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City faces a future of gridlock

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Galway end Cork's league hopes

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Monday, March 2, 2020

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School shuts as first case of virus detected

HSE to monitor students and staff of Dublin school for 14-day isolation

Cianan Brennan

A secondary school on the northside of Dublin has been closed for 14 days on foot of the first confirmed case of coronavirus in the Republic of Ireland.

Scoll Chaitriona, a school of several hundred pupils in Glasnevin, will be shut for the duration of the virus's incubation period, the Department of Health has said. While the department's chief medical officer, Tony Holohan, declined to name any specific regarding the school yesterday, a letter from the HSE to parents of children at the school emerged in the immediate aftermath of that briefing.

Marcella Nic Niallaigh, principal of Scoll Mohi, the feeder primary school to Scoll Chaitriona, last night told parents by text: "Scoll Chaitriona has confirmed it is closing for two weeks as a precautionary measure."

"I want to reassure you all that I'm seeking direction from the HSE and the Department of Education, and I will revert back to you all as soon as possible."

The school will remain closed until March 16, with all students and staff being treated as possible contacts of the confirmed patient.

The first confirmed case in the Republic of Ireland of Covid-19 — the technical name for the coronavirus which has killed nearly 3,000 people worldwide — was reported on Saturday evening, involving a male in the east of the country who had recently returned to Ireland from one of four areas in northern Italy which have been deemed to be high risk.

Mr Holohan said contact tracing following the confirmed case raised a connection with a secondary school in the east of the country.

"The Department of Education said it is 'available to assist the school in any way necessary'."

"The closing of this school was a decision made on public health grounds after risk assessment deemed it appropriate. All other schools will remain open," said a spokesperson for the department.

It could not be confirmed whether the initial contact with the virus, which resulted from a trip to one of

the four affected areas in northern Italy, had eventuated from a school trip. The patient is now receiving appropriate medical care at a hospital in Dublin.

Dr Holohan said all pupils and teachers at the school had been asked to restrict their movements until the end of the incubation period. "They shouldn't go to school or work or sporting events, and they should try to avoid contact with vulnerable groups as well," he said.

Dr Holohan said the decision to lock down the school does not affect any other institutions. He said the situation is not of sufficient significance to move Ireland from the containment stage regarding Covid-19 into the mitigation stage.

"That decision will depend on a significant number of cases arising in the community and community transmission occurring," he said.

Over the course of the next two weeks, each individual affected will receive a text each day from the HSE, asking them whether they still feel well, or if they have begun to develop symptoms of the virus.

Health Minister Simon Harris last night underlined this advice, saying: "It is important that people continue to follow the advice of our public health doctors who decided, following risk assessment, that it was best to close the school as a precautionary measure."

"As the chief medical officer has said, other schools should continue to stay open and follow the advice of the HSE in this regard."

"I know this can be a very concerning time for parents but it is important to listen to the doctors. If you have any concerns, please contact your GP or the HSE."

Dr Holohan confirmed that contact tracing for the other confirmed case of Covid-19 on the island as a whole, a woman in Belfast, had been completed, and no further quarantine steps had been taken.

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Business: 17

Fly a kite



A 33m drawing of a red kite by renowned Irish sand artist Sean Corcoran at Killmurin Beach, Co Waterford, to celebrate St David's Day and the first ever Wales Week in Ireland (March 9-13). Welsh sand artist Marc Treanor simultaneously created a sand drawing of the red kite, often considered the national bird of Wales, on Whitesands Bay to represent Irish and Welsh cultural connections.

Picture: Naosie Culhane

Paedophile worked with kids despite concerns

Noel Baker
Social Affairs Correspondent

An unpublished report has criticised the role of a government department in the case of a former Christian Brother — since convicted three times for sex offences against children — who continued to work at a centre for young offenders.

Edward Bryan, 67, was jailed for a third time last month after pleading guilty to the indecent assault of a teenage boy while he was a teacher at the North Monastery in Cork City almost four decades ago.

It was his third conviction relating to his time as a

teacher in the secondary school.

However, between 1994 and 2010, he worked at what became Finglas Child and Adolescent Centre in Dublin — a forerunner to the present day Oberstown facility.

Initially a teacher, Bryan was promoted to deputy director and also served as chaplain at the facility, despite twice being suspended from his return to work over concerns about his behaviour.

However, an unpublished report, commissioned by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs and the Irish Youth Justice Service (IYJS) and sparked by his initial 2013 conviction for offences

while teaching in Cork, shows there were concerns while he was working in Finglas.

It emerged that Bryan had been suspended twice in the early to mid-2000s, but on both occasions took legal actions against his employers to force his return to work — firstly against the board of the centre, and secondly against the HSE after it had assumed authority over the facility.

A summary of the independent review, written for the department and the IYJS by child welfare consultant Kieran McGrath, suggested the process became a legal quagmire which proved "costly" for the State and with Bryan ultimately resuming the role of child protection officer at the centre.

That summary said: "This person held a management position within the organisation and during a period of c 15 years' concerns' had been raised at various times. The catalogue of concerns culminated in the staff member being placed on administrative leave pending further investigation."

"The investigation process extended over a protracted period of time which resulted in the High Court ordering that the suspension be lifted. Some six years later

the employer was informed of allegation [sic] relating to a period prior to taking up his present employment."

"The amount of time and energy devoted to the micro-management of this case by the Department [of Education] was unnecessary and unhelpful."

"By involving legal advice from the AG's office, the process was slowed down which created delay and confusion. This was compounded by the numerous number of staff changes during the period."

"Where there is no clear-cut allegation, just a series of concerns, then the concept of grooming behaviour must be considered."

The report summary outlined how the concerns could have been better dealt with, and said staff found it difficult to stand over their concerns due to Professional Accommodation Syndrome.

"The review found that no one person had a firm grip of the matter and this led to the confusion and delays," it said. "The plethora of delays is a striking feature throughout the case."

When contacted, the Department of Children and Youth Affairs said it was not in a position to provide a response at that time, but would address the issue of grooming behaviour must be considered."

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24k money laundering and terror financing cases in 2018

Seán McCaithaigh

Almost 24,000 suspected cases of money laundering or terrorist financing were reported in 2018.

Figures from the Department of Justice show a total of 23,939 reports of suspicious financial transactions were made to gardai in 2018 — a decrease of almost 2% on the previous year.

A smaller number of cases — 23,442 — were reported to Revenue, despite the requirement to notify both the tax authorities and Revenue of all suspect activity.

The latest annual report on money laundering and terrorist financing indicates that over 80% of cases reported to Revenue concerned tax-related offences. Revenue said information generated from such reports had resulted in an additional tax yield of €4.7m.

Criminal proceedings resulted in 73 individuals being charged with 294 money laundering offences during 2018. A total of 28 individuals were convicted

of 130 money-laundering offences — up from 11 individuals in 2017 — while one person was convicted of two terrorist financing offences.

Hassan Bal, 36, was jailed for two and a half years at Waterford Circuit Criminal Court after pleading guilty to providing and attempting to provide funding for Islamic State.

In 2018, the Criminal Assets Bureau also secured court orders freezing 85 bank accounts and obtained a total of 228 orders over assets valued at €14.4m which were suspected of

being the proceeds of crime such as drug-trafficking, fraud, and smuggling.

The quality of information submitted in the reports of suspicious activity improved during 2018 following the acquisition of new software, the department stated.

While money laundering and terrorist financing differ in many ways, the report said they often exploited the same vulnerabilities in financial systems.

It said legislation to tackle the issue was strengthened in 2018 by a law which put further obligations on financial institutions to carry out due diligence on customers and report suspicious transactions, while also giving more powers to the Garda Financial Intelligence Unit.

The unit is staffed by 11 Garda detectives and six administrative staff.

The changes also placed reporting responsibilities on other businesses, including solicitors and accountancy firms, property service providers, and gambling clubs.

Inside

Analysis

Moria refugee camp has capacity for less than 3,000 people. It now holds 20,000 inhabitants, almost half of those children caught up in the chaos and despair. Page 11

Arts

It's a man's world in Russia. Women outnumber them demographically, so they hold all the cards in a dating game explored in 'School of Seduction'. Page 15

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In your paper today

World 8&9

Biden win may blunt Sanders

Democrat presidential hopeful Joe Biden said he can 'unite this country', after scoring a big win over Bernie Sanders in South Carolina. **Page 8**

Life/Style 12&13

I would like women to realise that they don't have to be all. Having it all means doing it all and that is ridiculous. **Page 13**

Outdoors 14

Inis Mór is a continuation of the Burren, whose limestone beds were laid down 350m years ago. It has had human habitation for more than 4,000 years.

Business 17-19

Herd immunity to climate change

The role of hill sheep farmers in maintaining the uplands of Ireland has acquired a new focus. **Page 19**

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sudoku

basic

4	5	9	2	3	7	8	6	1
8	3	2	6	5	1	9	4	7
1	6	7	8	9	4	5	2	3
5	8	1	7	2	3	6	9	4
3	7	6	5	4	9	2	1	8
9	2	4	1	6	8	3	7	5
6	4	3	9	7	5	1	8	2
7	9	8	3	1	2	4	5	6
2	1	5	4	8	6	7	3	9

HOW TO PLAY
Fill in the grid, ensuring that each column and row, and every 3x3 box, contains the numbers 1-9

intermediate

6	4	3	5	2	1	8	7	9
9	1	2	3	8	7	6	4	5
5	8	7	6	9	4	3	2	1
8	7	6	2	4	5	9	1	3
2	5	1	7	3	8	6	9	4
4	3	9	1	7	3	8	6	5
1	9	8	4	5	6	7	3	2
7	2	4	8	1	3	5	9	6
3	6	5	9	7	2	1	8	4

advanced

3	7	8	1	6	2	5	4	9
9	1	4	8	7	5	6	3	2
2	6	5	4	9	3	1	8	7
4	8	2	9	1	6	3	7	5
1	5	3	2	8	7	9	6	4
7	9	6	5	3	4	1	2	8
5	2	1	3	4	8	7	9	6
6	3	9	7	2	1	4	5	8
8	4	7	6	5	9	2	1	3

BASIC

8	1	9	3	4	5
9	4	5	7	8	
		2	1		8
			6	4	7
3	6	4	5	2	9
	6		3	7	
	5		3		6
			4	8	7
7	3	1	5		9
				9	4

INTERMEDIATE

	3	4	1	9	6	2	8	7
				4			9	
4	9					8		
	6		4	5		1		
		8				3	2	
	2		1					
		5						
9	8	6	7	3	4	5	2	

ADVANCED

	7		3	2		9	6
		3		8		5	
	2		6			9	
6	9	8				7	2
		1		7			6
	8		2				
		7		4		2	
2	1		7	9			5

Weekend road death toll hits seven

Neil Michael

A footballer from the North has been named locally as one of the weekend's seven road-crash victims.

Bryan Magill was one of three people killed when two cars collided in Dundalk at 2am on Saturday, on the main Dublin-Belfast N1 road, at Carrickarnon, Ravensdale, north of the county.

Mr Magill's club posted a tribute to him on Facebook, saying: "All at the club are heartbroken by the untimely death of one of our top men,

Bryan [bru] Magill. He will always be remembered by all of us as a gentleman. "Sleep easy our kid. Shout at us from above."

The other two victims of the Carrickarnon crash were named locally as Mary Foxton, who was in her 80s, and her son, Kevin, who was in his 50s. They were both pronounced dead at the scene. Mr Magill was also pronounced dead at the scene. A second man in the second car was taken by ambulance to Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital and his injuries are not

life-threatening. All three deceased were removed to the mortuary at Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital, Drogheda, where autopsies were due to take place yesterday.

The local coroner was notified and an incident room was established at Dundalk Garda Station. The crash site and cars were examined by garda forensic collision investigators and local scene-of-crime officers.

Traffic diversions have since been lifted and the road reopened to traffic.

A man in his 20s has since been arrested in relation to this incident.

Gardai said he was detained at Dundalk Garda Station under Section 4 of the Criminal Justice Act, and "investigations are continuing".

A teenager died yesterday when the car in which she was a passenger struck a wall at 1.15am in the townland of Porrigterdun, Oughterard, Galway. She died at the scene.

Her body was removed to University Hospital Galway (UHG)'s mortuary, where an

autopsy was due to take place. The 21-year-old male driver was taken to UHG with serious but not life-threatening injuries.

On Saturday morning, a pedestrian died after being hit by an articulated lorry.

The man, who was in his 20s, was removed to Tallaght University Hospital in a serious condition, but he later died of his injuries. The driver of the lorry was uninjured.

The weekend's road carnage began at 7pm on Friday; two people died when their car collided with a jeep on

the N55 in Ballinagh, Co. Cavan. The driver was a man in his late 60s and the passenger a female in her 60s.

Both were pronounced dead at the scene.

The male driver of the jeep was taken to Cavan General Hospital, as a precaution.

In 2019, there were 135 fatal collisions, resulting in 146 deaths, on Irish roads, according to the Road Safety Authority, this represents one more collision and 4% — or five — more deaths compared to provisional garda data for the full year of 2018.

Warning of snow and ice in wake of Storm Jorje

Neil Michael

Weather warnings were still in place last night but not for conditions anything like as severe as Storm Jorje.

The warnings of extremely high coastal winds and floods were replaced by a status yellow snow/ice warning for the country.

Showers were likely to continue to affect the western part of the country overnight, expected to fall as sleet or snow in places.

With minimum air temperatures at zero or below, some icy stretches were likely this morning, with the warning due to be lifted by 8am.

Met Eireann had predicted wind speeds of up to 80km/h with gusts of up to 130km/h in exposed areas over the weekend. In the end, the highest gusts detected were 131km/h at Mace Head, Galway. The highest mean wind speeds were also recorded there, at 94km/h.

Shannon Airport also saw high winds, with mean speeds of up to 80km/h.

Despite fears of widespread power cuts, damage to power lines was minimal. A few thousand customers were affected for a time but, by 5pm yesterday, less than 200 people around the country were without power.

Damage to trees and power lines was still being fully assessed yesterday and checks will continue today. The National Emergency Co-ordination Group

(NECG) met yesterday.

Chaired by minister of state Damien English, it was held to review the impact of Storm Jorje and receive feedback on impacts, responses, and ongoing issues.

"As predicted, Storm Jorje impacted the West coast from early yesterday morning, before moving across the country in line with Met Eireann forecasts," said an NECG spokesperson.

"This follows the wettest February on record at many Met Eireann stations. "Storm Jorje brought some very strong winds, with heavy rainfall with some localised heavy downpours reported."

"High sea surges were also experienced along the Atlantic coast, with some resulting in limited coastal flooding."

"Thankfully, due to the public heeding public safety messaging, there were no major reported incidents or injuries to members of the public or the emergency services. There was also very little damage or destruction of property."

The NECG said flooding continues to affect many areas, with river catchments witnessing the effects of the prolonged period of heavy rainfall, and some houses and businesses close to water. It said, however, that current indications are that most catchments have stabilised or are falling.

"Local authorities worked with local gardai, Coast Guard, Civil Defence, and



Waves crash over Cloghhead in West Kerry as the 'sleeping giant' Basket Island withstands the onslaught of Storm Jorje yesterday. Picture: Don McMonagle



An Aer Lingus flight from Paris lands at Cork Airport in strong winds, after delays over the Old Head of Kinsale. Picture: Larry Cummins

other agencies, ensuring the public were aware of the threats locally," it said.

"All necessary mitigating actions such as road closures in coastal areas were implemented. The local authority supported the local communities along with the Defence Forces to maintain 24/7 pumping flood defence operations in

some areas, especially along the Shannon catchment.

Actions taken to mitigate the impact of flooding included the installation of temporary flood defences, making and dispensing sandbags, pumping operations, public information campaigns, clearing gullies and clearing other contributors to flooding."



A man jumps into the wind during Storm Jorje on the promenade in Salthill, Galway. Picture: Andy Newman

UCC president's call for Government action 'a cop out'

Neil Michael and Eoin English

UCC's president has been accused of blaming the Government so he can "cop out" of his responsibility to students on his own campus.

Pádraig Ó Sé urged his 3,450 Twitter followers to "call for Government action now" on the current crisis in student accommodation.

His call came as the students' occupation of the UCC quad in protest at plans by the college to hike campus accommodation by 3% entered its seventh day.

There appears to be no end in sight for the protest, which continued during Storm Jorje.

"We'll freeze until you freeze," said student leaders, who want the 3% increase

scrapped and rent rises frozen for three years.

Posting from his Twitter account, Mr Ó Sé stated: "UCC offers the best value high-quality student accommodation in Cork, by keeping rent well below commercial operators. We receive zero State funding to operate, maintain & develop the housing our students so desperately need.

"We call for a National response to a National issue."

In a later tweet, he said: "There are over 40,000 third-level students in Cork City. UCC Campus Accommodation has only 1,200 beds and CIT has none."

"What will happen when many thousands of new students look for housing for next September and every September after that? Call

for government action now."

However, almost immediately, he was blasted over his comments.

One Twitter user replied to him saying: "Blaming the Government and the shortage of housing is a cop out. UCC is responsible for rent hikes and is now worried about their reputation."

Another user replied: "I'm embarrassed UCC — and

seemingly yourself — are attempting to justify pricing students and potential students out of education with this spin."

"Supposed high quality should not be the USP to justify this increase, it should be the norm."

More than 4,200 have now signed an online petition to get the college to ditch the 3% rent hike.

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WEATHERDIAL
FROM MET ÉIREANN

WEATHERWATCH

TODAY
A mostly dry and bright morning for eastern Munster and Leitrim. However, showers over western counties will gradually spread east as the day goes on. The showers will be most frequent and heavy in the west, and some will be winny on the hills. Fresh westerly winds. Max temp 5-8C (41-46F).

TONIGHT
Scattered showers will continue to fall this evening, especially across Ulster and Leitrim, perhaps merging into spells of rain for a time. Into the night, rain or showers will clear away to leave some areas of clear skies. Cloud will thicken in Munster by dawn. Min temp 5-8C (41-46F).

TOMORROW
It will be largely cloudy for Connacht and Munster with occasional rain. A mostly dry and bright start elsewhere. As the day unfolds, scattered showers will push from the west, mostly in the afternoon. The evening will see the showers petering out. Moderate winds. Max temp 5-8C (41-46F).

SUN AND MOON TODAY

times	sets	times	sets
Sun..... 07:08	18:05	Moon..... 10:16	01:33

MOON PHASE
Full Moon
9 March

EXTREMES

Warmest	Murrough	8C (46F)
Cooldest	Cork	1C (34F)
Wettest	Ballypatrick Forest	0.93 inches

ATLANTIC SITUATION: Low J hills. High W is stationary near the Azores. Low G deepens and moves eastwards.

EUROPE TODAY
Widespread rain across, heavy at times and will track eastwards into the Low Countries, Germany, Switzerland and Italy. Brighter from the west with sunny spells and scattered showers across Iberia and the western Mediterranean, locally heavy and thundery at times. Drier and brighter elsewhere.

EUROPE OUTLOOK
Early showers rain tomorrow across Italy and Germany will continue to push eastwards, whilst another area of rain will push in from the west across France and Iberia. A band of rain stretching from Poland to Greece on Wednesday will slowly push eastwards bringing locally heavy and thundery showers.

HIGH TIDES TODAY

time	height	time	height
Galway	10.06 4.1m	22.34 4.0m	
Limerick	11.36 4.9m	23.01 4.9m	
Cobh	10.00 3.5m	22.22 3.4m	
Waterford	10.35 4.1m	22.56 4.0m	
Dublin	04.13 3.3m	16.58 3.3m	
Belfast	03.47 3.0m	15.58 3.0m	

IRELAND YESTERDAY

readings at 12noon	condition	°C	°F
Belfast	hail	6	43
Birr	hail	3	37
Cobh	hail	6	43
Dublin	hail	5	41
Kilgerney	showers	5	41
Limerick	showers	7	45
Shannon	hail	7	45
Virginia	showers	6	43

Information provided by MeteoGroup

Coronavirus outbreak

Outbreak could cause closures and cancellations

■ Schools, sport, and St Patrick's Day could be affected

Cianan Brennan

Multiple school closures and the cancellation of mass gatherings are among the possible consequences of any spread of the coronavirus across Ireland.

That is the latest information from the Department of Health, as the country reacts to the first positive test for an incident of the virus in the Republic of Ireland.

With an adult male from the east of the country having now tested positive for the disease, and a secondary school, Scoil Chaitríona in Glasnevin, Dublin 9, having closed for two weeks as a precaution, all eyes have turned to the health authorities for confirmation as to what the latest development will change.

"The key tool for us at this stage of containment is that we have the co-operation of the public, and that people know that we want them to put their hands up and tell us if they've got symptoms, and that we can help them," said Ronan Glynn, the deputy chief medical officer with the Department of Health.

Speaking to RTE Radio, Dr Glynn said it is "possible" that further school closures could ensue depending on how the situation evolves in its Irish context — but added that such a move is not envisaged in the near term.

"We're in a containment phase," said Dr Glynn. "We're monitoring developments and if measures like that need to be taken then they will be taken, and the reasoning behind those measures will be communicated to the public."

Less clear is what the protocol for large-scale public events will be, or possible restrictions on travel.

While the Ireland-Italy Six Nations rugby match, initially slated for next weekend, has been postponed, no other action has as yet been taken regarding domestic events such as St Patrick's Day parades, or sporting events such as the Allianz leagues in both Gaelic football and hurling.

A decision on the St Patrick's Festival in Dublin can be expected later this week, said Niall Gibbons, chief executive with Tourism Ireland, the body with responsibility for overseas tourism.

That decision will feed from an independent risk assessment being carried out by the National Public Health Emergency Team, with Mr Gibbons speculating that a decision will likely be made from the middle of this week once the relevant ministers have been briefed.

"Clearly there will be events of major or national significance that will require input from public health doctors. There will be a process around that in the coming days," Dr Glynn said.

He stressed, however, that there is currently no community transfer of the virus in an Irish context, with both cases on the island having originated in affected areas of Italy.

Meanwhile, the World Health Organisation has raised its risk assessment of the new virus strain from "high" to "very high", a decision which is intended to communicate to the public that they should expect instances of the disease in their community.

Margaret Anne Harris, spokeswoman for the WfIO, said in effect that this should mean authorities in each country "knowing what they're going to do in the immediate days and weeks to protect the population, and to look after the people who may fall ill".

Further details as to the number of Irish people who have been tested for the virus will be made available tomorrow.

As of last Tuesday, 90 people had been tested with no positive results, prior to the positive case in the east of the country.

That male is receiving the appropriate medical treatment at a Dublin hospital, having self-presented with coronavirus symptoms in the wake of travelling from an affected region in northern Italy.

The number of tests being carried out is likely to have risen significantly given that the range of affected regions has expanded by a distance since the beginning of last week.

Separately, a woman in her 40s continues to receive treatment in Belfast, having tested positive for the virus last Friday — the first incident of Covid-19 on the island as a whole.

Around Europe, meanwhile, the number of confirmed cases of infections continues to rise. Britain has reported 35 incidences of the virus, including 12 cases, and one which was contracted within the country.

More than 81,000 people have been infected worldwide, with nearly 2,800 fatalities to date.

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A priest elevates the host prior to Holy Communion during Mass at Saint Francois Xavier church, Paris, yesterday. The Paris archbishop asked priests to change the way they give Communion to counter the spread of Covid-19 after a priest in the French capital tested positive for it on Friday after returning from Italy. Picture: Rafael Yaghoobzadeh/AP

It's not a pandemic yet — but we have a limited opportunity to halt Covid-19

Vivian Nereim

The World Health Organisation has warned that the window to contain the Covid-19 coronavirus was narrowing — but that we are not yet at pandemic levels.

While countries must step up their preparations, the WHO said there is no need for fear or panic.

It comes as the virus spread further with two people on the island of Ireland being confirmed to have the disease, and the US, Australia, and Thailand reporting fatalities.

In total, the list of countries hit by the virus has climbed to nearly 60. More than 86,000 people worldwide have contracted the virus, with deaths topping 2,900.

The UK reported 12 new cases of the coronavirus, taking the total in the country to 35.

Iran's health ministry has raised

the death toll from the coronavirus to 54 as the number of people infected soared to 978. Spokesman Kianoush Jahanpour said new cases were confirmed in a number of cities, including Mashhad, which is home to Iran's most important Shiite shrine that attracts pilgrims from across the region.

The rise in cases in Iran came shortly after the United States recorded its first death, a man in his 50s in Washington state who had underlying health conditions, but who had not travelled to any affected areas.

China yesterday reported a slight rise in new cases over the past 24 hours to 573, the first time in five days that number has exceeded 500.

They remain almost entirely confined to the hardest-hit province of Hubei and its capital, Wuhan. Many cases of the virus have been relatively mild, and some of those in-

fectured apparently show no symptoms at all.

That can allow for easier spread, and worries are mounting that prolonged quarantines, supply chain disruptions, and a sharp reduction in tourism and business travel could weaken the global economy or even cause a recession.

Around the world, the virus, and the fear that accompanies it, caused turmoil.

Islam's holiest sites were closed to foreign pilgrims, while professional baseball teams played in deserted stadiums in Japan.

Tokyo Disneyland and Universal Studios Japan announced they would close, and big events were cancelled, including a concert series by the K-pop supergroup BTS.

Italian authorities say the country now has more than 1,100 coronavirus cases, with 29 deaths so far.

In France, officials advised residents to forgo customary greeting kisses. And the archbishop of Paris advised priests not to administer communion by placing the sacramental bread in worshippers' mouths. Instead, priests were told to place the bread in their hands.

In Japan's northern island, Hokkaido, a man in his 70s died from the virus yesterday, becoming the 12th victim in Japan. It was the third fatality in Hokkaido, where a state of emergency was declared on Friday.

Thailand reported its first death yesterday, a 35-year-old man who had contact with foreign tourists.

UN secretary general Antonio Guterres recommended that a meeting on March 9 where about 10,000 people were to commemorate the 50th anniversary of a UN conference on women's rights be scaled back because of the spread of Covid-19.

What it is, how to stop it, and what to do if you think you have it

■ What is a coronavirus?

>> Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that cause illnesses ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as severe acute respiratory syndrome (Sars).

The strain of coronavirus that has recently emerged is a new strain that has not been previously identified in humans.

The respiratory disease it causes has been named Covid-19 by the World Health Organisation (WHO).

■ Where did it come from?

>> Coronaviruses are zoonotic, which means that they are transmitted between animals and people, according to WHO.

The first cases of the disease identified were among people connected to the Huanan Seafood Wholesale Market in Wuhan in China.

■ How is it spread?

>> The disease can spread from person to person through small droplets from the nose or mouth which are spread when a person coughs with the virus coughs or exhales.

These droplets land on objects and surfaces around the person and can be picked up by other people touching them then touching their nose or mouth, it added.

Q&A

■ How can you stop it?

>> Hand-washing, maintaining distance from other people, and avoiding handshakes are among the most effective measures for reducing your risk of catching coronavirus.

Everyday precautions like carrying hand sanitiser, covering your mouth and nose with a tissue or sleeve when you cough or sneeze, rather than your hands, and binning used tissues immediately can also be helpful.

■ What are the symptoms?

>> Initial symptoms include fever, cough, tightness of the chest, shortness of breath, and breathing difficulties.

More severe cases can cause pneumonia, severe acute respiratory syndrome, sepsis, and septic shock, which can lead to death.

There are no specific treatments or vaccines for a new coronavirus but symptoms can be treated.

■ Can people with no symptoms spread the virus?

>> The jury is still out on this one, although scientists

believe that there is evidence of asymptomatic transmission.

The Department of Health believes the risk of catching coronavirus from someone with no symptoms at all is low. However, because many people with Covid-19 experience only mild symptoms, particularly during the early stages of the disease, it is possible to catch it from someone who has mild symptoms.

■ What is the scale of the problem?

>> So far, China has reported nearly 80,000 cases and almost 3,000 deaths. Outside China, there have been cases in nearly 60 countries with around 100 deaths.

■ What's happening here?

>> The first case was confirmed in the east of the country on Saturday night. However, the deputy chief medical officer at the Department of Health has said the risk of contracting coronavirus for individuals remains low.

■ What actions are authorities recommending for

anyone who has had contact with a confirmed case or has come from an affected region?

Anyone who thinks they have symptoms is urged to self-isolate and contact the HSE.

■ Are some groups more at risk?

>> The WHO has said that about four in five people who contract the virus get mild symptoms and recover.

However, it added that older people, people with pre-existing medical conditions such as high blood pressure, heart disease or diabetes — are more at risk of developing serious illness.

■ What about a vaccine?

>> Vaccines have been developed, and researchers are starting to test them on animals.

However, tests can take months to see if any potential vaccine can be used on humans, and there will then have to be trials on humans.

The WHO has convened a group of experts to fast-track promising tests, drugs, and vaccines to help slow the outbreak.

However, experts say it could still be months or even years before any approved treatments or vaccines are developed.

Chinese tourism influx falters

Jimmy Woulfe

Irish hotels are bracing for loss of over 100,000 bookings from China in coming months due to the coronavirus, according to the Irish Hotels Federation.

The Chinese tourist market has been the fastest growth area for Irish tourism over the past five years. IHF president Elaine Fitzgerald Kane said the Chinese market might take a short-term hit this year.

"We have been making a big push into China. In 2014, we had just over 30,000 Chinese visitors to this country and this increased to over 90,000 by 2017. We were expecting in excess of 100,000 visitors from China this year with the projection is that this figure will go to 175,000 within five years."

"Many Irish hotels have

been part of the Fáilte Ireland and Irish Tourism Board initiative 'China Ready'. This involves promotion of Ireland in China as a holiday destination. Hotels here have invested a lot in getting involved in this marketing push into China and worked in creating a Chinese cultural awareness within their hotels and among hotel staff."

However, she said the hotel industry will now have to prepare for the worst. "We are in the unknown right now, but we have to prepare ourselves for the scenario that there will be very diminished if any visitors at all from China this year."

"However, like all these things, the coronavirus will pass and the work we have done in marketing Ireland in China will pay dividends in the years to come as the Chi-



Elaine Fitzgerald Kane: Chinese market faces a short-term hit.

nese market will come again.

"China is the largest outbound tourism market in the world and Chinese visitor numbers here have been growing at a phenomenal rate and many of these visitors would be regarded as high end spenders."

Ms Fitzgerald Kane said the loss of Chinese visitor revenue will come at a particularly bad time with a VAT hike from 9% to 13.5%.

She said the IHF is in ongoing dialogue with the Department of Health and Department of Tourism on getting best advice on how to deal with the current alert.

"Our chief executive, Tim Fenn, has been talking to our European counterparts on how hotels in affected areas were dealing with the corona issue and measures that are putting in place when an issue arises."

"We feel information is critically important and that is why we have a very open channel with regards to getting best practice from the Department of Health and also to getting the most up to date information on what hotels are doing throughout Europe."

"As I said, keeping all our members up to speed on the measures that are being taken elsewhere."

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Raising concerns: How a sex offender was able to stay working with young people

Questions linger over how former Christian brother Edward Bryan, jailed last month for sexual offences, remained working with young offenders for so long — and whether the matter should have been handled differently, writes **Noel Baker**

EDWARD BRYAN has been described as friendly, affable, enigmatic. He has been a teacher, a chaplain, a Christian Brother.

He has also been convicted three times of historic sex offences against boys while teaching in Cork.

For 15 years he worked with young offenders in Dublin, for much of that period as deputy director of what was the precursor to Oberstown Children Detention Campus.

Bryan, now 67, was jailed again just a fortnight ago after pleading guilty to the indecent assault of a 14-year-old while working as a teacher in the North Monastery secondary school in Cork.

And yet here was a man who, while deputy director at what became the Finglas Child and Adolescent Centre in Dublin 11 between 1994 and 2010, was the subject of concerns over his behaviour.

He was suspended twice, and both times brought his employers to court and returned to work, in what an unpublished report — commissioned by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs and the Irish Youth Justice Service and a summary of which has been seen by the *Irish Examiner* — described as a process riddled with delays and mistakes, exposing weaknesses in the system as it operated then, and fears that a similar scenario could arise again.

In early 2013, Bryan, with no previous convictions, was sentenced to five years in jail for indecently assaulting three boys at the North Mon in the 1980s.

At that trial, Bryan said of the charges: "I deny it emphatically."

When the prosecution put it to him that if the allegations were untrue, as he maintained, then he must feel like the unluckiest man in Ireland, Bryan replied: "I certainly feel that way."

The court had heard from gardai that the nature of the abuse included getting boys to strip naked, sometimes climbing on their backs and ejaculating.

One victim told the court: "On a number of occasions, I sat in my car outside various Garda stations in Cork and just cried. To have to go through all the graphic detail of what was done to me was something I wouldn't want anyone to have to do. But I did it and it took 20 trials and 100 hours in the witness box I would still do it."

Another said: "It has been haunting me for 23 years."

Bryan was sentenced by Judge Seán Ó Donnabháin, who observed: "There is no shred of remorse in this, not a shred of remorse."

In mid-2015, Bryan was returned to jail following an unsuccessful appeal against the 2013 convictions. At that time, the court was told that Bryan was prepared to take up any available rehabilitative courses for sex offenders.

Then in July 2015, Bryan was sentenced to a year in prison after pleading guilty to sex assaults on two other pupils in the North Mon.

The victims were teenagers and were being coached after school in 1981 when the crimes were committed.

One of the victims said: "I suppose I would say that you have stolen a moment of my life that I can never have back and will always have a resounding effect on my life."

At that hearing, Bryan's defence barrister said he had been instructed to apologise profusely to the victims, as well as to his own family and to the Christian Brothers for any disrepute he had brought on them. Judge Ó Donnabháin welcomed what he said was Bryan's substantial change of heart and declared: "The victims are vindicated."

The court had heard a month previously that Bryan had made an attempt on his life at his address in Trim, Co Meath.

Just two weeks ago came the latest jail sentence, yet again for an offence dating back to his time in the North Mon.

Bryan, now 67, pleaded guilty to having indecently assaulted a 14-year-old boy at the secondary school in Cork in 1981 after picking him out to meet for basketball training. Bryan, now 67, was jailed after Dugort, Achill Island in Co Mayo, was jailed for one year.

The victim told the court he gave up sex because after the incident he could not face being in a changing room with others.

In his victim impact statement he said: "I later had to sit in that very hall and do my Intermediate Certificate Exam. I froze with fear and nervousness and feeling seen in my moment."

"Needless to say, I failed my exam. I sat there looking at the clock on the wall, the minutes ticking by — the same clock that was on the wall when Bryan had me on the ground and he was on my back sexually abusing me."

DOCUMENTATION received by the *Irish Examiner* under Freedom of Information shows Bryan's rapid progress at the Finglas Child and Adolescent facility in the mid-1990s.

He was first appointed as a teacher to St Laurence's in Finglas in 1994, having left the brothers. By November 1995, the board unanimously decided to recommend Edward Martin Bryan for the job of deputy director.

The appointment was confirmed by a letter sent by Michael Donnellan to the Special Education section in Athlone on

December 27, 1995.

Bryan, in his letter of acceptance of December 19, 1995, wrote to Donnellan — who went on to become director general of the Irish Prison Service and who left the Finglas facility not long after Bryan joined — "assuring you of my best efforts on behalf of the centre".

Also included in the FOI documents are the questions asked during the deputy director interviews on November 11, 1995, among them: "Why is it important for a centre such as ours to have a clear written child protection policy?"

By the turn of the millennium, the Finglas campus — made up of St Laurence's Special School, St Michael's Assessment and Remand Centre, and the Grove Pre-Release Unit — was not a happy place.

In April 2002, five care staff locked themselves into a room after six teenagers broke out from their dormitory, smashing their way through a window and climbing to the top of a two-storey building.

In June the following year, three 14-year-old boys were charged with causing damage costing €10,000 after they barricaded themselves into a room. In March 2003, the Dáil heard that Finglas children's centre had gone, in the space of four years, from a centre of excellence into ongoing crisis, with constant reports of riots, assaults, absconders, ad-hoc planning, high staff turnover, low bed-occupancy, threatened industrial action, and escalating annual budgets.

An inspection report published in July 2002 found: "It is evident and undeniable that the organisation is in acute crisis. It lacks clear direction; it is not meeting a number of basic requirements." It added: "It is not safe for young people and staff."

In the middle of all this, concerns were raised regarding the behaviour of Edward Bryan, so much so that he was suspended, first in 2002.

On July 22 that year, Bryan launched a legal action against the board of the Finglas centre, and others, including the minister of education and the attorney general.

The action was adjourned multiple times until an order was delivered — "Chancery Action (settled) Final" — in May 2004.

The *Irish Examiner* understands that Bryan went back to work, despite continuing misgivings on the part of some staff. It is also understood he was suspended for a second time.

He launched a legal action as plaintiff against the HSE in July 2005, when an *ex parte* judicial review was granted, followed in November of that year by a judicial review certiorari final.

It appears he had twice successfully fended off disciplinary proceedings, and even returned to his position of designated child protection officer.

In February 2013, in a letter to Tony O'Donovan, child welfare officer in the Irish Youth Justice Service, the then-inspector manager of Hija, Patrick Bergin, referred to Bryan's recent conviction: "Considering the recent conviction and positions that Mr Bryan held in the detention school facilities, the authority are seeking clarification if any actions/assessments were or are planned to be undertaken by the detention schools in conjunction with the HSE to determine if any children were exposed to abuse by Mr Bryan during his tenure in the facilities."

THERE was action. A report commissioned by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs and the Irish Youth Justice Service (IYJS) was conducted by Michael McGrath, a noted child welfare consultant, and finalised in 2014. The summary version of that report, seen by the *Irish Examiner*, refers to "a former member of staff of a Children Detention School and the historic offences which occurred prior to his employment there".

That man is Edward Bryan and the report states: "This person held a management position within the organisation and during a period of c.15 years' contact, he had been raised at various times. The catalogue of concerns culminated in the staff member being placed on administrative leave pending further investigation."

"The investigative process extended over a protracted period of time, which

resulted in the High Court ordering that the suspension be lifted. Some six years later the employer was informed of allegation (sic) relating to a period prior to taking up his present employment."

It adds that Bryan was placed on administrative leave at that point.

Among the questions asked by the report was what knowledge existed that someone who worked in a child care setting, and who was later proved to have sexually abused, had posed a threat to children. It also asked what protocols existed for professionals working alongside him at the time, and whether actions taken were reasonable in the circumstances.

On the protocols, it said managers and staff needed to have "appropriate awareness and confidence to deal with concerns/complaints" and added: "Where there is no clear-cut allegation, just a series of concerns, then the concept of grooming behaviour must be considered."

It said staff needed to familiarise themselves with the six stages of 'grooming behaviour' and as to legal opinion, it said: "The over-reliance on the legal point of view and the path that had to be followed having received it precluded the scope to look at the concerns/complaints from a wider child welfare and/or performance review perspective."

"Any future investigation should be two-pronged, with the legal and child welfare aspects taken on board."

It also referred to professional accommodation syndrome "to explain how frontline professionals sometimes develop unhealthy coping mechanisms in response to the stress of dealing with child welfare work" and the need for

transparency and fair procedure.

The report also refers to returning staff and how it can be acceptable for their own protection to ask them not to perform certain tasks or fulfil certain roles and that this implies no guilt or slur on their character.

As for close supervision, it said "that in such a case of a returning staff member while the investigation into the specific incidents/complaints was over a centre or management of a centre need not adopt a type of 'institutional amnesia' for fear of falling foul of a court order. Management have room to limit access to children; to put in place safety measures; and alter functions that could be presented as being for the staff member's own protection."

The report went on: "The grooming aspect was only dealt with in an implicit rather than an explicit manner."

It said staff found it difficult to stand over their concerns due to professional accommodation syndrome and that the numerous number of staff changes during the period.

"The review found that no one person had a firm grip of the material and this led to the confusion and delays."

"The plethora of delays is a striking feature throughout the case," it said.

"Delay is the enemy of both sound child safeguarding practice and fair procedure."

The review also said that where



Former Christian Brother Edward Bryan at Cork Circuit Criminal Court on Washington St in 2013. On that occasion, he was sentenced to five years in jail for indecently assaulting three boys at the North Mon in the 1980s. In July 2015, Bryan was sentenced to a year in prison after pleading guilty to sex assaults on two other pupils in the North Mon. Just two weeks ago, Bryan, now 67, pleaded guilty to having indecently assaulted a 14-year-old boy at the secondary school in Cork in 1981. Bryan was jailed for one year.

Picture: Des Barry



The North Monastery Secondary School in Cork City, where Bryan taught.

Picture: Maurice O'Mahony

"I sat in my car outside various Garda stations in Cork and just cried. To have to go through all the graphic detail of what was done to me."

proceedings, given the history of having 'previously dealt with' most of the complaints against the person, if that was not possible."

It added that the matter could have been reviewed under a performance review or practice development.

The report concluded: "The reviewer would argue that weaknesses still exist within current guidance in that the examination of cases where allegations [are made] against persons in positions of trust, teachers and others, is frequently very drawn-out, with a lack of clarity among management."

"In terms of the future, the reviewer is of the view that another scenario similar to the case reviewed could arise. This is not wholly preventable, given how devious some sex offenders can be."

DURING some of those recent court dates, Bryan was accompanied by a friend and blended into the busy courtroom on Anglesea St in Cork. He looked younger than his years, wearing a wine-coloured jacket and thick glasses.

He was returned to prison without ceremony, and yet it was hard to imagine that somehow he was, as he said back in 2013, the unluckiest man in the world.

Sentencing Judge Bryan O'Callaghan referred to Bryan's "no doubt genuine" apology and said: "As well as destroying the life of this victim, your own life has been destroyed and your reputation, which is only as it should be."

And he said: "The court must not forget who the victim is."

control of the process is handed to the HR department, which is more removed from day-to-day practice. "It is much easier for the process to become overly legalistic and/or suffer very long delays".

The report likens the situation to that on an oil rig — "On an oil rig, every member of staff is instructed to feel free to bring ANY safety concern to the crew's attention, even to the highest ranking member of staff, if designated safety officers don't take their concerns seriously enough."

The report cited a number of weaknesses "that existed in the past", including:

■ Failing to correctly identify the dynamics of sexual abuse, in particular the way in which certain sex offenders 'groom' their victims, prior to actually abusing them;

■ The process was allowed to get bogged down in a series of legalities that ultimately were both counter-productive and extremely costly to the State;

■ Over-reliance on legal advice;

■ A reliance on the Attorney General's Office in deciding how a case should be dealt with.

The report added: "Allowing a staff [member] to resume the role of designated child protection officer was a mistake in the reviewer's view, but this may have been influenced by a belief that the outcome of the legal proceedings had been so negative that no attempt should be made to curb the role in any way, lest it trigger further litigation."

"A far better approach, in the reviewer's view, would have been to have kept the matter out of disciplinary

proceedings, given the history of having 'previously dealt with' most of the complaints against the person, if that was not possible."

It added that the matter could have been reviewed under a performance review or practice development.

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Go-ahead for second vote for Taoiseach

■ No government formation breakthrough as talks continue

Juno McEnroe
Political Correspondent

A second Dáil vote for Taoiseach is set to go ahead on Thursday as parties continue to meet and debate policies in an attempt to form a government.

Labour has indicated that it will table a motion to the Dáil's business committee for the vote, which other parties are expected to allow. Fine Gael, Sinn Féin, and others have indicated their support for it.

Outgoing Labour leader Brendan Howlin wrote to Ceann Comhairle Seán Ó Fearghail and the committee late last week seeking the fresh vote.

The move comes amid an awareness among leaders to step up talks to form a government after the first case of coronavirus was confirmed and as post-Brexit trade negotiations begin today.

Nonetheless, even with a fresh vote for Taoiseach, which could be agreed by an incoherent meeting of the committee as early as today, the outcome is expected to be the same as it was on February 20, when no leader came out to securing sufficient support to lead the country.

The business committee ruled out the vote last Thursday but Labour pushed on Friday for one to proceed.

Fine Gael will today begin two days of meetings with the Greens before making what is being deemed a seminar or one-day policy meeting with Fianna Fáil on Wednesday.

Fine Gael sources insist the talks are non-committal, given that the party intends to go into opposition.

"This week isn't a negotiation," said a source. "That's why the Taoiseach is clear that he wasn't appointing a negotiating team."

Much attention will focus on the Fianna Fáil-Fine Gael meeting, and whether the two sides will speed up talks, given that coronavirus has arrived on Irish shores.

Tense EU-UK negotiations

on a future trade deal also begin today, amid threats from London to trigger a fresh Brexit no-deal scenario.

Wednesday's meeting between Fine Gael and Fianna Fáil is expected to include discussion on affordable childcare, income tax change proposals and affordable housing. However, Government sources also stress that the talks between Fine Gael and the Greens will be equally important.

They come on the back of end of the last week with the Greens and Fianna Fáil on transport funding and climate change provisions, following tough talks between those two sides last week.

MEPs, TDs, and senators will all three groups will be updated at their party meetings in Leinster House during the week on government formation talks.

Meanwhile, Sinn Féin is scheduled to meet the Social Democrats, the Green Party, People Before Profit, IndependentsChange, and other Independent TDs for talks this week.

Mary Lou McDonald's party will also hold a further open public meeting in Galway on Friday.

Sinn Féin's attempts to end a left-leaning government have received a boost after a Behaviour and Attitudes opinion poll on the weekend put support for the party at 35%, a rise of 10 points since the election.

The surge for Ms McDonald's party saw losses for others, with Fine Gael slipping 3 points and Fianna Fáil 2 since the February 8 vote. Satisfaction ratings for Ms McDonald have also surged by 13 points to 53%, 22 points ahead of her nearest rival Michael Martin.

The Fianna Fáil poll showed 15 points to 31% while satisfaction for Taoiseach Leo Varadkar is down eight points to 27%. The poll was conducted from face-to-face interviews with 917 eligible voters on February 17 to 25.

Page turner



Caragh McCarthy, aged 3, at Tralee Library for the Libraries Open Day in Co Kerry. Libraries all around Kerry held an open day over the weekend, inviting current members and non-members alike to come along and see the services on offer at their local library.

Picture: Dominick Walsh

Mary's exit cha-cha-cha changes things

Jess Casey

Despite a lively cha-cha-cha, it was the end of the *Dancing With The Stars* journey for "queen of the ballroom" Mary Kennedy.

Mary and her dance partner John Nolan ended their run in the competition as the judges decided to send them home following a dance-off with model Gráinne Gallanagh.

"Mary, you have been our queen of the ballroom with elegance, class, and grace for nine weeks," said guest judge Darren Bennett.

Judge Loraine Barry told the former *Nationaliste* presenter: "You've been an inspiration to me, and I also think to many other people watching the programme."

Following her elimination, Mary said: "It was a wonderful opportunity, I've learnt so much. I've been out of my comfort zone. It was a great challenge."

"I really do hope that people of my age, and stage, who have been watching us would kind of say 'Yeah, I could do that, or I'll try something different or something new', so that would be nice."

Dancing the cha-cha-cha

to 'Young Hearts Run Free' by Candi Staton, Mary and John scored 18 from the judges.

Mary said: "I did enjoy it. The cha-cha-cha is hard and we worked really, really hard on it."

"It took until about Thursday to get it right. I really enjoyed the challenge and then home following a dance-off with model Gráinne Gallanagh."

Her pro partner John Nolan, who won the show last year, said he loved working with the RTE star.

"She's been the best pupil that I could have ever asked for," he said. "We have laughed more times and people don't get to see that side of Mary. I've been lucky. She's one of the funniest people ever and I just loved every single minute of our journey."

Fair City actor Ryan Andrews opened last night's show. Fresh from scoring 30 points from the judges, he and partner Giulia Dotto danced a quickstep to 'What a Man Gotta Do' by the Jonas Brothers. "I felt a lot of expectations of all people but as well as myself," Ryan said. "I just have to keep doing the best I can week after week."

Former Kilkenny hurler



Ryan Andrews with Giulia Dotto on 'Dancing with the Stars'.

Aidan Fogarty was praised for his "romantic rumba" while Lottie Ryan was lauded for a "phenomenal" samba. But the judges were less than impressed with fan favourite Fr Ray Kelly's quickstep.

Fr Kelly and his pro partner Kyle Vincent danced to 'I'm a Believer' by the Monkees.

After their performance he said: "Yeah I was happy. I knew I lost it but I just said I have to get it back on track."



ZFM presenter Lottie Ryan and pro dancer Pasquale La Rocca during last night's 'Dancing With the Stars'. Pictures: Kieran O'Brien

Labour must address the real issues in people's lives

Juno McEnroe
Political Correspondent

Labour leader contender Aodhán Ó Riordáin has said the survival of his party depends on addressing the issues facing Ireland's neighbourhoods, as opposed to making headlines or "squabbling in the Dáil."

In comments that might be interpreted as a dig at his rival for the leadership, Tipperary TD Alan Kelly, Mr O Riordáin set out why Labour members should back him.

The Dublin Bay North TD told the *Irish Examiner* of his priorities ahead of him and Mr Kelly going head-to-head in Cork City in the first in a series of hustings for the race.

Mr O Riordáin said that, if elected leader, he would prioritise campaigning to

improve the lot of the 25% of workers on low pay and the 40% under age 30 in insecure jobs. He said Labour should propose legislation to end the employers' veto of trade unions.

"No such veto exists anywhere across Europe, except in Ireland," he said.

If such legislative proposals were deemed unconstitutional, Labour should campaign for a referendum to drop that veto, said the former junior justice minister.

Mr O Riordáin also said that policy-led intervention will improve Labour's prospects, as opposed to clashes with other parties.

"We have to stop this obsession, instinct that we have to fight other parties," he said. "We weren't founded to fight other parties, but to represent the workers of the

country and those who are disadvantaged."

"We need to fight poverty and pay, disadvantage, fight insecure work, to fight exploitation, to fight illiteracy and homelessness."

"If we're not changing the agenda and we are leading on that agenda, I think people will respond to that better if we have a positive message."

"Because trying to get a couple of seconds on RTE News or a couple of lines in a national newspaper versus being absolutely right in somebody's own life experience and in their own community on something we are saying or trying to achieve, that is a much more effective way. That can be trying to just open a library in your area longer or having a referendum on workers' rights."

Mr O Riordáin declined to



Aodhán Ó Riordáin: Labour must stop fighting other parties.

say why members should not vote for Mr Kelly but said he was in a "unique position", after losing his Dáil seat in 2016, to understand why voters rejected Labour.

"It is absolutely above the noise of Leinster House and the squabble and addressing the real issues that are going on in people's lives," he said.

The TD disagreed that his remarks were indirectly targeting Mr Kelly.

Sinn Féin former MEP Boylan to run for Seanad

Juno McEnroe

A former MEP, a former mayor, and several outgoing senators have been picked as candidates by Sinn Féin for the upcoming race to run in the industrial and commercial panel.

Party leader Mary Lou McDonald and the party's ard chomhairle met over the weekend and agreed on seven candidates ahead of voting open for the race later this month.

Former poll topper and Dublin MEP Lynn Boylan will run on the agriculture panel and will be joined by Mayo party councillor Gerry Murray.

Outgoing party senators Fintan Warfield and Niall O'Donnoghue have been chosen to run again for the Seanad on the administrative panel, as has senator

Paul Gavan and Máire Devine on the labour panel.

The party has nominated former Derry mayor Elisha McCallion, who lost her seat in Foyle in December's UK general election, to run in the industrial and commercial panel.

So-called 'inside' nominations by parties or groups are made by four TDs or senators.

While Sinn Féin has a combined 43 such members in Leinster House and could in theory run at least 10 candidates, party sources have confirmed that support will also be given to non-party candidates.

These are expected to include Independent candidate Frances Baka, a musician and active campaigner for Palestinian rights seeking a return to the Seanad, as well as another Independent, John Bosco Conama, a campaigner for the deaf community who has worked closely with former Sinn Féin TD Caoimhín Ó Caoláin on recognition for Irish sign language.

The deadline for nominations for vocational panels is midday tomorrow.

More than two dozen Seanad candidates have been nominated already for the two university panels while dozens more have been put forward for the remaining five vocational panels by outside or professional groups.

The Green Party has elected to nominate general election candidates Saoirse McGuire from Mayo and councillor Pauline O'Reilly from Galway, as well as outgoing senator Pippa Hackett for the upper house race.

Drugs, counterfeit cash seized in raids

Gardaí seized €4,000 of suspected cocaine and cannabis herb and €5,000 in counterfeit cash following searches in Renvyley, Mallow, Co Cork on Saturday.

As part of an operation targeting the sale and supply of drugs in the town, gardaí executed search warrants at two houses in the Renvyley area. The operation was led by gardaí from the Mallow district drugs unit, with the assistance of local uniformed and detective gardaí, the armed support unit, and southern region dog unit.

During the searches, gardaí seized €3,580 of suspected cocaine, €420 of suspected cannabis herb, and €5,000 in 'movie money'. The suspected drugs will be sent for analysis. No arrests have been made but gardaí are following a definite line of inquiry.

At Mallow Garda Station, Inspector Michael Corbett said: "Last month, we highlighted that Revenue officers have seized 'movie money' worth over €400,000. We would ask that business and the general public be aware that some of these notes may be in circulation. They do not contain the security features, so be sure to check all notes, regardless of the denomination."

"The use of fraudulent currency when trying to purchase goods or services is an offence under the Criminal Justice Act."

Most drivers report pothole damage

The majority of Irish drivers have had their vehicles damaged as a result of striking a pothole as a result of recent research.

The AA surveyed over 7,000 people — and over 80% of respondents reported damage caused to their car, motorbike, or bike as a result of passing over a pothole.

In the majority of cases, the likely fallout of a run-in with a pothole was tyre damage.

Alleged stabbing in Cork city centre

Gardaí are investigating the alleged assault of a man in Cork city centre who sustained an apparent stab wound while working in a licensed premises on Saturday afternoon.

Gardaí and emergency services were called to the scene at approximately 6.25pm when the man, who is in his 20s, sustained the injury at his place of work on Paul St.

He was taken by ambulance to Cork University Hospital. His injuries are not thought to be life threatening.

A man in his 20s was arrested at the scene and is currently detained under section 4 of the Criminal Justice Act, 1984. Witnesses are urged to contact the Bridewell Garda Station 021-4943330 or the Confidential Line on 1800-666111.



Natasha Harty stood for Greens in local and general elections.

Environmental activist passes

Tributes have been paid to longtime environmental activist Natasha Harty, who passed away at the weekend.

Ms Harty stood as a candidate for the Green Party in East Cork in the 2014 local elections and the 2016 general elections.

Cork Greens chairwoman Eithne Lynch described Ms Harty as a "true environmentalist" and a "pioneer of the environmental movement in Cork."

"She had a long time involvement in the Cork Harbour Alliance for a Safe Environment over two decades and was more recently active in the Midleton Climate Awareness Group," she said. "Love of nature and the environment was central to Natasha's whole life."

Geldof still sobs over 2014 death of daughter Peaches

Sherina Noah

Bob Geldof has said that, in the case of the death of his daughter Peaches, time does not heal.

Peaches died from an accidental heroin overdose in 2014, at the age of 25.

The Boomtown Rats frontman, 68, spoke about loss to *The Mail on Sunday*.

"It surges forward, this involuntary subconscious flood of emotion inhabits you, utterly," he said. "I'll be at the traffic lights and I start to weep and I think: 'You're weeping.'"

"Then I say: 'Let it go. Let it happen.'"

around to check that nobody's taking pictures or filming."

"But I just look down and I let it come. I just let it happen. Then I'm empty. So, that's always present."

He recalled how he told a friend that "time doesn't heal, it accommodates."

Geldof said that Peaches, whose mother Paula Yates also died from a heroin overdose, had been to rehab.

"She was doing pretty well... Then she ran away from me. I tried to stop her at the door, but there's nothing you can do. She was free to leave."

Geldof said his daughter always did "little weird things" as a child.

"She was always a frantic child as a little baby," he said. "She couldn't sleep. And that continued all through her infancy."

"She did weird little things as a kid, she had these cute habits. She'd go around collecting things. And she sucked a dummy until she was 10 or 11."

"She'd go around truffling on her dummy and topping up her twig collection."

"She was such a clever, sweet, eccentric girl."

"I tried to stop her at the door, but there's nothing you can do. She was free to leave."

Geldof said his daughter always did "little weird things" as a child.



Bob Geldof at his father's funeral in Glashtule, Co Dublin in 2010 with three of his daughters, from left: Peaches, Fi Trixibelle, and Tiger Lily. Picture: Laura Hutton/Photocall Ireland

I thought it was there for good, so I never tried." Geldof now helps his wid-

owed son-in-law Thomas Cohen with his two grandsons, Astala and Phaedra.

"They're hurting stupidly cute and completely hilarious," he said.

Cork infrastructure

Lack of investment stalls drive to get city moving

■ Political will is there — but road projects delayed and re-routed over lack of funds

Kevin O'Neill

A decade-long lack of investment in major roads projects has caused a major traffic jam in Cork — literally and figuratively.

Any road user in Cork lately will have been met with large volumes of traffic and tailbacks. Accidents are a daily occurrence and frustrated motorists claim the current infrastructure is not fit-for-purpose.

Others argue that the current situation highlights a need for investment in other areas, such as rail, to get people out of cars but few will argue that the current infrastructure is sufficient.

In the coming decades, the population of the Cork region is expected to increase, too, bringing with it further pressure on existing infrastructure.

But, in a time when climate focus is becoming more pronounced, is investment in roads the wise move long-term?

There is a school of thought that says more roads will simply lead to more traffic and that money would be better spent on rail and light rail. However, the counter is that these long-awaited projects — Dunkettle, Cork-Limerick, Ringaskiddy, Cork-Kerry — are crucial in unlocking the economic potential for the broader region.

Several of these projects are included in the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (CMATS), which maps out the long-term transport plan for the Cork region. It does not just focus on roads — footpaths, greenways, cycle lanes and rail upgrades are on the cards too — but it notes that the likes of the M28, the M20 and Dunkettle are key elements for the region.

Largely, the political will appears to be there to complete these projects, too.

The CMATS plan was a Fine Gael initiative initially and Fianna Fáil, for the most part, have been vocal in backing some of the elements.

Sinn Féin's election manifesto proposed funding the CMATS, including

light rail. It also mentions completing the Cork-Limerick motorway. There is some disagreement about these schemes, though.

UCC economist Dr Frank Crowley said that they will cause more urban sprawl and that public transport must be prioritised.

The Green Party, which could potentially be crucial in government formation, has also spoken about the need to prioritise rail and other public transport initiatives.

Party leader Eamon Ryan, pictured left, was heavily criticised during the general election for suggesting that the Cork-Limerick motorway would "make no sense", while party members in Cork have stressed the importance of light rail and public transport solutions ahead of private transport.

While the CMATS, which was published in 2019, included plans for a light-rail system, construction isn't estimated to begin until after 2031, some time after most of the roads projects proposed are due to be completed.

While many business interest groups, including the Cork Chamber, have put their support behind public transport and cycle infrastructure, they have also backed the development of major roads infrastructure. Its election manifesto said: "Key strategic transport corridors, such as the Dunkettle Interchange, the M20 Cork-Limerick motorway and Northern Ring Road, the M28 Cork-Ringskiddy Road, the N22 Cork-Kerry Road have all been committed to in the National Development Plan and must be delivered with urgency."

The Chamber identifies Cork's future as "a city region that is fit for today and built for the future", with connectivity such as this cited as a priority.

There is, largely, a drive to complete many of these projects, even if there is disagreement about some of the elements. This, though, is what has frustrated so many: if most people are on the same page, why are these projects delayed, re-routed and lacking in funding?



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Date: Wednesday 28th March 2018

Creating an Atlantic corridor between Cork and Limerick

The €1.2bn Cork-Limerick motorway took a major step forward in mid-February when Transport Infrastructure Ireland confirmed the route where development will take place.

The project will involve an upgrade of the existing N20, via Mallow and Macleavelle.

This option was chosen ahead of an alternative proposal to take a spur off the existing M8 at Mitchelstown building a motorway through east Limerick.

The National Development Plan (NDP) sets out that the N/M20 Cork to Limerick scheme would provide better connectivity between Ireland's second and third largest cities, Cork and Limerick.

It would improve the quality of the transport network, addressing safety issues associated with the existing N20 route and provide for safer and more efficient journey times.

The project is a key element in Project Ireland 2040, the Government's long-term overarching strategy to make Ireland a better country for all of its people.

It was a hot topic in the recent general election campaign, with a war of words erupting between Fine Gael and Green Party members about the scheme.

Green Party leader Eamon Ryan said that the development would "make no sense" and insisted upgrading the rail network was a better alternative to improve transport in the south and south-west of Ireland.

There was a backlash, with Fine Gael senator Kieran Kavanagh hitting back, claiming that the Green Party was showing "a distinct lack of understanding" of what was needed in the area.

Tánaiste Simon Coveney also backed the project, claiming that cutting the journey times would help to create "a counter-balance to Dublin in the south and south-west".

