

Cumann Lúthchleas Gael



Church & General
National Leagues

1993/94 Church & General Assurance

National Football League Quarter Finals

Páirc an Chrócaigh

3 Aibreán, 1994

Luach £1

Clár Oifigiúil

Seamus Ó Maolmíchail
Árd Stiúrthóir



Amhrán na bhFiann

Sinne Fianna Fáil,
Atá faoi gheall ag Éirinn,
Buíon dár slua
Thar toinn do ráinig chugainn
Faoi mhóid bheith saor,
Sean-tír ár sinsear feasta
Ní fhágfar faoin tíorán ná faoin tráill.
Anocht a théam sa bhearna baoil
Le gean ar Ghaeil chun báis nó saoil
Le gunna scréach faoi lámhach na bpiléar,
Seo libh canaig amhrán na bhFiann.

Na Réiteoirí

Tommy Sugrue (Ciarraí)

One of the most experienced referees in the country, the Kerryman took control of the Dublin-Down league game at Croke Park in February. He refereed the two matches between Meath and Cork for the 1988 All-Ireland senior title and the historic Sam Maguire Cup tie of 1992 in which Donegal beat Dublin.

Sugrue is associated with the St. Patrick's Club, Blennerville.

Seán Ó Caoimh (Corcaigh)

A member of the St. Michael's club in Blackrock, Ó Caoimh has been refereeing since the early eighties. He advanced through the ranks from local games to provincial matches and had charge of last year's Munster U-21 final between Kerry and Waterford at Dungarvan.

His assignments in the current League included matches between Kildare and Donegal at Droichead Nua, Laois and Meath at Portlaoise and the recent Kerry-Donegal meeting at Tralee.

MEDICAL/LOST CHILDREN

Medical — Site Medical Officer: Dr. Stuart.
On pitch in front of Nally Stand — St. John's Ambulance members.

HOGAN STAND:

Hogan Lower — Treatment Ambulance rear of Section G/L.
Hogan Upper — Medical Station rear of Press Box.

HILL 16 AREA:

Treatment Ambulance rear of Hill Terrace beside Medical Station.

LOST CHILDREN:

Hogan/Nally area — G.A.A. Shop
Upper Hogan — Medical Station.
Hill 16 Area — Medical Station rear of Terrace.
Canal End — Medical Centre rear of Terrace.

Cumann Lúthchleas Gael



Church & General
National Leagues

1993/94 Church & General Assurance

National Football League

Quarter Finals

Dún na nGall v Laois

2.00 i.n. Réiteoir: T. Sugrue (Ciarraí)

An Dún v An Mhí

3.30 i.n. Réiteoir: S. Ó Caoimh (Corcaigh)

Extra time must be played in the event of a draw in either game at full time

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New Era in National Football League

A new era in the long-established National Football League got under way on a Saturday afternoon in early October when the first Church & General sponsored competition started at Jenkinstown some six miles outside of Kilkenny city. Kilkenny entertained Westmeath in the only game of the day. The first full nationwide programme was played the following afternoon.

The competition is proving very successful. Games have attracted bumper attendances and there have been many exciting matches and splendid individual performances.

The opening game was to provide some good pointers for the future. Ger Heavin started on a high note in what was to become a majestic campaign among the goals and points by scoring 1-7 to power Westmeath firmly along the road that has brought them to their meeting with Derry today.

Heavin scored two points more than Kilkenny as Westmeath triumphed by 2-15 to 1-5.

The following day another Westmeath native, Fintan Shortall, helped to make history when he scored an injury time point that gave London a winning debut in the League at

Ruislip, London, at the expense of Waterford by 1-8 to 0-10.

REMARKABLE

Colm O'Rourke completed a remarkable weekend when he turned on a sparkling display for Meath as they started their campaign with a win over Cork at Navan. He helped himself to 1-4.

The 36-year-old Skyrne man lined out in that game after helping his club earn a Meath championship quarter final draw with Walterstown the previous evening

Derry went six games without defeat to clinch the Division I title before completing their group programme by entertaining Dublin at Bellaghy early last month. The All-Ireland champions got off to the best possible start with one of the quickest goals of the league scored by Joe Broily after only twenty seconds. But Dublin recovered well to win by 0-15 to 2-6. Derry's second goal came in the last minute from a 20 metre free by Anthony Tohill.

Earlier in the year Kildare and Dublin were in opposition at Droichead Nua in the first all-ticket game for a divisional league match.

The game, in early February, attracted some 12,000 spectators to the Kildare venue and

the Dubs led by 0-5 to 0-3 at the interval.

Remarkably, in an entertaining and very competitive game, Dublin did not score in the second half at all until injury time.

Points in quick succession by Tommy Carr and right half back Paul Curran earned the Dubs a draw on the post in an exciting game — Kildare 1-4; Dublin 0-7.

FROM SCOTLAND

Noel Hegarty was brought home from Scotland to help Donegal against Clare at Ballyshannon in February and did much to shape a late, late win.

Hegarty had a fine game at centre half forward, but it was only late points by Manus Boyle and Tommy Ryan that clinched a home win by 0-10 to 1-5.

Boyle gave one of the top individual performances of the league so far when he shone at Breffni Park as Donegal snatched another late win in their Division I play-off tie against Down last month.

Donegal were a point adrift in the second half when Boyle put the final flourish to a grand five man movement by cracking home a memorable goal. With the game over a minute into injury time, the teams level and extra time looming, he coolly slotted over the winning point. Boyle finished with 1-6.

NOTEWORTHY

Laois gave some good displays in their march to the quarter finals, but one of the most

noteworthy was a four points win over Meath at Portlaoise in February.

Damien Delaney, another of the scoring experts of the league, got Laois off to the best possible start with a goal from a penalty after only 22 seconds and the home side went on to lead by 1-5 to 0-4 at half time.

Meath battled back bravely in typical fashion to reduce arrears to a point. Then, Laois goalkeeper Tony McMahon foiled Martin O'Connell of a goal, and the home team came back well to delight their followers in the 3,000 crowd with a 1-11 to 0-10 win.

Armagh displayed plenty of character when bouncing back from a two goal Antrim barrage in the first seven minutes at Casement Park in November to earn a two points win.

Armagh scored just two points in the first half to trail by two goals, but just after the resumption an Antrim defender turned the ball into his own net from an Armagh '45'. The Orchard County gained great confidence from that score and inspired by Ger Houlihan, Barry O'Hagan and Diarmuid Marsden turned what earlier looked like being a major setback into a win that had a big say in earning a quarter-final ticket.

Armagh secured the Division III title and promotion by beating Monaghan at Armagh last month for their concluding game. A brilliant goal by Diarmuid Marsden in the fifteenth minute proved the springboard for the 1-6 to 0-6 victory.

BLOW FOR WESTMEATH

A last minute goal by Fergal Kelly, playing his first league game for Sligo, sent Westmeath tumbling to their first league defeat at Sligo in February. They have bounced back well with three wins in a row for the Division IV crown, and a quarter-final ticket.

A consistently high standard football throughout the season by Tony Scullion — he missed just one game — proved one of the best features of Derry's campaign. He gave some top class displays during the season and was particularly impressive with his quality football at left full back in the last league win in February over Kildare.

Down made it a case of second time lucky when they beat Kerry last Sunday for the second time in the current league to book their place in the last eight.

A second half goal by Charlie Pat McCartan put the Mourne County on the road to success at Newcastle over Kerry in mid-November in a Division I tie. Down, Donegal and Kerry later finished level with eight points apiece in the group.

Down lost a play-off tie to Donegal, who went through to the last eight. But the Mourne men had a "second bite at the cherry" last Sunday in a clash with Kerry for the remaining quarter final place on offer for Division I.

The Ulster men stepped up on their showing against Donegal and, cleverly led by Mickey Linden and boosted by goals from Ciaran McCabe in the first half and Gerard Deegan in the second, earned a return to the quarter-finals in great style for the second successive year.

A Rare Quartet

This year's quarter-finals break new ground in that, for the first time in the history of the National League, this stage of the competition is monopolised by two provinces, Ulster and Leinster - Down's victory over Kerry last Sunday ensuring that it would be a North-East confrontation right across the board.

But if the representatives of one province emerge victorious from all four of today's quarter-finals to set the stage for an all Ulster or all Leinster semi-final confrontation it will be a unique occurrence only in the case of Leinster, as there has been one instance of the league semi-final being contested by four counties from the one province and that was in 1985 when Armagh, Down, Monaghan and Tyrone were the last four standing with Armagh and Monaghan advancing to contest the final.

