

# Pettitt's SHC - May 11, 2013

## Ferns St. Aidan's 2-11 Shemaliers 0-8

IT HAD the potential to be the game of the weekend, but only one team showed up in windy Oylegate on Sunday last as Ferns St. Aidan's romped to a most convincing nine-point win over a poor Shemaliers side in this Pettitt's Senior hurling championship Group A encounter.

Both teams had made steady progress last season and this one should have been hard to call. However, from early on the touch and movement of the men in red and white was far superior to their lethargic rivals who were without county player Eoin Doyle through injury.

The only time the Shels led was in the sixth minute when Stephen Banville put them ahead by 0-2 to 0-1 while playing with the strong crossfield wind in their favour. Midway through the first quarter Ferns struck for a fortunate goal, with Tommy Dwyer's '65 gathered by netminder Brian Murphy who stepped back over the line before striking the ball clear.

The green flag was duly raised and Ferns never looked back, widening the gap to five points in the 20th minute when Christopher O'Connor handpassed to Ian Byrne who raced in from the left wing before planting the ball past Murphy (2-3 to 0-4). Moments earlier O'Connor had been just off target when Byrne played him through in similar circumstances, and the Ferns attack was moving with purpose.

Brian Doyle and Paul Morris swapped points before Tommy Barron hit a fine effort from the left corner for the Shels just before the break, but his uncle John's well-prepared Ferns side still looked the more likely to succeed at half-time when they led by 2-4 to 0-6.

Nobody could have foreseen that the Shels challenge would fade out to such an extent that they would only add two points after the break and fail to score in the last 21 minutes plus added time.

Wing-back Conor Walsh and Stephen Banville got those scores but Brendan Jordan, Tommy Dwyer ('65), Paul Morris (free) and John Breen helped Ferns to lead by 2-8 to 0-8 before the outcome was well and truly decided in the 49th minute.

For once the rock-solid winners' defence, well marshalled by James Tonks, was breached as Banville and Brian Malone combined to put Conor Byrne through and he was hauled down. However, his penalty was saved and seconds later Brian Doyle received a straight red card for a wild pull on Ciarán Roberts, leaving Ferns in a commanding position.

John Breen, Paul Morris and Ian Byrne added unanswered points for the victors whose meeting with Faythe Harriers in Bellefield on Saturday next will be very interesting.

**Ferns St. Aidans:** Mick Walsh; Declan Byrne, Niall Maguire, Colin Leacy; Colm Whelan, James Tonks, Ciarán Roberts; Brendan Jordan (0-1), Tommy Dwyer (1-1 '65s); John Breen (0-3), Jamie Whelan, Ian Byrne (1-1); Jonathon Dwyer, Paul Morris (0-5, 2 frees), Christopher O'Connor. Subs. - Eddie Cullen for J. Whelan (45), Gavin Bailey for Roberts (55).

**Shemaliers:** Brian Murphy; Andre O'Brien, Aidan Murphy, Brian Malone; Conor Walsh (0-1), Clive Lawler, Aidan Cash; John Redmond (0-1), Brian Doyle (0-1); Alan Griffith, Ciarán O'Shaughnessy, Tommy Barron (0-1); Chris McGrath, Stephen Banville (0-2), Conor Byrne (0-2 frees). Subs. - Simon Donohoe for Redmond (HT), Eoghan Nolan for McGrath (45), Redmond for Griffith, inj. (60 + 2).

**Referee:** Barry Redmond (Clonard).