval and a goal midway through the second half helped them stretch their lead.



Cork senior camogie star Leanne O'Sullivan with U12 players Grace Ring, Sarah Murphy and Jade Noonan from her club Glen Rovers as the O'Duffy Cup paid a visit.



President of the Camogie Association Kathleen Woods and Deirdre Ashe of Liberty Insurance present Cork's Aoife Murray with her All-Star. Picture: INPHO/Tommy Dickson

points without reply to see it finish 1-4 to 0-7, the replay goes ahead tomorrow in Castle Road at 2pm, with the SE Systems Minor C final as a curtain raiser at 11.30am where Kilbrittain/Timoleague met Sliabh Rua.

The juvenile board continue their league and championship competitions and last weekend Castlemartyr booked their place in the U16 B Championship final with a win over Na Piarsaigh. In the U14B league semi-final Glen Rovers advanced to the final after they defeated Ballinascairthy. They now await the winners

of the Fr O'Neill's versus Aghada semi-final after the latter defeated Blackrock.

In the U16 C championship Ballinhassig had four points to spare over Nemo while in the U16 B grade Courcy Rovers edged out Douglas with two points to spare. Middleton made it to the U14 C league final with a win over Ballinhassig.

The Seandún board have a busy day today with three U13 finals down for decision. They start in Castle Road with the U13 Shield final where Douglas meet St Vincent's at 10am.

This is followed at 11.30am by the U13B final at Douglas 1 play Bishopstown and the U13 A final between Blackrock and Glen Rovers is down for decision at 3pm.

Last weekend they completed their development league competition as they held the U12 A final where Glen Rovers overcame St Vincent's 2-1 to 1-0 to retain the title.

KERRY CAMOGIE:

Kerry camogie received another huge boost last weekend when Clanmaurice retained their AIB Munster

“Despite trailing by two points after 10 minutes Clanmaurice who contested last year's All-Ireland Junior Club final never panicked and digging deep they were two points ahead at the break.”

Junior Club Champions title with three-point victory over Crecora from Limerick.

Despite trailing by two points after 10 minutes Clanmaurice who contested last year's All-Ireland Junior Club final never panicked and digging deep they were two points ahead at the break.

A determined start to the second half ensured the title returned back to Clanmaurice as they held off a determined Crecora challenge in the closing stages to run out winners with three points to spare 1-11 to 1-3.

Inniscarra primed to lift Munster crown

CAMOGIE

■ Linda Mellerick

Munster club final:
Inniscarra v Inagh Kilnamona,
Páirc Sean Ó Laochda, Cashel,
tomorrow at 2.30pm.

A rivalry has built up between Cork's Inniscarra and Clare's Inagh Kilnamona over the past few years.

They renew it tomorrow in Cashel to determine who will be crowned kingpins of Munster. In 2016, Inniscarra had only two days upon winning the Cork senior title after a lapse of six years before they took to the field to defeat Inagh/Kilnamona in the semi-final, but succumbed to a strong Tipperary Burgess team in the final.

Inagh/Kilnamona gained revenge 12 months ago in a game which came less than 24 hours after Inniscarra had won back-to-back titles and having played four championship games in eight days.

However, Burgess Duharra again took the Munster title.

Now, with Inagh having defeated Burgess in this year's semi, it's down to the runners-up of the past two years.

Like Inniscarra, Inagh won their third county title in a row recently, by virtue of a single point victory over Newmarket.

Both sides have been knocking on the door and, with three local championships secured, there is a real hunger to go beyond and challenge for Munster and All-Ireland honours.

Helped by a fortunate goal two minutes before half time, Inagh took a two-point lead to the break, 1-4 to 0-5, in their county final. Having played with the aid of the breeze in the first half, a two-point advantage didn't look enough.

Eleven minutes into the second half, Newmarket had drawn level, but within a minute of Aine O'Brien firing over the equalising point, the title holders struck for their second goal. Sinead O'Loughlin finding the net. Inagh led by five points in the dying minutes, but 1-1 — the goal coming in injury time from Newmarket — left a point between them at the finish.

Fiona Lafferty and Aoife Keane are Clare senior inter-county players, the latter named player of the match in that win, from midfield. Siobhan Lafferty is another key name for the Clare side.

Confidence will be high in Inagh after dethroning the Munster champions but Inniscarra will feel this is the first year in three that they are properly prepared for their Munster onslaught.

The game is a double-header with the curtain raiser seeing Cork's Eire Óg take on Gailltúr of Waterford in the intermediate Munster final. The venue was chosen to honour Joan Hayden of Cashel camogie club, former treasurer of Munster Camogie, who passed away recently.

Worthy winners in All-Star lineup



Camogie

Linda Mellerick

RIGHTLY so, Cork dominated the 2018 Camogie All-Stars team last weekend taking seven places on this year's selection All-Ireland runners-up Kilkenny received five awards, with semi-finalists Galway and Tipperary receiving one award each and Waterford completing the line-up with number fifteen.

Paudie Murray received back-to-back Manager of the Year awards after guiding Cork to both the senior and intermediate titles last September. A record third reward for him.

It's wonderful for those winning awards for the first time. Hannah Looney found herself in unfamiliar territory this year when Paudie decided to try her facing the ball. With a good hand, great strength and pace it was a wise move and Hannah must be thrilled that it resulted in her taking an All-Star award at right half back.

I'm thrilled to see Chloe Sigerson win one.

What a player she has developed into since her minor days. Her leadership qualities and confidence to strike points from defence and assume the responsibility for long-range free taking have blossomed.

No surprise, Gemma won her record 11th award and sits top of the All-Stars roll of honour. The ever-dependable Pamela Mackey thoroughly deserved her fourth award. Aoife was a certainty, wasn't she?

I don't think you can argue with that defensive selection. I was hoping Laura Treacy might get one, but Galway's Sarah Dervan is a hard one to be up against and you would expect semi-finalists to grab at least one statue. Player of the final Orla Cotter took her sixth award at midfield.

I'm a big fan of Grace Walsh. I was a big fan of her brother Tommy too and there can be no denying her a first All-Stars Award at right corner-back. Anne Dalton claimed a sixth medal at centre-back and also picked up the Camogie Association/WGPA Senior Players' Player of the Year. Meighan Farrell in midfield with Katie Power and Denise Gaule in the half-forward line were the other Kilkenny recipients.

The 2018 All-Stars team was completed with Tipperary forward Cailt Devane, rewarded with her first All-Stars Award for her performances as the championship's top scorer in their run to the All-Ireland semi-final, by being selected at full-forward while Waterford star Beth Carton is recognised at left corner-forward as Waterford reached the knockout stages of the senior championship for the first time.

It's great for Beth Carton, acknowledging the tremendous player she is. It's far harder for a player from a weaker county to shine against stronger opposition, the chances don't come your ways as often, yet Beth has done it time and again and it's well deserved.

Courcey Rovers' Saoirse McCarthy was the recipient of the Intermediate Players' Player of the Year while Dublin's Caragh Dawson was chosen as the



President of the Camogie Association, Kathleen Woods and John Coffey of Liberty Insurance with all of the 2018 Soaring Stars All-Stars winners. Picture: INPHO/Tommy Dickson



President of the Camogie Association Kathleen Woods and Deirdre Ashe of Liberty Insurance present Cork's Chloe Sigerson with her first All-Star. Picture: INPHO/Tommy Dickson

Junior Players' Player of the Year. If I'm not mistaken, the last Cork player to receive three All-Ireland inter-county medals in one season was Glen Rovers' Clare McCarthy back in the early 80s.

Cork had double the reason to celebrate again as our Intermediate All-Ireland champions also led the Soaring Stars Awards. We took seven positions. Goalkeeper Amy Lee, captain Sarah Harrington and Leah Weste in the full-back line, Jennifer Barry at centre-back, Katelyn Hickey in midfield, Saoirse McCarthy at left half-forward and Catriona Collins at left corner-forward. 14 All Stars in total plus Manager of the year.

Not a bad night at all!

2018 All-Stars team sponsored by Liberty Insurance:

Goalkeeper: Aoife Murray (Cork) - 8th Time Winner.

Right Corner-Back: Grace Walsh (Kilkenny) - 1st Time Winner.

Full-Back: Sarah Dervan (Galway) - 5th Time Winner.

Left Corner-Back: Pamela Mackey (Cork) - 4th Time Winner.

Right Half-Back: Hannah Looney (Cork) - 1st Time Winner.

Centre Half-Back: Anne Dalton (Kilkenny) - 6th Time Winner.

Left Half-Back: Chloe Sigerson (Cork) - 1st Time Winner (Won Intermediate Soaring Stars Award in 2016).

Midfield: Gemma O'Connor (Cork) - 11th Time Winner.

Midfield: Meighan Farrell (Kilkenny) - 3rd Time Winner.

Right Half-Forward: Orla Cotter (Cork) - 6th Time Winner.

Centre Half-Forward: Katie Power (Kilkenny) - 4th Time Winner.

Left Half-Forward: Denise Gaule (Kilkenny) - 2nd Time Winner.

Right Corner-Forward: Katrina Mackey (Cork) - 5th Time Winner.

Full-Forward: Cailt Devane (Tipperary) - 1st Time Winner.

Left Corner-Forward: Beth Carton (Waterford) - 1st Time Winner (Won Intermediate Soaring Stars Award in 2015).

2018 Soaring Stars sponsored by Liberty Insurance:

Goalkeeper: Amy Lee (Cork) - Intermediate - 1st Time Winner.

"I'm thrilled to see Chloe Sigerson win one. What a player she has developed into since minor."

Right Corner-Back: Leah Weste (Cork) - Intermediate - 1st Time Winner.

Full-Back: Sarah Harrington (Cork) - Intermediate - 2nd Time Winner.

Left Corner-Back: Alannah Savage (Down) - Intermediate - 1st Time Winner.

Right Half-Back: Fionnuala Carr (Down) - Intermediate - 4th Time Winner.

Centre Half-Back: Jennifer Barry (Cork) - Intermediate - 1st Time Winner.

Left Half-Back: Deirdre Johnstone (Dublin) - Junior - 2nd Time Winner.

Midfield: Katelyn Hickey (Cork) - Intermediate - Time Winner.

Midfield: Paula Gribben (Down) - Intermediate - 1st Time Winner.

Right Half-Forward: Caragh Dawson (Dublin) - Junior - 1st Time Winner.

Centre Half-Forward: Jenny Grace (Tipperary) - Intermediate - 1st Time Winner.

Left Half-Forward: Saoirse McCarthy (Cork) - Intermediate - 1st Time Winner.

Right Corner-Forward: Niamh Mallon (Down) - Intermediate - 4th Time Winner.

Full-Forward: Sara-Louise Carr (Down) - Intermediate - 2nd Time Winner.

Left Corner-Forward: Catriona Collins (Cork) - Intermediate - 1st Time Winner.

2018 Manager of the Year: Paudie Murray - 3rd Time Winner.

Camogie stars feted Down Under

ALL-STARS

■ John Bohane

CORK camogie players Clair O'Sullivan and Louise Holland were recently recognised for their camogie prowess when they both received All-Star awards in Australia.

The ace duo were honoured for a series of great displays for their club and state teams this season.

They both received Australasian All-Stars awards.

Clair, who hails from Newcestown was thrilled with her accolade.

"It was such a great achievement.

"I've played in the State Games in previous years for both football and camogie and never received one so it was a great honour to be picked.

"It is a nice honour," revealed the star camogie player.

Clair, who is based in Melbourne, plays her club camogie with Sinn Féin GAC.

The defensive ace played a huge role in their league and championship success this season.

She was thrilled to play her part in their successful season.

"We won both the league and championship this year.

"The standard of camogie is great and getting stronger every year. The number of girls playing here in Victoria are increasing every year.

"I was playing as a corner/wing back over the season.

"We finished our season in July with a championship win over Shamrocks.

The season will start back again in January in preparation for the Melbourne sevens in February."

The GAA enthusiast is loving life in Australia.

Joining a GAA club in Melbourne opened many doors for her and it also enabled her to make contacts and friends with other camogie enthusiasts as she revealed.

"Sinn Féin GAC are a great club to play for. We celebrated our 65th year this year and it was great to reconnect with older members. It's probably the best way to meet people, you'll be added into a WhatsApp group of about 70 girls who are all or have been in the same position as you.

"It is great to get some contacts and tips from people who have been here for a number of years.

"I've been living in Australia eight years now. I am enjoying it as I've been here so long. I am very lucky that I got a chance to move here and make friends for life."

Cork camogie was well represented in the Australasian All-Star awards.

Jen Hosford, Karen Jones and Louise Holland also received All-Star awards following great seasons with their Australian clubs respectively.

Clair is thrilled for her fellow Cork camogie players.

"I am thrilled for the rest of the girls who got All-Star awards.

"They are a great bunch of girls. They have such heart and determination, it was great to see.

"I only knew Louise Holland before I moved over to Australia, as we played football together with St Val's. I got to know Karen and Jen through camogie."

Attention for Clair now turns to getting married. She is planning on taking a year off from playing camogie,



Former Newcestown player Clair O'Sullivan who won an All-Star award in Australia following a series of great displays for both Sinn Féin and the Victoria State team. She is pictured here on the far right with the other three Cork camogie All-Star winners in Australia. Left to right: Karen Jones, Inniscarra; Jen Hosford, Glen Rovers; Louise Holland, Cloughduv; and Clair O'Mahony, Newcestown.



Louise Holland with her parents and nephew at Croke Park after winning the World Games for Australia.

but will still help Sinn Féin GAC in off-field matters.

"I've really enjoyed playing camogie. I have learnt so much from playing with different girls from all over the country, they all have a unique style of playing.

"For now, however, I am hanging up my boots as I am getting married next year and bruise like a peach so it will be safer if I take the year out.

"I will stay involved in the club as it is nice to help out behind the scenes."

Former Cloughduv player Louise Holland was also delighted to conclude the season with an All-Star award.

"It was a great achievement. I was very shocked.

"It is a team effort and we were playing with a great bunch of girls on the Victoria State team.

"We played against both New South Wales and Queensland. The 20 All-Stars are made up of a combination of

the three state teams. From that list of players, 14 players will then get a chance to be picked for the Australia team at the World Games which will be held in Ireland next year."

The Cork camogie ace has already represented the Australia camogie team at the World Games.

She has great memories of playing in Croke Park.

"I finally had my dream come true of playing in Croke Park. We won the whole tournament, playing teams from Dubai, New York and London.

"It was a great experience."

Louise still keeps abreast of all the camogie action back at home.

She was thrilled to see her former team-mate Aoife Murray captain the Cork senior team to All-Ireland glory.

"I still keep a close eye on all the action at home. It was great seeing Cork win another All-Ireland title."

"I was delighted to see my fellow

“It is great to get some contacts and tips from people who have been here for a number of years

club mates Briege Corkery coming back playing this season once again and Aoife Murray was brilliant as captain.

"They have enjoyed great club and county careers. They are fantastic players and role models."

Louise, who played underage football with Cork, has great memories of playing with her beloved Cloughduv club.

"I started playing for Cloughduv at the age of six. I was an average player who blossomed with age.

"Having players like the Corke family, the Dunleas, Joanne O'Callaghan and Una O'Donoghue was fantastic to play alongside.

"They were all great players. I won a few county titles in the early 2000s before I moved away from Ireland.

"Those were great days with great club."

Inniscarra queens of Munster again



CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick

Inniscarra 2-9
Inagh Kilnamona 0-7

INNISCARRA became Munster champions for the second time in their club's history after an impressive second half performance in Cashel.

Just as they did in their semi-final win, yesterday they withstood the first half pressure, wore Inagh Kilnamona down and proceeded to run at their opponents in the second.

Added to that was the once again unerring accuracy of Niamh Dilworth from placed balls, as midway through the second half Inniscarra looked to be getting stronger and stronger with Inagh struggling to keep up.

In mucky and heavy underfoot conditions referee John Lillis let rucks play out and attempted to keep the game flowing in the opening 30 minutes, but an excess of side-line balls lent itself to a stop-start half.

Inagh had an off day in front of goal, Amy Keating missing two soft frees, with a cumulative eight wides in total registered by half time. But you must give credit to Inniscarra who forced strikes under pressure. Their full-back line of Aine O'Regan, Caitlin Looney and Rebecca Quigley were brilliant, like little Jack Russell's snapping at the heels, their opponents desperate to get away but not having any success.

Whenever Inniscarra attacked they had the measure of the Inagh defence. With their first attack on three minutes, Niamh Dilworth had the ball in the net after an offload from Niamh McCarthy. Attacks were sparse, but Dilworth had Inniscarra ahead 1-1 to 0-1 on 13 minutes with a lovely overhead strike, again McCarthy's involvement crucial.

It was a low scoring opening half with Inniscarra leading 1-2 to 0-3 at the break, but excitement grew tenfold once the ball was thrown in for that second thirty. With the end whistle in sight, both sides lifted the tempo. Inagh Kilnamona burst into attack but again the defending by Inniscarra's entire back six was exemplary.



Inniscarra celebrate winning the Munster senior club camogie final in Cashel.

Picture: John D Kelly

Niamh Dilworth and a beauty of a point from Katie O'Mahony pushed Inniscarra four ahead. The move of the game came on 37 minutes. It started with Rena Buckley in defence. Not an Inagh player touched the ball as Inniscarra worked it up the field with super sub Claudia Keane finishing to the net.

Aileen Sheehan made surging runs from centre field, Niamh McCarthy was brilliantly hard working on the forty as Inniscarra pulled further away. Three frees from the stick of Dilworth and Inniscarra were home and dry, emptying their bench minutes before the final whistle.

Scorers for Inniscarra: N Dilworth 1-6 (0-5 f), C Keane 1-1, K O'Mahony, N McCarthy 0-1 each.

Inagh Kilnamona: A Keating 0-5 (0-4 f, 0-1 45), L Ryan, A Keane 0-1 each.

INNISCARRA: S Walsh; A O'Regan, C Looney, R Quigley; R O'Mahony, R Buckley, R Keane; E Looney, K O'Mahony; T McCarthy, N Dilworth, A Sheehan; J Burke, N McCarthy, E Murphy.

Subs: C Keane for J Burke (h-t), L Hayes for R Keane (50), M Buckley for R Quigley (60), D O'Callaghan for A O'Regan (60), A O'Connor for E Murphy (60).

INAGH KILNAMONA: R Keating; J Fitzgerald, S Quinn, S Power; T O'Keefe, C Hehir, O Cotter; L Ryan, A O'Keefe; F Lafferty, S O'Loughlin, A Keane; A Ryan, A Keating, C Connors.

Referee: John Lillis (Tipperary).



Inagh Kilnamona's Teresa O'Keefe tackles Inniscarra's Katie O'Mahony during the Munster final yesterday in Cashel.

Picture: John D Kelly

Éire Óg fall well short in Munster intermediate joust

Gailtír 2-10
Éire Óg 0-6

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

WATERFORD champions Gailtír proved a bridge too far for Cork champions Éire Óg as they took the AIB Munster Intermediate championship title in Cashel yesterday.

Gailtír dominated the opening 30 minutes and they turned around in a comfortable position leading 1-7 to 0-2. A goal from Aoife Fitzgerald after 22 minutes helped extend their lead to seven points when she collected a long range Aoife Lyng free and sent it to the net.

Éire Óg opened the scoring with a point from Maeve Ellen Desmond to which Aine Lyng quickly replied to level matters. With their defence under a lot of pressure Éire Óg fell behind with the Fitzgeralds, Aoife and Annie, leading the way for Gailtír

they took the lead.

Aoife fired over a point and with Annie hitting three in-a-row one from a free it was 0-5 to 0-1 as Éire Óg battled hard against the strong Gailtír defence for a response. With eight minutes to the break the lead was increased thanks to Aoife Fitzgerald's goal and with Aine Lyng adding a point the Waterford champions extended their lead.

Margaret O'Herlihy pointed a free to keep them in touch but Clodagh Carroll with a point ensured Gailtír went to the dressing room leading by eight.

Gailtír got the perfect start to the second half with an Annie Fitzgerald goal after eight minutes. The Cork side responded with O'Herlihy's free and 45 but again Gailtír replied with a Shauna Fitzgerald point

and through the second half they kept the pressure on the Éire Óg defence as they held their lead.

Annie Fitzgerald and O'Herlihy traded frees and with Aine Lyng pointing from play Gailtír led 2-10 to 0-5 with five minutes remaining.

And with their defence holding firm, there was no way back for Éire Óg.

Scorers for Gailtír: Annie Fitzgerald 1-5 (0-2 f), Aoife Fitzgerald 1-1, A Lyng 0-2, C Carroll, S Fitzgerald 0-1 each.

Éire Óg: M O'Herlihy 0-5 (0-4 f, 0-1 45), ME Desmond 0-1.

GAILTÍR: C Jackman; E Mahony, M Heffernan, C Dunne (c); L Sheridan, E Roche, H Flynn; K Lynch, S Fitzgerald; A Lyng, C O'Sullivan, Annie Fitzgerald, E Walsh, Aoife Fitzgerald, C Carroll.

Subs: A Corcoran for Aoife Fitzgerald, E Flynn for E Mahony, R Flood for E Walsh, H Hutchinson for C Carroll, E Cullinane for H Flynn.

ÉIRE ÓG: R Murray; K McCarthy, A Hennessey, K Murphy, E Quigley, S Hutchinson (c), M Gleeson; A Barry, I Sheehan; E Crowley, M O'Herlihy, M E Desmond; G Collins, A O'Callaghan, G Murphy.

Subs: A Buckley for K McCarthy, N Twomey for E Crowley.

Referee: Kevin O'Brien (Limerick).

Inniscarra's blend of youth and experience works well

Munster Senior Club Camogie final

Inniscarra (Cork)	2-9
Inagh-Kilnamona (Clare)	0-7

Liam Hogan
Cashel

A splendid performance in the second half helped Inniscarra win their second Munster Senior Club camogie title and first in eight years when they overcame a dogged Inagh Kilnamona outfit in a hard fought encounter played at a miserable Leahy Park, Cashel yesterday afternoon.

Intermittent spells of rain threatened to spoil the day but the Cork champions (winners of three in a row at home) played no heed to the weather as they used the experience of Rena Buckley, Aileen Sheehan, Kate O'Mahony, Niamh Dilworth, Niamh McCarthy wisely.

They had youth on their side too with 16-year-old Claudia Keane scoring 1-1 in the second half after she replaced Ellen Murphy at half-time when Inniscarra led 1-2 to 0-3.

Keane scored her goal in the 38th minute when she caught a long ball from player of the match Aileen Sheehan before firing a rasper from close in to make it 2-4 to 0-3.

Inagh, who knocked out the holders Burgess in the semi-final, hit back with three frees to come within four of the leaders but eight first-half wides proved to be their downfall and the winners upped their game in the last quarter as Katie O'Mahony, Niamh Dilworth and Niamh McCarthy combined to share five all important points to see the champions over the line for a deserved victory.

Winning manager Kevin



Inniscarra celebrate after beating Inagh-Kilnamona to win the Munster Senior Club Camogie final in Cashel yesterday.

Picture: John D Kelly

Murphy knew what to expect from Inagh Kilnamona, who beat his side in the semi-final last year.

"Inagh Kilnamona put it up to us in the first half and we had to dig in as our backs had to work very hard. In the second half it was our midfielders and our forwards who upped the game for us," he said.

He used his bench well. "Claudia Keane has been a burst of energy every time she has come on. She is still only 16 so we are conscious of that," added Murphy.

Soft conditions and driving rain at times curbed skilful hurling but not the determination of both sides. Inagh Kilnamona were the better team in that opening half where Teresa O'Keeffe, Clare Hehir, Aoife Keane, Fiona Lafferty and Amy Keating led the way.

The experienced Niamh Dilworth got the game's opening goal after just three minutes.

Amy Keating replied with a 45 in the tenth before Dilworth added a free four minutes later.

Inagh full-forward Amy Keating was a threat to the Cork champions and had a right good battle with Inniscarra full back Caitlin Looney. Keating's free after 21 left two between the teams but eight wides would leave the Clare Champions struggling for air.

Another Dilworth free moved Inniscarra a goal in front after 22 minutes. One minute later Laoise Ryan scored a point when a goal was a possibility following a good move led by Teresa O'Keeffe and Aoibhinn Ryan.

Inagh lost full back Sinead Quinn through injury at half-time but Inniscarra had the advantage of the stiff diagonal breeze in the second half and didn't waste much time in setting about their business as Niamh Dilworth (free) and

Katie O'Mahony had the Cork champions four in front after 35 minutes.

Claudia Keane may have had a point disallowed a few minutes earlier but her goal in the 38th minute put Inniscarra seven in front. However a resilient Inagh Kilnamona refused to go away and by the 47th minute they were within four thanks to Keating's accuracy from frees.

A great score by Niamh McCarthy plus another Keane point left the new champions two goals in front with nine on the clock. Inagh continued to fight back and it was end to end, the only difference was Dilworth's free-taking as Inniscarra ran out eight-point winners.

Inagh Kilnamona manager Margaret Lafferty agreed losing full back Sinead Quinn was a loss. "The first 15 minutes we practically owned the ball but we had eight wides in

the first half. Unfortunately we lost our full-back Sinead Quinn through injury at half time. We played much better in the second half but Inniscarra just upped their game," said Margaret.

Scorers for Inniscarra: N Dilworth (1-7, 5 frees; C Keane 1-1; N McCarthy and K O'Mahoney 0-1 each).

Scorers for Inagh Kilnamona: A Keating (0-5, 4 frees, 1 45); L Ryan and T O'Keeffe (0-1 each).

INNISCARRA: Sheila Walsh; Aine O'Regan, Caitlin Looney, Rebecca Quigley, Rosie O'Mahony, Rena Buckley, Rebecca Keane; Aileen Sheehan, Katie O'Mahony; Treasa McCarthy (Capt), Niamh Dilworth (vc), Erin Looney; Jenny Burke, Niamh McCarthy, Ellen Murphy. **Subs:** C Keane for Burke (h/t); A O'Connor for Murphy (56).

INAGH KILNAMONA: Rebecca Keating; Jane Fitzgerald, Sinead Quinn, Sinead Power; Treasa O'Keeffe, Clare Hehir (capt), Orlaith Cotter; Aoife Keane, Andrea O'Keeffe, Fiona Lafferty, Sinead O'Loughlin, Laoise Ryan; Aoibhinn Ryan, Amy Keating, Claire Commans. **Subs:** Laura Rynne for Cotter (h/t); Chloe Fuddy for Quinn (h/t in).

Referee: John Uillis, Tipperary.

Gaultier ease to second provincial title on spin

AIB Munster Junior Club Camogie final

Gaultier (Waterford)	2-10
Éire Óg (Cork)	0-6

Liam Hogan

Waterford champions Gaultier claimed their second Munster Junior Club camogie title in a row when they defeated Éire Óg at Cashel yesterday.

It was a perfect day for the three Fitzgerald cousins, Shauna, Annie and Aoife who combined to score 1-6 of Gaultier's total.

Leah Sheridan, Emma Roche and Hannah Flynn were excellent at half-back while Aine Lyng was the player of the match. Aine Lyng, Shauna Fitzgerald and Aoife Fitzgerald have county experience on their CVs.

Aileen Hennessey and Siobhan Hutchinson were best at the heart of the Éire Óg defence. Hutchinson's experience as a county player was a help. Sixteen-year old Isobel Sheehan did well at midfield while Margaret O'Herlihy led with five points from placed balls. Maedbh Ellen Desmond had her moments also.

Gaultier could afford the luxury of seven first-half wides and yet led 1-7 to 0-2 at half-time. Aoife Fitzgerald's goal in the 27th minute gave the Waterford champions the breathing space needed to remain in charge.

Any hopes of an Éire Óg comeback in the second half were put on the back-burner as eight minutes in a second Gaultier goal by Aine Fitzgerald put the game beyond doubt.

"It's a fantastic win. In the first-half the girls were finding each other very well. The breeze was a factor down at that far off corner and while we had to face it in the second half, we drove on," said Orla Murphy, Gaultier selector.

Her team now hope to go one better in next year's All-Ireland semi-final.

"We were beaten in the All-Ireland semi-final by the narrowest of margins. This is our third year in putting a team together and we have 13 minors coming up. The juvenile work done is starting to show," said Orla.

Scorers for Gaultier: A Fitzgerald (1-4, 0-2 f); A Fitzgerald (1-1); A Lyng (0-3); C Carroll and S Fitzgerald (0-1 each).

Éire Óg: M O'Herlihy (0-5, 0-4 f, 0-1 45); M Desmond (0-1).

GAULTIER: Clara Jackman; E Mahony, M Hennessey, C Dunne (capt); L Sheridan, E Roche, H Flynn; K Lynch, S Fitzgerald; A Lyng, C O'Sullivan, Annie Fitzgerald; E Walsh, Aoife Fitzgerald, C Carroll.

Subs: A Corcoran for Aoife Fitzgerald (54); R Flood for Mahony (59); E Flynn for Walsh (59); H Hutchinson for Carroll (62); E Cullane for Flynn (62).

ÉIRE ÓG: R Murray; K McCarthy, A Hennessey, R Murphy; E Quigley, S Hutchinson, M Gleeson; A Barry, Isobel Sheehan; E Crowley, M O'Herlihy, M Desmond; G Collins, A O'Callaghan, G Murphy.

Subs: A Buckley for K McCarthy (45); Orlaith Meaney for Crowley (45); N Twomey for G Collins (45); C Sheehan for Murphy (54).

Referee: Kevin O'Brien (Limerick).



Rising Cork star and 2017 minor Hurler of the Year Brian Turnbull with Cork senior camogie player and recent All-Star Chloe Sigerson and Martin Walsh of co-sponsor Greenstar at yesterday's scholarship announcements at UCC. Sixty-five students have been awarded Greenstar Scholarships. Picture: Michael Mac Sweeney/Provision

Nov. 2018



Loreto Secondary School, Fermoy who recently won their second All-Ireland camogie title with their coach, Michelle Gould, mentor Edwin Magner and TY student

LORETO FERMOY were crowned All-Ireland 7s U14 ½ camogie champions recently.

In a very tough final, they beat St Pat's from Armagh to set off scenes of wild celebrations among the players and supporters.

Ashbourne was the venue for the All-Ireland 7s event and a big crowd travelled up from the school, including Transition Year students.

"Players had an early start, leaving at 6:30am from Fermoy," coach Michelle Gould said. "Our first game was played against Woodford from Connaught.

"This was a very dramatic game as with time up and three points down, our captain Lucy McNulty won a free and drove it to the back of the net which kept our hopes alive.

"After a short break, we then played St Pat's of Armagh and won.

"This win proved vital as it secured a place for us in the All-Ireland final.

"St Pat's played Woodford needing to win it and it was a close game which saw St Pat's reach the final which meant both teams were familiar with one another heading into the final."

In that final, St Pat's started the better, but Loreto soon got a grip on the game.

"We were two points behind, but with excellent displays of skill from sisters Ava and Leah Hallihan, and goals from Chloe Draper at crucial times.

"Cliona Dunning, Avril Beirne and Emma Doyle were all standing solid in defence, it was only a matter of minutes before we took control and led.

"Goals from St Pat's meant it was a drawn game with minutes remaining.

"We had a goal disallowed and St Pat's capitalised once again putting them ahead by one goal.

"Ava Hallihan quickly responded and hand-passed the sliotar to the back of the net for us to see our team lead again.

"St Pat's keeper gave a quick

Loreto earn All-Ireland 7s crown

CAMOGIE

■ Michelle Gould

puck-out but was beaten to the ball by Avril Beirne, whose magnificent, fast pass down the line found Chloe Draper in space and she managed to turn, run at goal and confirm the win for Loreto with an unstoppable shot to the back of the St Pat's net.

"All our players were class," Loreto coach Michelle Gould paid tribute to the local clubs who are producing some fine players for the school teams after the final win.

"This was a hard-fought All-Ireland win, but then again, nothing is easy at this level.

"I'm delighted for the girls, they played their hearts out and were not going to let this title slip by.

"It was great to win this.

"We are indebted to the local GAA clubs who are doing great



Loreto captain Lucy McNulty of the All-Ireland winning camogie 7s team receives the All-Ireland trophy after their win

work with their own players and we are getting the benefit of that training when they come to play for the school team.

"That training is making a huge

difference to us and we thank the local clubs for the great work they are doing with the girls, week in, week out."

"But for now it's Loreto abú."



The Kilbrittain/Timoleague camogie team that won the minor C county title on Sunday in Castle Road where they beat Sliabh Rua by 1-5 to 0-6. Back from left, Ella Burke, Katie Murphy, Clara O'Neill, Aine O'Mahony, Kaitlyn Ustanowski, Mary Butler, Hannah Sexton, Orla Fahy, Jess Harrington and Shannon Aherne. Front from left, Maebh Ryan, Clara O'Shea, Aoife Brennan (captain), Katelyn Dineen, Kate O'Neill, Julie Sheehy, Sinead O'Sullivan and Sarah O'Sullivan.

Midleton
made to
work to
claim title

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

Midleton 0-7
Erin's Own 0-6

IT WENT right down to the wire in the U14 C league final in Ballinlough, as Midleton edged it to take the title overcoming Erin's Own by the narrowest of margins.

Despite the heavy underfoot condition, the day was excellent for camogie and it was a battle from start to finish as the sides gave it everything to take the league title.

Ella Collins pointed and Erin's Own free to give them an early lead and adding to her side's tally from frees and play they settled into the game. Midleton battled hard and hung in there as their defence absorbed a lot of Erin's Own pressure, they were on the scoreboard with a Ciara Garde point from play.

Abbie Foley scored one from play and a free to cut the gap and with Twomey and Garde finding the range Midleton edged in front and they led 0-5 to 0-4 at the break.

A closely contested second half saw the sides battle for every ball with huge determination Ella Collins had Erin's Own back on level but again Midleton replied to regain the lead with an Abbie Foley point but again Erin's Own were up to the challenge with Ella Collins replying to again tie the game up.

As play swung from end to end both defences were busy. Grainne Guest in the Erin's Own goal brought off some outstanding saves whilst Emma Daly and Aoibhinn Drummy also impressed.

As both sides pressed for a winner with time almost up, Midleton won a free Abbie Foley duly converted to edge her sides in front and they held out to the final whistle to take the title for the second year in a row.

All credit to both sides as they turned in superb displays with Midleton's Abbie Fitzgerald named Player of the Match.

Scorers for Midleton: A Foley 0-4, C Garde, 0-2, S Twomey 0-1.

Erin's Own: E Collins 0-6.

MIDLETON: J Connaghan; T Buckley, M Tarrant, L Goulding; R Hennessy, Y Abernethy, A Fitzgerald; E O'Sullivan, E Lamb; S Twomey, A Foley, E McManus; H Duggan, C Garde, E Collins.

Sub: L Dineen for H Duggan.

ERIN'S OWN: G Guest; S Casey, M Glavin, F Geasley; E Daly, K Mulcahy, A Corkery, A Corcoran, A Drummy; E Norton, E Collins; H Healy; A Corkery, A O'Neill, S Corry.

Subs: C Ni Laighin for A Corkery, E O'Donnell for S Corry.

■ U16 CHAMPIONSHIP: Today is a busy day in Castle- road with the U16 championship finals taking place. In the U16 C at 10.15am Buttevant meet Millstreet, at 11.45am it's the U16 B final Castlemartyr against Courcy Rovers, the U16 Premier Final at 1.15pm sees Sarsfields taking on Aghabullogue and at 2.45pm the U16 A final is between Aghada and Newcestown.

Board officers doing great work



Camogie

Linda Mellerick

THURSDAY, December 6 is the date for the 2018 Cork Camogie Annual Convention.

Cork Camogie is in a very healthy state and that doesn't come about by chance. All-Ireland Minor, Intermediate and Senior champions for 2018, a magnificent pitch and clubhouse out in Castleroad, a strong club championship at all levels. These are just some of the achievements of a handful of board officers.

I personally am in awe of the countless hours of personal time they spend running Cork Camogie, in what is often a thankless job. I've witnessed the likes of Mary McSweeney, Marian McCarthy, Sheila Golden and Mary Bugler amongst other volunteers spend eight hours plus a day during championship time out in the county's camogie grounds in Castleroad.

How many hours have Kay Dunne and Catherine O'Brien spent running 'the shop' trying to raise funds? And that's outside of the time spent on dealing with the management of Cork teams, Central Council, board meetings, fixtures, rules, motions, fundraising, the completion of the clubhouse, etc.

The relationship between the Cork board and Cork teams is healthy. I remember the days when it wasn't, and it certainly cost Cork All-Ireland titles.

I give a lot of credit for that to Marian McCarthy and her approachable nature. There can be no disputing that all officers are in their roles for the good of Cork Camogie. Does that mean that decisions made will always be the right ones? Does it mean that everybody in the county will be happy with the 'Board' all of the time?

No. But when a decision is made with the best of intentions it should be acknowledged but also learnt from if proved the wrong one.

There was a big improvement this year with club fixtures given weeks in advance of the championship starting so all club players could plan holidays accordingly and the county final was played two weeks in advance of Inniscarra lining out against Ahane in Munster.

The board are often caught between a rock and a hard place. Trying to keep both inter-county managers and clubs happy, is a delicate balance.

Many clubs would be annoyed at the long lay off from games before inter-county fixtures.

They have a point. It is extremely frustrating. It's a problem across all codes in GAA.

The Summer Cup was a good initiative, the chance for club's non-inter-county players to play a summer league. It keeps players interested.

Players want games. The majority of players are with clubs that will never win a county championship but training and playing is what's important for most.

I wear both hats in that I am a keen Cork camogie supporter, wanting Cork to win year after year but equally I've been a club manager where I've



Inniscarra's Niamh Dilworth scoring a second half goal against Ahane in the Munster Club Senior A Camogie Championship semi-final at Ballyanly.

Picture: Denis Minihan



Scoil Padre Pio staff members Mary Browne, Melissa O'Donoghue and Madeline O'Mahony watched their school win a Sciath na Scol double this week.

Picture: Denis Minihan

been annoyed at certain things. But on the grand scale of things, we as a county are doing very well.

I know from years of involvement that there are many clubs where Cork winning All Ireland titles or not doesn't interest them. Their love and ambition are solely for their club. And that's ok too. But the statistics are there that inter-county teams winning results in a greater number of youngsters taking up the sport.

So, clubs are indirectly benefitting whether they can clearly see it or not.

The Cork Camogie Board should be applauded for Cork taking over at the top of the leader table in 2017 when it comes to All Ireland titles. We now hold 28 titles. We must give credit for a job well done.

