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One Halfpenny

FOOTBALL FINAL.

DUBLIN'S EASY VICTORY OVER MAYO.

GREAT CROWD: POOR CONTEST.

Ideal weather conditions favoured the 1921 All-Ireland Football final between Dublin and Mayo, which attracted a great crowd to Croke Park yesterday, though not by any means equalling those that have assembled for previous football finals. It was somewhere in or about 20,000 and the "gate" was approximately £1,000. Local devotees, of course, formed the major portion of the muster, but the special trains brought large contingents, amongst whom were to be seen many old and familiar faces.

A POOR FINAL.

The game itself proved far below championship standard. The Mayo team, who all through failed to reproduce their accustomed high-class play, had undergone several changes in the expected personnel. It lacked cohesion and zest, and very seldom exhibited the mastery of the ball exhibited in all former displays. On the Dublin side there was only one change – P. Kirwan (Keatings) taking the place of Stanley, who was found to be ineligible by release of the fact that he was resident in Kildare during 1921.

PLAYED BELOW EXPECTATIONS.

Of the Mayo players individually, with few exceptions, they did not play up to expectations. This is particularly true of their forward line, which missed many invaluable openings in the first half. In centre-field they were weak, with the exception of Colleran, a new player from Charlestown, who gave a great display. Lavin showed his great speed on every possible occasion, but was too prone to hang on to the ball. He had better kicked and followed up. Naturally in such a game their backs had a hard task and hero McEllin, Durkin (until he retired) and Doherty put up a great fight. McClean, Robinson and McNicholas played a hard game but the combination as a whole was weak and disjointed. Quite evidently, effects of the last year told upon the Mayo team and at no time did they seem rightly to reproduce the form which has gained them such repute in the football arena.

THE VICTORS.

On the Dublin side the half-back line was always prominent and the defence generally was far above the attacks. Reilly and Norris were always capable of handling effectively the most dangerous opposition. In centre Murphy took a wide field of operation and, with Donovan, put in some very effective work. At first the forward line did not show up to much advantage, but in the second half, with the lead, they settled down to characteristic Dublin tactics, which were well rewarded. Kirwan, the newcomer, was very enterprising, and, as the summary of the play shows, Sinnott, Burke, Pierce, and Fitzsimons all made their mark.

SERIOUS LOSS TO MAYO

Dublin has seldom, if ever, got a softer "Final." They were scarcely severely tested and their superiority was unmistakable. There were many casualties and the loss of Durkin (the Mayo captain) who was badly hurt, was a serious matter to Mayo. The match was played in the finest spirit throughout. There was nothing in it to enthuse over, and perhaps many of those present were disappointed. The conditions prevailing in the province must, however, be kept in view and allowance made for the lack of continuous competition, which alone gives vigour to inter-provincial contests.

THE PLAY.

Playing to the Clonliffe goal, Mayo dashed off and Beirne sent to Lavin, who shot wide. Dublin then broke into Mayo ground and after some exchanges Robinson cleared. McEllin had again to clear, but Norris returned quickly. At length Colleran sent down for Mayo and fast exchanges ensued in the Dublin half. The attack was repulsed at last, and Donovan put Dublin well into Mayo ground. McEllin again cleared and Colleran once more gave Mayo a footing in Dublin territory. A "free" relieved and Mayo came again for Barrett to send out. On delivery Dublin were relieved by a penalty. Fitzsimons responded finely and the ball crossed through the Mayo defence. After a "free" by Robinson, Colleran sent well down and White missed an open shot.

THE FIRST SCORE.

Immediately after Lavin received from McNichol and sent wide. Mayo were now attacking but the Dublin half back line — Reilly especially — proved impassable. Quickly the scene changed and Dublin swarmed around the Mayo posts, but without result, and the ball eventually was sent to midfield, where a stoppage occurred. Dublin got away from the restart and Sinnott sent to Burke, who transferred to Pierce. The last-named forced a "50" taken by Paddy Carey, and Fitzsimons finished with the first score —

a point for Dublin. Colleran drove down with a great kick for Mayo, and White, getting possession, equalised after 15 minutes play. Mayo still pressed and White sent wide. The Dublin lines were in danger when Carey kicked to the touch line. Murphy cleared but the ball did not reach half-way.

MAYO'S CAPTAIN INJURED.

