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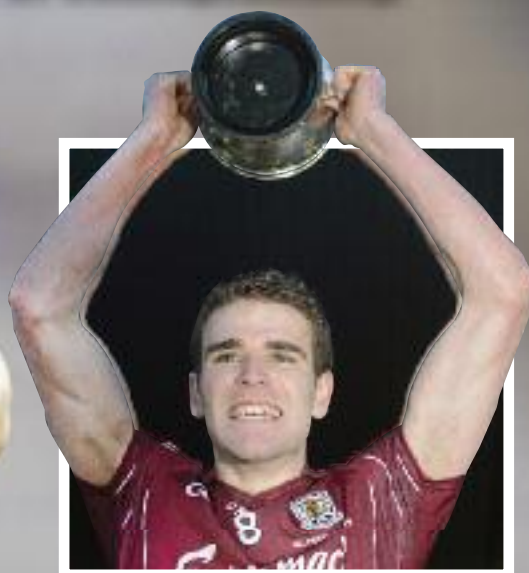
Into the West

The bi-monthly magazine of the Connacht GAA Council



Countdown!

Connacht counties gear up for start of championship



Galway U-21s triumph



Glory for Sligo school



OFFICIAL GAA PUBLICATION

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President's Note

A CHAIRDE GAEL,

WITH the national football and hurling leagues behind us for another year all of our attention now turns to the Connacht football championship, and this year's competition is one to look forward to.

The way the draw has panned out, we are sure to have a number of titanic battles before we get anywhere near a Connacht final. Leitrim face a difficult assignment in New York, London will test Sligo's mettle, and if the two home counties get over their foreign tests, their meeting in Carrick on Shannon is sure to renew their age old derby rivalry.

On the other side of the draw the meeting of Galway and Mayo in Pearse Stadium is a quarter-final worthy of the final, but with Roscommon waiting in the wings for the winners, we can expect the fireworks to continue. It should be a couple of entertaining months.

Galway's victory in the Connacht U-21 championship concluded a tight provincial competition and their hard-fought wins over Mayo and Roscommon in the final has set them up nicely for another crack at the All-Ireland title.

And their victory over Kildare in the semi-final sees Connacht representation in the final for the third season in a row. Hopefully they can now go on to pick up their second title in three years against Cork.

Congratulations are due to Castlebar Mitchels and Abbeyknockmoy on their splendid victories in the inaugural Táin hurling leagues. In total 18 clubs were



involved in 41 games over the divisions, which was the brainchild of the National Hurling Development Committee. The work of Adrian Hassett, John Prenty and Damien Coleman has to be applauded and the competition has brought a new level of organisation to club hurling in the province.

It was disappointing that many eligible clubs chose not to participate in the competition, but I earnestly hope that they will reconsider their position in the future.

We also had much to cheer in the Colleges football championships as St Attracta's CS, Tubbercurry claimed the All-Ireland 'B' title, which shows the great work that has been done in the school in the last few years. Special mention also goes to Scoil Mhuire, Strokestown who lost in the All-Ireland 'C' final, to St Gerald's Castlebar who were defeated by the eventual champions in the Hogan Cup semi-final and to Loughrea's St Brigid's who narrowly lost out in the Vocational Schools 'A' hurling final.

And finally, I was delighted to see the efforts of the Football Review Committee were rewarded at the GAA Annual Congress. The introduction of the new rules to the game should result in a more enjoyable game to watch with the removal of much of the game's cynicism. Congratulations to the Connacht representatives on the committee: John Tobin, Kevin Griffin, Declan Darcy and Paul Earley, it is a great achievement that will give us a better game.

Is mise,

FRANK BURKE,
President, Connacht Council GAA

Secretary's Note

LIKE a lot of people at this stage of the year, I am counting down the days until the first game of the Connacht championship, and with the meeting of New York and Leitrim almost upon us, the wait is nearly over.

On the back of a decent league showing Mayo will rightly be the favourites to defend their Connacht title, but it is fair to say that all of the seven participating counties will fancy their chances of registering at least one win in the competition.

As a result it should be a most exciting and intriguing competition and with Galway's progression through an ultra-competitive provincial championship and into the All-Ireland U-21 final, and our Colleges displays on the national front, football seems to be in a healthy state in Connacht.

It proved to be an excellent Connacht Scór for the home county Leitrim as they went on to take five of the eight titles up for grabs at the provincial finals in April. As always the standard of the competition was very high and the very best of luck to all of our representatives as they go on to the All-Ireland finals in Derry.

It is always difficult to launch a new competition, but it has to be said that the first year of the Connacht GAA Táin Leagues has proved to be a huge success.

Well done to Galway's Abbeyknockmoy and to Mayo's Castlebar Mitchels on their respective division one and division two victories, but also hearties thanks to all of the teams that took part and made the competition such a resounding success.

Enjoy the championship!

Is mise, le meas

JOHN PRENTY
Runai, CLG Cuiqe Connachta



'Into the West'

Keep yourself in the loop. Sign up today for your free electronic copy of the magazine - emailed directly to your Inbox.

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Cover Photos - Main Picture: **Mayo's Michael Conroy in action in the Allianz National Football League Division 1 semi-final against Dublin.** Photo: Ray McManus / SPORTSFILE

Inset: **Galway U-21 captain Fiontán Ó Curraoin lifts the cup following his side's victory in the Cadbury Connacht GAA Football Under-21 Championship Final against Roscommon.**

Photo: Stephen McCarthy / SPORTSFILE

Inset: **The St Attracta's team and management celebrate their victory.** Photo: Eamonn McMunn



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Seán Moran of Galway in full flight in Connacht U-21 final.



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Killiererin's Peter O'Connell hopes to conquer Everest.



Mayo at wrong end of two goal league semi-final defeat.



Tribe U-21s **reclaim** Connacht **title**

Burke and Walsh kick Tribesmen to victory



Galway's David Cunnane in action.

Photo: Stephen McCarthy / SPORTSFILE



Seán Moran of Galway in full flight.

Photo: Stephen McCarthy / SPORTSFILE

Galway1-17

Roscommon2-11

After extra-time

By **DECLAN ROONEY**
Media West Ireland

SHANE Walsh kicked four points in the last four minutes to force extra-time as Galway denied Roscommon a second Connacht U-21 title in a row at Hyde Park.

Three extra-time points from Ian Burke sealed Galway's 17th title, but Walsh proved the hero for Alan Flynn's side one again.

On a beautiful evening for flowing football the entertainment was switched on from the outset and Galway had rattled the Roscommon net before 40 seconds had elapsed.

Cathal Mulryan's would have been disappointed to see his attempt at a point

drop below Tadhg Lowe's crossbar, but the stopper appeared to briefly lose the ball in the setting sun and it was deemed to have crossed the line.

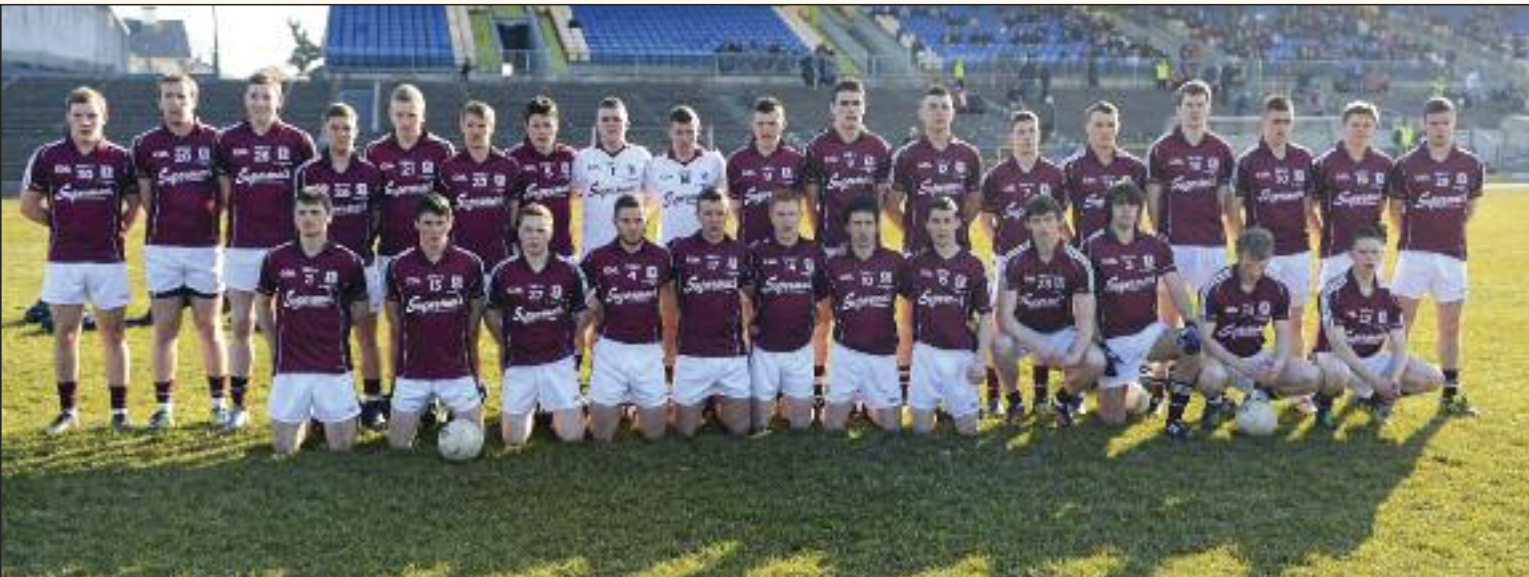
Roscommon soon got their own game plan under way when Conor Daly picked out Donie Smith in front of the Galway goal and he rattled the net with a low drive to level the game at 1-0 each just three minutes in.

Galway looked extremely dangerous up front and soon began to pick off their points. Firstly Adrian Varley set up his brother Paul for a point, before the attacker laid it off to Walsh to score from the right to open out a two point lead.

But in the 20th minute Roscommon hit a vital goal to take a 2-2 to 1-4 lead; Fintan Cregg applied the finish after Donie Smith picked the pocket of Mulryan as Galway tried to work the ball slowly out of defence.

Galway trailed by 2-4 to 1-6 at the break, but three points either side of half-time from Ian Burke soon drew them level.

But their challenge took a serious blow in the 41st minute when corner-back Eoin Walsh was shown a straight red card for striking out at Donie Smith, who was



The Galway squad assemble ahead of their Cadbury Connacht GAA U-21 football final at Dr. Hyde Park.

Photo: Stephen McCarthy / SPORTSFILE

pulling his shirt.

Smith joined him on the sidelines 12 minutes later following a high tackle, and after Walsh worked his magic to force extra-time, Galway cruised to the win.

SCORERS – Galway: S Walsh 0-7 (4f), I Burke 0-6, C Mulryan 1-0, S Moran, P Varley, S Maughan & G Kelly 0-1 each.

Roscommon: D Smith 1-2 (2f), C Murtagh 0-4 (2f), F Cregg 1-0, C Compton 0-2, E Smith, M Holland & T Corcoran (1f) 0-1 each.

GALWAY: T Healy; L Silke, J Shaughnessy, E Walsh; M Loughnane, G Canavan, P Varley; F O Curraoin, D Comer; C Mulryan, S Moran, S Maughan; S Walsh, A Varley, I Burke.

Subs: T Flynn for Silke (28), C Rabbitte for Maughan (44), P Cunningham for Moran (46), P Ezer-gailis for Canavan (48), G Kelly for Comer (59), D Comer for Mulryan (74), M Heskin for Cunningham (78).

ROSCOMMON: T Lowe; D Murray, R Timothy, C Cafferky; M Connaughton, J McManus, C Daly; F Kelly, T Corcoran; E Smith, C Connolly, F Cregg; D Smith, C Compton, C Murtagh.

Subs: S Killoran for Cregg (52), C Kilcline for E Smith (61), M Holland for Kelly (60), P Corbett for Killoran (66), C Cox for Connaughton (67), E Smith for Connolly (74).

Ó Curraoin chuffed to lead Tribe to title

By DECLAN ROONEY (Media West Ireland)

GALWAY U-21 captain Fiontán Ó Curraoin was thrilled to see his side get across the winning line and allow his pick up the Connacht U-21 title on behalf of the team.

“It’s great. I still can’t believe we’ve won. I’m still in shock. It’s a great moment for Galway football. They’re a great team and a great bunch of lads.

“We were a few points down but we just kept believing. We knew that if it came down to the end, we’d be able to fight and we did. Luckily, we grabbed it at the end.

“Roscommon were very unlucky. I feel sorry for a lot of the boys. I know them well. When Donie (Smith) went off, he was a big loss to them. Then Ian Burke stood up and took our scores.

“We knew going into extra-time that we had to push on in the first five minutes. But in fairness to Roscommon they came back at the start of the second period. It could have gone down to the wire again,” he explained.

Looking forward to the All-Ireland semi-final against Leinster champions Kildare, Ó Curraoin felt that another tight game was in the pipeline.

“I don’t know too much about Kildare. They won a very strong Leinster championship so it’s going to be a tough match,” he concluded

Galway captain Fiontán Ó Curraoin lifts the U-21 title.

Photo: Stephen McCarthy / SPORTSFILE





Flynn hopes Connacht championship will prime side for All-Ireland



By **DECLAN ROONEY**
Media West Ireland

GALWAY U-21 manager, Alan Flynn, thinks the Tribesmen are ready to progress through the All-Ireland series after his side edged past Roscommon in a tense Connacht final at Hyde Park.

"That's be another big game for us. Kildare are All-Ireland favourites now and we are going to have to raise our game again.

"But we are delighted what the boys have done so far. They have beaten Sligo, Mayo and Roscommon and in fairness, when you beat those three teams you de-

serve to win a Connacht title," said Flynn.

"We have always done ourselves proud and I'd expect nothing less in a couple of weeks.

"I'm delighted we didn't fall into the trap of just looking for a goal, we got there in the end. In extra-time, the guys we brought on had a great impact. Then our defence got stronger the longer it went on," he said.

"They did not start trying for goals. They held their nerve and that is to their credit. This group of lads has a lot of character and a bit of steel to them. They showed that against Mayo in the semi-final and they showed it again last weekend when it was needed most."

Galway manager Alan Flynn gives Shane Maughan some final words of advise ahead of his introduction.
Photo: Stephen McCarthy / SPORTSFILE



The Roscommon squad ahead of their Connacht U-21 final defeat to Galway.

Photo: Stephen McCarthy / SPORTSFILE



Dineen rues missed chance at back-to-back titles

By **IAN COONEY**
Roscommon Herald

NIGEL Dineen stared into space, trying to comprehend what had just unfolded. As a former forward, he knew about the importance of being ruthless and putting away chances. But he shrugged his shoulders as if to deduce that it was one of those unexplainable things in life. The potency of Roscommon's forward line had been well flagged beforehand but, ironically, it had let him down when it should have garnered a historic second Connacht U-21 title in succession.

"After the sending-off, we had Conor Daly as a free man and everything seemed to be going according to plan. The

chances we missed, what can you do? They were unforgivable. Then when Donie (Smith) was sent-off, we were under serious pressure.

"We still thought we had a chance going into extra-time. It was always there for us, maybe we'd get a lucky break or something like that if we kept plugging away. But they ran us off our feet in the end and we couldn't cope with it.

"The forwards missed the chances but we missed a few frees too that we'd normally get on another day. Look, that's the way football goes. Some days it goes for you and some days it doesn't," he lamented.

Despite the cruel nature of the defeat, Dineen had nothing but positive things to say about his players afterwards.

"I'm very proud of the lads. They've trained very hard and they're so disappointed going back into the dressing room.

We nearly had it won with all the chances we had. It's never over until the fat lady sings but

I'm still proud of them, and that's the most important thing," he felt.



Galway full-forward Adrian Varley is chased by David Murray of Roscommon during the Cadbury Connacht U-21 final.

Photo: Stephen McCarthy / SPORTSFILE

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Young Tribesmen now meet Cork in All-Ireland final

Galway2-10
Kildare2-5

By **JOHN FALLON**
Media West Ireland

GALWAY'S smarter use of the ball proved decisive as a wasteful Kildare side were brushed aside in the first of the All-Ireland U-21 football semi-finals at O'Connor Park in Tullamore.

The traditional Kildare penchant for wasting chances was all too evident as they paid the price for shooting 19 wides to just five for Galway.

But Galway made good use of possession, with players only chancing a shot when the odds were in their favour. That was in sharp contrast to a Kildare side who kept repeating the same mistakes.

Galway led by 1-6 to 1-3 at the interval having had the advantage of the diagonal wind with Tom Flynn giving them a big boost with a goal after ten minutes when he collected a poor kickout and took a return pass from the hard-working Ian Burke to shoot low to the net.



Galway forward Seán Moran is put under pressure by Kildare's Jonathan Byrne at O'Connor Park.

Photo: Paul Mohan / SPORTSFILE

Kildare, despite a string of bad wides, hit back and Daniel Flynn fired low to the net after 13 minutes after Niall Kelly had intercepted a sideline from Galway full-back James Shaughnessy.

A point from Kelly edged Kildare 1-2 to 1-1 in front after 17 minutes but their hopes of advancing

to the final for the first time in five years were undermined when they failed to score for the next 13 minutes.

Galway, with Damien Comer, Fiontan O Curraoin, Flynn and Burke prominent, hit four points in succession to go 1-5 to 1-2 in front after 28 minutes.

Shane Walsh, always dangerous in front of goal, tacked on another point before the break after Fionn Dowling, who hit six wides from play in the course of the game, had pointed for Kildare with the Tribesmen leading by 1-6 to 1-3 at the interval.



Damien Comer gathers possession ahead of Thomas Moolick during the U-21 All-Ireland semi-final. Photo: Paul Mohan / SPORTSFILE

Flynn praises efficient forwards

By **JOHN FALLON** Media West Ireland

GALWAY U-21 boss, Alan Flynn, always thought that his forward line had the potential to oust Kildare from the championship at O'Connor Park on Saturday.

"We felt ourselves that if we got enough ball to our forward line we could cause a little bit of damage. In fairness to Kildare they came out of the Leinster championship. I suppose they were so dominant that their back-line wasn't tested enough.



"We would have felt that our midfield, was going to test their midfield and that we were going to get enough possession and if we did Adrian Varley, Ian Burke, Sean Moran and Shane Walsh; when these guys get balls they were going to do damage.

He continued: "I think the most important thing to say today is that there is nothing won. It's a semi-final and it gets us a place into a final and we certainly have areas to work on."



Galway's Mark Loughnane pulls off a terrific divong block to deny Paddy Brophy a point.

Photo: Paul Mohan / SPORTSFILE



Paul Varley (left) and Damien Comer celebrate reaching the All-Ireland U-21 final.

Photo: Paul Mohan / SPORTSFILE

Walsh landed two more points for Galway in third quarter either side of efforts from Pdraig Fogarty and Paul Cribbin, and just when it seemed that Kildare might rally, Galway struck for their second goal when Sean Moran finished to the net after referee Barry Cassidy played a good advantage following a run from Burke after 46 minutes.

Sean Hurley responded with a Kildare goal three minutes later but they did not score for the remaining eleven minutes.

Walsh added an insurance point for Galway eight minutes from time and they finished in style with Cathal Mulryan adding another point in the closing stages as they reached their second final in three years.

SCORERS – Galway: S Walsh 0-6 (3f), S Moran 1-1, T Flynn 1-0, D Comer 0-1, I Burke 0-1, C Mulryan 0-1.

Kildare: D Flynn 1-1, S Hurley 1-0, N Kelly 0-1, F Dowling 0-1, P Cribbin 0-1, P Fogarty 0-1.

GALWAY: T Healy; M Loughnane, J Shaughnessy, D Cunnane; D Burke, P Varley, G Canavan; T Flynn, F Ó Curraoin; C Mulryan, S Moran, D Comer; S Walsh, A Varley, I Burke.

Subs: C Rabbitte for D Burke 41, P Ezer-gailis for Cunnane 44, L Silke for Canavan 52, E Commins for Comer 59.

KILDARE: M Donnellan; S Higgins, D Hyland, M Konstantin; P Cribbin, F Conway, J Byrne; T Moolick, S Hurley; D Flynn, L McGovern, F Dowling; P Brophy, P Fogarty, N Kelly.

Subs: H Mahon for Fogarty 49, G Farrell for Dowling 55, T Gibbons for McGovern 55.

REF: B Cassidy (Derry).



Seán Moran, Galway, who was presented with the Cadbury Hero of the Match Award by Shane Guest, Senior Brand Manager, Cadbury Ireland. Photo: Paul Mohan / SPORTSFILE

Ó Curraoin excited by another final

By **JOHN FALLON**
Media West Ireland

FIONTÁN Ó Curraoin was delighted with the team's display at the back that helped them to make a return to the All-Ireland final for the second time in two years.

"I put it down to our backs. I think there were five or six blocks in the first-half alone. When you see a block like that, it really drives a team on, especially in the forwards. When you get chances, you know you've got to take them," said the Micheál Breathnach's powerhouse.

And the skipper said that lessons learned in the Connacht final saw them to the win as the most efficient team.

"Against Roscommon, we dropped a lot of ball and kicked a lot of ball wide, so in the last few weeks training we really focussed on that. Thankfully, we used the possession a lot better today and that's what we needed," he said.

Brilliant Tribesmen into final

Galway0-9
Mayo0-7

By **FRANK KEARNEY**
Media West Ireland

GALWAY left it late to edge past Mayo into the Connacht U-21 semi-final at Tuam Stadium, but it was largely thanks to Shane Walsh that the Tribesmen made it through to the decider.

Walsh kicked two excellent points from play in the last six minutes to give Galway a three point cushion, but Mayo senior Cillian O'Connor came very close to forcing extra time when his blistering late free was deflected over the bar to ensure the Galway goal remained intact.

In total Walsh kicked six points for Galway, who go on to meet Roscommon in

the provincial final in two weekend's time at Hyde Park.

Both sides failed to finish the first-half with their full complement as Mayo's Conor Horan picked up his second yellow card after 20 minutes, while Galway corner-back Liam Silke follow him to the line seven minutes later for a similar offence.

Referee Paddy Neiland showed a total of nine yellows and two red cards in the first-half, but after the restart the game flowed as Walsh and O'Connor did battle.

By the break Galway had worked themselves into a 0-4 to 0-3 lead after playing with the wind at their backs, but O'Connor levelled the match with a free after the restart.

O'Connor added another point nine minutes from time to pull Mayo within a point after a Galway surge, but Walsh powered on in the closing stages with two points from play, and the goal-line heroics to stop the Ballintubber man's free clinched a spot in the final in two weeks for the 2011 champions.

SCORERS – Galway: S Walsh 0-6 (2f), A Varley 0-1, C Mulryan 0-1, D Comer 0-1.

Mayo: C O'Connor 0-4 (3f), E Regan 0-2 (2f), D Kirby 0-1.

GALWAY: T Healy, L Silke, J Shaughnessy, E Walsh; M Loughnane, D Burke, P Varley; F O Curraoin, D Comer; C Mulryan, S Moran, P Cunningham; S Walsh, A Varley, G Kelly.

Subs: C Rabbittie for Cunningham (h-t), S Maughan for Kelly (38), E O hEochaidh for Moran (53), I Burke for A Varley (57), G Canavan for Comer (59).

MAYO: P Mannion, B Harrison, N Freeman, A Butler; C Horan, C Walsh, E Collins; D Kirby, M Forde; A Gallagher, E Regan, F Durkan; D Coen, C O'Shea, C O'Connor.

Subs: J Shaughnessy for Gallagher (42), E Jordan for Durkan (44), E Lavin for Coen (49), K Rutledge for Regan (59).

REF: Paddy Neilan (Roscommon).

Roscommon too strong for Leitrim's challenge

Roscommon4-10
Leitrim2-8

By **FRANK KEARNEY**
Media West Ireland

ROSCOMMON'S defence of the Connacht U-21 title remains on course after they eased past Leitrim in Kiltoom to reach the provincial final.

And they go on to meet 16-times champions Galway in the final after Shane Walsh's magic gave the Tribesmen an encouraging victory over Mayo at Tuam Stadium.

Roscommon never looked in danger against Leitrim from the first minute when Colm Compton goaled and Diarmuid Murtagh pointed for the Rossies.

Shane Moran proved accurate from dead balls for Leitrim, but once Compton bagged his second goal after Cian Connolly's three-pointer for the 2012 champi-

ons, the result was never in doubt.

Winning a championship game by eight points usually means a good day's work but the sight of Nigel Dineen and his management team in the middle of the Kiltoom pitch, deep in conversation ten minutes after the final whistle was revealing.

Leading by 13 points at half-time and with the wind to come in the second half, one of Roscommon's biggest championship victories against Leitrim looked likely.

But the visitors were far from embarrassed during the second period. They took the game to Roscommon and exposed frailties that need to be rectified before the provincial decider against Galway.

When Dineen eventually made his way off the pitch, he found it hard to put Roscommon's performance into context.

"It's hard to sum it up really to tell you the truth. The first half went well but Leitrim won the second half. I'm obviously disappointed with the way the lads slackened off in the second half. The effort wasn't good enough to win a championship game. The lads switched off and we just

couldn't get them to lift their performance," he explained.

SCORERS – Roscommon: C Compton 2-1, C Connolly, D Smith 1-1 each, K Murtagh 0-3 (2f), T Corcoran (f), D Murray, S Killoran, E Smith 0-1 each.

Leitrim: S Moran 0-5 (5f), C Gilheaney, M Beirne 1-0 each, M McWeeney, P McGowan, C Guckian 0-1 each.

ROSCOMMON: T Lowe; D Murray, R Timoney, C Cafferkey; M Connaughton, J McManus, C Daly; F Kelly, T Corcoran; S Killoran, C Connolly, F Cregg; D Smith, C Compton, C Murtagh. **Subs:** M Flaherty for Keenan (22), E Kenny for Compton (37), E Smith for Corcoran (37), M Holland for Cregg (52), D McDermott for Daly (62).

LEITRIM: B Flynn; M Murphy, D Keane, M Clancy; S Quinn, J Rooney, M McGourty; D Wynne, C Guckian; D Flynn, T Mulvey, M McWeeney; J Mulligan, S Moran, K Boyle.

REF: S Hehir (Galway).

Poetry in motion as Yeats men fall to Galway

Galway1-20
Sligo0-7

By **DECLAN ROONEY**
Media West Ireland

GALWAY easily qualified for the Connacht U-21 championship semi-final after Gary Kelly and Shane Walsh led them to victory over Sligo at Tuam Stadium.

Anthony Brennan's side had no answer to Galway's dynamic performance and a tally of 1-18 from open play underlines Galway superiority.

The Tribesmen now have just four full days recovery before their semi-final with Mayo on Saturday, so Galway manager Alan Flynn was thankful they had an easier than expected challenge.

"It is very quick. We are lucky that we don't think we have any serious injuries after that game. We were able to take off a few lads early enough, we made five changes pretty quickly, but Saturday won't be long coming around.

"The winning margin probably flattered us a bit in the end, but we have to be happy with it being our first day out. The boys inside were pretty sharp, but they were been given good service from out the field too. Any time they got quick, early ball they started to do a bit of damage," said Flynn, who also acts as a selector with Alan Mulholland and the Galway seniors.

Sean Moran's goal after 13 minutes gave the Tribesmen a significant cushion early on, but they stretched that advantage out to 1-8 to 0-5 by the break, as Walsh and Kelly began to find their range.

Moran's rattled the net after some good creative work from Paul and Adrian Varley, but two good points from Niall Murphy brought Anthony Brennan's side back to within two points by the 20th minute.

But they never got any closer than that as Galway kicked 12 of the last 13 points to cruise into the last four.

