

DR CROKE CHALLENGE CUP

GREAT MATCH AT MALLOW.

BLACKROCK V. KILFINANE.

Yesterday at two o'clock Blackrock (Cork) and Kilfinane (Limerick) met in the Mallow Town Park to decide the final tie in hurling for Munster for the Challenge Cup presented by his Grace the Archbishop of Cashel, Most Rev Dr Croke. The day was an ideal one for the game, and the ground did not suffer by the rain of the previous day. Considerable interest was manifested in this contest, as Blackrock had been awarded the final owing to Kilfinane not turning up at Mallow on the day fixed for the fight last month. After some controversy Blackrock waived their claim, and agreed to play the match, they being anxious, if possible, to cover the defeat they received at the hands of the Kilfinane men in the All-Ireland Championship last year. The Central Council then fixed the match for yesterday at Mallow Town Park, when there was a very large concourse of spectators. Special trains were run from Limerick, Fernoy, Limerick Junction, and Cork, and all were eagerly availed of. The order was good. Mr P Magrath discharged the duties of referee with capability, and Messrs M Doering, President of the Association, Mr F B Dineon, secretary; Mr W Wren, Co Trustee, and Mr T Dooley, Cork, assisted in carrying out the admirable arrangements. The result was a draw, and was a surprise to everyone, as from the outset Kilfinane looked like men who were going to win. They were in excellent form, and kept Blackrock for long periods on the defensive. Altogether they made a better show than Blackrock, who not alone failed to take advantage of the opportunities afforded them, but would have been badly beaten were it not for such men as Maloney, Leary and Mooney. True, they were minus Norberg, one of their best men; still in the open Kilfinane simply did what they pleased. The play called for no comment. At the end of the match the referee said another half hour could be played, but Kilfinane would not resume. Details:—

Kilfinane won the toss, and Paving with a fair breeze in their favour immediately made a rush which resulted in an overrun on the left hand side. Blackrock then took up the play, and had no difficulty in doing first blood with a point off Leary, one minute from commencement. The ball was subsequently transferred to Blackrock territory, and here a struggle ensued which was relieved by another over. Then Blackrock made a splendid dash down the field, and almost scored. The game was now a very open one, nothing brilliant being done, save the hauling of Blackrock. Matters dragged very slowly on the left wind middle ways, but a throw out made things somewhat lively, in which both teams showed good form. A long shot from Kilfinane looked dangerous as on its return Moloney ("Billex") Kilfinane made a creditable effort to score, but the shot went wide. Some centre play ensued, but it was merely a matter of give and take. On a throw out from Blackrock Kilfinane forced desperately against a fine defence. In the subsequent play a flying shot by Kilfinane from centre went over the bars, thus equalizing matters. Blackrock seemed more enervated and determined now, but all their exertions to get out of the struggle in their own ground were rendered futile for some time by the work of their opponents. However, the Ruckies got away again, and after some dilly-dallying at the Kilfinane end of the left wing they made an endeavour to centre, which was unsuccessful owing to the splendid combination of Kilfinane, some of whose forwards were not sufficiently guarded with the result that they availed of the many opportunities they got of off hand shots. Were it not that Blackrock backs were minding their business and the clever tactics of Lyons, Kilfinane must have scored. As it was they pressed and made things hot for Blackrock, who, however, on getting relief made another dash for score, but the ball again went wide. On puck out Kilfinane got the best of the play. Blackrock men at this stage muffed in many instances, but the work of Moloney created some hope as he stopped and baulked magnificently. A period of dulness then followed, taken up by Blackrock endeavouring to repel Kilfinane. There was a good bout proceeding when half time was called. The score then stood—

Kilfinane—1 point.

Blackrock—1 point.

The wind had moderated considerably when change of sides took place. Blackrock forced and carried the leather to the Limerick side. An overline relieved pressure, and play was quickly carried to the other side, but as quickly returned when Blackrock failed to score, Delea striking wide. It seemed now as if all luck had deserted Blackrock, as Kilfinane charged and cornered them, and would have converted their shots into scores but for Moloney and Mooney. The Corkmen again got on the offensive, but Kilfinane goal was too well guarded. The Kilfinane forwards got possession, and simply danced round some of their opponents, making every slash effective in some respect, and warming up Blackrock until one of the long shots of the latter told that they were beginning to look up, because they ran up the field and put Kilfinane on their mettle. Several times they shot to score without result. In the scrummages that followed Blackrock did not seem at home, but they kept the ball in their opponents' territory, and met misfortune several times in trying to score. In some instances the ball actually touched the outside of the posts. Kilfinane now got on the ball, and with marked combination and fighting against a desperate defence beat all opposition and secured a goal very cleverly. A truly grand shot by Blackrock from mid-field was sent back in splendid style just as the ball was almost between the goal bars. However, Blackrock again pressed, and were rewarded with a point. Subsequently a foul was awarded to Blackrock, but they made nothing of it. Although they got several chances afterwards they made ridiculous ruffs. However, they dribbled in another point. The result of a dispute as to a foul was a puck out by Kilfinane, which Blackrock converted to a point amidst vociferous cheering, the crowds rushing in on the field on all sides. This made the scoring even, and excitement ran high among the Blackrock supporters, who now began to count on defeat. In the midst of the din of the cheering the full time whistle was sounded, but portions of both teams played on with wild enthusiasm, the outcome being that Blackrock put the ball between the point posts again. But the whistle had gone just as the previous score had been made, and the referee declared the result a draw as follows:—

Kilfinane—1 goal 1 point.

Blackrock—4 points (1 goal 1 point).

The following were the teams:—

Blackrock—P Coughlan (captain), Denis Coughlan, Jeremiah Coughlan, Dan Coughlan, John O'Brien, J O'Leary, J Delea, D Cremen, Michael Huffe, Wm Huffe, Michael Lynch, Wm Maloney, Robert Mooney, M Flaherty, Jeremiah Flaherty, P Gorman, and David Hayes.

Kilfinane—Grimes (captain and goalkeeper), Buskin, Hynes, Hanley ("Shawnogun") M Finn, Butler, Mulcahy, Condon, M Flynn, P Flynn, T Brazzel, Dunworth, O'Brien, Riordan, Casey, Flood and Downes.

Referee—Mr P. Magrath, Chairman Tipperary Co Board.