

# Marian take G.W.I. trophy

**M**ARIAN, Dublin, are the new holders of the G.W.I. Trophy. After a week-end of exciting basketball—nineteen games were played, five of them being won by a point—the Dublin squad emerged as worthy winners at Sligo's Summerhill College on Sunday last when they defeated St. Gall's, Belfast, in a final that never matched earlier games for entertainment or skill.

Sligo All Stars were deprived of a place in the semi-finals by an on-form Killester who turned in one of their best-ever performances to win by a point.

The 'Most Valuable Player' award went to St. Gall's John Kennedy.

Each pool produced plenty of thrills and upsets and a very high standard was maintained until the final which was something of an anti-climax.

In Pool A, St. Vincent's, Dublin, had to work hard to overcome St. Mary's, Athlone, while later in the day, Neptune, of Cork, failed to St. Mary's by three points.

St. Vincent's made no mistake in their next encounter and recorded a comfortable win over Neptune to win their pool.

Pool B, which opened the tournament with a game between U.C.G. and United States Navy, set the standard for the week-end. Navy got off to a great start and had gained a fourteen point lead by half-time. However, the Galway squad came storming back and a see-saw struggle developed until the final whistle when Navy scraped through with a one point victory.

The second pool game saw Marian make their first appearance, and even at this early stage, they indicated they had serious intentions of laying hands on the trophy.

Marian led Navy by six points at half time, but the Derry-based outfit were not to be easily overcome as they fought back to within a point of their opposition mid-way through the second half.

With twelve seconds remaining, Navy's R. Tucker was fouled and he coolly converted both free throws to give his squad a one point lead. Marian immediately swung into attack to convert a twenty-foot outside shot and win the game.

U.C.G. failed to live up to their earlier promise in the semi-final qualifier and Marian had little difficulty in cantering to a comfortable win.

Disappointment, upsets and plenty of excitement—this was the story from Pool C. Cladagh Shamrocks of Galway failed to turn up and a team from Sligo's Summerhill College came to the rescue. Although they were not expected to match the standard of the All Stars, they turned in a polished performance, but All Stars had a convincing victory.

## Best moments

Summerhill's best moments arrived later in the day when they took on Killester. Having fought back from a nine points half-time deficit, Summerhill had the Dublin squad under pressure with three minutes to go, but experience was the telling factor and Killester held on to record a win.

All Stars met Killester in the pool decider and the Sligo squad were unfortunate in that the Dubliners probably never played as well. Leading 6-2 after three minutes, they had the Sligo outfit in difficulties from which they never recovered.

Although trailing by a point at the break, the Sligo boys were still favourites to win, but Killester refused to be intimidated and maintained their grip on the game as All Stars tried everything they knew to get on top.

In a thrilling finish, both sides matched each other score for score, each notching twenty-four points in the second half, but Killester held their one-point half-time lead to qualify for a place in the semi-final.

Blue Demons, last year's winners, made an early exit from the semi-final stages when they suffered a shock two-point defeat at the hands of Belfast's St. Gall's.

Demons were well in command in the early stages and held a seven-point lead at the break, but they could not find an answer to the St. Gall's challenge and the Belfast squad went on to record their first major success with a two points win.

Thus, having defeated Corinthians earlier in a tame affair, St. Gall's qualified for the semi-final stages. Demons redeemed themselves somewhat by running up a most convincing score against Corinthians in a game that decided minor placings.

St. Gall's met St. Vincent's in the first semi-final. The game was closely

fought throughout, with St. Gall's leading 18-16 at the break. From then on, there were never more than two points between the sides until the last minute when St. Gall's scored four points to win 39-33.

## Disappointing

The second semi-final saw Killester meet Marian. This was a disappointing clash as Killester did not live up to expectations and were completely outclassed by the tournament's eventual winners. Marian led 22-10 at the break and were so confident of victory they rested their better players in the second period—and still won 39-29.

Anybody expecting a classic final was bitterly disappointed as Marian were in complete control from the beginning and St. Gall's never showed traces of their earlier sparkle. Marian were comfortably ahead by 23-15 at the break and remained on top to win 59-38.

Sligo All Stars met Blue Demons to decide fifth and sixth places, and this game turned out to be one of the thrillers of the tournament. After ten minutes, both sides were level at 12-12; and then Sligo went ahead by six points. Highlight of the first half was Gerry Monaghan's feat in scoring fourteen points for Sligo.

All Stars continued to attack in the second period and had increased their lead to twelve points after six minutes. But Demons fought back to equalise 40-40, having scored ten points in a three minute spell of power.

From then until the end, the game was an extremely close affair, with Sligo running into foul trouble. Sligo's Anthony Cronnelly was fouled out in 19 minutes and was replaced by Gerry Gallagher who came into the game with his side trailing by a point.

His first shot, in the last minute lead, but Demons replied within of the game, gave Sligo a one-point seconds. With time ticking away, Sligo's John McGowan sank a tremendous twenty-foot shot to regain the lead—and back came Demons to score again and regain their lead.

With fifteen seconds to go, Gallagher sank a fifteen foot corner shot to clinch a 51-50 victory for Sligo.

Sligo players and scorers—G. Monaghan (28), J. McGowan (15); S. Burns (8), J. Palmer (10); B. O'Hara (15); C. Carty (11), T. O'Hara (7), A. Cronnelly (29), T. Hickey (19), J. Gallagher (20), S. Watson (23), C. Duggan (8), F. Rogers (20).