

COUNTY FINAL SPECIAL

06 NOV 2007

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2007

Promised Land

Seneschalstown
captain Cormac
Quinn raises the
Keegan cup.

Seneschalstown 0-15
Navan O'Mahonys 0-9

Seneschalstown tear up script

Seneschalstown 0-15 Navan O'Mahonys 0-9

By Donnchadh Boyle
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Seneschalstown tore up the script on Sunday at Paire Tailteann when they produced a brilliant performance to be crowned kingpins of Meath football for the first time since 1994.

Damien Sheridan's men served up an excellent brand of football that was easy on the eye and in the end earned them the right to take the Keegan Cup home.

After last week's drawn game, Damien Sheridan told anyone who would listen that his side had more in the tank and that they would be more than ready to take their chance in the replay. All that despite the fact that he had just watched his side miss a late free that would have sealed the win.

Belief

That belief was obviously instilled in his players as they tore into O'Mahonys from the first whistle. Indeed, Seneschalstown could have goaled in the opening seconds after Damien Sheridan gathered possession from the throw up and found brother Joe with an early pass. Sheridan turned his marker Kevin Reilly only to see his shot saved by Keith Lane in the Navan goal.

Brian Clarke opened the scoring with a free for the Yellow Furze men and that was cancelled out by a Mark Ward effort but from there Seneschalstown took control. They dictated things in every area of the pitch with Damien Sheridan and Robert Ruddy combining to curb the influence of Ward around midfield while up front Joe Sheridan was having the better of his duel with county colleague Kevin Reilly.

Seneschalstown kicked three points in as many minutes to gain control and from there Sheridan's men would keep the town side at arm's length for the rest of the afternoon.

Brian Clarke was the star of the show in the drawn game and he showed he was in good form again early on as he landed four first half points, including a '45. Seneschalstown seemed to grow in confidence as the half wore on, helped in no small way by David Bray's woes from the placed

ball. The normally reliable Navan man couldn't find his range with his left peg and save for one effort in the second half, he had a day he would rather want to forget.

Defence

That said, credit is due to the Seneschalstown defence who gave away very little in terms of kickable frees. They kept their fouls to a minimum thanks to some disciplined tackling. Once again, Cormac Quinn was like a man possessed as he broke up numerous Navan attacks and put the Town team on the back foot while the excellent Mark Carey ably assisted him in the half back line. Carey landed a goal in the drawn game and he showed great appetite for getting forward again and he was rewarded with two points in the first half.

O'Mahonys were punch drunk at this stage but managed to keep themselves in the game with a few late scores through Stephen (2) and David Bray but Michael Downes would have been far from happy at the break.

Pace

The second half seemed to pick up just where the first one had left off. The game was played at the same frantic pace and this seemed to suit Damien Sheridan's men and they were first to score again. Brian Clarke pointed a free after Joe Sheridan had been fouled before Navan replied with a brace through Ward and David Bray. Ward's point was a collector's item as he raised a white flag after a left footed effort. His shot appeared to be going wide, much to the delight of the huge Seneschalstown support, but it curled and curled before dropping over the black spot.

Crucially, Navan were never allowed to gain any momentum as the men in blue and yellow could always come up with a score when required. On this occasion, Joe Sheridan landed the point of the game when he gathered possession while running away from goal. Reilly seemed to have his angles covered before the big Seneschalstown man boomed over a point that drew gasps from all in attendance.

The Sheridan family celebrate after the game from L to R: Gerry, Joe, Mary, Damien Jnr, Brian, Stephen and Damien Snr.



Mark Ward lets fly for O'Mahonys.



Niall McKeligue gets to grips with Ciaran Macken



Midfield pile up during Sunday's Senior football final. Photo: Barry Cronin

The O'Mahonys defence coughed up free after free that Clarke was only too happy to convert and try as Stephen and David Bray might, they couldn't drag Navan back into contention.

Rally

They did manage something of a rally midway through the second half when they closed the gap to two points thanks to scores from the Bray brothers but again Seneschalstown seemed to have the heads for the big occasion. They worked their way up field and drew the foul which Clarke converted. Navan showed surprising naivety when it came to giving away frees as the coughed up point after point to Clarke and Co and in doing so never really gave themselves a chance.

In the last ten minutes, it was clear that there was only going to be one winner and it was fitting that Clarke would have the last say of the game. He landed three unanswered frees in the final minutes. He celebrated each score with ever-growing enthusiasm, sensing that victory was edging nearer.

David Coldrick eventually blew his final whistle, sparking scenes of wild celebrations among the Seneschalstown contingent on and off the field. Seneschalstown were deserving winners and surely won over most neutrals with their style of play. They played the game with an infectious enthusiasm and seemed hungrier and more determined.

For their part, O'Mahonys were found wanting in the county final yet again. They failed to play to their undoubted potential as was the case last year against Wolfe Tones. They could point to a few incidents like when Stephen Bray seemed to be bearing down on goal only to be pulled back to take a free after he had been fouled. But that is far from the reason they lost. There will be a lot of soul searching on Brewhs Hill over the next few weeks and months.

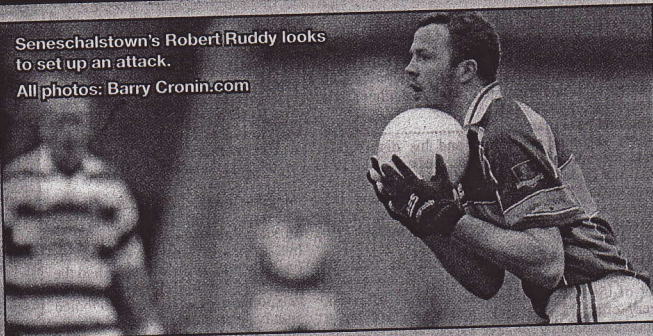
Of all his championship success, Sheridan might find this the sweetest of his GAA career so far. Written off by most, Sheridan told us they would do it in the replay.

