

Legend Seán guest of honour at seven-a-side

By Niall Scully

DOWN legend and Team of the Millennium member Seán O'Neill was the guest of honour in Stillorgan last Saturday.

It was the inaugural Joseph O'Ryan seven-a-side football tournament. Joseph was a solicitor and a founder member of the GAA.

Eight teams took part in the one-day blitz. They were from the four legal societies of Ireland (solicitors and barristers), four

teams from the North and four from the South.

The action began at noon. Matches were 10 minutes each way.

The final began at 4.30pm. All the games were played in Páirc de Burca, the Kilmacud HQ and the home of the Sevens.

It was an all Southern final, with the trainee solicitors beating the qualified solicitors. The extra dash of pace and fitness proved decisive.

The standard was high. The referees had a

ball. Not a yellow card in sight, and not even the mention of a tribunal.

"It went very well. We were delighted. The weather was fantastic and there were many young families there," explains Marcus Ó Buachalla.

"The feedback from everyone was very positive and I think the will is there now to continue. It was lovely having Seán O'Neill there. He's the honorary president of the Northern solicitors."

The tournament follows last year's historic

Brendan McCann Trophy fixture which was the first ever Gaelic football match between the Law Society of Ireland and the Law Society of Northern Ireland.

"In the 125th year of the GAA we felt it would be a nice touch to hold the first ever All-Ireland tournament in memory of Joseph O'Ryan.

"Joseph was there in the room in Thurles on that fateful day with all the big boys, and it's nice to salute his contribution," adds Marcus.

RANELAGH GAELS 4-10
ST BRENDAN'S 1-10

By Rónán Mac Lochlainn

RANELAGH GAELS maintained their impressive league form with a comfortable victory over a plucky St Brendan's side in their AFL 9 clash in the picturesque surroundings of Bushy Park last Thursday evening.

This win has moved Gaels to second place in the league, a point behind leaders Ballyboden but with a game in hand; the talented Ranelagh are in a great position at the mid-season break.

Brendan's remain in fourth spot and can take some crumbs of comfort from their spirited display, but it was the concession of three first-half goals, two within the opening six minutes, that ultimately proved their downfall.

Ranelagh's lightning beginning was kick-started by a well-worked Ken Fitzmaurice point within 50 seconds, and two minutes later Fitzmaurice turned provider, feeding Barry Prendergast who cracked home past a helpless Colin Garvin in the Brendan's goal.

It was one-way traffic at this juncture and, after a John Conlon free, Fitzmaurice stretched the host's advantage to eight points with a first-time finish from 14 metres which once again had Garvin blameless in the visitor's goal.

COMPOSURE

The Grangegorman side battled back well though and gained reward for their efforts through Karl Feehan's free on eight minutes as they regained some of their composure and Gavin Hanley reduced their deficit even further when he followed up to point after Conor Drumm in the host's goal had brilliantly denied Mark McEntee from close range.

However, their upturn in fortunes was only fleeting as with Alan Toolan impressing at wing-back, Gaels continued to push forward and Conlon added a beauty from the right-flank following a clever cross-field ball from Brian Regan.

St Brendan's replied with a pointed free from John Moore in the 17th minute, but disaster struck for the visitors two minutes later when Tieran McNamara availed of good work from Alan Kelly and Prendergast to calmly slot the ball home without even the hint of a challenge from a badly exposed Brendan's defence.

To their credit, they bounced back from this setback and finished the half strongly with further points from Moore, Hanley, Timmy Ryan and Feehan to reduce their arrears to six points (2-7 to 0-7) at the break.

