

RUGBY: FRANCE v. IRELAND.

Ireland, in the darker shirts, are at home to France at Lansdowne Road - and from the start they're battling hard to prevent the visitors from scoring their fourth successive victory over an Irish fifteen. It's a fast and fierce game, with plenty of open play - but both packs are on their toes, and their three-quarter lines are hard pressed.

An Irish offside gives France a penalty kick, neatly taken by Vannier to put the visitors three points up.

A scrum in mid-field....

And France get it away - Haget tries to push through, but Kavanagh brings him down. Dugg and O'Reilly tussle for it - French scrum half Dufau runs forward, but his pass is missed and it goes into touch.

The ball's out - Wood grabs it - but he's brought down - and now Mulligan passes it to his stand-off Kyle. Kyle dodges Baulon and passes to Pedlow - but Pedlow's stopped by Boniface.

A penalty for Ireland - and a fine kick by Pedlow brings the equaliser!

A sudden Irish sweep on the French goal - and winger Brophy's over the line before the startled Frenchmen realise what's happened.

Pedlow takes the kick, and it sails between the posts to give Ireland an 8-3 lead.

Second half, and Ireland are pressing towards the French line again. Pedlow tries to break loose, but it turns into a free-for-all.

Stand-off half Kyle starts a run - he's pulled down. Kavanagh recovers the ball.

Back to Kyle - who makes a brilliant dash for the corner and scores. Ireland 11, France 3. No luck with the conversion. Before long Kyle is trying again - he attempts to break through, but he can't make it. A French counterattack is also smothered.

Ireland are now on top of the game - their lead apparently secure, and not many minutes left for play. The French pack seem unable to prevent the Irish three-quarters from getting the ball, and for a while it looks as though that eight-point lead is going to be even bigger.

But the French backs still have some fight in them, and a movement by Haget and Boniface looks dangerous. It is stopped - and in spite of a last-minute French penalty goal, Ireland are the well-deserved victors!