

Na Gaeil Notes Monday January 13th 2020

All Ireland Semi Final 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.

All Ireland Final Na Gaeil will now play Rathgarogue/Cushinstown of Wexford in the All Ireland Premier Junior Final in Croke Park on Saturday January 25th at 3.15pm. It's the place to be so make your arrangements as soon as possible. A good number of Na Gaeil supporters have booked rooms in Dublin the night before. There will be a bus travelling from Na Gaeil on the morning of the match.

Bus to Croke Park There will be a bus travelling to Croke Park for the All Ireland Final on Saturday January 25th. The cost for adults is €25 and for juveniles is €10. The bus will travel home directly after the game. The bus needs to be pre booked so call in to the clubhouse or contact any club officer. Occasions like this don't come

around too often. Croke Park is the place to be on January 25th. Be there. Na Gaeil Abú!!

Hats & Flags For Sale Na Gaeil hats, flags, car flags and children's wristbands are on sale in the clubhouse. It is important that we flaunt our club colours as we head to Croke Park in two weeks time and support this great group of players.

Sympathy We extend our sincere sympathy to Cáit and Michael Griffin Highfield Grove on the death of Cáit's brother Battie Murphy, Dromtine, Sneem who died last week. Ar Dheis Dé go raibh a anam dílis. Our deepest sympathy to the family of Paddy O'Connor, Oakpark Demesne and late of Castleisland who passed away recently. May he rest in peace. We also extend our sincere sympathy to Seán O'Domhnaill and family Racecourse Lawn on the recent death of his brother Colm. Ar Dheis De go raibh a anam dílis.

Na Gaeil Cycling Club Na Gaeil Cycling Club summer schedule: Saturday mornings at 9.00am from the clubhouse. ALL ARE WELCOME, High Vis essential.

Fir Na Gaeil Light Football Training for Men who have retired from playing football and for those that have not played and would like to try it out. Very little skill is required. This is a great way to keep fit with light training, ball games and a bit of a laugh. Training is on Monday and Friday nights in Na Gaeil. Contact Eddie at 0876791460 for more info

Mná Na Gaeil We are a Gaelic for Mothers and Others team who come together and do a bit of exercise, football training and socialising. Anyone who would like to join are most welcome, No skills are required, just a good attitude and a sense for fun. Training is on Wednesdays and Sunday evenings. Contact Eddie at 0876791460 for more info.

Lotto The draw for the jackpot of €3,300 took place on Monday evening last. Numbers drawn were 1, 2, 3 6. There was no winner. €50 winners were Michael Forrest, Liosdara and Michelle, C/O Ballyroe Heights Hotel. €25 winners were Sorcha Ní Shúilleabháin, Ballyard, Seán Browne, C/O Kay Browne, Currovough, John Cleary, Matt Talbot Road and Tim O'Connor, Leith West. Next week's jackpot is €3,400. All are welcome for the draw in the club each Tuesday night at 10.30pm.

Bingo Bingo is on every Monday night at 8.30pm sharp. We have prize money of over €1,000 guaranteed every week with a mini jackpot that increases fortnightly when not won. A door prize and a half-time raffle with lovely prizes will also take place every week. A bus service is available at 087 2817577. You can ring this number for pick up and drop off. 100% of the funds raised go back directly into the club. The bingo is run on a totally voluntary basis by our club members. A huge thank you to all the parents who offer their time to run this vital fundraiser for the club. If anyone wants to donate a spot prize for our weekly bingo raffle, please leave it at clubhouse and mark it "Bingo". Thanks to all our patrons who support this event on a weekly basis.

Cards A card game is held every Wednesday night in the clubhouse. This is a very sociable occasion where you meet your friends for a great night's entertainment and

relaxation. Starting time is 9.30pm and everyone from novice to senior will enjoy a relaxing game of 45.

Clothes Collection There is now a Clothes Collection Bin situated in Na Gaeil car park.