Damien, we should have listened to you.

SUBS NAVAN O'MAHONYS	KEITH LANE	SUBS SENESCHALSTOWN
	LEE RUSSELL KEVIN REILLY IAN MATTHEWS S. CLARKE 0-1 J. SHERIDAN 0-2 B. CLARKE 0-9, 8F, 145	
	PAUL QUINN 0-1 RICHIE HOGAN N. MCKEIGUE JOE COWLEY ANDREW MC CANN CIAN MACKEN	
	S. MC GABHANN MARK WARD 0-2 D. SHERIDAN 0-1 ROBERT RUDDY	
	G. O'BRIEN 0-1 PADDY SMYTH 0-1 C. MCGUINNESS COLM GLEESON CORMAC QUINN MARK CAREY 0-2	
	D. BRAY 0-2, 1F BARRY REGAN STEPHEN BRAY 0-2 COLIN CLARKE ANDREW COLLINS S. SHERIDAN	
	DAVID LYONS	
	NEVILLE DUNNE	
	DARREN O'TOOLE	
	BRIAN SHERIDAN JAMES BYRNE	

REFEREE: DAVID COLDRICK (BLACKHALL GAELS)

Seneschalstown's Robert Ruddy looks to set up an attack.
 All photos: Barry Cronin.com



Stephen Sheridan clears his lines for Seneschalstown.



MAN OF THE MATCH

BRIAN CLARKE
 (Seneschalstown)

Unlike the hurling last week, this time we agree with the official award. Brian Clarke didn't put a foot wrong all day and his tally of nine points tells all you need to know. He didn't score from open play but his all round contribution was crucial and he won many of his own frees. A deserving winner.

REF WATCH

The appointment of David Coldrick as the man in the middle for the replay was widely welcomed but the Blackhall Gaels clubman had a decent day at the office. He might have let Stephen Bray go when he seemed to slip his marker but other than that he did well given the tension on both sides. Let play go when he could and accommodated attacking football when possible.

SCORE OF THE MATCH

Joe Sheridan's second half point was a score that probably only he could have got. Sheridan seemed to be going away from goal with Kevin Reilly for company before firing over from an almost impossible angle from a long way out. It also came at a time when Navan had cut the gap to two points and that score prevented the Town side getting any momentum going. Brilliant.

MOAN OF THE MATCH

Once again, Navan O'Mahonys failed to deliver on the big stage. Their talent is undoubted but they have now stumbled in the final for two successive years. There was a feeling of déjà vu on Sunday as memories of the 2006 final against Wolfe Tones came flooding back to the Navan side. It will take something special to get them up and running for 2008.

TURNING POINT

It mightn't have been a turning point but it certainly had a big influence on the rest of the game. O'Mahonys had the game's best goal chance just six minutes in when David Bray broke Barry Regan's centre. Paddy Smyth was first to react and his effort seemed to be rolling over the line until Cormac Quinn came from nowhere to clear off the line when it seemed the Navan men had goaled.

Clarke shoes Seneschalstown to victory

Seneschalstown Player Ratings

David Lyons 8
Had a couple of shaky moments early on but regained his composure well and came to his side's rescue in the closing stages when he tipped a powerful strike from Gary O'Brien over the crossbar. Kick-outs were long and looked comfortable under the high ball as the game progressed.

Stephen Sheridan 8
Resumed his marking duties on Stephen Bray and once again came out of the game with plenty of credit. The O'Mahonys danger man did point twice but Sheridan rarely gave him the space he needed to cause his usual problems.

Andrew Collins 8
It's hard to believe that Collins was a minor this year as he showed great maturity to get the better of his opposite number Barry Regan. Always managed to get a foot or some part of his body to the ball and dealt well with any long balls that were pumped into towards the 'square'.

Colin Clarke 7.5
While David Bray did point twice (once from play), Clarke rarely gave him time to settle on the ball and make a couple of important interceptions when O'Mahonys threatened to come back at Seneschalstown in the closing stages.

Mark Carey 8.5
In the drawn game, Carey snuck forward to net a crucial goal. On this occasion the pacy wing-back galloped forward to point twice in the 19th and 23rd minutes respectively. Despite his attacking tendencies, he also managed to take care of his defensive duties and he easily won his personal

duel with Cormac McGuinness.

Cormac Quinn 8
The Seneschalstown rearguard unit gave away very little change to O'Mahonys and Quinn deserves great credit for the way he marshalled his troops. Always seemed to be in the right place at the right time and kept Paddy Smyth on a tight reign throughout.

Colin Gleeson 8
One key area where Seneschalstown were on top was in the middle third where they picked up the vast majority of breaking ball. Gleeson worked his socks off for the hour and pounced on a huge amount of loose ball that spilled from the midfielders.

Robert Ruddy 8
After allowing Ward to dictate matters in the drawn game, Ruddy stepped up his performance considerably and was the main contributor to his side's dominance of midfield. Although he didn't really gather any clean possession, he broke a lot of kick-outs and frustrated Ward throughout.

Damien Sheridan 7.5
Gave absolute everything and his distribution into the full-forward line was pinpoint. The fact that his opposite number Stephen MacGabhann was virtually non-existent tells its own story and sent over an excellent point in the 45th minute to stretch his side's lead back to four points.

Andrew McCann 7
A lot of his work goes unnoticed as he does a lot of the dirty work around midfield. But was very effective as a link man between defence and attack and rarely gave the ball away when in possession. His experience was also vital in the closing stages.

Ciaran Macken 8
Was flown back from Australia to beef up the Seneschalstown attack and what a masterstroke it proved to be. Right from the outset he looked made for the big stage and added a bit of experience to the set-up. Picked up a lot of possession around midfield and provided Joe Sheridan and Brian Clarke with plenty of service throughout.

