

Shock defeat for Tyrone title holders

Lámh Dhearg(Antrim) 2-07 Omagh(Tyrone) 1-05

Antrim champions Lámh Dhearg sparked a shock by knocking holders Omagh out of the Ulster Minor Football Championship at Shaw's Road, Belfast.

The Tyrone title holders never got going against a hard-working Belfast outfit, who battled for every ball, as if their lives depended on it and the Hannahstown side fully deserved the five points win that set up a first round clash with Aghadrumsee of Fermanagh.

The absence of the injured Ronan O'Neill was a huge blow to the St Enda's, who sorely missed their attacking talisman and always struggled for scores. Omagh did open the scoring in the third minute when Stephen Murray finished with precision, following a surging run from midfielder Conor Clarke.

But they managed to add just one further point in the opening half, repeatedly closed down by a hungry Lamh Dhearg side, whose work rate was quite staggering.

Mark McGarry and Carl Maxwell knocked over points, and in the 14th minute, a defensive lapse allowed Mark Jordan to send Gerald Slane in for a goal.

Traded scores

Jordan added a point, and late in the first half Cormac O'Neill and Jordan traded scores.

Lamh Dhearg led by 1-4 to 0-2 at the interval, but Omagh got themselves back in contention when Conan Grugan netted a penalty two minutes into the second half.

They failed to build on that boost, however, and their opponents responded with a second goal, Jordan finishing from close range after his initial effort had been saved by Ryan Clarke.

Two Ryan Murray points opened up a seven points gap at the beginning of the final quarter, and the St Enda's were in deep trouble.

They did manage to break down a stubborn Dhearg defence for O'Neill and Grugan to slot scores, but their attempts to grab an all-important goal were thwarted, Tony McCann going closest, when his shot was blocked down.

In the end, it was the Antrim champions who made it through, and Omagh were left to reflect on what might have been.

Lámh Dhearg scorers: Mark Jordan 1-2, Gerard Slane 1-0, Ryan Murray, Mark McGarry 0-2 each, Carl Maxwell 0-1.

Omagh scorers: Conan Grugan 1-1 (1-0 pen, 0-1 free), Cormac O'Neill 0-2 (1 free), Stephen Murray, Piaras McElduff 0-1 each.

Lámh Dhearg: Gerard McKeown, Conor McIlvenny, Aaron McAulfield, Christopher Monaghan, Mark McGarry, Declan Stranney, Michael Hynes, Declan Lynch, Stephen Tully, James Lindsay, Gerard Slane, Mark Jordan, Ryan Murray, Matthew McKernan, Carl Maxwell.

Subs: Kevin Quinn for Maxwell, Darren Mervyan for McKernan.

Omagh: Ryan Clarke, Nigel Brannigan, Eoghan McElduff, James Gallagher, Gregory Murray, Conan Grugan, Ciaran McLaughlin, Ruairi Bradley, Conor Clarke, Cormac Hannigan, Eamon McMahon, Tony McCann, Stephen Murray, Cormac O'Neill, Ciaran Canavan.

Subs: Rory McBride for Canavan, Piaras McElduff for McMahon.

Referee: Martin McErlane (Derry).