Is fada ó bhí tréimhse, i gcúrsaí peile, ag fir Laoise a bhí an chomh torthúil is a bhí an bhliain seo 1993/94. Bhí tráth ann agus bhí mí-ádh ar na fir lártíre nar bhain siad craobh na hÉireann uair amháin ar a laghad (1936-38). Ach is fánach a bheith ag amharc siar agus sa bhliain reatha bhain siad craobh 'B' na hÉireann, bhain siad áit amach i Roinn I den Léig agus inniu tá siad ag tabhairt dúshlán Dhún na nGall iar-churaídh Uile-Éireann '92. Treásláitear ó chroí leo.

Ní fada ó bhí foireann Thír Chonaill sa riocht céanna is a bhí na Laoisigh cúpla bliain ó shin; ach táid taghta in aois agus iad in ann agus in inmhe seasamh gualarinn ar gualainn le foireann ar bith sa tír.

Cé go raibh cuid mhaith den

Laoisigh Imeasc na n'Déithe'.

fhoireann gortaithe le déanaí tá raidhse fir ionaid acu atá chomh cumasach céanna leis 'an chéad rogha'. Is breá an suíomh é sin don Bhainisteoir, Brian Mac Conduibh, agus níl aon amhras nó go mbainfidh sé leas as, sa Léig agus sa craobh-hchomortas.

Níor bhuaigh Dún na nGall craobh na Léig ariamh agus bí cinnte nár casadh ar a chéile iad roimhe seo sna cluichí déanacha den chomortas seo; bhuaigh na Laoisigh é faoi dhó — i 1926/27, an chéad bhliain

go raibh a lethéid de chomortas ann, agus arís i 1985/86. Bhí Dún na nGall sa chraobh-hchluiche anuraidh in aghaidh Bhaile Átha Cliath nuair ba ghá athmirt a bheith ann sular chloigh na 'Dubs' iad (0-10 in aghaidh 0-6).

Tá sé deacair a shamhailt cén toradh a bheidh ar an gcluiche seo — tá stíl an-bhreá ag na Conallaigh agus cuid mhaith den sean-chineál peile ('lig don liathroid an taisteal a dheánamh') ag na Laoisigh ach faoi stiúir an iar-pheileadóir clúiteach Colm de Brún tig leo an cluiche a imirt cibé bealach is gá.

Beidh ardcluiche againn inniu agus de bharr an caighdeáin iontach a léirigh siad in aghaidh An Dúin tugtar an vóta do na Conallaigh.

Win Over Laois Ensured Promotion

Donegal gained promotion to Division I of the National Football League for the first time since the competition was reconstructed in 1980 by beating Laois by 1-5 to 0-3 at Portlaoise in February 1988.

The Ulster county were three points clear, eight minutes from the final whistle, when Charlie Mulgrew effectively sealed promotion by collecting a goal.

The Donegal team included Gary Walsh, J.J. Doherty, Donal Reid, Martin Shovlin, Anthony Molloy, Martin Gavigan, Declan Bonner, Martin McHugh, Tommy Ryan and Manus Boyle, all of whom have appeared during the current campaign.

The North-West county lost a quarter-final that year to Monaghan at Omagh by two points and did not appear in the knockout stages a year later. They have displayed great consistency in the present decade, however, in the league.

The lost to Meath at Clones in 1990, beat Offaly in 1991 at Breffni Park after extra time and went down to Dublin at the same venue a year later. Last

goal, hit the winning point in injury time and finished with a personal best for a league game at 1-6.

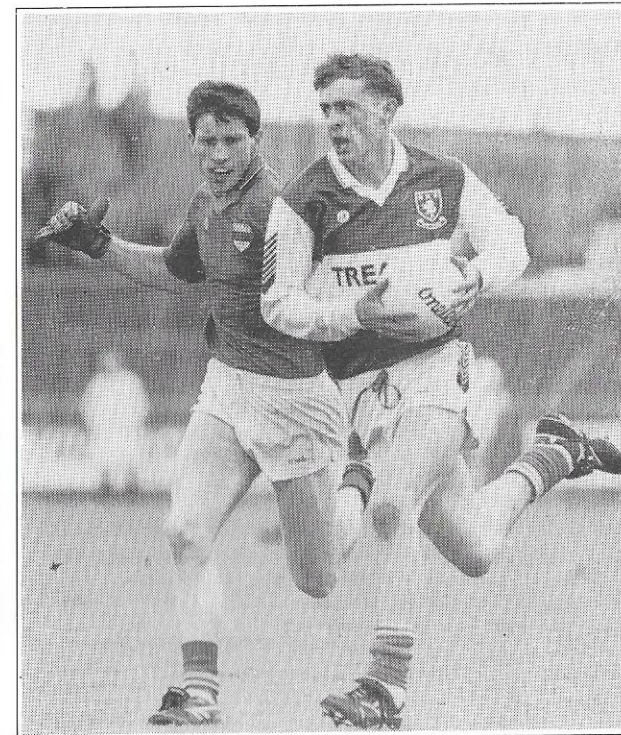
Gary Walsh brought off a couple of inspiring saves in Donegal's goal last time out. He has had a good series overall and was not beaten in five of his seven appearances. He did not play against Kildare at Newbridge in the final game of 1993.

Donegal qualified for their first-ever National League final appearance last season when they were beaten by Dublin after a replay.

April Derry failed to Donegal at Cavan.

It was also at Breffni Park last month that Donegal recorded their only away win in the 1993-94 Church and General league when they beat Down in a play-off match for a place in the last eight.

The game was a personal triumph for Manus Boyle. He scored a memorable



● Damien Delaney takes his place at full-forward for Laois.

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Dún na nGall — Last year's defeated League finalists against Dublin.

Donegal and Laois

Differing Fortunes

Today's quarter-final brings into opposition two counties whose experience in the pursuit of football honours presents an interesting contrast - Donegal who have never won the National League and Laois who have never won the championship. And these respective failures can not be attributed to lack of effort - or opportunity - on the part of the counties, though there is little similarity in the pattern of victory and failure over the years.

Laois, for instance, contested an All-Ireland final more than one hundred years (1889)

before Donegal graced the final day scene for the first time - but Donegal won out at first call whereas Laois have still to achieve the breakthrough. With the league, however, Laois, found fame at the first attempt (1926), and when they contested their second final 60 years later the touch was still golden as they took their second title.

(Incidentally, Laois share with Longford the distinction of being the only counties to have a one hundred percent record of success in league finals).

Donegal's quest for league honours is a tale of frustration on a grand scale. They may have contested only one final - which they lost on a replay, 1993, but over the past 30 years they have made it to the closing stages with commendable consistency. Ironically, in view of the events of recent

years, it was in the league that Donegal first emerged among the football elite, reaching the knock-out stages on five, occasions before they won provincial championship honours for the first time in 1972.

Laois's presence through most of the years was distinctly low-key, though they did reach the semi-final in 1978 when they lost to the great Dublin team of that era by five points.

The eighties, of course, brought Laois's second league title after a most spectacular campaign, and interestingly Donegal beat them three times in that decade...but not when it mattered.

Recent campaigns have seen Donegal reach the quarter-final ('91) and final ('93) but Laois, who have not featured in the closing stages since '86, still have two league titles to their credit with Donegal still striving for that elusive first.

Best Run in Eight Seasons

Laois are enjoying their best run in the National Football League since 1986 when they beat Monaghan by a point in the final. That ranks as their only title since beating Dublin in the inaugural league final in 1927.

Martin Dempsey was full back in the last title winning side and Colm Browne, now the county senior team manager, captained the team from left half back.

In their quarter-final that season the O'Moore county beat Down by a goal after extra time at Croke Park. This is their first appearance in a quarter-final since then.

The O'Moore county have earned their return to the knockout stages with some good performances in Division II. Their only defeat was back in November when they were surprised by Leitrim at Carrick-on-Shannon, where they went down by a point. They also played two draws.

Probably their most noteworthy achievement was in beating Meath by four points at Portlaoise in February. The home side had a splendid start when Damien Delaney, who has been scoring freely all season, sent a penalty kick expert-

ly to the Meath net after only twenty-two seconds.

Laois led by 1-5 to 0-4 at the interval, but had to endure some worrying moments in the second half. Meath got within a point of their opponents in quick style, and it took some quick thinking by goalkeeper Tony McMahon to foil the Royal county's centre-half-forward Martin O'Connell of a goal.

Laois got their game together again after that and went on for a well-merited and morale boosting 1-11 to 0-10 win.

Damien Delaney had a capital game, finishing with 1-7. Mick Lawlor, also in attack, George Doyle at midfield, and Denis Lalor in defence were others who played big roles in the win.