SCORERS – Galway: G Kelly 0-5, S Walsh 0-5 (2f), S Moran 1-1, A Varley 0-2, C Mulryan 0-2, P Cunningham 0-1, P Varley 0-1, F O Curraoin 0-1, D Comer 0-1, D Burke 0-1

Sligo: N Murphy 0-4 (1f), S Cawley 0-1. R Connolly 0-1, J Rodgers 0-1 (1f)

GALWAY: T Healy; L Silke, J Shaughnessy, P Ezergailis; M Loughnane, E Walsh, P Varley; F O Curraoin, D Comer; C Mulryan, S Moran, P Cunningham; S Walsh, A Varley, G Kelly.
Subs: C Rabbitte for Cunningham (39), D Burke for Loughnane (44), S Maughan for Kelly (49), E O hEochaidh for O Curraoin (50), M Heskin for Comer (55).

SLIGO: J O'Hora; C Gorman, G Ryan, E Flannigan; M O'Hehir, C O'Dowd, Ciaran Brennan; D Coffey, R Connolly; J Rodgers, N Murphy, S Regan; S Cawley, B Egan, Cathal Brennan.

Subs: K McDonnell for B Egan (21), D Brady for Rodgers (27), M Gordan for O'Dowd (31), E Connolly for Gorman (49), C Surlis for Regan (58).

Healy injury blow for Tribesmen

By **DECLAN ROONEY**
Media West Ireland

GALWAY'S intentions of defending their Leinster hurling title have been hit with the news that forward Niall Healy could miss the next four months after tearing tendons in his bicep.

Healy has already undergone surgery to repair the damage sustained in a recent training match with Anthony Cunningham's side, but could be a worry for the championship.

And the injury blow is particularly galling for Healy who has just returned to the Galway panel this year after missing most of last year with a troublesome hand injury.

"It is a huge blow for Niall. It is horrible, desperate altogether," said Galway boss Cunningham.

"I hate to see any of the lads getting injured but Niall has had no luck at all. He has had his fair share of injuries and bad ones at that."

The 27-year-old Craughwell attacker had already appeared back to his best in the early months of the year and hit the net for the Tribesmen in their league win over Kilkenny.

But Cunningham is hoping that the injury will not prove as serious as first thought and that he may yet be able to play some part in their provincial championship.

"To be honest Niall still has to go back to the surgeon for a check up to see how things have gone. It will be a maximum of four months, but it could be a minimum of a month yet.

"We should have more news later this week after his check up. Hopefully he'll be okay to play this summer, maybe he can get some club hurling under his belt for June," he said.

The news is a little better for Niall Burke, who has undergone surgery on a calf injury. But Cunningham expects the talented youngster to be ready for a league final, should Galway overcome Kilkenny on Sunday.

Byrne applauds league format

By **JOHN FALLON**
Media West Ireland

GALWAY'S top hurling official has welcomed the excitement brought by the six-team format in the national league but is concerned that it does not give managers the opportunity to experiment.

Joe Byrne, chairman of the Galway hurling committee, said that there was great intensity to Sunday's final round of games where each of the six teams had a chance of making the semi-finals while each also faced the possibility of relegation.

"There is no doubt there was an edge to matches and that will bring teams on.

"But against that, teams probably felt they had little room to

experiment or try out players. Tipperary drafted in a lot of players for the opening game against Cork but were less inclined after that after suffering a big defeat. "I'm sure other counties felt the same, you just about had to win every game. Of course, players who did get a chance and impressed will have done their cause a power of good because the matches were a step up on other years in terms of intensity," he said.

Byrne said that reaching the semi-finals was a huge boost to Galway for their championship preparations.

"It extends the league by at least another three weeks. The clocks have changed, there will be more time for hurling and that will bring this Galway side on a lot," he added.



Glorious victory for St Attracta's

St Attracta's College (Tubbercurry)4-11

Our Lady's College (Templemore)1-7

Tubbercurry side crowned All-Ireland champions

By **LEO GRAY**
Sligo Champion

ST. Attracta's College, Tubbercurry, emerged as worthy All-Ireland Champions with a sparkling display against a highly-rated Our Lady's Secondary School, Templemore, in a thrilling Ma-sita Senior 'B' final at Cusack Park.

The South Sligo boys produced a breathtaking performance to fashion a thoroughly deserved 4-11 to 1-7 win, thereby clinching the coveted title for the first time since 2006

The Tipperary team went into the game with a great reputation but they were no match for a ruthless St. Attracta's team who stamped their authority early on and never looked like surrendering their grip on a thrilling encounter.

The 'Super Saints' led by 0-4 to 0-3 after 22 minutes and then came the goal which dramatically transformed the pattern of the contest. Padraig Mitchell won possession about 50m from goal and set off on a penetrating run before linking with Stephen Connolly who unleashed a powerful shot low to the net.

It got worse for the Munster side two minutes before half time when St. Attracta's struck for a second goal. This time it was Cian Gilmartin who inflicted the



Tourlestrane's John Carr aims for the posts in St Attracta's All-Ireland final win over Templemore. Photo: Eamonn McMunn



St Attracta's seniors from the Coolaney/Mullinabreena GAA club celebrate their win on All-Ireland final day. From (L to R): Brendan Doddy, Stephen Connolly, Pearse Gorman, Eoin McDonagh, Darren Coleman and Stephen Barrett. Missing from photo is Colin Marren. Photo courtesy of Coolaney/Mullinabreena GAA Club.

damage, finishing to the net from close range after good work by Jason Perry.

That gave the South Sligo boys a 2-9 to 0-5 interval lead and they had no hesitation in resting on their laurels in the second half.

Templemore added on a goal and four points in the second period but the goal came from a penalty while all the points were from frees.

It was St Attracta's who continued to be the dominant side, however.

Even after Sean Patrick Guerins found the net from a penalty for Templemore, the South Sligo boys came back with the perfect response, a clinically taken goal by Conor McIntyre.

That put St. Attracta's 3-10 to 1-6 in front and they rounded off a sensational performance with a fourth goal from Darragh Kilcoyne near the end.

On their relentless march to All-Ireland glory, the South Sligo boys rattled up a magnificent 18 goal spree, an indication of the strength and power of their forward line.

All six forwards got on the scoresheet in the final but they had plenty of defensive qualities as well.

All in all, it was an exceptional perform-

ance by the St Attracta's squad who were a credit to their manager, Colm McGee, and his selectors, Pat Kilcoyne, and Gary Gaughan.

ST ATTRACTA'S: Eoin McDonagh (Coolaney/Mullinabreena), Pearse Gorman (Coolaney/Mullinabreena), Barry Walsh (Tourlestrane), Michael Gordon (Curry); Stephen Barrett (Coolaney/Mullinabreena), John Carr (Tourlestrane), Niall Murphy (Charlestown) 0-1; Jason Brennan (Cloonacool) 0-1; Cathal Henry (Tourlestrane) 0-1; Stephen Connolly (Coolaney/Mullinabreena) 1-2, Padraig Mitchell (Bunninadden) 0-1, Kenneth Gavigan (Tourlestrane) 0-2; Jason Perry (Tubbercurry) 0-1, Cian Gilmartin (Tubbercurry) 1-0, Conor McIntyre (1-0).

Subs: Jonathan Durkin (Curry) for Mitchell (38); Darragh Kilcoyne (Tubbercurry) 1-1 for Brennan (49); Darren Coleman (Coolaney/Mullinabreena) for Gavigan (51); Sean O'Donnell (Bunninadden); J P Lang (Tourlestrane) for Carr (55).

OUR LADY'S: L Murphy; M Campion, D Brereton, James Bergin; J Ryan, B Kennedy, JJ Ryan; C O'Riordan, J McGrath; J Fogarty, E Moloney, D McEnroe; T Nolan, SP Guerins, B O'Connell. **Subs:** J Nyland for Nolan (23), Jamie Bergin for O'Connell (32), T Maher for Fogarty (55).

REF: D Maher (Westmeath).



The St Attracta's College senior footballers celebrate their All-Ireland 'B' Colleges' victory after team captain, Jason Brennan, accepts the Noonan Cup. Photos: Eamonn McMunn

St Attracta's reach Noonan Cup final with spirited showing

**St Attracta's
Tubbercurry3-10**
**St Michael's
Lurgan0-7**

A BLISTERING second half performance paved the way for St. Attracta's comprehensive win over St. Michael's, Lurgan, in the Masita All Ireland Post Primary Schools senior football B semi-final at Derrylin, Fermanagh.

Reduced to fourteen men when captain, Jason Brennan, was rather harshly sent off for a second bookable offence in the 26th minute, the South Sligo boys had to dig deep to fashion a thoroughly deserved victory which was every bit as convincing as the scoreline suggests.

The teams were tied at three points each at the time of Brennan's dismissal and it looked as if the contest might swing in the Lurgan team's favour.

But the heroic Tubber boys refused to settle for second best. They responded to their numerical disadvantage with renewed vigour and got an important break when they were awarded a penalty on the stroke of half time after St. Michael's 'keeper foot-blocked Kenneth Gavigan's goalbound shot.

Jason Perry stepped up to take the spot-kick and was the calmest person in the ground as he dispatched a perfectly-placed shot low to the keeper's right to give the Connacht champions a 1-3 to 0-3 lead at the break.

That changed the complexion of the game and gave St. Attracta's the perfect platform on which to build a dynamic second half performance.

True, St. Michael's hopes suffered a severe

setback when one of their better players, John Magee, was sent off after picking up a second yellow card seven minutes into the second half.

They were trailing by a point at that stage but they struggled to regain their composure after Magee's departure as St. Attracta's set about stamping their authority on the exchanges.

With the teams both reduced to fourteen men, the game became more open and free-flowing and this suited St. Attracta's perfectly as they passed the ball with precision and pace, picking off a string of superbly executed scores.

Just two minutes after Magee's dismissal, the South Sligo college struck for a highly important goal - and in its creation and execution it underlined what the St. Attracta's team is all about.

An incisive attack, initiated by the unsparing Stephen Barrett and carried on by the impressive Stephen Connolly, tore the Lurgan defence to shreds and Perry provided the icing on the cake, crashing the ball low to the net.

That gave St. Attracta's a 2-3 to 0-5 lead and there was simply no way back for the Ulster Champions.

The Sligo boys almost threw away a commanding lead in the Connacht final but there was no danger of any such anxiety on this occasion as they maintained a high-tempo momentum right to the end.

Pushing forward with relentless determination, St. Attracta's added on a third goal in the 53rd minute.

And again it was a well-crafted effort as Pdraig Mitchell set off on a penetrating run before firing a fierce drive to the net.

During this period of dominance, the Sligo boys also slotted over a number of exquisite points from Stephen Connolly, Pdraig

Mitchell, Jason Perry, Cian Gilmartin, Darragh Kilcoyne and Cathal Henry.

In the end, St. Attracta's ran out very comfortable winners but it didn't look that way for most of the first half when there was very little between the sides.

Ruairi Loughran, who scored all of his side's points, gave St. Michael's the lead with a point from a free after five minutes but the Sligo side hit back with a pointed free from Cathal Henry.

Then Niall Murphy from play and Henry from a free made it 0-3 to 0-1 in favour of St. Attracta's. Two pointed frees by Loughran made it all square before Jason Brennan got his marching orders.

The Sligo boys found inspiration in the face of adversity and Perry's goal from the penalty spot just before half-time gave them the confidence to go on and take the game by the scruff of the neck after the interval.

ST ATTRACTA'S: Eoin McDonagh, Pearse Gorman, Barry Walsh, Michael Gordon, Stephen Barrett, John Carr, Niall Murphy (0-1), Cathal Henry (0-4, 3f), Jason Brennan (c), Stephen Connolly (0-1), Pdraig Mitchell (0-1), Kenneth Gavigan, Jason Perry (2-1, 1-0 pen), Cian Gilmartin (1-1), Conor McIntyre.

Subs: Darragh Kilcoyne (0-1 f) for C McIntyre (h-t).

ST MICHAEL'S: Jack Wilson, Jason Rogers, Drew McKenna, Adam Kelly, Aaron Casey, Shea Heffron, Eoin McCabrey, Oisín Lenehan, Jonathan Torode, John Magee, Diarmuid O'Hagan, Declan Heaney, Pdraig Judge, Ruairi Loughran 0-7, 0-5 frees, James McDade.

Subs: Matthew Mulholland for D Heaney, Niall O'Neill for A Casey, Paddy Sheehan for A Kelly, Conor McConville for P Judge.

REF: Martin Higgins (Fermanagh)



McGee thrilled with victory for Tubbercurry boys

By LEO GRAY Sligo Champion

ST. Attracta's triumphant manager, Colm McGee, was loud in his praise for his players after their sensational victory in the Masita Post Primary Schools All-Ireland final at Cusack Park, Mullingar.

The former county star masterminded the South Sligo School's first national senior title since 2006 but he was more than happy to deflect all the credit on to his talented bunch of young players.

"These lads are just brilliant", he beamed.

"We had a hard year and I know I demanded a lot from them.

"But everything I asked them to do, they did it without complaint.

"They just kept coming up with the goods and they never gave up, from our very first game right through to the All-Ireland final"

St. Attracta's had a real scare in the Connacht final when they almost threw away a big lead but they were outstanding throughout the Provincial and All-Ireland campaigns, emerging as worthy champions.

"We got a bit of a wake-up call in the Connacht final but we learned from it", said McGee.



St. Attracta's triumphant manager, Colm McGee.

Photos: Eamonn McMunn



St Attracta's Jason Brennan



St Attracta's Kenneth Gavigan (Tourlestrane).

"We knew that we had to keep going for sixty minutes in every game and that was evident in the final.

"We were well in control at half-time, leading by 2-5 to 0-3, but our message to the boys in the dressing room was to keep going. No All-Ireland is won by one half of good football. So we knew we had to keep driving on and the lads did that brilliantly in the second half"

The South Sligo boys ran up a remarkable tally of eighteen goals during the season and their goal machine was in top gear again in Saturday's final.

"Yes, we've got plenty of goals in the team, which is great, but the overall panel made a great contribution all year. I'm very proud of every one of them", the manager added.

Captain, Jason Brennan, described the final as a great day for the College.

"This means so much to everybody - the College, our clubs and our families", he said.

"It's a great honour to be captain of such a great bunch of lads."

"We came here to finish the job and there was no way we were going to leave the All-Ireland title behind us.

"Every single member of the panel played a role but our manager, Colm McGee, is the main man. He never stopped believing in us", the triumphant captain added



St Brigid's let lead slip in final

St Brigid's, Loughrea
(Galway)0-13

St Fergal's College,
Rathdowney (Laois)2-10

By JACKIE CAHILL

AT half-time, John Casey couldn't see it happening. St Fergal's, Rathdowney, were eight points down against St Brigid's (Loughrea) in last Saturday's Masita GAA All-Ireland Vocational Schools senior hurling A final and it seemed there was no way back.

The St Brigid's full-forward line - Daniel Nevin, Brian Molloy and Jamie Ryan - had banged over nine points between them as the Galway boys cruised into a 0-10 to 0-2 interval lead.

The gap stretched to ten when St Brigid's registered the first two points of the second half but what happened next brought a fitting end to this competition.

Casey and his backroom staff looked on, awestruck, as St Fergal's outscored their opponents by 2-8 to 0-1 for the remainder of the game.

Ten points down in the 35th minute, they ended up winning by three, with two late goals

from captain Aidan Corby and Daire Quinlan sealing victory in the last ever final of the Vocational Schools A championship.

"Maybe they might give us the cup forever!" smiled Casey, a hurling evangelist who arrived from Causeway in county Kerry, in 1977.

What Casey and successive management teams have achieved is noteworthy, at a time when Laois hurling is struggling to make an impression on the national stage.

This was a second title for St Fergal's, who previously won it in 2006.

St Brigid's, meanwhile, were chasing three-in-a-row, having been awarded the 2012 crown in the boardroom following the abandonment of the semi-final between Nenagh VS and St Fergal's.

"We had our setbacks," Casey recalls. "In 1994, against Athenry by a point. We lost a few semi-finals to Loughrea with good teams. Today is the icing on the cake."

Seven years ago, Conor Dunne captained St Fergal's to glory. On Saturday, at sunny Semple Stadium, Conor's brother Gavin was quite superb at centre back.

In an entertaining game, St Fergal's refused to say no and with the breeze at their backs in the second half, they set about eating into the St Brigid's lead. Slowly but surely, the margin reduced and when Corby took a pass from Quinlan in the 56th minute to rifle home a

super goal, the sides were level at 1-10 to 0-13. In the final minute of normal time, Quinlan beat Garry McHugo to Robbie Phelan's long ball and fired home a memorable winning goal.

Casey said: "Once they believed in themselves, that they could do it, they moved forward. In the first half, they were overtaken with the whole situation. A lot of them never played here before, a lot of them never played under a camera and I think the whole thing got to them."

SCORERS - St Brigid's: B Molloy 0-6 (2f), J Ryan 0-3, D Nevin 0-2, D Dolan & E Burke 0-1 each.

St Fergal's: D Quinlan 1-3 (0-2f), A Corby 1-1, L O'Connell (1 65) & M Kavanagh (1 sl) 0-2 each, C Kilbane and C Stapleton 0-1 each.

ST BRIGID'S, LOUGHREA: R Brennan; J Mooney, G McHugo, D Cronin; C Jennings, D O'Donoghue, P Prendergast; D Dolan, E Burke; B Dolan, J Mannion, J Monaghan; D Nevin, B Molloy, J Ryan.

Sub: K Cooney for Mannion (60+1).

ST FERGAL'S COLLEGE, RATHDOWNEY: D Brennan; C Quinlan, E Doyle, C Kilbane; B Meade, G Dunne, R Phelan; C Stapleton, L O'Connell; S Bergin, P Whelan, L Cleere; M Kavanagh, D Quinlan, A Corby.

Subs: E Fitzpatrick for Whelan (38), D Hogan for Bergin (46), S Phelan for Cleere (60+1).

REF: C Lyons (Cork).



Gerald's campaign ends at hands of eventual champions

St Pat's (Maghera)3-8
St Gerald's (castlebar) ..1-7

AFTER a thrilling victory over great rivals St Jarlath's of Tuam in the Connacht semi-final, St Gerald's were unable to make it though to the Hogan Cup final for the first time since 1997.

The obstacle of Sean Marty Lockhart's St Pat's of Maghera proved too high to clear for the Castlebar side as two goals late in first-half action put the Derry side in control.

The MacRory Cup winners went into this semi-final at Brewster Park in Enniskillen as favourites and fully justified that tag, although they were made to work hard by St Gerald's.

The Connacht champions looked good in the early stages as they established a three-point lead but the concession of the two goals as they were forced to chase the game against the breeze after the restart.

Those early points came from James Durcan and Ronan Carolan but Maghera hit back through powerful full-forward Stephen O'Hara and Neil McNicholl.

St Gerald's then enjoyed their best spell of the game that yielded points from two Durcan frees and a '45' from Mark McHugh, but that was as good as it got for them.

The Derry side began to find their feet and 2-3 without reply before the break put them in control.

Midfielder Peter Cassidy got a brace of points before 15-year-old wing-back Conor Glass finished off a mazy run with a superb individual goal.



St Gerald's College captain Patrick Durcan is presented with the Connacht title by Paddy Naughton.

And when Gerald Bradley hit the net just before the half-time whistle the Derry school held a 2-5 to 0-5 interval lead.

St Gerald's needed a good start to the second half and they got it. Within ten minutes they had reduced the deficit to two points as midfielder Eamon Regan showed good strength to finish to the Maghera net.

Maghera didn't panic, though, and a second Glass goal settled their nerves before points from Conor Carville and Danny Tallon sealed the issue.

In the end St Pat's went on to claim their fifth Hogan Cup in a blistering victory over St Pat's Navan, so there was little shame for St Gerald's who must be satisfied to end the year as Connacht schools champions.

SCORERS – St Pat's: C Glass 2-0, G Bradley 1-0, C Carville, P Cassidy (1f), D

Tallon 0-2 each, N McNicholl, S O'Hara (f) 0-1 each.

St Gerald's: J Durcan 0-4 (3fs), E Regan 1-0, M McHugh ('45'), M Plunket, R Carolan 0-1 each.

ST PAT'S: C McCloy; C Glass, D Hughes, O Hegarty; C Mulholland, C Carville, P Hagan; J Kearney, P Cassidy; C O'Doherty, G Bradley, N McNicholl; C Gallagher, S O'Hara, D Tallon. **Subs:** C Convery for O'Hara, N Toner for McNicholl, N Gorman for Mulholland, D McFaul for Hagan.

ST GERALD'S: D McHale; K McNally, M McHugh, K Egan; P Durcan, M Hall, J Lydon; R Coleman, E Regan; J Gannon, M Plunket, S Conlon; R Carolan, A Murphy, J Durcan. **Subs:** C Dravins for McNally, M Ruane for Gannon, N Jordan for Lydon, J O'Malley for Carolan.

REF: N Mooney (Cavan).



Ryan Coleman battles for possession



Late agony for Strokestown

St Augustine's (Dungarvan)2-8

Scoil Mhuire Strokestown0-10

**By NOEL FALLON
Roscommon Herald**

SCOIL Mhuire manager Séamus Ó Donghaile spoke with dignity and pride about his team as they coped with the heartbreak of losing an All-Ireland final in injury-time.

A gripping, intensely-contested game showed that no All-Ireland title, at any level, is easily won but Ó Donghaile wasn't surprised by how good St. Augustine's, Dungarvan were.

"St. Augustine's were an extremely physically, strong team, they had some powerful men. Six of that team will be starting in the All-Ireland Colleges' 'A' hurling final and three of four more are on the panel. We had done our research on them. We had seen their results and we knew they were good," Séamus explained.

"They were physically fit and powerful, we didn't have the same power. St. Augustine's had 15 huge men who were very fit.

They were great athletes and they were tough. They have a great tradition and were in an All-Ireland 'B' final in the past," the manager maintained.

"I was happy at half-time even though we would be playing into a very strong wind. The concession of a goal was crucial in a game between two such evenly-balanced teams. At half-time neither of the two teams had any goal chances," he noted.

The Scoil Mhuire manager didn't try to make excuses for his team's defeat but acknowledged that county minor Cathal Compton, who was missing through injury, was "a massive loss".

The defeat was particularly hard to take as Strokestown had held an 0-8 to 0-3 lead at half-time and could now be All-Ireland champions, but for two goals in the last six minutes from Joe Allen and Michael Sweeney.

"We could have had a penalty but that was out of our hands. I am very proud of this group of players for the way they conducted themselves on and off the field. They have been absolutely super. This team has been a credit, they have been fabulous all year long. Their behaviour has been 100 per cent. No matter what was asked of them, they did it," Séamus em-

phasised.

He also paid tribute to the team's supporters. "The support we've received all year has been phenomenal. From the Connacht final in Kiltimagh to Brewster Park for the All-Ireland semi-final and again today," he commented.

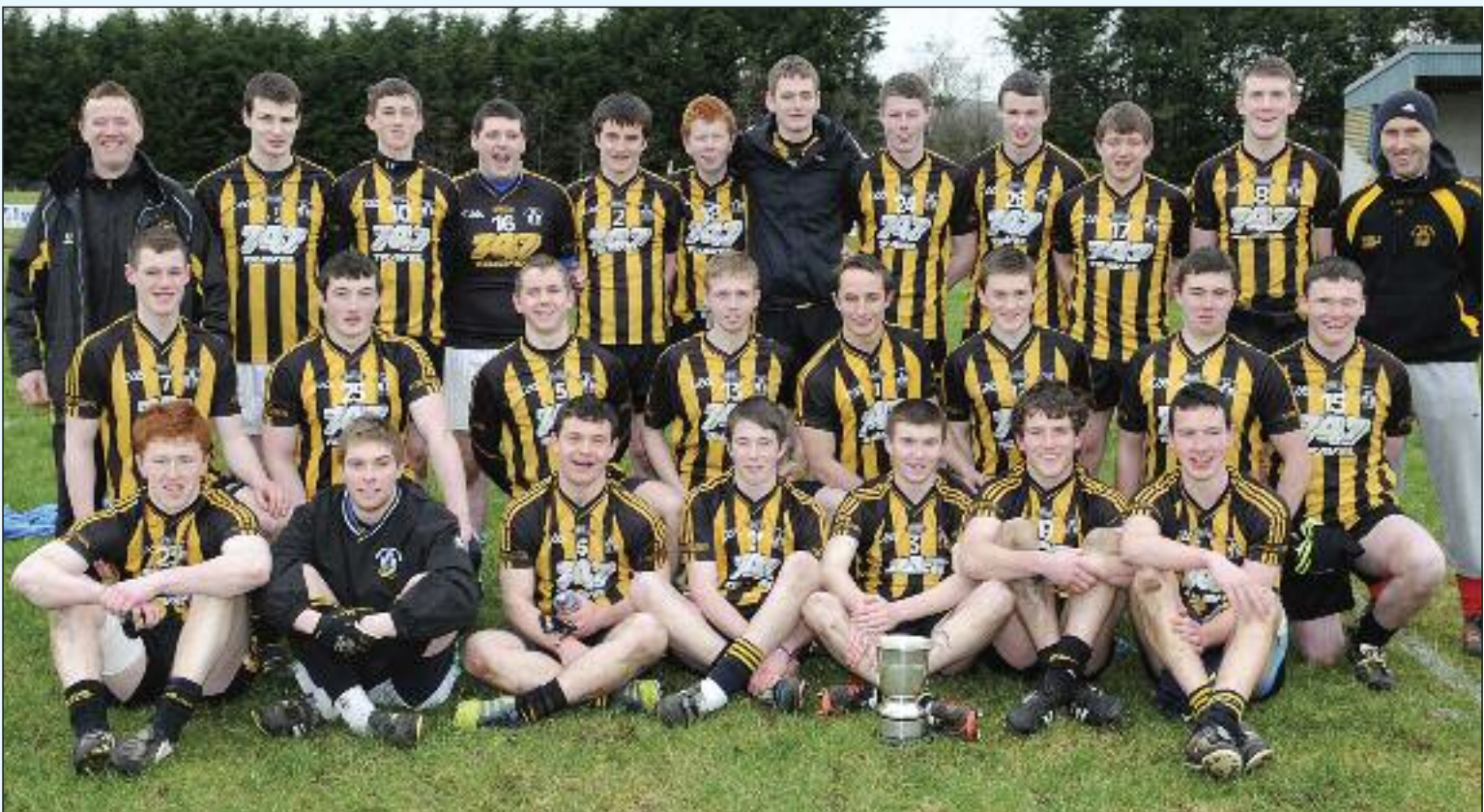
As one All-Ireland campaign ended just minutes earlier Séamus admitted it was difficult to think about starting all over again.

"We won't have Cathal or Thomas Corcoran but we will have Tadhg O'Rourke, Seán Mullooly, David Neary and Diarmuid McGann so we have the nucleus of a respectable team but it's difficult to start from scratch again," he concluded.

ST. AUGUSTINE'S: K Dwane, C Tobin, B Lobby, J Mullaney, C O'Neill, T Devine, R Browne, S Keating 0-1, D Gartland, J Allen 1-0, T Bourke 0-3, B French, M Troy 0-3, C Prunty 0-1, M Maher. **Subs:** E Kiely for French (42), M Sweeney 1-0 for Maher (48), C Cusack for Kiely (58).

SCOIL MHUIRE, STROKESTOWN: C MacDonagh, K Beirne, C Gibbons, C Higgins, E Kelly, D Neary, D O'Rourke, T Corcoran 0-2, S Mullooly, M Fallon, D Carleton 0-2, E O'Beirne, M Conway 0-2, T O'Rourke, D McGann 0-4.

