

2015

Team Manager: Rory Gallagher

Dr. McKenna Cup

1	4th Jan. (Sun)	Round 1	Owenbeg	Derry	1-16	Donegal	0-08
2	11th Jan. (Sun)	Round 2	Paire MacCumhaill	Donegal	2-16	QUB	1-08
3	14th Jan. (Wed)	Round 3	Paire MacCumhaill	Donegal	0-12	Fermanagh	2-05
	18th Jan. (Sun)	Semi Finals					
	24th Jan. (Sat)	Final	Athletic Grounds	Tyrone	1-13	Cavan	0-10

Senior Football Championship

4	17 May		Páirc Mac Cumhaill	Donegal	1-13	Tyrone	1-10
5	14 June		Crossmaglen	Armagh	0-8	Donegal	2-11
6	28 June		Clones	Donegal	1-9	Derry	0-10
7	19 July	Ulster Final	Clones	Monaghan	0-11	Donegal	0-10
8	1 August	Qualifiers	Croke Park	Donegal	3-12	Galway	0-11
9	8 August	Qtr. Final	Croke Park	Donegal	0-11	Mayo	2-12
	20 Sept.	Final	Croke Park	Dublin	0-12	Kerry	0-9

National Football League

Division 1 Cork, Dublin, Kerry, Mayo, Tyrone, Derry, Donegal, Monaghan

Division 2 Cavan, Down, Galway, Laois, Meath, Kildare, Roscommon, Westmeath

Division 3 Clare, Fermanagh, Wexford, Louth, Sligo, Limerick, Armagh, Tipperary

Division 4 Carlow, Leitrim, Antrim, London, Wicklow, Waterford, Longford, Offaly,

Allianz Football League Roinn 1 2015

10	31.01.2015 (Sat)	Round 1	MacCumhail Park,	Dún na nGall	1-15	Doire	0-12
11	07.02.2015 (Sat)	Round 2	Páirc an Chrócaigh	Áth Cliath	2-10	Dún na nGall	0-11
12	01.03.2015 (Sun)	Round 3	Fr Tierney Park,	Dún na nGall	0-12	Corcaigh	1-8
13	08.03.2015 (Sun)	Round 4	O'Donnell Park,	Dún na nGall	1-4	Muineachán	0-9
14	15.03.2015 (Sun)	Round 5	Austin Stack Park,	Ciarraí	2-13	Dún na nGall	2-11
15	29.03.2015 (Sun)	Round 6	MacCumhail Park,	Dún na nGall	1-13	Tír Eoghain	0-6
16	05.04.2015 (Sun)	Round 7	Elverys MacHale Park	Maigh Eo	0-12	Dún na nGall	1-09
17	12.04.2015	Semi-final	Croke Park	Corcaigh	4-11	Dún na nGall	0-19

GAA - BANK OF IRELAND DR MCKENNA CUP, GROUP B

Early goal seals Donegal's fate

DERRY 1-16
 DONEGAL 0-08

BY CHRIS MCNULTY AT OWENBEG

THE Rory Gallagher era got underway with an eleven-point McKenna Cup defeat to Derry at Owenbeg, but it was very much an experimental side sent to the trenches by the new manager.

Derry ran out comfortable and convincing winners, pulling clear in the second half when they overpowered Donegal at midfield and it had petered out by around the midway point of part two.

The turning point arrived with Derry's first score, a neatly-taken goal by Emmett McGuckin in the 16th minute, rolling past Michael Boyle from close range.

Donegal had posted an early two-point lead courtesy of Willie Gillespie and Martin O'Reilly, but it was an afternoon when the visitors didn't bring their shooting boots to the feet of the Sperrins.

Five times in the opening fifteen minutes, Donegal registered a wide and that tally stretched to ten at the interval.

Dermot Molloy and Martin McElhinney, who was the captain for the game, were the only two players yesterday who had featured in last year's All-Ireland final; none of the starters from that game against Kerry were even in the panel here.

Gallagher handed first-ever Donegal starts to four players, including 33-year-old Eamon Ward, a native of Clontibret in County Monaghan who now plays for Glenswilly. St Eunan's Conor Parke, Kilcar's Ciarán McGinley and Eunan Doherty of Naomh Conaill joined him in making their bows at this level.

Kilcar's highly-rated Eoin McHugh,

MATCH STATS

DERRY v DONEGAL

1	Goals	0
16	Points	8
10	Wides	12
2	45s	2
19	Frees awarded	18
4	Frees scored	5
1	Short efforts	1
0	Black cards	0
3	Yellow cards	2
0	Red cards	0

ATTENDANCE 3,035

son of 1992 All-Ireland winner James, started in the half-forward line having played just once previously in the McKenna Cup, against St Mary's in 2013, while the likes of Gillespie and Cory Gallagher had also appeared in that campaign.

The big news, though, was the return of Mark McHugh, whose last game for the county was the 2014 Division 2 League final against Monaghan.

The 2012 All-Star is back on board under the new regime, while there were debuts off the bench for Joe Gibbons (Glenswilly), Ryan Malley (Ar dara) and Malachy McDermott (Moville).

By contrast, Declan Brown was the only newbie in the Derry XV.

The Oak Leaf side were out-of-sorts to begin with, but McGuckin's goal was just the tonic.

Skipper Mark Lynch fed the Magherafelt man and after stealing a march on Ward, whom he had the measure of throughout, the full-forward struck past Boyle into the far corner. Derry led for the first time and it was a lead they wouldn't surrender.

Enda Lynn and Brian Óg McAlary fisted points and McGuckin opened up

a four-point lead by the 21st minute.

Molloy was showing well for the ball, but the Glenties man had a frustrating day, kicking five wides, although he did well to convert a '45 late in the half. With O'Reilly and the returned Gary McFadden on the mark with frees, Donegal trailed by the goal at the short whistle.

Lynch kicked two frees in the closing moments of the first half and the midfielder opened the second half with another effort from a placed ball. Daniel McKinless got in on the act after Barry McGoldrick magnificently dispossessed McFadden.

McGuckin drilled wide when given another sniff of goal and it took a fine save by Boyle to turn over from the impressive Conor McAtamney in the 48th minute.

Donegal kicked only two points from play, Molloy scooping over the second in the 49th minute after Gillespie's early effort had opened the scoring.

Derry were cutting through at will now, though, and Donegal had trouble picking up possession from kick-outs with Derry effectively dominating this sector.

Daniel Heavron landed the point of the game when he boomed over from just shy of the '45 and Derry tacked on points from McAtamney, Benny Heron, McGuckin, Mark

Craig and another of the McGoldrick clan from Coleraine, Liam.

Donegal will continue to experiment with the new faces in the home games against Queen's and Fermanagh.

So, an eleven-point loss signals the start of the new age. The relevance of these results is perhaps best told by the fact that Jim McGuinness's Donegal won just four of the 12 McKenna Cup games they played – and that didn't turn out too shabbily.

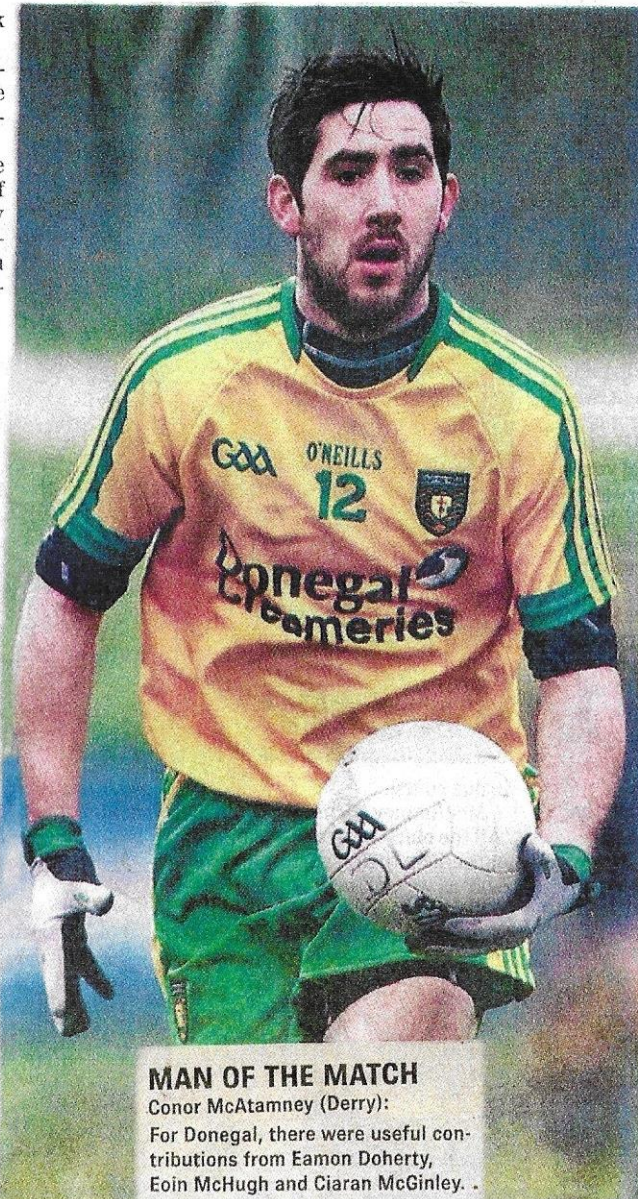
DERRY: Eoin McNicholl; Oisín Duffy, Niall Holly, John O'Kane; Kevin Johnston, Declan Brown, Brian Óg McAlary (0-1); Mark Lynch (0-4, 3f), Conor McAtamney (0-2); Ciaran McFaul, James Kearney (0-1, 1f), Enda Lynn (0-1); Daniel McKinless (0-1), Emmett McGuckin (1-2), Barry McGoldrick. Subs: Liam McGoldrick (0-1) for McAlary (half-time), Daniel Heavron (0-1) for B. McGoldrick (44 mins), Benny Heron (0-1, 1'45) for Lynn (54 mins), Mark Craig (0-1) for McAtamney (54 mins), Seán Brady for McGuckin (61 mins), Jarlath Bradley for Kearney (65 mins).

DONEGAL: Michael Boyle; Eamonn Doherty, Eamon Ward, Conor Parke; Cory Gallagher, Mark McHugh, Ciarán McGinley; Martin McElhinney, Gary McFadden (0-2, 2f); Eunan Doherty, Eoin McHugh, Dermot Molloy (0-2, 1'45); Willie Gillespie (0-1), Hugh McFadden, Martin O'Reilly (0-3, 3f).

Subs: Joe Gibbons for Gallagher (39 mins), Ryan Malley for M. McHugh (47 mins), Malachy McDermott for Molloy (57 mins).

REFEREE: Ciaran Branagan (Down).

Donegal manager Rory Gallagher keeps a close eye on the game.



MAN OF THE MATCH

Conor McAtamney (Derry):

For Donegal, there were useful contributions from Eamon Doherty, Eoin McHugh and Ciaran McGinley.

BANK OF IRELAND DR. MCKENNA CUP

Rory Gallagher gets his first win as Donegal manager thanks to a more experienced team line-out

DONEGAL	2-16
QUEEN'S	1-8

PETER CAMPBELL

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Rory Gallagher got his first competitive win as Donegal manager with a comprehensive victory over Queen's in Ballybofey.

Conditions were atrocious for any sort of football but both sides did their best to serve up a good game for the small attendance.

Stars of the show were Donegal seniors Odhran MacNiallais and Christy Toye, who both looked in great shape for the time of year.

It was a great day too for veteran Eamon Ward, who was drafted in to replace Conor Parke at corner back and had a goal to his name, hitting the target with the last kick of the first half.

Manager Gallagher will have been happy enough with the outing with a number of players showing up well, not least Ciaran McGinley and Martin O'Reilly.

It was a game that did not have anywhere near championship intensity with just two yellow cards - one to each side, both in the final minutes - but the scoreline in the conditions gave the attendance plenty of entertainment.

Donegal had the elements at their back in the opening half and were in almost total control.

MacNiallais missed an early free before Martin O'Reilly pointed from a free after Ciaran McGinley was fouled when going for goal on four minutes.

O'Reilly found the net two minutes later after a turnover in the Queen's defence and Hugh McFadden sent the MacCumhaill's man clear to finish with aplomb.

Odhran MacNiallais added two points inside two minutes by the 10th minute, one from a 45 and a great effort from play to leave Donegal 1-3 to no score ahead.

Queen's got an unexpected opening a minute later when Niall Delargy found Ciaran O'Hanlon in acres of space in front of the Donegal goal and he finished in style.

Toye, dominant at mid-

field, added a Donegal point with his left before Sean Fox had the first point for the Students.

Then MacNiallais hit two points inside a minute, one from a 47m free and another from play to stretch the Donegal lead to five.

Tony Donnelly converted a free for Queen's on 31 minutes before McGinley sent O'Reilly clear on goal, to point.

In added time Ruairi Wells hit the point of the opening half against the wind from close to the sideline on the stand side but the Donegal side hit back immediately with McGinley powering through the middle to set up Eamon Ward to prod home and leave Donegal 2-7 to 1-3 ahead at the break.

It was a moment to remember for the Glenswilly man, who made his senior intercounty debut last week against Derry at the age of 33.

The Donegal senior duo of MacNiallais and Toye combined again at the start of the second half with Toye converting.

Ryan Murray and Donnelly hit two long range points for Queen's but Donegal replied

quickly with MacNiallais hitting a delightful score off the outside of his left after a short '45' with Martin McElhinney while Daniel McLaughlin finished a sweeping move involving Toye and Paddy McGrath.

Eoin McHugh added another point on 50 minutes while MacNiallais and Gary McFadden stretched the lead out to 2-13 to 1-5 with 53 minutes gone.

The final quarter was academic as both sides introduced a raft of substitutes. Queen's added two points from Donal Hughes and Donnelly but then Donegal hit back with three points from Dermot Molloy (free), McGinley and Hugh McFadden.

The win puts Donegal in the mix for a semi-final spot in the Dr. McKenna Cup. A five-point winning margin will see Donegal, most likely, finish Section B in second place behind Derry, who face Queen's on Wednesday night.

The best runner-up will qualify for the last four with the three group winners.

Donegal: Michael Boyle; Eamon Ward, Eamonn Do-

herty, Paddy McGrath; Ciaran McGinley (0-1), Declan Walsh, Frank McGlynn; Martin McElhinney, Christy Toye (0-2); Cory Gallagher, Odhran MacNiallais (0-6 2f, 45), Eoin McHugh (0-1); Daniel McLaughlin (0-1), Hugh McFadden (0-1), Martin O'Reilly (1-2, 0-1f). Subs., Gary McFadden (0-1) for C Gallagher ht; Eunan Doherty for D Walsh 48; Sean Hensey for E Ward 54; Willie Gillespie for E McHugh 55; Dermot Molloy (0-1, f) for MacNiallais 57; Ciaran McCaughey for McElhinney 62

Queen's: Michael Cunningham; Greg McCabe, Gerard McGovern, Brendan Burns; Ruairi Wells (0-1), Micheal O Muanain, Niall Delargy; Che O Cuilin, Sean Warnock; Donal Hughes (0-1), Sean Fox (0-1), Ryan Murray (0-1); Ciaran O'Hanlon (1-0), Conor Hamill, Tony Donnelly (0-4, 2f). Subs., M Jordan for O'Hanlon ht; Barry McCann for Hamill 43; Jack Dowling for Fox 47; Mickey Donaghy for O Muanain 51; Caolan Daly for Warnock 55; Conor Kearns for Burns 56.

Referee: Dan Mullan (Derry)

MAN OF THE MATCH

THE WINNER WAS ODHRAN MAC NIALLAIS and the decision was an easy one, even though Christy Toye was a contender as well.

Ref Watch

IT WAS AN EASY OUTING FOR Derry's Dan Mullan, who had two teams intent on playing football.

The referee awarded 22 frees to Donegal (13 in first half) and 23 frees to Queen's (15 in first half). Donegal had seven wides (two in first half) while Queen's also had seven wides (two in first half).

There were only two yellow cards flashed, both within a minute of each other with three minutes left - Queen's full-back Gerard McGovern followed by Donegal substitute Ciaran McCaughey.

