

# PITCH & PUTT IRELAND



## National Matchplay Finals 2026

May 30<sup>th</sup>, 31<sup>st</sup> & June 1<sup>st</sup>

**Senior Ladies Official Venue**

**Rocklodge Pitch and Putt**

**Intermediate & Junior Ladies Official Venues**

**Ranges Pitch and Putt**

**Rocklodge Pitch and Putt**

**Championship Preview by John Manning**

## Ladies Senior Preview

The 2026 National Ladies Matchplay championship opens with a high profile preliminary round encounter between a couple of former champions. **Tracey Redmond** (Lucan) won at Castletown in 2009 while **Mary Murray** (Rocklodge) claimed the trophy on the last occasion it was contested at Rocklodge – that was in 2019.

The winner of that joust will face No. 4 seed **Sarah O'Neill** (Collins) in the quarter-final. Sarah collected the All Ireland Ladies Matchplay Nett Cup at Rocklodge seven years ago and reached the Scratch semi-finals at Larkspur Park in 2024.

The second preliminary round match sees 2022 champion (at Douglas) **Liz Quinn** (Collinstown) challenged by Seapoint's **Barbara Murphy**, the 2025 Leinster Strokeplay runner-up.

Both boast a prodigious provincial Matchplay pedigree. Barbara was 2019 Leinster Junior and 2023 Leinster Intermediate Matchplay champion while Liz reached the 2022 and 2023 senior finals.

Lying in wait for whoever survives that all-Leinster clash is **Amy Galvin** (Tullamore), who lifted the Elvery Cup in Cashel two years ago before succumbing to **Chrissie Sheedy** (Ryston) in last season's decider at Erry.

Holder Chrissie renews rivalry with Fermoy's **Eleanor Walsh** in the last eight. This pair has regularly clashed at the business end of the championship, most notably in the 2012 final at Claycastle and in the 2018 semi-final at Tullamore, both matches won by Chrissie.

Chrissie seeks to reach the semi-finals for the 18th time in her bid to match Clare Keating's haul of eight titles – second best all-time in championship history. 1988 champion Eleanor has contested eight semi-finals.

The other quarter-final match that is already set sees Fermoy's **Sarah Byrne** tackle the 2014 champion **Breda White** (Tipperary Hills). Former Irish girls' champion Sarah reached the final at Douglas four years ago while two-time Strokeplay champion Breda finished runner-up in the 2020 and 2021 Matchplays.

## Intermediate Ladies Preview

The National Ladies Intermediate Matchplay championship has not been played for 34 years. Eight Cork contenders will have the opportunity of emulating Pat McCarthy (Collins), who was crowned champion at Lakewood in 1992.

First of these into action will be 2024 Munster Junior Matchplay champion and provincial Mixed Foursomes winner **Linda Griffin** (Bishopstown) who is opposed by Carlow Inter-County player **Ann Hickey** (Bagenalstown), a prolific winner in Scratch Cups already this season.

That's a preliminary round match-up as is the meeting of 2002 National Girls Strokeplay champion, and 2018 Munster Junior Matchplay champion **Valerie Leahy** (Lakewood) with Eden's **Angela Connolly**, a semi-finalist in last year's All-Ireland Ladies Matchplay Nett Cup.

Reigning Leaside Matchplay champion **Siobhan Foy** (Rocklodge) faces a very tough assignment against 2020 All-Ireland Ladies Matchplay Nett Cup winner and 2021 National Junior Strokeplay champion, **Margaret Hennessy** (Riverdale). Having claimed the 2023 National Intermediate Strokeplay title, Margaret will relish the opportunity to be the first player to win both the National Strokeplay and Matchplay at intermediate level.

Another former All-Ireland Ladies Matchplay Nett Cup winner **Marion Gannon Kelly** (Ryston) plays Lakewood's **Ann O'Herlihy** who reached the final of the same event in 2022 before claiming runners-up spot in last year's National Junior Strokeplay championship.

Cork is guaranteed at least one quarter-final slot with 2012 National Junior Strokeplay champion **Ailish Sexton** (Fermoy) taking on 2005 Munster Matchplay victor **Vera McCarthy** (Collins).

The only player to claim two All-Ireland Ladies Matchplay Nett Cup titles **Audrey Donnelly** (MacBride) bars the path to progress of 2026 Cork Matchplay runner-up and 2025 provincial Junior Strokeplay winner **Gillian Morrissey** (St. Anne's).

Final Cork player to tee-off will be 2003 National Intermediate Strokeplay bronze medalist **Patricia Murphy** who hope to make host course (Ranges) advantage pay against Shandon's **Patricia McLoughlin**, who placed third in the 2012 National Intermediate Strokeplay championship.

2023 Munster Matchplay champion **Lisa O'Connor** has been hugely successful in Mixed Foursomes, both provincially and nationally. The Tralee lady will hope to bring that experience to bear against former National Girls Matchplay and Strokeplay champion and reigning Leinster Intermediate Matchplay champion **Molly O'Toole** (McDonagh).

The inaugural 2018 All-Ireland Ladies Matchplay Nett Cup winner **Elaine Quinn** (Lakeside) will do battle with Reigning Munster Matchplay champion and 2024 National Mixed Foursomes winner **Eileen McCarthy** (Deerpark).

## Junior Ladies Preview

Reigning National Junior Strokeplay champion **Charlotte Blake** will seek a quick double in the 2026 All-Ireland Junior Matchplay. Charlotte would probably prefer to be confronting anybody other than Tralee clubmate **Catriona O'Connor**, the 2023 Munster Matchplay champion and 2024 provincial Strokeplay runner-up.

The winner of that Tralee derby will next tackle the survivor from the intriguing collision of **Ciara O'Riordan** (Rocklodge), granddaughter of club legend T.J. and 2026 Munster Junior Matchplay champion **Margaret O'Donovan** (Bruff).

Next up, Lakewood Juvenile Officer **Teresa Venables** challenges reigning Cork Matchplay champion and 2025 Munster Matchplay champion **Michelle O'Connell** (Cunnigar).

2023 Cork Strokeplay and Matchplay champion **Eileen Hanley** will be another seeking to capitalize on the familiar surroundings of The Ranges as she engages with Tipperary Inter-County player **Serena O'Neill** (Larkspur Park).

Already through to the Junior quarter-finals are three-time Cork Peter Healy Memorial Team Event winner **Sandra O'Sullivan** (Bishopstown) and her opponent **Nuala McNamara** (Collins), 2023 Munster Junior Strokeplay champion and 2016 National Ladies Junior Strokeplay bronze medalist.

Completing the last eight line-up are 2022 Munster Junior Matchplay runner-up **Angela Royer** (Bishopstown) and **Jean O'Shea** (Deerpark), who contested last year's All-Ireland Ladies Matchplay Nett Cup finals.