

9

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# Gaelic Sport

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'CRIBBERS'?



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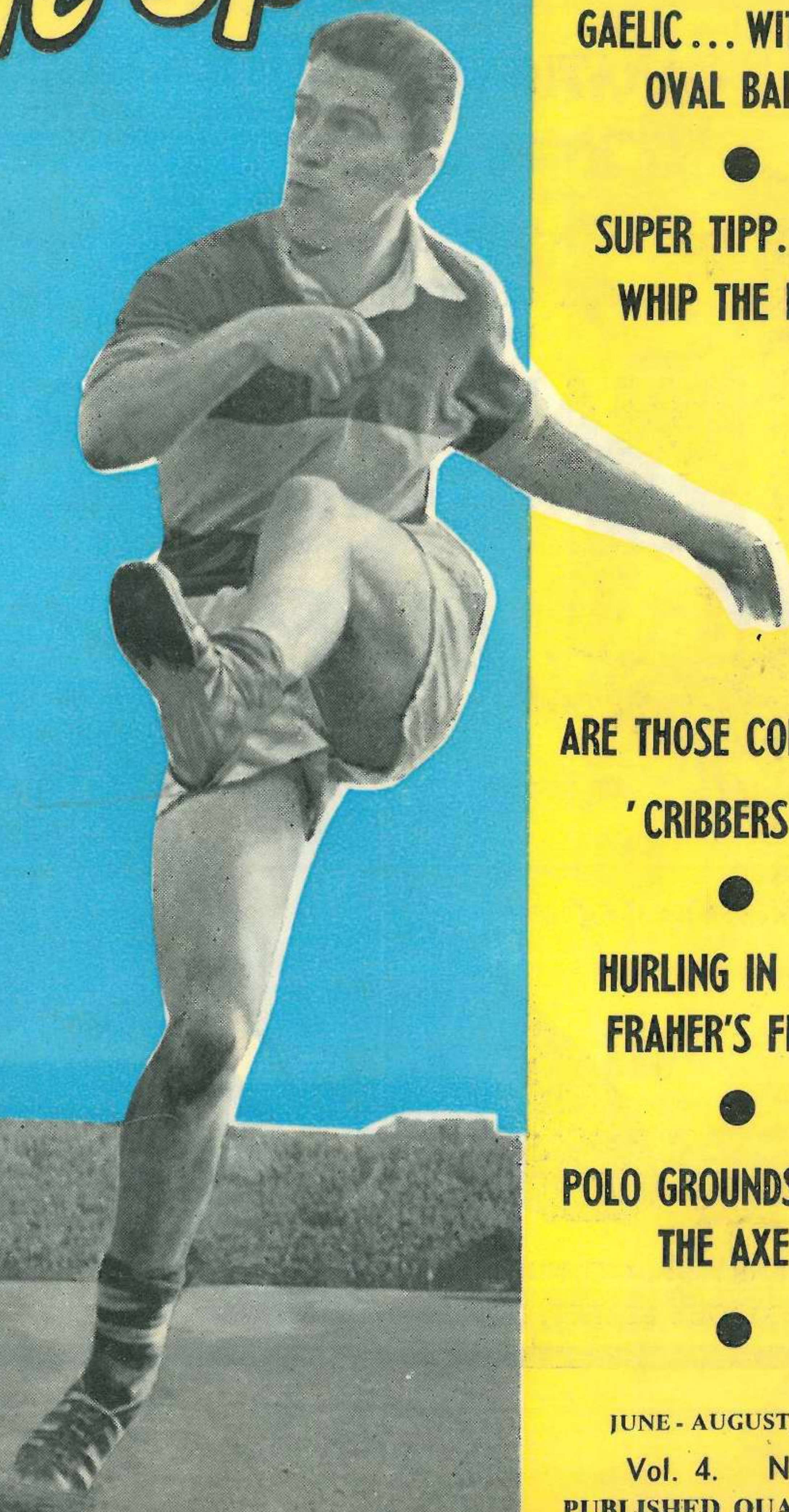
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JUNE - AUGUST, 1961

Vol. 4. No. 2

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY



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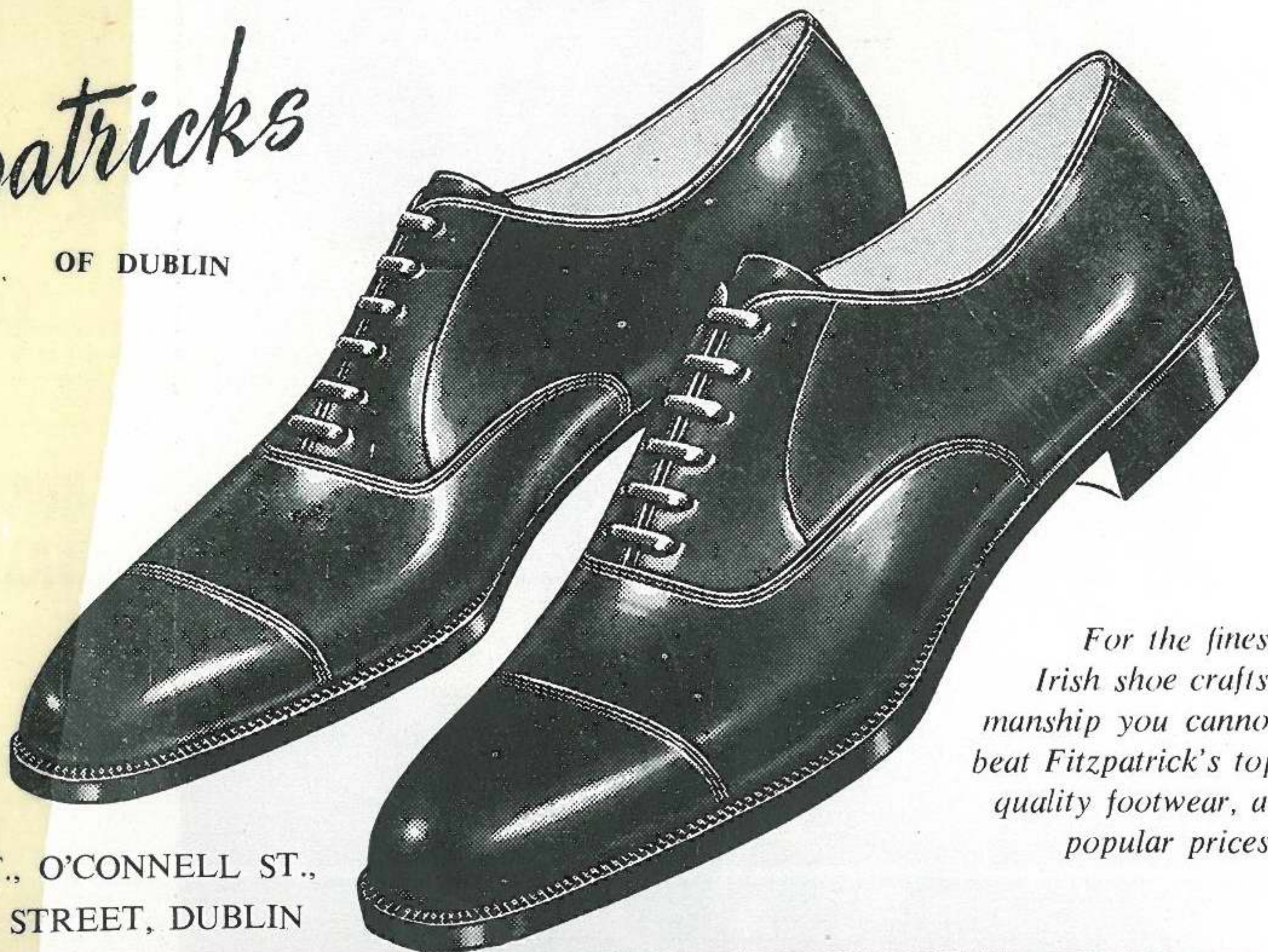
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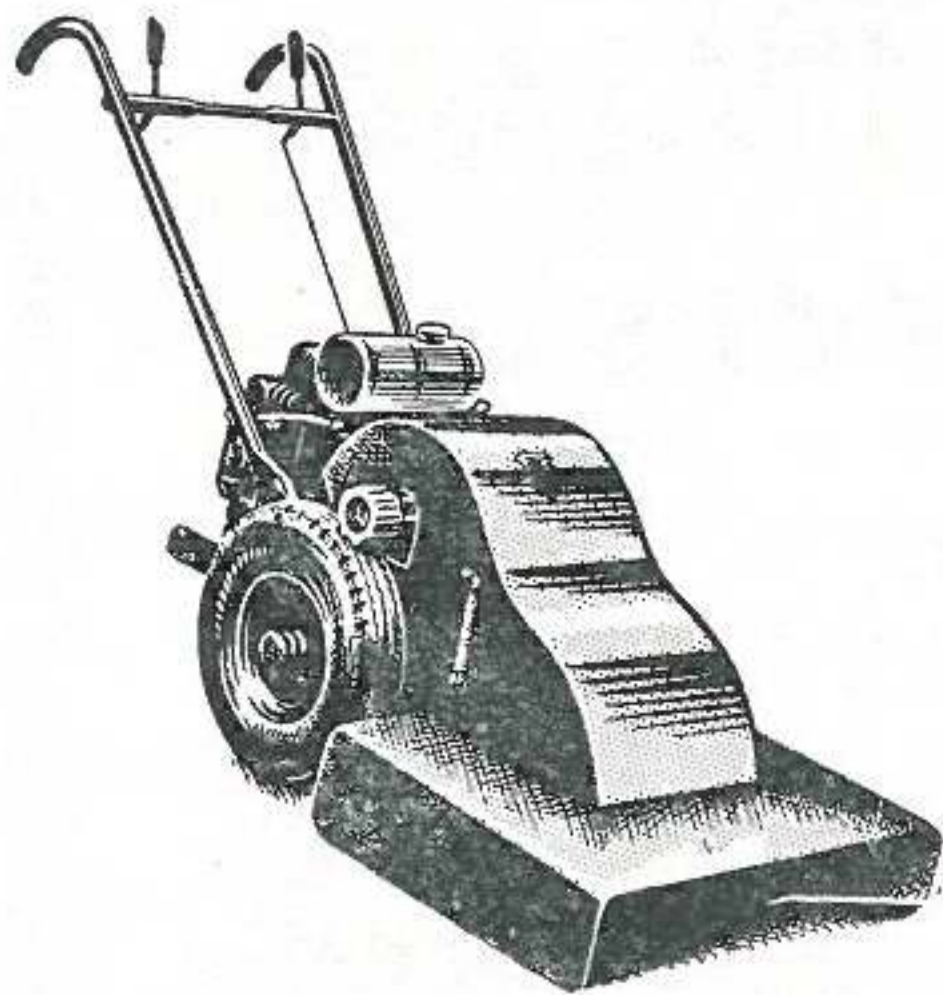
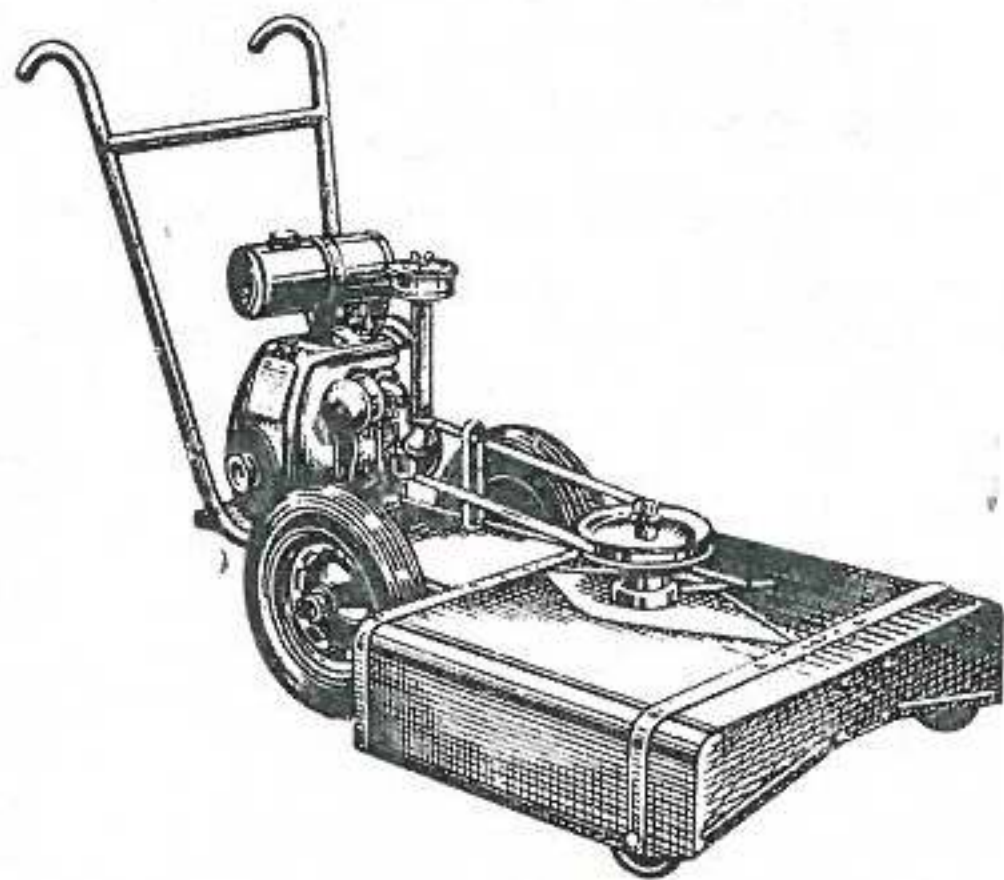
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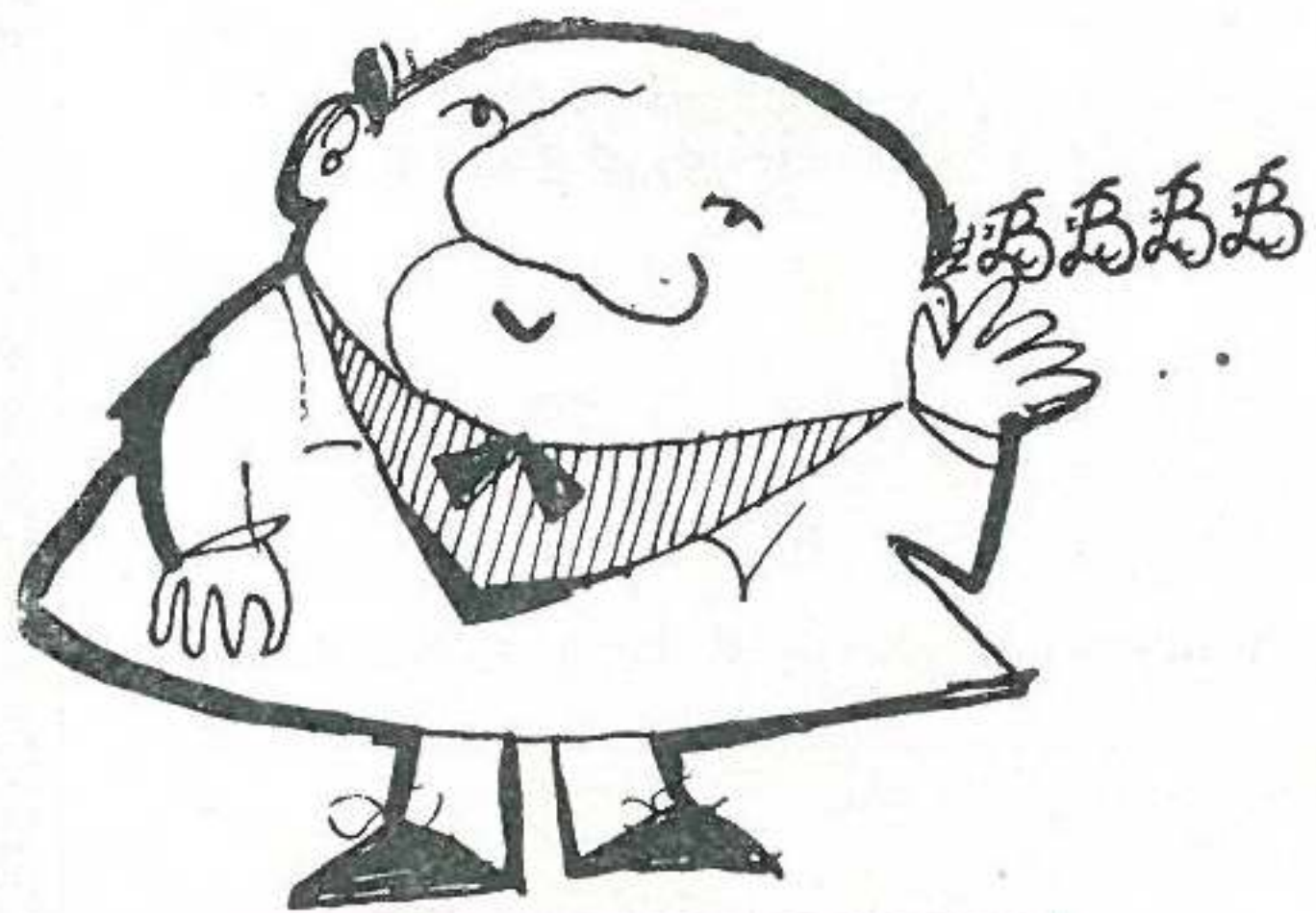
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# Gaelic Sport

