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Into the West



The bi-monthly magazine of the Connacht GAA Council

Galway U-18 Ladies prevail!



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UNIVERSITY OF GALWAY

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Nóta an Uachtaráin

Dear friends,

WITH the inter-county scene done and dusted for another year, it's now time to hand over to the clubs.

It's heartening to witness such a plethora of activity in the junior, intermediate and senior grades throughout the province of Connacht and beyond. And while it would appear that the conclusion of the inter-county championships has left a vacuum, I believe that's a short-sighted and narrow view.

We all accept that there was considerable hype surrounding the inter-county championships as they reached a climax, particularly around the All-Ireland semi-finals and Finals. But we have to consider that, at local level, there are so many games and thousands of people attending local club fixtures. So, while there might be huge focus on games that are centred around Croke Park in August, we now have a situation where multiple venues are attracting healthy attendances for club fixtures. There is super coverage across the board via live-streaming services and TV but there are so many people out watching the games live.

The split-season as it stands is a situation that needs to be allowed to bed down. I believe it will find a home and become second nature in time. We will become very familiar with it and take to it.

There's an argument too that the GAA is losing ground in August and September to sports like soccer and rugby, with the Premier League in full swing and the Rugby World Cup about to get underway. But the Rugby World Cup, which takes place every four years, will always muscle in and find its home and the Premier League isn't any more prevalent than it has been previously. Being the number one team in the world heading into the Rugby World Cup, the hype and noise around that tournament was always going to be significant in any case. I'm sure I speak for all Gaelic Games people and general sports lovers when I say that I would love to see the Ireland team doing well. It's a national sport and it's always going to find its niche.

What I would advocate, on a wider level, is for people to look around and see what's happening on the ground. We're back where we started, with our clubs, and in Sligo, for example, you can buy a season ticket for €100. So, you could be out on a Friday evening, Saturday and Sunday watching games, and all for terrific value. You might have 500 people attending a game but across five venues, that's 2,500 spectators. And let's be frank, you might not have that at a National League match. So, let's take the wider view. Ok, we might need tweaks but this is a slow-burner and I would strongly encourage people to let this bed down for two or three years, and then take an informed and longer-term view.

Is mise, le meas

John Murphy
Uachtarán Chomhairle Connacht



JOHN MURPHY
Connacht GAA President

Nóta an Rúnaí

A chairde,

THE 2023 inter-county season has now concluded and while we were without Connacht representation in the Senior Finals, I'm confident that our leading teams will be back in the hunt for silverware again soon.

At the time of writing, our counties are busy finalising their inter-county management teams for the 2024 season, with lots of work happening behind the scenes. This time of year does allow counties to draw breath to an extent but the work never stops. Managers and their selectors are busy scouring their counties for any prospective new talent that can be added to the mix for next year, and the club season is in full swing.

The split-season will continue to be a topic of discussion and my colleague, John Murphy, has provided his thoughts on this page. I'm in agreement that the current structures need time to bed in before we can evaluate fully and tweak what's already a very busy calendar, if necessary.

For now, I wish our clubs across the province the very best of luck as they continue upon campaigns that, for many, began earlier this year. The first priority is always to remain competitive in your grade and avoid a dreaded relegation fight, while the leading contenders will battle it out for county silverware. That's always a massive prize and the added carrot is entry into the provincial series, which promises to be as competitive and packed with drama as it's always been.

The club scene is vibrant and the advent of live-streaming has added a whole new dimension. If you log onto various social media channels now, you'll be provided with details of upcoming games, and clips of some of the very best action. The live-streaming companies in operation are providing an excellent service, while RTE and TG4 are also beaming live club championship fixtures into viewers' homes. That can only be a good thing, of course, as clubs fight for the coverage and attention that they richly deserve.

Our counties will also be busy at this time readying themselves for Convention season, with the various reports being formulated and finalised for publication. These are always of interest, particularly around the costings associated with preparing inter-county teams right across the country. Again, I'm looking forward to seeing what the figures reveal as running inter-county teams is now an increasingly costly business.

To conclude, I'd like to congratulate recent winners at local and national levels from across the province, including the Galway team that did so well at the Tony Forristal competition. It's also been a period where we have lost people who have contributed so much to our Association, and who are remembered fondly on these pages. Ar dheis Dé go raibh a n-anamacha.
Is mise, le meas

John Prenty
Rúnaí, CLG Cuige Connachta



'Into the West'



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COVER PICTURES

LEAD – Galway captain Aoibhinn Eilian is presented with the cup by Uachtarán Cumann Peil Gael na mBan, Micheál Naughton after the ZuCar All-Ireland Ladies Football U18 A final match between Galway and Kildare at Glendon Brothers Pearse Park in Longford. Photo by Sportsfile

Offleads: Galway manager Henry Shefflin, left, and selector Damien Joyce during the GAA Hurling All-Ireland Senior Championship semi-final match between Limerick and Galway at Croke Park in Dublin. Photo by Brendan Moran/Sportsfile

Mayo manager Kevin McStay with his assistant manager Stephen Rochford, behind, during the GAA Football All-Ireland Senior Championship quarter-final match between Dublin and Mayo at Croke Park in Dublin. Photo by Piaras Ó Midheach/Sportsfile

Galway All-Ireland winning captain Annette Clarke is honoured at half-time of the TG4 LGFA All-Ireland Senior Championship Final at Croke Park in Dublin. Photo by Ramsey Cardy/Sportsfile



Kilkerrin Clonberne, Galway, celebrate after beating Glencar-Manorhamilton, Leitrim, in the senior championship final at the 2023 currentaccount.ie All-Ireland Club 7s tournament at Naomh Mearnóg GAA Club in Malahide, Dublin.



OLLSCOIL NA GAILLIMHE
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Horan named on Mayo U-20 management team

Mayo manager James Horan before the GAA Football All-Ireland Senior Championship Quarter-Final match between Kerry and Mayo at Croke Park, Dublin.
Photo: Piaras Ó Mídheach/Sportsfile

JAMES HORAN is part of a high-calibre Mayo U-20 football management team that was ratified by the county board in August.

The two-time senior boss will serve as a selector under new manager Peadar Gardiner. The new management also includes two other former Mayo stars, Keith Higgins and Ger Cafferkey, as well as Mark Ryan. Gardiner was previously an U-20 selector during Maurice Sheridan's time in charge.

Meanwhile, Ciaran McDonald is head coach in the new Mayo minor management set-up which is fronted by joint-managers Tom Reilly and David Heaney.



JIMMY COONEY RIP

GALWAY GAA was plunged into grief following the sudden death of former All-Ireland hurling winner and inter-county referee Jimmy Cooney on July 31.

The former All Star, who was 68, was the eldest of the famous Cooney brothers from Sarsfields who emerged during the 1980s to lead their club and county to unprecedented glory.

He was also the referee 25 years ago when he prematurely blew the final whistle in the All-Ireland semi-final between Clare and Offaly, leading to an on-field protest by Offaly supporters. Clare were leading at the time but the game was refixed and Offaly won it before going on to win the All-Ireland title. It was a terrible time for Cooney, who had developed into a top class inter-county referee following a playing career which had led to breakthrough wins for Galway and Sarsfields.

Cooney was corner-back when Galway defeated Limerick in the 1980 All-Ireland final, bridging a 57-year gap since their only other crown. Cooney is the second member of that starting team to die, with full-back Niall McNerney passing away in 2004, while three other members of the squad John Ryan, Finbarr Gantley and former GAA President Joe McDonagh have also passed away.



Cooney led the way as Sarsfields captured their first Galway title in 1980 and with brothers Michael, Pakie, Joe, Brendan and Peter coming through they became a dominant force and became the first club to win the All-Ireland club title in successive years in 1993.

Another generation of Cooneys has since come through to help Sarsfields win their seventh county title in 2015 with Joseph Cooney, son of former Hurler of the Year Joe, winning an All-Ireland medal in 2017 and has since been joined on the senior side by brother Kevin.

The death of Jimmy Cooney, who came from a family of 15, is the latest tragedy to hit the family from Bullaun. Peter Cooney, the youngest of the six brothers to help Sarsfields to county glory, died from cancer at the age of 48 in 2019. Another brother Thomas died as an infant.

Earlier this year his mother Nora, who was in her early 90s and was predeceased by her husband, Michael, died.

Jimmy Cooney was well-known in farming circles in Galway and was manager of the mart in Loughrea.

His sudden death caused widespread shock in the Bullaun and New Inn communities and throughout Galway.

Killannin All-Stars success story

“IT HAS been electric,” Rory Murphy says about the response since the Killannin GAA All-Stars commenced.

Killannin GAA club and the local community have embraced the initiative ensuring training every Tuesday evening is time very well spent. Last week a GAA4All Cúl Camp was held, simply adding to the feel good factor.

That so many are ready, willing, and able to contribute is heartening for Murphy, who has helped to spearhead the project. “We couldn't have had more support from the club,” he says. “Everything we have ever needed, they have been there for us.

“Some of the parents had children, who were involved in a mixed ability rugby group in Galway with Corinthians Raptors. We said why can't we try to replicate something similar out here. That is when we did a bit of digging into the GAA4All and the All-Stars programme.”

So the planning and plotting started. “It was essentially a few parents coming together to get a socially inclusive group going with GAA4All,” he adds. “Not just for our parish, but for connecting parishes too.

“That was the germ of the idea, a couple of parents coming together. We knew we would need to navigate it by doing it the right way.

“We got Pat Queally involved, we also had great support from the Connacht Council Inclusion Officer, Denis O'Boyle. That is essentially how we kicked it off, by just trying to do something for kids with mixed ability with a GAA focus.”

It has been a hectic spell too with a couple of Croke Park trips bringing plenty of nice memories too. “Ger McTavish in GAA headquarters, the diversity and inclusion officer, she has been a real help for us,” Murphy explains.

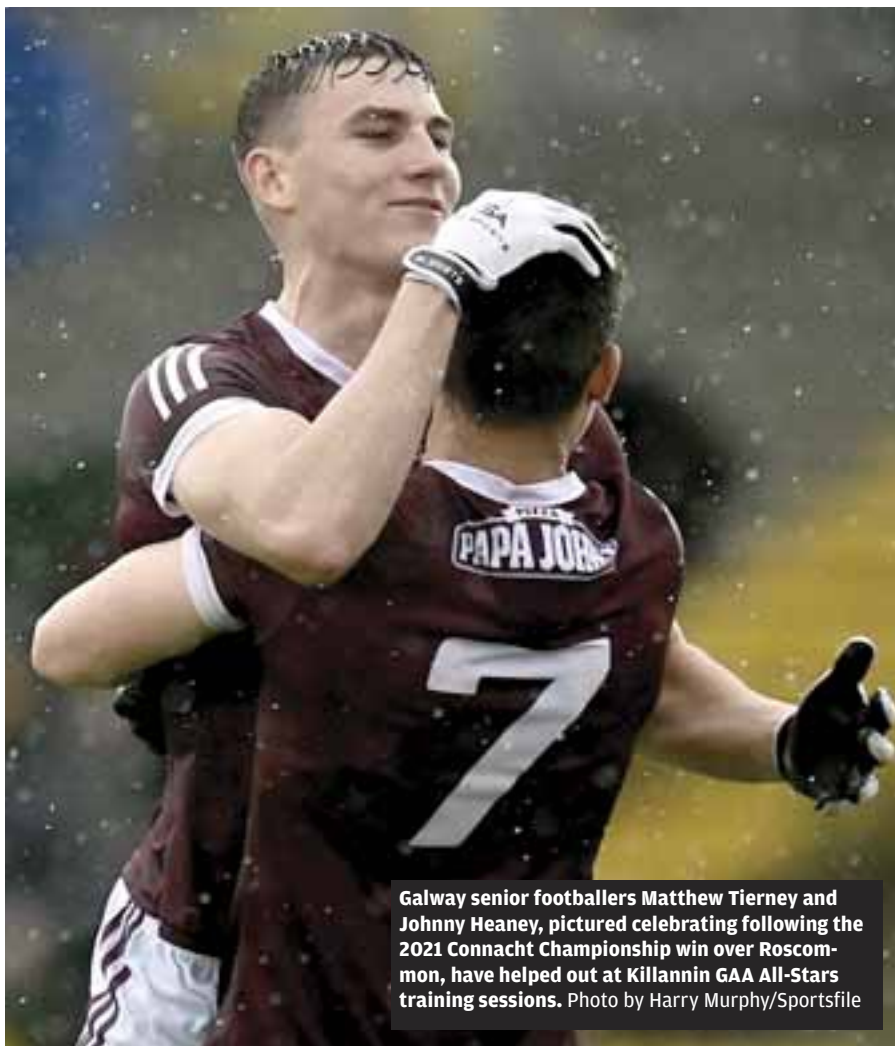
“We had a super day out at the All-Star day in August last year. We are the only Galway football all-inclusion team, so we are getting great coverage. I know there are some hurling teams too, but we had a great day in Croke Park. We great support from sponsors and Galway GAA players.

“Anything we have ever needed the club has been there for us and Connacht GAA, in fairness to them.

“We also were at one of the football quarter-finals this year, we got to play at half-time in the Derry versus Cork game. So that was outstanding.”

Every Tuesday young players gather in Killannin to train with fun on the agenda. “We have about 15 children with nine adults and five volunteers,” Murphy says.

“So we nearly have one to one, we train every Tuesday at six o'clock. We go for an hour. Hail, rain or sunshine we are always training outdoors on the commu-



Galway senior footballers Matthew Tierney and Johnny Heaney, pictured celebrating following the 2021 Connacht Championship win over Roscommon, have helped out at Killannin GAA All-Stars training sessions. Photo by Harry Murphy/Sportsfile

nity pitch. We've had great support from Killannin GAA, they have given us the full GAA pitch to use.

“I'd say we get about eight to 10 kids each week, they are free to come and go as they wish. The support of the parents is great, they stay to help. It is really just about having fun, just to get them exercising and having fun.”

A successful Cúl Camp was also held this month. “The Cúl Camps are great, they've always had access for people with special needs,” Murphy says.

“The only thing they don't do is tailor the games to them so that was the idea of having the camp for our team or anybody around that wanted to have a look. We were having a Cúl Camp for the kids, tailored to their needs, playing games, sports, and activities that they could do.

“When the kids go back to school they see all of the other children with their Cúl Camps gear, maybe they haven't been able to get it because they weren't

comfortable going to the main Cúl Camp.

“So that was the idea we'd be purely focused on simple games, non competitive, and that they'd all get the Cúl Camps gear. That is what they were most excited about really.”

Galway senior footballers Johnny Heaney (Killannin) and Matthew Tierney (Oughterard) have attended some of the training sessions too with Murphy encouraged about how it is all unfolding. “We are really only a few years into it,” he says. “We started it in May of last year. We wanted to take small steps before we went into our stride.

“We are going to push it out for neighbouring parishes. We hope to be the team for around the parishes, we get great support. Local lads like Johnny Heaney and Matthew Tierney, they come down to get involved in the sessions. We couldn't be more grateful to the community.”

A rewarding sporting story continues in Killannin.

Mayo to travel to The Big Apple in 2024

CONNACHT GAA CEO John Prenty has confirmed that Mayo will travel to face New York in next year's Championship.

An arrangement exists whereby the five bona fide Connacht counties travel to London and New York for the provincial quarter-final on a rotational basis, with Mayo next up to go stateside next year.

And, despite spiralling costs, with the trip likely to set Mayo back far more than their previous excursion to the Big Apple in 2019, the rota will be honoured.

Connacht Council secretary Prenty told The Mayo News: "We [the Connacht Council] met and had a really good sensible discussion about it, and the general consensus was that it was only right to finish out the existing rota.

"So that will mean Mayo go to New York next summer, Galway

will be there in 2025, and Roscommon will travel in 2026 to finish out the rota.

"At that stage then the whole thing will be reviewed.

Having said that, there are a lot of discussions to be had over the next few months about the nuts and bolts of Mayo playing in New York next summer, around the whole area of logistics, costs and so on."

Prenty pointed out how it cost Leitrim county board around €250,000 to travel to New York in this year's Championship, when the Exiles claimed their first ever Championship victory following a penalty shootout.

The Connacht Council contributed €50,000 towards Leitrim's expenses but Prenty said that "the cost of the trip for the team going over can only be brought down by bringing less people in the official party."



5 May 2019: Referee Conor Lane with team captains Niall Madine of New York and Paddy Durcan of Mayo before the Connacht GAA Football Senior Championship Quarter-Final match between New York and Mayo at Gaelic Park in New York, USA.

Photo by Piaras Ó Midheach/Sportsfile

MICK McCORMACK RIP

ROSCOMMON GAA led the tributes to local photographer Mick McCormack, who passed away in August.

The Ballaghaderreen man was a familiar face on the sidelines of GAA grounds around Roscommon and further afield for many years. Just a few days shy of his 60th birthday, Mick captured many of the great sporting moments in the county and endeared himself to all who knew him.

"We are deeply saddened to hear of the death of Mick McCormack. We would like to convey our sincere condolences to Mick's

family and friends at this sad time," Roscommon GAA said in a statement.

Roscommon Herald Editor Christina McHugh commented: "This county has lost a truly unique individual. Our lives were all enriched by his presence and his passing has left a deep void for his heartbroken family, friends and colleagues."

Mick is survived by his mother Phyllis (Phyll), brother John, sister Maria Walsh, nephew Rory, nieces Laura, Aoife, Michelle, Ciara, Niamh and Dearbhla, and extended family.



Joyce moving forward with Galway footballers



Galway manager Padraic Joyce.
Photo by Seb Daly/Sportsfile

FORMER playing great Pádraic Joyce will remain in charge of the Galway footballers for the 2024 campaign.

Joyce completed year one of a fresh three-year term in 2023 and is eager for the Tribesmen to bounce back after an earlier than hoped All-Ireland SFC exit.

Galway did retain their Connacht crown but old rivals Mayo sent them packing in the All-Ireland preliminary quarter-final.

That marked regression for Galway this year, following the high of contesting a 2022 All-Ireland Final against Kerry.

"Just very, very disappointing. That's just the bottom line. There's no point in trying to gloss it over," said Joyce, reflecting honestly on 2023.

