

BRILLIANT CONTEST AT MALLOW

VICTORY FOR KILFINANE.

Mallow Town Park was on yesterday again the scene of an enormous gathering on the occasion of the struggle for the final in hurling for the cup presented by his Lordship, Most Rev Dr Croke, Archbishop of Cashel. Cork and Limerick were to decide this final, about which so much has been written and said, but the fight for it occurred so often and ended so unsatisfactorily on all occasions that there were not a few who looked forward to yesterday's match between Blackrock and Kilfinane with gloomy anticipations, because circumstances forced upon them the conviction that misfortune was associated with the fixture. It looked as if the forecasts of those who were becoming weary of match after match without any result for the same cause were not to be realised, but at the very wind-up of yesterday's contest there arose a circumstance that in the minds of those people justified their forebodings as to unsatisfactory elements. This circumstance is fully dealt with below, and it will suffice here to say that Kilfinane were declared the winners by one point after the best match ever witnessed in Mallow Town Park. It will be remembered that this fixture was originally made for Mallow. Kilfinane did not turn up, and urged as a reason bad weather. Blackrock were awarded the match, but after some parley on both sides the latter waived their claim, and the same venue for the play was again decided on. The teams did meet as arranged, and the scoring was even. Kilfinane refused to replay in Mallow on the ground of unfair treatment at the hands of spectators during the draw match, with what reason was not evident, it has been generally and consistently stated, to 99 per cent of the vast crowd that assembled on that occasion, behaved with the greatest impartiality. However, Kilfinane adhere tenaciously to the assertion, but with that we have nothing to do. A great deal of unpleasantness ensued at meetings of the Council and the different County Boards over this matter, and eventuated in a majority of the last Council meeting in Dublin re-fixing the match for Mallow for yesterday. The Rockies, after deliberation, decided to comply with the order of Council, and consequently the teams lined up yesterday, all looking in the pink of condition, and anxious for the fray. The morning broke out gloomy, a drizzling rain falling intermittently, yet about noon old Sol came out only for awhile. He soon hid his head again, and there succeeded an oppressively dead heat and ominous clouds, which executed their threats with a drenching rain during portion of the first half of the match. However the weather cleared up again, and the contest was finished under fairly satisfactory atmospherical conditions. Rarely has there been seen in Mallow such an enormous gathering of Gaels and supporters of the pastime. The special train from Cork was taxed to the utmost. The same applies to the train from Limerick Junction, which brought great crowds from Garryowen and Tipperary. Such was the interest centred in this important event that a number of City Fathers attended to witness what was undoubtedly an exceedingly brilliant exposition of the science of hurling. These included Ald E Fitzgerald, Chairman Cork Board of Guardians; Mr C Millard, T C, P L G; and Mr E Fitzgerald, T C. Blackrock team were accompanied by Rev Fr M Murphy, C C, Blackrock, who shares with the revered Ven Archdeacon Coghlan, P P of the parish, which gives a name to our once All-Ireland Champions, a deep interest in the general welfare of these famed hurlers. Kilfinane, too, had a large and enthusiastic following, including Mr Downes, their respected president; Mr M'Carthy, treas, and Mr D S Lyons, R DC, Chairman Limerick County Board. There were also present—Messrs M Deering, President G A A; W Wrenn, Co Trustee; Thomas Dooley, sec Cork County Board; J J Keane, V C, Central Council, and D Woods, Co Trustee, who refereed the match with a strictness and ability desirable on such occasions. It is to be regretted that the Executive charged such a prohibitive entrance fee as 6d per head. The result was that not half those who travelled to the town were on the field, while climbing walls and forcing gaps were resorted to by the sterner ones who would witness the match at all hazards. Owing to the rains of the previous days, the ground was soft and slippery, consequently there were many falls, and a few injuries of a trifling nature. The order of the spectatore was admirable, as is always the case at Mallow. Not a single player was interfered with, and not one incident occurred to mar the proceedings. As to the match it may be repeated that it was simply a marvel of scientific hurling. It was fast, orderly, and well contested at all points. The ball was kept rolling and flying all the time, and ever and anon there were some splendid exhibitions of passing. This was the good feeling which seemed to animate the players, all of whom worked with a will and for all they were worth, made matters very pleasant for all concerned, and maintained the interest of the vast crowds behind the ropes. A large number of Constabulary were present from Cork, Mallow, and the districts surrounding, but nothing occurred to call for their interference. In the first half Kilfinane shone out grandly, not alone in individual instances, or at any quarter of the arena, but as a well-combined body and in all places and at all times. Their forwards were dashing, yet withal cool-headed fellows, who knew when and how to feed their comrades. If any distinction is to be made, it must be with regard to the backs, who were superb when they got any tough work to do. And hard work they did get occasionally, because Blackrock at times proved much more knacky than they generally get credit for, and must have scored several times but for Kilfinane's able defence. The Garryowen men kept forcing all the time, and it was only by dint of brilliant and hard work, and mustering all their old energy and ability that Blackrock got the three points they secured in the first half. On change of sides the scene was a different one. Blackrock seemed cooler, they roamed better, passed well, when passing was necessary, and shot straighter than they did in the beginning. They soon equalised matters, and were at one period leading, but Kilfinane eventually overtook and finally got ahead of them by one point. The unsatisfactory element referred to above arose in this way. About half a minute before call of full time, the ball was in the Kilfinane territory. It went towards the right wing, and a Blackrock man poked it up and shot right into the goal. The red flag was put up, and it is alleged simultaneously the line flag was raised, indicating that the ball had been struck from over line. The referee's whistle also went simultaneously. Thus matters stand, but the referee declared that Kilfinane had won by one point. Blackrock, we understand, have lodged an object