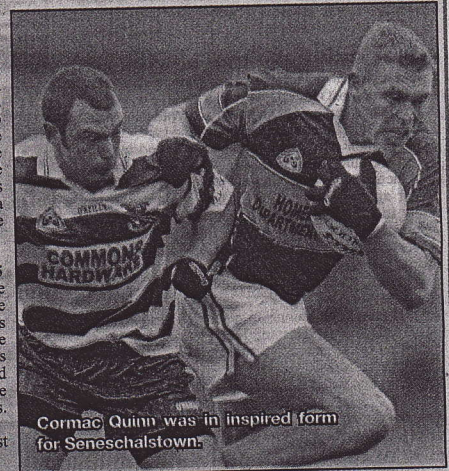
Joe Cowley 7
Like McCann, a lot of his work goes unnoticed but he did give a sizeable donation to the midfield battlezone. Was involved in a couple of Seneschalstown attacks that led to scores and can be pleased with his contribution to the victory.

Brian Clarke 9
After turning in a fine display in the drawn game, Clarke was once again the star of the show and finished proceedings with nine points to his name. Although eight of those scores came from frees, he won the majority of them himself and gave Lee Russell a torrid afternoon. Was ice cool under pressure and was a worthy recipient of the 'Man of the Match' accolade.

Joe Sheridan 8.5
The imposing full-forward didn't fire on all cylinders in the drawn game but he was back to his best in this one. Right from the outset he had the beating of Kevin Reilly and took his two points very well. Was also fouled on a couple of occasions and Clarke duly obliged with the resulting frees. Tracked back in the closing stages and ran Clarke close for the best player on show.

Shane Clarke 7
Replaced the injured Stephen Finnegan in the full-forward line and while he may not have had the same influence as Sheridan and Clarke had, he won his fair share of ball. Pointed well from a free in the 16th minute and battled for the cause before he was replaced by David Byrne in the 48th minute.

David Byrne 6
Was surprisingly left out of the starting fifteen but helped Seneschalstown remain in the ascendancy following his arrival in the 48th minute to replace Shane Clarke.



Cormac Quinn was in inspired form for Seneschalstown.

Ward rises above mediocrity

Navan O'Mahonys Player Ratings

Keith Lane 7
Wasn't called upon too often and did anything he had to do with authority. Picked Ward out well with kick-outs in the first half but didn't have the same effect after the resumption.

Lee Russell 6
Was given the arduous task of picking out Clarke and like a lot of his fellow defenders, he gave away too many frees in scoreable positions. Although Clarke didn't point from play, he won a huge amount of possession and Russell allowed him too much space.

Kevin Reilly 6
After doing an excellent job on Joe Sheridan in the drawn game, Reilly was unable to contain the full-forward this time around. Allowed Sheridan to point twice but also gave away a few crucial frees away by foolish fouling.

Ian Matthews 7
Was relieved of his marking duties on Brian Clarke by Lee Russell and did a much better job on Shane Clarke. Won most of the footraces with the aforementioned and did anything that was asked of him with authority.

Paul Quinn 7
Was one of O'Mahonys better performers and tried to scurry forward to help out their attack when the opportunity presented itself. Managed to get on the scoresheet in the 41st minute when he pointed well from a tight angle and overall did well enough.

Niall McKeigue 6
It was expected that the return of the county star

would give O'Mahonys that bit of experience that was missing the last day but McKeigue never managed to influence the game as he can. Afforded Ciaran Macken far too much space and a lot of his passing was sloppy.

Richie Hogan 6
Snuffed out a couple of Seneschalstown attacks and gave his usual wholehearted display. Had a tough battle with Andrew McCann but the O'Mahonys defender gave as good as he got.

Stephen MacGabhann 5
While Robert Ruddy stepped up to the mark after underperforming last week, MacGabhann was unable to do the same. Looked lost in the midfield battlezone and was anonymous for long periods before being replaced Neville Dunne in the 42nd minute.

Mark Ward 7.5
Although he wasn't quite as influential as he was in the drawn game, Ward was still O'Mahonys best player. Looked as though he was going to tear Seneschalstown apart singlehandedly in the opening minutes when he won the first couple of kick-outs and pointed in the 11th minute. His performance did tail off a little in the second half but still added a second point six minutes after the resumption.

Cormac McGuinness 5
Moved to the half-forward line in the pre-match reshuffle to accommodate Niall McKeigue but never looked comfortable. Let Mark Carey saunter up field to point twice in the first half and can have no complaints about being called ashore entering the final quarter.

Paddy Smyth 6
Was very unlucky not to have netted in the fifth minute when his low drive was cleared off the

line by Cormac Quinn but failed to have any impact on the game thereafter. Did find his range in the 18th minute but was outmuscled by Quinn all too often.

Gary O'Brien 6
Rarely got the chance to use his pace to hurt the Seneschalstown defence and was knocked off the ball on a couple of occasions. Had a chance to bring his side right back into contention with four minutes remaining but his goal bound effort was excellently tipped over the bar by David Lyons.

David Bray 7
Will be remembered for his off day with the frees and he will be bitterly disappointed to have missed a couple of those which he would usually point with his eyes closed. Was one of O'Mahonys better performers from open play and finished with two points to his name.

Barry Regan 6
Seemed to be off the pace throughout and rarely looked threatening. Credit must be given to Andrew Collins for quelling his influence but the O'Mahonys lad will know himself that he is capable of much better.

Stephen Bray 7
A lot of responsibility rests on the eldest of the two Bray brothers to come up with scores and while he did point twice, he was well marshalled throughout by Stephen Sheridan. Was starved of service as the game progressed and surprisingly the O'Mahonys management team failed to isolate him in the full-forward line.

Neville Dunne 6
Was thrown into the action to replace MacGabhann after 42 minutes but was unable to influence proceeding to any real degree.

