

Piltown Take Historic Title



The Piltown panel celebrate after they defeated Lismore in the All-Ireland Intermediate Club Final at Croke Park last Sunday. | Photos: Dan McGrath/Editorial Images.

All-Ireland Intermediate Club Camogie Final

Piltown 1-10
Lismore 1-9

Piltown completed a 'Grand Slam' of camogie titles when they claimed their maiden All-Ireland Intermediate crown at Croke Park last Sunday, seeing off holders Lismore by a single point after a tense contest.

The South Kilkenny club, still relative newcomers at this grade, added the ultimate prize to their All-County League, League, Kilkenny and Leinster Championship successes.

And to take down the defending All-Ireland champions to claim their first national title surely made Sunday's victory additionally satisfying.

For Lismore, it was very much a case of 'so near yet so far' as they relinquished their All-Ireland title after a tenacious battle with the first-time finalists.

That the better side emerged victorious cannot be disputed, and Laura Norris had the distinction of becoming the first Piltown clubwoman to climb the steps of the Hogan Stand to lift the glittering prize. One for the history books indeed.

As the teams and supporters made their journey to Croke Park, they braved heavy sleet and snow showers, which continued as the players entered the sacred sod around 1.15pm.

But by the time referee Peter Dowd threw in the ball 15 minutes later, the snow had cleared, and although the floodlights stayed on for the remainder of the afternoon, conditions certainly weren't the worse for the competitive game of Camogie which followed.

Although dismissed in the semi-final win over Oranmore-Maree, Lismore defender Aoife Houlihan had her red card rescinded before the final, a huge boost to the holders coming into this match.

Both sides began nervously, but Lismore opened the scoring after three minutes, after Aoife Hannon slotted over a pointed free.

Hannon's tally was to reach 1-7 by the full-time whistle, but crucially just one point of that tally came from play, with Nicola Morrissey and Gráinne Kenneally also adding a point each from play, in a game where the Piltown defence restricted Lismore's scoring largely from placed balls.

Lismore would only hold the lead for three minutes of this tie, with Edel Long equalising soon-after with a well taken point from play.

Further scores from Katie Power and Niamh Culleton inside 90 seconds handed Piltown a 0-3 to 0-1 lead after eight minutes and that early momentum gave the Kilkenny team an edge they retained throughout the contest.

Scores were at a premium over the following nine minutes, as defences got on top.

Marie Russell and Aoife Houlihan showed well at the back for Lismore, but at the opposite end they struggled for scores, firing two wides in quick succession.

During this spell Piltown got through for their only goal of the game, and what a crucial score it ultimately proved to be.

After 12 minutes Power fed Chloe Blackmore (also an underage rugby international) who sent a low shot to the left of goalkeeper Tanya Morrissey, handing the first-time Leinster champions a 1-3 to 0-1 lead.

Nicola Morrissey pointed for Lismore's first score in 14 minutes, at the start of a spell which saw them outscore Piltown by three points to one inside seven minutes, with Hannon adding a further two scores.



Piltown captain Laura Norris lifts the trophy following her side's one-point victory. | Photos: Dan McGrath/Editorial Images.

Points from Power and captain Laura Norris pushed Piltown to a 1-6 to 0-4 lead after 26 minutes, but Lismore finished the half impressively.

After 28 minutes Hannon fired a powerful free to the back of the Piltown net to cut the gap to two points, and although Lismore's defence also came under pressure, Tanya Morrissey made a fine save, coupled with a Shauna Kiernan clearance to ensure a 1-6 to 1-4 interval score-line.

Piltown extended their lead to four points inside six minutes of the restart, and that edge proved critical given the tense finish both sides served up.

The challengers pushed 1-10 to 1-6 ahead following a 52nd minute Laura Norris point, but Lismore, to their credit, never gave up.

Four minutes from time, a Nicola Morrissey goal was ruled out due to a square ball. Hannon fired wide, before slotting over two pointed frees, one either side of a Gráinne Kenneally score, but it was too late, as Piltown deservedly took the silverware and made history.

What odds on a third successive Waterford/Kilkenny final at this grade next season? One senses these sides may well cross ash again before too long.

Piltown: Aoife Norris; Mairead Power, Elaine Kenny, Jennifer Norris; Debbie Phelan, Karen Duggan, Kellyann Doyle; Laura Norris, Alice Talbot ; Niamh Culleton, Katie Power, Edel Long; Chloe Holden, Chloe Blackmore, Lorraine Long.

Substitutes: Georgina Culleton for Talbot (47 mins); Lisa McCarthy for Holden (59); Katelynn Phelan for Debbie Phelan (61).

Scorers: Alice Talbot (0-4; 0-3f), Laura Norris (0-2), Chloe Blackmore (1-0), Katie Power (0-1f), Niamh Culleton, Chloe Holden and Edel Long (0-1 each).

Lismore: Tanya Morrissey; Niamh Molumphy, Shauna Prendergast, Marie Russell; Aoife Houlihan, Shauna Kiernan, Sarah Fenton; Grainne Kenneally, Shona Curran; Nicola Morrissey, Aoife Hannon, Sharon Williams; Ruth Geoghegan, Caithriona McGlone, Johanna Houlihan.

Scorers: Aoife Hannon (1-7; 1-6f), Gráinne Kenneally and Nicola Morrissey (0-1 each).

Substitutes: Laura Buckley for Williams (28 mins); Sarah Coughlan for Molumphy (HT); Aisling O'Brien for Houlihan (46).

Referee: Peter Dowd (Meath)

Cóilín Duffy at Croke Park