Announcing the preferred route, it was confirmed the M20 project team had spent a year of work based on the Public Spending Code requirements, which requires consideration of all potential options, including bus and rail alternatives.

That work informed their choice of route which will provide the highest journey time savings between Cork and Limerick, has the potential to save the greatest number of road-based collisions, accidents and fatalities, across the network, and provides the highest level of traffic relief to towns and villages.

Public consultation will take place in the latter part of this year, with the preferred option identified within the broad N20 corridor identified soon after.

Ring road delay 'major blow'

In January 2020, it was confirmed by the Department of Transport that the long-awaited Northern Ring Road would not be built until after 2027. It was a major blow to the northside of Cork city.

A report issued by the Department of Public Expenditure, titled 'Prospects: Ireland's Pipeline of Major Infrastructure Projects', has a page on the N20 Cork-to-Limerick road upgrade, which makes reference to the Northern Ring Road.

The report stated: "The solution for the N20 corridor will be identified through the appraisal process by the development of a business case for the scheme."

In a statement, they said the Northern Ring Road remained a long-term aim.

"The National Development Plan sets out the need to upgrade the road linking Limerick to Cork."

"When the new road reaches Cork, it will need a suitable docking point and it is envisaged that, in the longer term, that docking point would be where it would meet the Cork North Ring Road."

The N20 project will examine how that should be planned for. However, in the shorter term, the new N20/M20 will have to tie into the existing road infrastructure in Cork North City.

"The Cork North Ring Road will not be delivered as part of the new N20 Limerick-to-Cork road in the period of the National Development Plan (2018 to 2027)."

"Any delivery of part or all of the Cork North Ring Road would be after 2027."

The Cork Northern Ring Road has been in the pipeline for 15 years. Cork City Council has repeatedly included the Northern Ring Road in its capital cost applications, but the Government has not prioritised its delivery.

The first designs for the road were drawn up in 2004 and were broken into three phases.

Phase one proposed linking up the N22 Ballincollig bypass with the N20 Mallow Road, while phase two included a link to the N20 from the existing Northern Ring Road. Phase three would see the Northern Ring linked to

the N8 Dublin Road.

In 2007, the National Road Authority (now Transport Infrastructure Ireland) announced a €500m route for the Northern Ring, with 10km of dual carriageway from Ballincollig to Carrigrohane, which would join up with the N20.

Phase three of this has been included in the Government's capital plans, but this will only unlock the eastern side of Cork's transport ring.

The western corridor, from Glanmire to Ballincollig's Poulavone roundabout, is likely to remain without a natural link for several years to come.

The sole prohibitive issue, it appears, is the cost of the project.

A complete Northern Ring Road would join the M8 from the toll booth at Watergrasshill to the Poulavone Roundabout, in Ballincollig, and the N22.

It remains a hot topic politically, with local politicians from all sides putting their weight behind it.

The recent election of Thomas Gould, a Sinn Féin representative from Knocknaheeny, who has pushed for the road for years, could add further pressure to it, if the party gets into government.

Criticism over delays for Dunkettle Interchange

The Dunkettle Interchange project is currently being re-routed after being delayed by 12 months last August.

The delay was viewed as a major setback at the time for a project deemed crucial for the entire region. The development involves the reconfiguration of the existing Dunkettle Interchange to a free-flowing interchange.

The project includes road links between the N8, the N25 and the N40 and links to the R825 in Little Island and Bury Bridge in Dunkettle; one grade-separated junction arrangement; four roundabouts; 52 structures of various forms; several culverts; Intelligent Transport Systems; and pedestrian and cyclist facilities.

The design phase (stage 1) of the contract was awarded in May 2018. It was decided to revert to the market in

September 2019 for the main works and tenders are expected to be returned in summer 2020.

The project was originally budgeted to cost in the region of €100 million when it was announced almost ten years ago but estimates have soared since. Last summer, when the delays first came to light, it was estimated that it could cost closer to €170m, and even higher figures have been floated since.

Transport Infrastructure Ireland cited "worse-than-anticipated ground conditions and the consequent increase in scope" as the reason it will go back to the market to find a contractor to take on the construction stage of the process.

It said the funds to complete the project have been ringfenced and the value of the contract will be confirmed once the tendering process is complete.



The interchange is currently used by 850,000 vehicles daily and, depending on the completion of other roads projects in the region, this figure could increase even more in the coming years.

The current proposed upgrade will result in the removal of the current signalised system operating on a roundabout on the northern exit of the Jack Lynch Tunnel, is designed to cater for future growth

Getting the right transport strategy is vital for future of the region

Thomas McHugh

It's easy to make inflammatory statements that do nothing to address the complex challenges we face as a society.

On housing, healthcare, foreign policy, and trade, there is a tendency to oversimplify, and to jump into the silo of your choosing.

Transport is one such issue: some would argue exclusively for public and active transport, while others heavily prioritise roads.

Fortunately for Cork, government policy and stakeholder consensus are on the verge of being enshrined in a National Transport Authority plan, called the 'Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy' (CMATS), which demonstrates that the answer for Cork includes roads, buses, cycling, walking, and rail.

To implement this strategy, the chamber has called for a Cork NTA office and for the strategy to be set in legislation to ensure delivery. Let's look at some of the reasons CMATS is so important:

- 100km of new and upgraded footpath
- 140km of greenways
- 250% increase in footfall on St Patrick's Street
- 50km of cycle network and 60km of inter urban cycle network
- 100km of bus lanes, with six strategic park-and-rides
- 22 new, two-car trains and eight new suburban rail stations, such as Kibbarry
- 17km of light rail with a five-minute frequency

CMATS also references roads projects, such as the M28 to Ringaskiddy, the Northern Ring Road, Dunkettle interchange, and the M20 to Limerick, which are important facilitators of the exemplary public and active transport that we wish to see in our metropolitan area.

They take account of the National Planning Framework by enhancing the connectivity of Ireland's second and third-largest city regions. They enable the Port of Cork to make the historic move to Ringaskiddy, thus making our docklands and Tivoli the home to a thriving city community and solidifying the role of the port in global shipping.

They also pave the way for options such as a city centre HGV ban to enhance city centre air quality and to ensure pedestrian and cycle safety. They make journeys safer, quieter, and less polluted by removing hazards and congestion and routing commercial vehicular movement away from communities.

A limited suite of planned strategic upgrades is, therefore, a functional necessity for Cork. This accepted, the remaining element of debate in the well-worn battle line between the committed public and active transport advocate and the roads promoter is which should be prioritised and the spend ratio between the former and the latter.

In a 2019 Citizens Assembly vote, 90% wanted to flip the roads-to-public transport spend ratio from 2:1 to 1:2. While the precise impacts of such a move are untested, the sentiment is clear.

Cork Chamber membership has

consistently elevated public transport and housing as the top two priorities.

The chamber has repeatedly called for the first €50m to be made available for CMATS delivery, with immediate delivery of Bus Connects, the Cork Cycle Network, and pedestrian improvements, and increased frequency of our existing rail.

The cost of bringing projects through planning is a fraction of the cost of delivery. The long process and tendency for objections creates a major frustration for project timelines.

Such, there is a need for multiple activity streams to ensure that Cork does not stall based on over-reliance on a small handful of enticing projects.

Funding models of various formats, such as PPP, can be used to make certain projects happen.

There can be no reason for lack of ambition or delivery and the burden need not rest exclusively with the State.

There is also no reason why the spend ratio in a place like Cork can not fluctuate and evolve as specific projects are brought to fruition. In 2020, building a new road may not capture the imagination like a cycle lane or greenway. However, the M20 offers an opportunity for Ireland to build the best integrated motorway in Europe.

Public transport can be the dominant mode of travel at the point of interaction with both Cork and Limerick cities.

CMATS and its Limerick equivalent can provide for this. At each city entrance, bus corridors can be incorporated with park-and-rides.

From this point, bus frequency and reliability are key to traffic-free inter-city travel.

HGVs can move unhindered and shoppers and schoolchildren can cross the road in Charleville and Buttevant without diesel engines churning and then.

The town centre can become a quality space for people. With a national tree planting strategy of 22m trees per annum, there can surely be room for a significant contribution to indigenous planting along the whole of the corridor. The relative cost would be negligible.

There should be cycle corridors adjacent, in parallel, or incorporated into the new M20 or along the old N20 route.

The route to mobility in a city region like Cork will require an acknowledgement that all assets will be required. Following this is a question of prioritisation, what can be done, what is most strategic, and which projects can be brought through planning while others are in construction.

With gestation periods of decades, there is no such thing as a quick win with roads infrastructure. But a road rumble through the planning process, multiple fine-grain interventions can be delivered.

Delivery of CMATS will define the success of Cork.

Thomas McHugh, director of public affairs and communications at Cork Chamber



It is hoped that east-bound traffic queues near Mahon Point shopping centre for the Jack Lynch tunnel would be relieved by an interchange that has been dogged with issues since it was first announced.

Cork-Ringaskiddy motorway expected to be complete by 2027

The construction of the M28 Cork-Ringaskiddy motorway is currently scheduled for a 2027 completion date if the project progresses as planned.

However, it has been hit by a number of delays over the years and more of these would not be a surprise for a scheme considered crucial in many respects with regards to regional development.

The motorway is viewed as critical to unlocking the potential of the Port of Cork in Ringaskiddy, supporting the expanding pharmaceutical industry in the area and enabling the Port to move out of their land in Tivoli, Cork city, which would then be used to develop housing.

However, before it gets to the stage of construction, there are approximately three years of advance works and diversions to complete, as well as a number of Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs) for land in the area.

The M28 Cork to Ringaskiddy Project is the upgrade of approximately 12.5km of the N28 from the N40 South Ring Road, at Bloomfield Interchange, to Ringaskiddy.

Transport Infrastructure Ireland is the funding authority for this project and the project has been included in the government's Infrastructure and Capital Investment Plan 2016 - 2021.

The N28 corridor itself is part of the Trans-European Transport Network, accessing the Tier 1 Port at Ringaskiddy. This requires that the Port is served by a high-quality road (either a motorway or express road), designed and built for motor traffic.

Approval for Macroom /Baile Mhúirne bypass following 20-year wait

The €200m upgrade of the N22 Cork-Kerry road, which includes the Macroom bypass, was approved by Cabinet in October 2019.

The vast road project had been on the transport spend ratio from 2:1 to 1:2. While the precise impacts of such a move are untested, the sentiment is clear.

It includes the construction of 22km of dual carriageway from the M20 to the west of Macroom, to include a northern bypass of Macroom town, continuing west to tie in to the existing N22 near the Cork-Kerry border.

The new road will also bypass the villages of Baile Mhic Ire and Baile Mhúirne, giving road-users an alternative to the infamous Baile Mhúirne bends.

The Cabinet approval meant Cork County Council was free to award a contract for the scheme, which is designed to improve road safety and journey times between Cork and Kerry. The road was awarded to a joint venture of Jons Civil Engineering Company Ltd and John Cradock Ltd.

It came eight years after An Bord Pleanála granted planning permission for the scheme. Planning documents, which are now almost a decade old, predicted that by 2027, the Macroom bypass would handle around 11,200 vehicles a day to the west of Macroom, and between 9,500 and 11,500 vehicles per day on the bypassed section in Macroom.

The A11 route is used by 14,000 vehicles daily, with this figure expected to increase to more than 20,000 when work is complete.

Transport Infrastructure Ireland said the bypass alone will lead to savings in travel times of between 11 and 17 minutes, depending on the start and end location of the journey.

The road works will be through challenging terrain, from hilly, remote land with rocky outcrops at the western end, to overlying pasture lands to the east of Macroom.

It will cross a land-locked section of the Ininisarra reservoir to the south of the town.

Engineers have spent the last two years on a range of preparatory works to prime the route corridor for construction, including extensive ground investigation works, archaeological excavations, and the removal of overhead power lines.

As part of the road project, some 18 road bridges (under and over structures) and a number of culvert structures are to be constructed.

Once construction work starts, it is expected it will take three and a half years to complete.

However, it is understood that the Macroom bypass section will be built and opened before the western section is completed.

The implementation and construction phase – and is on course for a 2023 finish.

That report puts it in a cost range of €250m to €500m.

Manathir seeks vote as new Malaysian PM sworn in

Eileen Ng
Mahathir Mohamad has called for an urgent sitting of Malaysia's parliament to contest the appointment of a former ally as prime minister under a Malay-majority coalition that could further split the nation following the collapse of Mr Mahathir's multiracial reformist alliance.

Muhyiddin Yassin, a seasoned politician who once famously quipped that he is

Malay first and Malaysian second, was sworn in as the new leader at the palace after getting the support of several opposition parties. Among the supporters was the corruption-tainted United Malays National Organisation (UMNO), which was ousted by Mr Mahathir's Alliance of Hope in a historic vote in 2018.

Mr Muhyiddin, 72, pulled his Bersatu party out of the alliance last Monday, triggering its collapse.

Mr Mahathir resigned as prime minister in protest of the plan that would bring UMNO back to power. After a week of political turmoil, the king said that he believed Mr Muhyiddin had the majority support of politicians and named him the new leader.

But Mr Mahathir's camp has contested that assertion, saying the 94-year-old two-time prime minister has the backing of 114 politicians to return as premier for a third time, surpassing the

112 votes needed for a simple majority.

Mr Mahathir said yesterday that the palace had refused to hear him out. He called for an urgent sitting of the lower house of parliament to test Mr Muhyiddin's claim of majority support.

The house is due to resume on March 9, but Mr Mahathir said it could be delayed.

"People on our side may be offered to be ministers. They may be offered other things," he said.

"We feel we have 114, but after the actions taken by these very rich and very powerful people, we may not have the 114," he said. "So the test of the pudding is in the eating; hold the parliament sitting now."

Already, two of the politicians among the 114 have denied supporting Mr Mahathir.

Mr Mahathir said he felt betrayed by Mr Muhyiddin's move and warned that UMNO leaders including ex-

prime minister Najib Razak, who is facing trial on corruption charges, may get off the hook. UMNO is the biggest party in Mr Muhyiddin's new coalition.

"The court may find it embarrassing to take action against the government," Mr Mahathir said. "We have seen this happen before during Najib's time when he was able to manipulate the court, change the charges and to a certain extent, influence the decision of the court. I be-

lieve if the new government is installed now with Najib in it, this is what is going to happen."

Mr Muhyiddin and Mr Mahathir were former members of UMNO who formed Bersatu in 2016 amid anger over a massive corruption scandal involving the 1MDB state investment fund.

Mr Muhyiddin served in various ministries during Mr Mahathir's first stint as prime minister for 22 years until 2003.



Muhyiddin Yassin won the support of opposition parties.

Biden: can 'unite the whole country'

■ Momentum with former vice president ahead of Super Tuesday

Steve Peoples
Joe Biden said he can "unite this country, the whole country" after scoring a thundering victory in South Carolina's Democratic primary that could force moderate rivals out of the race and blunt the rise of progressive leader Bernie Sanders.

Mr Biden vowed he would improve his campaign operation, his fundraising haul — and even his own performance — as the race pushes toward Super Tuesday, making the case he is the candidate that can win in states beyond those voting this week.

"I feel good," Mr Biden said on ABC's *This Week*. "I can win and I can bring along Democratic victories."

Mr Biden commanded the airwaves with back-to-back interviews after Saturday's win, which came on the strength of African American support and at a perilous moment in his 2020 bid. He needed an emphatic rebound after underwhelming performances this month in Iowa, New Hampshire and Nevada.

The race now pivots to the 14 states from Maine to California that vote tomorrow in what in effect will be a national primary in a race increasingly becoming a match-up between the two powerhouses representing divergent paths for the party.

Mr Sanders led in fundraising hauls with an eye-popping \$46.5m (€42.2m) for February. The senator said it's not the total amount that should impress but the enthusiasm of working people digging into their pockets for his candidacy.

"No campaign out there has a stronger grassroots movement than we do," Mr Sanders said. "That's how you beat Trump."

Follow progressive Elizabeth Warren brought in

\$29m (€26.2m) last month and Mr Biden trailed with \$18m (€16.3m), but the former vice president said he raised \$5m (€4.5m) in the past 24 hours.

Seven candidates remain in the Democrats' quest to find the strongest possible nominee to take on president Donald Trump in November.

Pressing is mounting on the trailing candidates to justify their campaigns or step aside so Mr Biden can engage in a more direct match-up against Mr Sanders, who heads into the coming week eager to surpass his rivals in amassing delegates for the nomination.

"It's not for me to tell another candidate to get out of the race," Mr Biden said on *Fox News Sunday*.

Mr Biden made his own direct attack on Mr Sanders, saying: "The people aren't looking for revolution. They're looking for results."

Mr Biden won about three times as many delegates in South Carolina as Mr Sanders, his nearest rival, giving a momentary respite to anxious Democrats who feared that the democratic socialist would finish February with four consecutive top finishes that would make it difficult for anyone to overtake him.

Even with the victory, the shortcomings of Mr Biden's campaign remain, including lack of robust funding and organisation, and this week for the first time he will face Mike Bloomberg, a billionaire who has spent more than \$500m advertising in the Super Tuesday states.

Mr Biden downplayed the lack of an endorsement from former president Barack Obama, whose name he often invoked in the campaign trail to voters nostalgic for his administration.

Mr Biden said he has to earn this "on my own."

Farewell to winter



People watch a sculpture of a bridge burning at the Maslenitsa (Shrovetide) festival at the Nikola-Lenivets art park in Nikola-Lenivets village, about 200m south-west of Moscow, Russia. Maslenitsa is a traditional Russian holiday marking the end of winter that dates back to the pagan times.

British PM Johnson reveals plan for 'hard bargain' in bid to secure trade deal with US

Richard Wheeler

Boris Johnson has pledged to "drive a hard bargain" as the UK outlined its negotiating objectives for the upcoming trade talks with the United States.

The UK government said it wants to open up opportunities for British businesses and investors while also ensuring the NHS is not for sale via the desired free trade agreement.

It added it remains committed to keeping the NHS universal and free at the point of use, something which the prime minister was pushed on time after time during the general election.

The British team also wants to guarantee high standards and protections for British consumers and workers, including on animal welfare.

Mr Johnson said: "We have the best negotiators in the business and of course, we're going to drive a hard bargain to boost British industry. Trading Scottish smoked salmon for Stetson hats, we will deliver lower prices and more choice for our shoppers."

"Most importantly, this transatlantic trade deal will reflect the unique closeness of our two great nations."

The comments come as ministers prepare to publish its negotiation mandate with the US today.

The talks will take place in parallel alongside the bartering with the European Union over a post-Brexit relationship.

Downing Street has been urged by trade union leaders not to "cosy up" to president Donald Trump during the talks, calling on the PM to block any US manoeuvring



British prime minister Boris Johnson and partner Carrie Symonds have announced that they are expecting a baby in the summer.

to lower food standards, and environmental concerns raised.

The Department for International Trade (DIT) said it expects manufacturers of ceramics, cars, food and drink, and professional services to be among the British industries to benefit from tariff-free access to the US market.

Crawford Falconer, DIT's chief trade negotiation adviser and formerly New Zealand's chief negotiator, will oversee talks on the UK side.

Negotiating rounds will alternate between the UK and US.

Meanwhile, Mr Johnson and Carrie Symonds have announced they are expecting a baby.

Ms Symonds told her followers on Instagram she felt "incredibly blessed".

She said she and Mr Johnson got engaged at the end of last year "and we've got a baby hatching early summer". Mr Johnson, 55, and Ms Symonds, 31, made history as the first unmarried couple to officially live together in Downing Street when they moved in last year.

Afghan president rules out freeing Taliban prisoners

Associated Press

Afghanistan's president has said he will not free thousands of Taliban prisoners ahead of all-Afghan power-sharing talks set for next week.

Ashraf Ghani said he disagreed with the timetable for a speedy prisoner release said out a day earlier by a US-Taliban peace agreement.

Mr Ghani's comments pointed to the first hitch in implementing the fragile deal, which is aimed at ending America's longest war after more than 18 years and getting rival Afghan factions to agree on their country's future.

However, the US has said a planned troop withdrawal over the next 14 months is linked to the Taliban's counter-terrorism performance, not to progress in intra-Afghan talks.

The US-Taliban deal signed on Saturday envisions the release of up to 5,000 Taliban prisoners by the Afghan government ahead of talks between Afghan factions meant to begin on March 10 in the Norwegian capital Oslo. The Taliban would release up to 1,000 prisoners.

Mr Ghani said in the Afghan capital Kabul that this was not a promise the United States could make.

He said the release of prisoners was a decision for his government to take and that he was not ready to release prisoners before the start of negotiations.

"The request has been made by the United States for the release of prisoners

and it can be part of the negotiations but it cannot be a precondition," Mr Ghani said.

The US-Taliban deal is seen as a historic opportunity to extricate the United States from Afghanistan, a nation convulsed by conflict since the Soviet invasion in December 1979.

Yet it could also unravel quickly, particularly if the Taliban fail to deliver on a promise that no terror attacks would be launched from Afghan soil.

The intra-Afghan talks between squabbling political factions and rival Taliban are even more intricate — even if a potential failure might not slow the withdrawal of American forces.

In an interview with The Associated Press, Qatari foreign minister Mohammed

bin Abdulrahman al-Thani said he considered a prisoner exchange an important confidence-building measure.

"What we have here is a



Afghan president Ashraf Ghani speaks during a news conference at the presidential palace in Kabul, Afghanistan, yesterday.

Germany wine harvest hit by warm weather

David McHugh

A warm winter means that for the first time in years, Germany's vineyards will produce no ice wine, an expensive, golden nectar made from grapes that have been left to freeze on the vine.

The German Wine Institute said that none of the country's wine regions saw the necessary low temperature of minus 13C.

A succession of warm winters have cut into ice wine production recently, the institute said, noting that in 2017 only seven producers managed to make it, and only five managed it in 2013.

The institute, the wine industry's marketing arm, did not say how far back records went.

"If warm winters become more frequent over the coming years, ice wines from Germany's regions will soon be-

come an even more expensive rarity than they already are," said wine institute spokesman Ernst Buescher.

Freezing the grapes before they are crushed concentrates the sugar and leads to an intensely sweet, golden wine often served with dessert.

It has always been a niche product, about 0.1% of German production, and expensive to grow.

Making it is a tricky business that can enhance the winemaker's reputation.

Workers must race into the vineyards to bring the grapes in with only a few hours notice when the temperature falls.

The grapes must be pressed while still frozen, a process carried out in unheated facilities, and the owners also face the risk that grapes set aside for ice wine will rot on the vine before the hard freeze comes.

Outspoken gang critic LeBarón flees threat in Mexico for United States

Peter Orsi

Julian LeBarón, who has long been outspoken in denouncing rampant criminal activity in the area and local citizens living in northern Mexico that was shattered by the November massacre of three women and six children along a rural road has fled to the United States under an apparent threat on his life.

"I think that it's reaching a breaking point. I mean, people are just sick to death of the criminals," Mr LeBarón said. "They're sick and tired of feeling like you have to move (around). In other words, little by little they end up taking over people's freedom."

Mr LeBarón believes the threat was related to his re-

fusal to keep silent and suggested that the final straw may have been a recent disagreement with local police.

On February 17, he said, there was a shootout in Casas Grandes, Chihuahua state, where he has a home, followed by a couple of apparent grenade detonations, and then still more gunfire.

The next day, he called po-

lice to ask about it, and to an officer said they didn't know that anything at all had happened. They argued, and the officer hung up on him.

That night Mr LeBarón said he received a phone call at home from a friendly source saying they had information that La Línea, a force that acts as enforcers for the Juárez Cartel, wanted to kill

him and he needed to get to a safe place — preferably north of the border.

He ran behind a concrete wall and called for help from federal police posted in nearby Colonia LeBarón, a force the community largely trusts and with which it maintains good relations. When they arrived in Casas Grandes, they saw local po-

lice "scrambling," he said. A relative's maid later reported seeing 15 gunmen in a canal near Mr LeBarón's home that night, and he believes he could have been their target.

"We're a thorn in these people's side," he said. "The local police in our region in north-western Chihuahua, they all work for the cartel. And obviously the state at-

thorities, they kind of turn a blind eye to the fact that we have an armed army just roaming the streets and murdering people and just complete and total impunity," Mr LeBarón said.

After laying low for a couple of days, Mr LeBarón drove with his uncle and a federal police escort to the Arizona border.

Pressure grows on UK home secretary Patel to step down

Patrick Daly

UK home secretary Priti Patel has been defended by a senior Cabinet colleague amid calls for her to resign following a fall-out at the top of the home office.

Philip Rutnam, the department's most senior civil servant, quit on Saturday after accusing Ms Patel of orchestrating a "vicious" campaign against him, of lying about her involvement in it and of creating a climate of

fear among her officials. But health secretary Matt Hancock said Ms Patel was "extremely courteous" in her dealings with colleagues.

And Conservative ally Nusrat Ghani MP, who was sacked as a minister by Boris Johnson last month, said the criticism of Ms Patel had sexist overtones.

Their comments came at the start of a "vicious" campaign against him, of lying about her involvement in it and of creating a climate of

defence of the embattled former international development secretary.

Mr Hancock told the BBC's *Andrew Marr* programme: "Priti is a very determined home secretary."

"She is probably closer to where the public are on the issues of law and order than any home secretary in recent history. I think she drives things forward."

"I also think she is extremely courteous, and in every dealing I've had with

her she has been very courteous. I can't get into the details of the case, not least because it looks like it might be going to court, and I'm not close to it."

Former transport minister Ms Ghani used her appearance on Sky News to suggest that Ms Patel could be being judged more harshly because she is a woman.

She said: "My experience of working with Priti is that she is incredibly determined. She provides strong leadership and she's delivering some very important aspects of our policy."

"I do think it's curious that if you're providing leadership, if you're determined, working at a fantastic pace, that within men that is seen as a fantastic skill and for women sometimes it's seen as challenging."

Labour has looked to ramp up the pressure on the under-fire home secretary, with shadow chancellor John McDonnell suggesting she

could be forced to resign. Mr McDonnell, when asked if Ms Patel could stay in her post, told Sky News' *Sophy Ridge on Sunday*: "I can't see it, it's bizarre."

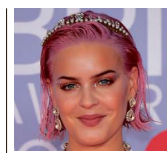
He added: "One of the ways the prime minister could go forward is to have an independent investigation but during that period you'd have to suspend the home secretary whilst that went on."

Labour leadership candidate Keir Starmer also

called on Ms Patel to explain to MPs the explosive allegations levelled against her by Mr Rutnam.

Mr Starmer said: "The home secretary has a duty to come to parliament to explain the allegations made about her own conduct."

The shadow Brexit secretary called for cabinet secretary Mark Sedwill to start "an immediate investigation" into the circumstances surrounding Mr Rutnam's departure.



Anne-Marie.

Singer apologises for hurt over TV sketch

Pop star Anne-Marie has apologised for the "hurt" caused by her appearance on ITV's *Saturday Night Takeaway* after presenter Ant and Dec wore headbands emblazoned with the Japanese Rising Sun flag during a performance.

The artist, 28, criticised the choice of costumes afterwards, telling her 679,000 Twitter followers: "Unfortunately, education on this part of the history wasn't done."

Japan's Rising Sun flag is seen by some as a symbol of Japan's imperialist past. An ITV spokesman said: "We apologise for any offence caused by the costumes worn. This was clearly unintended."

New bid to legalise abortion in Argentina

Argentine president Alberto Fernández announced that he will send to Congress a bill to legalise abortion, an initiative that has broad social support but is also strongly opposed by religious groups in Pope Francis' home nation.

The centre-left Peronist president, who took office in December, will also capitalise on his strong electoral mandate to reform the judiciary and Argentina's intelligence services, he told Congress.

The initiative will be accompanied by a sex education and pregnancy prevention drive, according to the government.



Simon Pegg.

Pegg calls for more women in cinema

Men should "suck it up" and accept it is time women were given the same respect as men, Simon Pegg said as he took part in a festival focused on women-led films.

The *Mission Impossible* star was speaking during the Glasgow Film Festival at the UK premier of his new movie *Lost Silver* set in the world of the late, late director of American Katharine O'Brien.

LGBT activists stage archbishop protest

Several dozen activists protested in front of a Warsaw church guarded by police yesterday as a Catholic archbishop, who has been criticised for his language, celebrated Mass.

Last year, in a sermon, Archbishop Marek Jędraszewski said Poland was under siege from a "rainbow plague" of gay rights campaigners who he compared to the Nazis.

He also said the country was a "land of the Devil" and "a land of the Devil's children".

Filmaker Bartosz Staszewski, 29, said: "It's not a rainbow plague. We are citizens of this country and we want to look him in the face."

Daleks to return in Christmas special

Fearsome enemy the Daleks will return in a Doctor Who festive special, BBC bosses have announced.

The one-off follows the end of series 12 last night, in which the fate of the Doctor appeared to be hanging in the balance. *Revolution of the Daleks*, set around Christmas and New Year, will see the return of "one of the Doctor's biggest and most feared enemies".

John White will reprise his role as the Time Lord Showrunner Chris Chibnall said: "We can't leave the Doctor there! Well, we did but rest assured, the Doctor and her friends will be back."

Beatle guitar valued at £463k on TV show

A former session musician was "taken aback" after his guitar, once owned by John Lennon and George Harrison, was valued at £460,000 (£463,000) on BBC One show *Antiques Roadshow*.

His owner said he was given the instrument because he could play it better than Harrison and George Harrison. He said: "I think in 25 years it's by far the most expensive thing I've ever sold."

The owner said he was amazed at the guitar's value and he still plays the instrument regularly.

Refugees gather at borders as fighting escalates

■ Migrants try to enter Greece after Turkey opens floodgates to Europe

Costas Kantouris and Andrew Wilks

Thousands of migrants and refugees massed at Turkey's western frontier, trying to enter Greece by land and sea and after Turkey said its borders were open to those hoping to head to Europe.

In Syria, Turkish troops shot down two Syrian warplanes after the Syrian military downed a Turkish drone, a major escalation in the direct conflict between Syrian and Turkish forces.

Turkey's decision to ease border restrictions came amid a Russian-backed Syrian government offensive into Syria's north-western Idlib province.

That offensive has killed dozens of Turkish troops and led to a surge of nearly a million Syrian civilians fleeing the fighting toward Turkey's sealed border.

Turkey backs the Syrian rebels fighting in Idlib province, and has sent thousands of troops into the area.

Idlib is the last opposition-held stronghold in Syria, and is dominated by al Qaeda linked fighters.

A Turkish official said the fighting in Idlib was directly linked to Turkey's decision to open the gates for refugees to Europe.

He said Ankara had changed its focus to preparing for the possibility of new arrivals from Syria "instead of preventing refugees who intend to migrate to Europe".

"Europe and others must take robust action to address this monumental challenge," said Fahrettin Altun, the Communications Minister for Turkey's president, Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

"We can't be expected to do this on our own."

Mr Erdogan's decision to declare his country's borders with Europe open made good on a long-standing threat to let refugees into the continent.

His announcement marked a dramatic departure from the current policy and an apparent attempt to pressure Europe into offering Turkey more support in dealing with the fallout from the Syrian war to its south.

Under a 68bn deal in 2016, Turkey agreed to stem the tide of refugees to Europe in return for financial aid, after more than a million people entered Europe in 2015.

It has since accused the EU of failing to honour the agreement, and Mr Erdogan has frequently threatened to allow refugees and migrants to head to Europe unless more international support was provided.

Turkey already hosts 3.6m Syrian refugees, as well as others from Africa, Asia and the Middle East.

On the Greek Turkish land border, Greek army and police patrols thwarted attempts on Saturday evening by thousands to push into the country, using tear gas and stun grenades to keep crowds back.

Officials said the situation was much calmer yesterday morning. But in the afternoon, authorities used tear gas and water cannons to push back another crowd attempting to cross.

Migrants threw rocks and other objects, heed one policeman was injured.

The UN migration organisation reported at least 13,000 people had massed on Turkey's land border by Saturday night, the vast majority from Afghanistan.

Analysis: 11



Migrants walk on the railway tracks heading for Greece near the Pazarkule border crossing in Edirne, Turkey. The UN migration organisation said that at least 13,000 people were massed on Turkey's land border with Greece, after Turkey officially declared its western borders were open to migrants hoping to head into the EU. Picture: Ennah Gurel/AP

Weary and divided, Israel goes back to the polls for the third time in under a year

Josef Federman

For the third time in under a year, prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu is seeking re-election, and once again the Israeli election is on the ropes.

After two inconclusive elections last year, opinion polls forecast another stalemate — a troubling scenario for Mr Netanyahu, who will go on trial on corruption charges just two weeks after today's vote.

This election campaign has been especially tumultuous. US president Donald Trump launched his long-awaited Mideast plan, a proposal that heavily favoured Israel and the Palestinians.

But experts and journalists said it was an election gift to Mr Netanyahu.

The Israeli leader, meanwhile, was forced to drop his bid for immunity from prosecution, and just a week ago, Israel battled Gaza militants in a two-day round of



Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu addresses his Likud party supporters during an election campaign rally in Ramat Gan.

fighting. Today's election is seen as another referendum on Mr Netanyahu, the country's longest-serving prime minister. And once again, the country seems hopelessly divided.

With seeming boundless energy, 70-year-old Mr Netanyahu has taken to the airwaves and hit the campaign trail, presenting himself to adoring audiences as a global statesman uniquely qualified to lead the country through its many complicated challenges.

He claims credit for a strong economy and boasts of his close relationships with world leaders, first and foremost Mr Trump, while deriding opposition Benny Gantz as a lightweight.

In a message that has drawn accusations of racism, he also accuses Mr Gantz of plotting with Arab politicians to oust him.

In recent days, Mr Netanyahu and his Likud surrogates spread unfounded allegations claiming his opponent is corrupt, unstable and susceptible to blackmail by Iran.

"Being prime minister of Israel is a complicated thing, full of pressures 24 hours a day," Mr Netanyahu added. "I don't think Benny Gantz can handle it."

Mr Gantz, a former military chief of staff, has focused his campaign on Mr Netanyahu's character, saying a man accused of serious crimes is unfit to lead.

He said he was a "lowly photographer." Mr Chantopadhyay recalled.

He noted that while journalists in India have always been targeted for their work, under Mr Modi "the attack-

ers are much more open, furious and fearless."

Similar demands for proof of religion were heard in Gujarat, Mr Modi's home state and where he was the chief elected official.

The state erupted in violence when a train filled with Hindu pilgrims was attacked by a Muslim mob and caught fire and 60 Hindus burned to death. In retaliation, more than 1,000 people, mostly

Muslims, were killed in the state. Mr Modi was accused of tacit support for the rampage against Muslims, and was even blamed for the deaths.

Mr Modi's supporters saw the international criticism as an attack on the country for it on journalists and other critics, a feeling that continues today.

The decision provoked howls of disapproval from opposition MPs. Some accused Mr Philippe of trying to sneak the divisive pension reform through while public attention is focused on the Covid-19 crisis.

Far-left leader Jean-Luc Mélenchon accused Mr Philippe's government of "brutalising" the opposition.

Attacks on Indian reporters highlight growing intolerance

Emily Schmall

Reporting in India has never been without its risks, but journalists say attacks on the press during last week's deadly communal riots between Hindus and Muslims in New Delhi show the situation is deteriorating.

One reporter was shot and survived, another had his teeth knocked out, and many more said Hindu mobs demanded proof of religion

and tried to keep them from documenting vandalism and violence that included people attacking one another with axes, swords, metal pipes and guns.

Authorities have yet to provide a full account of what sparked the 72-hour clash that left 42 people dead and hundreds wounded.

Hindus and Muslims have been building for months over a new citizenship law.

Nor have they addressed journalists' allegations that they were singled out by Hindu mobs.

But experts and journalists say the attacks on reporters covering the riots further underscored the content in the aftermath of the violence — are a sign of growing intolerance for independent reporting in India.

Under prime minister Narendra Modi's Hindu-nationalist led government.

Anindya Chattopadhyay, a photographer for the *Times of India* newspaper, said that as he reached the scene of the riots last Tuesday, a man approached him, offering to put a tilak, a mark indicating a person is Hindu, on his forehead.

The man said it would make his work easier. Mr Chattopadhyay refused, but later, after he rushed to take pictures of a building on fire, he was approached

by a group demanding to know whether he was Hindu or Muslim, threatening to remove his pants to check whether he was circumcised per Muslim custom.

"I folded my hands and pleaded with them to let me go, saying I was a lowly photographer," Mr Chattopadhyay recalled.

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ers are much more open, furious and fearless."

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Slovakia moves to the right as opposition wins election

Dean Gray

The centre-right populist opposition has claimed victory in the parliamentary election in Slovakia, ending the reign of the scandal-tainted left party.

According to nearly complete results released by the Statistics Office yesterday, the Ordinary People group captured 25% of the vote and 53 seats in the 150-seat parliament in a move that steered the country to the right.

"We will try to form the best government in Slovakia ever had," Ordinary People chairman Igor Matovic told a cheering crowd of 2,000 supporters in a sports hall

in his home town of Trnava, located north east of the capital.

The ruling leftist Smer-Slovak Democracy party led by former populist prime minister Robert Fico was in second with 18.3% or 38 seats.

Smer has been in power for most of the past 14 years, winning big in every election since 2006. It gained 28.3% in the last election in 2016 after campaigning on an anti-migrant ticket.

But the party was damaged by political turmoil following the 2018 murders of an investigative journalist and his fiancée.

In what would be a further blow for Smer, its two current coalition partners, the ultra-nationalist Slovak

National Party and a party of Hungarians looked like they would not win any seats.

Pro-western Mr Matovic, 46, has made fighting corruption and attacking Mr Fico the central tenet of his campaign. An anti-corruption drive has been in his party's programme since he established it 10 years ago.

Mr Matovic is expected to govern with the pro-business Freedom and Solidarity party that made 6.2% (13 seats) and the conservative People established by former president Andrej Kiska that finished with 5.8% (12 seats).

Although the three would have a majority with 78 seats, Mr Matovic said he also wants to rule with We



Leader of the Ordinary People group Igor Matovic arrives for a TV debate in Bratislava a day after Slovakia's general election.

Are Family, a populist right-wing group that placed third with 8.2% or 17 seats.

"We're not here to fight cultural wars."

An extreme far-right party whose members use Nazi salutes and which wants Slo-



Anger as French PM pushes through pensions reforms

Associated Press

France's government has invoked a sparsely used special power to push contested pension reforms through parliament without a vote by the opposition MPs.

Prime minister Édouard Philippe's surprise announcement that he was cutting short debate in the National Assembly was the latest twist in the difficult

business of the pension shake-up that has sparked sustained protests and weeks of crippling strikes.

The constitutional power Mr Philippe invoked to force the pension bill through the assembly without a vote previously had been used fewer than 100 times since modern France was founded in 1958.

The government has become

increasingly frustrated with the slow progress of the bill, held up by thousands of opposition amendments.

Mr Philippe told parliament he was invoking the power "not to end debate but to end this episode of non-debate". He said he got approval to do so during a special cabinet meeting on Saturday that focused on France's response to the coronavirus outbreak.

The decision provoked howls of disapproval from opposition MPs. Some accused Mr Philippe of trying to sneak the divisive pension reform through while public attention is focused on the Covid-19 crisis.

Far-left leader Jean-Luc Mélenchon accused Mr Philippe's government of "brutalising" the opposition.

Irish Examiner

Established 1841

Road network overwhelmed

Why are we still playing catch-up?

It cannot be too long before students of management or public administration fill libraries with how-could-this-happen dissertations on the national children's hospital. Decades in the making, this project, as yet to be credibly costed, symbolises the swamp where political point-scoring, self-serving professional interests, huge and growing public need, institutionalised indecision, evasion, and denial, as well as unassertive leadership – and recession – come together. What should be a jewel in the crown has become a national embarrassment. The project also shows what can happen when momentum is lost, when focus shifts, and alternatives, long ago dismissed, resurface and distract.

Sadly, it also shows how we struggle with delivering major infrastructure. We may not be alone in this and the children's hospital is not the only important project defying timelines. However, it is unquestionably the grand panjandrum of these promised projects, driving frustration and eating away at the national sense of competence. It will, unfortunately, do that long after its doors eventually open.

Every region has versions of the national children's hospital. This weekend, many of those living along the Shannon will wonder if they can stay in their homes in the longer term. They are in a difficult position despite one promise after another to help them. The tens of thousands who, before dawn this morning, began the draining commute to a faraway job are in a similar if different trap. They have many hours, as they race home to try to say goodnight to young children, to consider their position but very few can see a viable alternative. One of the reasons many people find themselves caught in one version of this kind or another is the glacial pace around the delivery of long-trumpeted projects intended to make life more livable, to make it less stressful.

Today we focus on the impact of decades of underinvestment and what seems here minimum ambition on the road networks around Cork City and region. That network is no longer fit for purpose, it has been overwhelmed. Business interests say development has been good, but the difficulties are exacerbated by underinvestment in public transport.

There are urgent needs: The Dunkettle interchange, the Cork-Limerick motorway, access at Ringaskiddy, upgrading the bridge between Cork City and the Macroom bypass. Though its more than 40 years since Jack Lynch was taoiseach, some of these issues were regulars in his in-tray. Despite all that, there seems a polite recognition that these projects should go ahead. It also raises the possibility that we are focussed on issues that may be losing their relevance, especially around the minimum ambition on the road networks around Cork City and region. That network is no longer fit for purpose, it has been overwhelmed. Business interests say development has been good, but the difficulties are exacerbated by underinvestment in public transport.

These issues are, even in a quickly changing world, all within our competence. Delivery would have an impact far beyond infrastructural. Let's get on with it.

Divided Democrats may fail

Unsettled and very unsettled

It may, as our establishment political parties play pass the parcel with the options presented by a three-way election result, seem presumptuous to cast a cold eye on how another election uses democracy. However, if the outcome could be a second term for US president Donald Trump, then passing curiosity becomes justified concern.

The conflicting results of the Democratic party's efforts to agree a candidate deepen those concerns. Joe Biden's victory in South Carolina's primary exacerbate them. Not because Biden, at 77, may be unequal to the challenge but that, just days ahead Super Tuesday, he was seen as 'a dead candidate walking' – yet he turned the tables. Earlier primaries suggested Bernie Sanders or Pete Buttigieg might win the nomination. Mike Bloomberg's multi-million TV blitzkrieg won him fleeting prominence, though he was eclipsed by Elizabeth Warren, who just 5% of Saturday's vote.

This process underlines the vulnerabilities and hubris of what might be called the all-too-contented centre of democratic politics. In 2016, the Democrats chose the wrong candidate. They have not used the intervening years to build a candidacy that looks as if it might defeat Trump. Just like Fine Gael and Fianna Fáil, they kicked themselves down the road all too often let their, unsettled core supporters.

They, like us, may pay an inordinate price for that smug, unjustified complacency.

Coronavirus information

Time to be open

The coronavirus figures are constantly changing, and are likely to do so for some time. Nevertheless, by yesterday afternoon, the virus had been found in some 55 countries, including Ireland. There have been almost 90,000 cases, 1,520 in Europe. The death toll has reached 2,878 and will grow, and even if Ireland has already killed far more people this year, coronavirus remains and unknown known, which is the strongest political argument for opening up the economy.

The 55 or so countries fighting the spread of the virus may, by and large, adopt the same approach but each country will have its peculiarities, especially around how information on the virus and how it is spreading through communities is shared with the public.

Official Ireland has had a deep commitment to discretion bordering on secrecy. This culture may have its time and place, but at a moment when discipline and an active commitment to the common good is essential it would be counterproductive. This seems a moment for openness, so confidence might be sustained and the prospect of panic minimised.

Press Council of Ireland



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Child-19 might not be the Black Death, but it's not to be sneezed at

IT KNOWS it's peculiar, but plagues are my thing. I have shelves of books on bubonic and pneumonic plague. Not to mention the Spanish flu, which began in the latter stages of the First World War and which was so incredibly lethal that some patients who were perky in the morning were dead by lunchtime.

Here's the rub. This coronavirus is new. Or 'novel', as it keeps being described, which makes it sound engaging and harmlessly trivial, like giving up Instagram for Lent. It is seriously and gravely new. Unprecedented, even.

It's a change in the way we live, work, and think. In last month's general election, a quarter of the voters opted for change, suggesting that change was a good thing. So why are people so enraged about Covid-19?

Short answer? We love to believe we like change, but we hate it, as evidenced by the deep resentment of the virus.

The RPU cancelled that big rugby game in that stadium whose name escapes me, and within minutes, callers to radio programmes were giving out dog's abuse about this life-saving measure. Sure, most of the infected Italians who had bought the masks would come here anyway, these callers said, as if hordes of Italians were just pretending to be coming here for the rugby, but were secretly travelling for the chance to sneeze on us. A good sneeze on one of the natives, this theory suggested, would be more appealing to those who had planned on coming to the match than getting their flight money back.

Just as we were getting over that affront, the news came through from Japan that a woman who had suffered her contracting through a coronavirus attack had been tested again after she had regained her health, only to find that the virus had either been contracted by her over again or that it had been lying dormant in her, like the cold sore which contracts by her for a chance to sicken her afresh.

You might think this might have evoked a moment of respectful silence, but, in fact, the reaction seemed to be one of bitter disillusion. Like Dickens' Mrs Gummidge, it was a case of: 'Was the good of anyfink? Why, nuffink!' It was akin to going on a diet and finding yourself with a weight gain at the end of it. No justice at all. Enough to put you in a blind rage, it was. It was fairly tough on the Japanese too, although reports of the virus didn't include data on how furious she was about her double misfortune.

Rage was never the emotion evoked by previous plagues. Spanish flu evoked a stunned terror because it was so sudden, so complete, so thorough in its destruction. The children's game evolved from that song, with every child in the ring collapsing on the ground after mimicking the sneezes of the plague. There's creativity under pressure for you – those kids in the Dark Ages created a game that recalls an international plague in a lighthearted way, costing nothing (unlike Monopoly, Scrabble, or a pocket full of posies, atishoo, we all fall down).

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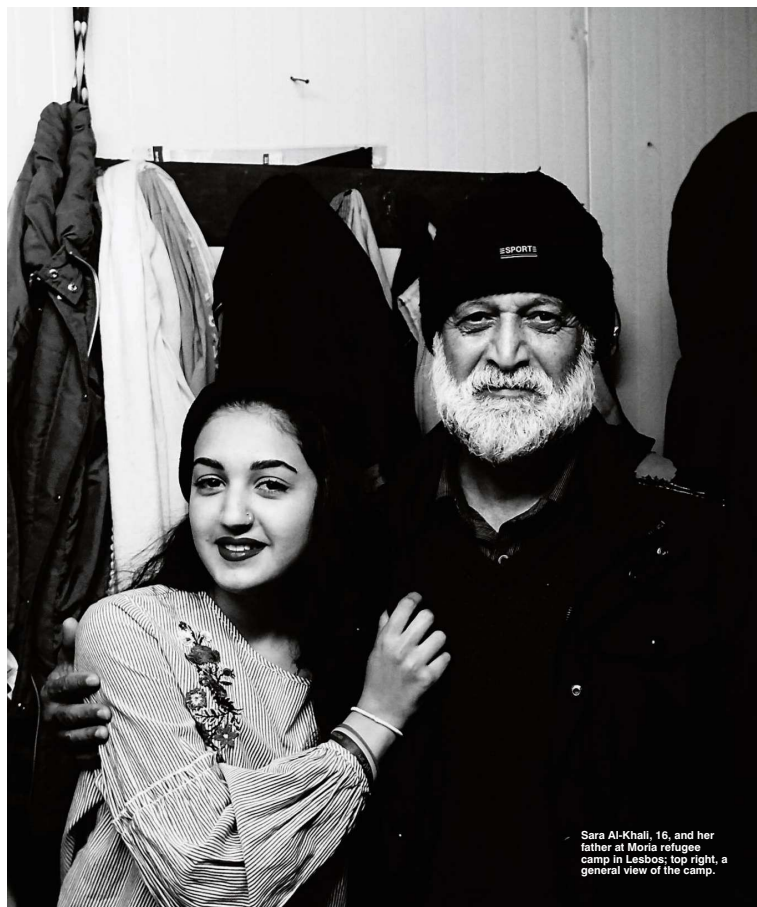
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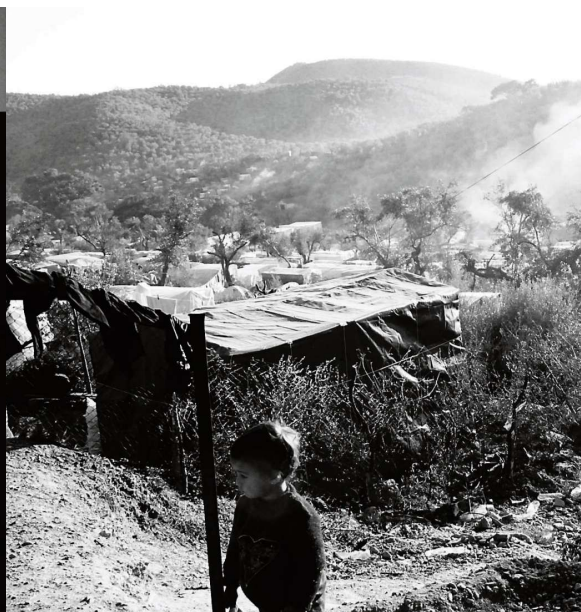
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The Greek island of Lesbos has been a transit point for hundreds of thousands of refugees and asylum seekers. Moria refugee camp is a former detention centre with capacity for less than 3,000 people. At present, the camp has more than 20,000 inhabitants, almost half of those children, living in limbo in conditions that are referred to as a humanitarian catastrophe. In recent weeks, inhabitants protesting at the conditions in the camp have been tear-gassed and some physically assaulted. **Caoimhe Butterly** meets some of the families caught up in the chaos and despair



Sara Al-Khaili, 16, and her father at Moria refugee camp in Lesbos; top right, a general view of the camp.



Inside the refugee camp



From left: Adam, 4, watches nursery rhymes while his father describes the difficulty of life in Moria; a family member watches over Adam as he rests; Adam gets a hug from his grandmother Amal. Pictures: Felipe Lopes

The Al-Khaili family sit on the floor of their second-story prefab shelter in Moria refugee camp in Lesbos, Greece. In the centre of their circle is four-year-old Adam, who has emptied a box of his toys on the ground between them. He hands out figures to represent the members of his extended family. His grandfather, Ahmed, is given a figurine of Gandalf the wizard; his mother, Hala, a plastic turtle; his teenage cousin, Sara, a cloth doll; his father a small wooden car. Minutes before, a fight in the street below had escalated. A passer-by, a young man from Congo, had been stabbed. Members of the family had rushed downstairs and watched from the crowd as camp security had dragged away the victim, who was bleeding heavily from numerous deep wounds. The perpetrator had disappeared into the night. Afterwards, back inside their shelter, Hala — an engineer from Syria — and her mother, a primary school teacher, tried to calm everyone, and to refocus Adam on his game. In the weeks prior, Adam had had recurrent nightmares and had begun to bite and hit his family. His mother and grandmother relied on Google to try to gain insights into his expressions of distress and watched videos of play therapy when sporadic internet coverage would allow. Adam sat back in the middle of the circle. He took back the toys he had given each member and then redistributed them. When it was his turn to pick a toy for himself, he shuffled through a deck of story cards. He found a card, stuffed it underneath his shirt, and then, with his grandmother's cooing, held it up. On it was an illustration of a small boy falling down a hill. "He's scared," Adam said quietly. The Al Khaili family shares their

shelter with another large family from Syria, separated by a thin grey blanket. Inside there is some reprieve from the chaos and cold of the camp outside, but it's temporary. Each morning, afternoon, and evening family members join the queues which define much of the camp inhabitants' long waits for insufficient food, for basic medical attention, for limited legal information. Moria refugee camp, located inland on Lesbos island, has stated capacity for 3,000 people. There are now more than 20,000 inhabitants, over a third of those children, many living in olive groves and hills surrounding the main camp. Those in the camp have journeyed from Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Kurdistan, Yemen, Congo, Sudan, Central African Republic, Somalia, Eritrea, and elsewhere. Many have been on the road for months, some for years, before crossing the Aegean sea in rubber dinghies, fleeing conflict, persecution, and insecurity. Large extended families live in tarpaulin structures and flimsy tents inside and outside the official camp, with mounds of rubbish throughout the grove that remain uncollected by local authorities. Refuge seekers attempt to stay warm at night and dry damp clothes and sleeping bags around camp fires fuelled by whatever can be found — branches, cardboard, plastic bottles — the acrid smoke of which permeates the camp. Newly arrived unaccompanied minors, many without tents, stay awake under starry skies, moving together in small groups for warmth and for safety. Children navigate the bustle and mud, often in sandals or flimsy shoes, their hacking coughs punctuating the nights. The prefab shower stalls frequently run out of water and un-serviced portable toilets — none of them accessible for inhabitants with disabilities or

“We made this journey because we wanted our children to have lives far away from the suffering and violence we experienced. But here, many women struggle to have hope, because we’ve seen that we left one war and now live another kind of war here

additional needs — over-flow. There is no electricity in the olive grove and with sporadic attacks on the rise, many women, including 19-year-old Mina, a student from Afghanistan, are afraid to leave their tents alone at night. “Living with this fear all the time is difficult,” says Mina. “I try to be hopeful and to tell my mother that we will leave the camp soon, but sometimes I think maybe we will be here for another year, and then I feel like I am suffocating.” Nadia is a Yazidi survivor of Islamic State's genocidal attacks on Sinjar, Iraq in 2014. She spent seven months in Moria and another year in a nearby camp with her husband and three children. Twenty-three of her family members, immediate and extended, were killed by Islamic State. Her brothers, who were the first to be killed, were executed in front of her. Nadia was gang-raped in the presence of her eldest child, who was three

years old at the time. Her youngest sister, to whom she was very close, a student and wheelchair-user, was kidnapped during the attack. She was never found and Nadia has tattooed her name, Leila, on her forearm, which she touches frequently as she speaks of her. “Living in the camp brings back all the memories again — of what we escaped and left behind,” she says. “We made this journey because we wanted our children to have lives far away from the suffering and violence we experienced. But here, many women struggle to have hope, because we’ve seen that we left one war and now live another kind of war here. This war is a psychological one, and it is destroying people, too.” The impacts of the camp are profound. NGO mental health teams speak of the overwhelming scale of psychological trauma present in Moria. Despair is a recurrent theme, as is the lack of possibility of constructing any meaning around indefinite, demoralising

limbo. Suicides and attempted suicides of minors have risen dramatically in the past year and serious self-harm is reported in children as young as seven. Médécins Sans Frontières, which operates a clinic across the street from the camp, speak of the prevalence of panic attacks, elective mutism, anxiety, outbursts, and recurrent nightmares amongst the children they engage with. Their staff, on the front-line of a response that struggles to respond to the level of distress witnessed, refer to the camp as a form, and site, of psychological torture. Valere is a 39-year-old mechanical engineer and survivor of torture from Congo. He was part of the Lay Co-ordination Committee of the Catholic Church in Kinshasa and was arrested during a peaceful protest in 2018 calling for the ousting of then-president Joseph Kabila. His back was broken in police detention, resulting in limited mobility. He is dependent on the pair of battered crutches that have accompanied his long journey. He was recently relocated to a temporary, single room flat in the island's capital, Mytilene. Valere speaks of the residual impacts of his trauma, both cognitive and physiological, and of the isolation he now faces. “The camp was so difficult, in many ways, for me,” he says. “I did not feel safe and my body and mind suffered. But now I have been moved to this room alone and been forgotten. There is no one to distract me from my memories. When I go outside I observe how people here see me, and dismiss me, as if being a refugee is my only identity.” Back in the prefab container in Moria, Sara, Adam's 16-year-old aunt,

shows us photos of the family's home and life, during the war. Sara survived the shelling of her school, the deaths of those she knew, and the bombing of her home. She speaks of her father, who was a bank employee before the war and to whom she is deeply bonded. “The war was hard, but our family is close and that protected us,” she says. “We focused on the future. When we left Syria, and were on the boat, we were still so positive. “My father was always strong and calm. But here, he has changed. He feels ashamed that he can't protect us and is worried all the time. I try not to show him my fear, so that he doesn't worry more, but I feel like we are trapped in Moria, with no way forward or back.” Outside in the makeshift camp market, another fight erupts — this time de-escalated by a group of older Somali women. After the crowd disperses, hot food, fruit, phone repair, and second-hand clothes stalls reopen and vendors continue to sell their wares through a multiplicity of languages. Camp inhabitants resume interrupted WhatsApp video calls with families back home. A woman from Congo murmurs a song to her twin toddlers, one balanced on each hip. Small fires illuminate the faces of those gathered around them in the hills surrounding the camp. Upstairs, the Al-Khaili family continue a conversation about the latest restrictive migration policy changes, and how they will impact the next steps of their journey. Adam stands on his over-turned toy box next to a small window, peering outside at the camp below and watching it all in silence. ■ Caoimhe Butterly is a campaigner and trainee psychotherapist and has worked in refugee camps for the past 20 years

LIFE/STYLE

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Getting over the line

As we look forward to International Women's Day, Breda Graham speaks to Bandon-born sprinter Phil Healy on her successes, the challenges facing women in sport, and why we should strive for a more equal sporting world

Cork athlete Phil Healy recently became Ireland's fastest woman. Her impressive performance at the AIT International Grand Prix in Athlone saw her smash the national indoor 200m record with her time of 23.10 seconds.

The 25-year-old broke the 23.17 record of Ciara Sheehy that had stood for 17 years.

She attained the fastest run by a European athlete this season, finishing 61 of a second ahead of Germany's Jessica-Bianca Wessolly as she set her third sprint record on home soil.

Phil now holds the national record in the 100m and 200m outdoor and the 200m indoor sprints.

Her achievement, which was witnessed by a sold-out crowd at the AIT International Arena, was streamed live on TG4 and received a generous amount of media coverage.

Yet, record-breaking moments in women's sports don't receive as much praise as deserved, because we live in a world where men will take the headlines.

That's the view of the Bandon-born sprinter as she celebrates women and their successes in their sport and in their field of work and strives for a more equal world this International Women's Day.

"If you looked at television yesterday, how much of it was men's sport in comparison to women? Kids sitting at home watching TV look up to male rugby players and GAA players.

"How are they supposed to get to know the female players if they're not taken to the matches or they don't see it on television?"

"Our national champions are next week, are they advertised enough? Definitely not. We're not encouraging clubs to come in to watch athletes, to encourage them into the sport."

Phil believes that initiatives such as free tickets into matches or sporting events and encouraging clubs to attend such sporting events would make young people more aware of the female sporting talent that Ireland produces.

"There definitely needs to be more initiatives to bring more people in and more TV coverage of the sport. If people are sitting at home on Sunday and they're watching the sport on television, they get to know more Irish athletes and that promotes the sport itself."

Phil has been competing competi-



Phil Healy believes that initiatives such as free tickets into sporting events would make young people more aware of the female sporting talent that exists in Ireland.



tively, both nationally and internationally, since she was 18.

In those seven years, Phil says she has witnessed inequality in the coverage and celebration of women in their sport.

"In general for sport and even in athletics we need to promote more women in sport, their achievements in sport and have that equality."

"Why should their achievements be brushed under? We train as hard as anyone else so we deserve the

coverage as much as the males do.

Obviously, there are more barriers in terms of professional set-ups across different sports where women are working full time and trying to balance a sport as well, but why shouldn't we celebrate?"

"We saw it with women's hockey. That came down to media coverage because they were doing well and that was promoted. So many people came on board and we got to know the hockey players."

"We need to get as much recognition as we can because women are out there fighting as much in their sport as the males are," she said.

She said that not many inequalities exist between females and males in her sport specifically in terms of television coverage, because men and women compete on the same day and therefore receive the same amount of coverage.

"With athletics men and women compete on the same day so we don't

have inequalities in that way, and we get the same TV coverage as the men do if it's an international competition, but obviously athletics is a minority sport. Our nationals are next week and we don't have TV coverage of that.

"As a female athlete looking at other sports, it definitely isn't fair that women's GAA and women's rugby and sports like that are all brushed under and men will take the headlines."

As an ambassador for women in IT, Phil encourages women's involvement in the sector and has been involved in promoting International Women's Day.

"Why should it just be one day? Yes, one day to promote it but women should be promoted in their sport and in their field every day just like the men, men get 364 days whereas women just get the one."

Phil said that the atmosphere after her recent success in Athlone was "absolutely super" and that her training on the lead up to the sprint paid off on the day.

It was absolutely super to set the record on my home turf. The record stood for 17 years so to break that and add it to one of my collections feels great.

"As well as having a great race, there was a great atmosphere. It was a sold-out crowd and there were so many children."

"Even to give them the time after to sign autographs, take pictures, different things like that, that's going to encourage them."

Phil said that balancing her masters in Waterford Institute of Technology with training six days a week, sometimes having two sessions per day, takes a lot of commitment and that sacrifices have to be made but her support networks give her whatever she needs.

The college is absolutely super both sporting wise and academically wise and they give me whatever I need.

