



Despite a spirited effort, Moynalvey were well beaten by reigning Keegan Cup champions Ratoath in the opening game of the 2023 Fairyhouse Steel Meath Senior Football Championship played at Skryne on Thursday evening July 27th.

Moynalvey 0-8 Ratoath 1-14

From the moment the 2023 championship draws were made at Dunganny on Monday night April 24th the Group C first round clash between Moynalvey and 2022 Keegan Cup Champions Ratoath was never going to be easy for Caoimhin King's men.

The last time Moynalvey were in SFC championship action was against the same opponents and eventual winners in last year's SFC seven point Quarter Final defeat.

Today's Moynalvey starting 15 was minus eight of last year's starting side for that quarter final clash, through travels and injuries.

Despite never really troubling Kevin Reilly's charges, Moynalvey found themselves just five points adrift of their opponents at half time, sticking to their game plan and frustrating Ratoath, while had a Cillian O'Sullivan effort five minutes before the break found the net the half time

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margin would have been closer.

Early on it was Ratoath who opened up a three point advantage with scores from Cian O'Brien, Daithi McGowan and Bryan McMahon, before Moynalvey opened their account in the 11th minute with a David McLoughlin free.

A further four Ratoath points, three from Daithi McGowan and one from McMahon left it seven points to one with 29 minutes played. A Padraic Harnan point two minutes into added time left the half time score board read 0-7 to 0-2.

A Ratoath point after the break was countered by a Padraic Harnan point, before three unanswered Ratoath points extended their five point half time lead out to 0-11 to 0-3 to put some real daylight between the sides.

David McLoughlin points either side of Ratoath points from Ronan Byrne and Eamon Wallace left it 0-13 to 0-5 with 47 minutes played.

Bryan McMahon and David McLoughlin traded frees before the game's only goal came via a Ben McGowan simple palm to the net to put that extra bit off gloss on the winning margin.

There was still time for two late David McLoughlin points in the 61st and 62nd minutes to leave the final score board read 1-14 to 0-8 to the Keegan Cup holders.

Next up for Caoimhin King's side is a round two tie against St. Colmcilles at the same venue on Friday evening August 11th, while Kevin Reilly's Ratoath are out against Skryne on Sunday 13th.

Moynalvey team & scorers:

Conor Egan, David Reilly, Fearghal McCabe, Craig Gilsean, Darragh Branigan, Brian Harnan, Charlie McCormack, Padraic Harnan (0-2), Stephen Donoghue, Darren Brennan, Mark O'Sullivan, Donal Smith, Cillian O'Sullivan, Vinny Walsh, David McLoughlin (0-6, 4f).

Subs used: Eoin Corrigan for Walsh, Luke Duffy for Branigan.

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