

The Clare People

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Volume 4 Issue 29 Tue 15 July 2008 (065) 6895500

€1.80 (UK £1.50)

FOOTBALL SUPPLEMENT INSIDE
8-page special on the weekend's championship clashes



Sharon Collins adjusting to prison life

Emer Connolly

ENNIS woman Sharon Collins has spent the weekend in jail after being convicted of soliciting a poker dealer to murder her partner PJ Howard and his sons, Robert and Niall.

The mother-of-two, of Ballybeg House, Kildysart Road, Ennis, was

also found guilty of conspiracy to murder the three Howards, at the end of an eight-week trial at the Central Criminal Court in Dublin.

She was remanded in custody to the Laurel House unit of Mountjoy women's prison where she is one of ten inmates, including Tanya Lamb (30), who is serving a 10-year term

for killing her partner with a hockey stick.

Her co-accused, Essam Eid (52), a native of Egypt, was found guilty of extortion and handling stolen property and acquitted of burglary at the Howards' family business in Ennis.

However, the jury could not decide on conspiracy to murder charges

against him and recorded a verdict of disagreement.

Collins denied setting up the email address lyngeyes98@yahoo.ie and hiring a hitman over the internet in 2006. She claimed that she had been the victim of a set up.

U See pages 12 & 13



Dejected Clare fans during Clare's Munster Final loss to Tipperary on Sunday. See Sports for full coverage, reaction and analysis. Eamon Ward

Addiction services in meltdown

Andrew Hamilton

CLARE addicts over the age of 24 are being forced to fend for themselves as counselling and detox facilities waver on the verge of collapse because of under funding in the public health service.

The Clare People has learned that Sláinte, the HSE's local drug and alcohol treatment service, has been forced to limit its service to those under the age of 24.

The recruitment freeze in the HSE has also left more than half the county without a local mental health counsellor as staff covering the Ennis, east Clare and west Clare regions have not been replaced.

This has created a situation where Clare GPs have no place to refer patients who present with alcohol or drug addiction problems, while GPs outside of Ennis, east and west Clare

can only refer addiction patients with mental problems to the mental health services which they claim are "inappropriate" to their needs.

"There is a big difficulty in Clare when it comes to funding. At the moment, in large areas of the county there is no counselling service available at all. We have a worse service now than we had back in 2006," said Clare county councillor and community nurse manager with Clare community mental health services, Joe Arkins (FG).

"We may have the offices and the signs outside the door, but we don't have the personnel inside. The area is badly under funded. People over 24 years of age are being sent to the mental health services which is a totally inappropriate place to send them.

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What A Show


A great day out as the country moves to town
Feature



Naomi On High
European award for Ballyvaughan singer
News



Meelick Tragedy
Local woman dies as fire destroys her home
News



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SENIOR FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

S P E C I A L S U P P L E M E N T



Ballyvaughan the brave

Joe Ó Muirheartaigh

THEY'RE a superstitious lot in Ballyvaughan and Fanore. They don't pose for team photographs until they have a cup. It means there won't be a photo of Ballyvaughan's first senior team until they have Jack Daly.

It's a dreamy notion for sure, but it doesn't stop the Ballyvaughan boys dreaming. And, one more dream came to life in Ennistymon on Saturday night when they shocked 2006 champions Éire Óg with a stunning second half comeback that sent shockwaves around Clare football

country.

The news was greeted with gasps of amazement at games in Kilmihil and Miltown Malbay – Clare football had been turned on its head by Ballyvaughan, a club that haven't basked in the senior football limelight since Fanore's Paddy O'Donohue played for the county in the 1917 All-Ireland or Sean Mac Néill O'Loghlen and a few others were on the Liscannor team that won the 1940 championship.

The thrill of it all was summed up by manager Pat Costello afterwards. "It was brilliant to beat Éire Óg, it's

hard to describe really how it feels," he said. "We didn't know what to expect going into this game – we had a few injuries and only had 18 togged at the start of the game, while they had 33 or 34. That's the difference, but we got on with it and got a few more lads to tog out on the day.

"Beating Éire Óg is bigger and better than beating Cusack's in last year's intermediate final. It's huge for us. People said we'd go straight back down to intermediate. There were even people in our own parish who said we were only a junior team, but we proved them wrong with this

result.

