

# Na Gaeil Notes Monday December 6<sup>th</sup> 2021

**Intermediate Final** Na Gaeil GAA Club has made its own bit of history once again with the senior team playing in its first ever County Intermediate Final and emerging victorious against Mid Kerry side Beaufort in Fitzgerald Stadium on Saturday. Na Gaeil was without the services of county star Jack Barry, captain Eoin Doody and defender Kieran O'Donovan. But the good news was that our other county star Diarmuid O'Connor lined out at wing forward, against all the odds after sustaining a nasty hand injury a few weeks earlier. Beaufort was without the services of their influential captain, Liam Carey who is out with a long term injury. On what was a cold December day Na Gaeil played with the aid of the breeze in the opening half, with both teams finding it difficult to cope with the slippery underfoot conditions due to the sporadic showers of heavy rain that fell that morning and throughout the day. Beaufort drew first blood after two minutes of play when their nifty no. 15 Kieran Dennehy won a mark outside the 20 metre line and put it over the bar. There were many handling errors by both teams in the first quarter due to the wet surface. Beaufort had the lion's share of possession at this stage but failed to convert it into scores as the Na Gaeil defence fought tenaciously and broke up every Beaufort attack. Both sides traded wides but as the quarter wore on the Killeen side found their rhythm, settled into the game and began to pick off scores at will. In the 13<sup>th</sup> minute Andrew Barry who was mopping everything up in the middle of his defence fired over a beauty from all of 45 metres. This was quickly followed by a super point from wing forward Diarmuid O'Connor from out on the right wing. Young Jack Sheehan added to that tally a minute later when he popped one over the bar, after being put through by Stefan Okunbor, to leave Na Gaeil two points ahead at the first water break. Na Gaeil never let up and Sheehan scored his 2<sup>nd</sup> point on the resumption of play. Beaufort were totally at sea and couldn't take a stranglehold on the game which was mainly down to Na Gaeil's superior work rate. The scores came thick and fast for Na Gaeil. In the 24<sup>th</sup> minute, Darragh Carmody pointed a 30 metre free for a foul on Stefan Okunbor after James O'Connor had delivered him a good pass. Jack Bourke scored his first of the afternoon on 27 minutes and this was followed by another Darragh Carmody point, this time from play. In the last minute of the half Jack Bourke won a mark after receiving a good ball from Dan Goggin and put the kick straight between the posts. In injury time Fergal Hallissey pointed a free for Beaufort. Their first score in 30 minutes, to leave Na Gaeil ahead by 6 at the break on a score line of Na Gaeil: 0-08; Beaufort: 0-02. It was a super first half display by Na Gaeil with their supporters giving them a standing ovation on their way to the dressing rooms and deservedly so.

Would there be a kick in Beaufort in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half with the breeze at their back. They definitely brought more intensity to their game and were rewarded with a goal 3 minutes

into the half. Kieran Dennehy won possession outside the large parallelogram. He passed it to Jack O'Connor, who rifled it to back of the Na Gaeil net to reduce the gap to three points. You would expect this score to rattle Na Gaeil. But they kept their composure and focused on the job at hand. In the 37<sup>th</sup> minute, Tomás O'hAiniféin was hauled down at the other end after a good run through the middle and Darragh Carmody pointed the resultant free to leave 4 between the sides again. At the start of the 2<sup>nd</sup> half Beaufort put midfielder Ronan Murphy into the edge of the square and pumped high ball into him. But this ploy didn't work as Na Gaeil full back Niall O'Mahony was in the form of his life and prevented him from winning any gainful possession. At either side of him Enda O'Connor and Damien Bourke were winning their individual battles, clearing their lines every time and mopping up all the breaks.

From here to the end it was point for point from both sides. Beaufort's Padraig Doona reduced the deficit with a good point from 30 metres. Na Gaeil were doing well at midfield through Tomás O hAiniféin and Stefan Okunbor. James O'Connor was working his socks off at no. 10 and sweeping up a lot of dirty ball. Jack Bourke who had a marvelous game fisted over his third point on forty minutes but this was cancelled out when Ciaran Kennedy fisted over for Beaufort at the other end. Just before the water break Tomás O'hAiniféin cut through the centre and slotted over a fine point with his left to leave Na Gaeil 4 ahead on a score line of Na Gaeil: 0-11; Beaufort : 1-04.

