

# The 2018 County Senior Hurling Championship

By Seamus J. King

Against the odds and in the face of public expectations, Clonoulty-Rossmore won their fourth county senior hurling title at Semple Stadium on October 21, when they defeated Nenagh Eire Óg by 0-23 to 2-13 in the final. Quoted at 9-4 beforehand following the display of their opponents in dethroning the champions of the previous four years in the semi-final, Clonoulty-Rossmore were expected to provide the opposition but were not supposed to deliver a performance and secure a victory that was more deserved and decisive than the four-point margin of victory might suggest. While there were superb individual performances on the day, the West champions' victory was a massive team achievement in which every individual played a hero's part.

What may have been forgotten in the hype of Nenagh Eire Óg's semi-final victory was how close the sides were when they met in the group stage of the championship in August. Nenagh won that encounter by 1-20 to 1-18 and had to survive a late Clonoulty-Rossmore onslaught. In a game in which each side enjoyed periods of dominance, the West side led by a point at the interval. Within ten minutes of the resumption they had gone into a six-point lead. It was then Nenagh Eire Óg's turn, who converted the six points down into four clear as time ebbed away, but then came Clonoulty-Rossmore's final rally, which came up just two points short. It could have been either side's game.

## Dan Breen Cup

The Dan Breen Cup had sixteen teams. The list had two changes from the previous year when Ballina and Burgess were relegated and Toomevara and Roscrea promoted from the O'Riain Cup. The full list of teams was as follows: Clonoulty-Rossmore, Nenagh Eire Óg, Mullinahone, Roscrea, Toomevara, Eire Óg, Anacarty, Kilruane MacDonaghs, Killenaule, Upperchurch-Drombane, Drom Inch, Thurles Sarsfields, Carrick Swans, Kiladangan, Loughmore-Castleiney, Borris-Ileigh, Portroe.

Divided into four groups, they played off on a league basis and the top two teams in each group qualified for the play-offs.

In Group 1 Clonoulty-Rossmore and Nenagh Eire Óg came through, with Mullinahone and Roscrea losing out. In Group 2 Toomevara and Kilruane MacDonaghs were successful with Eire

Óg Anacarty and Killenaule failing to make the cut. In Group 3 the successful teams were Drom Inch and Thurles Sarsfields with Upperchurch-Drombane and Carrick Swans failing to qualify. In Group 4 Kiladangan and Loughmore-Castleiney qualified to the exclusion of Borris-Ileigh and Portroe.

## Quarter-finals

Because Killenaule won the South championship they got another bite of the cherry, a place in a preliminary quarter-final. Their opponents came from the runners-up in the three groups in which they weren't involved and, in a draw, Loughmore-Castleiney got the short straw. The sides played at Borris-Ileigh on September 15 and the Mid side came through by 3-12 to 1-16.

The quarter-finals proper were played on the weekend of September 19/30. Two of them were played at Nenagh on September 29th. Toomevara caused an upset when they defeated Drom-Inch by 3-15 to 1-20. With the wind in the first half they led by 2-8 to 0-7 at the interval and could have been out of sight had they been more economical with their chances. A two-goal blast in the 11th minute had put daylight between the sides. Drom Inch's chances were severely dented shortly after the resumption when they had a player red-carded. They fought back but a third goal for Toomevara after nineteen minutes put seven points between the sides once again. Drom Inch refused to lie down and reduced the margin to three points with seven minutes to go. They had reduced it to a point deep into injury time and Toomevara just survived.

In the second game at Nenagh Thurles Sarsfields came back from the dead with a last gasp goal from Ronan Maher in the second minute of injury time to win by the minimum of margins, 2-14 to 1-16, from Kilruane MacDonaghs.