ion. Messrs W Abern, Cork, J Reidy, Limerick, Michael Cotter, Cork, and D S Lyons, Limerick, were goal umpires, and Messrs P Lee, Limerick, and M Riordan, Dublin (late of Cork), linesmen. We understand that Kilfinane and Blackrock have arranged to play a friendly match on a date and place to be fixed later on. Details:—

On the spin of the coin Blackrock were favoured, and they elected to play with a sun that was not particularly brilliant on their backs. Play commenced sharp at 2.29, and was opened by Kilfinane getting possession and making an over. Throw-out found Blackrock on the defensive, but they were well tackled by Kilfinane, who made another over. A splendid puck out to the centre of the field was taken up by Delca for Blackrock, and a flying shot was converted into a point, which was succeeded by a similar score by Jeremiah Flaherty four minutes from commencement of play. Some splendid work in the way of passing on both sides was now witnessed, and as a result of steady hitting and watchfulness, Kilfinane got a point. The right wing was now the scene of a few minutes' stiff struggle, for which relief was found by another over. Blackrock got on the ball, which they carried along the left wing to the Kilfinane goal, but a shot went wide. The Rockies kept on the defensive, but a few shots went over, the softness of the ground telling on both sides at this period. Kilfinane got possession again and, rushing up to their opponents' goal, had no difficulty in breaking through a weak defence and equalizing matters. Flaherty attacked on the left wing, but Shaunogue met him and defeated an attempt to score. However, Blackrock stuck at it, and had the ball almost at the Kilfinane posts, but the backs of the latter were too good. Kilfinane then rushed up the field and made a majority point. A dull period ensued in the left wing and subsequently in the open, when a delay occurred in consequence of a Blackrock man, Cronin, getting hurt. His place was taken by Chris Young. On resumption the Cork men sent the ball over left side which was followed by them, failing in an endeavour to goal. Kilfinane defended in excellent style, and got matters into their own hands with the result that they put another point to their credit. Blackrock followed up in a drenching downpour of rain by getting a like score off one of their well-known long shots. After this Kilfinane worked desperately, and notwithstanding an excellent defence, got a well secured goal. Cork seemed enervated by this and, carrying the ball down the field, Delca took a shot from hand and grazed the point post, missing badly, when he was in no way surrounded. Blackrock made nothing of a free, rather did Limerick use it to advantage as they shot back and were only prevented scoring again by the brilliant stand of the Cork goal keeper. A minute after this a Kilfinane man stretched himself on the field, cried, and when the other players gathered around him, he showed a disposition to fight. It subsequently transpired that he was really hurt, but he was, however, able to resume play. This occasioned a five minutes delay. On resumption of the play in mid-field mild play was changed somewhat by Kilfinane shooting from a long distance a point. They continued this play for some time, but Young got a hold of the ball and was foiled in an endeavour to score. The Limerick men now combined much better and gave Blackrock a warm time of it in their own quarter. Flaherty, however, relieved with a long shot, but it was as quickly returned, when the play became fast and furious, out of which Blackrock emerged with honour, Cremin (captain) making a splendid run along the left wing after taking the ball from four of Kilfinane stars. An over-line was about to be played off when half time was called. The score then stood—