Darren O'Toole 6
Was introduced for Cormac McGuinness for the final quarter but could do little to halt Seneschalstown superiority.



O'Mahonys' Kevin Reilly is inconsolable after the game.

The parish has been lifted - Sheridan

By David Jennings
sport@meathpost.com

The parish of Yellow Furze has had to deal with its fair share of grief in the last few years but Sunday's Keegan Cup success marked an upturn in fortunes and winning manager Damien Sheridan was understandably delighted that his troops were able to give the parish a much needed lift.

"I am sorry that it was Mickey Downes and Navan O'Mahonys that we had to beat but our name was on the Keegan Cup from the start of the year. I knew from December last year that we were going to win the championship because of the spirit of this bunch of lads and because of the sadness that has been in the parish," Sheridan said.

"I am lost for words. Their attitude and the way they prepared for the game was first class. But in truth there was more to today than just football. It ran a lot deeper than that. It was about a community that needed lifting and today, thanks be to God, they have been lifted."

"A lot of people have lost a lot of loved ones and they were on a mission. As a team they are an unreal group of lads. I have won eight senior championships but these are the best bunch that I have ever been involved with without a shadow of a doubt."

It has been a memorable year for Seneschalstown on all fronts and they still have league and Feis Cup finals to look forward to and Sheridan pointed out that they have not lost a game that really mattered all season.

"We have never been beaten in any game this year that mattered. We have been bet in two championship matches that really mean much and we were bet in two league matches when we

were already in the League final so this team has gone the season unbeaten in my books."

Winning a championship is always going to be a proud day for any manager but Sunday's success was that little bit sweeter for Sheridan as his sons Joe, Damien and Brian were all involved in the action and he admitted that he was a proud father.

"I am as proud as punch. Every emotion that you could possibly think of is running through me and I am delighted for everybody involved and I know it's a cliché but we are one big family."

"Brian tried it out on Friday night and it was a bit 50/50 and then today he felt really good on it and it was great to see him coming on there near the end."

So what was the difference between Sunday and the drawn encounter? Sheridan felt that his side didn't wait for O'Mahonys to make the first move on this occasion and made things happen themselves.

"The last day we were waiting on O'Mahonys to do something and we didn't take that step forward. That step out into the unknown where these lads mightn't have been before. We took that step today and that proved the winning of the game."

"We got crucial scores at crucial times and in fairness O'Mahonys did miss some crucial scores early on. The second half has been a worry for us throughout the year as we haven't been playing well in them but we played it cool today and we can now call ourselves senior champions"



Seneschalstown manager Damien Sheridan shakes hands with Mickey Downes after the game.

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I am as proud as punch. Every emotion that you could possibly think of is running through me and I am delighted for everybody involved and I know it's a cliché but we are one big family.

Attacking aces knew they could pull it off

By David Jennings
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There were many contributory factors to Seneschalstown's Keegan Cup heroics on Sunday but the attacking duo of Brian Clarke and Joe Sheridan will sit proudly at the top of that list after turning in top class displays.

After being a shade off colour in the drawn game, Joe Sheridan returned to top form on Sunday and he was of the opinion that the main difference was the belief that he and his colleagues had going into the game.

"I can't believe it. It means so much to everyone and we have put in so much effort throughout the year. We had the belief today. The last day we were a bit weary as to whether we would be able to put it up to O'Mahonys but we showed the last day that we could and now we proved that we are the best football team in the county," Sheridan said.

"We knew we could do. In the first ten minutes we were a bit nervy but after that there was no stopping us and these lads deserve all the credit they get. They have been there since last January and have put in a huge effort."

"We were a little bit disappointed that we didn't win it the last day but we had two weeks to regroup and we had time to put things right. We played the football that we were capable of playing. Everybody has doubted us all year.

They never gave us a chance going into the final but now we have proved how good we are."

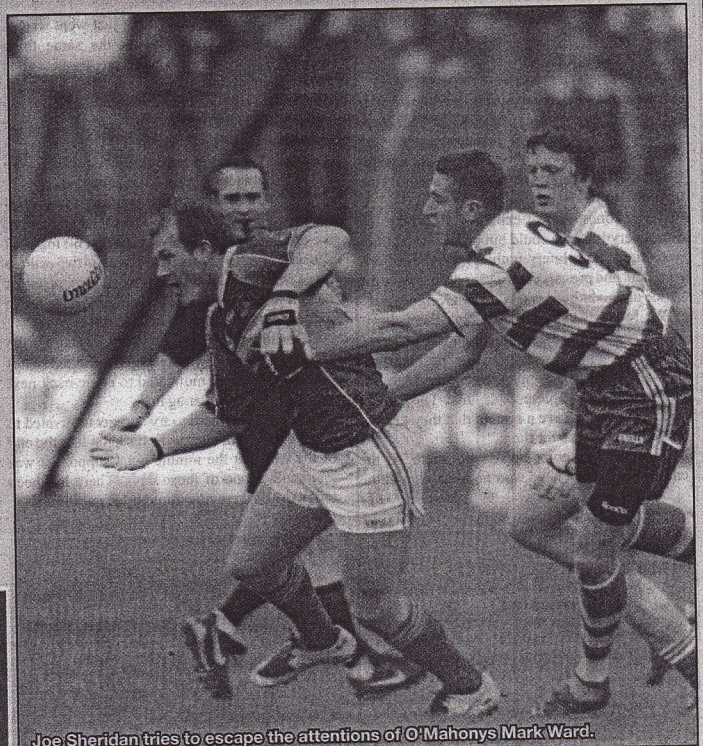
Another to make a big contribution to the success was Ciaran Macken and Sheridan heaped praise on the returning forward who made the journey back from Australia to help his side in the heat of battle.