Markman

Ciaran McGinley: This was a good display from the Kilcar man who was involved in plenty of attacks, making a goal and scoring a point. 7-5

Eoin McHugh: Like Cory Gallagher, not suited by the conditions, but the Kilcar man still worked very hard and got a good point. 7

FERMANAGH GIVE DONEGAL A FRIGHT

THE IRISH NEWS
MONDAY JANUARY 19 2015

THE media's decision to select Fermanagh goalkeeper Thomas Treacy as their choice for the man-of-the-match award tells a major story about this game.

While they lost by a point, Fermanagh still qualified for the semi-finals courtesy of their superior scoring difference. Fermanagh can thank Treacy for that.

Were it not for Treacy's heroics, the Ernemen would have been torn apart. On four occasions the Devenish clubman produced fabulous saves, denying Eoin McHugh (twice), Daniel McLaughlin and Paddy McGrath.

Even though Treacy repeatedly kept Donegal from hitting the net, for most of the first half it still looked like the home team was going to cruise to an easy victory.

For the first 35 minutes, the Ulster champions toyed with Fermanagh. It was like watching a cat with a mouse. The hosts were in total control.

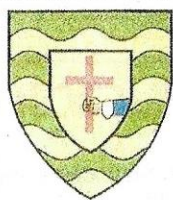
Admittedly, Fermanagh looked organised, but when they retreated into their defensive cocoon, they conceded too much ground.

With minimal pressure being applied on the edge of the blanket, Donegal were allowed to keep recycling possession.

Moving the ball around the perimeter of Fermanagh's cordon, they could pick and choose the moment when they would puncture the lines of green. It was all too easy.

Christy Toye, Martin McElhinney and Neil Gallagher were in total control at midfield. The aforementioned trio would hold the ball before releasing Eoin McHugh whose incisive runs repeatedly troubled Fermanagh's defence.

When Donegal opted to hit their full-forward line, Daniel McLaughlin, Hugh McFadden and Martin O'Reilly routinely won the race for possession.



Section B

Donegal..... 0-12
Fermanagh..... 2-5

From Paddy Heaney in Ballyshannon



Despite Treacy making two point blank saves in the first 30 minutes, Donegal were scoring at will. They led by seven points at half-time. By that stage, the result seemed beyond doubt.

But the Ernemen were transformed in the second half. While they had to rely on their goalkeeper to make another two saves, it was Fermanagh who dictated the terms of engagement.

Donegal managed just two points in the second period. Meanwhile, Fermanagh were left to rue their profligacy. They kicked nine wides in the second half, and 17 over the course of the game.

Martin O'Brien kick-started Fermanagh's resurgence. The fleet-footed wing-back was one of the few Fermanagh players who impressed in the first half.

O'Brien got the rewards for his tireless running when he finished a great move in the 41st minute. When Sean Quigley bagged Fermanagh's second goal, the margin was reduced to just two points.

With Donegal on the back foot and looking increasingly ragged, Fermanagh could easily have secured a morale-boosting win. But their inaccuracy undermined their sterling efforts. An injury-time free from Quigley could have earned Fermanagh a draw, but his effort trailed wide.

Afterwards, Pete McGrath praised his players for the character they displayed in the second half.

"They showed great courage. They showed spirit," said McGrath.

But why did his players perform so poorly in the first half?

"I think it was a case of some people being psychologically intimidated by who they were playing against. There is no doubt about that," said McGrath, who had stern words with his players at half-time.

"We said some things and we got them back to a more reasonable way of thinking."

However, a rousing team-talk wasn't the only reason why Fermanagh were a different proposition after the interval.

The introduction of Ruairi Corrigan, Paul McCusker and Eoin Donnelly also helped to change the pattern of the contest.

McGrath also predicted to his players that their superior fitness would enable them to dominate the last quarter.

"I said to the players at half-time, we have a lot more work done on the field than Donegal. In the last 15 minutes of this game, I told them we would be the top team.

"Given the amount of work we have done, it transpired that way. Donegal definitely flagged. We lost the game by a point but I think we hit 17 wides.

"A lot of them came when we had Donegal where we wanted them. One or two of those would have got us over the line," said the Erne boss.

Commenting on the experience of steering Donegal to a win against

his native county, Rory Gallagher said: "I was a wee bit worried there towards the end. I wouldn't have wanted to come away with a draw. It's nice to win.

"But Fermanagh were very game. I was very impressed with their tackling and their work-rate. If they had brought their shooting boots, they would probably have come out on the right side in the second half."

Although he failed to secure a semi-final berth, Gallagher was still satisfied with Donegal's McKenna Cup campaign.

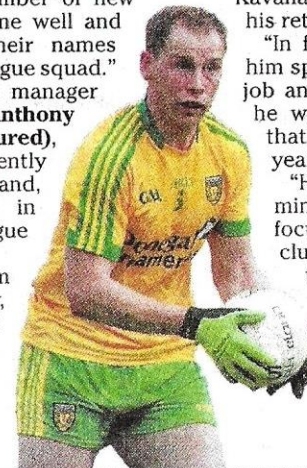
"It's a bit disappointing," said Gallagher. "We put ourselves in a position to qualify but we would have taken two wins at the start.

"Overall we are quite pleased. We got a lot of our established guys back in and a number of new additions have done well and they have put their names forward for our League squad."

The Tir Chonaill manager confirmed that **Anthony Thompson (pictured)**, who is currently working in England, will be included in the National League squad.

"We will get him over. Anthony, in fairness, said from day one that he was very interested in staying involved.

"But his work



MATCH STATS

Donegal: P Durcan; P McGrath, E McGee, D Walsh; M McHugh, F McGlynn (0-1); C McGinley (0-1); C Toye, N Gallagher (0-1); E McHugh (0-2), R Malley (0-1), H McElhinney; D McLaughlin (0-2), M McFadden, M O'Reilly (0-3, 0-3 frees).
Subs: G McFadden for D McLaughlin (58); E Doherty for C Toye (61); C Gallagher for F McGlynn (65); C McCaughey for M McElhinney (67). **Yellow cards:** M McHugh (63); R Malley (69). **Black cards:** M Murphy replaced H McFadden (46);

Fermanagh: T Treacy; C Quigley, J Allen, T Daly; D McCusker, J McMahon, M O'Brien (1-0); R O'Callaghan, C Jones; B Mulrone, D McQuade, S McManus; R Jones (0-1), S Quigley (1-2, 0-1 free), D Kille (0-1 free).
Subs: P McCusker for S McManus (h/t); R Corrigan for D Kille (h-t); E Donnelly for R O'Callaghan (h/t); M Jones for T Daly (47); D Kelly for C Jones (50); E McManus for D McQuade (52).

Referee: Niall McKenna (Monaghan)

has taken him over there. We just had to look at the logistics of flights. He keeps himself in great condition and he is doing a lot of work over there. Fitness will not be an issue for Anthony."

Gallagher also indicated that he was not surprised by Rory Kavanagh's decision to announce his retirement.

"In fairness to Rory, me and him spoke before I even got the job and he was telling me that he was thinking all last year that it was going to be his last year.

"He is very content in his mind. He probably wants to focus his energies into his club career. He has other things in life and he has had a long career.

"He has 14 in the squad and he has a wonderful last four. He is bound to be very content with where he is at."

GAA - ULSTER SFC PRELIMINARY ROUND

Donegal win battle by the Finn

DONEGAL 1-13
TYRONE 1-10

BY CHRIS MCNULTY AT SEAN MACCUMHAILL PARK

THE weather even played its part in this one - providing a dark and dank backdrop to the latest chapter in a compelling rivalry.

It felt like the perfect setting before the 17,435 who wedged their way into the Sean MacCumhail Park. What ensued was a vibrant, pulsating and ferocious battle by the Finn.

Donegal continued their recent dominance of Tyrone as the Ulster champions drew on their big game experience with their big names to the fore when it mattered most.

It's now four Ulster Championship wins on the trot for Donegal against Mickey Harte's side - who've lost to Donegal more than any other in Championship football in his tenure.

MATCH STATS

DONEGAL v TYRONE

1	Goals	1
13	Points	10
6	Wides	10
1	45s	0
15	Frees awarded	24
2	Frees scored	3
2	Short efforts	1
0	Black cards	1
7	Yellow cards	4
1	Red cards	1

ATTENDANCE 17,435

Since 2011, Donegal have now won 14 of their last 15 Ulster SFC games and are unbeaten in 13 League and Championship games in Ballybofey.

By the end, the audience had to draw a collective breath for it had been a frenetic finale in which Tyrone threw all their might in search of a goal.

At that stage, both sides were down to 14 men with Neil Gallagher and Sean Cavanagh sent off, Gallagher getting two bookings and Cavanagh black carded after an earlier booking.

Donegal certainly missed Gallagher's presence when Tyrone launched a late search for a rescuing score, but they survived. Peter Harte saw a flicked effort clawed to safety by Paul Durcan, while Colm Cavanagh steered onto the crossbar and Mattie Donnelly had hearts in mouths when a late, late snap shot flew wide of the target.

As it was, three points by Michael Murphy in the 57th, 60th and 69th minutes separated the teams when the busy Joe McQuillan shrilled the whistle for the final time.

Murphy had been central to the story again. For the duration, Justin McMahon lived in Murphy's face. The Omagh man had the sole job of keeping Murphy quiet and while he kept him scoreless for almost an hour, the targeting of the Donegal captain again raised its head on the big stage. The Glenswilly man certainly did well to keep his head under such intense scrutiny.

Donegal had big performances from Karl Lacey and Frank McGlynn, while Martin McElhinney scored 1-2 and Colm McFadden - into the team in place of his namesake, Hugh - was magnificent in a deep role we've rarely seen him before.

Donegal got off to a flying start, with McGlynn opening the scoring after only thirty seconds. It set the tone

for a blistering beginning by the hosts, as McBrearty, Toye and McElhinney opened up a four-point lead.

Tyrone struck gold in the 10th minute when Peter Harte provided the assist for Darren McCurry and he picked his spot to perfection, firing across Durcan into the far corner.

McFadden and McElhinney boomed over scores to keep Donegal three ahead, but Tyrone were in front when Sean Cavanagh arched over in the 33rd minute.

In between times, McMahon managed to let himself away from Murphy for a brief moment to score a point, after Durcan saved from Harte, while three from Cavanagh helped give Tyrone the lead.

Donegal grasped hold of the game again in the dying moments of the first half. The clock was already in added time when Odhrán MacNiallais was denied by Championship debutant Michael O'Neill - playing due to an injury to Niall Morgan - but McElhinney fired in the rebound.

McFadden completed the first-half scoring, but the action ended on a rather sour note with players, officials and backroom members clashing as they met heading into the tunnel. Murphy was shoved by Gavin Devlin and there were several minor scuffles breaking out, although McQuillan took no action.

Tyrone twice managed to reel in two-point deficits in the second half. Cavanagh and Connor McAliskey scored the opening two points of part two.

Even when Patrick McBrearty and Lacey landed quick-fire points, Tyrone hit back again with a McAliskey

brace. However, his score in the 51st minute was their final score as Mickey Harte's men failed to register in the last 19 minutes.

Donegal had chances to put the game out of reach. McBrearty, after McElhinney and McGlynn combined, was denied by a strong right-handed save by O'Neill and McGlynn's volley for the rebound was wide.

When Donegal needed a match-winner they turned to Murphy. Shackled and surely frustrated close to breaking point by McMahon, he nailed three late placed ball kicks to demonstrate again his priceless value.

And Durcan came to the rescue at the other end when he got a hand to Harte's hopeful effort. Gallagher and Cavanagh were now spectators having been lined and the game was still up for grabs, but Donegal held on to

their lot and move into a quarter-final clash with Armagh, whose manager Kieran McGeeney was in attendance. That June 14 clash could be a rerun.

DONEGAL: Paul Durcan; Paddy McGrath, Neil McGee, Eamon McGee; Ryan McHugh, Karl Lacey (0-1), Frank McGlynn (0-1); Neil Gallagher, Odhrán MacNiallais; Martin O'Reilly, Martin McElhinney (1-2), Christy Toye (0-2); Patrick McBrearty (0-2), Michael Murphy (0-3, 2f, 1'45), Colm McFadden (0-2).

Subs: Mark McHugh for O'Reilly (39 mins), Anthony Thompson for Toye (67 mins), David Walsh for McElhinney (70 mins), Daniel McLaughlin for McFadden (70 mins).

TYRONE: Michael O'Neill; Aidan McCror Ronan McNamee (0-1), Cathal McCarroll Ronan McNabb, Justin McMahon (0-1), Peter Harte; Colm Cavanagh, Sean Cavanagh (0-4, 3f); Rory Brennan, Mattie Donnelly (0-1), Barry Tierney; Darren McCurry (1-0), Cathal McShane, Connor McAliskey (0-3).

Subs: Pdraig McNulty for McShane (42 mins), Tiernan McCann for Tierney (55 mins), Mark Bradley for McCurry (63 mins), Ronan O'Neill for McAliskey (67 mins).

Tyrone - Sean Cavanagh (67 mins).
Booked: Donegal - Martin O'Reilly (3 mins), Patrick McBrearty (11 mins), Christy Toye (30 mins), Neil Gallagher (35 mins), Karl Lacey (53 mins), Neil McGee (59 mins), Neil Gallagher (64 mins); Tyrone - Ronan McNamee (11 mins), Connor McAliskey (59 mins), Justin McMahon (63 mins), Sean Cavanagh (64 mins).
Sent off: Donegal - Neil Gallagher (64 mins); Tyrone - Sean Cavanagh (67 mins).

REFEREE: Joe McQuillan (Cavan).

TERRACE TALK

It was well documented that Donegal would have to run a daunting gauntlet to retain the Ulster title, but yesterday showed that the old dogs are quite well suited for the hard road. Colm McFadden rolled back the years in a new, deep role, while the McGees, Paul Durcan and Karl Lacey really stood tall.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Put June 14 in the diary: Armagh v Donegal at the Athletic Grounds. For Tyrone, it's the qualifiers.

GAA - ULSTER SENIOR FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP QUARTER-FINAL

Armagh undone

MATCH STATS

ARMAGH v DONEGAL

0	Goals	2
8	Points	11
9	Wides	9
1	45s	0
9	Frees awarded	21
1	Frees scored	5
3	Short efforts	2
1	Black cards	0
2	Yellow cards	2
0	Red cards	0

ATTENDANCE 18,186

ARMAGH 0-08
 DONEGAL 2-11

BY CHRIS MCNULTY
 AT THE ATHLETIC GROUNDS

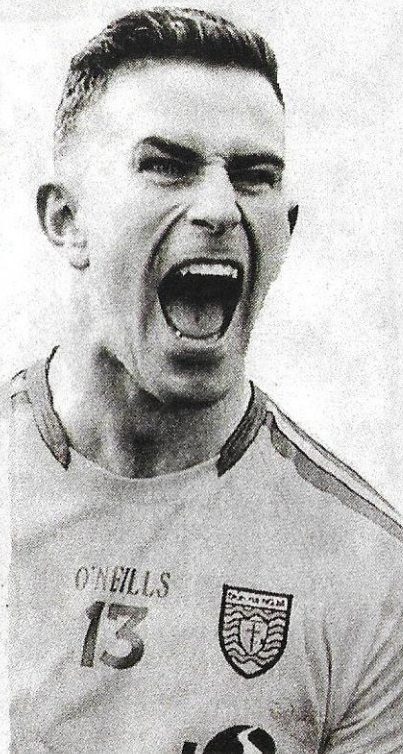
THERE was a passage of play that summed up the utter control Donegal held over Armagh here.

Where once Armagh were Donegal's nemesis and toyed with them on these baking summer Sundays, the tables have now turned for sure, as Rory Gallagher's men confirmed with a convincing display.

Towards the end, Donegal tossed the leather around the Athletic Grounds with ease, playing keep-ball, to the annoyance of the shattered Orchard men, many who stood with hands on hips at that point.

