

Senior Championship Ü GROUP 4, ROUND 1

# Champions stroll to success

 Kilmurry Ibrickane 2-12 - Ballyvaughan 0-05 

at Ennistymon

Andrew Hamilton

THE Kilmurry Ibrickane juggernaut stuttered and stammered before eventually rolling over a hard done by Ballyvaughan side in their championship opener in Ennistymon on Saturday.

After going blow for blow with the county champions for more than half an hour - the north Clare outfit were undone by an opportunist goal by Mark McCarthy in first half injury time.

The goal took the heart from the Burren men, making the second half onslaught which followed from the county champions that bit inevitable.

But Ballyvaughan can take much more from this match than the score line might suggest. They put it up to Kilmurry for 30 minutes, hunting in packs and harrying hard without the ball and playing a well drilled and effective hand passing game when in possession.

For half an hour it worked and worked well - they knocked the county champions off their stride and visibly frustrated the men in green and red.

But it was always going to be a game of inches for Ballyvaughan, and once Kilmurry got that yard of breathing space the result looked a foregone conclusion.

Ballyvaughan opened the match the stronger, and shot themselves into an early lead with a well worked point from Phelim Kyne on four minutes.

But it was tough going, with both sides happy to work the ball slowly up the field using short passes, making the midfield third a physical battleground filled with 16 warriors.

Michael Hogan got Kilmurry back on terms with a well taken point on nine minutes but it lasted less than 30 as Jack Queally popped up with an immediate response for Ballyvaughan.

The battle was intense - and a yellow card for James Hynes after 15 minutes helped to remind both sets of players not to let things boil over.

As the half wore on Kilmurry Ibrickane started to mix up their game, with their half-backs pouring forward allowing them to wrestle control of possession. A flurry of points followed for Stephen Moloney and Ian McInerney (2) as the county champions began to find their stride.

But they breed them tough up in north Clare and Ballyvaughan stormed back with points from Cian Walsh and John Martyn to leave them deservedly on terms as we approached half time.

But the match was to turn on the McCarthy goal. It came from a high ball launched into the Ballyvaughan box and when keeper Damien McNamara got into a tangle with his own defender the ball broke to McCarthy who had the easy task of tapping into an empty net.

That knocked the stuffing out of Ballyvaughan, and though Kilmurry Ibrickane would arguably have pushed on in the second half regardless, the margin of the defeat and

the nature of the second half would surely have been different.

Ian McInerney got the ball rolling with a pointed free on two minutes before Darren Hickey came up from the back to slot over a lovely point two minutes later. Stephen Moloney too was now starting to get space and time to work - and the wing forward showed all of his undoubted skill and speed, racing clear after nine second half minutes to score a well taken solo effort.

Ballyvaughan were living off scraps, and a pointed free from Cian Walsh a minute later was to prove the north Clare men's final score of the afternoon.

Two quick points from Ian McInerney and another from Mark McCarthy shot Kilmurry into a commanding 1-10 to 0-5 point lead with ten minutes to go. When McCarthy stole in to fire his second goal of the game a minute later all but the most stout of Ballyvaughan hearts were looking anxiously at the exit. But they steadied the ship once more and although they didn't manage to trouble the scorekeepers for the rest of the match they never gave up the fight.

Two points late on from substitute Peter O'Dwyer and a lovely curling free from McInerney left it 2-12 to 0-5 at the end.

Kilmurry will be far from happy with their overall display but the tough first half battle should stand to them when they come across better opposition later in the year.

Right: Kilmurry Ibrickane's Peter O'Dwyer gets the ball away from Ballyvaughan's Setanta Moran.



## Ü Won and lost

BALLYVAUGHAN would have found it difficult to keep up their efforts in the second half but McCarthy's goal in first half injury time was the real turning point in the match. It was the first and last time that Kilmurry sent quick high ball into the full forward line and they were rewarded handsomely for it.

## Ü Man of the Match

**Paul O'Connor** (Kilmurry Ibrickane)  
HE went about his job in the heart of the midfield with quiet efficiency and on a day when none of the Kilmurry attacking starts really reached their undoubted potential, O'Connor kept everything going in the right direction.

## Ü Match Details

**Kilmurry Ibrickane** Dermot O'Brien (7), Mark Killeen (6), Darren Hickey (7) (0-1), Martin McMahon (7), Shane Hickey (6), Declan Callinan (7), Enda Coughlan (7), Keith King (7), Paul O'Connor (8), Evan Talty (6), Ian McInerney (8) (0-5, 0-4 frees), Stephen Moloney (8) (0-2), Michael Hogan (7) (0-1), Johnny Daly (6), Mark McCarthy (7) (2-1). **Subs** Michael O'Dwyer (6) for Talty, Peter O'Dwyer (7) (0-1) for Daly.

**Ballyvaughan** Damien McNamara (6), Mark Walsh (6), Philip Monks (7), Setanta Moran (6), Mark O'Loughlin (7), Kieran Casey (6), Diarmuid Greene (6), James Hynes (7), Raymond Casey (7), Phelim Kyne (6) (0-1), Stevie Hynes (6), Kevin Carrucan (6), Jack Queally (7) (0-1), John Martyn (6) (0-1), Cian Walsh (7) (0-2). **Subs** Cillian Mahon (6) for Casey, Tomas Francis (6) for Queally, Jason McDonagh (6) for Kyne.

**Match Official** Tom Stackpool (Ennistymon)



Above: Ballyvaughan's Setanta Moran and James Hynes try to stop the advances of Kilmurry Ibrickane's Michael O'Dwyer during their game in Ennistymon on Saturday evening. Yvonne Vaughan