"Ciaran was a massive influence. He has been involved in the club all his life and has been a part of the senior panel for 15 years and you could see the influence he had out there. He is a great man to win breaks and I am delighted that he came back and was involved in the victory."

After proudly accepting the 'Man of the Match' award, Brian Clarke took time out to speak to the 'Post' and he paid tribute to the way in which the whole panel dug in as a team and carve out the right result.

"It wasn't just me playing well out there. It was 17 others who played out of their skin as well. I honestly don't know what happened to O'Mahonys out there. I think they must have just stayed in the dressing room. But we came out running and we were all playing for each other and that is the way that we grew up playing."

"I wouldn't have got those scores only for the forward got in there and won frees where other people wouldn't put themselves. All I was concentrating on was putting the ball over the black spot and luckily enough, it just happened for me out there."



Joe Sheridan tries to escape the attentions of O'Mahonys Mark Ward.

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Everybody has doubted us all year. They never gave us a chance going into the final but now we have proved how good we are.

Downes disillusioned by his misfiring troops

By David Jennings
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When asked by the 'Post', 'What went wrong for his side in Sunday's decider', Navan O'Mahonys manager Mickey Downes wittingly replied that it would be quicker to go through what went right. It was that sort of day for the Brews Hill side. But Downes was not dwelling too much on his own side's wrongdoings and had the height of praise for the way Seneschalstown performed.

"I suppose everything that possibly could have gone wrong went wrong and nothing went right. But you have to give credit to Seneschalstown, they are the team with the Keegan Cup tonight and they thoroughly deserved to win," Downes said.

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

Reflecting on the game itself, Downes felt that a couple of missed chances in the early stages of the encounter had a huge bearing on how the game progressed.

"We missed an awful lot of chances in the first half when we were well in the game. They seemed to score most of their opportunities in the first half but at the same time their defence was very good. We did have three goal chances in the first ten or fifteen minutes of the game but we didn't score any of them but you have to give credit to Seneschalstown. They didn't panic. They stuck to their plan and they kicked some brilliant frees and all their big men performed for them on the day."

Brian Clarke was the O'Mahonys tormentor-in-chief and Downes was disappointed that his side didn't learn from the mistakes that they made in the drawn game when conceding too many frees in scoreable positions.

"We seen the last day that Brian Clarke can kick frees from 60 yards. He did it again today. We just didn't learn our lessons at all from the last day. Maybe there was a feeling that because we got out of jail the last day that

it would happens for us this time but at this stage everybody in O'Mahonys knows that you have to make things happen."

"They controlled the midfield area and in truth they controlled most areas of the pitch. When you are not in control you are not going to win. Any team that is in the final of three major competitions are always going to be a fine team and they proved that out there. They have been ultra consistent throughout the year."

Since he began his stint as O'Mahonys boss, Downes has guiding his troops to two Keegan Cup deciders but he will not be staying on to try and go one better next year and revealed that he will be stepping down as manager.

"I won't be staying on for another year. There is an awful lot more involved in football than there is in just being there on match days. I think it is time for somebody else to take it up and maybe take another approach and see what they can do to bring the championship back to O'Mahonys."



Navan O'Mahonys manager
Mickey Downes



I suppose everything that possibly could have gone wrong and nothing went right. But you have to give credit to Seneschalstown, they are the team with the Keegan Cup tonight and they thoroughly deserved to win.

Defeat leaves McKeigue lost for words

By David Jennings
sport@meathpost.com

As the dust settled on Sunday's SFC decider, Navan O'Mahonys captain Niall McKeigue was lost for words to try and describe why his side performed so poorly in letting the Keegan Cup slip from their grasp for the second year in succession.

"To be honest I can't explain that display. We done everything we could but on the day nothing went right. Absolutely nothing. We were fairly confident and preparations were perfect. We can't blame anybody but ourselves," McKeigue said.

"We found it very hard to break them down. They are tough to break down and they defend from deep. Frees again proved a problem just like last year and I suppose you would have to question our discipline after this. They are a solid team. They have a system that they keep to and it really works for them."

"There was no complacency out there. At the end of the day we have won nothing yet and the

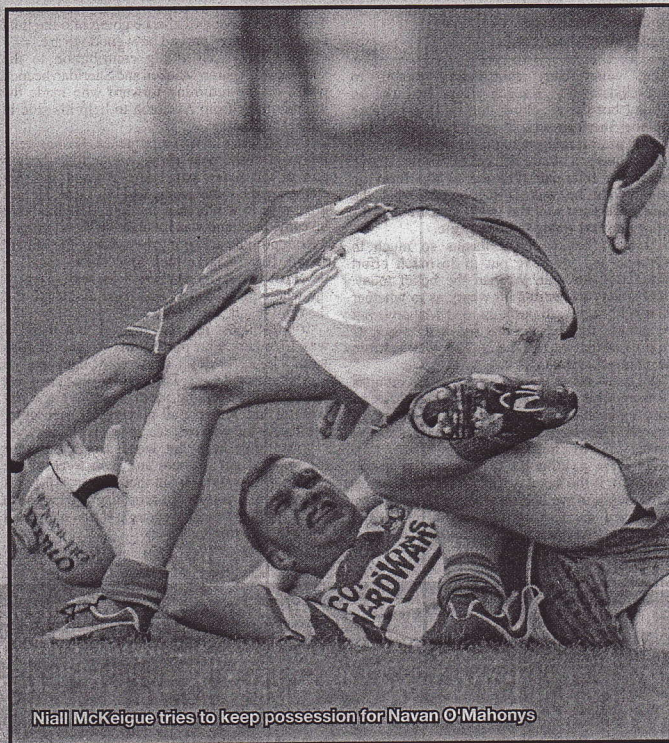
hunger is there but everything just went wrong. But it is very worrying that the same thing happened last year so we will have to take a good look at ourselves."

