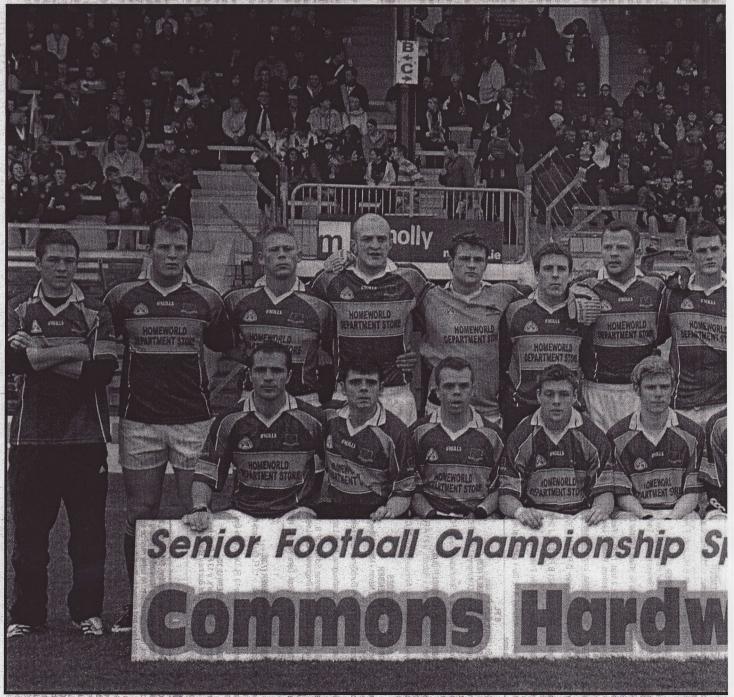
# Menth Chronicle Souvenir 2007 SFC Champions



The Seneschalstown players who were on duty for the 2007 SFC Keegan Cup final replay victory at Pairc Tailteann (from left) were: back - Joe Cowley, Joe Sheridan, Cormac Quinn, Damien Sheridan, David Lyons, Go James Byrne, Colin Gleeson, Stephen Sheridan, Jan Carroll, Andrew McCann, Brian Clarke, Conor Ruddy and Gerry Sheridan.

# Meath Chronicle



# Player Ratings Seneschalstown



# DAVID LYONS

Fortunate to avoid conceding goals early in the first-half when he fumbled the ball on a few occasions and was saved by his colleagues. Made a fine finger tip save in the second-half which denied Navan O'Mahonys a goal from a Gary O'Brien shot. Rating: (8).



# STEPHEN SHERIDAN

Displayed a great attitude from the start and that was evident when he made a tantastic block on a Stephen Bray effort at a point in the opening half. Maintained the momentum throughout the game and can certainly be pleased with his overall display, (7).



# ANDREW COLLINS

The full-back stood up to a lot of searching questions which were posed by the OMahonys full-forward, both on and off the ball, but he coped admirably and went on to deliver a top class performance for his team. (8).



# COLIN CLARKE

Started off with the job of curtailing David Bray and kept a tight rein on the O'Mahonys attacker. He also made good use of possession and linked well with colleagues when the ball was worked out of defence. (7).



# MARK CAREY

Certainly added an extra dimension with an inspirational half-back performance allied to a marvellous contribution to the scoreboard when he got forward and claimed two points in the opening half (8).



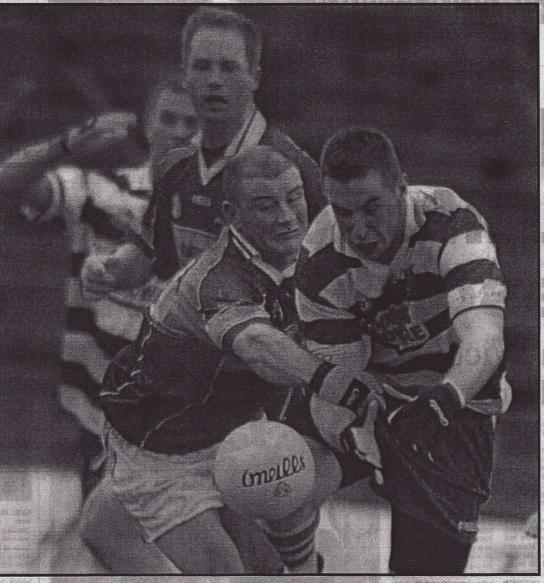
# CORMAC QUINN

Was handed a huge assignment as he had to curtail the influence which Paddy Smyth would exert for O'Mahonys. Played a real captain's role, he was also prepared to get forward at every opportunity and covered a lot of ground. (8)



### COLIN GLEESON

An excellent first-half during which he battled tenacousty and won a lot of possession. That gave his colleagues lots of confidence and he upped his performance after the break and, overall, had to be pleased with his contribution to this merited victory (8).



Navan O'Mahonys midfielder Mark Ward tussles for possession with Seneschalstown's Charan Macken during Sunday's SFC final replay at Pairc Tailteann.

# Seneschalstown

# Player Ratings Navan O'Mahonys



### KEITH LANE

Certainty didn't make any major errors although he endured a few scary moments. Handled well and passed the ball confidently out of the danger zone. Wasn't responsible for his side's poor performance in this replay. (7).



## LEE RUSSELL

A player of immense ability, but he is fast running out of time to deliver on that potential. Needs to fund a longer fuse because if you were the type of supporter who liked to bet on who might get a yellow card then this player would have to go down as a banker. (6)



### KEVIN REILLY

Cannot have enjoyed Sunday's experience against a rejuvenated Joe Sheridan who guaranteed a terridafternoon for a normally solid full-back. Top marks for his ability to complain, but that's about it. (6).



# IAN MATTHEWS

A big improvement on his performance in the first game and at one stage he was actually starting to impose himself, but that was as good as it got and he was under a lot of pressure subsequently as Seneschalstown threatened to run not. (7).



PAUL QUINN

PAUL QUINN
Never gave up trying and
was rewarded for all his
efforts with a fine point in
the second-half, but it wasn't enough on this occasion
for a player with a good attitude who deserved more for
his contribution to the championship, (7).



# RICHIE HOGAN

Was dragged out of position early on by Andrew McCann who dropped back into his own half-back line. Found it difficult to get going when unsure of his positioning, but once he settled he was composed and made a number of decent interceptions, (7)



## NIALL McKEIGUE

Had the task of trying to police Clairan Macken and that was enough to exhaust anyone as the Seneschalstown man played a pivotal role and exerted a lot of influence despite the best efforts of one of O'Mahonys better performers.

ROBERT RUDDY

What a performance from a lion-hearted player. Not afraid to mix it when the opposition resorted to off-the-ball tactics and there was plenty of that. but despite skating on thin ice on a few occasions, he made a handsome contribution to the victory, (8),



DAMIEN SHERIDAN

Certainly one of the most under-rated midfielders in the county. He enjoyed some great moments, none more so than when he split the posts midway through the second-half after Brian Clarke's superb pass set up the chance. (8).



