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**SPORTING
VIEW**

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Senior soccer: The joke is now over

Al Finucane parts company with Limerick

BY JOHN O'SHAUGHNESSY

THE JOKE IS OVER for Limerick. Their handling of the Al Finucane affair was not in keeping with what one would expect from a League of Ireland Club and has left a very sour taste. A veil of secrecy surrounded this week's hurried transfer to Waterford, and even the great Agatha Christie Herself would have had difficulty in trying to unravel the mystery of it all.

Never before in the history of the LOI can there have been such a strange transfer saga. The on-off deal with Waterford came to a head on Wednesday night, when Finucane put pen to paper for the Suirsiders without the parties concerned agreeing on a transfer figure.

There wasn't time to discuss money. The ex-Reds United schoolboy just beat the European Cup deadline, and it was left over to last night to arrive at a fee.

The 29-year-old, 13 times capped Irish International was unavailable yesterday to comment on the situation, but his closest friend and next door neighbour, Mr. Jack Tuohy, who is also a member of the Limerick board of directors, was adamant at 10 a.m. on Thursday that Finucane had not signed for Waterford.

Little did Jack know that the deal was completed 12 hours earlier.

MET

It appears that Mr. Dave Coughlan, hon. secretary, hon. treasurer and PRO, and Mr. Billy Higgins, vice-chairman, Limerick A.F.C., met Waterford chairman, Dr. Bob O'Driscoll, to re-open negotiations.

Mr. Higgins told me last evening: "Despite the improved terms we offered Al at our last meeting he wanted away, and it is in the interest of all concerned that he should leave Limerick."

Earlier, Finucane confided in me that it was most unlikely he would be seen in Limerick's colours this season as he wanted a change of club.

On Monday, a spokesman for the Limerick club said they had no intention of parting with Finucane.

Waterford's problems have now been solved... but Limerick's could be just starting.

There has been a regular flow

of telephone calls to the Limerick Leader office over the last 24 hours condemning the local club's handling of the Finucane affair.

Some threatened to boycott the Markets Field. Others suggested that the board should resign en bloc.

Unless that the blues can come up with something good over the next fortnight they can look forward to anything but a bright opening to the new season.

And Houdinis are scarce on the Limerick board.

RIGHT MOVE

I am convinced that Finucane has made the right move. Limerick were aware that he was unsettled and it was obvious that they couldn't hold on to him for much longer.

They acted correctly in putting their star pivot on the market. It was the amateurish way in which they went about their business that has most genuine soccer fans annoyed.

Their approach to the friendly against Nottingham Forest at the Markets Field on Tuesday night left a lot to be desired. Any local junior club would have made a better effort to put a team on the field.

The supporters are entitled to a better deal. The days for covering up are ended.

Now that Al Finucane has parted company with the club that he served for close on a dozen years, there is a possibility that the back-lash will be felt for the next few weeks.

* It could be that Al will line out against his old club in the Munster Cup at Killohan Park on next Thursday.

The Limerick board of directors met this morning to finalise Al Finucane's transfer to Waterford. "We have no option but to let him go," said a spokesman for the club. Waterford's offer was described as "reasonable."

Soccer :

Limerick Supporters Club issue statement

The Limerick Supporters Club issued the following statement this morning.

We, the above committee, at our meeting of 14th August, unanimously agreed that the present situation with regard to Limerick A.F.C. Football Club is so drastic that it calls for immediate action by the directors if Limerick is to have a football team for the future and especially for this coming season.

Their present situation is a carbon copy of previous seasons which we were led to believe at the end of last season would not be allowed to happen again.

But, here we are, two weeks to a new season and last Thursday night we were just about able to put eleven players(?) on the field. Is this the business-like approach that we were promised? If so, then we really have something to look forward to! The carry-on over the last few weeks would remind one of Harry Worth's antics. They have made a laughing stock of themselves and of Limerick.

The supporters of football deserve better than this. Do they expect supporters to go to the Markets Field and part with their hard-earned money to see the fare we were served up on Tuesday night? No effort has been made to strengthen the side, nor does there seem any sign that there will be. We feel that Limerick, being the third largest city in the Republic, should be capable of having a team to suit its standing and be run in a proper business-like fashion. If the present set of directors have any dedication to football then the most honest thing for them to do would be to make way for someone who will be capable of doing what they have failed to do.

The Limerick public deserve far better than that which has been offered them for the past few weeks. We are not making this statement to knock anybody for the sake of knocking. No, we really have the genuine interest of football at heart and we feel we cannot, as the saying goes, "stand idly by."

At our last annual dinner

Big charity game on Sunday

Southill A.F.C. have arranged an attractive charity game at the new church at Sout. Some of the best junior players in the city will be in action, it might be in Limerick A.F.C. interests to drop along.

The Southill Sel. team Billy Power (Southill); Healy (Southill), Jim Ral (Caledonians), Brendan Mez (Cals.), Christy O'Donogh (Star Rvs.), Eddie Han (Janeshoro), Jimmy Ry (Fairview), Tom Brow (Janeshoro), Junior Will (Cals.), Tom Considine (Michael's), Ger Ryan (Gedines).

Reserves: S. Killeen (Inedy Park), P. O'Grady (Soill), G. McCormack (West), Jim McCarthy (Dines), Mulcahy (Shannon), Fra Timmons (Pike), Martin grove (Abbey Rvs.).

The Rest of Limerick was not available at the of publication.

Messrs. Nestors have kindly donated a new ball for the match, and a special prize the first goal has been given Mr. Mick Crowe.

This game should be worth a visit.

Referee's meeting

The first meeting of the referees Association for the season will be held on Tuesday, August 28th, at the non Arms Hotel. Members intending members are invited to attend.

Star Rover: A.G.M.

C.L.C.G.

Coliste Cho Lunn

Sunday, August 19th.

at Gaelic Grounds

Camogie

Limerick play

Tinnerary