SAFE-KEEPING

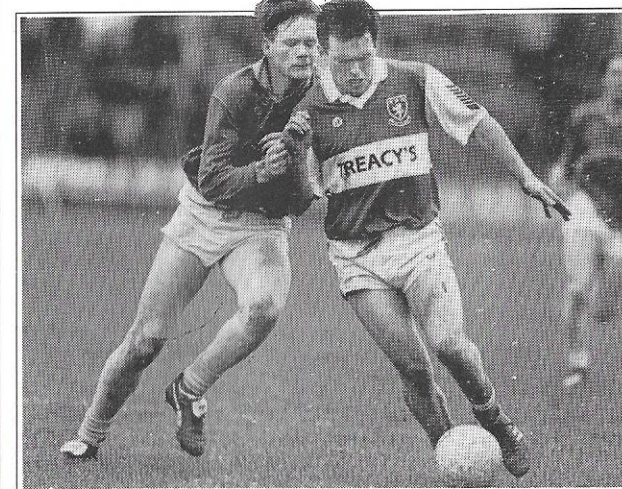
Having taken such a major step along the road to the knockout stages, Laois quickly showed against Fermanagh at Portlaoise

in their concluding group game that they were in no mood to allow the quarter-final ticket slip away. They had their place in safe-keeping at the interval as they led by 1-6 to no score.

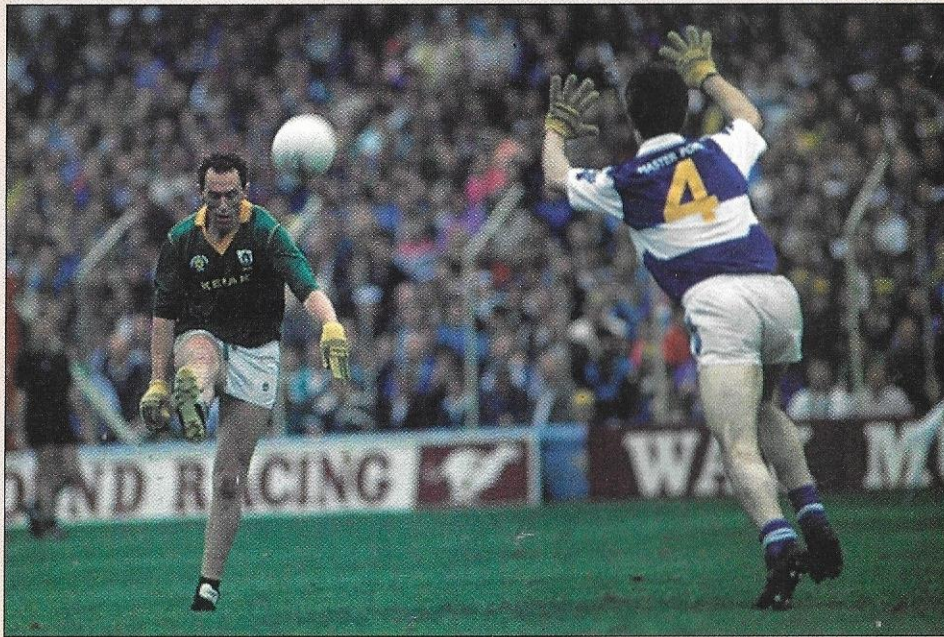
Delaney was again the sharp-shooter supreme scoring 2-5 and the 2-11 to 0-4 win left Laois level with Meath on top of Division II with ten points apiece and through to the last eight.

Laois avoided relegation to Division III when they beat Donegal at Ballyshannon by 2-9 to 0-5 in March 1987 in their final group game of that season.

Just under a year later in another Division II game a Laois team that included McMahon, Martin Dempsey, Pat Roe and Denis Lalor lost to Donegal at Portlaoise in the last senior league meeting of these counties. Donegal won by 1-5 to 0-3 to earn promotion to Division I.



● Laois captain David Lalor.



● Brian Stafford (An Mhí) and George Doyle (Laois).

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The Laois Senior Football team N.F.L., 1993/94.



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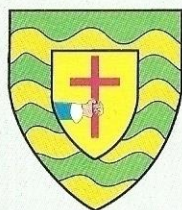
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Dún na nGall

Dathanna: Uaithne, Ór is Bán

Fir Ionaid

- (16) **Paul Callaghan**
P. Ó Ceallchain
(Beart)
- (17) **Paul Carr**
P. Mac Giolla Chearra
(Na Ceithne Maistir)
- (18) **Martin Shovlin**
M. Ó Sheibhleain
(Naomh Ullian)
- (19) **Anthony Molloy**
A. Ó Maolmhuidh
(Ard an Rath)
- (20) **Marty Carlin**
M. Ó Cearúlláin
(Aodh Rua Killybegs)
- (21) **Donal Breslin**
D. Ó Breasláin
(Gaath Dobhair)
- (22) **Tommy Ryan**
T. Ó Riain
(An Tearmain)
- (23) **Eamon MacMenamin**
E. Mac Menáinm
(Mac Cumhaills)

Roghnóirí:

Brian McEniff (Manager)
Naul McCole, Michael
Lafferty, Seamus Bonner,
Anthony Harkin (Trainer)

Substitutes list given as available
at time of going to press - subject
to confirmation.

1
GARY WALSH
G. Breathnach
(Burren)

2
JOHN JOE DOHERTY
S.S. Ó Dochartaigh
(Naomh Columba)

3
MATT GALLAGHER
M. Ó Gallchoir
(Naomh Bríd)

4
PADDY HEGARTY
P. Ó hEigeartaigh
(Aodh Rua Killybegs)

5
DONAL REID
D. Ó Maolbhríde
(Aodh Rua Killybegs)

6
JOHN CUNNINGHAM
S. Mac Cuinneagáin
(Na Cealla Beaga)

7
NOEL HEGARTY
N. Ó hAgheartaigh
(Naomh Columba)

8
MARK McSHANE
M. Mac Seain
(Cill Chartha)

9
BRIAN MURRAY
B. Ó Muiri
(An Stát Sheirbleis)

10
JAMES McHUGH
S. Mac Aodha
(Cill Chartha)

11
MARTIN McHUGH
M. Mac Aodha
(Cill Chartha)

12
JOYCE MacMULLIN
S. Mac Maoláin
(Na Ciethre Maistir)

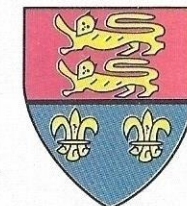
13
DECLAN BONNER
D. Ó Cnaimhsí
(Na Rossa)

14
MANUS BOYLE
M. Ó Baoill
(Na Cealla Beaga)

15
JIM McGUINNESS
S. Mac Aonasa
(Naomh Conaill)

Laois

Dathanna: Gorm is Bán



Fir Ionaid

- (16) **Emmet Burke**
E. de Búrca
(St. Joseph's)
- (17) **Colm Maher**
C. Ó Meachair
(Portarlinton)
- (18) **Brian Kirwan**
B. Ó Ciarubháin
(Emo)
- (19) **John O'Reilly**
S. Ó Raghailigh
(Graiguecullen)
- (20) **Colin McEvoy**
C. Mac Fhiobúí
(Timahoe)
- (21) **Declan Cryan**
D. Ó Criadheáin
(O'Dempsey's)
- (22) **Pat O'Brien**
P. Ó Broin
(Portlaoise)
- (23) **Mark Behan**
M. Ó Beacháin
(Graiguecullen)
- (24) **Martin Slevin**
M. Ó Sléibhín
(O'Dempsey's)

1
TONY McMAHON
A. Mac Mathúna
(Ballyroan)

2
TOMMY SMITH
T. Mac Gabhann
(Portarlinton)

3
MARTIN DEMPSEY
M. Ó Diomasaigh
(St. Joseph's)

4
TOM CONROY
T. Ó Conraoi
(Portlaoise)

5
AIDAN LACEY
A. Ó Laitheasa
(St. Joseph's)

6
DENIS LALOR
D. Ó Leathlobhair (Capt.)
(The Heath)

7
EAMON LACEY
E. Ó Laitheasa
(Ballylinan)

8
PAT ROE
P. Ó Rua
(The Heath)

9
GEORGE DOYLE
S. Ó Dúghaill
(Courtwood)

10
TOM BOWE
T. Ó Buaigh
(Park-Ratheniska)

11
HUGH EMERSON
A. Emerson
(Portarlinton)

12
MICHAEL LAWLOR
M. Ó Leathlobhair
(Emo)

13
LIAM O'CONNOR
L. Ó Conchúir
(Graiguecullen)

14
DAMIEN DELANEY
D Ó Dúláinne
(Stradbally)

15
LEO TURLEY
L. Mac Toirealaigh
(O'Dempsey's)

DÚN NA nGALL

	Cúil	Cúilíní	Seachái	45m	Saor Ciceanna
1adh Leath					
2adh Leath					
IOMLAN					

LAOIS

	Cúil	Cúilíní	Seachái	45m	Saor Ciceanna
1adh Leath					
2adh Leath					
IOMLAN					

PATHS TO THE QUARTER FINAL



Donegal, a Division One team, played one game more than Laois, who campaigned in Division Two, in the current league. That was a play-off match at Cavan, where the North-West men beat Down.

