



MONDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 1974

F.A.I. CUP: £466 "GATE" AT MARKETS FIELD

Leavy strikes and Limerick make shock exit

BY JOHN O'SHAUGHNESSY

LIMERICK, 0; TRANSPORT, 1

WHAT A SAD, sad day for local soccer. On the other hand this defeat might be a blessing in disguise, for Limerick must realise by now that a complete overhaul is needed both on and off the field. Kevin Fitzpatrick made his quickest ever getaway from the Markets Field—he left three minutes after the final whistle—and while he might stand accused of evading his responsibilities, one could understand his feelings after having watched his so-called semi-professionals humbled by non-League Transport in the second round of the F.A.I. Cup.

Even allowing for the local inconsistent form this season, only the odd housewife forecasting with a pin could have given any chance to a struggling, immature, Leinster League side like Transport, cauldron to face a Limerick XI bent on compensating their fans for an eight weeks run which failed to yield even a solitary point.

But these Dublin minnows, who cost less than Limerick normally collect at the gate for a league game, astonished the 1466 crowd by grabbing the only goal after 80 minutes—a goal which was sufficient to give them a place in the quarter-finals.

This will go down in the record books as one of the shock results of the decade. Furthermore it will take Limerick a long time to live down this one. The club's image has suffered a lot over the past three months, but this latest set-back must be looked upon as the death blow.

BORE
You've all heard often enough about thrill-a-minute football. Well here's a new one—laugh a minute football. This 90 minute bore made a mockery of what soccer is all about. Really it was laughable watching the two teams—Limerick especially—making the most elementary of mistakes on a day and on an occasion when one expects the finer arts of the code to be as plentiful as confetti at a wedding.

There's some excuse for Transport since they play in a lower grade, but even the Blues' most loyal followers must agree that this was the biggest let-down of all time. Even in the bad old days—and they couldn't have been worse than now—Limerick were always capable of beating non-league outfits.

So ambitious, but unfashionable, Transport go marching on. Even though they took the honours yesterday, I am sure that bookmaker, Malachy Skelly, could increase his odds on them to win the trophy from 500/1 to 10,000/1 and still wouldn't have many bidders. Yes, the blues were that bad. The Dubliners looked no more than a useful junior combination. They had little to recommend them except for the effort shown, and regretfully, that was one commodity which the

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FITZPATRICK BOMBSHELL

Kevin Fitzpatrick announced at mid-day that he is quitting his post as player manager of Limerick Football Club and added that he would never again play in the League of Ireland. Kevin, annoyed with yesterday's result continued that this was not a hasty decision and that he had given careful consideration to the matter. He has written to the board of Directors informing them of his decision.

—John O'Shaughnessy.

homestays didn't possess.

Fitzpatrick, who was a mere observer for most of the 90 minutes, must have been the most disappointed man at the venue when referee, Mr. Dugan, sounded the final whistle. He had built his hopes on a good Cup run, but saw them dashed simply because his players didn't want to know what it was all about.

CHEER

The supporters also gave vent to their feelings, and the drab enclosure was reserved for Transport's all important goal, this despite the fact that the visitors had hardly a dozen followers with them. Blue and white colours were discarded as disgruntled home fans lent vocal support to the plucky Harold's Cross side, who responded by almost grabbing a second goal in the 82nd minute.

After this dismal performance, the time must surely come for a showdown. Many heads are bound to roll, and the sooner a statement is issued on future policy the better for all concerned. I shudder to think of what the "gate" returns will be like for the remainder of the season.

The spinning soccer roulette wheel has dealt local football a cruel blow. Many a dream has been shattered, and while defeat at the hands of another League of Ireland club might have been acceptable, to be mastered at home by a non-league side is extremely difficult to stomach.

UPSET

The man responsible for this upset was Transport's crafty half back, Tony Leavy. He has been around quite a bit, but seldom will he have made such a crucial contribution as he did yesterday. With the game destined to go to a replay, little Sherwood prompted an attack for the visitors.



