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2009 U:14 Championship Final

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## **Killoe hold out to achieve another success**

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Under a lot of pressure in the closing stages of the game, Killoe managed to hold out for a hard earned win over Northern Gaels in the U-14 'A' Football Championship Final which produced a very exciting finish at Pearse Park on Saturday last.

When Paddy Kiernan landed a well struck point to leave the eventual winners of the title in a fairly comfortable 2-5 to 0-7 lead with 17 minutes gone in the second half, it looked all over for the Abbeylara and Mullinalaghta amalgamation who had won the U-16 'A' Championship title against the same club the previous week.

However, the Gaels then took over completely to dominate the remainder of the game but were guilty of squandering a few good chances and were denied a badly needed goal when Killoe keeper Stephen Duke made a point-blank save to keep out a shot from Anthony Reilly in the 52nd minute.

Although Northern Gaels were thrown a late lifeline when Nigel Rabbitte planted a penalty in the back of the net after substitute Jason Matthews was fouled in the square a minute into stoppage time, Killoe launched an immediate counter-attack to strike the killer blow.

Corner-forward Ciaran Donohoe cut in from the left to score his second goal and that was enough for the Killoe club to achieve another notable success after capturing the minor championship title in September.

While Northern Gaels managed to close the gap with a point from Anthony Reilly, time eventually ran out for the gallant losers and Stephen Duke was very much the saviour for Killoe as he pulled off a tremendous save with nine minutes gone in the first half.

Duke was at full stretch to stop a powerful shot from the boot of Aaron Earley and while Rian Brady hit the crossbar for the Gaels soon after, Killoe had other goal chances during the course of the game.

Ciaran Donohoe caught a high ball in from Paddy Kiernan to find the back of the net in the 6th minute and that vital score left Killoe in a slender 1-3 to 0-4 lead at the break with their points coming from Larry Moran, Shane Tully (free) and Donohoe in quick succession.

Centre-half-back Aaron Earley fired over the first two scores for Northern Gaels while Rian Brady and Anthony Reilly were also on target as a tight contest began to develop and the gap was reduced to the minimum of margins when David McGivney landed a point in the opening minute of the second half.

Moments later, a dipping shot from Larry Moran ended up in the back of the net for what proved to be a decisive goal for Killoe but they then missed a number of decent chances of extending their advantage and that poor finishing allowed Northern Gaels to get back into contention with a point apiece from Rian Brady (free) and Anthony Reilly.

Killoe regained their grip on the game with a brace of scores through Larry Moran (free) and Paddy Kiernan but were very much on the defensive thereafter with Northern Gaels persisting in trying to engineer a goal when points were there for the taking in a very determined bid to avoid defeat.

KILLOE: Stephen Duke; Shane O'Hara, Fergal O'Donnell, Stephen Hughes; Shane Conway, Damien Bennett, Liam Hughes; John Lynch, Darragh Gilna; Jamie King, Paddy Kiernan (0-1), Shane Tully (0-1, free); Aaron Clyne, Larry Moran (1-2, one point from free), Ciaran Donohoe (2-1).

Sub:- Shane Fitzpatrick for A Clyne (60 mins).

NORTHERN GAELS: Conor Sheridan; James Mooney, Aidan McElligott, David Kane; Luke Meehan, Aaron Earley (0-2), Conor Berry; Jason Earley, David McGivney (0-1); Podge Rafferty, Nigel Rabbitte (1-0, penalty), Hayden Reilly; Rian Brady (0-2, one free), Anthony Reilly (0-3), Barry McKiernan.

Subs:- Jason Matthews for P Rafferty (35 mins); Dean O'Shea for B McKiernan (47 mins).

Referee: Dean Victory (Ardagh St. Patrick's)