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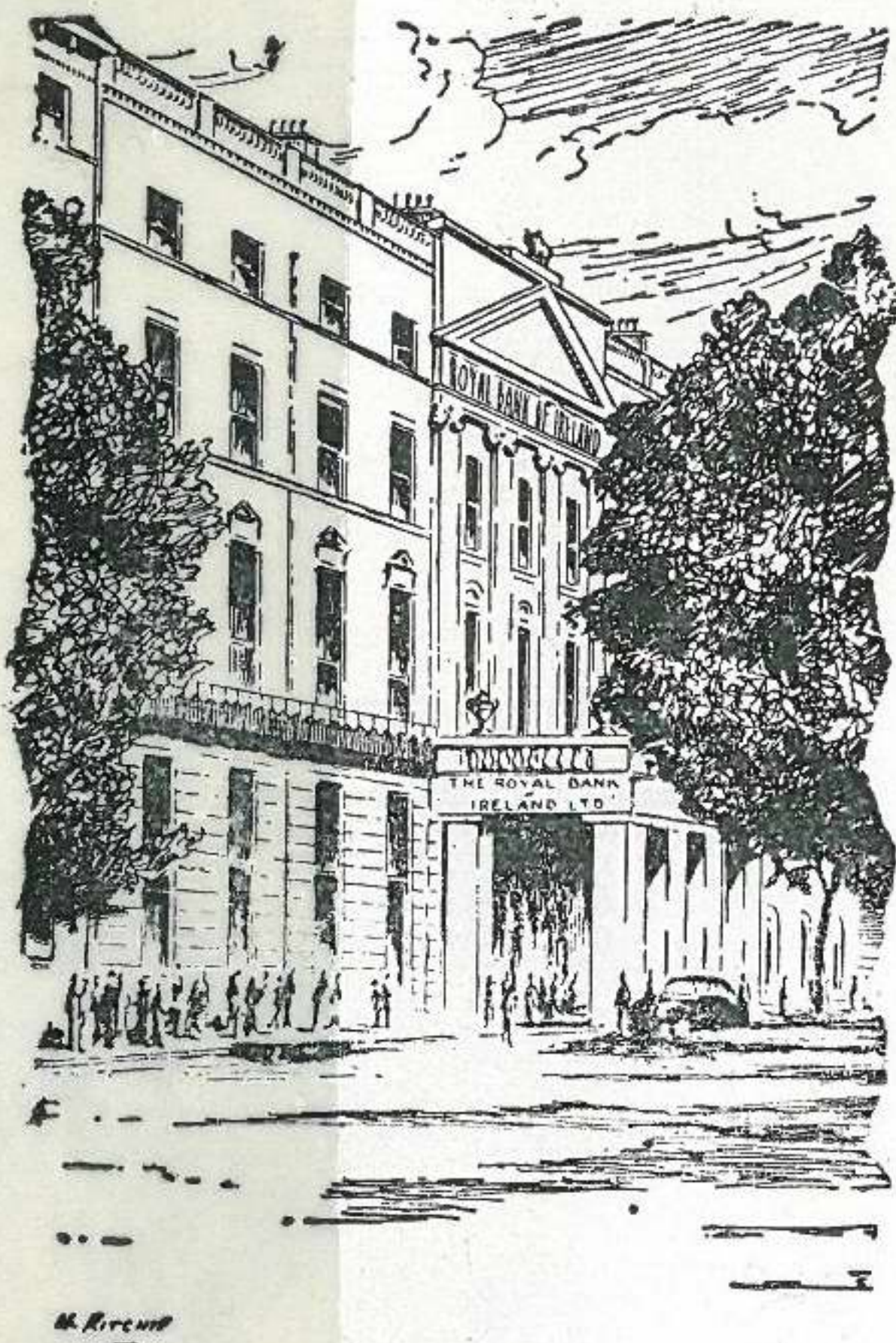
Gaelic Sport

Vol. 4. No. 1.
MARCH-MAY 1961



1!

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Footballer of the Year (Story on Pages 28, 29)



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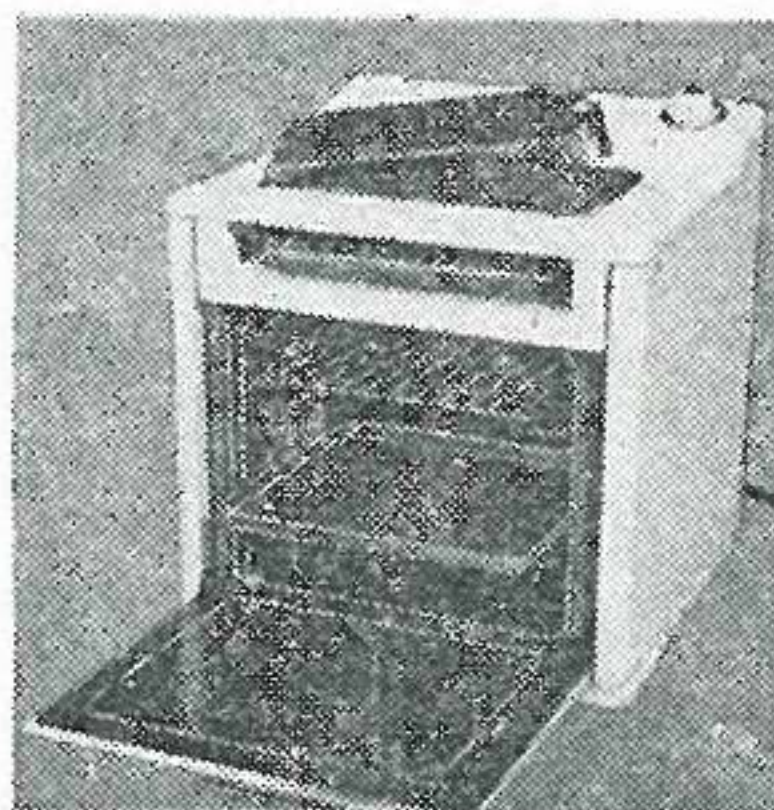
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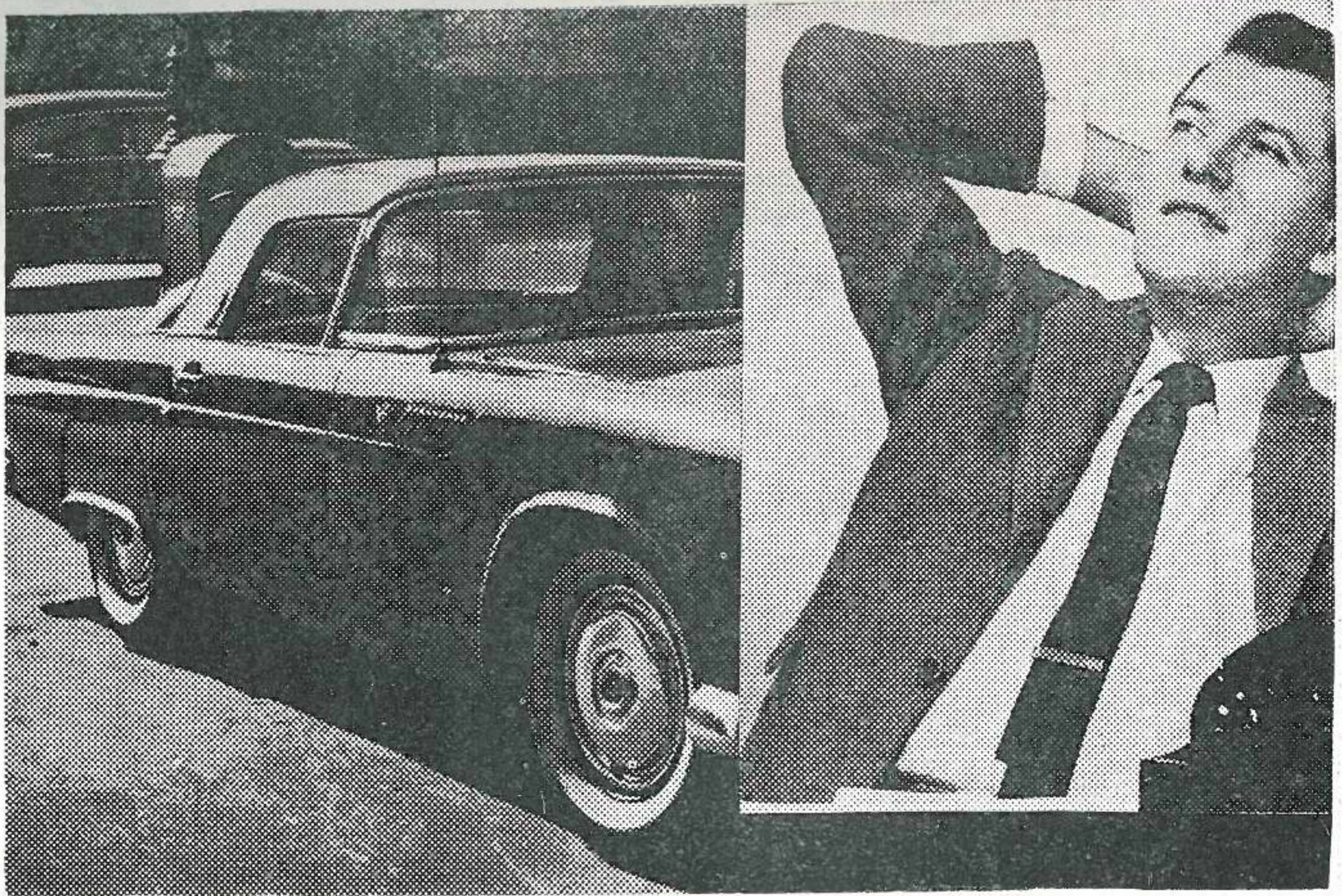
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Gaelic Sport

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PRÍOMHALT

Fiche bliain ag fás

SEO í an fichiú bliain ag Christy Ring ar fhoireann iománíochta na Mumhan. Lá de Pádraig 1942—b'shin an chéad uair a d'imir an fear seo ó Chluain Uamha ar fhoireann a chúige. B'iad na Laighnigh a bhí ina n-aghaidh an lá céanna agus sár-chluiche a bhí ann, an bua ag an Mhumha ag deire na h-uaire, 4-9 in aghaidh 4-5.

I lár sa leath-líne tosaigh a bhí Christy an lá sin. Ar a dheis bhí Willie Barron agus ar a chlé, Dick Stokes. Is fada anois ó d'imir ceachtar acu siúd. Is fada leis d'imir Mick Mackey agus John Quirke a bhí le Ring ar fhoireann na Mumhan i 1945, nuair a bhuaigh sé a cheathrú bann sa chomórtas seo—nó fiú i 1950, nuair bhuaigh sé a ochtú bann—níl duine den bfoireann sin ag imirt do chonndae nó do chúige go fóill.

Bhí an tarna cogadh mór ar súil an lá úd i 1942, nuair d'imir Ring don chéad uair i gcomórtasáí na n-Iarann Ród. Bhí formhór den Mhór-Roinn faoin Ghearmáin agus ní raibh na Meircánaigh sa chogadh fós. Sea, is mór a tháinig is a d'imthigh ó shoin ach tá Christy Ring linn fós.

Is fíor a rá anois go dtéigheann roinnt mhaith den slua go Páirc an Chrócaigh gach Lá 'le Pádraig d'fhonn Ring amháin a fheiscint agus níor chlis sé riamh orthu. Sea, agus is cinnte fós go ndeanfidh sé gaisce i mbliana, mar a dhein gach bliain le fiche bliain anuas agus, le cunamh Dé, mar a dheanfaidh go ceanní bhfad.

Fiche bliain ag fás—ón ngarsún óg i 1942 go dtí an fear meán-aosta a bheidh mar lán-tosach i mbliana. Fiche bliain ag tuilleamh cáil agus clú a mhairfidh an fhaid is a mhaireann cluichí ár gcine.

Gura fada uainn a imtheacht.

THE YANKS AND ALL THAT

By EAMONN YOUNG



“NEW YORK must come to heel, or get out.”

He was a fine old man, and he meant what he said.

Only one set of rules can be allowed, and breaches of those we have drawn up over seventy years cannot be tolerated.

The New York men have for too long been fighting against the bit placed by an Irish hand for firm control and guidance towards the objective of a national atmosphere surrounding national games.

For years there have been differences over finance and often the teams that went to New York were not those they wanted.

But differences of opinion and friction between leaders can never excuse violation of rules.

What right had the Americans to play Willie Casey when Central Council had ruled him illegal?

On whose authority did the Americans play more than three subs., thereby flouting another rule?

And what excuse can there be for playing a soccer man?

Yes, the case against New York is black enough, especially to him whose eyes can never examine but one side of the coin. What's on the other?

To deny the charge of Casey's illegality the Yanks say that the Brendan Cup is a separate

competition and that every man who takes up permanent residence in New York is immediately legal to play.

The procedure has gone unchallenged in the past and New Yorkmen, though available, were given no chance of saying this at the Central Council meeting where Casey was outlawed.

The playing of extra subs. is harder to explain in the cold light of fact, but great organisations are not founded on rules—the acrid, T-crossing brain-children of limited minds—but on spirit, enthusiasm, and that emotional flow of virile goodwill which men call sportsmanship.

It's an honour to play in Croke Park, but the best men I've met never got within an ass's roar of it except with money in their hands, and I've seen men who reared strong sons with visions of scores at the Railway end.

Would you believe it if I told you that the extra subs. sprang from the players' desire to wear a jersey in Croke Park? There's a ring of sincerity in it, and there are times when the player, like the conductor of the orchestra, takes over unperturbed by the wishes of the manager.

And the soccerman? The Ban loses force in America. No wonder, when we see how it's ignored here, where more than one wise man sees in its strict interpretation a decimation of G.A.A. ranks—or a removal of the Ban.

If I were in charge of the New York team I

would not have played Ken Finn; but, then, I am a small man in a small country surrounded by hundreds who continue to nail their nationality to the worm-eaten standard of yesterday.

The Americans say that our treatment of them here is niggardly in spite of the fact that most of the money from the tours is made on American soil. In four years we made £12,000 in New York, but lost £10,000 in two years here at home. Their suggestion that he who helps to pay the piper is entitled at least to criticise the tune, has some foundation.

To look at the matter calmly, the players here want the tours for obvious reasons. Those who have no hope of going to New York in a team-party also want the tours to continue, and some long-headed men realise that if we lose contact, the Americans may form their own organisation.

About 200 years ago when the new got tired of the old they had a tea-party in Boston. If we, like the men of Louth, wish to cut off the Yanks, an American revolution won't worry us; but while one can understand the strong feelings in the soccer man's home county, it cannot be said that the view finds universal favour either in Louth or outside it.

The American organisation is too important to lose. It is not confined to New York, though that city may have the greatest membership.

There is a Mid-Western League which I believe was formed under the guidance of Michael Kehoe, when he was President. This divides the United States into eight sections and the games are played in Buffalo, Pittsburgh, Washington, Springfield, Chicago, Boston, Vancouver and San Francisco.

Far from detracting from the status of New York, as some would have it, I feel that this continental scene adds weight to the opinions of the exiles; for an All-American organisation must of necessity be credited with an importance in proportion to its playing population.

It is not a pipe-dream to suggest that in the near future there might be an All-American championship, and later a game between the winners and our All-Ireland champions. A full-

scale international would be the logical climax to our representative games every spring where the best players still fail to rouse enthusiasm because an "Ireland" team is such a misnomer.

Then, what of Britain? Why not a three-cornered contest? We must look ahead. This old world is growing smaller.

But to return and face facts, the present dispute must be healed. Will we do it in the way Paul Russell suggested in the "Sunday Review" recently by holding a summit talk. Paul knows as well as I do that recent events in more important spheres have bred a distrust of summitry and a renewed interest in the work of the diplomat.

Surely, sensible men have even now smoothed the way of reconciliation.

Surely, we are not going to wait until Congress, an earnest gathering where far too much is done too hastily, to fix the American question. If our delegates to the summit are directed by Congress they may be committed to conditions unacceptable to the Americans and unalterable by themselves.

Now is the time to start anew, to parley in a hundred minor discussions where diverse points of view may be detailed and eventually, we hope, reconciled.

Very many of us feel as I do, that both the New Yorkmen and our own owe it to the organisation, the followers and the players.

Could one suggest a more harmonious swansong for the outgoing President than hands across the sea? One feels that Dr. Stuart would have little objection to it.

I have not been to New York, but it demands no great flight of fancy to know what the tours mean to the exiles who throng Gaelic Park on Sundays and revive their souls in an island of Gaelic culture right inside New York.

Perhaps I didn't see this so clearly until I read the old man's letter.

"I want no longer to go to Ireland now," he wrote. "just pray that He spares me for the day when you boys will come again—and bring my country with you."

By
MAURICE
MAGUIRE

ANOTHER MEDAL FOR RING

WHEN the hurlers of Munster and Leinster take the field at Croke Park on St. Patrick's Day to do battle for the title of 'champion hurling province of 1961', watch for the stocky, balding man in the royal blue jersey of the Southern province.

And as he bounds on to the pitch in his own inimitable way, stand by for that uncanny brand of hurling magic that has thrilled countless thousands over the past twenty years. You see, Christy Ring, ageless wonder of Cork and Munster hurling, is back in town again!

