

Cork seal place in minor semi-finals

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

Cork 2-17
Galway 2-10

CORK are safely through to the Electric Ireland All-Ireland Minor Camogie semi-finals after a strong performance saw them come away with seven points to spare over a Galway side who, despite losing, join them in the last four.

Having lost their second game to Waterford after drawing with Kilkenny, the Rebels got their campaign back on track last weekend with a victory over Tipperary.

Facing table-toppers Galway, this was going to be another big test, but they passed it with flying colours.

Cork, playing against the strong wind in the opening half, led at the interval 0-8 to 0-4. An impressive third quarter saw them stretch their advantage to 16 points before a late Galway rally saw them grab two late goals that helped put a gloss on the scoreline in a game Cork never looked like losing.

First-half points from Ciara Morrison (3), Niamh McNabola, Emily O'Donoghue, and Amy McCarthy helped Cork lay the foundation for victory.

Galway stayed in touch thanks to the excellent free-taking of Aoibhinn Barry with three points and one from play from Clara Kelly.

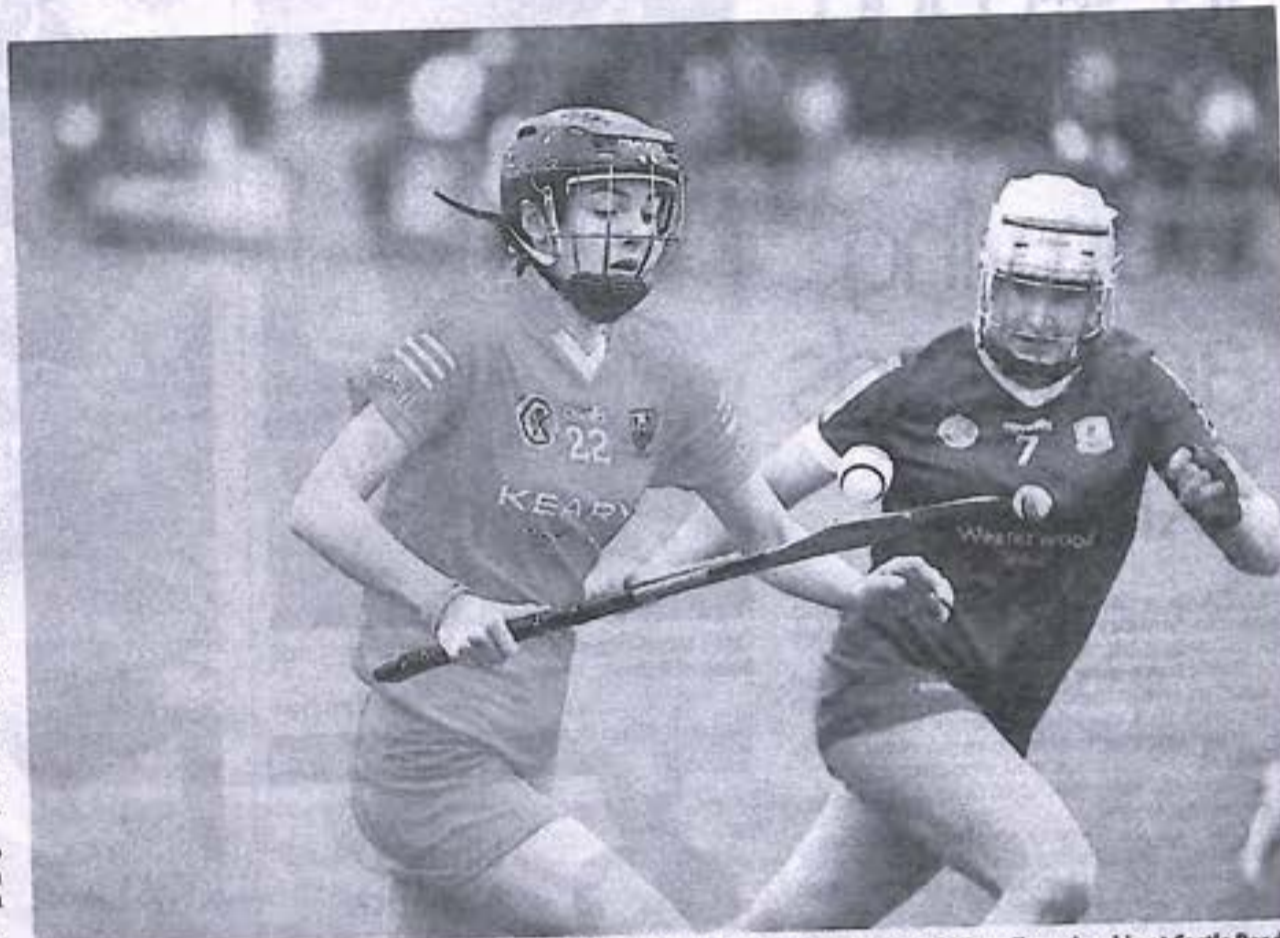
From the restart, Cork set about ensuring their semi-final spot was safe. Amy McCarthy and Ciara Morrison's scores stretched their lead before McNabola grabbed the game's opening goal. McCarthy and Ciara Morrison's scores stretched their lead before McNabola grabbed the game's opening goal after 38 minutes.

Two points from Amy Sheppard and Morrison had Cork nine points in front before O'Donoghue added a goal. Piling on the pressure by adding three points without reply, Cork were in total control.

Galway found their range again with 10 minutes remaining. Barry converted a free and to their credit, they fought hard and were rewarded with goals from Caoimhe Kelly and Sophie Flynn.

McCarthy pointed for Cork while Galway replied with one from Abbie Massey and Barry, but it mattered little as Cork were in control and were never going to be denied.

As the sides swapped points to the sound of Ray Kelly's full-time whistle both will look forward to the semi-final



Cork's Ava Fitzgerald is chased by Galway's Zoe Rodgers in the Electric Ireland Camogie All-Ireland Minor Championship at Castle Road. Picture: Larry Cummins

draws and maybe another opportunity to come face to face.

Scores for Cork: C Morrison 0-6, E O'Donoghue 1-3, N McNabola 1-2, A Mc McCarthy 0-3, A Sheppard 0-2, O Cremin 0-1.

Galway: A Barry 0-8 (0-7 f), A Flynn 1-1, C Kelly 1-0, A Massey 0-1.

CORK: C Lane; M De Burca, S Hurley, R Roche, O Cremin, L Dunlea, E Dulgnan; M Condon, A Fitzgerald; A Sheppard, C Morrison, A McCarthy; N McNabola O'Donoghue, E Curtain.

Subs: A Lott for E Curtain (40), A O'Sullivan for A Sheppard (42), J Connaughton for C Lane (42), R Roche for A Fitzgerald (42), C Rice for L Dunlea (49), H Healy for S Hurley (49), S Murphy for N McNabola (49), A O'Riordan for M Condon (49).

GALWAY: C Hickey; S Kelly, A Crowe, K Scully; G Leen, C McGrath, Z Rodgers; C Glynn, A Collins; A Barry, L O'Halloran, C O'Meara; A Fahy, S Carr, C Kelly.

Subs: I Flait for G Leen (41), A Massey for L O'Halloran (41), S Flynn for A Fahy (40), K Madden for A Collins (40).

Referee: Ray Kelly (Kildare)

Picture: Larry Cummins



Niamh McNabola drives to the loose sliotar. Picture: Larry Cummins

O'Leary's late free earns Cork and clash with Cats

Cork 1-7
Kilkenny 1-7

CORK and Kilkenny will have to do it all again after a Cliona O'Leary pointed free after 60 minutes levelled matters in the Very Division 2B National League final in Clonmel Commercial.

In a low-scoring contest, Kilkenny, playing with a strong wind, led by two, 1-5 to 1-3, at the interval after they got a dream start with a Danielle Quigley goal in the opening minute.

Laura Green added a point to stretch the Kilkenny lead to four before Cork were on the scoreboard with two Cliona O'Leary points, a free and one from play. Kilkenny, with Danielle Morrissey unerring from two frees and adding another from play, stretched their lead to six.

Fiona Nelligan kept the scoreboard ticking over with a Cork point and a goal on 23 minutes from

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

Cliona Dooley had Cork back within touching distance.

The final say of the half was Kilkenny's, as Emma Mulhall pointed to put them two ahead at the break.

The second half was nip and tuck all through as the sides battled it out. Nelligan reduced the Kilkenny lead to a point inside four minutes of the resumption but Kilkenny replied through Mulhall.

Battling hard with the wind in their favour Cork responded. Lauren Homan pointed and O'Leary slotted over a free and it was level on 47 minutes.

Both defences came under a lot of pressure but held their lines.

Morrissey edged Kilkenny ahead with seven minutes remaining and with their defence dealing with

anything Cork threw at them they held firm. Kilkenny did have a chance to go two points clear but Morrissey's effort sailed wide and it was a let-off for Cork. As the clock ticked towards full-time it looked as if Kilkenny might have done enough, but Cork won a free and Cliona O'Leary converted.

Scores for Cork: C O'Leary 0-4 (0-3 f), C Dooley 1-0, F Nelligan 0-2, L Homan 0-1.

Kilkenny: D Morrissey 0-4 (0-3 f), D Quigley 1-0, E Mulhall 0-2, L Greene 0-1.

CORK: S Beausang; A Moloney, N O'Leary, E Flanagan; L O'Sullivan, M Ring, L Doyle; A Cashman, R Hartly (c); R Murphy, L Allen, C O'Leary; C Dooley, F Nelligan, L Homan.

Subs: O Mullins for C Dooley (37), I Sheehan for A Doyle (44), L Halligan for F Nelligan (47), A Kidney for L Homan (59).

KILKENNY: C Murphy; N Leahy, J O'Dea, J Cass; K Byrne, R Phelan, H Scott (c); L Greene, M Kennedy; D Quigley, A Cantwell, D Morrissey; C Doherty, C Kennedy, E Mulhall.

Subs: A Grace for A Cantwell (39), V Holmes for E Mulhall (52). Referee: Karl Collins (Galway).

Cork lose fourth successive final as Galway defend Division 1A league crown

GALWAY 2-13
CORK 1-12

DARAGH Ó CONCHUÍR
REPORTS

THIS is an unwanted run for Cork in major finals – the Rebels' record now stands at four defeats in a row in finals after Sunday's Very Camogie League Division 1A decider loss to Galway.

Having lost the 2021 and '22 All-Ireland finals, Cork have now lost the 2022 and '23 league deciders; it's an agonising run for a team so close to silverware.

Cork will have something to say about the destination of the O'Duffy Cup this summer and have not been without their injury problems during this league campaign, the likes of Katrina Mackey and Ashling Thompson among the considerably significant absentees, but they have to be stung by what is a fourth consecutive loss in a national final.

And while it was a game they could have won, Matthew Twomey's side can't really have too many complaints, wasting a host of chances in the second half, whereas Galway had the radar tuned in, only hitting their first wide of the latter period in injury time.

Disappointed after the latest loss in Croke Park, Twomey made no attempt to hide the deflation, though he promised that the Rebels would bounce back.

'Our shooting was off today,' Twomey admitted.

'Was it Orlaith (Cahalane) who hit it off the bottom of the post (in the second half)? If that went in, it was a different story. We thought we had a foul went against us and then they went up and got a goal.

'They're the breaks but we seem to be always on the receiving end of them. It's tough. That's our fourth final now in a row. It's not easy.

'They're after working so hard. We put in a great league campaign. We were very happy coming into the game today. At half-time, we were very happy (leading by 1-8 to 1-6). But we just went astray. Can't put the finger on it now. We have to analyse it. It's a bit raw now to be coming up with any great messages.

'We're certainly not going to lie down. We'll feel sorry for

'That's our fourth final in a row. It's not easy'



Cork's Amy O'Connor dejected after the Very Camogie League Division 1A final. (Photos: Ryan Byrne/INPHO)

'We're certainly not going to lie down. We'll regroup' – Matthew Twomey, Cork manager

ourselves today but we're not going to lie down. We've too much to play for and too much pride in what we do. These girls are incredible. They're infectious to be around. We'll regroup.'

A fantastic goal from Sabina Rabbittie midway through the second half, allied with a personal contribution of a goal and eight points from Carrie Dolan and a dour defensive display, all added up to Galway retaining their Very Camogie League Division 1A title at the expense of an equally driven but less economic Cork.

It was no surprise that there would be so little between the teams, and if there were periods for each in the ascendancy, they were never too pronounced and certainly didn't last long.

Cork had the last of the first half, registering four points in a row to turn a two-point deficit into a two-point interval lead, 1-8 to 1-6.

They had started perfectly too with an Orlaith Cahalane goal

Cork's Fiona Keating can't hide her disappointment.



in the third minute. The latest scion of the famed GAA family had already made one dangerous run before finishing another with a solid strike off the sod, after being hooked excellently initially.

Last year's minor star and sister of experienced defender Méabh followed up with a point, after the inspirational Dolan had gotten Galway off the mark with a fine score. The game settled thereafter, Dolan hitting two of the next three points as Murray's side established a foothold. They were boosted significantly further by an 11th minute goal from Dolan.

Aoife Donohue illustrated her adroit movement and stickwork with two delightful points, either side of Amy O'Connor's first score, from a free, and it was 1-6 to 1-4

but Laura Hayes powered up the left flank to drive over an outstanding point on the run from the next play, matching an earlier effort from midfield colleague Saoirse McCarthy. Three more points from frees, by McCarthy and O'Connor (two), edged the Rebels ahead at the change of ends.

The second half never really seemed to get going, with both teams cancelling each other out in so many departments and neither getting their favoured running games going.

Of course both defensive units deserve much credit for that, with Libby Coppinger, Méabh Murphy and Laura Treacy prominent for Cork and Shauna Healy, Dervla Higgins and Róisín Black offering stern resistance for Galway.

Cork did have a splendid goal opportunity but were unlucky to see Cahalane's piledriver hit the post and O'Connor's shot off the turf lacked crispness but was stopped well nonetheless by Fiona Ryan.

Instead, it was Galway that found the net via a sensational finish by Sabina Rabbittie, like the Cahalanes, of blue-chip stock.

The young Athenry forward placed the sliotar over the advancing Amy Lee in remarkably composed fashion, after being put through by Ailish O'Reilly in the 46th minute.

That moved them two points in front and with Cork's attack largely shut down from general play and reliant for the most part on O'Connor converting placed balls, they were able to keep their noses in front.

Dolan was unerring from frees herself, of course, but Donohue chipped in with her third also, hard work by the Galway attack forcing a turnover from which the diminutive Mullagh marvel swooped.

A goal separated the sides



Cork's Orlaith Cahalane battles with Galway's Rachael Hanniffy.

when O'Connor managed to break the lines with a searing run in the 59th minute. Her pass to Sorcha McCartan had to spend a little longer in the air than was ideal to clear the cover she had drawn, allowing a retreating mob in maroon to hold the former Down star up, after she had briefly been unattended with only Ryan between the posts in front of her.

When she finally got her shot away, it was blocked and cleared and instead, Áine Keane drove over a beautiful soaring score to set the seal on a special day for Galway.

'Ten wides...yeah. Killer,' Matthew Twomey accepted. 'We had a few goal chances that we should have taken but we didn't. They probably had two opportunities and they scored the two of them. That's the difference there. We can't feel sorry for ourselves. There's no two ways about it. But you can't do that against any team, let

alone Galway.'

Scorers

Galway: C Dolan 1-8 (7f); S Rabbittie 1-1; A Donohue 0-3; A Keane 0-1

Cork: A O'Connor 0-5 (5f); O Cahalane 1-1; S McCartan 0-2 (2f); S McCarthy, L Hayes, F Keating, C Sigerson 0-1 each

Galway: F Ryan, S Healy, R Black, D Higgins, S Gardiner, E Helebert, R Hanniffy, N Hanniffy, C Hickey, S Rabbittie, C Dolan, A Keane, N McPeake, A Donohue, A O'Reilly.

Subs: S Corcoran for McPeake (41), K A Porter for O'Reilly (60+3), J Hughes for Rabbittie (60+4).

Cork: A Lee, M Murphy, L Coppinger, M Cahalane, P Mackey, L Treacy, I O'Regan, S McCarthy, L Hayes, C Sigerson, F Keating, C Healy, A O'Connor, S McCartan, O Cahalane.

Subs: E Murphy for Sigerson (44), O Cronin for Healy (46), A Healy for O'Regan (48), L Hayes for Cahalane (50)

Referee: Justin Heffernan (Wexford).

Horgan makes hay as Kingdom edge out Meath in thriller

Kerry 0-14
Meath 0-13

DARAGH Ó CONCHÚIR
at Croke Park

Kerry came out on top of a thrilling encounter with Meath to claim the county's first Very Camogie League Division 2A title at Croke Park.

The Royals contributed in full to a hugely entertaining affair in which the teams were level seven times and in Amy Minogue had one of the game's key protagonists.

But with Jackie Horgan contributing eight points, half of which came from play, Kerry had their noses in front when Brian Kearney blew the final whistle after more than seven minutes of injury time.

While both sides missed chances in the first half, it was a

period that produced outstanding points from both sides, as well as an exhibition of hooking from a defensive perspective.

Minogue was spectacular, a powerful presence in the middle with splendid accuracy, hitting four points in that opening period, with all three of her scores from play right out of the top drawer.

The Dunderry dynamo opened the scoring from a 45 but Aoife Behan and the brilliant Horgan put Kerry ahead.

Wondrous points

Then came the first of Minogue's wondrous points from play, sending a misplaced clearance through the posts from the 65-metre line, tight to the Cusack Park sideline.

That was the first of four consecutive scores for Brendan Skehan's team, Aoibhinn Lally, Minogue and Leah Devine making it 0-5 to 0-2 by the end



■ Kerry's Caoimhe Spillane is challenged by Rachel O'Neill and Aoife Minogue of Meath. PHOTOGRAPH: RYAN BYRNE/INPHO

of the first quarter.

Amy O'Sullivan struck from a tight angle to stop the rot for Kerry and Patrice Diggin converted a free, having sent a few similar opportunities astray before then.

Olivia O'Halloran and Dig-

gin exchanged scores but Minogue was on fire and she drew a fine save from Aoife Fitzgerald before launching a phenomenal fourth. Kerry remained obdurate and Horgan replied, leaving a point between them at the break, 0-7 to 0-6.

Pat Ryan's side flew out of the traps with two quick points from Horgan, from a free and play but then Amy Gaffney replied with a brace of her own.

Kerry had a gilt-edged goal opportunity when O'Sullivan was released inside the square but her shot was miraculously saved by Tara Murphy from point-blank range.

Tit-for-tat

It was tit-for-tat all the way. Horgan having taken over the freetaking duties for Kerry to good effect while Minogue and sub Norette Carey were on target for Meath.

The Kingdom finally made their break for glory in the last five minutes of normal time, Horgan giving them the lead before Diggin, who had been unusually subdued but is the rock upon which so much of Kerry's progress has been founded upon, came up with a truly sensational point from

almost in the Hogan Stand, 40 metres out.

There was a real scare as Fitzgerald made another good stop from Minogue and Abbye Donnelly's instinctive ground shot from the rebound flew millimetres wide.

Donnelly did halve the deficit but Horgan read a battered clearance cleverly to restore the two-point margin, meaning that Gaffney's third point of the second half was not enough to deny the green and gold a historic triumph.

KERRY: A Fitzgerald, M Costello, S Murphy, R McCarthy, A Behan (0-1), N Leen, K Lynch, J Horgan (0-8, four frees), E O'Donoghue, P Diggin (0-3, two frees), L Collins, C Spillane, C Walsh, A N Leen, A O'Sullivan (0-1). Subs: N Carey (0-1) for Leen (43 mins).
MEATH: T Murphy, S Payne, C Coffey, R O'Neill, T King, M Quince, E Burke, C O'Riordan, A Minogue (0-6, two frees, one 45), A Lally (0-1), O Coleman, A Gaffney (0-3), O O'Halloran (0-1), E O'Connell, L Devine (0-1). Subs: A Donnelly (0-1) for O'Donnell (51 mins), S Leonard for O'Riordan (60). Referee: Brian Kearney (Kildare).

Why is it so unusual for a woman to manage a camogie team?



Denis Walsh

Ten of the top 12 teams in this year's leagues are managed by men

When Stella Sinnott was interviewed for the role of Wexford camogie manager, the other three candidates were men. In her long and illustrious career as a player with Buffer's Alley and Wexford, she had never been coached by a woman. It wasn't a point of contention in the game: it was a self-perpetuating state of affairs and the accepted norm. Camogie was a game played by women and mostly managed by men.

Sinnott had been a selector for the previous couple of seasons, and when the manager stood down the players encouraged her to apply for the job.

"At that stage in camogie it could be anybody that would go for a manager's job," says Sinnott now, 16 years later.

"Might get it, might not. Whereas now, it's a lot more professional, the set-ups are a lot more professional. Alan Aherne came in with me, as like an assistant manager, and I remember going into the first selection meeting with the county board and saying to Alan, 'Are we mad?'"

In 2007, her debut season as manager, Wexford won the All-Ireland for the first time in 32 years. But when Sinnott stepped down two years later there wasn't another woman to take her place, and nobody agonised about that vacuum.

In recruiting JJ Doyle as their new manager, Wexford reverted to the norm. Doyle led them to three All-Irelands in a row, and just as they had chosen wisely with Sinnott, the Wexford county board made an excellent appointment in Doyle too.

No other woman has stepped up since Sinnott, though, and she doesn't see any potential candidates on the horizon. Why should that be the case? Not just in Wexford, and not just in camogie, but across the ever-expanding territory of women's Gaelic games? Are women not encouraged to take those roles, or not empowered to do so? Why is the gender balance so skewed?



■ Former Wexford manager Stella Sinnott during Wexford's 2008 All-Ireland semi-final against Galway. Left: Ann and Angela Downey on the sideline with Kilkenny.

PHOTOGRAPH: CAROLINE QUINN/INPHO

By the end of this year, every sports organisation is obliged to have 40 per cent female representation on its governing board or face "financial consequences" – a threat repeated in a letter sent to national governing bodies by Minister for Sport Catherine Martin in December.

At that stage, data compiled by Sport Ireland showed that the IRFU, the FAI and the GAA were significantly short of that target, with the FAI leading the Big Three on just 25 per cent. Camogie and women's football had their houses in order: 11 of camogie's 17 board members were women, and in Women's Gaelic Football the number was 10 of 19.

Quota system

On the administrative side of sport there is an obvious merit in using a quota system to drive gender equality. Applying that principle to team managements, though, wouldn't necessarily produce more women in leadership roles. Management teams are so large and diverse now that a 40 per cent threshold could be reached by offering any number of less influential positions to women.

Instead, the challenge is to create a different environment and different expectations. Of the top 12 teams in this year's senior camogie leagues, 10 are managed by men. Why should it be unusual for a woman to be in charge?

Ann Downey is one of the greatest camogie players of all-time and in 2011 she assumed the role of Kilkenny manager. In hurling or Gaelic football that is a well-trodden path: great player dons the bainisteoir's bib. That equation, however flawed, doesn't exist in camogie. Just like Sinnott, Downey's playing days were characterised by playing for male coaches and managers.

"Going back to my time playing," says Downey, "it was more a matter of who would take the job."

So, if finding candidates was difficult, why haven't more women stepped forward? "I suppose the biggest problem is time, to be quite honest," Downey says.

"Isn't it always traditional that – in hurling, football, camogie or women's football – that the men probably have the free time to go and train teams while the wife will look after everything at home?"

"Like, it's seven days a week. It's a fierce commitment. And now, women are in top professional full-time jobs too, and to give it the time is a huge commitment."

Downey had been involved with Kilkenny teams as a selector going back to the early-2000s and it was clear that she had an aptitude for management. As a player she had won 12 All-Irelands, so it wasn't as if she needed a map to find Croke Park. And still, she was the first woman to take the senior job in Kilkenny and the only woman manager in that year's senior championship.

"It didn't feel for me like I was crossing a barrier," she says. "I didn't think, 'Here I am, a woman going into this job and I have to prove myself.' If your training sessions are good, and the girls feel they're getting something out of it, it doesn't matter whether it's male or female – it's all about the session. I'd love to see more women involved. This might be a funny statement coming from me, but some women can bring a great calmness to a set up. Also, isn't it a different eye?"

Sinnott played in the 1992 All-Ireland for Wexford, and counter to every trend, two of her opponents that day ended up in leadership roles too when they finished playing: Fiona O'Driscoll was the Cork coach for three seasons from 2005, and Denise Cronin served a similar term as Cork manager, immediately after O'Driscoll finished. In Cork, both of them were breaking new ground.

"I loved it," says O'Driscoll now. "Do you know what, I didn't give it a whole lot of thought getting into it. You know, if you think about these things too much you mightn't take them on. I'd be a very positive person and that would be my outlook

on things."

Not only had O'Driscoll been an outstanding player, she had also studied physical education in college and had cultivated her passion for coaching. "I would have attended coaching courses, but they were GAA coaching courses, and the vast majority of people there would have been men," she says.

If women were grossly underrepresented on those courses, it was bound to have a trickle-down effect: in an era when the GAA was investing ever greater resources in the coaching of coaches, the pool was flooded with one gender.

Ambition

"Do women have the ambition to take it on and just don't get the opportunities? I'm not sure," says O'Driscoll. "Clubs would be the same [as county teams]. At club level in camogie you see an awful lot of male coaches as opposed to female."

"When I went in that time [with Cork] I don't remember any other female coaches, at senior intercounty level anyway. It becomes more normal when you see other people doing it."

But no other woman has followed the path of O'Driscoll and Cronin in those roles; in Cork, just like everywhere else, men have been more likely to be picked for the top jobs.

In 1999, when Tipperary won their first ever All-Ireland, the late Biddy Phillips was the manager. But after they suffered a 36-point annihilation by Cork in the league final, Phillips turned to Michael Cleary and Colm Bonnar to right the ship – a pair of high-profile, retired Tipperary hurlers.

Waterford made a huge breakthrough by reaching the All-Ireland semi-final last year, and so this season, in their desire to keep climbing, they turned to Seán Power – who coached Waterford's hurlers to All-Irelands at minor and under-21 level – and Paul Flynn, one of the greatest Waterford hurlers of the modern era. Convinc-



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I'd love to see more women involved. This might be a funny statement coming from me, but some women can bring a great calmness to a set up. Also, isn't it a different eye?

ing those people to come on board would have been seen not just as an expression of Waterford's ambition, but also as a recruitment coup.

In Downey's last year as Kilkenny manager in 2019 she brought in Brian Dowling as the coach, and the former Kilkenny hurler succeeded Downey in the manager's role. Around him now on the Kilkenny management team are Philly Larkin, Pat O'Neill and Tommy Shefflin, a glittering array of former Kilkenny players. Is there another woman somewhere to pick up the thread from Downey?

"If you were to ask me will it happen in the next five years, I would say no," says Downey. "I'd like to be pleasantly surprised and have someone step up, but no, I don't see it happening. In 10 years' time, maybe Ann Dalton."

The Camogie Association are acutely aware of this deficiency. Before the pandemic, with funding from Sport Ireland, the Camogie Association launched a programme called MNA [Motivate, Nurture, Aspire], designed to identify and support women coaches. The initiative is in its fourth year now and so far 196 mentors have been upskilled and 201 new coaches have qualified at club level.

Before Christmas, another initiative was launched in the same space. This time it was a collaboration between the GAA, the Camogie Association and the LGFA, with the purpose of creating a pathway for "ambitious female coaches". The mentorship programme was designed to be intensive and only 25 places were available. Without expressly saying so, it is aimed at producing elite women coaches, precisely the human resource that is lacking at the high-end of women's Gaelic games.

When Sinnott finished with the Wexford camogie team, she didn't stop there. Her next role was to manage the Ennisceorty men's rugby team, which represented a different kind of breakthrough.

Her skill set was portable from one dressingroom to another. "It's like anything," she says, "it's getting to know people, knowing their characters and knowing how to manage them, as people."

For coaches and managers, camogie has not been short of pioneers. What it needs is others to follow.

Ballygarvan ace O'Leary holds her nerve to earn Cork replay

BY DARAGH Ó CONCHÚIR

CORK and Kilkenny must face off again after more than an hour of action failed to separate them in the Very Camogie League Division 2B decider at the Clonmel Commercial GAA grounds on Saturday.

Ballygarvan's Cliona O'Leary displayed tremendous temperament and technique to slot an injury-time equaliser from a 70-metre free for the Leesiders to get a second bite of the cherry with it finishing 1-7 apiece, Trevor Coleman's charges never having had their noses in front.

Cork got off to the worst possible start as Danielle Quigley pulled on a loose ball about 18m out for a goal with only a minute elapsed and Laura Greene

extended Kilkenny's advantage with a neat point.

Playing into the wind, Cork settled into the fray with a couple of points from O'Leary but Seamus Kelly's Noresiders moved five clear thanks to a Danielle Morrissey trio, a pair of which came from play.

Fiona Nelligan replied for Cork and the Rebels were right back in it thanks to a terrific goal from Cliona Dooley in the 28th minute, roofing an unstoppable shot after gathering possession from skipper Rachel Harty's sideline.

Kilkenny had the final say of the first half though, a Claire Doherty point making it 1-5 to 1-3 at the change of ends.

It was nip and tuck throughout the second half, with scores

hard to come by. Nelligan and Emma Mulhall swapped scores but Cork had drawn level with Kilkenny by the 48th minute thanks to points from Homan and O'Leary.

Former senior player Morrissey split the posts for the fourth time to restore the Cats' advantage but they could not extend it, and O'Leary's nerve and striking held firm under the most intense of pressure to set up a mouth-watering replay this Saturday in Clonmel (2pm).

Cork's Rachel Harty gets away from Kilkenny's Laura Greene in the drawn final.
(Photo: Lorraine O'Sullivan/INPHO)



McCarthy helped to inspire MTU to glory



CAMOGIE

Rory Noonan

SPEND a little time in the company of Cork, MTU and Courcey Rovers camogie star Saoirse McCarthy and one thing becomes very obvious.

She is passionate about her chosen sport and is driven to improve as a player and also in her pursuit of an All-Ireland senior championship medal.

She does have one to her name, but that was as a sub so whilst Saoirse is very proud of it, she wants to win one as a starter. That desire drives her on game after game, training session after training session.

What she doesn't tend to mention in her modest way is the fact she won two All-Ireland medals on the day she won the senior title.

Saoirse was also part of the Cork intermediate team that made it a double in 2018 for Cork and celebrations had to be put on hold for a quick jersey change to take her place with the senior squad for the senior title.

Now at just 22 Saoirse is well established in the senior side and will be one of the players that manager Matthew Twomey will be looking to in the upcoming Munster and All-Ireland championships.

But it's not for her exploits with Cork that Saoirse was picked as a monthly winner of The Echo Women in Sport awards. It was for her success with MTU (Munster Technological University) as she captained them to All-Ireland success in the Purcell Cup recently.

She was also named Player of the Game in the final, as she led by example from start to finish.

The college beat University of Galway in the final, which Saoirse said was the culmination of four years of hard work. The final score was 2-10 to 0-12, with Saoirse raising four white flags, ensuring she got to lift the cup at the end of play.

SPECIAL

Winning with your college is a special according to Saoirse and she was honoured to have captained the side to glory.

"There is something special about winning an All-Ireland title with whatever college you are studying at," said Saoirse, "every year you aren't sure of what players will be available, with some leaving and others arriving. Even at the start of the year getting organised for training sessions takes a bit of time, with players involved in other competitions at that stage."

"But it's the same for every college and in a lot of ways that's what makes it more exciting. You don't know what players they have until you meet them in the competition a lot and really, it's all about on the day."

"Of course, there has been a lot of hard work going on at MTU (formerly Cork Institute of Technology) and for me this is the culmination of four years of that."



Rory Noonan, The Echo, presents MTU and Cork camogie player Saoirse McCarthy, with her The Echo Women in Sport award.

Picture: Eddie O'Hare



MTU Cork's Saoirse McCarthy lifts The Purcell Cup.

Picture: INPHO/Ryan Byrne

"Some of the players have been involved with me over those four years and others have joined during that time, including this year. There is a special bond between college players as you know you're only together for a relatively short time and to win an All-Ireland in those few years is a

great achievement."

While it didn't sway where Saoirse went to college a picture of her fellow Courcey Rovers player, Jacinta Crowley, had a lasting effect on her.

"At the open day I saw a brochure and on the front was a picture of Jacinta lifting the cup in 2016 and I

thought to myself that if I go to college here, I want to do that."

"I want to lift that cup and it was just a really special moment to do so and one I won't ever forget."

Having gone through the group stages of the cup undefeated they headed to Dublin for the semi-final

“At the open day I saw a brochure and on the front was a picture of Jacinta lifting the cup in 2016 and I thought to myself that if I go to college here, I want to do that”



on a Saturday and the final 24 hours later.

In the semi-final, they got the better of Trinity and it was a case of back to where it all started in the final.

University of Galway was one of the first games they played earlier in the season, and they were aware of the 'beat teams twice in the one season' scenario.

"They were missing a few players that day and so were we and I think both sides were aware of this, especially after the semi-finals."

"Looking back now I was probably the most nervous I have ever been for games going into that weekend."

I am not normally nervous, but I suppose when you know this is your last chance to win with your college it plays on your mind."

"But once the ball is thrown in you forget about it and just get on with it and thankfully, we came out on top after two tough games and it was an honour to lift the cup on behalf of the team."

Saoirse was part of the Cork side that lost out to Galway in the Very National League final last Sunday. In a game that could have gone either way a second-half goal from Sabina Rabbittie proved to be the crucial score for the winners.

Now her concentration will be on the upcoming Munster championship, followed by the All-Ireland series as Cork bid to win the O'Duffy Cup for the first time since 2018.



Cork's Fiona Neligan is tackled by Kilkenny's Jenni O'Dea during their Very Camogie League Division 2B final. Picture: Inpho/Lorraine O'Sullivan

Cork and Kilkenny do battle again for Division 2B League crown

TODAY: Very Division 2B National League final replay, Cork v Kilkenny; The Ragg, 2pm

FOR the second time in seven days Cork and Kilkenny will meet to decide who takes home the Very Division 2 B league title. By now these two sides know each other well in what has been new-look league with just five of the stronger counties in one group. They met four weeks ago in the group stages and now face off for the third time in as many weeks.

In their first meeting it was a close contest, but Cork grabbed the goals that turned the game in their favour and they had eight points to spare at full-time. It was a different story last weekend and it took a long-range pointed free from Cliona O'Leary to give Cork a replay just when Kilkenny looked to have done enough to edge a low scoring contest which finished 1-7 apiece.

Kilkenny, having played with a strong wind, led by two points 1-5 to 1-3 at the interval, Danielle Quigley having got the game's opening goal in the first minute. Aided by the wind, Kilkenny led by four points before Cork were on the scoreboard with two O'Leary points, one from a free and one from play.

Kilkenny, with Danielle Morrissey again unerring from frees and play, were in control and stretched their lead to six, but Cork fought back to just trail by two at the break.

The second half was close, with Kilkenny just keeping their noses in front before Cork drew level with 13 minutes remaining.

With the wind in their favour, Cork should have got more out of the second half, but a strong Kilkenny defence dealt with anything Cork threw at them and as the clock ticked towards full-time Morrissey edged Kilkenny in front.

Kilkenny did have a chance to go two clear, but uncharacteristi-

cally Morrissey's effort sailed wide. Cork applied pressure and it paid off as O'Leary converted a difficult free.

Kilkenny will be disappointed not to have closed it out, but Cork showed fighting spirit to rescue a draw; the sides are very evenly matched and it could go either way.

Cork have an excellent defence and they worked hard last Saturday; they need to get more out of their attack something Trevor Coleman will no doubt emphasising to his charges.

