

LEINSTER SCHOOL'S SENIOR A LEAGUE

SUTTON PARK1
KILKENNY COLLEGE0

By Stephen Findlater

EOIN O'REILLY'S short corner rebound six minutes from time earned Sutton Park all the points as they struck late to beat Kilkenny 1-0 in a high quality Senior A school's league tie on Wednesday and they jump up to second in the standings.

The win adds to Sutton's recent 2-2 draw against an under-strength St Andrew's as the northside school continues to make huge strides under the tutelage of Colin Stewart and Ronan Walsh.

In truth, a draw may have been the fairer result as both sides created plenty of opportunities but found brick walls at either end in the form of Kilkenny's George Smyth and Sutton's Tom Fee.

Notice of a flowing first half was served inside 100 seconds when Killian Flood's right-wing cross skipped across the circle with both Zack Holmes and Chris Hayes agonisingly missing the deflection on the slide.

Moments later, a sublime interchange between the Cats' Brendan Dowling and Eamon Walsh created a one-on-one which Fee smothered well.

In the opening half, such chances flowed thick and fast in a typical schools' manner as the mercurial Evan Matthews pulled the strings in the Kilkenny engine room, while the overlapping Matty Moore wreaked havoc down the right wing.

INTRIGUING

However, O'Reilly's big overheads and solidity at centre-back allied to Ferdia Carty's driving runs made for an intriguing contest.

Chances flowed as Smyth saved well from Chris Hayes before Finnegan's piledriver was blocked and the influential Howard McDonnell rebounded onto the post with Luke Moore scrambling the clearance off the line.

Sutton's best chance came in the wake of O'Reilly's surge from the back. He beat four players before unleashing a back-hand smash. Smyth saved but Hayes' clever pull-back from the baseline from the rebound found the sprightly Flood but he shot wide.

The second half was more circumspect as the defensive gaps of the first period were plugged and goal-mouth action was scarce.

The teams' midfields stepped it up a gear in intensity and a series of cautions were dished out for over-zealous tackles.

Kilkenny forged the first corner of the match as the

stopwatch entered the final 10 minutes but Matthews' drag-flick was deflected round the post by Fee's stick and while Walsh did well in the circle, the follow-up chance came to nothing.

The ensuing break out

Sutton stick it to Cats to go second

O'Reilly is Park hero as late goal enough to grab points

saw Sutton earn their only corner as Max Dozier - a gritty battler throughout at right-back - snuck into space from a long-corner and found a foot with his cross.

A neat one-two gave O'Reilly the initial shot from eight yards, which Smyth shut down, but the sweeper reacted quickest to sneak his shot into the right corner and a second place in the table was assured for Sutton.

The key fixture this week pits All-Ireland champions Wesley against St Andrews on Friday afternoon at 4.45pm in Ballinteer.

Elsewhere, St Andrew's U13s moved within a game of completing an A league full-house following a 5-1 win over Wesley last week. It was their fifth victory from five outings and one final fixture against King's Hospital will complete the set.

At U13 B level, High School have been in impressive form, notching up consecutive wins over Wesley B and St Columba's.



LOOKING FOR OPTIONS: Sutton Park's goalscorer Eoin O'Reilly drives forward. Left: Kilkenny's Evan Matthews.