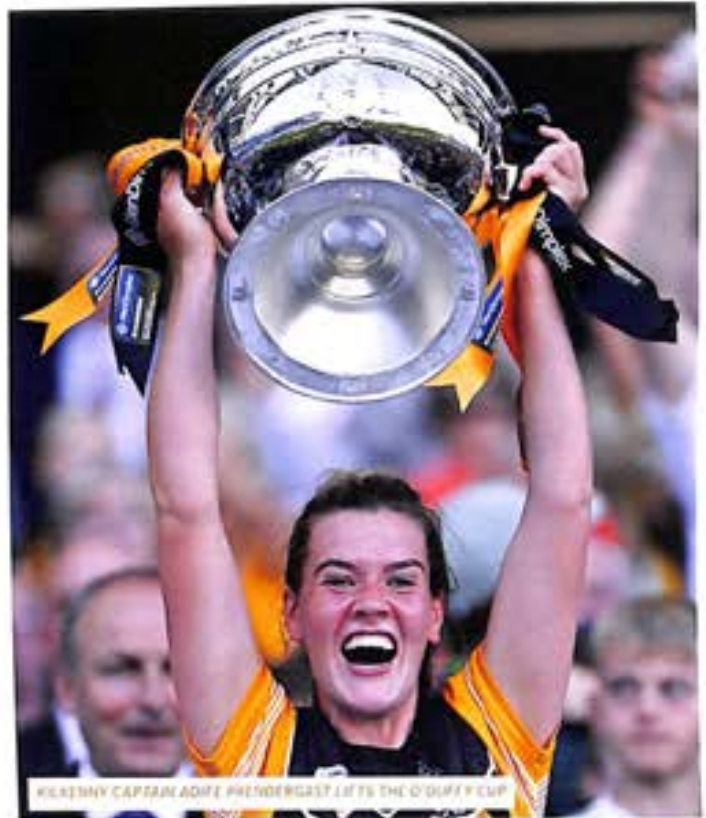


# GLEN DIMPLEX SENIOR CHAMPIONSHIP SCOREBOARD

GROUP 1				
May 21, Walsh Park	Dublin	1-11	Waterford	0-12
May 21, Ennisworthy	Cork	2-14	Wexford	1-6
May 21, Ballydoon	Tipperary	0-10	Clare	0-10
May 28, Parnell Park	Dublin	0-10	Tipperary	0-10
May 28, Walsh Park	Waterford	3-18	Wexford	0-9
May 28, Páirc Uí Rinn	Cork	2-17	Clare	2-5
June 4, Sarsfield	Wexford	1-9	Clare	0-11
June 4, Clonsilla	Cork	2-10	Dublin	0-9
June 5, FBD Sempie Stadium	Waterford	1-16	Tipperary	0-13
June 18, Ennisworthy	Tipperary	0-15	Wexford	1-11
June 18, Cusack Park	Clare	1-9	Dublin	1-9
June 18, Walsh Park	Cork	0-16	Waterford	0-10
July 2, Cusack Park	Waterford	1-15	Clare	1-12
July 2, Páirc Uí Rinn	Tipperary	1-17	Cork	1-16
July 2, Ennisworthy	Dublin	4-14	Wexford	2-11
GROUP 2				
May 21, Liscroft	Kilkenny	1-23	Down	1-10
May 21, Pearse Stadium	Galway	4-11	Limerick	1-7
May 21, Birr	Antrim	4-18	Offaly	1-10
May 28, Ballycotton	Down	1-12	Antrim	1-12
May 28, GPMC Nowlan Park	Kilkenny	1-21	Limerick	0-6
May 28, Birr	Galway	2-12	Offaly	1-6
June 11, Athlery	Galway	3-23	Down	0-6
June 11, Dullboy	Kilkenny	1-15	Antrim	1-9
June 11, Cappamore	Limerick	0-11	Offaly	0-9
June 25, GPMC Nowlan Park	Kilkenny	3-17	Offaly	2-7
June 25, Dullboy	Galway	2-17	Antrim	0-6
June 25, Cappamore	Limerick	2-11	Down	0-12
July 2, Cusack Park	Limerick	1-14	Antrim	1-11
July 2, Liscroft	Down	1-11	Offaly	0-13
July 2, Athlery	Galway	1-17	Kilkenny	2-14
RELEGATION PLAY-OFF				
July 16, Monaghan	Clare	6-10	Offaly	1-13
ALL-IRELAND QUARTER-FINALS				
July 16, FBD Sempie Stadium	Waterford	3-16	Limerick	1-12
July 16, FBD Sempie Stadium	Kilkenny	2-24	Dublin	1-11
ALL-IRELAND SEMI-FINALS				
July 23, Croke Park	Cork	0-15	Waterford	0-10
July 23, Croke Park	Kilkenny	1-13	Galway	0-12
ALL-IRELAND FINAL				
August 7, Croke Park	Kilkenny	1-13	Cork	1-12



ALKENY CAPTAIN ADIFE PRENDERGAST LIFTS THE O'DUFFY CUP



MICHAELA KENEALLY OF ALKENY IN ACTION AGAINST REASH CANALANE AND ASHLING THOMPSON OF CORK IN THE GLEN DIMPLEX ALL-IRELAND SENIOR CAMOGIE CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL



KAITIE NOLAN OF ALKENY



KAITIE NOLAN OF ALKENY IN ACTION AGAINST LAURA TRACEY OF CORK IN THE GLEN DIMPLEX ALL-IRELAND SENIOR CAMOGIE CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL

Clubs programme, which reached the considerable milestone of 450 clubs engaged in 2022. Following two years of not being able to gather during the pandemic, it was a breath of fresh air to see 300 Healthy Clubs Officers representing the 150 new clubs that entered the programme mingle, laugh, and shake hands, at the Healthy Club orientation day in Croke Park in March. Prof Rose Anne Kenny, lead researcher with the Irish Longitudinal Study of Ageing (TILDA) gave a wonderful keynote address that revealed how we add life to our years as well as years to our life. The secret? Having a sense of purpose in one's life while being stitched into a fabric of meaningful social connections that allows one to contribute to something bigger than oneself. When the GAA functions well, it provides such opportunities. It would be remiss as part of a recollection of 2022 not to acknowledge and recall the exceptional losses we experienced as an Association, as a community, as a family. It is one of the

responsibilities of the Community & Health Department to support our units through challenging times and critical incidents. Every year, clubs quietly draw on generations of innate experience to support their members and communities through heart-breaking losses and critical incidents. This is usually done quietly, without recognition. Occasionally, the incident is of such high profile that it stops the country in its tracks and attracts national media attention. This occurred more often in 2022 than during any other year during my eleven seasons working in Croke Park. I highlight the following situations not because they were exceptional (which they were), but because the responses involved are indicative of the quiet work undertaken by so many clubs and counties in 2022 as they helped their members and communities overcome incredibly challenging times and experiences. The work of the Kilcormac/Killoughey Camogie Club in the aftermath of the shocking murder of Ashling Murphy in January. The response by the Athlery

and Ardrahan camogie clubs following the tragic death of Kate Moran in their league match in March. The efforts of the Curry club in Sligo following the sudden death of Red Óg Murphy in April. The reaction of the Clonsilla-Rossmore club when Dillon Quirke passed away in a club championship match against Kilruane MacDonaghs in August. The resolve of the St Michael's club in Creeslough in the aftermath of the unprecedented explosion that claimed 10 lives in October. The responses of the volunteers in these clubs, and countless others, could not have been more empathetic, more compassionate, were it one of their own that had lost their life. Other critical incidents may not involve a death but could be life-changing in other ways. In many cases, the volunteers leading the response are also deeply impacted by the experience but set aside their grief and trauma to support those around them. They are the people that the family of Gaelic Games and Irish communities are built upon and we owe them a great debt of gratitude.



# Loughgiel edge out Drom and Inch to reach final

**Camogie**

Loughgiel	3-6
Drom and Inch	2-6

**Cian Locke**  
Antrim champions Loughgiel Shamrocks reached their first All-Ireland senior club camogie final after defeating Tipperary champions Drom and Inch.

Conditions in Kinnegad were difficult with temperatures rapidly dropping, but Drom and Inch got off to the better start with three pointed frees from Eimear McGrath.

Annie Lynn and Caitrín Dobbin replied with points for the Ulster champions.

In the 18th minute a high delivery from Joanne Ryan came back off the crossbar and Miriam Campion forced the ball over the line for a Drom and Inch goal.

Loughgiel replied almost immediately as Annie Lynn was the first to react after Drom and Inch goalkeeper Caoimhe Burke had saved from a Lucia McNaughton shot.

The Munster champions had their second goal in the 22nd minute after Ryan's high

ball resulted in Eimear McGrath finishing to the net to put her side four points up.

Just before half-time Loughgiel scored a crucial goal to reduce the deficit to two points heading into the break. McNaughton popped a pass over the defence for Dobbin to finish to the net.

Loughgiel's defence tightened after the break and Drom and Inch didn't register another score until the 52nd minute. By then they were four points down as Róisín McCormick's lob into the area went all the way to the net on 38 minutes.

McGrath eventually got the Tipp side off the mark again, but a quick puck out was picked up by sub Chloe Higgins to make it four again and Loughgiel were able to hold out for Croke Park and a meeting with Sarsfields of Galway, who defeated St Vincent's by 1-11 to 1-10 in the other semi-final.

**Scorers for Loughgiel:** C Dobbin (1-2, 0-1 free), R McCormick (1-1), A Lynn (1-2), C Higgins (0-1).

**Scorers for Drom-Inch:** E McGrath (1-6, 0-5 frees), M Campion (1-0).

**Loughgiel:** E Boyle; C Campbell, K Lynn, C McKillop; M Lynn, U McNaughton, S Doran; A Boyle, L McNaughton, C Lavery, M McKillen, A Connolly; C Dob-

bin, R McCormick, A Lynn.  
**Subs:** K McKillop for A Connolly (42), C Boyle for S Doran (58), C Higgins (0-1) for M McKillen (59).

**Drom and Inch:** C Bourke; A Greed, C Brennan, M Ryan; E Cahill, M Evison capt, A McGrath; N Long, M Burke; E McGrath, A Evison, J Ryan; N Ryan, N Treacy, M Campion.

**Subs:** K O'Dwyer for J Ryan (42), S McGrath for N Long (51).

**Referee:** Liz Dempsey (Kilkenny).

**Loughgiel's Róisín McCormick looks to get away from Drom and Inch's Christina Brennan in their clash at Kinnegad.**

Picture: Evan Treacy/Inpho



**UNDER PRESSURE:** Sarsfields' Klara Donohue leads the charge for possession in Saturday's All-Ireland club senior camogie semi-final against St Vincent's in Birr. Picture: Tom Maher/Inpho



**COLD CLASH:** Sarsfields beat St Vincent's yesterday in the All-Ireland Camogie semi-final

## McGrath goal proves decisive for Sarsfields

● Sarsfields booked their place in the All-Ireland senior camogie final with a hard-fought 1-11 to 1-10 win over St Vincent's.

The Galway side made the brighter start, going 0-6 to 0-1 up inside 10 minutes. All Maguire's goal saw the Dubliners go in just one behind at the break and three points on the restart moved them ahead.

But Sarsfields hit back and looked in command when Siobhan McGrath converted a penalty. St Vincent's got it back to one through Aisling Maher, who scored 0-10, but they couldn't find the equaliser to force extra time.

## Loughgiel dig deep to get better of Drom and Inch

● Loughgiel Shamrocks are through to their first AIB All-Ireland senior club camogie final after a back-to-back performance against Drom and Inch in Kinnegad.

The Antrim side won by 3-6 to 2-6, but it was Drom and Inch who took an early lead, with Miriam Campion getting the opening goal.

Annie Lynn hit back for Loughgiel within minutes, but Eimear McGrath snatched a second Tipperary goal in

## CAMOGIE

**All-Ireland Club Senior semi-finals:** Sarsfields 1-11 St. Vincent's 1-10, Loughgiel Shamrocks 3-6 Drom and Inch 2-6.  
**All-Ireland Club Intermediate semi-finals:** Castlegar (Galway) 0-6 James Stephens (Kilkenny) 1-10, Clonduff (Down) 1-16 Clannmaurice (Kerry) 1-11.  
**All-Ireland Club Junior semi-final:** St. Dominics (Roscommon) 0-2 Knockanna (Wicklow) 1-8.  
**All-Ireland Club Junior B semi-final:** Lacken (Cavan) 4-9 Fr. Murphys (UK) 1-4.



# All-Star Saoirse thrilled with latest award

BY GER McCARTHY

SAOIRSE McCarthy has added a Celtic Ross West Cork Sports Star monthly award to her growing collection of personal accolades.

The Coursey Rovers and Cork star received a Camogie All-Star last month, for her 2022 heroics in a Cork senior camogie jersey. Receiving a local award is just as important to one of the country's best defenders.

'Local West Cork awards like this one are something my club Coursey Rovers and I pride ourselves on,' McCarthy told *The Southern Star*.

'I know we are on the border and some might not necessarily count us as 'West Cork' but we definitely do. This is a great honour for me and to be able to bring my family here (Celtic Ross Hotel) tonight as well. It is lovely to be recognised by peo-

ple from your own area.'

Ahead of the 2023 campaign, McCarthy is relieved to have had an opportunity to take a break, albeit temporarily, from the inter-county, club and college camogie grind.

'The Cork senior camogie panel is not back training just yet but we have met up and just that taster alone has me saying let's go!' McCarthy said.

'It was nice to have a little break though. I feel this past year hit the Cork seniors very hard. After the previous year's All Ireland final defeat (to Galway), I'd have gone back training the day after. This time around, I actually felt I wanted to take a step back during winter and just breathe.

'To be fair, we were back with our clubs a week after losing to Kilkenny and I loved that. Once the club championships ended I was straight in with MTU Cork.

**'It is lovely to be recognised by people from your own area'**  
— Saoirse McCarthy

So, a break from the hectic nature of Camogie was definitely a good thing for me.'

Playing alongside the two 'Lauras', Treacy and Hayes, in Cork's half-back line has seen McCarthy develop into one of the country's top defenders culminating in a merited 2022 All-Star award.

'The two Lauras got their All-Stars in 2021 so I was playing catch-up this year!' McCarthy laughed.

'Laura Treacy and Laura Hayes are phenomenal athletes. Laura Treacy is such a commanding presence at centre-back and the way she com-



West Cork Sports Star monthly award winner Saoirse McCarthy with her parents Cella and Leonard at the Celtic Ross Hotel on Monday night. (Photo: George Maguire)

municates is hugely important to Laura (Hayes) and myself.

'It is a team effort that allows us to bomb forward all the time

because someone else has to fill in those positions. We have that freedom to attack and be the launchpads for Cork's

attacks. A lot of teamwork is needed to facilitate that but that's why I love playing alongside the two Lauras.'

## Big move to tackle concussion issues among GAA bodies

IN a welcome development, UPMC has joined with the Camogie Association, the GAA, LGFA, and the Gaelic Players Association to roll out a concussion baseline testing programme for inter-county players across the 32 counties.

This has been done with the goal of rapidly diagnosing and treating concussions in players.

The initiative, which began on Monday will cover camogie, hurling, and football players who will participate equally across all codes.

Senior vice-president of UPMC International David Beirne, said: "UPMC is changing how health care is delivered in Ireland, and we are excited to use our world-renowned concussion treatment and testing experience to assist players across our national games.

"As a global leader in concussion care, sports medicine, and rehabilitation, UPMC is proud to support this player welfare programme along with our dedicated partners."

The presidents of the GAA, Camogie Association and LGFA as well as the GPA all welcomed the programme and Uachtarán CLG Larry McCarthy said: "A considerable effort has been made in the area of education and awareness among players and coaches in relation to concussion and it requires constant vigilance.

"This latest development between leading experts in UPMC and the GAA is not only welcome but vital to ensure best practice is being followed.

"Although this is a programme that focuses initially on inter-county players our intention is to see the benefits of the programme made available to clubs and to every player at every level as soon as possible."

Uachtarán ACC Hilda Breslin expressed the Camogie Associations delight to be involved with the project: "We are delighted to be joining with UPMC and the Gaelic games family on this programme.

"The welfare of our players is paramount, and we hope this programme will not only help ensure our players have the right medical treatment if they sustain a



Cork's Lauren Homan is presented with her Soaring Camogie Stars award by Uachtarán Hilda Breslin and PWC's markets partner David McGee.

GAA

Mary Newman

concussion, but it will also provide important insight on concussive incidents in our games."

President of the LGFA Mícheál Naughton said: "Confirmation of the baseline testing programme for inter-county players is a most welcome development.

"The short and long-term impacts of concussion have come into sharp focus in more recent times and to be in a position to assist our players on such a wide-scale basis is a huge step forward.

"If concussions are not diagnosed early, and treated carefully, the consequences can be serious, and with a huge risk of repeat concussions.

"We are delighted to join our colleagues in the GAA, the Camogie Association, the Gaelic Players Association and UPMC to roll-out the programme.

"I am sure that this programme will be of huge benefit to a number of our players

and, from a health and safety perspective, this is a vital intervention piece."

CEO of the GPA Tom Parsons sees the move as an excellent one and is important for the wellbeing of players.

"This is an extremely important step in terms of looking after the physical welfare of players."

"With the attritional nature of Gaelic games, head injuries and concussive events are an unfortunate feature of our games. Being able to diagnose and better manage the return-to-play protocols provides players with a greater standard of care with head injuries.

"That's why we are delighted to partner with UPMC and the governing bodies to proactively monitor the incidence and effects of concussion on our members.

"This will allow us to take the necessary steps in mitigating against the consequences of concussion and delivering the best possible care for players."

Baseline concussion testing will be provided to all inter-county players, and these players will also be covered for concussion physician specialist treatment.

This will be delivered using the IMPACT concussion testing model, evidence-based, neurocognitive assessment software co-developed by UPMC specialists.

IMPACT which stands for immediate post-concussion assessment and cognitive testing is an objective tool to support trained clinicians in making return-to-activity decisions following concussions.

This announcement builds on UPMC's pilot programme for baseline testing that was launched in 2021 for the GAA.

It also follows a conference in September between UPMC and the Gaelic Athletic Medical Association in UCD, where Michael Collins Ph.D, director of the UPMC sports medicine concussion programme in Pittsburgh, and his colleagues presented their latest research and treatment protocols.

This is an exciting initiative which is welcome for inter-county players, male and female, and hopefully going forward it may be extended to include all GAA players at all levels, but for now it's a welcome step in the right direction.



# U14 and U16 Camogie championships successfully completed

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

WITH juvenile competition almost all completed its time to take a look at results from the U16 and U14 championship competitors.

In Premier 1 Sarsfields took the title with a victory over Ballinhaslig in a final they dominated from the throw in, despite Ballinhaslig giving it their all the Sarsfields girls ran out winners. In the U16 premier Plate final it was close but Cloughduv thank to an excellent opening thirty minutes ran out winners with four points to spare over Glen Rovers.

In the U16 Premier two championship Newtownshandrum overcame Newcestown in a game where goals proved important, the Premier 2 plate was won by Ballinora with a strong performance helping them overcome Enniskeane.

In the U16 A championship, it was Erin's Own who ran out



Sarsfields, Premier U16 camogie championship winners.

winner over Aghabullogue, the U16 plate final was an all-city affair with Blackrock taking the title with a four point winning margin over na Piarasigh.

At U16 b level Ballyhea had a one point win over Valley Rovers in a close 3-6 to 2-8 battle and in the B plate final it was another close encounter as Castletyons

edged out Dungourney in a high scoring 5-13 to 6-8 game.

The U16 C championship final was a tight low scoring contest a Nemo hit three goals to Aghada 1-3 to take the honours, a goal also separated Watergrasshill and Blarney in the U16 C plate final where it finished Watergrasshill 3-8 Blarney 2-8.

**U14:** In the Premier U14 championship final Sarsfields had a four point win over Éire Óg in a hard fought contest where it finished 3-9 to 1-11, in the Premier plate final it went down to the wire as Inniscarra edged out Sliabh Rua with a point between the sides at the full-time whistle 5-5 to 3-10.

The Premier 2 cup was won by Aghabullogue as they recorded 4-4 to 2-4 win over Ballincollig, Bandon took the Premier 2 plate with four points to spare over Bishopstown 3-6 to 3-2.

In the U14 A championship Kill-eagh were the winners as they overcame St Catherine's on a 2-5 to 1-4 scoreline, the U14 A

plate was won by Castlemartyr na game where we had no goals as it finished Castlemartyr 0-6 Enniskeane 0-2.

The U14 b championship final was an exciting contest where just a point separated Fr O'Neill's from Carrigtwohill as O'Neill's ran out 3-7 to 4-3 victors. The U14 B plate was won by Ballinora by two points as they overcame Banteer 4-11 to 6-3 in a high scoring encounter.

In the U14 C championship final Castletyons had four points to spare over Brain Dillon's 2-8 to 2-4, in the plate final it finished Charleville 8-3 Bride Rovers 3-12.

The U14B 2 competition was for clubs with second teams and here Douglas 2 defeated Middleton to take the B2 plate with Éire Óg 2 defeating Cobh 2 to take the shield.

A long hard season of underage championship completed thanks in no small way to the club who battle hard to get the programme completed.



Lucia McNaughton lines out for Loughgiel Shamrocks in today's final against Sarsfields of Galway

## McNaughton continuing special family tradition

Niall Scully

LUCIA McNAUGHTON will play for Antrim's Loughgiel Shamrocks at Croke Park today in the AIB All-Ireland Senior Camogie Club Championship final against the holders, Sarsfields of Galway (6.30).

Lucia's grandmother, Mary McGarry, played on the Antrim team that completed the All-Ireland championship three-in-a-row in 1947.

That 1947 All-Ireland inter-county championship campaign contained controversy. The CIE club, representing Dublin, beat Galway in the All-Ireland semi-final at Ballinasloe. At the end of the game, hundreds of spectators rushed onto the pitch to express their upset with the refereeing. The gardai restored order and escorted the referee away by car.

Late on in the November All-Ireland final at Corrigan Park, Kathleen Cody's blistering shot sank in the sea of mud in the Antrim goal area.

The Antrim goalkeeper, Kathleen Madden, fished the sliotar out of the net and cleared it to safety. Dublin appeals that the ball had crossed the line were not entertained. Antrim won by two points.

Lucia's sister Úna is also on the Loughgiel team, as are three more of

the late Mary's granddaughters, Katie, Maria and Annie Lynn.

"I was very young when my grandmother died," explains Lucia. "But I would have heard all the stories about her from my family and the people in the parish."

"It's really nice that my grandfather, Mary's husband, John, is still alive, and he can watch us playing on the television. He was a top player himself."

The small ball was always big news in these parts.

"Camogie and hurling. That's all we did. And Irish dancing. I have been playing since I was five."

"It means so much to the people here. My grandmother's generation loved hurling and camogie, and it's the same for us now. It's nice to have that piece of family history, but there are other families on the team that have their histories too."

"There's such a great buzz in the locality about the final. When you go down to the shops, or to Mass, people are coming up to you talking about the match. It just shows how something like this can lift the parish. We always hoped that this day would come. As a child, you'd dream about running out in Croke Park with your club mates."

"It's our first ever All-Ireland final. We lost a few semi-finals. This is such a big

deal for us. Reaching Croke Park is a wonderful achievement. We have put in the work. We'll give it a rattle."

McNaughton works as a physiotherapist. She is one of the club's most decorated players. She captained Antrim to All-Ireland intermediate success last year.

"That was one of the best days of my life. It encouraged us all to push on to stay senior, and try to get better every year."

Another memorable afternoon came last Saturday when Loughgiel overcame Tipperary's Drom & Inch in the All-Ireland semi-final.

"Three points in it. So tight the whole way through."

The champions will be another test. But Shamrocks will take inspiration from those that have gone before.

Like her grandmother, and the hurling teams that brought home All-Ireland titles, Loughgiel have twice been All-Ireland senior hurling champions, 1983 and 2012. Her dad, Séamus, was on the winning side of '83.

"It's vital to have a strong underage section," states McNaughton. "And to give them something to aspire to. Showing them the importance of the club to the community, and to appreciate the effort it takes to keep a club going"

### WEEKEND CLUB GAA PREVIEWS

TODAY

#### ALL-IRELAND CLUB IHC SEMI-FINAL

Tooreen (Mayo) v Liatroim (Down), Kingspan Breffni, 1.0, C Mooney (Dublin)

THIS is Tooreen's fourth All-Ireland semi-final, having lost the previous three. Back-to-back Connacht intermediate titles mean they have bigger things in mind now.

The omens are good. They lost key men in Shane Boland and Kenny Feeney to injury in their recent victory over Killimor but coped, with Liam Lavin and Seán Regan playing key roles.

Verdict: Tooreen

#### ALL-IRELAND SENIOR CLUB CAMOGIE FINAL

Loughgiel Shamrocks (Antrim) v Sarsfields (Galway), Croke Park, 6.30, L Dempsey (Kilkenny) - RTÉ2

A FOURTH consecutive All-Ireland final and the status of champions makes Sarsfields justifiable favourites here as they seek to emulate the feats of the club's senior men's hurlers, who went back-to-back on the national stage in 1993 and '94.

Galway star Siobhán McGrath scored 1-7 (0-4f) against a doughty St Vincent's in the semi-final last weekend. Sarsfields scraped through by a point and, in the absence of a commanding performance, still mustered a winning one.

Loughgiel, meanwhile, were liberated by finally moving out of Slaughtneil's shadow in Ulster to beat Drom & Inch last week in Kinnegad to make the first All-Ireland final in their history.

They kept the Munster champions to just three scores from play all day and require a similar defensive effort here if their first trip to Croke Park is to be a successful one.

Verdict: Sarsfields

#### ALL-IRELAND INTERMEDIATE CLUB CAMOGIE FINAL

Clonduff (Down) v James Stephens (Kilkenny), Croke Park, 4.15

JAMES STEPHENS had five points to spare over Galway's Castlegar last week and should have enough to become just the second Kilkenny club to win an All-Ireland intermediate championship after Piltown in 2014.

Verdict: James Stephens



# McGrath looks to strike a balance as Sarsfields defend crown

**Niall Scully**

NIAMH McGRATH will be driving home for Christmas, and she'll hope to be travelling with the Carroll Cup.

McGrath is the captain of Sarsfields, the Galway side who take on Loughiel Shamrocks in the AIB All-Ireland senior camogie club final at Croke Park on Saturday (6.30).

She works as a solicitor in Dublin, in asset management and investment funds for the William Fry company. It takes her 90 minutes to get back to east Galway.

"The motorway is great. It can get boring, but you get used to it. I get down twice a week. I work in Dublin for three days and from home for two. Being able to work from home

was one positive aspect that came out of Covid," she said.

Sarsfields, the holders, edged Dublin's St Vincent's by a point in a thrilling semi-final in Birr last Saturday.

Four of her sisters are involved - Clodagh, Siobhán, Ciara and Orlaith. Orlaith, though, is injured. Their other sister, Laoise (15), will be eligible to step up next year. A magnificent six.

Their mother, Geraldine, played hockey for Ireland. Their dad, Michael 'Hopper' McGrath, won two All-Ireland senior hurling championship medals with Galway. He's the Sarsfields manager.

"There's a real family involvement,

but it's not just us. The squad has many sisters, cousins and relatives."

The midfielder (left) is enjoying the game as much as ever. "Especially in the last couple of years, but it's easy to enjoy it when you have success," she admitted. She has two All-Ireland senior club and two senior inter-county medals, but her Galway days are behind her.

"There's such a big commitment involved nowadays," she said. "And living in Dublin, and with the job that I have, that would be difficult."

"When I began playing, there was a big commitment, but it has increased so much, particularly in the last

five to six years. You have the gym, the ball wall, your nutrition, not to mention the usual training sessions. You'd admire the people who do it year in, year out.

"The sport has changed - with the strength and conditioning, the science and everything else that's involved. Players are playing on for longer. They are minding themselves."

"The Galway team has several players in their 30s, and they are as fit and as fast as anyone. It's up to each individual to see how much they get out of it. Camogie is not a young person's sport anymore. When I began, you had players as young as 14 and 15 playing senior. But now you'd have to be an exceptional player at 16 to get on a senior team."

Sarsfields have played in five All-Ireland senior finals, losing three and winning two.

"Hopefully, we can balance that out on Saturday. A big disappointment was losing the All-Ireland final to Oulart last December. We just didn't turn up, and Oulart hurled us off the field."

"The fact that we got to redeem ourselves so quickly last March was such a good thing. Time has flown since that day. I'm glad the competition will be over before Christmas. When you come back to play a semi-final or final in January, it seems like a new season."

She is expecting a close tussle. "We know each other well. I think it will be very tight."



# Buoyant Sarsfields aiming for two in a row against Loughiel

**All-Ireland camogie club senior final**

Loughiel Shamrocks (Antrim) v Sarsfields (Galway), 6.30pm, Croke Park. Referee: Liz Dempsey (Kilkenny).

**Daragh Ó Conchúir**

Sarsfields are in their sixth final in seven seasons and aiming to increase their conversion rate to 50% by going back-to-back for the first time.

The East Galway outfit secured their second AIB Camogie All-Ireland Club senior title last March, when they gained revenge on Oulart-The Ballagh, who had dethroned them in the previous season's decider, played just three months earlier.

They are a team of many talents and while All-Star Orlaith McGrath is a considerable loss having suffered another cruciate knee ligament injury in the summer, they can still call on a catalogue of top-tier operators whose gear bags rattle, not just with All-Ireland club medals, but with senior inter-county ones too.

McGrath's sisters Siobhán, Clodagh and inspirational skipper Niamh, Maria Cooney, Tara Kenny, Sarah Spellman, and Laura Ward are pivotal figures.

Siobhán's goal from a 46th minute penalty gave them the breathing space they needed to overcome St Vincent's of Dublin in the semi-final last Saturday.

They had begun in lightning fashion, moving five points clear early on and then stretched that to six but the concession of a goal left them leading by just the minimum at the interval.

