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GAA

# Gaelic Sport

1/6



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replies to  
JOE SHERWOOD

SEPTEMBER - NOVEMBER, 1961

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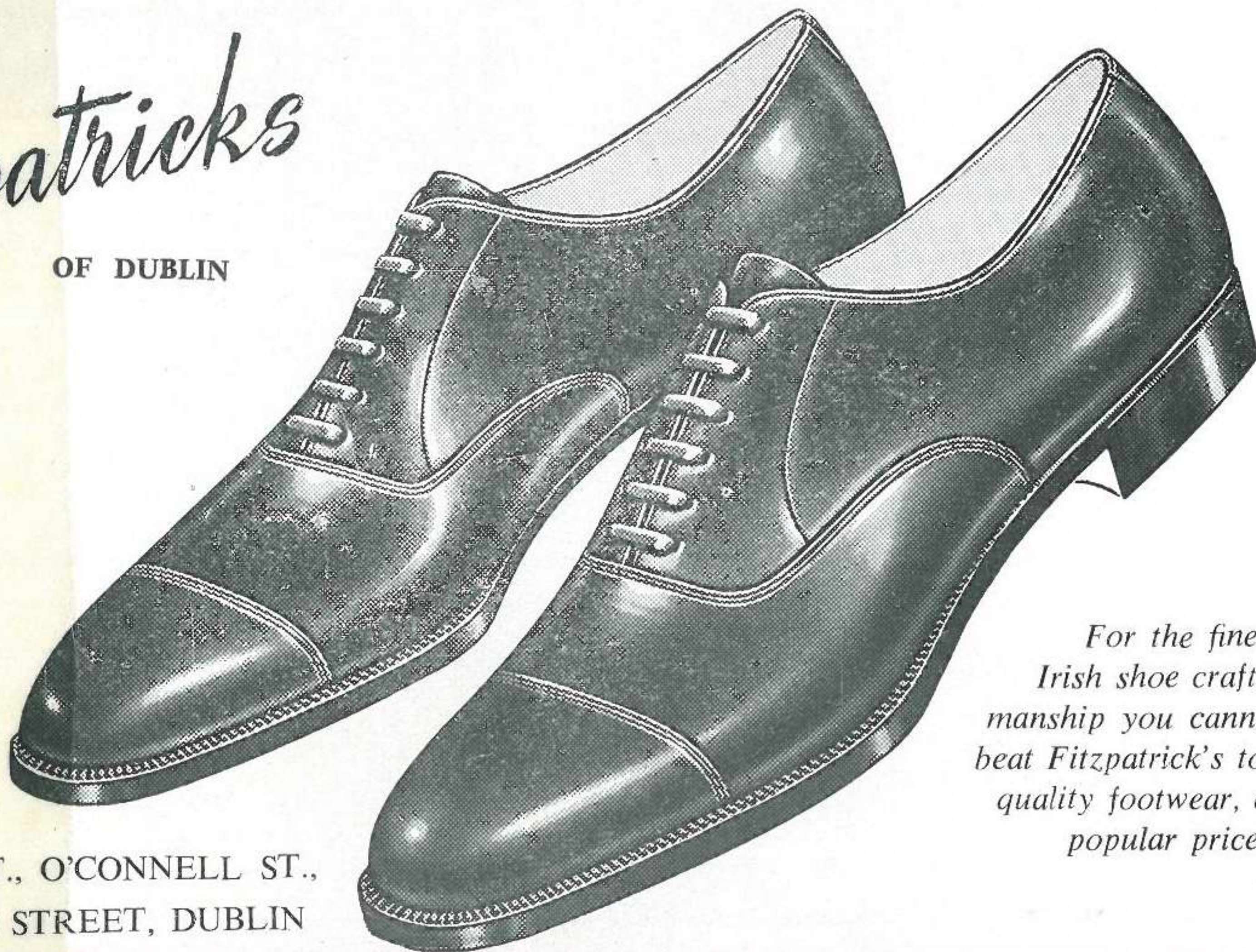
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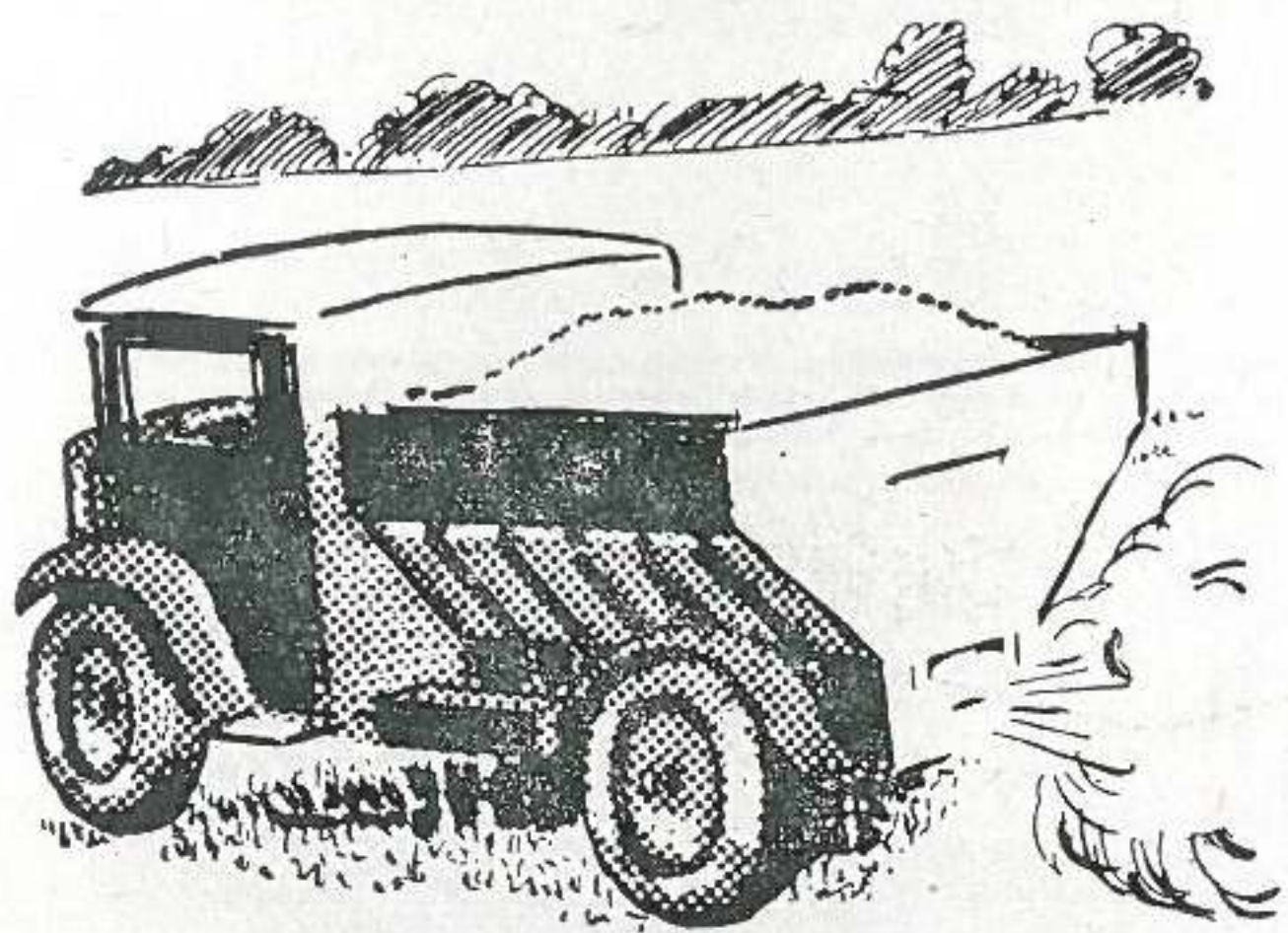
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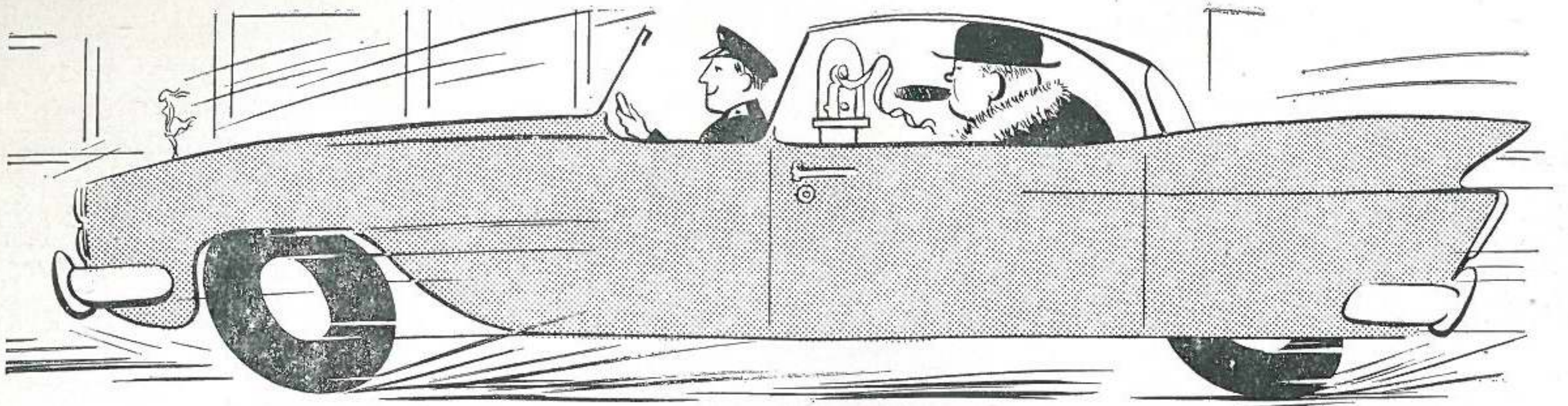
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# Gaelic Sport

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## COVER PICTURE

A dramatic action shot of Cork's incomparable Christy Ring. See special article on page 57.

## EDITORIAL

# Welcome, Offaly!

IT is always an exhilarating experience to see new faces in an All-Ireland final. When those new faces come from a county like Offaly the joy of the genuine G.A.A. follower is really deep, and the welcome is really big.

Offaly, the "faithful" county of the Association, make their first-ever appearance in an All-Ireland football final this year. They can be sure of a heart-warming reception from the huge crowd who will pack Croke Park for the big game against champions Down.

Down themselves savoured that reception when they made their final debut last year. The Ulstermen deserved it. Offaly deserve it too.

It was one of *Gaelic Sport's* contributors, Moondharrig, who wrote some years ago that Offaly were "the best team that never won anything". The description was both apt and complimentary at the time.

The Midlanders have since won two Leinster titles. But these long-overdue successes are but scant reward for Offaly's devotion to the game through all the barren years.

Now they come face to face with the biggest moment in their football history. Let's wish them luck in their quest for the biggest prize that the game has to offer.

And if the fates decree that the All-Ireland champions must relinquish their crown on September 24, be sure that the

sporting men of Down will be happy to hand it over to those fine footballers from the "faithful" county.

Now a word for the hurlers of Dublin. It is nine years since the Metropolitan light blue jerseys last appeared in an All-Ireland hurling final. That was in 1952 when they failed to Cork. Four years previously they lost to Waterford. In fact it is 23 years since Dublin won the All-Ireland hurling championship. The year: 1938. The opposition: Mick Hickey's men from the Decies.

They are due another victory. But the odds are stacked against them. That's why they are also due a very big hand from the hurling crowd when they line out against Tipperary.

## STILL TOP VALUE

IT is with great reluctance that we are obliged to increase the price of GAELIC SPORT from 1/- to 1/6. This has been brought about by the ever-increasing costs of production.

When GAELIC SPORT was launched three years ago it contained 44 pages. Our size has been increasing steadily ever since. This issue contains 64 pages! Yes, GAELIC SPORT is still the best value on the market—at 1/6.

*Eager Dublin bid for glory . . . but . . .*

# THE ODDS ARE ON TIPPERARY

By **FRANK O' FARRELL**

**T**WENTY-THREE years is a long time to have to wait on any title. And that is the length of time that has elapsed since Dublin last won the Blue Riband of hurling.

Yes, for 23 weary years, the men of Dublin have yearned for the day when the McCarthy Cup would return to the capital . . . when they could, with justification, say — "We've licked the best in hurling."

Now, at last, the fulfilment of that 23-year-old dream could be in sight. For on the first Sunday in September, 15 blue-and-white jerseyed hurlers will take the field against storied Tipperary with the McCarthy Cup as the alluring prize.

Dublin, chasing their first title in nearly a quarter of a century; Tipperary, straining at the leash to avenge last year's shock defeat by Wexford. Yes, that's the intriguing, crowd-pulling background against which this 1961 final will be fought out.

Only a few weeks ago you could have had long odds against a Tipp-Dublin final. But now that it has materialised, the stage is set for one of the most absorbing contests of recent years.

Consider their paths to the final,

In Munster, steely Tipp, fresh from their triumphant National League campaign, fairly swept through the challenges of Galway and Cork.



**MICHAEL MAHER**  
*Tipp full back*

In both cases, the margin was decisive. And yet, not even the most partisan Premier County fan would argue that either of those two displays was in the world-beating class.

Likewise Dublin. Despite two clear-cut wins over Westmeath and Wexford, the fans are still loath to hazard a guess at the true rating of this latest fifteen to come out of the capital.

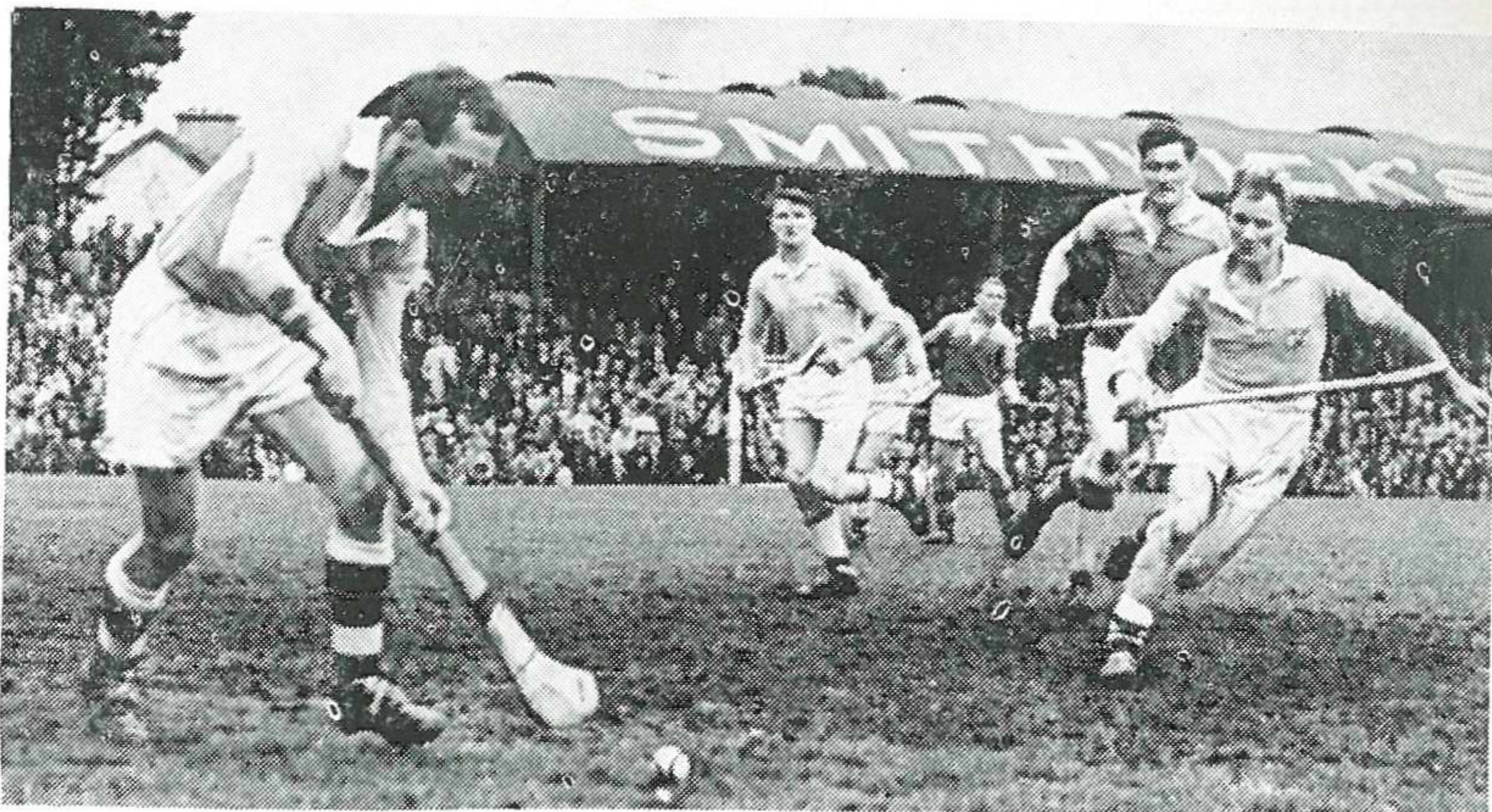
And they still aren't certain whether that goal deluge which sent Wexford hurtling from their pedestal, was a true reflection of the Metropolitans' worth, or just another 'flash in the pan.'

Taking the lion's share of the honours in the Dublin attack that day was full-forward Paddy Croke who, after playing in the No. 3 berth against Westmeath, celebrated his journey to the other end of the field by hitting three goals off Nick O'Donnell.