It's just about being mentally prepared, physically prepared and just going out there, enjoying the moment, soaking up the atmosphere and putting in your best performance," she said.

This theme of this year's International Women's Day is 'an equal world is an enabled world' celebrating women's achievement, raising awareness against bias, and taking action for equality.

Outside the box Suzanne Harrington



Follow Suzanne on Twitter: @soozysuze

Politics is about mothers and daughters

Im just back from a month in southern India, where all is lush, peaceful, and communist. In Kerala, this translates as higher literacy rates, greater gender equality, and less desperate poverty, rather than gulags and Stalinist pogroms. Like the rest of secular India, religion is everywhere; temples, mosques and churches tranquilly co-exist side by side. All gods are catered for.

Meanwhile, at the other end of the country, the populist Indian prime minister, Narendra Modi, welcomed his American counterpart, Donald Trump, dozens of people were slaughtered in Delhi. Muslim-owned shops and businesses were burned to the ground, in the most violence for decades, reminiscent of the partition of 1947.

Why? Modi, elected by just 37% of voters, and leader of the ultra-nationalist Hindu BJP party, has been at it again. Rabble-rouser extraordinaire, he is India's Trump. (A decade ago, he was refused a visa to the US; these days, Trump calls him "brother.") Modi's latest attack on democracy is the Citizenship Amendment Act, which discriminates against the 20m Indians who are Muslim. (India is 80% Hindu; Modi loves a scapegoat.) Many Indian Muslims, often poorer than their

Hindu compatriots, don't have the paperwork to prove their citizenship, despite being born and bred there; Modi is building internment camps. People are terrified. And with good reason. Here's a recent story from *The Hindu* newspaper. A 27-year-old Muslim single parent moved from her village, in the southern state of Karnataka, so that her 11-year-old daughter could go to school. The woman rented a place to live and got work as a domestic help, so that her child

could get an education. (Being a single parent in India now is like being a single parent in Ireland fifty years ago; being a poor Muslim woman from a rural village makes it even harder.) But mother and daughter settled into their new life in the town of Bidar. All was going well, until the daughter's class at school put on a play about the Citizenship Amendment Act, and its impact on the lives of ordinary people. The police heard about it, questioned the

children, and arrested the head teacher, herself a Muslim. They also arrested the young Muslim mother from the village, charging her with "teaching objectionable dialogues" to her daughter. The school was charged with sedition.

When her mother was locked up, the 11-year-old child was left in the care of neighbours, before being transferred to a hostel. According to her teacher, a Hindu, the girl was in such a state she couldn't sleep, and

was unable to sit her exams. All she could do was cry for her mother. After several weeks and attention from the media, the mother and the head teacher were released. Meanwhile, back in communist Kerala, the state governor rejected the Citizenship Amendment Act as "illegal and unconstitutional." In Delhi, Modi and Trump brawled each other, united in their policies of persecuting minorities as a way of clinging to power. Ugh.

YOU'VE BEEN SERVED

DENISE O'DONOGHUE

I have been working in hospitality for the past six years in total, having previously worked in the manufacturing industry for 10 years.

Having gone through the transition to hospitality, I must say I was hooked from the start. I love the variety of the day to day operations and the excitement of bringing my previous work experience to the industry.

My experience has been more colourful than any other as it allows me the freedom and mobility to meet and interact with people more freely.

Honestly, my day varies so much I would not know where to begin! Because I work for a group I could be at any property at any given time and my diary is usually filled months in advance. I juggle quite a lot at any given time working on day to day projects with the team and planning ahead for the



Kathleen Linehan

future. To help me structure this I work off of a five-year plan, typically involving recruitment, training, benefits, policies and legal compliance.

I also have the opportunity to represent Trigon at different events as a guest speaker, this is a great learning opportunity for me, while I get to share and talk about our experiences and practices I also get to learn from my peers.

Recently at our Annual Awards, a new team member from one of our hotels came up to me and said: "I love

working here. For the first time, I wake up every morning happy about going to work where I have friends and everyone is treated the same".

To me, that is the best reward of the job.

Our industry is rapidly changing, this requires organizational planning and leverage for the changes in the way we will need to get work done over the next decade for many reasons including influences by generational, technological and social changes.

This is what probably excites me the most, I enjoy working on projects that I know can have an impact and seeing those changes is hugely rewarding. I always tell people to choose a career that will enable you to do what you love the most and it will come easy to you. While there are times it can be difficult to juggle so many things I have to say I love what I do and could never see myself working in any other profession.

■ Kathleen Linehan is HR Director with Trigon Hotels in Cork.



Editor: Esther N McCarthy @estread

Monday, 2 March, 2020

'Clubbing was educational'



This International Women's Day is all about the idea of 'Each for Equal' and that's something I think is so important.

I would like women to realise that they don't have to have it all. Having it all means doing it all and that is ridiculous. I wish we could all see that the weight of work and labour should be shared and equal between everyone and that women realise that it's not their duty to look after everyone, they need to be looked after too!

My primary school was St Killian's in Kingswood where I grew up and then I went to Presentation in Terenure for my secondary journey.

I can't say it was my favourite time. I hated the structure, the focus on getting points and having to do all this work and not get paid for it!

I was the shyest child you've ever known. If anyone spoke to me my whole face would go up in flames and if I had to answer a question or read something, I would wish for the world to open up and swallow me.

My mom had me signed up to drama from a young age to build my confidence and try to get rid of the shyness. However, once I found myself in a part time job in retail in town, with a penchant for clubs, that all changed. It brought me out of my shell and made me who I am now. Yes, I am comparing clubs to an educational process.

Even though I was shy, I did make friends easily. One of my most vivid memories of school was during fifth year at Presentation. I'd been quite studious up until this stage and between my Junior Cert and 5th year discovered clubbing and all the wonders that were out in the real world (don't tell Mom).

I had a big conversation with a teacher about how I felt it didn't make sense to give over your whole life at the time to study, preferring to be an average grade student with a balanced teenage life. I think this was the best lesson I ever learned in school. Of course, apply yourself but do be cognisant of the cost and if it's worth the sacrifice.

I think having that breakthrough in 5th year about not having to conform to be the best has fully formed



Entrepreneur and activist, Andrea Horan.

my outlook on life today. I didn't have the capacity to put it into words when I was younger, but now it's distilled into my life mantra: Create the life you want to live. As I was a nerd for most of my school days, I got on well with teachers but I don't think I made an impact on them especially — I was kind of just meh.

Ms Jones, who taught me in Presentation, stands out to me as a teacher. She treated us like adults, was quite sarcastic and had all the

attributes of a normal person. And I think in school, that's what you crave the most. To be treated as a person. Up until Junior Cert I wanted to be a psychologist. I was influenced by pop culture and saw *Prince of Tides* and was like, that's it, that's what I want to be. Then my awakening happened after JC and I realised how many points I'd need and my interest was lost. I watched *Absolutely Fabulous* and I knew PR was the life for me. I wanted to be Edina Monsoon.

So I set my eyes on Communications in DCU. I didn't get the points but did PR and Comms as a cert in Rathmines which got me the Comms job I wanted. I had a little moment thinking about psychology again when I was older and enrolled as a mature student. All I can say is, not to sound like a Pinterest quote but you end up on the life that's meant for you. You may not know it at the time, but if you listen to what makes you happy that's how you'll make

“If you listen to what makes you happy, that's how you'll make your heart sing

your heart sing, not what you think you should do. I would have been Queen Depresso Martini if I ended up as a psychologist. It wouldn't have suited my personality or made me as happy as doing the things I'm doing now. I think whilst social media can be troublesome, it has also created an equality for kids today.

So often their thinking and visions are underestimated and the online world can take away a lot of the preconceptions garnered from ageism and they can achieve their wildest dreams. Think of the likes of Greta, the schoolkids in the US who campaigned against guns.

I think it's important to treat children like autonomous people who have a wealth of offerings to bring to the world. There's kids out there who have monetised their social media and are buying houses for their parents.

I like to try and change things I believe to be unfair or unjust but doing it in a way that suits who I am. I can care about human rights and campaigning for them whilst also caring about what colour lipstick I'm wearing. I'm ambitious and lazy. I hunger for success but on my own terms.

I think realising that you can be all of these things at the same time and not have to be defined by a societal description of who you are should be something we should all remember.

■ Andrea Horan is the owner of Tropical Popical nail bar, the co-presenter of the *United Ireland* podcast with Una Mullally, the co-creator behind the No More Hotels campaigning clubnigh and TEDx speaker on 'Escaping the Economy of More'

IN CONVERSATION
WITH CIARA McDONELL

APPLIANCE OF SCIENCE



Dr Naomi Lavelle

We have wonderful, female role models in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths), but is gender balance still an issue? To gain an insight, I spoke to three females in different areas, and stages, of science.

Dr. Maria McNamara

Dr. Maria McNamara is a palaeobiologist and senior lecturer in geoscience at University College Cork (UCC). Her research focuses on preservation of colour in fossil insects and vertebrates. She is an advocate for gender balance in science and addresses this within her school via mentoring programmes that dispel gender myths about specific science subjects.

McNamara says two areas require more focus: firstly, early school years, when gender bias influences children within a year of their starting school. Secondly, early career researchers and policies relating to maternity leave.

“It would be useful to take stock at a national level, surveying our incoming first year students... to find their motivations for choosing a degree in science (or not) and come up with national strategies to tackle problem issues,” she says.

Dr. Niamh Kavanagh

Dr. Niamh Kavanagh has recently completed her PhD in photonics and fibre-optic communication systems, at Tyndall National Institute, UCC. Kavanagh is also a science communicator and a passionate supporter for diversity within STEM.



Niamh Kavanagh: PhD in photonics and fibre-optic communication systems.

She is involved in House of STEM, a community-led network to improve LGBTIQ representation in STEM and STEM-related fields in Ireland.

Her enthusiasm for science did not spark until her teens, encouraged by her physics teacher, who helped her develop her quest for answers into a love of the subject. It was a magical fountain show that began her interest in the physics of light.

Kavanagh noticed a significant gender imbalance when she began studying physics at university. She felt an added pressure to succeed to prove that women do belong in physics.

Addressing gender imbalance in Ireland, Niamh says there is still much to do, as well as addressing our own accountability, we also need to look at the diversity of the decision-makers. Women do not need to change themselves so that they can better benefit from STEM; instead, we need to change the culture of STEM, so that it can benefit from women.

Ciarra Boylan

Twelve-year-old Ciarra has a passion for all things STEM, and a particular interest in space. She documents her scientific journey on her blog, *ciarasjourney.com*, and on her twitter account (@JourneyCiarra).

Ciarra is a voice of future women in science, and I was curious to know how she feels about her place in STEM. Ciarra has grown up drawing and painting, and she has great female scientists, from Marie Curie (the double Nobel Prize winner) to more recent role models like Dr. Nora Patten (an astrophysical engineer) and Nina Kanti (part of the award-winning team that created a hyper-loop prototype, Elioport).

Ciarra admires the work of so many women who have gone before her, and who have fought for her rights for equality.

“Because of their hard work... I do not believe it will be an issue for me to get a job in medicine, engineering, or astrophysics, and for that I am proud of the women that came before me,” Ciarra says.

Opening Lines Colm O'Regan

I's International Women's Day next Sunday and, as a father of daughters...

Sorry. That phrase, “as a father of daughters”, just falls out of me every time I want to weigh in with my opinion. I saunter up like the MS Word Office Assistant Clippy and nearly say: “It looks like you are talking to women. Would you like me to help you with your opinion?”

Well this is an AAPOD article, but don't worry. It's just about practicalities. Because AABOAB — as a brother of only brothers — I've missed out on a lot of girlhood. I interviewed my daughters about what it means to be a girl. The toddler has no available comment. She had just been given jammy toast, and was hyper and jumping up and down shouting: “I'm not a girl, I'm a little baby.” Which is profound. She is also currently minding a stone (named Stony Woney).

““

The eldest used to be into dinosaurs, then sea creatures, then vampires. And now she's into princesses and fancy things...and twirling.

The four-year-old was more forthcoming.

“Being a girl means getting to wear tights a lot.” But “boys can wear tights as well”. Are boys and girls different?

“A little bit different. Girls have boobs and can have babies.” We told ourselves at the start of this parenting journey that we were going to try and avoid overly gendered toys. I wanted my daughters not to feel shoe-horned into anything that would prevent them from being STEM heroes or World President.

We just let the girls play with driftwood, but somehow the pink things seeped into the house.

The eldest used to be into dinosaurs, then sea creatures, then vampires. And now she's into princesses and fancy things. She “really really [x10] wants to be fancy”.

She wants to be a ballerina and then a ballerina teacher when she

grows up. When she's doing ballet “I feel like I'm a girl and because I can twirl”. And twirling is just as valid an expression of physicality as hitting someone with a fair shoulder and driving them out over the advertising hoarding.

She got me to twirl. And twirling made me feel fancy. And fancy is a nice feeling.

I've had my nails painted, and veterans of the job tell me it's only a matter of time before my eye shadow is done. Which is fine because I'm feeling a little puffy lately.

We have seen both types of princesses in our reading. There are the modern princesses who rebel against outdated roles. And then there are the fairy stories that haven't been touched by any wave of feminism.

The eldest likes both types, but has raised questions about why any princess would marry someone so quickly after meeting them.



Follow Colm on Twitter: @colmoregan @irishmammies

OUTDOORS

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There's something in the air

THE open fire in the sittingroom has been replaced by the more efficient solid-fuel stove. But the smoke must still go somewhere.

You need only walk in residential areas of any city or town these cold and damp nights to notice air pollution. Last December, the air in monitored parts of Cork city was found to be of poor quality, even by European standards.

If you can't see it, you will certainly smell it and, after a while, you will taste it. In low-lying towns, air pollution can lead to a form of smog. Standing on high ground above Killarney, Co Kerry, on clear, windless nights, I've seen a thick cloud sitting over the town and partially obscuring public lighting.

The EPA warns that emissions from solid-fuel burning are the greatest threat to good air, closely followed by transport emissions. Some experts now claim poor quality air is as harmful as tobacco smoke. The EPA says our air quality is good relative to other EU countries, but does not measure up to World Health Organisation standards.

Chief sources of this pollution are emissions from vehicles in urban areas and from burning of solid fuels, such as coal, timber, and turf. These pollutants take the form of tiny solid or liquid particles. Poor air quality has short-term health implications, such as headaches, breathing difficulties, and eye irritation, and long-term effects, including asthma, cancer, reduced liver function, or heart disease.

Wood is a renewable fuel, but scientists in UK universities are now saying wood-burning people died prematurely in 2016 due to breathing polluted air. The 380,000 people who have asthma in Ireland are at an increased risk of death because of air pollution.

Worryingly, new evidence identifies traffic pollution as a cause of asthma in children, she adds.

And, like so many other matters regarding the environment, the asthma society believes children may be the key to tackling air pollution. A Clear Air Competition for second-level schools will educate young people on the detrimental health effects of breathing polluted air, while also encouraging them to improve air quality in their localities.

It is Ireland's biggest island when not counting islands connected by causeway, sandbar, or bridge, such as Valentia Island,

■ See asthma.ie

THE ISLANDS OF IRELAND

Inis Mór than meets the eye



A view of the cliffs of Inis Mór, the largest of the Aran Islands, and the Atlantic Ocean from within the walls of Dun Aengus. The playwright JM Synge (right) is one among many writers and artists to have been inspired by the islands' rugged landscape.

WHERE to start with this awesome wedge of rock in the Atlantic? At the beginning? But where is the beginning? Inis Mór is a continuation of the Burren, whose limestone beds were laid down in the Carboniferous era 350 million years ago.

It is an island which has had human habitation for more than 4,000 years. That such a small area can have had such an enormous impact on a people can barely be overstated: It is a lodestone, a refuge, an idea. It has created writers in the novelist Liam O'Flaherty and poet Máirtín O Direáin. It has nurtured others, including JM Synge, whose *The Aran Islands*, illustrated by Jack B Yeats, avowed polite society in Dublin to a monumentally different world to theirs; and Yorkshire mathematician and cartographer Tim Robinson, who depicted the landscape in his classic *Stones of Aran*. Limerick artist Sean Keating's paintings of the Aran Islands from the middle of the last century are famous for installing concepts of the West in the Irish imagination.

Robert J Flaherty's documentary *Man of Aran* from 1934 engaged in some myth-making — shark fishing hadn't been carried out as depicted for over 50 years — but sharply illustrated life on the islands. Inis Mór (Inishmore) — see link below — is the largest of the Aran Islands and considerably larger than its neighbours to the southeast, Inis Meán (Inishmaan) and Inis Oírr (Inishere) whose combined size would fit into half of the main island.

However, that is not all the Aran Islands: Stray Island lies just to the east of Inis Mór, while to the west are Brannock Island and Rock Island, making a total of six Aran islands. Aran is the anglicisation of arann, meaning kidney-shaped. The main island is sometimes mistakenly called Aran Mor, confusing it with Arranmore, Co Donegal.

It is Ireland's biggest island when not counting islands connected by causeway, sandbar, or bridge, such as Valentia Island,



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Co Kerry. Its 7,650 acres support a population of about 850 people, which means by itself it comprises a sizeable percentage of our islands' inhabitants. Of course Inis Mór is a real island and not a concept, and people live, work, and rear families there. It has a vigorous tourist industry, mainly in the summer, with manifold outdoor activities to entertain visitors.

A glance at the satellite view on Google maps reveals the astonishing topography of the place. A lot of it is swathed in sheets of limestone, but much too is divided and subdivided into rectangular fields whose very existence emerged from decades of painstaking removal of stones and careful fertilisation of the soil with seaweed.

Many of these fields have their own names and stories, and Robinson's meticulous recording of the rich lore contained within is a magnificent service to our heritage. Eamon Lankford has done the same for Cape Clear, Co Cork, as has Anthony Beese for the Skeams, Long Island, and Castle Island across from Cape Clear. Inis Mór's difference was alluded to in a 1980's documentary by film-maker Bob Quinn who suggested that the blood type of



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Dogs' behaviour inherited from wolves

DOGS love to chase a ball. Were they taught to do this by our ancestors? An animal able to retrieve carcasses would provide a valuable service during hunts, as wildfowling dogs still do today. Pups responding well to human commands could have been selected and trained. Now, however, a discovery made at Stockholm University is challenging this idea. Retrieving, researchers there claim, is not an artificially acquired behaviour. It's innate, inherited from the dog's ancestor of at least 15,000 years ago, the wolf.

Christina Hansen Wheat and Hans Temrin have studied the effects of domestication on both dogs and wolves. Her team hand-raised dog and wolf puppies under identical conditions and compared their performances in behavioural experiments.

In one test, a ball was thrown across a room. Dog puppies were encouraged to retrieve the ball and most of them learned to do so immediately. Then the test was given to wolf pups from three different litters. Those from two of the litters failed to respond to the ball, but some of cubs in the third litter did. Three of 13 eight-week-old puppies "showed interest in a ball" and, when encouraged to do so, fetched and returned it to their handlers. They did so even when the ball was thrown by "a perfect stranger".

Wheat and her colleagues were astonished. "I literally got goose bumps," Wheat told *Science News*, "it was so unexpected".

The behaviour showed that fetching, and the ability to respond to cues given by



Baby wolf cubs near their den. Research showed that fetching is innate in wolves.

humans, are innate in wolves. Retrieving things thrown for them is, therefore, a behaviour which dogs inherited. It was not just the result of training. Wolf puppies, capable of human-directed behaviour, "could have had a selective advantage in the early stages of dog domestication", says Wheat.

This is not the first observation on which wolves have got one over on dogs. Three years ago, researchers at the Wolf Science Centre in Vienna estimated that wolves have a better understanding of cause and effect than dogs. A team there investigated the cognitive skills of 14 dogs and 12 wolves.

This is not the first observation on which wolves have got one over on dogs. Three years ago, researchers at the Wolf Science Centre in Vienna estimated that wolves have a better understanding of cause and effect than dogs. A team there investigated the cognitive skills of 14 dogs and 12 wolves.

Both species responded to visual cues given by experimenters as to correct box; the animals would go directly to a box pointed out to them. However, the helper had to maintain direct eye-contact with them when doing so. Wolves, but dogs, neither dogs nor wolves responded to pointing.

Faced with finding the correct box on their own initiative, the wolves proved more successful than the dogs.

An empty box, for instance, is not noisy when shaken, whereas one with food items inside it rattles. Wolves, but not dogs, grasped this.

Such tests, the experimenters conclude, indicate that wolves have a better understanding of cause and effect than dogs. Not everyone agrees. Wolves must fend for themselves in the wild, whereas dogs have their food served up to them by their owners. Perhaps Vics are just 'laid back', out of practice when facing the kind of task wolves encounter constantly in the wild.

■ Christina Hansen Wheat & Hans Temrin. Intrinsic ball retrieving in wolf puppies suggests standing ancestral variation for human-directed play behaviour. iScience. 2019.

No first light on island as dust storm rages over Canaries

ON SUNDAY morning two weeks ago, while I read reports in newspapers from all over the world of the 'Calima' of dust storms from Africa then obscuring images of the Canary Islands, photographs taken from outer space, those very storms were happening outside my first-floor window.

I had intended, this week, to write about the scandal of supertrawlers with nets as big as football pitches operating from our Irish ports, raking up the oceans of the world. However, finding myself at the epicentre of a Canarian dust storm of an intensity which, according to the *Irish Times*, in Spain's newspaper of record, *El País*, has never been seen before, I felt I should report the effects "on the ground" and leave the supertrawlers for another day.

On Sunday afternoon, as the winds rampaged through deserts of the coastal and mountain villages of the Valle Gran Rey on La Gomera, I dusted off the screen of my laptop and began to try to describe the world I found myself living in from first light that day.

One could hardly have called the break of dawn "first light"; there was scarcely any light in the morning sun. Instead of a golden globe rising in a clear blue sky above the island of El Hierro, 90km to the south west, it was a dead, silver ball in a dead, brown sky and, beneath it, on that February 23 morning, El Hierro wasn't visible.

That day, a storm of dust and ash, and every bush and tree was cruelly tortured, or tortured to death, by the gusts which, every few minutes, lifted anything that wasn't nailed down into the sky or carried palm tree branches whizzing along the streets and over the houses.



Damien Enright

damien.enright@examiner.ie

It was no time to go out. When the split cane curtain lending privacy to our balcony was ripped back, saw occasional hardly souls plugging along the street, many with scarves wrapped around their faces or, indeed, entirely enfolded in what the British call women of the Sahara. One or two couples, clearly foreign visitors, had children with them — I suppose they had missions that couldn't wait.

In one case, I saw a tiny, blonde child lifted off its feet behind its father and, I believe, it would have been airborne had not the father held a strong grip on its small hand. God help the newly arrived holidaymakers. It was midwinter break in mainland Europe. This visit from winter in Europe should have been the consummation of a dream.

On the night before, February 22, the ferry from Tenerife to La Gomera had been full to capacity, more than 1,200 passengers. Some 200 of these had taken the onward local ferry to



Exhibition piece of a typical five-metres long, one-man La Gomera fishing boat lifted from its plinth and overturned by the ferocious Calima wind from Africa which hit the Canary Islands in recent weeks.

Valle Gran Rey. They woke next morning to a scene of apocalypse. All that was missing from the potpourri of airborne debris was flying plastic bags and household garbage, a testament to the energy and organisation of the local council and the awareness of the local people — a combination which better manages garbage than anywhere else I've ever been. There is always a litter bin close to hand when you need one, and mini-car size street-side garbage vats at reachable distances all over the villages and valley.

The notes of dust from Africa, so minuscule that they pervaded every crack and cranny, gathered in drifts and painted all they settled upon pale

pink or yellow. This is the colour of Saharan sand. Minerals in the sand help make fertile the islands' volcanic soils and are integral in their diverse and fruitful ecology. Half a dozen Calimas could be expected each year. Now, however, they come too often and, this time, with a ferocity never seen before.

La Gomera, with its 1,500m plateau of cloud forest (believed to have been in existence for millions of years) is far more fortunate than the northern islands of Fuerteventura and Lanzarote, bone dry and only 100km from the African coast.

With the wind, came African dragons by the hundred, zipping and hawking over the streets and the

gardens of mango and avocado trees behind our apartment. Multitudes could not have locally matured from larvae to death-defying flying machines overnight. I've looked for roadside casualties, hoping to identify the species (Africa holds 800), but they are too fast for cars. Locusts arrive on Calimas, but not this time.

At last, the dust settled and on Tuesday night, we again saw the evening star and, then, the constellations. Perhaps tomorrow morning we'd see Hierro and, tomorrow evening, the sun going down into the sea to one side of it. It's a very isolated island. Perhaps not a bad place, in the present human crisis, to be.

One of the stand-out documentaries at Dublin's film festival is about a school in Russia that teaches women to be more attractive, writes Richard Fitzpatrick

It's a man's world in Russia. Men outnumber women demographically in what is still a very patriarchal society. The resulting dating game is explored in the documentary *School of Seduction*. The film, which has been a decade in the making, follows the contrasting fortunes of three Russian women as they take classes, along with about 20 other women, in a swasty classroom to improve their skills in attracting men.

The women take direction from a middle-aged man. "Use bait!" he exhorts them, as he teaches them how to dance (in their lingerie) and undress in a sultry way. The advice he gives them lurches from the bizarre to the sexist. He encourages them to be like a little girl. "Cry in front of him," he says. Be good fun, but don't try to be too intelligent, he warns them, as no man wants a woman with "issues".

"Ten years ago in Russia, we had a lot of classes like this," says Alina Rudnitskaya, director of *School of Seduction*. "Times were changing in Russia. Communism had ended. Capitalism had taken over. Women wanted to change, but they didn't know how to change themselves. It's why these kinds of classes were popular."

"What interested me in these classes is that it was a man who taught women how to change. Most of the women who came to these classes were a little bit desperate. They were divorced, for example, or they couldn't find a man."

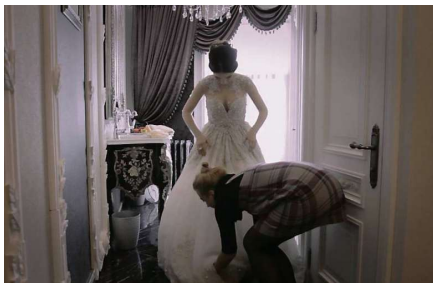
The director says attendees really trusted the teacher because he was a man. "They believed he would understand what a man wanted and what was best for a woman. What should I do so that a man likes me?" They believed he could give them knowledge that could help to change their lives."

"Today in Russia, psychology is becoming popular. Ten years ago, for many women to come to these kinds of 'seduction' classes, it was like therapy for them. The classes were like a women's club - where women could speak amongst themselves, and share their ideas of how to be a better woman and how to become sexier."

Although president Vladimir Putin's presence is fleeting in the documentary, his voice is heard, surprisingly so. "It's clear the influence he has on Russian society. In a public address, broadcast on television the day of International Women's Day, he notes



Keeping men happy



Scenes from *School of Seduction*, the Russian-set documentary being screened this week at the Dublin Film Festival.

that women "have other competitive advantages like their beauty, their charm, their warm-heartedness", as if he was describing a branch of the country's industrial sector.

"What Putin says is our mentality," says Rudnitskaya. "It's what our mothers and grandmothers told us - that a woman should be feminine and a man should earn money. I tried to show in my documentary what happens when a woman lives in a patriarchal world. Women in Russia really depend on men. We still

don't have equal pay. Women earn 30% less than men."

"We are born in a society where men should be strong, brutal and have a good income. Women should be pretty and try to cater for their man, cooking for them, staying at home with the children and so on. What is really important in our society is not who are you but who is your husband. How many children do you have? If you have one child why don't you have another one? If you're not married, it means that

you're ugly and nobody wants you. If a woman has a good income or is a single mother 'maybe she's a lesbian'. In Russia, feminism is still a bad word."

Rudnitskaya says that nowadays in Russia - compared to 2008 when she started making her documentary - the focus for women taking seduction classes has moved beyond teaching women how to be sexy to instruction about how to become more elegant, which is explored in the journey of the third and final



Pictures: Alina Rudnitskaya

What is really important in our society is not who are you but who is your husband

Glad to be getting out of there

It's not everybody's idea of fun. Who wants to pass interminable weeks in an oven-hot jungle, away from family and friends, being gorged on by mosquitos, routinely having to carry outretch-inducing tasks? All on a diet of rice and beans for food, nerves frayed to cracking point from sleep deprivation, while the TV-viewing public looks on at your daily humiliation.

When Andrew Maxwell got the call to go on *I'm a Celebrity... Get Me Out of Here!*, though, he jumped at the chance. OK, the money he got for it, reportedly around the €60,000 mark, must have helped.

"I was blown away," says Maxwell. "It's 13 million people in Britain, and half a million in Ireland, who watch it. It's like a TV national institution. I've spent a lot of time giggling in Australia. It's in cities, of course, connected to comedy festivals. I've always been curious about getting out to the bush, or 'the jungle', as it's called on television. I thought, it's a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. When is someone going to pay me to live in a tropical rainforest in the jungle for weeks on end? So I went for it."

Maxwell, who was taking part in the nineteenth edition of the jungle-test reality TV show, was joined by a series of British celebrities, including Nadine Coyle and the winner, a former *EastEnders* actor, Jacqueline Jossa, as well as the star American attraction, Caitlyn Jenner.

"It gave me a real insight into food insecurity and what it does to your mind," says Maxwell. "Your body is screaming. Where's the food? Why is there no food? Why have we ever got fed again? There's physiological stuff that happens to you. In the first 48 hours, you start stuttering. Every-

Andrew Maxwell had a mixed time on *I'm a Celebrity*, but is delighted to be back on the stand-up circuit, writes Richard Fitzpatrick

body got it. We were all thinking, what the hell is happening? We were told it was just a phase as the sugar was leaving our systems, and then it passed."

Maxwell didn't always have an easy ride, emotionally. He had a choking attack in one scene when some camel meat got stuck in his throat. The exhaustion got to him, too. He had some tetchy exchanges with surly ex-footballer Ian Wright, for example, and Maxwell broke down at one stage, admitting to Jossa he was feeling "overwhelmed".

Like the other contestants, he also had to contend with being monitored.



Andrew Maxwell will do his stand-up routine in Cork on March 13.



with the more stressful moments and personality clashes being churned out for the titillation of television viewers.

"Nobody is used to constant observation," says Maxwell. "The thing is when you're on an upswing and you're feeling good, you don't mind. It's when - for whatever reason - it all starts to get to you, if you're feeling down, if you start thinking [about] everybody who doesn't like you, it can really prey on your mind."

Maxwell says he devised a coping mechanism from his previous experience on a reality TV show. In

I just imagined that I was being constantly observed by a female goddess, who was slightly randy and omnipotent

2004, he was boxed up for several weeks living in a Big Brother-style house with seven fellow comers in a one-off Channel 4 vehicle, *Kings of Comedy*, a Russell Brand-presented show that Maxwell won.

"What I learned from *Kings of Comedy* is just don't imagine anybody is watching it. Or in my case, I just imagined that I was being constantly observed by a female goddess, who was slightly randy and omnipotent. You gotta play those mind games with yourself."

Maxwell was the second contestant to be voted off the show. 16 days into the adventure, but it's impact still resonates. It has helped raise his profile, and to promote his shows, including his current Irish stand-up tour.

"It's been a great experience," says Maxwell. "The lasting exposure from the jungle is all helping like gangbusters with ticket sales."

The Dublin comic, who has been based in the UK since the 1990s, won't, however, be pushing to go back on the show as a contestant.

"Number one: nobody's been invited on it twice," he says, "but I'd certainly like to go along and take the mickey out of people stranded in the jungle. That sounds fun."

Andrew Maxwell will perform his show *Reality at Cypress Avenue* in Cork on Friday March 13

Top docs in Dublin

■ **When Women Won** (Light House, 4pm, Thursday): Anna Rodgers's documentary on three feminists at the heart of the Repeal the Eighth Amendment campaign, who were prompted into action after the tragic death of Savita Halappanavar.

■ **The Hottest August** (Light House, 4pm): Brett Stacey's documentary about the anxiety experienced by New Yorkers in the face of climate change, which has received widespread acclaim on the international film festival circuit.

■ **Windmill Lane** (Cineworld, 6pm, Saturday): Alan Moloney's documentary about how a warehouse in an unfancied part of Dublin became one of the cultural touchstones of the country - for example, the recording studio for artists like U2 and a post-production unit for films such as *King Arthur* - since it was founded in 1978.

■ **Billie** (Light House, 6pm, Saturday): From the producers of the Oscar-winning documentary *Man on Wire* comes a film about the life of legendary singer Billie Holiday.

character in her documentary, a lady called Diana.

Life hasn't been easy for Diana. Her mother was an alcoholic, her father a "tyrant" so she moved in with her grandmother, who, it seems, suffers from dementia. She brings her son with her, who is only four when we first meet him. Diana fell in love with the boy's father because of his "big nose", and nothing much else, she says wistfully. When she became pregnant, he left her.

During the documentary, we're introduced to some of her suitors, including drunken English-speaking tourists in pick-up bars and a local Russian guy who lacks career prospects. Diana is quite firm with him: "There can't be a relationship without an apartment or money," she says.

Eventually, she marries an older, Italian guy lecturing at a university in Moscow, but she doesn't stop striving. She graduates to taking classes at the Austrian Higher School of Ladies where she's instructed in social etiquette skills like table manners, horse-riding and how to walk while balancing a book on her head. She's given a screen test where she quotes Nicole Kidman's character in the movie *Grace of Monaco*. Her Italian husband gives his imprimatur for her to take these self-improvement classes. "He's liberal. He can't forbid her to do what she wants. He doesn't think about the consequences," says Rudnitskaya.

In the documentary's penultimate scene, she heads to Monte Carlo with her son, who is now almost a teen-ager. While outside a posh hotel, he gushes into the hand-held camera they bring with them, happy to share in her dreams. "Beautiful women can meet a millionaire here."

■ *School of Seduction* will be screened as part of the Virgin Media Dublin International Film Festival, on Thursday

5 THINGS FOR THE WEEK AHEAD

1 **TV** **MAUDIE**
Decent indie film about real-life Nova Scotia 'outsider' artist Maud Lewis. Directed by Irish woman Aisling Walsh.
■ Tonight (Monday), TGA, 9.30pm

2 **gig** **THE 1975**
Matthew Healy and co return to Ireland with their polished pop-funk, and the frontman's between-song chatter.
■ Tuesday, 3Arena, Dublin



3 **film** **CORK FRENCH FILM FESTIVAL**
Eva Green and Matt Dillon star in opening film *Proxima*, above, and there are plenty more interesting Gallic offerings until the closing gala on Sunday.
■ Wednesday to March 8

4 **art** **IN TRANSIT**
Five international artists explore the experience of immigrants who live between different cultures.
■ From Friday, Crawford Art Gallery, Cork

5 **gig** **JOHN HOPKINS**
The electronic maestro actually plays grand piano for parts of a show in which he'll be joined by various musicians.
■ Friday, BGE Theatre, Dublin

Des O'Driscoll



Press Play



From news and politics, to satire and sport press play
today on your Irish Examiner podcast



Tourism faces blow after US 'no travel' advice

Eamon Quinn

Irish tourism is facing more uncertainty after the US issued warnings about travel to parts of Italy and the French authorities closed the Louvre Museum in Paris over concerns for its staff catching the coronavirus from the hundreds of people streaming through its doors.

Tourism chiefs here have been on high alert since the first of two victims of

COVID-19 was confirmed last week.

The Irish outbreak received widespread coverage in the media around the world.

Eoghan O'Mara Walsh, head of the Irish Tourism Industry Confederation, which represents the Irish tourism industry and the government tourist boards North and South, is preparing to attend a Department of Health meeting later today.

He said that the travel bans announced over the weekend by the US for its citizens to parts of Italy most affected by the outbreak and the closure of the Louvre will cause new concerns for the prospects for Irish tourism in the coming season.

"It is very concerning and alarming for ever sector but travel and tourism is likely to be most affected," said Mr O'Mara Walsh.

Companies as diverse as

Diageo, which makes Guinness, Baileys, and Smirnoff; Danone, the foods giant that also makes baby formula in Ireland; and Apple, have warned in the last two weeks about financial hits from coronavirus due to lower Asian sales or the huge disruption to their supply chains that threaten across China.

Amid last week's huge stock market sell-off, the shares of travel giants and airlines have been particularly badly hit. That reflected fears that American visitors will cancel travel plans to Europe should the outbreak fail to be contained in the coming months.

Bloomberg reported that the US state department upgraded its advisory for the Italian regions that include Milan and Venice to "do not travel", due to "the level of community transmission of the virus and imposition

of local quarantine procedures". Those regions include the country's finance hub, Milan, and Venice.

The rest of Italy is still ranked "reconsider travel" by the US authorities. Italy has reported more than 1,100 confirmed cases of the infection.

The US also issued a "do not travel" warning for the Daegu region in southeastern South Korea.

Meanwhile, Japan raised its travel advisory for Daegu city and Cheongdo county in the province of Gyeongsangbuk-do to level 3, or a "do not travel" level.

Japan's ministry of foreign affairs also raised the alert for Italy's Lombardy, Veneto, and Emilia-Romagna regions to level 2 from level 1.

France's Louvre Museum remained shut yesterday amid concern about coronavirus.

The shutdown followed a government decision on Saturday to ban indoor public gatherings of more than 5,000 people.

There was better news for the PSA Group, the maker of Peugeot cars, which has been told by Chinese authorities that the company will be able to restart industrial activities in the Hubei province from March 11, said chief executive Carlos Tavares yesterday.

No one can say where stocks will head due to coronavirus

Peter Brown

Up the escalator, and down the lift, is the old stock market adage that remains all too relevant.

The "up" bit had lasted for the past nine years. As stock markets had made huge strides, but in a very steady fashion.

A slow climb up meant that markets rose most days, and the reasons were not hard to find.

The recovery from the global banking crash in 2008 amid rock-bottom interest rates around the world has been very good for stock markets.

The market had climbed as money poured into company stocks and as central banks printed money to try to boost economic growth.

One consequence has been overinflated prices in some areas of the stock market, leaving them vulnerable to a correction.

Nonetheless, market corrections since 2009 have been short-lived.

The oil crisis in 2015 and hikes to US interest rates in late 2018 were also scary signals for investors to sell up. Yet, the market recovered strongly on both occasions and went on to reach new all-time highs.

And anyone who got out of shares or sold part of their holdings soon regretted it.

But the enduring problem is that bear markets jump out to catch investors unaware.

Investors lose their gains which have been built up over months, in a couple of days.

We saw that in recent days when Wall Street shed 2,000 points in a few days.

The last week or so has provided an example of the truth of the "up the escalator and down the lift" saying.

Despite the huge sell-offs, stock markets remained at historically elevated levels last week, amid growing fears of the economic fallout of the coronavirus.

Fund managers need strong arguments to take their clients out of stocks. In a bit of bad news, a 10% correction, as happened last week, was not enough to do it.

Selling when stock markets shed gains very quickly has proved to be a foolish strategy in the past. Indeed, clients would get very annoyed to be holding cash if soon after, stock markets were to recover and go on to post new all-time high levels.

That means that every time there is a correction, there is much advice urging investors to buy more stocks.

The scenario in which a fund manager recommends liquidating a client's portfolio is when there is

likely to be a fall of around 20% and when stock markets are likely to remain in a bear market territory for a number of years.

For that analysis to come true, the prospect of a global recession would have to loom large. Or maybe, US investors are also moving prices to take account of the policy shakeup should Bernie Sanders be elected as the next US president.

Whether the coronavirus is serious enough to cause a global recession will have to be weighed. A global slowdown is a certainty but that will usher in even lower interest rates — just look at the yield on the Irish Government 10-year bond, at minus-20 basis points, a historic low.

Germany likewise, at minus 50 basis points, signals there will be a slowdown in global economic growth.

Mr Sanders winning in the US is a very different matter. His pledge to forgive all student debt, if implemented, would send shock waves through the financial markets.

The heavy selling on stock markets in recent days may also have to do with his story too.

Joe Biden winning over the weekend in South Carolina may provide some relief to investors, while the Democratic nomination trail on "Super Tuesday" will go a long way to deciding who will compete against Donald Trump.

The market will be very focused on the outcome. On the virus, investors signals there will be a slowdown in global economic growth.

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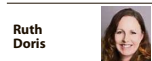
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Bright spark



Have you the next big idea to solve Ireland's social problems? 'See past the problems to the solutions' is the call from Social Entrepreneurs Ireland (SEI) who has launched its national campaign for applications, supported by DCC plc. SEI is looking for people across the country with innovative ideas to solve social problems to apply to one of its support programmes. Joanne Cox, creator of the Now We're Cooking Programme, is pictured with her daughter Lily-Mae and SEI alumni, Rosemary Kuneke, founder of Dignity Partnership. Interested candidates can apply or find out more at www.socialentrepreneurs.ie. Applications close on April 7.

Leaning on the experience of women



International Women's Day next Sunday is a chance to highlight the challenges and opportunities for women entrepreneurs and business owners.

While women account for only one-fifth of entrepreneurs, the numbers are growing thanks to initiatives such as Acorns for rural-based early-stage female entrepreneurs, and other State-backed programmes that focus on encouraging female business leaders.

However, women entrepreneurs still struggle to access venture capital funding. A recent report from the Local Enterprise Office in Wexford, Enterprise Ireland found that less than 10% of venture capital funding is secured by companies with women founders.

The 2020 Action Plan for Women in Business also found that only 3% of angel investors are women.

That represents a drawback for women entrepreneurs who are pitching for funds for their start-up businesses.

Vanessa Tierney, who founded Abodoo with husband Ben Wainwright, says although she hasn't experienced discrimination because she's a woman, she recognises that there is a different type of pitching.

"You realise you probably really need to up your confidence and your projections and be a bit bolder," she says.

Abodoo, a technology platform that matches workers with companies that support smart ways of working, has worked with companies such



Vanessa Tierney, co-founder of Abodoo, says she has to be bolder as a woman looking for investors.

as Shopify, Vodafone, Citibank, Automatic, and Deloitte.

It has also expanded its services, partnering with the public sector to map talent across the country.

To date, Abodoo has raised a total of €1.1m.

It has drawn support from the Local Enterprise Office in Wexford, Enterprise Ireland High Potential Start-Up funding and angel investment, as well as a hugely successful Crowdfunder campaign in October 2019.

Ms Tierney says that Abodoo was the first female-led technology company from Ireland to tap Crowdfunder in London.

Hitting its goal of €100,000 in 48 hours, by the end of the

campaign they had got the backing of more than 400 investors.

Meanwhile, food entrepreneurs Eliza and Evie Ward tapped the power of sisterhood in their own food business.

Eliza Ward sees International Women's Day as an opportunity for women entrepreneurs to get together and support one another.

The sisters have found a strong element of community across all types of businesses in Ireland with fellow female entrepreneurs offering advice and support.

Their company NutShed is an all-female team. It has a production unit at Stafford Street Enterprise

expanded their premises and have launched a new website and an online shop.

"Our parents have a speciality food shop in Nenagh since 1982, so we've been around makers and producers and business owners our whole life."

"I've looked up to and admired both men and women in the sector who are doing interesting things," she says.

Commenting on how the food business has changed, she says it has always attracted both women and men, but that there are now more women in farming and producing agri-produce.

There have always been "incredible producers, bakers, jam makers, and cheesemakers", involving men and women of all ages, from all walks of life, she says.

NutShed's butters are handmade with peanuts from on-site and the product range also comprises plant-based treats and raw energy balls.

Its products are sold at coffee shops and independent speciality shops around the country and through the NutShed website.

As a mother of three children, Ms Tierney recognises the unique challenges of juggling a business with parenting.

However, she disagrees with the view that having a family can be a disadvantage to setting up in business.

"I think when you're at the point of having a family, a lot of people think you can't start a company. I feel the opposite."

"Yes, there's the stress to make sure it works. But, equally, it just gives you so much flexibility to be with them when needed," she says.

Twitter shares fell last year when the company disclosed that its platform experienced glitches that hindered its ability to target ads and share with partners. The San Francisco-based company's reluctance to expand beyond its core platform has also left it with a limited scale compared with its larger social media peers.

Elloit, founded by billionaire Paul Singer, will be seeking to install its own nominees to Twitter's eight-member board when three of the company's directors stand for election at its upcoming annual shareholders meeting.

Twitter is one of the few US technology companies headed but not controlled by one of its founders. It has given shareholders equal voting rights, making Mr Dorsey, who owns only 2% of the company, vulnerable to a challenge from an activist investor such as Elliott.

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In brief

Call for increase in yearly tax revenues

The Social Justice Ireland Organisation, led by Sean Healy, has called on the next government to increase annual tax revenues by €2.5bn to €3bn to take on social inequality in housing, and climate change.

"If a country is setting social, economic, and environmental goals, it is important that taxation policy supports these goals," said Mr Healy.

"Ireland needs to have a real debate, not just about the levels of services and infrastructure it wishes to have in the coming decades, but also how these are to be financed."

Social Justice also wants a minimum effective corporation tax rate of 6%, a reform of tax breaks for wealthier individuals, scrutiny of all tax reliefs, and for the two main income tax credits to be made more paid work more rewarding.

Elliott 'pushing to remove Twitter CEO'

Hedge fund Elliott Management has amassed a stake in Twitter and is pushing for changes, including removal of the social media company's chief executive Jack Dorsey, said two people familiar with the matter.

Twitter is one of the few US technology companies headed but not controlled by one of its founders. It has given shareholders equal voting rights, making Mr Dorsey, who owns only 2% of the company, vulnerable to a challenge from an activist investor such as Elliott.

Twitter shares fell last year when the company disclosed that its platform experienced glitches that hindered its ability to target ads and share with partners. The San Francisco-based company's reluctance to expand beyond its core platform has also left it with a limited scale compared with its larger social media peers.

Elloit, founded by billionaire Paul Singer, will be seeking to install its own nominees to Twitter's eight-member board when three of the company's directors stand for election at its upcoming annual shareholders meeting.

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Decision looms for €3m fine for Google Ireland

Seán McCárthaigh

Google Ireland will discover tomorrow if it has successfully challenged a fine of over €3m imposed by the Hungarian government.

The Court of Justice of the EU is to rule on a case taken by Google Ireland seeking to annul the fine which was imposed by the tax authorities in Hungary.

An initial fine worth €30,600 which was issued in January 2017 involved the company's failure to

comply with an obligation to register for tax for selling advertising in Hungary.

Google Ireland was also subject to a daily fine for its alleged continuing failure to register as required under Hungarian law.

It brings the current overall fine to just over €3m.

Google started the action after the European Commission claimed the tax, which was introduced by Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban, violated EU

laws because its rates unfairly benefited some companies, as the tax was calculated on turnover.

The tax is applied to anyone who publishes advertisements on the internet, mainly in Hungary, or on Hungarian internet pages.

The Hungarian authorities have claimed Google has obtained a competitive advantage.

They have argued that the €3m fine is justified because the complaint dates back to January 2015.

Google took the action to the court which is based in Luxembourg primarily on the basis that it claims the fine is much higher than any fine that can be imposed on domestic companies in Hungary.

It said that Hungarian firms become automatically assessed for tax payments when companies are registered in Hungary.

Google also complained that its rights to an effective remedy were infringed as the decision to impose

the fine was final and enforceable from the moment it was issued.

Google has argued that it had limited scope to submit evidence to challenge the fine and that foreign-based taxpayers have extraordinary little time to try and challenge such decisions.

Its chances of successfully challenging the fine were boosted last year when a Court of Justice of the EU advocate general issued a legal opinion in favour of Google.

She claimed the law was applied

unfairly on companies based outside Hungary.

Although the EU General Court last year annulled the European Commission's decision which found the Hungarian advertising tax law in breach of EU state-aid rules, Hungary subsequently capped and lowered the tax rate before pleading last year to reduce the tax rate to zero up to the end of 2022.

Google Ireland is involved because the company's European head offices are based in Ireland.

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Too few women set up start-ups

Jennifer Melia at Enterprise Ireland aims to help women to set up their own firms, writes **Trish Dromey**

One stark fact showing the under-representation of women in the business world is that companies with female founders secured only €4.5m of the €24m invested by Enterprise Ireland in start-ups last year.

Only 19 out of 91 companies that received investments under the Enterprise Ireland High Potential Start-up (HPSU) programme — that helps companies expand overseas — had female founders.

The percentage of companies with female founders who received early-stage Competitive Start funding of €50,000 is at a more elevated level.

But HPSU manager Jennifer Melia points out that there are fewer applications from females and that women who do apply tend to seek less funding than their male counterparts.

HPSU is aiming to boost the number of female participants, however.

"There are three times more men than women starting and growing businesses in Ireland," said Ms Melia.

"Lack of previous strategic management experience, domain knowledge, and lack of a professional strategic network is likely to impact a decision to start an enterprise and, in turn, this can impact access to finance," she said.

Ms Melia notes that having too few women in business is an international issue and that Ireland has more potential high-growth start-ups founded by women than many European countries.

She adds that since Enterprise Ireland introduced additional support for female founders in 2012 there has been a big increase in the number of female-led companies receiving HPSU funding.

Ms Melia believes that one reason to explain the under-representation of women is that family commitments get in the way.

The fact that women are strong strategic thinkers who want clarity about the future tends to make them more risk-averse,

said Ms Melia.

"Typically some of our female founders are more risk-averse in terms of the amount of funding they look for. Male founders are not as risk-averse, and are more confident going in, looking for higher levels of funding — even when their idea might be at an earlier stage," she says.

By way of example, between 2012 and 2016 the average Enterprise Ireland HPSU investment for a male-led company was €250,000, while the amount for female-led companies was much less.

As part of its initiative to encourage more women to set up their own businesses, Enterprise Ireland has, for the last eight years, offered a dedicated Competitive Start Funding round for female entrepreneurs.

"We find female founders are more comfortable applying for a female-only call," says Ms Melia, adding that to encourage more women to become entrepreneurs, Enterprise Ireland also offers a range of supports including mentoring and an accelerator programme.

Ms Melia says that to encourage more female entrepreneurs, more needs to be done to encourage women to senior management in companies, because managers tend to go on to set up a high number of start-ups.

Enterprise Ireland plans to provide a grant of up to 50% of a manager's salary for part-time management posts. Ms Melia says this could allow senior female professionals the option to work on a part-time basis and bring people with valuable skills back to the workplace.

She says there will also be an increased emphasis on providing female mentors for start-up companies, taking full advantage of the number of successful female-led companies that have been supported by Enterprise Ireland.

Ms Melia notes there is a range of female-led companies across a range of areas, including financial technology, ICT, and life sciences which can provide mentoring to early-stage companies.

"Another of our objectives is to increase the number of female investors, and we also plan to encourage female researchers in colleges to work with us on research projects so they can spin-out companies," she says.

"Females with business ideas are out there — we just need to make it easier for them to come and talk to us and to develop them," says Ms Melia.

Irish Fiscal Council sounds the alarm on the climate emergency

From Irish banks exposed to bad loans and the slow process to redirect resources, **Kyran Fitzgerald** writes on the climate challenges identified by a fascinating conference

Banks and investment funds have been gradually waking up to the implications of climate change.

Economists too across Europe are sitting up and taking note and not before time, the Irish Fiscal Advisory Council, or ifc, the country's budgetary watchdog — devoted its latest annual conference to the burning topic of Budgeting for Climate Change.

As a member of the council, Sebastian Barnes, observes that "addressing climate change will be a huge challenge for Ireland".

In a sign of the times, the first speaker, an Italian academic and scientist, Elena Verdolini, delivered her address on screen from her home in Italy.

What she had to say was startling: For example, we are currently emitting twice the amount of carbon dioxide that the earth is in a position to absorb.

Once global temperatures rise more than 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, the associated risk and damage grows exponentially.

Warm-water corals are "already on their way to extinction" and mango forests are threatened but more resilient.

The impacts extend beyond melting glaciers, rising sea levels and flood events to include impacts on crop yields and human mortality.

She says that avoiding even a one-tenth of a degree rise in additional temperature matters a lot.

Eddie Casey of the Fiscal Council notes how economists have ducked a comparison with the huge topic.

The Quarterly Journal of Economics, for example, had until very recently never published an article on climate change.

But with floods and storms on the increase across these islands a collision with reality cannot be postponed.

The impacts are already being felt on the factors of production, land, labour, and capital.

Land is ceasing to be productive as a result of repeated flooding. Labour too is suffering in productivity as a result of the health effects of flood events.

Buildings and infrastructure have



With floods and storms on the increase across these islands a collision with reality cannot be postponed.

been damaged repeatedly.

Efforts at innovation have been diverted towards adaptation, although arguably, a consequence of recent events could be an acceleration in the transition in Irish farming away from

intensive stock rearing — at least in flood-prone areas.

Mr Casey suggests that the emergence of the green economy will entail higher rates of investment in areas such as the retrofitting of houses.

The Office of Public Works has carried out a detailed flood risk analysis and has produced flood risk tables for our major cities.

A rise in sea levels would leave much of the inner city in Dublin and Cork City is even more exposed. The State might have to step in to ensure payouts to businesses and householders hit by weather events.

The taxpayer faces huge costs in funding infrastructure when the national debt is already elevated.

The transition from carbon-intensive activities will create its own problems as the exchequer earns a lot of its revenues from duties on motor fuel and taxes.

While carbon taxes will bring in increased revenues in the short to medium terms, the whole point about such taxes is that they are intended to change behaviour.

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Drink to keep people ‘younger’ by delaying muscle ageing

Ailin Quinlan

Research is under way into the development of a revolutionary new drink which would delay the ageing of muscles in older people – in effect, keeping them ‘younger’ for longer.

The study into the potential benefits of whey protein for ageing muscles has been underway at the Teagasc research facility at Moorepark,

Fermoy, for about three years.

Whey protein is already highly popular in the sports industry, where athletes regularly use it for muscle repair and recovery.

It’s predicted that by 2050, there will be 1.6 billion people over the age of 65 in the world, about 10% of whom will experience sarcopenia or muscle wastage. Recent research at the

University of Limerick has found that sarcopenia can be offset by changes to dietary habits. Scientists found that optimising the quality and timing of total daily protein intake can decrease age-related loss of muscle mass. It is in this context that researchers at Moorepark have been studying the potential effects of whey protein on elderly muscles, as Linda Giblin, a senior scientist at the Teagasc Food Research Centre explains:

“Milk contains two different kinds of protein, casein and whey. “Whey is easily digestible and high in protein. It has all the essential amino acids which are important for the most basic growth and maintenance of the body, and branch chain acids which are crucial for muscle growth and repair.”

Ms Giblin said whey also contained bio-active peptides – strings of amino acids with a health benefit beyond nutrition. “These bio-active peptides may help repair muscle faster or help an athlete run faster,” she said. “What we’ve been looking at is what they can do in terms of delaying the ageing of muscles of older adults – we’re looking at what happens to whey as it

is being digested by the older gut. We’re looking at whether bio-active peptides reduce the ageing process in older muscles so muscles can stay younger for longer. “We have found that whey contains several bio-active peptides which can delay ageing in muscles.” She said the Teagasc research group had been growing and ageing muscles in the laboratory, to investigate

the benefits of these peptides on muscles in terms of their effects on ageing. “We have now created a beverage with the whey,” she said, adding that researchers had already produced “industrial-scale quantities” of this drink which can be made available in dried and powdered form. “It is still at research and development level, but looks very promising.

“We are currently planning the testing phase of this beverage on the ageing muscle,” she said. Once the final testing phase of the product is complete, she explained, it would be offered to interested sectors in the food industry. “We will be offering this to the food industry. We would hope to see it come on the market in the coming two or three years.”

Cuts to CAP will have big impact on rural life

Thomas Duffy

EU budgets, or Multiannual Financial Frameworks (MFF) as they are also known, are not an ordinary topic of conversation around the water-cooler nor down at the co-op. However, while attention by the majority has been on the continued conversation around government formation following an eventual election, EU budgets may have an even bigger impact on rural Ireland than any national policy.

The farming community has been increasingly subjected, as of late, to intense focus on a range of issues, from climate change adaptation to water quality and animal welfare, by European parties and commentators. It was with total shock that we learned of proposals to actively cut the budget for these very things.

A whopping €53.2bn was proposed to be cut from the Common Agricultural Policy to the Council of the EU, where the heads of each EU country sit. This slash to vital farm funding was spearheaded by the so-called “Frugal Four” leaders from Austria, Denmark, Sweden, and the Netherlands.

These countries, in response to the UK leaving, have rejected calls by countries such as Ireland to increase contribution to the overall MFF. Portraying themselves as the fiscally responsible opposition to what is a clear need for farmers to make progress, but this may be disastrous not only for EU farmers, but for the European project as a whole.

While to some CAP may be seen as an issue for farmers only, the focus must be returned to the CAP’s original purpose of providing safe, affordable food while complying with the demands of EU regulations and EU consumers – something of huge importance to all of those who are citizens of the EU.

While budgets are always contentious issues, be that farm budgeting or even our own national discussions on the

spending and “fiscal space”. EU negotiations are not only contentious, but can also be drawn-out affairs. With so many countries with competing interests, agreement is a difficult task.

Countries such as Greece and Italy which have dealt with a heavy burden of immigration can understandably argue for greater funds to deal with the refugee crisis. Other countries believe that with comments from US commander-in-chief Donald Trump about being reluctant to protect European allies, the EU should spend more on defence funding – a sensitive issue for a country like ours with a history of neutrality.

However, the greatest victim of this “frugality” may in fact be European ambition

on a number of fronts. The new EU Commissioner Ursula von der Leyden described the “European Deal” as akin to the EU’s ‘moon moment’. But importantly, she proposed to put their

man on the moon, he directed significant funding to the goal rather than slashing budgets to science and R&D. Regardless of how farmers may feel about these environmental ambitions, we will not doubt be put front and centre to Pillar 2 funding, this ambition seems more pie in the sky than JFK’s space program ever was. A measure ‘Just Transition’ fund of €7.5bn will not even begin to cover the losses to farmers even in the unlikely event it was all directed at agriculture.

The other great tentpole of European ambition has been the ‘Farm to Fork’ strategy many farmers are eagerly awaiting details of. Again, in this area the ideal that less funding for farmers to ensure we can play a role in making a mockery of this ambition.

Whether EU citizens are concerned by the security and quality of their food as a primary goal or the provision of goods and services which benefit all such as clean air, clean water, or biodiversity, no one can conclude that these can be achieved with reduced funding.

The greater challenge overall now will be how to address not only the hole in EU budgets left by the UK’s exit, but also the question left by Brexit of the EU’s very future direction.

At a time when we should be seeing greater ambition from the EU towards its citizens, of which provision of safe food is a key aspect, and a strengthening of the European community, this signal is deeply worrying.

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on a number of fronts. The new EU Commissioner Ursula von der Leyden described the “European Deal” as akin to the EU’s ‘moon moment’. But importantly, she proposed to put their

man on the moon, he directed significant funding to the goal rather than slashing budgets to science and R&D. Regardless of how farmers may feel about these environmental ambitions, we will not doubt be put front and centre to Pillar 2 funding, this ambition seems more pie in the sky than JFK’s space program ever was. A measure ‘Just Transition’ fund of €7.5bn will not even begin to cover the losses to farmers even in the unlikely event it was all directed at agriculture.

The other great tentpole of European ambition has been the ‘Farm to Fork’ strategy many farmers are eagerly awaiting details of. Again, in this area the ideal that less funding for farmers to ensure we can play a role in making a mockery of this ambition.

Whether EU citizens are concerned by the security and quality of their food as a primary goal or the provision of goods and services which benefit all such as clean air, clean water, or biodiversity, no one can conclude that these can be achieved with reduced funding.

The greater challenge overall now will be how to address not only the hole in EU budgets left by the UK’s exit, but also the question left by Brexit of the EU’s very future direction.

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Thomas Duffy, Macra national chairman.



Tourists and others who travel through the country’s foothills, especially in the summer, often marvel at the picture postcard scenery.

Picture: iStock

Creating a viable and sustainable future for sheep farmers is crucial, writes **Ray Ryan**

“Farmers often struggle to earn a viable living from rearing sheep in the rugged landscape often battered by the weather

Co Galway, said the sustainability of an individual hill sheep farm needs to be assessed across economic, environmental and social dimensions.

On the economic dimension, while comparable to cattle and lowland sheep systems, hill sheep farms tended to have lower levels of profitability, income per labour unit and overall economic viability.

On the social side, they generally had higher levels of household vulnerability and isolation risk.

When it came to the environment, all other things being equal, the risk associated with hill sheep farms was the lowest of any farm system in terms of

preserve a habitat which is beneficial to grazing animals, wildlife and birds, flora and fauna.

An understanding of the relationship between plants and animals” is needed to achieve it through grazing, she said.

Brendan Dunford, manager, Burren Life Programme in Clare, said the locally led Agri-Environment Scheme aims to conserve and improve the biodiversity, water quality and cultural heritage of the limestone area between Clare and Galway.