REF: F Barry (Kildare).



Scoil Mhuire, Strokestown, where defeated in the All-Ireland Colleges' 'C' football final.

Photo: Roscommon Herald



GAA President Liam O'Neill presents James Laffey, from Mayo, with the 2011 Best GAA Publication Award.

Photo: Matt Browne / SPORTSFILE



GAA President Liam O'Neill presents Anthony Hennigan and Michael Gallagher, from the Western People with the 2012 Provincial Media McNamee Award.

Photo: Matt Browne / SPORTSFILE

Connacht **media** presented with **McNamee Awards**

MEMBERS of the Connacht GAA Media were honoured for their work in 2011 and 2012 at the recent GAA McNamee Awards ceremony at Croke Park.

The three winners were presented with their McNamee Awards by GAA President Liam O'Neill to recognise their outstanding contributions in the area of media and communications.

The Awards, the GAA National Communication and Media Awards named after the late Pádraig McNamee, former President of the GAA, Chairman of the GAA Commission (1969-1971) and member of RTÉ authority are presented annually to members of the local and national media.

Mayo based newspaper 'The Western People' was handed the 2012 Provincial Media Award for their preview of the 2012 All-Ireland senior football final 'D-Day for Mayo'.

This 72 page tabloid supplement is a worthy publication capturing the importance of the event for the people of Mayo. Its scope, editorial con-

tent, quality of the writing, and pictorial content were excellent.

It combines expert match analysis of the big game with reflections on major games of years gone by and also reaches out to the Mayo Diaspora with articles outlining their viewpoint.

It was attractively presented, merging colour with black and white pictures tastefully, and is an ideal souvenir of the great memento.

The McNamee Award for 2011's Best GAA Publication went to James Laffey for his book 'The Road To 51: The Making of Mayo Football'.



Uachtarán Chumann Lúthchleas Gael Liam Ó Néill presents Sean Ban Breathnach, Raidió na Gaeltachta, with the 2012 Irish Language Award at the GAA's recent McNamee Awards ceremony at Croke Park.

Photo: Matt Browne / SPORTSFILE

Laffey's book is a compelling read; tracing the history of the rise of football in Mayo and sets that rise within the history of the county and within the history of Ireland.

It is much more than a sports book offering as it does a brilliant insight into the men who made football such an integral part of the life of Mayo people.

And the Gradaim na Gaeilge 2012 award went to Raidió na Gaeltachta's 'Spórt an tSathairn' show.

Bíonn clúdach cuimsitheach ar imeachtaí spóirt ar fud na tíre, agus níos faide ó bhaile chomh maith, ar an gClár "Spórt an tSathairn" ar RTÉ Raidió na Gaeltachta idir 14.00 – 18.00 gach Satharn ó cheann ceann na bliana.

Bíonn faisnéis, anailís, agallaimh, torthaí, tuairiscí agus tráchtairacht bheo ar an gclár a chuireann Seán Bán Breathnach i láthair, agus éagsúlacht thar cuimse sa gclár. Pé scéal tugtar tús áite do na cluichí Gaelacha, peil, iomáint, camógaíocht agus liathróid láimhe.

International Hurling Festival for Galway

FROM the 18th to 21st September this year, Aer Lingus in partnership with Etihad Airways, will host the first ever International Hurling Festival. The qualifying games will take place in regional towns around Galway with the finals being staged at Pearse Stadium.

Teams from all over the world are being invited to compete in this unique tournament. Sixteen overseas teams will participate in the competition including teams from New York, San Francisco, Canada, the UK, Continental Europe, the Middle East and Australia.

The tournament will also serve as an opportunity to promote the game of hurling in developing regions by including teams such as Buenos Aires, Milwaukee, Indianapolis and a Europe team made up of non-Irish nationals.

Aer Lingus announced the four festival host towns; Loughrea, Gort, Ballinasloe and Galway West, along with the festival hotels who will provide accommodation for the overseas teams. A number of lively traditional music and dance events will be staged in these venues throughout the festival.

Aer Lingus also announced details of the local underage Hurling Tournament that will run in parallel to the adult International Hurling Tournament.

Speaking at the launch were representatives from European GAA, PRO Brian Clerkin and Britian GAA - President Brendy Brien and Donal McCarty from the Middle East GAA who spoke of the huge level of interest and excitement around the Hurling Festival in their respective regions. Also in attendance were the Mayor of Galway City Cllr, Terry O' Flaherty and Mayor of Galway County Thomas Welby, a selection of All Star Players amongst other special guests.



Nuala Cooney Aer Lingus, Dave Walsh, General Manager, Ireland, Etihad Airways, Galway hurling captain, Fergal Moore; Michael Grealy, Chief Human Resources Officer, Miroslava Andrejkova, Etihad Airways.
Photo: Andrew Downes.

Aer Lingus Chief Human Resources Officer Michael Grealy said, "We are very excited to bring this one of its kind hurling festival to Galway City and County, in the year of The Gathering. Galway is renowned not only for its hospitality but also for its festivals of traditional music and dance."

He added, "We have seen a huge response to the event and are confident that the Aer Lingus hurling festival, together with our partners Etihad Airways, will help to foster an interest in one of our most loved national sports. The game of hurling is uniquely Irish, like Aer Lingus, and is a source of enormous pride to the

Irish all around the World. We look forward to welcoming many friends and visitors home to Ireland and we will be extending a special welcome to all the visitors to Galway next September."

Peter Baumgartner, Etihad Airways' Chief Commercial Officer, said: "As proud sponsor of the GAA Hurling All Ireland Senior Championship and official airline to the GAA, we are delighted to support the International Hurling Festival. The festival will bring teams from the Middle East and Australia to Ireland, the home of Gaelic sports, and we are very proud to play such a key role in making the event a huge success. We wish best of luck to all the teams that take part."

PARTICIPATING TEAMS

- New York
- San Francisco
- Chicago
- London – St Gabriels
- London – Kilburn Geals
- London – Robert Emmets
- Rest of Britain
- Australia
- Canada
- Europe (Irish)
- Europe (Non-Irish)
- The Middle East
- Buenos Aires
- Barley House Wolves / Allentown
- Denver / Indianapolis
- Milwaukee

For more information visit
www.aerlingushurling.com



Leanne McGarry, Etihad Airways, and Carmel Coyne, Aer Lingus, with Galway Hurler, David Collins, and Salthill Knocknacarra hurlers, Donal O'Shea and Finn Timon. Photo: Andrew Downes.

Canning backs internationals

By **JOHN FALLON**
Media West Ireland

JOE Canning believes that it would be a superb move by the GAA if they could develop an international dimension to hurling.

The first ever international hurling festival will be hosted by Galway next September as part of The Gathering and Canning reckons it could be the front-runner to a tournament on a bigger scale.

Sixteen teams from Britain, Europe, the Middle East, Australia, the United States and Argentina will take part in the tournament next September.

Four of the teams will feature non-Irish born players and Canning believes that the hurling gospel is spreading all the time.

"It is growing the whole time. There are new clubs popping up all over the world. That's only good for the marketing side of Gaelic games. Hopefully it will grow and grow into much bigger things," said the All-Star.

Canning said that it remains to be seen if a hurling equivalent of the International Rules series against Australia for the footballers can be developed.

"It is something that you'd have to look at further down the line. Maybe down the line you might have teams from Australia or something. There is so many people going abroad at the



Joe Canning at the launch of the Galway Hurling Festival

moment that you'll have a pretty good team out there in another few years. There might be something like that in the future, which would be great for hurling," said the Galway attacker.

The festival, which is being sponsored by Aer Lingus in partnership with Etihad Airways, will involve host venues in Loughrea, Gort, Ballinasloe and on the west of Galway city, will run from September 18-21.

Many of the teams who have been invited to

participate will feature players who have had to emigrate because of the economic crisis in this country and Canning says it will be a great opportunity for them to come home.

"It is huge for guys that had to emigrate due to work commitments and so and so. It is great for those guys to just come home for a couple of days and get to meet their families and friends again and play a bit of hurling and have a bit of craic over the weekend," he added.

Six Mayo senior clubs appoint new managers

By **MIKE FINNERTY** Mayo News

COUNTY champions Ballaghaderreen are one of six Mayo senior football clubs that have appointed new managers for the 2013 season.

The East Mayo club have appointed Michael Solan to succeed Mark O'Dowd, the Roscommon coach that led Ballagh' to the Moclair Cup last year.

Solan (30), a former Mayo minor, has had his playing career cut short by a knee injury but was part of the Ballagh' squad in both 2008 and 2012 when they won the Mayo SFC title.

His brother, Barry, is a well-known strength and conditioning coach who works with the likes of Katie Taylor, the Polish national soccer team, and the Laois senior footballers.

Meanwhile, Ray Connelly (Ballinrobe) and Declan O'Reilly (Breaffy) have also made the step-up to senior management at club level this year to replace Norman O'Brien and Jim O'Shea respectively.

Connelly, who is continuing to play junior football with his home club, Hollymount/Carramore, won a National League medal with Mayo in 2001.

O'Reilly, a former Mayo minor manager, has extensive experience at vocational schools level with St Brendan's College, Belmullet.

Elsewhere, John Healy (Ballina), Nigel Reape (Knockmore) and Declan Ronaldson (Shrule/Glencorrib) have returned to the management positions in their home clubs after taking a break from the sideline.

Healy, who last managed the Stephenites in 2011, will combine the role with being chairman of the North Mayo club. He will be joined in the Ballina dugout by Paul McGarry and Robert 'Nobby' McLoughlin.

Reape has enlisted the help of former Mayo midfielder Kevin Staunton as a trainer/selector. The ex-Knockmore attacker was also in charge when the North Mayo side lost the Mayo SFC Final to Charlestown in 2009.

Meanwhile, Declan Ronaldson has returned to take over Shrule/Glencorrib after a five-year absence following his decision to step down as manager in 2007.

The former Mayo minor and U-21 boss led the South Mayo club to a county final in 2005 when they were beaten by Crossmolina.

Ronaldson's selectors are Padraic Hennelly, Jimmy Duffy and David Walsh.

The remainder of the clubs competing in the Mayo championship have retained the services of their managers with Pete Warren (Davitts), Denis Kearney (Charlestown), Pat Holmes (Castlebar), Peter Ford (Ballintubber), Martin McNamara (Claremorris), Michael Moyles (Crossmolina), Tomas Tierney (Westport), Jack

Grimes (Tourmakeady) and Seán Finnegan (Aghamore) all back on board again.

There are also a number of new faces in the managerial ranks among the clubs competing for Mayo Intermediate championship honours this year.

Former Mayo captain Noel Connelly has taken the reins of Hollymount/Carramore with James Regan, John Stagg and Pat Walsh installed as his selectors.

Over the road in Kilmaine, Ollie Walsh replaces David Loughlin while Paul Keane is now managing The Neale, last year's Mayo junior champions.

Burrishoole, who have lost the last three county finals, will be under the tutelage of Neil Chambers this year who has taken over from Colm McManamon.

Other newcomers to the bainisteoir bibs include Michael 'Duther' Durkan (Parke) and Des Ryan (Islandeady).

Elsewhere, former Crossmolina senior manager Hugh Lynn has taken charge of the Ardna-re Sarsfields junior football team.

He succeeds Declan O'Dea who led the North Mayo club to three county finals in the last four years, losing to Kiltimagh (2009), Islandeady (2011) and The Neale (2012).

Other new managers in the Junior ranks include Padraig Walsh (Louisburgh) and John Feeney (Ballintubber).

Killarerin footballer hoping to crack Everest for Pieta House

By **DECLAN ROONEY**
Media West Ireland

A GALWAY man has taken the first steps on his expedition to conquer Mount Everest to raise funds for Pieta House West.

Peter O'Connell (29), who plays Gaelic football for the Killarerin club that also produced Padraic Joyce, reached the Everest Base Camp on Wednesday 17th April and is expected to spend two days acclimatising before setting off on the arduous climb to the highest peak in the world.

O'Connell is attempting to climb the 8,848 metres of Mount Everest to raise funds for Pieta House West who are in the process of establishing a centre in Tuam Co Galway. He has already broken through the €20,000 mark.

Pieta House, a centre for the prevention of self-harm or suicide, is 90 percent funded by donations and O'Connell is hoping that his climb will raise vital funds and awareness for the much needed centre in Tuam, which is expected to



Peter O'Connell at the summit of Manaslu.

open later this year.

And already he is in awe of the challenge that is ahead of him as he attempts to become the first Connacht man to crack the mountain.

"I have Everest towering in front of me for the past couple of days, as well as getting views of four other 8,000m peaks we saw on our acclimatisation hike today.

"The views are simply spectacular in every way you look. We hiked up to 5000m today just for a craic, eagles flying in the valleys, it's just unreal.

"The locals are kind and warm, the fellow climbers are mighty craic, although some a bit mad! All going great, sure i'll be up in a few weeks," he said.

His trip and expedition is full self funded and all monies raised will go directly to Pieta House.

After passing through Gorak Shep to reach Everest Base Camp, the adventurer is currently preparing to climb the notoriously unstable Khumbu Icefall at some stage in the next week, which is regarded as one of the most dangerous sections of the route.

He has estimated it will take four weeks to reach the summit of Everest, and anyone interested in his progress can follow him on Facebook under PeterOConnellEverest4Pieta.

Donations to Pieta House West can be made online at www.idonate.ie.



Nicola Fahy and Leo Moran.



Peter and his Granny, Jane Kelly from Tyrur, Newbridge, Co. Galway, before his 12th climb of Croagh Patrick



NUIG students honoured for excellence in sport



Rebecca Toweey from Ballaghaderren, Co. Mayo, receives a Special Merit Award from Galway GAA hurling committee representative Joe Byrne at the inaugural NUI Galway GAA Awards.



Hannam Iqbal from Ballyhaunis, Co. Mayo, receives the Fresher B Hurler of the Year Award from Galway GAA hurling committee representative Joe Byrne at the inaugural NUI Galway GAA Awards.



Paddy Collins from Breaffy, Co. Mayo, receives the Junior Footballer of the Year Award from Galway GAA hurling committee representative Joe Byrne at the inaugural NUI Galway GAA Awards.

NUI Galway graduate and Galway GAA hurling committee representative, Joe Byrne presented the University's inaugural Player of the Year Awards at a special ceremony at the University recently.

The Player of the Year Awards honours all teams led by the outstanding players who participated on behalf of NUI Galway during the past third-level GAA season. A number of inter-county players from different counties were winners in hurling, camogie, ladies football and men's Gaelic football.

Special Merit awards were also presented to those who, whilst not winning individual awards, achieved distinction by playing with both fresher hurling and football awards, as well as club administration.

NUI Galway GAA Officer Michael O'Connor said: "This is part of NUI Galway GAA's increased involvement with the community and the players that represent the University. NUI Galway is also involved in the sponsorship of Man of the Match Awards in all Connacht hurling and football finals at second level to help showcase the best Gaelic games talent and highlight the games that take place at this level."

2012-13 PLAYER OF THE YEAR AWARDS:

- Fresher A Football: Lee Cullen from Bellanleck, Co. Fermanagh
- Fresher B Football: Ger McWalter from Foxford, Co. Mayo
- Fresher C Football: Éanna Bane from Caherlistrane, Co. Galway
- Junior Football: Joint winners - Paddy Collins from Breaffy, Co. Mayo and Ruairdhi McLoughlin from Carrick on Shannon, Co. Leitrim
- Intermediate Football: Kieran O'Donnell from the Aran Islands, Co. Galway
- Senior Football: Shane Nally from Garrymore, Co. Mayo
- Fresher A Hurling: David Reidy from Ennis, Co. Clare
- Fresher B Hurling: Hannam Iqbal from Ballyhaunis, Co. Mayo
- Intermediate Hurling: Eoin O'Farrell from Blackpool, Cork
- Senior Hurling: Joseph Cooney from Bullaun, Co. Galway
- Camogie: Aisling Dunphy from Graigue Ballycallan, Co. Kilkenny
- Fresher Ladies Football: Emer Gallagher from Termon, Co. Donegal
- Lynch Cup Ladies Football: Michelle Guinan from Tullamore, Co. Offaly
- O'Connor Ladies Football: Ciara Hegarty from Moville, Co. Donegal
- Special Merit Awards: Conor Cleary from Kilmaley, Co. Clare (Dual Fresher); Kevin McMahon from Marino, Co. Dublin (Dual Fresher); Gordon Joyce from Fairhill, Cork City (Dual Fresher); Dinny Mulvey from Butlersbridge Co. Cavan (Junior Football Manager); Maureen Heneghan from Portstewart, Co. Derry (Camogie); Rebecca Toweey from Ballaghadeeren, Co. Mayo (Ladies Football); and Byran O'Loughlin from Kilmaley Co. Clare (Intermediate Hurling).



Ruairdhi McLoughlin from Carrick on Shannon, Co. Leitrim, receives the Junior Footballer of the Year Award from Galway GAA hurling committee representative Joe Byrne at the inaugural NUI Galway GAA Awards.



Éanna Bane from Caherlistrane, Co. Galway, receives the Fresher C Footballer of the Year Award from Galway GAA hurling committee representative Joe Byrne at the inaugural NUI Galway GAA Awards.



Kieran O'Donnell from the Aran Islands, Co. Galway, receives the Intermediate Footballer of the Year Award from Galway GAA hurling committee representative Joe Byrne at the inaugural NUI Galway GAA Awards.



Galway picked apart by Laois

ROUND 5

Laois1-15
Galway0-10

By **DECLAN ROONEY**
Media West Ireland

GALWAY manager Alan Mulholland lamented the seven second-half wides that cost his side any chances of testing Laois at O'Moore Park.

"We had a lot of chances in the second half – I'm not saying we should have won – but we could have made the score a lot less that the eight point difference at the end.

"We had some missed frees on the left side and right side from Paul and Micheal which could have made the gap a lot of closer," said Mulholland whose side now face a relegation battle, as well as retaining faint hopes of promotion.

As well as the wides from Conroy and Meehan, Galway dropped countless spec-



Alan Mulholland lamented the seven second-half wides

ulative point attempts into the goal-keeper's hands, but in reality they never recovered from the concession of Gary Walsh's first-minute goal, which delighted Laois boss Justin McNulty.

"I think on occasion we played absolutely sublime football and created some unbelievable opportunities. We weren't as ruthless as we needed to be in front of goal," said the Laois manager, who also

had Cahir Healy sent off late on for two bookings.

In truth the eight point defeat flattered Galway as they never came to terms with Laois' excellent movement up front. Ross Munnelly landed two points from play in each half while MJ Tierney and Walsh proved deadly accurate from frees as Galway never looked like a side chasing a slot in the top flight.

In a division with much at stake and little confirmed, the picture will become a lot clearer next Sunday when Galway meet Wexford (12.45pm) at Pearse Stadium.

SCORERS – Laois: G Walsh 1-4 (3f), MJ Tierney 0-5 (4f), R Munnelly 0-4, P Clancy, D Kingston 0-1 each.

Galway: M Martin 0-4 (3f), P Conroy 0-3 (2f), N Coleman, M Meehan(1f), G Sice 0-1 each.

GALWAY: M Breathnach; J Duane, F Hanley, G Sweeney; G Bradshaw (K Kelly 56), G O'Donnell, G Sice; N Coleman, A Griffin (F O Curraoin 42); M Boyle, P Conroy, S Denvir (C Doherty 46); E Concannon (S Armstrong 44), M Meehan, M Martin (D Cummins 53).

Footballers back on track

ROUND 6

Galway1-16
Wexford0-11

By **JOHN FALLON**
Media West Ireland

GALWAY produced a storming finish to 1-5 without reply to clinch victory at Pearse Stadium.

Wing-back Gary Sice was the hero when he burst forward 11 minutes from time to blast the ball to the net after a good passing movement involving Michael Meehan and Danny Cummins.

The sides were level for the fifth time in the game at that stage but Wexford collapsed after that.

Meehan secured possession from the kickout and put four points between them and the rampant Tribesmen tacked on another four points to seal an invaluable victory.

"We are relieved to be honest," said Galway boss Alan Mulholland. "If we hadn't come through today we were look at



GOAL GETTER: Galway wing back Gary Sice and Graeme Molloy of Wexford during Sunday's NFL action at Pearse Stadium.

Photo: Ray Ryan / SPORTSFILE



Galway lose out to Armagh

Round 7

Armagh0-21
Galway1-12

By **FRANK KEARNEY**
Media West Ireland

IN the end this result was great for Armagh who needed to win to hold on to their division two status and needed other results to go their way and while Galway lost their way, one would feel that it would have been an injustice if the Tribesmen had spoil the Armagh party.

Galway were already safe in division two and if other results went right, a victory could have given them a place back in division one, but in the end Derry and Westmeath go back to division one.

From the outset Armagh had Galway in trouble as Kevin Dyas, Stephan Harold, Tony and Aaron Kernan kicked points at will with breeze advantage and by the eleventh minute led by five points.

Michael Meehan got Galway off the mark with a pointed free after Gary O'Donnell was fouled, but Armagh dominated the game and with midfield totally on top, the Orchard men had raced into a 0-8 to 0-2 with ten minutes left in the opening half.

Then Galway received a lifeline when Conor Doherty broke through for a Galway goal that in fairness came completely against the run of play. It was a score that ignited Galway and Michael Meehan added a point that put Galway in striking distance as the half time whistle sounded as the scoreboard read Armagh 0-10 Galway 1-3.

Galway started the second half in blistering fashion and made full use of the wind advantage and four points in as many minutes. Sean Armstrong struck two frees and Michael Meehan had two, one from play.

While it was looking good for Galway, Armagh needed a right result if they had any hope of survival.

Tony Kernan and Stefan Forke added Armagh points which pushed Armagh five clear and Galway had a mountain to climb at the three quarter stage.

The introduction of the lively Danny Cummins led to two more Galway scores but when Aaron Kernan and Stephan Harold scored two wonderful points inside a minute, the writing was suddenly on the wall for the Galway side.

Cummins and Gareth Bradshaw scored another brace, but Armagh hit three in the final five minutes to seal the game and ultimately their division two status for another season.

SCORERS – Armagh: A Kernan 0-6 (3fs), K Dyas 0-5, S Forke, S Harold 0-3 each, S Clarke, B Mallon, C Rafferty, T Kernan 0-1 each.

Galway: S Armstrong 0-5 (2fs), M Meehan 0-3 (2fs), C Doherty 1-0, D Cummins 0-2, P Conroy, G Bradshaw 0-1 each.

GALWAY: M Breathnach; J Duane, F Hanley, C Forde; G Bradshaw, K Kelly, G Sice; G O'Donnell, A Griffin; E Concannon, P Conroy, C Doherty; S Armstrong, M Meehan, M Hehir. **Subs:** D Cummins for Hehir (h-t), G Higgins for O'Donnell (39), G Sweeney for Sice (45), M Martin for Concannon (53), S Denver for Bradshaw (64).

against Wexford

the other end of the division so that put relegation to bed now I am nearly sure. We can rest easy now after that."

Cummins, Sean Armstrong and Meehan landed early points for Galway, but Wexford corner-forward Shane Roche was in top form and he shot three points from in the opening half and they trailed by just 0-8 to 0-7 at the break having played against the wind.

Galway went a goal in front with a strong start to the second-half against the wind with points from Paul Conroy and substitute Gareth Bradshaw but Wexford rallied and points from frees by Roche and Ben Brosnan reduced the margin before Redmond Barry equalised after 50 minutes.

Wexford then hit the front five minutes later and looked good for victory when PJ Banville pointed but, remarkably, that was their final score of the match.

Armstrong levelled the game 13 minutes from time Wexford hit some bad wides and then they were made pay when Sice burst forward for the decisive score of the match, with substitute Michael Martin landing three points in a strong finish for the Tribesmen.

It was a disappointing end for Wexford

and manager Aidan O'Brien was alarmed with the way their heads dropped after conceding the goal.

"In the last ten minutes we fell away badly so that is very disappointing," he said.

GALWAY: M Breathnach; J Duane, F Hanley, C Forde; G O'Donnell, K Kelly, G Sice (1-0); F Ó Curraoin, A Griffin; J O'Brien, S Armstrong (0-5, four frees), C Doherty (0-1); P Conroy (0-1), M Meehan (0-2, one free), D Cummins (0-3).

Subs: G Bradshaw (0-1) for Duane (34 mins), E Concannon for Griffin (half-time), S Denver for O'Brien (54 mins), M Martin (0-3, two frees) for Doherty (61 mins), S Walsh for Meehan (64 mins)

WEXFORD: T Hughes; R Tierney, G Molloy, J Wadding; B Malone, D Murphy, A Flynn (0-1); D Waters, R Quinlivan; J Holmes, C Doyle, R Barry (0-1); S Roche (0-4, one free), B Brosnan (0-2, two frees), PJ Banville (0-3).

Subs: C Carty for Doyle (25 mins), C Lyng for Holmes (58 mins), P Byrne for Roche (66 mins), L Chin for Murphy (69 mins), A Doyle for Flynn (69 mins),

REF: Padraig O'Sullivan (Kerry).



HEADS UP: Paul Conroy tries to take possession despite the attentions of Armagh's Kieran Toner. Photo: Paul Mohan / SPORTSFILM



Tipp run riot in Salthill

ROUND 3

Tipperary4-22
Galway1-20

By **JOHN FALLON**
Media West Ireland

GALWAY boss Anthony Cunningham had a perfect weekend ruined by rampant Tipperary at Pearse Stadium.

Cunningham had double cause for celebration when his native St Thomas' won the All-Ireland club hurling title on Sunday and then St Brigid's, where he lives and who he managed to Connacht glory, captured the football crown.

But hopes of completing a memorable hat-trick of successes were blown away by a sharp Tipperary side who had a cutting edge which the Tribesmen could not match.

A soft goal from a long range Brendan Maher sideline saw Galway fall 1-5 to 0-1 behind after just nine minutes. Three points from Joe Canning and one from Damien Hayes got the Tribesmen back in contention.

But once more Tipperary upped the pace and a goal from Shane Bourke after 17 minutes helped them go 2-10 to 0-5 ahead after 21 minutes. A goal from Joe Canning from a 20-metre free reduced the margin to 2-13 to 1-9 at the interval.

Galway's best spell came in the third quarter but while Aidan Harte, Canning, Niall Healy and Davy Glennon found the range. They only got within a goal of Tipp.

And then Eamon O'Shea's men put on the burners again and pulled away in the final quarter. John O'Dwyer crowned a superb performance with a goal from close range after 53 minutes.

Seamus Callanan quickly followed with a point to make it 3-18 to 1-17 with 17 minutes remaining. Tipp finished strongly with Lar Corbett soloing through before flicking it with one hand to the net.

Jason Forde, Shane McGrath and O'Dwyer finished the rout with a flurry of points in the final moments.

TIPPERARY: D Gleeson; P Stapleton, P Curran, M Cahill; P Maher, C O'Mahony 0-1, C O'Brien; J Woodlock 0-3, B Maher 1-0, sideline; S McGrath 0-1, L Corbett 1-1, J O'Brien; J O'Dwyer 1-6, S Callanan 0-7, 4f, 2'65, S Bourke 1-2.

Subs: D Maher for O'Mahony 35 mins, N McGrath for Maher 48, B O'Meara for O'Brien 51, J Forde 0-1 for S Bourke 65, P Bourke for Callanan 68.

GALWAY: F Flannery; F Moore, K Hynes, J Coen; D Collins, J Cooney, N Donoghue; I Tannian 0-1, A Smith; J Glynn, C Donnellan 0-1, D Glennon 0-2; N Healy 0-2, J Canning 1-10, 1-7f, D Hayes 0-2.

