

Moynalvey recorded a comfortable win over Rathkenny in the opening round of the Fairyhouse Steel SFC at Skryne on Saturday evening 6th April.

***Moynalvey 3-12
Rathkenny 0-9***

Having drawn with the same opposition in Round 4 of last year's SFC Group stages, Saturday's encounter at a well presented Skryne was one sided in comparison.

Having just an A league first round draw with Syddan to their name, Moynalvey picked the perfect time to record their first win of the year.

Moynalvey's win was hugely assisted by welcoming back Cillian O'Sullivan and David McLoughlin for their first appearances of the year in the maroon and white jersey, O'Sullivan returning from county duty and McLoughlin from injury. Also returning from injury were Conor Harnan and Adam Murphy, making just their second starts this year.

The first two scores of the game went the way of Rathkenny with Ivan Lenehan and Keith Curtis pointing. Moynalvey's opening score came from an O'Sullivan free in the 11th minute and two minutes later Darren Brennan had the side's level.

An Adam Murphy point saw Moynalvey take the lead in the 14th minute, one they weren't to relinquish. Points from Padraig Harnan and Donal Smith (2) either side of a Keith Curtis point for Rathkenny left the score 0-6 to 0-3 after 16 minutes.

Then came Moynalvey's first goal, Stephen Donoghue's pass found Shane Lenehan who turned his man and passed across goal to O'Sullivan, who made no mistake from close range. A Keith Curtis free for Rathkenny before referee Andrew Smith's half time whistle meant Moynalvey were five points to the good at the break, 1-6 to 0-4.

Three minutes after the restart James Macken reduced the deficit to four for Rathkenny. But a minute later the game was effectively over when O'Sullivan found the net for a second time, after being on the end of a great cross field ball from Cathal McCabe.

Rathkenny points from substitute Tom Barron and Keith Curtis left it 2-6 to 0-7 eleven minutes into the second half. Another O'Sullivan free followed by Adam Murphy's second point with Keith Curtis replying for Rathkenny left it 2-8 to 0-8 with 10 minutes remaining.

The introduction of David McLoughlin saw him score 1-2, along with points from another substitute James Weldon and O'Sullivan; with Rathkenny replying with an Evan Crosbie point saw Moynalvey manager Gerry Smith and his management team record their first victory on a 3-12 to 0-9 score line.

Not a bad time to pick it up!

The Moynalvey back six were back to their tigerish best, returning to the form from the back end of last year, limiting Rathkenny to just five points from play to keep just their second clean sheet this year. That coupled with the in form O'Sullivan up front resulted in this comfortable SFC opening round win.

Next up in Round 2 is a clash with neighbours Summerhill in a fortnight's time in Trim.

Moynalvey: Ray Ryan, Conor Harnan, Robert Lawless, Darren Brennan (0-1), Stephen Donoghue, Brian Harnan, Fearghal McCabe, Donal Smith (0-2), Padraic Harnan (0-1), Cathal McCabe, Adam Murphy (0-2), Padraig Kelly, Shane Lenehan, Cillian O'Sullivan (2-3, 2f), Sean Duggan.

Subs used: David McLoughlin (1-2,1f) for Duggan, David Donoghue for Kelly, James Weldon (0-1) for Lenehan.