It currently works with 328 farmers on 25,000 ha of heritage-rich farmland, mainly specialising in suckler beef, although some continue to farm sheep.

A locally-based management team administer the programme and its seven-year budget of some €12m on behalf of the Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine, with support from the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

The BP has evolved over 20 years of research and development and its success

owes much to the strong partnership developed between the organisations involved – in particular DAFF, NPWS, Teagasc, and the Irish Farmers Association’s Burren branch. “This partnership of farming and conservation interests developed over many years with a great deal of trust and compromise needed on all sides.

However, as a consequence all sides have benefited greatly from the impact and success of the project, offering lessons for other areas of high nature value in Ireland,” he said.

Mr Dunford said with the Government recently declaring a climate and biodiversity emergency, there will be more opportunities for farmers in the Irish uplands and other high nature value areas to earn income for delivering environmental improvements in response to this emergency.

“The BP has proven that, with the right type of funding, support and encouragement, Irish farmers are an invaluable conservation resource,” he said.

Students swap books for wellies in Agri Aware initiative

Ray Ryan

More than 3,000 second-level agricultural science students are to swap their books for wellies to participate in Agri Aware’s annual Walk and Talk initiative.

The March 2-13 event series will focus on the sustainability of agriculture and allow students gain a practical insight through a range of farm visits. Teagasc ex-

perts and key patrons will be on hand to explain what farmers are doing to reduce their carbon footprint and make their holdings more environmentally and economically sustainable.

The students will examine soil profiles, view new technologies, watch cows being milked and compare breeds of sheep during their visits to Teagasc, UCD, and the Irish Farmers Journal farms.

Dairygold, Glanbia, Aurivo, Arrabhawn and Lakeland Dairies will give talks on the dairy industry, while Slaney Meats, ABP, Dawn Meats, Kepak and Truly Irish will be on hand to educate students about the meat sector.

Agri Aware executive director Marcus O’Halloran, launching the series at the UCD Lyons Farm, said that with sustainability, a key

component of the new agricultural science syllabus it was only right to make it a focus of the series.

“The events are a brilliant opportunity for students to engage with industry experts,” he said. “Agri Aware wouldn’t be able to facilitate them without the help of Teagasc, UCD, the Irish Agricultural Science Teachers’ Association and our patrons from the agri-food industry.”

Agri Aware chair Alan Jagoe said it will be the first time many students will have set foot on a working farm. This will help increase awareness of sustainable food production and bridge the gap between young consumers and producers.

Teagasc chair Liam Herlihy said the Walk and Talk series is a great opportunity to showcase sustainability of Irish farming and to

highlight the actions being taken on farms to protect water, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and encourage biodiversity.

The BP was founded in 1996 by a number of leading agri-food businesses, who identified the need for an independent body to provide the public with information and education on the importance of agriculture and food to the Irish economy.

THURSDAY IN Farming

We talk to Laura Fitzgerald about farming and All-Ireland ladies football wins

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Winner 2019:
First snow in Mourne Mountains
and wall reaching skies.
Picture: Pawel Zygmunt

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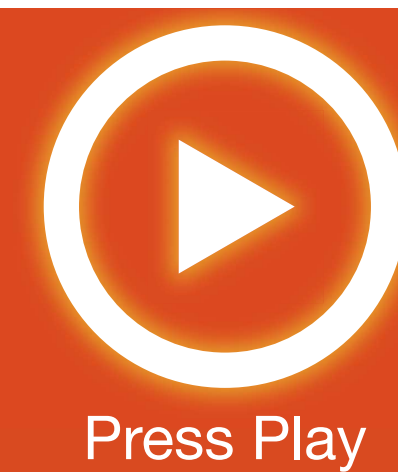
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Murphy blocked election candidate spend rise

■ Feared extra €190k of campaign funding would cause public outcry

by Ken Foxe

Housing and Local Government Minister Eoghan Murphy decided against raising general election spending limits for candidates amid concerns taxpayers would be hit with an extra bill of almost €190,000. Mr Murphy was told that the amount somebody could spend to get elected to the Dail had not changed since 2007, despite a 7.5% increase in consumer prices.

However, civil servants cautioned Mr Murphy that the €188,750 bill for a hike in limits might be unpalatable, not least because of uncertainties over Brexit. He was warned this could lead to "public criticism that the money could be better spent elsewhere".

A submission for the minister said: "It may be difficult to justify a measure to facilitate increased spending by those involved in politics, when other sectors of the economy may be facing significant challenges ahead."

Officials had put forward options for increasing spending limits by between €2,250 and €3,300, depending on the size of the constituency. This would have increased the spending limit in a three-seater to €32,400, in a four-seater to €40,400, and in a five-seater to €48,500.

The maximum reimbursement would have been increased by €600, from €8,700 to €9,300.

Based on the 2016 election, when 321 candidates had been paid back €2.7m in total, the taxpayer could expect a bill of €2.48m if the changes were introduced.

The internal submission, obtained under FOI, said there were arguments both for and against. Inflation had increased moderately and with that the cost of typical election goods, such as stationery, printing, transport, and postage.

"The ability to conduct an election campaign is an

important part of the democratic process, and there is a case for the spending limits to reflect the current costs associated with this," it said.

Last month, 160 TDs were elected to the Dail, but population increases meant that political representation was reaching the "maximum ratio" allowed in the constitution.

"[This] means that candidates will have to reach a larger number of voters than would otherwise be the case if the population had not increased," said the submission.

"Election campaigns can be costly and the reimbursement of election expenses is important in supporting participation in the democratic process."

Officials also argued that introducing graduated increases would avoid any "sudden shocks" to election funding, shocks that might create controversy.

It asked: "What would be the cumulative increase in the Consumer Price Index, if no changes were made for another five/six years, in particular if such years were to be a period of high inflation?"

Arguments against making any change included uncertainty over Brexit and the careful approach to public spending of Budget 2020.

Mr Murphy was told another possibility would be to increase only the spending limits for the election, but not the amount that would be repaid by the Exchequer.

This would guarantee a "cost-neutral" approach for the taxpayer, but would have given candidates a 7.5% boost in what they could spend. Mr Murphy opted to not change the spending limits. In response on November 7, he wrote: "No change to the spending limits or reimbursement amount."

A spokesman said: "It is a matter for the minister to vary the spending limits and reimbursement amounts."



Rider on the storm

Ray Kaskelis takes advantage of the wild weather at Garrylucas, Garretstown, Co Cork, over the weekend as wind speeds reached 57 knots, gusting at 63 knots, and waves peaked at 10 metres on the south coast during Storm Jorge. NEWS, Page 2 Picture: David Creedon/Anzenberger

Wind farms now generate one third of Irish electricity

Jess Casey

Almost a third of Ireland's electricity now comes from wind energy, ranking it one of the highest in Europe, new figures show.

In 2019, wind energy met a record 32.5% of the country's electricity demand – the second highest in Europe and the highest in terms of onshore wind production. That is according to an annual report from the Irish Wind Energy Association (IWEA) which shows that 24 new wind farms were connected last year.

This is second-highest number connected in Ireland within one year.

Wind energy also provided more electricity than natural gas during February and December of last year.

Despite the strong results, there is growing industry concern about the amount of wind energy lost each year, according to the IWEA. Last year, this amounted to just under 8% of total production which was enough to power more than 200,000 homes.

This is due to a practice known as dispatch down, which occurs when the transmission system operator, Eirgrid, instructs a wind farm to produce less electricity or even to shut down entirely.

"We need a stronger transmission system to ensure that we are not wasting electricity and, if we are to achieve our 2030 targets, and beyond then to 2040 and 2050, then we are going to need a plan to build a stronger electricity grid,"



Wind farms such as this one at Coomattallin, Dunmanway, Co Cork, meet nearly a third of our electricity needs. Picture: Dan Linehan

said David Connolly, chief executive of IWEA. A number of communities around the country have taken on potential wind farm developments; Last week,

three siblings settled their High Court action against a Cork windfarm for a total of €225,000.

The sister and two brothers claimed they suffered illness due to noise, vibrations, and shadow flicker. The settlements were made without an admission of liability.

The Slabh Luachra Wind Awareness group, made up of locals living in Slabh Luachra area on the Cork-Kerry border, are challenging plans for turbines in the area.

Just before Christmas, the High Court ruled that An Bord Pleanála should not have granted planning for the 14 turbines.

The judgment was based on the failure of the ben hard-

er, a bird of prey, which is found in the area. It is not yet known if there will be another application for a modified version of the farm.

Meanwhile, the IWEA believes Ireland has not yet met its potential when it comes to harvesting wind energy.

Dr Connolly said: "With the right planning systems, on land and offshore, and the right policies there is no reason why most of Ireland's electricity should not be coming from wind energy in the second half of this decade."

"That is why it is so important that the Government moves ahead to ensure the first auction in the Renewable Electricity Support Scheme, announced last week, concludes, on time, in June."

On this day...

- 1717: Three recently discovered superheavy elements, moscovium, tennessine, and oganesson, were officially added to the periodic table.
- 1911: Shahbaz Bhatti, Pakistan's only Christian government minister, was shot dead in his car for his outspoken opposition to Pakistan's blasphemy laws.
- 2008: Russians went to the polls to choose a new president, the third since the collapse of the Soviet Union. As expected Dmitry Medvedev, Vladimir Putin's hand-picked successor, won a landslide victory, with Putin himself taking the position of prime minister.
- 2007: An outbreak of 57 tornadoes swept across the southern US states of Georgia, Alabama, and Missouri over a 37-hour period, killing 20 people and causing damages in excess of \$520m.
- 2004: John Kerry clinched the Democratic nomination for the US presidency by sweeping to victory in nine of 10 contests held on Super Tuesday. The following day, John Edwards, who had emerged as Kerry's only serious rival, said he was withdrawing to work with Kerry on his bid.
- 2004: Europe's Rosetta spacecraft was launched on a 10-year mission to land a probe on the surface of the comet Churyumov-Gerasimenko, a feat achieved successfully in November 2014.
- 2004: More than 140 Shia worshippers were killed in apparently co-ordinated suicide attacks in the Iraqi cities of Karbala and Baghdad at the climax of the festival of Ashura, the holiest day in the Shia calendar, marking the death in battle in 680AD of Imam Hussein, grandson of the Prophet Mohammed.
- 2000: Former Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet flew home to Chile 16 months after being detained in Britain following a Spanish request that he be extradited to face charges of human rights violations. British Home Secretary Jack Straw ruled that Pinochet, 84, was mentally unfit to stand trial.
- 1999: Dusty Springfield, one of Britain's top singers in the 1960s, who made a successful comeback during the 1980s, died from cancer.



One of John Cerisoli's models of the giant ape, poised above the New York skyline in a scene from the 1933 classic monster movie 'King Kong'.



- 1998: The will of Diana, Princess of Wales, was published; she left £13m to her sons, William and Harry.
- 1997: A state of emergency was declared in Albania amid widespread unrest triggered by the collapse of pyramid investment schemes.
- 1995: Rogue trader Nick Leeson, who brought down Barings Bank, was arrested at Frankfurt airport after eight days on the run, having fled his base in Singapore.
- 1995: Seven-time Italian prime minister Giulio Andreotti was ordered to stand trial on charges of collusion with the Mafia.
- 1981: Al-Zulfikar terrorists hijacked a Pakistani airliner with 148 passengers on board. All hostages

- were released on March 15 after Pakistan freed 55 political prisoners.
- 1972: US spacecraft Pioneer 10 was launched. It passed close by Jupiter and Neptune before leaving the solar system, and is now more than 9 billion kilometres from Earth.
- 1969: The first of two prototype Concorde made its maiden flight from Toulouse.
- 1961: Artist Pablo Picasso, 79, secretly married his 37-year-old model, Jacqueline Roque.
- 1958: Vivian Puchs completed the first land crossing of Antarctica.
- 1950: American singer Karen Carpenter was born in New Haven, Connecticut. She enjoyed success with brother Richard in 'The Carpenters', whose hits included 'Close to You' and 'We've Only Just Begun'.
- 1949: US Air Force Captain James Gallagher completed the first non-stop round the world flight in a Boeing B-50A Superfortress. With inflight refuelling he completed the 37,742km flight in 94 hours, one minute.
- 1943: The Battle of the Bismarck Sea began. Twelve Japanese ships carrying reinforcements to New Guinea were sunk by Allied planes, killing nearly 4,000.
- 1940: The Cunard liner Queen

- Elizabeth began her maiden voyage in secret, painted battleship grey, to New York prior to entering service as a troopship during the Second World War.
- 1939: Pope Pius XII was elected.
- 1917: As a result of the February Revolution, Tsar Nicholas II of Russia abdicated for himself and his son, Alexei, nominating his brother, Michael, to succeed him as tsar. On the same day, a provisional government headed by Prince Georgi Lvov was set up.
- 1882: Roderick Maclean made an unsuccessful attempt to assassinate Britain's Queen Victoria at Windsor; he was later declared insane.
- 1855: Nicholas I, Tsar of Russia, died. His reign of autocracy and militarism was ended by defeat in the Crimean War.
- 1835: Francis II, Emperor of Austria, died. His reign of autocracy and militarism was ended by defeat in the Crimean War.
- 1822: Czech composer Bedrich Smetana was born. In 1874, he became completely deaf due to syphilis, but continued to compose until he suffered a mental breakdown in 1874.
- 1807: The US Congress banned the import of slaves into America, the act to take effect from January 1, 1808.
- 1801: The War of the Oranges between Spain and Portugal began. French troops fought alongside the Spanish after Portugal refused Napoleon's demand to cede much of the country to him.

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Spring brake

**Galway's league hopes
brighten as Cork's
shudder to a halt**

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Premier League: United and Spurs slip up in top four chase

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Staying alive

Tipp make
hard work of
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Flannan's delight

22nd Harty title
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college

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Karaoke Kingdom

Singsong tunes
Kerry up for
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Banner boost

Clare win in
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How they lined out

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13. C Lehané	11. S Harnedy
7. F Burke	10. R O'Flynn
9. A Tuohy	
8. C Mannion	5. P Mannion
12. A Walsh	9. D Fitzgibbon
10. N Burke	15. C Cooney
7. S O'Leary	Hayes
6. T O'Mahony	5. B Cooper
8. M Coleman	
13. B Concannon	
4. C Spillane	
23. J Flynn	14. C Whelan
3. E Cadogan	2. N O'Leary
1. A Nash	

IT MATTERED

The sending off of Robbie O'Flynn after 52 minutes. Cork had overturned a three-point interval deficit to lead by 1-14 to 1-13 at the time of the red card. Momentum shifted to Galway from that point forward.

CAN'T IGNORE

Galway's dreadful first-half wide count of 11. This litany of misses contrasted sharply with Cork who had not a single wide in the opening 35 minutes. Galway were fortunate their first-half wastefulness did not come back to haunt them.

GOOD DAY

Encouraging to see Galway, minus Joe Canning, come out on top in such a tight contest. 2017 All-Ireland winning captain David Burke also got his first minutes in a maroon shirt in 2020.

BAD DAY

Cork, as a result of their league elimination, will now go 10 weeks without a competitive fixture. "No, it is not ideal," said Kieran Kingston of the long layoff in front of them.

SIDELINE SMARTS

Kieran Kingston commented afterwards that his team "seemed to totally run out of legs" in the

closing stages. It was an accurate observation, and yet Kingston and his management made only two changes in total - the first, which was injury-enforced, came at half-time, the other arriving at the beginning of second-half stoppages.

BEST ON SHOW

The Galway full-back line was excellent, particularly in the second-half when facing the gale. Darren Morrissey and Gearoid McInerney can be most pleased with their day's work.

MAN IN THE MIDDLE

Fergal Horgan was correct in his decision to send off Robbie O'Flynn.

NEXT UP

Cork's next competitive fixture - their Munster SHC opener at home to Limerick - is 10 weeks in the distance. Galway welcome Tipperary to Pearse Stadium on Sunday for their rescheduled Group A game. Winner advances to league quarter-final. In the event of a draw, Tipperary, on account of their superior score difference, progress.

Words: Eoghan Cormican

Galway's spring brightens as Cork's shudders to a halt



Allianz HL Division 1 Group A (R5)

GALWAY 2-18

CORK 1-16

Eoghan Cormican

Pearse Stadium



WHERE Galway look forward to a second knockout fixture on home soil in the space of a week, Cork's calendar is worryingly bare.

As the final whistles simultaneously sounded at Salthill and Thurles yesterday afternoon, Cork's spring ground to a shuddering halt.

Having begun the day ahead of both Galway and Tipperary in the Group A standings, the county's third league defeat, coupled with Tipperary's win over Waterford, meant an end to Cork's league involvement.

What it also means is that the county will not play another competitive fixture between now and their Munster SHC opener at home to Limerick on May 10. That's a 70-day layoff, one which Kieran Kingston accepted was less than ideal.

No question but manage-

ment would have much preferred at least one more league outing so as to move closer to their starting championship team. For while there is a degree of clarity as to what five players will likely fill the jerseys numbered five through nine, in every other line there are positions still to be nailed down.

As for Galway, Shane O'Neill's charges had been in dire trouble with 20 minutes remaining and on course for a fourth successive defeat. It appeared they would have nothing but pride to play for when Tipperary visited for this weekend's Round 3 re-fix-ture.

What happened next was Cork lost Robbie O'Flynn to a straight red card for a high challenge on Fintan Burke. Brian Concannon then goaled three minutes later to send the home side back in front, a lead they would hold all the way to the line and one that was fattened by four unanswered injury-time points.

The five-point win resurrects their league campaign and, in the process, turns this Sunday's visit of the All-Ireland champions into a winner-takes-all clash.

Considering all this was done without the services of Joe Canning, Galway's spring, all of a sudden, has become a great deal brighter than it was when Tim O'Mahony found the net on 50 minutes to propel a Cork team backed by the remnants of Storm Jorge into a winning position.

"We were on the receiving

end of a one-point defeat last week so to come out on the winning side of a tough league game is great," said Shane O'Neill.

"Looking at the two halves, it was probably our use of the ball that was the difference. In the first half, we didn't use it as well as we should have. In the second, we used it brilliantly against the wind.

"We have a tasty match against Tipp now. What we have been trying to create over the last couple of months is a competitive squad. There were five subs today and they all did extremely well."

Among those replacements was Evan Niland, the 2015 All-Ireland minor winner converting two injury-time frees. Galway's advantage stood at the minimum — 2-14 to 1-16 — entering injury-time, but Niland's dead-ball accuracy, and a point each from Conor Cooney and the returning David Burke, propelled the hosts to their first league victory since January 26.

What displeased and frustrated O'Neill was his team's first-half wide count of 11. Galway's shockingly high number of misses equalled the 11 times they hit the target in the opening 35 minutes. And considering the strength of the gale blowing through Pearse Stadium, their interval lead of 1-10 to 0-10 was anything but a healthy one.

The Galway manager reckoned his players left three green flags behind them, the first of those being Jason Flynn's shot hit directly at An-

thony Nash two minutes in. Flynn, mind you, made no mistake when presented with a second chance on 23 minutes, the inside forward rounding Nash after a lovely looping pass from Concannon.

That score, arriving after three unanswered points from Aidan Harte, Cooney (free), and Adrian Tuohy, shoved the home side 1-7 to 0-4 ahead. But no bigger would the gap grow.

Down the other end, Aidan Walsh, Shane Kingston, Bill Cooper, Conor Lehané, and Patrick Horgan (two frees) all split the posts to leave Cork just three in arrears at the break. It was a first half noticeably devoid of any sense of intensity or urgency. The error count was through the roof on either side.

A Tim O'Mahony sideline and Darragh Fitzgibbon missile from out the field were the pick of the early second-half scores as Cork, assisted by the elements, cut the deficit to one — 1-12 to 0-14 — by the 46th minute. And although Cathal Mannion (free) subsequently doubled the Tribesmen's advantage, Cork hit the front when Tim O'Mahony, played through by Robbie O'Flynn, drilled the sliotar past Éanna Murphy.

But there followed O'Flynn's sending off and Concannon's goal to swing the tide back in Galway's direction.

"This was a championship game in all but name. We knew we needed to win to get into a quarter-final. That is

Cynicism not gone away but Harty Cup



Anthony Daly

IT doesn't always happen but, invariably, the wheel will turn full circle. At the end of the Dr Harty Cup final yesterday, I spotted my clubmate and former St Flannan's team-mate, Pat Healy, recording footage of the trophy presentation on his phone. Thirty-three years on from when we won our Harty medals together, Pat's son Darragh got

to taste that feeling.

Another clubmate, Cian Galvin, was joint captain, the first Clarecastle man to lift the Harty since Peter Leyden in 1983. Flannan's was always good to us in Clarecastle. There were four of us on that 1987 squad — Pat, Fergie Tuohy, Alan Neville and myself — which was kind of unusual at the time because the team was usually made up from a broad range of guys from all over Clare, along with boarders from Limerick, Tipperary and Galway.

It's a totally different scene now. The boarders are long gone. Flannan's is co-ed. Guys from south Clare go to school in Shannon or Limerick, mostly Ard Scoil Ris, which has made Flannan's playing pool shallower. The entire starting team yesterday was made up of players from

Ennis, clubs bordering the county town, or from parishes just a handful of miles from Ennis. This was Flannan's 22nd title but, given the huge changes since their last crown in 2005, this was one of the sweetest ever won.

This squad was superbly managed by Kevin O'Grady, Brendan Bugler, Mike Kelly, Shane McCarthy, and Peter Casey but the school is clearly benefitting from the strong presence of big names on the teaching staff. Tony Kelly and Jack Browne were otherwise preoccupied with Clare but their Maor Uisce duties were taken up by Jamesie O'Connor.

Flannan's were the better team. They played smart, controlled hurling in the first half, leading by four points having played into the breeze. Similar to his strike in the

quarter-final against Tulla, the Flannan's goal from Diarmuid Cahill was out of the top drawer.

Cahill's clubmate from Corofin, Killian O'Connor, gave an exhibition, scoring four points from play and being fouled for another two scores. Cian Galvin, Conner Hegarty and Stephen Casey were also really impressive.

CBC were always chasing the match but I felt Flannan's retreated too deep in the last quarter, and invited CBC on to them. The Cork college threw caution to the wind when they were six points down by throwing Carthach Daly up in the forwards. He was fouled two or three times before being eventually hauled down for a penalty, which the excellent Jack Cahalane buried.

In Flannan's, we were always reared to think that

the Harty was the Holy Grail, and that the All-Ireland was a bonus. These boys won't be thinking that way but they won't have much of a chance to allow this success sink in with St Kieran's coming down the tracks at the weekend. Kieran's have always thought the complete opposite — Leinster was always only a pathway to an All-Ireland for them.

Kilkenny have done so much to change the modern thinking around hurling because every team is judged by that standard now. Limerick won a league and a Munster title last year and the season was effectively considered a write-off when they lost the All-Ireland semi-final by one point.

We dismiss the league as soon as the competition is over but it generates a whole different dynamic while it's



Allianz League *Review*

Weekend talking points



Cork defender Colm Spillane tries to halt the run of Galway full-forward Conor Whelan during the Allianz NHL clash at Pearse Stadium. Cork's third league defeat, coupled with Tipperary's win over Waterford, meant an end to the Rebels' league involvement.

Picture: Inpho/Ryan Byrne

what we came here for, so disappointed not to get a result," said Kieran Kingston.

"We would have been happy at half-time. We went a point up in the second half so disappointing not to close it out. From what I saw, we wouldn't have any complaints [with the red card]. When you go down to 14 men, it is always challenging. Galway closed it out that

bit better. We struggled in the last 10 minutes, we just seemed to totally run out of legs (Cork didn't score beyond the 64th minute)."

Kingston added: "I think the league has been good for us in terms of what we have learned, more than anything else."

The problem is it'll be May 10 before any of that learning

can be put to meaningful use.

Scorers for Galway: B Concannon (1-2); C Mannion (0-5, 0-3 frees); J Flynn (1-1); C Cooney (0-3, 0-2 frees); E Niland (0-2 frees); N Burke (0-2 each); A Tuohy, A Harte, D Burke (0-1 each).

Scorers for Cork: P Horgan (0-9, 0-9 frees); T O'Mahony (1-1, 0-1 sc); S Kingston (0-2); D Fitzgibbon, C Lehane, B Cooper, A Walsh (0-1 each).

GALWAY: É Murphy; D Morrissey, G McInerney, S Loftus; A Harte, S Cooney, F Burke; C Mannion, P Mannion; N

Burke, C Cooney, A Tuohy; C Whelan, J Flynn, B Concannon.

Subs: D Burke for N Burke (39 mins); S Linnane for P Mannion (51); E Niland for F Burke (57); TJ Brennan for Harte (60, inj); C Walsh for Concannon (58).

CORK: A Nash; C Spillane, E Cadogan, N O'Leary; B Cooper, T O'Mahony, S O'Leary Hayes; D Fitzgibbon, A Walsh; R O'Flynn, S Harnedy, C Lehane; M Coleman, S Kingston, P Horgan.

Subs: C Cahalane for Walsh (HT, inj); J O'Connor for Lehane (70).

Referee: F Horgan (Tipperary).

Tipperary likely to contest Barrett's red

League talking points

Sheedy: Three reds proof 'we've enough cards in hurling'

It was never a proposal of Liam Sheedy's Hurling 2020 committee to increase the number of cards in hurling so he was pleased the black card motion at Congress was rejected.

"We have enough cards in hurling," he said after his 14-man team just about saw off 13-man Waterford. "We saw it there today. There are yellows and reds and if they have to use them they can."

"I would say it's a great game, it's in a really good place, and you see the level of competition and the conditioning of teams right throughout the League, every match we've played has been nip and tuck."

"Hurling is in the best place it's been in a long time — we certainly don't need to be tinkering with the rules. We just need to get every child in the country playing it."

Sheedy suggested Tipperary are likely to contest Cathal Barrett's red card for reacting to Dessie Hutchinson in the first half in Thurles.

"I spoke to Cathal after the match and he did feel there was nothing in it so I take his word for it," he said of the dismissal, which will rule him out of the Galway game.

"The umpire picked it out from 80 yards away."

- John Fogarty

'Frightening' Powder getting closer to his potential

Sean Powder's all-action display caught the eye in Páirc Uí Chaoimh, and his manager fully acknowledged his importance to the team.

"People talk about Cathal McShane and Mattie Donnelly being out for Tyrone, but the likes of Sean and Brian Hurley have been massive, massive misses for us," said Ronan McCarthy.

"Sean, you could play anywhere. He's so dynamic, he's a line-breaker, he punches holes in a defence, and his tackling was first class... he's a top-class inter-county player we've had to do without for the last two years. And he ain't there yet, lads. That's the frightening thing."

McCarthy stressed the importance of managing Powder, who missed those last two seasons with leg injuries.

"We took him off today, and we have to manage him properly, but it's brilliant to have him back."

"He's played five games and

he hasn't finished too many of them. If we can keep him playing throughout the League, manage him properly, and if he doesn't have any setbacks by the time we get to May, he should be motoring well."

- Michael Moynihan

Weather the cause of 'topsy-turvy' Division 2?

Division Two of the Football League continues to confound and fascinate.

The peloton had shown belated signs of stringing out until wins for Kildare and Clare on the road bunched the whole thing up again. Just three points separate first from seventh with two rounds to go.

Fermanagh may be rooted to the bottom but they could make it all tighter again if their game against Armagh, postponed yesterday, produces a win for the Ernesiders and leaves them level on points with Kildare and Clare.

"It's hard to know what's in your own hands in this division because it is a very topsy-turvy division," said Kildare manager Jack O'Connor after their defeat of Laois. "It is incredible to think that Armagh beat us well, Laois beat Armagh well, and it's very hard to put a finger on it."

"It's difficult conditions and unless your mindset is spot on in those conditions... Some fellows maybe the conditions don't suit them. I think the weather has a lot to do with the topsy-turvy nature of the results."

- Brendan O'Brien

How many Cork forwards can be satisfied with their spring?

Is it highlighting the obvious to state that Cork have a Patrick Horgan dependency issue in attack?

Across their five League games this season, Cork have struck 11-90 (123). Horgan accounted for 47% of this total, notching 3-49. Leaving aside the fact that all but 0-2 of his total came from dead-ball efforts, Horgan is the player shouldering the burden of in the scoring department.

To frame it another way, how many Cork forwards, outside of Horgan, would be even remotely satisfied with their League endeavours. Besides Shane Kingston, one doesn't envisage too many hands flying into the air.

Cork's starting front six managed 0-4 from play during 70-plus minutes of hurling at Salthill yesterday. That's simply not good enough and will need to be rectified during the 10 weeks between now and the county's Championship opener.

- Eoghan Cormican

showcases joy in purest form

on. I could only listen to the Tipperary-Waterford match on the way home but you knew from the commentary that there was a lot more than just two points at stake. Tipp were desperate for a win; Liam Cahill was even more desperate for his team to make a statement on his old turf. The three red cards were an obvious statement of how much both teams went at it.

Tipp were playing for their lives, and their chance to remain in the league, as were Galway in Pearse Stadium. Cork were in a great position when leading by one point but the sending-off of Robbie O'Flynn completely altered the complexion of the match.

Galway used the spare man really smartly, especially in the windy conditions, and Cork struggled to cope with that surge in the last quarter.

Brian Concannon's goal was a huge turning point but Cork looked to tire late on and consistency remains an issue. Of course Cork in the 'long grass' now till May 10 will be large in Limerick minds.

It was a big win for Galway, especially when they have Joe Canning and Daithi Burke to return, while Davy Burke got game-time into him. It was the best I saw of Conor Cooney since 2017. All positives but even more so when the Galway public were looking for something after two defeats. The result always beautifully tees up next week's game against Tipp.

Kilkenny, Wexford and Limerick did what was expected of them while Clare kept their foot to the gas with a nine-point win over Dublin.

That's a slight worry for Mattie Kenny. Like Cork, Dublin have a lot of waiting around now until the championship.

There was a lot of talk about cynical play in hurling recently and, while I'm not saying that kind of stuff isn't in the game, I'm glad the black card was rejected at Congress on Saturday. I'd just love to know who the 18% were who voted for the sin-bin.

Of course we can always make the game better but we can also get caught up in politics, and the increasing professionalism of the game, which manifests itself in seemingly do-or-die league games, which soon become irrelevant once the smell of freshly cut grass is in the air.

Although the rising standard and demands, and the professional approach of young players, was on full

show in Mallow yesterday, it was great to witness the pure form of expression and elation that time and all the other stuff has largely left untouched.

With a ladies football game played after the Harty final, the PA announced shortly before the final whistle that nobody was allowed on to the pitch. He had some chance of that happening because there was a double-pitch invasion; the Flannan's hordes stormed the place to embrace their friends, heroes and classmates while the CBC crew were consoling their buddies.

The klaxon horns were blaring. The old Flannan's chants and songs were being belted out. The atmosphere was electric, just like it was in Kilmallock 33 years ago.

The wheel always turns full circle.

4 GAA

Clare seal semi-final spot after unbeaten spring run



Allianz HL Division 1 Group A (R5)
CLARE 0-27
DUBLIN 1-15

Joe Ó Muircheartaigh
 Cusack Park

Clare, in Brian Lohan's debut season as manager, rounded off their Division 1B campaign in hugely impressive style with a polished display at Cusack Park, Ennis yesterday.

This nine-point success before an attendance of 3,360 was as dominant as Clare have been in their five games to date, as they maintained their unbeaten run with the minimum of fuss.

"You want to try and win as

many games as possible," said a delighted Lohan, after his side cruised to victory in the second half when racking up an impressive 0-16.

"There aren't too many games in the whole calendar year," he continued. "We played our first five games and that could have been it, but we're in a semi-final now and we'll drive on."

They were in the driving seat here for all but a 10-minute spell before half-time during which time they conceded 1-3 without reply to see a 0-11 to 0-5 lead evaporate as a resurgent Dublin got back on terms.

However, in the overall scheme of things it was just a blip as the normal service of the first half — illuminated by Tony Kelly's unerring accuracy from frees and fine efforts from play by David McInerney, Domhnall McMahon and the sublime Shane O'Donnell — came back with a vengeance on the turnover.

Dublin had been firefighting largely on the back of



STEP OVER: Clare's Cathal Malone wins possession ahead of Dublin's Dáire Gray during the Allianz NHL clash at Cusack Park. 'I am very happy with the response of the players, right from the very first day we got together, said Lohan.

Donal Burke's 0-6 haul and the 34th minute goal he set up for Eamonn Dillon that brought the sides level at the break (0-11 to 1-8), but were subsequently blitzed by a rampant Clare outfit.

That the half-time whistle came at the right time for the hosts told in the way they raised their game immediately after the resumption, hitting seven out of the first eight points to effectively kill the contest within 12 minutes of the third quarter.

Tony Kelly sent the home side on their way inside a minute en route to hitting 0-12 for the third time in five league outings to pass the 0-50 mark for the season, but fellow midfielder David McInerney and

inside forward Shane O'Donnell were the standouts as Clare powered home.

Burke continued to plough a lone battle for Dublin in the second half as he bought his tally to double figures, but for Clare it was target practice long before the end as they booked a first semi-final berth since 2016, when they also won the title for the fourth time.

David Reidy and John Conlon from the starting 15, as well as substitutes Aron Shanagher and Gary Cooney, also found the range before the end to ensure that nine different players put a mark on the scorecard from play.

"I am very happy with the response of the players, right from the very first day we got

together," said Lohan. "The team is working well and training hard."

"We have a two-week break now. There are a number of guys who have had a lot of game time so we'll give them a break on Tuesday night," he added.

"The league finished for us today and we realise we have work to do going forward," reflected Dublin boss Mattie Kenny. "We're looking forward to pushing on so that come May we will be fresher and get the benefit of all the guys who got game-time in the league."

Scorers for Clare: T Kelly (0-12, 10f, 1 '65), D McInerney (0-4), S O'Donnell (0-3), D McMahon (0-2), D Reidy (0-2), A Shanagher (0-1), J Conlon (0-1), G Cooney (0-1), D Ryan (0-1).

Scorers for Dublin: D Burke (0-10, 6f), E Dillon (1-0), P Crummy (0-3), D Gray (0-1), R Hayes (0-1).

CLARE: E Quilligan; J Browne, C Cleary, L Corry; C Malone, P O'Connor, P Fitzpatrick; D McInerney, T Kelly; D Ryan, D Reidy, D McMahon; R Taylor, J Conlon, S O'Donnell.

Subs: A Shanagher for Ryan (43), G Cooney for Shanagher (56-57) B/S, G Cooney for Taylor (58), K Hehir for McMahon (63), P Collins for O'Donnell (65), R Hayes for Fitzpatrick (68).

DUBLIN: A Nolan; P Smyth, E O'Donnell, A Dunphy; J Malone, P Crummy, D Gray, S Moran, R McBride; D Sutcliffe, D Burke, F McGibb; M Schutte, D Keogh, R Hayes.

Subs: E Dillon for Moran (25), A O'Neill for Dunphy (50-59) B/S, P Ryan for Sutcliffe (54), A O'Neill for McGibb (59), J Hetherington for Schutte (60), L Rushe for McBride (65).

Referee: David Hughes (Carlow)

Limerick roll on but fears grow over Dowling fitness



Allianz HL Division 1 Group A (R5)
LIMERICK 1-24
WESTMEATH 0-18

John Keogh
 LIT Gaelic Grounds

Limerick maintained their 100% record in the Allianz Hurling League with a nine-point win over Westmeath at the LIT Gaelic Grounds.

They were made to work for the victory as Westmeath produced an impressive second-half performance that saw them cut Limerick's lead to four points in the latter stages. However, David Dempsey fired in the game's only goal in

the 69th minute to see Limerick earn their fourth win as they bid to retain their league title.

John Kiely's men made a flying start by scoring the first nine points before Niall Mitchell got Westmeath on the board in the 18th minute.

David Reidy opened the scoring for Limerick inside a minute with his first of eight first-half points. Tom Morrissey and Seamus Flanagan also got two points apiece in that spell as Limerick took control from the off.

Flanagan was a constant threat with his form a big boost for Kiely looking ahead to the Munster Championship.

Barry Nash and three Reidy frees saw Limerick 0-9 to 0-0 up before Mitchell got Westmeath up and running with a well-taken point.

That seemed to settle Westmeath and they grew in confidence as the half wore on. A couple of frees and two sideline cuts from Derek

McNicholas saw them settle further.

Limerick upped the pace again just before the break with two Reidy frees and an excellent Brian Ryan point from play that helped them to a 0-15 to 0-6 lead at the break.

Reidy made way for Dempsey at half-time due to a stiff neck and was missed for Limerick in the second half as a week's warm weather training Portugal began to take its toll.

Westmeath opened the second half scoring through a Darragh Clinton point that was immediately cancelled out by a Tom Morrissey free.

Two McNicholas frees and Jack Galvin's second point of the game then reduced Limerick's lead to seven eight minutes into the second half.

Morrissey again replied from play after he was picked out by Darragh O'Donovan.

However, that was to be his last positive contribution, as he was soon sent off for an off the ball incident.

Westmeath then hit three in



Limerick's Kyle Hayes is tackled by Westmeath's Aonghus Clarke.

a row through two further McNicholas frees and another excellent effort by Clinton after he was brilliantly picked out by Galvin.

Limerick were starting to creak a little bit, but Ryan's second and Flanagan's fourth point settled any nerves at the Ennis Road venue.

Flanagan also came within a whisker of a goal with a

thunderous shot that cannoned off the crossbar.

Westmeath kept plugging away though and another McNicholas free, as well as a well-taken Josh Coll point from play, kept them in touch.

Coll hit the target again on 58 minutes to make the score 0-20 to 0-16 in Limerick's favour and it looked at that stage that a shock could be on.

Limerick responded through Darren O'Connell, but McNicholas' 10th point of the afternoon kept Westmeath's hopes alive going into the final stages.

A long-range Barry Nash point put Limerick five clear again and a superb individual goal from Dempsey made sure of the win. He beat a couple of Westmeath defenders and came in along the end line before firing an unstoppable shot into the roof of the net.

Following the victory, Kiely gave an update on injuries to Peter Casey and Shane Dowling. Casey is expected to be back to full training this week,

but the news is not positive about Dowling.

The Na Piarasigh marksman's knee injury picked up last season has not responded well to treatment and it is unclear as to whether he will play any part in Limerick's 2020 campaign.

Scorers for Limerick: D Reidy 0-8 (7f), T Morrissey 0-7 (4f), S Flanagan 0-4, D Dempsey 1-0, B Nash and B Ryan 0-2 each, D O'Connell 0-1.

Scorers for Westmeath: D McNicholas 0-10 (8f, 2 s/f), D Clinton 0-3, J Galvin and J Coll 0-2 each, S Clavin 0-1.

LIMERICK: B Hennessy; S Finn, M Casey, A Costello; B Nash, D Hannan, D Morrissey; J Considine, D O'Donovan; D Reidy, T Morrissey, B Ryan; D O'Connell, S Flanagan, G Mulcahy.

Subs: K Hayes for Mulcahy (h-t), D Dempsey for Reidy (h-t), B O'Grady for Finn (42), P O'Loughlin for Hannan (52), R Hanley for Considine (62).

WESTMEATH: A McHugh; A Ennis, T Doyle, C Shaw, D Egerton, A Clarke, L Varley; S Clavin, A Cox; C Boyle, D McNicholas, R Greville; J Boyle, N Mitchell, J Galvin.

Subs: D Clinton for Ennis (27), C Doyle for Cox (34), J Coll for J Boyle (h-t), J Gillingan for Varley (44), B Doyle for Egerton (65).

Referee: S Hynes (Galway)



Tipperary's Dillon Quirke takes a sideline cut during the Allianz NHL game against Waterford at Semple Stadium yesterday. Said Tipp boss Liam Sheedy: 'March 1, we're very happy with back-to-back wins and it gives us loads to play for next Sunday up in Galway.' Picture: Ramsey Cardy

Tipp make hard work of 13-man Déise

A bona fide slog for Tipperary but it shouldn't have been, not when they had the numerical advantage for almost 50 minutes.

For eight of those minutes, they had two men to the good before Cathal Barrett followed Austin Gleeson (two yellow cards) and Kevin Moran in being shown to the line by referee Seán Stack.

And they had to rely on Waterford's profligacy in the second half.

Their 11 wides (16 overall) sapped the abundance of energy they were already expending on an impressive-looking Semple Stadium field chasing after Tipperary.

After a fine game against Galway the previous weekend, Pauric Mahony had one to forget in accumulating nine wides.

As Cork's defeat to Galway confirmed Waterford's place in a quarter-final at least, Cahill wasn't too down-hearted afterwards.

Annoyed, yes, by the decision on a linesman's evidence to dismiss Kevin Moran for a jab at Jason Forde but overall pleased with the heart shown in the second half, which they won 1-8 to 0-10.

"It had a really competitive edge to it, especially after the sendings off, and I think both teams would be happy with what they got out of today."

"They showed great resolve again, very happy with them that way. They're applying themselves really well. The respect they're showing management and Mikey (Bevans) coaching-wise and the management team and everyone associated with it is really, really great."

"They're coming honest to the field every day, both train-



Allianz HL Division 1 Group A (R5)

TIPPERARY 0-24

WATERFORD 2-16

John Fogarty

Semple Stadium



ing and matches, and what more can you ask from a group of players only that so fair play to them and I just hope now that they can keep that up."

Cahill had no truck with Stack's call to issue a second yellow card to Gleeson but he was beside himself with anger on the sideline when Moran was carded.

"Disappointed with the second one, had no real issues with Austin Gleeson's second yellow, it was high and warranted a yellow card, that's the rules."

"I think the one with Kevin Moran was just a little bit of handbags. But again, if there was a striking action there, those are the rules and the rules have to be applied."

Liam Sheedy appreciated his team should have done more with the extra man and their 0-14 to 1-8 half-time lead could have been bigger.

The legginess of his players could have been interpreted as casualness and Michael Breen, John McGrath and at times Pádraic Maher appeared most off the boil.

Their manager highlighted

that the game came during an intense training period for his side.

"We were probably tiring a lot in the finish because we are in a heavy training schedule trying to make up the ground that we lost early on being a bit late back to the pitch but overall very happy with the effort."

"Some guys out there obviously put their hands up again with very solid performances. March 1, we're very happy with back-to-back wins and it gives us loads to play for next Sunday up in Galway."

None more so than Dillon Quirke who in front of the 6,411 Thurles crowd notched four points and delivered when more experienced colleagues in the forward line looked out of sorts.

It was Quirke's fourth point which put Tipperary into a 54th minute lead they didn't surrender and it was his pass that set up Seamus Callanan for the next score.

Sheedy acknowledged: "The way he applies himself in training that wouldn't surprise you because he's a very up and at it guy and he brings a lot of energy to the pitch and he brought that energy again to Semple Stadium today, which is great."

Goal chances were plentiful here although Stephen O'Keeffe was level to all that was thrown at him as much as some of the shots at him were low percentage ones.

Brian Hogan did make a fine stop from Jamie Barron in the 10th minute but the parry fell to Peter Hogan and as much as Hogan again got a touch to it the shot was too good.

When the sides were even in personnel, Waterford opened

up Tipperary a few times only for their composure to let them down.

Although Stephen Bennett added a second goal in the second minute of the second half, their poor shooting became more apparent as the game grew with their usual excellent captain Mahony missing several attempts.

"Unfortunately, this group of players invite a lot of teams on them by unforced errors," rued Cahill.

"Leaving that amount of scoring chances behind you would be disappointed but there would be a lot of silly frees we gave away."

"We have a lot of areas like that to work on that should narrow the gap in scoring when the time comes if we're able to correct them."

Scorers for Tipperary: J Forde (0-11, 5 65s, 4 frees); D Quirke (0-4); P Maher, S Callanan (0-2 each); C Barrett, N McGrath, N O'Meara, J McGrath, C Darcy (0-1 each).

Scorers for Waterford: P Mahony (0-7, 6 frees); P Hogan (1-2); S Bennett (1-1); J Barron (0-2); C Gleeson, D Hutchinson, N Montgomery, K Moran (0-1 each).

TIPPERARY: B Hogan; A Flynn, R Maher, C Barrett; B McGrath, P Maher, B Heffernan, P Cadell, M Breen; J Forde, S Callanan (c), D Quirke; N McGrath, J McGrath, N O'Meara.

Subs for Tipperary: C Darcy for P Cadell (blood, 28-31); B O'Mara for B McGrath (43); J Morris for M Breen (49); C Darcy for J McGrath (58); C Morgan for A Flynn, P Flynn for N O'Meara (injury) (both 63).

Sent off: C Barrett (35+3, straight).

WATERFORD: S O'Keeffe; K Power, S McNulty, C Prunty; S Ryan, A Gleeson, K Moran; J Barron, C Gleeson; J Fagan, P Mahony (c), M Kearney; P Hogan, S Bennett, D Hutchinson.

Subs for Waterford: C Lyons for S Ryan (injury, 22); J Prendergast for J Fagan (65); D Lyons for K Power (58); N Montgomery for D Hutchinson (60); P Curran for P Hogan (67).

Sent off: A Gleeson (30, second yellow); K Moran (34, straight).

Referee: S Stack (Dublin).

How they lined out

1. B. Hogan		
5. A. Flynn	3. R. Maher	2. C. Barrett
13. P. Hogan	14. S. Bennett	15. D. Hutchinson
4. B. McGrath	7. P. Maher	6. B. Heffernan
12. M. Kearney	11. P. Mahony	10. J. Fagan
17. P. Cadell	9. M. Breen	
9. C. Gleeson	8. J. Barron	
10. J. Forde	14. S. Callanan	15. D. Quirke
7. K. Moran	6. A. Gleeson	5. S. Ryan
8. N. McGrath	11. J. McGrath	12. N. O'Meara
3. C. Prunty	4. S. McNulty	17. K. Power
1. S. O'Keeffe		

IT MATTERED

After Jamie Barron had made it a one-point game in the 70th minute, Jason Forde's late converted free for a foul on Noel McGrath provided Tipperary with the breathing space.

CAN'T IGNORE

The sendings off. Austin Gleeson's was justified but Kevin Moran's dig at Jason Forde didn't merit a red card. On review, Cathal Barrett's dismissal looked over-the-top top. Both were based on information given to the referee by his team.

GOOD DAY

The secret about Dillon Quirke is out now: the boy can play. Those who saw him in the county championship in 2018 or for Liam Cahill's U21 team would have known that but after injury upset him last year he looks ready to make an impact this season.

BAD DAY

Cahill had no issue with Gleeson's sending off but the player will again have to consider if playing so close to the line each time, for a player of his immense skill, is worth doing.

SIDELINE SMARTS

With how Waterford set up and lined out, Cahill didn't show too much of his hand while the other Liam, Sheedy, flipped a few positional lines. Tipp did go with 11 of their All-Ireland winning team but many of them looked leggy.

BEST ON SHOW

Stephen O'Keeffe would be the pick if some of Tipperary's shots weren't made easy for him. Quirke, so good for Clonoulty-Rossmore a couple of seasons ago, was excellent and will retain his place against Galway.

MAN IN THE MIDDLE

Trying conditions for Seán Stack as much as the players. The calls on Austin Gleeson were right but he may have been given bad advice from his other assistants for the other straight card dismissal. The frees for Tipperary in the second half dried up considerably.

NEXT UP

Tipperary and Galway face off for a quarter-final place in Salthill - a point will be enough for Tipp to go through. Waterford face Limerick in the LIT Gaelic Grounds this Saturday evening with a quarter-final confirmed but a semi-final place on the line.

Words: John Fogarty

6 GAA

Relentless Wexford take Carlow to the cleaners



Allianz HL Division 1 Group A (R5)

WEXFORD 2-29**CARLOW** 1-11**Brendan Furlong**

Chadwicks Wexford Park

It was routine in the end as Wexford cruised to a comfortable 21-point victory over a

disappointing Carlow, claiming a quarter-final spot at Wexford Park yesterday.

Wexford were officially through to the quarter-finals, but a home victory — coupled with a Clare loss — would have seen them leapfrog the Banner county into the semi-final. But with results going as expected, the Model county had to be satisfied with a place in the quarter-finals as Davy Fitzgerald's Clare secured that semi-final place with a convincing defeat of Dublin.

Wexford took the initiative from the opening minutes, never relinquishing their grip as they dominated right through the pitch. It was an

outstanding team display to go along with some excellent individual performances.

Already doomed to relegation play-off, Carlow showed it in their play, for they failed to match the momentum of their opponents. But they will be desperately disappointed, as they succumbed to one of their heaviest defeat without offering a serious challenge.

Wexford made the bright start into the breeze, shooting into a 0-7 to 0-0 lead by the 12th minute, with the in-form Rory O'Connor shooting over three points, two frees, while Conal Flood, Harry Kehoe, Jack O'Connor and Aidan Nolan

also got in on the scoring act.

Carlow had to wait until the 14th minute for their opening score, a Chris Nolan pointed free. Carlow were given brief hope when Diarmuid Byrne forced home a 19th minute goal to reduce the deficit to 0-7 to 1-3. But with Wexford responding with a string of points to go along with a Rory O'Connor goal from a free, the home side led 1-13 to 1-6 at the interval.

For Wexford it was a case of completing the job on the resumption. After Rory O'Connor and Chris Nolan had exchanged pointed frees it was home sub Paul Morris who took up the scoring re-

sponsibility, shooting over eight points, four frees, as they totally dominated the second 35 minutes.

Carlow could only manage points from Nolan frees, before Wexford completed the task with a Diarmuid O'Keefe 69th minute goal to complete a satisfactory afternoon.

Carlow finished with 14 men after having full-forward Edward Byrne sent off on a second yellow card after 45 minutes.

Fitzgerald was happy with the display. "I thought at times we played some really good hurling, hitting over some great scores. That's the quality that's in the team but

there's still room for improvement for the quarter-final."

WEXFORD: J. Lawlor; S. Donohoe (0-1), L. Ryan, S. Reck; P. Foley, M. O'Hanlon, C. Flood (0-2); L. O'G McGovern, D. O'Keefe (1-2); A. Nolan (0-2), J. O'Connor (0-3), R. O'Connor (1-6, 1-4 frees); M. Dwyer (0-1), C. McDonald (0-1), H. Kehoe (0-2).

Subs: P. Morris (0-8, 0-4 frees) for R. O'Connor (40), S. Murphy for Foley (43), C. Dunbar (0-1) for Kehoe (55), S. Casey for J. O'Connor (60), G. Molloy for McDonald (67).

CARLOW: D. Jordan; M. Malone, P. Doyle, M. Doyle; A. Corcoran, D. English, G. Bennett; S. Whelan, A. Amond; J. Kavanagh, D. Byrne (1-1), J. Nolan; T. Joyce (0-1), E. Byrne, C. Nolan (0-8, 0-6 frees).

Subs: M. Kavanagh (0-1) for J. Kavanagh (Blood Sub 34); C. Whelan for D. Byrne (35), K. McDonald for Whelan (45), C. Tracey for J. Nolan (49), G. Coady for Corcoran (51), J. O'Neill for English (60).

Referee: C. Cunniff (Antrim).

Another Cody gets the Cats call



Allianz HL Division 1 Group A (R5)

LAOIS 1-19**KILKENNY** 3-22**Greg Mulhall**

UPMC Nowlan Park

Kilkenny continued their pursuit for Allianz League honours with a commanding victory over a brave Laois side in Nowlan Park.

Laois looked like they had an upset in them in the early stages of the second half, notching the first four points with the wind behind their backs.

Kilkenny and in-particular Eoin Cody had other plans, the Ballyhale youngster coming to the fore for the Cats to hit 1-5 in a five-minute spell and put the result beyond all doubt.

Laois were forced to cough up home advantage for this clash due to an overworked surface at the Portlaoise venue, but it allowed a dress rehearsal for their Leinster Championship meeting to proceed.

Laois' status in the Division 1B was confirmed for another year following their win against Carlow last weekend and with the knockout stages out of their reach, there was little to play in this encounter.

Alan Murphy and Ross King traded early frees before the opening goal arrived six minutes in when the Laois defence opened up to allow Billy Ryan to rifle low past goalkeeper Enda Rowland.

Kilkenny attacked at will and the scores came easily for Cody's men against a Laois de-

fence that struggled to stop the onslaught. The home side went on to hit seven of the next ten points to pull clear by the 20th minute, the highlight of the scoring a brilliant point from Laois vice-captain Willie Dunphy.

The half ended in hectic fashion when Alan Murphy goaled on the stroke of half-time, but Laois went up the other end and earned a penalty that Rowland came forward to confidently dispatch.

"Just after half-time to get the start we got, that should've really catapulted us into that match," said Laois boss Eddie Brennan. "But the one thing we well know at this stage is that when you come to Nowlan Park, the one area you have to be really strong in is the work-rate, the tackle and the honesty. That was probably the difference."

Aside from the initial Laois scoring spree, they rarely troubled Kilkenny in the closing half. Eoin Cody took over the free-taking duties for the half and Henry Shefflin's nephew gave a coming-of-age performance.

Scorers for Kilkenny: E. Cody (1-8, 1-0 pen, 0-4 frees, 2-65s), A. Murphy (1-5, 3-3 frees, 1-65), B. Ryan (1-1), J. Maher and M. Keoghane (0-2 each), D. Brennan (free), R. Leahy, G. Aylward and J. Bergin (0-1 each).

Scorers for Laois: R. King (0-9, 5-3 frees, 2-65s), W. Dunphy (0-3), E. Rowland (1-0, pen), E. Gaughan and P. Purcell (0-2 each), J. Lennon, A. Dunphy and J. Ryan (0-1 each).

KILKENNY: D. Brennan, T. Walsh, H. Lawlor, C. Wallace, C. Delaney, P. Walsh, D. Mullen, R. Leahy, J. Maher, M. Keoghane, E. Cody, A. Murphy, B. Ryan, W. Walsh, G. Aylward.

Subs: L. Scanlon for Murphy (half-time), B. Sheehan for W. Walsh (48), M. Carey for Maher (52), J. Bergin for Keoghane (57), S. Walsh for Aylward (66).

LAOIS: E. Rowland, L. Senior, M. Whelan, D. Hartnett, R. Broderick, P. Delaney, C. McEvoy, F. Fennell, C. Stapleton, A. Dunphy, J. Ryan, P. Purcell, R. King, W. Dunphy, E. Gaughan.

Subs: J. Kelly for Senior (28), J. Lennon for Stapleton (30), C. Taylor for Ryan (66), J. Keyes for McEvoy (66), C. Phelan for Fennell (69).

Referee: John Keenan (Wicklow)



Kerry centre-forward Michael Leane battles for the ball with Antrim's Joe Maskey during the Allianz NHL Division 2A game. Victory ensured the the Saffrons qualified for the decider but Kerry's fate will only be decided after the next round of games. Pict: Domnick Walsh

Weakened Kerry finally falter



Allianz HL Division 2A

KERRY 2-14**ANTRIM** 2-20**Mortimer Murphy**

Austin Stack Park

Antrim ended Kerry's unbeaten run in this Allianz Hurling League Division 2A tie at Austin Stack Park, Tralee to secure their place in this month's decider. But Kerry's hopes were dashed before throw-in, with Shane Conway

one of three players ruled out due to mumps.

Antrim boss Darren Gleeson admitted to having sympathy for the home side: "Shane is a serious player and we might have operated differently if he was on the field. But it was a very disruptive week for the Kerry lads. It was also tough on Kerry when it was their last match while their two main rivals have a match left."

The opening half was a relatively close affair. After 20 minutes, the sides were tied on 0-6 apiece, with Niall McKenna (2), James McLaughlin, Keelan Molloy, Neil McManus and Paddy Burke on the mark for Antrim while Padraig Boyle (2 frees), Brandon Barrett, Michael Leane, Jordan Conway and Shane Nolan were the Kerry scorers. But then Antrim fired

over six unanswered points to take a firm grip on proceedings but a goalkeeping error gave Kerry a lifeline as Jordan Conway's goal cut the margin to three at the interval (0-12 to 1-6).

Antrim netted shortly after the restart and Donal Nugent's strike pushed them six clear again. Kerry battled hard and reduced the gap to three (1-15 to 1-12) by the 52nd minute with Mikey Boyle scoring an inspirational point from his own half. But Antrim moved up the gear with points from McManus (free) and Eoghan Campbell before captain Conor McCann struck had their second goal and the lead was now eight points.

Mikey Boyle did force Conor McAllister to tip the ball on the crossbar and then scored a late Kerry goal, but it was purely cosmetic as the

better side prevailed.

Scorers for Kerry: P. Boyle 0-6 (0-4f), J. Conway (1-2), M. Boyle (1-1), M. Leane (0-2), B. Barrett, S. Nolan and M. Slattery (0-1 each).

Scorers for Antrim: N. McManus (0-5, 3f, 1, 65), D. Nugent (1-2), C. McCann (1-0), K. Molloy and N. McKenna (0-3), J. McNaughton (0-2), C. Cunniff, M. Bradley, P. Burke, E. Campbell and D. McCloskey (0-1 each).

KERRY: M. Stackpoole; E. Leane, B. Murphy, J. O'Connor; S. Weir, M. Boyle, J. Diggins; M. Leane, F. Mackessy; M. O'Leary, S. Nolan, B. Barrett; P. Boyle, M. Slattery, J. Conway.

Subs: C. O'Keefe for J. O'Connor (43), D. Goggin for S. Nolan (58), C. Harty for M. Slattery (68).

ANTRIM: C. McAllister; P. Duffin, M. Donnelly, S. Rooney; G. Walsh, P. Burke, J. Maskey; E. Campbell, K. Molloy; M. Bradley, N. McManus, J. McNaughton; D. Nugent, N. McKenna, D. McCloskey.

Subs: C. McCann for J. McLaughlin (44), C. Jordan for D. McCloskey (57), A. O'Brien for G. Walsh (63), C. Cunniff for M. Bradley (63), C. Johnson for P. Duffin (66).

Referee: C. McAllister (Cork).

Harty specialists Flannan's back in winner's enclosure



Dr Harty Cup final
ST FLANNAN'S COLLEGE (Clare)..... 1-15
CBC (Cork) 1-12

Therese O'Callaghan
 Mallow

A great day for St Flannan's College at Mallow yesterday — in their 40th Dr Harty Cup final appearance the cup specialists claimed their 22nd title.

It was a most deserved victory in front of just over 3,000 spectators in a decider as tightly fought as the scoreline suggests.

"We were playing a system that suited our players, they love to run," said St Flannan's mentor Brendan Bugler.

"A lot of them are dual players and are equally as good at football. They are very comfortable on the ball, there is no problem when you are giving a short puckout or anything like that.

"We were against the wind in the first half but I suppose with the way we play it doesn't make a difference whether we play with or against the wind. We can equally go long if we have to.

"We weren't looking back on last year or the year before, we were just focusing on this year."

Strong all over the field, St Flannan's first-half heroics against the elements enabled them to go 1-8 to 0-7 in front at the interval.

Pinpoint passes from a tireless defence setting up the likes of Killian O'Connor, Conner Hegarty, Tony Butler and Peter Power for well-taken points. Diarmuid Cahill's excellent goal midway



WE'VE DONE IT: St Flannan's joint captains Conner Hegarty and Cian Galvin show off the trophy after their Dr Harty Cup final win over CBC, Cork at Mallow yesterday. Team mentor Brendan Bugler said: 'They are very comfortable on the ball, there is no problem when you are giving a short puckout or anything like that.'

Picture: Dan Linehan

through the half was finished with aplomb.

Jack Cahalane's almost flawless free-taking performance was a huge influence on a youthful CBC display. And when Cahalane converted three more straight after the restart, the margin was reduced to one.

St Flannan's were wasteful but still upped the gears. Galvin (3) and one each from Oisín O'Donnell and O'Connor helped them ease six points clear, some of the scores straight from the top drawer.

Credit needs to be given to CBC who fought right to the bitter end but several goal opportunities went amiss. Ca-

halane's goal from the penalty spot arrived too late, in the seventh minute of stoppages.

"We put in a gallant effort," said CBC joint coach Tony Wall.

"As I said after the semi-final, we can never question the courage of this team. We were probably a bit too slow starting in the first half.

"St Flannan's played exceptionally well in the first half. We had goal chances in the

second half and we were extremely unlucky not to have got one. They were a bit stronger than us too physically and they won that battle."

Both teams have All Ireland quarter-finals to prepare for this week.

Scorers for St Flannan's: C Galvin (0-5, 0-4 frees), K O'Connor (0-4), D Cahill (1-0), C Hegarty and O O'Donnell (0-2 each), T Butler and P Power (0-1 each).

Scorers for CBC: J Cahalane (1-9, 1-0

pen, 0-8 frees), R Cotter (0-2), E Kirby (0-1).

ST FLANNAN'S: C Broderick (Clarecastle); N Walsh (The Banner), D Healy (Clarecastle), M Reidy (Ballyea); T Butler (St Joseph's Doora Barefield), C Galvin (Clarecastle, Joint-Capt), S Casey (Ballyea); C Hegarty Kilnamona, (Joint-Capt), J Collins (Eire Og); A Brohan (Ruan), C Cassidy (Clooney Quin), K O'Connor (Corofin); P Power (Newmarket-on-Fergus), D Cahill (Corofin), O O'Donnell (Crusheen).