TOMORROW: Electric Ireland Minor All-Ireland Championship semi-final, Cork v Galway, Nenagh, 2pm

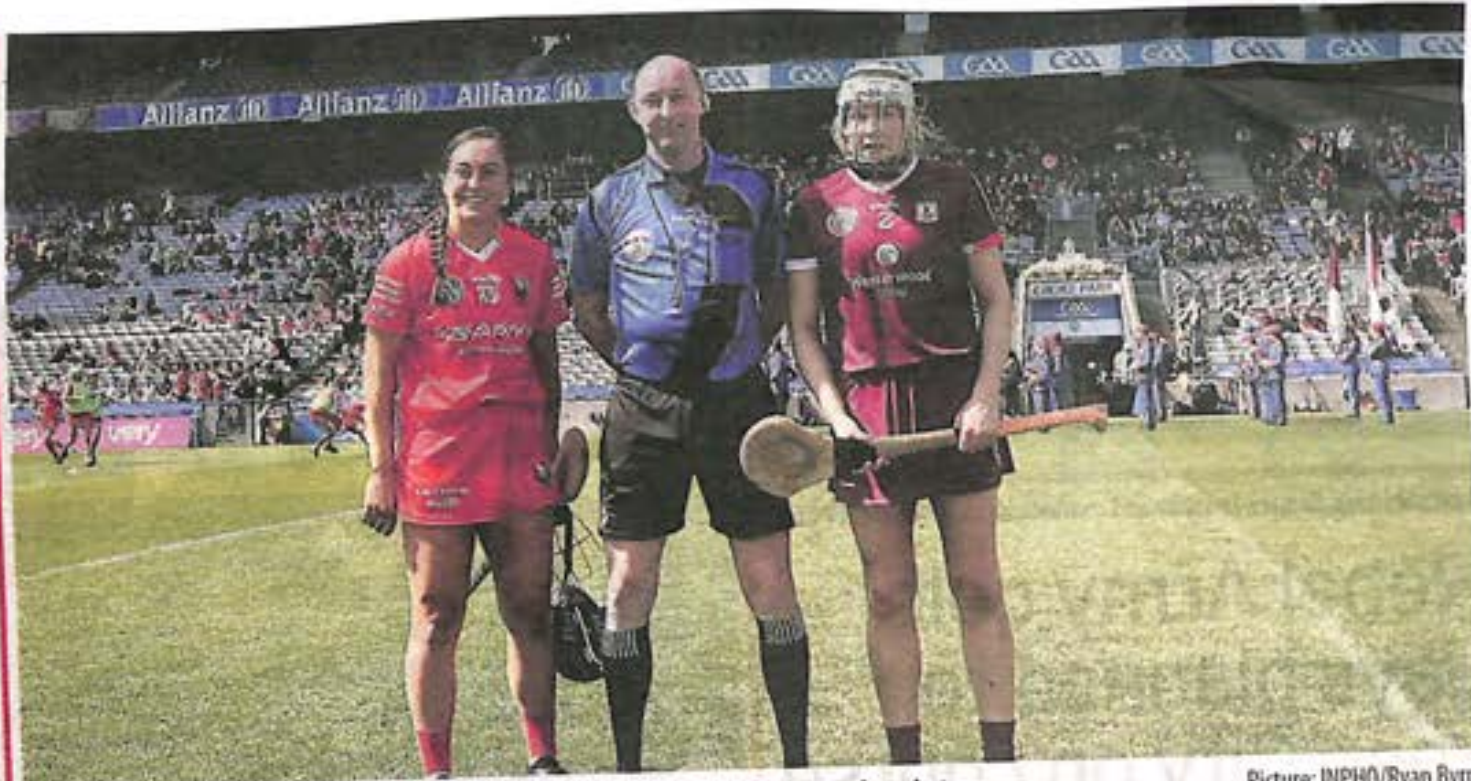
IT'S Cork versus Galway in the Electric Ireland Minor A All-Ireland semi-final as the sides meet again and having met last Sunday in the final game in the group series. Despite having lost to Waterford in their second group game and drawing with Kilkenny, Cork topped the group on a better scoring average ahead of Kilkenny and when the draw for the semi-finals were made it pitted Waterford, who finished third with a better scoring difference than Galway against Kilkenny in the second semi-final.

Both sides knew last weekend that they were safely through and one got the feeling that neither managements were going at full tilt as the possibility of meeting again this weekend was there.

Since their loss to Waterford Cork have improved with each game; they gave an excellent display to draw with Kilkenny and last weekend were in control against Galway from the throw-in but Jerry Wallace is smart enough to know his side will get a bigger challenge tomorrow.



Cork's Orlaith Mullins challenges Kilkenny's Niamh Leahy during the League 2B final. Picture: Inpho/Lorraine O'Sullivan



Cork's Amy O'Connor and Galway's Shauna Healy with referee Justin Heffernan at the coin toss. Picture: INPHO/Ryan Byrne

Cork have it all to do again



CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick

AS the dust settles on another defeat in a final, Cork's management and panel will have a job on their hands to turn things around before the knockout stages of this year's championship in mid-July.

Cork will reach the knockout stages: That's a given. Whether it's a quarter-final or semi-final is to be determined.

Cork had positives from this game: 10 wides to Galway's five, and four goal chances, with one taken.

But this is also a negative and where the players need to take responsibility. The openings were there, so the build-up was good. Some of the wides were unforgivable. We had two poor wides, between the 43th and 44th minutes, which would have put Cork three up. Galway then got their second goal and, suddenly, Cork were two down and never regained parity.

Then, on 54 minutes, with the game at 2-11 to 1-12, another wide; and on 58 minutes, a wide ball from a free followed by a missed goal opportunity.

But it was Galway who scored again to give them their fourth advantage-point and, effectively, the game.

Cork were the form team coming into this final. When Galway defeated Cork in the Páirc four weeks ago to snatch the final spot from Tipperary, we didn't worry too much.

Galway, like Cork, have injuries and were without key players and, already qualified, Cork gave their panel members a run. We were coming into the final with a better team 'on paper'.

But, in hindsight, that was a mistake. Had Cork beaten Galway, they would have faced Tipperary in the final. They would have beaten Tipp, of that I'm sure, and it would have been a league medal, important silverware, and a first win since 2018 in HQ.

We can't underestimate the shift in mindset had that happened for Cork com-



Cork's Fiona Keating and Sorcha McCartan after the defeat. Picture: INPHO/Ryan Byrne

pared to our position now.

Cork psychologist Michelle O'Connor will be worth her weight in gold if she can swing the pendulum Cork's way again.

It's the second final in a row against Galway in which we failed to deliver a second-half performance despite being in the lead. Galway took all bar one of their second-half chances. When you look at the players Galway have lost, in addition to their injuries, it makes their league final win all the more impressive.

They had eight starters from their 2021 All-Ireland victory. Three of their starters were subs in last year's semi-final defeat and they had good games.

I was at the intermediate division 1B final on Saturday in Clonmel, where, similar to Sunday, we just didn't get a return up front. Both sides are better than that.

Cork's distribution on Saturday was miserable, whether by hand or by stick. I have two pet hates: One where a goalkeeper's short puckouts fail to reach the player and they waste valuable seconds retrieving it; and, two, where a player attempts to control the sliotar with the hurley when there is no need.

All players have two hands. If a ball is delivered to you within an arm's reach, whether high, low, to the side or your middle, then you catch it. When a ball is delivered into a player's stomach area and they batt it away, my blood pressure shoots up.

Actually, I've a third gripe: The one-handed pick-up that rarely comes off and the opportunity is lost.

I've watched a number of Cork's intermediate games and in every one it's their distribution that lets them down.

The one forward who I thought had something to offer was Fiona Neligan and she was substituted.

She's small and slight, but has speed, a good touch, strike, and a massive work rate. In the very tight pitch that was Clonmel Commercial's, a player of that stature shouldn't be left inside where the battle was going to come down to strength.

She might have caused problems had she been brought out onto the 40, where her roaming style could have got Cork motoring.

It was worth a shot anyway. The Ragg is another squeezed pitch, and the replay is there today at 2pm.

Rebels beat Cats for league glory



CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick

Cork 2-15
Kilkenny 0-13

A MUCH-IMPROVED Cork won the replayed Division 2B national league title against Kilkenny in The Ragg on Saturday afternoon.

It was a different game to the dour draw in Clonmel last week, and was played much faster, on a better pitch, with some lovely hurling.

Trailing 0-6 to 0-7 at half time, Kilkenny pounced on Cork after the restart, only for a brilliant Stephanie Beausang to save and deny them. Outstanding play by Niamh O'Leary, Leanne O'Sullivan, and Laura Doyle instigated Cork's push back and they hit 1-3 inside eight minutes to lead 1-11 to 0-8. They never looked back.

From the throw-in, Cork looked different: Hungry and confident. Lauren Homan came out on the 40 and, alongside Doyle and Lucy Allen, covered good ground and spread it well.

The inside line were finding it difficult against Kilkenny's Niamh Leahy, with Jenni O'Dea, and Jane Case, guilty, at times, of being too static until the ball was actually struck into them.

It was level pegging four times in the opening 30 minutes. Tit for tat on points, before Cork took a two-point advantage on 21 minutes, 0-5 to 0-4, Lucy Allen hitting two, only for Danielle Morrissey to reply with a free. Homan scored again, from a free, before two on the trot from Kilkenny had it level entering the closing minutes of the half; wayward distribution gifted Laura Greene a score before Morrissey added another free.

Cork finished the half one up after a great team move and point from play by Homan.

Cork's goal, on 43 minutes, was a brilliant move: Doyle to Allen to Cliona O'Callaghan, who billowed the net.

End-to-end stuff from there, three points for the Cats to two for Cork and five points separated the sides on 54 minutes. Full-forward O'Callaghan, who had become prominent, hit her second point and she passed to Homan, who struck the net, and the cup was



Joy for Cork after winning the Intermediate Camogie final Division 2B replay at the Ragg.

Picture: Brendan Gleeson

coming to Cork.

Substitute Fiona Nelligan came in, on the 40, and, with her first touch, made space to score before two consolation points for Kilkenny closed matters.

It was an important win for Cork and a win that should do their confidence the world of good heading into the All-Ireland series.

Scorers for Cork: L Homan 1-5 (0-3 f), C O'Callaghan 1-2, L Allen, R Murphy, C O'Leary (f) 0-2 each, R Harty, F Nelligan 0-1 each.

Kilkenny: D Morrissey 0-7 (0-5 f), C Doherty, C Kennedy 0-2 each, L Greene, T Donnelly 0-1 each.

CORK: S Beausang; A Moloney, N O'Leary, E Flanagan; L O'Sullivan, M Ring, L Doyle; A Cashman, R Harty; L Homan, L Allen, C O'Leary; C Dooley, R Murphy, C O'Callaghan.

Subs: I Sheehan for A Cashman (41), F Nelligan for C Dooley (53), C Keane for R Murphy and A O'Callaghan for Leanne O'Sullivan (58), E O'Donovan for A Moloney (60).

KILKENNY: C Murphy, N Leahy, J O'Dea, J Case; K Byrne, R Phelan, H Scott; L Greene, M Kennedy; D Quigley, E Gunner, D Morrissey, C Doherty, C Kennedy, E Mulhall.

Subs: T Donnelly for E Mulhall (38), E Leahy for D Quigley (53), K McCluskey for M Kennedy (54).

Referee: Mike Ryan (Tipperary).

Cork minor camogie team back in the final

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

Cork 1-18
Galway 3-11

THIS was a hard-fought battle with champions Cork edging it to reach the Electric Ireland All-Ireland Minor final in Nenagh.

Despite Galway playing with an extra player in defence for the opening half Cork led by four at the interval, 1-11 to 2-4 after four points in a row settled them.

Galway had the opener when their scorer-in-chief Aoihbhinn Barry fired over a point. Caoimhe O'Donoghue, Amy Sheppard, Eimear Duignan, and Clara Morrison then responded.

Cork took the game to Galway when they stretched their lead with further points from Sheppard and Ellen Crowley before Kayla Madden boosted Galway with a goal at the end of the opening quarter.

Cork's response was immediate with Emily O'Donoghue booting the ball to the net and they added three points in a row to extend their lead to eight, but leading the Galway fightback Barry grabbed their second goal.

The second half exploded into life.

Niamh McNabola and Caoimhe Kelly swapped points and then Kelly cut the Cork lead with a Galway point and applied a lot of pressure on the Cork defence.

Caoimhe Kelly won a penalty and she dispatched it to the net to tie the game five minutes after the restart.

Cork upped the pace though. Four points without reply from Niamh McNabola, Emily O'Donoghue (2), and Erin Curtain restored the Rebel advantage with seven minutes remaining.

As the sides battled for a place in the final it was backs to the wall. Orlaith Cremin gave Cork breathing space with a point as the clock ticked towards full time but still Galway pressed.

Twice Barry pointed frees along with one from play, to keep the Tribe within touching distance.

Time ran out though as Cork held on for a hard-earned victory as their bid to retain their All-Ireland minor title remains on course.

Scorers for Cork: E O'Donoghue 1-4 (0-2 f), N McNabola 0-4, C O'Donoghue 0-3, A Sheppard 0-2, E Duignan, C Morrison, E Crowley, E Curtain, O Cremin 0-1 each.

Galway: A Barry 1-6 (0-4f), K Madden, C Kelly 1-1 each.

CORK: C Lane; M De Burca, S Hurley (c), C O'Donoghue; O Cremin, L Dunlea, E Duignan; M Condon, A Fitzgerald; A Sheppard, C Morrison, A McCarthy; N McNabola, E O'Donoghue, E Crowley.

Subs: E Curtain for E Crowley (37), G Finn for C Morrison (53).

GALWAY: C Hickey; S Kelly, A Crowe, K Scully; G Leen, Z Rodgers, C McGrath, C Glynn, A Collins; A Barry, K Madden, C O'Meara; K Coleman, A Massey, C Kelly.

Subs: L Ni Dhonnichá for G Leen (24), A Joyce for K Coleman (1-0), K Burke for A Collins (54).

Referee: Aaron Hogg (Clare).



Ella Wiggington Barrett, Orlaith Cahalane and Ava Hallihan.



The Newtownshandrum camogie team which won the Cork Division 1 Féile title.



Blarney were Division 2 winners over Killeagh in last weekend's camogie Féile.

Féile dominates busy weekend as Newtown advance to national final

LAST weekend was hugely busy and successful for camogie as the county board organised the Cork Féile na nGael competition. Clubs from all over the county were out in force on Saturday and on Sunday. There were three divisions, with the Division 1 winners going on to represent Cork at national Féile, while the Division 2 and Division 3 winners will participate in regional Féile competitions at provincial level. It was a huge undertaking for the clubs and county board; 57 teams comprising 1,482 players took part in 101 games at 16 venues across the city and county.

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

Hundreds of volunteers ensured that the venues were ready, and refreshments were provided as visitors were well looked after. In the Division 1 semi-finals, Aghabullogue pipped Ballincollig by 1-2 to 1-1, and Newtownshandrum beat Sliabh Rua 3-2 to 1-4. In the Division 2 semi-finals, Blarney overcame St Catherine's 0-7 to 0-2 and Killeagh defeated Kilworth 2-4 to 1-3. In the Division 3 semi-finals, Castletyons were too strong for Bride Rovers, winning 3-7 to 0-6,

while Barryroe overcame Laochra Og to book their place in the final.

Division 1

Newtownshandrum 0-7
Aghabullogue 1-2

Newtownshandrum will represent Cork at the National Féile after they beat Aghabullogue in an exciting final in Castle Road. They were driven on by the excellent Caoilainn Ryan who hit five points in her side's tally. It was a remarkable achievement for Newtown who won their first Division 1 title a year after winning the Division 2 crown.

Newtown had the better start with a Leah Ryan point, Lexi Manley tied the game with an Aghabullogue point, but Caoilainn Ryan edged Newtownshandrum into the lead, pointing a free. As half-time loomed Aghabullogue laid siege to the Newtownshandrum goal and, in an excellent move, Manley offloaded superbly to Sarah Kelleher who finished to the net for a 1-1 to 0-2 interval lead. On the turnover Newtownshandrum applied pressure and an Orla Troy point cut the deficit. Manley was dangerous in attack for Aghabullogue and she

pointed to give her side a two-point advantage, but with the Newtownshandrum defence tightening up considerably, Aghabullogue were finding it difficult to break through. Driven on by the hard working Leah Ryan, Newtownshandrum were gaining the upper hand and the pressure paid off when they won two frees, which Caoilainn Ryan converted to level the contest with four minutes remaining. Newtownshandrum kept their composure and a point from play and a free from Caoilainn Ryan tilted the balance in their favour.

DIVISION 2

Blarney 2-4
Killeagh 0-9

One point separated the sides in the Division 2 final in which Blarney and Killeagh were level at four points a piece at half-time. Second-half goals from Yasmin Abadan and Kelly Hedderman proved decisive as Blarney ran out winners. Eabha Lynch contributed three first half points with Sophie Donohoe adding one. In the Division 3 final Barryroe took spoils when they defeated Castletyons 3-7 to 0-6.

Double dose of success



CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick

THERE is little uproar on social media this week around the fact that both the Cork ladies' footballers and the Cork camogie teams are playing Munster championship games tomorrow.

Is it that people are just worn out from it? Have they finally broken the public down?

The camogie players are in Páirc Uí Chaoimh for their quarter-final game against Waterford as part of a double-header with the Cork senior hurlers, while the footballers open their Munster round-robin campaign away to Tipperary in Cahir.

All the talk about integration is just that, talk. If our own provincial councils haven't the will to work together then where are we going?

It's always a blame game as to which organisation should have moved their games.

To be fair, the Munster championship in football is linked to the All-Ireland series which makes it highly significant for them. The camogie one isn't, but winning this Munster championship campaign is very important to camogie's management after their league final defeat and for that reason.

And the fact they are carrying a large number of injuries into tomorrow they wanted as many of their panel as they could get.

This Munster championship is knockout. There are a number of Munster camogie-hurling double-headers. Limerick and Clare are playing their semi-final in front of their hurling counterparts this evening in the Gaelic Grounds.

Should Cork advance they will



Cork's Aoife Healy clears against Waterford at Castle Road.

Picture: Eddie O'Hare



Inniscarra's Claudia Keane breaks away from Cloughduv's Aoife Barry Murphy and Niamh McNabola last year.

Picture: Howard Crowley

play Tipperary next Saturday as a curtain raiser to the senior hurlers who also face Tipp.

It would be very disappointing if it was Waterford playing there instead. The league final on May 13 is a double-header in Semple Stadium.

These fixtures are on the calendar for months. But the blind eye is turned, the heads go deeper under the blankets, and nothing gets addressed.

Both managers Matthew Twomey and Shane Ronayne have come together and decided each team will take two of the four dual players. Even that scenario alone; how must the players feel?

Would the released players from either code feel that they aren't as important as the other two? An awful

scenario to be in. Libby Coppinger and Hannah Looney will play in the Páirc with Aoife Healy and Orlaith Cahalane travelling with the footballers.

Waterford are certainly riding the crest of a wave at the moment. They've just won the Division 1B league title and while the B category might indicate a lower standard they pushed Cork all the way in last year's All-Ireland semi-final.

Cork finishing strongly with eight unanswered points to win by five. I never get too concerned about counties that have a spirited and admirable campaign. They are typically a one-off.

I look behind to see the work that's being done, what's coming behind that might give an indicator of sus-

tained growth. The consistency is happening in Waterford. They surprisingly (as we keep saying) beat Cork in the opening round of this year's All-Ireland Minor Championship, and they defeated Kilkenny in the semi-final in Nenagh on Sunday to set up a final showdown with Cork in Nowlan Park next Sunday. Congratulations to Cork and manager Jerry Wallace on yet another final appearance after a one-point victory over Galway. We're heading for four titles in six years.

It could be five only for the cancellation of the competition in 2020. What a run and all the more commendable when you consider the turnaround of players.

Waterford will be fired up and thrilled to be playing Cork tomorrow.

They brought 11 pairs of fresh legs to their panel this year. Annie Fitzgerald returned after two years and is playing well while Anne Corcoran was involved in 2021.

Successful Gailltír has the lion's share of players on the squad with six involved. The Cork Intermediate side's victory over Kilkenny in the Division 2B replay on Saturday was an important one. It was a much better performance than the drawn game and Cork were worthy winners. There are three or four positions where they need to be stronger.

Two players I'd be giving a lengthy tryout to would be Claudia Keane and Aoibhinn Kidney. We need more up front and Rachel Harty needs more support around the middle.

Cork boss confident Rebels will end losing streak in major finals

BY KIERAN MCCARTHY

RUTHLESS – that's the word Matthew Twomey selects when asked what Cork need to do to end their recent final hoodoo.

The county's senior camogie team has lost four successive major finals – 2021 and '22 All-Ireland finals and 2022 and '23 Division 1 league finals – as the Rebels' wait for national silverware goes on.

The recent league final defeat to Galway (2-13 to 1-12) hurt, as Cork had been ahead at the break but fell away in the second half. That's a trend in the other finals, too. In the 2021 All-Ireland final Cork led Galway 1-11 to 0-11 with ten minutes left, but lost 1-15 to 1-12. In last year's league final against the Tribeswomen Cork led 1-10 to 0-7 early in the second half, but ended up losing 2-14 to 1-13. The Rebels led Kilkenny by two points in last year's All-Ireland final, but still lost 1-13 to 1-12. Spot the theme?

'I have no doubt that we will take that next step,' Cork boss Matthew Twomey tells this week's *Star Sport Podcast*.

'It's not a case of us waiting for it to happen, we have to do something about it.'

'In all of these games it's coming down to the last quarter; we have been in the games, like last year's league final when we were six points up with 20 minutes to go, the last day we were two points up with 15 minutes to go. In the last quarter

Cork manager Matthew Twomey.
(Photo: Ryan Byrne/INPHO)



TWOMEY WANTS RUTHLESS STREAK

we need to be ruthless, to put teams away.

'It is something we have looked at since January, to get that ruthless streak and we thought we were going well up until the league final.'

'We'd be telling lies if we said we didn't want to win the league, but the priority was to embed our new tactics and a new system of play. I hope to be judged on where we are in August, not where we were in April.'

Twomey insists that Cork believe they are on the right track, and they are amongst

'I hope to be judged on where we are in August, not where we were in April' – Matthew Twomey, Cork camogie manager

the top three teams in the country, alongside Galway and Kilkenny. Four final defeats in a row is a body blow to the group, but the Cork boss is adamant that they can take that next step and lift silverware.

'No-one feels the pain more than we do,' he says. 'Being in the dressing room after those four finals has been horrific.'

We try to change things slightly every time. The last two finals hurt the most; the way we lost the All-Ireland final and the league final.

'We have a sports psychologist, Michelle O'Connor, in with us, and she has been excellent and will be a valuable part of the management from now on.'

'We are not that far away from it. I know the consistency of getting to the last four finals is great but we know we have to go on and win one. We will have to change a few things but we are not pressing the panic button yet.'

Cork's focus now switches to the Munster championship and a quarter-final against Waterford at Páirc Uí Chaoimh on Sunday afternoon (1.30pm), the first part of a double-header, followed by the Munster SHC clash of Cork and Waterford. Twomey is wary of the Déise, but a Cork win will set

up another double-header on May 6th, a provincial semi-final against Tipperary at Páirc Uí Chaoimh ahead of the Munster SHC meeting of Cork and Tipperary.

The focus has shifted from the league to the Munster championship, and will soon turn to the All-Ireland series – and that's where Twomey wants his Cork side to be judged.

On the injury front, he hopes to have Ashling Thompson back in contention for the latter stages of the championship, while Katrina Mackey is weeks away from her return.

CHAMPIONS! Barryroe's Féile triumph



The brilliant Barryroe U15 camogie team that secured the Féile C title with a hard-fought 3-5 to 3-3 victory over Castletyons on Sunday in Castle Road. Barryroe had qualified for the final following games against Dungourney, Kilbree and Brian Dillons.

Champions Cork chase fourth title in six years

BY DARAGH Ó CONCHÚIR

CORK have enjoyed tremendous glory in the Electric Ireland Minor A Camogie Championship since getting off the mark in 2018 and are now one game away from a fourth title in six seasons as a result of their 1-18 to 3-10 triumph over a valiant Galway in Nenagh.

Awaiting them in the final at UPMC Nowlan Park on May 7th are neighbours Waterford, who will be striving to win their first title after emerging from another derby by accounting for the most successful county in the competition, Kilkenny in the second semi-final at the Éire Óg venue.

Millie Condon (Ballinacorney) and Amy McCarthy (Clonakilty) are both part of Jerry Wallace's minor panel this season.

Helped by a goal from Caoimhe O'Donoghue, Cork led Galway by 1-9 to 1-1 at half time. Galway did draw level, 3-6 to 1-12, but the Leaside riposte was notable. Player of the match Ava Fitzgerald drove them forward as Niamh McNabola, Emily O'Donoghue (two) and Erinn Curtin put some daylight between the sides once more.

Waterford prove too strong for brave Cork

Munster Camogie SC
Cork 1-15
Waterford 1-18

Therese O'Callaghan

Waterford advanced to a Munster senior camogie championship semi-final against Tipperary next weekend following their deserved three-point win over Cork at Páirc Uí Chaoimh.

A momentous occasion for the Déise, their first competitive victory over the Rebels since they were promoted to the top grade eight years ago.

No doubt, Seán Power's panel is on an upward trajectory after their recent Division 1B league final triumph over Wexford, while their minor team will contest the All-Ireland final against Cork next Sunday.

Three-time All-Star Beth Carton's return of 10 points, plus huge work-rate from all over the field ensured the perfect result.

Waterford started the half fast to go four points to two up inside the opening 10 minutes — three of these flags from play by Abby Flynn (2) and Orla Hickey. Cork came more into the game, Vikki Faulkner having to make a brilliant block to deny Cork a goal opportunity.

Ahead by 0-6 to 0-3, Waterford couldn't repel Cork captain Amy O'Connor as she collected a cross-field pass and fired low to level matters on the quarter hour mark.

Orla Cronin put Cork ahead for the first time, but the visitors regained the advantage when a lovely move started by Carton to Hickey was finished to the net by Niamh Rockett. Although she lost possession, the corner-forward kept her composure to score.

The hosts achieved parity twice as Saoirse McCarthy had the final say of the half to leave the score, 1-8 apiece.

Waterford moved in front after the interval through Flynn and Carton. Matthew Twomey's outfit squandered a couple of good chances before Carton rifled over her fourth free and they continued in the ascendancy to go ahead 1-14 to 1-10 with 10 minutes to go — Carton epitomising all that was good about the Waterford attack.

Cork sub All Smith pegged one back, but scores were hard to come by against a resolute backline.

Waterford worked their socks off all over the field, and they held a five-point lead, 1-16 to 1-11.

Again, Cork ate into their dominance, Smith and sub Emma Murphy scoring.

With the vocal crowd getting behind their respective teams, it made for a nervy finish as the Reds chased a goal.

Waterford though, sensing victory, would not be outdone.

Scorers for Cork: A O'Connor (1-3, 0-3 frees), C Sigerson (0-4, 0-3 frees), O Cronin, A Smith and E Murphy (0-2 each), S McCarthy and L Hayes (0-1 each).

Scorers for Waterford: B Carton (0-10, 0-7 frees), A Flynn (0-4), N Rockett (1-0), O Hickey (0-2), L Bray and M O'Brien (0-1 each).

CORK: A Lee; M Murphy, L Coppinger, M Cahalane; L Hayes, L Treacy, I O'Regan; S McCarthy, C Healy, C Sigerson, F Keating, H Ryan; A O'Connor (Capt), O Cronin, C Finn.

Subs: P Mackey for C Healy (half-time), E Murphy for H Ryan, A Smith for C Finn (both 43), K Wall for O Cronin (54).

WATERFORD: B O'Regan; V Faulkner, I Heffernan, N Curran; K Corbett Barry, C Carroll, M Power; L Bray (Capt), K Lynch; M O'Brien, O Hickey, B Carton; R Walsh, A Flynn, N Rockett.

Subs: R Kirwan for M O'Brien (48), A Landers for N Curran, A Corcoran for R Walsh (both 52), T Power for I Heffernan (58), M O'Regan for N Rockett (61).

Referee: Mike Ryan (Tipperary).

Twomey bemoans 'terrible' Cork in defeat to Waterford

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

AN upset Cork camogie manager, Matthew Twomey, expressed huge disappointment at his side's loss to Waterford in the Munster quarter-final in Páirc Uí Chaoimh.

A 1-18 to 1-15 defeat means they miss out on next Saturday's provincial semi-final against Tipperary.

"We were just terrible out there today, no excuses, the better team won out there, they were focused and tuned in from the throw-in and they wanted it more than we did. You can make all the excuses you like, but at the end of the day, if you don't perform you don't get the results."

"This is where you want to be playing in Páirc Uí Chaoimh before a big Munster hurling championship game and go out and play like we did today is just not good enough." Twomey pointed to Waterford's intensity.

"From the start, they tore into the game, they hunted in packs and put us under pressure. On several occasions, they turned us over and won balls they probably should not have won, but we allowed them to do it. Their work-rate was huge and, all credit to them, they won the Division 1 B league recently and they showed today just how focused they are."

Having lost out in the Division 1 league final

to Galway two weeks ago, Cork had to regroup and Twomey's side had prepared well.

"To be fair, we put the defeat behind us and we had two very good weeks' training and we should have been ready for what Waterford threw at us today, but, all credit to them, they are a good side and they played with fierce determination out there today."

Twomey had to plan without key players, who were injured.

"We were down 11 players today from our panel of 32, but that is no excuse: We didn't perform and we weren't good enough. We have had a long chat with the players there now and they are hurting, they know the performance was well below par, and they know we need to put the knuckle down and get focused now for championship."

An away trip to Galway is next, in the first round of the All-Ireland championship and Twomey readily admits this is a huge challenge for his charges: "It will be a huge game for us and the girls know a performance like today will not suffice."

CAMOGIE

Munster Championship semi-final:
Limerick 0-11 Clare 1-15; Munster
Championship quarter-final: Cork 1-15
Waterford 1-18.

Homan's heroics inspire Cork to Division 2B league title

CORK 2-15
KILKENNY 0-13

DARAGH Ó CONCHÚIR
REPORTS

CORK captain Rachel Harty made no bones about how disappointed she was by the general level of her team's performance when they needed a phenomenal injury-time equaliser by Cliona O'Leary to snatch a draw in the Very Camogie League Division 2B final.

The Rebels certainly found an extra gear one week on to be successful in Saturday's replay, making no mistake to record an eight-point triumph over Kilkenny at The Ragg.

Ballyhea clubwoman Harty was player of the match in the drawn encounter and provided huge leadership once more as Cork came away with league silverware.

The most significant scores were goals from the always threatening Cliona O'Callaghan and Lauren Homan, who usually lines out at corner of full-forward but earned play-



Cork captain Rachel Harty and teammates celebrate their Very Camogie League Division 2B final replay win. (Photo: Bryan Keane/INPHO)

er-of-the-match garlands in this encounter by scoring 1-5 from the wing.

Danielle Morrissey shot seven points for Kilkenny, six from placed balls, and the former senior player worked ferocious-

ly too.

The teams were level three times in the first quarter, with Lucy Allen and Morrissey shooting a pair of points each for their sides, and four times in all in the first half. Homan shot

three points in that opening period and her third nudged Cork ahead by 0-7 to 0-6 at half-time.

Kilkenny kept nipping at Cork's heels and were level twice more, Claire Doherty and Caroline Kennedy split-

ting the posts either side of a Rose Murphy score but Trevor Coleman's Cork crew separated themselves with a fruitful seven minutes soon after.

Harty gave Cork the lead before Homan raised the white flag twice, once from with her third converted free. Then came a 43rd minute goal from O'Callaghan, which was a peach.

It started as Lucy Doyle played a considered ball down the flank to favour Allen. The clever Sarsfields attacker gathered and turned before providing another lovely delivery in front of O'Callaghan. The full-forward still had plenty to do when she grasped the sliotar with Jenny O'Dea at close quarters, but a side-step earned some space to run towards the goals and rifle an unstoppable shot past Cliona Murphy.

Morrissey kept the Cats in touch with a couple of pointed frees but O'Callaghan raced through for two of her own and then latched onto a delivery from Harty to place Homan brilliantly for an emphatically finished goal with 56 minutes

elapsed. There would be no way back from that for Kilkenny and the honours were headed to Leaside.

Scorers YITHADANESDTE

Cork: L Homan 1-5 (3f); C O'Callaghan 1-2; L Allen, R Murphy, C O'Leary (f) 0-2 each; R Harty, F Nelligan 0-1 each.

Kilkenny: D Morrissey 0-7 (5f); C Doherty, C Kennedy 0-2 each; L Greene, T Donnelly 0-1 each.

Cork: S Beausang; A Moloney, N O'Leary, E Flanagan; L O'Sullivan, M Ring, L Doyle; A Cashman, R Harty; L Homan, L Allen, C O'Leary; C Dooley, R Murphy, C O'Callaghan.

Subs: I Sheehan for A Cashman (41), F Nelligan for C Dooley (53), C Keane for R Murphy and A O'Callaghan for Leanne O'Sullivan (58), E O'Donovan for A Moloney (60).

Kilkenny: C Murphy; N Leahy, J O'Dea, J Cass; K Byrne, R Phegan, H Scott; L Greene, M Kennedy; D Quigley, E Gunner, D Morrissey; C Doherty, C Kennedy, E Mulhall.

Subs: T Donnelly for E Mulhall (38), E Leahy for D Quigley (53), K McCluskey for M Kennedy (54).

Referee: Mike Ryan (Tipperary).



Clodagh Finn under pressure against Waterford at Páirc Uí Chaoimh.

Picture: Larry Cummins

Cork knocked out by Déise



CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick

Cork 1-15
Waterford 1-18

A MASSIVE blow for Cork and a gigantic win for Waterford as they knocked Cork out of the Munster championship in Páirc Uí Chaoimh.

It's the first time that Waterford have beaten Cork in 13 competitive matches since they earned promotion to the senior ranks eight years ago. Cork won all of their three meetings in 2022.

But something is missing from Cork's make up in 2023. On the back of losing the league final they needed to win this Munster campaign.

Outside of losing their second major competitive game in three weeks, they are now without further Munster games ahead of the All-Ireland series.

Waterford led by five points entering the last six minutes of normal time. Cork came to life, got the next three scores to trail 1-16 to 1-14, but short puck-outs where Cork were overturned instead of driving the ball upfield to capitalise on their momentum were just two areas where Cork broke down.

Cork's panel again failed to deliver. It was a surprise to see Hannah Looney held on the bench but that's a decision for Cork's management.

Not a puff from the pitch side flags as the game started but that didn't last long as a strong wind favoured Cork in the opening half.

Four times in the opening half the sides were level. Amy O'Connor got the first score of the day from a free. Six points to Cork's two had the visitors leading 0-6 to 0-3 after 14 minutes, four forwards hitting the mark: Abby Flynn, Orla Hickey, Beth Carton and Mairead O'Brien. Waterford were spreading the play well around the



Cork's Orla Cronin in action against Waterford.

Picture: Larry Cummins

forty but too many shots dropped short into the hands of Amy Lee with no one close by to mount a challenge.

Cork had chances too, some good defending preventing a goal on eight minutes. Amy O'Connor had the sides level on 17 as she danced through defenders to hit low to the net, after receiving a good cross-field ball in space.

Cork took the lead with an Orla Cronin point, her first of two first-half scores.

But a good Waterford move involving Beth Carton, now operating further out, the loose Orla Hickey and Niamh Rockett saw Rockett blast the net, Waterford two in front again.

Another from Cronin, two from Sigeron, one a beauty from the sideline, and one from Saoirse McCarthy to replies from Lorraine Bray and Beth Carton had the sides level at the break.

Two quick Waterford points after the restart before a goal chance for Cork. Amy O'Connor coming in from the side in typical fashion passed outside to Clodagh Finn who's soft strike was blocked.

Vikki Faulkner was strong defensively with Lorraine Bray at midfield a trojan as Cork were at times running into trouble and crowded.

Cork needed greater penetration; two further wides left them three behind on forty.

They narrowed it to one only for the classy Carton and Flynn pushing Waterford four ahead, 1-14 to 1-10.

Cork fumbling left Waterford in again, 1-16 to 1-11 before Cork three in a row.

Cork needed a goal, but slow delivery and great defending gave Waterford a huge victory.

Scorers for Cork: A O'Connor 1-3 (0-3 F), C Sigeron 0-4 (0-3 F), O Cronin, A Smith, E Murphy 0-2 each, S McCarthy, L Hayes 0-1 each.

Waterford: B Carton 0-10 (0-7 F), A Flynn 0-4, N Rockett 1-0, O Hickey 0-2, M O'Brien, L Bray 0-1 each.

CORK: A Lee, M Murphy, L Coppinger, M Cahalana, L Hayes, L Treacy, I O'Regan, S McCarthy, C Healy, C Sigeron, F Keating, H Ryan, A O'Connor, O Cronin, C Finn.

Subs: P Mackey for C Healy (h-t), E Murphy and A Smith for H Ryan and C Finn (44), K Wall for O Cronin (53).

WATERFORD: B O'Regan, V Faulkner, J Heffernan, K Lynch, K Corbett Barry, C Carroll, M Power, L Bray, O Hickey, M O'Brien, B Carton, R Walsh, N Curran, A Flynn, N Rockett.

Subs: R Kirwan for M O'Brien (47), A Landers and A Corcoran for N Curran and R Walsh (52), T Power for J Heffernan (57), M O'Regan for N Rockett (61).

Referee: Mike Lyons - Tipperary



FAR REACHING: Amy O'Connor of Cork in action against Iona Heffernan of Waterford during the Munster Senior Camogie Championship Quarter Final match between Cork and Waterford at Páirc Uí Chaoimh. Cork lost 1-15 to 1-18. PHOTO: BRENDAN MORAN/SPORTSFILE

Sharpshooter Carton turns focus toward Tipp

Tomás McCarthy

Waterford camogie All Star Beth Carton celebrated like the great John Mullane when she sent over her 10th point on Sunday to seal a statement win in Páirc Uí Chaoimh.

It was their first victory over Cork at senior level since they earned promotion back in 2015. The Déise suffered 12

straight losses to the Rebels in league and championship but eight second-half points from the De La Salle sharpshooter inspired Sean Power's side to a famous result.