"We had loads of chances. We won Connacht, lost the League final, wasn't a bad year for us – but being knocked out of the championship before the quarter-finals is a poor season overall."

He added: "You look at the group, we had the same points and best scoring difference but we found ourselves in the game today. But we've no one to blame only ourselves for that. "We didn't win the game (against Armagh) last week or draw the game. You have to accept it and move from on it, and that's all we can do.

"Mayo were probably a bit better than us today, but we just missed too much.

"Even last week in Armagh, we shouldn't have been in the position



to be in here today. But we are, and we're out of the championship now, and it's a bitter pill to swallow. But we'll have to just regroup and see where we go.

"I think we had seven scores from 18 shots in open play, which tells the story from our side.

"But, look, the lads put in a massive effort, they are great lads and they have taken the county a long way last year and this year. It is disappointing today and it is just very hard to stomach."

Galway lost the Allianz NFL Division 1 Final to Mayo but stormed back to land the Connacht title again, with victories over Roscommon and Sligo retaining the Nestor Cup.

Galway beat Tyrone and Westmeath in the group stages of the All-Ireland series before losing out to Armagh and Mayo in successive fixtures, thus ending their interest in the 2023 Sam Maguire Cup race.





Kilkerrin-Clonberne retain

KILKERRIN-Clonberne retained their currentaccount.ie All-Ireland Senior Club 7s title. The Galway side, who are also the reigning currentaccount.ie All-Ireland Senior club champions, were in imperious form at the annual event held at the Naomh Mearnóg and St Sylvester's clubs in Dublin.

Kilkerrin-Clonberne racked up big totals during the group stages and after accounting for Armagh's Clann Éireann in the semi-finals, they enjoyed a 4-10 to 1-7 victory against Leitrim opponents Glencar-Manorhamilton in the Final.

With the Noone sisters, Hannah, Eva and Lynsey, spearheading a Kilkerrin-Clonberne side that also contained the Ward twins, Nicola and Louise, Kilkerrin-Clonberne were 2-7 to 1-3 clear at half-time, with Lynsey Noone and Caitlin Boyle grabbing the first half goals.

Further goals followed in the second half from Eva Noone and Nicola Ward, as Kilkerrin-Clonberne closed out a comfortable win.

This win marks a fourth Senior Club 7s title for Kilkerrin-Clonberne, following previous successes in 2014, 2016 and 2022.

In the Senior Shield Final, last year's beaten Cup finalists, Tipperary outfit Fethard, got the better of Roscommon's Clann na Gael by 5-6 to 2-6.

The Intermediate Cup Final was won by Shelmalier of Wexford, with Galway outfit Bearnna collecting the Intermediate Shield.

And in the Junior Cup and Shield competitions respectively, there were victories for Galway's Grainne Mhaols and Walterstown from Meath.



Kilkerrin Clonberne, Galway, captain Louise Ward is presented with the senior championship trophy by Uachtarán Cumann Peil Gael na mBan, Mícheál Naughton, alongside Rachel Doyle, training manager at currentaccount.ie, left, and Dorothy Gallagher, business development manager at currentaccount.ie at the 2023 currentaccount.ie All-Ireland Club 7s tournament at Naomh Mearnóg GAA Club in Malahide, Dublin.

Photo by Piaras Ó Mídeach/Sportsfile

All-Ireland Club 7s Champions



All-Ireland Club 7s title



Kilkerrin Clonberne, Galway, celebrate after beating Glencar-Manorhamilton, Leitrim, in the senior championship final at the 2023 currentaccount.ie All-Ireland Club 7s tournament at Naomh Mearnóg GAA Club in Malahide, Dublin.

Photo by Piaras Ó Mídheach/Sportsfile





Derek is new U-20 manager

Derek Savage of the 1998 All-Ireland winning Galway jubilee team who were honoured before the GAA Football All-Ireland Senior Championship final match between Dublin and Kerry at Croke Park in Dublin.
Photo by Ramsey Cardy/Sportsfile



GALWAY have appointed Derek Savage as their new U-20 football manager for the 2024 season.

Galway county board confirmed that it will recommend the two-time All-Ireland SFC winner and his backroom team of Ja Fallon, Gareth Bradshaw, Damien Dowd, Declan Burke and Paul Harty at the next county board meeting.

“Galway GAA are delighted to recommend the appointment of Derek Savage as u20 Football Manager on a 3-year term,” the statement read.

“An All-Ireland Senior Football winner as a player in 1998 and 2001, Derek has been coaching and managing with the Galway Academy Squads and managed his club Cortoon Shamrocks at adult level in recent years.

“Derek’s management team will include Ja Fallon, Gareth Bradshaw, Damien Dowd, Declan Burke and Paul Harty. We wish them the very best of luck in the coming years. Galway GAA would like to place on record our sincere thanks and gratitude to outgoing u20 Manager, Donal Ó Fátharta and u17 Manager Alan Glynn and their respective management teams. An All-Ireland winning manager in 2020, Donal has done fantastic work over the past 4 years in developing players for Senior football in Galway.

“Alan delivered an All-Ireland Minor title in 2023 and has brought standards to a new level in preparing players for inter-county football.

“We are fortunate to have people of their calibre involved in Galway football and we look forward to working with them into the future.”



2001 – Derek Savage of Galway in action against Mark O’Reilly, left, and Paddy Reynolds of Meath during the GAA Football All-Ireland Senior Championship Final match between Galway and Meath at Croke Park in Dublin.
Photo by Ray McManus/Sportsfile



Dublin star McCaffrey linking up with Galway club



DUBLIN star Jack McCaffrey is linking up with Salthill-Knocknacarra but a permanent move to the Galway side headed up by former All-Ireland winning manager John O'Mahony has been ruled out.

Instead the 2015 Footballer of the Year will train with Salthill-Knocknacarra in the coming weeks and months while lining out with Clontarf in the Dublin championship and staying sharp heading into the winter after returning to the Dublin squad earlier this year for the first time since 2019.

McCaffrey is based in Galway at the moment where he works as a doctor at University College Hospital and will train with Salthill-Knocknacarra as well as he turns his attention to the Dublin championship after winning his sixth All-Ireland medal.

"He was in touch shortly after the All-Ireland apologising that he had to sort out a few niggles before linking up with us. That shows the sort of guy he is. I didn't expect to hear from him for some time but he was already switched back," said O'Mahony.

The conduit for the move to Salthill-Knocknacarra is one of O'Mahony's kingpins from the 1998 and 2001 All-Ireland wins John Divilly, the current Galway selector who managed the UCD side skippered by McCaffrey to win the 2016 Sigerson Cup.

"It's common practice for a club to facilitate a player who is away from home like this and we're looking forward to Jack coming in. It can only benefit a squad to have a player of his calibre training with us and what an inspiration and example he is a young player coming through.

"Of course we would love to have him if he wanted to make the move but that's not what this about. I've had clubs look after players on teams I was managing in the past and we were always grateful and we are delighted to help Jack out in this way," added O'Mahony.

This is O'Mahony's second year in charge of Salthill-Knocknacarra and they have some ground to make up after suffering a 3-10 to 0-6 opening round loss to Corofin after a virus in the camp had a big impact on their preparations in the week leading up to it.

They expect to have Galway midfielder John Maher for this Sunday's clash with Caherlistrane while his county teammate Rob Finnerty is due back after a stint in the United States.

"We have a bit of ground to make up after the last day but hopefully we will get a clear run into this one with a few lads back," added O'Mahony.

Double boost for Joyce and Galway footballers



Liam Silke of Galway in action against Seán O'Shea of Kerry during the GAA Football All-Ireland Senior Championship Final match between Kerry and Galway at Croke Park in Dublin.

Photo by Ray McManus/Sportsfile

By JOHN FALLON

GALWAY football manager Pádraic Joyce has received a double boost as he begins plotting his fifth season in charge of the Tribesmen with All Star Liam Silke back home after a year in New Zealand and his Corofin teammate Kieran Molloy now fully recovered from a cruciate injury.

But a return by 2017 All-Ireland hurling winner Johnny Glynn to the Galway colours next season appears unlikely despite him transferring back to play for Ardrahan this year as it's understood the 30-year old will commute from New York to give at least one more campaign to his native club.

Silke, who departed after Galway's All-Ireland loss to Kerry, has now finished his stint working as a doctor in New Zealand and started for his club Corofin in the opening round of the championship last weekend.

And Molloy, who nailed down a wing-back position during Galway's run to the 2022 All-Ireland final, came on for Corofin last weekend as they hammered John O'Mahony's understrength Salthill/Knocknacarra side by 3-10 to 0-6.

Molloy's superb season was cut short last September when he suffered a cruciate injury in a championship clash with neighbours Tuam Stars.

But he worked hard on his recovery and at one stage there were hopes he might even make a return for Galway this year.



Kieran Molloy of Galway during the GAA Football All-Ireland Senior Championship Final match between Kerry and Galway at Croke Park in Dublin.

Photo by Ramsey Cardy/Sportsfile

He lined out for his club and made his championship return last weekend as Corofin, who completed an All-Ireland three-in-a-row in 2019, made a blistering start to their Galway championship campaign.

The return of the two Corofin defenders will be a big boost to Joyce as he begins plotting for the 2024 season.

There may be changes to his back-room team with the future of coach Cian O'Neill the focus of most speculation.

Meanwhile, 2017 All-Ireland hurling winner Glynn could be back in action for his club Ardrahan as soon as this weekend when they open their championship campaign against Castlegar in a clash between two sides who dominated Galway hurling in the 1970s when they won three titles each but have fallen on lean times ever since.

Glynn, who hasn't featured for Ardrahan since before Covid, is expected to commute over the coming months to boost their hopes of success after they were promoted to senior A last year.

Glynn played for New York in the football championship this year, including their historic win over Leitrim, and his transfer from Hoboken Guards back to Ardrahan went through on July 9.

And while there was contact between Glynn and Shefflin when the former Kilkenny star took charge of Galway two years ago, a recall for the towering Ardrahan player to the county panel for 2024 seems unlikely at this stage, even if Glynn has shown remarkable commitment and flexibility in the past.

Kenny Park undergoing significant drainage works

KENNY Park is currently undergoing significant drainage works as the Athenry venue will not host club games for the rest of the year.

With the works beginning this Monday, the secretary of the Kenny Park Committee, Malachy Hanley confirmed that the pitch will be out of action for the rest of the year.

“There will definitely be no club games. When you are re-sowing the field or lawn then it will just take that bit of time. The drains need time to harden up. The pitch will be out of action for the year.”

The Athenry venue is a popular one among patrons but in recent times the pitch has been unable to host early season games. With more competitions running on a round robin basis, this therefore leads to more games and in turn greater demand for venues across the county.

Hanley says that these works should ensure that Kenny Park can host games earlier and later in the year.

“Looking back on it you could only use the pitch from around the first of April to roughly the 10th or 15th of October. With all the games now, we wanted to be able to host some during the year.

“We hope these works will help us host games earlier in the year, maybe from February on. It’s a brilliant summer pitch but earlier and later in the year it is nearly impossible to keep it going. The divots are unreal.”

The Carnmore man says that the vertical drainage system being implemented needs to be commenced during a period of grass growth, therefore ruling out the early part of the year. The works are only expected to last roughly two weeks, but the recovery period will ensure that the venue is not able to host games until next Spring.

The Athenry venue is considered the home of Galway hurling with its central location and accessibility from different parts of the country proving a hit with supporters. Hanley feels that supporters want to travel to Athenry for games and be able to watch their own sides battle it out for supremacy.

“We have teams training in Athenry so the pitch certainly gets used. A lot of country people can’t be going in to Pearse Stadium all the time. We know supporters like coming to Athenry because it is in between Turloughmore, Portumna, Castlegar, (St) Thomas’. Getting the work done is to try and help the clubs be able to play in the best conditions and not have the pitch cutting up on them in big games.”

Galway hurling manager Henry Shefflin with Galway hurling coach Richie O’Neill during the Galway County Senior Club Hurling Championship semi-final match between Craughwell and Clarinbridge at Kenny Park in Athenry, Galway.

Photo by Piaras Ó Mídeach/Sportsfile

Clarinbridge substitute Alan Kerins during the Galway County Senior Club Hurling Championship semi-final match between Craughwell and Clarinbridge at Kenny Park in Athenry, Galway. Photo by Piaras Ó Mídeach/Sportsfile





Shefflin to stay with Galway hurlers for 2024 – and possibly beyond

Galway manager Henry Shefflin during the GAA Hurling All-Ireland Senior Championship semi-final match between Limerick and Galway at Croke Park in Dublin.

Photo by Stephen Marken/Sportsfile

HENRY SHEFFLIN has indicated to the Galway county board that he is willing to extend his term as the county's senior hurling manager beyond next season.

Shefflin agreed a three-year term as Tribes boss when he was named as Shane O'Neill's successor in October 2021 and the former Kilkenny star is to complete the remaining year of that term in 2024.

So far under Shefflin, Galway have lost successive Leinster finals to Kilkenny before going to reach All-Ireland semi-finals in both 2022 and 2023, where Limerick proved too good on both occasions.

Galway GAA chairman Paul Bellew confirmed that Shefflin will be staying in place for next season and that both parties are now looking to extend the term into the 2025 season. An extension of his term would need to come before a meeting of the county committee.

A statement from Bellew said: "Henry is on board for next year and we are looking at extending it beyond that. Henry has indicated a willingness for that and so have we, so now it's a matter of finding a mutually acceptable agreement. But it's great he is on board and will continue the work carried out so far."

Garrity confident of bright future for Leitrim

LEITRIM'S quest for TG4 All-Ireland Intermediate glory was ended by Wexford at the quarter-final stage in 2023 – but team manager Jonny Garrity is predicting a bright future for his group.

Leitrim also contested a Lidl National League Division 4 Final against Antrim, but lost out to the Saffrons at Parnell Park.

Roscommon won the TG4 Connacht Intermediate Final against Leitrim but Garrity's charges showed some good form in the TG4 All-Ireland series.

"Similar to Kildare when we played

them in the group stages where, whatever they threw at us, we were always very close by and refused to give up the fight," Garrity said.

"That was evident again today and you're talking about that against very

accomplished teams and teams that are a few years down the line in terms of their management and the time that they've spent together in order to implement their culture and tactical gameplan.

"For us to do that in year one, we can take a lot of positives from that. We do feel that we won't be starting from scratch in year two and there will be a much higher ceiling in terms of what we can achieve."

Leitrim manager Jonny Garrity before the 2023 Lidl Ladies National Football League Division 4 Final match between Antrim and Leitrim at Parnell Park in Dublin.

Photo by Piaras Ó Mídheach/Sportsfile



Doherty announces Mayo

2012 – Jason Doherty in action in the All-Ireland semi-final against Dublin.



Connacht championship titles and two league crowns with the Westerners and was nominated for an All-Star award in 2017.

The 33-year-old started in three All-Ireland SFC finals for his county (2012, 2016 and 2017), and came off the bench in the 2013 decider against Dublin, with his last appearance being an All-Ireland quarter-final defeat to the Dubs just over five weeks ago.

“Playing for Mayo has been a huge honour for me since I first pulled on the jersey as a Mayo minor in 2007,” Doherty said in a statement released.

“I am so thankful for the experiences I’ve had and the memories I’ve made over the last 13 years. There were so many ups and downs along the way, but I

feel incredibly lucky to have shared a dressing room with a bunch of highly driven, ambitious and talented guys who have now become friends for life.

“There are so many people who helped me along the way, including my club Burrishoole, the management teams who trusted me to wear the green and red jersey and every teammate I’ve had since 2011 who motivated me to max out on my efforts to reach a shared goal.

“My wife Caroline, in particular, made so many sacrifices so that I could play for Mayo for as long as I did. I will always be grateful to her. My parents James and Margaret, my entire family, also supported me every step of the way. It would have been impossible for me to give football so much time and attention without their unquestioning support and that is something I will never forget.

“Mayo supporters are incredible. It was always special to run on a field, anywhere in Ireland, to a great Mayo roar and feed off the energy they sent from the terraces.

“I’d also like to thank my employer Sustainable Energy Authority Ireland and the various managers I’ve had over the years who gave me the flexibility to adapt my working week to accommodate the travel from Dublin to Mayo for training.

“Finally, I extend my best wishes to the management team and players involved with Mayo in 2024 and beyond. I’ll miss the environment, the craic, the challenges, the problem solving and the carb loading, but most of all I’ll miss that feeling of satisfaction after a hard-fought win and being able to look my teammates in the eye and have their respect. That’s what made it all worthwhile.”

MAYO forward Jason Doherty has announced his retirement from inter-county football.

The Burrishoole clubman spent 12 years on the Mayo senior panel, making 132 appearances in the green and red and scoring 17-153.