LAOIS

Laois lost just once in seven games so far and played two draws. This is their record:

First round at Portlaoise:
Beat Roscommon by 0-14 to 0-12

Scorers: Damian Delaney 0-8, Michael Lawler 0-3, Hugh Emerson 0-2, Mark O'Brien 0-1.

Second round at Drogheda:
Drew with Louth 0-11 to 1-8

Scorers: Damian Delaney 0-5, Michael Lawler 0-3, B.Kirwan 0-1, L. Tuite 0-1, Mark O'Brien 0-1.

Third round at Portlaoise:
Beat Cork by 1-9 to 1-8

Scorers: Tom Bowe 1-1, Damian Delaney 0-4, Denis Lalor 0-2, Tony Maher 0-1, Leo Turley 0-1.

Fourth round at Carrick on Shannon: Lost to Leitrim by 1-6 to 1-7

Scorers: Leo Turley 1-1, Damian Delaney 0-3, Mark O'Brien 0-2.

Fifth round at Pearse Stadium:
Drew with Galway 0-8 to 0-8

Scorers: Damian Delaney 0-3, Michael Lawler 0-2, Hugh Emerson 0-1, George Doyle 0-1, Colm Maher 0-1.

Sixth round at Portlaoise:
Beat Meath by 1-11 to 0-10

Scorers: Damian Delaney 1-7, George Doyle 0-1, P.Roe 0-1, Michael Lawler 0-1, Colm Maher 0-1.

Seventh round at Portlaoise:
Beat Fermanagh by 2-11 to 0-4

Scorers: Damian Delaney 2-5,

Michael Lawler 0-4, George Doyle 0-1, Leo Turley 0-1.

Total Score for: 5-70 (85);
Against 3-57 (66).

Thirteen players contributed to the Laois total with Damian Delaney accounting for more than half the scores, a remarkable - even unique - feat in competitive football.

Damian Delaney 3-35 (44), Michael Lawler 0-13, Leo Turley 1-3, Tom Bowe 1-1, Mark O'Brien 0-4, Hugh Emerson 0-3, George Doyle 0-3, Denis Lalor 0-2, Colm Maher 0-2, Tony Maher 0-1, B. Kirwan 0-1, L. Tuite 0-1, P. Roe 0-1.

DONEGAL

Donegal lost all their away games in the divisional programme - to Derry, Kildare and Kerry. This is how they reached this stage:

First round at Ballyshannon:
Beat Down by 1-15 to 0-9

Scorers: John Duffy 0-4, Tom Ryan 1-0, Declan Bonner 0-3, John Gildea 0-3, Noel Hegarty 0-2, Jim McGuinness 0-2, Mark McShane 0-1.

Second round at Casement Park: Lost to Derry by 0-7 to 3-16

Scorers: Declan Bonner 0-2, Jim McGuinness 0-1, John Duffy 0-1, Tom Ryan 0-1, John Gildea 0-1, James McHugh 0-1.

Third round at Ballybofey:
Beat Dublin by 0-11 to 0-7

Scorers: Declan Bonner 0-3, Marty Carlin 0-2, Noel Hegarty 0-1, Brian Murray 0-1, Martin McHugh 0-1, Jim McGuinness 0-1, John Duffy 0-1, James McHugh 0-1.

Fourth round at Newbridge:
Lost to Kildare by 0-7 to 1-10

Scorers: John Duffy 0-2, D.Breslin 0-2, M.Crossan 0-1,

Martin Shovlin 0-1, Declan Bonner 0-1.

Fifth round at Ballybofey:
Beat Mayo by 3-7 to 0-12

Scorers: Manus Boyle 0-4, Marty Carlin 1-0, Martin McHugh 1-0, John Gildea 1-0, Declan Bonner 0-3.

Sixth round at Ballyshannon:
Beat Clare by 0-10 to 1-5

Scorers: Manus Boyle 0-6, Damian Reid 0-1, Noel Hegarty 0-1, Martin McHugh 0-1, Tom Ryan 0-1.

Seventh round at Tralee:
Lost to Kerry by 0-9 to 0-11

Scorers: Manus Boyle 0-8, Joyce McMullan 0-1.

Play-off at Breffni Park:
Beat Down by 1-8 to 0-10

Scorers: Manus Boyle 1-6, James McHugh 0-2.

Total score for: 5-74 (89);
Against: 5-80 (95).

Donegal's total of 89 points was amassed by 17 players with Manus Boyle the top contributor. And while Boyle's return may not compare with that of his counterpart on the Laois side, Damian Delaney, his 1-14 is a remarkable achievement in that he didn't play his first game until the fifth round, and since then he has been his side's top scorer in every game.

Manus Boyle 1-24 (27), Declan Bonner 0-12, John Duffy 0-8, John Gildea 1-4, Tom Ryan 1-2, Marty Carlin 1-2, Martin McHugh 1-2, Noel Hegarty 0-4, Jim McGuinness 0-4, James McHugh 0-4, D. Breslin 0-2, Martin Shovlin 0-1, Damian Reid 0-1, Mark McShane 0-1, Joyce McMullan 0-1, Mark Crossan 0-1, Brian Murray 0-1.

One of the great ironies of competitive football as far as Laois are concerned is that the championship, in which so much effort and genius has been invested, has failed to yield the expected dividends, whereas the National League, where expectations were never exceptionally high, has produced the county's two greatest triumphs. And for good measure Laois emerged as the winners of the very first league in 1926.

And this great achievement did not appear a realistic possibility when Laois set out in the autumn of 1925 in a four-team group that was part of the Leinster section of the new competition. They were grouped with Carlow, Wexford and Kilkenny, with the Slaneysiders, the reigning provincial champions warm favourites to qualify. The opening game was a rather tame affair which resulted in a 2-5 to 1-4 win for Laois at Graiguecullen. Nor did the meeting with Kilkenny suggest that there were great things in the offing, but the manner in which they surmounted the Wexford challenge at Carlow by 2-1 to 0-6 after they had led by 1-1 to 0-1 at the break and withstood a fierce last-quarter barrage by the favourites, really brought them to public notice.

Five days before Christmas, they took another significant step forward, when at Croke Park, in a play-off tie with Dublin, who had beaten Louth, Meath and Kildare, they emerged winners by 1-3 to 1-2.

LAOIS'S HOURS OF GLORY

The knock-out stages produced yet another fine performance, a 1-6 to 1-5 elimination of a powerful Kerry team at Croke Park on March 26 - a Kerry team, most of whom would be involved in the epic All-Ireland contests with Kildare six months later.

Sligo, winners of the Connacht division, provided the semi-final opposition at headquarters. Laois led at half-time by three points, but failed to last the pace and Sligo won by 3-5 to 2-6. But it was not the end of the line. An objection regarding the constitution of the winning side was upheld and a replay ordered. Seven weeks later 2,000 spectators at Roscommon saw a close contest for half an hour, but then Laois stepped up the pace and Sligo simply had no answer. It was surprisingly easy in the end - 4-6 to 1-4.

The championship then intervened and the final, for which Dublin had qualified, was put back to September. The delay did not help public

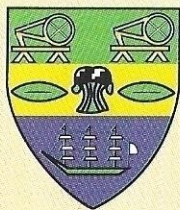


interest and the decision of the Central Council to stage the game at New Ross - an incredible venue - meant that even the most rabid follower of the finalists felt little inclined to make the long journey to this out-of-the-way location.

Scarcely 500 people watched a game that merited a better setting and attendance. There was little between the sides with defences on both sides very much in control. Dublin succeeded in raising only one flag, and John Millar's goal and point, which made him top scorer of the day, swung the game to Laois. On a 2-1 to 1-0 scoreline Laois became the first National Football League champions and the team was:

Dick Millar (capt.) (Annanough), Bill Irwin (Ballyroan), Paddy Bates (Stradbally), Jack Brown (Annanough), Matt Delaney (Annanough), Tom Cribben (Portarlinton), Joe Ward (Portarlinton), Chris Millar (Annanough), Jack Whelan (Ballyroan), Paddy Whelan (Portarlinton), John Millar (Annanough), Joe O'Shea (Portarlinton), Jack Delaney (Stradbally), Jim Millar (Annanough), Tom Costillo (Portarlinton).

