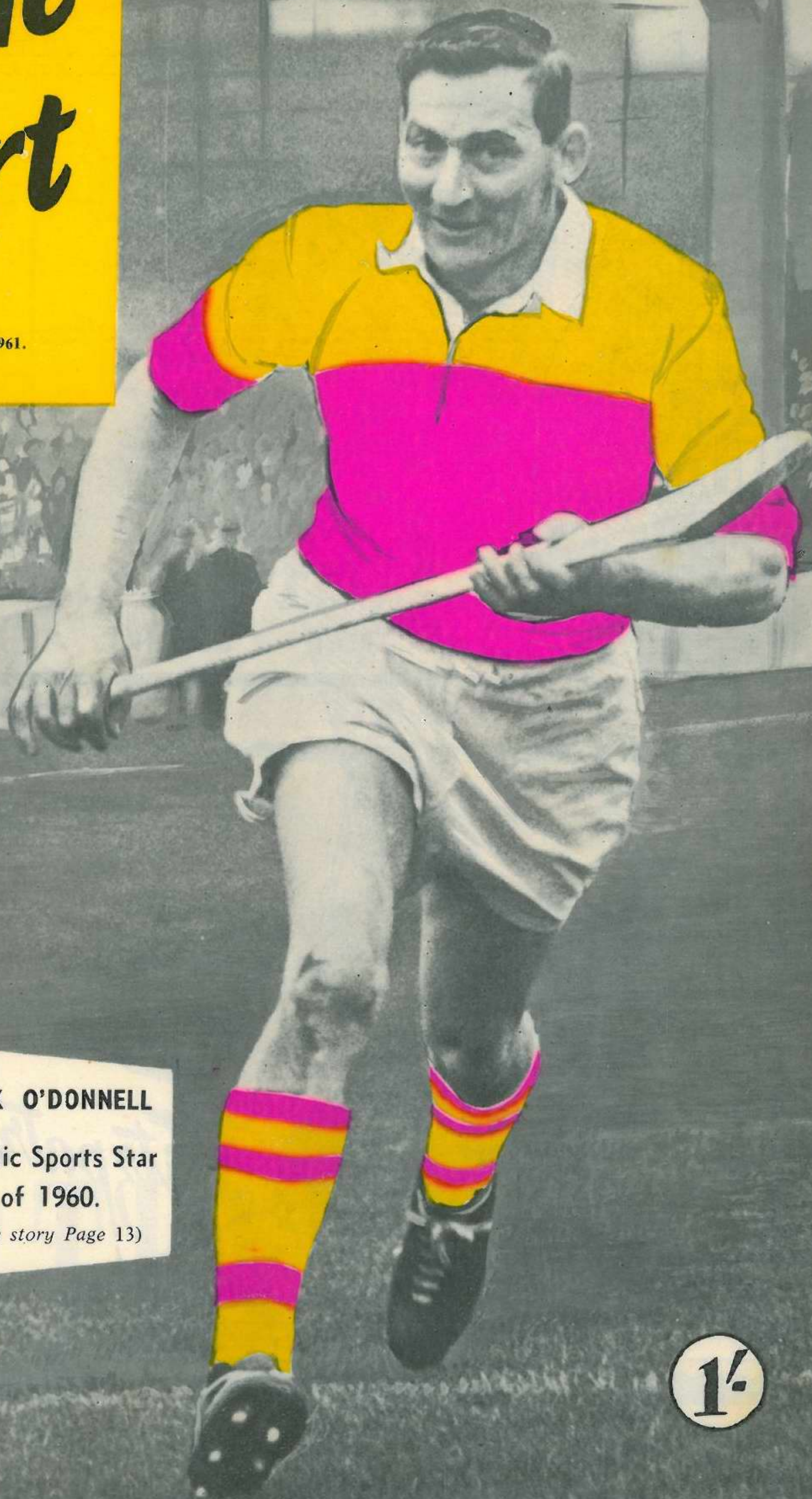


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Gaelic Sport

Vol. 3 No. 4.
December, 1960-February, 1961.
Published Quarterly.



NICK O'DONNELL
Gaelic Sports Star
of 1960.
(See story Page 13)

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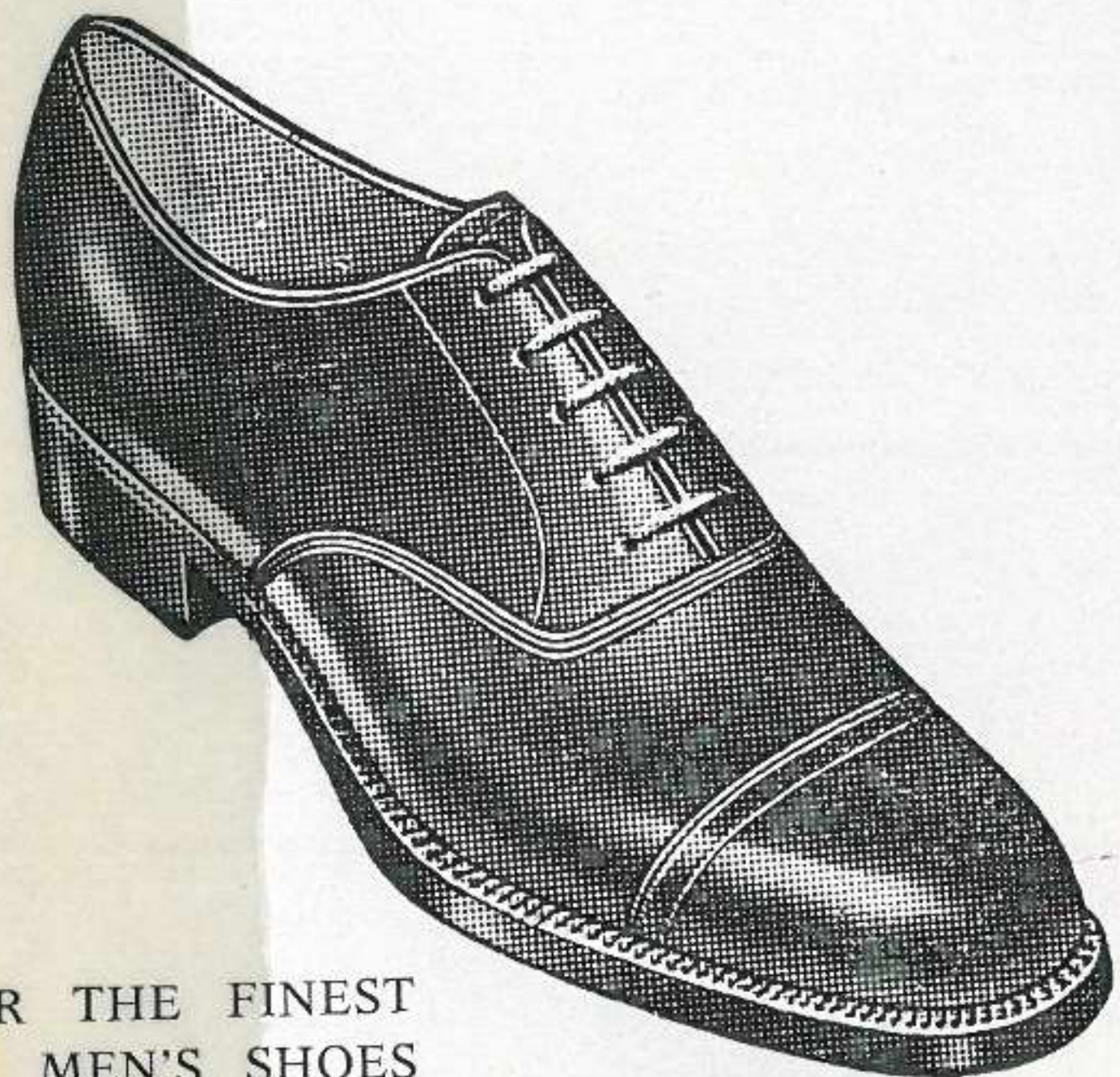
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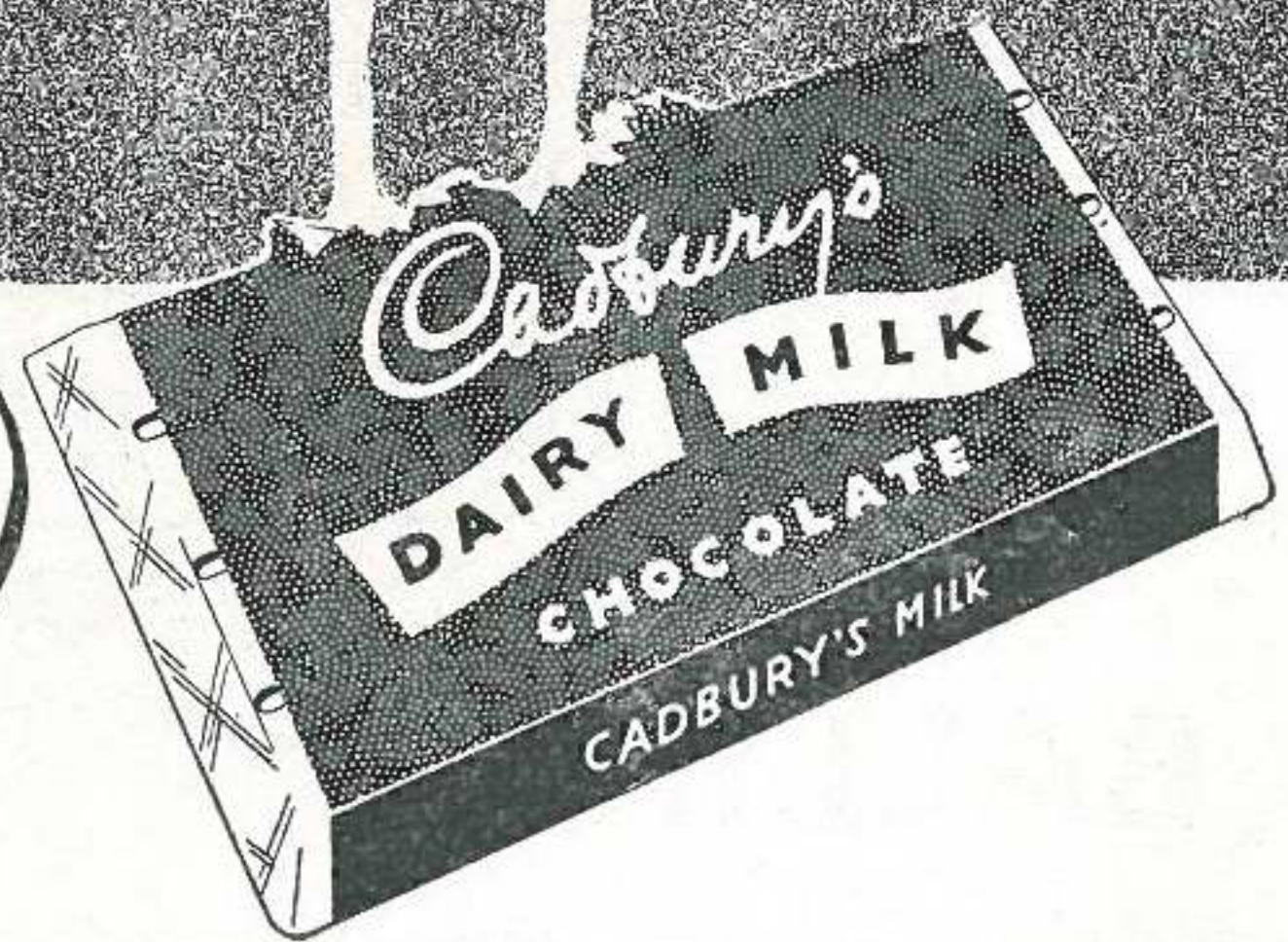
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Gaelic Sport

Vol. 3, No. 4. Dec. 1960/Feb. 1961

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INDEX

Interview With Maurice Hayes	6. 7
The Crucial Kick —by Kevin Fitzpatrick	8
Down Has Shown The Way —by Liam Fox	11
Profile of Nick O'Donnell —by Terence Roynane	13
How Wexford Won —by Moondharrig	17
1961 May Be Offaly's Year —by Capt. Sean Donegan	20
'Oscars' for 1960 —by Sean Feeley	23
Ring v. Mackey —by Eamonn Young	26
Salute the Champs	28, 29
We Can't Be Smug —by Frank Foley	31
Quit the 'Hero' Act —says Peter Byrne	34
Anna Crotty: A Pen-Picture —by Agnes Hourigan	39
Tipp. Get It Easy —by Frank O'Farrell	41
Bring Back the Handpass —says Frankie Byrne	45
Can Roscommon Come Back? —asks Sean O'Neill	49
The Ban —by Eamonn Mongey	50
Topical Talk —by Eamonn Young	53

Cover Picture

Our front cover is a special tribute to the Sportsman of 1960—doyen of hurling full-backs, Nick O'Donnell, who led Wexford to a magnificent All-Ireland victory last September (see story on page 13).

They Did It

WITH six months of 1960 gone we have only now come to realise that this could be one of the most momentous years in the history of the Gaelic Athletic Association.

... Under the impact of the National Football League final result we discovered that we were standing on the threshold of a great historical event—the Sam Maguire Cup could cross into our sundered six counties next September, for the first time in 74 years of championship football.

And the team to do it? Down . . . (They) stand hip to hip with reigning champions Kerry in the race for football's biggest prize this year.

The foregoing paragraphs are taken from the leading article which appeared in the mid-summer issue of *Gaelic Sport*.

We are glad that our predictions came true. Down had still to play their first championship game when that article was published, but they were soon to set out on a trail of triumph that led to glorious fulfilment on the last Sunday in September.

How did Down rise from comparative obscurity to the summit of success in two or three years? What is the secret behind the magnificent football which swamped Kerry in the final?

In the following pages, Down County Secretary Maurice Hayes, in an interview with the Editor of *Gaelic Sport*, reveals that "secret": the aims and ambitions, the blossoming of hope, and then the carefully planned, intelligent campaign that brought its great reward just a few months ago.

If a few dedicated and resourceful men could do this for Down, is it not possible that the same could be done for the other counties (and we have them in all four provinces) who have yet to stamp their names on the All-Ireland honours list?

Be sure it is possible. But it is not easy. For it takes men of the calibre of Maurice Hayes, Brian Denvir, Barney Carr, George Tinnelly, Arthur Doran and their fellow Down officials to accomplish such a mighty task.



MAURICE HAYES reveals the story behind Down's revival

PATIENCE PAYS OFF

IN their whirlwind progress to the 1960 League and All-Ireland titles, Down startled and gladdened the followers of Gaelic football as no team has done since Roscommon captured two successive All-Irelands in the middle 'forties.

But the novelty of a new name on the record books and the sympathy and exultation with which the resurgent "underdogs" are always greeted will soon wear off.

Before that happens let's record the amazing story behind Down's resurgence; the dedication, determination and planning that resulted in such astonishing success.

In a special interview with Maurice Hayes, Secretary of the Down Board the Editor of *Gaelic Sport* posed the questions which have intrigued football followers everywhere since September.

EDITOR: *It could not be possible that Down, by sheer chance, produced a team capable of winning so many major competitions in 1960. There must have been a planned revival. How and when did that revival begin?*

MAURICE HAYES: It is difficult to say when exactly it began, but the first indications appeared

among promising Colleges and minor players in the early 1950s.

Then, Armagh's great display against Kerry in the All-Ireland final of 1953 (a game that they very nearly won) gave us positive hope. For around that time, Down could frequently give Armagh almost as good as they got in Ulster championship and League games.

From there on we decided to broaden the county team's experience. And the first step was a series of challenge games with southern teams. Most important of these were against Carlow in the mid-'fifties.

Carlow reached the League final of 1954, beating such strong teams as Kerry, Cork and Armagh on the way. We beat Carlow shortly after their League final appearance against Mayo. That gave us tremendous encouragement.

Did the Down team of that time contain many of the present-day players?

Yes. Speaking from memory I think we had Kevin Mussen, George Lavery, Kieran Denvir, P. J. McElroy, Jarlath Carey and Paddy Doherty in that game with Carlow. That was Paddy's first game with the senior team.

Apart from those challenge games did you have any other team-building policy?

The pursuit of experience against southern teams was only a part of our plan. At the same time we commenced an intensive talent-search within the county. And the results were excellent.

By 1956 we were pretty certain that we could win an All-Ireland title in about five years. We reckoned that it would take that time for the team to reach maturity. We had found the right type of players—all that was necessary then was to mould them, by training and match-practice, into a first-class unit.

In order to facilitate that work we overhauled our Selection Committee. Up to 1956 we had 17 senior selectors, all of whom had done useful work in team-building up to then. But as the team took definite shape it was felt that such an unwieldy body would not make for stability or continuity.

So the Committee was reduced to three—Brian Denvir, Barney Carr (who is also team manager) and myself. Last winter, incidentally, two excellent men were added, bringing the total to five. They are T. P. Murphy and Dr. Martin Walsh.

Compiled from a
special interview

By

the Editor of

GAEELIC SPORT

In reducing the Selection Committee so drastically did you not exclude men who were vital talent-spotters throughout the county. A three, or even a five-man committee could not possibly do the work of 17 in that respect. Therefore, did you not take the risk of overlooking potential county players—are you not still taking that risk?

Not at all. I must make it quite clear that in reducing the committee membership we were not discarding selectors because of incompetence, or any inadequacy for the job. It was simply decided that such a large body was too unwieldy. Those men, all members of the County Board, continued to function as talent-spotters, and at the beginning of each season they submitted a panel of 25 players to the Selection Committee. That system still operates—and most effectively, too. But it doesn't exclude the admission of new "discoveries" to the panel through the season.

I should mention here that another important factor in maintaining stability, both at Board and team levels, was that we had no change in the county chairmanship. George Tinnelly has

been in that position for several years.

How did the new selectors' policy work from 1956 onwards?