Subs: J Doherty (Clarecastle) for C Cassidy (45), D Cunningham (Clooney Quin) for P Power (54), D Nagle (St Jo-

seph's Doora Barefield) for A Brohan (57), R Power (Ruan) for O O'Donnell (59).

CBC: E O'Neill (Blarney); G Reddy (Midleton); S Kingston (Ballinora); E Downey (Glen Rovers); P Cummins (St Colman's); C Daly (Lismore), G Mulcahy (Glen Rovers); J Dwyer (Ballincollig), E Kidney (Cobh); E Kirby (Blarney), N Hartnett (Douglas, Capt), D McSweeney (Blarney); R Cotter (Blackrock), J Cahalane (St Finbarr's), D Burke (Douglas).

Subs: D Cremin (Midleton) for D McSweeney (53).

Referee: John O'Halloran (Limerick).



CBC's Robbie Cotter under pressure from St Flannan's players Tony Butler, Stephen Casey, and Ashley Brohan. Picture: Dan Linehan

THE 60 SECOND REPORT

IT MATTERED

St Flannan's first-half performance against the wind, after which they led by four points. Diarmuid Cahill's brilliantly executed goal midway through the opening 30 minutes was a big score.

CAN'T IGNORE

Christian Brothers College had several goal opportunities from play in the second half, but between the woodwork and St Flannan's defensive brilliance, they were denied.

GOOD DAY

St Flannan's extended their lead at the top of the Harty Cup roll of honour (22 titles). Darragh Healy followed in the footsteps of his father Pat, who himself won a Harty medal in 1987.

BAD DAY

A tough pill to swallow for CBC, who have now suffered two Dr Harty Cup final defeats in a row.

SIDELINE SMARTS

St Flannan's short passing and running game got them over the line.

BEST ON SHOW

For St Flannan's, Killian O'Connor's haul of four points makes him a worthy recipient. A mention too for Jack Cahalane (1-9) for CBC.

MAN IN THE MIDDLE

Limerick referee John O'Halloran had an intense game of hurling flow.

WHERE NEXT

On to the All-Ireland quarter-finals, where St Flannan's will play St Kieran's College, Kilkenny and CBC meet Presentation College, Athenry. Both matches to be completed by March 7.

Therese O'Callaghan

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McEntee blasts 'wrong calls' as Galway win sees Royals relegated



Allianz FL Division 1 (R5)

MEATH 1-12
GALWAY 1-14

Paul Keane

Páirc Tailteann



Meath boss Andy McEntee blasted what he termed poor refereeing and criticised what he alleged was a series of wrong calls in big games following the team's relegation from Division 1.

The Royals led Galway by eight points approaching half-time but ultimately slipped to a two-point defeat, their fifth on the spin, and will return to Division 2.

Captain Shane Walsh, who hit 0-7 including the game's last two points, Paul Conroy and goalscorer Ronan Steede all played huge roles in a win that lifts Galway clear at the top.

But McEntee criticised referee Niall Cullen, arguing that Galway's cynical play in the lead up to half-time went unpunished and that it allowed the Tribesmen to gain a vital foothold in the game, reeling off four points without reply as they did before the break.

Earlier in the campaign, McEntee was fuming that not enough stoppage time was played in their one-point de-

feat to Mayo and, separately, that Conor McGill was black carded against Donegal.

"We got a response back regarding two games, one that there should have been more time played but we paid the penalty that day and another one that there shouldn't have been a black card against Donegal but we conceded 2-2 when we had that man out on a black card," said McEntee. "These all are decisions that are impacting on games; they are having a material impact on the scoreline of games, they are not Mickey Mouse decisions. They are big decisions and they are consistently getting it wrong."

As regards Fermanagh referee Cullen, McEntee claimed he 'had too much of an influence on the game' and that aided Galway's revival.

"He doesn't seem to know the rules, he gave a free against Ethan Devine for a one-handed hand-pass, which he is allowed to do if one hand is being held. The ref said it was a one-handed throw. It's not just Meath games, it's every game."

McEntee claimed that Cullen didn't do enough to punish what he alleged was Galway's cynical play and rejected the suggestion that the visitors were simply using all their experience and know-how.

"They got away with it because the officials didn't take the appropriate action," said McEntee. "That is not a reflection on us. We are trying to take kick-outs, lads are trying to make a run and they get dragged to the ground, that is not a lack of cuteness on our



Meath's Ethan Devine tests the texture of John Daly's jersey as the Galway defender tries to break upfield during the Allianz NFL Division 1 clash at Páirc Tailteann.

Picture: Daire Brennan

behalf, that is a lack of officials doing what they are supposed to do."

McEntee, who spoke to Cullen at half-time, claimed Galway's cynical play 'changed the pace of the game,

it changed the scoreline dramatically enough' though Galway manager Padraic Joyce rejected this.

"He can have his own opinion on it but my opinion is that the referee refereed the

game fairly all day long," said Joyce, who reckoned Meath were guilty of cynical play too. "I saw a couple of Meath lads trying to drag our Galway fellows down to the ground, trying to get them into trouble. These

things happen, it's 50-50 at the end of the day."

After hammering Tyrone by 19 points the previous weekend, Galway planned to pick up where they'd left off but were shocked to find themselves 1-6 to 0-1 down, necessitating an epic comeback.

"It's not hindsight but I said at the start of the campaign this would be our toughest game," said Joyce.

It was made all the more difficult by the losses of Cillian McDaid (knee) and Damien Comer (hamstring) with fresh injuries.

Joyce's response to falling eight points down was to replace Martin Farragher with Conroy and the veteran had a huge impact.

It was Conroy, following a turnover in Meath's defence, that picked out Steede for Galway's 40th minute goal and he added four points after that to help turn the screw and consign Meath to the drop.

Scorers for Galway: S Walsh (0-7, 6 frees); R Steede (1-1); P Conroy (0-4, 1 mark); M Daly, E Brannigan (0-1 each).

Scorers for Meath: E Devine (1-0); J Conlon, D Lenihan (2 frees); B McMahon (0-3 each); B Menton (0-2); O O'Brien (0-1).

GALWAY: C Gleeson; S Kelly, S Mulkerin, J Heaney, L Silke, J Daly, G O'Donnell; R Steede, T Flynn; E Brannigan, C D'Arcy, M Daly; M Farragher, S Walsh, A Varley.

Subs: P Conroy for Farragher (27); G Bradshaw for O'Donnell (52); R Finnerty for Varley (55); D Silke for Daly (61); M Barrett for Steede (65).

MEATH: M Brennan; R Clarke, C McGill, D Toner; J McEntee, R Ryan, D Keogan; B Menton, B Conlon; E Devine, B McMahon, C O'Sullivan; J Conlon, O O'Brien, T O'Reilly.

Subs: S Walsh for O'Brien (48); D Lenihan for Devine (55); J O'Connor for J Conlon & P Harnan for B Conlon (55). **Referee:** N Cullen (Fermanagh).

Bonner hails Donegal's vital win over Monaghan



Allianz FL Division 1 (R5)

DONEGAL 2-12
MONAGHAN 0-8

Alan Foley

Ballyshannon



Having blown promising positions against Mayo, Galway and then Dublin, Donegal made some amends yesterday in Ballyshannon to blow Monaghan away with a degree of comfort.

Declan Bonner's team had only themselves to blame for turning a jostle with those at the top of the Division 1 table into a scrap to stay in the top-flight.

They're not safe yet, al-

though this 10-point win over Monaghan would've alleviated some of the frustration they've built up in recent weeks.

With conditions at Fr Tierney Park certainly awkward — a hail shower fell almost horizontally at one stage in the first half — Donegal pressed on from a 1-5 to 0-2 interval advantage, with Caolan Ward the goalscorer, and weren't for taking the foot off the gas this week.

Monaghan, second best from start to finish, saw whatever chances they had recede to nothing when Ryan Wylie was dismissed for adding a yellow to a first-half black on 41 minutes.

Then, with the bookmakers having already paid out, they lost Rory Beggan to the sin bin in a move that concluded with Hugh McFadden smashing a second Donegal goal into an empty net from a couple of yards out.

Referee David Coldrick had played the advantage before dishing out the black card to

the Monaghan goalkeeper for hauling down Patrick McBrearty in the build-up.

Donegal just played it out till the finish and had the unusual luxury of not requiring a single Michael Murphy score. Michael Langan would score five points from play from his berth at centre-field.

"Even though we didn't get over the line against Dublin or Galway, there has been a really good atmosphere in the squad," Bonner said afterwards. "They're all pushing on. The results were disappointing, but the effort they were putting in was excellent."

"It was important for us to get the two points. We spoke about it before the match. Whatever about the performance, it was all about getting the two points and getting over the line."

McBrearty was making his first start of 2020 having spent the best part of three months holidaying in the United States and kicked two early scores. Both teams struggled to find their way on occasion

in the difficult conditions, but Donegal, with whatever wind, were 0-3 to 0-1 up on the half-hour, with Monaghan's first point only coming on 27 minutes from a Conor Boyle punch.

Murphy was inside more often than not and with his early marker Kieran Hughes booked inside the quarter-hour, others swarmed the Donegal captain.

However, that too was their undoing as Murphy, almost swallowed up on 32 minutes, still found space to feed Langan who in turn fed Ward to strike an excellent first goal past Beggan. Langan's brace made it a six-point game at the break.

Making sure they'd not have their coattails pinched as the second half took shape, Langan and Peadar Mogan's points, either side of Wylie's dismissal, gave the hosts a 1-9 to 0-3 lead.

Jack McCarron did provide Monaghan with something more up front — the substitute would score three to add to

Conor McManus's two frees. Donegal, though, were in control, with Murphy linking the play from wherever he saw fit.

Monaghan's press was undone on 54 minutes as Mogan got McBrearty away into space and he managed to get off a pass to McFadden, despite being fouled by Beggan.

McFadden wasn't going to miss and it was 2-9 to 0-6 and all but over.

Niall O'Donnell came off the bench to score a couple of points, as Langan added two more to complete a splendid personal performance. Many of the supporters had made their way back down the hill headed for home by then. Monaghan, in their head, probably had too.

"We were very happy where we were with 31 minutes gone in the game," said Monaghan manager Seamus McEnaney. "We felt that we had Donegal in a great place, especially with the strong breeze. But Donegal got a goal then and the first two points of the second half and it was going to be

a serious uphill battle of that.

"When we dropped to 13 men and Donegal are one of the best teams in the country at keeping the ball. When you give them a lead like that, it's not a good place to be."

Scorers for Donegal: M Langan (0-5); P McBrearty (0-3, 1 free); H McFadden, C Ward (1-0 each); N O'Donnell (0-2); P Mogan, C Thompson (0-1 each).

Scorers for Monaghan: J McCarron (0-3, 1 free); C McManus (0-2 frees); C McCarthy, C Boyle, K Hughes (0-1 each).

DONEGAL: S Patton; C Ward, N McGee, E Gallagher; R McHugh, D O Bacioli, O McFadden-Ferry; H McFadden, M Langan, P Brennan, C Thompson, C McGonagle; P McBrearty, M Murphy, P Mogan.

Subs: N O'Donnell for PBrennan (34); E McGee for McFadden-Ferry (38); A McClean for McGonagle (54); J Mac Ceallabhai for Mogan (68); E Doherty for McBrearty (69).

MONAGHAN: R Beggan; D Wylie, C Boyle, K Duffy; K O'Connell, R Wylie, M Bannigan; D Hughes, N Kearns; R McAnespie, C McCarthy, D Ward; D Malone, K Hughes, C McManus.

Subs: J McCarron for Bannigan (h-t); C McGuinness for D Hughes (50); S Carey for Malone (50); D Kirk for McAnespie (55); Colin Walsh for Beggan (66).

Referee: D Coldrick (Meath)

Spiteful scenes mar Tyrone ending Dubs' unbeaten run



Tyrone wing-forward Darren McCurry races past Dublin full-forward Ciarán Kilkenny during the Allianz NFL tie on Saturday. Dublin manager Dessie Farrell said: 'They showed that bit more hunger and appetite, while turnovers killed us in that game.'

You'd suck the top off an entire packet of pencils trying to settle on the most appropriate opening par after a night, and a game, such as this.

Tyrone taking Dessie Farrell's unbeaten record away?

The appalling weather conditions, and Farrell stating, "A GAA official said to me that only for the TV being here the game would not go ahead,"?

Niall Morgan's place-kicking masterclass?

Or the fairly grave scenes at half-time, caught as ever by a concerned citizen on a mobile phone and freely available for anyone to watch players pucking the heads off each other as they made their way down the tunnel. Let's start with that.

"All I will say is that we came up here to play football and that was needless what happened at half-time," was Farrell's reaction.

"I could not see it. There were a hundred people in the tunnel ahead of me."

And Tyrone manager Mickey Harte?

"I didn't see too much, there were just a lot of bodies in a confined space. Maybe that was a good thing, that nobody could get doing any damage to each other."

Neither Harte or Farrell are wholly responsible for the behaviour of their players of course, but there could be fairly serious repercussions and suspensions coming down the track, given the amount of footage already available.

That aside, Tyrone's ability to come out on top of a dogfight has probably saved them in this league. Against Kerry in Edendork, the condi-



Allianz FL Division 1 (R5)

TYRONE 1-10
DUBLIN 1-7

Declan Bogue

Healy Park



tions were similarly dreadful and they carved out a win. Here, they struggled badly in the third quarter after Pádraig Hampsey was black-carded before the game restarted — evidently for his role in the tunnel fight — and Dublin moved into a two-point lead after being level at the break.

At that stage, the All-Ireland champions usually assume control of a game's flow. But this was no normal night and the pitch and weather wouldn't permit it. Darren McCurry converted a free before goalkeeper Niall Morgan hit three consecutive Tyrone frees to grab the lead. Each of them were on a sliding scale of gorgeousness from 'wow' to 'holy f***'.

His fine motor skills were appreciated by his manager. "It's critical," said Harte. "The last two games we've won, his kicking off the ground was critical."

"We did a serious amount of work to win those frees and if they're being missed, that work's in vain."

"When you get a score, the

players feel good, that it's worth working for those frees."

A Dean Rock free levelled the game for the sixth time before Tyrone did to Dublin what Dublin do to so many by hitting a late goal.

Credit must go to substitute Tiernan McCann who began a move down the right flank, combining with Liam Rafferty. A late run came in the guise of Rory Brennan and the trailing Dublin defence couldn't quite read his angle. The Trillick man made straight for goal and put it high in the roof of the net beyond Evan Comerford.

A few things. There was only one minute of normal time left at this point. Just four minutes — correctly — was awarded for time added on and crucially, referee Cormac Reilly stuck to this.

Without a pristine pitch to execute their game-saving plays, being three points behind, Dublin engineered one final raid but when Kevin McManamon was presented with a sight on goal, he hooked his shot wide to the left of the post.

The 3,850 hardy souls here were gifted rich entertainment, and the cheer that greeted the final whistle felt a bit like old times in Healy Park, all the sweeter given Tyrone's bi-polar form and the sight of Cathal McShane in a compression boot.

Dublin had looked up for the game in the early stages when late replacement Colm Basquel netted a goal after two minutes, but Tyrone are a doughty lot when they get into trench warfare.

For example, they turned

over Dublin eight times in their own 45 metre zone in the first half alone. Would that have happened under Jim Gavin?

"You don't like to lose, full stop," admitted Farrell afterwards.

"It was a feisty affair but it is not the end of the world by any stretch of the imagination but it is just your competitive instincts, you don't like coming out the wrong end of those duels."

He sensed that given the prevailing conditions, perhaps there was a bit being held back in any event.

"There was a bit of that to be sure. That would be natural enough but credit to both sides they went at it."

"It takes a bit of courage to do that but that is no excuse because it was difficult for both sides."

"They showed that bit more hunger and appetite, while turnovers killed us in that game."

As for Tyrone, they have one foot out of the relegation grave, and as players headed down the tunnel afterwards, substitute Ronan O'Neill smiled as he shouted, "We're not dead yet, boys!" to reporters.

It felt like a natural kick-back from the 19-point humiliation to Galway last weekend. Harte agreed.

"Absolutely," he said when asked if the Tuam defeat stung.

"I've been managing Tyrone teams for 30 years now, since 1991, and I never suffered a defeat like that at any level."

"Of course I was stung, and they were stung. I shared that

How they lined out

1. N Morgan		
2. M Cassidy	3. R McNamee	9. P Hampsey
13. P Mannion	14. C Kilkenny	15. D Rock
4. L Rafferty		
5. M McKernan	6. R Brennan	7. M O'Neill
12. N Scully	11. S Bugler	18. C Basquel
14. B Kennedy	8. C Cavanagh	
8. B Fenton	9. J McCarthy	
10. F Burns	11. N Sludden	12. D McCurry
5. E Murchan	10. B Howard	7. C O'Shea
13. P Harte		
2. M Fitzsimons	25. E O'Brien	4. D Byrne
1. E Comerford		

IT MATTERED

The weather. Being straight, a game should not have been played in Omagh on Saturday evening and you can thank the heavens or fate that no serious damage occurred. "A GAA official said to me that only for the TV being here the game would not go ahead. It was the same for both sides," said Dessie Farrell, in an admission that will raise eyebrows in some places.

CAN'T IGNORE

For all the hand-wringing and one-time combative players turned pundits being 'shocked' at events here at half-time, the players will not care one ounce about it. It all shows us that there is nothing faked in the rivalry between this pair.

PHYSIO ROOM

We can only comment on what we see with our own eyes, but many will be perplexed that Jack McCaffrey, recovering from injury, was sent on at half-time after sitting cold for the previous 40 minutes. He lasted just half an hour before being replaced by Aaron Byrne.

BEST ON SHOW

Niall Morgan was the winning of this game for Tyrone. His ability to strike a ball was the reason Mickey Harte brought him in back in 2013, and over the last three years he has taken his overall game to another level. His ability to judge a kick in these conditions was jaw-dropping.

MAN IN THE MIDDLE

Cormac Reilly would have needed a pair of eyes on the back of his head to have dealt with all the stuff going on off the ball, or even, another referee altogether. Made a brave call to even play the game, and a possibly bizarre one to award a black card to one player — Pádraig Hampsey after the half-time row. But he was on a hiding to nothing here.

NEXT UP

Tyrone now head to Donegal on March 14th with more than just pre-Championship markers on the line. Dublin would appear nailed-on to get back to winning ways when they host neighbours Meath the day after.

Words: Declan Bogue

sting with them tonight before they came here."

Wouldn't doubt it. At all.

Scorers for Tyrone: N Morgan (0-4 frees), R Brennan (1-1), P Harte (0-2), L Rafferty, C Meyler (0-1 each), D McCurry (0-1 free)

Scorers for Dublin: D Rock (0-4 frees), C Basquel (1-0), B Fenton, C O'Shea, N Scully (0-1 each)

TYRONE: N Morgan; M Cassidy, R McNamee, L Rafferty; M McKernan, R Brennan, M O'Neill; C Cavanagh, P Hampsey; F Burns, N Sludden, D

McCurry; P Harte, B Kennedy, C Meyler
Subs: B McDonnell for Kennedy (HT), T McCann for O'Neill (45m), K Coney for Sludden (61m), R O'Neill for McKernan (65m), N Kelly for Hampsey (70m)

DUBLIN: E Comerford; M Fitzsimons; E O'Brien, D Byrne; E Murchan, B Howard, C O'Shea; B Fenton, J McCarthy; C Basquel, S Bugler, N Scully; P Mannion, C Kilkenny, D Rock

Subs: J McCaffrey for O'Brien (HT), K McManamon for Bugler (45m), J Small for Fitzsimons (49m), C Costello for Basquel (61m), A Byrne for McCaffrey (65m)
Referee: Cormac Reilly (Meath)



TIGHT SQUEEZE: Mayo's Diarmuid O'Connor strips possession from Kerry's Dara Moynihan in yesterday's Allianz FL Division 1 game in Castlebar. 'It would have been a sickener not to come away with the two points,' said Kerry boss Peter Keane.

Picture: Tommy Dickson

Kerry karaoke stars nearly fluff their lines



Allianz FL Division 1 (R5)

MAYO 1-13
KERRY 1-14

Mike Finnerty

MacHale Park



After a game that had very little rhyme or reason to it, it probably shouldn't have come as a major surprise to hear that the Kerry players had passed the time on Saturday night with a spot of karaoke in the team hotel.

With their game against Mayo postponed until yesterday afternoon due to the arrival of Storm Jorge, Peter Keane and company organised an impromptu bit of team bonding to help kill the time.

It certainly didn't do them any harm when the game finally got going, especially in the first half when Kerry made sweet music while Mayo were out of tune completely.

The Kingdom were seven points up at half-time and cruising, throwing the ball around, kicking scores for fun, and leaving the home side chasing shadows.

An early Seán O'Shea goal

was followed by a David Clifford penalty that rattled the crossbar, and points rained over from all angles as Kerry filled their boots at their leisure.

It was one-way traffic for the most part.

That's why the second half was such a huge shock to everyone, including Kerry.

James Horan reshuffled his pack with three substitutions — bringing in the energy and pace of rookies Eoghan McLaughlin and Tommy Conroy and adding the bite and steel of Eoin O'Donoghue to the half-back line.

Suddenly Mayo caught fire, and with Aidan O'Shea at his rampaging best, the league champions started to reel Kerry back in.

Incredibly, there was only a point between them deep in additional time, and Keith Higgins was left cursing his luck when his last-gasp effort for an equaliser drifted just wide almost five minutes into stoppage-time.

The music stopped seconds later.

"Yerra we had a bit of karaoke and we were flying," a smiling Peter Keane told reporters afterwards when asked how Kerry had reacted to the news that the game had been pushed back to Sunday.

"Tommy Walsh is a fantastic singer," he added.

"It would have been a sickener not to come away with the two points," admitted the Kerry manager, surmising that the wind had a lot to do

with the tale of the two halves.

"It was a very strong wind and it was very difficult to play with."

James Horan couldn't hide his disappointment as he surveyed the scene following Mayo's third defeat in five games.

They only have matches against Galway and Tyrone to try and prolong their status in Division 1.

"You want to be winning games," he admitted. "There's nothing like winning games but our performances have not been as consistent as they can be so that's what we will be chasing over the next couple of weeks."

The game really did look done and dusted at half-time as Kerry went in leading by 1-8 to 0-4, despite playing against the strong wind.

The visitors came flying out of the blocks and Seán O'Shea had the ball in the Mayo net after only 80 seconds after Micheál Burns intercepted a loose clearance from Keith Higgins and Tommy Walsh set O'Shea up for a simple close-range finish.

Last year's beaten All-Ireland finalists kicked on from there with O'Shea (free) and flying wing-back Gavin White tagging on points to open up some clear daylight.

Mayo, who again badly missed the leadership and influence of the likes of Colm Boyle, Matthew Ruane, Jason Doherty and Cillian O'Connor were struggling to keep up.

And they were fortunate not

to fall even further behind after five minutes when David Clifford cracked his fiercely-struck penalty off David Clarke's crossbar.

The home crowd finally got something to cheer about when Darren Coen (free) and Tom Parsons raised white flags after two rare Mayo attacks, but Kerry quickly quelled this mini-comeback.

The Munster champions picked off five points without reply in the space of 17 minutes during the second quarter as they opened up the Mayo defence at will.

Dara Moynihan, Tony Brosnan, Seán O'Shea (free), Diarmuid Clifford and Micheál Burns all hit the target as Kerry attacked in waves and prised a porous Mayo backline apart.

It was 1-8 to 0-2 when the barrage finally ended.

Down at the other end Mayo's misfiring attack were struggling to make any inroads against Kerry's well-organised defence, while the home side also shot a string of bad wides.

After going 20 minutes without a score, they finally got the scoreboard moving again with two frees from Kevin McLoughlin to leave seven points between the teams at the interval.

The second half took on a life of its own and there was no mistaking the different mood music coming from the opposite sides of the tunnel afterwards.

"I'm confident we can sig-

How they lined out

1. S Ryan		
2. G O'Sullivan	3. T Morley	4. T O'Sullivan
10. J Flynn	14. D Coen	11. R O'Donoghue
5. P Murphy		
6. S Enright	7. G White	
15. J Durcan	12. D O'Connor	13. K McLoughlin
9. J Barry		
8. A O'Shea	22. T Parsons	
10. M Burns		
11. S O'Shea	13. D Moynihan	
7. P Durcan	9. S Coen	25. K Higgins
21. T Walsh		
14. D Clifford	25. T Brosnan	
18. J McCormack	3. O Mullin	4. L Keegan
1. D Clarke		

IT MATTERED

Kerry's rip-roaring first half display was ultimately where most of the damage was done. The visitors came flying out of the traps and were nine points up coming into half-time.

CAN'T IGNORE

Mayo are really struggling without a string of their tried and trusted veterans and some key influencers.

GOOD DAY

This was a third successive league win for Kerry in Castlebar and a first for Peter Keane on Mayo soil. After being turned over in Tralee and in the League Final last Spring, it will have been a happy Kerry bus on the long journey south last night.

BAD DAY

James Horan knows his team now have only two games left to pick up the points they need to avoid being relegated out of the top-flight for the first time in more than 20 years.

SIDELINE SMARTS

Kerry's decision to start Tommy Walsh had been flagged in advance and his inclusion caused Mayo plenty of problems in the opening half.

BEST ON SHOW

Gavin White was at his swashbuckling best in the opening half, in particular, while Sean O'Shea, David Clifford and Tommy Walsh all showed glimpses of what they're capable of. Mayo's apprentice full-back Oisín Mullin did a fine job of restricting Clifford's influence overall though while Aidan O'Shea, Ryan O'Donoghue and Eoghan McLaughlin put in big second half shifts.

MAN IN THE MIDDLE

Martin McNally didn't have too many major incidents to deal with and got the penalty decision right. He generally tried to let the game flow, but some of his decisions in the closing stages certainly didn't go down well with Mayo supporters. A late free to Kerry — when David Clifford seemed to be doing just as much of the pulling and holding with Keith Higgins off the ball — seemed a harsh call.

NEXT UP

Kerry go to Inniskillen to face Monaghan in the penultimate round next Sunday week while Mayo are away to Galway at Pearse Stadium in Salthill on the same day.

Words: Mike Finnerty

nificantly improve our performance," said James Horan when asked the growing threat of relegation.

"We need to build on the second half. I know everyone says that but we do. We've a good two weeks and we will have a crack at our next game."

That's against Galway in Salthill while Kerry head to Monaghan with a shot at the league title still very much on the cards. Peter Keane was asked afterwards if that was 'a priority'.

"No, it's the next game in two weeks' time in Inniskillen that's the next thing," he replied.

"It's not about getting to a final, it's about game upon game and learning from everything."

And there were no shortage of lessons from both camps to

take from this game of two halves.

Scorers for Kerry: S O'Shea (1-4, 3 frees); D Clifford (0-3); J Barry, M Burns, G White, D Moynihan, T Brosnan, S O'Brien, D O'Connor (0-1 each).

Scorers for Mayo: E McLaughlin (1-1), K McLoughlin (0-3, 2 frees), D O'Connor (0-2 frees), D Coen (free), R O'Donoghue, E O'Donoghue, T Conroy, P Towey (free), A O'Shea, T Parsons (0-1 each).

KERRY: S Ryan; G O'Sullivan, T Morley, T O'Sullivan, P Murphy, S Enright, G White; D O'Connor, J Barry; M Burns, S O'Shea, T Walsh; D Moynihan, D Clifford, T Brosnan

Subs: T Brosnan for Burns (50mins); P Geaney for Walsh (53mins); G Crowley for G O'Sullivan (63mins); K Spillane for Moynihan (65mins); L Kearney for Brosnan (72mins).

MAYO: D Clarke; J McCormack, O Mullin, L Keegan; S Coen, K Higgins, P Durcan; A O'Shea, T Parsons; K McLoughlin, D O'Connor, J Durcan; J Flynn, D Coen, R O'Donoghue

Subs: E O'Donoghue for Parsons (HT); E McLaughlin for J Durcan; T Conroy for D Coen (HT); P Towey for Flynn (71mins).

Referee: M McNally (Monaghan).

Laois prove accommodating hosts to neighbours in need



STRIDING CLEAR: Kildare full-forward Daniel Flynn holds off the challenge of Laois defender Trevor Collins in yesterday's Allianz FL dash at MW Hire O'Moore Park.

Picture: Sean Brilly

This should have been the most awkward of house calls for a Kildare side that has found form to be a fleeting companion this spring but Laois ultimately proved to be the most welcoming of neighbours.

The midlanders gave their old rivals the run of their place and it allowed the visitors to pop back across the border with their Division Two survival prospects looking so much healthier than when they had arrived.

Kildare must love the sight of those blue and white jerseys by now. Laois have beaten them just once in the last decade having met a plethora of times in both league and championship. Some of those games have been blow-outs. Never mind the scoreboard, this one was in that same bracket.

Jack O'Connor's side registered 21 misses here between efforts that fell wide or short of their target. You could argue that Laois spurned a couple of goal chances but this was mostly one-way traffic for the winners and a car crash of an effort for the losers.

The two league points are, ultimately, all that mattered. Laois could have turned their thoughts towards a late and unlikely promotion push if they had won here. Now they face the prospect of two away trips in the last couple of rounds and with the spectre of relegation still following them



Allianz FL Division 2 (R5)

LAOIS 0-10
KILDARE..... 0-15

Brendan O'Brien

MW Hire O'Moore Park



into the month of March.

Go down and their season is in deep peril given they have been stationed on the same side of the Leinster Championship draw as Dublin. Fail to make a provincial final and the Tailteann Cup, as the second-tier championship has now been labelled, would await.

Division Three is still a live prospect for Kildare too. On four points now, they are one adrift of Mike Quirke's Laois, but they did more than enough yesterday to suggest that they are well capable of edging themselves clear of trouble and not least because they finish with a pair of home games.

"Points are hard-earned in this division and we badly needed the points today," said O'Connor. "The lads were very determined. They might have left their shooting boots

at home at times but in general they fought very hard and showed a very good attitude."

Laois should have smelt blood. This should have been an opportunity to grind their neighbours' noses in the dirt. Or, given the conditions, the mud even if the pitch stood up well given to a game that was pushed back from Saturday evening to yesterday lunchtime on account of Storm Jorge.

It was Kildare who attacked from the off. Four unanswered points in the first four minutes established the script and, like Cavan in this same venue a fortnight ago, they dominated Laois from first whistle to last.

That in itself was a clear sign of progress. Kildare had shot seven consecutive points after a dodgy start against Roscommon the week before but then had the stuffing knocked out of them by a goal and eventually went down to a four-point defeat.

Then again, Laois aren't at Roscommon's level even if they snatched a draw up in the Hyde in round one.

They were routed in the middle third here and Kildare's dominance spread from there to every corner of the field. Three of their first seven scores were products of a Laois player being dispossessed in their own third while the same number of attempts at the other end were blocked by a defender's arms in the opening credits.

Kildare led by eight points to four at the break, despite their all too frequent failings in front of the posts. That was actually a result of sorts for Laois given the way the period had unfolded and they could have found further succour in the goal chances that fell to Evan O'Carroll and Eoin Lowry in the course of the second quarter.

If they did take encouragement from that then it must have been quashed in a third quarter that came and went with little or nothing of note happening and just three points registered between the pair of them. Kildare won't have been bothered, it was Laois who needed to make things happen.

The game as a contest simply faded away in that spell. It was only Laois' late burst, when they scored five of the last seven points in the last dozen minutes of play, that gave the scoreboard any illusion of something akin to a contest.

"They were much the better team," said Quirke, whose side have now been well beaten in their last two home games. "Whether it was five points or 10 points it doesn't matter. We were much the second-best team in the game."

"We didn't play well. They dominated our kickouts and we had too many turnovers and we didn't play well. Regardless of what the scoreboard says, we are under no

How they lined out

1. N Corbet		
2. T Collins	6. R Pigott	4. G Hanrahan
15. N Kelly	14. D Flynn	13. A Tyrrell
5. S O'Flynn	7. P O'Sullivan	3. M Timmons
12. P Brophy	11. P Cribbin	10. L Power
8. J O'Loughlin	9. K Lillis	
9. T Moolick	8. K Feely	
10. S Byrne	11. E Lowry	12. D O'Connor
7. K Flynn	6. C Kavanagh	5. D Hyland
13. R Munnally	14. C Murphy	15. E O'Carroll
4. E Doyle	3. S Ryan	2. M O'Grady
1. M Donnellan		

IT MATTERED

Laois should have been primed to tear into a Kildare side so low on league points from the off. Instead, they allowed the visitors to build a solid foothold in the form of four unanswered points and, with that, he tone was set.

SIDELINE SMARTS

Kildare area team that can do lots of things right but they simply can't afford to be so profligate in front of goals. Knowing when, where and how to shoot is a tactic in itself and it's one they have to do so much better.

CAN'T IGNORE

Originally slated for a 7pm throw-in on Saturday night, the game was pushed back to yesterday lunchtime and, after a heavy hailstorm before throw-in, the weather and the pitch stood up to the task.

GOOD DAY

Los this one and Kildare would have been stuck behind the black ball in terms of the fight against relegation so this gives them momentum and hope that Division Three can be avoided in 2021.

BAD DAY

Laois have blown hot and cold in Division Two so far and this was one of their off days. Kildare won by five but could have won by ten or 15. Mike Quirke is a collected presence on the sideline, just as well on days like this.

BEST ON SHOW

Maybe key men would do this one more justice. Kildare dominated the middle third so kudos to their midfield pairing of Kevin Feely and Tommy Moolick in that sense. Brilliant shift from both of them.

MAN IN THE MIDDLE

Hurling was awash with complaints last week about referees who were too pernickety. Well, Joe McQuillan turned a blind eye here time and again to players who clearly took a number of steps too many with ball in hand.

NEXT UP

Cavan make the trip to Newbridge on Sunday week. Laois make the journey to Mullingar for a midland derby with Westmeath.

Words: Brendan O'Brien

illusions that we were second-best in every department."

Scorers for Laois: E O'Carroll (0-4, 0-2 frees); N Corbet (0-2 frees); S Flynn and B Byrne, K Lillis and J O'Loughlin (all 0-1).

Scorers for Kildare: A Tyrrell (0-4, 0-3 frees); P Brophy (0-3); P Cribbin (0-2); K Feely (0-2, 0-1 free); K Flynn, L Power, N Kelly and N Flynn (all 0-1).

LAOIS: N Corbet; T Collins, R Pigott, G Hanrahan; S O'Flynn, P O'Sullivan, M Timmons; J O'Loughlin, K Lillis; S Byrne, E Lowry, D O'Connor; R Munnally, C

Murphy, E O'Carroll.

Subs: M Berry for O'Connor (42); M Keogh for Munnally (46); B Carroll for Murphy and G Walsh for Lowry (both 55); B Byrne for S Byrne (68);

KILDARE: M Donnellan; M O'Grady, S Ryan, E Doyle, D Aylward, C Kavanagh, K Flynn; K Feely, T Moolick; L Power, P Cribbin, P Brophy; A Tyrrell, D Flynn, N Kelly.

Subs: C Hartley for Power (48); K Cribbin for P Cribbin (56); J Robinson for Kelly (64); J Hyland for Flynn (68); N Flynn for Tyrrell (7);

Referee: J McQuillan (Cavan).

Classy Clare upset the odds



Allianz FL Division 2 (R5)

CAVAN 0-15
CLARE 1-14

Kevin Carney
 Kingspan Breffni

Clare produced a sleeves-rolled-up display to deservedly notch a first-ever NFL victory over hosts Cavan.

In an exciting top versus bottom Division 2 clash at Kingspan Breffni, the Munstermen tore up the script thanks, in the main, to a dervish-like workrate.

The adventurous Banner County crew also boasted some clinical finishing which hoisted them above the ordinary in extraordinary weather conditions.

Cavan were complicit in their own undoing too with sloppy defensive work, a midfield that was outwitted and an attack that was too inconsistent for the team's good.

The visitors took advantage of powder puff tackling which resulted in a 12th-minute goal from a direct-running Joe McGann.

Using the wind to good advantage, Clare remained on the front foot and a classy point by Cian O'Dea made it a five-point game.

Amidst teeming hailstones, the game was Clare's to lose at the interval as they led by 1-8 to 0-5.

Cavan were jet-propelled on the restart and four points in as many minutes — including a gem from defender Stephen Murray — served to reduce Clare's lead to two points.

Clare refused to reach for



RAIN DANCE: Clare's John Conlon looks for a way around Cavan's Pádraig Faulkner during the Allianz NFL Division 2 clash at Kingspan Breffni Park, Cavan.
 Picture: Philip Fitzpatrick

the panic button though and points from the impressive Cian O'Dea and centre-back Pearse Lillis inside 80 seconds stopped the rot.

On an increasingly glue-like surface, the game became a survival of the fittest with the hosts doing most of the running but Clare digging their heels in.

With 15 minutes remaining, Clare looked increasingly comfortable in leading by 1-13 to 0-12 thanks to their excellent defending and admirable ball retention.

For every punch Cavan landed, the Banner responded

in kind and another classy point from David Tubridy brought an upset closer.

Cavan laboured in their game of catch-up though Clare got off the hook in the 57th minute when McGann's soccer-style effort flashed into the hosts' side-netting.

Clare's blanket tested their opponents' patience and accuracy from long range but points from Oisín Pierson and Martin Reilly (63) offered renewed hope for the table-toppers.

Cavan dominated possession in the final 15 minutes but with 14 men behind the

ball, the Banner stubbornly refused to be lowered.

The announcement of six additional minutes was followed moments later by Cavan's Pierson floating over a free (73) which left just the minimum between the sides.

Clare had a sting in their tail though with the impressive Tubridy's 75th minute effort sealing the deal for the underdogs.

Scorers for Cavan: O Pierson (0-7, 5 frees); Ciarán Brady (0-2); O Kiernan, G McKiernan, M Reilly, J Smith, B Magee, S Murray (0-1 each)

Scorers for Clare: E Cleary (0-5, 3 frees); D Tubridy (0-4, 1 free); J McGann

(1-0); C Russell, C O'Dea (0-2 each); P Lillis (0-1)

CAVAN: R Gallowan; C Madden, P Faulkner, K Brady; G Smith, Ciarán Brady, O Kiernan; T Gallowan, C Conroy; E Doughty, G McKiernan, M Reilly; O Pierson, J Smith, B Magee

Subs: S Murray for K Brady (inj. 30); R Connolly for J Smith (55); B Kelly for B Magee (62); Conor Brady for C Conroy (65)

CLARE: S Ryan; K Hartnett, C Brennan, G Kelly; S Collins, P Lillis (0-1, A Sweeney; C Russell (0-2), C O'Connor; C O'Dea (0-2), K Sexton, D Coughlan; E Cleary (0-5, 3f), D Tubridy (0-4, 1f), J McGann

Subs: G O'Brien for D Coughlan (59); J McGann for A Sweeney (63); C Downes for J McGann (71)

Referee: J Henry (Mayo).

Tyrone and Donegal battle hard to set up final date

Ulster U20 FC

Francis Mooney

Tyrone and Donegal will meet in next week's Ulster U20 Football Championship final, after both came through tough tests in severe conditions.

Storm Jorge failed to claim either of the fixtures, which were both in doubt but went ahead in heavy underfoot conditions at Co Derry venues.

Holders Tyrone had to come from behind to get the better of Antrim by 0-11 to 0-9 at Lavey, with Tiarnan Quinn and Darragh Canavan getting the all-important second-half scores.

Both of their first-half scores came from goalkeeper Lorcan Quinn, who converted a '45 and a long-range free into the wind.

Antrim midfielder Pat Shivers kicked accurately from dead balls to ease his side ahead, but crucially for Tyrone, they conceded just one score while Joe Oguz was in the sin-bin.

The Red Hands also spurned a goal chance which fell to Tomas Donaghy, who shot hurriedly and wide.

Dominic McEnhill shot a classy score for the Saffrons, and a third from Shivers sent them in with a 0-4 to 0-2 interval lead.

With the driving wind and snow to their backs, the Red Hands made a furious start to the second half, with three points in the opening three minutes, from Quinn, Ethan Jordan and Joe Oguz to go ahead for the first time.

Battling Antrim regained the lead through Rory Broily, but another flourish saw the holders hit five in a row, two of them super Canavan efforts.

And with Cormac Munroe performing brilliantly at full back, they turned back a series of Antrim raids.

After Quinn had opened up a four points lead with 10 minutes to play, the Saffrons threw everything into attack, with McEnhill slotting over a couple of frees.

Shivers narrowed the gap to two, but the defending champions held out for a place in another decider.

Donegal also had to fight hard to carve out a narrow win over Down at Loup, where they emerged with a 1-11 to 0-12 success.

After a closely fought opening half, the sides were level at 0-5 apiece, with Richard O'Rourke and Aaron Doherty on target for the Tir Chonaill men.

It was Rory O'Donnell who gave them the lead, and an Aaron Doherty goal eased Donegal into a four points advantage.

Down fought back late on to close the gap, but Pádraig McGettigan and Doherty made sure of Donegal's place in the decider against their north-west neighbours next weekend.

Cox returns to inspire resilient Rossies



Allianz FL Division 2 (R5)

ROSCOMMON 1-16
WESTMEATH 0-12

Ian Cooney
 Dr Hyde Park



Roscommon reeled off their third successive win in Division 2 to leave themselves with every chance of returning to the top flight following a routine victory against Westmeath at Dr Hyde Park.

Conor Cox made his first competitive start of the season and the former Kerry player ended up with 0-6 overall to

leave the Rossies top of the table heading into their final two games, away to Armagh and Cavan.

"There's very little between the teams. There's nothing in it, between top and bottom. But, from our point of view, we really, really want to have a right go at the next two matches (against Armagh and Cavan)," said Rossies boss Anthony Cunningham.

"Guys flourish from league matches. We're trying to see a few more players on a weekly basis. It's good to have Conor Cox and Conor Hussey back. We want to get more game time into more players and then work on our game to improve."

The game's defining score arrived after 20 minutes. Enda Smith made headway towards goal before setting up Conor Daly who palmed the ball into the empty net.

Westmeath struggled for

any traction close to goal as their key player John Heslin was well marshalled by a solid Roscommon defence.

Four points towards the end of the half from Donie Smith (a hat-trick of frees) and Cox left the home side in command at the break, 1-9 to 0-3 to the good.

Enda Smith smashed a second-half penalty off the crossbar, albeit there was the consolation of a point from the rebound for the Boyle player.

But Westmeath could never get going and four out of their nine second-half points came in the final five minutes from Heslin (free), full back Ronan Wallace, and substitutes Lorcan Dolan and Darren Giles, as the home side closed out the game comfortably.

"We want to be up there (in Division 1) and we'll be doing everything we can to get up there, but we'll need to get the breaks. We have two very dif-

ficult games coming up but we're up for the fight," concluded Cunningham.

Scorers for Roscommon: C Cox (0-6, 3 frees, 1 mark); D Smith (0-5, 4 frees); C Daly (1-0); C McKeon, C Cregg, N Kilroy, C Lennon, E Smith (0-1 each)

Scorers for Westmeath: J. Heslin (3 frees), R. O'Toole (0-3 each); L. Loughlin, D. Corroon, R. Connellan, R. Wallace, L. Dolan, D. Giles (0-1 each)

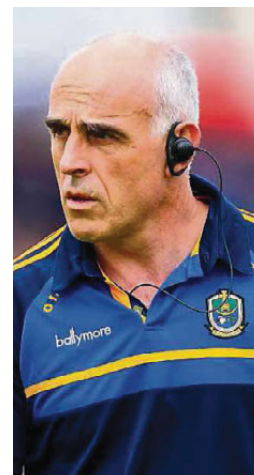
ROSCOMMON: C. Lavin; D. Murray, C. Daly (1-0), M. Richardson; N. Daly, B. Stack, C. Hussey; T. O'Rourke, E. Smith; N. Kilroy, C. McKeon, H. Darcy; D. Smith, C. Cox, Cathal Cregg

Subs used: C. Compton for C. Cregg (50), C. Lennon (0-1) for D. Smith (56), F. Cregg for Darcy (58), P. Scott for Hussey (64), R. Hughes for Scott (69), D. Ruane for McKeon (70)

WESTMEATH: J. Daly; A. McGivney, K. Maguire, B. Sayeh; K. Daly, R. Wallace, D. Lynch; R. Connellan (0-1), D. Corroon; S. Duncan, R. O'Toole, J. Dolan; L. Loughlin, J. Heslin, C. McCormack

Subs used: T. McDaniel for McCormack (48), C. Coughlan for Lynch (48), C. Sleavin for McGivney (59), L. Dolan for Connellan (67), D. Giles for Duncan (69)

Referee: B. Tiernan (Dublin).



Roscommon senior football manager Anthony Cunningham.



NET GAINS: Cork forward John O'Rourke fires home past Derry's Odhrán Lynch and Benny Heron in yesterday's Allianz FL Division 3 game at Páirc Uí Chaoimh.

Picture: Eddie O'Hare

Rebels hold out as Powter finds groove

It's not often a barnstorming finish leaves both managers dissatisfied, but yesterday's Allianz Football League Division 3 clash in Páirc Uí Chaoimh was an example from a slim genre.

Cork were nine points ahead at one point of the second half and set fair to maintain their 100 per cent record in the division when Derry rallied. The northerners hit two late goals to leave two points between the sides and Cork facing a late free destined to land in the danger zone.

The home side held out, but manager Ronan McCarthy pointed at the cloud rather than the silver lining afterwards.

"For 26, 27 minutes of the second half it was a really, really good performance against a side that are difficult to play against.

"The end of the game has put a little bit of a dampener on what was a quality display, particularly in the second half. We were cruising and again we left the opposition back into it at the end. I was poorly sighted for the goals but they looked poor from my vantage point."

His opposite number was no happier.

"We were beaten by a much better team," said Derry boss Rory Gallagher. "We showed great heart and desire but it was too late in the game."

"And I thought that even though we gave away a very



Allianz FL Division 3 (R5)

CORK.....3-13

DERRY.....3-11

Michael Moynihan

Páirc Uí Chaoimh



bad goal from our point of view in the first half, Cork were very good.

"I thought they were patient, playing against us, but then when it opened up in the second half they showed an awful lot of quality."

"I think they'll be disappointed in the naivete, the way they let us back in."

Both men gave an accurate diagnosis.

Cork attacked the Blackrock End in the first half, backed by a stiff wind. Derry dropped back in numbers from the off, defending in depth.

Cork were three points up before Shane McGuigan got Derry's first score, a close-in free, but then the home side turned the screw.

Cork's Sean Powter somehow overran a good goal chance, with the ball squirting wide, but when Derry's

keeper Odhrán Lynch restarted he didn't find his target, corner-back Padraig McGrogan, and Damien Gore finished to the net.

Gore made it 1-4 to 0-1 but Powter needed to take a shot off the line from Derry's Danny Tallon on 22 minutes: Odhrán Lynch pointed the resulting 45.

Cork led 1-5 to 0-4 at the break when strangely — the game was competitive but didn't have a nasty edge — a melee broke out, most of the players tangling with each other reaching the dressing-rooms.

On the resumption Cork almost had a goal from Brian Hartnett, but sub Cathail O'Mahony (on for the injured Luke Connolly) and John O'Rourke pushed Cork further ahead before Powter cut through to place O'Rourke for a close-in goal: 2-8 to 0-5 on 45 minutes.

Derry responded — hard-working centre-forward Niall Loughlin managed a first-time finish to the net gave the visitors hope, but Cork swept downfield for Paul Kerrigan to place O'Rourke with a sweet pass for a third goal: 3-11 to 1-8.

However, Derry outscored Cork 2-3 to 0-2 in the final quarter. Emmett Bradley and sub Patrick Kearney hit the goals but they came that bit too late. Shane McGuigan's last free came in injury-time, so Derry needed a goal from it, but Cork barred the way.

Gallagher took the positives from his side's rally but acknowledged the quality Cork showed as well: "I have to give them great credit, we came across them last year and they have improved massively. They're a much better team now — I think you can see that the coaching is working as well, they're used to playing against defensive football, or they were better at it."

The win doesn't guarantee Cork promotion but it leaves them in charge of their own destiny.

"It might be Division Three but it's not easy to win all your games," said McCarthy. "We've had different challenges and at different times. Offaly caused us problems here in the first game, and Tipperary had a real cut off us last week."

"Against the two northern teams we were playing very controlled, very comfortable in both games against them which is good because they're different to play against — but we just didn't finish the games out well."

For Derry one of the lessons to absorb was to perhaps show more ambition — Gallagher was disappointed his team didn't go after the Cork kick-out, for instance, but at times there was only one Derry player in the Cork half, even when the northerners were well in arrears during the second half.

Little wonder Gallagher said that a two-point margin

How they lined out



1 A. Casey

2 T. Clancy 3 M. Shanley 4 P. Ring

15 N. Toner 14 S. McGuigan 13 B. Herron

5 L. O'Donovan 6 S. Powter 7 M. Taylor

12 D. Tallon 11 N. Loughlin 10 E. Bradley

8 I. Maguire (c) 9 K. O'Hanlon

6 C. McKaigue (c) 9 P. Cassidy

22 S. White 11 J. O'Rourke 12 B. Hartnett

7 N. Keenan 8 C. McFaul 5 S. Downey

13 P. Kerrigan 14 L. Connolly 15 D. Gore

4 C. McWilliams 3 B. Rodgers 2 P. McGrogan

1 O. Lynch



IT MATTERED

John O'Rourke's second goal came after Paul Kerrigan picked him out with an outside-of-the-boot free from well out the field. O'Rourke took his time and found the net for a goal that seemed initially to be an illustrative flourish, but in the end it proved to be the match-winner.

CAN'T IGNORE

The result. It's not the first time that Cork have had to hang on late in a game, but each time they've managed to dig out a result. Yesterday would have been a devastating game to lose, given how far ahead of the opposition they were on the day, but Ronan McCarthy will know well that his players need to work on closing games out more comfortably.

SIDELINE SMARTS

Rory Gallagher's Derry played very deep, but Cork showed the patience necessary to pick their way past their opponents. Ronan McCarthy's side ran hard at Derry in the second half, with Sean Powter's incursions critical to their win - credit Ronan McCarthy for setting Cork up with an attacking half-back platform.

BEST ON SHOW

Derry were looking to Chrissy McKaigue and Niall Loughlin to drive them on, while Ian Maguire and two-goal John O'Rourke caught the eye for Cork. The most impressive player on view was Sean Powter, however, whose pace and power - in both defence and attack - were hugely impressive. Little wonder Cork are so focused on keeping him healthy for the summer.

PHYSIO ROOM

Ruairi Deane picked up a slight injury last Thursday night but Ronan McCarthy expects him back in a couple of weeks. Luke Connolly and Liam O'Donovan were substituted before half-time and need to be assessed. McCarthy added that Tadgh Corkery and Brian Hurley are close to returning.

MAN IN THE MIDDLE

Fergal Kelly of Louth handled the game well.

NEXT UP

Cork host Louth in a fortnight, Derry host Longford.

Words: Michael Moynihan

wasn't an accurate reflection of the proceedings, adding that Cork had been seven or eight points better than Derry.

In the home corner one of the principal takeaways was the importance of Sean Powter to the red and white cause.

The Douglas man's dynamism was central to much of what Cork did - he took a Galway shot off the line in the first half, his surge was the basis of the first Cork goal, he set up the second with a powerful burst through the middle, and Derry's renaissance began as soon as he was substituted.

Ronan McCarthy was musing after the game about what Cork might have achieved with a fully fit Powter in the last couple of years, a train of thought which was probably shared by many of the home supporters strolling home.

Even at this stage of the year his importance to Cork for 2020 can't be overstated.

Scorers for Cork: J O'Rourke (2-2); D Gore (1 free)(1-3); C O'Mahony (2 frees)(0-4); L Connolly (1 free)(0-2); E McSweeney, M Hurley (0-1).

Scorers for Derry: S McGuigan (frees)(0-6); N Loughlin (1 free)(1-1); E Bradley (1-1); P Kearney (1-0); C McWilliams (free); O Lynch (45); P Cassidy (0-1 each).

CORK: A Casey, T Clancy (Fermoy), M Shanley, P Ring, L O'Donovan, S Powter, M Taylor, I Maguire (c), C O'Hanlon, S White, J O'Rourke, B Hartnett, P Kerrigan, L Connolly, D Gore.

Subs: C O'Mahony for Connolly (inj. 25); K O'Donovan for L O'Donovan (35); E McSweeney for Hartnett (45); M Hurley for Kerrigan (64); J Loughrey for Powter (65).

DERRY: O Lynch, P McGrogan, B Rodgers, C McWilliams, S Downey, C McKaigue, N Keenan, C McFaul, P Cassidy, E Bradley, N Loughlin, D Tallon, B Heron, S McGuigan, N Toner.

Subs: L McGoldrick and P Kearney for Cassidy and Toner (43); C Doherty for Tallon (58); D Cassidy for Herron (62).

Referee: F Kelly (Longford).

14 GAA

Resolute Longford put Tipp in relegation peril



Allianz FL Division 3 (R5)
LONGFORD 3-12
TIPPERARY 3-7

Deniese O'Flaherty
Glennon Bros Pearse Park

Longford consolidated their place in Division 3 for next year while still keeping their promotion hopes alive with a fine win over Tipperary in Glennon Brothers Pearse Park yesterday.

For Tipperary, they now need results in their next two games if they are to avoid relegation.

Longford manager Padraic Davis was delighted that his players bounced back from their defeat to Down.

"Every day they go out. I feel they are putting in a performance and there are days that it will go against you, but thankfully again that didn't happen. I think we have to be happy with that," he said.

With so much to play for, it was an entertaining encounter with some excellent scores and performances. For Longford, their midfield maestro Darren Gallagher was fantastic once again, with Daniel Minnagh and Oran Kenny also impressing. Tipp relied heavily on Conor Sweeney who had a very good game.

Longford made a great start and scored their first goal in the fourth minute when Liam Connerton shot low into the net. Darren Gallagher followed up with an excellent point and Donie McElligott put Longford ahead by five in the ninth minute.

Tipp cut the gap to one point in the 19th minute with a pointed free from Conor Sweeney and then a goal after he received a pass from Steven O'Brien.

Longford scored a second



Longford's Andrew Farrell holds off Tipperary's Philip Austin in yesterday's NFL Division 3 game. Longford had to endure a nervy end to the game after late goals from Tipp, prompting manager Padraic Davis to later praise his players' resolve. Picture: Declan Gilmore

goal in the 24th minute when Dessie Reynolds flicked the ball to the back of the net. Tipp replied with two points before Gallagher hit over a fantastic point. Tipp ended the half well to trail by a point at the break — 2-4 to 1-6.

The first major incident of the second half was a black card to Padraic Loomam in the 44th minute. Rian Brady fired over the resulting free. Brady and Paddy Collum sent over frees to extend their lead to four in the 52nd minute.

The Midlanders made use of numerical advantage and in

the 54th minute grabbed their third goal when Connerton passed to Oran Kenny — his powerful shot beating Evan Comerford. Gary Rogers added a point to stretch the advantage to eight points.

Tipperary were given a lifeline in the 58th minute when they were awarded a penalty. Steven O'Brien appeared to take a few too many steps, but was fouled. Sweeney made no mistake with the spot-kick.

Longford responded with two points, but a goal from Liam Boland left it a three-point game in stoppage time.

Gallagher (free) and an excellent score from Kenny sealed the win for Longford.

Davis was pleased with his side's response to those two second-half Tipp goals: "To keep showing that character and resolve that they have. You can't ask for a whole lot more than that. We know that when we are under pressure, they will respond."

Scorers for Longford: O Kenny (1-2); D Gallagher (0-4, 2 frees); D Reynolds, L Connerton (1-0 each); R Brady (0-3 frees); P Collum (free), D McElligott, G Rogers (0-1 each).

Scorers for Tipperary: C Kennedy (2-4, 4 frees, 1-0 pen); K O'Halloran (1-0); S

O'Connor, L Boland, P Loomam (0-1 each).

LONGFORD: P Collum; P Fox, A Farrell, B O'Farrell; D McElligott, G Rogers, G Flynn; D Gallagher, K Duffley; M Quinn, D Minnagh, D Reynolds; R Brady, L Connerton, O Kenny.

Subs: D Doherty for Flynn (55), J Hagan for Brady (70)

TIPPERARY: E Comerford; A Campbell, J Meagher, T Fitzgerald; P Loomam, R Kiely, B Maher; S O'Brien, C Kennedy; E Moloney, J Kennedy, B Fox; C Sweeney, S O'Connor, R Quigley.

Subs: L Boland for Kennedy (11), P Austin for Loomam (45), K O'Halloran for O'Connor (49), J Herney for Maher (61), A Moloney for Quigley (65)

Referee: N McKenna.

Win in Offaly sees Down eyeing promotion



Allianz FL Division 3 (R5)
OFFALY 0-9
DOWN 0-17

Brian Lowry
O'Connor Park

Down boosted their promotion hopes with a convincing eight-point win over Offaly in Tullamore yesterday.

The visitors were dominant throughout despite two sin binnings.

Barry O'Hagan was the star for the Mourne men, the wing-forward hitting six points.

Down played with a strong wind in the opening half and led 0-11 to 0-2 at half time as Offaly struggled to break through Down's mass defence.

The home side tried hard to get back into the clash after the interval. Two frees from Ruairi McNamee helped cut the margin to six — 0-13 to 0-7.

Down upped gears for the final 20 minutes however, and with Offaly wing-back Eoin Carroll picking up his second yellow card, the hosts were a beaten docket.

Scorers for Down: B O'Hagan (0-6, 4f), J Guinness (0-3), L Kerr (0-3, 1f), C Quinn (0-2), C Doherty (0-1), O McCabe (0-1), C Harrison (0-1).

Scorers for Offaly: R McNamee (0-3, all frees), A Sullivan (0-2), M Brazil (0-1), E Carroll (0-1), A Leavy (0-1), B Allen (0-1, f).

DOWN: R Burns; R McAleenan, P Murdock, K McKernan; J Guinness, G Collins, P Fegan; D Guinness, C Poland; J Flynn, C Doherty, B McArdle; L Kerr, B O'Hagan, C Quinn.

Subs: O McCabe for J Flynn (51), A Morgan for K McKernan (55), P Delvin for C Doherty (58), C Harrison for C Quinn (61), N Donnelly for P Mordock (inj 65).

OFFALY: P Dunican; C Doyle, E Rigney, D Hogan; E Carroll, D Dempsey, N Darby; C McNamee, M Brazil; S Horan, P Cunningham, C Mangan; A Sullivan, B Allen, R McNamee.

Subs: A Leavy for C McNamee (44), C Johnson for A Sullivan (60), C Donnelly for M Brazil (60), C Donohue for P Cunningham (70), S Nally for C Doyle (72).

Referee: James Corrigan (Cork).

Inspired O'Rourke keeps Leitrim's survival hopes alive



Allianz FL Division 3 (R5)
LOUTH 1-12
LEITRIM 3-14

John Savage
Gaelic Grounds

Leitrim's Division 3 survival mission will go right to the wire following a rousing win over Louth in Dundalk.

The enigmatic Ryan O'Rourke inspired the Shannonsiders to a deserved first victory, which all but condemned the home side to Division 4.

It was a must-win for both side, but Leitrim were the better side throughout, and now look set for a winner-takes-all tussle with Tipperary on the final day, regardless of how results go on Sunday week.

Low on confidence, Louth struggled to curb O'Rourke's influence all afternoon and the centre forward left Bevan Duffy for dead in the 13th minute to fire past Fergal Sheekey.

Leitrim were the better side throughout the opening half, and twice led by four points, with O'Rourke and Mark Plunkett particularly influential.

Louth hung in there and two frees before the break from Ryan Burns and Tommy Durbin left two between the sides, 1-5 to 0-6.

Louth momentarily cut the

deficit to the minimum with another Burns free after the break, but Leitrim responded magnificently, plundering 2-3 without reply.

Their second goal was a stonewall penalty, dispatched by Keith Beirne and when O'Rourke tapped home his second of the day from close range there was 10 points between the sides, 3-8 to 0-7.

A Ryan Burns' penalty and black card for Fergal McTague briefly raised Louth hopes, but Leitrim comfortably held the gap at seven points during his spell in the

sin bin.

Terry Hyland takes his team to Newry on Sunday week where Down will be hoping to continue their push for promotion, but thereafter all Leitrim eyes will be on that final day showdown with Tipp in Carrick-on-Shannon.

Scorers for Leitrim: R O'Rourke (2-3), K Beirne (1-4, 1-0 pen, 0-4f), D Rooney (0-3, 0-1 mark), D Wynn (0-2 each), M Plunkett, C McGloin (0-1 each).

Scorers for Louth: R Burns (1-4, 1-0 pen, 0-2f), S Mulroy (0-2), L Jackson, B Duffy, G McSorley, C Downey, T Durnin (0-1f), D Byrne (0-1 each).