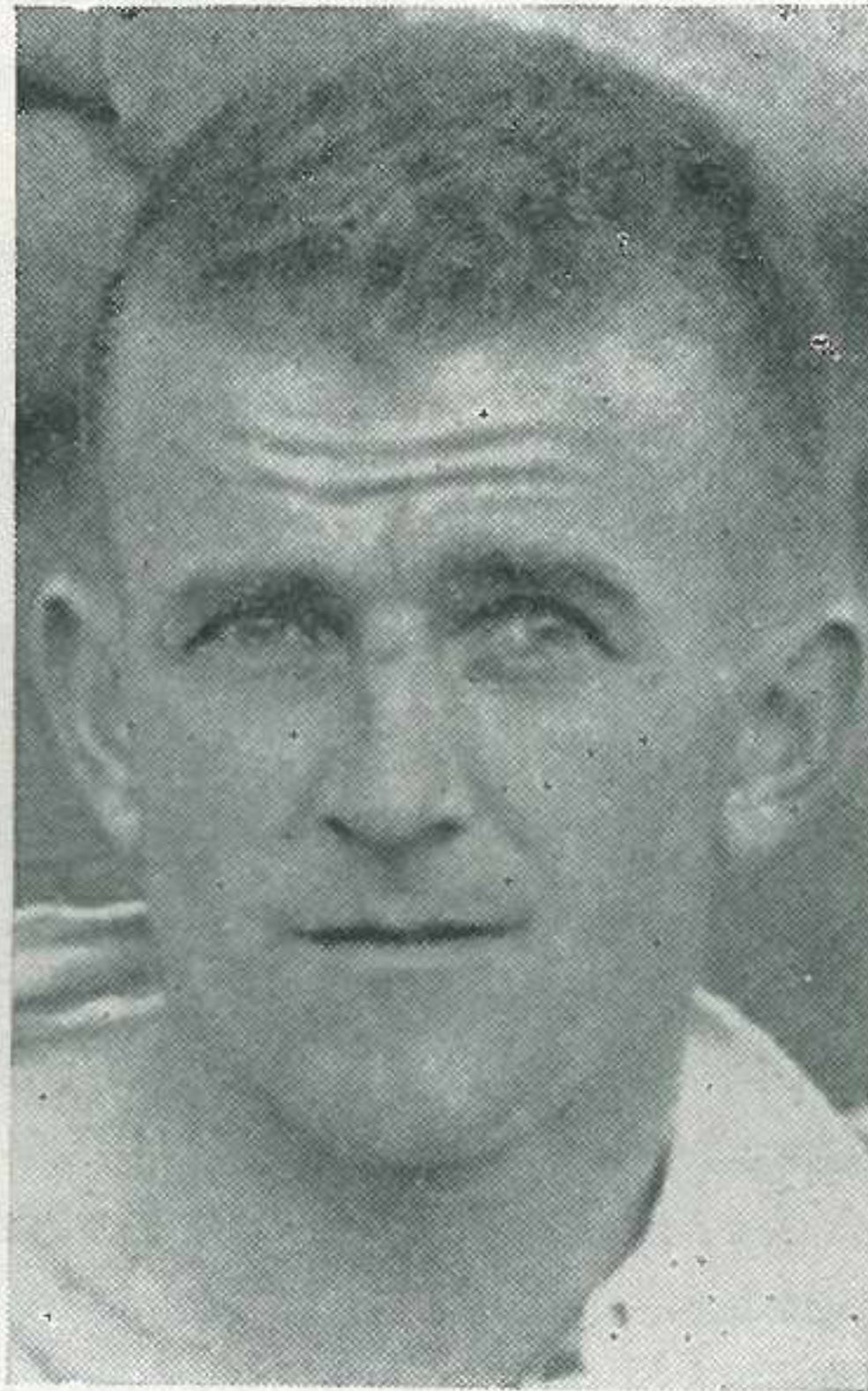
And depending on how the twinkle-toed Cloyne maestro makes out against the seasoned Leinster back line, hinges the issue in this vital prestige battle in which the Munster men will be striving to land their fifth inter-provincial title off the reel.

Going strictly on semi-final form, there won't be much between the teams when the referee calls time. In beating Ulster 3-13 to 1-2, the Southerners were never out of second gear while Leinster were equally decisive winners over a lop-sided Connacht fifteen, winning 5-8 to 3-7.

Back-boned by All-Ireland Champions, Wexford, Leinster look a solid, well-balanced combination. Against Connacht there were times when their high-powered attack failed to click as a unit, but overall, the fire and craft of Podge Kehoe and his men sounded an ominous warning for Munster.

Kehoe, though a shade slower than of yore, is still a master tactician and those knife-like thrusts up the middle coupled with his tremendous shooting power, stamp him as one of the deadliest forwards of this generation.

Together with fellow-countyman



OLIVER McGRATH
Leinster 'hope.'

Ollie 'Hopper' McGrath and Kilkenny's 'ball of fire', Billie Dwyer, Kehoe forms a punch-packed scoring triangle which could write finis to Munster hopes of bringing up that fifth consecutive win.

In defence, too, this Leinster team looks 'tops'. Buttressed by 'hurler of the year' Nick O'Donnell, they shut out the Connacht attack in impressive style and a repeat performance here will sap a lot of the sting from the star-studded Munster attack.

O'Donnell is still a rock-like full back and with wing half-backs. Jim English and John Nolan hitting the high-spots, score-getting in this

sector of the field will be a pretty difficult business.

Throw in the tenacity and astute covering of corner-men Tom Walsh and Tom Neville, plus the goal-keeping brilliance of Ollie Walsh and it all adds up to an out-sized headache for Tony Wall's men.

Not that all the trumps are stacked in the one hand. Just take a look at the talented combination which Munster will parade.

In defence you've got that well-nigh impeccable full-back line of Jim Brohan, Michael Maher and John Barron—a tried and trusted trio whose deadly tackling, allied to their raking clearances, will do a lot to offset Leinster's expected mid-field 'pull'.

Up front, Jimmy Doyle is back again to the form which fired Tipperary on to that impressive victory march in the earlier part of last season and his deadly accuracy, plus the opportunism of Clare's Jimmy Smith and the speed of Frankie Walsh, poses a big problem for Leinster.

Two powerful defences; an expected battle-royal at mid-field and a couple of talent-laden forward lines — yes, forecasting a winner here is going to be rough.

And now enter Christy Ring. Proud holder of a Railway Cup hurling medal while three of his forthcoming rivals, John Nolan, Des Foley and Eddie Kehir, were still only infants-in-arms, the legendary Cloyne man is now going to provide the answer to my problem.

And what other course is open to me after thumbing back records which reveal the staggering fact that the peerless Christy Ring will

(Continued next Page)

Leinster again!



JIMMY DOYLE
Ace marksman.

be making his 39th appearance in the Munster jersey in this game.

And during that life-time of inter-provincial hurling Christy, who has won 16 Railway Cup medals and has been held scoreless only once—when Connacht beat Munster in the 1947 final—has, in the process 'bagged' the astonishing total of 209 points for his province.

Yes, that decides my Railway Cup hurling forecast for 1961. It's roll on Medal No. 17 for courageous, wonderful Christy Ring!

WHEN the swirling wind carried John Dowling's kick high between the uprights for Munster's dramatic last-minute equaliser in their semi-final clash with Connacht in Tuam on February 26, it brought many worried frowns to the forehead of your respectful servant, the Editor of *Gaelic Sport*.

For that golden (?) Munster point meant that we are forced to go to press without knowing who will battle it out with Leinster for Railway Cup honours on St. Patrick's Day.

And battle is the operative word; for even at this stage it looks as if only a king-sized effort will prevent Leinster from recapturing a crown they 'farmed' for so long in the early part of the last decade.

The odds against the Eastern province achieving this feat were pretty long at the outset of the campaign when the Down-powered Ulster team were red-hot favourites to retain the trophy.

But back, crashing into the lime-light, came the Leinster men when, on sun-drenched Casement Park, they handed a shock one-point beating to the Northerners—a margin which, in the opinion of most critics, was a trifle flattering to the losers.

And the full merit of that success can be gleaned when it is recalled

that a last-minute defection robbed the winners of the services of ace forward Kevin Heffernan.

Now the long-service Dublin man—still the most dangerous attacker
(Continued on Page 56)



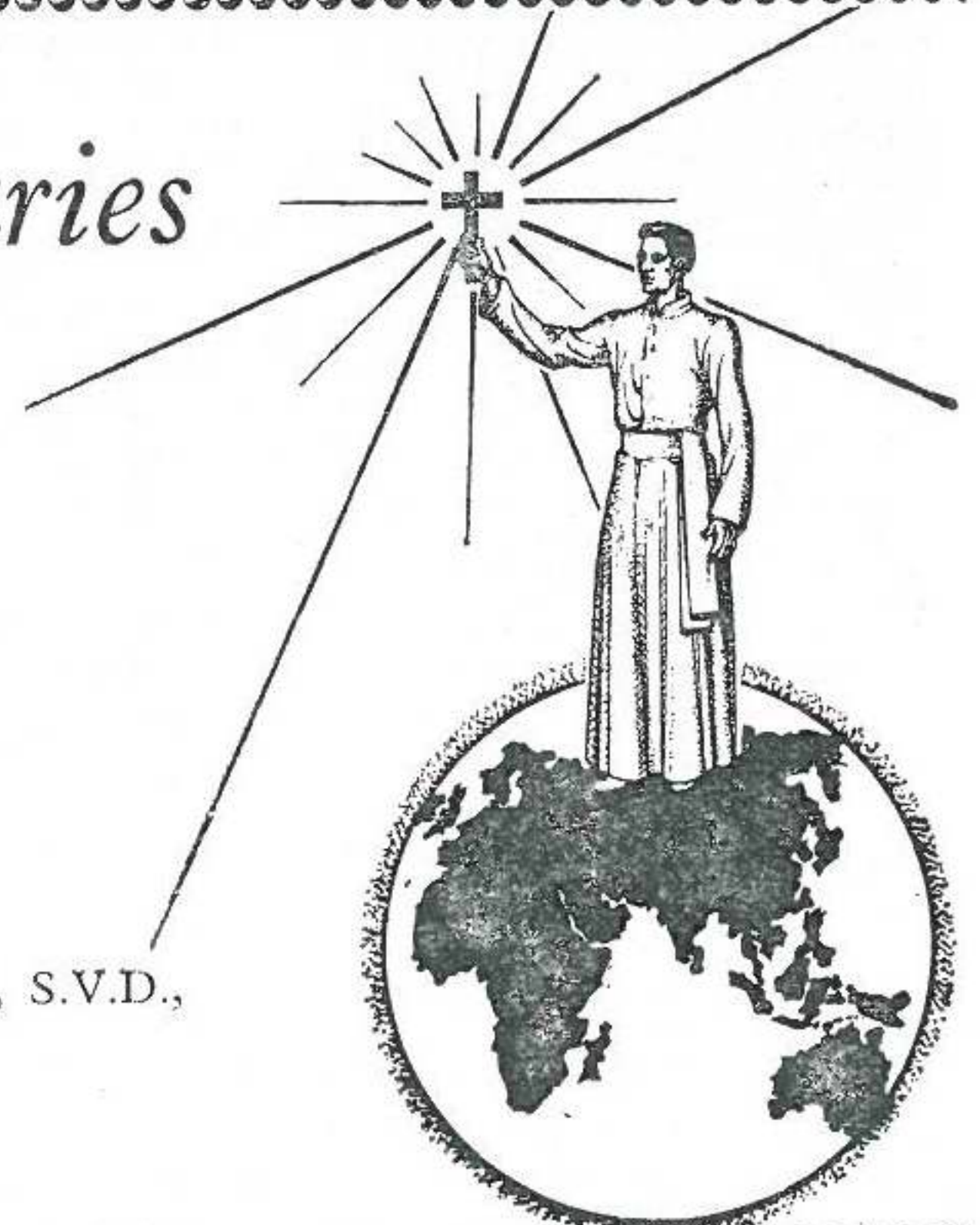
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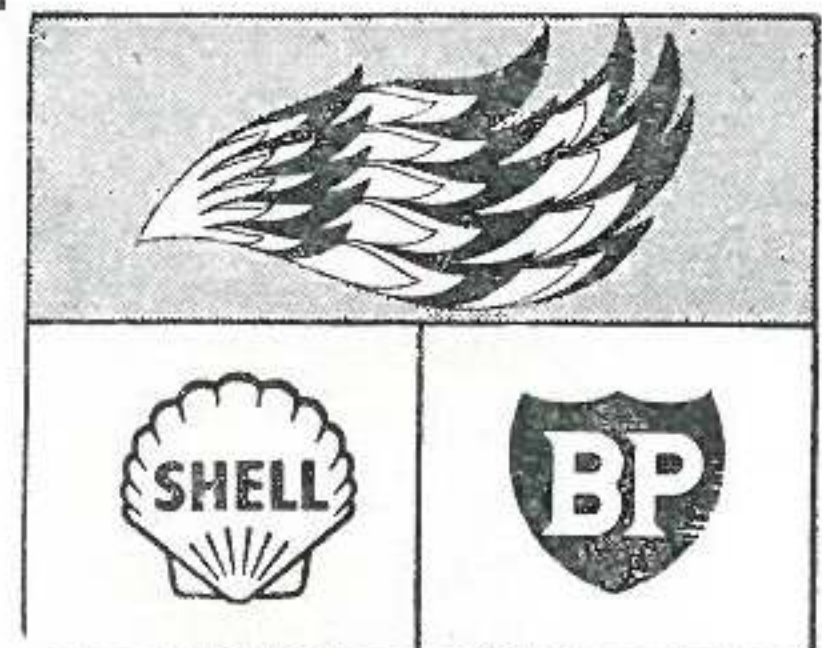
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THE BAN

(on Gaelic Games)

SCARCELY a week passes that somebody or other does not raise the matter of the Gaelic Athletic Association's "ban" on foreign games. To listen to some of the arguments and to hear some of the comments one would imagine that the G.A.A. was attempting to prevent the ordinary man in the street from playing or attending any games he pleased.

Such, as anybody who has given the matter two minutes of clear thought surely knows, is far from being the case. After all, the G.A.A. is an association with Rules of Membership just like any other association which caters for a particular section of the public.

Other associations have rules, and nobody seems to think it at all peculiar that the Pioneer Association, for example, stands so firmly by its rule that anybody who indulges in intoxicating liquors cannot be a member, or that to be a member of the Commercial Travellers' Association one has to be a full-time commercial traveller.

Indeed, it would be even more peculiar if the Pioneer Association were to admit well-known tipplers to its ranks or if the Commercial Travellers were to admit all and sundry to their organisation.

Similarly, the Gaelic Athletic Association has rules of membership, and one of these is the so-called "Ban" Rule. This rule specifies that

members of the G.A.A. must not play, watch or encourage four sports, all of which were once closely associated with alien rule in Ireland. They are hockey, rugby, cricket and soccer. Those who do not wish to observe this rule need not join the G.A.A., the answer is as simple as that. But those who do join the G.A.A. obviously agree to observe this rule, and if they break it are well aware of the consequences

The whole outcry against this "ban" rule seems to come from a small number of people who wish to enjoy all the privileges of membership of the Gaelic Athletic Association and yet not have to abide by the rules.

These G.A.A. rules have been planned and voted upon by all members of the Gaelic Athletic Association or their representatives, and those rules are no concern of anybody else except the members of the G.A.A. At any time, the people most directly concerned, the members of the G.A.A., can alter or abolish the "ban" rule, or any other rule if they wish to do so. But that is their business and nobody else's.

And now, for a change, let us turn from the customary cribbing about that G.A.A. ban on other games, to the ban on G.A.A. games so rigidly, if by no means so openly, enforced by a number of our schools and colleges.

It may well be maintained that no such ban

(Continued on Page 13)

LETTERS
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Dear Sirs,
I have not ridden a winner
all this year. An experienced
friend tells me that Guinness is
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(signed) Constant Loser



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(From Page 11)

exists; that even in schools which play rugby, soccer, cricket and hockey, a boy is free to play any game he pleases. I have grave reason to doubt that statement, but we will let it pass, for there is no need to overstate our case.

It is remarkable, however, that although there is no denominational ban in the G.A.A., I have never yet heard of a non-Catholic school which sent out an organised G.A.A. team or encouraged G.A.A. games within the school itself. What is indisputable is that the boy attending schools which play the four prescribed games is anything but free to play any competitive game he pleases.

There is nothing whatever to prevent rugby-playing schools from allowing their students who wish to play Irish games to take part in G.A.A. competitions.

Two famous schools, Rockwell College, Cashel, and Cistercian College, Roscrea, have long competed in both G.A.A. and rugby competitions with a fair measure of success. It is always to be understood, of course, that the same students do not take part in both sets of competitions.

Why do not the other "rugby" schools follow these examples? Are they afraid that so many of their pupils, left to their own free choice, would opt for G.A.A. games and that the rugby teams would be very weak fifteens as a result?

Twenty-five years ago Blackrock College did follow the example of sister-college Rockwell and at once came sweeping to the forefront of the Leinster Colleges hurling competition. Is there any valid reason why Blackrock could not again follow Rockwell's example to-day?

