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Mick Smyth of Shamrock Rovers was beaten all ends.

F.A.I. CUP FOR ROVERS

Re-play honours to losers

By DES HANRAHAN

SHAMROCK ROVERS 1 : LIMERICK 0

ATTENDANCE, 20,000 RECEIPTS, £3,050

GIVEN the luck of the draw in the European Cup Winners' Competition, Limerick will pack Dalymount Park. At least that was the impression gained from the reception given the Shamrock Rovers at the venue on Wednesday night when they thrilled their huge following with as gallant and skilful a showing as one could wish to see—a display that should have yielded victory instead of a 1-0 beating in the F.A.I. Cup final re-play.

Shamrock Rovers stepped up considerably on the form re-tested in last Sunday's 1-1 draw, but Limerick, too, improved their game immeasurably, and the result was one of the greatest finals in the history of the competition. There can hardly have been one in ten of the big attendance who was not sorry for Ewan Fenton and his playing colleagues. To a man they rose after the match chanting "we want Ewan, we want Ewan" Fenton's after-the-game speech was simple—"We promised Rovers a good game and I think we gave them just that by the evening" Ronnie Nolan—"Limerick

deserved at least a draw". And he meant it. **CRUEL LUCK**
Twice in the first half the winners' goalkeeper, Mick Smyth, was seen to bless himself as Al Finucane and Eddie Mulvey, in turn, and the cruellest of luck with golden chances. In the second half, Smyth was relieved to see a goal disallowed and again when his faulty kick-out rebounded off centre-half Tom Farrell's back and just wide. Probably his closest call was a borderline case whether or not he was over the goal-line when Limerick were fighting desperately for an equaliser. Do not run away with the idea that it was all Limerick

No indeed, Rovers goal was a beauty, and unlike last Sunday, Limerick goalkeeper Kevin Fitzpatrick was fully occupied. His was a majestic performance—a towering display with class which laid over it. What does the future hold for Ewan Fenton, whose contract is due to expire on August 1st? Witness cannot say, but whatever the ultimate decision the Limerick player-manager can look back on Wednesday's performance as one of the greatest of his career. To say he never put a foot wrong is putting it mildly. He was in towering form.

and while playing second fiddle they were not losing cause. None could have given more in the face of tremendous odds. **BREAK-NECK SPRINT**
The first half was contested at break-neck speed. We expected that there would be a change in the switching on of the lights, but the pace never flagged and Limerick fairly covered themselves in glory. Rovers supporters agreed that they had that measure of kick which is necessary to win a Cup final and there the difference lay. While Rovers could lay claim to the edge on the wings, their inside-men seldom counted. Dick O'Connor was Limerick's best forward, but in fairness to Mitchell, he had not anything like the support that his might have expected. However, he tried all the way and cannot be saddled with blame for defeat. Tom Farrell, at centre-half, was Rovers' best back, but Ronnie Nolan and Paddy Mulligan were not far behind. Farrell did make a slip that almost yielded a goal. His back-pass was intercepted by Eddie Mulvey, but the inside-right's shot was snuffed before he could connect properly and the ball went outside for a corner. **GAME TO THE LAST**
It was a tribute to Limerick that no spectator left the ground before referee Sammie Spillane of Cork signalled full-time. And they were there with a great fighting chance all the way. I doubt that any losers were given a greater reception than they accorded Limerick. The way the Dublin public rose to Fenton and his colleagues left no one in doubt that they had seen a first-class value. On this reckoning, Limerick, provided they are lucky enough to draw one of the top teams in Europe for the Cup winners' bid, must give serious thought to playing the home leg at Dalymount Park. Close on 45,000 watched Limerick and Rovers in their Cup battles and they enjoyed every minute of the games. For Shamrock Rovers it was their 13th time winning the F.A.I. Cup. Limerick took heart from the fact that they could not have been beaten by a better league of Irish sides. **A MATCH FOR BEST**
And so it is again a case of so near and yet so far. Limerick However they have proved that the break-through cannot be long delayed and that they are a match for any side in the League of Ireland. To have beaten the League champions, Drumcondra, on their way to the final, has forced Shamrock Rovers—Shield and Cup winners—to a back-to-the-wall stand before triumphing by the only goal, taken on the sting out of defeat. Rovers' goal resulted from Frank O'Neill's cross, which was returned by Tony O'Connell and headed home by Johnny Fullam, who had to dive high to his goal.