"They were four ahead after



Niamh McGrath will be in action for Sarsfields at Croke Park against Loughiel Shamrocks this evening. Picture: Eoin Noonan/Sportsfile

Siobhán followed her penalty with a point from a free as she brought her tally to 1-7 and they needed every one of those with just one between them at the death.

Michael 'Hopper' McGrath's crew had earlier been pushed all the way by Oranmore/Maree as they bagged a fourth county title on the spin, needing goals from Shannon Corcoran and Clara Donohoe to emerge victorious.

Loughiel have had to be patient over the years, dealing with a series of heartbreaks along the way but an apparently bottomless reservoir of resilience sees them preparing for their first ever All-Ireland senior final and attempting to become the second Antrim team to go all the way. The Saffron powerhouses - their nine-point defeat of Ballycastle was their seventh consecutive county championship success - had suffered as Derry giants Slaughtneil

registered three All-Irelands on the trot and six Ulsters in succession, the provincial titles all garnered at the Shamrocks' expense.

Loughiel had shown more than enough to suggest that they weren't far off, however, and this year they finally claimed the coveted scalp of their Oak Leaf rivals to claim a seventh Ulster title but their first since 2015, with five points in hand at the final whistle thanks to goals from Antrim stars Róisín McCormick and Caitrín Dobbin.

Part of Slaughtneil's legacy is cementing a belief, inside and outside of Ulster, that the northern contingent are genuine contenders for the Bill & Agnes Carroll Cup.

Loughiel proved their mettle by accounting for the Robert Emmets and then following up against Tipperary's Drom & Inch last weekend, when Dobbin and McCormick were once again among the goals, along with Annie Lynn.

# Clonduff trio planning the mother of all comebacks

**All-Ireland camogie intermediate final**

Clonduff (Down) v James Stephens (Kilkenny), 4.15pm, Croke Park. Referee: Cathal McAllister (Cork).

**Daragh Ó Conchúir**

The return of three legendary figures, who had taken a year out to have babies, has propelled Clonduff all the way to Croke Park and a shot at a second AIB Camogie All-Ireland intermediate title.

Paula O'Hagan was captain and player of the match when the Down side eked out a one-point victory at HQ in March 2019, while sisters Fionnuala Carr and Sara-Louise Graffin were major contributors also.

The trio have enjoyed the ultimate success in the black and red of the Mourne County too, so one can only imagine the filip to their clubmates when the trio returned to the fray this season, buggies in tow along with a considerable compilation of ability and leadership.

Throw others such as skipper Jenna Boden, Clare Kearney and goal sneak Beth Fitzpatrick into the mix and it's easy to see why Clonduff are so close to the summit once more.

A green flag from Fitzpatrick just before the interval was a critical score in the provincial decider against English, at Páirc Esler, as it brought the teams level going

into the dressing rooms. Boosted by that rapier thrust, Clonduff chiselled out the victory from there.

They displayed mammoth character to emerge from a rip-roaring All-Ireland semi-final against Kerry's courageous Clanmaurice last Saturday, needing two last-ditch levellers before emerging successful at the end of two periods of extra time.

They trailed by four points at the break but O'Hagan and Graffin exerted a greater influence after the resumption, eventually scoring 13 points between them, while Carr also thundered into the fray and Clanmaurice were held to two second-half scores. Graffin shot the first equaliser, while O'Hagan held her nerve from a placed ball to drill the second one.

Clonduff had just that bit more legs perhaps in the final period of extra time and had nosed two points ahead when Fitzpatrick removed all doubt with a goal in the game's final act.

James Stephens have embarked on a tremendous journey in recent years, soaring to this stage just little more than two years after making the breakthrough at junior level in Kilkenny.

They signalled their progress by going through league and championship unbeaten this term, overcoming the stern resistance of Rower-

instioge in the championship decider. Next up were Raharney (Westmeath) and St Brigid's (Laois) before Carlow champions Myshall were accounted for by five points in a Leinster final that amounted to a riveting battle of wills.

Management will love how their troops continue to navigate choppy waters and Castlegar (Galway) offered up another stern examination of their credentials at the penultimate hurdle before being beaten by five points.

Kilkenny's goal-scoring All-Ireland final heroine, Sophie O'Dwyer is a key figure, with her accuracy from placed balls another string to her bow.

Michelle Teehan and Niamh Deely are other stars of the black and amber who have helped propel The Village to this juncture.

It is worth noting that while Teehan has established herself in the Kilkenny team as a corner-back, her more natural role is more advanced and it was her goal after a brilliant length-of-the-field move that ended Castlegar's resistance.

Emma Manogue and Emma Gaffney are others who James Stephens followers will be looking to if they are to deliver more silverware but the likelihood is that there is very little between these two well-balanced units and that this is one that will go all the way down to the wire.



# Sars stars

Strong finish sees Galway side retain title

Clodagh McGrath, left, and Tara Kenny of Sarsfields celebrate after winning the AIB All-Ireland senior camogie title. Picture by Piaras Ó Midheach



# Sarsfields back it up

**Sarsfields 2-14**

**Loughiel Shamrocks 1-14**

By Séamas McAleenan

SARSFIELDS retained their AIB All-Ireland senior club title after getting a severe test from Loughiel in Croke Park last night. That makes it three titles in the past four years for the Galway side with the McGrath sisters leading the charge.

Midfielder Niamh picked up the Player of the Match award with sister Siobhán getting Sarsfields off to the perfect start with a goal after just 33 seconds before adding five frees over the course of the game. Two more sisters, Clodagh and Ciara played their parts as their dad, former Galway hurler, Michael 'Hopper' McGrath steered the ship from the sideline.

The only time they looked rattled was in the minutes after Maria Cooney's injury when Loughiel reeled in their lead of five points and went two ahead, playing some very sharp camogie.

In an obvious pre-planned move, Siobhán McGrath was left one on one from the throw-in, received the pass and buried the sliotar in the net after just 33 seconds. A few minutes later Sarsfields were five points up when McGrath and teen-

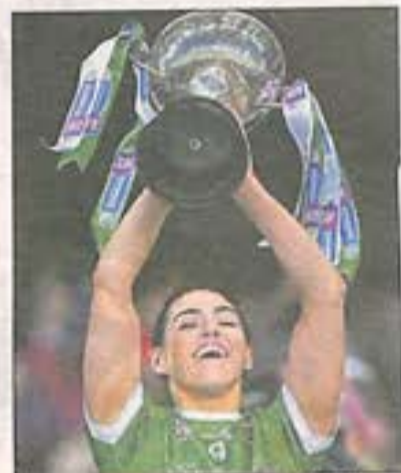
**HEAT:** Sarsfields' Clodagh McGrath gets her clearance away under pressure



ager Caoimhe Kelly added singles. However Loughiel fought their way back into the game with points from Mary McKillen, Róisín McCormick (the first of nine frees) and Lucia McNaughton. Then came the injury to Cooney. McCormick pointed the resultant free and a couple of minutes later Caitrín Dobbins raced clear to strike

to the net. Annie Lynn pointed twice within a minute and suddenly the Ulster champions were two up. However the Connacht side hauled themselves back to parity at the break, 1-6 to 1-6. A Rachel Murray goal after 37 minutes reasserted Sarsfields' superiority. However a series of frees from McCormick dragged

Loughiel back level with five minutes remaining. The McGrath sisters then stepped up to find the winning scores for their team before Sarah Spellman picked off the insurance score. McCormick brought her total to nine points with a late free, but Sarsfields used their experience to close out the victory by containing



**SWEET:** Sarsfields captain Niamh McGrath raises the cup yesterday

their opponents in added time. Meanwhile, after scoring six points in last week's elongated semi-final win over Clanmaurice, Sara-Louise Graffin fired over three more in Croke Park to bring Clonduff Shamrocks to a second All-Ireland intermediate club crown on a scoreline of 0-12 to 1-6. **LOUGHIEL:** E Boyle; C Campbell, K Lynn, C McKillop; M Lynn, U McNaughton, S Doran; A Boyle, L McNaughton; C Lavery, M McKillen, A Connolly; C Dobbins, R McCormick, A Lynn. **Subs:** K McKillop for A Connolly (45), C Boyle for C Campbell (49), C Higgins for C Lavery (60+2). **SCORES:** C Dobbins (1-1), R McCormick (0-9 frees), A Lynn (0-2), L McNaughton (0-1), M McKillen (0-1). **SARSFIELDS:** L Lynn; R Kelly, L Ward, K Gallagher, T Kenny, M Cooney, J Daly; Clodagh McGrath, N McGrath capt, K Donohue, R Murray, C Kenny; S Corcoran, S McGrath, C Kelly. **Subs:** S Spellman for M Cooney (24), Ciara McGrath for C Kelly (60+2), C Cahalan for S Corcoran (60+4). **SCORES:** S McGrath (1-5, 0-5 frees), R Murray (1-0), N McGrath (0-4, 2 frees), C Kelly (0-2), K Donohue (0-1), S Corcoran (0-1), S Spellman (0-1). **REFEREE:** L Dempsey (GKerry)





Sarsfields' Rachel Murray hits the winning goal in the All-Ireland camogie final  
Picture by Piaras Ó Midheach

# Sarsfields retain title after overcoming Loughgiel

<b>SARSFIELDS</b>	<b>2-14</b>
<b>LOUGHGIEL S'ROCKS</b>	<b>1-14</b>

**DERMOT CROWE**  
CROKE PARK

Sarsfields retained the All-Ireland senior camogie club title at Croke Park, defeating Loughgiel Shamrocks who were bidding to become only the second-ever winner from Antrim, after O'Donovan Rossa in 2008.

Appearing in their fourth consecutive final, and tipped to win, the side managed by former Galway hurler Michael 'Hopper' McGrath claimed a third win in four seasons and achieved a first successful defence.

Having gone in level at half time and fallen a point in arrears soon after the resumption, Sarsfields were lifted by a vital second goal seven minutes into the second half through Rachel Murray which put them four points up and they were five ahead a minute later from a Niamh McGrath free.

Loughgiel refused to surrender in a match that produced a terrific tussle from first whistle to last. Five points, four from Roisín McCormick frees and a neat finish from Caitrín Dobbin, brought the Antrim side level, 1-12 to 2-9, as play entered the 52nd minute. That set up a grandstand finish.

But Sarsfields have more finishing kick. Siobhán McGrath and McCormick exchanged pointed frees before Niamh McGrath sent over a fine point to nudge Sarsfields in front with 55 minutes gone. Another free from Siobhán McGrath left two in it, but Sarsfields couldn't feel safe, even when Niamh McGrath landed an excellent free to open up a goal

lead in the 58th minute.

But in the first of four minutes injury time Sarah Spellman, introduced in the first half for the injured Maria Cooney, put them four up. McCormick's reply, a ninth converted free, wasn't enough to stall Sarsfields who needed all their experience to see off a spirited Loughgiel challenge.

Sarsfields captured a second All-Ireland club title last March, when they overcame Oulart-The Ballagh, who had dethroned them in the previous season's decider played just three months earlier. This latest success completes a dream year for a club that only won their first county title in 2016.

Loughgiel suffered the worst possible start when after just 31 seconds Sarsfields full forward Siobhán McGrath scored a goal at the second attempt, her first effort saved by Eimear Boyle. Similar to their semi final win over St Vincent's, Sarsfields were quick to settle into the match and had 1-2 on the board before Loughgiel managed to register a score in the sixth minute through Mary McKillen, with good build up play from midfielders Lucia McNaughton and Amy Boyle.

Before that there was a brilliant solo point by Caoimhe Kelly, daughter of 1993 All-Ireland winner Pádraig, and McGrath put over a free to give the champions a five-point start. McKillen's opening point for Loughgiel was replied to immediately with a fine score from Niamh McGrath, but the Ulster champions became more composed as the half wore on, full forward McCormick leading the fightback.

It was McCormick who won and pointed a free which led to Cooney having to go off injured in the 24th minute, a major blow to Sarsfields, McCormick's free leaving Loughgiel trailing 0-4 to 1-4. And they were

level when Caitrín Dobbin picked up the ball in a ruck outside the D and raced away before finishing coolly to the net after 27 minutes.

Two exceptional scores from Annie Lynn had Loughgiel in front for the first time, two up after being five down, and when Kelly scored her second point for Sarsfields it ended a 17-minute scoreless period for the Galway ladies.

One of the scores of the half was a point by Lucia McNaughton who caught a stick pass by McCormick on the move and struck over the bar. But Sarsfields got back level by the break with Klara Donohoe pointing in the seventh minute of injury time, after numerous first half stoppages.

Having gone in level at half time and fallen a point in arrears soon after the resumption, Sarsfields celebrated a goal seven minutes into the second half by Rachel Murray which put them four points up and they were five ahead a minute later from a Niamh McGrath free.

Loughgiel refused to surrender. Five points, four from Roisín McCormick frees and a neat finish from Caitrín Dobbin brought the Antrim side level, 1-12 to 2-9, as play entered the 52nd minute. That set up a grandstand finish.

**Scorers - Sarsfields:** S McGrath 1-5 (5fs); R Murray 1-0; C Kelly 0-2; N McGrath 0-3 (2f); K Donohoe, S Corcoran, S Spellman 0-1 each  
**Loughgiel:** R McCormick 0-9 (9 fs); C Dobbin 1-1; A Lynn 0-2; L McNaughton, M McKillen 0-1 each  
**Sarsfields:** L Glynn; R Kelly; L Ward; K Gallagher; T Kenny; M Cooney; J Daly; C McGrath; N McGrath; K Donohoe; R Murray; C Kenny; S Corcoran; S McGrath; C Kelly. **Subs:** S Spellman for Cooney (inj 24); C McGrath for Kelly (62); C Cahalan for Corcoran (65).

**Loughgiel:** E Boyle; C Campbell; K Lynn; C McKillop; M Lynn; U McNaughton; S Devlin; A Boyle; L McNaughton; C Laverty; M McKillen; A Connolly; C Dobbin; R McCormick; A Lynn. **Subs:** K McKillop for Connolly (45); C Boyle for Campbell (50); C Higgins for Laverty (62). **Referee:** L Dempsey (Kilkenny).

## Trio of new mothers inspire Clonduff

**All-Ireland Club Intermediate Camogie Final**

<b>Clonduff (Down)</b>	<b>0-12</b>
<b>James Stephens (Kilkenny)</b>	<b>1-6</b>

**Daragh Ó Conchúir**

Clonduff followed up their 2019 All-Ireland intermediate success with another triumph at Croke Park on Saturday, with Paula O'Hagan and player-of-the-match Sara-Louise Graffin bringing all their experience to bear as they followed up their semi-final heroics by scoring nine points between them.

Little wonder Alastair McGilligan, joint manager with Kieran McGourty, hailed their influence, and that of Graffin's sister Fionnuala Carr, as the trio produced a top-tier performance at HQ, having missed out last year after giving birth to their first children. Their absence undoubtedly told as Clonduff gave up their Down title last term but McGilligan reckons it might have been a blessing.

"This group of players up until last year were going for three winters in a row and probably last year, we got a bit of a break," McGilligan told Off The Ball Sports.

"Maybe we didn't want a 15-point beating by Portaferry to do that but we did get the break. It revitalised us and gave us time to make slight changes in the management group but also it gave time for our three big leaders in terms of Paula, Fionnuala, Sara-Louise to come back after having family for the first time.

"There's a famous photo when Ross (Carr) won the All-Ireland for the first time (with Down in 1991) of Sara-Louise, Aidan, and Fionnuala as children. I think Sara-Louise was only two at the time. She was practically sitting in Sam Maguire, the other two hanging on to it. They're now able to make similar photographs of their own generation.

"You can't put drive into people. It's how they look after their diet, how they do their strength and conditioning. And it's also a little bit in terms of us balancing the workload and not expecting them to do the three nights heavy slog, slowly getting back in again, giving them extra recovery. But they're absolutely outstanding."

**Scorers for Clonduff:** P O'Hagan (0-6, 5 frees); SL Graffin (0-3); C Byrne, I O'Hare, K Morgan (0-1 each)

**Scorers for James Stephens:** S O'Dwyer (1-5, 5 frees); N Deely (0-1)

**CLONDUFF:** K McGilligan; E Rafferty, J Boden capt, N Murray; C Kearney, F Carr, K Morgan; I O'Hare, C McGilligan; C Fitzpatrick, O Gribben, B Fitzpatrick; P O'Hagan, C Byrne, SL Graffin.

**Subs:** O McCusker for Gribben 18-22; O McCusker for Murray 36; C Cowan for Gribben 46; A Morgan for McCusker 60+2

**JAMES STEPHENS:** L McGrath; M Burke, E Gaffney, H Larkin; E Manogue, A Cantwell, H Scott; M Teehan, A Doherty; S O'Dwyer; N Deely capt, N Butler; C Delaney, R Leahy, E Smith. **Subs:** C Moran for Butler HT, T McGuire for Moran (60)

**Referee:** Cathal McAllister (Cork).



# TWO ALL-IRELAND CAMOGIE TITLES FOR CORK

It was another hectic season on the local and national scene for Cork camogie.

At local level, the county board organised championships and league competitions from U12 up to and including senior along with a huge volume of underage Go Games. On the inter-county scene, it was a tremendous year for Cork and it was the youth who led the way as back-to-back minor and U16 All-Ireland titles were won.

The U16s made it three titles in four years and, with no championship having been played in 2020 due to Covid, Cork could very well have made it four in a row. For the minors, it was a huge success, having lost out to Kilkenny in the 2021 decider, when they were bidding for a third title in four years.

The senior and intermediate teams headed to Croke Park on All-Ireland day

bidding for a double as the seniors took on Kilkenny and the intermediates met Galway but the dream of a clean sweep of four titles in the same year were quashed as Galway got the upper hand in the opening game before Kilkenny did likewise to take the senior title. With the intermediate and senior sides securing their places in the All-Ireland final after excellent campaigns, hopes were high and it was disappointing for new senior manager Matthew Twomey, who came into the role having worked at senior level as a mentor in previous years. When he announced that Davy Fitzgerald was coming in as coach, there was a huge buzz about the place and, all of a sudden, Cork camogie were big news.

Davy took a back seat where all the media were concerned and it was

Matthew who was manager and front of house. Clare native Fitzgerald brought huge energy to the role and the feedback from all the players was superb with each and every player enjoying the year – what a pity their huge efforts just fell short.

The intermediate team, under the guidance of manager Trevor Coleman, looked to be the form team as they took on Galway and, with the Connacht side reduced to 14 players for the last quarter, Cork were in a good position but failure to capitalise on opportunities saw them lose out by two points on a disappointing day in Croke Park.

The minor team, managed by Jerry Wallace, set out to go all the way and avenge the hurt of losing in 2021. In what was a repeat of their opening

Tesco All-Ireland Camogie Minor A Championship Final, FBD Semple Stadium, Thurles, Tipperary 26/3/2022  
Cork vs Galway  
Cork players celebrate with the cup  
(pic @INPHO/Tommy Grealy)





game in their group, Cork and Galway came face-to-face in the final, with Galway having knocked out holders Kilkenny.

Cork showed huge determination and spirit all through the campaign to get out of tight corners. The final lived up to expectations and a superb effort from Cork in FBD Semple Stadium saw them capture the county's third title at the grade. In a tight game, Cork had a 1-3 to 0-3 interval lead and they tore into the second half with a superb

energy and they kept their noses in front despite huge Galway pressure. Their defence was magnificent as they hooked, blocked and got the ball out of the danger zone, led superbly by Aoife Healy, who was named as Player of the Match. Cork won by 2-11 to 2-7, the goals scored by Ciara Morrison and Orla Cahalane.

Despite defeat to Galway in their opening group game, the U16 team knuckled down with excellent victories over Kilkenny, Limerick and Wexford

before going on to meet Tipperary in the final. What was impressive all through their campaign was their workrate – it was huge and the will to win was there to be seen. The competition for places on the starting fifteen was intense and, with a very strong bench, Donie Daly and his management continued to keep everyone on their toes as they changed their lines out and keeping everyone focused and working hard.

On final day, a huge crowd got behind

both teams from the throw-in and Cork had to weather an early Tipperary challenge before they retained their crown. First-half goals from Sarah Murphy and Gráinne Finn help to turn the game in their favour and seven points separated the sides at the interval as Cork held a 2-6 to 0-5 advantage.

The second half belonged to Cork they were totally dominant in all sectors. The Cork forwards reeled off the scores and as the Cork defence closed down the

Tipperary attack totally, there was no disputing the result. The final score was 2-18 to 0-10, with Ava Fitzgerald named as Player of the Match.

At local level, Seandun made it back-to-back senior titles as they overcame Sarsfields in the SE Systems senior final. Aghabullogue, having lost the last two finals, banished the ghost as they overcame Blackrock in the intermediate decider but it took a replay and extra time to decide the outcome. The junior A title was won

by Ballinhassig as they overcame Ballinora, Aghada took the junior B crown defeating Youghal and the junior C title was won by Bride Rovers as they got the better of Midleton.

While it was disappointing not to have made a clean sweep of All-Ireland titles, Cork camogie can be pleased with their year and, with the youth leading the way, it can only augurs well for the future.



2022 Cork Senior Camogie Final, Seandun V's Sarsfields, at Castle Road, Mahon, Cork. (pic Jim Coughlan)





Amy O'Connor will captain Cork this year.

Picture: Jim Coughlan

## Camogie association on a recruitment drive at a national level

THE Camogie Association are planning ahead and are presently recruiting for a full time referee development and education co-ordinator.

The purpose of this role is to develop, manage and support initiatives that support clubs to recruit, educate, train and retain referees within the sport.

This is an area which has received a lot of publicity in recent times and it is widely acknowledged that it is becoming harder and harder to get people interested in taking up refereeing.

The Association in recent years has put in a lot of work into their young whistlers programme and also in recruiting young female referees.

The successful candidate will be part of the camogie associations development team and will be responsible for delivering on a work plan providing support to units, volunteers, and officers, and will assist in implementing the Camogie Association's National Development Plan for 2020-2023.

The successful candidate will be required to have an understanding and experience of volunteer sporting National Governing Bodies and experience of working with Volunteers, have an interest in the sport and a knowledge of the structures and operations of the Camogie Association and Gaelic games, specifically within Camogie activity at Post Primary Schools and Third levels and have awareness of current challenges and opportunities within female sports environment.

Experience of involvement in hurling/camogie and familiarity with experience in collaborative working and developing new relationships and an experience of identifying opportunities and development of new programmes and an awareness of Camogie coach and referee education structures.

The Association is also recruiting for a full time participation and retention co-ordinator to join the Association's staff, the key purpose of this role is to develop, manage and support initiatives that support clubs to retain players within the game and creating strategies to boost retention at all levels of the association, playing recreationally and competitively, as well as encour-

agement progression to officiating, coaching and administration. The successful candidate will be part of the association's development team and will lead the regional participation and growth co-ordinator team. The successful candidate will be part of the Camogie Associations development team and will be responsible for delivering on a work plan providing support to units, volunteers, and officers, and will assist in implementing the Camogie Association's National Development Plan for 2020-2023.

Amongst the qualifications requirements for this role is that the successful candidate holds a third level degree in sports, sports development or other relevant area and have at least two to three years professional experience of working in a development role in sport, community development, youth work or other relevant area. They must have the ability to develop good working relationships at multiple levels, contribute to a positive working environment and influence the delivery of objectives with a wide variety of stakeholders including volunteers, colleagues in sport, sponsors etc. and hold excellent administrative and IT skills, be highly organised thorough and conscientious with demonstrated ability to work to deadlines and hold excellent communication skills— verbal, written, reporting and presentations and have extensive experience of project management. A full-time club and education support co-ordinator is also being recruited and the key purpose of this role is to develop and manage initiatives to support development and best practice in governance, planning, implementation and administration of camogie within clubs, schools and The closing date for receipt of applications for the positions is 3pm on Wednesday 4th January 2023, with interviews scheduled to take place week beginning January 9.

The association are inviting anybody interested in taking up the roles to submit a C.V. and cover letter to [jobs@camogie.ie](mailto:jobs@camogie.ie).

### CAMOGIE

#### Mary Newman

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Denise Gaule of Kilkenny celebrates converting a free during the All-Ireland Camogie final against Cork



Martin O'Brien and Gemma O'Connor celebrate after the 2018 camogie final

## Twomey: Cork to implement new

BY MATTHEW HURLEY

A YEAR that ultimately ended in heartbreak for the Cork camogie team still offered hope. Douglas man Matthew Twomey has completed his first year in charge and in his second, the Rebels will be gunning for their first All-Ireland senior title since 2018.

'At the start of 2022, all we wanted to do was get back to the final and better what we did in 2021. We got a lot of young players into the panel to see how they fared. We were up in Croke Park three times which was always fantastic but the way we came up short was dis-

appointing,' admitted Twomey, as Cork lost the All-Ireland final to Kilkenny in August by a single point, 1-13 to 1-12.

'On a whole, you have to say it was positive. There's no doubt there are learnings there from the management's perspective but also the players.

'There can be improvements there, which is a good reflection to have but it's also a modest reflection. Ultimately, my job is to look at myself and everything else. It was a good year, but there could have been more. We had a league final that we could have won and obviously the All-Ireland we possibly should have won.'

The three main camogie contenders, according to most, are Twomey's charges, Kilkenny and Galway. The Cork boss is still wary of the so-called challengers.

'We were missing Orla Cronin, Linda Collins and Pamela Mackey in the final, huge losses to us. We played for 40 minutes and lost the All-Ireland by a point, after leaving in a poor goal. There is no doubt we can improve,' the Cork boss said.

'Then there's the likes of Tipperary, Dublin, Waterford, all with new management. They're going to improve as well. The gap is getting smaller

and smaller, as we found to our detriment against Tipperary. That's still a healthy situation though. Our goal next season is to get better,' Twomey added.

One new face coming in is coach Liam Cronin, who has replaced Davy Fitzgearald in the Cork backroom team. Cronin was involved in 2020 with Cork camogie and with Clare hurling for three years previous to that. He was with Dublin senior hurlers for the last two years and Twomey is delighted to have him on board.

'Coaching wise, he's a class act, most importantly too, he's a gentleman. He feels he has unfinished business down in

## style in '23 to show our strengths

Cork which is great,' Twomey explained.

The Cork boss will be hoping that a new style of play will come from this appointment too. 'The quality of players we have is second to none. The success coming through at underage is a credit to everyone involved there but we have to utilise that. We have to get the right players in the right positions with the right play,' he said.

'Let us worry about ourselves. We were playing with eight players in the defence so people did put up their stalls against a team like us. That is a compliment in a way, like

they're worried about us. We did play into their hands though. We have an excellent coach coming in next year and he's in the same mindset as myself. It is a stumbling block for myself that we have to remain totally united as a management. Everyone has to buy into what we are doing. There is a system we could play that suits our players. I'm hoping we'll implement that next year to show our strengths rather than focus on anyone else's.'

Two important players are dual stars Libby Coppinger and Meabh Cahalane, and the Cork manager is full of praise for the duo but also aware of the big

commitment.

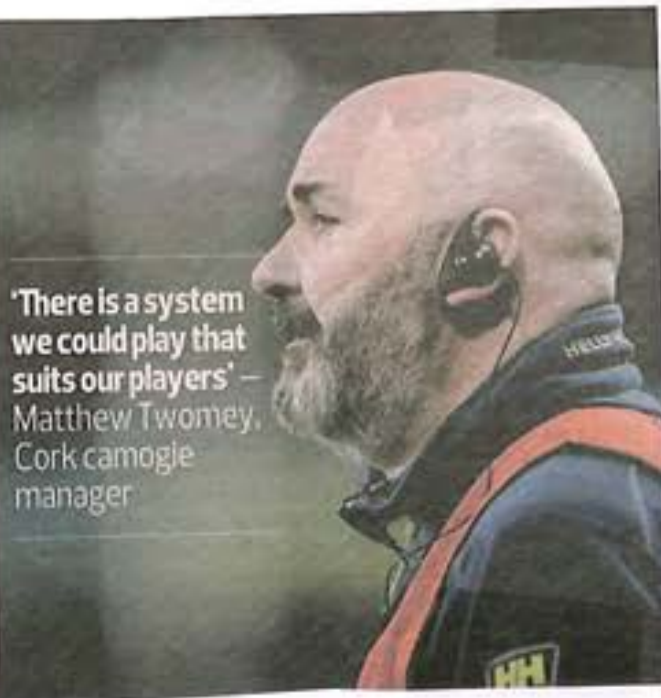
'They remind me so much of Rena and Briega. There's not a bother on them, they could be out four or five nights a week. There is a bit of minding of them as well. Libby has a fair drive up to Cork from Kealkil and that has to be brought into consideration,' Twomey said.

'We do have to sit down with the football management and try and curtail their activities as well. These players want to play, they're good enough to play. If they could split between the two teams, it would be key. You want them to be happy too, I wouldn't put a gun to anybody's head and say if you play football

you're gone.'

Even though Cork have now suffered back-to-back All-Ireland final defeats, the belief in the group is strong.

'There's a savage belief there,' Twomey said. 'I think in 2021, just to get to a semi-final was a monkey off the back. They hadn't been in a final for a few years. Galway were just more experienced on that day but in 2022 we were very confident of going the whole way. It didn't go our way but they are relentless. I don't think any player would go back in January unless there was a belief that we'd win an All-Ireland. We have to be confident, and we are.'



'There is a system we could play that suits our players' — Matthew Twomey, Cork camogie manager



# THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT LIBBY

We asked Libby Coppinger's team-mates – Fiona Keating, Emma Spillane, Clara Crowley and Aisling Murnane – to tell us more about the St Colum's All-Star



BY MATTHEW HURLEY

THE past year has been the best of Libby Coppinger's GAA career.

Not only did the dual star enjoy a superb season in the Rebels' jersey for both the camogie and football teams, but she was also rewarded with her first Camogie All-Star award.