Now comes the acid test, however, for in full-back Michael Maher, Croke comes hip-to-hip with one of the toughest, hardest-pulling defenders in the game.

If the Young Ireland's man can come out on top in this vital duel, then Tipp could end up in big trouble. For this motley Dublin





*Dublin goalkeeper Jimmy Grey (left) in action against Wexford in the Leinster final. Also in picture: Liam Foley (D), Oliver McGrath (W), Andy Doyle (W), Des Ferguson (D). Grey, Foley and Ferguson are three of Dublin's key men in the final against Tipperary.*

attack—made up of five recognised backs and a goalkeeper—has the punch and drive to hammer home the decisive scores.

Army man Mick Bohan made a big success of the centre half-forward spot against Wexford and with Larry Shannon, Willie Jackson and the Boothman brothers, Bernie and Achill, all top-flight hurlers, the Munster champions' defence faces a tough afternoon.

Missing the services of ace centre half-back Tony Wall against Cork, the Tipp defence impressed as a solid, well-balanced outfit in which the daring hurling of Donal O'Brien, John Doyle, Matt Hassett and Keiran Carey tore the back out of the Cork resistance.

At mid-field I hand the palm to Dublin. Burly Des Foley, as devastating a hurler as he is a footballer, can master either Theo English or Liam Devaney and with stylist Fran Whelan to watch the 'breaks', the Metropolitanans can take control of

this important sector.

On my reckoning then, Tipp's forwards are booked for a pretty searching test, for, starved of a good mid-field service, they may have to go foraging for their scoring opportunities.

And even when they do get possession, they will have to move a good deal more lively than they did against Cork if they are to outwit the compact Metropolitan defence which bottled up the punch-packed Wexford attack in such competent fashion.

A lot depends on how the young St. Vincent's player, Shay Lynch, one of the most improved hurlers of the season, makes out in his vital clash with ace Tipperary score-getter, Jimmy Doyle.

If Lynch can pull over a "John Nolan act" on the deadly Thurles forward and Christy Hayes can curb the Donie Nealon menace, then Dublin will be half-way towards that coveted title.

The remainder of the Tipperary

attack were no more than moderate against Cork and Tom Ryan and the Moloughneys will need to step up the tempo of their game considerably if they are to cut any ice against men like Noel Drumgoole, Des Ferguson, Lar Foley and Christy Hayes.

Yet I think the vital battle will be waged at the other end of the field where the controversial Dublin attack hold the key to victory.

If they click with the same precision as they did against Wexford, Dublin will win the 1961 All-Ireland hurling title—by as much as ten points!

If they don't, Tipperary must be the choice to annex their 18th All-Ireland title.

Personally, I can't see the Metropolitanans going on another scoring spree against the tough-as-teak Tipp men. So prepare to see the bonfires blazing down Boherlahan way on Sunday, September 3!

## Down are poised for second title



**JIM McCARTAN**  
*Down 'dynamo'*

THE skirmishing is over. And out of the original 31 teams who set off on the long and thorny road to All-Ireland honours last May, the steely men of Down and Offaly have qualified for the final 'show-down' on September 24.

Ever since that epic semi-final tie last year in which a disputed penalty goal enabled Down to snatch a draw before going on to win the replay and the final, Offaly fans have thirsted for an opportunity to avenge themselves on the champs.

Now that chance has arrived and with the Sam Maguire Cup, itself, as the glittering prize, stand by for an hour of fast, furious, full-blooded football before the new kingpins of 1961 are made known.

Seldom has there been more worthy contestants for Gaelic football's greatest prize for in coming through their respective provinces, both Down and Offaly showed the mettle of which champions are made.

In Ulster Down took all that National League semi-finalists, Derry could offer and then came storming back for a brilliant win which sent them on to a provincial final date with a rapidly-improving Armagh fifteen.

This proved to be one of the

most spine-tingling battles of the season and while Armagh still claim that the ball was over the line before goalkeeper Eddie McKay scooped out Johnny McGeary's shot, in those last few gripping minutes of the game, there was no denying the splendour of the champions' football during that great second half resurgence.

Similarly Offaly. After "mopping up" Carlow in the opening round, they went on to shatter what many regarded as the best Kildare team in years, to the tune of 3-9 to 0-6 in the provincial semi-final.

Then came the formidable Dublin challenge. Still smarting from last year's defeat, the Metropolitans were hell-bent on glory at Port-

laoise but, like many another fine team over the past twelve months, they crumpled before this superbly-equipped Offaly side.

And so to the All-Ireland semi-finals. In lowering the famed Kerry colours, Down certainly looked the team of all the talents but no less impressive were Offaly in sweeping to a clear-cut 3-6 to 0-6 win over Roscommon.

Keystone of Offaly's success to date has been their magnificent defensive work which came within an ace of shattering Down's championship hopes last season.

And most of that brilliance has sprung from their big, muscular full-back line of Pat McCormack, Greg Hughes and Johnny Egan who, backed by the cat-like Willie Nolan in goal, have put the shackles on all-comers to date.

Further out, wing-halves Phil O'Reilly and Charlie Wrenn are neat, competent footballers and while Mickey Brady's lack of inches can sometimes be a handicap in the middle of the half-back line, his cool, calculated football has rescued the Midlanders from many an awkward spot in the past.

If there's one forward line capable of outwitting this rocklike combination, it's the Down sextet. So stand by for thrills when the ball moves into the Offaly half.

Wing forwards Paddy Doherty and Sean O'Neill can prise open the tightest defence with those lightning thrusts up the wings while further in, Tony Haddon and Brian Morgan are all that corner forwards should be—fast, elusive, deadly accurate on the loose ball.



**GREG HUGHES**  
*Offaly 'full'.*

for the coveted Sam Maguire Cup

# ... but watch these Offaly men fight!

But, most important of all, Down possess that human dynamo that is James McCartan. What a wonderful inspiration the lion-hearted Glens man is to any team!

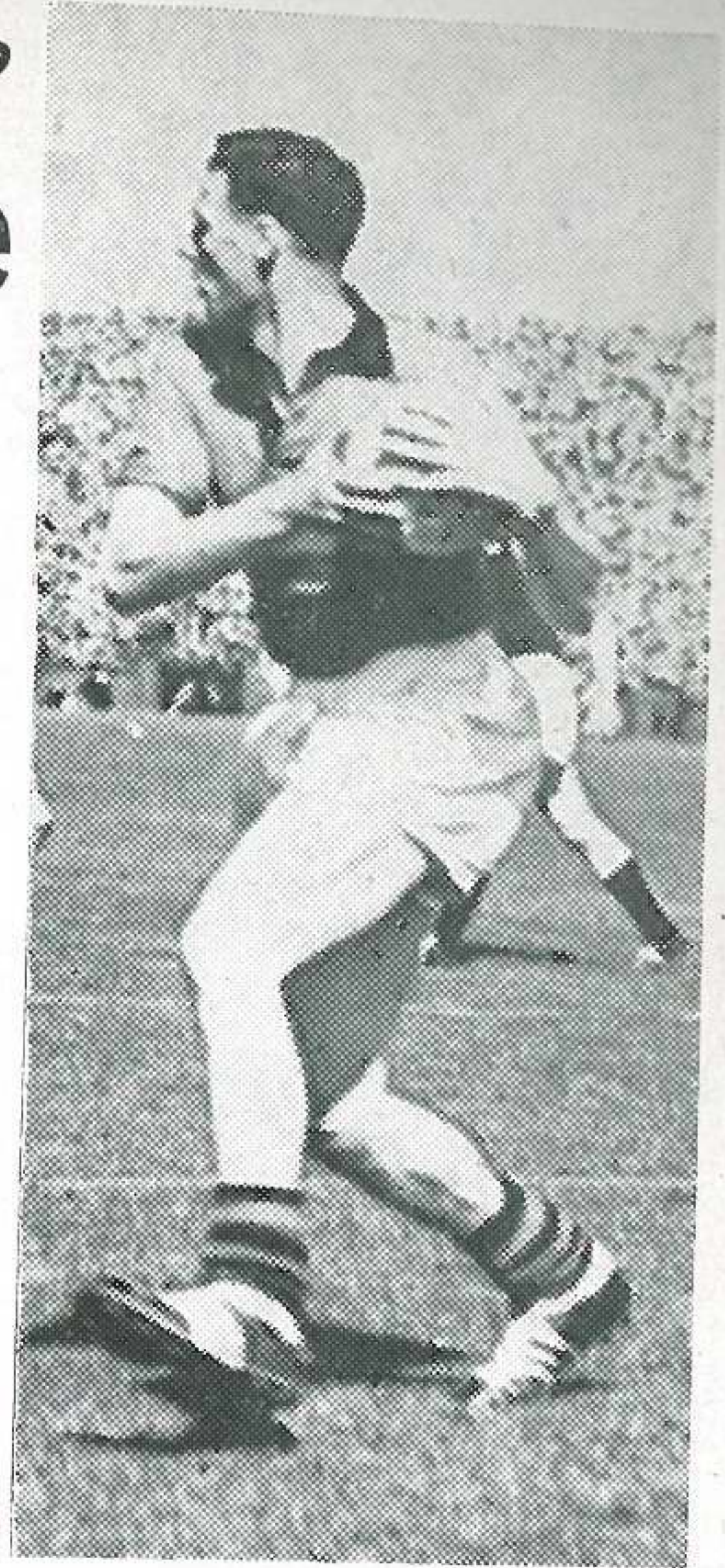
There shouldn't be much in it at mid-field where the high-fielding Ulster combination, Joe Lennon and Jarlath Carey, meet foemen worthy of their steel in the Offaly pair—Sean Brereton and Sean Ryan.

To centre half-back Dan McCartan falls one of the biggest tasks of the day when he lines out on fair-haired Donie O'Hanlon. If the Down man can succeed in curbing the O'Hanlon menace, then I feel George Lavery, Leo Murphy and big Pat Rice can take care of Har Donnelly, Mick Casey, Tommy Greene and Co.

This will be Offaly's first final appearance and taking a line through their form when pushing the All-Ireland champions all the way last year, this fighting-fit combination, trained to the ounce by Peter O'Reilly, will not succumb without a mighty fight.

Yet, I row in with Down. In beating Kerry in the semi-final, they struck me as one of the best teams of the last 20 years, with strength, skill and speed—the hallmarks of a truly brilliant combination.

Weigh in the deadly marksmanship of Paddy Doherty, the shrewd generalship of full-back Leo Murphy and the sheer driving force of James McCartan and it should all add up to another Down triumph in what promises to be a titanic struggle.