When the league, after a one-year break, was resumed in 1927-28 Laois had drifted from the high standard of two years previously and failed to make it to the closing stages, but the memory of these glorious hours which culminated in that first league triumph would warm Laois hearts for many years to come.



An Dún

Dathanna: Dearg is Dubh

Fir Ionaid

- (16) Eamonn Connolly
E. Ó Conaighaile
(Warrenpoint)
- (17) Paul Higgins
P. Ó hUiginn
(Ballymartin)
- (18) Peter Withnell
P. Withnell
(Drumans)
- (19) Shane McMahon
S. Mac Mathúna
(Mayobridge)
- (20) Liam Howlett
L. Ó hUileid
(Warrenpoint)
- (21) Barry Hynes
B. Ó hEidhin
(Drumgath)
- (22) Colm McAlarney
C. Mac Giolla Earra
(Castlewellan)
- (23) Garnett McFerran
G. Ó Fearáin
(Burren)
- (24) Aidan Farrell
A. Ó Fearail
(Rostrevor)

1
NEIL COLLINS
N. Ó Coilleán
(Carryduff)

2
CATHAL MURRAY
C. Ó Muiri
(Clonduff)

3
MICHAEL MAGILL
M. Mac an Ghiolla
(Warrenpoint)

4
RICHARD STARKEY
R. Mac Starcaidh
(Downpatrick)

5
GREGORY McCARTAN
G. Mac Artain
(Ballymartin)

6
CONOR DEEGAN
C. Ó Duiginn
(Downpatrick)

7
EAMON BURNS
E. Ó Broin
(Bryansford)

8
BRIAN BURNS
B. Ó Broin
(Bryansford)

9
GERARD COLGAN
G. Mac Colgáin
(An Riocht)

10
GREGORY DEEGAN
G. Ó Duiginn
(Downpatrick)

11
GREG BLANEY
G. de Bléine
(Carryduff)

12
GERARD DEEGAN
G. Ó Duiginn
(Downpatrick)

13
MICHAEL LINDEN (CAPT)
M. Mac Giolla Léandáin
(Mayobridge)

14
CIARAN McCABE
C. Mac Caba
(Castlewellan)

15
JAMES McCARTAN
S. Mac Artain
(Ballylish)

An Mhí

Dathanna: Uathne is Ór



Fir Ionaid

- (16) Conor Martin
C. Ó Máirtín
(Ballivor)
- (17) P.J. Gilic
P.S. Mag Uille
(Carnaross)
- (18) Sean Kelly
S. Ó Ceallaigh
(Dunderry)
- (19) John McDermott
S. Mac Diarmada
(Skryne)
- (20) Declan Lynch
D. Ó Loingsigh
(Ballinlough)
- (21) Cathal O'Bric
C. Ó Bric
(O'Mahoney's)
- (22) Willie Donnelly
L. Ó Donaile
(Skryne)
- (23) Michael McDonnell
M. Mac Donnail
(Summerhill)
- Roghnoiri:
Sean Boylan (Coach)
Joe Cassells
Mick Lyons

Substitutes list given as available at time of going to press - subject to confirmation.

1
DONAL SMITH
D. Mac Gabhann
(O'Mahoney's)

2
ROBBIE O'MALLEY
R. Ó Máille (CAPT)
(St. Colmcille's)

3
MARTIN O'CONNELL
M. Ó Conaill
(St. Michael's)

4
TOM HANLEY
T. Ó hAinle
(Athboy)

5
GRAHAM GERAGHTY
G. Mac Oireachtaigh
(Seneschalstown)

6
CORMAC MURPHY
C. Ó Murchú
(St. Patrick's)

7
BRENDAN REILLY
B. Ó Raghailigh
(St. Peter's, Dunboyne)

8
JIMMY McGUINNESS
S. Mag Aonasa
(Dunsany)

9
COLM BRADY
C. Ó Brádaigh
(Simonstown Gaels)

10
NEVILLE DUNNE
N. Ó Doinn
(O'Mahoney's)

11
COLM O'ROURKE
C. Ó Ruairc
(Skryne)

12
TREVOR GILES
T. Ó Glaisne
(Skryne)

13
BERNARD FLYNN
B. Ó Floinn
(Mullingar Shamrocks)

14
TOMMY DOWD
T. Ó Dúda
(Dunderry)

15
JODIE DEVINE
S. Ó Daimhin
(Ballinlough)

AN DÚN

1adh Leath

2adh Leath

IOMLAN

Cúil

Cúilíní

Seachai

45m

Saor Ciceanna

AN MHÍ

1adh Leath

2adh Leath

IOMLAN

Cúil

Cúilíní

Seachai

45m

Saor Ciceanna

Fir na Móirne ar a mBealach — Ar Éigin!

Tá cosúlacht mhór idir An Mhí agus An Dún maidir leis an bpeil dhe. Tá sé (6) craobh Léige ag An Mhí augs ceithre (4) cinn ag An Dún agus casadh ar a chéile iad, sa chraobh-hchluiche, uair amháin i 1990 nuair a bhí an ceann is fearr ag an gcontae Ríoga (2-7 in aghaidh 0-11).

Is i Roinn I a bhí An Dún le linn na sraithe láithrí agus mar sin bhíodar i gcomortas leis na foirne is fearr sa tír; bhí An Mhí ag imirt i Roinn II agus bhain siad an chéad áit sa Roinn sin agus ardú céime don bhliain rómhainn. Faoi láthair tá neart peileadóirí den scoth i gcontae na Mí mar gur bhuaigh siad craobh na Mionúir agus craobh na n-Ógánach (faoi 21) sa cúpla bliain atá thart acu níl foireann shocair fós ag Seán Ó Baoilleáin, An Bainisteoir.

Tá peileadóirí ard-chumasacha ag An Dún, go háirithe ó d'fhill cúpla duine ón 'bhfásach' agus táid ag baint leas as an Léig ar an mbealach ar ais go dtí na 'Laetha órga' a bhí acu in 1991. Bhí mí-ádh orthu in aghaidh Thír Chonaill nuair a bhain Micki Mac Giolla Fhiontáin cúl álainn a cuireadh ar ceal toisc go ndúbharthas gur ghlac sé céim sa bhreis ar an méid atá ceadaithe.

Rud amháin faoin Mhí agus iad i pPáirc An Chrócaigh — is cinnte go dtabharfaidh siad taispeántas maith peile agus ní bhíonn siad cloíte go dtí an fheadóg dhéanach. Tá foireann den chéad scoth ag An Dún agus mar sin beidh sárchluiche againn.

Céaptar go rachaidh An Dún ar aghaidh!

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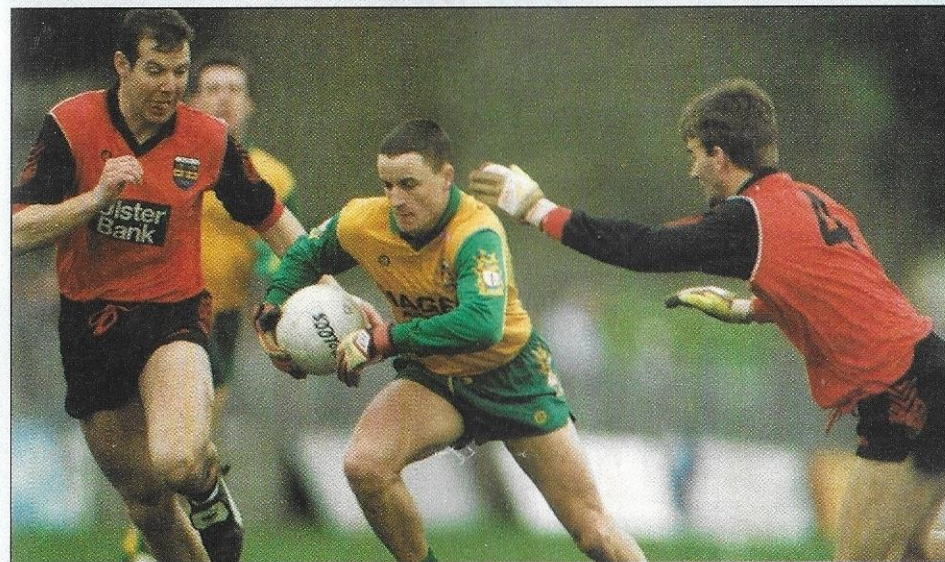
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Down aiming for semi-final place



● Eamon Burns (An Dún), Donal Breslin (Dún na nGall) and Richard Starkey (An Dún) in action.