For more than twenty years from the opening of this century, the Dominican College of St. Thomas of Aquin at Newbridge was the fount and origin of hurling in Kildare. Indeed, on one famous occasion, sixteen College boys, aided by one priest-member of the Community, advanced to the Leinster senior hurling semi-final, and were only very narrowly beaten after a thrilling game by one of the most famed Dublin All-Ireland teams of the time.

Twenty years or so later the standard of hurling in the Newbridge College was still good

enough to win a Leinster Colleges championship from such doughty opposition as St. Kieran's College, Kilkenny.

Is it too late to ask for a hurling revival in Newbridge now?

Seventy-five years ago the Carmelite College in Terenure, Dublin, was the first in Ireland to declare its allegiance to the then infant G.A.A. The resolution then passed at a representative meeting of professors and students is of historic if somewhat ironical interest now: "Resolved—That, believing it to be one of the functions of educational establishments to provide for the physical, no less than for the moral and intellectual, training of the rising generation of Irishmen, in accordance with the instincts and traditions of their ancient race, we hereby form ourselves into a branch of the G.A.A. to be called the Terenure College Branch of the G.A.A."

Judging by what we can read in recent years a lot of water seems to have drifted under the Dodder bridges since then. Surely there are boys in such Colleges as Castleknock and Clongowes Wood and Belvedere who would be quite willing to play in the Leinster Colleges competition if G.A.A. clubs were active in their colleges.

Nor is there any great point, mind you, in talking vaguely of "rugby" traditions. St. Kieran's, Kilkenny, and St. Mary's, Knockbeg, were once playing rugby, and rugby only, on the competitive fields, and yet have long been in the front ranks of the G.A.A. competitions.

Nobody wants the rugby colleges to abandon their traditions. All that is asked is that students in such colleges who wish to play G.A.A. games and take part in G.A.A. competitions be allowed to do so.

And here is where the parents come in. Gaelic-minded parents, no matter where their boys go to school, should insist that their sons be allowed to play Gaelic games if they wish to do so.

If the parents insist on this I have no doubt but that we would shortly see Gaelic teams taking the field from even our most dyed-in-the-wood rugby schools.

PICK STITCHING

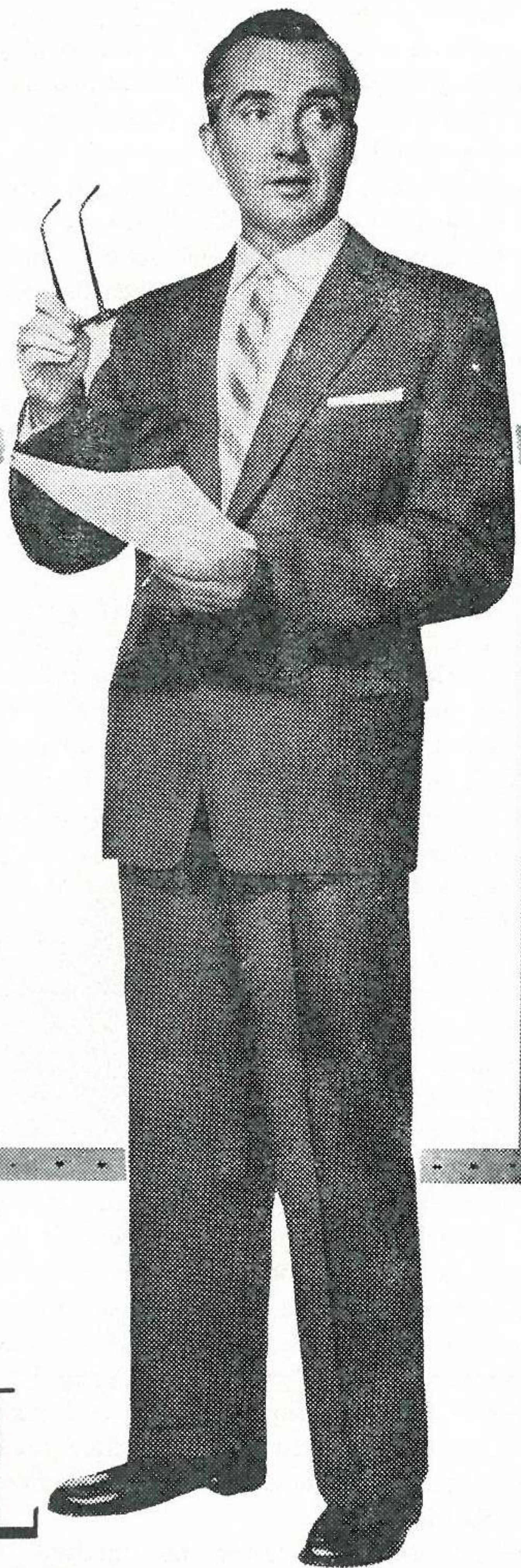
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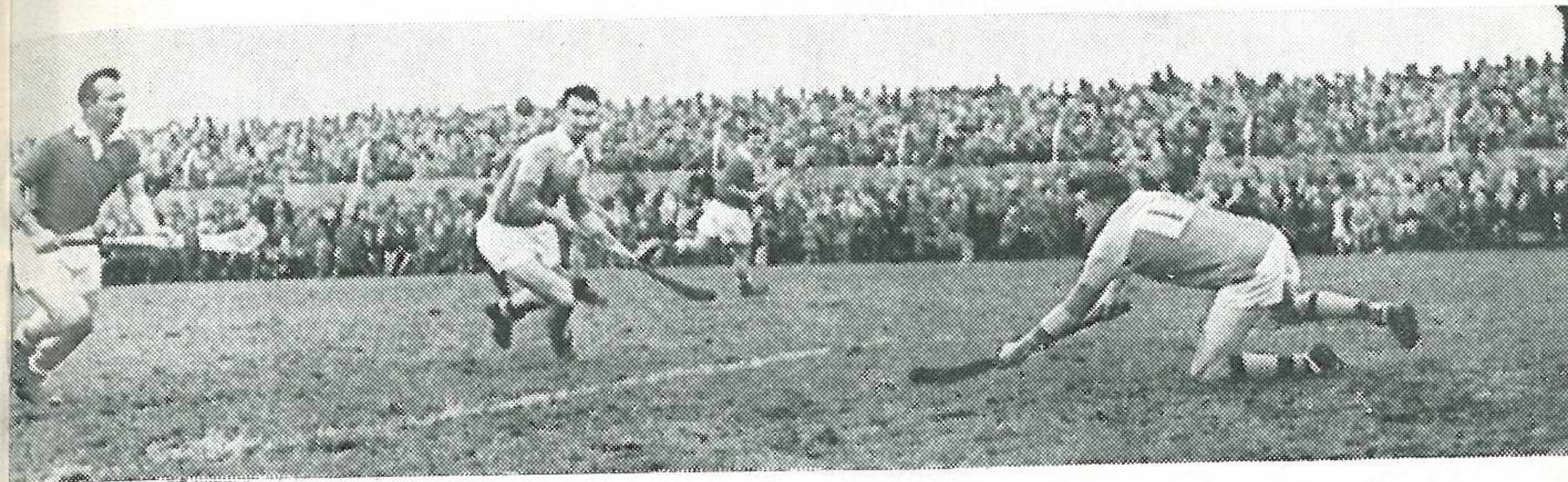
The pick stitch is the extra stitch found on the edges of the jacket. It is the mark of the highest grade handcraft suit and is normally only found in expensive unhurried made-to-measure tailoring. Now "Ideal" are introducing the pick stitch in ready-to-wear suits giving them not only the impressive look but also the shape and line retaining qualities of the made-to-measure handcraft suit.

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PAT NOLAN, Wexford's goalkeeper, saves a hot shot in the League match against Cork at Enniscorthy on February 12. The game was drawn—Wexford 2-10; Cork, 3-7.

PICK THE WINNERS

—————with FRANK FOLEY

CRAZY to talk about the championships with the 1961 playing season barely re-opened? It's not, you know. Although the All-Ireland finals in September are still a long way off the curtain goes up on the senior championships in little more than a month from now.

As usual Leinster, the largest province, will be first into the championship field. And there, this year, the distinction of opening the senior championships falls to the hurlers of Laois and Westmeath, who ring up the curtain at O'Connor Park, Tullamore, on April 16.

How about championship prospects. This year perhaps more than ever before, the competitions are wide open. About the only thing we can be certain of is that neither Laois nor Westmeath, who play the first match, will be in Croke Park on All-Ireland day (September 3).

Who will be there? Last year's finalists, Wexford and Tipperary? Or will we see a completely new pairing?

The battle for a place in the All-Ireland final

is likely to develop in Leinster into yet another joust between Wexford and Kilkenny. For Dublin's trouncing by Waterford in the League last month suggests that the Metropolitans are far from championship material.

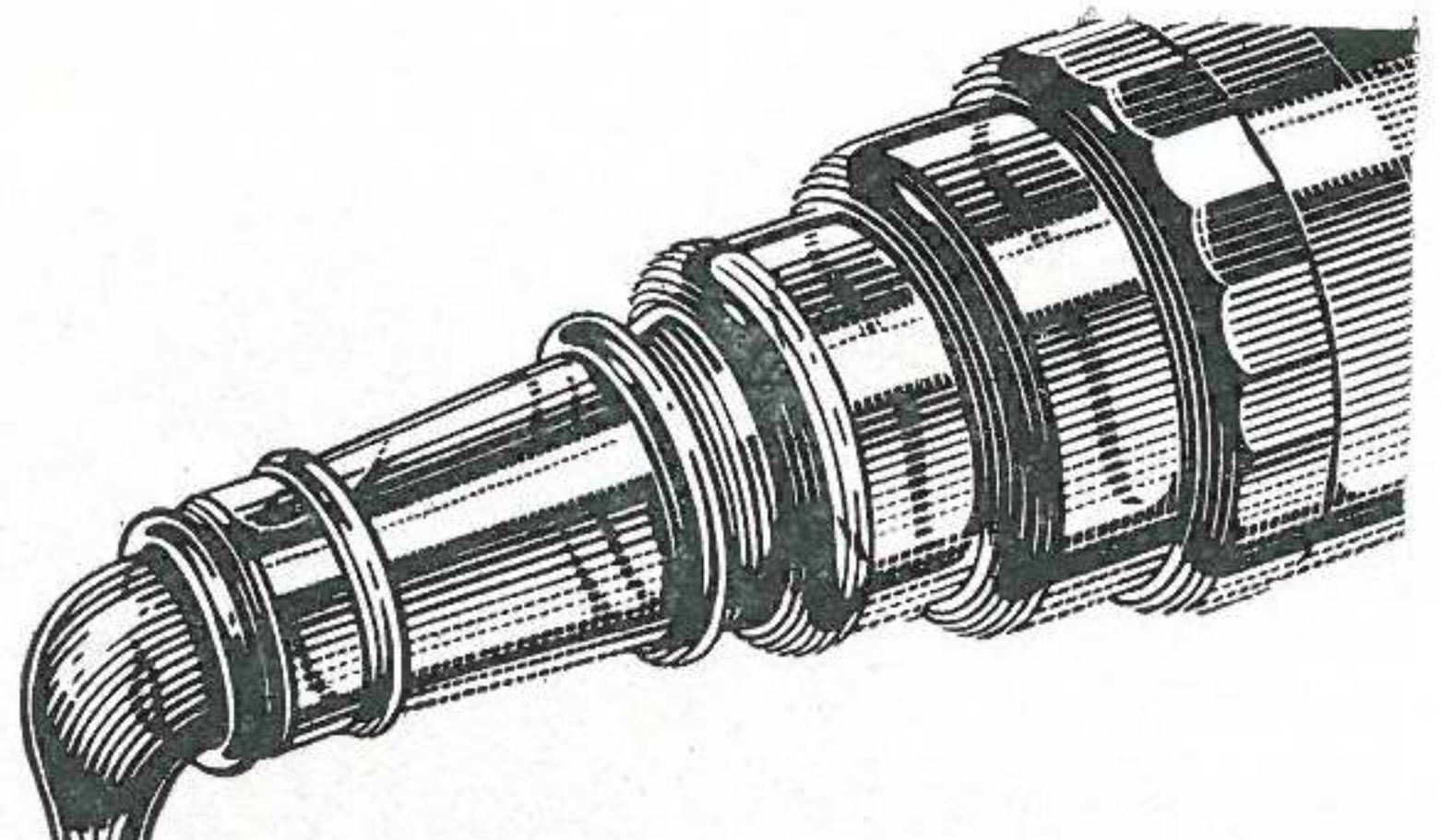
Nor have Kilkenny done anything to indicate that they can take the Liam McCarthy Cup. Their team-building has not been successful. It seems they need a few more like young ex-minor Joe Ayres.

But Kilkenny can be so unpredictable that making predictions about their fate can be oh so dangerous.

Wexford may not be finished as many believe when they count the number of "veterans" in the side that won last year's title. There are some promising young players available. Martin Lyng and Martin Bergin are settling into the side and John Walsh and Dick Murphy, who have made some appearances recently, are useful subs.

The comeback of Waterford is the big news

(Continued on Page 17).



**THE
OIL THAT
STAYS ON
THE JOB**



EXTRA MOTOR OIL

(From Page 15)

in Munster. Much the same side in personnel as that which crashed to Tipp. last year, but they are now playing with new fire and determination. There could be a big threat to champions Tipp. in that new mood.

If the draw works out without any major sensations in the first rounds the semi-final line-up should be: Tipperary v. Galway (July 2) and Waterford v. Cork (July 9).

From those games we should get a Tipperary-Waterford final, although Cork, once again led by the evergreen Christy Ring, will take some beating.

In such a final my money is on Tipp. Despite the new vigour of Waterford one cannot overlook the power that's still present in the Tipp. side. Furthermore, men like Mick Maher, Tony Wall, Kieran Carey, Jimmy Doyle and Liam Devaney are resolved to make up for last year's All-Ireland crash.

So how about Tipperary for the All-Ireland title?

What an intriguing puzzle the football championship presents. Nowhere is it more complex than in Leinster. Early in February Dublin were being written-off. Then came their League win over Galway and they were right back into the reckoning. And believe me, by the time the championship gets going they will be a strong force.

Leinster's Railway Cup win over Ulster cast new lustre on provincial champions Offaly and shortened the odds against them retaining their title.

That defence, which beat back the eager Ulster forwards, had five Offalymen backed by goal-keeper Willie Nolan. Sean Foran was in splendid form at midfield and Sean Brereton had a second half that was better than many of his displays last year.

The dangers? Dublin, of course. But watch out for Laois. Offaly's neighbours and keen rivals in the Midlands. After several months' absence that stylish forward Jack Kenna returned to the side . . . and came back in top scoring form.

With last year's minor Dinny Byrne and Fintan



OLLIE WALSH . . . a keyman in Kilkenny's bid to regain All-Ireland honours this year.

Walsh in the attack, Kenna can make things difficult for the best of them.

Mayo is the hot tip in Connacht, although Roscommon's fine League record, based primarily on the staunch half-back line of P. J. Shine, Gerry O'Malley and Tony White, have made the county's supporters optimistic.

Twelve months ago, remember, Galway were also written off. Then, just as now, they had crashed to Dublin in the League, but their recovery in the early summer was good enough to give them their fifth successive Connacht title.

Now they are chasing a record-making sixth. They won't be foiled easily.

Down must be favourites in the North, but up there nothing is ever certain. Kevin Mussen and his men will make a bold bid to retain the All-Ireland title they brought up there last year.

But I advise them to watch out for Derry. Slowly the 1958 Ulster champions are settling into their reorganised formation, and with Jim McKeever playing some of his old power football they could cause a shock or two.

Munster, of course, may be a runaway for Kerry again. And once out of the South the Kingdom will present a threat to any side.

So here's my semi-final line-up: Kerry v. Down, Mayo v. Offaly, with Kerry beating Offaly in the final.

FRANK

BYRNE *former Meath All-Ireland star, poses an*

IS FOOTBALL A BIG MAN'S

IS Gaelic football a big man's game? Of course it is! Now, nobody but a Lilliputian would regard me as a big man, so this article is bound to have a certain bias. But the existence of such a bias does not necessarily invalidate my arguments that Gaelic football is a big man's game.

Irrespective of what type of football — "traditional" or otherwise — a team plays, the game is geared in favour of the bigger men. As long as a ball is airborne, and during the course of any game it is more often travelling through the air than along the ground, the small man is at a distinct disadvantage.

I often experienced the frustration of having the ball lifted off my fingertips by a taller opponent. I remember shaking off my opposite number in a Railway Cup game against Munster and going on a solo-run that ended in a score.

A few minutes later during an injury stoppage he naively remarked, "you're very fast, but I'll beat you in the air!" He spoke with conviction and so well he might. He towered six inches above me.

Not only is a clean high fetch the most spectacular sight in Gaelic football, it is also an integral part of the game. Thus, many a fine footballer is precluded from occupying any of the centre berths on a team from full-back to full-



DAN MURRAY

One of the few.

forward, simply because he has short legs; because, despite the oft' quoted advice to play the wings, the ball is more often than not booted down the centre of the field.