So what was the main difference between the sides? McKeigue felt that the goal chances that his side failed to convert in the early stages as well as not winning enough breaking ball were the two key factors behind the defeat.

"They won a lot of breaks. No matter how much we tried to play things just weren't happening. In the end we were probably trying that bit too hard and we started to get frustrated. We had two or three goals chances early on and if we had taken one of them it might have settled us down. Brian Clarke kicked every free for them which hurt us badly."

After failing to justify the favourites tag for the second year in a row, McKeigue admitted that it will be hard to get motivated to come back next year and do it all over again.

"It will be very hard to try and get motivated to come back again next year. It seems like the end of the world at the minute but I suppose it was just another one of those days. There has been too many of them now though for my liking."



Niall McKeigue tries to keep possession for Navan O'Mahonys



There was no complacency out here. At the end of the day we have won nothing yet and the hunger is there but everything just went wrong.

Seneschalstown Celebrates



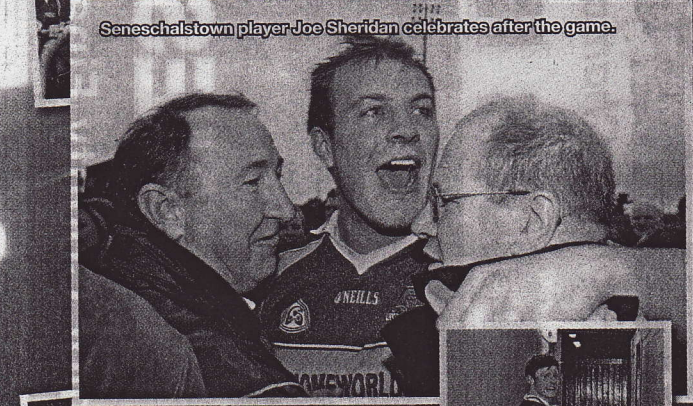
The Seneschalstown team celebrate after the game.



Seneschalstown player Damien Sheridan on the podium after the match.



Seneschalstown celebrate after the game.



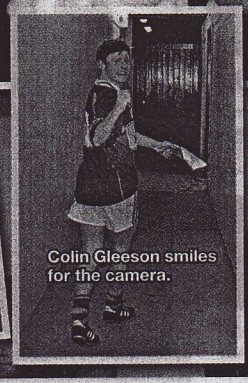
Seneschalstown player Joe Sheridan celebrates after the game.



Seneschalstown's Shane and Brian Clarke celebrate after the game.



The Seneschalstown bench await the final whistle.



Colin Gleeson smiles for the camera.



Seneschalstown manager Damien Sheridan speaks to his team in the dressing room after the game.



Seneschalstown Selector Ian Maguire celebrates with Club treasurer Christy Farrell.



Seneschalstown's Robert Ruddy enjoys the moment.

MEATH SENIOR FOOTBALL CHAMPIONS 2007



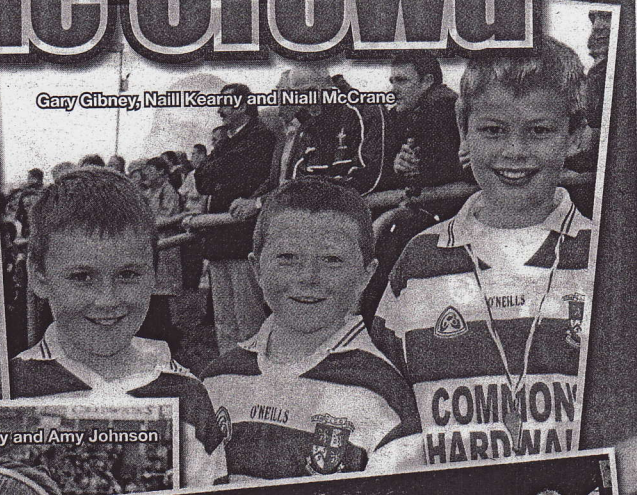
SENESCHALSTOWN

Meath Senior County Final • Pairc Tailteann • 4th November 2007

Faces In The Crowd



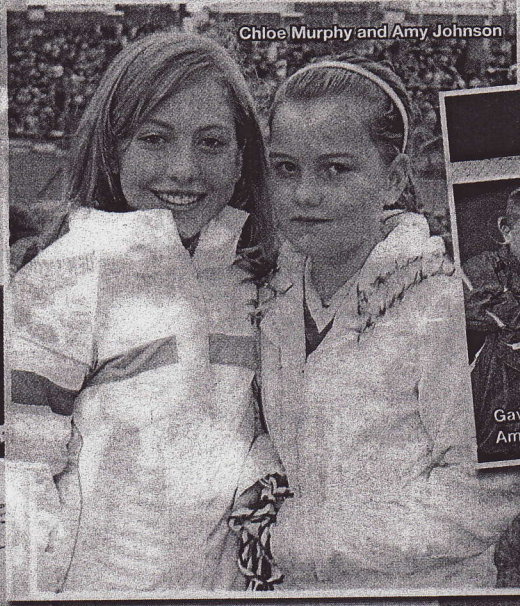
Daragh, Donal and Ronan McGuinness and Ashling Lynch



