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1993 Senior Championship Final

Killoe v Granard

From Longford Leader – 17th September 1993

Senior Football Championship Final Killoe back at the top

Killoe Young Emmets 0-9
Granard St. Mary's 0-7

Despite the fact that they kicked a total of fifteen wides (as compared to their opponents seven) and also had two goals disallowed (one in each half), Killoe Young Emmets proved too strong for gallant Granard St. Mary's in the Senior Championship Final played in difficult windy conditions on Sunday last, with their greater experience proving a decisive factor in a reasonably entertaining game that attracted an attendance in the region of 5,000 to Pearse Park. Killoe played with the advantage of the strong breeze in the first half and having established a fairly commanding 0-7 to 0-2 lead by half-time, they appeared to be well on the way to their expected victory. However, Granard came storming back in the second half and making good use of the wind - which was now in their favour - they scored five fine points on the trot in what was their best spell of the game with captain, Kevin O'Rourke providing the inspiration.

It was a point by 'Soda' (his fourth of the game) that put St. Mary's back on level terms with all of 18 minutes left to play and had they not squandered a few other opportune chances during this spell, they may well have gone on to cause an upset. Granard captain O'Rourke was at his best in the third quarter but faded thereafter as Killoe - mainly due to the fine efforts of Declan Rowley at centre field - regained their grip on the game and points by John McCormack (free) and Denis Boyle in the 44th and 49th minutes respectively clinched a hard-earned victory.

There were no further scores and the Killoe backs were particularly impressive in the closing stages as they kept the opposing attack at bay. Michael Kiernan looked to have out the issue beyond all doubt when crashing the ball to the roof of the Granard net with six minutes left to play but referee, Pat Keenan penalised him for over carrying and the goal was subsequently disallowed - although Kiernan appeared to be fouled as he burst his way through. The Young Emmets corner-forward also found the back of the St. Mary's net in the

first half after a fisted attempt by Matt Duggan came back off the crossbar, but was again denied by Keenan, who decided to award a free out instead. The Mostrim official was quite right as Kiernan charged his way, rugby-style, over the line - at a stage when Killoe led by 0-4 to 0-1 and were very much in control.

Granard had the better of the early exchanges but a point by Kevin O'Rourke was all they had to show for their efforts as they kicked a couple of costly wides. Killoe gradually got on top as their youthful opponents began to make mistakes and but for the fact that the Young Emmets shot no less than nine wides in the first half, it could have been all over as a contest at the break. Four of their first half points came from team captain, John McCormack and while only one was from play, it was a magnificent effort from the side of the boot and was unquestionably the best score of the game.

However, it was a revitalised Granard side that took the field for the second half and with only four minutes gone they had succeeded in narrowing the gap to just two points. Killoe then had a glorious chance of wrapping up the game when Michael Kiernan put Kevin Dooner through but he shot agonisingly wide with the goals at his mercy. That was a real lucky escape for St. Mary's, who quickly regained the upper hand and a brace of well taken points by Kevin O'Rourke left the sides all-square.

Indeed, Killoe were fortunate not to find themselves trailing at this stage as Shane McGovern and substitute Ray Brogan were both off target inbetween O'Rourke's double strike, and what costly wides they proved to be. Granard lost their way again after that and there was no comeback this time as the Young Emmets went back in front with those all-important points by 'Speedy' and O'Boyle.

Their vast experience showed in the closing stages as they confidently maintained their slender advantage with the exception of one dangerous centre from Shane McGovern with four minutes left to play - which John Bracken broke down into the safe hands of Pat Masterson who cleared to safety - Killoe never looked like letting victory slip in regaining the coveted Sean Connolly Cup they last won back in 1988.

It was a particularly memorable

day for John McCormack as apart from having the honour of captaining Killoe to their richly deserved success, he also received 'Man of the Match' award for his fine display - although the prestigious Fr. Phil McGee Memorial trophy could also have gone to the Young Emmets outstanding centre half-back Gerry Delaney, who played consistently well over the hour. Mark Mimmagh, John Toher, Declan Rowley and John Coyle also played exceptionally well for the winners while Brendan Lennon, Denis O'Boyle and Michael Fitzpatrick (second half) were others to figure prominently for the new Champions.

However, the best player on the field in the opinion of many, was St. Mary's centre half-back Turlough McGovern who was the rock on which many a promising Killoe attack perished. He got great assistance in defence from Philip Smyth, who rarely put a foot wrong at full-back, while Vinny O'Rourke had a very sound game in goals. Kevin O'Rourke played very well in the early stages of the game, and was particularly dominant in his side's second half revival, while his midfield partner, Pdraig Kiernan tried very hard throughout the sixty minutes.

However, the St. Mary's attack were a big disappointment and only one of their forwards managed to score from play. Shane McGovern came much more into the game when switched to right half-forward on the change over while Ray Brogan caused a few problems when brought on at the start of the second half. Although referee, Pat Keenan booked no less than five players in the first half, Matt Duggan, Declan Rowley and Michael Fitzpatrick (Killoe) along with Granard players, Pdraic Hynes and Turlough McGovern - it was generally a sporting game and the promising young St. Mary's side were gracious in defeat.

Granard St. Mary's: Vinny O'Rourke, Joe O'Donnell, Philip Smyth, John O'Hara, Paul Daly, Turlough McGovern, Thomas Cronogue, Kevin O'Rourke (0-4), Pdraig Kiernan, John O'Rourke, Shane McGovern (0-1, free), Pdraic Hynes (0-1), Philip O'Hara (0-1, free), Thomas Reilly, Niall McGovern.

Subs: Ray Brogan for T. Reilly (half-time), Michael Kiernan for J. O'Rourke, Patrick Durkin for P. Daly.