Subs: A Harte 0-2 for Donoghue 21 mins, B Flaherty for Cooney 35, N Burke for Donnellan 35, A Callanan for Burke 51,

REF: B Gavin (Offaly).



BACK IN FORM: Cyril Donnellan was back to his best for Galway against Cork at Pearse Stadium on Sunday.

Photo: Ray Ryan / SPORTSFILE



BACK WITH A BANG: Galway forward David Burke made a big impact for Galway in his return to inter-county action against Waterford at Walsh Park.

Photo: Stephen McCarthy / SPORTSFILE



Super Can saves Galway

ROUND 4

Galway2-12
Cork2-12

By **JOHN FALLON**
Media West Ireland

GAA bosses spent a lot of time at the weekend trying to find ways of making the games more entertaining but Joe Canning showed them that the best way is to produce a skill level that is awesome.

Canning looked sharp and deft in open play and threw in a few sublime touches as well in another superb display and while it was not without fault, Galway would have been in trouble without him.

In the end, his display was not enough to secure victory as Cork rallied well in the closing stages just when it seemed the game was going away from Galway.

Afterwards, manager Anthony Cunningham was displeased with the manner they let a winning hand slip but he took comfort from the fact they can still qualify despite being bottom of the table.

“There was a lack of concentration there in

the finish really. It is something we will talk to the players about and go through it in detail, you can't allow and good team like Cork into it and take your foot off the pedal because they'll come back and sucker punch of a goal.

“We paid the price for that there. This league is extremely competitive, I don't think there is any team qualified and definitely we have everything to play for on the last day.”

Canning was superb for the Tribesmen, shooting 0-10 in another awesome display but Cunningham will be looking for a bigger return from some of the other forwards in their final game against Waterford next week.

“We'd always be looking for more scores, and that we get scores easily, and maybe a bit more easily than we are getting them at the moment. That's what we'll be back on the coaching field on Tuesday night with,” he added.

His side hurled well in the opening half and it took a goal from a penalty by goalkeeper Anthony Nash to give the Rebels a 1-7 to 1-6 interval lead having played with the wind, but they shot ten wides.

A sublime overhead handpass from Canning sent Davy Glennon through for the opening goal after 20 minutes.

But with Lorcan McLoughlin, who finished with 0-3 from midfield, in good form Cork rallied before the break and again after half-time

when points from Conor Lehane and McLoughlin put them 1-9 to 1-8 in front following a superb point from a sideline by Canning.

Galway got moving and another Canning effort reduced the deficit before Cyril Donnellan leveled the match after 46 minutes and then Canning edged them in front from distance.

Galway looked set for victory when Donnellan blasted to the net after taking a delivery from Glennon but the Cork response was good.

Cian McCarthy and Stephen Moylan pointed before McCarthy picked out Paudie O'Sullivan with a great crossfield pass and the Cloyne man found the net to tie the game at 2-11 apiece ten minutes from the end.

Canning restored Galway's lead with a free but McCarthy secured a deserved draw five minutes from time for the Rebels.

SCORERS – Galway: J Canning 0-10 (7f, 1sl), C Donnellan 1-2, D Glennon 1-0.

Cork: P O'Sullivan 1-1, A Nash 1-0 (1-Open), L McLoughlin 0-3, C McCarthy 0-2 (2f), P Horgan (1f), P Cronin, W Egan, S Moylan, C Lehane and L O'Farrell 0-1 each.

GALWAY: C Callanan; F Moore, K Hynes, J Coen; A Harte, D Collins, N Donoghue; I Tannian, A Smith (B Flaherty 68); J Cooney, J Canning, J Glynn; C Donnellan, D Hayes, D Glennon (T Haran 65).

Kilkenny next for Cunningham's boys in last four

ROUND 5

Hurlers reach semi-final

Waterford0-12
Galway0-15

By **BILL KIELY**

GALWAY qualified for the semi-final of the national hurling league division 1A after a workman-like victory over Waterford.

Once more Joe Canning led the scoring charts for Anthony Cunningham's side, but seeing five of his six starting forwards register on the scoreboard will please the Galway management no end.

Indeed Canning could have filled his boots, but he saw he 14th minute penalty saved well by Waterford and he also let a couple of other

efforts slide by.

But the slack was taken up by the ever improving Davy Glennon. The Mullagh man bagged four points from play to add to his impressive outing last week against Cork, while the returning St Thomas' contingent also boosted Galway up front.

Galway managed to work their way into a 0-8 to 0-3 lead at the break in an icy Walsh Park, with two points from Canning, Iarla Tannian – who was partnered by Joesph Cooney at midfield – and Niall Burke giving them the advantage.

Waterford managed to gain some foothold in the tie after the restart as points from Maurice Shanahan and Seamus Prendergast pulled the Deise men to within three points, but then Galway's superiority saw them to a vital win.

Three of the St Thomas' All-Ireland winners made their first appearance of the season in Waterford. James Regan was a second-half substitute, while Conor Cooney and David Burke were added to the starting 15 late on.

And David Burke hit his first inter-county point of the season in the second-half to settle Galway after Waterford's early brace, before Glennon and Cyril Donnellan tagged on points to see Galway over the line, despite a late

comeback from the home side that reduced the winning margin to just three points.

But the Galway management will care not a jot. The main early season objective to remain in the top flight for 2014 has been accomplished; they have a league semi-final to look forward to on Sunday fortnight; and they will there get a chance to lay down another marker to Kilkenny, who they have already beaten in the league this season.

WATERFORD: I O'Regan; S Fives, L Lawlor, S Daniels; J Nagle, M Walsh, D Fives; S O'Sullivan (0-1), K Moran; R Barry, S Prendergast (0-1), B O'Halloran (0-1); J Dillon (0-1, 0-1f), M Shanahan (0-7, 5f, 1 '65'), J Barron (0-1).

Subs: P Mahony for O'Halloran (53), S Walsh for Barry (59), B O'Sullivan for Dillon (63).

GALWAY: C Callanan; F Moore, K Hynes, N Donoghue; A Harte, D Collins, J Coen; I Tannian (0-2), J Cooney; D Burke (0-1), C Cooney, J Canning (0-5, 3f); D Glennon (0-4), C Donnellan (0-1), N Burke (0-2).

Subs: D Hayes for N Burke (53), A Smyth for J Cooney (57), J Glynn for C Cooney (61), J Regan for Donnellan (68), B Flaherty for D Burke (70).

REF: Anthony Stapleton (Laois).



Tribesmen have no ans Kilkenny dominance

Galway1-17
Kilkenny1-24

By **JACKIE CAHILL**

It was business as usual for Kilkenny as the Cats produced their best performance of the season to please absent manager Brian Cody.

The Allianz League and All-Ireland champions cruised past Galway to set up a mouthwatering final with neighbours Tipperary on May 5.

Pundits and neutrals alike wondered how the Cats would cope without Cody, who was unavailable after undergoing heart surgery recently.

Martin Fogarty and Mick Dempsey took charge of team affairs and the transition was seamless as Galway were sent packing.

Kilkenny's progression to a third successive league final was routine stuff.

Galway scored an early season league victory against Kilkenny but with the stakes higher yesterday, the tables were turned emphatically.

Eoin Larkin hit 0-10 for the winners, including nine points from placed balls.

At the other end, Joe Canning was Galway's leading scorer with 0-8 but the Portumna star failed to score from play.

At half-time, wind-assisted Kilkenny led by 0-15 to 1-6, having fought back from a sluggish start.

Cyril Donnellan's fourth minute goal handed the Tribesmen a 1-1 to 0-0 lead but Kilkenny don't do panic and they were level by the 24th minute at 0-6 to 1-3.

The sides were deadlocked twice more before Kilkenny unleashed a flurry of scores before half-time to lead by six.

And they killed the game stone dead in the 46th minute when Colin Fennelly pounced from close range for Kilkenny's goal.

This game was overshadowed, however, by a serious injury sustained by Galway captain Fergal Moore.

The Turloughmore defender was involved in a sickening tenth minute collision with Kilkenny's Walter Walsh – and stretchered off the pitch.

A semi-conscious Moore was reportedly transferred to hospital in Clonmel, where he received treatment for concussion.

Lester Ryan, one of the real finds of



Conor Cooney alludes the challenge of Kilkenny wing-back Tommy Walsh in the Tribesmen's defeat in the NHL semi-final.
Photo: Barry Cregg / SPORTSFILE

this league campaign, bagged three points from midfield and his partnership with Michael Rice at centre-field was the platform for this comfortable win.

KILKENNY: E Murphy; P Murphy, JJ De-laney, JJ Tyrrell; T Walsh, V Hogan, K Joyce, L Ryan (0-3), M Rice (0-2); W Walsh, R Power (0-1), E Larkin (0-10, 0-6f, 0-3 65s); C Fennelly (1-0), R Hogan (0-5), A Fogarty (0-2). **Subs:** M Ruth for W Walsh (55), C Buckley (0-1) for Fennelly (62).

GALWAY: C Callanan; F Moore, K Hynes, N Donoghue; J Coen, D Collins, A Harte (0-2); I Tannian, J Cooney (0-1); C Donnellan (1-3), C Cooney, D Burke (0-1f); D Glennon, J Canning (0-8, 0-6f, 0-2 65s), D Hayes (0-1).

Subs: A Smith (0-1) for Moore (inj, 15), P Killeen for Donoghue (26), J Glynn for C Cooney (46), J Regan for Hayes (57).

REF: D Kirwan (Cork).

Players need a break: Helebert

By **JACKIE CAHILL**

TOM Helebert said that a return to club hurling will be the perfect tonic for the county stars as they prepare for their Leinster championship semi-final in eight weeks time.

"At the end of the day, you're always planning to the next game. We'll pick ourselves up after today.

"They need a break, we've had a tough campaign right the way through, because we've been gearing ourselves programme wise all the time to a Lein-

ster final – or a Leinster semi-final – and that's our big target.

"I'm sure they'll be very happy to take a week off from us now; their club championship commences next week, that will bring a little bit of freshness and spice to the whole thing, and off we go again.

"We've to manage a schedule. Whether you play one game, three games or five games in between makes no difference, you have a programme to manage and times to peak and times to ease up, and that's the way we plan it," said the management team member.



wer for

Moore injury not as bad as feared

By JACKIE CAHILL

THE nine minutes delay to the first-half action for the treatment of Fergal Moore's head injury had no effect on the match's outcome, according to selector Tom Helebert.

After a clash of heads with Walter Walsh, Moore was stretchered from the field after receiving extensive attention. However, the news from the camp appears to be good as Moore looks to be suffering from 'slight concussion'.

"They had the momentum just before he got hurt. They were after tacking on three points just before he got hurt; we were starting to leak a little bit around the middle third at that particular juncture.

"Again, I wouldn't pin it completely on Fergal's injury. We would be probably hiding behind the obvious. I suppose the fact was they started to get a grip on the game. Richie Power started to drift out from centre forward to the middle-third, picked up a lot of ball, and certainly their half back line solidified themselves very well when he did that.

"As a unit, they all just basically clamped us in the middle of the park, and from there that was their springboard," said Helebert.



Galway goalscorer Cyrill Donnellan in action against Kilkenny full-back JJ Delaney, during the NHL semi-final at Semple Stadium.

Photo: Barry Cregg / SPORTSFILE

Abbeyknockmoy defence holds solid to take Connacht GAA League title

Abbeyknockmoy .0-12
Tooreen0-11

ONE of the best games played in the inaugural Connacht GAA Tain league was reserved for the final game in the series at the windswept Connacht GAA Centre as Abbeyknockmoy withheld a determined second-half fight-back from Tooreen to gain their first piece of silverware for the season.

In what has been acclaimed by all involved as an inspired creation the Connacht GAA Tain league has helped to invigorate hurling in Connacht counties at seasons beginning with a fitting final for all concerned.

Whoever played with the strong wind in the Connacht GAA Centre required absolute accuracy otherwise a difficult second-half would be their lot. Abbeyknockmoy, managed by Galway hurling icon Michael Coleman were without the services of Galway senior panellist Brian Flaherty whilst Tooreen bemoaned the loss of NUI, Galway Sigerson player Cathal Freeman, who missed the game due to a shoulder injury.

The Galway side played with the elements in the opening period but it was Tooreen who had as many chances to score but were off target from placed balls and in the final analysis this was crucial to the final outcome.

Padraig O'Donnell opened the scoring with a free for the Galway side after three minutes. Kenny Feeney responded for Tooreen before Padraig O'Donnell struck three in a row (2 frees) in a four minute spell as Abbeyknockmoy realised that a double digit lead would be welcome at the break.

A constant feature of the game was the inability of either side to carve out clear goal chances and had one or the other done so success would have been theirs with ease. Shane King sent Abbeyknockmoy into a short lived four-point lead before Tooreen wing forward David Kenny with a well created score gave hope to the Mayo men who had spurned four scoring chances in the first ten minutes.

At the other end of the field Abbeyknockmoy were creating a sizeable tally of wides giving Adrian Hession a relaxed first-half in the Tooreen goal. Under tremendous pressure in the last ten minutes of the first half Tooreen held out to

concede a paltry four points to Abbeyknockmoy with Danny Mullins, Sean McCarthy and O'Donnell (2) on target.

Tooreen on the one hand went in at the break happy to be only 0-9 to 0-2 in arrears but from the other viewpoint disappointed that they themselves had hit seven wides against the breeze with at least three eminently scoreable.

The standard of play increased considerably in the second half as Abbeyknockmoy defended well allowing little concession of frees after what had been a free ridden first half. Both sides upped their efforts in the physical stakes as the entertainment value was now at an optimum.

As the second-half matured and Tooreen were finding it difficult to score from frees and play and the magical goal looking impossible they allowed Abbeyknockmoy off the hook for a crucial segment of the second half and in that timespan Padraig O'Donnell struck three vital second half Abbeyknockmoy scores. Kenny Feeney did the most that could be expected with half a dozen second half scores (2 frees) as Fergal Boland, Pat Morris and Ciaran Finn also tagged on minors to leave the minimum between the sides entering the final moments.

Great scenes of jubilation greeted Gus Chapman's final whistle as Abbeyknockmoy accepted that they had used up all their good fortune in securing the title and could thank a mean defence and a marvellous freetaking exhibition by Padraig O'Donnell. Likewise for Tooreen who showed great honesty in defence just fell short in the first half when an extra score or two would have garnered the odds. As a consequence and such tiny margins champions are created.

ABBKEYKNOCKMOY: Declan Molloy, Tommy Farragher, Tom Blade, Mike Gannon, Paddy Flaherty, Steven Ruane, David Carton, Ronan Cooley, Colman Maher, Ger Ruane, Padraig O'Donnell (0-9), Shane King (0-1), Sean McCarthy (0-1), Brian O'Donnell, Danny Mullins (0-1)

TOOREEN: Adrian Hession, Paul Hunt, Shane Morley, Brian Delaney, Joey Ganley, Michael Morley Conor English, Ciaran Charlton, Gary Nolan, David Kenny (0-1), Kenny Feeney (0-7), Ciaran Finn (0-1), Dylan Lynskey, Sean Ganley, Pat Morris (0-1). **Subs:** Conor Henry for J Ganley, Shane Boland for S Ganley, Fergal Boland (0-1) for D Lynskey.

REF: Gus Chapman (Sligo).



Ballinderry NS, Corofin Co Galway were honoured recently by a visit from Mr Liam O'Neill, President of GAA. Anne Canney, PRO Corofin LGFA, took the opportunity to sell Mr O'Neill a St Patrick's Day ribbon. The Galway Ladies Football clubs assist the Carers Association with their fundraising activities by selling ribbons for this worthy cause.



NEW DEAL: Pictured at the announcement of Boston Scientific as the sponsors of the Galway club football Division 1 and 2 Leagues are (L to R): Finian Hanley, (Galway senior captain), Milo Costello, (Galway Football Treasurer), Michael O'Flynn, (Vice-President, Boston Scientific), Tadhg O Conghaile, (Galway Football Chairman), Anatine O'Gríofa, (Galway senior player).

Half a Parish, a complete club

CORTOON Shamrocks GAA Club was founded in 1888, and celebrated its 125th anniversary on the 22nd of April.

And to mark this significant milestone, members of the club have written a detailed history entitled 'Half A Parish, A Complete Club', encompassing events both on and off the field.

The fruit of this arduous task was revealed at the official launch in The Ard Ri House Hotel, Tuam, with the official unveiling completed by former Cortoon player and past President of the GAA, Joe McDonagh.

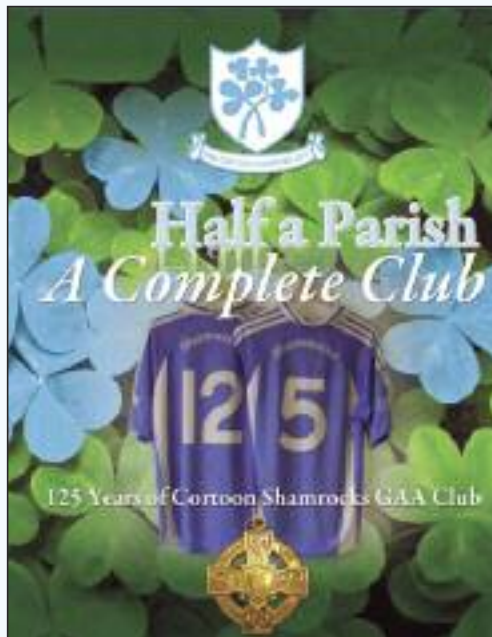
As part of the launch, an exhibition of photographs and club memorabilia along with a selection of club jerseys, past and present, were put on display.

Among the many highlights from the book are personal contributions from well know players including, Derek Savage, Tommy Joe Gilmore, Peter Finnerty, Emer Flaherty, Edel Concannon, as well as Joe McDonagh.

"The club to me epitomizes all the endearing characteristics of the quintessential rural GAA club, from the sense of belonging, the indomitable community spirit, and the pride and passion of the supporters," said Savage, Cortoon player, Galway All Star 2000 and senior All-Ireland football winner in 1998 and 2001

"The Club made me...one should always be proud of the club no matter where you play or at what level," said Tommy Joe Gilmore, Cortoon player and manager, Galway All Star in 1972 and 1973 and NFL winner from 1981.

The history of Cortoon Shamrocks



"I've come to realize what football meant to everyone in the parish. Gaelic football is everything to the people of Cortoon," said Peter Finnerty, former Cortoon player, five time All Star, and All-Ireland hurling winner in 1987 and 1988.

But it wasn't just the men of Cortoon that brought pride to the club as attested

to by members of the victorious 2004 Galway Ladies football team.

"The memories of the year we will cherish forever. One in particular that we both share is our return to our home club Cortoon. The warm feeling that we experienced on that night has remained in our hearts since. We were so proud to be able to bring home senior All-Ireland medals to the parish," said Emer Flaherty and Edel Concannon.

And the highest honour of any GAA member went to former player Joe McDonagh, who was named GAA President in 1997.

"I am very proud to have been associated with one of the oldest clubs in the Gaelic Athletic Association. I cherish the memories I have of a life-long association with my place of birth. I thank Cortoon Shamrocks for allowing me to reclaim my birthright," said Mr McDonagh.

Situated within the boundaries of Tuam parish, and bordered by seven clubs, Cortoon Shamrocks have had to overcome many obstacles in order to survive. From winning their first trophy in 1945, a Galway North Board Junior title, to winning the Senior League in 2009, the club has come a long way.

They currently field ten teams from underage to senior level. Their home pitch is Brownsgrrove, which has been their playing ground since 1939.

A copy of 'Half A Parish, A Complete Club' can be purchased through club members. For more information contact club chairman, Mark Gilmore at mark.gilmore@yahoo.co.uk.



UNDER-13 NORTH DIVISION 1



U-13 Division 1 North Shield winners Monivea Abbey. Back row (L to R): Jack Mannion, Devon Kelly, Jaden O'Conner, Cillian Burke, Mark Harrison, Matthew King, Keith Boyle, Dara Colman, Sean King, Niall Forde, Evan Moylett, Jack Fleming. Front row (L to R): Niall Martyn, Cathal King, Cian Harris, Cillian Lindner, Greg Higgins, Ciaran Farrelly, Jason Joyce, Luke Forde, Shane Cosgrove, Daniel Lydon, Gavin Cosgrove, Reece Forde.



U-13 Division 1 North Shield Finalists Tuam Stars. Back row (L to R): Seamus Fallon and Gerry Bodkin (Management), Conor Higgins, Robert Murphy, Brian Mannion, Darragh Creaven, Dean Ward, Anthony Keating, Liam Colleran (management). Front row (L to R): Joe Burke, Liam Gormley, Luke Higgins, Eoin Fowley, Caoimhin Marren, Cathal Mannion, Cillian Reidy, Darren Leufer, Jack Davin and Mark Colleran.



Bobby Mullins (Vice Chairman, Coiste Peil na nOg), presenting the U-13 Division 1 North Shield to Sean King, captain of Monivea Abbey.



Larry Larkin (Secretary, Coiste Peil na nOg), presenting the cup for the U-13 Division 1 North League Final to Andrew Burns, Corofin captain.



Padraig Coyne (Coiste Peil na nOg), presenting the cup for the U-13 Division 3 North League Final to Darren Costello, captain of Milltown.



UNDER-13 NORTH DIVISION 1



Under 13 Division 1 North League Final winners Corofin. Back row (L to R) Dean Finnegan, Patrick Reilly, Cian Forde, Darragh Burke, Eoin Broderick, David Canon, Rossa Ryan, Jonathan Whyte, Jamie McIntyre, Richard Creighton, Sean Finnegan, Conor Melia. Front row (L to R): Nathan Kearney, Cian Gillespie, Matthew Cooley, Sean Raftery, Ian Collins, Adam Hession, Andrew Burns, Ciaran Melia, Kieran Costello, Darren O'Brien, Joseph Duggan, Jack McHugh, Dean Hynes and Jake Hogan.



Under 13 Division 1 North League Finalists Annaghdown. Back row (L to R): K. McLoughlin (management), D. Tunney, S. Dennigan, P. Shaughnessy, S. Mitchell, J. Hickey, C. Harkin, E. Kilcoyne, T. Kilcommins (management), A. Reilly, R. Barrett, L. Thornton, C. Maloney, D. Curry, M. Curry (management). Front row (L to R): S. McLoughlin, K. Naughton, A. Heneghan, J. McCarthy, C. Newell, D. O'Sullivan, C. Ross, D. Kilcommins, C. O'Flynn, D. Hegarty, J. McNicholas.



Under 13 Division 3 North League Finalists Pdraig Pearses. Back row (L to R): Des McCabe (management), Shane Hynes, Dylan Grady, Jack Barrett, Ronan Flannery, Darragh Healy, Gordon Kenny, Oisín Flannery, Dean Reilly, Stephen Doran, Cathal Kitt, Mike Carr (management). Front row (L to R): James Friel, Darragh McCabe, Eoin Lally, Mark Hennelly, Conor Burke, Eoghan McCabe, Niall Moran and Thomas Carr.



UNDER-13 NORTH DIVISION 1



Under 13 Division 3 North League Final winners Milltown Back row (L to R): Terence Godwin and Kevin Carney (management), Sean Walsh, Robert Connolly, Darren Costello, Niall Carney, Cathal Kelly, Oisín Burke, Jack Kirrane, James Kirrane (management). Front row (L to R): Ben Cronin, Conor Mullahy, Terence Godwin, Niall Costello, Conor Carney, Eoin Mannion, David Flanagan, Thomas Carney and Matthew McGuinn.

UNDER-13 NORTH DIVISION 2



Under 13 Division 2 North League Final winners Glenamaddy. Back row (L to R): Management: Pat Collins, Kevin Duffy, Alfie O'Brien, Michael Coyne and Pat Geraghty. Middle row (L to R): Jonathan Whyte, Ronan Coyne, Daragh Keaveney, MacDara Geraghty, Matthew Curley, Ryan Keaveney, Luke Divilly, Odhrán Geraghty, Eoin Collins, Daniel O'Rourke. Front row (L to R): Thomas O'Brien, Patrick Fitzmaurice, Adrian Divilly, Thomas Collins, Damien Mannion, Ryan Duffy, Gerard Smyth, Niall Conneely, Raymond Joyce and Michael Ryan.



Under 13 Division 2 North League Finalists Caherlistrane. Back row (L to R): Michael Cunningham (management), Pádraig McCabe, Peter McDonagh, James Monaghan, Colin Boltan, Patrick Monaghan, Michael McDonagh, Jack Walsh, Sean Cunningham, Shane Nally and David Nally (management). Front row (L to R): James Collins, Joseph Monaghan, Mark Higgins, Stephen McDonagh, Conor Donnellan, Liam Judge, Cillian Nally, Keelan Mannion, Alan Morris, Conor O'Shaughnessy, David Quinn, Rory Molloy, Mason Glynn and Evan McHugh.



P.J. Rabbitte (Chairman, Coiste Peil na nÓg) presenting the cup for the Under 13 Division 2 North League Final to MacDara Geraghty captain of Glenamaddy.



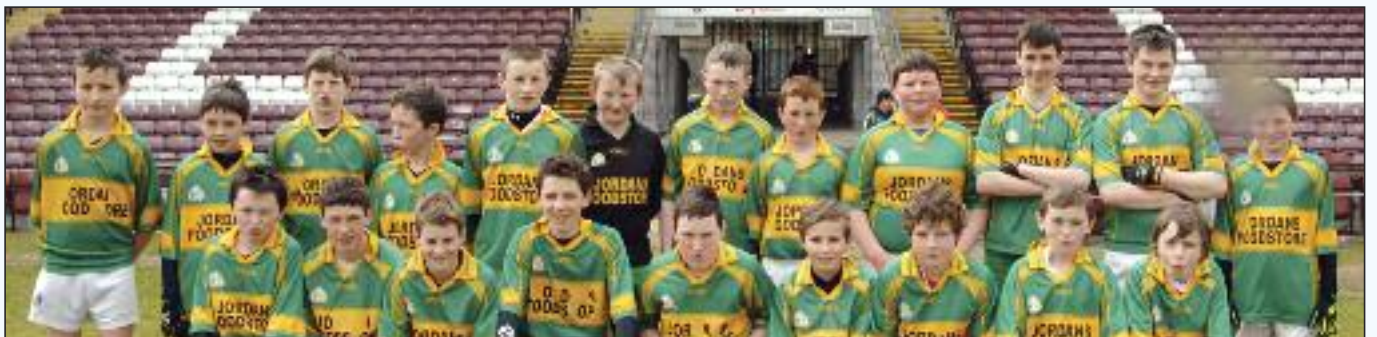
UNDER-14 GALWAY FEILE



Claregalway Feile Winners 2013



Oughterard Feile Shield 'A' Winners



Menlough Feile Shield 'B' Winners 2013



Clifden Feile Shield 'B' finalists



P.J. Rabbitte (Chairman, Coiste Peil na nOg), presenting the shield to Patrick Monaghan, captain of Menlough.



P.J. Rabbitte (Chairman, Coiste Peil na nOg) and Cathal McGinn presenting the Niall McGinn Cup to Pdraig Cummins, captain of the Claregalway U-14 team.



P.J. Rabbitte (Chairman, Coiste Peil na nOg), presenting the shield to Daniel Kenny, captain of Oughterard.



Plenty of **glory** for Leitrim at Connacht **Scór**

It proved an incredible night for the host county in the Connacht Scór Finals in St Mary's Hall Carrick on Shannon as Leitrim topped the polls of titles on the night by winning five of the eight events.

This haul has brought Leitrim's Connacht titles to 110 in Scór since it started in 1970. Leitrim also retained the Cormac MacGilla Cup which was won in recognition of their success, the cup has never been outside of Leitrim since it was introduced to the competition, it was presented to Rúnaí Maura Mulvey by Ailbhe McGill.