**PAT RICE**  
*stonewall back*

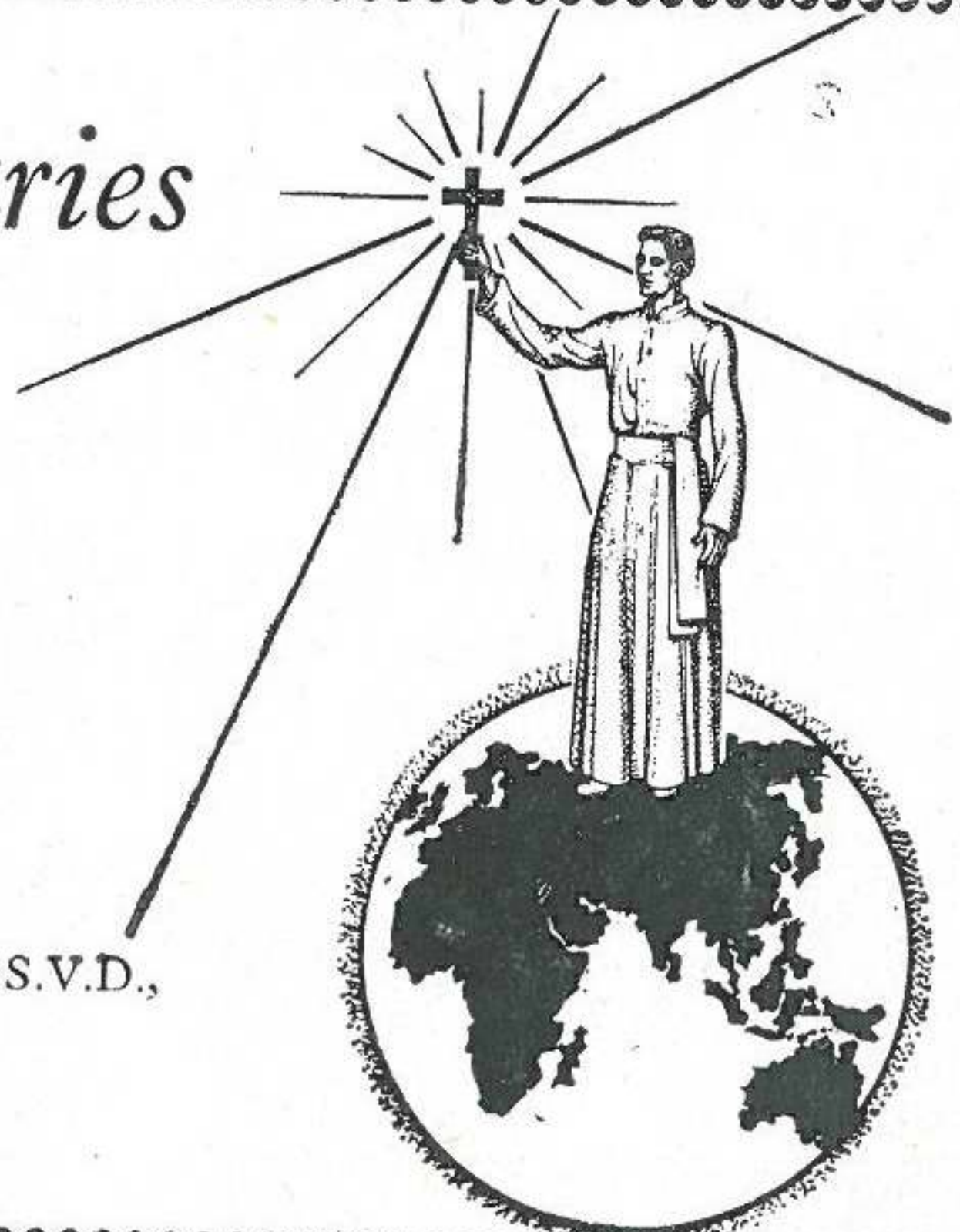
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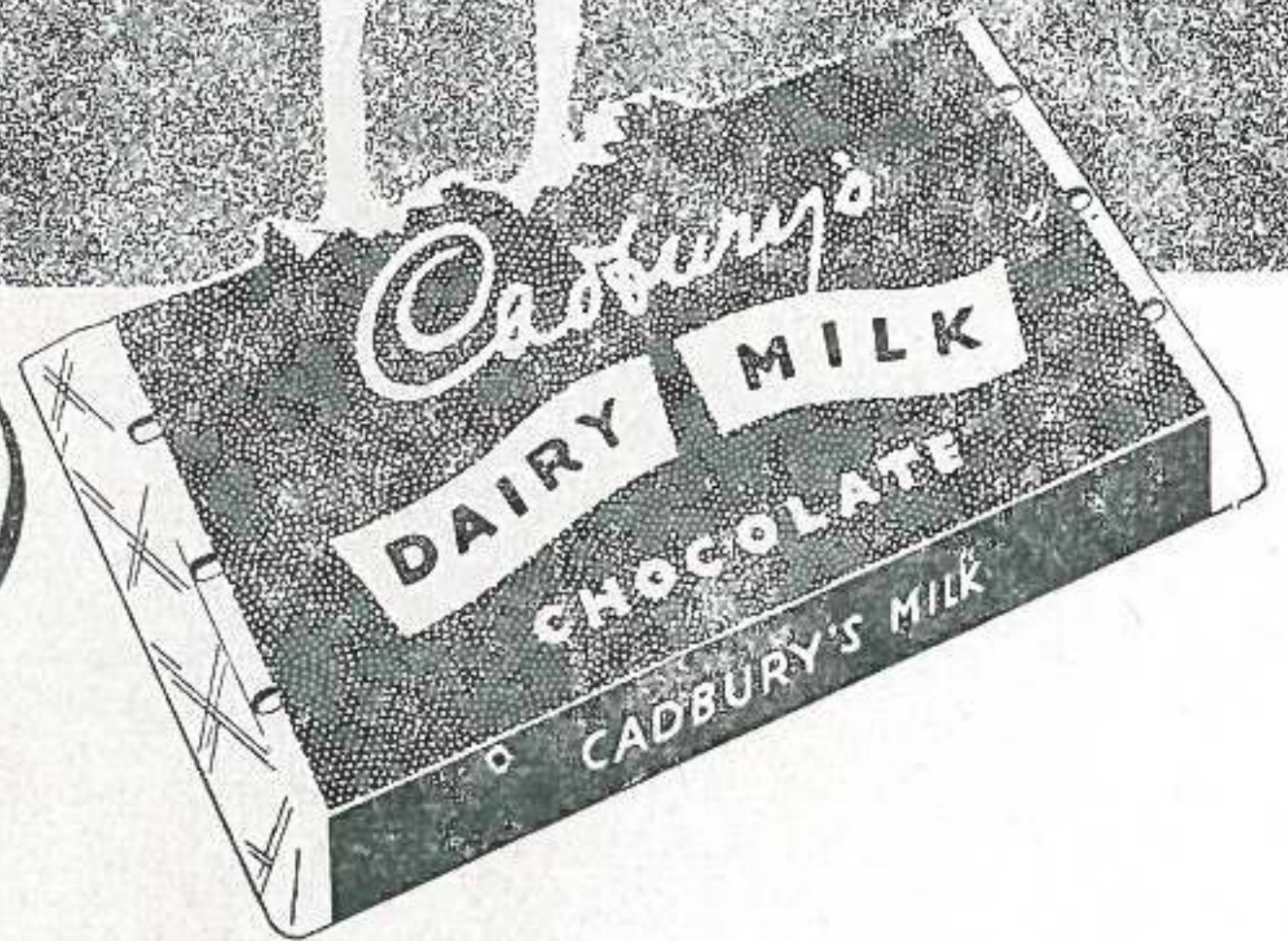
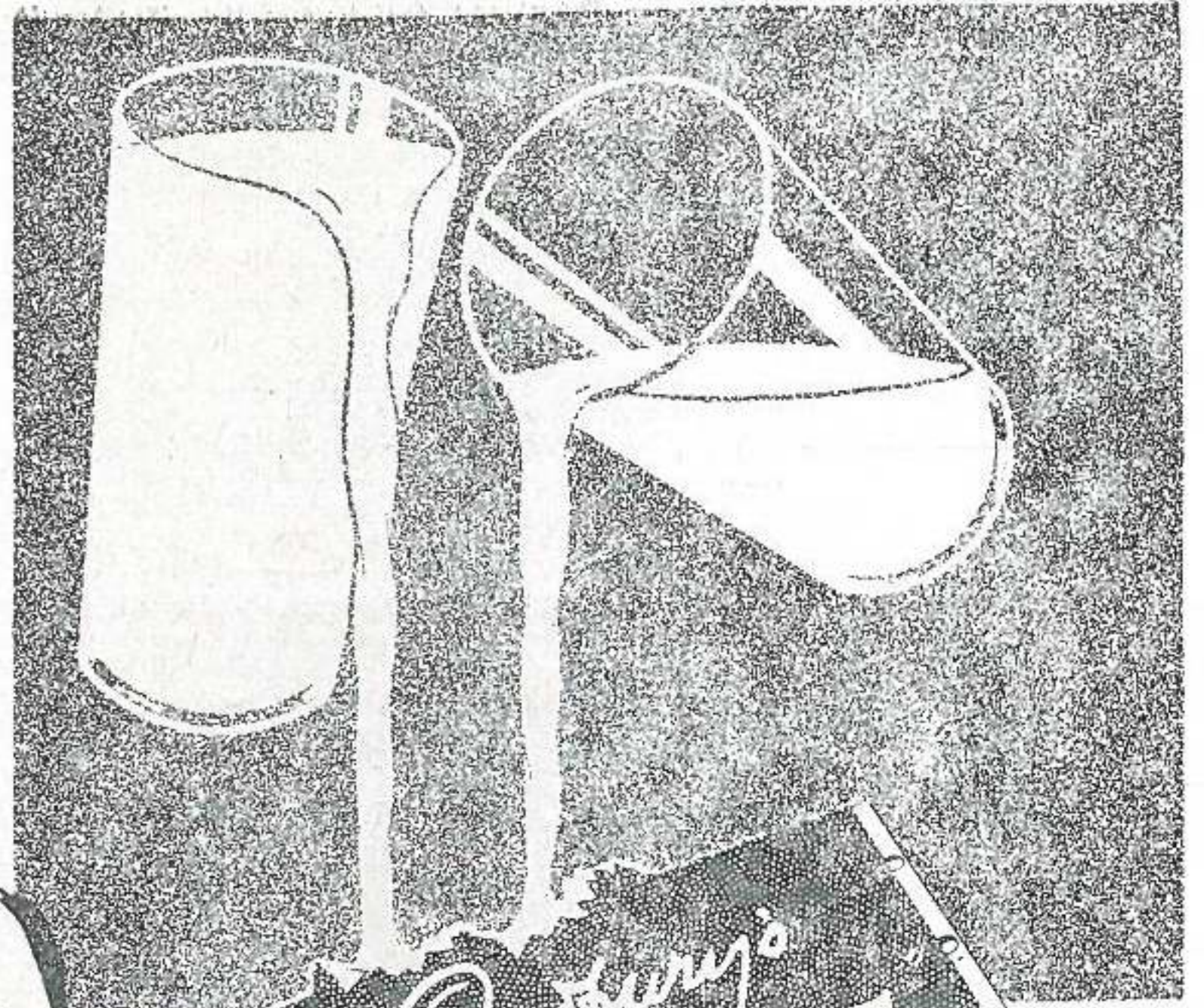
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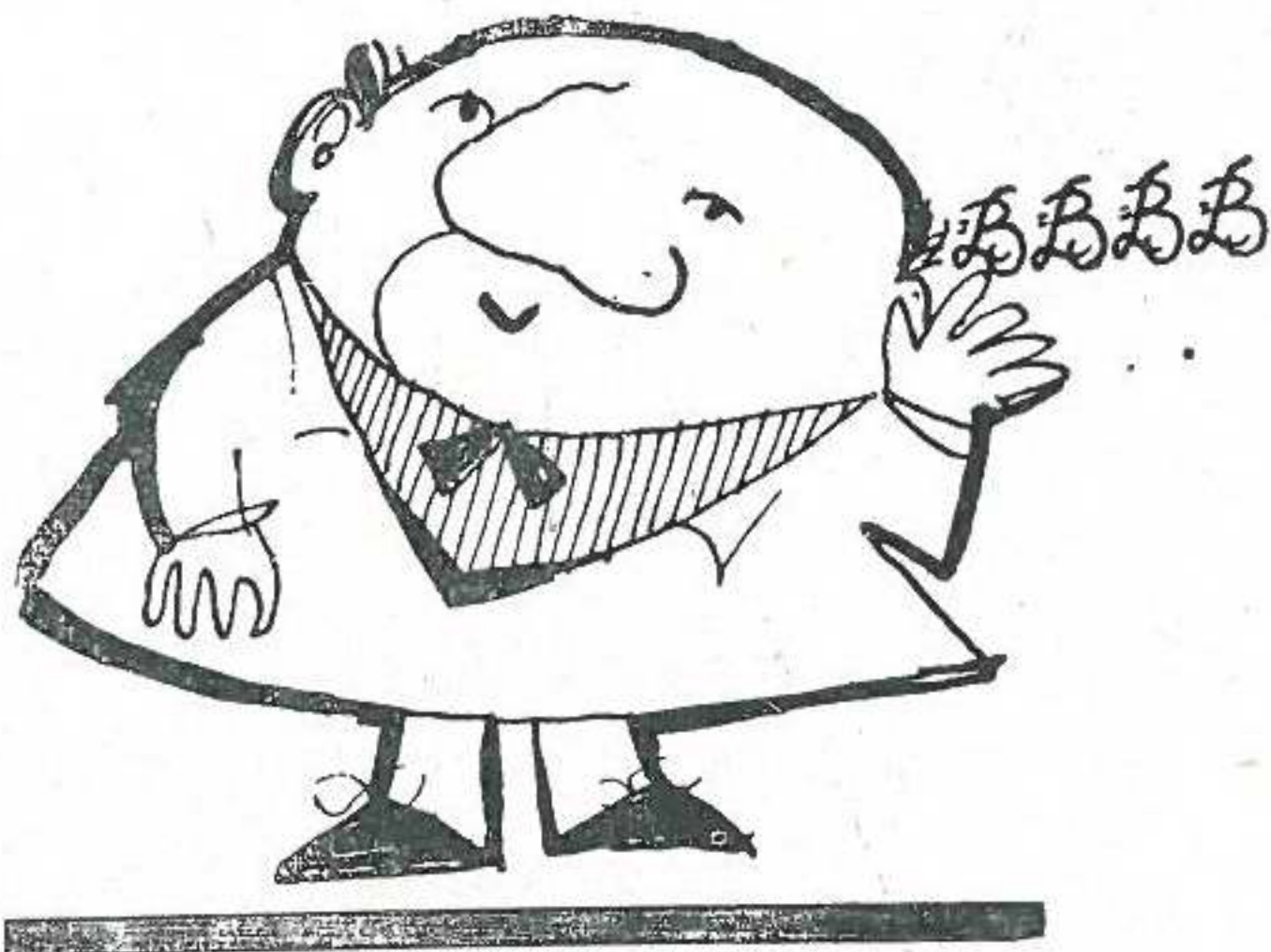


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# Mick O'Connell tops them all



A HIGH, swinging ball soared into the centre of the field. Underneath it stood a bunch of superbly-fit athletes, limbs straining, nerves twitching—each one poised for the catch that would earn an ear-splitting roar from the packed terraces.

As it dropped, five men took off in unison: five groping pairs of hands probed the skies.

But one man went higher than the rest. And as he came charging out of the ruck, ball in hand, a thunderous roar rent Croke Park . . . a roar of awe and admiration which broke in waves across the broad shoulders of Kerry's Mick O'Connell.

And as the burly Valentia man accelerated away from a spread-eagled Dublin defence, the thought flashed across my mind—was I watching Gaeldom's greatest-ever footballer?

Much water has flowed under the bridges since that epic 1959 All-Ireland semi-final on a sweltering August afternoon and many grounds throughout Ireland have since witnessed the majesty of the Kerryman's football.

But I now ask you the question that struck me two year's ago—is Mick O'Connell Ireland's greatest-ever Gaelic footballer?

Before answering, consider these facts:

O'Connell has earned from no less a critic than *Sunday Review* columnist, Paul Russell—he himself the holder of six All-Ireland medals—the tag of "best in the past 30 years."

By \_\_\_\_\_

MAURICE MAGUIRE

● Since hitting the front three years ago, the Valentia man has proved the driving force behind what many shrewd critics believe to be a very much under-rated Kerry team.

What is the secret behind the phenomenal success story of this quiet-spoken six-footer who, until two or three years ago, was practically unknown outside his own county?

To many people, the most important part of O'Connell's superb football make-up is his brilliant fielding of the dropping ball—crisp, clean, delightful to watch.

But there's more to it than that. Witness the produce of that keen football brain. Watch the long raking kick, the short jab, the fisted pass — all varied judiciously as the Valentia man schemes and generals the scores which still make Kerry the most feared name in Gaelic football.

And sportsmanship? Yes, even this very important department, the lissome Kerryman, although better fitted than most to "rough" it, is still "a man apart."

Two years ago Mick took one of the biggest "roastings" of his

career from Frank Evers of Galway in the 1959 All-Ireland final. But never once did he resort to unfair tactics to cancel out the Galway man's brilliant football.

Faults? Two of the most common levelled at the Kerry star are (a) that he is far too erratic and (b) that he doesn't fight hard enough for the ball when dispossessed.

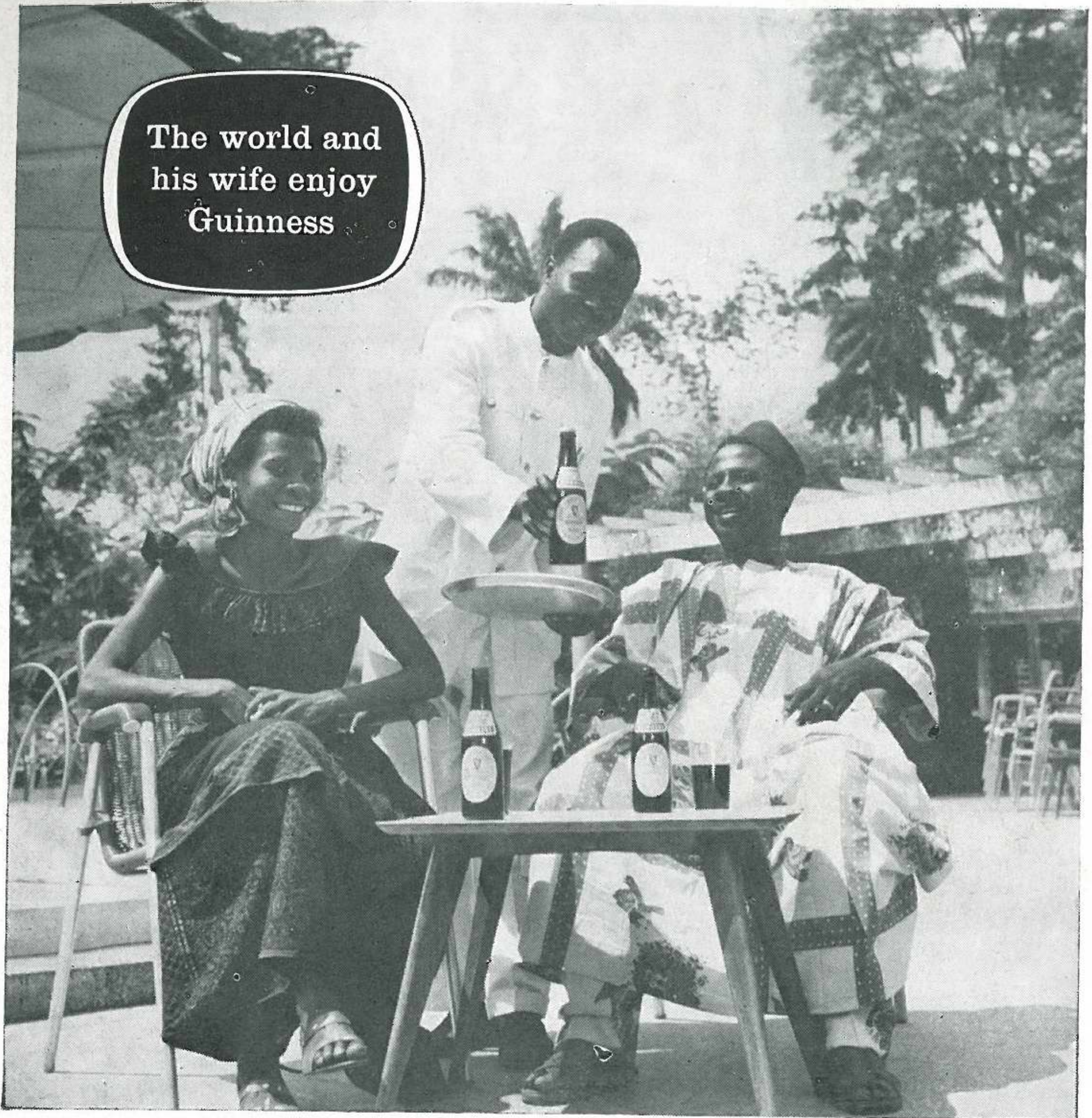
I go along part of the way on the first count. But then show me the man who is exempt from the occasional "stinker".

I disagree entirely on the second count, however, for I have never seen O'Connell throw in the sponge when there was a chance of winning possession.

On the contrary, I applaud him for his astuteness in refusing to chase forlorn chances which so often "burn out" the inexperienced footballer.

Yes, no matter how you look at it, this man O'Connell has something out of the ordinary. Craft, strength, courage, he packs the lot in what, for my money, ranks as the most complete football outfit of all time.

Long may he continue to adorn the Gaelic football arena!



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*Two young Nigerians take Guinness on the terrace of the Mogambo Club in Lagos.*



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In fact, Guinness is "quite the thing" in many parts of the world. At home here, naturally it is very much a part of the landscape. And any true Guinness man will insist that . . .

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# GERRY GLENN recalls the 1941 Hurling Final

## DUBLIN TOOK A DRUBBING

**H**EARTIEST congratulations to Dublin hurlers on their unexpected but fully deserved entry to the All-Ireland final. That never-to-be-forgotten Leinster final at Nowlan Park in July provided the greatest shock of the G.A.A. season. Indeed, it was on a par with that produced by Wexford themselves when winning the 1960 title. Needless to add, the Wexford team, like a great battleship, went down gallantly with all guns firing.

I cannot help recalling that twenty years ago to the month I lined out with Dublin in the All-Ireland Senior Hurling Final against Cork. 'Twas little I did in that game, indeed, besides lining out with them. Cork "bet us home" as the saying goes.

It may be of interest, however, to recall some of the facts, figures and personalities of those days twenty long years ago.

The German armies had invaded Russia in June 1941 and Hitler's Panzer divisions were deep in the heart of Russia as hurlers and footballers in Ireland were doing battle for All-Ireland honours.

Here at home it was the year of the foot- and -mouth epidemic which was particularly severe in certain counties. Tipperary and Kilkenny were two of the counties badly effected in this respect. As a result, Cork in Munster and Dublin in Leinster were nominated to represent their provinces. Subsequent to the All-Ireland final itself, the Munster and Leinster hurling finals were played.

Strange to relate, the 1941 All-Ireland champions, Cork, were beaten by Tipperary in the 1941 Munster final! Nevertheless, this was a great Cork team as is evidenced by the fact that they retained their title until 1945, when Tipperary took over.

Dublin, incidentally, went on to beat Kilkenny and capture the Leinster title later in the Autumn of 1941.

However, to get back to the 1941 All-Ireland Final and events leading up to it.

On Sunday, September 14, at Cork Athletic Grounds, Cork met the reigning All-Ireland champions, Limerick and hammered them to the tune of 8-10 to 2-3. Jack Lynch, Christy Ring, John Quirke, Jim Young and Alan Lotty figured prominently in this great victory.

Followers of the champions bemoaned the absence of the Mackey brothers, although it was generally agreed that even the great Mick Mackey himself could have done little to stem the advance of this brilliant young Cork combination. Paddy Scanlon, one of the greatest hurling goalkeepers of all time, was included in the Limerick line-out only at the last minute. A wrecked defence was mainly responsible for the eight goals scored against Paddy and otherwise it is recorded that he gave a magnificent exhibition.

On that same Sunday afternoon in Roscrea Dublin and Galway battled it out in the All-Ireland semi-final and after a dull sixty minutes Dublin had reached the

final on the score of 2-4 to Galway's 2-2.

