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BUSIEST WEEKEND TO DATE IN FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

Next weekend will be the busiest so far in the GAA provincial football championships with no fewer than six games to be decided across all four provinces, four of which will be shown 'live' on RTE.

The biggest crowd is likely to be in Fitzgerald Stadium, Killarney for the Kerry v Cork Munster GAA Football Championship semi-final, featuring the All-Ireland champions against the reigning Munster champions. It will be the 13th successive year they have met in the championship. Indeed, since the introduction of the All-Ireland qualifiers in 2001, the rivalry has been more intense than previously with two – and sometimes three – clashes in some years.

Full fixture details for the weekend as follows:

Saturday

- Connacht GAA Football Championship Quarter-final: Sligo v Mayo, Markievicz Park, 5.0 (Live on RTE 2), Referee: Jimmy White (Donegal).
- Leinster GAA Football Championship Quarter-final: Louth v Kildare, Navan, 7.0 (Live on RTE 2), Referee: Michael Duffy (Sligo).

Sunday

- Leinster GAA Football Championship Quarter-final: Westmeath v Wicklow, Tullamore, 3.30, Referee: Michael Collins (Cork).
- Munster GAA Football Championship Semi-final: Kerry v Cork, Killarney, 4.0 (Live on RTE 2) Referee: Pdraig Hughes (Armagh).
- Munster GAA Football Championship Semi-final: Waterford v Limerick, Dungarvan, 2.0; Referee: Syl Doyle (Wexford).
- Ulster GAA Football Championship Quarter-final: Armagh v Monaghan, Casement Park, 2.0. (Live on RTE 2); Referee: Martin Sludden (Tyrone).

KERRY v CORK

It was by far the busiest rivalry in football in the last decade with the sides having met no fewer than 19 times in the Munster championship, All-Ireland semi-finals and finals. They clashed in two All-Ireland finals, five semi-finals (one replay), six Munster finals (one replay) and six semi-finals (two replays) with the results going as follows: Kerry 11; Cork 4, Draws 4. All four of Cork's wins came in the Munster championship, including last year when they won a semi-final replay by eight points. Cork and Kerry have met every year since 1998 (Clare beat Cork in 1997).

The last competitive clash between the counties was on 13 February last when they clashed in the Allianz GAA Football National League Division I campaign with Cork winning by 1-12 to 0-12 in Páirc Uí Rinn.

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Cork v Kerry: 19 Championship Clashes (2000-2009)

2010 – Kerry 0-16 Cork 1-9 (All-Ireland final)
2009 – Cork 1-17 Kerry 0-12 (Munster semi-final) Replay
2009 – Cork 1-10 Kerry 0-13 (Munster semi-final)
2008 – Kerry 2-14 Cork 1-13 (All-Ireland semi-final) Replay.
2008 – Kerry 1-13 Cork 3-7 (All-Ireland semi-final)
2008 – Cork 1-16 Kerry 1-11 (Munster final)
2007 – Kerry 3-13 Cork 1-9 (All-Ireland final)
2007 – Kerry 1-15 Cork 1-13 (Munster final)
2006 – Kerry 0-16 Cork 0-10 (All-Ireland semi-final)
2006 – Cork 1-12 Kerry 0-9 (Munster final) Replay
2006 – Cork 0-10 Kerry 0-10 (Munster final)
2005 – Kerry 1-19 Cork 0-9 (All-Ireland semi-final)
2005 – Kerry 1-11 Cork 0-11 (Munster final)
2004 – Kerry 0-15 Cork 0-7 (Munster semi-final)
2002 – Kerry 3-19 Cork 2-7 (All-Ireland semi-final)
2002 – Cork 0-15 Kerry 1-9 (Munster semi-final) Replay
2002 – Cork 0-8 Kerry 0-8 (Munster semi-final)
2001 – Kerry 0-19 Cork 1-13 (Munster final)
2000 – Kerry 2-15 Cork 1-13 (Munster semi-final)

Story so far....

Cork will be have having their first outing in this year's championship but Kerry have one win to their credit, having beaten Tipperary by 2-18 to 2-6 in the first round. Bryan Sheehan scored 2-5 and Colm Cooper 0-5 for Kerry.