Denis Lymer (Limerick) and Sherwood (Transport) in a race for possession during yesterday's Cup game at the Markets Field.

The ball was played in and out of the Limerick penalty area, and eventually found its way to Leavy, who left Fitzpatrick helpless with a powerful shot from all of 30 yards.

The 'Port were an inspired lot afterwards, and two minutes later, Fitzpatrick must have stretched every bone in his body as he dealt with a scorching from Conroy.

Up to then, this was a miserable affair. Indeed, the incidents were so few and far between that they could have been written on the back of a cigarette packet.

As for the quality of play, I have seen better football played in the streets out of Clareview way. Limerick cannot offer any excuses. They had the edge most of the way, but didn't seem capable of compensating their followers for what has been a dreadful season. Transport were delighted with themselves, but even they must be honest enough to admit that further progress is beyond them.

Allowing for the poor quality of the opposition, this was a cup tie in name only. Limerick were very much off the boil and there wasn't even one player who emerged with his reputation unscathed.

The defence, even though they were asked to cope with only two Transport front runners for most of the time, suffered from the jitters and none more so than Lymer, Core and Hall, a trio on whom so much depended. Willie O'Mahony was no more than average at full-back, and if Joe O'Mahony can be credited with trying hard, this was one occasion when he failed to fulfil his duties as captain. Shay Doyle gave a wholehearted performance, and I wouldn't blame him if he rushed in this week with a transfer request.

INABILITY

Tony Meaney, Des Kennedy and Nick Hogan never really troubled a winners defence that was anything but solid and Kennedy's inability to master the ageing and cumbersome Conroy allowed 'keeper Delahunt the freedom of his own penalty area. Waters managed to get in a couple of worthwhile shots and was unlucky with one effort which shaved a post with Delahunt out of position.

Which brings us back to Kevin Fitzpatrick. He didn't have a shot of note to deal with in the first period; took the ball off Myers' head in the 60th minute, and next saw the ball when it flashed past him in the 80th minute. And yet Limerick were beaten. Such are the uncertainties of cup football.

One detected an air of frustration in the losers play after they had failed to open their account in a first half that is best forgotten. Kennedy gave promise of better things to come when he brought Delahunt to his knees in the 2nd minute, but from then on the home strikers were way off target in their shooting. The nearest Limerick came to opening their account was when Kennedy fired in a powerful shot which struck the 'keeper on his chest. Then in the 32nd minute, Doyle headed narrowly wide. During all that time Transport failed to launch an attack of note.

The second half took on much the same pattern and even the substitution of Martin for Hogan failed to inspire the locals. Transport's tactics of playing it deep in defence seemed to be paying dividends and with

O'Brien, Finlay and Leavy holding their own in the middle of the park it was obvious that Limerick would have to come up with something new if they were to maintain their status.

ADVENTUROUS

The Dubliners became a little more adventurous and scenting that the Isers morale was low they went in for the kill. Their moment of glory arrived when both Lymer and Mick O'Mahony allowed Sherwood to set up an attack and with the home

Referee: Mr. R. Duggan, Cork.

Limerick Players Did Well

Munster much too good for Universities

By CORMAC LIDDY

MUNSTER, 5-11; COMBINED UNIVERSITIES, 2-7
LIMERICK players contributed handsomely to this big win by Munster in the Railway Cup semi-final at the Ennis Road Grounds on Sunday. To make local supporters even more happy, Paul Fitzmaurice of Killeedy was the star performer for the Universities who, generally, were outclassed.

Within thirty seconds Ned Rea cracked in a great goal and this set the pattern for the rest of the game. By the end of the first quarter, Munster led by 3-2 to the sole Universities point from a free by Paul Fitzmaurice.

With thirty seconds remaining to the interval Munster were in front by 3-3 to the single point but just before the break Fitzmaurice had the Universities second point.

Again after the restart Munster took up the attack and after three minutes Rea nipped in to whip in another goal after the goalie had made a fine save. Rea followed up with a point and then Charlie McCarthy tacked on three points in as many minutes.

