

Waterford Relishing Monaghan Challenge

**All-Ireland Senior Football Qualifier Round 2
Waterford v Monaghan (Fraher Field, Saturday, 2pm)**

“We’re determined to make the most of Saturday,” Waterford senior football manager Tom McGlinchey told The Munster Express ahead of the visit of Monaghan to Fraher Field.

“We’ve trained very well since the Wexford match, I’d be hopeful of having Joey Veale back available, which would be a great boost for us and the rest of the panel are in really good shape having got that Championship win we were so hungry and anxious to achieve.”

The affable McGlinchey added: “We know we’re going to be up against it on Saturday. It’s a level of challenge we’ve never faced competitively before in my time here as manager – while Cork were a Division One side that we pushed all the way to the brink last year in Dungarvan, Monaghan are very much a top six side, and as a Division Four team facing top flight opposition, you have to take that into account in terms of how we’ll set ourselves up. We know we’re going to have vast swathes of the game when we won’t have the ball and that presents a different challenge than we’d have faced from Wexford or from other Division Three and Four teams for that matter. We know we’re heading into a match where our work and discipline off the ball is probably going to count for as much as what we’d like to do when in possession and on the attack. That’s just reality but it’s sort of reality and challenge we’re all delighted to be facing into. That’s what playing football at this time of the year is all about. It looks like there’s going to be sizeable travelling support from Monaghan down for the game, which is obviously going to be great for the Dungarvan economy. Hopefully getting the better of Wexford and extending our run in the Championship will mean we’ll draw a few additional supporters in the gate so that we can generate the sort of atmosphere we probably haven’t had enough of over the last few years. But we realising we have to be winning and performing consistently to give supporters something to shout about and I just hope the lads will raise it a level, like we did against Cork last year and produce a performance against top class opposition that our supporters will be proud of.”



JJ Hutchinson was in scintillating form as Waterford overcame Wexford in their Round 1 Qualifier at Wexford Park. | Photo: Sportsfile

Tom McGlinchey welcomed the national media coverage his players have received since the victory in Wexford Park. “That’s been a fantastic and well-deserved off-shoot for the lads,” he declared. “I know how hard these lads work in training, I know how committed they are to that jersey every time they pull it on so to see them getting column inches for the right reasons, recognising their commitment in an inter-county code that’s a hard sell here in Waterford, has been totally unexpected, to be honest, but it’s so well merited.”

Acknowledging the greater weight that a Championship victory accrues for any inter-county panel, the Deise boss added: “If you’re talking about the difference between League and Championship, it really is chalk and cheese stuff. If we’d won four League matches or even won promotion, I don’t think we’d have generated the level of interest that winning in Wexford and then coming out of the draw against Monaghan has generated. The Championship really is the only gig in town, it’s what every county player wants to play in as regularly as possible as that’s where you get the chance, as a group, to raise the bar. You see how good League campaigns have benefited and spurred on the likes of Tipperary and Carlow in recent years and that’s got to be the challenge for us: to turn good performances into more victories. We’re under no illusions about the scale of the challenge facing us on Saturday, but the mood in the group is fantastic and we’re determined to make the most of this challenge.”