St Mary's were first to the stage in Rince Foirne and won

the Figure Dance on home ground, beating the eight ladies from Kilglass, Co Roscommon. This is the club's second trip in a row to the All-Ireland, having won it for the first time in 2012 and they will be hoping to go the extra mile and bring the title back to Leitrim.

Aisling Maxwell from Ballinamore gave a fabulous performance in solo singing but Norrie Kane of Abbeyknockmoy took the title back to Galway.

Drumkeerin represented Leitrim in Instrumental Music, they gave a flawless foot tapping performance but in the end St Farnan's of Sligo were announced the winners.

Brendan Brennan from

Sean O'Heslins club went down a treat in Recitation giving all in the crowd a very entertaining piece and clinched his Connacht medal on his fabulous performance.

The St Mary's Ballad group gave yet another outstanding All-Ireland standard performance, but were pipped at the post by their Roscommon neighbours. Having made it to the All Ireland on two separate occasions in the last five years the St Mary's performers will have to come back again next year.

It wasn't the night either for the 2012 All Ireland champions from Bornacoola in the Question Time. And as the final

marks were totted up, Clann Na nGael of Roscommon were named the quiz winners.

The fantastic and witty Seán O'Heslins won the Novelty Act. Having last won the All-Ireland in 2009 they will be hoping for success again in Derry.

Leona Reynolds from Aughnasheelin competed in Rince Sean-Os, a very well executed performance, mixing the traditional old style steps with some very nice quirky modern clicks and lifts and successfully won the title.

Set Dancing was won by the fabulous young Fenagh team, a fine performance and worthy winners.

Club Achadh na Síleann

Keith Sammon, winner of the Achadh na Síleann Junior Club Player of the Year, with Terence Boyle, Runaí and Máire Ní Mhaoilbhliá Cathaoirleach Club Achadh na Síleann.



Achadh na Síleann club member, Leona Nic Raghnaill, is presented with her gold medal by Michael Rock, Chairperson of Scór Connachta. Leona represented the club and County at Scór Sinsear and won the Sean nOs Dancing title.



Tara Fitzpatrick being presented with her Achadh na Síleann Ladies Player of the Year by Máire Ní Mhaoilbhliá, Cathaoirleach, Achadh na Síleann.

Sean McWeeney winner of the Senior Club Player of the Year with his award and the Seanie Tubman Cup with Terence Boyle, Runaí, agus Máire Ní Mhaoilbhliá, Cathaoirleach, Club Achadh na Síleann





Dugdale **intent** on victory

The FBD league winners open their Connacht championship account away to New York on May 5th and - speaking after the narrow league win over London - Dugdale knows a professional approach is required against the other Exiles:

"We have to make sure that we have our own house in order, that we plan properly," the co-manager says in The Leitrim Observer. "We're taking nothing for granted.

"We need to go in a professional manner, do the job and get a result. That is what we have to focus on.

"They're probably a big, physical team who will throw everything at us. We have to make sure we can play at a slightly higher pace as obviously they

George Dugdale expects Leitrim to "do the job" at Gaelic Park

won't have had much match practice and we need to use that to our advantage.

"We have plans in place. We know what lies ahead for us. We're going to work hard and see where it takes us. Hopefully we can go to New York and do the job."



Leitrim joint managers, George Dugdale, left, and Barney Breen, keen to look to the championship.
Photo: David Maher / SPORTSFILE

Cox stars in **undulating** performance

Round 6

Leitrim3-14
Waterford3-7

By **JOHN CONOLLY**
Leitrim Observer

If the words Jekyll & Hyde were used once, they were probably used a hundred times as a Leitrim team mixed the fabulous with the awful in liberal measure and still came away with a deserved seven point victory over Waterford in round five of the Allianz League Division Four campaign in Pairc Sean Mac Diarmada.

Any day a Leitrim team scores 3-14 is a very good day as the Leitrim forwards, and a very impressive Ray Cox in particular, found their shooting boots in devastating fashion, scoring from a variety of angles and distances to score a real morale boosting victory.

And in keeping with a growing belief that this Leitrim team perform best when the pressure is off, the Green & Gold attacked in waves and produced an attacking display full of imagination and vigour, a stark contrast to the nervy display just six days previously against Offaly.

The recalled Ray Cox was at the heart of everything good Leitrim did when this game was alive – the Annaduff man was either the scorer or the creator of all but two points of Leitrim's opening 1-6 as he ended with a personal tally 2-1, his second goal finally killing off Waterford's resistance in the second half.

Yet, and the paltry die-hard Leitrim supporters who bothered to show up would be the first to admit this, had Waterford taken any one of four gilt edge goal chances, to go with the two goals they did score, it could very easily have been a very different story.

Defensive mistakes and loss of possession saw Waterford through on four occasions in one-on-one situations with young keeper Brendan Flynn, atoning for a howler in the third minute, making two

wonderful goal saving stops as the Munster men wasted two more glorious chances when goals seemed certain.

The defensive frailties were exposed time and time again and had Waterford shown a modicum of the finishing that Leitrim displayed, they would, not could, have won this game and it must be a concern for the Leitrim management.

Attacking does not seem to be a problem when Leitrim's mind-set is right but when the pressure is there, accuracy suffers badly and it was only when Ray Cox got his second goal that Leitrim were truly safe.

LEITRIM: Brendan Flynn, Fabian McMorrow, Ciaran Egan, Paddy Maguire, Gary Reynolds (0-1), Enda Williams (0-2), Danny Beck, Brendan Brennan (0-1), Tomas Beirne, Robbie Lowe, Emlyn Mulligan (0-6), Paul Brennan, Brian McDonald, Conor Beirne (1-2), Ray Cox (2-1).
Subs: Gerry Hickey (0-1) for Lowe (HT), Shane Moran for McDonald (62 mins), Gavin Reynolds for Gary Reynolds (65 mins), Barry Prior for Beck (67 mins).



Tipp end promotion dreams

ROUND 7

Tipperary2-15
Leitrim0-14

By **JOHN CONOLLY**
 Leitrim Observer

LEITRIM'S hopes of figuring in the promotion shake-up in division 4 of the Allianz National Football league, ended in deep disappointment at Semple Stadium, Thurles on Sunday, where they were out-played by a slicker home combination who were not flattered by their seven points winning margin.

Both sides needed to win to stay in the race but Leitrim manager Brian Breen acknowledged afterwards that his men could not cope with the movement, and interchanging of the Tipperary forwards. "It was all over after fifteen minutes", he said.

Not quite, but at that stage Tipperary were 1-5 to 0-1 ahead and might have had another goal had Alan Moloney not dragged his shot wide of Brendan Flynn's post in the fourth minute, spurning a great goal chance.

The Tipp attack was carving the Leitrim de-

fence open thanks to the quality ball being provided from outfield. A goal was inevitable and it came in the 8th minute when Brian Fox delivered to Michael Quinlivan whose dummy set up Barry Grogan for a classic strike.

Leitrim were struggling to find a rhythm. Gerry Hickey had their opening point in the 7th minute but they were on the back foot as the Tipp attacks came in waves. Leitrim enjoyed a productive spell from the 16th to the 23rd minutes when points by Conor Beirne and Emlyn Mulligan (2) narrowed the gap to four points but the flourish was short-lived as Tipperary regained control.

This was when the game was really lost, as Tipperary added 1-5 without reply in the last eight minutes of the half, their goal, again by Grogan, coming on the stroke of half-time.

Down 0-4 to 2-10, even the most optimistic Leitrim man in the paltry 351 attendance, could not have held out much hope for the second half, although the help of the fresh breeze would be considerable. However, there was no immediate sign of improvement as Tipperary scored the first three points of the half in five minutes and could have had another goal had Robbie Costigan put away a simple chance in the 37th minute.

Sub Sean McWeeney who had come on at

the interval, had Leitrim's first score of the half in the 44th minute, and the Beirnes, Conor and Tomas, added further points as Leitrim sought to salvage some pride.

At 12 points adrift, there was really no hope of catching the home side but to Leitrim's credit they stuck to their guns, a further brace of Mulligan points leaving them 0-9 to 2-14 behind in the 54th minute.

It might be said that Tipperary had taken their foot off the pedal by now, but certainly Leitrim began to get seriously into the game.

Emlyn Mulligan, well policed until now by Tipperary's Munster player, Ciaran McDonald, found space to exert his influence on play, and in an encouraging finish to the game, Leitrim shot the last five points, two from Mulligan, and one each from Ray Cox, Paul Brennan and Colm Clarke.

LEITRIM: Brendan Flynn; Gary Reynolds, Ciaran Egan, Paddy Maguire; Paul Brennan (0-1), Enda Williams, Daniel Beck; Brendan Brennan, Tomas Beirne (0-1); Brian McDonald, Emlyn Mulligan (0-6), Gerry Hickey (0-1); James Glancy, Conor Beirne (0-2), Ray Cox (0-1); **Sub:** Fabian McMorrow for Williams; Sean McWeeney (0-1) for McDonald; Paddy McGowan for Beck; Colm Clarke (0-1) for Reynolds.

Mulligan proves the difference once again

ROUND 8

Leitrim1-11
London1-9

By **JOHN CONOLLY**
 Leitrim Observer

AN Allianz League Division Four campaign that started with the promise of greater things ended in much the same fashion as the entire campaign transpired, with Leitrim turning in a baffling mix of the good and the bad as the Green & Gold were somewhat lucky to get the better of an improving and impressive London side in Pairc Sean Mac Diarmada.

The match turned decisively in Leitrim's favour 13 minutes from full-time when London's Ciaran McCallion crashed a shot off the Leitrim cross-bar. A desperate Leitrim cleared their lines, worked the ball up the field where Conor Beirne expertly finished a great shot to the net.

The goal ultimately proved the difference in a tight contest where an emerging and physically powerful London put Leitrim to their pin of their collars to emerge with the win, indeed, it was London who were chasing a late goal as Leitrim were growing increasingly desperate in injury time.

Conor Beirne's goal proved crucial but the

real match-winner was the imperious Emlyn Mulligan whose return of five points fails to show just how much influence he had on this contest. When the pressure was on, Mulligan was the man his teammates looked to and their captain delivered in style.

Two brilliant points from play after London had taken a two point lead early in the second half typified Mulligan's display and it was definitely needed as a Leitrim team who looked as if they had one eye already firmly fixed on New York delivered their most lackadaisical display of the League campaign.

Perhaps it is understandable that Leitrim weren't firing on all cylinders - with nothing to play for, the focus is very definitely on the championship, now just four weeks away, but the paltry few fans who turned out last Sunday to Pairc Sean will have been worried by Leitrim's erratic form.

The championship will bring greater intensity and focus but the optimism that rose so sharply thanks to Leitrim's FBD League triumph has been slowly eroded and leaves Leitrim more than a shade anxious when they make the long journey across the Atlantic to face New York in Gaelic Park.

What Brian Breen and George Dugdale will

be most anxious to deliver is a consistent performance as all of Leitrim's displays in the League have mixed periods of wonderful football with equally frequent bouts of haphazard and nervous football.



Conor Beirne bagged a vital goal for Leitrim in their division four win over London.

Photo: David Maher / SPORTSFILÉ

LEITRIM: Brendan Flynn, Sean McWeeney, Fabian McMorrow, Paddy Maguire, Colm Clarke, Paul Brennan, Wayne McKeon, Tomas Beirne (0-1), Brendan Brennan, Gerry Hickey, Emlyn Mulligan (0-5), Cian Reynolds (0-1), Robbie Lowe (0-2), James Glancy (0-1), Kevin Conlan. **Subs:** Conor Beirne (1-0) for Glancy (22 mins), Daniel Beck for McWeeney (32 mins), Shane Moran for B. Brennan (45 mins), Ray Cox for Conlan (60 mins), Barry Prior for

Hickey (67 mins).

LONDON: Declan Traynor, Seamus Hannon (0-1), Stephen Curran, Philip Butler, Eamon McConville, Anthony Gaughan, Danny Ryan, Caolan Dole, Gregory Crowley, Sean Kelly (0-1), Lorcan Mulvey (1-3), Ciaran McCallion, Pádraig McGoldrick (0-3), Cathal Magee, Mark Gottsche. **Subs:** Seamus Stenson for McGoldrick (45 mins), Barry Mitchell for Kelly (50 mins), Mark Cahalane for Ryan (62 mins), Aidan McTigue for Crowley (67 mins).

REF: Pat Fox (Westmeath).



Goals sink Mayo ship

Dublin2-16

Mayo0-16

By **MIKE FINNERTY**
Mayo News

THE months ahead will reveal exactly how relevant and important this latest Mayo reversal at Croke Park was in the context of Championship 2013, but this performance certainly threw up enough talking points to keep us occupied between now and May 19.

James Horan described this league semi-final as a 'crazy' game and it certainly wasn't your conventional, run-of-the-mill affair as Mayo maintained their recent habit of mixing the good, bad and indifferent in the same 70-minute cameo.

They were undone on the scoreboard by two Dublin goals in the space of two minutes in the first quarter, but the truth is that other, more pressing issues were also exposed during the course of the afternoon.

Mayo badly missed their absent and injured contingent, as Keith Higgins, Barry Moran, Alan Dillon and Andy Moran all watched from the wings, along with Danny Geraghty, Cathal Freeman, Tom Cunniffe and Alan Freeman.

Dublin made their superior strength-in-depth, fitness and general well-being count, recovering from a slow start to rack up 2-9 (all but one point from play) in the space of twenty blistering minutes in the first half.

Mayo responded with just two points of their own during that spell and by the time Dublin took their foot off the accelerator they were ten points clear.

By that stage, Mayo's three point lead after ten minutes, achieved courtesy of Donal Vaughan's strong running and points from Cillian O'Connor (2 frees), plus a well-taken score from Cathal Carolan, seemed a very distant memory.

The game was less than fifteen minutes old when Dublin proceeded to take control of midfield and cut Mayo's defence to shreds.

Michael Dara McAuley, Cian O'Sullivan, Ger Brennan and Paul Flynn were the main protagonists as Dublin won the kick-out contest 18-10 in the opening half.

They wiped out Mayo's early advantage on 13 minutes when the pacy Paul Mannion brushed past Kevin Keane along the endline and rifled a shot past David Clarke.

Diarmuid Connolly, who was given far too much latitude by Lee Keegan in that opening half, then curled over the lead



Kevin McLoughlin goes past Darren Daly.

Photo: Ray McManus / SPORTSFILE

score before Dublin struck for their second goal.

The clock showed 15 minutes when Kevin McLoughlin made an uncharacteristic error, sending a stray handpass to Ger Brennan, and seconds later the inexperienced Jason Whelan was hammering the ball past Clarke again.

In the fifteen minutes that followed Dublin were awesome, tagging on eight points and giving an exhibition of pace, power and finishing.

Mayo mustered just two points at the other end, including a solo effort from the

excellent Michael Conroy, but a 2-9 to 0-5 deficit on 31 minutes told its own story.

As is their wont, Mayo rallied just as quickly as they had faded and three points on the bounce in as many minutes from Conroy, Cillian O'Connor and Jason Gibbons narrowed the margin to more manageable proportions by the break.

However, only the most optimistic and naïve of Mayo supporters would have felt there was a way back,



especially given the team's recent goalscoring drought and Dublin's range of firepower and options on the bench.

Sure enough, Mayo fought the good fight in the second half, restoring Aidan O'Shea to his rightful place at midfield and outscoring the winners by 0-8 to 0-7.

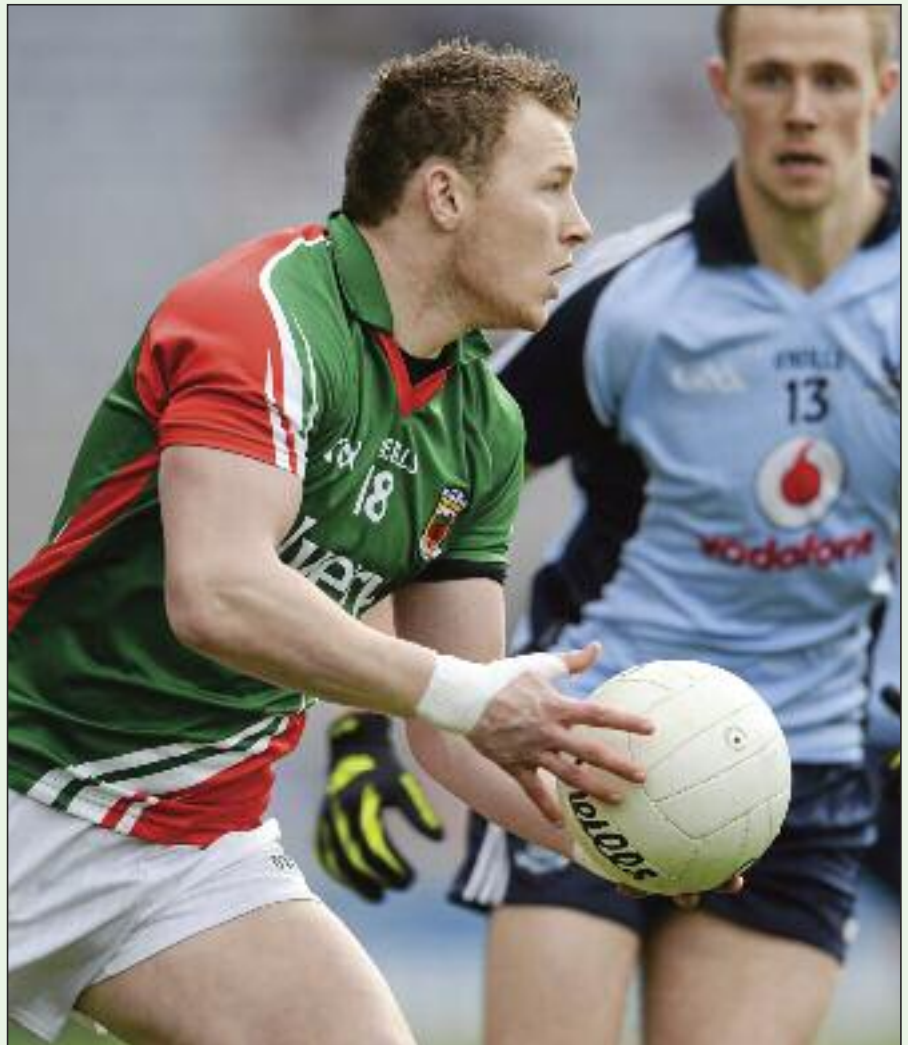
By and large though the exchanges had a challenge game feel to them during that period; Mayo never getting any closer than six points, and Dublin always giving as good as they were getting.

Stephen Cluxton had denied Jason Doherty and Donal Vaughan when goals threatened in the first half and he also frustrated Cillian O'Connor and Vaughan again later in the day.



A dejected Colm Boyle, Mayo, leaves the field after losing the league semi-final to Dublin.

Photo: Dáire Brennan / SPORTSFILE



Michael Walsh, Mayo, in action against Paul Mannion in the division one semi-final at Croke Park.

Photo: Ray McManus / SPORTSFILE

At the other end only the brilliance of David Clarke prevented Bernard Brogan and Dublin from surging even further ahead, while Ger Cafferkey and Vaughan also manned the defences as best they could.

Mickey Conroy was Mayo's best forward again and his third point from play was just reward for a hard shift while Aidan O'Shea underlined his midfield credentials with a couple of superb scores from distance.

James Horan threw Michael Walsh and Alan Murphy in at the deep end for their league debuts and also gave Brian Gallagher his second run at centre-forward. In the circumstances, making an impact was easier said than done.

Mayo now have less than five weeks until they must put what they have learned this spring into practice.

There is no time to be wasted.

DUBLIN: S Cluxton (0-1, 1f); K O'Brien, J Cooper, P McMahon; J McCaffrey (0-1), G Brennan, D Daly; MD Macauley, C O'Sullivan; J Whelan (1-1), D Connolly (0-3), P Flynn; P Mannion (1-4, 1f), P Andrews, B Brogan (0-5, 1f).

Subs: N Devereux for Daly (47); D Bastick for O'Sullivan (50); B Cullen for Flynn (54); K McManamon for Connolly (55); M Fitzsimons for Cooper (65).

MAYO: D Clarke; K Keane, G Cafferkey, C Barrett; D Vaughan, L Keegan, C Boyle; J Gibbons (0-1), S O'Shea; K McLoughlin (0-1, 1f), A O'Shea (0-2), C Carolan (0-1); C O'Connor, J Doherty, M Conroy (0-3).

Subs: R Feeney for Doherty (h-t); B Gallagher for Gibbons (44); M Walsh for Keane (45); A Murphy for Carolan (55); E Regan for McLoughlin (65).

REF: J McQuillan (Cavan).



Geezer's boys prove too powerful

ROUND 5

Kildare1-11

Mayo0-13

By **MIKE FINNERTY**
Mayo News

FRUSTRATION. Disappointment. Disbelief. These were the prevalent emotions among Mayo management, players and supporters as they trooped out of McHale Park and the appalling vista of relegation from the top flight became even more of a realistic prospect.

Another patchy performance, more mixed messages to try and comprehend, and another narrow defeat that leaves all inside the Team Mayo camp scratching their heads in search of answers.

Kildare's victory was their first over their hosts since 1998 and meant that this was Mayo's first time to lose four league games in-a-row since 1994.

By the time the final whistle sounded, confirming this latest agonising loss, the memories of Mayo's first quarter blitzkrieg had long since faded.

They played with pace and purpose in those first twenty minutes, prising the Kildare defence open time and again, and clocking up points from all sorts of angles and distances.

A six-point lead was no more than they deserved as Evan Regan, Jason Doherty, Kevin McLoughlin (free), Cathal Carolan (2) and Colm Boyle all posted stylish scores.

It looked like it was going to be one of those nights for Kildare but, crucially, Mayo failed to take two good goal opportunities during this purple patch, opting not to go 'for the kill' on both occasions.

Those decisions, allied to wayward shooting, meant that Mayo paid a heavy price for racking up fourteen wides, dropping five shots short of the target, and missing a string of scoreable frees.

The excellent Niall Kelly opened the Lilywhites' account in the 20th minute and points from Seanie Johnston and Johnny Doyle (free) edged them closer before the only goal of the night arrived. It was to be the game's decisive moment.

A contentious free to Kildare in their own half, after Jason Doherty appeared to have been fouled in front of the stand, started the move which ended with wing-



Seamus O'Shea in action against Daniel Flynn

back Eoin Doyle palming the ball past Mayo 'keeper David Clarke seconds later.

The tide was beginning to turn at this stage and the lively Seanie Johnston tagged on a couple of scores to send Kildare in ahead by 1-5 to 0-7 at the break.

For some reason Mayo had started to fall back into the bad habit of bringing the ball into the tackle, and generally lose their way as Kildare took control of the midfield battleground.

Kieran McGeeney's decision to switch Mick Foley and Peter Kelly in order to curb the influence of Aidan O'Shea and Peter Kelly also altered the pattern of the match, while Daniel Flynn's relocation to midfield did Mayo no favours either.

As a consequence Kildare tacked on four points after the restart from Flynn, Johnston (free), Paddy Brophy and Niall Kelly and, despite a couple of well-struck frees from Evan Regan, Mayo were behind by 0-9 to 1-9 at the end of the third quarter.

The last twenty minutes was nothing if not frenetic as Mayo gave chase in typically, swashbuckling fashion but a lack of composure in attack spoiled much of their decent approach work.

Normally reliable free-takers like Jason Doherty and Kevin McLoughlin were out of sync' too so it was no major surprise to see Cillian O'Connor eventually take on the place-kicking duties after his arrival off the bench.

Mayo managed just one point from play in the entire second half (from the boot of centre-back Tom Cunniffe on 58 minutes) but it was enough to reduce the gap to the minimum swinging for home.

Remarkably, Mayo were unable to

draw level though as Kildare kept them at arm's length.

First, Fionn Dowling cancelled out Cunniffe's effort before another Kildare substitute, Eoghan O'Flaherty, responded to a converted free from Cillian O'Connor.

The mood among the large partisan home crowd in the attendance of 6,572 was palpable for long stretches of the second half, in particular, as they watched their team press and probe in vain for the game-changing scores.

It was a case of so near and yet so far, once again.

The All-Ireland champions are up next for Mayo on Sunday, with time running out for James Horan's team to save their top-flight status.

Two games and counting. . .

KILDARE: M Donnellan; O Lyons, M Foley, H McGrillen; E Bolton, P Kelly, E Doyle (1-0); H Lynch, P O'Neill; D Flynn (0-1), N Kelly (0-2), M O'Flaherty; S Johnston (0-4, 1f), P Brophy (0-1), J Doyle (0-1, 1f). **Subs:** F Dowling (0-1) for Doyle (52); D Hyland for Bolton (55); T O'Connor for Johnston (69); E O'Flaherty (0-1) for M O'Flaherty (61).

MAYO: D Clarke; C Barrett, G Cafferkey, K Higgins; L Keegan, T Cunniffe (0-1), C Boyle (0-2); B Moran, S O'Shea; K McLoughlin (0-1, 1f), A O'Shea, C Carolan (0-2); E Regan (0-3, 2fs), J Doherty (0-2, 1f), M Conroy. **Subs:** C O'Connor (0-2, 2fs) for Regan (54); R Feeney for Carolan (57); E Varley for Conroy (60); J Gibbons for A O'Shea (64).

REF: M Higgins (Fermanagh).



Sweet revenge for Green and Red

ROUND 6

Mayo1-10
Donegal0-9

By **MIKE FINNERTY**
Mayo News

EVERYBODY with a vested interest in the fortunes of the Mayo senior footballers needed this performance and that result.

Especially the loyal, faithful, long-suffering (and freezing) supporters who turned out in their thousands again at McHale Park in search of reasons to be cheerful and optimistic about Mayo's chances of making an impression on Championship 2013. They left as relieved as they were frozen to the marrow.

Ending the county's worst run of league defeats since 1994 was the main objective, and a first win over Donegal in seven attempts over the course of the last eight seasons has been achieved.

However, it was the manner of the performance and the noticeable improvement in attitude and application from recent outings that caught the eye more than anything else.

Collectively, and individually, Mayo were better and the fact that they matched Donegal, the All-Ireland champions, in terms of work-rate and endeavour for long spells before eventually wearing them down is a positive worth noting.

It also augurs well for Mayo's trip to Cork on Sunday week next when another win will not only safeguard their top-flight status for another year, but it may also catapult James Horan's team into the semi-finals.

In the end, Michael Conroy's 47th minute goal (Mayo's first from a forward since the Davitts dynamo netted against Down in the All-Ireland quarter-final last August) transpired to be the watershed moment.

It came after a typically searing burst upfield from Keith Higgins (who looked every inch an All Star all afternoon) and an incisive pass that allowed his first cousin Conroy to volley a ground-shot into the net off Paul Durcan's post.

The crowd roared their approval to sig-



Ryan Bradley in action against Barry Moran and Cathal Carolan.

nal the end of the goal drought.

Driven on by an inspirational performance from towering midfielder Barry Moran, with no little help from his new partner, Seamus O'Shea, Mayo played with a style and a purpose that has been conspicuous by its absence in recent weeks.

Their display also bristled with intensity and a well-organised and disciplined defence restricted Donegal's sharpshooters, Michael Murphy and Colm McFadden, to just three points from play between them.

All six backs worked effectively as a unit with Tom Cunniffe deputizing efficiently for the injured Donal Vaughan, and Colm Boyle's tenacity setting the tone from the outset.