WATERFORD v LIMERICK

They have already met twice in this year's Allianz GAA Football National League Division IV campaign but meetings in the Munster championship have been surprisingly scarce over the past twenty years. In fact, next Sunday's game will be only the third Munster championship clash between the counties since 1990.

However, there's a recent form line from this year's League where they met in the Allianz GAA Football National League Division IV group series and again in the final. Waterford won the group game by a point (1-12 to 1-11) but Limerick gained revenge in the final, winning by 1-16 to 1-14. Both were promoted to Division III.

Limerick, who are chasing their first Munster title since 1896, were in last year's final (losing to Cork) while Waterford, who last won the title in 1898, last reached the final in 1960.

Last Five Championship Clashes

2004: Limerick 1-18 Waterford 0-7
1991: Limerick 0-13 Waterford 0-11

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1989: Limerick 5-9 Waterford 1-9
1985: Limerick 2-10 Waterford 0-7
1981: Waterford 0-10 Limerick 1-4

Story so far....

Limerick are having their first outing in this year's championship but Waterford have one win to their credit, having beaten Clare by 1-10 to 0-9 last Sunday week.

SLIGO v MAYO

Reigning Connacht champions, Mayo begin the defence of their crown 'away' to Sligo in what promises to be an intriguing contest. Mayo reached the Allianz GAA Football National League Division I final last month but were well beaten by Cork (1-17 to 0-12) while Sligo won the Allianz GAA Football National League Division III final with a 0-19 to 1-11 win over Antrim. Both sides were promoted to Division II. Mayo won their last three championship clashes with Sligo, whose last success over the green and red was in 2000.

There's an added interest to the game through the rival managers as Mayo boss, John O'Mahony was in charge of Galway when they won two All-Ireland titles in 1998 and 2001, occasions when Sligo manager and former Galway midfielder, Kevin Walsh made a big contribution to the Tribesmen's success.

The winners will play Galway in the semi-final on June 27.

Last Five Championship Clashes

2008: Mayo 3-11 Sligo 0-7
2003: Mayo 0-14 Sligo 0-11
2001: Mayo 1-12 Sligo 1-11
2000: Sligo 1-13 Mayo 1-10
1997: Mayo 0-11 Sligo 1-7

Story so far....

Both will be having their first championship outing.

KILDARE v LOUTH

They meet for the first time in the Leinster GAA Football Championship since 2002. Indeed, it hasn't been a very busy championship rivalry over the last twenty years with only four meetings since 1990.

Kildare, who were runners-up to Dublin last year, last won the Leinster title in 2000 while Louth are chasing their first success since 1957. They have already beaten Longford in the championship (1-11 to 1-7) while Kildare will be having their first outing. They beat Louth in their last two clashes (2002 and 2000) but Louth won the previous two in 1995 and 1991.

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The winner will play Westmeath or Wicklow in the semi-final on June 26.

Last Five Championship Clashes

2002: Kildare 0-12 Louth 0-11
2000: Kildare 1-12 Louth 0-12
1995: Louth 0-13 Kildare 0-11
1991: Louth 2-11 Kildare 2-10
1978: Kildare 4-15 Louth 1-8

WESTMEATH v WICKLOW

They meet for a second successive year, having clashed in last year's quarter-final with Westmeath winning by three points (0-16 to 1-10) in extra-time. Prior to that, Wicklow had won their previous two championship games in 1995 and 1985. Westmeath are heading into the championship off a disappointing Allianz GAA Football National League run, having been relegated from Division II.

They will be having their first outing in the championship, whereas Wicklow already have one win to their credit, beating Carlow by 3-13 to 0-12 in the first round. The winners will play Louth or Kildare in the semi-final on June 26.

Wicklow will, of course, be led by Mick O'Dwyer who is now in his 34th year as a senior championship manager while Pat Flanagan takes charge of Westmeath for the first time after replacing Brendan Hackett who stood down after the League.