"It's absolutely brilliant in there," Carton admitted afterwards. "A great bunch of girls in that room that have been waiting a while to get a big win like that."

And what about that celebration? "I'll get a bit of stick over the fist pump off the girls! I gave the fist pump but I knew near the end that any time Cork get the ball, they're lethal and could have got a goal. It was just all out there near the end, to be honest. I missed a crucial free near the end so I had no choice but to try and get another score. I

Beth Carton of Waterford has scored 2-66 in seven games.



would have been very disappointed with myself if it went the other way." Carton has scored 2-66 in

seven games this season. She had a few red marks on her arms after another tough battle with Cork. "I'd say I'll be sore in the morning! Any time you play Cork, it's physical. Camogie is going that way which is great to see. That's what we want, that's what we train for. We'll recover now and we'll go again Tuesday for a big week."

Condon eager to retain All-Ireland minor crown

BY GER MCCARTHY

MILLIE Condon is eager to make her mark in Cork's Electric Ireland All-Ireland Camogie minor A final showdown with Waterford on Sunday.

The Ballinacorney camogie and Clonakilty LGFA dual star has already pocketed a Munster football minor medal ahead of Sunday's final at UPMC Nowlan Park.

Jerry Wallace's side must overcome a Waterford team that defeated the Rebels 3-9 to 2-5 in the round-robin section of this year's championship.

A noticeable step up in quality made reaching this year's All-Ireland minor decider more difficult than ever.

Condon has noticed the minor grade's improved quality but believes this Cork team is in with a decent shout of retaining their title.

"I feel like all the teams that

'It's only 60 minutes so you might as well just try your best in the 60 minutes you have'
— Millie Condon

we've played, including Waterford, have really stepped it up from last year," Condon told *The Southern Star*.

"Ever since we first played Waterford at U14, they've just been getting better and better."

"I feel Cork were there or there about



against all the teams we faced in this year's championship though. So, I think it's going to come down to whoever will better on the day will probably win the All-Ireland final."

Having lost to the Déise and drawn with Kilkenny, Cork overcame Dublin and Tipperary to setup an All-Ireland semi-final meeting

with Galway.

One of the minor championship's best games saw Cork emerge narrow 1-18 to 3-10 victors. That performance should stand to the Rebels against a Waterford side that will most likely start 13 of last year's minor team.

It is going to be a tough ask but Millie Condon is used to playing in high-profile finals having won numerous inter-county underage titles.

Whatever the outcome, nerves will not play a part in the 2022 West Cork Sports Star Paudie Palmer Youth Award winner's preparations.

"No, I don't get nervous. I suppose I just don't overthink things too much when it comes to playing in All-Ireland finals," the Ballinacorney stalwart said.

"It's only 60 minutes so you might as well just try your best in the 60 minutes you have."

"Jerry Wallace and our management team are great. If you have anything to say to them or anything to ask them, they'll always be honest and tell you."

"Most of the time, they tell you the thing you want to hear! I don't have anything bad to say about them anyway!"

Millie Condon has had to juggle plenty of demands as a Clonakilty LGFA football, Ballinacorney Camogie player and dual inter-county star.

Witnessing four Cork senior Camogie and LGFA players suffer with the scheduling of last weekend's Munster championship ties cannot have been easy.

It's an unwanted scenario that Condon has not yet been faced with at inter-county level.

"Thankfully, I haven't had to choose between the two codes so far," Millie Condon added.

"My two managers from both

codes, Jerry Wallace (Camogie) and Jamie Cronin (LGFA), always look out for me and tell me what to do."

"They guide me so I don't have to make any choices. I can't imagine what it would be like to have to make a choice like that."

Cork manager Jerry Wallace is as eager as his players to retain their All-Ireland Camogie minor trophy.

"I'm thrilled to be back in an All-Ireland final once again," Wallace commented.

"I think that it's a fabulous achievement by our players. They're getting better with each game. They've bought into everything that we've done since we began way back at the start of November last year."

"They had had a different championship format to compete in this year as well. I think it's been enjoyable for the players."

More disappointment for Cork seniors following Déise defeat

Rebels suffer first competitive loss to Waterford in eight years

CORK 1-15
WATERFORD 1-18

JOHNNY CAROLAN REPORTS

CORK'S reign as Munster senior camogie champions came to an end as they suffered a first competitive defeat to Waterford since the Déise's ascension to senior ranks in 2015.

Played prior to the Munster SHC meeting between the counties at Páirc Uí Chaoimh last Sunday, this result was further disappointment for Cork in the wake of last year's All-Ireland final loss to Kilkenny and league final defeat to Galway in April.

While there is no material affect in terms of the All-Ireland championship – the provincial and national competitions stand apart from each other – Matthew Twomey's side will miss out on valuable game-time prior to the commencement of the big event in a month's time.

Having beaten Waterford three times in 2022, Cork were expected to win and set up a Munster semi-final against Tipperary, back at Páirc Uí Chaoimh this coming Saturday evening.

Instead, they were unable to produce a response to the league final and a late flurry acted as something of a mask on Waterford's superiority.

Cork manager Twomey certainly didn't sugar-coat things afterwards.

'It was very disappointing,' he said.

'The performance wasn't there and we got what we deserved; Waterford were better than us today.'

'The opportunity to play here, in front of a game like this [hurling] and we didn't take it. We didn't look like a team in cohesion, we didn't look like a team that wanted to win it. Waterford showed more desire and you can't defend that.'

'You can't hide it; it is a setback. The challenge now is for the players to respond to that – if they play like that,

they won't beat anyone.'

While Cork captain Amy O'Connor opened the scoring with a free, Waterford responded well and were 0-6 to 0-3 in front inside the opening quarter-hour.

Indeed, they could have been further ahead but for some poor shots dropped short into the hand of Cork goalkeeper Amy Lee.

That wastefulness looked to have been costly as O'Connor levelled following a good run and shot to the net. Cork moved in front as Orla Cronin – named as a sub but drafted in to start – got the first of two opening-half points.

Waterford were not overawed, though, and hit back with a goal as Beth Carton and Orla Hickey combined for Niamh Rockett to fire home. Even so, Cork went in level at half-time, 1-8 apiece, after points from Cronin, Chloe Sigerson (two) and Saoirse McCarthy, with Lorraine Bray and Beth Carton on target for Waterford.

Waterford hit the front with two early points on the resumption and Cork found it difficult to break down a defence where Vikki Faulkner stood strong. By the three-quarter mark, Waterford were 1-14 to 1-10 in front and that lead was five points, 1-16 to 1-11, with 6 minutes of normal time left.

Cork did reel off three late points to leave them within a score, but another goal was needed and Waterford were not going to cough it up. They move on, while Twomey is left to work on the issues in the team.

'We had enough of them since the league final, we're after finding more of them now, that's the problem,' he quipped.



Cork manager Matthew Twomey.



Courcey Rovers stalwart Saoirse McCarthy who was part of the Cork senior camogie team that suffered a first competitive loss to Waterford in eight years following last weekend's Munster Championship clash at Páirc Uí Chaoimh. (Photo: INPHO/Bernie Brady)

'You can't hide it; it is a setback. The challenge now is for the players to respond to that – if they play like that, they won't beat anyone'
– Cork Manager Matthew Twomey

Scorers

Cork: Amy O'Connor 1-3 (0-3 frees), Chloe Sigerson 0-4 (0-3 frees), Orla Cronin, All Smith, Emma Murphy 0-2 each, Saoirse McCarthy, Laura Hayes 0-1 each.
Waterford: Beth Carton 0-10 (0-7 frees), Abby Flynn 0-4, Niamh Rockett 1-0, Orla Hickey 0-2, Mairéad O'Brien, Lorraine Bray 0-1 each.
Cork: Amy Lee (Na Plarsaigh); Meabh Murphy (Ballinora), Libby

Coppinger (St Colum's), Meabh Cahalane (St Finbarr's); Laura Hayes (St Catherine's), Laura Treacy (Killeagh), Izzy O'Regan (Ballygarvan); Saoirse McCarthy (Courcey Rovers), Cliona Healy (Aghabullogue); Chloe Sigerson (Killeagh), Fiona Keating (Courcey Rovers), Hayley Ryan (Blackrock); Amy O'Connor (St Vincent's), Orla Cronin (Enniskeane), Clodagh Finn (Fr O'Neills).
Subs: Pamela Mackey (Douglas)

for Healy (half-time), Emma Murphy (Glen Rovers) for Ryan, All Smith (Aghada) for Finn (44), Kate Wall (St Finbarr's) for Cronin (53).
Waterford: Brianna O'Regan; Vikki Faulkner, Iona Heffernan, Katie Lynch; Keeley Corbett Barry, Clodagh Carroll, Mairéad Power; Lorraine Bray, Orla Hickey; Mairéad

O'Brien, Beth Carton, Rachael Walsh; Niamh Curran, Abby Flynn, Niamh Rockett.
Subs: Róisín Kirwan for O'Brien (47), Aoife Landers for Curran, Anne Corcoran for Walsh (52), Tara Power for Heffernan (57), Megan O'Regan for Rockett (61).
Referee: Mike Lyons (Tipperary).

THE HIGHLIGHTS

Our Star: With 1-3, Cork captain Amy O'Connor top-scored but it was a day where few Rebels emerged with credit.
Star Moment: Cork's late surge suggested they might salvage something but even then it was a faint hope.
Talking Point: The Cork management used four substitutes but the experienced Hannah Looney was not one of those brought on.
What's Next? Cork have a month to prepare for their meeting with Galway in the Glen Dimplex All-Ireland SCC.



Cork's Ava Fitzgerald was named the Electric Ireland Player of the Match following her performance for Cork in the Electric Ireland Camogie Minor A Shield All-Ireland Championship semi-final against Galway at McDonagh Park in Nenagh, Tipperary. Picture: Stephen Marken

Déise aiming to win first minor title but Cork will have other ideas

Electric Ireland Minor A All-Ireland final: Cork v Waterford, Sunday, May 7, Nowlan Park, Kilkenny, 4.30pm.

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

CORK are chasing their fourth All-Ireland minor title in six seasons have enjoyed huge success in the grade since taking the county's first title (since minor went to under 18) in 2018.

On Sunday, provincial neighbours Waterford provide the opposition as they will bid to create their own bit of history and win their first title.

Cork had to battle to the finish to shake off a determined Galway in their semi-final outing before emerging with two points to spare after a testing contest.

Waterford overcame Kilkenny despite being reduced to 14 players just before the interval where they took a six-point lead to the dressing room.

In the second half they played with huge determination as they overcame a Kilkenny side they had lost out to in the group series.

Waterford have already overcome Cork in the round robin series as they recorded a 3-9 to 2-6 victory they were full value for, they lost out to Galway but with wins over Dublin, Kilkenny and Tipperary they made it to the semi-final.

Cork having defeated Dublin in round one were brought back to ground losing to Waterford, they rallied to record a valuable draw against Kilkenny and going on to overcome Tipperary and Galway they did enough to make it to the last four.

Waterford will go into this final with huge confidence, with their senior sides having knocked Cork out of the Munster championship last weekend there is a huge buzz in the county and the hard work at all levels is paying off.

For many they might be the surprise team in this minor all

Ireland final but steadily they have been working towards this and it comes as no surprise to see them there.

Last year they reached the semi-final losing out to Cork by a point and with Mark English at the helm for his first season with the minor team he took over a group which has progressed through the underage ranks together.

The huge bond that exists could be seen in their crucial outing against Tipperary.

When they were trailing by eight points midway through the first half they made some changes and began to work as they battled to get the win they needed to stay in contention.

Whilst Waterford are chasing their first title they will no doubt feel the pressure that will come with bidding to make history, equally so no doubt Cork will be conscious as they strive to make it back to back titles and reverse the result of the last meeting between the sides.

Waterford have excellent players in Laoise Forrest, Jane Kirwan, Hannah McGrath, Bevin Bowdern, Eimear O'Neill and Maggie Gostl.

Cork have a lot of experience in their line out with Maedhbh de Burca, Eimear Duignan, Millie Condon and Clara Morrison amongst the ten remaining from last season's successful campaign.

As the championship has progressed Cork have improved with every game. Niamh MacNabola, Amy Sheppard, twins Caoimhe and Emily O'Donoghue and Captain Sinead Hurley have all played their part as a final spot was secured.

Waterford will make a huge bid to create history but Cork will not give their title up easily.



Kate Wall looks for support on the forward line late in the second half against Waterford at Páirc Uí Chaoimh.

Picture: Larry Cummins

Lack of Cork hurt a worry



CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick

CORK should be preparing for a Tipperary Munster semi-final showdown in Páirc Uí Chaoimh today ahead of the hurling clash between the same counties.

Instead, we are forced to look on as Waterford take our place after what must be said was a very poor defeat on home soil last Sunday.

I say a very poor defeat, not out of disrespect to Waterford because I said last week that they are a fine side, riding the momentum wave after their Division 1B league victory and running Cork close in the All-Ireland semi-final last year. They are a team with a very talented forward division and a hard-working defence and midfield.

And that's why the loss was poor. We didn't give a hard-working performance. You can take the defeats when you give it your all. We've lost cracking All-Ireland finals recently and while bitter to take, you lick your wounds and then lift your head again.

No such licking the wounds this time, only a long hard look in the mirror. I know management takes the flak when things go wrong but to me this issue is player-related. Where is the leadership and spirit gone?

The casual approach by many on the field looks uninterested. To watch players slow down as they approach the ball and have it snatched from under their noses, to watch players give up the chase or to watch players casually take points in the dying minutes when a goal chance is on and needed speaks volumes to me about a lack of desire.

Where is the pride? Players have never been so well looked after.

Yes, Cork have injuries, Katrina Mackey being their most prominent after suffering a punctured lung in the first-round league game against Dublin. She is back training this week and is badly needed. Katrina's work-rate is top-drawer



Emma Murphy fires over a point from play.

Picture: Larry Cummins

and she also has a killer instinct for goal.

Our midfield and forward return last weekend was very poor. The wides, and the goal opportunities that have gone begging in the last two games, just won't cut it, in addition to trying to take the ball too near to goal before popping it.

Galway had significant injuries too as well as a large rotation of players for their league win.

I know Cork's management have been trying to compensate for their injuries and lack of penetration by toying with Laura Hayes and Saoirse McCarthy at midfield, but both players need to flank Laura Treacy and go back to the formidable attacking half-back line that they were. They were Cork's launchpad last year and are hard to stop, even though Kilkenny closed their running down somewhat in the final.

You have to hand it to Beth Carton. What a player she has been for Waterford over the years and still only in her mid-20s. She stands up when the odds are stacked against her and that's what it takes. Ten points last Sunday, three from play. Four from Abby Flynn and a goal by Niamh Rockett sealed the deal.

What now for Cork? Can they turn it around?

It will be some turnaround if they can. Are they hurting enough after last Sunday? Based on their performance they didn't seem to be carrying any hurt from their league final defeat.

That was the time to lay down a marker, with an impressive display. The All-Ireland championship kicks off on the weekend of June 3, four weeks away. It doesn't get any tougher than an away opener to Galway.

After that Cork have a home game to Down and are away to Clare. There are three groups, with Cork in group 1. As in previous years, six teams will qualify for the knockout stages of the championship, two from each group. Two of the three group winners will advance directly to the semi-finals, with the remaining top-placed county joining the other three second-placed teams in the quarter-finals. The Cork versus Galway game will determine our semi- or quarter-final spot.

The identity of those straight to semi-final will be determined by a draw involving the three group winners. The quarter-final pairings will be decided by an open draw but there will be no repeat pairings, ie the third group winner participating in the quarter-final cannot play the runner-up from their group.



Picture: Stephen Marken/Sportsfile

Ciara Morrisson of Cork in action against Alannah McNulty of Waterford.

All-Ireland glory for brilliant Cork

Cork 1-13
Waterford 1-10

CORK retained their Electric Ireland All-Ireland minor camogie title, their fourth in six years, as they overcame a Waterford side that had defeated them earlier in the season.

Despite playing against the strong wind, Cork set the pace and were five up at the break. An Emily O'Donoghue goal six minutes was key after Waterford keeper Katelyn Gardiner had denied Cork with an excellent save after just two minutes.

O'Donoghue pointed a free to put Cork four in front before Amy Sheppard and Erinn Curtin stretched the lead to six.

Maggie Gostl had two points for

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

Waterford but the Cork response was instant with Sheppard, Curtin, O'Donoghue, and McCarthy on target from play.

Waterford began to push forward and three points narrowed the gap; 1-7 to 0-5.

Waterford started the second half well. Gostl pointed a free and with their defence tightening up, they were playing with confidence. Cork hit two wides in a row and Waterford continued to press with another Gostl free trimming the gap to three points.

The huge Waterford support roared

their side on, but Cork replied with two O'Donoghue points. Eimear O'Neill and Gostl hit scores for the Déise as the pace was picking up with bodies were on the line.

Erinn Curtin pushed Cork ahead by four on 49 minutes and play was stopped for a brief injury as everyone caught their breath. The game resumed at a lightning pace as the Rebels pushed towards the finishing line.

Curtain and O'Donoghue scored again for a six-point lead with two minutes remaining. As the game entered injury-time the sides swapped points but Waterford grabbed an injury-time goal through Laoise Forrest.

Cork won the puck-out as the final whistle sounded.

Emily O'Donoghue was named

Player Of the Match after her contribution of 1-5 on a wonderful day for Cork minor camogie.

Scorers for Cork: E O'Donoghue 1-5 (0-3 f), E Curtin 0-4, A Sheppard 0-2, A McCarthy, K Fennessy 0-1 each.

Waterford: M Gostl 0-7 (0-4 f, 0-2 45), L Forrest 1-1, E O'Neill 0-2.

CORK: C Lane, M de Búrca, S Hurley (c), C O'Donoghue, O Cremin, L Dunlea, E Duignan, M Condon, A Fitzgerald, A Sheppard, C Morrison, A McCarthy, N McNabola, E O'Donoghue, E Curtin. **Subs:** B O'Shaughnessy for McNabola (41), K Fennessy for C Morrison (52), E Crowley for C O'Donoghue (57), A O'Sullivan for A Sheppard (63).

WATERFORD: K Gardner, A Healy, M Buck, F Murphy, L Harty, B Bowden, J Kewin, C Sherlock, L Forrest, E O'Neill, N Halley, A McNulty, E Fitzgerald, M Gostl, K Obanya.

Subs: O Walsh for K Obanya (25), H McGrath for N Halley (44), C Lyons for O Walsh (56).

Referee: Aaron Hogg (Clare).



Cork celebrate winning the Electric Ireland All-Ireland minor A camogie championship final against Waterford at UPMC Nowlan Park. Picture: Evan Treacy/Inpho

O'Donoghue and Curtin help Cork maintain minor supremacy

All-Ireland minor A camogie final

Cork 1-13
Waterford 1-10

Daragh Ó Conchúir
Nowlan Park

Emily O'Donoghue and Erin Curtin were on fire for Cork, who turned the tables on a Waterford team that had beaten them in the group stages and in the process, claimed a fourth Electric Ireland All-Ireland minor A camogie title in five attempts at UPMC Nowlan Park.

Waterford were appearing in their first final and perhaps that was a factor, as a slow start with the wind at their backs proved significant. They never gave up but Laoise Forrest's goal in the fourth minute of injury time came too late for them.

O'Donoghue, who finished with 1-5, set the tone early on as she nabbed a wonderfully instinctive goal in the sixth minute, having initially created an opportunity for Ciara Morrison. The Bishopstown fulcrum followed up her jabbed finish with a well-struck free.

Amy Sheppard floated over a delightful point and when the lively Curtin nailed a stupendous score from an almost impossible angle, the first of four points from play for the right corner-forward, it was looking very good for the Rebels.

Maggie Gostl was Waterford's most threatening player, scoring seven points and having a hand in a couple more. She drilled a 45 over the black spot to get them off the mark in the 14th minute and they settled into the fray.

Gostl finished the half with four points and won a brilliant

dirty ball to set up Eimear O'Neill for another.

But Sheppard, O'Donoghue, Curtin — with another outstanding finish after the latest of a number of interceptions by Laura Dunlea — and Amy McCarthy found the target at the other end, making it 1-7 to 0-5 at half-time.

Waterford upped the intensity in the second half and De La Salle teenager Gostl gave the Déise's supporters tremendous hope with a couple of placed balls.

O'Donoghue extended the margin once more with her own brace but a Gostl block set up a delightful point for O'Neill, and Gostl then made no mistake from a free on the left making it a one-score game again.

But Jerry Wallace's squad always kept their gutsy opponents at arm's length. Curtin provided two more very neat finishes and O'Donoghue,

whose twin Caoimhe also played very well, put six between them.

Waterford kept fighting, Forrest and Kate Fennessy swapping points, but Forrest's goal came too late and it was Cork's day.

Scorers for Cork: E O'Donoghue (1-5, 2 frees); E Curtin (0-4); A Sheppard (0-2); A McCarthy; K Fennessy (0-1 each)

Scorers for Waterford: M Gostl (0-7, 3 45s, 2 frees); E O'Neill (0-2); L Forrest (1-1 free)

CORK: C Lane, M de Búrca, S Hurley, C O'Donoghue, O Cremin, L Dunlea, E Duignan, M Condon, A Fitzgerald, A Sheppard, C Morrison, A McCarthy, E Curtin, E O'Donoghue, N McNabola.

Subs: B O'Shaughnessy for McNabola (44); K Fennessy for Morrison (53); E Crowley for C O'Donoghue (58); A O'Sullivan for Sheppard (60+3)

WATERFORD: K Gardner, A Healy, M Buck, J Kirwan, F Murphy, L Forrest, L Hartly, B Bowdren, C Sherlock, E O'Neill, N Halley, A McNulty, E Fitzgerald, M Gostl, K Obanya.

Subs: O Walsh for Obanya (26); H McGrath for Halley (45); K Lyons for Walsh (57)

Referee: Aaron Hogg (Clare)

CAMOGIE

All-Ireland minor finals: A final Cork 1-13 Waterford 1-10; A Shield final: Antrim 2-15 Limerick 1-13; B final: Roscommon 1-14 Laois 1-5; C final: Kerry 0-12 Down 0-8; **Munster championship:** Senior semi-final: Tipperary 4-11 Waterford 1-9; Intermediate semi-final: Kerry 0-14 Clare 0-12; **Leinster championship:** Kilkenny 4-21 Westmeath 0-6

Munster Senior Camogie semi-final

Tipperary 4-11
Waterford 1-9

Therese O'Callaghan

New Tipperary manager Denis Kelly has urged his team to go on and finish the job after they put four goals past Waterford in the Munster senior camogie championship semi-final at Páirc Uí Chaoimh on Saturday.

Clare stand in their way next Saturday in FBD Semple Stadium — a double-header with Clare and Waterford hurlers.

"The girls are starved of silverware," he said. "A Munster Championship is not to be sniffed at, it's been a long time since we won it. We will be taking Clare very seriously."

Three green flags between the 16th and 22nd minute was a big blow for the Déise, with stalwart and player-of-the-match Cáit Devane returning 2-5.

In a competition that has been dominated by Cork, Tipperary led at the interval 3-5 to 0-4.

"The goals are something we have been working on. Maybe a bit disappointed with our points tally. You won't win big games with those points, and we gave away a soft goal at the end. But it is great to have things like that to work on."

Devane was inspirational. She landed the first goal. Eimear Heffernan blasted the second, whilst Róisín Howard provided the third.

Devane's second goal at the start of the new-half killed off

Tipp boss Kelly urges 'starved' side to finish job



PÁIRC LIFE: Cáit Devane shoots to score Tipperary's first goal against Waterford in Saturday's Munster Senior Camogie Championship semi-final at Páirc Uí Chaoimh. Picture: David Fitzgerald/Sportsfile

any hope of a Waterford comeback, for whom Beth Carton supplied 1-7 — the goal from a penalty on 60 minutes.

"Cáit has been around for a

long time but she keeps going to the well. That was a great performance from her. But, in general, it was a great team performance.

"It is brilliant to get to play in stadiums like Páirc Uí Chaoimh. That is where you want to be. As many games as we can get into the bigger

stadiums, the better.

"Fair play to Munster GAA and Camogie who had the foresight to match up the games.

"We are at home next weekend but there will be a big Clare following. Hopefully Tipp will come in and support this team. It was great to see them here today."

Another positive is their strong bench.

"We didn't use the likes of Mary Ryan and Mairead Evison (recovered from injury), and there are others.

"But anyone who played well, it will be hard to dislodge them."

Scorers for Tipperary: C Devane (2-5, 0-2 frees, 0-1 45), R Howard and E Heffernan (1-0 each), E McGrath (0-4 frees), G O'Brien and N Treacy (0-1 each).

Scorers for Waterford: B Carton (1-7, 1-0 pen, 0-5 frees), N Rockett and L Bray (0-1 each).

TIPPERARY: C Bourke; J Bourke, C Quirke (J-Capt), E Loughman, K Blair, K Kennedy (J-Capt), A McGrath, T Ryan, C Hennessy; R Howard, C Maher, E McGrath; G O'Brien, C Devane, E Heffernan.

Subs: C McCarthy for C Maher (42); N Treacy for E Heffernan (48); C Hogan for G O'Brien (50); G Moloney for R Howard (54); C Ryan for E McGrath (57).

WATERFORD: B O'Regan; V Faulkner, I Heffernan, N Curran; K Corbett Barry, C Carroll, M Power; L Bray (Capt); K Lynch; M O'Brien, O Hickey, B Carton; A Corcoran, A Flynn, N Rockett.

Subs: R Walsh for A Flynn; A Fitzgerald for A Corcoran (both half-time); A Landers for M Power (38); T Power for K Lynch (45); R Kirwan for M O'Brien (52).

Referee: Aaron Hogg (Clare).



Cork celebrate winning the Electric Ireland All-Ireland Minor A Camogie Championship final against Waterford at UPMC Nowlan Park, Kilkenny. Picture: INPHO/Evan Treacy

Rebel U16s get their championship off to the best of starts

THE Cork U16 camogie side got their championship campaign off to a winning start as they turned the tables on Munster champions Limerick to take the points on offer in the first game of the All-Ireland group series in Castle Road last weekend, running out 0-15 to 0-5 winners.

Cork showed great determination and work rate from the throw in as they battled to put aside the disappointment of losing to the same opposition 2-8 to 1-3 just four weeks ago.

This time out Cork were sharper and focused and they went at Limerick from the word go.

Meabh O'Brien, Rachel Murphy, Ava McAuliffe and Aoife Cottrell were prominent and with Emma Honohan denying Limerick with some excellent saves, Cork led 0-6 to 0-3 at the interval.

Throughout the second half Cork kept the pressure on and with Tara Goulding, Ally Mul-kerrins, Laura Walsh, Catherine Murphy and Ava McAuliffe keeping the scoreboard ticking over with points.

Cork controlled matters despite a strong challenge from a Limerick side, who will no doubt be disappointed losing out.

It was a wonderful response from Cork to losing out in the Munster final and all credit to Cork for the manner in which they have turned it around.

Cork are bidding for three in a row of titles this year and



Ava Fitzgerald, left, and Sinéad Hurley of Cork after the Electric Ireland Minor A All-Ireland Championship final win against Waterford at UPMC Nowlan Park in Kilkenny. Picture: Stephen Marken/Sportsfile

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

with a new management at the helm this opening round victory is a huge boost.

Only one of last season's successful management team remains but there is continuity with the role of manager taken on by John Maloney from Newtownshandrum who had been involved as part of Donie Daly's management set up in recent years.

Moloney brings huge experience to the role of manager and he is joined by Deirdre Twomey from the St Catherine's, who herself lined out at inter-county level with Cork, Michelle Gould, St Vincent's is the goalkeeping coach, John Brosnan, Buttevant is coach / selector, Mark Kavanagh, Charleville is a coach / selector. Mark has also been involved with Cork Rebel Og teams.

Brendan O'Driscoll, Carrigaline, who previously worked with the Cork under 17 development squads is also on board as a coach / selector.

In a change of format this year just six teams battle it out for the U16A All-Ireland championship title with all six teams in one group.

The teams will play each other once, with the top four teams going forward to contest the semi-finals.

Cork, Galway, Kilkenny, Limerick, Tipperary and Wexford will be bidding for the four places.

Cork will travel take on Wexford tomorrow.

Wexford recorded a draw 1-10 a piece with Galway last weekend, round three will see Cork at home on May 21 for their clash with Kilkenny.

Kilkenny lost out to Tipperary in their opening game on a 2-18 to 3-7 scoreline.

Tomorrow, Kilkenny are at home for their meeting with Limerick and Tipperary travel to meet Galway.

After round three there is a five week break for state exams and championship will resume with round four on the weekend of July 1-2, round five on the weekend of July 8-9.

The top four will meet in the semi-finals on the weekend of July 8-9 with the final down for decision on the weekend of July 29th /30th.



Cork celebrate victory in the Electric Ireland All-Ireland Minor A Camogie Championship final against Waterford at UPMC Nowlan Park, Kilkenny

Semple stage adds lustre to Munster decider

It will be another big occasion in FBD Semple Stadium today when the camogie players of Clare and Tipperary cross swords in the Munster senior championship final. It will precede the Clare and Waterford hurling match.



Munster Senior Camogie Championship final
Tipperary v Clare

Today: Semple Stadium, 3.30pm
Referee: Andy Larkin

Therese O'Callaghan



Adding to the intrigue is that neither side has collected a provincial title in quite some time.

"Silverware at Munster championship level is hard-won," acknowledges Clare manager John Carmody. "It will be a massive boost for whichever county takes it."

"It is 10 years, I think, since we won the Munster championship. I should know, I was the manager back then."

"We beat Cork in the Ragg. Cork are the standard bearers. They have won it so many times. This is a novel final so both teams will be extremely motivated to win it. It should make for a great game."

Clare, backed by joint-captains Niamh O'Dea and Clare Hehir, have had a break since defeating Limerick a fortnight ago in the TUS Gaelic Grounds, while Tipperary overcame Waterford last weekend in Páirc Uí Chaoimh — the Déise knocked out Cork in the quarter-final a week earlier.

The experience of playing in the top stadiums is not lost on Carmody.

"Thankfully the last few years, Munster Council Camogie and GAA, they are kind of a step ahead of integration. This promotion of the girls is the way it should be seen. It is great to have the girls playing before the lads. The girls put in equally as much and it is great to see them showcased."

"It was a great occasion to be involved with the last day. We played ahead of Clare and Limerick in the SHC. It tends to bring the best out of our girls. That has been our experience of it. The bigger the occasion, the more they seem to lift their game. We would be hoping that would be the case again."

"The only concern for us is since the Limerick game, we picked up a few injuries. Unfortunately Rebecca Foley is out for the year, she has a recurrence of a cruciate ligament injury. She will be a loss. And we are sweating over Laoise Ryan, we are waiting on the results of a scan on her finger injury."

"It would be huge for us to win. We are in the group of death in the All-Ireland championship — with Cork and Galway [and Down]. For me, this game is a gauge of where we are at in terms of can we compete with the big counties."

"I think Tipp have been the form team for the year to date. They'll admit themselves, they slipped up against Kilkenny in the league. They absolutely dismantled Waterford last Saturday, so it is going to be a huge task for us."

"We would feel we need a big performance from our girls. But there is no pressure on them either, we want them to enjoy the occasion. To build on last year's experience, having lost to Cork in the final which went to double-extra time."



Cork's Ava Fitzgerald shows her delight at the end of the Electric Ireland All-Ireland Camogie Championship final win over Waterford at UPMC Nowlan Park, Kilkenny.

Cork claim fourth All-Ireland minor A camogie crown in five years

CORK 1-13
WATERFORD 1-10

BY DARAGH Ó CONCHÚIR

TWO of West Cork's rising camogie stars played their part in Cork's successful defence of their All-Ireland minor A camogie title.

Ballinascorthy dual star Millie Condon and Clonakilty's Amy McCarthy both started in the Rebels' three-point win against Waterford at UPMC Nowlan Park.

Emily O'Donoghue (Bishopstown) and Erinn Curtin (Blackrock) were on fire for Cork, who turned the tables on a Waterford team that had beaten them in the group stages and, in the process, claimed a fourth Electric Ireland All-Ireland minor A camogie title in five attempts.

The Leesiders had only bagged their first title in 2018 but have won every championship since bar one, with the 2020 renewal lost to Covid.

O'Donoghue, who finished with 1-5, set the tone early on as she nabbed a wonderfully instinctive goal for Cork in the sixth minute, having initially created an opportunity for Ciara Morrison. The Bishopstown fulcrum followed up her jabbed finish with a well-struck free.

Amy Sheppard (Clougduv) floated over a delightful point and when the lively Curtin nailed a stupendous score from an almost impossible angle, the first of four points from play for the right corner-forward, it was looking very good for the Rebels. Maggie Gostl was Waterford's



Clonakilty's Amy McCarthy in action for Cork in the Electric Ireland All-Ireland Minor A Camogie Championship final. (Photo: Evan Treacy / INPHO)

Millie and Amy shine as Rebels triumph



Cork captain Sinead Hurley lifts the trophy.

most threatening player, scoring seven points and having a hand in a couple more. She drilled a 45 over the black spot to get them off the mark in the 14th minute and they settled into the fray from there.

Gostl finished the half with four points and won a brilliant dirty ball to set up Eimear O'Neill for another.

But Sheppard, O'Donoghue, Curtin - with another outstanding finish after the latest of a number of interceptions by Laura Dunlea - and Clonakilty's Amy McCarthy found the target

at the other end, making it 1-7 to 0-5 at half-time.

While Mark English would have been pleased to see his crew play themselves into the game, they would have hoped for better having had the elements in their favour. They upped the intensity in the second half though and had half a goal chance from the opening attack. Niamh Halley's shot was deflected out for a 45 but Gostl slotted the resultant placed ball. The De La Salle teenager gave the Déise's supporters tremendous hope when converting a free but Waterford

couldn't get closer than three as they pursued a first-ever title at this level.

Gostl's opposing full-forward O'Donoghue extended the margin once more with her own brace but a Gostl block set up a delightful point for O'Neill and Gostl then made no mistake from a free on the left making it a one-score game again with 12 minutes of regulation time left.

But Jerry Wallace's squad always kept their gutsy opponents at arm's length. Curtin provided two more very neat finishes and O'Donoghue, whose twin Cao-

imhe also played very well before going off late on, put six between them. True to type, Waterford kept fighting, Laoise Forrest and Kate Fennessy swapping points, but Forrest's goal came too late and it was Cork's day.

Scorers

Cork: E O'Donoghue 1-5 (2f); E Curtin 0-4; A Sheppard 0-2; A McCarthy, K Fennessy 0-1 each.

Waterford: M Gostl 0-7 (3 45, 2f); E O'Neill 0-2; L Forrest 1-1 (f).

Cork: C Lane, M de Búrca, S Hurley, C O'Donoghue, O Cremin, L Dunlea, E

Duignan, M Condon, A Fitzgerald, A Sheppard, C Morrison, A McCarthy; E Curtin, E O'Donoghue, N McNabola. **Subs:** B O'Shaughnessy for McNabola (44), K Fennessy for Morrison (53), E Crowley for C O'Donoghue (58), A O'Sullivan for Sheppard (60+3).

Waterford: K Gardner, A Healy, M Buck, J Kirwan, F Murphy, L Forrest, L Harty, B Bowdren, C Sherlock; E O'Neill, N Halley, A McNulty; E Fitzgerald, M Gostl, K Obanya. **Subs:** O Walsh for Obanya (28), H McGrath for Halley (45), K Lyons for Walsh (57).

Referee: Aaron Hogg (Clare).

Kelly: Tipp won't be derailed by end of long wait for silverware



Munster camogie championship final
Tipperary 1-26
Clare 1-9

Therese O'Callaghan
 Semple Stadium

A Munster senior camogie championship title that has been coming for some time was finally claimed by Tipperary in FBD Semple Stadium on Saturday.

It was done with style after a 13-year wait.

Their last All-Ireland senior championship crown came in 2004, and manager Denis Kelly knows well that will measure their real progress.

"We need to drive it on, we have other things in our sights. Today will be a big help. But we can't look past Dublin in four weeks. As the saying goes 'walk easy when the jug is full' and the jug is full at the moment, but it mightn't be too full if Dublin turn us over. So, we have to keep our minds on that game and get back to training during the week." The boss heaped praise on his team.

"Delighted for the girls. They put in some effort since



Tipperary players join Mairead Eviston as she celebrates with the cup after the Munster camogie final win over Clare in Thurles.

Picture: Ray McManus/Sportsfile

the start of the year. We are thrilled they got some reward. It is well worth the wait. Some of the players were only five and six when Tipp last won the cup. I hope it is not another 13 years before we get silverware in Tipperary again.

"We stuck to the game plan, we kept our heads. We weathered that storm at the start of the second-half and finished convincing winners.

"Clare were living off frees and we spoke at half-time about our discipline. We were

keeping them in the game with poor discipline. Once we tightened up in the second-half, there was no stopping us."

