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1960 County Final Preview

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The Senior Final Could 'Go Either Way' Longford Slashers and Killoe meet on Sunday

The meeting of Killoe Young Emmet's and Longford Slashers in the Senior Championship final at Pearse Park on Sunday next (4 p.m.) is arousing great interest. A huge crowd is expected to catch the game in view of the fact that the teams met in last year's final when the Longford side captured the title after a replay. Killoe won the Junior title in 1957 and when they entered Senior ranks the following year, they qualified for the Leader Cup Final in which they were beaten by Sunday's opponents. The team also met in the first round of the Championship that year and again Slashers came out but were considered lucky to do so. Last year Killoe and Slashers clashed four times. Slashers won the Championship at the second attempt: Killoe beat them in the Leader Cup Final, while in the Feis CUP Final Slashers won a low-scoring game.

This will be the first meeting between the sides this season and there is much speculation as to the outcome of Sunday's match. Only a few points separated the teams in all their encounters. Who will win the 1960 title? Ah, the burning question.

Killoe had little difficulty in beating Rathcline in the first round. Then came the real test against Eire Og. Killoe outplayed their opponents for periods in the first half but were led by one point at the interval. At that stage they should have been at least two goals ahead. The attack failed miserably to capitalise on the many opportunities offered.

Eire Og set the pace in the second half, and with just over ten minutes left for play, Killoe were five points down. The Emmet's made a few switches which led to a revival and in no time they were on level terms. With time ticking away, and a replay on the cards, Killoe swept into the attack and a harmless looking centre from Tom McGoldrick ended up in the net and Killoe were in the final.

If Killoe play as well and with as much heart as in those last ten minutes in the semi-final, Slashers will find it hard to stop them. To allow themselves to go too far in arrears against a sturdy Longford side would be fatal.

Longford Slashers had a bye in the first round and then beat a much fancied Granard team in the semi-final rather easily. Although the holders won well they are still not happy about their forward line, so much so that they are bringing Sean Donnelly from England for the game and this player should pack more punch to the attack. Joe Deane will also be available but where to fit him in will be a problem for the selectors as Rene McNally has filled the right half-back adequately.

Killoe are likely to line out as they finished against Eire Og – George Doherty; Jack Toher, Sean McGoey, Liam Quinn; John Hagan, John Bracken, Mickey Bracken; Billy Morgan, Vincent Duignan; Seamus Igoe, Tom McGoldrick, James McGoldrick; Seamus McGuire, Davy Sheeran and Joe Quinn.

Both sides have trained hard for the final and have played a series of challenge games. Killoe had two matches with Mental Hospital (Mullingar) while Slashers had

useful games against teams from different provinces , Carrick, Cavan Gaels and Navan O'Mahony's.

The result may largely hinge on the outcome of the midfield exchanges. Alex Baxter and George Balfe hit up a sound understanding against Granard. Killoe have senior county men, Billy Morgan and Vincent Duignan, in this sector. Morgan is a footballer with an established reputation and Balfe with have to pay particular attention to him. If he is given too much scope the Killoe forwards could run riot.

Baxter is capable of rising splendidly to the occasion in club football and he could prove to be more than a match for Duignan. But only a sustained effort can give Slashers an even break here.

Much will also depend on the outcome of the duels between Sean McGoey and Neilus Corkery; Liam Quinn and Sean Donnelly; John Bracken and Pdraig Gearty; Jim Shannon and Seamus McGuire; Paddy Dennigan and Joe Quinn and Mickey Kelly and Tom McGoldrick.

In the Killoe camp there is confidence that the team will bring major honours to the parish. Before the start of the championship it was said that Killoe had deteriorated a lot and that they would not be the same force this year. However, they answered their critics when they defeated a determined Eire Og team a month ago and confirmed that they have their eyes set on capturing the title.

It can be assumed, however, that the title will make a great defence of their crown and are likely to prove very hard to beat.

The game is wide open and a forecast would be foolhardy, but if one goes by past meetings Slashers should win. Killoe supporters will not agree with this, as they cannot see their heroes beaten in the final. Sunday will decide the matter, but whoever wins, a huge attendance should be treated to a thrilling hour's football.