Very smoothly. First of all we stressed the importance of team spirit and combined effort. And we discouraged the "star cult". Each man was a link in the chain, and no one was considered to be more important than his fellows.

The players co-operated magnificently. They knew what the Board and selectors were aiming at . . . they knew it was a long-term plan, and that it would take some years to reach football maturity. So they went out to win every game, but weren't disappointed when they lost. That was a part of the process of development.

We embarked on our first big session of indoor training for the Lagan Cup final of 1957/58. The schedule was strict and intensive. That winter, also, we encouraged the team to attend Technical school for physical culture courses. All the present players were in action at that time, with the exception of Sean O'Neill and Dan McCartan, who were then in minor grade.

Our training programme has not been so intensive since 1958. We



A Down defender in action.

cut it down to two nights per week — never more — for three weeks before big games.

It has been said that Down lost the 1959 All-Ireland semi-final to Galway—whom you had beaten a couple of months before in the Wembley tournament—because of "staleness", or over-training. Is that correct?

It may be. However, as I've said already, the possibility (indeed, at that time it was the probability) of defeat was part of our campaign in the search for big-time experience.

Our success at Wembley in 1959, and later our big win over Cavan in the Ulster final were ample proof that the team was developing according to plan. We were then aiming at an All-Ireland title in 1961. But if it came before the "target date", naturally we wouldn't say 'no'. (It did!)

As a result of our 1959 experience, we spaced training more shrewdly during the past season: half-fit for the League and Ulster championship, which gave the team plenty of scope to reach their peak for the All-Ireland semi-final and final.

Kerry thought that we were fully trained when we beat them in the League semi-final last April. We didn't correct that impression!

What was the biggest factor in your victory over Kerry in the All-Ireland final?

I should say that the players' mental attitude played at least as big a part as their skill and physical fitness. They had a great store of self-confidence.

Have your League and All-Ireland wins done anything to improve the game at club level within the county?

It is too soon to say. But I am certain that the improvement will come. The county players will disseminate their experience and standards among their club teammates. Already, of course, more and more young players are being attracted to the game, and crowds have doubled at club matches.

Can Down retain the All-Ireland title in 1961?

That is another difficult question to answer. But whatever may happen in '61, this team is capable of winning two more All-Irelands in the next three years.

THE CRUCIAL KICK



James McCartan

By
KEVIN FITZPATRICK

KEVIN MUSSEN'S sideline kick sent the ball swinging in from the speckled background of the packed Cusack Stand. Up for it leaped a bunch of Down and Kerry players, and all but one of them came down without it.

The man in possession of the ball, 45 yards from the Kerry goal, was burly, bustling, big-hearted James McCartan. The time stood exactly on the eleventh minute of the second half; Down and Kerry were on level scores.

And then, McCartan, breaking clear from the tall, Kerry centre-half, Kevin Coffey, sent that ball looping straight as a die, on to the "enemy" posts.

Not a man, team-mate or opponent, within ten yards as Johnny Culloty rose to catch it. The lithe Killarney 'keepers sure hands grasped the white "pigskin" under the crossbar. A simple catch. "Saved" murmured the vast Croke Park throng.

But no; something had happened to Culloty's usually reliable fingers. The ball had wriggled through, and the net shivered. Goal for Down! A mighty northern roar rent the heavens. The 1960 All-Ireland football final was won—and lost.

Yes, that McCartan kick was the turning point

in one of the most electrifying deciders ever staged in Croke Park. From that dramatic moment onwards, Down surged through in devastating waves that rocked, reeled and finally shattered the mighty Kingdom of Kerry.

A few minutes after the Down centre forward's decisive goal, Paddy Doherty sent a penalty kick blazing to the back of the net. And the Ballykinlar man added three further points—two of them from frees—to leave the Mourne men eight points clear at the final whistle.

Kerry had never before suffered such a crushing defeat in an All-Ireland final. And it took the bounding, sparkling Down team to do it!

But Down's accomplishment went far above and beyond an eight-point victory over redoubtable Kerry in an All-Ireland final. This was HISTORY.

The All-Ireland football title had crossed the "Border" for the first time! And the men who did it were the most polished and skilful footballers ever to come out of the Six Counties.

Since that red-letter day, James McCartan has had lavish, delirious praise showered upon him. And how well he deserves it. But in lauding a

match-winner, how easy it is to forget that he had fourteen team-mates with him—each and every one of whom played a big part in victory.

There was majestic Leo Murphy at full back, who gave one of the greatest displays of defensive football ever seen in Croke Park; and on his flanks, the rock-like George Lavery and Pat Rice rolled back every Kerry attack with tenacious tackles and prodigious clearances. And then there was stylish Kevin Mussen, captain of the side, whose vice-like fielding and long, well-placed kicks broke up numerous Kerry movements. Beside him, Dan McCartan and Kevin O'Neill were performing their jobs in no less effective fashion.

At midfield, industrious Joe Lennon and the rangy, loping Jarlath Carey stood up to and wore down Kerry's dangerous Michael O'Connell and "Jerdie" O'Connor. This pair played a more vital part in the triumph than has been generally acknowledged.

James McCartan's flying wingers, Sean O'Neill and Paddy Doherty, were a constant menace to

the opposing half-black line, while inside, Brian Morgan, Pat O'Hagan and the mercurial Tony Hadden were danger-laden will-o-the-wisps that the Kerry full-backs could never track down.

And finally, let's not forget that wonder goalkeeper, Eddie McKay, whose display between the posts confirmed his claim to the tag—"No 1 keeper in the game."

Yes, this was Down's finest hour. A fitting climax to a glorious run of victories that began when they crushed Galway on a sun-drenched Wembley pitch on Whit Saturday, 1959, and that has since "netted" them all the major trophies in Gaelic football. Just look at the array which those red-shirted stars have collected since the summer of 1959: two Ulster championships, McKenna Cup, Lagan Cup, two Wembley tournaments, National League, Sam Maguire Cup, and St. Brendan Cup.

Down's rapid rise to greatness has been the most wonderful event in modern football. Long may they reign on the shining pinnacle of success.

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With those who fostered the revival
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To every sportsfan that we know,
 A Happy Christmas from



K.A.A.

Down has shown the way

By LIAM FOX

ON an evening in late September County Down was aflame with celebrations . . . irrespective of creed, its natives were wildly rejoicing. And elsewhere in Gaeldom the fans shared their joy. For on that misty Monday evening the Sam Maguire Cup made its first crossing of the Border.

A history-making arrival in the Six Counties, of course. But one which gave point ever more forcibly to the questions so often posed up to then: Why has the All-Ireland championship never gone to one of the Wee Six?

Now, Down's triumph leads inevitably to another question: Why did Down succeed where the others failed?

For fail the others did—disappointingly and almost depressingly during seven decades of championship football, as supporters of Armagh, Antrim, Tyrone and Derry well know.

The explanations have been legion. But I prefer to believe that Down's policy of determined, far-sighted planning has now paid rich dividends.

Down has enjoyed a long Gaelic tradition since the days when Michael Cusack, first secretary of the G.A.A., was a member of the St. Colman's College (Newry) teaching staff. Loyal and patiently they adhered to the Gaelic ideals . . . although, until now, not successfully.

The turning-point came, not in the last few years with the rise of the present team, but back at the beginning of the 1950s with the new and wise movement that produced the present team.

Thoughtful, progressive men like Peadar Barry,

George Tinnelly, Maurice Hayes, Arthur Doran, to name but a few of the very many excellent officials the county is lucky to be served by, formulated an all-out policy of nurturing the youthful material in the county and through youth aspiring to higher things.

Greater care was taken in the selection of minor teams; more diligently was all minor talent vetted and no one was rushed before his time. Trial games took on a new meaning and players tried out were given ample time to prove themselves.

Results were slow in coming. But Downmen were in no hurry; they realised that it was worth waiting for the success that they aimed at. And September 25, 1960, surely vindicated this belief.

Practically the entire Down senior team of 1960 came through minor ranks. The county won the Ulster minor title in 1958 and the junior title in the same year. These were the men whose football talent was unearthed by the new policy. These are the triumphant champion men of 1960.

One other aspect of Down's policy is worth noting. In Ulster, the style of football is bright, attractive, stylishly methodical; but, Cavan apart, all counties lacked an essential drive and devil in their play when they left the north to play southern teams.

Call it toughness, if you will; but it's the toughness, as distinct from unfair play, that is a fundamental feature of the traditional manliness of Gaelic football.

Down football lacked this ruggedness, too. In order to remedy this, the officials grabbed every

(Contd on Page 37)



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IDEAL

OUT ON HIS OWN

By TERENCE ROYNANE

SINCE we are all entitled, seemingly, to pick our Sportsman of the Year nowadays, I may as well be in the fashion and I have no hesitation whatever in naming Wexford's full-back Nick O'Donnell as my Gaelic Sports Star of 1960.

Without him I doubt if the men from the Slaney would even have qualified for the Leinster final, for he was surely their sheet-anchor in their semi-final draw and replay against Dublin.

Nor could there be any doubt at all about the part that "Nicko" played in the Leinster Final against Kilkenny, particularly so in the first-half when the hurlers in black and amber often seemed to have found a way past the rest of the Wexford defence, but, somehow, Nick O'Donnell always seemed to stand like a wall between them and the goal.

And has there ever been a more masterly exhibition of what I will call a full-back on the defensive than Nick O'Donnell gave in the All-Ireland final against Tipperary?

It was obvious that he had made up his mind that Tipperary attacks must not only be stopped as far outfield as possible, but must also be driven back downfield as far as possible.

So, leaving his corner-men and goalkeeper to deal with any mistakes he might make, Nick O'Donnell sallied out to meet the ball and the Tipperarymen time and again instead of doing as most other full-backs would have done and waited for the ball and the Tipperarymen to come to him.

Those tactics seemed to nonplus the Munstermen, for it meant that, even when Tipperary came raiding, the initiative still rested with O'Donnell and Wexford.

Nor had his wing-backs or goalkeeper any extra cause to worry for I can remember only one occasion through the hour when Nicko failed to clear in those subtle sorties. In addition, of course, he was rock-solid as ever on the edge of the "square" when Tipperary did get close enough to storm the Wexford citadel.

I thought O'Donnell the outstanding figure of the All-Ireland campaign of 1960. I don't believe that I am alone in thinking so.

But, of course, Nick O'Donnell is no newcomer to the All-Ireland scene. I first saw him, a

(Contd. overleaf)

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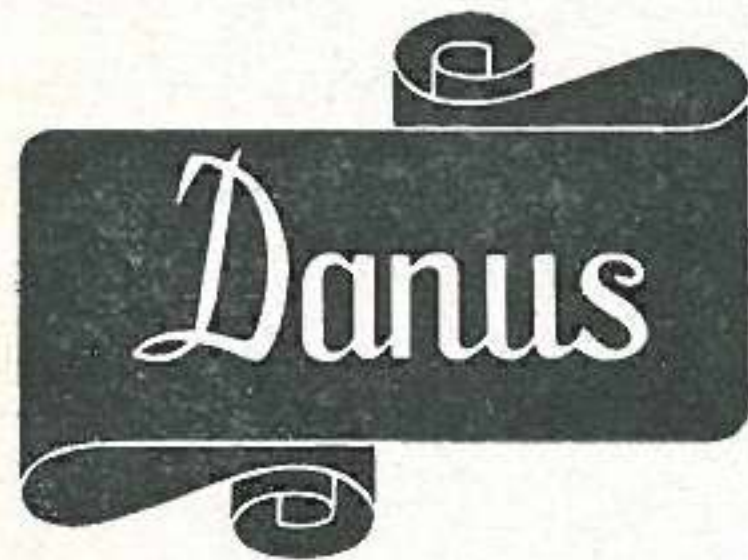
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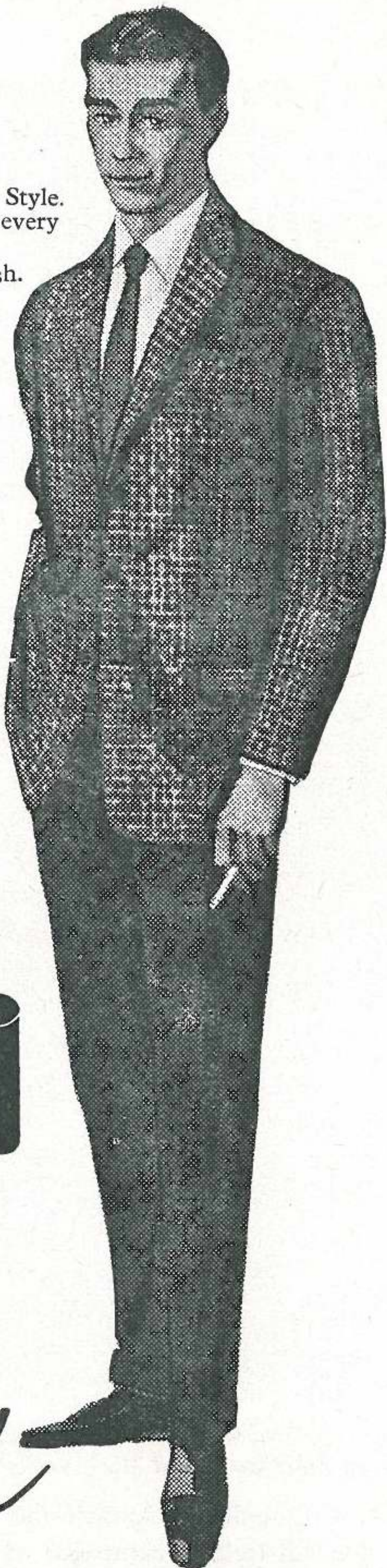
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(NEAR O'CONNELL BRIDGE)

(from Page 13)

strong upstanding young hurler from the Goresbridge-Graiguenamanagh country, on the Kilkenny junior selection which, despite losing several stars to the defeated senior side, went on to win the junior All-Ireland of 1946.

In the following year he was a reserve on the Kilkenny senior team that, in turn, took the All-Ireland crown from Cork with that last-minute point from Terry Leahy.

Through the next few years Nick O'Donnell continued to play great hurling for the famed Eire Og club though he rarely found his place on Kilkenny selections.

About ten years ago he left the county and took up employment in Enniscorthy where he soon won his place as full-back on the Wexford

side, a position he has filled with distinction ever since.

He was one of the men whose experience and craft helped to mould that great young Wexford side in their early days and I firmly believe that, had he not been injured at a crucial stage in the All-Ireland final of 1954, the purple and gold would surely have been borne to victory that day.

However, Nick O'Donnell has had ample compensation since, with All-Ireland medals for 1955 and 1956 and that magnificent victory this year, as well as Railway Cup, National League and Oireachtas medals. Indeed he has won every honour of the game.

And finally, on top of all his hurling ability, Nick O'Donnell has always been one of the true gentlemen of the game, humble in victory, cheerful in defeat, a man of whom the whole Gaelic Athletic Association may well be proud.

Fashion on the field

THIRTY-ONE-YEAR-OLD Gerry Bowes from Birr, Co. Offaly, has a plan to revolutionise Gaelic games.

Tactics, or technique? No. Style? Well, yes—depending on what is meant by style. For this revolution is in the realm of haute couture—fashion on the football field, and on the hurling and camogie fields, too.

“The men may not take too kindly to that fashion tag” says Gerry, who opened the now famous “Gaelic Sports Shop” at 12 Lr. Dorset Street, Dublin, last September. “But it does mean something with Irish T.V. on the way.”

The “Gaelic Sports Shop” is pioneering new, comfortable, easy-to-wear neck-line styles in jerseys. “The old, buttoned-up type front is gone,” Gerry told us. “We are also experimenting with numbers on the front as well as the back. We feel that this would be a great boon to spectators, and to newspaper reporters, too. And it would be no additional burden to the player.”

Another bright Bowes idea is a short-sleeved jersey for the hurler—“The footballer must still have that full length sleeve to handle a wet ball.”

Feature of the Bowes outfitting establishment are the Continental-style knicks—short and with ballooned hips—specially designed to give greater freedom of movement.