Tipp were in rampant scoring form with 10 different finishers, including goal scorer Eimear Heffernan enabling them lead 1-13 to 0-6 at the interval. They hit 1-21 from play.

Cait Devane and Mary Ryan are survivors from 2010.

"They have been through a lot of tough days," Kelly acknowledged. "It takes a bit of

courage to stay at it, facing defeat every year. They help with the younger players."

Kelly will relish the competition for places with the likes of All-Star Ryan coming off the bench. In the All-Ireland championship, they are in a group with Dublin, Wexford, and holders Kilkenny.

"There is some youth coming through. They will give us an extra push.

"We are building on what Bill [Mullaney] did. I was involved with Bill last year, he is part of this as well. We can't

forget about that. It is not just about me coming in and shaking things up a bit. It is about the people before me."

For Clare, it is a second successive final defeat. They must regroup ahead of meeting Down, Galway, and Cork in the O'Duffy Cup.

Goalkeeper Doireann Murphy was outstanding for them, Aine O'Loughlin netted a fine goal, while Lorna McNamara converted six frees.

Scorers for Tipperary: E McGrath (0-6, 0-4 frees, 0-1 45), E Heffernan (1-3), C Devane and G O'Brien (0-4 each), C Maher (0-3), R Howard (0-2), T Ryan, K Blair, E Fryday and C McCarthy (0-1 each).

Scorers for Clare: L McNamara (0-6 frees), A O'Loughlin (1-0), Z Spillane, O Duggan and A Keane (0-1 each).

TIPPERARY: C Bourke, J Bourke, C Quirke (J-Capt), E Loughman, K Blair, K Kennedy (J-Capt), A McGrath, T Ryan, C Hennessy, R Howard, C Maher, E McGrath, G O'Brien, C Devane, E Heffernan.

Subs: C McCarthy for E McGrath (49), N Treacy for C Hennessy (51), M Eviston for E Loughman (52), M Ryan for A McGrath (54), E Fryday G O'Brien (54).

CLARE: D Murphy, C Grogan, S Daly, C Kelly, A Ryan, C Hehir (J-Capt), A Walsh, C Carmody, O Duggan, M Scaron, N O'Dea (J-Capt), A Keane, E Kelly, A O'Loughlin, L McNamara.

Subs: A Spillane for A Ryan (half-time), C Morey for M Scaron (42), E Casey for C Grogan (44), L Daly for C Carmody (45), J Daly for E Kelly (53).

Referee: Andy Larkin (Cork).



SANDWICH: Limerick's Ciara Buckley is tackled by Antrim's Mary McArthur and Anna McKillop in the All-Ireland minor A Shield final at UPMC Nowlan Park. Antrim won 2-15 to 1-13.

Picture: Evan Treacy/Inobo

Aren't we all just hurlers?

WE won't GO there. You've probably heard enough about matches not being on television. Of course Cork v Tipp should be enshrined as a human right. There's even an argument it might be made compulsory viewing, put on some kind of national syllabus. But then the value of everything was thrown up in the air the day it was decided that John Giles had no more to teach us.

As things stand, a wave of half-time adverts for HDMI cables could be the modern answer to liver fluke treatments. But there are other interesting aspects to the current 'debate'. For instance, when crunch ladies football and camogie matches are shown on the internet, behind a paywall, it tends to be regarded as a sign of tremendous progress. I don't recall the launch of the LGFA's streaming bundles coming up in the Dáil. As though blessings should be counted and one might expect to go the extra mile or two to watch women's sport. And learn how to cast.

Maybe that only struck me because I'm reading Eimear Ryan's new book, *The Grass Ceiling*, which doubles on many a double standard in its pages. When Eimear was playing both U12 hurling and camogie, she thought "we were all just hurlers". Then sort of twigged, one day, the lack of social capital that came with one code, compared to the other.

Really, she had internalised that knowledge a long time before. Researching the book, she found a scrapbook she had put together aged four. A double spread of Nicky English photos, naturally, to open it. Bobby Ryan, Paul Delaney, Fox, the Bonnars, the Ryans. A catalogue of impossible glamour. But "In the scrapbook, there isn't a single woman."

"Even as a kid I realised that for a female player there would be no glamour. We only saw camogie players on TV once a year, and they were rarely in the papers — never a picture to cut out or a poster for the wall."

Naturally, these thoughts on difference are a feature of nearly all sports autobiographies written by women. Not that there are still that many. There is a striking passage in Beth Mead's book, *Lioness: My Journey to Glory*, where her mother June, who died in January, comes home ahead of last year's Euros with an armful of Panini stick-



Eimear Ryan: She has an All-Ireland medal with Tipperary but as an unused sub, writing: 'I wanted to be overjoyed at the win for the sake of the team, but I felt unable to bury my personal disappointment. It was exhausting, and I hadn't even pucked a ball.'

Picture: Miki Barlok

er packets, to begin the search for one of her daughter. The Arsenal forward thrilled at the novelty.

"I think back to that young girl in Hinderwell, and the hours she spent slipping cards of her favourite Premier League players into her collector's album. I think of the kids today who will now be pressing me into their own sticker books. It feels very special."

Still, the power of Eimear Ryan's memoir of a camogie player is not really in the many differences that still exist between men's and women's sport. Or even the gradual narrowing of those differences. It's great on some of the sportsperson's universal conditions. Maybe it's good to hear them thrashed out from a woman's perspective. Or maybe by anyone capable of expressing these complicated feelings.

It probably helps she was not a superstar, just a very good hurler. She has an All-Ireland medal with Tipperary but as an unused sub. Should we be valuing lives in the cur-

rency of medals when hers was somewhere in the attic, disregarded?

On the bench, you tend to question everything.

"Permanent status as a substitute brings out the same symptoms as unrequited love: jealousy, paranoia, and yearning. The loneliness of the unused panel member is heightened by the fact that it's so hard to express. In an environment focused on positivity and the collective good, no one wants to hear it. It's dispiriting, it's self-centred, it's covetous — and yet it's also entirely natural."

"I wanted to be overjoyed at the win for the sake of the team, but I felt unable to bury my personal disappointment. It was exhausting, and I hadn't even pucked a ball."

There's a great passage on training when you're not in the team. A perfect diagnosis of how joy and confidence leaks away.

"For me, it warped into a weird, pressurised sort of test. Every mistake — every fumbled ball or missed shot — was confirmation that I didn't

belong there. Every small flourish of skill or deft touch, if unseen, hardly seemed to matter. If I did something good in front of my coach and it went unremarked on, did it even occur?"

There's plenty on the fakeness of minor local celebrity, how you can be somehow subsumed into your accomplishments.

"I climbed on stage to make a speech and looked down at the crowd — friends, classmates, neighbours, and teachers, but also the girls who bullied me, the boys who never spoke to me. They were clapping and cheering now. I felt at the time that I hadn't earned any of it, and that feeling has never left me."

But when do you cut your losses? Say no to *The Sacrifices* and *The Demands*. It's a quandary more, and elite, players appear to be wrestling with. At what stage is it acceptable to put yourself ahead of the county?

"My friend Claire, however, said two magical words to me: Just quit. She said it like it was nothing, like it was easy. You

are allowed to walk away from things that make you unhappy."

"But I'd internalised so many of the core values of Gaelic games — service, honest effort, the sublimation of the ego, and submission to the good of the team, never ever giving up — that it took three years of frustration, and my friend's magic words, before I grasped that this was an option."

For us modest Tipperary folk, there is necessary analysis of the peculiarities of Corkness.

"The Moneygall dressing-room had always been relatively quiet; players chatted, but

we were all midlands girls, soft-spoken and modest. The Barrs dressing room was cacophonous. Cork people have a reputation for flamboyance, but I had to see it to believe it. In the midlands we were all about shyness, deflection, hiding behind our long straight Manson-girl hair; my Cork teammates had swagger, directness, and obvious self-esteem. While I couldn't quite relate to it, I aspired to it."

And while the rural GAA club is often romanticised in the way a community orbits around 'the field', Eimear rightly pinpoints the special energy of a city club, with its pitch 1 and 2 and 3 and its circle of life from overflowing academy to barely moving junior Bs. "The place buzzes with life."

To find out, she had to negotiate the most complicated taboo of them all: a club transfer.

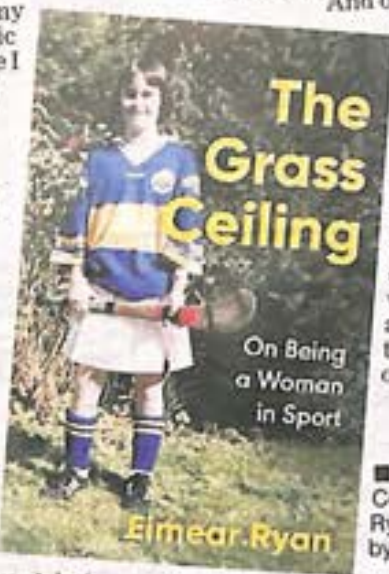
"I was betraying Moneygall: depriving a small rural club of another player, giving up on the dream of making it to a county final. I would need to own this stark fact. I would always be from Moneygall, but I would never again be a Moneygall person in quite the same way."

But however it torments us, man or woman, sport is best when it inhabits more than subsumes us. When we are just hurlers.

"Every day, on that short walk, I imagined myself on the camogie pitch. I tried hard to walk normally, but there was probably a certain bounce in my gait, a flexing of my fingers. I visualised stretching to catch the ball, landing, pivoting. I pictured soloing and using my left hand to fend off defenders. I pictured smashing the ball to the roof of the net, over and over again."

And on the days when it works just right, out on the grass, there is no ceiling on joy.

"I have only the goalies to beat, and am hit by the beautiful certainty that I will bury it. I already have the spot picked out."



■ The Grass Ceiling by Eimear Ryan is published by Penguin



Cork's Rachel Harty breaks from Galway's Megan Gannon.

Ryan's unbeaten Kerry are ready for what should be a great battle

THE big game of the weekend has Cork and Kerry as a curtain-raiser to the hurling clash tomorrow in the Munster Intermediate final with a 12pm throw-in.

Kerry are coming into this game on the back of a hugely successful Very Division 2 A league where they came out on top of a thrilling encounter with Meath to take the county's first League Division 2A title. This year they are under a new management team and Pat Ryan's side have yet to lose a game, having reached the quarter-finals last year, they have steadily built on the experience gained.

Winning the league has been a huge boost. They have added a lot of young players. Experienced campaigners Sara Murphy at full-back, Niamh Leen at centre-back, and stand-out scoring aces Patrice Diggin and Jackie Horgan will spearhead their challenge. Laura Collins, Ellen O'Donoghue, Aoife Behan and Kate Lynch bring good balance to the side.

They continue to build on having played two All-Ireland Junior finals in Croke Park. Despite losing to Dublin in 2018 they bounced back to beat Limerick.

Backed by the strong Clannaurice players, they were excellent in the league this season. They drew with Westmeath but had victories over Meath, Cavan, Derry and Laois before going on to contest the final defeating Meath.

Cork participated the Division 2B and took the league title in a game that went to a reply with Kilkenny.

Captain Rachel Harty, Leanne O'Sullivan, Niamh O'Leary, Laura Doyle, Lauren Homan, Cliona O'Callaghan



Cork players celebrate winning Electric Ireland All-Ireland Minor A Camogie Championship Final win over Waterford. Picture: Inpho/Evan Treacy

GAA

Mary Newman

and Aisling Moloney are key while Fiona Nelligan has shown well in all games when introduced.

This year it was a new-look league for Cork with just five second teams participating. In championship, they will meet much stronger opponents and first-choice teams.

Cork were due to meet Kildare in round one, though there have been major and well-documented issues up there in recent weeks, and Kildare pulled out.

Kerry overcame Clare 0-14 to 0-12 to book their place in the final. With only three teams entered in the Munster championship Cork went straight to the final. Last season Cork and Kerry played out a cracking game in Páirc Uí Chaoimh with Cork coming away with the title.

ALL-IRELAND U16 CHAMPIONSHIP

Cork continued their winning streak as they recorded their second win in the round-robin series of the All-Ireland U16 A championships with an impressive 4-12 to 1-5 win over Wexford last weekend.

Galway overcame Tipperary 2-15 to 0-8, Limerick edged out Kilkenny with a point to spare 2-6 to 1-8. Cork top the group with two wins from two, Galway having recorded a draw in their opening game against Wexford are in second place with Tipperary and Limerick in joint third.

This weekend Cork host Kilkenny. Tipperary are at home to Wexford and Galway travel to Limerick.

Bid to make sports sciences available to club coaches



CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick

THE advancement of GAA games in the way of sports science has increased at an accelerated rate over the past decade.

Every player wants the latest and greatest.

Club players want it as much as inter-county ones and when they hear what inter-county teams are doing, they put pressure on their clubs' management to provide it for them.

Or they hear of what such and such a club is doing and it's a case of 'why aren't we doing that?'

The professional demands at club level has led to a decrease in volunteers.

It's a full-on job now and many can't give the time or feel they won't be able to meet players' expectations.

The demand has led to the launch of a specially designed framework for the development and provision of sports science at club and county level across gaelic games.

For more than two years a workgroup of experts, chaired by the highly respected Dr Aoife Lane (founder and chair of the WPGA in 2015), has spearheaded the development of guidelines in best practice that aim to make sports science accessible to not just elite inter-county teams but of relevance and benefit to players at every stage of the Gaelic Games Player Pathway.

Speaking at its initial launch Dr Lane said: "We're very conscious of clubs investing a lot of money in specialists when there could and should be a pathway for club coaches to get some accreditation or qualification to be able to deliver content around athletic development, nutrition, or performance analysis, for example."



WPGA chief executive officer Aoife Lane believes there should be a pathway for club coaches in the field of sports sciences.

It was also stated at the launch that the purpose of this new guide is to provide a framework for the application of sports science across gaelic games that is aligned to the Gaelic Games Player Pathway.

Healthy and holistic player development may be led by the gaelic games workforce, and also by coaches, teachers, parents, and guardians, and can be supported by evidence-based education and qualified practitioners from various disciplines of sports science.

This sports science knowledge and experience is most beneficial to coaches and players when consistently and appropriately applied, and delivered in practice within the values of gaelic games.

It is envisioned that the full delivery of this programme can be achieved by 2030 with capacity for adaptation and responsiveness to an ever evolving and expanding evidence base for sports science, particularly in the context of gaelic games and across specific subgroups of expert-

ise. The six subgroups are; athletic development, nutrition, physiotherapy and rehabilitation, sports psychology, performance analysis, and skill acquisition.

Meanwhile, on the camogie front, Tipperary won their first Munster Senior championship title since 2010 last Saturday, defeating Clare impressively, 1-26 to 1-9 in FBD Semple Stadium.

It was an emphatic victory; scoring 26 points, 21 from play, was a real statement with 10 players hitting the mark.

Tipp were favourites, but it was a really slick display, something Cork have lacked of late.

Since Cork's defeat in the Munster quarter-final they've had tough discussions within the group and have been quietly going about putting their wrongs right with a steely determination.

Championship starts on the weekend of June 3 and it is once again extremely frustrating that two and a half weeks out (at the time of writing), counties still don't know whether they will be playing on Saturday or Sunday, or the venue and time.

This is infuriating. Why the association does this year after year, causing unnecessary frustration, anger, and bad publicity mystifies me.

There are a few basic things that inter-county teams want and the first of them is a league and championship fixture list well in advance of competition.

This nonchalant drip feeding infuriates for no reason whatsoever. Surely they have dates and venues sorted at this stage.

Cork start with the toughest of tasks heading to Galway, the date, time and venue a national secret.

I think Cork will be ready here.

If they lose it won't be the end of the world as they will account for Clare and Down and reach a quarter-final, but you could meet a strong Kilkenny or Tipp from group 2, with Waterford expected to top group 3 containing Antrim, Limerick, and Offaly, neither of which wouldn't be a big threat at the quarter-final stage.



Kilkenny's Clare Doherty and Laura Doyle of Cork battle it out.

Classy Cork too strong for Kerry



Cork's Rachel Harty races clear of Kerry's Aine O'Connor and Kate Lynch during their Munster Intermediate Championship game at Cusack Park. Picture: Sportsfile

Cork 2-18
Kerry 0-9

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

CORK retained the Munster Intermediate championship with a 15-point advantage over a Kerry side who earlier in the season were crowned Division 2A League champions.

Here, Cork were the better side at Cusack Park from the off. They had a better spread of scorers with nine players on target from play while Kerry had an over-reliance on frees with only two players on target otherwise.

The opening half saw Cork take control as Kerry, playing a very defensive game, dropped back and as a result, up front they found it hard to break through the Cork defence.

At midfield, Cork captain Rachel Harty was doing a lot of work and getting fast ball into their inside line.

Cork had opened up a three-point lead inside the opening quarter before Kerry found the range, Lauren Homan, Rachel Harty, and Lucy Allen from play settling Cork, before Patrice

Diggin pointed a Kerry 45. Jackie Horgan converted Kerry free before the game was held up for six minutes after Cork keeper Caoimhe Buckley had to be stretchered off the pitch following an injury when she rolled her ankle as she came towards a dropping ball.

The game resumed with Stephanie Beausang taking up the custodian role.

Kerry pushed players forward but it was Cork, who began to take control and hit four points without reply, stretched their lead to five points; Cliona Dooley and Lauren Homan with one a piece from play and Cliona O'Leary with two, one a superbly-struck long-range free.

Jackie Horgan and Patrice Diggin were working hard and battling for every possession as Kerry dug deep and Spillane and Homan swapped points as Cork maintained their lead.

We had six minutes of first-half in-

jury time in the opening half and two Jackie Horgan points narrowed the gap, but Kerry were let off the hook when Rachel Harty's pile driving shot hit the crossbar and bounced back into play and at the short whistle, it was Cork that led 0-8 to 0-5.

Cork had a dream start to the second half, when Cliona O'Callaghan finished to the net for the game's opening goal inside 50 seconds of the restart and boosted by this, they upped the pace, three points without reply set the pattern for a second half that was dominated by Cork as Kerry began to struggle.

Cork began to show their class. Cliona O'Leary was unerring from frees and with their defence rock solid and their midfield on top, Kerry could make little headway against an impressive Rebel outfit.

Kerry will no doubt be disappointed with their second-half tally of three points all of which came from placed balls. Cork never looked troubled and introducing substitutes Fiona Nelligan and Claudia Keane, who each con-

tributed to their tally, showed they have plenty of talent in reserve.

As Cork picked off points, Kerry relied on frees to eat into Cork and a Lucy Allen goal two minutes full time sealed the deal for the Rebels.

Cliona O'Leary was named as Player of the Match with an impressive six-point tally, four of which came from frees.

Scorers for Cork: C O'Leary 0-6 (0-4 f), L Homan 0-5, L Allen 1-1, C O'Callaghan 1-0, F Nelligan 0-2, R Harty, C Keane, C Dooley, L Doyle 0-1 each.

Kerry: J Horgan 0-7 (0-6 f), P Diggin (45), C Spillane 0-1 each.

CORK: C Buckley, A Moloney, N O'Leary, E Flanagan, A O'Callaghan, M Ring, L Doyle, A Cashman, R Harty (c), R Murphy, L Allen, C O'Leary, C Dooley, C O'Callaghan, L Homan.

Subs: S Beausang for C Buckley (Inj 19), F Nelligan for C Dooley (38), C Keane for C O'Callaghan (152), I Sheehan for L Doyle (56), L Hallihane for R Murphy (57).

KERRY: A Fitzgerald, R McCarthy, S Murphy, M Costello, C O'Sullivan, A Behan, E O'Donoghue, P Diggin, K Lynch, A O'Connor, J Horgan, C Spillane, C Walsh, L Collins, A O'Sullivan.

Subs: L Casey for A Behan (43), C Moloney for C Walsh (50), I Dillane for A O'Sullivan (50), L Collins for K Buckley (57), J O'Keefe for P Diggin (57).

Referee: Aaron Hogg (Clare).

CAMOGIE

Intermediate Munster Championship final: Cork 2-18 Kerry 0-9; Junior final: Tipperary 1-9 Limerick 0-8.



Cliona O'Callaghan of Cork is tackled by Sara Murphy and Patrice Diggin of Kerry.



Caoimhe Spillane of Kerry is tackled by Rose Murphy of Cork.

Munster Intermediate Camogie Final

Cork v Kerry in Ennis on Sunday at 12pm

It's a very early start for these girls as Cork bid not only to retain a title they won impressively last year, but also to add it to the league success of a couple weeks back.

Kerry camogie has improved immeasurably

in the last number of years built around a successful Clanmaurice team who supply practically the entire starting 15, and were recently crowned Division 2A League champions and they will fancy their chances of avenging the defeat to Cork in last year's final.

In the league final, Kerry got the better of Meath with Jackie Horgan, Aoife Fitzgerald, Patrice Diggin and Aoife Behan key players for the Kingdom ladies.

Cork had a very good league campaign going through unbeaten and while the final against Kilkenny went to a replay after a poor drawn encounter, they were much improved the 2nd day and were comfortable winners.

There is a nice balance to this team, while the defence is excellent as they showed in both games against Kilkenny.

Leanne O'Sullivan, Niamh O'Leary and Meabh Ring were rock solid and laid the foundations for the win that was copperfastened by Rachel Harty, Fiona Nelligan, Lauren Homan and Cliona O'Leary. Difficult to predict a winner but hopefully Cork can get the afternoon in Ennis off to a winning start.



Cork's Cliona O'Callaghan is tackled by Sara Murphy, right, and Patrice Diggin of Kerry during yesterday's Munster intermediate camogie final at Cusack Park, Ennis. O'Callaghan's goal was a key moment in the contest. Picture: John Sheridan/Sportsfile

Cork retain title in emphatic fashion

Munster intermediate camogie final

Cork	2-18
Kerry	0-9

Therese O'Callaghan

Defending champions Cork proved too strong for Kerry in the Munster inter-

mediate camogie championship final played in Cusack Park, Ennis yesterday as part of a double-header with the Cork and Clare SHC.

Ahead by 0-8 to 0-5 at the interval, Cliona O'Callaghan's goal straight from the restart put them on the front foot.

When they added a trio of points, their advantage was never going to be overhauled, especially with Cliona O'Leary

converting from placed balls.

Their supremacy never allowed Kerry to eat into their lead, as the Rebels ensured a steady flow of white flags throughout.

Scores were rare at the other end, despite the hard work of Patrice Diggin and Jackie Horgan.

A late goal from Lucy Allen's added gloss to Cork's commanding victory.



Hall of Fame winner Sheila Spillane received her award from Frank Nyhan, chairman of Greyhound Racing Ireland.



Belgooly players celebrate their win over Berrings in the Allianz Sciath na Scol Chorcaí DC2 final at Páirc Uí Chaoimh. Picture Denis Minihane



Berrings' Saoirse Desmond and Belgooly's Olivia Ziegert trying to win possession. Picture Denis Minihane



Berrings supporters cheering on their side at Páirc Uí Chaoimh. Picture Denis Minihane

Letiah hits four in double success

SCIATH NA SCOL

Dylan O'Connell

Gaelscoil Mhuscraí	9-7
Coachford	1-2

GS MHUSCRAÍ completed a double at the Sciath na Scol Chorcaí finals by defeating Coachford in the DC8 final at Páirc Uí Chaoimh yesterday.

This followed their victory over Ballintotis, and now trophies for hurling and camogie are on their way to Blarney.

They had no time to settle into this final as Megan O'Sullivan bundled the ball over the line for Ballintotis with less than 30 seconds on the clock. Muscraí responded through Aoife Nic Conchoille, who knocked in 1-1.

Second

Letiah Nic Suibhne embodied GS Mhuscraí's quest for a double, as her next two shots hit the back of the net. Nic Conchoille then got her second goal, and the school led 4-1 1-0 with just six minutes played.

Their streak in front of the posts was finally broken by Molly Ni Chóill, as she poked the sliotar centimetres wide.

Nic Suibhne completed her hat-trick with a close-range finish at the Blackrock End, and Gaelscoil went 13 points up.

All of this combined to give the school a commanding 5-5 to 1-0 lead at the break.

Gaelscoil started the second half by putting the ball into the hands of



GS Mhuscraí celebrate winning the DC8 trophy following their win over Coachford in the camogie final to complete a double at Páirc Uí Chaoimh. Picture: Howard Crowdy

Lucy Nic Gearailt and she hit it narrowly wide.

The next time they got into that position, Nic Suibhne flicked the sliotar in at the City End and added another goal to her tally.

Nic Gearailt got the next goal for their school, and that was their seventh of the game.

Lauren Ni Icí added the final few scores, and that secured the double.

Scorers for GS Mhuscraí: L Nic Suibhne 4-1, A Nic Conchoille 2-2, L Ni Icí 1-2, L Nic Gearailt, C Ni Chróinín 1-1 each.

Coachford: M O'Sullivan 1-0, A Murphy 0-2.

GAELSCOIL MHUSCRAÍ: R Ni Shealghin; B Ni Nía Fuarhain, L Nic Suibhne 4, E Sorensen, E Ni Chinneide, C de Faoite, M Ni Chóill, C Ni Laoighaire, E Ni Bhrúitín, E Leaslaol, C Ni Chróinín, R Ni Chonall, A Nic Conchoille, L Ni Icí, B Ni Loingsigh, L Nic Gearailt.

COACHFORD: S Bracewell, E Casey, E Murphy, H Martin, I Cahill, A Murphy, E Barry-Murphy, E Crowley, M O'Sullivan, K O'Connell, A Cronin, I Cooney, A Crowley, K Cregan, E O'Donovan.

Referee: Andrew O'Connell



Cork hurler Patrick Collins presents the runners-up trophy to Coachford captain Alannah Murphy. Picture: Howard Crowdy



The Scoil Padre Pio team which beat Gaelscoil Machan in the Urban DC1 final at Páirc Uí Chaoimh yesterday. Picture Larry Cummins

Whelton plays a captain's role in Padre Pio's win

SCIATH NA SCOL

Dylan O'Connell

Scoil Padre Pio Girls	4-5
Gaelscoil Machan	2-0

SCOIL PADRE PIO captain Kate Whelton led by example in the Urban DC1 final win over Gaelscoil Machan in the at the Allianz Sciath na Scol Chorcaí finals in Páirc Uí Chaoimh.

She tallied 3-5 over the half hour played, and that was more than enough to make sure the trophy would be going to Churchfield.

After a scoreless opening to the game, Whelton led by example by hitting the back of the net after carrying the sliotar through the Gaelscoil Machan half.

Danielle Bermingham got the second goal by burrowing through a sea of yellow and green jerseys. Whelton then put over two points from open play and Scoil Padre Pio led 2-2 to no score.

They carried this lead into half-time, protected by defensive work from goalkeeper Ella Prendergast and Millie Keenan.

Whelton picked up where she left off by collecting a pass from Abigail Hertherington and she knocked in her second goal.

The captain added a third point to her tally which went over at the City End.

Gaelscoil Machan pushed up after this and a goal chance was blocked by Faye McNamara-Spillane.

Scoil Padre Pio won the puck-out and played a quick pass to Whelton. She beat two defenders and raised her third green flag of the game.

Gaelscoil Machan finished the final with a flourish with goals from Isabell Scorlog and Kaycee Ni Eili de



Scoil Padre Pio captain scores one of three goals against Gaelscoil Machan. Picture: Larry Cummins

Breit.

Scoil Padre Pio got the last score, fittingly, through Whelton. The captain stood over a free at the City End and split the posts with expert accuracy. The whistle went seconds later and Scoil Padre Pio Girls celebrated with their supporters fans.

Scorers for Scoil Padre Pio Girls: K Whelton 3-5, D Bermingham 1-0.

Gaelscoil Machan: I Scorlog 1-0, K Ni Eili de Breit 1-0 each.

SCOIL PADRE PIO GIRLS: E Prendergast; M Keenan, F McNamara-Spillane, C Faulkner, M Aherm O'Donovan, N Sexton, A Bultman, D Bermingham, L Scannell, K Whelton, T Byrne, A O'Connor, A Hertherington, A Ring, L O'Sullivan, K O'Sullivan, A O'Connor, A O'Sullivan.

GAELSCOIL MACHAN: C Ni Shuilleabhain; M Nic Ambrois, H Ni Laoire, A Norberg, B Ni Shuilleabhain, S Puirseil, I Scorlog, A Ni Chearúil Ni Fhoghlu, L Ni Mhíacháin Finne, K Ni Mhurchu, E Ni Ragain, M Ni Chonchuir, M Ni Thuama Ni Eimhigh, L Ni Shuilleabhain.

Referee: Cathal Ó Murchú



The Gaelscoil Mhachan team who played Scoil Padre Pio in the Urban DC1 final at Páirc Uí Chaoimh. Picture: Larry Cummins



Scoil Eoin, Innishannon, players celebrate after winning the Allianz Sciath na Scol Chorcaí DC3 final at Páirc Uí Chaoimh. Picture: Denis Minihane

Muireann stars for Innishannon with hat-trick of goals

SCIATH NA SCOL

■ Dylan O'Connell

Scoil Eoin, Innishannon	6-5
Kilbrittain	3-1

JUST after Kilbrittain made it a one-point game at the start of the second half, Innishannon scored three quick goals to help them win 6-5 to 3-1 in the DC3 final at the Sciath na Scol Chorcaí finals at Páirc Uí Chaoimh yesterday.

Muireann Holland almost single handedly made sure that her school won by tallying 3-3 over the 40 minutes.

Her hat-trick was knocked in during the first half, and she padded that with three points from open play.

Amy Holland and Nicole Keane were responsible for quelling the Kilbrittain fight-back, with the pair raising three green flags between them during the second half.

It didn't look like the game would play out this, as the opening exchanges were dominated by both teams scrapping it out for possession, and almost everything that was hit went narrowly wide.

When Innishannon finally got the ball in front of the posts, Holland put over the first point of the game and followed that up with a goal.

Sophie O'Mahony responded for Kilbrittain by kicking the ball in and that made it 1-1 apiece.

It became a one-point game after Kate O'Mahony and Sophie O'Mahony raised green flags, and the second goal hit the back of the net with just seconds gone at the start of the second half.

Innishannon responded by putting over a flurry of scores and kept their opponents quiet for the remainder of



Happy Scoil Eoin, Innishannon, supporters cheer on their side. Picture: Denis Minihane.

the game. Amy Holland got the final score of the game, and that rounded off a perfect morning for Innishannon in the Sciath na Scol Chorcaí finals.

Scorers for Innishannon: M Holland (3-3), A Holland (2-1), N Keane (1-0), E O'Sullivan O'Connell (0-1).

Scorers for Kilbrittain: S O'Mahony (1-0), K O'Mahony (1-0), R O'Mahony (1-0), L Ustinowski (0-1).

INNISHANNON PANEL: E Sullivan O'Connell, C O'Sullivan, R Slyne, S Crowe, C Curtain, C Burke, D Forde, A Holland, G McCarthy, E Lynch, I Le Blanc, M Holland, E Lynch, N Keane, R Falvey, A Nolan, L Harrett, S Falvey, W Cullinane, E Barrett, J O'Mahony.

KILBRITTAIN PANEL: S O'Neill, A Grey, C O'Donoghue, L Cronin, Lily Ustinowski, Moly O'Hanlon, L Kelly, K O'Mahony, S O'Mahony, A Deasy, R O'Mahony, C Aherne, R Bryan, K Enright, E Dolard, M Kelleher, R Gibson, R Westcott, O O'Mahony, K O'Mahony, N McKewin, A O'Leary, G O'Mahony.

Referee: Colm Lyons



Scoil Eoin, Innishannon's Muireann Holland wins possession from Kilbrittain players Aibhe Grey and Lucy Cronin. Holland top scored with 3-3. Picture: Denis Minihane

Evelyn lights up final and helps Belgooly triumph

Belgooly	2-8
Berrings	1-2

WHEN they needed an insurance score, Evelyn Rath stood up for her school and hit 1-4 in the final minutes to help Belgooly beat Berrings 2-8 to 1-2 in the DC2 final at the Sciath na Scol Chorcaí finals at Páirc Uí Chaoimh yesterday.

It was a slow opening to the game as three points helped cancel out an early goal for Berrings.

The moment that shifted the momentum in the final came in the 14th minute when Kaleigh Murphy swatted away ever ball that was sent in, and made sure that Belgooly couldn't get near the box.

One of the main reasons they had to go long was the work done by Rachel Maher in the back-line. She swatted away ever ball that was sent in, and made sure that Belgooly couldn't get near the box.

The one time she was beaten, Ciara Dumigan managed to raise a green flag. This gave Belgooly a four-



Belgooly's Kaleigh Murphy being challenged by Berrings' Elizabeth Moynihan. Picture: Denis Minihane

SCIATH NA SCOL

■ Dylan O'Connell

point lead at half-time, which was the biggest that either team had at that point in the final.

Mary-Kate Desmond came out after the break and hit Berrings' first

point over the bar, and that reduced Belgooly's cushion to just three.

This was the start of a long period of possession for the school, but they were unable to create opportunities to get past the organised Belgooly back-line.

That defensive work paid off with a burst of scores from Rath, and she polished off this spell in front of the posts by rolling in her school's second goal from close range.

Scorers for Berrings: M Kate Desmond (0-1), V Brisbane (1-0), S Desmond (0-1).

Scorers for Belgooly: E Rath (1-4), C Dumigan (1-0), K Murphy (0-2), N Barrett (0-2).

BERRINGS PANEL: A McSweeney O'Sullivan; Isabella O'Mahony, Rachel Maher, V Brisbane, E Donnellan, K O'Mahony, E Moynihan, T Logue, S Desmond, H Murray, L Daly, K May Hurley, E O'Mahony, M Kate Desmond, M Blair, D O'Callaghan, S Healy, M O'Connell, L Murphy, B Oiden, C O'Brien, L Desmond Moriarty, R Desmond, M Coleman, N Malone, L Larkin, C Flemming.

BELGOOLY PANEL: L Lane O'Mahony; N Cunningham, A Grennan, S Bolger, A Foran, Z Harte, I McGowan, E Rath, O Ziegert, C Dumigan, K Murphy, J McSweeney, F Lane, N Barrett, L McCarthy, M Jones, G Kvak, P Looney 20; E Vaughan, R McCarthy, C O'Neill, A Pereira, S O'Shea, L O'Brien, C Foley, E Kerrigan, R Cahill.

Referee: Colm Lyons.



Kilbrittain's Kate O'Mahony winning possession from Doireann Forde of Scoil Eoin, Innishannon, in the Allianz Sciath na Scol Chorcaí DC3 final at Páirc Uí Chaoimh. Picture: Denis Minihane

CAMSIGIE

Glen Dimplex Intermediate All-Ireland Championship: Dublin 1-4 Kilkenny 4-13, Derry 2-17 Wexford 0-7, Antrim 1-11 Carlow 1-11, Meath 6-19 Laois 2-3, Westmeath 1-11 Kerry 2-0; Junior All-Ireland Championship: Wicklow 1-9 Cavan 7-20, Mayo 0-6 Armagh 3-24, Limerick 5-11 Offaly 1-5, Louth 0-3 Clare 4-17, Tyrone 1-10 Roscommon 2-6

Cahalane believes decision to focus on Cork camogie will reap rewards

Former Cork dual star feels fresher as she devotes all her inter-county time to camogie

BY KIERAN MCCARTHY

SHE has not closed the door fully on football, but Meabh Cahalane feels her decision to focus on camogie at inter-county level this season is paying off.

In recent years she juggled both, but the life of a dual inter-county player is relentless and after last season's exertions – Cork lost the All-Ireland camogie final, the footballers were knocked out at the quarter-final stage – something had to give.

'I based my decision on how I was feeling last year,' the Éire Óg woman tells *The Southern Star*.

'I loved playing dual, and it's a privilege to represent Cork in both, but I just found it challenging when it came to the toughest games last year, playing one day after the other.'

'Being involved in dual at senior level with my club as well, it's a long year.'

'If this is the right decision, I will know later in the year. Hopefully football is not a closed book for me because I love playing it too. This was a personal decision based on how I was feeling after last year.'

Cork football's loss is camo-

gie's gain. Not involved with the footballers in 2023, Meabh admits to feeling fresher this year with only one code to concentrate on whereas in recent campaigns the back and forth between both did take its toll.

'I feel hungry going into every training session because I know I am getting the most out of it. After every session I now have adequate time to recover. I can do the gym and the extra bits and pieces that I feel I need to work on whereas before I wasn't able to,' she says.

'Just going into every training session this year, I feel fresh. Going into the summer I have one focus for the weekend: camogie.'

'It's a fresh mind as well as body.'

'Of course I miss football and I still watch the football. Hopefully they can do well and we can do well, and that both codes go well this summer.'

While Meabh has parked life as a dual player, her younger sister Orlaith is juggling both; she is one of four current dual Rebels along with Libby Coppinger, Hannah Looney and Aoife Healy.

This is Orlaith's second sea-



Meabh Cahalane at the 2023 Glen Dimplex All-Ireland Camogie Championship launch. (Photo: Ryan Byrne/INPHO)

son with Matthew Twomey's camogie set-up and the 2022 Cork minor has made an instant impression – both Cahalane sisters started the recent Division 1A league final against Galway, Meabh in the full-back line, Orlaith in attack.