Vol. 4. No. 2. June/August 1961

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## Cover Picture

Gaelic Sport comes up again with another magnificent action-shot in our front-cover series, "Spotlight on the Stars". This time the spotlight focuses on Kerry's **Dan McAuliffe**—as the camera caught him in the drawn Kerry-Roscommon League semi-final on April 23.

## EDITORIAL

# Afterthoughts

**F**URTHER on in this issue two of our correspondents—both of them experienced and respected commentators on G.A.A. affairs—devote considerable space to discussions of the 1961 Easter Congress.

And the underlying theme of both articles, even if it sometimes slides between the lines, is that the supreme legislative body of the G.A.A. is in need of an overhaul—both in constitution and in its perennial approach to the concept of rule changes.

That approach is undoubtedly conservative: some maintain that it is much too conservative—a barrier to administrative progress and to the natural evolution of the games.

That, of course, is a matter of opinion; and one can readily appreciate the G.A.A.'s tacit argument that if rules were to be changed, willy-nilly, every year the stability of the Association would be soon undermined and the laws governing the games mere playthings for crackpot "revolutionaries".

But there is a vast difference between irresponsible changing for the sake of change and a mature and imaginative desire to improve the rules.

One such mature and imaginative attempt was made at Congress last Easter. A Wexford motion proposed that referees be given discretionary powers when dealing with offenders on the field of play. And the discretionary power sought was this: that, in the case of minor misconduct, a referee be allowed to send the offending player to the line for the duration of the game—no suspension to follow.

It was an excellent proposal, the adoption of which would have remedied a rule which referees are now loath to apply because of the severity of automatic suspension in the case of minor transgressions.

But the Congress delegates, many of whom, one felt, had not given the motion intelligent consideration, refused to give it the necessary two-thirds majority to make it law.

Such are the fetters of unimaginative conservatism. Such are the occasions when every intelligent G.A.A. man must feel forced to rally in support of any campaign which seeks to establish a less unwieldy Congress and a more radical attitude to progressive legislation.

# Gaelic Football . . . with an oval ball!

By TERENCE ROYNANE

**OLD--STYLE** Gaelic football, point-posts and all, played with eighteen men aside, but, just to make it difficult, with an oval ball and on an oval-shaped ground . . .

That sounds like something from a footballer's nightmare, but, in actual fact, it's the game they call Australian Rules, far and away the most popular winter pastime in that great sub-continent under the Southern Cross.

No other code of football played 'down under' can match Australian Rules in crowd appeal and the grand finals, played between what are, mark you, only club teams, can fill the great arenas even more tightly than cricket test-matches used to do in the days before tennis outdid cricket as Australia's favourite summer sport.

Some folk like to claim that Australian Rules is a development of English Rugby, but it is no such thing! The Australian game is nothing less than a logical development of old-style Gaelic football, played in much the same way as Gaelic football was played here at home in the years before the G.A.A. introduced what old-timers used to call 'the Davin rules' in 1886.

In this old-time Irish football, of which Kerry

"caid" was a variation, the ball, built around an animal bladder, was prolate in shape as the Australian Rules ball is today.

When you fielded a high ball in the Irish games of those days, you promptly made a mark, and then could kick the ball, unchallenged, from where you caught it. That high-fielding and the subsequent marking are still outstanding features of the Australian game today.

The wrestling between players has been abandoned in Australia, as it was in Ireland, but the Australians have retained the point-posts of the 'Davin rules', though we abandoned them nearly fifty years ago.

In the early days of Gaelic football, a goal was worth five points. The Australians have gone one better than that. Their goals are equal to six points, but the ball that goes between those point-posts is still equal to one point and no more.

Again, up to 1913, Gaelic football had seventeen players aside. Here, too, the Australians go one better. They have eighteen men on each side. However, as is the case in Gaelic, fifteen of those eighteen players keep 'fixed' positions on the field. They have six backs and six forwards, as in the





*INTERESTING THOUGHT: These stars versus an Australian Rules side! Players in our picture taken at the Rest of Ireland v. Universities match on March 29 from left are: S. Brereton (Rest), S. Murray (Univs.), C. Flynn (Rest) and F. McKnight (Univs.), partly hidden.*

modern Gaelic game, and these are even called by much the same names as we know them here in Ireland, 'left wing back, left half-back, left half-forward,' but they have dispensed with the services of a goalkeeper.

In addition, the Aussies have three 'fixed' mid-field men, a left-wing mid-fielder, a midfield mid-fielder and a right wing mid-fielder, who are stationed on the same line as our two mid-fielders.

The three extra men who make up the eighteen are characters of no fixed abode. Their job is to keep in constant pursuit of the loose ball and see that it gets safely into the hands of their forwards.

All three of these players 'rove' as they will, or as the bounce of the ball takes them, but, technically speaking, only one of them is called a rover. The other two are known as 'followers', whose prime duty it is to get the ball to the 'rover' who is then expected to distribute it to the very best advantage.

If further proof be needed that Australian Rules had a Gaelic grandfather, the following facts should provide all the evidence necessary. In the Australian game the ball can be kicked, or knocked, or handballed in any direction, but it cannot be thrown. If you throw the leather, the opposition is granted a free kick,

Neither can you push an opponent from behind, nor can you interfere with him at all when the ball is more than five yards away from him, unless you want to give away another free. (Indeed, some similar rule about no charging until the ball is within playing distance might well be considered by the G.A.A.)

You can't run with the ball more than ten yards unless you keep bouncing the ball from hand to ground and back again (a solo run, with the player bouncing an oval ball, must be an entertaining sight); nor are you allowed to trip, strike, kick or deliver a foul charge on an opponent.

If you are guilty of any such indiscretions, the referee puts your name down in his little book, and you must appear before a tribunal the following week, where you will be warned off for as many games as the members of the tribunal think your offence deserves.

In addition to the high fielding and 'marking' (you can only "mark" the ball direct from a kick by another player), long punts and sailing drop-kicks are features of this hard, fast and open Australian game.

Each match is controlled by a white-shirted referee, complete with shrill whistle; there are

**(Continued on page 51)**

# LEAGUES NEED OVERHAUL

————— Says  
**LIAM FOX**

**T**HE National League titles for 1960-61 have been won and lost and when the competitions re-open in October they are likely to be played under a changed set-up. And about time, too.

For quite some time it has been obvious that the composition of the groupings have urgently needed overhauling. Yet nothing was done until Kildare and Limerick, sponsoring motions at this year's Congress, called for alterations.

These motions were withdrawn, but not before the counties were assured that the Central Council, in reviewing the Leagues, now that the two-year cycle has been completed, would give serious consideration to a change in the groups.

Demanding particular attention is Division I of the National Hurling League where Tipperary, winners nine times in the last 13 seasons, have had a trouble-free canter through Section B for several years.

Surely this competition is lop-sided. Tipperary only infrequently meet with one stern test from Limerick, Clare or Galway in turn—this year they didn't even have one stiff challenge—before qualifying for the final.

Long before the Sections were completed in April it had been painfully obvious in recent years that Tipp. would win theirs. There was no interest; no doubt; and a growing lack of enthusiasm on the supporters' part.

As one of the latter who rarely misses a Tipperary game said to me recently: "We don't even get one match that's really worth going to."

How different is the set-up in Section A which includes "Big Guns" Cork, Waterford, Kilkenny and Wexford. There, interest is maintained often right up to the very last game and in recent years all four of these counties have taken the honours. Therein lies a lack of monotony that is the bane of Section B.

I'm not suggesting that Tipperary's easy path to the final is the reason for their proud collection of League titles. Despite the stiff match-practice the Section A winners get they have won only a few titles in the last decade.

And with due regard to Antrim and Kerry, they are out of place in the premier division. They need encouragement, I know, but they don't get it by being hammered Sunday after Sunday.

Furthermore, look at the expense of sending Antrim to Cork and Waterford—expense that is certainly not covered by the gate receipts either at those venues or when these strong teams pay the return visit to Casement Park.

Trouble with the League is that there must be a final; therefore we must have Sections in Division I. But why not two divisions of the stronger teams played on a double round?

One section could consist of, say, Cork, Water-

ford, Dublin and Galway, the other to include Tipperary, Wexford, Limerick and Kilkenny. In these sections each team would play all others twice; thus each county would have six games instead of the present five.

Clare for a start could be included in Division II with Carlow, Antrim and Kerry as well as those counties already there. Even if the counties didn't want to introduce a relegation and promotion system, the Central Council could review the set-up and decide if any county was obviously out of place and change them to the other division accordingly.

In football, Division IV certainly needs overhauling: but if for nothing else but the variety it would produce the other divisions could do with a re-arrangement too.

Division I being the Lagan Cup competition it, of course, will remain untouched. But in the other three there could be some shifting around of teams with beneficial results.

The question of travel surely doesn't arise in these days of luxurious limousines and comfortable diesel trains. Distance certainly wasn't an obstacle as far back as 1936 when Mayo won the first leg of their League and Championship double.

That year they won a one-division league which included top teams like Dublin, Kerry, Galway,

Meath and Cavan. If travelling to Cavan and Dublin wasn't a burden for Kerry in 1936 why should distance be the motive behind the present groupings?

*Roscommon defender J. J. Breslin in action against Kerry in the League semi-final replay on April 30.*



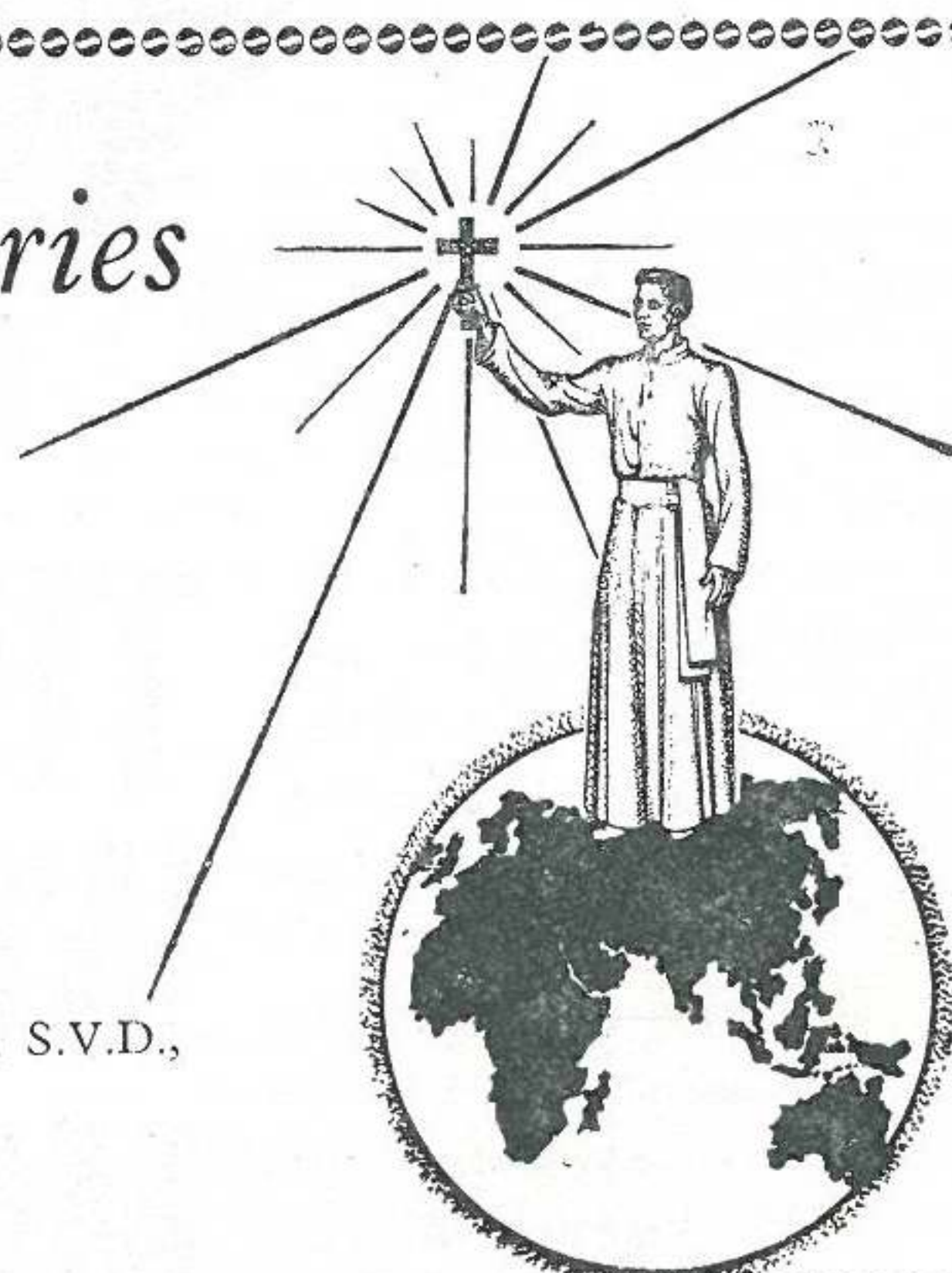

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## The end of a great sports arena

# POLO GROUNDS GETS THE AXE

By SEAN O'NEILL

BY the end of this year it is almost certain that the Polo Grounds, New York, will have been demolished. This is sad news, indeed, for although few of us have had the opportunity of seeing this renowned Harlem venue, we still remember it as the scene of some of Ireland's finest sporting hours. The never-to-be-forgotten 1947 All-Ireland football final, when Cavan came from behind to snatch the title from Kerry, was in itself enough to win for the Polo Grounds a place in the annals of Gaeldom.