Jack Sheehan was to the fore again after this water break, when on his way through lost possession but managed to rifle the ground ball over the bar to put Na Gaeil 5 ahead and looking comfortable. But Beaufort kept plugging away and were rewarded with a Fergal Hallissey pointed free and also a fine point from play from Seán O'Brien. At the other end Darragh Carmody's goal bound bullet of a shot just sneaked outside the post. If it had gone in it was game over. Instead at the other end Beaufort were awarded a 45 and Jack O'Connor slotted it over the bar on 57 minutes. This brought it back to a two point game and made for an exciting finish. Fergal Hallissey sent a 35 metre free to the right of the posts at the end of normal time, which if it had gone over would have made it a 1 point game. Na Gaeil slowed the game down in extra time and with time almost up Enda O'Connor was hauled down outside the Beaufort parallelogram. Dara Devine pointed the free to put Na Gaeil 3 ahead again. Only a goal would save Beaufort now. They had one last attack and worked the ball up the field. But Na Gaeil had a wall of bodies back and easily dealt with Beaufort's last shot on goal. Referee Brendan Brosnan blew the final whistle much to the delight of the Na Gaeil players, management and supporters. Final score: Na Gaeil: 0-13; Beaufort: 1-07. This has to go down as one of Na Gaeil's greatest achievements ever. The performance of the players has to be commended. They certainly did their talking on the pitch. Their work rate and support play was top class and they just made it impossible for Beaufort to settle into the game at any stage. There were heroes all over the pitch. Devon Burns was rock solid between

the posts and his accuracy from kick outs was excellent. As already stated the full back line of Enda O'Connor, Niall O'Mahony and Damien Bourke soaked up everything that was thrown at them and gave their opposite numbers a torrid time. In the half back line, Fergal Barry didn't put a foot wrong all day and made some great sallies up the field. Andrew Barry put in a man of the match performance and must have the most possessions of any player on the pitch. What a dream day for Oisín Maunsell. It was his first outing for Na Gaeil senior team and he slotted seamlessly into the no. 7 position. Stefan Okunbor and Tomás O hAiniféin won the midfield battle over the hour which served as the platform for many of our attacks. They covered every blade of grass and linked up very well with both our attack and defence. If your half forward line comes out on top there's every chance you'll taste success and that's exactly how things transpired. James O'Connor was a revelation at no. 10, won a serious amount of possession and showed the strength of Irish rugby star Tadhg Furlong in shipping some heavy tackles. At no. 11 Dan Goggin was a good orchestrator as usual and his accurate long deliveries into the full forward line yielded some good scores. Diarmuid O'Connor at right half forward defied all the odds in lining out at all, but you would expect nothing less from such a great clubman. And what a super game he had, scoring a ridiculous point in the first half. Inside them Jack Sheehan, Jack Bourke and Darragh Carmody made for a potent full forward line scoring 7 points from play between them. Darragh Carmody's play was calm and measured as always. They say experience comes with age, but what a performance from 18 year old Jack Sheehan and 19 year old Jack Bourke scoring 3 points each in their first Intermediate Final. Absolutely amazing! Darragh Reen, Dan O'Connor, Dara Devine, Jamie Lowham and Kieran Dineen also played their part when introduced as did the whole panel throughout the year. Hats off to our management team for the wonderful job they have done with this panel and for the effort they have put in all year. In the absence of our captain, Eoin Doody and vice captain, Jack Barry it was Diarmuid O'Connor and Kieran Dineen that accepted the cup from county treasurer Tom Keane to rapturous applause from our very appreciative and loyal supporters. Andrew Barry was presented with yet another man of the match award for a top drawer display at centre half back, to cap a great year so far for him. It was a great day at the office and as a club we are delighted to be elevated to the senior ranks for the county championship in 2022. Congratulations and well done to all involved. Our opponents in the Intermediate Munster Championship are Drom and Inch of Tipperary and that game will be played in two week's time in Austin Stack Park.