New Ireland insurance held their annual Hall of Fame Awards in the

Maryborough hotel last Thursday. The 2018 recipients were Nancy O'Driscoll, Clare Cronin and Sheila Dunne Morgan. It's a fabulous afternoon for those in attendance and a great honour and well deserved by those selected.

Clare swept St Aloysius school to All Ireland honours in 1976. She won All-Ireland minor medals in '76 and '77. Clare was honoured with a Levi Youth and a B&I award. She displayed her athletic prowess by winning the Gram Tamte award for skills tests in 1983. Clare won the first of her four All Ireland senior inter-county medals in 1978 and captained Cork in 1981.

Nancy gave every ounce of energy for the team. She would run until she dropped and then get up and go again. An international hockey player, she also excelled at Badminton and cap-

“On the grand scale of things, Cork as a camogie county is doing very well.”

tained Cork to All-Ireland honours at both junior and senior levels.

Captain of the victorious Cork senior team of 1978 she won a second All Ireland title in 1980. One of six camogie playing sisters she won five Cork senior championships with Eire Og.

Holder of four All-Ireland senior medals Sheila Dunne won four All Ireland senior titles in succession in 1973. Sheila from Canovee starred in the final at centre back. Antrim and Corl provided the most exciting and emotional final in years.

Brilliant striking, lightning pace, an abundance of thrills and a rip-roaring finish ranked that game among the best camogie finals ever.

It's players such as Nancy, Clare and Sheila that kick-started Cork's dominance and we have a lot to be grateful for to former players like them.

Minor championships come to a conclusion

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

Ballygarvan 0-5
Newcestown 0-3

A WEEK ago it ended all square and this time it was close again but two second-half frees were enough to just about edge it in Ballygarvan's favour as they retained the SE Systems Minor A Championship crown.

At a wet and windy Castle Road, the pitch was in remarkable condition given that it was the fifth game in 24 hours and huge credit must go to those involved for having it in such great condition at this time of the year. It was hard on both sides though, intermittent heavy downpours making it extremely difficult but fair play to both teams who never left the weather interfere with their performances.

Ballygarvan played with the aid of the strong wind in the opening half and they led at the interval by three points and we wondered if it would be enough as through the opening half Newcestown did make plenty of forages into the Ballygarvan half of the pitch but good defending kept them at bay.

Twice in the opening half Sarah Aherne was forced to make good saves but confident handling ensured she kept a clean sheet and it was important for Ballygarvan.

Cliona O'Leary was impeccable from placed balls and it was to prove crucial. She opened the scoring with a 45 before Sarah Elliffe extended the Ballygarvan lead from play. As Newcestown battled against the elements to get on the scoreboard they also stood strong in defence and contained the Ballygarvan attack to just one score from play.

Before the break O'Leary again pointed a 45 to give Ballygarvan a 0-3 to no score interval lead.

The second half was going to be tough on both sides as the heavens opened during the interval, in the continuous rain it was most definitely a battle for survival.

Newcestown had the wind in their favour for the second half but they still persisted in playing with an extra player in defence.

Maebh O'Donovan had them on the score board 10 minutes into the half from a long-range free and continuing to put the Ballygarvan defence under pressure they searched for scores. By the midway stage it was level pegging with O'Donovan causing the Ballygarvan defence huge problems, landing two points from play.

Orla Dineen in the Newcestown goal denied Ballygarvan with an excellent save but with 12 minutes remaining Newcestown gave away a free in front of the goal and left O'Leary with the simple task of tapping over to restore Ballygarvan's lead.

Again Newcestown swept downfield but the disciplined Ballygarvan defence stood firm and cleared their lines. At the other end O'Leary slotted over another placed ball which put Ballygarvan two ahead with nine minutes remaining.

Newcestown applied pressure in



Kilbrittain/Timoleague, the winners of the SE Systems Minor C Camogie Championship.



The Ballygarvan players and mentors after landing the SE Systems Minor A Camogie Championship recently.

search of a score and they came close just when O'Donovan's distance free just whizzed past the post and wide. Now under a lot of pressure, huge credit must go to the Ballygarvan defence where captain Shannon Wynne, Niamh Lyons and Laidh Murphy did a lot of work as they closed down attack after attack.

Further out the field Molly Kelleher although listed and lining out in the half-forward line was tremendous and used her strength to great effect as she roamed out around the middle and dropped back in front of her defence.

Her performance saw her named as Evening Echo Player of the Match

and helped in no small way to ensure Ballygarvan held their two-point advantage to the full time whistle to make it back to back minor A titles.

Scorers for Ballygarvan: C O'Leary 0-4 (0-2 45, 0-2 ff), S Elliffe 0-1.

Newcestown: M O'Donovan 0-3 (0-1 ff).

BALLYGARVAN: S Aherne, L Murphy, S Lyons, N Lyons, E Murphy, S Wynne (c), S J Brady, E O'Regan, K Dorney, C O'Leary, R Crowley Kelleher, I Lyons, A Finnegan, S Elliffe.

NEWCESTOWN: O Dineen, A Buckley, A O'Sullivan, G Ryan, S Kelleher, A O'Donovan, E Tarrant, C O'Sullivan, L Whelan, L Jennings, M O'Donovan, A Sheehan, A Tarrant, A O'Sullivan, L O'Callaghan.

Sub: C Wilson for A Tarrant (48).

Referee: Cathal McAllister (Aghada).

Kilbrittain/ Timoleague 1-5

Sliabh Rua 0-6:

Kilbrittain/Timoleague took the SE Systems Minor C championship title in a hard fought contest where a Maebh Ryan goal proved vital in the finish.

Kilbrittain/Timoleague led 0-5 to 0-1 at the interval with Katelyn Dineen, Sarah O'Sullivan and Julie Sheehy on target as Michelle Fitzpatrick had one for Sliabh Rua. Kilbrittain/Timoleague extended their lead early in the second half with a goal but a strong second half Sliabh Rua rally saw them add to their tally with points from Helena Hayes, Michelle Fitzpatrick and Katie Daly.

Orla Fahey, Kilbrittain/Timo-

“Cliona O'Leary was impeccable from placed balls and it was to prove crucial.”

league, was the recipient of the Evening Echo Player of the Match following an outstanding display.

Scores for Kilbrittain/Timoleague: K Dineen 0-3 (0-2 ff), M Ryan 1-0, S O'Sullivan, J Sheehy 0-1 each.

Sliabh Rua: M Fitzpatrick 0-4, H Hayes K Daly 0-1 each.

KILBRITTAIN/TIMOLEAGUE: A Brennan, K Ustainowski, S O'Sullivan, K Murphy, C O'Neill, H Sexton, K O'Neill, O Fahey, C O'Shea, J Sheehy, K Dineen, M Ryan, J Harrington, Sarah O'Sullivan, S Aherne.

Sub: M Butler for K O'Neill (in).

SLIABH RUA: J Corkery, E Egan, U O'Donovan, A Price, L Kelleher, K Daly, A Murphy, O Cummins, A Coyle, A Egan, C Bernard, E O'Callaghan, A Hartnett, M Fitzpatrick, S Butler.

Sub: H Hayes for A Egan.

Slick Gailltír too strong for Éire Óg in Munster decider

ÉIRE ÓG 0-6
GAILLTÍR 2-10

BY SHIRLEY MOLONEY

A SLICK Gailltír of Waterford cruised to Munster glory when they disposed of a courageous Éire Óg in the Munster intermediate camogie final at Cashel on Sunday.

Despite opening the scoring via Meadhbh Ellen Desmond, Éire Óg found themselves grappling with an in-form Gailltír attack where Annie Fitzgerald, Aoife Fitzgerald and player of the match Aine Lyng proved formidable, notching up 2-6 from play between them.

After 21 minutes, they winners led by four. That was stretched to seven when Aoife Fitzgerald goaled.

Éire Óg were battling hard in defence where Aileen Hennessey and Siobhan Hutchinson were to the fore and after Gailltír went eight clear, Margaret O'Herlihy pulled one back for the Cork champions. At the break, Gailltír led by 1-7 to 0-2.

Gailltír extinguished any hopes of an Éire Óg resurgence when Annie Fitzgerald blasted to the net seven minutes after the restart.

Two O'Herlihy placed balls cut the deficit to nine, however a brace from Shauna Fitzgerald and Annie Fitzgerald restored an 11-point advantage for the Waterford champions.

Two further O'Herlihy placed balls either side of a Lyng point in the closing minutes of the game saw Éire Óg trail by ten. Despite the best efforts of Éire Óg, it was a superior Gailltír side that took the Munster intermediate title for the second year in a row.

Scorers

Éire Óg: M O'Herlihy 0-5 (4f, 145), ME Desmond 0-1.

Gailltír: Annie Fitzgerald 1-4 (2f), Aoife Fitzgerald 1-1, A Lyng 0-3, S Fitzgerald, C Carroll 0-1.

Éire Óg: R Murray; K McCarthy, A Hennessey, F Murphy; E Quigley, S Hutchinson (c), M Gleeson; A Barry, J Sheehan; E Crowley, M O'Herlihy, ME Desmond; G Collins, A O'Callaghan, G Murphy.

Subs: A Buckley for K McCarthy (38), O Meaney for G Collins (44), N Twomey for E Crowley (44), C Sheehan for G Murphy (55).
Gailltír: C Jackman; E Mahony, M Heffernan, C Dunne; L Sheridan, E Roche, H Flynn; K Lynch, S Fitzgerald; A Lyng, C O'Sullivan, Annie Fitzgerald, E Walsh, Aoife Fitzgerald, C Carroll.

Subs: A Corcoran for Aoife Fitzgerald (53), E Flynn for E Walsh (58), R Flood for E Mahony (58), E Cullane for H Flynn (62), H Hutchinson for C Carroll (62).
Referee: Kevin O'Brien (Limerick).



Moira Barrett, Ballinascorthy, captain of the Cork team that won the All-Ireland minor camogie championship, receiving the Carbery Monthly Award for May from John Cleary, special guest, and Tom Lyons, Carbery Board Chairman. (Photos: Paddy Feen)



Orla Cronin, Enniskeane, and Libby Coppinger, St Colum's, receiving the Carbery Monthly Award for September from John Cleary and Tom Lyons.

Nov. 2018

Super sub Keane makes impact to push Inniscarra to provincial title

INAGH KILNAMONA 0-7
INNISCARRA 2-9

MUNSTER CAMOGIE FINAL

SHIRLEY MOLONEY
REPORTS

INNISCARRA found their best form at the right time as they powered to Munster final glory.

The Cork senior camogie champions added the provincial title to their collection with super sub Claudia Keane's goal early in the second half crucial as they captured their second Munster senior title at Cashel on Sunday.

Keane had been introduced to the fray at half time and took only seven minutes to make her presence felt. Aileen Sheehan made a surging run through the Inagh Kilnamona defence to offload a pass to Keane at the edge of the square. She wasn't found wanting when she expertly dispatched a hand pass to the net giving Rebecca Keating no chance between the posts.

'Claudia is unbelievable. She is so driven. At 15 years of age, that's incredible. She is quite content being that super sub. Any club in the country would have her out there on the field but in Inniscarra, we're really professional. She has a job to do

and she does it,' Aileen Sheehan said afterwards, before praising the Inniscarra performance.

'We knew this big game was in us. We've been saying all through the championship that we've been at 90 per cent, I can never say that we were at 100 per cent. Today needed our best, we needed to start well, we did.'

An All-Ireland semi-final now awaits in the new year but Inniscarra will enjoy the run-in to Christmas after this latest success.

They got off to a brilliant start when the tenacious Niamh McCarthy made a strong run to offload to Niamh Dilworth, who fired to the Inagh Kilnamona net to see the Cork champions take the lead inside the opening two minutes.

Amy Keating and Dilworth then swapped scores but another Keating free kept the Clare champions in touch. However, the competent Dilworth on free-taking duty restored the Inniscarra lead to three when she fired over a close-range placed ball.

Laoise Ryan, for Inagh Kil-

namona, cut the deficit to two, as her side trailed 0-3 to Inniscarra's 1-2 at half time.

Upon the resumption Dilworth put three between the sides when she pointed a 20-metre free before the hard-working Katie O'Mahony split the posts to push Inniscarra four clear.

With Caitlin Looney, Rosie O'Mahony and Rena Buckley holding down their defence, Inniscarra rallied and when player of the match Aileen Sheehan made a surging run that found Keane on the edge of the square she made no mistake when she received the pass to turn and hand pass into the Inagh Kilnamona net.

Three Keating close range frees in quick succession had Inagh Kilnamona to within four of Cork champions by the three-quarter mark.

However, an excellent brace from McCarthy and Keane pushed Inniscarra seven clear heading into the closing 10 minutes.

Keane pulled one back for the Clare side, but three placed balls in the space of three min-



Cork senior Niamh McCarthy scored one point in Inniscarra's win.

utes from the unerring Dilworth closed out the game with Inniscarra taking the title.

Scorers

Inniscarra: NDilworth 1-6 (5f), C Keane 1-1, N McCarthy, K O'Mahony 0-1 each.

Inagh Kilnamona: A Keating 0-5 (4f), C Foudy, L Ryan 0-1 each.

Inniscarra: S Walsh; A O'Regan, C Looney, R Quigley; R O'Mahony, R Buckley, R Keane; A Sheehan, K O'Mahony; T McCarthy (c), N Dilworth, E Looney; J Burke, N Mc-

Carthy, E Murphy.
Subs: C Keane for J Burke (ht), A O'Connor for E Murphy (55), M Buckley for A O'Regan (61), L Hayes for R Quigley (62), D O'Callaghan for R Keane (62).

Inagh Kilnamona: R Keating; J Fitzgerald, S Quinn, S Power; T O'Keefe, C Hehir (c), O Cotter; A Keane, A O'Keefe; F Lafferty, S O'Loughlin, L Ryan; A Ryan, A Keating, C Commene.

Subs: C Foudy for S Quinn (ht), L Rynne for O Cotter (ht).
Referee: John Lillis (Tipperary).

Hall of Fame trio

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman



Pictured are, Hall of Fame recipients, Sile Dunne Morgan, Clare Cronin Murphy and Nancy O'Driscoll O'Donovan, with Mark Kenny, New Ireland Assurance, Orla Cronin, Cork Senior Camogie, Hannah Looney, Cork Intermediate Camogie and Tim Barry Murphy, New Ireland Assurance.

Picture: Jim Coughlan



Hall of Fame recipients, Sile Dunne Morgan, Clare Cronin Murphy and Nancy O'Driscoll O'Donovan, with Paudie Murray, Cork Senior Camogie Manager, Orla Cronin, Cork Senior Camogie, Lord Mayor Cllr Mick Finn, Hannah Looney, Cork Intermediate Camogie and Mark Kenny, New Ireland Assurance.



Hall of Fame recipient, Nancy O'Driscoll O'Donovan.



Sile Dunne Morgan, Clare Cronin Murphy and Nancy O'Driscoll O'Donovan, with Orla Cronin, Cork Senior Camogie and Hannah Looney, Cork Intermediate Camogie.



Sile Dunne Morgan, with grand daughter, Sile Walsh, daughter Eileen Morgan and son, William Morgan.

NEW IRELAND Insurance and the Cork Camogie County Board bestowed a huge honour on three former players at a lunch held recently in the Maryborough Hotel.

Nancy O'Driscoll, Sheila Dunne and Claire Cronin were all inducted into the Cork Camogie Hall of Fame.

The three players gave tremendous service to the game and once again the judging panel came up with three players who were without doubt worthy recipients.

Lord Mayor Cllr Mick Finn paid tribute to the three players and also congratulated Cork Camogie on a tremendous season.

"To win an All Ireland take huge work and to have won Senior Intermediate and minor in the same year is something Cork camogie should be hugely proud of."

Today we honour three worthy former players and congratulate them on their contribution to Camogie. Mark Kenny representing New Ireland spoke and paid tribute to the recipients and he praised the winners for what they had achieved.

"As sponsors New Ireland are delighted to be here and to be involved in the Cork Camogie Hall of Fame awards this is a wonderful way of recognizing the achievements of so many great players who have done their county proud in the past."

"We at New Ireland are proud of our involvement with the Cork Camogie teams; this is our third year as sponsors of the county teams and we are delighted to have three All-Ireland camogie titles in cork this year and we are thrilled to help strengthen the growth of Camogie."

The recipients here today are worthy winners their achievements on the playing field are to be admired, when you look back at the names of the previous winners of this award you get a real sense of how lucky Cork are to have had such inspirational players representing us on the Camogie field all of these years."

Picking three players every year from the vast collection of greats who have graced the playing fields is not easy but when you read out the names of those who have been inducted into the Hall Of Fame they have all been worthy winners.

Service

The whole idea of the Cork Camogie Hall Of Fame is the only apt reward for the tireless and skilled services these former players gave to the game for so many years and this year's recipients more than deserve their names to be included with their peers.

It is especially fitting that the three players who have been chosen enter the hall of fame together and their deeds on the playing fields served as an inspiration to those that came after them.

Speaking at the awards, Mary McSweeney Chairperson Cork Camogie County Board said: "Cork Camogie County Board is proud to host this awards initiative with our sponsors New Ireland, Cork Camogie is privileged to have many great sporting days to look back on all of which are etched in the history of camogie by such great players as those honoured here today."

The Hall of Fame Awards gives us an opportunity to publicly honour our Cork camogie legends." Claire Cronin-Murphy responded and thanks the board and New Ireland on behalf of the recipients.

take centre stage



Hall of Fame recipient, Nancy O'Driscoll O'Donovan, with daughter Annie and son Noel, at the Cumann Camogaíochta Chontae Chorcaí, Hall of Fame 2018, sponsored by New Ireland Assurance, at the Maryborough Hotel.

Picture: Jim Coughlan



Hall of Fame recipient, Clare Cronin Murphy.



Cork Mayor Cllr Mick Finn, with Hall of Fame recipients Sile Dunne Morgan, Clare Cronin Murphy and Nancy O'Driscoll O'Donovan.



Hall of Fame recipient, Clare Cronin Murphy, with her husband Ned, daughters, Judy and Lyn Murphy at the Maryborough Hotel, Cork.

Amongst large attendance were representatives from New Ireland including Peadar Deegan and Tim Barry - Murphy both hugely involved in camogie with their respective clubs Blackrock and Cloughduv.

Officers of the Cork Camogie Board and Juvenile Board, members of the board GPC and THDC including former presidents Mary Moran, Sheila Golden, Nora Newman and Kay Dunne, Munster council were represented by President Rose Malone and her husband Con and Marie Kearney.

Several of the former Hall of Fame award winners were also present a senior manager Paudie Murray and Ger Cunningham who did tremendous work behind the scenes with the Cork Camogie Board.

Many great players have helped cork camogie become what it is today and the latest former greats now join the previous recipients in a very special place in Cork Camogie history.



Hall of Fame recipients, Sile Dunne Morgan, Nancy O'Driscoll O'Donovan and Clare Cronin Murphy at the Maryborough Hotel.



Hall of Fame recipients, Sile Dunne Morgan proudly displays her award.

HALL OF FAME 2018

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Securing your future



Sheila Dunne Morgan

Sheila comes from a strong gaelic games background and continued the tradition with her own family when she married Noel Morgan.

Around 1960, with the support of her father, Mick Dunne, and other GAA neighbours, the Canovee Camogie Club was formed. Sheila was one of the first to sign up. In 1962, Canovee won the Cork County Junior championship and, in 1970, added the Cork County Intermediate Championship.

Sheila took to the game easily and honed her skills rapidly. She played with great enthusiasm and commitment. Her non-stop action was a great benefit to her team.

She won 2 Ashbourne Cup medals in the colours of UCC and represented the Combined Universities.

Sheila enjoyed a very successful inter-county career. She played for Cork in 7 All-Ireland Senior finals and was a member of the historic four-in-a-row winning team of 1970-1973. She holds several Munster Senior championship medals and wore provincial colours in the Gael-Linn Cup.

On graduation, Sheila returned to her alma mater, Mercy, Macroom, in a teaching role and passed on the skills of the game to the students. Her interest in colleges camogie led to her election as President of the All-Ireland Post Primary Schools Council in 1989.

Sheila gave her time freely as referee and still maintains a lively interest in camogie.

Congratulations Sheila. Today's award is a recognition of your contribution to Cork camogie.





Cumann Camogaiochta Chontae Chorcaí

HALL OF FAME 2018

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Sheila Dunne Morgan



Achievements

4 All Ireland Senior Medals 1970,1971.1972 1973

2 Ashbourne Cup Medals with UCC

Junior Champ Medal with Canovee 1962

Intermediate Championship Medal with Canovee 1970

Munster Championship & Gael Linn Medals

Elected President of the All Ireland Post Primary Schools Council in 1989



Cumann Camogaiochta Chontae Chorcaí



HALL OF FAME 2018

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Nancy O'Driscoll O'Donovan



Achievements

Unique achievement of captaining Cork to both Senior and Junior All Irelands

2 All Ireland Senior Medals 1978, 1980 (Captain 1978)

All Ireland Junior Medal 1973 (Captain)

4 Senior County Champ Medals with Eire Og 1977,1978,1979,1985

Intermediate and Junior Championship medals with Eire Og

Junior A and B Championship medals with Valley Rovers

Munster Championship & Gael Linn Medals

International Hockey Player

HALL OF FAME 2018

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Nancy O'Driscoll O'Donovan

Nancy is one of the few players to have won All-Ireland Senior Camogie medals and represented Ireland in another sport. She was an international hockey player. Another notable achievement on Nancy's sporting C.V. was to captain Cork to All-Ireland success in two separate grades.

Nancy went to school at the Ursuline Convent, Blackrock where she played hockey.

Together with her 5 sisters, she joined the local Eire Og camogie club and quickly picked up the skills of the game. She helped Eire Og to win Cork Junior and Senior Championship and Munster Club championship trophies.

In 1973, she captained the first Cork team to win the All-Ireland Junior Championship. Five years later, she led Cork to victory in the All-Ireland Senior Championship. She added a second All-Ireland senior medal in 1980.

Nancy always gave her all and encouraged the players around her. A leader on the field and a good distributor of the ball, she used her boundless energy to drive her team forward. In an exceptionally long playing career, Nancy helped Valley Rovers to win Cork Junior B and Junior A Championships.

Congratulations Nancy. Today's award is a recognition of your contribution to Cork camogie.





Cumann Camogaiochta Chontae Chorcaí



HALL OF FAME 2018

Sponsored by:



NEW IRELAND
Securing your future



Clare Cronin Murphy



Achievements

4 Senior All Ireland Medals - 1978, 1980, 1982, 1983
2 All Ireland Minor Medals 1975, 1976
All Ireland Post Primary Colleges Medal with St Aloysius
2 Ashbourne Cup Medals with UCC
B & I Camogie Player of the Year 1983
Munster Championship & Gael Linn Medals
"Gradam Tailte" Camogie Superstars Competition winner 1983
Captained St Finbarrs to win the County Junior A Championship and League 1984

Ballinora turn on style to land minor crown

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

Ballinora 0-16
Enniskeane 1-5

BALLINORA were crowned SE Systems Minor B champions as they turned in a splendid display to they overcome the challenge of Enniskeane in Castle Road.

Underfoot conditions were top class with the pitch in pristine condition, but the strong wind and intermittent rain made it difficult at times for the players on both sides, but all credit to them as they played with huge determination.

Playing with the aid of the strong wind in the opening half, Ballinora applied huge pressure on the Enniskeane defence and at the interval they held an eight-point lead.

From the throw-in they attacked and with their midfield pairing of Rose Murphy and their captain, Kate Dooley, doing huge work, they cut off the supply to the Enniskeane attack.

When they did get through, they found strong defenders in the excellent Maebh Murphy, Sarah O'Keeffe, and Brid Holmes standing firm for Ballinora.

With Cliona Dooley in fine form up front, Ballinora took the lead with an early point, but on the puck-out, Enniskeane responded with a Niamh Collins point.

Ballinora took control of the game and from the fifth to the 21st minute they added to their tally as they hit nine points without reply and with eight coming from play it was an indication of their strength.

Cliona Dooley struck five from play, Kate O'Shea had one from the play and followed up with two frees, and with Jane McAuliffe adding one it was 0-10 to 0-1.

Enniskeane kept working away and when Ciara O'Donovan, who was a threat up front, offloaded to Niamh Collins she made no mistake sending a ground shot to the net to cut the deficit.

Ballinora responded with points from Cliona Dooley and Kate Dooley to leave them leading 0-12 to 1-1 at the break.

Enniskeane dug deep in the second half and, applying huge pressure, they contained the Ballinora attack and in the second half they limited them to just four points.

Enniskeane got an excellent start to the half when they scored the first two points with Mairead Crowley on target, but the Ballinora defence was superb and they closed down any attacks and they worked hard with the support of their midfield who dropped deep to give excellent cover as Enniskeane's threatened.

Cliona Dooley and Kate O'Shea found the range to keep the scoreboard ticking over, but Tara Sheehan replied for Enniskeane as they remained in the hunt, but as they battled for a second goal, the Ballinora backs dug deep and blotted out any sniff of goal with some excellent clearances.

Cliona Dooley and Mairead Crowley



Ballinora, the 2018 SE Systems Minor B Camogie Championship winners.



President of the Camogie Association Kathleen Woods and Deirdre Ashe of Liberty Insurance present Cork's Orla Cotter with a 2018 Camogie All-Stars Award at the Citywest Hotel earlier this month.

ley traded points and with the clock ticking towards full-time, the final say was with Kate O'Shea as she pointed to ensure Ballinora remained in control.

Ballinora midfielder Rose Murphy was named as *Evening Echo* Player Of the Match after a performance befitting a county final.

Scorers for Ballinora: C Dooley 0-9, K O'Shea 0-4 (0-2 f), K Dooley 0-2, J McAuliffe 0-1.

Enniskeane: N Collins 1-1, M Crowley 0-3 f, T Sheehan 0-1.

BALLINORA: O O'Shea, M Murphy, S O'Keeffe, C Murphy, K Cream, B Holmes, G

Lenihan, K Dooley (c), R Murphy, A Murphy, J McAuliffe, K O'Shea, C Dooley, C Nic Abhaird, A Lenihan.

Sub: N Mayer for A Murphy (54).

ENNISKEANE: K Corcoran, L Markey, M Crowley, R O'Driscoll, S Fleming, D O'Brien, Collins, S Hurley, E O'Brien, A Sheehan, Abame, T Sheehan, L Corcoran, O'Donovan, D Brown.

Subs: L McCarthy for N Collins (42), N Collins for L Corcoran (53).

Referee: Cathal McAllister (Aghada).

Sarsfields 3-9

Aghabullogue 1-10

SARSFIELDS became the first club

to take the Premier U16 Championship title after a hard-fought battle with a determined Aghabullogue side at Ballinlough.

Sarsfields, playing with the aid of the strong wind, controlled the opening half despite Aghabullogue taking an early lead with a Kelly Honohan point.

Ella Woods, with four points, Kate-lyn Sheehan with two and Cliona Lynch with a goal had Sars seven points in front before Ella Foley pointed a free to cut their lead.

Woods and Orlaith Mullins kept Sars in control with points and again Aghabullogue dug deep with Leah Dineen pointing.

A Mullins goal and a Nikki Barr point had Sars in a commanding 2-10 to 0-3 interval lead.

Aghabullogue showed fierce determination from the restart and applying all the pressure, they hit five points without reply inside 15 minutes with Leah Dineen, Ella Foley, and Kelly Honohan all on target.

Battling to regain control, Sars got a vital goal from Mullins and added a free.

Aghabullogue continued to apply pressure. Dineen pointed a free before adding a goal and another free but despite huge pressure, Sars hung on.

Sarsfields' Ciara Irwin was named player of the match. Wood was presented with the Joan Goggin Memorial Trophy, in memory of a great camogie stalwart, by her daughter, former Cork star, Paul Goggin.

Scorers for Sarsfields: E Woods 0-5 (0-4 f), Mullins 1-1, C Lynch 1-0, A Mullins 1-0, K Sheehan 0-2, N Barry 0-1.

Aghabullogue: L Dineen 1-5 (0-2 f), E Foley 0-3, K Honohan 0-2.

SARS: F Loneragan, A McNamara, R O'Gorman, Twomey, A McAllen, C Irwin, C Lynch, S Desmond, G Cashman, N Barry, O McAllen, Woods, K Sheehan, A Mullins, O Mullins.

Subs: E Mulcahy for O Mullins, E McMahon for Mullins, L Fitzgerald for C Lynch, T Elliott for Twomey.

AGHABULLOGUE: L Cooney, L Casey, C O'Connell, A Barrett, K Cooney, M Ring, E O'Shea, Foley (c), B Cotter, R Martin, C Barrett, K Honohan, A Twomey, E Barry-Murphy, L Dineen.

Subs: M Buckley for K Cooney, N Barry-Murphy for A Twomey.

Picture: INPHO/Tommy DicksonSH

Cronin treble fires Aghada to U16 title

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

Aghada 3-6
Newcestown 4-1

THREE goals from Eimear Cronin helped pave the way for Aghada to be crowned U16 A county champions in Ballinlough.

They overcame Newcestown in a thrilling encounter which went down to the wire.

Weather conditions were hard on both teams, but they battled on and gave a tremendous hour of entertainment.

Aghada held a three-point interval lead, 2-4 to 2-1, but a strong fightback by a determined Newcestown saw just two points between the sides with six minutes on the stopwatch.

It was a nervous six minutes but all credit to Aghada who stood strong when the pressure was applied. Newcestown battled to cut the gap, but strong defending from Aghada ensured they held the lead to the final whistle and did enough to take the title and be crowned champions for the first time.

With Cronin finding the net twice in the opening half Aghada, with points from Ali Smith and Aoife Healy, ensured they were three in front at the break, despite first-half Newcestown goals from Caoimhe McCarthy and Saoirse Hayes and an Eabha Collins point.

On the resumption, Newcestown battled hard but they met resistance from a strong Aghada defence. Second-half Newcestown goals from Caoimhe McCarthy and Aoibhe Sheehan kept them in the hunt, but with Cronin finding the net for her third goal and Ali Smith on target with points, Aghada held their composure to run out winners after a superb contest.

For Newcestown it was disappointing, having lost out in the minor A championship final a week previously, again by just two points.

The day belonged to Aghada who crowned a memorable occasion for a club founded in 2011, with Mary Leahy named as Player of the Match.

Scorers for Aghada: E Cronin 3-0, A Smith 0-5, A Healy 0-1.

Newcestown: C McCarthy 2-0, S Hayes, A Sheehan 1-0 each, E Collins 0-1.

AGHADA: C McIntyre, C Stafford, K Terry, A Gilroy, C Boylan, M Leahy, R Leahy, A McGrath, S Geary, A Smith, A Healy, R Kiano, A Wallace, E Cronin, R Barry.

Tremendous year for Cork camogie



Camogie

Linda Mellerick

CORK camogie can look back on a great year on the club and inter-county fronts.

You can't get better than a clean sweep of All-Ireland titles at adult level, including minor. Yes, we could have added the U16A and B titles to our haul, but let's not be too greedy. They had a very strong campaign also.

On the senior club scene, we had some great battles. One of my favourites was the second-round replay between St Finbarr's and Douglas where Douglas won out by two points after a pulsating game in Na Piarasigh's Grounds.

So many games went down to the wire and when that happens, even if the game itself doesn't reach great heights, the excitement is tangible.

St Catherine's lost their first and second rounds by a point, both scored in injury-time. In round one Milford came from six points down to beat the Glen by six.

Douglas took a fancied Carbery side in round three by a point. Ballygarvan had a good year, but they were beaten by Ballincollig, 1-8 to 1-7, in the quarter-final.

A young Courcy Rovers took the might of Milford by four points to reach their first final. Along the way Inniscarra had comfortable enough wins, their closest on the scoreboard being their opening round where they won out against Cloughduv by three points.

The county final failed to live up to the hype. Rovers didn't reach the heights that saw them reach the final. They were possibly overawed by the occasion, but equally you'll never get it easy against a team of seasoned campaigners who were heading for their third final in a row.

Inniscarra marched on and two impressive performances in Munster see them taking a couple of weeks off before getting back into action to prepare for their All-Ireland semi-final in late January.

On the inter-county scene, we broke Kilkenny's hearts again, with an injury-time winning score. The final was poor because of poor refereeing where the advantage rule wasn't utilised and for the way Kilkenny went about their business, failing to attack the game.

Subs: E Lewis for C Stafford, N Codd for C Boylan, A Ring for A Wallace.

NEWCESTOWN: B Desmond, B O'Sullivan, E Dineen, A Wilson, R Hallahan, G Ryan, L Jennings, E Tarrant, J Buckley, C McCarthy, C Wilson, A Sheehan, E Collins, S Hayes, L Wilson.

Subs: O Barrett for E Collins, S Buckley for L Jennings.

Referee: Ian Thomas (Carrigaline).



Eire Og's Isobel Sheehan breaks out of defence chased by Galtir's Hannah Flynn during the Munster Intermediate camogie final in Cashel, where the Cork side came up short.

Picture: John D Kelly



Aghada, the Camogie U16 A Championship winners for 2018. See left for a report on their victory.

It began for Cork in Páirc Uí Chaoimh on June 9 as they comfortably accounted for Wexford.

In round two against Dublin, at half-time Cork led by double scores 2-6 to

1-3. They comfortably kept the scores ticking away and ran out 4-15 to 2-3 winners in what was a light training session.

On July 7, they were well on their

way to a championship semi-final after a 1-27 to 1-12 win over Tipperary in a top-of-the-table clash at The Ragg.

They made it four wins from four a week later. Cork added a goal and three points within five minutes of the resumption for a comfortable 3-12 to 0-6 victory over Meath.

Cork were racing ahead as leaders of Group 2, amassing a massive scoring tally.

Their final game against Offaly was a foregone conclusion as regards emerging top of their group and heading straight to the semi-final. As expected, they comfortably took Offaly at home to finish top with 15 points from five games.

Cork utilised their full substitution allowance of five in the second half of their All Ireland semi-final against Tipperary. Cork weren't tested at all, but that has become the norm right through the championship with Cork and Kilkenny streets ahead of the rest.

The final was intense, edgy, physical and tactical and Cork were deserving All-Ireland champions.

Ballinascarthy complete fantastic camogie double

BALLINASCARTHY'S county winning camogie team are the perfect role models.

To highlight this, they celebrated Sunday's West Cork final success by posing with the iconic Model T in Ballinascarthy later that evening, after their 2-13 to 0-9 win against St Colum's.

They've now won the West Cork Junior Cup to add to their county junior B title won in September.

Caroline Sugrue, Moira Barrett, Michelle Dullea, Clara Crowley and Breda McCarthy got the scores that mattered last Sunday.

A victory dinner dance will be held in Fernhill House Hotel on Saturday, February 2nd and everyone is welcome to join in the celebrations. 2019 is a special year for the club as it is the 50th anniversary of the setting up of the club back in 1969. The team of '69 will be introduced at the

event and all former, past and retired players throughout the years is invited to attend.

The Bal team for West Cork final was: Martina O'Brien, Ella Murray, Lisa Hegarty, Hannah O'Donovan, Marie Phayer, Claire Kingston, Siobhán Hennessy (captain), Kate O'Donovan, Clara Crowley, Moira Barrett, Michelle Dullea, Sinéad McCarthy, Elaine O'Brien, Caroline Sugrue, Breda McCarthy, Sarah Cahalane, Anna Cullinane, Helen Harrington and the team mascot Siobhán McCarthy.

Ballinascarthy's county-winning camogie team pose with the iconic Model T after their victory over St Colum's last Sunday evening.



Castlemartyr camogie growing in popularity

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

Castlemartyr 4-8
Courcey Rovers 0-8

GOALS win games and they certainly proved important when Castlemartyr and Courcey Rovers met in the U16 B championship final in Ballinlough.

They were deadlocked, 0-4 apiece, after an opening 30 minutes where the defences impressed. Courceys took an early lead with a Siobhan O'Donovan point but Zara Bowles levelled. Ellen Maguire, Ava O'Donovan and Siobhan O'Donovan were working hard as Rovers hit three points in a row.

However Castlemartyr ace Lilly Hayes-Nally's three points from play tied the game.

Four minutes into the second half Castlemartyr struck for a goal with Aimee Morgan finding the net. Further goals from Sadhbh Beausang, Millie Bowles and Hayes-Nally had Castlemartyr on their way to being crowned champions.

Morgan had the final say with a Castlemartyr point and she was named as Player of the Match after a superb display.

This was a huge victory for Castlemartyr and a testament to all the hard work that has gone into establishing the game in the club over the last number of years.

Scorers for Castlemartyr: A Morgan 1-4 (0-2 f, 0-1 45), L Hayes-Nally 1-3, S Beausang, M Bowles 1-0 each, Z Bowles 0-1.

Courcey Rovers: S O'Donovan 0-6, E Maguire, A O'Donovan 0-1 each.

CASTLEMARTYR: C Lane, C Deane, A Harty, L Horgan, F McGrath, C Barry, C Steele, Z Bowles, G Lynch, A Morgan, S Beausang, L Kennealy, L Hayes-Nally, E Hayes-Nally, A Cousins.

Sub: M Bowles for A Cousins (38).

COURCEY ROVERS: A Hynes, R Nolan-Collins, A Collins, L Crowley, G O'Reilly, A Corcoran, E Casey, E Maguire, L Helbow, E Maguire, S O'Donovan, R Gallagher, M O'Leary, A O'Donovan, N Nyhan.

Subs: K O'Regan for M O'Leary, S Fitzpatrick for N Nyhan.

Referee: Cathal Egan (Glen Rovers).

Buttevant 1-5

Millstreet 1-3

BUTTEVANT were crowned U16 C county champions as they held out under strong pressure to defeat Millstreet in a thrilling contest at Ballinlough.

A first-half Sarah Dunlea goal was vital to Buttevant as it helped them hold a 1-1 to 0-3 interval lead with Chloe Trimm adding their point.

Beibhinn Moynihan and Orla O'Leary pointed for Millstreet with Louise Lyons adding a free.

Buttevant showed huge determination from the restart and opened up a five-point lead thanks to Shannon Jewitt and Chloe Trimm (3).

Battling hard Millstreet they never gave up and were rewarded with a Caoimhe Murphy goal as the full-time whistle loomed. With only two points between the sides it was a tense few minutes as Buttevant dug deep to hold their lead and Millstreet pressed for a winner.

Sarah Dunlea, Buttevant captain, accepted the trophy from Mary O'Sullivan of the juvenile camogie board.



Buttevant players and mentors celebrate winning the U16 C camogie championship title.



Aimee Morgan, Castlemartyr, Player of the Match in the U16 B Camogie championship final is presented with her award by Tracy Sheehan, secretary of the Cork Juvenile board.

To cap a great day for Buttevant, Rachel Brosnan was named as Player of the Match.