LEITRIM: D McKiernan; C Reynolds, P Maguire, F McTague; C McGloin, M

Plunkett, J Gilheany; D Wynn, R O'Rourke, A Flynn; D Rooney, K Beirne, S Moran.

Subs: O McCaffrey for K Keegan (65), P Dolan for Wynn (70+1), R O'Rourke for Flynn (70+1), E Sweeney for Rooney (70+4).

LOUTH: F Sheekey; D Corcoran, D Campbell, J Craven; E Callaghan, E Carolan, J Clutterbuck; T Durnin, C Early; C Downey, B Duffy, C McKeever; S Mulroy, D Byrne, R Burns.

Subs: L Jackson for Early (43), G McSorley for Clutterbuck (56), C Grimes for Byrne (56), C Byrne for Burns (63).

Referee: L Devenney (Mayo).

LADIES FOOTBALL/GAA 15

Second half surge sees Cork cruise past Mayo

Lidl Ladies NFL Division 1

Cork 1-12

Mayo 1-4

Barry Murphy

Mallow

Cork manager Ephie Fitzgerald sees plenty of room for improvement in this side despite their convincing second half performance securing victory over Mayo and a place atop the Lidl Ladies NFL Division 1 table.

This was Cork's fourth straight win and Orla Finn's seven-point haul gave them the edge against the westerners who only scored one point after the break. With Finn and Aine O'Sullivan on song, Cork kept in touch before Libby Coppinger's goal early in the second half kickstarted their powerful finish.

"We weren't happy with our first-half performance, but in fairness the girls knew that

themselves," said Fitzgerald. "Mayo were much better than us in that half, they played some great football and deserved to be in front at half-time.

"But after the break, once we got the goal, I felt we were always going to win."

A goal from Lisa Cafferky helped Mayo into a two-point lead at half time, but manager Peter Leahy was forced to field a changed team with some of his squad unavailable because of the game being refixed to this weekend.

"We knew this was going to be a tough game and we were missing a few players with the game having been put back a week," said Leahy.

"Some of the girls had arranged to go away on holidays so we didn't try to stop them. But it gave us the chance to look at a few more players and credit to them I thought they did well. We will regroup ahead of our game next weekend."



Cork's Áine O'Sullivan scores a point despite pressure from Mayo's Maria Reilly during the Lidl Ladies NFL Division 1 match in Mallow yesterday.
Picture: Seb Daly

Despite playing against the slight wind, Cork got off to the better start with Finn opening the scoring in the second minute and she doubled Cork's advantage from a free with seven minutes played.

But from the restart Mayo took the lead when a sweeping move up the field saw Mary McHale run at the Cork defence before setting up Cafferky for a goal.

Aine O'Sullivan and McHale swapped points, and Finn soon had the sides level again, but points from Lisa Cafferky and Sinead Cafferky increased Mayo's half-time lead to 1-3 to 0-4.

Cork's Áine O'Sullivan and

Mayo's Maria Reilly were both sin-binned before the break, and after making some readjustments, the home side delivered a much improved performance after the break and Coppinger goal pushed them back into the lead.

Finn added two from frees, before Lisa Cafferky pointed from a free for Mayo, their only score of the half.

Cork continued to dominate, with Saoirse Noonan increasing their lead and two more frees from Finn had them 1-10 to 1-4 up, with four minutes left to play.

Two late scores from Áine O'Sullivan rounded off the

scoring as Cork ran out deserving winners and move back to the top of the table.

Meanwhile, in the only other game of the day Roscommon were convincing 3-4 to 2-5 winners in the Lidl Division 3 clash against Fermanagh.

Roisín O'Reilly and Rebecca Finan exchanged goals in the 23rd minute, and after Ellen Irwin goaled for Roscommon and Sarah McCausland replied with a penalty to close the gap to two, Aoife Gavin scored the clinching goal for Roscommon.

Scorers for Cork: O Finn (0-7, 5f), A O'Sullivan (0-3), L Coppinger (1-0), A Hutchings (0-1), S Noonan (0-1).

Scorers for Mayo: L Cafferky (1-2, 1f),

M McHale (0-1), S Cafferky (0-1, 1f).

CORK: L Crowley; M Ambrose, S Kelly, A Kelleher; L O'Mahony, M Duggan, A Hutchings; M O'Callaghan, A O'Sullivan; O Farmer, B O'Sullivan, C McCarthy; L Coppinger, K Quirke, O Finn.

Subs: S O'Leary for C McCarthy (h-t), S Noonan for Quirke (39), L Cleary for Farmer (42), A O'Mahony for B O'Sullivan (52).

MAYO: A Tarpey; N O'Malley, N Moran, S Lally; É Ronayne, Ciara McManamon, Clodagh McManamon; R Durkin, S Cafferky; M Cannon, L Cafferky, M Reilly; E Brennan, N Gaughan, M McHale.

Subs: N Casey for Durkin (23, inj), A Halligan for Casey (39), S Golden for Cannon (43), G O'Neill for Gaughan (46), L Reid for Brennan (51), J Cawley for McHale (52), N Ansbro for Ciara McManamon (58), N Casey for Lally (59).

Ref: Jonathan Murphy (Carlow).

Curry's late point earns Déise share of spoils

Allianz FL Division 4

Waterford 2-14

Carlow 2-14

Tony Ryan

Fraher Field

A seventh pointed free by Jason Curry, in the sixth minute of added time, earned Waterford a deserved draw in the Fraher Field, Dungarvan in yesterday's Allianz Football League Division 4 game.

Trailing by 1-10 to 1-5 at half-time (having played against the wind), the home side reduced the deficit to just two points by the 55th minute at 1-13 to 1-11.

However, a fisted goal in the 59th minute by Carlow sub Daniel St. Ledger looked to have put the game beyond the hosts.

But, displaying great character and battling qualities, Waterford kept their visitors scoreless for the rest of the game.

A 66th minute goal by centre-back Sean O'Donovan and points from Darach O Cathasaigh and Curry earned Benji Whelan's charges a share of the spoils in dramatic fashion.

Carrow's Paul Broderick finished the game's top scorer with 0-9 with Dermot Ryan (Waterford) and John Murphy (Carlow), both scoring first half goals.

Both teams are out of contention for promotion and will be plying their

trade in Division Four in 2021.

Scorers for Waterford: J Curry (0-7, all frees), D Ryan and S O'Donovan (1-0 each), C Murray (0-3), D Fitzgerald (0-2), B Lynch, and D O Cathasaigh (0-1 each).

Scorers for Carlow: P Broderick (0-9, 5f, 1'45"), J Murphy and D St. Ledger (1-0 each), D Foley (0-3, 2f), S Gannon, E Ruth (0-1 each).

WATERFORD: P Hunt; A Jones, D O Cathasaigh, M Kiely; R Flynn, S O'Donovan, D Ryan; D Fitzgerald; J Curry; D Guiry, C Murray, J Gleeson; B Lynch, D Corcoran, S Curry.

Subs: B Looby for J Gleeson (ht), J Beresford for S Curry (64).

CARLOW: R Molloy; L Roberts, S Redmond, J Moore; C Doyle, R Walker, R Dunphy; S Murphy, E Ruth; J Murphy, D O'Brien, S Gannon, L Walker, P Broderick, D Foley.

Subs: M Bambrick for R Dunphy (47), C Hulton for L Walker (50), D St. Ledger for D Foley (55), J Morrissey for S Murphy (57), D Walsh for J Moore (67).

Referee: Brendan Griffin (Kerry).

Superb Saffrons end Limerick run with comprehensive win

Allianz FL Division 4

Antrim 2-21

Limerick 1-12

John Martin

Portlengone

Limerick's uneaten run in Division 4 of the Allianz Football League came to an end at Portlengone where the Saffrons turned in a superb second half performance to run out 12-point winners.

Playing with a first-half breeze, the visitors got off to the better start with Hugh Bourke opening the scoring after three minutes and then Pádraig Scanlon firing to the net after Danny Neville's shot was blocked.

Midway through the half, Antrim were on level terms with Conor Murray and Colum Duffin on target and no more than two points separated the sides for the remainder of the half.

Limerick came close to a second goal on 23 minutes when Neville set up Tommy Childs but his goalbound effort was turned over the bar by Antrim goalkeeper Andrew Hasson.

Both sides produced some quality scores late on in the half with Pádraig de Brún and Tony McCarthy adding points for Limerick, and Paddy McBride on song for Antrim. Bourke converted Limerick's only score

from a placed ball in injury-time to leave his leading 1-9 to 0-10 at the break.

McBride and Scanlon swapped points shortly after the restart but from there on in it was all Antrim. McBride added another point and in the following 33 minutes, Antrim outscored their visitors by 2-9 to 0-1.

Eastwood's first goal came on 40 minutes when McBride squared the ball for the St Enda's man to palm to the net and on 55 minutes Conor Small was the provider for Eastwood to seal the Antrim win.

Seamus O'Carroll added a late point for Limerick who still top the division on eight points with Antrim now a point behind in second place.

ANTRIM: A Hasson; P Gallagher (0-1), R Johnston, M Gardiner; D Lynch, J McAuley, P Healy (0-1); C Duffin (0-2), M Jordan; M Johnston, P McBride (0-7, 1f), N Delargy; O Eastwood (2-3), F Burke, C Murray (0-3).

Subs: J McCann for M Johnston (ht), D McAleese (0-1) for M Gardiner (ht), C Small for F Burke (49), P Cunningham (0-3) for M Jordan (56), E Walsh for N Delargy (60).

LIMERICK: D O'Sullivan; P Maher, B Fanning, M Donovan; T McCarthy (0-1), I Corbett, R Childs; T Griffin (0-1), T Childs (0-1); A Enright, C Fahy (0-1), P de Brún (0-3); H Bourke (0-2, 1f), D Neville, P Scanlon (1-2).

Subs: J Noughton for A Enright (29), J Ryan for T Griffin (47), S O'Dea for R Childs (56), S O'Carroll (0-1) for D Neville (58), D Lyons for P Scanlon (64).

Referee: P Faloona (Down)

Sligo defy conditions to earn valuable points

Allianz FL Division 4

Sligo 2-7

Wexford 1-9

Brendan Furlong

Wexford Park

Sligo withstood a late Wexford fightback to take two valuable points from a game played at windswept Wexford Park on Saturday afternoon.

Despite playing into the galeforce wind in the first half, Paul Taylor's charges struck for what were to prove two crucial goals, the first coming as

early as the third minute when wing-forward Darragh Cummins got on the end of a Barry Gorman cross across the face of the goal to punch downwards into the corner of the net.

The second arrived seven minutes before the break when wing-back Sean Carrabine soloed through the defence for a 2-2 to 0-6 interval lead.

Conditions made good football almost impossible, but points from Liam Gaughan, Red Og Murphy and Barry Gorman keep Sligo in front. A Ben Brosnan goal left the minimum separating the sides, but Sligo held on.

Scorers for Sligo: S Carrabine 1-1, D Cummins 1-0, A Devaney (1), J F Carr, L Gaughan, R Og Murphy, B

Gorman, K Cawley 0-1 each).

Scorers for Wexford: B Brosnan (4f) 1-5, I Meegan, C Devitt, J Bealin, S Nolan, 0-1 each.

WEXFORD: I Meegan; M O'Connor, G Sheehan, J Rossiter; E Porter, B Malone, R Barron; E Nolan, N Hughes; G Malone, C Devitt, T Byrne; M Rossiter, J Bealin, B Brosnan.

Subs: S Doyle for Rossiter (inj. 4), S Nolan for Rossiter (53), C Carty for Byrne (58), J Stafford for Bealin (68), R Crosbie for Devitt (70).

SLIGO: A Devaney; J F Carr, E McGuinness, N Mulligan; G O'Kelly-Lynch, P McNamara, S Carrabine; P O'Connor, P Kilcoyne; D Cummins, L Gaughan, Keelan Cawley; R Og Murphy, B Gorman, P Hughes.

Subs: Kyle Cawley for Hughes (49), C Breheny for Kilcoyne (51), M Gordon for Cummins (53), S Coen for Gorman (61), D Quinn for Carrabine (inj. 70).

Referee: S Lonergan (Tipperary).

16 GAA

Dramatic injury-time Jackman goal seals title for Gailltír

AIB All-Ireland Intermediate Camogie Club Final

Gailltír (Waterford) 1-13

St Rynagh's (Offaly) 0-13

Daragh Ó Conchúir,
Croke Park

Gailltír snatched victory from the jaws of defeat when Una Jackman sent a close-range piledriver to the roof of the net to deny a heartbroken St Rynagh's in a pulsating AIB All-Ireland Intermediate Club Camogie Championship final.

Eleven points from the magnificent Kate Kenny and official player of the match Siobhán Flannery looked to have edged the Offaly girls over the line, as they led by

one point in the fourth minute of injury time.

But then came must the dramatic of endings with Shauna Fitzgerald teeing up Una Jackman for a sensational goal and seconds later a Trish Jackman free sealed the win and the Agnes O'Farrelly Cup was headed Suirside.

"I feel like I'm dreaming" said Jackman.

"I feel like I'm dreaming. I thought it was gone. I just honestly can't believe it. Shauna caught that ball, I don't know how she did it. I turned and I could see another girl in front of the goalkeeper. And I just hit it to the back of the net."

"For Shauna to get the ball to me was unbelievable but she's unreal. It's unbelievable. I didn't have a second. There

were two girls standing in front of the goal but I just said, 'We have to win this, there's no way we're losing this.' The feeling is unreal. I can't even describe it. Trish scoring the point after then..."

The agony of losing last year's decider to Clonduff by a point may well have been decisive in the Waterford girls never say die spirit.

"We were so hurt, everyone in the club (was hurt) and we just needed to come back, we needed to get this. There was no way we were coming back without that cup."

"Every single one of the girls are worthy of a spot on the team, they're training so hard, week-in, week-out, eight o'clock in the morning on Saturdays. All of us want to be on

the field but once we're winning, it doesn't matter who's on the pitch."

Gailltír led by 0-7 to 0-2 after 25 minutes, Ciara O'Sullivan, Aine Lyng and Aoife Fitzgerald among the scorers.

Flannery and the excellent Linda Sullivan reduced the margin before the break and Rynagh's carried that momentum through to the second half, when Flannery did the business from placed balls, while Kenny hit fantastic points off either wing. That put them two ahead but Gailltír came back with three on the trot, two from Annie Fitzgerald frees. Gráinne Dillon quickly levelled and then Flannery from a 45 restored the Rynagh's advantage. Annie Fitzgerald and Flannery swapped pointed placed balls before the last ditch Hollywood ending.

Scorers for Gailltír: Annie Fitzgerald (0-4, fs); U Jackman (1-0); Aoife Fitzgerald, A Lyng, C O'Sullivan (0-2 each), A Corcoran, S Fitzgerald, T Jackman (f) (0-1 each).

Scorers for St Rynagh's: S Flannery (0-7, 6fs, 1 45); K Kenny (0-4); L Sullivan, G Dolan (0-1 each).

GAILLTÍR: C Jackman, M Heffernan, L Sheridan, H Flynn, E Roche, C Carroll, T Jackman, K Lynch, S Fitzgerald, C O'Sullivan, A Lyng, Annie Fitzgerald, A Corcoran, Aoife Fitzgerald, E Walsh.

Sub: C Dunne for Heffernan (47), U Jackman for Walsh (51).

ST RYNAGHS: E Gilligan, C O'Connell, E Sullivan, S Moran, R Daly, L Sullivan, E Corcoran, H Dolan, R Egan, A McLoughlin, S Hanamy, G Dolan, L Mannion, K Kenny, S Flannery.

Sub: T Nugent for O'Connell (22), M Dooley for Hanamy (60+3).

Referee: Owen Elliott (Antrim)

'Collig keep record intact

Cork Leagues

Denis Hurley

Ballincollig made it three wins from three in the Rochestown Park Hotel Division 1 Football League as they overcame Mallow by 1-17 to 0-15 yesterday.

While Mallow led with 10 minutes remaining, a black card left them at a numerical disadvantage and Ballincollig took over, with sub Evan Cooke's goal in the 55th minute sending them ahead.

Kevin Browne got three points for the winners, while subs Dara Dorgan and Steve Wills also made important contributions in the closing stages.

St Michael's are in second place, four points behind Ballincollig, after a 2-12 to 0-11 win away to Clonakilty.

Tadhg Deasy scored 1-5 for St Michael's, who led by 1-7 to 0-4 at half time, while Eric Hegarty got 1-2 and Eoghan Buckley, Tom Linehan, and Eoin O'Donovan were on target also. Seán McEvoy kicked four points for Clon, with Dara O Sé getting four.

At Neenan Park in Togher, home side St Finbarr's got their first win, overcoming O'Donovan Rossa on a 2-13 to 2-10 scoreline. The Barr's led by 0-8 to 0-3 at half time, and had second-half goals from Colm Keane and Cian Walsh, though their opponents stayed in the game as Kevin Davis and David Shannon also found the net. Steven Sherlock kicked five points for the Barr's while Daire O'Sullivan and Colm Barrett had two each.

Elsewhere, Castlehaven had a 1-12 to 0-13 win away to Cill na Marra, with their goal coming from a Conor O'Driscoll penalty. Éire Óg sit top of Division 2 after a second victory, beating Clyda Rovers by 0-12 to 1-6 with Kevin Hallissy starring.

In the other games, Ilan Rovers beat Carrigaline 2-14 to 2-12, Fermoy had a 2-8 to 1-7 win over Béal Athan Ghaorthaidh, and Newmarket were 1-11 to 0-6 winners over Valley Rovers. Division 3 has Nemo Rangers' second team at its summit after a 0-11 to 1-4 win against Rockchapel. There were also wins for Glanworth, Knocknagare, and Aghada.

Dromtariffe, Na Piarasigh, and Mayfield were victorious in Division 4 while Ballinora and Grenagh triumphed in Division 5, and Millstreet drew with St Nicholas.

There was one RedFM Senior Hurling League game, with Erin's Own joining Sarsfields at the top of the table as they beat Ballymartle 1-11 to 0-12. Kieran Murphy scored seven points for the Glounthaune side with Maurice O'Carroll getting 1-2, while James O'Flynn and Sam Guilfoyle were on the scoresheet too.

Magnificent McGraths fire Sarsfields to thrilling victory

AIB All-Ireland Senior Club Camogie championship final

Sarsfields (Galway) 1-8

Slaughtneil (Derry) 0-10

Daragh Ó Conchúir,
Croke Park

Sisters Orlaith and Siobhán McGrath combined to send Sarsfields on their way to All-Ireland glory in a thrilling climax to yesterday's senior club camogie championship final at Croke Park.

With the Galway champions within seconds of suffering their third defeat to Slaughtneil on decider day, Orlaith set up Siobhán to blast to the net for the match-winning strike.

That effort put two points between the teams and though Therese Mellon reduced the margin to the minimum after a brilliant run by Tina Bradley, time ran out on the Ulster outfit.

Sarsfields lost to Slaughtneil in the 2017 and 2018 deciders but this was more about getting over the line than revenge.

"It's a bit surreal," said Orlaith McGrath.

"It doesn't feel like I thought it would feel. Something you've always dreamed about and it actually comes to pass, it's just wow! It is an unbelievable feeling. It's a relief."

"Especially considering our second-half performance, I don't know what happened to us. They came at us all guns blazing and we didn't react to that at all."

"At one stage, it looked like the game was gone. They were making darting runs down the centre and Tina Bradley and Shannon Graham could easily have gotten goals there. We were lucky for a change."

"Of course, your luck comes down to hard work and in the first half, we worked immensely hard and maybe



Sarsfields players celebrate with the Bill & Agnes Carroll Cup after victory over Slaughtneil in the AIB All-Ireland Senior Club Camogie Championship final at Croke Park yesterday.

Picture: Laszlo Gezo

didn't capitalise on that ourselves.

"We didn't score as much as we should have."

"To be fair, the goal came against the run of play. We weren't in it but we kept with-in touching distance. We're over the moon."

The two McGraths — who were joined on the team by captain Niamh and midfield partner Clodagh — were magnificent.

So too was Maria Cooney, the daughter of another legendary club and county figure Joe, who excelled as a defensive screen for the westerners.

Sarsfields hounded Slaughtneil in the first half and were well worth a 0-6 to 0-3 half-time lead. Orlaith

McGrath in particular was always a threat, but Siobhán was not far behind and the duo's desire to take on their markers at every turn caused mayhem in the normally assured Slaughtneil defence.

They were responsible for all six of their side's first-half scores and all bar one point of the final tally.

Unsurprisingly, Slaughtneil responded like champions and could have had two goals early in the second half, but Graham and Bradley took points when the goal was on.

Still, the Derry representatives hit the front in the 51st minute, when Aoife Ni Chaiside fed Siobhán Bradley, who made it 0-7 to 0-6.

It took Sarsfields 23 minutes

to register their first score of the second half, and it was a vital one from Rachel Murray. Orlaith McGrath gave them the lead straight after but Siobhán Mellon levelled and then Dougan drove over from a different postcode.

It seemed as if Slaughtneil had effected one of their now famous rescue acts but the McGraths had the definitive say.

"When Slaughtneil came out of the other semi-final, we said 'Great'" explained Orlaith.

"They beat us twice and they beat us fair and square."

"We were coming up against the best and what's the point in playing if you're not playing the best and Slaughtneil

are an unbelievable team. It was just our turn today."

Scorers for Sarsfields: S McGrath (1-4, 2fs); O McGrath (0-3); R Murray (0-1).

Scorers for Slaughtneil: T Bradley (0-4, 1f); L Dougan (0-2, fs); S Graham, S Bradley, S Mellon, T Mellon (0-1 each).

SARSFIELDS: L Glynn, S Cannon, L Ward, K Gallagher, S Warde, M Cooney, J Daly, C McGrath, N McGrath, C Kenny, O McGrath, S Spellman, A Deeleay, S McGrath, R Murray.

Subs: E Leslie for O McGrath blood (22-23), Leslie for S Warde (52).

SLAUGHTNEIL: J Bradley, Céat McEl-downey, G Ni Chatháin, E McGrath, B McAllister, A Ni Chaiside, C McGrath, C Mulholland, S Graham, S Bradley, T Bradley, L Dougan, S Mellon, J McMul-lan, T Mellon.

Subs: O Rafferty for Mulholland (42), Carla McDeldowney for S Mellon (60+3).

Referee: J Dermody (Westmeath)

GAA not giving up on killing off maor foirne role

John Fogarty

The black card/sin bin in hurling is as dead as a dodo, but the GAA has not yet given up on getting rid of the maor foirne.

A considerable 83% of Congress delegates in Croke Park on Saturday rejected the sin bin applying in hurling to counter cynical play. And the lack of a speaker for the motion apart from proposer — playing rules chairman David Hassan — has convinced GAA president John Horan not to return to addressing cynicism in hurling.

The extent of the defeat, failing to receive a third of Congress' support, means the black card in hurling can't be debated for another three years. That might have been avoided had it been withdrawn, but Horan identified little support for the measure.

"That largely kicks it into touch," he said.

"We had been approached by the committee to see would I allow it to go back for further consideration, and I said I would if there was any element of support on the floor for the actual move.

"There was meant to be a bit of support there, but it never materialised, so it is very hard to rule a referral for something when nobody on the floor spoke in favour of it, so dare I say it — the sin-bin in hurling is binned."

However, Horan sounded a more positive note about disbanding the role of the maor foirne and tweaking the advantage rule in scoring areas after both playing rules committee motions fell agonisingly shy of the required 60% support for it to become a rule.

The proposal to amend the advantage rule would see referees give frees in or within the 45-metre line in football and in or within the 65m in hurling instead of advantage unless they considered a goal opportunity would develop.

Horan said of those narrow



LET'S CHAT: GAA president-elect Larry McCarthy with current GAA president John Horan during the GAA Annual Congress 2020 at Croke Park. Horan said that two proposals that fell just short of the 60% needed for approval 'will have to be revisited'.

Picture: Piaras Ó Midheach

disappointments for the Playing Rules Committee: "You'd have to feel sorry for the committee to hit 59% twice. How many votes were involved in that 1% difference?

"If something hits 59, you have to revisit it at the next opportunity that you get. When people see that it was 59, I think it will firm up their opinion. It could become more decisive after that."

Without trial, Kildare club Raheen's football motion to prevent a player from returning the ball to the goalkeeper after he receives it was backed into becoming a rule on Friday evening. It's an idea Horan floated last year when he highlighted there was an

average of 10 back passes to the goalkeeper per game in 20 Allianz League matches analysed last year.

Following Saturday's Congress, Central Council confirmed it will come into action in four weeks' time, but will not apply to the league's divisional finals. It is possible that teams will find a way around it by getting their defenders to kick the ball out to their goalkeepers, but the wording of the rule still has to be drafted completely.

"It (the motion) uses terms like 'a pass back' as opposed to return, which might be a better word," admitted GAA director general Tom Ryan.

"There's a small bit of re-

finement that we will do to make it a bit easier for referees."

Horan, though, doesn't believe sides will try and take the risk to circumvent the motion as it currently reads.

"I don't think teams in a game would engage in the risk factor of a defender kicking it to the goalkeeper. Who's actually going to cover the goal?"

"Suddenly your goalkeeper is now outside the 'D'. With the kick-out going to the 20m line and the 'D' becoming involved now, the keeper is a good way from his actual rightful position."

The Playing Rules Committee was successful in tweaking the advanced mark rule so

that a player choosing not to claim it in the large or small rectangle can be tackled immediately.

After Congress agreed there would be no relegation in the Leinster Senior Hurling Championship this year, there remains the possibility Kerry could be the sixth team in the competition in 2021, should they win the Joe McDonagh Cup.

Although the motion from the Leinster Council stipulates Kerry, as McDonagh Cup winners, would play off against the lowest team in the Munster SHC, it is understood Leinster would be agreeable to accepting Kerry into their competition.

Weather forces rethink on hurling league format

John Fogarty

The GAA are set to review the schedule if not the structure of the Allianz Hurling League after they were impacted by the weather for a third consecutive season.

GAA president John Horan intimated that the current schedule for the hurling competitions of eight game-days in nine weekends for Division 1 was overly ambitious and is set to be addressed by the Central Competitions Control Committee (CCCC).

"The CCCC will definitely (look at it)," he said. "They have two years of evidence now and if you go back to the fixture review committee, they left a gap in there and that was probably the one area of dispute between themselves and the CPA (Club Players Association, who proposed not break weekend)."

With climate change becoming more obvious and the series of bad weather experienced at this time of year clearly not relenting, the GAA know they have to react accordingly, says Horan. "Look, we have had two weeks of weather now and our pitches are in great condition, but look at Portlaoise — it just can't take it."

MW Hire O'Moore Park had to surrender the Laois-Kilkenny Division 1, Group B game. Removing the quarter-finals in the new Division 1 format would free up a second weekend, something that is enjoyed by the football competition, which does not have scheduled round games this coming weekend.

Meanwhile, both Horan and GAA director general Tom Ryan confirmed that three football championship options are on the agenda for fixtures review task-force's roadshow ahead of Special Congress this September.

The retention of Allianz as the sponsor of the National Leagues for another five years is not expected to impact on the proposal to flip the League into the summer and the four divisional system becoming the Championship.

However, the GAA would be compelled to reassess its sponsorship model were the radical plan to be adopted.



Director general Tom Ryan at Congress. Picture: Sportsfile

U20 football set for summer return in 2021

John Fogarty

The U20 All-Ireland Football Championship is expected to revert to a summer start in 2021, GAA president John Horan has admitted.

Plans to put early-year deadlines on the U20 competition, the Sigerson and Fitzgibbon Cups, as well as the post-primary championships were deferred for further consideration after a plea by GAA president Nicky Brennan.

With speakers from Tyrone, Mayo, and Tipperary speaking against the motion to stage the All-Ireland U20 FC in February and March, it appeared the proposal was on its way to a defeat, despite the competition being rescheduled.

As his U20s were in Ulster semi-final action against Antrim on Saturday, Tyrone delegate Benny Hurl had queried what was the real reason for the switch — costs, as it was initially claimed, or giving more space to the clubs in the summer and avoiding clashes with early-summer examinations.

Mayo chairman Liam Moffatt highlighted how his county and Galway's U20s had to play their Connacht game in "terrible weather".

Expected to be debated again at Special Congress in September, Horan agreed the championship will be a summer competition again.

"It has to now. The argument Conor O'Donoghue (fix-

tures review task-force member) was trying to make was it (moving to spring) was going to free up players. I saw it myself in my own club and Tyrone where clubs were decimated with having so many players tied up between the senior and U20 panel," he said.

"Unfortunately, we have too many things woven into the calendar and everybody feels very sacrosanct about their own patch."

As 16 teams in Division 2 and 3 are busy trying to avoid the newly-named Tailteann Cup (second-tier football championship), Horan confirmed that work will begin shortly on persuading counties that it is a competition worth winning.

"We will be putting a group together here between our communications and marketing, sponsorship, and media. We will put a package together on that in the next fortnight or three weeks, and then you will see it rolling out."

There was some success for the GAA in convincing counties that there has to be some uniformity in terms of age grades.

"It gets simpler after today," said GAA director general Tom Ryan. "It's funny — the call all the time is for us to bring clarity, but if it is not the clarity, one particular county wants it poses another difficulty."

"What we have now is we have a policy in place, we have

the latitude if we need to and the flexibility to change that policy if we need to. Counties have the option to field at underage grades that are optional in terms of the even ages. Some counties will do that. I think what we did today will hopefully put a lot of that unrest to bed."

In his address on Saturday, Horan said the GAA and GPA need to work closer to alleviate the burden on inter-county players as soon as they agree a new funding deal. That should be done before the summer.

"The desire of both parties is to get it off the table and get working together, to sort some of the other issues that can only be solved really if we get together," he said.

18 SOCCER

A grim return to what has become United's new normality

MAMMA mia! "Large public events might be cancelled," Britain's health secretary glumly admitted to a brow-furrowed interviewer on Sunday morning, as various worst-case coronavirus scenarios were put to him. Every United fan in the country will have immediately had the same thought: "What? Including all remaining Liverpool matches?" Talk about a silver lining..."

Most of us would also have the good grace to feel guilty about such selfish tastelessness, I hasten to add. And few would dare argue that LFC wouldn't deserve their trophy — if it's ever actually awarded.

Naturally, that didn't stop us dancing around our living rooms as we listened to their shock collapse at Watford on Saturday. God has granted us one small mercy in this otherwise frightening season — that Liverpool will not be joining Arsenal and Preston in the elite band of Invincibles.

Elsewhere, however, his mysteri-



Terrace Talk

Richard Kurt

ous ways were looking as enigmatically worrisome as ever. Manchester City's historic win in Madrid ruined the week — yes, despite our own romp against 10-man Brugge — and leaves us staring at the increasing possibility of an MCFC/LFC Disaster Double. The fact that City may eventually be prevented from defending any such title by CAS would be the scantest of consolation. 2020 would instantly become our worst year since 2005. S.O.S!

Every old Da' would now interject: "never mind what the others are doing — you just concentrate on your own work, son." Alright then; let us balefully and briefly examine the return to January-style normality that was the trip to Everton.

Normal: Martial being a doom-faced disgrace, Lindelof being a wet lettuce, De Gea being distinctly dodgy. Normal: the team running out of gas after an hour despite all those pre-season assurances about how fit this squad was going to prove to be. Normal: VAR turning an exciting climax into yet another soul-curdling mess.

Not that the offside decision was necessarily wrong by the letter of the law, mind you. And any Red will always get enjoyment from seeing Scousers crying about being robbed. No, it's just that every time VAR steps onto the stage, the heart sinks.

It has nothing to do with it getting things right or wrong, it's the whole miserable process and its attendant corridor of uncertainty down which we all must gingerly creep. Dare one celebrate anything with gay abandon anymore, knowing that some unwelcome voyeur may be about to blow the whistle?

Speaking of unwanted intruders, look who may be deigning to grace a

training session with his presence once more: Monsieur Paul Pogba. Assuming that the fragile flower doesn't break a metatarsal as he drives to Carrington — also assuming he still remembers where that is — there is even talk that he may be in contention for next weekend's derby.

You may be familiar with the term 'BGR' — 'Big Game Red', i.e. the United fan who only swans in for the glamour ties and finals. Every right-thinking supporter hates them, and it's that kind of mentality that has some arguing that Pogba shouldn't be allowed anywhere near the showpiece derby, given his recent behaviour and overall attitude towards the club.

I must admit I would prefer to see him serving a penitential hour in the saltmines of Derby County first; after all, who wouldn't like to witness what Wayne Rooney might 'think' of him face-to-face on the pitch?

One thing's for certain anyway;

almost all lingering fears about United's midfield crumbling without Pogba's intermittent services have disappeared thanks to the boy Bruno. Can you hear the drums, Fernandes? They're playing the winner takes it all, and it's you. But why on Earth didn't we buy him earlier? Not least as we could have saved money, money, money? (Sorry.) The comical answer briefed out by Old Trafford to one paper was that last summer's hesitant Woodward was suddenly won over by some dramatic "growth" in the player since August. Pfft! Clearly, the only thing growing here is the nose of whoever told that tale.

Bruno was once again the best thing in Red on Sunday's pitch, and could yet prove to be the difference between Champions League 2021 and oblivion. He is now the future, while Pogba is suddenly the past. Now if only there were a single word to summon up a once world-conquering Frenchman finally meeting failure on a big stage....

Ancelotti sees red after United let-off



Premier League

Everton..... 1

Calvert-Lewin

Manchester United. 1

Fernandes

Ian Whittell

Goodison Park



CARLO Ancelotti, the suave Italian known for his unflappable demeanour, was sent off after the final whistle as Everton were denied what would have been a spectacular late win.

It may take a lot to raise the hackles of the dignified 60-year-old but VAR, apparently, can do it.

The Everton manager marched onto the pitch and raged at referee Chris Kavanagh and his assistants after his team had first been awarded, and then denied, a dramatic added time victory.

Kavanagh had initially signalled a goal when Dominic Calvert-Lewin's shot deflected off Harry Maguire and into the net, having judged that Gylfi Sigurdsson, who was lying on the pitch after tumbling over and in an offside position, had been rendered outside by the deflection.

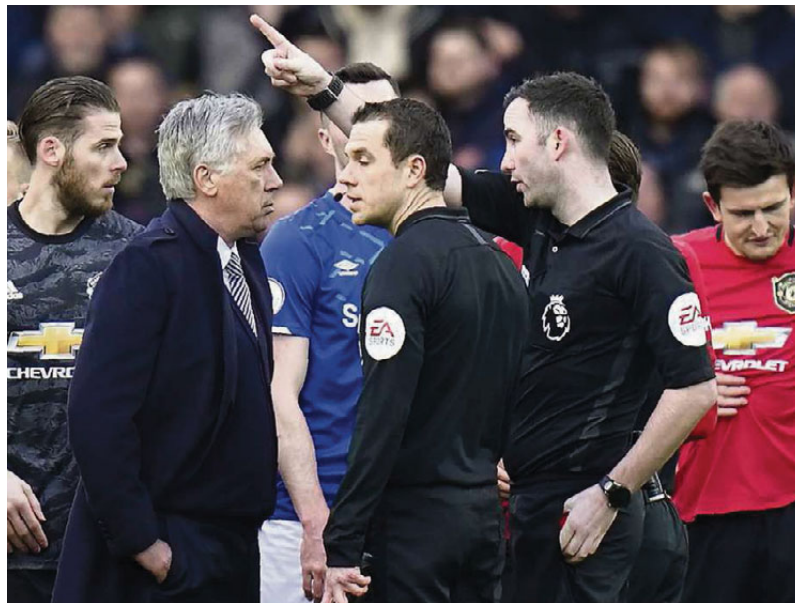
But after heated United protests, the VAR intervened and ruled that Sigurdsson had obscured the goalkeeper's view, even though David De Gea was moving the other way before the ball hit Maguire.

Ancelotti insisted he had not been "disrespectful" to Kavanagh but confirmed he had gone to the referee's room after the game to seek an explanation for the decision to disallow the goal.

"There was a misunderstanding on the pitch and he sent me off," said the Italian. "After that I spoke with him calmly in the dressing room."

"I want to keep the conversation private and he will make a report for the referee."

"I didn't disrespect to him but I can understand the end of the game was really exciting. It can happen but we will see if I am banned."



Referee Christopher Kavanagh gestures to Everton's manager Carlo Ancelotti after showing him a red card after the final whistle during the Premier League game against Manchester United. Pic: AP Photo/Jon Super

Did you know?

Since his Premier League debut, Bruno Fernandes has had more shots (10), more assists (2) and created more chances (7) than any other Manchester United player.

"It was a difficult decision. I think they checked the position of Gylfi, it was offside, but in our opinion it didn't affect the vision of the goalkeeper. In their opinion it affect the vision."

"I've never been sent off before but it probably won't be the last time. We will see if I am banned [from the touchline] for the next game."

"But the stand is close to the technical area at Chelsea where we play next week."

Ole Gunnar Solskjaer was just relieved the decision went in his team's favour as they stretched their unbeaten run to eight games in all competitions and appeared to show some sympathy towards Ancelotti.

"I don't 100 percent know the rule," said the United manager. "But David said he was distracted by the boy in his sights."

"I have not spoken to Carlo — we just shook hands. It was drama towards the end. I probably wouldn't have been sent off if it had been a goal."

The controversy over the disallowed goal, much to the relief of the protagonists in question, overshadowed mistakes by both goalkeepers.

The increasingly error-prone De Gea gifted Everton a third-minute lead when his attempted clearance kick was charged down by the impressive Dominic Calvert-Lewin and the ball rebounded into the net.

Pickford's blunder was not quite so obvious but he should have kept out Bruno Fernandes' 31st minute equaliser. The midfielder's shot was well-hit and swerved but Pickford appeared to misjudge it. Watching England boss Gareth Southgate will have

taken note.

Significantly, both De Gea and Pickford have made seven mistakes that have led directly to goals since the start of last season the worst records of any goalkeepers in the Premier League in that time.

But both both players showed their strength of character by redeeming themselves with instinctive saves to ensure the game ended 1-1.

Moments after his calamitous error De Gea tipped round a shot from Calvert-Lewin and also stretched out his left leg to make a crucial save from Sigurdsson moments before the disallowed goal.

Solskjaer claimed, not very convincingly, that De Gea is still the "world's best goalkeeper" amid growing suggestions that Dean Henderson, who has been highly impressive during his loan spell at Sheffield United, should take the Spaniard's place next season.

"It was the worst possible

Premier League										
	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts			
Liverpool	28	26	1	1	64	20	79			
Man City	27	18	3	6	68	29	57			
Leicester	28	15	5	8	54	28	50			
Chelsea	28	13	6	9	47	39	45			
Man Utd	28	11	9	8	42	30	42			
Wolverhampton	28	10	12	6	41	34	42			
Tottenham	28	11	7	10	46	39	40			
Sheff Utd	27	10	10	7	29	25	40			
Burnley	28	11	5	12	33	39	38			
Arsenal	27	8	13	6	39	36	37			
Everton	28	10	7	11	37	42	37			
Crystal Palace	28	9	9	10	25	32	36			
Southampton	28	10	4	14	35	51	34			
Newcastle	28	8	8	12	24	41	32			
Brighton	28	6	10	12	32	40	28			
West Ham	28	7	6	15	35	49	27			
Watford	28	6	9	13	27	43	27			
Bournemouth	28	7	6	15	28	45	27			
Aston Villa	27	7	4	16	34	52	25			
Norwich	28	5	6	17	25	51	21			

start, David took too long to make the clearance, but he showed his character with his reaction," said Solskjaer. "For me he is still the best goalkeeper in the world. Dean is doing really well at the moment and when he comes back to us he will be fighting to play and we want competition in every position."

United recovered well after the shock of De Gea's blunder and dominated the first half, Nemanja Matic striking the bar but Everton were much improved in the second half and Calvert-Lewin pressed his case in front of Southgate for an England call-up.

Considering that United were thrashed 4-0 at Goodison Park last April in the lowest moment of Solskjaer's up-and-down tenure in charge, it was little surprise he was happy with a point, especially after the added time controversy although a draw did little for either club's European hopes.

EVERTON (4-4-2): Pickford 6; Coleman 5 (Sidibe 28, 5), Keane 6, Holgate 7, Baines 6; Walcott 5 (Bernard 62, 6), Davies 6, Gomes 7 (Kean 81, 5), Sigurdsson 6; Calvert-Lewin 8, Richarlison 7.

MAN UTD (4-3-1-2): De Gea 6; Wan-Bissaka 6, Lindelof 7, Maguire 9, Shaw 7; McTomlinay 6 (Mata 72, 5), Matic 7, Fred 7; Fernandes 8; Greenwood 5 (Ighalo 72, 5), Martial 4 (Williams 89).

Referee: Chris Kavanagh.

Timely tonic for Pep and City

Chris Hatherall

Comment



PEP GUARDIOLA'S eighth trophy since arriving at Manchester City may not be the biggest he's ever won, nor the one which will remember the most when he eventually waves goodbye, but it was hard-fought and comes at an opportune time if, as promised, he plans on hanging around.

Just when Liverpool are about to run away with the Premier League title and with City facing a Champions League ban, a reminder that Guardiola is still building a dynasty designed to collect silverware long into the future is the perfect tonic.

It wasn't easy, either, against a Villa side that fought tooth-and-nail to stay in the game despite having so little possession; and it was almost taken away from City right at the death when Bjorn Engels' header hit the woodwork.

That City survived in that moment was partly down to luck, but the rest was underpinned by a hunger to win that proves there is still fire in City bellies despite all the setbacks this season.

Allied to their recent stunning victory at Real Madrid, it should give Liverpool and Jurgen Klopp some food for thought when looking to the future. This team of cham-

pions may have found themselves out of the league race this time, and under pressure from all angles, but they aren't going away.

Take young Phil Foden, for instance, who was given a chance to start at Wembley ahead of Kevin de Bruyne.

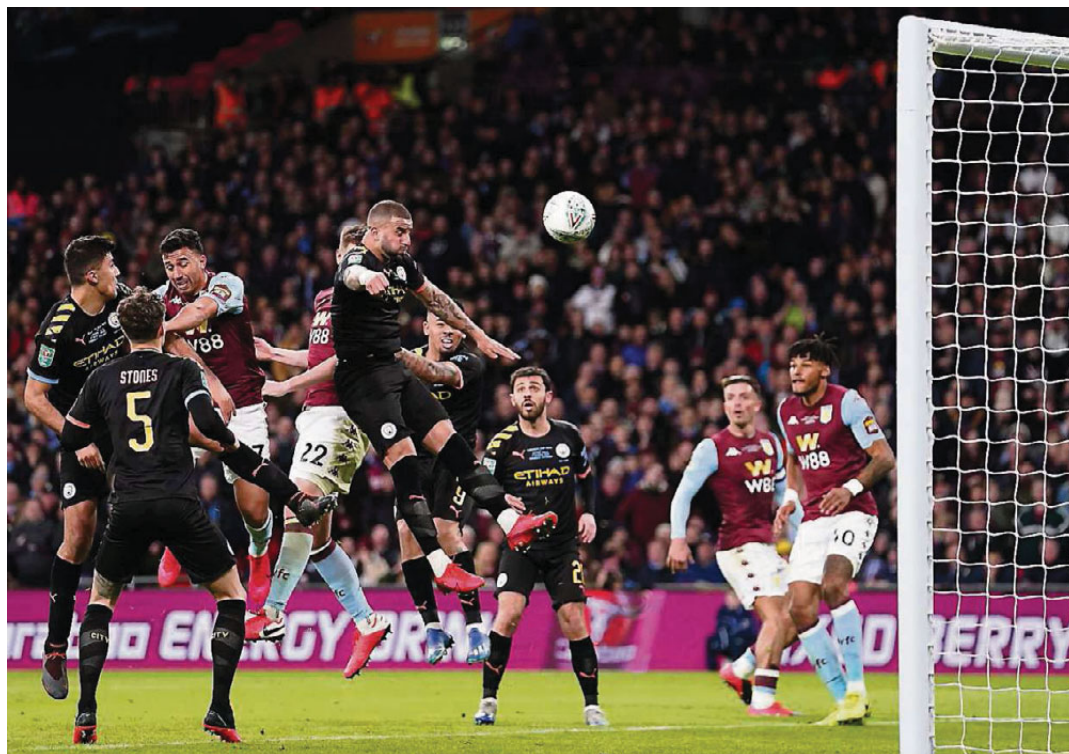
The 19-year-old was outstanding on the right, setting up the opening goal for Sergio Aguero, and he will be vital to the club next season when City attempt to win back the title that Liverpool are in the process of snatching away from them.

It won't go unnoticed at Anfield, either, that City — a team that barely troubled the top 10 in the days when Liverpool were in their pomp — have now equalled the Merseyside club's record of winning three League Cup titles in a row (achieved between 1981 and 1984).

That's the kind of history City fans could never have dreamt of achieving before Sheikh Mansour arrived from Abu Dhabi. It's a reminder of how far this project has come, and how solid it remains despite Uefa's determination to temper it.

So, although it would be easy to suggest that the League Cup didn't figure high on City or Pep Guardiola's priority list, especially in a year when they are chasing what would be a highly emotive and poignant Champions League title, the evidence proves otherwise.

Guardiola's reign at the Etihad has been built on gathering a steady stream of trophies, creating a winning



Aston Villa's Bjorn Engels heads the ball against the post during the Carabao Cup Final at Wembley. City survived the late scare to secure their third League Cup in a row, matching Liverpool's record from 1981 and 1984. Picture: John Walton/PA

mentality and developing a hunger for silverware; so there was more on this match than many City fans were willing to admit at a time when they need to convince everyone — including their own players — to stick with the project next season.

Don't forget this was the first piece of silverware Guardiola won with City and, after a trophyless first campaign which ended with a brutal clear-out of an ageing squad, that 3-0 demolition of Arsenal was absolutely key to changing the belief levels for Manchester United's noisy neighbours. In fact, it set the tone for a memorable title win a few months later.

City won the League Cup again last season, this time against Chelsea, and you got a feel for how much it meant to Guardiola in 2020 when he punched an advertising hoarding in frustration at the way his team defended to concede to Villa when they were already 2-0 up.

“There is still fire in City bellies despite all the setbacks this season”

That's what makes a good manager, of course — and anyone who ever watched Alex Ferguson celebrate a Community Shield victory knows that anything which glitters is worth winning for those who truly lead.

The way City started yester-

day's match was almost breathless, stretching Villa's back four with every pass and every run. So a two-goal lead set up through Aguero and Rodrigo was well deserved.

The only fly in the ointment was John Stones' embarrassing slip which allowed Villa to grab a reply before the break and which galvanised the underdogs and set up a fascinating and competitive second half.

As for Villa, a huge club building their way back to where they belong, just being at Wembley was an achievement for a side that were playing in the Championship last season — and they gave it everything.

Their presence was a reminder of how quickly football can change, because the European Cup winners of 1982 have been sorely missing in recent times. Their fans' chant of 'Champions of Europe, you'll never sing that' was rather tongue-in-cheek — even if succeeded in irking their rivals.

The last time Villa won the League Cup was in 1996, against Leeds, but this was their ninth final and it came with some appealing narratives.

A team managed by Dean Smith, a boyhood Villa fan, and led on the field by Jack Grealish, another staunch Villan who has stayed with the club despite overtures from the likes of Tottenham and Manchester United.

They stuck in there, too, surviving City's neat triangles and almost total domination to keep their vociferous fans cheering to the last, out-singing their rivals for most of the 90 minutes.

Don't let that fact fool you into thinking Villa wanted it more, however. Guardiola's art as a coach is to instill a hunger for trophies, and you saw it here.

It may be 'only' the Carabao Cup, but these are exactly the kind of stories he needs to create to keep this team, and this project, together.

Guardiola delights in hat-trick heroes' 'incredible' cup consistency



Carabao Cup final

Aston Villa..... 1

Samatta 41

Manchester City..... 2

Aguero 20, Rodri 30

Andy Hampson

Wembley Stadium

Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola hailed his side after securing a hat-trick of Cara-

bao Cup wins with a 2-1 victory over Aston Villa.

Sergio Aguero and Rodri struck in the first half at Wembley to earn Guardiola his 29th trophy as a manager.

Mbwana Samatta pulled a goal back for Villa but, despite Bjorn Engels hitting a post with two minutes remaining, a spirited performance could not stop City.

"Three times in a row is a big success," said Guardiola. It's the consistency — incredible. It was awesome. We struggled in the first minutes and the last ones. They had two clear chances in the first minutes, but we played really well, especially in the second half.

"We've won a lot. I tried when we arrive, every game we play we try to win it, every competition we try to win it, and three times in a row, being here and winning is great."

The holders have now lifted the trophy in five of the last seven seasons, with Liverpool the only other team to win it three years in a row, between 1981 and 1984.

Phil Foden, arguably the most surprising inclusion in the City team, revealed he found out on Saturday that he would be involved, and the 19-year-old admitted he needs to shine when given such an opportunity.

"The day before, in training," he replied when asked

when he knew he was starting.

"The manager was working on tactics — I couldn't wait to play.

"It was an unbelievable day. I have to say fair play to Aston Villa, they gave us a really good game.

"When I play, every minute counts, so I try and do my best and I'm very proud of my performance today.

"You look at players like Kevin De Bruyne and David Silva, who are great, so when I get into the team I have to make the most of it."

Villa boss Dean Smith refused to blame the controversial decision to award City a corner ahead of their second

goal and said he was proud of his players.

"We all know it wasn't a corner," he told beIN Sports. "Unfortunately we didn't defend the corner well enough — 2-0 against a top team like that is very tough but I thought the lads showed a lot of heart and a lot of quality as well."

"I'm very proud of them, we were playing against one of the top teams in the world.

"We knew we would have to be patient without the ball, they went 2-0 up and it is a mountain to climb against a team of that quality, but we nearly climbed that mountain."

Asked if his team must now

take heart from the display as they battle the drop, he added: "We have to.

"You can't not look at the results from yesterday and because we weren't playing we end up in the bottom three.

"We have got a game in hand and if we take the performance from today into our league season then we will be OK."

ASTON VILLA: Nyland, Guilbert, Engels, Mings, Targett, Douglas Luiz, Nakamba, Elomahamady (Trezeguet 70), Grealish, El Ghazi (Hourihane 70), Samatta (Davis 80).

MAN CITY: Bravo, Walker, Stones, Ferrandinho, Zinchenko, Gundogan (De Bruyne 58), Rodri, Foden, Silva (Bernardo Silva 77), Sterling, Aguero (Gabriel Jesus 84).

Referee: Lee Mason.

20 SOCCER

Wolves bite back against Spurs



Premier League
Tottenham 2
 Bergwijn 13, Aurier 45
Wolves 3
 Doherty 27, Jota 57, Jimenez 73

Gerry Cox

Tottenham Hotspur Stadium

bed, and while Jose Mourinho said he could not fault his players' fighting spirit, he questioned their mentality and bemoaned a lack of ruthlessness.

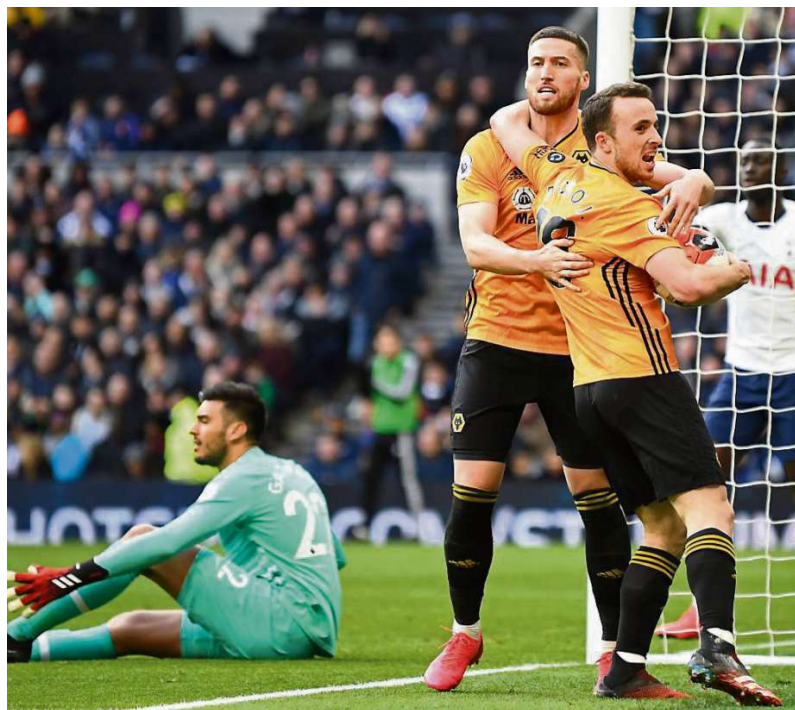
"I cannot complain about the players' spirit, about their fighting. I can complain about some psychological characteristics — that is something not easy to change," he said.

"They (Wolves) did what they have to do to win a game. They have the correct mentality," he added, suggesting a level of cynicism that his own players lack.

"I think we were punished, not just today on their second and third goals, but for quite a long time because we don't have that aggression, that ruthlessness. I think we are too good, too nice. And that was the only thing that made a difference in the game."

Yet it started well for Spurs, who took the lead in the 13th minute when Steven Bergwijn scored from close range after Rui Patricio had saved Dele Alli's first-time sidefoot.

Wolves did not waste time responding, however. Jota went close with two long-range shots before they equalised in the 27th minute. Ruben Vinagre made a driving run from left-back to fire in a low cross, and Ben Davies could only stop the ball to set up Doherty for a straightforward shot through the legs of Paulo Gazzaniga, playing in place of the injured Hugo Lloris.



Diogo Jota celebrates with Matt Doherty after scoring Wolves' second goal against Spurs. Tottenham boss Jose Mourinho later bemoaned his side's mentality, saying they were 'too nice'. Picture: Daniel Leal-Olivas

But Spurs regained the lead on the stroke of half time. Alli led a quick break and played in Serge Aurier, who cut inside Vinaigre and hit a powerful shot past Patricio into the far corner of the goal.

Tottenham should have wrapped up the points at the start of the second half, but Lo Celso hit a weak shot from a good position and Alli headed a deep cross from Davies wide of the far post.

But Wolves once again showed their fighting spirit, and equalised in the 57th minute. Adama Traore, their most threatening player, started to make his trademark surging runs through the middle, and he shrugged off two opponents before laying the ball out to Doherty on the right. The Irishman's low cross was perfect, and Jota had the simple task of running the ball over the line from close range.

Jota then turned supplier, with a surging run down the left touchline, evading two challenges before cutting inside and finding Jimenez with a perfect pass.

The Mexican showed great composure to draw a sliding challenge from Japhet Tanganga, before turning inside and placing his left-footed shot past Gazzaniga.

Mourinho finally sent on substitutes, including Irish teenager Troy Parrott, the club's only fit centre-forward. Parrott's arrival, five minutes from the end, brought a huge roar from home supporters, but he could not find a way through, and Mourinho insisted afterwards he is still not ready for a proper chance in the team.

"He is a good kid, a good talent, one that needs help on and off the pitch," he said.

"He's a kid we are going to

take care of, and will get a real opportunity at the right moment, when we feel it is right."

Nuno Espirito Santo was delighted with the way his side fought back.

"It was a tough game. Tottenham started much better than us, but I was pleased with the way we finished," he said.

The only blemish for Wolves was news that Traore suffered a slight dislocation of the shoulder for the third time this season.

"He's a strong boy, but it is a lot of pain, and he suffers like everybody else," said Santo.

TOTTENHAM (5-1-1): Gazzaniga 7; Sanchez 6, Dier 6, Tanganga 6 (Ndombele 76); Aurier 7 (Gedson Fernandes 82); Lo Celso 7, Winks 7, Moura 6, Davies 6 (Parrott 86); Dele 6; Bergwijn 6

WOLVES (3-4-2-1): Rui Patricio 7; Boly 6, Coady 7, Saiss 6; Doherty 7, Moutinho 7, Neves 7, Vinagre 6; Traore 8 (Neto 75); Jota 8 (Dendoncker 78); Jimenez 7 (Pondence 89)

Referee: Stuart Attwell.

Chelsea going all-out to beat Liverpool in FA Cup clash

Nick Purewal

Frank Lampard has vowed to field a full-strength Chelsea line-up in tomorrow's FA Cup match with Liverpool.

The Blues boss insisted he will resist any temptation to prioritise the Premier League and the fight for Champions League qualification when the Reds pitch up at Stamford Bridge.

Chelsea could be without Ruben Loftus-Cheek, Tammy Abraham, Callum Hudson-Odoi, N'Golo Kante, and Christian Pulisic for the fifth-round cup encounter, but that will not twist Lampard's arm into making changes.

Asked if he could rotate his players given the congested fixture list, Lampard said: "Cement and go for victory. It's Liverpool, our fans are coming in the FA Cup to try to overturn the best team in the land," he said.

"It doesn't mean I might not change a couple of people. There might be something for freshness of legs or a couple of different options, but I won't pick a team to casually give minutes ... (I'll) treat it like I would any Premier League game."

Loftus-Cheek is likely to feature for Chelsea's U23s tonight. The England midfielder was an unused replacement in Saturday's 2-2 Premier League draw at Bournemouth as he continues on the comeback trail following his Achilles surgery.

Lampard expects winger Hudson-Odoi to miss the Liverpool game, but the 19-year-old could recover from his hamstring complaint in time for Sunday's Premier League meeting with Everton.

There is, however, no prognosis on a return for either striker Abraham from his niggling ankle problem, or Pulisic from his lengthy adductor injury.

"Callum I am hoping will be back for next weekend," Lampard said. "Christian is the same as Tammy — there is no clear answer."

Marcos Alonso's brace salvaged a 2-2 draw at Bournemouth on Saturday for the fourth-placed Blues.

Jorginho's yellow card at the Vitality Stadium means the Italy midfielder will now miss the league matches against Everton and Aston Villa through suspension, although he can play against Liverpool.

Lampard remains confident, however, that the Blues have the resources to cope with Jorginho's impending absence, albeit coupled with fellow defensive midfielder Kante's knee injury.

Asked if Jorginho's suspension will cause problems, Lampard said: "Yeah, but we'll work around it. We'll have to. We have players who can do it. Mateo Kovacic finished in the holding role, Ross Barkley, Mason Mount, Billy Gilmour ... That will be the solution and it might open opportunities for other players."

Arteta feeling pinch of Champions League exile



FA Cup fifth round
Portsmouth v Arsenal

Tonight: Fratton Park, 7.45pm

TV: BT Sport 1

Referee: Mike Dean

Betting: Portsmouth 13/2, Arsenal 1/3, Draw 4/1

Mark Mann-Bryans

possibility of no European football at all next year and the financial ramifications that would entail.

A shock defeat to Olympiacos in the Europa League last 32 has closed off one route to a Champions League return, while they sit 10th in the Premier League.

Manchester City's appearance in the Carabao Cup final meant Arsenal did not have a league game this weekend but instead head to Portsmouth tonight for an FA Cup fifth-round clash.

Winning a record 14th FA Cup could now present the best way for Arteta to qualify for Europe as it offers a place in the Europa League.

But the 37-year-old knows the lure of Champions League football is important not only to bring in new faces but also keep hold of key talent like

Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang and Alexandre Lacazette.

"I think it is a no-brainer," Arteta replied when asked if it was easier to get players to sign when Champions League football was on offer.

"Every player in the world wants to play Champions League and, if you talk about having this option on the table, players are in a much more open way to join this club or to renew their contract or to convince anybody because we want to be in that competition."

"It will be difficult but this is the situation we are in now. We've been in that situation because we haven't performed as well as the other top four clubs have been doing."

"That's the reality and we have to face that reality face to face and try to make the best decisions."

Arsenal announced financial losses for 2018/19, the first time they have done so since 2002, and Arteta said there was now no margin for error to make mistakes with the money the club can invest.

"I think the damage caused by the club not being in the Champions League for the third season is really big," he added.

"Financially the impact is enormous because the structure of this club is built to be in the Champions League and you can sustain that for one year or two, but then after you have to start making decisions."

"So we will have to make decisions one way or the other depending on the scenario we find ourselves, whether we are in the Champions League, Europa League or nowhere near that."

Arsenal head coach Mikel Arteta admits it is a "no-brainer" that the club will struggle to attract top players if they fail to qualify for the Champions League for a fourth successive season.

The Gunners face the real

People would rather die than see us win league

Look, they're going to make this 10 times harder than it needed to be.

You know it, I know it. Deep down, we've always known it. Sit back and strap in, there isn't a damn thing you can do.

Relax, enjoy the fruits of the winter break. Two defeats, maybe would have been three but for Fabianski. I suppose the spotlight is always on Klopp because he's been the poster boy for it since he came here.

But we've still got injuries, still look like we're trying to conserve energy in games that haven't been decided yet. The Norwich and West Ham performances were hardly impressive, regardless of points.