For roughly two minutes, Donegal kept hold of it and it felt like a trick of the mind to see a Kieran McGeeney-managed Armagh

Martin O'Reilly celebrates after scoring Donegal's second goal of the game.



the hosts, who looked every bit the Division 3 side they'd been this spring.

Just in case, Gallagher had brought his own dose of venom. In Michael Murphy and Patrick McBrearty, Donegal had the match winners.

Murphy was immense and inspired. Five times the Donegal captain split the sticks from frees. His first was arched over from 30 metres, but the other four were all from beyond the 45, the pick of them a sumptuous 60-metre kick in first-half stoppage time that confirmed a 1-9 to 0-2 interval lead.

In general play, Murphy was Donegal's driver although it seemed strange - especially given Justin

McMahon's performance for Tyrone in Ballybofey last month - that Armagh didn't marshal Murphy as tightly as they might have.

He appeared to engineer everything as Donegal, who are chasing Ulster title number four in five years this summer, surely shortened odds for silverware as goals by McBrearty and Martin O'Reilly fired them into an Ulster semi-final meeting with Derry.

They had eight points to spare by the end and were full value for it.

Armagh might have been expected to bring fire, but it was Donegal who exploded. Clearly sensing that Armagh would be up for it, Donegal effectively had them at the edge of the cliff

by the 12th minute when they led 1-3 to 0-0.

Just three minutes in, McBrearty reached above James Morgan to pluck Neil Gallagher's ball from the sky. Having had his initial shot saved by Matthew McNeice, McBrearty finished the rebound.

McBrearty was in sparkling form, as Morgan found out to his cost when terrorised. The peculiar thing is that he was left on the Kilcar man for so long.

McBrearty intercepted a kick-out to set up Neil Gallagher for a point and won a free for Murphy to convert to open up a five-point lead by the seventh minute.

When McBrearty burned Morgan again, a second goal - and a pulverising - looked on the cards, but he lost his footing just as he scorched away. Martin McElhinney, after bursting through the gain-line, made a chance for himself to score.

Two majestic Murphy frees, the first from 55 metres and the other from 47, followed a wonderful effort by the reliable Odhrán MacNiallais as Donegal turned the screw.

Murphy was in the control room and his vision invited McBrearty for one of the scores of the game; fetch, turn and shoot in a devastating move that saw Donegal roar nine clear.

Aaron Findon and Tony Kernan got Armagh's only scores of the first half, but by the break the words of McGeeney were surely echoing loudly.

In his pre-match press conference, the Armagh manager had warned that his team couldn't afford to make 'Division Three mistakes' or risk the wrath of Donegal.

Armagh's mistakes were elementary and they were cannon fodder to Donegal at times.

Eleven minutes into the second half, Donegal made the win safe. Murphy, again, was involved, feeding Frank McGlynn, who got through with sheer grit. The ball slipped away, but he prodded forward for O'Reilly, who composed himself before rounding McNeice to net his first Championship goal.

Armagh did have their moments. Jamie Clarke, again kept scoreless by Donegal, rattled the post after haring through early in part two, with Stefan Campbell whacking the rebound into the side netting.

A little later, Paul Durcan reminded us again of his enduring shot-stopping ability with a magnificent left-handed save to deny Ciaran O'Hanlon, the Armagh substitute.

At that stage, it was only a matter of

how many Donegal would win by, but Murphy and MacNiallais made sure of a double-scores win against shell-shocked Armagh, who lost Findon to a black card in the dying moments.

If there was any doubt, it can now be put to bed: Donegal are contenders again for sure.

ARMAGH: Matthew McNeice; James Morgan (0-1), Charlie Vernon, Fionn Moriarty; Andy Mallon, Ciarán McKeever (0-1), Stefan Campbell; Aaron Findon (0-1), Ethan Rafferty (0-1, 1f); Caolan Rafferty (0-1), Micheál McKenna, Aidan Forker; Andrew Murnin, Tony Kernan (0-3, 1f), Jamie Clarke.

Subs: Michael Murray for McKenna (30 mins), Kevin Dyas for Moriarty (32 mins), Ciaran O'Hanlon for Rafferty (52 mins), Brendan Donaghy for Forker (58 mins), Eugene McVerry for Murnin (68 mins), Stephen Harold for Findon (black card, 69 mins)

DONEGAL: Paul Durcan; Paddy McGrath, Neil McGee; Neil McGee; Ryan McHugh, Karl Lacey (0-1), Frank McGlynn; Neil Gallagher (0-1), Odhrán MacNiallais (0-2); Martin O'Reilly (1-0), Martin McElhinney (0-1), Christy Toy; Mark McHugh, Michael Murphy (0-5, 5f), Patrick McBrearty (1-1).

Subs: Anthony Thompson for E.McGee (half-time), Hugh McFadden for McBrearty (52 mins), David Walsh for Toy (57 mins), Gary McFadden for McElhinney (68 mins), Eamonn Doherty for O'Reilly (70 mins).



ULSTER SENIOR FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP SEMI-FINAL

A real cat and mouse affair in Ulster semi-final as Donegal prevail with good third quarter

O'REILLY GOAL IS DECISIVE SCORE

DONEGAL	1-9
DERRY	0-10

PETER CAMPBELL
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Donegal's passage to a fifth Ulster final in-a-row was not a smooth one in a tense battle in Clones on Saturday evening.

As expected Derry put up the roadblocks and for a period at the end of the first half there were big question marks over Donegal's ability to find a way.

The sides were deadlocked at 0-5 each at the break. Donegal had been held scoreless for a 20-minute period but a burst in the first ten minutes of the second half saw them take a winning five point lead.

It was almost a replica of last year's encounter in Celtic Park when Donegal turned around a two point half-time deficit.

The goal, on 45 minutes, was clinically finished by Martin O'Reilly, just as he did against Armagh two weeks earlier. The score proved to be the big turning point in

the game as the remainder of the contest became a dog-fight with defences again to the fore. Near the end the Derry frustration was vented with Brendan Rogers and Ciaran McFaul black carded for serious fouls on Odhran MacNiallais and Ryan McHugh. Indeed both were lucky not to see straight red, such was the reckless nature of the challenges.

STRUGGLE

For long periods Donegal struggled to make inroads against this Derry side. Maybe the 7 o'clock start was a factor but energy and intensity levels were not up to the required standard. The decision to leave a clearly injured Patrick McBrearty on the field until the final minutes was also a talking point. With McBrearty alone for long periods up front, the Donegal defence lacked a cutting edge because he was not at his best.

The opening half was almost divided between two quarters. Donegal were ahead by 0-4 to 0-1 after 11 minutes with Odhran MacNiallais, Patrick McBrearty (2) and Christy Toye on target while

Eoin Bradley had the Derry point from a free.

Donegal were going well with Ryan McHugh and Christy Toye making headway while one of the highlights was a Colm McFadden pass from the endline to Christy Toye on the 45m line!

Derry were given a way back into the contest after a silly push by Neil McGee which saw the referee give Derry a free in front of the posts. It was an award that baffled some as two Donegal defenders had been fouled and the ball had been waved wide before McGee's push.

Derry were back level by 21 minutes with Caolan O'Boyle (who caused many problems early on) and Mark Lynch pointing.

Donegal's high ball into Neil Gallagher was not working and even Michael Murphy was off target with a crossfield ball. Colm McFadden finally broke through to hit the target while Chrissy McKaigue burst forward to level matters. Just before the break Derry 'keeper Thomas Mallon made a great stop as Michael Murphy got his fist to a Ryan McHugh centre.

Half-time: Donegal 0-5, Derry 0-5.

Donegal got their noses in front inside 55 seconds of restart with Colm McFadden pointing while Derry hit two bad wides. Michael Murphy landed a monster point from 55m before Niall Holly responded for Derry.

Colm McFadden and Neil McGee were involved as Martin McElhinney edged Donegal two clear on 44 minutes and a minute later from kick-out Neil Gallagher pounced to drive forward, play a one-two with McBrearty before releasing Martin O'Reilly, who coolly rounded Mallon to fire to the corner of the net.

The Derry response was good as Mark Lynch (47m free), Caolan O'Boyle and Benny Heron pointed, the latter availing of slackness in the Donegal defence as Lynch took a free short.

Michael Murphy stepped up again to push Donegal three clear after a McBrearty free came back off the post but with six minutes left Ciaran McFaul reduced the margin to two once more.

But that proved to be the final score as Donegal put

Mark McHugh: In for McFadden for final quarter, McHugh did very well and will be fighting for a place for the final. **7**

Ryan McHugh: A very energetic performance but did run up some blind alleys. Was one of Donegal's best performers. **7.5**

up the shutters and Derry's frustration was reflected in the black cards for Rogers and McFaul.

DONEGAL: Paul Durcan; Paddy McGrath, Neil McGee, Eamon McGege; Ryan McHugh, Karl Lacey, Frank McGlynn; Neil Gallagher Odhran MacNiallais (0-1); Christy Toye (0-1), Martin McElhinney (0-1), Martin O'Reilly (1-0); Patrick McBrearty (0-2,1f), Michael Murphy (0-2), Colm McFadden (0-2). Subs., Mark McHugh for McFadden 57; Anthony Thompson for Toye 61; Hugh McFadden for McElhinney 71; David Walsh for McBrearty 72.

DERRY: Thomas Mallon; Oisín Duffy, Brendan Rogers, Dermot McBride; Kevin Johnston, Christopher McKaigue (0-1), Ciaran McFaul (0-1); Niall Holly (0-1), Fergal Doherty; Sean L. McGoldrick, Mark Lynch (0-2,1f), Enda Lynn; Danny Heavron, Eoin Bradley (0-2,2f), Caolan O'Boyle (0-2). Subs., Benny Heron (0-1) for McGoldrick 47; Liam McGoldrick for Duffy 48; Terence O'Brien for Lynn 50; Niall Loughlin for Bradley 61; Enda Lynn for O'Boyle 64; Conor McAtamney for Rogers, bcard 69.

REFEREE: Rory Hickey (Clare)

Patrick McBrearty: Was very sharp early on, notching two points, but seemed to jar his knee inside 13 minutes. It was a surprise that he remained on the field as he just didn't look fit. **6**

MAN OF THE MATCH

NEIL GALLAGHER WAS THE BIG player for Donegal. His influence over the big moments in the game was as high as ever and his involvement in the match-winning goal was telling. He saw the opening and found the pass to put Martin O'Reilly through. Michael Murphy, Neil McGee, Colm McFadden and Ryan McGee all played well.

Turning point

NO DOUBT THE ONLY GOAL OF THE game was the big turning point with Martin O'Reilly again in the right place.

Ref Watch

RORY HICKEY HAD A REASONABLY good game and apart from a couple of calls seemed to be in charge.

Match Facts

DONEGAL WERE AWARDED 16 frees, seven in first half. They had 11 wides, seven in first half. Donegal picked up one yellow card
DERRY WERE AWARDED 13 FREES, five in first half. They also had 11 wides, 4 in first half. They had two yellow and two black cards

ULSTER SENIOR FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL

Sweet revenge for Monaghan as Donegal's second half wide count proves their undoing

ULSTER CHAMPIONS ARE BEATEN

MONAGHAN	0-11
DONEGAL	0-10

By **TOM COMACK**
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Donegal just came up short in their bid for a fourth Ulster title in five years and ninth in all, when going down to Monaghan in yesterday's Ulster Final in Clones.

In the end there was just a point in it at the final blow of David Coldrick's whistle as Monaghan held on after a spirited Donegal fight-back in the closing 20 minutes.

The reigning champions came from five points down in the closing 20 minutes to set up a frenetic finish. Conor McManus's sixth point and Monaghan's eleventh point had extended the Farney men's lead out to five points for the second time in the half with just 15 minutes gone on the second half clock.

Trailing 0-6 to 0-11, and looking down the barrel of defeat, Donegal, who squandered a host of chances at the start of the second half, slow-

ly clawed their way back into the tie that seemed all but gone with a little over a quarter hour remaining.

But Neil Gallagher, Frank McGlynn and Ryan McHugh have big hearts and Patrick McBrearty did the business in front of the posts. McBrearty kicked three brilliant points - two of them frees and one a super effort from play from all of 50 metres - and Michael Murphy converted from 40 metres.

McBrearty also had a long range effort to salvage a draw but his shot just tailed wide with what was the second last kick of the game.

It wasn't McBrearty's late wide that Donegal fans were ruing at the final whistle, but those missed chances from Odhran MacNiallais, Martin McElhinney and Colm McFadden in the opening two minutes of the second period, as Donegal blitzed Monaghan, just as they had done in the opening exchanges.

Ultimately, these missed opportunities were to prove costly as Owen Lennon opened Monaghan's account shortly after to stretch his team's lead out to five points,

0-9 to 0-4.

It all began brightly for Donegal who blitzed the Monaghan posts in the early minutes as they reeled off three points in six minutes.

Patrick McBrearty skinned Ryan Wylie for the first point on the minute mark and Colm McFadden and McBrearty combined to set up Karl Lacey for the second a minute later. And when Frank McGlynn knocked over off his left after a Ryan McHugh break and a high ball into the Monaghan goalmouth, Donegal were 0-3 to 0-1 up by the sixth minute mark.

Conor McManus stroked over a 35 metre free for Monaghan's point.

But amazingly Donegal did not score again for 27 minutes until Michael Murphy converted from 40 metres after Frank McGlynn was swung around.

In between Monaghan bossed the game as time after time they turned over Donegal up front far too easily and then countered with a slow and patient build up and scores from McManus (3) and Karl O'Connell, Owen and

Kevin Duffy, Dessie Mone to go in with a double score, 0-8 to 0-4, half-time lead. It was a giant step on the road to a sixth Ulster title.

Donegal: Paul Durcan; Paddy McGrath, Neil McGee, Eamonn McGee; Ryan McHugh, Karl Lacey (0-1), Frank McGlynn (0-1); Neil Gallagher, Martin McElhinney; Christy Toye, Odhran MacNiallais, Mark McHugh; Patrick McBrearty (0-6, 4f), Michael Murphy (0-2, 2f), Colm McFadden. Subs: Martin O'Reilly for C Toye (33); A Thompson for K Lacey (40); Darach O'Connor for C McFadden (52); Leo McLoone for O MacNiallais (69).

Monaghan: Rory Beggan; Dessie Mone (0-1), Vinny Corey, Ryan Wylie; Colin Walshe, Fintan Kelly, Karl O'Connell (0-1); Neil McAdam, Darren Hughes; Owen Duffy (0-1), Owen Lennon (0-1), Kieran Duffy (0-1); Dermot Malone, Kieran Hughes, Conor McManus (0-6, 3f). Subs: Ryan McAnespie for O Duffy (46); Stephen Gallogly for D Malone (53); Dick Clerkin for O Lennon (70).

Referee: David Coldrick (Meath)

Mark McHugh: He came more into the game in the second half and made a number of forays up the field and won a number of frees. **6**
Patrick McBrearty: Patrick kicked six points and he had the measure of his marker Colin Walshe any time the ball went his way. **8**

Ryan McHugh: After a quiet first half, Ryan came into the game in the second half and drove forward at every opportunity. He played a lead role in the fight back. **8**



Rory Gallagher

Next up for the Donegal manager and his team is an All Ireland qualifier against Galway on the August bank holiday weekend

MAN OF THE MATCH

Conor McManus kicked six points, three of them from play. They were all big scores in a game of tight margins and he was the man of the match. Frank McGlynn and Neil Gallagher were Donegal's big players throughout and they were joined by Ryan McHugh, in the second half. McHugh drove at the Monaghan defence at every opportunity and won a number of frees.

TURNING POINT

The game had swung in favour of Monaghan by the half hour mark as they led 0-6 to 0-3. Michael Murphy from a free on 33 minutes had reduced the margin to two only for Dessie Mone and Conor McManus to tag on two more for Monaghan to send them in 0-8 to 0-4 in front at half-time

REF WATCH

Meath official Dave Coldrick was particularly fussy about the pick off the ground. He awarded a free against Paul Durcan after he dived on the boot of Dermot Malone who was in for a goal. Conor McManus converted the free and in such a close game, it was a big call.

Rust seeping into Donegal's fortress football machine

LAST May, Shay Given spoke in fairly awestruck terms about the Donegal Gaelic footballers he'd spent an evening with the previous summer.

