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Leader Cup Final Report

(2005)

Killoe lift Leader Cup for the first time in 20 years

Killoe Young Emmets 0-14
Ballymahon 0-13

There was nothing separating these two evenly balanced sides in the Senior Football League Final at Pearse Park and just when it appeared as if a replay was going to be required to decide the outcome, Killoe were awarded a free in the second additional minute at the end of extra-time and rising young star Sean McCormack fired over the pressure kick as the Young Emmets lifted the Leader Cup for the first time in 20 years.

Killoe showed a lot of character in over-coming the handicap of having a player sent-off with 22 minutes gone in the first half of normal time – John Fitzpatrick was dismissed for a second yellow card offence – and looked to have won the famous old trophy as they led by a point deep into stoppage time.

When Mark Connor was just off target from a free that was brought forward for dissent, Ballymahon appeared to have blown their last chance of a late, late equaliser but referee T.P. Pettit continued to play on in giving Joe McCabe's charged another chance of snatching a draw and that they duly did in their next move as full-back Ken Lovell joined the attack to put Connor through for a well-taken point.

That was in the fourth minute of stoppage time, much to the dismay of the Killoe supporters who comprised most of the disappointing small attendance (no more than 300) but that was hardly surprising considering the Saturday staging of the final that would have attracted bigger crowds on the traditional Sunday date.

And so the game went into extra-time amid the fading light and while Ballymahon had the better of the exchanges, they were guilty of kicking three wides on the trot while substitute Thomas Lennon was denied a match-winning goal when shooting against the foot of the post. The departure of the injured Trevor Smullen certainly did not help their cause – although they did lead 0-13 to 0-12 when Mark Connor converted a free for his ninth point. However, a tremendous kick from Sean McCormack soon after left the sides all square again before McCormack grabbed a last gasp winner from a 40 yard free after he was fouled.

Sean landed another cracking point from play in extra-time, with Eugene Clarke also on target, while Mark Connor (free) and Edwin Nally (a fine fisted point after he cut in from the right) replied for the gallant losers.

Michael Dunne played well in the role of playmaker on the '40' for Killoe while Ciaran Keogh figured prominently in the Killoe defence for the best part of the contest. However, the man-of-the-match award went to Sean McCormack, who ended up scoring eight points (six frees), and was particularly good when it mattered most – in the extra-time period.

The game developed into a shoot-out between McCormack and Mark Connor, who scored a staggering 0-17 points between them.

The Young Emmets clinched their second senior success this season (they also won the Division 1 League title) and team manager Jimmy Gacquin has certainly done well in his

first year in charge of Killoe – who had not won any senior trophy since 1995 when the Championship crown was captured.

KILLOE: Cillian Burns; Ciaran Keogh, Justin Quinn, Thomas Donohoe; Val Delaney, Aidan Brady, Peter McGuire; Aidan Keogh, Paul O'Hara; John Fitzpatrick, Michael Dunne (0-1), John Kiernan (0-2); Eugene Clarke (0-1), Thomas Nolan (0-1), Sean McCormack (0-8, six frees).

Subs: Ian Browne (0-1) for A. Keogh (26 mins); A. Keogh for J. Kiernan (53 mins); Sean Brady for T. Donohoe (60 mins).

Extra-Time: J. Kiernan; T. Brady for A. Brady (injured, 2 mins).