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Limerick Leader

MONDAY, MARCH 29, 1971

CONFIRMATION OUTFITS
If you want something unusual and different, then you must—
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Tony Purcell Reports on F.A.I. Cup Special

UGLY SCENES AS LIMERICK REACH THIRD FINAL

Quick Goal Clinches 'Rough and Tumble' Affair
Five Players Booked, and One Sent Off

LIMERICK 1 : ST. PATRICK'S ATHLETIC 0.

FIVE players "booked" and another sent to the line gives a clear indication of this rough and tumble F.A.I. Cup semi-final at Tolka Park on Saturday which saw Limerick, with the aid of a gift goal after only three minutes play, reach the final for the third time in the club's history at the expense of a rugged St. Patrick's Athletic side.

If the game itself was not explosive enough for the £1,318 "gate," which included over 3,000 Limerick followers, the ugly scenes at the final whistle certainly left a lot to be desired in the eyes of civil-minded people present, and cast a sad reflection on the Dublin soccer following. Angry St. Patrick's Athletic supporters made a vicious attempt to attack the referee, Billy O'Neill (Cork) as he dashed into the dressing-room with the help of Gardai. Unfortunately, one of the linesmen, Bobby Duggan (Cork) was struck by a bottle and fell to the ground dazed as Gardai forcibly restrained hooligans with the use of batons.

More St. Pat's supporters gathered outside the main entrance waiting for the referee, linesmen, and Limerick players and officials to come out. But so frightening was the situation outside the ground that they had to sneak away safely through a side entrance to their respective coaches.

What really incensed the St. Pat's fans was referee O'Neill's decision to send Noel Campbell off for apparent verbal abuse in "injury time." With so little time remaining in this bruising Cup struggle the referee might have prevented the nasty situation subsequently had he not taken this drastic action, but he stuck to his principles in most courageous fashion.

BLAME
Of course, the blame for such disgraceful scenes ever taking place must be shouldered to a certain degree by the F.A.I. legislators for appointing this particular referee to handle the game.

The reason: Referee O'Neill, one of the most highly respected in the country—he was appointed to take charge of the one of European Cup semi-finals on Friday—was involved in a controversy with Limerick Soccer Club last Sunday when a bad decision cost the club two valuable points against Bohemians. The incident was much publicised in the national Press and

one Limerick official, on the spur of the moment, stated that the club would refuse to play in the Cup semi-final with Billy O'Neill in charge. This was later denied by Mr. Michael Wallace, chairman, Limerick A.F.C. The F.A.I. went ahead with the appointment.

And so to the match itself. From the start referee O'Neill who was the boss as he took a firm hand on the proceedings. The tackling was really tough and over robust on occasions. Many of the referee's decisions angered St. Pat's players and followers. It appeared that in a 50-50 situation where the tackling by two opposing players was on the hard side, the home player was invariably penalised and the free-kick given to Limerick. But lest anyone might think that the Limerick players got away with "murder," such was not the case. They were penalised also.

TACTICS
But referee O'Neill was correct in the majority of his decisions as St. Pat's tried to adopt "rough house" tactics to offset Limerick's greater football skill by some fierce tackling. One felt that if St. Pat's concentrated more on playing football they might have fared better. Too many of the players seemed to lose their heads with the referee.

To say that Limerick fully deserved to win would be unfair. On the day St. Pat's rugged type of approach was effective, and were a little unlucky not to force a draw. They took over the middle of the field in the second-half and piled the pressure on the Limerick defence for long periods, but just could not get the ball into the net.

Behind the Limerick goal were the angry St. Pat's supporters, and soon after the interval goalkeeper Kevin Fitzpatrick was nearly hit by a bottle thrown on to the pitch. Gardai were summoned to the end of the ground by the referee as various missiles were hurled towards the players.

UNSETTLING
These unruly acts obviously had an unsettling effect on the Limerick defenders, battling to keep their lines intact. But while the clearances were a little sluggish on occasions, they nevertheless, held out in magnificent style. Goalkeeper, Kevin Fitzpatrick, proved a match-winner and inspired Al Finucane, Ritchie Hall, Joe Bourke and Sean Byrnes to greater heights as they staved off the fierce pressure.

The outstanding Limerick player to my mind was Joe O'Mahoney, who worked tirelessly in the hectic mid-field exchanges, and tried extremely hard to get his front runners in action. But unfortunately, they had their work cut out against the hard-tackling St. Pat's defence, and scoring chances were very few and far between. Hughie Hamilton, the hero in Bohemians downfall, missed an absolute sitter at the end, when following great work by the industrious Paddy Shortt, he blazed the ball over the bar from only six yards out. Dave Barrett and Andy McEvoy narrowly got much scope to make a real impact on this ill-tempered game.