CIARAN MACKEN

Travelled a long way for this game, his first in the 2007 SFC, and what an occasion it turned out to be for the hugely talented forward. He provided extra options for his colleagues at all times and set up a number of crucial open-



ANDREW McCANN

Took up deep positions although he started at centreforward, he gave a wholehearted display and never flagged in his commitment and showed his true potential with some quality distribution. He also took up intelligent positions. (8).



JOE COWLEY

Replaced in the closing stages as manager Damier Sheridan brought on Brian Sheridan for the last few minutes. Both players received standing ovations and Cowley certainly warranted that sort of treatment after making a big input to the outcome . (8).



BRIAN CLARKE

What can you say about this player other than he thoroughly deserved his man-of-thematch award. Nine points, eight frees and a '45' totally devastated the opposition and although he kicked a few wides at the end, they were as good as scores. (9).



JOE SHERIDAN

Composed and efficient would be a fair way to describe his performance surely displayed enough attributes in the full-forward position to get the interest of Meath manager Colm Covle . (8).



SHANE CLARKE

Played second fiddle to his brother (Shane) in the other corner, but he still managed a brace of first-half points and also collected a yellow card, Showed great determination and commitment throughout until he was replaced in the final quarter (8)

# storm to victory

# **Fergal Lynch**

Seneschalstown \_0-15 Navan O'Mahonys 0-9 HISTORY has a tendency to repeat itself and on Sunday at Tailteann Seneschalstown reprised

their act from 35 years ago by defeating Navan O'Mahonys to lift the Keegan Cup after a thrilling replay.

Seneschalstown defeated the Brews Hill men in 1972 following an exciting replay and last Sunday they pulled out all the stops again and claimed the Meath SFC title for the third time.

Both sides served up some scintillating football compared to what was on offer two weeks ago.

There was only one difference between the teams hunger. Seneschalstown's appetite and determination was far greater than O'Mahonys and given the adversity faced by the parish in recent years, their win was fully deserved.

The bedrock of the success was a real passion for victory, but that was underpinned by some tremendous football. Seneschalstown played the game as the purists love to see it played. They were nificent. direct and purposeful in

everything they did. their route one style, but efficiency and effectiveness winner Andrew McCann also that Seneschalstown produced, it is a joy to watch.

Ten of the 15 points came from placed balls, but the skill and power applied to most of those kicks by the outstanding Brian Clarke was phenomenal. For a cornerforward of Clarke's stature he can put some distance into his kicks and his form was vital.

O'Mahonys were aware of the threat he posed from frees. frees, but that didn't prevent them from giving away many frees within his range. The Seneschalstown man punished them ruthlessly with eight frees and a '45' for a personal tally of nine

points. Brian Clarke epitomised all that is good about Seneschalstown football. He took his knocks, and some of them were ferocious, like a man. He never complained and when felled he always hopped back up to punish his aggressor where it mattered most, on the scoreboard.

He deservedly won the man-of-the-match award, but several others pushed him close. The key area of battle was pin-pointed to be at midfield and with Robert Ruddy and Damien Sheridan dominating O'Mahonys were forced onto the backfoot.

With Meath players, Mark Ward and Stephen Mac Gabhann in the centre, O'Mahonys would have expected to shade the midfield battle, but Ruddy and Damien Sheridan were mag-

Anytime Damien Sheridan didn't win clean possession, Some mightn't appreciate Ruddy got vital flicks and with experienced veteran and when it is played with the former Armagh All-Ireland operating around the middle, Seneschalstown had the perfect platform.

Joe Sheridan may have got very little change from play against Kevin Reilly, but the full-forward tormented his former Meath colleague Once Seneschalstown gained possession at midfield they lofted long balls into Joe

Sheridan and he won a lot of out of contention.

He also contributed the best score of the game when he took possession on the right and from almost 40 metres he lofted over a point on the turn to make it 0-10 to 0-6, 10 minutes into the second-half.

Seneschalstown had heroes all over the field and one of the most unlikely was Ciaran Macken. Two weeks ago he was 10 months into a trip to Australia, but a SOS saw him return in the days before the replay and he did enough to earn a start.

And what an impact he made. Macken was everywhere. He covered every blade of grass and provided assistance to the backs and forwards and was his side's ultimate playmaker.

While winning the midfield battle was key it was the resolve of the Seneschalstown defence that restricted O'Mahonys outstanding attacking threat.

David Bray, Barry Regan and with ease, Paddy Smyth failed to ignite Seneschalstown started to get and with Tommy Loughran a grip at midfield. absent, O'Mahonys missed Points from Brian Clarke, a his crucial experience.

performance must go to 0-1 first-quarter lead. Seneschalstown's brilliant rearguard action that was inspired by captain Cormac Quinn and full-back Andrew Collins, Both men excelled and with Mark Carey chipping in with two points Seneschalstown knew that Sunday was their

There were times when O'Mahonys threatened to spoil the party and at no stage were Michael Downes' men

bound effort not been bril- 0-8 at the break. liantly parried over for a point off the bar by David Lyons with four minutes remaining, the outcome might have been different.

Commons Hardware SFC final replay

A goal then would have left O'Mahonys just two points behind and it is unlikely that Seneschalstown would have had the room to force two more scores. However, on such fine points games can turn and Lyons' save was crucial

From early on it was obvious that the quality of football was going to be much higher than the first game. Brian Clarke opened the scoring inside a minute when Reilly fouled Joe Sheridan.

Five minutes later O'Mahonys had the best goal chance, but Smyth's effort hit Quinn on the line and was cleared. It took O'Mahonys 10 minutes to open their account when Ward gathered Key men Stephen and a poor kick-out and pointed

'45' and a free, were followed All the credit for by a Shane Clarke free to O'Mahonys' disappointing give Seneschalstown a 0-4 to

O'Mahonys were rattled and David Bray was unusually wayward from frees. Smyth responded with an easy point, Seneschalstown countered when Carey and Joe Sheridan grabbed their first scores from play.

That pattern continued Stephen Bray got a point for O'Mahonys, but Carey and Brian Clarke made it 0-8 to 0-3 before David Bray closed

the exciting half with a Had Gary O'Brien's goal- decent point to make it 0-4 to

> After the resumption Brian Clarke pointed another free before a superb point from Ward and a great free from David Bray made it 0-6 to 0-

Joe Sheridan's score of the game put four between the sides, but Paul Quinn and Stephen Bray set up an exciting final 20 minutes to leave O'Mahonys trailing by 0-8 to 0-10.

However, Seneschalstown refused to panic. Another superb free from Brian Clarke was followed by a Damien Sheridan point and although Brian Clarke missed the easiest free he had all day, Seneschalstown were still in control.