In that game Dublin's future prospects received a set-back when the Faughs and Dublin full-back Mick Butler — a Kilkennyman — had his collar-bone broken. Another Kilkennyman, and a member of the Faughs team, Terry Leahy, figured on the Dublin team that day. Six years later, Leahy was the star of the Kilkenny team — he scored the winning point — which beat Cork in that great All-Ireland final of 1947.

So Cork and Dublin came to Croke Park on Sunday, September 28, 1941 each in quest of the blue riband of hurling. No matter how you looked at it, Cork were favourites. They had humbled the reigning champions and they were simply bursting with confidence and enthusiasm for the fray. Dublin, hit by injuries and replacements, were imbued more with hope than with confidence.

If I may venture a personal opinion, I believe that if anything we—at least some of us — were overtrained for that game. I know I was. I well remember a prominent member of the County Board who warned us during our training period not to overdo it. "You'll leave yourselves without the strength to hit a ball" he said: And he was right. We overdid the training—keen and anxious as we were to succeed.

The attendance at Croke Park that day was 26,150 — about a thousand short of the number who

(Continued on Page 15)

# PICK STITCHING

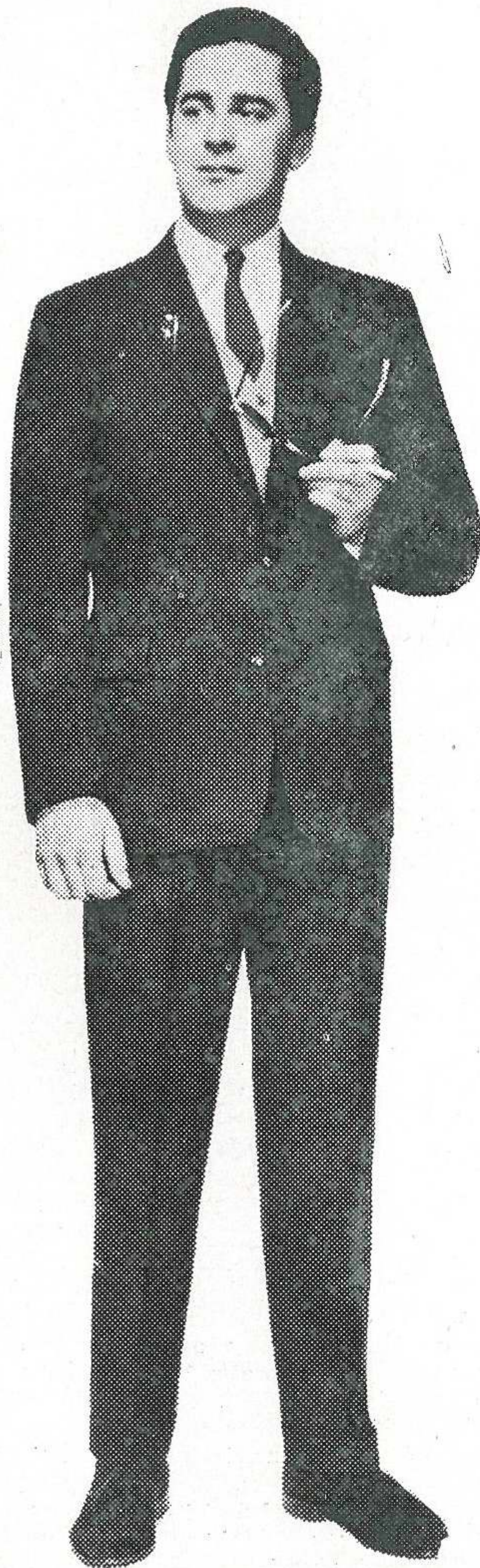
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Arrow



◆  
 Noel Drumgoole  
 (left, forefront) the  
 Dublin full back  
 tussles with  
 Tim Flood  
 (Wexford) in the  
 Leinster final.  
 Noel will again  
 figure at  
 full-back on the  
 Metropolitan  
 side which meets  
 Tipperary in the  
 All-Ireland final.  
 ◆



(Continued from Page 13)

saw the Leinster final in 1961. The "emergency", however, was on and there were no Sunday special trains in those days. The referee was W. O'Donnell of Tipperary. Referee of the minor game in which Cork beat Galway by 3-11 to 1-1, was none other than Dr. J. J. Stuart one day to become President of the Association.

The senior teams lined out as follows:

Cork: Jim Buttimer; Billy Murphy, Batt Thornhill, Alan Lotty; Bill Campbell, Con Cottrell, D. J. Buckley; Jack Barrett, Jack Lynch; Christy Ring, Con Buckley (Capt.), Jim Young; John Quirke, Ted Sullivan, Micka Brennan.

Dublin: Christy Forde; Dan Nicholl, Mick Connolly, Charlie McMahon; Mick Gill (junior), Phil

Farrell, Jim Byrne; Harry Grey, Frank White; Mossie O'Donnell, Ned Wade, G. Glenn; Eamonn O'Boyle, Pat McSweeney, Charlie Downes. Dave Conway came on as substitute in goal for Forde who retired injured near the end.

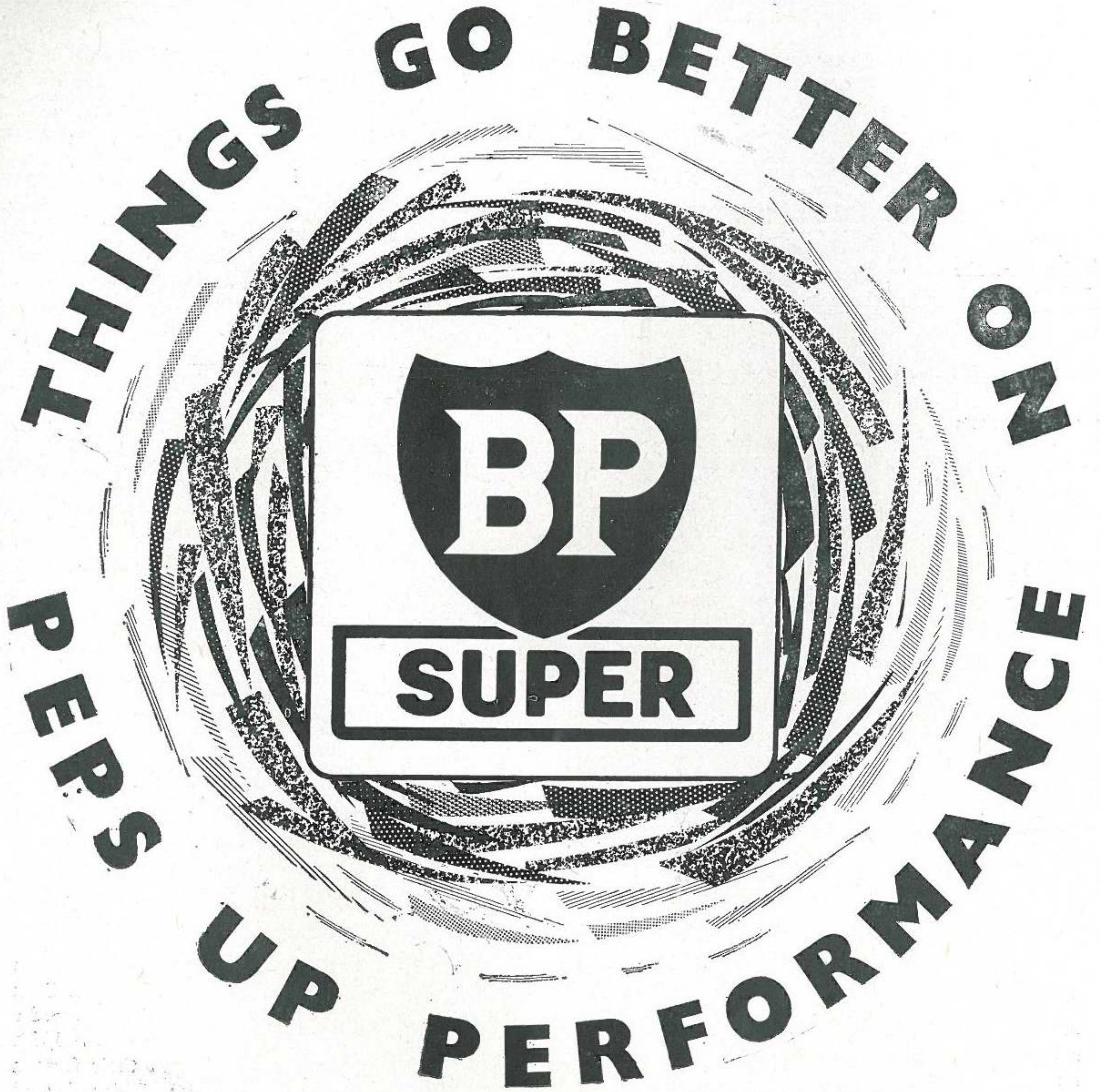
My abiding memory of this game—apart from the heavy defeat sustained—was the incident in the third minute when Bill Murphy pucked out the ball from the Canal goal. The ball landed about fourteen yards from the Dublin goal and in a flash John Quirke had it in the net. A few minutes later I got a pass from McSweeney. I was about ten yards from the Cork goal, but a Cork defender was behind me and afraid of being "hooked" I pulled quickly and took the point off an upright.

Unfortunately, it was the wrong

side of the upright! Young, Barrett (2); Ring (3), Sullivan and Lynch had points and Sullivan another goal for Cork while Wade, Grey and Downes each had a point to leave Cork ahead at half-time by 2-8 to 0-3.

The second half was mainly a battle between the Cork forwards and a gallant Dublin defence. Cork won 5-11 to 0-6, thus capturing the title for the first time since 1931. This was the first of their famous four-in-a-row series of victories.

This Dublin team of 1961 is young, keen, strong, superbly fit and secure in the knowledge that on their path to the final they have conquered the reigning champions. In my opinion they have more than an even chance of emulating Wexford's sensational success of last year.



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# INVINCIBLE JIM ENGLISH

By FRANK FOLEY

IT was the considered opinion of 2,775 hurling followers that Jim English of Wexford ranks as the greatest right half-back of all time. They said so in entries they submitted for the Gael-Linn competition to find the "greatest ever hurling team."

The team for which English was voted into the right-back spot was announced just a few days before the first of this year's Leinster hurling semi-finals. If the competition had been delayed until after that game I'm certain English would have polled a far greater number of votes.

For in an illustrious career of hurling greatness the display Jim English gave in that game against Kilkenny was surely his best. It was an exhibition of half-back play at its finest, it contributed greatly to Wexford's victory. English, stocky, wiry native of Rathnure, was in invincible form. During that great hour he was never beaten despite Kilkenny switches which put different opponents in against him.

He was imperturbable in his cool level-headedness; unshakeable in his urgent determination. Time out of number he broke the back in Kilkenny advances; with perfect control of the ball he cut down the wing and sent his own forwards away on attack with beautifully placed drives. Just as often this great-hearted, avaricious worker found time to cover off a colleague or nip in to save his side in places other than his own.

This of course was not the first of Jim English's memorable performances. He played just as

splendidly for Leinster and the Rest of Ireland earlier in the year and had an unforgettable hour that "made" his reputation in the 1954 All-Ireland final when marking Cork's famed and great Christy Ring.

It's hard to realise now that this outstanding half-back once played as a forward. It was in the attack that he first wore Wexford's purple and gold colours when chosen on the 1950 minor team.

In addition, Jim, also a footballer of no mean ability, won Wexford football championship medals with the Rathnure junior and senior teams and he helped the club record a Wexford junior and senior hurling double in 1950.

As far back as 1951 Jim was a substitute on the Wexford senior hurling team, but didn't become a regular member of the side until early 1954 and then played a major role in helping the county reach that year's All-Ireland final.

Two years later this former New Ross C.B.S. boy was first chosen for Leinster and several times since then he has worn the green jersey with distinction. He had the honour of captaining the Rest of Ireland team in 1957.

At one stage last year it seemed as if Jim had completely lost his form, but it was typical of this modest, but intensely determined young man that he drove himself strenuously throughout the weeks of championship training to recover his best form.

How well he succeeded was seen in Wexford's day of triumph when they beat Tipperary last September.

# THE OLD DAYS IN CROKE PARK

By TERENCE ROYNANE

ONCE again All-Ireland Final time has come around, and I find myself looking forward again, God willing, to the re-unions with the old friends that make up so much of the pleasure of a big Croke Park occasion.

Admittedly, since all the changes have taken place in the big field at Jones's Road, it is by no means as easy to find the old friends now as it used to be long ago when they all congregated, first at the corner of the old 'Long stand', and then on the cement steps in front of the old Hogan. But I am still able to find them when I have time to look for them, and then we trade yarns about the older friends who are gone, God rest them, and who will see Croke Park no more.

It seems but yesterday, though it is the best part of thirty years gone, when we used to stand in roughly the same positions that I have named and talk about old times, and there used to be men with us then who really knew what old times meant.

I often heard Dick Curtis, one of the old-time Dublin greats, trace back to the days of twenty-one aside and the famous battles in the early days at old Clonturk Park,

and how Dublin played Cavan in an All-Ireland semi-final on the opening game one Sunday, then watched while the All-Ireland hurling final was played and then went out and won the All-Ireland football final in the last match of a busy day. There were men in those days.

And always, when they would be talking about the great men of the past, the talk would surely veer to Jack Grace of the Kickhams, and sooner or later someone was bound to say 'There never was an all-round man like Jack Grace' and though the same Jack Grace had been gone far before my time, I heard so much about him that I can almost believe I saw him play.

One of the greatest arguments of all, about which those old-timers would argue for hours, was whether Grace or another idol of the old Dublin fans, the 'Cocker' Daly had hit the greatest kick on a ball ever drawn in Croke Park.

They used to say that Grace, playing for the Kickhams, and backed by a slight wind, kicked a point from eighty yards out off a free in a Dublin championship game.

While those who supported the

'Cocker' would point out in reply that Daly, for so many a year the star of the Parnells, once took a free about thirty yards out from the Railway goal and dead in front of the posts. He kicked that ball not only over the bar, but over the Railway Wall and over the Railway embankment, which must have nearly landed the leather out on the Clonliffe Road.

When I was a boy I saw the "Cocker" Daly play with two of his sons in Dublin senior games, and he was still a formidable opponent even then, though the old lads used to relate with great gusto that he had 'retired' some twelve or fifteen years before.

But even the Cocker's record paled before that of Billy Leonard from the Commercials, who was an All-Ireland hurler with Dublin in early years of this century, and who was still playing in goal for the same club more than thirty years later.

Though I wasn't born or little word of me when Billy began his inter-county career, not only did I hurl against him afterwards, but I had retired from the game before he did.

The Croke Park stewards were all great friends of ours in those old days, but, except for George Hughes and Tom Bourke, and John Rock, the man in charge of the ball for big games, there are not many of the old friends still surviving up there now.

We all used to say that we knew when a good match was going to turn into a great one if Rock wore the hard hat instead of the cap when he brought in the ball to the referee, and he still wears the "Bowler" an odd time now.

Sean O'Duffy, who for nearly forty years has been known to the most of Ireland as 'the camogie man,' is one of the oldest inhabitants in Croke Park nowadays and surely there has never been one more faithful. But the old-timers that tutored me at the foot of the Hogan remembered the Sean of more than fifty years ago, when he was the driving force behind the Crokes, a hard and earnest hurler and a noted referee.

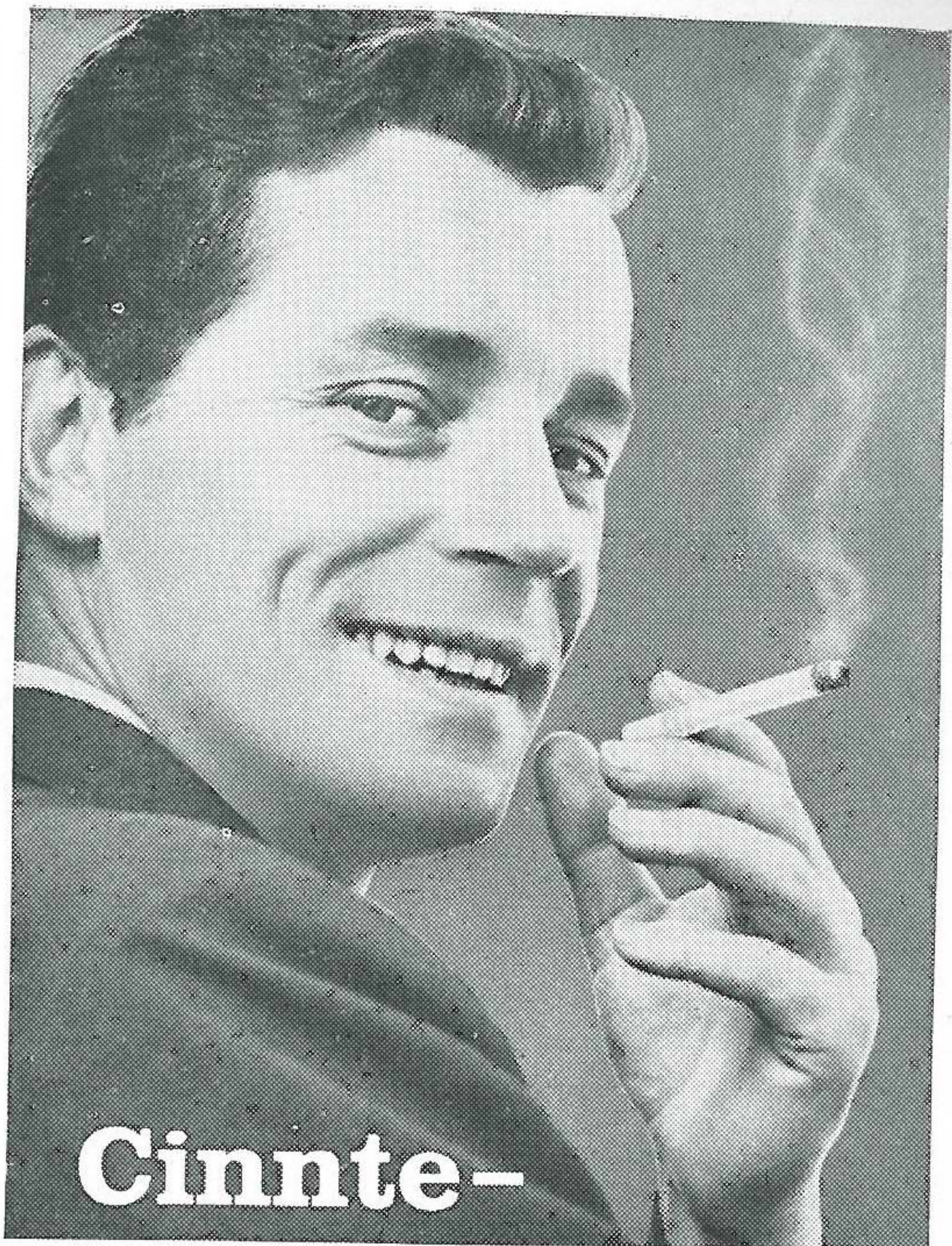
Crokes were the model Club of the Association half a century ago, hurlers, footballers, Gaelic Leaguers almost to a man, and the old-timers used to say that the whole Club marched out to fight together in 1916, though I suppose that was something of an exaggeration.