To most of us the Polo Grounds means Gaelic games; but, in fact, our games contributed but minutely to the sporting fixtures of the venue.

The birth of the Polo Grounds took place in the early 1870's, when polo was actually played there by a small circle of New York's high society. And although the canter of hoofs was short-lived, the grounds retained the name "polo" ever since. In the late 1870's baseball took over and during the years since it remained the main form of sport played there and more or less monopolised the arena.

Down through the years many Irishmen have been associated with the grounds. Probably the first of these was one John (Muggy) McGraw, who managed the New

York Giants baseball team towards the end of the last century. In fact, it was not until a few years ago that the Giants abandoned the grounds to find a new home venue in San Francisco.

In 1910 another Irishman, Johnny Hayes, became the first man to really pack the Polo Grounds for a non-baseball event. Hayes had won the Olympic marathon in London two years previously, but he had been rather lucky for he would definitely have finished only second had the Italian, Dorando Pietri, who was well clear of the field, not collapsed near the finishing-line. By 1910 both Hayes and Pietri had turned professional and the Polo Grounds was booked for a return meeting between them. A fabulous sum of 10,000 dollars was offered to the winner and no less than 40,000 people turned-out to see the event. Ironically enough, neither Hayes nor Pietri won the event.

Another Irishman, Tom O'Rourke, was the first man to introduce big-time professional boxing to the arena; Tom, one of the shrewdest boxing mentors of his era, had previously managed such great fighters as George Dixon, the original Joe Walcott and our own Tom Sharkey.

For his introduction of boxing at the Polo Grounds, Tom suc-

ceeded in tempting veteran world featherweight champion Johnny Kilbane to defend his title against Frenchman Eugene Crique. Kilbane lost the title on a sixth round knockout and so ended the second longest championship reign in boxing history.

So successful did O'Rourke's first venture at the Polo Grounds prove that two weeks later, June 18, 1923, he staged a second world title bout, matching the great Welshman Jimmy Wilde with Pancho Villa. Like Kilbane, the Polo Grounds became the end of the road for Wilde, too. He was knocked out in the seventh round.

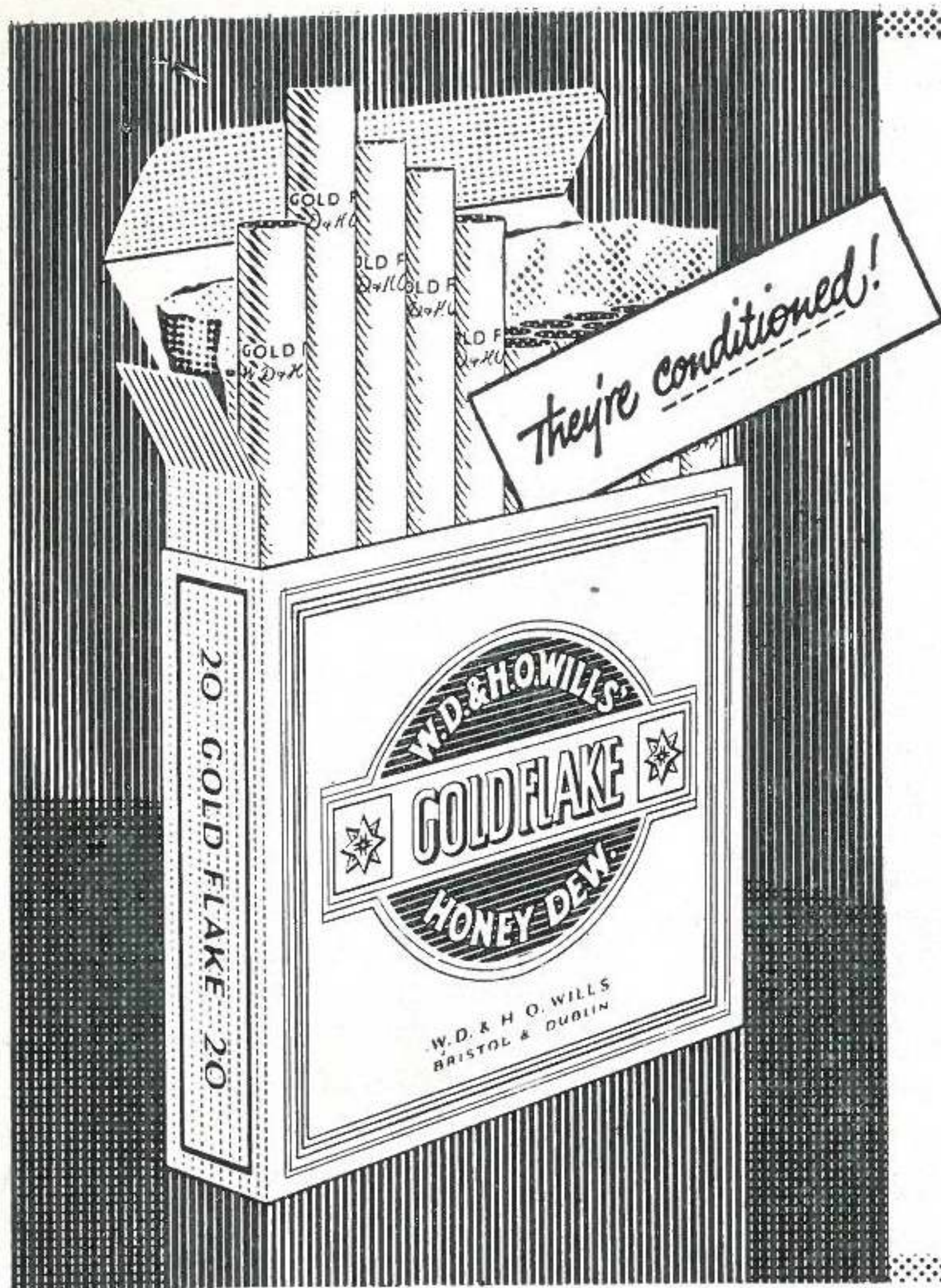
Having carefully noted Tom O'Rourke's successful promotions in the Polo Grounds, America's other big man of boxing in those days, Tex Rickard, moved in and in September of that same year—1923—he staged the Dempsey-Firpo fight, which turned-out to be one of the greatest of them all. It lasted only four minutes but it had all the thrills and spills of a hundred rounds.

Later years saw other Irishmen, like Gene Tunney, Jimmy McLarnin, Mike McTigue and Tommy Loughran fight in world title bouts in the, by then, world-famous venue.

In more recent years the Polo Grounds was host to such boxing greats as Joe Louis (he fought Billy Conn there in their first meeting), Rocky Marciano, Ray Robinson, Archie Moore and a host of others. In June, 1957, Floyd Patterson retained his world title there when he knocked out Tommy Jackson.

And so the story ends. For ninety years the Polo Grounds has been a mecca of sport. It has been host to the Jack Dempseys and Gene Tunneys, to the Christy Rings and Sean Purcells, to the Babe Ruths and the Jim Thorpes. In fact, to all branches of those wonderful and manly activities known collectively as—Sport.

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# CONGRESS MUST GET SHAKE - UP

## Says Eamonn Mongey

**H**AVING watched our annual Congress in operation at close quarters for a number of years now, I am absolutely convinced that it is in drastic need of an overhaul—both as regards its constitution and its procedure. In its constitution it is unnecessarily unwieldy while its method of doing business does not give anything like the necessary guarantee of mature deliberation expected from the supreme body of the G.A.A.

On the question of the constitution of Congress, the present basis for representation is that each County is entitled to send one delegate for every ten clubs under its control. This means that a county like Cork, for instance, with 226 clubs is entitled to send 23 delegates.

Now, I yield to no one in my admiration for the Cork delegation. As a group they are by far the most interested delegation which attends Congress; but I had never seen 23 of them there yet, nor do I think

there is any necessity for 23 delegates from Cork or indeed from any other county either.

What is true of Cork is in fact true of Congress as a whole—that the large number of 300 (odd) delegates as a whole is totally unnecessary. Reducing it to practical matters, if only 10% of all the delegates spoke for the allotted 3 minutes on each motion, it would take a 42-hour week to dispose of a 28-motion Congress such as we had this year.

But, of course, far, far less than 10% of them speak. The vast majority appear only for voting purposes and in this connection if (as often happens) counties have difficulty in filling up their delegation, their last-minute efforts to do so at times produce the oddest results as regards the age and quality, not to mention the G.A.A. affiliation, of those late choices.

The fact that all this is unnecessary when they want to get good support for a motion in which they have an interest shows how futile

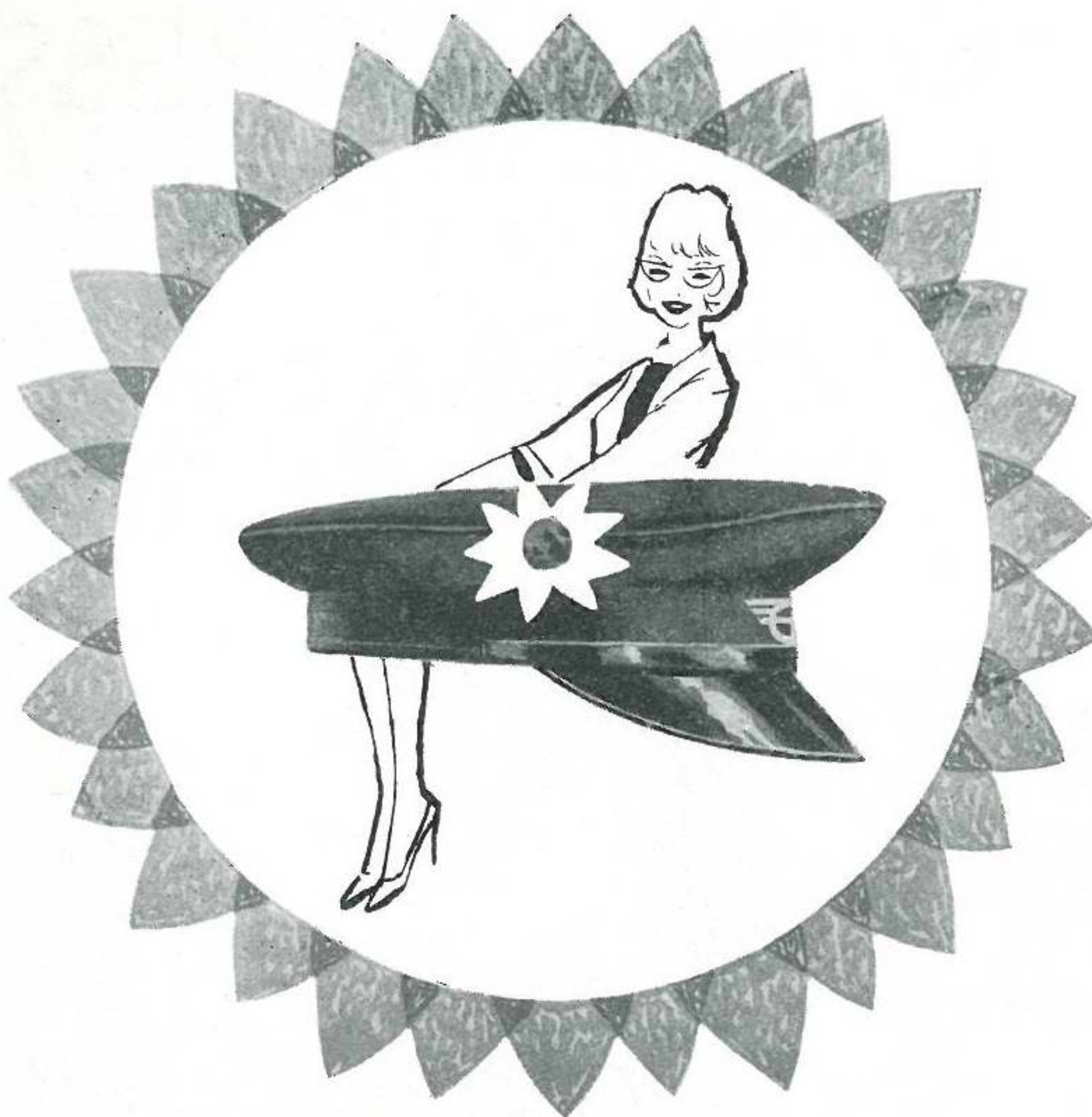
it is to have representation as high as it is now for each county.

I'm convinced that by halving the present representation, that is, reducing it to one delegate for every 20 clubs we would get a much better delegate, much better debates and a speedier Congress in the matter of balloting, etc.

One other point that has militated against a good Congress is the fact that instead of giving delegates freedom to vote as they themselves think fit, having heard the opinions voiced for and against a particular motion, many County Boards tell their delegates how to vote on particular motions. They are, of course, fully entitled to do this, but its effect on Congress can be only demoralising, even stultifying.

I remember, for instance, the Leitrim motion which sought to pool and divide all National League gates. The last year this motion appeared on the agenda at least 10 delegates spoke (and spoke most

(Contd. overleaf)



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(From Previous Page)

eloquently and reasonably) on it—and every one of them spoke in its favour. There was not a single voice raised against it, yet, when the vote was taken, the motion was defeated by an overwhelming majority. The delegates had in fact been told in advance how to vote. This is one sure way to introduce an atmosphere of disinterestedness at Congress.

There is, of course, one thing worse and that is where delegates whose hands are not tied are coaxed into making serious decisions by golden-tongued orators or, alternatively, are frightened into inaction by apostles of doom who drag red herrings all over the Council Chamber.

The most outstanding example of the former was when Monsignor Hamilton persuaded Congress to play the 1947 All-Ireland football final in New York. I don't think any delegate going into Congress that Easter Sunday intended voting for exporting our Final, but, after listening to the persuasive words of Monsignor Hamilton, they were practically unanimous in yielding to his plea.

As regards the red herring, I think this year saw the greatest trailing of that odoriferous commodity Congress has seen. This occurred when the Wexford motion dealing with automatic suspension came up for discussion—and I'm afraid that all the herrings were cured in Cork!

This, in my opinion, was a most commendable motion but immediately it was proposed a Cork delegate pointed out that it was giving the referee a discretion in the matter of sending a player to the line for dangerous play, whereas under another rule he had no such discretion but had to send the offending player off.

This argument was completely erroneous because the motion did not ask to give a referee such discretion. It dealt merely with the penalty—either the player was sent

(Contd. on Page 29)



## Events at the recent G.A.A.

## Congress prompt the query:

# ARE CORKMEN 'CRIBBERS'?

EAMONN YOUNG replies . . . .

“ARE Corkmen naturally argumentative?” The question has to be analysed in its context and knowing what the man had in mind, I put the case as follows.

We are referring not to Corkmen in general but to a portion of that band—those who administer G.A.A. games. Of course, we are especially interested in the men who lead the administration and in particular those who were sent to represent the county at the recent Easter Congress.

The activities of the delegation at that gathering has evoked a lot of criticism, because one after another, Corkmen spoke with the object of getting certain motions ruled out of order. The background is this. Central Council last year notified each county that the terms of general rule would apply when forwarding motions to Congress.

The rule states that proposals to enact new or amend existing rules would give the full text of the proposed addition or amendment and also quote in full any rules affected thereby.