No, there is nothing wrong with my memory! I still retain vivid recollections of sterling displays at full-back by Cavan's Paddy Smith and Tyrone's Jim Devlin while

Bobby Beggs and the late Tony Donnelly were great centre-half backs. Eamonn Young and Maurice Whelan starred at midfield for more than a decade with their respective counties. Eddie Devlin represented his county and province from centre-half back to centre-half forward, while Jimmy Murray, operating on the "mark", was one of the brightest stars in a great Roscommon team. Both Peter Solon and Frank Stockwell played in several positions but both made their names as full-forwards.

Yet, none of these men topped 5'-9" while most of them were a good inch shorter than that. But the good small men are few in comparison with the hosts of big men who filled those same positions with distinction down the years.

Nowhere in the field of play is a safe pair of hands more necessary than in the full-back line. So, as a general rule, the small man is rarely chosen to fill the corner back position. He can't afford the luxury of fielding behind his man, so he must try and beat his usually faster opponents to the ball. If he fails, or is outfielded, the path towards goal is wide open. Again there have been exceptions, Michael O'Brien, George Lavery, and Dan Murray are names that most readily spring to mind.

Gaelic football is no parlour game and heaven forbid that it

important question:

GAME?

should ever lose its bite which is meat and drink to followers of the game. The toughest and also the scrappiest play is usually centred around the goal area where too often brawn takes precedence over brain. So corner forwards are at a distinct disadvantage unless they possess at least average height and weight. Again, names flash across my memory to confound my argument, but on reflection aren't they far outnumbered by their bigger brethren who starred as corner forwards?

While still encamped around the goal area I can't resist the temptation to make a plea for a larger parallelogram. If it were extended outwards to the 14 yards line and laterally for seven yards on either side of the goal I feel sure it would benefit the game. It would surely reduce the number of unsightly mauls and scrambles around the goal area that are so much a part of the game today. Backs would be more wary of any infringement which would automatically result in a penalty while the smaller and more mobile player would surely capitalise on the latitude afforded him in such an extended "square".

According to my argument, then, there are only five positions on a football team where the small man
(Continued on Page 33).



BERNIE O'CALLAGHAN (dark jersey), a small man with a big future in Kerry football.



**Sweaters for
Men**

Cluichi Gaelacha sa spás—aois

le Séan Ó Dúnagáin

NUAIR a himríodh céad cluiche ceannais na h-Éireann i mBiorra in 1887 bhain formhór fóirne na Gaillimhe an t-ionad comhraic amach de shiúl a gcos; thrasnaigh siad an tSionainn ag an áth ag Meelick, áit a bhí dhá nó trí mhíle ó Dún an Ochta, an club a sheas an fód an lá úd ar son na Gaillimhe—Ó Meelick bhí aistear seacht míle acu trasna tíre chuig Biorra. Ar ndóigh bhí orthu siúl abhaile arís. O shin i leith tá córais taistil ag feabhsú agus chuaigh fóirne chuig na cluichí Ceannais ar thraenacha, ar ghluais-teáin, ar longaibh agus ar eithleáin d'éir mar d'oir doibh.

Ach anois tar éis sin uilig tá aois nua anuas orainn agus ní mór don Chumann Luithchleas Gael áird a thabhairt uirthi agus feidhm a bhaint aisti chun leasa na gcluichí. Sí an aois sin ná aois na teilifíse agus aois na scairdeitleán. Le teacht na haoise seo tá an-chuid fadhbanna le réitheadh agus morán ceisteanna le cur; gan amhras beidh Gaeil ag fanacht ar fhreagraí.

An bhfuil eagraíocht ann leis na freagraí a thabhairt nó an bhfuil beartaithe ag na húdaráisí coiste a bhúnú le tabhairt fé na ceisteanna seo? Deirim nach bhfuil. D'fhéadfaí an cheist a chur 'caidé an deacracht, cá bhfuil an dubhshlán?' Is maith an cheist í agus roimh deireadh an alta seo tá súil agam go mbéidh fhios ag an léitheoir cad iad na deacrachtaí.

Sa chéad dul síos tógaimís ceist na teilifíse. Is cumhacht mhór í

an teilifís chun maitheasa nó chun uilc. Tá craos uafásach aici—alpánn sí gach rud a thagann 'na giorracht. Braitheann sé ar Ghaeilibh féachaint chuige go gcuirfear ábhar maitheasa roimh teilifíse na hÉireann; ní foláir nó go gcuirfear cluichí eachtrannacha uirthi agus ní mór a shocrú go mbéidh go leor cluichí Gaelacha ar fáil dí freisin.

Ní abraim gur fiú na cluichí ceannais amháin a chur uirthi ach gur fiú cluichí eadar-chlub agus cluichí eadar-chontae a chur uirthi. Nach íontach an deis é chun an iománaíocht a chur chun cinn sna ceantracha nach bhfuil aon mheas uirthi iontu. Nach féidir ceachtanna sa pheil, ach go háirithe san iománaíocht, a mhúineadh don aos óg trén mheán seo. Sa deireadh thiar beidh muintir Laighean Thuaidh, Muintir Chonnacht agus Muintir Uladh in ann cluiche ceannais Mumhan san iománaíocht d'fheiceáil.

Ach an bhfuil An Cumann Luithchleas Gael réidh chuige? Níl oiread agus fear amháin scannánaíochta sa tír in ann cluiche iománaíochta a leanúint i gceart; táid ann atá in ann barraíocht pictiúirí a ghlacadh ach tá comhairleoirí de dhith orthu; tá treoir ag teastáil uathu de shíor i rith an chluiche. An bhfuil córas ann chun na ceisteanna seo d'infhiúchadh; chun ceist na teilifíse ar fad a phlé agus moltaí a thabhairt? Tosnófar ar chláracha teilifíse a chur amach go luath agus más maith is mithid don C.L.G. rud éigin a dhéanamh fé.

Sí an dara ceist a thógas na ceist taistil agus conas mar a chuireann sé isteach ar chúrsaí cluichí na nGael.

Táid na Gaeil scapaithe ar fud an domhain agus gach áit a dtéann siad is breá leo a gcultúr féin, idir teanga, ceol agus cluichí, a chleachtadh; ní bréag a rá go néiríonn siad níos Gaelaí ar imeacht ó bhaile dóibh. Bhí aithne agam ar dhuine a chuaigh chuig an Astráil; d'imir sé Rugbí sa Chlosáiste dó agus 'na dhiaidh sin. Ní raibh sé ach sé mhí san Astráil nuair a bhí club bunaithe aige chun cluichí na nGael a chleachtadh agus bhí Rugbí thart timpeall ar fad air san Astráil.

Tá rún ag fóirne in gach ceantar thar lear dul in iománaíocht le céile agus, sa deireadh thiar, dul i gcoimhlint leis na fóirne is fearr sa bhaile—i bPáirc an Crócaigh. Cuireann córas taistil na scairdeitleán ar a gcumas dul trí na ceithre míle míle ó bhaile ag deireadh na seachtaine chun na cluichí seo d'imir agus bheith ar ais ag obair maidin Dé Luain. Léamar le déanaí gur thaisteal foireann peile San Francisco chuig Boston chun cluiche d'imir.

Tig le Gaeilibh gan áird ar bith a thabhairt ar na rudaí seo; tig linn a rá gur cuma sa tsíoc céard a dheineann sliocht Chorcaí i Chicago nó clann Mhuigheo i Detroit; is féidir a rá go gcuireann rudaí mar seo isteach ar Chomórtas Ceannais Peile Éireann nó ar na Sraith-Chluichí Náisiúnta agus gur fearr gan bacaint leo. Sáithimís ár gceann sa ghainimh

agus leigimís orainn nach gnó dúinn é!

Ach níl sé chomh simplí sin. Muna ghlacann na hударáisi sa bhaile greim ar na culichí ar fud an domhain agus muna ndeintear láithreach é béidh thiar ar C.L.G.

Ba beag nár scior cumhacht an Choiste Láir uathu anuraidh; bhí orthu gníomh láidir a chur i bhfeidhm chun leasa na gcluichí. Ach tá an baol ann go dteipfidh ar an gcóras sa bhaile muna gcuirtear srian leis na rudaí seo.

Tá dóthain airgid ag na Choiste Láir uathu anuraidh; bhí féin tá daoine agus comhluchtaí saidhbre sásta tacaíocht a thabhairt dóibh ar mhaithe leo féin. Is éasca don imreoir maith post fháil—is éasca na himreóirí is fearr sa tír seo a mhealladh chun iimrce le geallúintí maoinne maithe i gcionn tréimhse gairide. Is beag an choiscéim ó bheith id' imreoir páirtaimsireach go dtí post lánaimsireach mar imreoir.

Leis an gcóras nua taistil seo tá sé ar chumas aon chlub sa tír seo turas a thabhairt ar na Stáit, ar an mBreatain nó ar Chanada. Níl aon chumhacht ag an gCoiste Láir ar seo—tugann an Coiste Chontae cead le haghaidh na dturas seo. An gcuireann sin isteach ar Chraobh-Chomórtaisí an Chontae i gceist, ar fhoirinn an Chontae fiú? An dtiocfaidh na himreóirí uilig abhaile?

Tá alán rudaí nach féidir a rá in alt chomh gearr le seo; ach siúd iad cuid de na deacrachtaí. Go háirithe ní féidir an leigheas a thabhairt ná ní bhéadh sé de dhánaíocht ionam tabhairt fé. Ach molaim do na teachtaí chuig Comhdháil na bliana seo gur fiú dóibh smoineamh ar na rudaí seo, gur fiú an cheist a thógaint agus gur fiú féachaint chuige go gcuirfear pé moltaí a glactar i bhfeidhm. Anois! B'fhéidir go mbéidh sé ró-dhéanach an bhliain seo chugainn.

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IN MEMORY OF THE DEAD

AS we look forward each year to St. Patrick's Day and those great inter-provincial battles between the cream of Ireland's hurlers and footballers, I think it only right that we should pause for a moment and remember those gallant players from the past—the recent past—whose displays gave us so much pleasure on our National Holiday, but whose careers were cut short by that indiscriminate leveller—death.

There was Caleb Crone who won Railway Cup medals with both Leinster and Munster; Mick Tubridy who was his team-mate in Munster's 1946 victory; John Joe O'Reilly and P. J. Duke who were on Ulster's winning team in 1950; and now, the man who helped Connacht to victory in 1951 — Mick Flanagan.

I had the privilege of playing with Mick Flanagan in that 1951 Connacht triumph and in all the Mayo victories of that period, and over the years of our association I came to appreciate all those sterling qualities which made him so

feared and respected on the field and so popular off it.

I know of no player who could avail of the forlorn chances which came his way like Mick Flanagan. A broken ball, a lobbing pass, and Mick was on to it like a flash, belting at full steam for goal and sending in unstoppable shots straight to the back of the net.

Our pulses quickened whenever Mick got possession and his scores inspired the whole team. In particular I remember how his goal against Louth in the 1950 final saved Mayo from almost inevitable defeat, and how his two goals against Kerry in the replayed 1951 All-Ireland semi-final put us safely on the way to our second successive All-Ireland championship.

But if Mick was a personality on the field he was a greater personality off it. He had that wit, charm and warmth which made him popular wherever he went, and which, in particular, endeared him to his colleagues.

Mick was really an essential part of the Mayo camp. Nothing

ever got him down, and whenever any gloom hung over the team in general, or any player in particular, he always seemed to have just the right word to banish the gloom instantly.

And when an unfortunate injury shortened Mick's career he didn't retire to rest on his laurels but threw himself wholeheartedly into administering local G.A.A. affairs. Elected chairman of the Castlebar Mitchels and, though one of the youngest chairmen in Ireland, he showed all the ability and tact of a veteran, and his six years' term of office was the most successful and prosperous in the Club's history.

As a player, whether for Castlebar, Mayo, Connacht or Ireland, Mick Flanagan was outstanding. As a man he was everybody's friend. As an administrator he was one of the ablest in Ireland.

His death is mourned by all, and in particular by the G.A.A. which has lost one of its brightest young stars.

Solas na bhFlathas le na anam.

—EAMONN MONGEY

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CAN DUBLIN COME BACK?

asks Bob Dolan

A PROMINENT G.A.A. critic in an Irish Sunday newspaper posed a question which has been in the minds of many followers in recent times: Whither Dublin?

He was, of course, referring to the Dublin footballers, who, since winning the triple championship in 1958, have slipped down the ladder.

And the form displayed before Christmas seemed to further suggest that the gradual slipping was threatening to become a landslide, especially when a full strength side was beaten by Meath in a January challenge, after an experimental line-out had defeated the Royal Countymen in December.

However, the clouds of gloom appear to have a silver lining because there are definite signs of a revival as evidenced by improved form against Leitrim, Galway and Louth and many hold that with proper direction the available talent could be used to better advantage.

It is generally felt that the selectors are very slow to go out and about the county looking for possible recruits for the senior team.

This is a legacy of the better years when St. Vincents supplied the bulk of the players for the

team and the selectors did not have to cast their nets very far.

And this is largely the reason why the team's fortunes declined following the retirement of such brilliant stars as Danno Mahony, Olly Freaney, Jim Crowley, Mossy Whelan, Nick Maher, Jim Lavin and Mick Moylan.

At that time, things were going so well for the county side that nobody thought of the future, and although it became increasingly evident that players, whose names had become household words throughout the nation, were gradually slowing up and losing their brilliance, nothing was done to build up reserves.

Some of the Dublin County officials suggested that these players all retired more or less together. This was, of course, a ridiculous suggestion because as everyone who follows Gaelic games knows, Danno Mahony had hung up his boots long before Jim Crowley, Nicky Maher and Mossy Whelan.

And the inimitable Olly Freaney was last of all to retire, so the argument that their sudden exit from the inter-county scene caused something of a vacuum, hardly holds water.

Another factor which played a big part in Dublin's fall from prominence was the training crux, which was brought about when the

St. Vincent's players decided to train separately from their county team-mates, who were under the guidance of Peter O'Reilly.

This inevitably led to a slackening of discipline and at one stage it was commonly held that the players were running the team rather than the selectors and trainer.

This was a most unfortunate state of affairs because it meant that established players were picked regularly without being fully fit and, worse still, the team as a whole lacked the benefit of tactical talks and carefully worked out plans.

And then, to crown it all, Peter O'Reilly, who had steered Dublin to successes which included the Sam Maguire Cup, St. Brendan Cup and several National League titles, resigned because he had not been consulted about the County Board's scheme to provide indoor training for the footballers once a week.

And in view of O'Reilly's record, one would have thought that his judgment on the merits or demerits of indoor training would have been sought and acted upon.

However, the nett result of it all was, that at the beginning of the current National League campaign the Dublin team had no acknowledged trainer.

And that was the position after the Christmas recess. So, under the circumstances, it was no wonder that Dublin lost matches which they should have won.

This fantastic state of affairs was brought to an end in January, when the county executive, after several meetings and much discussion, finally appointed Brendan Quinn (Parnells), who won an All-Ireland medal in 1942, as trainer.

Quinn stated soon after he had taken over that he would stick to the methods used by his predecessor and that he did not approve of indoor training for footballers.

And with the new appointment St. Vincents decided that they would turn out with their colleagues from other clubs for training under Brendan Quinn.

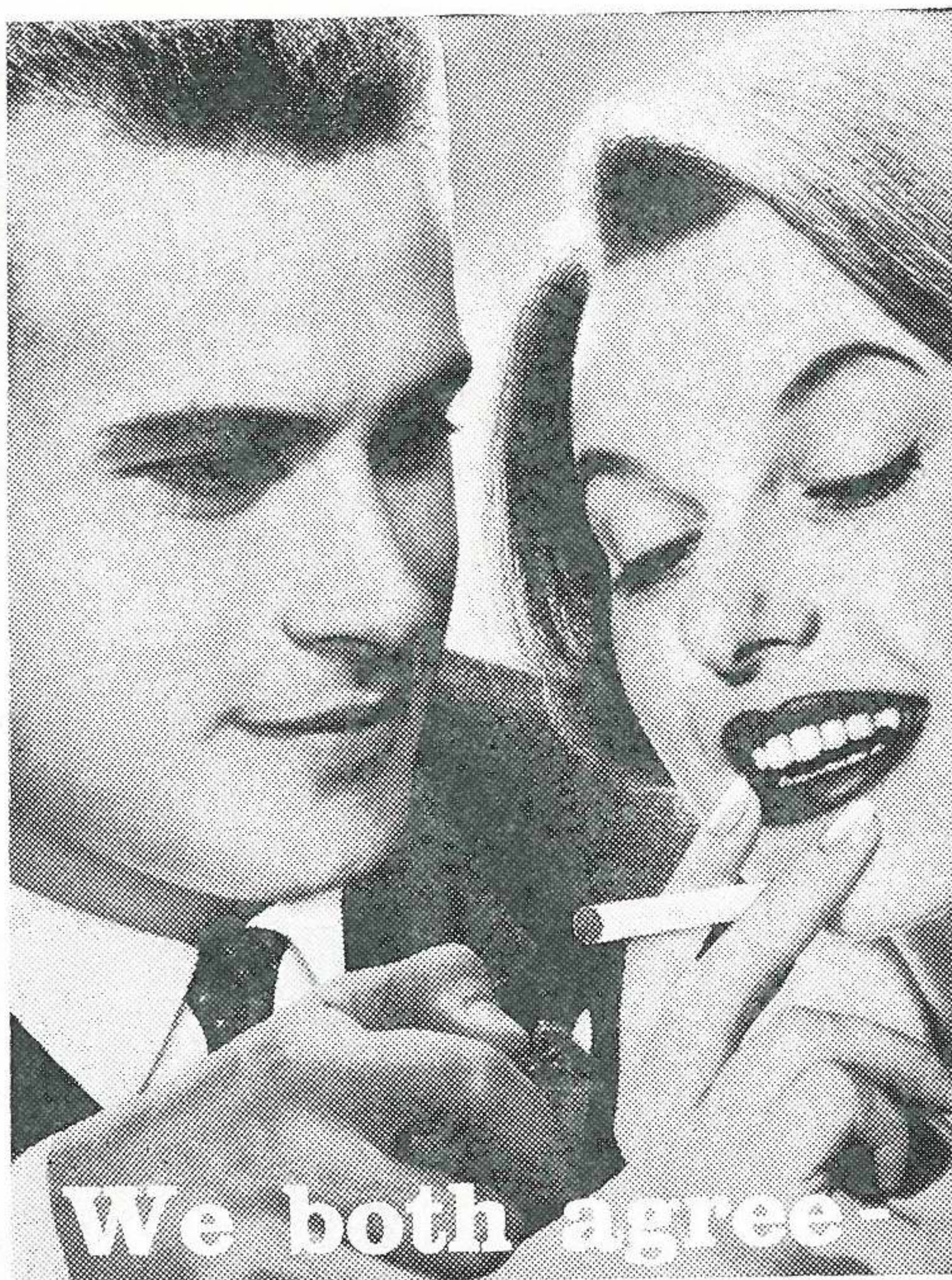
Recent games seem to suggest that better things are to come and when all things are considered that Dublin do not lag behind other counties that much.