Last Five Championship Clashes

2009: Westmeath 0-16 Wicklow 1-10 (After extra-time)
1995: Wicklow 0-9 Westmeath 0-3 (Leinster quarter-final)
1986: Wicklow 0-15 Westmeath 1-5 (Leinster first round)
1982: Westmeath 3-7 Wicklow 2-5 (Replay) (Leinster first round)
1982: Westmeath 1-8 Wicklow 0-11 (Draw) (Leinster first round)

MONAGHAN v ARMAGH

It was a busy championship rivalry in the last decade with the counties clashing on six occasions in Ulster and the All-Ireland qualifiers. Their last clash was in last year's Round I qualifiers where Monaghan won by a point after extra-time in Clones.

Monaghan, who survived in Division I where Tyrone and Derry were relegated, are having their first championship outing but Armagh, who won the Allianz GAA National Football League Division II title, already have an impressive Ulster GAA Football Championship win to their credit having beaten Derry by 1-10 to 1-7 in the first round clash in Celtic Park.

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Last Five Championship Clashes

2009: Monaghan 0-13 Armagh 0-12 (After extra-time)

2006: Armagh 1-13 Monaghan 0-10 (Replay)

2006: Armagh 0-10 Monaghan 0-10

2004: Armagh 2-19 Monaghan 0-10

2003: Monaghan 0-13 Armagh 0-10

GAA FOOTBALL ALL-IRELAND SENIOR CHAMPIONSHIP 2010

CONNACHT

May 2: Quarter-final: Galway 2-13 New York 0-12, Gaelic Park.

May 30: Quarter-final: Roscommon 0-14 London 0-6 Ruislip.

Next Saturday: Quarter-final: Sligo v Mayo, Markievicz Park.

June 20: Semi-final: Roscommon v Leitrim, Dr. Hyde Park.

June 27: Semi-final: Mayo or Sligo v Galway, Castlebar or Pearse Stadium.

July 18: Final

LEINSTER

May 16: First Round: Wicklow 3-13 Carlow 0-12, Portlaoise.

May 23: First Round: Meath 1-20 Offaly 2-7, Portlaoise; Louth 1-11 Longford 1-7, Portlaoise.

Next Saturday: Quarter-final: Kildare v Louth, Navan.

Next Sunday: Quarter-final: Wicklow v Westmeath, Tullamore.

June 13: Quarter-finals: Laois v Meath; Dublin v Wexford. Both in Croke Park.

June 26: Semi-final: Kildare/Louth v Wicklow/Westmeath.

June 27: Dublin/Wexford v Laois/Meath, Croke Park.

July 11: Final, Croke Park.

MUNSTER

May 16: Quarter-final: Kerry 2-18 Tipperary 2-6, Thurles.

May 23: Quarter-final: Waterford 1-10 Clare 0-9, Dungarvan.

Next Sunday: Semi-finals: Kerry v Cork, Killarney; Waterford v Limerick, Dungarvan.

July 4: Final.

ULSTER

May 16: First Round: Armagh 1-10 Derry 1-7, Celtic Park.

May 23: Quarter-final: Tyrone 2-14 Antrim 1-13, Casement Park.

May 30: Quarter-final: Down 1-15 Donegal 2-10 (After extra-time), Ballybofey.

Next Sunday: Quarter-final: Armagh v Monaghan, Casement Park.

June 12: Quarter-final: Cavan v Fermanagh, Kingspan Breffni Park.

June 19: Semi-final: Tyrone v Down.

June 27: Cavan/Fermanagh v Armagh/Monaghan.

July 18: Final.

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ALL-IRELAND CHAMPIONSHIP

June 26: Qualifiers Round 1: Those involved: 16 teams who didn't reach provincial semi-finals.

Counties already there: Carlow, Offaly, Longford, Derry, Antrim, Donegal, Tipperary, Clare, London.

July 10: Qualifiers Round 2: Eight first round winner's v eight defeated provincial semi-finalists.

July 17: Qualifiers Round 3: Round 2 winners play off against each other in four games.

July 24: Qualifiers Round 4: Round 3 winner's v beaten provincial finalists.

July 31/August 1/2/3: All-Ireland Quarter-finals.

August 22: All-Ireland Semi-final, Croke Park.

August 29: All-Ireland Semi-final, Croke Park.

September 19: All-Ireland Final, Croke Park.

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