

Senior Hurling Championship - August 3, 2013

Ferns St. Aidans 1-21, Oylegate/Glenbrien 2-11

FERNS ST. Aidans took the points but improvement is needed as they struggled for lengthy periods before eventually seeing off a determined Oylegate-Glenbrien challenge in this Pettitt's Senior hurling championship Group A game at St. Patrick's Park on Saturday last.

Oylegate-Glenbrien enjoyed the better of the exchanges until the 48th minute when a long Ian Byrne point edged his side in front by 1-12 to 2-8, having levelled matters only six minutes earlier. While Ferns went on to control the final quarter, they had not looked comfortable up to then as it took a considerable effort to shake off the committed challenge of their opponents.

Credit to Oylegate-Glenbrien who have been forced to play their two recent games minus the services of a number of players. Despite this drawback one could not fault their commitment as in both recent games they enjoyed splendid opening spells, but the lack of experience and balance came back to haunt them in the closing quarters.

Oylegate-Glenbrien dominated the opening exchanges with a Fergal Doran pointed free edging them in front after just 30 seconds, while one minute later following good play from Paudge Doran, Jamie Reck finished splendidly to the net, giving his side a 1-1 to nil lead.

Ferns through points from Paul Morris, Jonathon Dwyer and Christopher O'Connor gradually hauled themselves into the game, with the sides level (1-3 to 0-6) after twelve minutes. After 13 minutes Reck turned provider with Doran crashing home his inch-perfect pass to give his side a 2-3 to 0-6 lead. The sides continued to trade points but Oylegate-Glenbrien still led by three (2-6 to 0-9) at the interval.

After Jamie Reck with an excellent point extended his side's lead within one minute of the re-start, Ferns' best attacker, Paul Morris, shot home an excellent goal from an acute angle, reducing the deficit to the minimum (2-7 to 1-9) after 33 minutes.

Fergal Doran and Ian Byrne went on to exchange points before Ferns responded with six unanswered points through Ian Byrne (two), Tommy Dwyer (free), Paul Morris (two) and Brendan Jordan to lead by 1-15 to 2-8 with ten minutes remaining.

While an excellent individual point from Paudge Doran raised his side's hopes entering the closing stages, Ferns finished the game with a flourish of scores as Morris, Ian Byrne and Tommy Dwyer sent over excellent points, while their opponents could only manage scores from a Fergal Doran free and Paudge Doran. Ferns ran out seven points winners in the end, but considerable improvement will be sought if they are to impact on the knockout stages of the championship campaign.

Ferns St. Aidans: Mick Walsh; Declan Byrne, Niall Maguire, Colin Leacy; Colm Whelan, James Tonks, Ciarán Roberts; Brendan Jordan (0-1), Tommy Dwyer (0-5, 4 frees, 1 '65); Jonathon Dwyer (0-2), John Breen (0-1), Ian Byrne (0-3); Patrick Farrell, Paul Morris (1-5), Christopher O'Connor (0-3). **Subs.** - Gavin Bailey (0-1) for Farrell, Edward Cullen for O'Connor.

Oylegate-Glenbrien: James Doyle; Aidan Murphy, Pádraic O'Connor, Robert O'Connor; Anthony Doyle, Jim White, Daithí O'Mahoney; Peter Nolan, Eoin O'Mahoney (0-1); Tomás Stamp (0-1), Jamie Reck (1-1), Mark Kavanagh; Fergal Doran (0-4, 3 frees), Paudge Doran (1-4, 0-1 free), Mark Morris. **Sub.** - Shane Lambert for D. O'Mahoney.

Referee: David O'Leary (Rathnure).