And it wasn't an evening on the jar. He'd gone training with his fellow countymen at their base in Convoy. "The intensity, the physical input in the session was phenomenal," he told *The Irish Times*. They had taken their fitness to another level: "They're machines," he added.

Most people who've seen Donegal in action over recent years would appreciate the analogy. Their sheer running power at times looked irresistible and inexhaustible.

But of course they are human beings not machines and last Sunday there were distinct signs of human fatigue seeping like rust into the machine. In the third quarter they managed to locate some of that familiar tidal energy which can drown an opposing



TOMMY CONLON

team with its attacking waves. But it was a spasm rather than a flood. They couldn't muster any of it for almost all of the first half. And when they did summon it after the break, they couldn't sustain it all the way through the second half.

It's a mysterious process, this erosion of athletic omnipotence. It happens gradually, invisibly, like a virus caught on the wind and left to incubate silently within the system. No one can pinpoint the exact time and date it entered the unsuspecting host body. But eventually it comes to the surface, usually without warning, often on a day when it is exposed not by its that bit faster.

On numerous occasions Donegal players were stripped of possession in the tackle, indicating that Monaghan's reflexes were sharper, their concentration a shade more alert. Donegal couldn't match them for relentless application.

In the 53rd, Monaghan's Karl O'Connell exemplified the difference between a player fresh with physical zest, and players turned stale from heavy workloads. O'Connell received possession in midfield and simply knifed his way through the heart of the Donegal cover. The middle of Donegal's defence has been a vortex in recent seasons. Trying to penetrate it has been a fool's errand for ball-carriers. But O'Connell left three of them in his wake and sailed through an improbably vacant channel.

Given the deficit in natural ability, Monaghan had to get a lot of facets of their game spot on, just

own symptoms but by the speed and sharpness of the challenging team.

Only now does it become visible to outsiders looking in, a sense that something is missing: that zip in the legs, that springy bounce off the ground, that freewheeling feeling one gets off a team that believes it can run forever.

Usually the players showing these symptoms are the last to notice it, or accept it. And for a team like Donegal who have willingly suffered so much punishment in training, they would be well within their rights to deny that it is happening at all. They earned their formidable athletic conditioning the hard way. Their commitment is deep and serious. It wouldn't happen if they had anything to do with it; they wouldn't allow it to happen.

But happen it will, because ultimately they cannot resist the inevitable wear and tear. And if it is happening now, it will feel

like a betrayal against their own immense collective willpower.

Right now they cannot afford any such admission to themselves. They are facing a knockout match against Galway next Saturday. So their analysis of last Sunday's defeat to Monaghan will centre on the amount of wides they kicked, their poor shot selection and the multiple turnovers, rather than any notion that their communal energy might be ebbing irrevocably away.

But Monaghan forced those turnovers. Donegal just weren't able to power away from them. Time and again their attacks were chewed up and spat out. Time and again they became entangled in a blue-and-white web and hadn't the

support runners to keep the move alive, as they had in previous years.

Just before half-time Karl Lacey, one of their spiritual leaders, came off second-best in a 50-50 battle for a ground ball. It was a hard championship moment and Fintan Kelly went in that bit harder and

to stay ahead of a team that could afford a bit more slack and still come out on top, or level.

They produced huge performances in defence from the likes of Kelly, Mone, Corey and O'Connell. The rest of the worker bees in the hive delivered honest,

Monaghan's reflexes were sharper, their concentration a shade more alert

high-energy displays. And Conor McManus supplied the requisite class up front.

His point on 31 minutes epitomised their effort on the day. Ryan Wylie harried Christy Toyne into submission; he basically out-hustled him for the ball. McManus picked it up, rode a lunging tackle from Neil McGee, came out of the crouch, surfed McGee's second tackle and flashed his shot over the bar.

Wylie had earlier picked out Owen Duffy with an elegant crossfield pass that granted Duffy just enough time to measure his shot between the posts. And five minutes later Dermot Malone picked out Kieran Duffy with a drilled diagonal pass that took Lacey out of the equation as Duffy grabbed it with a full-extension overhead catch.

These were the few grace notes in another Ulster final between the counties that stagnated into a prolonged stalemate as they repeatedly charged into their mutual castle walls.

This was fortress football, a brand that the Donegal machine perfected — before the rust started to tarnish its engine.

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SPORT GAA - DONEGAL V MONAGHAN IN RETROSPECT

Is this the end of the road for Donegal in championship 2015?



The Donegal team before the Ulster final on Sunday. Photo Thomas Gallagher INDP2007 Ulster final TG1

Galway and Mayo lying in wait as Donegal injury toll rises after tough campaign

ALL IRELAND QUALIFIERS ROUND 4B

Goals from McBrearty, McHugh and Toye help Donegal to impressive win over Galway in Croke Park

TEN POINT WIN FOR GALLAGHER'S MEN

DONEGAL	3-12
GALWAY	0-11

TOM COMACK

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Donegal showed there is plenty of life in the old dog yet with Saturday evening's ten point victory over Galway.

Without the inspirational Karl Lacey, out through injury, and losing Eamon McGee to injury at half-time, Donegal turned in a masterful second half performance before a crowd of 25,665 in Croke Park.

They also lost Paddy McGrath to a black card in the middle of the second period.

A point down after Adrian Varley kicked Galway ahead, 0-8 to 0-7, six minutes into the second half, Donegal turned up the volume to go two up, 1-7 to 0-8, by the 47th minute thanks to two points from Michael Murphy and one from Odhran MacNiallais.

The half-time introduction of Martin McElhinney to midfield, and Anthony Thompson, gave Donegal energy and ball-winning ability which they

didn't seem to have in the second quarter.

McElhinney's presence also released Michael Murphy to the edge of the Galway square and allowed MacNiallais play in a more attacking role.

Both men played a lead part in the Donegal second half revival with MacNiallais kicking two massive long range points, and Murphy winning a number of crucial frees. He also broke the ball down for Ryan McHugh's clinching 60th minute goal.

Donegal showed three changes from the team announced on Friday night. Eamonn Doherty replaced Anthony Thompson in the half-backline, Hugh McFadden slotted in at wing forward instead of Christy Toye and Martin O'Reilly replaced Martin McElhinney. This led to Michael Murphy going to midfield with O'Reilly lining out at in the attack.

After a sprightly opening with points from MacNiallais, Colm McFadden (2) and a sixth minute Patrick McBrearty goal, Donegal led 1-4 to 0-3 by the 15th minute mark, McBrearty also scoring a point.

Danny Cummins scored

the game's opener and Gary Sice and Thomas Flynn raised the Galway opening quarter white flags.

But with Galway winning the midfield battle and Paul Connery making his presence felt in the half-forward line, Donegal were in bother.

Despite their bright opening, they would go 23 minutes of the half without scoring. In this period Galway hit four unanswered points, from Adrian Varley, Sice (2) and Connery to head to the dressing room on level terms - 1-4 to 0-7, and much the happier of the two camps.

Odhran MacNiallais, Colm McFadden, Ryan McHugh, Michael Murphy and Patrick McBrearty - surprisingly replaced in the middle of the second half - were receiving all the claps on the back at the finish. And rightly so. But once again the Donegal backline and the defensive system were key to this win and especially in the second quarter when Galway were on top.

So air-tight is the Donegal rearguard that for all their domination, Galway didn't get a sniff of a goal and were restricted to a mere four sec-

ond half points, two of them Sice frees.

Late goals from Ryan McHugh and substitute, Christy Toye eventually killed off the Galway challenge.

Donegal: P Durcan; P McGrath, N McGee, E McGee; R McHugh (1-0), F McGlynn, E Doherty; N Gallagher, M Murphy (0-3, 3f); H McFadden, O MacNiallais (0-3), M McHugh; M O'Reilly, P McBrearty (1-1), C McFadden (0-4, 1f). Subs: A Thompson for E McGee (inj, h/t); M McElhinney for M O'Reilly (h/t); D Walsh for P McGrath (51); L McLoone (0-1) for P McBrearty (53); C Toye (1-0) for H McFadden (67); D Walsh for C McFadden (68).

Galway: B O'Donoghue; J Duane, F Hanley, C Sweeney; L Silke, G O'Donnell, G Bradshaw; F O'Curraoin, T Flynn (0-1); G Sice (0-4, 4f), P Conroy (0-1), M Lundy; A Varley (0-2), D Comer (0-1, 1f), D Cummins (0-1). Subs: S Walsh (0-1) for A Varley (56); P Sweeney for P Conroy (56); P O'Gríofa for D Cummins (63); S Denvir for M Lundy (66). M Martin for T Flynn (68), E Tierney for G Sice (68).

Referee: E Kinsella (Laois).

Mark McHugh: He spent most of the game sweeping at the back but also got forward with good effect on a number of occasions. **6**

Patrick McBrearty: Patrick netted the opening goal and also kicked a point when up front on his own. He was not as influential when joined by Murphy. **7**

Ryan McHugh: Ryan drove at Galway from the off at every opportunity. Did well to get up to score the second goal. **8**



Eamon McGee

The Gaith Dobhair man was forced off at half time after picking up an injury late in the first half

MAN OF THE MATCH

Colm McFadden kicked four points, three of them from play, and was involved in all three goals. He was on the end of a good move to leave the first on a plate for Patrick McBrearty. He supplied the long delivery to Michael Murphy, that led to Ryan McHugh rattling the Galway net. And he then set up Christy Toye for the third.

TURNING POINT

They say goals win games and there is no getting away from the fact that Donegal's first two were critical scores. Michael Murphy's second point of the second half and Donegal's seventh was a massive score - won and kicked under pressure to restore his team's two point lead.

REF WATCH

Laois official Eddie Kinsella let the game flow and used the advantage rule well.

Donegal should have no complaints over the black card shown to Paddy McGrath in the second half.

GAA - ALL-IRELAND SENIOR CHAMPIONSHIP QUALIFIERS ROUND 4B

DONEGAL PLAYER RATINGS

BY RYAN FERRY

PAUL DURCAN: The Donegal netminder was not overly busy and he did not have a save of note to make. His kick-outs were particularly good in the second half. 7.5

NEIL MCGEE: After a disappointing game against Conor McManus in the Ulster final, Neil McGee was back on form on Saturday. He marshalled Damien Comer with minimum fuss and manned the square well. However, he was caught in possession a couple of times. 7.5

EAMON MCGEE: McGee had his hands full with the tricky Adrian Varley and he caused problems early on. The Gaoth Dobhair was starting to get to grips with his opponent before the break, but then went over on his ankle and did not return in the second half. 7

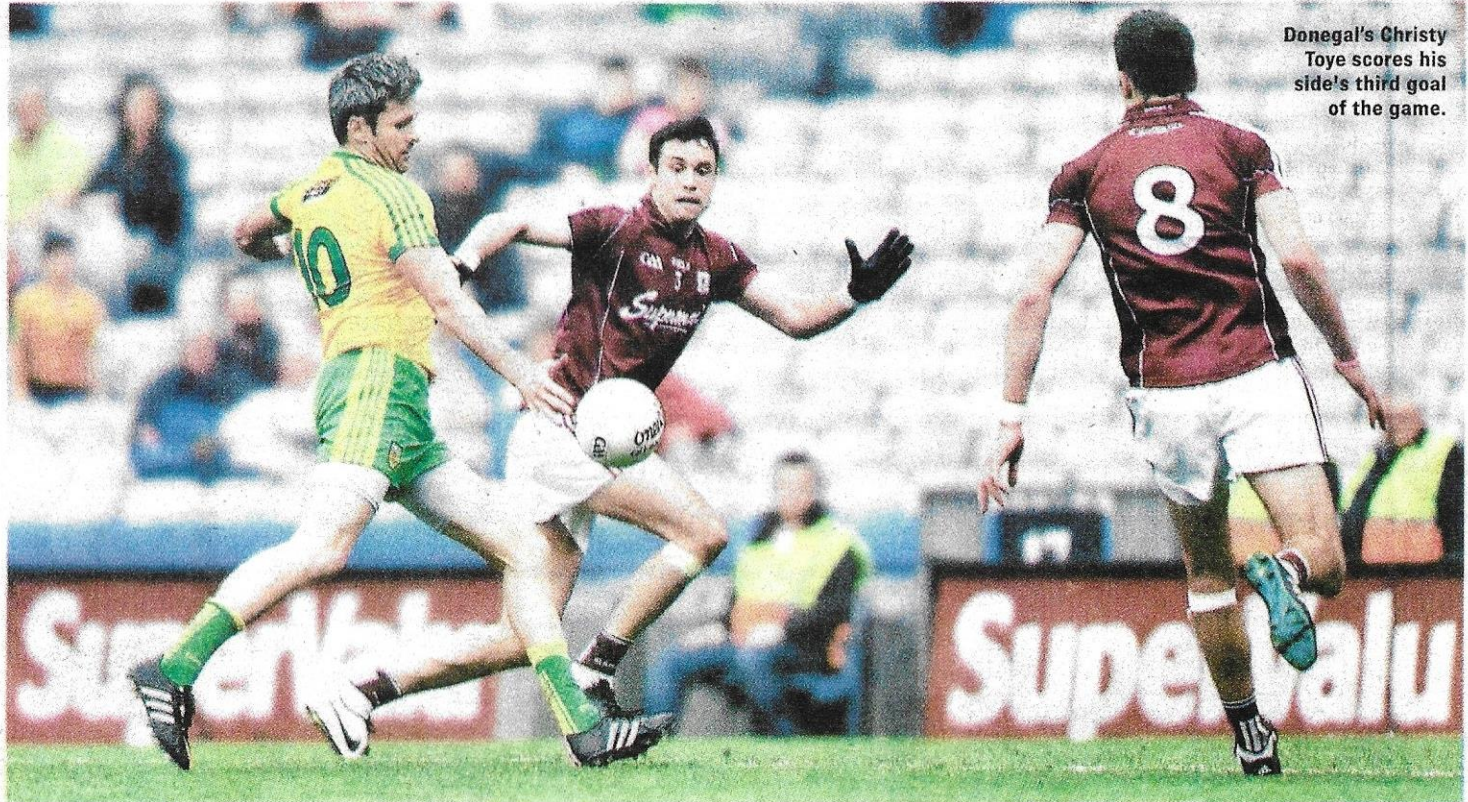
PADDY MCGRATH: McGrath was always going to have a tough evening on Danny Cummins. He struggled early on but started to win the duel as the game progressed. He was black-carded in the 52nd minute, and while no player likes to leave the field of play, it was a good foul to prevent a goal. 7

RYAN MCHUGH: The Kilcar man provided another excellent performance on Saturday. He kicked two wides in the first half, but made up for those misses with a fine finish for the second goal. He also managed to put Micheal Lundy on the back foot for the whole game. 8.5

FRANK MCGLYNN: McGlynn is one of Donegal's most consistent players and he had another solid outing. He defended well, and was given a man-marking assignment in the second half. He may feel that he should have scored a goal in the first half. 7.5

EAMONN DOHERTY: Saturday's game was Doherty's first championship start and he didn't look out of place as he silenced Gary Sice in the first half. He did have some trouble when switched onto Varley, but improved when he was moved back out the field again. 7

NEIL GALLAGHER: Gallagher led by example again and helped Donegal to dominate the midfield in the second half. His distribution was excellent and he was an effective link man for Donegal. 8



Donegal's Christy Toye scores his side's third goal of the game.