No no, we won't be going an entire season unbeaten. We

did in a way, but that doesn't count of course. Never does, does it?

Defeat in Madrid was interesting, particularly the notion Diego had "sussed us out".

It's not the way Liverpool would approach a first leg tie at home, but no use bitching about that.

A surprising number of people think it's already over. It hasn't even been 12 months since Barcelona.

Liverpool weren't much better against West Ham, and signs of complacency are there. A team struggling so much should not be equalising so quickly.

I'm stood on the Kop, wincing at the raucous strains of "we're gonna win the league" all around me. I don't know why; it was sung a lot in my



Terrace Talk

Steven Kelly

youth. There were mitigating factors for that, obviously... It was funny to hear them change tune (almost literally) to "champions of the world" immediately after the Hammers' equaliser, as though this amorphous blob of fan suddenly realised it had rattled Fortuna's cage and needed to backtrack pronto. She's been around a lot longer than us. You should never take the piss.

All was well eventually, which I'm saying after every win now. Performance and style have been abandoned in the tawdry haste to get things

done, presumably before water levels sweep everything away or the virus takes us.

It's weird the number of people who would rather die than see Liverpool win the league. Banter? Hmmm, if you say so.

We've already had 'poor league' thrown at us, even in a week when relegation candidates gave us three of our hardest games all season.

Even English teams' first-leg droop in the Champions League was used snarkily, before City themselves poured cold water over that nonsense. Ah, Senor Ramos; cold revenge does indeed taste sweeter.

If the nation does grind to a halt and curtail all football activity, I'd hazard a guess that pleasure/displeasure

with Liverpool's non-title may be swiftly demoted to the bottom of the problem pile.

It's already beginning to happen in Italy, so don't mock.

It all made events in Watford somewhat irrelevant. When not one player shows up, just take your medicine and hope to move on.

It's tempting to single out Lovren, since he's the hardened criminal always lurking at the scene. This time, I'll be charitable and say it was a complete coincidence, scout's honour, guv.

Van Dijk was in suicidal autopilot mode and Trent's inability to defend can't be camouflaged by crosses forever. Even Moyes sussed it out, although afterwards there was only fulsome praise because of involvement in

two of our goals. He was already getting a lesson from Deulofeu before his awful injury (he may be ex-Everton, but I'm not a savage).

What's rotten is that just like at Norwich they were warned in the first half but this time there would be no knuckling down, just buckling under.

Is complacency understandable? Is the gap so big no-one need be too concerned yet? Yes, he said twice through gritted teeth.

Some of us have the kind of personality that sees no beauty anywhere, just dirt and derangement. I freely admit there's a roleplay element to that, but even the cockier fans must be slightly concerned.

Embrace the dark side (cackles maniacally).

Liverpool's 'wake-up call'



Premier League

Watford..... 3

Sarr 54, 60, Deeney 72

Liverpool..... 0

Nick Callow

Vicarage Road



There was almost a sense of relief in defeat in the Liverpool camp.

The pressure to win every match, break records and emulate Arsenal's Invincibles had been taking a toll. Now Jurgen Klopp says he can reboot, reset and, to quote the irritating rallying call he favours: 'Go again!'

And in tomorrow night's FA Cup tie at Chelsea, the Liverpool manager has the perfect way to test how his players will respond to their first Premier League defeat of the season.

The reaction at Watford was nothing if not dignified and all the indications, speaking to those involved, are that Chelsea could be on the receiving end as Liverpool bid to prove they are still the best side in England.

They are, after all, still 22 points clear and only four wins away from being crowned Premier League champions.

Klopp agreed "a kick up the backside" could be positive in his quest to add domestic and European cup successes to their first Premier League title in 30 years and said:

"It is not as if none of us has just lost for the first time in our lives. We know how it feels.

"Still you don't want to have



WAT A MOMENT: Ismaila Sarr races away in delight after scoring Watford's second goal against Liverpool during the Premier League clash at Vicarage Road on Saturday. Sarr had earlier scored the opening goal for the Hornets.

Picture: Richard Heathcote/Getty Images

it. The reaction is what you can hope for. We shall see in the next games.

"Nothing has changed. But of course sometimes a little knock is important.

"So I don't see anything negative in it. From time to time if you are not good enough you need to see affect. What happens then? You rest-art.

"Maybe the longer the run goes maybe it becomes more important. But I didn't see that. Now it is over. We can start again with whatever we did before. And we will.

"We cannot say now we will

react in this way or that. We have to show it in the next games."

This was not Liverpool at their best for, if anything, they played with the arrogance of a side that expected to win and for relegation threatened Watford to roll over.

Nigel Pearson's side, winless in their previous five matches, did nothing of the sort and three second-half goals were the least they deserved with goalscorers Ismaila Sarr and captain Troy Deeney too hot to handle.

Central defenders Virgil van Dijk and Dejan Lovren

looked particularly unsettled by their pace and power. Lovren, who made his first Premier League start since December 7 for the injured Joe Gomez, was man enough to admit "This is a wake-up call. The last couple of games haven't been the best performances but we won.

"This one, it didn't happen. This one was like someone hit us in our faces — and we deserved it."

The Croatian international agreed Liverpool have lacked their customary edge since the recent winter break and added: "I think the manager

knows we are missing something.

"I think it is about the aggression when we lose the ball and recovering the ball as quickly as possible.

"We deserved to lose. Maybe it is a wake-up call for us."

Lovren's own performance could mean a return for Joe Gomez at Stamford Bridge, but none of that will interest Watford fans, who have unearthed a genuine new star in Sarr.

The Senegalese striker could have been on the scoresheet before his two well-taken second half goals, which were

Did you know?

Liverpool's defeat was the heaviest suffered by a team top of the top-flight table against an opponent in the relegation zone since Leicester beat Manchester United 3-0 on November 23 1985.

followed up by a popular finish from captain Deeney.

Sarr's only disappointment was that he was withdrawn before he could complete the hat-trick he craved.

French team-mate Abdoulaye Doucoure described Sarr as a shy, private young man compared to his confident on pitch persona and Deeney said he will ensure his fellow forward does not get carried away by this success.

"He was good today and you can't replicate that pace and power. He cost £40m for a reason. He's a really good player, he's got a lot to learn and still got room to grow. This is what Watford do. We buy players of potential.

"We did it with Richarlison and people of that ilk.

"Hopefully he continues to learn and get better, but it's his first season in English football and he's taken to it like a duck to water.

"But we don't get an extra point for beating Liverpool or get out of the bottom three. There's ten games and we've got to graft away.

"I won't look at this game in two month's time if we're relegated and go 'oh, remember that game against Liverpool!'

WATFORD: Foster 7, Femenia 7, Kabasele 7, Cathcart 7, Masina 7, Hughes 7, Capoue 7, Sarr 9 (Pusset 82), Doucoure 8 (Chalobah 89), Deulofeu 7 (Pereyra 37), Deeney 8.

LIVERPOOL: Allison 6, Alexander-Arnold 6, Lovren 4, Van Dijk 5, Robertson 6, Oxlade-Chamberlain 5 (Origi 65), Fabinho 5, Wijnaldum 5 (Lallana 61), Salah 5, Firmino 5 (Minamino 79), Mane 6.

Referee: Michael Oliver.

22 SOCCER

Liverpool didn't need a break from winning

Daniel Storey

Weekend review



Did winter break put Liverpool off their stride?

Only the sharp contrast with Liverpool's typical brilliance this season makes Saturday's defeat a shock.

We have grown accustomed to Jurgen Klopp's team finding a way — any way — to pull themselves over the line. To lose their first league match on the final day of February is an astonishing achievement. They are also a better team (at least in the context of their dominance) than Arsenal in 2003/04. They are still likely to coast past 100 league points this season, breaking a record set by Manchester City that we assumed would never be surpassed.

A defeat or two will not take the gloss off their majesty. And yet shock loss at Vicarage Road should cause some disappointment.

There is something truly historic about going an entire league season unbeaten, and Liverpool persuaded us that they could match the record of Arsenal's Invincibles.

To pass up that opportunity in such a limp manner will irk Klopp and his players. They

were outplayed by Watford, managing just a single shot on target.

The interesting question is whether the winter break put Liverpool off their stride. Common wisdom suggests that accumulated fatigue acts as a handbrake on a high-performing team, but under Klopp, Liverpool seem happier when playing regularly.

It is as if the team spirit and confidence that comes from winning overshadows any concerns about fatigue. As so many former players say, you just don't feel tired when you're in form.

Solskjaer praise will not deflect De Gea criticism

Man United's 1-1 draw at Goodison can be distilled as the travails of two goalkeepers. England manager Gareth Southgate was present to check up on Jordan Pickford. His current No 1 should have done far better with Bruno Fernandes' equaliser.

At the other end, David de Gea has his own problems. He dallied on the ball and then aimed his clearance straight at Dominic Calvert-Lewin. It was the seventh goal United have conceded as a



result of a De Gea error. No Premier League player has been responsible for more this season.

After the game, Ole Gunnar Solskjaer, predictably, defended his goalkeeper, but his insistence that De Gea is still the best in the world in his position requires quite the suspension of disbelief.

His form has tailed off badly over the last 18 months.

Dean Henderson could be the beneficiary for club and country. His loan deal with Sheffield United ends this summer. If Manchester United need to raise funds to improve their squad

in a number of positions, selling De Gea isn't as unthinkable as it once was.

Leicester in danger of slipping back into the pack Whilst the final table should be the only evidence required to judge the success of a league season, the reality is a little different.

A team that struggles in the autumn before going on a wondrous run to achieve a surprise Champions League place will always be judged differently to one that flies out of the blocks before stuttering and staggering to the same league position.

No Leicester supporter would have been disappointed with finishing sixth at the start of the season. European qualification was a cause for potential celebration in Brendan Rodgers' first season, the first time in four years that the Big Six had been broken up. Leicester are still almost certain to do so with a smaller

wage budget and having spent less money than the financial elite below them.

But Leicester and Rodgers are in a pickle. Defeat at Norwich on Friday night could be explained away by the absence of Youri Tielemans and Jamie Vardy, but this type of lethargic performance is in danger of becoming the new norm. Since beating Aston Villa on December 8, Leicester have taken 12 points from their last 12 league games. They haven't scored for almost 300 minutes.

After that Villa win, Leicester were in second place and 14 points clear of fifth. They may have only dropped to third, but that gap is now down to six points. Rodgers' side must click back into form to avoid being pulled back into the chasing pack.

West Ham push on with their Anfield intent

Against Manchester City last month, David Moyes sacrificed any chance of victory by picking a defensive team and never trying to score, even after City scored.

West Ham might have lost at Anfield last Monday, but they

showed plenty enough attacking intent to convince Moyes that this must be their strategy if they are to get out of trouble.

They are not good enough defensively to sit back and close out matches. Moyes' attacking plan worked against Southampton.

He picked four attacking players and saw three of them (Michail Antonio, Jarrod Bowen, and Sebastien Haller) score, while the other (Pablo Fornals) created two.

West Ham had 33% possession but seven shots on target compared to Southampton's two. Here was proof that ceding the ball does not mean blunting your own attacking ambition.

With home games against Aston Villa, Watford, and Burnley to come before the end of the season, Moyes must now keep the faith. Bowen can get the best out of Haller, Fornals can service both, and Antonio offers a unique directness with the ball at his feet and a desire to run beyond the last man. This has to be the start of a sustainable improvement rather than just another false dawn.

Jurgen Klopp consoles Andy Robertson after Liverpool's defeat to Watford in the Premier League on Saturday. After winning all but one of their league matches this season, the Anfield club managed just a single shot on target against the relegation strugglers.

Picture: Justin Tallis

Manchester United's David de Gea reacts after his mistake against Everton at Goodison yesterday.

Picture: Paul Ellis

CHANCING HIS ARM

Steve McManaman: "It won't go down as a chance, but what an opportunity."

SCREENWRITER'S GUILD AWARD

For a good while now, the behind-the-scenes geniuses at Virgin Media Sport have elevated the neglected art of TV caption-writing to something of an art form. But there have been few better examples of the trade than last Tuesday's effort while Brian Kerr was holding court on stylish Lyon midfielder Houssem Aouar: "Go on Aouar that."

FIGHTING TALK



Jane Mangan's fond farewell to Un De Sceaux:

"He went out with his armour on his sleeve."

MAKING A MEAL OF IT

Ray Hudson wasn't impressed with how last night's Clasico started: "Slopier than a soup sandwich." But he was happy enough to tuck into the main course:

"Vinicius onto it like Dracula onto a plate of liver."

Other choice cuts: "Benzema peels away from Umtili like tissue on a toilet roll."

"Little Isco rises like a salmon out of a summer stream."

"... like a kangaroo off a spring-board."

JACK THE LAD

Speaking of his son's grounding in the Gah in *The Athletic*, Jack Greallish's father Kevin broke into an impressive flourish of pure football pluraleese: "It was a summer sport, Gaelic, and he'd play that non-stop. He didn't care about your crickets or rugby's."

FLIGHT MODE

Jeff Stelling's description of the 'derby' between Brighton and Crystal Palace, 41 miles apart: "El Gatwicko..."

NATURE CALLS

Kenny Cunningham adjudicates:

"That kind of natural understanding doesn't develop naturally."

WAYNE'S WORLD

All roads eventually lead back to one place for the *Toronto Star*, even COVID-19: "The Gretzky of viruses..."

MERSE CODE

In case there should be any con-

fusion, Paul Merson described Sébastien Haller's goal against Southampton as:

"A big, big football goal."

THE ONE THAT GOT AWAY

Paul Merson refuses to count Łukasz Fabiański's blunder against Liverpool:

"He could have saved that a hundred out of a hundred times."

HARSH BUT FAIR

Newcomer Neil Warnock got a warm welcome to Soccer Saturday.

Warnock: "I don't understand football anymore..."

Paul Merson: "Yeah, that's why you're sat here."

PAT'S CHAT

Pat Fenlon advised Shamrock Rovers not to panic after Patrick Hoban put Dundalk in front:

"Rovers are still well in the game, they've just got to get back into it..."

RADIO RENTAL

Heard on Talksport this week:

"Three players are about to be inducted into the new Premier League Hall of Fame."

"Dele Alli didn't look happy getting pulled off by Jose Mourinho."

TWEET @dangerhere

Junior proves unlikely Real hero



LaLiga
Real Madrid 2
Junior 71, Diaz 90
Barcelona..... 0

Dermot Corrigan
Santiago Bernabeu

Teenager Vinicius Junior was the unlikely matchwinner, and substitute Mariano Diaz added the clincher, as Real Madrid returned to the top of the LaLiga table with 2-0 Clasico victory over Barcelona at the Estadio Santiago Bernabeu last night.

The decisive moment of a Clasico not at the standard of some recent clashes between the two Primera Division giants came with 20 minutes remaining when Vinicius' cross-shot was diverted past Barca goalkeeper Marc Andre Ter Stegen by the outstretched toe of defender Gerard Pique.

Barca's recent emergency signing Martin Braithwaite — who had almost opened the scoring moments earlier — was caught out as the young Brazilian sprinted into space

down Barca's right hand side, and got the break that his team's greater pressure and intensity in the second half deserved.

The opening stages had been quite cagey — not a huge surprise given former Madrid coach turned Spanish media pundit Jorge Valdano's claim pre-game that the two teams were "hobbling" through this stage of the season.

It then grew quite stretched — with chances at either end. Madrid's Karim Benzema and Toni Kroos shot too high, while Barca's Arthur Melo and Lionel Messi were denied by home goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois, and Antoine Griezmann fired over from near the penalty spot.

The quite exciting end to end nature of the play was most likely against the plans of either Zinedine Zidane and Quique Setien, but neither team were able to exert the control over the play that their coaches desired.

Perhaps due to their greater need for the victory — as pointed out by Setien pre-game — Madrid began to press forward more after the break.

Barca keeper Marc Andre Ter Stegen went full length to finger tip an Isco curler around the post, while Pique cleared off the line after the diminutive Madrid midfielder's header had just beaten the German keeper.



THE CLINCHER: Mariano Diaz scores Real Madrid's second goal past Marc-Andre Ter Stegen despite the challenge of Samuel Umtiti during last night's LaLiga match against Barcelona at Estadio Santiago Bernabeu.

Picture: Gonzalo Arroyo Moreno

Braithwaite almost scored with his first Clasico touch, but he was denied by Courtois. And soon afterwards the Denmark international was in the picture but taken out of the game by the hugely influential Kroos' pass as Vinicius shot found the net for 1-0.

Madrid then got away with it when the home centre-backs allowed all-time Clasico top-scorer Messi acres to gallop into behind, but Marcelo — a surprise choice at left-back by Zidane — just about got back to cover. A frustrated figure in the second half in particular,

Messi's frustration was then shown when he was booked for a hack at Madrid midfielder Casemiro.

The Bernabeu enjoyed that moment a lot, and it did seem that the home players had shown greater intensity and desire when the game was there to be won. Zidane's team knew their whole season was on the line — with their last three home games having been defeats in three different competitions, including Tuesday's 2-1 Champions League reverse against Manchester City.

During the final stages Vinicius was denied again by Ter Stegen, and was roaring the home fans on to make even more noise, and being rewarded with a big cheer. The 19-year-old, signed for €45m in summer 2018, still has a lot to learn, and may or may not go on to achieve galactico status, but this was his night.

A second goal in added time by substitute Mariano, in his first LaLiga minute of the season, made the victory safe.

Madrid moved back on top, with a one point advantage over Barca. This may not be

the highest quality Spanish title race of recent years, but it is now likely to go right down to the wire.

REAL MADRID: Thibaut Courtois 8; Dani Carvajal 7, Raphael Varane 7, Sergio Ramos 6, Marcelo 7; Fede Valverde 7, Casemiro 6, Toni Kroos 9, Isco 7; Karim Benzema 7, Vinicius Junior 8.

Subs: Luka Modric 6, Lucas Vazquez 6, Mariano Diaz 7

BARCELONA: Marc Andre Ter Stegen 8; Ruben Semedo 6, Gerard Pique 7, Samuel Umtiti 6, Jordi Alba 6; Arturo Vidal 5, Sergio Busquets 7, Arthur Melo 6, Frenkie De Jong 7; Leo Messi 6, Antoine Griezmann 6.

Subs Martin Braithwaite 5, Ivan Rakitic 6, Ansu Fati 6.

Referee: Antonio Miguel Mateu Lahoz

Lennon delights in Celtic's domestic bliss

Scottish Cup

Ronnie Esplin

Neil Lennon hailed Celtic's "amazing" domestic cup record after yesterday's 1-0 win over St Johnstone set up a William Hill Scottish Cup semi-final against Aberdeen.

The treble treble winners, who have captured the last 10 trophies in Scotland, had to thank attacker Ryan Christie for his whipped-in free-kick in the 81st minute at McDiarmid Park which went past Saints keeper Zander Clark.

It was Celtic's 34th successive victory in domestic cup competitions and they were rewarded with a match against the Dons, with Hearts taking on Edinburgh rivals Hibernian in the other semi-final.

When asked about the relentless mentality of Celtic in cup competitions, Lennon

said: "That's 34 undefeated and that's amazing.

"It can go at any time so they want to keep it running as long as they can and they are coming up against all sorts of opposition and they're dealing with it.

"They've faced some difficult opposition — and today was difficult, mentally and physically after Thursday.

"They have picked themselves up again on a really heavy pitch and came through it unscathed, hopefully."

Lennon was referring to Celtic's Europa League last-32 exit at the hands of FC Copenhagen on Thursday night, with the Hoops going out 4-2 on aggregate after losing 3-1 at Parkhead.

The former Celtic captain praised his side for responding positively to the bitter European blow.

He said: "They are good that

way. They didn't have much time to dwell on it.

"It was only a couple of minutes in the game on Thursday that they let themselves down, a couple of basic mistakes.

"I didn't think we got what we deserved on Thursday, I thought we were the better team.

Rangers, meanwhile, were brought crashing back down from their continental high as Hearts' Oliver Bozanic dumped Steven Gerrard's team out of the Cup.

The Ibrox outfit were hoping Wednesday's stunning Europa League win over Braga would spark a turnaround in domestic fortunes.

But instead they face another trophyless season unless they can battle through from the last 16 in Europe after Bozanic handed Daniel Stendel's Ladbrokes Premier-league basement boys a shock 1-0 win at Tynecastle.

Lethal Leeds close gap on Baggies

Championship

Dylan King

Leeds coped without suspended goalkeeper Kiko Casilla as they won 4-0 at Hull to move within a point of the Sky Bet Championship summit.

The Spaniard had been banned for eight games by an FA disciplinary commission for racially abusing Charlton's Jonathan Leko during a match in September.

Stand-in keeper Ilan Meslier was rarely troubled by Hull and goals from Luke Ayling and Pablo Hernandez plus substitute Tyler Roberts' late brace made it four wins in a row for Leeds.

West Brom remain top of the table despite a frustrating day at The Hawthorns, losing 1-0 at home to relegation-threatened Wigan — Sam Morsy's 73rd-minute goal moving the Latics out of the

bottom three at the expense of Middlesbrough.

Third-placed Fulham kept in touch with a 2-0 home defeat of Preston, with David Nugent's 58th-minute own goal separating the teams until Aboubakar Kamara's strike in added time.

Luton salvaged a 1-1 draw with fellow strugglers Stoke thanks to James Collins' late penalty, after Sam Vokes had given the visitors the lead after nine minutes.

Blackburn also earned a home point with a goal in added time, courtesy of Bradley Johnson.

Sam Gallagher gave Rovers a 25th-minute advantage at Ewood Park, but opponents Swansea hit back with goals from on-loan Liverpool striker Rhian Brewster on 45 minutes and Andre Ayew's penalty in the 48th minute.

Freddie Woodman denied former Swans frontman

Danny Graham from the penalty spot, before Johnson's late intervention meant it finished 2-2.

Barnsley are above the bottom-placed Hatters on goal difference after a 2-0 defeat at Reading, who moved eight points clear of the relegation zone after goals from Yakou Meite and George Puscas.

Huddersfield improved their survival hopes with a stylish 4-0 defeat of Charlton. Karlann Grant scored twice against his former club, with Steve Mounie and Juninho Bacuna getting the others.

Scott Hogan scored twice to earn Birmingham a 2-2 draw at QPR. The on-loan Aston Villa striker gave the visitors the lead in the 24th minute at Loftus Road and earned them a point nine minutes from time after goals from Marc Pugh and Jordan Hugill had turned things around in the home side's favour.

Speedster Neville in record equalling 60m form

Cathal Dennehy

The winning and losing of any 60-metre race is typically in the start, and when Ciara Neville got a flying one in yesterday's national final the game was virtually up for her rivals. The Limerick sprinter powered to victory in 7.30 seconds, equalling her Irish U-23 record.

She was followed home by Joan Healy, who clocked 7.33 to edge younger sister Phil (7.36) for silver. "I'm happy out," said Neville. "I've been working really hard on the

start and there's more work to be done, but I was happy with how I executed my race."

Andrew Coscoran produced a standout to win the men's 1500m in a championship record of 3:41.36.

With bonus points on offer for a national title, the race represented a key opportunity for the 23-year-old to boost his world ranking and Olympic qualification chances, so his training partner Daire Finn agreed to take the pace out hard. Raheny's Brian Fay took over at halfway but the 20-year-old had no answer to

Coscoran's pace over the final lap, with Fay taking silver.

"We were looking to go in as a team," said Coscoran. "To work together and try to run fast and break the championship record, which we did." Mark English bounced back to form with an impressive victory in the men's 800m, the UCD athlete taking gold in 1:49.09 ahead of Zak Curran. Nadia Power was equally dominant in the women's 800m, winning in 2:06.26.

Sarah Quinn and Gerard O'Donnell took the 60m hurdles titles in 8.32 and 7.95

respectively, while John Travers was an impressive winner of the men's 3000m in 8:00.96.

Cathal Crosbie of Ennis Track edged a thrilling battle in the men's 400m, holding off Andrew Mellon and Brian Gregan to hit the line in 47.93. Sophie Becker held off a late surge from Shariene Mawdsley to win the women's 400m in 53.75. Leevale's Louise Shanahan unleashed an impressive kick to beat Rio Olympian Ciara Everard in a tactical women's 1500m in 4:40.45.

In the field events Sarah

Buggy was a standout performer with double gold in the long jump (6.05m) and triple jump (12.80m). David Cussen took the men's long jump with 7.33m while Keith Marks took high jump gold with a best of 2.08m. John Kelly beat his brother James to win the men's shot put with 18.35m.

On Saturday, Phil Healy smashed the championship record to win the women's 200m, the 25-year Bandon AC athlete clocking 23.16 seconds. "To run just shy of the national record (23.10) again is super," said Healy.

Raheny's Mark Smyth produced a superb performance to win the men's 200m, clocking 21.04 to come home a wide-margin winner over Donore's Paul McDermott (21.73).

David Kenny produced a lifetime best to take gold in the men's 5000m race walk in 19:45.97, with Brendan Boyce runner-up in 20:07.52. Last year's champion Alex Wright was disqualified. Kate Veale retained her title in fine style in the women's 3000m race walk, the West Waterford athlete coasting to victory in 14:47.05.

Emotional Adams powers to sprint win

Cathal Dennehy

Abbotstown



AMID a tidal wave of emotion, Dean Adams tried to remain an oasis of calm. Shortly before the men's 60m final at yesterday's national indoor championships in Abbotstown, the 29-year-old Antrim sprinter stood behind his blocks during a tribute to Craig Lynch, a former rival and friend of his who died in a car accident last September.

Lynch and Adams went way back. The first time Adams won a national medal in his teens, taking silver in a sprint event in Nenagh, it was Lynch who won gold. In 2016, Adams had returned from injury to make the national senior 60m final, where he finished sixth in 6.93 seconds. The first man over to him after that race was Lynch, who told him how glad he was to see him back.

That had been Lynch's finest hour, the Shercock sprinter taking gold in 6.81. When he passed away last September, it rocked Adams to the core. Before yesterday's final, the 29-year-old wrote "Lynch #justtrace" on the inside of his bib.

Over the years Adams was often one to get overcome by nerves before races, and that was something Lynch often said to stop him over-thinking: "Just race."

"That was tough to write because you want to win the race then," said Adams. He did exactly that, power-

ing out of the blocks and leaving his rivals trailing as he claimed gold in 6.74 — nine years after his last national senior title. It was a goal that had been on his mind for months, especially after another tragic turn of events in January when one of Adams' closest friends, Yul McAteer, died suddenly.

The last time they spoke was on Christmas Eve when they outlined their respective plans for the year. Adams told McAteer that night that his big goal for 2020 was to win the national 60m title, after which he planned to retire from the sport.

McAteer's funeral was held the same weekend as the Scottish Indoor Championships in late January, a race Adams had long picked out to sharpen his form ahead of the Irish Championships. He decided the best way to honour his friend was to stick to that original plan they discussed and race in Glasgow, where he clocked a lifetime best of 6.81.

Three weeks later he lowered his PB to 6.73 in Athlone, which made Adams the hot favourite for gold yesterday. As hard as it was to hold it together for the race in Scotland, yesterday was even worse, with a round-of-applause for Lynch taking place moments before the race.

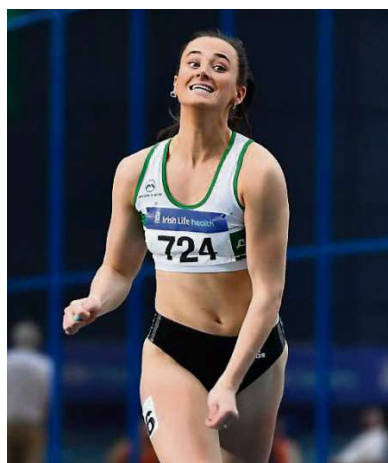
"I just wasn't ready for it," said Adams. "I didn't think anything would be as tough as (the race in Scotland) but today was very tough."

Adams held up his bib after the race and soon burst into tears. On the podium, he was presented with the Craig Lynch Cup by Lynch's fiancée, Amy, and his mother, Ann.

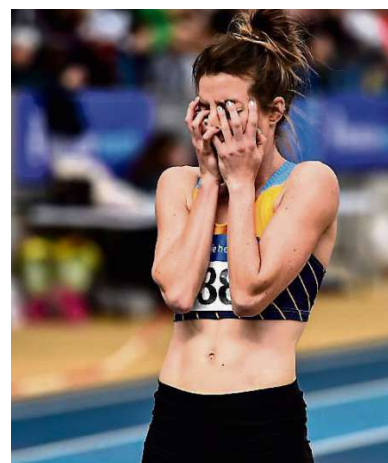
His coach has been telling him in recent weeks to reconsider his decision to retire-



An emotional Dean Adams of Ballymena and Antrim AC is presented with the Craig Lynch cup by Craig's mother Anne Lynch, left, and fiancée Amy Cotter, after winning the Senior Men's 60m at the Irish Life Health National Senior Indoor Athletics Championships at the National Indoor Arena. Pictures: Sam Barnes/Sportsfile



Ciara Neville, Emerald AC, Limerick, dips for the line to win the Senior Women's 60m.



Ciara Everard, UCD AC, reacts after finishing second in the Senior Women's 1,500m.

ment, and Adams figures he now owes it to himself to see what he can do over 100m.

"I wanted to go out on a high but he said I'd regret not doing the 100. Maybe I'll do four or five outdoor races and there'll be no pressure."

In yesterday's semi-final he cruised to the line and was shocked to see his winning time of 6.78: "I was like, what is going on here?"

The key this season has

been improved strength in his posterior chain, which has allowed Adams to build on his bullet start and put a more complete race together.

A native of Ballyclare in Antrim, he works a full-time athletics development officer with Ulster University, which doesn't leave him as much time to train as much as he'd like.

Having been injury-prone in the past, he operates with

caution on a three-day cycle: track, gym, rest and repeat. "I'm trusting the body a lot more now," he said.

If indeed this was his final indoor season, it's one Adams can sign off on with great pride. Coping with an unfathomable level of emotion yet still producing his best when it mattered most — an achievement that would have made his two late friends extremely proud.

Healy sets new world record for over-50

Cathal Dennehy

At the age of 51, it was a simply astonishing achievement. Then again, Shane Healy is not your typical 51-year-old.

The Olympian rolled back the years yesterday to finish eighth in the national indoor 1500m final in 4:01.76, an over-50s indoor world record.

That broke the previous mark he set to reach the final in Saturday's heats — but for Healy, the biggest achievement was not the world record, but rather being able to still mix it with Ireland's best.

"I was delighted to make the final of a senior 1500 because I don't think it'll be done again by another 51-year-old," he said.

Healy, who reached the 1500m semi-final at the 1996 Atlanta Olympics, was inspired to launch his comeback while watching the 2016 Olympics on TV. At the time, he was two stone overweight.

"I was a bit depressed, not happy with my wellbeing. I set myself a goal that when I turn 50 I'm going to break the world record, and here I am."

There are few harder workers in Irish sport, Healy typically covering 80 to 90 miles a week in training.

"It's not easy, it's tough, but I just get on with it. The key to it is being consistent with my team-mates from the Dublin Track Club and without them slapping me around in practice, I wouldn't be able to do it. They're a great bunch of guys and they've one purpose — to run fast."

Healy was one second shy of the outdoor over-50s world record last year, running 3:59 for 1500m. His aim this summer is to run 3:54 for 1500m and a 4:10 mile. He says more people should compete, and not just participate, in middle-age. "It's a way out of being depressed," he said. "To get into sport is fantastic."



Shane Healy in the 1500m.

26 RUGBY

Coombes accelerates Munster's West Cork rally



Guinness PRO14

Munster29
Scarlets10

Charlie Mulqueen

Thomond Park

There's no keeping West Cork rugby players out of the news these days. When Southern Kings took a drubbing from Munster at Musgrave Park, debutant flanker John Hodnett, 22, highlighted a superb man of the match performance with a spectacular try.

A week later, Darren Sweetnam, the West Corkman who started it all, returned from injury to score one of the four bonus-winning tries in the defeat of Zebre in Milan. And on Saturday at Thomond Park, another 22-year-old back-rower Gavin Coombes came late to the visit of Scarlets and used his strength and skill to produce two tries in the last five minutes to eke out another bonus victory despite the best efforts of Storm Jorge.

It doesn't end there. Another 22-year-old, Fínean Wycherley, has been helping to maintain the highest standards in Munster's second-row in the long term absence of Tadhg Beirne and Jean Kleyn.

"I am very pleased with our young players coming through as I am with the whole group over the past few weeks," enthused head coach Johann van Graan.

"We've got some very good young back-rowers, Coombes, Jack O'Donoghue, John Hodnett, Jack O'Sullivan.



Munster's Arno Botha is tackled by Scarlets' Angus O'Brien during the Guinness PRO14 clash at Thomond Park.

Picture: Diarmuid Greene

Gtting game time for those guys is important. I said to Coombes at the start of this block, I'm going to play you at lock even though you're a loose forward, you're going to fulfil that role, and he did so really well. An excellent performance."

Munster now have at least a week's 'holiday' and indeed maybe longer as we await the implications of the coronavirus.

It has already been decided that any postponed PRO14 game will be declared a nil-all draw and Munster's next two

are against Italian side Benetton Treviso (away on March 21st and at Musgrave Park on March 27th). Right now it is difficult to see either going ahead which could leave Munster with a mere four points instead of the ten they could reasonably expect from those fixtures.

Van Graan is remaining philosophical: "They will go on holiday and once they're back, we'll just go with what PRO14 and Ireland decide."

"It's not frustrating at all, it's just the way life works and I guess at this stage life is

more important than rugby."

For now, the South African has good reason to be delighted with a maximum return of 15 points from the side's last three outings and for the way they coped with what many would have considered unplayable conditions at Thomond Park on Saturday, the five-pointer moving Munster to within two points of Conference B leaders Edinburgh.

Scorer for Munster: Tries J O'Sullivan, B Holland, G Coombes (2); JJ Hanrahan one penalty, 3 cons.

Scorers for Scarlets Try, J Sebastian; pen, con A O'Brien.

MUNSTER: M Haley; C Nash, C Farrell, D Goggins, D Sweetnam; JJ Hanrahan, C Casey; J Cronin K O'Byrne, S Archer, F Wycherley, B Holland capt, A Botha, C Cloete, J O'Sullivan.

Replacements: J Loughman and J Ryan for Cronin and Archer 57; J Hodnett for Cloete 60; T O'Donnell for O'Sullivan 66; R Scannell for Goggins 69; G Coombes for Wycherley 68; N McCarthy for Casey 74; D Barron for O'Byrne 74;

SCARLETS: A O'Brien; C Baldwin, P Asquith, S Hughes capt, S Evans; D Jones, J Evans; P Price, T Davies, W Kruger, L Rawlins, S Lousi, A Shingler, J Macleod, U Casseim.

Replacements: I Phillips, Dylan Evans, J Sebastian, T Ratuva, S Cummins, D Davis, D Blacker, R Conbeer.

Referee: Mike Adamson (Scotland).

Con close on semis after whitewash

Energia All-Ireland League

Dave Mervyn

Winger JJ O'Neill touched down twice as Cork Constitution whitewashed Dublin University 27-0 at College Park in the Energia All-Ireland League clash at Belfield. The bonus point success has the unbeaten Division 1A leaders within touching distance of a home semi-final, lying a full 17 points clear of third-placed UCD.

The students edged out Clontarf 22-19 in a gripper, with Ronan Foley's sixth try of the season decisive.

Leinster 'A' back rower Foley squeezed in under a couple of defenders to score a decisive 70th-minute try in a game that doubled up as the Leinster Senior Cup final. The students are provincial champions for the first time since 2016.

UCD, who had early tries from Alex Penny and David Ryan, have closed the gap on second-placed Garryowen to five points. A Michael Courtney brace and prop Ivan Soroka's 47th-minute effort was not enough for Clontarf who now lie seven points outside of the top four.

A Cian Bohane-inspired UCC side fell just short in a 14-12 home defeat to Terenure College. Tries in either half from Niall O'Sullivan and Caolan Dooley saw 'Nure end a run of four successive bonus point losses.

Leinster Academy hooker Dan Sheehan grabbed his fourth try in seven games in Lansdowne's late 12-6 victory over Ballynahinch, with the headquarters club holding onto fourth place - just a point ahead of Young Munster with four rounds remaining.

Meanwhile, Shannon's promotion push in Division 1B took a hit with an 18-0 loss at City of Armagh. The Ulstermen struck with captain Robert Whitten's charge-down try before a 73rd-minute clincher from Neil Faloona.

Friend proud as 14-man Connacht overthrow Kings

Guinness PRO14

Southern Kings19
Connacht29

Andre Jacobs

Connacht's scrum ground out the bonus-point penalty try as Andy Friend's 14 men worked hard for victory over Southern Kings.

Early tries from Colby Fiananga and Tiernan O'Halloran had Connacht in total control before Peter Robb was sent off after 16 minutes. But Jack Carty scored their third try in the second half before the pack forced the five-point haul following a mammoth scrummaging session.

"Yeah that was job done. I'm

really proud of the boys there," said Friend.

"I thought we started the game really well. We got the red card and a yellow card in the heat and all of a sudden the pressure is on us.

"But I thought we dug in really hard and the last 40 minutes of the game, we controlled it and our game management was outstanding. A hard-fought and well-deserved win."

Connacht couldn't have dreamed of a better start when Fiananga picked it off a pass and ran in after 55 seconds to score. They doubled their lead from their next attack when O'Halloran's dummy pass cleared his way to the line.

Shortly after their second

try Connacht lost winger Matt Healy to a shoulder injury, and Robb arrived in the 11th minute. Unfortunately, he only lasted five minutes before he was sent off when his leading arm and caught Howard Minsi in the throat.

Kings began to create scoring chances, and following a quick-tap from Stefan Ungerer, Kyle Godwin failed to retreat and was sin-binned. But from the scrum that followed Kings struck, with Ungerer worming his way over.

Without two of their backs there were plenty of holes in the Connacht defensive line, and three minutes after their first, Kings crossed for their second try when Erick Cronje ran through, but just before

half time Carty kicked a penalty to put his side three clear.

Six minutes after the restart Carty made the most of a poor missed tackle to score in the corner, but Kings weren't finished and a floated pass from Theo Maree sent Cronje over for his second on the hour mark to make it 22-19.

Despite playing with 14 players it was Connacht that bossed the next period of play. After camping out in the Kings' 22, the Connacht scrum earned five consecutive penalties, which eventually saw them earn the penalty try, which clinched the bonus point.

Scorers for Southern Kings: S Ungerer, E Cronje 2 tries; S Masuku 2 cons
Scorers for Connacht: C Fiananga, T

O'Halloran, J Carty, (pen try) tries; J Carty 2 cons, pen

SOUTHERN KINGS: M Banda; C Hollis, S Silihole, H Minsi, E Cronje; S Masuku, S Ungerer; S Ferreira, A van Rooyen, R de Klerk; J Sexton, JC Astle; L Badyana, T Bholi, E Louw.

Replacements: R Stevens for van Rooyen (49), X Vos for Ferreira (49), T Maree for Ungerer (50), P Scholtz for de Klerk (53), B de Wee for Sexton (53), R Lerm for Bholi (53), T Botes for Masuku (60), J Twum-Boafo for Hollis (71).

CONNACHT: T O'Halloran; J Porch, K Godwin, T Daly, M Healy; J Carty, C Blade; P McAllister, S Delahunt, D Robertson-McCoy; U Dillane, J Maksymiw; P Boyle, C Fainga'a, J Butler.

Replacements: P Robb for Healy (11), D Hefferman for Delahunt (33), C Kenny for Robertson-McCoy (33), D Buckley for McAllister (h-y), E McKeon for Boyle (56), K Marmion for Blade (56), E Masterson for Maksymiw (70), C Fitzgerald for Marmion (78).

Referee: Cwengile Jabezweni (South Africa).



Connacht Dave Hefferman on the charge in Port Elizabeth.

Picture: Richard Huggard/Inpho

O'Mahony: You feel that you've let people down

Brendan O'Brien



THERE'S few more frustrating experiences along life's flight path than a holding pattern.

All Andy Farrell and his squad of players and back-room staff can do for now is sit back, train and await news on when, or even if, their Six Nations campaign can continue on its journey. Peter O'Mahony doesn't pretend it's perfect but he isn't grumbling about the delay.

"It's not something we have a huge amount of control over, unfortunately. Look, it's frustrating. Obviously we want to play. You battle through it. There's lots of stuff we have to worry about and that's not one of them. I try not to let it bother me. Know what I mean?"

It's a smart approach given the ongoing doubt spawned by the coronavirus which has already caused the postponement of Ireland's home game with Italy this Saturday and could yet result in further rearrangements, or even cancellations, including the side's game against France in Paris.

The French government have ordered the cancellation of enclosed gatherings of more than 5,000 people until further notice.

For O'Mahony and his Ireland teammates, the loss of next weekend's fourth round tie against the Azzurri has already robbed them of the opportunity to wash that Twickenham loss out of their hair and move on to Paris in two weekends' time with equilibrium restored.

Placing the Italian game in cold storage has created a vacuum that can't be filled fully by updates on the spread or otherwise of COVID-19 and the result, in rugby terms, has been an even longer period than normal for us all to dwell on that convincing defeat to England.



REASON TO SMILE: Peter O'Mahony takes a selfie with a young supporter following an Ireland Rugby open training session at Energia Park, Donnybrook. The Ireland squad must play a waiting game because of the loss of the Italy clash. Picture: Ramsey Cardy

The criticism has been considerable this last week and more and it hasn't emanate from all corners. Social media was a vast reservoir of opinions, some of them measured and others unforgivably personal and insulting. Such is the way of things online.

Journalists and former players have had their say too. Jonathan Sexton responded to all this late last week with his observation that a conductor needs to turn his back to the

audience and O'Mahony has been firm in his determination to avoid the takes of men he once played with.

"Probably the main reason I don't engage with it is because I like to keep friendships with guys. I know they need to do their thing so I genuinely don't engage with it. We are by far our sternest critics and I don't need another group outside that to listen to as well.

"We'll go through it with a fine toothcomb and be the most serious critics of ourselves, as a group, as a pack, as a back line," he explained. "There is no-one harder on us than ourselves. Outside of that it doesn't really bother me." That's not completely true.

No man is an island and no player exists in isolation out-

side of camp. O'Mahony is one of those in Andy Farrell's squad who has a young family behind him and those without children have plenty of loved ones of their own whose love and respect they crave.

Lose in the manner Ireland did in Twickenham, and on more than one occasion across such a disappointing 2019, and it becomes all but impossible to quarantine the hurt and the disappointment inside the dressing-room or team HQ.

"Sure you feel that you've let people down. You feel that you've let the boys down, family, which is the hardest part. It's another reason why I don't draw the rest of [the criticism] on me because we have enough to worry about in regards to them: what the lads

think and what your family think. They're tough days," he admitted. "They're tough days until you get back together, which is the safe place. And it's great to have your family and you go home to them and, as I said, they always think that you're great.

"But when you're in the Six Nations you're kind of longing to get back into the group and get it sorted, get the reviews done and turn a page because, listen, it's a good group to be around and you long to get back together and get it sorted together."

■ Dove Men+Care brand ambassador Peter O'Mahony was speaking in the Aviva stadium, celebrating a new definition of strength; one with care at its centre

Free-to-air UK stations could lose Six Nations

Cian Locke

The Six Nations could be removed from free-to-air television in the UK, according to reports.

Sky are now favourites to land the biggest contract in rugby history, according to a report in *The Rugby Paper*. BBC and ITV outbid Sky when the rights were last awarded, but joint bids are no longer allowed, putting Sky in pole position to take the games off British terrestrial TV.

"By ruling out any joint bids, it's almost as if the Six Nations are clearing the way for Sky," the paper quotes an industry source as saying.

"There is a very real danger that they will be prepared to sacrifice the big audiences on BBC and ITV for more money.

"Cricket did that and the popularity of the sport was hit as a consequence. If rugby chooses not to learn from that mistake, then they will be at risk of the same consequence from the same lack of exposure."

One Welsh rugby insider describing the situation as being "a sad day" for the sport in Wales.

Wales Online report: "It would be potentially a sad day for the sport in Wales were coverage of matches to be taken off terrestrial TV.

"Yes, sport is business nowadays and money is hugely important, but so are TV audiences.

"There are many people in Wales who cannot afford satellite television, including people who are older and might not have the incomes of those in work.

"Also, not everyone wants to, or can, watch a game in a pub.

"International rugby is hugely popular in Wales, but if this goes ahead a lot of people will miss out.

"I'd argue all those factors need to be taken into consideration.

"In a perfect world, a balance would be struck."

Russell set for July return after Townsend talks

Cian Locke

Finn Russell could return for Scotland's July tour after holding talks with head coach Gregor Townsend.

Russell has missed the Scots' first three Six Nations fixtures after a breach of team discipline.

But reports on BBC Scotland suggest Russell will call into Scotland's coaches meeting ahead of the clash with France to share insights into his Racing 92 teammates.

The BBC report says: "Despite relations appearing strained, the player and coach have since spoken positively, and Russell is expected to be available for the July fixtures against world champions

South Africa and New Zealand, where he could win his 50th cap."

Townsend has added Edinburgh lock Lewis Carmichael to his squad in place of Worcester Warriors back-row Cornell du Preez, while wing Darcy Graham's knee injury will keep him sidelined for the remaining championship games.

Elsewhere, London Irish director of rugby Declan Kidney accepted his side's winning run in the Gallagher Premiership deserved to come to an abrupt end as Wasps won 36-26 at the Madejski Stadium.

A run of three victories was their best effort since 2011 and they looked set for a fourth when they deservedly led 14-3

but Wasps stepped up their game to ultimately run out convincing winners.

Wasps' tries came from Biyi Alo, Ben Harris, Marcus Watson, Dan Robson and Jacob Umaga with Jimmy Gopperth adding four conversions and a penalty.

The Exiles responded with tries from Ben Meehan, Ben Loader, Matt Rogerson and Motu Matu'u with Stephen Myler converting three.

Kidney said: "Wasps were good value for their win and they gave us a lesson at the breakdown.

"We weren't ourselves and weren't on the money as much as we have been in recent weeks.

"They showed us what

areas of our game we need to work on, which we will address in due course."

Bristol moved third in the Gallagher Premiership after beating Bath 19-13 and claiming a first league win at the Recreation Ground for 14 years.

Tries by flanker Chris Vui, wing Alapati Leiua and substitute scrum-half Harry Randall shaded a tight and tense west country derby in Bristol's favour.

Fly-half Callum Sheedy kicked two conversions and, although Bath replacement Will Chudley touched down in the second period, it was a case of too little too late.

Rhys Priestland slotted two penalties and a conversion,

yet it was Bristol's day as they climbed to just a point behind second-placed Sale Sharks.

It was Bath's first Premiership home defeat for a year, but Bristol's fourth league win on the bounce underlined serious title play-off ambitions this season.

Meanwhile, in Rugby League, Catalans boss Steve McNamara hailed Israel Folau's contribution after he helped the French team to a last-gasp 34-29 victory at Hull.

The 30-year-old Australian was the centre of attention in what was his first Super League appearance in England since signing a 12-month contract with Catalans.

He struggled to make an impact as Hull ran in 24 un-

answered points either side of the break.

Catalans responded with three quickfire second-half tries to level the scores but the hosts thought Marc Sneyd won it with a drop-goal three minutes from time.

However, Folau produced a superb catch to regain possession from a short Catalans kick-off, which resulted in James Maloney crashing over for the match-winning score to the delight of boss McNamara.

"To come up with the short kick off and for Izzy to go up there and take it one-handed and it gives us a chance to win it, we are obviously happy with the end result," McNamara said.

28 GENERAL

Dominant DCU Mercy crowned champions

Basketball

John Coughlan

DCU Mercy were crowned Women's Super League champions courtesy of an impressive 81-58 win over nearest rivals Maree at the DCU Complex.

In a game in which the sides shared 62 first half points DCU, behind a 32-point contribution from American Meredith Burkhall and Sarah Woods (21) eased past their Galway opponents in the second half to win the championship in style.

For coach Mark Ingle it was a day to relish as he reflected on his team's performance.

"We didn't have a great campaign last season but we regrouped as a team and the attitude all season has been outstanding.

"We lost a cup semi-final in Cork to Brunell and questions were asked about our pedigree but I think we have answered them all in recent weeks and I am very proud of the entire squad."

Ambassador UCC Glanmire gained revenge for their cup semi final defeat to champions Pyrobel Killester with a 96-83 overtime win at Clontarf. The sides were deadlocked at 75 points each at full time when Killester's Ella McCloskey tied the game but the outstanding Shrita Parker (31) helped Glanmire in extra time to gain the all-important win.

There was a shock in the Cork derby when Singleton's Supervalu Brunell edged out Fr Mathew's 72-71. It was another disappointing loss for the new Fr Mathew's head coach Niamh Dwyer who suffered her fourth consecutive defeat in the role since taking over from James Fleming.

WIT Wildcats travelled to basement side Marble City Hawks and came away with a comfortable 80-54 win. Liffey Celtics were tested on their home court by IT Carlow before running out 84-66 winners.

In the Men's Super League Coughlan C&S Neptune suffered another defeat, this time going down at home to a resurgent DCU Saints. Neptune were quickest from the blocks



The DCU Mercy squad celebrate after victory over Maree at the DCU Complex secured the Women's Super League.

Pictures courtesy of Basketball Ireland Twitter page

and surged into an 11-point lead just two minutes into the game.

That's as good as it got for them as the Saints gradually began taking control and edged into a 45-40 interval lead.

The Cork side lacked desire and intensity in the second half and with former American Michael Bonaparte finishing with a game high 24 points the Saints were full value for their 86-77 win.

After the game the dejected Neptune player coach Lehmon Colbert admitted: "Saints had players that put up big numbers as our defence lacked aggression and the end result is always inevitable when you play as badly in defence as we did in this game." Garvey's Tralee Warriors had to wait almost 24 hours to play their rescheduled home game

against Maree in Castleisland last night, but the venue made little difference as they ran out 100-84 winners.

Nearest challengers Belfast Star put in another huge shift at Abbey Seals Dublin Lions when demolishing the basement side 102-61. The game was settled in the first half when Star surged into a 21-point lead but coach Adrian Fulton is simply taking it one game at a time.

"We are not even thinking about what's going on with other teams as we are in second place and now we must prepare for a home clash against Neptune."

DBS Eanna are also pushing hard for the Champions Trophy play offs and they produced another solid performance when disposing of UCD Marian 90-76.

In a competitive game

Eanna led 49-36 at the break and with Stefan Zecevic (34) showing a resemblance of his early season form his side were full value for their win much to the delight of coach Darren McGovern.

"We have been a little bit inconsistent since our cup final loss but the lads haven't stopped working hard and I think they were rewarded with a win against a very good side," McGovern said.

Pyrobel Killester are also finishing the season in style and a 30-point contribution from American Kason Harrell paved the way for their 83-70 win over Keane's Supervalu Killorglin.

Moycullen's recent winning run came to an end at Griffith College Templeogue when losing 90-80 with Lorcan Murphy leading their scoring with a 29-point tally.

Jorge wreaks havoc on Hockey League

Hockey

Stephen Findlater

Hockey Ireland's "Bad Weather Protocols" came under the microscope over the weekend after the EY Hockey League was subject to two postponements and two abandonments with Storm Jorge hitting hard.

Munster Hockey made the decision on Friday evening to order a blanket cancellation of all local league action under their own protocols in the face of orange weather warnings.

That meant the men's Munster Senior Cup semis and a crucial women's Division One tie between UCC and Cork C of I will have to find a new date.

Cork Harlequins' trip to Old Alex was called off early on due to the anticipated conditions as was Pegasus' date with Pembroke in the women's league with dangerous return travel the main concern.

UCD's derby with Muckross got the go-ahead but the wind soon reared up and blew the goals off their positions and the game was duly cancelled.

It left just two completed games with Catholic Institute continuing their excellent run of form in February as they drew with league leaders Loreto.

Roisin Upton, as so always, was the inspiration with a virtuoso sweeper performance in addition to scoring the opening goal in the sixth minute. Hayley Mulcahy did equalise with a flashy reverse in the third quarter but Insta dug in for an important point.

Belfast Harlequins, meanwhile, got their first win of the season when Alex Kelly struck with the final play for a 4-3 success over Railway Union.

On the men's side, Monkstown and Lisnagarvey followed the protocols correctly and agreed to press on with their 4pm table-topper at Rathdown. They fell foul of the severity of the storm as earlier pitch inspections took place in sunshine and both sides wanted to give the tie a chance to be completed.

They only got as far as half-time when high winds and hailstones saw the game abandoned with Town leading 2-1 before a decision was reluctantly made. It meant the Dubliners missed out on the chance of cutting the gap to two points to Garvey and they were duly joined by Banbridge and Three Rock Rovers on 23 points after they picked up victories.

Bann scored three times in the last nine minutes to defeat YMCA 3-1 while Rovers did the damage early on against Corinthian with Harry Morris and Ben Walker scoring in the first eight minutes of a 2-1 win.



DCU Mercy captain Sarah Woods with coach James Weldon.

Valimaki lift first Euro Tour title after playoff

Golf

Phil Casey

Sami Valimaki overcame Brandon Stone in a play-off to win his first European Tour title at the Oman Open.

The Finn claimed four wins on the satellite Pro Golf Tour after turning professional in January last year but was playing just his sixth European Tour event following his step up at the Qualifying

School.

He was outside the top 100 after day one in Muscat but climbed the leaderboard over the weekend and was alongside Stone in a six-strong tie for the lead after round three.

The South African holed a gutsy 20-foot putt on the 18th to set the target at 13 under after a 70 and pile the pressure on Valimaki, who was playing in the group behind and needed a birdie of his own to take the contest to extra holes.

The 21-year-old left himself around 20 feet for his closing gain that set up the play-off, and the duo could not be separated as they both made par on the first two trips back up the last.

They both hit perfect drives at the third time of asking but Stone sent his second shot clattering into the stands and could not get up and down, leaving Valimaki to take the trophy with a par.

"It's awesome," said

Valimaki. There are not many words to say, it's unbelievable.

"After the ninth hole when I made a double I knew that the 10th hole is good and I had to make a birdie on that.

"I didn't make a really good par on 11 and after that bogey I felt like, 'okay this is gone'. But then I just grinded, made three birdies and on the last, an awesome birdie."

Frenchman Adrien Sandier bogeyed the 17th to finish a shot out of the play-off after a

closing 69, with Finn Mikko Korhonen and Italian Guido Migliozzi at 11 under.

England's Jordan Smith finished in the group at nine under, a shot clear of countryman Robert Rock and Scottish pair Grant Forrest and Connor Syme.

Englishman Callum Shinkwin had led by one shot with nine holes to play but made a quadruple-bogey on the 17th as he eventually finished at six under.

Why the FAI should follow our neighbours' lead on kids heading

LAST week, in a joint announcement by the English, Scottish, and Irish Football Associations, guidelines were published mandating that there should be no heading of footballs in training for children of primary school age. Furthermore, from age 11 to 18, the guidelines provide for a slow, incremental introduction of heading technique.

FAI interim deputy CEO Niall Quinn has already said that the FAI have been in touch with the various football authorities in the UK and Uefa on this issue. Moreover, under the FAI's 2015 Player Development Plan, children in Ireland play with footballs which are weighted dependent on their age.

Should, however, the FAI, follow its neighbours in full, and adopt the heading ban for children?

Yes, they should — and here's why.

The move by the FA in England to introduce guidelines restricting headers by children can be traced back in part to England's 2-1 loss to Uruguay at the 2014 World Cup, during which Uruguay's Alvaro Pereira took an accidental knee in the head from Raheem Sterling.

What followed was part farce, and near negligence.

As Pereira lay on the ground, trainers tried to slap him awake. As he came to, he immediately remonstrated with his trainers because, like most players, he wanted to return to play. Unlike most sports then and now, he was, within three minutes of sustaining the concussive blow, allowed to return, playing out the last 30 minutes of the game.

That incident, and later others invol-

ving Argentina's Javier Mascherano, who cracked heads with a Dutch player in the semi-final, and a blow to the head of Germany's Christoph Kramer in the 2014 World Cup final, put the spotlight on faults in Fifa's concussion protocols at the time, since overhauled.

The month after the 2014 World Cup, Fifa was named as a party to a class-action lawsuit in the US federal courts filed by a group of parents and players. The action claimed that Fifa and various soccer authorities within the US had been negligent in the treatment of cumulative head injuries.

As evidence, the plaintiffs highlighted research suggesting that high school soccer players in the US annually sustained more concussions than participants in baseball, basketball, softball, and wrestling combined.

Unlike similar class-action litigation brought in the US against the NFL in ice hockey and in the NCAA in college sports, the claim was not for compensation; the claimants simply wanted rule changes.

In 2015, a settlement was reached between the parties and the US soccer authorities in which a series of guidelines, very similar to those announced last week, were put in place in youth soccer across the United States.

In the UK, the issue of chronic injury arising out of the heading of footballs has long been associated with the story of former West Brom striker Jeff Astle, a noted header of the then-heavy (especially



A young girl heads the ball during the Futsal-Cup 2019 in Wuppertal, Germany. It is thought children's brains are much more susceptible to concussion than those of adults.

Picture: Bongarts/Getty Images

when wet) leather ball and who was a member of England's 1970 World Cup squad.

On his premature death, aged 59, from a neurodegenerative disease, the coroner recorded a verdict of death by industrial disease, suggesting a causal link between Astle's suffering and repeated headers in training and in games.

A determined campaign by

the Astle family, and anecdotal evidence surrounding the prevalence of various neurodegenerative diseases in professional footballers who played in the 1960s and 70s — including members of the 1966 World Cup winning team — placed even greater media scrutiny on football's regulatory response.

In 2017, a research group at the University of Glasgow, led by consultant neuropathologist Dr Willie Stewart, and supported by the FA and PFA, examined NHS Scotland data to compare the causes of death of 7,676 former male professional football players, born between 1900 and 1976, against just over 23,000 people drawn

from the general population.

The results were stark: the former professional footballers were three and a half times more likely to suffer from dementia and other serious neurological diseases; there was a five-fold increase in the risk of Alzheimer's; a four-fold increase in motor neurone disease; and a two-fold increase in Parkinson's.

The Stewart Report stopped short of concluding that there was a direct, causal link between the results and the heading of footballs. Nevertheless, the results were sufficiently conclusive to ensure that in upholding their duty of care towards all those who play football and noting that

children's brains are much more susceptible to concussion than those of adults, the various FAs in the UK took the decision to restrict heading in pre-teen football.

Given the legal and medical responses outlined above and taking into account Niall Quinn's recent comments and the FAI's progressive history on this; it seems inevitable that the FAI will follow suit.

It must be remembered though that any protocols on concussion are only as effective as they are enforced. The most basic but effective advice to any coach of a young team remains — if in doubt, sit them out.

Moreover, the FA's guidelines do not ban heading outright and this is because if the technique is not taught at some point in a player's development, then evident problems will arise at the adult level. This is similar to rugby wherein the teaching of correct tackling technique (as opposed to banning tackling outright at underage level) is an important, preventative measure in mitigating the risk of injury.

Finally, one issue that was slightly overlooked in the Stewart study was that it also found that the former footballers were less likely to die of other common health problems (heart disease and certain cancers) and lived on average three and a quarter years longer than the general population.

For many then, and even those who work in the area of neurodegenerative disease, the benefits of playing sport continue to outweigh the associated risks. As one expert stated on release of the Stewart Report: "A healthy heart is the best way to keep the brain healthy", meaning that played safely, a game of ball with your mates is still one of the best tonics for your mental and physical well-being.

■ Jack Anderson is Professor of Sports Law at the University of Melbourne.

Jack Anderson

TV WEEK AHEAD

TODAY

CRICKET: Second Test, New Zealand v India, (Sky Sports Cricket, 10.25pm); Sky Sports Main Event, 11pm).

GAA: GAA 2020, (TG4, 8pm).

RUGBY: Against the Head, (RTE Two, 8pm).

SOCCER: Soccer Republic, (RTE Two, 7.30pm); FA Cup, Portsmouth v Arsenal, (BT Sport 1, 7.15pm); Sky Bet Championship, Middlesbrough v Nottingham Forest, (Sky Sports Main Event, Sky Sports Football, 7.30pm).

TOMORROW

SOCCER: FA Cup, Chelsea v

Liverpool, (BBC One, 7.30pm); West Brom v Newcastle, (eir Sport 1, 7.50pm); Ladbrokes Premiership, Hibernian v Hearts, (BT Sport 1, 7.15pm).

WEDNESDAY

CRICKET: Second ODI, South Africa v Australia, (Sky Sports Cricket 10.55am).

GAA: Eirgrid Munster U21 FC final: Kerry v Cork, (TG4, 7.20pm).

SOCCER: FA Cup, Sheffield Wednesday v Manchester City, (BBC One, 7.30pm); Tottenham v Norwich, (eir Sport 1, 7.35pm); Ladbrokes Premiership, Livingston v Celtic, (BT Sport 1, 7.15pm).

