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1979 U-21 Championship Final

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## **Big breakthrough for Killoe Club**

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### **Killoe Young Emmets: 2 – 6**

#### **Mostrim: 1 – 7**

Killoe, who were regarded by many as very unlucky not to have captured the Under 21 title a year ago, gained sweet compensation for that reverse on Sunday when, at Leo Casey Park Ballymahon they overcame a fancied Mostrim team by two points, 2-6 to 1-7 in this years decider, thus bringing the Mac Aodhagan Cup to the parish for the first time and at the same time making it a big breakthrough for the club.

While the winners supporters were undoubtedly relieved to hear the final whistle, with their side hanging on to that slender lead, there can be no argument about the merits of this victory by the Killoe boys.

After they had overcome a shaky start, during which they were lucky not to have fallen more than two points behind the winners gradually took control and the fact that Mostrim, although backed by the strong breeze, failed to score during a 25 minute spell in the second half, is a fair indication of the superiority of Killoe in this period.

While each and every player on the winning side did their part in fashioning this success, it was two astute decisions by the Killoe mentors that really swung around the game that they looked like losing early on.

Firstly it was the direct switch between Eugene Murphy and Frank Kennedy that broke Mostrims early dominance, for the placing of Kennedy at centre-half bolstered the Killoe half back line to such an extent that the losers half forwards, who had looked so menacing during the first ten minutes were never in the match in the second half.

Team captain, Eugene Murphy, turned in a magnificent performance after his move to midfield where his tremendous work rate proved far too much for his opponents to cope with.

The second masterstroke by the Killoe selectors was the introduction of Barney Mahon at full forward. Barney who would have been on the original team only for an injury, quickly made his presence felt, sending over the bar with his first kick of the ball, while it was his well-taken goal ten minutes into the second half that really put his team on the road to victory.

Others to play a big part in this fine win were goalkeeper Gerard O'Donnell who, just as he did in the semi-final against Rathcline, brought off a brilliant save in the first ten seconds when a goal for Mostrim might have been fatal to Killoe's hopes.

As usual John Toher was safe at full-back and he fielded a couple of great balls early on. Corner backs Hugh Flynn and Mark Mimnagh were very dependable all through while once they found their feet, Frank Rowley and Eugene McNerney in the half back berths completed a very solid half-line of defense with Frank Kennedy and as a result the

Mostrim half-forwards considered the best line in their team, never got moving after the opening quarter.

Brendan Lennon had a quiet enough first half but he came very much into the game after the break as well as scoring a great point at a stage when his team badly needed a score.

The youthful Killoe attack (it contained two 15 year olds, Declan Rowley and Damien Bennett), found the heavy underfoot conditions hard to master yet they kept the Mostrim defense at full stretch all through.

John McCormack although receiving a lot of close attention, quite legally it should be pointed out, was the pick of the forwards, but he will be an even better player when he learns to cut out some of the dramatics.

Barney Mahon gave McCormack best support while James McGoldrick, Michael Caherly and Gerard Rowley all played their part.

Mostrim started as if they were going to sweep Killoe off the field. Although set t face the wind, they made all the early running with their midfield partnership of Christy Kennedy and Peter McNally completely on top, while their forwards time and again cut the Killoe defense wide open.

However they failed to take advantage of some good chances of scores and once the winner's defense settled down only Joe Fogarty and Tommy McGuinness looked dangerous.

Mel Greene was a solid full back and gave nothing away, while Joe McEnroe policed John McCormack effectively. Tom Victory and John Kiernan also did quite well in a defence that could not be blamed for this defeat.

Peter McNally and especially Christy Kennedy started brilliantly at midfield, bot both faded out as the game progressed. Mostrim broke away from the throw-in and when Stephen Tierney got in a hand cross shout, Gerard O'Donnell in the Killoe goal, brought off a great save and John Toher completed the clearance keeping up the pressure Mostrim missed a couple of chances before Joe Fogarty opened their account with a point. In another Mostrim raid, Tommy Gallagher shot narrowly wide before Stephen Tiernan got his teams second point. The game was almost ten minutes old when Brendan Lennon had Killoes first wide.

The winners were beginning to come into the game now and when James McGoldrick sent Frank Kennedy down the right wing, the midfielders centre was missed by both backs and forwards before coming to Declan Rowley who coolly hand-passed to the net for the lead.

Mostrim were still very much on top around the middle of the field and in that best spell they shot quick points from Tommy McGuinness, Stephen Tierney, and Peter McNally in turn to get back in front 0-5 to 1-0 after 18 minutes of play.

At this stage Killoe mentors made what was to prove the match winning moves and when John McCormack was fouled he cut the lead with a point from the free. Barney Mahon sent over the leveling point from forty yards out and just before half-time John McCormack added another free to put Killoe ahead by 1-3 to 0-5 at the break.

With the wind behind them, Mostrim must have been very happy starting the second half when Mickey O'Hara put the team's level it looked as if the title was on its way.

However shortly afterwards, the losers missed a great chance of going in front when Tommy Gallagher missed from close in. This was to prove costly as when Killoe forced play to the other end they were awarded a free out near the sideline. John McCormack floated it right across the goal for the incoming Barney Mahon to rise high and punch the ball to the net.

This goal seemed to knock the heart out of Mostrim and the winners almost had another goal soon afterwards but Brendan Lennon soon stretched the lead with a long-range point.

It was all Killoe now with their half-back line in complete control, so it was no surprise that they went further ahead with two pointed frees by McCormack to leave them two clear goals in front 2-6 to 0-6 with five minutes left, and they had missed further chances before Mostrim rallied and even when O'Hara pointed a free the winners were not ruffled.

However they got quite a scare when one minute before the end from a melee in the Killoe goalmouth the ball was scrambled to the net. Even at this stage Mostrim made ne last effort and forced a sideline kick which was sent right into the Killoe 'square' but this time the defense cleared just as referee Leo McCormack who handled the game very well, sounded the final whistle.

Killoe: G. O'Donnell, H Flynn, J Toher, M Mimmagh, F Rowley, E Murphy, E McNerney, F Kennedy, B Lennon, M Caherly, J McGoldrick, D Rowley, G Rowley, J McCormack, D Bennett. Subs – B Mahon for G Rowley.

Mostrim: S Gill, M Reynolds, M Greene, T Victory, J Kiernan, J McEnroe, T Mahoney, P McNally, C Kennedy, S Tierney, M O'Hara, J Fogarty, T Gallagher, T McGuinness, E Reilly. Subs – T Garvey for E Reilly, K Hughes for M Reynolds.

After the game, County Secretary Jimmy Fox presented the cup to Eugene Murphy captain of the winning team, and paid tribute to both teams for providing a top-class game.