

# Fairview go through in FAI

Fairview Rgs.....3  
MCR, Sligo.....0

A GOOD job that this game was played at the Fairgreen for I think that MCR, on a tighter pitch might have given Fairview a much closer game than they did yesterday, writes *Sean Curtin*.

As things transpired this was a pretty comfortable win for the home side who could have, in the end, doubled their eventual tally.

That is not to say that they were exceptionally good; far from it, especially in the opening half hour when the westerners brought at least three marvellous saves out of keeper Lynch and had their No. 9 Joe O'Callaghan been on target with some stunning shots I think big questions could have been asked of Fairview.

MCR, who had this fixture originally fixed for their home patch, thought they had two chances to stage the game and allowed last week's fixture be cancelled despite being offered McSherry Park. They were stunned when it was learned that they had to make the long trip south and they arrived just in time for a 2.30 k.o.

Fairview began slowly - there's nothing new in that and inside the opening quarter they could have been in real trouble were it not for some magnificent goal-keeping by Owen Lynch. Martin Neary, back in harness after more than two months on the injured list was outstanding yesterday though he tired somewhat towards the end. Lynch, as I said, was outstanding while in front of him Joe Hanan was exceptional once again while Pat Purcell had his moments, too, though he might not be as forceful as heretofore. A big, towering defender, Purcell needed to be at his best to keep tabs on O'Callaghan, easily MCR's most effective striker.

Sean Lipper had one of his better games of the season - he scored one goal and carved the opening for Fairview's first and he did his own job well, too.

Fairview again looked a little suspect in the middle of the park; missing was the dynamism that only Barry Flynn seemed to generate but for all that they were better than their counterparts but if Fairview are to retain the coveted trophy they will have to get this department right once and for all. Jason Purcell was superb -



Sean Lipper had a great game for Fairview yesterday . . . he scored one and crossed perfectly for Fairview's opener

again - Dermot Phelan did OK besides scoring a superb goal while on the flanks John Collopy (right) and Kevin McCarthy (left) worked hard in dreadful conditions without setting

the world alight. Collopy created the opening for the penalty and paid a heavy price when shipping a pretty tough tackle for his efforts. Up front Gerry Kelly was very good and I was sur-

prised to see him substituted. He did a lot of running and scored a magnificent goal while Jimmy Sheehan, too, caused a lot of problems for the visiting XI. MCR, who came to

Limerick with a big reputation, were pretty impressive in that opening half and while they played catch-up for almost the entire second half it could have been a much different

story had they managed to beat keeper Lynch with one or two of those early chances.

Joseph O'Callaghan, as I said, was nothing short of excellent - he was easily their best player on the day, though he did run out of steam in the second half.

Fairview carved out a couple of early chances for themselves, however, with Gerry Kelly and Jimmy Sheehan both going close before MCR had their first real chance - from a corner kick that keeper Lynch just managed to clear off the line. From another corner Sean Lipper cleared desperately off the line with Lynch beaten on this occasion. By this stage Fairview had learned that MCR were extremely dangerous from dead ball situations with O'Callaghan taking the point off the upright with a superb strike from a 30 yard free kick.

Fairview were living dangerously at this stage; their fans were beginning to get a little restless but the longer the game went on without the westerners scoring the more comfortable Fairview were getting on the ball. They took the lead in the 25th minute when a corner from the left by Sean Lipper was heading on by Gerry Kelly and up popped Dermot Phelan to head home an absolute beauty.

Fairview continued to try the patience of their supporters and some very sloppy defending gave O'Callaghan the chance but this time Lynch came to the rescue with a truly marvellous save.

Isn't it amazing the transformation that has come over keeper Lynch. He joined Fairview as second choice keeper at Mungret and many believed it was only as a stop-gap until Colin Fleming returned from injury. Well since then he has gone from strength to strength and must now be rated among the best junior goalkeepers in the country. He certainly earned his keep yesterday in that opening 45 minutes.

The rains poured down incessantly in the second half; Fairview were much more comfortable on the ball at this stage. They took control of the game and when Jason Purcell got possession in front of goal it looked all over for MCR but the Sligo men breathed a sigh of relief when he somehow contrived to shoot wide of the target.