

ALL STARS MAKE A FLYING START

SLIGO ALL STARS opened their 1973 National Cup campaign with a resounding thirty six points win over Kelliher's of Tralee in the CYMS Hall, Tralee, on Sunday afternoon and went the first step towards winning the championship in which they have finished runners-up in the past two seasons.

It was a morale-boosting victory for Sligo to win by such a handsome margin on the Tralee court because victory at any time is never easily come by at a Southern venue and particularly one so convincing as this 79-43 rout.

It was also one of the best displays by the Sligo squad in recent outings, for they played a controlled and calculated game against the Kelliher's man-to-man defence and this resulted in a number of beautifully taken scores.

All Stars were not as sharp as they might like to be under their own basket and many of the Tralee scores came from the outside. However, Sligo had the edge on the rebounds and they got the ball away quickly for several delightful fast-break plays.

Sligo did not have a number of their players in the squad — Tony O'Hara was unable to make the trip to Dublin and Gerry Monaghan is on holiday in the US — but their presence would only have meant an even greater spread on the scoreboard. As it was, their places were capably filled by the ever-improving Carl Duggan and Jimmy Dwyer while future All Stars Stuart Watson and Gerry Gallagher also got a share in the game.

Brigates hope of the day was the fine performance of Stan Burns who showed a welcome return to his old greatness but for his all-round display, leaping high under the defensive board and sharp-shooting on offence, Tommy Hickey stole the limelight with his best performance of the season.

All Stars got off to a devastating start with two points from Joe Palmer. Brian O'Hara, Hickey, Burns and John McGowan before Kelliher's replied. The game continued in this trend and Sligo were swinging along picking up the baskets at ease while Kelliher's tried all they knew to get a grip on the play.

Sligo started subing early but Kelliher's never really threatened and the gap was seventeen points wide at the break.

All Stars really got in the mood in the second half and Kelliher's tried everything in the book to halt the rush of scores but their spirit was completely broken and Sligo continued to pour in the shots to win easily in the end.

It was a particularly satisfying game for captain John McGowan who had the task of coaching the squad in the unavoidable absence of Tom O'Brien and he filled both roles flawlessly.

Sligo All Stars—T. Hickey 22; J. McGowan 16; S. Burns 15; C. Duggan 10; C. Carty 6; J. Palmer 5; B. O'Hara 2; G. Gallagher 1; S. Watson.

Mercy girls win again

Progressive basketball is one of the many ideals of the St. Patrick's basketball team which took another step in this direction this season when they entered a squad in the Ladies' Senior National Cup.

The only Convent team in the competition which began last weekend, they had a very encouraging victory over WASF, Dublin, calling on their under 19, under 16 and under 14 players to make up the panel.

Walkins' own had the advantage of home ground and were able to provide a strong challenge in the first half which finished level at 22 points each.

The second period saw the Sligo team strengthening their defence which curtailed the Dublin girls to only three points in the opening ten minutes while Mercy notched up 15 points to put them on the road to victory.

While Dublin scored a further seven points after B. Kieley and C. Foley were fouled out, the scoring power of the Mercy squad could not be matched as they added eighteen further points to record a 55-33 victory.

While seniors V. Mannion and A. Keaveney were the Sligo stars, B. Ferguson, M. McGlynn and C. Fallon turned in impressive performances.

Sligo team and scorers—B. Kieley (1); A. McLoughlin (6); C. Foley (9); A. Keaveney (16); V. Mannion (15); B. Ferguson (6); P. Nairn, M. McGlynn (2); C. Fallon, R. Barr, C. Toner.