Up to this time when a club secretary submitted a motion to change a rule he quoted the amendment and added the number of each rule affected. But the full text of those existing rules were not found necessary. It was felt that it was enough for the reader to be given the number of the rule. The rest he could see in his copy of the *Official Guide*.

Thus the reader, by analysing the suggested amendment in the light of his revised knowledge

of the existing rules, was able in a short time to make up his mind how to vote. And it's no harm to say that there's many a delegate who makes only a very cursory study of the motion, though his decision to vote is often wiser than that of the man who had spent an hour at the task.

In Cork, the custom has been over the years to insist that any rules affected by a motion would be quoted, and failure to do this usually meant that the motion was ruled out of order, either at the suggestion of a delegate or the initiative of the chair.

There is no doubt that the failure to refer to rules which the motion sought to alter was seized upon at times to ensure that motions which were thought undesirable got a quick death. This is logical and a procedure common to all legislatures.

Viewed in this light it can be seen that a Cork delegate would naturally examine each motion to ensure it was in order.

To return to the correct implementation of the rule already quoted, when this was put before the Cork Board during last year it was decided that the same terms would apply when accepting motions from clubs for the Cork Convention last January. In fact, a committee examined the motions submitted and eleven were ruled out of

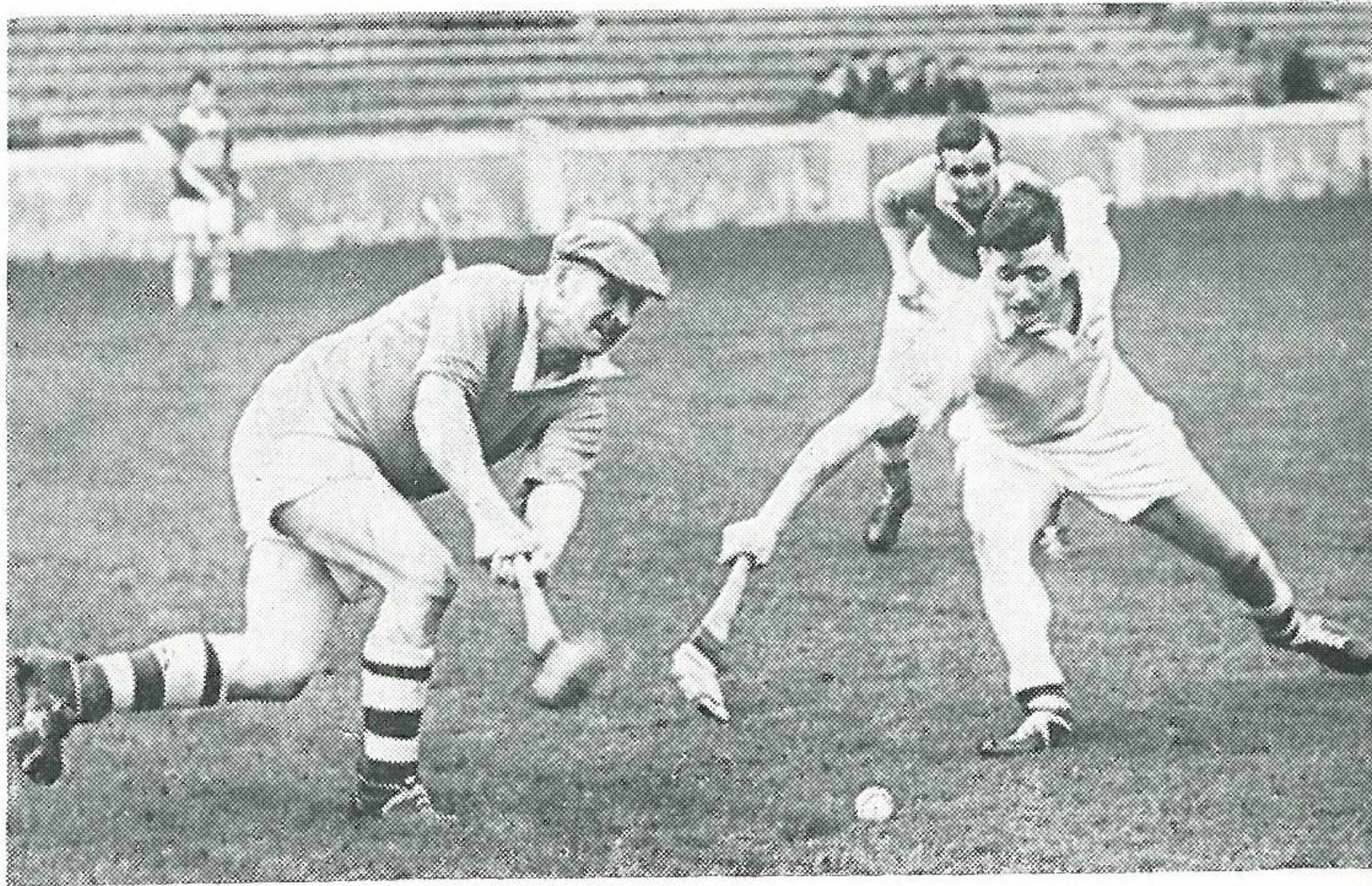
(Contd. on Page 17)

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*Cork's Christy Ring (left) crashes through the Dublin defence in the League game at Croke Park on April 9. Cork won, 5-8 to 2-7.*



(Continued from page 15)

order because they did not comply with the terms of the rule.

What should be more natural, therefore, than that a Cork delegation to Congress which included most of that committee should insist that any motion which in their view did not comply with the terms of the rule which Central Council had specified, should be ruled out of order. In fact, they would have been guilty of gross inconsistency had they done anything else.

The above has, I hope, explained the attitude of the people whose activities stimulated the opening question.

Corkmen, some of them anyway, ARE argumentative. I hope I am, and wish to enjoy the company of similar types for a few more years. Argument is a wonderful thing. It's a vocal meditation which draws into one big stream the mental ability of many tributary brains.

Of the ancient civilisations we remember the philosophers and teachers as vividly as the men who won the decisive battles of the world. Demosthenes does not pale before Leonidas; Cicero bows not to Caesar.

It's the way of argument that makes the difference. One man calls you a fool and makes you mad; another in a graceful way and with more words, shows the gathering that you are more to be pitied than blamed. You think he's a nice fellow.

The average delegate which the Cork Board sends to Congress cannot be regarded as a polished speaker. One can hardly complain if we look for decisiveness and readiness to call a spade a spade; so in discussing Corkmen as portrayed by our Congress delegation we must, I feel, agree that they expressed the wishes of the body they represent. Any unpleasantness caused by that expression could not be expected to perturb the delegation responsible.

I would, however, be disloyal to myself by concluding on that note. This intense concentration on technicalities offends me and of the motions ruled out of order before the Cork Convention six came from my club. As a result, I didn't attend. I was unable to attend Congress.

But don't mind me. I'm one of the really argumentative Corkmen.

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### *Dublin's hurling dilemma*

A SHORT while ago a Dublin hurling selector, Pat Farrell, proposed a motion at a Dublin County Board meeting that in future the selection of the county team be taken over by the champion club.

This was put to a vote and rejected by the members of the Board, so that the old system—a panel of selectors—in which even the selectors themselves appeared to have lost confidence, was allowed to prevail.

At least that is how it appears on the surface. My belief, however, is that this motion was moved, not so much to change the method of selection, as to focus attention on the very unsatisfactory position of the county's senior hurling team.

Indifferent displays were cause enough for concern, but when players did not turn up for training and, worse still, for inter-county games, without an adequate excuse, the situation obviously called for some definite action.

Indeed, on one occasion County Board officials had to make a rather undignified dash up to the Phoenix Park to round up players to make up a party to travel to a country venue for a league game.

On the training side, poor attendances were climaxed when at one session only one player turned up—surely not the stuff of which winning combinations are made.

All these things considered, it was expected that Mr. Farrell's motion, if it did nothing else, would give the members of the County Board a chance of putting the hurling question under the microscope; but to the disappointment of hurling

fans in general the whole thing fizzled out when the motion was defeated.

Unofficially, St. Vincent's had declared that they would be prepared to take over responsibility of selecting and training the side and perhaps that might have been the most reasonable solution.

For one thing, they might infuse a little of their own spirit and enthusiasm, which more than anything else, the Dublin hurlers lack.

And from another angle, they would, perhaps, be the best club to select an all-native team in view of the fact that it was St. Vincent's who pioneered the idea of "Dublinmen for Dublin teams."

Of course, many claim, especially those who opposed this plan, that that more than anything else, has been the cause of the decline in the Metropolitans' hurling fortunes.

They maintain that it was a case of "too far too fast" and that the sudden ban on non-natives weakened the team seriously.

There is some justice in this assertion but the supporters of the all-native policy argue that the damage was done long before that by players from other counties making a convenience of the Dublin team.

They remember with annoyance occasions in the past, when it had appeared that Dublin had very good hopes in the All-Ireland title race, only to find them dashed by the sudden declaration by one or two key players for their native counties.

Injury was often added to insult by the fact that the player was unknown until he had made his name with Dublin.

I think, perhaps, that this practice was really

(Continued on page 28)

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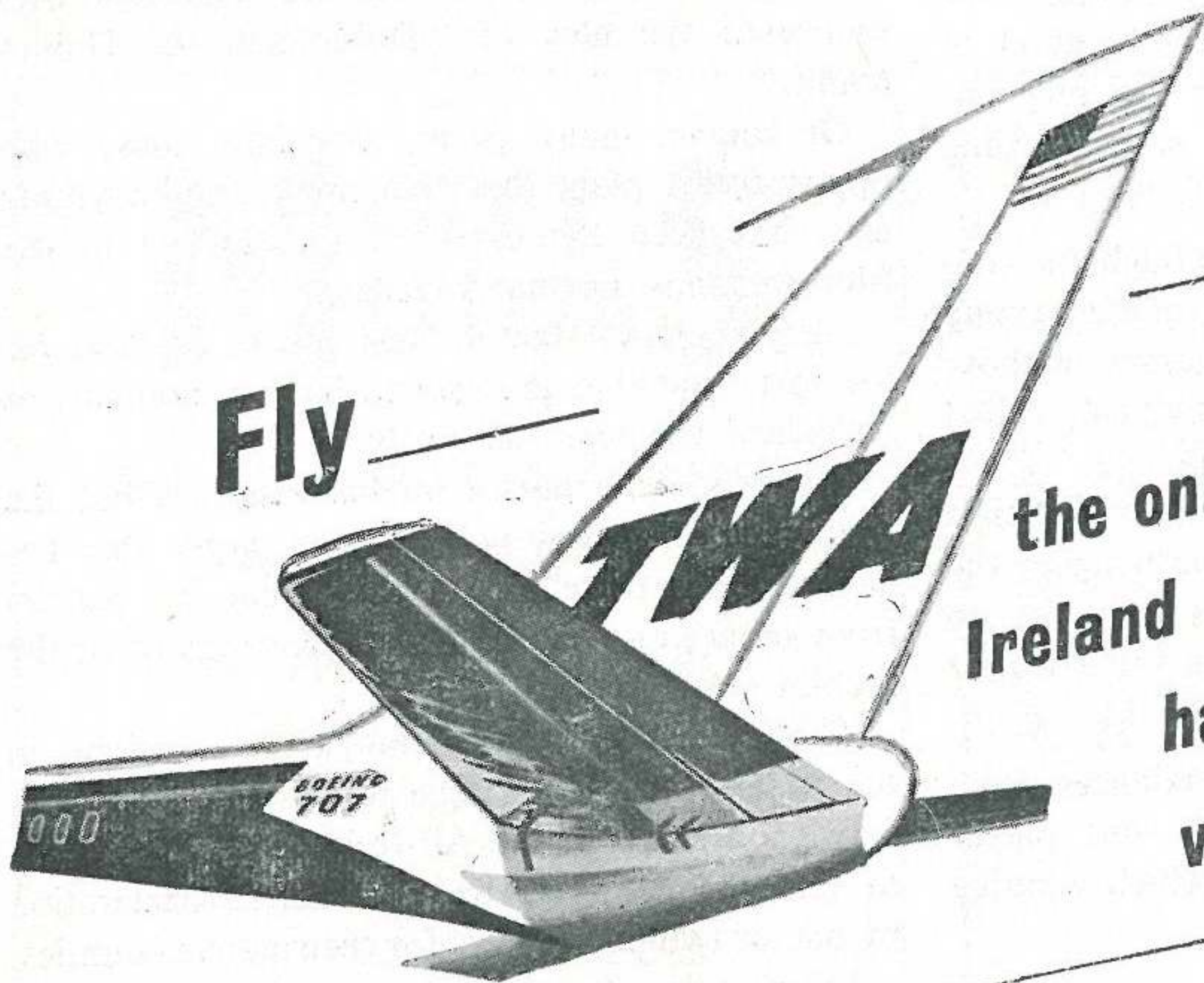
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## *Magnificent Tommy Murphy*

By FRANK FOLEY

**WINNING** entry in the recent Gael-Linn competition to find the "Greatest Ever Football Team" certainly made interesting reading. But to the younger generations of football followers some of the players were mere names.

Whether you agreed or disagreed with the winning entry you must admit that the team included players who have graced the football scene with high distinction down the years.

But to some of our younger readers the deeds of some of the players are known only by hearsay. They have never had the rare privilege of seeing these stars in action.

And they missed a great treat in not having seen a footballer of great brilliance whose inclusion in the team brought joy to the heart of this writer.

This is Tommy Murphy of Laois, chosen by a large popular vote as partner to Paddy Kennedy of Kerry in the greatest-ever midfield pairing.

It's not just the fact that he was the idol of my schooldays that I rate Murphy as THE greatest midfie'der of those I have seen. He was a player of supreme ability; an all-rounder so skilled in every feature of the game that he surely deserves the title of the greatest footballer never to have won an All-Ireland medal.

Murphy was above all a most intelligent player whose brainy football frequently baffled less gifted opponents. A six-footer, he was a safe fielder and could go extremely high off the ground, and until Kerry's Mick O'Connell appeared on

the inter-county scene there was none to match the Laoisman's ability to take a ball out of the air so expertly with one hand.

This, in fact, was a Murphy speciality. Endowed with big hands, he could neatly pluck the ball out of the air, scoop it down until it lay resting on his shoulder safely cradled in a crooked arm.

He was an expert marksman—from play or from frees. And there was no greater example of his ability as a free-taker than in the 1946 Leinster final when he scored eight points from frees in the 0-11 to 1-6 victory over Kildare.

By then, however, Tommy had left midfield and was playing at centre half-back—and playing there just as magnificently as when he formed that great Laois midfield partnership with Bill Delaney of Stradbally. In defence he was a forceful, attacking centre half.

But all that was in the mid-Forties when Tommy was in his middle twenties. Long before that his was a household name wherever football was known.

Born in 1921 almost in the shadow of Knockbeg College, Carlow, that great nursery of football, Tommy first came to fame with Knockbeg.

In 1937 he was on their junior and senior teams and that same year had the distinction of playing with the Laois minor, junior and senior sides. He rounded off a year of extreme football activity by also playing in all three grades for the Graigue-

(Continued on page 51)

# Referees must be trained

—Says former Dublin hurling star, **GERRY GLENN**

**A**S we swing into the Championship campaigns and hurlers and footballers in thirty-two counties prepare themselves for thrilling contests ahead, one wonders if 1961 will prove to be a record year for the Gaelic Athletic Association.