The St Colum's ace has made her mark on all the teams she has lined out with. Whether it's at county level with Cork, at divisional level with West Cork football or Carbery camogie, or her own club, Coppinger has left an impression.

Courcey Rovers' Fiona Keating has played with Libby for years, currently with Cork camogie, but they also won a Cork senior football title together with West Cork.

'I started playing with Libby for a year or two with West Cork, and then moved on to the Cork stages. She's always someone who took you under her wing,' Keating explained.

'I was nervous going into the Cork set-up and she was always the one where you could go to if you needed anything or if you needed questions answered. For Cork, when you had to go into pairs, you'd be a bit

**'Libby is one of the most talented, hard-working people I've ever played with' – Emma Spillane**

nervous and then Libby would say, "Fiona, come on away, I'll go with you". Even now as I move into the middle age category on the team, I can still see her looking after the younger ones as well as everyone else.'

Coppinger was once a young gun in the Rebels' set-up,



Libby Coppinger in action for her club, St Colum's.

but has developed into a leader. Her presence has been felt across Matthew Twomey's team.

'I think she has come out of herself a bit more. Even for us this year in the full-back line, she took more of a leadership role. For the likes of Meabh Murphy coming onto the team this year, Libby showed her the ropes. She knows what it's like coming new into the team,' Keating explained.

Cork stars Coppinger and Meabh Cahalane are the standard bearers for dual players all over the country. To compete and excel at the highest level in two codes is quite remarkable, especially when you consider the regular trek the West Cork woman makes from St Colum's, and home in Kealkill.

'She's travelling up and down to training. People feel bad for committing to one, never mind two sports. She's also trying to balance work, social and family life. It really shows what she puts into it,' Keating said.

'Libby is one of the most talented, hard-working people I've ever played with,' said Libby's current Cork football team-mate Emma Spillane.

'The commitment she gives to both codes, driving up and down to Cork five or six times

a week. I don't think she gets the credit she deserves sometimes. You'd never hear her complaining. She's a very positive person.'

The list of qualities of the St Colum's dual star is extensive. Not just her camogie or footballing ability but her communication too.

'She wouldn't be the loudest of the bunch but when she's on the field, she has such an impact. She's a team player, she gets on with everyone,' Spillane added. 'Her positivity is a great asset and it brings a lot to the group. When we're running in training, the girls will be complaining but Libby will say "it's only a few runs".'

Spillane, who played alongside Coppinger at club level when the latter played for Bantry Blues, praised the decision to award her an All-Star.

'You could say she was hard-done-by in the years where she was nominated. Nobody deserves it more than Libby. I'm delighted she has been honoured because the dedication she's given to both sports is unbelievable. For her family and her club, it's a great achievement for her,' Spillane said.

It's not just the Cork stars who believe Coppinger is an inspiration. Just ask her Carbery camogie midfield partner from 2021, Clara Crowley.

'I have played with and against Libby at club level, and she is one of the most genuine camogie players I have come

across. She has the skill and pace to get the ball and be gone up the pitch before you would blink,' Crowley explained.

'Libby has a major presence on the pitch. She has a never-give-up attitude and will always have a positive line to add to any pre-match team talk,' Ballinacathry club player Crowley explained.

While winning a match is important for Coppinger, a loss isn't the end of the world.

'The minute the whistle is blown, win or lose, Libby will have a smile on her face and will always find a positive element of the game to share with us,' Crowley added.

'There is no doubt Libby is one of the most talented camogie players of our generation, and she has always given her all to the Carbery team, allowing us fellow West Cork girls to get a chance to play senior camogie at a competitive level.'

The All-Star's influence on her beloved St Colum's has the largest impact.

'She's putting Colum's on the map a bit more and West Cork too,' Colum's camogie player Aisling Murnane acknowledged.

'Camogie wouldn't be as big down here, so it's great to have that coming down here. We're all delighted for her.'

Her influence amongst the players is really felt in her local club.

'She's a great team player. She's one of the girls on the

pitch that is close by to give you a hand if you're in trouble.

'When she isn't able to play with us, she'll come down to games. She's there talking to the girls before the game, at half time, and after the game. When she's at training herself, she'd be giving us drills and things to do. She learns a lot of skills and brings it down to us,' Murnane said.

Coppinger is not only a brilliant player but also great company to be around.

'Whenever there's a night out, Libby will be one of the first people there!' Emma Spillane laughed.

'She's always up for the craic after a match, to go out or whatever we're doing. As much dedication as she gives, she'll always go out, which is well deserved if you're committing that much of your life to the sport.'

'As long as I've known Libby, she always seems to be in great form. She's always involved in everything,' Fiona Keating added.

She's the same in her club. 'She's a great laugh. She would talk to anyone about GAA or even just catch-up with the girls in training before or after. She would be messing in the dressing room whether it's laughing over something or joking around the place. She's great fun,' said Aisling Murnane.

A role model on and off the pitch. And now a deserving All-Star, too.



# My life-changing trip to Kenya

Enniskeneane camogie star Orla Cronin says her recent eight-day visit to Africa has completely changed her outlook on life, and made her realise the importance of health and happiness



**Emma Connolly**

ALL-Ireland camogie player Orla Cronin is just back from a life-changing trip to Kenya where she was part of a group working to plant one million trees and support hundreds of thousands of African families and communities to live off them.

The 27-year-old from Balineen travelled with Cork team-mates Libby Coppinger, Laura Treacy and Ashling Thompson, as well as GAA players from all over the country.

The trip, she explained, was an initiative by Alan Kerins who is the founder of Warriors for Humanity - a charity organisation offering campaigning, volunteering, educational and fundraising opportunities with the expectation to inspire and connect people and issues.

The trip was in partnership with Self Help Africa (SHA) who are a leading international

development charity with an expertise in small-scale farming and growing family-farm businesses. They work with their own local and African staff and, through local partners, they have been undertaking a range of agri-development programmes in rural African communities for years,' said Orla, a physiotherapist who works in St Finbarr's Hospital in geriatric and stroke rehabilitation.

Over the eight-day trip the group travelled to various areas across the Rift Valley and western parts of Kenya where SHA have projects. Lots of what she saw inspired her, but some sights also stopped her in her tracks.

She admits that nothing could have prepared her for seeing children being indifferent to the flies on their faces, having to find clothes inside of rubbish piles, or seeing the kids begging on the streets



The tree planting projects are important as they restore nitrogen and nutrition to the soil, provide shade and shelter, as well as food and income for people.

of Nairobi from their wheelchairs.

'They have very little and are struggling in many ways, but they are the happiest and brightest you could meet. It still felt uneasy at times though, as you know, these children need more,' she said.

A visit to Londiani Sub County Hospital will stay with Orla forever.

'Working in the HSE, I was curious to see their health systems and it was completely eye-opening. We saw a labour ward of three beds tightly squeezed together, three or four incubators scattered in

Thankfully, the incidence of mother and babies dying is reducing. A decade ago, it might have been one in 16, now it's one in 26.

'Being a physio, I was also drawn to see what these services were like. The senior physio Janet told me she sees 15 patients a day. Her physio room was no bigger than an outdoor garden shed, and she had one exercise bike and one zimmer frame. Coming from a rehab setting with a vast selection of resources, it was admirable to see how she continues to use her skills to provide patient care even in

much energy with songs and dance. They were obsessed with my long wavy hair! We planted trees with the school kids there. We played soccer and volleyball with them. You couldn't but leave the school with a new lease of life because their energy was so great,' said Orla.

A visit to a project run by SHA in Baringo, which is suffering the worst drought in years with four failed rainy seasons, was a tougher experience.

'We re-planted trees that were wiped out by a drought-resistant, fast-spreading evergreen tree called Proposis. It has taken over natural biodiversity and native species, which is causing severe issues with feeding livestock, and families. Millions of livestock are dying which is detrimental to families. A person is likely to be dying from hunger every 48 seconds here. It was the warmest and most humid part of the country we had been to, and the land was so dried out, that the dust from the roads would make you cough. The Il Chamus people farmed the land here and they are a sub-tribe of the Masai people so they were colourful and



Orla said body and athletic image had taken over her focus too much in recent years. But the trip showed her that health and happiness are what matters most.

**'They say the Irish are some of the friendliest and most welcoming people on Earth, but the Kenyan welcome really is an amazing thing.'**

rooms. The reality is a lot of women have their babies at home. What was startling was that it may be something as simple as not having access to a basic drug that could prevent pregnancy/labour complications that may be the difference between life or death.

a resource-limited environment. However, it just feels like it shouldn't be that way.'

A visit to a school in Londiani was where the group enjoyed one of the most uplifting afternoons.

'There must have been over 2,000 kids welcoming us, so

donning us with some of their jewellery. No matter where we went and no matter how bad things were, or appeared to be, for the local people, they were so proud of their heritage and their land,' said Orla.

The aim of the trip was also to be a cultural exchange between Irish and Kenyan people, be it through music or sport. 'They say the Irish are some of the friendliest and most welcoming people on Earth, but the Kenyan welcome really is an amazing thing. When we arrived at Nairobi airport, we were greeted with a display of native dance and music by students from a local school, so from the off we were welcomed to their country. The

next day we made history by playing the first ever inter-county games to be played on Kenyan soil. We played both football and hurling in Nairobi Rugby Club. Some of us chanced our arm at racing a few of the kids afterwards.'

Back home and back to work, Orla says she's still processing the entire experience.

'The trip has had a profound effect on me. I have always been concerned by the planet, but the trip and seeing places like Baringo suffering devastating drought has really emphasised my own need to act now. Talk is cheap, as they say. I will be more conscious of my own carbon footprint, conscious of making better environmental choices in my

daily habits. We have to make those changes, be it through the food we eat, the clothes we buy, or the transport systems we take,' she said.

Orla also plans to 'focus less on what matters least.'

'Body image and athletic image have taken over my focus far too much in recent years. I would be worried about what others think, comparing myself to others at times. The Kenyan people I met, the last thing they worry about is how they look. Once they are healthy and happy, it's all that matters.'

Orla has committed to raising €10,000 for Self Help Africa and is almost at her target. See [www.idonate.ie/fundraiser/OrlaCronin](http://www.idonate.ie/fundraiser/OrlaCronin) to donate.



A physio room had one exercise bike and a zimmer frame.



# 80 players in the mix as Cork minors look to unearth new talent

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

IT'S all systems go for the Cork minor camogie management as preparations are underway for the defence of their title, but it will be under a changed format this season.

The new structure will see Cork, Kilkenny, Galway, Dublin, Waterford, and Tipperary in one group with the top four advancing to the semi-finals. The fixtures and venues have not been confirmed.

It's a tight schedule with games every week and this, no doubt, will take its toll, with little time to recover from game to game. Championship commences on March 11-12 with all counties playing the first-round games, then it's on to March 18-19, March 25-26, April 1-2, and April 15-16, for the concluding group games.

There is no let-up as the games continue with the semi-finals pencilled in for April 22-23. However, the team that makes it to the final will have a break with the finals fixed for the weekend of May 6-7.

Returning to manage the Cork team for a sixth year is Jerry Wallace who has been hugely suc-



The Lord Mayor of Cork Cllr Deirdre Forde who hosted a civic reception at the City Hall for the Cork camogie All-Ireland minor champions. Included were Jerry Wallace, manager and Brendan O'Driscoll, coach. Picture: Dan Linehan

cessful with the minor team guiding Cork to its first title in 2018 and making it back-to-back titles in 2019.

Covid put a stop to Cork making it three-in-a-row as the camogie association decided to abandon the championship with just two games to complete the programme.

Cork lost to Kilkenny in the 2021 final, but they were back with a bang last season to take the title and now the hunt is on to make it

back-to-back titles again. Joining Wallace in his backroom team is coach Michael Boland who has been with the minors through their hugely successful campaigns and this year they are joined by U16 All-Ireland winning coach Mossie O'Sullivan. Ollie Hallihan provides experience and mentorship to both players and management and he continues in his role. A new addition to the group is Chris Casey who joins in a role

covering mentorship and on-field training with players. Orla Hallihan returns as the group's liaison officer along with Mairead Donovan from the county board. John Daly is again the medical officer and will work with the group on game day. Sean Duggan returns in the role of providing statistics inputs from game days. Reyanna Power, Lucy Wallace, and Paul Griffin return to provide support and logistics assistance on championship

match days. Denis McCarthy and his team of coaches at Midleton Fitness Cork are providing outsourced support to the groups in the area of age-specific strength and conditioning performance-related group programs. Currently, the Cork management are looking at approximately 80 players in either game-based or training events and are leaving no stone unturned in talent searching for players.

Wallace updated us and explained their work to date. "Players have and are sourced from the 2022 All-Ireland Cork minor winning panel who are still eligible, the successful 2022 All-Ireland Cork U16 panel who have moved on from playing U16, last year's U17 development panel, and club and schools competitions at adult and age specific competitions in 2022." The minor panel and captain will be officially named on the first week of February.

## CORK U17 DEVELOPMENT

Cork Camogie will commence formalising a player's work group for U17 development. Players who may not make the minor panel but who remain eligible, along with players sourced from the U16 club championships and school competitions, will be invited to trial for a 24-player squad. Wallace has been ratified to manage the group; All-Ireland U16 manager Donie Daly will be lead coach and assisted by All-Ireland U16 winning coach Mossie O'Sullivan. No official competition exists for this group at national level and these panels are development squads.



Underage goalie coach Michelle Gould at the start of the St Vincent's Dave McCarthy memorial poc fada. Picture: Denis Minihane

## U16s will be aiming to compete a magnificent three-in-a-row this year

THE Cork U16 camogie team will bid for three in a row when the Tesco championship gets underway soon.

This season there is a new management team at the helm - former manager Donie Daly, who enjoyed huge success with the U16 sides in recent years stepped down and will instead be involved with the county U17 development squad.

Only one of last season's successful management team remains and taking over the role of manager is John Maloney from Newtownshandrum who had been involved as part of Donie Daly's management set up.

Moloney bring huge experience to the role of manager and he is joined by Deirdre Twomey from the St Catherine's club who will act as liaison officer, Michelle Gould, St Vincent's is goalkeeping coach, John Brosnan, Buttevant is coach /selector, Mark Kavanagh, Charleville is Coach / Selector and 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.

The management have been busy in recent weeks and they announced a squad of thirty players just before Christmas so it's all systems go as preparations are underway.

A change of format this years will see just six team battle it out for the Under 16A All-Ireland championship title with will all six in one group

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

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

The six counties are Cork, Galway, Kilkenny, Limerick, Tipperary and Wexford.

The date have been set for the games but as yet no fixtures have been released, round one gets under way on the weekend of May 6th /7th, round two on May 13th /14th, round three May 20th /21st.

After round three where is a five week break during state exams and championship will resume with round four on the weekend of July 1st/2nd, round five on the weekend of July 8th /9th.

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

The panel announced by the selectors is as follows: Aisling Cussen (Ballinhassig), Aily Mulkerins (St Catherine's), Anna Kearney (Blackrock), Aoife Cottrill (Ballinhassig), Ava McAuliffe (Castlemartyr), Ava McSweeney (Laochra Ogi), Avri Cagney (Mallow), Caoilainn Ryan (Newtownshandrum), Catherine Murphy, (Kinsale), Ciara Kelleher (Cloughduv), Clara Murphy (Eire Ogi), Eavan Cotter (Castlelyons), Elimear O'Callaghan (Sarsfields), Emma Honohan (Innisca), Grainne O'Neill (Banteer), Jess Murphy (Blackrock), Kate McEntee (Valley Rovers), Kate O'Sullivan (Midleton), Laoise Ahern (Eire Ogi), Laura Walsh (Mallow), Lily O'Shea (Aghabullogue), Maeve O'Brien (Enniskeane), Millie Lombard (Ballinhassig), Natalia Golka (Na Piarasigh), Nikki Hordford (Rockban), Rachel Murphy (Ballinora), Saoirse Cunningham, (Erin's Own), Sarah Burrows (Newcestown), Sophie Pomeroy (Sarsfields), Tara Goulding (Ballinacollig).

## Glenravel first Antrim side to win junior title

More evidence of the growing presence of Ulster camogie on the national stage was provided in Kinnegad yesterday when Bridini Óga from Glenravel became the first Antrim team to collect the AIB All-Ireland junior club title after coming from behind at the break to beat Wicklow champions Knockananna, 2-7 to 1-5.

That result means that three of the four All-Ireland club trophies have gone north over the past few weeks, with Glenravel's neighbours Loughgiel the only ones to miss out with a narrow loss to Sarsfields of Galway.

## Amy O'Connor named Cork camogie captain

ST Vincent's player Amy O'Connor has been selected as the Cork senior camogie captain for 2023. It has been confirmed.

On her appointment, Amy said: "It is such a huge honour for me to captain the Cork Senior Camogie team for the 2023 season. I am so proud to represent my family, my club St Vincent's, and my division Seandún and I'm really looking forward to the year ahead."

Her club wished her well following the news: "Massive congratulations to Amy O'Connor on her selection as Cork Senior Camogie Captain for '23. Well deserved Amy. We wish you the very best of luck."

Seandún also paid tribute saying: "We wish Amy the best of luck, as she takes over from fellow Seandún teammate Amy Leel!"

Team sponsors Kearns congratulated Amy: "From her championship debut in 2014 Amy has collected six senior Munster medals and four senior All Ireland medals with Cork - she also has an All Star. Amy is a fantastic role model for younger players across the county," the statement added.

## Tragic loss of Paudie leaves us missing our colleague and friend

IT WOULD be remiss of me not to mention my dear friend and colleague of long standing whom we lost recently in such tragic circumstances.

Paudie Palmer was a gentleman of the highest order and the limited space here does not allow me to do justice to just how much he will be missed.

For over 30 years, Paudie and his wife Colette and his two fantastic girls Emily and Claire have been wonderful friends.

To be in a press box with Paudie was a treat, the antics and fun he emitted was something else.

There have been perfect words from everyone to describe him, all very fitting; we will miss his fun, his laughter and most of all his wonderful sincere friendship.

I will miss his phone calls to get all the camogie information for his podcast and his column here on *The Echo*, I used to joke that I made him look as if he knew everything about camogie and boy did he get some laugh out of that.

Rest in peace dear friend you will never be forgotten because you were something so special.

### THIRD LEVEL

#### COMPETITIONS

Games in the Ashbourne and Purcell Cup competitions were to continue after the Christmas break but several round three games were postponed due to weather.

On Tuesday next in the Ashbourne Cup UCC take on Mary Immaculate in the Mardyke, Maynooth play Technological University Dublin, Dublin City University meet University of Limerick and UCD play South East Technological University Waterford.

In the Purcell Cup, University of Limerick play MTU Cork, UCC will meet TUS Midlands, DCU are in action against UG and Trinity met SETU Carlow.

#### SECOND LEVEL PROVINCIAL COMPETITIONS

Munster colleges games saw Coachford College edged out by Cashel Community School in a cracking A semi-final, Cashel led by two points 1-5 to 0-6 at the break a first half goal the score that was to be a cushion for them in a nip and tuck contest. The second half was close



Paudie Palmer at his home near Innishannon village. Picture: Dan Linehan

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

all through and at the full time whistle it was Cashel 1-10 Coachford 0-13, so to extra time, Cashel added four points to their tally as they got a grip on proceedings but it took a penalty save from goal keeper Molly Gilmartin to ensure they held off a strong Coachford rally to y booked their place in the final on a 1-14 to 0-13 score line.

In the Munster Senior B semi-final, St Mary's Nenagh proved too strong for Bandon as they ran out 6-7 to 3-6 winners, they meet Glanmire in the Munster Final.

In the Munster Senior D quarter final, St Mary's Newport recorded a win over Carrignavar.

In the Munster Junior A final, Coláiste Choilm Ballinacollig will meet an Ursulines College Thurles side who are bidding to retain their Munster and All-Ireland A titles.

They travel to a Cork venue to meet Coláiste Choilm who defeated Coachford College in their semi-final. Ursulines recorded a win over St Angela's Waterford in their semi-final outing and their sides feature several of last season's winning side, Caoimhe Stakeum, Maria Ralph and Lucy Purcell will be formidable scoring threats up front in what should be an exciting contest provisionally down for decision on January 29.

The Munster Junior D final saw St Augustine's College Dungarvan crowned Munster champions as they defeated St Al's Carrigtwohill 0-9 to 0-1.





## Éire Óg GAA celebrations

At the Éire Óg Club Premier Camogie Féile All-Ireland Champions and U16 Cork county league champions presentation dinner at Lee Valley Golf club, were:

- 1. Ciara Healy, Erin Healy, Abbie Hyde, Emma Casey, Clodagh O'Sullivan, Allannah Whelton, and Clara Murphy.
- 2. Lisa Murphy, Eabha Healy, and Marie McGoldrick.
- 3. Éire Óg captains Maria Barry-Murphy (left), captain of the Premier Camogie Féile winners, All-Ireland Champions 2022, and Orlaith Cremin, Cork U16 county league champions.
- 4. Sisters Laura, Eabha, and Ciara Healy.
- 5. Sisters Emma and Abbie Casey.
- 6. Con Malone, former chairman and coach, with Fiadh Malone, and Adrian Malone.
- 7. The Premier Camogie Féile winners, All-Ireland Champions 2022; also included are Conor Healy, manager, with mentors Trevor Casey, Breda Twohig, Evelyn O'Shea, Martin O'Donovan, and Adrian Malone.
- 8. Rionagh O'Leary and Jessica Power.
- 9. Marie Barry Murphy and Gemma Young.
- 10. Breda Twohig and her daughter Kate.

Pictures: Eddie O'Hare







Michelle Sliney, principal Coláiste Choilm, presents the Cork Colleges junior A camogie championship trophy to Coláiste Choilm captain Ailish Scanlon.

## First-half goals set Coláiste Choilm on the road for victory

Coláiste Choilm	
Ballincollig	2-8
Coachford College	0-5

IN an all mid-Cork meeting of Coláiste Choilm Ballincollig and Coachford College, two first-half goals were the vital cushion that gave Coláiste Choilm the Cork College's Junior A title in difficult underfoot and overhead conditions in the Cork colleges pitch at Castle Road last weekend.

An earlier game on the pitch saw it cut up badly and with a lot of muddy patches, at times it was difficult for players to hold their footing, but all credit to both sides who served up an excellent contest.

Coláiste Choilm hit the front early with a Clare Murphy point, and a goal on nine minutes from Fiadh Molone helped them settle; when Rachel Murphy finished to the net shortly afterwards they were in control.

Coachford found it difficult to break down a strong Coláiste Choilm defence, but Anna Foley had them on the scoreboard with a pointed free to which Murphy replied.

Coachford began to settle and hit three points in a row — Alice Buckley, Anna Foley, and Lexi Manley were on target as they narrowed the gap, but two converted frees ensured Coláiste Choilm maintained their six-point lead. Shortly before the break Adele Lotty cut the gap to five as Coláiste Choilm led by 2-4 to 0-5 at the break.

The second half was a much closer affair; Coachford applied huge pressure, but credit to the Coláiste Choilm defence which kept a tight hold on the Coachford attack.

Two Orla Cremin points gave Coachford breathing

### CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

space and with Murphy converting a late free, Coláiste Choilm ran out winners after a sporting contest.

**COLÁISTE CHOILM:** M Lonergan; R Hennigan, G Young, L Murtagh; L Murphy, A Cussen, S O'Connor; E McAuliffe Ni Shúilleabháin; A Scanlon (c), O Cremin, C Murphy; F Malone, R Murphy, J Larkin.

**Subs:** A Whelton for Murtagh (22), J Mehigan for Larkin (10), A Ryan for Malone (17), M de Barra Ni Mhurchu for L Murphy (11), E Nolan for Scanlon (43), D Desmond for Cremin (in) (45), A Scanlon for C Murphy (50), E O'Sullivan for Lonergan (52), R Hennigan for Cussen (58).

**COACHFORD COLLEGE:** E Honohan; E Barrett, A O'Sullivan, L Shaehan; S Bowne, A Murphy (c), G O'Leary, A Foley, A Buckley, L Meiloun, A Lotty, E Healy; L Manley, A Blake, E Duff.

**Subs:** J Buckley for Duff (43), J Corkery for Bowne (54), A Golden for L Meiloun (54), M Ross for Barrett (54).

**Scorers for Coláiste Choilm:** R Murphy 1-4 (0-3f, 50), F Malone 1-0, O Cremin 0-3, C Murphy 0-1.

**Coachford:** A Foley 0-2 (f's), A Buckley, L Manley, A Lotty 0-1 each.

**Referee:** Barry Day (Aghada).

**Christ King** 3-7

**Coláiste An Chraoibhin** 2-1

The opening game in Castle Road was the Cork intermediate C Shield final in which Christ King proved too strong for Coláiste An Chraoibhin, Fermoy.

Cassandra Fitzgerald opened Christ King's account with a point, Aoife Byrne-O'Riordan added two pointed frees before Abigail Hoare levelled matters with a Fermoy goal from a free. Byrne-O'Riordan replied to give Christ King a 1-3 to 1-0 interval lead.

Throughout the second half Christ King maintained their lead to run out winners.



Esther O'Leary presents the intermediate C camogie Shield to Christ King captain Aoife Byrne-O'Riordan.



■ 6. Members of the Cork U16 camogie team.

## Emotional win for Brídíní Óga

All-Ireland Junior A Camogie Final

Brídíní Óga (Antrim) 2-7  
Knockananna (Wicklow) 1-5

Daragh Ó Conchúir

Manager Rodney Kerr hailed an emotional Camogie All-Ireland junior A club win for Brídíní Óga. Two goals in the third quarter, from Aisling Millar and Molly Woulahan gave them an advantage they

never looked like relinquishing, although Rachel Byrne's goal from a well-struck free for Knockananna made it a nervous finish.

"Our club is going 106 years and to see men of 80-odd years of age when you're coming off the pitch, with tears in their eyes, that says it all. It's very emotional."

**Scorers for Na Brídíní Óga:** M Woulahan 1-1; A Millar 1-0; E McAleenan 0-3(2f); V Edgar, A Traynor, C McPeake 0-1 each.

**Scorers for Knockananna:** R Byrne 1-0(f); C Byrne 0-2; A Maher, E Hadden (f), Sarah Byrne 0-1 each.

**NA BRÍDÍNÍ ÓGA:** O Donnelly, A Mulholland, M McKenna, J Woulahan, E Coullter, M Mulholland, B Lavery, L McKenna, K Lavery, E McAleenan, S Fyfe, V Edgar, A Millar, M Woulahan, A Traynor.

**Subs:** C McPeake for Millar (38), S McDonnell for Traynor (60), N McKay for Edgar (60+2).

**KNOCKANANNA:** K Byrne, E Breslin, A Byrne, E O'Sullivan, Róisín Byrne, E Hadden, S Goetelen, A Maher, C Byrne, Rachel Byrne, L McGrath, E Mullan, Sínead Byrne, Sarah Byrne.

**Subs:** N Byrne for Sínead Byrne (57), D Byrne for McGrath (60+2), A Mulhall for Breslin (60+2).

**Referee:** Brian Kearney (Kildare).



Norina O'Callaghan, sales and marketing manager, Clayton Hotel, Silversprings and Eoghan Dinan, deputy editor The Echo presenting the award for April to the Cork minor camogie team. Picture: Eddie O'Hare

### SAOIRSE MCCARTHY (Camogie)

It might seem strange to be throwing a spotlight now on the Ballinspittle star given that its five years since she did that



extraordinary treble — winning minor, intermediate and senior camogie All-Irelands with Cork in one season (2018) — but the Courcy Rovers star was a forward then.

Now she has developed into a brilliant wing-back and become a versatile defender in the Rebels' pivotal half-back line. She's become a

target for puck-outs with speed to carry the ball and bringing a natural attacking sensibility to her new dogged defensive role, scoring 0-3 from play in the Division 1 league final and a point in the All-Ireland final. Cork were only pipped in the latter this year and McCarthy looks key to restoring them to glory.

The prototype of a modern hurling wing-back, she's a joy to watch and was rewarded with her first All-Star in 2022.



# Brilliant St Brogans crowned Munster camogie champions

ST BROGAN'S CGE 3-11  
WATERPARK CGE 0-9

JJ HURLEY REPORTS

A POWERFUL display saw St Brogan's College outclass Waterpark College in the Munster U18½ intermediate camogie final at Piltown, Co Kilkenny last Saturday.

While the three goals over the hour proved critical, so did Bandon's defensive unit, who were simply outstanding from one to seven. Indeed, the Waterford side, led by Abbie Mullane – daughter of Waterford legend John – found their early sorties blocked by the determined trio of Crowley, Dineen and O'Leary. While the Déise girls did eventually open the scoring, Brogan's response came from the trusty stick of Fiona Twohig, with a difficult free on nine minutes. Sixty seconds later, the Cork team opened a four-point lead when Meadh O'Callaghan finished the ball to the Waterford net.

Now dominating proceedings, Aoife O'Mahony and Ciara Haverin were stamping their authority on the midfield as the tireless Twohig added another free on 12 minutes.



The victorious St Brogan's team that won the Munster colleges' intermediate camogie final in Piltown.

Again, the Valley Rovers ace added to her first-half tally following a superb pass from Emma Eady, but their opponents responded, leaving the score at 1-3 to 0-2 after 15 minutes.

An additional point from Haverin had the Bandon girls beginning to put daylight between the sides. Two more points on 27 and 28 minutes from Twohig and O'Mahony, with a single reply from the Waterford team, left the score at 1-6 to 0-4 at the interval.

Securing the all-important score at the second half's opening, another Brogan's goal followed Fiona Twohig's point as Rebecca Sheehan latched onto a rebounded effort from

Aoife O'Mahony in the opening minutes. Waterpark's response was a point on 34 minutes, cancelled out by Twohig's unwavering accuracy. However, sensing the game slipping away, the Waterford outfit began to fight back with four points in the space of ten minutes, as Twohig landed an all-important point to give some breathing space to leave the score at 2-8 to 0-9.

It could have been far closer, but Bandon's inside line of Buttimer, Doyle and Long, marshalled by the netminder Lisa Niels, had twice heroically prevented goal opportunities for their opponents.

