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2010 Leader Cup Final Report

Killoe win Leader Cup to complete the senior league double

Longford Leader Report

Killoe Young Emmets 0 – 9

Longford Slashers 0 – 8

A long range point from midfielder Joe McCormack in the third minute of stoppage time won the Leader Cup for Killoe and it was no more than the Young Emmets deserved as they completed a most notable senior league double after already winning the Division 1 title this year.

Under the influential management of former Leitrim star Seamus Quinn, Killoe have enjoyed a very successful season and their first Leader Cup title triumph since 2005 could well be the stepping stone to greater things for a club with a strong underage structure.

The Young Emmets showed the greater urgency against a tired looking Longford Slashers side in the final at Pearse Park on Sunday last and the decisive factor was unquestionably the battle for midfield supremacy with Thomas Nolan producing a man-of-the-match performance for the worthy winners.

But for some poor finishing, particularly in the first half when they kicked six wides, Killoe would probably have emerged victorious in more comfortable fashion and the county champions clearly struggled without the driving force of their injured midfielder Niall Mulligan.

There was no stopping the powerful Nolan (who is emigrating to the United States this week) but when he was sent-off for a second yellow card offence with seven minutes of normal time remaining it looked as though Slashers were poised to capture the Leader Cup for the first time since 1991.

Colin Smith converted a free in front of the posts to leave the sides deadlocked at 0-7 apiece but the so determined Killoe side (down to 14 players) were in no mood to let the game slip from their grasp and with the generally prominent Joe McCormack working even harder in the middle of the park, they regained the lead in the 57th minute when Eugene Clarke landed a well struck point.

In a very tense finish to the final Slashers snatched the equaliser in the 60th minute when Colin Smith fired over a close range free following a foul on Paul Kelly who had cut in from the left wing and while the townies were awarded another free in the second minute of stoppage time, Mark Smith was unable to get the difficult kick from a tight angle on target.

A draw would have forced the game into extra-time, which might not have been possible as the dense fog that hovered over Pearse Park all afternoon began to thicken, but the winning score materialised when the under pressure Joe McCormack managed to land a point from over 40 yards out much to the sheer

delight of the Killoe supporters who comprised the bulk of the disappointing attendance estimated at 350.

Slashers had no time to recover and their tale of woe was complete in the last few seconds when Stephen Phillips was sent-off after receiving a second yellow card. Judging by the celebrations at the final whistle, this success meant a lot to the Killoe players who showed the greater hunger as their club won the coveted Leader Cup for the fifth time.

Lesser lights like resolute defender Colm Devaney and lively forward Eugene Clarke stood up when they were needed with Clarke landing a couple of very good points from play in the second half and overall it was a solid team effort by the Young Emmets.

Dermot Brady tried his best to lift Longford Slashers and while it was a disappointing defeat they deserve a lot of credit for the emphatic and effective manner in which they won the senior championship title for the first time in 16 years and it was certainly a job well done by their team manager Denis Connerton.

It might have been a different story had the Sean Flynn goal attempt not hit the crossbar in the opening minute of the game and while Killoe then enjoyed a dominant spell they were unable to convert this superiority into scores as several chances were squandered.

It was completely against the run of play that Slashers took the lead in the 9th minute when Mark Smith landed a well struck free from a tight angle and three more points quickly followed from Stephen Phillips, Thomas O'Rourke and Colin Smith before Sean McCormack got the opening score for Killoe in the 16th minute when he converted a close range free.

Colin Smith then kicked over a fine free from near the sideline in the 21st minute but Slashers failed to register another score until the 46th minute when Stephen Phillips shot over the bar. The Young Emmets second point in the 22nd minute almost yielded a goal as Ger Carberry left fly with a cracking first time shot that went just over the bar and moments later Denis McGoldrick converted a free in front of the posts.

Sean McCormack then kicked two wides in succession but it was Slashers who finished the first half the stronger with Colin Smith shooting narrowly wide and his brother Mark off target from a free. Unfortunate to be trailing by 0-5 to 0-3 at the break, Killoe made a terrific start to the second half to score three points on the trot – the first from Eugene Clarke and a brace from Sean McCormack (free and play).

That left the Young Emmets holding a slender 0-6 to 0-5 lead and both sides continued to miss chances. Slashers finally ended their scoring famine that lasted almost half a hour when Stephen Phillips landed a good point and scores

were then exchanged with Denis McGoldrick and Colin Smith on target from frees – the latter awarded for a foul on Michael Brady who was making his first appearance in 2010 for Slashers after returning from Australia.

But it was Killoe who found that little bit extra to eventually come out on top, despite the handicap of losing Thomas Nolan, and just the minimum of margins separated the sides in the finish with Eugene Clarke and Joe McCormack getting the crucial scores to prevent Slashers doing the Connolly Cup and Leader Cup double.

KILLOE: Cillian Burns; Colm Devaney, Francis Brady, Aidan Brady; Ger Carberry (0-1), David Kiernan, Shane Dowd; Joe McCormack (0-1), Thomas Nolan; Denis McGoldrick (0-2, frees), Sean McCormack (0-3, two frees), Pdraig McCormack; Thomas Reilly, Eugene Clarke (0-2), Ronan McGoldrick.

Subs:- Ciaran Keogh for A Brady (half-time); John Kiernan for T Reilly (half-time).