"Scoring 2-10 in senior football is a great achievement. A lot of senior matches are won in Clare with scores a lot lower than that. We knew we were capable of this – we knew we were fit enough to play for 60 minutes and had made our mind up beforehand that we were going to play for the football for the 60 minutes. That's what we did.

"We were slow enough to get going in midfield, but once we got to grips there Éire Óg couldn't stop us going forward. We deserved it and it's a huge boost for the club and our

first ever adult win in Ennistymon," he added.

With that it was time to repair to Logue's Lodge in Ballyvaughan, where the Talty Cup they won in last year's 'Battle of the Burren' with Michael Cusack's for the intermediate title was filled one more time.

The Jack Daly race had started with a big bang. A very big one at that.

Above: The Ballyvaughan boys in a huddle before their greatest day - as the defeated Éire Óg in their first ever senior championship game in Ennistymon on Saturday. Eamon Ward

Gaels too strong for Miltown

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Ballyvaughan shock the Townies

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Kilmurry and Kilkee share spoils

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**BEST &
FIRST
FOR GAA
COVERAGE
IN CLARE**

Shams hold on against Barefield

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Doonbeg take down the champs



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Liscannor edge out Cooraclare

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GROUP TWO  Round Two

Ballyvaughan boys' Ennistymon ambush

 Ballyvaughan 2-10 - Éire Óg 1-11 

at Ennistymon



Éire Óg picked up where they left off after the break. Hickey pointed inside 30 seconds before Glynn and Daniels tacked on two more. Another point from Hickey stretched Éire Óg's lead to ten points.

But Éire Óg's problems hadn't gone away. Cian Walsh chased a loose pass in the Éire Óg half with no one for company. Walsh tapped the ball onto Queally and he steadied, before hitting the net.

Martyn landed a beaut of free before Mahon ripped up the middle and roofed the ball to the Éire Óg net in 41st minute. The goal shaved Éire Óg's lead to three points.

Ballyvaughan seized their chance. Martyn popped over another three points. Éire Óg responded with a point from Daniels. Six minutes left. One point in it. Queally executed a slickly worked point from the right. All square. Moran, leaped, caught and pointed. Ballyvaughan led. Hynes' point left Éire Óg requiring a goal.

The Townies had nothing. Ballyvaughan won and the landscape of Group Two takes on a different complexion. Just one game said Ballyvaughan selector Patsy Carrucan afterwards.

But what a game.

Left: Ballyvaughan manager Pat Costello plots an amazing comeback victory with his players in Ennistymon.

Below: The Éire Óg team, who suffered only their second championship defeat in 14 games are now staring an early exit from the Jack Daly race.

Eamon Ward

Won and Lost

WHEN Cillian Mahon roofed the ball to the Éire Óg net for Ballyvaughan's second goal in the 41st minute, you knew something special was brewing in Ennistymon. Ballyvaughan suddenly believed. Éire Óg were paralysed and were swept aside as Ballyvaughan surged clear at the finish line. It was an Éire Óg collapse and the worst half hour of football produced by the town team since it returned to senior ranks in 1995. When Ballyvaughan smelled victory they went after it with ravenous intent. Éire Óg on this performance don't know what the word ravenous means anymore.

Match Details

Ballyvaughan Damien McNamara (7), Mark Walsh (7), Philip Monks (6), Sean McNamara (7), Mark O'Loughlin (7), Kieran Casey (7), Setanta Moran (8) (0-3), Raymond Casey (7), James Hynes (7) (0-1), Paul McDonagh (7), Cian Walsh (7), Kevin Carrucan (7), Jack Oueally (7) (1-1), Cillian Mahon (7) (1-0), John Martyn (8) (0-5, 4f) **Subs** John Linnane (6) for Queally, Jason McDonagh (7) for Paul McDonagh

Éire Óg Shane O'Connell (7), Alan Malone (6), Donie Lyne (7), Dean Ryan (7), Paul Madden (6), Marty Whelan (6), Saran Butler (6) (0-2), Brian Frawley (6), Peter Cosgrove (6), Brian Shanahan (7) (0-1), Shane Daniels (7) (0-3, 2f), Brian Fitzpatrick (6) (0-1), Sean O'Meara (6), Stephen Hickey (7) (1-2)(1f), Eoin Glynn (7) (0-2) **Subs** Brian Lennihan (6) for Fitzpatrick

Man of the Match

John Martyn (Ballyvaughan)
HE may share his name with a famous Scottish folk singer, but there was nothing laid back about John Martyn's performance. Quick to the ball and full of running, Martyn landed some crucial points late on. A thorn in Éire Óg's side and more than likely a few others this season.

