

Na Gaeil Notes Monday January 11th 2021

AGM As per GAA guidelines, Na Gaeil CLG will be holding its AGM virtually on Thursday January 28th at 8pm. We ask that if you are a Club Member and wish to be part of this AGM that you send your email address to our Club secretary Eamon Browne at the email address: secretary.nagaeil.kerry@gaa.ie by Thursday January 21st. We appreciate this is not ideal for some members but we ask that players and younger members assist their relatives and friends to join. Nominations for positions or motions were accepted up to January 8th. Thanks to everyone who has contributed to keeping our club operating in 2020 and we look forward to seeing some new faces on our executive in 2021.

All Ireland Semi Final As it is exactly a year ago since Na Gaeil's epic All Ireland semi-final clash with Kilmaine of Mayo in Ennis on January 11th 2020 we have decided to jog your memory the following is the match report on what turned out to be the defining game of the championship: The blood pressure and heart rate levels of the supporters may not have been tested during Na Gaeil's Munster campaign but they were definitely tested on Saturday with some reaching dangerously high levels when the Kerry Premier Junior Champions took on Kilmaine of Mayo in the All Ireland Semi Final in an epic encounter in Cusack Park, Ennis. The heavy morning rain cleared and the pitch was in good condition. Na Gaeil got off to a good start with Diarmuid O'Connor winning the throw in and the ball was worked up to Diarmaid Herlihy who turned his marker and fisted over the bar. From the kick out Kilmaine worked the ball down the other end at speed with Cathal Murphy kicking a good point. One sensed at that early stage that this was going to be a ding dong battle and so it turned out to be. Jarleth Mullin scored another point for Kilmaine on three minutes but Ian McCarthy responded with a fine point for Na Gaeil four minutes later. Diarmuid O'Connor raced through the middle and fired over another one for Na Gaeil on ten minutes to put them one ahead. Na Gaeil then missed a guilt edged opportunity for a goal. Diarmaid Herlihy intercepted a short Kilmaine kick out and passed it to the in-running Dara Devine, but his ground shot just skimmed the outside of the left post and wide. From the kick out Kilmaine put a good move together and sent a long ball into right corner. Na Gaeil defence failed to deal with the situation. The ball fell to Kilmaine's left corner forward Michael Hession and he finished it low to the net to put them two ahead. Their centre forward Adam Barrett pointed a free on nineteen minutes but this was cancelled out with a pointed free at the other end from Dara Devine for a foul on Dan Goggin. With six minutes of the half remaining Na Gaeil wing back Fergal Barry had to leave the field with a knee injury and he was replaced by the experienced Mike Griffin. Mike made an immediate impact scoring two points without reply which enabled Na Gaeil to retire to the dressing rooms at half time on level terms on a score line of Na Gaeil: 0-06 Kilmaine: 1-03.

Na Gaeil again made the better start to the 2nd half with Dara Devine pointing a 30 metre free for a foul on Diarmaid Herlihy. Na Gaeil's defence tightened up considerably with Damien Bourke and Ryan O'Neill playing the game of their lives in the full back line and Andrew Barry holding down the centre well, thus preventing Kilmaine from making any inroads. Dan O' Connor was hauled down as he was about to shoot for a goal and probably should have been awarded a penalty. His shot rebounded into the path of Dan Goggin who pointed eight minutes into the half. Dara Devine pointed his third free of the game two minutes later for another foul on Diarmaid Herlihy. Kilmaine dominated for the next ten minutes with their centre back Pat Kelly scoring from play after a foray through the centre followed by two pointed frees from their ace marksman Adam Barrett to level up matters once more with ten minutes remaining. Jack Barry entered the fray at this stage along with Eoin Walsh and Darragh Reen and Na Gaeil steadied the ship once again. Jamie Lowham and James O'Connor also made an impact when introduced. Dara Devine pointed a difficult free four minutes later after he had been fouled himself and Eoin Walsh fisted over the bar as the game entered injury time. Na Gaeil seemed to have done enough to win this game. But never say die Kilmaine came thundering back and their no. 5 Tomás Fahey kicked a great point three minutes into injury time to make it a one point game. The kick out broke on the 45 metre line. With a raft of players jostling for possession, Longford referee Patrick Maguire adjudged that it was touched on the ground by a Na Gaeil player and awarded in a free to Kilmaine about 45 metres out. Adam Barrett coolly slotted this difficult pressure free over the bar to bring the game to extra time. Na Gaeil: 0-11; Kilmaine: 1-08.