A scrappy passage of play saw Brian Clarke stretch that advantage to leave O'Mahonys needing a goal to get back into the game. It almost came through O'Brien, but Lyons intervened as Seneschalstown took heart and went on to claim their first SFC Keegan Cup since 1994.

Seneschalstown - D Lyons; S Sheridan, A Collins, C Clarke; M Carey (0-2), C Quinn, C Gleeson; R Ruddy, D Sheridan (0-1); C Macken, A McCann, J Cowley; B Clarke (0-9) J Sheridan (0-2), S Clarke (0-1) Subs - D Byrne for S Clarke, B Sheridan for Cowley, J Byrne for C Clarke.

Navan O'Mahonys - K Lane; L Russell, K Reilly, I Matthews; P Quinn (0-1), R Hogan, N McKeigue; S Mac Gabhann, M Ward (0-2); G O'Brien (0-1), P Smyth (0-1), C McGuinness; D Bray (0-2), B Regan, S Bray (0-2). Subs - N Dunne for Mac Gabhann, D O'Toole for McGuinness.

Referee - David Coldrick (Blackhall Gaels)

STEPHEN MacGABHANN

The type of day when nothng goes right is what this vastly experienced player endured and he was eventually replaced by Neville Dunne in the second-half



MARK WARD

Another of the short-fuse variety and he expends way too much energy on futile arguments, pulling and dragging. If he could focus on his good points, and he has loads of them, he would be a much better player. One of his side's top performs. (7)



GARY O'BRIEN

Went on a great run in the first-half and made an opening which was squandered. went on another run in the second-half and was denied a goal by a superb save. Plenty of honest endeavour.



PADDY SMYTH

Failed to produce some of his earlier championship form. Has the potential to be a great player, but potential will not win anything and until he finds some sort of consistency. ne will always have poten



CORMAC McGUINNESS

Lots of effort and commitment, but no real reward and was called ashore in the sec ond-half. His replacement didn't improve matters, but that's not much consolation to a player who usually produces more. (6).



DAVID BRAY

A point in each half just wasn't enough and his scoring boots weren't working so well either. Unfortunately, for his team, he tallied some bad wides as it all unravelled for O'Mahonys from an early stage. (7).



BARRY REGAN

Drew a blank on the scoreboard. Another player with great potential, but needs to adopt a more disciplined approach instead of wasting his time in the off-the-bal department and it's unaccept able to see such talent wast



STEPHEN BRAY

Showed great composure when he was hauled back for a free as he raced towards the Seneschalstown goal. The subsequent free was kicked wide. Just one of those days when nothing would go right. (7).

■ Team ratings compiled by Conall Collier.

# Man in black

David Coldrick was introduced as the man who had refereed the All-Ireland football final this year and the Blackhall Gaels clubman certainly needed all that experience to handle what could have been a particularly volatile affair. Lack of discipline certainly appears to be a problem in the O'Mahonys camp and the match official put up with a fair amount of remonstrating by the Navan players and off-the-ball incidents which showed an unnecessary ugly side to their game. It actually detracts from their ability, but on Sunday they needed to see red and didn't. They probably even blamed the referee for this defeat. It wasn't his fault, but he was responsible for the fact that they finished with 15 on the pitch. Not acceptable.

### Match Facts SENESCHALSTOWN NAVAN O'MAHONYS First Second Total Total Second Goals 0 15 **Points** 4 9 Wides 4 12 20 Frees 16 8 2 0 2 Yellow cards 4 2 0 0 Red cards 0 0



TV & LEISURE

Roddy Doyle to give talk in Solstice p14

**Guide to** going out. staying in p13-18



SECTION 3

**SATURDAY 10th NOVEMBER 2007** 

sports@meathchronicle.ie

# Beautiful day for Seneschalstown

# Shock replay victory for Yellow Furze side

# **Conall Collier**

FOR a parish that has endured more tragedies than most, Sunday was a beautiful day for the players, officials and supporters of Seneschalstown as they won the Keegan Cup for a third time with a sensational replay victory over Navan O'Mahonys.

The victory surely lifted the spirits of a community which has had to come to terms with many sad events and even in their moment of triumph, yet another family in the tightknit community was trying to cope with heartbreak on the other side of the world.

Ironically, it was the return to the county of one of the club's most gifted players from the other side of the globe that helped this gallant Seneschalstown team across the winning line.

Ciaran Macken answered the call and made the

marathon journey from Australia only days before the

Manager Damien Sheridan may have had mixed emotions about the prospects of Cormac Quinn was thrilled facing a team with which he with the victory. His delight won five Keegan Cup medals, but he still managed to plot their downfall with a direct approach.

Scarcely 40 seconds had elapsed on Sunday when Brian Clarke flashed the ball over the Navan O'Mahonys bar for the first of his nine points. It signalled the beginning of the end of O'Mahonys bid to avoid two successive

Leading by 0-8 to 0-4 at the interval, Seneschalstown were never headed and had six points to spare (0-15 to 0-9) when referee David Coldrick brought an absorbing encounter to a conclusion shortly before 4.0 on Sunday

That was the signal for a

pitch invasion by hordes of men, women and children. most clad in some form of club attire

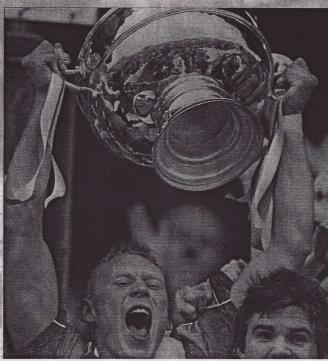
Seneschalstown captain was obvious as the presentation ceremony unfolded in front of a sea of blue and yellow flag-waving supporters.

"O'Mahonys gave us two tough games, but we won through, this is my third year with the club and I'm delighted with this victory," stated the captain.

"Our families have put up with a lot and hopefully this is some sort of a reward for them, the selectors did a lot of work and this success is for Tommy (McDonnell)," he added and was greeted with a mighty roar.

Quinn also highlighted the impact which the team manager had on the panel.

"Damien Sheridan told us we were going to be the coun-



# fast forward

There will be no resting on the laurels for senior footchampions Seneschalstown Sunday as they will face Dublin champions St Vincent's in the Leinster Club SFC at Parnell Park, 3.0 The last time the Yellow Furze side competed in the competition in 1994 they reached the final where they lost after a Kilmacud



Meath athletes, both adult and juvenile, will be representing the county at the second day of the Leinster cross- country championships Sunday which are scheduled to take place at Haywood Community Ballinakill. School, Abbeyleix, Co. Laois. The Royal Country can expect some sterling displays with the start set at the midland venue at midday



rejuvenate interest and

participation in the club.