Having made his senior championship debut in 2011 against London, Doherty went on to win seven

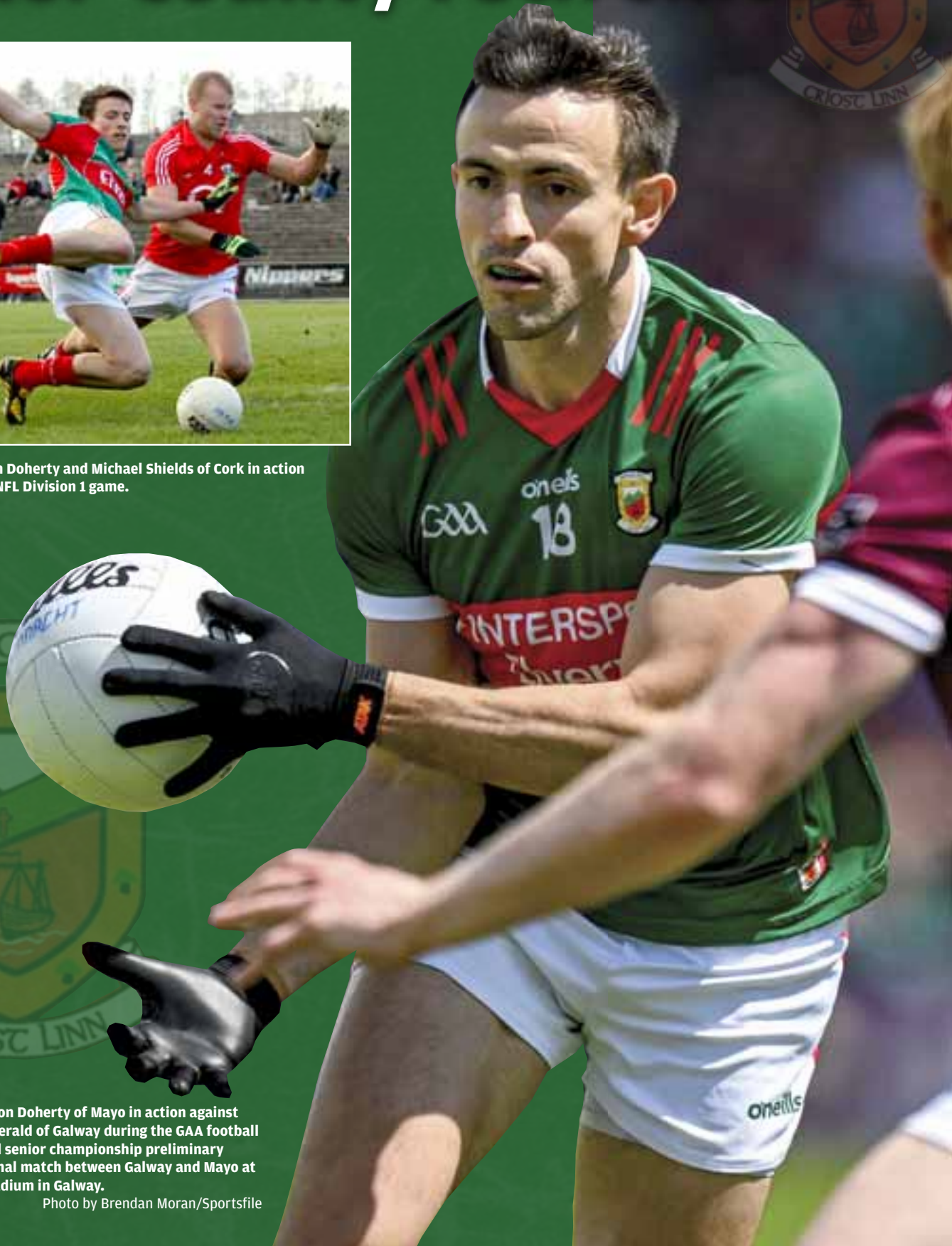


2011 – Allianz NFL, Division 1 - Dublin vs Mayo – Mayo’s Jason Doherty scores their first goal of the game and then celebrates scoring.

inter-county retirement



2011 - Jason Doherty and Michael Shields of Cork in action during the NFL Division 1 game.



2023 - Jason Doherty of Mayo in action against Seán Fitzgerald of Galway during the GAA football All-Ireland senior championship preliminary quarter-final match between Galway and Mayo at Pearse Stadium in Galway.

Photo by Brendan Moran/Sportsfile





McStay vows that Mayo will be better

MAYO manager Kevin McStay has vowed that the green and red will absorb key lessons and be better again in 2024.

Mayo were overwhelmed by Dublin in the 2023 All-Ireland Senior quarter-final, as the eventual champions ran out 2-17 to 0-11 winners.

"We got a tough lesson but I've to look at this in the overall," said McStay.

"It hasn't been a bad season for us. We'll take plenty of lessons from it.

"We had three or four young players in our backline. This will be a great day out for them when they look back at it in ten years. They'll learn an awful lot from it.

"That's the way we have to look at it.

We're here for a longer haul than just having a crack in one single season. We'll go back, rest, meet and see what the overall picture is.

"In an overall sense, not a bad year for us but today it ends disappointingly."

It wasn't a bad year at all for Mayo, who landed the Allianz National League Division 1 title.

But they were dumped out of the Connacht Championship by Roscommon at the quarter-final stage, before regrouping through the qualifiers.

Beating Kerry in Killarney was another stand-out moment for Mayo, who also defeated Louth in the group stages, before falling to Cork.

That sent Mayo into a preliminary quarter-final against Galway, where a memorable 1-10 to 0-12 victory was achieved.

But Dublin was a bridge too far for

Mayo, with McStay promising that progress can be made in the short to medium term.

"We absolutely wanted to win our kick-out up high, we were going hard on that, but the breaks just didn't - when you don't win it clean and it breaks off, the Dubs were just really clean on that break and it seemed to go their way," McStay reflected.

"They got more men in around it, and that's definitely a place we have to go back to improve on.

"We are not good enough at it yet, we are not up with the top teams in terms of our kickout yet, but we will be, I have no doubt we will.

"We have great lads around it that will think it through and figure it out, and we'll get more experience; that's my own view

and we'll be better for this.

"It's our first year together as a group and we are just finding each other out and figuring each other out.

"I've learned a lot about the boys and I'm sure they've tried to figure us out a bit as well, but overall I'm not broken or anything over this defeat.

"I'm disappointed for the big Mayo crowd that came up as they always do, but we'll take a break now to try to figure out where we have to go to next to get to another level."

McStay acknowledged the contribution made by Dublin's substitutes after half-time.

"I think they selected very well, when we got the changes it was obvious to us they were very afraid of our pace up top and they were hoping to get the game to the third quarter and bring on then their pacey guys, Jack (McCaffrey) obviously in particular, Paddy Small and so on.

"But we had managed it well until half-time, we had given them a lot of problems up in the full line, Tommy (Conroy) and Ryan (O'Donoghue) and Aidan (O'Shea) were busy, I felt, throughout that period.

"Big games swing on a moment or two, we're still in it, we're definitely breathing, we want to get a third quarter and then the goal we give away but you have to credit Dublin, look at the way they finished that goal, they just popped it across and a goal pushed it to an empty net."



Mayo manager Kevin McStay with his assistant manager Stephen Rochford, behind, during the GAA Football All-Ireland Senior Championship quarter-final match between Dublin and Mayo at Croke Park in Dublin.

Photo by Piaras Ó Midheach/Sportsfile



Moyles vacates Mayo Ladies post



MICHAEL Moyles has stepped away as manager of the Mayo ladies senior football team.

In a statement, Moyles said: "I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to the county board and the clubs for the honour they have given me in managing the Senior team and also for the support, guidance, and opportunities I have received throughout my tenure. I am truly grateful for the trust you placed in me to lead the team.

"I would also like to acknowledge the work done by a small but committed and hardworking fundraising team and to all our sponsors who helped ensure Mayo LGFA players were equipped and resourced with every tool necessary to compete at the highest level.

"Finally, I wish to thank the management team for consistently and relentlessly going above and beyond to match the ambition and dedication of the players. We hope as a management team we have added to the work done previously to make Mayo LGFA stronger."

Mayo saw their 2023 campaign ended by a Louise Ní Mhuircheartaigh-inspired Kerry in the TG4 All-Ireland Senior Championship semi-final.

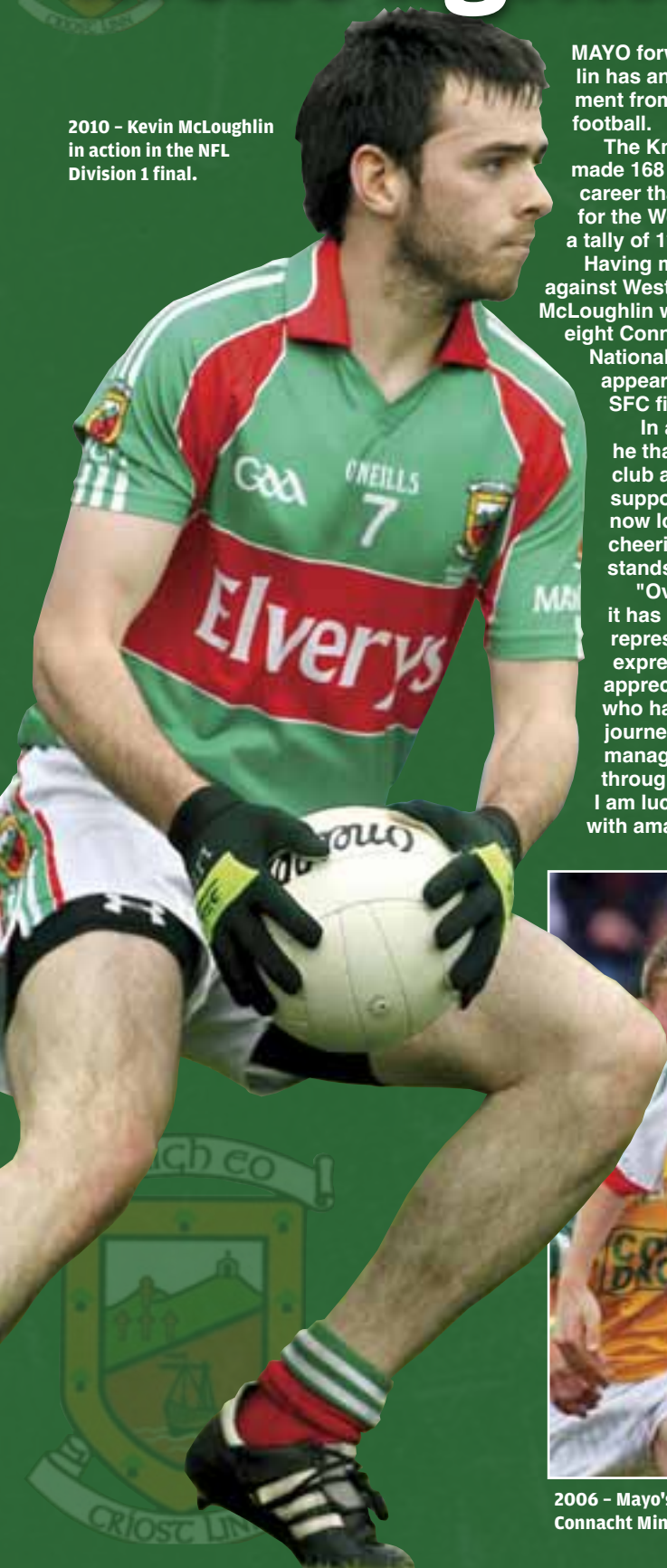
Mayo manager Michael Moyles during the TG4 LGFA All-Ireland Senior Championship semi-final match between Kerry and Mayo at Semple Stadium in Thurles, Tipperary.

Photo by Piaras Ó Midheach/Sportsfile



McLoughlin retires fro

2010 - Kevin McLoughlin in action in the NFL Division 1 final.



MAYO forward Kevin McLoughlin has announced his retirement from inter-county football.

The Knockmore clubman made 168 appearances in a career that spanned 15 years for the Westerners, racking up a tally of 11-176 in that time.

Having made his senior debut against Westmeath in 2009, McLoughlin would go on to earn eight Connacht SFC titles, two National League crowns and appeared in six All-Ireland SFC finals for his county.

In a statement released, he thanked his family and club as well as the Mayo supporters and said he now looks forward to cheering on Mayo from the stands.

"Over the past 15 years, it has been a privilege to represent Mayo. I wish to express my heartfelt appreciation to everyone who has been part of this journey. I thank all the managers who guided me throughout my Mayo career. I am lucky to have played with amazing team-mates,"

the statement read.

"The camaraderie and tightness of the group is something special. It has been a privilege to fight alongside all of them. I will miss the craic we shared and the battles we fought together.

"I am grateful to Knockmore GAA Club for all they did to develop me as a footballer, particularly in my early years.

"My employers, Rice College, Westport, have been ever supportive over the last number of years which enabled me to continue playing at the highest level.

"To my parents Kevin and Margaret, and my entire family, thank you for the sacrifices and guidance throughout my career. To my incredible wife, Deirdre, our children Saorla, Odhran and Cadhla - Deirdre, in particular, made many sacrifices throughout my career. Without her unwavering support I would not have played for Mayo as long as I did - I am forever grateful.

"Thank you to the amazing Mayo supporters. Your enduring support has made representing Mayo truly special. Whether it was MacHale Park or Croke Park those loud passionate roars are something I will always remember. I wish the team every success in 2024 and beyond. I look forward to cheering them on from the stands."



2006 - Mayo's Kevin McLoughlin (No 4) in action during the Connacht Minor semi-final - Leitrim v Mayo at Carrick.



m inter-county duty



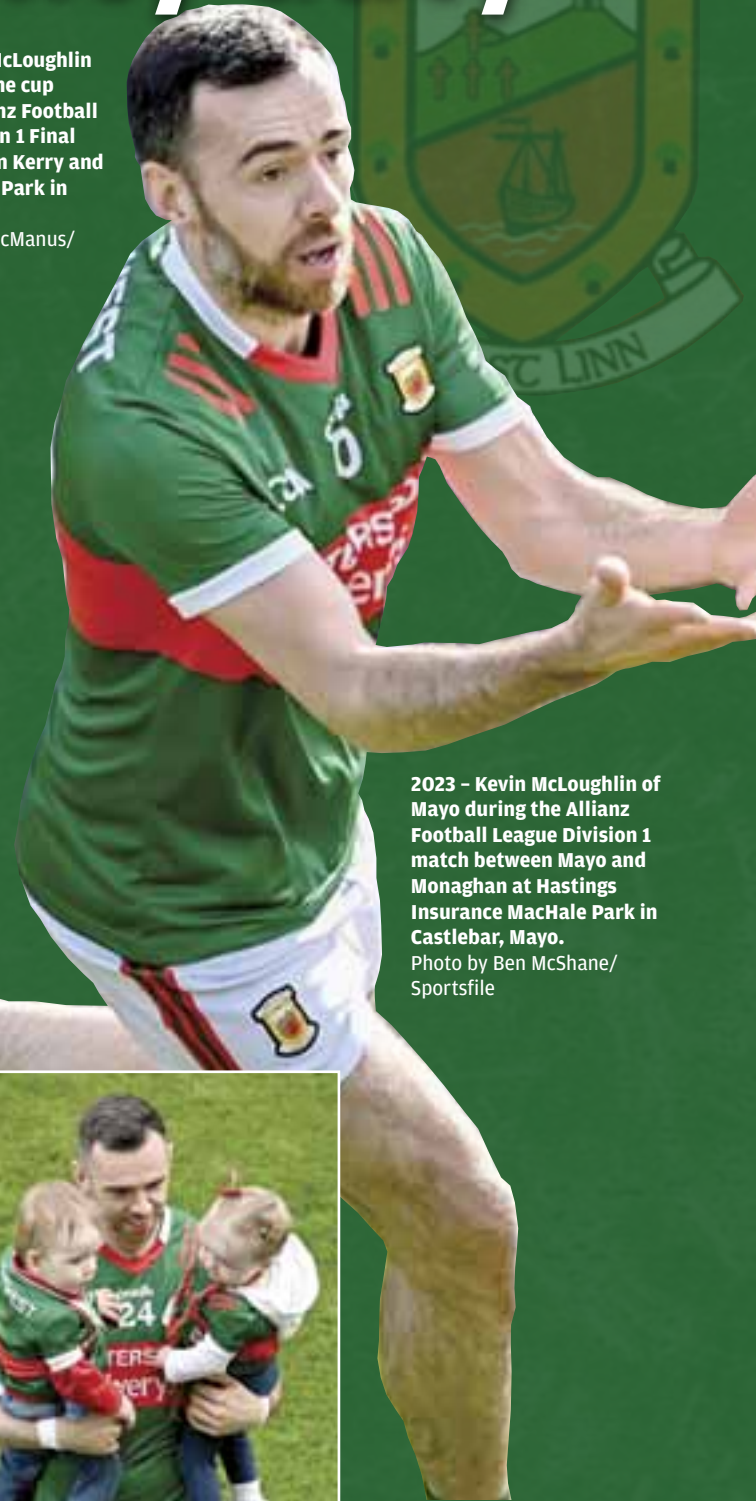
2019 – Kevin McLoughlin of Mayo lifts the cup after the Allianz Football League Division 1 Final match between Kerry and Mayo at Croke Park in Dublin.
Photo by Ray McManus/
Sportsfile



2012 – Kevin McLoughlin, seen splitting though Dublin's Paul Flynn and James McCarthy in the All-Ireland semi-final.



2023; Kevin McLoughlin with his children Odhran, left, and Cadhla after the GAA Football All-Ireland Senior Championship quarter-final match between Dublin and Mayo at Croke Park in Dublin.
Photo by Brendan Moran/Sportsfile



2023 – Kevin McLoughlin of Mayo during the Allianz Football League Division 1 match between Mayo and Monaghan at Hastings Insurance MacHale Park in Castlebar, Mayo.
Photo by Ben McShane/
Sportsfile

Rossies survive relegation play-off to preserve Intermediate status

ROSCOMMON can look forward to TG4 All-Ireland Intermediate Football Championship again next year.

But Ollie Lennon's charges had to survive a nervy relegation play-off against Louth to avoid dropping into the Junior ranks.

Having been relegated from Division 2 of the Lidl National League, Roscommon were desperate to avoid a similar Championship fate.

And there was silverware to reflect upon in 2023, following a TG4 Connacht Final victory over Leitrim in the Intermediate grade.

"It was probably completely different to anything we've been used to all year," said Lennon after the Louth win.

"We were holding onto a slender lead coming into the final stages of a game. Relegation battles will do that to you, the form book goes right out the window.

"Right up to the final whistle, there was nothing in that game, it could have gone either way."

Roscommon saw off Louth on a 2-12 to 2-8 scoreline, as brilliant captain Laura Fleming led the way with a 2-9 haul.

Laura Fleming of Roscommon during the Lidl Ladies Football National League Division 3 Final match between Roscommon and Wexford at St Brendan's Park in Birr, Offaly.

Photo by Ben McShane/Sportsfile



ROSCOMMON were on the hunt for a new Senior hurling team manager yet again after the conclusion of the 2023 campaign.

Following a loss to Louth in the Allianz League earlier in the year, Francis O'Halloran stepped down, hinting at a lack of player commitment. The side dropped into the relegation spots in Division 3A.

The Clare man was replaced by Seamus Qualter, who guided the side to promotion to Division 2B and secured Nickey Rackard status for 2024.