'She is after making the step

up and has really taken to it,' Meabh says.

'She came off the back of winning two All-Ireland minor titles last year (camogie and football) which is a massive achievement; not many people can say that. Aoife Healy is another who has stepped up, too.'

'Just going into every training session this year, I feel fresh' – Meabh Cahalane

It's great to see the younger players coming through and it's putting people under pressure for positions; you want that bite, you want the younger girls coming in.

'Orlaith has done well so far, and she can offer us something extra.'

Cork vice-captain Meabh, an accountant with Grant Thornton in Cork city, has crunched the numbers and is confident that the 'something extra' can move the Rebels closer to where they want to be: winning major national titles. Cork have come up short in the last two All-Ireland finals (2021 and '22) and last two Division 1 league deciders (2022 and '23), and all by narrow margins. They're close, but haven't been able to take that next step, yet.

The recent league final defeat to Galway stung, Cork had led but fell away in the second half before losing 2-13 to 1-12. The Rebels' opening Glen Dimplex All-Ireland Senior Championship Group 1 game is away to the Tribeswomen on the June bank holiday weekend, so it's a swift chance for revenge.

'We had a very positive league campaign and we were hoping to come home with the

silverware, but we came up short in the end,' Meabh says.

'Look, we were disappointed to lose the final because in close games you want to be closing them out, but going up to Galway is an opportunity to go after that performance. We'd be hoping if we put in the performance required, we'll get the result we want.'

'We have massive belief in the group, and we have massive belief in the management and they have massive belief in us. We are so close, but it is becoming more competitive. There are Galway and Kilkenny, and you have Tipp and Waterford too, every game is so tough now.'

'The three games we have in the group will be massive games, starting with Galway, then Clare and then Down.'

All Meabh's focus now is on the trip to Galway, nothing else. In her dual days she would have had the Munster LGFA final this weekend before switching back to camogie. Not this year, it's 100 percent on Cork camogie, and she hopes that decision will reap rewards.

Meabh Cahalane was speaking at the launch of the 2023 Glen Dimplex All-Ireland Camogie Championships.

Clodagh's hat-trick helps Chionn tSaile to Sciath victory

GS Chionn tSaile 4-2
Laragh 1-0

AFTER a close and exciting game, Gaelscoil Chionn tSaile claimed the Allianz DC6 camogie title at Páirc Uí Chaoimh yesterday.

It was a very close first half with both teams evenly matched, but two goals separated the sides when Lucy Ni Cheilleachair and captain Clodagh Ni Riagain rifled a goal apiece.

There was some lovely play from both teams, with Julie Fleming and Ruby O'Halloran impressing for Laragh while Ni Cheilleachair, Ni Riagain and Amy Nic Gioilla Phadraig excelled for the Kinsale side.

Laragh did create a few great attacks, however both defences were excellent throughout and Laoise Lehanne, in goal for Laragh, pulled off a great save to deny Chionn tSaile widening the gap in the first half.

The second half started much the same as the first, with great pace. Laragh got a well-deserved first score of the game when Julie Canty



Hannah Ni Mhurchú and captain Clodagh Ni Riagain with the trophies.

SCIATH NA SCOL

Barbara O'Connell

pulled on a loose ball to the back of the net to leave a goal between the sides.

Laragh did had an opportunity to equalise when Julie Fleming blasted at goal but was denied by a superb Riva Ni Raghallaigh save.

At the other end a quick break up the pitch saw Clodagh Ni Riagain's long-range effort hit the back of the net.

This was followed with two points

from Lucy Ni Cheilleachair to widen the gap, 3-2 to 1-0.

Laragh battled hard until the end and it was surprising to know it was their first ever Sciath na Scol final such was their excellent performance, however excellent defending by the entire defence of Chionn tSaile kept the score at bay while at the other end they managed to add to their scoring tally as Clodagh Ni Riagain completed her hat-trick and finished the scoring in an entertaining game.

Scorers for GS Chionn tSaile: C Ni Riagain 3-0, L Ni Cheilleachair 1-1.
Laragh: J Canty 1-0.

LARAGH: L Lehanne, K Barrett, Lucy O'Donovan, Sive Coughlan, Caoimhe Linehan, Ruby O'Halloran, Julie Canty, Isobel Lane, Aisling Daly, Kara Casey, Julie Fleming, Emily O'Flynn, Isabelle Skally, Abbie Walsh, Rose Fitzgerald, Rachel Murray, Fiona O'Brien, Louise Cleason, Julie O'Keefe, Holly Bambury.

GS CHIONN TSAILE: Riva Ni Raghallaigh, Nora De Barra, Nancy Ni Chonchair, Daisy Ni Argain, Hannah Ni Mhurchú, Amy Nic Gioilla Phadraig, Lucy Ni Cheilleachair, Clodagh Ni Riagain, Róisín Ni Chiaradubhain, Rosie Plant, Róisín Ni Charraigh, Máirín Ni Charragain, Ruby Ni Airtneada, Aobhearn Ni Loinsigh, Eimear Ni Conchradha, Erin Ni Chimascaigh, Ella Rose Nic Ghiolla Choda, Mia Nic an Easpáig, Sedbh Ni Dhuthair. Referee D Horgan (St Patrick's school).



The GS Chionn tSaile who ran out winners against Scoil Naomh Seosamh, Laragh in the DC6 Allianz Sciath na Scol final at Páirc Uí Chaoimh. Picture: Dan Linehan



The Blarney team which beat Farran in the Allianz Sciath na Scol DC7 final in Páirc Uí Chaoimh yesterday. Picture: Howard Crowdy

Lynch the driving force in Blarney's victory over Farran

SCIATH NA SCOL

Barbara O'Connell

Blarney	6-8
Farran	0-1

BLARNEY, inspired by Eabha Lynch who scored 4-7, claimed the Allianz DC7 camogie title with a win over a gallant Farran side at Páirc Uí Chaoimh yesterday.

Blarney took a huge lead in the first half, 4-6 to 0-1, with Lynch being the standout player, scoring 2-5, while other players to impress were Katie Buckley and Cara Kilmartin who chipped in with 2-1 between them; two well-taken goals from Buckley, while Kilmartin pointed over from long range.

Lynch had some incredible scores, most notably her second goal as she ran the length of the pitch showing great skill and footwork and skipped past players before unleashing an unstoppable shot to the roof of the net.

Farran battled hard and had some fine performances from the entire team, but just found it difficult to cope with a strong Blarney side.

The second half was a much tighter affair with Farran working really hard, particularly in defence, and it took Blarney six minutes before they got their first score of this half. But what a score it was.

The impressive Lynch blasted to the back of the net and this was followed soon afterwards with another strike from her, to make it 6-6 to 0-1.

Blarney's physicality proved a little too much for Farran; that along with their skill helped them finish stronger, however huge credit must go to Farran who battled right until the end.



Blarney's Katie Buckley is challenged by Farran's Michaela Looney. Picture: Howard Crowdy

As time went on, the score could have widened only for great goalkeeping by Alex Brennan in the Farran goal and the defence in front of her which never dropped their heads and did superbly under pressure.

Credit to Blarney, who produced an overall superb team performance and with a further two points from Lynch, it finished the scoring and Blarney deserved their win. Well done to both sides.

Scorers for Blarney: E Lynch 4-7, K Buckley 2-0, C Kilmartin 0-1.

Farran: E Keams 0-1.

BLARNEY: Muireann Philpott, Chloe Murphy, Tess Murphy, Aoife Daly, Olivia O'Callaghan, Eabha Lynch, Katie Buckley, Sophie Martin, Summer Healy, Cara Kilmartin, Siún O'Callaghan, Muireann Downey, Norah O'Connor, Kacey Rose O'Connor, Lauren Hughes, Rosie O'Brien, Isabelle O'Connor, Brooke O'Callaghan, Aoife Barry, Amy O'Keefe.

SCOIL NAOMH MUIRE FARRAN: Alex Brennan, Lucy Knowles (c), Sarah Barry-Murphy, Emily Keams, Anna Skally, Orlaith O'Connell, Amy Dineen, Ava Malone, Michaela Looney, Laura Harrington, Ayla O'Sullivan, Lily May Healy, Isabel O'Riordan, Anna Moriarty, Jane McCarthy, Eve White, Esme O'Hanlon, Emily Bushell, Sara Knowles.

Referee: H Ormond



GS Chionn tSaile's Clodagh Ni Riagain gets a tackle in on Scoil Naomh Seosamh, Laragh's Ruby O'Halloran. Picture: Dan Linehan



GS Chionn tSaile's Amy Nic Giolla Phádraig, breaks past Laragh's Julie Canty. Picture: Dan Linehan

Inch rule in high-scoring final victory

SCIATH NA SCOL

Barbara O'Connell

Inch	5-5
Crossmahon	0-2

INCH proved too strong for Crossmahon in the Allianz DC5 camogie final at Páirc Uí Chaoimh yesterday.

It was a one-sided first half with Inch leading at the break 5-0 to 0-1.

The impressive Clodagh Walsh got the first score of the game when she blasted the ball to the back of the net having rattled the crossbar earlier.

From here Walsh and her namesake Caoimhe Walsh were a constant threat, scoring 4-1 between them, while Orla Motherway also chipped in with a goal. It's fair to say the score could have been a lot bigger only for great goalkeeping from Sophie Doyle and excellent work from captain Anne O'Leary.

Caoimhe Walsh opened the scoring in the second half when she pointed from close range, which was followed by a lovely long-range effort by Clodagh Spillane to widen the gap.

Clodagh Walsh added to her tally with a point from a tight angle. Both teams battled hard, but Inch always looked that bit stronger and only for excellent goalkeeping and great defending by Crossmahon, it could have been a lot higher scoring at this point.

Midway through the second half, Caoimhe Walsh was denied a goal by an excellent save from Doyle.

Spillane scored two lovely points to widen the gap after great work by Lucie Nelo on both occasions.



Inch players saluting their supporters after their victory over Crossmahon in the Allianz Sciath na Scol DC5 final in Páirc Uí Chaoimh. Picture: Howard Crowdy

Crossmahon battled hard throughout and got two well-deserved scores when Anne O'Leary pointed twice. That finished the scoring but it gave the Inch school a well deserved victory.

Scorers for Inch: Clodagh Walsh 3-1, C Walsh 1-1, O Motherway 1-0, C Spillane 0-3.

Crossmahon: A O'Leary 0-2.

Inch: Lucy Tate, Mia Landers, Lucy May Kelleher, Sara O'Connor, Keira Walsh, Aoibhinn Mac-Graith, Lucie Nelo, Clodagh Walsh, Hannah Smiddy, Caoimhe Walsh, Neasa Barry, Lesh Daly, Caoimhe Smiddy, Clodagh Spillane, Orla Motherway, Zara Dunn, Sarah Grace Coady, Neil Ahern, Ruby Daly, Samantha Murphy, Zara Fitzgerald, Sarah Costine, Isobelle Nicholson, Katie Curran, Sarah Kate Cronin, Róisín Brennan, Kaitlin Coady, Jessica Buddis, Kelly Walsh, Teresa Fitzgerald, Emma Courtney, Ellie Ashman, Courtney Daly.

Crossmahon: Sophie Doyle, Grace Murphy, Olivia O'Shea, Aine O'Driscoll, Josephine Kelleher, Clara Cullinane, Anne O'Leary, Isabelle Harrington, Ali O'Connell, Neasa Shannon, Lily Hannon, Elie O'Leary, Emma Daly, Aoife Fleming, Aisling Devereaux, Sophie Holland, Chloe Hegarty, Reilín Devereaux.

Referee: H Ormond



Captain Hannah Smiddy holds the trophy aloft. Picture: Howard Crowdy



The Farran team that were beaten by Blarney in the Allianz Sciath na Scol DC7 final in Páirc Uí Chaoimh. Picture: Howard Crowdy

Niamh is the guiding force in Cloghroe's win over Carrigaline

SCIATH NA SCOL

Barbara O'Connell

Cloghroe	4-3
GS Charrraig Ui Leighin	2-1

INSPIRED by Niamh O'Connor, who was outstanding throughout, Cloghroe claimed the Allianz C1 camogie title with a win over GS Charrraig Ui Leighin at Páirc Ui Chaoimh yesterday. The opening score arrived eight minutes in; an effort from a 45 by Carrigaline's Orla Ni Mhurchú which hit the back of the net. She followed soon afterwards with a great point from a tight angle. Cloghroe battled hard and had some great passage of play, in particular from O'Connor and Aine Harty and although Carrigaline's defence were solid, Cloghroe deservedly made the breakthrough and got on the scoreboard when Harty unleashed an unstoppable shot to the roof of the net making it 1-1 to 1-0 in favour of Carrigaline at the break. Cloghroe started well in the second half and threatened inside the box, however excellent defending by Doireann Breathnach and an excellent clearance by Ruth Nic Craith denied them a scoring opportunity. However, a minute later Cloghroe got the equaliser when O'Connor pointed from a free. Tensions grew and a great battle was had between the sides which resulted in Cloghroe taking the lead for the first time when captain Erin O'Leary blasted to the back of the net. This was followed with a superb point from O'Connor to give Cloghroe a 2-2 to 1-1 lead. Aine Harty got her second score of the game when she pointed as she struck from her left while under pressure to widen the gap once again. Great work by O'Leary, O'Connor and Alana Lyons resulted in the latter hitting the net. This was followed by another



Cloghroe captain Erin O'Leary holds the cup aloft. Picture: Howard Crowley

goal from Ellen Doyle. Cloghroe finished strong and had more goal-scoring opportunities but were denied by excellent goalkeeping from Zoe Ni Shuilleabhain. A late goal was scored by Doireann Breathnach to close the gap, but time ran out and Cloghroe celebrated their win.

Scorers for Cloghroe: A Harty 1-1, E O'Leary, E Doyle and A Lyons 1-0 each, N O'Connor 0-2. **GS Charrraig Ui Leighin:** O Ni Mhurchu 1-1, D Breathnach 1-0.

CLOGHROE: Julieann Crean, Amy Kavanagh, Millie Ryan, Rachel Barry, Sheola Mae Harrington, Nell O'Connell, Julia Crowley, Niamh O'Connor, Aine Harty, Cliona Walsh, Erin O'Leary, Ellen Doyle, Katie Nolan, Alana Lyons, Jenny Twomey, Alicia McCann, Sarah Teahan, Emily Williams, Louise Sloman, Sophie McCarthy, Ava Dunne, Sophie O'Driscoll, Jennifer O'Connell, Eadaoin Fenton.

GS CHARRAIG UI LEIGHIN: Zoe Ni Shuilleabhain, Amy Ni Mhurchadha, Ruth Nic Craith, Lily Ni Cheallachain, Sadhbh de Barra, Doireann Breathnach, Olivia Ni Dhughail, Orla Ni Mhurchu, Zoe Ni Mhurchu, Una Ni Eachtigheim, Rebecca Ni Fhiachra, Kacie Ni Dhrisceoil, Jessica Ni Chonail, Riona Ni Mhuircheartaigh, Fae Ni Mhuircheartaigh, Cara Ni Fhearghail, Aoibheann Ni Mhurchu, Siun Nic Conmara, Rosie Ni Airis, Laurie Ni Airis, Fia Ni Liathain, Alex Cearnt, Edel Ni Dhuinnin, Lauren Ni Mhurchu.

Referee: M Collins



Cloghroe celebrate their win over Gaelscoil Charrraig Ui Leighin in the Allianz Sciath na Scol C1 final at Páirc Ui Chaoimh yesterday. Picture: Howard Crowley



Dungourney players celebrate winning the Allianz Sciath na Scol Chorcaí DC4 final at Páirc Ui Chaoimh.

Girls make it a Dungourney

Dungourney	5-1
Castlemartyr	2-2

SCIATH NA SCOL

Barbara O'Connell

DUNGOURNEY won the Allianz DC4 camogie title with a win over Castlemartyr at Páirc Ui Chaoimh yesterday. Dungourney got off to a great start, scoring 1-1 in the opening five minutes. They were denied a goal earlier in the game when Hannah Casey's effort was superbly saved by Rachel Magnier. However a minute later, they got the first score of the game when Caoimhe Casey pulled past a crowded goal and into the net. This was followed by a wonderful score from Abby Keane when a superb run resulted in her pointing from long range.

At the other end Castlemartyr had a great chance but were denied by an excellent save from Holly Finnegan. However, a minute later they got their first score of the game when Chloe McCarthy unleashed an unstoppable shot to the roof of the net to make it 1-1 to 1-0. At the other end, Hannah Casey widened the gap when she buried to the back of the net. Castlemartyr had a great goal-scoring chance, but once again Finnegan made a double save. They did add to their tally when Alison Lane pointed to leave a goal in it, 2-1 to 1-1.



Dungourney supporters cheering on their teams in the Sciath na Scol finals. Picture Denis Minihane



Gaelscoil Charrraig Ui Leighin's Ruth Nic Craith about to clear the sliothar away from Cloghroe's Erin O'Leary. Picture: Howard Crowley



Sciath double with big win

Castlemartyr suffered a huge blow when Anna Cronin's long range free hit the back of the net, but a great score from Aoife Clifford after running the length of the pitch closed the gap to make it 3-1 to 1-2 at the break. Dungourney started the second half strong as a goal from Ali Ahern widened the gap further. A quick break though saw Castlemartyr close the gap as great work from Lily Power and an excellent strike from Lane hit the back of the net. Dungourney did have a chance to close the gap again but two excellent saves by Magnier denied them. It wasn't long until they did get that goal; Caoimhe Casey rounding off the scoring. **Scorers for Dungourney:** C Casey 2-0, A Cronin, H Casey and A Ahern 1-0

each, A Keane 0-1.

Castlemartyr: A Lane 1-1, C McCarthy 1-0, A Clifford 0-1.

Dungourney: Holly Finnegan, Eimear McCarthy, Sophia O'Flynn, Ava O'Callaghan, Abby Keane, Rachel Sweeney, Mary Jane Casey, Anna Herlihy, Anna Cronin, Caoimhe Casey, Livia McCarthy, Hannah Casey, Ali Ahern, Niamh Hanna, Ali Horgan, Aileen O'Doherty, Aoife Brackett, Grace Sweetman, Sarah Bryan, Nikola Urbaniak, Michaela Ahern.

Castlemartyr: Rachel Magnier, Shauna O'Mahoney, Caitlin Clifford, Aoife Clifford, Faye O'Mahoney, Molly Healy, Madilyn O'Halloran, Alison Lane, Chloe McCarthy, Brooke Holland, Khushi L'Hostis, Mia Mills, Lily Power, Aine Tobin, Molly McSweeney, Kacey Cremin, Clodagh Walsh, Millie Ansbro, Olivia Fielding, Tara Murphy, Athena McKenna, Clara Mottalebi, Kayla O'Donovan, Amelia Vance, Leah Cahill, Grace Forest, Saoirse Enright, Amy Lynch, Brooke O'Sullivan Costigan. Referee: J O'Connor.



Dungourney captain Livia McCarthy lifting the cup high

Cork intermediates target a third win over Kilkenny in camogie opener

TOMORROW
Glen Dimplex Intermediate Championship: Cork v Kilkenny; John Locke's GAA Grounds, Kilkenny, 5pm

CORK will get their Glen Dimplex Intermediate Championship campaign up and running when they travel to Kilkenny today. The sides are more than familiar with each other having met three times during the League. Cork were 2-9 to 0-7 winners in the round-robin game, both qualified for the final where a late pointed free from Cliona O'Leary secured a draw for Cork who were far too strong in the replay, winning 2-15 to 0-13 to win the title. Cork were to play Kildare last weekend but following the latter's withdrawal from the championship, Cork were left without an opening round game. Kilkenny got their campaign off to a flying start with a resounding 4-13 to 1-4 victory over Dublin. It is now a group of just four: champions Galway, Cork, Dublin, and Kilkenny. Group 2 comprises Antrim, Derry, Carlow, and Wexford, while Meath, Laois,



The Cork players celebrate with the cup after the Munster Intermediate Camogie Final match between Cork and Kerry at Cusack Park in Ennis, Clare. Picture: Ray McManus/Sportsfile

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

Kerry and Westmeath make up Group 3. Having lost to Galway in last year's final, Cork will be hoping to go one better this season, and while there are a few changes to their panel, Cork are still very

strong, and with a Division 2B league title and the Munster crown already secured, they Cork are going all out to atone for last year's final defeat. In their last competitive game against Kerry, Cork played with huge confidence as they brushed aside the Division 2A champions, O'Leary gave a player of the match display,

showing just how important a free-taker is to a side, and all through the league campaign she has excelled. Lauren Homan, Niamh O'Leary, captain Rachel Harty, Aisling Moloney, Stefanie Beausang, and Leanne O'Sullivan are experienced campaigners at this level, while Lucy Allen, Cliona O'Callaghan, and Rose Murphy have

all impressed. Throughout the league and provincial campaign, the Cork management have given a lot of game time to players, and Fiona Nelligan is a player who has been hugely impressive on introduction in every game. She has huge pace and an ability to grab scores, and she is a player who will be in the running for a place

on the starting 15. In the Munster final, Leah Hallihan, Isobel Sheehan, and Claudia Keane also saw game time and were very impressive; no doubt Trevor Coleman and his management will have a tough time when they sit down to select their starting 15. Kilkenny will be without Danielle Morrissey, who has been hugely impressive in all their league games. She had been drafted into their senior panel for their Leinster campaign but was expected to line out in the intermediate championship, but a recent injury picked up looks if it will sideline her for this clash. She didn't feature against Dublin; nevertheless they were strong in all sectors. Afton Grace, Sarah Barcoe, Laura Greene, Laura Greene, Ellen Gunner, and Therese Donnelly were all on target as they brushed aside the challenge of a Dublin side that started well and were four points in front before the Kilkenny machine sprang into life. Having lost twice to Cork, Kilkenny will be determined to reverse those results.

'We are up against it'



CAMOGIE

Rory Noonan

CORK get their Glen Dimplex Senior All-Ireland championship campaign underway tomorrow, at Kenny Park, Athenry, throw-in 5pm.

They are on the road as they take on Galway in their opening tie against one of the favourites to lift the O'Duffy Cup later on in the year.

Of course, the Rebels are amongst the favourites as well for overall honours and they will be aiming to lay down a marker against a side they have found difficult to beat in recent years.

Over the last few seasons, they have lost out to Galway in both an All-Ireland decider and more recently in the league final. That's a record they will be looking to change, starting tomorrow.

Since that league final loss, it has not been a good few weeks for Cork as they lost out to Waterford in the first round of the Munster championship, a result that surprised many. So it has been a month since their last competitive match and a chance for manager Matthew Twomey to work with the players and get them right for tomorrow.

He admitted that they couldn't have asked for a much tougher start to their All-Ireland campaign, but also they were looking forward to the challenge.

"It's going to be a huge challenge for us, they are the best team in the country at the moment on paper and on form, so we are totally up against it tomorrow," Twomey said.

"But we are after a good block of four weeks training and I suppose the best way of finding out where you are at is to play the best team in the championship."

Reflecting on their league final



Cork manager Matthew Twomey leaves his team to do a huddle before throw in. Picture: INPHO/Ken Sutton

loss to Galway he said that you can't be going up there looking for revenge and you just have to park that, while learning from the mistakes you made on the day.

"The biggest problem with the league final was our conversion rate, we had more chances than Galway but we didn't take them. So that has been a bit of a grudge bear with us, but revenge? If you are going up there for that you are in trouble."

"We are looking for a big performance, that's the key thing out of it. Conditions are perfect for them, a Saturday evening in Athenry so we are under pressure so it's important we get that performance and see where we are at with our backs against the wall."

Reflecting on Cork's poor record against Galway in recent years Matthew added: "Our record is not great and I don't think Cork have beaten them since 2017 in competitive matches so that's a fair indication of where the two counties are at."

Match-up

"Big changes from the past and they have quality all over the field and even when you are trying to do match-ups you look at one and then another and it's a star-studded team."

"And even since we played them in the league final they have a few more players back on the panel, the two McGraths and Sarah Dervan so that will improve their team further than the league final."

Since that league final loss, they were defeated by Waterford in the Munster championship, a surprise result.

"If it had been season-ending and we were out of everything it would have been worse than what it was. As a group, we weren't happy with ourselves after that game."

"We just didn't turn up on the day and we had a big conversation on the Tuesday night after it in training and laid everything out on the table. We said this is what we have to do to get to the level we need to be at. We got a response from the players to be fair to them and they have worked very hard since and this is the exact moment we want now to see where we are at."

Luck hasn't been on Cork's side this year with stars like Ashling Thompson still out, along with others. "We will have to do a few fitness tests before the game and have a few dodgy ones. We have been unlucky, Katrina Mackey has played 20 minutes all year, Pamela Mackey is injured again and Orla Cronin is struggling as well and there are others."

"But every player on the panel has qualities and we have a strong squad and they have to step up now on Saturday," concluded Matthew.

Following on from the Galway clash they are at home to Down on Saturday, June 17 before they are on the road again on Saturday, July 1 to Clare.

Daragh Ó Conchúir

In an era where so many talk of the rigour of involvement in sport at an elite level, it is nice to hear someone speak about the pure joy of actually participating in their chosen high-performance discipline and doing so in the company of people they love being around.

For Laura Murphy, that's playing camogie with Kilkenny. A 26-year-old Irish and history teacher at St Colmcille's Community School in Knocklyon, Co Dublin, Murphy is a dual Glen Dimplex All-Ireland champion with Kilkenny and there is no doubt that winning tends to make competing more fun.

But hers is not the story of pre-pubescent genius, of the neophyte bursting onto the scene while still at school and scaling the heights with each passing summer.

The O'Loughlin Gaels half-back/midfielder is an advertisement for perseverance, for maintaining a belief that continuing to work assiduously on self-improvement, shelving the disappointment of having a bit-part role at best and continuing the fight for a starting spot will pay dividends.

It might seem contradictory, but managers love players like that, even when they are not picking them. They ensure that standards are high because they keep those with a hold of the jersey to account.

It was 2020 when she started making some kind of breakthrough, coming on as a sub in the covid All-Ireland final won by the Cats. She remained a contributor from the bench the next year. It wasn't until the beginning of last year's championship that Murphy finally got the nod to start. She would end by winning an All-Ireland on the pitch and collecting an All-Star.

There were, of course, times when Murphy was downbeat and wondered about her future. On those days where the questions drum loudest in your brain, your motivation needs to be strong and credible. Words like 'sacrifice' can't be moping around, even

Murphy: If you're not enjoying it, you shouldn't be doing it



Laura Murphy: 'You just want to give absolutely everything because you know they're doing all they can to get us over the line.'
Picture: Inpho/James Crombie

even greater premium on panel depth, she suspects and the loss of player of the year Miriam Walsh (cruciate) and Mary O'Connell (travelling) is significant. But they got a hold of the O'Duffy Cup despite the cruciate curse striking Kellyann Doyle and her sister Aoife, and they are back in the fold now.

Either way, Murphy predicts a torrid battle if Kilkenny are to scale their Everest once more.

"The standard is just through the roof this year. Clare, Waterford, Cork, Galway, Tipperary, Dublin — we had extremely tough matches against all of them. The standard has been brought to another level. We can expect the same from Wexford.

"There's no doubt it's a blow to be missing players. Miriam was in the form of her life and was such a target for us. But it's an opportunity for other players. There's so many new, young faces coming through. It's great to have Jenny Clifford back. Then the likes of Asha McHardy has come in and is absolutely flying.

"Brian (Dowling) and the lads are very fair. They always say that you have to bide your time and stay putting it in and if it's happening for you on the training pitch, you'll get your opportunity out on the field. You never know, girls can dip in and out of form or there could be an injury or someone could be sick. That's when your chance comes and you have to be able to take it when the opportunity arises."

Nobody knows that better than Murphy.

sub-consciously.

So what sustained Murphy?

"It's the girls either side of me when I go out on the pitch," she declares. "You just want to give absolutely everything for them because you know they're doing all they can to get us over the line and get us where we want to be, which is Croke Park on the first weekend of August. They want it just as much as you do and you want to give everything for them.

"Then there's pride in the jersey, representing your club and your family.

"Number one thing then is just the enjoyment, the absolute craic that you have with the girls, whether it's at training, before or after training, recovery sessions, all that stuff. I don't think there's anyone on the panel that doesn't enjoy the company of the rest of the girls. That's huge."

There is no doubt that mental resolve is required, however, something Murphy clearly possesses in volumes.

"Everyone wants to have a starting jersey. Once you have it then, you can't let it go. It

can be difficult on the days you feel like you have a lot to offer. But there's no one on the panel that doesn't have something to offer. You just have to be patient and you have to have the right mindset to know, if you come in off the bench, what have you to offer? Can you finish this off? Can you help the team get over the line? Once you have that mindset, things start to go well and you never know what could happen or where you'll end up."

The National League got off to a ropery start but finished well with a defeat of Tipperary to deny the neighbours a place in the Division 1 decider. They have since chiselled out a hard-earned victory over Dublin in the Leinster final.

The Glen Dimplex All-Ireland Senior Championship gets under way on Saturday, though the champions won't start their Group 2 campaign until next week, with Wexford, Dublin and Tipperary providing the opposition.

The heat, hard ground and incessant action will put an

Talented Cahalane feeling the benefit of focusing on camogie

Cliona Foley

It's fair to predict that the demands on dual players in women's Gaelic games must be coming close to breaking point when someone with the genetic and temperamental gifts of a Cahalane starts cutting her losses.

Maebh, the second oldest of the family of seven which is giving such remarkable service to the Blood and Bandage right now, has spent over a decade straddling the twin high wires of inter-county camogie and football but, like her brother Damien, has finally cut her losses and downsized.

"I decided to focus on camogie this year, I just found it challenging when it came to the big games last year," the 27-year-old St Finbarr's defender explains.

"You want to perform your

best every time you go out but, when you're doing both, it's just not possible all the time, often because you'll have played the day before.

"They're very different games as well so hopefully it's a good decision. I've definitely noticed a difference. You have more free time and better recovery."

Appetite, work-rate, and commitment. If the Cahalanes had their own family GAA crest, that would surely be their motto.

Maebh's decision to focus on just one code should be some help to parents Niall and Ailish whose uber-talented children have dragged them hither and thither for years.

Damien, 30, is the eldest, Maebh next, and then comes Conor (25), Grainne (24), Jack (20), Orlaith (19), and Kate (16).

Jack has already lined out for Cork in both codes while

Orlaith won All-Ireland minor titles in camogie and football in 2022 and came off the bench in the senior camogie final.

Maebh reckons that the youngest siblings have benefitted from the family's size.

"Orlaith came off the back of winning two All-Ireland minors so, while she's come into the (Cork) seniors very young



Maebh Cahalane has focused on camogie this year. Larry Cummins

I felt she was able for it. She's ahead of her years.

"Ever since she was small she could do anything with the ball and Jack is the same. They're so good with their hands, probably because they've been playing with older people for so long."

Dad may have won All-Ireland football medals at every level but they get just as much talent, she stresses, from her mum's side of the family.

Current Cork football boss John Cleary is their uncle and his sister Nollaig, a nine-time football champion, is just as much of an inspiration and a barometer for them. "Every Saturday and Sunday my mum and dad would be on the road, going to some sort of match or training session.

"You think they'd be sick of it at this stage but I remember during covid they were cracking up. They didn't know what

to be doing with themselves!

"We'd all be fairly outgoing, all into sport and into school. Myself and Grainne are accountants, my brother Conor's just finished Business Information Technology and Jack and Orlaith are looking to go teaching.

"We get the competitive side from Dad alright but you know we were never pushed to play. There was just so many of us that one or two of us would always go training with him. You either stood around on the sideline or you played."

With both sets of grandparents from West Cork they also benefitted from a halcyon dual upbringing; playing their hurling in Toghher while spending summers in Castlehaven where the boys still play their club football.

"Haven't only had a boy's team so we played with the boys up until U12. There was

no ladies football in St Finbarrs until recently which is why we play with Eire Og."

Her teenage sister is certainly the kind of exciting attacker that Cork camogie needs to break their recent final duck. She bagged 1-1 in this year's Division One league final but they lost to Galway by four points, on top of losing the last two All-Ireland finals so there's a score to settle in their tough Glen Dimplex Championship opener against the Tribeswomen on Saturday (5pm).

"Starting against Galway is a massive game. I think you can get caught up in results but if we just focus on getting a performance hopefully the results will come," she reckons.

The Cahalanes will be turning the cars for Athenry again on Saturday as the extraordinary sporting journey and service to Cork continues.

Go Games rules to see sanctions imposed for U12 competitive games

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

THERE has been a lot of discussion and comment in recent days on hearing the GAA is to clamp down and sanction those involved in providing any form of competition for players under the age of 12.

Recently, Cork camogie clubs were updated on the regulations for organising games for players age 12 and under and clubs were advised that keeping, recording or publishing of scores, or competitions, blitzes or events that involve knockout stages or the handing out of winners or runners-up medals, trophies, awards or prizes will be sanctioned with fines issued to offenders who fail to comply.

Clubs were reminded that games played at U12 level or below come under the banner of 'Go Games' which are intended to be non-competitive.

The 'Go Games' initiative has been in place for several years, part of the GAA's bid to tackle the practice of teams nurturing the best and neglecting the rest.

The board emphasised that Croke Park have reminded counties that there is no facility under association rule for any competitive aspect within these games.



Dungourney players celebrate winning the Allianz Sciath na Scol Chorcaí DC4 final at Páirc Uí Chaoimh.

Picture: Denis Minihane

All clubs hosting or participating in blitzes are now required to submit an online application for approval to their county's games development manager who will sanction the blitz if it is deemed to be within the remit of the rules.

In previous years, an email from the club secretary looking for permission to play a friendly U12 game or hold a Go Games blitz for beginners upwards was deemed sufficient but that is now

replaced by the online form.

All matches played at U12 level and below fall under the category of Go Games, which are meant to be non-competitive.

However the county board can organise an U12 league — these are currently up and running but they can no longer hold quarter- or semi-finals, just a final.

The GAA introduced Go Games a number of years ago to

stop what it perceived to be a trend where teams were favouring their best players while neglecting the rest.

Whilst the county board did not organise leagues or games at U11 level it did allow divisional boards to hold development leagues for this age group where club players made the step up and played games under Go Games rules similar to the U12 league which are played on a smaller pitch, teams could field

up to 13 players.

Now if clubs want to play an U11 game, with either have to be three clubs participating or two clubs with their players split into two teams.

Having spoken to a lot of club mentors in recent days, the feeling amongst a lot of them is that if a club only has 10 players at this age level they will then only be able to play a five-a-side games and this will be of no benefit to any players.

It seems to be the 11 and 12 age groups that are most disappointed at not being allowed to play one-on-one games.

There seems to be a general feeling amongst a lot of mentors that whilst the Go Games blitz idea is excellent for beginners up to the age, 10 the older girls in the age 11-12 age bracket want to play games on a larger scale than blitz-formatted small-sided games.

One club mentor recently made a very good point when she said her club would get a pitch for an hour to play an U11 or U12 match midweek but there was no way she could get a pitch and hold it up for two hours or more to play a blitz with two or three clubs in the middle of a week where there are other teams training and playing matches.

If these rules are now being strictly enforced it could mean the end of a lot of prestigious tournaments that are organised in hurling, football and camogie — events such as the hugely successful Balinassig Tournament and the John Kerins Cup are just two that spring to mind.

Another question being asked is will this also effect Sciath Na Scol?

Nobody seems to know for sure.

Win for Cork is a big ask

CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick

IT'S a hugely important trip to Galway for Cork in the opening round of the Liberty Insurance All-Ireland championship series today, throw in 5pm.

On the back of their four-point league final defeat to the Tribeswomen a win for Cork in Kenny Park, Athenry, is a big ask but one that can be achieved if they apply themselves for the full hour.

Cork haven't beaten Galway in a championship knockout game since 2017.

While tomorrow isn't knockout Cork need something from this, if nothing else they need a showing of grit, steely determination, and a battle-hardened performance where winning is the only focus.

Because since 2017 Cork have lacked these attributes when it mattered most. I say that because in most cases Cork led these games, were often in control and a lack of doggedness, a lack of win at all costs mentality, the killer blows just weren't there.

Consistency over the hour is where Cork have fallen down.

They failed to maintain their intensity over the hour and when backs were to the wall, failed to take the right options or have enough leaders up front to grind it out. Killer instinct.

Cork beat Galway in the All-Ireland semi-final in 2017 by 2-9 to 1-9. They haven't beaten them since.

Both counties avoided each other in the league and championship knockouts in 2018.

Galway defeated Cork in the All-Ireland semi-final of 2019 as Cork



At the launch of the Glen Dimplex All-Ireland Camogie Championships at Croke Park were, back from left, Meabh Cahalane of Cork, Hannah Fitzsimons of Cavan, Ava Lambert of Mayo, Fiona Keating of Westmeath, Ava Lynskey of Galway, Kate Nolan of Carlow, Shauna Fallon of Roscommon, Ellen Burke of Meath and Michelle McGuigan of Armagh. Front row, Sinead O'Keefe of Kilkenny, Aidan Kinsella, Marketing Executive at Glen Dimplex, Hilda Breslin, President of the Camogie Association, Tara Flynn, Chief People and I.T. Officer at Glen Dimplex, Mike Cavanagh, Group Head of Communications at Glen Dimplex, Cáit Devane of Tipperary and Keeley Corbett-Barry of Waterford.