The remaining two quarter-finals were played at Dolla on September 30. Clonoulty-Rossmore had a four-point win over Kiladangan on a scoreline of 1-19 to 1-15. The winners raced into a 0-8 to 0-2 lead after eighteen minutes but Kiladangan drew level, 0-9 each, by half-time. Clonoulty stamped their authority on the game in the third quarter and led by 1-14 to 0-10. Kiladangan reduced the margin with three unanswered points and reduced it further to three points following a goal. In the dying minutes Darragh Egan had a twenty-metre free to level



## Clonoulty Rossmore - County senior hurling championship winners

Front l-r, Denis Murphy, Donnacha Quirke, Nathan Slattery, James Hammersley, Joey O'Keffee, Tom Butler, Michael Ryan (W), Cathal Bourke, Fiachra O'Keffee, John O'Keffee (Capt), Timmy Hammersley, Conor Hammersley, Paudie White, Ronan Heffernan, Paddy Hennessy, Paddy Ryan and Paul Hayes, Back l-r, Niall Shanahan, Aidan White, David Egan, Thomas Butler, Aidan Loughman, Paudie Carew, Sean O'Connor, James Ryan (C), Dillon Quirke, Declan O'Dwyer, Enda Heffernan, Ciaran Quirke, Aaron Ryan (R), Kieran Carroll, Odhran Quirke, Pdraig Heffernan, James Heffernan, Jack Ryan and Liam Devane.



the scores but it was saved and from the clearance Clonoulty had a point for their four-point margin of victory.

Nenagh Éire Óg had a five-point margin of victory over Loughmore-Castleiney on a scoreline of 2-17 to 0-18. The winners led by 2-9 to 0-8 at the halfway stage and were eight points ahead, 2-14 to 0-12, at the three-quarter stage. At this stage the Mid men made their move with four unanswered points and were only a goal in arrears with five minutes to play. However, it was Nenagh that got the later points for their five-point victory.

### Semi-finals

The semi-finals were held in Semple Stadium on October 7. Clonoulty-Rossmore defeated Toomevara by 0-19 to 1-10. Toomevara, with the aid of the breeze, performed poorly in the first half, failed to score from play and had to rely on the stick of full-forward Mark McCarthy for the five points they registered in the first half, three of them from side line cuts. Clonoulty-Rossmore led by double scores at the break, 0-10 to 0-5. The West men kept up the tempo after the break adding a few points and Toomevara didn't get their first point from play until the tenth minute, when Jack Delaney pointed. He had a second soon after and then, in the twelfth minute, David Young goaled. This was the high point of their effort as they reduced the deficit to four points but Clonoulty were never really troubled and got the final points for a six-point margin of victory.

The big talking point was in the second game when Nenagh Éire Óg defeated the reigning champions, Thurles Sarsfields, by 2-18 to 2-15. The challengers got off to a great start with a decisive 1-3 scored before Thurles Sarsfields came alive. They led by 1-10 to 0-5 at the break and by the end of the third quarter were ten points in front, 2-13 to 0-9. Sarsfields pulled themselves out of their torpore at this stage and goals in the 49th and 55th minutes left only a goal between the sides, 2-13 to 1-13. Nenagh Éire Óg went ahead again with a string of four points to open up a lead of seven points by the 62nd minute, A point by Pa Bourke and a 65th minute goal by Ronan Maher cut the lead to a goal but it was to be Nenagh's day and they more than deserved their three-point victory.

### The Final

The final was played at Semple Stadium on October 21, when the underdogs, Clonoulty-Rossmore, took their fourth title by 0-23 to 2-13. It was a great performance by the men from the West who worked their socks off from start to finish to give a hugely effective performance, which harried and hassled the Nenagh players to such an extent they were unable to deliver quality



Jake Morris (Nenagh Éire Óg) being chased by two Clonoulty defenders.



Timmy Hammersley receives the Man of the Match award from John Quirke Jewellers Cahir while John O'Keeffe holds the Dan Breen Cup presented by County Board Chairman John Devane.

ball to their forwards.

The winners led by 0-6 to 0-4 by the eighteenth minute but a goal from Philip Hickey in the 19th minute and the points that followed appeared to give Nenagh Éire Óg the momentum, but Clonoulty rallied with a number of points to lead by 0-12 to 1-8, at the break. The sides were level again ten minutes after the resumption but Clonoulty then surged ahead with three points, two from Timmy Hammersley. Nenagh came back with a bang, a point by Brian Heffernan followed by a goal by Paddy Murphy to put them ahead by 2-12 to 0-17. Points were exchanged and Timmy Hammersley levelled with four minutes remaining. During these four minutes, plus the three added on, Clonoulty-Rossmore showed themselves the stuff of champions as they scored four unanswered points and dispelled any doubts that their supporters or anybody else might have had of their claim to the Dan Breen Cup.

