

Waterford Ladies Football History 1999

1999. When the euphoria that surrounded the incredible previous year died down, fund raising began for a team holiday. Noel Murray organised the annual calendar which brought in good revenue and amongst the other events organised was an auction in the 'Gabh Maloney's Pub' in Dungarvan.

The team flew to Tenerife in late January and enjoyed a good week in the sun. Then it was back to training and the league kicked off Sunday the 28th of February away to Meath in St. Ultans Park, Martry. It was business as usual with a 6-8 to 5-2 win. Aine Wall scored 4-0, Deirdre Nagle and Claire Ryan also found the net and newcomer Aine Ryan played in goal while Angie Walsh, Marion Troy and Sarah Gleeson came on as subs.

The following week saw Congress held in Cork chaired by Noel Murray. On Sunday the 14th March Waterford played Monaghan in round 2 of the league. The teams were level 0-7 each at half time but Waterford ran out convincing winners 3-13 to 1-9. Rebecca Hallahan scored 2-0, Aine Wall 1-1, Claire Ryan 0-3 and Geraldine O' Ryan 0-3.

It was announced that for the first time RTE would now televise the All-Ireland semi-finals. Three new clubs Abbesside, Cappaquinn and Rathgormac registered and Mary O' Donnell won one of the Examiner young sports star of the year awards.

Next up was a league clash with Longford at the Fraher field, which brought an easy 4-22 to 1-5 victory. Geraldine O' Ryan shot 1-6, Claire Ryan 0-5, Rebecca Hallahan 1-2 and Deirdre Nagle got the 4th goal. Newcomers Donna Frost, Tanya Kirwin, Fiona O' Reilly and Grace O' Brien all played in this game. Waterford travelled to Castledaly in Westmeath to play Mayo on the 11th of April and won a tough game 2-15 to 1-9 with mid fielder Martina O' Ryan in outstanding form, scoring 0-6, Deirdre Nagle and Rebecca Hallahan got the goals and Cora Staunton was particularly prominent for Mayo.

In the U16 A final Tramore beat Old Parish 0-10 to 1-5 at Fraher field and on the 18th of April. Waterford beat Tyrone in the League and the following Sunday travelled to Pairc Gorman to play Wexford and had to fight hard to secure a 2-6 to 2-2 victory. Claire Ryan and Aine Wall got the goals.

Thirteen Waterford players played with Munster in the interprovincial series which was won by Ulster and on the 5th of May Waterford played Cork in the Munster U14 championship at Fraher field. Waterford led at half time 1-6 to 0-2 but Cork with the wind at their backs in the second half won 3-10 to 2-6. Emma Wall and Rachel Ahern got the goals but Waterford had lost their hard earned U14 All-Ireland title.

On Sunday the 23rd of May Mayo played Waterford in the league semi final and the game gave a clear indication that Mayo were a coming force. Mayo led 0-6 to 0-4 at half time and the situation could have been worse only from a super save by Sarah

Hickey. The teams finished level and it was then on to extra time and a Diane O' Hora goal gave Mayo and 1-8 to 0-10 lead after 72 minutes.

However Geraldine O' Ryan came on as a sub and kicked 4 great points. Rebecca Hallahan got a goal and Waterford ran out 1-16 to 1-8 winners. But the scoreline didn't do justice to Mayo's efforts. Deirdre Nagle shot 0-4 and Claire Ryan 0-3.

The league final was played at Parnell Park on Sunday the 27th of June and Monaghan turned on the style, winning 4-6 to 0-12 with Edel Byrne (2-0), Angela Larkin (1-3) and Catriona mc Guinness (1-0) doing the damage. The Waterford defence was in serious trouble all day.

St. Anne's defeated Ballymacarbry in the U14 A county final at Bushy Park. On Sunday the 11th of July Waterford defeated Clare 3-9 to 3-4 at Fraher field in the Munster junior championship, Julie Mai Keane got 2-0, 1 from a penalty, Lorena Mooney scored 0-4 and Breda Morrissey got the 3rd goal.

Mount Sion registered another new Ladies Football club and Brickey Rangers won the Mary Walsh seven a side cup, defeating Tramore 2-10 to 2-3. The Brickey 2nd team won the Marine Bar shield with a 2-6 to 2-4 win over St. Pats, thus completing the double.

On the 14th of July the Waterford minors beat Kerry 3-11 to 1-9 in Fermoy. Marion Troy scored 2-1, Niamh Barry 1-2 and Julie Mai Keane notched 0-5. The seniors were due to play Clare on the 18th of July at Fraher field but Clare unexpectedly pulled out and conceded a walk over, incredible when you consider that they pushed Waterford all the way in both the league and championship in 98.

Waterford beat Cork 3-13 to 2-6 in the Munster Junior final to complete 3 in a row. Marion Troy and Niamh Briggs first half goals proving decisive. The minors destroyed Tipperary 7-23 to 0-2 and then faced Cork in the final and won 2-18 to 4-9 in a great game.

