



TIPPERARY SOUTH (3 seats)

Electorate.....**54,637** Spoiled**330**
 Total Poll.....**39,112** Total Valid Poll.....**38,782**
 Turnout.....**71.59%** Quota**9,696**

Elected



TOM HAYES: Hayes has one of the safest Fine Gael seats in the State and his re-election was expected. A Golden-based farmer, he was spokesman on the environment, with special responsibility for heritage and rural affairs, in the last Dáil. He has been chairman of the Fine Gael parliamentary party since 2002. A strong Dáil performer on issues relating to agriculture and rural matters, he was first elected to the Dáil in 2001 in a byelection caused by the death of party colleague Theresa Ahearn. He had been narrowly beaten in a byelection the previous year, held after the death of Labour TD Michael Ferris.



MATTIE McGRATH: McGrath succeeded to the seat vacated by long-serving TD Noel Davern, who retired. Clonmel-based McGrath has been a member of South Tipperary County Council since 1999, topping the poll in the Cahir electoral area in 2004 with 1,902 votes, some 600 votes above the quota. He previously served on the council in the early 1990s. McGrath runs a plant hire company in Clonmel, employing eight full-time staff. In the election campaign, he highlighted issues relating to care of the elderly, justice and community employment.



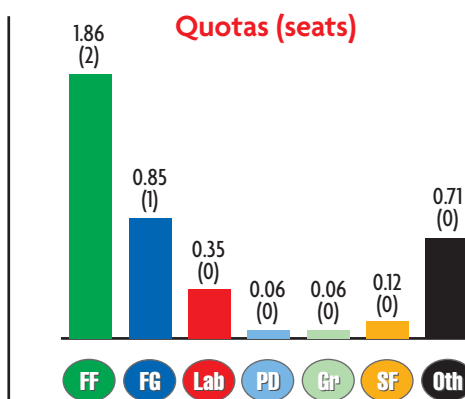
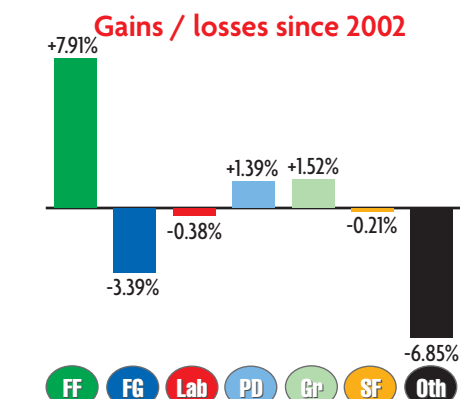
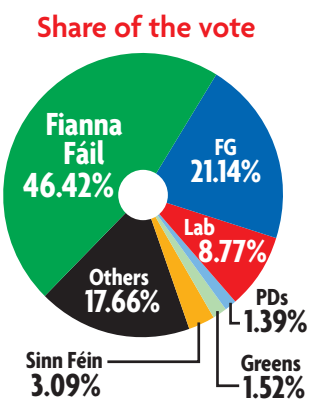
MARTIN MANSERGH: Martin Mansergh's victory, at the expense of Independent Séamus Healy, was a surprise. It was thought that there would be just one Fianna Fáil seat in the constituency and that the threat to Healy would come from Labour's Phil Prendergast. Oxford-educated Mansergh is a respected figure in Fianna Fáil and well-liked in Tipperary. He was an adviser to every Fianna Fáil taoiseach since he left the Department of Foreign Affairs to join Charles Haughey's staff. Academic and bookish, he also has a practical streak as evidenced by his election to the Dáil after a period in the Seanad. He was the author of a document that paved the way for the 1992 Fianna Fáil-Labour government. He is best known for his work on the peace process, which saw him honoured in Tipperary. He has a strong claim to a cabinet post.

Count

		Distribution of Lennon, Molloy, O'Donnell votes	Distribution of Wood votes	Distribution of Browne votes	Distribution of Prendergast votes	Distribution of Ambrose surplus	Distribution of Hayes surplus
COUNT	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
McGrath							
Hayes, Tom* (FG)	8,200	(+186) 8,386	(+437) 8,823	(+247) 9,070	(+1,448) 10,518		
McGrath, Mattie (FF)	7,608	(+103) 7,711	(+100) 7,811	(+183) 7,994	(+469) 8,463	(+1,630) 10,093	
Mansergh, Dr Martin (FF)	6,110	(+151) 6,261	(+145) 6,406	(+122) 6,528	(+224) 6,752	(+2,061) 8,813	(+313) 9,341
Healy, Seamus* (Ind)	5,707	(+177) 5,884	(+152) 6,036	(+420) 6,456	(+1,092) 7,548	(+1,043) 8,591	(+607) 9,198
Ambrose, Siobhán (FF)	4,286	(+128) 4,414	(+83) 4,497	(+152) 4,649	(+448) 5,097		
Prendergast, Phil (Lab)	3,400	(+231) 3,631	(+121) 3,752	(+155) 3,907			
Browne, Liam (SF)	1,198	(+68) 1,266	(+97) 1,363				
Wood, Tom (Ind)	1,141	(+46) 1,187					
Lennon, Bernard (GP)	591						
Molloy, Richie (PD)	364						
O'Donnell, Peadar (PD)	177						
Non-transferable		42	52	84	226	363	0
ELECTED:					Hayes	McGrath	Mansergh
ELIMINATED:		Lennon, Molloy, O'Donnell	Wood	Browne	Prendergast	Ambrose	



Scrutineers examining votes at the count for the close contest for the last seat between Aengus Ó Snodaigh (SF) and Eric Byrne (Labour) at the count centre in the RDS. Photograph: Frank Miller



Story of the count

Fianna Fáil made a significant gain in winning a second seat in this three-seater constituency, with Dr Martin Mansergh edging out sitting TD Séamus Healy. The other seats were filled by outgoing Fine Gael TD Tom Hayes and Fianna Fáil's Mattie McGrath.

The eighth count on Friday night put Mansergh a mere 59 votes ahead of Healy, who at that point requested a recount.

A re-examination of the votes began at lunchtime on Saturday after legal issues had been resolved, but the initial result was confirmed at 10pm that night, when returning

officer Mary Delehanty confirmed that Healy had withdrawn his request for a complete re-examination and recount.

The election was a personal and political triumph for Hayes and McGrath. The Fine Gael TD consolidated his popularity in the area by topping the poll for the second successive election, securing 8,200 first preferences. He was elected on the fifth count.

The largest cheer was reserved for Fianna Fáil councillor McGrath, who was elected on the sixth count, having polled 7,608 first preferences. Controversy had raged within

Fianna Fáil over McGrath's selection and his ratification was delayed because he has been charged with public-order offences arising from an incident in his home village of Newcastle, near Clonmel, last August. He says he is innocent of the charges.

There was a much smaller than expected increase in support for Labour, whose candidate, the mayor of Clonmel, Phil Prendergast, had been tipped to take a seat. She received just 3,400 first-preference votes and was eliminated on the fourth count.

Éamonn Wynne