

# All-Stars were surprise team

ALTHOUGH Sligo All Stars defeated only one team in their pool in the Roy Curtis Memorial Trophy Tournament at Cathal Brugha Barracks, Dublin, last week-end, they were rated the surprise team of the event by virtue of a wonderful display of basketball in their decisive pool game against Ardglass Sharks, Co. Down.

Their only victory was against Corinthians B, tipped in one of the national daily newspapers to win out the tourney.

The All Stars were dogged by bad luck right up to the event. John McGowan, who scored 32 pts. in a challenge game against Longford on Wednesday last, which they won 106-33, injured his ankle on Thursday and was unable to play.

Going to Dublin, one of their cars suffered a breakdown and they had to race against time to reach Cathal Brugha for their first game while player-coach, Joe Palmer, had muscular trouble and was little more than a passenger in all three games.

Weakened and shaken as they were however, Sligo came up with the best performance of their career so far and the only fault which was really brought to attention by the tournament was their lack of experience in the midst of big-time competition.

Sligo paved the way for their outstanding performance later in the evening by scoring a narrow, 34-30 victory over Corinthians B who are the Dublin senior league and championship holders.

A good start by the All Stars got them into top gear and their long-range shooters went into action, scoring some fine baskets. With Stan Burns in complete control of the pivot area, Corinthians were beaten time and again under their own basket by the tall centre and Sligo went into a six-point lead. The Dubliners fought back vigorously and in the space of a few minutes, clamped the All Stars back on defence and broke through for the equalising scores but Sligo restored their lead and were 16-14 ahead at half-time.

Sligo went further ahead early in the second half and held on to a narrow lead for ten minutes but the pressure was telling. A few minor mistakes gave the homesters the chance they needed and the sides were level once again with four minutes remaining. It was stalemate for fully three minutes before Tony O'Hara swished the net with a jump shot from the corner and Stan Burns ensured them victory when he coolly sank two foul shots in the

dying seconds of the game.

Burns with sixteen points and O'Hara with ten both gave great performances while Brian McHugh, drafted onto the first five to replace McGowan, was a powerhouse on defence.

Sligo All Stars really surpassed themselves against Ardglass Sharks and provided a thriller which had the packed gymnasium on their toes in a blistering second half.

Starting off in dynamic fashion, Sligo shot into a ten point lead in the first five minutes during which time, they held their opponents down to a single score. Leading by 12-2 at this stage, they had Ardglass really tottering, particularly on defence where their long-range shooters spread-eagled the Ardglass zone.

The shock reaction to Sligo's brilliant opening play quickly wore off the Sharks and they made a determined bid to get a hold on the game. But Sligo were not to be so easily shaken and although they slipped coming up to the interval and were pulled back to six points, they recovered to make it 25-14 in their favour at half-time.

When Sligo broke from the jump ball at the start of the second period, it seemed they were off on another scoring spree but they were quickly brought to their senses when a tightly pressing man-to-man defence knocked them completely out of their stride. Seizing their chance in great opportunist fashion, Ardglass hammered home a few decisive scores while Sligo were in trouble and with six minutes to go, they scored the equaliser.

Excitement was fever high when British Olympic player, Gary Fuller, shot his side into a one-point lead a minute later but Sligo were back to level the game again with three minutes left. They had the game at their mercy at a vital moment when Tony O'Hara was through for a lay-up but he missed a simple shot. Spurred on by this turn of luck, Ardglass went all out and got two quick baskets to leave them clear when Burns got two foul shots but only scored one. Another break by the Northerners gave them a score but Palmer had only time to take the ball out, race up court, shoot and score when the final whistle was blown, and Ardglass were through by 39-36.

Sligo had lost all interest in the tournament by Sunday morning when they went under to Neptune of Cork by 39 points to 31 following a very mediocre game.

The trophy was won by St. Vincent's, Dublin, who beat Ardglass in the final on Sunday night.

## Weak challenge

SLIGO ALL STARS ... .. 47;  
TARMONBARRY GARDA ... .. 28

Sligo All stars had little difficulty in disposing of a rather weak challenge by the Garda Club, Tarmonbarry, in a Connacht League game last week.

Sligo pressurised their opponents in a fast opening half to lead 28-8 at the interval and they brought on their subs. after the change and coasted through a quiet second half.

Sligo All Stars: — B. Gorevan 4, R. Burns 6, T. O'Brien 16, T. O'Hara 16, T. Palmer 1, C. Carty 4.

F  
W  
C  
S  
S  
L  
A  
  
-  
st  
w  
ra  
D  
  
st  
2.  
M  
  
F  
m  
  
M  
3.  
  
2.  
ar  
J  
  
2.  
ot  
  
L  
la  
  
A  
ar