Down return to Croke Park for the second successive week determined to go one better than a year ago when their hopes of National Football League glory were ended by a Peter O'Leary — inspired Kerry after extra time in a quarter-final at headquarters.

O'Leary did much to thwart the Ulster county. He brought off a couple of splendid saves in Kerry's goal in normal time, saved another from Mickey Linden in the first period of extra time and, seven minutes from the end foiled Linden yet again of a goal.

Down, with Michael McGill, Conor Deegan and Paul Higgins prominent in defence, and Eamonn Burns impressive at midfield, had the better of the exchanges in the first half,

but wayward shooting meant they still went in at the break on level terms - 0-4 each.

Five minutes from the end, Down had a player dismissed by the referee and trailed by two points, but Ross Carr and Brendan Mason sent over the bar to put the game into extra time.

Kerry had the better of the exchanges after that and eight minutes from the final whistle were 0-15 to 0-12 ahead. However, Down rallied strongly and put strong pressure on the Southern defence to get within one point of their opponents. Kerry hit back with a three player movement that ended with a Seamus Moynihan point and Greg Blaney brought Down into the hunt again with a fine point, but time ran out for the Mourne men.

Michael McGill, Conor Deegan, Paul Higgins, Brian Burns, Eamonn Burns, Blaney and Linden were among those in action with Down from the start. Aidan Farrell went in as a substitute.

Earlier in the campaign, Down clinched their quarter-final ticket by beating Meath at Castleblayney thanks in no small measure to a goal by corner forward Brendan Mason after 38 minutes. That score set Down firmly on the road to a 1-11 to 0-9 win in a qualifying play-off before some 14,000 spectators.

Down's last win in a League quarter-final was at Navan in 1990 when D.J. Kane, although playing at left half back, showed his forwards the way to goal by grabbing his team's only green flag in a 1-21 to 1-5 win over Longford.

Down competed in Division One and Meath have qualified from Division Two for their latest engagement at headquarters. They had contrasting fortunes on opening day - the Mourne men lost away to Donegal while the Royal County had a home win over Cork.

Meath

Meath's record so far is:

First round at Navan: Beat Cork by 1-12 to 0-6

Scorers: Colm O'Rourke 1-4, Brian Stafford 0-6, Sean Kelly 0-1, J. Martin 0-1.

Second round at Carrick-on-Shannon: Beat Leitrim 1-10 to 0-8

Scorers: Brian Stafford 0-5, Jody Devine 1-1, Graham Geraghty 0-1, Declan Lynch 0-1, Tommy Dowd 0-1, John Henry 0-1.

Third round at Navan: Lost to Roscommon by 1-9 to 2-7

Scorers: Mick O'Dowd 1-1, Graham Geraghty 0-2, Declan Lynch 0-2, Sean Kelly 0-1, John Henry 0-1, Ciaran Harten 0-1, Cormac Murphy 0-1.

Fourth round at Dundalk: Beat Louth by 0-14 to 0-9

Scorers: Brian Stafford 0-7, Tommy Dowd 0-4, Jody Devine 0-1, Declan Lynch 0-1, Mick O'Dowd 0-1

Fifth round at Navan: Beat Fermanagh by 0-12 to 0-6

Scorers: Brian Stafford 0-4, Martin O'Connell 0-3, Colm O'Rourke 0-1, Declan Lynch 0-1, Tommy Dowd 0-1, Trevor Giles 0-1, Brendan Reilly 0-1.

Sixth round at Portlaoise: Lost to Laois by 0-10 to 1-11

Scorers: Brian Stafford 0-3, Colm O'Rourke 0-2, Mick O'Dowd 0-2, Tommy Dowd 0-1, Trevor Giles 0-1, Jimmy McGuinness 0-1.

Seventh round at Tuam Stadium: Beat Galway by 1-10 to 0-8

Records So Far

Scorers: Brian Stafford 0-6, Tommy Dowd 1-2, Colm O'Rourke 0-1, Jimmy McGuinness 0-1.

Total Score for: 4-77 (89); Against 3-55 (64).

Sixteen players contributed to the Meath total with Brian Stafford, not surprisingly, by far the leading marksman with a lead of as many as 19 points over his nearest rival in the table.

Brian Stafford 0-31, Tommy Dowd 1-9, Colm O'Rourke 1-8, Mick O'Dowd 1-4, Declan Lynch 0-5, Jody Devine 1-2, Martin O'Connell 0-3, Graham Geraghty 0-3, Jimmy McGuinness 0-2, Sean Kelly 0-2, J. Henry 0-2, Trevor Giles 0-2, J. Martin 0-1, C. Harten 0-1, C. Murphy 0-1 and B. Reilly 0-1.

Down

Down have already had a heavy programme in the league. This will be their tenth outing of the campaign and their third appearance this year at Croke Park.

This is how the Ulster county has progressed so far:

First round at Ballyshannon: Lost to Donegal by 0-9 to 1-15.

Scorers: James McCartan 0-3, Ross Carr 0-2, Gerard Deegan 0-2, Greg Blaney 0-1, Eamon Burns 0-1.

Second round at Newry: Beat Mayo by 0-10 to 0-9.

Scorers: Ross Carr 0-5, Colm McAlarney 0-2, James McCartan 0-1, Greg McCartan 0-1, Aidan Farrell 0-1.

Third round at Cusack Park:

Drew with Clare 1-5 to 0-8.

Scorers: Charlie Pat McCartan 1-1, Greg McCartan 0-2, Ciaran McCabe 0-1, Mike Linden 0-1.

Fourth round at Newcastle: Beat Kerry by 1-12 to 0-10.

Scorers: Ciaran McCabe 0-3, Charlie Pat McCartan 1-0, Ross Carr 0-2, Mike Linden 0-2, Gerard Deegan 0-1, D.J. Kane 0-1, Colm McAlarney 0-1, Garret McFerran 0-1, Gerard Colgan 0-1.

Fifth round at Newry: Lost to Derry by 0-6 to 0-8.

Scorers: Ross Carr 0-2, Mike Linden 0-2, Aidan Farrell 0-1, Gerard Colgan 0-1.

Sixth round at Croke Park: Drew with Dublin 1-7 to 1-7.

Scorers: Ross Carr 0-3, Greg McCartan 0-3, Aidan Farrell 1-0, Gerard Deegan 0-1.

Seventh round at Newry: Beat Kildare by 0-11 to 0-8.

Scorers: Greg McCartan 0-6, Greg Blaney 0-2, Mike Linden 0-1, D.J. Kane 0-1, Peter Withnell 0-1.

Play-off at Breffni Park: Lost to Donegal by 0-10 to 1-8.

Scorers: Greg McCartan 0-3, Mike Linden 0-2, Gerard Colgan 0-1, Aidan Farrell 0-1, Gerard Deegan 0-1, Peter Withnell 0-1, James McCartan 0-1.

Play-off at Croke Park: Beat Kerry by 2-12 to 0-11

Scorers: Gerard Deegan 1-2, Mike Linden 0-4, Ciaran McCabe 1-1, Greg McCartan 0-2, Conor Deegan 0-1, Greg Blaney 0-1 and James McCartan 0-1.

Total score for: 5-82 (97); Against: 3-84 (93)

Gregory McCartan 0-17, Ross Carr 0-14, Mickey Linden 0-12, Gerard Deegan 1-7, Ciaran McCabe 1-5, Charlie Pat McCartan 2-1, Aidan Farrell 1-3, James McCartan 0-6, Greg Blaney 0-4, Colm McAlarney 0-3, Gerard Colgan 0-3, Peter Withnell 0-2, D.J. Kane 0-2, Eamonn Burns 0-1, Garret McFerran 0-1 and Conor Deegan 0-1.

A Spirited Comeback

Meath can feel well pleased with a spirited comeback that has brought them from the heart-break of a last gasp one point Leinster senior football semi-final defeat last July by Dublin to this first league quarter-final outing in two years.

That game was against Clare at Ballinasloe and the Royal County were provided with a searching examination. Clare had the better of the exchanges in the first half, but still only led at the interval by 0-5 to 0-3.

Ten minutes from the end of the game Meath went ahead for only the second time when Brian Stafford pointed a 35 metres free. Even so it was not until two minutes from the end that John McDermott made the issue safe for Meath by landing a point.

Among those on duty for Meath were Donal Smyth, Bob O'Malley, Graham Geraghty, Enda McManus, Martin O'Connell, Colm O'Rourke, Brian Stafford and Bernard Flynn.