Early on Mayo were a little uncertain, as Donegal eased into a 0-4 to 0-1 lead with Michael Murphy and Colm McFadden leading the line as usual.

Slowly but surely, however, Mayo settled and with Cillian O'Connor on song from frees, posting four fine scores, five points without reply meant Mayo led by 0-6 to 0-4 at half-time.

Jim McGuinness admitted afterwards that his team surrendered possession of the ball on nine occasions to Mayo in that first half due to unforced errors.

However, he neglected to mention how many times sheer pressure from willing and able tacklers like Chris Barrett, Colm Boyle, Kevin McLoughlin and Cathal Carolan won possession back for Mayo.

They forced turnovers like they were on overtime all day long.

Donegal were never going to roll over, despite their inability to inflict their game on to Mayo a lá last September, but they did level the game for the third time with quickfire scores from Marty O'Reilly and Colm McFadden after the restart.

But Mayo's goal changed everything.

The confidence garnered from the score seemed to spread through the team within minutes and they continued to hunt in packs, press forward, and do most of the basics right.

In truth, not unlike Donegal last season in terms of their approach but Mayo wanted this one more and they finished with a flourish, outscoring their guests by four points to two down the home straight.

Colm Boyle and Jason Doherty both hit the target before Enda Varley enhanced his reputation as an 'impact sub' with two stylish points that made the game safe.

Both sides finished the match with fourteen men after Donegal's Anthony Thompson and Mayo's Jason Doherty were both dismissed in the final quarter by referee Marty Duffy after being booked twice.

But the red cards were merely footnotes on a day when Mayo got back to winning ways, and not before time.

MAYO: D Clarke; C Barrett, G Cafferkey, K Higgins; L Keegan, T Cunniffe, C Boyle (0-1); B Moran, S O'Shea; K McLoughlin (0-2, 1f), A O'Shea, C Carolan; C O'Connor (0-5, 4fs), J Doherty, M Conroy (1-0). **Subs:** R Feeney for O'Connor (47m); D Vaughan for Higgins (inj, 59m); E Varley (0-2) for Conroy (63m); B Gallagher for S O'Shea (64m).

DONEGAL: P Durcan; P McGrath, N McGee, E McGee; D Walsh, F McGlynn, A Thompson; N Gallagher, R Kavanagh (0-1); R Bradley, L McLoone, M McHugh; P McBrearty, M Murphy (0-3, 2fs), C McFadden (0-3, 1f). **Subs:** R Wherity for Walsh (23m); R McHugh (0-1) for McLoone (HT); M O'Reilly (0-1) for Bradley (HT); R Bradley for N McGee (inj, 46m); M McElhinney for Wherity (60m).

REF: Marty Duffy (Sligo).



Mayo into semis thanks to O'Connor magic

ROUND 7

Cork0-10
Mayo0-11

TWO late sideline kicks from Cillian O'Connor secured victory for Mayo at Pairc Ui Caoimh, but more importantly they survived the drop to division two on points difference.

Cork, who also survived the drop, looked set to cruise to a facile victory by 0-8 to 0-2 five minutes from half-time, but Mayo rallied before the break to trail by just three at the turnaround.

And Mayo, who also managed to make it through to the league semi-final thanks to that points difference, dominated the second-half and with O'Connor and Kevin McLoughlin kicking vital scores, James Horan's men took their third win of the campaign.

Despite struggling as the first-half went on, Mayo started the game very brightly and a lovely point from Kevin McLoughlin off the outside of his boot gave them the lead in the first minute.

But for the next 27 minutes the home side dominated entirely as eye-catching points from Aidan Walsh and the excellent Fintan Goold got them up and running.

After getting himself off the mark with a good score from the left, Daniel Goulding should have punished Mayo even more, but he sent his tenth minute close range free wide.

But those early wides looked like they wouldn't matter as seven points in a row including another booming effort from Goold, saw Cork open out a 0-7 to 0-1 lead by the 23rd minute.

However, as half-time approached Mayo recovered and Michael Conroy, Aidan O'Shea and Alan Freeman scores before the break to reduce the deficit to 0-8 to 0-5 at the break.

Donal Vaughan pointed immediately after the restart to get Mayo off to a great start and after Goold kicked his third point from play to renew the half-time lead, Mayo began to show the form that saw them reach last year's All-Ireland final.

O'Connor kicked his first free after a foul on Michael Boyle in the 47th minute, before McLoughlin added a free and a point from play to draw Mayo level five minutes later.

Goulding edged Cork ahead with a free as the intensity was upped noticeably, but with

their division one status hanging the balance Mayo looked the hungrier for the battle.

And that proved to be the case as O'Connor landed two huge kicks from each touchline to give Mayo the lead with six minutes remaining, as they held on to secure the win and claim a spot in the semi-finals.

MAYO: D Clarke; K Keane, G Cafferkey, S McHale; L Keegan, D Vaughan (0-01), C Boyle; J Gibbons, S O'Shea; K McLoughlin (0-04, 0-02f), A O'Shea (0-01), C Carolan; C O'Connor (0-03, 0-03f), A Freeman (0-01), M Conroy (0-01).

Subs: E Varley for Conroy (42 mins), R Feeney for Carolan (47 mins), J Doherty for Freeman (57 mins), D Coen for Varley (57 mins), C Barrett for McHale (63), E Regan for O'Connor (72 mins),

CORK: K O'Halloran; J McLoughlin, J O'Sullivan, M Shields; P Kissane (0-01), N O'Leary, T Clancy; A Walsh (0-01), G Canty; M Collins (0-01, 0-01f), F Goold (0-03), A O'Sullivan; D Goulding (0-04, 0-03f), B O'Driscoll, P Kerrigan.

Subs: J Loughrey for O'Leary (27-35 mins blood), P O'Neill for A O'Sullivan (51 mins), J Loughrey for McLoughlin (51 mins),

REF: Maurice Deegan (Laois).

Cillian kicks on

By MIKE FINNERTY Mayo News

HES the last man to leave the Mayo dressing-room and looks as calm and unfazed as ever as he signs some jerseys, meets and greets his parents and relations, and stops to chat about another hectic day in his footballing life.

Cillian O'Connor spent most of the last six months on the sidelines, looking on, as he recovered from a shoulder injury.

Now he's making up for lost time.

His two points from sideline balls at Pairc Ui Caoimh not only turned out to be the defining scores that settled this arm-wrestle, but they are destined to become YouTube sensations.

We were watching an artist at work as he swung over the first from the left touchline, curling it over on the breeze, before trotting across to the far wing, four minutes later, and repeating the trick, this time with the outside of the boot.

Special? Yes. Surprised? No.

This is what Cillian O'Connor does best.

Unsurprisingly, for a 20 year-old with ability and ambition, he is relishing the prospect of pitting his wits against Dublin again.

"It was a nice carrot to have coming down here, that if we did our business we'd be back in Croke. Who doesn't love playing the Dubs at Croke Park?" he smiled from underneath his woolly hat.

"This year they're the form team, they have so many players playing well, such a big panel, it's nice to get to play against teams like that so that you can measure yourself against the best, to see where you really stand.

"It's going to be a good test, a good measure for us."

O'Connor's brace of remarkable points may have been the scores that ultimately made the difference, but it was David Clarke's save from Fintan Goold on 47 minutes that kept Mayo in contention.

The Young Footballer of the Year couldn't agree more.

"That was a vital moment in the game. That probably would have turned it I think. They had a great flowing, passing move, they did cut us open, it was probably the only time they got through.

"There's no better man in the country you want in that position, closing down the goal. He's got a big frame and gives great confidence to the rest of the team.

He's hard to beat, we know that from training ourselves.

"I think the defence deserve massive credit too. Cork got two points in the second half, and they supplied us with the ball that allowed us to get the scores."

On a day when the wind howled and the rain fell, you wonder how Mayo engineered a one-

point victory after trailing by six points after 25 minutes.

"We trained well the last week or two, we didn't panic with the couple of results that went against us, we had a couple of good training sessions, that's where the work was done," replied the Ballintubber student.

"I think we showed good character and composure out there, the likes of Lee [Keegan], Aidan and Seamie [O'Shea] around the middle, we didn't give any ball away.

"Composure when things went against us, and to stick to our game, and not let the scoreline or conditions affect us."

It would have been easy for Mayo to lose the plot early on as Cork attacked from all angles, picked off scores, and kept Messrs Conroy, Freeman et al at bay.

But, despite a scoreless 25 minute spell, just three points separated the teams at the short whistle.

"They got a bit of a run on us at the start, they had the breeze and we didn't start particularly well," explained O'Connor.

"I thought the team showed good character, we didn't panic, we knew what we had to do. We just had to up the intensity a small bit.

Aidan [O'Shea] got a great point before half-time as did Mickey Conroy, they were two big scores. At half-time we were relaxed and confident."

Nobody moreso than the man himself as it transpired.



Adrian Freeman remembered

By JOHN FALLON Media West Ireland

A TALENTED inter-county hurler who was tragically killed in a road traffic accident in Australia three years ago after emigrating to find work, was remembered at an underage tournament in his honour recently.

The inaugural Adrian Freeman Memorial Cup was up for grabs as the Mayo U-14 hurling Feile na nGael competition took place in Tooreen grounds when Westport, Caiseal Gaels and host club Tooreen battled it out.

Adrian Freeman helped Tooreen win the Mayo senior championship and he went on to play in the largely Galway dominated Connacht side in the inter-provincial championship in Abu Dhabi in 2009.

Freeman, an engineer, whose brother Cathal is currently on the Mayo senior football squad, also won a Christy Ring All-Star before emigrating to find work in Australia in October 2009.

However, he was killed the following May in an horrific crash south-west of Melbourne in an accident which also claimed the life of Robbie Twomey from Listowel in Co Kerry, as they returned home from work.

“It is fitting that his cup will help promote the U-14 grade within Mayo, a grade at which Adrian himself first came to prominence as a hurler in the late 1990’s,” said a spokesperson for the Tooreen club.



The late Adrian Freeman who was remembered in the Mayo U-14 hurling Feile recently. Pictured here in Christy Ring Cup action for Mayo in 2009. Photo:

Paul Mohan / SPORTSFILE

Mayo hurlers taste defeat in Newry

Down1-22
Mayo1-14

By BRENDAN GERAGHTY

MAYO and Down contested Round 5 of the Allianz National Hurling League 2B in Newry with both sides having little to play for.

Before the final round of games Meath and London had secured their places in the Division final and barring unlikely wins for Roscommon and Armagh both Mayo and Meath had secured their Division 2B status for next year.

Mayo started the brighter and led 0-6 to 0-3 after 13 minutes with two points from the bustling Darren McTigue, Sean Regan (2), Kenny Feeney and Captain Derek McDonnell.

But Mayo faded alarmingly for the next 20 minutes with Down scoring nine points without reply with Daniel Toner, Paul Sheehan, Conor Woods and Paul Braniff to the fore. Mayo responded just before the short whistle with points from Feeney (f) and Regan to leave the half-time score Mayo 0-8, Down 0-13.

Down were first out of the blocks in the second half with points from Braniff and Eoin Clarke. Disaster then struck for Mayo as keeper Donal O'Brien failed to deal with a fairly weak effort on his goal with the ball breaking to Toner who lashed it to the Mayo net.

After 42 minutes gone the score read Mayo 0-10, Down 1-16. Christy Phillip's and his Management team emptied the bench bringing on Declan Gallagher, Paddy Barrett, Sean Markham and Fergal Lyons in an attempt to overcome the

huge deficit.

A magnificent point from centre back Pdraig O'Flynn on 45 minutes began Mayo's fight back. Stephen Hoban gave Mayo supporters further hope when he made a penetrating run from the right to strike low to the left of Down custodian Stephen Keith to bring the margin back to 6 points, 1-12 to 1-18. Try as they might Mayo could not catch their more experienced opponents losing out by eight points in the end.

When the Mayo management team of Christy Phillips, Ciaran Hynes and Austin Kenny review their team's performance they will be concerned by the poor display in the second quarter when Down fired nine points without reply.

Phillips and his backroom team will have to address this issue ahead of Mayo's opening Christy Ring Championship game away to Kildare on May 4th.

MAYO: D O'Brien, A. Brennan, S. Morley, B. Hunt, C. Finn, P. O'Flynn (0-1), C. Charlton, P. O'Grady, G. Nolan, S. Hoban (1-0), D. McDonnell (0-1), N. O'Malley, D. McTigue (0-2), S. Regan (0-4 (1f)), K. Feeney (0-6 (4f)). **Subs:** F. Lyons for P. O'Grady (30), D. Gallagher for N. O'Malley (41), P. Barrett for K. Feeney (61 inj.), S. Markham for D. McTigue (65), F. Lyons for C. Finn (66).

DOWN: S. Keith, M. Hughes, P. Flynn, P. Hughes (0-3), C. Coulter, B. Toner, M. Ennis, A. Savage, C. Woods, S. Nicholson (0-2), P. Braniff (0-5, (0-4f)), P. Sheehan (0-5), D. Toner (1-3), G. Johnson, E. Clarke (0-2). **Subs:** M. Conlon for C. Coulter (50), M. Turley (0-2) for D. Toner (52), D. Hughes for A. Savage (67)

REF: P. Murphy (Carlow)



Mayo GAA Feile na nGael U14B title goes to Ballina



The successful James Stephens Ballina U14 Hurling side who claimed the Mayo GAA U14B Feile na nGael title with a narrow win over Castlebar Mitchels in Munnelly Park in Castlebar recently. The Moysiders now travel to Limerick on the weekend of 5th - 7th July where they will be hosted by the St Kierans GAA Club in Ardagh. Back (L-R): David O'Sullivan (Coach), Luke Hurley, Billy McVann, Mark Stevens, Aiden Orme, Christian Judge, Shane Kennedy, David Judge, Michael Delaney, Declan Ginty, David Flood, Daniel Senkevics, Seamus Hurley (Coach). Front (L-R): William Stevens, Chris Walsh, Tom Mulhaire, Oliver Feeney, Hugh O' Sullivan (C), Darragh Gill, Dylan Kelly, Kristers Prizevoits and Liam Kelly.

THE Ballina James Stephens Hurling Club were celebrating after their U-14 hurlers claimed the Mayo GAA U-14B Feile na nGael title, after overcoming both Ballyvary and Castlebar Mitchels to claim the title.

In a close-fought final, the Moysiders overcame the Mitchels on a 1-1 to 0-1 score-line. They now go forward to represent Mayo in Division 5 of Feile na nGael where they will be hosted by the St Kierans GAA Club in Ardagh in County Limerick. Feile na nGael takes place over the weekend of 5th-7th July with over 80 hurling clubs and over 60 camogie clubs taking part in the three-day event. For



Hugh O'Sullivan - Ballina captain, receives the Shield from Adrian Hession (Mayo GAA Hurling Development Officer).

further information visit www.feilelimerick2013.com

RESULTS:

- Semi1: James Stephens 2-5 Ballyvary 1-1
- Semi2: Castlebar Mitchels 3-6 Ballyhaunis 2-2
- Final: James Stephens 1-1 Castlebar 0-1.



The Castlebar Mitchels U14 Hurling side who went down to James Stephens in the Mayo GAA U14B Feile na nGael Competition Blitz in Munnelly Park recently. The team are pictured here with coaches Tony Stakelum and Keith Feehily.



Pictured are the participants and coaches at the recent Easter Hurling & Camogie Coaching Camp held in the Tooreen Hurling Grounds. The camp saw eighty-nine school children from both clubs come together for the three-day event, with fun games and enjoyment being the theme of all activities. The highlight of the event was the visit of Mayo GAA star Aiden O'Shea, who proved very popular with the children from the Tooreen area. The event also promoted the 'Respect Initiative' in Mayo GAA which is being roled out at underage level in the county. Back row (L-R): John Cassidy, Aoife Cassidy, Labhaoise Cunnane, Aisling Lynskey, Stephen Commons, Sean Kenny, Aiden O'Shea, Kenny Feeney, Dom Greally, Eleanor Harrison and Adrian Hession.



Pictured are the Caiseal Gaels (White) and Claremorris (Blue) U13 hurling sides who took part in the half-time 'Respect Initiative' games at MacHale Park in Castlebar on Sunday. The sides formed part of a very action packed day which saw London defeat Mayo in the NHL and Mayo defeating Donegal in the NFL.

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JOHN FALLON
Managing Editor



West Mayo Cúmann na mBunscol Blitz

The Gaelscoil na Cruaithe (Cathair na Mart), Mini 7s hurling side who were present at the West Mayo Cumann na mBunscol Blitz in Westport GAA Grounds recently.



Pictured are the Mountpleasant NS (Ballyglass) hurling side who took part in the South Mayo Cumann na mBunscol Mini 7's Hurling Blitz in Ballinrobe recently. The side acquitted themselves well in games against Kilmaine NS and Claremorris BNS. It was the first occasion that Mountpleasant took part in a Cumann na mBunscol Hurling event after undergoing a series of 'Hurling in the Schools' coaching sessions recently.



The Brackloon NS (Westport) Mini 7s hurling side who were present at the West Mayo Cumann na mBunscol Blitz in Westport GAA Grounds recently.



Evans happy after league survival

By IAN COONEY
Roscommon Herald

JOHN Evans bounded off Breffni Park like a spring lamb, full of energy and looking forward to the next challenge. He had just seen his side produce their best display under his tenure to end the league campaign on an extremely positive note.

Evans has always accentuated the positives, even in defeat, and the last three games has seen substantial progress being made.

“We’ve had some frustrating times but when you get a couple of extra players, it helps. To come here to Breffni Park where Roscommon haven’t been too successful, it was great to put up that score. Hitting 16 scores was the most pleasing part of it. The workrate of the team since half-time in the Meath game has been wonderful. It’s the style of football they’re playing and they’re getting the results now.

“The camp is good. There’s great honesty in what the players are doing. There’s a wonderful atmosphere in training. Every fella is pushing one another.

“We still have a lot of players to come back. They’re on the sideline looking in and they know it’s going to be tough to win their place back,” he pointed out.

Too easy for Roscommon in Belfast

Roscommon0-11
Antrim1-06

IT was tight in the end, but Roscommon should have this win wrapped up long before the full-time whistle.

With nine wides in total to add to their 11 points on the board, John Evans' side should have cantered to the win.

But perhaps they might have been made pay for some lethargy in front of goal if there was another five minute son the clock when Healy hit the net for the Saffrons in injury-time.

Antrim were very poor in the opening 35 minutes as Roscommon led 0-7 to 0-1 at the

break, with Colin Compton doing most of the damage.

After an even third quarter, the closing stages quarter belonged to Antrim but the home side only added two points before the late, late face-saving goal.

Roscommon manager John Evans said: “Last week, we lost two terrible goals to Meath and you can call this win a backfire or a rebound but we were hungry.”

ROSCOMMON: M Miley; N Collins (0-1), N Carty, S McDermott; D Keenan, N Daly, C Daly (0-1); M Finneran, K Higgins; C Gregg (0-3, 3f), D O’Gara (0- 1), D Keane; D Smith (0-2, 1f), C Compton (0-3), C Devaney.

Subs: F Gregg for O’Gara (56), D McDermott for C Gregg (60), S Oates for Keane (65), C Dineen for Devaney (69).

Roscommon foil Mons hope of promotion

Roscommon0-8
Monaghan0-7

MONAGHAN'S promotion charge was dealt a blow by Roscommon at Dr. Hyde Park, as John Evans' side came from behind against the Farney Men to secure their own status in the third tier for another season.

A win would have seen Monaghan seal their promotion back to Division II, and Malachy O'Rourke's side led 0-7 to 0-3

with 20 minutes to go, with Paul Finlay, Owen Lennon, Darren Hughes and Kieran Hughes all on the scoresheet for the Ulster side.

However, Roscommon showed tremendous heart to kick five unanswered points in the final quarter and take the game. Donie Smith, Kevin Higgins and Cathal Cregg all fired over for Roscommon in that thrilling final flourish, and the Connacht side now even have an outside chance of promotion going into the final round of games.

O’Gara shines in big win

Roscommon2-14
Cavan1-07

IT looked easy for Roscommon as John Evans' men put Cavan to the sword in a poor Division Three tie at Kingspan/Breffni Park.

The westerners led from the off and eased tot he victory with two goals by full-forward David O’Gara key to victory.

Wind-aided Roscommon careered into an early 0-4 to 0-0 lead, corner-forward Donie Smith's three frees helping them on their way.

Cavan replied in the tenth minute when Martin Dunne goaled against the run of play from the penalty spot, while points from Niall McDermott (free) and Martin Reilly helped close the gap to a point (1-3 to 0-7) on the half-hour.

However, Roscommon took over contorl

of the game when O’Gara goaled in the 33rd minute to open a 1-7 to 1-3 half-time lead.

Cavan tried to work their way back into contention, but Roscommon held solid and sub Donal Keane and half-back David Keenan heaped on the misery as the visitors cut loose.

And late on O’Gara pounced for his second goal of the day to clinch a well needed win for Roscommon.

ROSCOMMON: D O’Malley; N Collins, N Carty, S McDermott; D Keenan (0-1), S Purcell, I Kilbride; M Finneran, K Higgins (0-1); C Dineen, K Mannion (0-1), C Cregg (0-3, 2f); D Smith (0-6, 6 f), D O’Gara (2-0), D McDermott.

Subs: D Keane (0-1) for C Dineen (half-time); P Brogan for S Purcell (half-time); S Oates for D McDermott (42); E Smith (0-1) for D Smith (62); D Butler for C Cregg).



Roscommon GAA supports Mayo/Roscommon Hospice

ROSCOMMON GAA are hosting a fundraiser in aid of Mayo Roscommon Hospice Foundation on Saturday June 15th in the Abbey Hotel, Roscommon.

The event will be a “singing competition with a difference” and will see performers from GAA Clubs throughout Roscommon battle it out to impress the celebrity judging panel and the audience.

Votes from the audience, votes from the judges and donations made to Mayo Roscommon Hospice in their name of a singer will also count towards determining the winner. In addition to helping a worthy cause the winner will receive a cash prize for their club and a weekend away for themselves.

Speaking at the announcement, Michael Fahey, Chairperson of Roscommon GAA County Board, said: “In early 2012 John and Lily Murphy took the decision to sponsor the Roscommon senior football team in order to give something back to the local community and to generate awareness of the Hospice movement.

“Everyone involved with Roscommon GAA is proud to be associated with the Hospice movement; a group of voluntary organisations which have helped so many families throughout the country and we decided to follow the lead of the Murphys by organising this event, which will help raise funds for our local foundation - Mayo Roscommon Hospice and hopefully increase awareness of the good work carried out by the organisation”.

The event will also feature live music and the 2013 Roscommon GAA Members Draw will take place on the night.

Full details of the contest and ticket information will be published in local media and on www.gaaroscommon.ie shortly. If entries are oversubscribed two semi-finals will also be held, with these “pencilled in” for late May.



Pictured at the announcement were John Murphy, Roscommon Senior Football team sponsor; Michael Fahey, Chairperson of Roscommon GAA County Board, and Lily Murphy, Roscommon Senior Football team sponsor.

Photo: Gerard O'Loughlin

Cynthia Clampett CEO of Mayo Roscommon Hospice Foundation said: “We were delighted when Roscommon GAA approached us with the offer to help raise funds for our Palliative Care Service.

“The contest sounds like a really novel and fun event. In the current economic climate fundraising is more difficult and each year we have to organise so many different events and projects to raise the funds necessary for the service so it’s a great boost to have the support of Roscommon GAA.

“The Palliative Care Service in Roscommon and Mayo is heavily dependent on voluntary funding and the Foundation have to raise €1.3 million each year through donations and fundraising efforts

to fund approx. 50% of the service costs, in association with the HSE.

“We are now in the final stage of negotiation with the HSE to develop Hospice Units in both Mayo and Roscommon. Plans are drawn for a 14 bed Unit in Castlebar and an 8-bed Unit in Roscommon. Our Foundation has to fund 100 percent of the capital cost of both Units which is in the region of €7.5million for Mayo and €4.5 for Roscommon.

“It’s a huge undertaking for a small origination but we are confident that with the support of the people we can do it. We are hopeful that we will be in a position to make an announcement to go to planning in the coming months”.



Dermot Hughes of Dermot Hughes Cars, Roscommon recently made a presentation to the Roscommon Under 21 Football team.

Pictured at the presentation were (L-R): Charlie Ward, Team secretary; Ross Tomothy; Dermot Hughes (Sponsor); Dara Hughes; Nigel Dineen; Ciaran Cafferkey, Team Captain; and Enda Smith.



Strong finish seals Rossies win

Roscommon0-17
Sligo2-6

By **MARTIN WYNNE**
Roscommon Herald

THE Roscommon minors produced a strong closing ten minutes to come through a tough encounter with Sligo at Connolly Park in Collooney.

The visitors, who had led by three points at the break, were pegged back by Sligo as the game entered the final quarter. But Fergal O'Donnell's side responded by hitting unanswered five points to claim their third win on the trot in this year's Connacht Minor League.

The Roscommon manager would have been pleased with the character shown by his side in the closing stages, particularly as they were facing into a strong breeze. However, they should have taken a bigger lead into the break after playing with the wind at their backs in the opening half.

Seán Farrell, Ultan Harney and Ronan Daly had Roscommon three points up after seven minutes. The next eight minutes were scoreless, but Roscommon doubled their lead with three quick points between the 16th and 19th minutes. Two of them came from Henry Walsh, the first a free, and sandwiched between those scores was a fine strike from near the left touchline by Evan McGrath.

It took Sligo 23 minutes to get off the

mark, but when they did it was a three-pointer. It came from the penalty spot after Conor Mulry was penalised for tripping Sligo wing-back Liam Henry. It appeared to be a rather soft decision, as Henry seemed to collide into Mulry who was already falling over. Nevertheless, it was given and Kevin Henry found the bottom left corner with his spot kick.

It halved the deficit, but Roscommon responded positively with three points in as many minutes. The first, which came from the boot of Darren Kelly, came just 30 seconds after the goal. Ronan Daly and Walsh (free) added the other two.

It restored the six-point advantage, but the deficit was halved once again when Kevin McDonnell raised a second green flag for Sligo in the 28th minute. It left Roscommon holding a rather precarious three-point lead, 0-9 to 2-0, facing into the breeze in the second-half.

The sides went score-for-score in the third quarter as six points were shared. Sligo's three points all came from frees, Cian Breheny getting two of them and Dylan Kilgallon converting the third. Henry Walsh (two frees) and Ronan Daly responded for Roscommon.

Sligo enjoyed a purple patch at the beginning of the final quarter, reeling off three points in two minutes. Jamie Gillen got two of them, and sandwiched in between was a point from Kilgallon.

Sligo looked like warm favourites to push on for the victory at that stage. However, Roscommon rallied impressively during the closing ten minutes. Niall

Connaughton edged the visitors ahead in the 51st minute when he pointed after being set up by Seán Farrell.

Walsh added a free on 52 minutes, and Ronan Daly stretched the lead to three points 60 seconds later. Sligo registered a couple of wides shortly afterwards as they spurned the opportunity to reduce the deficit.

A Walsh free in the 58th minute provided the insurance score for Roscommon, and Harney capped off a fine display with the final score of the match 60 seconds later. The result means that Roscommon's hopes of retaining the Connacht Minor League title remain very much alive ahead of a crucial clash with table-toppers Galway at Dr. Hyde Park on Saturday next.

ROSCOMMON: S. Mannion; C. Mulry, M. Daly, K. Keenan; M. Murtagh, C. Casserly, R. Daly (0-4); U. Harney (0-2), E. McGrath (0-1); Senan Farrell, Sean Farrell (0-1), T. Butler; D. Kelly (0-1), N. Connaughton (0-1), H. Walsh (0-7, 6f). **Subs:** S. Pettit for Butler (43), J. Early for Senan Farrell (56).

