

On The Sporting Ground



Source: Donegal Live Sport

And The Saints Go Marching On, On, On!

On Monday the 31st of January, our senior boys soccer team took to the field to represent the school in the Ulster Senior B Championship Final against Gairmscoil Chú Uladh. The team is managed by Master Donal O'Hagan and is captained by sixth year student Dermot Cunningham. The school team is made up of players from St.Catherines FC, Dunkineely Celtic, Finn Harps Academy and Sligo Rovers Academy. The Gairmscoil Chú Uladh team is managed by Paul Gallagher and captained by an Irish Academy player Luke McGlynn. St.Catherines won the toss to have home advantage to play at Emerald Park, Killybegs. The game kicked off at 12:00pm sharp.

The stand was at full capacity at 12:00pm as students from Transition Year to sixth year were there to support their family, friends and classmates. Captains Dermot Cunningham and Luke McGlynn met at the half way line and the coin was flipped to determine who would start the game. St.Catherine's won the toss and took initial possession of the ball.



Source: Ronan Cunningham

From the first blow of the whistle you could see the determination in the boys play. JP McGuinness put in a very strong tackle within the first minute of the game which set the tone for the afternoon and from there the boys were in it to win it. In the fifth minute of play, a sideline ball was thrown by Colin Mooney into the path of Christopher Mulligan who took the first shot at goals for St.Catherines. From thirty yards out Mulligan fired the ball beautifully into the top corner of the net. The crowd went absolutely wild as the team celebrated the first goal of the game.

In the opening minutes of the game we saw consistently good tackles going in by the St. Catherine's defensive line up and superb kickouts by goalkeeper Daire Brennan. Chú Uladh had an opportunity from a throw-in, but St.Catherine's forward JP McGuinness skillfully intercepted the ball and had a free run up the centre of the field. JP crossed the ball into the path of Alex McBreaty who hit an amazing strike which resulted in a goal, grazing the post on the way into the net! Within the first fifteen minutes of the game St.Catherine's were now in a commanding two goal lead.



Source: Ronan Cunningham

As tension builds between the two teams. Chú Uladh captain Luke McGlynn takes his first shot of the game but the ball goes wide of the goal.

As the game continued St.Catherine's really took the opportunity to show off their dominance with Alex McBreaty and JP McGuinness really showing how good a partnership they were up front, while Kyle McGeoghan and Colin Mooney worked hard in the defensive line up. Midfielders Christopher Mulligan and Dermot Cunningham continued to create chances for the team at every possible moment. As the half time whistle approached Chú Uladh began to put pressure on St.Catherine's, but they struggled to break through a solid St. Catherine's defensive line up. On the half hour Chú Uladh did have a shot on

target, but on this occasion the St. Catherine's goalkeeper Daire Brennan was equal to the challenge and made a great save, determined to keep a clean sheet for St. Catherine's.



Source: Ronan Cunningham

Chú Uladh gained possession of the ball in the centre of the pitch and with speed they made their way towards the St. Catherine's defensive line. Defender Gavin Gallagher makes a strong tackle and intercepts the ball. But the ball was quickly won back by Chú Uladh. Christopher Mulligan and JP McGuinness were close at hand to try and win back possession but JP McGuinness was penalised for a late tackle which resulted in a yellow card for the St. Catherine's player.

Moments later, forward Alex McBrearty had a free run at goal when the Chú Uladh goalkeeper stepped out of the box to block the shot. The two players had a bad collision and unfortunately for the Chú Uladh goalkeeper his injury seemed to be quite serious and he had to be substituted. Fortunately for St. Catherine's Alex was able to continue.



Source: Ronan Cunningham

As half time approached St.Catherine's passed the ball around with great ease. The game began to move at a slower pace. St.Catherine's made some more attempts at goals but were unsuccessful to score a third before the halftime whistle. This left the score at halftime; St.Catherine's 2-0 Chú Uladh.