THURSDAY

GOLF: European Tour, Commercial Bank Qatar Masters, (Sky Sports Golf, 7.30am; Sky Sports Main Event 11.30am; PGA Tour,

Arnold Palmer Invitational, (Sky Sports Main Event, Sky Sports Golf, 2pm).

SOCCER: FA Cup, Derby v Manchester United, (BT Sport 1, 7pm). Euro 2021 Women's Qualifier: Republic of Ireland v Greece, (RTE Two, 7pm).

FRIDAY

GAA: Eirgrid Leinster U21 FC final: Dublin v Laois, (TG4, 7.20pm).

GOLF: European Tour, Commercial Bank Qatar Masters, (Sky Sports Golf, 7.30am; Sky Sports Main Event 11.30am; PGA Tour, Arnold Palmer Invitational, (Sky Sports Main Event, Sky Sports Golf, 2pm).

RUGBY: Gallagher Premiership, Worcester v Northampton, (BT Sport 1, 7pm); Guinness PRO14, Dragons v Benetton, (Premier Sports 1, 7pm).

SOCCER: Sky Bet Championship, Nottingham Forest v Millwall, (Sky Sports Main Event, Sky Sports Football, 7pm).

SATURDAY

CRICKET: Third ODI, South Africa v Australia, (Sky Sports Main Event, 8am).

GOLF: European Tour, Commercial Bank Qatar Masters, (Sky Sports Golf, 9am); PGA Tour, Arnold Palmer Invitational, (Sky Sports Golf, 5.30pm).

RUGBY UNION: Guinness Six Nations, England v Wales, (Virgin Media One, 4.45pm).

SOCCER: Premier League, Liverpool v Bournemouth, (BT Sport 1, 12pm); Burnley v Tottenham, (Sky Sports Main Event, Sky Sports Premier League, 5pm); Sky Bet Championship, Bristol City v Fulham, (Sky Sports Main Event,

Sky Sports Football, 12pm).

SUNDAY

CYCLING: Paris-Nice, (Eurosport 1, 12.30pm).

GAA: GAA Beo, (TG4, TBC); Allianz League Sunday, (RTE Two, 9.30pm).

GOLF: European Tour, Commercial Bank Qatar Masters, (Sky Sports Golf, 9am); PGA Tour, Arnold Palmer Invitational, (Sky Sports Main Event, 7.30pm).

RUGBY: Guinness Six Nations, Scotland v France, (Virgin Media One, BBC One, 2.30pm).

SOCCER: Premier League: Chelsea v Everton, (Sky Sports Premier League, 1pm, Sky Sports Main Event, 2pm); Manchester United v Manchester City, (Sky Sports Main Event, Sky Sports Premier League, 4pm).



Mikel Arteta: His Arsenal team face Portsmouth tonight.

WEEKEND SCOREBOARD

Fermanagh	3	1	0	2	-12	2
Cavan	4	1	0	3	-23	2

Downey and English secure Olympic Madison qualification

Cycling

Luke Maguire

Mark Downey and Felix English secured Olympic qualification after an 11th place ride in the Madison event at the Track World Championships in Berlin.

It was looking bleak for the Irish early-on, who were locked with Portugal and Hong Kong for the final spot at the 2020 games.

Hong Kong began to put points on the board early into the 50km event, forcing the pressure on Downey and English.

Downey also had a scare at the midway point as he touched the wheel of the rider in front of him at over 50kmph, however, the 23-year-old track specialist managed to stay upright.

But the luck of the Irish changed when the Portuguese were deducted 20 points for losing a lap and Hong Kong were forced to retire from the race.

Though 11th place was well below the capabilities of the pair, it was still enough to secure their spot in Tokyo next July.

"I'm absolutely over the moon," said Downey after the race.

"It's been a long process for two years now and I think we needed 101 things to go our way. We woke up this morning and the two of us were so nervous because we knew we just couldn't make one mistake. We've had our backs up against the wall now for nearly a year and a half and we've done it in the last race so that's pretty special."



Children compete during Kids Race Day at the UCI Track Cycling World Championships at the Berlin Velodrome yesterday.

Picture: Getty Images

English added: "It was just mad. We knew everyone, especially those top five teams were just going to be untouchable essentially. And then we had two teams we needed to look at which were Hong Kong and Portugal. We needed to put five spots into Hong Kong,

and we needed to just beat Portugal in the race." Earlier in the afternoon Alice Sharpe finished 21st in the Women's Points Race. Sharpe was also in action earlier in the week when the Women's Pursuit Team broke the Irish Record to finish 8th.

The qualification of Downey and English is a major boost for Team Ireland who were buoyed earlier in the week by the news that Mia Griffin, Kelly Murphy, Alice Sharpe and Lara Gillespie set a new national record in the team pursuit on Thursday.

Technical director of the Irish track programme Brian Nugent was thrilled with the results.

"I'm so pleased with the team."

"This is what the last few years have been about - building towards Tokyo and now

we can say we've done it. There is still a lot to do before then, we know that, but now we're going to enjoy this. Everyone played their part in getting here - from the riders right down to the technical team behind the scenes".

Ireland's success on the track in recent seasons is made all the more impressive by the fact that Ireland is one of the few competing nations in Berlin this week without a purpose built track.

Plans are in place to build a velodrome in Ireland post-Tokyo at the sports campus in Blanchardstown as part of the next phase of developments supposed to be completed in 2021, with an expected cost of between €15m to €20m.

"We've been led to believe now that there are indications that it will go ahead and there are positive signs that this will become a reality before 2021," said Nugent.

"It would make such a difference to our sport and to our athletes if they had the option to train and compete at home. It would be fantastic."

Meanwhile the upcoming events on the World Tour calendar - Strade Bianche and Tirreno Adriatico in Italy and Paris-Nice in France, remain under threat with fears for athlete and public welfare in the wake of the coronavirus scare. Ireland's Sam Bennett and Eddie Dunbar who were in Abu Dhabi for the cancelled UAE Tour travelled home on Saturday.

However, four of the competing teams in UAE have been forced to stay in the Gulf with suspected coronavirus cases amongst their riders and staff.

World of Sport

Tokyo Marathon takes place on empty streets

The Tokyo Marathon took place yesterday against a backdrop of empty streets and with just a couple of hundred runners due to the coronavirus outbreak.

Organisers had reduced the entries to just elite runners and wheelchair athletes with the mass race, which usually attracts around 38,000 runners, cancelled.

The numbers of volunteers were also reduced and spectators were advised to "avoid gathering along the course" and were instead encouraged to "support through TV and radio."

Event staff and competitors were given surgical masks and hand sanitizer. Ethiopian Birhanu Legese won the men's race for the second year in a row in two

Athletics

hours four minutes and 15 seconds, while Israel's Lornah Kiplima Chemtai Salpeter won the women's race in a course record time of 2:17.45. Tokyo is due to host the Olympics from 24 July to 9 August.

"If the Olympics look like this, it's going to be a sad sight," 68-year-old shoe-maker Hiroshi Enomoto, who watched the race in the downtown area of Asakusa said.

"There are maybe 20% of the number of people who came to see the race last year. Normally, it's so packed you can barely breathe."

More than 200 people have so far been infected with the coronavirus throughout Japan.

Belvo storm to victory

Ross O'Donoghue

Old Belvedere made light of Storm Jorge with a 27-5 win over Suttonians at Ollie Campbell Park.

The impressive Dubliners scored five tries in bleak conditions to tighten their grip on a place in the Energia Women's All-Ireland League semi-finals.

"It was gale force winds and snow in our face at times but the handling and support play from our girls was excellent," said Belvo coach Nora Stapleton.

"We had clear focus coming into this game around our gameplan in both attack and defence.

"It shows when you do the simple things and do them well you can keep possession and we scored some amazing tries."

UL Bohemian remain top of the league despite the postponement of their game against Galwegians.

Second placed Railway

Rugby

Union are now just a point behind but have played two games after yesterday's clinical 62-0 demolition of northern side Malone.

The disruption to the Women's 6 Nations campaign allowed Railway to welcome Ireland internationals Ailsa Hughes and Larissa Muldoon back into the fold.

With top try scorer Steph Carroll out injured, her place on the right wing went to Aoife O'Shaughnessy and the former Rockwell College player delivered a hat-trick of tries.

Sligo native Grainne O'Loughlin continued her transition from intercounty ladies football with two tries and a strong outing at loose-head prop.

Blackrock College dented Cooke's hopes of a place in the knock-out stages with a 41-17 win in Belfast.

Snow postpones rally

Martin Walsh

Overnight snow forced the postponement of the Abbeyfeale based Keltic Limerick Forest Rally, the second round of the Valvoline Irish Forest Rally Championship that was set to take place yesterday at three forest locations straddling the Cork, Limerick and Kerry county boundaries.

It was the second year in succession that the event, organised by the Limerick Motor Club, fell victim to the snow that began to fall at around 2am on Sunday and quickly covered the forest tracks.

A club official inspected the route around 7am yesterday and after liaising with the rest of the organising team, the decision to postpone the event was taken at around 9.30am.

The club are hoping to reschedule the rally for the weekend of 18/19 April. Meanwhile, the Motor-

Motorsport

sport Ireland National Navigation Trial Championship remains in the balance after the top two crews, both from Cork, endured a torrid time at the Cavan Navigation Trial, the penultimate round of the series.

The Mallow/Drinagh duo of Derek Butler/Denis O'Donovan (Subaru) had a disastrous event and finished 17th with 144 penalties following a wrong approach at one time point and missing a succession of several others.

Mogeely's James Fitzgerald and Ballincollig's Ken Carmody (Subaru) were also in trouble finishing ninth with 66 penalties, both crews are now on a total of 96 points ahead of the title decider in Monaghan at the end of March. The Cavan event was won by Derek Mackarel/Conor Boylan (Subaru), who incurred just nine penalties.

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Racing

Gun Digger finds his form with a vengeance

Leopardstown

John Ryan

Bottom-weight Gun Digger, ridden by 7lb. claimer Gavin Brouder, bagged the featured TRI Equestrian Handicap Chase in very demanding conditions at Leopardstown yesterday, second leg of a Sunday double for trainer Gordon Elliott.

The Gigginstown-owned eight-year-old, pulled up in five of his last seven starts, bounced back to form with a vengeance, staying on to beat Scoir Mear by two and three-quarter lengths in a race won last year by stable-companions Woods Well.

"It's the first time I've met the young lad (Brouder), but the horse had a light weight and he gave him a good cheery ride," said Elliott.

"He got the horse jumping well and did everything right."

Elliott indicated that Gun Digger might now be aimed at the Randox Health Ulster National at Downpatrick on March 22.

Suited by the testing conditions, Larquebuse sparked the Cullentra double, making virtually all under Davy Russell to land the Anton O'Toole Memorial Mares Novice Hurdle in the colours of Cheveley Park Stud.

The 2/1 favourite triumphed, readily, by ten lengths from Mrs Millner in a race which saw only four of the eight runners complete. Elliott acknowledged: "It's testing out there, which suited her."

"She stays well and will have no problem going further. She's a grand mare and the plan was to make it. So



Grand Partner and Sean O'Keefe on the way to winning the Irish Stallion Farms EBF Rated Novice Chase.

Picture: Healy Racing

it worked out well. We might try to get some black type for her now (probably in the Shannon Spray Mares Novice Hurdle in Limerick on March 15). She'll jump a fence next

season."

The Elliott-trained Gowran winner Homme D'un Soir was sent off an uneasy 8/13 favourite for the four-year-old bumper.

But having dictated the pace, Jamie Codd's mount gave way early in the straight and faded to third as Joseph O'Brien's debutante Lunar Display and Blazing Khal, rep-

resenting Charles and Philip Byrnes (picked-up a two-day whip ban), knuckled down to fight it out. Victory, by a head, went to the Oakley Brown-ridden Lunar Display, bred and owned by the trainer's mother AnnMarie.

Charli Parcs made a successful Irish debut when coming from off the pace to land the New Leopardstown Racing Hall Hurdle.

Formerly trained by Nicky Henderson and off the track since contesting the 2018 Champion Hurdle, won by Buvur D'air, the J P McManus-owned seven-year-old is now with Aidan Howard on the Curragh.

The easy-to-back 7/1 shot improved to track Mengli Khan and Jetz starting the long run-in (last two flights were omitted) and mastered Jetz a furlong from home before scoring by four and a quarter lengths.

Howard explained: "We have him a good while and he has been doing everything nicely, although we haven't asked him a whole pile at home."

"He won nicely today - they went a good gallop, so Barry was able to settle him great and he has a bit of class. The team at home have done a good job with him and Barry gave him a great ride."

"I'll try to find a similar race somewhere for him."

Jon Snow, in the colours of Rich and Susannah Ricci, made it fourth-time-lucky over hurdles when justifying 6/4 favouritism in the Donohoe Marqueses Maiden Hurdle, making all under Paul Townend and holding the persistent challenge of market rival Fakiera (Davy Russell) by a length and a quarter.

Three fixtures in France to be held behind closed doors

Three meetings at in France next week are to take place behind closed doors in a response to the coronavirus outbreak.

At Compiègne, Monday's jumps card and the Wednesday fixture on the Flat will have no paying customers, with the order coming from the mayor of Compiègne and the president of the Compiègne Racing Society.

It is a similar story at Chantilly, where Tuesday's programme will not be open to the public.

Racing professionals will be admitted as normal. The move is the first of its kind for the sport in Europe, but meetings in Japan and Hong Kong have been affected in a similar fashion.

Regarding Compiègne, a spokesperson for France Galop said: "This is not a national approach. It is an initiative limited to the municipality of Compiègne."

The authority tweeted the news on Saturday evening concerning Chantilly - which is around 30 miles from Compiègne - and its closed-doors fixture, a decision made "at the request of the Chantilly town hall and the Oise Prefecture".

Horses from France are due to run at the Cheltenham Festival, which begins on March 10.

Giving its latest position in relation to coronavirus, the British Horseracing Authority stressed there currently remained "no need to develop a policy" in relation to the abandonment of any specific fixtures.

Power of Pause can recoup losses in bumper

Today's Racing

Tommy Lyons

Back to Leopardstown this afternoon for a seven-race card, and The Club 30 Membership Bumper is a very interesting race, with Power Of Pause and Run For Oscar bringing good form to the race, and the Cheveley Park-

owned Felino De Bersy an intriguing newcomer.

Power Of Pause was a costly loser on debut, having been sent off the 3-10 favourite, but can make amends today. He won his maiden point to point over two and a half miles and started over a similar trip in that Thurles bumper. He gave the impression the trip stretched him somewhat and,

with that experience under his belt and today's shorter trip to suit, he can get off the mark.

Run For Oscar wasn't beaten far behind Eric Bloodaxe on debut and ran a huge race in defeat behind Favourite De Champdoux on his second start. On the latter occasion, the race wasn't run to suit and he can be considered a touch

unlucky. He is clearly a very capable sort and will put it up to the selection.

Barnaviddaun can get off the mark over hurdles in the Connolly's Red Mills Irish EBF Auction Novice Hurdle. Tom Mullins' seven-year-old made his track debut in a maiden hurdle in November and ran a race of promise behind Unexcepted. He then fin-

ished fourth behind Assemblée in a bumper before finishing 15 lengths behind Champion Bumper favourite Appreciate It on his next start.

After another start in a bumper, he returned to hurdling just nine days ago and was well backed to get off the mark. A slow jump at the second-last cost him the lead and momentum, and for a few

strides he looked like getting swallowed up by the chasing pack. To his credit, he picked up again after the last and was bearing down on the winner in the closing stages. Funky Daddy came out on top that day, but there is a 6lb swing at the weights and Barnaviddaun can make that count. Arcadian Sunrise rates the most obvious danger

LEOPARDSTOWN (Racing TV) Going: Hurdle: soft; chase: yielding-yielding to soft in places

TOMMY LYONS		NEXT BEST	
1.15	MUHAAFIZ	FRUITS OF GLORY	
1.45	BARNAVIDDAUN (NB)	ARCADIAN SUNRISE	
2.20	NICOLE'S MILAN	PECULIAR GENIUS	
2.55	DISCORDANTLY	DORTMUND PARK	
3.25	SHAKEYTRY	STUCKER HILL	
4.00	GOLDEN SUNSET	ASK AND ANSWER	
4.30	POWER OF PAUSE (NAP)	RUN FOR OSCAR	

1.15 KIDS GO RACING HANDICAP HURDLE (80-109)
2m €7,200 4yo plus

1	9F030	LEAN AND KEEN (36) (P;T;D2) (Seamus McConnon) S Byrne 10-11-12	S O'Keefe (5) *120
2	94610	MAGIC SEA (F10) (BF) (Anthony Peter Passmore & Dr J F Dawson & R McCoubrey) Mrs S Dawson 5-11-12	E Walsh (7) 116
3	0087	SCULLY'S DREAM (12) (D) (Nathan O'Sullivan) James Andrew Fahy 9-11-12	M J Bolger 115
4	P0089	HANDSWORTH (11) (Brian Pierce) P J Dempsey 5-11-11	L P Dempsey 110
5	3U320	ROACHDALE HOUSE (F17) (D) (Aidan Gallagher) P W Flynn 9-11-11	D O'Regan 119
6	5FP00	BOLD EMPEROR (47) (D) (Derek Kierans) T Gibney 7-11-10	D J O'Keefe 112
7	79805	WAJAAHA (23) (C Byrnes) C Byrnes 5-11-9	C A Landers (5) 109
8	-7320	TWIST (66) (John A McMahon) E McNamara 5-11-7	R Treacy (3) 119
9	P0-P8	LOVE AND WISHES (16) (P*,T*) (J J Taylor) R K Watson 8-11-5	P T Enright —
10	28-80	ATALANTA'S GOLD (116) (T;D) (Dr P D Molony) Michael Maguire 7-11-4	B Browne (5) 92
11	F-5PP	BREESY MOUNTAIN (116) (H*,T;D) (Gary Ryan) K Thornton 8-11-2	D Meyler 105
12	6-617	MUHAAFIZ (8) (D) (Sean O'Brien) V T O'Brien 8-11-2	R Doyle (3) 114
13	01400	ALFRED WEGENER (66) (D) (T Duggan & E McNamara) E McNamara 6-11-1	C P McNamara (5) 117
14	3821B	FRUITS OF GLORY (106) (H,T;D) (Edward Cawley) E Cawley 11-11-1	C D Timmons (3) 116
15	U6407	BENEFIT NORTH (9) (H,T) (Cathal M McGovern) C A McBratney 9-11-0	B J Cooper 117
16	34102	KNOCKRAHA BOSS (11) (D) (Richard Foley) Richard Anthony Foley 11-10-13	K J Brouder 114
17	008	MARY OF DE SORROWS (15) (Martin Hannan) G Cromwell 5-10-12	J B Kane (5) 98
18	0-129	MARY PEGGY (204) (Paul E Kelly) N C Kelly 8-10-12	McGarvey 116
19	7870	SEVERUS ALEXANDER (100) (T) (Not Top Fay Syndicate) G Cromwell 4-10-7	Jonathan Moore 101
20	08P	DARKENED (16) (J Carthy) D Hogan 4-10-2	Mark Enright 95
21	47078	CHALKY WHITE (32) (Good At It Too Partnership) James Dullea 6-10-10	RESERVE 114
22	0008-	ROBBIES MAGIC (326) (Liam Hackett) R Hackett 7-10-5	RESERVE —
23	0006-	THEFAITHFULINDIAN (F94) (Tanya Foxe) A A Howard 5-10-3	RESERVE —

2019: Serious O 6 11 3, Davy Russell 8-1 (G Elliott), 15 ran.
Betting: 5 Knockraha Boss, 13-2 Fruits of Glory, 7 Muhaafiz, 8 Wajaaaha, 10 Magic Sea, Severus Alexander, Twist, 12 Darkened, 14 Others.

SUMMARY: In a moderate contest, marginal preference is for **KNOCKRAHA BOSS**, who won at Tramore on New Year's Day and he was last seen hitting the crossbar at Thurles 11 days ago. **Magic Sea** disappointed on his most recent hurdles appearance but is a player based on his previous Down Royal victory, while **Roachdale House** and **Fruits Of Glory** are others who merit consideration.

1.45 CONNOLLY'S RED MILLS IRISH EBF CONNECTION NOVICE HURDLE

2m 4yo plus €11,999

	1	F-515	SCARDURA (106)(T*;D) 6-11-10.....	R Dunne 107	€7,933
		Trainer: N Mulholland (UK)		Owner: Jane Nuala Cartwright	
	2	31213	ARCADIAN SUNRISE (23)(D) 6-11-8.....	D O'Regan *136	€20,576
		Runs: 7 Wins: 2(S) Places: 3		Owner: Mrs Miriam Queally	
	3	00631	FUNKY DADY (9)(D) 5-11-8.....	P J Cawley (7) 124	€14,287
		Runs: 8 Wins: 1(S) Places: 1		Owner: Final Reminder Syndicate	
	4	506	Sonnenkonig (23) 5-11-7.....	P D Kennedy 111	€400
		Trainer: Mrs J Harrington		Owner: Miss Kate Harrington	
	5	3-870	GOOD LUCK HOPE (61) 6-11-5.....	Gavin Peter Brouder (7) 112	€1,425
		Runs: 5 Wins: 1 Places: 1		Owner: J A Nash	
	6	86	IT COULD BE YOU (9) 6-11-5.....	D E Mullins —	€199
		Runs: 2 Wins: 0 Places: 0		Owner: Mrs Helen Mullins	
	7	54742	BARNAVIDDAUN (9)(BF) 7-11-3.....	D J Mullins 122	€5,706
		Runs: 7 Wins: 0 Places: 1		Owner: Mrs L Griffin	

2019: Zero Ten 6 11 12, D J Mullins 8-11 Fav (Emmet Mullins), 7 ran.
Betting: 5-2 Scardura, 11-4 Arcadian Sunrise, 3 Barnaviddaun, 4 Funky Dady, 12 Sonnenkonig, 16 Good Luck Hope, 20 It Could Be You.

SUMMARY: Funky Dady and Arcadian Sunrise both merit plenty of respect given their previous winning form but the penalties they carry have to be a concern. With that in mind, preference is for **BARNAVIDDAUN**, who chased home **Funky Dady** at Fairyhouse but a 6lb swing in the weights could see that form reversed. **Scardura**, in a first-time tongue-tie, is another who merits a place on the shortlist.

2.20 TRI EQUESTRIAN HANDICAP HURDLE (80-109)

3m €7,800 4yo plus

1	/3333	CHERIF DE LISLE (15) (B;BF) (T Howley Jnr) G Elliott 8-11-12	D N Russell 117
2	27086	FIRE AWAY (52) (T) (Mrs G Hourigan) G T Hourigan 7-11-12	H Morgan (7) 111
3	2-880	HARDY MAN (12) (Premier Racing Club) Denis Hogan 6-11-8	S A Mulcahy (7) 105
4	6FP3U	BALLYBROWNEY JACK (52) (B,T) (Patrick Pyne) J P O'Brien 7-11-6	J J Slevin —
5	99279	MOSCOWSOWWHAT (16) (P*) (James Dullea Racing Syndicate) James Dullea 7-11-5	D E Mullins *118
6	65272	BAILY THUNDER (16) (P) (R A Scott) M F Morris 6-11-3	P T Enright 117
7	P-457	PECULIAR GENIUS (23) (B) (Mamvorton Limited) Paul Nolan 7-11-1	S O'Keefe (5) —
8	90842	NICOLE'S MILAN (47) (B;D2) (Eoin A Barry) Sean Ahern E Walsh (7) 118	E Walsh (7) 118
9	1U076	SWEET STING (13) (Mrs Phyllis Bowe) M Bowe 5-11-0	B Hayes 110
10	-0680	SCOTSMAN'S BAY (37) (Aidan J Ryan) E McNamara 7-10-11	C P McNamara (5) 102
11	-0006	DIAMOND GROVE (44) (Edward Cawley) E Cawley 5-10-10	A W Short (3) 115
12	45000	PUNCHERS PATH (9) (William M Brown) N C Kelly 5-10-10	D O'Regan 116
13	62719	ANGETAWAYOUTAD (37) (B) (Heads Or Harps Syndicate) Miss E Doyle 6-10-9	S D Torrens (7) 115
14	/0702	ICE COOL (13) (D) (Sean O'Brien) V T O'Brien 11-10-9	D J O'Keefe 113
15	90060	MAL DE MER (37) (Stephen McCormack) Matthew J Smith 6-10-7	P D Maxwell (7) 109
16	-1131	HIGHEST BENEFIT (37) (D) (W J Austin) W J Austin 11-10-6	J A Short (3) 115
17	0541P	LEE VALLEY LEGACY (32) (P;BF;D) (David Effe) D A McLoughlin 7-10-6	P J O'Hanlon (7) 114
18	0500	CEPALO DELAFAYETTE (11) (P*;D) (Thomas Donohoe) G Cromwell 8-10-5	Jonathan Moore 103
19	008	ALL CLASS (36) (J A Griffin) P Griffin 5-10-3	G B Noonan (7) 115
20	8U380	OLIVE D'HAGUENET (57) (T) (I Madden) I Madden 8-9-12	K J Brouder 117

2019: Lady Writer 6 11 11, D G Hogan 6-1 (Denis Hogan), 13 ran.
Betting: 11-2 Highest Benefit, 13-2 Cherif De Lisle, 7 Nicole's Milan, 8 Baily Thunder, 10 Ice Cool, 12 Ballybrowney Jack, 14 Others.

SUMMARY: BAILY THUNDER bumped into a very well-handicapped rival when finishing second at Gowran Park a couple of weeks ago and that form gives him a big chance in this contest. **Nicole's Milan** is an obvious threat to the selection having also filled the runner-up position when last seen. The shortlist is completed by **Cherif De Lisle**, **Lee Valley Legacy** and **Ice Cool**.

2.55 LEOPARDSTOWN MAY FAMILY DAY BEGINNERS CHASE

3m 5yo plus €8,400

	1	24P39	ASK CORY (13)(P) 7-11-12.....	D E Mullins 106	€6,328
		Runs: 15 Wins: 4 Places: 4		Owner: Ivan G Thompson & Cobra	
	2	P9047	CHESTERTVILLE (11)(H) 6-11-12	B Noonan (7) —	€550
		Runs: 6 Wins: 0 Places: 0		Owner: Carrig Syndicate	
	3	963F5	DISCORDANTLY (15) 6-11-12.....	P D Kennedy *145	€16,953
		Runs: 12 Wins: 1 Places: 4		Owner: The Odd Fellows Partnership	
	4	59-75	DORTMUND PARK (122)(T) 7-11-12	N Russell 65	€97,253
		Runs: 12 Wins: 5(S;G) Places: 4		Owner: Gigginstown House Stud	
	5	45-P5	HOTEL DU NORD (13)(D) 7-11-12	S O'Keefe (5) —	€2,243
		Runs: 8 Wins: 1 Places: 1		Owner: Sullivan Bloodstock Limited & M	
	6	0-650	TURBOJET (65) 9-11-12.....	A W Short (3) —	€27,683
		Runs: 16 Wins: 1(S) Places: 7		Owner: Mrs P J Conway	
	7	3/357	HALF THE ODDS (16)(T;D) 8-11-5.....	Jonathan Moore 116	€25,154
		Runs: 13 Wins: 3 Places: 4		Owner: Albert Dravins & Eamonn Scanlon	

Betting: 6-5 Dortmund Park, 11-4 Discordantly, 11-2 Half The Odds, 6 Hotel Du Nord, 10 Turbojet, 25 Ask Cory, 33 Chesterville.

SUMMARY: Jessica Harrington saddles two for consideration in the lightly-raced chasing newcomer **Hotel Du Nord** and **Discordantly**, who will find this much easier than the Grade 2 he took part in last month and looked set to open his account at Punchestown before that when falling two out. However, preference is for **DORTMUND PARK**, who was a Grade 1 winner over hurdles and looked in real need of the outing on his fencing debut when last seen in November.

COURSE INFORMATION

LEOPARDSTOWN: A left handed rectangle that extends for 1m6f with a run in of 3f and an uphill finish. Its long straights and sweeping bends make it ideal for long striding gallopers. 7 hurdles and 9 fences per circuit.

TOP TRACK TRAINERS WITH RUNNERS: (2015-2020): W P Mullins 76-411, G Elliott 39-361, J P O'Brien 38-352, Mrs J Harrington 37-399, Thomas Mullins 16-125.

TOP TRACK JOCKEYS WITH RIDES: (2015-2020): Davy Russell 20-141, Mr P W Mullins 20-50, D J Mullins 9-76, B J Cooper 8-67, Mr Finian Maguire 7-28.

FAVOURITES: (2015-2020): 301 have won out of 887 races (33.9%). At the previous corresponding meetings, 2 have won out of 9 races (22.2%).

GOING: Soft.

3.25 LEOPARDSTOWN BEGINNERS CHASE

2m 5f €8,400 5yo plus

1	5114P	CELTIC DANCE (174) (Celtic Steps Syndicate) E McNamara 7-11-12	R Treacy (3) —
2	055P3	CHIEF OF POLICE (47) (Keep The Faith Syndicate) O McKiernan 6-11-12	B Browne (5) —
3	84028	DASMYHOSS (36) (P*) (Oliver Barden) P J Rothwell 7-11-12	D J O'Keefe 116
4	-4489	EMPIRE BURLEQUE (47) (P;T) (Gigginstown House Stud) G Elliott 8-11-12	D N Russell —
5	25643	FIRST CLASS RETURN (58) (South East Racing Club) J P O'Brien 7-11-12	K J Brouder 117
6	-5356	IN YOUR SHADOW (58) (T*) (Gigginstown House Stud) N Meade 6-11-12	D O'Regan 108
7	4-380	MEMORY TREE (25) (Mrs B Power & John J Phelan) Paul Power 6-11-12	Mr P Power (7) —
8	26554	MY MANEKINEKO (30) (J A Nash) J Nash 11-11-12	Gavin Peter Brouder (7) 123
9	1114-	PAKTE IN THE PARK (652) (S J Kenny) P J Rothwell 9-11-12	H Morgan (7) —
10	-3F22	SHAKEYTRY (48) (GlebeLand Farm Partnership) E J O'Grady 8-11-12	P T Enright 125
11	80907	WHYDAH (58) (P) (Geoffrey Ruddock) Mrs J Harrington 6-11-12	P D Kennedy 111
12	00P57	LORD LARIAT (9) (T) (P Blake) K Thornton 5-11-7	D Meyler 83
13	-2099	PETERSTOWN (15) (Mrs Heidi Gibney) T Gibney 8-11-5	S O'Keefe (5) —
14	-9563	STUCKER HILL (64) (D) (Mrs Sarah Ann O'Hanlon & Seosamh A Murphy) W J Langan 8-11-5	D E Mullins *127
15	6P685	SUNRISE LADY (85) (Hugo Kane) C O'Dwyer 8-11-5	R Doyle (3) 123
16	20009	I'LL BE THAT LADY (37) (The Wait Is Over Partnership) Brian M McMahon 5-11-0	Mark Enright —

Betting: 11-4 Shakeytry, 6 Stucker Hill, 13-2 My Manekineko, 8 First Class Return, Dasmyhoss, 12 Empire Burleque, 14 Others.

SUMMARY: SHAKEYTRY has made the podium on all three occasions he has completed over the larger obstacles, and the eight-year-old appears a winner in waiting as he moves back up in distance. The likeable veteran **My Manekineko** wasn't beaten far on a raiding mission to Musselburgh and could have a part to play. **Chief Of Police** shaped nicely when third over hurdles at Punchestown and is interesting switching to fences, with **Stucker Hill** and **First Class Return** others to note.

4.00 ADARE MANOR OPPORTUNITY HANDICAP CHASE

2m 5f €8,700 5yo plus

1	57124	BRIDGE NATIVE (34) (T) (Real Bandits Again Syndicate) Mrs B Love 9-11-10	C J Orr (2) 126
2	/681	DUBAI DEVILS (383) (Mrs L Skelly) P Stafford 9-11-10	A W Short —
3	74435	GUNFIRE REEF (85) (A D Mullins) Ms Margaret Mullins 10-11-9	C P McNamara (2) 115
4	P3855	SCHOOL LANE (15) (B) (Patrick F Doyle) L Lennon 7-11-8	D Hand (4) 119
5	66512	ASK AND ANSWER (37) (T;BF) (Eoin A Barry) Sean Ahern 7-11-7	E Walsh (4) 116
6	0-307	BLUE EMPYREAN (34) (P) (J J Taylor) R K Watson 10-11-7	P J O'Hanlon (4) 99
7	92UP1	GOLDEN SUNSET (34) (John P McManus) N Madden 7-11-1	S D Torrens (4) 116
8	794F0	GONE GALAVANTING (25) (Pig N Porter Syndicate) Padraig Reed 7-10-7	A P Kelly (4) 85
9	00058	BABY BELLINI (77) (T) (I Madden) I Madden 9-10-4	Gavin Peter Brouder (4) 128
10	61527	WITNESS OF FASHION (37) (P;CD) (Mrs Lorraine Rooney) Patrick Rooney 14-10-1	T Ryan (2) *131
11	9U08P	CAPTAIN CRUISER (44) (T*) (Cotswolds Crew Syndicate) L P Cusack 7-9-13	S O'Keefe (2) 90
12	-00PP	THE BROOM SQUIRE (53) (P) (Eric Newham & Carol Hogan) P J Rothwell 7-9-11	G B Noonan (4) —
13	UPU8	KRISQUN (52) (B*) (Moyville Racing Syndicate) Shane Nolan 9-9-10	Geaoid Brouder (4) 115

2019: Amaulino 6 11 13, P J O'Hanlon (4) 14-1 (R K Watson), 8 ran.
Betting: 5-2 Golden Sunset, 11-4 Ask And Answer, 11-2 Bridge Native, 8 Gunfire Reef, 10 Dubai Devils, Witness Of Fashion, 12 Blue Empyrean, 14 School Lane, 20 Others.

SUMMARY: **ASK AND ANSWER** returned to winning ways over 3m at Navan, and backed that effort up with a narrow defeat over 3m1f at Fairyhouse. Sean Ahern's seven-year-old is expected to mount another bold bid following a 3lb rise in the ratings and gets the verdict ahead of **Golden Sunset**, who looked on good terms with himself when striking over 2m4f at Down Royal. **Bridge Native** steps up from 2m and could also take a hand back over fences.

4.30 CLUB 30 MEMBERSHIP FLAT RACE

2m €6,000 5yo to 7yo

1	F2-F3	ALCO ROUGE (65) (W T F Partnership) T Gibney 6-12-0	Mr R McParlan (5) 71
2	9	CROSSHILL (92) (R A Bartlett & David Hodgkiss) Mrs J Harrington 5-12-0	H F Maguire (3) 51
3		FELINO DE BERSY (Cheveley Park Stud) G Elliott 5-12-0	Mr J J Codd —
4	3P-	FOURNEUX D'SANKKA (358) (Gigginstown House Stud) G Elliott 5-12-0	Ms L O'Neill —
5	551	HAS A HARDY BLOKE (92) (Hammer & Trowel Syndicate) N Meade 5-12-0	Mr M J O'Hare —
6		KEMPSTONE (Miss E Hamilton) S Crawford 5-12-0	Mr P Donoghue (7) —
7		KESSLER (Steven Crawford) S Crawford 5-12-0	T Hamilton —
8		MASTER MCSHEE (Mrs D Corkery) P Corkery 6-12-0	Mr D Allen (7) —
9	1-2	POWER OF PAUSE (43) (BF) (Miss M A Masterson) W P Mullins 5-12-0	Mr P W Mullins *114
10	42	RUN FOR OSCAR (25) (Top Of The Hill Syndicate) C Byrnes 5-12-0	Mr P Byrnes (7) 110
11	PP	BALLELA TO MOSCOW (12) (P*) (L O Cosgrave) J G Cosgrave 5-11-7	Mr R McLeigh (7) —
12	50-96	TWO SHOE TOM (37) (Mrs B Howard) Peter Fahy 6-11-7	Mr D G Lavery (3) —

2019: No corresponding race.

Betting: 11-4 Power Of Pause, 3 Run For Oscar, 5 Felino De Bersy, 7 Alco Rouge, 15-2 Has A Hardy Bloke, 10 Crosshill, Two Shoe Tom, 12 Fournieux D'sankka, 25 Others.

WETHERBY (Racing TV) Going:

Heavy-soft in places (inspection 8am monday)

FAUGH-A-BALLAGH		FOXHUNTER	
2.00	ACCORDINGTOGINO	ACCORDINGTOGINO	
2.35	RELKADAM	TAKEMEBACK	
3.10	DIODORUS	YOUNG LIEUTENANT	
3.40	CASUAL CAVALIER	CASUAL CAVALIER	
4.15	SECRETE STREAM	KHAGE	
4.45	SPIRIT OF HALE	SPIRIT OF HALE	

2.00 RACINGTV EXTRA MAIDEN HURDLE

3m €4,1

Newinn Lester overcomes tough conditions

Around The Tracks

Tommy Lyons

Conditions were tough on Saturday night at Shelbourne Park, resulting in slow times, but competition was tight and there were just four spots between the three heat winners in the second round of the Ladbroke's Easter Cup.

The standard was set in the very first heat, which went to the Graham Holland-trained Newinn Lester.

The wide seed broke best and had the pace to take a length out of Ballyanne Sim on the run to the first bend. He was in command there

after and raced to a one-length victory over the fast-finishing Ballymac Inspeed, in 30.21, with Ballyanne Sim third and odds-on favourite Wolfe grabbing the fourth spot in next weekend's semi-finals.

Ballymac Anton was a 4-7 chance to take the second heat and Liam Dowling's dog duly obliged.

Boylesports Xtra moved for the rails early but had just enough in hand to prevent the favourite getting around in front.

However, Ballymac Anton raced in his slipstream most of the way before finding the gap along the inside on the

turn for home. The strong stayer raced on to beat the long-time leader by two and a half lengths, in 30.25.

Priceless Blake took the last of the three heats for Paul Hennessy. Drawn next to the rails, he used the inside line perfectly to lead Cabra Firmينو around the opening bends, and then stuck to his task gamely to hold favourite Ballydoyle Valor by two lengths, in 30.24.

The draw for next weekend's semi-finals favour Wolfe, who was unable to cope with T5 on Saturday night. He will wear the blue sheet in the first heat and that can help him steal a march on

Ballymac Anton, drawn three. Ballydoyle Valor will need to break better to play a part, while Newinn Lester has the early pace of Cabra Firmينو to contend with on the outer half of the track.

There are six inside seeds in the other heat, and Priceless Blake and Ballyanne Sim are particularly poorly drawn on the wide outside. With so much early pace in the race, it could play to the strengths of Ballymac Inspeed, who can tuck in behind the pace before making his late effort count.

On Friday night in Tralee, the second round of the Greyhound & Petworld Juvenile

Classic took place and the Pat Buckley-trained Glengar Bale was marginally the quickest of the heat winners. He tracked Deerjet Sydney through the early stages and prove too strong late on as he raced on from the crown of the final bends to win by three and a half lengths, in 28.52.

That was a second heat winner for Pat Buckley as Degroom was also on the mark. He rode early trouble to make every yard of the running, in 28.95.

The first heat was fascinating as Ballymac Notisme showed terrific middle pace to take up the lead but was

just outbattled in the closing stages by kennelmate Ballymac Wild, who forged ahead late on to win by three parts of a length, in 28.90.

Paul Hennessy took the other heat with Jaytee Japan, who made all the running and pulled clear late on to win by five and a half lengths, from Ballyverry Sarah, in 28.53.

Ladbroke's Easter Cup semi-finals draw:

Heat 1: 1. Razidazi Peak, 2. Wolfe, 3. Ballymac Anton, 4. Ballydoyle Valor, 5. Cabra Firmينو (m), 6. Newinn Lester (6).

Heat 2: 1. Ballymac Inspeed, 2. Laughil Josh, 3. Boylesports Xtra, 4. Murts Boher, 5. Priceless Blake, 6. Ballyanne Sim.

GREYHOUND CARDS & RESULTS

YOUGHAL

6.44 – 525: Burgess Bullet, Burgess Diego, Cash For Brandy, Dunbar Lazer, Steeple Rd Eden, Clonda Flyer.

525: Slaneyside Drake, Glenfinn Floss, Hollyhill Magic, Canvas Lady, Aloha Saratoga, Watch Out Doll.

525: Fair Bluebell, Watch Out Socks, Murleys Reel, Business Loot, Hollyhill Ninga, Giacometti.

525: Cavies Heather, Garryvoe Captain, Toosharpotocatch, Watch Out Matty, Anns Matt, Conna Maxi.

525: Ballybrien Slick, Dansa Kate, Asset, Dunbar Bay, Conna Fireblade, Aarons Ace.

525: Charles Buddy, Slaneyside Maeve, Ballybrien Zee, Tobereen View, West-end Rose, Flair Henry.

525: Kilrush Jake, Tattoo, Belindas Cover, Witches Sonia, Philipstown Bid, Hollyhill Beller.

525: Dunbar Lady, Hollyhill Titan, Canvas Tipp, Blitzkrieg, Stunning Bruno, Deady Duffly.

525: Sarou Sharon, Slaneyside Colin, Dunbar Ace, Elinore Dick, Shebeen Alfie, Blade.

525: Voltage, Slaneyside Mabel, Conna Merc, Goldie, Hollyhill Magoo, Millview Kire.

525: Mike Dash, Ringo Kid, Mylane Minnie, Slaneyside Maisy, Chunky Exlie, Faulks Lane.

525: Canvas Duke, Conors Blaze, Bop Bob Baby, Druids Where To, Safari Silver, Fanfruluche.

ENNISCORTHY

8.00 – 525: Superb Elegance, Woodpecker Kate, Lakeview Boy, Sweet Lilly, Kingsmill Hakone, On The Nod.

525: Kingsmill Ron, Gentstown Messi,

Jump For Joy, Terrific Taylor, Tomahurra Flame, Wexford Star.

525: Lorraine Machine, Clougheast Lass, Saunders Pearl, Metric Dynamo, Coolcotts Topy, Carriogoe Jazz.

525: Dysert Copper, Misterin Lake, Bisto Crystal, Tomahurra Max, Carlsbush Girl, Kingsmill River.

525: Cosy Coyote, Kiltrea Chloe, Ballinabola Mia, Suzies Daisy, Mottee Glory, Gareths Star.

525: Crokes Gale, Rathbally Rocky, Karlow Splat, Nettie Soup, Lisnakill Messi, Kingsmill Izzy.

525: Tullycanna Lady, Misterin Rose, Dolls Vase, Little Fujairah, Blacks Act, Cracker Be Slick.

525: Neamstownbuttons, Benwell Girl, Couldnt Go Wrong, Ballycown Nula, Metric Bailey, Woolie Two Toes.

LONGFORD

8.00 – 330: Pleasetell Trish, Salthill Sky, Cherokee Champ, Micklem Merlin, Foulkscourt Yank, Kilbannon Wolf.

330: Glentara Daisy, Kilbannon Tee, Hawkfield Jango, Tymon Queen, Ringroo Rambler, Botswana Hero.

330: Lyneen Whisper, Mrs Owley, Bayview Panda, Dirtbird Daisy, Merciful Ali.

330: Colonel Jack, Ardilaun Jo, Kilbannon Lilly, Kinard Boyo, Mostrim Mandy, Saratoga Gracias.

330: Mountcashel Jet, Old Fort Zipper, Cleanway Vicky, Ivy Bridge, Merciful Debbie, Supersonic Buzz.

330: Shrewd Boe, Dirlbird Dan, Emmas Boy, Urney Ed, Mountcashel Jazz.

525: Glentara Panda, Lukes Miss, Botswana Amy, Creevy Candy, Dengabs Henno, Crown Prince.

525: Angels Glory, Blakemount Flash, Tommys Simba, Jetts Razl, Croaghill

Pearl, Crown Jonnie.

330: Kilbannon Karl, Hawkfield Solo, Cushgallow Kate, Ringroo Rascal, Brexit Backstop, Ballyscally Finn.

330: Mohawk Chief, Shrewd Dreams, Good Man Joey, Baby Shark, Kilbannon Pedro, Olivers Island.

525: Lyneen Wagon, Dee The Man, Demo Model, Tyrur Heidi, Martinstown Babe, Racecourse Breze.

525: Driven Shoot, Lightfoot Kealy, Blakemount Sheba, Shallow Park, Medugorje Rose, Croaghill Tony.

CURRAHEEN PARK

525: A. Barrett's (Kilmallock) **Some Bolt** (Droopys Roddick-Winter Ash) (1R) 5-1 1; Bear Oil Kat (4) 6-4 2; Rockstar Ellie (5) 2-1 3. 8l, 4/4l, 29.07. Tote. 2.70, 1.60, 1.60; 7.40. Trio. 19.80.

330: Sunday Night Boys Syndicate's (Leicestershire) **Iveshead Tim** (Droopys Cain-Lagile Blossom) (6) 6-4 1; Hollyhill Sydney (1) 2-1 2; Zooomey Robin (2R) 2-1 3. 1/4l, 1l, 18.19. Tote. 4.70, 2.70, 3.00; 15.80. Trio. 35.60. (Trd. P. Kiely).

525: V. & J. Browne's (Blarney) **Super Hi Mack** (Droopys Nidge-Super Jenny) (1) 5-4 1; Coppeen Ace (4) 5-2 2; Tidy Up Billy (6R) 2-1 3. 14l, 2/4l, 29.10. Tote. 3.30, 2.50, 1.40; 6.90. Trio. 39.90.

525: B. O'Connell's (Blarney) **Gaytime Kasia** (Gaytime Hawk-Gaytime Derval) (4) 5-2 1; Zooomey Pal (5) 3-1 2; Aghaburran Charm (1) 4-6 3. 9l, 1/4l, 28.60. Tote. 4.00, 2.60, 3.20; 12.70. Trio. 33.10.

525: K. Ruby's (Mallow) **Aldworth Cherry** (Godsend-Jers Joy) (5) 5-1 1; Aldworth Spinner (6) 5-2 2; Uptlewkingaroo (1) 5-2 3. sh, 5l, 29.89. Tote. 13.30, 5.60, 2.20; 142.10. Trio. 320.10.

525: L. Hanrahan's (Glanworth) **Boherash Noah** (Kinloch Brae-Boherash Katy) (3) 5-2 1; Casimir (4) 9-4 2; Rosebank

Return (2) 2-1 3. sh, 5l, 28.91. Tote. 3.20, 1.50, 2.00; 21.50. Trio. 48.20.

525: J. & Ms. M. O'Donoghue's (Bandon) **Brogan Guest** (Skywalker Puma-Skywalker Pearl) (2) 7-4 1; Lake Garda (1) 2-1 2; Ashgrove Classic (6) 4-1 3. 1l, nk, 29.17. Tote. 5.00, 1.60, 1.60; 6.00. Trio. 29.90.

525: D. J. Dooge & P. O'Driscoll's (Blarney) **Dawstown Sky** (Aero Majestic-Shaded Sky) (1) 4-5 1; Droopys Outcome (5) 2-1 2; Iveshead Betty (4) 6-1 3. 2l, 1/4l, 29.28. Tote. 2.30, 1.60, 2.00; 6.20. Trio. 33.60.

525: P. Hynes' (Galway) **Congress Thunder** (Droopys Nidge-Balinakill Trish) (1) 2-1 1; Uncle Bertie (5) 2-1 2; Ballyhimikinibolt (2) 3-1 3. 7/4l, sh, 28.11. Tote. 3.00, 3.70, 1.80; 20.90. Trio. 26.60. (Trd. P. Hennessy).

525: N. Casey's (Mallow) **Carrigoon Risk** (Aero Majestic-Carrigoon Amy) (1) 3-1 1; Super Bossman (5) 9-1 2; Lebudgiesmugler (4) 5-2 3. 4/4l, 1l, 28.87. Tote. 6.10, 2.70, 1.90; 13.80. Trio. 68.60.

525: T. G. Quinn's (Cork) **Wee Carla** (Mall Brandy-Abbey Carla) (1) 3-1 1; Lads Ebony (6) 4-1 2; Canadian Trevor (2) 5-4 3. 1/4l, 9l, 28.91. Tote. 3.40, 1.40, 2.10; 12.80. Trio. 75.00.

525: Ms. A. Corkery's (Grenagh) **Agatha** (Scolari Me Daddy-Ironically) (3) 9-2 1; Butts Bound (5) 6-4 2; Ladys Crest (2) 5-2 3. hd, 4/4l, 29.15. Tote. 12.70, 6.50, 2.10; 61.00. Trio. 88.00.

DUNDALK

525: Civils Coen 30.19; 400: Colarhouse Tiger 22.29; 400: Dear Oh Dear 21.95; 400: Nicebrindle Lady 22.30; 400: Nice White Paws 22.37; 350: Dublin Tom 19.52; 525: Tullymurry Samba 30.15; 525: Ravenswood Mango 29.32; 400: Gerards Dream 22.12; 525: Hatmore Ava 29.13; 525: Try One More

29.38; 525: Lady Lewis 29.48.

GALWAY

525: Sellout Craytur 29.57; 350: Kilbannon Voight 20.19; 525: Fairy Hill Zara 29.77; 350: Glorias Pet 19.71; 525: Drombeg Dancer 29.72; 350: Togher Blue Leah 19.55; 550: Sarahs William 31.22; 550: French Deluxe 31.03; 550: Bumblebee Daitni 30.89; 550: Springwell Mouse 30.89.

LIMERICK

525: Stonehall Hero 29.41; 525: Drombully 29.59; 525: Elms Tree 29.54; 525: Magical Billyray 29.27; 750: Chris Peanut 42.44; 525: Rallying Joy 28.85; 350: Ballyhar King 19.05; 525: Newinn Taylor 28.37; 525: Gurntarehy Gift 29.38; 525: Sevenheads Rock 28.85; 350: Ballymac 19.29; 525: Denises Belle 28.94.

MULLINGAR

525: Kementari 30.52; 600: Sophisticated Jax 34.51; 525: Breffni Comet 30.12; 600: Azure Myst 34.68; 525: Home Bambi 30.61; 525: Island McGrath 30.48; 525: Clonfert Dolly 30.85; 525: Over It Now 30.05; 3350: Frozen Fire 19.75; 525: Lingrawn Salmon 30.09; 400: Blessington Star 22.30.

SHELBOURNE PARK

525: Lord Boomerang 29.33; 525: Traceys Pet 29.33; 525: Razidazi Mya 29.41; 525: Patricks Machine 29.14; 525: Clonbrien Flash 29.16; 525: Riverside Leo 29.22; 550: Newinn Lester 30.21; 550: Ballymac Anton 30.25; 550: Priceless Blake 30.24; 525: Pestana 29.01.

TRALEE

525: Oak Express 29.97; 525: Rocky

Style 29.39; 525: Tokenfire Blaze 29.85; 525: Lane Rd Ping 30.10; 325: Carmac Confusion 17.87; 525: Stayaway Blake 28.63; 525: Sugar Plum Fairy 29.09; 525: Global Reset 29.29; 525: Hillview Paddy 28.87; 525: Cashen Sankaranai 29.20.

WATERFORD

525: Farranrory Megan 28.73; 525: Strides Jet 29.05; 525: Mingers Po-poye 29.32; 525: Tomahurra Zeus 29.41; 525: Coco Leader 29.31; 525: Supporting Emery 29.24; 525: Sparta Cally 28.95; 525: Melville Swift 28.89; 525: Go Willow Go 29.05; 525: Honorary Judge 29.23.

MULLINGAR (SUN)

525: Scotchthra Magic 30.20; 525: Fahy Johnny 30.16; 525: Killshill Queen 30.30; 525: Bective Julie 29.83; 525: Catunda Aine 30.39; 525: Home Cara 29.48; 525: Catunda Lucas 30.33; 525: Cauty Sean 29.54; 525: Castlehill Bart 29.66; 525: Stonewall Rex 29.62.

CLONMEL (SUN)

525: Annagh Lucille 29.26; 525: Down An Hour 29.38; 300: Tivoli Maestro 16.20; 525: Emers Velvet 29.27; 525: Tommys Pluto 29.22; 525: Cavies Buzz 29.08; 525: Rapid Jack 29.50; 525: Geneva Tee Jay 29.26; 550: Vigoroux Vincent 30.25.

TRALEE (SUN)

525: Toast Of Brazil no time available; 525: Too Be Class 29.04; 525: Ballymac Minton 29.13; 525: Millridge Zoey 28.71; 525: Mileheigh Matt 29.01; 525: Cashen Okavango 29.30; 525: Pennylene Storm 28.85; 525: Ardref Eric 28.89.

Rails draw works the oracle for Congress Thunder in Cork Cup

Curraheen Park

Eoin Walshe

Congress Thunder, trained by Paul Hennessy for Paul Hynes, Galway, ran out a worthy winner of the final of The Cork Cup at Curraheen Park on Saturday night the son of Droopys Nidge-Balinalkill Trish stopping the clock in a blistering 28.11 on a track rated 10. fast.

Without a win in the preliminaries but ideally drawn on the rails he was sent off the 2/1 joint favourite with the only unbeaten finalist Uncle Bertie to claim the winners prize of €5,000 and that was the order in which they finished.

Blasting to the front from

trap-rise Thunder held a two length advantage over his market rival Uncle Bertie as they ran the opening two bends.

Powerful along the back straight the January 18 whelp extended his lead as he went crossing the line with the wide margin of seven and a half lengths over Uncle Bertie, who just held on to second by a short head from the fast finishing Ballyhimikinibolt.

The final of The Curraheen Park unraced ON3 saw Glantane owner Kevin Ruby, who was doubly represented by the litter comrades Aldworth Cherry & Aldworth Spinner, claim the winner & runner-up prizes.

In a bunch finish it was Cherry who claimed the hon-

ours by a short head from Spinner with Upflewkingaroo just a half a length further away in third in 29.89.

Gaytime Kasia owned by Brendan O'Connell, Tower was the most impressive winner on the undercard, the home bred July 18 bitch taking the fourth, an A5, in an excellent 28.60. S

Smartly into stride the 5/2 chance won pulling up by nine lengths from Zooomey Val giving their stud dog Gaytime Hawk a nice start to his stud career.

Carrigoon Risk, owned by Noel Casey, Mallow took over at halfway in the tenth, an AA0/A0, when the leader Splasher seemed to go wrong and he then drew four and a half lengths clear to the line

from Super Bossman in 28.87.

Wee Carla, owned by Thomas Gunter Quinn, Castlelyons made every yard of the running in the eleventh, an A3, but after being three clear between the bottom two bends she just held on at the line by a half a length from Lads Ebony in 28.91.

The well supported Butts Bound, 7/4 favourite after shipping a heavy bump between the opening two bends in the last, an A2, went five clear along the back straight but his early exertions took their toll as he was reeled in on the line by the Ashley Corkery, Grenagh owned Agatha a head dividing the pair in 29.15.

Boherash Noah, owned by Leonard Hanrahan, Glan-

worth showed fine early pace in the sixth, an A4, which took him five clear at halfway.

Casimir took up the chase and although reducing the leeway the line came just in time for Boherash who held on by a short head in 28.91.

Wide margin winners were the order of the night with the first, an A7/8, going to the James Kelleher, Macroom, owned Southwind Penny who had eight lengths to spare at the line over Bear Oil Kat in 29.07.

Super Mack owned by Vincent and John Browne, Cloghroe got off the mark at the third attempt in the third race, an A8/9, the 5/4 favourite romping to a fourteen length victory over Coppeen

Ace in 29.10.

Iveshead Tim, trained by Pat Kiely for The Sunday Night Boys Syndicate wore down the fast starting Hollyhill Sydney to take the second, an S4, by a half a length in 18.19.

In the seventh, an A3, Brogan Guest owned by John and Marguerite O'Donoghue, Bandon justified favouritism but it took him until the home straight to get the better of the early paced Lake Garda a length separating the pair at the line in 29.17.

Dawstown Sky, handled by John Kenny for Diarmuid Doogeand Pat O'Driscoll was another to justify favouritism when he scored his fifth career win in the eighth, an A1, in 29.28.



CUP CHEER: The Gailltír players celebrate following their victory over St Rynagh's in yesterday's AIB All-Ireland Intermediate Club Camogie final at Croke Park. See report on page 16.

Picture: Harry Murphy/Sportsfile

Irving Berlin and the ideas factory

Many thanks to the reader who told me during the week that he 'admired my anecdotes'.

I'm only sorry I didn't respond in my best Kenneth Williams voice, if not nostrils, but l'esprit de l'escalier is a cross we must all bear. If the same man had asked where I got my column ideas from, however, for once I had an answer.

The traditional riposte here is along the lines of the Irving Berlin urban legend: There was a suggestion in the old days that the man credited with *White Christmas* and many other classics didn't actually write them, but relied on a couple of musical geniuses he kept chained up in his attic to do the heavy lifting.

I don't have any such facility to hand, principally because the roof beams are so low in the attic that it would be unfair to expect anyone to compose 1,200 words of sparkling wit up there.

Or even 1,200 words of clichéd obviousness.

I do have a notebook that I sometimes scribble column ideas in, though, and after my brief encounter earlier in the week I had a look to see if I could strip-mine some inspiration from it. To my surprise I had some raw materials. Very raw.

Here's a raw transcript, with my annotations in the brackets following.

Note 1: J. Burrow — hand size low? 9 compare to others 10 and one quarter — hurling/rugby — is Trump NO — but BENCH.

As far as I can make out, this relates to a prospective NFL quarter-back, Joe Burrow, whose hand size is now seen as a potential disadvantage, given some other quarter-backs have hands an inch and a quarter bigger than his. I abandoned this early on as a column idea because a) what could I compare it to, my own micro paws? b) I'd have to measure other people's hands, which sounds creepy c) most people would ask who Joe Burrow is in the first place. Or Johnny Bench, also mentioned, who could hold seven baseballs in one hand.)

Note 2: WR release on TG: reported? Who? Numbers numbers numbers. Backlash prepared.

This note relates to a press release from World Rugby about a meeting to discuss transgender issues in that sport 'going forward', as the saying goes. This area is one which has the potential to detonate in all sports, so my reason for putting it to one side relates to a) one column segment being insufficient to address everything b) the anticipation of a howling mob reacting to anything that's written.

One for a bigger space, and a later date, preferably the day before a three-week holiday.

Note 3: Butter big Milk Pizza bases x 2 Dark chocolate digestives McVitie's only HAND SANITISERS X 8 PLUS TOILET ROLL '24'

Self-explanatory, non-column-related note.

Note 4: handshakes, GG, happy Christmas, corona-

corona lurking in background still, foreseeable.

This note relates to the columnist's nightmare, the decent idea which is overtaken by events. On Monday it struck me that the traditional pre-game meeting of opponents — across most sports — might have to be shelved temporarily, because with the coronavirus 'lurking in the background', the health authorities could try to cut out all unnecessary handshakes. It was a strong possibility until the church banned the sign of peace later in the week. Ah well.

Further clarification: The 'GG' refers to the shock revelation this week that some members of a certain GAA club's U11 side do not say 'good game' when shaking hands with opponents after matches but abbreviate the greeting to 'GG'. The scamps.

Note 5: Congress — smoke filled rooms and backstairs politicking, diary of a Congress naif.

This one was hot on the heels of the banned handshake, based on the fact that the annual GAA Congress has a high recognition factor among sports readers, readers who might appreciate a light-hearted expose of its machinations and masterstrokes.

Then I realised a) I wasn't going to Congress b) I didn't want to go to Congress and c) I didn't want to imagine what the backstairs politicking might actually be like.

Note 6: Ask the two lads in the attic
So I did.



Michael Moynihan

Where climate change meets game plan

Perhaps you watched some of Tyrone v Dublin the other evening, a game so wet it induced spontaneous dampness in the clothing of TV viewers all over Ireland.

The half-time row attracted a lot of comment, but the conditions deserve some focus. Not because of their severity, but because teams must now adapt game plans to a whole other mode of playing — i.e., surviving the unplayable.

Playing matches at this time of the year is inviting trouble, but if the GAA is to continue fixing games for January and February then managers and coaches will have to come up with a style that can be adapted to such horrific conditions.

Exaggeration? Not when a kicker like Dean Rock sees a delivery boomerang around the field as happened early on in Omagh. The NFL game with one side not kicking a single ball in the seventy minutes is on its way.

George Steiner had a powerhouse intellect

Better late than never — I mention here the late George Steiner, who passed away at 90 just a few weeks ago. Steiner was the platonic ideal of the European intellectual — multilingual, erudite, cosmopolitan (credited with introducing Anglo-American audiences, said the Guardian, to the likes of Ernst Bloch, Theodor W Adorno, Thomas Bernhard, Paul Celan and Walter Benjamin.)

Why is he here, though? Well, Steiner's description of

a chess player could stand for many a sportsperson ("A chess genius is a human being who focuses vast, little-understood mental gifts and labors on an ultimately trivial human enterprise").

One of his very last books is also well worth a read — *My Unwritten Books* — but not, maybe, on a crowded train if you're conscious about someone reading over your shoulder.

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