# Championship chatterbox

**FOOTBALL** 

That was the signal for a



■ Seneschalstown supporters Aoife Stanley (left) and Paula

snortly before 4.0 on Sunday

"Damien Sheridan told us we were going to be the county champions, he gave us the belief to play football the way it should be played and he never gave out to us, thanks Damien," he said.

ager had on the panel.

"It was just a matter of getting our heads right and we achieved that," he concluded.

The amount of support which Seneschalstown brought with them to Navan last Sunday will probably be surpassed next Sunday when they will make the relatively short journey to Parnell Park in Dublin for the Leinster Club SFC clash with St



■ HAPPY DAYS....... Seneschalstown captain Cormac Quinn hoists the Keegan Cup at Pairc Tailteann on Sunday accompanied by Brian Clarke.

# One Meath player selected on GPA team

# Fergal Lynch

JUST as with the All Star awards, only one Meath play-

football team-of-the-year. with Darren Fay nominated at full back.

er was selected on the Gaelic for a magnificent season that



■ Opel Ireland MD Dave Sheerin (left) presented Meath fullback Darren Fay with his GPA award following his selection on the team-of-the-year. Also included is GPA chief executive

Calling all young musicians, singers,

dancers, actors and quiz enthusiasts

Compete in Scor na nÓg -

The GAA's Talent Competition for

Meath Co. Final in Navan on Friday 23rd

November at 7pm.

Eight separate events - Figure Dancing, Instrumental

Music Group, Solo Singing, Novelty Act, Ballad Group

Team Quiz, Recitation, Set Dancing

Age Limit:- Under 17 on 1st January 2008

Full details on www.gaa.ie/meath

If YOU are interested in Scor - Meath

GAA is interested in YOU.

Contact your local GAA club IMMEDIATELY (contact details on website)

Further information from Meath Scor Chairman

Richard Harrahill on 046-9025023 or 087-2367941.

Young People

Players Association (GPA) saw him return from retirement and effortlessly slip back into the number three role with almost flawless per-

> The decision to pick Fay as the best full-back of the year makes a mockery of the decision by the All Star selectors not to even consider the Trim man in the full-back line. His inclusion on the GPA team is one of four changes from the All Star team that was selected by some of the national newspaper journalists.

Amazingly, only one player from the Cork team, Nicholas Murphy, has managed to make it onto the GPA team. Just one Rebel star, Graham Canty, was included on the All Star team, but he didn't make the latest team of the vear to be selected.

it is surprising that Stephen Cluxton was again chosen ahead of Brendan Murphy.

All-Ireland champions Kerry have seven representatives, Marc Ó Sé, Tomás Ó Sé, Darragh Ó Sé, Declan O'Sullivan, Paul Galvin, Aidan O'Mahony and Colm Cooper. The three Dublin players Cluxton, Barry Cahill and Alan Brogan, Meath's Fay and Cork's Murphy are joined by Tyrone's Conor Gormley and Monaghan's Thomas Freeman

Football Committee chairman Jack O'Connor congratulated the winners "Gaelic football is a team

game, but these awards recognise the outstanding contribution of some very skilful individuals during the course of Three Dublin players are the year. On the football com-

felt were the three most deserving nominees for each position, and the players then had the final say.

"I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate all the recipients on this year's team. To be honoured by your peers is the one of the most satisfying rewards for footballer," O'Connor.

Dessie Farrell, Chief Executive of the GPA said. "Players' player awards will always have a special place in the hearts of footballers and hurlers so I would like to congratulate the 15 winners who were chosen from the 45 nominees by their fellow players.

"Of course no player can be singled out without the assistance of his team-mates and fellow panelists who also selected on the GPA side and mittee, we selected who we deserve special mention as do

all the participants in the 2007 football championship," he

Meath received four nominations for the ladies football and camogie All Stars. Meath have been rewarded for their strong showing in this year's camogie championship with one nomination, Aileen Donnelly for this year's Energise Sport All Stars.

Irene Munnelly, Sinead Dooley and Louise McKeever are all in the running for a 2007 O'Neills/TG4 Ladies Football All Stars following a string of impressive displays. Munnelly has consistently

been one of the country's finest goalkeepers and will go close to winning some deserved recognition. Dooley excelled in defence for Meath and McKeever continues to prove to be one of the country's finest defenders.

Sports results

FOOTBALL

"I'm as proud as punch. Every emotion you can possibly think of is

running through me at this moment. I'm delighted for my lads, but I'm

Seneschalstown manager Damien Sheridan explaining how

he felt as he reflected on a tremendous victory in the Keegar

"Every player on the Seneschalstown team seemed to want i

badly and they played accordingly, but could you say the same about

Navan O'Mahonys manager Michael Downes in the aftermath

of his team's failure to win the Keegan Cup on Sunday. See

"It has been a long 13 years since we last won it, but I'm just delighted now and I'm totally lost for words. The lads did brilliant

Seneschalstown goalkeeper David Lyons who made a crucial

save in the closing stages of Sunday's memorable final at Pairc

delighted for the whole team because we are one big family.

GAA Leinster Club IHC semi-final -Clonkill (Westmeath) 2-15, Kiltale

Tailteann. See page three.

Cup final replay. See page three.

everyone on the O'Mahonys team. I don't know."

SFC final replay Seneschalstown 0-15, Navan O'Mahonys 0-9. U-21FC - Blackhall Gaels 1-8,

Gaeil Colmcille 2-4 U-21 A FC - Trim 3-11 Castletown 0-14; Dunshaughlin 5-

15, Nobber 3-3 U-21 B FC - Oldcastle 0-15 St Brigid's 0-3.

Div 1 - Dunboyne 2-17, Kilmessan 3-10.

Div 3 - St Ultan's wo. Ballinabrackey scr. SOCCER

FAI Junior Cup - Sandyhill Celtic 2, Kentstown Rovers 1; Quay Celtic 2, Square 3; Columbas Rovers 2, Woodview 4; Navan Cosmos 2, St Vincent's 0; Usher Celtic 1, Carrick 1, 4 - 5

Leinster Junior Shield Castledockrell 1, Sheelin Celtic 4; BBC Utd 3, Donacarney 4; Gorey Celtic 1, Johnstown 8; Virginia 4, West End 2.

Premier - Rock Celtic Glenmuir 1; Dromin 1, Glaslough 2; Slane 2, Trim Celtic 0; Torro 0 Ardee Celtic 3

Div 1 - Bellurgan 2, Clones Town 2; Kells / Blackwater 1, Newtown 3; Oldcastle 1, Botown 3; OMP 2, Trim Town / Kilmessan 2; Termonfeckin 4, St Laurence's 2.

Div 2 - Longwood 3, Athboy 3; Marsh Celtic 6, BMC 0; Skryne / Tara 3, Kells 3; Bohermeen 3, Kingscourt 3; Castle Villa 2,

Div 3 - Castlepollard 0, Summerhill 3; Fordrew 2, Laytown 6; Agher 1, Rossin 2.