Gary Gibney, Naill Kearny and Niall McCrane



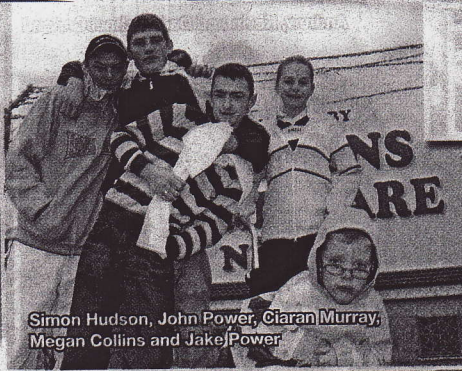
Ian and Gerry Murphy



Chloe Murphy and Amy Johnson



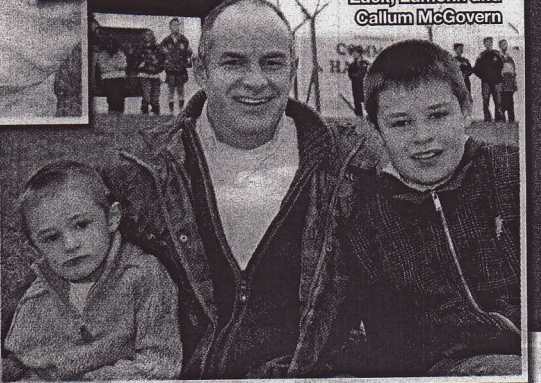
Gavin Fox, Evan Daly, Sarah Hannon, Tracey Maher, Amy Fox and Leslie-Anne Fitzpatrick



Simon Hudson, John Power, Ciaran Murray, Megan Collins and Jake Power



Donal, Anne and Cormac Geraghty



Zack, Eamonn and Callum McGovern



Benny McGuire and Frank Cooney



Stephen and David Shields

Faces In The Crowd



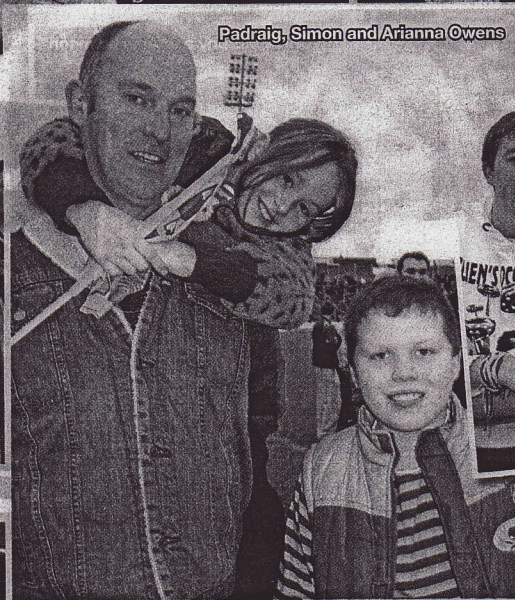
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Elva, Aidan, and Eoghan McKeigue and Colm O'Bric



Conall and Caoimhe Blake



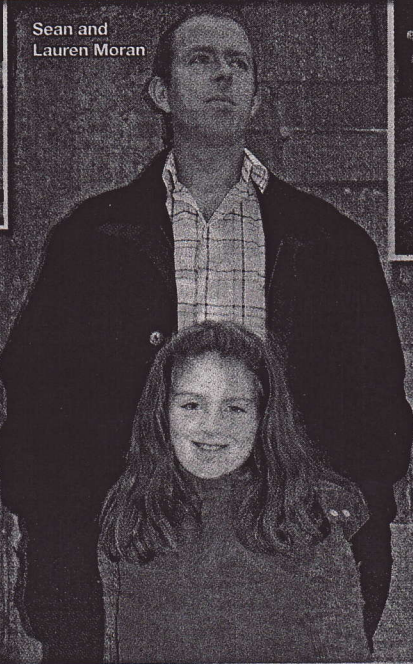
Padraig, Simon and Arianna Owens



Paul, Laura, Puchie and Sean McDonnell



Ciaran, Gillian, Andrea and Darren Maloney



Sean and Lauren Moran



Andrew, Kevin and Dad Michael Garland



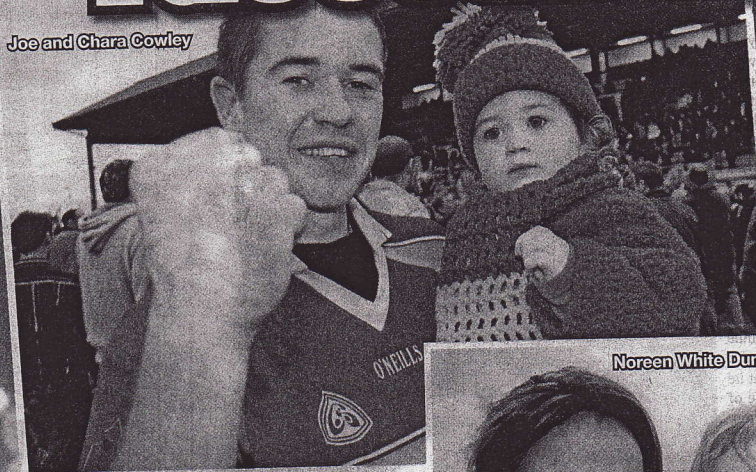
Maria and Beatrice McDonagh, Guss McCabe and Maxie McDonagh