And though the Dublin hurlers were almost entirely drawn from country-born players, the same was never true of Dublin football-teams in the old days, when a fair proportion of the stars were always native products.

Dick Curtis and "Cocker" Daly were both Dublin men, as far as I know, and another man from the past whose name was always cropping up was Darby Errity from the Clondalkin Round Towers. Darby Errity, by all accounts was the hardiest bit of a man ever seen in Jones's Road always ready to take the rough with the smooth, and quite prepared to give back in kind whatever he got.

Another native Dubliner that my old friends used to talk a lot about

(Continued on Page 50)



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# From cabbage-patch to mammoth Stadium

By LIAM FOX

**CROKE PARK** . . . the mecca of hurling and football fans; the place of glory that inspires and prompts Irish youth; a place so much more than a sporting stadium that it can tug at the heartstrings of our scattered exiles . . . the same Croke Park that less than a century ago was still Butterley's cabbage-patch.

This month more than 150,000 people will pack themselves into Croke Park for the All-Ireland finals bringing colour and pageantry and showing up this national stadium for what it is: the greatest in the land and among the best equipped in Europe.

Croke Park stands a shining example to the wonderful progress and tremendous success of the Gaelic Athletic Association. And it is, too, an everlasting tribute to the men, many of them unsung, who made it all possible.

The Croke Park story really began in December 1829 when John Bradley was leased an "orchard, a dwellinghouse, yard and garden with fields adjoining" by the Rev. T. Browning and Venerable J. Torrens.

Came 1864 and by another deed the lands "on the south side of Clonliffe Road in the parish of St. George and county of Dublin"—21 acres, one rood, 12 perches—were leased to Maurice Butterley by a Mr. Robert Fowler

The lands mentioned in these deeds joined each other; on them today stands Croke Park.

The passage of time brought dwelling houses, shops, the construction of a railway and a canal on these lands and what remained was bought in 1894 by a company called the City and Suburban Racecourse and Amusements Grounds Ltd.

This new company let their grounds for athletic meetings, whippet racing, then popular in Dublin, and at times to the still-young Gaelic Athletic Association, which staged All-Ireland finals there for the first time in the spring of 1896.

After the property was put up for auction in 1906 it was acquired in December 1908 by Mr. Frank Dineen, an early president of the G.A.A. The grounds covered by his lease included the present Croke Park and the adjoining Belvedere College ground at the back of the present Cusack Stand, all in one plot.

In those days the G.A.A. was not as happy financially as it is today and Mr. Dineen's purpose was to hold the grounds for the G.A.A. until the Association could take them over. But in 1910 he had to reduce the debt due to the bank by selling some of the grounds to the Jesuit Fathers

(Continued on Page 23)

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*Des Harney (Armagh) fields a high ball during the Ulster football final against Down at Casement Park. Score: Down, 2-10; Armagh, 1-10.*

**(Continued from Page 21)**

for £1,090. This portion of the grounds became the present Belvedere sportsfield.

So financially successful were the inter-county hurling and football tournaments for the Croke Cups which the G.A.A. organised in 1913 that as well as erecting a monument in Thurles to the memory of Dr. Croke, the first patron, they were able to buy the Jones's Road grounds from Mr. Dineen and give them the name Croke Park.

From this sale Mr. Dineen, glad to have been able to hold the grounds for his Association, made no profit.

Then began the development of the grounds which continued until recent years.

The present Hill '16 grew out of the rubble

provided by the contractors clearing Dublin's O'Connell Street after the 1916 Rising and eight years later the Hogan Stand, named after Michael Hogan, a victim of British bullets on Bloody Sunday, 1920, was built for the revived Tailteann Games.

Throughout 1937 the Cusack Stand was built thus causing the Tipperary-Kilkenny hurling final of that year to be played in Killarney and it was officially opened in August 1938. The Canal end terracing was constructed in 1949 and three years later the Corner stand, since named the P. W. Nally Stand was opened.

At the end of 1957 the job of building the huge new Hogan Stand began and, completed before the scheduled time, it was opened in June 1959.

## ALL-IRELAND WINNERS

	Football	Hurling	Total
Cork	3	19	22
Dublin	16	6	22
Tipperary	4	17	21
Kerry	19	1	20
Kilkenny	—	14	14
Wexford	5	4	9
Limerick	2	6	8
Galway	4	1	5
Cavan	5	—	5
Kildare	4	—	4
Mayo	3	—	3
Louth	3	—	3
Waterford	—	2	2
Roscommon	2	—	2
Meath	2	—	2
Clare	—	1	1
London	—	1	1
Down	1	—	1

## Facts and figures

Compiled by SEAN FEELEY

**F**OLLOWING are some interesting facts and figures from the records of All-Ireland football and hurling finals:

### FOOTBALL :

The average score in a football final is 1-9 to 1-3.

Laois is the only county to fail to score in a football final. This happened in 1889 when Tipperary beat them 3-6 to 0-0.

The highest total score (both teams) in a football final was registered by Galway and Cork in 1956—Galway 2-13; Cork 3-7. Next highest was Cavan's 4-5 to Mayo's 4-4 in the 1948 final.

The lowest total score in a football final was seven points. There

were three occasions: Tipperary, 0-4 to Meath, 0-3, in 1895; Kerry, 0-5, to Dublin, 0-2, in 1904; Kerry, 0-4, to Dublin, 0-3, in 1924.

The most one-sided football final took place in 1911 when Cork beat Antrim, 6-6 to 1-2. This 6-6 still stands as the highest team score registered in a football final. The second place for these one-sided tallies is shared between the 1930 and 1936 finals: 1930—Kerry, 3-11, Monaghan, 0-2; 1936—Mayo, 4-11, Laois, 0-5.

Strange as it may seem Limerick have the most consistent record in All-Ireland football finals—they appeared in two finals and won both—a 100 per cent record.

### HURLING :

The average score in a hurling final is 4-7 to 1-6.

Two teams have failed to score in hurling finals—Galway in 1887 against Tipperary and London in 1902 against Cork.

The 1887 final also produced the lowest total score—Tipperary 1-1; Galway 0-0. The second lowest total was in 1901 when London beat Cork, 1-5 to 0-4.

The highest total score in a hurling final was registered in 1893 when Tipperary beat Kilkenny 7-13 to 3-10.

There was only one point scored in the 1914 hurling final—Clare, 5-1, to Laois's 1-0.

The highest team score for a hurling final was registered by Tipperary in 1896 when they beat Dublin, 8-14 to 0-4. This also was the most one-sided final. Second comes Cork's 5-20 to 2-0 win over Dublin in the 1894 final.

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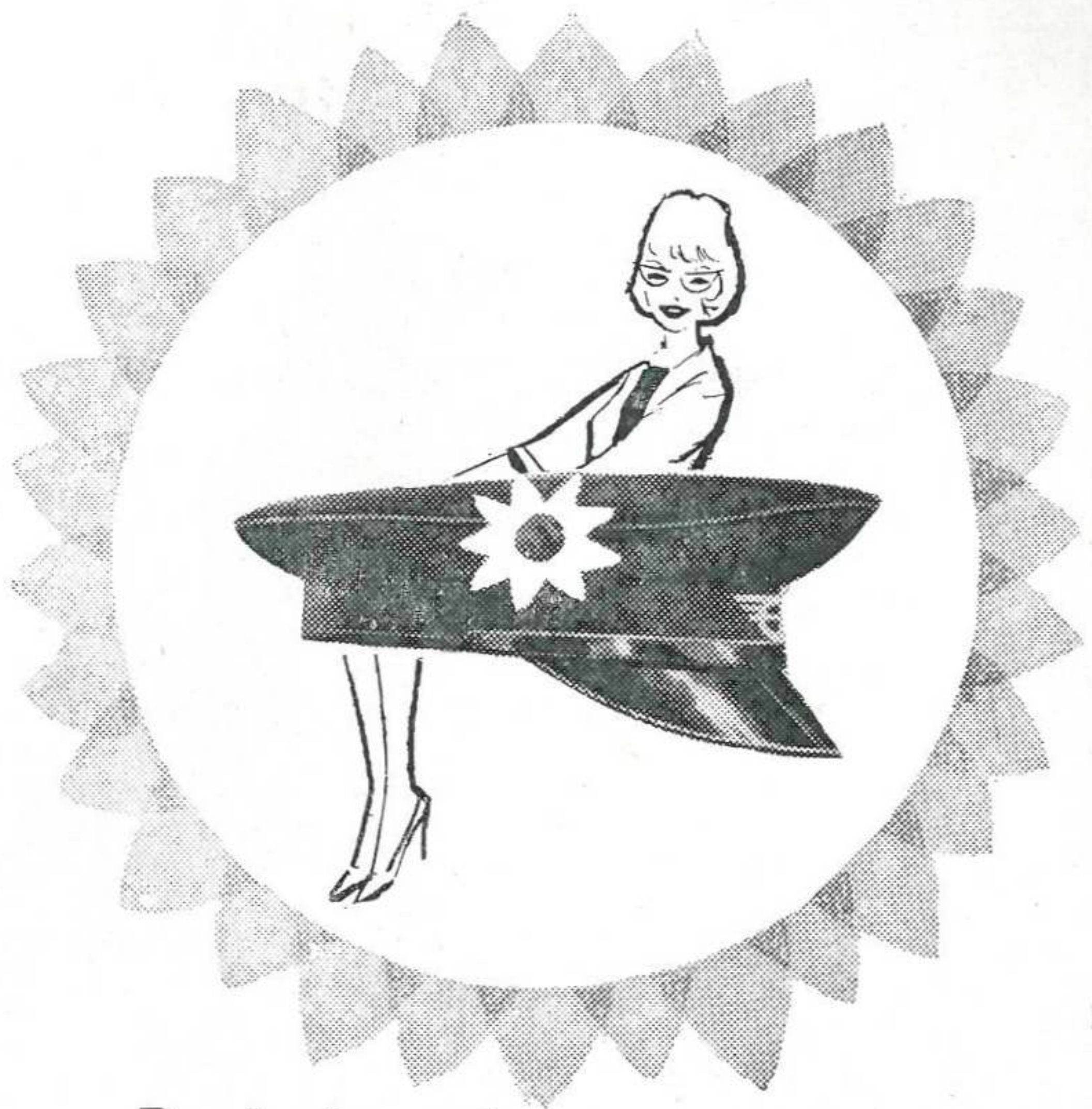
## FINALISTS

**I**N this table we give you total number of appearances in All-Ireland finals of the 23 counties who have reached the last stage.

	F'tball	H'ling	Total
Cork	12	30	42
Dublin	22	20	42
Kerry	29	1	30
Tipperary	5	23	28
K'kenney	—	28	28
Galway	10	9	19
Wexford	8	10	18
Limerick	2	10	12
Cavan	11	—	11
London	5	4	9
Kildare	8	—	8
Mayo	7	—	7
Meath	6	—	6
Louth	5	—	5
Laois	2	3	5
Waterf'd	1	4	5
Clare	1	3	4
Rosc'n	3	—	3
Antrim	2	1	3
Armagh	1	—	1
Mon'gh'n	1	—	1
Derry	1	—	1
Down	1	—	1



*Flashback to the League: Dublin forwards and Galway backs fight for a high ball in Ballinasloe (Feb. 5)*



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## A MUNSTER EPIC

IN the last issue of "Gaelic Sport" I promised to say something more about the Munster Hurling Final of 1926 as it appeared to me at the time.

As a fairly small boy I just didn't see anything at all of the first meeting that year between the All-Ireland and world champions Tipperary and Cork at Cork, for the simple reason that the over-flow crowd just moved in front of me, and that was that.

But I never gave my father, God rest him, peace or ease until he promised to bring me to the replay in Thurles. I think it was only a week after the first game that we set off for Thurles and lucky it was that we went early because I was never before or since awed by a crowd as I was by the thousands that gathered into the Thurles Sportsfield that day.

Everyone tells me ever since that the crowd was small enough by modern standards, and maybe it was, but just the same it scared the wits out of me despite all the competence and efficiency of Tom Semple and his hundreds of stewards, many of them with ash-plants.

Anyway we got safely to a good position on the side-line and this time, I'll warrant you, no one came between us and the play.

Through the first half I think the Tipperary men could hardly believe their eyes, because the men from the Lee had all the better of that half hour, showed scant respect for the reputation of their opponents and led, I think, by two goals at the half-time whistle.

Johnny Leahy must have done some pretty stiff

talking to his men during the interval, for they were a far more potent force on the restart. I can't remember the sequence of scoring now after thirty-five years, but Tipperary had a goal and a point, I think, while Cork had a point.

Then came another fierce Tipperary assault and before you could say 'trapstick' the ball was in the Cork net, and as I saw it, all Tipperary went mad. Staid, middle-aged men went leaping and flag-waving up and down the side-lines, ladies screamed in ecstasy and the Cork folk were suddenly as gloomy as they had previously been in such high glee.

But that was nothing to what was to come. Five minutes from time, or thereabouts, with scores still level and excitement at its highest, Mick D'Arcy took a Tipperary free and dropped it right to full-forward Martin Kennedy who promptly cracked home a goal that sent the Tipperary supporters into a frenzy of jubilation that made their previous demonstration look tame in comparison.

That should have meant the end by any book of words, but these Corkmen of 1926 just would not take no for an answer.

The Tipp exultation had barely subsided when away came the Cork boys, and in a trice the ball was in the Tipperary net.

And then the other half of the field went mad and anyone who thinks that Corkmen can't shout as loudly as Tipperary men should have been in Thurles that day.

(Continued overleaf)

(Continued from Page 27)

I never saw excitement like it before or after, and I have seen a lot of excitement since then.

Anyway, a minute or so afterwards referee Dinny Lanigan of Limerick blew the full-time whistle, and for the next fortnight there was no other topic of conversation throughout the South than the third meeting of the two sides.

Both teams made changes, all of which I cannot remember now. The Corkmen brought on Phil Sullivan and one of the Ahearnes for Matt Murphy and 'Major' Kennedy while Tipperary certainly brought on John Joe Callanan and Arthur O'Donnell and I think there was one further change, perhaps it was Jack Gleeson from Borrisokane.

I can't recall who they left off, but I don't recollect Jack D'Arcy playing in the third game and I feel one of the Boherlahan Powers was also missing.

Anyway, the crowds that gathered in Thurles for the second game were nothing to what came in for the third. His Grace Dr. Harty, then Arch-

bishop of Cashel and Patron of the Association, threw in the ball, and all Munster and half of Leinster seemed to be on hand when the game began.

Now as I say, I was very young at the time, but the impression left on me from the start of that third match was that there was a change in Tipperary's approach to the game. The All-Ireland champions seemed to have abandoned the idea of trying to out-hurl the Corkmen, and decided to rely instead on strength and dash to carry the day. And in that they backed the wrong horse, for, in their anxiety to subdue the opposition they left the ball-playing to the Corkmen, who were not at all ruffled by robust tactics. In fact, it was the Tipperary men who became ruffled and one of their players was sent to the line midway through the first half by referee Dinny Lanigan.

From that to the end Cork held the whip-hand, though Tipperary settled down to hurl after that disaster, and though always fighting a rearguard action fought a particularly valiant one.