McCarthy went in to the Munster side in place of Ray Cummins and Eamonn Cregan withdrew because of a family bereavement and Waterford's Pat McGrath was brought in.

Just at the end of the three-quarter stage, Frankie Nolan had a fine point—he kicked in a goal later on—and Sean Foley slammed over a great point from about 72 yards.

That helped Munster into a lead of 4-10 to 0-2 and it seemed as if they would have a huge win. Suddenly, however, the Universities hit back and Fitzmaurice had their third point 12 minutes from the end. Hugh Dolan had another point for the Universities and this was followed by a goal by Seamus Ryan and a point by Dolan to make it 4-10 to 1-5. Then came Nolan's goal, although many thought that Ned Rea's effort had crossed the line before Nolan kicked it in.

Thus, Munster are through once again to meet Leinster in the final on St. Patrick's Day. All the Limerick players did particularly well for Munster,

Pictures

by Noel Gavin

defence at sixes and sevens, Leavy availed of the opportunity to have his name etched into the history books.

Limerick had used up all their available energy. Doyle was given a great opportunity of levelling matters in the very last minute but his weak shot was turned round for a corner by Finlay.

Let us not detract from Transport's win. They came with one purpose... to get a replay at home, but as things transpired they got over this hurdle at the first attempt. Tony Leavy might have emerged as their match winner but when the excitement dies down I am sure they will pay equal tribute to their young keeper Tony Delahunt, who gave them the confidence they needed with a couple of outstanding saves early on. The courageous Delahunt never shirked his duties and is a keeper with a bright future.

The remainder were only average.

Limerick: Fitzpatrick; O'Mahony (M), Lymmer, O'Mahony (J), Core, Hall; Waters, Doyle, Kennedy, Hogan, Meaney. 12th man: Martin for Hogan.

Transport: Delahunt; Doyle, Finlay, Leavy, Conroy, O'Brien, Byrne, Myers, Byrne, Sherwood, Stewart.

Referee: Mr. R. Duggan, Cork.



Steve Conroy gets the better of Des Kennedy in this duel at yesterday.

RUGBY: IRELAND DO THE HAT-TRICK

A memorabilia at Twickenham

A SUPERB TEAM DISPLAY

BY CHARLIE MULQUEEN

ENGLAND, 21 PTS.; IRELAND, 26 PTS

THE SPIRIT OF this great Irish team performance was best by the manner in which 33 year-old loose head prop forward, was able to make a twenty yard burst down the right-hand 41st minute of the second half. It was this dynamic, never-say-die made all the difference between the sides at Twickenham on land won 26-21 to complete a hat-trick of victories over the "O

For many men, it was a day they will never forget. Skipper Willie John McBride, setting a world record of 37 caps, will have had few happier occasions in his long and honourable career in the green jersey. Mike Gibson, too, gave the answer to those who felt he was over the top, and his superb overall performance marked him out as possibly Ireland's man of the match.

Still, Ray McLoughlin's solidity at loose head prop (thought by many to be the most difficult position in which to play) will be an abiding memory for me. Firstly, it should be noted that McLoughlin was propping against one of the world's great forwards, Brian Cotten, who is over eight years his junior; at 16 st. 7 lbs. to 15 st. 8 lbs he held a considerable weight advantage and at 6 ft. 2 ins. against 5 ft. 10 ins. was no more than four inches taller. But not once did McLoughlin show any buckling in the face of all the odds, always gave his hooker maximum support and as I have said late in the game found time to make a powerful burst under the West stand.

SPIRIT
It was a tour de force by McLoughlin, and the spirit displayed by him permeated through the entire side. The pack were absolutely superb, especially in the opening twenty minutes of the second half, when playing against the wind and holding a precarious half time lead of 10-6, they drove the Englishmen back at will and from the 4th to 18th minutes ran in an incredible three tries, converted two of them, and go into an apparently untouchable 26-9 lead.