Entering the final ten minutes, relief for the considerable travelling support came from

Aoife O'Mahony's goal as the Bandon girls added two more points from Fiona Twohig and Rebecca Sheehan to clinch a famous victory, on a day when many remembered the school's legendary staff member, the late Paudie Palmer.

#### Scorers

**St Brogan's College:** F Twohig 0-9 (6f); R Sheehan 1-1; M O'Callaghan, A O'Mahony 1-0 each; C Haverin 0-1

**Waterpark College:** A O'Sullivan 0-6 (3f); A Mullane 0-2; S Cawley 0-1

**St Brogan's College:** L Niels (Courcy Rovers); L Buttimer (Enniskeane); M Doyle (Bandon); L Nolan (Enniskeane); K O'Leary (Bandon); R Dineen (Enniskeane); E Crowley (Newcestown); A

O'Mahony (Kilbrittain); C Haverin (Ballinhassig); E Eady (Enniskeane); F Twohig (Valley Rovers); R O'Donovan (Newcestown, captain); M O'Callaghan (Enniskeane); R Sheehan (Newcestown); M Slyne (Ballinhassig).

**Subs:** E Long (Enniskeane) for L Nolan (injured); T Lane (Newcestown) for M O'Callaghan.

**Waterpark:** N Brady; A Hutchinson; R O'Neill; E McHugh; O Power; I Boland; A Rohan; A Mullane; S Monaghan; C O'Brien; A O'Sullivan; H Cheasty; C Brennan; S Cawley; R Russell.

**Subs:** C O'Shea for C O'Brien; M Phelan for C Brennan; K McGrath for E McHugh; S Ryan for H Cheasty.  
**Referee:** L Dempsey (Thomastown).

## Glanmire put in a great effort

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

St Mary's, Nenagh 4-10  
Col. Phiarasigh 1-14

COLAISTE an Phiarasigh held all the aces as they led 0-6 to 0-1 at the end of the opening quarter of this Munster Senior B Camogie final.

However, their Tipp opponents turned it around to lead by one at the break and goals proved to be decisive when the final whistle sounded.

Colaiste an Phiarasigh settled quickly with points from Orlaith Ni Mhaolain, Evie Ni Thuama, Emma Nic Giolla Phádraigh and Deirdre D Nic Cárthaigh and a strong rear-guard saw full-back Lidan Nic Aoire impress.

Eventually Eimhear Troy had St Marys on the scoreboard converting but Orlaith Ni Mhaolain and Emma Nic Giolla Phádraigh responded. Then Mary's came storming into the game with scores from Emma Costello (2), Marie Ryan and Troy and a goal when Jane Ryan set up Ryan: 1-6 to 0-8 at the interval.

Evie Ni Thuama quickly had Colaiste An Phiarasigh level while Orlaith Ni Mhaolain also struck before Lúisi Ni Mhuiri denied St Mary's with a superb save before Troy netted. Nenagh had a four-point advantage as we entered the final quarter.

Ni Mhaolain pegged it back to three but again Troy was the thorn in the Colaiste an Phiarasigh defence when she superbly handled a dropping ball, turned and first time to the net. From the puck-out Colaiste an Phiarasigh attacked but Aoife Gleeson denied them with a good save.

They were rewarded with an Emma Nic Giolla Phádraigh point before Iris Grace raised a green flag with a long-range effort. The sides swapped points as St Mary's maintained their lead, Colaiste an Phiarasigh added a late goal and a point to their tally but by now the outcome was decided. Disappointment for the Cork school after a great effort. Ultimately St Mary's ability to hit the net and their strong second quarter after going down by five points early on saw them lift the Munster Senior B title at Bishopstown.

**Scorers for St Mary's:** E Troy 2-4 (0-2 f), I Grace 1-2 (0-1 45), M Ryan 1-1, E Costello 0-2, I Kingston 0-1.

**Colaiste An Phiarasigh:** O Ni Mhaolain 1-6 (0-3 f), E Nic Giolla Phádraigh 0-4, E Ni Thuama 0-2, D Nic Cárthaigh, A Ni Fhoghú 0-1 each.

**NENAGH:** A Gleeson; M Gleeson, A Dooley, E Williams; L Nagle, B Kennedy, M Steed; I Grace, K O'Dwyer; E Costello, A Kennedy, A Treacy; E Troy, J Ryan, M Ryan. Subs: I Kingston for M Ryan (43), C Ryan for J Ryan (48), C Mulcahy for E Costello (59).

**GLANMIRE:** L Ni Mhuiri; E Nic Mháin, L Nic Aoire, A Nic an Adhastair, A Nic Mháin, Y Abernethy, M Ni Chonchubair; C Ni Dhonnabháin, E Ni Thuama; A Ni Fhoghú; E Nic Giolla Phádraigh, C Ni Shúilleabháin; D Nic Cárthaigh, O Ni Mhaolain, A Ni Riada. Sub: R Nic Mháin for E Mháin (40).

**Referee:** Ger Sheehan (Douglas).

## Loreto Fermoy are crowned Munster camogie champions

Loreto Fermoy 3-7  
Kinsale Community School 2-4

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

BISHOPSTOWN GAA Club was the venue for the clash between Loreto Fermoy and Kinsale Community School in the Munster Junior C Camogie Championship final.

Both teams had tough games en route to the final; Loreto overcame Colaiste an Phiarasigh, Cork, Scariff from Clare, and Laurel Hill from Limerick. Kinsale beat St Caimin's from Clare, Laurel Hill FCJ from Limerick, and St Mary's from Newport. Loreto opened scoring though an Ally Mulkerins point from play.

Minutes later she pointed from a free after good work by Nikita Parle and Sophie Early. Kinsale's Catherine Murphy registered their first point followed by a pointed free to leave the contest at 0-2 each as both teams fought for every ball. Loreto took the lead again with a goal from Mulkerins.

The game was nip and tuck, but Loreto increased their lead with a well-taken Robyn Hickey goal. Kinsale tried to press, but Loreto's defence, led by full-back Ailish O'Donovan and flanked by Chloe Higgins and Clara Harrington, stood firm.

Aoife Cottrell and Nora Gould had a good battle with Loreto's Sophia Fitzgerald and Shannon O'Mahony in midfield. Loreto looked the stronger side going in at half-time leading 2-2 to 0-2.

Kinsale thundered into the game in the second half and Cottrell scored an early goal to bring them right back into the game. This was followed quickly by a well-taken point to leave it 2-3 to 1-3.

Eavan Cotter, who worked tirelessly, pointed for Loreto.

A breaking ball found Kinsale's Murphy and after a goalmouth scramble, she found the net. It was game on again! Kinsale pointed again thanks to a great effort from Catherine Murphy which put them ahead for the first time.

Loreto were not found wanting, however, as Cotter took on the defence and pointed to draw level again. Hickey's pace was too much for the Kinsale defence and she rattled the net to put Loreto a goal in front.

Loreto keeper Abbie O'Meara made some fine saves and with the hardworking midfield duo of Rebecca Feehan and Shauna O'Driscoll, the Fermoy side were digging deep to stay ahead. Kinsale keeper Hannah Ganly stopped a goalbound shot which was cleared by Pamela O'Donovan.

Faye Sheehan, along with Aisling Rosner were making great runs and kept the ball in the Loreto forward line.

Hickey pointed to put Loreto ahead by four, but even at this stage it was still all to play for. However, the switch of Mulkerins to midfield changed the game in Loreto's favour and she scored two fine points for Loreto to win by a six-point margin.

Michelle Gould, who manages and coaches the Loreto team, was absolutely thrilled with her team's performance.

"We made changes at the right times and I'm so glad they worked and we got over the line. "I couldn't be more proud of each and everyone on this panel. They've trained really hard since September.

"We're back on the training field again as we play the All-Ireland semi-final in two weeks."



Loreto camogie players celebrate their Munster win



Loreto camogie players celebrate their Munster final win with their coach Michelle Gould



# Amy's finals heroics see her crowned top athlete

## Newman inducted into Hall of Fame

### WOMEN'S SPORT

■ Dylan O'Connell

**THE ECHO Women in Sport Awards, which honoured Cork's most impressive female athletes in 2022, were held at Páirc Uí Chaoimh yesterday.**

Camogie superstar Amy O'Connor collected the overall prize, with Mary Newman entering the Hall of Fame after giving a lifetime of service to camogie in Cork.

O'Connor received the award after a year which saw her win the Munster Senior Camogie Championship and the Cork Senior Camogie Championship with Seandún.

The St Vincent's legend was instrumental in both successes; she scored 10 points in the Munster final and 2-8 in the county final win over Sarsfields.

The award was seen as the perfect way for the Cork captain to start the season.

She joined a list of other top Cork athletes that includes MMA world champion Louise Brady, Olympian Louise Shanahan, and basketball star Claire Melia, who were recognised for their services to sport in 2022.

Almost every sport was represented on the night and among the monthly winners were All-Ireland, European, and world champions.

It was an emotional evening for Newman who was commended for her lifelong service to Cork camogie and to her club, Glen Rovers.

She has decades of experience, having worked as secretary and PRO of Glen Rovers Camogie Club, and PRO for the Cork County Board.

The evening also saw the guest of honour, former professional footballer Claire Shine, address the crowd.

The striker recently hung up her boots after spending more than 10 years in the professional game, a career



Hall of Fame inductee Mary Newman and sportswoman of the year Amy O'Connor at The Echo Women in Sport awards at Páirc Uí Chaoimh last night. Picture: Eddie O'Hare

**The Echo  
Women  
in Sport  
Awards**

which saw her win almost every competition she played in.

Shine is best remembered on Leeside for scoring the winning goal for Cork City in the 2017 FAI Cup Final and she was well reminded of this.

The former Irish international's speech echoed the underlying theme of the even-

ing: Next summer's Women's World Cup in Australia and New Zealand, where Ireland will compete for the first time.

The MC for the evening, *The Echo's* sports editor John McHale, said it was a hugely successful night for Cork and for women's sport.

"It was a fantastic evening that was an all-round success. Some of the biggest names in Cork were here and it was a fantastic celebration of women in sport," he said.

"It was great to see so many sports represented on the night and Amy O'Connor is a worthy winner of the overall prize.

"Everyone in *The Echo* is so proud of Cork's female sport stars and we cannot wait to see what 2023 has in store."

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Serving Cork since 1892

## Cork women lead the way in sport

A CAMOGIE double capped off a memorable night at Páirc Uí Chaoimh for the 16th annual *Echo* Women in Sport awards.

St Vincent's, Seandún and Cork camogie dynamo Amy O'Connor was a worthy winner of the overall prize while Glen Rovers' Mary Newman was inducted into the Hall of Fame for her lifelong commitment to promoting camogie in *The Echo*, on radio and through her county board work.

The special guest was Douglas native Clare Shine. An Irish international soccer player and former professional, she also represented Cork in an All-Ireland senior camogie final. She is an advocate for positive mental health and last year published a deeply insightful book on her career and difficulties off the pitch: 'Scoring Goals in the Dark'.

This is the 16th year of the popular scheme that turns the spotlight on the best of female sport in Cork city and county.

*The Echo* editor Maurice Gubbins paid tribute to all the nominees.

"The standard of women's sport in our Rebel county increases every year, and we're privileged to be able to cover the activities and outstanding achievements of our talented sports-women. For many years we have prided ourselves on giving recognition to players and teams from when they start out in schools and juvenile competitions all the way to elite levels."

The 2022 monthly winners were Grace Young, Annette Quaid, Louise Shanahan, Amy O'Connor, Annie Walsh, Hannah O'Shea, Louise Brady, Christina Desmond, Mags Cremen, Aoife Casey, Grace Murphy, Hollie Moffett and Claire Melia. The variety of sports covered is vast from camogie, boxing and rowing to cyclo-cross racing, Aussie Rules and MMA.

*The Echo* sports editor John McHale explained how Corkonians hit new heights year after year.

"We always say that if you're the best in Cork, you're often the best in Ireland, and beyond. All our nominees and winners showed aspiring young athletes there are no limits to what can be achieved."

The previous overall winners include some of the greatest Rebels of all-time with boxer Christina Desmond and rower Sanita Puspure both having collected the coveted trophy twice.

Glanmire basketballer Jessica Scannell was the inaugural winner, recognised for an epic National Cup weekend in Tallaght.

On the GAA front, Brieghe Corkery (2008), Juliet Murphy ('11) and Rena Buckley ('16) landed *The Echo* Sportswomen of the Year trophies and no one would quibble about their contribution to women's sport in general.

On the international athletics scene, Olive Loughname (2009), Derval O'Rourke (2010), Orla Barry ('12) and Lizzie Lee ('15) flew the flag for Cork while wearing the Irish singlet.

And Ireland's development into a force to be reckoned with in rowing has been backboned by Sanita Puspure, overall winner in 2018 and '20, and last year's victor Emily Hegarty.

Christina Desmond has done the same in the ring and was picked for a monthly Women in Sport award again in 2022 as part of an all-conquering Irish team at the European Championships. Denise O'Sullivan (2014) and Saoirse Noonan ('17) are among the Irish women's soccer vanguard blazing a trail that leads to New Zealand and Australia this summer for the World Cup.

Amy O'Connor had all the attributes to join them on the roll of honour.



## Clare Shine gives inspiring speech at The Echo Women in Sport Awards



Cork camogie captain Amy O'Connor, overall winner, and Mary Newman, Hall of fame winner, with the monthly winners, guest speaker Clare Shine, Lord Mayor Deirdre Forde, deputy mayor of Co Cork Deirdre O'Brien, The Echo editor Maurice Gubbins, and managing director Michael Sheehan at The Echo Women in Sport Awards at Páirc Uí Chaoimh last night.



Mary Newman, Hall of fame winner, with her mother Nora at The Echo Women in Sport Awards.

# 'Sport gave me my life back'

Continued from Page 1.

Elaine Whelan

The Douglas woman reminded attendees that while the physical aspect of sport is key, women in sport must not neglect their mental health.

Speaking of her own experience, Shine said: "I spent the majority of my sporting career afraid to be myself, afraid to share what I was going through, because I was scared I wouldn't be selected for a team. When I found myself in a situation where my mental health and addictions pulled me away from the one thing I loved and portrayed me as something I am not and slowly deteriorated my life, it was sport and the sporting community that gave me my life back. That is the power in sport."

She continued: "If I could change one thing about being an athlete, it would be how we are really understood, especially when facing difficult periods. We do not have con-

trol of everything that happens in our life, but we do have control over how we react to it. No matter what happens in life, sport has the power to bring you back alive. Just like it did for me."

Another woman who has dedicated her life to sport, both on and off the pitch is Mary Newman. She was honoured with the Hall of Fame award for her support of Cork sport.

The Newman family made history on the night by becoming the first family to have both mother and daughter recipients of the prestigious award.

The Echo editor Maurice Gubbins summarized the night by saying: "The standard of women's sport in our Rebel County increases every year, and we're privileged to be able to cover the activities and outstanding achievements of our talented sportswomen."

See Sport for more



Cork camogie captain Amy O'Connor with Clare Shine at last night's awards ceremony.

## UL controversially knocked out of Ashbourne Cup

UL have been eliminated from this year's Ashbourne Cup, the blue riband third level camogie championship, in extraordinary circumstances. WRITES CONOR MCKEON.

The Limerick College played Maynooth in the final game of the group stages, requiring a win to draw level on points with DCU and TUD. According to competition rules, score difference would then determine which two out of the three would qualify for the semi-finals.

A table published on the official third level camogie social media channels showed DCU with a scoring difference after three games of +31, with UL's shown as -2.

In a statement released yesterday by the UL panel, they claim that they received confirmation from the CCAO executive of the standings prior to their game with Maynooth which they won by 34 points.

However, they were subsequently contacted by the CCAO, who informed them that a mistake had been made with the information.

"As far as we are aware," the statement outlines, "a question was raised by DCU about the score difference, importantly not before but after our match with Maynooth, although they had been made officially aware of the scores and possible outcomes in the week leading up to the UL and Maynooth fixture."

UL say they were informed, via a "one line email" from the THDC that DCU would be advancing to the semi-finals after clarification of a scoreline by the referee in the DCU/Maynooth game, which was played last November 29.

## ST VINCENT'S PLAYER AMY WINS WOMEN IN SPORT AWARD



Cork camogie captain and St Vincent's player Amy O'Connor was named overall winner at The Echo Women in Sport awards at Páirc Uí Chaoimh.



# 'Sport has made



Mary Newman, *The Echo* Women in Sport Hall of Fame winner with her husband Finbarr McCarthy, mother Nora relatives and friends from Glen Rovers. Picture: Eddie O'Hare

## Camogie has been a way of life for Hall of Fame recipient Mary

AFTER decades of service to camogie in Cork and Glen Rovers, Mary Newman was inducted into *The Echo* Women in Sport Awards Hall of Fame at Páirc Uí Chaoimh.

### CAMOGIE

■ Dylan O'Connell

She was commended for her years of service to Cork GAA and recognised for her work as secretary of the Glen Rovers Camogie Club, PRO for the club, and PRO for the Cork County Board. It wasn't just a personal victory, she was joined by her whole family when she accepted the award. This brought everything full circle as her mother, Nora O'Brien, played on the first Glen Rovers team to win the senior county championship in 1950. She also worked as the club's chairperson and president, all while establishing herself as the life and soul of the club as a volunteer.

Her story is rooted in her love for the sport, which she was introduced to when she was still in a buggy.

"Camogie means everything to me. In the pram, where else was I going? My mother said they had no one to mind me so they had to bring me to the matches," she said, just seconds after collecting the award.

"I see Deirdre Sutton down there and I saw Deirdre playing with Cork and the Glen and you'd be inspired by those people and I just wanted to be a part of it. That's it. I just took it on board and went with the flow and I just love it."

Newman, whose family are steeped in the Glen, has seen the club through some of their best and worst days. She was there in 2014 when they lost to Sarsfields by 16 points and again in 2015 when the Seán Óg Murphy Cup returned to Blackpool after a 26-year hiatus.

Each campaign, regardless if it is at underage level or senior, is greeted with fresh excitement from Newman, who just wants to support the Glen and see a good game of camogie.

Every season sees new memories made across Cork city and county, and Newman has experienced the game in almost every way that a person can. She started playing before transitioning into various volunteer roles and has worked as a selector. It was her off-the-pitch position that helped the club win a number of Cork, Munster, and All-Ireland titles. Despite all the trophies that she helped bring to Blackpool, the growing status of camogie in Cork is one of Newman's greatest achievements.

"I love it and I have great memories. I was thinking below with Linda (Mellierick) about the many battles and fights we had picking teams."

"They are all here from the county board and I served with all those great people and people in my club. Mary Sheehan, our chairperson, just took photographs with my mother and Deirdre."

"These are people that you work with and fight with. We've had more fights than anybody! But, it's our sport."

"We're promoting camogie and we've come such a distance since I was going to school and we were toying off behind the ditch. That's not too long ago. Look at what the players have now. We're making progress all the time thanks to people like *The Echo*. They've given us the publicity."

### WOMEN IN SPORT

■ Dylan O'Connell

THURSDAY evening saw the best and brightest of Cork gather at Páirc Uí Chaoimh for *The Echo* Women in Sport Awards.

They were treated to a speech from guest of honour Clare Shine that outlined the struggles of being a professional athlete and how sport can be used to overcome such adversity.

As a youngster, the Douglas native excelled at camogie, ladies football, and soccer, reaching great heights from playing at Croke Park to scoring in the Champions League but battled addiction and mental health issues along the way.

The former Irish international said: "When I was asked to be guest speaker for tonight's awards, as soon as I got off the phone I was thinking 'how am I going to inspire women who inspire me?'"

"But being an athlete is so much more than what people may seem; the hard work, commitment, sacrifices, blood, sweat, and tears, the highs and lows, the cold winter nights, the pressure, the expectations, not only the expectations that people have on you but the expectations you have on yourself to be the absolute best that you can be."

"And that is where the real athlete is born. Sport shapes you into being an incredible human being."

"In saying that, my career didn't shape up to be what I hoped for in the end, but I am the person I am today because of sport. That is something I am forever grateful for."

"Growing up playing sport in Cork, it was always exciting between Gaelic football, camogie, and soccer, I spent every night of the week doing what I loved. The opportunities that young sport stars have in Cork are incredible and that is down to the work being done by all of you paving the way."

"It was only on my way across here tonight after a long day of reflecting, and reflecting is something that I do love to do, I remembered winning the monthly award and attending the annual dinner just like today and only caring about the wine that was being served."

"For me, I was never present. I was never someone who could appreciate what I had achieved in the moment because there was always the next trophy and game to win."

"It's only since I stopped playing a couple of months back that I really started to appreciate and be proud of my achievements."

"Being true to yourself while playing sport can be difficult at times. There's a simple fact that lies among our fears and that is being judged. Being put under a light of having weaknesses and being vulnerable is something that can categorise us as being unfit and not being the best player or athlete that we can, which can be a scary thought."

"I most certainly think the opposite. I think being vulnerable and having weaknesses is having a strength like no other."

"Imagine a world where everyone can be themselves; be open and honest with who they are without a fear of judgement. We would be unstoppable, unplayable, and the best version of ourselves on and off the pitch."

"For me, I spent the majority of my sporting career afraid to be myself, afraid to share what I was going through, because I was afraid I wouldn't be selected or chosen to be part of something I always



## The Echo Women in Sport Awards

dreamed of.

"I've travelled around the world doing what I love. I've played in a World Cup, two European finals, an All-Ireland final in Croke Park, and I've scored in the Champions League."

"When I found myself in a situation where my mental health and my addictions pulled me away from the things that I loved, portrayed me as someone I'm not, and slowly deteriorated my life on this earth, it was sport and the sporting community that gave me my life back. That is the power of sport; the power of having team-mates and a family who believe in you. Not only as a player, but more importantly as the human being you really are."

"If I could change one thing about being an athlete, it would be how we are understood. Especially when we go through difficult periods. We do not have control over everything that happens in our lives. But we do have control over how we react to it and no matter what happens in life, sport has the power to bring us back to life."

"Just like it did for me."



Clare Shine, guest speaker at *The Echo* Women in Sport awards. Picture: Eddie O'Hare



Michael Sheehan, managing director *The Echo/Irish Examiner* speaking in Páirc Uí Chaoimh. Picture: Eddie O'Hare



# me what I am'



Echo Women in Sport award winners with Lord Mayor Cllr Deirdre Forde, County Deputy Mayor Cllr Deirdre O'Brien, Maurice Gubbins, editor *The Echo* and Michael Sheehan, MD *The Echo/Irish Examiner*.  
Picture: Eddie O'Hare



Amy O'Connor with Lord Mayor Deirdre Forde, County Deputy Mayor Deirdre O'Brien, Maurice Gubbins, editor *The Echo*, and Michael Sheehan, MD, *The Echo/Irish Examiner*.  
Pictures: Eddie O'Hare

## Award the perfect way to start new season, says Amy O'Connor

CAMOGIE

■ Dylan O'Connell

CORK camogie star Amy O'Connor is the overall winner of the Echo Women in Sport Awards for 2022 and she collected her prize at Páirc Uí Chaoimh.

This follows a landmark season that saw her win the Munster Senior Camogie Championship and the Cork Senior Camogie Championship for the second year in a row with Seandún.

O'Connor was instrumental in both victories as she scored ten points in the provincial decider and 2-8 in the Cork final against Sarsfield at Castle Road in Mahon. She was recently made the Cork senior camogie captain for 2023, and she said Thursday night's award was the perfect way to kick off the new season.

"It's a lovely way to start the year, I'm in total shock and delighted to start the year on a high," she explained. "I'm in a state of shock. I didn't expect to win when I saw the calibre of people who were also nominated."

O'Connor beat a number of Irish, European, and world champions to the prestigious award. The trophy will now go into her collection alongside four All-Ireland medals, six Munster titles, and an All-Star. Thinking about all of this, O'Connor prefers to see camogie as a game that she loves as opposed to a way to win trophies and medals.

"I just love playing, obviously I do play to win, but I genuinely enjoy playing and every minute I do have playing," she said.

"While it can be tough at times, it is not something I take for granted as it won't be around forever. I feel like I blinked and I was this age!"

O'Connor previous life in

association football was also mentioned and people were told about her performances at the 2014 U19 European Championships. She starred for an Irish team that reached the semi-finals, and the majority of that squad are now getting ready to compete at their first-ever FIFA Women's World Cup.

"I'm really looking forward to it. It's on right at the peak of our season, I might have tried to go if it was on at a different time of year," she explained.

"It's brilliant for them. I think they can do quite well. It'll be great to see the likes of Denise (O'Sullivan), Megan (Connolly), Katie (McCabe), and all of those people that I would have known growing up and playing with. I'm looking forward to it and hopefully they can do well."

"Denise is about two or three years older than me and I've known her since I was very young. It'll be brilliant to see her do well because I know she will do well at the World Cup."

While she gets up early in the summer to catch Ireland's games in Australia, O'Connor will be in the middle of her first season as the captain of Cork's senior camogie team. She says that the new role adds no pressure as it is a team sport with shared responsibility. "We play a team game, it's actually a squad game so ultimately my role at the end of the year, if we win something, is to collect it on behalf of the team. I won't be feeling any additional pressure or anything," she said.



John McHale, sports editor *The Echo* with Clare Shine guest speaker at The Echo Women in Sport awards at Páirc Uí Chaoimh. Picture: Eddie O'Hare



Cork camogie captain Amy O'Connor with Mary Newman, Hall of Fame winner.



# Echo honours Cork's

THIS evening we honour some of the top sports stars in their chosen field as the overall *Echo* Women in Sport Awards are held at Páirc Uí Chaoimh.



Women in sport

Rory Noonan



The *Echo* Women in Sport Awards, monthly winner, Cork camogie player Amy O'Connor.

Picture: Larry Cummins

From the 12 monthly winners, an overall winner will be chosen, along with a Hall of Fame award.

The diversity of the sports shows just how well Cork athletes perform, be it at local, national, or international levels.

Some of the monthly winners' sports include camogie, hockey, cycling, rowing, boxing, ladies football, Aussie Rules, athletics, basketball, and swimming and we even have MMA for the first time.

But no matter what the sport, all these winners have a number of qualities in common.

All possess the drive, desire, and passion to be the best in their chosen sport which comes about through hard work and a determination to keep going no matter what.

And for some they have excelled in more than one sport and over the years could just have easily been honoured for other successes along the way.

Take Amy O'Connor as just one example of that. When the English women's soccer team won the European Championships she had played against and beaten many of those players with Irish underage sides.

O'Connor played international soccer until she was 17 and could have easily gone on to a professional career across the water but gave it up because camogie was her first love.

Annie Walsh has countless All-Ireland, Munster, and National League foot-

ball medals with Cork, but has now added European championship medal to her haul for Aussie Rules with the Irish Banshees.

Others, like Annette Quaid, suffered a number of setbacks, but never gave up and went on to win three gold medals at the Masters European Athletics Championships last year.

It takes guts to get into the cage for an MMA fight, but it takes a lot more than just guts to walk into a training gym full of boys and men at just 11 years of age.

But that's what Louise Brady did when she took up the sport. It's only a few short years ago, but there

were not too many girls taking part in the sport then.

But the gutsy Brady joined her local club and quickly showed

that she had what it takes to become the best of the best and it was no great surprise to see her win a gold medal at the Youth World MMA Championships in Abu Dhabi last year.

And you can continue on and on with all our monthly winners, like Hannah O'Shea, who wrote her name into the history books in 2022 by becoming the first female swimmer to win the Lee Swim.

So, all of us at *The Echo* salute all our Women in Sport monthly winners and all those who excel in their chosen sport and congratulate you for what you have achieved and for what you will achieve in the coming years.

**The Echo  
Women  
in Sport  
Awards**

## O'Connor nets award

Elaine Whelan

SOME of the biggest names in sport turned out to celebrate *The Echo* Women in Sport Awards in Páirc Uí Chaoimh last night.

The awards recognised the talented Cork women that have made headlines for their sporting accomplishments in 2022.

Twelve Cork sports stars were honoured on the night, with one person being named *The Echo* Women in Sport Awards overall winner: Camogie player Amy O'Connor.

Through the awards, *The Echo* aims to highlight the inspiring athletes who represent the Rebel County on pitches, courts and tracks around the world.

One such woman was footballer Clare Shine, who delivered a powerful speech and discussed the power of women in sport.

Continued on Page 3.



Cork camogie captain Amy O'Connor, overall winner, and Mary Newman, Hall of fame winner, with Lord Mayor of Cork Deirdre Forde and deputy county mayor Deirdre O'Brien at *The Echo* Women in Sport Awards at Páirc Uí Chaoimh. Picture: Eddie O'Hare



# Feast of college action in Ashbourne, Purcell and Meaghair Cups

IT'S a big weekend for students as the UCD campus in Belfield hosts camogie's oldest and most prestigious competition, the Ashbourne Cup.

## CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

The Purcell Cup and Fr Meaghair Cup are also up for grabs at the university venue.

The Ashbourne Cup is hugely competitive and is without doubt the highlight of college sporting life for camogie playing students. Huge preparations will have been made since term began and the scene is set for what promises to be a feast of college camogie.

The competition was the brainchild of Agnes O'Farrell, founder member and president of UCD camogie club, who later served as president of the Camogie Association.

In 1975 she persuaded Lord Ashbourne to donate a trophy for the camogie inter-varsity competition.

Since 2010 the Purcell Cup has been staged alongside the Ashbourne Cup and has been contested for since 1977. It was donated by Una Purcell, president of the Camogie Association. Her husband Padraig was Gaelic games correspondent for the *Irish Press*. The format is similar to the Ashbourne Cup; in the final stages of the competition six teams are divided into two groups of three in which each team play two matches.

The top two in each group goes through to the cup semi-finals while the bottom team in each group plays in the final of the Purcell Shield.