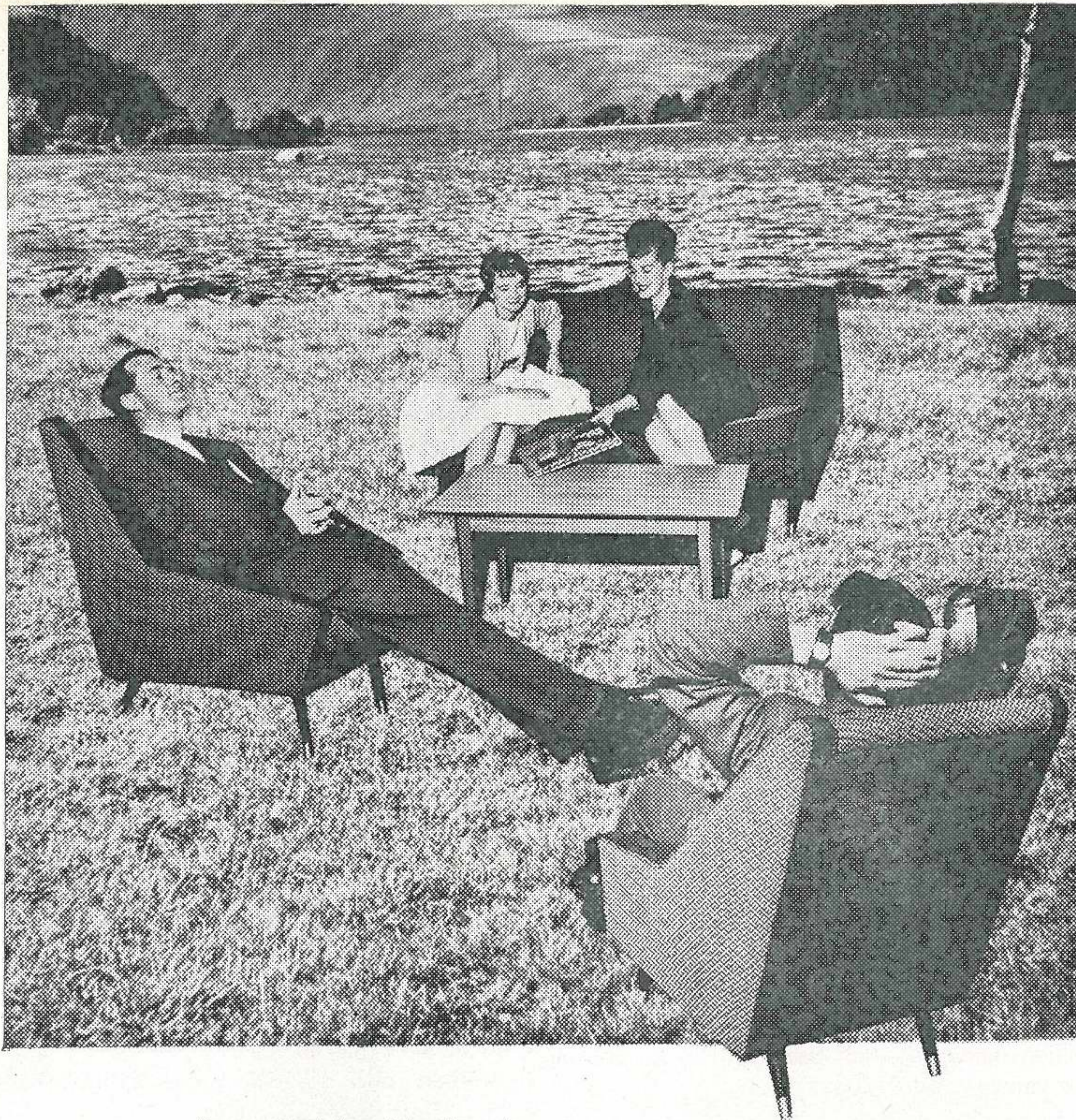
Where does camogie come in? We will let Mr. “Dior” Bowes explain:

“We feel that girls like to mix glamour with their games, so we are turning out really natty outfits for the camogie player: well-cut blouses with a flattering neck-line; new-look skirts and ballet-type stockings.

“Most girls dislike the type of gym-slips they have to wear at school,” added Gerry, “so why should they have to go on wearing them on the camogie fields when **they've left school.**”

Said Ulster and Cavan full-back Gabriel Kelly, who manages the “Gaelic Sports Shop”:

“I think Gerry Bowes has some great ideas in Gaelic sports outfitting. I fully recommend them.”



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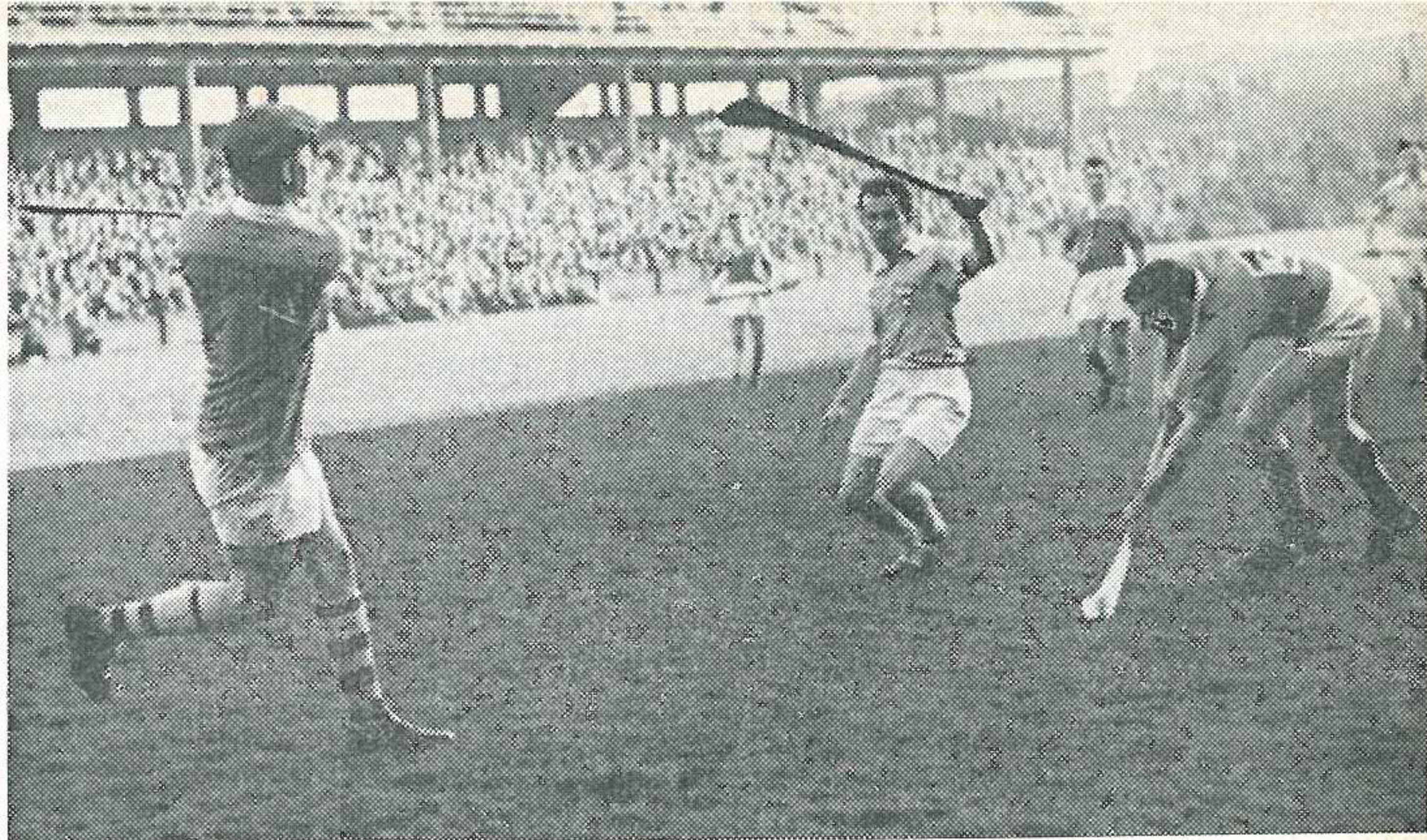
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Goalkeeper S. Crean (wearing cap) gets in a clearance for Wexford during their League game against Dublin at Croke Park on November 6.



How Wexford Won

By MOONDHARRIG

EVER since the last whistle blew in the All-Ireland hurling final last September the keen students of the game have been discussing as to why Wexford, the team that had not been given a chance either by the experts or by the public at large, should have been such convincing winners over a Tipperary team that were looked upon as certainties for supreme hurling honours.

Now, that Wexford won well that day cannot be denied and actually, with a bit of extra luck in the first and last quarters, respectively, their winning margin could have been even greater.

Yet, Wexford have not since produced anything like the same form while Tipperary have gone on to win the Oireachtas and St.

Brendan Cups and, in fact, have only sustained one defeat in the whole year—and that in the most important match of the season.

I have heard some Munster followers describe Wexford's final victory as a freak result, but with that verdict I cannot agree at all, for there were a whole variety of factors that combined to make Wexford a better team than Tipperary on the first Sunday in September. Here are some of them.

The present Tipperary side have been hurling with a great deal of success since the league season of 1957-58. They took the 1958 All-Ireland in flying style; went on to win the League title from Waterford, and the only black mark on their copy was the crushing defeat

they got from Waterford in the 1959 Munster championship semi-final at Cork. However, they came back undaunted into the League, showed their confidence in their own ability by going to Cork to play the League final, and beat the Leesiders well.

When the championship campaign opened they swamped Limerick, exacted ample vengeance on Waterford for the humiliation of the previous year, and then beat Cork in the Munster final at Thurles, although, strangely enough, their victory did not look as convincing as their League final win at Cork had done over the same opposition.

On the other hand, we had seen very little of Wexford since they
(Continued overleaf)

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just beat Limerick in the National League final of 1958. They had then been beaten by New York in a rather controversial St. Brendan Cup final in the following October and their League and championship record in between had been less than mediocre.

This season they were held to a draw by Dublin in the Leinster semi-final, and only when the replay came on was there anything like the enthusiasm in the county that had characterised the great years from 1951 to 1956.

Even so, their win over Dublin in that replay was none too easily achieved, and they were anything but favourites when they met Kilkenny. They beat the Noremen in that Leinster final, but only just, and when we all sat down to assess that All-Ireland final we looked at the form-book over the past couple of years and said 'Tipperary by a mile.'

In the first place, we forgot that Tipperary had been by far the busier team for years before, and that many of their stars had, either for club or county, been hurling almost continuously Sunday after Sunday, until the edge had gone off their hurling through getting too much of it.

Wexford were fresh, with nothing to lose and everything to gain.

Through the couple of weeks before the match I have never known such confidence of victory as there was in Tipperary, whereas the Wexford attitude was, 'Well, we'll do the best we can.'

And that is exactly the way the All-Ireland final went. Wexford came out to 'have a go' at the supposedly invincible Tipperary boys and found from the opening stages that their opponents weren't invincible at all. With every passing moment Wexford's confidence increased and though Tipperary looked to have overcome their early uncertainty nearing the interval, there was one man near me

who kept on saying, "If Tipp. don't lead at half-time they are beaten."

I thought then that he was talking through his hat, for I felt that Tipperary were the fitter lot and that the veterans on the Wexford side would not last the hot pace.

In the early stages of the second half Tipperary did swarm to the attack, but their forwards were never happy against a very solid Wexford defence brilliantly led by Nick O'Donnell. A couple of very good chances were missed at a crucial moment, the Tipp. forwards began to panic and once Wexford began to swing back to the attack again the game was already lost and won.

After the match I asked the man near me why he said Tipperary couldn't win if they didn't lead at half-time. "I'll tell you why," said he. "Because Wexford were the stronger team. They were driving Tipperary off the ball, even where you'd least expect them to do so, and they were the fresher men as far as hurling was concerned. I'd say Tipp. were expected to win fairly easily. Then they found that they couldn't get the game to go the way they wanted it to go. And there's nothing more tiring than to find yourself playing, not your own game, but the game the other fellow wants to play. To win, Tipperary had to gain the initiative, and to do that they'd want to get ahead before half-time."

I suppose he was entitled to his opinion, though I don't think that it was all quite as simple as he made it out to be. For myself, I thought the trouble with Tipperary really stemmed from two sectors, half-back and half-forward, where they were expected to be strongest. The half-backs were struggling from start to finish with the result that all their forward plans went awry. Besides, it was obvious that Tipp.'s main scoring hopes rested on young Jimmy Doyle and Jimmy, on the day was outmatched by John Nolan.

Nick O'Donnell was quick to see that the Tipperary forwards were unsure of themselves so he completed their confusion by taking the kind of chances a full-back normally doesn't take, coming out time and again as a kind of extra centre-back and the result was that Tipperary never scored a goal.

Tipperary followers are quite entitled to maintain that, had the game been played a fortnight earlier, or a fortnight later Tipperary might have won. But the indisputable fact remains that, on the first Sunday in September, Wexford were far and away the better team and well deserved their victory.

It is, I think, invidious to compare the Wexford team of 1960 with that of 1956. Of the players on both teams, Nick O'Donnell was good as ever and possibly Jim English. Jim Morrissey, Tim Flood, Ned Wheeler and Billy Rackard, all of whom have had spells away from the game in between, had their brilliant moments, but the Wexford newcomers stole most of the show.

Jimmy O'Brien, the Nolan

brothers, Neville, Seamus Quaide and Hopper McGrath were outstanding, and in all-round efficiency they could compare well with the great sides from the county in the past decade, but one shudders to think what might have happened had Nicky and Bobby Rackard, in all their greatness, been in the purple and gold that day.

Finally, there was one man in the Wexford jersey who struck possibly his greatest day at the proper moment. And that was Padge Kehoe, whose roving tactics were never answered by the Tipperary defence and whose encouragement and example made all the difference to the young Wexford forwards.

All these things combined to help Wexford bring off the upset of the decade and make them very worthy hurling champions, and to inflict on Tipperary their first defeat in an All-Ireland senior final for 38 years. But there is no need for Tipp. supporters to worry. They'll be back to win many another in compensation.

THE CALTEX AWARDS

THE Sports Editors of Ireland's daily, evening and Sunday papers will shortly announce their nominations for the Caltex Trophies of 1960. So let's try to anticipate their choice in Gaelic games.

Last year, incidentally, we predicted that Sean Murphy (football) and Christy Ring (hurling) would receive the awards. They did!

Nick O'Donnell, the Wexford All-Ireland hurling captain, seems to have few rivals for the hurling trophy. *Gaelic Sport* has chosen him as the star of 1960 (see front cover and story on page 13); we have no reason to doubt that the Sports Editors will also give him a unanimous vote.

Gaelic football presents a more

difficult problem, with so many Down men—and a few others like Sean Purcell, Mick O'Dwyer, Mick O'Connell and Jim McDonnell—in the running.

Our guess, however, is that Paddy Doherty, Down's top scorer in League and championship, will be the No. 1 choice.

And who will enter the Hall of Fame—the new place of honour for which Caltex have donated an additional Trophy? There is no certainty that it will go to a G.A.A. man, but we can suggest several men who would be eminently worthy of the honour—Mick Mackey, John Joe Sheehy, Paddy O'Brien, John Keane, Jack Lynch, Lowry Meagher, Kevin Armstrong . . .

1961 may be Offaly's year

by

CAPTAIN SEAN DONEGAN

(Former Offaly and Leinster star)

THE 1960 season was for Offaly footballers the greatest ever; not alone did the seniors take the Leinster title to the county for the first time, but the minors made it a memorable double by bringing home the provincial cup for the second time.

The persevering followers of the "Faithful County" were at last rewarded for the many years of disappointment on that last glorious Sunday in July, but further thrills were in store in two memorable games in the All-Ireland semi-final against Down.

To what is this upsurge in the county's football strength attributable, and what are the prospects for 1961?

Offaly have had fine teams and great individuals in the past, especially from the mid-thirties onwards, and yet achieved no worthwhile reward. The overall weakness probably lay in the fact that past teams were centred around great players, players whose ability was equal to that of the famous players of any county, but whose efforts were wholly individualistic in an effort, maybe, to make up for the short-

comings of their less well-endowed compatriots.

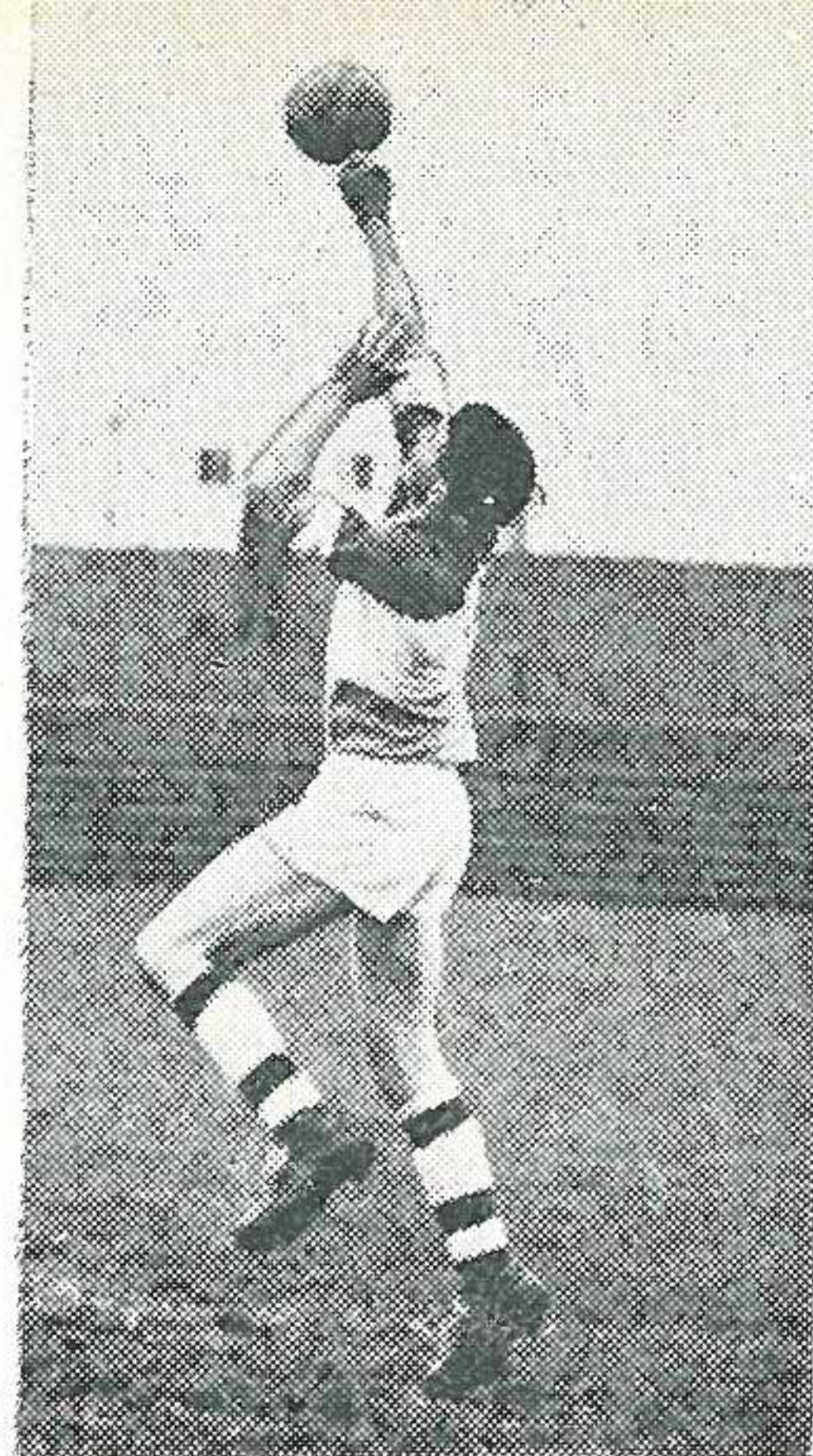
The result was a lack of teamwork and combination. If the outstanding player, or players, struck an off-day the effect on the team as a whole was calamitous.

