

Kilmacud win marred by three Ballymun red cards

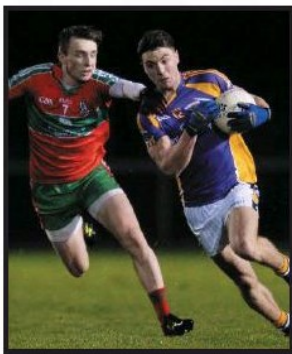
Rónán Mac Lochlainn



KILMACUD Crokes produced an impressive overall performance when overcoming Ballymun Kickhams by 0-12 to 0-6 in their Dublin Under-21 'A' Football Championship final in Newcastle last night.

In a contest that was dictated to a degree by the poor conditions, Crokes held the upper hand for the large part and were well worthy of their win.

In doing so, they defended their title won so impressively last year and a strong



showing against the elements in the first half provided the foundation for their success.

Cillian O'Shea was particularly influential during this period as his side fell behind early on through a third-minute point from Ryan Swan.

However, the holders largely controlled matters as they restored parity through Cian O'Connor before taking the lead in the eighth minute thanks to a Conor Kelly score.

Callum Pearson tagged on a free to double that advantage

before Colm Hulton sprang into action for Kickhams with three points in succession, two from placed balls.

Kilmacud responded impressively to that mini setback with points from Kelly and O'Connor ensuring a narrow 0-5 to 0-4 interval lead.

That supremacy was retained upon the resumption with Pearson adding his second free in the 33rd minute

and O'Connor put daylight between the teams with his third point of the night four minutes later.

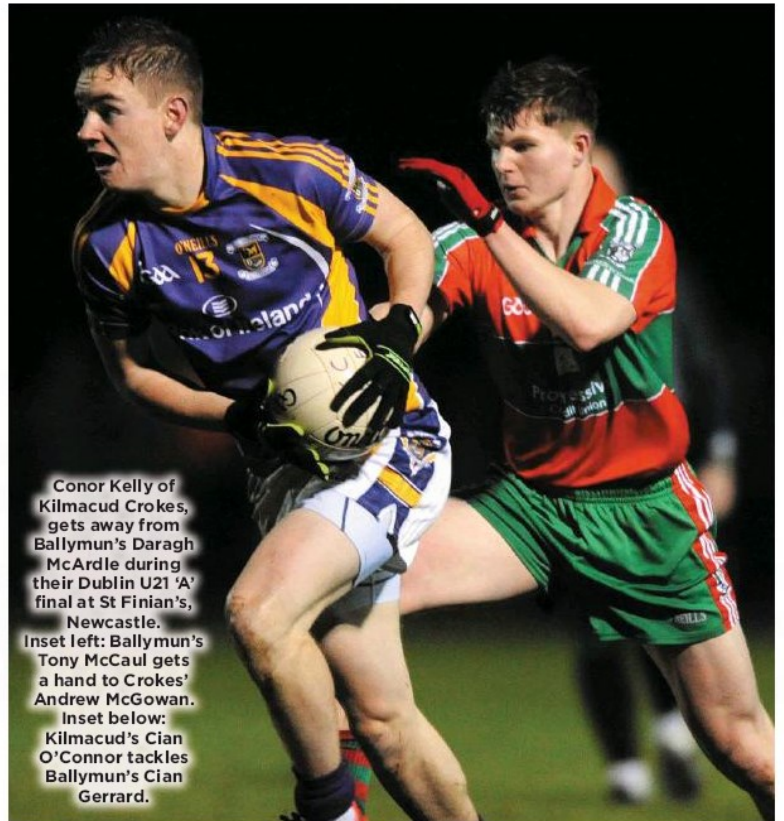
Kickhams added some pressure around the third quarter mark which manifested itself in

scores by Paddy Small and Hulton.

It was in the closing stages that Crokes confirmed their dominance as Pearson kicked two late points to confirm their deserved success.

Ballymun's misery was compounded with the dismissal of three of their players in injury time.

The ugly scenes marred what was up until that point a well-disciplined contest and after consulting his officials, referee Paul Faughnan had



Conor Kelly of Kilmacud Crokes, gets away from Ballymun's Daragh McArdle during their Dublin U21 'A' final at St Finian's, Newcastle.
Inset left: Ballymun's Tony McCaul gets a hand to Crokes' Andrew McGowan.
Inset below: Kilmacud's Cian O'Connor tackles Ballymun's Cian Gerrard.

no hesitation in brandishing red cards to a trio of Kickhams players.

Thankfully, before matters deteriorated further, the final whistle blew with captain Aidan Jones the proud recipient of the cup on another great night for the Stillorgan outfit.

SCORES - KILMACUD CROKES: C Pearson 0-5 (3f), C O'Connor 0-4, C Kelly 0-2, T Fox 0-1. **BALLYMUN KICKHAMS:** C Hulton 0-4 (2f), R Swan, P Small (f) 0-1 each.

KILMACUD CROKES: K Creasey; S Daly, G English, R Murphy; A Jones, C O'Shea, S Showlin; B Showlin, C Casey; T Fox, D O'Brien, A McGowan; C Kelly, C Pearson, C O'Connor. Subs: N Nolan for Murphy (40).

BALLYMUN KICKHAMS: E Comerford; D McArdle, L Young, D O'Brien; E Craig, C Gerrard, T McCaul; A Elliot, R Swan; C Keeley, A Swan, C Deegan; D Keating, P Small, C Hulton. Subs: C O'Tighe for Deegan (h-t).

REF: Paul Faughnan (St Patrick's Palmerstown).