**Clonoulty-Rossmore:** Declan O'Dwyer, Joey O'Keeffe, Ciaran Quirke, James Ryan (C), Sean O'Connor, John O'Keeffe (0-1), Enda Heffernan, Conor Hammersley, Michael Ryan (W), (0-1) Cathal Bourke (0-3), Dillon Quirke (0-2), Paudie White (0-2), Fiachra O'Keeffe (0-1), Timmy Hammersley (0-12), Tom Butler (0-1). Subs: Ronan Heffernan for Fiachra O'Keeffe, James Hammersley for Joey O'Keeffe, Thomas Butler for Paudie White. Also: David Egan, Pádraig Carew, Liam Devane, Paul Hayes, James Heffernan, Aidan Loughman, Denis Murphy, Donnchadh Quirke, Aaron Ryan, Patrick Ryan, Niall Shanahan, Aidan White.

Manager, John Devane. Selectors: Paddy Bourke, Jason Forrester. Doctor: Jerry O'Sullivan. Physio: Emily Hayden. Logistics: Con O'Keeffe, P. J. O'Sullivan.

**Nenagh Éire Óg:** Shane Hennessy, Conor Ryan, Noel Maloney, Conor McCarthy, Daire Quinn, Hugh Maloney, Barry Heffernan (0-1), Pearse Morris, Killian Gleeson (0-1), Philip Hickey (1-1), Michael Heffernan (0-1), Tommy Heffernan (0-1), Jake Morris (0-6), Paddy Murphy (1-1), Andrew Coffey (0-1). Subs: James Mackey for Pearse Morris, Adam Gratton for Noel Maloney. Also: Michael McNamara, John Brennan, Mark Flannery, Niall Madden, Adam Carey, Adam Healy, Craig Hilmi, Mark O'Farrell, Killian Malone, Christopher Ryan, Niall McKeogh, Dan O'Donovan, Mark Tuitt.

Manager: John Fitzgerald. Selectors: John Phelan, Paul Ryan, Brian McDonnell. Coach: Darragh Droog. Kit Man: Matt Lillis, Physio: Paul Ryan. First Aid: Noreen Ryan, Liam Quinn. Doctor: Paul O'Farrell.

**Referee:** Kevin Jordan (Thurles Gaels). Standby Referee: Johnny Ryan. Linesman: Sean Everard. 4th Official: Mark Dunne. Umpires: Martin Fitzpatrick, Dermot Ryan, Christy Moore, Paul Stepleton.

**Man of the Match Award:** Timmy Hammersley (Clonoulty-Rossmore).

**Attendance:** 7,406



## The O'Riain Cup

Twelve teams played in the O'Riain Cup, Burgess, St. Marys, J. K. Brackens, Ballingarry, Silvermines, Templederry, Clonakenny, Newport, Holycross Ballycahill, Moycarkey-Borris, Ballina, Lorrha. The change from the previous year was the relegation of Borrisokane and Knockavilla Kickhams and the promotion of St. Mary's, which resulted in the reduction of the number of teams to twelve from thirteen. They were divided into three groups of four, with the top two in each group to qualify for the play-offs.

In Group 1 Burgess and J. K. Brackens qualified, while St. Mary's and Ballingarry were eliminated. In group 2 Silvermines and Templederry qualified, while Newport and Clonakenny failed to make the play-offs. In Group 3 the qualifiers were Holycross-Ballycahill and Moycarkey-Borris, while Ballina and Lorrha failed to make the cut.

Of the six teams that qualified, two, Burgess and Moycarkey-Borris, got byes to the semi-finals on the basis of topping their respective groups with full points. The remaining four teams played the quarter-finals.

These games were played on September 16. J. K. Brackens defeated Silvermines by 2-25 to 3-20 at Toomevara, while Templederry Kenyons beat Holycross-Ballycahill by 2-14 to 0-15 at Kilcommon.