The players from both sides who had given their all and were dead on their feet at this stage entered the dressing rooms to prepare for another twenty minutes of football. Na Gaeil dominated the first ten minutes of extra time. James O'Connor made an incisive run towards goal to be pulled down just outside the Kilmaine square. But the referee amazingly gave a free out. With Dan Goggin working his socks off it was fitting that he scored the first point six minutes in after a neat pass from Jamie Lowham. Hard working midfielder Diarmuid O'Connor scored another after a great run through the middle to leave Na Gaeil up two points after the first period of injury time.

Many of the players from both sides were cramping from the serious shift they had put in but there was another ten minutes left to play. This period was dominated by Kilmaine with substitute Jarleth McDonagh firing over in the first minute to make it a one point game again. Kilmaine threw the kitchen sink at Na Gaeil launching attack after attack. But the Kerry defence stood firm and pressurised the Mayo side into kicking four shots wide of the post which was to prove costly for them in the end. Their last attack was broken up by the impressive Kieran O'Donovan who put his body on the line to gain possession. He was awarded a free and the referee blew the final whistle much to the delight of the Na Gaeil players and their large number of supporters in attendance. It was sheer relief at the end for everybody concerned. Hats off to every player and substitute involved in this enthralling contest. To a man they left everything

out on the pitch in Ennis on Saturday and were visibly physically drained after this intriguing battle but delighted to have gotten over the line. Congratulations also to an astute management team who orchestrated this victory from the sideline. They can now look forward to playing in an All Ireland Final in Croke Park where they will meet Rathgarogue/Cushinstown from Wexford on Saturday January 25th. It was great to see so many Na Gaeil supporters at the game. They travelled in large numbers and proudly wore the green and white of Na Gaeil. One has to spare a thought for a gallant Kilmaine side that brought so much to this contest and played to the final whistle. It's so hard to lose a game by a point after extra time.

Team: Timmy Culloty, Ryan O'Neill, Kieran Dineen, Damien Bourke, Fergal Barry, Andrew Barry, Eoin Doody, Diarmuid O'Connor(0-02), Kieran O'Donovan, Dan O'Connor, Eoin O'Neill, Dara Devine(0-04), Diarmaid Herlihy(0-01), Dan Goggin(0-02), Ian McCarthy(0-01) Subs: Mike Griffin(0-02) for Fergal Barry(inj); Eoin Walsh(0-01) for Kieran Dineen; Jack Barry for Ian McCarthy; Darragh Reen for Dan O'Connor; James O'Connor for Dara Devine; Jamie Lowham for Diarmaid Herlihy.

Extra Time: Ian McCarthy for Darragh Reen; Diarmaid Herlihy for Dara Devine.

Sympathy Sincere sympathy to Ogie Moran and family on the death of his sister Tima Browne in December. May she rest in peace. We express our sincere sympathy to the Turner family on the sad passing of Jimmy Turner, Ballygarron, The Spa recently. He worked tirelessly for many community organizations and was a former secretary of Churchill GAA Club. Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam dílis. We also offer our condolences to the O'Connor family on the recent death of Liam O'Connor, Woodlee. Liam was a great supporter of our Annual Race Night. May he rest in peace. Our sincere sympathy also to Kerry O'Shea and his family on the recent passing of his father John O'Shea of Ballyard. May he rest in peace. Our condolences to the Deely family on the recent death of John Deely of Tralee and Ballyheigue. Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam dílis. Our sincere sympathy also to the Leane family on the passing of Danny Leane, Tralee. Danny was former chairperson of Kerins O'Rahillys GAA Club. May he rest in peace. We offer our condolences to the Kerins and Duffy families on the death of Margaret Duffy of Tralee and Offaly. Ar dheis Dé go raibh a h-anam dílis.

Clubhouse The clubhouse is closed for all outside activities and the gym will also be closed until there is further clarification from GAA Headquarters as to when they can re-open.

Clothes Collection There is now a Clothes Collection Bin situated in Na Gaeil car park for use by all members of the public