To-day's team depends on no individual. All are above average in ability, some well above it but yet not dwarfing their fellows. Allied to this, the team has discovered, in the mill of hard competition and from experienced mentors, that combination is the keynote of success.

No more wild punting from half-backs, centre-field or forwards; the let-who-will, get-it-I'm-rid-of-it attitude is gone and good riddance.

A typical example of how a combined movement is started is demonstrated several times throughout a game by the stylish Sean Foran at midfield. A glorious fielder with wonderful positional sense, Sean sparks many a forward movement with a neat kicked pass.

Similarly Charlie Wrenn and Phil O'Reilly, the wing backs, play every ball to the advantage of the forwards. And men of the calibre



Goalman Willie Nolan . . . one of Offaly's brightest stars through 1960.

of Mick Casey (who will soon have played in three decades — 1946-1961), Tommy Greene and Tommy Cullen carry on the good work in the forward line to chalk up a winning tally.

The high catching and fast, hard tackle are retained, making the team essentially one of the catch-and-kick brand, but with the added refinements of combined play and weaving forward movements.

The present team was forged in the National League furnace of 1958/59 when Offaly emerged victors from the section containing the All-Ireland champions of the three previous years—Galway (1956), Louth (1957), Dublin (1958).

Against Kerry in the League semi-final of 1959 they were unlucky to be without their centre-forward (suspended) and centre-back (injured), and yet were not disgraced on their first important visit to Croke Park since 1954.

The lessons were learned, the nucleus of a good team was there and in last season's championship and League the personnel necessary to fill the gaps were found.

Many maintain that Offaly were the unluckiest team of the year. Conceding an unexpected penalty to Down in the All-Ireland semi-final, they were forced to a replay.

In an exciting replay, they were superior to the Down men in most quarters; but due to some unfortunate switching were ousted by a two-point margin; this was, however, sufficient to prove them the second best team in the country after Down had won the All-Ireland title fairly handsomely.

What may be expected from them in 1961?

With Dublin team-building and Louth declining I can, frankly, see no deterrent to their winning a second Leinster title next season; and, with luck on their side, an All-Ireland title is definitely within their capabilities.

The team is exceptionally well-served in the full-back line where Paddy McCormack, Greg Hughes (Ireland and Leinster) and Sean Egan can be justly compared to the famous Meath line of some years back.

Mick Brady at centre-back is a fast, stylish player with an incisive tackle. Holding a place on the Leinster half-line, Mick's only disadvantage is lack of poundage. Based on this fulcrum, the remainder of the team are highly mobile and receive sufficient of the ball to win any game.

The only weakness is at centre-field where a regular partner, of his own standard, has not yet been found for Sean Foran.

With an average age of 25 there are a few years of top-class football left in the majority of this team. For the veterans it is 1961 or never, and who will deny that footballers all over Ireland would rejoice should Mick Casey at last receive the reward to which he is undoubtedly entitled — an All-Ireland medal.

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REMEMBER THE NAME

'Oscar' List for 1960

LOOKING back on the happenings of the past year we must admit that, although the standard of both inter-county football and hurling was not as high as in other years of the recent past, 1960 was still a year to be remembered. The rise of Down and Offaly in football, the sensational comeback of Wexford to win the hurling championship on the golden anniversary of their first hurling title; the great rise of Carlow hurling and the classical displays of the Kilkenny minor hurlers, were all events that make the past season truly memorable.

On a more detailed level here is how I would award the "Oscars" for 1960.

The six top players of the year:

Football—1, Paddy Doherty; 2, Sean Purcell; 3, Mick O'Dwyer; 4, Leo Murphy; 5, James McCartan; 6, Sean Egan.

Hurling—1, Nick O'Donnell; 2, Jimmy Doyle; 3, Christy Ring; 4, Padge Kehoe; 5, Jimmy Brohan; 6, Liam Devaney.

Down's sharpshooter, **PADDY DOHERTY**, must get the award as the year's outstanding footballer. He played a leading role in all of Down's great victories both in league and championship, and without him, I think Down would have won neither competition.

Paddy's greatest display during the year was in the drawn game with Offaly when he scored 1-7 of Down's total of 1-10.

SEAN PURCELL, though far from being the footballer he was in the early or mid-fifties, is still one of the best forwards in the game. His display in the All-Ireland semi-final proved this when he scored all but one of Galway's eight-point total. Sean was consistent through the year and evidently has plenty of football in him still.

In third place I have **MICK O'DWYER**, who established himself as a really great half-back during 1960.

Down's **LEO MURPHY** must be included in any list of this type, for he, more than any of the Down defenders, helped to bring home the Sam Maguire Cup. Over the year, Leo met all the great full forwards in the game—the clever ones who roved and the forceful ones who rushed the square—but he faced them all with his own brand of determined and stylish football, and came out on top on each occasion.

JAMES McCARTAN is as far removed from being a perfect footballer as Waterford's star of last year, Tom Cheasty, was a perfect hurler. However, like the Waterfordman, James was always there when Down needed him most and he scored or made the two vital goals which brought Down the All-Ireland title.

Last on the football list I have **SEAN EGAN** of Offaly. Like his fellow countymen, Sean looks to 1961, when he may well win even higher rating.

In the hurling world, **NICK O'DONNELL**

(Contd. overleaf).



Ollie Walsh whips the ball away in the Kilkenny-Waterford League match at Waterford on November 6.

(Continued from previous page)

defied age, tradition and form to lead Wexford to All-Ireland victory. As always, Nick was his own consistent self in every outing.

JIMMY DOYLE had a really brilliant year, and took over as the finest forward in the game. Only his eclipse in the All-Ireland final deprived him of the top spot in my reckoning. However, there are many years ahead.

Men may come and men may go but **CHRISTY RING** goes on forever. He merits third position. He gave a number of unforgettable displays in 1960.

PADGE KEHOE must get fourth place for his generalship of the Wexford attack, while **JIMMY BROHAN** grew greatly in stature over the year with his consistently brilliant displays.

In sixth place I have **LIAM DEVANEY**, who was undoubtedly the most improved player of 1960.

Here, now, are the highlights of 1960, as I saw it:

Greatest game: Football—Down-Offaly, All-Ireland semi-final (drawn game). Hurling—Tipperary-Cork, Munster final.

Greatest individual display: Football—Frank

Evers in the Kerry-Galway All-Ireland semi-final. Hurling—Christy Ring in the Tipperary-Cork National League final.

Most consistent player: Football — Mick O'Dwyer. Hurling—Jimmy Brohan.

Hard luck team: Football — Carlow, who literally threw the game away against Offaly in the Leinster championship. Hurling—Dublin, who with another point would have beaten Wexford in their first Leinster championship meeting.

Outstanding official: John Dowling of Offaly, who had the honour of refereeing both senior finals, and who won great distinction in doing so.

Biggest controversy: Football—Down's penalty against Offaly. Hurling—Tipperary's form in the final.

Top scorers: Football—Paddy Doherty. Hurling—Jimmy Doyle.

Outstanding county champions: Football—St. Vincent's, Dublin, who won their 11th senior title in twelve years. Hurling—Mount Sion, Waterford, who won their eight successive title.

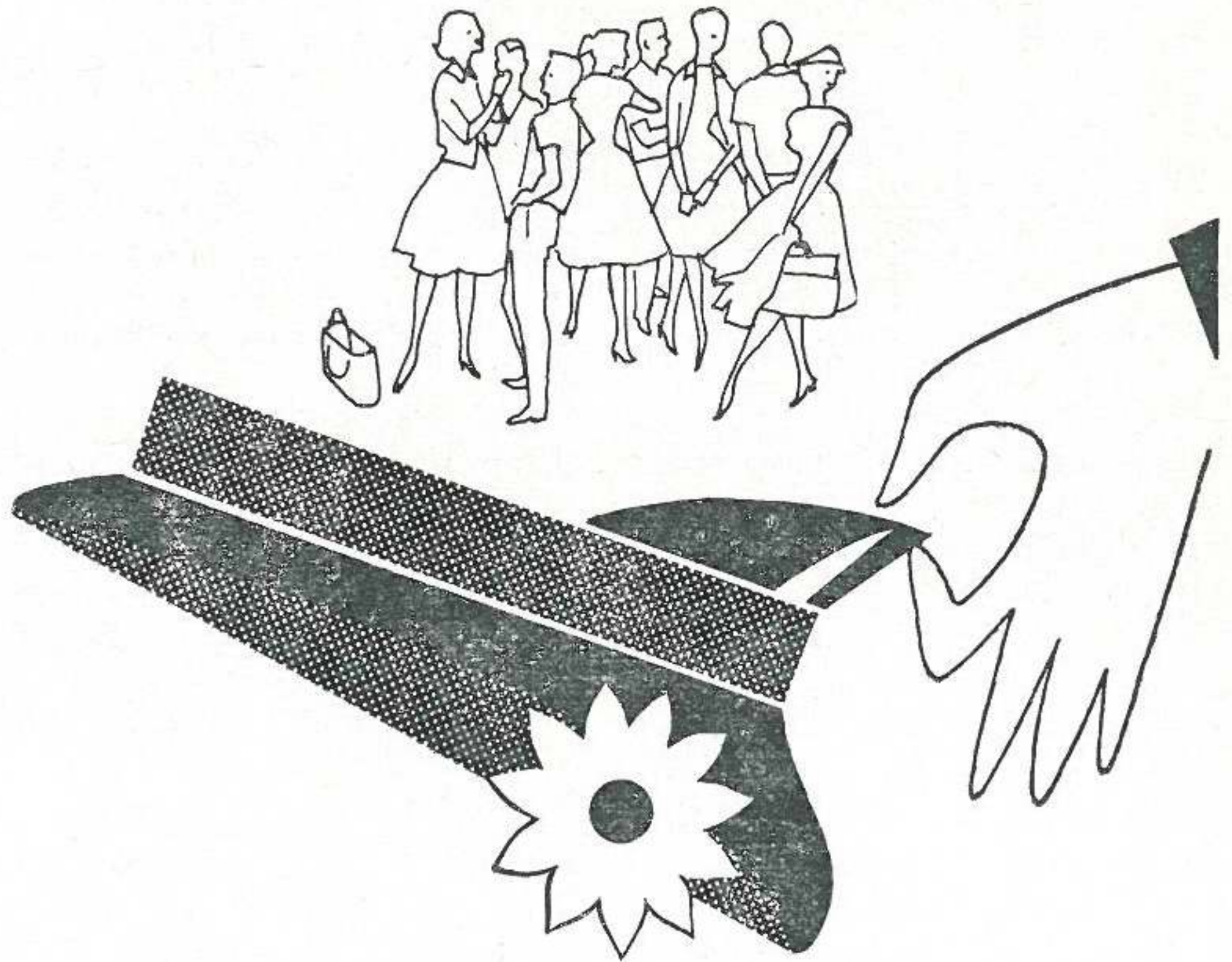
What should not have happened: Football—The Dr. Eamon O'Sullivan incident in Kerry. Hurling—The incident between Wexford and Cork at New Ross in the Oireachtas semi-final.



PAT DONNELLAN (Galway), above, and BOB McCREA (Dublin), below . . . two of the most promising newcomers to inter-county football in 1960. We will hear a lot more of this pair in the coming season.



CHEAPER BY THE HATFUL

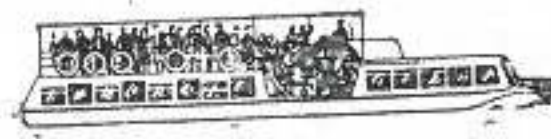


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The Old Argument :

RING v. MACKEY



By EAMONN YOUNG

"WHO was the better, Mick Mackey or Christy Ring?" I was asked. Four of us there were and each had a lot to say. I finished my words with:

"Ring is the better hurler, but Mackey the better man." And then I saw with sorrow that Christy had just joined the company. I don't like to hurt a man's feelings, and anyway, who was I to judge?

That was about ten years ago when a bunch of us gathered to honour the only men in Ireland who had won four All-Irelands in a row.

Let's compare these two wonderful players whom older men than I call the greatest of all time.

Mick Mackey started with Limerick in 1931 and finished in 1946. He won three All Irelands, eight Railway Cups, between '34 and '45 travelled to America with one of the greatest teams of all time, Limerick; and was a heart-ache to every backline in the country. His best place was centre-forward. He played football, too, rollicking thunderous stuff and wore his county jersey at it.

Christy Ring started with Cork in the League of '39, and is still going strong. He has eight All-Irelands, 16 Railway Cups and when he was dropped off the Ireland team one year, half the country went mad over it. He, too, has his football medals and though he was not selected for Cork, he would have been good enough—of that there's no doubt. He has been to America twice. Ring started at right half back and

since has played everywhere from that up, his best positions being centre-forward and left corner.

Mackey weighed about 12½ stone when at his best, though he played great games afterwards when a stone heavier. He stood about 5ft. 8½ins. He was strong as a horse, could turn on a sixpence and had a great dash over a short distance. Broad-shouldered, black-haired, well-muscled and tough-looking, he played an aggressive, hard type of hurling which often knocked the courage out of less virile opponents.

But when he met a really tough man Mick was rogue enough to know that he could do more for his team by playing the ball. This he could do with the precision of the master.

Like all good players he could take the ball anyway it came in the air or on the ground, and could whip hard with the best in the country. What he loved, however, was to scoop the sliotar into his hand and then anything could happen.

Perhaps he would simply turn and swerve past an opponent with an ease that made one think the other fellow was hopeless; or he might just run straight at his man with the ball in his hand and brush past him.

Then would come the solo which he himself brought into the game. Down the field he would go like a small steam engine, and he looked so powerful and aggressive one didn't realise the speed. After crashing headlong into another opponent or two, Mick had his shot and then if he buried it, he leaped around the field like

a madman often bumping a few of the men who had tried to stop him—just to rub it in.

In those days I hated Mackey with the burning fervour of youth. Why not? Wasn't he always beating us?

Christy Ring never stripped much over 11 stone in his earlier days. Today he is about a stone heavier (just a little too heavy I think, but then he's 40). There are so many things he does well one knows not where to start, but there's no doubt that the firm way he doubles a high ball is a masterpiece.

The power of his shot is out of all proportion to his size and the way he can swing his very heavy hurley even with one hand gives proof of his forearm strength. He stands 5ft. 7ins. and still has a grand turn of speed. Up to three years ago I'd back him against any man in the country over ten yards from a sudden start.

As John Quirke once said to me: "Ring would beat Roger Bannister to the ball if he thought he'd get a goal off it."

And that's a fair assessment of Christy's mental make-up. He's mad about hurling. One Sunday morning (I'm sure it happened a hundred times) he was out on the field down in Cloyne hurling with the kids. In the afternoon he played with the Glen and that night went back to play with the kids again.

From constant practice over 25 years Christy can strike a fast ball off either hand and his ball-control is perfect. The speed of his shot is proved by the number of goals he has scored from 21

yard frees. Don't forget that before his time the accepted score off this free was a point.

The main difference between Mackey and Ring is that Mick, in addition to being an artiste with the stick, was a tough, shrewd, calculating player who knew the value of his strength and didn't hesitate to use it if he thought it would help.

Ring, on the other hand, relies on his wonderful hurling and the stimulation of spirit which drives him to hurl himself with crazy abandon at one moment, or to dart like a swerving snipe well out of his place a minute later to collect a ball that no one but himself expected.

Mackey was the power-house which radiated strength and fire to his comrades. Ring was, and is, the blinding light that dazzled defenders and puts numbers on a board.

Remember that Munster championship day up in Thurles in '56? Donal Broderick, Limerick's right corner back was watching Christy like a hawk and doing a good job. Ringey was out of it and the game nearly over with the Garryowen chaps hurling like champions.

"They're gone for the milk," said a Corkman, "and Ringey is asleep." Then it happened. I suppose the frustration, anger at himself, and the white-hot determination not to yield, all smouldering inside that trim frame, suddenly burst into flame; for Ringey erupted like a volcano and with triple blows stunned Limerick.

Limerick were two clear goals ahead when he raced out and slipped over a lovely point. The puck-out came back and once again he was on the ball careering goalwards with it on his stick. Suddenly the hurley was whipped from his hands and the veteran was staggering onward; but before he hit the ground that well-muscled right arm swung, slapped the sliotar hard and Paddy Cuneen of Limerick saw it in the net.

