

SPORTING VIEW

Win full of power and majesty

IN THE hectic hour and in the seething excitement that followed Limerick's great Munster hurling final triumph last Sunday many oldtimers asserted that we had just witnessed Limerick's finest ever performance on the hurling field and, in reflection, it is mighty hard to disagree.

It was a win full of majesty and power in one of the toughest and hard-fought Munster finals of modern times, and what made it truly unforgettable was the fact that it was our first Munster final win over Cork since that glory day in 1940, the thrill and spills of which only the oldtimers can recall. The great Cork team of all the talents were only coming then — they were afterwards to win five All-Ireland titles in the six years that followed, but last Sunday we faced a Cork team who were reigning National League title-holders, who were unbeaten in a Munster championship game since 19th May, 1974, and who were going all out for a record six Southern senior hurling championship crowns.

They were almost everybody's fancy last Sunday and even when the heart said otherwise the head insisted that form was all with Limerick and they just had to win. Even some great Limerick supporters were convinced by the scribes and know-alls in general that nothing could match the Cork mood this year.

On Saturday morning, in O'Connell Street, I met that great Gael, Denis McNamara, who had just arrived off the plane from New York to see what must have been his nineteenth Munster final. He expressed his bitter disgust at the manner in which all the pundits had written off the Limerick challenge but I tried to mollify him by saying that it was just the way we wanted it and that the cockier Cork felt the greater would be their fall.

"I am very disappointed"

—Eoin Hand



Happier times for Eoin Hand — he is mobbed by fans at the end of the final home game last season against Home Farm.



A happy group of supporters pose with the magn Intermediate Eights Chair

Rowing

St. Michael's champs

(BY "ASPIRANT")

ST. MICHAEL'S struck a telling blow for local rowing prestige when at Iniscarra, Co. Cork, on Friday last, they won the Intermediate Eights Championship of Ireland — second only in importance to the elite event.

It was the club's first championship win in what is now known as senior grade, and the second in all, having won the Junior A title last season.

The blue and gold colours of the club was left flying proudly over the clubhouse all week, and well they might. News of this historic win was greeted with unbounded jubilation not alone by club members, but by the rank and file rowing followers, and otherwise, throughout the city. At long last, one of the traditional "Union Cups" (Junior Eights) had come our way again after a long and barren spell stretching way back to 1954, when Shannon R.C. won the maiden pot.

Mention of a Union Cup has always had a magical ring about it for local rowing men, its annexation being the biggest ambition and ultimate honour. Legends have grown up around local Union Cup wins and holders of such honours are invariably held in esteem.

Twenty-six years is a long time to wait for one of the fabled cups to be brought back to the city and thanks to St. Michael's, one would be safe in saying that the lean spell — nay, famine — of the sixties and seventies — has now been truly put behind. "Well rowed" St. Michael's, you have all the congratulations and thanks of all rowing followers throughout the city.

Shannon R.C., incidentally, were also the last local club to win this magnificent trophy when in 1945 they won the then Irish Junior Eights Championship in Cork. Athlunkard, with what some old-timers argue was the best crew ever, has now been the club slipway, won the cup in 1941 and soon afterwards were beaten a couple of feet in a heat by Trinity in Limerick attempting to bring off the senior double.

Strong Limerick challenge for South of Ireland

BY CHARLIE MULQUEEN

The annual amateur golfing showpiece in these parts, the South of Ireland Championship, gets under way at Lahinch, on this Saturday with the first of seven rounds which lead up to the final on Wednesday afternoon next.

So in this unpredictable — at best — climate of ours, the championship may very well be as much a test of stamina as of shot-making, although the presence of so many members of the International panel ensures that the victory of a rank outsider is a remote prospect indeed.

Defending the title will be Killenny's Padraic O'Rourke, a slightly surprising if very worthy winner twelve months ago. He beat Jackie Harrington in the semi-final before going on to master Tom Cleary by 4/3 in the decider. O'Rourke won his place on the Irish panel after that success, but

and hone: now paye They are: kett, D. I O'Brien, Loughrey, J. Cumisk

T St. Mic means, fa the race, who were been built were favc In the Michael's first heat, and Fern time of 6 while UC Cork B. I liminary In the l tled down did race selves s toward: Michael's students for the tr with jus length t Cork B. time wa On Si

Law

THE scene o'clo betw tussle

Who drawn fortnig to be Priory certain good i incide famei exten youth; inext; were neutr dech; dinch Cup.

On porte tifiab) their men; 'were i' were the s Gera as L have slipp deker week (0-1) in th — ar

TVI

NO INFERIORITY

I said last week that the National League finals at Cork and our earlier defeat of the Leaders in the League proper should have killed and adequately buried for all time any feeling of the inferiority complex which, it is to be feared, was evident for at least some years in our dealings with Cork hurling.