Will we see new "gate" records at Croke Park and at major provincial venues? I think we will—at Croke Park for certain—and I'll give you one good reason. Soccer this season has been so appallingly

poor and Rugby, particularly the International games, so very indifferent, that more than ever of the general sports followers will turn to Croke Park for easily the best entertainment provided in Ireland.

I am firmly convinced that any genuine sports fan who has seen a thrilling and close contest in hurling and Gaelic football will come again and again for more.

There is, however, one feature of

our games that may well bewilder, confuse and perhaps finally disillusion the new found spectator. I refer, of course, to our general standards of refereeing which are poor to say the least. True, we have some fine referees but unfortunately they are in the minority. Their less accomplished colleagues are the ones who cause confusion, give rise to bitterness between players and teams; and in general spoil what are otherwise splendid games.

Now, the obvious question immediately arises: how is it that in probably the most powerful amateur athletic organisation in the world there should exist such a scarcity of first-class referees?

The answer, as I see it, is very simple. The Association throughout the years has attached for too little importance to this very important function. One might almost certainly conclude that the higher authorities of the Association have always believed that referees are born, not made.

And nothing could be further from the truth. Referees there are, I grant you, who are born to control games and to control them well, and the fact of the matter is that these few happen to be, in the case of the G.A.A., the minority whom we classify as our outstanding referees. They are first-class in their field only because they happen to be cut out for the job — not because of any learning in the art which they received from the Association.

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And the proof of my statement is the fact that the G.A.A. lacks completely any system of training for referees. The capable referees just happen to be good; those less gifted in the difficult art are very unlikely to improve since there is no provision made for their guidance or enlightenment.

We have rules galore but how many interpretations of them do we see Sunday after Sunday at Croke Park and elsewhere? Time and again we see the player in possession of the ball charging opponents right and left of him and being allowed to carry on scot free. Only occasionally do we see that man penalised for breaking the Rule.

So frequently is this rule flouted that for many referees and players it might never have existed.

However, the gravest fault common to most of our referees and the one which cries out to Heaven for vengeance is their almost grim determination never to apply the Advantage Rule. Either that or their total ignorance of it. The Advantage Rule, as I think almost everybody knows, is an unwritten one and applies in every game under the sun. It is a matter of simple justice.

A man is fouled deliberately; he is due compensation, generally in the form of a free kick or puck. If the infringement has taken place within the parallelogram and the man is an attacker his team are awarded a penalty. All very simple—too simple indeed.

But if I were to tell you that in Gaelic Games that same man who has been fouled deliberately has been penalised instead of receiving compensation would you believe me? Of course you would, because time and time again you have seen it happen.

How often have you seen the "victim" score a goal only to be awarded a fourteen yards' free kick—from which it is almost impossible to score a goal—for his pains! How often have you seen the same 14 yards free being kicked wide?—a

total loss of three points instead of two. No wonder that it pays to foul, particularly in the goal area.

What is the remedy? Now please, let us grow up. You know the remedy—everybody knows it, except, apparently, a lot of referees. Apply the Advantage Rule—award the goal without further ado.

The only reasonable objection to this remedy that I have ever heard is the statement: but the referee has already blown his whistle and

therefore a free must be awarded. Fair enough. But that's exactly where a referee's training would count. A referee trained to his job would wait for just those vital few seconds, especially in the goal area, before using his whistle and thereby give the immediate advantage of the ensuing play to the victim of a foul.

Thus would justice be done. It would also appear to be done which is almost as important!



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# CÁ dTÉANN NA MIONÚIR MAITHE?

CEIST AG SEÁN Ó DÚNAGÁIN

**C**HUIRTÍ ceist orainn fadó—'Cá dtéann na cuileoga sa Gheimreadh?' Ní raibh freagra pas againn riamh ar an gceann sin agus n'fheadar an bhfuil freagra cruinn ar an gceist 'Cá dtéann furmhór na sár-mhionúir a cítear i bPáirc an Chrócaigh ó bhliain go chéile?'

Níl aon amhras ann ná go dteipeann ar bharráocht díobh gradam a bhaint amach dóibh féin mar sinnsir. Nach minic a cloistear daoine ag rá tar éis sárchluiche mionúir gur fiú faire ar fhóirne na gContae i gceist i gceann bliana nó dhó, d'fhonn na himreoirí úd fheiceáil agus iad in aois fir. Is trua nach amhlaidh a bhíonn. Tagann duine nó beirt chun cinn ach ní cloistear arís fén gcuid eile.

Dúirt sagart oirmhineach, i dtaca le mionúir Thiobraid Arainn, 'téann an triú cuid díobh le sagartóireacht, tagann an triú cuid ó pharóistí nach bhfuil fóirne sinnsireacht aca agus baineann an triú cuid díobh foireann sinnsearach an Chontae amach'. Tá an ráiteas fíor ar bhealach ach ní thagann an triú cuid ná fiú an cúigiú chuid chun cinn. Bh'féidir go dtagann i dTiobrad Arann ach ba mhaith liom é sin a chruthú.

Tá fhios againn go dtagann

fóirne mionúir go hiondúil as Coláistí agus meán-scoileanna. I gcleachtadh, i gcomórtaisí scol agus sna comórtasáí eadar-chontae is in aghaidh ogánaigh dá gcomhaois a mbíd in iomaíocht. Bíonn cuid bheag aca níos airde agus níos láidre ná a gcompánaigh ach go ginearálta bíonn an furmhór inchurtha lena chéile.

Tar éis dóibh aois ocht mbliana déag a shlánú is minic a cuirtear ar fhóirne sóiseareacha iad. Tá nós ann iar-shinnsir a cheapadh mar bhail d'fhoirinn shóisearach; chomh maith, is gnáthach don té nach raibh maith go leor d'fhoirinn sinnsear a shaol imeartha a chaitheamh mar shoisear; ar bhealach ar bith is daoine iad atá aosta go leor, láidir, beagainín mall agus tugtha don chlisteacht. D'ógánach naoi mbliana déag d'aois is mór an t-athrú dó dul i gcoimhlint leis na 'sean-fhir' seo; go háirithe má bhí a ainm anáirde mar shár-mhionúir tugtar 'aire' mhaith dó.

Is dual do na fir láidre ara dtugtar sóisir an luas a bhaint den iarmhionúir trén a "mhoilliú" ar bhealaigh áirithe. Is trua é, ach cuireann rud mar seo déistean ar ógánach agus éiríonn sé as an imirt

ar fad. Ní bhíonn crut níos fearr ar an scéal más ar fhoireann sinnsearach club a toghtar é. Ach cé thógfadh ar oifigí an club é toisc é thogadh; bíonn ganntanas imreoirí sa ghnáth-pharóiste agus de gnáth bíd ag lorg 'fear sciobtha don gliathán'. Ach is mar seo a cuirtear críoch le réim an iarmhionúir. Bristear a chroí nó deineann sé iarracht an iomarca a dhéanamh leis an dtoradh go mbonn a ré thart i gceann bliana nó dhó.

Bhí rún ag Chontae Mhuigheo i mbliana ós cóir Comhdhála an Chumann Luchleas Gael 'go mbéadh na comórtaisí sóisear do dhaoine fé bhun bliain is fiche d'aois amháin'. Is trua nár iarmhionúir; ar feadh cúpla bliain bhéidís in iomaíocht le daoine dá gcomhaois arís.

Tig le duine a rá liom gur féidir leis an mionúir maith foireann sinnsearach an Chontae a bhaint amach in aois ocht déag nó naoi déag agus gan aon dochar dó dá bharr; tig leis samplaí a tabhairt mar Tomás Ó Murchú, Tony Tighe, Caoimhín Ó hIfirneáin nó Séamus Ó Dubhghaill. Mar fhreagra ar sin deirim gur eisceachtaí iad siúd agus ba mhionúir den chéad scoth iad. Chomh maith dhéarfainn gur fearr

i bhfad iad a chur ar fhoirinn shinnsear an Chontae áit a mbéidh siad i gcomhlint le daoine a thugann aire níos mó don liathróid nó don sliotar ná mar a thugann siad don imreoir. Ag an am gcéanna ní mór don iar-mhionúir bheith an-láidir nó an-tapaídh agus an-chliste chun cion fir a dhéanamh i gcomórtaisí sinnsireach eadar-chontae.

Má tugtar faoiseamh dóibh agus gan iad a thogha ar aon sóirt fóirne go dtí go mbíonn siad in aois a fiche nó bliain is fiche tá an baol ann go gcaillfidh siad spéis sa chluiche nó go mbéidh easpa chleachta ortha. Cén réiteach atá ar an scéal mar sin?

Ceapaim gur fiú triail a bhaint as ceachtar den dá mholadh seo:—

(1) Uas-aois na mionúir d'árdú go naoi mbliana déag, nó

(2) Comórtas eile a bhúnú d'ógánaigh fé bhun naoi mbliana déag d'aois, agus comórtas idir-mheánach a ghlaoch air.

I gcás (1) tá na comórtaisí eadar-cholaistí i gCúige Uladh reachtáilte ar an mbealach seo agus ní dheineann sé aon dochar. I dtaca le (2) ba mhór ag a lán daoine na mionúir d'fheiceál arís tar éis bliana eile mar is acu siúd a bhíonn an imirt is tapúla agus is cliste. Ní bhéadh aon chonstaic mhór ann mar go mbeadh furmhór de gach foireann cláraithe cheana féin agus na haoiseanna cruthaithe ag an Rúnaí Chontae.

Pé moladh díobh a ghlacfaí leis, dhéarfainn go mbéadh toradh maith air. Tar éis dóibh iad féin a chruthú i gcomórtaisí bliana eile agus d'éis dóibh dul i nirt agus i meáchain bhéidis in ann dul i gcoimhlint le fir gan aon stró. Bhéadh fhios againn ag deire na bliana annsan céard a tharlaíonn do na sár-mhionúir.

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# HURLING, IN DAN FRAHER

WHEN I was young, the Munster hurling championship had a glamour all its own. Looking back now across the years, I suspect that memory has cast a rosy halo over the days that are gone; for it seems to me that hurlers nowadays are not as tall or as swift or as stylish as those I watched on the Munster circuit more than thirty years ago.

But then, it must have been the gloss of youth that laid such glamour about the hurlers of my boyhood, because thinking back now, I seem to find every day was bright then—there was never such sunshine or such crowds and surely there never was a field like Dan Fraher's field in Dungarvan, to my young, and wondering eyes.

The first time I ever saw a Munster final was in the Waterford seaside town, and it almost frightens me now when I discover it was all of thirty-seven years ago. In my memory it was a summer day, and I was surprised to find, on looking up the records, that the game was not played until the first Sunday of October.

Huddled between my father's knees in the front row of sideline seats behind the goal at the seaside end I was, I must admit, a bit awestruck by the rigour of the exchanges.

Perhaps the game was no more than what we would call 'robust' nowadays, but the clashes, as Tipperary, a point or two behind in the closing stages, came storming down on those posts in quest of victory, seemed very rough and dangerous to me.

I had no affiliations with either side, but, for some reason or other that I cannot now recall, my sympathy was all with the Limerickmen and I was by no means happy when belated scores gave Tipperary victory.

With the exception of John Joe Kinnane of Limerick, who, I think, retired injured in the closing stages, I cannot now recall any individual player on either side, but what I do recall very vividly is being brought to pay my respects after the game to Dan Fraher himself, who was sitting on a chair outside some kind of small pavilion or dressing-shed on the way out.

But I have a far more vivid recollection of my next Munster hurling final, again in Dungarvan, in the following year—the August of 1925.

I had grown enough through the months between to have learned much about the players, and, besides, the team that opposed Tipperary in this final was Waterford, and several of the Waterford City players were well known to me.

But, after a reasonably well-balanced first half, the Tipperary men took complete command after the interval, and perhaps that is why I remember them with such remarkable vividness.

Down all the years nothing dims the memory of Mick Darcy from Nenagh as he was that day at the peak of his hurling glory, tall and lithe and lissome, his hurley a magic wand that could charm the ball from the skies or send it almost incredible distances off the ground.

And to-day, more than thirty years later, when I see the same Mick Darcy, erect as ever, urging on a U.C.D. hurling team from the Croke Park or Belfield touchlines, my mind is at once back to that August day at Dungarvan long ago when not even Cuchullain himself could have bettered the brilliance of the young and sleek-haired student.

But Mick Darcy had great men with him then. There was his brother Jack, considerably less spectacular but often just as effective. There was

# HER'S FIELD

: By MOONDHARRIG

Arthur O'Donnell from Boherlahan, equally reliable as goalkeeper or full-back. There was Phil Cahill, surely as clever a forward as ever wore the blue and gold, and Martin Kennedy, a full-forward whose equal for dash and accuracy has hardly been seen since.

That day, too, was the first occasion on which I was able to identify the Leahy brothers to my own satisfaction, Captain Johnny from Boherlahan, who ever since has typified for me the very spirit of Tipperary hurling and his brother Paddy who, even when I meet him to-day, seems to bring with him the freshness of his native fields to the diesel-doped air of Dublin's O'Connell Street.

But Waterford were not without their heroes, too. On the Suirside line-out that day was a man long and gloriously renowned on the hurling fields, Brendan Considine, who, as a stripling, had won his first All-Ireland with his native Clare back in 1914 and who was on Dr. John Ryan's Collegian selection that won the All-Ireland of 1917 from Johnny Leahy's Boherlahan men, coming on as a sub when someone, I think it was Joe Phelan, retired in the decider.

Brendan, good enough as a footballer to deserve an All-Ireland medal, too, was a bank official in Waterford County in 1925 and had another famous Clareman with him in the Deiseach colours, Mick Falvey, then a student at the De la Salle Training College.

Also on the Waterford line-out that day were Dick Morrissey, who subsequently starred with Kilkenny and whose hurling career was so tragically cut short in the opening game of the famous triple final against Cork in 1931; Charlie Ware, later to lead Waterford's climb to hurling

greatness and John 'Dottie' Power, a hurling artist of the top class whose name will not quickly be forgotten by the Suirside.

To me that 1925 Dungarvan final will always hold pride of place, even over all the titanic clashes for Munster titles since then; principally, of course, because I think it was on that day I came to the use of reason as a hurling follower, but also because that day I saw Tipperary hurling in all its glory.

Moreover, though Waterford were badly beaten, that game marked the start of the Deisemen's march to the top. In little more than ten years they were in a senior All-Ireland final at Croke Park and have rarely been out of the top rank ever since.

In the following year, 1926, I was fortunate enough to see all three games for the Munster final between Cork and Tipperary.

At least I claim to have seen all three games, but all I saw on the first day at Cork were the backs of various members of the overflow crowd that encroached on the pitch and an occasional glimpse of the *sliothar* when it was high in the air.

The first replay at Thurles was, I think, the most exciting Munster Final I have ever witnessed. Dinny Lanigan of Limerick was referee, Cork were six points in front at the interval and the scenes of excitement and enthusiasm when Martin Kennedy levelled for Tipperary shortly before the last whistle surpassed anything I have seen since.

Some other day, God willing, I shall try to recall those three matches in detail and how Cork won through at the third time of asking.



*A Dublin defender surrounded by Cork forwards in the League game at Croke Park on April 9.*

(Continued from page 19)

what started the all-Dublin movement and it found voice among the intensely county-proud Marinomen, who, when they rose to the top of the tree, set about changing the system.