In fact, what the team now needs is some driving personality and character like Olly Freaney, to inspire his team-mates and stir them fully from their hitherto lackadaisical approach.

Should the selectors be lucky to find such a player, I have no doubt that success will crown their efforts in the near future.

Another vital factor in considering a Dublin revival is the St. Vincents club's progress and one hopes that when they open their new ground at Raheny that it will be but the start of another glorious chapter which will also reflect on the county's performances.

At all events, it appears that the Dublin football team cannot be written off and that with a little boosting of the reserve talent and staunching of a few weak positions on the team, they could be back in the limelight sooner than most people think.

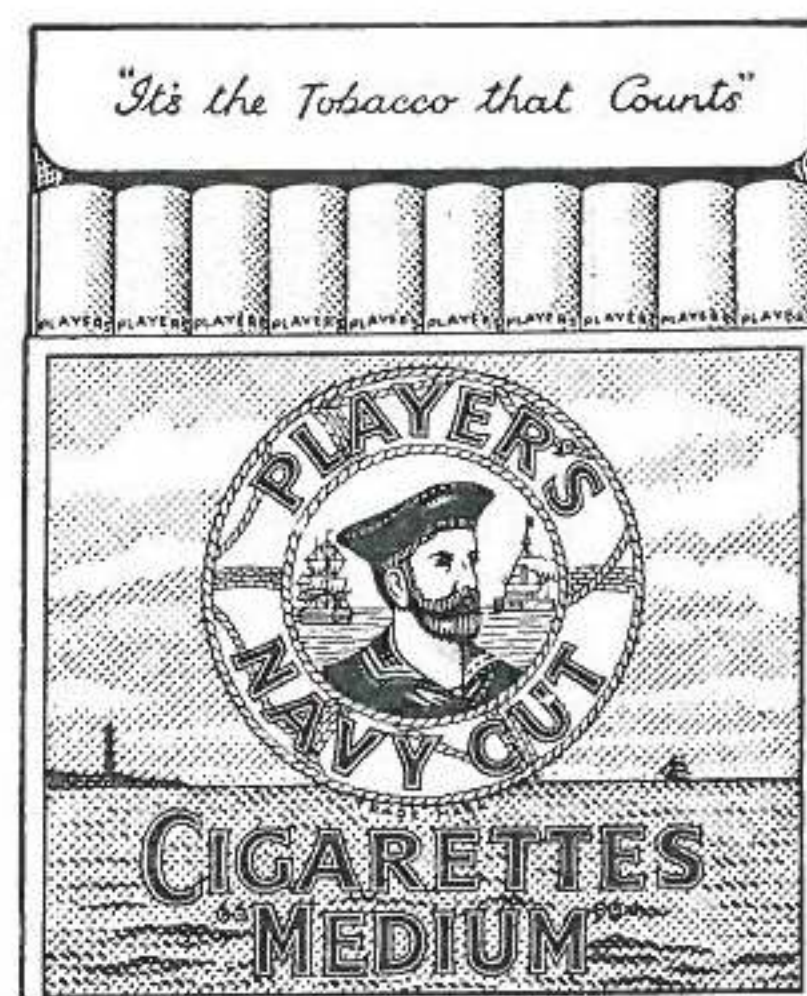


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CORK FAIL . . .

WITH TWO RINGS!

By SEAN O' NEILL

WE were all sitting around in Leahy's Lounge having a jar. It was a few hours after last year's National Hurling League final in Cork, and although some of us still had to face an arduous drive back to Dublin in a car which persistently refused to go into top gear, we were quiet relaxed.

It had been a good game and Tipperary did deserve to win—even our Cork friends admitted that. But then, perhaps, their usual truculence on such occasions had been tempered by the consoling thought that it had really been Ring's day. He had scored a total of three goals and four points, leaving only four points to the other five Cork forwards.

Yes, indeed, it was a consoling thought for all Corkmen—win, lose or draw there was only one Christy Ring.

"You know" remarked Jim "if we had two Rings we'd have beaten them home."

"Aye" said Frank, as he looked at his watch "I suppose ye would. However, I think we'd better be shortening the road."

"Talking of two Rings" said the man with the hat, as he gazed affectionately at his new-born pint, "I remember a day when Cork HAD two Rings—and LOST."

Frank showed new interest and seemed to forget about the long journey back to Dublin.

The man with the hat continued: "It was long before your time—1922. You see, the 1920 All-Ireland final was not played until the Summer of 1922—I think it was the month of May—anyway the weather was fine.

It had been nearly three years since an All-Ireland final had been played and Cork were still the reigning champions. Come to think of it, we

must be the only county to hold the hurling title for three years without defending it.

In the 1919 final we had given Dublin a good beating, and going up in the train that day, we could see no reason why we could not do it agin.

Anyway, to make a long story short, Cork won the toss and big Dick O'Gorman from Midleton decided to play with the breeze—not that there was any great breeze blowing the same day.

"I remember the Dublin captain, Bob Mockler, putting his team into the attack early on, only to have Sean Og Murphy, God be good to him, send every ball back out again. Denis Ring opened the scoring with a Cork point and a few minutes later Ring was through again to place O'Gorman for a goal. Further out the field our other Ring, Dannix, was doing great work as well.

"At half-time we were a goal ahead but in the second half Dublin improved. Jim Walsh gave them a tonic with a lovely point right after the throw-in and then Frank Burke put them ahead with a goal.

It was hammer and tongs from then on, with Dublin doing most of the attacking; and despite the best efforts of Connie Sheehan and Sean Og and the Rings, the Leinster men were getting on top.

"Bob Mockler seemed to knock all the heart out of Cork when, half way through the second half, he grabbed a ball about forty yards from his own goal, and from where he stood drove it straight over the bar for a point. 'Pon my word but 'twas the longest stroke I have ever seen—at least a hundred yards.

(Continued on Page 55)



Profile of James McCartan:

SPURNED BY ULSTER SELECTORS..

by MOON

WHAT a wonderful year 1960 proved to be for stocky James McCartan, that burly, tearaway footballer from Donaghclon in the County Down, who only celebrated his twenty-third birthday last November.

To begin with, he had helped Down to victory in the Lagan Cup final. Next, he played no small part in helping Ulster to regain the Railway Cup in a hard-fought final against Munster at Croke Park on St. Patrick's Day.

But this was but a foretaste of the glories to come. In April, Down met Kerry at Croke Park in the semi-final of the National League. Those who maintained that Down would never acquire anything in the top grade had to eat their words that day; for, inspired by a crashing James McCartan goal mid-way through the first half, Down scored their

greatest triumph to that date by deservedly defeating the boys from the Kingdom.

A few weeks later James McCartan was the tireless, roving attacking spearhead of the men from beyond the Mourne when Down stormed to a hard-fought, hard-earned first National League final victory over Cavan at Croke Park.

That was the first "leg" on the way to triple crown honours but there were set-backs to come. Down were beaten by Derry in the McKenna Cup and lost to Kerry in a challenge game at Listowel.

These defeats served a very useful purpose: they knocked any "cockiness" that League victory might have nurtured out of the footballers in red and black and sent them, with James McCartan in the van, rampaging through Galway to win the London County Board tourna-

ment at Wembley for the second successive year.

Back they came, giants refreshed, to the Ulster championships and James McCartan was again one of their leading stalwarts when they beat Cavan in the final at Clones.

In the wonderful games against Offaly in the semi-final, James McCartan was the hardest worker in the Ulster champion's attack, and so he came to his first All-Ireland final.

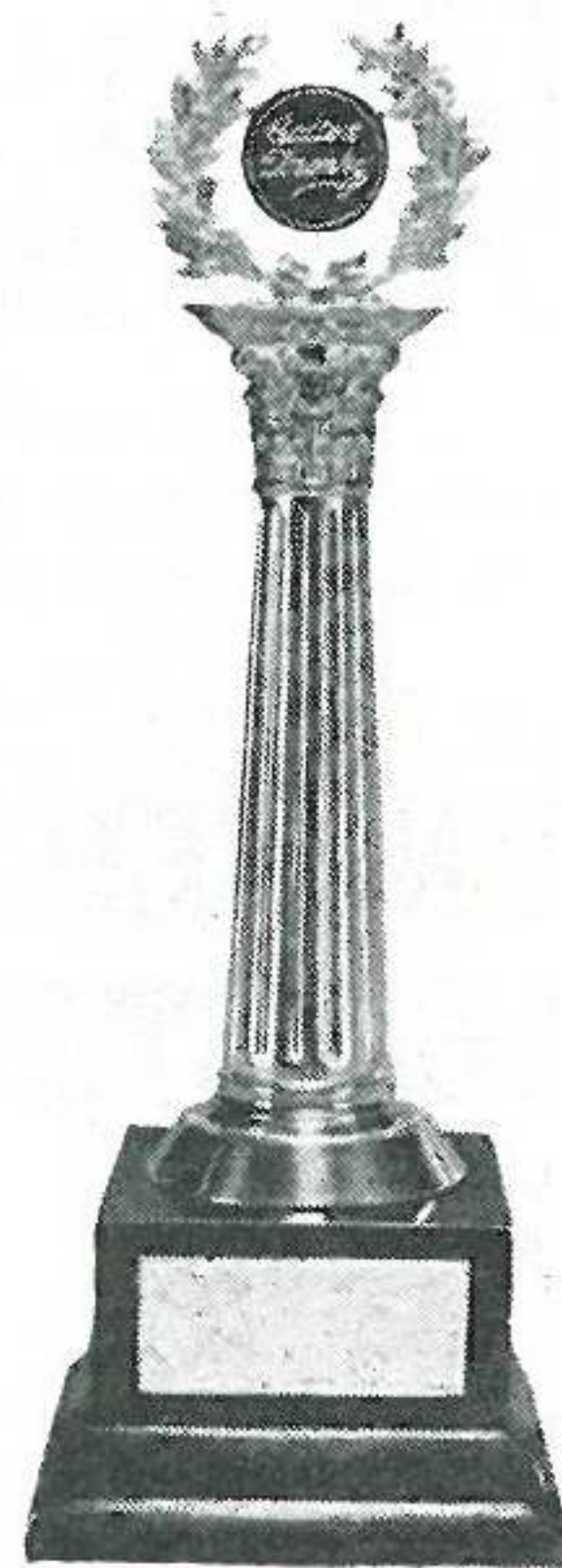
For years to come, not only by the Bann and among the Mourne, but away among the Reeks of Kerry, aye and through the other thirty counties and wherever Gaels gather overseas, James McCartan's golden goal which set Down on the high-road to their first All-Ireland senior crown, will long be the subject of discussion.

And the cheers and bonfires which greeted that historic

Caltex Footballer of the Year

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victory had scarcely died away when Down were back in the news again. This time they successfully completed their bid for the Triple Crown of Gaelic Football, by defeating New York in the St. Brendan Cup final at Croke Park, and once again McCartan was the hardest working forward afield.

No wonder, then, that when the Caltex Gaelic Footballer of the Year trophy came to be awarded it went to the genial James, even over the heads of so many of his colleagues from Co. Down who had also performed so superbly.

It was all the more surprising, then, that the Ulster selectors could find no place for James McCartan on their Railway Cup line-out and, too late, discovered how big a mistake that omission was.

But, if he found that decision disappointing, McCartan has

since had ample compensation for he has been chosen to captain the Ireland football team in the forthcoming annual exhibition game.

Football, of course, is in James McCartan's blood; for his father, Brian, was a prominent county footballer with Down a quarter of a century ago.

Educated at St. Colman's College, Newry, James played on the school's MacRory Cup side as centre-forward in 1954, and first won his place on his county's minor side in the same year. Two years later he graduated to the county's junior side and to the senior team at full-forward.

But he was very young yet for the "big time" and had another spell with the juniors before he came again onto the senior side, as centre half-back against Derry in the 1958 Ulster Final which Down lost so narrowly.

From there he moved to the attack once more, with conspicuous success, but was again at centre-half back when Down won their first senior championship of Ulster in 1959, only to crash to Galway in the subsequent All-Ireland semi-final.

In November of that year he relinquished the centre half-back post to his younger brother, Dan, and, at the start of the 1960 campaign, moved back to the attack, where so much glory awaited him.

James McCartan, whose home club is Glenn, has years of inter-county football still ahead of him. Young, strong, eager and tireless, he will be an even greater menace to opposing defences in the seasons to come as he turns to full account all the experience he has garnered in the victorious campaigns just past.

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Never so dull

says **EAMONN MONGEY**

IT'S not an easy thing to say, but it looks as if this year's Congress is going to be the dullest on record: a more uninspiring, unimaginative selection of motions I have never seen. I can't imagine any of them causing even a ripple of excitement, except possibly Louth's motion calling for the abandonment of the Brendan Cup competitions—and even New York wants this to go through.

If this motion is successful the removal of the trip to New York as a League prize might also reduce the incentive to win the League and thus weaken that competition; and in this connection it is unfortunate that a Monaghan motion seeking to reorganise the National Football League on a promotion and relegation basis was not passed.

But Monaghan has put forward another motion which should be passed. This seeks to allow a player to declare for his home club (i.e., where his home is at the time of declaration) rather than for his native club (i.e., where he was born). This is a most sensible motion and, in my opinion, seeks to establish the position envisaged when this rule was first introduced.

Talking of "native" and "home" reminds me of a motion which a number of counties has sent forward in an effort to keep the All-Ireland junior championships at home in Ireland.

It has always seemed incongruous to me that London, Warwickshire or some other English county could become All-Ireland champions and, equally, it has always appeared grossly unfair that a county which has produced the best junior team in Ireland should be called upon to put it at stake against some English team which usually has a hard core of seasoned senior players.

I know that these English counties want some incentive for their players, but so do our home counties—and charity begins at home. And I thought it tragic that counties like Antrim and Carlow which had done so much to develop hurling in their non-hurling areas should have morale-boosting All-Ireland laurels snatched from them in successive years by London teams.

It is significant that Carlow is one of the counties moving the motion to confine All-Ireland championships to Ireland, and it is equally significant that Dublin (which won last year's junior All-Ireland in football and beat the English champions as well) is also moving it.

There are a couple of novel motions on this year's agenda. One from Cork asks that the ball should not be thrown in until all spectators, officials and newspaper photographers have left the pitch. This motion, I feel, arises out of the confusion caused at last year's football final when there were more outsiders than players on the pitch immediately after the throw-in, and when the Church dignitary who threw in the ball had to "run for it".

This throw-in procedure is most undignified, and if the Cork motion fails, then there should be a firm ruling made that, for any big occasion in which there is a ceremonial throw-in, there should be a false start to enable the pitch to be cleared and allow the game to be started without any outside interference.

Another novel motion, this time from Kerry, asks that the Central Council instal floodlights in Croke Park to facilitate evening games. If the holding of evening games is the only reason for

(Continued overleaf)

Connacht forwards swarm round the Munster goal in the drawn Railway Cup semi-final at Tuam on February 26.

(Continued from Page 31)

installing floodlights, then I'm against it. A pitch can take only so much use (or abuse), and no other pitch I know takes as much punishment as Croke Park. It is used all the year round, in all weathers and usually with two games on Sunday afternoon. Any further evening games—on Sundays or week-days — could do serious damage to the pitch.