Picture: Ryan Byrne/Inpho

were gunning for three in a row, 0-14 to 1-10.

2020 and the league competition wasn't concluded. Cork lost their final group championship game to Galway. Even though both sides had already qualified and were vying for a semi-final or final position, the game had a real knockout feel to it and Galway continued their winning streak, 0-15 to 0-12.

Cork won their quarter final against Clare but lost their All-Ire-

land semi-final to Kilkenny. Kilkenny won the final, beating Galway by three points.

Lost

2021 and Cork lost both their league semi-final to Galway 1-19 to 1-17 and the All Ireland final 1-15 to 1-12 after leading by three with eleven minutes remaining.

Roll forward to 2022 and Cork lost the league final to Galway, 2-14 to 1-13.

This was another big blow as the Galway All Ireland champions turned a six-point deficit into a four-point victory with a sparkling second half display.

The comparison between Cork's opening and second half displays was as gaping as you can get. Cork could do no wrong in the opening half. They didn't give Galway an inch, in their face every time they had possession.

Cork's tracking back was excel-

lent, dispossessing Galway several times, their intensity from the top drawer. What happened in the second half? They faded from the game.

Work rate dropped, frees conceded, misplaced passes and Galway got back into it.

Kilkenny beat Galway in the championship semi-final setting up a Cork v Kilkenny final. This time it was Cork's early performance that caught them out. Cork started slowly, trailed by six points after 15 minutes.

Level at the break Cork went two ahead but failed to get over the line. A trend had emerged.

2023 — In the months just past Cork lost the league final 2-13 to 1-12. They led by two at half time.

Galway were level by the fortieth after Cork had missed two goal chances and hit a couple of poor wides and another two poor strikes coming down the stretch when there was three in it.

What was evident again here was the lack of intent up front. A lot of the strikes seemed too casual to me.

Cork were the form team going into that final. They have forgotten how to grind out the big games however and they need to get this back.

Yes, Cork have their fair share of injuries, their latest to Laura Hayes a big blow, out for the season with a broken bone in her foot. Galway have their own worries, even though star sisters Orlaith and Siobhan McGrath are back.

The main takeaway is that these games that Cork have lost over the past two seasons were there to be taken by the players on the pitch. I don't see enough aggression from some. I don't see pain on the faces of some after a defeat.

Cork lost their subsequent Munster championship game to Waterford.

My understanding is that strong words were had within the camp following these defeats. Training intensity has upped considerably. Today is a big game.



Amy O'Connor (Cork senior camogie captain), Matthew Twomey (Cork senior camogie manager), Trevor Coleman (Cork intermediate camogie manager), Keith Barry (brain hacker and mentalist), Rachel Harty (Cork intermediate camogie captain), Paul O'Halloran (COO, Kearys Motor Group).
Picture: Michael Mac Sweeney/Provision

Kildare's withdrawal leaves Cork inactive on opening weekend

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

THE Glen Dimplex All-Ireland Intermediate Championship gets under way this weekend, but Cork find themselves without a game after their opponents Kildare withdrew from the championship three weeks ago in what has been a very turbulent and disappointing time for camogie in the county.

Events came to the fore on May 9 when an open letter to the county's clubs was released by the Gaelic Players Association on behalf of the Kildare intermediate team expressing their disappointment at their county board's decision to withdraw from the All-Ireland Intermediate championship.

A lot of on-going issues were behind that decision and last week, in a statement released by the Camogie Association, it was confirmed that Kildare would not take part in the intermediate championship, the statement reads as follows:

"The Kildare Camogie Executive representatives, members of the Kildare panel, The Camogie Association and GPA convened a meeting last night.

"It was agreed that Kildare will not participate in the 2023 Intermediate All-Ireland Camogie Championship. This very difficult decision was reached by the Kildare executive and players after extensive discussion.

"All parties committed to undertake an independent review of all matters pertaining to the preparation and participation of inter-county camogie teams representing Kildare.

"This independent review will be overseen by Ard Chomhairle of the Camogie Association, and will involve the county board, clubs, players and other relevant parties.

"The goal is to improve structures and supports, to enable Kildare camogie to perform at the highest levels."

It brought to an end a situation which came about after the board executive took the decision to withdraw from the championship after a lot of unresolved issues that the players were unhappy with, and with championship getting under way in less than two weeks, time was not on their side to get matters resolved.

What a pity that it has come to this, but hopefully going forward, and working together, they can



Cork Intermediate Manager Trevor Coleman.

resolve the issues and come back stronger.

It leaves Cork without a game this weekend and also reduced group one to four teams. It also means there will be longer breaks between games for the four remaining counties.

Group 1 comprises champions Galway, Cork, Dublin, and Kilkenny; Group 2 is Antrim, Derry, Carlow, and Wexford; Meath, Laois, Kerry and Westmeath make up Group 3.

Dublin and Kilkenny meet in Dublin today, next weekend Cork take on Kilkenny and on June 10 Cork are home to Dublin and Galway host Kilkenny.

Galway travel to Dublin on June 24 and the following weekend Cork are at home to Galway.

Cork will go into championship in confident mood with impressive league and provincial campaigns behind them. Last Sunday they were in total control in their meeting with Kerry in the Munster final and Trevor Coleman will be pleased with the contributing made by all his charges.

As Cork dominated the game they brought players off their bench; Fiona Nelligan looked very impressive while Leah Hallihan with two points from play showed they are well able for the challenges ahead.

U16 ALL IRELAND CHAMPIONSHIP

The Cork U16s continued their good run as they recorded a three-point win over Kilkenny, and with three rounds played Cork are top with three wins from three games.

Championship will resume on July 2 when Cork travel to Galway and the following week they are away to Tipperary and at this stage are well poised to make it to the semi-finals on July 15/16.



Lauren Homan scored 0-3 against Kilkenny. Picture: Larry Cummins

Kilkenny's subs score a goal each in the second half to kill off Cork

Kilkenny	2-13
Cork	1-8

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

TWO second-half goals in nine minutes from substitutes Ellen Gunner and Emma Manogue swung the game in Kilkenny's favour in the Glen Dimplex Intermediate Championship clash in sun-baked John Locke's GAA Grounds.

It was Kilkenny's second match in the group series, having defeated Dublin last week.

In a game that was level on three occasions, Kilkenny upped the pace in the second half. They outscored Cork 2-7 to 0-2 to turn the tide and put themselves in pole position to qualify.

A Cliona O'Callaghan goal at the end of the opening quarter separated the sides at the interval. Kilkenny had made the better start, opening up a three-point lead with a brace of points from Afton Grace and one from Laura Greene.

Rose Murphy got Cork off the mark with a ninth-minute point and with Therese Donnelly responding, it kept Kilkenny three in front.

O'Callaghan's goal tied the sides and with Lauren Homan and Cliona O'Leary splitting the posts, Cork took the lead for the first time after 17 minutes, but Kilkenny equalised with two in a row, from Aoife Cantwell and Laura Green.

Both sides battled to gain a grip and it was Cork who finished the half stronger, with three unanswered points, to lead 1-6 to 0-6 at the interval.

Lauren Homan stretched Cork's lead to four points with a pointed free inside a minute

of the restart, but it was to be 32 minutes before Cork had another score. Kilkenny took control. Afton Grace hit a point either side of Tara Ronan's point to tie for the third time and as the sides battled it was 10 minutes before Ellen Gunner hit the back of the net to put Kilkenny in front. Cork battled for a response and seemed to have equalised, but the goal was deemed to have been sent to the net with the hand and was disallowed. Building on their lead, Kilkenny struck for a second goal, on 30 minutes, with Emma Minogue on target.

Cork had a point from Tara McCarthy, but they failed to match the intensity of a Kilkenny side that finished strongly, with points from Laura Greene and Ellen Gunner, to ensure victory.

Scorers for Kilkenny: A Grace 0-5 (0-2 f), E Gunner 1-2 (0-2 f), L Greene 0-3, E Minogue 1-0, T Ronan, A Cantwell, T Donnelly 0-1 each.

Cork: L Homan 0-3 (0-2 f), C O'Callaghan 1-0, R Murphy 0-2, A Cashman, T McCarthy, C O'Leary (f) 0-1 each.

KILKENNY: C Murphy; N Leahy, J O'Dea, J Cass; N Phelan, R Phelan, H Scott (c); L Greene, A Cantwell; S Barcoe, T Ronan, D Quigley, T Donnelly, C Kennedy, A Grace.

Subs: E Manogue for T Ronan (40), E Gunner for A Grace (45), K Byrne for J Cass (45), M Kennedy for S Barcoe (50).

CORK: S Beausang; A Moloney, N O'Leary, E Flanagan; A O'Callaghan, M Ring, L Doyle; A Cashman, R Harty (c); R Murphy, L Allen, C O'Leary, C Dooly, C O'Callaghan, L Homan.

Subs: F Nelligan for C O'Callaghan (41), C Keane for C O'Leary (45), L O'Sullivan for L Doyle (45), T McCarthy for A Cashman (50), J Sheehan for L Allen (52).

Referee: Carol Collins (Galway).



Rose Murphy in action earlier this year. Picture: Eddie O'Hare

CAMOGIE

Glen Dimplex Intermediate All-Ireland Championship: Kilkenny 2-13 Cork 1-8; Senior All-Ireland Championship: Galway 1-12 Cork 0-12, Down 2-11 Clare 1-19, Antrim 1-15 Limerick 0-14, Offaly 1-9 Waterford 2-26.

Millie on team of the year

BALLINAS-CARTHY dual star Millie Condon has been selected at midfield in Millie Condon, the 2023 Electric Ireland Minor Camogie Championship Team of the Year.



Dual player Condon, who plays her club football with Clonakilty, was a central figure in the Cork camogie team that retained their All-Ireland title. Maedhbh De Burca (Carrigtwohill), Caoimhe O'Donoghue (Bishopstown), Laura Dunlea (Sarsfields), Emily O'Donoghue (Bishopstown) and Erinn Curtin (Blackrock) were also selected.



Cork huddle after the loss to Galway.

Picture: INPHO/Tom Maher

Cork come up short again



CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick

Galway 1-12
Cork 0-12

CORK failed to overturn Galway at the third time of asking this year. They lost by three points in the Glen Dimplex All-Ireland first round in Athenry.

Cork's striking from play and placed balls again left them down shockingly and Cork will be extremely disappointed. No score from play in the second half, 10 second-half wides, and a number from placed balls from different players.

And again, no goal.

Galway will wonder how they won this after playing second fiddle for the first half. Changes from the league final were Aoife Healy for Pamela Mackey, Hannah Looney for the injured Laura Hayes, and Katrina Mackey, back from injury, in place of Sorcha McCartan. For Galway, Sarah Spellman and Siobhan McGrath replaced Ciara Hickey and Niamh McPeake.

Cork were in control in the first half, leading by three at half time, 0-10 to 0-7, having created at least three goal chances. Before six minutes of additional time were played, Cork led by just one and that was a concern after such dominance.

A couple of wides and a couple of soft frees and Carrie Dolan's two frees and there was just a point in it. Two excellent Katrina Mackey points saw Cork take a three-point lead into the dressing room.

Cork were holding possession, running off the shoulder well and making deliveries into open space. Chloe Sigerson was finding room and hit her first of three points.

Galway looked disjointed. They were making long deliveries into their full-forward line, but Meabh Murphy and Libby Coppinger were doing brilliantly on Alisha O'Reilly and Siobhan McGrath. Laura Treacy was supporting and picking up any pass or loose ball and with Fiona



Cork's Cliona Healy is challenged by Carrie Dolan of Galway.

Picture: INPHO/Tom Maher

Keating making searing runs down the middle. Cork were splitting Galway's half-back line.

Only for the brilliance of Roisin Black at full-back, Galway were in trouble.

Such a difference Mackey made. With four touches she had three points. By the 12th minute, Cork led 0-5 to 0-2, via Sigerson (2), Mackey (2) and an Amy O'Connor 45, with Galway's scores coming from frees.

They had a goal chance, but O'Connor just couldn't get her pass to Mackey off in time. Goalkeeper Fiona Ryan blocked another chance by Keating on 22. But the goals didn't come, and Cork couldn't shake Galway, finishing the half with five wides to two.

Two soft frees offered up at the start of the second half and Galway had the gap to one. Then, wide after wide from Cork. McGrath started to find room against Coppinger and levelled it.

Another Dolan free and Galway led by one on the three-quarter mark. McGrath got another before Mackey took over the free-taking duties and pointed Cork's first score of the second half on fifty. The killer

blow. Dervia Higgins broke out of defence, found Niamh Hanniffy, who passed to Siobhan Gardiner. Her pull was heading for the bottom corner after Amy Lee had advanced and McGrath made sure by tapping it home. Cork trailed 1-12 to 0-11.

Further wides from Cork. Galway batted down the hatches, Mackey had the final say, but the game was gone and now there is a lot more soul-searching for Cork.

Scorers for Galway: C Dolan 0-8 (0-7 f), S McGrath 1-2, A O'Donohue, A O'Reilly 0-1 each.

Cork: K Mackey 0-6 (0-2 f), C Sigerson 0-3, A O'Connor 0-3 (0-1 45, 0-1 f).

GALWAY: F Ryan, S Healy, R Black, D Higgins, S Gardiner, E Helebert, R Hanniffy, A Donohue, N Hanniffy, S Rabbittie, S Spellman, A Keane, C Dolan, S McGrath, A O'Reilly.

Subs: S Dervan for A Keane (58), S Corcoran for A O'Reilly (63), N McPeake for S Rabbittie (65), A Kelly for S Spellman (66).

CORK: A Lee, M Murphy, L Coppinger, M Cahalane, A Healy, L Treacy, I O'Regan, S McCarthy, H Looney, C Sigerson, F Keating, C Healy, A O'Connor, O Cahalane, K Mackey.

Subs: S McCartan for A O'Connor (39), E Murphy for I O'Regan (47), A Smith for A Healy (59), C Finn for O Cahalane (63), H Ryan for C Healy (66).

Referee: Ray Kelly (Kildare).

GAA teases out gender balance options

John Fogarty

Removing the GAA director general position from the association's management committee (Coiste Bainisti) is among a number of recommendations aimed at achieving funding-dependent gender balance on the board.

As sports bodies' state funding is contingent on 40% gender quotas on its governing bodies being reached by January next year, the GAA in considering proposals to ensure they continue to receive €3m per annum from the Government, which does not include capital and club funding.

Currently 16%, three women on a 19-person body, only one of them — nominee Anne Looney — has voting rights on Coiste Bainisti.

Ladies Gaelic Football and Camogie Association chief executives Helen O'Rourke and Sinead McNulty are non-voting members.

Recommended in the 'An Coiste Bainistioclachta Board Diversity' document, which was presented by GAA director general Tom Ryan to Central Council on Saturday, is defining management committee members as those with voting rights, assigning votes to the LGFA and camogie representatives while stipulating they must be voluntary and assuming they are female, while ending the Coiste Bainisti membership of the director general and director of finance, GAA president-elect, and immediate former president.

Going forward, one of the trustees would be female as well as one of two Central Council-appointed directors and on a rotation basis three provinces would appoint female directors as opposed to now, when directors have been elected.

A period of four years to implement the changes is anticipated with the gender balance target achieved at the outset.

Other options are also outlined. Curtailing male representation to attain the quota would involve removing voting rights from the GAA president-elect, the two trustees/Congress and four provincial representatives while giving voting rights to O'Rourke and McNulty and two independent appointees next year.

The board would reduce in size to 10.

While simple, there is a warning that the board possibly being too small and the influence of the provinces on it being diminished.

It is envisaged the female membership could be increased without impinging on the male representation by augmenting the size of management committee to 22 members with the LGFA and Camogie representatives giving voting rights as well as seven new independent appointees.

However, it is highlighted that the appointees' presence would be disproportionate.

Dolan delivers for Galway

All-Ireland Senior
Camogie Championship

Daragh Ó Conchúir

Cathal Murray was pleased that his Galway side got their Glen Dimplex All-Ireland Senior Camogie Championship campaign off to a winning start against Cork at Kenny Park in Athenry despite a lengthy period of inactivity.

The westerners repeated their league final victory over the Rebels, this time on a margin of 1-12 to 0-12, Siobhán McGrath's goal and eight points from player of the match Carrie Dolan helping to turn around a three-point interval deficit.

Cork only scored two points in the second half, after going 20 minutes without moving the dial in that regard. Katrina Mackey, playing her first game since suffering a rib injury in the first half of the Leisiders' opening league tie, took over the free-taking duties in the final quarter to register those two scores, adding to four points from play in the first half.

The visitors ended with 14 wides and it was no wonder that manager Matthew Twomey was bemoaning his side's "shocking" conversion rate.

In contrast, Galway were more economical, particularly facing into the wind in the second half, as they trailed by 0-10 to 0-7.

The Tribeswomen don't have provincial competition unlike the rest of their rivals and that is an inequity Murray feels needs to be address-



Cork's Amy O'Connor is challenged by Galway's Shauna Healy and Rachael Hanniffy in Saturday's All-Ireland Senior Camogie Championship match at Kenny Park in Athenry.

Picture: Tom Maher/Inpho

ed, but he was quick to acknowledge that Cork hadn't a huge advantage in this regard, having been defeated in the first round of the Munster Championship themselves.

"We'd a seven-week break and that's not the same for everyone," Murray noted afterwards. "It would have been 10 weeks if we didn't get

to the league final. That is hard to manage and a huge disadvantage to us.

"But at the same time, they had only one game against Waterford so we can't be using that as an excuse either. We just weren't at the pace of it (in the first half). They had a sweeper and had a serious platform in the half-back line.

We just didn't work hard enough, we didn't track the runners and that's not something we do. We're always proud of our workrate, the way we work on the field and our attitude wasn't there in the first half.

"We spoke about it at half-time and in fairness, the girls knew themselves it wasn't

good enough and in the second half they were a way better team, worked incredibly hard and some great scores there near the finish into a strong breeze.

"Cork were throwing everything at us with that strong breeze. They certainly had a lot of wides and we can't run away from that.

"They created an awful lot of chances and that's something we're going to have to look at. But at the same time, it's the first round of the championship. You don't have to be going flat out.

"It's about improving all the time. We're happy with the win but there is loads to improve on."

That profligate shooting was the critical factor according to Twomey.

"That's the difference between the two teams," said the Cork boss. "The stats we had was that we dominated the game with chances but our conversion rate is not good enough.

"We said coming up here, winning the game wasn't going to win an All-Ireland and losing the game wasn't going to lose the All-Ireland. We're in the same place going home as we would have been had we won the game. We still have to beat Clare and we still have to beat Down.

"(Galway) are a great side. They had one sniff of a goal and took it and that's the difference unfortunately.

"We have to beat Down and if we don't, we're out. We have to beat Clare, if we don't, we're

out. That's the way it is, and it puts us under a small bit more pressure. We're trying to nurse a few injuries as well, try and get as many as we can back into the fray.

"But we've no complaints. It's just our conversion rate was shocking and that's what we have to work on, again."

Clare began their Group 1 campaign with a 1-19 to 2-11 triumph over Down at the Liatroim Fontenoys grounds, two points each from Louise McNamara and sub Elmear Kelly, and an injury-time goal from Aine O'Loughlin wresting back the initiative for the Banner, after the prodigious Niamh Mallon's goal and nine points had seen the home side hit the front in the final quarter.

In Group 3, Waterford had ten different scorers as they made light work of Offaly by 2-26 to 1-9 in Banagher. Beth Carton shot 11 points, after Annie Fitzgerald and Mairead O'Brien had registered first-half goals. Sarah Harding struck the Waterford net from a second-half free but the result was never in any doubt.

They will travel to Limerick in a fortnight with the Shannonsiders needing to win after a second-half rally fell short in Dunloy against Antrim.

The Saffrons led by seven points at the break, Siobhán McKillop scoring the goal, and when Limerick rallied to bring themselves in touching distance, Róisín McCormick and Aine Magill steadied the ship to cement a 1-15 to 0-14 success.

Down's Magee hopes side find spark against Cork

Paul Keane

Dearbhla Magee has insisted that Down have not given up hope of pulling off a landmark win over Cork, or Galway in their final round-robin game, to avoid a relegation battle in the camogie championship.

The Ulster champions are desperate to retain their senior status but blowing a sizeable lead in the closing minutes against Clare last weekend has left them favourites to finish bottom in Group 1.

That would leave Down, in their third season as a senior team following their 2020 intermediate championship win, facing into a relegation battle.

Galway hammered Down

by 3-23 to 0-6 in last year's championship while Cork, the 2022 All-Ireland runners-up and 2023 league finalists, will be expected to win on Saturday week also.

Asked if Down truly believe they can beat Cork or Galway to secure their status, PwC GPA Player of the Month for May in camogie Magee nodded.

"We're pushing really, really hard and I would say that we'll give it everything we have," said the full-back.

"We're well aware that they're two must-win games. To win even one of them would be massive. We will be pushing for that.

"I think last year against Galway was a kind of a blip in the system. Every team

has a bad day and I think Galway happened to be our bad day and we were punished heavily but I think we'll be pushing on massively in the next month or so to get the wins."

Magee revealed her frustration that Down let the win over Clare slip through their fingers last weekend.

"If we had beaten Clare, that was us then, we knew we would have been safe," she said, outlining the circumstances of the defeat. "We were up by six points with 10 minutes to go.

"I just think there was maybe a bit of tiredness that came into it with our team and then the frees went against us towards the end.

"We should have prob-

ably won the game but that's sport at the end of the day. Clare did come out with that bit of fight in the last few minutes and we just found it hard to withstand it. But we are there or thereabouts."

Aside from that competitive display, what gives Magee hope is their Division 1B league win over Limerick back on March 18.

"That Limerick game was also a must-win game for us, to keep us up in Division 1," she recalled. "We played in Liatroim, which is my home pitch. There was just something different that day. There was a spark in everybody. It was massive.

"We just turned on a show. We came out there and just stormed the pitch.



PwC GPA Camogie Player of the Month for May, Down's Dearbhla Magee. Picture: Sam Barnes

Even playing on the pitch, you could feel it, there was something different within us. Hopefully that reignites and comes again, it might just come hopefully against Cork or Galway."



Erinn Curtain was one of six Cork players in the Team of the Year.

Six Cork players are selected in the Minor Team of the Year

ELECTRIC Ireland recently named their Camogie Minor Team of the Year.

It comes as no surprise to see six Cork players named on the 15 after another All-Ireland victory. This is the first year the championship has been sponsored by Electric Ireland and they are to be complimented for the amount of publicity they gave it.

The Rebels chosen were defenders Maebh De Burca, Caoimhe O'Donoghue and Laura Dunlea, midfielder Millie Condon and forwards Emily O'Donoghue and Erinn Curtain.

Waterford goalkeeper Katelyn Gardner, a dual player, was picked in goal.

Cork's Maebh De Burca brought all the experience gained in the 2022 campaign to the fore. All through she was solid and reliable and consistent at corner-back, a shining light in a strong Cork defense.

Galway lost out to Cork in the semi-final by just one point, but joint-captain Ava Crowe was excellent in the full-back position.

As well as turning in solid performances in the Cork defense, Caoimhe O'Donoghue was adept in attack and this was best exemplified in the semi-final win over Galway when she scored 1-2.

A superb defender, Laura Dunlea controlled matters from the half-back berth. Her interceptions saw her turn over opposition players in possession and drive forward setting up Cork attacks.

Laoise Forrest is a versatile player and excelled at centre-back and as an important scoring threat for Waterford from distance.

Shauna Heffernan was a shining light for Tipperary in

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

their round-robin games at wing-back, doing her job without much fuss.

Dual star Millie Condon was a powerhouse in the Cork midfield covering acres of ground in every venue; her ability to win and deliver fast ball to her inside lines was crucial all through the campaign.

A member of the 2022 All-Ireland winning side, she had another superb season.

Kayla Madden was a prominent figure throughout Galway's season. A hard-working midfielder, she struck for a superb goal against Cork.

Rachel Dowling was a dominant presence in the Kilkenny attack. Deadly accurate from placed balls, she was a constant threat and a handful for defences.

Galway's Aoibheann Barry was immense as they made the last four.

Waterford's Alanna McNulty is a name to watch out for and in her third year at minor, she was a regular scorer.

Maggie Gostl grabbed seven points in the All-Ireland final. An all-rounder, she also won a Munster U19 Cup with Bohemians FC Waterford during the year.

Player of the Match in the All-Ireland, Emily O'Donoghue scored 1-5 against Waterford. A strong full-forward and a great player to win possession she grabbed vital goals and was accurate from frees; a twin sister of corner-back Caoimhe.

Erinn Curtain showed huge pace and ability to find the range as she hit 0-4 from play in the final; a great player to find space and clinical too.



Galway's Ailish O'Reilly is tackled by Meabh Murphy of Cork during last weekend's championship opener.

Picture: INPHO/Tom Maher

Cork did have their chances



CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick

AS I was writing this column last Tuesday evening word came through that Teddy McCarthy had passed away. Like the rest of the county, I was shocked and deeply saddened. It genuinely upset me.

He was a hurler from my era, and I remember us all being so proud of him at the time. 1990 lives on in our memories. Teddy Mac was ours. To Oonagh, Cian, Niall and Sinéad and to the entire McCarthy and O'Neill families, my deepest sympathies.

Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam.

The only positive Cork can take from their three-point championship defeat to Galway last Saturday was that they had enough chances to win the game by double that. They didn't win though and at this stage, if the forward division aren't taking a long hard look in the mirror, then an All-Ireland title is slipping further and further away.

There are others who need to step up but where are our scoring forwards gone? Katrina Mackey was the only shining light. Thank God she has returned. Unfortunately, Cork didn't get half enough ball to her.

Chloe Sigerson started very brightly with three great first-half points but her free-taking in the second half didn't match up. Sorcha McCartan's placed ball also sailed wide. Others seem to be flittering around as if they are at ballet classes and the substitutes aren't making the desired impact.

I'm typically not one for singling out players when things don't go their way. Off days happen but we are seeing a sustained failure to deliver up front and we can't keep hiding from saying it aloud.

We've issues elsewhere too. Galway's goal should not have happened. Amy Lee should not have left her line. Meabh Cahalane was chasing Gardiner, Libby Coppinger was cutting across and Amy was in 'no mans land' to attempt any serious defence.

Siobhán Gardiner then got the lightest of flicks to trickle the ball into the bottom



Cork camogie manager Matthew Twomey during the loss to Galway. Picture: INPHO/Tom Maher

corner. Siobhán McGrath tapping it in was only a formality.

Cork were working the ball out well, Fiona Keating was making great runs through the middle completely splitting Galway's half-back line, right into the danger area and we failed to goal capitalise, even once.

Two points in the second half, both from the free-taking of Mackey. At senior inter-county level?

Cork's management must be tearing their hair out. You can't blame tactics. There were plenty of opportunities created. The finish was the problem. No player on the panel can complain that they haven't had enough game time to prove themselves. Again, on Saturday five substitutes, but no impact was evident.

There is honour and pride in wearing the Cork jersey. Clare led Down by 0-10 to 0-7 at half-time in the group's other game but they needed a late flurry that yielded a goal and four points to get over the Ulster champions by 1-19 to 2-11 at the Liatroim Fontenoy's grounds.

Niamh Mallon goalied in the 37th minute for Down and though Louise McNamara kept Clare's noses in front, that was no longer the case when Saoirse Sands' drive from distance went all the way to the Clare net

and Mallon slotted her ninth point from a free with less than six minutes of normal time remaining.

The response from John Carmody's players was notable, with Eimear Kelly coming off the bench to split the posts twice and McNamara adding to her tally with a pair of minors, before Aine O'Loughlin goalied in injury time to assure the verdict.

In Group 3, last year's semi-finalists Waterford got their campaign up and running with a comfortable victory over Offaly, prevailing by 2-26 to 1-9 in Banagher.

Annie Fitzgerald rattling the net after 15 seconds gave her team the ideal start. Máiréad O'Brien scored a second goal for the Déise and with Beth Carton slotting five frees to record a first-half tally of six points, they led by 2-14 to 0-5 at half-time.

Becky Bryant had scored four points for the home team, but they hadn't enough of a threat, and it was straightforward for Seán Power's crew after the restart, as Carton brought her tally to 11. Sarah Harding gave the home supporters something to cheer about with a goal from a close-in free six minutes from the end of regulation time, but it was a cruise for the visitors.

Antrim withstood a strong second-half comeback from Limerick to win by 1-15 to 1-14 in Dunloy.



Cork's Emily O'Donoghue, the Electric Ireland Player of the Match in the All-Ireland final win over Waterford.

'Shocking' conversion rate frustrates Twomey

Host of missed chances cost Rebels in Group 1 tie

GALWAY 1-12
CORK 0-12

BY DARAGH Ó CONCHÚIR

FOR the third time this season Cork took on Galway, and for the third time the Rebels lost.

Cork will look back on their opening Glen Dimplex All-Ireland Senior Camogie Championship Group 1 game with a mixture of frustration and regret. Matthew Twomey's team had the chances to leave Kenny Park in Athenry with the win, but they missed far too many scoring opportunities.

The visitors ended with 14 wides and it was no wonder that Twomey was bemoaning his side's 'shocking' conversion rate.

'That's the difference between the two teams,' the frustrated Cork boss said.

'The stats we had was that we dominated the game with chances but our conversion rate is not good enough.'

'We said coming up here, winning the game wasn't going to win an All-Ireland and losing the game wasn't going to lose the All-Ireland. We're in the same place going home as we would have been had we won the game. We still have to beat Clare and we still have to beat Down.'

'Galway are a great side. They had one sniff of a goal and took it and that's the difference unfortunately.'

The sides last met in the Division 1A league final seven weeks ago, having also clashed in the group stages of that competition, both games Galway won, and a 55th minute goal from Siobhán McGrath sealed the issue here after a fiercely-contested affair.

Allied with eight points from the fantastic Carrie Dolan, it was pivotal in getting Cathal



Galway's Siobhán Gardiner tackles Cork's Fiona Keating in their 2023 Glen Dimplex All-Ireland Senior Camogie Championship opener. (Photos: Tom Maher / NPHO)

SENIOR GROUP 1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
Clare	1	1	0	0	1-19	2-11	3
Galway	1	1	0	0	1-12	0-12	3
Cork	1	0	0	1	0-12	1-12	0
Down	1	0	0	1	2-11	1-19	0

Murray's team over the line.

It had been nip and tuck until then but Cork were unable to pose enough of a threat in the second half. Indeed they only managed two points in the latter period, both magnificently-slotted frees by the brilliant Katrina Mackey, though they did rack up seven wides to give an indication of some of the chances they had created.

'We'll just have to go away again, get the players ready for Down,' Twomey said.

'Where we're at now, from here on in, it's knockout. We have to beat Down and if we don't, we're out. We have to beat Clare, if we don't, we're out. That's the way it is, and it puts us under a small bit more pressure. We're trying to nurse

a few injuries as well, try and get as many as we can back into the fray.

'But we've no complaints. It's just our conversion rate was shocking and that's what we have to work on, again.'

Cork had gone in at the change of ends leading by 0-11 to 0-7 and it was a deserved lead that should have been greater but for the failure to capitalise on some other good chances.

This was a malaise that proved very costly for Twomey's crew. The Leesiders welcomed Mackey back from a rib injury suffered in the very first game of the league and one of the most experienced players on the pitch excelled with six points, including four from play in that opening half.

Galway were a different team after the resumption with McGrath slotting two points and Dolan keeping the scoreboard ticking over with three scores to add to her first-half quintet. It took Cork 20 minutes to get off the mark but McGrath's goal came soon after to decide the contest.

Galway boss Cathal Murray commented: 'Cork were throwing everything at us with that strong breeze. They certainly had a lot of wides and we can't run away from that. They created an awful lot of chances and that's something we're going to have to look at.'

Next up for Cork is a home game against Down on June 17th. In the other group game last weekend Clare began their

Group 1 campaign with a 1-19 to 2-11 triumph against Down.

Scorers

Galway: C Dolan 0-8 (7f); S McGrath 1-2; A O'Donohue, A O'Reilly 0-1 each.

Cork: K Mackey 0-6 (2f); C Sigerson 0-3; A O'Connor 0-3 (145, 1f).

Galway: F Ryan; S Healy, R Black, D Higgins; S Gardiner, E Helebert, R Hanniffy; A Donohue, N Hanniffy; S Rabbitte, S Spellman, A Keane; C Dolan, S McGrath, A O'Reilly.

Subs: S Dervan, S Corcoran, N McPeake, A Kelly.

Cork: A Lee; M Murphy, L Coppinger, M Cahalane; A Healy, L Treacy, I O'Regan; S McCarthy, H Looney; C

Sigerson, F Keating, C Healy; A O'Connor, O Cahalane, K Mackey.

Subs: S McCartan, E Murphy, A Smith, C Finn, H Ryan.

Referee: R Kelly (Kildare).



'Our conversion rate was shocking and that's what we have to work on'

Lacey striking the balance between farming and playing

Camogie

Daragh Ó Conchúir

We can be fairly confident that not many players involved in championship fare over the weekend, in either of the four main Gaelic codes, will be milking cows prior to donning their county jersey in the cauldron of competition.

Wexford ace Aine Lacey is already in a select grouping as a dual player but while more women have managed to maintain their involvement in camogie/hurling and football, what is very much common to both genders is the fall-off of farmers being able to commit.

The time required to be a high-performance sports person doesn't fit in with an occupation that has a round-the-clock element to it, is assuredly not in the nine-to-five window and doesn't offer a guaranteed period of holidays on an annual basis.

Wednesday, when this conversation was shoehorned into the half-hour drive home to Screen from training at the Halo Tires Wexford GAA Centre of Excellence in Ferns, began for Lacey with a 6am alarm call. The day included milking her herd of 135 cows in the morning and evening, with the time in between spent on silage. The St Ibar's/Shelmaller ace got in the door at 6pm and was rushing back out ten minutes later for Ferns. A dip at Curracloe Beach before turning in was still under consideration.

The recently-turned 29-year-old struggles to explain why she puts herself through such a hectic, wearying and at times stressful regime. In fact, in what she describes as an act of madness, she added to her burden this term when accepting an invitation to join the ladies football squad, having impressed as Shelmaller



Wexford's Aine Lacey is fitting in a long day down on the farm with training and playing but at its core is a grá of playing and of representing the Model County. Picture: Laszlo Gecco/Inpho

retained the county title last year. It wouldn't be possible without the help of her parents, Kathleen and John, and the occasional necessary leeway offered by respective managers Colin Sunderland (camogie) and Lizzy Kent (ladies football) but at its core is a grá of playing and of representing the Model County.

Lacey joined the camogie panel in 2013. That was the season Wexford were going for a four-in-a-row and the likes of Lacey's clubmate and neighbour, Kate Kelly and co were in their pomp.

She never dreamt that a dec-

ade later, she would still be waiting to be part of an All-Ireland-winning squad.

"When they rang for the football, I knew it was madness, but I kind of said, there's not that many years left and I'd go at it for one year at least and I could say I'd done it," says Lacey as she winds her way back towards Screen.

"You know no different 'cos you're at it the whole time; since I'm 18 or that. You do find a little more the body isn't really able and you'd get tired of rushing the whole time, evenings going to training and the weekends."

For example, Lacey dons the yellow and purple this evening as Wexford begin their All-Ireland Senior Camogie Championship with a trip to the lion's den, taking on champions Kilkenny at Nowlan Park (6pm throw-in — live on the Camogie Association's YouTube channel).

Tomorrow, it will be the same jersey but a big ball. The games are one thing but the training requirements have multiplied over the past ten years, which is why Lacey is such an outlier.

And while it can be mentally taxing, there are benefits

for the mind too, in terms of outdoor living and playing. And one offers a distraction from the pressures of the other.

"We're playing Kilkenny and it's on at six in the evening and I will probably work away until two o'clock. I'll do the milking and then I won't do anything too hard but I'll do a few bits, check on the sucklers and a few other things. So I probably won't think about the game till I'm finished, whereas someone else could be thinking about it all day. Even with a club match during the week, you're milking

and heading out the door. You're only thinking, 'I only have five minutes to get out of here!' You don't get nervous."

That said, the difficulties are evident.

"I can get to the training and I'm doing all that but it's things like group recovery sessions and at certain times of the year, that extra hour or two you need to do on your own time. That's where I get caught but both sets of management have been good to me. A lot of the work I'd do would be manual so if you were doing any bit of gym at all you'd be fairly tired all right that way and being only five or ten minutes from Curracloe Beach is great. I would be there the three or four days before the weekend if I can."

The challenges don't get much bigger than the Cats in the Marble City, particularly with Brian Dowling's squad beginning the defence of their title.

Wexford are in reasonably good shape, having reached the Division 1B league final in Sunderland's first season.