Their deeds spoke volumes and having beaten the best in club competitions with all local players they soon introduced the idea for the county teams as well.

One of the strongest points in their favour was that under the then existing selection plan, Dublin had gone precisely nowhere, so that there was much to be gained and little to be lost by picking an all-Dublin side.

The most important gain was that young hurlers leaving school after having been tutored thoroughly in the skills of the game by the Christian Brothers and lay teachers, found that where previously there had been no outlet for their talent, they could now look forward to representing the county in one of the grades.

The question now is, are the present-day Dublin

hurlers grasping their opportunities with both hands? One is forced to the conclusion that they are not.

Of course it would be wrong to lay all the blame on the players' shoulders. The best team in the country must have support from behind and I feel that Dublin hurlers do not get this.

The County Board is, generally speaking, football-minded and although the members themselves may not realise it, they pay scant attention to the achievements—or lack of them—of the hurlers.

In fact, some of the officials don't even bother to travel with the team for away games.

So for the future, if Dublin hurling at inter-county level is to pull out of the tailspin it has been in for some time, it will need a shot in the arm in the form of more official support and encouragement; more spirit and enthusiasm from the players and a more adventurous approach from the selectors.

Try

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FOR MEN'S AND BOYS' CLOTHES

(Continued from page 14)

off for the rest of the match or, alternatively, he took the prescribed automatic suspension of a month or two months according to the offence. But in either case the referee had to send him off anyway.

The introduction of this point caused a good deal of confusion at Congress and this was added to by another Cork delegate who pointed out that a paragraph in Rule 115 automatically suspending players who insulted or threatened referees, linesmen or umpires was omitted from the Wexford motion.

If this delegate had bothered to check on his Agenda for Congress last year, he would have discovered that the Antrim motion passed last year which gave us Rule 115 in its present form, also omitted the paragraph protecting officials from intimidation. In other words, this paragraph was not omitted by Wexford this year — it had been omitted by Congress last year.

All these specious arguments threw delegates into such confusion that they were afraid to pass the Wexford motion which was defeated by a narrow majority. My point is that this would never have happened if the whole matter had been teased out carefully by a smaller and more responsible form of Congress where false arguments could be shown up by deliberate and careful analysis.

I must admit that this motion was lucky that it came early in the afternoon as otherwise it would have got even a shorter shrift. It is well known that when proceedings are running late, delegates have a tendency to throw out as fast as possible anything which causes the slightest worry, and pass anything as fast as possible which looks harmless.

This, in my opinion is certainly not the way to run Congress, and I do hope that when next Congress comes around we will have a few motions to revise the present constitution and procedure of this, the most important body in the G.A.A.



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# TOPICAL TALK



By **EAMONN YOUNG**

**I**T was always fashionable among the cynics and the cranks, most of whom suffered from a sense of physical inferiority, to belabour "this thing called sport". I heard one of the type spitting acid on the subject the other night. First I thought he was joking and prepared to fun with him; but when it was obvious that this poor chicken was in earnest I drifted into the safer conversational backwaters of metallurgy, bird-watching and other stimulating subjects.

He wore a droop in his shoulders, a twisted red line for a mouth, and his hair hung down in ring-a-lets. The only suggestion of animation was the light of suppressed viciousness in his eyes. Sport, he told the gathering, many of whom were trying to hold conversations of their own, was a degrading thing that stultified the mind and harmed the body. It increased the number of morons, of whom we already had a surfeit. It developed the body of an ox to house the mind of a zany and it lured thousands away from elevating intellectual pursuits and stripping them of all restraint reduced them to the level of the ravaging beast . . . etc., etc.

Certainly, over-emphasis on sport is not healthy. Which of us didn't have to forget the playing field when there was work to be done? Sport is for recreation . . . to help

a man relax, to make him happy.

In the days when man's food depended on his speed, skill and strength there was little need for games. Today, the man who works hard with his hands in field or factory may not feel a great need to chase a ball in the evening, but this modern life has given men jobs that could be done as well by women. Natural, therefore, that man will like to express his virility in a way reserved for him alone. (Don't remind me about women's wrestling).

Many a good man (unlike my beatnik acquaintance) was not at all interested in games. There are other ways of being happy; but there's no doubt that healthy exercise in any form of game is about the best thing we can recommend to the youth of any age. President Jack Kennedy and his advisers seem to agree, so we'll take a chance and ignore the dismal prophecies of our modern, long-haired Jeremias.

On the following day I met an inter-county player walking with his young son. We began to talk about many hurling and football competitions we have organised for the youngsters, and I waxed voluble on the good they do.

He took the wind out of my sails with a flat disagreement. He felt that frequent competition dulled

the appetite of the youth and left him at twenty a burned-out shell of the player he might have been.

His words left me unimpressed until he rolled off a list of names. They all had been superb at sixteen and tired at twenty. There may be something in it; but again, if there had been no youthful contests would these stylists have ever been seen even for the few short years?

Again, the object of the games is not to produce stars but to provide play. And yet, one hates to think of even one great possibility ruined by over exertion at an age when he was not fit for it. Sets you thinking.

◆ ◆ ◆

Never was the difference in styles and standard between teams of almost equally high merit brought home as in the recent O'Byrne Cup drawn final between Dublin and Louth. Kerry and Roscommon played a League semi-final in the second game that April day in Croke Park.

The Dublin and Louth teams showed men like Jim McArdle, Stephen White, Kevin Heffernan, John Timmons and others who have held their own with the best. And yet, we were treated to a succession of jersey-pulling, tripping, punching, sloppy fetching and downright awful kicking.

(Continued on page 33)

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ball first in  
this tussle  
during the  
exhibition game  
against  
All-Ireland  
champions  
Wexford at  
New Ross on  
March 19.  
The Rest won  
by 3-9 to 2-10.*



**(Continued from page 31)**

In spite of the excitement of the game we were annoyed and irritated and only Kevin Beahan's first-class feat of fifty-kicking which yielded a wonderful last-minute equalising point helped to take away the sour taste.

How different when Kerry and Roscommon began to play. This was Gaelic football . . . fetching, solid, lengthy kicking, sensible blocking down, and speed, speed . . . speed of thought and action.

And very little untidy, unrewarding and spiteful little attacks. We know that players are out there to win but surely the best way to do it is to play the game in a manner where shining skill is borne on the vehicle of hard, honest strength and determination.

It was pleasant to see that the constant sniping we scribblers have been doing at the monumental bastion of stubbornness which houses the shrine of automatic suspensions is at last taking effect.

In Cork I haven't been able to get very far with it due to an in-

ability to phrase a motion that won't be ruled out of order. Other counties have, however, sent it to Congress and when a great player and intelligent speaker like Alf Murray throws in his weight behind the motion one feels that the day will soon dawn when it will be apparent even to the die-hards that the greatest deterrent to good refereeing is automatic suspension.

I look forward to the day which I'm convinced is not far away, when the referee will put the offender to the line, bring on a sub to replace him, and let the committee deal as it sees fit with the boy whose boldness is outlined in the ref's report.

I am not a great radio-fan, at least for matches, for I usually see them; but the other day I had a novel experience when the game was on in front and Micheal O. Hehir's crisp commentary came from the transistor set on the lap of the man beside me. I had often heard them ten yards away but for the first time had the chance of comparing precisely my own view

with that of the commentator. Verdict? I wish I had a transistor.

That man Owen Mulholland of Dublin is a bit of a "crackpot" like the rest of us. Under the Hogan Stand I met him and we talked on a subject very dear to me . . . training films. Owen has built up a library of films over recent years which he expects will yet see the light of day on Irish television.

He has done many playing studies of famous players by keeping the camera focussed on them and catching them in all-out action. I saw about five minutes of very interesting hurling done by Jimmy Brohan one night in Owen's house with tall Micheal Moriarty, the Gaelic commentator from Dingle.

It was terrific and showed all the skills which every good performer must have learned before he can play consistently good stuff in class ball-play.

But when Owen was describing his latest films to me under the Hogan he clutched at balls dropping

**(Continued on page 45)**

**SUPER TIPP CAN WHIP**

**S**UNDAY, September 3, 1961, is quite a while away yet. But already I can "let you in" on one particular incident on that particular date.

At about 4.45 on that first Sunday in September a young blue-and-gold jerseyed hurler, by the name of Matt Hassett, will climb the steps of the Hogan Stand and, there to the ringing cheers of thousands of Tipperary fans, will receive the McCarthy Cup from the hands of G.A.A. President, Mr. Hugh Byrne.

Cheek? Rubbish? Or just plain Hard Neck? Call those opening two paragraphs what you like.

But to my way of thinking, they sum up the outcome of this year's

All-Ireland senior hurling championship race which will shortly thunder into white-hot action in both Munster and Leinster.

In making that bold forecast, I am not unmindful of the ever-present danger that lurks in . . . .

● WEXFORD . . . Reigning All-Ireland champions, they have the craft and defensive power to cancel out the lack of genuine scoring thrust up front . . .

● WATERFORD . . . bolstered up by a string of impressive wins in the National League, they shook the Tipp men to their heels in the decider with that tremendous last quarter rally which came so near to

toppling the powerful blue-and-gold brigade . . .

● CORK . . . They showed in the League that they were far from being a spent force and led once more by the irrepressible Christy Ring, they will not succumb without a hectic fight.

Three sturdy forces, certainly. But having weighed up the pros and cons of both sides I'm convinced that nothing will stop the Tipperary men from annexing their 18th All-Ireland senior hurling title.

Look at it this way. For 22 hectic months the Munster champions have taken on the elite of the hurling world and only once during that long, grinding road have they been forced to bow the knee.

Unfortunately, that one lapse was sufficient to cost them the 1960 All-Ireland title; but then, even the most partisan Wexford follower will agree that Lady Luck wasn't particularly kind to the Munster lads on that one day when it mattered most.

But, tough as it was at the time, that shock reverse has proved something of a blessing in disguise for Tipperary.

For it steeled them into the resolute, well-knit fifteen which swept to such a convincing win in the recent National League final and which will, in the opinion of many shrewd judges, pay off in the shape of an All-Ireland title—come September 3.

From goalkeeper Donal O'Brien

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## prospects

# THE LOT

right down to Tom Moloughney in the left corner-forward berth, there's an unmistakable look of class about this latest fifteen to come out of the famed Premier County.

O'Brien bids fair to develop into a goalkeeper of the Tony Reddan class and fronted by a line of tough, hard-pulling backs in Matt Hassett, Michael Maher and Kieran Carey, his cat-like agility poses a mighty problem for all would-be goal grabbers.

Flanked by two brilliant wingmen in Mick Burns and big-hearted John Doyle, Tony Wall is again hurling with all his old-style and class and with Theo English and Liam Devaney to man the mid-field berths, I can't see the opposition getting the edge on the Tipp. men in this department.

Ace marksman Jimmy Doyle hasn't been hitting the target so often of late—he was singularly ineffective in the League final against Waterford—but, for all that, he still remains a great forward and in company with Donie Nealon, Tom Ryan, and the Moloughneys, can play havoc with the best organised defence.

As I said at the outset, this year's All-Ireland senior hurling championship will prove no "cake-walk"—Wexford, Waterford and Cork will see to that.

Nonetheless, I take Tipp to whip them all and prove conclusively that they are fit to take their place with the greatest teams that ever came out of the storied Premier County!



MICK MAHER (left), the Rest of Ireland full-back in a duel with Wexford's PADGE KEHOE during the exhibition match at New Ross on March 19.

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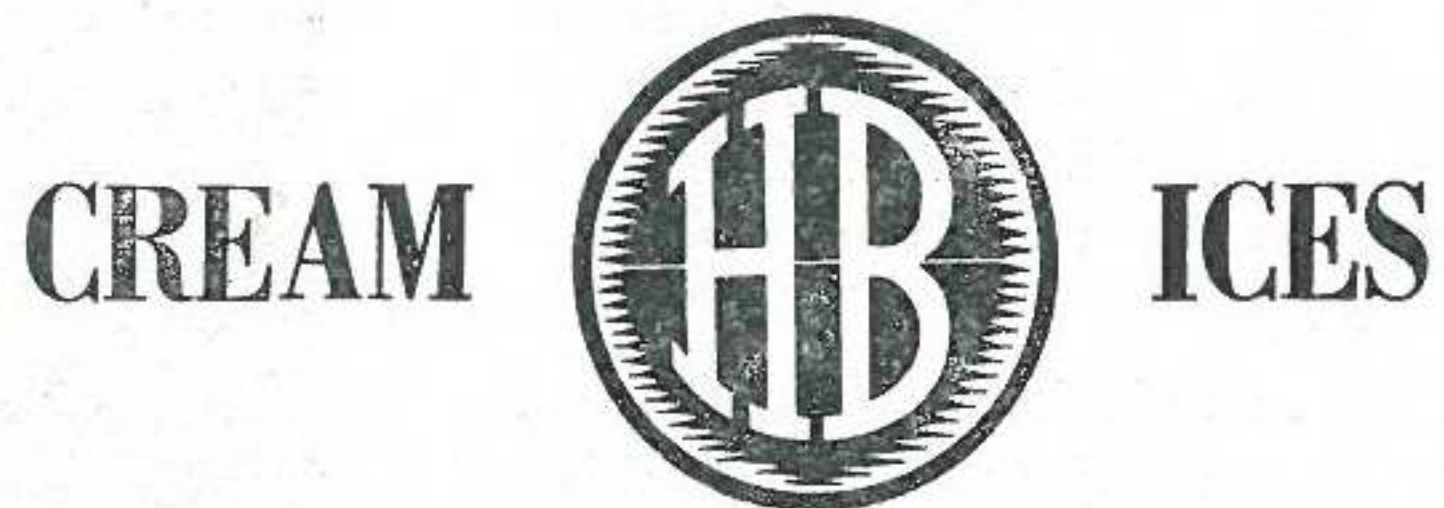
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## *Sophia Brack*

**K**ATHLEEN MILLS of Dublin has won more than enough camogie All-Ireland medals for a full team, while every G.A.A. follower knows that Christy Ring, Cork's own non-pareil of the stick game, has eight senior All-Ireland medals; but Sophia Brack from the South County Dublin village of Loughlinstown, holds the most remarkable record of all—she has won eight All-Ireland senior camogie medals in eight consecutive years!

Sophia Brack must have been one of the most effective full-forwards that ever played camogie for Dublin or for any other county, but, whatever attacking position she filled she was always a wonderful inspiration to her side and captained the Dublin county team for several years, encouraging her colleagues both by example and exhortation.

Not alone did Sophia Brack win eight consecutive All-Irelands; she also won ten consecutive Leinster titles and played in nine All-Ireland finals in as many years.

Though she retired from the inter-county scene some five years ago she still turns out regularly for her club, C.I.E., and still manages to snatch many a vital goal.

Sophia Brack began her camogie career as a youngster with Bray Technical School, and

progressed from there to the old Cromlech club which was subsequently re-organised as St. Patrick's. From St. Patrick's Miss Brack 'graduated' to Slieve Bloom and then in 1956 she joined C.I.E., the club to which ever since she has given such distinguished and faithful service.

Around this time there was an unfortunate schism in the camogie Association which resulted in Dublin not competing in the All-Ireland championship. Eventually, the C.I.E. club joined the Central Council body and as it was the only club then affiliated, represented the county in the All-Ireland final of 1947, losing narrowly to Antrim in the decider at Belfast.