Match Official John Brew (Kilmurry Ibrickane)

Ronan Judge

THIS was Ballyvaughan's first ever game in the senior football championship and what a way to start. Ten points down with 22 minutes left, this story was set.

A win for Éire Óg, despite manifest defensive failings. Stagefright for Ballyvaughan.

And then, with goals from Jack Queally and Cillian Mahon, predictions went out the window, Éire Óg went into retreat and like the train that tortured Johnny Cash in *Folsom Prison Blues*, Ballyvaughan just kept on rolling.

They were level by the 49th minute; ahead through Setanta Moran's point in the 55th minute and in each other's arms at the final whistle. Éire Óg were losing the plot with Peter Cosgrove picking up a red card in injury time after comments that clearly found no favour with referee John Brew.

How did it all happen? Ballyvaughan never stopped believing and after blowing two goal chances, they did the business in the second half. James Hynes and Raymond Casey wrestled back some authority in midfield. Mark O'Loughlin and Setanta Moran gave Ballyvaughan extra gallop on the flanks.

Closer to goal the stylish John

Martyn never faltered from dead balls and Jack Queally grew in confidence as the game wore on. Éire Óg can't argue that the goals came as bolts from the blue.

Éire Óg can't afford any more slip-ups. Unlike for Ballyvaughan, the match programme listed no management team for Éire Óg. The Townies are in desperate need of a strong voice on the line.

The alarm bells were ringing loud and clear in the first half as goalkeeper Shane O'Connell twice came to Éire Óg's rescue.

Large chunks of space were a constant feature in the Éire Óg half-back line. Despite doing a decent job, Dean Ryan and Donie Lyne were left brutally exposed in the second half. Still, all of this should have a matter for another day and not the basis for a demoralizing defeat.

Four Éire Óg points in the first eight minutes of the second half left the scores 1-10 to 0-3. That should have been the end of it, from Éire Óg's point of view. It was, of course, only the beginning as far as Ballyvaughan were concerned.

There wasn't much between them in the opening stages. Éire Óg posted points through Daniels, Brian Shannon and Saran Butler. Ballyvaughan stuck close behind with

points from Moran and Martyn.

Both sides could have had goals by then. Éire Óg had one disallowed when Fitzpatrick was penalised for pushing. Ballyvaughan, not for the first time, powered through and empty corridor but Hynes shot was well blocked behind by Shane O'Connell.

This triggered a response from Éire Óg. Peter Cosgrove landed a high ball on top of Hickey. The full forward

adjusted his footing and poked a goal in the 17th minute.

Hickey won plenty of ball off Philip Monks, even if his shooting was at times erratic.

This was Éire Óg's best spell. Points from Butler, Eoin Glynn and Fitzpatrick pulled them 1-6 to 0-2 clear at the break. Ballyvaughan went off, cursing another missed goal chance with Martyn the culprit this time around.



END OF THE DAY...



THE PEOPLE'S TEAM à

For the first update on The Clare People's fantasy football team, check out this next Tuesday's Clare People when we give you the leading ten performers in our championship challenge.

RESULTS à

- Group 1**
Shannon Gaels 1-13 St Joseph's Miltown 0-9
- Group 2**
Ballyvaughan 2-10 Éire Óg 1-11
- Group 3**
St Senan's Kilkee 2-7 Kilmurry Ibrickane 0-13
Kilrush Shamrocks 2-9 St Joseph's
Doora-Barefield 0-13
- Group 4**
Doonbeg 1-10 Lissycasey 0-8
Liscannor 0-8 Cooraclare 1-4

TOP PLAYER à



Conor Whelan (Doonbeg)
DOONBEG served notice of their intent in '08 with their comfortable victory over champions Lissycasey - Whelan's performance summed up this intent, scoring a point from play from full-back rounded off a great performance. The Magpies mean real business under Tommy Tubridy.