The Purcell Cup winners play the Ashbourne Shield runners-up the following year to determine promotion and relegation. Having initially been established for non-university colleges in 1977 the standard of the team rather than the type of university determines if colleges should

participate in the Ashbourne Cup or the Purcell Cup.

Colleges that don't compete in the Ashbourne and Purcell Cups play for the Fr Meaghair Cup; it was inaugurated in 1986 and the format is similar to the Ashbourne and Purcell.

Close to 400 players will descend on the Belfield complex for the semi-finals; many of the players in action are already involved in inter-county camogie, while for a lot of players it will be a huge privilege to represent their college. Down through the years many players have made the breakthrough to inter-county camogie thanks to their efforts in the Ashbourne Cup and inter-county managers will be keeping an eye on proceedings.

Cork are well represented in the Ashbourne semi-finals with UCC fielding a strong side that will feature a host of Cork seniors and intermediate players including Emma Murphy who captains the side, Molly Lynch, Ali Smith, Laura Hayes, Ciara O'Sullivan, Meabh Murphy, and Aoife Healy. They lost at the semi-final stage last year and they will be hoping to go all the way this year.

Cork eyes be also be on the Purcell Cup semi-finals; SETU C will meet UG at 2pm and MTU will meet Trinity at 4pm.

It's a huge achievement for MTU to be in the last four of the Purcell and with Cork players Saoirse McCarthy, Aoife O'Neill, Fiona Keating, and Lauren Holman in their line-up, Mick Boland and his backroom team will be confident of going all the way.

Sunday is finals day. The Meaghair final at noon followed by the Purcell Cup at 2pm, with the Ashbourne Cup final at 4pm.

# TU Dublin claim first Ashbourne Cup title

## Ashbourne Cup final

TU Dublin 1-11

UCC 0-13

(after extra-time)

### Daire Walsh

History was made at Belfield yesterday as Roisin McCormick's last-gasp free ensured TU Dublin secured their maiden Ashbourne Cup crown at the expense of 32-time champions UCC.

It took 80-plus minutes before the college formerly known as DIT got their hands on the trophy. Antrim ace McCormick having kept her side in the reckoning with a nerveless '45' at the end of normal time. A late UCC burst in extra-time had looked set to force a penalty shootout.

Yet there was one final opportunity for TU Dublin to swing the pendulum in their favour and McCormick's fifth point of the game added a new team to the Ashbourne Cup's roll of honour.

Scorers for TU Dublin: M Dowdall (1-3); R McCormick (0-5, 2f, 1'45); C Gannon, K Finnegan, S Daly (0-1 each).

Scorers for UCC: C O'Leary (0-6, 5f), L Hayes, C Finn (0-3 each), S O'Brien (0-1).

**TU DUBLIN (Dublin unless stated):** R Atkinson; C Shanahan, R Brennan, L Robinson; C Gannon, N Gannon, J Couch; G Couch, E Minogue (Kilkenny); N Keenaghan (Cavan), E Young, K Finnegan; M Dowdall (Westmeath); R McCormick (Antrim); S Barcoe (Kilkenny).

**Subs for TU Dublin:** A Heffernan for Barcoe (h-t); S Daly for Young (44); Barcoe for G Couch (60+3); H Davis (Kildare) for Shanahan (68); O Gray for J Couch (76); E Young for Minogue (81).

**UCC (Cork unless stated):** M Lynch; R McCarthy (Kerry); C Carroll (Waterford); M Murphy; M Ring; A Healy; A Cashman; C O'Leary; E Heffernan (Tipperary); O Kelleher (Limerick); L Hayes; E Murphy; S O'Brien (Limerick); C Finn; K Blair (Tipperary).

**Subs for UCC:** I Sheehan for Cashman (37); R Conway (Clare) for Blair (40); M Barrett for Heffernan (48); L Leenane (Tipperary) for Finn (51); Blair for Leenane (65); Finn for Kelleher (68); Cashman for McCarthy (71).

Referee: R Kelly (Kildare).



MTU Cork celebrate with the Purcell Cup. Pictures: Ryan Byrne/Inpho

# Saoirse McCarthy helps MTU Cork to the Purcell Cup title

MTU Cork 2-10

University of Galway 0-12

## CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

Inspired by Cork star Saoirse McCarthy and helped by two first-half goals which set the foundation, MTU were crowned Electric Ireland Purcell Cup champions in UCD.

Galway settled quickly and had opened up a 0-4 to 0-2 lead at the end of the opening quarter but with the MTU defense tightening up considerably UG began to feel the pressure.

Ella Wigginton-Barrett had the opening goal on 16 minutes and it gave MTU a lead they held to the final whistle.

MTU won a penalty and with Saoirse McCartan dispatching it to the net, they opened up a five-point lead and stretched it out even more with a point. MTU were 2-5 to 0-5 ahead at the interval.

UG made a great start to the second half hitting two points without reply and that cut the gap to three points, but MTU responded with Orlaith Cahalane and Saoirse McCarthy adding two more points.

UG began to win frees, Laura Kelly converted two and the gap was back to three.

Holding their composure, MTU dug deep. Captain Saoirse McCarthy was superb. Winning a second penalty they went to finish the job but Fiona Ryan denied McCartan a second goal with a good save.

The sides then swapped points before a late Lauren Homan point gave UG no way back and saw MTU crowned deserving champions.

Captain McCarthy was named player of the match.

Scorers for MTU: S McCartan 1-2 (0-1

pen, 0-1 f), S McCarthy 0-4 (1, L Wigginton-Barrett 1-0, L Homan 0-2, H O'Leary, O Cahalane 0-1 each.

UG: L Kelly 0-10 (0-9 f), T Canning, T Fitzgerald 0-1 each.

TUD 1-11

UCC 0-13

(after extra time)

Heartbreak for UCC as TUD make history to capture their first Ashbourne Cup title with a free in injury time of extra time, just 12 months after being crowned Purcell Cup winners.

Controversy overshadowed the competition as UL were disqualified from the last four on the eve of the semis but the College's only concern was getting their hands on the big prize.

UCC looked to have done enough as the clock ticked towards full time but a 62nd-minute Roisin McCormack free tied it up at the death and she then hit the late extra-time winner.

Scorers for TUD: M Dowdall 1-3, R McCormack 0-5 (0-2 f, 0-1 45), K Finnegan, C Gannon, S Daly 0-1 each.

UCC: C O'Leary 0-6 (0-5 f), C Finn, L Hayes 0-3 each, S O'Brien 0-1.

TUD: R Atkinson; C Shanahan, R Brennan, L Robinson; C Gannon, N Gannon, A Heffernan; G Couch, N Manogue; N Keenaghan; E Young; K Finnegan; M Dowdall; R McCormick; S Barcoe.

Subs: S Daly for E Young (43); A Heffernan for S Barcoe (h-t); J Moore for G Couch (76).

UCC: M Lynch; R McCarthy; C Carroll; M Murphy; M Ring; A Healy; A Cashman; C O'Leary; E Heffernan; O Kelleher; L Hayes; E Murphy; S O'Brien; C Finn; K Blair.

Subs: I Sheehan for A Cashman (39); R Conway for C Blair (40); M Barrett for C Heffernan (48); L Leenane for C Finn (52); C Finn for O Kelleher (68).

CORK camogie star Saoirse McCarthy inspired MTU Cork to Purcell Cup glory last weekend.

The Courcy Rovers Camogie All-Star scored four points in a player-of-the-match performance as MTU Cork defeated University of Galway 2-10 to 0-12 to win the third-level colleges' trophy.

Led by captain fantastic McCarthy, goals from the St Finbarr's duo of Ella Wigginton-Barrett and Sorcha McCartan (penalty) were key in this triumph.

There was plenty of local interest in the MTU Cork squad with Saoirse McCarthy, Fiona Keating, Anne Marie Collins and Ellen Maguire (Courcy Rovers), Annie Condon (Ballinascorthy), Ciara O'Shea and Katelyn Dineen (Kilbriann) and Emily O'Donovan (Kilbree) all on the panel.

Orlaith Cahalane, daughter of Castlehaven football legend Niall Cahalane, was also a key player.

There was disappointment, however, for UCC in the Ashbourne Cup final as they lost 1-11 to 0-13 against Technolog-

# Saoirse leads MTU to glory



MTU Cork's Saoirse McCarthy lifts the Purcell Cup. (Photo: Ryan Byrne/INPHO)

ical University Dublin (TUD) after extra time. Again, there was West Cork interest here

with Ciara O'Sullivan (Newcestown), Moira Barrett (Ballinascorthy) and Maggie Coppinger

(St Colum's) all on the panel. A free in injury time of extra time from Roisin McCormack

saw TUD win the third-level camogie championship trophy for the first time.



# O'Sullivan facing lengthy spell on the sidelines

## Newcestown player injured in Ashbourne Cup semi-final

BY GER McCARTHY

THERE is contrasting news for West Cork's Orla Cronin and Ciara O'Sullivan ahead of Cork's national camogie league Division 1A opener against Dublin on Saturday.

While Cork manager Matthew Twomey is pleased to have Enniskeane star Orla Cronin back in the senior fold, Newcestown's Ciara O'Sullivan is facing a lengthy spell on the sidelines.

O'Sullivan suffered a serious knee injury in UCC's victory over DCU in the Ashbourne Cup semi-final last Saturday, and is set to miss a sizable chunk of the season.

'Orla has committed to the senior panel for the coming year which is great news.'



Cork forward Ciara O'Sullivan in action for Newcestown.

Twomey told *The Southern Star*.

'Unfortunately, Ciara suffered a bad injury while playing in the semi-finals of the Ashbourne Cup for UCC. We are waiting for confirmation on the

severity of it but, right now, it looks like Ciara could be out for some time. It's a huge blow for the player herself, obviously, but also for Cork.'

The opening weekend of the 2023 Very Ireland Camogie

National League sees Cork beginning their Division 1A campaign at home to Dublin this Saturday (MTU Cork, 2pm).

Last year, Twomey's senior side topped a group containing Kilkenny, Clare and Limer-

ick before going down 2-14 to 1-13 to Galway in the Division 1 League final at Croke Park.

This season, Cork will entertain Dublin and Clare before embarking on two difficult road trips against Tipperary and the side that defeated them in the 2022 All-Ireland final, Kilkenny. A home fixture against Galway rounds off the Rebels' group phase in which fringe players will get a chance to impress. Davy Fitzgerald has departed the Cork camogie management team to take over the Waterford men's senior hurling team. The Clare native's exit has necessitated a backroom team reshuffle.

'Dynamics is a word I have been using a lot lately but it was vital that we got the dynamics of the Cork management team right for 2023,' Twomey admitted.

Teddy O'Donovan, Anthony O'Neill and Ger Manley are staying on. Liam Cronin, who previously worked with the Clare and Dublin senior hurling teams, has a wealth of experi-

ence and came in as coach after Davy Fitzgerald took up his new role with Waterford.

'Wesley O'Brien and Eoin Dorgan are looking after our S&C programmes. Jennifer Meade is new to the backroom team as well and has been a huge help to me since she came in.'

First up for Cork is Dublin on Saturday. The visitors are looking to build on last year's encouraging run to the All-Ireland quarter-finals where eventual champions Kilkenny ended their run. 'We certainly want to look at more players and give some younger players an opportunity during the league,' Twomey explained.

'This year's league will be a great test as last year we had only three league games before facing Galway in the final. Now we have a minimum of five games and all against serious contenders. We want to see exactly where we are at and will be trying to integrate a new style of play into the Cork team.'

## MILLIE CONDON

GAA | BALLINASCARTHY | 17

ON these *Star* sport pages last summer we wrote that 'Magic Millie Condon has the Midas touch' - and it was easy to see why. The Ballinascartly teenager bossed last season. The dual star won All-Ireland minor football and camogie crowns with Cork, starting on both teams. Millie was player of the match in the All-Ireland schools' senior C football final win with her school, Sacred Heart Clonakilty. There were Munster titles in those competitions, too. (Rewind to 2021 and she won an All-Ireland U16 camogie title, as well as Munster U16 titles in camogie and football!)

It was an incredible medal haul for Millie who will line out with both Cork minor football (as captain) and camogie teams again this year, while Sacred Heart is also in an upcoming Munster senior B football final. The Leaving Cert student also plays camogie with her club Ballinascartly (and would love to win the county junior A title) and senior football with Clonakilty, so she is busy on both fronts.

Skillful, versatile and hard working, and blessed with an incredible engine, she's an ideal wing back in football; Millie defends when she needs to but also has the ability to get forward to kick a score as well. She is part of the new wave of talented young footballers and camogie players from West Cork that is making their mark.

**DID YOU KNOW?** Millie was recently crowned the 2022 Munster LGFA Young Player of the Year after her incredible success last season.



## Courcey Rovers

Congratulations to Saoirse McCarthy of Courcey Rovers and Cork who captained the MTU camogie team and won the player of the match award on way to capturing The Purcell Cup at the weekend. Saoirse was delighted to have three of her clubmates on the winning panel.

Congratulations was expressed to Fiona Keating, Anne Marie Collins and Ellen Maguire. Congratulations was also expressed to their trainer Mike Boland.

Another match with interest in Courcey's parish was the Allianz National League game between Cork and Galway. Sean Twomey of Courcey Rovers wore the No 12 jersey and did the team proud by scoring two great goals in the winning game for Cork. Sean was also victorious with UL defeating the GMIT university last week in the quarter-finals of The Fitzgibbon Cup with Sean contributing to the scores.

The Courcey Rovers camogie and ladies football club had players on the Kinsale Community School's second team that won the county final against

Coachford College. Congratulations was expressed to Aislinn Healy, Lily Crowley, Olivia Hurley and Kate Harrington who played on the team.

Katie Crowley and Caoimhe Foley of Courcey Rovers were in action with the Cork U14s at the weekend.



Saoirse McCarthy (captain), Fiona Keating, Ann Marie Collins and Ellen Maguire were the Courcey Rovers players and Purcell Cup winners with MTU last weekend.



# Bulked-up league adds edge to camogie season

## Camogie talking points

### Therese O'Callaghan

A new league format is being trialled for the camogie season. The objective is to try and create extra competitiveness, which has to be seen as a positive step forward.

It is made up of six stand-alone divisions, with the teams playing each other once. There will be promotion/relegation from Division 1A, 1B, 2A, and 3A.

One of the more notable alterations is that the second teams from counties are in their own separate divisions — 2B and 3B.

"I love the league structure," says Brian Dowling, manager of All-Ireland champions Kilkenny. "We were looking for more games and we've got that so it's brilliant. It will be very competitive this year, no doubt about it."

"If you lose one or two of the first games, you're in relegation trouble straight away so there'll be more pressure than before and maybe that's a good thing."

Cork boss Matthew Twomey is equally certain the extra games will be beneficial ahead of championship.

"In the league last year, there was only the three games before the final and we probably didn't get enough out of it as a result. We were still raw going into that so this year is great with the five games, five tough games. We're happy to have that."

### Managers (old and new) prepare for big year

A number of attractive fixtures are scheduled to kick-start the leagues. The two big games in Division 1A today are Cork at home to Dublin



Roisin McCormick of TUD scores from a free to win the game in extra-time of the Electric Ireland Ashbourne Cup Final between UCC and TUD at UCD in Dublin. Picture: Ben McShane/Sportsfile

(MTU 2pm), while Tipperary host reigning league champions Galway (The Ragg 2pm).

Clare take on All-Ireland champions Kilkenny in Cusack Park, Ennis (12pm), tomorrow. This will form part of a double-header with Clare and Kildare in the NFL, which gives the game that added bit of exposure it richly deserves.

As managers and coaches begin their terms, the question is who is going to put it up to the big three of Cork, Galway, and Kilkenny.

Cork boss Twomey and coach Liam Cronin (who replaced Davy Fitzgerald) will be hoping to get over the finish

line this time having lost last year's decider and All-Ireland final. It is 10 years since the Rebels won this competition, and they will surely target the league as a means of silverware.

Cork, though, are injury-hit, Twomey explains: "We're down three players definitely with ACLs — Ashling Thompson, Katie O'Mahony, Olivia McAllen — and then, at the weekend playing for UCC, Ciara O'Sullivan suffered a suspected ACL."

Dublin, meanwhile, arrive at MTU with a new management team which includes Wexford All-Ireland winner

Mags D'Arcy. They will look for consistency throughout this campaign. A number of their players were represented on the TU Dublin panel that won the Ashbourne Cup which should be a boost.

Elsewhere, former Blue and Gold hurler Denis Kelly has come on board with Tipperary. There have been some encouraging displays under Bill Mullaney. Having come close, a winning start at home to Galway will have to be pursued.

Cathal Murray is at the helm once again for the west-erners. He signed for another three years and has plenty to

work with following their Intermediate success in 2022. Interestingly, Cora Staunton is part of his backroom team.

Tomorrow, manager-of-the-year Brian Dowling and his All-Ireland winning charges head to Ennis. Last week one of their greats, Anne Dalton appeared on the acclaimed TG4 programme *Laochra Gael*. What a phenomenal player and an inspiration to so many.

While the Cats will seek to find their stride once more, John Carmody will want a strong start to their campaign in front of their home support.

Division 1B should provide some lively encounters with Wexford at home to Limerick, whilst Offaly entertain Waterford. Down and Antrim clash is an all-Ulster affair.

This is another competitive group, with a few new faces on the sideline here also.

Wexford (Colin Sunderland), Waterford (Seán Power), and Offaly (Noelle Kennedy (multiple All-Ireland Tipp winner) take over and all three know what it takes having performed on the big day themselves.

### Very little launch fanfare

Finally, did the Camogie Association miss a trick this week with no launch of the Very leagues? Very (formerly Littlewoods Ireland) are sponsoring for the seventh year and this was surely an opportunity to present the camogie players who constantly showcase their talent.

An opportunity to provide insights from management and players into their preparations for the new season would have been useful and timely. All of which would have been widely and willingly promoted by various media outlets.

# Local trio named on Cork minor camogie squad

BY KIERAN MCCARTHY

MILLIE Condon, Amy McCarthy and Fiona Twohig will be part of this year's Cork Camogie panel for the 2023 All-Ireland Minor A Championship.

The rising stars from Ballinascarty (Condon) and Clonakilty (McCarthy) are joined by Twohig from Valley Rovers in manager Jerry Wallace's confirmed 30-strong panel.

Cork will be eager to retain a trophy they won in splendid fashion last year. Jerry Wallace oversaw the Rebels' campaign, culminating in a 2-11 to 2-7 Tesco All-Ireland minor final defeat of Galway at FBD Semple Stadium.

The 2022 Cork minor panel included Twohig, Condon, Caoimhe Murphy (Kilbree), Emily O'Donovan (Kilbree) and Ellen Murphy (Kilbrittain/Timoleague). Castlehaven legend Niall Cahalane's daughter and Cork senior Orlaith Cahalane (St Finbarr's) was also



Clonakilty's Amy McCarthy celebrates winning the 2022 All-Ireland Camogie U16A championship final with Cork.

part of that success, contributing 1-3 in the final against Galway.

Clonakilty's Amy McCarthy played a pivotal role in Cork's Munster and All-Ireland U16 Championship triumphs last year. Newcestown's Alice Buckley was also part of Cork manager Donie Daly's third All-Ireland U16 title success in

as many years.

Amy McCarthy, alongside fellow midfielder, Sarsfield's Ava Fitzgerald, helped Cork overcome Tipperary 2-18 to 0-10 amid sweltering conditions in the All-Ireland final.

"We're after having a good winter, recuperated well and ready to go again with the Cork minor camogie squad for 2023,"

Jerry Wallace told *The Southern Star*.

"We've been working away for the last couple of months and trialling lots of players. I was very fortunate, along with my management team, to announce the panel for 2023 last weekend. Last Sunday, I also had the unfortunate task of having to contact 15 girls that had come down to the last cut but did not make it on to the final panel of 30.

"This year we have eight dual players involved and they will require careful [time] management. We have a very healthy panel at the moment. It includes 14 players from last year's Munster and All-Ireland championship-winning U16 panel. There are ten players from 2022's minor All-Ireland winning team. We've added six players that were U17 and didn't make last year's minor panel as well.

"So there is a very strong group of players ready to rep-

resent Cork at minor camogie level this year."

There is a new All-Ireland camogie minor championship format for 2023. Cork will compete in a round-robin tournament where the top four ranked counties progress to the All-Ireland minor semi-finals.

Cork begin their minor championship with two road trips. Dublin are Jerry Wallace's side's first opponents on March 12th. That's followed by an equally difficult assignment away to Waterford seven days later. Tipperary visit Leeside in the third round of the minor A championship on March 26th before Cork take on arch rivals Kilkenny on April 2nd. The Rebels complete their round-robin fixture-list against the county they defeated for last year's title, Galway, on April 15th/16th.

Should Cork accrue enough points, they will contest an All-Ireland minor semi-final on April 22nd/23rd. This year's

minor All-Ireland decider is pencilled in for the weekend of May 6th/7th.

"Wexford, Limerick, Clare and Antrim withdrew from this year's minor A grade," Jerry Wallace explained.

"Those counties would always have been involved in tier 1 since I first got involved back in 2018. They have all elected to play tier 2 this coming year."

"So the Camogie Association have put all remaining tier 1 teams into the one group for 2023. Each of us will play one another once before the semi-finals and final."

"It's fabulous to have this new format because, as a Cork camogie minor player, if you are good enough, you will play a minimum of five All-Ireland championship games. There are semi-finals and possibly a final to play too."

"Everyone involved in the Cork camogie minor setup is excited and looking forward to the challenges that lie ahead."



# Cork should have what it takes to defeat Dubs in Division 1 league

**SATURDAY: Very National League Division 1A: Cork v Dublin, MTU, 2pm**

IT'S 10 years since Cork last won the Division 1 national camogie league title, landing back to back titles in 2012 and 2013.

They failed to win the All-Ireland in both years and took a different approach in 2014 and 2015, using the league to blend new players, and won back to back All-Ireland titles.

They reached five All-Ireland finals between 2014 and 2018, winning four and not a league title in sight.

There's always the debate as to whether putting a winning focus on the league impacts or hinders your All-Ireland ambitions. The good or bad of the consideration varies, depending on the success of the team. Win both league and championship and 'a winning habit' is what managers were targeting, lose the league but win the championship and it played a 'significant role in developing our players'.

If on the road a long time the league is often seen to rest seasoned players. But confidence and team belief plays an enormous role in sport and for teams with little recent success you need to be winning league and provincial titles to have aspirations of the big prize, particularly if there has been a turnover of players.

## CAMOGIE

■ Linda Mellerick

ing in last weekend's finals where UCC agonisingly lost out in added time of extra time by a point and MTU winning by four.

Cork's training has been heavily impacted by the large college contingent but most are available for this Saturday's game. Orla Cronin is out injured as is Ciara O'Sullivan who at the time of writing was awaiting the results of a scan on a suspected cruciate injury. Thompson and Olivia McAllen are in rehab and it'll be later in the year before we know how successful that is in a race against the clock. Laura Treacy is on a winter holiday.

Cork manager Matthew Twomey made a number of cuts to his panel at the beginning of their season and has brought in just Aoife Healy from Aghada. She is sure to be given a role this weekend. Aoife is a Cork dual player, one of four alongside Hannah, Libby and Orlaith Cahalane, and the ladies' footballers have a challenging game away to Galway on Sunday.

Linda Collins was due to re-join the panel after a year teaching in Dubai. However she followed that up with a trip to Australia and doesn't feel ready to leave that experience behind her yet, so that's a disappointment.



Amy O'Connor will captain Cork this Saturday. Picture: Jim Coughlan

In Cork's case there has been a large turnaround of players over the past four or five years and we haven't won a championship title since 2018. Heading into our fifth year without one, this league campaign is a serious one.

Of that starting 2018 All-Ireland 15, Amy Lee, Pamela Mackey (back in the panel after a two season break), Laura Treacy, Hannah Looney, Libby Coppinger, Chloe Sigerson, Ashling Thompson (recovering from a cruciate injury), Katrina Mackey, Orla Cronin, and Amy O'Connor remain. Ten players is a good nucleus you'd feel but it's the full panel that has seen a significant change and you need another 10 panel members to reach the same level.

Cork begin their league campaign with an opening fixture against Dublin in MTU tomorrow.

Twelve of the current senior panel have been involved with UCC and MTU in their third level competitions, culminat-

Cork should still have enough to withstand a challenge from Dublin who haven't made the knockout stages in a number of years.

Tipperary's Paul Kelly was ratified with a three year term with Dublin in late 2022 with aspirations of giving the league a right challenge.

Amy Lee will stand between the posts, Corks' full back line will possibly have Meabh Murphy, Coppinger and Meabh Cahalane. Healy could get her first run in the absence of Treacy with Pam Mackey and Laura Hayes completing the half-back line. Saoirse McCarthy, Fiona Keating, Katrina Mackey, captain Amy O'Connor, Cliona Healy, Sorcha McCartan, Chloe Sigerson, Hannah Looney, Orlaith Cahalane, and Emma Murphy will compete for the remaining eight slots.

Coach Liam Cronin replaced Davy Fitzgerald and Dr Wesley O'Brien has also joined Cork's backroom team.

## CAMOGIE

**Very Camogie Leagues: Div 1A:** Tipperary 4-9 Galway 1-9, Cork 3-17 Dublin 0-5, Kilkenny 0-11 Clare 2-7; **Div 1B:** Offaly 1-9 Waterford 4-22, Wexford 0-13 Limerick 0-10, Antrim 5-14 Down 0-14; **Div 2A:** Derry 2-13 Cavan 1-7, Kerry 0-9 Westmeath 1-6, Laois 2-6 Meath 2-7.

**Schools Camogie finals: Allianz Corn Sceilge All-Ireland Senior A final:** Loreto Kilkenny 1-16 St Patrick's Maghera 1-2; **Senior C semi-final replay:** Coláiste Abhann Rí Cailán 2-9 Coláiste Laureil Hill 2-8; **Senior D final:** St Declan's Kilmacthomas (Waterford) 1-10 Ardcoil Mhuire Ballinastoe 2-4.

# Twomey hails Cork display, Clare and Tipp take scalps

## Camogie

### Daragh Ó Conchúir

Although the 3-17 to 0-5 scoreline was emphatic, Cork boss Matthew Twomey focused on workrate as the most pleasing aspect of his team's Very Camogie League Division 1A success against Dublin at MTU Cork on Saturday.

On a weekend when champions Galway were beaten by Tipperary by 4-9 to 1-9 at The Ragg before Clare defeated All-Ireland champions Kilkenny 2-7 to 0-11 at Cusack Park, this was the only tie devoid of tension.

The overall results suggest this division could be one of the most competitive in years under a new structure in which the six teams will play each other once, with the top two reaching the final.

Caolmhe Carmody and Aine O'Loughlin scored goals in either half to help Clare see off Kilkenny, who had overturned a 1-5 to 0-4 interval deficit to lead at the three-quarter mark thanks to points from Denise Gaule and Miriam Walsh.

That makes the Clare triumph all the more worthy, as they stepped up their resistance and O'Loughlin's goal secured the verdict for new boss John Carmody.

On Saturday, a stunning fourth-minute goal from joint captain Karen Kennedy sent Tipp on their way and Róisín Howard and Courtney Ryan also raised green flags to make it 3-6 to 1-3 at the break. Carrie Dolan found the net fortuitously from a long-distance free for a Galway side that has ladies football and AFLW legend Cora Staunton as performance coach this year. Cathal Murray's crew were



FULLY FOCUSED: Pamela Mackey in action for Cork against Dublin at MTU on Saturday. She was one of many impressive performers for the Rebels. Picture: Larry Cummins

shorn of a slew of long-established stars but battled hard after the resumption. They could not make sufficient inroads, however, and sub Anna Fahie slotted a late goal to provide Denis Kelly with the perfect start as manager.

Cork have Pamela Mackey back in the fold after a year out and the four-time All-Star was just one of the standout performers as the Rebels cruised to victory. Player of the match and

team captain Amy O'Connor had a goal in the sixth minute, on the way to providing 1-6 of their tally. The other Mackey twin, Katrina, followed up two minutes later. She would go off with a rib injury before half-time and was sent for an x-ray to determine the extent of the problem.

That was just about the only negative for the Leesiders and with the likes of Laura Hayes and Cliona Healy also standing out, and sub Ali Smith

providing a third major, there was little wonder Twomey was happy at the final whistle.

"What we wanted off them was the workrate," said Twomey. "There were a couple of things in the first half but we scored 2-11 and were very happy with it. We had planned to make substitutions, we brought on eight players and it is going to interrupt things but you still have to be happy with the performance

as a whole.

"One thing we're going on since we came back this year is the turnovers. We have people up there counting turnovers in the backs and the forwards and it's nearly a competition between them. That was key and then, the next phase of that is off the shoulder. We want a player never to be under pressure on the ball, that she has an option on all sides."

Dublin boss Gerry McQuaid admitted it was a "tough day at the office" for his charges, but with so many players having been unavailable to train due to club and Ashbourne Cup duties, and an increase in competitiveness in the second half, he is hoping for better things to come in the future.

"We've a lot of work to do, we know that. I think of the championship team that started against Kilkenny back in July, we'd seven starters so they're an inexperienced team but you had to come and start here."

O'Connor pointed to the increasing attendances the Rebels are attracting as being a considerable help.

"The stand was full today and you could feel that on the pitch. It is getting better, camogie players are getting more exposure. You could see the crowd of young people on the pitch, it's very good. Lots of clubs are putting in a huge effort in Cork to get teams to matches and we can feel the benefits of it."

"There might be a game that's very tight in the last 10 minutes — I'm thinking of the Munster final last year, the crowd really got behind us and it does make a difference so we're delighted that they keep coming to the games."



# Rebels set the pace

## Cork brush Dublin aside as title holders Galway stutter

By Daragh Ó Conchúir

**L**AST year's runners-up Cork trounced Dublin by 3-17 to 0-5 at MTU Cork yesterday as Galway's defence of their Very Camogie League Division 1A title got off to a bad start as they were beaten 4-9 to 1-9 by Tipperary at The Ragg.