(Contd. on Page 43)



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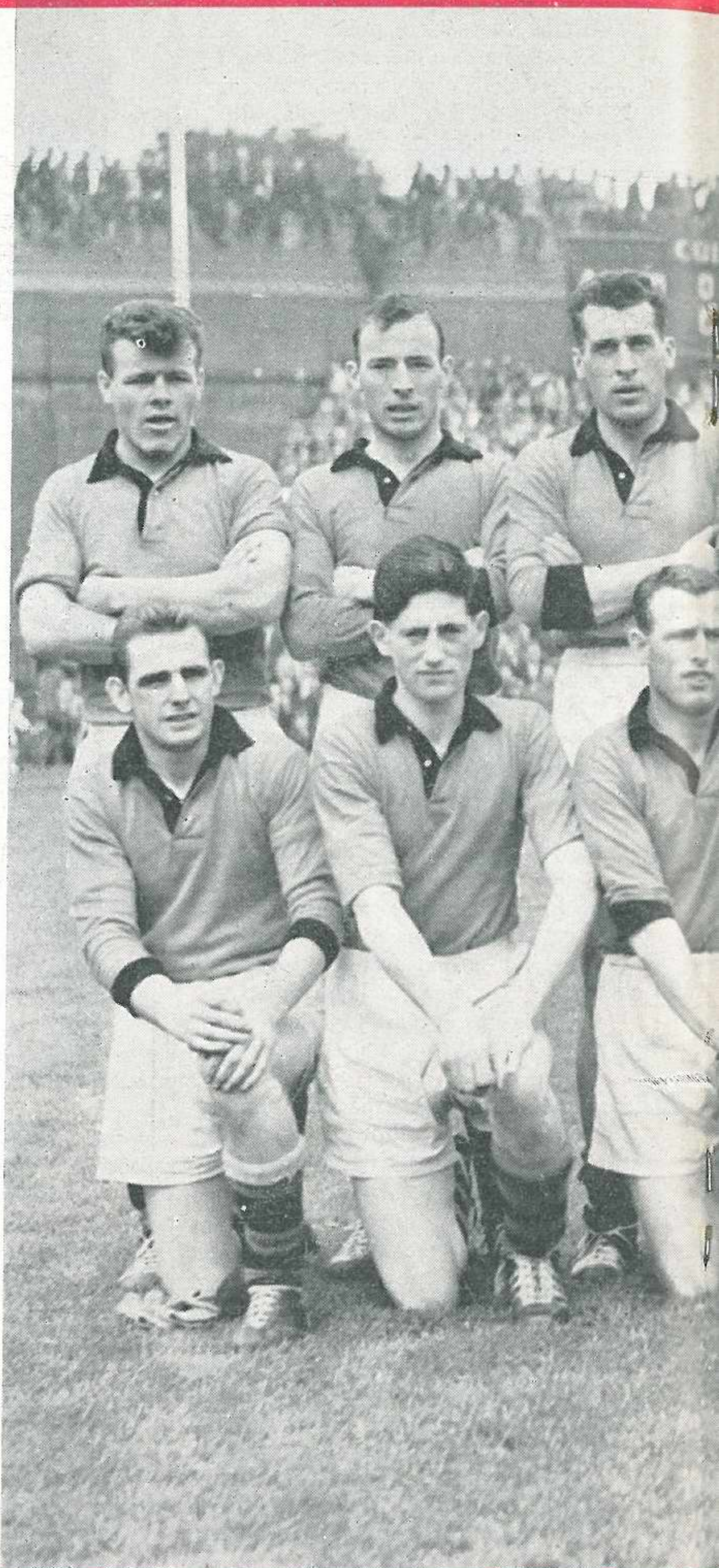
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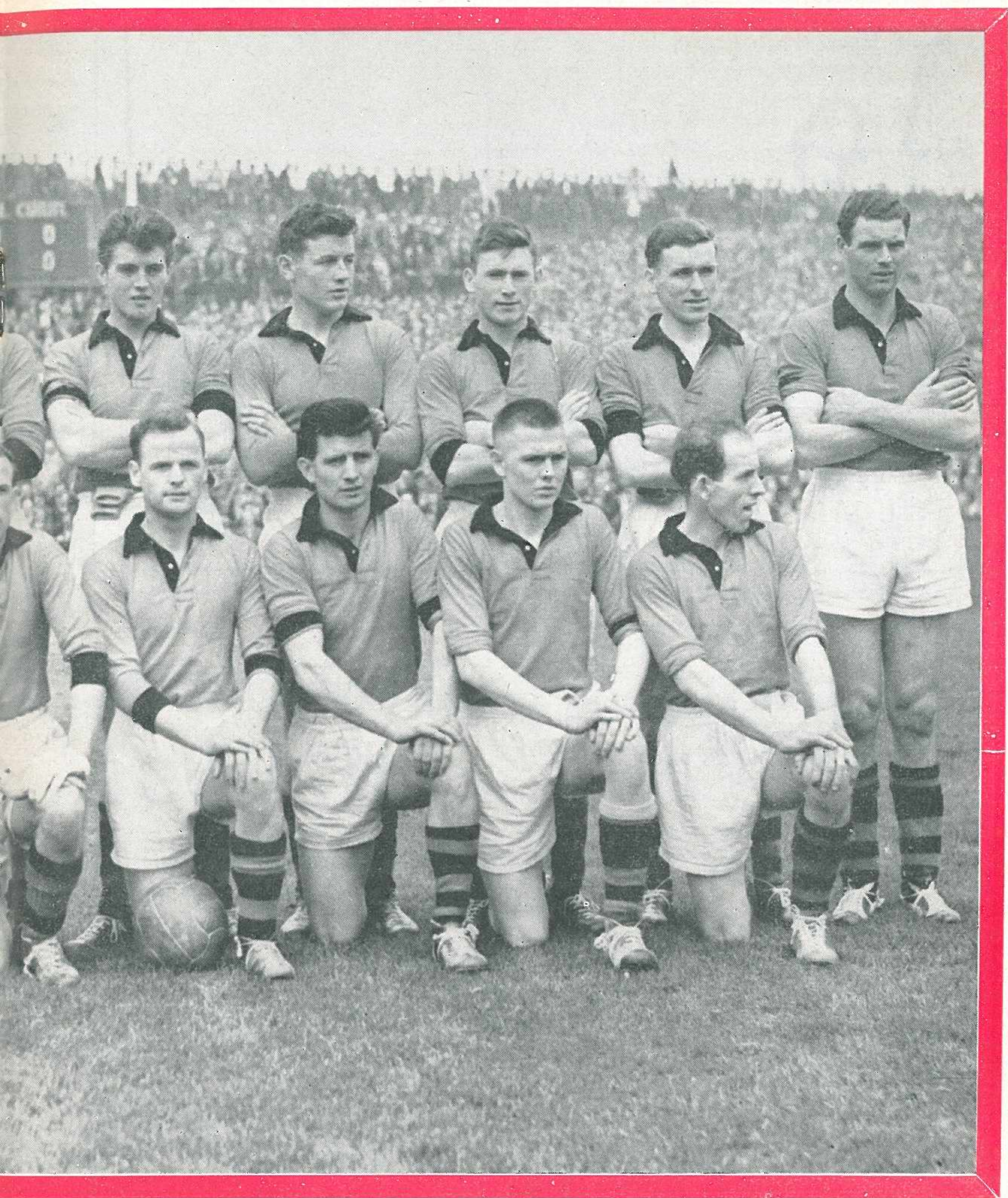
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This picture of the Down team was taken on All-Ireland final day at Croke Park. **BACK ROW** (left to right): James McCartan, Joe Lennon, Jarlath Carey, Leo Murphy, Dan McCartan, Sean O'Neill, Kevin O'Neill, Pat Rice. **FRONT ROW** (left to right): Eddie McKay, Patsy O'Hagan, Paddy Doherty, Kevin Mussen (captain), George Lavery, Tony Hadden, Brian Morgan.

●

Following is a list of Down's major achievements on the football fields of 1960: Lagan Cup final, v. Derry—2-10 to 0-3; League semi-final, v. Kerry—2-10 to 2-8; League final, v. Cavan—0-12 to 0-9; Wembley Tournament, v. Galway—4-11 to 3-7; Ulster final, v. Cavan—3-7 to 1-8; All-Ireland semi-final (replay), v. Offaly—1-7 to 1-5; All-Ireland final, v. Kerry—2-10 to 0-8; St. Brendan Cup final, v. New York—2-8 to 0-6.







THERE comes a moment in every drinking life—after three or four short ones with a long long night ahead—when the question is: "What next?" That's the moment to switch to the light smooth refreshment of Carlsberg, the perfect follow-on.



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Frank Foley says

WE CAN'T BE SMUG

FOR the G.A.A. it has been another year of glory and success. A year in which the All-Ireland football championship crossed the Border for the first time . . . a year of ever-increasing attendance and the continued popularity of Gaelic games.

But with crowds at the big games moving up to nearly 90,000 and in an atmosphere of spectacular success there's the danger of complacency. It's easy in such pride-filling circumstances to be smug.

And that must not happen, for despite the continued progress there is still plenty to be achieved by the G.A.A. What are these things?

Hurling : This is obviously the most urgent problem. In spite of Wexford's wonderful achievement, a thrilling Leinster final and an equally hectic Munster final all is still not well with the game.

Next year sees the introduction of the intermediate championship, but this, at best, is but a stop-gap arrangement which cannot be expected to spread the game as desired. A far-reaching scheme must be drawn up by the Central Council, one that will base its policy for the future on arousing the interest of the youth.

Grounds : No aspect of the Association's work gives greater cause for satisfaction than the number of new and improved grounds throughout the country.

But here, too, there's more to be done. Few of even the major grounds provide proper dressing-room facilities complete with shower baths for the players and quite a number have still to erect covered accommodation for spectators.

Referees : Pity the unfortunate gentlemen who undertake the onerous task of handling our games. There is no more loyal or enthusiastic group in the organisation and theirs is a most thankless job of responsibility.

They deserve better treatment than now given them. In council chambers and county board-rooms these men should have the full support of all officials. Their decisions, no matter how they affect an official's favourite team, must be supported in the spirit of trust and faith in the undoubted sincerity with which they are made.

Goalkeepers : Wisely the 1960 Congress gave to football goalkeepers the concession of picking the ball off the ground in the square. But, they spoiled a good day's work by not adopting the request for all goalkeepers to be togged in distinctive jerseys.

In the goalmouth melee, no matter how near the referee may be, it is difficult at times for the "knight of the whistle" to distinguish between

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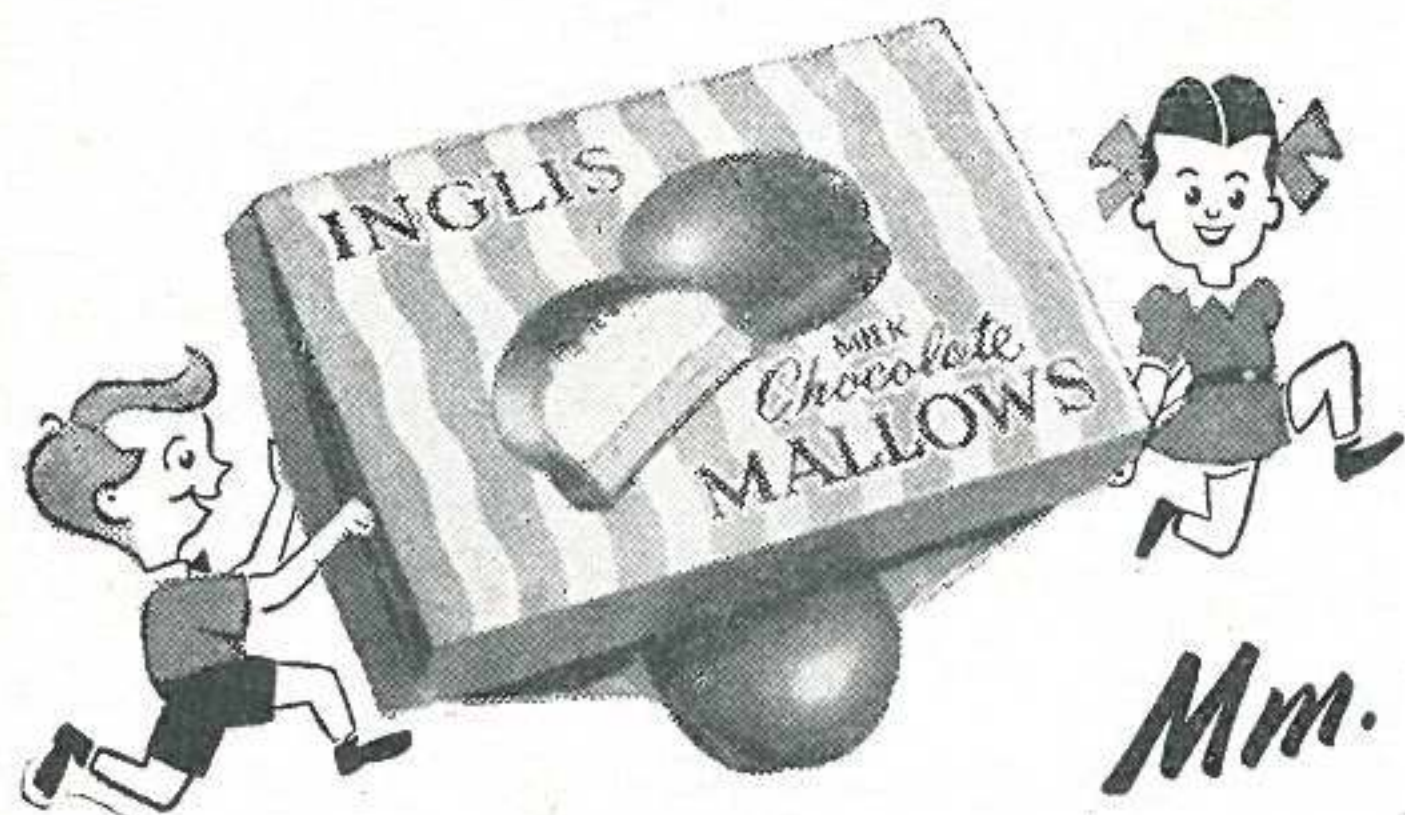
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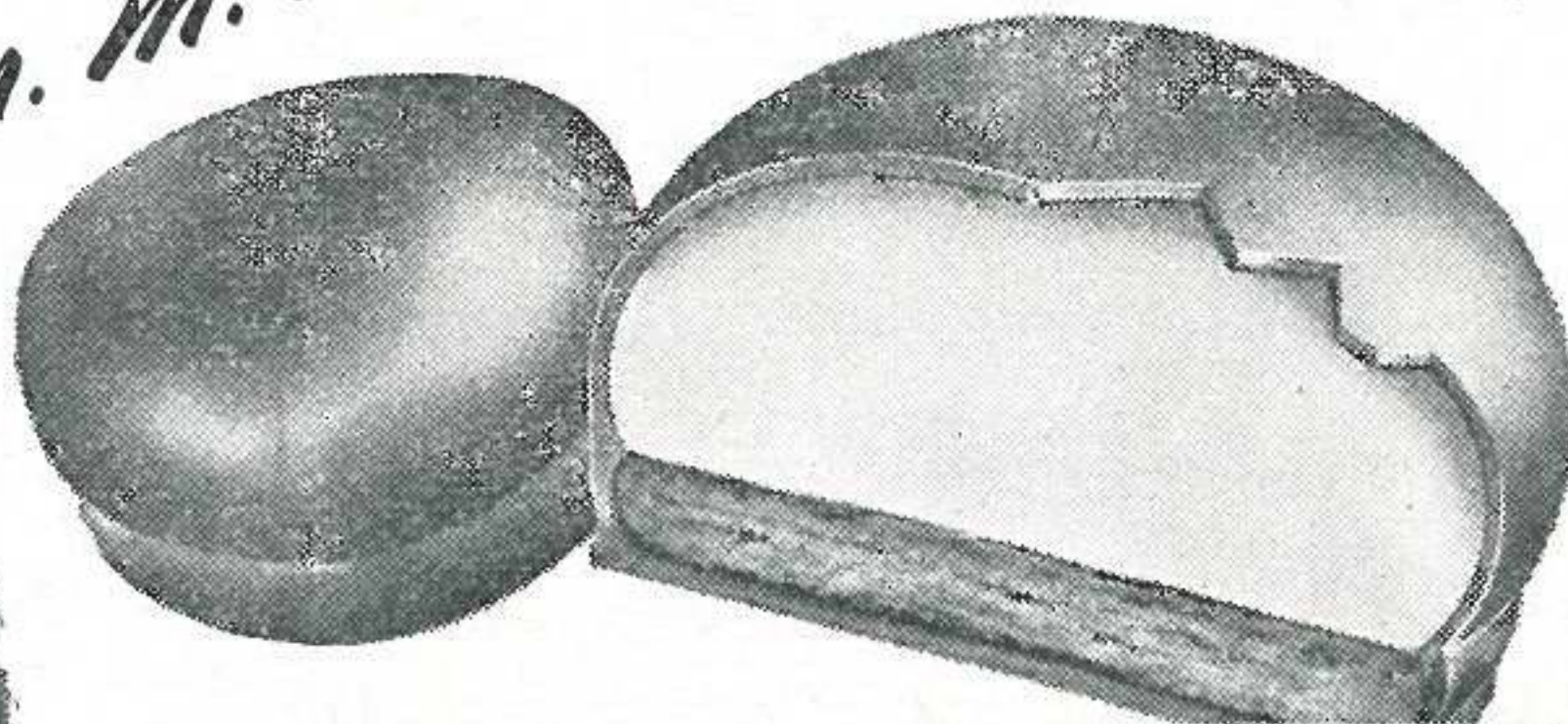
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*Martin Leonard,
the Dublin goalkeeper,
tips the ball over the bar
in the tournament game
against Meath at Croke Park
on November 20.*



players. His view may be blocked and he may see only part of the player who lifts the ball.

There would be no difficulty in deciding if the goalie or a defender had lifted the ball if the goalie wore a distinctive jersey.

The objection to this at Congress was, of course, a narrow-minded one in that goalies thus togged would be too similar to their counter-parts in a foreign code, i.e. soccer.

But what no one seemed to realise was that the goalkeepers didn't have to wear the sweater-type jersey as used in soccer. An ordinary Gaelic jersey of a different colour to the rest of the team or one with an additional stripe or hoop to the county colour would suffice.

Substitutes: Here Congress made one of the most commendable decisions of many years. But here, too, they left something still undone.

First, they limited the acts of substitution to

three; then last Easter they belatedly added a penalty for a breach of this rule by a winning team . . . BUT not for the losing team.

And there's the weakness of the rule as it now stands. A team that uses more than three subs. automatically loses a game it wins on the scoreboard.

But nothing happens to the team which in desperation in the second half may send in extra subs., and then lose the game.

Take the St. Brendan Cup hurling final this year. Tipperary won and won well, but in an effort to save the game New York made five substitutions. Had the exiles won that game they would have automatically forfeited the right to the Cup and the international title, but since they lost they suffer no penalty for their breach of rule.