The Munster senior final took place on the 15th of August at Fraher field. Within 25 seconds Aine Wall shot the opening goal, Geraldine O' Ryan got another in the 2nd minute and Aine Wall scored a 3rd with a pile driver in the 23rd minute. Cork replied with a goal from a well taken penalty by Susan Power and Mary O' Donnell's 29th minute goal gave Waterford a 4-6 to 1-2 lead at the interval. Within 20 seconds of the restart Claire Ryan had the ball nestling in the Cork net and then Aine Wall put Niamh Barry in for a 6th goal. Cork battled away and scored 1-2 in the closing stages, Mary O' Connor getting a goal but Waterford won easily 6-12 to 2-8 and Claire Ryan won the player of the match award.

The minors travelled to Birr to play Monaghan in the All-Ireland semi final in a game that turned out to be a classic. The Munster champions were flying but a nasty injury to Niamh Barry in an incident that Waterford weren't happy about changed the

game and Monaghan playing some great football in the second half ran out winners 5-10 to 5-8.

It added a bit of spice to the meeting of the counties in the All-Ireland Senior semi final at Parnell Park on the 4th of September after the 3 epic games in 97 and 98. The nation held its breath and was not dissatisfied.

Waterford travelled up the night before and stayed in Bray. They had the usual kick around in St. Vincent's Club grounds. The game was preceded by the other semi final between Meath and Mayo which Mayo won. Waterford started well, Rebecca Hallahan and Mary O' Donnell shot early points, Edel Byrne replied for Monaghan. Annalisa Crotty and Aine Wall tacked on further Waterford points.

Angela Larkin pointed a Monaghan free and then Waterford keeper Sarah Hickey make 2 great saves. Annalisa Crotty put Geraldine O' Ryan in for a goal. Aine Wall left the field injured and 2 further Rebecca Hallahan points left Waterford 1-6 to 0-6 ahead at half time.

Waterford led 1-10 to 0-8 after 40 minutes then Margaret Kearns shot a Monaghan goal to bring the crowd to life. Then all hell broke loose as Rebecca Hallahan was sent off for a tackle on Edel Byrne and within 2 minutes Catriona Casey left the field with a broken leg. Short Rebecca Hallahan, Catriona Casey and Aine Wall with 15 minutes to go Waterford goose seemed well and truly cooked.

It was then this Waterford team donned the mantle of greatness and for the last quarter they absolutely dominated and the point's flowed. Geraldine O' Ryan, Olivia Condon, Geraldine O' Ryan again, Marion Troy and Deirdre Nagle all pointed and Monaghan simply didn't have an answer. Waterford 1-15 Monaghan 1-9 was the final score in the latest chapter between 2 outstanding teams, Olivia Condon won the R.T.E player of the match award and Waterford were back in the All-Ireland final.

It was good news also in the primary game as Waterford defeated Monaghan 1-1 to 0-1, Emma Gallagher got Waterford's goal and Grace O'Brien shot the point. As Waterford left Parnell Park there were two major problems that were eventually to prove crucial. Firstly the imminent suspension of Rebecca Hallahan and secondly the loss of Catriona Casey, whose injury was diagnosed as a fracture that evening in a Dublin hospital.

The following Saturday the 11th Sept Waterford took on New York in the All Ireland junior semi final in Summerhill (Meath). New York led 0-8 to 0-1 at half time, Waterford's only score, and a Breda Morrissey point. Waterford began the second half with a succession of points from Aine Ryan, Julie May Keane, Mary O'Rourke, Breda Morrissey and Keane again to reduce the deficit to 2 points. New York pointed then Mary O'Rourke got a goal to level the scores. A succession of New York points put them three points ahead but points by Julie May Keane, Carmel Kissane and Elaine Power levelled it up again then Mary O'Rourke pointed to put Waterford ahead for the first time. Then with the finishing post in sight Waterford gave away

possession, New York broke and scored a goal. Julie May Keane landed her 4th point but the count down clock beat Waterford and New York were in the All Ireland junior final by a single point margin, 1-12 to 1-11.

Waterford: Nuala Hearne, Donna Frost, Sinead Kirwin, Bridget Hannigan, Aine Ryan(0-1), Tanya Kirwin, Ciara Prendergast, Angie Walsh, Fiona O Reilly, Julie May Keane(0-4), Carmel Kissane(0-1), Ann Morrissey, Mary O Rourke(1-2), Lorena Mooney, Breda Morrissey(0-2), Subs.. Cleona O Keefe, Elaine Power (0-1).