Martina Finnigan, Clem McDonagh and Antoinette Moynihan

Faces In The Crowd

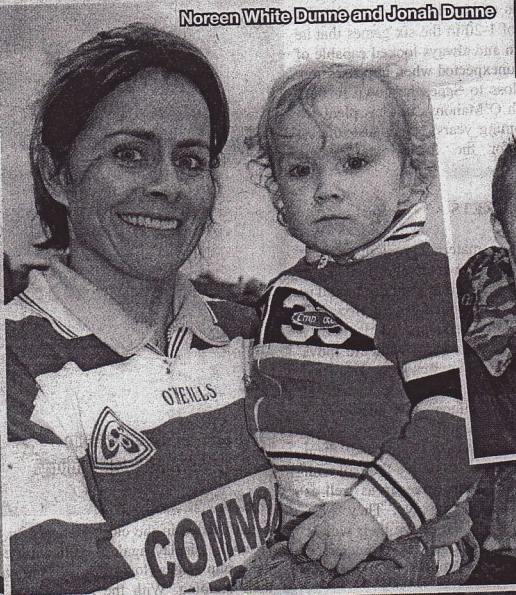
Joe and Chara Cowley



Ruth MacDonogh, Lorna McDonnell and Sarah Moynihan



Noreen White Dunne and Jonah Dunne



Fiachra Ross and Martin Mulhall



Colette, Dermot and Jack Carey



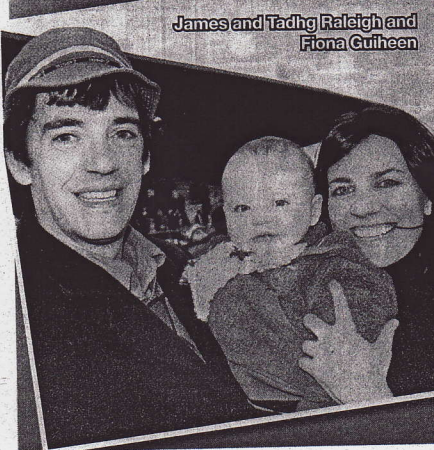
Eddie and Brian McCormack



Patrick and Cathal Darby



James and Tadhg Raleigh and Fiona Guiheen



Derek and Lorraine Lawlor



Club scene provides thrills and spills

It has been a bumper year for football in Meath. The success of Colm Coyle's charges made the summer that little bit more memorable and following their exit to Cork at the semi-final stage, the club scene then took centre stage. DAVID JENNINGS looks back on the highs and lows of the season.

GAME OF THE CHAMPIONSHIP

Navan O'Mahonys v Dunboyne, SFC Round 2, May.

O'Mahonys and Dunboyne had built up a fierce rivalry following the outcome of their disputed semi-final clash back in 2005 and this second round meeting at Dunshaughlin was a right old tussle. After an hour of exhilarating action, it was the Brews Hill side that prevailed by the minimum of margins, 0-11 to 0-10.

That outcome didn't look too likely when Stephen Bray was dismissed for dissent in the 47th minute with O'Mahonys trailing 0-8 to 0-10. But Mickey Downes' charges recorded the last three scores of the game to carve out a memorable victory.

Still down a point with the stopwatch ticking into added-on time, substitute Cormac Reilly crept forward from the back to fist over the equaliser. Then from the resulting kick-out, O'Mahonys won a free and Henry Finnegan kept his nerve to send over and complete the Houdini Act for the hoops.

It was a fitting conclusion to a thoroughly enjoyable encounter that left those in attendance gasping for breath when the final whistle eventually sounded.

PLAYER OF THE CHAMPIONSHIP

Mark Ward (Navan O'Mahonys)

This was the year that Mark Ward really began to fulfill his promise and his size and stature enabled him to dictate mid-field matters on countless occasions. Ward really shot to the fore in the knockout stages, where he was outstanding against St Patrick's and easily got the better of Niall Kelly in their last eight clash with Dunshaughlin. His biggest challenge came in the semi-final where he met Nigel Crawford but the towering O'Mahonys lad came out on top once again and he capped a memorable year with a fine display in the drawn game against Seneschalstown. Was the main contributor to O'Mahonys successful season.

PHONEIX FROM THE FLAME

Billy Shaw (Summerhill)

After spending the majority of his years in attack, Shaw has retreated back between the posts for the last two years. The veteran was again very steady as the last line of the Summerhill defence this season and produced a number of fine saves, most notably against Dunshaughlin and Blackhall Gaels which helped propel them to a place in the knockout stages of the competition.

YOUNG GUN

Brian Sheridan (Seneschalstown)

Brian, the youngest of the Sheridan brothers, has a tough act to follow but on the evidence of his displays throughout the course of the championship he looks certain to continue in the footsteps of his elders. Accumulated a personal tally of 1-20 in the six games that he was involved in and always looked capable of producing the unexpected when in possession. Was a major loss to Seneschalstown in both their dates with O'Mahonys but has plenty to offer in the coming years. Might just interest Colm Coyle for the forthcoming league campaign as well.

SURPRISE PACKETS

Rathkenny

When relegation material predictions were made at the start of the campaign, Rathkenny were probably mentioned in a similar mould to Ballinlough and Kilmainhamwood. However, last year's IFC winners proved that they were well capable of coping with the move up to senior status. Victories over Trim and Walterstown followed by a stalemate with St Patrick's saw them clinch their quarter-final slot before the last round of group matches were played. Eamonn O'Brien had them playing a nice brand of attractive football with brothers David and John Donegan as well as Brian Meade catching the eye. They were probably punching too far above their weight in the quarter-final when they were outclassed by Dunboyne but the future looks bright in Rathkenny.

MOST DISAPPOINTING

Walterstown

The Blacks were among those tipped for outright honours before the campaign commenced but it proved to be another frustrating year for Ned Keaney's charges. They did show glimpses of what they are capable of in the drawn game with St Patrick's but they were unable to find that extra gear



Brian Sheridan was in top form before his injury.

when needed in the closing stages. In the end, an awful display against Rathkenny earlier in the group stages (lost 0-6 to 0-8) proved to be their undoing. With the players they have at their disposal, namely John Geoghegan, Charles McCarthy and Alan Reynolds, they should be capable of landing a few more blows.

LUCKLESS

Wolfe Tones

After beating Navan O'Mahonys in the second last round of group matches, it was widely expected that Wolfe Tones would safely secure their passage to the last eight. However, the new

format to the championship meant that score difference rather than previous results decided who progressed to the quarter-final. A defeat to Skryne at Pairc Tailteann ensured that it was O'Mahonys and not the holders who keep their Keegan Cup hopes alive. A draw with a struggling Kilmainhamwood side ultimately proved their downfall and the loss of Eoin Harrington through injury was a major loss in their bid for a repeat. Had they managed to qualify for the last eight, they would have proved more than a match for finalists Seneschalstown and Navan O'Mahonys.



Rathkenny surprised many with their march to the senior quarter finals this year.