Div 4 - Bailieboro 4

Clonmagadden 2; Enfield 2, Bia Celtic 1; Moneymore 0, Beaufort 2; Abbey Celtic 3, Knightsbrook 1 Premier Reserve - Albion Marsh Celtic 0; Ardee Celtic 2 Rock Celtic 2; Carrick 2, Glenmui

4; Square 1, Glaslough 4; Trin Celtic 4. Dromin 1. Premier A Reserve - Ardee

Celtic 3rds 0, Bellurgan 0; Botown Navan Cosmos 2; Navan Town Slane 3; Newtown 10 Kentstown 0; Town/Kilmessan 0, Torro 2.

Premier B Reserve Bohermeen 3, Oldcastle 1; Chor Celtic 4, Electro 3; Longwood ( Kells-Blackwater 2; Kingscourt 4

Premier C Reserve - Athboy 1 Johnstown 1; Donacarney Enfield 2: Summerhill 3 Castlepollard 2.

Div 1A - Parkvilla 1, St Joseph's Major Sunday - Ratoath Harps

1, St Joseph's Boys 1. U-17 League - Trim Celtic 2 Walshestown 2.

U-16 League - Kells
Blackwater B 2, Cavan Celtic 4. U-15 SFAI Cup - Parkvilla 0

Carrick Rovers 1 U-15 League - Borora Juniors E 0. Oldcastle

U-14 SFAI Cup - Trim Celtic 6, Rock Celtic 0, Northway Rangers 0, Kells / Blackwater 2.

U-13 SFAI Cup - Kells Blackwater 4, Boyne Rovers 3; Cootehill Harps 3, Trim Celtic B 0. RUGBY

Leinster League Div 1 Ashbourne 10, Garda 10 Portlaoise 15, Navan 40; Cill Dara 20, Boyne 21; Dundalk 34, Wicklow 5; Skerries 19 Monkstown 16.

Provincial 2nds League Ashbourne 13, Garda Portlaoise 12, Navan 29.



■ Athletics Association of Ireland president Michael Heery (centre) with AAI officials Mary Coghlan and Padraig McKeon at the launch of the inaugural 2007 National Athletics' Awards which will take place in Dublin on Saturday, 17th November and will honour the best Irish athletes, clubs and coaches from across the country

# A long journey in a short space of time

# **Paul Clarke**

A LOT has happened for Seneschalstown in a short space of time. They travelled to Dunsany 14 months ago with the threat of a relegation dogfight hanging over them and turned in a display against champions Dunboyne which was as impressive as it was puzzling

Five days earlier they had under-performed alarmingly against Skryne and the possibility of a drop to the intermediate ranks for the first time in nearly four decades was being talked about. The contrast between that showing and the one that followed against Dunboyne couldn't have been

One man stood out like a beacon with his accuracy that evening - Brian Clarke who scored six points.

Push the clock forward a year and Seneschalstown were beginning to build up the sort of momentum at the perfect time to mount a serious assault on the SFC. They were by no means convincing in the group stages, but once the urgency was intensified with the arrival of knock-out football it was clear that they were warming to the challenge.

Summerhill will probably win the Keegan Cup in the next few years, but it was in the quarter-final meeting of the sides that Seneschalstown demonstrated the extent of their improvement and, above all, their growing physicality and self-belief.

And it was that physicality that played a massive role in carrying them to the title as they defeated Simonstown Gaels at the penultimate hurdle and drew with hot favourites Navan O'Mahonys in the final.

It was a game they should have won, but they knew coming away from Pairc Tailteann that evening that they were up to the task, which they completed in Sunday's replay when Clarke kicked points for fun.

Much has changed with the team since that evening in Dunsany in early September last year, the most visible ones being the emergence of a solid spine down the middle of the defence which is essential if a team wants to prosper at this

Andrew Collins, a youngster who has endured his share of injuries, has emerged as a fullback with tremendous potential. Not too many 18 year-olds have won SFC medals in that position and this must have been a very proud day for his father Billy who was a member of the Seneschalstown team that brought the club its first senior title in 1972.

Directly in front of him is the rock at the heart of the Seneschalstown defence, captain Cormac Quinn, who has arguably made the single biggest difference this year. He possesses tremendous strength and is a towering presence in the pivotal role.

But they have been just two of the stand out players in a team which possesses a tremendous work ethic and that willingness to graft, win ugly ball on the ground and generally get stuck in clearly unsettled O'Mahonys in the

There were also the tremendous showings of Robert Ruddy and Damien Sheridan at midfield, where Mark Ward had his moments for O'Mahonys, but Stephen Mac Gabhann really struggled.

Andy McCann's craft has also served them well at centre-forward, while there has



■ Referee David Coldrick appears to be clearing the way for Seneschalstown's Ciaran Macken during Sunday's SFC final replay

never been any doubt about the threat they pose in the full-forward line. Brian Sheridan was so unlucky to be ruled out of the drawn game with an injury and the club's third Keegan Cup was secured by the time he was introduced near the end on Sunday

Joe Sheridan's decision to opt out of the Meath set-up clearly benefited Seneschalstown enormously as he was a far fresher looking player subsequently and his performances in the latter stages of the championship were hugely significant.

His second-half point on Sunday was surely as good as has ever been scored in a senior final and demonstrated the overall confidence in a team that always looked capable of responding to any serious threat O'Mahonys might pose to a lead they held for almost the entire game.

And then there was that man Clarke who possesses one mighty kick of a football, and a fairly accurate one as well. He missed probably the easiest chance he had from a placed ball when Seneschalstown led by four points in the second period, but his overall contribution was immense.

Nine points - eight frees and a '45' - was some tally, but that statistic also demonstrates that O'Mahonys were forced into a lot of fouling.

Indeed, their overall performance was disjointed and proved that they hadn't left the poor form that afflicted the majority of their campaign behind them. So many of their players will be disappointed with the way they performed and the fact that two of their county panellists, Mac Gabhann and Cormac title that really stood out. McGuinness, were substituted

just about summed it all up. It was also one of those days for David Bray who missed kicks he would normally get with

They have now failed to win the Keegan Cup despite getting three opportunities in the space of a little over a year and it will be interesting to see who is given the onerous task of trying to put things to right in 2008 following the departure of Mickey Downes.

It's unlikely to be a job that a long line of people will be queuing up to take on. There's a similarity there to being manager of the Dublin football team where expectation is always high. That brings pressure - the sort of pressure not too many people want and certainly not the sort you go looking for.

One senior championship in the space of 17 years represents a very poor return for a club of their pedigree, but there is no doubt that the players are there to put the record straight.

They will find it hard to lift themselves after this latest setback, but triumphs achieved out of adversity tend to be the sweetest ones. Now is not the time to stop believing.