There was still an All Ireland senior final and Waterford ran out on to Croke Park to take on Mayo on Sunday 3rd Oct. Just prior to the game the Mayo mentors approached the Waterford manager Michael Ryan and informed him that Cora Staunton had a back injury and would start the game as a token and would be replaced at the first opportunity and asked the Waterford players to ensure that she wasn't tackled. Staunton duly left the field and was a big loss but Waterford lined out without Rebecca Hallahan (as an appeal against her suspension failed) and Catriona Casey and the loss of this experienced duo was to prove costly.

Mary O Donnell also went into the game with a dislocated finger and the team never produced the semi final form, obviously the battles with Monaghan over the previous three years had taken some of the edge off them and in fairness Mayo played very well.

Claire Ryan and Geraldine O Ryan edged Waterford into a 2 point lead but two goal chances were missed and by the time Christine Heffernan levelled the scores with a brace of pointed frees by the 18th minute Mayo were flying, their confidence sky high. Diane O Hora, Heffernan and Sathrina Bailey edged the Westerners into a three point lead, but Geraldine O Ryan and Julie Torpey replied to leave Mayo 0-5 to 0-4 ahead at half time.

The damage had now been done and Mayo produced a marvellous second half performance. Points by O Hara (2), Christina Heffernan and Imelda Mullarkey put them five points clear by the 35th minute. Waterford battled away and points by Claire Ryan, Geraldine O Ryan and Niamh Barry reduced the deficit to two points. The came 12 scoreless minutes before Barry reduced it to the minimum, but Waterford couldn't find that extra gear and Mayo kicked on again, O Hara twice and Sinead Costello kicked match winning points to rewrite the history books and seal a deserved victory.

The following day the Examiner newspaper summed it up 'Waterford were like an athlete asked to peak too often, players had invested too much in the classic semi final victory over Monaghan'. The Brendan Martin cup was on its way across the Shannon for the first time since 1978.

Waterford: Sarah Hickey, Triona Whyte, Noreen Walsh, Marion Troy, Olivia Condon, Siobhan O Ryan. Julie Torpey(0-1), Martina O Ryan, Annalisa Crotty, Claire Ryan(0-2), Mary O Donnell, Fiona Crotty, Niamh Barry(0-2), Geraldine O Ryan(0-3), Aine

Wall. Subs: Deirdre Nagle, Paula Walsh. Diane O Hora won the player of the match award.

The following Sunday the Ballymacarbry players were back in action in the Munster club final and somehow found the energy to record a 4-18 to 2-1 over Donoughmore, Geraldine O Ryan (2), and Aine Wall (2) were the goal scorers. Marie Crotty returned for her first game since her cruciate leg injury in 1996 and scored 1-8. In the under 12 A county final Ballymacarbry, coached by Aine Wall and Patricia Butler, defeated Rathgormac 2-10 to 2-3 in what was the first ever championship to be played in Waterford in this grade.

Brickey Rangers defeated Crusheen (Clare) in the Munster junior club championship semi final, 4-17 to 2-2. In the final Rockchapel (Cork) defeated the Brickeys 3-17 to 2-7.

On Sunday 3rd October Shelmaliers defeated Ballymacarbry in the All Ireland club semi final in Cappoquin on a score line of 3-5 to 3-3. Two Kate Kelly goals helped Shels to an eight point lead after 15 minutes. Marie Crotty replied with a Ballymacarbry goal and when Geraldine O Ryan punched another it looked game on. Noreen Walsh went off early in the second half. Laura Corrigan goaled a penalty for Shelmaliers, Shirley Condon scored a late Ballymacarbry goal but Shels held on for a two point victory, and a couple of weeks later defeated Hollymount of Mayo to win the Dolores Tyrrell cup for the second time.

Waterford still had a league game to play and fielded just eight members of the championship team against Laois. In all nine minors played and Waterford won 2-12 to 1-7, with Geraldine O Ryan getting (1-5) and Claire Ryan (1-4). Elaine Power, Aoife Murphy, Fiona O Reilly and Deirdre Breathnach came on as subs in this game.

Honours:

Waterford Munster senior champions

All Stars: Siobhan O Ryan Ballymacarbry, (full back), Annlisa Crotty Ballymacarbry, (right half back) Catriona Casey Ballymacarbry, (left half forward), Geraldine O Ryan Ballymacarbry, (left full forward)

The A.G.M. in November elected the following officer's for the new Millennium.

Chairperson:	Michael Ryan,	(Ballymacarbry)
Vice chairperson:	Dan Murphy,	(St Garvans)
Secretary:	Katie Kiely,	(Brickey Rangers)
Ass Secretary:	Jackie Murphy,	(Dungarvan)
Treasurer:	Brendan Gallagher,	(St Anne's)
PRO:	Kevin Gallagher,	(Ardmore)
Registrar:	Bernie Troy,	(Old Parish)
Development Officer:	George Young,	(Old Parish)
Irish language officer:	Sylvia Shanley,	(Brickey Rangers)

And so the 1990's ended.

