

Desmonds Win a Thrilling Minor Final

Ladies Minor Division One Final: Castleisland Desmonds 0-9 Southern Gaels 2-4

By Jimmy Darcy

Castleisland Desmonds and Southern Gaels served up fantastic feats of football in a wet but immaculate Glenflesk, with the quality of play made all the more impressive by the challenging weather conditions. Southern Gaels made the early running, Muireann Teahan setting up Clara Daly for an early goal chance and Daly doing likewise for Caoileann Lynch, but both efforts sailed just wide. Sadhbh O'Sullivan did put them a point in front before Clara Daly teed up Caoileann Lynch for a point and added another herself. 0-3 in front and it could easily have been more, with three wides and a long ball well gathered safely by Desmonds keeper Caoimhe O'Mahony.

However, all of that hard work was undone when Desmonds equalised with their very first real attack. Julie O'Connor did really well to jink into space before threading a ball across the goal for Seana Wilkinson to finish to the net. 0-3 to 1-0.

Midfielder Keelin O'Sullivan hit a superb score from distance to put Desmonds in front. A lively Siún Fitzgerald equalised but Amelie Kerin nudged Desmonds back in front. A superb free by Fitzgerald from long distance saw the sides level after a pulsating first half.

Half-time Castleisland Desmonds 1-2 Southern Gaels 0-5

It was Castleisland Desmonds who made all the early running in the second half, but without anything to show for it on the scoreboard. The best chance fell to Kerry senior Amy Curtin, but goalkeeper Aoife Looney was equal to the challenge. The pressure had to tell, and it did as an alert Seana Wilkinson struck for her second goal.

Southern Gaels almost hit back straight away, Sarah Murphy teeing up Clara Daly for a shot heading straight to the bottom left corner, but Caoimhe O'Mahony flung herself to her left and managed somehow to palm it away. Katie O'Connell did kick a fine point and won a free converted by Siún Fitzgerald. Level pegging, 2-2 to 0-8, and anybody's game.

Desmonds, with Hazel Bourke and Robyn Cahill especially influential, regained the upper hand. Seana Wilkinson nudged her side back in front and Amelie Kerin stretched the gap to two. Southern Gaels pressed very hard to the finish line, and will feel a little bit aggrieved at leaving one or two chances behind them, but all they could muster was one final point by Sarah Murphy, and in the end, it was Desmonds who took the title by the slimmest of margins.

Castleisland Desmonds: Caoimhe O'Mahony, Caitlin Griffin, Hazel Bourke, Amy McCarthy, Leah Griffin, Robyn Cahill, Hazel Murphy, Amy Curtin, Keelin O'Sullivan (0-1), Emily O'Donoghue, Kate O'Connor, Emilie Kerin (0-

2), Julie O'Connor, Seana Wilkinson (2-1), Emma O'Donoghue. Subs Norma Murphy (for Keelin O'Sullivan, half-time), Erin O'Connor (for Amy McCarthy, 47 mins)

Southern Gaels: Aoife Looney, Ella Sheehan, Cara McCrohan, Meabh O'Sullivan, Dervla Healy, Clodagh Dwyer, Katie O'Connell (0-1), Niamh Moran, Orla Fitzgerald (0-1), Sarah Murphy (0-1), Siún Fitzgerald (0-3, 2f), Sadhbh O'Sullivan (0-1), Muireann Teahan, Caoileann Lynch (0-1), Clara Daly (0-1). Sub Bríd Curran (for Orla Fitzgerald, half-time)

Referee: Tadhg Murphy (Duagh)