However, Galway native Qualter had noted at the time that he would only be in position for the remainder of the 2023 season.

The county board thanked Qualter and his backroom team as he brought his term to an end.

Qualter had previously managed the Roscommon senior and U21 teams from 2010 to 2013, winning an All-Ireland U21 'B' title in 2012.

More recently, he guided Athleague to a Roscommon SHC title in 2018 and Tremane to their first county final appearance in 25 years in 2021.

The former Southern Gaels and Westmeath forward also led his native Lake County to Christy Ring Cup success in 2007.

Qualter's backroom team of Daithí Hand (coach), Peter Galvin and Francis Doolan also stepped down following his Roscommon departure.



Roscommon manager Seamus Qualter during the Allianz Hurling League Division 3A Final match.

Photo by Michael P Ryan/Sportsfile



Roscommon on the hunt for new senior hurling team manager





Smith speaks of Ros

Roscommon star Enda Smith has spoken of his frustration at how their season ended inside the space of a week.

The Connacht men had an eye on second spot – and a home draw in the knockout stages – in their All-Ireland series group but fell to Kildare to see them drop to third.

The following weekend they were drawn to play Cork away in a preliminary quarter-final, where they fell to the Rebels to bring an abrupt end to a season that had held such promise.

“In the space of six days we went from having a chance of topping the group against Kildare that day – depending on the Dublin result, but Dublin beat Sligo well so that was ruled out – but definitely we had second in our mind at least,” Smith told Shane Rice on ‘The Off Season’ YouTube series.

“But in fairness we didn’t do enough on the day to beat Kildare and they beat us by a point and once again it was the last kick of the game.

“To be honest, they were better than us on the day. They got two black cards in the middle of the first half and probably if they didn’t get those they might have beaten us more comfortably.

“It was disappointing at the time but I remember after the game being disappointed but knowing that we were still in it regardless six days later.

“We found out Monday morning we drew Cork who had just beaten Mayo on the Sunday. They came strong against Mayo in the last 15 or 20 minutes when it looked like Mayo had them beat.”

Roscommon coughed up a commanding position in the first half to lose by the minimum for the second game in succession, which ended with Smith being sent off.

“The Cork game was funny. We would have felt we did very well in the first 30 to 35 minutes. After 30 minutes we were maybe 0-7 to 0-2 or 0-7 to 0-3 up and they got a bit of a run on us at the end of the first half and it went 0-7 to 0-6 at half-time.

“The second half they took control for a large part and went five up after getting a goal. We finished strong, hit five in a row to get back level, and it looked like all the momentum was with us and then they ended up getting a score.”

Roscommon had started the year brilliantly under the newly-appointed Davy Burke, winning their first three games and finishing third in Division 1.

Those performances represented a step forward as since 2011, Roscommon have played in all four divisions of the league and only once in that time have they managed to stay in Division 1 for two seasons in a row.

Smith pointed to Burke’s defensive set-up as key to Roscommon’s ability to stay



In attendance, from left, Roscommon footballer Enda Smith, Armagh ladies footballer Kelly Mallon, Waterford camogie player Niamh Rockett, and Clare hurler David Fitzgerald at the NutriQuick GAA/GPA Product Endorsement Partnership launch at Croke Park in Dublin.

Photo by David Fitzgerald/Sportsfile



common frustration



Enda Smith of Roscommon is tackled by Ian Maguire of Cork during the GAA Football All-Ireland Senior Championship Preliminary Quarter Final match between Cork and Roscommon at Páirc Uí Chaoimh in Cork.

Photo by Tom Beary/Sportsfile

in the top flight.

“Once you get your defence in order you’d be hoping to keep it tight for the game and hope your bench can see you out in the end, and that was the way it was in those first three or four games where we kept in the game.

“We mightn’t have been playing brilliantly but we had a good bench to come off and help us win games. That was the theme for the first three games.

“We had a bit of a blip in the middle but finished strong and just missed out on a final. But in terms of a Division 1 campaign, it was very satisfying.”



McEntee on board with Sligo again in 2024

Sligo manager Tony McEntee.
Photo by Ramsey Cardy/Sportsfile

McEntee has already completed three years in the job and the 2023 season was the most progressive yet as they won Division Four and reached a first Connacht final since 2015, where they lost to Galway.

They were subsequently well beaten by Roscommon and Dublin in the All-Ireland group stage but earned a creditable draw with Kildare.

There was an option for the former Armagh star to extend his term by a year and both parties have exercised that following a county board review.

Joe Keane will continue as assistant manager while a county board statement said that "it is expected that the rest of the management team will continue".

County board chairman Sean Carroll commented: "The review was very thorough and detailed. We want to thank both the management and the players for their time and thoughts.

"Between us all we recognise that to progress further requires improving every aspect of the team's work, on and off the field – our standards have to be higher."

Reape reappointed

CORMAC REAPE has been reappointed as Sligo Ladies manager on a two-year term. The Mayo native had previously been appointed to the role in March until the end of the 2023 season, after Anthony Brennan stepped away.

In a brief statement, Sligo LGFA said they were looking forward to working with Reape for the next two years.

In the TG4 All-Ireland Ladies Junior Football Championship, Sligo were pitted in the group stages with eventual finalists Limerick and Down.

The Yeats County acquitted themselves reasonably well but fell to two defeats against the teams who would go on to Croke Park in August.

Down got the better of Sligo by five points, while Limerick were three-point winners.

Sligo's campaign did finish on a high note with a big victory over Kilkenny, a game in which the Westerners put 7-19 past the Cats.

The feeling in Sligo is that the team can build in 2024 and challenge for a TG4 All-Ireland Junior title.

Sligo are in something of a rebuilding phase after being relegated from the Intermediate ranks in 2022.

A poor Lidl National League campaign saw Sligo pick up just one win from seven outings, however, but it was a crucial victory over Longford that saw them survive in Division 3.

Sligo hurling seek Mannion successor

FOLLOWING a review of the 2023 hurling season, Sligo GAA confirmed its intention to seek a new management team for the 2024 season.

The board met with Padraig Mannion, team manager since 2020, to confirm that decision.

Sligo GAA Chairperson Sean Carroll said: "over the past three years when we were promoted to Division 2B and then stayed there initially, and on occasions in the Christy Ring Cup, we have seen the potential of Sligo hurling.

"This past year, however, has been a disappointing one with required progress not being made in some key areas.

"Having consulted with the

players and the hurling clubs of Sligo, we have decided that a change is needed so we will not be offering another year to the current management group.

"We want to thank his Padraig and his colleagues for their commitment and the work done. "Padraig took the role during the difficulties of the pandemic and helped harness a young team to success in the Division 3B final and Division 3A. We are grateful for that input and wish him and his colleagues the very best in the future."

Sligo GAA confirmed that applications for the vacancy would close on Friday, September 1st.

Galway pick up Tony Forristal silverware

GALWAY picked up silverware at the new-look Tony Forristal Cup competition in August.

There was a change in the competition structure this year, as the Division One flagship event for U-14 sides all across Ireland was split into North and South. Teams from Galway, Dublin, Limerick and Clare travelled to the Faithful Fields in Offaly for the Northern event.

In Kilcormac, a dominant Galway 1 side cruised to victory with wins over Dublin 2 (1-24 to 0-4), Offaly (2-14 to 1-5) and then Dublin 1 in the final, 3-9 to 0-6.

There was plenty of drama in the quarter-final round where Limerick 1

edged out Clare and Offaly wing forward Eddie Carty struck a late 1-1 for his side as they reeled in a seven-point deficit to beat Limerick 2 by 1-10 to 1-9.

Galway began to show their class in the semi-final round however, as goals from Jack Ackman and Dara Hayes fired them past Offaly, despite some very impressive showings in the full-back line from Philip Larkin, Kieran Coughlan and James Dooley.

They kicked on with an even more dominant display in the final where midfielder and Player of the Tournament Tadhg MacCarthaigh was impressive, while Oranmore-Maree colleagues Gus Lohan – son of

former Clare hurler Frank Lohan – and Jack Akman also starred.

First half goals from Akman and Seán Óg Dolan, the latter a stunning strike from 20 metres out at the end of a darting run, left Galway 2-7 to 0-1 in front at the interval, and after Lohan finished off an excellent team move to add a third goal early in the second half.

Galway stepped off the gas and allowed James O’Keeffe and Jack Fallon to add a series of late points, reducing the deficit.

Galway also claimed the honours in the Shield decider, following a 1-3 to 0-4 victory over Dublin.

Memories to last a lifetime for up and coming young stars

Paddy Ketterick, Brackloon NS, Westport, Mayo, representing Limerick, during the INTO Cumann na mBunscol GAA Respect Exhibition Go Games at the GAA Hurling All-Ireland Senior Championship final match between Kilkenny and Limerick at Croke Park in Dublin.

Photo by Ramsey Cardy/
Sportsfile



YOUNG hurlers and footballers from all over Connacht left Croke Park with memories to last a lifetime following the Connacht GAA Go Games days at Croke Park in August.

These two special days provided selected clubs from all over Connacht the experience of Croke Park. The players involved got to grace the hallowed sod and they also enjoyed a trip to the Croke Park Museum. This initiative, which was spearheaded by former

Connacht GAA Games Manager, John Tobin, first took place 13 years ago.

It has been an outstanding success and, over the years, all clubs in the province have had the Croke Park experience.

The focus of the two days is on participation and enjoyment rather than winning and losing. It's a unique occasion designed to cultivate a lasting positive relationship between all players who take part in Gaelic Games.

THE CLUBS TAKING PART IN 2023 IN FOOTBALL AND HURLING WERE:

Tuam Stars, Garadice Gaels, St Brigid's, Castleconnor, Northern Gaels, Belmullet, Strokestown, St Mary's Kiltoghert; Erris St Pat's, Menlough, St Michael's, Caherlistrane, St Ronan's, St John's, Crossmolina Deel Rovers, Éire Óg, Castlebar Mitchels, Aughnasheelin, Allen Gaels, Kilbride, St Aidan's, Killerin, Mountbellew/Moylough, Westport, Glenfarne, St Michael's, St Mary's, Kilglass Gaels, Killanin, Claremorris, Glencar/Manorhamilton, Geevagh, Liam Mellows, Tommy Larkin's, St Thomas, Killimor, Kilnadeema/Leitrim, Ragoon/Newcastle, Kiltormer/Mullagh, Castlegar.

Kerry too good for Mayo

TG4 ALL-IRELAND LADIES SENIOR FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP - SEMI-FINAL

Kerry1-16
Mayo1-11

By OISÍN MCGOVERN

LOUISE Ní Mhuircheartaigh produced a stunning display and shot 1-10 as Kerry took another major step towards ending their famine as they booked their place in the TG4 All-Ireland final for the second year in a row.

Kerry, even without injured captain Siofra O'Shea, were on top throughout and will now hope to go one better in two weeks and capture the TG4 All-Ireland title for the first time since 1993.

The Corca Dhuibhne sharpshooter delivered an awesome display in a game where Kerry built up a nine-point half-time lead to leave Mayo with little chance of a revival.

The Connacht champions enjoyed a better second half with the wind and shot 1-6. However, Michael Moyles' side had no answer to the unstoppable Ní Mhuircheartaigh, who caused havoc at every turn.

The exchanges were quite even in the first ten minutes, with Sinéad Cafferky and Shauna Howley exchanging points with Ní Mhuircheartaigh and Hannah O'Donoghue.

But Mayo were blown away in a devastating nine-minute spell in the first half when Kerry hit them for 1-7 without reply.

The twin threats of O'Donoghue and Ní Mhuircheartaigh accounted for 1-5 of this, with Emma Costello and Niamh Ní Chonchúir pointing the remainder.

The impressive Danielle O'Leary was instrumental in Kerry's 18th minute goal, fist-passing across the goalmouth for Ní Mhuircheartaigh to palm into the net.

Mayo – who sent three kick-outs out over the sideline in the first half – broke an 11-minute long scoring drought when Sinéad Cafferky knocked over her second point.

Centre-back Ciara Needham added another for the Connacht champions, but a nine-point interval deficit left them with a mountain to climb.

The Kingdom lost the impressive O'Donoghue to injury at half-time, but that did little to impede their march to victory.

Ní Mhuircheartaigh was immense, kicking 0-5 in the second half and nearly grabbing a second goal.



Saoirse Lally of Mayo in action against Niamh Carmody of Kerry during the TG4 LGFA All-Ireland Senior Championship semi-final match between Kerry and Mayo at Semple Stadium in Thurles, Tipperary.

Photo by Piaras Ó Mídeach/Sportsfile

Substitute Deirdre Doherty gave Mayo a glimmer of hope when she struck the net mid-way through the second half within a minute of her introduction.

However, they failed to muster a serious bounce against a Kerry team that tackled and turned over ball tigerishly all afternoon.

Shauna Howley and Aoife Geraghty pointed as Mayo made a few brave charges at goal, but their shooting and shot selection let them down.

A rampant Ní Mhuircheartaigh, who ended with 1-6 from play, continued to terrorise the Mayo defence and saw a wicked shot on goal graze over the crossbar in the closing stages.

SCORERS – Kerry: L Ní Mhuircheartaigh 1-10 (0-4f), H O'Donoghue 0-3, E Costello 0-1, N Ní Chonchúir 0-1, D O'Leary 0-1.

Mayo: D Doherty 1-0, S Howley 0-3 (2f), S Cafferky 0-2, C Needham 0-2, S Walsh 0-1, L Cafferky 0-1, R Kearns 0-1, A Geraghty 0-1.

again at semi-final stage



Deirdre Doherty of Mayo celebrates after scoring her side's first goal during the TG4 LGFA All-Ireland Senior Championship semi-final match between Kerry and Mayo at Semple Stadium in Thurles, Tipperary.

Photo by Piaras Ó Midheach/Sportsfile

KERRY: C Butler; E Lynch, K Cronin, C Murphy; A O'Connell, E Costello, C Lynch; L Scanlon, L Galvin; N Carmody, N Ní Chonchúir, A Galvin; H O'Donoghue, D O'Leary, L Ní Mhuircheartaigh (capt.) **Subs:** A Harrington for O'Donoghue (HT, inj.), M O'Connor for Galvin (47), C Evans for Ní Chonchúir (54), E McGlynn for Carmody (66).

MAYO: L Brennan; S Lally, C McManamon, D Caldwell; É Ronayne, C Needham, K Sullivan (capt.); A Geraghty, T O'Connor; S Cafferky, R Kearns, S Mulvihill; T Needham, S Howley, L Cafferky. **Subs:** S Walsh for Mulvihill (26), L Wallace for O'Connor (44), D Doherty (1-0) for Kearns (44), M Cannon for T Needham (52), F McHale for Howley (59).

REF: Maggie Farrelly (Cavan).



Sinéad Walsh of Mayo shoots under pressure from Aishling O'Connell of Kerry during the TG4 LGFA All-Ireland Senior Championship semi-final match between Kerry and Mayo at Semple Stadium in Thurles, Tipperary.

Photo by Piaras Ó Midheach/Sportsfile



Howley fists late Mayo win



Éilís Ronayne of Mayo in action against Bláithín Mackin of Armagh during the TG4 Ladies Football All-Ireland Championship match between Armagh and Mayo at BOX-IT Athletic Grounds in Armagh. Photo by Sam Barnes/Sportsfile

TG4 ALL-IRELAND LADIES SENIOR FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP - QUARTER-FINAL

Mayo0-10
Galway1-6

By **DARREN KELLY**

A DRAMATIC Late point from substitute Shauna Howley with just 20 seconds remaining on the clock snatched victory for Mayo over arch rivals Galway in the first of the TG4 All-Ireland Senior Championship quarter-finals at Pearse Stadium.

Just as extra-time loomed, Galway's attempt to work one last score from deep was punished when Ciara Needham intercepted and raced through before setting up Howley for the winner.

Mayo had the wind in the first half and picked up two points through Deirdre Doherty and Sinead Cafferky before Galway landed the first major blow on six minutes.

Nicola Ward was involved in a move that included Leanne Coen, Ailbhe Davoren and Róisín Leonard before



Rachel Kearns of Mayo in action against Tracey Leonard of Galway during the TG4 Ladies Football All-Ireland Senior Championship quarter-final match between Galway and Mayo at Pearse Stadium in Galway. Photo by Sam Barnes/Sportsfile

ner to knock out Galway



Tara Needham of Mayo in action against Aoife Molloy of Galway during the TG4 Ladies Football All-Ireland Senior Championship quarter-final match between Galway and Mayo at Pearse Stadium in Galway.

Photo by Sam Barnes/Sportsfile

Lynsey Noone was perfectly placed to finish to the net making it 1-0 to 0-2.

It was the first of four goal chances the Tribeswomen had but they didn't manage to convert others as Laura Brennan saved from Lynsey Noone, Shauna Brennan hit the crossbar, and Davoren was pulled for steps before slicing the ball wide.

Doherty's second free levelled and the teams would be all square twice more by the 27th minute. Tracey and Roisin Leonard both registered placed balls for Galway; Ciara Needham and Doherty providing the Mayo response.

They looked set to enter the dressing rooms level but Mayo took advantage of an error just before the hooter. Aoife Geraghty turned over possession in midfield before delivering into Tara Needham and she pointed making it 0-6 to 1-2 at the break.

The hosts suffered a blow three minutes after the restart when Lynsey Noone received a yellow card for a challenge on Geraghty. But the Maghnus Breathnach/Fiona Wynne managed team outscored their opponents 0-3 to 0-1 over the next 10 minutes.

Two Róisín Leonard frees and one

from play for her cousin Tracey were only matched by a Shauna Howley free. But Mayo did have the ball in the net on 39 minutes only for Geraghty's effort to be disallowed for a square ball.

Howley's second score restored parity for the sixth time on the three quarter mark and the teams traded again through Galway's Aoife Molloy and Mayo's Maria Cannon.

Galway had a late chanced but Tracey Leonard's effort went wide before Mayo countered for their dramatic winner from Howley before getting a late yellow card as the Connacht champions advance to the last four.

SCORERS – Mayo: D Doherty 0-3 (3f), S Howley 0-3 (2f), S Cafferky 0-1, C Needham 0-1, T Needham 0-1, M Cannon 0-1 (1f).