The same position held good in the following year. Again C.I.E., representing Dublin, won through to the final, but this time the club team scored a remarkable victory and very deservedly won All-Ireland honours.

Thus Sophia Brack gained the first of her All-Ireland medals and then when in 1949 the rest of the Dublin clubs and the Central Council finally patched up their differences the Metropolitan girls became invincible on the camogie fields, sweeping on to victory in 1949, 1950, 1951, 1952, 1953, 1954 and 1955.

(Continued on page 39)

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*Mayo full-back Sean O'Reilly repulses a Derry attack in the National Football League semi-final on April 16.*

(Continued from page 37)

In every one of those victories Sophia Brack played a leading role, and when Dublin at last tasted defeat, again at the hands of Antrim, and again at Belfast in the All-Ireland semi-final of 1956, the C.I.E. star decided that the time had come for her to retire from the inter-county scene.

Member of a sporting family, her sister plays camogie for Geraldines while her brother plays for the Geraldines G.A.A. club, Sophia Brack is herself the most sporting of players, and is an example to all players today for she never misses a game in Phoenix Park, is always ready to lend

her services as goal umpire, and is an expert on camogie rules. She does not referee, though she may be persuaded to do so when her playing days are done.

An E.S.B. employee, Miss Brack is a mine of information on camogie matters and, while a keen G.A.A. follower, travels to every important camogie fixture of the season to which she can possibly get.

There is no greater enthusiast in Ireland for the game than Sophia Brack from Loughlinstown, camogie's record-breaker of record-breakers.

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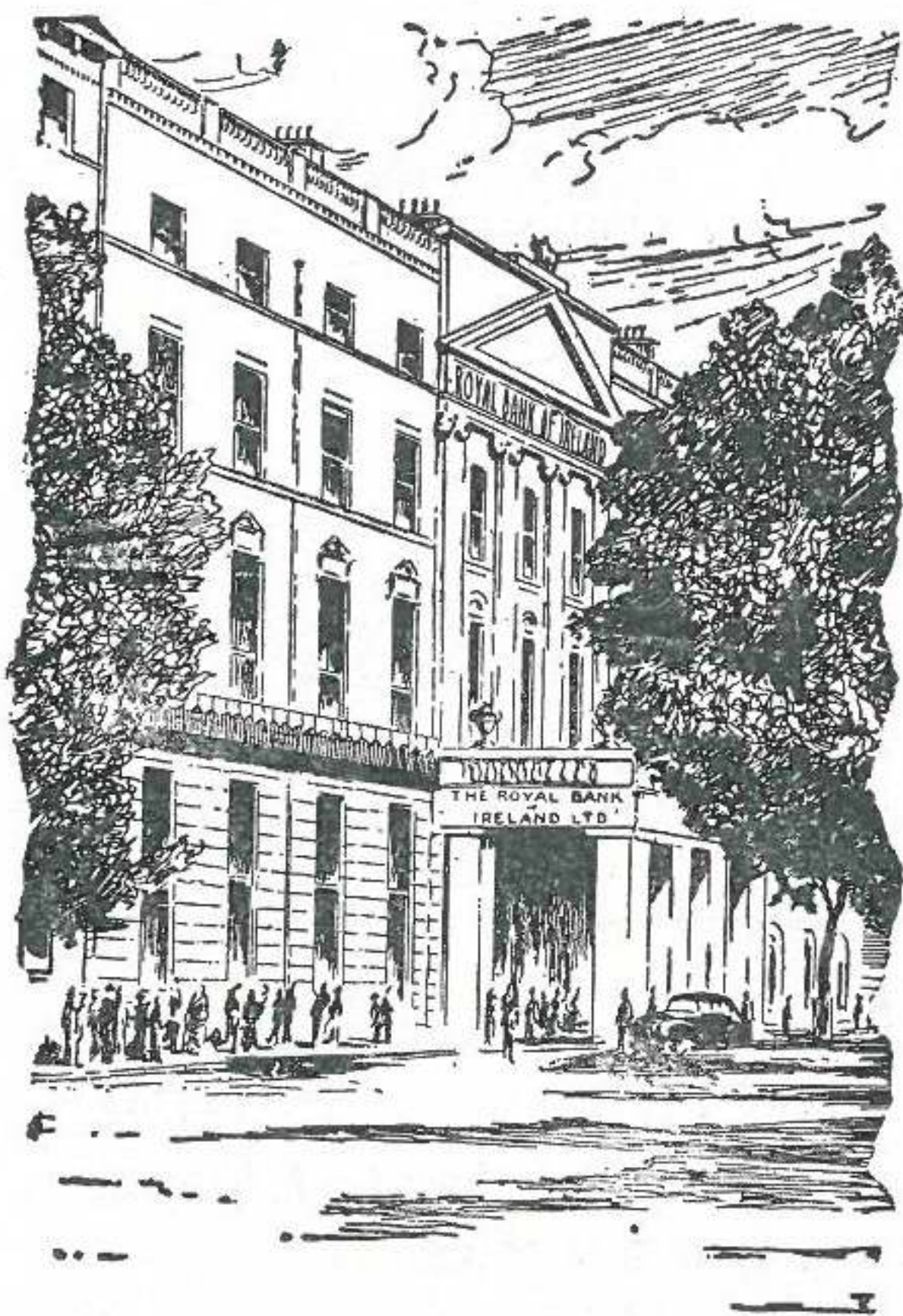
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# The long look back

---

By FRANK BYRNE—former Meath All-Ireland star

**W**HO was the best man you ever played on?" When a player retires from football this is the question most often put to him whenever and wherever Gaels gather and discuss games past and present. On the surface it is a straightforward inquiry, which, in the mind of the questioner, merits, indeed demands, an equally straightforward reply.

If by chance you name a fellow county man of the interrogator your former prowess is increased considerably in his eyes. But it isn't always that easy to state categorically—"Oh, so and so of course."

There are many factors which combine to make one man superior to his opponent during the course of a game. Every player, no matter how good, will give more than one poor display during his career, when, in the words of the disgruntled supporters, "He wouldn't bate Katty Barry"!

He will taste defeat many times, and remember, it is much easier to outplay your opponent when on a winning side than when your team is taking a hammering.

Then there is also the case of the "bogey" man. Every player has at sometime or other during his career suffered the frustration of playing second fiddle to a moderate opponent who happens to have the "Indian sign" on him.

I remember a schoolmate of mine who could always beat me in a sprint although I could do better times than him on the clock. He was tall and gangly and I always took the lead from the gun. But halfway down the straight I would find myself listening for him and sure enough before we reached the tape "me man" would sail by.

I remember reading with astonishment in a Sunday newspaper a famous centre-half forward's reply when asked who was the best footballer he ever played on. When next I met him I expressed surprise at his choice. "Ah, don't mind that," he replied "so and so was the last man I played on, and when I was asked the question his was the first name that came into my head."



**STEPHEN WHITE**  
*Star half-back.*

Now, I can't for the life of me remember who was the last man I played on, but in any event I couldn't, nor wouldn't, attempt to nominate the best man I ever played on.

Consider such stars as Simon Deignan, Sean Quinn, Gerry O'Reilly and Stephen White and you will realise the magnitude of the task. All of these outstanding players would surely be eligible for inclusion in any "Who's Who" of

wing backs in Gaelic football. I feel it would be invidious of me to dare nominate any one of them as the greatest. After all, why bother to distinguish between such superlatives as "brilliant" and "outstanding".

All of them had many worthy attributes in common. They were complete footballers and did perform equally well in other positions on the field, but it was in their games at left-half that I came to learn and respect the full range of their talents.

One important lesson any young aspiring wing-back could have learned from their play was that the oft-quoted advice to "mark your man" for them meant "outplay your man." Slavish adherence to such well-meant but too-often ill-advised counsel defeats its own object.

As a youth of twenty I well remember playing in an Intermediate championship game during the era of the hand-pass and the solo-run. Having won a Railway Cup medal with Leinster a short time previously and being the fastest man on the team, I was apparently considered by the opposition—in the light of subsequent events—to be the key-man on our team.

I'll never forget that hour. My opponent made not the slightest attempt to play the ball. Mind you, he didn't employ dirty tactics; but he attached himself to me like a limpet, right from the throw-in. I was held, obstructed and pushed and if I did manage to elude my "shadow" another member of the defence took over and I was back on the same old merry-go-round again.

Whenever daylight showed between us someone was sure to roar  
**(Continued on page 43)**

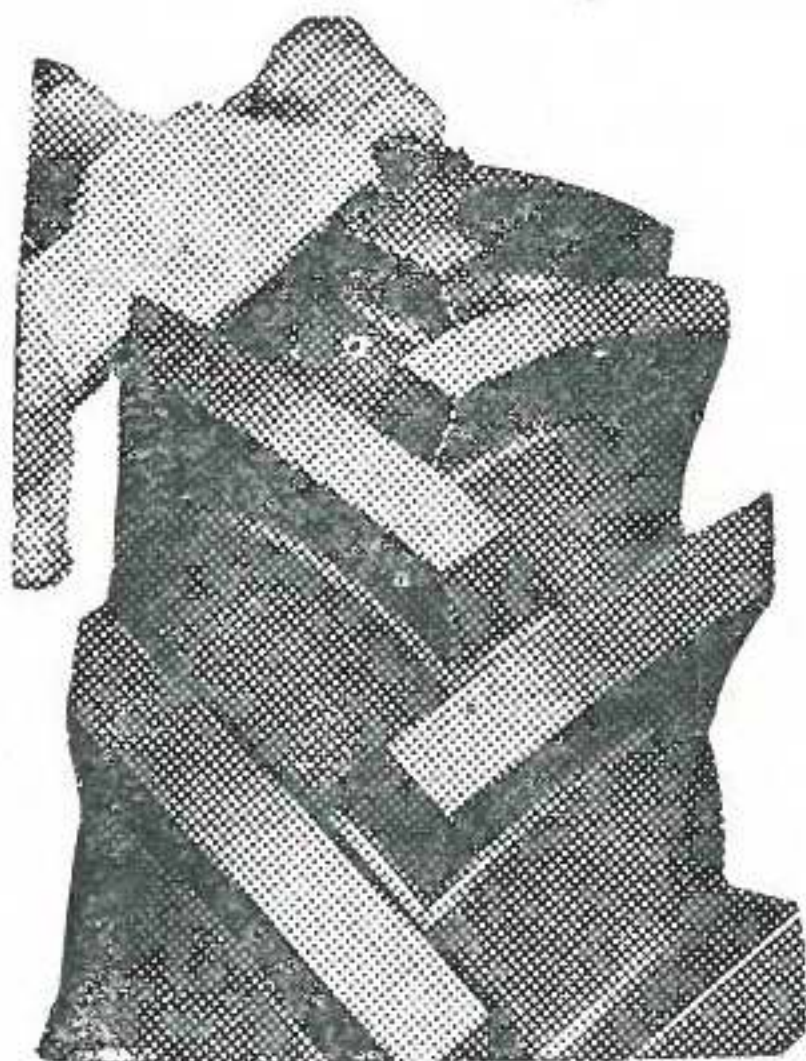
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*Action in the Derry-Mayo League semi-final. From left: D. Mullan (D), B. Keane (M), W. O'Kane (D), S. O'Reilly (M).*

(Continued from page 41)

from the side-line — “so and so, mark your man.”

At half-time I complained to Boiler McGuinness that I wasn't getting a “smell” of the ball. “You're doing fine Frank,” he replied, “while you keep them busy we'll get the scores.” That's exactly what happened. I never had a worse game, but the rest of the forwards had a field day and we won easily.

I relate the above anecdote to illustrate that the negative policy involved in that particular interpretation of “mark your man” doesn't win games.

From time to time during the course of an important championship or league tie one sees a player being shadowed so closely by his opposite number that the antics afford the less partisan spectators much amusement and even draws comment from Micheal O Hehir.

But in nine cases out of ten they do little to benefit his team.

Now I don't for one moment contend that a wing back should go through the course of a game with complete disregard for his opponent. That would be sheer folly. But I hold that if the back is too pre-occupied with what the wing-forward is doing he will automatically adopt a completely defensive role and become a stopper pure and simple.

As such, he is only fulfilling half his function. A good wing back is also an attacker who initiates practically as many attacks as a midfielder. The four I have named all excelled in this facet of the game.

They had another quality in common—they were versatile and adaptable wing backs. If you “foxed” them once you rarely succeeded with the same trick a second time. Gerry O'Reilly, Sean Quinn and Stephen White used their speed to beat an opponent to the ball. Both Gerry and Sean lacked inches so they usually positioned

themselves to field the ball in front of the forward.

Stephen, in common with Christo Hand, only used his right leg as a prop for his left; yet because of his speed and swerve he was rarely blocked down.

Simon Deignan, for all his powerful frame, was deceptively fast and agile. When beaten for possession he nearly always contrived to position himself so as to be between the winger and the goal. He rarely made a hasty tackle so it was very difficult to beat him with a side-step.

Yes, these four were tops. Although they were tenacious tacklers and courageous defenders when occasion demanded, they realised that the old adage “Possession is nine points of the law” also holds true in football. Theirs was a positive brand of football. They sought at all times to outplay their opponents, a policy which paid rich dividends as evidenced by their illustrious careers.

IT is more than 12 years ago since I was first told that I would soon see a Gaelic football match televised, and like many others I eagerly awaited the opportunity of seeing this powerful means of mass-communication operating. When Ulster Television was established in Belfast, I got the opportunity of seeing the Gaelic footballers of Derry for the first time televised, in a training practice at Newbridge in 1959.

Derry at this time were back after a glorious football year which brought them to the All-Ireland final of 1958, only to be beaten by Dublin.

Although certain newspapers criticised the Northern Television Authorities, it was rather unfair criticism as far as U.T.V. was concerned. They have undoubtedly given fair coverage to Gaelic games. Jim McKeever gave lectures on rules and field positions — a series which would be of great help to the youth and which should be continued.

When Down took the Sam Maguire Cup across the Border for the first time, the whole Down team and officials were received on U.T.V. and sports editor Ernie Strathdee discussed the game at length. with Down coach Barney Carr.

U.T.V. followed Down for their television programmes in 1960, and the climax came when Paddy Doherty won the U.T.V. sports star of the year award.

In a recent Sportscast programme on U.T.V. efficient sports officer Ernie Strathdee discussed the outcome of the Lagan Cup final with the Down and Derry captains—Kevin Mussen and Jim McKeever, and dealt with various aspects of G.A.A. rules and administration.

Ulster Television is naturally a service to cater for Ulster viewers, and they are very keen on giving up-to-the-minute news items. They give the results of all major Gaelic

games from both sides of the border, and during the All-Ireland final between Down and Kerry last year, they telephoned the studio from Croke Park. This quick news service is an additional advantage.

The Universities were entertained by U.T.V. during this year's Sigerson Cup series and a player from each University was interviewed, including Down's Sean Ó Neill. All in all, taking the coverage of Gaelic games on Radio Eireann—with the exception of the

not been asked to discuss certain items of importance in G.A.A. administration; but I hope that in the future some of these men will get the opportunity of appearing on the screen.