The champions are certainly a side in transition, with the likes of Sarah Dervan and Niamh Kilkenny among the notable absentees - Shauna Healy taking over the captaincy from Dervan and filling the number three jersey in place of the two-time All-Ireland-winning skipper, and a number of other regulars missing for the League at least.

They include Sarah Healy and Catherine Finnerty, who are both travelling, while Orlaith McGrath, Rebecca Hennelly and Ciara Donohue are all still recovering from cruciate injuries.

Club All-Ireland victors with Sarsfields, Maria Cooney, Sarah Spellman and Siobhan McGrath are rehabbing other injuries.

Denis Kelly should not allow any of that to detract from his team's triumph, though, in his first competitive outing, having been tasked with carrying on the tremendous progress carried out under Bill Mullaney.

The initial signs are good as he fielded a nice blend of youth and experience, welcoming back joint-captain Karen Kennedy, who missed out last year through injury, but starting with a couple of Tipp legends, Cáit Devane and Mary Ryan, on the bench.

Kennedy struck for a sensational solo goal in the fourth minute, running from deep and exchanging a one-two with Courtney Ryan before dispatching ruthlessly to the net.

Tipp played with assurance from there, six-point Eimear McGrath excelling as the hosts were able to keep a Galway team at bay that

**ELBOW ROOM:**  
Cork's Amy Lee (left) and Grace O'Shea of Dublin fight for possession yesterday



boasts ladies' football and AFLW legend Cora Staunton as their new performance coach.

Carrie Dolan did equalise fortuitously from the next attack, when her long-distance free, awarded for a foul on Aoife Keane, was held up by the wind and dropped into the net.

Tipp showed notable composure however and McGrath hit four points in succession, three from frees. Goals from Róisín Howard and Ryan put them in a commanding

position at the break, leading by 3-6 to 1-3.

Galway did attempt to increase the pressure with the elements in their favour after the resumption, but though Dolan, who finished with 1-4, Niamh McPeake and Ailish O'Reilly split the posts, Cathal Murray's side needed goals and, instead, it was Tipp who raised another green flag via substitute Anna Fahie late on.

Meanwhile, earlier this week, Cork supremo Matthew Twomey

spoke of his wish to develop a new game plan that suited his players and, while it's early days, they certainly looked like a team relishing the return to the fray as they blitzed Dublin in stunning fashion.

Missing Ashling Thompson, Katie O'Mahony and Olivia McAllen with ACL injuries and Ciara O'Sullivan, who is feared to have suffered the same injury in Ashbourne Cup action last weekend, the Rebels were boosted by the return of four-time All-Star defender Pamela

Mackey after she'd taken a year out.

Dublin had already been forced into a change of management following the announcement of former Tipp star Paul Kelly as boss in October, with Gerry McQuaid stepping into the fray, and last year's All-Ireland quarter-finalists were unable to land a blow.

By the time the visitors got off the mark with a 17th-minute point by Gaby Couch, Twomey's titans already had 2-7 on the board, skipper Amy O'Connor responsible for a goal and four.

The goal arrived in the sixth minute and, when Katrina Mackey pounced for a second just two minutes later, Dublin were shellshocked. The attacking Mackey twin unfortunately had to leave with an injury before the half ended but that made little difference to the this game as O'Connor, who registered 1-6 in total, last year's minor star Orlaith Cahalane, Sorcha McCartan and Cliona Healy pointed to make it 2-11 to 0-1 at the interval.

With the game in the bag and the changes being rung, Dublin were more competitive in the second half and, even though newcomer Ali Smith goaled for Cork, the Blues did register four points, three from Aisling Maher and one from Aoife Whelan, and will hope to improve as the campaign unfolds.

In Division 1B, two first-half goals from Caitrin Dobbin sent Antrim on their way as they accounted for Down, who had Niamh Mallon starring, by 5-14 to 0-14. Beth Carton shot 2-14 as Waterford defeated Offaly by 4-22 to 1-9, while Wexford overcame Limerick by 0-13 to 0-10.

Meanwhile, in the Allianz Corn Scelge All-Ireland senior A final, Loreto Kilkenny had too much firepower for St Patrick's Maghera, prevailing by 1-16 to 1-2.

# O'Sullivan ruled out of Cork's campaign

## Newcestown star suffers season-ending ACL injury

BY KIERAN MCCARTHY

**NEW-CESTOWN** camogie star Ciara O'Sullivan will miss Cork's entire 2023 campaign after it was confirmed she has suffered an ACL injury.

The West Cork woman was injured in action for UCC in a recent Ashbourne Cup semi-final and the subsequent scan

has revealed a season-ending cruciate ligament injury.

'The ACL was confirmed last weekend, so she's gone now for the year,' Cork camogie Matthew Twomey told *The Southern Star*.

O'Sullivan, who has been involved in the Cork senior panel since 2020, started last year's All-Ireland senior final against Kilkenny and was hoping to become a regular with the Rebels this year.

She is the fourth Cork player to suffer an ACL injury, as Ashling Thompson, Katie O'Mahony and Olivia McAllen are all currently sidelined too.

'That's the fourth cruciate

injury we have suffered, three players with their club and one with their college. It is very disappointing to lose those players,' Twomey said.

Cork opened up their Very Camogie League Division 1A campaign with a convincing rout of Dublin (3-17 to 0-5) last weekend, and the Rebels host Clare in Páirc Uí Rinn on Saturday, but will be without both Katrina Mackey and Enniskeane's Orla Cronin.

'Orla is still missing - you can see the improvement in her but she's still about three or four

weeks off,' Twomey added.

All four Cork senior teams are in league action this weekend. With Twomey's camogie team playing on Saturday, Shane Ronayne's Cork ladies football team are at home to Donegal in Mallow on Sunday (12.30pm) in Division 1. The Cork men's footballers and hurlers



Cork forward Clara O'Sullivan.

have a double header at Páirc Uí Chaoimh on Sunday, with the unbeaten hurlers taking on Westmeath (1.45pm) in Division 1 Group A followed by the footballers' Division 2 clash with Limerick (3.45pm).

John Cleary's footballers will look to return to winning ways against Limerick, following their 0-18 to 2-10 loss to Dublin last weekend. The Cork boss has urged his players to be more clinical in front of goal.

'We had about five goal chances (against Dublin),' Cleary pointed out, and Cork scored two.

'In fairness all this league we have



Manager Twomey happy but frustrated

CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick

CORK manager Matthew Twomey admitted he expected a tougher game against Dublin in their opening league encounter in MTU on Saturday. "Obviously, we expected a stiffer test. We were conscious before we went out on the field of work rate as we thought Dublin would put in a big work rate, but they went very negative from the start. We were able to pick them open, in the first half in particular. But it is what it is and we made seven substitutions."

The game was over as a contest really once Cork hit their two first half goals.

"I suppose as soon as we got the second goal it was comfortable stations for us. We went into a bit of a lull but we kicked on again. We'd be happy enough. Even though we got 2-11 in the first half we still left 2-4 or 2-5 behind."

"There was a couple of goals on we should have taken. I suppose we've work to do again now Tuesday night which is great ahead of the Clare game."

The game lost its shape a bit with both sides making a number of substitutions, 13 in total.

"Look by the time Ali Smith scored we had taken off all of our forwards. There are people putting their hand up for a start."

"We've Orla Cronin to come back in there along with Laura Treacy and Hannah Looney getting more game time should be an automatic start."

With the top two going through to the final and Tipperary beating Galway, a big score could end up being very important.

"Definitely, there will be a few surprises along the way. The teams are coming closer. That was a surprise win for Tipperary, have they turned the tide again?"

Looking ahead to Clare next Saturday, Cork have "a bit of work to do before that as they gave us two titanic battles last year".

The interview couldn't conclude without mentioning the 2021 and 2022 All-Star trip to Canada taking place in the lead in to the 2023 championship. Cork's manager couldn't hide his frustration.

"This wouldn't happen in the men's game. I can't believe the association is allowing this to happen. We have 10 players potentially going on this tour. How can we train two weeks before a championship if we're short 10 players and then you've jet lag and everything else they'd be doing over there."

"It's farcical, very, very disappointing."

That, coupled with the fact that while the championship dates are set, the draws aren't yet made, it's hard to fathom.

"Again, would this even happen in the men's game? Why are we accepting it? Neither the county boards nor managements were consulted. We're all puzzled by this."

# Cork pick Dublin apart, win in style



CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick

Cork 3-17  
Dublin 0-5

IT WAS a very comfortable opening round win for Cork in the Very Ireland National League Division 1A tie in MTU on Saturday.

Cork weren't really tested throughout and were full value for their win, leading at half time 2-11 to 0-1. While Dublin did provide a stronger challenge in the third quarter they failed to get any return and once Cork weathered that patch they moved back into the driving seat with three points in-a-row between the 43rd and 46th minutes.

From the start, Dublin opted to bring full forward Muireann Kelleher back as a floating defender and that didn't help their cause. Cork had the wind and they bypassed Dublin's seventh defender which nullified her impact, while up front Dublin were never going to make headway against a seasoned Cork side down an inside player.

Featuring 10 of last September's All-Ireland final starting 15, Cork worked the ball out of defence skillfully and then let a fast ball into their forwards.

Their first goal came on five minutes. Fiona Keating passed to running midfielder Chloe Sigerson who off-loaded to Amy O'Connor, and she finished from an acute angle.

Five minutes later the second goal came. Cliona Healy, often playing deep from her left half-forward slot, took a short pass from Amy Lee. Her delivery was to Orlaith Cahalane. She passed inside to Katrina Mackey, who hit the net from close range.

Debutant Aoife Healy from Aghada was thrown into the pit of the action taking the right half-back slot. She's the only addition to the 2023 panel. Laura Treacy was an absentee and Orla Cronin, Ashling Thompson and Olivia McAllen remain injured.

Dublin looked a young inexperienced side and physically were no match for Cork. Cork's intermediate



Cliona Healy, Cork, is tackled by Grace O'Shea, Dublin, at MTU.

Picture: Larry Cummins

player from 2022, Kate Kilcommins, lined out in blue, now working in Dublin, but remains with her club Ballyhea.

The home side kept the scoreboard busy with seven players hitting the mark in the opening half, Dublin's only score coming from Aishling Maher and she finished with four of her side's total of five points.

Both sides made a number of substitutions, Katrina Mackey going off after a knock to the back and Emma Murphy and Hannah Looney replacing Orlaith Cahalane and Sorcha McCartan at half time.

Dublin, with the wind having picked up and now in their favour, produced a more collaborated game in the second half. But they continued with Muireann Kelleher playing a defensive

role. They were unlucky not to hit the net at the start but Lee made a point-blank save from Maher. A few further strikes fell into the hands of Lee or went wide of the post.

Cork went 2-14 to 0-1 ahead entering the final quarter. Maher pointed for Dublin before substitute Ali Smith got Cork's third goal. Smith entered the fray on 40 minutes and on 48 hit the net after a great run in from the left wing from O'Connor. Emma Murphy followed it up with a point before Maher hit a free for Dublin. Hayes hit one for Cork, Maher and Aisling Whelan replied before Smith again split the posts.

Cork will have learned little but gave a number of their panel on the day a runout. Their second round is a home venue to Clare next Saturday.

Scorers for Cork: A O'Connor 1-7 (0-3), A Smith 1-1, K Mackey 0-1, L Hayes, S McCartan 0-2 each, F Keating, O Cahalane, C Healy, H Looney, E Murphy 0-1 each.

Dublin: A Maher 0-4 (0-2), A Whelan 0-1.

CORK: A Lee, A Egan, L Coppinger, M Cahalane, A Healy, P Mackey, L Hayes, S McCarthy, C Sigerson, C Healy, F Keating, S McCartan, K Mackey, A O'Connor, O Cahalane.

Subs: I O'Regan for K Mackey (inj 22), E Murphy for O Cahalane and H Looney for S McCartan (1-1), M Murphy for A Egan and A Smith for A Healy (42), K Wall for F Keating (44), C Finn for A O'Connor (48).

DUBLIN: E Mooney, E O'Byrne, E O'Brien, A Ryan, K Kilcommins, C Gannon, H O'Dea, E Jamison, S Murphy, G O'Shea, G Couch, A Gannon, A O'Neill, M Kelleher, A Maher.

Subs: C Shanahan for E O'Byrne (13), E Baker for S Murphy (30), A Heffernan for A Gannon (44), A Whelan for H O'Dea (45), A Buckley and J O'Flynn for A O'Neill and G Couch (60).

Referee: Liz Dempsey (Kilkenny).



Orlaith Cahalane in action for Cork against Dublin at MTU.

Picture: Larry Cummins



A soaring sideline cut by Saoirse McCarthy.

Picture: Larry Cummins



# Twomey blasts 'farcical' All-Star tour ahead of the championship

## Cork boss hits out at timing of Camogie All-Star tour to Canada in May

**CORK** 3-17  
**DUBLIN** 0-5

### GER MCCARTHY REPORTS

A GROWING injury list and news of an ill-timed All-Star Camogie tour overshadowed Cork's facile Very Camogie League Division 1A defeat of Dublin at MTU last Saturday.

Despite being short of a host of first-team regulars, Cork made light work of an inexperienced Dublin to register the easiest of league wins.

Cork manager Matthew Twomey was delighted with his team's work rate and the ruthless manner Dublin were blown away during a dominant opening quarter.

There were plenty of positives to take from a game effectively over after 15 minutes, including Aoife Healy and Oriath

Cahalane, minors promoted to the starting senior line-up, who acquitted themselves well. Kate Wall and Ali Smith also made telling contributions from the bench.

But Cork's mounting injury-list that includes Ashling Thompson, Orla Cronin and Olivia McAllen was added to following last weekend's league opener.

Newcestown's Ciara O'Sullivan suffered a cruciate injury (the fourth Cork senior currently out with an ACL injury) in the Ashbourne Cup the previous weekend. Katrina Mackey went off injured during last Saturday's match and went straight to hospital for an x-ray.

'I am very happy with the result and our first-half performance which was excellent,' Cork boss Twomey said.

'In defence, I thought we were brilliant and our two early goals helped kill the game.'

'It is no longer a 15-person game. We have suffered another injury today (Katrina Mackey). There are already four out, more than likely for the whole year, at this stage. We need everyone (available) and we are still on the lookout as numbers are getting tight.'

On the positive side of things, Matthew Twomey couldn't have asked for a better start against an experimental Dublin line-up. Amy O'Connor played a captain's role by scoring 1-1 inside the opening 5 minutes.

Immediately on the back-foot, Dublin were unable to stop a constant stream of Cork attacks as Saoirse McCarthy, Chloe Sigerson and Fiona Keating dominated the middle third.

Amy Lee was barely tested in the Cork goal throughout the afternoon but had to make a smart stop before the Rebels began reeling off a flurry of scores.

A superb move ended with Katrina Mackey firing into an empty net after seven minutes. Laura Hayes, Fiona Keating, Amy O'Connor (three) and Sorcha McCartan efforts extended

Cork's Cliona Healy keeps her eyes on the ball during the Very Camogie League Division 1 opener against Dublin at MTU Cork. (Photos: Evan Treacy/INPHO)



Cork's lead to 2-7 to 0-0 after 16 one-sided minutes.

Aisling Maher finally got the visitors off the mark courtesy of a well-taken point. Cork lost Mackey to a nasty-looking injury but her teammates responded after a scrappy spell to put the result beyond doubt. Amy O'Connor (free), Oriath Cahalane, Sorcha McCartan and Cliona Healy points made it 2-11 to 0-1 at the break.

A flurry of substitutions and increased Dublin effort made for a better spectacle in the second period. Amy O'Connor (two one free) and Hannah Looney extended the home team's advantage during a fractious third quarter. Another Cork substitute, Ali Smith, made her presence felt by finding the back of the net.

Aisling Maher was Dublin's lone attacking threat throughout a difficult afternoon. Maher added three points and Aoife Whelan also raised a white flag but late Emma Murphy, Laura Hayes and Ali Smith points completed Cork's 3-17 to 0-5 rout.

Aside from his current squad's injury woes, news that this year's PwC Camogie All Star tour to Canada (for 2021 and 2022 winners) will take place from May 19th to the 25th, just before the All-Ireland championship, has shocked Cork's manager.

'It is farcical and it wouldn't



Cork forward Fiona Keating gets away from Dublin's Muireann Kelleher.

**'Potentially, Cork could have ten players making the trip to Canada as it covers the 2021 and 2022 All-Stars' – Matthew Twomey, Cork boss**

happen in the men's game,' Twomey blasted.

'If a player from a club team told you they were going away on holiday a week before the championship, you would drop them. Why is our association putting this on us?'

'Potentially, Cork could have ten players making the trip to Canada as it covers the 2021 and 2022 All-Stars. There has to be some serious talk and consideration about this decision. We are not a bit happy with it. It is embarrassing.'

### Scorers

**Cork:** Amy O'Connor 1-7 (3f); Ali Smith 1-1; Katrina Mackey 1-0; Sorcha McCartan, Laura Hayes 0-2 each; Cliona Healy, Fiona Keating, Hannah Looney, Oriath Cahalane, Emma Murphy 0-1 each.  
**Dublin:** Aisling Maher 0-4 (2f); Aoife Whelan 0-1.

**Cork:** Amy Lee; Aisling Egan, Libby Coppinger, Meabh Cahalane.

**Pamela Mackey, Aoife Healy, Laura Hayes, Saoirse McCarthy, Chloe Sigerson, Sorcha McCartan, Fiona Keating, Cliona Healy, Amy O'Connor (captain), Katrina Mackey, Oriath Cahalane.**  
**Subs:** Izzy O'Regan for K Mackey (22, 1g), Hannah Looney for S McCartan (1t), Emma Murphy for O Cahalane (1t), Meabh Murphy for A Egan (41), Ali Smith for A Healy (41), Kate Wall for F Keating (44), Clodagh Finn for A O'Connor (48).  
**Dublin:** Eabha Mooney; Emma O'Byrne, Eve O'Brien, Abbey Ryan; Kate Kilmorris, Claire Gannon, Hannah O'Dea; Elyse Jamison Murphy, Sinead Murphy; Grace O'Shea, Gaby Couch, Aisling Gannon; Aisling O'Neill, Muireann Kelleher, Aisling Maher (captain).  
**Subs:** Christine Shanahan for E O'Byrne (12), Ellen Baker for S Murphy (30), Aoife Heffernan for A Gannon (44), Aoife Whelan for H O'Dea (44), Alix Buckley for A O'Neill (61), Juliette O'Flynn for G Couch (61).  
**Referee:** Liz Dempsey (Kilkenny).

## Mackey and Cronin miss Clare clash

BY JOHNNY CAROLAN

CORK camogie manager Matthew Twomey is expecting a far stiffer test as the Rebels take on Clare



Matthew Twomey

in Division 1A of the Very Camogie Leagues. The Banner visit Pairc Uí Rinn on Saturday (3pm) with both sides recording opening-round wins – Cork beating Dublin by 3-17 to 0-5 while Clare were 2-7 to 0-11 victors against All-Ireland champions Kilkenny.

While pleased with the win, Twomey felt that the Dublin win was achieved without too much strain but he knows that won't be the case this time around.

'We'd only three or four field sessions done and a couple of challenge matches,' he says. 'We were anxious going out, just to see where we were at. We did expect a tougher battle, there's no two ways about that.'

'We broke them down very easily, which was great in one way but disappointing at the same time as we wanted a stiffer test. When the game was over at half-time, we just rolled out the subs to give them a run.'

'We're playing Clare next weekend and if there was any fear of anyone getting carried away, the fact that they beat Kilkenny is a wake-up call again.'

Cork will be without Newcestown's Ciara O'Sullivan for the entire season after she was revealed to have suffered a cruciate ligament injury and there are others unavailable too.

'The ACL was confirmed last weekend, so she's gone now for the year,' Twomey says. 'The other three girls [Ashling Thompson, Kate O'Mahony and Olivia McAllen, all of whom have the same injury] have a battle on their hands and then Katrina Mackey got injured too. We thought it was a broken rib and it's not, but she'll be out for a while. 'Orla Cronin's still missing, too – you can see the improvement in her but she's still about three or four weeks off.'

'The positive is that it gives girls chances. We had two from last year's minors, Aoife Healy and Oriath Cahalane, in last Saturday and they did very well. Getting them another 60 minutes will be brilliant, that's what you're looking at, really.'

## O'Sullivan ruled out with ACL injury

NEWCESTOWN star Ciara O'Sullivan's knee injury suffered in action for UCC in the Ashbourne Cup has been confirmed as a cruciate injury, Cork camogie manager Matthew Twomey says.



Ciara O'Sullivan

O'Sullivan is the FOURTH Cork player to be struck down by an ACL injury as Ashling Thompson, Katie O'Mahony and Olivia McAllen are already sidelined.

The Newcestown woman suffered the injury in action for UCC in an Ashbourne Cup semi-final earlier this month. 'Ciara O'Sullivan's injury, unfortunately, has been confirmed as a cruciate.'

'That's the fourth cruciate injury we have suffered, three players with their club and one with their college. It is very disappointing to lose these players,' Twomey said. UCC student O'Sullivan, a back-to-back All-Ireland minor winner, has been involved in the Cork senior panel since 2020.

## THE HIGHLIGHTS

**Our Star:** Saoirse McCarthy's work-rate and delivery from midfield gives the Coursey Rovers star the nod.

**Star moment:** The skill, speed and accuracy of Amy O'Connor's opening green goal for Cork was class personified.

**Talking point:** Cork's growing injury-list is a concern, as is an ill-timed All-Stars tour just before championship.

**What's next?** Cork host Clare at Pairc Uí Rinn (3pm) in this Saturday's second round of Very Camogie League Division 1A matches.



# Cracker in store as Clare come to Cork



CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick

**TOMORROW: Very National League Division 1A: Cork v Clare, Páirc Uí Rinn, 3pm**

AFTER an opening round victory over Dublin where they weren't in reality tested, Cork again have home advantage against Clare tomorrow in round two of the Very National League Division 1A.

Cork will be strong favourites, but Clare enjoy coming to Cork and always put it up to their hosts. They'll be buoyed by a two-point win over All-Ireland champions Kilkenny last weekend.

Clare finished bottom of the championship table in 2022 which was a huge disappointment for them after a respectable league and an morale-boosting display against Cork in the Munster final which went to extra-time before Cork won 9-24 to 1-18.

Were Clare ahead of other counties in their pre-championship training last season?

Had they given so much to the league and Munster campaign that they couldn't sustain the intensity?

Or are they on a steady rise and closing the gap?

Another impressive display by defeating Kilkenny 2-7 to 0-11, but can they follow it up with a defeat of Cork?

Tipperary defeated Galway, and with each team in the group of six playing each other, leading to five games before the top two reach the final, every weekend is an important one.

If Cork slip up tomorrow, anything could happen. The group is already wide open with the three Munster sides' victories last weekend. The other six senior championship counties compete in the division 1B league.

Playing at home in Cusack Park, Clare led by 1-5 to 0-4 at half-time and it was notable that six different players had hit the mark. O'Loughlin goaling in the seventh minute and the points coming from Chloe Morey, Caoimhe Carmody, Zi Yan Spillane, Lorna McNamara, and Clare Hehir.

While Kilkenny nosed ahead it was Clare who made the best of the run in to the final whistle, Caoimhe Kelly restoring parity before O'Loughlin's major and Clare saw out the tie out im-



Cliona Healy, Cork, is tackled by Grace O'Shea, Dublin in their league game at MTU last weekend.

Picture: Larry Cummins

pressively from there.

Cork were well in control against a disappointing Dublin, with Amy O'Connor, Katrina Mackey, and Ail Smith hitting the net and Laura Hayes and Cliona Healy also standing out.

Ten players found the target, seven substitutes were used. Hannah Looney came on at half-time.

Katrina Mackey went off injured on 21 minutes; bruised ribs and a bruised lung will keep her out of tomorrow's game. Pam Mackey picked up a hamstring injury and it is expected that Orla Cronin will be out for another three weeks. Laura Treacy is available, so she and Meabh Murphy will possibly fill the vacant slots with Looney also starting.

Cork manager Matthew Twomey intends to give some of last week's subs a further run-out. The likes of Emma Murphy, Orlaith Cahalane, and Fiona Keating in particular are on the fringes of the starting team and will need more game time to get them up to championship speed.



Orlaith Cahalane fires over a point from play against Dublin.

Picture: Larry Cummins

## Camogie Association drops plans to change its brand

The Camogie Association's highly anticipated plans to rebrand the organisation, on foot of a major sponsorship investment by Carmel Naughton and Glen Dimplex last year, has been shelved.

The association went to market last September inviting tenders for a "review of the current brand identity and development of a clear tagline which meets our ambitious goals (as an organisation which) competes above its weight in the sporting landscape".

A key challenge for the board was outlined as one which must engage with younger audiences while ensuring that the traditions and history of the body prevail.

While eager to keep its current corporate identity, the Camogie Association told prospective tenders that it wanted a new logo to attract that key younger audience, and a tagline, along with a suite of corporate brand guidelines.

The key timelines for the rebranding of the Camogie Association were due to be

October 10 for submission, with the selection of a short-list of agencies by October 24, from which the successful candidate would be selected.

The final designs and submissions was due on December 2 before an unspecified launch date. However, the Camogie Association contacted applicants in recent days to advise that it had made the "difficult decision not to progress with a full rebrand at this time".

The reason given for the sudden ending of the plan was down to a series of unspecified changes within the organisation and its work environment.

The rebrand of the organisation coincided with the end of camogie's first season of a seven-year deal with Glen Dimplex and its key stakeholder Carmel Naughton, which was activated at the beginning of last season.

When asked if Glen Dimplex had any input around the ending of the rebrand the company did not respond, although such involvement would be most unusual.



Clonakilty footballers Katie O'Driscoll, Siofra Patwell and Millie Condon all featured for Cork



# Murray happy with Galway's resolve

Daragh Ó Conchúir

It may only be the end of February and Galway manager Cathal Murray acknowledged the calendar realities but that did not prevent the two-time manager of the year recognising the importance of his side's strong last-quarter showing, nor dilute the considerable satisfaction he derived from that.

After all, the Maroons had entered the lion's den in taking on All-Ireland champions Kilkenny at UPMC Nowlan Park and with both sides having had first-round defeats inflicted on them the previous weekend, there was plenty at stake in terms of standards as well as results with the Very Camogie League Division 1A in mind.

The visitors are the title-holders and remain in contention thanks to ten points from Very player of the match Carrie Dolan and a goal and three from Ailish O'Reilly.

Dolan had five on the board as Galway led by 0-10 to 0-7 at half-time but a couple of points from Asha McHardy drew Kilkenny closer and when Julianne Malone goalied, it was the Noresiders who led by one.

The riposte was significant however, as Dolan levelled quickly and added another brace. O'Reilly also split the posts and the Corrib crew prevailed by 1-17 to 1-13.

"We're really happy, especially with the last 10, 15 minutes I suppose," said Murray.

"When you go a point down here and Kilkenny were well on top when they got that goal, you want a reaction from that off the team and it was great. We went up the field again and got the equaliser straight away nearly and the last 10 minutes we were excellent in fairness.

"It's early in the League but today was important for us to get a reaction and I'm really happy with it.



Rachel Harty set up Rose Murphy with a wonderful pass for Cork's opening goal against Tipperary in the first round of the Division 2B Intermediate Camogie League at Castle Road. Picture: Larry Cummins

Cork and Tipperary are two from two as a result of victories over Clare and Dublin respectively, with the Dubs joining Kilkenny as the only sides that are pointless in the extremely competitive top division, the Metropolitans propping up the table by virtue of an inferior score difference.

Second-half goals from Caoimhe Maher and the excellent Casey Hennessy enabled Tipp to pull away for a 2-13 to 1-6 success against Dublin at Parnell Park.

A Muireann Kelleher goal just before the interval left it delicately poised 0-7 to 1-3 but

Tipp pulled away to maintain their unblemished record ahead of Saturday's top-of-the-table clash with Cork, who lead by virtue of a 14-point better score difference.

The Rebels brought Clare crashing down to earth after the Bannerwomen's opening defeat of Kilkenny, Amy O'Connor shooting 1-3 in a 2-19 to 1-0 victory at Páirc Uí Rinn.

Skipper Amy O'Connor brought her tally in two games to 2-15 after notching up a goal and eight points in Cork's 2-19 to 1-10 win against Clare at Páirc Uí Rinn.

Sorcha McCartan was also in good shooting form and after establishing a seven-point half-time advantage, Matthew Twomey's outfit pulled further clear with a goal from O'Connor.

Aine O'Loughlin nabbed her second goal in a week for Clare but an unfortunate own goal by goalie Doireann Murphy followed almost immediately, leaving a final margin that was probably a little unreflective of John Carmody's efforts but illustrated the good order Cork are in right now.

In Division 1B, Waterford

and Antrim maintained their strong early form, as they defeated Wexford and Limerick respectively. The Déise were 0-19 to 0-7 winners in their local derby, while Antrim made their long trip to Rathkeale's Mick Neville Park worthwhile to the tune of a 2-17 to 1-11 result. In the division's other tie, Down got off the mark for the campaign by chiseling out a 0-13 to 0-9 success over Offaly.

In Division 2A, Cavan beat Laois 2-16 to 0-10, Kerry got the better of Meath by 1-12 to 0-12 and Derry accounted for Westmeath, 1-9 to 0-7.

# Millie adds West Cork award to collection

Ballinascarthy teen (17) won **THREE** All-Irelands during incredible 2022 season

BY KIERAN MCCARTHY

MILLIE Condon is the first recipient of the West Cork Sports Star Paudie Palmer Youth Award.

The Ballinascarthy teenager, who won **THREE** All-Ireland titles during a memorable 2022, will receive her deserved accolade at the 2022 Celtic Ross Hotel West Cork Sports Star Awards annual gala ceremony on Saturday night, March 11th.