Scorers for Buttevant: C Trimm 0-4, S Dunlea 1-0, S Jewitt 0-1.

Millstreet: Caoimhe Murphy 1-0, B Moynihan, L Lyons, O O'Leary 0-1 each.

BUTTEVANT: S Dunlea (c), O Fitzmaurice, C Carroll, L Dunlea, L O'Brien, R Enright, S Jewitt, E Kennedy, A Carroll, R Lenahan, K O'Connell, A Dunlea, C Trimm, R Brosnan, N Guinane.

Sub: A Jerks for S Jewitt.

MILLSTREET: L Lehane, R Buckley, A Tarrant (c), H O'Regan, E O'Leary, N Smyth, G Serrell, L Lyons, M Lehane, F Hurley, S O'Connor, B Moynihan, O O'Leary, C Barrett, C Brophy.

Sub: C Murphy for C Brophy (35).

Referee: William Wallis (Aghada)

SEANDÚN

The Bishopstown and Douglas U15s met in the final last weekend.

Douglas were ahead at half-time whistle and it was point for point through the second half but Bishopstown gained a grip to prevail by full-time. Goals from Charlotte Higgins, Grace O'Driscoll and Emily O'Donoghue proved vital for Bishopstown while Caoimhe Henchy and Caoimhe O'Donoghue were also on the score-sheet.

In the Shield final where it was an

all northside clash between Na Piar-saigh and Brian Dillon's. Na Piar-saigh were that bit faster to the ball and took their chances to secure the victory.

An Alex Thompson goal and two Lauryn O'Connor points were key in the first half.

O'Connor added 1-2 in the second half and Aine Ring a point. Player of the Match was Ailish Allen.

SUMMER CUPS:

Éire Óg recently proved too strong for Sarsfields to make it a year to remember as they added the Summer

“This victory was a testament to all the hard work that has gone into establishing the game in Castlemartyr.”

Cup to their intermediate championship title.

The Junior Summer Cup was won by Ballinora. They overcame Millstreet, who opened the scoring with an early point, before Ballinora responded with points from Karen Lane, Lisa O'Shea and Cliona Dooley.

Millstreet rallied with two quick goals but Jennifer Murphy replied with two of her own and points from Siobhan O'Regan and Dooley saw Ballinora lead 2-10 to 3-3.

Goals from Lane and Dooley saw Ballinora run out 4-18 to 4-5 winners.

Camogie All-Star team was tough call



GAA

Linda Mellerick

AFTER retaining the Cork senior camogie title, Inniscarra backbone the Rearden's All-Star selection, which will be announced on Wednesday (7pm) in Reardens.

There are seven players from the mid-Cork club in the line-up, along with five from runners-up Courcey Rovers, who went from being outsiders to finalists after an epic campaign.

Milford duo Christine O'Connor and Elaine O'Riordan are in the full-back line while Douglas's Katrina Mackey also made the cut. The awards will be presented on Wednesday night, while the Camogie Player of the Year will also be announced.

1. Sheila Walsh (Inniscarra): Sheila had a very dependable season for Inniscarra between the posts. Confident and calm under the dropping ball and an excellent shot stopper, Inniscarra's number one made a number of crucial saves during the course of the campaign.

2. Christine O'Connor (Milford): A highly dependable season. With minimum fuss Christine was tremendously reliable at corner-back.

With an attacking style, she broke down many a forward's advancement particularly when games hung in the balance. She was instrumental in helping Milford reach the semi-final.

3. Elaine O'Riordan (Milford): Once again the full-back dynamo had a consistent and superb season for Milford. Teak tough, never shying from the hard tackle, a great reader of the game and with great distribution.

4. Ciara Hayes (Courcey Rovers): A true leader in defence for Courcey Rovers, Ciara had an outstanding season. Tough, skilful, and a great reader of the game, Ciara intercepted many an opponent's attack during a great season for Courcey Rovers reaching their first County senior final.

5. Rena Buckley (Inniscarra): Having Rena in your side increases your chances of victory by 20%. Another dependable year from Miss Ice Cool. Her dependability, reading of the game and distribution, while marking opponent's most threatening players all season, was exemplary.

6. Ashling Moloney (Courcey Rovers): Ashling played a captain's role and led from centre back. Her semi-final performance against Milford was a highlight but from the start of the campaign she led an attacking and exciting Courcey Rovers side.

7. Rosie O'Mahony (Inniscarra): One of Inniscarra's most consistent performers over the past number of seasons. Always positioning herself in the right place at the right time, Rosie had another great season. An unassuming leader in the team she is a vital cog in the wheel that is Inniscarra.



Milford's Loretta Hanley trying to block down a shot by Katrina Mackey of Douglas in the SE Systems Cork Camogie Senior Championship quarter-final at Castle Road. Mackey scored 2-34 over the course of the season, 2-20 from play. Picture: Denis Minihane



An attempted handpass by Inniscarra captain Treasa McCarthy is foiled by Aisling O'Reilly of Courcey Rovers. McCarthy linked up defence and attack magnificently for Inniscarra. Picture: Larry Cummins

8. Jacinta Crowley (Courcey Rovers): Scorer of 27 points (11 from play). A top-class display of free taking during the season from Jacinta. A great performance in the opening round where she scored 10 points from play. Also displayed a great work ethic throughout the campaign.

9. Katie O'Mahony (Inniscarra): Always a player to give 100% on the field, Katie O'Mahony had one of her best seasons in the blue jersey. Her work rate, speed, and distribution from the middle of the park made her an invaluable asset.

10. Treasa McCarthy (Inniscarra):

Throughout the entire campaign Treasa McCarthy wore her heart on her sleeve. She covered miles as she fell back to help defenders and drove forward with attacks. Will always make the hard run in an effort to dispossess opponents. A true Captain.

11. Niamh Dilworth (Inniscarra): What a season this Inniscarra stalwart had. Scorer of 2-34. Taking over the free taking responsibility Niamh was exceptional from all angles of the pitch as well as giving a huge contribution from play where she worked extremely hard.

12. Katrina Mackey (Douglas):

Another scorer of 2-34, from five games, with 2-20 from play was another tremendous return for the Douglas and Cork star. A second-round replay against St Finbarr's saw her hit nine points and drive Douglas into the third round.

13. Fiona Keating (Courcey Rovers): What a season this Cork minor enjoyed. To score of 3-16 from play during the campaign was an incredible feat. Showing confidence, great speed, and a willingness to take responsibility, Fiona has a bright future ahead.

14. Niamh McCarthy (Inniscarra): A forward's job isn't just about

“Inniscarra backbone the Rearden's All-Star selection. There are seven players from the mid-Cork club in the line-up, with five from runner-up Courcey Rovers

finding the posts. It's about working hard, doing the hard grind to also provide opportunities for others. Niamh had all of the above attributes for Inniscarra — making scores for her teammates, winning frees, and herself scoring 3-7 — a great year.

15. Linda Collins (Courcey Rovers): Despite being a marked woman in every game she lined out in Linda was a thorn in the opposition's side.

All she needs is just one break and almost every time, the ball will hit the net. Scorer of 5-6 she can be proud of her contribution to Courcey's run this year.

Dec. 2018



Josephine Madigan, Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, with Limerick's Sean Finn and Cork's Aoife Murray at the announcement that hurling/camogie has been put into UNESCO's List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. Picture: Brendan Moran/Sportsfile

Our games are world class

The decision of UNESCO to inscribe the games of hurling and camogie to the the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity is a great recognition of Cork's favourite games.

The Camogie Association and the GAA can be very proud of achieving this prestigious international recognition of our national game.

We have always rejoiced in the speed and skill involved in both camogie and hurling and hopefully now more people around the world will be prompted to seek them out.

It would be great if more were encouraged to travel here to experience the spectacle for themselves. They can find it, to a very high quality, in many villages, towns and city areas in Cork of a summer's evening. It will take their breath away!

Nov. 2018



The Bal team that won the county junior B final when they beat Bride Rovers by 1-11 to 1-10. Front from left, Niamh Sugrue, Martina O'Brien, Clare Kingston, Anna Cullinane, Clara Crowley, Siobhán McCarthy, Siobhán Hennessy (captain), Michelle Dullea, Moira Barrett, Annie Condon, Anna Flynn and Breda McCarthy. Back from left, Hannah O'Donovan, Sarah Cahalane, Kate O'Donovan, Ella Murray, Helen Harrington, Caroline Sugrue, Sinead McCarthy, Lisa Hegarty, Elaine O'Brien, Lisa McCarthy, Cara Deasy, Marie Phayer and Kaela O'Driscoll.



Shana Kavanagh, Sheila Walsh, Niamh Dilworth and Treasa McCarthy, captain of the Inniscarra camogie team, at the Rearden's GAA All-Stars awards night in Rearden's. Picture: Gerard Bonus



Elaine O'Riordan and Christine O'Connor from Milford GAA at the Rearden's GAA All-Stars awards night. Picture: Gerard Bonus



CAMOGIE MATTERS

By Jennifer O'Leary

DESERVED AWARD | Inniscarra's Niamh Dilworth named Rearden's Camogie Player of the Year

All I want for Christmas is another 2018

AS MY 2018 Barryroe Co-Op calendar is already flipped over to December, the advent calendar is now also sitting pretty on my mantelpiece. As I chomp on the first chocolate that lies hidden beneath day number one, I reflect on what has been an amazing year for Irish women in sport.

With overwhelming victories dominating the headlines of newspapers and successes of women in sport creating an online media frenzy, I've picked five female achievements that have captured my imagination and admiration in 2018.

Cora Staunton's autobiography - This is certainly going to be a popular stocking-filler for sporting enthusiasts this Christmas and is already placed in hiding in my house, ready to be wrapped as a gift to myself! A sporting icon and an influential woman in sport, there isn't much that Staunton hasn't achieved in her sporting career. She is already after making a serious impact in Sydney playing AFL with the Greater Western Sydney Giants, winning the accolade of Goal of the Year as well as making a notable impact with her unique kicking style on the oval pitch. Her influence was so apparent that she has returned for a second season.

We are all very aware of Cora's awesome ability as a ladies' Gaelic footballer with Mayo and how she has won the admiration of young players across the country, but now her autobiography, ghost-written by Cork's Mary White (who penned *Relentless*, the story of the Cork team) puts her on a pedestal for being the first ladies' GAA player to release a book of its kind. She has made history and will inspire others to make a similar move, to highlight their achievements and receive the recognition they are so deserving of.

There seems to be no stopping this woman, and no doubt in 2019 she will help build an even bigger profile for women in sport.

Cork camogie - With both senior and intermediate camogie teams bringing back the All-Irelands in exciting fashion,

we also experienced success with the minor camogie team achieving All-Ireland success in April against Galway.

One of the many stars to shine from this minor team was Saoirse McCarthy, who was also impressive in Croke Park when she helped the intermediates to defeat Down after many years of heartache. Camogie appears healthy and strong in the county and this is reassuring to know after moving away from the county five years ago!

A highlight from the Cork camogie panel for me was the growing talent of Chloe Sigeron, who has recently been nominated for the RTE Sportsperson of the Year Award. Her long-range free-taking ability was incredible to watch and, for someone so young and relatively new to the senior starting 15, she exudes a quiet confidence that reassures us that she will be one to watch in the coming year once again.

The Cork camogie board are working tirelessly behind the scenes to ensure these girls are achieving and reaching their potential and the professionalism Paudie Murray brings to the set-up means other teams are trying hard to emulate his approach to success.

Kellie Harrington - The name on everyone's lips over the last decade has been Katie Taylor, with no other serious female boxer even coming close to her boxing prowess.

However, over the past couple of years there has been a talented young lady who has been working tirelessly to achieve world championship gold behind the scenes. In 2016, she won silver in the world championships and, while many would find it difficult to return to the hard grind after this disappointment, she decided to drop

from 64kg to 60kg into the lightweight category. This was a category dominated by Katie Taylor before she turned professional. Many have said this



President of the Camogie Association, Kathleen Woods, and Deirdre Ashe of Liberty Insurance present Cork manager Paudie Murray with the 2018 'Manager Of The Year' award at the Camogie All-Stars Awards, sponsored by Liberty Insurance, at the Citywest Hotel, Dublin in early November.

28-year-old was always an excellent fighter, so versatile and hardworking, but she wasn't able to shine or find the limelight because of Taylor's popularity and dominance. Well now is her time to shine and the light she emits is almost blinding. Finally winning world boxing gold in the recent championships in India, she is now a hero in Irish sport. She is only the third Irish boxer ever to win world championship gold with Conlon and Taylor the previous winners.

This girl is only finding her feet. The Olympics in Tokyo are now calling.

Sarah Healy - At 17 years of age, this incredible athlete won the gold double at the European U18 Athletics Championships in Hungary this summer.

The runner from Dublin achieved her first gold in the 3000m race, where she was 11 seconds faster than second in the field. Having tasted sweet success, her appetite for more resulted in her winning a fur-

One of the many stars to shine from this minor team was Saoirse McCarthy, who was also impressive in Croke Park when she helped the intermediates to defeat Down after many years of heartache.

ther gold in the 1500m, where she smashed the current European championship time by three seconds.

Having watched the race, it was very clear to see that she had more energy and stamina left in the tank compared to her opponents, who lay on the ground struggling to recover from the gruelling pace set by Healy.

In the meantime, Sarah celebrated and gave interviews with relative ease considering she just ran 1.5 kilometres in just four minutes and almost 19 seconds! How this athlete grabbed my attention mostly was how she spoke in one of her post-race interviews. At 17 years of age, she is facing her Leaving Cert year and undoubtedly this will present many challenges in

striking a balance in her studies and sport.

However, I was delighted to hear her say that she thinks it's important to have her running as well as her studies. Admitting that school must come first, she welcomes the break running can give her and intends on pursuing both challenges as the year progresses.

She is someone every young person should listen to as she highlights that with hard work you can do everything you want to do, you can enjoy exercise and still achieve what you wish in school. Both go hand in hand and many who apply themselves to both actually do better in school.

The Irish women's hockey team - 'I am not in the habit

of repeating myself,' was a line from one of the many comic characters in Killinaskully.

Having written about this squad recently, I wasn't sure I could broach the subject once again.

However, the Irish women's hockey team's success in the World Cup is surely worthy of constant written repetitions.

This amazing group of believers overcame the odds that were tightly stacked against them by winning a silver medal in the biggest hockey competition of their lives in August 2018 - a feat never achieved by any Irish hockey team.

Facing the dominance of the Netherlands in the final, the never allowed their opponent to force them to drop their heads or give up. They kept their game plan going right to the final whistle. There were no tears of devastation at the end of the fourth quarter, it was a celebration for what they had achieved.

With their world ranking now sitting at eighth, this formidable year for women's hockey captured the hearts of the nation and were the sports story of the summer of 2018.



Cora Staunton's autobiography will be a popular stocking-filler for sports fans this Christmas

Saoirse flying high after winning three All-Irelands in the one year

Courcey Rovers star Saoirse McCarthy chats to Ger McCarthy about her dream season and missing the county final



FEW athletes are more deserving of a West Cork Sports Star of the Month award than Cork GAA camogie and Courcey Rovers' Saoirse McCarthy.

The Kinsale Community School student has come to the end of an action-packed 12 months in which the emerging star won All-Ireland minor, intermediate and senior camogie medals. That's three All-Irelands in one calendar year.

Add to that, the player of the match award in the All-Ireland intermediate final, being crowned the intermediate camogie Players' Player of the Year plus a Soaring Star All-Star award and McCarthy could be forgiven for having her head in the clouds.

But the first thing the 18-year-old remembers when asked about an amazing 12 months is her devastation at missing out on Courcey Rovers' county senior final appearance due to having her appendix removed.

That tells you how down to earth she is, putting the disappointment of her club's county final loss to Inniscarra ahead of all the personal accolades picked up at inter-county level.

'That was a real downer (missing out on Courcey's

county final),' McCarthy told *The Southern Star*.

'Everyone kept saying to me how lucky I was and that I didn't have to have my appendix out earlier in the year because that would have cost me All-Ireland final appearances for the Cork intermediate and senior teams. People were telling me it that was perfect timing. Well, that's not how I looked at it at all.

'I felt like I was letting my team-mates down, that's how it was for me at the time. I mean, I was so desperate to play that I toggled out on the sideline for Courceys only a week after surgery. There I was with my boots and skort, sitting on the substitutes bench and roaring the girls on.

'I am awful for watching matches though, I'm so bad. I just wanted to be out there making a difference but there was nothing I could do about it.'

In terms of her meteoric rise through the inter-county camogie ranks, McCarthy first appeared in a Cork jersey for the U13s back in 2012. Since then, the Courcey Rovers player has moved up through the age-grades before defeating Galway 0-18 to 1-11 to claim an All-Ireland minor title this past year.



West Cork Sports Star Monthly Award winner for October, Saoirse McCarthy pictured at the award presentation with, from left, Aoife Walsh, Cella McCarthy, Shay Walsh, Leonard McCarthy, Caoimhe Cotter and Aileen Walsh.

(Photos: George Maguire)

That represented Cork's first success since the age-grade was changed from U16 to U18 back in 2006.

'I won the All-Ireland minor title with Cork first and that was amazing so I'd have been happy to stop at that!' McCarthy stated.

'The day after the minor final I got a call from Paudie Mur-

ray and began training with the Cork seniors almost straightaway. I remember coming on in the Munster semi-final against Clare and I barely knew any of the girls.

'I will be honest and say I was a bit star struck sitting in the dressing room beforehand. Laura Hayes from St Catherine's who also came up from the minors was with me and we were just looking around at all these household names. It was surreal to be playing with the seniors so soon after toggling out for the minors. We trained all summer with the seniors before playing with the intermediates towards the end of the year.'

Fast forward to September and McCarthy walked out on to the hallowed Croke Park turf for an All-Ireland intermediate decider against Down. Once again the 18-year-old made her mark, scoring 0-4 and winning the player of the match award as Cork ended a run of three consecutive All-Ireland final defeats.

The Courcey Rovers star barely had time to celebrate before joining Cork's substitutes and watching the senior panel register an epic one-point victory over Kilkenny.

'That day was surreal, like a dream really,' McCarthy stated. 'I still haven't had time to

'I was so desperate to play that I toggled out on the sideline for Courceys only a week after surgery. There I was with my boots and skort, sitting on the substitutes bench and roaring the girls on.'

process everything! Everyone keeps asking if I have come back down to earth yet and the answer is no. Some evenings I look at pictures of that day and can't believe it all happened to me. I have a senior All-Ireland medal?

'Following on from that, I was honoured to be nominated for a Soaring Star (intermediate) All-Star award. On the night of the awards, I was delighted to get the trophy but couldn't believe when they announced I had won the intermediate Players' Player of the Year as well.

'I honestly thought our goalkeeper Amy Lee was going to win it as she had such a fantastic year. I mean, I even voted for (Cork's) Niamh Mallon!'

It is difficult to ask a young inter-county player what lies in store for 2019 when the previous 12 months delivered unprecedented success.

McCarthy is different from your average camogie player however and already thinking about what she can achieve with her club and county.

'Hopefully, I will be involved

with the Cork senior panel because we won the intermediate title this year and all of the girls will want to kick on now,' she said. 'As for Courcey Rovers, next year is definitely going to have to be a big one. Starting with the league trophy, we want to get that back having last won it in 2016.

This past year, I felt I didn't have hardly any time to play for my club and will hopefully get to represent them a bit more in 2019.

'It is a huge commitment to keep going for Courcey Rovers and Cork but it doesn't feel like a big thing because I enjoy playing camogie so much. I was out four nights a week with the inter-county setup alone plus matches at the weekend.

'This past year, I really wanted that All-Ireland minor title so everything after that was a complete bonus to be honest. Thankfully, I have had quite a quiet winter so far because I was at home recovering from my appendix operation. That was no harm I suppose but I cannot wait for next year.'



Saoirse McCarthy receives her monthly award from, from left, Paudie Palmer (C103), Helen Wycherley and Neil Grant (Celtic Ross Hotel) and Con Downing (The Southern Star).



LEESIDE LEADERS: Ben Shorten, Reardens, with award winners Niamh Dilworth (Inniscarra), Bill Cooper (Imokilly), Doireann O'Sullivan (Mourneabbey) and Paul Montgomery, Reardens at last night's event at the Cork city venue. Picture: Ger Bonus

Cooper, Maguire, O'Sullivan, and Dilworth take top Leeside awards

Liam Ryan

County star Bill Cooper, of Young's and Imokilly, was named Reardens Cork Club Senior Hurler of the Year at a ceremony in Reardens, Cork City last night, with Ian Maguire (St Finbarr's) picking up the football prize.

Doireann O'Sullivan of Mourneabbey is the Ladies Footballer of the Year, with Niamh Dilworth (Inniscarra) claiming the camogie prize.

And it was a special night for the Cahalane family, with Castlehaven's Damien named on the football team of the year, while his sister Meabh (Eire Og) was selected on the ladies football team.

County champions Imokilly dominated the hurling team of the year selection, picking up eight awards.

Seamus Harnedy, Paudie O'Sullivan and Niall O'Leary were honoured for the second year in a row, with Cooper, Colm Spillane, Ciarán O'Brien, Mark O'Keefe, and Will Leahy also honoured.

Beaten finalists Midleton's fine championship saw Tommy Wallace, Séadnaidh Smyth, Conor Lehane, and Luke O'Farrell make the cut.

St Finbarr's and Duhallow shared 12 of the 15 positions on the football team following their classic county final in October, with Castlehaven's fantastic run, which saw them lose their semi-final to Duhallow at the third time of asking, rewarded with two All Stars.

The queens of ladies football, Mourneabbey, landed five All-Stars, including three O'Sullivan sisters, Róisín, Ciara and Doireann for the second year in a row.

County champs Inniscarra lead the way in camogie with seven All-Stars.

Hurling All-Stars: Tommy Wallace (Midleton); Gary Norberg (Blackrock); Colm Spillane (Imokilly); Séadnaidh Smyth (Midleton); Ciarán O'Brien (Imokilly); Niall O'Leary (Imokilly); Mark Coleman (UCC); Bill Cooper (Imokilly); Mark O'Keefe (Imokilly); Luke O'Farrell (Midleton); Seamus Harnedy (Imokilly); Daniel Kearney (Sarsfields); Will Leahy (Imokilly); Conor Lehane (Midleton); Paudie O'Sullivan (Imokilly).

Football All-Stars: Patrick Doyle (Duhallow); Sam Ryan (St Finbarr's); Bart Daly (Duhallow); Rob Hegarty (Carbery Rangers); Colin Lyons (St Finbarr's); Damien Cahalane (Castlehaven); Lorcán McLoughlin (Duhallow); Ian Maguire (St Finbarr's); Aidan Walsh (Duhallow); Enda Dennehy (St Finbarr's); Mark Collins (Castlehaven); Denis O'Brien (St Finbarr's); Seamus Hickey (Duhallow); Donncha O'Connor (Duhallow); Steven Sherlock (St Finbarr's).

Camogie All-Stars: Sheila Walsh (Inniscarra); Christine O'Connor (Milford); Elaine O'Riordan (Milford); Ciara Hayes (Courcy Rovers); Rena Buckley (Inniscarra); Ashling Moloney (Courcy Rovers); Rosie O'Mahony (Inniscarra); Jacinta Crowley (Courcy Rovers); Katie O'Mahony (Inniscarra); Treasa McCarthy (Inniscarra); Niamh Dilworth (Inniscarra); Katrina Mackey (Douglas); Fiona Keating (Courcy Rovers); Niamh McCarthy (Inniscarra); Linda Collins (Courcy Rovers).

Ladies football All-Stars: Martina O'Brien (West Cork); Eva Dunne (St. Vals); Melissa Duggan (West Cork); Sinead Cotter (St. Vals); Meabh Cahalane (Eire Og); Róisín O'Sullivan (Mourneabbey); Daire Kely (West Cork); Maire O'Callaghan (Mourneabbey); Enda O'Sullivan (Mourneabbey); Aine Terry (West Cork); Ciara O'Sullivan (Mourneabbey); Doireann O'Sullivan (Mourneabbey); Rhona Ni Bhuaicalla (St. Vals); Eimear Scully (Eire Og); Laura O'Mahony (West Cork).

Big guns commit to Rebels' camogie bid

GOALKEEPER Aoife Murray and 11-time All-Star Gemma O'Connor have committed to the Cork camogie set-up for 2019, manager Paudie Murray has revealed.

The decision of both players to continue for another year is a massive boost to the All-Ireland champions and their bid to achieve the county's first O'Duffy Cup three-in-a-row since 1973. Murray, who recently won her eighth All-Star award, skipped Cork to their one-point All-Ireland final win over Kilkenny in September. Now living and working in Dublin, 2019 will be the 35-year old's 18th season with Cork.

O'Connor (33), having also joined the Cork squad in 2002, is another who is heading into her 18th inter-county campaign. Both are chasing a 10th All-Ireland medal. And with the news earlier this week that Briege

CAMOGIE

■ Eoghan Cormican

Corkery is also returning, the Cork management will have much the same hand to pick from next year.

Paudie Murray says it is absolutely vital that his more experienced players have decided to remain on board.

"It has helped the dressing room greatly in that they are keeping standards high in there," Murray remarked.

"We wouldn't have achieved what we have achieved in recent years only for those players. And I include Rena (Buckley) in that. Briege coming back two months before this year's All-Ireland final gave us a great kick because she brought a huge level of experience and a small bit of madness too, which was probably good at that time."

Murray and O'Connor commit to another season for Cork

Eoghan Cormican

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huge level of experience and a small bit of madness too, which was probably good at that time."

The Cork manager, having come into the job late in 2011, had his mind pretty much made up that he was staying on for an eighth year once the final whistle sounded on their All-Ireland final win.

"At the beginning of the year, I had decided this was my last year, irrespective of us winning the All-Ireland or not. That changed after this year's All-Ireland final.

"You have the possibility of three-in-a-row. We failed in that regard in 2016. There is a small bit of trying to right the wrongs, really. Second of all, when you are dealing with the bunch of players that I am dealing with, it is not easy to walk away from them either."

I'll give it another year, says Cork hero Briege

Dual star Briege Corkery will be hoping to extend her own record All-Ireland medal haul after confirming she will be available to Cork camogie boss Paudie Murray in 2019.

The Cloughduv star, who will turn 32 next weekend, has won 18 All-Ireland medals across camogie and football — a joint record held along with her former Rebel County teammate Rena Buckley — and will hope to add another title next September.

After stepping away from the game at inter-county level for two years, during which time she became a mother last March, Corkery made her return to the Cork fold as a substitute for the All-Ireland camogie semi-final against Tip-

perary last August and claimed an All-Ireland medal as a non-playing substitute in the final win over Kilkenny.

"I'm going to go back to camogie," she told the42.ie yesterday.

"I suppose I was disappointed I didn't get a game [in the All-Ireland final] and understandably, I know why I didn't.

"I'd have preferred to have gone on a losing note and played [rather] than not play at all. It's just I'd like to try and get back on the team and see."

"If I'm not good enough to get back on, I'm not good enough, that'd be OK too, but at least I can say I gave it another year and I tried."



Briege Corkery: I'd like to try and get back on the team and see.

Cork's thrilling victory over Kilkenny saw Corkery collect her 18th All-Ireland medal across camogie and football. She has six camogie All-Ireland medals while Buckley has 11 in the big-ball code.

Corkery led the Munster Interprovincial team to victory after beating Ulster at Waterford IT last month.

Club aces were in the spotlight

Officers back in place for 2019

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

THIS is the time of year when awards and accolades are handed out like confetti but usually it is at the top levels that we hear of our superb players and athletes being feted.

This is not the case in Cork, where club players are looked after as well, and earlier this week the players who helped make it another great camogie championship season were rightly honoured when the Rearden's Camogie All-Star team of the SE Systems senior championship was announced.

It's wonderful to see the players at grassroots level getting due recognition for their hard work over a season, particularly a championship season for those that reach the latter stages spans over approximately a 10-month period. Very often these players may have never made a county team and enjoyed the experience playing at that level brings but there is nothing better than lining out with your club, it is where you start and hopefully finish up.

For the average club player who is not on an inter-county team, they sometimes play all through their league campaigns minus the star players but come championship time everybody is available and the pressure is on to perform.

The Cork County Championship is one of camogie's oldest and certainly most prestigious competitions and to this end to pick the best 15 from a galaxy of committed and dedicated players is impossible. Last year for the first time every Rearden's included camogie and ladies football in their award scheme and plaudits must go to their management team spearheaded this.

Paul Montgomery of Rearden's was delighted with the evening.

"We're thrilled to now have the camogie and ladies football teams here as well in 2017 we expanded the awards as it is only fitting that the girls get the same recognition as the lads."

It is great to see players such as Courcey Rovers' Ciara Hayes recognised on the team this season. She is one of their longest serving players and it a very worthy winner.

Consistent all year in her role in the Courcey's defence she helped hold off the challenges posed by St Catherine's, Muskerry, Killeagh and Milford before a place in her clubs first ever county senior championship final was reached.

In the final Courceys had to give way to holders Inniscarra who made it three in a row but the performance given by Ciara was once again superb and she is a worthy inclusion as she wins her first Rearden's award.

Another first-time award went to Courcey Rovers captain Aisling Maloney who led her side so well as they contested their first county senior final, always prominent she led by example and is a worthy winner.

Jacinta Crowley hit 27 points as Courceys blazed a trail through the championship here work rate is huge and with a good eye for the target, she also gave some great exhibitions of free-taking. Youngster Fiona Keating is still a minor yet she played with huge maturity as Courceys set about reaching the final and her tally of 3-16



Joe McCarthy with his daughter Treasa McCarthy, captain of the Inniscarra Camogie Team, at Rearden's this week. Picture: Gerard Bonus.



Ciara Hayes, Rearden's award recipient from Courcey Rovers, with JJ, Sarah and Josie Hayes. Picture: Gerard Bonus.

means she's certainly one to watch out for in the future.

Linda Collins broke the hearts of defences all year both at club and indeed county level but it is for her thrilling displays she wins her first Rearden's All-Star award. She has an incredible burst of speed and a keen eye for goal, hitting five in total in what was, without doubt, her best championship campaign to date.

Goalkeeper Sheila Walsh from county champions Inniscarra enjoyed a great year for her club, cool under pressure she held off the challenges of Cloughduv in the opening round and in total only conceded one goal through a campaign that saw Inniscarra also overcome Sarsfields, Cloughduv and Ballincollig defeating getting the upper hand on Courcey Rovers in the final.

As Inniscarra made it three in a row

captain Treasa McCarthy showed all her experience as she led her side to victory, calm under pressure she drove them on in all games, up front Niamh Dilworth was unerring from placed balls and play and was a thorn in all defences sides.

Likewise, Niamh McCarthy who made life difficult for every defence Inniscarra met. Legendary Rena Buckley adds to her vast collection after leading the Inniscarra defence with wonderful displays all through.

Katie O'Mahony was Player of the Match in the county final after turning in another superb display she was consistent form the first game for Inniscarra as was Rosie O'Mahony who always seems to pop up in the right place for Inniscarra and both are hugely deserving of inclusion.

Down through the years Elaine O'Riordan has been to the fore small in

"It's great that in Cork club players get the recognition they deserve."

stature but big in heart she is strong determined and hugely competitive and this was very evident all through a championship campaign which saw her win her second Rearden's All-Star. Another Milford player to impress was the lion-hearted Christine O'Gorman, a tough defender she stood tall in all of her clubs outings and now in the twilight of an outstanding career she picks up a deserving All-Star to add to a collection that includes All-Ireland club Munster and county championships.

Katrina Mackey wore her heart on her sleeve for Douglas and was their standout player in championship 2018 all through against all oppositions she showed just how valuable a player she is to her club.

Huge credit to Rearden's for the honouring the best camogie players of 2018.

THE Cork camogie board held their county convention in their complex in Castle Roady for the first time.

The reports from the various officers reflected the commitment of the county to the game and a packed house heard huge praise for the Cork senior, intermediate, and minor teams, who took All-Ireland titles in 2018. Munster titles were also won by the Cork U16 and junior sides, while the intermediates retained the National League.

The secretary, Sandra Corcoran, gave a comprehensive report of all activities and paid tribute to all the effort of the clubs and at county level.

The chairwoman, Mary McSweeney, acknowledged all who work for camogie and thanked the delegates. The treasurer, Marion McCarthy, gave a detailed report on the board's finances and while it was an expensive year, three All-Ireland titles made it worthwhile.

The PRO, Shirley Maloney, reported on a rise in the board's followers in all areas of social media. She also thanked all the various media outlets that continue to promote camogie.

The development officer, Esther O'Leary, reported on the various courses that were organised in 2018.

The minor selector, Jerry Wallace, spoke on behalf of his management committee and he thanked everybody who helped them bring the first All-Ireland minor title to Cork.

The intermediate selector, Mollie O'Sullivan, said it was a pleasure to be involved with Cork teams.

The chairman of the Castle Road development committee, Joe McCarthy, addressed convention and gave a detailed update of the huge progress being made at the complex. He said that the committee hoped to have the next phase of the clubhouse development underway and dressing rooms three and four in use in 2019.

There were four elections for positions on the board.

Outgoing chairperson, Mary McSweeney (Bandon), held off the challenge of secretary, Sandra Corcoran (Enniskeane), to continue in the chair for a third year.

The treasurer, Marion McCarthy (St Finbarr's), was returned unopposed, after Sadie Coughlan (Kilbrittain/Timoleague) withdrew her nomination.

The secretary, Sandra Corcoran (Enniskeane), was also returned opposed, after Rachel Wycherley-Crean (Ballinora) withdrew.

Vice-chairperson, Sheila Golden (Inniscarra), and development officer, Esther O'Leary (Mallow), were returned unopposed, while the board reappointed Robin Triggs (Aghada) children's officer.

Dilworth and Inniscarra are acknowledged



Inniscarra camogie award winners: Treasa McCarthy, Sheila Walsby, Niamh McCarthy, Overall Camogie winner Niamh Dilworth, Katie O'Mahoney and Rena Buckley at the Rearden's GAA All-Stars awards night.

GAA

John O'Shea

THIS group of camogie players out in Inniscarra place very high standards upon themselves.

The Mid Cork side are a solid operating unit, as was evidenced by them having seven players in the Rearden's All Stars team of the season.

They were also the club where the winner of the Rearden's Bar Camogie player of the year, Niamh Dilworth, comes from as well.

It is safe to say with absolute certainty that Dilworth had a truly brilliant campaign in the Inniscarra jersey.

She assumed over the free-taking duties for her side also and was exceptional at score taking, from a variety of different angles right across the pitch.

The workrate of Dilworth means that she very frequently provides a massive contribution on the pitch for Inniscarra from play.

"This year we've had a new brought into Inniscarra and they have instilled great confidence and belief within us that we could win.

"It is a great accolade to accept on behalf of the team. We have had a fantastic year this year. We will enjoy the training now over the winter and look forward to the match in January."

As Dilworth alludes to, next on the Mid Cork girls journey will be a pursuit at the All Ireland title. After suffering national final heartbreak in Croke Park back in 2011, with a number of the players involved that day still apart of the current setup, Inniscarra would dearly love to secure All Ireland glory.

"We were there in from our 2010



Paudie Murray manager of the Cork camogie team; Ben Shorten, Rearden's, presents the Overall Camogie award to Niamh Dilworth, Inniscarra, also Alan Cotter, Heineken Ireland at the Rearden's GAA All-Stars awards night Washington Street.

Pictures: Gerard B...

campaign. That day we lost. So hopefully this time we can push on and get there."

Inniscarra come into this game off the back of a Munster title success.

Given the outrageously short turnaround in 2017 between winning the County and heading into Munster, it must have been great to Dilworth and her teammates to have time to have a proper crack in their provincial challenges this time around.

Dilworth adds: "I suppose in the last two years, the team haven't had any time to prepare properly for the Munster championship.

"This year we had two weeks to prepare. That really stood to us for Munster.

"Going through the Cork championship, we had a few tough matches.

"Heading into the Munster semi final and then final, those matches

really stood to us."

Inniscarra are an outfit that have gotten the balance well between youth and experience.

That was very much evident in their successful retention of the Cork camogie title, while they also managed to pick up the Munster crown for the second time in their history.

"There is a lot of young players, especially the likes of Claudia Keane coming onto the team and scoring 1-1

in a Munster final.

"It really showed the depth and strength of our panel."

Inniscarra will be hoping the strong panel will be a major weapon in their armoury to take into the All-Ireland quest.

Next up for the Mid-Cork side is the national semi final, where they are set to face Leinster Champions Martins from Wexford early in the new year.



The Rearden's Camogie team of the year 2018, at the recent Rearden's GAA All-Stars awards night.



Ben Shorten, Rearden's; Ronan Curran, Mycro Sports; Niamh Dilworth, Overall Camogie, and Inniscarra GAA Club, with Paudie Murray Cork Camogie Team manager at the Rearden's GAA All-Stars awards night.



Overall Camogie winner Niamh Dilworth, of Inniscarra GAA at Rearden's GAA All-Stars awards night.



Niall Collins is a fan of numbers. He's also a sports nut. Put the two together and you have Cork camogie's performance analyst who is helping the Rebels stay ahead of the chasing pack. **GER McCARTHY** spoke to the Dunmanway man

Stat's life – Niall crunching the numbers to keep Rebels on top

CORK camogie statistician Niall Collins says that recording events in games isn't just a box-ticking element but rather a key instrument in improving future decision-making.

As the Rebels, under manager Paudie Murray, have risen to the top of the tree in recent years, Dunmanway native Collins – a cousin of the boss – has played an integral role as part of the management team.

A Software Architect with BWest Consulting in Cork, Niall Collins first became involved five years ago.

'I initially got involved back in 2014 when Paudie became manager,' he says.

'He contacted me when he was putting together his management team for that year and asked if I'd like to get involved. My background is in computer software development and that, coupled with my interest in a wide range of sports, led me to first get involved in the role. Prior to that, Paudie was in charge of the Dohenys football team, where I would have worked closely with him on a lower scale for about a year.

'When I first got involved with the Cork camogie team, I did a lot of research on the various software packages that were out there for recording match statistics. I decided on Performa Sports and still work closely with them. That gives me in-game analysis, post-game analysis and the ability to share videos and information with both the players and management.

'I've also worked with other software tools like Dartfish, SportsCode and Match Sport just to help gather and process additional bits of information.'

When it comes to statistics, Collins is responsible for producing live data as a match is progressing whilst also generating in-depth post-game analysis reports.

'Normally, the process before any game is to produce some pre-match data analysis of ourselves as well as the opposition team,' he says.