HUGH MCFADDEN: The Killybegs man worked tirelessly on his first big game for Donegal. He made one great dispossession just before half-time, and he kept things simple for the most part. His tackling was also much more disciplined than during his outings in the league. 7.5

MARK MCHUGH: McHugh had another good outing for Donegal, and he looks to have secured his spot in the team again. He worked hard and was always available for a pass, but he didn't get the chance to attack as much as he did against Monaghan. 7.5

MARTIN O'REILLY: It was a frustrating game for O'Reilly, as he just couldn't get into the encounter. He did pick up a few breaks, but he struggled to penetrate through the Galway defence. He was replaced at half-time. 6

ODHRÁN MACNIALLAIS: After two quiet games, MacNiallais was clearly determined to make an impression on Saturday. He notched three brilliant points

and he attacked the ball strongly in the air. 9

PATRICK MCBREARTY: McBrearty would have been happy with how he started the game as he had 1-1 on the board after 16 minutes. However, he went onto hit four wides and was substituted midway through the second half. 7.5

MICHAEL MURPHY: Murphy had a relatively quiet first half, but he was outstanding in the second period. He scored three points and his assist for McHugh's goal was magnificent. 8.5

COLM MCFADDEN: McFadden is playing with renewed vigour this year and he is revelling in the playmaker role. Not everything went his way in the first half, but he never shied away from the ball, and he was involved in all three of the Donegal goals. 9

SUBSTITUTES

MARTIN MCELHINNEY: The St Michael's man made a big impression off the bench. He kicked two wides,

but was the target for the majority of Durcan's restarts in the second half and he also had joy while running at the Galway defence. 8

ANTHONY THOMPSON: Thompson had his best game of the season on Saturday. He did a good job on Gary Sice and linked up with the play well. 7.5

DECLAN WALSH: The Malin man was called in after McGrath's black card and he didn't put a foot wrong. He did well on both Danny Cummins and Peadar O'Griofra and was quite happy to come out with the ball when the opportunity arose. 7.5

LEO MCLOONE: McLoone made a big contribution after his introduction in the 54th minute. He played in the forward line and scored a good point and won a free which Murphy scored. 8

CHRISTY TOYE: Not on long enough for assessment.

DAVID WALSH: Not on long enough for assessment.



ALL-IRELAND FOOTBALL QUARTER-FINAL

Mayo goals either side of half time are the difference as the Connacht champions prove too strong once again

RORY GALLAGHER'S SIDE WELL BEATEN

MAYO	2-13
DONEGAL	0-11

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There was no one saying it afterwards, players or management, but Saturday's quarter final proved a game too far for Donegal.

The hard slog of five tough games and the bumps and bruises picked up along the way eventually caught up and took their toll.

And if all that was not bad enough, there was also the unfair seven day turnaround from the previous game, an flattering 3-12 to 0-11 victory over Galway in last Saturday's Qualifier.

In the end Donegal looked battle weary in this quarter final. There had been ominous signs the week before against the Tribesmen, especially in the second quarter when Donegal's play was lateral and lethargic.

Mayo may not be world beaters but they are a seasoned top tier outfit and a rec-

ognised top four team.

The Connacht champions got their match-ups and tactics spot on. Michael Murphy, Ryan McHugh, Neil Gallagher, Colm McFadden and Patrick McBrearty were seen to carry the main threat. And apart from skipper Murphy, who scored 0-8 of Donegal's total, all the others were successfully targeted and closed down. Patrick McBrearty and Colm McFadden were kept scoreless. Neil Gallagher had one of his quietest outings in a Donegal shirt in years and Ryan McHugh was but a pale shadow of the player who did so well in the previous five games in the campaign.

Both sides were pretty cagey in the opening minutes as they sussed each other out with Donal Vaughan for Mayo and Michael Murphy - from a 44 metre free - and Frank McGlynn, posting early wides.

Murphy kicked the game's opening score just inside five minutes which was quickly cancelled out by Lee Keegan at the other end after Donegal were turned over and hit on the break.

Keegan knocked over a carbon copy score two minutes

for a 0-2 to 0-1 Mayo lead. It was all square again on ten minutes courtesy of Michael Murphy - who scored all but one of Donegal's first half points.

With Mayo playing with more of a spring in their step, the Connacht champions forged two ahead for the first time, courtesy of patient approach play and points from Cillian O'Connor and Jason Doherty.

But Christy Toye polished off a good move with a fine score on 18 minutes before Murphy, shortly after, tied up the game on 0-4 each when he converted a '45.

Cillian O'Connor with a beautiful point - his only one from play - from out on the Cusack Stand side restored Mayo's two point advantage.

And the men in green and red were three up for the first time when Kevin McLaughlin, on the stroke of the half hour, kicked Mayo's seventh of the afternoon.

But two late Murphy conversions, the last of them on 35 minutes, had the margin back to one again, 0-7 to 0-6. Donegal were still somehow very much in the game.

All that changed in the second minute of injury time when Aidan O'Shea sunk the dagger for Mayo's first goal. The big full-forward took a long delivery from his bother Seamus on the edge of the small rectangle. Despite being double-marked by Neil McGee and Mark McHugh, O'Shea won clean possession, turned and tucked the ball wide of Paul Durcan for a 1-7 to 0-6 half-time lead.

It was a hammer blow for Donegal and it got worse when three and a half minutes into the second half, Lee Keegan struck for goal number two and a 2-7 to 0-6 lead.

Keegan, from about 13 metres, found the top corner of Durcan's net with a looping shot that had all the appearances of an attempted point.

And as the floodlights went on, Cillian O'Connor converted from close range. It gave his team an eight point lead and even with half an hour still to play, Donegal were in big bother.

Michael Murphy added three more frees to his tally and second half replacements Anthony Thompson

and Leo McLoone split the posts. But these were only consolation scores.

Mayo, who lost Kevin Keane in the closing seconds to a straight red card two minutes after entering the game, cruised to a comfortable and thoroughly deserved win to set-up a semi-final showdown with Dublin.

Donegal: P Durcan; P McGrath, N McGee, E McGee; R McHugh, K Lacey, F McGlynn; N Gallagher, H McFadden; C Toye (0-1), O MacNiallais, M McHugh; P McBrearty, M Murphy (0-8, 5f, 145), C McFadden. Subs: M McElhinney for C Toye (h/t); A Thompson (0-1) for N McGee (37, inj); L McLoone (0-1) for O MacNiallais (39).

Mayo: D Clarke; G Cafferkey, D Vaughan, K Higgins (0-1); L Keegan (1-2), T Cunniffe, C Boyle; S O'Shea, T Parsons; D O'Connor, A O'Shea (1-0), K McLaughlin (0-2); B Moran, C O'Connor (0-3, 2f), J Doherty (0-4). Subs: C Barrett for T Cunniffe (33, inj); R Hennelly for D Clarke (h/t, inj); P Durcan for D Vaughan (Black card, 54); A Freeman (0-1) for S O'Shea (64);

Referee: D. Gough (Meath)

MAN OF THE MATCH

LEE KEEGAN

Apart from Michael Murphy, who posted eight of Donegal's 0-11, all of the contenders were Mayo men. Barry Moran, Aidan O'Shea, Jason Doherty, Keith Higgins and Seamus O'Shea all left their imprint on the game. But Lee Keegan, with 1-2 from wing back, gets the nod.

TURNING POINT

Mayo's first goal two minutes into the second half when Aidan Shea won a long, hopeful ball from his brother Seamus into the Donegal goalmouth. Despite the best efforts of Mark McHugh and Neil McGee, O'Shea got shot away to beat Paul Durcan from the edge of the small rectangle. The goal sent Mayo in four up at half time, 1-7 to 0-6.

REF WATCH

Meath official David Gough was in control throughout and was, by and large, anonymous. He had a fine game in charge.

GAA - ALL-IRELAND SENIOR CHAMPIONSHIP QUARTER-FINAL

DONEGAL PLAYER RATINGS

BY RYAN FERRY

PAUL DURCAN: The Donegal goalkeeper had trouble with his kick-outs in the first half and he was nervous at times under the high ball. He did well to prevent Jason Doherty from scoring a goal in the first half, but his positioning could have been better for Keegan's goal. 6.5

PADDY MCGRATH: McGrath was one of Donegal's better performers. He did not allow Kevin McLoughlin much space in the first half, and battled hard when switched onto Cillian O'Connor in the second period. 7

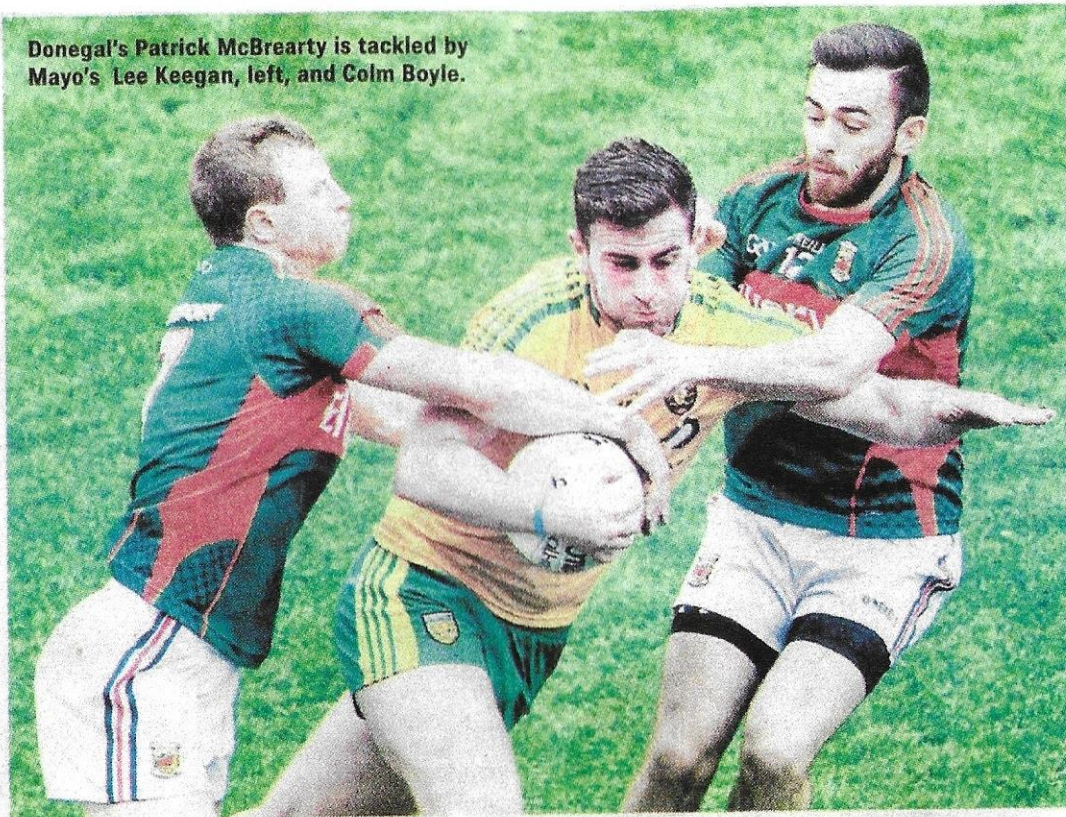
NEIL MCGEE: The Gaoth Dobhair clubman enjoyed a good tussle with Aidan O'Shea in the first half, and he was getting on top before the Mayo forward scored the crucial goal. McGee did receive treatment a number of times in the first half and was replaced in the 38th minute. 6.5

EAMON MCGEE: McGee came off injured against Galway and he didn't look fully fit against Mayo. He had his hands full with Cillian O'Connor in the first half, and struggled to contain Aidan O'Shea after his brother went off. However, he never gave in and kept going right to the end. 6.5

MARK MCHUGH: McHugh did well on the attack and played some good passes into Michael Murphy. However as the sweeper, he will be disappointed with how easily Mayo were allowed to get in for both of their goals. 5.5

KARL LACEY: Lacey was not fit and the match was a real struggle for him. He lacked sharpness which

Donegal's Patrick McBrearty is tackled by Mayo's Lee Keegan, left, and Colm Boyle.



saw him get caught in possession easily and his passing was also off. 5.5

FRANK MCGLYNN: The Glenfin man had an uncharacteristically poor game. He missed two chances early on and he gave the ball up cheaply on a few occasions. He was also fortunate not to be black-carded in the first half. 6

NEIL GALLAGHER: Gallagher has been one of Donegal's best players all season, but he struggled to im-

pose himself against Barry Moran in midfield. 6

HUGH MCFADDEN: There was plenty of endeavour and work rate from McFadden, but it was still a step up in class for him. However, he will learn from the experience and look to push on next year. 6.5

CHRISTY TOYE: Toye brought a knock into the match, but he started well and landed a super point. However, he drifted out of the match and was replaced at half-time. 6.5

RYAN MCHUGH: McHugh made a fantastic catch early on, but he couldn't influence the game in the manner he did against Galway. He squandered possession too easily at times. 6

ODHRÁN MACNIALLAIS: Consistency has been MacNiallais' problem this year, and after a terrific outing against the Tribesmen, he was quiet once again against Mayo. However, it was still a surprise to see him withdrawn as early as the 39th minute. 5.5

PATRICK MCBREARTY: Donegal needed a big performance from McBrearty, but the Kilcar man was held scoreless. His shot selection was poor and he didn't combine well with Murphy inside. 5.5

MICHAEL MURPHY: The Donegal skipper was still not fully fit, but he delivered one of his best displays of the year. He scored eight points – three sublime efforts from play – and he was constantly showing for the ball. 8.5

COLM MCFADDEN: McFadden was on fire last week, and he started well. However, Mayo soon got to grips with him and he had little joy in the second half. He may also feel he should have done better with his goal chance in the first half. 6

SUBSTITUTES

MARTIN MCELHINNEY: The St Michael's man brought energy to the team and he showed well for the kick-outs. He had one wide when he fisted to the wrong side of the post from a good position. 6.5

ANTHONY THOMPSON: Thompson came on for Neil McGee and he worked hard. He stepped forward to kick a point and tried to link the play. 7

LEO MCLOONE: McLoone did well initially when he came on and he hammered over a point. However, his lack of fitness was slightly exposed late on. 6.5



ALLIANZ NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE - ROUND 1

Donegal take all that Derry had to offer in opening half and hit them in the third quarter

MCBREARTY IN SCINTILLATING FORM

DONEGAL	1-15
DERRY	0-12

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Donegal under Rory Gallagher got their Allianz League off to a winning start with a good win over Derry in MacCumhaill Park on Saturday night.

In cold but perfect conditions, the game was very well contested with Derry looking the stronger in the opening half before a sizeable crowd of over 4,000.

They led by 0-9 to 0-6 at the break and the margin could have been greater with Mark Lynch supreme, but once Donegal got their act together at half-time they were a different outfit after the resumption, pushing up on Derry and it paid rich dividends.

It was as if Derry punched themselves out in the opening half and Donegal took control in the second half, but at half time there was concern about Donegal's prospects.

It took Donegal less than five minutes to cancel out the

half-time advantage and they looked a completely different team thereafter.

Patrick McBrearty, in his first game in the Donegal colours this year, was outstanding, hitting some great points and also being a very good target man. McBrearty, along with Neil Gallagher and Christy Toye, were the leaders in this victory.

Derry had the Lion's share of possession in the opening half. They were on top in most areas and the half-time score-line of 0-9 to 0-6 was a good reflection of that.

Derry looked fitter and were able to hold on to possession and that was best reflected in their fourth point in the 14th minute. They held possession for fully 90 seconds before Benny Heron hit a great score with the outside of his boot. It put them in front 0-4 to 0-3 and from there to the half-time whistle, they completely dominated.

Mark Lynch was outstanding from placed balls, hitting four in the opening half, two from outside the '45' and he added another from play.

Donegal had started well and led by 0-3 to 0-1 after

eight minutes with Patrick McBrearty lively and Christy Toye and Martin O'Reilly also finding the range.

With Lynch punishing any frees given away, Derry pushed clear 0-9 to 0-5. Paul Durcan almost gifted a point to Emmet McGuckin after three minutes while Conor McAtamney blazed just over the crossbar midway through the half.

Before half-time Michael Murphy hit two frees to just about keep Donegal in touch.

The second half, however, was a different story. Martin McElhinney came in at midfield and made an immediate impact, pointing after 46 seconds.

Within eight minutes of the resumption Donegal were ahead by a point and even though Derry briefly got back on terms, Donegal pushed on.

They could afford to see a Michael Murphy penalty come back off the crossbar before Odhran MacNiallais finished a great goal to put them on their way.

The penalty was a talking point in the game as Michael Murphy contested a high ball in from Odhran MacNiallais

but Niall Holly punched it away. However, referee Marty Duffy ruled that Murphy was held which seemed harsh.