Galway: L Noone 1-0, R Leonard 0-3 (3f), T Leonard 0-2 (1f), A Molloy 0-1.

MAYO: L Brennan; S Lally, C McManamon, D Caldwell; K Sullivan, C Needham, E Ronayne; A Geraghty, S Walsh; S Mulvihill, F McHale, S Cafferky; D Doherty, R Kearns, T Needham.

Subs: S Howley for Doherty (HT), M Cannon for Mulvihill (43), L Wallace for Sullivan (51), L Cafferky for McHale (55), T O'Connor for Geraghty (60).

GALWAY: L Murphy; K Geraghty, A Ni Cheallaigh, S Ni Loingsigh; A Molloy, L Ward, S Brennan; N Ward, L Coen; L Noone, H Noone, O Divilly; T Leonard, A Davoren, R Leonard.

Subs: C Trill for Brennan (HT), S Divilly for L Noone (43), K Slevin for R Leonard (46), B Quinn for Ni Cheallaigh (50), E Noone for H Noone (53).

REF: Seamus Mulvihill (Kerry).



Kathryn Sullivan, right, and Ellis Ronayne of Mayo celebrate after their side's victory in the TG4 Ladies Football All-Ireland Senior Championship quarter-final match between Galway and Mayo at Pearse Stadium in Galway.

Photo by Sam Barnes/Sportsfile

Mayo reach knockout stages with victory over Laois

TG4 ALL-IRELAND LADIES SENIOR FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP - ROUND 2

Mayo2-15
Laois0-8

A HAUL of 2-9 from Sinéad Cafferky and Sinéad Walsh secured an emphatic home win to ensure Mayo advance to the TG4 All-Ireland quarter-finals.

Victory was never in doubt for the Connacht champions at Hastings Insurance MacHale Park, as Mayo enjoyed near total dominance from start to finish against a Laois squad who now bow out of the title race.

With the aid of the wind, Michael Moyles' women started the game with seven points on the bounce.

The impressive Sinéad Cafferky — who lined out without her injured sister Lisa — finished the half with 0-4 while the equally excellent Walsh struck 1-2.

The hardworking Mayo forwards put Laois under enormous pressure and made life difficult for last year's TG4 All-Ireland intermediate champions on their kickouts.



Deirdre Doherty of Mayo in action against Ellen Healy of Laois during the TG4 LGFA All-Ireland Senior Championship match between Mayo and Laois at Hastings Insurance MacHale Park in Castlebar, Mayo.

Photo by Tom Beary/Sportsfile



Kathryn Sullivan of Mayo during the TG4 LGFA All-Ireland Senior Championship match between Mayo and Laois at Hastings Insurance MacHale Park in Castlebar, Mayo.

Photo by Tom Beary/Sportsfile

Throughout the first half, Mayo forced 15 turnovers and had several genuine goal chances either blocked or resulting in points.

Laois struggled to create many meaningful scoring opportunities and didn't get the scoreboard moving until Mo Nerney and Anna Healey pointed after 14 and 18 minutes.

Laois did managed to mount several good attacks but fortune wasn't on their side.

Mayo continued with their unrelenting work ethic and it was no surprise when they got the opening goal when Deirdre Doherty sent a 40-yard pass into the isolated Walsh, who turned and delivered a fine finish to the net.

It was all Mayo again at the start of the second half, with Deirdre Doherty landing a free before Cafferky rattled the net after receiving a pass from Shauna Howley.

Walsh had to settle for only a point from two goal chances as Mayo cruised home with a second-half haul of 1-6.

Laois enjoyed a lot more possession

and carried the ball better but only got four points for their efforts in the second half as both sides failed to make good goal chances count.

Scores from Sarah Anne Fitzgerald (two frees), Mo Nerney (also a free) and Eva Galvin provided scant consolation for Laois as Mayo held on for a deserved win.

SCORERS - Mayo: S Walsh 1-5, S Cafferky 1-4, S Howley 0-3 (1f), D Doherty (1f) C Needham, É Ronayne 0-1 each.

Laois: M Nerney 0-3 (2f), S.A. Fitzgerald 0-2 (2f), E Healy, E Galvin, A Healy 0-1 each.

MAYO: L Brennan; É Ronayne, C McManamon, D Caldwell; S Lally, C Needham, K Sullivan (capt.); A Geraghty, F McHale; M Cannon, S Cafferky, S Delaney; S Howley, D Doherty, S Walsh.

Subs: M Reilly for D Doherty (40), S Tierney for F McHale (44), R Durkan for K Sullivan (49), E Murray for C Needham (50).

LAOIS: N Luttrell; S Farrelly, C Dunne, A Kelly; S Havill, E Healy (capt.), L Nerney; A Healy, O Hennessy; E Galvin, L.M. Maher, A Moran; S.A. Fitzgerald, M Nerney, K Donoghue.

Subs: A Kirrane for K Donoghue (44), G Moran for O Hennessy (46).

REF: Maggie Farrelly (Cavan).

Galway secure home quarter-final



Tracey Leonard of Galway during the TG4 Ladies Football All-Ireland Senior Championship quarter-final match between Galway and Mayo at Pearse Stadium in Galway.

Photo by Sam Barnes/Sportsfile

TG4 ALL-IRELAND LADIES SENIOR FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP - ROUND 2

Galway4-10
Tipperary3-4

GALWAY secured top spot in Group 4 of the TG4 All Ireland Senior Championship and a home quarter final as they overcame a spirited Tipperary outfit at Moyne Templetuohy GAA Grounds.

Tipperary face Cork next with that tie deciding who finishes second in the group and progresses to the quarter final stage.

There were hail showers and thunder before the contest but it was Tipperary who made a lightning start as they found the net inside the opening 90 seconds. A patient move saw Niamh Martin's long range delivery acrobatically punched to the net by Aishling Moloney.

Maghnus Breathnach and Fiona Wynne's charges refused to panic though. The Leonard cousins – Tracey and Róisín – helped Galway draw level with the former firing over two scores while the latter curled over a neatly taken effort.

A superb long range Leanne Coen effort pushed Galway in front for the first time but the Tipperary response was emphatic. A flowing team move ended with Angela McGuigan's long range strike flying to the roof of the net. Galway hit back in style as a rapid attack saw Tracey Leonard finishing to the bottom corner after being set up by cousin Róisín.

Shauna Brennan, Olivia Divilly and Róisín Leonard (free) slotted over before the break while Emma Morrissey grabbed Tipperary's first point after 25 minutes with Galway leading 1-7 to 2-1 at the interval.

The third quarter saw Tipperary control possession as Emma Morrissey showed her class to strike over two superb long-range scores.

But Galway possess the class to cut through any defence in the country with Lynsey Noone finding the net after Kate Geraghty won a crucial turnover.

Despite Tipperary trying valiantly to push forward and carve out the scores to cut the gap on Galway, the Tribeswomen countered for a huge score as Louise Ward saw her long-range effort fly to the net.

Galway's squad depth began to show as the ever dangerous Kate Slevin came off the bench to score their fourth goal after being set up by Olivia Divilly.

Moloney continued to be a threat for Tipperary and she got her second goal in the closing stages when she fisted the ball to the net.

SCORERS - Galway: T Leonard 1-2, K Slevin 1-1 (0-1f), L Ward and L Noone 1-0 each, R Leonard 0-2 (1f), O Divilly 0-2, S Brennan, L Coen and E Noone 0-1 each.

Tipperary: A Moloney 2-1, A McGuigan 1-0, E Morrissey 0-3 (1f).

GALWAY: K Connolly, K Geraghty, S Ní Loingsigh, A Ní Cheallaigh, A Molloy, N Ward, S Brennan, L Ward, L Coen, L Noone, H Noone, O Divilly, T Leonard, A Davoren, R Leonard.

Subs: K Slevin for R Leonard (39), S Divilly, for S Brennan (39), E Noone, for T Leonard (46), A Trill, for L Noone (55), E Gavin, for S Ní Loingsigh (55).

TIPPERARY: L Fitzpatrick, E Kelly, L Spillane, E Cronin, M Curley, L Morrissey, C O'Dwyer, E Morrissey, N Towey, C English, M Murphy, S English, A McGuigan, N. Martin, A Moloney.

Subs: K. Downey for C. English (39), N Spillane, for M Murphy (39), R. Kiely for A. McGuigan (47), N Martin, for S English (52).

REF: Garryowen McMahon (Mayo).



Galway joint managers Maghnus Breathnach, right, and Fiona Wynne before the TG4 Ladies Football All-Ireland Senior Championship quarter-final match between Galway and Mayo at Pearse Stadium in Galway.

Photo by Sam Barnes/Sportsfile

Mayo pipped at the death

TG4 ALL-IRELAND LADIES SENIOR FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP - ROUND 1

Armagh2-10
Mayo1-11

A LAST-MINUTE penalty goal from Aimee Mackin saw Armagh claim their place in the TG4 All-Ireland Senior Championship quarter-finals, as Shane McCormack's side came from five points down to defeat Connacht champions Mayo in a thrilling contest.

Armagh were quickest off the mark at the Box-It Athletic Grounds with Aimee Mackin pointing from distance. However, Mayo responded with points from Sinéad Cafferky and Deirdre Doherty, before the former raised a green flag on eight minutes. Shauna Howley played Cafferky in behind the Armagh defence, and she kept her composure, before drilling the ball into the roof of the net.

Kelly Mallon pointed to settle Armagh, before Aimee Mackin converted a free soon after. But Mayo, who had a strong breeze at their backs, used it to full effect with Doherty swinging a point over from range. The Connacht champions remained in control and points from Doherty and Howley had them five ahead.

Armagh were given a lifeline moments before half-time, when they were awarded a penalty, but Aimee Mackin couldn't take



Éilís Ronayne of Mayo in action against Blaithin Mackin of Armagh during the TG4 Ladies Football All-Ireland Championship match between Armagh and Mayo at BOX-IT Athletic Grounds in Armagh. Photo by Sam Barnes/Sportsfile



Fiona McHale of Mayo in action against Caitriona O'Hagan of Armagh during the TG4 Ladies Football All-Ireland Championship match between Armagh and Mayo at BOX-IT Athletic Grounds in Armagh.

Photo by Sam Barnes/Sportsfile

advantage as her top corner effort was kept out by a tremendous Laura Brennan save.

Traded points between Aimee Mackin and Sinéad Cafferky saw Mayo take a five-point lead in at the break.

Armagh flew out of the traps at the start of the second half, and in the blink of an eye they had raced in front. Aimee Mackin and Lavery reduced the deficit to two, before the former laid the ball on a plate for Niamh Reel, and she finished to the Mayo net from a yard out to level matters, and Mallon scored to put the Orchard County ahead.

Mayo regained their composure and got back in front through points from Lisa Cafferky and Doherty, but an Aimee Mackin point drew the sides level again.

Armagh edged ahead in a thrilling finish through a Mallon free.

However, Mayo looked to be on their way to victory with a superb solo score by Lisa Cafferky followed by two converted frees by Doherty putting them two ahead.

But the drama wasn't over yet. A

Mallon free made it a one-point game, and in the last minute referee Siobhan Coyle awarded Armagh a penalty for a foul on Aimee Mackin, and having missed in the first half, the Shane O'Neill's star made no mistake this time around with just 15 seconds left on the clock, she buried her effort past Brennan to seal a remarkable win for Armagh at the death.

SCORERS - Armagh: A Mackin 1-5 (1-0 pen, 0-2f), K Mallon 0-4 (2f), N Reel 1-0, E Lavery 0-1.

Mayo: D Doherty 0-6 (3f), S Cafferky 1-2, L Cafferky 0-2, S Howley 0-1.

ARMAGH: A Carr; S Grey, C McCambridge, L Kenny; G Ferguson, L McConville, C Towe; N Coleman, E Lavery; B Mackin, A Mackin, E Druse; N Reel, K Mallon (capt.), A McCoy. **Subs:** N Marley for Grey (HT), C O'Hagan for Reel (39), C Marley for Kenny (53).

MAYO: L Brennan; É Ronayne, C McManamon, D Caldwell; C Needham, F McHale, K Sullivan (capt.); A Geraghty, S Cafferky; S Howley, T O'Connor, S Mulvihill; L Cafferky, D Doherty, S Walsh. **Subs:** L Wallace for O'Connor (29), M Cannon for Howley (40), M Reilly for Mulvihill (48), S Lally for Sullivan (58), R Flynn for Needham (58).

Galway show fighting spirit



Ciara O'Sullivan of Cork in action against Nicola Ward of Galway during the TG4 All-Ireland Ladies Senior Football Championship Round 1 match between Galway and Cork at Pearse Stadium in Galway.

Photo by Piaras Ó Mídhreach/Sportsfile

TG4 ALL-IRELAND LADIES SENIOR FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP - ROUND 1

Galway3-11
Cork1-11

TWO goals from Ailbhe Davoren and one from Kate Slevin in the final minute secured a six-point opening day victory for Galway in the TG4 All-Ireland Senior Championship at Pearse Stadium in Salthill.

The Tribeswomen trailed 1-9 to 1-8 entering the final quarter but 1-2 unanswered, including Davoren's second goal set up by Nicola Ward and Eva Noone, finally gave the team managed by Fiona Wynne and Maghnus Breathnach a buffer.

Cork refused to yield as Katie Quirke and Doireann O'Sullivan left them just 2-11 to 1-11 behind but when Nicola Ward went on another trademark run in the final minute, she found Slevin inside who finished the job.

Both teams took their time to settle before Cork opened with a Doireann O'Sullivan free on four minutes. But the pace picked up not long after with Hannah Noone equalising for Galway three minutes.

Both attacks asked probing questions but it was Galway who first reaped dividends when Leanne Coen, Louise and Nicola Ward combined to put Davoren through for their first goal on nine minutes.

That left it 1-1 to 0-1 but Cork were back in charge within four minutes. Two Doireann O'Sullivan frees reduced arrears to the minimum. But when Eimear Kiely's 45 dropped into the square on 13 minutes, Doireann O'Sullivan couldn't find a way past keeper Karen Connolly but her sister Ciara was on hand to stroke into the net.

Cork were two ahead but the Tribeswomen equalised by the quarter hour with cousins Roisin and Tracey Leonard finding the target. The sides were level twice more as after the O'Sullivan sisters raised Cork white flags, Coen and Tracey Leonard did likewise for Galway.

It was 1-5 apiece on 20 minutes before the Munster champions restored their lead. Captain Máire O'Callaghan was introduced for the injured Sarah Leahy and she set up Ciara O'Sullivan.

However, Galway had the final say as a Roisin Leonard free, and Davoren gave the hosts a 1-7 to 1-6 interval lead.

Again, the second period was slow in accelerating as Cork gained the advantage with Doireann O'Sullivan landing two

frees, the second won by Melissa Duggan.

Roisin Leonard profited from a splitting pass by cousin Treacy to level at 1-8 apiece. And after Doireann O'Sullivan tallied again, Slevin's first free levelled the teams for the eighth time.

But after another, they set up Davoren for her second goal and Galway didn't look back with Slevin concluding a great result for the maroon and white when she slotted home their third goal in the dying moments of a very good contest.

SCORERS - Galway: A Davoren 2-1, K Slevin 1-3 (0-2f), R Leonard 0-3 (1f), T Leonard 0-2, H Noone 0-1, L Coen 0-1.

Cork: D O'Sullivan 0-8 (8f), C O'Sullivan (1-2), K Quirke 0-1.

GALWAY: K Connolly; K Geraghty, S Ni Loingsigh, A Ni Cheallaigh; A Molloy, N Ward, S Brennan; L Ward, L Coen; O Divilly, H Noone, L Noone; T Leonard, A Davoren, R Leonard.

Subs: K Slevin for R Leonard (41), E Noone for L Noone (41), S Healy for Brennan (41), S Divilly for Molloy (54), C Miskell for T Leonard (53).

CORK: M O'Sullivan; M Duggan, E Meaney, R Phelan; E Cleary, S Kelly, A Ryan; S Leahy, H Looney; K Quirke, D O'Sullivan, C O'Sullivan; L O'Mahony, E Kiely, D Kiely. **Subs:** M O'Callaghan for Leahy (15), L Coppinger for Cleary (42), D Kiniry for O'Mahony (51), L Fitzgerald for D Kiely (52).

REF: Seamus Mulvihill (Kerry).



GALWAY - All-Ireland Ladies



The Galway team before the ZuCar All-Ireland Ladies Football U-18 A final match between Galway and Kildare at Pearse Park in Longford.

Photo by Ben McShane/Sportsfile

ZUCAR ALL-IRELAND LADIES FOOTBALL U-18 A FINAL

Galway3-11
Kildare1-8

By DENIESE O'FLAHERTY

Galway overturned a two point half-time deficit to claim the ZuCar All-Ireland U18 A championship title for the seventh

time with a nine point win over Kildare in Glennon Brothers Pearse Park, Longford.

The turning point of the game came in the 36th minute when Kate Thompson scored a penalty to give Galway the lead for the first time. It was a lead they didn't relinquish.

The sides were level twice in the opening nine minutes. Kildare edged ahead for the third time in the ninth minute with a point from Sarah McGovern. One minute later they grabbed a goal; a short kick-out was picked up by Aoife Murnane and she made no mistake. The lead was five

points when Leah McGovern pointed in the 10th minute.

Galway were back in the game in the 17th minute when Aisling Madden scored a fantastic goal; she got past a number of players before firing to the net. Both sides had chances but kicked a number of wides.

Ava Whelan put Kildare ahead by three in the 27th minute but Thompson replied with a lovely point for Galway to leave them trailing by two at the break at 1-6 to 1-4.

Siún McGovern (free) and Niamh

Football U-18 A Champions



Galway captain Aoibhinn Eilian is presented with the cup by Uachtarán Cumann Peil Gael na mBan, Mícheál Naughton after the ZuCar All-Ireland Ladies Football U18 A final match between Galway and Kildare at Glennon Brothers Pearse Park in Longford. Photo by Sportsfile



Farrelly exchanged frees before Galway took the lead in the 36th minute. A free from McGovern came off the crossbar,





Galway claim ZuCar All-Ireland

Lauren O'Donnell got the rebound but was fouled in the area by Zara Hurley. Thompson duly dispatched the penalty.