A "free" brought relief to Dublin. Another to Mayo followed. Still a third to Dublin taken by Donovan was put over for a fine point. Twenty minutes' had gone. Murphy sent Dublin up and when Fitzsimons centred Dublin looked dangerous, when Durkin, the Mayo captain, was hurt and Moran took his place. On re-starting Dublin still held the upper hand till at length Mayo broke through, but Carroll cleared. Play was now pretty keen at centre, but Dublin came away and Frank Burke sent over a fast point. Mayo attacked, but Dublin rallied and closed in. Frank Burke centred well and Pierce knocked over a further.

LAVIN'S GREAT EFFORT.

Half-time was now running out and Lavin made a great effort for Mayo. It was well countered and play still being in the Mayo ground. From a good chance White sent wide for Mayo. A stoppage ensued and Mayo were struggling hard for a score but were gradually ousted. Reilly ultimately prevailed, but Lavin put Mayo again attacking. A "free" taken by Carroll did not get far, as Colleran responded well, and McClean again sent down for Mayo. An opportune "free" came to Dublin, which P. Carey drove well up. Colleran replied with interest but the Mayo forwards could not get properly going. Again a Mayo "free" was well cleared by the Dublin defence. Donovan reinforced the offensive, McNichol returned and play settled across centre until the interval, when the score was

DUBLIN....4 points.

MAYO.....1 point.

Mayo were off on re-starting but Dublin broke away after a few exchanges. A pick up gave Mayo a penalty. Reilly sent back and play rested on the far side. Kirwan got away fast for Dublin and shot a great long point. The Metropolitans were now settling down to a clever game. Colleran, however, sent up for Mayo and a second hurt and stoppage ensued within a few minutes. On restarting Lavin dashed off and Beirne, receiving from Boshell, sent wide. Soon after a well-placed "free" for Mayo, taken by Robinson, was poorly delivered. Colleran again put Mayo attacking but Norris and Reilly lost control of the offensive, and Dublin broke away for Sinnott to drive unaccountably wide in the face of an open goal.

DUBLIN IN CONTROL.

Norris was next to win advantage with a great clearance, and Burke, getting on the ball kicked a high point. After midfield play, in which Dublin were getting the ball better, and in which Colleran was always prominent for Connacht, White got away but Norris again drove them back. McDonald put Dublin on a good movement. The ball came out on the line and Mayo went off with splendid dash on the left wing. Robinson had a "free" but Dublin once more regained control. Dublin lead now most of the play.

THE UNBEATABLE NORRIS.

Dublin had a "free" and McEllin cleared. Only a "free" gave temporary relief from a persistent Dublin attack and when the ball crossed the half-way line, Norris beat all opposition and the Dublin offensive was resumed. Pierce had a "free" close to the goal line. He shot low – Forde cleared. Dublin closed in again and Fitzsimons scored a point. A long stoppage ensued. Lavin being hurt, and on resuming Dublin initiated a warm attack, which the Mayo backs withstood splendidly. Mayo now seemed aroused, and burst into Dublin ground. They tried some very ineffective hand passing. A "free" came to them inside half-way, which Robinson delivered splendidly. A foul spoiled, and, after a hop, Lavin put over a point – the first score in the second half.

BRISK CROSS-KICKING.

The Connacht champions continued to press with considerable vigour, and another "free" taken by Delany was driven to the goalmouth, where Norris saved in the nick of time. After brisk cross-kicking Dublin invaded. The Mayo defence held out for a time, but the attack returned and centred around the Mayo goal-mouth, where at length Fitzsimons put in a goal – a simple box after a hop. Time had now arrived, and Dublin had won the championship once more on the score –

DUBLIN - 1 goal 9 points

MAYO – 2 points.

TEAMS

Mayo – K. Dillon (goal), J. McEllin, P. Durkin, F. Doherty, P. McLean, P. Robinson, M. McNicholas, P. Colleran, J. Forde, P. Beirne, G. Delaney, J. Lavin, J. White, W. Boshell, M. Barrett.

Dublin – E. Carroll, P. Fallon, A. Belmaine, P. Carey, J. O'Grady, J. Norris, J. Reilly, C. McDonald, J. Murphy, W. Fitzsimons, John Sinnott, P. Kirwan, W. Donovan, T. Pierce, F. Burke.

Referee – Mr. W. Walsh, Waterford, who discharged his duties with accustomed tack and firmness.