

Beggans monster kick takes revenge for the Farney!

10/05/20

Monaghan 2 - 12

Cavan 2 - 11

Joseph O'Neill reports from St. Tiernach's Park, Clones

After last year's Ulster Quarter Final defeat at the hands of their local rivals, Cavan, Monaghan under comeback Manager Banty McEnaney, gained sweet revenge for last years below par performance by the Farney to advance to a quarter final meeting with Antrim.

But it took a monster kick from the halfway line with time up on the clock by Monaghan's Number 1 Rory Beggan to seal victory in this highly entertaining match in Clones.



This local derby has always provided excitement for the fans and no matter what division Cavan have been in, in recent years, they are always very competitive come championship time. They have met many times over the years with Cavan tipping the balance of wins through their 55 encounters with the Breffni having 39 Ulster Championship wins since 1888. Today's encounter was a far cry from that first encounter in 1888 which finished on a scoreline of 0-2 to 0-2.

The sea of blue and white could be seen on all approach roads to St. Tiernach's Park with flags flying high for the occasion. The atmosphere in Clones today was very tense before throw in and while the fans enjoyed their melting ice-creams many had to use their programmes to block the heat from the unusually warm sunshine for this time of year. Monaghan gave a championship debut to rising Latton star Aaron Mulligan who filled the boots of Conor McManus who failed to recover from a hamstring injury that he picked up in training three weeks before.

Cavan surprised everyone by employing Gearoid McKiernan at full forward hoping to put some crucial scores past the Monaghan defence. In fact it proved fruitful for the Breffni men as McKiernan had a smasher of a game putting 1-4 past the Farney defence.



The first half actually started well for Monaghan with Kieran Hughes gaining advantage over Killian Brady from the throw in, quickly kicking it in to Aaron Mulligan who turned with a burst of speed and pointed off his right foot for the first score of the game. During the next ten minutes the two teams traded pointed frees (two each for Jack McCarron and Martin Reilly) until Dara McVeety scored a magnificent point from 40 metres out to level the score at three points each with fifteen minutes on the clock.

At this stage of the game Monaghan were coming under severe pressure and Cavan were keeping them pinned inside their own half. Cavan gained a two point advantage with two neat points by McKiernan and Martin Reilly. With 30 minutes gone Monaghan needed some inspiration. But then from a short kick out from Rory Beggan to Drew Wylie, the Ballybay veteran powered to the halfway line and kicked a high ball over the top which was caught by Ryan Mc Anespie above his head on the right side of the pitch. Then the Monaghan half-forward jinxed his way through the Cavan defence and placed it casually in the left corner of the net giving Raymond Galligan no chance. The score was now 1-3 to 0-5. Monaghan tails were up at that stage and they rattled off two more points before the break, one fisted over the bar by Aaron Mulligan and one from a left foot curler by Jack McCarron.

Half-time Monaghan 1 - 5 : Cavan 0 - 5

Supporters for both teams inside St. Tiernach's park had no sooner taken their seats for the second half when Killian Brady out jumped his opposite number Kieran Hughes from the throw-in and sent a high ball over the top to Gearoid McKiernan who caught it in his chest and with a bullet of a shot put it in the right side of the net past Rory Beggan. The game went cagey for a period after this with both defences on top.

The game suddenly sparked into life once more. Cavan's No. 1 Raymond Galligan fired a superb sixty yard kick out directly to Oisin Kiernan who took a mark. He

kicked it into the unmarked Conor Madden who sidestepped Rory Beagan, tapping it easily into the empty net. Suddenly Cavan were a goal in front, 2 - 5 to 1 - 5. However this Monaghan were not beaten yet and they rattled off three points in a row, two frees from Conor McCarthy and a neat team score from Monaghan involving seven different players and finished off with a right foot curler from Kieran Hughes, to level the game, 2 - 5 to 1 - 8. Once again the teams traded pointed frees leaving the score on the board 2 - 7 to 1 - 10. At this time it was heading into the final 10 mins and the tension was so thick you could cut it with a knife. In the sixty third minute Monaghan went on the attack again, with Ryan Wylie firing a low ball into Ryan Mc Anespie who quickly fist-passed it across the goals where the waiting Aaron Mulligan palmed it past Galligan into the Cavan goal. This was followed up by a long range free by Rory Beggan. With only five minutes on the clock it was looking good for Monaghan.



Cavan showed great character and started their comeback with McKiernan at the end of a flurry of great moves by the Cavan side, scoring three magnificent unanswered points. The Breffni were flying at this stage and the Cavan supporters inside St. Tiernach's Park went wild when Niall Murray bent a beautiful shot off the outside of his right foot to level the scores, 2 - 11 to 2 - 11 well into injury time.

Just when it looked that the game was going to end in a draw the resultant kick out by Beagan was caught by Niall Kearns who was fouled as he attempted to play the ball. Then when Niall Kearns tried to take a quick free everyone could hear Banty call out to his No.1 to come up and attempt a monster winning kick from the halfway line. The crowd held their breath as Rory Beggan stepped up to take the free. He took his usual short run up to the ball, then kicked it high and straight between the posts to send the Monaghan supporters absolutely crazy. Immediately the referee blew the final whistle.

Final score: Monaghan 2 - 12 Cavan 2 - 11

Both teams performed exceptionally under the warm sunshine inside St. Tiernach's Park today with many heroes on both sides. Apart from Beagan's heroics, debutant Aaron Mulligan showed maturity beyond his years and he was ably assisted by Jack McCarron and Ryan McAnespie. For the visitors Gearoid McKiernan was man of the match. Monaghan now advance to a home quarter final against Antrim.

Teams & Scorers

Monaghan: R. Beggan (0-2, 1f), D. Wylie, C. Boyle, C. Walshe, K. O'Connell, R. Wylie, M. Bannigan, K. Hughes (0-1), N. Kearns, R. McAnespie (1-0), C. McCarthy (0-2, 2fs), J. McCarron (0-5, 4fs), D. Malone, A. Mulligan (1-2), D. Ward.

Subs: D. Hughes for D. Ward (H-T), F. Kelly for M. Bannigan (52 mins), C. McGuinness for C. McCarthy (63 mins), K. Loughran for C. Boyle (68 mins)

Cavan: R. Galligan, P. Meade, P. Faulkner, G. Smith, C. Brady, B. Kelly, O. Kiernan, K. Brady, B. Magee, S. Smith, D. McVeety (0-1), M. Reilly (0-5, 4fs), N. Murray (0-1), G. McKiernan (1-4), C. Madden (1-0).

Subs: E. Doughty for B. Magee (49 mins), S. Cadden for S. Smith (61 mins), J. Smith for C. Madden (65 mins)

Referee: B. Cassidy (Derry)