However, any momentum gained from this mini-comeback was negated by an inspired first six minutes of the second-half by Conlon as he kicked three glorious points from distance, which briefly illuminated

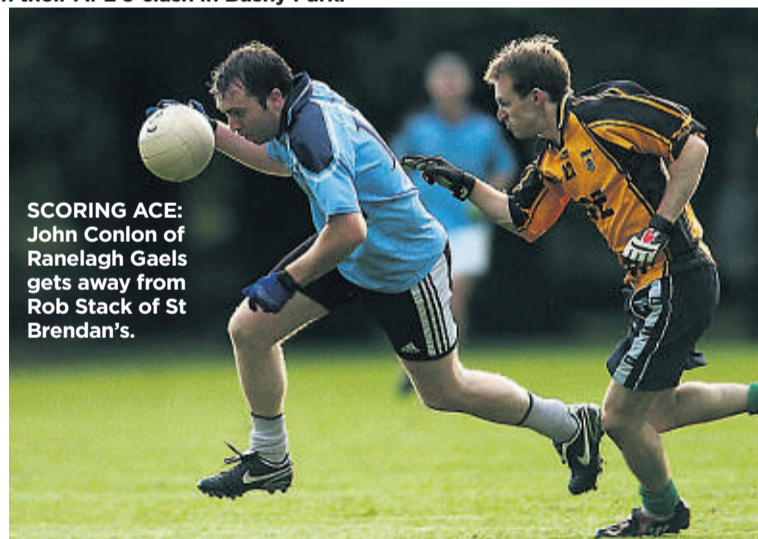
Gaels breeze by Brendan's



O'HAGAN'S HEROES: The Ranelagh Gaels team that beat St Brendan's (r) in their AFL 9 clash in Bushy Park.



Gael Force: Karl Feehan of St Brendan's (top) and Ranelagh Gaels' Seamus Galvin contest the ball during their AFL 9 clash in Bushy Park.



Scoring Ace: John Conlon of Ranelagh Gaels gets away from Rob Stack of St Brendan's.

Ranelagh move into great league position with comfortable victory

the increasingly bleak Terenure landscape.

The game was effectively killed off as a contest on 38 minutes when Fitzmaurice showed quick reflexes to poke to the net after a defensive slip by Ken Foxe to leave a massive twelve points between the sides.

The introduction of Rob Stack and Seán Quinn helped steady the Brendan's ship and they responded with points from David Henry and a Feehan free, but with Conlon adding a couple of frees at the other end, the hosts never looking in any trouble,

with manager Liam O'Hagan ensuring complacency didn't set in with his vocal promptings.

Quinn gave Brendan's a ray of hope with a cracking goal with 13 minutes remaining but they could only add one more point from Feehan before the close as they finally succumbed by nine points.

O'Hagan was thrilled with his side's performance and stressed the importance of the goals. "Goals are so important at every level, and you saw that again tonight. That's what won us the game," he added.

MATCHFILE

■ SCORERS - Ranelagh Gaels: J Conlon 0-9 (5f), K Fitzmaurice 2-1, B Prendergast, T McNamara 1-0. St Brendan's: K Feehan 0-4 (2f), S Quinn 1-0, J Moore ('45'), G Hanley 0-2, T Ryan, D Henry 0-1 each.
■ RANELAGH GAELS: C Drumm; S Galvin, S Minehan, D Grehan; A Toolan, C Hartnett, S Daly; B Regan, D Doolan; K Fitzmaurice, B Prendergast, A Kelly; E Courtney, T McNamara, J Conlon.
Subs: E Marron for Fitzmaurice (57 mins).
■ ST BRENDAN'S: C Garvin; S O'Dwyer, K Foxe, J Walsh; T

Purtill, Derek Henry, G Foxe; M McEntee, T Ryan; J Ryan, G Hanley, R Caulfield; K Feehan, J Moore, David Henry.
Subs: R Stack for O'Dwyer (38 mins), S Quinn for Purtill (40 mins), C Feehan for Hanley (47 mins), M McHugh for David Henry (53 mins).
■ MENTORS
Ranelagh Gaels: Liam O'Hagan.
St Brendan's: John Ryan, Brendan Sharkey, David Henry.
■ REFEREE: Philip Brady (Croí Ró Naofa)
■ WIDES: Ranelagh Gaels 8 (3+5), St Brendan's 6 (5+1)
■ CONDITIONS: A bright



evening mixed with scattered showers.
■ PLAYER OF THE GAME: John Conlon (Ranelagh Gaels)