

ENGLAND 9 IRELAND 2

GOALS RAIN AT MANCHESTER

English eyes are sailing! At Maine Road, Manchester, a whiteshirted England eleven takes a cue from the Mancunian sky and turns on a rain of goals. Dispelling all the "ifs," "buts" and "maybes" about the team, the white-shirts show no mercy to the harrassed Irish defence. They are on top from the word "go!"

Stan Mortensen (No. 8) paves the way to the first goal. A pass to Jack Fregatt - the Portsmouth winger puts over his centre - and Jack Rowley is there to send it home.

England's rearranged forward-line, with three new faces, show some of the neatest footwork seen for years. It's soccer straight out of the textbook. The speedy Fregatt - the dashing Mortensen - they are all at the top of their form - with Tom Finney - now with the ball - playing the game of his life. Finney lays on goal No. 2. A centre to Fregatt - and the Pompey man heads it home.

Hard as they try, the Irish defenders are swept away by the avalanche. Stan Mortensen puts England 4 up.

And in the second half, there is still more to come. From a Fregatt centre, Jack Rowley makes it 5 nil. For our man of the match, we pick Tom Finney (No. 7). It is from his pass that Stan Mortensen scores No. 6. For our sympathy, we pick Hugh Kelly, the hard-worked Irish goalie.

Here comes Rowley to complete his hat-trick. England's great performance sets a poser for the Scottish team - who'll meet them for the championship decider in April. Scoring No. 8 - Rowley again.

Tom Finney, taking over Stan Matthews' mantle, delights the crowd with his bag of tricks. It's from his centre that Pearson scores No. 9.

It's England's finest display since the war. Though Ireland get two consolation goals (here's Brennan with No. 2) the white-shirts don't show a weakness. We think that both England and Scotland should go to Rio. One of them is sure to win the world cup.