The only advantages I see are, first, that artificial lighting would permit later starts to winter games, and, second, that it might be necessary for the successful televising of games played on dark afternoons.

That reminds me of another odd thing about this year's Congress. Is it not strange in a year in which Irish television is going to become an accomplished fact, that not a single motion deals with this important topic. Are we going to allow our games to be televised? If so, on what basis and subject to what conditions? Or, what is the attitude of the general body of the G.A.A. towards television? A searching motion at Congress could have found all this out. Now, I wonder!

Of the rest of the motions sent forward this year, one, which has come from a number of counties, asking that goalkeepers wear distinctive jerseys seeks to remedy a position which should have been cleared up last year, and two others are hardy annuals which failed in the past and have only the slimmest chance of success on this occasion.



I refer to the Kildare motion asking for an arranged draw in the hurling championship, and the Mayo motion which seeks to impose an age limit of 22 years in the All-Ireland junior championships. Both motions deserve serious consideration and I hope they get it.

That's the pick of the motions as I see them. Not a very inspiring or provocative lot, you will agree; but still, one never knows. One of these motions might well provoke a discussion which could make this year's Congress memorable—or at least worthwhile.

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suffers no disadvantage. They are goal, right and left half back and left and right half forward. In his duels with bigger opponents the small man's greatest weapons are his speed, mobility and sharp wits and these are given fullest scope in the aforementioned positions.

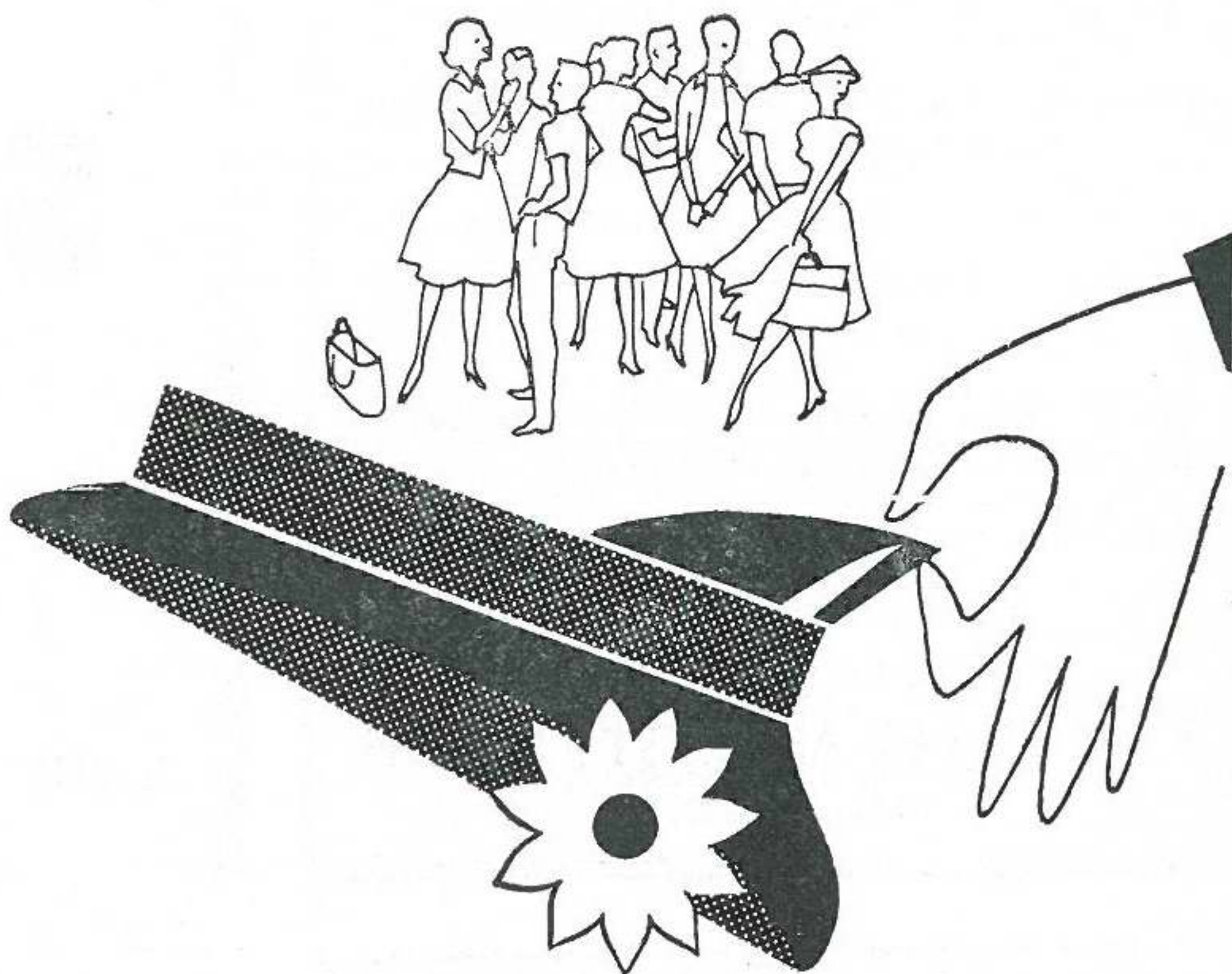
Now I do not for one moment contend that sixfooters are short on grey matter, but it is a noticeable fact that the majority of smaller players who make the grade in intercounty competition are as a rule liberally endowed with what is commonly known as football brains. They have got to be to hold their own among the big fellows on a Gaelic pitch, for the old axiom that a good big 'un will always beat a good little 'un is as true in football as it is in boxing.

Pity the small man? Not on your life! I wonder can any sixfooter boast that he entered Croke Park on Patrick's Day to play in his first Railway Cup final, via the boys' gate? I can. I had gone to Amiens St. Station to meet my younger brother (in case he got lost in the big city) and when I arrived back at the hotel the Leinster team had already left for Croke Park. I reached the ground to find that they had passed through the stiles. I tried to follow suit. I explained to the official at the stile what had happened.

He was not impressed and I was not admitted. I didn't feel like playing the role of player and paying spectator, so I decided to "chance" the boys' gate. I slid the sixpence under the grill and a voice from the darkness beyond said "You're a hairy-looking school-boy!" "I beg your pardon" said I, "I'm still at school." That was no lie, only I neglected to add that I was now a teacher.

There was a long pause as my innocent, and I hoped pathetic, countenance was scrutinised by the owner of the voice. Then I heard the magic words: "All right, go on!" I pushed through the barrier and I was in. Ah well, life has its compensations.

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MAEVE GILROY

By Agnes Hourigan

ONE of the great answers to those who maintain that hurling can never establish a foothold in those counties which have not been traditionally successful at the game is provided by the fact that camogie, which is not in a position to benefit from free hurleys; which is so financially weak that players and teams have to pay their own way more often than not! and which receives little or no publicity; has yet managed to thrive in recent years in areas where hurling is non-existent.

We have seen teams from Mayo, Down and Derry in All-Ireland finals at Croke Park, and only one Ulster county has the honour of having won senior All-Ireland titles at any other Gaelic game than football—those are the Antrim camogie teams which have won four All-Ireland titles in the last fifteen years.

It is the more remarkable that it is generally acknowledged that the "Antrim style" in camogie is the most polished and most pleasant to watch in the game.

Nor is there any greater personification of the Antrim style than their polished attacking player, Maeve Gilroy, who has been one of the county's greatest players through the last six or eight seasons.

A ball player who is almost in the Christy Ring class, Maeve Gilroy was a star of Antrim's last All-Ireland victory in 1956, and had the luck been with her she could easily have added a couple of further supreme awards to that honour.

Coming from a Belfast family always keenly interested in Gaelic games, it is no wonder that Maeve Gilroy was playing camogie from her earliest schooldays in that great nursery of the game for the girl Gaels, St. Dominic's, Belfast.

Strangely enough, though she was for long the star of her school teams and captained the top

side in her senior year, she failed to win any honours with St. Dominic's. But she had ample compensation even then, for she was playing for St. Malachy's Club team with outstanding success in juvenile and junior competitions, winning several Antrim junior medals.

On leaving school in 1952, Maeve Gilroy was promoted to the senior St. Malachy's club side, and in that same year won her place on the Antrim county team, a place which she held generally at centre-forward, sometimes at mid-field or on the wing—until last season, when she

(Continued on Page 55)



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GALWAY in Munster . . . Antrim in Leinster . . . and it's not geography gone mad. In fact, this is just what will happen in this year's hurling championships.

Galway, of course, are already regarded as a Munster county for championship hurling, but Antrim's entry into Leinster is explained by the new intermediate championship which will be inaugurated this year.

This new competition, the brain child of the Central Council's Special Hurling Commission, will be confined to the strong hurling counties of Leinster and Munster, plus not so strong counties like Offaly, Kerry, Antrim, Laois and Meath.

The junior grade will, henceforth, be confined to what can be roughly called the weak counties and it's hoped that the exclusion of the "Big Guns" like Cork, Tipperary, Kilkenny and Waterford will give the weaker counties greater incentive and, more important, help to spread the game in areas where it is weak or non-existent.

THE NEW EXPERIMENT

An Assessment :

By LIAM FOX

Since Antrim is the only county of intermediate standard in Ulster the county will enter the Leinster championship in this grade. There on April 2, they make their debut when they travel to Dublin to play Dublin.

But their juniors will continue to play in Ulster and the draw for this competition will be made shortly.

In the All-Ireland intermediate

championship there will be no semi-finals. Connacht and Ulster are not represented in this grade and Kerry are the only county playing intermediate in Munster.

So in the "home" final Kerry will play the Leinster winners on August 13 or 27 and the winners of this game will meet London on September 17 in Ireland. London, like Antrim and Kerry, will also compete in the junior championship.

At the end of each year the Central Council will review the intermediate competition and shall relegate any county that is obviously out of its class there or accede to the request of a county that wishes to leave that grade and go junior. It would be only fair to wait until at least one season of intermediate hurling has been completed before passing a judgment on the competition. But at this stage it looks as if the competition is at best only a stop-gap arrangement.

I sincerely hope that having devised this competition the Special Commission will not rest content that they have done all they might. This new grade will cater for adult hurlers, but does nothing for the juveniles and teenagers who are, after all, the stars of tomorrow and upon whose youthful shoulders rests the further propagation of the game.

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THE LATE PHIL PURCELL: a tribute

THE following tribute to the late Mr. Phil Purcell of Tipperary appeared in the *Sunday Review*. We reproduce it here because we wish to be associated with an Appreciation that admirably expresses our own sentiments.

The death of Mr. Phil Purcell, secretary of the Tipperary County Board, came as a profound shock to everyone in, and connected with, the Gaelic Athletic Association.

His loss to the Association in general is immense; to Tipperary, which he served so long and so faithfully, both as player and administrator, it is irreparable.

Thirty years ago, Phil Purcell's reputation as a Tipperary backman echoed through the hurling world . . . the echo of awesome respect from his county's rivals . . . of admiration from all.

Then, when his great playing career was over, the gentle, quiet-spoken man from Littleton turned his fine talent to the administration of Tipperary's G.A.A. affairs.

The hurling reputation of "Kickham's County" blossomed once more under his guidance, and its record of success during his long term as county secretary and selector is in itself a proud and lasting monument to the painstaking application of his vast experience and to the selfless devotion of his work.

In an age when, too often, the hall-marks of officialdom, in almost every walk of life are arrogance, petty dictatorship and incivility, COURTESY and KINDLINESS were

Phil Purcell's greatest and most lovable qualities . . .

It may be trite now to say that he died in a life's cause. But that is the cold truth. For Phil Purcell had been in failing health for the past few years, and there can be no doubt that

his arduous duties hastened his untimely death.

To his wife and family we offer our deepest sympathy . . . and to the memory of a great hurler and a great man we offer a proud salute.

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Football's Most Important Man

By PETER BYRNE

EVER try to figure out the most important position on a Gaelic football team? If you've never sampled the dubious pleasure of this harmless-looking pastime, I've got news for you—don't! You could end up in big trouble.

Like yours truly the other night, for instance. A cosy fire, a couple of drinks and a bunch of ebullient, straight-talking young G.A.A. fans—the scene had all the setting of a Gael's version of heaven on earth.

And then it happened. "Tell me," said Ned, nursing the dregs of a once-frothy pint. "If you were asked to name the most important berth on a Gaelic football team, what position would you plump for?"

That was about nine o'clock in the evening. Two hours later I was plodding my way home, bewitched, bothered, utterly bewildered that four men, each priding himself on being a connoisseur of the arts and crafts of Gaelic football, could cross paths in such violent fashion.

To Ned, himself, the answer was crystal clear. It just had to be midfield; and to prove his point he rolled of a list of men like Con Brosnan, Larry Stanley, Tommy Murphy, Paddy Kennedy, Pádraig Carney, Mick O'Connell and Jim McKeever, who controlled game after game from the middle of the field.

Sean was equally emphatic. "Give me a good centre half-forward," he said, "one who knows where and when to distribute the ball, and I guarantee he'll transform any mediocre forward line into a brilliantly effective unit."

Me? I had no hesitation in naming the centre



JIM CROWLEY (left) one of Gaelic football's top centre half backs in recent years.

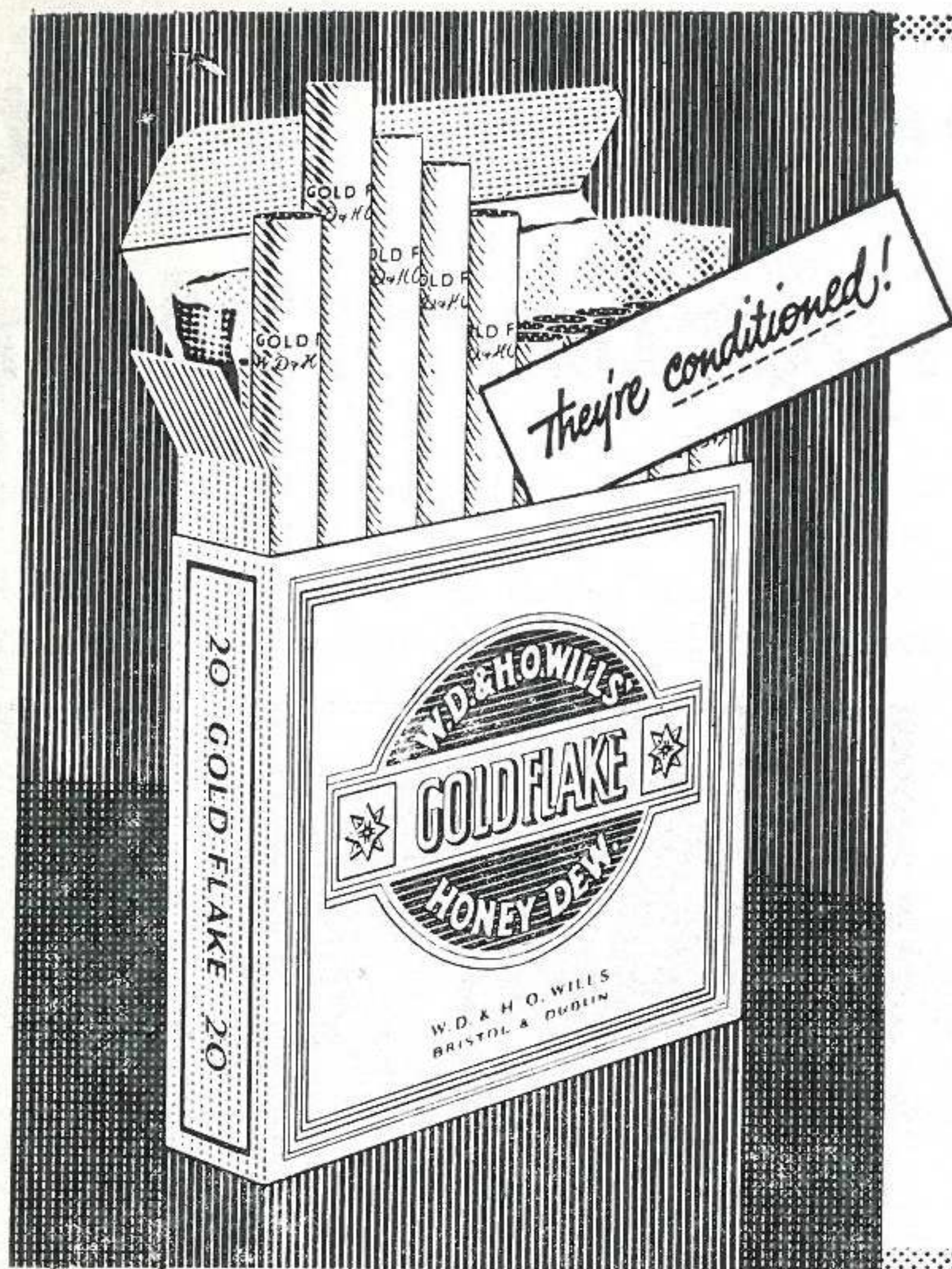
half-back spot as the key berth in the make-up of any title-aspiring football team.

And in arriving at that conclusion I was greatly influenced by the contributions the leading No. 6 men have made to their teams' progress in recent years.

To prove my point, take a look at some of the defensive pivots who have won All-Ireland football honours during the last six years.