'This is my fifth year involved with Cork and I have built up a large amount of data on all the opposition we have faced. I probably have a profile of most of the camogie players in Ireland. Prior to games, I produce a report for the Cork management team which they analyse and review before presenting statistics to the players. During the actual game itself, I gather various live statistics with a couple of other people who work with me.

'That information is fed to management via radio communication, primarily to Paudie. Those live statistics are used as one of the tools in the management team's decision making. At half time, I also present information to Paudie to better help and understand how things are proceeding.'

There are as many myths about gathering match information statistics as there are people who advocate their usefulness. Yet, Collins' input in helping the Cork senior camo-



Cork captain Aoife Murray – cousin of team statistician Niall Collins – lifts the O'Duffy Cup after the Rebels' All-Ireland win against Kilkenny in September.

gie setup during one of the county's greatest trophy hauls speaks for itself.

'I suppose there are a lot of misconceptions out there when it comes to gathering match statistics,' he says.

'For example, a score is sometimes interpreted as a progression or how a team is doing.

A score is only important at one point in a game and that is when the game is over. I am tasked with building up a lot of other information to better understand how the game is proceeding.

'Post-game, I would first combine all the video footage. We would normally take video from a different number of angles. The next step is to run all that footage through our software, tagging the various events that occur during a game. Normally, there are 1,500 to 2,000 'events' within a particular game. Each of those events could have 20 plus different attributes. This approach helps give a very good analysis of how the team has performed, how players have gotten on as well as the key characteristics of the opposition's performance.

'From there, a report is generated and passed on to management for their full post-match analysis and the cycle continues with that information being passed on to the players.'

Finally, putting together such a huge amount of data and

presenting it in a useful manner takes up a large amount of Collins' free time. It is not a simple role but it's one he enjoys.

'To be honest with you, as enjoyable as I find the whole process, it is incredibly time-consuming,' he says.

'On average, one game could take between ten and 14 hours to complete for management to look through. This is what's required if you want to produce the kind of detail elite sports athletes like the Cork camogie team needs.

'That data is hugely important as it also forms the basis for management's forthcoming training sessions. Managing that amount of time can be very difficult as I am in full-time employment. My job is where my primary concentration and effort goes every day. Normally, it is a case of getting up early and working on the data before heading out to work or sometimes working late into the night.

'It is much easier to put in all that effort when you feel like you are making a difference

and the work you are doing is accepted by Cork camogie's players and management. Your motivation is much stronger when you understand that what you are doing is not just ticking a box.

'Certainly with Cork, statistical analysis isn't about ticking boxes but is a fundamental driver for helping make better decision-makers out on the field. You also have to be passionate about what you're doing. You have to have the motivation to do all of this but luckily, I come from something of a GAA stronghold. My father has always had a strong influence on me from a GAA perspective and I've grown up loving the sport.

'An opportunity to work with elite athletes on an inter-county stage and the possibility of walking out the tunnel at Croke Park on All-Ireland final day was too good to turn down.

'When you are seen to be making a difference and get the results that have helped Cork win so many All-Irelands, well that makes all the time and effort worthwhile.'



The All-Ireland winning Cork camogie management team of Kevin Murray (hurling coach), Niall Collins (performance analyst), Paudie Murray (manager), Martin O'Brien (strength and conditioning) and Damien Murray (logistics).

Aghada and Sars grab league titles

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

A BUSY season for the juvenile camogie board drew to its conclusion on Saturday last when the excellent city division headquarters hosted three league final.

It was a credit to the board that the venue was in fantastic condition at this time of year and given the weather conditions.

All credit must go to a very hard-working juvenile board committee headed up by chairperson Mary O'Sullivan and secretary Tracey Sheehan. Both will be stepping away from their roles in January when their convention reconvenes.

Huge credit also to the six clubs that battled it out in weather that was tough but they played with huge determination and the titles were secured by Sarsfields, Aghada and Buttevant respectively.

Sarsfields 0-13
Éire Óg 1-9

ÉIRE Óg's challenge just fell short as they battled to the finish against U16 premier county champions Sarsfields in the league final played at Ballinlough.

Having captured the Premier Championship crown earlier in the month Sars were hunting the double but they found the going tough against an Éire Óg outfit who were short key players. The Owens side had to field minus four of their starting 15 who were on football trial duty with Cork.

It was very much a game of two halves with both sides enjoying 30 minutes of dominance. Éire Óg played with the aid of the gale force wind in the opening half and they led at the interval 1-7 to 0-3.

They got the opening score of the game through an Isobel Sheehan point and they held their lead to the half time whistle going in seven point clear.

Orlaith Mullins replied to level the game but Éire Óg responded with an Ava O'Brien goal and three points in a row, from Sheehan and Emily Coffey.

Battling hard to contain the lively and determined Éire Óg challenge, Sarsfields had it all to do but two points in a row from Aine Mullins and captain Ella Woods cut the lead.

Sarsfields came storming into the game from the restart led by captain Woods, who opened the second half with a point. They added to their tally with scores from Nikki Barry, Cliona Lynch, Olivia McAllen, Aine Mullins and Orlaith Mullins. Éire Óg battled on with the impressive Sheehan pointing twice more but the Sarsfields' rally proved stronger as they ran out winners with a point to spare.

Scorers for Sarsfields: E. Woods 0-4 (0-1 f), O Mullins 0-2, C. Lynch 0-2 f, A. Mullins 0-2, N. Barry 0-2, O. McAllen 0-1.

Éire Óg: I. Sheehan 0-8 (0-4 f), A. O'Brien 1-0, E. Coffey 0-1.

SARS: F. Loneragan, A. McNamara, R. O'Gorman, L. Twomey, T. Elliot, C. Irwin, C. Lynch, S. Desmond, G. Cashman, N. Barry, O. McAllen, E. Woods, K. Sheehan, A. Mullins, O. Mullins.

Sub: E. McMahon for L. Twomey.

ÉIRE ÓG: O. Lynch, A. Goulding, F. Nagle, E. Sheehan, R. Sheehan, C. Malone, O. Beechinor, M. Kelly, I. Sheehan, C. Sheehan, E. Coffey, A. O'Brien, A. Desmond, C. Beechinor, P. Holmes.

Subs: S. McCarthy for P. Holmes (h-t), S. Sheehan for C. Malone (45), M. O'Connell for S. Sheehan (in 46).



Camogie Player of the Match in the U16 B League final Aghada's Ali Smith with team captain Mary Leahy.



Sarsfields captain and Camogie Player of the Match Ella Woods after her side's victory in the U16 A League final.

Aghada 5-14
Kilbree 5-5

AGHADA added the U16 B League title to their A championship title in Ballinlough in a high-scoring contest they overcame Kilbree.

Aghada played with the aid of the strong wind in the opening half and put the Kilbree defence under huge pressure and with Ali Smith, who finished with staggering 4-14, Eimear Cronin, Rachel Leahy and Mary Leahy prominent they notched up the scores.

Mairead Crowley was on target with Kilbree's first three points and with

Maeve O'Neill grabbing a Kilbree goal it was Aghada who led 3-9 to 1-3 at the interval.

Aghada got the perfect start in the second half adding two quick goals. Again Smith was the main threat up front as she picked off some excellent scores. Mairead Crowley responded for Kilbree with two goals and with the scores coming fast both sides kept the scoreboard ticking over.

Mary Murphy had two Kilbree points before Maeve O'Neill grabbed a goal but despite Kilbree showing spirit and determination, Aghada were not to be denied as they ran out winners to cap a memorable season for them.

“Smith who contributed 4-14 to Aghada's tally was deservedly named as Player of the Match.

On the day, Ali Smith who contributed 4-14 to Aghada's tally was rightly named as Player of the Match.

Scorers for Aghada: A. Smith 4-14, E. Cronin 1-0, R. Leahy, M. Leahy 0-1 each.

Kilbree: M. Crowley 2-3 M. O'Neill 2-0 M. Murphy 0-3.

AGHADA: C. McIntyre, E. Lewis, K. Terry, A. Gilroy, C. Boylan, M. Leahy, A. McGrath, S. Geary, R. Leahy, A. Healy, R. Keane, A. Smith, N. Codd, E. Cronin, R. Barry. Subs: K. Owers for R. Barry, R. Barry for K. Terry.

KILBREE: H. Brimble, M. Collins, K. O'Donovan, J. O'Driscoll, S. O'Donovan, R. Deasy, R. Hurley, E. O'Donovan, M. Murphy, L. Sheehy, M. Crowley, C. Murphy, M. O'Neill, N. McCarthy, A. O'Neill.

Sub: A. Collins for N. McCarthy.

Win over Dillon's is a double delight for Buttevant

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

Buttevant 4-3
Brian Dillon's 1-5

BUTTEVANT made it a double as they added the U16 C League title to their championship crown as they defeated Brian Dillon's in Ballinlough on Saturday last.

Brian Dillon's played with the aid of the wind in the opening half but Buttevant started well with Nicola Guinane giving the Brian Dillon's keeper no chance as she sent the ball to the net to grab an early goal.

Chloe Trimm added a point from a free as Buttevant opened up a four point lead by the end of the opening quarter. Brian Dillon's came back strong as they hit three points on the trot with Sophie Porter-Foley on target from frees.

Buttevant responded as the half time whistle approached with a pointed free from Trimm and they grabbed a second goal. Guinane again found the net to give them a four-point interval lead.

The wind died down in the second half and both sides battled hard through an evenly matched period of action.

Buttevant again started the half well with Alison Dunlea pointing a free. But Brian Dillon's dug deep and keeping the pressure on the Buttevant defence they were rewarded with a Sophie Porter-Foley goal and Rebecca Barry pointed to cut the Buttevant lead to just a point.

Buttevant responded well with Sarah Dunlea and Laura O'Brien combining well before Kate O'Connell gained possession and evaded defenders before finishing to the net. Boosted by this they came in search of more and a Dunlea goal sealed victory as they ran out winners despite a spirited display from Brian Dillon's who battled to the finish and never gave up.

With Lauren Dunlea from Buttevant named as Player of the Match it sealed a great day and season for the club.

Scorers for Buttevant: N. Guinane 2-0, K. O'Connell, S. Dunlea 1-0 each, C. Trimm 0-2 f, A. Dunlea 0-1 f.

Brian Dillon's: S. Porter-Foley 1-4 f, R. Barry 0-1.

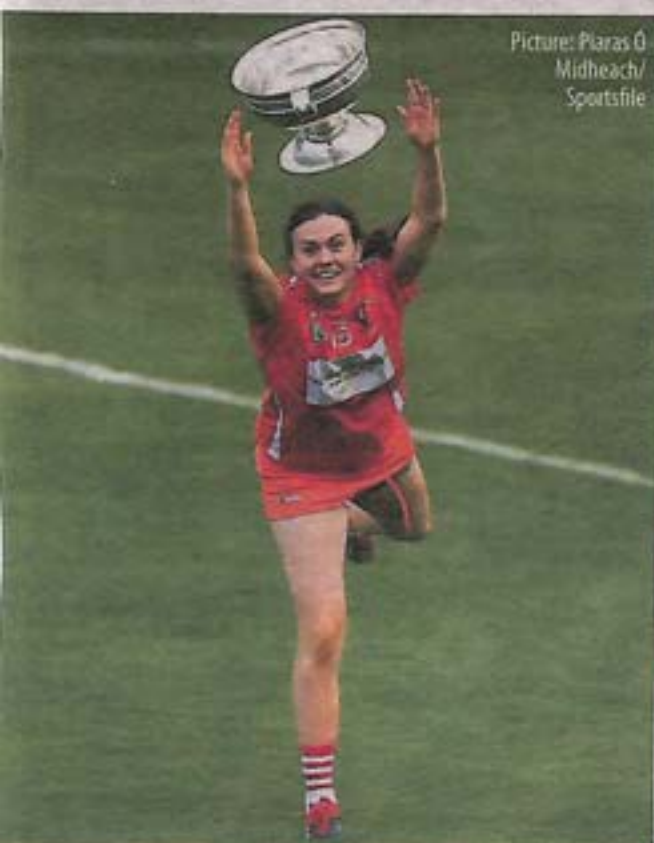
BUTTEVANT: C. Carroll, R. Lenahan, R. Enright (c), O. Fitzmaurice, R. Brosnan, A. Dunlea, A. Carroll, S. Dunlea, E. Kennedy, L. Dunlea, K. O'Connell, N. Guinane, C. Trimm, L. O'Brien, S. Jewitt.

Subs: A. Jenks for C. Trimm, B. Dunlea for R. Lenahan, L. Daly for S. Jewitt.

BRIAN DILLON'S: C. Alavoine, P. O'Hara, E. Brady, T. White, C. Brady, M. O'Sullivan, N. Mulcahy, E. Smith, A. O'Callaghan, R. Barry, R. O'Connell, A. Garvan, Z. Cotter, S. Porter-Foley, J. Fuchon.

Subs: E. Ray for A. O'Callaghan, S. McSweeney for T. White.

What a difference a week makes...



Picture: Piaras Ó Midheach/Sportsfile



Picture: Brendan Moran/Sportsfile



NECK AND NECK: Briege Corkery and Rena Buckley

Serial thrillers in camogie world

■ John Dolan

CORK dual star Rena Buckley announced her retirement from the inter-county scene in May this year.

Her final tally of All-Irelands stood at 18: seven camogie medals and 11 in football.

In an interview in last year's *Holly Bough*, Rena had hinted she was about to hang up her boots and said the team-mate with whom she had the best bond was Briege Corkery. Her friend then had 17 All-Ireland medals, and Rena said: "She might overtake me yet!"

Well, Briege ended a two-year hiatus from inter-county this year — during which she became a mother to son, Tadhg — and duly snapped up her own 18th All-Ireland medal with Cork's camogie team. Her record is now identical to her great friend, Rena — seven camogie titles and 11 at ladies' football.

However, in an interview after winning her 18th medal, Briege insisted Rena's record was far from her mind. "That was one of my biggest fears, that people would think I was only coming back to get the medal to be equal with Rena," she told *The Irish Times*.

"That's not the case at all. If I had wanted to stay level-pegging with Rena, I'd have played last year. And this time last year, if you asked me would I be playing again I'd probably have said no."

The big question now is... will Briege be around in 2019 to try for medal No.19?

Now — a mea culpa. In last year's *Holly Bough* article about Rena, we mistakenly stated that the record haul of camogie All-Irelands was the 12 won by Ann Downey of Kilkenny. Not so.

Reader Tony McMahon, of Dublin, pointed out: "The record is 15, held by the late Kathleen Mills of Dublin. She won her 15th All Ireland in 1961 at the age of 38 and to quote Max Boyce, 'I was there'."

"Her father was a Corkonian. He worked for the Great Southern Railway and he became a widower when Kathleen was very young and his mother-in-law helped him rear her."

"Her club was CIE, which became Transport Gaels some years back. Christy Ring is reputed to have said of Kathleen that if she were a man, he wouldn't like to play against her. One of her teammates, Una O'Connor, worked in a shop in the area I grew up in and she has 13 All Ireland medals."



Many thanks to Mr McMahon for putting us right.

Kathleen (left) played senior camogie for Dublin from 1941 until 1961 and was indeed one of the all-time greats. She was 16 in that

debut year, when the Dubs lost the All-Ireland camogie final to Cork. Kathleen got her revenge the year after when she helped them beat Cork in a replay.

In 1942, when Dublin beat Cork again, Kathleen scored one of her team's eight goals from fully 50 yards out.

She won a further 13 All-Irelands, including four as captain between 1958 and 1961, when she had her last outing for the Dubs on her 38th birthday. Her tally could have been even greater had Dublin not been precluded from the championship in 1945 and 1946, after a dispute with the camogie association.

Kathleen died in 1996, aged 72, and in 2010 the camogie trophy for the annual inter-county All Ireland Championship for counties graded Junior was named in her honour.

RARELY can two photos have encapsulated the joy and agony of sport more than those above, taken just seven days apart.

On the left, on September 9, Hannah Looney is celebrating All-Ireland victory with Cork's camogie team at Croke Park.

On the right, on September 16, the dual star is having tears wiped from her eyes after losing to Dublin in the All-Ireland Ladies' Football final on the same turf.

It's fair to say that, at just 21, Hannah has already felt every high and low: emotions that some sports people go their entire career without experiencing.

From a young age, the Aghada native had dreamed of representing Cork in the two codes. In 2018, those dreams were realised on the biggest stage of all when she was named in the 15 for both All-Ireland finals, alongside another dual player, Libby Coppinger.

The first part of the double-header went like a dream, as Cork defeated Kilkenny in a nerve-jangling final, 0-14 to 0-13. Hannah won her fourth senior All-Ireland camogie medal in five seasons, lining out at half-back for Paudie Murray's side.

It took a magnificent 60-metre pressure-ridden free from Orla Cotter in the dying seconds to deliver back-to-back O'Duffy cups, and Looney recalls the first moments after the final whistle with a smile.

"It was phenomenal. You can't really eat it. If you could bottle that feeling and sell it you would be a millionaire. We won the All-Ireland, it's amazing and you are as high as a kite. It was just class."

"When the whistle finally went, it was when you put in so much to something, it feels phenomenal, I was on cloud nine."

Fast forward seven days, to the same location, the same time, the same jersey, but the end feeling couldn't have been more different, as the Rebels crashed to a 1-11 to 1-12 defeat to Dublin.

Looney, who started at midfield, admits the game is now a blur and, even a month later when I spoke to her, it was clearly still a painful experience to recall.

Dual star Hannah Looney tells LINDA CROWLEY about her rollercoaster year

"Looking back, I can't even remember the camogie or the football finals, none of it," said Hannah. But she does remember the feeling of loneliness in Croke Park when Cork lost to Dublin, even though there was a record crowd of more than 50,000 surrounding her — most of them celebrating wildly.

"It didn't really hit until the Wednesday after the football, you are in a bubble and it just bursts," said Hannah.

"It's crazy, you are training so hard for so long and then when the final whistle goes, Croke Park can be a lonely, lonely place. It can be grim. I am only coming around now, trying to get back to normal."

"It's tough. Even when you mention Cork football at the moment, I still find it hard to talk about."

Despite the rollercoaster Hannah has endured, you can sense the excitement radiating off her at the prospect of what both teams can achieve in 2019.

In camogie, Cork will chase the elusive three-in-a-row — something they have failed to do numerous times since the four-in-a-row team of 1973. When they last went for it, in 2016, they lost to Kilkenny.

"When you look back to 2016, the match wasn't lost on the day," said Hannah. "So many mistakes were made throughout the year, I think everyone just took their

eye off the ball. Like missing training wasn't a big deal, or going out socialising here and there wasn't a big deal, it was all grand, but I think we learnt so much from 2016 that hopefully we won't make the same mistakes again in 2019."

"That hunger needs to be there, we have to treat it like we are going for our first All-Ireland. Hopefully, all the management and players will stay on."

It was a great year for Cork camogie as the intermediate and minor teams also won All-Irelands, which can only benefit the senior cause.

"We are developing as a panel so much more than anything," said Hannah. "It's crazy when you think about it, we won an All-Ireland in 2015 and were only playing 15 or 16 players and this year we had about 20 players we could confidently start."

"That's so exciting, so we have 20 or 21 strong players now and will have another two or three blooded in this year."

As for the footballers, she is confident the group will bounce back and exciting times lie ahead for the young panel.

"There is a really good mix between the older and younger ones. Ciara (O'Sullivan) would hate me saying this but she likes of her and Martina (O'Brien) are like the mothers in one sense, then the likes of Eimear Scally, Eimear Meaney, myself and Aishling Kelleher, we have all been playing since U14 and are just coming together at senior level. It is really, really exciting and hopefully everyone sticks at it."

12th time unlucky for football winning machine

THE defeat for Cork in the Ladies' Football Final brought to an end one of the most remarkable sequences in modern sport.

Before this year, the Rebels had competed in 11 finals — and won them all! Had they beaten Dublin in September, they would have moved clear ahead of Kerry as the county with most overall titles. Perhaps most remarkably of all, Kerry themselves won all their first 11 All-Ireland football finals... and lost their 12th, against Cork, in 2012.

In other sports, the great Joe Davis won all 15 world championship finals he contested, although in that era, the champion played a challenge match against one opponent each year. Jack Nicklaus holds the record for most golf major titles, with 18, but the fact he was also a runner-up on 18 occasions is often thrown up as an example of his enduring dominance.

Barryroe crowned minor camogie champs

BARRYROE: The minor camogie team are West Cork champions after a tense 1-6 to 0-5 win away to Clonakilty on Tuesday of last week. It was all square at 0-2 each at half-time but a determined Barryroe emerged in the second half and an Orla Deasy goal was the crucial score.

Team: Therese McCarthy, Naomi Murphy, Roisin Dullea, Clodagh Moloney, Eva Scallan Dowd, Andrea Tobin, Aldeen O'Riordan, Grace Tobin (0-1), Clara Collins, Chloe Collins (0-1), Maeve Whelton, Clara O'Sullivan (0-2), Sarah Harrington, Orla Deasy (1-0), Jessica McCarthy (0-1), Roisin McCarthy (0-1), Megan Murphy, Sarah O'Regan, Eimear Sheehy.

Congratulations to Jessica McCarthy, who has been selected on the Cork U16 panel for next year.

As we come to the end of another busy year let us reflect on what has been achieved both on and off the fields of play and acknowledge the huge amount of work by so many people in making this a successful year. We thank all those who have contributed to our activities in any way. To all, we say you are a credit to yourselves, to our Club and your community. Nollaig shona agus athbhliain faoi mhaise daoibh go léir.

The Christmas Day swim in Broadstrand is now celebrating its 44th year and this year donations are in aid of Cystic Fibrosis Children's Ward in CUH.

DEC.
2018



The Barryroe U18 camogie team that was crowned West Cork champions for 2018.

Dilworth ends great year with another award

BY GER MCCARTHY

INNISCARRA'S Niamh Dilworth capped off a superb year by being crowned Cork camogie club player of the year at the Rearden's All-Star awards.

Dilworth contributed 1-7 during her club's AIB Munster Championship senior camogie final victory over Inagh-Kilnamona (Clare) last month. That success came hot on the heels of a third consecutive senior championship win over Courcey Rovers.

One of seven Inniscarra players - Sheila Walsh, Rena Buckley, Rosie O'Mahony, Katie O'Mahony, Treasa McCarthy and Niamh McCarthy - honoured on the Rearden's All-Star camogie team of the year, Dilworth was delighted to pick up an All-Star award but was taken

aback at receiving the overall player accolade.

'I'm absolutely thrilled at winning an All-Star award within Cork county is one thing but to receive the overall player of the year award is fantastic,' she said.

'It is great to receive such an award on behalf of the entire Inniscarra squad after the success we had in 2018. Seeing seven Inniscarra players on the overall team of the year just shows the depth of talent within our squad and I'm delighted for them.

'That county final win against Courcey Rovers was the toughest game we had all year. We all knew heading into it that it was going to be nothing less than a tough battle. That match really stood to us against Ahane in the Munster semi-final, I can tell you. We

were down two points at half time in that one but the experience from going toe to toe with Courceys two weeks previous was vital to us.'

Reaching a Munster decider, Inniscarra came face to face with the Clare champions Inagh-Kilnamona in a game Dilworth underlined her importance to her team.

Scoring a goal after three minutes, the winners' vice-captain went on to add seven points (five frees) in a 2-9 to 0-7 triumph.

Dilworth's contribution along with Claudia Keane's 1-1 was enough to earn Inniscarra the provincial title and an All-Ireland semi-final meeting with Leinster champions St Martin's (Wexford) next month.

'I suppose we got off to something of a

lucky start in the Munster final and just kicked on from there really,' Dilworth noted.

'We are lucky to have such a strong underage structure which has helped develop our senior team over recent years. Our management team did fantastic work in blending the youth in with our experienced players this year. A lot of the players that came on to the senior panel have really had to stand up for themselves when it comes to playing in the championship. The training those girls got is the reason we are being successful now.

'Seeing the likes of Claudia Keane come on in the Munster final and scoring 1-1 is pushing all the experienced players like myself to train harder. We have to if we want to keep our places!'



Aoife Murray (Cork) accepting the Camogie Player of the Year award from Munster GAA Chairman Jerry O'Sullivan at the 2018 Munster GAA Awards held at Fota Island Resort.



Newly crowned Cork Senior Cross-Country champion Tim O'Donoghue with his wife Emer. Picture: John Walsh

A special year for Rebel camogie

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

WITH the pitch activities on hold, it's the time of year when we look back on the year.

To say 2018 has been a good one on the inter-county scene for Cork is certainly an understatement. A trophy-laden cabinet is an indicator of just how good a year it has been on the playing fields, off the pitch as well the county board continued to spearhead their Castle Road development as they endeavoured to take the project towards its conclusion.

Despite a heavy fixture laden season at the local level, Cork camogie blossomed and grabbed all the headlines as the trophies kept rolling in. Cork became the first county to take senior, intermediate and minor All-Ireland titles in the same year.

When you add in a Division 2 National League title, and provincial honours at senior, intermediate, junior and U16 A, the year has really been one to look back at with huge satisfaction.

Personal honours came rolling in as well with Paudie Murray's feat of leading the county to a double acknowledged as he was named the Camogie Association's Manager of the Year. There were seven All-Star awards with Aoife Murray, Pamela Mackey, Hannah Looney, Orla Cotter, Chloe Sigerson, Katrina Mackey and Gemma O'Connor all picked.

The same number of Soaring Star awards were won by the intermediates with Amy Lee, Sarah Harrington, Leah Weste, Jennifer Barry, Kaitlin Hickey, Saoirse McCarthy and Catriona Collins climbing the steps to the stage on a night when Cork were without a doubt the leading county.

The year got off to a good start as the seniors edged out Limerick, 2-17 to 2-13, in the league semi-final as they set up a final meeting with Kilkenny. On the day it was Cork who were on the wrong side of a one-point scoreline as Kilkenny got revenge for their defeat in the All-Ireland final a year earlier. You got the feeling this was only a warm-up and there would be bigger fish to fry.

Before championship got underway the Munster series saw Cork beat Waterford and Clare. And on the day when long-serving Orla Cotter walked up the aisle for her wedding, her teammates were in the new Páirc Uí Chaoimh facing Tipperary.

Aoife Murray became the first female to lift a trophy in the new stadium.

Championship action got underway on June 10 and with Wexford, Dublin, Tipperary, Meath and Offaly all defeated Cork were through to a semi-final meeting with Tipperary. Cork signalled they were in no mood to relinquish their title to defeat Tipperary 0-19 to 0-6.

For the third year in a row, it was to be Cork versus Kilkenny in the final! Ann Downey and her charges were in confident mood as they faced down the champions and before the game even started the gauntlets were thrown down that this one was not going to be won easily. We had the comical situation of a huge group of Kilkenny players jostling and surrounding the Cork forwards before the ball was thrown in.



Cork's Amy O'Connor is hooked by Tipperary's Karen Kennedy during the Munster senior camogie championship final at Páirc Uí Chaoimh in May.
Picture: Eddie O'Hare



Cork's Laura Treacy examines her broken hurley during the league semi-final at CIT.
Picture: INPHO/Oliver Keniry

At one stage there were at least eight players standing in front of the Kilkenny keeper toe to toe before the linesman finally sorted it out and got them into the correct formation. This Liberty Insurance final was always going to be in your face stuff!

When the sides finally settled down Kilkenny were hugely defensive to stop the Cork attack and any kind of a running game.

Cork dominated the early stages despite Michelle Quilty opening the scoring giving Kilkenny an early lead. Chloe Sigerson and Orla Cotter edged Cork in front converting two frees and Cork were denied a certain goal when Linda Collins was foiled. Aoife Murray pointed the resulting penalty.

And when Cotter pointed a long-range effort Cork were three clear. Denise Gaule converted a free before Aoife Murray denied Kilkenny at the expense of a 45 which Gaule duly converted.

verted.

Cork stretched it to two with Chloe Sigerson and Katrina Mackey pointing but Denise Gaule pushed Kilkenny two in front with three pointed frees and one from play but it was Cork who finished the half stronger with two excellent Orla Cronin points and it was 0-8 each at the break.

The second half was tight, on four occasions the sides were level, puck counted, every free was vital and every ball so important. Cork hit the front with a Mackey point and it was level on four occasions through the next half hour as both sides dug deep.

Aoife Murray denied Katie Power with a brilliant save on 51 minutes and as Kilkenny threw everything at them the Cork defence stood firm.

Still, Kilkenny regained the lead. The final three minutes plus four of injury time was hectic!

Amy O'Connor tied it up with three

“Cork camogie blossomed and grabbed the headlines as the trophies kept rolling in.”

minutes remaining and winning a free Chloe Sigerson landed a huge effort between the posts to give Cork the lead.

Yet with a minute on the stopwatch, Gaule leveled again. A draw looked on the cards but driven on by the huge heart they possess the champions were not giving up their title easily.

Once again they struck late tearing down field Orla Cotter won a free and confidently standing over what was possibly the most important shot of her playing career the Cork stalwart sent it sailing towards Hill 16.

With one hand on the O'Duffy Cup, they just needed to hold their composure and defending one last Kilkenny attack was thwarted as they retained their title by the narrowest of margins.

A classic it certainly was not and but that didn't worry Cork! Champions for the 28th time.

Cork's loss has been a gain for Inniscarra

CAMOGIE

■ Denis Hurley

WHILE the absence of Rena Buckley for the first time in two decades was Cork's loss in 2018 – though the county won another All-Ireland senior camogie title – it was certainly a gain for her club Inniscarra.

Buckley, who captained Cork an O'Duffy Cup win in 2017 – her 18th senior medal across camogie and ladies' football – announced her retirement in May.

Having been part of the Inniscarra sides which won county camogie honours in 2016 and 2017, she helped the club to a three-in-a-row in the autumn, going on to claim Munster too, leaving them looking ahead to the All-Ireland series in 2019.

Her presence is something Inniscarra captain Treasa McCarthy cited as being a huge advantage to the Muskerry club.

"Rena's an incredible player," she says. "She's a credit to the club and to Cork county. She retired from intercounty this year and it has actually been fantastic for us because it has ensured that she has been at all of our training sessions; whereas maybe she would have been with Cork before."

"She has certainly instilled the belief in us that we can do it and she has brought training up to another level, absolutely."

Buckley herself didn't feature for Cork in the national league as she contemplated her options and, when she found she didn't miss it, she made the call.

"I suppose I would have had thoughts about it at the start of last year, as well as the start of 2017," she said.

"The way it panned out with Inniscarra winning the county in 2016 and with captaincy, I felt like it was a huge honour and one not to be overlooked."

"I went back last year and put my heart and soul into it. I suppose I knew from the start of this year, that I didn't have the same grá to go back playing. I was coming to the conclusion that if you didn't have that madness to play, you are probably not going to do yourself justice on the field."

Unlike so many, she went out at the top, something which made the decision easier.

"I would be lying to say that I wouldn't," she said.

"I certainly would have been very content last year, I felt really did my very best."

"I think that is a much easier note to leave on than if you hadn't quite performed on the day, or if things went wrong for yourself, or if you were injured towards the end of the year, or something like that."

"I am quite content with how things finished up and that's important because I suppose you invest so much emotionally over the years, and it's nice to have that bit of contentment at the end."

A busy physiotherapy clinic in Macroom will keep her occupied. She won't be short of activity, certainly.

"I'm a good person to fill time so I can't imagine I would be sitting at home, drinking tea; I say I will be kept going!"



JOY ON THE DOUBLE!

By Shirley Moloney, Cork Camogie PRO

It was another big day in Croke Park on Sunday, September 9 when Cork lined out in both the senior and intermediate Liberty Insurance All-Ireland camogie finals for the third year in a row.



(Pic: Louise Gervin)

Having secured a narrow one-point victory over rivals Kilkenny in 2017, the senior team successfully retained the O'Duffy Cup in 2018. The final was a repeat of 2017, whereby Cork defeated Kilkenny and, once again, by a solitary point. The intermediates were making their third appearance in a final and, having suffered defeat to Meath after a replay in 2017 and succumbing to Kilkenny in 2016, they attained silverware in 2018 when they accounted for Down.

Reflecting on the 2018 year, the senior side registered victories over Galway, Wexford, Tipperary and Offaly in the group stages of the Littlewoods Ireland Division 1 league to see them book a semi-final place against Limerick. They overcame the Shannonsiders in CIT on a scoreline of 2-17 to 2-13 to set up a league final decider with Kilkenny as part of a double-header with the Allianz Hurling League final in Nowlan Park on April 8. In a repeat of the previous year, Cork registered their first defeat of the season when they lost to Kilkenny 0-15 to 1-11.

In the Munster championship, Cork overcame Waterford in a preliminary round fixture before defeating Clare in Cusack Park in the semi-final to book a place in the final against Tipperary. Having relinquished the Munster title to Limerick in 2017, Cork regained the title with a comprehensive 0-19 to 0-6 victory over Tipperary in Páirc Uí Chaoimh.

The Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Championship commenced in June and Cork topped their group with victories over Wexford, Dublin, Tipperary, Meath and Offaly. On August 18 in Semple Stadium, they overcame Tipperary by 0-21 to 0-9 in the semi-final to book their place in the All-Ireland final on September 9. A determined victory over Kilkenny ensued, with

Cork taking their 28th title by the slimmest of margins, 0-14 to 0-13. Victorious captain Aoife Murray climbed the steps of the Hogan Stand to lift the O'Duffy Cup, much to the delight of her brother and team manager Paudie, the backroom team and all the players.

The intermediate season culminated in All-Ireland victory for the side when they finally tasted success after two consecutive defeats in final. The side added to their league title and Munster titles obtained earlier in the season. Cork played 14 competitive games in the 2018 season and registered victories in 12. Defeat occurred against Westmeath in the group stages of the league and a draw transpired in the group stages of championship when they finished level at 0-10 apiece in their away fixture with Derry.

En route to retaining their Division 2 league title, they accounted for Carlow, Antrim, Wexford and Down while suffering a defeat to Westmeath in the group stages to progress to a semi-final pairing with Kilkenny. Defeating Kilkenny with seven points to spare set them up for a final spot against Westmeath. On April 29 in St Lachtain's, Freshford Cork defeated Westmeath by 0-8 to 1-4 to retain the title.

On May 6, the side added to their silverware when they captured the Munster intermediate championship title with an emphatic victory over Tipperary, 1-19 to 0-2, at Ballyagran.

In the All-Ireland intermediate championship group stages, the side registered wins over Carlow, Laois and Down and drew with Derry. They had enough done to top their group and secure a semi-final spot against Galway. They recorded a 0-14 to 0-9 victory to secure an All-Ireland final place against Down



Orla Cotter in action



Julia White

(Pic: Trevor Pashley)



(Pic. James Cramble)

Cork senior captain Aoife Murray lifts the O'Duffy Cup



(Pic. Tommy O'Sullivan)

Cork intermediate captain Sarah Harrington lifts the Jack McGrath Cup

BRILLIANT BUCKLEY STILL GOING STRONG

WHILE the absence of Rena Buckley for the first time in two decades was Cork's loss in 2018 – though the county won another All-Ireland senior camogie title – it was certainly a gain for her club Inniscarra.

► Buckley, who captained Cork an O'Duffy Cup win in 2017 – her 18th senior medal across camogie and ladies' football – announced her retirement in May. Having been part of the Inniscarra sides which won county camogie honours in 2016 and 2017, she helped the club to a three in a row in the autumn, going on to claim Munster too, leaving them looking ahead to the All-Ireland series in 2019.

Her presence is something Inniscarra captain Treasa McCarthy cited as being a huge advantage to the Muskerry club.

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"She has certainly instilled the belief in us that we can do it and she has brought training up to another level, absolutely."

Buckley herself didn't feature for Cork in the national league as she contemplated her options and, when she found she didn't miss it, she made the call.

"I suppose I would have had thoughts about it at the start of last year, as well as the start of 2017," she said.

"The way it panned out with Inniscarra winning the county in 2016 and with captaincy, I felt like it was a huge honour and one not to be overlooked.

"I went back last year and put my heart and soul into it. I suppose I knew from the start of this year, that I didn't have the same grá to go back playing. I was coming to the conclusion that if you didn't have that madness to play, you are probably not going to do yourself justice on the field.

"So it was kind of a gradual process but I had an inkling that it was coming at the same time."

Unlike so many, she has gone out at the top, something which made the decision easier.

"I would be lying to say that it wouldn't," she said.

"I certainly would have been very content last year, I felt I really did my very best.

"I think that is a much easier note to leave on than if you hadn't quite performed on the day, or if things went wrong for yourself, or if you were injured towards the end of the year, or something like that.

"I am quite content with how things finished up and that's important because I suppose you invest so much emotionally over the years, and it's nice to have that bit of contentment at the end."

Though still only in her early 30s, Buckley has a lot of miles on the clock and she didn't want her retirement to be drawn out.

"I'm not in my early 20s anymore," she says.

"I would have known you can't stay going forever and if it wasn't this year, it would be next year.

"I would have known it wasn't far away and I am quite content from that point of view.

"I did have discussions with the Cork camogie management, and the football management to be fair, and we went through things.

"It was a decision I had to make for myself. They were very understanding and there is mutual respect there for sure."

A busy physiotherapy clinic in Macroom will keep her occupied. She won't be short of activity, certainly.

"I'm a good person to fill time so I can't imagine I would be sitting at home, drinking tea; I'd say I will be kept going!"



Moira strikes the right balance to inspire Rebels to All-Ireland title

BY GER MCCARTHY

FEW secondary school students get to experience the joys of leading their county to an All-Ireland success, let alone playing an integral role in aiding their club's annexing of a county junior B title in the same calendar year.

Yet both those two accolades belong to Cork and Ballinascorthy's Moira Barrett.

The Bandon Grammar student scored 0-3 in Cork's 0-18 to 1-11 All-Ireland win over Galway, becoming the county's first captain to lift the minor A trophy since 2006.

Add to that, Cork Camogie junior B championship success with her local club and Moira has every reason to look back on 2018 as a memorable year.

Living in Lyre with parents Con and Mary, brother Eamonn and twin-sisters Anne and Maggie, the youngest of the Barrett siblings has had to deal with a huge amount of time management for someone so young.

How difficult is it for an 18-year-old inter-county player considering all the school, work, club and county commitments, not to mention hundreds of miles in the family car?

'It can be really, really tough,' Moira admitted.

'You have commitments pretty much every day of the week. I'm one of the lucky ones when it comes to school in that Bandon Grammar is a boarding school so I stay on in the library and complete my homework. I can also have my dinner in the school around 5.30pm before my Mum picks me up in Bandon on the way to Cork for training.'

'It does make for very long evenings. My teachers expect me to have everything (homework and assignments) done though. It is expected that you can manage the workload but there are times that it can become a bit too much with so much going on. Sometimes you have to take a step back, not from sport but just a step back to clear your head.'