SLIGO: K. Kelly; A. Clerkin, S. Keenan, C. Heraghty; K. Carty, J. Gillen (0-2), L. Henry; K. McDonnell (1-0), K. Henry (1-0, a penalty); G. Brady, D. Kilgallon (0-2, 1f), S. Curley; T. Mahon, J. Farrell, D. Cummins. **Subs:** C. Stenson for Heraghty (half-time), C. Breheny (0-2, 2f) for Farrell (half-time), D. Keown for Curley (half-time), D. Cafferky for Mahon (52).

REF: G. Foley (Leitrim).

Evans faces goalkeeping dilemma

ROSCOMMON are faced a goalkeeper crisis ahead of their Connacht SFC clash with the winners of Galway and Mayo on June 16.

Geoffrey Claffey and Mark Miley featured between the posts for the Rossies during their FL Division 3 campaign but reports are that both have since quit the squad.

Claffey wore the number one jersey in the defeat to Meath and was replaced by Miley for the next game against Antrim.

Miley was then dropped and has opted out of the panel leaving Darren O'Malley as the likely first choice for their championship campaign.

Under 21 'keeper Tadgh Lowe has been called up by John Evans who also has to plan without the services of St Brigid's stars Senan Kilbride and Peter Domican who are currently not part of the squad.

The Kerry native is, however, hopeful that the experienced pair will make themselves available after taking an extended break from football following their club All-Ireland success.



Harry Dawson, Dublin, has his shot saved by Roscommon goalkeeper Tadgh Lowe during last year's Cadbury's GAA Football All-Ireland Under 21 Championship Final.

Photo: Dáire Brennan / SPORTSFILE



Pictured at the launch of the 2013 Roscommon GAA Members Draw were (L-R): Anthony Flaherty, Roscommon GAA Hurling Committee Chairperson; Michael Fahey, Roscommon GAA Chairperson, and John Evans, Roscommon, senior football team manager.

2013 Roscommon GAA Members Draw launched

ROSCOMMON GAA recently launched its annual Members Draw in Dr Hyde Park.

This year the draw has a top prize of €35,000 and eleven further cash prizes ranging from €5,000 to €500.

In addition there are nine hotel breaks on offer:

- 13th prize is Two All-Ireland Football Final Tickets and one night B&B in a Dublin City Hotel
- 14th prize is Two All-Ireland Hurling Final Tickets and one night B&B in a Dublin City Hotel
- 15th prize is Two nights B&B and one evening meal for two in the Galway Bay Hotel
- 16th prize is Two nights B&B and one evening meal for two in the Regency Hotel, Dublin
- 17th prize is Two nights B&B and one evening meal for two in the Mill Times Hotel, Westport
- 18th prize is Two nights B&B and one evening meal for two in the Park House Hotel, Galway
- 19th prize is One night B&B and one evening meal for two in the Hilton Hotel, Malahide Road, Dublin
- 20th prize is One night B&B and one evening meal for two in the Welcome Inn, Castlebar

All prizes will be drawn on Saturday June 15th at an event in the Abbey Hotel, Roscommon

Speaking at the launch Chairperson of Roscommon GAA, Michael Fahey, appealed to Clubs and supporters to get behind the draw.

“Your support for our draw is a very tangible way of helping our teams compete at provincial and at national level. The progress that is being made at under-age level

over the past few years is there for all to see and resulted in three All-Ireland Final appearances last year. This development is beginning to bear fruit at adult level and was particularly evident during the current Allianz Football League. Our Senior football team was missing a large number of experienced players due to injury, exam commitments and St. Brigids victorious All-Ireland run. Their places were

filled by members of the 2012 and 2013 U-21 panels who acquitted themselves very well and showed that supporters have a lot to look forward when the full panel is available for selection ahead of the Championship.”

Mr. Fahey concluded by saying: “Any

financial support we receive from our supporters will be invested wisely in the future of our players”.

In addition to supporting the county finances the draw is also an important source of funding for clubs and this was another point highlighted at the launch - since this type of draw commenced in 2006 clubs have received over €500,000 in commission from ticket sales.

This year clubs who reach their sales targets will be entered into a draw for some excellent prizes, which include €500 vouchers donated by local businesses - Class Grass, Castlecoote; Seamus Hunt Sports Therapy; Roscommon Leisure Zone; Connolly's Red Mills; J.F. Hanley Groundcare; Roscommon Signs; Abbey Hotel Health and Fitness; Treacy Decór / Colortrend Paints.

Tickets costing, €100, are available from your local Club, from the Roscommon GAA Offices or online at www.gaaroscommon.ie/draw. For more information on the draw call 09066 27176 or email draw@gaaroscommon.ie

Roscommon GAA would like to take this opportunity to thank the local businesses listed above who sponsored the Club Prizes; our Media Partner the Roscommon People and the Hotels who sponsored prizes in the Main Draw.



Sligo fail to secure promotion

Longford1-8
Sligo0-9

LONGFORD withstood the dismissal of Kevin Conneely after 30 minutes to capture Division 3B Hurling honours at Pairc Sean Mac Diarmuda in Carrick-on-Shannon.

Frank Browne's side were reduced to 14-men for the closing 40 minutes, but stood firm to claim rare silverware and a place in Division 3A next year.

Longford had already beaten Sligo in the competition by 18-points in their final

Sligo midfielder Liam Reidy chases possession in the league final. Photo: David Maher / SPORTSFILE



round tie, but this game was always going to be tight in nature.

Sligo welcomed back Keith Raymond to their side after he had opted out for the bulk of the early season, but Longford restricted the talented full-forward well, on their way to this hard earned two-point win.

Longford led by 1-5 to 0-3 at half-time, with Luke Kelly netting a 13th minute goal, after doubling on a dipping Eoin Donnellan free.

Sligo kept in touch thanks to the efforts of Gary Waldron, with the returning Raymond; Liam Reidy, Benny Kenny and Brian McMahon contributing scores in the second half.

The Connacht side worked hard in the closing 35 minutes, to eat into Longford's lead, but the Leinster outfit just had enough to take honours, despite Conneely's dismissal.

After the game Joe O'Brien accepted the cup on behalf of the victorious Longford side as Division 3A Hurling awaits for next year.

LONGFORD: E Daly (0-1, 1f); P McGarry, R Breslin, B Stakem; C Egan, T Roche, K Murray; C Finucane, P Barden; L Kelly (0-1), K Conneely, E Donnellan (0-1, 1f); D Tanner (0-1, 1f), J Newman (0-1), J O'Brien (0-4, 2f). **Sub:** P Corcoran for Kelly (66).

SLIGO: D Reidy; F Coyne, J Kelly, T Cawley; E McGowan, B Kenny (0-1), J Kenny; L Reidy (0-2), D Collery; A Morrison, R Cox, K Gilmartin; G Waldron (0-4, 4f), K Raymond (0-1), M Gilmartin. **Subs:** B McMahon (0-1) for Coyne (HT); M Connelly for Gilmartin (68).

REF: Brendan Sweeney (Cavan).



Sligo hurler Brian McMahon in action during their Allianz Hurling League, Division 3B final defeat to Longford at Pairc Sean MacDiarmuda. Photo: David Maher / SPORTSFILE



The Sligo hurling squad that was defeated by Longford in the recent division 3B league final.

Photo: David Maher / SPORTSFILE



Sligo hurlers reach league final despite hefty loss

Longford4-13
Sligo1-4

By LEO GRAY
Sligo Champion

THIS third round game played in freezing conditions at Glennon Bros Pearse Park turned out to be a precursor of the AHL3B final.

But Sligo will be hoping that they can improve on last Sunday's performance as they were outplayed by a physically stronger and more direct Longford team in a game that was ruined by a constant succession of frees.

Sligo started without a couple of regulars including Brendan Kenny and Brian McMahon but they were on the back foot from the start.

Longford raced into a 1-4 to no score lead after 16 minutes of play, with man of the match Joe O'Brien grabbing two frees and Donnellan adding to his first point again from a placed ball.

Some bad wides, in albeit blustery conditions that favoured the home team, meant that Sligo failed to register a score until the 19th minute when Gary Waldron fired over a good point as he latched onto

a loose ball from around 35m out and converted to the relief of the Sligo support.

However, Longford had their tails up and continued to press as Sligo continued to foul. Donnellan added his third converted free from distance and Kevin Conneely, who dominated at centre-forward throughout, pointed with some style when he swiftly fired the sliotar over the bar to give Longford a 1-6 to 0-1 lead following 21mins of dominant home play.

Longford showed no mercy when some desperate defending led to another free being conceded and former Offaly hurler Declan Tanner stepped up to strike the ball firmly past the Sligo defenders and give the hosts an unassailable lead 2-8 to 0-3.

The home side had an emphatic 3-9 to 0-3 lead at the break and were relentless in the early stages of the second half as Joe O'Brien grabbed another goal in the 43rd minute.

Sligo had their most dominant spell in terms of possession and chances from the 45th to 60th minutes but a succession of 4 wides and the concession of a converted free by Tanner typified this game when nothing would go right for the away team.

Ciaran Brenan fired an unstoppable strike into the top corner of the net in the 56th minute to restore some pride with the scores at 4-10 to 1-4.

Longford finished strongly as Sligo's resistance petered out in the final fifteen minutes.

Further points from Joe O'Brien (2) gave him a 1-5 total.

Declan Tanner scored from a free, to finish off a disappointing Sligo performance by 4-13 to 1-4.

Sligo have, however, qualified for the divisional final against Longford and a much improved performance will be needed if promotion is to be achieved.

LONGFORD: E Daly; P McGarry, R Breslin, G Moore; J Gaffney, B Stakem, C Egan; P Barden, K Murray; E Donnellan (0-5), K Connelly (0-1), D Tanner (2-2); L Kelly (0-1), J Newman (0-1), J O'Brien (1-4).

Subs: K Cox for Donnellan, D Connolly for Breslin, P Corcoran for Kelly, J Mulhern for O'Brien.

SLIGO: D Reidy; J Kelly, R Cox, T Cawley; F Coyne, L Reidy (0-1), J Kenny; E McGowan, D Coltery; K Gilmartin, C Brennan (1-0), N Cadden; G Waldron (0-2), M Gilmartin, C O'Mahony (0-1).

Subs: A Morrisson for Coyne, G Cadden for O'Mahony, T Conneely for Cadden, M Davey for Gilmartin, M Connolly for Kelly.

REF: J Keane.

Championship draw throws up some interesting groups

REIGNING County senior Champions, Curry, and the 2012 Intermediate winners, Bunninadden, have been drawn in the same group for this year's Belfry Sligo senior football Championship.

They will be joined by Eastern Harps in what promises to be an intriguing Group A.

Tubbercurry, St. Molaise Gaels and St. John's are in Group B while Tourlestrane will be joined by Coolera/Strandhill and Ballymote in Group C. St. Mary's, Geevagh and Coolaney/Mullinabreena make up Group D.

In the Kennedy's Intermediate Championship, last year's beaten finalists, Drumcliffe/Rosses Point have been drawn with Calry/St Joseph's and Eastern Harps in Group D. Shamrock Gaels, Owenmore Gaels and St. Michael's will contest Group A while Group B will be an all West division affair with St. Pat's, Castleconnor and Easkey involved.

Group C contains Enniscrone/Kilglass and Cloonacool.

St. Molaise Gaels, Shamrock Gaels and Curry are in Group A in the Toffs Junior A Championship with St. Mary's, Tubbercurry and Coolera/Strandhill in Group B. St. John's will be joined by Bunninadden and Geevagh in Group C.

BELFRY SENIOR CHAMPIONSHIP

Group A
Curry
Bunninadden
Eastern Harps

Group C
Tourlestrane
Coolera/Strandhill
Ballymote

Group B
Tubbercurry
St Molaise Gaels
St. John's

Group D
St. Mary's
Geevagh
Coolaney/
Mullinabreena

Scór final

ST Mary's GAA Club hosted the county Senior Scór final at the Clubhouse on Saturday night 23rd March.

It was a great social event with music, song, recitation & Trath na gCéist performances from around the county.

Roisin Kilgannon -, St Farnan's winner of Solo singing .
Naomh Molaise -Grúpa Bailead (Ballad Group)
Gene Sheerin - Naomh Molaise - Aitriseoireacht (Recitation)
Naomh Fearnain – Ceol Úirlise (Instrumental Group.
Naomh Mhuire – Trath na gCeist (Quiz).

The winners later went on to represent Sligo in the Connacht Final in Carrick on Shannon on Saturday 6th April.



Late goal robs Yeats men

ROUND 5

Sligo2-9
Cavan1-12

SLIGO squandered a five point lead in a dramatic finish as Cavan fought back to earn a share of the spoils in this thrilling Allianz Division Three League clash at Markievicz Park last Sunday.

After their disastrous performance against Monaghan the previous week, Sligo looked to have done enough to have secured a priceless win when they led by five points with just four minutes remaining.

However, they pressed the self-destruct button in a frenzied climax, allowing Cavan to get back on level terms, with the equalising goal coming from substitute, Eugene Keating, two minutes into stoppage time.

And if all that wasn't bad enough, Sligo had centre-back, Adrian McIntyre, sent off for a second yellow card offence in the last minute.

It was a cruel blow for the Yeats County, who led by six points at one stage in the first half and also had a commanding lead in the closing stages.

Even more frustrating was that they brought most of the trouble on themselves, turning over possession on numerous occasions and giving away the ball with sloppy passing far too frequently.

On the plus side, it was a vastly improved performance from the Clones debacle, with the unsparing Frankie Quinn, Gerry McManus and Pat Hughes, who was very effective as a target man in the second half, giving renewed impetus to the forward line

And Adrian Marren was also in good form, kicking five excellent frees.

A near gale force wind made it a testing afternoon for both sides and the robust nature of the exchanges meant there was little free flowing football.

Sligo looked marginally the better team for long stretches of the game but Cavan deserve a lot of credit for their never-say-die attitude and the introduction of substitutes, Barry Reilly and Keating, both of whom were very influential in the last quarter, had a major impact on the final outcome.

Early points from frees by Mark Breheny and Marren settled Sligo's nerves but Cavan wasted little time in getting back into contention with good scores from play by the lively Cian Mackey and Niall McDermott.

A free by Marren edged Sligo back in front in the 13th minute and then came the

game's opening goal four minutes later.

It was the product of a clever passing move as Hughes twice linked with Quinn before releasing Shane McManus who slammed the ball low to the net.

James Kilcullen claimed his first point for Sligo shortly afterwards and then Marren slotted over a free to give the Yeats County a six point advantage, 1-5 to 0-2.

Sligo failed to sustain the momentum, however, and four unanswered points from Martin Dunne, David Givney, Niall McDermott (free) and Damien O'Reilly cut the gap to just two points at the interval.

The Ulster side were on level terms within five minutes of the restart, thanks to two excellent scores from impressive midfielder, Gearoid McKiernan, but Sligo responded with a point from a free by the ever reliable Marren.

And only a brilliant reflex save by Cavan keeper prevented Marren's deflected '45' from finding the net minutes later.

However, the 'keeper was at fault as Sligo struck for their second goal in the 55th minute. He failed to hold a shot from Hughes and Stephen Gilmartin pounced on the rebound to finish to the net.

That gave Sligo a 2-6 to 0-8 lead and they looked to be home and dry when Hughes picked off a terrific point two minutes later.

Cavan had other ideas, however. Two

points by Barry Reilly put them back in the hunt and even though McManus and Marren added on a points for Sligo, it was the Ulster side who finished the stronger.

Two pointed frees by Barry Reilly cut the gap to three and then, with two minutes of injury time almost up, Reilly launched a long hopeful ball into the heart of the Sligo defence which was finished to the net by the alert Keating.

SCORERS – Sligo: S McManus 1-1, A Marren 0-5 (5f), S Gilmartin 1-0, J Kilcullen, M Breheny (f), P Hughes 0-1 each.
Cavan: B Reilly 0-4 (2f), E Keating 1-0, N McDermott (1f), G McKiernan 0-2 each, M Dunne, D Givney, C Mackey, D O'Reilly 0-1 each.

SLIGO: P Greene; C Harrison, J Martyn, R Donovan; K Cawley, A McIntyre, B Curran; S Gilmartin, J Kilcullen; S McManus, F Quinn, B Egan; M Breheny, P Hughes, A Marren.

CAVAN: A O'Mara; K Brady, J McEnroe, O Minagh; K Mehan, A Clarke, D O'Reilly; T Corr, G McKiernan; C Mackey, M Reilly, M McKeever; N McDermott, M Dunne, D Givney. **Subs:** E Keating for Dunne (52), B Reilly for Reilly (52), J Reilly for O'Mara (56), P Reilly for Brady (60).

REF: E O'Grady (Leitrim).

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Sligo in threat of drop after latest loss

ROUND 6

Fermanagh0-15
Sligo0-9

Courtesy of Sligo Champion

SLIGO are hanging on to their Division Three status by their fingernails after this heavy defeat to promotion chasing Fermanagh at Brewster Park, Enniskillen, last Sunday.

In a scenario which has become depressingly familiar during the course of the League, Sligo collapsed without trace in the second half as rampant Fermanagh outscored the Yeats County by ten points to three after the break.

Sligo were competitive and eager in the opening period and were good value for their 0-6 to 0-5 lead aft the interval.

But what a transformation after the break as the Yeats County lost all their shape and composure.

Fermanagh were seeking a win to enhance their promotion prospects while Sligo desperately needed to get a result to help their chances of survival in the division.

It was a scenario which should have produced plenty of fire and passion but, in truth, both sides struggled to cope with the difficult conditions.

That said there was no shortage of effort and the game did produce some memorable moments, particularly from Sligo sharpshooter, Adrian Marren, who was in outstanding form throughout.

Fermanagh started off at a good pace and edged in front in the first minute when the hard working wing back, Declan McCusker, took possession from Shane McCabe's '45' and ran through unchallenged to fist over. A goal chance came as the Sligo defence retreated but McCusker was happy with the point.

Minutes later, Sligo 'keeper, Philip Greene, had to react smartly to keep out Thomas McElroy's close range effort but the Yeats County steadied the ship and played their way back into the game.

They were on level terms after 6 minutes when good play by James Kilcullen gave Niall Murphy to send over a well-taken point from play.

And the Connacht side edged in front two minutes later when Marren got the first



Sligo manager, Kevin Walsh.

of his scores, brilliantly firing over a 50m free from a very tight angle.

The score had a touch of real class and the Curryman got an even better point in the 10th minute, once again finding the range from a difficult angle to put Sligo two points clear.

At the other end, Thomas Corrigan kept the home side in touch with a good score from play and then Paul Ward slotted over a free to tie the game up at three points each.

There was little between the sides at this stage but Marren's class was key for Sligo. He restored their lead with another brilliant point in the 19th minute, this time converting a 47m free in great style.

Sligo had a slight wind advantage in the opening period and Frankie Quinn made good use of the elements when he picked off a terrific long range point in the 24th minute after good play by James Kilcullen had opened up the Fermanagh defence. The Ulster side hit back with an incisive passing movement which ended with Corrigan slotting over with his left foot to cut the gap to the minimum.

However, it didn't take long for Sligo to restore their two point advantage. And again it was Adrian Marren who inflicted the damage, taking a pass from Quinn in his stride, before hammering over another exceptional point.

Fermanagh hit two bad wides and directed another effort straight into the arms of Greene before the pressure finally

brought their fifth point, a good effort by the excellent McCusker just before the interval.

It was the unsparing McCusker who got the home side up and running in the second half, popping over the equaliser with a long range point within two minutes of the restart

Marren put Sligo back in front again from a free minutes later but that was about as good as it got for the Yeats County as they faded in alarming fashion

Corrigan converted two frees in quick succession to edge the home side in front and then Keenan, Ward and Marty O'Brien added on scores as the pattern of the game swung decisively in Fermanagh's favour.

With Sligo losing all direction and giving the ball away Fermanagh stretched their lead to five points, 0-12 to 0-7 when Corrigan slotted over a free. Shane McCabe added on a point from play before Marren, from a free, replied for Sligo.

However, as the Ulster side continued to have things all their own way, clocking up two further scores, courtesy of Ward.

Marren had a consolation score from a free for Sligo five minutes from time but Fermanagh out easy winners.

SCORERS – Fermanagh: Tomas Corrigan 0-5 (2f), Paul Ward 0-4 (1f), Declan McCusker 0-3, Daryl Keenan 0-1, Tommy McElroy 0-1, Martin O'Brien 0-1.

Sligo: Adrian Marren 0-7 (6f), Niall Murphy 0-1, Francis Quinn 0-1.



Sligo escape the drop

ROUND 7

Sligo1-12
Wicklow0-11

By LEO GRAY
Sligo Champion

A GAME which was identified as one of the defining fixtures of the season for Sligo produced the right result as the Yeats County delivered a strong finish to edge out Wicklow in the last round of Division Three of the Allianz Football League at Markievicz Park.

It means that Sligo beat the dreaded drop by the skin of their teeth as Antrim's defeat to Monaghan consigns them to Division Four along with Wicklow.

It was understandable that both teams lacked fluency and for a long time it looked as if Sligo might not be able to find the momentum to bring victory.

A first half goal by Pat Hughes meant that the sides went in level at the break, 1-4 to 0-7. And, given that they had the advantage of a strong breeze in the second period, it was reasonable to expect Sligo to stamp their authority on the exchanges on the restart.

But, as things transpired, it was Wicklow who looked the more composed side in the early stages of the second half and Sligo looked to be in real trouble when the Leinster moved three points clear, 0-10 to 1-4 within six minutes of the restart. With disaster staring them in the face, Sligo came up with the required response, how-

ever.

A switch which saw Hughes moving to the full-forward line and the introduction of the lively Niall Murphy injected badly needed urgency and penetration up front. And the ever-reliable Adrian Marren also became increasingly influential.

They hauled themselves back to equality, 1-8 to 0-11, with fifteen minutes to go and pushed on in the closing stages to secure a priceless win.

Sub Tony Taylor, who was making his first appearance of the campaign, winning some good ball, Sligo dominated possession, adding on four unanswered points. And it was also encouraging that they managed to keep Wicklow scoreless during the closing minutes as well.

In the end, the win was more comfortable than might have been anticipated early in the match but the overwhelming emotion among fans and players alike was one of relief rather than celebration.

Wicklow led by three points to two after 11 minutes, with Sligo's two scores coming from Marren. Then, in the 14th minute, Sligo struck for a vital goal as Pat Hughes connected with Marren's sideline kick and punched the ball low to the net. Wicklow hit back with three points in a row from John McGrath, Dean Healy and Paul Earls but Marren slotted over from a free in the 29th minute to keep things level.

Breheny edged Sligo back in front with a terrific score from way out on the left but this was quickly cancelled out by McGrath to leave it all square at the break. Austin O'Malley, Patrick McWalter and Kevin Murphy all scored from play to give the Leinster side a three point lead early in the second half.

It was looking bleak for Sligo at that stage but they dug deep to haul themselves back into contention. Points by Breheny (2), Brendan Egan and Murphy helped them to draw level by the 55th minute. It was all to play for now and Sligo got their noses in front when Murphy fired over after Marren's neat lay-off.

A great long range score by Marren served to settle the nerves in a tense finish and Sligo never looked back, adding on two pointed frees from the excellent Marren in the closing minutes.

Scorers – Sligo: A Marren (0-6, 3f), M Breheny (0-3, 2f), P Hughes (1-0), N Murphy (0-2), B Egan (0-1). Wicklow: J McGrath (0-5, 3f), A O'Malley (0-2), K Murphy (0-1), P McWalter (0-1), D Healy (0-1), P Earls (0-1).

SLIGO: P Greene, C Harrison, R Donovan, K Cryan, K Cawley, A McIntyre, B Curran, E Mullen, J Kilcullen, S McManus, P Hughes, B Egan, M Breheny, K Sweeney, A Marren.

Subs: T Taylor for J Kilcullen ('blood' sub), 5; J Kelly for C Harrison, 49; N Murphy for K Sweeney, 52; T Taylor for E Mullen, 55.

WICKLOW: R Lambert, C Hyland, D Power, A Byrne, D Hayden, S Byrne, D Healy, J Stafford, A McLoughlin, K Murphy, P MacWalter, D Woods, J McGrath, A O'Malley, P Earls.

Subs: N Mernagh for D Woods, 51; L Benson for P MacWalter, 61; P Dalton for K Murphy, 61; J Bolger for S Byrne 65.

REF: Barry Cassidy (Derry).

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JOHN FALLON
Managing Editor



Donegal's All-Ireland winner and 2012 All-Star Colm McFadden pictured with the Enniscrone/Kilglass U-12 team, who won the 'A' Shield title in 2012.

Enniscrone/Kilglass honour successful underage teams

By Cathal Mullaney

ENNISCRONE/KILGLASS GAA club in West Sligo started 2013 with a presentation ceremony to honour our successful underage teams of 2012.

The celebrations took place in late January, with Donegal's All-Ireland winning corner-forward Colm McFadden in attendance to present the teams with their awards.

2012 was arguably the club's most successful season in recent years at underage level, with the U-12 team capturing the 'A' Shield, the U-14 team winning the 'C' Championship and the club's minor team being crowned 'C' league champions. At the event in the Ocean Sands Hotel in Enniscrone, Colm McFadden acknowledged the work being done at underage level in the club, as did club chairman Declan Rouse, and both paid tribute to the effort put in by players and mentors alike.

Everyone in the club felt privileged to welcome Mr McFadden to Enniscrone and he was presented with a gift as a token of the club's appreciation.

It was an enjoyable evening for all present and an ideal way to kick off club activities in what is the club's 125th year in existence.

All of the club teams have since returned to the playing fields, and it is hoped that 2013 will be an equally successful one for our club.

To obtain an electronic copy of the magazine each quarter, free of charge, email magazine@connachtgaa.ie.



The MacHale Family Eddie, Katie and Eamonn Calry/St. Joseph's GAA Club, Sligo recently presented a Cup to Sligo County Scór Committee in memory of the late Teresa MacHale, who represented the Club and County at the Connacht Scór Sinsear Finals shortly before her passing in 2009 - (L-R): Tom Kilcoyne, Catherine Gallagher, Eddie MacHale, Bridie McGovern, Kate MacHale Bernadine McGovern Joe Queenan and Eamon MacHale.



Tomás Mulcahy pictured with Calry/St. Joseph's GAA Club Connacht Hurling Champions 2012.



Cork Hurling Legend Tomás Mulcahy pictured with (L-R): Brian McGauran, Bernardine McGauran, Cultural Officer, and Eddie MacHale, Chairman, Calry/St. Joseph's GAA Club, at the celebration night for the Connacht Junior Hurling Champions in 2012 and the U16 Ladies also crowned County Football Champions



G4G co-ordinators and coaches bang up to date



LFGA development officer Lisa Cafferky, Aine Gormley, Katrina Connolly and LFGA development officer Noelle Gormley.

OVER 45 people attended the 'Gaelic4Girls' training in Ballinlough recently, with the seven clubs selected to host the G4G in attendance to get trained up on taking the next steps in the programme.

LFGA development officers Lisa Cafferky and Noelle Gormley delivered the two-hour workshop and from the beginning had all the participants interactive engaged. They started with a generic talk which discussed the importance of communication and working together in a club.

The co-ordinators and coaches then went into the hall where they got to be the participants for 'one night only' and experience all the different games in which we hope they implement throughout the G4G

programme and also give them training ideas going forward as coaches.

After Noelle and Lisa had taken the participants through the warm up and four stations it was then the coaches turn to implement the skills/games they were just shown. The coaches received feedback on their coaching skills which ensured they are now competent and capable of delivering G4G training sessions.