"We're happy with where we are going into the Kilkenny game. We're obviously rebuilding after we won the All-Irelands and then went down fairly steep, so we're slowly coming up.

"As a group, we're hoping to push all the way. I think if we could get some type of a result (against Kilkenny) it will grow confidence. It's like anything, when you get confidence and momentum, you could end up anywhere but to get out of the group is the first step and then God knows where you'll end up. It's all about belief and getting a bit of momentum.

"It's gonna be busy but time is flying by. In another two months, it'll be nearly over so you'd be looking forward to it. This is why you're training, to be playing big games."



Sarsfields, winners of the Cork City Garda camogie blitz at St Finbarr's GAA club, with Supt Annette Browne.

CAMOGIE

Glen Dimplex Senior All-Ireland Championship: Tipperary 2-19 Dublin 1-6, Kilkenny 1-17 Wexford 3-11; Intermediate All-Ireland Championship: Galway 0-11 Kilkenny 0-19, Cork 2-11 Dublin 0-5, Carlow 0-6 Derry 6-15, Laois 1-10 Westmeath 2-17, Kerry 0-11 Meath 3-16; Junior All-Ireland Championship: Tipperary 5-17 Wicklow 2-3, Offaly 1-9 Mayo 0-12, Armagh 2-18 Limerick 1-6

annual camogie blitz



Some of the Gardaí who organised the Cork City Garda camogie blitz held recently at St Finbarr's GAA club. Also included is Supt Annette Browne. Picture: Eddie O'Hare



Cloughduv players get to meet mounted garda Joe Quinn and his horse, Ruairi, at the Cork City Garda camogie blitz at St Finbarr's GAA club. Picture: Eddie O'Hare



Aghabullogue who took part in the Cork City Garda camogie blitz. Also included in Supt Annette Browne. Picture: Eddie O'Hare



Kilworth players with mounted gardai Maria Kearney and Joe Quinn at the Cork City Garda camogie blitz at St Finbarr's GAA club. Picture: Eddie O'Hare



The Fermoy squad with Supt Annette Browne at the Cork City Garda blitz. Picture: Eddie O'Hare



St Finbarr's players with mounted gardai Maria Kearney and Joe Quinn at the blitz. Picture: Eddie O'Hare



The Cork team stand for a minute's silence for the late Teddy McCarthy prior to their clash with Dublin at Ballinlough. Picture: Dan Linehan

Cork honour Teddy before intermediate win over Dublin

Cork 2-11
Dublin 0-5

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

CORK kept their Glen Dimplex Intermediate Championship qualification hopes alive with their first victory in the round-robin series at the immaculate Ballinlough venue.

Before throw-in, a minute's silence was observed in memory of the late Teddy McCarthy, who was laid to rest on Saturday and attended his last game at the same venue on Monday afternoon before his shock passing.

Cork were sharp and moved the ball well and always held the upper hand, though they did waste a number of chances.

Lauren Homan pointed an early free and added one from play to settle the hosts and it was nine minutes in before Dublin opened their account with a Grace Skelton point.

From the puck-out, Homan took on and evaded two defenders before giving a pinpoint pass to Rose Murphy who made no mistake to goal.

With their defence solid, Cork had Rachel Harty covering acres of ground in midfield and ensuring fast ball was sent into the Cork inside line.

Homan pointed two frees and, in between, Harty slotted one over and Cork were seven points in front on 20 minutes.

Cork keeper Stefanie Beausang was forced into a good save soon afterwards at the expense of a 45 which Skelton converted, and with Cliona O'Leary and Meabh Hicks exchanging points it was 1-6 to 0-3 at the break.

On the restart, Cork set about stretching their lead and three points from O'Leary, Lucy Allen, and the pacy Fiona Nelligan saw

them begin to pull away. With Leanne O'Sullivan and Laura Doyle on top in their half-back line, Cork cut off any supply the Dublin forwards hoped to win.

Harty continued to dominate around the middle and Dublin had to wait until the end of the third quarter before Joyce Atkinson registered their only score from play of the second half.

Cork hit their second goal on 48 minutes with Homan again offloading, this time to Cliona Dooley who finished well.

Cork added points from Doyle and Homan to ensure victory was secured before Skelton clipped a late Dublin free.

With Kilkenny defeating Galway it ensures they have secured one of the semi-final spots; Galway and Cork will fight it out for the second semi-final spot when they meet on July 1 in Cork.

Scorers for Cork: L Homan 0-5 (0-3 f), R Murphy, C Dooley 1-0, C O'Leary 0-2 f, R Harty, L Allen, L Doyle, F Nelligan 0-1 each.

Dublin: G Skelton 0-3 (0-2 f), M Hicks, J Atkinson 0-1 each.

CORK: S Beausang; A Moloney, N O'Leary, E Flanagan; L O'Sullivan, M Ring, L Doyle; A O'Callaghan, R Harty (c); R Murphy, L Allen, L Homan; C Dooley, C O'Leary, F Nelligan.

Subs: C O'Callaghan for C O'Leary (42), T McCarthy for M Ring (52), I Sheehan for F Nelligan (52), A Cashman for R Murphy (in 55), E O'Donovan for E Flanagan (57).

DUBLIN: L Campbell; C Tierney, S McCarthy, H Austin, S Power, N Cotter, E Adderley, J Atkinson, A Kenny, M Hicks, G Shanahan, N Brennan; R Buckley, A Deegan (c), G Skelton.

Subs: C Murphy for G Shanahan (27), L McMahon for A Deegan (45).

Referee: Karol Collins (Galway).



Carrigaline players with Supt Annette Browne at St Finbarr's GAA club.

Picture: Eddie O'Hare



Brian Dillon's players who took part in the Cork City Garda camogie blitz at St Finbarr's GAA club.

Picture: Eddie O'Hare



The Douglas panel with Supt Annette Browne at St Finbarr's GAA club.

Picture: Eddie O'Hare



Cork's Laura Doyle is first to a breaking ball ahead of Nina Brennan, Dublin, at Ballinlough on Saturday. Picture: Dan Linehan

Cats rue fadeout but Wexford take huge step in right direction

Camogie

Daragh Ó Conchúir

Clara O'Connor was finding it hard to make sense of it all, after putting the exclamation mark to a thrilling Wexford fightback as well as a magnificent personal nine-point contribution with a brilliant injury-time score securing a 1-17 to 3-11 draw for the visitors against All-Ireland champions Kilkenny in the first round of the Glen Dimplex All-Ireland Senior Camogie Championship (Group 2) on Saturday.

The point came after O'Connor's sister and former All-Star, Sarah, won a do-or-die possession, lost her hurley in the process and so kicked expertly in the direction of her sibling, who showed good strength to gather before driving forward and sending over that soaring equaliser on the run.

That arrived as the clock moved into the seventh minute of additional time and six minutes after early second-half sub, Aine Lacey had astonishingly flicked an airborne sliotar from a seemingly impossible position with her back to the goal and outside the left post to the far corner of the net for what will take some beating for goal of the year.

Kilkenny were shellshocked and conceded the last goal and four points of the game. Denise Gaule, Katie Power and Katie Nolan (who was the Striptywomen's top scorer with six points) had put them in a decent position when pointing in response to Shelley Kehoe's early goal for Wexford and Clara O'Connor's outstanding two-point sideline.

Julianne Malone goalied 40 seconds into the second half and Brian Dowling's side looked to be coasting as points from Aoife Doyle, her sister Kellyann and Gaule put them ten clear, but a Linda Bolger goal breathed life into Wexford and given their dominance in the final quarter, a share of the spoils was deserved.

"I don't even know where to start," said Clara O'Connor, who was named player of the match in her first outing after a six-week absence with a knee injury.

"I suppose Kilkenny, coming up to their back garden, was always going to be a tough game. Given the history that team has had over the last few years as well, it was always gonna be a battle. But we knew it was like any game, any opposition, you focus on your own game plan and believe in our players and believe in our backroom team and that's what we did.

"Wexford camogie hasn't really been there or thereabouts. It's been development so far and this is a step in the right direction."

Such is the rarity of sideline scores in camogie, that there was some confusion about the umpire's signal for a two-point score.

"I thought he was waving it wide so I kinda went a bit ballistic but the ref informed me it was the two points," said a laughing O'Connor. "I suppose when you're practising it you hope it will come up in game time and you get to show what you can do and thankfully it went over."

Dowling gave credit to Wexford but was unhappy with his players' fadeout.

"We're very disappointed,"



ANY MEANS POSSIBLE: Kilkenny's Katie Nolan is tackled by Laura Dempsey and Sarah O'Connor of Wexford in Saturday's All-Ireland Senior Camogie Championship clash at UPMC Nowlan Park. Picture: Ben Brady/Inpho

the Kilkenny manager admitted. "I think we went 10 up at one stage and looked like we were in complete control. We totally took our foot off the gas and in fairness to Wexford they kept plugging away.

"We knew coming in they were a very good team and the

girls were focused on it but I don't know what happened there in the last 15 minutes, very disappointing on our part.

Wexford boss, Colin Sunderland was understandably delighted, though he emphasised the importance of the up-

coming encounters, starting with another crunch clash, at home to Tipperary, who were convincing 2-19 to 1-6 winners over the Dubs at The Ragg.

"I thought the first half was a little bit scrappy from our own point of view," Sunderland noted. "Belief is a big

thing in these girls. Just getting the belief going that they're up there at this level.

"We referenced it at half-time. 'Does anybody feel out of their depth here, that shouldn't be here?' Because it hasn't been going great the last few years. We were off the charts altogether a few years ago at the bottom. In fairness, the last few years (under Kevin Tattan) they built back up.

"But it's important to remember we didn't win the game, it's still only a draw so we still need a couple of wins. 'There's no breaks here, we're straight back into and will hopefully switch on and unless we can go and give a performance against Tipperary, today is worth nothing.'

Cait Devane scored a goal in either half as she built up a tally of 2-6, while Eimear McGrath contributed five points as Tipperary continued the form they showed in winning the Munster Championship with a surprisingly comfortable triumph over a Dublin team that had fallen just short against Kilkenny in the Leinster decider.

It was all over at half-time, as Tipp led 1-12 to 0-2 and to make matters worse for Dublin, substitute Issy Davis, only recently returned from a long-term knee injury, had to leave the fray nine minutes after her introduction after receiving lengthy treatment to the same knee.

Gerry McQuaid's side rallied briefly and Aisling Maher and Ashling O'Neill hit some nice points but though the excellent Maher rifled to the net late on, there was still time for Devane to grab her second major for Denis Kelly's strong unit.

Daragh Ó Conchúir

You are what you eat, the saying goes, and Róisín McCormick certainly espouses that theory.

The Antrim attacking star hopes to be part of a high performance set-up in a professional capacity in the future. She's not calling for camogie to be a full-time, paid pursuit, though I'm sure she wouldn't object given she would be one of the most marketable players in the game with her array of skills and cold-blooded finishing ability.

But high performance sport attracts full-time, professional sports coaches and support staff and McCormick's ambition is to be involved in that sort of environment on a day-to-day basis.

The just-turned 22-year-old has a year to go on a Sports Science degree at TUD, who she helped win a historic first Ashbourne Cup last February with the victorious point from a free in extra time against UCC.

She is planning on pursuing a Masters in Sports Nutrition thereafter. Conveniently for training, as the Glen Dimplex All-Ireland Senior Camogie Championships get into full swing, McCormick is now on a placement in Belfast with MoveTru, helping in the development of a performance tracker/injury prevention device.



Róisín McCormick: Antrim star seeing improvements.

"We are currently focusing on injury prevention of ACL ruptures and sagittal plane movement patterns," McCormick explains. "It's fascinating."

And important, especially given the pandemic for ACL ruptures in female sportspeople and until recently, the lack of knowledge surrounding the reasons for that. But ground is being made.

Significant strides have been made too in terms of the use of professional expertise

to prepare and condition camogie teams.

"The whole sports science aspect behind all the teams is definitely making a difference and I suppose more research is being done into women's sports. We are a lot different to males so obviously that research is helping us. You can see it, the last few camogie seasons, there is a massive difference in speed, agility, strength and skills. It's impacted so much on the game. It's the way forward.

"It was common knowledge that female sportspeople were them few years behind but the last few years, the more it's been looked at and the more that's being done with tests and research, it's good to see it evolving."

As GAA has clearly demonstrated, the deepest pockets that can avail of more of these services tend to prevail. Antrim have worked very hard to provide players with what they need.

"For a few years, just before I came into the senior set-up, the Antrim team took a dip. A few girls stopped showing up

Resolution found in Cork dual debacle

Cian Locke

A resolution has been found in Cork's dual stars' fixture-clash debacle, with the four players in question set to be split up between the two codes. The Cork camogie team are due to face Down at Páirc Uí Chaoimh today, with a 3pm throw-in scheduled. Meanwhile, the ladies' footballers are due in Pearse Stadium for a 7pm start against Galway on the same day. The fixture clash means dual

and the numbers were struggling. (But) the development, from U14 upwards to minor is excellent in Antrim. The last couple of All-Ireland wins for the junior and intermediate team — now the senior team obviously — has definitely influenced a lot of the younger camogie players to

stars Orlaith Cahalane, Libby Coppinger, Hannah Looney and Aoife Healy will not be able to represent their county in both codes this weekend.

It is understood that Coppinger and Healy will turn out for the camogie side, while Looney and Cahalane will play with Shane Ronayne's ladies' footballers. Speaking to the *Irish Examiner* last week, Looney conveyed her anger at the situation.

"At the moment, I'm really frustrated and disappointed, and really angry at the Camogie Association and Ladies Football Association," remarked Looney. "Two knockout championship games in many senses, playing Galway in the football and Down in camogie. It just seems that we've taken 10 steps back."

step into the county scene and hopefully develop.

"There's a lot more going on behind the scenes now thanks to those wins that helps.

"We did struggle for a few years with sponsors and bringing in money but there's a lot of fundraising gone on in

the last few years and then the likes of new sponsorship being brought in, the likes of Team Kit and stuff, so definitely it's making a difference.

"A lot of conditioning and various coaching and supports take a lot of money but there is loads the county board would be doing to make sure we get that and we can perform with the best."

Again, this is imperative. Because Antrim is a county going places and they are putting the foundations in place to try to ensure it is for the long haul.

Losing to Limerick last year when most expected them to prevail, was a valuable lesson.

"We have the ability. We did lack the experience of other teams. We were playing intermediate league last year and then going into senior championship and it's just a completely different ball game.

"We just have to focus on the win but it's obviously in the knowledge that if we win this, it leads to the bigger stage."



Mairead Donovan, chairperson Cork Camogie Board presents the adult long puck trophy to Chloe Lane.

Camogie league titles are decided

AFTER a busy few months of league games for clubs, adult league competitions in seven grades were recently completed, and after some exciting finals the winners of the various competitions were decided.

In the senior grade, Sarsfield's overcame holders Inniscarra in a game where goals proved vital. They got the better start with first-half goals from Maeve McCarthy and Saoirse Desmond which helped them settle into the game. Points from Kate Fennesy and Ella Woods helped to give Sars a four-point interval lead of 2-5 to 0-5 and they upped their work-rate in the second half to run out 3-18 to 0-9 winners. Blackrock won the intermediate league when they defeated Ballyhea; Castlelyons took the junior A title after they proved too strong for Sarsfield's 2, while the junior B league was won by Eire Og 2 who beat Midleton, and the junior C 13-aside title went to Grenagh who overcame St Fannah's.

The Lillie O'Sullivan Junior League was won by Sarsfield's 3 who defeated Aghabullogue 2 and the Lily Grant Junior League was won by Ballinora 2 who beat Cobh 2.

Underage leagues

The juvenile board has been busy in the last few months getting their league competitions at U12, U14, and U16 played and as the summer break fast approaches competitions at U14 and U16 levels are coming to a conclusion.

The U16 leagues will be concluded once state exams are over but for the U14s it's all systems go with five finals down to be played this weekend.

Tomorrow in the Premier 1 U14 final Killeagh will take on Aghabullogue in Blarney GAA grounds (3.15pm).

In the U14 Premier 2 final Ballin-

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

collig and Sliabh Rua meet in Bishopstown (11.15am). The U14 A final between Ballyhea and Ballinhassig will take place in Ballyanley (11.15am). Later in the day at the same venue Nemo Rangers and Ballygarvan will meet in the U14 B (4pm).

The U14 B 2 final is between Aghabullogue 2 and St Catherine's 2 in Blarney (5pm).

A very busy day of final action, best wishes to all teams. This is the last weekend of U12 league games; there will be a break for holidays and games will resume in the weekend of August 20 with three rounds of games to be played before September 3.

Cork long puck

Cork held their adult and underage long puck competitions in a sun-drenched Eire Og ground in Ovens recently. Ten competitors showed huge skills as they battled for both titles.

After close contests the winner of the adult competition was Castlemartyr's Chloe Lane. Valley Rovers' Shona Cronin won the U16 competition.

Lane and Cronin will represent Cork in the Munster competitions which will be held in conjunction with Munster GAA.

Inter-county

With their victory over Dublin secured last weekend, Cork intermediates have a break until July 1 when they will meet Galway. Cork are second behind Kilkenny who are already qualified.

If Galway beat Kilkenny on June 24 the clash of Cork and Galway will decide who will go through to the semi-final.



Mairead Donovan chairman Cork camogie board presents the U16 Cork long puck trophy to Shona Cronin



Cork dual star Hannah Looney on the move against Clare.

Picture: Larry Cummins

No thought for dual stars

CAMOGIE



Linda Mellerick

CORK had a rest weekend while group two played catch-up and they face Down today in round two of the All-Ireland Championship in Páirc Uí Chaoimh at 3pm.

They'll be without two of their dual stars who will play with the footballers in Galway this evening. The less said about that the better because it seems like we're wasting our breath. Nothing changes and people are so used to it now that it is just accepted with little public furore. This is wrong, but as with everyday life outside of sport if it doesn't affect the majority of people, protests don't happen, and the wrongs continue.

I did hear during the week that the GPA were getting involved. I hadn't an update by submission. But I don't expect a change. The camogie fixtures are always Saturday with the football on Sunday. The ladies' football association totally dismissed that so their game could be televised on TG4.

You would have to say that the future of the dual player is seriously in doubt at this stage. It doesn't do any team or player any good having this issue year after year. We have another clash in two weeks when Cork take on Clare in camogie and the footballers play Tipperary in Clonakilty.

The massive surprise from last weekend's fixtures was the draw between Kilkenny and Wexford.

That puts Kilkenny under pressure to finish top and straight to a semi-final if Tipperary get the better of them in July. Tipperary put 2-19 up against Dublin whereas Waterford hit 2-26 against a poor Offaly side a week previously. I think Waterford would have preferred to be in a tougher group than they are. They'll top group 3, of that I'm sure, and they'll head straight to a semi-final with no stern com-



Cork ace Libby Coppinger at Páirc Uí Chaoimh.

Picture: Larry Cummins

petition. The result will show that it finished all square in Nowlan Park between Leinster rivals Kilkenny and Wexford. It will feel like a victory for Colin Sunderland's Wexford side, as they rattled off the last 1-4 of the game, including 1-1 in stoppage time, to salvage a 3-11 to 1-17 draw with the reigning All Ireland champions.

Shelly Keogh's goal got the underdogs off to a dream start with just three minutes on the clock. Kilkenny's response was immediate, as they rattled off the next five points of the game — four from the stick of Katie Nolan — over the next eight minutes. Steffi Fitzgerald and Kellyann Doyle linked up play extremely well, enabled by some strong defensive work from the Kilkenny half-back line, and while a brace of Ciara O'Connor frees stemmed the tide somewhat, points from Denise Gaule (two), Katie Power and Nolan made it 0-10 to 1-2.

Wexford needed a moment of magic to stay in contention and they got it when O'Connor whipped a sideline over the bar for a two-point score, though they still trailed by 0-12 to 1-5 at half-time.

With 40 seconds gone in the second half, Julianne Malone finished to the Wexford net following a snappy turnover and there was even less evidence of the comeback

that was to come. Linda Bolger's goal, rifled into the top corner, kept them in contention, but when Asha McHardy pointed in the 53rd minute to make it 1-17 to 2-7, there were very few anticipated the big finale that was coming.

Three O'Connor scores, two from frees and one from play, set the scene for a frantic period of stoppage time. Orla Sinnott's long, hanging delivery was flicked by Aine Leacy to the net, but arguably the most impressive score was the equaliser, six minutes into stoppage time.

Sarah O'Connor drove out from centre back and kicked the ball to her sister Ciara, who duly levelled the game with her ninth point of the afternoon.

There was no such drama at the Ragg, where Munster champions Tipperary made a solid start to their campaign at Dublin's expense. Cáit Devane found the back of the Dubs' net in just the second minute of play, and things didn't get much better for Gerry McQuaid's side from then on, as Tipp racked up a 2-19 to 1-6 win.

Grace O'Brien, Eimear McGrath and Devane all struck a couple of points each in the opening half as Tipperary surged clear, 1-12 to 0-2, at the break. The game lost any intensity in the second half as Tipp convincingly drove on.

Rebels must be ruthless in Páirc Uí Chaoimh after Galway loss

SATURDAY: Glen Dimplex All-Ireland Senior Championship: Cork v Down, Páirc Uí Chaoimh, 3pm.

CAMOGIE

■ **Linda Mellerick**

IT'S Cork and Down in round two of the Glen Dimplex All-Ireland Senior Championship in Páirc Uí Chaoimh tomorrow.

It's a game Cork are expected to win but with so many injuries Cork manager Matthew Twomey and football manager Shane Ronayne are expected to do what they did a few weeks back and take two dual players each as the footballers travel to Galway for an equally important clash.

Cork's panel is seriously depleted to injuries and to lose their four dual players would be too much of a blow, regardless of the opposition.

You could say that this predicament again gives an opportunity to others to put their hand up but it's against Kilkenny, Galway, and Tipperary that you need to be doing that, so just how much management will learn from this outing is questionable. But it's a senior championship game in our home ground that is Páirc Uí Chaoimh.

You have to play what's in front of you and after Cork's opening defeat to Galway this is a must-win game, so I expect a vibrant display from the red and white.

Down lost their opening round to Clare, 1-19 to 2-11. They won the All-Ireland intermediate championship in December 2020 and Clonduff Shamrocks won their second All-Ireland intermediate club crown in 2022 so Down aren't coming to Cork to just fulfill a fixture. They'll love coming here and are sure to give an

animated display.

There is a real sense of pride to be competing at the highest grade now in Down with extremely demanding matches against Cork and Galway.

Player Dearbhla Magee embraces the challenge: "We played Cork in Newry a few years ago and we only lost by six points. Cork and Galway are good teams, but at the same time we will relish the opportunity."

Retaining top-tier status is critical according to Magee.

"It is massive, a few people when we won the intermediate back in 2020, they said we'd go back down. That is what people's instinct was with Down camogie. I think we have proved a point in the last three years, we have remained in senior. That is pivotal for us, staying up."

Key for Down is Sara-Louise Graffin, daughter of football star Ross Carr and captain Niamh Mallon up front and expect a lot of play directed to them.

Down finished second last in a group of six in 2022, with one win, a draw and three defeats, Offaly finishing last. Cork and Down didn't meet in championship in 2022.

Cork still have injuries to Laura Hayes, Orla Cronin, Aishling Egan with the hope that Pamela Mackey will be fit to play the full hour.

It's important Cork raises the green flag on more than one occasion to get back into the zone of scoring goals, something missing from their make-up of late. Cork needs a high-scoring return here overall.



Katrina Mackey was Cork's main scoring threat away to Galway recently. Picture: Ray Ryan



St Catherine's Laura Hayes is currently out injured. Picture: Larry Cummins

Camogie
Glen Dimplex All-Ireland Senior Championship
Group 1: Cork 3-19 Down 1-10;
Galway 1-13 Clare 0-13
Group 3: Antrim 3-16 Offaly 1-12
All-Ireland Intermediate Championship
Group 2: Wexford 3-11 Antrim 1-14

McCormick shows her class as Antrim advance

By **Daragh Ó Conchúir**

touch to control Dobbin's delivery on the stick before driving a rasper to the net. There was no way back for Offaly from that but they will go into the last group game against Limerick emboldened by this display despite this 3-16 to 1-2 defeat.

Galway maintained their 100 per cent record by inflicting a first defeat on Clare who provided a stiff test at Cusack Park before going down by 1-13 to 0-13 triumph.

The Tribeswomen struggled to break down a well-drilled Clare team that had taken their scalp in the National League at the beginning of the season.

The teams were deadlocked at 0-6 apiece at the break, Carrie Dolan and Niamh McPeake for Galway, and Lorna McNamara for Clare the primary scorers but it was Siobhán

McGrath's goal with just over a minute of the second half gone that proved the difference.

Points from McNamara and Orlaith Duggan brought Clare within two but that was as close as they got, as Galway just about managed to keep them at arm's length.

In the other Group 1 game, Cork overcame a stern first-half challenge from Down to get their campaign back on track at Páirc Uí Chaoimh. Two goals in three minutes at the end of the half helped them go in leading by seven at half-time and they went on to record a comfortable 3-19 to 1-10 victory.

Down more than held their own and when Niamh Mallon's free from just inside the Cork half rebounded off the crossbar, Olivia Doyle recated and kicked to the net on 18 minutes.

That put the visitors a goal ahead but less than five minutes later, the Rebels had inched in front as Katrina

Mackey drilled to the net.

Further goals from player of the match Amy O'Connor in the 30th minute and another from Mackey three minutes later made it 3-6 to 1-5 at the change of ends.

Those closing minutes that yielded 2-2 proved pivotal, as Cork were content to just keep the scoreboard ticking over after the resumption, and after Mallon registered her eighth point in the 53rd minute, the Leesiders registered the last six points, including a brace from Ali Smith, who finished with three, and a neat finish by O'Connor, who recorded a six-point tally.

The Mournewomen must now play Galway and another defeat will consign them to the relegation play-off series, with victory ensuring the westerners top the table.

Meanwhile, Cork will square off against Clare with a second qualifying position up for grabs.



ON FIRE: Antrim star Róisín McCormick

NATIONAL League winners Galway and 2021 intermediate champions Antrim booked their places in the knockout stages of the All-Ireland Senior Camogie Championship following victories over Offaly and Clare respectively.

Róisín McCormick was in stellar form, scoring a goal and ten points as Antrim made it two wins from two at the end of an entertaining clash with Offaly.

McCormick jolted Antrim from a poor start, bringing them level with three points on the trot before sending Aine Magill through for an early goal.

And it the Ulster women also finished the opening period the stronger. Caltrin Dobbin raised a green flag to send Elaine Dowds' side in at the break leading by 2-10 to 1-7.

On the restart McCormick showed composure and skill in taking one

Twomey not happy with Cork's missed chances

Cork win but lots to improve upon

CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick

IN the end it was job done and points gained for Cork in their All-Ireland Championship second-round senior camogie tie with Down in Páirc Uí Chaoimh on Saturday.

Manager Matthew Twomey had a tough week due to the game's clash with the footballers, who were playing in Galway on Saturday night.

He was happy it was behind him.

"Yeah, it's a fierce relief to have the week over with for one thing and get a win after having four losses, to get points on the board and a bit of confidence."

"We were very edgy in the first half; even a goal down at one stage, which was disappointing, but we got a great second quarter and pulled away just before half-time which was pleasing."

Asking if those four defeats in a row, three to Galway, had psychologically affected the players, Twomey said: "I'd say so, because our main problem was the scoring and it was the same again today because even in the first half we had 96 possessions against their 30, so we dominated the game and should have been a lot further ahead, but there was an edginess in front of the goal again."

"But as soon as we got into a roll to finish with 3-19 you have to be pleased. But at the same time if you want to be critical we still left a good few scores, especially goals after us."

The short passing game was getting Cork into trouble and when they went more direct it paid off. Twomey agreed.

"Yeah I suppose after watching their games (Down) they were after going very defensive in many of their games. They didn't this time and we were playing a game to work around them, but there was oceans of space and as soon as we got the information we wanted to get the ball in as fast as possible in front of the full-forward line because they were causing havoc inside there."

"And again as I say we got three goals, but there was more there, even in the first half."

Niamh Mallon is Down's star and troubled some of Cork's defenders all day long.

"Yeah I think we had three different defenders on her, she was excellent and did their main scoring."

"She got a couple of points out on the wing, they were glorious to watch. She is a great player," he graciously acknowledged.

Cork will face Clare next in two weeks time.

"We will watch the video, see where we can improve and hope to play better next time out and be more clinical in front of goal."



CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick

Cork 3-19
Down 1-10

THE performance may not have sent us home too excited, but Cork did what they had to do against Down to Páirc Uí Chaoimh on Saturday.

Enforced changes for Cork included the omission of Hannah Looney who travelled with the footballers to Galway in what was the second clash of the codes this year with another one to come on July 1.

Orlaith Cahalane was also due to travel, but word came through during the game that she broke her foot late in the week at football training. That's another big blow to Cork.

Despite the expectation that Cork would beat Down, with the injuries affecting Twomey's squad, he couldn't afford to let all dual four players go.

Aoife O'Neill got her first championship start at left corner-back with Meabh Cahalane moving to right half-back, O'Neill replacing Looney. Aoife Healy switched to midfield and Sorcha McCartan came in for Orlaith Cahalane to the team that started against Galway a fortnight ago.

Cork led by 3-6 to 1-5 at half-time, but at the 25th minute it was 1-4 apiece.

Cork had been poor, with 1-2 from play, all from the stick of Katrina Mackey. They were guilty again of some poor wides.

Cork, in fact, trailed the 2020 All-Ireland intermediate champions 1-3 to 0-3 on 18 minutes when a free from Niamh Mallon was lobbed into the square and Olivia Boyle kicked the ball home.

Cork's first touch up front was letting them down. Unable to gather the ball coming at pace first time, they lost a few chances to open Down up. When Cork sent in long deliveries, they were getting the better of their opponents.

Attempting to walk the ball out of



Cork's Amy O'Connor breaks from Down's Isabella O'Hare and Rhea Smyth during the Glen Dimplex All-Ireland Senior Camogie Championship at Páirc Uí Chaoimh. Picture: Eddie O'Hare

defence slowed down play too much.

At one point Amy Lee came from goal and took a free sideways to her corner back, which was bizarre.

Mackey's goal on 22 minutes put the spurt into Cork that they needed.

A great run down the middle by Fiona Keating, drawing defenders, left Mackey free and Keating's pass found her. She billowed the net from close range.

A Niamh Mallon free levelled the game at 1-4 but from there it was all Cork.

Amy O'Connor pointed a free and she then found her mojo to take a good McCartan pass to secure her trademark goal of rounding defenders and hitting the net. Cliona Healy pointed.

Then Mackey again to the net after a Saoirse McCarthy pass. Now Cork were playing. When they played direct, they were better.

At the start of the second half, Mallon pointed a free and for the next few minutes Cork didn't get beyond their own 45 due to short puckouts and play where they were overturned.

A stop/start game which was at times lifeless, referee Alan Hogg was far too soft with frees and showed poor use of the advantage rule.

Mackey was played deep in the second half, out on the 45. Cork's primary goal scorer, their goals dried up, but they hit 13 second-half points from eight players which was a good return.

Down's Mallon was, as expected, their scorer in chief with 10 points, five from play with Boyle Down's only other scorer.

As the game moved towards its conclusion a couple more goal chances were there for Cork, and they needed to take them with far tougher games ahead.

They won't overly be delighted with their performance, but they did what they had to do and play Clare in round 3 in Ennis in two weeks time.

Scorers for Cork: K Mackey 2-3, A O'Connor 1-5 (0-1 45, 0-25), A Smith 0-3, S McCarthy, F Keating 0-2 each, C Healy, C Sigerson, A Healy, E Murphy 0-1 each.

Down: N Mallon 0-10 (0-5), O Boyle 1-0.

CORK: A Lee, M Murphy, L Coppinger, A O'Neill, M Cahalane, L Treacy, I O'Regan; S McCarthy, A Healy, C Sigerson, F Keating, C Healy; A O'Connor, S McCartan, K Mackey.

Subs: P Mackey for M Cahalane (42), H Ryan for A O'Neill (49), E Murphy for C Healy and A Smith for S McCarthy (52), K Wall for S McCartan (54).

DOWN: C McGourty; I O'Hare, D Magee, A Savage; A Mallon, D Savage, R Smyth; D Colman, C McGilgan; B Savage, N Mallon, S L Graffin; C Fitzsimmons, L Clarke; O Boyle.

Subs: S Sands for A Savage (16), A McAleenan for C Fitzsimmons (38), C Coleman for D Coleman (43), S McGrath for A Mallon (52), C McConnell for B Savage (60).

Referee: A Hogg - Clare.



Cork's Fiona Keating shoots from Down's Dearbhla Magee during the Glen Dimplex All-Ireland senior camogie championship at Páirc Uí Chaoimh. Picture: Eddie O'Hare



Cork's Libby Coppinger and Down's Niamh Mallon during the Glen Dimplex All-Ireland Senior Camogie Championship at Páirc Uí Chaoimh. Picture: Eddie O'Hare

Female players ready to step up protest

Issues female players want resolved

John Fogarty

Senior ladies football and camogie players have indicated they will escalate their protest at an impasse regarding welfare and support issues with their governing bodies.

In a show of strength at a press briefing organised by the Gaelic Players Association (GPA) in Dublin yesterday, captains and representatives of 24 football and camogie teams released a joint statement confirming they will be playing the remainder of the championship under protest.

Frustrated with the lack of progress made about agreeing on a players' charter with their governing bodies for next season, they are seeking the GAA, Ladies Gaelic Football Association and Camogie Association to enter discussions in the short term.

Their press release read: "This has been over 18 months since integration was declared a priority and voted in by the membership of the three Associations. While the National Governing Bodies claim to be listening, it is evident that they are not truly hearing us. Urgent issues affecting player welfare have been brought to their attention, yet they refuse to even engage collectively to discuss solutions."

"We as players are not receiving the respect we deserve. Therefore, do not expect business as usual in the upcoming weeks and months."

The group's lead spokesperson, Dublin camogie captain Aisling Maher, said they would consider taking further action if there is no progress made. "Look, obviously our priority here is to come to some sort of resolution so the exact protest is not something we have discussed at any length or agreed as a collective."

"I think we have seen examples in the male game of



SHOW OF SOLIDARITY: GPA members, back row from left: Niamh Rockett, Waterford; Carla Rowe, Dublin; Shauna Healy, Galway; Karen McGrath, Waterford; Siofra O'Shea, Kerry; Ellen Healy, Laois; Kelly Mallon, Armagh; Neasa Byrd, Cavan. Middle row from left: Melissa Duggan, Cork; Anais Curran, Wexford; Marion Quaid, Limerick; Niamh Mallon, Down; Maria Curley, Tipperary; Aisling Maher, Dublin; Chloe Morey, Clare; Amy O'Connor, Cork; Front row from left: Lisa Cafferky, Mayo; Vikki Wall, Meath; Sinead O'Keefe, Kilkenny; Niamh McLaughlin, Donegal; Ailbhe Davoren, Galway; Lucia McNuaghton, Antrim; Clodagh Quirke, Tipperary and Grainne Dolan, Offaly. Picture: Matt Browne/Sportsfile

things they have been pushed to whether that is delaying start times, not speaking to media, whatever things we've seen in the GAA are all viable options to us if we get forced into that position."

Both the Ladies Gaelic Football and Camogie Associations released press releases reacting to the joint statement. The LGFA expressed "surprise" as they are "actively involved in correspondence arising from the publication of the GPA's 'State of Play' Equality report".

They also added that over €1.4m of government funding will be allocated to inter-county squads this year to assist with expenses claims, €900,000 of which goes directly to players.

Having requested further details from the GPA from their report, the Camogie As-

sociation said it "remains available for further discussions and awaits the more detailed information as requested."

As an AFLW player with North Melbourne, as well as an inter-county footballer, Meath star Vikki Wall stressed the stark contrast between the experiences.

"You look across, the (Meath) men are training on the pitch beside you and you could be travelling from the exact same place as them; you could be meeting them in the gym on a Tuesday night, you could be meeting them travelling to games and you think, 'I'm out of pocket here'. It's not a case of we're asking for salaries, we're out of pocket. There's a huge disparity."

"If you're making a pros and cons list when you're making a decision and you

look at X and look at Y, if you were to compare at the moment, what a male inter-county player gets to what a female inter-county player gets, frustrating is a PC term to use for it at the moment, to be honest."

"It's so infuriating that we are putting in serious efforts to be taken seriously as elite athletes for our national sport, and it's not a case of asking about mileage and things like that at the moment, we're not even being listened to at the moment."

Clare camogie player Chloe Morey said: "The message is clear, from the NGBs, from our perspective, it's that if you want strength and conditioning, sort it out yourself. If you want facilities, sort it out yourself. Nutrition, gear, travel expenses, sort it out, it's nothing to do with us and that's the sentiment that's felt

between all players here."

Coming in the wake of Cavan pulling out of a league game over an expenses row in March and Kildare camogie team's differences with their county board, GPA chief executive Tom Parsons stressed the financial prowess of a player or their family should not dictate their playing career.