The semi-finals were played on the weekend of October 6. Moycarkey-Borris defeated J. K. Brackens by 1-18 to 0-18 at the Ragg. A great save by Moycarkey goalkeeper, Ryhs Shelly, in injury time denied J. K. Bracken's Paddy Cadell the goal that would have sent the contest to extra time. Moycarkey led by 1-13 to 0-9 at the interval and remained in front until a J. K. Bracken's resurgence in the final quarter reduced the margin to two points. A Moycarkey point in the 60th minute increased the margin to three, which was nearly wiped out by Cadell's shot.

Burgess created a bit of a surprise in their semi-final game with Templederry Kenyons. They led by 1-10 to 0-7 at the break but Templederry came back with a bang and were ahead by 2-13 to 1-13 after forty-seven minutes. Burgess, however, weren't finished. They levelled and got a crucial goal from Stephen Murray in the fifty-seventh minute, which gave them a three point victory.

The final was played at Semple Stadium as a curtain-raiser to the Dan Breen Cup final on October 21. Burgess came out on top by a solitary point – which Moycarkey-Borris disputed having been denied what appeared a legitimate score during the game – in a game that never really rose above the pedestrian level until the final minutes. The sides were level at 0-5 each at half-time. They were still level ten minutes after the restart. Moycarkey moved ahead by three points. Burgess were level again following Ben Cooney goal. The sides exchanged points and in the thirty-second minute, Donagh Maher put Burgess ahead by the minimum of margins and so it remained to the end. It was



*Seamus Ó Riain Final Man of the Match recipient Shane Maher receives a trophy from John Quirke Jewellers Cahir in the presence of County Board Chairman John Devane.*



*Burgess captain Noel Gleeson lifts the Seamus Ó Riain Cup presented by County Board Vice Chairman Joe Kennedy.*

Burgess's first senior title win and they celebrated in style as a result. On the same day, their intermediate side from 1993 were being honoured for winning the county title in that year so it made the winning of the O'Riain Cup all the sweeter.

**Burgess:** Niall McGrath, Jack O'Flaherty, Shane Maher, Pat Woods, Jonathan Mulqueen, Donogh Maher (0-2), Noel Gleeson, Conor Gill, Willie Ryan, Eoghan Hogan, Stephen Murray (0-4), Brian Hogan (0-1), Keith Nealon (0-2), Danny Ryan (0-1), Stephen Kirwin. Subs: Kieran Ryan for Conor Gill, Ben Cooney (1-1) for Brian Hogan, Bill O'Flaherty for Keith Nealon, W. Fogarty for Willie Ryan. Also: Paul Carroll, Ronan Tucker, Eoin Ryan, Paddy Hogan, John O'Brien, Tony Hogan, David Seymour, Drew Boland, J. P. Grace, Jack Boland.

Selectors: Pat Gibson, Paul Hogan, Hughie Ryan. Coach: Paul Keane. Doctor: Dr. Muiris O'Keefe. Physio: Cian McDonnell.

**Moycarkey Borris:** Rhys Shelly, David Morris, Rory Ryan, James Bourke, Eoghan Hayes, Pat Molloy, Kevin Moran, Chris McCullagh (0-1), Niall Heffernan (0-1), Pat Caey (0-3), Tom Hayes (0-3), John Bergin, Kieran Morris, Anthony McKelvey (0-4), James Power (0-1). Sub:: Jack Fallon for John Bergin. Also: Brain Moran, Mike Bergin, James Power, Eric Fanning, Ger Carey, Kevin O'Regan, Paul Dempsey, Rory Darmody, Niall O'Sullivan, Brian Maher, David Ryan, Timmy Ryan, Matty Ryan, Manager: Brian Lonergan. Selectors: Christy Clancy, Noel McKelvey, Kevin O'Regan.

Coach: Sean Prendergast. Physio: George Ryall. First Aid: Jim Fanning. Kitman: Paddy Shanahan.

**Referee:** Fergal Horgan (Kickhams). Standby referee: John McCormack. Linesman: Davy Ryan. Fourth Official: P. Skeffington. Umpires: John Ryan, Mick Butler, Sean Bradshaw, Christy Ryan.

## Relegation and Promotion:

Two teams were relegated from the county senior hurling championship to the O'Riain Cup.

