

All Star "originals" show their class

WHEN it comes to a battle of age versus experience the latter usually wins out and the final of the Inter-Area Basketball Tournament played last Sunday proved no exception when the older "original" All Stars paved their way to a well-earned 78-52 point victory over their younger counterparts, the current All Stars.

Proving that the old skills and craft exhibited in their heyday had not yet withered away in obsolescence the originals turned in an impressive performance and snatched the much sought-after silver tankard trophies away from their more youthful opponents.

Indeed they did well to contain a lively and sharp current All Stars selection to gain a 26 point marginal victory but the losers were worthy runners-up and received plaques for their efforts.

Mr. Steve O'Donovan, are representative of Albany Cigarettes—the sponsors of the tournament—praised the "high standard of skill and athletic ability displayed by the teams taking part" and their unsparring efforts ensured the successful completion of the day's activities.

All Stars C team, which mostly comprised players recently joined the Club, along with experienced Gerry Gallagher, opened the programme in a match against the original All Stars and while it proved to be a one-sided affair it nevertheless provided both teams with an opportunity to formulate tactics for the remainder of the tournament.

The originals lead at half time by 57 points to 20 and romped home to a 98-50 victory with Stan Burns showing how it could be done by registering a personal tally of 22 points for the winners.

Despite their defeat the C team turned in a creditable performance with Gallagher leading the way and opportunistic young Tommie O'Brien junior scoring the impressive tally of 16 points.

Current All Stars playing as the B team failed in the early stage of their game against a high-spirit Boyle combination and could only manage to lead at half time by four points. However, at the change of ends they took more control of the game and emerged easy winners with a 50-33 win.

Ballina B team, faced with the formidable task of playing against the originals, played determined basketball but could not hold their own. With Anthony Cronnelly rolling a personal tally of 20 points and well assisted by his team mates, the local side eventually won 61-12.

What was expected to be a closely-contested game between the local B side and Ballina A's turned out to be a one-way street affair when the former secured an easy victory which put them in the final. From the outset the trio of Watson, Rogers and Griffin had the situation all sown up when they recorded early scores and increased the tally as the half progressed.

In the second half, aided by effective work from Boinis and Lynch, they further impressed and while Ballina used all their efforts to swing the game in their favour they were unable to penetrate the strong defence of the local side.

The match of the day was undoubtedly between Ballina B and All Stars C. Both teams fighting for a place to contest the third and fourth positions it was Ballina who took the opportunity of piling on the pressure against a disorganised Sligo combination and within minutes they held a six point lead.

Gallagher, stalwart of the local side, was held scoreless during the half but J. Verdon managed to notch up eight points and B. Fox scored a free throw. The half concluded with Ballina boasting a commanding 20 point lead.

With much leeway to make up a transformed Sligo side appeared in the second half and a rejuvenated Gallagher registered a quick 15 points and J. Verdon added another 17 for a match total of 25 points. Welcome assistance was received from S. Kelly and P. Cassidy and the team went on to record a convincing 47-42 point victory.

Though Ballina B's and Boyle played off for fifth and sixth places with the former winning it was the local C team that created all the excitement in the play-off for third and fourth places with Ballina A's

In a ding-dong battle the lead changed several times in the first half and ended with both sides level on 20 points. With the stage set for a "hair-raising" second half the two teams battled for supremacy and it was the local side which forged ahead for most of it. But despite a massive 25 points tally from Gallagher they were unable to stave off the persistent attacks of a ruthless and determined Ballina who went on to grab a 41-37 victory.

The day climaxed with a classic exhibition by the original All Stars against the B's. Getting off to an excellent start with strong defensive play that upset their opponents and

with superb rebounding by J. Palmer and A. Cronnelly and sharp-shooting from O'Hara and McGowan they poached into an early ten point lead. This they never lost and in fact they doubled this tally three quarters of the way through the half.

The B's recovering from the onslaught retaliated and notched 5 points through the agency of J. Burns, S. Watson, I. Griffin and a further four by F. Rogers thus narrowing the gap to nine points. The half finished with the veterans holding on to a 11 point lead.

As the game progressed the original All Stars reconfirmed their superiority and streaked further ahead giving the danger sign to their opponents. They settled down to a clear brand of basketball and showed a flair for the sport which was undoubtedly developed through years of experience. C. Carty surprised the more younger players with his second half tally of ten points.

In the final analysis it was a creditable performance from both sides and while the originals deserved their triumphant success the B's, who gave a sporting and high-spirited display, were worthy runners-up.

Teams: (originals) J. Palmer (13); J. McGowan (42); B. O'Hara (12); C. Carty (24); S. Burns (29); A. Cronnelly (58); T. O'Brien (41).

B side: S. Watson (32); J. Burns (30); F. Rogers (28); I. Griffin (30); M. Delory (12); M. O'Brien (5); P. Lynch (10); D. Cassidy (4).

C side: G. Gallagher (52); P. Morrison (12); S. Kelly (2); T. O'Brien Jar. (16); B. Fox (7); P. Cassidy (2); J. Verdon (43); T. McGowan.