

LONDON FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

BRENDANS LATE RALLY

St Brendans 1 - 10
St Clarets 2 - 7

Out of the limelight for the past few years, St Clarets earned an honourable draw against favourites St Brendans in a senior football championship game that reached new heights in entertainment value at Ruislip, on Saturday.

With St Clarets ahead by two points and time ticking away an upset looked on the cards. But St Brendans were not to be denied and a do-or-die rally resulted in Joe Stack sending off the all-important equaliser in injury time. While some hold the view that St Clarets may have missed the boat, there is no reason why they should not confirm their superiority in Saturday's replay.

Certainly, if they perform with the same determination they could be headed for a lengthy run in their bid for a first ever championship title. St Clarets

excelled in the positions where it mattered most and especially in the middle of the field where the Kevin Gilmartin - James Nevin proved more than a match for the combinations tried against them. Gilmartin was equally effective when switched to full forward in the last quarter.

John Kelly, Colm Lynnot and Adrian Adare stood out in a sound back line with Denis McCarthy, Martin Hessian and Gerard Lynnot stealing the show in attack. Having survived this scare, St Brendans will no doubt be better prepared for the replay and certainly their forwards cannot afford the same degree of wastage if they are to survive.

Missing a penalty when three points in arrears failed to dampen St Brendans ardour and with defenders Frank O'Dowd, John McCormack and Pat Murphy holding firm against prolonged pressure, the team gradually fought its way back. Gabriel O'Neill proved the better of the midfield players with Joe Stack, Vincent Murphy and Tommy McDermott promising most in attack.