By that stage, however, Donegal were beginning to get the upper hand and the goal, on 53 minutes, came quickly as the McHughs, Ryan and Mark and Martin O'Reilly were involved before Christy Toye put MacNiallais through and he fired low to the net.

From there to the finish they were completely on top as Derry ran out of steam. Christy Toye and Neil Gallagher were immense around the middle and young Martin O'Reilly and Patrick McBrearty hit some great scores. McBrearty's final score from under the stand and hooked in his inimitable style was the score of the match

Derry brought in Eoin Bradley and he almost got in for a goal with his first touch after a slip by Donegal defender, but his effort went over the crossbar.

And just like the end to the first half, Donegal were able to call on Michael Murphy to point frees to keep them clear before Marty Duffy's last whistle.

New kid on the block!

Ciaran McGinley Donegal, who made his Allianz League debut for Donegal on Saturday night, attacks the Derry defence during the NFL game in MacCumhaill Park.

Photo Thomas Gallagher 0202 Donegal v Derry TG3

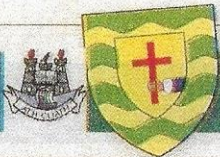
Donegal: Paul Durcan; Paddy McGrath, Eamon McGee, Frank McGlynn; Ryan McHugh, Karl Lacey, Ciaran McGinley; Neil Gallagher, Hugh McFadden; Mark McHugh, Odhran MacNiallais (1-0), Christy Toye (0-2); Patrick McBrearty (0-5, 2f), Michael Murphy (0-5, 5f), Martin O'Reilly (0-2). Subs., Daniel McLaughlin for McGinley 27; Martin McElhinney (0-1) for McFadden ht; Darach O'Connor for McLaughlin 69; Gary McFadden for O'Reilly 70

Derry: Thomas Mallon; Oisín Duffy, Niall Holly, John O'Kane; Kevin Johnston, Gerard O'Kane, Mark Craig; Mark Lynch (0-6, 5f), Conor McAtamney (0-1); Benny Heron (0-1), Daniel Heavron, Enda Lynn (0-1); Sean Leo McGoldrick, Emmett McGuckin (0-1), Barry McGoldrick (0-1). Subs., Brian Og McGilligan for McAtamney 47; Liam McGoldrick for Holly 54; Eoin Bradley (0-1) for McGuckin 57; Terence O'Brien for B McGoldrick 58; Ciaran McFaul for Heron 64; James Kearney for Lynn 67.

Referee: Marty Duffy (Sligo)



Ciaran McGinley: Was just off target with a chance before picking up a yellow card. Unlucky to be replaced as every Donegal player was below par in the first half.



ALLIANZ FOOTBALL LEAGUE DIVISION ONE - ROUND 2

Tempestuous affair in Croke Park with both sides showing a lot of indiscipline

MCCAFFREY GOAL LIGHTS UP GAME

DONEGAL	0-11
DUBLIN	2-10

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Donegal were brought back down to earth in Croke Park on Saturday night as they were unable to match the fitness of a young Dublin side.

A magnificent goal from Jack McCaffrey seven minutes from the end was the clinching score for the home side who always held the upper hand throughout.

Donegal again fielded nine of their starting All-Ireland side, while Dublin had only four of the team that started against Donegal in the All-Ireland semi-final clash back in August.

However, before half-time Donegal had sent in Neil McGee to shore up the full-back line and not long into the second half Colm McFadden also made his comeback. At the other end Dublin called in Bernard Brogan just before the end.

Donegal will not be happy

with their overall display with a lot of mistakes in a game that was fractious, especially in the second half. There were numerous melees with Dublin losing Kevin McManamon to a second yellow card early in the second half.

Referee Maurice Deegan was like a fireman putting out fires in different parts of the field, especially in the second half.

GOOD START

Donegal started well with Michael Murphy pointing after 24 seconds and the full-forward added a second on two minutes when Patrick McBrearty was fouled.

But the Donegal defence was cut open two minutes later as Eric Lowndes put Cormac Costello through and he slipped the ball past Paul Durcan, whose kick-out had led to the Dublin attack.

Durcan was injured trying to prevent the goal and had to be replaced by Michael Boyle.

Michael Murphy levelled matters on 10 minutes but Dublin began to find their feet and despite hitting seven first half wides, they hit the next three points from Davy

Byrne, Emmet O'Conghaile and Eoghan O'Gara. The latter turned Eamon McGee and was through on goal but elected to take his point.

Patrick McBrearty replied for Donegal with a brace of points to reduce the margin to the minimum by the 26th minute.

Dean Rock availed of a free won by Cormac Costello while Mark McHugh blazed wide at the other end. Dean Rock converted a '45' after Michael Boyle deflected a Denis Bastick effort around the post.

In added time Frank McGlynn set up Christy Toye for a good score while Michael Murphy engineered a score for Patrick McBrearty to leave just a point between them at the break - Dublin 1-5, Donegal 0-7.

Donegal started the second half well with a Michael Murphy point after 14 seconds but they were unable to exert their usual third quarter pressure with Dean Rock responding with two frees.

Dublin were reduced to 14 on 45 minutes when Kevin McManamon picked up a second yellow.

The numerical advantage didn't matter as they kept in front with Donegal only able to get within a point. That was on 52 minutes when a great break by Ryan McHugh was finished by Christy Toye.

CLINCHING SCORE

Then came the clinching score when substitute McCaffrey first fired over a point and then after Patrick McBrearty lost possession when almost through, he tore through the Donegal defence to unleash an unstoppable shot past Michael Boyle.

In between those two scores Donegal had two great chances for points with Ryan McHugh wide and Colm McFadden dropping his effort short.

But with the margin out to five points Donegal never really looked like creating the goal that they needed with the final two points of the contest shared by Colm McFadden and Ciaran Kilkenny. Donegal lost Michael Murphy to a black card with two minutes left.

Donegal: Paul Durcan; Frank McGlynn, Eamon McGee, Paddy McGrath; Karl

Lacey, Eamonn Doherty, Mark McHugh; Neil Gallagher, Christy Toye (0-2); Ryan McHugh, Martin O'Reilly, Odhran MacNiallais; Patrick McBrearty (0-4,1f), Michael Murphy (0-4,3f), Hugh McFadden. Subs., Michael Boyle for Durcan 6; Neil McGee for McGrath 18; Martin McElhinney for O'Reilly 45; Colm McFadden (0-1) for H McFadden 53; Darach O'Connor for Doherty 64; Daniel McLaughlin for Murphy, b card 69.

Dublin: Sean Currie; Eoin Culligan, Michael Fitzsimons, Daren Daly; Jonny Cooper, John Small, Davy Byrne (0-1); Denis Bastick, Emmet O'Conghaile (0-1); Tomas Brady, Dean Rock (0-5,4f,45), Eric Lowndes; Kevin McManamon, Eoghan O'Gara (0-1), Cormac Costello (1-0). Subs., David Byrne for Culligan 16; Ciaran Kilkenny (0-1) for Brady 18; Jack McCaffrey (1-1) for Lowndes 48; Philly McMahon for Cooper 59; Bernard Brogan for Costello 64; Michael Dara Macauley for Davy Byrne 70.

Referee: Maurice Deegan (Laois)

Dublin's Eoghan O'Gara clashes with Ryan McHugh and Eamonn McGee of Donegal Credit ©INPHO/Cathal Noonan



MAN OF THE MATCH

THERE WERE VERY FEW outstanding performances on both sides. Michael Murphy, Ryan McHugh were best for Donegal but the award goes to John Small of Dublin

Turning Point

THE BIG TURNING POINT IN THIS game came with seven minutes left. Patrick McBrearty had a chance to point but was turned over and Jack McCaffrey blazed through to score a brilliant goal which proved the difference.

Ref Watch

REFEREE MAURICE DEEGAN HAD a tough task keeping tabs on all that was going on, both on and off the ball. Could have stamped more authority early on.

Match Facts

Donegal were awarded 17 frees and had 10 wides (5 in each half. Dublin were awarded 18 frees and had 8 wides (7 in first half)

Chill winds of Donegal blow Cork off course

CLIONA FOLEY



DONEGAL	0-12
CORK	1-8

ALLIANZ NFL DIVISION 1

CORK'S unbeaten record fell to 14-man Donegal in Ballyshannon where the one-point losing margin actually flattered them.

The Arctic gale that blew down Fr Tierney Park was a far cry from Dubai where half the Donegal squad had a week's holiday recently but their sojourn in the sun did them no harm, especially Frank McGlynn, whose barnstorming performance somehow managed to outshine his deep tan.

After being outmuscled by Dublin last time out, Donegal never shirked a hard yard or a tough tackle here and showed great resolve, especially when they lost Michael Murphy to a second yellow card in the 51st minute.

They were leading by five points at the time, kicking on quickly after taking over the wind advantage at half-time when it was deadlocked on 0-5 apiece.

Murphy's first-half yellow looked harsh enough but his second - a late tackle on Eoin Cadogan - immediately threw the visitors a lifeline, particularly as he had just struck a magnificent free from the left sideline to put them 0-10 to 0-5 clear.

Any team that packs its defence as tightly as Donegal is always going to spring leaks once it loses a man and the dyke was breached virtually immediately.

Within six minutes, Cork had scored 1-2 and got the gap back to a single point and the goal was fisted home by

wing-back Tomas Clancy after a great cross from Brian Hurley, who followed it with a quick point.

Suddenly a game that had lacked any serious penetration or attractive attacking football - it was like a bad game of zone defence basketball before half-time, with both sides struggling to get a clean shot off - opened up and Donegal got two goal chances themselves that they wasted.

But Odhran MacNiallais matched Murphy by spinning over an extraordinary shot from 50 metres and Paddy McBrearty got a vital insurance point before Colm O'Neill cut it to a minimum again.

"These narrow wins are good for (the) character," Donegal boss Rory Gallagher grinned. "We probably overplayed it a bit, there were times we went for goal and probably should have put it over the bar," he admitted. "But what was pleasing was the way that we created those opportunities."

DEPTH

What was underlined was the growing depth in Donegal's squad. Marty O'Reilly was the main scorer yesterday with 0-4 from play but McBrearty and MacNiallais also provided a big threat.

Christy Toye continued his extraordinary Benjamin Button impression in a midfield where Neil Gallagher was also excellent. McGlynn and Mark and Ryan McHugh drove it from the half-back line, Neil McGee held Colm O'Neill scoreless and Martin McElhinney and Eamon McGee did well off the bench.

Donegal had reportedly worked hard on a new longer kick-out strategy beforehand but the conditions dictated that they couldn't showcase it.

But they still dominated midfield, especially when Ken O'Halloran was kicking into the teeth of the gale, and the real mystery was why the Rebels didn't use their first-half wind advan-



Michael Murphy of Donegal fetches the ball ahead of Cork's Michael Shields during yesterday's Allianz NFL clash at Ballyshannon **SPORTSFILE**

tage to much better effect.

Apart from one exception, Cork simply didn't counter-attack quickly enough or use long kicks to beat the blanket defence.

"We didn't want to over-kick the ball as you saw Donegal do there in the second half when some of their attacks went wide," Rebel boss Brian Cuthbert said.

"At the same time we allowed Donegal too much time to get bodies back. When that happens fellas don't want to give away the ball, they became stationary and it becomes very frustrating," he admitted.

Cork's young half-forward line of John O'Rourke and the O'Driscoll brothers worked their socks off but as a team they looked naive at times, taking the wrong option with their final pass too often. It wasn't until some experienced operators came off the bench that they began to click.

"I said from the outset, teams would take points from each other in this

division and today was a case in point," Cuthbert added.

The one worry for Donegal was that this was the second game in a row that Murphy didn't finish. His prowess means he taking a lot of unfair punishment but needs to curb his own recklessness too.

"Michael is a big guy and he goes into a lot of contact and sometimes things look a little worse than they are," Gallagher observed diplomatically.

Man of the Match: Frank McGlynn

SCORERS - Donegal: M O'Reilly 0-4, P McBrearty 0-3 (1f), M Murphy 0-3 (3f), C Toye, O MacNiallais (f) 0-1 each. **Cork:** C O'Neill 0-4 (4f), Tomas Clancy 1-0, M Collins, K O'Driscoll and B Hurley 0-1 each, D O'Connor 0-1 (f).

DONEGAL - P Durcan 7, P McGrath 8, N McGee 8, E Doherty 7; F McGlynn 9, K Lacey 7, M McHugh 8; N Gallagher 8, C Toye 8; M O'Reilly 8, O MacNiallais 8, R McHugh 7; P McBrearty 8, M Murphy (capt) 6, H McFadden 6. **Subs:** M McElhinney 7 for H McFadden (1-t), C McFadden 6 for Toye (5f), A Thompson 6 for Lacey (6f), E McGee 8 for Doherty (6f), J Gibbons for McBrearty (7f).

CORK - K O'Halloran 7, Tom Clancy 7, M Shields 7, J Loughrey 6; J O'Sullivan 6, E Cadogan, Tomas Clancy 6; F Goolid 5, M Collins 6; C O'Driscoll 7, J O'Rourke 7, K O'Driscoll 8; C O'Neill 6, D O'Connor 5, B Hurley 7. **Subs:** C Dorman 6 for O'Sullivan (4f), P Kerrigan 7 for O'Connor (4f), P Kelly 7 for C O'Driscoll (5f), J Hayes 6 for K O'Driscoll (6f), D O'Ghodnett 6 for O'Rourke (6f). **REF** - J McQuillan (Cavan)



ALLIANZ NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE DIVISION ONE - ROUND 4

One of the worst ever displays from a Donegal team as they go down tamely against Monaghan

DONEGAL	1-4
MONAGHAN	0-9

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Monaghan ground out a result in a dire Division One game in O'Donnell Park where the name of Gaelic football was brought into disrepute.

In a game that left a sour taste, Donegal were listless and almost unable to make any headway against a stubborn Monaghan defence.

The quality of the game is best underlined by the fact that only four scores came from play - the Donegal goal and three Monaghan points.

Both teams employed mass defences with Monaghan even getting everybody back when they had the wind at their back in the opening half.

The sides were level at the break, 0-4 each, but Donegal, with the wind at their back were unable to make any progress. They managed just one score in the second half.

a goal from Michael Murphy from a long ball from Neil Gallagher on 43 minutes.

Monaghan, needing the league points, had the stomach for the fight and were able to tag on five points before the end.

Three of those points came from frees - two from Paul Finlay, while 'keeper Rory Beggan came forward to edge Monaghan ahead with four minutes left.

Donegal had just no cutting edge. They did have one great opportunity to draw level when Anthony Thompson found himself free, but he pulled his effort wide.

Then in added time Monaghan's Fintan Kelly got into a forward position to fire over the insurance point.

Long before that the groans from the 5,000 supporters in O'Donnell Park, could be clearly heard. The majority of those present would vouch that it was the worst game of intercounty football they had witnessed in a long time.

The ball was played laterally and backwards by both teams. Both teams were equally guilty; Monaghan

were successful because they had a little more penetration.

With the wind Donegal dropped a number of efforts short and also had a number of bad wides.

At half-time with the sides level at 0-4 each Donegal seemed to be in the better position as they had most of the possession in the opening half against the breeze.

They had opened well with three points from frees inside 11 minutes, Michael Murphy (2) and Patrick McBrearty getting the scores.

But Monaghan were bidding their time, getting forward on sporadic raids and Kieran Hughes had their first point on 12 minutes - the only score from play in the opening half.

Conor McManus added a free, but was then black carded after an off-the-ball tangle with Neil McGee, which was reported by the umpires. There was surprise when the Monaghan man was singled out as they were on the attack at the time.

The loss of McManus did not affect the Farnley men as Paul Finlay pointed a free.

Michael Murphy replied a minute from half-time but in first half added time Finlay punished a foul on Ryan McAnespie to tie up the game.

There were those who felt the second half had to improve, but that hope never materialised and as an advert for Ulster football, it was not pretty viewing.

The Donegal goal on 43 minutes came when a long delivery from Donegal's best player Neil Gallagher to the edge of the square saw Michael Murphy contest with Vinny Corey and Rory Beggan and Murphy got the touch to see the ball nestle in the empty net.