There was only a goal in it at half-time, but as

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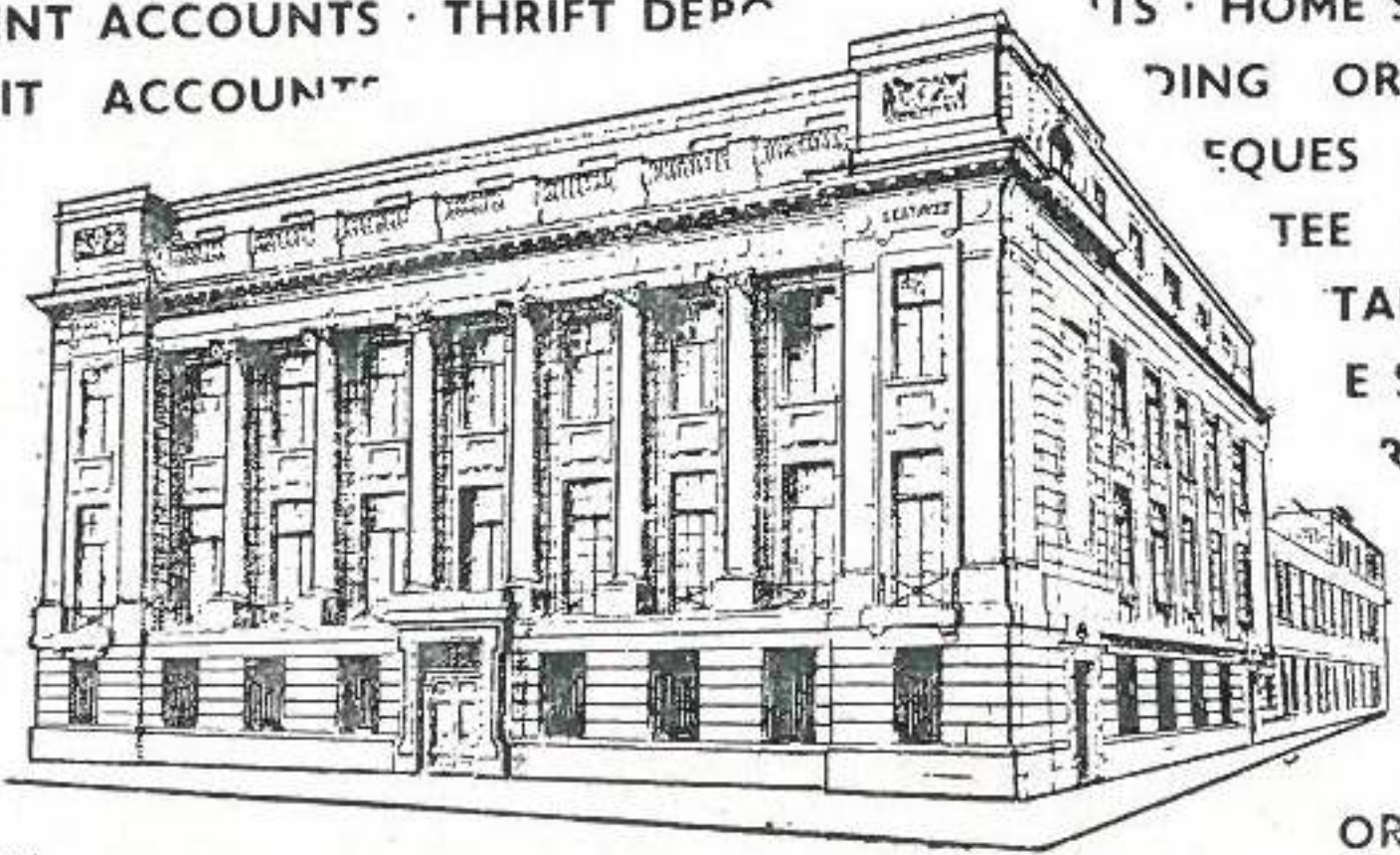


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the second half wore on it was obvious that the youth, speed and stamina of the Corkmen could not be denied.

When the last whistle blew Cork were victors by 3-6 to 2-4 and Captain Johnny Leahy and his great Boherlahan selection had bowed themselves out at last, after more than a decade of hurling glory.

But for Cork it was the start of a glorious run for they not only scored a ready victory over Kilkenny in the subsequent All-Ireland final, but went on to take the title four times in the next six years.

I have seen many a Munster Final since, but never have I seen a Southern title arouse interest as great as that aroused by those memorable clashes between Cork and Tipperary in 1926.

For the sake of those interested here are the teams that played on the third and final day.

**CORK:**—Sean Og Murphy (captain), J. ('Ballyhea') Coughlan (goal), Eugene Coughlan, Jim Hurley, E. ('Marie') O'Connell, Mick Murphy, Paddy ('Balty') Ahearne, Phil O'Sullivan, Mick ('Gah') Ahearne (Blackrock); Dr. J. Kearney (St. Finbarrs); W. Higgins, Maurice Murphy, D. Ahearne (Collins); Dinny Barry Murphy (Cloughdubh); Jim Regan (Kinsale).

**TIPPERARY:** Johnny Leahy (captain), Micky Leahy, Paddy Leahy, Paddy Dwyer, Arthur O'Donnell (Boherlahan); Martin Kennedy, Pat Collison, Stephen Hackett (Toomevara); Steve Kenny, Martin Kennedy (Cloughjordan); Mick D'Arcy (Nenagh); Jack Gleeson (Borrisokane); J. J. Callanan (Thurles); Phil Cahill (Holycross); Martin Mockler (Moycarkey).



*Kildare backs (white) outjump an Offaly forward in the Leinster football semi-final. Offaly won, 3-9 to 0-6.*

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# WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO HIT

**W**HAT are the ingredients which go to make an All-Ireland winning combination? This is a question which is often debated and the views expressed are not always unanimously held.

Over the years we have seen teams with varying degrees of football ability win titles; we have seen sides which were totally unfancied at the beginning of a championship campaign come through against all the odds to con-

found the critics and win our highest honours.

Equally, sides which appeared to have all the necessary talents to triumph went down before an awkward but fit and enthusiastic combination that on paper, at least, had no chance.

So that undoubtedly special qualities are needed to persevere to the end and win the Sam Maguire or McCarthy Cups.

What are these qualities? For

a start, a team needs luck. This is one of the most important factors, without it even a very good side won't go far.

How many times have we seen a perfectly directed shot hit an upright or the cross-bar or a mis-kick or puck trickling past an astonished defence.

Or taking it from another angle, how often does a referee's or umpire's mistake make all the difference between victory or defeat? Indeed it can be said that human errors play too much of a part in the destiny of titles.

In my experience I have seen teams denied the fruits of victory by a referee playing over time. On one occasion this amounted to no less than nine minutes—and the winners of that game—Meath—went on to take an All-Ireland senior football title.

However, all these human factors can be summed up in one word **LUCK**.

Allowing that a team starts off well endowed with good fortune what other qualities must be present?

They must have the **will to win** from the moment they step out in the first round of their provincial championship. This is of the utmost importance because if players' minds are not fixed on victory, they will surely crack up when they encounter heavy pressure.

It is this quality which has stood so much to Kerry's credit in the

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past. Even moderate teams from the Kingdom have often won highest honours because of their refusal to admit defeat until the final whistle. Many attribute this spirited approach to the Dr. Eamonn O'Sullivan "technique" and with great truth too!

What about the Croke Park nerves? These only affect lesser counties who come into the lime-light suddenly.

For the bigger powers in hurling and football, Croke Park has no terrors. Undoubtedly, individual team members will have butterflies in their stomachs before a big game but I have spoken to many of them and they are fairly unanimous in declaring that once they have had the first kick or puck they forget their nerves.

The county that overcame the nervous tendency most successfully in recent times was Offaly. After being humiliated in a National League semi-final by Kerry, the Midlanders came back in dynamic style not so long afterwards to hold the mighty men from Down to a draw, although being beaten in the replay.

Balance is another important feature. A combination of five fairly seasoned players with ten younger men is usually the ideal set-up. The proportion is often varied, where a county is endowed with talented veterans or near veterans.

(Continued on Page 60)



*John Nolan, Carlow's goalkeeper, saves this shot although hard pressed by an Offaly attacker in the Leinster senior championship at Droichead Nua on June 11. Score: Offaly, 0-17; Carlow, 2-6.*

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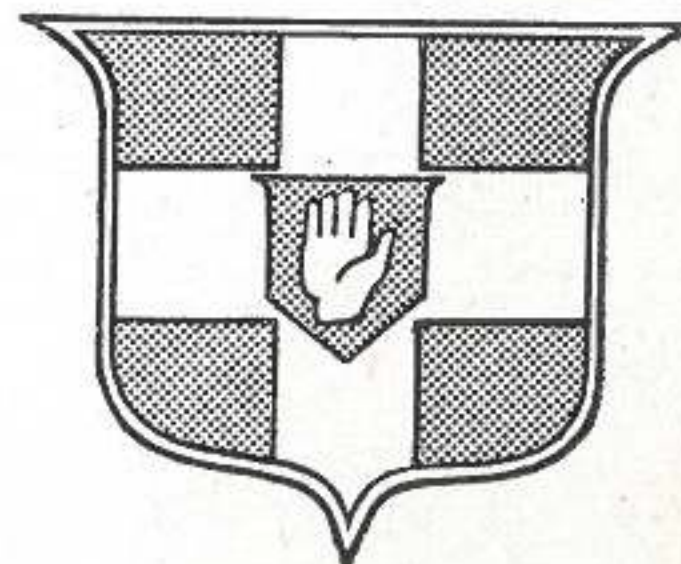
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# TOPICAL TALK

By **EAMONN YOUNG**

I MET him running along the beach, clad only in swimming-togs, the water silver at his feet against the gold of the sand under the sunshine. Enjoying his holiday and getting active man's pleasure from the exercise he had been taking regularly for twenty-five years. He gave me a new angle on games. Hardy as a flail and mad about football, his junior team wanted him to keep playing. But it looked as if he would have to retire, for in the event of injury the club would have to make up his wages of fourteen pounds a week to feed the family. And that would break them.

He didn't play golf or tennis, and didn't wish to. Have we no sensible recreation to which this type will turn when the playing days are over? Too many players I've seen through lack of suitable games and sedentary jobs become old men in five years.

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An ex-county player tells me that if the games, both codes, were cleaned up inside the twenty-one yard line they would be great. His solution is to outlaw the fouling, cute and otherwise, which goes on between the three full forwards and their men.

The way to do it is award more

penalties, by making a spot-kick the risk every back takes when fouling within the area extending fifteen yards on either side of the goal and out to the twenty-one. This would certainly be the end of the all-in wrestling I've seen in Ballyhob, Taghmon, Croke Park and places east.

◇ ◇ ◇

The consistent fitness of Christy Ring is the cause of amazement to many. In fact, for the last ten years I have been hearing them say that he was great for his age and dozens of times we have been told that the great hurler from Cloyne was finished.

It must be seven years ago since, after a quiet game at Croke Park, a Dublin friend told me they were renaming the pitch Ringsend.

But Christy's fitness is not in itself remarkable. It's not so long since slight Sugar Ray Robinson nearing his fortieth year, fought fortyfive minutes in baking heat against a man a stone and a half heavier. Archie Moore is able to reduce by two stone and outclass opponents twenty years younger. Stanley Matthews, nearer fifty than forty still dances on twinkling feet and I knew a frail man of forty-five named Sam Milner who won a 26 mile foot race along a metalled road.

If the body is healthy a high standard of fitness can be maintained if the athlete is prepared to endure a spartan existence over the greater portion of the year. What matters is the man's mental approach and if he doesn't think it worth the candle, or has to concentrate on other matters in life, then, obviously he will not be fit.

Fitness is easily won if one has the guts to do so. What all the great artists have in addition is a dedication to their art as well as great playing ability. Why doesn't the strong, fit sprinter who can puck a ball one hundred yards become a great centre-fielder? Because his physical qualities are only the admission fee to games. What of positional play, sense of anticipation, steadiness under pressure, concentration on the precise hitting of the ball?

When Joe Louis was finishing up he said "I don't see so fast no more."

Men like Christy Ring see that ball coming a shade faster than you or me. Normal speed, good ball-control, strength, and a determination to win do the rest.

Last year, after a fair game by the maestro in the Tipp match I told him that we expected five more years of good hurling from him. If his robust health lasts, and his fervour remains unabated I see no

reason why he won't fulfil the expectation, though I would like to see him lighter by seven pounds.



I wasn't able to see the two games mentioned so I can't answer a Dublin friend's inquiry about Kevin Heffernan. The Vincent's stylist, up to lately the most dangerous corner-forward in the country, got no score in the Dublin final which his team won over Air Corps. Shortly after, his only contribution to the four goals and fourteen points Dublin had against Meath in the championship was a goal and that when the city side was well on top towards the end.

Yes, Kevin may be finished. On the other hand, the public are oblivious to and often unreasonable about the many things—illness, professional or domestic upsets—which we all suffer. These things reduce one's enthusiasm for the games and there's nothing will lower a man's game faster than a lack of enthusiasm.

Don't be surprised if an intelligent man like Heffernan has not already searched for the reason that scores are not coming his way and made up his mind about the solution.



I was speaking the other day to the two Limerick hurlers, Jack and Jim Quaid, identical twins whom I still cannot recognise apart. These hardy, fair-haired fellows are true Limerick hurlers, sons of men of the open air who hurl with strength of sinew and toughness of mind without which a player is only a straw in the wind. They had played very hard and in vain against Waterford but even then had no great opinion of their opponents. Events and a bunch of hardy fellows in red jerseys proved them so right not long after.



If I were a Waterford hurling follower the disappointment would be intense, for this very good team

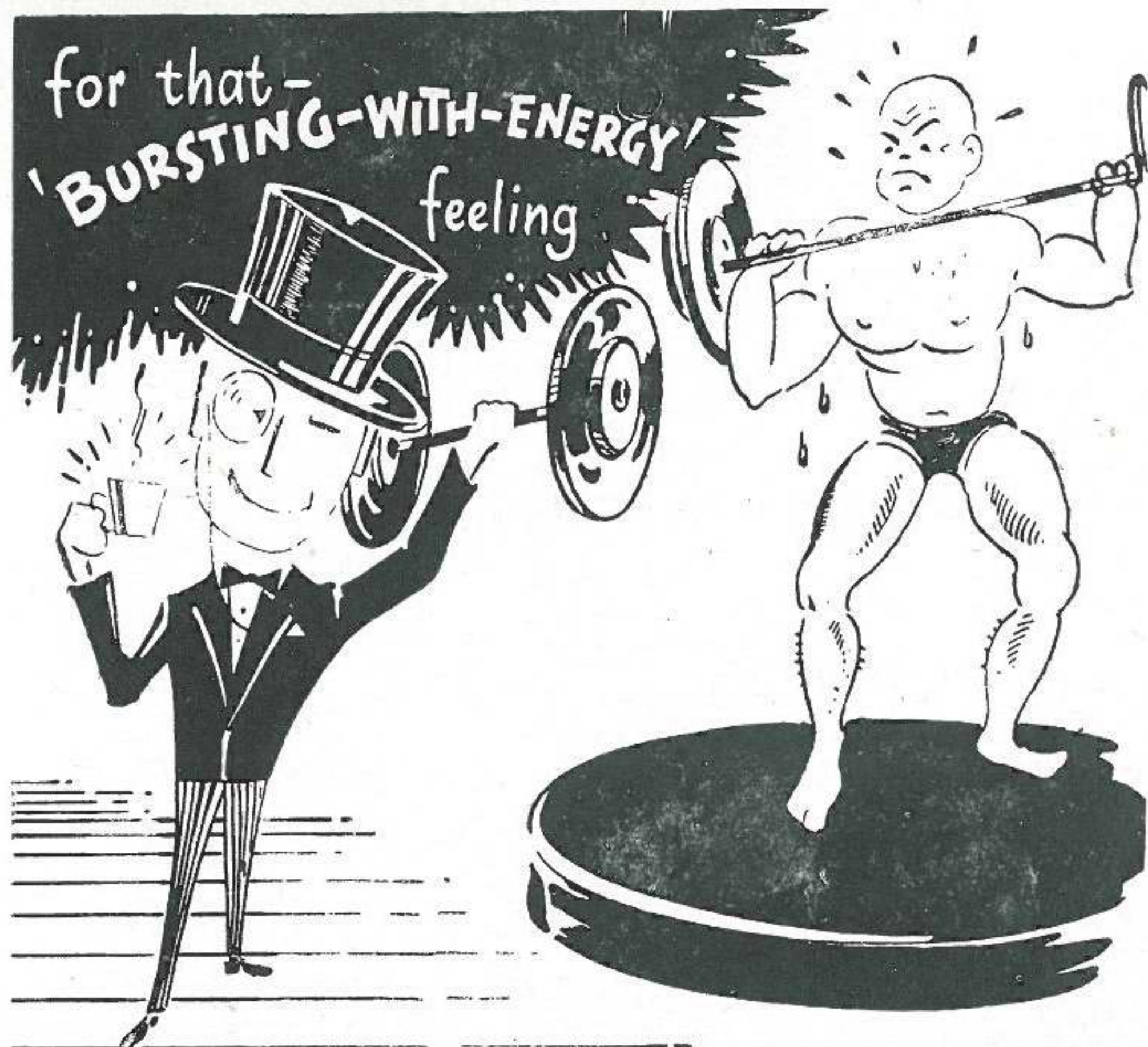
has been near enough to the front over the last four years to have won far more than they did. What's the reason? Some hard old-timers of the Munster hurling arena say that Waterford men die easily. Agreed; so do Corkmen, Kerrymen, Claremen—some of them, and I don't accept the explanation. I didn't have the privilege of playing hurling against them but there's an odd creaking joint which still brings to me a picture of hardy young Waterford footballers in almost white jerseys, whose tanned,

hairy arms and sharp elbows loosened the nuts and bolts of my vertebrae.

