

Old Wesley lay St Mary's bogey after 33 years

OLD WESLEY, celebrating their centenary season, will have derived very special satisfaction from their victory over St Mary's College in the quarter-final of the Leinster Senior Cup, a competition sponsored by Smithwicks, at Lansdowne Road yesterday.

This win gives Old Wesley a place in the last four and it also marked the club's first senior cup win over St Mary's for 33 years, the last being achieved in 1959. In the interim Old Wesley had to endure six cup defeats and more than a few in the league at the hands of St Mary's.

Thus a dual celebration for the Donnybrook club who, on balance, just about deserved their victory. However, it was not clinched until the 79th minute when hooker Noel Kearney forced his way over the line by the posts and Nial Farren kicked the conversion to turn a 7-4 deficit into a three-point lead. Old Wesley did not have to endure any anxiety in the injury

OLD WESLEY10
ST MARY'S7

Edmund Van Esbeck

time period that referee Des Lamont played. In fact, he added almost seven minutes to the normal span of time, but in that he was quite correct. There was a hold up of over five minutes while St Mary's New Zealand number eight Brent Pope received attention. He was carried from the field and taken to hospital after sustaining a neck injury. But the reports on his condition are encouraging.

From the time of his departure the Old Wesley pack got well on top and turned their superiority into tangible benefit. Having trailed 7-0, they got their first try in the 67th minute. They had St Mary's under severe pressure deep in their "25" and a vigorous drive forward enabled Old Wesley's accomplished scrum-half

Deryck Vincent to force his way for a crucial try. Farren's conversion attempt hit an upright but fell on the wrong side.

So St Mary's held a precious three-point advantage, but were unable to protect it as Old Wesley took control. The reward came in the shape of Kearney's match-winning try, and Farren's conversion were the insurance points. That score came in similar manner to the first, the product of two good drives for the line by the pack and St Mary's were eventually broken.

It was a match more interesting than entertaining, but the conditions were difficult; a strong and cold wind blew from the Havlock Square end and at times it was accompanied by heavy rain and hail. Certainly Old Wesley found it hard to come to terms with the wind in regard to place kicking and three times in the first half Dermot Strong was unable to kick goals into it. In the second period his level of success was of no greater dimension, for he missed three more penalty chances before being relieved by Farren.

A three-point interval lead did not look sufficient for St Mary's as they had enjoyed the benefit of the wind. The only score of the half came in the first minute when Old Wesley were caught offside in front of their posts and Aidan White, who had a fine match for



Old Wesley hooker Noel Kearney gets the winning try in the second half of the Leinster Senior Cup quarter-final match despite the efforts of St Mary's full-back Aidan White at Lansdowne Road yesterday. — (Photograph: Eric Luke).

Lansdowne fall to Monkstown