However, this was Seneschalstown's day and they were worthy of the sixpoint winning margin which was the heaviest final defeat inflicted on O'Mahonys since Kilbride beat them by 10 in 1971

The role played by manager Damien Sheridan and selectors Tommy McDonnell and Ian Maguire has been immense, but it was the way the players applied themselves to the many challenges that go into winning the senior

They are worthy champions

Navan O'Mahonys in the final. tre-forward, while there has at Pairc Tailteann.

# MICOURINGSS, WEIG SHUSHILLEU

# The road to 2007 Keegan **Cup success**

FIRST ROUND

Seneschalstown 0-14, Walterstown 0-8.

Seneschalstown - D. Lyons; J. Byrne, P. Carey, C. Clarke; S. Sheridan, C. Ruddy, M. Carey (0-2); R. Ruddy (0-1), S. Finnegan; D. Byrne (0-1), J. Sheridan (0-2), C. Gleeson; B. Clarke (0-3), D. Sheridan (0-1), B. Sheridan (0-4). Sub - J. Cowley

SECOND ROUND

St. Patrick's 1-8, Seneschalstown 1-5.

Seneschalstown - D. Lyons; J. Byrne, P. Carey, C. Clarke; S. Sheridan (0-1), C. Ruddy, M. Carey; R. Ruddy, C. Quinn; D. Byrne (1-0), D. Sheridan (0-1), B. Clarke; A. McCann, J. Sheridan, B. Sheridan (0-3). Subs - S. Finnegan for Quinn, J. Cowley for McCann, C. Gleeson for B. Clarke.

THIRD ROUND

Trim 2-7, Seneschalstown 0-9. Seneschalstown - D. Lyons; A. Collins, P. Carey, C. Clarke; S. Sheridan, M. Carey, J. Byrne; R. Ruddy D. Sheridan; J. Sheridan (0-2), B. Clarke (0-1), J. Cowley; S. Finnegan, A. McCann (0-1), B. Sheridan (0-5). Subs - D. Byrne for Finnegan, G. Sheridan for

Cowley, T. Ledwith for J. Byrne. FOURTH ROUND

Seneschalstown 1-12, Rathkenny 0-9.

Seneschalstown - D. Lyons; P. Carey, A. Collins, C. Clarke; G. Sheridan, M. Carey, S. Sheridan; R. Ruddy (0-1), C. Quinn; D. Byrne, B. Sheridan (0-3), D. Sheridan; B. Clarke (0-1), J. Sheridan (1-6), A. McCann. Subs - J. Cowley (0-1) for Quinn, S. Clarke for McCann.

**OUARTER-FINAL** 

Seneschalstown 2-11, Summerhill 0-11.

Seneschalstown - D. Lyons; P. Carey, A. Collins, C. Clarke (0-1); M. Carey (0-1), C. Quinn, C. Gleeson; R. Ruddy, D. Sheridan (0-1); S. Sheridan, A. McCann, J. Cowley (0-1); B. Clarke (0-4), J Sheridan (1-0), B. Sheridan (0-2). Subs - D. Byrne (1-1) for P. Carey, S. Finnegan for Cowley.

SEMI-FINAL

Seneschalstown 3-6, Simonstown Gaels 1-9. Seneschalstown - D. Lyons; S. Sheridan, A. Collins, C. Clarke; M. Carey, C. Quinn, C. Gleeson; R. Ruddy, D. Sheridan; D. Byrne (0-1), A. McCann, J. Cowley; B. Clarke, J. Sheridan (2-1), B. Sheridan (1-3), Subs - S. Finnegan (0-1) for Cowley, S. Clarke for Byrne, J. Byrne for Gleeson.

FINAL

Seneschalstown 1-8, Navan O'Mahonys 0-11 Seneschalstown - D Lyons; S Sheridan, A Collins, C Clarke; M Carey (1-0), C Quinn, C Gleeson; R Ruddy, D Sheridan (0-1); D Byrne, A McCann, J Cowley: B Clarke (0-7), J Sheridan, S Finnegan. Subs - S Clarke for Cowley, T Ledwidge for Finnegan.

REPLAY

Seneschalstown 0-15, Navan O'Mahonys 0-9. Seneschalstown - D Lyons; S Sheridan, A Collins, C Clarke; M Carey (0-2), C Quinn, C Gleeson; R Ruddy, D Sheridan (0-1); C Macken, A McCann, J Cowley; B Clarke (0-9), J Sheridan (0-2), S Clarke (0-1). Subs - D Byrne for S Clarke, B Sheridan for Cowley, J Byrne for C Clarke.

# Huge lift for a small comn

# **Fergal Lynch**

THE key area of battle in most football matches is midfield and rarely have four better exponents of the art competed than in last Sunday's SFC final.

managers had Both expressed views that whoever got the upperhand at midfield would have the advantage and

it was Seneschalstown who managed to swing that one

With the battle won around the middle, victory in the war was secured. One warrior stood head and shoulders above all others. Red heads are often accused of being fiery characters, but that is an attribute that makes Robert Ruddy a better footballer.

Ruddy was magnificent for

Seneschalstown, He drove his side and was a real leader. His hunger and passion were ferocious and it was his drive that inspired those around him.

'When O'Mahonys you know that the game is never wrapped up. We played them in three or four u-21 semi-finals and finals and we know they are never beaten. I can sympathise with them, but it is our

"It is a great day for Seneschalstown, just look at the crowd of people that are here supporting us, it is magic, absolutely magic.'

The recurring theme expressed by all associated with Seneschalstown is that this win is for the parish and all involved with the area who have lost loved ones. Ruddy re-iterated that point.

"Seneschalstown have had a lot of tragedies with the bus here. crash and the tragedy out in Australia during the week, so something like this means a

whole lot to a small community," he said. "We went out and put it up to the best in the county and now we will go on to put it up are the most important and he to the best in the country. It

always told us to play fiveminute football. We start with the first five minutes and give it our all and then we go again and again. He emphasised that the six inches in front of us really motivated us," concludshould put a bit of heart back ed Ruddy before racing off to into the area. It is unbeliev- join the celebrations.

# **Supporters at Pairc Tailteann on Sunday**



■ Enjoying the SFC final replay at Pairc Tailteann were Hazel Weldon (left) and Ciara Mulhall from Dunderry.



■ Alan Brady from Navan with Australian lady Elisha Hall at Pairc Tailteann on Sunday.



■ Caroline Simpson and Graham Simpson from Yellow Furze were all smiles at Pairc Tailteann on Sunday.



Marie Kelly and Yvonne Cowley.



■ Supporting Seneschalstown at Pairc Tailteann on Sunday were Martina Cowley (left), Ann- Supporters at Pairc Tailteann on Sunday included (from left: back - Michael Bennett and Liam Kerrane from Navan; front - Jim Lynagh, Kitty Lynagh and Arthur Clarke all from Kilberry.