"If anybody in their county, male or female, is good enough to represent their county in any of the codes, your financial prowess to be able to pick up the physio bills, the nutrition requirements to be an inter-county player, to be able to pay the fuel to get into their car should not be part of the decision-making process."

"That is non-negotiable for all players who represent their county."

John Fogarty

Two months ago, the Gaelic Players Association (GPA) published a "state of play" report, which raised several issues regarding training and playing in the two female field sports.

Following that, the GPA called on the GAA, the Ladies Gaelic Football Association and the Camogie Association to enter discussions about devising a players' charter for the female codes for the 2024 season where minimum standards of player welfare would be set out.

It is the GPA's belief that the governing associations won't move on the matter until the integration process between the three has been completed, which the official players body feels could take several years.

Among the grievances raised at yesterday's press conference included:

- Lack of physiotherapy and training facilities;
- Lack of team doctors and insurance cover for operations;
- Lack of mileage expenses — only 10% of players reported to receive them in the "state of play" report;
- A female player rupturing her anterior cruciate ligament in a rabbit hole on a pitch the men's team refused to train on;
- A 40 cent per mile mileage rate recently ceasing in Cavan as it was only available to college students during semesters compared to 70 cent per mile for men and €1 when car-pooling;
- College-going senior footballers in Mayo considering not going to training as they can't afford to travel;
- Players having to purchase county gear in local sports shops and team-mates having to share shorts due to a lack of playing gear.

Twomey relieved as Cork finally get on the board

Camogie

Daragh Ó Conchúir

Matthew Twomey admitted to relief being the prevailing emotion as his Cork team brought a four-game losing run in three different competitions to an end in the Glen Dimplex All-Ireland senior camogie championship.

Waterford, Galway, and Antrim all secured places in the last six at least by making it two wins from two against Limerick, Clare, and Offaly respectively.

That trio will go into the final round, in a fortnight, targeting top spot in their groups, with two of the three No 1 seeds earning direct progression to the semi-finals.

Cork could still be one of those sides. Conversely, as a result of their first-round defeat to Galway and with a joust to come against a Clare side that only lost by 1-13 to 0-13 against the League champions at Cusack Park on Saturday

and already has a victory under their belt, they still remain in danger of not advancing.

A brace of goals from Katrina Mackey and another major from Amy O'Connor, all in the second quarter and two between the 30th and 33rd minutes, turned the Rebels' tie against Down.

Having trailed by a point, they led by seven at half-time before cruising to a 3-19 to 1-10 at Páirc Uí Chaoimh, Niamh Mallon hitting ten points (half from play) for the visitors.

"It was a tight, tough first half," said Twomey.

"We were running at them and we knew we were causing trouble. We got a couple of scores then before half-time that virtually killed the game off but they're a good side. They went toe-to-toe with us and fair play to them."

"We're after watching a good few of their games in the last few weeks. When you've a forward like Niamh Mallon, she's an excellent for-

ward and she caused us fierce trouble."

"They're very organised, even their short puckouts and for our puckouts too, they were cute enough and it took us a while to adapt, which was probably disappointing from our side of things."

"But we were happy enough the way the players adapted then just in the last quarter of the first half, to pull away."

In Group 3, Waterford consigned Limerick to a second consecutive defeat at Cappamore yesterday.

Niamh Rockett had a first-half goal and with the supreme Beth Carton slotting seven points with the aid of the breeze, Seán Power's unit led by 1-11 to 0-5 at the break, Claire Keating contributing four points for Limerick.

The Déise girls carried the greater threat and Carton unleashed a rocket to the top corner of the net for their second goal, as the De La Salle destroyer finished with a tally of 1-12 (1-8 from play)



Cork's Amy O'Connor breaks from Down's Isabella O'Hare and Rhea Smyth during their clash in the All-Ireland senior camogie championship at Páirc Uí Chaoimh. Picture: Eddie O'Hare

and Waterford prevailed by 2-19 to 0-11.

Róisín McCormick shot 1-10 as Antrim accounted for a gritty Offaly by 3-16 to 1-12 in Portlengone in the other Group 3 game on Saturday. The goal was an absolute jewel

in the first half, after she had set up Aine Magill for Antrim's first major and Caltrín Dobbins had the Saffrons' third major before the interval with a snappy ground struck to make sure the hosts would have valuable breathing space

through the second half. Elsewhere it was a real struggle for Galway, who could never shake off Clare and were glad of Siobhán McGrath's first-half goal to enable them to edge the verdict.

'Dual issue tarnished the week,' Twomey admits after Cork win

Rebels get their All-Ireland campaign back on track

CORK 3-19
DOWN 1-10

GER MCCARTHY REPORTS

ORLAITH Cahalane's injury and ongoing dual player issues overshadowed Cork's All-Ireland camogie senior championship victory over Down at Páirc Uí Chaoimh last Saturday.

Cork manager Matthew Twomey confirmed dual player Calahane broke a foot training with the Cork ladies football team during the week and will miss significant time over the coming months.

The Down game was also overshadowed by the ongoing dual player saga affecting Cork's Aoife Healy, Hannah Looney, Libby Coppinger and Cahalane.

With the footballers also in championship action on Saturday, it was decided that Coppinger and Healy would tog out for the camogie team and Looney would play for the footballers.

'I'm delighted with the two dual players that played for us today,' Twomey told *The Southern Star*.

'Libby Coppinger is irreplaceable in my eyes and Aoife Healy played very well too. The dual issue tarnished the whole week. It is a ridiculous situation for (Cork football manager) Shane Ronayne and I to be in again, not to mention the players.'

'We spoke all week to the LGFA, Camogie and WPGA to try and come to some sort of agreement. There was no give,

'Libby Coppinger is irreplaceable in my eyes'
— Matthew Twomey

it was like a game of chess. It is very disappointing.

'Shane was hoping to go up to Galway with four players and only ended up with one after Orlaith Cahalane broke her foot in training last Thursday night. Everyone else in the world can see that there is an easy fix. A bit of communication but they (associations) cannot seem to do it.'

A heavy downpour just before throw-in at Páirc Uí Chaoimh didn't deter the hosts who moved two points clear courtesy of Katrina Mackey and Amy O'Connor (free). Goalkeeper Amy Lee made an early save from Sarah Louise Graffin but Down were quickly on the scoreboard via Niamh Mallon (free). Amy O'Connor edged Cork 0-3 to 0-1 in front from a free after ten minutes. The visitors were not overawed however, and two Niamh Mallon points levelled matters.

Down capped off a dominant spell when a Mallon free landed in the square and Olivia Boyle kicked the loose sliotar into the net. 1-3 to 0-3 behind, Katrina Mackey took the game by the scruff of the neck. The Douglas player fired over her second point before gathering a Fiona Keating pass and walloping home an unstoppable effort. Next, Mackey had another goal-bound shot deflected out for a

45 that O'Connor converted. O'Connor went one better a minute later, arrowing a cracking effort into the net. Cliona Healy added a point prior to Mackey flicking home Cork's third goal.

3-6 to 1-4 ahead at the interval, Cork kicked on in the third quarter and produced excellent scores from Saoirse McCarthy, Amy O'Connor, Chloe Sigerson and Aoife Healy. Niamh Mallon added three more scores for Down who trailed 3-11 to 1-8 at the three-quarter mark.

Niamh Mallon kept Down in touch and ended with all ten of her team's points. Cork found another gear however, with Ali Smith, Saoirse McCarthy, Aoife Healy and Emma Murphy adding late scores to copperfasten a 3-19 to 1-10 victory.

'I see that the camogie and LGFA fixtures are on the same Saturday now again in two weeks' time (July 1st),' Matthew Twomey added. 'If they don't want dual players then come out and say it. Leaving the players to make a call on it is just crazy. Hannah Looney was very disappointed not to be able to play camogie for us today.'

Scorers

Cork: K Mackey 2-3; A O'Connor 1-5 (2f, 145); A Smith 0-3; S McCarthy, F Keating 0-2 each; C Healy, C Sigerson, A Healy, E Murphy 0-1 each.
Down: N Mallon 0-10 (7f); O Boyle 1-0.
Cork: A Lee; M Murphy, L Coppinger, A O'Neill; M Cahalane, L Treacey, I O'Regan; A Healy, S



There is no stopping Cork's Fiona Keating as she bursts up the field against Down.

(Photos: Bryan Keane/INPHO)

McCarthy; C Sigerson, F Keating, C Healy, A O'Connor (captain), S McCartan, K Mackey.

Subs: P Mackey for M Cahalane (42); H Ryan for A O'Neill (49); E Murphy for C Healy (53); A Smith for S McCarthy (53); K Wall for S McCartan (54).

Down: C McGourty, I O'Hare, D Magee, A Savage; A Mallon, D Savage, R Smyth; D Coleman, C McGilligan; B Savage, N Mallon (captain), S L Graffin, C Fitzsimmons, L Clarke, O Boyle.

Subs: S Sands for A Savage (44); S McGrath for A Mallon (53); C McAleenan for C Fitzsimmons (38); C Coleman for D Coleman

McConnell for B Savage (60).
Referee: Aaron Hogg (Clare).



Down's Alannah Savage gets to grips with Cork's Sorcha McCartan in Saturday's encounter.

CAMOGIE GROUP 1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	SD	PTS
Galway	2	2	0	0	2-25	0-25	+6	6
Cork	2	1	0	1	3-31	2-22	+12	3
Clare	2	1	0	1	1-32	3-24	+2	3
Down	2	0	0	2	3-21	4-38	-20	0

THE HIGHLIGHTS

Our Star: Katrina Mackey's two goals gave Cork breathing space after a disappointing first-half display. Amy O'Connor, Saoirse McCarthy, Fiona Keating and Ali Smith also impressed.

Star moment: Katrina Mackey's first goal and Amy O'Connor's green flag were beautifully crafted and superbly finished.

Talking point: The victory over Down was secondary to the news of Orlaith Cahalane's injury and the ongoing dual player saga that is set to rear its ugly head once again next week.

What's next? Cork continue their All-Ireland camogie senior campaign with a must-win trip to Clare on July 1st.

Cork rocked by loss of injured dual star Cahalane

BY DARAGH Ó CONCHUIR

CORK dual star Orlaith Cahalane is facing a spell on the sidelines after breaking her foot training with the county's footballers.

Cahalane suffered the injury ahead of last weekend's games, and it's a blow to both the camogie and football teams. She was due to line out with the Cork

footballers in their championship clash away to Galway on Saturday night.

'Unfortunately, Orlaith Cahalane broke her foot Thursday night so we've about nine serious injuries,' Cork camogie manager Matthew Twomey confirmed. It's a big blow to the camogie team that is already missing a host of big names through injury, including Ashling Thompson. With three more dual

players in action for both the camogie and football teams, Twomey's squad depth is being tested.

'We've been very unlucky so we said we'd use the bench (against Dow) to see what we have because there will be times that we will need them to come in and change the game. (Saturday) wasn't a token gesture but the game was wrapped up but they made a fierce

impression and we're delighted with it,' Twomey explained.

'Emma Murphy came on and got a score, Ali Smith got three points; she's always doing that for us when she comes on. Kate Wall did well. Pamela Mackey is just back, we only got good news on her yesterday from the doctors so we said we'd try to get as much time into her (as we could).'



Injured: Orlaith Cahalane.



Cork players celebrate after the Down game. Picture: INPHO/Bryan Keane

Joy for Aghabullogue, Ballinhassig, Nemo and Sliabh Rua in finals

IT WAS a busy weekend of U14 league finals with victories going to Aghabullogue, Ballinhassig, Sliabh Rua and Nemo Rangers.

In the Premier final, played in Blarney, Aghabullogue overcame a spirited Killeagh side.

They took the lead and at the interval and led 3-7 to 2-3 with Lexi Manley, Sarah Kelleher, Ava Murphy and Cornelia Buckley all working hard.

In the second half, Aghabullogue applied pressure and despite the best efforts of the Killeagh defence, Aghabullogue ran out winners on a 6-15 to 2-7 scoreline with Lexi Manley contributing 3-9 of her side's total.

She was ably assisted by Ava Murphy, Sarah Kelleher, Sarah Hubbard, Clodagh O'Sullivan, Ciara Masie Cremin, Cornelia Buckley and Rachel Holland, who were all on the scoresheet.

In the U14 Premier 2 final, Ballincollig and Sliabh Rua met in Bishopstown and at the interval Sliabh Rua led 3-9 to 1-2.

Sliabh Rua defended well, ably led by captain Aoife Sheehan and goalkeeper Sarah O'Connor, who denied Ballincollig with some excellent saves.

Throughout the second half, despite excellent Ballincollig defending, Sliabh Rua proved too strong as they ran out winners on a 6-15 to 3-6 scoreline.

The U14A final was played in Ballyanley and here Ballyhea and Ballinhassig battled it out.

Ballinhassig settled into the game with first half scores from Orla Lynch, Ruby Jardine, and Evie Rose Twohig.

Ballyhea kept in touch with Rosie Walsh and Katelyn Shortt on target but thanks to a strong opening half it was Ballinhassig who led 2-6 to 1-2 at the break.

Both sides battled hard throughout the second half but it was Ballinhassig who built on their strong opening half adding six points to their tally, thanks to points from Ruby Jardine, Katlyn Looney, Evie Rose, Orla Lynch Point and Kayla O'Toole.

CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

Ballyhea responded with Rosi Walsh and Katlyn Shortt adding to their tally but it was Ballinhassig who ran out winners on a 2-12 to 3-6 scoreline.

In the U14 B final, Nemo and Ballygarvan met in Ballyanley where Nemo took the title on a 6-8 to 2-2 scoreline with Shonagh O'Sullivan, Grace French, Brianna Lynch, Rosin Moroney and Isobel Brophy, who hit 3-5 of their tally all finding the range with excellent scores.

Ballygarvan had good performances from Hazel O'Flaherty, Annie Duggan, Meryl Casey and Ava Downey who were all on the scoresheet for them.

The U14 B2 final was closely contested with Aghabullogue edging out St Catherine's by two points 1-5 to 1-3.

Aoibhinn O'Connell, Lisa Marie Casey, Chloe Hubbard and Alice How were to the fore for Aghabullogue, whilst Simone Fitzgerald and Kaylee O'Connor were on the St Catherine's scoresheet.

MINOR CHAMPIONSHIP

The draws for the S E systems minor championship are made recently with first round to be played on or before July 23.

Round two will be played on or before July 21st and round three on or before August 13.

Minor Premier: Eleven clubs divided into two groups, Group 1: Eire Og, Ballinora, Clonakilly, Blackrock, Aghabullogue, Enniskeane. Group 2: Cloughduv, Sarsfields, Middleton, Erins Own, Iniscarra.

Minor A: Fifteen teams divided into three groups of five, Group 1: Glen Rovers, Ballygarvan, Fr O' Neills, Sarsfields 2, Castlemartyr. Group 2: Newcestown, Laccra Og, Rockban, Cogh, Ballincollig. Group 3: Barryroe, Douglas, Kilbrittain / Timoleague, Malloy, Na Piar-saigh.

Minor B: Twenty two teams, two groups of six and two groups of five.

Group 1: Killeagh, St Catherine's, Courcay rovers, Milford, Ballyhea, Ballinhassig.

Group 2: Carrigaline, Tracton, Sliabh Rua, Valley Rovers, Castletyons, St Fannan's.

Group 3: Ballinhassig, Kilworth, Blarney, Newtownshandrum, Youghal.

Group 4: Carrigrohilly, Bishopstown, St Finbar's, Millstreet, Aghada.



Cork manager Matthew Twomey watches on during the All Ireland senior camogie championship at Páirc Uí Chaoimh.

Picture: Eddie O'Hare

Camogie win badly needed



CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick

IT WAS a much-needed win for Cork last Saturday against Down.

They had lost their four previous outings. I can't remember the last time that happened with Cork's senior team.

Three of those defeats were to Galway, in their final group game, the league final and opening round of the All-Ireland championship.

In between, Cork lost their Munster championship opening round to Waterford. I'd say the relief was immense. It doesn't matter that it was against Down, it was a win, and they broke the cycle.

What a nightmare it has been for Matthew Twomey this year. Cruciate injuries to Ashling Thompson, Olivia McAllen, Katie O'Mahony and Ciara O'Sullivan.

Orla Cronin out of action except for sporadic appearances for over a year now, a four-month injury to Katrina Mackey, only back in competitive action a fortnight.

Pam Mackey injured and came on as a sub on Saturday. Then Laura Hayes, who has become such a pivotal member of the team, broke a bone in her foot and to cap it all Orlaith Cahalane broke a bone in her foot last Thursday night.

The bad run couldn't be worse, and you have to positionally manoeuvre your team to accommodate such losses.

Maybe the injuries are a stretch too far this year in terms of All Ireland success. Maybe not!

We've been critical of Cork's performances and rightly so because despite their woes they have created a volume of opportunities but been extremely wasteful up front and many of those players are regulars a few years now.

And experienced options are limited on the panel.

Cork were hesitant in front of the posts last weekend again. And again, goal opportunities weren't capitalised on.



Cork's Amy O'Connor with Alannah Savage and Rhea Smyth of Down. Picture: INPHO/Bryan Keane

Katrina Mackey's frustration was evident when she didn't get a pass in the closing seconds of the game with a certain goal on.

Having scored two goals in the opening period Mackey played too deep for my liking in the second half.

She is our most lethal forward, a top-class player and if she gets a sniff of goal, she'll go for it.

If Cork are going to play a two player inside line, Mackey has to be and remain one of them. Yes, she wanders, as she should, as her point scoring is equally potent, but I feel if playing on a wide pitch such as Páirc Uí Chaoimh she needs to be closer to goal.

She'll still get space and she needs to get the passes when they present themselves.

What a debacle last weekend was between the football and camogie clash. And we have the same issue presenting itself on July 1.

You know what, I'm not going to be popular for saying this, but I think the day of the dual player is over. I think integration is a few years off but I'm not saying it just because of the fixture clashes.

I can fully appreciate when a player is good at two sports that they want to play both and to make a choice is hard, but the

time has come that they should.

The training that girls do today between strength and conditioning and field work equals that of their male counterparts.

The time required to commit to inter-county is significant, equal again between men and women.

How so do the men feel they can't do both, but the women feel they can?

I don't believe for one minute that either ladies' squad is getting the best from their dual players. How can they?

You train extremely hard three or four days of the week and in between rest is as important as the active work.

Even if both sets of management 'manage' the situation and have their dual players sit out 50% of their own week, how is that productive for your squad?

If you have a big game coming up, your two weeks run in is crucial. You need your full complement to work on play scenarios, you want their full focus on the game ahead.

There is no way that any dual player is 100% focused on that particular game when they are trying to do physically, mentally, and logistically the same with their other sport.

That's draining. I think it's time to decide



Equality isn't too much to ask for

While we wait for integration, a charter has to be put in place to ensure proper treatment for female players

Nadine Doherty



The Dublin Pride parade was as colourful, joyful and celebratory as ever yesterday. It's now 40 years since 200 people marched through Dublin city centre to Fairview Park demanding equal rights for the LGBTQ+ community and with every passing year the occasion grows in participation levels and in significance.

The concept of Pride originated in New York in June 1969 following

six days of riots in the quest for civil rights. The protests started as the result of an unprovoked, violent and illegal police raid on the Stonewall Inn, an LGBTQ+ bar located in lower Manhattan. That event changed the course of history and began a global movement for equality for our LGBTQ+ community that is still ongoing today.

Every year Pride reminds us of the important part our allies across societal demographics play in helping us on that journey.

This year also marks the 50th anniversary of the Ladies' Gaelic Football Association, and last Monday a group of inter-county football and camogie players sat united in front of the nation's media asking for their voices to be heard. An image of

#UnitedForEquality was projected on a screen behind the group. Each player wore their county jersey but in reality they were representative of every player in every county across the country.

The players outlined their disappointment at what they see as inaction on behalf of the governing bodies in relation to the development of a female squad charter that has led them to play the remainder of the championships under protest.

Over two months ago the GPA released a report outlining the conditions female players are currently enduring. The majority of the findings and statistics in the document are shocking, yet unsurprising to those of us connected with women's sport.

Supported by the GPA the players have sought discussions with the GAA, LGFA and Camogie Association to formulate a squad charter from 2024 onwards.

Mayo's Lisa Cafferky, an intercounty player since 2007, outlined the series of events that has brought them to this juncture. "It feels like our voices haven't been heard and that there hasn't been any action taken since the report came out so we felt we had no choice," she said.

I started playing football with St Eunan's in 1993 at under 12. We trained half a kilometre away from the main club facilities on a field with two goalposts and an occasional herd of cattle. There were no changing or toilet facilities. The boys trained on the main pitch in the club with access to changing rooms.

On June 24 that year, Ireland passed legislation decriminalising homosexuality as a result of over 20 years of tireless work by the social movement led by David Norris.

Donegal's Niamh McLaughlin told a story last week of a player who tore her ACL while training with her county team on a pitch that had been badly damaged by rabbits. That team had no option but to train there. And this was in 2022.

In 2015 I was a coach with the Westmeath ladies' team. The players didn't get any expenses; college players regularly couldn't afford to travel for midweek training. It was a rarity if we knew by lunchtime where training would be that evening. Luckily we

had an excellent chairperson who, in hindsight, had probably dipped into her own pocket so that players were fed after training and matches.

In May of that year the marriage equality referendum was passed by 68 per cent of the Irish public, making Ireland the first country to legalise same sex marriage by popular vote.

When Vikki Wall spoke last Monday she highlighted how the double All-Ireland winners have struggled all season to secure training venues, a difficulty that has caused huge stress to the players and had a detrimental impact on their preparations.

The players fighting for their right to escape from having to pay to play are very realistic in their expectations. They do not expect immediate equalisation with male players, they are simply looking for a pathway towards closing the gap. They are seeking equality, rights and provisions at a basic level. They are anxious about a number of realities and possibilities, they understand that their associations are restricted in terms of finances, while being clear that discussions between the GPA and all three bodies must take place imminently.

Cafferky admits Mayo are "one of the fortunate counties" in terms of the provisions that have been put in place for them. "We have a brilliant set-up in Mayo," she said, "but there is nothing on paper that guarantees us any of that provision

Lily Fahy of Newmarket-on-Fergus in action against Leah Barrett of Turloughmore during the John West Féile na nGael at Connacht GAA Centre of Excellence. Eighty club sides took part in the hurling and camogie national finals at seven venues in Connacht yesterday. Picture by Stephen Marken



There has to be a set of minimum standards in place for all female intercounty teams.

It is going to take for integration to become a reality.

Cafferky echoed the sense of abandonment felt by her peers when she described her reaction to the LGFA statement released on Monday. "Ultimately it is disappointing that there perhaps isn't an appreciation of the challenges that we are facing and it feels like they [LGFA] aren't fully listening to our concerns.

"We understand that from an LGFA perspective there are challenges with the generation of revenue and income ... but they are our national governing body and they should be supporting us as players and wanting the same as us — to create a better environment for female inter-county players," she said.

"We want them to be working alongside us to come up with solutions. We don't have them alone, but if you get all the NGBs alongside the GPA we can work towards a better future. It is disappointing that the LGFA have come out slightly defensive. We want to work with them, we don't want to be in this position."

I received many invitations to attend Pride events within the Gaelic games community this weekend. Our three governing bodies have embraced, celebrated and promoted inclusion, diversity and equality throughout their histories. Prioritising the basic rights of our female players must take precedence in the short term and by doing so those involved will make a strong statement of what their intentions are in moving forward the process of integration.

A female squad charter cannot be funded and facilitated by one association acting independently. It can only be achieved collectively. In 2022 the GAA had a surplus of €22m, the LGFA's was €890,000 and the Camogie Association had an underspend of €292,000.

The players have stated that "business as usual in the coming weeks and months should not be expected" and Cafferky described what that might look like. "We are players and we want to continue to focus on playing the sports we are passionate about, but we need to see progress in the coming weeks in terms of all parties coming together and working towards putting in place a female squad charter.

"However, if that doesn't happen, a decision will be taken by all players in terms of what action we will take. There are many possibilities such as delaying games or players not talking to the media. The past has taught us that in order to enact change, sometimes it is necessary to disrupt to begin with, but it is always essential to work collectively with those who have the same common goal.

"Transformational and strong leadership is required to ensure our female players are treated with the respect and dignity they deserve."



Lisa Cafferky: 'Our voices haven't been heard.'

in the future. The next manager or county board could come in and for whatever reasons, there's no food, pitches, physio, all of that and we are struggling again. There has to be a set of minimum standards in place for all female inter-county teams."

There is also an anxiety around players choosing sports other than football or camogie, a problem highlighted during the press conference when 14 out of 24 hands were raised in response to a reporter's question asking how many knew of players who have left the game because they cannot afford to play anymore.

Players understand that integration is the overarching deciding factor in solving problems, but like any long-term plan, there must be short-term planning and the charter must be a priority. The players cannot wait the five-plus years

Female players unite in a show of strength

CLIONA FOLEY

A joint sit-down at Parnell Park yesterday by Kilkenny and Dublin senior camogie players just before throw-in marked the start of the female inter-county protest actions.

Two dozen players, representing both codes and all counties, held a joint press conference last Monday to express their frustration that a player charter for basics like medical support and expenses has not been implemented by their governing bodies in camogie and Gaelic football.

The players have been lobbying for one since April and said they would play out the remainder of the 2023 championships 'under protest'. The initial form of that emerged in the first of the weekend's Glen Dimplex senior camogie championship clashes.

Just before the national anthem started, players from both sides mingled and lined up alongside each other in a show of strength across the pitch. They then sat down on the pitch together for up to a minute before assuming their starting positions.

The gesture was greeted by sustained applause from the crowd and, in the match programme, Dublin camogie chairperson Karl O'Brien wrote: "Here in Dublin, we are proud to stand alongside our players and support this call. Dublin camogie will always strive to offer our players the best supports possible."

After the match, Dublin star Aisling Maher said both teams had lined up together "to show our unity on this issue" and then sat down "as an official protest".

She said this initial action was designed to "be of minimal disruption to the game and the supporters as possible" but indicated that if their pleas for action are not acted upon, then player actions could escalate in the future.



Denise Gaule: Led the charge

Kilkenny ran out 3-14 to 0-11 winners in a repeat of the Leinster final, with Denise Gaule and Katie Nolan leading the All-Ireland champions' charge. The visitors led 2-10 to 0-7 at half-time thanks to goals from Nolan and Aoife Prendergast.

Gaule got the Cats' third goal, from a 20-metre free, almost immediately after the restart, but that was all that separated the sides in the second half when Dublin were much improved. Maher, Muireann Kelliher and Ashling O'Neill led their fightback.

Tipperary are back in the knockout stages after making it two wins from two in Group 2 with a resounding 3-15 to 0-12 win over Wexford at Bellefield.

The seven-season unbroken run in the last six came to an end 12 months ago on score difference, but new manager Denis Kelly has no such worries in his maiden campaign, qualifying with a game to spare.

Wexford will need a big win over Dublin and hope that Tipp can do something similar to Kilkenny if they are to progress but must first address their slow starts. Once more, Colin Sunderland's outfit left themselves with a mountain to climb, but unlike a fortnight ago, when they secured a draw having trailed Kilkenny by 10 points, they were unable to rescue the situation this time.

All-Ireland senior camogie championship

Tipperary 3-15 Wexford 0-12; Kilkenny 3-14 Dublin 0-11

All-Ireland intermediate camogie championship

Derry 1-16 Antrim 1-6; Wexford 4-13 Carlow 1-10; Westmeath 4-10 Meath 2-5; Kerry 2-14 Laois 0-9; Galway 1-14 Dublin 1-9

All-Ireland junior camogie championship

Tipperary 3-14 Cavan 1-9; Armagh 6-32 Offaly 0-1; Limerick 2-9 Mayo 0-10; Clare 3-19 Roscommon 0-5; Tyrone 1-22 Louth 1-3

Dublin and Kilkenny repeat

Camogie

Daragh Ó Conchuir

Today's All-Ireland Senior Championship clash between Dublin and Kilkenny (Parnell Park, 2pm) is a repeat of the Leinster final, in which Kilkenny needed a late goal to eke out a four-point triumph.

The All-Ireland champions were at full strength so it was a good effort by Dublin, following their relegation from the top tier of the National League.

They failed to replicate that though when falling to a heavy defeat to Tipperary in the first round and defeat here would end their hopes of returning to the quarter-final stages, at which the Cats ended their journey last year.

Kilkenny looked to be getting the defence of their title off to the perfect start when leading by 10 points early in the second half against Wexford but in the end had to settle for a draw so will be anxious to record victory here ahead of their concluding tie with Tipperary.

Wexford meet Tipperary at Bellefield today (4pm) and are in good shape after a stunning last-quarter rally saw them snatch a draw with Kilkenny in the opening round, having trailed by 10 points.

They were still four down at the end of regulation time but Aine Lacey's phenomenal goal preceded a spectacular equalising point from Ciara O'Connor.

Division 1B League finalists, the Model County women, are moving in the right direction but face another major test against a Tipperary team that enjoyed a good Division 1A League campaign before a narrow loss to Kilkenny denied them a place in the top-tier decider.

They annexed the Munster title, however, and began this campaign with an easy win against Dublin. If they can do the business here, they will be back in the knockout stages, after a seven-year run ended on score difference 12 months ago.



Kilkenny's Steffi Fitzgerald fights for the ball against Wexford.

Tipperary return to

Premier side back in knockout stages with win over

TIPPERARY are back in the knockout stages of the Glen Dimplex All-Ireland Senior Camogie Championships after securing their second victory in Group 2 when beating Wexford by 3-15 to 0-12 at Bellefield.

The seven-season unbroken run in the last six came to an end 12 months ago on score difference but new manager Denis Kelly has no such worries in his maiden campaign as the Premier side have qualified with a game to spare.

Wexford will need a comprehensive win over Dublin and hope that Tipp can do something similar to Kilkenny if they are to progress but they must first address their slow starts. For the second tie in succession, Colin Sunderland's outfit left themselves with a mountain to climb but unlike a fortnight ago, when they secured a draw after falling ten points behind Kilkenny, they were unable to rescue the situation this time.

By Aoife English

Kilkenny on the way to their first victory, getting the better of a spirited Dublin by 3-14 to 0-11 at Parnell Park.

The home team had the wind in the first half and used it to good effect early on, teenager Aisling O'Neill pointing from the first attack. Denise Gaule equalised with the first of her tally of 1-9, 1-5 of which came from placed balls, and the teams would go on to be level four times in the first eight minutes.

Grace O'Shea shot two points for the home team and Aisling Maher another, while Katie Power, Gaule and Kellyann Doyle were on target for the Cats.

Gradually though, the visitors began to hit their straps and they registered 2-4 before Maher tagged on Dublin's next score.

Gaule splitting the posts either side of a Katie Nolan score, before last year's victorious captain Aoife Prendergast goaled at the quarter-mark. Nolan latched onto a break to send a rasper to the corner of the net shortly after.

Maher and Aisling Gannon did steady the ship with three points between them and it was 2-10 to 0-7 at half-time, but Kilkenny removed all hope immediately after the restart when Gaule goaled from a 20-metre free awarded for a foul on the former player of the year.

It was 0-4 apiece for the remaining half-hour as Dublin battled hard, Maher and O'Neill slotting good points while Asha McHardy came off the bench to bag a brace for Kilkenny, who have that tussle with Tipp to come. Dublin must get the better of Wexford to avoid being drawn into a relegation play-off.



FULL ON: Kilkenny's Katie Nolan comes under pressure against Dublin (main) at Parnell Park while Claire Phelan takes on the hosts' Abby Ryan (inset).



PREMIER STAR: Cait Devane in action for Tipperary



Eimear McGrath had a point on the board for Tipperary when Cait Devane came up with an inventive finish for a goal in the fifth minute despite the best efforts of Ciara Storey who thought she had done enough but the sliotar was ruled to have crossed the line by the umpire.

Points from Chloe Foxe and Ciara O'Connor, who finished with nine, looked to settle the home team but Grace O'Brien, Teresa Ryan and Karin Blair raised white flags for Tipp before Ryan slammed a 12th-minute goal after good work from the prominent Karen Kennedy and a sublime cross-field pass by Devane to Eimear Heffernan, who provided the final assist.

O'Connor fired three points and Linda Bolger two as Wexford looked to eat into the nine-point deficit but five was as close as they got, Devane, Blair, Heffernan and McGrath enabling the Munster side to establish a 2-10 to 0-8 lead at the interval.

The second half was poor, with scores at a premium until Róisín Howard bagged a goal from 13 metres on the hour and Devane struck two injury-time points.

Meanwhile, two goals in five minutes mid-way through the first half sent All-Ireland champions Kil-

It's a short wait for Tipperary as they return to knockout stages

CAMOGIE ROUND-UP

Tipperary are back in the knockout stages of the Glen Dimplex All-Ireland Senior Camogie Championships after securing their second win from two Group 2 games when beating Wexford by 3-15 to 0-12 at Bellefield.

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Aine Slattery's Tipperary are back in the knockout-stage picture

business end

Wexford as Kilkenny get off mark



Lack of equality may see female players strike or even quit

Eoghan Cormican

A little maths to begin with. Galway footballer Nicola Ward has been living and working as a nurse in Dublin for three years. During the inter-county season, she travels west for training and games three times a week.

Up to €40 worth of fuel goes into the car for each trip, while a further €10 is needed for tolls at Enfield and Cappataggle. Multiplied by three, that's €150 a week.

In a seven-month inter-county season, Ward is forking out €4,500 on travel costs alone.

Covid meant the 2021 inter-county season ran a little shorter than last year's campaign and the current edition still ongoing, so we've calculated the Galway centre-back's travel costs for the past three years at €10,950.

2021 was the first year the Government grant to female inter-county players was brought in line with the €2.4m allocated to their male counterparts.

Ward, when picking up her PwC GAA/GPA player of the month award for June, did not disclose the amount she received in government funding in either 2021 or 22, only to say that "it wouldn't go anywhere near" what she's spending.

On these pages last year, the *Irish Examiner* revealed that the maximum amount a female player received in government funding in 2021 was €950. Applying that figure against Ward's expenditure, she's out of pocket on an annual basis to the tune of €3,550.

Ward is a native of Kilkerrin/Clonberne in the north of the county. The 2019 All-Star was instrumental in guiding the club to back-to-back All-Ireland senior titles over the past two seasons.

Shane Walsh is another talented footballer from Kilkerrin/Clonberne. He too is an All-Star. He too is based in Dublin. He too commutes west several times a week to train and line out in the maroon shirt.

The outstanding difference between the pair is that Walsh is never out of pocket for his journeys down the M6 to Loughgeorge, Tuam Stadium, or Salthill.

Where male inter-county players receive 70c per mile from the GAA, only 9.5% of their female counterparts are reimbursed for fuel costs. And of that 9.5%, 6% receive less than 20c per mile.

It was timely then that the 68 captains of male inter-county teams yesterday released a statement to express their "full support for our female colleagues" in their ongoing fight for minimum standards of player welfare ahead of the 2024 season.

In an open letter to GAA management, the male players said they "do not accept that this is a matter solely for the two female governing

bodies which is the response you have given to date".

Highlighting how female players require help to achieve the "basics" of medical support, nutritional support, access to facilities, and financial support to offset travel expenses, the 68 captains asked the leadership of the GAA will they allow this opportunity for positive change to pass them by?

"In the GAA we know and love, there would only be one answer to that question," they signed off.

Last weekend's protests for minimum standards saw teams return to the dressing room for approximately five minutes after the national anthem was played, with throw-in delayed as a result. Players also donned t-shirts reading "#UNITED FOR EQUALITY" during their warm-ups.

Ward is hopeful the GAA, Camogie Association, and LGFA can deliver a solution so protests do not escalate to the point where female inter-county players are considering the nuclear option of strike.

"I'd hope that the three governing bodies will come to some sort of solution," she said.

"Like, we're all there as players, we love playing the game. It comes so natural to us that we wouldn't like that ourselves, not to be playing and representing our counties. I hope that it wouldn't come to that."

But if a female charter isn't delivered in the weeks and months ahead, whatever about potential strike, Ward fears college-going players could walk off the inter-county field for good.

"It can be unsustainable when you're out of pocket, travelling very far but, again, we do it because we want to be there. I don't travel from Dublin because I don't want to be there. I want to be there. I want to represent my county on the biggest stage of ladies football at the end of the year."

"But, like you said, it's being out of pocket for the travel and everything like that can take its toll on people, for sure."

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PLAYER POWER

To read Christy O'Connor on a week of crisis for camogie, turn to:

SPORTS PAGES 4-5

immediately after the restart when Gaule goaled from a 20-metre free. It was 0-4 apiece for the remaining half hour as Dublin battled, Aisling Maher and O'Neill slotting points while Asha McHardy bagged two for Kilkenny. Dublin must now get the better of Wexford to avoid getting drawn into a relegation play-off.



Galway's Nicola Ward with her PwC GAA/GPA Player of the Month award for June.

Picture: Harry Murphy/Sportsfile