

TEMPLENOE 0-12 OUGHTERARD (GALWAY) 1-12



THE GAME IN 60 SECONDS

MAIN MAN

For us Tadhg Morley was the top Templenoe performer on the day, but we've got to go with Oughterard centre-back Ronan Molloy who was an immense figure throughout the match for his side.

TALKING POINT

Maybe Kerry's dominance at this level isn't quite as pronounced as many of us thought it to be. Yes this is a game Templenoe could have and maybe should have won, but had they done so there wouldn't have been much in it. Galway clubs seem to have the Kingdom's measure at this level.

KEY MOMENT

The goal, it turned the game. It was a little unfortunate from a Templenoe point of view the way it played out and really Templenoe should have had one of their own before that, but that's the way the cookie crumbled on this occasion.

'It was a kick of the ball at the end of the day between the teams that's what it was'

BY DAMIAN STACK

THERE was disappointment, of course there was, but there was also a degree of stoicism to how Templenoe manager John Rice reacted to defeat at the hands of Oughterard last weekend.

He took defeat on the chin with his typical equanimity.

"Any semi-final of any competition you're in it's always going to be really tough," he said.

"Especially in an All Ireland series like this and I want to say congratulations to Oughterard, they came out well today on top of us. We've got a very good, exciting team inside there [the dressing room], but very disappointed.

"Conditions played a big part today, it probably levelled it a bit, we didn't get our usual fast-moving game going, but no small respect to Oughterard as well they played well."

Templenoe had three clear cut goal-scoring chances, any of which if taken could have booked passage to Croke Park for the All Ireland final. Templenoe didn't take any of them, however, and Oughterard did and sometimes football is that simple.

"Absolutely," he concurs.

"A goal was always going to be the vital score and unfortunately it wasn't us who got it. We were very comfortable throughout the game I thought until that incident, they got a goal and they tacked on a point straight away and we just didn't get the chances to pull it back."

Even when they were chasing the game at the end, the

goal just wouldn't come for Templenoe with Cian Hallissey being blocked out by the excellent Oughterard shot-stopper Jordan Waller and out for a forty five.

"Another day that would have gone in, but not today. Josh Holland had another chance I think that went across the goal as well, you know things like that will always happen."

There was no shame in losing to that Oughterard side, who look to have what it takes to go on and claim the All Ireland title in a week and half's time.

"Their workrate throughout the field was something to be admired in fairness to them and fair play to them," Rice confirmed.

Even in the midst of this great disappointment it's important to remember the remarkable journey Templenoe have been on and to remember the great season they've had.

"Not today obviously and we would have liked to have finished it out in Croke Park, but it is what it is," Rice continued.

"We'll regroup now again and we're back in Division 2 now this year and we'll have to work with that and we're going to be playing in the senior club championship and the county championship for the first time ever as a senior club, which as a small rural parish is excellent.

"You never like losing, but you always have to pit yourself against the conditions and the opposition no matter who they are and today we came out second best out of that and that's how it is. It was a kick of the ball at the end of the day between the teams and that's what it was and we'll plough on again."

again in semi-final

accept. They couldn't care less whether or not it was a great game or a great occasion. For them the winning was all. The way Templenoe go about their football is always pleasing on the eye, however, and though they trudged off the pitch they could do so with heads held high.

There was no shame in this. Templenoe gave it their all, tried their best, left it all on the field and on this occasion it just wasn't enough.

All over the field they had guys who fronted up – led from the back by Tadhg Morley who was simply an immense presence, giving real leadership from first minute to last.

In front of him at centre-back Tom Spillane was excellent. At midfield Seán Sheehan gave a warrior's performance. Teddy Doyle and Brian Crowley both impressed at half-forward, while all three of the full-forward line looked sharp and dangerous even if ultimately that goal just wouldn't come.

Templenoe had a few bits of bad luck too. Gavin Crowley carried an injury into the game and didn't look quite himself,

although he did thunder into the game late on and kicked a massive point on fifty two minutes from over forty yards out.

The wing-back also won a free for Stephen O'Sullivan to point before that and assisted his inter-county colleague Killian Spillane for a point on fifty six minutes. With the game slipping away from his side, Crowley stood up and stood out. A leader.

Patrick Clifford having to go off with twenty minutes go was another blow and robbed Templenoe of another platform from which to attack on the half-back line. Indeed, it was from half-back that Oughterard arguably won the game.

Their centre-back Ronan Molloy was the game's outstanding performer, while both of the Monaghan brothers, Cian and Ryan, alongside him stood out too. Oughterard took four points from half-back and Templenoe just one. Few would have predicted that disparity beforehand.

Oughterard really are a fine side, a well-drilled side and a side who hung on in there when they had to and picked off their



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scores when they could. When Templenoe get a chance to reflect on this game that's the thing that will really annoy them, they didn't make the most of what they had.

They created marginally more scoring chances in the game than their rivals – 25 to 21 – but their rate of return on those chances was significantly poorer at 48% compared to Oughterard's 62%. Had they been more clinical this game was there for John Rice's men. Still though – and we know

the pain of defeat will linger for a while yet – there's much to enthuse about from a Templenoe point of view. It's been a fantastic twelve months even if the ultimate has eluded them on this occasion.

The football they play, the quality of footballer they have at their disposal, the imprint they have on the current Kerry senior football squad, speaks to a very healthy club dynamic.

Compared to most clubs they really are living the dream right now and the thing to remember is they ain't done yet.

In April they'll play their first ever games at senior level and sometime after the All Ireland, probably in mid to late September, they'll play their first games in the County Senior Football Championship.

Templenoe's journey from Division 5 to Division 1, from novice to senior football, has been truly remarkable and memorable. A defeat on a heavy pitch on a wet day to a very good Oughterard side undoes none of that.

The future is bright. The future is blue and white.



A dejected John Spillane is left alone to digest the reality of defeat after last weekend's AIB All-Ireland Intermediate Club Championship Semi-Final in Kilmallock
Photo by Eric Barry