No, to me that Waterford team that went under to Cork has many fine strong and determined hurlers. Agreed that a lack of steadiness in a few important places has caused unexpected reverses, and these lead to a panic which comes to all teams that have not won enough. In addition, many of them looked listless in the Cork game and having had the same experience myself it

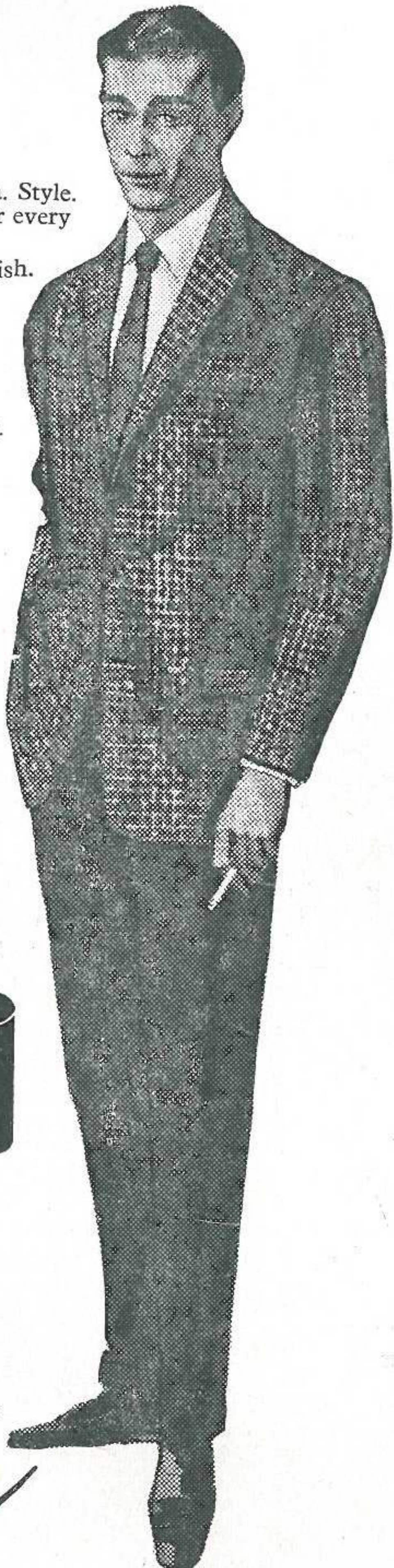
(Continued on Page 37)

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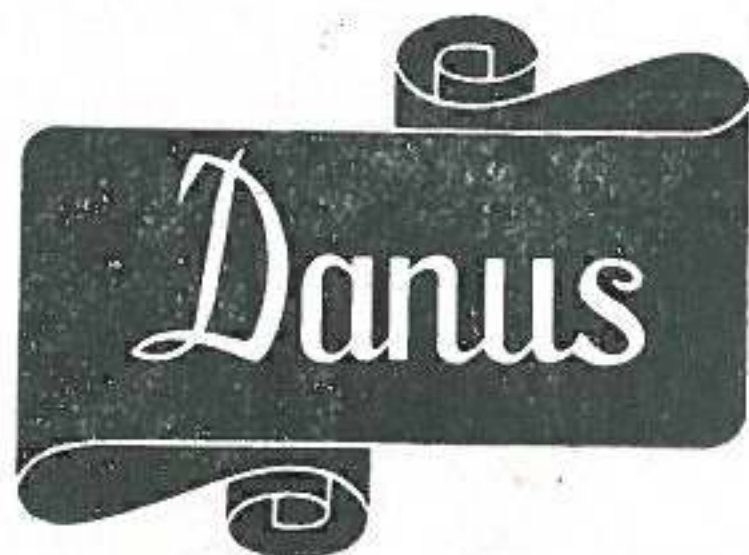
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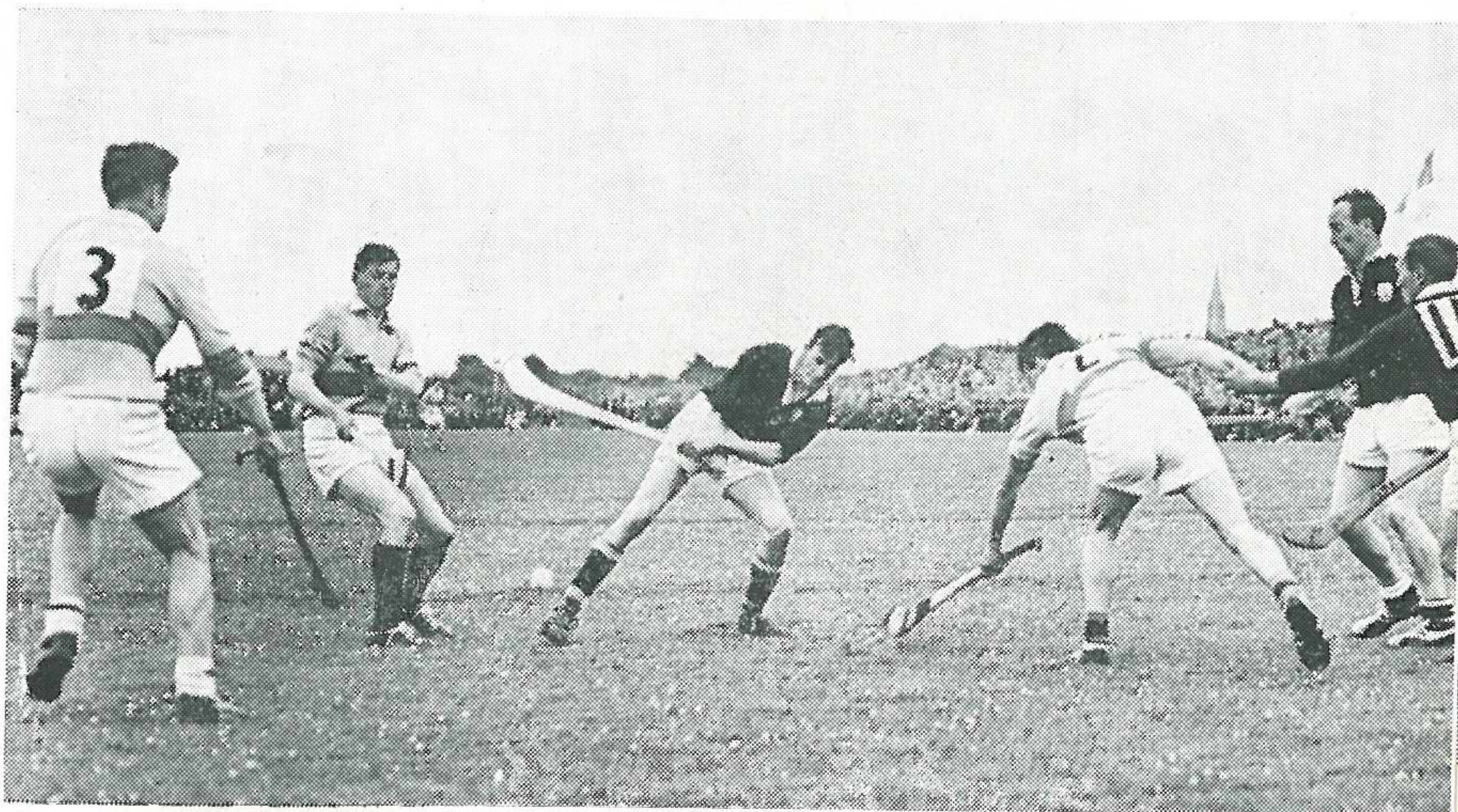
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*A Galway forward shoots for goal during the Munster championship game against Clare at Nenagh on May 28. Score: Galway, 2-13; Clare, 0-7.*

**(Continued from page 35)**

seems that some of these hard-training Waterford men may have gone over the top and become tired.

The man who said "if you can meet with triumph and disaster, and treat those two imposters just the same" was not a hurler, but surely he was on the ball. I hope that Waterford can, and here's to their next All-Ireland.

◇ ◇ ◇

I have always, since my school-days in New Ross, been a fan of Wexford's and so hailed the rise of the hurlers in the early fifties especially when their footballers failed in the mid-forties. Incidentally that football team of Paddy Kehoe, Nick Rackard, Jim Coady, Sam Thorpe and the rest was good enough to win an All-Ireland but failed to set the teeth in and go all the way. Their worth was obscured, naturally, by the magnificence of Nick O'Donnell, Tim Flood, the

Rackards, Jim English and that grand band of hurlers. Has Father Time called it a day for those men now that Dublin gave them a trimming?

Perhaps, but in defeat Wexford earned our admiration just as much as ever they did in victory. When it was obvious that the fast and skilful Metropolitans were set for victory, Wexford continued to play their own strong, hard, clean game and when they went down it was to the applause of many who had followed them faithfully over the years. Is it the end of an era for Wexford?

◇ ◇ ◇

Ban the radio broadcasts? That's what Sean O'Duffy of North Mayo wants and anyone who realises that the function of the G.A.A. is to get bands of young people playing and give, thereby, a bit of fun to their supporters will see the Mayo men's point.

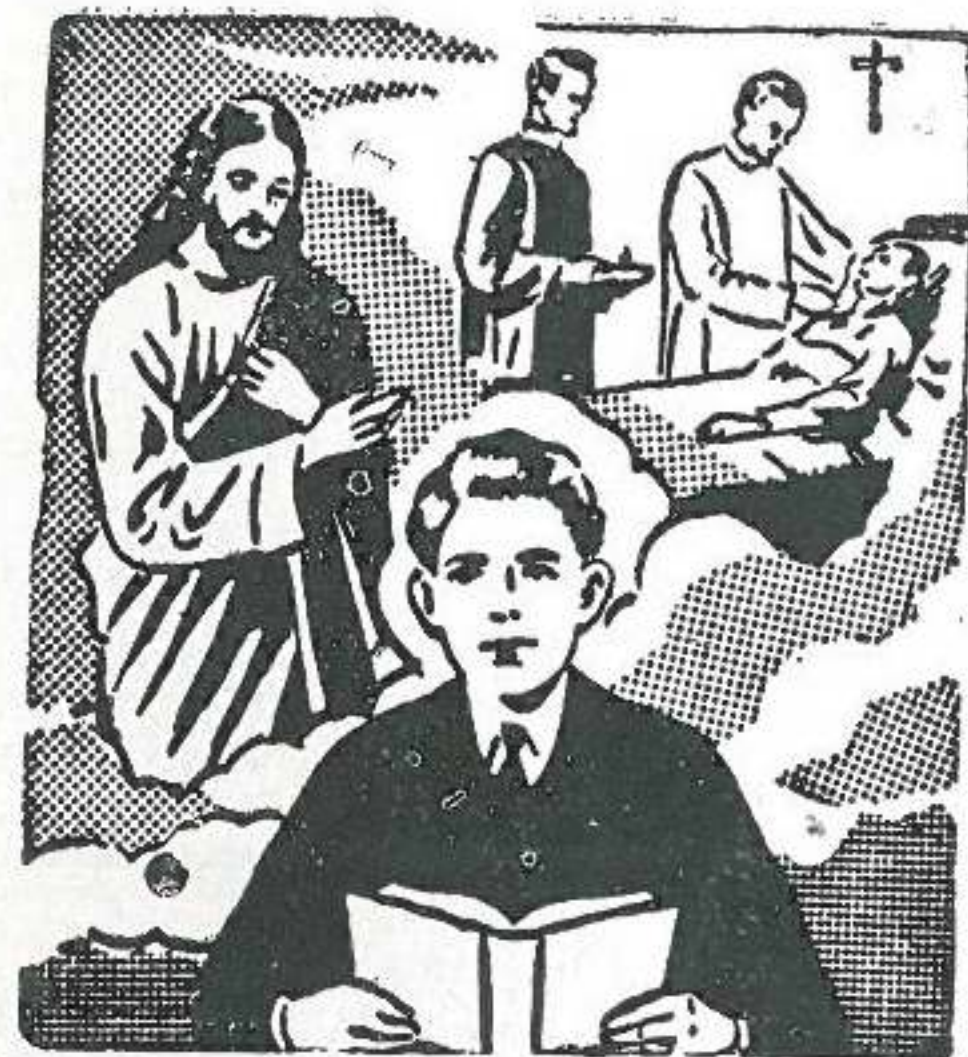
Said Mr. O'Duffy: "Attendances

at club games are falling rapidly all over the county in recent years because Radio Eireann is having all the big games broadcast. If there's a slight drizzle fans will stay at home to listen to Miceal O Hehir . . . ."

First of all, I don't think the broadcasts will be stopped, for purely from the entertainment point of view they are good business to R.E. Secondly, we must not forget the relatives and friends of the players and especially those in hospital, many of them old men who played and saw a lot of the games in their day. Every effort should be made by clubs, however, to discourage young men from staying at the radio when their club is playing because, apart from club loyalty, it is for the players primarily that the games are organised. In any case, there is reason to suggest that the games—or highlights of them—might be repeated over R.E. later in the day or on the following day.

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2. Nach bhfuil aon phionós leagtha síos don té a sháraíonn na rialacha seo.

I dtosach báire caithfidh mé a rá gur amaideach an smaoineamh é ag duine adeireann nach bhfuil cead ag an Ard-Chomhairle rialacha a leagadh síos. 'Sé an fáth go gceaptar Ard-Chomhairle ná chun smacht agus riarachán na heagraíochta a stiúradh. Bh'féidir go bhfuil na scríbhneóirí seo ag smaoineamh ar na rialacha imeartha ach ní bhaineann na teoracha nua seo len a leithéid. Cinnte, tá cead ag an Ard-Chomhairle rialacha a leagadh síos nó mar a tugtar ar na cinn seo "decisions which were arrived at by the Central Council."

Tá ré na teilifíse tagtha agus ní mór do ghach eagrais spóirt, an Cumann Luthchleas Gael ach go háirithe, gníomh riachtanach a thógáint dá réir. Dhein an scríbhneóir seo tagairt do seo cheana i

"Gaelic Sport." Chomh maith tá comórtaisí éagsúla ag dul i méid le roinnt bliana anuas. Chun na rudaí seo a smachtú agus nósanna imtheachta na mball a stiúradh cuireadh coiste ar bun ag an Ard-Chomhairle. Tugadh "Coiste um Raidió, Teilifíse agus Comórtaisí" ar an gCoiste seo; b'iad baill an choiste ná an Dr. S. S. O Stiobhairt (Iar-Uachtaran), P. O Caoimh., Ard-Rúnaí; P. Mac Conmí (Uachtarán Ginearálta); P. de Búrca, P. O Fainín (Portlairge); L. Mac Giolla Fhiontáin (Liatroim), R. Mac a' tSaoir (Ath Cliath) agus M. O hAodha (An Dúin).

Tugadh moltaí an choiste seo don Ard-Chomhairle agus dá thoradh sin leagadh síos na rialacha nua. Ceapaim gur cóir agus gur ceart na rialacha seo a chur i bhfeidhm. Tá trí ranna sna rialacha mar leanas:—

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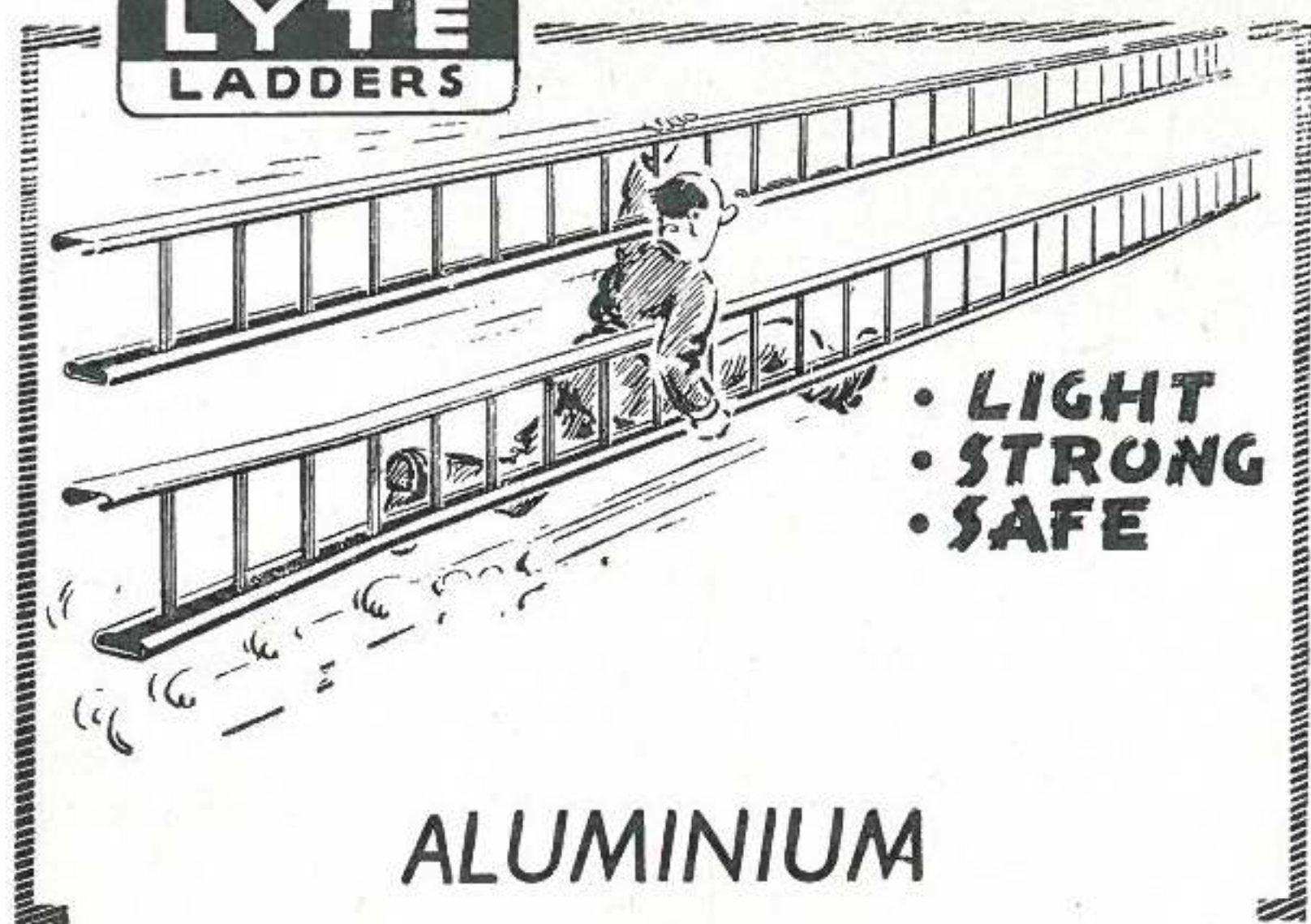
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4. Ní mhairfidh comhaontú mar seo thar tréimhse níos faide ná dhá bhliain agus ní bheidh alt ag tabhairt cead athnuachana ann.
5. Ní ghlacfaidh aon bhall den Chumann páirt in aon taispeántas raidió, scannánaíochta nó teilifíse i dtaca le Cluichí Gaelacha gan réamhchead na hAird-Chomhairle.

