

Highs and Lows



Maurice Shanahan and Patrick Hurney produced star turns for Waterford last Sunday. See Sport 2-4 for more League coverage and reaction from Walsh Park. | Photos: Noel Browne

Contrasting emotions for our senior managers following double-header

There was quiet satisfaction for Derek McGrath's hurlers, and head-scratching disappointment for Tom McGlinchey's footballers following last Sunday's National League double-header against Antrim at Walsh Park.

The Deise's 32-point demolition of Kevin Ryan's charges has guaranteed a League quarter-final berth, but the much greater prize of automatic promotion awaits should Waterford return from Wexford Park victorious on Sunday next (throw-in: 2pm).

Meanwhile, the McGrath Cup winners suffered their fourth successive Division Four defeat, the third NFL reversal in which, frustratingly, they'd lost by just two points (0-15 to 0-13).

Derek McGrath, as understated as always following Waterford's 4-30 to 0-10 victory, stated: "We're happy enough. It was a good performance from the lads and I was generally happy with their application, and it was great to see so many lads out there today working so hard..."

"When we got the draw for the League, we were handed Limerick, Offaly and Wexford away, so on paper, we probably got the three most difficult away games we could have been left facing. So now we've Wexford next Sunday, and I know ye probably think this is me playing it down again but we really are only taking this one game at a time.

"If we'd found ourselves in a situation at the start of the week where we'd be going to Wexford with everything on the line, that wouldn't have been an additional motivation for us. We just want to improve, we want to get better and that's what we're

trying to do.

“We’ve two massive games over the next weekend, we’ll enjoy Wexford next weekend...we did what we had to do today but we’re under no illusions about what we’re going to be facing in Wexford.”

As for our footballers, who played before a fraction of the 1558-strong gate that filed in to check out the lunchtime hurling opener, a third two-point defeat in this League campaign which started so optimistically was difficult to stomach.

“I hope no-one ever questions the attitude, application and effort of these players when they come to training or when they come to matches,” said Tom McGlinchey, whose pride in his players was as evident as his disappointment at the result.

“When you’re out of the League, the easiest thing to do would be to, maybe, throw out a weaker team per se and go through the motions, but that’s not what we’re here for. We’re here building for the Championship.”

McGlinchey added: “And these lads are hurting; they’re hurting after losing three matches by two points, and it’s small margins, and this is where Waterford have to come up to the plate if they’re to compete with the better teams.

“Small margins mean so much in games like this, and we’ve got to start coming out on the right side of these sorts of games. Antrim scored their frees, we missed a few frees and we missed a penalty (in second half injury-time) – it could have gone either way at the end. Yes, we’re disappointed but we’re thrilled with the lads’ application.”

The results’ graphs for both Port Láirge units make for contrasting analysis right now, and while our hurlers are moving in the right direction, our footballers remain unluckily stuck between gears. However, both must keep believing ahead of their respective summer campaigns.