

Ossians prevail in thrilling encounter

Lámh Dhearg 1-12 v Glenariff Ossians 4-13

Glenariff took a massive step towards promotion to division one hurling with a comprehensive ten point win over Lámh Dhearg at Hannahstown on Sunday afternoon.

This was a game that had massive consequences at either end of the league table; a Glenariff win would keep them in pole position to secure promotion, while a win for Lámh Dhearg would relieve some pressure in the battle to avoid relegation. Ossians started the game at a ferocious pace and quickly put scores on the board; Conor McAllister got Glenariff's first score from the throw in, before wing half forward John McIntosh added a second soon after. The Glenariff momentum continued and with less than five minutes on the clock their lead was increased further; Conor McAllister was the thorn in Lámh Dhearg's side with his accuracy from set pieces, and two frees resulted in a four point advantage opening up. The Lámhs who were second best in the early stages landed their first score after seven minutes, a high ball into the forward line picked out full forward Christy Tumelty who turned well and struck the ball over the bar to reduce the deficit to three.

The Ossians soon regained control of the game after ten minutes when they found the net; a block by Lámh Dhearg goal keeper Dee McConville was quickly pounced upon by corner forward Paul McDonnell who composed himself to lash home to the back of the net to make the score 0-01 – 1-04 . It was a case of taking their chances when they came for the Lámhs who were playing against the wind in the first half; Lámh Dhearg's second score of the game came through right half forward Brendan Herron, picking up possession on the right wing Herron drove at the Glenariff defence before sending the ball over from a tight angle to grab the Lámhs second score. Mid-way through the half Glenariff put daylight between the sides with a second goal of the game; a well worked move put full forward Randall McDonnell through on goal, and he made no mistake with a smart finish beyond McConville to put eight points between the sides 0-02 – 2-04.

Both sides then traded scores with each other throughout the next period of scores; Randall McDonnell and John McIntosh increased the Glenariff's lead to nine on two occasions, although Brendan Herron and Declan Lynch were equally accurate for the Lámhs with two scores to keep the margin at eight points. The Ossians ended the half strongly though and fired over five un-answered points; a free from Conor McAllister and a brilliant point from Seamus McDonnell increased the lead to ten points, before a further two McAllister scores and a point from Kevin McDonnell put a staggering thirteen points between the sides at the break.

Half time: Lámh Dhearg 0-04 Glenariff Ossians 2-11

Lámh Dhearg had the advantage of playing with the wind in the second half and needed to make a good start to try and claw their way back into the encounter; two minutes into the second half referee Cathal O'Flynn awarded the Lámhs a penalty and a route back into the game, Brendan Herron took responsibility for the resulting puck and coolly blasted the ball home to give the Lámhs slender hope. Glenariff settled down though and opened their second half account five minutes in, the lively and threatening Randall McDonnell was on the score sheet for the Ossians who stretched their lead to eleven. The Lámhs though began

to grow in confidence and hit four un-answered scores to give themselves a fighting chance; a superb Declan Lynch score was followed by a Brendan Herron point to reduce the arrears to nine, with some momentum an audacious point from Conor McConville and a free from Brendan Herron soon seen Glenariff's lead cut to seven mid-way through the second half.

Just as Lámh Dhearg dared to believe they could grab something from the game Glenariff dented their hopes with a third goal; a well worked move down the right channel picked out Conor McAllister in the middle, and the right corner back unleashed a fierce shot into the back of the net to kill the game off. The Ossians grabbed a point soon after through Seamus McDonnell to put them eleven points clear, though the Lámhhs were not about to lie down and rallied once more. A long range strike by Terry McGuinness had the range and went over the bar, before Michael Herron added a quick second to reduce the deficit to nine. Paddy Tumelty scored a third un-answered point for the Lámhhs though all their hard work was undone with a fourth Glenariff goal; long ball up field was won by half forward Seamus McDonnell who took off towards the Lámh Dhearg goal before burying the ball into the corner of the net to end the Lámhhs resistance. The Lámhhs could only reply through a well taken point from Conor McConville as the Ossians ran out comprehensive winners. The result moves Glenariff closer to promotion and they will be pleased to have hit such a big score; the Lámhhs can take some positives from the game with a never say die attitude in the second period and will need to perform to the same level against Carey next week in an all-important relegation battle.

Final score: Lámh Dhearg 1-12 Glenariff Ossians 4-13

Lámh Dhearg : Dee McConville, Kieran Stewart, Mark McLarnon, Paddy Brunty, Terry McGuinness, Michael Herron, Mark Lynch, Paddy Tumelty, Christopher Nolan, Brendan Herron, Charlie McCloskey, Aaron McAufield, Declan Lynch, Christopher Tumelty, Sean Braniff. Subs – Conor McConville for Aaron McAufield, Johnny Hanna for Sean Braniff, Ronan McHugh for Christopher Nolan

Glenariff Ossians: Seanan McToal, Norris Murray, Mark McNulty, Conan McToal, Conor McAllister, Michael Getters, Conor Kerr, Thomas Quinn, Carl Healy, Niall Murray, Seamus McDonnell, John McIntosh, Paul McDonnell, Randall McDonnell, Kevin McDonnell. Subs – Seamus McDonnell, Sean Cosgrove, Alex McDonnell, Eamonn Oisín Kearns, Aaron Cosgrove.

Lámh Dhearg scorers: Brendan Herron (1-04) Declan Lynch (0-02) Conor McConville (0-02) Paddy Tumelty (0-01) Christopher Tumelty (0-01) Michael Herron (0-01) Terry McGuinness (0-01)

Glenariff Ossians scorers: Conor McAllister (1-06) Randall McDonnell (1-02) Seamus McDonnell (1-02) Paul McDonnell (1-00) John McIntosh (0-02) Kevin McDonnell (0-01)

By Kevin Herron.