The second half kicked off at 1:00pm and Chú Uladh had initial possession of the ball. St.Catherine's management decided to remain with the starting eleven players while Chú Uladh made a few changes to their line up. As the second half proceeded it was evident that Chú Uladh were determined to turn the game around in their favour. St.Catherines defenders were under pressure as Chú Uladh made several strong attacks at goals. Daire Brennan and his defensive line were alert to any incoming shots and successfully kept the visitors at bay.

After a rough tackle on a St.Catherines player, defender Kyle McGeoghan steps forward to take a free kick from distance. He launches the ball with power straight into the box aiming for a goal. The ball hit against the post and a very alert Alex McBrearty was there to hit home the rebound from close range, to make the game 3 nil to the host team St.Catherines .



Source: Ronan Cunningham

With St. Catherine's now in a commanding lead, Chú Uladh showed no signs of giving up. The pressure was on as there was still time on the clock. Chú Uladh made it no way easy for the St.Catherine's defenders with some very strong attacks on goals. St.Catherine's midfielder Christopher Mulligan continued to win the battle in the centre of the park, while defender Jack Boyle intercepted all incoming balls in the St.Catherine's danger zone.

20 minutes into the second half St.Catherine's midfielder Christopher Mulligan made a brilliant run towards goals and with a right footed cross he picked out forward Dean Breslin who's first time shot hit the back of the Chú Uladh net giving St.Catherine's a 4 nil lead. The atmosphere at Emerald Park was absolutely electric, from there we knew the CUP was ours.

As tension built Chú Uladh became more aggressive with their tackles and Captain Luke McGlynn began to show his frustration with St.Catherine's player Ambrose McGee. As Luke took a sideline ball for Chú Uladh he threw the ball aggressively against Ambrose McGee's back and then kicked it out on the rebound. For this action Luke received a yellow card and a free kick was given to St.Catherine's.

As the game was coming to a close, manager Master Donal O'Hagan made some changes to the St.Catherines line up. Gavin Gallagher and Ambrose McGee were taken off injured and were replaced by Barry Murray and Matthew Huntley.

With minutes remaining on the clock, St.Catherine's continued to find gaps in the Chú Uladh defence, with forward JP McGuinness hitting the target for St. Catherine's fifth and final goal of the game.

Some more substitutions were made by management, Captain Dermot Cunningham and top goal scorer Alex McBrearty were replaced by Máirtín Heraty and Darragh Gallagher.

Moments later the long awaited final whistle blows and the crowd erupts! All the St.Catherine's supporters flood onto the pitch and with excitement celebrate with the team. After an incredible win by St.Catherine's side, captain Dermot Cunningham had the honour to receive the cup from Vice Principal Master Cathal Campbell.



Source: Ronan Cunningham

Well done to the boys and good luck in the up and coming All Ireland Semi Finals!

Gairmscoil Chú Uladh



Source: Donegal Live Sport

Squad: Seamus Dé Bruin, Gavin Mac Cormaic, Thomas Ó Crosain, Shaun Mac a Bhaired, Ben Mac Ailín, Darragh Ó Carriúl, Petter Mac Fhloinn, Jack Mag Fhlionn, Jamie Ó Domhnaill, Luke Mag Fhloinn, Seaghan Mac Cormaic. Replacements: Kevin Ó Gallachoir, Brendan Ó Mearlaigh, Niall Ó Dochartaigh, Sean Mac Fhloinn, Dylan McGinty, Conoir Mac Meanaid, Odhran Conuchir, James Ó Cnaimhsi.

St.Catherine's Vocational School



Source: Ronan Cunningham

Squad: Daire Brennan; Colin Mooney, Gavin Gallagher, Jack Boyle, Kyle McGeoghan, Christopher Mulligan, Ambrose McGee, Dermot Cunningham, JP McGuinness, Alex McBrearty, Dean Breslin. Substitutes: Barry Murray, Matthew Huntley, Darragh Gallagher, Aaron O'Shea, Martin Heraty, Daniel McCallig, Caoimhin O'Neill, Shane Adair

Rachel Chapman and Nicole McGinty