Four clubs qualified for the relegation contest as a result of their positions after the group stage of the championship, Carrick Davins, Killenaule, Mullinahone and Portroe. As a result of a draw Killenaule played Carrick Davins at Monroe on October 14 with victory going to Killenaule by 2-20 to 3-6. The second game was between Mullinahone and Portroe and this was played at Holycross on November 4, with victory to Portroe by 0-21 to 0-18.

With Carrick Davins and Mullinahone relegated the top two teams in the O'Riain Cup were promoted and they were Burgess and Moycarkey Borris.

At the other end of the O'Riain Cup no team was relegated while Thurles Sarsfields and Cashel King Cormacs, the finalists in the intermediate championship, were promoted, thus bringing the complement of teams in the O'Riain Cup to fourteen.

## County Senior Hurling Championship

DATE	VENUE	TEAM	SCORE	TEAM	SCORE	REFEREE
<b>Group 1 Round 1</b>						
15/04/2018	Bansha	Clonoulty/Rossmore	1.14	Mullinahone	0.11	Kevin Jordan
15/04/2018	Dolla	Nenagh Éire Óg	2.24	Roscrea	0.11	John O'Grady
<b>Round 2</b>						
11/08/2018	Templetuohy	Roscrea	3.18	Mullinahone	0.19	Garrett Howard
12/08/2018	The Ragg	Nenagh Éire Óg	1.20	Clonoulty/Rossmore	1.18	John Butler
<b>Round 3</b>						
01/09/2018	Templemore	Nenagh Éire Óg	2.22	Mullinahone	1.15	John McCormack
02/09/2018	Dolla	Clonoulty/Rossmore	1.22	Roscrea	2.08	Kevin Jordan
<b>Group 2 Round 1</b>						
15/04/2018	Dolla	Toomevara	1.09	Kilruane MacDonaghs	0.10	Peter Carroll
15/04/2018	Pairc Ciocaim, Dundrum	Éire Óg Anacarty	0.16	Killenaule	1.11	Johnny Ryan
<b>Round 2</b>						
11/08/2018	Templetuohy	Killenaule	2.24	Kilruane MacDonaghs	3.16	Kevin Jordan
12/08/2018	The Ragg	Toomevara	2.14	Éire Óg Anacarty	0.18	Johnny Ryan
<b>Round 3</b>						
01/09/2018	Templemore	Toomevara	4.15	Killenaule	1.14	Philip Kelly
02/09/2018	Dolla	Kilruane MacDonaghs	1.19	Éire Óg Anacarty	0.16	Sean Everard
<b>Group 3 Round 1</b>						
14/04/2018	Templetuohy	Upperchurch-Drombane	0.20	Drom-Inch	1.13	Sean Everard
11/09/2018	Templetuohy	Drom-Inch	0.13	Upperchurch-Drombane	0.13	Garrett Howard
<b>Round 2</b>						
11/08/2018	The Ragg	Thurles Sarsfields	1.24	Upperchurch Drombane	1.15	Philip Kelly
11/08/2018	Leahy Park, Cashel	Drom-Inch	2.24	Carrick Swans	0.16	Tommy Ryan
16/09/2018	Holycross	Thurles Sarsfields	1.27	Upperchurch-Drombane	3.16	Philip Kelly
02/09/2018	Holycross	Drom-Inch	2.22	Thurles Sarsfields	1.18	Fergal Horgan
<b>Round 3</b>						
19/09/2018	Templetuohy	Thurles Sarsfields	1.16	Drom-Inch	0.18	Keith Delahunty
<b>Group 4 Round 1</b>						
14/04/2018	Templederry	Kildangan	0.15	Loughmore-Castleiney	1.11	John McCormack
15/04/2018	Nenagh	Borris-ileigh	2.10	Portroe	0.12	Garrett Howard
<b>Round 2</b>						
11/04/2018	Nenagh	Kiladangan	1.22	Portroe	1.18	Johnny Ryan
<b>Round 3</b>						
01/09/2018	Nenagh	Kiladangan	2.18	Borris-ileigh	2.18	Johnny Ryan
01/09/2018	Dolla	Loughmore-Castleiney	1.24	Portroe	2.11	Paddy Ivors
<b>Preliminary Quarter finals</b>						
25/09/2018	Borrisoleigh	Loughmore-Castleiney	3.12	Killenuale	1.16	Peter Carroll
<b>Quarter Finals</b>						
29/09/2018	Nenagh	Toomevara	3.15	Drom-Inch	1.20	Paddy Ivors
29/09/2018	Nenagh	Thurles Sarsfields	2.14	Kilruane MacDonaghs	1.16	John McCormack
30/09/2018	Dolla	Clonoulty/Rossmore	1.19	Kiladangan	1.15	Kevin Jordan
30/09/2018	Dolla	Nenagh Éire Óg	2.17	Loughmore-Castleiney	0.18	Fergal Horgan
<b>Semi Finals</b>						
07/10/2018	Semple Stadium	Clonoulty/Rossmore	0.19	Toomevara	1.10	Johnny Ryan
07/10/2018	Semple Stadium	Nenagh Éire Óg	2.18	Thurles Sarsfields	2.15	Fergal Horgan
<b>Final</b>						
21/10/2018	Semple Stadium	Clonoulty/Rossmore	0.23	Nenagh Éire Óg	2.13	Kevin Jordan