# Emotional moments for the winning

coach

# **Fergal Lynch**

BEFORE the drawn SFC final two weeks ago between Navan O'Mahonys and Seneschalstown, Damien Sheridan put his sides achievement in reaching the decider into perspective.

The Seneschalstown manager said that all he wanted to see were the smiles returning to faces of people from the

Those smiles returned in abundance and many eyes were also flooded with tears after a sensational victory on Sunday afternoon.

Seneschalstown is a parish that has known more tragedy than most in recent years, so few can begrudge the footballers their chance to bring the smiles back.

In the midst of the cheers and tears Sheridan accepted the back slapping from his neighbours, he took them all with a shrug of his shoulders and a pride that hid the torment that lies in his heart.

Sheridan is well aware of the hard times that have beset his parish. As he spoke to the waiting press tears welled in his eyes and a lump grew in

"I'm sorry that it had to be Mick Downes and Navan O'Mahonys that we beat, but

been in the parish. A lot of people have lost a lot of loved ones and those lads were on a mission this year. I can't say to you now what that mission was, but they were deter-

"History has repeated itself. It is amazing how similar it was to 1972 with the drawn match and even with the car accident around that replay we had a car accident last week as well.

"The lads are unreal as a team. They are the best group of lads ever. I have won eight senior football championships and these are the best group of lads I have ever been involved with without a shadow of a

"Their attitude is amazing. The way they think about the game is brilliant. There was more to this today than football. I'm sorry for Navan O'Mahonys, but there was more to today than just football. Today runs deeper than

"Today is about a community that needed lifting and today, thank God, their spirit has been lifted a little," he

shouldn't really be a major surprise. They are also in the League and Feis Cup finals and have rarely tasted defeat- half. ed this year.

"We were beaten in two league matches when we were already in the final, so this team has gone undefeated all year in games that matter.

"I'm as proud as punch Every emotion you can possibly think of is running through me at this moment I'm delighted for my lads, but I'm delighted for the whole team because we are one big

When asked what was the difference between the drawn game and Sunday's victory. Sheridan was clear that his troops were braver this time around and they took the chances that made the differ-

"Like I said after the game the last day, we waited on O'Mahonys in that game. We didn't take the step forward into the unknown where these lads have never been before. However, we took that step

Seneschalstown's success played well and we picked up and O'Mahonys hit a few bad wides early in the second-

"That was the time that



■ Seneschalstown's Brian Clarke holds off the challenge of Navan O'Mahonys defender Lee Russell during Sunday's SFC final replay at Pairc Tailteann

# Index very took that step today and I'm delighted these lads did it. "Midfield was crucial, but Brian Clarke kicked some brilliant frees and Joe (Sheridan) also had his back up for the game. Everybody played well and we picked up crucial breaks at crucial times and O'Mahonys hit a few bad

**Fergal Lynch** 

was to ask where did it go right?

When asked where did it all go wrong his reply that if you want to win a county final then you have to play and we simply didn't play today.

Mick Downes and Navan and have rarely tasted defeat-O'Mahonys that we beat, but our name has been on the championship cup. I knew that since the 27th December tered. We were beaten in two last year because of the spirit

of the lads," said Sheridan. "I knew it because of the

ed this year.

"We have never been beaten in a game this year that matchampionship games against St. Pat's and Trim, but even if we won those we would still amount of tragedies that have have only been in a quarter-pions," he concluded.

"That was the time that O'Mahonys needed to claw back a few scores, but they didn't get them. The second half was a worry for us, but we played it cool today and walked and talked like cham-



■ Meath GAA Co Committee chairman Brendan Dempsey presented the Keegan Cup to Seneschalstown captain Cormac Quinn. Also included is John O'Byrne of Commons Hardware who sponsored the senior championship

# Lyons happy to win

# **Fergal Lynch**

WHILE Brian Clarke was being lauded in the middle of the Pairc Tailteann stand as the man-of-the-match, the other Seneschalstown heroes outstanding effort that secured O'Mahonys would have been a third Keegan Cup for the

keepers efforts tend to go unnoticed. It is only when a mistake is made that everyone notices, but on Sunday Seneschalstown's custodian David Lyons was in the spotlight for all the right reasons.

With four minutes remaining and with his side holding a

face-to-face with Gary O'Brien. The O'Mahonys man had only one thing on his mind and his fierce drive had goal written all over it.

Had he succeeded the wind would have been knocked out were receiving praise for an of Seneschalstown's sails and back in the game.

Lyons was equal to As can often happen, goal- O'Brien's shot and he deflected the effort onto the woodwork and over the crossbar. It was a remarkable piece of goalkeeping, but as always goalkeepers are modest folk and Lyons preferred to deflect the attention onto his col-

"It has been a long 13 years

since we last won it, but I'm just delighted now and I'm totally lost for words. The lads did brilliant today," said

"I got a little touch onto their late effort, but I was always saying that there is one big save in me. That was their gameplan to put a lot of pressure on me after the last day, but it didn't work out for

"It means so much more to the parish than it does to the club. As Damien (Sheridan) said in the paper, the parish has had so much hurt over the last few years that it is great to be able to do something like this," concluded a tearful

# SFC Fair Play League - final table

The Meath Chronicle / Meath Local Sports Partnership SFC Fair Play League aims to encourage a disciplined approach from teams in the 2007 SFC. Each team started with 100 points with deductions for red cards (10 points) and yellow cards (five points).

The top team at the end of the SFC will receive a €1,000 voucher for the under-age section of its club, the runner-up €500, third and fourth placed teams €250. In the event of a tie, the best team will be identified on countback to when first card was received.

Maria No.	P	Yellow	Red	Deductions	Total
Wolfe Tones	4	5	0	25	75
Rathkenny	5	5	0	25	75
Dunshaughlin	6	7	0	35	65
Dunboyne	6	7	0	35	65
Summerhill	6	7	0	35	65
Simonstown	7	8	0	40	60
Kilmainhamwood	6	8	0	40	60
St. Patrick's	5	8	0	40	60
Duleek	5	8	0	40	60
Skryne	5	9	0	45	55
Trim	4	10	1	60	40
Seneschalstown	8	13	0	65	35
Walterstown	5	14	1	80	20
Blackhall Gaels	5	15	1	85	15
Ballinlough	6	15	2	95	5
Navan O'Mahonys	9	20	1	110	(10)

# **Fergal Lynch**

TO have your heart broken once is bad enough, but to lose two SFC finals in-a-row was too much for Michael Downes as he announced his decision to step down as Navan O'Mahonys manager following Sunday's Keegan Cup final defeat by Seneschalstown at Pairc Tailteann.