'With so many demands it is all about finding a way to manage your time but it has to be your own way as well. I was extremely lucky during the summer months in that the Clonakilty Park Hotel management - where I work - were incredibly helpful.'

'They were very understanding and allowed me to schedule my work around my other commitments. My teachers were equally helpful in that they would be tipped off when I had a lot going on and were always supportive. I definitely needed all that help.'



Cork captain Moira Barrett from Ballinascorthy lifts the trophy with her teammates after the young Rebels' fantastic win against Galway in the All-Ireland minor A camogie championship final in Nenagh at the end of May.

The two most striking aspects of Moira's character become immediately obvious when interviewing the Cork minor captain. Her passion for her

chosen sport is as impressive as her maturity when it comes to discussing the merits of sacrificing so much of her free time. So, is putting in all that effort

- even though it delivered an All-Ireland medal - sustainable and does she worry it could it yet take its toll?

'I would agree that things are intense for someone like myself at such a young age,' Moira concurred.

'I have been training four days a week since second year and that can be hard going sometimes. It is fine though once you find your balance, once you know what you can and can't manage and you are not putting yourself under too much pressure.'

'Obviously, any player worries about picking up injuries but that's all part of the game. I was on crutches at the start of this season when I first met the Cork minor manager Jerry Wallace. I didn't know how long I was going to be out and only came back a month before the All-Ireland championship. Those few weeks watching training and thinking I might not be able to be involved were really scary.'

Another endorsement of Moira's maturity and burgeoning talent was when the Bandon Grammar student was offered

the captaincy of her county by Cork minor selectors manager Jerry Wallace (Midleton) and selectors Michael Walsh (Midleton) and Mike Boland (Carrigtwohill). Although unexpected, the responsibility sat easily on her shoulders.

'I did not expect the captaincy at all,' the rising Ballinascorthy star commented.

'The minor club championship hadn't been completed so there was no one to nominate. I remember shaking when I got the phone call because I genuinely could not believe it. I had no idea what was going on!'

'It wasn't any added pressure because there were so many strong individuals and leaders already on the Cork team. Motivating people was never needed because all of the players are self-motivated anyway.'

'Most people were shocked to hear that I was captain but I was a huge honour and something I never expected. To me, it was a huge thing as I never expected it.'

'There were a lot of girls promoted onto that panel from the previous year's U16 squad but I had to go for a trial. I man-

aged to get on the U17 squad and came on in most of our matches before starting most of our Munster championship games. This year, winning the All-Ireland minor, there was more continuity as it was the majority of last year's 17s squad involved plus a few new players as well.'

'It was incredibly important for me to have the two Newcestown girls, Aisling O'Donovan and Ciara O'Sullivan, with me in the Cork set-up. Not alone for splitting the long spins but just having someone to have the chats with.'

'It was good to have not just team-mates but friends to talk to about something that might have gone wrong in training or a game.'

'Having friends going through the same experiences as you made a lot of long roads less lonely.'

Moira has overcome her fears, dealing with long journeys, injuries and managing her time better than individuals twice her age. Ballinascorthy and Cork camogie have a player to build their respective futures around.



Moira Barrett won a Celtic Ross West Cork Junior Sports Star Award for her camogie heroics.

Libby Coppinger was busier than most these past 12 months. **GER MCCARTHY** spoke to the All-Ireland winner about dual commitments, winning another O'Duffy Cup and the West Cork ladies' increased profile

A year of highs, lows and drama for Libby

INTER-COUNTY dual star Libby Coppinger experienced a host of highs and lows that few 22-year-old GAA players in her position would have been able for.

Yet, after 12 months the fourth year Public Health UCC student is unlikely to ever forget, Coppinger enters the New Year with a smile on her face and another All-Ireland medal in her back pocket.

The St Colum's and West Cork star ignored intense media scrutiny of college and inter-county commitment issues to become one of 37 female inter-county players to receive a third-level scholarship from the Women's Gaelic Players Association.

Add in a Celtic Ross West Cork Sports Star of the month award and the Coomhola, Bantry, native has more reasons to look back on 2018 in a positive rather than negative light.

March: Dual trouble.

A public spat between Coppinger's Cork senior camogie and UCC women's football managers grabbed plenty of unwanted media attention. UCC's involvement in the third-level O'Connor Cup occurred on the same date as Cork camogie's Division 1 semi-final, affecting three individuals. Coppinger chose to line out for her college while Meabh Cahalane and Hannah Looney opted for Cork.

Eight months on and Coppinger offered mature perspective on the issue: 'There are players all over the country, not just in Cork, faced with similar dual football and camogie commitments all the time now.'

'Better planning is needed and better communication

between the organisations involved. I am only a small part of it as the managers and players involved in these things are impacted the most, to be honest.

'People can focus on me all they want but it affects a lot of other people too. No one wants to be choosing one sport over the other but luckily, when it was all going on, I had my family for support and they gave me a good insight in to what I should do.'

June: Crisis averted.

Coppinger and Looney were back in the news during the early part of the summer when Cork's footballers and camogie teams were each scheduled to play on Saturday, June 23rd. Thankfully, common sense prevailed and the Camogie Association moved Cork's clash with Dublin to the following day.

'The good thing about that situation is that something positive happened to avoid a fixture conflict,' the 22-year-old St Colum's player noted.

'In the past, the whole attitude would have been the girls will just have to put up with it and try to work around it. Luckily, common sense prevailed and luckily, it is just not possible for us (players) to be asked to play twice in the one day.'

'I think the GAA is trying to come up with a way to make sure that camogie is played one weekend and football on the other. It makes sense to have a weekend dedicated to each sport.'

September: Another All-Ireland.

An All-Ireland winner in 2017 under Paudie Murray's stewardship, Coppinger returned to Croke Park for another showdown with Kilkenny this past



Libby Coppinger shows no signs of nerves ahead of the All-Ireland senior camogie final against Kilkenny at Croke Park in September.

'There are players all over the country, not just in Cork, faced with similar dual football and camogie commitments all the time now. Better planning is needed and better communication between the organisations involved' – Libby Coppinger

September. Retaining their Liberty Insurance All-Ireland senior camogie title was always going to be difficult and unsurprisingly, Kilkenny pushed Coppinger and her team mates to the absolute limit.

It took a late Orla Cotter free to bring the O'Duffy Cup back to Leaside for the second year running.

'Obviously, it was a feeling of pure happiness at the final whistle but relief as well,' Coppinger remembered.

'The two All-Ireland finals I've been involved in have been so close. The Cork camogie team likes to make hard work of it when it comes to winning All-Irelands alright! It was bril-

liant to win it again especially considering the great battles we have had with Kilkenny over the last two years.

'We had a bit of luck and things just went right for us on the day. We were unlucky in the All-Ireland football and that was disappointing. My father wouldn't let me feel down for too long about that though as he kept saying "sure look, wouldn't be giving out if you were told that you'd have an All-Ireland medal in your back pocket at the end of the year!"

'When it comes to All-Irelands, it is a case of taking it all in and enjoying those games as much as you possibly can.'

October: So near and yet so

far.

Fresh from winning another All-Ireland medal, Coppinger turned her attentions to helping the West Cork ladies football squad reach a first ever Cork senior final. But standing in the Carbery side's way of making history was Mourneabbey.

A pulsating county final ended in a draw when Rosscarbery's Sarah Hayes kicked over a 69th minute injury-time equaliser. Mourneabbey proved too strong in the replay and the defending champions ran out convincing winners in front of another bumper attendance at Cloughduv.

'It is great that West Cork takes ladies football so serious-

ly,' she said.

'We (West Cork) have established ourselves as one of the key competitors in ladies' football within the county. Mourneabbey and St Val's have been the top two for so long so it was important West Cork got to a county final this year.'

'That showed how many great players are in West Cork and that we can play as a team. Brian (McCarthy), Dinny (Enright) and Anne (O'Grady) have been incredible and kept it going for the last three years. It is a pity we couldn't get over the line in the end (for them) because they have put so much great work into ladies' football.'

'You don't notice the fact so many people are coming to the senior ladies' championship games until you have a chance to reflect on the games after they are finished. It is great to see so much coverage in *The Southern Star* too and that definitely helps increase people's interest in ladies' GAA.'

What a year for this Cork side

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

YEARS of heartache were put to one side and tears of joy were shed as Sarah Harrington lifted the Jack McGrath Cup in the Hogan Stand on the first Sunday in September as the All-Ireland ICC title was finally won.

Having lost out in the finals of 2016 and 2017, Cork finally got over the line and it was no more than they deserved as players such as Sara Buckley, Leah Weste, Sarah Harrington, Finola Neville, Caroline Sugrue, Niamh Ni Chaoimh and Lauren Callanan finally got the much-coveted medal they so desperately had yearned for.

The season got underway on February 18 start as the Liberty Insurance leagues got underway and in a six-team group that also contained Carlow, Antrim, Wexford, Down and Westmeath, Cork defended their National League crown.

A trip to Carlow for their opening game saw Cork record a comfortable 1-12 to 0-3 victory and a week later they played host to Antrim and continued their impressive display with a 1-17 to 0-5 win.

After a week's break, it was all systems go as they headed to Wexford where they totally overpowered the home side.

A long trip to Down for round four saw Cork scrape a win with just two points to spare and even at this early stage we knew we would be seeing a lot more of this Down side.

Westmeath travelled to Cork and on an appalling day weather-wise, they held the league champions to a draw as it finished 0-11 apiece but both had done enough to qualified for the semis.

In a hard-fought semi-final, a Rachel O'Callaghan goal proved vital as Cork overcame Kilkenny. Meanwhile, an ever-improving Westmeath overcame Dublin 3-10 to 1-6 to book their place in the final.

This was a new pairing at this level with Westmeath appearing in the Littlewoods Ireland Camogie Leagues Division 2 final for the first time in 35 years. They lost to Dublin in 1983 and gradually slipped down the pecking order but in recent times, huge progress was made.

The final was a close affair and went down to the wire as Pamela Greville's 24th minute goal from a 20-metre free gave Westmeath real hope after they had fallen five points behind and she followed up with a pointed free from the next attack to reduce the gap to the minimum.

However, try as they might, Westmeath could not find the equaliser as Cork defended magnificently in those last eight minutes to hold onto their crown.

As championship dawned, the Cork panel had been strengthened with Niamh Ni Chaoimh returning after a summer break from her teaching post in Abu Dhabi and minors Saoirse McCarthy, Cliona Healy and Laura Hayes called up to join the squad but on the minus side, Linda Collins was a huge loss having been elevated to the senior side for championship.

Cork went in as favourites following an impressive league campaign and in their group they were joined by Carlow, Laois, Derry, and Down and they signified their intentions as they ran



Cork's Sarah Harrington, Leah Weste, Sarah Buckley, Niamh Ni Chaoimh and Finola Neville celebrate with the the Jack McGrath Cup. Picture: Bryan Keane/INPHO.

out easy winners over Carlow hitting an impressive 5-18 before going onto record a round two victory over Laois.

In round three, there was a wake-up call for the side when Cork travelled north as Derry held them to a draw, 0-11 each.

Subsequently, they made the trek to Down for their last game in the group series where they knew a result was needed to maintain their position on top of the group and this they achieved with an impressive 0-18 to 0-6 victory to set up a semi-final meeting with Galway.

One of the main talking points after this semi-final in McDonagh Park, Nenagh, was the injury to referee Gavin Donegan which forced him to retire five minutes into the second half with stand-in referee Peter O'Dowd having to take over the whistle.

From a playing perspective, the statistic that Galway failed to score from play tells the story of a strong defensive display from Cork while the introduction of minor player Cliona Healy as the game entered the final quarter had a major influence in turning the game as the Aghabullogue youngster hit four points to finally settle Cork and put daylight between the sides as Cork ran out winners 0-14 to 0-9 to make it to Croke Park for the third year in a row.

Afterwards, a very relaxed group arrived in Croke Park ready to give it one hell of a go to finally take a crown that had eluded them for so long.

Familiarity breeds contempt is a well-known phrase and familiarity was very much on the minds of this Cork side as preparations got underway for a journey many of them had been on so many times before.

In 2016, Kilkenny were gifted a title in a game that Cork looked to have under control, in 2017 Meath grabbed a draw in a game Cork looked to be coasting home in and in the replay Cork were flat and had no answers as Meath were crowned champions.

In consultation with their management and backroom team the panel decided to break from the norm and not travel to the final until the Sunday morning of the game.

The senior side travelled as usual on the Saturday but the thinking behind the Intermediates decision was that they had a lot of younger players on the panel and they would take the added pressure of an overnight before the game away and simply treat it as another championship game.

The decision worked a treat as the report back was that it was a very relaxed group that arrived in Croke Park ready to give it one hell of a go to finally take a crown that had eluded them for so long.

Cork, having won the title in 2000, 2002 and 2006, and were runners-up on no fewer than six occasions, faced a Down side chasing their first intermediate title and having recorded a 12-point victory when the sides met in the National League, Cork went in as raging favourites but Down showed little regard for this tag and they had to stave off a wonderful effort by a Down who were in contention right to the end, the magnificent Niamh Mallon and Saoirse Sands leading the way as they battled to the final whistle.

Catriona Collins was inspirational scoring 1-6 while minor player Saoirse McCarthy added four from play as Cork put the agony of two consecutive defeats at the last hurdle behind them

to finally become Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Intermediate champions.

Catriona Collins found the net in the 40th minute to put six points between the teams and it was an uphill struggle for Down from here on in and their cause wasn't helped by the harsh sending off of Sara-Louise Carr 10 minutes later, the reason for the second yellow card not obvious and the player was distraught as she left the field.

Points from Sara-Louise Carr and Sands settled down but Saoirse McCarthy, who along with Laura Hayes and substitute Cliona Healy, was winning her second All-Ireland medal in a few months having enjoyed U18 glory, got a chance to show her pace and the player of the match had the teams level in the blink of an eye with a wonderful brace.

Down enjoyed their best period and moved three points clear with two points from Mallon and Paula Gibbon's but they didn't score for the entire second quarter and Cork went in leading 0-7 to 0-5 Collins with three points to bring the teams level before Caroline Sugrue and McCarthy also found the target.

Down were level within five minutes of the restart but it was all Cork from there, as the Leesiders lead by three when Catriona Collins rocketed the net with a fantastic finish at the end of a move that started with a brilliant catch by Siobhan Hutchinson who passed to Finola Neville who moved forward and drew the defence before timing her pass to perfection.

Catriona Collins finished superbly. Down tried hard to respond, but they couldn't threaten and Cork were finally able to end their Intermediate famine.

O'Connor: I know I can still do better

GAA

Barbara O'Connell

AMY O'CONNOR can look back on 2018 with a great deal of satisfaction. The 22-year-old intern pharmacist from Knocknaheeny won her fourth senior All-Ireland camogie medal in Cork's narrow win over Kilkenny and while right now she is enjoying the Christmas holidays with her family, thoughts of three-in-a-row or winning an All Star award are never far from her mind.

O'Connor has that winners' mentality. She is never satisfied. She always wants more from herself and believes there is still more to come for Cork and her beloved club St Vincent's.

This year at senior level, she felt maybe she should have been in the reckoning for an All Star.

She didn't get one, but the former Irish soccer international who played her football with Wilton in Cork will use that snub as one of her motivational points for the new season.

And with some many new talented forwards stepping up to senior level, O'Connor knows she will have to be even better this year than she was the last if she is to retain her place in Paudie Murray's starting 15 for the league and championship.

"We are already back pre-season and I can't wait to get stuck into it again," said O'Connor.

Looking back over last season, O'Connor was delighted with the success, but believes there is always room for improvement.

"Any year that you win the All-Ireland is a great year so we are obviously delighted with that," she said. "I had a good year personally as well, so hopefully next year will be better again."

"I was happy with my year overall but I know I can still do better."

"I could've been better on All-Ireland final day but those games are so tight it can be hard as a forward to stand out, especially against Kilkenny and the way they set up."

"Myself and Linda Collins were in the full forward line and at times there were four and five Kilkenny defenders to two of us, so you were always going to be up against it."

"I scored 1-21 from play throughout the season which is not a bad return."

"I enjoyed so many games this season and it was a bonus that the weather was brilliant this year for the championship, so I enjoyed all the games in Páirc Uí Rinn in the sun."

Although very much a team player, O'Connor was still a little disappointed not to pick up an All Star, but she knows the level of talent across the country was really high.

"With regards to the All Stars, I was disappointed, to be honest, but you can nearly predict it every year who will get one."

"They are a matter of opinion and they are what they are."



Cork's Chloe Sigerson and Amy O'Connor celebrate beating Kilkenny in the Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Senior Camogie final at Croke Park, Dublin. Picture: INPHO/Bryan Keane



Cork's Amy O'Connor with Kilkenny's Davina Tobin, Ann Dalton and Grace Walsh in the All-Ireland Senior Camogie final. Picture: INPHO/Bryan Keane

hard again this year and one person who is responsible for this is Kevin Murray.

"Kevin is a genius, I think. He makes everything about hurling — which I totally agree with."

"There was never a session where it was all running/fitness etc."

"Everything was in relation to the game. Himself and Mazzer were forwards themselves so I think they kind of have the Barcelona football team mentality of 'if you score four goals, we'll score five' — so all of us forwards loved him!"

"Not sure the backs enjoyed his

training sessions as much as us though (or Paudie or Niall)."

"As a forward, I love that kind of style and think camogie should be played like that — make it more exciting to watch, a bit like hurling."

"Often, camogie comes down to a game of frees or just going out to stop the other team from playing, which is very frustrating."

"With the free count in games at the moment, especially in the later stages of the championship — there is no flow to the games and they can be awful to watch and these are the ones shown on TV, which is doing the

“With regards to the All Stars, I was disappointed, to be honest, but you can nearly predict it every year.”

game no favours.

"A good free-taker is worth their weight in gold at the moment in camogie and we're lucky to have two of the best — Orla Cotter and Chloe Sigerson."

O'Connor and her teammates will be going for three-in-a-row this year and although she believes this will be a motivation to work harder, she doesn't think it will be the squad's main focus.

"Going for three-in-a-row is obviously a motivation to work even harder next year — however, I don't think we will think about it too much

— everyone outside will be on about it now for the year but I'm not sure if Cork team has ever done it before so we won't be under any pressure to do it!"

"Obviously, it would be great to do it, but the plan at the moment is just to get everyone back fit and see how we are. The league is starting very early as well, so it'll give other people a chance to try to get into the team. Paudie is good at that, so everyone will get a fair chance."

"With regards to our panel, I don't think we have anyone leaving, which is great. We will have a couple of the intermediates come up alright."

"I think Laura Hayes is very good — she's only out of minor but is very fit and athletic so she will definitely be a great addition. She goes under the radar a bit and doesn't draw much attention, but I think she could be excellent. Out of the minors that were training with us for a bit last year I thought she really transitioned well."

"Saoirse McCarthy is another prospect. She had a great year last year. She is also very fit and athletic and is very confident, so she will be great for the team going forward."

"The newer girls this year have a lot of experience of playing intermediate so that will help them a lot."

"The step-up is huge between the grades, but young blood is what makes a team better."

"My main aim is to hopefully, stay fit and healthy and be better than I was in 2018."



Eoghan Cormican

After comeback, Corkery has bigger plans for 2019

The comeback, though she hadn't intended on one, was triggered by an unexpected phone call from Cork camogie manager Paudie Murray.

Briege Corkery was five months pregnant when Paudie got in touch in December of 2017. She hadn't pulled on a red shirt since September of 2016 and harboured no ambitions of a return to the inter-county scene, so even though the pair would be friendly, she was somewhat bemused as to why he was calling.

"Paudie was like, 'what's the story?' And I was like, 'I dunno, what's the story?'" giggles Briege, recounting the nub of their conversation "I told him I was not due till March. 'Sure, you'll be fine, you can come back after that,' was his reply. I was like, 'whatever'. He finished by saying, 'I'll ring you again in January to see how you're getting on'."

To his word, the Cork manager phoned again the following month. And even though Briege didn't realise as much at the time, Murray had got her thinking.

On Saturday, January 14, Cork opened their 2018 league campaign with a home fixture against Galway. Briege knew the game was on and for the first time in quite a while, she got an awful hankering to be back involved with the county.

This was in marked contrast to the 2017 All-Ireland final a mere four months earlier and that feeling of nothingness as she sat in Croke Park watching Cork secure back-to-back All-Ireland titles. There was no longing to march behind the Artane Band or ascend the steps of the Hogan Stand as she had done in nearly every previous September going back to 2003. Of far more concern was her three-month scan which was scheduled for the day after Cork's one-point final win over Kilkenny.

"I thought that chapter of my life was closed. I thought, this is it now; I'm a past camogie player and my focus from here on will be on my club and being a mother."

"But when they started back for the 2018 league, I just got an awful grá for it. I don't know why. Had Paudie not phoned me, I wouldn't have even thought about [coming back]. And he continued to ring in February and March. He rang me nearly every week to see how I was getting on."

By this stage, she had forced herself out onto the roads around Cloughduv. Two kilometres down to the pitch, six or seven laps of the place and two kilometres back home. Belated exertion, having renounced exercise for almost the first six months of pregnancy.

"I am an awful creature for doing things backwards. When we found out I was pregnant, I didn't do a stroke from July to the week before Christmas. I realised then I was putting on too much weight, it was literally piling on, so it



LGFA president Marie Hickey presenting the cup to Munster captain Briege Corkery following the interprovincials at Waterford IT Sports Campus in November. Despite the provincial win camogie will be Corkery's sole inter-county focus in 2019.

was time to start doing something. The last couple of weeks leading up to the birth, I started doing 5km runs, which was totally backwards.

"When I got home one night from a run, I text Paudie and said, 'I'll be no good to you, it is after taking me 48 minutes to do four kilometres'. Paudie's response was, 'are you having an elephant'."

Baby Tadhg arrived hale and hearty in late March. As with any new addition to the family and adjusting to such, several items were temporarily placed in the backseat.

At Orla Cotter's wedding in late May, camogie conversation was unavoidable. Paudie told the new mother that Cork's conditioning coach, Martin O'Brien, would be in contact to map out a plan of action. There was no need, reckoned Briege.

"I didn't think I'd make any progress, didn't think I'd add anything to the set-up."

That was but half the story.

There were reservations as to how her return would be perceived outside the camp. During a conversation with her sister Katherine, Briege intimated her fear that she'd be accused of having rejoined the set-up solely to try and match Rena Buckley's haul of 18 All-Ireland medals. Katherine's advice was rather straightforward; if you want to go back and play camogie, go back and play camogie.

At the end of June, three months after giving birth, the 16-time All-Star (10 ladies football and six camogie) made her decision.

The long road back to full fitness involved numerous 6.30am starts at Newcestown pitch with Martin O'Brien, baby Tadhg often left with Martin's wife Mary, while Briege was being put through the wringer.

The first couple of weeks were a struggle. The weight wasn't moving, the 2014 All-Ireland winning ladies foot-

ball captain frustrated by the lack of progress.

A stricter diet was enforced and incrementally, her form began to return.

"When you are in a team environment, it's easier. I found it much harder to do things on my own. There were a couple of occasions where Tadhg was sick and Diarmuid was gone training, so I hadn't time to do the individual work which had been prescribed. You'd feel guilty."

"But I was determined to get the necessary work done. I had to send my results to Martin every second day. When I started with Martin, I was around 74kg. He got me down to 62kg in a couple of months."

"Look, I suppose you don't have to have your life to stop because you've had a child. You can concentrate on being a full-time mother or you can concentrate on being a mother, a camogie player and having a life as well."

On route to record

Introduced with two minutes remaining in the All-Ireland semi-final win over Tipperary, the brief cameo at Semple meant she played on route to the record 18th medal.

"It was a different feeling after the match, definitely," Corkery says of the final success.

"Does [the medal] hold less value? For me, it would. That is no disrespect to anybody who does not get to play in an All-Ireland final. When you are used to playing in them, it has a different feeling. If people ask me how many medals I have, I'd always say, 17 and a half."

"I still feel I gave something towards Cork camogie in 2018. And I'd be hoping in 2019 that I could give a little bit more."

For the moment, camogie is her sole focus on the inter-county front. Mind you, speculation was rife the 11-time All-Ireland ladies foot-

ball medal-winner was reprising her dual status when captaining Munster to inter-provincial glory in late November. Having accepted an invitation to join the panel, Briege, somewhat naively, expected her Munster involvement to fly under the radar.

When the respective panels were released on social media a few days before the inter-pros weekend in Waterford, the accompanying headlines carried only one name.

"I opened up a can of worms for myself. I wished I didn't bother saying yes. Then, when we won, people were saying, congratulations, your comeback. I was like, this isn't a comeback. This was supposed to be something to do on the QT."

"I really enjoyed the speed and competitiveness of that weekend. There were other parts of me thinking was I trying to invite myself back onto the Cork football panel, would people think I was going to try to invite myself back onto the Cork football panel. That wasn't my aim. My aim was to go out and play a match and that was it."

All in all, she's glad to be back involved with at least one Cork team.

Having grown tired of the inter-county scene throughout 2016, the Bank of Ireland ambassador committed to neither code in 2017. Even before the 2016 All-Ireland camogie and ladies football finals, she confided in Rena Buckley that she was skipping the following season.

In a total departure from years previous, Briege had found herself reading newspapers the Monday after a game to see was she mentioned in the match report. If she hadn't been, she'd nearly take offence. Coming to and from training, she'd be like a "dog", giving out about this, that and the other.

"I just ran myself out of steam a small bit. You'd be up at 6.15am, on the farm till 6pm and then off out to training. You wouldn't be home until 10pm most nights. There was no downtime. I needed a break. And I did enjoy my time away. Absence makes the heart grow fonder, isn't that what they say. James Masters and Paudie were on to me in 2017 to see would I come back. I was actually going back to the camogie in late June of 2017."

"I had told Paudie on a Thursday that I'd be at training the following Tuesday. On the Saturday, we found out I was expecting. I had to ring him on the Monday, saying, 'I'm out. I don't know if he copped straightaway.'"

"Having Tadhg around is fantastic. Then, on the playing side, it is great to have a goal again for next year."

"I am delighted the way things have worked out."

Picture: David Fitzgerald/Sportsfile

'I could have told you then it was going to be front page the next day'

What: Baby Tadhg Scannell (five months), the son of Cork camogie and ladies football legend Brieghe Corkery, in the O'Duffy Cup after the Rebelettes' Liberty Insurance All-Ireland Senior Camogie final victory over Kilkenny at Croke Park.

Behind the lens: James Crombie, Inpho.

The story: "This picture literally fell into my lap, but you

still have to have the necessary experience to make sure you capture it.

"After the All-Ireland camogie final, we would have divided up who goes where with regard to celebration pictures so as to ensure we all weren't doing the same thing.

"Following the presentation, one of the main pictures to get is the team together with the cup in the middle of the group.

"You are almost trying to

SNAPCHAT

jostle to get into the right position, the middle, so to be able to capture all the girls around the cup.

"The trophy is the pivotal part. You are waiting for that to be put on the ground in front of the group.

"In this instance, Brieghe

Corkery was standing to the side of the group with Tadhg in her arms. The players and ourselves told Brieghe to put him into the cup, and she obliged.

"There were four or five photographers around me. I would say it is 50/50 in terms of luck and experience that I found myself right in the middle and at the perfect angle to capture the shot.

"I was centred enough, but I was lucky in that it happened

right in front of me.

"You know straight away that is the shot. I could have told you then it was going to be the front page picture the next day. You just know.

"The four All-Ireland finals are always going to be front page news in Ireland, we're so lucky in that regard.

"Now, I have to say it is rare that that shot presents itself right in front of you and you don't have to go looking for it.

"You could go to 10 All-Ire-

land finals without getting the shot. So long as one of your colleagues get it, you don't mind.

"That did fall into my lap literally. And you are just hoping you capture it when it does happen because the kid is in the cup for only 10 seconds. He won't appreciate me on his 18th birthday when this picture is dragged out.

"Or his wedding."

— Eoghan Cormican



'Tadhg is the next generation'

Brieghe Corkery (back row, extreme right in picture): "I always loved the way the GAA players brought their children on to the pitch after a match; I thought it was a lovely thing to do. I never thought I would have the opportunity to do that. But then Paudie (Murray) asked me to come back to the Cork camogie panel this year, and we got to Croke Park for the All-Ireland final.

Paudie had been on to me to come back playing since De-

cember. But, when Tadhg was born on March 29, I had a section which meant I was out for 12 weeks.

"There was a lot of factors against me but when the opportunity arose, I was delighted to get back playing. And to join up with the girls who were very welcoming, especially the likes of Orla (Cotter) and Gemma (O'Connor) who I have played with down through the years.

I suppose the one picture I did miss after the match in

Croke Park was one of myself and Rena Buckley. We always got our picture taken together after the All-Ireland finals.

When the photos were being taken after the game, Tadhg ended up sitting inside in the O'Duffy Cup and it was fantastic. It is lovely for my family to have this fabulous photo. My sisters have played in Croke Park and Tadhg is the next generation. He might get there to play himself someday. But, no pressure on him to do that,

whatever he wants to do.

I think Tadhg might have been a bit overwhelmed by the whole situation. He didn't know what was happening with all the cameras and all the noise around him. And all the girls as well, but they are all mad about him.

"It is nice to have that picture. They are new memories. We have our family of four now (including the dog) and we are looking forward to a lovely Christmas."

— Therese O'Callaghan

Camogie must 'move towards hurling rules'

CAMOGIE

■ Eoghan Cormican

CORK camogie manager Paudie Murray has overseen sweeping changes in how players train and prepare at the elite level in the 21st century.

Now, he is turning his sights on how the game is administered and officiated from the top down.

Since his appointment late in 2011, a term of office which has so far delivered four All-Ireland senior titles, Murray has borne witness to significant change within Cork camogie and, indeed, the game at large.

Where the former is concerned, Murray has been a driver of that change.

Among the reforming steps taken was the addition to his backroom team of a strength-and-conditioning coach and implementation of an S&C programme.

Necessary advances, he says, to satisfy a group who wouldn't be shy in telling management off if training is not up to the standards they demand.

Throughout October and November, Cork players, instead of tuning out during the off-season, were in regular contact with conditioning coach Martin O'Brien to tie-tac ahead of their return to training.

"I've been meeting them coming out of gyms continuously since September," says Murray.

"That's a change from recent years, where you wouldn't hear from them until January."

However, where his own players and almost every other top-level county have made notable improvements in how they ready themselves for league and championship, Murray believes they are being let down by a Camogie Association stuck in reverse.

As Kilkenny midfielder Meighan Farrell recently bemoaned, what is the point of teams carrying out a two-month S&C programme during the winter if players are not allowed to shoulder one another come spring and summer.

For those operating at inter-county level, the camogie rulebook makes for frustrating reading.

The main bone of contention is that shouldering and 'moving into an opponent's body' are not allowed.

"The Camogie Association is at a crossroads," says the Cork manager. "The biggest problem is that we have come from a 12-a-side game, which was in place up to the late nineties, and a lot of people in administration played that game."

"They've no real experience of the 15-a-side game. The Camogie Association has to change with the times."

"We are starting the league in a couple of weeks time and I can guarantee you that 90% of the scores in our first league game will come from frees."

"If this continues, you'll have no body watching our game."

September's All-Ireland camogie final between Cork and Kilkenny made for turgid viewing, the game blighted by 36 frees and containing only nine scores from play.

Similarly unappealing was the Galway-Kilkenny semi-final, a fix-



Cork All Ireland Camogie winners Aoife Murray, Chloe Sigerson, Laura Treacy and Paudie Murray with the O'Duffy Cup 2018 RTE Sports Awards, RTE Studios, Donnybrook, Dublin. Picture: INPHO/Bryan Keane

ture which also had a free-count in the 30s and produced a meagre seven scores from play.

"To keep people watching our game, we've got to move more towards hurling rules."

"The closer the game is to hurling, the better."

"Going back the years, we have regularly been involved in games where there has been 40-plus frees doled out, even though the game has been absent of a single dirty stroke. That cannot continue."

Contacted by this newspaper in the days after the All-Ireland final, Camogie Association president Kathleen Woods said the game "will progress as delegates deem it should".

Woods, serving as president since April 2018, put it up to players unhappy with the current rules, telling them to bring forward proposals for change to their respective county boards.

Murray was most disappointed with the comments.

"She is a new president and I was hoping she would grab the bull by the horns and drive this thing."

"There was a comment that players have to lead it. To push it back onto the players and delegates is nonsense."

"Kathleen needs to lead [change] and lead it as quickly as possible."

"You look at the evidence and the evidence would suggest that [the Camogie Association is conservative]."

"We need to make the game more appealing to the spectators."

With the GAA currently trialling a host of experimental football rules, the Cork boss sees no reason why camogie's governing body can't follow

Ashling Thompson's failure to land an All-Star nomination:

"It cannot be because of the way she played."

"She scored 0-12 from midfield in the championship."

"She was in the top two of scoring midfielders in the country."

"One wonders is it because of the media activity which she engages in that she didn't get an All-Star nomination."

"Other than that, I have no idea. I think, according to most managers, she would be in the top two or three midfielders in the country."

Signing up for the eighth year at the helm:

"We went away to Fuengirola, Spain in April [2018] for five days. Players and management paid for everything, down to the last cent."

"That is where we are at. What New Ireland Assurance give us, we couldn't do without."

"But the money we get, we put it back into the team to pay for buses, food, facilities and equipment."

"That's where we like to spend our money. Our county board has done really, really well."

"We have a fantastic pitch and facilities, whilst operating on a shoestring."

"You just can't be going looking to the board for money for a team holiday."

Still, though, Cork press on. The Rebels are within touching distance of the three-in-a-row, a feat last achieved by the county in 1973.

The minor and intermediate successes of the past year have the county perfectly positioned to extend their stay at the top.

The All-Ireland champions returned on Tuesday, December 11, meeting in the St Finbarr's complex for their first S&C session of the 2019 campaign.

"In 2016, the last time we went for three-in-a-row, we let our standards slip," said Murray.

"We made mistakes. We fattened on our success of the two previous years and didn't drive on."

"If anything, our standards for next year are going to have to be higher than where they were in 2018."

Paudie Murray on...

"I am involved with a very special group."

"I am conscious of that in that if I left to go somewhere else, I may not get the same buy-in as I am getting here."

"It is seldom you get the level of buy-in we are getting."

"This is a driven group that is rarely rattled, a group that is putting massive pressure on the management to come up with something new the whole time, which is great."

Players and management footing the entire bill for their 2018 team holiday:

"We went away to Fuengirola,

Spain in April [2018] for five days. Players and management paid for everything, down to the last cent."

"That is where we are at. What New Ireland Assurance give us, we couldn't do without."

"But the money we get, we put it back into the team to pay for buses, food, facilities and equipment."

"That's where we like to spend our money. Our county board has done really, really well."

"We have a fantastic pitch and facilities, whilst operating on a shoestring."

"You just can't be going looking to the board for money for a team holiday."

Still, though, Cork press on. The Rebels are within touching distance of the three-in-a-row, a feat last achieved by the county in 1973.

The minor and intermediate successes of the past year have the county perfectly positioned to extend their stay at the top.

The All-Ireland champions returned on Tuesday, December 11, meeting in the St Finbarr's complex for their first S&C session of the 2019 campaign.

"In 2016, the last time we went for three-in-a-row, we let our standards slip," said Murray.

"We made mistakes. We fattened on our success of the two previous years and didn't drive on."

"If anything, our standards for next year are going to have to be higher than where they were in 2018."

Excellent minors made real mark

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

A 12-YEAR wait finally came to an end in 2018 as the Cork minors captured the county its first title since the age criteria was changed in 2006.

The grade was raised from U16, where Cork were hugely successful, to U18, and while the Rebels contested the finals of 2013 and 2014 they lost out on both occasions in replays.

Cork set about their task even before the year began and with a new backroom team in place by October, 2017, under the leadership of former Cork senior hurling trainer Jerry Wallace, who was involved in the mid-noughties and also had stints with Antrim and Limerick as well as managing his native Midleton.

Wallace brought a breath of fresh air and professionalism to the task assigned to him and his experience was a vital factor overall.

Gathering his management team around him he brought on board former U16 county mentors Mick Boland, Michael Walsh and Margurite-Fitzpatrick. Jerry and his management were frequently at games from U16 to senior as they cast an eye over players at all levels.

With the All-Ireland minor championship taking place in February and the provincial competitions not played until after the State Examinations, it is hugely important that a county is prepared. Usually at this time of the season both clubs and counties are just beginning to look ahead to a season of summer inter-county activities.

With their panel in place before Christmas they were ready and waiting for the early start of the minor championship.

With eight survivors from the previous year's panel still eligible for selection it was all systems go over the Christmas and New Year break, and on February 17 Cork headed to Dublin.

Given the early time of the year, conditions were demanding and on a boggy Parnell's pitch, Cork proved to be too sharp for Dublin and claimed a reserving 11-point opening round win that set the tone for the season. The main difference between the two sides was Cork's ability to pick off scores from play and keep the scoreboard ticking over.

Dublin failed to register a score from play with their four points coming from frees. Dublin took an early lead but Cork reeled off the next four points from Cliona Healy with three and one from Fiona Keating and they turned over two points in front. Dominating the second half, Cork saw the game out with a Laura Hayes goal to seal it.

A week later, Cork welcomed Kilkenny to Conna and turning in a polished display, they overpowered the visitors. Level 1-3 to 0-6 at the break, Cork opened up in the second half and goals from Healy and Emma Murphy inside three minutes of each other helped Cork run out 3-11 to 0-8 winners.

Round three pitted them against champions Galway and with two splendid victories from two outings this was a crucial game, as they took on a Galway side who had lost out by a point in their opening game to a Kilkenny side. Dublin beat Kilkenny but had a game more played than Cork.



The Cork minors celebrate at the final whistle against Galway last spring.

Picture: Ryan Byrne



Cork minor boss Jerry Wallace.

Picture: Ryan Byrne

Galway lined out minus the Athenry and Sarsfields contingent due to their involvement in the All-Ireland club finals but they travelled with a strong side, back-boned by their successful U16 squad of the previous year.

From the start, the Rebels were determined and a goal proved vital in a nip-and-tuck clash as Cork shaded it in an important encounter. Fiona Keating hit the key goal 23 minutes into the game to edge Cork into a lead they held to the full-time whistle despite enormous Galway pressure. Wallace's charges were now top of the group with a game to go and qualification secured, while Galway needed to defeat Dublin in their last game to keep their hopes alive, which they did.

Cork could afford to rest players against Wexford in advance of a semi-final against Clare while Galway were paired with Tipp.