## County Senior Hurling Seamus O Riain Cup

DATE	VENUE	TEAM	SCORE	TEAM	SCORE	REFEREE
<b>Group 1 Round1</b>						
15/04/2018	Toomevara	Burgess	1.14	JK Brackens	1.12	Fergal Horgan
15/04/2018	Leahy Park, Cashel	St.Marys Clonmel	0.14	Ballingarry	0.11	Philip Kelly
<b>Round 2</b>						
11/08/2018	Leahy Park, Cashel	JK Brackens	2.16	St.Mary's Clonmel	1.11	John O'Grady
12/08/2018	Templetuohy	Burgess	2.23	Ballingarry	1.10	Sean Everard
<b>Round 3</b>						
25/08/2018	Clonoulty	Burgess	2.17	St Mary's Clonmel	1.15	Phil Ryan
02/09/2018	Templetuohy	JK Brackens	2.19	Ballingarry	0.20	Michael Murphy
<b>Group 2 Round 1</b>						
15/04/2018	Nenagh	Silvermines	1.19	Templederry Kenyons	0.09	Michael Murphy
15/04/2018	Toomevara	Clonakenny	2.11	Newport	0.13	Phil Ryan
<b>Round 2</b>						
11/08/2018	Nenagh	Newport	0.19	Silvermines	0.18	Kieran Delaney
11/08/2018	Moneygall	Templederry Kenyons	1.24	Clonakenny	1.12	Peter Carroll
<b>Round 3</b>						
01/09/2018	Nenagh	Templederry Kenyons	3.26	Newport	0.17	John Butler
01/09/2018	Toomevara	Silvermines	0.21	Clonakenny	1.16	Kieran Delaney
<b>Group 3 Round 1</b>						
14/04/2018	Borrisoleigh	Holycross/Ballycahill	1.17	Ballina	1.09	Paddy Ivors
15/04/2018	Roscrea	Moycarkey-Borris	1.22	Lorrha-Dorrha	3.10	Johnny McDonnell
<b>Round 2</b>						
12/08/2018	Dolla	Moycarkey-Borris	3.34	Ballina	0.10	Noel Cosgrave
12/08/2018	Dolla	Holycross/Ballycahill	3.23	Lorrha-Dorrha	4.13	Mark Jordan
<b>Round 3</b>						
01/09/2018	The Ragg	Moycarkey Borris	2.19	Holycross/Ballycahill	1.17	Keith Delahunty
<b>Quarter Finals</b>						
16/09/2018	Toomevara	JK Brackens	2.25	Silvermines	3.20	Johnny Ryan
16/09/2018	Kilcommon	Templederry Kenyons	2.14	Holycross/Ballycahill	0.15	John McCormack
<b>Semi Finals</b>						
06/10/2018	The Ragg	Moycarkey-Borris	1.18	JK Brackens	0.18	Philip Kelly
06/10/2018	Dolla	Burgess	2.17	Templederry Kenyons	2.14	Kevin Jordan
<b>Final</b>						
21/10/2018	Semple Stadium	Burgess	1.11	Moycarkey-Borris	0.13	Fergal Horgan