

manance from Kinsella. Jones Paddy O'Flaherty and Nathan Nolan also enjoyed influential games for the hosts who opened up an early two point lead thanks to scores from Robert Russell and Kinsella.

However, their early dominance was eroded in the fifth minute when David Lacey, who excelled throughout for the visitors, spun clear from his man before beating Matt Barry at his near post with a powerful shot.

Lacey was a complete joy to behold over the 60 minutes, kicking 1-12 (0-7f) in total, with his ability to kick accurately off either foot ensuring his side remained in the hunt throughout.

EXCELLENT

Although Kilmacud were able to punch holes through the Na Fianna defence with some excellent support play and running off the shoulder, they proved susceptible on the counter-attack with their opponents taking full advantage in the 11th minute as Ted Regan palmed home from close range after a telling incision by James Doran.

Two Lacey frees pushed Na Fianna six points clear by the 14th minute but with Nathan Nolan an obdurate and telling presence at midfield, Kilmacud finished the half in the ascendancy with Kinsella's 19th minute goal and a late point from full-back Seán Gillan leaving Crokes 1-8 to 2-4 ahead at the break.

The tightness of the first-half exchanges continued upon the restart with Lacey kicking two sublime points from play in the first three minutes of the half, scores that reflected a player operating with a huge level of confidence.

However, Jones jinked through for a fine solo goal in the 44th minute and the same player turned provider for Kenny eight minutes later as Crokes inched four points clear.

Lacey offered brief hope for Na Fianna with two long-range frees but Nolan, Jones and Dan O'Brien kicked late points to ensure a nervy but deserved home success.

Na Fianna's Cathal Caverly contests possession with Crokes duo of Cal Kavanagh (left) and Nathan Nolan.

MATCHFILE

SCORERS – Kilmacud Crokes: C Kinsella 1-3, D Jones 1-1, H Kenny 1-0, D O'Brien 0-3 (2f), N Nolan 0-2, R Russell, S Gillan, P Flaherty 0-1 each. **Na Fianna:** D Lacey 1-12 (0-7f), T Regan 1-0.

KILMACUD CROKES: M Barry; M Mullin, S Gillan, N Brady; B Carr, R Fitzpatrick, J Keating; N Nolan, P O'Flaherty; R Russell, D O'Brien, C Kavanagh; C Kinsella, D Jones, H Kenny. **Subs:** P O'Reilly for Fitzpatrick (half-time), A Lundon for Russell (44), E Higgins for Kavanagh (47).

NA FIANNA: D O'Hanlon; E McLoughlin, R Byron, R Mackey; K Doran, N Loftus, J Stewart; C Caverly, D Ryan; S O'Gorman, J Doran, S Ronayne; D Lacey, T Regan, B O'Leary. **MENTOR – Kilmacud Crokes:** Robbie Behan, Tomás Ó Flaharta, John O'Callaghan, Robbie Leahy. **Na Fianna:** Hugh Gallagher, Dan McGowan. **REF:** P Fitzsimons (Liffey Gaels). **WIDES – Kilmacud Crokes:** 9 (5+4); **Na Fianna:** 5 (1+4). **Conditions:** A calm, still evening, perfect for free-flowing football. **PLAYER OF THE MATCH:** David Lacey (Na Fianna).