Stafford was Meath's top scorer with three points.

Meath lost the semi-final

that season to Derry, who went on to beat Tyrone for the title.

RECOVERY

The Royal County lost no time in getting the latest recovery on the rails after the championship loss to Dublin by beating Cork in their opening league encounter of the current season as a Division II team.

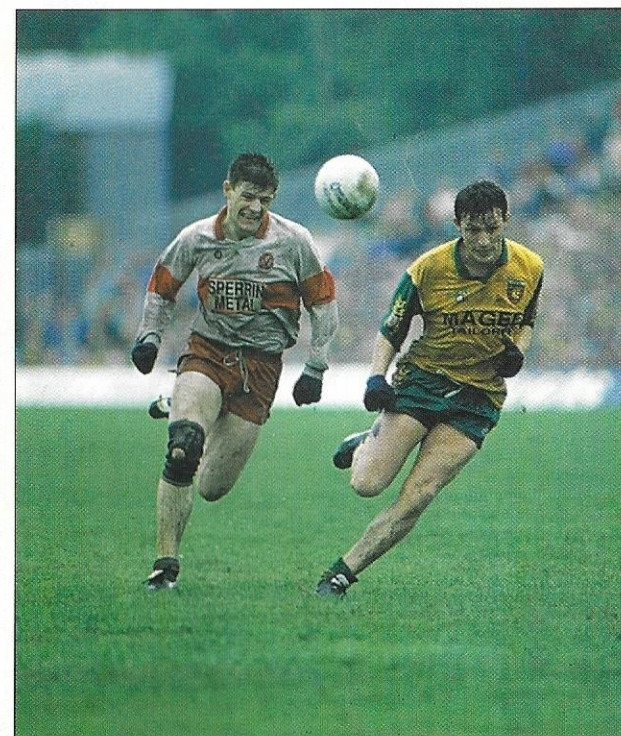
They subsequently faltered to Roscommon and Laois to drop their only points of the campaign.

Meath ensured promo-

tion and this quarter final outing with a polished performance last time out when beating Galway by 1-10 to 0-8 on a rare visit to Tuam Stadium last month.

Not for the first time Colm O'Rourke delighted with his creative play and Brian Stafford led the scoring returns with six points.

Trevor Giles, who won an All-Ireland minor medal in 1992, was another star for the winners in attack and Bob O'Malley in defence was another who contributed much to the success.



● Enda Gormley (Doire) and John Joe Doherty (Dún na nGall).

Their Final Meeting - 1990

Meath 2-7; Down 0-11

This final, the first-ever at this stage of the league involving these counties was entertainment on a grand scale. The niceties of the code may have surfaced only sporadically, but an attendance of more than thirty thousand watched enthralled as two fit and thoroughly committed teams pursued victory with a fervour that was almost frightening in its intensity but which rarely threatened to exceed the bounds of good sportsmanship.

With midfield failing to yield a definite pattern of superiority at any stage and defences, for the most part, edging the battle with the opposition, it was clear from an early stage that the team

that could provide the elusive touch of genius would survive.

And it was the highly experienced Meath attack that produced it. The first quarter had seen Down register the only two scores recorded, and they had added a point when Meath's crafty tacticians struck. Colm O'Rourke and Liam Hayes did most of the approach work and David Beggy finished to the net with clinical efficiency. The Leinster men badly needed that goal because Conor Deegan and his fellow-defenders had been doing a marvellous job of containing the lethal Meath attack.

Cathal Murray's accuracy kept Down afloat, however, and at the break it was 1-2 to

0-5.

It was touch and go for 20 minutes of the second half; then the Down defence, out of sheer necessity, conceded a penalty, which Stafford drove unerringly to the net. That wasn't the end. The Meath defence, too, had its moments of desperation, subsequently, but their indiscretions yielded only points to Murray's immaculate place-kicking. Even so, one score could have turned defeat into victory and vice versa. Once again Down and Meath had provided the crowds with what they wanted.

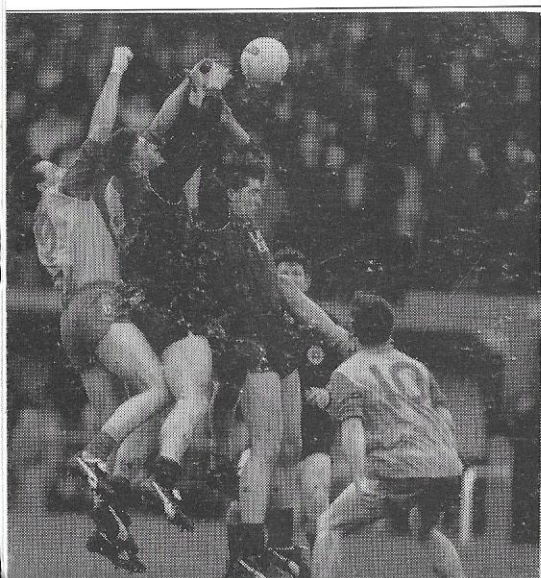
Meath scorers: B. Stafford 1-3, D. Beggy 1-0, B. Flynn 0-2, C. Brady 0-1, C. O'Rourke 0-1.

Down scorers: C. Murray 0-5, M. Linden 0-3, J. McCartan 0-2, C. Burns 0-1.

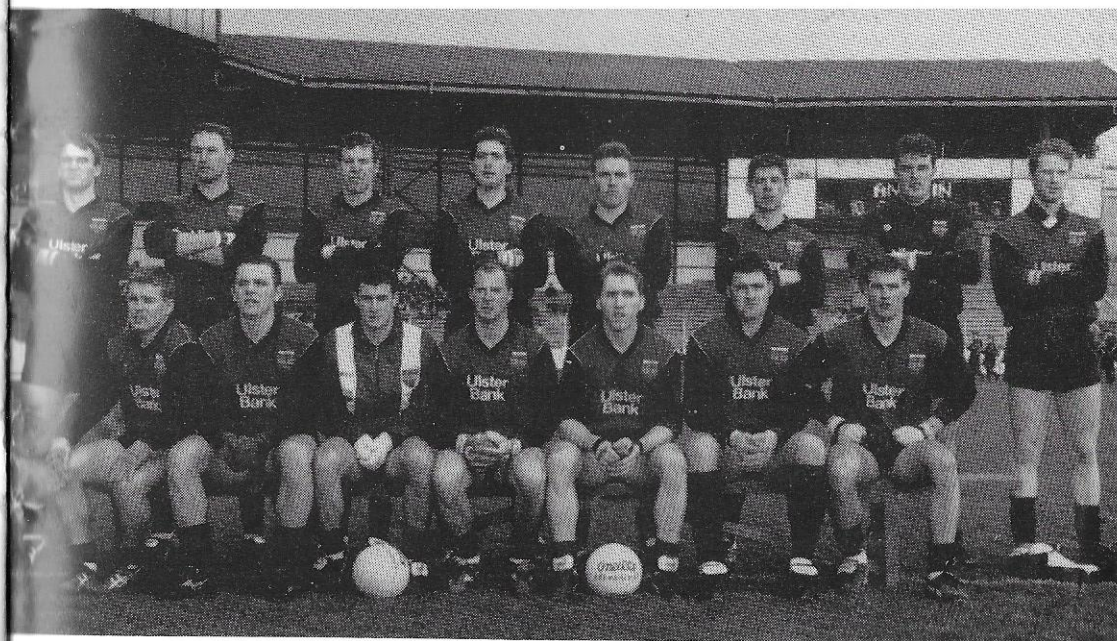
Meath: Donal Smyth, Kevin Foley, Mick Lyons, Terry Ferguson, Brendan O'Reilly, Liam Harnan, Martin O'Connell, Liam Hayes, Colm Brady, David Beggy, Colm Coyle, P.J. Gillic, Colm O'Rourke, Brian Stafford, Bernard Flynn. Subs: Joe Cassels for Coyle, Sean Kelly for Harnan.

Down: Neil Collins, Paul Higgins, Conor Deegan, Barry Breen, John Kelly, Paddy O'Rourke, D.J. Kane, Ross Carr, Eamon Burns, Ambrose Rogers, Greg Blaney, Collie Burns, Cathal Murray, Micky Linden, James McCartan. Subs: Brendan Mason for Rogers, Mark McCartan for Collie Burns.

● Midfield action at Cavan two weeks ago — Donegal's Brian Murray is outnumbered by Down's Brian Burns and Gerard Colgan while James McHugh awaits the outcome.