Three Munster counties were in the

shake up for the title, while Clare were runners-up the year before and extremely determined to make a breakthrough after four losses in All-Ireland minor deciders but couldn't get past Cork.

The big day was on April 28. Cork showed passion and determination as they bounced back with five unanswered points after Galway had opened up a two-point lead 10 minutes into the second half.

There were plenty of heroes but Saoirse McCarthy and Laura Hayes were the standout players. At centre-back, Hayes was a tower of strength while McCarthy worked tirelessly all through and contributed six points, three from play.

Ciarra O'Sullivan had opened their account, Niamh Niland levelled for Galway but points from Cliona Healy, Emma Murphy and Hannah O'Leary stretched it in Cork's favour.

“Huge credit must go to an excellent backroom team and their players.”

At the interval, it was level pegging 0-8 to 1-5.

Cork hit two in a row on the resumption through McCarthy and captain Moira Barrett before the Tribe got a top. All credit to Cork who responded magnificently as they upped the pace and the introduction of a fast-moving Rachel O'Regan proved telling. Barrett and Fiona Keating had them back level before O'Regan confidently struck two in a row and set up another for Keating.

Slobhan McGrath nailed some big frees but Barrett and McCarthy had the final say for the Rebels.

Huge credit must go to an excellent backroom team and their players whose focus from Day One was on winning the All-Ireland.

They failed to take the provincial title later in the season, losing out to Waterford, but it was mission accomplished overall.

Inniscarra benefit from underage effort



Camogie

Ger McCarthy

REARDEN'S All-Star and Player of the Year Niamh Dilworth is eager to build on a trophy-laden campaign and aiming for All-Ireland success with Inniscarra.

A UCC Public Health nurse student, Niamh Dilworth is vice-captain of an Inniscarra team that has their sights firmly set on All-Ireland glory. Leinster champions St Martin's from Wexford stand in Dilworth and her club's way of reaching an All-Ireland final but a committed squad has given themselves a fighting chance following a busy training programme over the winter period.

"We are not looking beyond our All-Ireland semi-final opponents and have been training hard throughout Christmas to be ready for it," Dilworth confirmed.

"Opportunities like these don't come around too often so everyone has made the necessary sacrifices and trained hard during the winter months. We have a lot of inter-county stars in our team but just as many young up and coming players as well. Our Cork players push everyone on when they come back training but they have also brought renewed self-belief and a calmness that Inniscarra has benefitted from in close games this past year.

"We are fortunate to have a player like Rena Buckley with eighteen All-Ireland medals in our dressing room and she has been brilliant to our younger girls, be it giving a pep-talk or offering advice."

Little doubt that the highlights of the past twelve months were Inniscarra retaining their SE Systems Cork Senior Camogie Championship at the expense of Courcey Rovers as well as bridging an eight-year gap to their previous Munster final success.

Niamh Dilworth was part of the Inniscarra team that overcame Clare's Inagh-Kilnamona 2-9 to 0-7 in the provincial decider in Cashel back in November. Dilworth scored an early goal to settle her side's nerves before Claudia Keane's second-half strike cemented the Cork club's second Munster title. That triumph set up a meeting with St Martin's in the last four of the championship and resurrected memories of Inniscarra's qualification for the 2011 All-Ireland final.

"Winning this year's county final was special," the experienced Inniscarra player admitted.

"Many would have seen us as outsiders for that particular championship so getting that trophy was a very happy moment for us and everyone associated with our club. It was a big deal for the panel because of the fact we lost so many players to injury and others that went off travelling.

"Once again, phenomenal credit has to be given to the management team for instilling such belief into not just our younger players but our established, experienced players as well. Getting the blend right is never easy but our manager and selectors made the correct decisions when



Inniscarra vice captain Niamh Dilworth fires over a point from a free against Courcey Rovers.

Picture: Larry Cummins



Ben Shorten presenting the Camogie Player of the Year to Niamh Dilworth, Inniscarra, with Paudie Murray.

Picture: Gerard Bonus

they needed to and enabled us to get over the line.

"Some of the current Inniscarra panel were lucky enough to have played in the 2011 All-Ireland club championship final against Killimor of Galway but on the wrong end of the result that day. The hunger is there to get back there once again but our only aim is the All-Ireland semi-final against St Martin's. We cannot look beyond that game and that's where all our focus is right now."

Dilworth and seven of her club

team mates, Sheila Walsh, Rena Buckley, Rosie O'Mahony, Katie O'Mahony, Treasa McCarthy and Niamh McCarthy, finished 2018 on a positive note by being selected on the Rearden's All-Star camogie team of the year. The Inniscarra vice-captain went one better, being honoured with the overall Rearden's Camogie Player of the Year accolade.

"I'm absolutely thrilled as winning an All-Star award within Cork county is one thing but to receive the overall player of the year award is fantas-

"We are lucky to have an underage structure which has helped develop our senior team."

tic," said Dilworth.

"It is great to receive such an award on behalf of the entire Inniscarra squad after the success we had in 2018. Seeing seven Inniscarra players on the overall team of the year just shows the depth of talent within our squad and I'm delighted for them.

"That county final win against Courcey Rovers was the toughest game we had all year. We all knew heading into it that it was going to be nothing less than a tough battle. That

match really stood to us against Abane in the Munster semi-final, I can tell you. We were down two points at half time in that one but the experience from going toe to toe with Courcey's two weeks previous was vital to us."

Inniscarra have been fortunate to call upon experienced campaigners like Niamh Dilworth, Rena Buckley and Treasa McCarthy over the past number of years. Now, a new group of talented young players is emerging from the underage ranks and Inniscarra's future looks promising at the conclusion of a successful 2018 campaign.

"We are lucky to have such a strong underage structure which has helped develop our senior team over recent years," Niamh Dilworth noted.

"Our management team did fantastic work in blending the youth in with our experienced players this year. A lot of the players that came on to the senior panel have really had to stand up for themselves when it comes to playing in the championship. The training those girls got is the reason we are being successful now.

"Seeing the likes of Claudia Keane come on in the Munster final and scoring 1-1 is pushing all the experienced players like myself to train harder. We have to if we want to keep our places (laughs)."

Keating proving she is an exciting talent



Camogie

Ger McCarthy

FIONA KEATING experienced elation and heartache in Cork and club colours during 2018 but is looking forward to the New Year with renewed optimism.

An All-Ireland minor winner with Cork's camogie squad and runner-up with the county's minor footballers, Fiona Keating ended the year on a high with a deserved Reardens All-Star award.

It was also a year that Keating's hometown club Courcey Rovers came up short in their first camogie senior club final appearance.

24 hours later, Keating missed out on a county senior football final replay appearance with West Cork through an unfortunate finger injury sustained in the camogie final loss to Inniscarra.

A rollercoaster season if ever there was one for the Kinsale Community School student.

"I think you learn more from your losses and try to use those experiences to your advantage going into next season," Keating admitted.

"It was 10 minutes into the second half of our county (club) Camogie final when I broke my finger.

"I didn't even notice at the time as I was going for a point, the adrenalin was pumping and an Inniscarra player caught me from behind in an attempt to block me.

"The finger was broken which was gut wrenching because I was due to play for West Cork in the senior county football final the day after.

"It was a bit of a downer and a bad way to end the year until I was told I was getting a Rearden's All-Star award.

"That made up for a lot of the previous month's disappointments and was a positive end to 2018."

Keating proved her worth for club and county thought a terrific year and regularly delivered consistent performances.

One of the Courcey Rovers stalwarts' most enduring traits is Keating's ability to conjure up a score from nothing, something that the Cork minors and West Cork seniors appreciated on many occasions.

"It is nice to hear people say I played consistently but there are loads of other girls who deserve that praise more than I do," the Courcey Rovers star commented.

"Team commitment is what it is all about.

"There are 15 of us out on the pitch and it cannot all be about one person.

"We all have jobs to do, for our clubs and county, so I really believe towards like the Reardens one is own to the combined efforts of a lot of other people."

Fiona Keating's contribution to the West Cork ladies footballers was another highlight.

The Carbery divisional side reached a Cork LGFA county senior football final for the first time with debutante Keating regularly featuring in



Fiona Keating in action for Courcey Rovers.



Fiona Keating, Courcey Rovers, Rearden's All-Star award recipient with her parents Patricia and Donal.

Picture: Gerard Bonus

the forward line until that aforementioned broken finger denied her a place in the county final replay with Mounseabbey.

"This year was the first that I played with West Cork but I loved every minute of it until my injury late in the season," Keating said.

"Anne O'Grady is with us in the Cork minors and also involved in the West Cork ladies management setup.

"Anne was mocking me towards the end of the season saying I'd never have enough time to squeeze in rep-

resenting West Cork but I worked out a few things and was delighted to get the chance.

"Anne puts so much time and effort into the teams that she is involved with so I was more than happy to play (for West Cork).

"Anne and I would have seen each other three, maybe four, times a week during the year but getting involved with West Cork proved an amazing experience.

"The chance to line out alongside the likes of Aine Terry O'Sullivan

“Even though we didn't get over the line against Mounseabbey, things are looking good for another crack at the senior championship this coming year”

(Beara), Martina O'Brien (Clonakilty) and Melissa Duggan (Dohenys) was unreal.

"Then you see the likes of the two Kiely sisters (Daire and Eimear) from Valley Rovers and O'Donovan Rossa's Laura O'Mahony making the breakthrough and it was just fantastic to be involved.

"Even though we didn't get over the line against Mounseabbey, things are looking good for another crack at the senior championship this coming year.

"I'm only in fifth year at the moment so I will definitely be back playing football for West Cork in 2019."

Courcey Rovers reached this season's county Camogie decider, a first appearance in the senior final for the Ballinspittle club.

Inniscarra proved too strong however, running out 1-13 to 0-5 winners but Fiona Keating believes the experience of reaching a final will stand to her club.

"Losing the county final to Inniscarra was tough but we intend to stand down as a squad and watch a rerun of the game over Christmas, learn from our mistakes and come back stronger than ever this coming year," the Courcey Rovers forward stated.

"Looking back, it was our first ever Camogie county final, so there is a lot to be taken from that.

"Courcey Rovers simply isn't used to playing in senior county finals. Everyone was a bit nervous on the day.

"Now we know how to handle situations like that and the hope is to be back at the top table once again in 2019.

"As a club, Courcey Rovers are thriving. We have a huge underage section and the Camogie and football teams are very understanding towards one another."

Fiona Keating will be back in Cork minor colours over the coming months and anxious for repeat camogie success as well as going on better in football.

Courcey Rovers and West Cork also look set to benefit from one of Cork's rising GAA stars.

Saoirse soaring to new heights

CAMOGIE

■ Ger McCarthy

COURCEY ROVERS' Saoirse McCarthy finished 2018 with All-Ireland minor, intermediate and senior Camogie medals in her back pocket.

The 18-year-old Kinsale Community School student was part of the Cork intermediate squad that faced Down in the All-Ireland decider at Croke Park last September.

The Rebels were indebted to their young forward who finished the game with a personal tally of 0-4, helping her county end a run of three consecutive All-Ireland final losses.

It proved a memorable day for McCarthy who was also awarded the Intermediate decider's Player of the Match trophy.

The rising Courcsey Rovers star had little time to bask in the glow of her achievements as she was immediately required to take her place amongst Cork's substitutes and witness a marvellous one-point Cork victory over Kilkenny in the senior final.

The accolades didn't stop there as Saoirse McCarthy was honoured for her breakout year by becoming the GAA Intermediate Player's Player of the Year and also received a GAA 'Soaring Star' All-Star award.

"That day was surreal, like a dream really," McCarthy commented.

"I still haven't had time to process everything! Everyone keeps asking if I have come back down to earth yet and the answer is no.

"Some evenings, I look at pictures of that day and can't believe it all happened to me. I have a senior All-Ireland medal!

"Following on from that, I was honoured to be nominated for a Soaring Star (intermediate) All-Star award. On the night of the awards, I was delighted to get the trophy but couldn't believe when they announced I had won the Intermediate GAA Player's Player of the Year as well.

"I honestly thought our goalkeeper Amy Lee was going to win it as she had such a fantastic year. I mean, I even voted for (Cork's) Niamh Mallon!"

It is difficult to put Saoirse McCarthy's rise through the county ranks into context since the Kinsale Community School student made her debut at U13 level.

Since then, McCarthy made her mark in each of the preceding age-grades and culminating in a All-Ireland minor final success earlier in the year by overcoming Galway 0-18 to 1-11.

"I won the All-Ireland minor title with Cork first and that was amazing so I'd have been happy to stop at that!" the Courcsey Rovers player noted.

"The day after the minor final, I got a call from Paudie Murray and began training with the Cork seniors almost straight away. I remember coming on in the Munster semi-final against Clare and I barely knew any of the girls.

"I will be honest and say I was a bit star struck sitting in the dressing room beforehand. Laura Hayes from St Catherine's who also came up from the minors was with me and we were just looking around at all these household names.

"It was surreal to be playing with the seniors so soon after toggling out



President of the Camogie Association Kathleen Woods and John Coffey of Liberty Insurance present Cork's Saoirse McCarthy with a 2018 Soaring Stars Award at the Camogie All-Stars Awards Sponsored by Liberty Insurance, held at Citywest Hotel, Dublin. Pictures: Inpho



Cork's Saoirse McCarthy is challenged by Ciara Helebert of Galway during the All-Ireland Minor A Camogie final in Nenagh, Co Tipperary last April. Cork won 0-18 to 1-11.

for the minors. We trained all summer with the seniors before playing with the intermediates towards the end of the year."

Despite all her inter-county successes, not everything went to plan for Saoirse McCarthy during 2018.

The 18-year-old missed out on Courcsey Rovers' SE Systems Cork Senior Camogie county final loss to Inniscarra.

McCarthy had her appendix removed in the run-up to the final and could only watch on from the sidelines as her team mates lost 1-13 to 0-5 at Castle Road.

McCarthy's disappointment was immediately apparent when asked about the county final defeat: "That was a real downer."

"Everyone kept saying to me how lucky I was and that I didn't have to have my appendix out earlier in the year because that would have cost me

All-Ireland final appearances for the Cork intermediate and senior teams.

"People were telling me it that was perfect timing. Well, that's not how I looked upon it at all.

"I felt like I was letting my team mates down, that's how it was for me at the time. I mean, I was so desperate to play that I toggled out on the sideline for Courcsey's only a week after surgery. There I was with my boots and skort, sitting on the substitute's bench and roaring the girls on.

"I am awful for watching matches, though, I'm so bad. I just wanted to be out there making a difference but there was nothing I could do about it."

Looking ahead to the coming year, the Intermediate GAA Player's Player of the Year has plenty to be excited about both for club and county.

"Hopefully, I will be involved with the Cork senior panel because we won the intermediate title this year and all

“It was surreal to be playing with the seniors so soon after toggling out for the minors”

of the girls will want to kick on now," McCarthy noted.

"As for Courcsey Rovers, next year is definitely going to have to be a big one. Starting with the league trophy, we want to get that back having last won it in 2016.

"This past year, I felt I didn't have hardly any time to play for my club and will hopefully get to represent them a bit more in 2019.

"It is a huge commitment to keep going for Courcsey Rovers and Cork but it doesn't feel like a big thing because I enjoy playing camogie so much. This past year, I really wanted that All-Ireland minor title so everything after, that was a complete bonus to be honest.

"Thankfully, I have had quite a quiet winter so far because I was at home recovering from my appendix operation. That was no harm, I suppose, but I cannot wait for next year."

Good year's work by Cork boards

Camogie

■ Mary Newman

IT was another hugely successful year for the Cork Camogie Board with a massive programme of games at adult and under age level taking place.

Once again both county boards completed their schedule of championship league and plate competitions on schedule.

The senior board under the chairmanship of Mary McSweeney got through a fixture schedule of 22 competitions at championship and league level. With Senior, Senior B, Intermediate, Junior A, B and C, Minor A, B, C and D competitions in championship and league, add in two summer cup competitions and that gives just a small idea of the massive workload organising these games takes.

The juvenile board level under the guidance of Chairperson Mary O'Sullivan continued to do massive work catering for the needs of players from under-8s up to and including under-16s. The setting up of this board was a huge step forward for the county and it took a huge burden off the shoulders of the adult board. Clubs were well catered for with the Juvenile Board running competitions at under-8 to under-11 Go Games Blitz.

The board took a decision to change the format of the under-12 competition and with Gerard Corcoran taking the lead as co-coordinator the new structure was a huge success. It was decided to not grade the teams into A, B or C sections as in previous years as the feeling was that it was impossible to know the standard of each club given that these are the first competitive leagues that they would participate in. Up to this these players would have been playing at under age Go Games level up to and including age 11s and with no results to guide them the board have come up with an excellent new format.

The league was divided in to eight sections with six teams in each section. Each team in each section then played each other giving each club five games. On completion of each of the sections of their games the teams were then split into three groups of 16 based on their finishing position in their respective sections. Group 1 consisted of the winners and runners-up in each section, Group 2 had the teams finishing in positions three and four in each section, and Group 3 the teams that finished in positions five and six in each section. These groups then played off in a knockout competition based where they were placed in their group's, the new format saw games right through the summer months and ensured lots more games for this age group.

The under-14 participates in leagues and there are three grades A, B and C plus the board also ran a second under-14 league to which kept this age group playing right to the end of the season and this was another huge success.

Under-14 Championship again had three grades A, B and C and it was a huge success here there was a back door system continuing and clubs welcomed this option. The Cork under-14 Feile Na Gael also comes under the remit of the juvenile board with and A and B Feile organised in late April.



Cliona Dooley who was the Player of the Match in the Munster Under 16 A final.



The Cork U16 A camogie team have qualified for the All-Ireland semi-final against Tipperary.

Under 16 Championship and Leagues and A, B and C made it a busy calendar of games to get through. In total, between championship and leagues there are 15 competitions to be decided plus the Feile Na n-Gael, the Go Games and Cluster Blitzes to be organised and ran off and for good measure there is a Feile Na n-Gael local skills competition to be played off.

Without doubt owning their own grounds in Castle Road has been a major help as it gives them a pitch at their disposal 24/7 but such is the volume of traffic for it another Castle Road would not go astray.

Having got through such a comprehensive programme of competitions it is a tremendous achievement for the hard working officials of both boards who continue to promote camogie to the highest level in the county and players and clubs owe a huge debt of gratitude to these hard working volun-

tary officials.

This year with three Cork teams contested All Ireland finals and it meant a lot of club playing time was lost as Cork had to be afforded time to be at their best. It's a scenario of "you're damned if you do and you're damned if you don't". The senior board looked at the Inter county calendar and slotted in club games around these and to be fair this worked out reasonable well with championships games running off smoothly yet it only takes one draw at either club or inter county level to knock the whole schedule off balance as we saw in the first round of senior championship when Ballincollig and Douglas drew.

Hopefully this year a schedule of dates can be worked out and announced at the end of February this will then enable clubs to plan ahead and players to book holidays safe in the knowledge they won't be missing

out or having to fly home. The draws do not necessarily need to be made to do this simply plan ahead with dates. Huge challenges lie ahead in the bid to get the perfect balance but it can be achieved.

The senior board was again fortunate to have the all of their adult championship competitions sponsored by S E Systems and this support ensures that a huge burden is taken off the shoulders of the board and they are hugely appreciative to John O'Leary for the help and support his company continues to give to Camogie in Cork.

The *Evening Echo* are also very important as sponsors of all the adult Player of the Match awards for championship. This support is a huge help in the promotion of the game.

Over the next few Saturdays we will take a look back at some of the highs and low that was the season gone by for our clubs.

A very mixed season for Cork U16S

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

FIELDING two U16 teams again in 2018 the season got off to an early start as the Cork A squad were in provincial championship action on February 8.

The provincial competitions help preparations for the All-Ireland series which gets underway in July on an open-draw basis.

The Cork A side overcame Tipperary in their opening game with three points to spare on a 0-12 to 1-7 scoreline, ensuring them of a place in the final where they would meet Limerick on March 11.

In a game where goals proved vital, Cork retained their Munster U16 A championship title as they got the upper hand on Limerick.

Inside five minutes of the throw-in, Cork had set the foundations for victory. A Cliona Dooley point in the opening minute was followed by a goal from Elena Kelleher as they opened up a four-point lead within five minutes.

Limerick replied with a pointed free, but Cork extended their advantage with Kelleher and Clodagh Finn on target with two points each to lead 1-5 to 0-3 at the break.

Limerick started the second half strong and put pressure on the Cork defence and with Katelyn Dineen, Finn and Rose Murphy adding to the tally, Cork had recorded a splendid win, with Dooley who covered every inch of the pitch named Player of The Match.

The U16 reserves overcame Clare 1-7 to 2-3 to book a place in the Munster final, but they lost out narrowly to Waterford 0-9 to 0-7 in a game which needed extra time to decide.

It was all systems go for the championship and the A side got off to a great start, defeating Kilkenny 1-12 to 2-4. They continued their impressive run with wins over Dublin 2-17 to 2-7 and Clare 5-23 to 0-3 to book a place in the semi-final. Tipperary provided the opposition. Cork hit 19 points to Tipp's 2-6 to book a place in the final.

Eight points from Niamh Niland and goals from Niamh McPeake and captain Aine Keane ensured Galway triumphed 3-14 to 1-7.

Cork got off to a great start and went four points in front, but three Galway goals made it 3-5 to 0-6 at the interval. A fourth goal inside minutes of the restart gave Cork a mountain to climb as Galway kept the pressure on to the final whistle to take the title.

In the Reserves final, Sabrina Rabbittie scored 4-4 as Galway got the better of Cork by 7-6 to 2-10. Late goals from Lucy McNulty and Kate O'Shea were not enough as Galway ran out winners.

And so a season that promised so much ended in disappointment but with a Munster title to their credit it was just rewards for the efforts put in.

“Players and clubs owe a huge debt of gratitude to the hard working voluntary officials

Fitzgerald and Flynn star as St Angela's win first title



St Angela's captain Annie Fitzgerald is presented with the Munster trophy by John O'Leary. Picture: Liam Burke/Press 22

Munster Post Primary Schools Camogie

St Angela's Ursuline, Waterford

1-11

Scoil Tríonóide Doon 0-5

John Keogh
Cappamore

St Angela's Ursuline, Waterford were crowned Munster Post Primary Schools Senior A Camogie champions for the first time after a 1-11 to 0-5 victory over Scoil na Tríonóide Naífa, Doon, in Cappamore. The Waterford school dominated from the outset and

raced 0-5 to 0-0 clear thanks to Annie Fitzgerald and Abby Flynn - the duo would hit all of St Angela's scores in this win. Doon did well to only be four points adrift at the break with frees from Leah Heffernan and Karen Cunningham keeping them in touch.

However, St Angela's were not to be denied and sealed a well-deserved win when Fitzgerald buried the game's only goal five minutes from time.

St Angela's mentor Emilie Darmody said: "I am delighted for the girls, they have put in a massive effort."

St Angela's made a bright start with Flynn and Fitzgerald

doing the damage early on with four points between them in the opening six minutes.

Doon nearly responded after Rachel O'Dwyer's shot beat Leah O'Donoghue but the shot trickled wide.

It was a rare attack from the Limerick school as they struggled to get to grips with a powerful St Angela's outfit.

Flynn's second point from play stretched the lead to five, before Doon registered their opening score from a Heffernan free.

St Angela's had a great chance to add to their lead on 18 minutes but a Flynn penalty went wide of Gemma Fox's goal.

That miss didn't seem to bother Flynn, however, as she sent over her third of the opening half hour after excellent build-up play from Fitzgerald.

Doon responded with a Cunningham free that saw the score at 0-6 to 0-2 in St Angela's favour at the break. A couple of Cunningham '45's gave Doon hope of a comeback early in the second half but further efforts from Flynn and Fitzgerald extended St Angela's lead. As Doon pushed forward in the last 10 minutes they were hit with a sucker punch when Fitzgerald goalied to seal an historic win for St Angela's.

Scorers for St Angela's Ursuline Waterford: A Fitzgerald 1-6 (21), Ab Flynn 0-5.

Scorers for Scoil na Tríonóide Naífa Doon: K Cunningham 0-3 (11, 2' 45s), L Heffernan 0-2 (26s).

ST ANGELA'S URSULINE, WATERFORD: L O'Donoghue; S Cantwell, L Hogan, E Flynn; S Farrell, L Sheridan, H Flynn; J Tuohy, K Lynch; C Carroll, C O'Sullivan, A Fitzgerald; R Walsh, A Flynn, Ab Flynn.

Subs: S Maher for E Flynn (44), L McLoughlin for A Flynn (59), H Ryan for Farrell (60).

SCOIL NA TRÍONÓIDE NAÍFA DOON: G Fox; Ao Ryan, R O'Donnell, L Quaid; E Gantley, L Heffernan, S Burke; An Ryan, K Bradshaw; A Hayes, R O'Dwyer, L Meehan; L Heffernan, K Cunningham, E O'Dwyer.

Subs: C Ryan for Quaid (27), F Bradshaw for An Ryan (58).

Referee: J O'Leary (Cork).



SAINTS GO MARCHING ON: It was a day to celebrate for St Angela's Ursuline, Waterford who overcame the challenge of Scoil na Tríonóide Naífa, Doon, in the Munster Colleges Senior A Camogie final in Cappamore on Saturday. See report on page 23. Picture: Liam Burke Press 22

JAN. 2019

TODAY
CAMOGIE: Munster Post Primary finals:
Senior A SNT Doon v St. Angela's, Waterford, Cappamore, 1pm; **Senior B:** St. Flannan's, Ennis v St. Mary's, Nenagh, Clarecastle, 12.30pm;
Senior C: Loreto Fermoy v Cashel CS, Ballynoe, 1pm; **Senior D:** Colaiste Muire Ennis v Colaiste Na Trocaire, Rathkeale, Eire Og, Ennis, 2.30pm.



IN THE SPOTLIGHT: Amy O'Connor at the launch of Littlewoods Ireland's #StyleOfPlay campaign for the National Camogie Leagues. PHOTO: ©INPHO/DAN SHERIDAN

Sarsfields' Isabel Kelly gets a shot away during the division 1 camogie Féile final against Kiltrush at Claremorris in June.
Picture:INPHO/Laszlo Geczo

Friday, January 18, 2019

Evening Echo Cork Sports World



Rebels with a cause

The annual Rebel Óg awards will take place in the Silver Springs Hotel this evening. Inside we look back at the 12 monthly winners: See pages 2-13

Briege is ready for the challenge after return

BY DENIS HURLEY

IT'S 14 years since Briege Corkery was first part of the Cork senior camogie and much has changed, but some things have remained constant.

Back then, her debut year was marked with an All-Ireland win, followed by another victory in 2006, and Cork's victories have come in pairs since then – 2008 and '09, 2014 and '15, 2017 and '18.

The Cloughdun star was absent for the penultimate one of those wins, however, as she was pregnant with Tadhg, who was born at the end of March. By the end of May, she was back training with football side St Val's – she played in goal to take it easy – and when Paudie Murray came calling with an invitation to return to the Cork panel, she was happy to accept.

Bar a brief cameo in the All-Ireland semi-final win over Tipperary, though, she was largely a spectator as Cork went back-to-back and it is that sense of wanting to be involved which has brought her back again.

The Rebels begin their 2019 campaign on Sunday with a national league opener away to Tipperary with Corkery keen to make an impact.

'It's nice to be back,' she says, 'especially at the start of the year.'

'I've a lot of work to do to break back on to the team but it's a nice old challenge.'

'Coming back last year was

CAMOGIE

'From a competitive point of view, it wasn't a fulfilling year and it was a bit too short, so I wanted to go again. I'd never regret coming back, but I would regret not going back.'

as much of a surprise to me as anyone else, Paudie had been on to me and I said I'd go back and see how I'd do.

'Maybe if I'd got ten minutes in the final, it might have killed the itch, the fact I'd played, but I came on for three minutes in the semi and dropped my hurley, that was the extent of my contribution.'

'From a competitive point of view, it wasn't a fulfilling year and it was a bit too short, so I wanted to go again. I'd never regret coming back, but I would regret not going back.'

Obviously, the new addition means an extra level of responsibility off the field for Briege, but Tadhg's arrival hasn't impinged on her ability to play.

'He's quiet enough most of the time, that's number one,' she says.

'Number two, I'm really lucky to have a great family around me to help out and I've two nephews to mind him on the sideline if I have to bring to

training with me.

'Obviously, there's great support from my husband Diarmuid [Ó Scanaill, who plays with Naomh Abán] and his family and my family.'

The touch took a while to come back, too.

'The first month and a half was torture, pure hard work,' Briege says.

'I was way off the pace, but the rest of the girls were very encouraging.'

'My hurling is never that great, to be honest, but I plugged away, I went to the ball alley by myself and trained with Cloughdun on nights Cork weren't training. It all added up.'

'Paudie felt I wasn't ready for the final, which is fair enough, but that's given me the edge to come back this year.'

Cork will be chasing a three in a row this year. It's not just in Corkery's time that they've been limited to pairs – not since the four in a row of 1970-73 has it been done, with back-to-back

achieved in 1982 and '83, 1992 and '93 and 1997 and '98 before her career started.

'The last few times, it's something we've tried to put in the back of our minds but it's always there,' she says.

'Only Wexford and Tipp have done it since the game went 15-a-side, so it would be a big achievement but it's a long way off too.'

'There is a real maturity within the group, since I've come back I've noticed the likes of Laura Treacy, Orla Cronin and Chloe Sigerson have become real leaders.'

'I almost feel like a young player looking up to them now!'

However, while she is back playing camogie, she won't be resuming her Cork football career, despite an outing with Munster as they won the interprovincial championship in November.

'I just wouldn't have the time,' she says.

'The interpros were handy as I'd had a short year and I'd be quite lazy during the winter so I felt what was the harm in playing a football match.'

'I thoroughly enjoyed it but it was only for a laugh, not that that's intended to belittle the competition. I hadn't played to that standard in a long time and it showed!'

Cork's Briege Corkery has returned to the camogie set-up this season.



West Cork sports



2014 winner Jennifer O'Leary.



Youth winner Moira Barrett.

September – Libby Coppinger (camogie)

Dual star Libby (pictured) excels for Cork in camogie and football, and in 2018 she helped both Rebel teams qualify for their All-Ireland finals. The Kealkil woman shone as Paudie Murray's Cork camogie team won the All-Ireland final against Kilkenny, and was honoured for her role in that. Unfortunately, the Cork footballers lost to Dublin.

October – Saoirse McCarthy (camogie)

From Ballinspittle, the Courcy Rovers camogie star won three All-Irelands in 2018 – at minor, intermediate and senior levels. Saoirse was also player of the match in the All-Ireland intermediate final, was crowned the intermediate camogie Players' Player of the Year and also won a Soaring Star All-Star award.

MOIRA BARRETT

The newly crowned West Cork Junior Sports Star of the Year captained Cork to All-Ireland minor A camogie glory in 2018 and then played three times – against Carlow, Derry and Galway – for the Cork intermediate team that went on to win the 2018 All-Ireland title. She also lines out for the Carbery senior camogie team and was part of the Ballinascarty camogie team that won the county junior B championship and West Cork Cup in 2018; a great double for the club. Moira is a Leaving Cert student at Bandon Grammar school. As a result of Cork winning the intermediate All-Ireland last year, she was ineligible for regarding to intermediate again this year and is overage for minor so she will concentrate on her club and the Carbery senior team in the year ahead.

FIONA KEATING

Here's a dual jewel, that Cork breed that doesn't just excel in one sport, but two. The Courcy Rovers rising star (17) was named Munster Provincial Young Player of the Year in 2017 for her football exploits and Fiona was on the West Cork senior ladies' football team that contested the county final last year. This highly-rated forward also lined out for Courcys in the county senior camogie final last October – and was top scorer in their semi-final win against Milford – and while defeat was her lot in both, odds are she'll regularly be in the mix for medals in the years ahead. The Kinsale Community School fifth-year student won an All-Ireland minor





Clayton Hotel manager Joe Kennedy making the presentation to Cork All-Ireland winning minor camogie team player Ana Hartnett and team-mates. Also included are County Mayor Declan Hurley, Fergal Dennehy, deputy Lord Mayor of Cork, Eoghan O'Connor, Rebel Óg treasurer and Jerry Wallace, team manager.



Mick Evans, chairman of the judging panel, making the presentation to Cork All-Ireland winning minor camogie team player Fiona Keating and some of her team-mates. Also included are Mary McSweeney, chair of the Cork Camogie Board and treasurer Marian McCarthy.

Picture: David Keane

Rebel Óg honour for camogie champions



MONTHLY AWARD

Rory Noonan

THE Cork minor camogie team who won the All-Ireland title recently were the May 2018 winners of the Rebel Óg Monthly Awards sponsored by the Clayton Hotel Silver Springs, Cummins Sports, with the *Evening Echo* and *redFM* as media partners.

Cork were drawn in the group stages to play Dublin, Kilkenny, Galway and Wexford.

This turned out to be a very successful campaign with all of the 32-strong panel of players getting to play at some stage in this All-Ireland competition.

Cork beat Clare in the All-Ireland semi-final and faced Galway in the final.

They made their own bit of history as they won Cork's first national title at Minor A level.



Kevin Cummins making the presentation to Cork All-Ireland winning minor camogie team captain Moira Barrett and her team-mates at the Clayton Hotel, Silver Springs. Also included are County Mayor Cllr Declan Hurley, deputy Lord Mayor of Cork, Cllr Fergal Dennehy, *Evening Echo* marketing executive Nicola Cullinane, Norina O'Callaghan and Joe Kennedy of the Clayton Hotel, along with Rebel Óg officials and team management.

Picture: David Keane



Nicola Cullinane, *Evening Echo* marketing executive, making the presentation to Cork All-Ireland winning minor camogie team vice-captain Sarah Ahern and some of her team-mates. Also included are Cllr Declan Hurley, Cork County Mayor, Cllr Fergal Dennehy, deputy Lord Mayor of Cork, John Purcell, Rebel Óg chairman and Michael Boland, team selector.

Picture: David Keane



Rebel Óg PRO Cian O'Brien with the All-Ireland winning Cork minor camogie team captain Moira Barrett, left and vice-captain Sarah Ahern, at the presentation ceremony of the Rebel Óg monthly award winner for May 2018, at the Clayton Hotel, Silver Springs.

Picture: David Keane

Cliona Foley



Amy O'Connor's criticism of camogie's rules and tactics is a breath of fresh air in a sporting climate where so many stars now spout vanilla.

The Cork forward is as groundbreaking off the pitch as she is frustrated on it right now, which explains why she's not afraid to speak her mind, despite her relative youth. Still only 22, her prodigious talent in a number of sports meant she had to make some hard choices at a young age.

As a teen she once played a county (gaeltic) football final, a championship camogie game and an All-Ireland soccer semi-final all in one day.

She was on the Ireland U19 soccer team whose progress to the semi-finals of the 2014 European Championships was a massive breakthrough for the Irish women's game.

But unlike former-teams-mates and Irish internationals Katie McCabe, Megan Connolly and (now starring for Arsenal and Ireland) and Sarah Rowe (currently juggling Mayo football with Aussie Rules), O'Connor plumped for camogie when playing multiple sports became too much.

Science is another of her passions and when she found that there was only Leaving Cert biology available in her Cork city secondary school (St Vincents), she successfully campaigned for chemistry to be introduced.

Not only did she get into one of the toughest courses in university — pharmacy — but when she graduated in UCC last summer O'Connor received a special award for managing to successfully balance top-level study and sport.

What makes all of that particularly exceptional is that O'Connor is the first of her family to attend third level education.

She is not disparaging in any way when she describes her native Knocknaheeny to non-Corkonians "like Bally-



O'Connor still shattering glass ceilings

IN THE SPOTLIGHT: 'Everyone goes out to win every game. It just hasn't happened (for us) and last year's league final kind of haunts me. I didn't turn up on the day and we didn't turn up on the day,' says Cork's Amy O'Connor.

Picture: Photocall

mun in Dublin," seeking only to explain the level of social deprivation in parts of her community.

"My mam and dad never got the opportunity to go to college but they always told me 'education, education, education!'"

"Not many from my school went to college but they always encouraged it too. Now the girls who didn't go to college are doing just fine too," she stresses. "There's just not enough exposure to education in our area where there'd be some anti-social behaviour and drugs and alcohol. It's very hard to break that cycle."

O'Connor has spectacularly broken it and her brother is also now in university, much

to her parents' delight.

"There was no history of serious sport in her family either."

She first tagged along to soccer with a young male cousin. He quit, she didn't and she never looked back, crediting sport with giving her discipline.

"I'd train seven nights a week so I had to come home and do my homework first. My poor dad travelled the length and breadth of the country with me for games and training, and when he was working my mam would do it. The school was brilliant to me the whole time too, even when I missed 11 weeks in sixth-year because of international soccer."

"The teachers would stay

back and help me with things."

She's now doing a one-year Masters in Pharmacy in the College of Surgeons now, the final element of her studies, but it won't interrupt her inter-county commitment as she only needs to travel to Dublin periodically.

Cork, who've lost the last two Division One finals to arch-rivals Kilkenny, open their league season away to Tipp in a tough group that also includes Galway, Waterford and Wexford. "Everyone goes out to win every game. It just hasn't happened (for us) and last year's league final kind of haunts me. I didn't turn up on the day and we didn't turn up on the day," O'Connor admits.

Winning the last two All-Irelands has seen Paudie Murray's side come through their expected "transition period" remarkably well and she expects him, once again, to trial lots of young players in the league.

"I thought we'd go through a big transition period because we were so young. Hannah Looney is only 21, Laura Hayes was minor last year. This is the first year we've had players who were born in the 2000s! But then you have Gemma (O'Connor, this year's captain) and Aoife (Murray) who are so experienced, and you have the likes of Julia White and the Mackeys in the middle so we've a lot of balance."

'Players are happy with contact'

Cliona Foley

Cork star Amy O'Connor has called on the Camogie Association to allow more physicality in the game, describing it as "boring to watch".

"I know, if I was watching the (2018) All-Ireland final at home, I'd probably have turned it off," said the four-time All-Ireland winner ahead of the start of the Littlewoods National League this weekend.

Cork manager Paudie Murray last month told the *Irish Examiner* that "90% of the scores in our first league game will come from frees."

"If this continues, you'll have nobody watching."

Kilkenny's Megan Farrell has said: "You can't even tip off someone and it's a free. I don't even like watching it if it's like that."

The last two All-Ireland finals, in which Cork have pipped Kilkenny by just a point, were goal-less.

Last year's decider was decided by a late Orla Cotter free and only nine of the game's 27 points came from play.

"I'd like to see the rules changed because, at the moment, whoever has the best free-taker wins," O'Connor said.

