

**GAA**  
Páirc an Chrócaigh  
Baile Átha Cliath 3  
Guthán +353 1 836 3222  
Faics +353 1 836 5075  
www.gaa.ie

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Dublin 3  
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Fax +353 1 836 5075  
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## CLARE & WATERFORD BID FOR MUNSTER FINAL PLACE

The honour of being the first to book a place in the Munster GAA Hurling Championship Final will fall to Clare or Waterford who meet in the semi-final on Bank Holiday Monday next. Throw in will be at 3.0 with Brian Gavin (Offaly) as referee.

Meanwhile, on Sunday, Dublin and Laois clash in the Leinster GAA Hurling Championship Quarter-final in Nowlan Park (3.30) with Cathal McAllister (Cork) in charge. There's also Christy Ring Cup semi-finals, plus Nicky Rackard and Lory Meagher action on Saturday and Sunday.

### CLARE v WATERFORD

They meet for the 29<sup>th</sup> time in the championship (including All-Ireland qualifiers) with Clare leading 15-9 while there were four draws in their previous 28 encounters.

It's their first clash since the 2008 Munster first round tie which Clare won easily, leading to the departure of Waterford manager Justin McCarthy, followed by his replacement with former Clare hero, Davy Fitzgerald.

Fitzgerald now leads Waterford against his native county and against Ger 'Sparrow' O'Loughlin, his team mate on the Clare teams that won All-Ireland titles in 1995 and 1997.

Waterford reached five Munster finals in the last decade, winning three in 2002-2004-2007 and losing in 2003 and 2009. Clare, who last won the Munster title in 1998, reached one final last year, losing to Tipperary in 2008.

Both will be having their first outing in this year's championship. They didn't meet in this year's League as Waterford were in Division I whereas Clare were in Division II.

### Last Five Championship Clashes

2008: Clare 2-26 Waterford 0-23  
2005: Clare 4-14 Waterford 0-21  
2004: Waterford 3-21 Clare 1-8  
1998: Clare 2-16 Waterford 0-10 (Replay)  
1998: Clare 1-16 Waterford 3-10 (Draw)

### DUBLIN v LAOIS

They meet for the first time in the Leinster GAA Hurling Championship since 2005 when Laois beat Dublin by 4-14 to 0-14 in a quarter-final clash in Nowlan Park on a day when James Young scored 1-9 for the winners.

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Dublin have improved considerably since then, having reached the Leinster final and All-Ireland Quarter-final last year while also continuing to secure their place in Division I whereas Laois are in Division II.

However, Laois gave themselves a considerable confidence booster in the opening round of the Leinster GAA Hurling championship when they beat Carlow by 1-13 to 0-10 in Portlaoise last Saturday week in a game where midfielder, Joe Fitzpatrick scored 1-3 for the winners.

All-Ireland champions, Kilkenny await the winners of Sunday's game in the semi-final on June 20.

#### **LAST FIVE CHAMPIONSHIP MEETINGS**

2005: Laois 4-14 Dublin 0-14  
2003: Dublin 3-11 Laois 0-15 (Replay)  
2003: Dublin 1-18 Laois 2-15 (draw)  
2001: Laois 1-15 Dublin 2-11  
2000: Dublin 2-15 Laois 1-14 (Replay)

#### **GAA CHRISTY RING CUP**

The battles for places in the final takes place next Saturday with Kerry taking on Wicklow in Nenagh (3.30) and Kildare facing Westmeath in Páirc Tailteann, Navan (5.0).

#### **GAA NICKY RACKARD CUP**

##### **Saturday**

Round 1: Louth v Tyrone, Dundalk, 3.30; Armagh v Fingal, Crossmaglen, 3.30;  
Roscommon v Monaghan, Athleague, 3.30

##### **Sunday**

London v Sligo, Ruislip, 5.0.

#### **GAA LORY MEAGHER CUP**

##### **Saturday**

Round 1: Warwickshire v Fermanagh, Páirc na hEireann, 1.0; Leitrim v South Down, Carrick-on-Shannon, 3.30; Donegal v Longford, Letterkenny, 3.30.

#### **GAA HURLING ALL-IRELAND SENIOR CHAMPIONSHIP 2010**

##### **LEINSTER**

May 22: First round: Laois 1-13 Carlow 0-10, Portlaoise.  
May 29: Quarter-final: Galway 2-22 Wexford 1-14, Nowlan Park.  
May 30: Quarter-final: Offaly 2-26 Antrim 3-16 (After extra-time), Parnell Park.  
Next Sunday: Quarter-final: Dublin v Laois, Nowlan Park.  
June 20: Semi-finals: Dublin/Laois v Kilkenny; Galway v Offaly, Croke Park.  
July 4: Final, Croke Park.

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### **MUNSTER**

May 30: First round: Cork 3-15 Tipperary 0-14, Páirc Uí Chaoimh.

Next Monday: Semi-final: Clare v Waterford, Thurles.

June 20: Semi-final: Cork v Limerick, Páirc Uí Chaoimh.

July 11: Final

### **ULSTER**

May 8: Monaghan 1-15 Fermanagh 2-10, Enniskillen; Armagh 3-23 Donegal 1-12, Letterkenny; Tyrone 6-24 Cavan 1-14, Omagh.

May 15: London 3-16 Monaghan 1-15, Casement Park; Armagh 3-20 Tyrone 2-9, Casement Park.

May 29: Quarter-finals: Down 4-24 Armagh 0-9, Casement Park; London 2-12 Derry 0-15, Casement Park.

June 13: Semi-final. Down v London,

June 27: Final: Antrim v Down/London, Casement Park.

### **ALL-IRELAND CHAMPIONSHIP**

June 26: All-Ireland qualifier – Preliminary Round (One game involving two of the following counties: Tipperary, Carlow, Antrim, Wexford, plus the losers of Dublin v Laois)

July 3: Qualifiers – Phase I

July 10: Qualifiers – Phase II

July 17: Qualifiers – Phase III.

July 25: All-Ireland Quarter-finals

August 8: Semi-final, Croke Park.

August 15: Semi-final, Croke Park.

September 5: Final, Croke Park.

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