

# 2010 All-Ireland SFC Quarter-Final

## Five key battles on Sunday

■ Interviews: Shane Reynolds

**Battles in a number of pivotal positions will prove decisive in Sunday's All-Ireland quarter-final between Roscommon and Cork. Shane Reynolds spoke to two men well qualified to read Sunday's encounter, former Roscommon player Seamus Hayden and former Mayo stalwart Kevin McStay and got their take on who will come out on top in these key battles.**

### Fergal O'Donnell v Conor Counihan

The battle of the managers will be very interesting. Fergal O'Donnell's reputation is ever-growing amongst the GAA elite while Conor Counihan will not rest until he has secured All-Ireland glory with Cork. Counihan is the more experienced of the two, however O'Donnell will feel right at home considering his exploits with the minor team in 2006. If his side manage to pull off the shock of the summer then his reputation will be further enhanced.

**SH:** "I think both of the managers are very similar. They are both cool, calm and astute men. Fergal has gained a lot of experience from his minor days while Croke Park is like a second home for Counihan."

**K McS:** "They are both very good managers and I'd imagine both are very popular in the dressing room owing to their likeable personalities. Although Counihan has

managed in Croke Park on a number of occasions O'Donnell has his fair share of experience too through his exploits with the minors."

### Seanie McDermott v Daniel Goulding

Daniel Goulding is one of Cork's most potent dangerman. One can only speculate, but presumably it will be Seanie McDermott who will be assigned the task of nullifying the sharp-shooting corner-forward. After his man-of-the-match performance the last day out, Goulding's confidence will be high—however McDermott is fast becoming regarded as one of the best man-markers around the country, so this clash certainly makes for an interesting sub-plot. If Cork play high ball on top of Goulding, Roscommon could be in trouble but if the majority of the supply is along the ground, McDermott may excel. Only time will tell. A very interesting battle lies in store.

**SH:** "Seanie Mc is tight and tenacious. Goulding may hold the physical edge but Seanie will fight for everything and this battle will be a very interesting one. Anything along the ground will be pounced upon by Seanie."

**K McS:** "Goulding is one of the best young talents in the game at the moment in my opinion. He is very important to the Cork challenge and will try to get onto his dangerous left foot as much as possible on Sunday. However Sean McDermott is also a fantastic footballer and will be up for the challenge. The key for him will be to play in front in order to try and quench the threat of Goulding."



### EXPERT VIEW McStay & Hayden

### Michael Finneran v Alan O'Connor

The midfield clash centres around two players who have been very important to their own team's cause in recent games. Michael Finneran was outstanding in the Connacht Final while Alan O'Connor has established himself as one of the most well-known midfielders throughout the country with a string of impressive displays since he burst on to the scene last year. Hopefully Finneran was picked up where he left off the last day, but it will be very difficult up against the midfield diamond of Cork, who are vastly experienced. One would imagine that Fergal O'Donnell would be more than happy if Roscommon break even in this sector.

**SH:** "Michael Finneran was exceptional in the Connacht Final and provided a springboard for us, particularly in the first half. However

Cork are possibly the strongest team in this sector throughout the country so it will be very difficult this Sunday, there's no doubt about that."

**K McS:** "There is doubt over who will start in midfield the next day for Cork, but no matter who it is, it's going to be difficult for Roscommon. Michael Finneran was majestic the last day but he will need the very same performance if he is going to have any say in the midfield exchanges on Sunday."

### Cathal Cregg v Noel O'Leary

Noel O'Leary is Cork's best player to win breaking ball, so one can almost take for granted that he will be assigned the duty of marking Cathal Cregg this Sunday. Cregg was fantastic in the win over Sligo, pouncing on loose ball and driving his team forward at every opportunity, but O'Leary will be a very tough nut to crack, considering his uncompromising nature. However if Cregg can put him on the back foot from the first whistle, then it may be another very fruitful day for the Western Gaels clubman.

**SH:** "Cathal Cregg was excellent during the last game. However, he will have his hands full with Noel O'Leary, who is a very robust character. Cathal is one of our most experienced footballers and I'd be quite confident that he can get the better of this battle if he is focused on the game."

**K McS:** "Cathal was very impressive during the last game. However I think that he needs to add scores to all the other important work he does for the team. For instance

I would hate to read the paper on Monday and learn that Noel O'Leary has outscored Cathal Cregg from wing-back, as O'Leary is a very dangerous customer once he breaks forward."

### Donie Shine v Graham Canty

With Michael Shields presumably unavailable due to injury, it would seem that Graham Canty will revert to full-back to man-mark Roscommon's most valuable player, Donie Shine. Shine's class does not need to be underlined owing to his individual performance the last day, however he will be facing one of the most accomplished and experienced defenders that has played since the turn of the millennium. If Shine gets the right type of supply then he will cause Canty all kinds of problems, but if Roscommon are struggling to gain primary possession then this battle may be a non-event. Having said that, he has the ability to emulate his McHale Park heroics if the supply lines are forthcoming.

**SH:** "Obviously Donie Shine is our key man and will be relishing the challenge of this game. His ability is undoubted so I just hope he'll get the opportunities to show what he is capable of again on Sunday. However it certainly won't be easy as Canty is one of the best defenders in the game."

**K McS:** "I am a massive fan of Shine's and have watched him mature from the minors. He is one of the best place-kickers in the country at the moment but only time will tell if those around him will be able to manufacture the frees which will allow him to showcase them skills on Sunday."

Best wishes to Roscommon in the All-Ireland Quarter Final



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