

Irish Independent

Vol 16 No. 270

December 15, 1913

One Halfpenny

GAELIC FOOTBALL CHAMPIONS KERRY'S GREAT VICTORY OVER WEXFORD. 20,000 PEOPLE WITNESS PLUCKY FIGHT.

The final contest for the All-Ireland Football Championship was decided yesterday at the Croke Memorial Park, Jones's road, when about 20,000 people witnessed the victory of the invincible Kerry men over Wexford on the score:

Kerry, 2 goals 2 points...8 points.

Wexford.....3 points.

In the course of the year which is now drawing to a close the Irish metropolis has witnessed two of the most exciting football combats ever played under the auspices of the G.A.A. One was the great match played last summer between Kerry and Louth, and the other was that decided yesterday at historic Jones's Road between Kerry and Wexford.

There have been larger gatherings at Jones's Road, and yesterday's muster could not compare with that which watched the last encounter between Kerry and Louth – but there were, at least 20,000 people, including a very strong muster of ladies, present when the ball was thrown in, and the utmost order and good humour were maintained throughout the exciting play. By far the largest number of country visitors came from Wexford and the adjoining counties, thousands being conveyed by special trains over the Dublin and South-Eastern Railway system.

There was also a big contingent from the Southern province, and Northern and Western Gaels were present in fair numbers. Mr. John Dillon, M.P., was amongst the spectators.

No less than 31 special trains were run to Dublin, and these came from all parts of the country. The spectacle of our crowded streets on occasions of these great Gaelic competitions has now become familiar to us. Yesterday's scenes were as animated as any that went before. On the gates being thrown open at 12 o'clock close on 2,000 people immediately passed through the turnstiles, which kept clicking away until 2 o'clock, when there must have been at least 15,000 people on the ground, and thousands more dispersed along the railway bank and surrounding eminences.

The ground was in splendid condition and everything favoured a fast game.

Both teams were in attendance some time before the advertised hour of starting and were taken in hand by Mr. M.F. Crowe, and the ball was thrown in by the Mayor of Wexford at 2.20.

WEXFORD WORTH MORE.

Although the pace was fast from the start, the football (says our Special Correspondent) left much to be desired as both teams during the first half were continually infringing the rules. Matters in this respect mended themselves during the second portion of the contest when some splendid football took place, both teams giving as good an exhibition as has ever been witnessed on the same ground.

Although the score shows Wexford beaten by five points, that is not a fair index to their merits, as they were worth a little more, and they certainly gave the Kerry men more trouble than any combination they have met in recent finals. A remarkable feature of the game was that neither team scored in either the first or the last quarter hour's play. The result proves that Kerry are still the best exponents of Gaelic football in the country, and, judging by yesterday's display, when they are in the earnest they are practically unbeatable.

THE PLAYERS AND PLAY.

EXCITING GAME DESCRIBED.

WEXFORD

T. Doyle (capt.).

J. Cullen (goal).

A. Doyle.

T. Mernagh.

F. Furlong.

P. Reynolds.

J. Byrne.

J. Mullally.

J. Rossiter.

J. Doyle.

E. Black.

T. Whealan.

J. O'Kennedy.

C. O'Kennedy.

J. Mackey.

KERRY.

R. Fitzgerald (capt.).

D. Mullins (goal).

J. Lawlor.

T. Costello.

M. McCarthy.

J. Rice.

T. Rice.

C. Clifford.

P. Shea.

P. Kinneally.

J. Skinner.

P. Doyle.

C. Murphy.

P. Healy.

J. Mahony.

On the ball being thrown in, Wexford bounded off but Kennedy's kick went wide. Maurice McCarthy got in a huge goal kick, but his side were penalised, and Mernagh sent the free to Kennedy, who missed the scoring area.

A typical Kerry rush was now headed by Rice, and Mahony struck the upright, the ball rebounding into play, but eventually went into touch in goal.

Play veered round in favour of Wexford, and Black punted to John Kennedy, who was forced over the line. Aided by a brace of free kicks, Kerry changed the scene of operations, and Healy sent into the goal mouth. Wheeler met the ball, and a loud cheer greeted a splendid clearance.

