

Rhode Begin Defence of Title With Runaway Win in Local Derby

Rhode 2-12
Daingean 0-3

The second senior football championship game on the Walsh Island programme on Saturday evening saw defending champions, Rhode, make an impressive start to the defence of the Dowling Cup, although the merit of their 2-12 to 0-3 victory over Daingean may have been exaggerated by the calibre of opposition.

Of course Rhode were always warm favourites to win this local derby. Buttressed by county players in key positions and reproducing a lot of the flair which brought them out of the wilderness last year, they looked every inch a well balanced side, but the dismissal of influential midfielder David Bannon who was sent to the line by referee Mick Mahon in the closing minutes will not have pleased manager Eugene Mulligan. Clearly, Rhode are the side all the others have to beat, and the odds against them retaining the title will have shortened considerably following this emphatic victory. Their defence was very tight, but tended to concede too many frees – a fault that might prove costly in a closely contested game. The champions also packed plenty of power up front, with five of their six forwards finding the target. In contrast, Daingean could manage only one point from play in the course of the hour.

There was nothing in the first half exchanges to suggest that Rhode would have matters so much their own way. Their interval lead was just 0-6 to 0-2, but having played into the wind for the opening 30 minutes they must have felt that their quarter-final place was assured even at that stage.

Pascal Kellaghan accounted for four of Rhode's first half points, three of them being scored from frees, and the half dozen was completed by Roy Malone and Eddie Byrne. Daingean's points in reply were scored by Tony Kenny (free) and Enda Corcoran.

One-Way Traffic

It was very much a case of one-way traffic on the change of ends, for Daingean found themselves subjected to relentless pressure. They coped well for a while, but buckled under the sustained pressure in the final quarter. Still, the holders had to wait until the 48th minute for their first goal, which was netted by Joe Kilmurray following a storming run from inside his own half, and just before the finish Eddie Byrne raised a second green flag to put the icing on the cake. Daingean's only senior county player, John Kenny, was clearly hampered by injury and failed to produce his best form.

Scorers:

Rhode – E. Byrne 1-2, P. Kellaghan 0-4 (3 frees), J. Kilmurray 1-0, R. Malone & P. Daly 0-2 each, D. Bannon & A. McNamee 0-1 each
Daingean – T. Kenny 0-2 (2 frees), E. Corcoran 0-1

Rhode: Adrian Daly, Alan Kellaghan, Barry Malone, Pdraig Dunne, Richie Harnett, Pat Kenny, Joe Kilmurray, Fergal Dunne, David Bannon, Alan McNamee, Roy Malone, Declan Gorman, Pat Daly, Eddie Byrne, Pascal Kellaghan. Subs – Ken Kellaghan for Declan Gorman, Anthony Hyland for Joe Kilmurray.

Daingean: Ollie Corcoran, Craig Slattery, Sean McEvoy, David Carey, Stephen Burns, John Greene, Mark Whittle, Brendan Donagher, John Kenny, Eddie Greene, Paul Jordan, Enda Corcoran, Mick Connolly, Tony Kenny, James Keating. Subs –

John F. Kennedy for Mick Connolly, Gareth Curley for Mark Whittle, Ciaran Carey for Brendan Donagher.

Referee: Mick Mahon (Shannonbridge)