It was to prove a false dawn as Donegal failed to score in the 29 minutes played thereafter - a truly demoralising statistic.

There will be plenty of critical analysis of many parts of this game, not least the manner of the Donegal substitutions which seemed to have a destabilising effect on the performance.

There were few Donegal players who made an impression and it doesn't augur

well for the trip to Tralee and a date with All-Ireland champions Kerry next weekend.

Donegal Paul Durcan; Paddy McGrath, Neil McGee, Eamon McGee; Eamonn Doherty; Karl Lacey, Frank McGlynn; Neil Gallagher, Odhran MacNiallais; Christy Toye, Mark McHugh, Ryan McHugh; Patrick McBrearty (0-1,f), Michael Murphy (1-3,3f), Martin O'Reilly. Subs., Anthony Thompson for Doherty; Martin McElhinney for Toye, both ht; Colm McFadden for Lacey 36; Daniel McLaughlin for McBrearty; Eoin McHugh for E McGee, both 54; Gary McFadden for MacNiallais 65.

Monaghan: Rory Beggan (0-1,f); Conor Boyle, Drew Wylie, Vinny Corey; Dessie Mone, Finta Kelly (0-1), Karl O'Connell; Neil McAdam, Darren Hughes; Paul Finlay (0-4,4f), Dermot Malone (0-1), Ryan McAnespie; Conor McManus (0-1,f), Kieran Hughes (0-1), Daniel McKenna. Subs., Thomas Kerr for McManus, blk card 24; Owen Duffy for McKenna 48; Dick Clerkin for McAdam 66

Referee: Padraig Hughes (Armagh)

	DIVISION ONE						Diff	Pts
	P	W	D	L	F	A		
Mayo	4	3	0	1	8-45	2-45	18	6
Cork	4	3	0	1	7-54	3-53	13	6
Donegal	4	2	0	2	2-42	3-39	0	4
Tyrone	4	1	2	1	1-43	4-37	-3	4
Monaghan	4	2	0	2	2-49	6-42	-5	4
Kerry	4	2	0	2	3-51	6-51	-9	4
Dublin	4	1	1	2	4-45	1-53	1	3
Derry	4	0	1	3	2-46	4-55	-15	1

MAN OF THE MATCH

THERE WEREN'T MANY DONEGAL players in contention, maybe Neil Gallagher. The award goes to Kieran Hughes, who was everywhere for Monaghan and kept driving them forward when needed.

Turning Point

There were few. The Donegal goal could have been one but Donegal just made no impression after that. Rory Beggan's free from 45m against the wind was the biggest point in this game.

Ref Watch

Padraig Hughes made a number of calls that were contested by the players but overall he wasn't a factor in a poor game.

MATCH FACTS

Donegal won 20 frees (11 in first half). They had seven wides (two in first half. Monaghan won 25 frees (12 in first half). They had five wides (two in first half

ALLIANZ NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE DIVISION ONE - ROUND 5

Sheehan and Moran outstanding for Kerry but Donegal make them fight all the way

MUCH IMPROVED PERFORMANCE

DONEGAL	2-11
KERRY	2-13

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Donegal lost out narrowly in a cracking game at Austin Stack Park, Tralee.

The contrast between this game and what was put forward as an excuse for the game the previous week against Monaghan in Letterkenny was stark.

Both sides contributed handsomely to give the 6,250 attendance something to really shout about.

Donegal had to line out without Frank McGlynn who developed a bug overnight while Odhran MacNiallais failed a late fitness test on an ankle injury.

It was a rip roaring first half and the place kicking of Bryan Sheehan was magnificent to watch. In the opening minutes, Sheehan hit two magnificent shots from the 45m line over, one a free and one a '45'.

Donegal got back on level terms inside six minutes with long balls successful on both

occasions. Christy Toye found Patrick McBrearty and after a 1-2 with Michael Murphy, McBrearty fired over and when Martin McElhinney was fouled, Murphy found the range from 48m.

Bryan Sheehan was given an easy passage to put Kerry back in front but Donegal struck for a great goal on nine minutes. Hugh McFadden found Murphy with the long ball and the ball was worked through Martin O'Reilly who sent Ryan McHugh through on goal and he finished calmly.

Two points behind, Kerry hit back with four points in a row between the 14th and 19th minutes - Paul Murphy, Billy John Keane, David Moran and another magnificent Sheehan free, the scorers.

Donegal were having trouble finding the inside men with the distance between the provider and the target much too long, but Hugh McFadden cut out the middle man with a magnificent point from near the sideline and 45m out.

Bryan Sheehan added another long range free before Patrick McBrearty missed an easy effort at the other end.

Kerry almost punished a promising Donegal attack that broke down as they tried to create a goal chance with Paul Geaney

and Kieran Donaghy involved but Johnny Buckley was crowded out and they had to settle for a fisted point from Sheehan.

In the final minutes of the half, Neil Gallagher won a free for Murphy to point from 47m and on the stroke of half-time Martin McElhinney added another as tempers began to fray on both sides.

Half-time: Kerry 0-9, Donegal 1-5.

The second half saw Donegal spring from the traps with Michael Murphy converting a '45' after a Martin O'Reilly effort was deflected just wide. Patrick McBrearty followed up by cutting in along the endline and fisting a good point to push Donegal in front and on 39 minutes Murphy found McBrearty with a great ball and he fed half-time substitute Colm McFadden to point.

A bad turnover involving Christy Toye and Karl Lacey saw Alan Fitzgerald hit back for Kerry and they got a goal to go in front on 44 minutes. A long delivery was broken by Eamon McGee from Donaghy and it seemed in safe keeping when Neil McGee got possession, but somehow Paul Geaney dispossessed him and crossed for Billy John Keane

to palm home from close range.

Donegal almost had a goal at the other end when another great ball from Murphy (now operating around midfield in the second half) saw McBrearty turn his marker from close range his effort went just over.

Paul Geaney stretched the lead to two but another Murphy-McBrearty connection finished with Neil Gallagher pointing.

Kerry were relying on the long ball to Donaghy and substitute Tommy Walsh and there was reward when the ball broke to Johnny Buckley, who showed great calmness, before fisting over.

Donegal could have been back level but for bad wides from Mark McHugh and Christy Toye. Then they were struck for a second goal with seven minutes left. An effort from Johnny Buckley for a point came back off the upright and after a scramble it broke for Paul O'Donoghue, who was caught by Eamon McGee as he took his shot. From the penalty David Moran clinically found the corner.

Stephen O'Brien opened the gap to six but Patrick McBrearty pulled a point back and then on 68 minutes McBrearty and Neil Gallagher were involved before Colm McFadden was fouled as

McBrearty on song

Patrick McBrearty: A good display from the Kilcar man, who looked really sharp and was helped by a better supply in the second half. 8

Ryan McHugh: Played mostly in defence where he found himself up against Bryan Sheehan, McHugh got forward well for the goal but otherwise was on the periphery. 6

Mark McHugh: Got on a lot of ball, but finding it difficult to break tackles. 5-5

MAN OF THE MATCH

IF BRYAN SHEEHAN HAD REMAINED on the field then he would have been the winner, but the award goes to David Moran, who had a towering game at midfield. Patrick McBrearty, Michael Murphy and Neil Gallagher stood up for Donegal in a good all round display.

TURNING POINT

The second Kerry goal was most fortunate as the ball came back off the upright and it just fell for Paul O'Donoghue and there was little Eamon McGee could do but tackle to give away the penalty

REF WATCH

Clare official Rory Hickey was under intense pressure from the home followers, who booed him off at half-time and full-time. But I felt he had a good game. He issued yellow cards to Neil Gallagher, Martin McElhinney and Michael Murphy.

STATS

**Kerry won 19 frees, (15 in first half). They had 10 wides (one in first half)
Donegal won 20 frees (13 in first half). They had five wides (two in first half).**

Donegal continue dominance of Tyrone in ruthless fashion

THE IRISH NEWS
MONDAY MARCH 30 2015

Division One:

Donegal.....1-13
Tyrone.....0-6

From Paddy Heaney in Ballybofey



FOUR years have passed since Jim McGuinness established the new order between these counties and judging by this game in Ballybofey – very little has changed.

McGuinness may have gone but his replacement Rory Gallagher appears to have made a seamless transition into the hot-seat.

When the McGuinness era began in 2011, Donegal beat Tyrone in Omagh by a margin of seven points, 1-10 to 0-6.

Yesterday, Tyrone once again only managed the modest tally of 0-6. Donegal, meanwhile, racked up 1-13, leaving a gap of 10 points between the teams.

It might be slightly unfair to dwell to Tyrone's multiple failings. Yes, the Red Hands were awful. There is no point sugar coating it. They were beaten in every department. In terms of physical power, tackling, link-play and just the overall chemistry of their play, Donegal were operating on another level.

While Tyrone were desperately disappointing, most counties would have struggled to compete with Donegal. The reigning Ulster champions were seriously impressive.

Defensively, they were superb. Tyrone managed just two points from play. While the visitors posted 11 wides, most of those shots were of the hit-and-hope variety. Tyrone couldn't breach Donegal's grid-locked defence. Time and time again they ran into traffic - and the result was almost always the same. Donegal would force a turnover and their counter-attack would begin.

When Donegal ran with they ball they were an entirely different proposition. Tyrone's support play was all too predictable. Donegal



showed much greater imagination. More often than not a supporting runner came at an angle which allowed a hole to be punctured in Tyrone's defence.

In terms of individual performances, Donegal could also boast that they had the two best players on the field – Martin McElhinney and Michael Murphy.

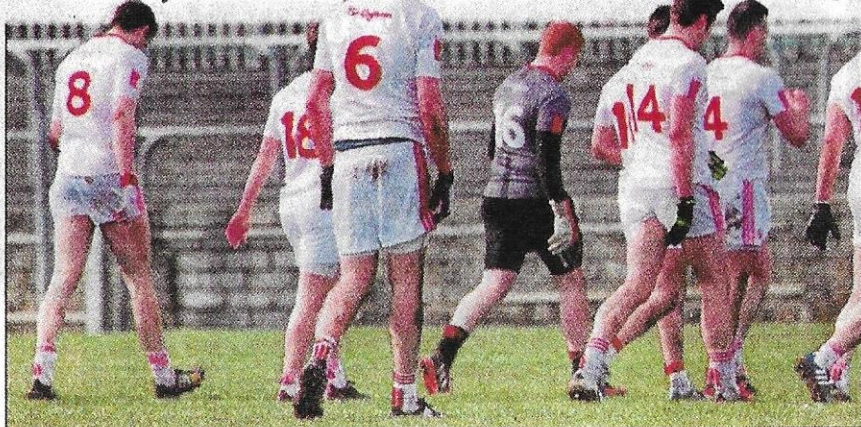
Martin McElhinney underlined the main difference between the teams. Apart from kicking two points, he was the catalyst for numerous scores. The St Michael's clubman was particularly adept at making angled support runs which wrong-footed Tyrone's rearguard. A team player, he usually had another player coming off his shoulder and Donegal would be through f o r yet another

score. Tyrone failed to replicate that level of choreography. They ran in straight lines. It was all too easy for Donegal who had no problem second guessing exactly what their opponents wanted to do.

If McElhinney was the oil which made Donegal run smoothly, then Murphy was the actual engine. On the form which he was in yesterday, the Donegal skipper is a force of nature.

Murphy signalled his intentions from the start of the game. Winning possession with a one-handed catch, he registered the game's opening score after just eight seconds.

His free-taking was astonishingly good. While Donegal benefited from a few charitable decisions by Joe McQuillan, M u r p h y took maximum advantage.



From 50, 55 and 60 metres, he drove a series of monster efforts over the bar.

By the 27th minute, the pattern for the game had been set. Donegal had moved into a five-point lead and they looked in control. If Tyrone could have reached half-time trailing by four or five points, they might have had some hope of retrieving the situation in the second half.

But any hopes of a comeback were quashed in the 31st minute when Ryan McHugh nabbed a goal. When a Frank McGlynn shot hit the upright, Hugh McFadden caught the rebound. Although McFadden's shot was well saved by Sean Fox, McHugh, however, was on hand to drive home into an empty net.

A point by Odhrán Mac Naillais on the stroke of half-time meant Donegal led by nine points at half-time.

Even on their worst day, Donegal wouldn't surrender a nine-point advantage. The second half was a damage limitation exercise for Tyrone.

Tyrone manager Mickey Harte introduced Sean Cavanagh at half-time. A knee problem meant

Cavanagh didn't start the game. Substitutes Conal McCann, PJ Lavery and Ryan McKenna followed shortly afterwards.

The injection of fresh blood made no difference. Instead, Donegal strengthened their grip on proceedings as Murphy (55-metre free) and Ryan McHugh extended their lead to 11 points.

When Peter Hárte landed a fantastic long-range point in the 56th minute it was Tyrone's first score in half an hour. Two minutes later, Harte thumped over a 60-metre free-kick. But that's as good as it got for Tyrone. Their mini revival lasted one minute. It would be another 23 minutes before they scored again. Just like the League game in 2011, Sean Cavanagh landed their sixth and final point with a late free-kick.

MATCH STATS

Donegal: M Boyle; E Doherty, N McGee (0-1), E McGee; F McGlynn (0-1), K Lacey, R McHugh (1-1); N Gallagher, C Tóye; M McElhinney (0-2), M Murphy (0-6, 0-5 frees), O Mac Naillais (0-1); P McBrearty, M O'Reilly, H McFadden.

Subs: C McFadden for N Gallagher (57); M McHugh for R McHugh (67); G McFadden for N McGee (68); D Walsh for M O'Reilly (70).

Yellow cards: N McGee (32); E McGee (38).
Black cards: Anthony Thompson, replaced M Murphy (60); D McLaughlin, replaced M McElhinney (65).

Tyrone: N Morgan; R McNamee, Justin McMahon, C McCarron; C Clarke, T McCann, R McNabb; C Cavanagh, P McNulty; A McCrory, M Donnelly, P Harte (0-2, 0-1 free); D McCurry (0-1, free), R O'Neill (0-1), C McAliskey (0-1, free).

Subs: S Fox for N Morgan (15); S Cavanagh (0-1, free) for R O'Neill (h-t); C McCann for P McNulty (40); PJ Lavery for C McAliskey (40); R McKenna for C Clarke (44); P Hughes for C Cavanagh (60).

Yellow cards: C Clarke (2); C McCarron (45).
Referee: J McQuillan (Cavan)

■ **HEADS DOWN:** Tyrone players trudge off the pitch following their defeat to Donegal in Ballybofey.

Picture: Margaret McLaughlin

Donegal prove value of accuracy in modern game

Sylvester Hennessy

Tuesday Tactics

Irish Examiner
Tuesday 07.04.2015



More than 12,000 supporters flocked to MacHale Park on Sunday, the majority long-suffering loyal Mayo supporters. Unfortunately for the Westerners, this was another tortuous day.

Mayo dominated territory if not possession for much of this game as Donegal packed their defence and the Mayo men kicked wide after awful wide.

Mayo dominated territory if not possession for much of this game as Donegal packed their defence and the Mayo men kicked wide after awful wide. In the second half, Mayo only took five of 15 scoring chances as Donegal miraculously snatched a draw with a late point and accordingly booked a semi-final meeting with Cork. Donegal created just five scoring chances in the second half, scoring four, showing that accuracy is the strongest currency in the game of Gaelic football.

It took Donegal all of 20 minutes of the half to score at all, but their game-plan and system proved the winner, much to the chagrin of lovers of traditional football.

Unfortunately, this match was another example of the ugly face of football with consistent pulling and dragging, cynical football, off-the-ball scuffles and the now predictable massed defences.