However, England steadied with a fourth penalty goal by Alan Old, and then came a magnificent try by Peter Squires after a superlative burst by the brilliant No. 8, Andy Ripley. Old converted, and then with six minutes remaining kicked a fifth penalty to reduce the arrears to just five points. Old's pinpoint kicking brought him 17 points and exposed the frailty of Ireland's work in this sphere; had we kicked our goals, there would have been no need for the fluttering heartbeats that had us all in torment through the remainder of the time before Welsh referee, Merion Joseph took us out of our agony with the last blast of the whistle.

Obviously Ireland had their stars, with Gibson, McLoughlin, Tom Grace, Johnny Moloney and Fergus Slattery high on the list. But it was as a team they shone, drawing on the vast reserves of experience at their disposal to crush the English early in the second half and then be calm enough to hold the inevitable English counter-attack.

While the line-out work was poor, Ireland for the most part negated this deficiency by quickly tackling and covering and their scrummaging was such that each heel was cleanly channeled and sent back smartly. While John Moloney lacked the spin pass of Steve Smith, the highly rated Englishman failed to vary his play and Alan Old at out-half was much too stereotyped, which may have been a pity for England looked to have a few very dangerous three-quarters.

In the pack, No. 8 Andy Ripley stood out head and shoulders above the rest and his charging runs, one of which led

ment with the whistle well gone. Ensor levelled with a fine kick after sixteen minutes only for Moore to infringe the laws in the 26th minute and give Old his second penalty. In the 33rd minute, David Duckham threw in at a line-out at the English line straight to Terry Moore who had only to fall over the line. Ensor made a hash of the conversion but right on the interval, Mick Quinn dropped a goal via an upright.

Ireland started the second half with a bang... Old failed to hold a high McMaster kick and the ball bounced straight into Moloney's hands who showed speed and determination in covering the 30 yards to the try line successfully.

Old revived England temporarily with a penalty goal from the halfway line, but almost immediately Gibson finished off a lovely move involving Moloney, Quinn and Milliken by stepping inside a tackle for a try which he badly failed to convert.

In the 18th minute Dick Milliken, luckily, failed to control a rolling ball which instead went to Ensor who took it on the burst and raced forty yards before transferring the scoring pass to the superbly supporting Gibson. Gibson converted.

England's try came as the result of a thundering run by Ripley and was finished off by Squires, the man who also started it well in his own half. Old converted, and then kicked a penalty but Ireland held on for a victory that all us present will remember for a long time.

TEAMS
Ireland — P. A. Rosborough (Coventry); D. J. Duckham (Coventry); G. W. Evans (Coventry); D. Roughley (Liverpool); P. Squires (Harrogate); A. G. B. Old (Leicester); S. J. Smith (Sale); C. B. Stevens (Penzance and Newlyn); J. V. Pullin (Bristol); F. E. Cotton (Coventry); R. M. Uttley (Gosforth); C. W. Ralston (Richmond); P. J. Dixon (Gosforth); A. G. Ripley (Rosslyn Park); A. Neary (Broughton Park).

Ireland — A. H. Ensor (Wandsworth); T. O. Grace (St. Mary's College); R. A. Milliken (Bangor); C. M. H. Gibson (N.I.F.C.); W. W. McMaster (Ballymena); M. A. Quinn (Lansdowne); J. J. Moloney (St. Mary's College); R. J. McLoughlin (Blackrock College); K. W. Kennedy (London Irish); S. F. Lynch (St. Mary's College); W. J. McBride (Ballymena); capt.; M. I. Keane (Lansdowne); J. F. Slattery (Blackrock College); T. A. Moore (Highfield); S. A. McKinney (Dungannon).

SAME TEAM
The Irish team to play Scotland at Lansdowne Road on Saturday week is unchanged, and this is hardly surprising. The reserves panel also remains unaltered, which means that Patrick Whelan will be sitting out his ninth successive international in this capacity. Whelan's Garryowen clubmates, Seamus Deering and Seamus Dennison, will continue as reserves but at least, they each got a cap; Dennison against France last year and Deering against Wales a fortnight ago.

CLUB GAMES
Young Munster brought a big party on a highly successful tour

of London... The score was 26-21 in favour of the Irish.

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SPORTS ANGLING