Millie (17) was one of five youth quarterly award winners from 2022, alongside Darragh Dempsey (road bowling), Rachel Kingston (road bowling), Oisín Brady (kickboxing) and John O'Donovan (soccer) – and

the rising Cork dual star was selected as the winner after her superb successes.

First up in an unforgettable year, Millie helped her school, Sacred Heart Clonakilty, win the 2022 All-Ireland schools' senior C football final, and she was named player of the match too. Then Millie was a starter on both the Cork minor football and camogie teams that swept to All-Ireland honours as well. Add in Munster titles in all three competitions and her medal collection swelled considerably. Millie was recently crowned the 2022

Munster LGFA Young Player of the Year, and she also captains the Cork minor footballers in 2023.

Now she can add to the Celtic Ross Hotel West

Millie is Cork minor football captain this year.



Rising dual star Millie Condon in action for Sacred Heart Secondary School Clonakilty.

Cork Sports Star Paudie Palmer Youth Award to her growing list of accolades.

She will be the first recipient of this award since it was renamed in honour of the legendary Paudie Palmer, who was involved in these awards for the past 25 years. Sadly, Paudie passed away in January, but his legacy with the awards will live on.

"I'm delighted to win this award, especially because I know one of the reasons I was presented with a quarterly award was because of our school achievements last year. That makes it even more special," Millie told *The Southern Star*.

Dual star Millie is in good company as an overall youth award winner as previously

current Cork senior camogie star Fiona Keating (2019) and Moira Barrett (2018) have been crowned best young talent in the west.

"To win three All-Irelands in one year, it was a great year, and it's down to everyone who was on the pitch in all those All-Irelands. Everyone played a part in those wins," said Millie who added enjoying football and camogie is very important to her.

"I want to win as much as we can, but to have fun as well," the Sacred Heart Leaving Cert student explained.

"It's so important that we have fun, and we all enjoy going to training. We get the work done and we try as hard as we can, but we have fun and a laugh too."

It's going to be a busy year on and off the field for this talented dual player who, as well as lining out for her county, wants to help the Bal junior camogie team and the Clonakilty senior football team make an impression on their competitions too.

Millie will receive the West Cork Sports Star Paudie Palmer Youth Award at the awards night on March 11th, and it promises, as always, to highlight why West Cork is a hotspot for sport right now.

## TOP TALENTS

Here are all the winners of the Celtic Ross Hotel West Cork Sports Star Youth Award, now named in honour of the late Paudie Palmer:

- 2011: Lily de la Cour (kickboxing)
- 2012: Flann Lyden (sailing)
- 2013: Michael Cahalane (GAA)
- 2014: Connor Ellis (soccer)
- 2015: David Lowney (GAA)
- 2016: Darragh McElhinney (athletics)
- 2017: Laura Nicholson (athletics)
- 2018: Moira Barrett (camogie)
- 2019: Fiona Keating (football/camogie)
- 2020: Nicola Tuthill (athletics)
- 2021: Maeve O'Neill (athletics)
- 2022: Millie Condon (football/camogie)

Castlehaven's ladies football team will receive the Special Achievement Award, and Kilkenny legend Brian Cody is the guest speaker, while next week we will reveal who the 2022 West Cork Sports Team of the Year is.

The West Cork Sports Star Awards have been running for 25 years and is a joint enterprise by the Celtic Ross Hotel, *The Southern Star* and C103.





Cliona Dooley fires in the third goal against Tipperary Intermediate Camogie National League at Castle Road. Picture: Larry Cummins

## Cork intermediates make short work of Tipp in league opener

Cork 4-20  
Tipperary 0-2

CAMOGIE  
Mary Newman

CORK made a winning start to their Very Division 2B National Camogie League campaign as they overcame Tipperary in sun-drenched Castle Road on Saturday.

In all sectors Cork were dominant and as the scoreline indicated they controlled the game all through.

They were strong in every line and played with great composure, and despite playing minus several of last season's side that reached the All-Ireland final, they were never really troubled.

From the throw-in Cork were focused and, moving the ball well, they led 3-6 to 0-2 at the interval and they hit Tipperary a killer blow in a six-minute spell that saw Cork hit three goals. Rose Murphy had the first on 22 minutes to stretch Cork's three-point advantage to six.

Ellen Cunneen and Claire Stakelum were on target for Tipperary, but they struggled to gain the upper hand on the strong Cork defence.

Cork kept the pressure on and a Hayley Ryan point from a sweet ground stroke had six between the sides before Cork continued the goal blitz; Lauren Homan and Cliona Dooley finding the net to give Cork a comfortable 3-6 to 0-2 interval lead.

On the turnover, Cork hit four points without reply and a goal nine minutes in from Homan gave Tipperary a mountain to climb.

All over the pitch Cork won

possession and, using the ball well, they bombarded the Tipperary defence.

Cliona O'Leary, Lucy Allen, Ryan, and Leah Hallihane all picked off points as the lead was extended and such was the Cork rearguard's strength that they held Tipperary scoreless for the entire second half.

While the result will please the Cork management, they know that much stronger challenges await, but for now it's two points safely secured and on to round two on March 18 where they will meet last season's All-Ireland champions Galway at home.

**Scorers for Cork:** L Homan 2-3 (0-1 f), H Ryan 0-8 (0-4 f), C Dooley 1-2, R Murphy 1-1, C O'Leary 0-3 (0-1 f), L Allen, C Keane, L Hallihane 0-1 each.  
**Tipperary:** E Cunneen 0-1 f, C Stakelum 0-1.

**CORK:** S Beausang; N O'Leary, A Walsh, A Barrett, M Ring, A O'Callaghan, A Moloney; R Harty, E Flanagan; R Murphy, L Allen, C O'Leary; L Homan, H Ryan, C Dooley.

**Subs:** L O'Sullivan for A Walsh (44), L Doyle for M Ring (44), A Cashman for E Flanagan (48), O Mullins for H Ryan (48), T McCarthy for L Allen (50), C Golden for R Harty (50), C Keane for C O'Leary (51), L Hallihane for A O'Callaghan.

**TIPPERARY:** A Butler; E Murphy, R Maher, N Murray; L Cahill, C Walsh, C Ryan, C Horgan, A Callanan; C Shanahan, C Stakelum, C McKeogh; E Myles, R O'Dwyer, E Cunneen.

**Subs:** K Fitzgerald for E Murphy (22), E Butler for A Callanan (40), L Leenane for E Myles (40), A Sheedy for C Ryan (45), E Fogarty for C Walsh (45), A Greed for N Murray (50), E D'Arcy for C Shanahan (50).  
**Referee:** Karol Collins (Galway).



Midfielder Saoirse McCarthy drives the sliotar during the Camogie National League game against Clare at Páirc Uí Rinn on Saturday. Picture: Larry Cummins

# Changed Cork get the job done in ragged affair



CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick

Cork 2-19  
Clare 1-10

THE game may not have reached great heights, but it's the second round of the Very Division 1A Camogie League and we weren't expecting championship form as Cork again made a number of changes to the side that started their opening round win against Dublin last weekend.

In came goalkeeper Molly Lynch, Meabh Murphy, Laura Treacy, Hannah Looney at midfield and Izzy O'Regan, in place of Amy Lee, Aisling Egan, Pam Mackey, Aoife Healy, and Katrina Mackey.

A tame opening half with little to excite, despite Cork going in with a seven-point lead. Clare played with a two-player full-forward line, with one outside and three across the 40. Their attacks were sporadic and Cork were quick and strong in closing them down.

Clare weren't threatening in the opening quarter as Cork won the majority of possession around the middle of the park, Hannah Looney winning good ball.

Clare started to get a better grip in their half-back line and three pointed frees in a row by Lorna McNamara had the score at eight points to five leading into half-time and from Clare's perspective, they would have been happy with that; still in the game and having played against the wind.

Molly Lynch had also made a good save on 26 minutes, the first time she was called into action, so Clare were pushing. But Cork finished strong with a Saoirse



Full-forward Orlaith Cahalane pops a pass against Clare. Picture: Larry Cummins

McCarthy point from play and three Amy O'Connor frees leaving it 0-12 to 0-5 at half-time.

Soft frees contributed to a stop-start first half, overruling the focus of referee Justin Heffernan for which a number of frees were awarded to both sides.

O'Regan playing at left half-back broke forward for Cork's first score within 20 seconds. O'Connor struck from a 45 before Caoimhe Carmody pointed for Clare, but four in a row from Looney, Fiona Keating, Cliona Healy, and O'Connor from play left it at 0-6 to 0-2 at the end of the first quarter.

Keating and O'Connor (f) hit two before three points from the free-taking stick of Lorna McNamara narrowed the gap before Cork accelerated and finished the half strongly.

O'Connor was on the mark again after half-time with two points, one from play. Clare's Aine O'Loughlin caught a drop-

ping ball, turned fast but struck wide.

A free from McNamara, who got the bulk of Clare's scores, before Cork effectively put the game to bed. Sorchá McCartan hit a point either side of Clare substitute Jennifer Daly's score, before Clare's puckout went astray to O'Connor who ran towards goal and finished to the net, 1-16 to 0-7 on 45 minutes.

McCartan took over the free-taking duties from O'Connor as Cork used six substitutes.

O'Loughlin goaled on 56 minutes as Clare kept trying, only for Cork substitute Kate Wall's long delivery to defy Clare goalkeeper Doireann Murphy.

Carmody and Cork's Emma Murphy swapped points.

The game was ragged with too many frees, but it's another win for Cork and they top the table with Tipperary on six points each, Tipperary defeating Dublin (2-13 to 1-6) with Cork ahead on scoring difference.

Cork are now in a strong position to reach the final.

Elsewhere Galway beat Kilkenny 1-17 to 1-13, meaning Kilkenny will now find it difficult to make the final with two defeats from two.

**Scorers for Cork:** A O'Connor 1-8 (0-2 f, 0-1 45), S McCartan 0-4 (0-2 f), K Wall 1-0, F Keating 0-2, S McCarthy, H Looney, I O'Regan, C Healy, E Murphy 0-1 each.

**Clare:** L McNamara 0-6 (0-5 f), A O'Loughlin 1-0, C Carmody 0-2 (0-1 f), J Daly, C Morey (f) 0-1 each.

**CORK:** M Lynch; M Murphy, L Coppinger, M Cahalane; I O'Regan, L Treacy, L Hayes; H Looney, S McCarthy; C Sigerson, F Keating, C Healy, A O'Connor (c), O Cahalane, S McCartan.

**Subs:** E Murphy for C Sigerson and A Healy for C Healy (43), A Smith for O Cahalane and A O'Neill for L Hayes (48), K Wall for A O'Connor (53), C Finn for S McCartan (58).

**CLARE:** D Murphy; S Daly, C Hehir, C Grogan; L Ryan, N O'Dea, A Ryan; C Carmody, C Kelly; Z Yan Spillane, C Morey, L Daly; R Foley, A O'Loughlin, L McNamara.

**Subs:** A Walsh for A Ryan (27), M Scanlon for L Daly (31), J Daly for Z Yan Spillane (43), A Keating for C Carmody (49).

**Referee:** Justin Heffernan (Wexford).



Full-forward Hayley Ryan on the ball at Castle Road. Picture: Larry Cummins



# O'Connor: It's early but we are making huge progress

Cork captain inspires 12-point league win against Clare

**CORK** 2-19  
**CLARE** 1-10

GER MCCARTHY REPORTS

CORK made short work of a disappointing Clare to register a straightforward Very Camogie League Division 1A victory in Páirc Uí Rinn last Saturday.

Matthew Twomey's side dominated a second consecutive League encounter to maintain a perfect start to their 2023 campaign.

As with Dublin the week before, a visiting Clare team, coming off a terrific win over All-Ireland champions Kilkenny, failed to deal with Cork's powerful running and accurate distribution.

Against the backdrop of an on-going All-Stars Camogie trip to Canada saga, Cork boss Twomey made several changes to his starting line-up but the Rebels didn't miss a beat.

Replacement goalkeeper Molly Lynch played well as did defenders Meabh Murphy and Izzy O'Regan. Both Hannah Looney and Laura Treacy started the game and made their presence felt. Yet Twomey and his selectors will have been most pleased with Cork's forwards. Orlaith Cahalane started in the full-forward line and her intelligent running made space for Amy O'Connor (1-8) and Sorcha McCartan (0-4) to wreak havoc.

'What we looked for today, after Clare's result last week (against Kilkenny), was not to be complacent and that didn't happen,' Twomey told *The Southern Star*.

'We started off very well. I thought we were very good at the start of the second half as we just wanted to put the game away. I thought the players did that very, very well.'

'Our movement of the ball (was very good). We got 2-19 and I'm sure we left another 2-10 after us. Obviously, there is still a lot to work on but I'm just delighted we never let up. Every time Clare scored we came back up the field and scored.'

'These are small things but massive as well in the grander scale of things.'

Playing with the aid of a strong wind, Izzy O'Regan and



Cork captain Amy O'Connor scored 1-8 against Clare.

**'Orlaith Cahalane is so good to play alongside. I absolutely love playing with her' – Amy O'Connor, Cork captain**

Amy O'Connor got Cork on the scoreboard before Caoimhe Carmody (free) replied for the visitors. The home team enjoyed a purple patch as Hannah Looney, Fiona Keating, Cliona Healy and Amy O'Connor (free) scores extended Cork's advantage. It was 0-6 to 0-2 when Lorna McNamara scored for Clare after 15 minutes.

Despite six wides, Cork grew their lead to 0-8 to 0-4 coming up to the interval. Keating and O'Connor (free) scores were answered by two Lorna McNamara frees. Clare enjoyed their best spell and forced Molly Lynch into an excellent stop before McNamara landed another free.

A lively first half concluded with Cork 0-12 to 0-5 in front after a fine Saoirse McCarthy effort followed by three consecutive Amy O'Connor frees.

Cork didn't take their foot off the pedal early in the second period and moved further ahead. Two more Amy O'Connor scores (one free) made it a nine-point game.

Cork dominated the third quarter and kicked for home thanks to a superbly-crafted Amy O'Connor goal and two Sorcha McCartan points. Clare's Lorna McNamara (free)

and Rebecca Foley reduced the deficit but it was Cork who led 1-16 to 0-7 heading into the final stages.

That stretched to a commanding 1-18 to 0-8 advantage when McCartan (two frees) and McNamara (free) exchanged scores.

A series of substitutions preceded two late goals. Aine O'Loughlin was rewarded for her efforts with a well-taken goal before sub Kate Wall's speculative long-range attempt was allowed to float all the way into the back of Clare's net.

It finished 2-19 to 1-10 and Cork were full value for that win. 'We are very pleased with today as we are trying to work on some new things,' Cork captain Amy O'Connor said.

'Orlaith Cahalane is so good to play alongside. I absolutely love playing with her. Then you have the likes of Aoife Healy coming off the bench, another exceptional talent.'

'It is early in the year but there is huge progress being made. I'm learning a lot from Orlaith Cahalane's movement which is great. Sorcha (McCartan) was brilliant today too. When we are singing off the same hymn sheet, it is really easy to play (in this Cork team).'

## Scorers

**Cork:** Amy O'Connor 1-8 (2f, 145); Sorcha McCartan 0-4 (2f); Kate Wall 1-0; Fiona Keating 0-2; Izzy O'Regan, Hannah Looney, Saoirse McCarthy, Cliona Healy, Emma Murphy 0-1 each.

**Clare:** Lorna McNamara 0-6 (5f); Aine O'Loughlin 1-0; Caoimhe Carmody 0-2 (1f); Jennifer Daly, Chloe Morey (1f) 0-1 each.

**Cork:** Molly Lynch; Meabh Murphy, Libby Coppinger, Meabh Cahalane; Izzy O'Regan, Laura Treacy, Laura Hayes; Saoirse McCarthy, Hannah Looney; Chloe Sigerson, Fiona Keating, Cliona Healy; Amy O'Connor, Orlaith Cahalane, Sorcha McCartan.

**Subs:** Emma Murphy for Sigerson (43), Aoife Healy for Healy (43), All Smith for Cahalane (49), Aoife O'Neill for Hayes (48), Kate Wall for O'Connor (53), Clodagh Finn for McCartan (59).

**Clare:** Dolreann Murphy; Susan Daly, Clare Heir, Clara Grogan; Laoise Ryan, Niamh O'Dea, Alannah Ryan; Caoimhe Carmody, Caoimhe Kelly; Zi Yan Spillane, Chloe Morey, Lynda Daly; Rebecca Foley, Aine O'Loughlin, Lorna McNamara.

**Subs:** Abby Walsh for Ryan (28), Muireann Scanlon for Daly (ht), Jennifer Daly for Spillane (43), Amy Keating for Carmody (49).

**Referee:** Justin Heffernan (Wexford).

## DIVISION 1A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	SD	Pts
Cork	2	2	0	0	5-36	1-15	+33	6
Tipperary	2	2	0	0	6-22	2-15	+19	6
Galway	2	1	0	1	2-26	5-22	-5	3
Clare	2	1	0	1	3-17	2-30	-10	3
Kilkenny	2	0	0	2	1-24	3-24	-6	0
Dublin	2	0	0	2	1-11	5-30	-31	0

## THE HIGHLIGHTS

**Our Star:** Amy O'Connor was terrific and scored 1-8, and was ably assisted by a dynamic full-forward line also containing Orlaith Cahalane and Sorcha McCartan.

**Star moment:** Amy O'Connor's second-half goal was of the highest quality. The Cork captain's finish matched the slickness of Cork's approach play.

**Talking point:** A Clare team that previously defeated Kilkenny could not have been more disappointing but Cork were fluent, clinical and thoroughly deserved their win.

**What's next?** Cork are on the road and will travel to in-form Tipperary for their third Division 1A fixture on Saturday (3.30pm in the Ragg).

McCarthy hits out at timing of All-Star tour

BY KIERAN MCCARTHY



CAMOGIE All-Star Saoirse

McCarthy has hit out at the timing of the 2023 PwC Camogie All-Star tour to Canada in May.

The Courcy Rovers ace (pictured) has described the scheduling of the trip as 'wrong' and 'extremely disappointing' as it comes just before the start of Cork's championship campaign.

*The Irish Examiner* revealed that the seven Cork All-Stars, who would have been on the flight to Canada, will boycott the All-Star tour – to be held in Calgary, Alberta from May 19th-25th.

'The timing of this trip is wrong,' Saoirse McCarthy said.

'The most important part of the season is preparing for our Munster and All-Ireland campaigns.'

'Hope common sense prevails and we get an opportunity to celebrate.'

'We wouldn't have All-Stars without our teammates!'

McCarthy's Cork teammate, All-Star defender Laura Treacy added that the trip was 'a decision made without consulting players or the GPA.'

With the All-Ireland camogie championship expected to start in early June, players taking part in the All-Star tour land home on May 25th, so will miss vital preparations ahead of the championship. Cork manager Matthew Twomey described the scheduling as 'farical' and 'embarrassing'.

Cork All-Star Ashling Thompson has also noted that the Munster camogie championship takes place at the end of May so the All-Star tour cuts across it.

'Very disappointing to be missing out on this once-in-a-lifetime trip. We feel extremely let down by our own association. How can we leave our teammates in the middle of championship preparation when we wouldn't have an All-Star without them?', Cork All-Star Laura Hayes said.

St Colum's dual player Libby Coppinger won her first Camogie All-Star in 2022, alongside team-mates Saoirse McCarthy, Ashling Thompson and Katriona Mackey. In 2021 Laura Treacy, Laura Hayes and Hannah Looney all won Camogie All-Stars.



SCHOOLS CAMOGIE

# Late agony for Gort girls in All-Ireland showdown

O'Shea's free snatches the honours for Callan

GORT COMMUNITY SCHOOL	2-7
COLÁISTE ABHAINN RÍ, CALLAN	2-9

SARAH GAUGHRAN

GORT Community School came up just short in their quest for All-Ireland Colleges glory on Saturday when a last minute goal for Coláiste Abhainn Rí Callan sealed a two point victory for the Kilkenny side in the Senior C Post Primary Schools final.

Gort got off to a fantastic start. Points from Helena Tarpey and a

well taken score under pressure for Aisling Dolphin left them 0-2 to 0-0 ahead after four minutes. Player of the game Ciara O'Shea opened her side's account through a free before Chloe O'Donovan levelled the final.

Katie Flaherty and Aisling O'Sullivan then exchanged scores before Gort got their first major of the game in the 13th minute when a handpass from Tarpey found Abbie Massy and she made no mistake in sticking the ball to the net. Gort extended their lead with a Dolphin free, and a point from Tarpey.

In the 21st minute, a handpass from Flaherty found the oncom-

ing Alisha Quinn and she blasted the ball past Jenny Saunders in the Coláiste Abhainn Rí net to leave Gort 2-5 to 0-3 ahead, and in control. Dolphin added another free to Gort's tally in the 29th minute while O'Shea landed two frees for the Kilkenny girls to leave Gort 2-6 to 0-5 ahead heading into the break.

Scores were hard to come by for Gort in the second half as they only managed to one point throughout the half. O'Shea added two more frees for Coláiste Abhainn Rí before a 45 from the same player ended up in the Gort net. Ava Brett, under pressure, got her first score of

the game to bring them within one of Gort with 48 minutes on the clock.

Dolphin got Gort's only score of the half with a well taken point from play but O'Shea added another free to her tally to leave one between the sides again. Then a long range free from O'Shea was lobbed into the square and broke Gort hearts as the ball ended up in the back of the net to snatch victory.

**Gort Community School:** C Higgins; S Dolphin, E Niland, H Keogh; R Linnane, R Gardiner, A Connolly; K Flaherty (0-1), A Massey (1-0); H Tarpey (0-2), C Moloney (1-0), A Quinn; A Mirren, A Dolphin (0-4, 0-2 frees), S Mullins. Sub: L Linnane for C Moloney (38)

INTERMEDIATE CAMOGIE

# Galway fall away in the second half

GALWAY	0-7
KILKENNY	3-16

SARAH GAUGHRAN

THE Galway Intermediate camogie team suffered a heavy defeat away to Kilkenny in their opening game of the Division 2B competition. It is a completely new look side due to winning last year's All-Ireland Intermediate title in August.

Galway were the quickest out of the blocks with a Chloe Broderick free, but Aoife Cantwell responded straight from the puck out for Kilkenny before Danielle Morrissey added another from a free. Broderick replied for the Tribeswomen with a well taken point from play to bring the sides level again, but Kilkenny began to take control and powered 1-5 to 0-3 ahead thanks to a goal from Therese Donnelly.

Broderick replied with two frees for Galway, but Morrissey

hit back with her third point of the half. Mairead Dillon got her name on the Galway scoresheet in the 25th minute before Kilkenny captain Hannah Scott and Broderick exchanged scores to leave Kilkenny 1-7 to 0-7 ahead at half time.

Though still in the contest, Galway failed to score for the second half as Kilkenny dominated with Caroline Kennedy and Morrissey raising green flags. It must be noted however, that Galway gave game time to 23 players and for some

of them, it was their first time playing at this level.

Up next for the Galway is a home game against Wexford in Kilbeacanty on Saturday.

**Galway:** C Hickey, R Kelly, P Finnerty, S Forde, K Coleman, K Mannion C Lawless, S Coleman, R Hughes, Karen Kennedy (JC), Ava Lynskey (JC), C Broderick (0-6, 0-5 frees), M Gannon, M Dillon (0-1), C Reilly. Sub: C McClean for Hickey (HT), N Spellman for Kennedy (HT), N Horan for Coleman (HT), A Donnellan for Lawless (HT), R McPhibbin for Finnerty (35), S McGinley for Broderick (41), K Somers for Coleman (52), L Burke for Forde (55)

## Awards for McKaigue, Duggan, Reid, and Walsh

Derry's Chrissy McKaigue, Meath's Emma Duggan, and Kilkenny duo T.J. Reid and Grace Walsh have picking up the top honours at the Gaelic Writers' Association (GWA) awards.

Derry All-Star defender McKaigue, Kilkenny marksman Reid, together with All-Ireland winners Duggan and Walsh were named Football, Hurling, Ladies' Football, and Camogie Personalities of the Year, respectively, at last night's event.

The awards, in association with EirGrid, also saw four new inductees into the GWA Hall of Fame: Mary Jo Curran (Kerry), Linda Mellerick (Cork), Willie Bryan (Offaly), and Cyril Farrell (Galway).

RTE's long-time Gaelic Games correspondent and commentator Brian Carthy was presented with the Lifetime Achievement Award while Sligo's Padraig McKeon was named PRO of the Year.

The gala dinner was held in Dublin's Iveagh Garden Hotel.



Hall of Fame recipient, Cork Camogie player Linda Mellerick at the Gaelic Writers' Association Awards.

# Spillane staying ground after Kilkenny shock

Camogie

Daragh Ó Conchúir

The Very Camogie League got off to an explosive start when Division 1A champions Galway were taken down by Tipperary last Saturday.

While that result and the three-goal margin was still being digested, Clare pulled off what an arguably bigger shock less than 24 hours later, coming home strongly in the final quarter to defeat All-Ireland champions Kilkenny by two points.

The Cats had the majority of their big guns on show and were provided with a guard of honour on their first competitive outing since Aoife Prendergast lifted the O'Duffy Cup, but that was the last show of

deference by the women in saffron and blue, and there was no arguing the merit of the home side's triumph in Cusack Park.

Ziyan Spillane's performance was emblematic of the Clare approach, showcasing ferocious endeavour, boundless energy, great touch, her trademark lightning speed and clinical finishing when the opportunities were carved out.

The Feakle-Killanena clubwoman rightly enjoyed it but it is clear that everyone in John Carmody's group understands that if that is all they achieve this year, it will be worthless.

"We were all happy on Sunday and we'd gym then on Monday so there was definitely a positive atmosphere

after a positive start to the season," Spillane details. "We were happy with the performance and that's what we focus on the most, a good performance. We still have plenty to improve on, but it was a good win, certainly."

"Training has been going well. The biggest thing is the numbers and we saw on Sunday we have a good, strong panel now and players can come off the bench and make an impact. Last year we struggled with numbers a bit and in the last 15 minutes of matches we were dying. On Sunday, we were able to hold out and get the win."

That final quarter burst, coming after they fell behind for the first time having led by four points at the break, suggested a level of belief that will

only have been strengthened further by virtue of finishing the job.

"That thought always crosses your mind, especially when you play a team of the quality of Kilkenny but the biggest thing is we didn't panic. Maybe previously we would have panicked but we were able to stay calm and get the scores down the other end when Kilkenny did that get that run at us. Every team is going to have their purple patch but the way we responded to that was telling."

"We just want to improve on our performance now week-in, week-out ... It's one win and we've plenty to do."

Cork coming up (today, Páirc Uí Rinn, 3pm) probably helps in keeping things level.

"We want to know where we

are and playing the best teams is what you want in the League. I suppose a lot of people will remember the Munster final we had against them last year, with extra, extra time. That was some match."

"Last year we were talking a lot about closing the gap and the Munster campaign showed we had made some ground. In the All-Ireland series, we lost out by such fine margins and it was disheartening to end the year in a relegation final but at least we won that and with the extra numbers, we want to show this year that we definitely are there and thereabouts and hopefully that will carry on from the first game now through the League and into the Championship."



Ziyan Spillane: Clare can improve on impressive start to league.



# Galway back in the groove with timely win over Cats

Dolan and O'Reilly do the scoring damage as Tribeswomen impress

GALWAY	1-17
KILKENNY	1-13

EANNA O'REILLY  
AT NOWLAN PARK

THE Galway senior camogie team bounced back impressively from their opening round loss to Tipperary by defeating All-Ireland champions Kilkenny at Nowlan Park on Saturday. The Tribeswomen clicked from the outset and were deserving winners, outplaying the home side for long spells of this game.

It was clear that Galway were a different team from the start of this contest, and the flatness which characterised their performance against Tipperary was noticeably absent. They played with high energy and intensity and put Kilkenny under pressure from an early stage.

Points from Ailish O'Reilly and Carrie Dolan gave Cathal Murray's side an early lead before Kilkenny opened their account with a point from Julianne Malone. Dolan pointed her first free two minutes later, before Malone's second score made it 0-3 to 0-2.

The visitors then hit three consecutive points, through Dolan (0-2, one free), and Aoife Donohue. Some excellent link up play by the Galway forwards was evident in the lead up to each of these scores, reflecting a level of sharpness which was absent against Tipperary.

Denise Gaule soon got her first score for Kilkenny from the left wing, before Aine Keane responded for Galway with a terrific individual score. Galway's work rate was highly impressive throughout the field as they forced Kilkenny into turnovers and dominated the middle third, where Ciara Hickey and Niamh Hanniffy were prominent.

Kilkenny narrowed the margin with points from Asha McHardy, and Gaule (free), before Sabina Rabbite got her name on the scoresheet three minutes later. Rabbite impressively won a turnover before pointing from long range to make it 0-8 to 0-5.

The sides traded 0-2 each before the half time break. Michaela Kenneally and Katie Power tallied scores for the Cats, before O'Reilly and Dolan (free) concluded the first half scoring to leave it at 0-10 to 0-7 at the interval.

Spectators at Nowlan Park

were treated to some excellent half time entertainment from the under 12s of Oranmore-Maree and Kiltullagh-Killimordaly, who were involved in exhibition games against local teams Tullaroan and Rower Inistioge.

Galway made the best possible start to the second half, when Aoife Donohue made a strong run into the Kilkenny square, before being dispossessed. The loose ball was buried in the net by Ailish O'Reilly to give the visitors a six point lead.

The home side soon got on top however, and outscored Galway by 0-5 to 0-1 during the next ten minutes. Gaule (two frees), McHardy (0-2), and Jenny Clifford tallied points for the Cats, while Galway's sole score during this spell was Dolan's fourth pointed free.

Kilkenny then struck for a goal midway through the second half. A great run from Clifford opened up the Galway defence, before she laid the ball off to Malone, who fired to the net. The hosts were in front for the first time in the game and appeared to have all of the momentum at this juncture.