The game turned in their favour and they were ahead by four in the 42nd minute, although Kildare were unlucky not to grab a second goal. In the 44th minute

Mayah Doyle's effort came off the butt of the post and one minute later Edwina Birchall hit the bar with her shot.

Down the other end Galway extended their lead to five with a fine point from Thompson. McGovern landed two more frees as the Tribeswomen were clinical in

front of the posts.

Niamh Farrelly converted a free for Kildare, their first score in 23 minutes of play.

Thompson sealed the win in the 59th minute when her free eluded everyone and ended up in the back of the net.



I-Ireland U18 A glory

SCORERS - Galway: K Thompson 2-2 (1-0 pen, 1-0f), S McGovern 0-5 (3fs), A Madden 1-0, K Slattery, É Smith, É Baird, N Divilly 0-1 each.

Kildare: N Farrelly 0-4 (1f), A Murnane 1-0, S McGovern, M Doyle, A Whelan, L McGovern 0-1 each.

GALWAY: L O'Halloran; S Ní Scanláin, M Jordan,

E Brogan; B Naughton, A Eilian, R Reddington; K Slattery, K Banek; É Smith, É Baird, A Madden; S McGovern, N Divilly, K Thompson. **Subs:** L O'Donnell for Smith (22), A O'Malley for Baird (39), N Daly for Brogan and Z Duggan for Reddington (58), G Molloy for S McGovern (59).

KILDARE: S Knightly; J Duggan, E Glancy, Z

Hurley; J Brannigan, L Dunlea, H Murphy; S McGovern, M Doyle; E Birchall, E Kendrick, A Murnane; N Farrelly, A Whelan, L McGovern. **Subs:** H Lyons for Murphy (26), A Prizeman for L McGovern (ht), A Cahill for Whelan (40), C Bagnall for Brannigan and C Egan for Doyle (60).

REF: Seamus Mulvihill (Kerry)



Kerry break Sligo hearts in thrilling final

ZUCAR ALL-IRELAND LADIES U18 B FINAL

Kerry2-6
Sligo1-6

By LIAM MALONEY

FIRST-HALF goals from Amy Curtin and Julia Curtin were the key scores for Kerry in their three-point triumph over a gutsy Sligo side in a thrilling ZuCar All-Ireland U-18 B final at MacDonagh Park in Nenagh.

This B decider was a first for both Sligo and Kerry, although the Munster county have pedigree at A level, having won three titles in the top tier in 1980, '81 and '95.

The counties recently contested an All-Ireland U-16 B final, with Kerry earning the bragging rights on that occasion.

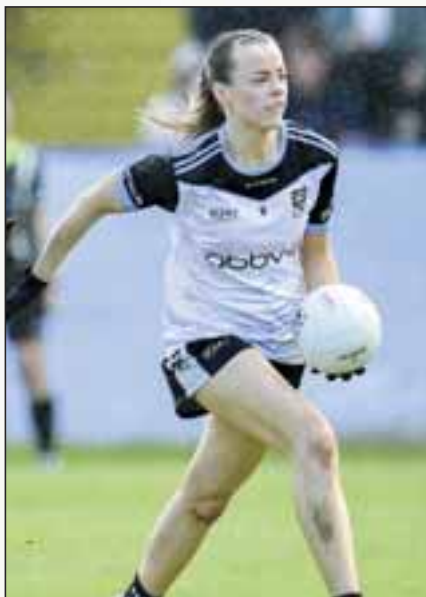
In blustery conditions at the Nenagh venue, wind-assisted Kerry, who enjoyed early possession, put pressure on the Connacht champions.

Having opened the scoring through Julia Curtin's converted free after five minutes, Kerry put a stamp on the game



Leah McMahon of Kerry in action against Cara King of Sligo during the ZuCar All-Ireland Ladies Football U18 B final match between Kerry and Sligo at MacDonagh Park in Nenagh, Tipperary.

Photo by Seb Daly/Sportsfile



Tara Breheny of Sligo in action during the ZuCar All-Ireland Ladies Football U18 B final match between Kerry and Sligo at MacDonagh Park in Nenagh, Tipperary.

Photo by Seb Daly/Sportsfile

with a well-taken goal from Amy Curtin in the ninth minute.

Sligo got their first score after 12 minutes through their only first-half scorer, free-taker Rianne Smith, as Kerry's disciplined defending kept Sligo at bay.

A fortuitous second goal for Kerry – Julia Curtin netted with a hooked effort that looked like a point attempt – gave the Kingdom a six-point lead, 2-1 to 0-1, after 14 minutes.

Sligo improved in the latter stages of the first-half and added two more points, both frees, from Smith but it was Kerry who took a five-point lead into the break at 2-2 to 0-3.

Both sides had a player sent to the sin bin in the last 10 minutes of the opening period – there were sanctions for Sligo's Lauren Normanly and Kerry player Kelly Enright.

Sligo were much-improved during the second-half, with substitutes Ellen Kelleher and Eimear Hunt doing well, while Smith kick-started the revival with a 41st minute goal from a close-range flick.

Good points from Blaithin Lavin, Lauren Normanly and Sarah Feeney brought Sligo to within a point of Kerry, 2-

4 to 1-6, with 16 minutes of normal time left.

But determined Sligo didn't score again for the remainder of the contest that included six minutes of added time.

Kerry, for whom captain Roisin Rahilly impressed, as did Enright, kept in front and vital converted frees from their top scorer Julia Curtin and Leah McMahon got them over the line.

SCORERS - Kerry: J Curtin 1-3 (2f), A Curtin 1-1, L McMahon 0-1 (f), K Enright 0-1.

Sligo: R Smith 1-3 (3f), B Lavin 0-1, L Normanly 0-1, S Feeney 0-1.

KERRY: A Looney; K Furey, R Smith, L Reilly; C Gannon, R Rahilly (c), O McKenna; E Ni Laighinn, K Enright; A Curtin, L McMahon, N Quinn; J Gill, J Curtin, K Doe. **Subs:** C Daly for L Reilly (45), T Murphy for J Gill (51), K Enright for C Gannon (56), G Kennedy for J Curtin (60).

SLIGO: M Burke; H Redican, C King, E Boland; I Henry, K Walsh, J Gabbidon; T Breheny, C Walsh; A McDaniel, R Smith, B Lavin; L Foley (c), L Normanly, S Feeney. **Subs:** E Hunt for K Walsh (ht), E Kelleher for L Foley (39), C Brennan for L Normanly (56), E Cawley for S Feeney (59), J Monaghan for A McDaniel (60+4).

REF: Gavin Finnegan (Down).

Brave Sligo challenge comes up just short against Kerry



A view of action during the 2023 All-Ireland U16 Ladies Football B Final match between Kerry and Sligo at Duggan Park, Ballinasloe, Galway.

Photo by Tom Beary/Sportsfile

ZUCAR ALL-IRELAND LADIES U16 B FINAL

Kerry4-10
Sligo2-13

By DARREN KELLY

KERRY are All-Ireland U-16 B ladies football champions for the first time ever after holding off a determined Sligo resurgence in Duggan Park in Ballinasloe.

Goals from Anna O'Sullivan, Mary Kate Smith, Lori O'Connor and Lisa Slattery were ultimately the difference. But after trailing by 10 points, goals from Saoirse Corcoran and Keeva Flynn helped reduce that deficit to two before O'Connor's late Kerry free sealed the win.

Kerry took full advantage of the wind in the opening five minutes hitting Sligo for 2-1 and it was a lead they didn't relinquish.

From the throw-in Smith and Keelin O'Sullivan moved play down the centre before releasing Anna O'Sullivan who scored their first goal.

Donal Doherty's team also forced keeper Rebecca Davey into a save from O'Connor before the latter set up Smith

for a point. But when Lisa Slattery supplied Smith for Kerry's second goal, there was seven between them.

Sligo finally got off the mark on nine minutes when Lucy Henry was fouled and Keeva Flynn split the posts. They enjoyed their best spell keeping the Kingdom scoreless but only managed another Flynn free in response leaving it 2-1 to 0-2 on 20 minutes.

Kerry ended their drought with Smith and O'Connor tallying to restore the seven-point cushion before Flynn's third placed ball for Sligo on 23 minutes. Kerry were threatening again as Smith added to her account.

Corcoran did get the Yeats County's first from play on 30 minutes but Kerry replied with 1-1. O'Connor was put through for the third goal and Sarah Fitzgerald added a point making it 3-5 to 0-4 at half-time.

Sligo started with two Flynn scores but Kerry replied through Hannah Nic Gearailt and O'Connor. And even when Corcoran did make the breakthrough for Sligo's first goal on 36 minutes, Slattery did likewise for Kerry two minutes later making it 4-7 to 1-6.

But Gerard Mullaney's charges wouldn't concede. Flynn registered two placed

balls before Corcoran scored from play. And after O'Connor responded for Kerry, another Flynn triple left Sligo just 4-8 to 1-12 down with five minutes remaining.

Nic Gearailt pointed for Kerry before Ellen Giblin sent over a Sligo free. But when Flynn took her pass and scored their second goal two minutes from time, the Connacht county's supporters were on their feet. However, Kerry held firm with O'Connor converting their final free to capture the crown for the first time.

SCORERS - Kerry: Lori O'Connor 1-4 (1f), MK Smith 1-3, A O'Sullivan 1-0, L Slattery 1-0, H Nic Gearailt 0-2, S Fitzgerald 0-1.

Sligo: K Flynn 1-10 (9f), S Corcoran 1-2, E Giblin 0-1 (1f).

KERRY: L Harrington; J Lee O'Connor, G Murphy, L O'Sullivan; S Collieran, Lucy O'Connor, H Nic Gearailt; A O'Sullivan, MK Smith; K O'Sullivan, L Slattery, K Riordan; M Mulvihill, Lori O'Connor, S Fitzgerald. **Subs:** A O'Donoghue for Collieran (34), M Teahan for K O'Sullivan (38), E Costelloe for Fitzgerald (42), A Collins for L O'Sullivan (59)

SLIGO: R Davey; C Crawley, K Feeney, S Walsh; A Durcan, L Henry, G O'Callaghan; R McGoldrick, L Galvin; C Burns, K Flynn, G Cooke; C Gallagher, S Corcoran, E Giblin. **Subs:** C Gilligan for Burns (17), T Hastings for Galvin (HT), A Conheady for Walsh (36), AK Davitt for Gallagher (50), S Davey for Cooke (58).

REF: Ciaran Groome (Offaly).



Mayo legend O’Hora looks back on glory days



1999 Mayo All-Ireland winning captain Diane O’Hora is honoured at half-time of the TG4 LGFA All-Ireland Senior Championship Final at Croke Park in Dublin.

Photo by Seb Daly/Sportsfile

By DAIRE WALSH

IN SPITE of it being a landmark victory for the county, Diane O’Hora and Mayo were not prepared to let their All-Ireland final triumph of 1999 go down as a flash in the pan.

Four-point winners at the expense of Waterford a year earlier with O’Hora as

captain, the westerners squeezed past the Déise by the slenderest of margins (3-6 to 0-14) to claim the Brendan Martin Cup crown in 2000. Their bid to claim a third successive All-Ireland SFC was halted by Laois 12 months on from completing back-to-back titles, but it remained a notable feat for a Mayo side that hadn’t appeared in a senior championship decider before the first of those victories.

“It’s a credit to the management because being from Mayo and I’ve said this before, it’s a county at senior level that hasn’t been blessed with success in the last 50 if not more years. For us as a senior team at the time to have won in ’99, it was a huge occasion for the county,” O’Hora acknowledged.

“It’s one thing to win one, but to win back-to-back is even bigger again. The Meath ladies showed that can be done. At



All-Ireland Ladies Football final Mayo vs Dublin 2003 – goalscorer Diane O’Hora celebrates at the end of the game.

Photo: INPHO/Lorraine O’Sullivan.

“It’s one thing to win one, but to win back-to-back is even bigger again.”

TG4 All-Ireland Intermediate title) provides a perfect example of how important this was.

“A girl called Deirdre Devine from Bonniconlon came in training as a keeper with Mayo. She was on the county panel for a couple of years. Only recently I think she had come home from England for a visit. She has moved home now, but she sent me a picture of her school book that I signed when she was in primary school. It’s just actually the coolest thing ever,” O’Hara explained.

“She wrote a little note beside it that I had come into her school. That I had signed it and I was captain of the team in that year.

“It’s so funny, 20 years later then she sends me the image of that. In the middle of all of this, we’d also have been playing on the Mayo team. When you think of those school visits, the value of what they had. The positive impact is just unbelievable.”

the time we were blessed to have been able to do it.”

After an extended spell in New York as part of a course she was doing in IT Sligo (now known as ATU Sligo), O’Hora was watching from the stands when Mayo reclaimed their All-Ireland crown with a 0-12 to 1-8 win against Monaghan in 2002.

Yet she was subsequently welcomed back into the fold and it was a late goal by the Ballina native that ultimately helped the green and red to once again defend their Brendan Martin Cup crown in a low-scoring affair (1-4 to 0-5) with Dublin on October 5, 2003.

“Someone won a free, I think it was probably around the ‘45’. Cora [Staunton] just knocked it into the box and I suppose right time, right place. A forward’s job is to do what you’re there to do and that’s to score.

“I was lucky the ball fell right to me. I think Cliodhna O’Connor [Dublin goalkeeper] tried to punch it and it kind of came down into my hands at the edge of the square. Then I just managed to put it into the back of the net.”

A run of four All-Ireland final wins over the span of five years certainly made this a golden era for Mayo ladies football. During this time, the team made a point of visiting as many schools as possible to help grow the sport and two-time All Star O’Hora (who guided Kildare to the 2023



2007 – Mayo captain Christina Heffernan, right, and Diane O’Hora at the 2007 launch of the TG4 All-Ireland Ladies Football Championship. Croke Park, Dublin. Photo: Paul Mohan / SPORTSFILÉ



Galway's winning streak against Cork comes to an end



Aoife Donohue of Galway in action against Laura Hayes of Cork during the All-Ireland Camogie Championship semi-final match between Cork and Galway at UPMC Nowlan Park in Kilkenny. Photo by Piaras Ó Mídheach/Sportsfile

ALL-IRELAND SENIOR CAMOGIE CHAMPIONSHIP - SEMI-FINAL

Cork0-15
Galway2-6

By DARAGH Ó CONCHÚIR
 at UPMC Nowlan Park

CORK ended a run of eight consecutive losses against Galway, including three this year alone, to emerge victorious in a fiercely fought Glen Dimplex All-Ireland senior camogie semi-final at UPMC Nowlan Park.

In front of a strong overall attendance for the televised double header of 7,257, the Rebels held the upper hand for most of proceedings but they found it difficult to shake off their doughty opponents.

With Waterford in the opposite corner for a unique derby final pairing, Cork will be looking to end another losing record, having fallen short in the last four national deciders stretching back to the 2021 All-Ireland.

This was a game that was less elemental than the first semi-final, cagier, with a little more testiness between players who know each other well.

Cork could find their go-to players

more easily than Galway, and whereas Matthew Twomey could introduce Laura Hayes, Cliona Healy, Orla Cronin, Ashling Thompson and Orlaith Cahalane off his bench, Cathal Murray has been shorn of the talents of Niamh Kilkenny, Sarah Dervan, Sarah Healy, Catriona Cormican and Heather Cooney to name just five this year.

The westerners, who got the better of the duel between the counties in the Very League Division 1 final, battled all the way to the line, with Aoife Donohue driving them forward and Róisín Black a resolute presence in defence, but Cork would not be denied.

Libby Coppinger and official player of the match Saoirse McCarthy had huge second halves and with the subs having a big involvement, the Cork victory was merited.

It was 0-6 to 1-2 at half-time of this arm wrestle, Mackey slotting two points and O'Connor three on her way to a tally of seven.

Siobhán McGrath buried the first of her two goals in the 17th minute however, thanks to a real bit of magic by Donohue to somehow get a pass off to Rachel Hanniffy, who in turn supplied the Sars-fields finisher who drove low beyond the advancing Amy Lee.

Donohue brought the teams level but half-time sub Hayes and O'Connor pushed Cork clear, while Healy also hit the first of her two points from the bench as Matthew Twomey's crew moved four clear.

Back came Galway with McGrath's second goal, after Lee failed to gather,



Niamh Hanniffy of Galway in action against Hannah Looney of Cork during the All-Ireland Camogie Championship semi-final match between Cork and Galway at UPMC Nowlan Park in Kilkenny.

Photo by Piaras Ó Midheach/Sportsfile



Siobhán McGrath of Galway after her side's defeat in the All-Ireland Camogie Championship semi-final match between Cork and Galway at UPMC Nowlan Park in Kilkenny.

Photo by Piaras Ó Midheach/Sportsfile

but with so much experience and talent to call upon, as well as vast reservoirs of grit, the Cork response was notable.

Healy lofted her second and when McCarthy, who had powered into the fray in the second half, pointed gloriously from a tight angle, after taking the return from a quickly-taken sideline and making ground up the left before cutting in, felt significant.

With O'Connor bringing her tally to seven and Orlaith Cahalane making it a fourth point from subs for Cork, they would not be pegged back.

SCORERS - Cork: A O'Connor 0-7(5fs, 1 45); K Mackey, C Healy 0-2 each; L Hayes, O Cahalane, C Sigerson(f), S McCarthy 0-1 each

Galway: C Dolan 0-4(3fs); S McGrath 2-0; A Donohue 0-2

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

Subs: L Hayes for Murphy (ht), O Cronin for McCartan (40); A Thompson for O'Regan (49)

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

Subs: S Rabbitte for McPeake (33), O McGrath for Gardiner (50)

REF: Ray Kelly (Kildare).

All-Ireland winning captain to hallowed sod of Croke Park

By DAIRE WALSH

ON Sunday August 13, almost 19 years on from one of the key moments in her distinguished inter-county career, Galway's Annette Clarke was back on the hallowed turf of Croke Park.

