

Limerick and Drogheda rekindle memories of the 1971 Cup Final

By AIDAN CORR

IT is now 35 years since Limerick AFC won their first ever FAI Senior Cup.

That was in 1971 at Dalymount Park when in a constant Thursday night drizzle, they defeated Drogheda United 3-0.

Just like last Saturday's rugby success in Cardiff, it was a wonderful occasion for Limerick fans and one that still lingers with us today.

The team had drawn the first tie 0-0 at the same venue the previous Sunday and there were plenty of tired limbs on both sides as Drogheda threatened to take the lead in the first half of the replay.

It took a fantastic save by Kevin Fitzpatrick to

keep Limerick level at the break and with the darkness quickly descending on Phibsboro and the drizzle deteriorating into a heavy mist, Limerick suddenly stepped up a gear.

A brilliant pass from Paddy Short put centre forward Davy Barrett through, 1-0 to Limerick and the Blue party was already underway. Limerick were now playing as if their very lives depended on the outcome with Al Finucane, Tony Meaney, Shamie Coad and Andy McEvoy dominating the midfield.

Two late goals from Scot Hughie Hamilton made him a household name and Al Finucane fought his way through a blue and white throng to mount the stand and lift the cup for the first time in Limerick soccer history.

Those days are memo-

rable and in time, Munster's achievement last week-end will be recalled, discussed and ever-remembered.

This Friday night, Limerick FC and Drogheda United meet again in the FAI Cup. Much of the glamour of senior soccer has now sadly drained away from this city but there remains a keen interest in the FAI Cup.

Drogheda are the holders but Limerick are the form team. Maybe a surprise could be on the cards!

During Limerick's great run of the 1970s, Limerickman Peter Quin, was adopted by the club as their 'official' photographer. Peter kindly brought us in a few pictures of the 1971 cup final this week and we are very grateful to him for that.

Let's hope they bring back happy memories of one of the great eras of

Limerick sporting achievement and unforgettable days of senior soccer at the Markets Field.

The scenes witnessed at Limerick Railway Station the following night when the team arrived back in Limerick were chaotic. Thousands crammed Parnell Street in the pouring rain hours in advance and Al Finucane, captain of the Limerick side, was shouldered high through the cheering fans. It was a very emotional occasion, matched only by last Sunday's more orderly reception for the victorious Munster team in the city.

For team coach, Ewan Fenton, it was another magnificent achievement in a glittering football career. Sadly, Ewan passed away a few weeks ago, almost 35 years to the day of that first FAI Cup success.



FAI Cup action, Dalymount Park, 1971: Andy McEvoy rises high but his effort comes off the Drogheda United crossbar. (Pic Peter Quin)



A packed Markets Field in 1970 as fans make their way out following a cup tie. (Pic Peter Quin)



Pictured at the victory dinner for Limerick AFC in 1971 at the Savoy Restaurant, from left, Richie Hall, Vinny Quin, Paddy Noonan and Davy Barrett. (Pic Peter Quin)

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Geraldines hoping to stop Wembley Rvs double bid