


FOOTBALL  Intermediate Championship Round One, Group One

# Ballyvaughan step it up a gear

 Ballyvaughan 1-15 - Clooney Quin 0-07 

at Páirc Finne, Corofin

**Ronan Judge**

FOR a while it looked like Clooney-Quin were going to make a game of it. Ballyvaughan had surged five points clear with eight minutes left in the first half. But their opponents hung on and reeled of three points to close the gap at half time to 0-7 0-5. And then Ballyvaughan stepped it up a gear. The goal, they came desperately close to scoring in the first half, finally arrived four minutes into the second.

The busy Stephen Hynes fed Cian Walsh who finished high to the net from a tight angle on the left.

Ballyvaughan led by five and set about ruthlessly extending that lead. They ended the day with a more than respectable total of 1-15. Thirteen of their sixteen scores came from play. A slick exhibition of forward play.

In John Martin and Phelim Kyne, Ballyvaughan had the sort of corner forwards corner backs hate to see coming. All pace, sharp turns and an eye for the score.

Stephen Hynes processed an amount of ball at centre forward while back among the defensive lines Sean McNamara was full of running.

The game could have been over long before Walsh fired to the net. Four times in the first half, Ballyvaughan fluffed their lines in front of goal, denied by a couple of brave saves from Clooney-Quin goalkeeper Ronan Gallagher.

Starting with a formidable midfield pairing of Cathal Egan and Fergal Lynch, Clooney-Quin made an encouraging start.

Johnny O'Brien slotted over a free and this was followed up by a point from Pat Gardiner.

The first of Ballyvaughan's goal chances arrived in the 10th minute when Martin blasted over from close range.

It set the North Clare side on their way. Points from Phelim Kyne, Jack

Queally and again from Kyne pushed them three points clear.

In between Gallagher kept out efforts from Ballyvaughan captain Mark O'Loughlin and Jack Queally.

Martin converted a free before Clooney Quin steadied. Declan O'Keefe received some good ball at full forward and made it count.

The former Kerry goalkeeper kicked two points and Johnny O'Brien one to leave just two points between the sides at half time.

Ballyvaughan responded quickly to another O'Brien point with Walsh's goal in the 34th minute. After they just kept the scoreboard ticking over. Martin, Adrian Fleming and Stephen Hynes scored in quick succession to stretch Ballyvaughan's lead to seven points.

Totally dominant, Ballyvaughan kept heaping on the points with substitute Jason McDonagh slotting over seconds after making his entrance. O'Keefe pointed a free for just Clooney-Quin's second point of the half in the final seconds.

 Match Details

**Ballyvaughan** Damien McNamara (7), Mark Walsh (7), Philip Monks (7), Sean McNamara (8), Mark O'Loughlin (7), Kieran Casey (7), Setanta Moran (7), Raymond Casey (7), Jamie Hynes (0-1) (7), Cian Walsh (1-0) (7), Stephen Hynes (0-1) (8), Phelim Kyne (0-4) (7), Jack Queally (0-1) (7), Cillian Mahon (0-1) (7), John Martin (0-3) (8)  
**Subs** Jason McDonagh (0-1) for McMahon, Kevin Carrucan for S Hynes, Diarmuid Greene (0-1) for R Casey

**Clooney Quin** Ronan Gallagher (8), Fergal Doyle (6), Victor Leyden (6), Shane McMahon (6), John Vaughan (6), Peter Cantwell (6), Ger Leamy (6), Fergal Lynch (6), Cathal Egan (6), Johnny O'Brien (0-3) (7), Pat Gardiner (0-1) (6), Adrian Fleming (6), Christy O'Brien (6), Declan O'Keefe (0-3) (7), Cathal Hannon (6)  
**Subs** Michael McNamara for Doyle, Pa Reynolds for Hannon, Robert Downes for O'Brien, Malachy Moran for Gardiner

**Man of the match** John Martin (Ballyvaughan)

**Match Official** Tom Stackpoole (Ennistymon)



Above: Ballyvaughan's John Martin breaks free of some tough defending from Clooney Quin on Friday evening. Emma Jervis/ Press 22

FOOTBALL  Intermediate Championship Previews

**GROUP 1**

**Cratloe v Clooney-Quin @ Shannon, Saturday**

A FACE-OFF between two teams not considered to be from football country.

And, it's the south east Clare men who will be the strongest of favourites to account for the challenge of a Clooney-Quin side who were very disappointing against Ballyvaughan last weekend.

Cratloe, who were only relegated from senior ranks last year, are now championship favourites following Kilmihil's shock defeat in their first round tie with Clondegad.

With players of the calibre of Martin 'Ogie' Murphy, Sean Collins and Sean Chaplin in their ranks they have will have far too much pace and fire-

power for a Clooney-Quin side who have disappointed greatly over the past two seasons after reaching the county semi-final back in 2005.

**Verdict: Cratloe**

**Naomh Eoin v Ballyvaughan @ Miltown, Saturday**

IT'S A long way from Loophead to Blackhead, but this one will be a meeting of old friends. All because they joined forces for two years as members of the rainbow football coalition that was Killballyowen.

They won't spend too much time talking about that abortive misadventure on Saturday though - it will be all about trying to secure two precious points in this year's intermediate race.

Matters are desperate for Naomh

Eoin - defeat first day out against Cratloe means that it's win or bust here. Ballyvaughan, meanwhile, are on the crest of a wave after their 11 point win last Friday night over Clooney-Quin.

More of the same and Ballyvaughan will be on the cusp of a county final appearance with one match to spare. Won't be easy though - there's a kick in the men from the peninsula. Expect Michael Liddane and co to make it a real battle.

**Verdict: Ballyvaughan**

**GROUP 2**

**Kilmurry Ibrickane v Kilmihil @ Cooraclare, Saturday**

KILMIHIL ARE smarting from their shock defeat to Clondegad; Kil-

murry Ibrickane are reeling from the drubbing they received at the hands of Michael Cusack's. They learned of the big difference between junior and intermediate, Kilmihil learned how dangerous the tag of a favouritism can be. The losers here will be out the championship.

This is Kilmihil's first team, Kilmurry's second that could them lose a few players to their senior brethren by the time the ball is thrown in. It adds up to Kilmihil finally getting their challenge up and running.

**Verdict: Kilmihil**

**Michael Cusack's v Clondegad @ Corofin, Saturday**

THE TIE of the second round - all because both sides are putting their 100 per cent records on the line. Bat-

tle of the bridesmaids. Cusack's seem to be the eternal bridesmaids in the intermediate championship grade, Clondegad themselves have endured the heartbreak of two final defeats in the past three years.

Something has to give in this one - Cusack's weren't tested by Kilmurry last time out while Clondegad fashioned a famous win.

The hunch is that Cusack's, who are much more familiar with the surroundings of Páirc Finne will have too much power and experience for Clondegad too dependent on the Garry Brennan and Kieran Browne.

However, being underdogs suits Clondegad well and they always perform much better when free of the burden of expectation. Still, won't be enough though.

**Verdict: Michael Cusack's**