On October 3, 2004, Clarke captained the Tribeswomen and scored 1-3 as they defeated Dublin in the TG4 All-Ireland Senior Football Championship decider. She returned to GAA HQ for the same stage of the Brendan Martin Cup the following season, but on that occasion it was a Cork team led by Juliet Murphy that claimed the first of five SFC crowns in succession.

Across the 49 finals that took place before this year, Clarke and Murphy were just two of 42 winning captains in the All-Ireland senior ladies football championship.

While there were a few absentees, each and every one of this cohort had their names read out during the half-time break for the Brendan Martin Cup showpiece between Dublin and Kerry on August 13 with Clarke amongst those who was introduced to the crowd.

"It was a great experience really, to be honest. I felt a bit lonely because I was the only Galway captain there, when you see groups of girls from Waterford and Cork, and Mayo and the likes!" Clarke recalled of a day that began with a

captain's lunch in the north Dublin stadium.

"You're disappointed for Galway that we only had the one All-Ireland in that time frame, but at the same time from a personal level, even just to represent Galway, I was just delighted to be part of the occasion. I thought my days of walking out onto Croke Park were done, but it was nice to get another walk out there!"

Because she was part of Dublin's panel for the LGFA's 50th All-Ireland senior final, Sinead Aherne (who captained the Jackies to four consecutive titles from 2017 to 2020) was represented by her former team-mate Lyndsey Davey for this captain's presentation.

Remarkably, both Davey and Aherne were playing for Dublin in their loss to Galway in that 2004 decider and remained inter-county colleagues until Davey announced her retirement in the winter of 2022. While her All-Ireland success doesn't feel that long ago in her own head, Clarke acknowledges conversing with the Skerries Harps woman on the day served as a reminder of how time can pass very quickly.

"I spoke to her afterwards and to think that Lyndsey and Sinead were both part of that Dublin team in 2004... For Sinead still to be toying out and taking part in an All-Ireland final in 2023, that's an achievement in itself.

"Lyndsey as well, she's only just retired. They were both very young obviously for Dublin when they would have toiled against us. They've gone on and they've had really great careers themselves."

Just two years before winning that 2004 crown, Clarke was also part of a Galway side that secured an All-Ireland junior title at the expense of Donegal. The tier below the senior championship at that time, this was a major boost for the county and made amends for their final reversal to Down at the same grade in 2000.

However, Clarke's first All-Ireland win at adult level wasn't in the maroon and white of Galway, but rather in the red and white of Kilkerrin-Clonberne. Acting once

2004 - Galway captain Annette Clarke lifts the Brendan Martin Cup after victory over Dublin. TG4 Ladies Senior Football All-Ireland Final, Dublin v Galway, Croke Park, Dublin.

Photo by Brian Lawless / SPORTSFILE



Captain Clarke returns to Croke Park

again as captain despite still being in her teens, she registered four points as the Connacht outfit claimed the All-Ireland intermediate club championship with a 2-6 to 1-3 triumph over Louth's Cooley Kickhams at Keenagh, Co. Longford in December 1999.

Her journey with Kilkerrin-Clonberne had begun at the start of the same decade and when she brought the curtain down on her inter-county career in the spring of 2016, Clarke was eager to give back to a club that had offered her so much during her formative years as a footballer.

"Obviously I had to commit to inter-county and I was grateful for all the opportunities that I got with Galway. At the same time, you don't get to give the same commitment with the club when you're playing at inter-county level.

"Obviously I would stay as committed as could be, but I felt when I retired from the county that I could really, really commit and concentrate on putting more work into the club. I got



2004 Galway All-Ireland winning captain Annette Clarke is presented with a medallion by former LGFA President Marie Hickey during a special luncheon before the TG4 LGFA All-Ireland Senior Championship Final at Croke Park in Dublin.

Photo by Ramsey Cardy/
Sportsfile

**CONTINUED
OVERLEAF**

2004 Galway All-Ireland winning captain Annette Clarke is honoured at half-time of the TG4 LGFA All-Ireland Senior Championship Final at Croke Park in Dublin.

Photo by Seb Daly/Sportsfile





2014 - Annette Clarke, Galway, in action against Molly Lamb, Dublin. TG4 All-Ireland Ladies Football Senior Championship, Semi-Final, Dublin v Galway, Cusack Park, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath.

Picture credit: Oliver McVeigh / SPORTSFILE

involved as a development officer and even just with the underage teams as well. Coaching U14, U16, minor teams. I just felt that it was time to give a little bit back.”

Having helped her club to win eight county championships and four provincial titles from 2013 to 2020, Clarke was initially away from the Kilkerrin/Clonberne set-up in 2021 after she became pregnant with her twins, Lucy and Jack.

Yet after they were born in September of that year, she quickly returned to the fold and added another coveted crown to her already impressive list of honours in January 2022. Just over two years on from losing out to the same side in a tension-filled showpiece, Kilkerrin-Clonberne finally got their hands on the currentaccount.ie All-Ireland Senior Club Championship with a 1-11 to 1-7 victory against Cork’s Mourneabbey at St Brendan’s Park, Birr.

Appearing off the bench with eight minutes remaining, Clarke became the first female Gaelic footballer in Galway to win an All-Ireland senior title at both club and county level. She wasn’t part of the squad that successfully defended the Dolores Tyrrell Memorial Cup a little over 10 months later, but is continuing to keep a keen eye on the progress of Kilkerrin-Clonberne.

“I got to achieve with the girls and with the management a first senior All-Ireland with the club. I’m grateful to the club, both the management and the players, to allow me to do that. To allow me back into the fold,” Clarke added.

“It was nice to be able to do. Obviously I’d love to be still involved, but I think age and family commitments have caught up with me. I just look forward to supporting the younger girls now as they’re coming through.

“You’d still be disappointed obviously losing 2019, but it helped make up for it by getting the All-Ireland medal. It was a little bit more emotional even for me then at that stage, because I have my two, Lucy and Jack, that I’d be able to tell about it in years to come. If they’re interested!”

Cup final heartbreak for Mayo

NANCY MURRAY CAMOGIE CUP FINAL MATCH REPORT

Wicklow1-15
Mayo1-5

WICKLOW put their heart-breaking defeat in last year’s Nancy Murray Cup final behind them in emphatic style in Birr as they produced a wonderful all-round display to outplay Mayo to win the All-Ireland junior A camogie championship.

With just five of the starters from that 2022 final on the pitch when referee Shane Foley threw in the ball, it was a new-look Wicklow side that tried to make up for that disappointment in Inniskeen.

However, it felt like the memory of Tyrone’s late three-goal surge to win by a point that day was fresh in their minds as Brendan Tobin’s side set about beating with more than a little to spare, ensuring that they wouldn’t run the risk of another tense finale.

Playing into the teeth of a strong breeze in the opening half, Mayo would have been the happier side with 10 minutes played, level at 0-2 apiece. Wicklow still looked like the sharper, more coherent unit with ball in hand, but the contest was very scrappy at that stage with very few clear-cut chances, and Lisa Scahill’s brace of frees kept the westerners on terms, aided by three early wides for the Garden County.

However, when it came to the battle for

breaking ball in the middle third, there was no doubt as to which side was quicker to get to the pitch of the game. Team captain Jade Byrne at centre-back, Aoife Keddy and Sarah Lambe at midfield, and player of the match Katie Tyrrell at centre-forward controlled their individual battles, and as a result the bulk of the play happened in front of the Mayo goal.

The absence of key attacker Maebh Delaney further blunted the Connacht county’s offence and gave Wicklow the freedom to really attack the game without fear.

Tyrrell landed some excellent scores while Daisie Summer Cullen Dunne was a real threat on the edge of the Mayo square, grabbing one point and whipping over another from a very tight angle to help Wicklow to build a 0-10 to 0-3 lead at the interval.

Even at that, Mayo weren’t out of it, since the wind was a huge factor. In the All-Ireland Under 16 B Shield final that preceded this game, Westmeath had a wind-assisted seven-point lead at half-time against Carlow but were only able to add one point in the second half and ended up nine points short, 4-12 to 3-6.

That was never going to happen here, though, as Wicklow didn’t allow Mayo to get the possession they needed to use the elements and instead the Leinster side kept their opponents at arm’s length, edging the third quarter by 0-2 to 0-1.

Sophie Birmingham’s point to open the scoring in the second half typified the difference between the sides, the Kiltegan player pouncing sharply on what looked like a 50/50

break off a long Tyrrell delivery before driving the sliotar over the bar before Mayo could close her down.

A fine catch and close-range finish from Emily Kelly appeared to give Mayo some cause for hope in the 46th minute as her route-one goal reduced the gap to five points but Wicklow’s response to that temporary setback was exemplary.

They tightened their stranglehold on proceedings at half-back, and while they had a couple of near misses with their next two attacks, they continued to crank up the pressure before two frees from Tyrrell put them right back on the front foot.

The contest was effectively settled with five minutes to play when Cullen Dunne found the net to stretch the lead out to 10 points. An explosive burst of pace from Hannah Doyle opened up the Mayo defence and when she played the ball into the hands of the full-forward, a deft sidestep and a clever low finish was enough to seal the deal.

MAYO: A. Crawley; C. Burke, A. Doherty, G. Delaney; B. Joyce, C. Delaney, N. Grealley, L. Keane (0-1), R. Lyons; E. Tener, A. Lambert, E. Kelly (1-0); S. Mooney, L. Scahill (0-4, 3f), S. Golden. **Subs:** K. Scahill, G.M. Henry, A. Quinn, H. O’Malley.

WICKLOW: C. Hughes; A. Mulhall, C. Kelly, M. Deegan; A. Connolly, J. Byrne, S. O’Shea; A. Keddy, S. Lambe; A. Birmingham (0-3, 1f), K. Tyrrell (0-8, 4f, 2 45’), H. Doyle; F. Corrigan (0-1), D.S. Cullen Dunne (1-3), N. Curran.

Subs: E. Bourke, E. Tyrrell, P.R. Cullen Dunne.

REF: Shane Foley (Carlow).

Galway denied by Rebels in thrilling All-Ireland decider

ALL-IRELAND U16 A CAMOGIE FINAL

Cork0-11
Galway1-7

CORK claimed their fourth consecutive All-Ireland U16 A camogie title, following a one-point win over Galway at Nowlan Park, Kilkenny, on Saturday afternoon.

John Moloney's side came through a gripping final to deservedly take home the trophy for the seventeenth time, with Ballinora's Rachel Murphy producing a Player of the Match performance.

The opening quarter of the game was very evenly contested. Cork played against the wind in the first half and opened the scoring with a good point from Rachel Murphy, after a strong run down the right wing. Galway replied two minutes later, with a score from Emily Lawless.

Laura Walsh put the Rebels back in front with an impressive individual score before Galway became dominant and tallied four consecutive points. Cara O'Brien sent over two frees and a 45, before Katie Lawless pointed to put the westerners into a 0-5 to 0-2 lead.

Rachel Murphy reduced the margin with a

super score from the left wing, before Galway reestablished a three-point lead, with a score from O'Brien from play. The final point of the half came from Catherine Murphy, to leave the Rebels two behind at the interval, on a 0-6 to 0-4 scoreline.

A tight and tense third quarter saw few scoring chances for either side, but Galway got a huge boost in the 40th minute when they were awarded a penalty. Emily Lawless was the player brought down in the Cork square before Katie Lawless blasted a low penalty to the net.

Cork looked in trouble chasing a five-point lead midway through the second half. However, the response from Moloney's young players was magnificent. The Rebels dug in and took over the game, scoring seven points without reply.

Rachel Murphy caught fire, hitting three marvellous points in a row. Laura Walsh then took a neat score over her shoulder, before Clara Murphy's point levelled the match in the 53rd minute.

The momentum was with the Leesiders at this stage, and they continued to pressurise the Galway defence. The Cork forwards drew two frees which were pointed by Rachel Murphy, to put them 0-11 to 1-6 ahead enter-

ing injury time.

Galway's Katie Lawless pointed a late free to reduce the margin to the minimum. Some Galway pressure in the dying minutes failed to produce an equaliser however, with the Cork backs defending superbly.

The Rebels held on to deservedly claim another All-Ireland title, in a grade which Cork continue to dominate.

SCORERS - Cork: R Murphy 0-7 (0-2 f, 0-1 45), L Walsh 0-2, Clara Murphy, Catherine Murphy 0-1 each.

Galway: K Lawless 1-2 (1-0 pen, 0-1 f), C O'Brien 0-4 (0-2 f, 0-1 45), E Lawless 0-1.

CORK: E. Honohan; S. Cunningham, A. Cagney, C. Ryan; M. Lombard, A. Cussen, L. O'Shea; A. McAuliffe, A. Cottrell; R. Murphy, K. O'Sullivan, Catherine Murphy; M. O'Brien, A. Mulkerrins, L. Walsh. **Subs:** Clara Murphy for O'Sullivan (h-t), T. Goulding for Catherine Murphy (39), J. Murphy for O'Brien (50).

GALWAY: L. Horan; C. Fahy, A. Morgan, M. Ní Lionsaigh; E. Dillon, R. Kilkenny, R. Gardiner; L. Behan, K. O'Driscoll; M. Rodgers, K. Lawless, C. O'Brien; E. Lawless, M. B. Cosgrove, E. Barrett.

Subs: E. Ryan for Ní Lionsaigh (h-t), K. Flaherty for O'Brien (51), C. Burke for Barrett (55), A. Morrissey for Rodgers (60).

REF: Liz Dempsey (Kilkenny).

ALFIE HOWLEY RIP

By JOHN FALLON

THE GAA in Galway lost a real character and a man who left an enormous legacy in the city when Alfie Howley passed away three weeks after his 80th birthday.

He was involved with three clubs in the city, helping one of them to win two county senior football titles and then was a leading force in setting up the other two clubs on the east of the city.

He was also involved for the last 60 years in developing and promoting the GAA in Galway city and gave widespread service to the organisation, not least in the running of Pearse Stadium in the past couple of decades.

Throughout it all, it would be hard to find someone to have a harsh word about Alfie Howley, despite the cut and thrust of the GAA and you often suspected he enjoyed the banter and politics of it all as much as the action inside the white lines.

Thousands of children were introduced to the GAA by Howley and what he helped to set up, and even from his hospital bed he was keen to hear of the progress of an U-13 team from the St James' club that he felt

was going places.

He arrived in Galway in 1961 from Kilfenora in Clare where he played both football and hurling, having helped St Flannan's College from Ennis to win their first ever Munster senior football title in 1959.

Howley joined the Fr Griffin's club in the city and helped them win the county senior final in 1967, when he scored the winning goal against Milltown, and again in 1970.

He was living in Renmore where the city was expanding rapidly with new housing estates and was approached by parish priest Fr Eamonn Dermody to help set up a GAA club there. They enjoyed underage success, while on the other side of the Dublin Road the Mervue parish, somewhat older but also expanding with new housing estates, was doing likewise.

The two neighbours met in the 1986 Féile U-14 final which Renmore won and when, four years later, Mervue got revenge in the county minor A final on a day when city rivals Salthill thrashed Corofin in the final in 1990, momentum built that the two clubs should merge if they wanted to become a force at senior level.

Howley was instrumental in establishing the new St James' GAA club which has gone



on to enjoy considerable success at adult and underage level.

He rarely championed his central role in all of this but he could never hide his sheer joy when St James' finest protégé Paul Conroy emerged to captain Galway to the 2007 All-Ireland minor title before embarking on a remarkable senior inter-county career that is still ongoing.

Alfie Howley is survived by his wife Mary and his family Pádraic, Deirdre, Anne, Brian and John. He was laid to rest at Rinville Cemetery in Oranmore following his funeral Mass at St. Oliver Plunkett Church in Renmore.

Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam.

St Jarlath's goes co-ed

By **JOHN FALLON**
Media West Ireland

THE country's most successful Gaelic football nursery for boys in the country has become co-ed for the first time in its 223 history with 30 girls taking their place in the classrooms at St Jarlath's College in Tuam when the school re-opened this August.

The north Galway school has captured the All-Ireland senior football title a dozen times and the Connacht crown on 49 occasions, three more than the combined total of the other eight schools who have won it.

School president John Kelly says plans are already under way to enter girls teams in as many sports as possible as well continue the high academic achievements of the school since it opened its doors for the first time in 1800.

It is a time of huge change in education in the north Galway town as the Presentation College and Mercy Secondary School, who have recently amalgamated will also be co-ed with boys being enrolled this term, bringing an end to single-sex schools in the town going back over two centuries.

The move to co-ed in the schools follows extensive studies carried out in the town and surrounding area, with an overwhelming majority of parents and pupils opting for mixed schools.

Mr Kelly is more than familiar with co-educational schools. He was educated at Sancta Maria College in Louisburgh which in 1991 became the first Catholic co-education secondary school in the



2002 - Michael Meehan of St Jarlath's College during the Post Primary Schools Hogan Cup Senior A Football Championship Semi-Final Replay match between St Jarlath's College and Coláiste na Sceilge at the Gaelic Grounds in Limerick.

Photo by Damien Eagers/Sportsfile

country, while all of his teaching roles have been in co-ed schools.

"The numbers in the school have increased over the last number of years. We have experienced an increase consis-

tently, so opening up the school to co-ed is not an exercise in increasing numbers in the school.

"Rather it is a case of providing the community with what it wants and what



Galway manager Padraic Joyce before the Quarter-Final match between Galway and Mayo at Pearse Stadium. Photo by Seb Daly/Sportsfile



Roisin Leonard of Galway kicks a free during the National League Div 1 Final between Kerry and Galway.

Photo by Brendan Moran/Sportsfile



2011 - Shane Walsh, in action during the All-Ireland final, against St Colman's, Newry. Photo: Oliver McVeigh



1999 – The St Jarlath's team prior to the GAA All-Ireland Post Primary Senior A Schools Football Hogan Cup Final match between St Jarlath's Tuam, Galway, and Good Counsel New Ross, Wexford, at Croke Park in Dublin. Photo by Ray Lohan/Sportsfile

they look for in a school. The trustees of the school ran a survey in the local area for all schools and the feedback from parents, from the primary schools, from our existing students and teachers is that co-ed is what is wanted.

“And that drove our decision, the Board of Management, and the trustees based on that decision that we would open up as a co-ed school,” said Mr Kelly, who became the first layman when he was appointed the 32nd president of the college in 2013..