HERO
But the real hero for Limerick supporters was Tony Meaney, who got the all-important goal in the third minute, to give Limerick the dream start needed. This resulted from a disastrous mistake by goalkeeper, Kevin Blount, who allowed the ball from Andy McEvoy's harmless looking job slip out of his hands, and there was Meaney to pounce on the ball and score the easiest of goals. This player has been criticised in the past, but it must be remembered he has scored many important goals in Limerick's success story this season.

BAD MISTAKE
St. Patrick's Athletic could not have got off to a more miserable start as they did. It was a dreadful mistake by goalkeeper, Kevin Blount, one of the most experienced in the League of Ireland, that led to the vital goal after only three minutes play. Had they not conceded this goal so early in the game, it might have been a different story. The players, however, never gave up trying and what they lacked in skill, they certainly made things hot for Limerick with their spirited performance. Mick Millington, in particular, Kevin Murray and Noel Campbell put in a fine amount of work throughout the 90 minutes.

Most of the play in the first half centred around the middle of the field, and there were very few goalmouth incidents. Blount had to rush out from his goal to clear the ball as Paddy Shortt came rushing in in the 28th minute. Tony Meaney shot narrowly over the bar in the 47th minute before Kevin Fitzpatrick saved a dangerous situation after O'Connor had a good chance from Henry

Quinn's header. In the 54th minute, Noel Campbell nearly had the equaliser when his powerful drive in a crowded goalmouth just went wide of the upright with Fitzpatrick looking on. St. Pat's appealed for a free-kick, penalty in the 67th minute when the ball hit Finucane for a corner, but the referee waved on play. Joe O'Mahoney had hard luck with a great free-kick which Blount just held in the 74th minute, and then near the finish Hughie Hamilton missed an open goal.

DISPLAY
What of Limerick's performance? Well, to be honest, the side did not show anything of the sparkling form evident in their great 3-1 win over Bohemians, the holders, last Tuesday, but they did provide what little good football there was in Saturday's game.

Captain Al Finucane, too, agreed that the side did not play well and still won. But the players are confident that they can rise to the big occasion on cup final day—April 18—and win the coveted trophy for the first time since Limerick entered the League of Ireland in 1957. It is generally agreed that luck, which is part and parcel of winning the FAI Cup, is going Limerick's way so far, and 1971 could well be the year for the history-making achievement.

Certainly, the defence is second to none in the country, and could well prove a match-winner for either Cork Hibernians or Dreggheda whichever side gets through to the decider.

CRITICAL
St. Patrick's Athletic were bitterly disappointed with Saturday's result, and were highly critical of the referee's handling of the game. Player-manager, John Colrain commented after the match: "This was one of the worst displays by a referee I have ever seen." Referring to the fact that four St. Pat's players—Kevin Murray, Henry Quinn, Mick Millington and Garry O'Rourke—had their names taken and Campbell was sent off, Colrain alleged that the referee intimidated the players from the word go. Paddy Shortt too had his name taken.

Manager Ewan Fenton thought St. Pat's played extremely well and forced Limerick back into defence in the second half. Fenton, who has now brought Limerick into their third cup final, is confident that the club can win the trophy at the third attempt.

He believes that the players will not find the going much tougher than they did against St. Pat's. He was a little disappointed with Limerick's display on Saturday, and feels certain that each player will be fighting that extra bit in the final for the elusive medal.

Limerick: Fitzpatrick; Bourke, Hall, Finucane, Byrne; O'Mahoney, McEvoy; Hamilton, Shortt Barrett, Meaney.
Referee: W. O'Neill (Cork).

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Tony Meaney, on left, just after flashing the ball (top, circled) into the net for the only goal of Saturday's Cup semi-final.

Junior Cup Rugby:

GOOD WINS FOR GARRYOWEN, CON. AND THOMOND

GARRYOWEN, Thomond and Constitution are through to the semi-finals of the Munster Junior Cup. Yesterday they accounted comfortably for Carrick-on-Suir, Waterpark and Midleton, respectively.

Garryowen will now meet Thomond in the first semi-final at Condon Park on Sunday week. Easter Sunday, and on the same day at Musgrave Park, Thomond meet the winners of next Sunday's game between Old Christians and Highfield.

GALLANT PACK GETS THOMOND THROUGH
Thomond 11 pts.
Waterpark Old Boys ... 3 pts.