Kilfinane ... 1 goal 5 points.

Blackrock ... 3 points.

On spreading themselves after change of sides, Kilfinane made a move to score, but it was baulked by Morley and Moloney, and then a shot for goal was well stopped. However, they had tried again and got a point. They now seemed to place themselves better, with the result that they several times would have scored but for the great work of the Garryowen backs. They kept on passing, and over after over was returned until they were rewarded for hard fighting by a goal, amidst general cheering. Again they went to work determinedly and kept the play in their opponents goal for a considerable time. Kilfinane got ease by a shot to mid-field which they followed up, and it ended in a 50 yards free puck for them. Out of this they got nothing, which was due to the work of O'Gorman, who made a splendid run through. Kilfinane again centred, but Blackrock got the ball on the left wing and retained it until Young scored a point cleverly. Puck-out sent the ball dead on the left side, but on its being centered Kilfinane attacked well and shot down the field with a nice bout of passing until they found the way clear for a shot for goal. The direct shot, however, was sent back in good style by the Cork goal-keeper. Play was now confined to the left wing in the Blackrock territory, but Cork got it out and were rushing up the right wing to score when Shaunogue returned it. Blackrock sent it back again, and Young registered another point. It was now simply a matter of Kilfinane defending, as for the most part of the next five minutes the struggle lay in the vicinity of the Limerick posts until Blackrock got a free. This was well stopped, and after a run up and down Kilfinane put Cork on the defensive, but the goal-keeper of the latter watched his ground too well, and the good work of Limerick was consequently rendered futile. For a short time the struggle was desperate in the Blackrock territory, and it was only when Maloney brought it over that relief came. Kilfinane then pressed, and scored two points in quick succession. Cork again got on the defensive, but their shots went wide. Limerick subsequently shone out, and from an over on the left side got near the Cork posts, but did no good. A game of long shots ensued in which Blackrock had the best of matters, and eventually scored a point. Play now became desperate as full time was drawing to a close. Blackrock forced, but the defence was simply grand, the ball on several occasions being at the posts when scoring was defeated. Play was conveyed to the left right wing, and here the incident above referred to occurred. At full time the score stood:—

Kilfinane ... 1 goal 7 points.

Blackrock ... 1 goal 6 points.

The following are the teams:—

Blackrock—Denis Cremin capt; Jeremiah Coughlan, Daniel Coughlan, Denis Coughlan, Patrick Coughlan, William Hufte, Michael Hufte, David Hayes, Michael Cronin, Stephen Riordan, Robert Mooney, P O'Gorman, Jerh Flaherty, Michael Lynch, James Delca, Joseph Anderson, William Moloney.

Kilfinane—D Grimes capt; James Hanly (Shaunogue); M Downes, M Finn, P Finn, P O'Brien, F Dunworth, Maurice Flynn, T Brazil, J Condon, Michael Hynes, J Butler, J Flood, J Busquin, J Cottrell, T Casey, and P Mulcahy.