

Fintan's next as Bray carry on winning

U16A EASTERN REGIONAL BOYS S-FINAL
PRESENTATION BRAY 57
ST FINTAN'S HIGH SCHOOL 48

By Rory Kerr

OLD habits die hard and for this Bray team – it's a winning one. Since claiming the All-Ireland first B title in their maiden year, Bray have proved unbeatable and yesterday at the Coláiste Eoin gym, St Fintan's were the latest to leave empty-handed.

With the two teams on opposite draw in the All Ireland cup, coaches O'Toole and Westbrook may well meet again before the season is out.

But there is no doubting that Bray on this form are going to be very hard to overcome following a series of impressive displays this season. Bray did a good job blocking out the threat of Irish U16 Mikey Deegan who along with the rest of the team had plenty of support behind them.

Among those watching on the far side were Hoops starter and former *Evening Herald* star of the week Eoin Chubb. Another interested spectator was Eimear Martin who like Chubb is currently enjoying a career at the top level for Meteors.

And along with Killester U16 coach, Conor Gordon, Johnny Barron and Eimear's kid sister and Irish cadet Clíodhna, the star-studded gathering was treated to a terrific spectacle.

Lorcan Murphy with nine points had powered Bray into a 19-9 first quarter lead with David Macken's driving to the end-line proving a very effective ploy.

And although Luke McGuinness would open with two points for the visitors after the restart, the impressive Brendan O'Neill then hit a three-point shot near the buzzer as Bray went in at half-time 34-22 up.

However, with Andrew Colfer keeping close tabs on Murphy, Fintan's had made it an eight-point game after Deegan had turned his marker prior to laying up under the Bray boards.

But Bray did not panic, with O'Neill twice landing late scores from the top of the key to leave it 48-36 at the end of the third.

Fintan's however kept plugging away with point guard, Dean Creegan, driving them on from the bass of the court.

And successive frees from Deegan followed by a basket from Creegan put just five points between the teams with 3.55 left on the clock. But some terrific defence from Macken and Andy Bartley ensured that Bray rode out the final minutes with Macken scoring each side of a Bartley basket to secure the win.

PRESENTATION BRAY: Brendan O'Neill, Lorcan Murphy, Jake Messitt, Andrew Barnes, Nicky Casey, Darragh McKay, Andrew Bartley, Ben Curran, Marc Lennon, David Macken
ST FINTAN'S HIGH SCHOOL: Raymond Kavanagh, Mikey Deegan, Gary Barron, Stephen Conway, Dean Creegan, Luke McGuinness, Simon Leonard, Conor McCracken, Carl McGovern, Andrew Colfer, Declan Mulligan

Portmarnock marooned by Moate boys

LEINSTER COLLEGES SENIOR 'A' FOOTBALL
MOATE CS 0-12
PORTMARNOCK CS 0-8

By Ruaidhri O'Connor

MOATE left Portmarnock yesterday with a place in round two secured after a commanding first-half performance saw them past the north Dubliners who will rue their slow start.

The Westmeath boys were superior in every department early on and blitzed the hosts by scoring 0-7 without reply in the opening 15 minutes.

Portmarnock stemmed the tide from there and outscored their opponents for the rest of the game, but while they got within a goal they couldn't bridge the gap fully.

SPURRED

Stars of the show for the victors were corner forward Darren Scanlon, midfielder David Minnock and half-back Brian Finnerty, while Jamie Walsh and Anthony Brennan impressed for Portmarnock.

Spurred on by the excellent Finnerty, Moate Portmarnock pressured from the off and only a superb save by Marcus Fitzmorris denied Enda Kincaid a goal in the opening minute.

The defence couldn't contain classy corner forward Scanlon early on, and the number 15 sent over three fine points in succession to give his side an early cushion.

Alan Stone's point attempt almost embarrassed Fitzmorris who regathered at the second attempt with the ball appearing to have crossed the line, but after consulting with his umpires, referee Paul Finnegan threw the ball up and David Minnock sent over a point.

David McCormack, MJ Kelly and John Flattery added scores to give the Lake County men a considerable buffer but they eased up thereafter and would never hit the highs again.

Portmarnock's heavy tackles certainly got to the Moate men and midfielder Stone was lucky to escape with a yellow card after two silly pieces of retaliation.

The Dubliners, who had struggled to escape from their own half in the



SLIPPING AWAY: David McCormack of Moate CS sidesteps away from Cian Molloy of Portmarnock CS during their Leinster Colleges Senior 'A' Football Round 1 match.

Below: MJ Kelly of Moate CS is tightly marked by Conor McMahon of Portmarnock CS.

Pics: Caroline Quinn

Northsiders fail to recover from early Westmeath blitz



early stages were suddenly winning ball in midfield and advancing into the Moate half, with midfielder Rocco Mulvey collecting one kick out particularly brilliantly.

Sensing a route back into the game, half-forward Walsh finally got Portmarnock off the mark with a free, but though he added another before half time Moate were able to keep the gap at seven at the break with points from Flattery and Stone cancelling out another Walsh point.

Scanlon began the second half as he

did the first, with an early point, but Moate couldn't extend their lead as Walsh set about reeling them in with two superb frees from long range.

Moate were still threatening and Scanlon went close with a low left footed goal attempt while Brennan – who was the best defender on show – put in a superb block on Stone that prevented a goal.

SECURE

A Colin Murphy point, another Walsh free and a Cormac Hurlihy score brought the gap down to three with 10 minutes remaining as the Westmeath side's nerves began to show.

But quick thinking from Scanlon allowed substitute Chris Maguire edge the gap out to four with a nice point.

Portmarnock pushed again and sub Ruairi Deasy brought the gap back to

a goal again after a fine Colm Riordan pass but McCormack won a free and took it himself to secure passage for Moate.

SCORERS – Moate CS: Darren Scanlon 0-4 (1f), John Flattery, David McCormack (1f) 0-2 each, David Minnock, Alan Stone, MJ Kelly, Chris Maguire 0-1 each. Portmarnock CS: Jamie Walsh 0-5 (4f), Ruairi Deasy, Colin Murphy, Cormac Hurlihy 0-1 each.

MOATE CS: Ciaran Finnerty; John Warburton, Chris Connor, Ciaran Kelly; Brian Finnerty, Liam Fitzpatrick, Paddy Holloway; David Minnock, Alan Stone; David McCormack, John Flattery, Jordan Cassidy; Enda Kincaid, MJ Kelly, Darren Scanlon. Subs: Cian Bradley for Flattery (32), Chris Maguire for Kelly (47), Eoin Fleming for Bradley (59)

PORTMARNOCK CS: Marcus Fitzmorris; Stephen Tier, Conor McMahon, Anthony Brennan; Ian O'Meara, Cian Molloy, Colm Riordan; John Boyle, Rocco Mulvey; Jamie Walsh, Michael Gibbs, Cormac Hurlihy; Alan O'Shaughnessy, Colin Murphy, Michael O'Donoghue. Sub: Ruairi Deasy for O'Shaughnessy (42).

REF: P Finnegan (Louth).