The play, which was very fast, was being spoiled by both teams breaking the rules, but the free kicks brought nothing tangible to either side. A grand bit of play between the brothers Kennedy looked promising for Wexford until Kerry's full-back, Lawlor, kicked out of danger, and Shea and Skinner came along at lightning pace, to be stopped by J. Byrne, and the next moment saw Gus Kennedy

send to Doyle, who kicked the ball into the net, but not before Referee Crowe had sounded his whistle for a foul.

Wexford now lost Tom Mernagh, one of their stalwarts, who was injured, and forced to retire, his place being filled by T. Murphy. On resuming Wexford were awarded a free, and their skipper drove to Shaun Kennedy, who sent over the crossbar for the first point after 17 minutes' play.

KERRY'S CAPTAIN IN FORM.

This reverse aroused the Kingdom representatives, who rushed into Wexford territory, when Wheeler, who was a tower of strength to his side, beat them off, and another nice bout of play between the Kennedy brothers was nullified by Maurice McCarthy.

The Kingdom lads were just now going best, and Healy, sending to Fitzgerald, the latter beat the Wexford custodian for a goal, the Kerry followers responding with a great cheer. Continuing, McCarthy and Kinneally were conspicuous for the Southerners, and Fitzgerald, getting possession, scored a point, which he followed a moment later with a goal, which was ruled offside, much to the disgust of the

Kerry admirers. There was no further scoring before the interval, when the score stood: -

**KERRY, 1-1;
WEXFORD, 0-1**

WEXFORD UNDAUNTED.

At 3 o'clock the game was re-started. Kerry got away, but Shaun Kennedy held them up, and sent into Kerry ground, where the ubiquitous Tom Rice got possession, and punted to Skinner, who passed to Dick Fitzgerald, the latter having little difficulty in sending over the bar.

Wexford came along from the goal-kick, and looked like scoring until the veteran Maurice McCarthy intercepted, and drove out of danger. The Wexford boys returned to the attack, and their efforts were rewarded when Mullally scored a point - a success which put the Wexford followers jubilating.

At this period the Leinster representatives, assisted by the freshening breeze, were outpacing their opponents, and when Reynolds reduced the lead by another point things looked well for Wexford, who were attacking strongly when Shaun Kennedy, with no one to beat but Mullins muffed badly.

The Kerry backs were bravely defending their posts, but the work of Costello, McCarthy, and Lawlor was sound, and further danger was averted. Then play was at the centre, and Kerry came out best, but their efforts to pass Wheeler were futile.

KERRY'S SECOND GOAL.

With lightning rapidity Kerry swept along the left wing, to be temporarily stopped by the Wexford captain, whose effort was spoiled by an infringement of the rules. Healy took the free, and after Rice (whose injured hand was causing him evident pain) crossed to Skinner, the Killarney man scored Kerry's second goal amidst cheers. They had now been playing 45 minutes, and Kerry led by 8 points to 5. Wexford was still going strong, and Gus Kennedy failed to avail of a grand opportunity. Kerry, who had been defending for a time, now broke through in gallant style, Mahony's parting shot going inches wide. The game was stubbornly contested to the end, and, with neither team able to penetrate the defence, the final whistle left Kerry winners on the scores above.

PRESENTATION TO THE VICTORS.

After the game Mr. E. A. Neale, the General Manager of the Great Southern and Western Railway Co., presented Mr. Dick Fitzgerald, captain of the Kerry team, with the massive silver cup given by the company for the victors. Mr. Neale congratulated the Kerry men on their gallant victory, and also paid a fitting tribute to the splendid fight made by Wexford.

Mr. R. Fitzgerald, in returning thanks for the trophy, said they thought in Kerry they were meeting soft opponents in the Wexford men, but he could assure those present that the game he had just played was, perhaps, the stiffest contest of his career.

Mr. Eugene O'Sullivan, Killarney, also thanked Mr. Neale, and wound up a nice little speech by calling for cheers for Messrs Neale and Floyd, as well as for the Wexford team.