

## **“Clean Ireland Recycling” Tipperary Senior Hurling**

### **Mullinahone Shock Toomevara**

#### **Mullinahone C J Kickhams 2-27 Toomevara 2-14**

Back in 2002 Mullinahone caused a huge surprise when they defeated Toomevara by a point in the Tipperary senior hurling semi-final. Toomevara had been the champions for the previous four years and went on to win the next two titles after 2002. In 2004 they would have won their 7th title in a row were it not for the Mullinahone Kickhams. Apart from 2006 when a late and lucky Paddy O’Brien goal thwarted the Kickhams, Toome have always held the upper hand. When the two clubs were drawn in the same group in the county championship this year many marked down Toome as hot favourites to overcome the South men and the relatively small crowd in Templetuohy on Sun. evening lent credence to that view. Those who did come along were stunned as the game unfolded. No Eoin Kelly in the Mullinahone lineout and the useful Kevin Walzer also an absentee at the throw in. County man Paul Curran was fit enough to line out but the odds seemed stacked against the Kickhams. Rumours told that Toome were on the wane but again the wisdom was that Mullinahone would do well to escape a heavy beating. The thought seems to have extended as far as Mullinahone as the number of Kickhams supporters seemed small in number and far less vocal than the Toomevara contingent when referee Sean Everard threw in the ball on a lovely April evening made for hurling.

Mullinahone shot the first three points in three minutes per Kevin Bolger, Sean Curran and Micheál Dunne but Franny Devaney calmed Toome nerves with two points in the 4th minute. He seemed likely to give Mullinahone centre back Eoin Fennelly a torrid evening but Fennelly rallied and the centre of he and Paul Curran became a no go area for Toome. Kevin Bolger pointed from midfield. Joey McLoughney replied from a free but Sean Curran pointed in eight minutes. The score now stood at Mullinahone 0-06 Toomevara 0-03 with Mullinahone displaying a nice crisp brand of hurling and no signs of an early collapse. Conor O’Meara and Sean Curran exchanged points. We had a few flare-ups with a couple of yellow cards but Mullinahone emerged unruffled with the backs very sure in gaining possession. Sean Curran began to cause huge trouble for Toome from the centre forward position and they began to foul as the speed of Mullinahone’s hurling started to trouble them. Jack Shelly at full forward was also coming into the game winning possession and then being fouled. Sean Curran was striking frees in the manner of the absent, Kelly. He was also scoring from play. Before the end he was to have built up a personal tally of 0-15, back to his best form of a couple of years ago. A Jack

Shelly point put Mullinahone 0-09 to 0-04 ahead. Messing in the Mullinahone defence gifted Toome a point which might have resulted in a goal. A minute later McLoughney pointed and his side appeared to have steadied the ship by the 20th minute. In the last ten minutes of the first half Toome were blitzed by the South lads who hit them for six points with only one in reply. Sean Curran with some help from his brother Alan and Cathal Horan were the chief architects. Half time arrived with the score Mullinahone C.J. Kickhams 0-15. Toomevara 0-07.

Curran pointed a free in the 3rd minute. Toome brought in David Young to try and curb him. They hit three points to leave the score after 10 minutes Mullinahone 0-16, Toomevara 0-10. Sensing danger, Mullinahone flashed over four points in five minutes. Toome pointed, but they needed a goal. It was Mullinahone who got one in 17 minutes with the credit going to Micheál Dunne or Cathal Horan. Toome hit back with a goal of their own straight away, but the harm had been done. A neat bout of passing in 18 minutes resulted in a Donal Cody point. Toome replied, but Micheál Dunne answered with a point in 22 minutes. Graham Horan pointed and the roof fell in for Toome in 24 minutes when a mix up in their goal area saw Mullinahone goal again. Within a minute Toome replied with a goal of their own from Joey McLoughney. Jack Shelly pointed from the puck out. Jack Delaney pointed for Toome. Sean Curran replied. Delaney pointed again, but Curran hit back twice more to hammer the final nails into Toome's coffin. Final score Mullinahone C.J. Kickhams 2-27 Toomevara 2-14.

The final result left many shaking their heads and posing questions. Have Toome slipped so far? Are Mullinahone as good as they seemed? In truth, they played good skilful hurling with the team prepared to contest for the ball. Their defence was sound with midfield playing well in the first half. Up front, Sean Curran took the honours, but the younger contingent can also take scores. Toome were out of sorts. Their younger contingent lacked the bite of more recent Toome teams. No doubt, they will improve, but they paid dearly for a tendency to foul. No doubt, with such a shock start, this group also involving Ballingarry and Boherlahan has more surprises to throw up before the group is settled. It would be silly to write off Toome while Ballingarry were always capable of surprising the Kickhams even in Mullinahone's best days. Boherlahan could yet be the surprise team in the group, but Mullinahone will be happy with a good start.

### **Teams:**

**Mullinahone C.J. Kickhams:** Alan Walsh, Niall Curran, Paul Curran, Keith Mullally, Gary Cronin, Eoin Fennelly, Luke Mullally, Kevin Bolger, Alan Curran, Cathal Horan, Sean Curran, Donal Cody, Micheál Dunne, Jack Shelly, Graham Horan. Sub. Kevin Walzer.

**Toomavara:** Aiden Cahill, Liam Ryan, Andrew Ryan, Colin Hall, Conor Delaney, Darren Delaney, Luke Ryan, Conor O'Meara, Paddy Grace, John Delaney, Franny Devaney, Joey McLoughney, Jack Delaney, Benny Dunne, Paul Ryan. Sub. David Young.

**Referee:** Sean Everard (Moynemount)