The Meath team which won the Sean Flanagan Cup in January by defeating Roscommon in the final of the Prolim S.F. tournament at Mayo Abbey. Front (l-r): Tommy Dowd, Cathal O'Bric, Jason Hendrick, Robbie O'Malley (captain), Enda McManus, Colm Brady, Vincent Ryan. Back (l-r): John Henry, Declan Lynch, Conor Martin, Jimmy McGuinness, Martin O'Connell, Cormac Murphy, Brian Stafford and John McDermott.



The Down team which defeated Kerry in the play-off at Croke Park last Sunday.



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MEATH AND DOWN



Clash of the Elite

Today they are unquestionably numbered among the elite of Gaelic football - the counties that have won All-Ireland titles in all grades of football, senior, junior, under-21 and minor as well as National League honours on several occasions. A far cry indeed from the day 67 years ago when competitive paths crossed for the first time. Then, in the early winter of 1927, neither county had much to show by way of football titles. Indeed, between them there was only one provincial title - Meath's lone Leinster crown in 1895. Down's take of honours was simply non-existent; in fact, the Mourne county had yet to contest an Ulster senior final and the junior grade which had provided a measure of compensation for the 'lesser orders', might not have existed as far as Down and Meath were concerned.

Yet their league meeting at the Newry marshes on November 13, 1927 was an eagerly-awaited clash as both counties had already displayed good form in recording wins over Dublin, and making Kildare, the reigning All-Ireland champions, earn the points the hard way.

It was a better game than a winning margin of eleven points would suggest, but there was no denying Meath's first-half superiority and their interval lead of 2-6 to 0-2 was fully deserved. Down forwards obviously decided that goals were the only way back into the game and with the aid of the breeze laid siege to the Meath posts in pursuit of the majors. It was an unwise strategy, as Pat Brown the Meath 'keeper' was in devastating form, saving at least four certain goals. And when Meath had their third

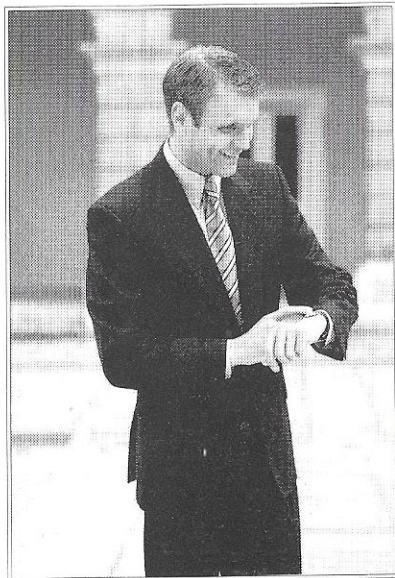
goal in a breakaway, that was that, though Down kept pegging away and O'Neill's goal their only score of the second half - was the last score of the game (3-7 to 1-2). The teams in that first meeting were:

Meath: P. Brown, P. Kearns, C. Doran, M. Madden (Donaghmore), P. Keelan, C. Sheerin, M. Keegan, P. Ratty (Gael), J. McIvor (Dunleek), P. Coffey (Martry), J. Ledwidge (Slane), M. Murphy (Harps), C. Cudden (Castletown), W. Dillon (Syddan), T. Meade (Castletown). Subs: M. Keogh, P. Ratty, J. Reilly.

Down: R. Black (Newry), D. Higgins, J. O'Hare, P. O'Hare (Kilcool), G. Mussen (Clonduff), B. McCartan, T. Cribben, T. Gallagher (Mayobridge), J. Morgan, S. Hughes (Kilcool), L. O'Neill (Hilltown), J. Jennings (Castlewellan), E. Keating (Bryansford), S. Rogers, J. McEvoy (Kilcool). Subs: P. Cribben (Mayobridge), D. Brannigan (Clonduff), J. Walsh (Bryansford).

Meetings in the early thirties all went in favour of the Royal county as did the 1938 clash, and Down had to wait a long time to exact a measure of revenge; but then it was sweet revenge, as they won the next five meetings between 1967 and 1971.

In all, Down and Meath have met 22 times in the National League with the record delicately balanced, nine-eight in Down's favour. Five games have been drawn and just how closely these counties are matched can be gleaned from the fact that their last three games ended all square.



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The scorelines of the 22 meetings read:

1927-28 - Newry:			
Meath	3-7;	Down	1-2
1930-31 - Hilltown:			
Meath	4-5;	Down	0-8
1931-32 - Navan:			
Meath	6-2;	Down	0-0
1938-39 - Moygannon:			
Meath	4-8;	Down	0-3
1967-68 - Navan:			
Down	2-10;	Meath	1-8
1967-68 (play off) - Croke Park:			
Down	1-11;	Meath	2-7
1968-69 - Navan:			
Down	1-7;	Meath	0-7
1969-70 - Navan:			
Down	2-8;	Meath	0-7
1970-71 - Navan:			
Down	1-12;	Meath	1-10
1971-72 - Navan:			
Meath	1-11;	Down	0-11
1974-75 - Newcastle:			
Down	0-12;	Meath	1-3
1981-82 - Newcastle:			
Down	0-7;	Meath	1-4
1983-84 - Newry:			
Down	1-3;	Meath	0-4
1984-85 - Navan:			
Down	2-11;	Meath	1-7
1985-86 - Navan:			
Meath	0-8;	Down	0-8
1986-87 - Newcastle:			
Down	0-10;	Meath	0-9
1986-87 (semi-final) - Croke Park:			
Meath	0-13;	Down	1-9
1988-89 - Newcastle:			
Meath	2-12;	Down	3-4
1989-90 - Croke Park:			
Meath	2-7;	Down	0-11
1990-91 - Navan:			
Meath	1-11;	Down	1-11
1991-92 - Newry:			
Down	1-7;	Meath	1-7
1992-93 - Newry:			
Down	0-10;	Meath	0-10

TOP Scorers

Once again, despite less than favourable weather conditions on a number of occasions, the current National League campaign has produced some excellent feats of marksmanship. Not surprisingly it was one of the lower divisions that saw the outstanding display of flag-raising of the entire league section - Ger Heavin of Westmeath leaving friend and foe far behind. Division One, where the competition is fiercest, as usual provided modest enough returns with Charlie Redmond the most consistent performer. But it was in Division Two where such celebrated figures as Brian Stafford, Colin Corkery, Colm O'Rourke and Stefan White operated, that a relative unknown stole the honours. Damian Delaney of Laois, whose performance from first round to seventh was eye-catching and an eye-opener, with his tally being 13 points better than his nearest rival. Michael O'Brien of Longford, and Conan Daye of Wicklow were others to return excellent figures over the eight games in Division Four. In every one of the 33 counties (London is the extra one) a clear leader in the marksmanship charts emerged and this list of top marksmen in the league section of the competition refers to the leading flag-raiser of each county and these 33 players are not necessarily the leading marksmen overall. It should be noted that scores recorded in the play-off ties are not included in this chart.

DIVISION ONE

Charlie Redmond (Dublin)	2-25 (31)
Niall Buckley (Kildare)	0-29
Aidan O'Keeffe (Clare)	1-23
Enda Gormley (Derry)	1-21
Sean McElligott (Kerry)	1-17
Kevin O'Neill (Mayo)	0-19
Manus Boyle (Donegal)	0-18
Ross Carr (Down)	0-14

DIVISION TWO

Damian Delaney (Laois)	3-35 (44)
Brian Stafford (Meath)	0-31
Stefan White (Louth)	2-21
Aidan Rooney (Leitrim)	0-25
Colin Curran (Fermanagh)	0-22
Niall Finnegan (Galway)	0-21
Colin Corkery (Cork)	1-12 (15)
Derek Duggan (Roscommon)	0-15

DIVISION THREE

Ronan Carolan (Cavan)	1-36 (39)
Ray McCarron (Monaghan)	2-31
Adrian Cushe (Tyrone)	4-21
Scott Doran (Wexford)	2-17
Ger Houlihan (Armagh)	1-16
Conal Heatley (Antrim)	2-10
James Mullan (Offaly)	2-8
Peter Lambert (Tipperary)	0-14

DIVISION FOUR

Ger Heavin (Westmeath)	5-46 (61)
Michael O'Brien (Longford)	2-36
Conan Daye (Wicklow)	1-34
Lar Molloy (London)	1-25
Chris McGill (Limerick)	3-15
Martin Murray (Carlow)	0-22
Brian Walsh (Sligo)	1-16
Pat Fitzgerald (Waterford)	0-16
Donal Walsh (Kilkenny)	0-13

Semi-Finals on April 17

The Church and General National Football League semi-finals will both be played on April 17 at venues to be announced.
Derry or Westmeath will meet Down or Meath. Donegal or Laois will oppose Dublin or Armagh in these games



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