QUIT THE 'HERO' ACT

Says PETER BYRNE

TEN minutes to go . . . a team trailing by two points . . . the referee awards them a 21 yards free dead straight in front of the posts.

The taker trots up to the ball. Should he play safe and take the point that will leave only the minimum margin between the sides?

Or should he assume the hero role and essay a low shot which would—if it came off—steal a dramatic lead for his side?

Recognise the situation? Of course you do, for that self-same predicament has stared many a G.A.A. player straight in the face in club, county, aye, even in All-Ireland finals.

And how often has that very same poser erupted into violent controversy among followers of a team as they argued the merits and demerits of the gambit of shooting for goals from close-in frees.

Notice, I use the past tense in the foregoing paragraph. For in recent times, the goal-hunger seems to have gripped our leading hurling marksmen with the result that more and more players are scorning the point that is there for the taking and having a bash at goal instead.

And for this tendency, I lay the blame at the

feet of two of the greatest hurling marksmen of modern times—Christy Ring and Nick Rackard. Let it be said, however, that they've incurred that blame unwittingly.

To men of Ring's or Rackard's prowess, finding the net from close-in frees was a comparatively easy task. And as such, it was only natural that the up-and-coming talent would try to emulate them.

Are they right in doing so? Around that question rages quite an amount of controversy which flares anew every time the gambit comes unstuck.

Personally, I think that shooting for goals from close-in frees, is a useful gambit **only when it is used judiciously.**

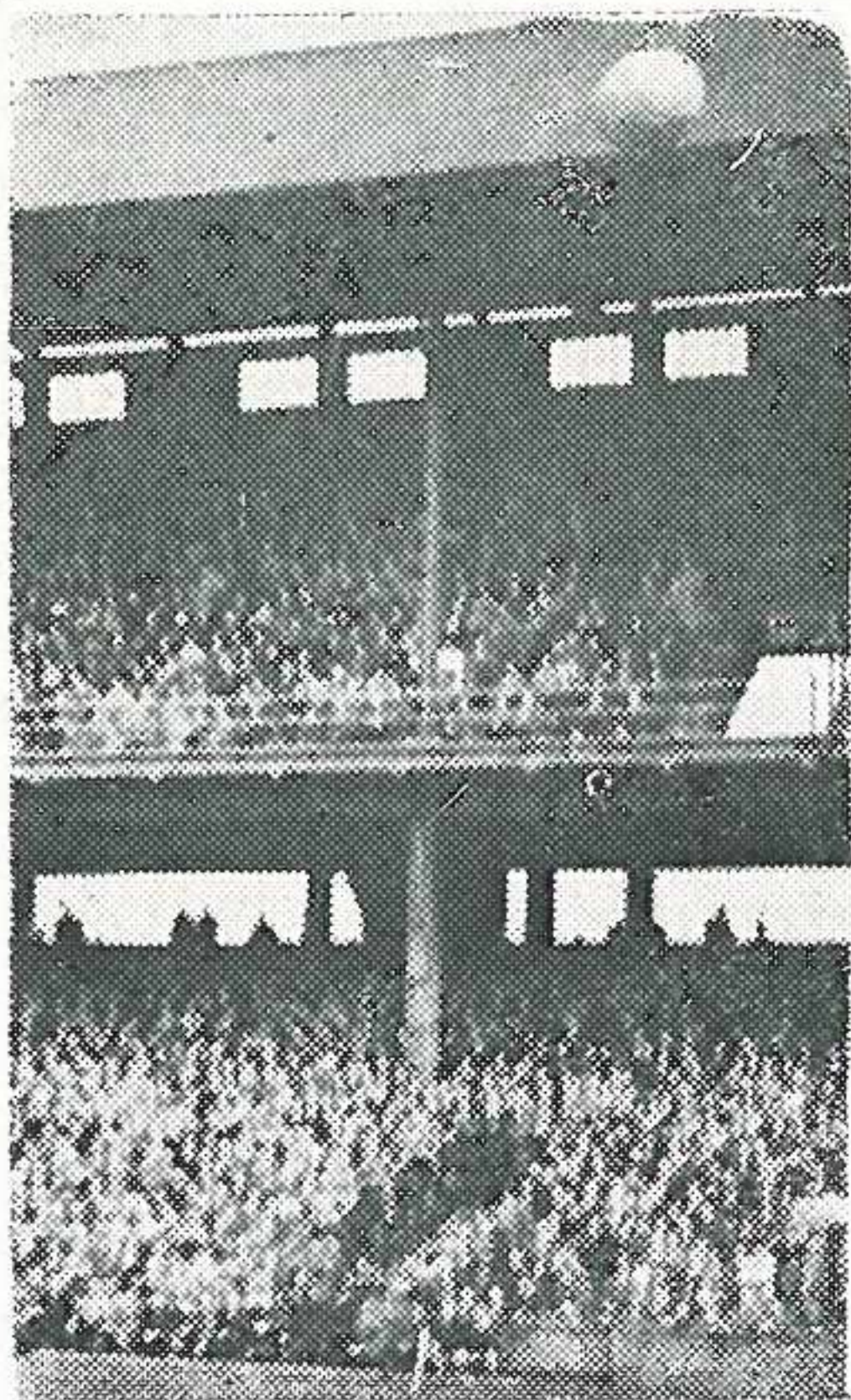
How, then, did Ring and Rackard manage to net so frequently?

The answer is simple. In Rackard's case, it was his almost superhuman strength which enabled him to blast the ball at unbelievable speed past the wall of defenders.

Ring's method is slightly more subtle. Not only has the Cloyne "maestro" the shrewdness

(Contd. on Page 36).

SPOT HIM ?

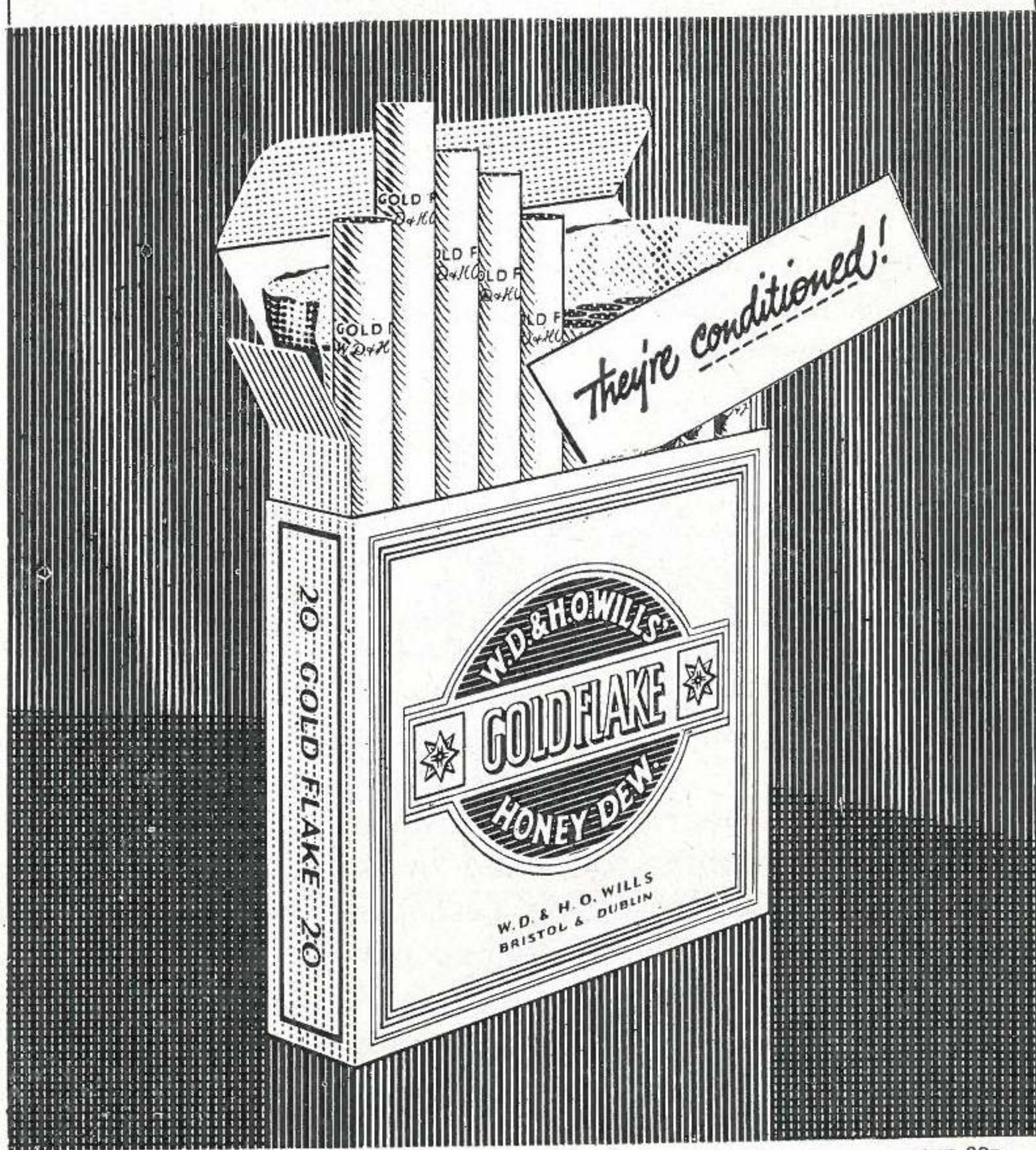


This is a new competition for readers of the Sunday newspapers. It's ingeniously called "Spot the Player," and competitors are asked to exercise their skill by indicating, to the nearest millimetre, the exact position of the missing player. It's possible, of course, that he is in the dressing room! But then, how did that ball get up there? The prize, incidentally, is a new pin for the purpose of picking the ball in the other competitions.

Acknowledgement

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(Continued from page 34)

to spot and exploit the tiniest gap in a packed goalmouth, but he also has that inimitable knack of surging forward four or five paces before striking the ball, thus giving the defenders little or no time to "cover" the shot.

But how many other inter-county hurlers can match the power of Rackard or the craft of Ring? Precious few, you'll agree—and yet you'll find even juvenile players trying to emulate these legendary figures on close-in frees.

The one big advantage every free-taker has on his side is the element of surprise. And, used judiciously, it can be quite a telling factor.

But, I'm afraid, many of our leading hurling marksmen haven't yet grasped the strategy behind such a move and time out of number I've watched games being thrown away by free-takers who, quite obviously, were intent on making the headlines by going for the net each time.

This tendency is bad enough in hurling but when you see footballers adopting the same policy, I think it is time to draw the line.

Someone once rated the chances of a footballer hitting a 14-yards free to the net as 50 to 1 against, but the more I think of it, the more convinced I am that the said enthusiast was either a born optimist or else he had a brother in the net-repairing business.

In my opinion, a footballer is justified in essaying a shot at goal from a close-in free in only two instances.

(1) When his team is trailing and when there is so little time remaining that a point in such circumstances would be useless.

(2) When the goalmouth is cut up and the ball greasy, a 14-yards free can sometimes bring a goal direct or, occasionally, the rebound will result in a major score.

All-in-all then, the policy of going for the 'bull' all the time is not one to be recommended to the up-and-coming stars.

Admittedly, it does turn up trumps at times, but do these successes compensate for the points frittered away? The answer is 'no' with a capital N.

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(from Page 11)

opportunity to play southern teams. Challenge games, tournament games . . . every invitation was readily accepted.

And the 87,000 who watched Down triumph in the All-Ireland final with a proficiency in the air that often baffled the great fielders from Kerry and a determined, no-quarter brand of football, realise the wisdom of this "outside contact."

Now, if Down could do it, why not others? I'm convinced they can—if they plan as carefully as Down. Plan, not for to-day, but for the future. Down's shining example is surely an encouragement.

Style and polish must never be sacrificed for brawn. But the method of play must be adaptable and in Gaelic football, skill in the air is most important. Allied to close combination, the use of open spaces and an all-round intelligent approach to the game, it can be unbeatable.

So teach it to the minors, the juveniles, the boys of to-day, and, as Down proved, they can be the champions of to-morrow.

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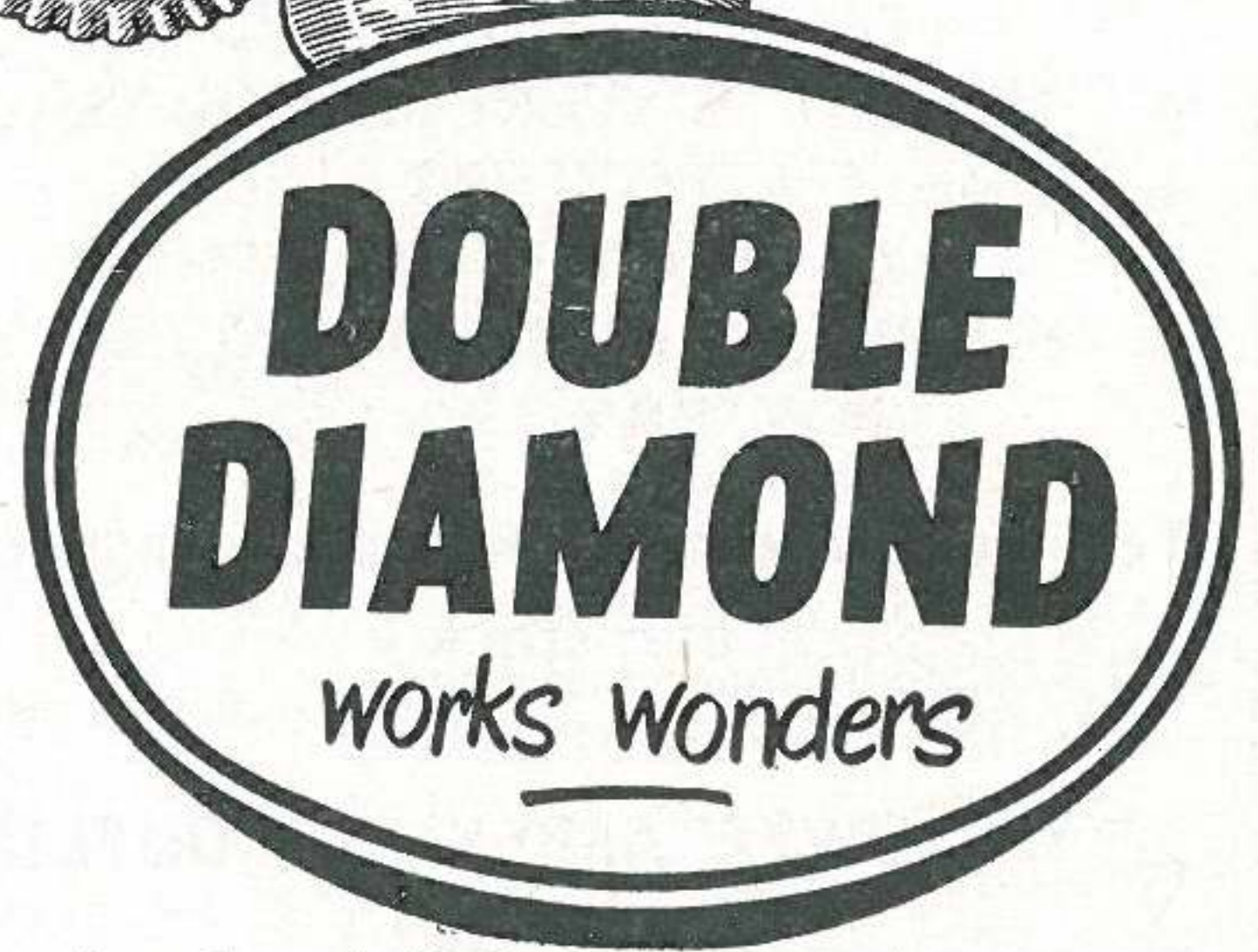
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Anna Crotty

by AGNES HOURIGAN

ALTHOUGH camogie has made great strides both in prestige and popularity in recent years, there are many who believe that not until Cork come back to the front ranks of the Association will the game regain all its old-time appeal.

Most of us remember the great clashes between Cork and Dublin in the All-Ireland finals of around 20 years ago. But, unfortunately owing to the great troubles that beset the Association subsequently, the Cork girls went out of inter-county camogie for nearly a decade.

Since the county's return to the fold it has not, for some reason that is impossible to pinpoint, succeeded in recovering its dominant position in Munster, and although the Cork girls have appeared in two All-Ireland finals in recent years, they lost both of them, one to Dublin and the other to Antrim.

So it is in the hope of inspiring young players in Cork to emulate her example that I now wish to trace the career of one of the greatest players who has ever worn the Cork tunic — Anna Crotty from Glen Rovers.

Anna Crotty began her camogie career with the local side in her home town of Cobh, but when the Cobh Club broke up she joined Glen Rovers in 1952.

With the Glen Anna has won three county championship medals, five county league medals and three Oireachtas na Mumhan trophies.

In 1952 when Cork returned to inter-county competition, Anna Crotty was an automatic selection for the county side and she has very deservedly retained her place ever since.

In 1955 she played in the decider against Dublin at Croke Park. A thunder-storm broke over the ground just before the game was due to commence and it had to be postponed for a week. The following Sunday it came off to schedule, but alas for the hopes of Cork and Anna Crotty, the Southern girls had to give best to Dublin after a great game.

In 1956 Cork were back again in quest of that elusive title. This time Antrim provided the opposi-

tion. We saw another brilliant and enthralling struggle, but once again Cork were narrowly defeated — admittedly by the best team that has ever come out of the North.

Since then, Cork have had little luck with their championship ventures but that lack of success cannot be attributed to Anna Crotty who has been playing as well as ever at mid-field or on the wing.

Indeed, she is the most versatile of attacking players, being equally at home anywhere from mid-field to full-forward. When the Gael-Linn interprovincial competition started, Anna Crotty was an automatic choice for Munster, and was again unlucky not to have won an interprovincial medal.

