

ALLIED IRISH BANK SFC

Parnells take advantage

**St Clarets 0-12
Parnells 1-15**

THERE WAS bouncy castle behind the top goals in Ruislip on Sunday and the way St Clarets went about their business in the first half of this game I am still convinced they used it for their warm up before hand.

They started this game dis-orientated, confused, without direction and with few of the other key elements usually associated with a coherent football unit but somehow, in a very St Clarets way, they were still in with a puncher's chance in this fixture entering the last five minutes.

How they manage week after week to deliver twenty minute bursts of football that often result in victory is one of those great mysteries and no doubt the source of endless frustration as their mentors try to extend those twenty minutes of brilliance into a full sixty.

Having said that though, the quality of the Parnells challenge in the second half left a great deal to be desired



and maybe they too took a little time out for themselves in the bouncy castle as they came back onto the pitch at the start of the second half, for they had little resemblance to the compact football machine they were in the first period.

During that time the Parnells tore St Clarets apart. David Sullivan, Barry Shea and the brilliant James Lynch were chief tormentors as they ran up a 1-12 to 0-2 lead after 26 minutes of the game and they had the Hayes men looking like Mike Tyson after a couple of rounds with the average bar room brawler.

However, by now we know that there is always a second coming of St Clarets but it appears that somewhere between the dressing room and the bouncy castle Parnells lost track of that fact and before they knew what was going on, their half time lead had been dragged back to 1-14 to 0-12 with six minutes remaining.



Having been completely outplayed by the Richard Sullivan / Cathal Diamond combination in the first half, the veteran pairing of Colm Lynott and Tony Murphy began to find some sort of footing in the game in the second and from that they were able to build a platform to play from.

With another of their elder statesmen Martin Hession beginning to pull the strings that operated the mesmerising movements of both Mossey Colleran and Patrick Lynott on his flanks, suddenly St Clarets had a game plan.

Substitute Steve Morrow intelligently knocked over a point for Parnells with five minutes remaining to put a

stop to the St Clarets gallop but almost immediately after Tony Murphy burst up field and hammered a shot against the Parnells cross bar from twenty metres and then was left helpless as the rebound fell to Gerard Lynott who saw his shot fantastically saved by Keith Doherty in the Parnells goal.

Had the ball gone in at that point there is little doubt that St Clarets would have probed every gap in the Parnells defence looking for the equalising score but as it was the let-off gave the winners the space to relax and allow Lynch to hoist over a point that totally assured his side of victory.

For a team made up of

fewer glamour names than they have had in recent years the Parnells looked a lot more effective than they had managed during that time.

Solid players were delivering solid, if unspectacular, performances while the few class acts they had were able to shine.

Barry Shea's first half goal was crucial to their victory and the role that Damien Holland played in it even more vital as somehow he fielded a high and hopeful ball above Paul Ryder's head to set Shea up for that critical score.

Johnny Niblock probed when the opportunity arose while David Sullivan proved himself once more to be a reliable sort of free taker.

For the losers, well aside from the absolute spirit demonstrated by full back John Ryan in the first half they had nothing to offer, while in the second all the usual suspects upped their game to the point where Parnells had no answers.

Mossey Colleran was solid, Patrick Lynott clinical, Martin Hession astute and Tony Murphy (once he had recovered from the aberration of a free kick he attempted in the first half) was his usual industrious, hard-working self.

However, it wasn't sufficient in this case purely because their start was so appalling and now as they enter the last chance salon of the Championship they will have to stop these forty minute no-shows that are becoming their trade mark and get serious about their business for the full sixty minutes.

Scorers:

PARNELLS: D Sullivan 0-6 (0-3f); J Lynch 0-5; B Shea 1-1; J Niblock 0-1; R O'Sullivan 0-1; D O'Loane 0-1.

ST CLARETS: P Lynott 0-3; E Colleran 0-3; C Lynott 0-2; M Hession 0-2; M McClave 0-1; P Duffy 0-1;