The question of playing games on a Sunday is a difficulty with both television services and the B.B.C. is faced especially with this problem of the Sunday Observance Act—a problem which will not arise with the new Irish Television Service. The B.B.C., during recent

## THE 'T.V. AGE' POSES MANY PROBLEMS FOR THE G.A.A

### *North must get a decent show*

By CONALLACH

live broadcasts—we have only Sean Óg Ó Ceallachain's 15 minutes on Sunday night, Junior Sports Magazine, and some other "mixed grills". It must be said that U.T.V. compares favourably.

But U.T.V. could cater more satisfactorily for their G.A.A. viewers by having more talks and discussions on Gaelic games. I am surprised that such excellent speakers and capable legislators as Frank O'Neill (Tyrone), former President of the Ulster Council; Alf Murray (Armagh), Maurice Hayes (Down), Seamus Gilheaney (Cavan), Sean McLoughlin (Derry) and Liam Harvey (Antrim), have

games in New Eltham, interviewed the Chairman of the London County Board, while a short film of the Lagan Cup final between Down and Derry was very much appreciated from that station.

However, the main questions now are: Will the new Irish Television Service give us "live" telecasts of football and hurling? And what will their general news and feature coverage of G.A.A. affairs be like?

Let's hope that the games will get a liberal share of screen space . . . and that, especially, the Gaels of the six counties will not be forgotten.

(Continued from page 33)

out of the skies; sidestepped like Seamus Murphy, did solos like Gerry O'Malley—and very nearly put me going, too!

No wonder an old-timer grinned as he passed. He left me then to cross to the Cusack to turn the cameras on another star. I do hope we see those films.

◆ ◆ ◆

I met a veteran footballer from Tipp the other day. As he's fifteen stone and still pretty hardy I'll omit the name. One day in New York he was playing a game that was reffed by his best friend. After ten minutes his opponent hit him an awful clout so Jim said to the ref, "Did you see that?"

"I did," said the ref. "If a man did that to me I'd kill him." Five minutes later Jim tapped his opponent on the noggin and down he went (good clean fun). Up came the ref and put Jim off the field. Who can a man trust?

◆ ◆ ◆

Ulster county football is pretty even now; Connacht have several good teams; Leinster as usual can field half a dozen that could, with a bit of luck, win an All-Ireland.

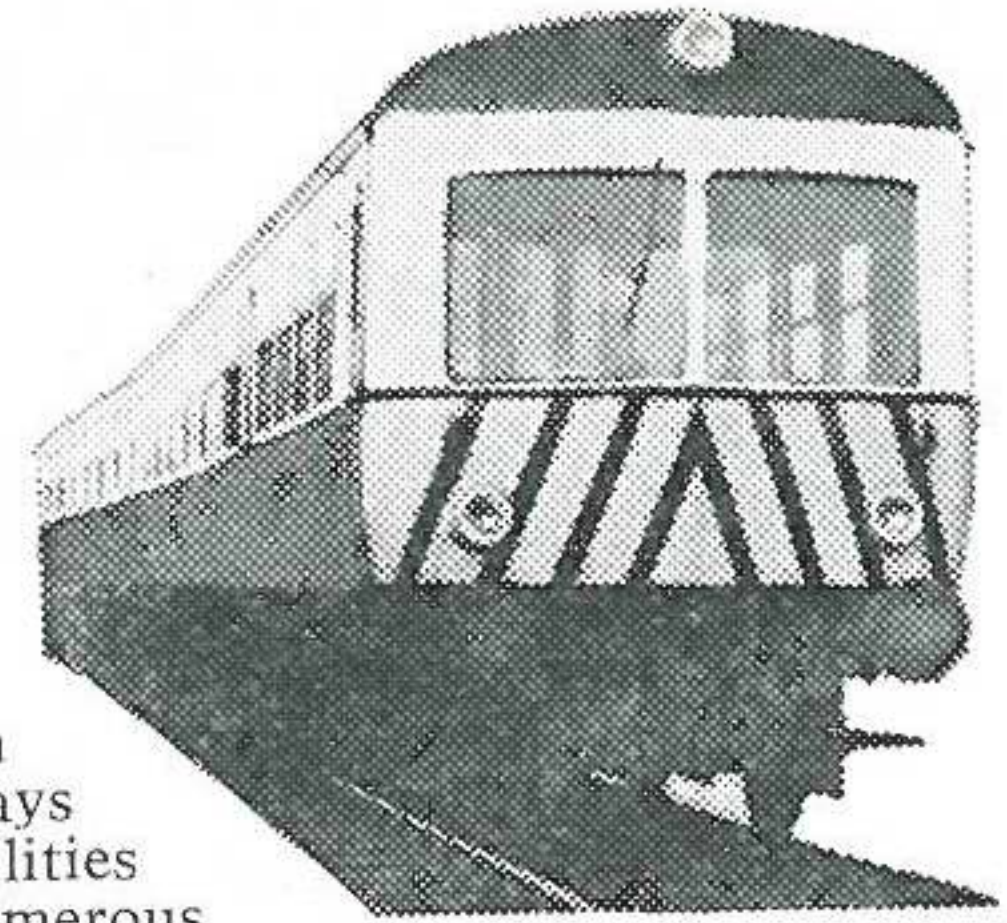
In Munster, Kerry holds the fort. At the southern Convention they decided to do something about a secondary competition intended to raise the standard, but so far we have not moved.

Why not invite two outside teams like Galway, Laois, Carlow or Roscommon to join our "Inner Six" in two groups and play a week-night competition on a league basis.

It would pass away a few months for the footballers of Clare, Tipp, Waterford, Limerick and Cork whose only chances of seeing Croke Park is from the sideline.

Tony Wall suggested to me a handicap system for hurling. In this football competition it should be just right to start Kerry at scratch and give Waterford, Tipp and Limerick a nine point lead. It would be fun for all to see if the good fellows could catch up.

## come NORTH this year!

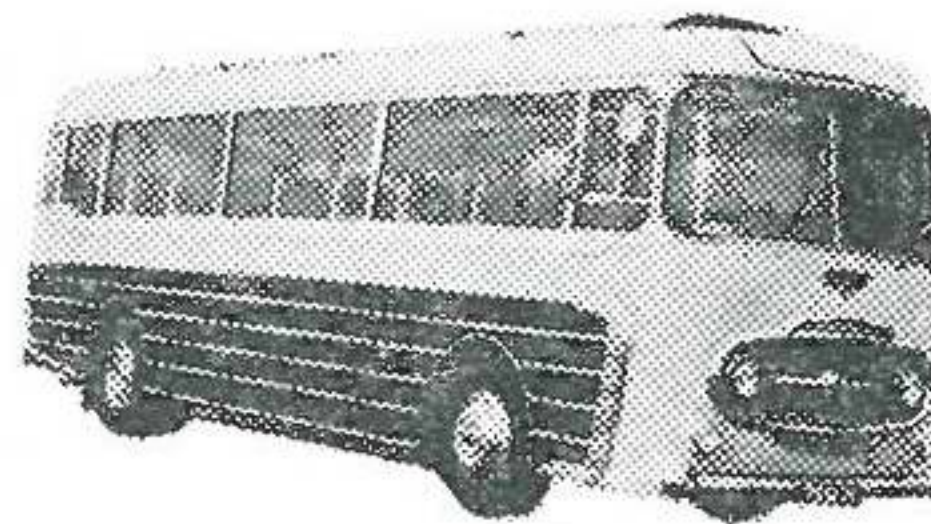


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# THE LONG-TERM MEN

TEN years at the top in any sport is a long time, and especially in Gaelic games, where physical strength, speed, and agility are continually being tested.

To win one's place on an inter-county team at say, twenty and hold it until one is thirty is indeed a feat. Yet, we have had men who far surpassed this mark . . . we've even had a few who doubled it.

There never was, of course, nor will there ever be, a player with a record like Christy Ring—twenty years of not alone inter-county hurling, but inter-provincial as well, and without a break.

In years to come, somebody will recall a feat of Ring's and a listener will ask "Was that in the 'thirties, 'forties, 'fifties or 'sixties?"

A man with a record which compares with that of Ring, if not in brilliance then at least in "longevity", is Col. Tom McGrath of Clare. Col. Tom came on the Clare team in 1906 and was still going strong in the late 'twenties.

It is said that had not an injury forced him into premature retirement, he would have been on the Clare fifteen which lost to Kilkenny in the 1932 All-Ireland final.

Other Claremen of exceptionally long careers were Pat "Fowler" McInerney, Dr. Tommy Daly and Tull Considine. The "Fowler" won his first All-Ireland medal when Clare beat Laois in the 1914 decider. Eighteen years later he was at his peak in the 1932 final.

Charlie Ware of Waterford was another who defied the march of time, putting in nearly two decades in the county colours and a further decade with his home club Erins Own. Another great Waterford man, John Keane, was for seventeen years on the county team while contemporaries Mick Hickey and Christy Moylan both saw a good part of a second decade in the Waterford jersey.

From Waterford to Tipperary and the feat of Tommy Doyle—winning his first All-Ireland medal in 1937 and his last in 1951. Then there was Garrett Howard—a star on the Limerick team which won the 1921 title and still a star when the Shannonsiders captured the 1936 title. Mick Cross just missed the 1921 final but he was there for the 1923 decider and still very much to the fore with Limerick and Munster in 1936.

Galway, too, has had its long-term men. Mick

(Continued on page 49)

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*Dublin's Kevin Heffernan (No. 15) gets in a shot against Louth in the O'Byrne Cup final (1960) at Croke Park on April 30. Kevin, with 13 years on the Dublin team, is one of the longest-serving players in present-day football.*

**(Continued from page 47)**

Gill and Mick King both won All-Ireland medals in 1923 and were still top-class hurlers in the mid and late thirties, while Kilkenny had a host of long-service men such as Matty Power, Dick Grace, Lory Meagher, Paddy Phelan, Paddy Larkin and Jim Langton, all of whom saw at least a dozen years in the Black and Amber jersey.

Harry Grey won an All-Ireland medal with Dublin in 1938 and was still with his native Laois in the mid-fifties while other non-natives who starred for Dublin and succeeded in staying on top while many years rolled by, were Jim "Builder" Walsh and Martin Hayes.

More recent stars such as Wexfordmen Nick Rackard, Nick O'Donnell and Padge Kehoe and Waterford's Phil Grimes, are others who have succeeded in defying time.

Cork-born Kerryman Dan O'Keeffe has the longest inter-county and inter-provincial football

record. He won his first All-Ireland in 1931 and was still good enough to be on the Munster team in 1948.

Mayoman Josie Munnely won an All-Ireland medal in 1936 and then three years ago came back to add an All-Ireland junior medal; while men like Paddy Bawn Brosnan, Sean Purcell, Gerry O'Malley, Jim McKeever, Kevin Heffernan, Jimineen Power, John Joe O'Reilly, Simon Deignan, Jim Kearney, Paul Russell, Joe Barrett, Con Brosnan, Dick Fitzgerald, Jackie Ryan, Mick Casey, Eddie Boyle, Johnny McDonnell, Jack Delaney, Tom "Boiler" McGuinness, Matt Goff, Mickey Geraghty, Jack Higgins and Jimmy Martin remained prominent stars for over a dozen years.

These long-term men, and no doubt I have forgotten a few, deserve a special mention in the annals of our native games; for in no instance was their stay at the top a chance affair. Rather was it the result of great dedication and of a true love for the game.

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# AUSTRALIAN RULES

(Continued from page 7)

two white-coated (and white-hatted) goal umpires, while what we call linesmen are known out there as 'boundary umpires', who have quite a deal of ground to cover on those oval pitches. When a ball goes into touch, the boundary umpire returns it into play by standing on the line with his back to the field and throwing the ball back over his head.

There are four quarters of twenty-five minutes each, teams changing sides at the end of each quarter. At half-time there is a fifteen-minute interval during which the players retire to their dressing rooms, while at three-quarter time it is the tradition that oranges and drinks are served to the teams at the centre of the field.

Playing fields need be of no fixed size. Length from goal to goal can vary from 150 to 200 yards and width from 100 to 170 yards. The ball, unlike a rugby ball, is rounded at the ends and is slightly heavier than a Gaelic ball.

The players are not full-time footballers, though, for ordinary games, they get a relatively small fixed sum per match, each player getting exactly the same amount (The usual sum some years ago was £5 (Australian) per man.)

Finally, no G.A.A. follower would have the slightest difficulty in checking Australian Rules results, for they list their score-lines just as we do, in goals and points, i.e., Melbourne, 7-10; Richmond, 5-13. (Of course, you have to remember that each of these goals is worth six points.) On the scoreboard, though, the points will be listed under "B"; for in the Rule-book a score between the point-posts is technically known as 'a behind'.

I once saw an Australian Rules player in action with Dublin University in a P. J. Duke Cup final in Croke Park. I'd dearly love to see a team of them there taking on eighteen Gaelic players under an agreed set of rules.

# TOMMY MURPHY

(Continued from page 21)

cullen club and being chosen on the Leinster Colleges' inter-provincial side of which he was a member again in 1938.

Not generally known, however, is the fact that Murphy was also a hurler of no mean ability and in his Knockbeg years (1936-'39) he wielded the caman for the college teams.

He was honoured with Leinster selection again in 1940 as a member of the football side that beat Munster in the Railway Cup final. He won another Railway Cup medal five years later when called in as a sub. during the final. He played a big part in the defeat of Connacht.

Until 1953 Tommy continued to play with Laois in various positions and he regularly turned out with Graiguecullen until two years later. Although approaching 40 years of age last year he was still playing football and was a member of the Carlow team that played in the Post Office All-Ireland championship.

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# READERS' LETTERS

Dear Sir,—Just recently I read in *Gaelic Sport* a profile of James McCartan by "Moondharrig" in which he stated that "he (McCartan) played no small part in helping Ulster to regain the Railway Cup in a hard-fought final against Munster in Croke Park on St. Patrick's Day, 1960." Has he got his facts correct?

I have scanned and scanned the Ulster team and in no place can I see the name of James McCartan for the simple reason that he was not on the team!

There were five Down men on the team and two reserves, namely, Paddy Doherty, Sean O'Neill, Tony Hadden, Pat Rice, Joe Lennon, Kevin Mussen and Pat O'Hagan.

If McCartan played no small part in winning the Ulster-Munster game, he must indeed be a wonderful man; for I have never yet met a man who can win a match simply by being among the spectators (which, I presume, he was).

There are quite a few points in "Moondharrig's" article with which I do not agree. Rather do I agree with Sean Feeley in the December 1960-February 1961 issue of the *Gaelic Sport* that "James McCartan is as far removed from being a perfect footballer as Waterford's star of last year, Tom Cheasty, was a perfect hurler."

In case of any doubts, I am an ardent Down supporter and have been at about forty of their matches within these past two years. That, you must admit, is quite good for a fifteen-year old schoolgirl.

*Dearg's Dubh go Deo.*

Dear Sir,—I am a regular reader of *Gaelic Sport* and I enjoy your magazine very much. Having read your March-May edition I glanced through the Camogie Profile and saw, as I already knew, that

camogie gets little or no publicity.

Well, why has it not? Isn't it much the same as hurling? Isn't it a sport for girls? Maybe the ladies are too proud to be seen with pieces of ash on a field.

I play camogie although my own county has no team nor has my parish a club yet. It soon will, I hope.

The camogie finals are not broadcast from Radio Eireann and it seems to me that that is what makes hurling as famous as it is. On our Sunday and daily papers it is very seldom we see even the word "camogie", let alone anything about it. It's time something were done about it. I am grateful to see that your magazine is not one of those forgetful papers.

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