There was an air of inevitability after the drawn game about Downes. He is always a calm and respected man and despite the obvious pain of losing, he took the time to try to explain where it all went wrong, but was confident that O'Mahonys will bounce back.

"O'Mahonys are always going to be there, they will always be a force in Meath football. They will be back again next year and maybe they will be able to win it, but I wouldn't be involved next year," he confirmed.

"I travel down from Dublin and there is an awful lot more involved in management these days than just being there on match days.

"I think it is time for someone else to take it up and maybe take a different approach and see what they do to bring this championship back to O'Mahonys.'

When asked where did it all go wrong his reply was to ask where did it go right?

"I suppose everything went wrong for us today and nothing went right. You have to give credit to Seneschalstown because they are the team with the Keegan Cup and it is fully deserved," he said.

"They had a game plan and they stuck to it. We couldn't cope with it. We didn't match their intensity, we didn't match their determination and we didn't match the clinical way they played and that's

"We missed an awful lot of chances in the first-half when we were well in the game and they seemed to score most of their opportunities in the first-half. Their defence was excellent, but we had three goal chances in the first 15 minutes of the game, but we didn't take them

"You have to hand it to Seneschalstown because they didn't panic, they stuck with their plan, they kicked some brilliant frees and all their big men performed for them on the day.

"We saw the last day that Brian Clarke can kick frees from 60 yards and he did that again today so we didn't learn from the first day.

We got out of jail the first day and there was a feeling that because we got out of jail then that we'd do it this time, but everyone in O'Mahonys knows

that if you want to win a county final then you have to play and we simply didn't play today.

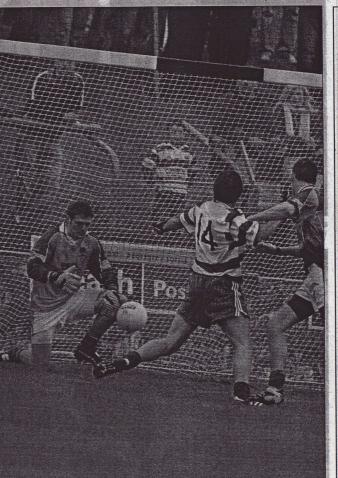
"They seemed to control the midfield area. They were in control in most areas on the pitch and when you are not in control then you are not going

"I've said all along that a team that is in the final of three major senior competitions has to be a very very good team. They have been ultra-consistent in the league, they fought their way through the championship and are in the Feis Cup final. You don't get to that position in Meath football without being a very, very, very good team."

The weight of expectation is greater on Navan O'Mahonys than most other clubs, but Downes was quick to dismiss the added pressure on his men as being the reason for their demise.

"There has always been an expectancy around Navan O'Mahonys and it didn't prevent other teams from winning championships in the past so it should n't effect us now. We have to wonder how many players wanted it badly enough? (1.0) qualities

"Every player on the Seneschalstown team seemed to want it badly and they played accordingly, but could you say the same about everyone on the O'Mahonys team, I don't know," concluded Downes.



■ Seneschalstown goalkeeper David Lyons saves in the first-half of Sunday's SFC final replay while full-back Andrew Collins holds off the challenge of Barry Regan.



# Senior championship statistics

- Top Gun: Tadhg Brosnan (Blackhall Gaels) 4-31; Stephen Bray (Navan O'Mahonys) 3-19; Ger Robinson (Dunboyne) 3-17; Shane O'Rourke (Simonstown Gaels) 2-20; Joe Sheridan (Seneschalstown) 4-13; Brian Clarke (Seneschalstown) 0-25; Brian Sheridan (Seneschalstown) 1-20; Cian Ward (Wolfe Tones) 1-20; Brian Ennis (Summerhill) 0-23; Barry Campbell (St. Patrick's) 2-16; Paul Gilsenan (Trim) 2-15; Stephen Moran (Dunboyne) 1-17; Wayne McCarthy (Simonstown) 0-20; Shane O'Neill (Simonstown) 3-10; David Bray (Navan O'Mahonys) 1-18; Conall McGinley (Duleek) 0-19; Paddy Carolan (Kilmainhamwood) 4-6; Henry Finnegan (Navan O'Mahonys) 0-18; Thomas Loughran (Navan O'Mahonys) 3-8; Charles McCarthy (Walterstown) 1-14; Peter Curran (Duleek) 1-13; Ray Magee (Kilmainhamwood) 0-16; Cathal O'Dwyer (Dunshaughlin) 0-16; Niall Kelly (Dunshaughlin) 0-16; Thomas Martin (Rathkenny) 0-15; John Lunney (Simonstown Gaels) 2-8; Richie Timmons (Rathkenny) 2-8; Rory Donnelly (Summerhill) 0-14; Felim O'Rourke (Skryne) 0-14.
- Total number of games played: 46.7 1 . Cl compared decree
- Number of draws: Six.

  Hot whistle: Navan O'Mahonys referee Donal Smyth awarded 62 frees in the relegation play-off between Kilmainhamwood and Walterstow which went to extra-time.
- Hot cards: St. Mary's referee Cormac Reilly issued 10 cards in the first round clash at Pairc Tailteann between Seneschalstown and
- Biggest winning margin: 18 points (Blackhall Gaels 4-17, Duleek 0-7
- (third round).

  Lowest winning margin: one point: Navan O'Mahonys 0-12, Dunboyne 0-11; Rathkenny 0-11, Trim 0-10 (both second round); Skryne 0-8, Navan O'Mahonys 0-7; Dunboyne 0-13, Skryne 1-9.
- Highest winning score: Blackhall Gaels 4-17 (third round). Lowest winning score: Skryne 0-8 v Navan O'Mahonys; Rathkenny 0-8 v Walterstown.
- Highest number of players to score: 16 Dunshaughlin, Navan
- O'Mahonys.

  Best attack: Navan O'Mahonys have scored 8-86 in eight games.
- Worst attack: Ballinlough have scored 6-32 in six games. ■ Best defence: Seneschalstown have conceded 4-63 in seven games
- Worst defence: Kilmainhamwood have conceded 9-66 in six games. Highest number of goals scored: eight - Blackhall Gaels and Navan
- O'Mahonys. Lowest number of goals scored: two Rathkenny and Skryne.
- Highest number of goals conceded; nine Kilmainhamwood.
- Lowest number of goals conceded: one Skryne Red alert (number of players sent off); Two - Ballinlough; one
- Walterstown, Blackhall Gaels, Trim, Navan O'Mahonys. ■ Yellow fever: (highest number of players cautioned) 20 - Navan O'Mahonys; 15 - Blackhall Gaels, Ballinlough; 14 - Walterstown.
- The top scorer in the senior football championship will receive a €1,000 sports voucher and his club will also receive a €1,000 sports voucher. This promotion is sponsored by DLS Mortgage Services / EBS Building Society. Kennedy Road Navan.