

THE IRISH TIMES

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in depth
coverage

25th JANUARY
1992

LANSDOWNE F.C.

15 C. Whelan
14 P. Purcell 13 G. Ahern 12 B. Glennon 11 J. Feston
10 E. Elwood 9 F. Aherne
1 C. O'Brien 2 M. Brady 3 A. McKeen
4 V. Ryan (Capt.) 5 P. O'Connor
6 G. White 8 N. Mannion 7 C. Quinn

ST. MARY'S

15 S. Hennessy
14 A. White 13 R. Hernan 12 E. Meagher 11 J. Gillan
10 V. Cunningham 9 N. O'Brien
1 B. Keane 2 M. Corcoran 3 D. Dowling
4 K. Potts 5 S. Jameson
6 D. Fanning 8 B. Pope 7 N. McCarthy

INSURANCE CORPORATION ALL IRELAND LEAGUE

Dogged Lansdowne win grim game

LANDSDOWNE 12

ST MARY'S COLLEGE 4

From Peter O'Reilly at Lansdowne Road

THIS was a game in which the potential for open, running play was thwarted by an endless succession of fruitless line-outs and scrums. Lansdowne deserve credit for their dogged performance but the game had little to admire.

The opening promised much. Mary's gained possession following a line out 30 metres out. A dummy switch in midfield created space for full back Stephen Hennessy, who chipped towards the right corner for Aidan White to barge his way past Peter Purcell and get the touch-down.

Thereafter the game deteriorated rapidly. Both out-halves preferred to kick, and neither Cunningham nor Elwood did this particularly well. Winning one's own line out was positively hazardous.

Lifting jumpers seemed more important than protecting tapped ball and so both scrum halves had to deal with some scrappy 'possession' as buffaloes bore down upon them.

The line outs were sham-bolic throughout. With little clean possession there were few attacking opportunities, and the only other score before half time came when Fergus Aherne was on target from 35 metres.

The second half began with some increase in tempo but little improvement in skill. Peter Purcell knocked on five metres out and when the ensuing scrum was seen to have been collapsed by Lansdowne the pressure on Mary's was lifted. Having missed three kicks in the first half, none of them easy, Hennessy was

wide from 25 metres with 20 minutes left.

The winning score came from a mistake. In attempting to loop his inside centre, Cunningham was knocked backwards by Garrett Aherne. While Mary's out-half managed to keep the ball alive, Ray Hernan's kick was blocked down by Brian Glennon, who collected to sprint 60 metres and score just left of the posts. Aherne added the points.

Fergus Aherne grew in authority as the game progressed. He added a further penalty, awarded for a line out infringement.

LANDSDOWNE: C Whelan; J Sexton, G Aherne, B Glennon, P Purcell; E Elwood, F Aherne; C O'Brien, M Brady, A McKeen; V Ryan captain, P O'Connor; G White, P Ward, C Quinn.

ST MARY'S: S Hennessy; A White, R Hernan, E Meagher, J Gillen; V Cunningham, N O'Brien; B Keane, M Corcoran, D Dowling; K Potts, S Jameson; D Fanning, E Pope, N McCarthy.

Marys were never in the hunt

IT was a case of role reversal at Lansdowne Road yesterday as St Mary's plunged into the perilous relegation zone of the First Division while Lansdowne assumed the temporary comfort of a mid-table berth.

And Mary's captain Kevin Potts will be furious at his pack's lack of discipline which saw his side squander several good attacking chances.

Profligate kicking by Mary's full back Stephen Hennessy compounded the problems for the visitors who failed to add to their first minute try by right wing Aidan White.

Fergus Aherne, who will be at the base of the Irish scrum in Twickenham next week, took charge of Lansdowne's kicking in the first half and performed admirably with two penalties and a conversion.

Aherne was quiet enough for the

LANDSDOWNE.....12 ST MARY'S COLLEGE.....4

First half hour due mostly to the dominance of the Mary's forwards but when Lansdowne began to win some good possession the scrum half's handling was adept and his kicking snappy.

Lansdowne went into yesterday's game without the services of international substitute Noel Mannion who damaged his upper back in training on Thursday and it was well into the game before Mano Ryan raised the workrate of his pack to a suitable level to match the power of St Mary's.

It was a poor first half with some dreadful speculative kicking from the Lansdowne centres but that all changed in the second when the home side's backs began to move the ball much more fluently.

As the packs cancelled one another out it was left to a breaking ball to change the course of the game.

A powerful tackle by Garret Aherne on Mary's out half Vincent Cunningham released the ball on the half-way line and Brian Glennon smothered Ray Hernan's attempted clearance. The break fell kindly for Glennon and the pacey centre sprinted 40 yards to put down between the posts.

Lansdowne: C Whelan; J Sexton, B Glennon, G Aherne, P Purcell; E Elwood, F Aherne; C O'Brien, M Brady, A McKeen, P O'Connor, V Ryan (capt), C Quinn, P Ward, G White. Rep: D Kavanagh for O'Brien (62 mins), J Collins for P Ward (82 mins)

St Mary's: S Hennessy; A White, R Hernan, E Meagher, J Gillen; V Cunningham, N O'Brien; B Keane, M Corcoran, D Dowling, K Potts (capt), S Jameson, D Fanning, N McCarthy, B Pope.
Referee: D. Templeton

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