

## TG4 All-Ireland SFC semi-final report: Kerry 1-8 Armagh 0-7

Kerry 1-8 -v- Armagh 0-7

By Daire Walsh

Niamh Ní Chonchúir grabbed a 16th minute goal at Glenisk O'Connor Park as Kerry advanced to a third consecutive TG4 All-Ireland Senior Football Championship final with a triumph against Armagh.

Five points to the good at the midway stage in this penultimate round contest, the Kingdom did enough in a low-scoring second half to seal their place in a top-tier championship decider alongside Galway — where they will hope to make amends for final defeats to Dublin and Meath in the past two seasons.

During a lively start to the contest, Armagh popped over points via the boots of Eva Lavery (two), Blaithin Mackin and Dearbhla Coleman. While Kerry attacker Siofra O'Shea added a score to compliment an earlier free from Louise Ní Mhuircheartaigh, Niamh Henderson split the posts on the run to give the Ulster side a 0-5 to 0-2 cushion on the first-quarter mark.

Yet team captain Clodagh McCambridge was temporarily replaced with a blood injury around this juncture following a clash with Kerry's Aishling O'Connell, who was also forced off for a five-minute period, and in her absence Ní Chonchúir got on the end of an excellent move to drill a fierce strike past Armagh netminder Anna Carr.

This added a spark to the Kerry challenge and with Danielle O'Leary, Ní Mhuircheartaigh (free) and the returning O'Connell finding the target to supplement a 0-2 salvo from skipper Niamh Carmody, the Munster champions were 1-7 to 0-5 in front at the break.

However, the Kingdom had suffered a blow a little under two minutes before the interval when Carmody was sent to the sin-bin. Even though their five-point cushion remained intact upon her re-emergence, Armagh added swift scores courtesy of Niamh Coleman and Mackin (free) to ramp up the pressure on Kerry.

The Kingdom, bidding for their first TG4 All-Ireland crown since 1993, were able to maintain possession for large stretches of the play, but it wasn't until the 49th minute that Kerry got their second half account up and running with a pointed free from centre-forward O'Leary.

Nonetheless, this established a four-point advantage for the 11-time winners and with Mackin receiving a 51st minute yellow card for a tackle on substitute Lorraine Scanlon, they ultimately eased their way into another Brendan Martin Cup showpiece.

Scorers - Kerry: N Ní Chonchúir 1-0, D O'Leary 0-2 (1f), N Carmody 0-2, L Ní Mhuircheartaigh 0-2 (2f), A O'Connell, S O'Shea 0-1 each.

Armagh: E Lavery 0-2, B Mackin 0-2 (1f), D Coleman, N Coleman, N Henderson 0-1 each.

KERRY: C Butler; E Lynch, K Cronin, C Murphy; A O'Connell, D Kearney, A Dillane; M O'Connell, A Galvin; N Carmody, D O'Leary, N Ní Chonchúir; S O'Shea, E Dineen, L Ní Mhuircheartaigh. Subs: A Harrington for A O'Connell (13-18), H O'Donoghue for Ní Mhuircheartaigh (46), L Scanlon for Carmody (49), K Brosnan for Ní Chonchúir (58).

ARMAGH: A Carr; G Ferguson, C McCambridge, R Mulligan; C Towe, L McConville, D Coleman; N Coleman, C O'Hanlon; E Druse, A McCoy, B Mackin; E Lavery, N Henderson, M McCambridge. Subs: L Kenny for C McCambridge (13-18), K Mallon for Lavery (38), N Reel for Henderson (50), L Kenny for Druse (54), M Feehan for O'Hanlon (58).

Referee: Shane Curley (Galway).