Though she was already a star with a camogie stick when she first attracted attention as a schoolgirl at St. Mary's School, Cobh, Anna was actually born in Manhattan, New York, and was three years old when she came back to Ireland.

So she can proudly claim to be the only American-born camogie player ever to captain her county into an All-Ireland final.

Although she has helped Cork to beat the Combined Universities in more than one of the former Cronin Cup games (that seem now to have been abandoned), Anna Crotty's greatness has not gained the rewards (in terms of trophies) that it surely deserves.

So here's hoping that 1961 will see the long-awaited Cork revival and that Anna, hailed in Cork as the Christy Ring of the Glen Rovers' camogie team, will come through to win the All-Ireland medal that her all-round excellence with the camog has surely earned.

RECORDS!

DUBLIN and Kathleen Mills set up an entirely new set of Camogie records when the All-Ireland final was played at Croke Park on Sunday, November 13, writes Agnes Hourigan.

In the first place, the Dublin girls won the O'Duffy Cup for the 12th time in 13 years, a record that only they themselves can beat.

In the second place, Kathleen Mills put herself even further ahead of every other player in the country by winning her 14th All-Ireland medal.

In the third place, Doreen Brennan, the Dublin captain, was the first ever to captain the winning team both in an All-Ireland final and in the interprovincial final for the Gael-Linn Cup.

But despite all these Dublin records, Galway played very well in the final and will be a force in the future.

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Tipp. get it easy !

By FRANK O'FARRELL

ONE of the most striking features about the G.A.A. calendar in post-war years has been the upsurge of interest in the National Leagues. At one stage, the league competitions were regarded as mere 'fillers' in the G.A.A. year—events where most counties marked time for the sterner tests ahead in addition to providing useful "bleeding" ground for the championships.

Happily, those days are no longer with us. Now the league tests, both hurling and football, run the championships to a neck-and-neck race in importance.

This new-found interest in the 'little' All-Irelands is due to many things, not least of which was the alluring incentive of a trip to America in alternate years for the league winners.

This has made for some razor-keen competition in both codes, particularly in football where the race for honours is followed with avid interest throughout the length and breadth of the country.

In hurling, too, the battle for league honours has given fans some wonderful entertainment, in addition to bolstering up the coffers of the competing counties. And yet, for all its progress, there is one big blot in the present set-up of the National Hurling League.

I refer, of course, to that lop-sided system whereby Tipperary are handed a ticket to the final practically every year by virtue of being grouped in Section B of Division I.

What an absurd situation! Tipperary, one of the greatest forces in hurling, being placed alongside the 'small fry' like Limerick, Clare, Kerry and Carlow.

Result is that Tipperary are virtually assured of a place in the final even before a ball has been pucked in the competition!

Is this crazy state of affairs good for the game?

Let's look at what has happened already this year, and I think you'll come to one conclusion—the whole set-up cries out for a drastic overhaul.

So far, the Premier County have played two games in the 1960/1 Hurling League against Galway and Carlow. Not surprisingly, their points tally now stands at four, a three points win over the Corrib men being followed by a runaway victory over Carlow.

Now, here's the rub. In neither of those matches did the Tipperary selectors deem it worth their while to field a full-strength team. They called on only five or six regulars in addition to paying the opposition the "compliment" of naming Tony Wall and Liam Devaney for the reserves.

But don't blame the Tipp. mentors entirely. After all, they are almost assured of their customary win, so why go to the bother of calling on men who may be engaged in an unimportant club tie.

But do blame the Central Council for their senseless policy of pitting the "weaklings" against the might of the blue-and-gold brigade.

There's another aspect to the case. And it's this. Is it fair to teams like Wexford, Cork, Kilkenny, Waterford or Dublin that they should have to battle it out at breakneck tempo for a place in the final while Tipperary stroll casually along to the same destination?

Is the present system warranted on economical or geographical reasons? It couldn't be, seeing that Cork have to travel to Belfast, and vice-versa.

No matter how you look at it, there is absolutely no justification for this unbalanced set-up. To me, the solution lies in new groupings, with an equitable distribution of strength in both sections of the first division.

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(from Page 27)

Cork went wild and the cheers were still ringing when Christy fastened on to it over at right corner and blazed a perfect ciotog shot to the square. Hard luck, for it glanced off a stick right to the net. Cork were a point ahead and a crazy spectator ran on to the field and hung on Christy's neck. Knowing the game was far from over Ringey acknowledged the greeting with a smart hurley-tap on the man's posterior.

And it wasn't over, for Vivian Cobbe had the ball in the Cork net and Limerick were ahead once more, but back it came, driven hard by Willie John Daly and at 20 yards there was Ring again, appearing out of thin air, to swing on to it with hurley shortened in his iron grasp. Crack, and it was in the net for the third time. Pat Barry and Terry Kelly did the rest and we were in another All Ireland. I never saw men so demoralised as were the Limerick supporters when it was over.

One could go on and on telling stories of these two great men—Mick Mackey and Christy Ring. But somewhere one must stop and give an opinion, right or wrong.

Mine? Is it because I'm a Corkman? Maybe, but my choice is Ring. Any man who can score that number of goals and burn his hands so often over 20 years pulling games out of the fire deserves to be in a class of his own. For durability and service alone the Cloyne man wins. Which of us can say that in the other facets of master-hurling — speed and guts—that whip-lash man from

Ring v. Mackey

East Cork didn't have as much as even Mick Mackey had at his best. Let's leave it at that. God send a few more like them before the eyes grow too dim to see.

I told you Mackey was a rogue. My facts are right but the tense is wrong.

A few years ago we attended a Convention at Shanaon. While a few of us were in conversation up came a stranger to speak to Mackey, who was leaning in that nonchalant way of his against a door.

"Say," he said in an American accent, "Which of them is Mick Mackey?" indicating our group a yard away.

Mick looked suspiciously, thinking your man was pulling his leg; but it was obvious that someone had told the stranger that Mackey was in the company but hadn't been precise in his indication.

Without moving a muscle Mick said: "There he is," pointing to a well-known Tipperary man.

"I believe he was a great hurler," said the Yank.

"Oh, that he was," agreed Mick.

"Tell me, was he a dirty player? I heard he was a tough man."

"Dirty?" said Mick in a sad voice. "He was a lightin' devil." Unable to control the laughing any longer and realising that Mackey was only getting warmed up, we moved off.

Ringey, too, had his sense of humour. It was a lovely summer

evening in the 'forties and the Corkmen, having won a Munster final at Thurles, were on their way home, tired but happy. Outside Mitchelstown they stopped the cars for a minute and Sean MacCarthy gazed with obvious pleasure across the fertile valley of North Cork where the green, browns, and golds gathered the evening warmth from a setting sun.

"Isn't it lovely?" said Sean. "Wouldn't it be wonderful to be able to paint it?"

From the back of the group came a voice, dry but very serious:

"Yes, but it would take an awful lot of paint, though."

I'll give you two guesses.

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Bring back the handpass

HAS the standard of football declined in recent years? I am convinced that it has, and I date its decline from that fateful Easter Sunday in 1950 when Congress made a tragic blunder by outlawing the handpass and introducing its cumbersome substitute—the fisted pass.

Controversy raged during the mid-1940s in parks and public houses; at street corners and cross-roads about the merits or demerits of the handpass. These sometimes heated discussions were sparked off by the feats of Antrim, one of the most stylish, colourful and sporting teams ever to grace a Gaelic pitch.

For all too brief a period those saffron-clad footballers from the Glens of Antrim held thousands spellbound by their brilliant displays. Inspired by such wonderful ball-players as the incomparable Kevin Armstrong, Sean Gallagher and Georgie Watterson, they were the greatest drawing-card in the Association, comparable to the Wexford hurling team of more recent years.

Yes, I know they never won an All-Ireland title, but paradoxical as it may seem, this was as much due to their own fault as to the strength of the opposition.

The Antrim team of that era, especially the forwards, brought combined handpassing movements to perfection. But often they tried to gild the lily and they paid the penalty of overelaboration by frittering away vital scoring chances.

Handpassing should never be indulged in for its own sake. To be

effective it must be constructive!

The Cavan team that won All-Ireland titles in 1947 and 1948 and failed to Meath in the 1949 final were, to my mind, the greatest exponents of constructive hand-passing.

Within the next decade a very well-balanced and extremely clever Dublin side thrust their way into the football limelight. But they, like Antrim, were prone to overelaboration and it was only after many bitter disappointments that they learned from experience that a judicious mixture of combined forward movements and more direct methods paid better dividends. They reaped their just reward when they took the All-Ireland title in 1958.

Critics of Antrim's style of play said that the game they played was more like basketball than football. Nonsense! In time, Antrim would have modified their game to incorporate the best features of both their own style and what had come to be known as the "traditional" catch and kick method. But they never got the chance.

For years, some counties, notably Kerry, had sought to have hand-passing abolished. At the 1950 Congress, Antrim surprisingly supported Kerry's motion, which was carried and the fisted pass became obligatory.

It is of interest to note how Antrim came to support Kerry's motion that year. At the County Convention some months previously, a motion to introduce the fisted pass was proposed by a junior club, and whether from

reasons of loyalty or otherwise it was stoutly supported by the rest of the clubs in that grade, whose combined voting strength was sufficient to carry it through against opposition from the senior clubs.

So Antrim delegates came to Congress pledged to support their own motion whether they liked it or not.

Repeated attempts by my own and other counties to reintroduce the handpass have not lacked support, but so far have failed to gain the necessary two-thirds majority. So we are still stuck with this laborious and unwieldy method of passing and I really believe that its retention accounts in some degree for the decline of football standards in counties such as Antrim, Cavan, Meath and Mayo, during the past decade.

I'm not forgetting that Meath won the All-Ireland title in 1954 when the fisted pass was in operation, but that game against Kerry was one of the most mediocre finals ever played at Croke Park.

The vast majority of players, backs and forwards alike, with whom I have discussed this topic were strongly in favour of the handpass. I have heard former stars such as Brendan Nestor, Alf Murray, Mick Higgins, Kevin Armstrong and Peter McDermott state on the Monday night Gael-Linn programme that it was their belief that the game would benefit by the re-introduction of the handpass. I couldn't agree more!

(Contd. overleaf)

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The fisted pass is much slower, less accurate, and consequently too easily intercepted. It is virtually impossible to pass to the right without having to stop and turn unless one is a *ciotóg* or ambidextrous; while passing back to a team-mate, which was executed as part of an excellent dummy in the good old days, is also ruled out.

There was a wide variety of passes and dummy passes possible under the old system. Its critics held that it was almost impossible to distinguish between a pass and a throw and that in fact all long passes were foul throws. Rubbish!

A proper handpass, however long, was launched from the fingertips by a sudden straightening of the arm, rather like the action of a weight-thrower putting the shot. On the other hand, a throw would involve taking the arm back and upwards and could easily be detected by the more pronounced and obvious arm actions.

The fisted pass has definitely slowed up the game. Passes take too long to deliver, travel too slowly, and too many of them have of necessity to be taken at a standstill. The result is that close, mauling tactics, followed by the inevitable free are all too frequent.

Lest I be accused, as a former forward, of espousing the case of the handpass simply because it benefitted forward play, I hasten to add that backs also could and

did exploit it with considerable advantage.

A short, snappy pass saved many a dangerous situation and was of infinitely more value to the team than an ill-judged kick, however prodigious. I vividly remember Micheal O'Brien in the 1949 All-Ireland final surrounded by a cluster of score-hungry Cavan forwards, rising up in the air to flick a pass over their heads straight into the hands of the unmarked Christo Hand.

In present-day football, Michael couldn't have done that! Have you ever seen a player give a fisted pass while both feet were off the ground? No, his hasty delivery would be blocked down or he would be blown for overholding, and if he did manage to get his kick in pure chance controlled its destiny.

Despite the passage of time I have vivid recollections of those thrilling Railway Cup games of the 1940's in which Ulster participated. Even allowing that "distant hills seem green" I contend that present-day Railway Cup fare is drab by comparison. Are there such colourful footballers as Alf Murray, Kevin Armstrong, Mick Higgins or Tony Tighe playing to-day?

Contrast, or slash of styles, was what made these encounters so brimful of excitement and lent them colour. Even under the present system, this truth is self-evident when we consider the

drawing power of the Dublin and Galway teams of a few years ago, and the present Down team when opposed to Kerry, the greatest exponents of the catch-and-kick style.

But how much greater the contrast and therefore the attraction when apart from those already mentioned players like Tommy Murphy and Bill Delaney. Pdraig Carney and Tom Langan, Jimmy and Phelim Murray, Brian Smith and Peter McDermott wove their football magic through the agency of the handpass.

Admittedly, it is idle speculation, but what a wonderful mental exercise to imagine what a Galway forward line inspired by Sean Purcell; a Dublin attack prompted by Freaney and Heffernan, or the present Down sextet could do if handpassing were back in vogue.

However, if some farsighted Congress should lift the ban on handpassing I would like to see one slight modification made to it. I would disallow any score made by handpassing to the net or over the bar.

I often passed a ball over the bar in my playing days and derived secret amusement from the expression of frustration and annoyance on the faces of the backs. As one Kerry defender blurted out in exasperation, "Why didn't you kick the ball?"

I always had the uneasy feeling that I was taking a mean advantage and (dare I say it?) that it wasn't "cricket"!

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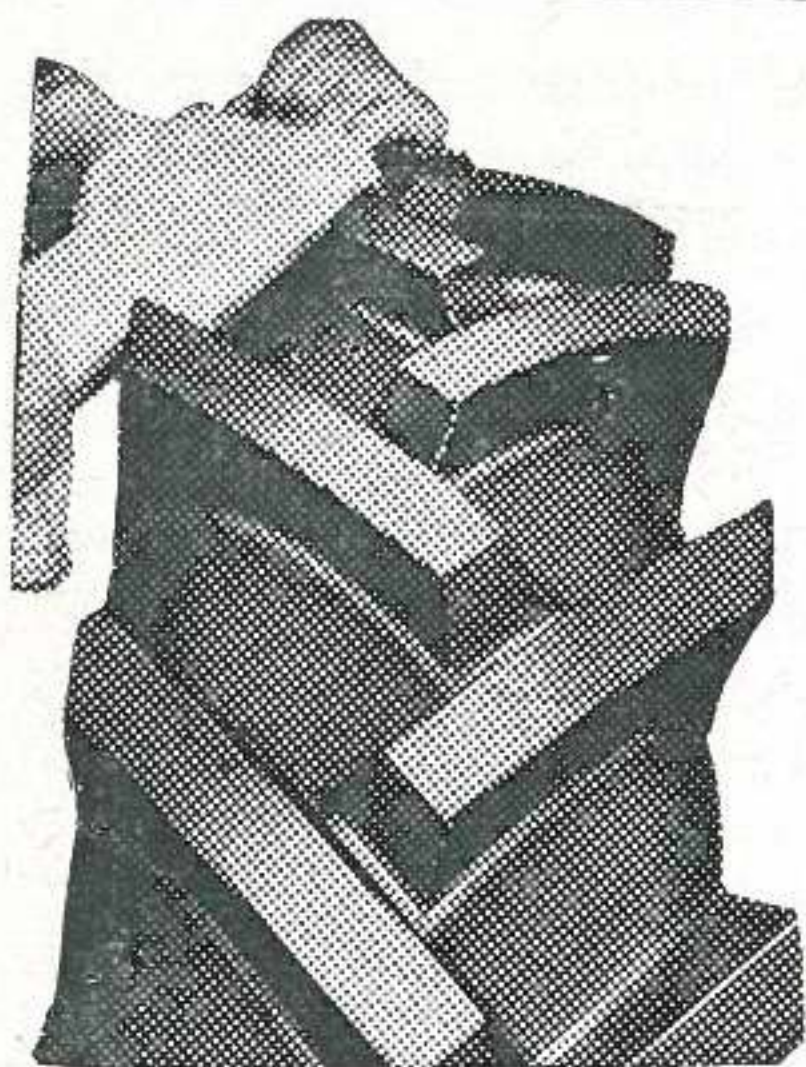
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Can Roscommon Come Back?

asks SEAN O'NEILL

WATCHING Down outplay Kerry in this year's All-Ireland final, my mind kept slipping back to a day in October 1943, when another young team won the Sam Maguire Cup in their first All-Ireland final appearance. Like Down, they, too, were outsiders and they had their lucky moments in a drawn game; but in the replay they were well on top and they made football history by winning the title. That team of 17 years ago was, of course, Roscommon.

Down's rise to football glory is, indeed, very similar to that of Roscommon. But only time will tell if their reign as All-Ireland champions will be as long and their stay at the top as successful.

In 1939, Roscommon won the minor title. Twelve months later many of these minors were on the junior team which won the county's second national title and, for good measure, the minors came back again in 1941. With material like this in the county a resurgence in senior ranks was inevitable. It came sooner than many had expected.

Galway were then supreme in Connacht football. They had been narrowly beaten in the 1940, '41 and '42 All-Ireland finals. Then in 1943, this young Roscommon side captured the Connacht title and for the first time since 1915 the county had qualified for the All-Ireland semi-final.

It rained heavily as Roscommon battled with Louth for a place in that 1943 decider and at the end of a high-scoring game, Roscommon were in front. The final score was 3-10 to 3-6.

In the first half of the Final Roscommon were anything but impressive. The more experienced Cavan team, led by Big Tom O'Reilly, were quick to settle down and at half-time they led by four points.

On the resumption, Roscommon seemed to have overcome their "Croke Park nerves" and a great goal by their captain, Jimmy Murray, put

them back into the game with a bang. Minutes later Donal Keenan had a point and they were level.

From then on it was an exciting and keenly fought affair, with both sides having their share of misses and at the end, a draw at 1-6 each seemed a fair result.

The replay took place two weeks later and the attendance jumped by over 20,000. From the whistle it was evident that Roscommon were an improved side. Liam Gilmartin and Eamonn Boland were well on top at mid-field and the attack moved with intelligence and precision. Goals by Frankie Kinlough and Jack McQuillan put the huge Roscommon following into ecstasies, and even when Cavan fought back to leave it 2-2 to 2-0 at half-time it was still evident that Roscommon were the better team.