TOP GAME à

Kilmurry Ibrickane v St Senan's Kilkee
THIS was a genuine clash of heavyweights. Kilmurry Ibrickane, unbeaten all year with the O'Gorman Cup and Cusack Cup already on the sideboard, up against renowned championship campaigners St Senan's. Kilmurry were going for their 19th competitive win in a row, but at half-time it looked as if Kilkee's championship hoodoo over them was about continue. The Blues beat them in the semi-final in '03 and the final in '05 and led 2-4 to 0-6 having played against the breeze. However, the battling qualities the men from the barony of Ibrickane showed in winning the Cusack Cup were again to the fore as they clawed their way back to parity with the equalising point coming from Cusack Cup final hero Mark McCarthy.



CLARE FOOTBALL'S FUTURE à

Mark McCarthy (Kilmurry Ibrickane)
Brian Clancy (St Senan's Kilkee)



Above: Lissycasey legend Martin Daly manning the line in St Michael's Park, Kilmihil on Saturday evening, having earlier started the game as a player, only for injury to strike him down in the first half. Eamon Ward

PLAY OF WEEK à

Shannon Gaels v St Joseph's Miltown
THE goal that put Shannon Gaels on the high road. It came courtesy of a raid down the left flank by Michael Coughlan, who played a one-two with Brian Cunningham before lofting a great ball into David Neylon. He tapped down to John Paul O'Neill who slammed the ball to the net. Game over really.

TOP TEAM à



Ballyvaughan
THIS was their first foray into senior championship football. And, a baptism of fire it was, being put in against the 2006 champions who had lost only one game out of the last 14 in the competition. Ballyvaughan claimed the Townies' scalps in one of the most sensational results in many years, coming from only ten points down with just over 20 minutes remaining. It was a stunning comeback to say the very least.

John Martyn (Ballyvaughan)
Noel Downes (Kilmurry Ibrickane)

LESSONS LEARNED à

THE biggest lesson learned on weekend one of the Jack Daly race was the value of putting proper management structures in place early in the season. The two teams who didn't were the biggest losers - champions Lissycasey and their predecessors Éire Óg. Both have struggled off the field in finding management teams - strange for the two most successful teams in the county over the past few years. Lissycasey changed midway through the season - Éire Óg only last week. Now both are firefighting - Lissycasey to prove that they weren't one hit wonders, Éire Óg to prove that they will not be remembered as a 'Golden Generation' who have grossly underachieved. Over confidence and arrogance was their undoing in last year's county final, and it hasn't gone away, with a genuine fear that they could soon be fighting relegation to the intermediate ranks rather than challenging for honours. Lissycasey meanwhile, are in a similar situation, with their difficulties compounded by the fact that they're in Group 4 - the recognised 'Group of Death' in the 2008 championship race.

TOP TACTIC à

Shannon Gaels v St Joseph's Miltown
PUTTING Michael Coughlan on Graham Kelly. Kelly played very well but Coughlan spoiled him and grew into the game in a big way.

SENT PACKING à

Peter Cosgrove (Éire Óg)
Michael Conway (Doonbeg)

QUOTE UNQUOTE à

“A man coming through - take his body first. No f***** prisoners I tell you.”

“Kilrush selector John Fennell doesn't dance around his instructions to one of his players about to enter the fray as a substitute near the end of their championship clash with St Joseph's Doora-Barefield in Kilmihil.”



HOT SHOTS à

Cathal O'Sullivan (St Joseph's D-Barefield) 0-7
Michael O'Shea (St Senan's Kilkee) 1-4 (Above)
Pat Joe McGrath (Kilrush Shamrocks) 1-3
John Martyn (Ballyvaughan) 0-5
Stephen Hickey (Éire Óg) 1-2
John Paul O'Neill (Shannon Gaels) 1-2
Mark McCarthy (Kilmurry Ibrickane) 0-5
Brian Cunningham (Shannon Gaels) 0-5

TOP 15 à

Nigel Dillon (Doonbeg)		
Tomas Madigan (Shannon Gaels)	Conor Whelan (Doonbeg)	Dara Blake (Liscannor)
Christy Kirwan (St Senan's)	Brian Considine (Liscannor)	Setanta Moran (Ballyvaughan)
James Hynes (Ballyvaughan)		
David Russell (St Senan's)		
Michael O'Shea (St Senan's Kil)	Cathal O'Sullivan (St Joseph's D-B)	Noel Downes (Kilmurry Ibrick)
Pat Joe McGrath (Kilrush Sham)	John Martyn (Ballyvaughan)	John Paul O'Neill (Shannon Gaels)