The main emphasis on the night was to keep it enjoyable and develop the skills through games. Participants got the chance to sample a variety of games and also got ideas on coaching and how to adapt the games. The session lasted one

hour: the approximate time a G4G session should last once a week.

Half way through the session the co-ordinators undertook specific training on their roles, which explained how they can promote and roll out this programme to the best of their ability within their club.

Thanks to the Michael Glaveys club who provided refreshments after the workshop. This was a chance to sit down and meet other clubs taking part and also to ask any questions they had.

In addition, thanks to Aine Gormley and Katrina Connolly who helped throughout the night in the coaching workshop and to Ita C. Hannon who took pictures which will be in our photo gallery.



Eastern Harps GAA Club members.



Tuam Cortoon Ladies GAA Club representatives.



Galway Girls U-14 side who won the recent blitz at the Connacht GAA Centre'

Galway win out in Ladies Football Blitz

CONNACHT Ladies Gaelic Football U-14 Blitz took place on Sunday 24th March at Connacht GAA Centre.

Four counties participated on a very dry but bitterly cold day with a veyr high standard of football on display throughout.

As it turned out Galway and Mayo opened and closed the blitz, with the Triebsgirls edging the final after earlier losing out to the Green and Red in the first game.

Thanks to our three match officials: Sandra Shanagher from Roscommon, Johnny Burke of Mayo and John Gilmartin from Sligo. Thanks also to the blitz co-ordinators Liam McDonagh from Sligo and Maura Burke from Galway.

Liam McDonagh Sligo Connacht Vice-President presented the Connacht Shield and winners medals to the Galway captain and players while Maura Burke Galway Connacht Registrar presented the runner up medals to the Mayo captain and players.

RESULTS:

Mayo3-4

Galway0-1

Sligo4-2

Roscommon0-0

Mayo3-1

Sligo0-0

Galway2-2

Roscommon2-0

Galway3-1

Sligo1-1

Mayo3-3

Roscommon1-0

FINAL:

Galway1-2

Mayo0-2



Mayo Girls U-14 team.



Sligo Girls U-14 team.



Roscommon Girls U-14 team.

Roscommon show best form of year

Roscommon1-11
Westmeath0-5

By IAN COONEY
Roscommon Herald

ROSCOMMON produced their best performance of the season to comfortably defeat Westmeath and, more importantly, qualify for the league semi-finals a bitterly cold Oran GAA grounds in Rockfield.

It was a hugely encouraging performance from the home wide who made light of the tough conditions to pull away from their opponents in the second half.

With the wind behind them after the break, Roscommon built on their 0-6 to 0-4 interval advantage to leave Westmeath in their wake. Their workrate was commendable and, in the absence of the team's chief score-getter Kelley Hopkins who broke her left hand in a club league game recently, Caitriona Regan, Fiona Connell and Annette McGeeney stepped up to the plate to get the scores Roscommon needed.

But there was so much more to be enthused about. Caroline Connaughton was very solid in between the posts and made a couple of spectacular saves in the opening half when the game was in the balance. Donna Kelly shored up the defence at centre-back, while Susan Spillane, Deirdre Regan and substitute Grainne Egan made fine contributions.

The all-important goal came in the fourth minute of the second period when some unselfish play by Egan and

McGeeney set up Fiona Connell and the Athleague player pounced for the game's only three-pointer. It proved to be the catalyst for a commanding second-half display from Roscommon. With Caitriona Regan delivering a flawless performance from midfield, there was to be no way back for the Lake County girls.

It was a different story in the opening 30 minutes as Westmeath were every bit as good as the home side early on. Pamela Greville and full-forward Denise McGrath were lively in attack and the Roscommon defence were on over-time trying to keep the duo's threat at bay.

McGrath opened the scoring in the fourth minute following a missed goal chance from the stick of Caroline Kelly. But the deadly accurate Regan levelled from a '45 before the same player edged her side in front from a free.

Laura Thompson pegged back Roscommon with a free following a foul on Fiona Leavy in the tenth minute. But Roscommon were back in front when Regan made Elizabeth Hannon pay for a wild pull on McGeeney.

Connaughton made the first of her excellent saves soon after when she dealt with an excellent effort from the left wing by Greville, clawing the sliothar away to safety from underneath her crossbar. Later in the half, the St. Dominic's player did brilliantly to deny McGrath from close range.

McGrath and Annette McGeeney swapped points before Regan added another free after McGeeney won a clever free. McGrath responded for Westmeath after a free from Mairead McCormack broke to her. But McGeeney gave Roscommon a two-point interval advan-

tage when she took a pass from Noeleen McCormack and pointed.

Four minutes into the second half, Connell had goaled and Roscommon were on their way. Regan's influence was growing and a brace of points from the Oran player alongside two more from Connell and McGeeney firmly put Roscommon in the driving seat.

Connell scooped a 48th minute effort over the bar but Catriona Murtagh replied for Westmeath in what turned out to be the visitors' only score of the half.

The game petered out to an inevitable conclusion as Roscommon, aided by the hard-working Donna Kelly and Niamh Coyle, closed out the game comfortably.

The hard work on the training ground is beginning to pay off.

ROSCOMMON: C. Connaughton; N. McCormack, C. Morris, E. Gately; C. Killeen, D. Kelly, J. Beattie; N. Coyle, D. Regan; S. Spillane, C. Regan (0-6, four frees, one '45), P. Lennon; C. Curley, F. Connell (1-2), A. McGeeney (0-3). **Subs:** G. Egan for Gately (half-time), C. Owens for Curley (43 mins), A. Fallon for Kelly (57 mins), C. Dervan for Spillane (59 mins), M. Craven for McGeeney (59 mins).

WESTMEATH: F. Keating; S. King, J. Egan, E. Hannon; S. McGrath, E. Murphy, A. Boylan; F. Leavy, M. McCormack; L. Thompson (0-1, a free), C. Murtagh (0-1), P. Greville; T. Forde, D. McGrath (0-3), C. Kelly. **Subs:** R. Scally for Boylan (blood substitution), J. McKeogh for Kelly (half-time), S. Jackson for Forde (half-time), E. Shaw for S. McGrath (56 mins), A. Corbett for Thompson (56 mins).

REF: R. McNicholas (Galway).

First win of season for Tribesgirls

Galway2-10
Dublin1-7

GALWAY Camogie got their first win of the league after of a hard-fought battle with Dublin at O'Toole Park.

Galway made more of the diagonal wind than their opponents, leading 1-8 to 0-5 at the interval.

Ali Maguire registered all of Dublin's scores from frees but Ailish O'Reilly's sixth

minute goal had Galway in a strong position. With Clodagh McGrath and Niamh Kilkenny dominant and Rebecca Hennelly amongst the points, the Tribeswomen were full value for their advantage at the change of ends.

They only managed two points after the resumption but Ann Marie Hayes' 40th minute goal ensured that they always had enough in hand.

Dublin kept battling away, with Caitriona Power and Grainne Quinn standing

up well to the pressure in the full-back line. Aoife Kelly got their only point from play to go with another Maguire free and Sarah Ryan scrambled a goal with ten minutes remaining but Dublin never looked like overturning the deficit.

GALWAY: A Concannon; G Glynn, L Ryan, H Cooney; S Cahalan, S Coen, T Manton; C McGrath, N Kilkenny; E Kilkelly, N McGrath, E Haverty; R Hennelly, AM Hayes, A O'Reilly.

BY SUSAN RODGERS

Good win for Mayo in U-14 Connacht Championship

Mayo8-11
Roscommon1-5

AFTER losing to Galway in the first round Mayo were determined to leave Gilmartin Park with a home win.

Mayo were quick off the mark with Lisa Reid finding the back of the net in the opening minutes. Three goals followed in quick succession from Maria Reilly, Roisín Flynn and Lisa Reid. Another goal from the boot of Reilly gave Mayo a sizeable advantage.

In the second quarter play was more evenly matched with Roscommon scoring 1-3 while Mayo put 4 over the bar with points coming from Reid, Reilly, Waldron and Ciara Whyte. Mayo opened the second half with a point from the impressive Reilly. Less than a minute after coming into the game Jade Henry blasted over a point from 30 metres. Lara Sweeney, another second half substitution, added a point which was quickly followed by another from the hard working Lisa Reid.

Meanwhile Roscommon scored two points at the other end which were to be their only second half scores, while in the last quarter Ciara Whyte scored Mayo's seventh goal and Maria Reilly, on course for a hat trick, deftly put the ball in the Roscommon net bringing Mayo's goal tally to eight.

SCORERS – Mayo: Maria Reilly 3-2, Lisa Reid 2-2, Ciara Whyte 1-1, Rebecca Waldron 1-1, Roisín Flynn 1-0, Jade Henry 0-3, Lara Sweeney 0-2.

MAYO: Michelle Treacy, Anna Regan, Emma Corr, Chloe McHale, Ella Brennan, Ellis Ronayne (Capt), Clodagh McManamon, Katelyn Concannon, Roisín Flynn, Laura Carroll, Ciara Whyte, Lisa Reid, Rebecca Waldron, Amy Dowling, Maria Reilly. **Subs:** Sive Duffy for Brennan, Jade Henry for Dowling, Lara Sweeney for Concannon, Laura Brennan for Carroll, Niamh Costello for Regan

Mayo seniors secure league semi berth

Mayo1-10
Dublin.....0-8

MAYO overcame Dublin in a tense encounter at Naomh Mearnóg to clinch their spot in this year's league semi-final.

Both teams knew that a place in the last four was at stake but it was the Western side that dealt better with the blustery conditions in Portmarnock to emerge as winners.

Mayo were the quickest to settle and they had two points on the board before Dublin were able to get any sustained possession thanks to good scores from Aileen Gilroy and Niamh Kelly.

Dublin's first score came from Lyndsey Davey who struck a good point on the run but again Mayo replied well with a great score from corner back, Kathryn Sullivan. However, Dublin settled thanks to the growing influence of Noelle Healy in the Dublin midfield. Healy scored two points herself as Denise McKenna added two points from frees and Leah McCaffrey added a fine score after turning over Mayo in their own half back line.

However Mayo replied well with the half-time whistle fast approaching scoring the last two points of the half from Aileen Gilroy and another from Deirdre Doherty to leave the scores at half-time Dublin 0-6 to Mayo's 0-5.

Mayo came out in the second-half with

a stiff breeze at their backs and they quickly started to take advantage of the elements as Cora Staunton grabbed her first two scores of the day with both coming from play. The industrious Fiona McHale got the score that her hard work deserved but it could have been more as she collected the ball after a fantastic run and strike off the post from Aileen Gilroy. Cora Staunton added her third score before the decisive moment of the match. Staunton stood over a free some 45 yards out from goal and her lofted free carried in the breeze and was saved by Dublin keeper, Clíodhna O'Connor, who failed to see the rebound fall to Niamh Kelly who swept the ball into the Dublin net to clinch the win.

Mayo now advance to the semi-final stage where they will face Monaghan who were extremely impressive throughout the campaign with a 100% record. Cork and Laois will meet in the other semi final as all four teams search for the first pieces of silver wear for the season.

Carnacon make it two in a row and retain the Boar's Head Trophy

BEFORE a ball has been kicked at club level in Mayo the Carnacon ladies already have silverware on the table. Congratulations to Carnacon and guest players; Yvonne Byrne, Ciara Hanahoe, Aileen Gilroy and Sarah Rowe on their recent win in the senior ladies final of Comótas Peile Paidí Ó Sé.

The girls travelled to Ventry in late February and brought home the Boars' Head trophy for a second year in a row. In round one the Connacht champions defeated Termon of Donegal on a scoreline of 4-8 to 2-4. St Sylvester's from Malahide were unable to field a team in the semi final and Carnacon found themselves with an easy route to the final where they emerged as comprehensive winners scoring 5-13 to Foxrock-Cabinteely's 2-6.

Westport Ladies GAA Club Chairperson Breda Browne receiving a new set of jerseys from William O'Halloran, The Big Tree Bar Westport, who sponsored the Westport senior Ladies for 2013. all pictured are: team managers Vinnie Burke, Dave O'Malley, Ann Gavin, along with Westport senior players.



Leitrim Ladies lose out

Leitrim3-6
Tipperary1-13

By **JOHN CONNOLLY**
Leitrim Observer

L EITRIM'S interest in this year's Tesco Homegrown Division 3 came to an abrupt end in Clara when they were defeated by a solitary point by Tipperary in the play-off to determine who would advance to a semi-final with Armagh.

The defeat came in the most cruel manner possible as Edel Hanley converted a free five minutes into injury time as the Leitrim supporters would still have been celebrating Aine Tighe's equalising third goal of the game as extra-time seemed inevitable.

Looking for where it went wrong for Leitrim, against a side they had beaten earlier in the league, a significant problem was the failure to build a commanding lead in the opening half when playing with a very strong breeze.

An early Aine Tighe free helped settle the nerves and the lead was doubled when Roisin Curneen and Anna Conlan combined to set up Roisin Fowley and her shot was tipped over the bar by Tipperary goalkeeper Jackie O'Gorman.

After Aine Tighe was on hand to force the ball across the line and all of a sudden Leitrim were looking to be in a strong position as their lead was now five points.

However, Leitrim were unable to build on

that score and Tipperary came to the fore as the half progressed. In the closing five minutes of the half Tipperary scored three unanswered points as Leitrim led 1-4 to 0-5 at the interval.

When looking for areas in which they can improve Tipperary will know they should have been clinical in front of goal and they spurned another goal opportunity 13 minutes into the second half. Mairead Morrissey and Jennifer Grant linked up well to release Edel Hanly but she sent her shot over the Leitrim bar to the frustration of the management team who were patrolling the sideline. Another Hanly free moment later meant Tipperary had a two point lead with 15 minutes remaining.

The next score proved to be one of the best of the game as it was a real team goal. The move began with Michelle Guckian who combined with Enya McWeeney to bring the ball out of defence and when it was worked further up the field the Fowley sisters Sinead and Roisin helped find Aine Tighe who made no mistake from close range.

With five minutes remaining and Leitrim leading by the narrowest of margins Tipperary struck emphatically with what proved to be their only goal of the game. Hanly and Carew cleverly exchanged passes and released Jennifer Grant and this time there was no mistake as Grant drilled her shot low and hard past Guckian.

A further Edel Hanley point meant there were three points between the sides as the game entered injury time but Leitrim refused to throw in the towel and their persistence was rewarded when they were awarded a penalty

four minutes into injury time after Aine Tighe was fouled. The Kiltubrid forward took responsibility for the penalty and after Jackie O'Gorman saved the initial effort Tighe scored the rebound to spark great celebrations on the sideline as attention began to turn towards extra-time.

However, Tipperary had not yet begun to focus on extra-time and immediately went on the attack after Leitrim failed to secure possession of the resulting kick out. A free was awarded, five minutes into injury time meaning that if Edel Hanley was successful with her effort Leitrim's efforts would be in vain. Showing no signs of nerves Hanley effortlessly slotted the free between the uprights to bring Leitrim's challenge to an abrupt end.

LEITRIM: Michelle Guckian, Mary Farrell, Enya McWeeney, Sharon Kerrigan, Clare Owens, Mairead Stenson, Kirby Gilgunn, Sinead Fowley, Anna Conlan, Roisin Curneen, Deirdre Ward, Aine Heslin, Roisin Fowley (0-3), Erin Farrell, Aine Tighe (3-3). **Subs:** Joyce Cunningham for E. Farrell (53 mins), Vanessa Gallogly for Ward (57 mins).

TIPPERARY: Jackie O'Gorman, Brid Condon, Samantha Lambert, Katie Lyne, Anne O'Dwyer, Claire Carroll, Barbara Ryan, Jennifer Grant (1-2), Sheelagh Carew (0-2), Niamh Lonergan, Mairead Morrissey (0-2), Orlagh Walsh, Edith Carroll, Aoife Ryan, Edel Hanley (0-8). **Subs:** Shauna Ryan for Carroll (54 mins), Aisling McCarthy for Walsh (57 mins).

REF: Paul Fahy (Roscommon).

'Pet Stop' come on board with Sligo Ladies Football

By **LOUISE O'DONNELL**

SLIGO Ladies Football announced 'Pet Stop' as their 2013 Main Sponsor at a recent celebration.

Everyone involved in Sligo Ladies GAA is delighted to bring 'Pet Stop' on board for the coming season. The company is a well known fuel and pet food supplier situated in Carraroe Retail Park on the outskirts of Sligo.

The owner of 'Pet Stop' Mr John McKeon has offered a very generous donation to the County this year which will no doubt help in the development of ladies football in the County and we thank him most sincerely.

Everyone associated with Ladies Football in the county is encouraged to support the Ladies' new sponsors whenever possible as they contribute immensely to the promotion of our organisation.



ON BOARD: Pictured at the official launch of the 'Pet Stop' and Sligo Ladies GAA deal was (L to R): Louise Lavin (Sligo Ladies GAA Chairperson), John McKeon (Pet Stop) and Ted Maloney (Sligo Ladies GAA Intermediate management).

Girls inter-provincial Handball team to shine



Back Row (L to R): Cora Conlon (Mayo), Aoife Quinn (Sligo), Heather Spelman (Galway), Elaine Nee (Galway), Fiona Tully (Roscommon), Eimear Ní Bhiadha (Galway). **Front Row (L to R):** Roisín Ní Ghionnúin (Galway), Mary Fahy (Galway), Anna Ní Odhrain Ní Mhurchú (Galway), Ciana Ní Churraoin (Galway).

PRIDE, passion, skill and intense competition were all in abundance in Kingscourt HC, Cavan recently, as 40 young girls from across the country proudly represented their provinces at the Girl 40x20 Interprovincial Team of 10 event.

This event was reinstated to this year's clár, after a two-

year absence, as part of the 'She's Ace' initiative to encourage female participation in handball.

And the decision was truly justified in a hugely entertaining and competitive day of quality handball. The format saw five doubles pairings, aged between 13 and 17 compete on aggregate scoring,

with many of the young girls competing at national level for the first time.

Connacht girls won their semi-final against Leinster by 23 aces but were defeated in the final by the narrowest margin of one ace. Well done to all the girls and team coaches Frances Curran and Sean Finnegan

RESULTS

- SF 1: Connaught dft Leinster 102- 79
- SF 2: Munster dft Ulster 82-65
- 3rd/4th: Ulster dft Leinster 103-75
- Final Munster dft Connaught 67-66

Scollan wins Connacht 40x20 Juvenile B Championship for Leitrim

THE 2013 Connacht 40x20 Juvenile B Championship came to its conclusion on Saturday with the finals played in Ballaghaderreen and Charlestown.

Cormac Scollan was the only Leitrim competitor to reach the finals and he came away with the Boys U-11 title defeating Niall Fleming of Mayo on a scoreline of 15-6, 15-10.

In a very entertaining match with some great rallies and kill shots Scollan eased to victory to take the first game. The second

game was much tighter early on with both players swapping scores, but once Scollan took the lead he never relinquished it. Fleming put up a real battle but midway through the game Scollan took control and put enough daylight between them to secure a great victory.

On his route to the final he defeated Conor Finn of Sligo 15-10, 15-12 in the quarter final and Colm Cunningham Galway 15-6, 15-2 in the semi-final.

Leitrim had a total of 11 competitors taking part in the championship including: Fergal McLoughlin and James Wrynn U-11 Doubles, Eoin McLoughlin U-12, Robert Maguire U-13, David Wrynn U-14, Aaron McLoughlin U-15, James Maguire and Conor McKeon U-15 Doubles Tony Simms U-16 and Mark Leddy U-17. All players reached the semi-finals against a stronger Galway selection with Mark Leddy losing out to Eamon O'Maoilchianain in the U-17 Final.

Ní Churraoin adds minor title to her list of many achievements



Pictured with the certificates and medals are Connacht representatives at the Girls Cumann na mBunscol event. (L to R): Laura Shannon and Lisa Ruane Belcarra N.S Mayo; Orla Ní Churraoin, S N An Spidéal; Roisín Ní Ghionnúin S N Sailearna Indreabhán; Sadhbh Ní Flaithearta and Ailbhe Breathnach S N An Spidéal.

MICHEAL Breathnach's Ciana Ni Churraoin had the honour of becoming the first Ladies Minor Handball title winner from County Galway after her victory at the Irish championships in Cavan.

Ni Churraoin took the win in Kingscourt Cavan on Saturday 23rd March against Maeve McElduff from Tyrone in Ladies Minor Singles decider.

The girls know each other very well and have met many times over the years and even won gold together at the recent World Championship as doubles partners.

But all of that was behind them as they were to compete for the blue riband title of Ladies Minor handball.

In the first game Ní Churraoin took control and blitzed McElduff with a display of power and pace and won on a commanding 21-4 scoreline.

McElduff did make a fight of it in the second and pushed her opponent all the way but the ever focused Ní Churraoin was not to be denied and she closed out the game 21-8 to seal her first minor title.

At just 16 years of age there is certainly a bright future for her in the game and is looking forward to playing in

open grades next year.

Ciana also plays centre forward for the Galway minor camogie team who competed

in the All-Ireland semi-final on April 20th. And the family success doesn't stop with Ciana as her brother Fiontáin recently captained the Galway U-21s footballers to Connacht glory.



Micheal Breathnach's Ciana Ni Churraoin receiving her All-Ireland Minor Ladies 40x20 medal from incoming GAA Handball President Willie Roche

Cúmann na mBunscol handball

EARLIER on the same day the provincial Cumann na mbun Girls winners competed against each other in a fun day of handball.

Connacht were represented by U-11 singles Ailbhe Breathnach, An Spidéal, U-11 doubles Orla Breathnach and Sadhbh Ní Flaithearta, also from S N An Spidéal.

Also turn out for Connacht on the day was U-13 Singles Roisín Ní Ghionnúin from Scoil Sailearna Indreabhán, and U-13 doubles Laura Shannon and Lisa Ruane Belcarra N.S Mayo.

All girls received a t-shirt, certificate and medal for their day's work and all went home happy after a great days action where new friends were made and a lot of fun was had.

Dolan and Gordon honoured by GAA Writers

Roscommon and All-Ireland club football champions St Brigid's have been further awarded for their St Patrick's Day success in Croke Park, with the news that inspirational forward Frankie Dolan has been named as the Connacht GAA Writers Personality of the Month for March.

Like has done on so many occasion in the past for both club and county, Dolan stepped up in the dying embers of the game to kick the point that ended the Roscommon famine for All-Ireland club football titles.

While the victory for Paul McStay's side was very much a team effort, Frankie

Dolan's consistency over the years and his personal fortitude late on to rescue his side against Ballymun, has been rewarded by the province's GAA Writers.

St Brigid's Frankie Dolan celebrates with the Andy Merrigan Cup after leading his side to the win over Ballymun Kickhams.

Photo: Ray McManus / SPORTSFILE



AND the award for April's Player of the Month goes to St Attracta's Community School and Sligo U-21 defender Michael Gordon.

Gordon (19), who also made his Sligo U-21 debut against Galway in Tuam earlier this year, proved a steadying influence on the Tubbercurry school as they overcame St Aloysius College, Athlone in the Connacht Colleges 'B' final; St Michael's from Lurgan in the All-Ireland 'B' semi-final, before starring once more in the Noonan Cup final victory over Our Lady's College, Templemore.

The Curry club-man has previously played a leading role at under-age level for his home club and for the Sligo minor team and is definitely one to watch for the future.

Sligo defender Michael Gordon in action for the Yeats County during the 2012 Connacht GAA football minor championship semi-final at McHale Park.

Photo: Paul Mohan / SPORTSFILE



Both Dolan and Gordon will be presented with their awards at the Connacht GAA Banquet at the end of the season, along with the January and February winners Wayne McKeon and Darragh McCormack.

No easy ways to get to the root of things

WHEN it comes to appraising how players perform in matches, I have long favoured a system of self-assessment – and, indeed, years later, the Revenue Commissioners and many builders’ providers followed my lead.

When I get players into the dressingroom at half-time, I make each one account for his performance. Like a sráidbhaile grocer, they count the pennies on both columns of the ledger, and hope the balance falls on the right side.

This approach promotes honesty in a player. A man, or, indeed, a woman, cannot improve without the capacity to identify their own mistakes.

Yet, this can only be achieved in a caring and trusting environment where a player feels comfortable. You pick the lock, centimetre by millimetre, until he volunteers a searingly honest evaluation of his own display*

Force the issue, however, and the moment is lost: that’s what happened Keating in later years, and I don’t mean Ro.

If your style is to deliver rasping team-talks, deploying piercing insults in the hope of stimulating the appropriate response, it is almost certain you will never get players to open up in the way I have described above.

But, there’s a ‘but’ in everything.

This ‘but’ is one of the many paradoxes of the game I have loved so well (and vice-versa): if you go deep enough, dredging up something from the bowels of the family history, perhaps an uncle who drank farms or an aunt known to take ten years off her age, you can actually provoke an unwanted openness in even the most obdurate of players.

There wasn’t a player yet I couldn’t reduce to a broken wreck – even if it wasn’t necessary, particularly if it wasn’t necessary. Prick, poke and prod until you find the vulnerable spot.

As his – or, indeed, her – tears flow, resist what temptation you may feel to draw back: until you hear a player wail “look, Noel, I kept a secret diary until I was ten – I just can’t let myself cut loose”, you have no prospect of creating the unique bond that underpins every symbiotic manager-player relationship.

Fortunately, and perhaps not surprisingly, I am able to play it both ways: tender and thoughtful, or low and hard, and it has invariably brought me unprecedented results over and over again.

Which begs the obvious question: in what way do I differ from Cody? Which begs the answer: who said we are different in the first place?

We are, as it happens. But I would still like to know who said it in the first place.

I see a lot of myself in Cody, which is not surprising perhaps considering the amount of time he spent in Ballybore during his formative years. The one thing about Cody is that there is no one thing about him.

Do I like him personally? Actually, I do. That may surprise a lot of people, but, behind it all, Cody is a decent man.

I know him long enough to take no notice of the prancing and preening on the sideline: in point of fact, I interpret that as a clear sign that deep within Cody actually entertains a great deal of self-doubt.

I had him as a player in St Pat’s. I drove up every day for the trainings. Cody tried my patience in the early days. Loughnane counselled caution but Cody bearded the lion, at great cost to himself.

It was a wet day in Saggart that the penny – and Cody – finally dropped. My patience was worn thin, my full-back line too. Cody came out to remonstrate with the midfielders.

“Cody, boy” I said, “I think you’ll find there’s only one boss around here. If there’s a problem with midfield, I will sort it out myself, in my own good time, and not a minute sooner.”

And then I took him off. He was furious, frothing at the mouth.

I could barely conceal my laughter.

And then, just to send him over the edge, I took off the

two midfielders together.**

Cody didn’t know which way to turn. He wasn’t sure if he was coming or going. “Going,” I warned him at half-time, “if you don’t smarten up your act.”

It was a seminal moment for him, but merely run-of-the-mill for me. On such moments do seasons, careers, empires, and epochs turn. Get it right, and you are a hero: get it wrong, and you’re on your own.

* JP Darmody preferred to call it “signing my own death warrant.” He says: “Every time I tell the truth at half-time, Noel, you take me off. The only time I don’t get to tell the truth at half-time, is when you have me taken off beforehand. I can’t win.” Thus he encapsulates the very essence of the approach I am championing here.

** We came back to draw, the best possible result in a comeback as it keeps a team dishonest.

Facebook: Knowledgeable Noel



VERY GOOD, VERY GOOD, THAT'S T, GET T OFF YOUR CHEST. IT WILL DO YOU GOOD AS WELL A SECOND-HALF ON THE BENCH.