Close on 140 first years started at St Jarlath's College this term, including 30 girls, pushing the overall number to 620 in a school with around 60 teachers. It is the latest development in the renowned

history of St Jarlath's College. Initially it was a boarding school when it was opened by the Tuam Archdiocese — pupils lived with local families until dormitories were built — and while it thrived in the initial years, pupil numbers fell to just 16 at one stage during the Great Famine.

Day pupils boosted numbers at the school over the decades and in 2006 boarding ceased at the school. By then moves were happening to amalgamate with St Patrick's College, formerly Tuam CBS their arch rivals, and this was completed in 2010.

But the school is most renowned for its success on the football field. The Hogan Cup, the All-Ireland trophy, has been brought home a dozen times. Only St

Colman's, Newry and St Pat's, Maghera, have managed to win it more than four times. St Jarlath's have appeared in 27 of the 66 All-Ireland finals and over the decades have produced hundreds of GAA stars, not just for Galway.

Current Galway manager Pádraic Joyce was one eight St Jarlath's players in the starting 15, with more in the subs, when Galway won the 1998 All-Ireland senior football title.

And with Galway stars such as Michael Meehan and Roisin Leonard on the teaching staff, the boys and girls of St Jarlath's College will not lack direction on the football fields in the years ahead as new era dawns for the famed Tuam nursery.

St Jarlath's victorious All-Ireland finals

- 1947 St. Jarlath's College, Tuam 4-10 St. Patrick's, Armagh 3-8 – V. McHale capt.
- 1958 St. Jarlath's College, Tuam 1-7 Franciscan College, Gormanstown 2-3 – S. Nolan capt.
- 1960 St. Jarlath's College, Tuam 3-10 St. Finian's College, Mullingar 3-7 – P. Sheridan capt.
- 1961 St. Jarlath's College, Tuam 2-6 St. Mel's, Longford 1-8 – L. O'Brien capt.
- 1964 St. Jarlath's College, Tuam 1-10 St. Mel's, Longford 0-4 – S. Downes capt.
- 1966 St. Jarlath's College, Tuam 1-10 St. Brendan's, Killarney 1-9 – J. Duggan capt.
- 1974 St. Jarlath's College, Tuam 4-11 Franciscan College, Gormanstown 2-11 – H. Gavin capt.
- 1978 St. Jarlath's College, Tuam 2-11 St. Colman's, Newry 2-4 – M. Joyce capt.
- 1982 St. Jarlath's College, Tuam 1-8 St. Fachtna's, Skibbereen 0-7 – R. O'Dwyer capt.
- 1984 St. Jarlath's College, Tuam 0-10 St. Patrick's College, Maghera 2-3 – M. Butler capt.
- 1994 St. Jarlath's College, Tuam 3-11 St. Patrick's College, Maghera 0-9 – P. Joyce capt.
- 2002 St. Jarlath's College, Tuam 3-13 St. Michael's College, Enniskillen 0-06 – M. Meehan capt.

All Ireland Finalists: 1946, 1949, 1962, 1967, 1973, 1976, 1979, 1983, 1990, 1992, 1993, 1999, 2001, 2003.



Dublin end Mayo odysse

ALL-IRELAND SENIOR FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP QUARTER-FINAL

Dublin2-17
Mayo0-11

THIS was a particularly sweet and satisfying afternoon for Dublin at GAA headquarters.

For more than a decade Dublin and Mayo Championship matches have frequently went the distance. In several chaotic encounters Mayo well and truly examined Dublin's resources, while also posting memorable wins in 2012 and 2021.

On this occasion when Dublin departed at the break armed with a slender 1-6 to 0-8 advantage another game looked set to be added to the list. Dessie Farrell's charges, though, weren't following that script.

Instead James McCarthy, one of the influential figures in this win, drove forward from the throw-in, crafted a chance for Paul Mannion to nail a point. It set the tone. Damage was being done by Dublin, who outscored Mayo 1-11 to 0-3 in the second period.

That was a statistic carrying a serious message; Dublin were primed for a battle. Mayo delivered initially and one first half burst yielded four points on the spin



Aidan O'Shea of Mayo in action against David Byrne of Dublin during the GAA Football All-Ireland Senior Championship quarter-final match between Dublin and Mayo at Croke Park in Dublin.

Photo by Ray McManus/Sportsfile



Ryan O'Donoghue of Mayo has a second half shot on goal blocked by Brian Fenton of Dublin, left, during the GAA Football All-Ireland Senior Championship quarter-final match between Dublin and Mayo at Croke Park in Dublin.

Photo by Piaras Ó Mídeach/Sportsfile

following an 18th minute Colm Basquel goal.

Then Mayo were beginning to believe, but before the interval Dublin replied with a burst of three points on the spin. It was critical, especially when a further 1-4 was added after the restart.

A 0-8 to 1-3 deficit was turned into a 2-10 to 0-8 lead. There was no way back for Mayo.

At the outset Mayo had caused Dublin some bother. Ryan O'Donoghue and Tommy Conroy craved involvement inside as the green and red team edged 0-4 to 0-3 ahead in the 17th minute.

Basquel planted an 18th minute goal for Dublin, but Mayo remained defiant. Conroy, O'Donoghue (two), and Aidan O'Shea (free) clipped points for Kevin McStay's outfit.

y at quarter-final stage



Matthew Ruane of Mayo in action against Brian Fenton and Seán Bugler of Dublin during the GAA Football All-Ireland Senior Championship quarter-final match between Dublin and Mayo at Croke Park in Dublin.
Photo by Brendan Moran/Sportsfile

Suddenly Mayo were two in front, but Dublin concluded the first half strongly. Cormac Costello, sharp inside, converted a couple of frees before captain McCarthy



Jordan Flynn of Mayo after his side's defeat in the GAA Football All-Ireland Senior Championship quarter-final match between Dublin and Mayo at Croke Park in Dublin.
Photo by Piaras Ó Mídheach/Sportsfile

pointed following a Niall Scully goal chance.

When the action recommenced McCarthy added a score as Dublin were in the groove. Further efforts from Basquel and Brian Fenton underlined Dublin's dominance at this stage.

Mannion, who was a potent threat, and Costello crafted an opportunity for Basquel in the 40th minute for a second Dublin major. Mannion supplied a point for Dublin, who were eight clear with Mayo in distress.

Paddy Durcan struck a point for Mayo, while an Eoghan McLaughlin goal attempt shaved the post with Dublin introducing a string of marquee players. Ciarán Kilkenney announced his arrival with a point, while Jack McCaffrey thundered forward to good effect also.

A Colm Reape point from a 45 proved to be Mayo's last score with Dublin rifling over five in a row, including scores from substitutes Paddy Small and Dean Rock. It was that sort of day for Dublin, who face Monaghan in the penultimate round.

SCORERS - Dublin: Colm Basquel 2-2, Cormac Costello 0-5 (3fs), James McCarthy, Paul Mannion, and Con O'Callaghan 0-2 each, Ciarán Kilkenney, Paddy Small, Brian Fenton, and Dean Rock 0-1 each.

Mayo: Ryan O'Donoghue 0-5 (2fs), Tommy Conroy 0-2, Paddy Durcan, Jordan Flynn, Colm Reape (45), and Aidan O'Shea (f) 0-1 each.

DUBLIN: Stephen Cluxton; Eoin Murchan, David Byrne, Michael Fitzsimons; John Small, Brian Howard, Lee Gannon; James McCarthy, Brian Fenton; Niall Scully, Seán Bugler, Cormac Costello; Paul Mannion, Con O'Callaghan, Colm Basquel. **Subs:** Jack McCaffrey for Murchan (46), Ciarán Kilkenney for Bugler (47), Paddy Small for Scully (54), Tom Lahiff for Costello (65), Dean Rock for Basquel (70).

MAYO: Colm Reape; Pádraig O'Hora, David McBrien, Sam Callinan; Paddy Durcan, Stephen Coen, Jack Coyne; Mattie Ruane, Diarmuid O'Connor; Eoghan McLaughlin, Jack Carney, Jordan Flynn; Tommy Conroy, Aidan O'Shea, Ryan O'Donoghue. **Subs:** Enda Hession for O'Hora (32), Cillian O'Connor for O'Shea (46), Kevin McLoughlin for McLaughlin (53), James Carr for Ruane (58), Donnacha McHugh for Coen (59), Jason Doherty for Callinan (70).

REF: David Gough (Meath).

Galway bow out at semi-final stage

ALL-IRELAND SENIOR HURLING CHAMPIONSHIP SEMI-FINAL

Limerick2-24
Galway1-18

WHEN Limerick trailed by six points after 25 minutes of this All-Ireland semi-final, you wondered were the three-in-a-row All-Ireland champions teetering.

They'd been out-hustled and out-thought by a Galway team bristling with energy, and struggled to muster their usual mixture of fluency with the ball and controlled aggression without it.

But then their defence with William O'Donoghue in an unfamiliar position of centre-back got to grips with the men they were marking, they began competing with their usual zeal for ball in the middle third, and they dominated the puck-out battle.

That gave them the platform to really get their forwards into the contest and they completely dominated the last 10 minutes of the first half and all of the second to eventually run out very comfortable victors.

Clearly the hunger of this Limerick team remains undiminished as they now advance to yet another All-Ireland Final, and bid to make it four titles in a row and five in six years.

The manner in which their challenge petered out after a very encouraging start will be hugely disappointing for the Galway players.

They had settled into the contest quickly, with points from Evan Niland (free) and Brian Concannon sandwiching an Aaron Gillane free for Limerick.

But then, somewhat against the run of play, Limerick landed the first heavy blow of the game when Gillane struck for a trademark goal.

He showed great strength to catch a Tom Morrissey pass above the head of Daithi Burke, and finished from close-range ruthlessly.

Galway hit back immediately with another Niland free which testified to the steely mental resolve they were bringing to bear on the contest.

Another Niland free brought them level and then Conor Whelan pushed them back into the lead when he won a ball ahead of Mike Casey, wriggled free from the Limerick defender, and lanced the sliotar over the bar.



Tom Monaghan of Galway in action against Cathal O'Neill of Limerick during the GAA Hurling All-Ireland Senior Championship semi-final match between Limerick and Galway at Croke Park in Dublin.
Photo by Brendan Moran/Sportsfile

Another Niland free quickly followed before Limerick levelled the game again – 1-3 to 0-6 - through points from Gillane (free) and Peter Casey.

Then came the best attacking play of the match so far when Kevin Cooney played in Cathal Mannion with a pass of real vision and the midfielder lashed the sliotar to the net from a tight angle.

Galway really had the bit between their teeth now and Concannon landed a very sweet point when he sidestepped beautifully past Kyle Hayes before driving it over the bar.

Concannon was causing Limerick big problems because he was drifting all over the pitch into pockets of space and both making himself available for passes and hitting some great diagonal ones himself into Conor Whelan from deep positions.

At the other end of the pitch Limerick's shooting was uncharacteristically off-colour with seven different players hitting seven wides in the first half.

Galway were more clinical, both from

play and placed balls, and by the 25th minute had moved 1-12 to 1-6 ahead.

A tricky situation for Limerick could have been much worse had Mike Casey not made a brilliant goal-line save from a Concannon ground-stroke that looked destined for the net. As if energised by that near-miss, Limerick came to life in the final 10 minutes of the first-half.

Darragh O'Donovan deserves a lot of credit for their resurgence. He hit a great point from wide on the left and then set up two more for Aaron Gillane and Seamus Flanagan with beautifully weighted passes.

The reigning champions hit the last four points of the half to leave the scores reading 1-13 to 1-12 to Galway at the break, which must not have felt reflective of the huge effort the Tribesmen had produced.

Limerick have a well-earned reputation for putting their foot on the gas at the start of the second-half and they did it again in this match.

They out-scored Galway by four points to two in the first ten minutes of the half with the pick of the bunch an inspirational effort from Tom Morrissey.

Then came their second-goal, and it was one Galway will have nightmares about. Cian Lynch put David Reidy through with a clever pass and when the wing-forward squared it to Aaron Gillane his initial batted effort struck the cross-bar.

Padraic Mannion attempted to flick the rebound clear, but instead he directed it straight into Gillane's path again and this time the Patrickswell star finished ruthlessly as he lashed a ground-stroke to the net.

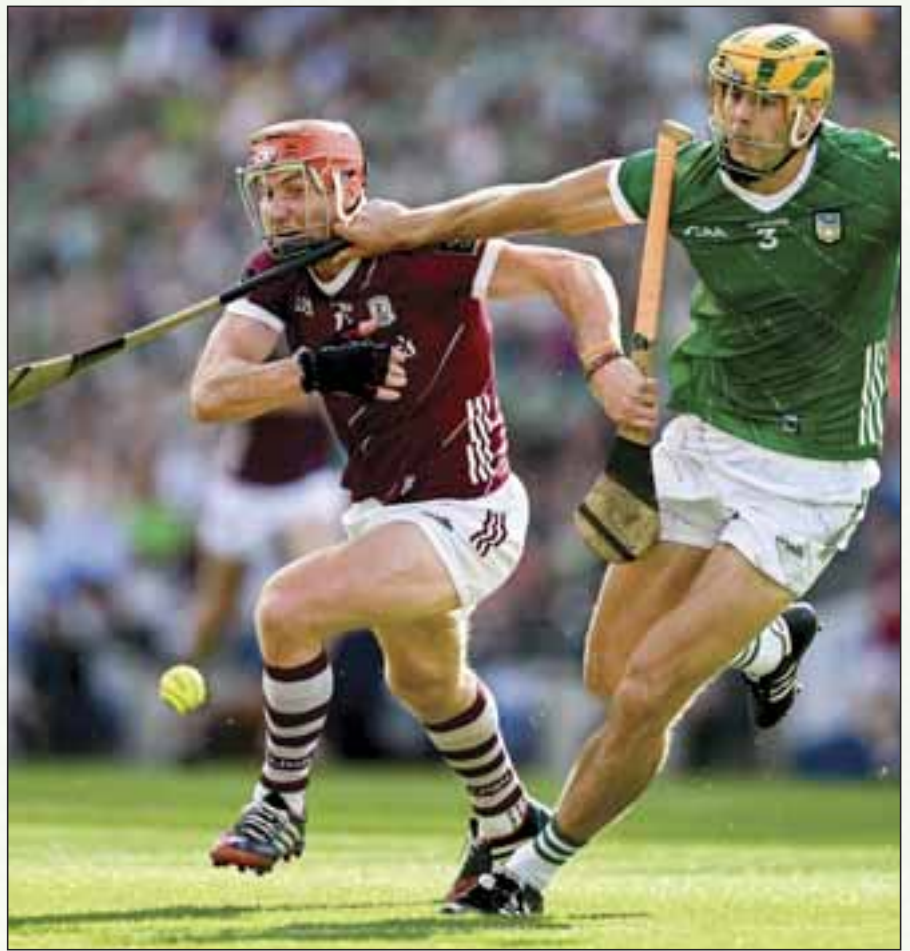
Now trailing by four points, Galway were in real trouble. They were struggling to get any sort of grip on the game because Limerick swallowed the ball up almost every time Éanna Murphy pucked it out.

And when they did manage to win possession in the middle third, they were under so much pressure from swarming Limerick tacklers they struggled to get decent passes into their starving inside forwards.

Points from Kyle Hayes, Gearóid Hegarty, Peter Casey, and David Reidy pushed a now very dominant Limerick team seven points clear by the 58th minute, and even by then a Galway comeback looked very unlikely.

Limerick had the luxury of running their bench, and won pulling up, with subs Graeme Mulcahy and Cathal O'Neill getting in on the act in the injury-time as they scored the final two points of the game.

And, so, Limerick march on to another



Conor Whelan of Galway is tackled by Dan Morrissey of Limerick during the GAA Hurling All-Ireland Senior Championship semi-final match between Limerick and Galway at Croke Park in Dublin.
Photo by Brendan Moran/Sportsfile



Graeme Mulcahy of Limerick in action against Evan Niland of Galway during the GAA Hurling All-Ireland Senior Championship semi-final match between Limerick and Galway at Croke Park in Dublin.
Photo by Brendan Moran/Sportsfile

All-Ireland Final where they will hope to ink another historic chapter in their already remarkable story.

SCORERS - Limerick: Aaron Gillane 2-6 (5f), Diarmaid Byrnes 0-3 (3f), Kyle Hayes, Gearóid Hegarty, Tom Morrissey, Peter Casey, Seamus Flanagan all 0-2, Darragh O'Donovan, Graeme Mulcahy, Cathal O'Neill, David Reidy, Cian Lynch all 0-1

Galway: Evan Niland 0-9 (all frees), Cathal Mannion 1-1, Conor Whelan 0-3, Brian Concannon 0-3, Kevin Cooney, Tom Monaghan both 0-1

LIMERICK: Nickie Quaid; Michael Casey, Dan Morrissey, Barry Nash; Diarmaid Byrnes, William O'Donoghue, Kyle Hayes; Darragh O'Donovan, Cian Lynch; Gearóid Hegarty, Tom Morrissey, David Reidy; Aaron Gillane, Seamus Flanagan, Peter Casey. **Subs:** Cathal O'Neill for Tom Morrissey (56), Graeme Mulcahy for Peter Casey (67), Conor Boylan for Gearóid Hegarty (69), Oisín O'Reilly for Seamus Flanagan, Adam English for Darragh O'Donovan (both 72)

GALWAY: Éanna Murphy; Jack Grealish, Daithí Burke, Darren Morrissey; Padraic Mannion, Gearóid McInerney, Seán Linnane; Joseph Cooney, Cathal Mannion; Ronan Glennon, Cianan Fahy, Kevin Cooney; Conor Whelan, Brian Concannon, Evan Niland. **Subs:** Tom Monaghan for Ronan Glennon (50), Conor Cooney for Sean Linnane (54), Liam Collins for Brian Concannon (63), Fintan Burke for Cianan Fahy (68)

REF: James Owens (Wexford)

UNIVERSITY OF GALWAY CONNACHT GAA AIR DOME



OLLSCOIL NA GAILLIMH
UNIVERSITY OF GALWAY



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