



On Wednesday 24th June 2009, Daniel Andre was doing what generations of children before him have done in the Hilltown area during good weather – playing ‘down at the Bann’ near Mussens Corner. Sadly Daniel slipped into a deep pool on the river known as the ‘Mill Pool’. Despite the best efforts of members of the Emergency Services to revive him after he was pulled from the river Daniel died in the early hours of Thursday morning in The Royal Victoria Hospital for Sick Children having been transferred there from Daisy Hill Hospital, Newry. The community was shocked and stunned at the loss of this sports-mad, fun-loving little boy who endeared himself to everyone with whom he came in contact. He was always smiling and his grin would light up his entire face.

During his Mass of Remembrance his teacher described him as ‘My Little Helper’. But this wasn’t just the preserve of his P6 teacher, Nigel Trainor.

This is one of the many ways in which Daniel will be remembered

throughout the entire community and particularly in Clonduff Gaelic Club of which he was a proud juvenile playing member.

Being a very energetic and active child Daniel joined Clonduff GAC almost four years ago. He attended weekly coaching sessions where he enthusiastically acquired the basic skills of Gaelic Football. Daniel’s coaches found him to be a very ambitious player always happy to get his place on the team and play to his full potential at every opportunity. During his short time with the club he never missed a training session. He was a happy-go-lucky player arriving at training on time and giving his best during each session. He was a quiet boy who co-operated well with his mentors. He was an excellent team player fitting in well with all of the players on the team.

At Under 8 level Daniel participated in all of the tournaments the Club took part in. Last year he was a member of the Under 9½ team that won the County Down Community Games Competition. During this season he was a member of the team that won the Drumgath Tournament and was part of the St Patrick’s Primary School team who were runners-up in this year’s county Primary Schools Competition. Daniel also participated in the Mitchels Tournament this year. His favourite position was in the forward line.

Such was his love of sport and being curious to learn more, he also joined the weekly hurling coaching sessions. He represented St Patrick’s Primary School in school’s Hurling Feile Final in 2008, and two weeks ago he took part in a hurling blitz competition organised by the Clonduff Club. He enjoyed playing hurling and practising his skills with his big sister Lauren, an accomplished Camogie player. Whichever sport he was involved in his mentors all agreed that he was willing to listen and to learn the skills and was always so happy to play on the team, even if this meant coming on as a sub.

He loved being associated with The Clonduff Club. Following a recent coaching session, the groundsman was lifting the grass on the main playing field which the mower had missed. Daniel offered to help and for the next hour and a half he happily worked alongside P J raking, gathering and tidying the grass. After an Under 8 blitz ten days previously, he was there to help collect the rubbish after the day-long event.

Daniel constantly wore his yellow Clonduff Jersey when he had the opportunity – it was his favourite piece of clothing. Clad in this gear, the most familiar sight around his home in Shanlieve Court, was Daniel carrying a football or a Hurley Stick heading to the home of one of his many friends. When Daniel wasn’t on the pitch playing or training he was often arranging mini games near his home, where he and his friends congregated to play. His caring and good natured personality ensured that no one was left out. He was a popular, well-known and well-liked young boy. His family chose to dress him in his favourite clothing, a Clonduff playing strip, for his waking and burial.

Daniel’s passing has left a void in the lives of the entire Clonduff Community and in particular his family – Mum and Dad Donna and Luigi, his two sisters Lauren and Kara and his extended family in both Ireland and his father’s homeland, the island of Maderia, and to all of them we extend our sincerest condolences.

Daniel had another family, the Clonduff Gaelic Club and it was a fitting tribute to him that his Under 10 team mates and mentors provided a guard of honour from his home to the church on Saturday for his funeral. Everyone in the Club and particularly his team mates and mentors will always remember and sadly

miss the promising wee fellow that volunteered to fill any position on the team so long as he could get playing.