How true that proved a hurling history now. The Cork bogey is utterly destroyed — fifteen men and two demonstrated that in the most telling fashion on the green sward of Thurles last Sunday, and their admirers and supporters, and that fifteen thousands from other hurling counties, were frantic with excitement in the emotionally charged atmosphere of the aftermath of a game that many will remember forever. —"CAMAN".

Ladies soccer

Shannon Albion 4
Taxes 0

Shannon Albion clinched the 3rd Division League title when they beat Taxes by 4 goals to nil at Carysven last week. Shannon Albion had to win this match to be sure of the league. A draw would mean a play-off against Boart Handrestals and if they lost Boart would be the champions.

Marie Phillips, Albion's outside right, put them in front after ten minutes and Maureen Talty, who had an outstanding game on the right wing for Albion, made it two up for Albion at half-time. Taxes would have been on level terms had it not been for some fine goal-keeping by Kathleen Divney, who brought off two brilliant saves. Julie McGrath and Mary Kirwan began to control the game in mid-field for taxes in the second half, but Denise Curran, Marie Doyle and Allison Power were very steady in the Albion defence. Trish Sullivan, Albion's brilliant mid-field player, made a great break through the middle and took a long-range shot which beat the Taxes' keeper for Albion's third goal.

Limerick through

Limerick won the top three matches in their Junior Cup clash with Douglas at Malinbeg, on Saturday evening and so advanced to the Munster Final in which they will meet Killarney.

Limerick v. Douglas (Limerick lines first): J. Fitzgerald bt. W. Nagle 3-1; J. Carew bt. M. Barry 4-3; J. Gleeson bt. P. Morris 2-1; G. Casey halved with J. Hannon; E. Tuohy halved with T. Higgins.

BY CHARLIE MULQUEEN

LIMERICK'S thousands of soccer followers are this evening still reeling at the news of Eoin Hand's resignation as manager of Limerick United A.F.C.

All the rumours, alas, had foundation, and a dejected Hand told me last night that he would be no longer involved with Limerick after this Saturday's Tyler Cup clash with Portadown at the Markets Field. So the man who undoubtedly played the lead role in Limerick's surprise Championship win in 1979/80 and so saw them into the glamour European Cup match with Real Madrid, has been "ditched" after less than twelve months at the Markets Field.

Officially, Hand has "resigned for domestic reasons". This was the reason given by club chairman, Michael Webb, when I contacted him at the Markets Field last night. Subsequently, Hand agreed with this explanation, although those close to the scene know only too well that trouble has been brewing between the manager and the committee for some time.

RIGHTS AND WRONGS

Whatever the rights and wrongs of the case, it is sad indeed that this should have happened after the most successful year in the club's history and just before the clash with Madrid. More than once last year the players expressed their pleasure and, indeed, pride at playing under a manager of the calibre of Eoin Hand.

While some members of the club believe otherwise, it is inconceivable that last season's results could have been achieved without Hand at the helm. He got an unbelievable response from the players, and the terraces, too, weren't slow to express their approval. Week in, week out, they chanted and sang his name and chaired him off the field at the end of the last home game against Home Farm and again when the title was finally clinched at Athlone.

Hand has been in professional football for sixteen years or so, and epitomises all that is best in the modern pro. Articulate and firm, he appeared to have a great future in the game, and when the Republic of Ireland appointed him from a distinguished and wide list of candidates, Hand had the soccer world at his feet.

FUTURE

Last night, though, he was pondering his future. Eoin told me he would be going to England for a few days a week — his family still live in Portsmouth, where he spent most of his professional career — and he pointed out that his job with the International team was part-time. "I am now on the look-out for a job", he said. "I am very disappointed".

Meanwhile, the Limerick board are apparently well advanced in their search for a successor. Mind you, one might well ask who would like a job with such a high mortality rate, but Mick Webb told me that a man with no connection with the club at present and who isn't an Irishman is very much in contention.

Mr. Webb said that Dave Mahedy, last year's

trainer and now assistant manager, will continue in that position. Dave himself is happy to wait and see just what develops.

BEHIND HAND TO A MAN

Team captain, Joe O'Mahony, this morning issued a statement on behalf of the players. It reads:

"We the players of Limerick United, on hearing the news of manager Eoin Hand's decision to resign, have decided to issue the following statement: Irrespective of the reasons for Eoin's resignation, we feel that the chairman and committee should do their utmost to retain his services for the coming season. It is essential for the players, the club, the supporters and soccer in Limerick that any reasons for the manager making this decision should be resolved immediately".



Eoin Hand in action for Limerick.

O'Mahony elaborated: "We want the supporters to know that we back Eoin fully. At this stage, the appointment of a new manager could cause an upheaval and we would urge both parties to get together and resolve whatever differences they have between them".

Joe furthermore pointed out that none of the players have been re-signed to date, in some ways a throw-back to the non-payment of a bonus after winning the league. "This development could further prolong the negotiations", said Joe.

But they must be re-signed by August 15th to play against Madrid, so whoever has the job may face a very thankless task indeed.