Dan McCartan (Down), Kevin Coffey (Kerry), Jim Crowley (Dublin), Jim McArdle (Louth), Jack Mahon (Galway) and John Cronin (Kerry). Those

(Continued on Page 41).



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(From Page 39)

were the men who had the privilege of steering their teams to victory from the centre half-back position during that period. And who can deny the king-sized roles played by each and every one of them.

The man wearing the No. 6 jersey is more than just the king-pin of the defence; he is the connecting link between defence and attack, the driving force around which his team will either stand or fall.

And I say that in spite of the age-old maxim that a team holding sway at midfield will, in nine cases out of ten, eventually come out on top.

For recent trends have tended to make the centre half-back a third midfielder, and depending on how well he measures up to that task lies the key to his team's success.

So, in addition to being the mainstay of the defence, the centre half must also act as a spring-board for his side's forays on the opposing goal. A pretty hectic schedule, you'll agree, all of which adds up to the tag of "Football's Most Important Man".

And what a wonderful array of talent is paraded out whenever the subject of the greatest centre half-backs in football gets an airing!

Confining ourselves to post-war years, we could rattle off a dozen men, the splendour of whose football entitled them to a place among the all-time "greats".

Men like Cavan's John Joe O'Reilly, for instance. Unbeatable in the air, shrewd around the field, deadly in the tackle—O'Reilly packed the lot in one of the most complete football make-ups it has ever been my privilege to see.

Then there was Bill Goodison of Wexford. A

man of boundless energy and astonishing spring. Bill looked small for the exacting position, but, boy, how brilliantly he filled it for so many years.

Remember Jackie Lyne of Kerry! All corners and tough as steel, the Killarney man was a glorious centre half.

And there were others. Burly Jim Crowley of Dublin travelled the length of the field before settling down as one of the top centre halves of our time, while Kerry fans still rave about big John Cronin's displays in the Kingdom's All-Ireland triumphs of 1953 and 1955.

"Matchless" Gerry O'Malley of Roscommon is another who personifies all that is good in a top-ranking centre half. An impeccable defender, O'Malley has that wonderful flair for turning defence into attack with one astute, shrewdly-delivered kick, and when many an All-Ireland medal winner has been forgotten, the big, fair-haired Roscommon man will still be remembered for his consistently brilliant football over the past decade.

And lastly, there was John Rice of Monaghan who looms high in the rankings of the top centre half-backs of our time.

Although the stocky Clontibret man never got many opportunities of displaying his talents in the "big time," apart from his regular appearances on the Ulster inter-provincial team, his cool, calculated football in the middle of the half-back line stamped him as one of the greatest ever to appear in the position.

Yes, indeed, John Rice was a gifted exponent of the many facets of skill which go to make centre half-back THE most difficult and vital position on a Gaelic football team!

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LAOIS—a county without a football title; yet as great a contributor to the glamour of Gaelic football as many a county with half a dozen titles.

Except for a brief flurry in 1889, which brought them into the All-Ireland final and resulted in a heavy defeat by Tipperary, Laois failed to pass the Leinster Championship until 1936. But that year they made it, and in the All-Ireland semi-final they met the reigning champions, Cavan.

The year before the Breffni men had proven themselves a very competent side by beating Kildare, 3-6 to 2-5 in the final; and, naturally, they were firm favourites to dispose of Laois and reach the 1936 final.

However, the determined Laois men proved their match in every department and so at the end of the hour Cavan were well beaten 2-6 to 1-5.

In the final it was Laois versus Connacht champions, Mayo.

Laois Gaels will remember that late September day in 1936 while memories remain; for from the first whistle everything seemed to go wrong. No matter how they tried, no matter what changes were made, everything seemed to fail and Mayo just kept piling on score after score.

Long before the end, the result was a foregone conclusion and Mayo rested on their oars to finish easy winners, 4-11 to 0-5.

Such a heart-breaking result in an All-Ireland final would have shattered the spirit of most counties—but not Laois. The fact that they reached the decider was in itself a great achievement, and so they came back with even greater determination in 1937.

In the first round of the Leinster championship they drew with Offaly and two weeks later won the replay by a goal. Then came a close game with Kildare and again a three points victory for Laois.

In the Leinster final there was a marked improvement in the Laois form and they beat Louth 0-12 to

0-4. Now they faced Kerry in the All-Ireland semi-final.

Fifteen thousand people packed the Cork grounds that day and although few anticipated it, they saw one of the greatest football contests for many years.

Laois did most of the attacking early on and at one stage a goal seemed certain when Jack Delaney went through . . . but Dan O'Keeffe saved.

However Laois opened the scoring with a point in the 15th minute and quickly followed with several wides. Nearing half-time Kerry

struck back and Con Gainey equalised with a goal. Dillon added a Kerry point and the Kingdom were ahead!

But Laois were not beaten. Bill and Jack Delaney were still supreme at mid-field and as time ticked away they piled on the pressure only to send over four successive wides.

Keohane worked tirelessly in the Kerry defence and then, once again, Tom Keogh was in possession. He was fouled and the Referee awarded a free to Laois. Jack Delaney sent it over the bar

Bad luck shattered Laois hopes in semi-final clash with Kerry

FAME IN DEFEAT

By Sean Feeley

came back with a goal, and so it rested at the break.

Early in the second half, Tommy Murphy went high, held it and shaking off two Kerry men sent the ball into the square for Swayne to punch home. Jack Delaney added two points and now Laois led 1-3 to Kerry's 1-1.

Kerry were on the run. Veteran Tom Keogh, who had helped Kildare win the 1927 and '28 championship, added another Laois point and with only a few minutes of play remaining Laois still led by three points.

Then, in typical style, Kerry

and the game was drawn

Two weeks later a much-changed Kerry side fielded in Waterford. Back on the team were the Landers brothers. Tim and veteran John Joe, plus four newcomers.

It rained briefly at the beginning of the game and once again it was Laois who opened the scoring with a Keogh point. Tim Landers equalised for Kerry and minutes later, from a Charlie Sullivan centre, the same player was through for a goal.

In the second half 'teenager Tommy Murphy was unbeatable. Fielding ball after ball, he rallied

the Leinster men, and in the 10th minute went through on his own to drive home a great goal.

It was a brilliant left-footed shot, straight into the corner of the net.

Two further Laois points followed to leave them two points ahead.

Then came a shattering blow to Laois — Tommy Murphy went down injured and had to retire.

Minutes later Tim Landers goaled for Kerry. Laois fought back but the loss of Murphy, and full-back Tom Delaney a few minutes later, was too much.

Both sides exchanged points and then referee Tom Shevlin indicated that it was all over; the score stood, Kerry 2-2; Laois 1-4.

Kerry went on to win the final—on a replay—against Cavan. But it could well have been Laois's title.

In 1938, Laois and Kerry met again in the semi-final and once again Lady Luck played her part and Kerry qualified by 2-6 to 2-4.

And so ends one chapter in the annals of Laois football. An American trip helped to compensate for that missed All-Ireland, but looking back now, those narrow defeats did, after all, have their glory.

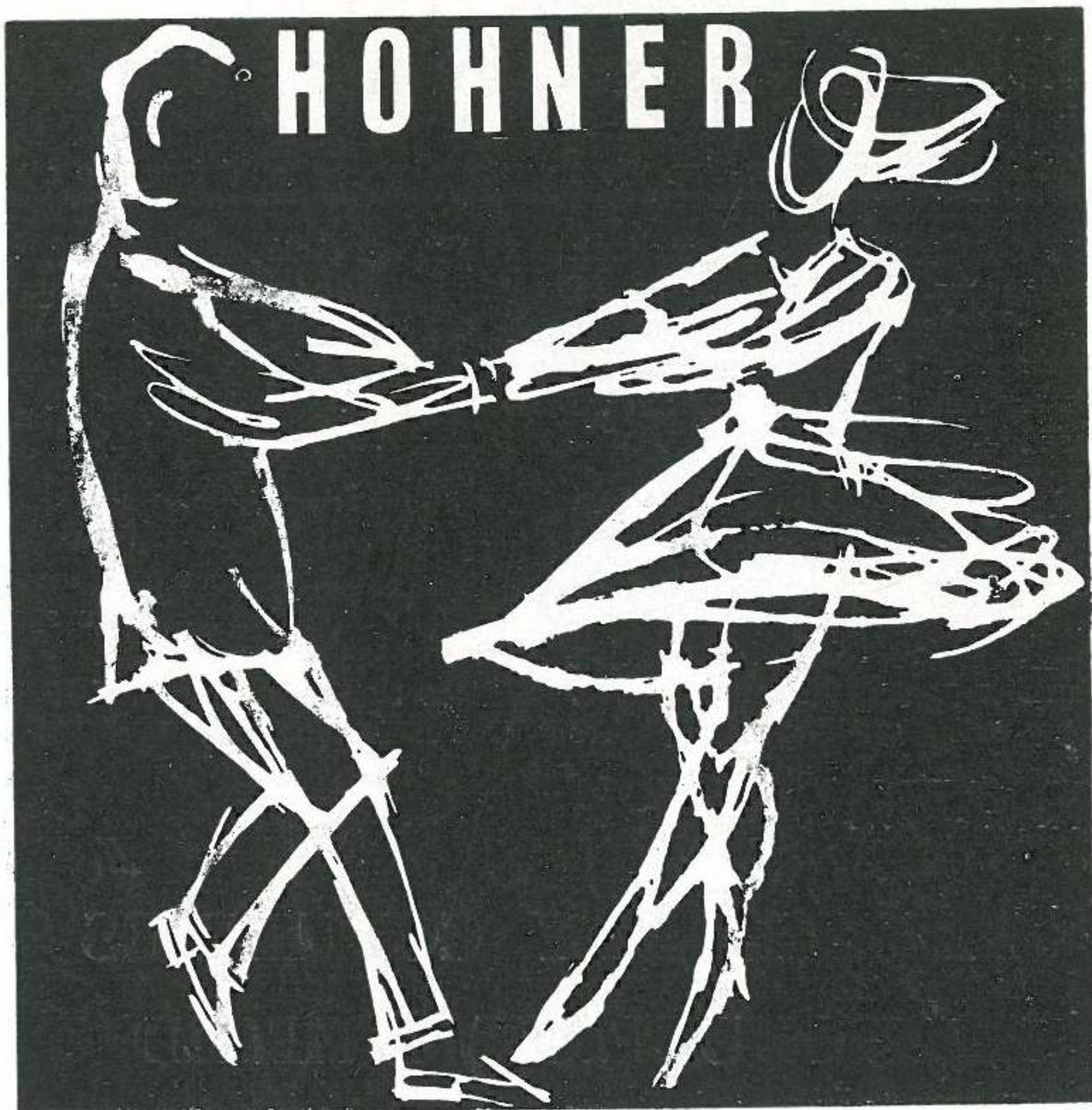
A quarter of a century has now passed and while we may hesitate when asked who won the 1934 or 1935 championship, we will always remember Laois in 1937—and in 1938, too.

We will remember the Delaneys, all of them; and Tommy Murphy then at school in Knockbeg College and playing minor for Stradbally. Yet, even in those years he stood a man among men.

In the personal achievements of those great players Laois football has its tradition, its memories and its inspiration.

And so, year after year, they will continue to strive to recapture the glory of the past. Lets hope that they will soon go that one step further to final victory.

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CAN WE IMPROVE GAELIC GAMES?

GERRY GLENN, former Dublin hurling star, says—YES

WITH summer waiting just around the corner and the long evenings beckoning, we look forward once more to the crash of the ash, the flying sliotar and the hectic exchanges of the football scene. And on a firm, dry sod we hope!

We have had samples of National League fare in the depths of a hard winter and hurlers and footballers have ploughed their way through mud and icy rain with piercing winds to help them on the move. Many will argue that both players

and pitches should be given a rest at least until spring has brought relief; but that's another matter.

With Group finals in the offing and the final stages of the Leagues on the horizon we will soon be casting about for likely League champions. Thus heralding the championships themselves.

The All-Ireland championships—what magic in the words — the greatest events in Ireland's sporting scene.

The shock champions of 1960—Down in football, Wexford in

hurling — proved that the Sam Maguire and the McCarthy Cups, respectively, are any counties' property no matter what the odds, if they set to it with a will.

What counties for the laurels this year? After the glorious uncertainties of 1960 your guess is as good as the next fellow's. So we can look forward with relish to yet another great series of mighty battles; and even the unknowns may enter the fray with hope in their hearts. Let battle be joined.

But how about the games themselves? The standard of play, I mean—the fitness of players, their stamina, fleetness of foot, their skill. Will we see an improvement all round? May we expect more actual play and less time devoted to taking of frees? Or are we satisfied with 1960 standards? Frankly, I am not.

How, for instance, can one improve hurling—one of the fastest and probably the most thrilling game on earth?

For one thing, I want to see more ground hurling. And remember, hurling is at its fastest — and of course at its best—only then. The non-stop Diesel from Cork to Dublin is a thrilling experience, but let it stop at every little station on the way and it becomes one pain in the neck. Thus, picking and poking the sliotar drags hurling down to the level of slow-motion entertainment.

Give us more pulling on the ball and the carefree abandon of Cuchulainn's game will automatically follow. But give our hurlers some protection, I say. I don't mean

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suits of armour, but I do suggest a light helmet such as American footballers wear. No need to stress that head injuries can be dangerous. Protect the head — that seems obvious.

Light shinguards too would appear to be a commonsense asset. But only the hurler himself is aware of the accidental damage that can be inflicted on his fingers and knuckles in the course of a hectic hour's hurling. The handicap thus imposed may well be imagined. A bruised or sprained finger will generally consign an otherwise perfectly fit and able player to the sideline. Finger-pads—or whatever it is that cricket batsmen use—should help to reduce the potential danger in this department.

Visualise the fire and fury of hurling if such innovations were introduced — and with even less likelihood of accidental injuries to the participants.

Let nobody tell me that such forms of personal protection will tend to pamper players or make a namby-pamby game of hurling itself. On the contrary, "no draw back" will become more than ever the order of the day.

Whatever about the need for a speeding-up of hurling, there is no question but that Gaelic football is simply crying out for reform. Thirteen aside—no full-back no full-forward, as proposed to me long ago by Christy Ring himself—would undoubtedly open up both games. The wrestling and wrangling that generally ensues between the full-back and his opposite number is a distinct blot on Gaelic football in particular. A larger parallelogram would eventually result in a big reduction in the number of fouls committed by defenders. At present it pays to grass the attacker. And it has often been said, in view of the multitude of opportunities

offered these days, that to any Gaelic football team an accurate place-kicker is a jewel of rare price!

But, of all the suggestions put forward to lift the standard of football, I firmly believe that one forbidding the player in possession to lift the ball off the ground would make for a vast and instantaneous improvement in the rhythm of the game.

The art of lifting the ball properly went out with the 'thirties. Even then, only a handful could perform the motion competently. Quite honestly I can recall but two men, Sean Brosnan and Paudie Sheehy (both Kerry men), who mastered the art of jabbing the ball with the toe into the hands without stooping—and at speed.

Others, no doubt, gave it up as a bad job because, needless to add, unless done perfectly, the trick can easily misfire: the hasty jab sends

(Continued on Page 51)



R. McDONNELL, the Ulster hurling goalkeeper, saves brilliantly in the Railway Cup semi-final against Munster at Casement Park on February 19.

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Meath goalie M. Clarke and right full M. Quinn watch a Westmeath point sail over the bar in the League game at Mullingar on February 5. Meath won by 2-6 to 1-5.

Says **FRANK O'FARRELL**

IN recent times the Gaelic Athletic Association has undergone many important changes. And one of the most striking of these is the new specialised approach towards the selection of inter-county hurling and football teams.

Out into the wilderness of the "has-beens" has gone the old-fashioned method of nominating five or seven men to look after the selection of county teams and hoping for the best from there on.

Now, the job is done by naming a panel of players, usually numbering about twenty-five, and

persevering with these men for a pre-determined period. If the desired results are forthcoming on the playing fields, the panel is retained; if not, the nets are cast wider and a remodelled group brought together.

The system works as easily as that. And the soundness of the practice can be gauged from a quick run-through of the successes garnered by the counties who have adopted it.

In the mid-fifties, Dublin, disheartened by their long run of defeats in their quest to bring

(Continued on Page 49)

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(From Page 47)

the Sam Maguire Cup back to the capital, decided to nominate a panel of the most promising players in the county and embark on a long-term policy.

The wisdom behind that move was driven home to the hilt when, in 1958, the Metropolitanans came from "nowhere" to make a clean sweep of all the major trophies, including the National League, the All-Ireland and St. Brendan Cup competitions.

And what about the record-making achievements of the 1960 Down senior football team? Theirs was the greatest example of all of the benefits to be derived from the policy of keeping the same group of players together for a specified period.

Undeterred by a number of defeats at the outset of their long-term policy, they stuck to their guns in unflinching style and eventually they strung together a side that went on to whip the might of Ireland last season.

Looking at those two examples, it isn't difficult to observe the strategy behind this approach. So simple, in fact, that one would expect every county board to have jumped on the band-wagon and to have started building up their teams of the future on similar lines.