A gallant pack of forwards saw Thomond through to the semi-final stages of the Munster Junior Cup. While all credit goes to the men up front, it must not be thought that their strength ends here, but as I have already said, individualism is out in this XV. Behind the scrum Mick O'Donnell had a great game, with the outside very little behind him.

SUBDUED
The only forward of note in a subdued Waterpark pack was Garry Halley, but he, in my opinion, threw in the towel midway through the second half. Full-back Frank Phelan and centre Brian Morrison were backs to catch the eye, Phelan in particular never putting a foot wrong.

THE SCORING
Thomond had a dream start. After 9 mins Brian Flanagan put them ahead with a fine kick 5 yds. from touch and 3 mins later Noel Morgan dropped a beautiful goal after good work by Leslie Walters. Donald McMahon had a try after 25 mins, when Moloney won the strike against the head. Flanagan added the extra points and, so, Thomond went into the

break 11 pts. to the good. Thomond faced a rather strong wind in the second half and failed to add to their tally. Waterpark's points came from Liam O'Shea, when he converted a penalty for off-side.

TEAMS
Thomond — B. O'Flanagan; L. Waters, J. Meaney, G. Cronin, N. O'Donnell; M. Morgan, M. O'Donnell; J. Bromell, M. Moloney, M. Leonard, P. O'Halloran, P. Smyth, P. Proctor, D. McMahon, J. Reidy.
Waterpark — F. Phelan; D. Power, A. Healy, B. Morrison, B. Doyle; L. O'Shea, V. Molloy; L. Kelly, J. Chestnut, L. Flynn, R. Lawlor, C. Widger, F. Trichter, N. Power, G. Halley.
Referee: Mr. P. D'Arcy (N.M.R.A.).

BIG WIN FOR GARRYOWEN
Garryowen, 16 pts.;
Carrick-on-Suir, nil.

Holders Garryowen gave a polished, relaxed display against a Carrick-on-Suir XV that never reached the high expectations placed in them. Playing with the wind in the first half, they ruled up front and used the ball cleverly in the backs to turn over a deserved and confident 13 points to the good. Subsequently, "Carrick" came more into the picture, but they lacked skill and another well-taken Garryowen try excluded any possibility of a come-back.

Mike Carroll was a shining light in a Garryowen pack that rucked powerfully and won ample possession in all other sectors as well. Their feet-footed backs were always dangerous, and Pat Pratt's try was as good as one could wish to see. Mike Carroll put them ahead early on with a try that Eugene O'Shea converted and then came Pratt's try after a flowing movement set up by a superb ruck and again O'Shea did the necessary. Before half time his brother Michael dropped a goal and the only score of the second half was a try by winger Tom O'Carroll. Carrick, who won last Tipperary-Waterford area last season, had a few brief moments when they looked threatening but they did not reproduce the form that swept Bohemians out of the competition in the previous round and were well beaten by the end.

TEAMS
Garryowen—P. Pratt; W. Mc-

Mick Hickey on Davis Cup team

Following a series of trials over the weekend at Fitzwilliam, the Irish Davis Cup tennis team to play Finland at Helsinki on May 7, 8 and 9 was announced yesterday as follows:
W. Browne, R. V. Gotto (captain), M. P. Hickey, P. H. Jackson.

A feature of the team is the return of Michael Hickey, who is again eligible under the Davis Cup International Committee ruling, which states that professionals who recognise the authority of their home associations can play.

Hickey, a teaching professional in Limerick, comes under that heading.

Institute's great win
Catholic Institute ladies struck a mighty blow for Limerick hockey at Cork on Saturday when they defeated Munster Senior Cup favourites, Avon, 2-1 in the semi-final. Róisín Ryan coolly put the Limerick team ahead following a short corner in the opening minutes.

This score was equalised by Ita O'Donovan ten minutes later, but Institute again forced ahead when Marie Crawford hammered home another short corner. Aply marshalled by Marie Bartlett, Institute held out for the remainder of the game to qualify for a final clash with U.C.C. St. Angela's College, Cork won the Munster Schoolgirls' Cup when they beat Laurel Hill Day School, 1-0, at Reshrien on Sunday.

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APPLICATION TO THE PLANNING AUTHORITY
Take notice that I, Seamus Costello, intend applying to Limerick Co. Council for permission to erect a house with garage and septic tank at Coolalough, Hospital, County Limerick. (m29p)

APPLICATION TO THE PLANNING AUTHORITY
Michael and Una Collins are applying to Limerick Corporation for Planning Permission to erect toilets at rear of their Railway Hotel premises. (m29p)



Paddy Shortt and Mick Millington in a duel for possession.

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