Crucially, Galway replied within a minute, when Dolan won and converted a free to level the contest. With the match in the balance, it was the Tribeswomen who took over. Dolan (0-2, one free), and O'Reilly converted some well worked scores, with Hickey, Donohue and Shannon Corcoran centrally involved in the build up play.



**"I'M JUST HOPING I CAN DO EVERYONE PROUD THIS YEAR. BUT WE HAVE PLENTY OF LEADERS THERE. THE GIRLS ARE GREAT"**

Gaule pointed her fourth free at the other end, which turned out to be Kilkenny's final score, as Galway closed out the game with points from Niamh Hanniffy and Dolan (free), to seal the win.

The Tribeswomen had outstanding performances from Róisín Black, Shauna Healy, and Siobhán Gardiner in defence.



Galway's Ciara Hickey tries to halt the progress of Julianne Malone of Kilkenny during Saturday's National League encounter at Nowlan Park. PHOTOS: INFO/TOM MAHER

Ciara Hickey impressed in mid-field alongside the dominant presence of Niamh Hanniffy, whose athleticism was a huge asset in the middle third.

Donohue, O'Reilly, and Dolan (who took home the player of the match award) showed tremendous leadership and quality in attack, while Aine Keane also caused problems for Kilkenny throughout. Galway also had a positive impact from the bench, with Shannon Corcoran and Jennifer Hughes impressing on their introduction.

Ardrahan defender Shauna Healy was appointed as captain of the Galway senior team at the beginning of this year. After their victory in Nowlan Park, she was very pleased with the performance of her teammates, and happy to have got their first league points of 2023 on the board.

"It's great to come down here and get the win today. We were disappointed after last week and we really wanted a good performance down here. Our mentality was a lot better today, our work rate was a lot better, and the girls really gave it everything out there. We have some good young players in the team and hopefully today will bring them on."

Healy was delighted to get the opportunity to captain the side this year, but also expressed her confidence in the leadership abilities of her teammates.



Galway defender Siobhán Gardiner bringing the ball under control against Jenny Clifford of Kilkenny at Nowlan Park.

"Look, it's something you dream about as a young player growing up. Getting to captain your county is a great honour. It's a great honour for me, for my club, and my family. I'm just hoping I can do everyone proud this year. But we have plenty of leaders there, the girls are great. It's all about the collective effort from everyone at the end of the day, and that's something we'll be working hard on this year," concluded the Galway captain.

Next up for the Tribeswomen is a clash with Clare on Saturday in Kilbeacanty (3:30pm). The match will be preceded by the Galway intermediates' second round game against Wexford (1:30pm). Conor Dolan's side suffered a heavy 3-16 to 0-7 defeat to Kilkenny last Saturday in their league opener.

Galway: F. Ryan; S. Healy, R. Black, D. Higgins, R. Hanniffy, S. Gardiner, E. Heilbert, N. Hanniffy (0-1), C. Hickey, A. Donohue (0-1), C. Dolan (0-10), 0-7

frees), A. Keane (0-1); S. Rabbite (0-1), A. O'Reilly (1-3), N. McPeake. Subs: S. Corcoran for McPeake (47), J. Hughes for Heilbert (47), N. McInerney for O'Reilly (temp. 55-57), K.A. Porter for Healy (64).  
Kilkenny: E. Kavanagh; Ciara Phelan, G. Walsh, Claire Phelan; S. Fitzgerald, N. Deely, T. Fitzgerald, L. Murphy, A. Prendergast; A. McHardy (0-3), M. Kenneally (0-1), D. Gaule (0-5, 0-4 frees); J. Malone (1-2), J. Clifford (0-1), K. Power (0-1). Subs: M. Bambrick for Prendergast (42), M. Teehan for Ciara Phelan (44), S. O'Dwyer for Kenneally (55).  
Referee: Andy Larkin (Cork).





Gaelic Writers Association Hall of Fame recipient Linda Mellerick at the Awards, supported by EirGrid, which took place at the Iveagh Garden Hotel. Picture: Eóin Noonan/Sportsfile

## Linda Mellerick inducted into Hall of Fame

The Gaelic Writers awards saw four new inductees into the GWA Hall of Fame, among them our own camogie correspondent Linda Mellerick.

The GWA scheme, in association with EirGrid, recognises the extraordinary contribution of players to Gaelic games in all four codes.

Linda was the winner of six All-Ireland medals with Cork and was one of the most influential players in the history of camogie. She was one of only four Cork players on the camogie team of the century in 2004 where she was joined by her club-mates Sandie Fitzgibbon and fellow Corkonions Marie Costine and Pat Moloney.

In what was a fantastic club career she won eight Cork County Senior Championships medals, three All-Ireland Club Championship medals as well as Munster club and All-Ireland Sevens with Glen Rovers, whom she joined in 1986 having played underage with Brian Dillon's. She captained the Glen to the 1996 county against Imokilly to record a seven-in-a-row, matching the club's record from 1962-'68.

Her inter-county career spanned 21 years, she captained Cork to All-Irelands in 1993 and 1997, won 10 leagues. She also won minor and junior All-Irelands and four Gael Linn Interprovincial titles.

Linda was actually born in Tipperary but moved to Cork at a very young age where she attended St Patrick's school at

### CAMOGIE

■ Mary Newman

Gardiner's Hill. It was there she decided to try out camogie.

A superb athlete she had a unique style and covered every blade of grass. She stood out in the days when helmets with her boundless energy.

Her skill matched that work-rate, always available to help team-mates in defence or attack. Her trademark solo runs were legendary while her spirit and leadership qualities made her a special player.

It was nothing to Linda to finish shift work and come straight to training with Cork and Glen Rovers. She became the only player to captain Cork to win All-Ireland senior titles on two occasions in 1993 and 1997. She was also Player of the Year in 1993 and 1998.

Retirement was on the horizon in 1997 but she returned for five more years and eventually hung up her boots in 2002 after winning her sixth All-Ireland medal, two years before the introduction of the Camogie All-Stars scheme.

In recent years Linda has carved out a new role off the playing field, reporting on games for *The Echo* and contributing a hugely popular and honest weekly column.

I am honoured to have her as a colleague at club and media level but most of all as a friend. Well done Linda, it was hugely deserved.

Cork's Ashling Thompson is one of Cork's camogie stars to hit out at the date of the All Stars tour.



# Cork stars highlight difference between players and camogie's national body

### CAMOGIE

■ Ger McCarthy

THE modern-day player's voice must grow louder to question demands made by governing bodies and associations.

In recent years, there has been an increasing trend of sports personalities — amateur and professional — speaking out against their governing bodies if they felt they have been unfairly treated.

The current All-Star camogie tour issue is a prime example.

The Camogie Association's decision to sanction a 2023 PwC Camogie All-Star tour to Calgary, Alberta, Canada, from May 19-25 drew an instant response from the affected Cork senior players.

Asking inter-county players (not just from Cork) to embark on a trans-Atlantic trip and return only a week before the start of the All-Ireland championship is a head-scratching decision.

Ashling Thompson likes to do her talking out on the pitch. So whenever the All-Ireland winner and All-Star midfielder comments about an off-field situation, Thompson's pedigree and experience mean her words carry extra weight.

"How could you expect seven players to turn their back on their team-mates at probably the most important time of the year leading up to championship. We wouldn't have All-Stars only for our team-mates," Thompson told the *Irish Examiner*.

"We are looking to be the one association. That's the goal. We are constantly looking for equality. How can you look for equality when it doesn't come from the top down? How can you possibly look for equality when women don't support women?"

Katrina Mackey and Laura Hayes also voiced their frustrations as did other Cork players via their personal social media accounts. In the interim, the GPA contacted the Camogie Association to discuss the possibility of rescheduling the trip.

Thompson, her Cork team-mates and

manager Matthew Twomey had little choice but to come out and voice their displeasure. What else could they do with a decision that will wreak havoc with the county's championship preparations?

In the past, there was a perception that players should refrain from expressing opinions against governing bodies.

The Cork GAA football strike of 2007-08 and hurling strike of 2008-09 showed what can happen when a complete breakdown of trust between players and a county board occurs.

So whether they like it or not, Cork Camogie and LGFA inter-county players in 2023 are also role models and public ambassadors for their chosen sports.

Nowadays, there is pressure, not alone to perform to the best of your ability on the pitch but also to defend your fellow players' rights.

That's why it is imperative the likes of Thompson, and other high-profile figures continue to speak out against perceived inequalities. At the very least, those voices spark change and draw attention to important issues.

Cork's current camogie and football players have a unique platform compared to previous generations. Through social media, the likes of Thompson, Mackey, Hayes, and others have multiple avenues in which to express their views to a wider audience. Social media gives players the power to amplify their message and make an impact like never before.

Cork's players, albeit amateurs, also have a responsibility to future generations to ensure that the sport they are dedicating their lives to remains as equitable as possible.

If they see injustice or discrimination

within their sport, it is their responsibility to speak out and advocate for change. By doing so, they are setting an example for future generations of ladies football and camogie players to follow.

It is not just amateur players in this country that are raising their voices and having their opinions heard.

Welsh rugby averted a crisis following contract wrangling about a new six-year financial agreement between the WRU governing body and players representing four Welsh regional teams. The unknown status of Welsh players' contracts meant uncertain futures and so a strike appeared likely.

Concessions were made to the Welsh players, but only at the 11th hour following a series of talks.

Last weekend's Wales and England Six Nations encounter was in doubt but went ahead. Yet the scars left behind between the WRU and their country's players will take a long time to heal.

Similarly, the concern for camogie and LGFA players is that decisions like the recent All-Star one are only going to increase amid a crowded split-season inter-county calendar.

I've no doubt that each of the nominated camogie All-Stars (from the 2021 and 2022 seasons) were looking forward to the trip of a lifetime.

I've no doubt each of those players would rather be fielding questions about Canada rather than how they could possibly prepare for an All-Ireland championship seven days after stepping off a long-haul flight.

Irrespective of if or when the tour goes ahead, the last fortnight has been a timely reminder of the delicate relationship that exists between players and governing bodies.

Let's hope future generations have someone like Ashling Thompson to speak up when necessary.



Linda Mellerick blocks Tpp's Therese Brophy in 2002. Picture: Sportsfile





Very Camogie League Division 1A

### Tipperary v Cork

Saturday: 3.30pm County Camogie Grounds

Referee: John Dermody (Westmeath)

Stream: Official Camogie YouTube

### Daragh Ó Conchúir



**W**HEN you think of four twenty-somethings living together, images of party central are conjured up fairly quickly.

That wasn't the case as Clodagh Quirke shared domesticity with her Clonoulty-Rossmore and Tipp colleagues and close friends, Sarah Fryday and Cáit Devane, along with an assortment of like-minded, committed camogie compadres taking up residence at various times.

The craic was 90, but the revelry was more organic than artificial, for the majority of the year at least, when

foam rollers, bands and ice packs were de rigueur.

"There was four of us from Clonoulty at one stage," details a chuckling Quirke. "But there were a few different people in with the three of us. Miriam Campion was there for a while and Andrea Loughnane from Thurles. So at one stage, we were all playing with Tipp. Loads of training was all we were doing."

Devane and Fryday were teaching in Presentation Secondary School in Thurles. A maths whizz, Quirke had gone another route but was drawn, professionally and in terms of lifestyle, to what her buddies did.

Now 28, she is in her final year, currently doing teaching practice in the Pres, where she went to school. Maths and economics are her subjects.

"I did a maths degree in college and I worked away in finance for a while before deciding to go back and change. I wasn't really getting a buzz from it. Living with Sarah and Cáit, they were working away

in school and you could see them being off all summer and that added to the attraction, but I was thinking about it anyway.

"Also with teaching, you're not too late into the evening and it works well in training. But I'm looking forward to it and like it. I'm glad I did it." She was named joint-captain of the Tipp squad with Karen Kennedy by new manager Denis Kelly at the beginning of the year and it's a role she's comfortable with having had the armband before.

After suffering a torn cruciate in 2021, she feels in peak condition now, although she did return to the team in last year's championship, having enjoyed a straightforward rehab under the watchful eye of Paddy O'Brien.

"It's very hard coming back during the season. It doesn't really matter how much work you put in on your own, it doesn't replicate the work that you do when they've all been training together at championship pace. So it's nice to

# 'If you're not 100%, you need to say that'



'It's nice to start off on a good note and touch wood, we've no major injuries,' says Clodagh Quirke. Picture: Inpho/Laszlo Gecco

have had a full pre-season and a good, competitive long club season under the belt too this year.

"Last year, I think it was our third championship game against Wexford I came back and then Cork I played a full game. The pace of it is so high at that stage of the year."

The cruciate curse has reached epidemic proportions in camogie and in women's

team sports generally. Devane and Fryday (twice) both went through it.

In Cork, Ashling Thompson, Katie O'Mahony and Olivia McAllen are currently out with it. Galway have Ciara Donohue, Orlaith McGrath (second time) and Rebecca Hennelly (third time) sidelined.

Kilkenny won last year's All-Ireland without the Doyle sisters. Kellyann was another to go down a third time with the cruciate, Aoife being felled not long after.

Studies are being carried out and there is information linking the issue with physiology (e.g. different pelvic width), the smaller size of women's ACLs, core strength, and possibly even menstrual cycles. "There is an emphasis on knowing yourself at this level especially, if you're not feeling 100%, you need to say that. There's tracking now on how people are feeling day to day, which I think is a big thing, because it is fairly evident that it's an issue among women something that needs

to be factored into the playing and training.

"It is coming from the older girls to the younger girls now, to let management know if it's the case, if you aren't feeling 100% and that's accepted now. I'm sure there's loads more research will be done and will start to come into play."

The Very League Division 1A campaign has begun splendidly under the new regime. Beating Galway by three goals was excellent and they followed up with a strong second-half showing to account for Dublin. "It's early days, and I wouldn't be getting carried away or anything, but it's nice to start off on a good note and touch wood, we've no major injuries."

Free-scoring Cork travel to The Ragg this afternoon for a top-of-the-table clash Quirke and her team-mates are relishing. "Cork will be a big test for us now. It's great to be going in to play them with two wins, but we'd be under no illusions that it's going to be a really tough match."

# Cork on top as classy Cahalane topples Tipp

By Kevin Egan

**C**ORK sit on top of Division 1A of the Very Camogie League after yesterday's series of games, but Matthew Twomey's side were pushed all the way by Tipperary at The Ragg. It's the first time this year that serious questions were asked of last terms' league and All-Ireland finalists who went on to record a 1-14 to 1-12 victory.

It was Tipperary who started the sharper of the Munster rivals, as they edged 0-4 to 0-2 in front. Nenagh's Grace O'Brien was in prolific form in the early stages as she fired over three early points from play, with Eimear McGrath adding another. Amy O'Connor and Chloe Sigerson (free) hit back for the Rebelettes.

The contest shifted in the Reds' favour when Orlaith Cahalane produced a mesmerising solo run to get beyond the Tipp defence before rifling low in to the bottom left corner of the net and they pushed on from there, with O'Connor and Fiona Keating both working the scoreboard as Cork moved 1-8 to 0-7 ahead at the break.

O'Brien continued to lead the line brilliantly up front for Tipperary and she fired in a quickfire 1-1 at the beginning of the final period to leave the sides deadlocked, Róisín Howard finding a deft pass to pick out O'Brien.

Both sides were unbeaten before yesterday and were level at 1-8, 1-9 and 1-10 apiece before Cork struck two in a row with Emma Murphy grabbing the pick of the pair. Despite their best efforts, Tipp were unable to regain parity with Keating grabbing the final score of the game in the 67th minute to seal a crucial win for Cork.

All-Ireland champions Kilkenny breathed some life into their fading hopes of squeezing into the top two and reaching a league final by overcoming Dublin 0-17 to 0-11 at Parnell Park.

With 54 minutes gone, Kilkenny's lead was down to just three points,



EXIT STRATEGY: Tipp's Róisín Howard takes on Cork

0-14 to 0-11, after an Aisling Maher score for the Dubs opened the door to a late smash-and-grab finish from Gerry McQuaid's charges, but Kilkenny finished strongly with the last three points of the tie.

**The contest shifted in Cork's favour following a mesmerising run by Cahalane**

Maher produced a terrific display for the beaten side but Dublin struggled to break down a resolute Kilkenny rearguard in the opening half. Maher fired in all four of her side's points in the first 30 minutes, just one of those coming from play. Kilkenny, meanwhile, were able to call upon the reliable Denise Gaule to punish any indiscipline, with 0-3 from Laura Murphy helping the Cats lead 0-9 to 0-4 at the break.

Although Asha McHardy and Gaule helped Kilkenny keep Dublin at arm's length, Aisling O'Neill and Maher kept the home side in the hunt, ensuring a tight finish.

In the west-coast derby at Kilbeacanty, seven points off the stick of Carrie Dolan and a Shannon Corcoran goal proved decisive as Galway secured a 1-14 to 0-13 win over Clare, despite a strong second half fightback from the Banner.

Galway led 1-9 to 0-4 at the break after hitting 1-4 on the bounce in the final 10 minutes of the opening half. Dolan grabbed four first-half points for Galway, three from frees, as last year's All-Ireland semi-finalists appeared to be in complete control.

Even though Clare Hehir and Lorna McNamara hit back for Clare, two Dolan scores kept Galway 1-11 to 0-6 in front, suggesting a comfortable win for the reigning league champions. That didn't pan out as the Munster side fought back to get within three of the hosts,

with McNamara firing over some important frees. Galway held firm however, Aoife Donohue grabbing the insurance score to seal second successive win for the westerners.

Meanwhile, in Division 1B, Waterford secured a facile 3-24 to 2-6 win over Limerick, while their neighbours Wexford completed a double. The senior side picked up a 2-17 to 0-9 win over Down after their intermediates defeated Galway earlier in the afternoon.

Finally, a huge second-half performance from Antrim helped them salvage a draw against Offaly in Banagher.

The Saffrons came from 2-7 to 1-2 down at the break to salvage a 2-8 each draw.





Cork camogie captain Amy O'Connor tries to shake off the attention of Clare defender Susan Daly on Saturday in the league. Picture: Larry Cummins

# All-Star row behind Cork



CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick

SATURDAY

**Very National League Division 1A: Tipperary v Cork, The Ragg, 3.30pm.** AFTER a week where Cork made the headlines by declaring their All-Star players will not be making the May trip to Canada, it was back to the pitch for their second-round national league tie with Clare last Saturday.

The All-Star tour had dominated the headlines. Credit to the Cork girls for making a brave statement of their intent not to travel.

It was a big statement from the travelling players and Cork manager Matthew Twomey agreed. "It's huge, it's sad they had to do that. It says an awful lot to the rest of the players."

"I know they're thrilled. The whole thing is still up in the air I suppose but as far as we're concerned we've a full pick of players from here to the championship."

There has been no contact from the Camogie Association since the news broke so to date there has been no change in stance. He doesn't think there will be a change.

"No, it won't change I think, they're committed to it."

"All we're interested in is the Cork players. They say they're not going which is great for us. What other counties do, I don't know. I've heard nothing from anyone else. We're just concentrating on ourselves."

Cork haven't been really tested to date with comfortable wins over Dublin and Clare showing the gap remains between the top four or five teams and other senior counties.

Cork's work-rate is key to their game plan this season. It's as it should be for every season. Twomey feels it's a given factor when they play.

"Our work-rate was top class again today, that's what you'd expect every



Midfielder Saoirse McCarthy fires over a point for Cork against Clare. Picture: Larry Cummins

game but when that comes you get the results."

Cork play Tipperary tomorrow in what is a big game for both sides in The Ragg. Cork lost their final championship group game to Tipperary last July, 1-17 to 1-16, but they had already qualified for the semi-final.

With the top two from six qualifying for the league final, Cork and Tipp sit on six points, the scoring difference being in Cork's favour as they sit top of the table and a win here would put them in a good position.

He acknowledges the challenge they face.

"It's going to be a tough game up there. They've won two games as well and they're full of confidence so look it's probably the test we want at this stage. We're after two comfortable games."

"Is that down to us or down to the opposition?"

"We don't know so we want to find that out this week and in a fortnight's time when we'll be playing Kilkenny."

Cork are happy with the way their preparations are going. After Tipp they make the trip to Kilkenny on March 18 and have a final home game to Galway in Páirc Uí Chaoimh on March 26.

Twomey acknowledges the collaboration they have with the Cork GAA board.

"I have to say that the Cork GAA County Board have been unbelievable to us. Always have been, but this year especially."

"They've given us their gym facilities anytime we wanted it and they worked things around to get us in there."

"Kevin O'Donovan and Aidan O'Connell have been into me a couple of times personally saying 'whatever ye want, give us a shout'."

"They have been brilliant and we owe them, even to be here in Páirc Uí Rinn has been great with a nice bit of a crowd and to get us into the double-header in Páirc Uí Chaoimh for our last league game against Galway."

"It's a credit to Cork GAA and it's great for us. We're also going to Nowlan Park before the Waterford-Kilkenny hurling game. That's where you want to be. The girls are elite and they deserve it."

At this point, you'd have to say that the final two spots will be between Cork, Tipp and Galway so Cork's biggest games are yet to come.

Katrina and Pam Mackey remain sidelined with injury; Orla Cronin had a small medical procedure which will also keep her out this week.



Full-forward Hayley Ryan, (Blackrock) Cork in action in the first round of their league game against Tipperary. Picture: Larry Cummins

## Cork and Kilkenny the early front-runners in competitive 2B league

CAMOGIE

Mary Newman

JUST one week into the Very Division 2B National Camogie League and it appears that Cork and Kilkenny will be very much the front-runners following their big victories over Tipperary and Galway last weekend.

With just five teams in the group Wexford were the team not playing on the opening weekend; last season they won the Division 2 league and with most of that side now competing on their Division 1 teams it is expected we will see a different side to the one we saw last season and in all probability they will not match the intensity of Cork or Kilkenny. Kilkenny had a resounding 3-16 to 0-7 win over Galway when the reigning All-Ireland intermediate champions travelled to Clara. It must be remembered that Galway are fielding a completely new look team this year with their All-Ireland winning sides not eligible to participate in Division 2B but nevertheless, they gave game time to 22 players many making their adult inter-county debuts. No doubt this will be a learning curve for many of the side.

It was a hugely competitive opening 30 minutes as Galway matched the home side in all sectors and it was Kilkenny who led 1-7 to 0-7 at the break.

Kilkenny really put the foot down for the second half and took control as they held Galway scoreless for the second half as they dominated scoring 2-9 without reply. Hannah Scott, Caroline Kennedy, Afton Grace, and Laura Greene were all prominent as Kilkenny ran out convincing winners to set down and early marker as to their intentions this year.

With Cork inflicting a 4-20 to 0-2 hammering on Tipperary in Castle Road, it begs the ques-

tion already has the right decision been made to put just the five counties who are perceived to be the strongest of the second teams into a league of their own and call it Division 2B?

Last season Cork participated in Division 2A and made it to the semi-final where they lost to Antrim, but having competed in a group that saw them play five games against Wexford, Kildare, Derry, Meath, and Galway it was a most competitive campaign and one that helped in no small way with championship preparations.

As it stands, if Kilkenny and Cork can maintain the standard they showed last weekend they will be assured of a place in the final after participating in a very small-sided and uncompetitive league. Much more was expected of Tipperary and last weekend's display was, by their standards, a disappointing one and by half time Cork were effectively coasting to victory. This year their second team will play in the Premier Junior All-Ireland championship while Cork continue in the intermediate grade.

They are minus a few of their more prominent players through injury, but with Tipperary having been prominent at underage level in recent years and you would expect that their second team would have been stronger. Their Division 1 team are going well having got their campaign off to a flying start with two wins under their belts as they defeated Galway and Dublin.

Cork have no division 2B game this weekend, Tipperary take on Kilkenny at home whilst Galway host Wexford.



Rachel Harty (Ballyhea), Cork set up Rose Murphy with a wonderful pass for the opening goal of the game against Tipperary.



Twomey happy for side to get tested

CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick

CORK manager Matthew Twomey was delighted with the tough game against Tipperary after two relatively comfortable opening games against Dublin and Clare.

"That was a total battle out there now. In fairness to Tipperary, we expected it coming up here.

"They're full of confidence, a very fit team, a well-trained team, and they put it right up to us. There was a lot of questions asked and some were good, some not so good but we're coming out with three wins from three games but with a lot of work still to do."

It was a good opening half where Cork led 1-8 to 0-5 before Tipp finished the half strongly.

"I put that down to us rather than Tipperary. I think we took our foot off the pedal and took the wrong option. Our distribution was poor there for a while and we got caught for it. I'd say a lot of their scores coming up to halftime was from us giving away ball so look that's something we have to work on.

"As we saw now today the opposition is after getting stronger with a bit more pressure applied. We panicked a bit at times but heading in now to play Kilkenny and Galway we need to be a bit smarter with the ball."

Cork never allowed Tipp to get the lead after they drew level just after halftime.

"Absolutely I thought our backs were brilliant. Even when they were shooting for goal we had three and four around them.

"They hadn't a hope of getting a proper shot off. I'm delighted with that side of things.

"I suppose our most disappointing thing was our distribution. Their full-back was in oceans of space and we kept hitting her. It's something our coach Liam Cronin has been working on so that's probably the only major disappointment coming out of here today. But look, we're still in the first week of March with three wins out of three and with a lot to do."

Matthew was complimentary of substitute Emma Murphy who came on and got a crucial point.

"We find Emma a huge impact sub. She's extremely important to us. When a half-back has been playing for forty minutes and sees Emma coming on, the speed of her.

"And she's always good for a score. We're waiting for her to get that goal and when it comes it's going to be a big one.

"But a brilliant player and Aoife Healy as well, she's had a tough week and she's playing with UCC in the football again Wednesday night so we didn't want to start her. But she too made a big impact.

"Look the competition for places is there."

# Cork pass tough Premier exam



CAMOGIE

Linda Mellerick

Tipperary	1-12
Cork	1-14

A GOOD win and an even better test for Cork as they came away from the Ragg on Saturday with full points to sit top of the division 1A table and put them in a really strong position to reach the league final.

It was a game that Cork will really welcome after two comfortable opening games. They were pushed all the way in a hard-fought, physical game where space was limited.

Tipp's physicality has improved considerably in recent times and their work rate was from the top drawer, particularly in the opening quarter and just after half time where they really pressurised Cork. Grace O'Brien was getting quick ball delivered in front of her and she was fastest off the mark to hit three points inside the opening 10 minutes. Added to an Eimear McGrath point Tipp led four points to two, Corks two points coming from frees from Amy O'Connor and Chloe Sigerson.

There wasn't a puff of wind in the compact pitch that is The Ragg, so compact that all press had to stand outside the railings.

Defensively Cork settled, Libby Coppinger got tighter on O'Brien and held her scoreless for the remainder of the half. Meabh Murphy was having a fine game, Laura Treacy was left unmarked and no better person to read the game.

In the 11th minute, Cork took the lead; Laura Hayes to Saoirse McCarthy who delivered fast into Orlaith Cahalane. Cahalane turned brilliantly inside her marker and struck across keeper Caoimhe Bourke to hit the net. An Eimear McGrath free levelled the game before Cork hit a strong purple patch. Six points in a row, Amy O'Connor with two frees and a 45 and one each from play from Sorcha McCartan,



Tipperary's Grace O'Brien battling Saoirse McCarthy of Cork for possession.

Picture: INPHO/Ben Brady

Fiona Keating and Cliona Healy as Cork led 1-8 to 0-5 on 26 minutes.

Amy O'Connor had a goal chance on 16 but was brilliantly hooked and Coppinger saved on the line from an O'Brien shot on 22 as two evenly matched sides put up a strong first-half showing. Eimear McGrath drove two long-range frees right over the black spot to give Tipp a strong finish to the half, left trailing by four 1-8 to 0-7. Defensively all six Cork backs were putting in strong performances.

And they needed to be as Tipp came straight on the attack after the resumption. A McGrath free again before a snappy pass inside to Grace O'Brien saw the latter finish from close range. The sides were level. A few minutes later Amy Lee saved a strong ground shot from substitute Cait Devane as Cork's backs now swarmed

Tipp's forwards.

It was point for point as Amy O'Connor and Roisin Howard swapped points before Cliona Healy and Caoimhe Maher did likewise, 1-10 each inside the final quarter.

The game became stop-start as a number of players from both sides received attention. A pointed long-range free from Sorcha McCartan and a good point from substitute Emma Murphy gave Cork a two-point advantage.

However, they will be disappointed with a number of long deliveries where the pass was to no Cork player and handed the advantage to Tipp. Devane pointed for Tipp. Saoirse McCarthy replied as we headed into seven minutes additional time. Another Tipp substitute Grace Moloney hit the mark leaving a point in it on 67 minutes.

Tipp needed a leveller but from the

puck-out, Cork worked the ball well before Fiona Keating settled matters to give Cork a two-point win.

Scorers for Tipp: G O'Brien 1-3, E McGrath 0-5 (0-4 5), R Howard, C Maher, C Devane, G Moloney 0-1. Cork: A O'Connor 0-5 (0-2 1, 0-1 45), O Cahalane 1-0, S McCartan 0-2 (0-1 5), F Keating, C Healy 0-2 each, C Sigerson (1), S McCarthy, E Murphy 0-1 each.

TIPPERARY: C Bourke, J Bourke, C Quirke, E Loughman, K Blak, K Kennedy, C Maher, T Ryan, C Hennessy, R Howard, M Eviston, C Maher, G O'Brien, E McGrath, C Ryan.

Subs: C Devane and E Helfman for C Ryan and C Hennessy (h-t), M Bourke for C Maher (57, inj), A Fahie for E McGrath (61), G Moloney for G O'Brien (64).

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

Subs: A Healy for H Looney (46), E Murphy for C Sigerson (46).

Referee: John Dermody (Westmeath).



Cork's Laura Hayes makes a pass in the win over Tipp.

Picture: INPHO/Ben Brady



Cork's Amy Lee breaks from Cait Devane of Tipperary.

Picture: INPHO/Ben Brady