Unfortunately, that isn't the case. And it's towards the "defaulters" that I direct the following warning

Either step into line with modern training methods and present-day team-planning, or else be prepared to sit it out on the side-lines whenever important hurling or football competitions are being decided.

And that applies in equal measure to the "top-notchers" as well as to the "small fry" . . . to the counties with unlimited playing strength at their disposal just as much as it does to those who are hard set to get fifteen senior-standard players on to the field.

The days when an inter-county senior selection committee could sit down and pencil in fifteen names, more or less at random, and still hope to win, are gone.

You now plan your moves two or three years ahead: build your team of to-morrow on the minors of to-day, and once having struck the right blend, you dig in solidly and wait for the ball to run your way.

The keynote behind this system of team-planning is team-work and combination. And the only way you can acquire these is to keep the same panel of players together for a reasonable period, thus giving them the chance of learning each other's style of play.

There is no substitute for skill, they say. But sometimes I doubt the wisdom of that maxim—for give me a team that works together as a unit and I will back them against any selection of star-studded ball-players.

In addition, the system of keeping the same string of players together for a specified period rules out the possibility of a man being dropped on the strength of one poor performance. All too often I've seen promising youngsters dropped for "keeps" just because they didn't hit it off on their initial inter-county appearance.

Maurice Hayes, Secretary of the Down Co. Board, didn't forget to mention the role team-planning played in his county's historic win, at the many functions which followed the Mourne men's wonderful achievement last season.

"As far back as 1956 we realised that we had the nucleus of an All-Ireland winning team in our ranks," said Maurice. "We brought them along slowly, but the care and patience paid dividends when we beat Kerry to win the Sam Maguire Cup."

Take careful note, all you title-chasing counties. If Down can do it, so too can you. It may take time—but it will pay off eventually.

TOPICAL TALK

By **EAMONN YOUNG**

TO start on a sombre note, what a toll the bad weather and its consequent illnesses took of the sporting world: Mick Flanagan, Phil Purcell, Dinny Sullivan's father from Oughterard, old "Boig" Coleman from Midleton, and the rest. Christmas, which brings a breath of warmth with the Child's arrival, so often precedes the chill gust that takes the old folks away. May God rest them.

I was reading the other day a reference by that very competent centre-back, Jack Mahon, of the displays of Tom Sullivan, Dinny's brother, during Galway's campaign of 1945.

I had first-hand experience of Tom's worth in that year, having had the bad luck to be on the half-way line when Cork beat Galway in a Croke Park semi-final. There was only one unluckier—a man named Factna Donovan from Clonakilty who strove manfully to keep the Oughterard man quiet. We failed.

In the days when the ball was thrown in by hand from the sideline, Tom Sullivan's worth was even greater, for he used throw the ball overhand like an American footballer, regularly getting about 45 yards' length.

In an army game in the Phoenix Park in the early 'forties I saw him run all over the field to take sideline throws until, in the end, he was nearly worn out.

* * *

Speaking of games in the Park, the other day, a hardy medical man from Limerick was telling of the frosty Sunday morn when he was last out of the dressing room. At the door he ran into a comrade dashing in with togs in his hand.

"Carry on," said your man, "I'll be right in a jiffy," and began to take off his dress suit, in which he had tripped the light fantastic the night before in the Gresham. . . Ah, youth!

* * *

The popular Jim Brosnan has taken over leadership of Kerry from Frank Sheehy who had served several years in the job. If "Brozzy" puts into his new job only a fraction of the energy we have seen on the field we should have results.

I noticed with unrestrained delight that the Kerry County Convention passed a motion that appeals committees be impartial. At present in

(Continued on Page 53)

(From Page 45)

the ball into the hands of an opponent.

To-day, and indeed for some years back, the position is almost farcical. The lifting is performed neither correctly nor at speed. Almost every lift is a hand-and-foot scoop in other words, an infringement. Most referees are loathe to double the staggering total of frees and consequently the disease goes unchecked. Worst of all, the illegal lift slows up the game, spoils promising movements and too often results in fouls that are obviously never intended but cannot be avoided.

Jump high and catch that high ball, grasp with open arms the hopping ball and, as before, fist it to a colleague—even lift the ground ball with your boot to your teammate . . . **but don't lift it yourself!**

Introduce this rule and **almost at once** I guarantee that no football game in the world will come within an ass's roar of Gaelic for speed, skill, spectacle and entertainment.

And the man who yells "Soccer" at this deserves to have his head examined.

PRIZE BONDS

AS will be seen from our advertising columns, Prize Bonds will be on sale again from Thursday, March 23, until Saturday, April 8. Bonds bought during the forthcoming issue will participate with existing Bonds, until they are cashed, in all future Draws for prizes.

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(From Page 50)

the Munster Council, the representatives of County Boards not only speak but vote on an appeal, while the clubmen who make the appeal are not allowed a vote. The committee is automatically prejudiced thereby, but the position should now be remedied.

* * *

The youngest 45-year-old I know is Comdt. Jim Doherty of Donegal, who played Railway Cup with Ulster in the late 'thirties. Jim, now living in Athy, played hard football, basketball and almost anything else up to a year ago. Now he concentrates on golf, not because he's slowing down, but, as he says himself, "It's not fair to show up the young fellows."

One bright Sunday in Stradbally twenty years ago I saw Jim score two of the greatest goals ever. We were playing the local club, and Doherty, thirteen stone of dynamite, flashed in from the forty and when another would have passed, kicked two goals clear to the net from at least 25 yards. When they go in from that range they have to be travelling!

The fact that he was marked by Mick Delaney, a top-class centre-back, meant that Jim must have been travelling also.

* * *

Should Christy Ring retire? It's becoming a popular discussion. Some of his greatest admirers, who see a little of his speed going, say he should. Naturally, they want to remember him at his best. I think it was the great singer, Margaret Burke Sheridan, who declined further appearances in public for the same reason.

Many others do NOT want Christy to hang them up. He's still the best forward in Cork, they say, "and God knows we want him." A good argument.

"I'd hate to be on the selection committee that dropped him," says another. Fair point.

"We will never have a leader in the forward line while he stays, and we do want a good man on the twenty-one. The son never blossoms in the family business until the father retires."

There's merit in every point, but I think, in

the end, the matter must rest with the man himself. We all started to play for fun, and most of the men I knew continued to play as long as they enjoyed it—not while they were winning medals. When the fun went, so did the player. Lack of speed, domestic affairs, and a dozen other factors reduce the enjoyment of playing. Christy is still a bachelor and has enough speed with which to carry on. Moreover, he loves the game, and will, I think, play it well for a few more years.

As in the case of Jim Doherty—one can name a hundred more—age is a personal thing, often completely at variance with multiplications of the period it takes the earth to make its annual lap of honour around the sun.

Some candles burn out at seventy; others glow brightly till ninety, and if Brian Boru had had a sentry at Clontarf he might be alive to-day.

* * *

I was speaking to one of those hardy old men. He had played a lot of football when there were twenty-one men a side. As many of the rural pitches were in those days smaller than our modern fields, and not by any means as well kept, one can imagine the hard play which resulted when forty-two tough men were trying to get hold of the ball.

That's the reason why there was no solo-running, hand-passing or egg-and-spoon juggling which bring the women (God love them) into the stands of to-day.

The boys were discussing a game we had seen that day, and were enthusiastic about a young newcomer who certainly brought the football out of the skies.

An admirer described how our man went for the first ball, flew up into the air, caught, held, came down and kicked. The second ball got more graphic treatment, and he was going to town on the third when old Con, who (like myself) was getting weary from the exertion, put us out of pain.

"'Twas a damn bad man that let him."

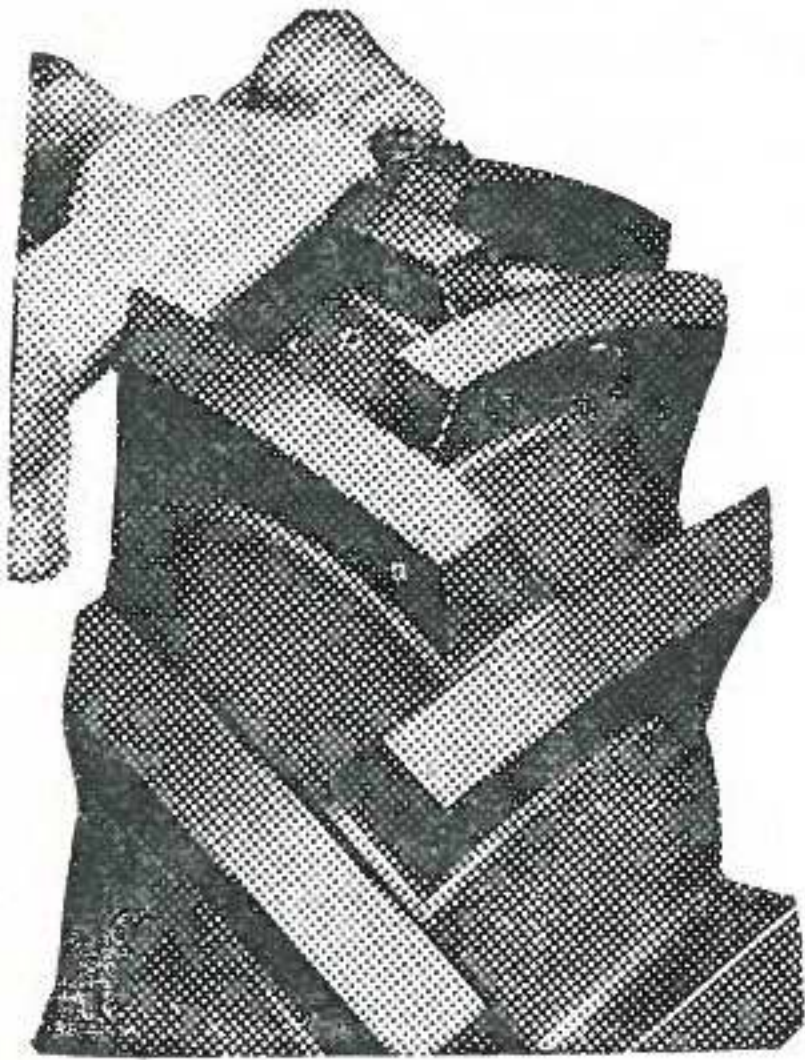
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MAEVE

(From Page 35)

announced that she was retiring from inter-county competition.

During those years Maeve won six Ulster senior medals, and was often the star of the side. She won an All-Ireland medal with her county in 1956, and was desperately unlucky to miss another when Dublin just snatched victory from Antrim with a last minute goal in the final of 1957.

She also played in three successive seasons for Ulster in the Gael-Linn Cup competition, and in 1956-'7 received the Cuchullain award as the outstanding camogie player of the year.

For eight seasons Maeve Gilroy was the centre of many great attempts by Queen's University, Belfast, to win the Ashbourne inter-'varsity Cup, and here again luck was more than once against her; for two years ago at Cork, Dublin only took the cup from the Belfast side on aggregate scores.

However, she has had compensation by many victories with her club, having won three Antrim senior championship titles, and five senior league medals.

A camogie player of many attributes, a match winner in any part of the field but especially in attack, Maeve Gilroy has always been a credit to her school, her University, her club, her county, and her province, and indeed to the whole Camogie Association.

On retirement from the inter-county fields a year ago she took up golf, a game at which she showed plenty of promise. But now the camogie fields are luring her back again. In the recent Ashbourne Cup series at Belfast she came back to help Queen's in a very gallant, if unsuccessful, bid to win the trophy, and if Antrim call on her again this season I, for one, will not be at all surprised to see Maeve Gilroy field out again in the saffron tunic in an effort to add another All-Ireland medal to that so prized award won in a thrilling final against Cork in 1956.

Maeve has one brother who is secretary of the St. John's hurling club in Belfast. She herself works as secretary in a Teachers' Training College.

(From Page 27)

"Cork tried hard towards the end but that wonder-man, the great Doctor Tommy Daly from Clare, was in the Dublin goal, and nothing could pass him. Anyway we were well beaten—even with the two Rings. The score, I think, was 4-9 to 4-3, and so our reign as All-Ireland champions came to an end.

"We didn't know it then, though, that back in Cloyne there was young garsun of two, just toddling around, awaiting his turn in the Cork jersey. Had we been able to look into the future and see the glory that Christy Ring was to bring to Cork hurling, I think we would have been a lot happier that evening in Dublin.

"You know, it was nearly five years before we set foot in Croke Park again for another final. I remember that day, too. Sean Og was captain and it was against Kilkenny—but that's another story and I suppose ye Dublin chaps want to go."

I looked at Frank and Frank looked at his watch and before we had time to say 'yes, aye or no' the barman was closing. The man with the hat looked disappointed.

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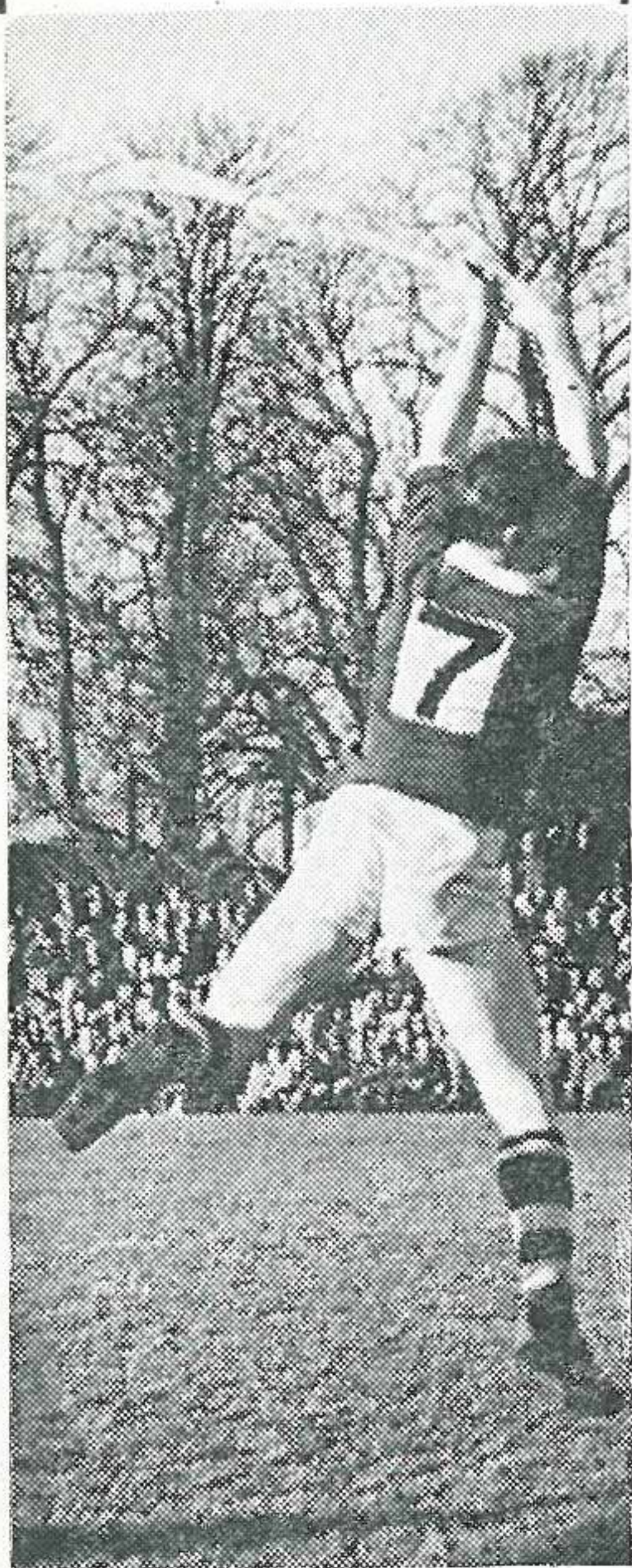
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Connacht Backman Goes High



PADDY FAHY stalwart Galway defender, seen here in action at left half back for Connacht in their unsuccessful Railway Cup hurling semi-final clash with Leinster at Ballinasloe on February 19.

(From Page 9)

in the game—is ready for the fray again and his presence in the left corner-forward berth enhances still further Leinster's victory prospects.

But 'Heffo' is not the only star in this crafty forward set-up which fired so effectively on all six cylinders in that Casement Park clash.

Schemer-in-chief Kevin Beahan is capable of splitting the tightest defences and with Offaly's Sean Brereton and Laois's Jack Kenna to supply the finishing touches, it could be 'operation nightmare' for the opposing defence on St. Patrick's Day.

A great deal of the credit for Leinster's surprise semi-final win must go to the solid 'core' of the Offaly contingent who provided the steadying influence when the going was toughest.

And nowhere was this more noticeable than in defence where Pat McCormack, Greg Hughes and John Egan brought in another display of that fearless, unruffled brand of football which carried the Midlanders to a string of shock victories in last year's Leinster campaign.

Further out, Micky Brady and Charlie Wren dove-tailed splendidly with Dublin's 'new find' Paddy Holden to form a virtual iron curtain which not even the star-studded Ulster front line could penetrate.

Weigh in the dashing football of Sean Foran and Westmeath's Mick Carley at mid-field and you have the recipe for a winning Railway Cup team—and that in spite of the wealth of talent which adorned both the Munster-Connacht semi-final clashes.

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