**Team:** Devon Burns, Enda O'Connor, Niall O'Mahony, Damien Bourke, Fergal Barry, Andrew Barry(0-01), Oisín Maunsell, Tomás O'hAiniféin(0-01), Stefan Okunbor, James O'Connor, Dan Goggin, Diarmuid O'Connor(0-01), Jack Sheehan(0-03), Jack Bourke(0-03), Darragh Carmody(0-03). **Subs:** Darragh Reen for Oisín Maunsell; Dan O'Connor for Dan Goggin; Dara Devine(0-01) for Jack Bourke; Kieran Dineen for Darragh Carmody; Jamie Lowham for James O'Connor.

**Hats & Flags** Na Gaeil car flags and beanie hats are for sale in the clubhouse and in Byrnes Spar, Oakpark. We look forward to seeing you wearing the club colours and supporting our senior team as they begin their Munster campaign.

**Senior County Final** It was great to see two Tralee teams, Austin Stacks and Kerins O'Rahillys playing in the Senior County Final at the weekend. Unfortunately there can only be one winner so heartiest congratulations to Austin Stacks on a great victory. Commiserations to Kerins O'Rahillys. Their cause wasn't helped by the early loss of Gavin O'Brien and David Moran. But they have a good panel of players and will be back even stronger next year. We wish Austin Stacks the best of luck as they embark on their Munster campaign.

**Na Gaeilgoers** It's Back! Na Gaeilgoers walking / running group is back every Monday and Thursday evening at 7.30pm sharp. Start your fitness journey by walking or running 5km while also getting fresh air and meeting new people. High vis jackets a must. Route will be around Tralee town and will be explained on the night. Children welcome but must be accompanied by an adult throughout the route. Please arrive at Na Gaeil and have parked by 7.25pm. Respect social distancing. This event will go ahead unless there is a weather warning. So please come along and join us.

**AGM** Our club AGM will now take place on Thursday, January 20<sup>th</sup> 2022 at 8pm. Any motions will have to be submitted to John Keating at [secretary.nagaeil.kerry@gaa.ie](mailto:secretary.nagaeil.kerry@gaa.ie) by Thursday, December 30<sup>th</sup> 2021.

**Lotto** Our Lotto draw was held on Tuesday last, November 30<sup>th</sup> in the clubhouse at 8.30pm. Numbers drawn were: 13, 17, 25, 26. There was no winner of the jackpot. €20 Lucky Dip winners were: Honor & Pat O'Riordan, Anthony & Oonagh O'Gara, O'Connor family, Guenter Siech and Pat Fitzgerald. Next week's jackpot is €5,900.

**Bingo** Na Gaeil Bingo Committee is delighted to announce the return of our popular bingo every Monday night at Na Gaeil Clubhouse, at the earlier starting time of 8pm. We have Split the Bucket on the night also. Masks have to be worn entering and attending Bingo and proof of Covid Vaccine has to be shown to committee members. Social distancing must be observed at all times. A bus service to and from the bingo is available. Just ring 087 281 7577.

**Sympathy** We extend our sincere condolences to our club secretary John Keating and family on the sad passing of his father Michael, of Cahirciveen recently. Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam dílis.

**Win a House** Win a house in Killarney with Kerry GAA. For €100 you could win a stunning new build A-rated 3 bedroom house superbly located just off the Park Road in Killarney. Kerry GAA is also running numerous other promotional draws throughout the fundraising campaign. The earlier you purchase your “Win a House in Killarney” ticket (or tickets!) the more draws you will be entered into. Remember all tickets purchased before the deadline for each promotional draw will entitle you to be entered into all promotional draws thereafter. Support your club and support your county. Go to [kerrygaa.ie](http://kerrygaa.ie) and buy your ticket today. If you're not in you can't win!