O'CONNELL BRILLIANT
Compared with the drawn game in which Limerick also had a goal disallowed, Rovers had one change, Tony O'Connell on the left wing for Liam Tuohy. O'Connell was on top of his form, and with Frank O'Neill on the other side again having an excellent game, the "loops" were strongest on the wings. Limerick played the eleven who finished the drawn game, but there was a positional change, Dick O'Connor moved to the left-wing and Denis Linnane crossing to the right. O'Connell maintained last Sunday's sparkling form and Linnane showed marked improvement, but the number 7 spot is not his best position and one had to regret the absence of Michael Doyle. Frank O'Neill was available. I have little doubt but that Limerick would have won. The half-back line of Al Finucane, Ewan Fenton and Des McNamara made ribbons of Rovers' inside trio. Finucane, at 22, one of the greatest prospects in the country, was again in thundering form; we have never seen a better Ewan Fenton and Des McNamara, too, was invaluable, blotting Johnny Mooney right out of the picture. Add Kevin Fitzpatrick and Dick O'Connor and you have two players who shared the top honours. Centre-forward Peter Mitchell was not as effective as he was in the first match, but he did not have the necessary support from the inside pair "Ginger" O'Rourke and Eddie Mulvey. The latter's heading was first-rate, but he left the form shown in the Drumcondra match behind and "Ginger" O'Rourke apart from a second-half shot that topped the crossbar, had not by any means a happy evening. The Limerick fulls Joe Casey and Vincent Quinn were unlucky to meet Frank O'Neill and Tony O'Connell on a night that the wingers would have given the best fulls in the game the run-round. The central Queen and seasoned half Joe Casey

While Fenton's all round display gave full proof of his worthiness to possess an English Cup medal, his indirect free in the 32nd minute of the first half gave us the "inside" on Limerick's goal, planning that he put into play Limerick's first appearance in the F.A.I. Cup final. Rovers had a wall of players ten yards from the ball. Al Finucane gave the impression that he was taking the kick, but left it to Fenton instead. The player-manager ran as if he was going to have a hand at blasting Smyth into the lifey. Unsuspecting Rovers were caught flat-footed when the ball was slipped over so neatly to Mulvey, who tapped it on behind Rovers' backs. With Finucane running on to it, we had visions of a wonder goal, but he failed to reach the ball by only inches and it trickled outside. Fenton was also in the lime-light 20 minutes from the end when he had a goal disallowed for offence. Rovers' goal came ten minutes after the interval, soon after "Ginger" O'Rourke and Eddie Mulvey had near misses for Limerick. Smyth had to go full length to save from Denis Linnane. This further embarrassed Limerick's back line.

CARROLLS NUMBER 1 TOURNAMENT
Still necessary for amateur to qualify
"Close" event will decide
by C. N. MULQUEEN

When the Carrolls Number 1 tournament had to be abandoned last Saturday due to adverse weather conditions, it was found impossible to hold this event prior to the Carroll International tournament at Cork on account of the professional and amateurs' existing commitments. The Carrolls Number 1 tournament had to be postponed to last Tuesday night. The Carrolls Number 1 tournament had to be postponed to last Tuesday night. The Carrolls Number 1 tournament had to be postponed to last Tuesday night. Special she tags Blue P QUIN SHAMROCK OF RIGI

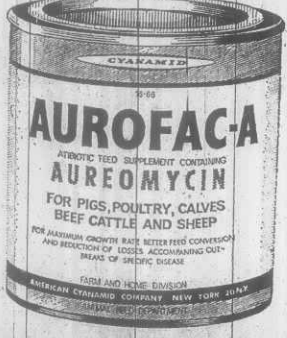
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