In the second half, Roscommon remained on top. Well taken points extended their lead to five points and then with time almost up, bedlam broke loose. For several minutes it looked as if the game would never be finished, but eventually, order was restored and seconds later it was full-time. Roscommon had won their first senior title.

The incident which took place did little to dampen the glory of Roscommon's victory. In fact, what took place was by no means their fault and so they returned home in triumph as the proud makers of football history.

In 1944 Roscommon were back again, a little changed team from that of the previous season. In the All-Ireland semi-finals they met old rivals Cavan and won easily—5-8 to 1-3. Then it was Kerry at the "last ditch."

A record crowd of 79,245 crammed Croke Park for that final, 10,000 more than the previous record which was set up by Kerry and Galway in 1938.

This was Roscommon's big test. Could they retain their title against the might and tradition of Kerry?

(Continued on page 55)

THERE is no more controversial topic in the G.A.A. than "the Ban". It arises regularly and naturally, *often* amongst G.A.A. followers themselves; *always* when in sporting conversation with those outside the fold.

Let me say at once that there is no harm whatever in discussing the Ban. There are, of course, some who shout "treason," "traitor" or "shoneen" whenever any argument is advanced against it, and there are some G.A.A. adherents who have even said, "Whenever the Ban goes, I go."

Ignoring completely the undemocratic approach of the latter, and in answer to the former who shout "treason", I think it should be pointed out that there is in fact a rule in the Official Guide which presumes that the Ban will some day be abolished. This rule gives specific permission to discuss it at Congress every three years. (Playing Rules can be discussed only once every five years), so that discussion on the Ban is not anathema to the G.A.A.—it is in fact encouraged.

Whether discussion is encouraged or not, however, it does, in fact, take place, as I found out on a recent tour of Ireland when

I had an opportunity of interviewing top G.A.A. players north, south, east and west. They come from all walks of life—professional men, craftsmen, white-collar workers, army men, commercial men and tradesmen; and the Ban arose naturally in conversation with practically all of them.

Some of them had never seen foreign games played; some of them had even played them. Some were from the furthest point south in the Republic, some were from the heart of the last remnant of British imperialism in the north. But amongst the vast majority of them I found an amazing lack of enthusiasm for the Ban.

Players Discuss The Ban

By EAMONN MONGEY

Of the *eleven* players who expressed themselves on the Ban, *seven* were opposed to it — Joe Salmon, Kevin Mussen, Stephen White, Eamon Goulding, Jim McKeever, Jock Haughey and Tony Wall. *Two* more — Charlie Wrenn and Harry Donnelly—thought the time had come for a thorough investigation to see what the Ban was achieving; and only *two* expressed themselves in favour of it—Willie Rackard and Tom Maguire.

Two out of eleven represents 18%, so that if this is a true cross-section of players' opinion on the Ban, then only 18% are in favour of it.

These are sobering statistics and even more sobering still is the fact that the two men from the Six Counties whom I interviewed, Kevin Mussen and Jim McKeever (in my opinion the north's two top G.A.A. personalities), were both opposed to the Ban. Whenever this topic is discussed one of the main cries is "An Lamh Dearg Abu," or, in other words, "We cannot let down our oppressed colleagues in the North." Therefore, it was enlightening to discover what some of those northern players thought of all this.

Why did so many want the Ban abolished? There were two main reasons on which practically all those opposed to it agreed. First, that it is serving no useful pur-



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pose at present and, second, that it is not being enforced.

Kevin Mussen wanted it abolished because he claimed that as far as the North is concerned they would lose nothing and gain everything. He gave me ample evidence to show that they would get all the facilities for training from the foreign games clubs — pitches, pavilions, massage, coaching, etc.; and, seeing that all the foreign games are played on Saturday only, they would get the players as well for their Sunday games.

Eamon Goulding went further and said he knew that many foreign games players would be glad to play Gaelic games in the summer if permitted to do so.

Stephen White took up another aspect when he told me that we could learn something from soccer, rugby and hockey and, by watching these foreign games, we might well get ideas to improve our own.

Harry Donnelly and Charlie Wrenn had a complaint all to themselves when they told me about two of their colleagues who were suspended for attending a soccer carnival. In this enlightened day and age these two current Offaly stars felt that this was going a little too far.

Jock Haughey felt that by retaining the Ban we were acknowledging in present circumstances that we were afraid of these foreign games. That he considered to be completely false. The Dublin team had proved conclusively, by attracting so many foreign games adherents, that there was something in the spirit of G.A.A. games which would attract followers, Ban or not.

Joe Salmon demolished one widely-held opinion—that Rugby players and administrators are actively opposed to the Ban. Joe actually played rugby in his youth and never found a tittle of evidence to confirm that opinion. As further arguments for abolish-

(Contd. on Page 56)

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TOPICAL TALK

By EAMONN YOUNG



“JUST as all work is unidextrous so all games should be ambidextrous. Hence, unlike hurling and handball, golf, tennis and billiards are not games at all. They should rather be called handicrafts, for these amusements necessitate a perfection and delicacy of touch worthy rather of a highly-skilled trade or perhaps even a circus trick. Some day, the psychiatrists may startle the sporting world by revealing that these pastimes do not give the mental relaxation proper to games. From the viewpoint of ambidexterity, AIN and BEARNA BAOIL are as games superior to hurling itself, since this element is an integral part of the rules of each.”

The extract is from a pamphlet written by a Sagart Paróiste, and sent to me by a famous student of games and athletics. The opening phrases read “Two new Hurley games—Golf and Tennis outrivalled.”

I’m looking forward to calling on the sporting priest in the near future.

* * *

I am continually amazed at the little which men know about training for games. The other day

I was telling a well-known club-player how a friend of mine was a great man to train. He did laps of the field regularly during his periods of hurling training.

“But,” says your man, “lapping will only make him slow.” The inference is that the only way a hurler should run is at top speed. Did running twenty miles a day slow up Herb Elliot? If it did, I’d like to see him after six months of forty-yard dashes.

* * *

The American trips are over and what a pity we have had more differences with the exiles. Willie Casey played in spite of the Central Council ruling that he was ineligible. New York’s visits to Waterford and Casement Park were cancelled. Are we forever to be in trouble with the Yanks, and they with us?

Relationships should be more adult and a friendly spirit MUST be fostered between the exiles and ourselves, for the public and players simply insist that the tours will continue. We’ll hear more of it at Congress.

(Contd. overleaf)

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I am very fond of pipers' bands and as a player found more genuine exhilaration in marching behind them than to any other kind of music; but at big games we must decide between the drone of the pipes and the singing of the multitude. For we cannot have both. The range and pitch of the pipe is not suitable to singing and, indeed, when it comes to the music of the Anthem it is well that people should sing it. At present we make a poor effort by comparison with say, the Welshmen at their sports fixtures.

By the way, it may be interesting to know that of forty boys of 17 recently tested, only five knew the Anthem.

And I don't see any need at all to play "Faith of our Fathers". There are many reasons given, but one that never appears is the natural desire of the band-leader to let the audience hear his music.

The hymn is not an Irish one, I believe. On cold days the spectators, impatient to get on with the game, do not want it; on days either hot or cold the player, mad to get his hands on the ball, wants it less.

Our religion is of such obvious importance that we do not need to bring it into the games, and fortunately, we have many opportunities of showing our public fervour in a much more suitable way.

* * *

In a hard club game during the summer I saw once again that the ref. cannot hope to control a hard match properly. Early in the game a back and his man got rusty with each other and from then on, they were at it every chance they got, for both, being fairly tough men, would not give in. The ref. saw almost nothing of it for they never severed diplomatic relations till that poor man was up to his eyes in it at the other side of the field.

We considered for a while giving the umpires and sideline men a right to flag fouls but the suggestion was not approved. Now several old followers want two referees.

Our pitches are much bigger than those of other games and if we admit that the ref. cannot see all that goes on then, surely we must seek a remedy.

The main flaw in our changing system is Congress. A strange statement, perhaps, for without Congress there would be no changes. But it is now admitted that there's too much business to be done and most delegates never get to the root of the matter being discussed.

I am convinced that the best way to change a rule regarding referees, or anything else, is for the county concerned to seek permission to try the new rules in some of their own competitions, and report as a result.

For years I have been opposed to the automatic suspension of the man who is put off the field. I feel that the ref. doesn't want to put off a man because he knows he will ruin the game, and most sensible people now admit that in the April/May period the inter-county man simply must not be put off.

* * *

Anyway, two months is too heavy for the man who is caught swinging a fist in a moment of anger. Which of us wishes to cast the stone?

A few times when I was in the humour I proposed modifications of this rule, one of them being the putting of a man to the line for ten minutes because of minor fits of irritation.

Recently we had a chance of trying this in an Army game. It worked wonderfully. The man who went off had to watch his opponent playing a blinder and when he went on again, fair play for him, he ran his heart out to make up for the slip.

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(from Page 49)

Moments after the throw-in, Donal Keenan had a point and then came Kerry with a goal by Dinny Lyne and a closely followed point for good measure. Like true champions Roscommon regained their feet and Frankie Kinlough set Croke Park alight with a great goal. Further points by Donal Keenan and Jimmy Murray extended the champions' lead and at half-time they had two points to spare.

Liam Gilmartin put Roscommon three points ahead early in the second half when he scored a classical point from far out and then it was Kerry's turn. A point by Paddy Kennedy heralded the Kingdom rally. Dunne slammed home a goal and Murt Kelly added a further point. Roscommon were two points down.

It was at this vital stage that Roscommon proved their real worth. They fought back, forcing the pace and from two frees, Donal Keenan made the scores level again. With time ticking away, Roscommon continued to press and then came a great Kinlough point followed once again by another Keenan "special" from a free. Roscommon were home and dry to the tune of 1-9 to Kerry's 2-4. They had beaten the Kingdom and retained their All-Ireland title.

Resting on their oars somewhat Roscommon failed to come out of Connacht in 1945, but in 1946 they were back again, beating Laois in the All-Ireland semi-final.

In the final they faced Kerry once again and imbued with the confidence and experience gained in 1944, they outplayed Kerry throughout 55 minutes of the game. Leading by 1-7 to Kerry's 0-4 with only five minutes to go, it looked another great day for Roscommon. Then Kerry struck back. A goal by Tom "Gega" O'Connor left but three points in it. Two minutes later they were level when Paddy Burke crashed another Kerry goal to the net. Final score: Roscommon, 1-7; Kerry, 2-4.

In the replay Roscommon failed to produce their best form. Many blame it on the fact that they trained for almost all their games that year and were going "stale" by the time the replay

took place at the end of October. However, the players themselves offered no excuses and at the end of a sporting game they conceded a four points victory to Kerry.

In 1947 Roscommon retained their Connacht title but they failed to Cavan in the All-Ireland semi-final and as a result missed the chance of meeting Kerry in the Polo Grounds, New York.

This more or less marked the end for most of that great Roscommon team and although many of them were still in their mid-twenties they decided to call it a day.

A brief flourish in 1952 and '53 gave hopes of a Roscommon revival, but on each occasion they failed in the All-Ireland semi-final. But then there are few counties who can remain continuously in the forefront and the Gaels of Roscommon, now under the capable chairmanship of Dr. Donal Keenan, are confident that their day will come again—perhaps in the not too distant future. Let's hope so, for Roscommon of the 'forties gave Croke Park some of its greatest thrills.

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(from Page 51)

ing the Ban, Joe referred to the wide TV coverage given foreign games which players can view without let or hindrance and to the fact that newsmen, photographers, bandsmen and Guards who are members of the G.A.A. have to go to these foreign games.

After talking to Tony Wall I felt that the social climate in Ireland had changed so much since the Ban was introduced that it was now unquestionably an anachronism.

This was indeed an argument which most players advanced:

Player Cup For Finglas Club

AN informal reception took place at Player's Tobacco Factory, Glasnevin, Dublin, on Thursday, November 10.

The occasion was the presentation of a solid silver trophy and medals to Erin's Isle G.A.A. Club for the Finglas Grounds competition to be inaugurated early next year. It will mark the opening of the Club's fine new grounds at Finglas.

The trophy and medals were presented on behalf of John Player & Sons, Dublin, by Mr. E. K. Bohane, General Manager, and were received by the Chairman of the Club, Rev. Fr. John O'Connell, C.C.

Erin's Isle G.A.A. Club has been established about 50 years and has done much to promote Gaelic games in North County Dublin. The intention of the Club is to establish this competition as an annual event for the Player Cup. Silver medals will be provided by Messrs. Player's each year for the winning team.

The trophy, which takes the form of a handsome silver bowl, is of appropriate Celtic design and Irish manufacture.

Whatever purpose the Ban originally served (and they were nearly all prepared to agree that it did serve a useful purpose once), it now was out of date.

Against all this, Tom Maguire and Willie Rackard argued that we should not betray our ideals at this stage—ideals which we had held on to for so long. The national territory is still sundered and until it is reintegrated completely the

Ban should stay. In the opinion of these two G.A.A. giants, this is the only way to keep our games pure.

What is my opinion after all that? It is simply this: A national poll among G.A.A. players is the only conclusive way to find out whether in fact they want the Ban or not, and that the time is now ripe for such a poll.

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USE

GLOWCO

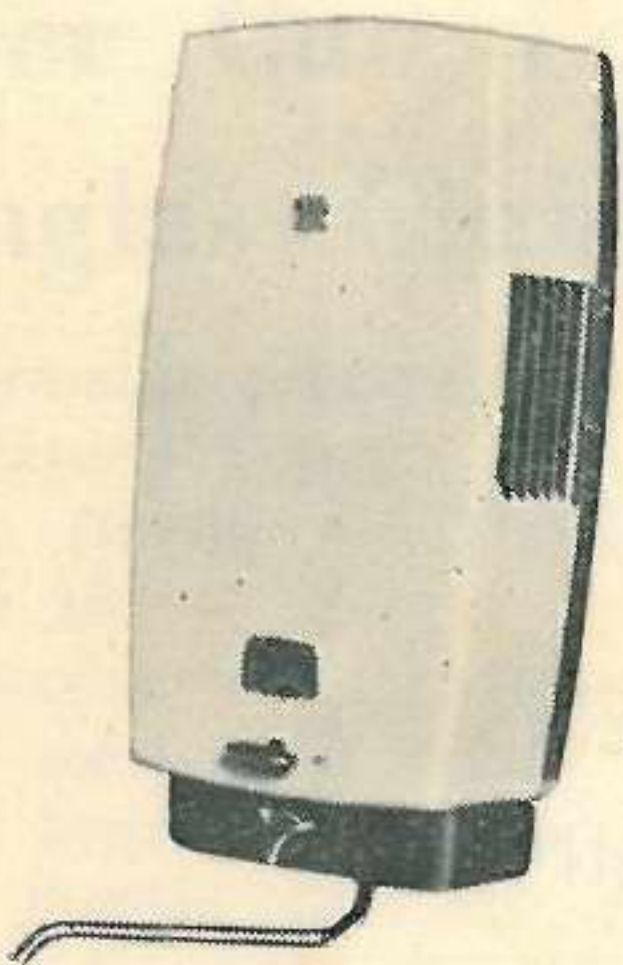
SMOKELESS FUEL

House Coals - Large Coke

AND

GAS

FOR

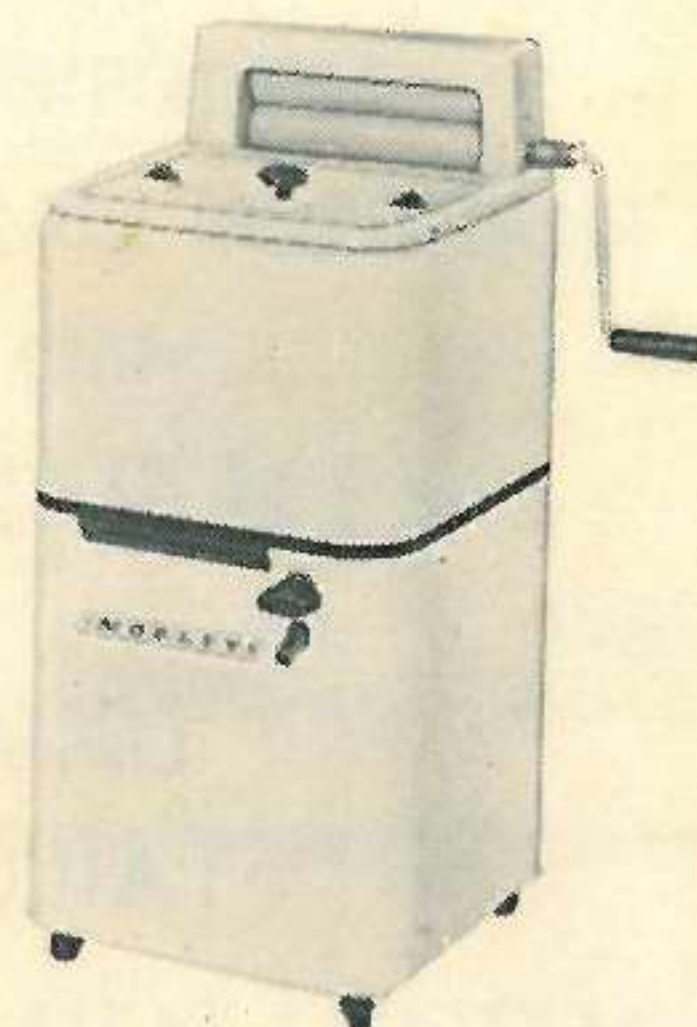


WATER HEATING

REFRIGERATION



COOKING



WASHING

HEATING

GLOWCO DELIVERED IN ANY AMOUNT—ANYWHERE, FROM

THE GAS CO.

WATERFORD

ENNISCORTHY

KILKENNY

COBH

WICKLOW

THURLES

TIPPERARY

FERMOY