"I don't blame the referees, they're only doing their job."

"It's the rules are the problem. It's so frustrating, especially as a forward, because you get the ball and you're fouled."

O'Connor says a combination of the strict non-contact rules ('shouldering' and 'moving into an opponent's body' are illegal), the inconsistency in the use of the 'advantage rule' and defensive coaching has made the game so stop-start that it's turning people off.

"It drives me insane!" she admitted, pointing out that the fitness and strength of modern players means they are ready and willing to engage more physically which would contribute to more continuity of play.

"The speed of camogie has come on in leaps and bounds."

"Players are quicker, stronger and leaner and can hit the ball further."

"I'm not saying change every rule but I do think more flow is needed in the game."

"If they (referees) let a shoulder go they're slated, but players are happy with contact."

"We're all in the gym! We do just as much in the gym and training as the men."

MINOR CAMOGIE TEAM WINS OVERALL REBEL ÓG AWARD



Maura Barrett representing the Cork Minor camogie team with her team-mates, after receiving the Overall Winners award at the 'Evening Echo'-sponsored Rebel Óg overall annual awards ceremony, at the Clayton Hotel, Silver Springs. Also included are back row from left: Kevin Cummins, Cummins Sports; Diarmuid O'Leary, Red FM; John Purcell, Rebel Óg; Maurice Gubbins, editor of the 'Evening Echo' and Joe Kennedy, the Clayton Hotel Silver Springs. See Monday's Evening Echo for our two-page special from the event.

Picture: David Keane

Inniscarra a step above in 2018

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

THE 2018 senior championship was a hugely enjoyable championship, with Inniscarra again getting their hands on the trophy.

The competition was again sponsored by SE Systems, with the *Evening Echo* providing the Player of the Match awards, and the interest in the senior grade drew large crowds to the main games.

Fourteen clubs and two divisions were involved and there were a few surprises along the way, despite Scarra retaining their title.

The opening round saw Sarsfields totally overpower Mallow with Killeagh doing likewise to senior debutants Valley Rovers.

Cloughduv put champions Inniscarra to the pin of their collars before the holders got home with three points to spare.

Courcey Rovers edged it with a point to spare over St Catherine's and Milford fought back after trailing by eight points to get the upper hand on Glen Rovers.

Ballincollig and Douglas ended level with Ballincollig gaining the upper hand in the replay while it was a good opening round for the divisional sides as Carbery overcame Ballygarvan and Muskerry got the better of league winners St Finbarr's.

In the backdoor, Douglas and St Finbarrs played out a cracker that ended level with Douglas winning the replay knocking St Finbarr's.

Champions Inniscarra were favourites with another impressive display to beat Sarsfields, while Douglas had a point to spare over Carbery, Ballygarvan defeated Glen Rovers and Courcey Rovers looked the part against Muskerry.

Suddenly it was down to eight teams chasing the title and all four quarter-finals were excellent.

Inniscarra were pitted once again against Cloughduv, Ballincollig faced Ballygarvan whilst Killeagh took on a Courcey Rovers side who were beginning to indicate they could be the dark horses of this championship.

Championship stalwarts Milford and Douglas were pitted against each other.

Inniscarra were too good for neighbours Cloughduv, though the holders didn't have all their own way despite what the scoreline might suggest. As the game entered the final quarter it was 1-9 to 0-5 and upping the tempo Inniscarra closed it out.

Courcey Rovers were full value for their six-point victory over Killeagh.

A howling gale made conditions hard on both teams but it was Courceys that mastered them and aided by the elements in the opening half set the foundations for their success.

They led at the interval by six points and they worked hard and never allowed Killeagh any room to get back into the contest as they continued their impressive march into a county semi-final.

Milford looked in control as they led Douglas 2-10 to 1-5 at the break but a strong Douglas rally had Milford pinned to their collars to hold out but this did to advance 2-14 to 2-11.

Ballincollig left it late to snatch a victory as they hit three unanswered



Niamh McCarthy, Inniscarra tries to avoid a challenge from defender Karyn Keohane, Courcey Rovers, in the last season's camogie decider. Picture: Larry Cummins



Milford's Eimear O'Gorman blocking down a clearance by Niamh Ni Chuanachain of Douglas in the SE Systems Cork Camogie championship. Picture Denis Minihane

scores in the dying minutes that swung the game their way.

It was in the 62nd minute they hit the front when Trish Buttimer pointed a placed ball that was to seal victory and they held out to the full-time whistle six minutes later to make it through.

And then there were four!

Inniscarra still on course for three in a row, Milford battling to get back on top again and Ballincollig and Courcey Rovers both chasing their first title.

Courcey Rovers booked their place in their first senior championship final as they defeated Milford in a hard-fought clash.

With both defences working hard it took six minutes for a score to be registered. Fiona Keating giving Courceys the lead Milford took the lead when Rebecca Finn connected on the ground to send the ball to the net and with scores

coming thick and fast it was 1-6 to 2-1 as Courceys led at the break.

Maria Watson cut the deficit to a point within two minutes of the restart. Jacinta Crowley and Emer Watson swapped scores before Crowley converted twice to push it to three. Emer Watson had Milford to within two however Courceys opened up a five-point lead with five minutes remaining when Linda Collins collected a long ball turned and crashed it to the net. Two late Milford points and one from Courceys saw Courceys hold out 2-10 to 2-6.

In the all Mid-Cork clash champions Inniscarra set the foundations for victory in the opening half as they went 2-8 to 0-1 ahead of Ballincollig.

It was a much tighter second half with Inniscarra adding just two points but their defence was superb curtailing Ballincollig to three points as Inniscarra ran out winners 2-10 to 0-4.

“The champions’ experience proved crucial, with Rena Buckley curbing Courceys’ scorer in chief Linda Collins”

As final day loomed the big question was could Courcey Rovers stop Inniscarra's march to three in a row or would the hype and excitement of the big day prove too much?

The champions' experience proved crucial, with the likes of Rena Buckley, Niamh Dilworth, Niamh McCarthy and captain Treasa McCarthy leading the way, especially Buckley who curbed Courceys' scorer in chief Linda Collins for long spells.

Niamh McCarthy caused problems at the other end for the Mid Cork outfit, while at midfield Katie O'Mahony was magnificent and gave a Player of the Match display. Fiona Keating and Jacinta Crowley kept the scoreboard ticking for the challengers but when Claudia Keane's long-range shot hit the net there was no way back.

Inniscarra proved their class afterwards in the Munster arena and can still capture the All-Ireland crown.

Significant changes to the grades last year

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

LAST YEAR saw huge changes in the grades of competitions as the proposal of the county board's executive to dispense with the Senior B grade was unanimously accepted by the clubs.

Over the last few years the third adult grade of intermediate had only had five clubs battling for the league and championship titles and with two clubs seeking to regrade down to junior in 2018, the board took action.

It also ensured the winners of the county's second-highest championship went forward into the Munster intermediate ranks.

A total of 13 clubs were graded intermediate and were divided into three groups. After some excellent games, the four clubs that emerged were senior B the season before. Aghbullogue held their composure to the final whistle as they edged out Fr O'Neill's but Eire Og and Newcestown ended all square before the Ovens team won the replay.

A strong second-half performance helped Eire Og take the title against the Mid Cork rivals in front of a huge crowd.

Having played against the wind in the opening half, Eire Og turned around trailing by three points and through the second half they worked hard but it was only in injury time that they hit the crucial scores that saw them close the game out. Maebh Ellen Desmond's hand-passed effort to the net, 19 minutes into the second half, proved critical.

Aghbullogue's Cliona Healy hit three points without reply to give her side a 0-8 to 0-5 interval lead but with their defence under huge pressure from the restart Aghbullogue were in a fight to survive and three points from Margaret O'Herlihy, Emma Crowley and Aoife O'Callaghan had it back level.

The Desmond goal, when she goaled despite being surrounded by defenders was a massive moment. To their credit, Aghbullogue swept up-field and won a penalty when Cliona Healy was fouled after good work by Emma Flanagan and Una Brown set her up.

However, the resulting penalty was saved by keeper Rachel Murray and boosted by this Eire Og batted down the hatches. Captain Siobhan Hutchinson, Marie Gleeson and Emma Quigley were superb in defence.

As the game entered injury time an excellent Emma Crowley point gave them breathing space before Margaret O'Herlihy converted a free and fired over one from play.

Emma Crowley was named as *Evening Echo* Player of the Match after turning in an excellent display as she contributed four points from play.

Eire Og will relish promotion and look with confidence to senior participation in 2019.

Lots to celebrate at

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

IT was an evening of Glitz and glamour in the Rochestown Park Hotel as the Cork camogie players kicked off their boots, cast aside hurleys and helmets and donned ballgowns to celebrate what has been a tremendous year on the playing fields.

With three All-Ireland titles, a national league crown, plus a host of provincial titles won, there were plenty of medals to be presented.

Pride of place went to the county senior team, who once again overcame Kilkenny in a thrilling final to retain the O'Duffy Cup in dramatic fashion with a last-gasp pointed free from Orla Cotter. The win put Cork two clear at the top of the all-time leaderboard with 28 titles to their credit — two more than Dublin.

The seniors were joined by the Division 2 side that made it a double in Croke Park when they captured a magnificent Intermediate All-Ireland title with a win over Down. Earlier in the season they had retained the Littlewoods National League title by overcoming Westmeath.

The county's minor side made history as they captured the county's first ever title when they overcame Galway in a thrilling All-Ireland encounter that got 2018 off to a great start for Cork.

Also honoured on the night were the County U16A and reserve sides. The A side were crowned Munster champions whilst both were runners-up in their respective All-Ireland finals. The Junior team also took Munster honours.

A crowd of almost 400 people gathered to salute the Camogie champions. Joining in the celebrations on the night were guests that included Lord Mayor Mick Finn who paid tribute to the teams, their management and especially the County board who have worked so hard to make Cork camogie so strong.

Des Cullinane, children's officer of the Cork GAA board, congratulated Cork camogie on their phenomenal success in capturing the three major All-Ireland titles in 2018, saying: "Cork camogie is a brand leader of Cork GAA and we hope for closer ties and greater access to Páirc Uí Chaoimh going forward for our camogie teams."

President of the Camogie Association Kathleen Woods was making her first official visit Leeside since assuming office last April and she congratulated Cork on a magnificent year both on and off the playing fields. She praised the hard-working officials and mentors who continue to work for camogie.

Ms Woods heaped praise on the players and those who picked up awards during what was a wonderful year for Cork camogie.

Camogie board chairperson Mary Mc Sweeney welcomed players, mentors their families and friends as well as team sponsors New Ireland. She heaped praise on the players who gave their all in pursuit of glory for Cork camogie. She also thanked those who are putting in a huge amount of voluntary work both at club and county level to ensure Cork Camogie continues to lead the way.

Team sponsors New Ireland Insurance had a large representation and expressed the company's delight to be involved with Cork camogie.

Ms Woods presented the players with their medals whilst presentations were also made to the team management by the board and players before a wonderful evening was enjoyed by all present at the Rochestown Park Hotel.



Cork players Claire Kingston and Siobhan O'Donovan, enjoying the Cork Camogie victory night All-Ireland medals presentation event, at the Rochestown Park Hotel.



Yvonne, Ana and Ger Hartnett from Ballincollig, at the Cork Camogie victory night.

Picture: David Keane



Cork players Rachel O'Shea, Katie Barry and Keeva McCarthy are all smiles at the All-Ireland medals event at the Rochestown Park Hotel.

Picture: David Keane.

Cork camogie night



Cork players Saoirse McCarthy, Leah Weste and Chloe Sigerson, are all smiles at the Cork Camogie victory night.

Picture: David Keane.



Cork players Emma Murphy and Ali Smith, at the Cork Camogie victory night.

Picture: David Keane.



Cork players Deirdre O'Reilly and Aileen Buckley, looking stylish at the Rochestown Park Hotel.

Picture: David Keane.



Cork players Ellen O'Regan, Aisling O'Donovan and Sarah Ahern at the Cork Camogie victory night.

Picture: David Keane.



Paul and Mary McNulty from Castlelyons at the Rochestown Park Hotel.

Picture: David Keane.



Rachel Wycherley and Tom Lenihan, both Ballinora, at the Rochestown Park Hotel.

Picture: David Keane.



Ashling Moloney, Courcy Rovers and Jillian O'Leary, Sliabh Rua, enjoying the Cork Camogie victory night.

Picture: David Keane.



Cork players Lisa O'Riordan and Kate Corcoran at the All-Ireland medals presentation event.

Picture: David Keane.



Shauna Hayes, Rathcormac and Lucy McNulty, Castlelyons, attending the Cork camogie victory night.

Picture: David Keane.

Camogie not at its best, despite hype

Camogie

Linda Mellerick



One of Cork's most stylish camogie players, Amy O'Connor, at the launch of Littlewoods Ireland's #StyleOfPlay campaign.

Picture: INPHO/Dan Sheridan



Kilkenny's Miriam Walshe and Meighan Farrell, with Cork's Hannah Looney, in last year's camogie league final.

Picture: INPHO/Ryan Byrne

“Amy O'Connor gave a great interview. She said camogie was ‘boring to play and boring to watch’”

Add in the fact that many teams, primarily Kilkenny, now play defensively and fans and players are getting less and less buzz from the games. The All Ireland final result in 2017 was ten points to nine; in 2018 it was 0-14 to 0-13 (15 points from frees). Back in 1992, we had 12-a-side games with narrower goalposts and low uprights. That made scoring from distance difficult, but the score was Cork 1-20, Wexford 2-6.

In 2002, it was Cork 4-9, Tipperary 1-9. In 2012, the result was Wexford 3-13, Cork 3-6. Where have the goals

gone? There is nothing like the buzz supporters get from a net-rattling in an All-Ireland final.

Amy O'Connor gave a great interview during the week. She stated that camogie has become “boring to play and boring to watch”. When a player says that the games are getting boring to play in, we really do have a serious problem.

Cork have two challenge games behind them, against Limerick and Offaly, and again new players are being tested. Niamh McCarthy won't be available for Cork until Inniscarra

finish their All-Ireland bid, which may take them all the way to the final in March.

Siobhan Hutchinson, Cliona Healy, and Laura Hayes are three additional players that Cork manager, Paudie Murray, is looking at blending in during the league. Katrina Mackey is out for Sunday with a back injury, but these aren't issues during the league, as seasoned players give way for younger players to gain experience. There are no retirements from the team, which took back-to-back All-Ireland titles in 2018.

Group 1: Clare, Dublin, Kilkenny, Limerick, Offaly. Group 2: Cork, Galway, Tipperary, Waterford, Wexford. FIXTURES:

January 20: Kilkenny v Clare, Offaly v Limerick, Tipperary v Cork, Wexford v Waterford. January 26: Clare v Offaly, Kilkenny v Dublin, Cork v Wexford, Tipperary v Galway. February 2: Limerick v Clare. February 3: Dublin v Offaly, Cork v Waterford, Galway v Wexford. February 17: Dublin v Limerick, Offaly v Kilkenny, Waterford v Galway, Wexford v Tipperary. February 24: Clare v Dublin, Limerick v Kilkenny, Galway v Cork, Waterford v Tipperary. March 10: Semi-finals. March 24: Final.

TOMORROW: Littlewoods Ireland National League: Cork v Tipperary. The Ragg. 2pm

THE 2019 camogie season gets underway this weekend with the Littlewoods Ireland Camogie Leagues Division 1 throw-in. The live-streaming of a minimum of six games over the course of the national league will publicise the game, with the final down for March 24.

The champions, Kilkenny, have home advantage to Clare, as they begin to defend their title and aim for four-in-a-row.

Meanwhile, current All-Ireland champions, Cork, will travel to Tipperary in the first clash to be live-streamed by Littlewoods Ireland on their social channels. Fans can tune in live from 1.45pm on January 20, across YouTube and Facebook, for pitch-side reporting from Lauren Guilfoyle and commentary from Killian Whelan and local analysts.

Twelve months ago, severe weather affected both training and fixtures. This year, there have been no such problems, with fields in good nick and grass growth strong. Hopefully, that will continue and the fixtures schedule will not be interrupted.

Paudie Murray remains at the helm in Cork. That was expected. He was never going to walk away with three-in-a-row a prospect. Ann Downey feels she has unfinished business, having lost the last two All-Ireland finals by a single point. But unless Kilkenny change their defensive approach to games, she'll more than likely suffer a third defeat in 2019.

Thank God for Cork and Kilkenny. They are the only two teams that generate any tension and excitement in camogie, and that's because of the rivalry between them, not the hurling. As we start the 2019 season, we're all hoping for better entertainment than in previous years.

Camogie needs more counties to raise the bar and give Cork and Kilkenny a run. With a blended team on Sunday, we should be expecting Tipperary to perhaps defeat Cork in the Ragg, but even with weakened sides, Cork remained undefeated in their group in 2018.

Stronger competition nationally and a freer-flowing game are both required to bring a wider audience to our game. We harp on so much about its stop/start nature that it's almost embarrassing.

Marketing can promote how great our game is and the growth we are witnessing, but much of the publicity is false. It's a case of 'say it enough times and people might believe it'.

The fitness level of the girls at senior inter-county level has improved massively in the past decade — for some counties, anyway — yet the game has more stoppages now than it did 25 years ago. I meet lifelong camogie followers who have no interest in going to inter-county games; they find them boring.

Waterford star Rockett defies doctors and pain for the love of the game

JAN. 2019

CAMOGIE

By Philip Lanigan

NIAMH ROCKETT is talking about the not-so-distant past, when playing camogie for your county was like travelling in second class.

"I remember when I was playing in the early years you'd have to give two or three euro to pay for the lights. Going away to a Championship match, you'd be told, 'you can either have a bus or a meal'. It's not the county board's fault, there just wasn't any money. It's very hard when it's costing you to play camogie."

That was when Waterford were starting out on their All-Ireland journey. After the breakthrough of a junior title in 2011 and the further building block of intermediate success in 2015, last year saw a milestone appearance in an All-Ireland senior quarter-final. Rockett was one of four players from the team nominated for All-Stars. Beth Carton honoured as the county's first senior winner.

Now?

On Tuesday nights, the camogie team trains at Carriganore on the WIT sports campus alongside the county senior hurlers.

They share a meal afterwards with the likes of Austin Gleeson and Jamie Barron. For someone who grew up idolising Ken McGrath, it's a sign of how far camogie has come for Rockett, whose father Eddie hurled for the county and whose brother represented Munster in Railway Cup football competition and featured on the famous Waterford team that beat Kerry in a Munster Under-21 football final.

"A lot of us are friends with guys on the men's team. We're using the same facilities on a Tuesday night and, after, both of us go for food. It makes you feel like you're on a par with them. For some of the girls who are 16, 17 and 18, this is all they know."

Money is still tight, with players helping to contribute to fund-raising activities, whether it's donning fancy dress costumes for a night at the dogs or pushing sports predictor competitions. But Rockett explains how 'part of our funding is dedicated towards getting a profile for the game'.

On Monday, she was at the O'Reilly Theatre in Dublin's city centre to launch the 2019 Littlewoods Ireland Camogie Leagues and the 'style of play' campaign which will see a minimum of six games live streamed over the course of the competition.

Camogie is fighting for a higher profile and a bigger market share and Rockett feels that the game is finally being taken



THE PAIN GAME: Niamh Rockett has defied medical advice



porated under the GAA banner would be a significant

step in that process.

"I think we're getting closer and closer to coming under the same bracket. Hopefully at the top level it will be pushed through. I know the women's GPA are trying to push make it happen."

She feels camogie needs to modernise, both in terms of the rules and its traditions, pointing to the defensive stalemate of last year's Cork-Kilkenny decider.

"There are still massive strides to be made. Last year's All-Ireland final was not a good spectacle, it wasn't a good showcase for camogie. We're doing all these gym programmes but you can't shoulder in camogie. As much as people give out that referees are ruining the game, they are only refereeing to the rules."

"We have to wear skorts. We tried to vote it out, to go for shorts, but it didn't get through congress. It definitely needs to change. Camogie needs to go under the same bracket as hurling."

Her own story is one of defying medical science and opinion. Now 25, she was only 16 when she was told by a consultant that a chronic knee problem for someone playing camogie, hockey, football and soccer was going to leave her in a wheelchair by the time she hit 30. "He told me we need to break your knees and realign them. Both of them."

"He wanted to put me in a wheelchair when I was 16. It was a lot to take on. My father being stubborn as well said, 'we'll wait

until you're 18 at least and see what the story is'. 'I was told to give it up then. I wasn't given a choice. I'm a PE and Maths teacher. It's already in my head, 'What kind of PE teacher can't walk in their 30s?'. I played on, did a bit of physio, went to a chiropractor, got other opinions."

She won a junior All-Ireland in 2011.

"I got a bad bang in a match against Meath, my kneecap came out of place. Couldn't play on. Couldn't jog for 14 months."

"I went to another doctor in Santry, he told me, don't play again, you can't play. He said, 'You've arthritis. You've the knees of a 60-year-old. That's how bad your left knee is'. I was in loads of pain. I went down to Declan O'Sullivan, the Cork GAA physio. He put it in my head that I could get back playing."

She won an intermediate All-Ireland in 2015.

Now?

"On supplements and pain-killers. Permanently?"

"All the time. I could be up all night, not able to sleep. There is no massaging it, rubbing it - nothing you can do. Just this constant ache. You can't ice it or get the swelling down."

Yet in 2018 the vice-captain was nominated for an All-Star.

Waterford's campaign starts this afternoon with an opening league game away to Wexford and Rockett has a simple target for the year ahead: "We want to be up with the best this year. We're out to prove a point that it's not just about having one good year."

And to continue to defy the odds.

Stars come out for camogie night



A NIGHT OF CELEBRATION: Cork players Gíara O'Sullivan, Cliona O'Leary, Laura Doyle and Gíara Murphy at the camogie victory night and All-Ireland medals presentation event held at the Rochestown Park Hotel last night.

Picture: David Keane

Cliona Foley

She's only 25 and already has a decade-worth of inter-county service, but Niamh Rockett probably shouldn't be playing camogie at all for Waterford, whose 2019 Littlewoods Ireland National League opener is an away trip to Wexford on Sunday.

At 16, already playing hockey, soccer, football and camogie with school, club, province and county, the talented St Anne's forward was told that both her knees needed to be broken and re-aligned if she wanted to continue playing sport.

Four years later, when a specific match injury forced her to get a knee reconstruction at the Santry Sports Clinic - "they took part of my hamstring and pulled it across my kneecap to act as a cross my kneecap to act as a stabiliser" - they discovered

Pain no barrier to Waterford Rockett

had eroded the cartilage in her left knee.

She was already half-way through her PE studies so this second prognosis also had massive career implications.

"The doctor said: 'I think you just need to give up sports or you'll never be a PE teacher. You'll be in a wheelchair by the time you're 30.'"

That she is not only still playing but received an All-Star nomination last season and will captain the Déise this year speaks volumes about Rockett's character and, she says chuckling, "the stubbornness" she inherited from her dad Eddie, also an inter-county star.

She credits Cork physio Declan O'Sullivan as the man who has kept her going with

constant knee-strengthening programmes.

She's grateful also for the county management team of Donal O'Rourke and Shane Dunphy, who led Waterford to their first senior All-Ireland quarter-final last summer, but also give her the necessary slack whenever she needs it.

"I get jeers off the girls, alright; 'she's sore again', or 'she's going to the physio again', or 'she's only putting on that limp out there', says Rockett, laughing.

However, real perspective was added in the past year too by a tragic loss in Blackwater Community School, where she now teaches.

"We had a child who sadly passed away from cancer. She

Niamh Rockett at the launch of Littlewoods Ireland's #styleofplay campaign for the National Camogie Leagues.

Picture: Dan Sheridan

was mad into sport and had to get her leg amputated. How lucky am I that I can still play? I never take that for granted."

"Yes, I mightn't be 100%, but I'll keep playing until I can't anymore and, when I finish, it's going to be on my own terms. That's why I go to the gym six-days-a-week and get up early to get my schoolwork done and then go to the ball-wall."



the occasion and surroundings - their first game in Páirc Uí Chaoimh - got to them. Now, they're hoping to kick on in a tough league group that also includes Cork, Galway and Tipperary.

Rockett sees progress off the pitch too. The Camogie Association will stream six league games live this season (five more than last year) and, once-a-week, her team trains and eats alongside the county senior hurlers in Carriganore, a new parity which has added to their self-esteem.

She agrees the 2018 All-Ireland senior final "wasn't a good spectacle" and that defensive set-ups are turning some games into free-taking shootouts, but stresses Waterford are different. "We go out and try to win every game. We don't try to just defend and contain teams. We might be underdogs, but we'll always try to go out and win."

Cotter points the way for Rebels



Camogie

Rory Noonan

Cork 0-10
Tipperary 0-7

A BETTER second-half performance saw Cork win their opening league encounter against Tipperary at the Ragg yesterday.

For all Tipp's good first-half play, led by the likes of Megan Ryan and Shauna Quirke, once Cork stepped up a gear in the second half they were unable to live with them.

Cork showed enough to know they are going to be one of the sides to beat again this year, with the likes of Orla Cotter, Ashling Thompson and Gemma O'Connor in good form.

Add in an impressive display from Briege Corkery when she came on at half-time, and it's going to take a good side to stop them.

But this was only their first league outing and there is a lot to do before making the qualifying rounds of the league, not to mind championship.

Niamh Treacy opened the scoring for Tipperary, with Cotter replying from a free for Cork. Cotter set up Linda Collins for the Rebels' second point, before a magnificent long-range effort from Eimear Loughman had Tipp level again, with 10 minutes gone.

Four minutes later and they were awarded a penalty when Quirke was fouled by Aoife Murray, with Devane deciding to put the ball over the bar rather than going for goal.

Despite being the better of the two sides, Tipp couldn't shake the Rebels off and Cotter had them back on level terms again, from a 45.

With four minutes to half-time, Cotter scored from another free, to make it 0-4 to 0-3.

But Tipp finished the half strongly, with Devane equalising and then in additional-time, she put them back in front from a free, as they led 0-5 to 0-4 at half-time.

Cork were back on level terms early in the second half, when Cotter was on target again and with 43 minutes gone she put them in front, 0-6 to 0-5.

Treacy had the sides level again, but



Cait Devane challenges Laura Hayes of Cork in yesterday's Littlewoods Ireland Camogie League Division 1 tie at The Ragg.

Picture: INPHO/Bryan Keane

a great ball from Cotter set up Libby Coppinger for a point and from here they never lost the lead again.

Cork could have had a goal with 48 minutes played, but Orla Cronin was fouled as she bore down on goal, with Cotter pointing the resultant free.

Campion pulled a point back for Tipp, but points from Sigerson and Cronin ensured the Rebels ran out winners, a game they deserved to win.

Scorers for Cork: O Cotter 0-6 (0-4 f, 0-1 45), L Collins, L Coppinger, C Sigerson, O Cronin 0-1 each.
Tipperary: C Devane 0-3 (0-2 f, 0-1 pen), N Treacy 0-2, E Loughman, M Campion 0-1 each.

CORK: A Murray, L O'Sullivan, L Treacy, L Hayes, M Looney, G O'Connor, C Sigerson, A Thompson, L Coppinger, S Hutchinson, O Cronin, A O'Connor, O Cotter, L Collins, C Healy.

Subs: B Corkery for S Hutchinson, S McCarthy for C Healy.

TIPPERARY: C Bourke, J Burke, G Grace, E Loughman, C Quirke, M Campion, A McGrath, M Ryan, E Fryday, S Quirke, J Grace, C McKeogh, C Devane, N Treacy, L Loughman.

Subs: N Walsh for J Burke, A Loughane for J Grace, E McDonald for C Devane, G O'Brien for C McKeogh.

Ref: Ray Kelly (Kildare).



Ashling Thompson bursts through to drive the sliotar down field against Tipperary yesterday.

Picture: INPHO/Bryan Keane

'This group knows how to win games at this stage of season'

THERE are not too many trophies won in January and Cork are really only just back training.

Like other years, in a formula that has worked, they have yet to take to the pitch for training sessions and early on yesterday you could tell.

But manager, Paudie Murray, knows what he is doing at this stage, and he was well aware that realistically the only thing to matter yesterday was getting the two points on the board and preparing for their next game.

He won't be getting carried away with their impressive second-half display, nor will he be overly concerned with their poor, by their standards, first-half one. He will be looking to make the latter stages of the league and ultimately drive on from there, but for now, he was happy to take the points yesterday and move on.

"We have nothing done really and we haven't trained on a pitch yet so far. We had two challenge

REACTION

■ Rory Noonan

matches so that's all we have done on a pitch and you could see it there in patches.

"In the first-half we played a bit too much summer type hurling but in the second-half we went a bit more direct and I think we were better in that half.

"Credit to the girls they always put in a massive effort, but I also thought that we panicked a little bit in the last 10 minutes before half-time and left them back into it.

"Other than that I thought we managed the game very well and this group knows how to win games at this stage.

"Orla was spot on from frees as usual and I think Briege made a difference when she came on at half-time. But look there is a long way to go and today was

about ensuring we put two points on the board and move on. "I would always be hoping to pick up a few players in the league to add to the championship squad and we are hoping to reach the semi-final of the league as this keeps us playing.

"If you don't there is a long gap between when you end your league campaign and start the championship so we will be hoping to get to the semi-final to keep them playing.

"But overall I'm happy with today, but like all sides, we have plenty of work to do in the weeks and months ahead," concluded Paudie.

And if anyone thinks that Paudie or Briege have any sorts of egos then all you had to see afterwards was the two of them pushing a spectators car when her battery had gone flat.

Corkery even jumped into the driver's seat to help jump start it when the owner was a little unsure of what to do!

Cork survive stern examination from Tipp

Camogie

Daragh Ó Conchúir

All-Ireland champions Cork survived a stern examination from Tipperary to get their Littlewoods Ireland Camogie League Division 1 campaign off to a winning start (0-10 to 0-7) at The Ragg yesterday.

Niamh Treacy capitalised on a loose clearance to give the hosts an early lead but All-Ireland final heroine, Orla Cotter slotted the first of her six points to level and

Linda Collins soon moved the Rebels in front.

But Tipperary then began to motor, thanks chiefly to Cáit Devane's dead ball accuracy. The hosts led 0-5 to 0-4 at the break, a margin which could have been greater had Devane not opted for a point from a penalty.

Home goalkeeper Caoimhe Burke was rock solid under the high ball in that opening period and denied Collins a goal on the restart.

The teams were level on 0-6 apiece entering the last

quarter, with Cotter and Treacy providing the pick of the scores from play, but Cork then upped gears down the home straight with Libby Coppinger, Chloe Sigerson and Orla Cronin all pointing.

Kilkenny got their bid for a fourth consecutive title off to a promising start but they too were pushed hard by a youthful Clare before leaving the John Lockes ground in Callan with the points (1-9 to 0-7).

Denise Gaule, Michelle Quilty and Danielle Morrissey had the Black and Amber

on the front foot early on and though Róisín Begley and Amy Keating settled Clare nerves, a Gaule goal from a penalty just before the break left it 1-6 to 0-3 in their favour.

The Bannerwomen refused to be cowed by that setback or the vaunted opposition and restricted Ann Downey's charges to just three points on the restart from Player of the Year Anne Dalton, Gaule and Morrissey.

Indeed Clare took the second half, with Keating their scorer in chief.

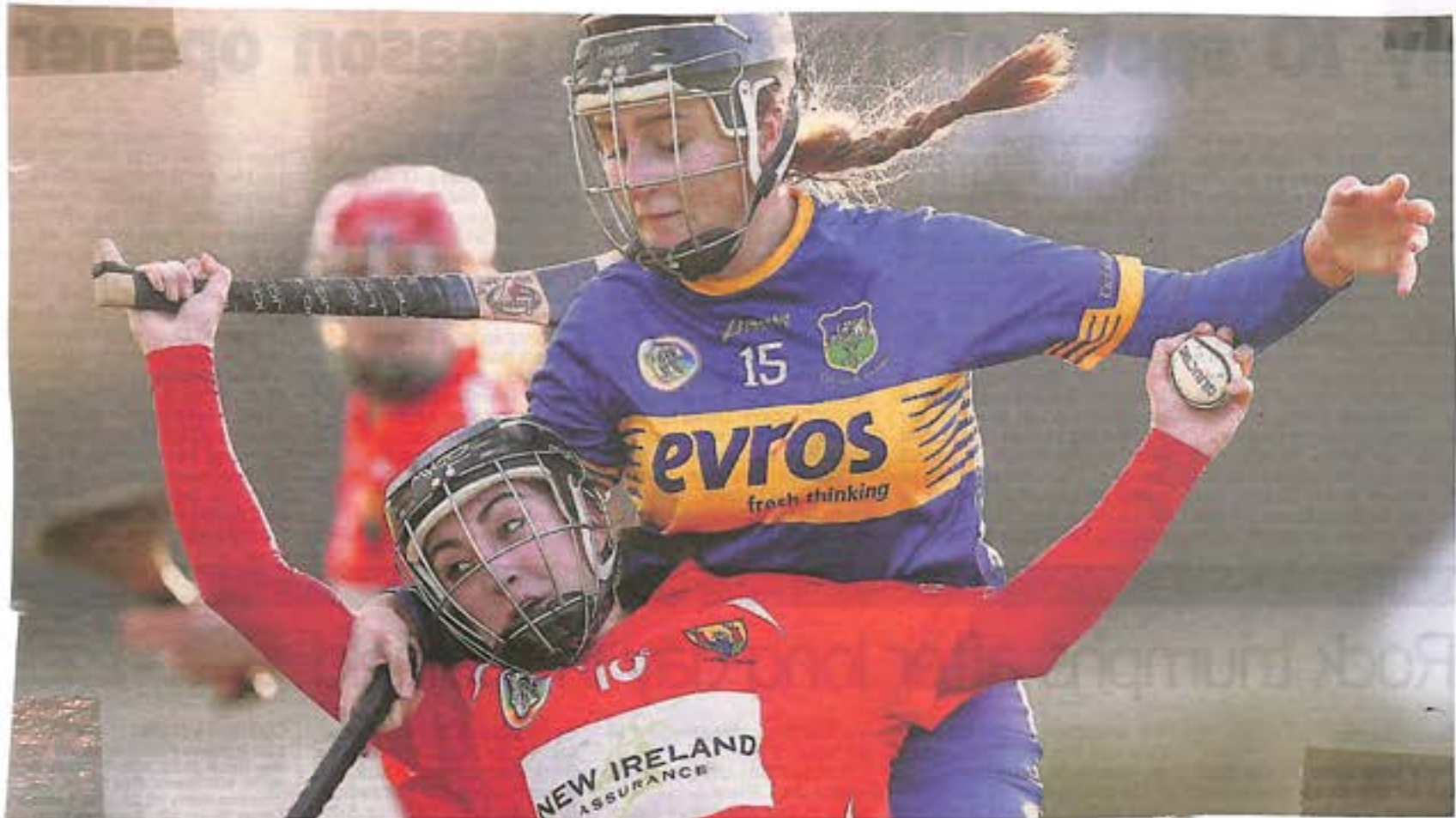
Beth Carton's increasing profile, and that of camogie in Waterford, was illustrated by the Déise's first ever All-Star being named WLR/Granville Hotel Waterford GAA Award winner for 2018 last weekend. And she showed just why with nine points as the Donal O'Rourke's side survived a Wexford third-quarter rally to prevail by 1-13 to 1-5 at St Patrick's Park in Ennis-corthy.

Five of those scores came in the first half when debutant Sarah Lacey also showed

well at corner-forward. Skipper Niamh Rockett's goal helped them to 1-7 to 0-3 interval lead.

Anais Curran's goal reduced the margin to two with 20 minutes left but they failed to score again while Carton kept stretching the gap at the other end.

Caoimhe Costelloe was the star for Limerick with two late points and nine in total as the Shannonsiders left St Rynagh's, Banagher with a 1-12 to 0-13 triumph over Offaly.



Cork's Amy O'Connor shields possession from Tipperary's Laura Loughnane in yesterday's Littlewoods Ireland Camogie League Division 1 clash. Cork won 0-10 to 0-7. See page 29.

Picture: INPHO/Bryan Keane

Echo honours our ladies sport stars



Phil Allen, Hall of Fame award; Sanita Puspure, Ladies Sport Star of the Year award winner and Gemma O'Connor, Special Achievement award, at the Evening Echo Ladies' Sports Star awards ceremony at the Ambassador Hotel yesterday. See pages 34 and 50 for more.

Picture: David Keane

JAN
201



Cork camogie player Ashling Thompson is accused of assaulting two women in a nightclub in Cork almost a year ago.

Picture: Daragh McSweeney/Cork Courts Limited

Cork camogie star Thompson faces two assault charges

Liam Heylin

GAA All-Star camogie player Ashling Thompson appeared before Cork District Court yesterday on charges of assaulting two young women at the Secret Garden nightclub in Rearden's in Cork almost a year ago.

The 28-year-old arrived at the courthouse, on Anglesea Street, Cork, with her solicitor, Eddie Burke, for the brief hearing.

She faced charges of assaulting Aoife O'Flaherty and assaulting Jennifer Coakley, both contrary to Section 2 of the Non-Fatal Offences Against the Person Act, on February 25, 2018, at Secret Garden, Rearden's, Washington St, Cork.

Initially, she also faced the more serious charge, contrary to Section 3 of the same act, namely assault



Ashling Thompson playing for Cork at Páirc Uí Rinn in 2017.

Picture: INPHO/Cathal Noonan

causing harm to Jennifer Coakley. However, this charge was dismissed.

In order to prosecute a case of causing harm, it is necessary to produce medical evidence of the alleged harm. In this case, Sgt Gear-

óid Davis explained: "We have been unable to get medical records on the Section 3 charge."

The sergeant went on to say that the State would apply to withdraw that charge. Judge Olann Kel-

leher agreed to an application by Mr Burke to dismiss the charge.

In effect, that left Ms Thompson facing two charges of simple assault, charges that are dealt with at district court level and not by indictment at the circuit court. Mr Burke, solicitor, applied for a copy of Garda statements on the two assault charges.

Judge Kelleher then adjourned the case until February 18 for that to be done. When the matter comes before the court in a month's time, it will then be indicated by the defence if pleas of guilty or not guilty are being entered.

Thompson was captain of the Cork camogie team that won the O'Duffy Cup in 2015. She has two All-Star awards and three All-Ireland club medals, won with her Milford club in north Cork.

Rebels aim to build on win over Tipperary

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

TOMORROW
Littlewoods Div 1 National League; Cork v Wexford; 2pm, Venue: TBC.

WEXFORD travel to Cork in search of a win after losing out in their opening game to Waterford by eight points whilst Cork go into this clash on the back of a three-point win over Tipperary.