In a week when the football took another battering from pundits and supporters alike, it was interesting to compare the four teams on view on



Big Match Breakdown

Kerry v Tyrone



TEAM STATS

57%	Possession	43%	Individual stats			
17/25	Own kick-outs won	11/22	D Moran 31 K Young 21 A Maher 20 J Buckley 20 P Crowley 20	Possession top 5s	M Donnelly 29 D McCurry 21 R McNabb 20 P Harte 18 S Cavanagh 17	
Kerry won 28/47 kick outs taken (59%)						
Scoring chances						
7/12	1st Half	8/15				
8/11	2nd Half	9/13	D Moran 4 A Maher 4 P Crowley 3	Kick-outs won 3s	C Cavanagh 5 R McNabb 3 R McNamee 3	
15/23	Total	17/28				
Frees against						
13	1st Half	9	J Buckley 8 J Lyne 8 A Maher 7	Tackles	P Harte 7 J McMahon 6 R McNamee 5	
18	2nd Half	3				
31	Total	13				
9	Turnovers against	19	K Donaghy 3	Assists	A McRory 3	
64	Tackle count	52				

television on Sunday.

Kerry had 275 possessions and they hand-passed the ball 60% of the time, with a 24% foot-pass ratio. Tyrone had 211 possessions — 63% producing hand-passes, just 16% foot-passes.

In MacHale Park, Donegal had 278 possessions — 67% hand-passes, 14% foot-passes. Mayo had 250 possessions and they, like Kerry, had a 60% hand-pass ratio and they kicked the ball 23% of the time.

These figures illustrate how the hand-pass has become the predominant option in Gaelic football. Especially, it seems, for

Ulster teams who kick the ball as a last resort. On Sunday, three of Donegal's starting 15 did not kick the ball once in the game and Tyrone also had three players who hand-passed all their possessions. Somewhat surprisingly, Tyrone had the lowest tackle count of the four teams we analysed.

Tyrone tend to tackle in clusters and target the man in possession but their overall tackle rate is not as high as other top-level teams. But Mickey Harte's men can point to fantastic discipline in the tackle.

They conceding just 13 frees, compared to Kerry's disappointing



Big Match Breakdown

Mayo v Donegal



TEAM STATS

47%	Possession	53%	Individual stats			
11/15	Own kick-outs won	13/24	S O'Shea 35 L Keegan 25 K McLoughlin 22 A O'Shea 22 B Moran 21	Possession top 5s	F McGlynn 32 K Lacey 31 O MacNiallais 27 H McFadden 24 Neil McGee 16	
Mayo won 22/39 kick outs taken (56%)						
Scoring chances						
7/13	1st Half	6/11				
5/15	2nd Half	4/5				
12/28	Total	10/16	B Moran 5 S O'Shea 3 D Vaughan 3	Kick-outs won 3s	M McElhinney 4 N Gallagher 3 H McFadden 2	
Frees against						
9	1st Half	8				
13	2nd Half	10	K McLoughlin 11 A O'Shea 10 D Vaughan 8	Tackles	H McFadden 7 N Magee 7 E McGee 6	
22	Total	18				
11	Turnovers against	22	S O'Shea 3	Assists	F McGlynn 3	
66	Tackle count	61				

31. This is probably the aspect of Sunday's display that will have least pleased the Kerry management. The concession of nine scoreable frees proved crucial to the game's outcome, although the critical late penalising of David Moran looked harsh.

Kerry management will also look to solve the riddle of a match where they dominated overall possession, midfield possession and the tackle count and still only drew the game.

The answer probably lies in defensive frailty. Kerry have been too easy to score against in the league.

Their overall tally of 9-90 conceded (an average of 1-14 per match) is the highest in the top division.

It's the type of stat that will have the Cork camp licking their lips ahead of a potential Munster final trip to Killarney.

For Tyrone, life in Division 2 beckons while Kerry and Mayo have to settle for retaining their divisional status. Donegal were probably the least impressive of the four teams or view this weekend, yet the northerners march onto to a semi-final meeting with Cork next weekend.

Allianz Football League Division One

Griffen's late point sends Donegal into the last four

Mayo 0-12
Donegal 1-9

Substitute Stephen Griffen kicked an injury-time point to send Donegal into the league semi-final against Cork following this dramatic final round clash with Mayo at MacHale Park, Castlebar before a crowd of over 14,000.

While Griffen emerged as the hero, the man who killed Mayo's chances of making it into the play-offs was Patrick McBrearty.

He kicked back-to-back points to bring his side back on terms just when Mayo appeared to have the winning of

the game when they shot two points clear, with ten minutes remaining in a game which had no shortage of needle between the All-Ireland finalists of 2012.

It still looked like Mayo had done enough to seal it when Kevin McLoughlin fired them back into the lead from a free, four minutes from the end of normal time.

Goalkeeper's hands

Mayo, who kicked 12 wides to Donegal's five, had at least three chances of sealing it, the best falling to substitute Patrick Durcan whose effort from in front of goals landed in the goalkeeper's hands.

Another substitute Michael Conroy was also guilty of frittering away three late opportuni-

ties that should have given Mayo the win they required,

Kevin McLoughlin also off target with two kickable frees before he made that lead point.

But the draw was sufficient for a Donegal side who never gave up in a game which saw two players from Mayo and one from Donegal, sent off in the second half, two for black card offences, while Mayo's Donal Vaughan picked up a yellow card followed by a black, which resulted in a red card two minutes from time. Diarmuid O'Connor also got a black card deep in injury time.

Donegal hit 1-3 without reply midway through the first half, a seven-man move finished with a thunderous drive to the roof of the net by Patrick McBrearty

on 18 minutes.

Odhrán MacNiallais, who scored three superb points in that first half, had two of those after the goal, McBrearty also



Donegal manager Rory Gallagher: has guided his side into the semi-finals

adding a pointed free to put Donegal 1-5 to 0-4 ahead after 25 minutes.

However, Mayo gradually began to find a way through that Donegal defensive blanket which saw them play 13 men behind the ball and then hit Mayo

on the break.

Mayo's half-back line pushed up high and points from Barry Moran, Donal Vaughan and Aiden O'Shea narrowed the gap to the minimum. Barry Moran, who put in a man of the match performance around midfield, scored his third point early in the second half to level matters.

Ten minutes into the second half Mark McHugh came in for Hugh McFadden who picked up the first black card of the day Diarmuid O'Connor put Mayo ahead again on 39 minutes but a superb point from Colm McFadden - his only score for the day - had it deadlocked at 1-6 to 0-9 before Conroy and McLoughlin kicked Mayo two clear and seemingly on course for the knockouts.

But Patrick McBrearty took this game by the scruff of the neck with two superb points, to throw the issue back in the meeting point. McLoughlin landed what looked like the winner but Griffen and Donegal had the last word.

DONEGAL: M Boyle, E Doherty, N McGee, E McGee, P McGrath, K Lacey, F McGlynn, M McElhinney (0-1), C Toye, M O'Reilly, O MacNiallais (0-3), R McHugh, P McBrearty (1-3, 1f), H McFadden, C McFadden (0-1), Subs: C McGinley for Toye (44), A Thompson for E Doherty (44), M McHugh for H McFadden (BC, 45), S Griffen (0-1) for C McGinley (56).

MAYO: K O'Malley, B Harrison, K Keane, K Higgins, L Keegan, C Boyle, D Vaughan (0-1), B Moran (0-3), S O'Shea, K McLoughlin (0-3, 1f), A O'Shea (0-1), J Doherty (0-2, 2f), M Ronaldson, D Kirby, D O'Connor (0-1), Subs: M Conroy (0-1) for M Ronaldson (nt), S Coen for Harrison (44), A Moran for Kirby (54), P Durcan for Boyle (64), N Douglas for McLoughlin (88), M Hall for D O'Connor (72, BC).
Referee: D McGoldrick (Meath).

Allianz Football League Tables and results

Division 1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PD	Pts
Cork	7	5	0	2	10-89	7-90	+8	10
Dublin	7	4	1	2	7-93	2-78	+30	9
Monaghan	7	4	0	3	4-86	7-84	-7	8
Donegal	7	3	1	3	6-75	5-70	+8	7
Mayo	7	3	1	3	8-79	7-79	+3	7
Kerry	7	3	1	3	6-88	9-90	-11	7
Tyrone	7	1	3	3	3-76	6-81	-14	5
Derry	7	1	1	5	4-75	5-89	-17	3

Results: Derry 2-15 Cork 1-11, Mayo 0-12 Donegal 1-9, Monaghan 1-11 Dublin 1-22, Tyrone 0-17 Kerry 1-14

Division 2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PD	Pts
Down	7	5	0	2	11-89	6-90	+14	10
Roscommon	7	4	1	2	7-99	6-94	+8	9
Meath	7	4	1	2	7-87	4-80	+16	9
Galway	7	4	0	3	9-88	8-85	+6	8
Cavan	7	3	1	3	1-85	7-66	+1	7
Laois	7	2	1	4	8-80	5-92	-3	5
Westmeath	7	2	0	5	4-75	11-83	-29	4
Kildare	7	2	0	5	7-87	7-100	-13	4

Down 3-12 Laois 1-15, Galway 3-12 Kildare 1-12, Meath 0-14 Cavan 1-12, Westmeath 0-12 Roscommon 2-13

Division 3

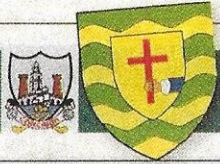
	P	W	D	L	F	A	PD	Pts
Fermanagh	7	5	1	1	8-89	4-71	+29	11
Armagh	7	5	1	1	11-76	5-75	+19	11
Tipperary	7	4	0	3	9-92	11-66	+20	8
Sligo	7	3	0	4	7-102	4-90	+21	6
Clare	7	3	0	4	5-89	11-75	-4	6
Limerick	7	3	0	4	10-67	10-90	-23	6
Louth	7	2	0	5	9-78	9-104	-26	4
Wexford	7	2	0	5	6-69	11-91	-37	4

Clare 1-14 Fermanagh 2-9, Louth 2-11 Limerick 2-13, Sligo 1-19 Armagh 1-8, Tipperary 2-12 Wexford 2-15

Division 4

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PD	Pts
Longford	7	6	1	0	5-103	3-76	+33	13
Offaly	7	5	1	1	5-90	7-58	+26	11
Antrim	7	4	1	2	5-87	3-88	+5	9
Leitrim	7	3	2	2	4-99	4-79	+20	8
Carlow	7	2	2	3	4-72	3-87	-12	6
Waterford	7	1	1	5	4-75	6-82	-13	3
Wicklow	7	1	1	5	3-70	6-85	-24	3
London	7	1	1	5	9-52	7-93	-35	3

Carlow 1-12 Longford 1-18, Offaly 1-13 Antrim 1-7, Wicklow 0-12 London 2-8



ALLIANZ NATIONAL LEAGUE SEMI-FINAL

Donegal get some great long range points in an attacking game that was like an exhibition match

MURPHY EXCELS ONCE MORE

DONEGAL	0-19
CORK	4-11

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Donegal lost out to Cork but will not be unduly worried after a good outing in an open game at Croke Park.

The game was a treat for spectators and was played more as an exhibition match than a seriously competitive game in the opening half. Both sides were willing to have a go and Donegal, in particular, kicked some great long range points, especially Odhran MacNiallais, Colm McFadden and Patrick McBrearty. The free count in each half reflected the nature of the game - 9-5 to Donegal in the first half and 7-6 to Donegal in the second. No Donegal player was booked!

The big difference between the sides were the Cork goals, taken with aplomb, while Donegal had two good chances, but both Colm McFadden and Patrick McBrearty were denied by Ken

O'Halloran.

Donegal started with Eoin McHugh and Hugh McFadden instead of Christy Toye and Martin O'Reilly.

Brian Hurley had the opening score with just over a minute on the clock and Donegal had three wides inside two and a half minutes.

Anthony Thompson, very prominent, equalised on four minutes and Michael Murphy almost had a goal as he took a pass from Odhran MacNiallais, turned and blazed just over (although Hawk Eye was needed to confirm).

Eoin McHugh, a surprise inclusion, was making an impression and he set up Patrick McBrearty for a third point before John O'Rourke and Fintan Goold levelled on seven minutes. McHugh was almost in for a goal later on and also made one great block back in defence in the opening half.

Donegal stretched four points clear by the 15th minute. Before that Colm McFadden was denied a goal by a last ditch tackle. Michael Murphy pointed the '45' while McBrearty, Murphy (free) and Odhran MacNiallais hit

a delightful strike from under the Hogan Stand.

Conor Dorman reduced the margin and Donegal were opened up for a goal when Colm O'Neill found corner-back Tom Clancy in space in front of the Donegal goal and he slid home.

Donegal's response was good with Murphy, Karl Lacey and Patrick McBrearty pointing, but Cork hit back with Fintan Goold (2) and Colm O'Driscoll.

Before half-time there was time for Colm McFadden to land his first point from 45m while Cork's best player, Brian Hurley, set up Colm O'Neill to leave the sides level, Donegal 0-11, Cork 1-8.

The nature of the match didn't change much in the second half but it was Cork who converted the goal chances they created. Colm O'Neill had their second inside three minutes when he was in place when the ball came back off a post.

Martin McElhinney hit a great point in reply but Brian Hurley got the better of Paddy McGrath to hit a great goal on 40 minutes.

Donegal did respond with three points from Michael Murphy (2) and Colm McFadden to reduce the margin to three - 3-10 to 0-16 but the goal they needed evaded them. Christy Toye, with his first touch, set up Patrick McBrearty on 50 minutes, but Ken O'Halloran got down to deny McBrearty.

After that the game fizzled to its inevitable conclusion with numerous substitutions on both sides, Patrick McBrearty and Michael Murphy got the final points for Donegal while Michael Shields and Colm O'Neill had points for the winners.

Apart from a captain's display from Michael Murphy, Frank McGlynn, Karl Lacey, Martin McElhinney, Eoin McHugh, Ryan McHugh, Patrick McBrearty and Colm McFadden can be happy with their contributions.

Overall, Donegal will be happy with the outing and they can now get their heads down to prepare for the Ulster Championship clash with Tyrone on May 17th..

Donegal: Michael Boyle;

Ryan McHugh: Worked really hard at trying to prise openings. Kept going to the end. 7

Patrick McBrearty: Another good display from the Kilcar man, who kicked some great scores. 7.5

Eoin McHugh: Making his Croke Park debut, McHugh had a really good first half and was involved in a few of the Donegal scores. Also got in one great block. 7

MAN OF THE MATCH

THE AWARD GOES TO FINTAN GOOLD, who hit four points from midfield for Cork, while Brian Hurley also had an exceptional game at corner forward. Michael Murphy and Martin McElhinney were the two Donegal players in contention.

TURNING POINT

The two Cork goals immediately after half-time turned the game with Donegal unable to make up the deficit thereafter.

REF WATCH

Marty Duffy will never have an easier game, issuing three yellow cards to Cork players and none to Donegal.

STATISTICS

Donegal won 16 frees (9 in first half) while they had seven wides (six in first half). They also had two 45s.

Cork won 11 frees (five in first half) and they had 13 wides (five in first half). They had one 45.

Paddy McGrath, Neil McGee, Eamon McGee; Frank McGlynn, Karl Lacey (0-1), Anthony Thompson (0-1); Odhran MacNiallais (0-1), Hugh McFadden; Eoin McHugh, Martin McElhinney (0-2), Ryan McHugh; Patrick McBrearty (0-4, 1f), Michael Murphy (0-8, 3f, 245), Colm McFadden (0-2). Subs., Eamonn Doherty for Thompson 40; Martin O'Reilly for E McHugh 45; Christy Toye for McGrath 49; Stephen Griffin for C McFadden 60; Daniel McLaughlin for H McFadden 63.

Cork: Ken O'Halloran; Tom Clancy (1-0), Michael Shields (0-1), James Loughrey; Conor Dorman (0-1), Brian O'Driscoll, Tomas Clancy; Eoin Cadogan, Fintan Goold (0-4); Colm O'Driscoll (0-1), John O'Rourke (0-1), Kevin O'Driscoll; Colm O'Neill (2-2, 1f), Mark Collins, Brian Hurley (1-1). Subs., Paul Kerrigan for Shields 55; Daniel Goulding for K O'Driscoll 60; Barry O'Driscoll for Brian O'Driscoll 63; John Hayes for Hurley 67; Donal Og Hodnett for O'Rourke 68.

Referee: Marty Duffy (Sligo)