

MCS triumphant in historic first



Scoil Chríost Rí, Portlaoise 1-1

Moate CS 2-0

By Peter Cunningham

History was made on Friday last in Portlaoise when Moate C.S. camogie team took the field in a competitive match for the first time ever. Even from the sideline you could sense the anticipation and excitement of these players as many of them had never played a game of camogie before in their sporting careers.

The weather conditions in Portlaoise, just like everywhere else in the country that day, were abysmal to say the least. With a gale force wind blowing almost directly across the pitch, it was evident from early on that this would be a low scoring affair. With the game being played over three twenty minutes periods, it was going to be crucial for the team that won the toss to play with whatever slight advantage the wind gave. Perhaps Moate's luck was in as they won the toss and elected to play with the wind.

From the start Moate tried to press home this advantage as they attacked at every opportunity. The opening ten minutes was a tense affair as both teams tried to adjust to the adverse conditions. Then after ten minutes of play Una Costello shot from forty five yards out that looked to be sailing over the bar for the first score, until the wind intervened and the sliotar drifted wide of the right post. When Portlaoise did attack they found Moate's all Drumraney full back line of the Slevin sisters, Celine and Sarah and Linda Maxwell in stunning form. Moate had another two narrow wides coming again from the stick of Una Costello and Laura Nugent. Portlaoise then had a wide of their own as they tried their best to fight against the wind. Then, in the final minute of this period

the Portlaoise corner forward hit a sneaky shot past Linda Maxwell and Jade Fielding in goals to hit the bottom corner of the net. This meant that despite all of Moate's hard work they went in trailing at the first interval.

From the beginning of the second period of play it was obvious that Portlaoise were going to use the advantage of the wind as best they could as their midfielder scored an excellent point from twenty-five yards out after just two minutes. From here on, the Moate goal was living a charmed life as the home side could not find a way through the visitor's outstanding defensive unit. However, when the full forward broke through and riffled a shot towards the top corner from ten yards out, Linda Maxwell, now in goals, somehow got a hurl to the sliotar to make an excellent save and deflect it out for a 45. From the resulting 45, the ball came looping in and Celine Slevin got a hurl to it and hit it out for yet another 45. Portlaoise then realised that this defence were not going to let in any more goals and they began to go for long range shots, this did not prove successful for the hosts as they then hit five unanswered wides, mostly due to the disruptive wind. The second third finished with yet another wide for Portlaoise.

Right from the start it of the final period it was obvious that Moate were going



to try and close the deficit as they pushed forward. Early on, Sandra Lynam hit a 45 wide as the wind took it completely away from the goals. After fifty minutes Celine Slevin lobbed a shot from twenty yards out into the top corner of the net, this brought real life back into the Moate girls as they began to sense a famous first ever victory. Portlaoise were trying their very best to keep

out wave after wave of Moate attacks. Sandra Lynam had yet another shot taken away from goal by the wind. Then after fifty five minutes Sarah Maguire hit the ball across the six yard box and it was tapped in by substitute Michelle Costello. All of Moate's hard work was finagling paying off and with three more attacks they were unlucky not to add further to their scoreline with three shots that went narrowly wide of the upright. The final whistle brought scenes of great jubilation among the players and supporters as they realised that they had been part of a great historical win for the school with a final scoreline of Moate CS 2-0 Scoil Criost Ri, Portlaoise 1-1.

This was a strong and honest performance by the girls from Moate. Great credit is due to Mr. Iain Hatton who has not only introduced camogie into the school but has also moulded this group of girls into a successful unit who can now look forward to the upcoming Leinster Championship with great expectations. This

group of players definitely have the potential to do very well and we look forward to many more exciting games and I urge you to watch this space as camogie in Moate CS is on the up and certainly here to stay.

Moate CS: Jade Fielding, Sarah Slevin, Linda Maxwell, Celine Slevin (1-0), Frances Cunningham, Sandra Lynam, Michelle Maxwell, Aisling Claffey, Una Costello, Sarah Maguire, Zoe Nugent, Niamh Glynn, Laura Nugent, Lorna McLoughlin, Laura Kealy. Subs used: Tarragh Fallon, Allanah Reynolds, Michelle Costello(1-0), Shannon Carrick, Sorcha Egan, Eugenia.

Sandra Lynam wins the ball under pressure.

The MCS team that defeated Scoil Criost RI, Portlaoise.

Una Costello strikes a free into the danger area.