Whilst Paudie Murray will be first to acknowledge his side had it tough there is no doubt but that the game will stand to Cork.

Wexford seems to be in somewhat of a transitional time these last few years and it has not helped matters that they have yet to find a manager.

Last season Martin Carey was at the helm but he stepped down after Christmas leaving the county without a successor and now they are finding it difficult to get somebody to take the reins.

Two wins in last year's league campaign weren't enough or good enough for a county who reached such great heights and they will be hoping that this year they can turn their fortunes around and progress to the latter stages of the competition.

Having lost out to Waterford last weekend would be seen as a blow and so they will be looking for an improved performance, this weekend and with hard games to come against, Galway and Tipperary every game is vital to them.

They will be minus seven of their panel who line out in the All Ireland club semi-final against Cork's Inniscarra on Sunday.

Cork fielded twelve of their All Ireland winning team last weekend and it was a strong statement of intent from the Cork management who in the past have not been as strong in the earlier stages of the league. It shows the determination that is in the side and it was great to see players such as Gemma O'Connor and Aoife Murray in the starting line out. Marked absent were the Mackey's Pamela and Katriona whilst Julia White was also a non-starter.

Three of the All-Ireland winning intermediate side were handed starts with Laura Hayes, Siobhan Hutchinson and Cliona Healy all nailing down places in the starting 15.

Saoirse McCarthy was also introduced as was Briege Corkery and with plenty of strength on his bench, we can look forward to seeing more players from the intermediate side introduced as the league progresses.

Saying that this side is still very much built around the experienced performers and with Orla Cotter again leading the way that Cork rose to the challenge.

Trailing at half time 0-5 to 0-4 they showed their strength to carve out a win that whilst not set the world on fire was enough.

A win on Saturday would set them up nicely with a game against Waterford to come on February 3rd and a trip away to Galway on Feb 24th it's all about getting the points secured to make it to the latter stages.

SPORT IN BRIEF

Camogie

LITTLEWOODS IRELAND CAMOGIE LEAGUES DIVISION 1
— GROUP ONE: (Whitegate) Clare 0-10 Offaly 1-5; (John Locke's) Kilkenny 1-15 Dublin 0-6. GROUP TWO: (Cork Camogie Grounds) Cork P Wexford P; (The Bagg) Galway 1-14 Tipperary 1-6.



The victorious Sacred Heart Secondary School team celebrates their Munster colleges' junior B final success with friends and supporters on Saturday.

(Photos: Trevor Patchett)

Sacred Heart don't miss a beat

Clon school in control all the way through decider



Noel Horgan
reports from
Mahon

MUNSTER COLLEGES FINAL

SACRED HEART CLONAKILTY	1-10
ST MARY'S MIDLETON	2-0

NEVER headed over the course of the hour, Sacred Heart Secondary School Clonakilty ran out comfortable winners over St Mary's Middleton in the Munster colleges' junior B camogie final at Mahon on Saturday.

The result earned the West Cork students a first-ever provincial title, and their historic triumph was built upon a rock-like rearguard in which Emma O'Driscoll and team skipper Daire O'Brien excelled in the central positions.

O'Driscoll was a veritable colossus at full back in the first half, doing most to ensure that Sacred Heart's advantage was never seriously threatened after they had made the early running.

They were three points to the good inside seven minutes, with classy corner forward Eimear O'Brien bagging all of their scores, two from frees, before adding another from a placed ball midway through the opening period.

Along with O'Brien, Maeve Kingston and Millie Condon made their presence felt up front for the winners early on, and Kingston proved her worth again when delivering a precision cross that led to O'Brien grabbing a goal in the 24th minute.

O'Brien's strike sent Sacred Heart's prospects soaring, even if they didn't exactly dominate territorially in the first half when centre back Ali Smith, midfielders Aoife Healy and Rachel Looney and roaming wing

forward Aimee Morgan showed up well for St Mary's.

With Emma O'Driscoll lord-ing matters at the edge of the square however, Sacred Heart coped admirably with the pressure until corner forward Lilly Hayes-Nally goaled for St Mary's in the 25th minute, expertly finishing Ali Smith's long-range free to the net.

That left the East-Cork girls 1-4 to 1-0 adrift at the interval, but Sacred Heart came up with most of the answers on the resumption, although it took a fine save by competent custodian Sinead McCarthy to prevent Grace Rooney from shooting another goal for St Mary's in the 35th minute.

Eimear O'Brien had opened Sacred Heart's second-half account prior to that, and they

steadily stretched the gap in the third quarter.

Anna Flynn, much more involved following a move from full-forward to the left wing, Daire O'Brien, from a long-range free, and the irrepressible Eimear O'Brien were all on target before Lydia Sutton got in on the scoring act, pouncing for a point after Caoimhe Murphy had brought the best out of Middleton goalkeeper Ellen Hayes-Nally.

It was 1-10 to 1-0 after Eimear O'Brien converted another free at the three-quarter stage, and the writing was clearly on the wall for St Mary's at that juncture.

To their credit, they refused to give up the ghost, pressing hard in the closing stages when centre-back Ali Smith was re-deployed at full forward in a bid to boost their fortunes up front.

Again, however, the Sacred Heart defence stood firm, with the result that St Mary's didn't add to their tally until Aimee Morgan, the loser's most accomplished performer overall, found the net virtually on the stroke of full time.

Daire O'Brien stood out at centre back for Sacred Heart in the second half when defenders Kate O'Donovan and Kellie O'Gorman, and midfielder Jessica McCarthy were others to



Sacred Heart's Millie Condon comes under pressure from the St Mary's defence.

contribute generously to what, in the final analysis, was an excellent team performance.

Scorers

Sacred Heart: E O'Brien 1-7 (4f), A Flynn, D O'Brien (f), L Sutton 0-1 each.

St Mary's: L Hayes-Nally, A Morgan 1-0 each.

Sacred Heart: S McCarthy (Ballinascahy); A O'Brien (Clonakilty); E O'Driscoll (Enniskeane); A Condon (Ballinascahy); K O'Donovan (Kilbree); D O'Brien (Enniskeane); K O'Gorman (Clonakilty); J McCarthy (Barryroe); M Murphy (Kilbree); L Sutton (Clonakilty); C Murphy (do.); M Condon (Ballinascahy); M Kingston (do.); A Flynn (do.); E

O'Brien (Enniskeane). **Subs:** S Patwell (Ballinascahy) for Sutton, (47); K Nolan (Clonakilty) for M Murphy (55).

St Mary's: E Hayes-Nally (Castlemartyr); S Dignam (Killeagh); A Harty (Castlemartyr); O Evans (Middleton); L Murphy (Dungourney); A Smith (Aghada); J Keegan-O'Connell (Middleton); A Healy (Aghada); G Rooney (Fr O'Neill's); C Cronin (Middleton); S Kent (Killeagh); A Morgan (Castlemartyr); N O'Connor (Killeagh); E Cronin (Aghada); L Hayes-Nally (Castlemartyr).

Subs: R Leahy (Aghada) for C Cronin (3); K O'Brien for Evans (injured, ht); C Cronin for E Cronin (ht).

Referee: A Walsh (St Vincent's).

THE HIGHLIGHTS

Our Star: Daire O'Brien and Eimear O'Brien were obvious contenders for the MVP rating, but **Emma O'Driscoll** was a tower of strength at full back for Sacred Heart.

Star moment: Sinead McCarthy's save early in the second half allowed Sacred Heart to

remain firmly in the driving seat.

Talking point: Semi-finalists for the past two seasons, it goes without saying that Sacred Heart weren't winning out of turn on this occasion.

What's next: Sacred Heart will begin their quest for All-Ireland glory next month.

Thrilled Mulcahy hails magnificent team performance

BY NOEL HORGAN

HUNGER was a huge motivating factor for Sacred Heart said team manager Ciarán Mulcahy as he reflected on their comprehensive win.

Pointing out that the Clonakilty College had been knocking hard on the door in this grade for the past few years, Mulcahy felt the girls carried 'a lot of hurt' into the game, particularly those who were on the age limit.

'They knew this was going to be their last chance, so they really put in a huge effort this season, and they got the reward they deserved today,' Mulcahy said. 'It was a fantastic performance, and in a low-scoring game, you'd have to say our backs were excellent.'

'The girls hunted in packs, and, while there were some outstanding individual displays, it was essentially a magnificent team effort,' he stressed.

Mulcahy revealed he was reasonably

confident going into the game, given that Sacred Heart had already beaten St Mary's in the group stage.

'We knew we were in with a great chance, but, at the same time, you have to be wary and respectful of any opposition going into a Munster final,' he said. 'To win Munster was always going to be our goal this season, and we'll be in bonus territory when we play the Dublin champions in the All-Ireland series in two or three weeks' time.'

'We'll be giving it our best shot, and I feel we have a very solid squad, so hopefully it will go well for us,' he stated.

Limerick native Mulcahy made no attempt to disguise how immensely satisfying it is to have steered Sacred Heart to a provincial title, although he was quick to play down the significance of his contribution.

'We do a lot of training at school, but it's the clubs around West-Cork that do

the bulk of the work with these players, and I want to acknowledge their input, because my job just managing the team is much easier,' Mulcahy explained. 'I've been teaching in Clonakilty for the past seven years, I really enjoy working with the camogie team, and this win means as much to me as what happened in Croke Park last August,' Mulcahy admitted in reference to Limerick's first All-Ireland senior hurling success since 1973.

Cork off to winning start

BY DARAGH Ó CONCHÚIR

ALL-IRELAND champions Cork survived an extremely stern examination from Tipperary to get their Littlewoods Ireland Camogie League Division 1 campaign off to a winning start, 0-10 to 0-7 at The Ragg.

Tipp are looking to build on a progressive 2018 under Bill Mullaney, when they reached the last four of the championship. Cork ended their aspirations and went on to complete a famous three-in-a-row but there was enough evidence here to suggest that the Premiers will prove a tough nut to crack for any opposition in the year ahead.

Niamh Treacy capitalised on a loose clearance to give the hosts an early lead but All-Ireland final heroine Orla Cotter slotted the first of her six points to level and Linda Collins moved the Rebels in front.

Tipp were able to hold their own in the physical exchanges and Cáit Devane was accurate from placed balls, as they went in at the interval leading by 0-5 to 0-4. It might have been even better but Devane opted for a point from a penalty.

Their goalkeeper Caoimhe Burke was rock solid under pressure under the high ball on a number of occasions in that opening period and was just as good in the second half, denying Collins a goal with one excellent intervention.

The teams were level on 0-6 apiece entering the last quarter, with Cotter and Treacy providing the pick of the scores from play, but Cork showed why they are so difficult to overcome, four points in the context of the overall trend of the game a significant yield in that closing period.

Cotter set up St Colum's club woman Libby Coppinger for a score and then slotted a close-in free, before Chloe Sigerson and Enniskeane club star Orla Cronin sealed the verdict.

Cork are home to Wexford this Saturday, at 2pm.

Scorers

Cork: O Cotter 0-6 (4f, 45), L Collins, L Coppinger, C Sigerson, O Cronin 0-1 each.

Tipperary: C Devane 0-3 (2f, 0-1 pen), N Treacy 0-2, E Loughman, M Camplon 0-1 each.



Cork's Briege Corkery under pressure from Tipperary's Jenny Grace during the Littlewoods Ireland Camogie League Division 1 game at The Ragg on Sunday.
(Photo: Bryan Keane/INPHO)



NATIONAL LEAGUE

The Cork team that beat Tipperary in the league opener.

CAMOGIE DIV 1 GROUP 2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Diff	Pts
Waterford	1	1	0	0	16	8	8	3
Cork	1	1	0	0	10	7	3	3
Galway	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tipperary	1	0	0	1	7	10	-3	0
Wexford	1	0	0	1	8	16	-8	0

Cork: A Murray, L O'Sullivan, L Treacy, L Hayes, H Looney, G O'Connor, C Sigerson, A Thompson, L Coppinger, S Hutchinson, O Cronin, A O'Connor, O Cotter, L Collins, C Healy.
Subs: B Corkery for S Hutchinson, S McCarthy for C Healy.
Tipperary: C Bourke, J Burke, G

Grace, E Loughman, C Quirke, M Camplon, A McGrath, M Ryan, E Fryday, S Quirke, J Grace, C McKeogh, C Devane, N Treacy, L Loughmane.
Subs: N Walsh for J Burke, A Loughmane for J Grace, E McDonnald for C Devane, G O'Brien for C McKeogh.
Referee: Ray Kelly (Kildare).

Inniscarra close in on All-Ireland appearance

CORK and Munster camogie champions Inniscarra are on the hunt for All-Ireland honours.

After conquering their county and province, next up is an All-Ireland club senior semi-final against St Martin's at WIT this Sunday, at 2pm.

After beating Courcy Rovers in the county final, Inniscarra then turned their attention to Munster where they bridged an eight-year gap to their last provincial crown by beating Clare outfit Inagh-Kilnamona in the final by 2-9 to 0-7.

The three-in-a-row winning Cork champions scored goals in both halves, from Niamh Dilworth and Claudia Keane, with the former scoring 1-6 that day, while Cork senior Niamh McCarthy was also on target.

Dilworth was named the Rearden's Camogie Player of the Year before Christmas and Inniscarra had seven players on that team to highlight their impressive county campaign. She scored eight points in their 1-13 to 0-5 county final win against Courcys, with former Cork inter-county dual star Rena Buckley also a major force in this team.

St Martin's of Wexford stand in their way of an All-Ireland final appearance. St Martin's beat reigning provincial champions Thomastown of Kilkenny, 2-10 to 1-6, in the 2018 Leinster decider thanks to second-half goals from Linda Bolger and Chloe Foxe.

JAN.

2019

WEST CORK SPORTS STAR AWARD



The winners at the 21st annual Celtic Ross West Cork Sports Star Awards were, from left, Hall of Fame inductee Kevin Jer O'Sullivan, Special Achievement winner Lily de la Cour, overall 2018 winner Phil Healy, Youth Sports Star Molra Barrett and Drinagh Rangers' JJ Hurley, Team of the Year winners.

Wexford hurdle for Inniscarra

CAMOGIE

CAMOGIE

TOMORROW
AIB All-Ireland Club Champion-
ship semi-final: Inniscarra v St
Martin's (Wexford), WIT.
Grounds, 2pm.

They head to WIT tomorrow in their bid to reach the AIB All-Ireland club championship final when they take on Leinster champions St Martin's of Wexford. Inniscarra have been there before in 2010 when they were crowned Cork champions for the first time and went all the way to the final only to lose out to Killamore of Galway.

Having made it three in a row of Cork titles last October Inniscarra have been hugely focused on making it four in a row by winning the All-Ireland Croke Park. On their path to the provincial title they overcame the challenge of Limerick champions Limerick before going on to face Clare champions Inagh Kilnamona in the Munster final.

Goals proved vital and this is where Anniscarra excel up front as they have players capable of poaching scores. Niamh Dilworth and Niamh McCarthy are strong and can mix it in the physical battles with the best of defenders.

Rena Buckley is hugely experienced in defence and is a class act strong and reliable she is the pivot of their side, her twin sister Mary, Caitlin Looney, Rebecca Quigley and Rosie O'Mahony can all hold their own with the best of forwards. Aileen Sheehan continues to have huge influences on all games whilst captain Treasa McCarthy has led by example in all outings to date. Dilworth is a superb free-taker, plus she will work hard through the 60 minutes and has huge strength.

In 2018 St Martin's made it back to back titles as they overcame Oulart the Ballagh in a tough county final where four points separated the sides at the final whistle. They defeated the side that they lost out to last season as Kilkenny champions Thomastown in the Leinster decider having gone 2-1 to 1-8 in their favour. St Martin's are



inter-county manager JJ Doyle.

Now in his fifth year with St Martin's, he has overseen two senior county championship successes but the big aim is to reach Croke Park.

she holds four All-Ireland senior medals and was goalkeeper for the Wexford team from 2003 to 2017. She is regarded as one of the top goalkeepers in the game.

Former inter-county player Noleen Lambert missed out on the 2017 county success but is back this year in their defence where she holds down the full-back position. Her battle with Niamh McCarthy should be an interesting one as the Cork forward will pose a handful for any defender.

“St Martin’s are one of Wexford’s oldest camogie clubs and were founded in 1949.

Ciara O'Connor was superb in their battle to retain their county title where she gave a Player of the Match display at centre-back.

"It's been a superb year winning three in a row and then going on to win Munster. We are looking forward to a tough battle but we are ready to give it our very, very best shot. We have prepared well and are really looking forward to the game."

Hopefully come Sunday evening Iniscarra will be looking forward to a trip to headquarters and their place in their second AIB All Ireland club championship final.

A TOTAL of 10 teams entered the Junior A Championships last year and were divided into two groups and when all the games in the two sections were played four emerged to contest the semi-finals.

Ballyhea combination proved too strong for Banteer as they advanced to the final on a 3-9 to 2-5 score line. The second semi-final proved a closer affair as Watergrasshill had three points to spare 2-12 to 2-9 over St Vincent's.

It was Watergrasshill's second year in a row in the Junior A final having led for 58 minutes in their clash with Na Piarsaigh the previous year they fell short as a storming finish saw Na Piarsaigh hit three late goals snatched the title from the Hill's grasp.

Having put in a tremendous effort again they were they were back in the final, a huge effort saw them take the Junior A league title earlier in the year as they edged out Slabh Rua in a close contest, but it had 1998 since the Junior A championship title was last won and they were very determined to get over the line.

Ballyhea were crowned Junior B champions in 2016 and had worked hard to reach the A final.

Tears of joy were wept on Sunday in Castle Road at the sound of the full time whistle as Watergrasshill finally got over the line and reached their goal as they captured the SE Systems Junior A Championship title but not before a stern test from a strong and determined Ballyhea side.

It was only in the closing stages that Watergrasshill could finally rest easy as Ballyhea made their fight to the finish before they finally banished many years of heart-break to finally be crowned champions.

This time out Watergrasshill pushed to confidently get over the line as they closed the game out in the last five minutes a Coleen Foley goal giving them a five point cushion on the run in to the final whistle finally allowed them breathing space.

Watergrasshill captain Edel Murphy was named as Evening Echo Player of the Match after an excellent hour as she played a captain's role in her side's journeys to victory.

Libby: Relax the rules and allow camogie to be more free flowing

Time to allow more physical contact insists Cork dual star

BY KIERAN MCCARTHY

LIBBY Coppinger admits that camogie can be 'not an enjoyable game to watch'.

The All-Ireland winning Cork star agrees that there are too many frees in camogie that never allow a game to build up momentum – and she wants the game to be more free-flowing.

In recent weeks, her Rebel team-mate Amy O'Connor said camogie can be 'a bit boring to play', 'boring to watch' and has become 'just free after free after free.'

Cork manager Paudie Murray also hit out recently at the camogie rule book and the lack of physical contact on the field. Management and players want the rule book to be updated to allow a more physical game to compliment the strength and conditioning of modern-day camogie players.

On Twitter, Rebel legend Gemma O'Connor tweeted: 'How many more times do players have to say it. Players are crying out for change. The game needs to be revised urgently. Free flowing matches are necessary to allow players showcase their strength speed and ability.'

St Colum's Libby Coppinger agrees with her team-mates and manager.

'We'd all prefer less frees and more open play. You feel some-

times like the game hasn't got going,' she says.

'Obviously we were delighted with the All-Ireland win and a free won us the All-Ireland so we can't complain too much but it's not really an enjoyable game to watch.

'If they played advantage more and allowed the game to be more free-flowing, the players would be happier and the fans would see a better game.

'There are a lot of frees, too many. My main issue is the lack of consistency at the moment. You don't know what you will be pulled for and what you won't.

'There are some rules that there are no need for in camogie. I'm not sure what will happen but at least it's been talked about anyway which is good.'

Dual inter-county star Coppinger also pointed out the improved strength and conditioning programmes that elite camogie players follow so she says they're well able to get more physical.

At the moment, they're not allowed shoulder or move into an opponent's body.

'Before there wouldn't have been any strength and conditioning but now both football and camogie have come on leaps and bounds in strength and conditioning, so everyone is best prepared physically. I don't think it would be any trouble to have a bit more physical contact



All-Ireland winning Cork camogie star Libby Coppinger, a monthly award winner for September, with parents, Tim and Maureen, Maggie Coppinger, Eliza Wiseman, Katie Coppinger, Breda Coppinger, James Forde and Annie Coppinger.

in the game,' she said.

The Kealkil woman was a monthly award winner at the West Cork Sports Star Awards on Saturday and on Sunday morning she was up in the city early to get the bus to Tipp for Cork's camogie national league opener. The Rebels won, and

Coppinger scored.

It's the start of a busy season that will see her juggle both inter-county camogie and football again. She's adamant that there is room at the top level for dual players and says the open lines of communication between camogie boss Paudie Murray and football manager Ephie Fitzgerald makes her life easier.

'Ya, I'm going to do the two of them again. That's the plan. I think it's going to work okay. There's myself, Hannah Looney and Ciara McCarthy,' she explained.

'Paudie and Ephie know that talking to each other is the main thing and they can organise where we need to be, what time and who we are meant to be training with. They've both been very accommodating and their support is great.'

Coppinger wants to avoid fixture clashes that have made headlines for all the wrong reasons in recent seasons. So, when the Munster LFGA released its football championship fixtures lately, she was delighted to see the provision that games will be moved if they clash with camogie matches. That's a step in the right direction.

'Common sense and co-op-



The day after the Sports Star Awards, Libby Coppinger lined out for Cork in their league win against Tipperary.

eration is all that we are ever looking for, to see that there is a clash on the horizon and to be able to plan ahead. It was great to see that on the calendar, to know that if there is a clash then there already is a plan so it's one thing less to have to worry about,' she said, keen to keep the tradition of Cork dual players alive.

'Cork is one of the only counties who have been able to do this successfully for years,

we have great role models in Briege (Corkery) and Rena (Buckley), and I will keep it going as long as I can,' she said.

'It's important to keep that tradition. I play both because I love the two of them. It's impossible to choose between them. It's becoming a lot more demanding. There are more games every year, the intensity and the standards are getting higher every year too. But I love both so I'll keep playing both.'

CAMOGIE

AIB All-Ireland Senior Club Championships semi-finals: Ardara (Galway) 0-4 Slaughtneil (Derry) 0-8, Inniscarra (Cork) 0-5 St. Martin's (Wexford) 0-11. **AIB All-Ireland Intermediate Club Championships semi-finals:** Clonduff (Down) 1-8 Craughwell (Galway) 0-9, Galitir (Waterford) 3-8 St. Rynagh's (Offaly) 0-12. **Littlewoods Ireland Camogie Leagues Division 1, Group 1:** Offaly 1-5 Clare 0-10, Kilkenny 1-15 Dublin 0-6. **Group 2:** Cork Wexford (postponed), Galway 1-14 Tipperary 1-6.

Weekend walkover will cost Wexford €4,500 grant aid

Camogie

Eoghan Cormican

Wexford camogie have lost half of their €9,000 WPGA grant for failing to field a team for Saturday's Division 1 league fixture away to Cork. The Cork management was informed late on Friday evening that Wexford were not in a position to travel to Cork the following day.

Despite initial reports that the second round league game had been postponed, the Camogie Association yesterday confirmed Cork had been awarded a walkover and the three league points on offer.

Punishment for inter-county camogie teams who do not fulfil a league or championship fixture is the withholding of almost half of their annual WPGA grant. With each squad getting €9,000 in Government funding per season, to be put towards injury prevention, performance analysis, and facilities, Wexford will lose close to €4,500 of this figure.

The Wexford senior camogie team are currently without a manager after Kilkeny's Martin Carey, brother of JJ, resigned prior to the beginning of the 2019 campaign.

Mick Curran assumed the role of stand-in manager for the county's opening game of the league on Sunday, January 20, a match they lost at home to Waterford, 1-13 to 1-5.

Jacinta Roche, who was appointed chair of the county camogie board last month, said they should have been able to put a team together for the Cork game, despite the unavailability of the St Martin's contingent who were in All-Ireland club semi-final action on Sunday afternoon.

Roche added it was "unfortunate" that a significant portion of their WPGA grant had been lost due to their failure to field. The board was aware of this penalty before making the call to concede the fixture.

"Since it became known that the senior manager's position was vacant, we have had various expressions of interest from outside the county. We hope to have that position filled as soon as possible."

Wexford's next game of the league is away to Galway on Sunday. The county, who were three-in-a-row All-Ireland champions in 2012, lost all but one of their games in last year's All-Ireland championship round-robin, failing to reach the knockout stages. The county board pulled their second team from the All-Ireland intermediate championship in June 2018 after several players, who were apart of the intermediate set-up during the league, withdrew from the squad in early summer.

Wexford were All-Ireland semi-finalists as recently as 2016. There is now widespread concern at the demise of one of the county's leading forces.

Nine-point Foxe the heroine as St Martin's end Inniscarra dream

Daragh Ó Conchúir

Nine points from Chloe Foxe propelled St Martin's to the final of the AIB All-Ireland Senior Club Camogie Championship as a result of a 0-11 to 0-5 win over Inniscarra at WIT Carriganore.

They will face the considerable task of attempting to dethrone an all-conquering Slaughtneil side that kept their three-in-a-row dreams alive with a typically resilient 0-8 to 0-4 defeat of Ardahan in the Donaghmore Ashbourne grounds.

It wasn't looking good for St Martin's at half-time, as they led by just 0-5 to 0-4, having failed to capitalise on a very strong wind and trouble an Inniscarra rearguard in which Rena Buckley excelled.

Foxe needed a couple of early sighters to get going but settled down once opening the scoring with a fourth-minute free and put on an exhibition of shooting in the second half.

Inniscarra had plenty of possession in that opening period, with Katie O'Mahony extremely influential.

Her long ball led to a seventh-minute penalty for the Cork champions, as Niamh McCarthy was hauled down by Noeleen Lambert but the defender made amends by saving Niamh Dilworth's vicious strike, although Dilworth latched onto the rebound to equalise.

O'Mahony was involved again as Aileen Sheehan pointed, though there was a real goal opportunity with Inniscarra having a three-on-one situation. Lettie Whelan levelled with a brilliant point from the right, before Linda Bolger and Foxe (free) doubled the scores.

Inniscarra still appeared comfortable however and points from Dilworth (45) and Ellen Murphy restored parity. Sheila Walsh was forced to make an excellent save from Whelan and though Foxe did restore the Wexford side's lead, it didn't look enough.

JJ Doyle undoubtedly had stern words with his crew at the break and they showed far more intensity in the second half, reaching a pitch that Inniscarra couldn't match.

With O'Mahony no longer managing to get on the ball, Martin's got on top around the



Inniscarra's Rena Buckley is surrounded by St Martin's players Chloe Foxe, Aisling Cronin and Ella O'Connor during the AIB All-Ireland Senior Camogie Club Championship semi-final at Carriganore-WIT, Co. Waterford yesterday.

Picture: Oisín Keniry/Inpho

middle. The pressure drew frees and Foxe punished the transgressions, landing two within seven minutes of the restart.

Later on, she struck a brace of scores with her right foot almost touching the right sideline and struck six points in all in the second half.

In the meantime, Inniscarra managed just one in that period, from Murphy, and even if the wind was not as strong as earlier on, the inability to put Mags D'Arcy under any pressure until the dying minutes scuppered their chances.

Ferocious workrate and a trademark all-action effort by Shannon Graham buttressed

Slaughtneil's latest triumph. Graham hit two points from play, while Tina Hannon and Siobhán Bradley also split the posts as the Robert Emmett's moved into a three-point lead by the 10th minute.

Ardahan managed to get to grips with the elements though and would have been delighted going in at half time trailing by just one point, 0-4 to 0-3 after Rebecca Hennelly's successful conversion of two frees.

Aoife Lynskey brought the teams level soon after the resumption and you wondered if this might be the day that the phenomenal run from the Derry gaelgoirí might be

about to come to an end at the hands of the Galwegians.

They have been in similar positions before however and once again found the where-withal to grind it out, winning all the key battles and making little of facing the wind. Pointed frees by Hannon and Louise Dougan, and another score from play by the effervescent Graham saw them advance to what is quickly becoming their second home, Croke Park.

Clonduff overturned a two-point interval deficit to ensure an Ulster double over Galway opposition, as they beat Craughwell by 1-8 to 0-9 at Corals town/Kinnegad to

qualify for the Intermediate decider.

Craughwell led by 0-6 to 0-4 at the break but a goal from Sara-Louise Carr at the beginning of the final quarter got the Down contingent over the line.

They will meet Gaill Tí in the final, after the Waterford representatives defeated St Rynagh's at Cashel King Cormac's, 3-8 to 0-12. Siobhán Flannery was unerring for the Offaly outfit but Clodagh Carroll struck the decisive blow with Gaill Tí's third goal, to supplement the excellence of Annie Fitzgerald and Aine Lyng and cement a trip to headquarters.



Inniscarra's Rena Buckley after the game. Picture: INPHO

Manager gutted but proud at defeat

CAMOGIE

Rory Noonan

INNISCARRA manager, Kevin Murphy was disappointed to lose out but also was very proud of the effort his side had put in, not just yesterday, all through this campaign.

"We are very disappointed today, we put an awful lot of effort into this over the last 11 months and it's a cruel blow at the very end of that effort. The second half was a huge factor as it was level enough up to half-time but they definitely upped their game and played to their advantages.

"We tried to hold them as best we could, but look at the end of the day they were the better team and we have no complaints about that. The wind died in the second half and they had it in the first half, but it died after the turnaround and the slight confusion over the score wasn't a factor either, they were just the better team in that half.

"But I am very proud of the effort the girls have put in, they are an incredible bunch of players and have put in a huge effort since last February.

"They were there in numbers at every training session, and there is a great bond between them and there are more girls coming behind them so it's fantastic for the club what is coming through in the next few years. It's a loss, but look the bigger picture is there is a bright future there and we won't be going away anytime soon," concluded Kevin.

His thoughts were echoed by selector, Brendan O'Driscoll, who pinpointed the second-half and the wind dropping as two key factors.

"In short the second-half was the difference, a different team came out against us and a different team came out for us. We couldn't match their pace and their intensity and then the wind died. We looked at each other and said 'where's the wind gone?', but look that was only part of it. Their intensity and pace was a killer and they opened us up.

"They are very young and fast and I just felt we didn't up it when they did. I wish I had an answer to it, we had a lot of work put into this, a lot of preparation and a lot of hard work so it's hard to put into words what went wrong, it really is."

"I have no doubt they will come again and learn from the heartbreak of today and come back stronger."

Heartbreak for gutsy Inniscarra



Camogie

Rory Noonan

St Martin's	0-11
Inniscarra	0-5

HEARTBREAK for Inniscarra as they lost out to St Martin's in the AIB All-Ireland senior camogie semi-final in Waterford yesterday.

Overall there can be no complaints as they were beaten by a better side on the day, but with five Wexford inter-county players in their starting line-up, this was always a tough ask for the Cork side.

That said they would have been happy at half-time, when having played against the wind they were only a point down and looked to be in a good position to drive on.

The half-time score caused some confusion as all in the ground had it at 0-5 to 0-4, but the ref first told them it was 0-5 apiece. As the teams came back out for the second-half he informed them, to his credit that Martin's were a point up and the scoreboard was changed to reflect this.

But luck wasn't on Inniscarra's side as the strong wind died in the second-half and instead it was their opponents who drove on, took the game to the Cork side and once they stretched their lead early on, never looked back.

Inniscarra will be disappointed with that half and perhaps a bit of frustration crept into their play as all of Martin's six second-half scores were all from frees, as they only responded with a single point of their own.

Key to that half for the winners was the cool head of Mags Darcy in goal and when one or two long balls were played in she cleared the danger, using her years of experience to quell any danger.

Outside of her, Katie O'Connor had an outstanding game at centre-back as time after time she stopped Inniscarra



The Inniscarra bench in the closing minutes of the game.

Picture: INPHO/Oisín Keniry

from getting anywhere near the goal.

For their part, Caitlin Looney, Katie O'Mahony and Ellen Murphy tried hard for Inniscarra but overall they were no match for the Wexford side, particularly in the second-half.

Foxe opened the scoring for Martin's, from a free, with Niamh Dilworth responding from the breakdown after a penalty.

Niamh McCarthy was bearing down on goal and she was fouled, with Dilworth's effort from the penalty stopped on the line by Noeleen Lambert, but Dilworth put the breaking ball over the bar.

Aileen Sheehan put them in front before Lettice Whelan has the sides level again.

Linda Bolger put the Wexford side in front, but credit to Inniscarra who

were well in contention, despite playing against the strong wind.

Foxe pointed another free, to make it 0-4 to 0-2, with Dilworth on target from a 45 to make it a one point game again.

A great score from Ellen Murphy has the sides level, with four minutes left in the half, but a late point from Foxe, saw Martin's lead 0-5 to 0-4 at half-time.

The start of the second-half was all St Martin's with Foxe pointing two early frees to increase their lead. Credit to them they hardly left Inniscarra into their half of the pitch for the first 15 minutes of the second-half, as they were dominating all over the pitch.

Two more from Foxe in that 15-minute spell has them well in control, 0-9 to 0-4, as the game was slipping away from Inniscarra.

A quick free from Sheehan saw Murphy pull a point back for them, but again St Martin's responded with two late frees from Foxe to see them through to the final, which overall they deserved on the day.

Scorers for St Martin's: C Foxe 0-9 (8f), L Whelan, L Bolger 0-1 each.

Inniscarra: E Murphy, N Dilworth 0-2 each, A Sheehan 0-1.

St Martin's: M Darcy, L Carty, N Lambert, MC Morrissey, A Ennis, K O'Connor, A O'Connor, C O'Connor, E O'Connor, A Cardiff, L Bolger, C Foxe, E Codd, M Barrett, L Whelan.

Subs: L Carty for A O'Connor, L Firman for M Barrett, A Ryan for E Codd.

Inniscarra: S Walsh, A O'Regan, C Looney, R Quigley, R O'Mahony, R Buckley, J Burke, A Sheehan, K O'Mahony, R Keane, N Dilworth, E Looney, T McCarthy, N McCarthy, E Murphy.

Subs: C Keane for J Burke, M Buckley for T McCarthy, L Hayes for E Murphy.

Referee: Owen Elliot, Antrim.



Inniscarra's Rena Buckley with Chloe Fox, Aisling Cronin and Ella O'Connor of St Martin's. Picture: INPHO/Oisín Keniry



The Inniscarra squad that fell short in the All-Ireland semi-final. Picture: INPHO/Oisín Keniry

Murray expects tough test from Waterford

CORK got the Littlewoods Ireland Camogie League points last week as Wexford failed to fulfil their Division 1 fixture at Castle Road, though manager Paudie Murray would have preferred a proper outing.

With no opponents, the All-Ireland champions trained instead on Saturday. While it wasn't a perfect situation, Murray is prepared to look at the positives.

'We have to make do with what we had,' he says.

'In one way, you're disappointed because at the start of the league we sat down and worked out how to give players game-time in the league, we have 28 players so we had to see who we'd use where.

'Looking at it another way, if Wexford only brought a very weakened team, a game like that wouldn't have been as beneficial as a good training session.

'Finding out on Friday night is far from ideal, the county board would have incurred a lot of cost in getting things right for the game so you'd hope that Croke Park would reimburse them.'

For a county like Wexford to find themselves in such dire straits is a warning to everybody, Murray feels.

'From a camogie point of view, it's not good,' he says.

'Wexford are a traditional powerhouse, it was only in 2016 that they took us to extra time in an All-Ireland

semi-final.

'It's a warning to all about what will happen if you take your eye off the ball, you can fall very quickly.

'Wexford also have good support and I can't figure out how it's got to this stage. Fair enough, there were some players involved with St Martin's against Inniscarra but that was still only five at most.'

Cork must now focus on a home clash with Waterford this Sunday, while they sit out the next round of fixtures before a trip to face Galway on February 24th.

'We'll have to make a few changes from our plan,' Murray says.

'There were a couple of players we wanted to play against Wexford who

will get a run and then we have three players involved with the ladies' footballers on Saturday so they won't be playing a full game.

'Waterford have been training with a long time, they were back at the end of October so they'll have a lot more done than us.

'It'll be a stiff challenge and we're in a heavy phase of training now, so we won't be firing on all cylinders.'



Paudie Murray would have preferred a proper outing.

Inniscarra lose out in All-Ireland club semi-final

BY DARAGH Ó CONCHÚIR

CAMOGIE

INNISCARRA'S hopes of AIB All-Ireland Senior Club camogie club glory were dashed as they fell to St Martin's in Sunday's All-Ireland semi-final at the WIT complex in Cariganore.

Chloe Foxe scored nine points for the Wexford side, who won by 0-11 to 0-5 to advance to a decider against Slaughtneil, who will be seeking a third consecutive title.

Inniscarra led by 0-5 to 0-4 at

half-time after playing against the win in the first half, with Rena Buckley excelling in a strong rearguard action for the Cork and Munster champions.

Foxe need a couple of early sighters to get going but settled down once opening the scoring with a fourth-minute free and put on an exhibition of shooting in the second half.

Inniscarra had plenty of possession in that opening period, with Katie O'Mahony extremely influential. Her long ball led to a 17th-minute penalty for the Cork champions, as Niamh McCarthy was hauled down by Noeleen Lambert but the defender made amends by saving Niamh Dilworth's vicious strike, although Dilworth latched onto

the rebound to equalise with a point.

O'Mahony was involved again as Aileen Sheehan pointed, though there was a real goal opportunity with Inniscarra having a three-on-one situation. Lettie Whelan levelled with a brilliant point from the right, before Linda Bolger and Foxe (free) doubled the scores.

Inniscarra still appeared comfortable however and points from Dilworth (45) and Ellen Murphy restored par-

ity. Sheila Walsh was forced to make an excellent save from Whelan and though Foxe did restore the Wexford side's lead, it didn't look enough.

More intensity

St Martin's showed far more intensity in the second half, reaching a pitch that Inniscarra couldn't match. With O'Mahony no longer managing to get on the ball, Martin's got on top around the middle. The pressure drew frees and Foxe

punished the transgressions, landing two within seven minutes of the restart. Later on, she struck a brace of scores with her right foot almost touching the right sideline and struck six points in all in the second half.

In the meantime, Inniscarra managed just one in that period, from Murphy, and even if the wind was not as strong as earlier on, the inability to put Mags D'Arcy under any pressure until the dying minutes scuppered their chances.



Slaughtneil's Shannon Graham (right) crashes into Ardahan's Andrea Mullins in the AIB All-Ireland Senior Camogie Club Championship semi-final yesterday. See Page 18.

Picture: Bryan Keane