Is léir gur rialacha riachtanacha iad siúd. Is i gcoinnibh Riail 5 atá cuid mhór den lucht cáinte ach caithfear a smaoineamh i gcónaí gurab í an ghluaiseacht náisiúnta a bhead á plé, nó á taispeánt, agus go bhfuil dreamanna ann a ghlacfaidh gach deis le magadh a dhéanamh di nó drochmheas a chaitheamh uirthi. Deineadh údaraisí spóirt eile, nó comhlachtaí gnótha eile, a rogha rud fé theilifís, ach go háirithe, ach tá sé de dhualgas ar Ard-Chomhairle an Chumann Lúthchleas a chinntiú nach bhfaigheann éinne deis chun na cluichí dár gcuid féinig a mhaslú.

Má tá cluiche ar bith ar theilifís nó ar na scannáin cuimhinítear go mbeidh réamh-chead ón Ard-Chomhairle chun a leithéid a dhéanamh—mar sin má iarrtar ar Chaptáen na fóirne buachana cúpla focal a rá ní bheidh aon chur-ina-choinne. Ní raibh sé d'intinn ag an gCoiste, a cheap na rialacha, nach mbéadh cead cáinte ag baill na fóirne. Cinnte, bhí orthu cosg a chur leis an dtaispeántas neamhúdaraíthe ar a deineadh cur-síos ar pholasáí an Chumainn; cinnte, bhí orthu srian a chur leis an mball a dhéanfadh ionsaí ar

an gCumann. Tig le duine go fóill a chuid tuairimí a nochtadh don phobal ach bíodh fhios ag an saol nach tuairimí oifigiúla iad. Bíodh cead cáinte aige ach bíodh sé d'fhearúlacht ann a rá gurab iad a thuairimí féin iad agus nach bhfuil aon bhaint oifigiúil aige leis an gCumann Lúthchleas Gael.

Deineadh rialacha chomh maith fé bholscaireacht ar na páirceanna imeartha. Tá ciall leo seo mar níl aon rud chomh gránna le fógraí móra stáin na amhmaid scapaithe ar imeallacha na bpáirceanna. Beadh deis ag dreamanna, ag a raibh fuath don Chumann, a gcuid earraí d'fhógrú don phobal Ghaelach; ní fhéadfaí srian a choimead leis.

Rud eile, ba ghá cosc a chur leis an iliomad comórtaisí a bhí á reachtáil ag dreamanna éagsúla ar fuaid na tíre. Táid riaraithe anois ar bhealach go mbeidh smacht ag gach coiste Contae orthu. Má chuireann siad isteach ar an gCraobhchomórtas nó ar an tSraith Náisiúnta is mithid iad a chealú. Má bhí duaiseanna ró-mhóra á mbronadh bhí an baol ann go meallfaidís imreoirí ó fhóirne na gcontae. Sé an gearán is mó atá ag an lucht cáinte ná gur féidir cluiche a chealú má thárlaíonn go mbíonn cluiche oifigiúil laistigh de 15 míle ón ionad coimhlinte. Má bhíonn an Coiste Contae ar a naire ní bheidh aon deacracht ann mar nach dtabharfaidís dáta a bhí leagtha síos don chraobhchomórtas d'aon dream eile; má thárlaíonn go dtugann, níl aon fáth nach mbeadh an Domhnach saor ag an gcluiche san Chraobhchomórtas.

Mar bhuille scoir, deirim go raibh gá leis na rialacha nua; bhí gach ceart ag an Ard-Chomhairle iad a leagadh síos agus tá sé de dhualgas ar gach ball glacadh leo.

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# LET'S HEAR THEM ON DISCS

By PETER BYRNE

THERE it was, the same old acute problem which has confronted thousands of fans in every part of the country for years.

A thousand times before I had come face to face with it, but now I was no wiser. It was, of course, the old 'stickler' of deciding which game to attend on one of those Sundays when there are key clashes in all four provinces.

But this time I had the answer—or partly so. For I took along my transistor radio set to the game of my choice and there, thanks to the ringing voice of Michael O'Hehir capturing, in his inimitable style, every dramatic little detail of a match played in the other half of the country, I was able to follow the trends of both games.

All of which set me thinking of the tremendous debt we in the G.A.A. owe to Michael who, more than anyone else, has helped to spread the popularity of our National Games in every part of the country.

But is Radio Eireann 'cashing in' sufficiently on the country-wide appeal of these commentaries?

Frankly, I don't think so. Admittedly, the Sunday afternoon commentaries bring cheap enjoyment to thousands of listeners all over the country when, for one reason or another, they can't get away to see the big game.

But the fact remains that the vast majority of G.A.A. fans, both players and spectators alike never hear these commentaries for the very good reason that they themselves are outdoors, either playing or watching other games.

For years, fans have been agitating for repeat broadcasts of part of these commentaries throughout the year but there doesn't appear to be much likelihood of this taking place.

But here is a suggestion which would not only

please the G.A.A. public but would also help to provide much-needed income for the Radio Eireann authorities.

Why not market the recordings of all G.A.A. commentaries on a commercial basis?

Just think of the pleasure these recordings would afford followers during long winter evenings as they re-lived every pulsating second of those hectic championship games played on the sun-baked pitches of July and August.

In recent years, the filming of big games such as the All-Ireland finals has afforded immense enjoyment to Gaelic followers of all ages but due to the expense involved, these films were, of necessity, limited.

Sound recordings would prove just as big an attraction and would have the added advantage of being within the financial scope of the ordinary man in the street.

Just think, too, of the pleasure the players themselves would derive from such records. How interesting it would be for them to re-live the game again and hear the comments on their displays by Michael O'Hehir.

But there's another and more important aspect to the case. It is the vast export potential of these commentaries.

In America, alone, there are thousands of Irishmen and people of Irish descent who would welcome the opportunity of being re-united with their folk at home through the medium of a recording of a G.A.A. match.

The African continent, too, offers a huge unexplored market as evidenced by the huge demand each year for the relaying of the commentaries on the All-Ireland finals by Radio Brazzaville.



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FRANKIE BYRNE, former Meath football star, says :

## Bring back the dribble

THERE is a small, but vociferous element among G.A.A. followers who hold that ground play has no place in Gaelic football. In fact it upsets them to see a ground pass being delivered and when on the rare occasion a player has the temerity to dribble the ball they voice their disapproval in no uncertain manner by casting aspersions on his legality. Well, if you, dear reader, happen to be "one of these" I have news for you. Ground football is, and always was, part and parcel of our national game.

In "Carbery's" excellent book, "Gaelic Football" I came upon a poem describing a game of football played at Swords between Swords and Lusk in 1720 from which I quote the following lines—

"Dick met and meeting smote  
the light machine,  
Reptile it ran and skimmed along  
the green,  
Till Terence stopped, with gentle  
strokes he trolls  
The obedient ball on short ex-  
cursions rolled  
Then swiftly runs and drives it  
o'er the plain  
Followed the rest and chased the  
flying swain."

One might well imagine Terence making the 18th century equivalent of the comment "Look Mammy, no hands!" Elsewhere in his book "Carbery" states: "There was an abundance of close ground play, where groups of men swept the ball upfield in close formation."

In football as we know it today

there is an abundance of close play around the goal area when some player, be he back or forward, obsessed with the idea of getting the ball into his hands makes repeated efforts to lift the elusive leather in the midst of a bunch of players as closely bunched as a swarm of bees.

If and when he does gain possession he has to emerge from that welter of bodies to get his kick in.

Such tactics generally lead to petty fouling and unsightly scrappy play. Why, oh why, can't our footballers learn from our hurlers, especially those of Munster. Surely they have by their prowess amply demonstrated the barrenness of this policy of attempting to lift the ball at all times.

There are two distinct elements involved in this play: gaining possession and then getting rid of what has become in the process, a very hot potato, indeed.

In hurling, a deft flick to a waiting colleague or a crisp ground-stroke has often relieved the most dangerous situation, or led to a vital score. Intelligent ground play has not only provided the best in hurling but has undoubtedly been largely instrumental for the dominance of Munster hurling during the last quarter of a century.

A footballer should have more control over his feet than a hurler has over his caman because, after all, they are part of his body. So if ground hurling is both effective and attractive to watch why shouldn't football also benefit from a liberal injection of intelligent ground play?

I don't at all advocate abolishing the traditional "Catch and Kick" style, but I feel strongly that in the evolution of the game too much emphasis has been placed on catching and kicking.

During wet weather the ball becomes as slippery as a wet cake of soap and time out of number eludes the safest of hands. Yet, how many players today can bring a ball under control with their feet and dribble it?

All through the field ground football is one facet of our National game which could be more gainfully employed. Time and time again, I have seen excellent chances of major scores muffed by forwards who lost that split-second advantage attempting to pick a ball which could have been first-timed to the net.

And until the introduction of the new rule I've seen many a penalty given away and many a goal scored as a result of goalkeepers' inexplicable penchant for lifting a ball while under heavy pressure.

On the wings from corner-back to corner-forward passes can be sent at speed on the carpet thirty or forty yards and with a greater degree of accuracy than from the hand. More ground play would further expose the limitations of the one-footed player and also help to offset the obvious advantage of superior physique and tilt the scales in favour of brain over brawn.

I can well imagine the advocate of what is loosely termed

(Continued on Page 64)

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## In reply to Uncle Joe

# SCRAP THE SCRAPPERS

Says EAMONN YOUNG

SOME time ago I wrote in a Sunday paper that our games were not ready for T.V. and suggested some amendments. Joe Sherwood, who writes in a Dublin evening paper, and who obviously keeps his eye on good journalists, does not agree.

Nearly all of our games are a credit to the men who organise and play them, but we do see matches that shame both us and the country. Lately I saw two under-twenties flail each other with hurleys in a stand-up fight and then use their fists. I saw . . . but why bother? Is there one of us who can't talk? I can only conclude that my friend Joe and I have different concepts of shame—or that I see more football and hurling matches.

“Those who play our national games are inherently bred of fighting stock. It is in the blood. And I see ‘nowt’ to be ashamed of in a chap standing up for himself. Rather do I think it a thing to be admired,” says the little man with the pipe, exuding as most small men do a spirit of restless aggression, to ensure we are noticed.

If by standing up for oneself Joe means fighting, I cannot agree. Our playing fields are for the players; the boxing ring for the lad who wants to fight. And it is little consolation to an injured boy's mother to read such juvenile and irresponsible statements from the pen of a prominent sporting journalist.

He pays a doubtful compliment to Dr. Jammie Clinch, the rugby player whom I didn't see. “He was a great scrapper. But a fair one. Almost

every player that Jammie ran up against was out to scrag him. But he was a beloved enemy by one and all.” I hesitate to comment for fear of hurting the feelings of a player, but surely the language is the mouthing of an irresponsible of twenty. Whether scrappers, likeable or otherwise, are welcome in rugby is not our concern: we want ball-players, hard and tough as you like, but still ball-players.

“Give me” says this strange standard-bearer of the G.A.A., “the vigour and all-out determination of the average Gaelic footballer and hurler, to the insipid, spineless and spunkless stuff seen in modern soccer.” If soccer HAS become tame it is no concern of ours, though it is appreciated that this may cause Mr. Sherwood some regret. The character, environment and tradition of Gaelic games makes it impossible for them to become spineless. After all, as he says, those who play them are of fighting stock.

Altogether it is significant that in the column where Mr. Sherwood castigates me for being naive and suggests I am much too refined (delightful thought for those who know me) he makes no comment on a letter which describes tripping and wrestling in an intercounty football game.

Is his silence taken as approval? If so, he gains the merit of consistency and one wonders would he, in fact, be happier as an aficionado of the bull-ring.

Incidentally, I did not say that televised games might get us a bad name with foreign viewers; I

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*A Derry forward shoots for goal; but the Down defence seem to have the situation well covered in the Ulster championship game at Casement Park on July 2. Score: Down, 2-12; Derry, 1-10.*

**(Continued from Page 47)**

am more interested in our own people whom I mentioned, namely the relatives of the players and the old-timers. I don't object to criticism (in fact it's welcome) but at least Joe should read what he's writing about..

Too often we have seen players injured by unfair tackling and deliberately dangerous play, and there's not a county where suspensions have not had to be imposed. An honest sportsman must find in our friend's article an incitement to this rough and dangerous play. The G.A.A. demands that the games should be sporting and not dangerous beyond reasonable risk. We try hard to avoid bad blood between neighbours, and one feels that Joe's experiences of urban rugby and soccer may not have revealed this picture to him.

An appeal to keep the games clean made so often by Annual Congress and the County Boards is not intended for deaf ears, but is born of a love of our national heritage in sport. We can be forgiven for hoping that Mr. Sherwood will heed the next one.

The amendments I suggest before T.V. are, the

abolition of automatic suspension for the player ordered off and the permission to play a sub for that troublesome man.

Inter-county men are usually clean players but if one goes wrong a fortnight before his county's big game, will he be put off? What's YOUR experience? Better to have him sent to the line if he deserves it and let the committee award the punishment. Already he's a loss to his side for the game. If we admit that our committees haven't the integrity to award just punishment then let's haul down the flag and go home.

Secondly, a sub should be allowed when a man is put off. The ref, who knows the spectators don't like fifteen men playing fourteen, usually evens up, justifiably or otherwise. Easy to avoid that by allowing the sub and counting him as two acts of substitution.

These changes will transform the referee from his present harassed state to a formidable official whose word is law. Foreign viewers, spineless soccer, likeable scrappers, uncle Joe Sherwood and all—this would make us G.A.A. men happy.

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(Continued from Page 19)

was Val Harris of the Terenure Sarsfields. They used to bemoan the fact that Val turned to soccer, for they claimed that, had not the ban rule come in, Val would have continued as the doyen of Dublin Gaelic forwards.

Strangely enough, although they were there at every hurling match as well as every football match they didn't talk nearly as much about hurling as they did about football. But I often heard them tell that the greatest upset they ever saw was the All-Ireland hurling final of 1913 between Kilkenny and Tipperary.

Kilkenny had won six All-Irelands in the previous nine years, were ageing and reckoned past their best. Tipperary were represented mainly by the Toomevara Greyhounds, and had run Kilkenny off the field in the Croke Park Memorial Final at Dungarvan early in the summer.

Despite all rules to the contrary, the bookmakers still freely plied their trade in Croke Park in those days and the odds were heavily on Tipperary in this final. Anyway, though Kilkenny led at half-time, the 'books' were still convinced well after the interval that Tipperary would win and were laying six-to-four against the Kilkennymen well into the second half.

Most of the old-timers I knew used still laugh about that nearly twenty years afterwards. For it had started to rain at half-time, and they were convinced that no one could get the lead back from Kilkenny in the wet. So they all had their money on Kilkenny and showed a profit at the end.

All-Ireland finals at Croke Park are far greater affairs now than they used to be. And to meet the old friends now I have to wait outside on Jones's Road when the game is over. But we still manage to devote a pleasant hour or two recalling the old days that are farther away and therefore more dear, with each succeeding year.

# *Team of all the talents*



By SEAN O'NEILL

"THE Dublin team of 1927 was the greatest hurling team ever"—that's what the man said.

He was very much of the nondescript type, whose age might have been anything from fifty to a youthful sixty-five. I had seen him before, but for the life of me, I could not remember when or where.

His statement caused all of us to look at him and I immediately got the impression that he was enjoying our awakened attention. Before anyone had time to say "Aye, Yes or No", he went on, "We may not have won a great many hurling championships but we Dubliners can boast that we produced the greatest team to win an All-Ireland title."

This was mighty high-handed talk, especially from a non-regular, and I knew that we were in for a long session. "Fill 'em up again, Jimmy" says I, for I wanted to hear what Frank had to say first. I had not long to wait.

"Look, my friend" says Frank, in that deceptively mild tone of his, which usually preceded more vigorous reasoning "the Dublin team of 1927 was quite a good fifteen but they wouldn't hold candle-light to the Cork team of 1931 or the Limerick team of 1936."

Frank's "friend" was in no way taken aback by this and he immediately retorted "Think now for a minute" says he "the Cork team of 1927 was a better team than the Cork team of 1931. As a matter of fact, I have often wondered how that 1931 team lasted through those three games with

Kilkenny, for they were an old team then. Men like Eudie Coughlan, Jim Regan, Jim Hurley, Dinny Barry Murphy and Sean Og himself, were all getting on in years by 1931.

These men were at their peak in 1927 and do you remember what happened in that 1927 final? Well, just in case you don't I'll tell you. Dublin beat them 4-8 to 1-3 . . . the biggest beating Cork ever took in an All-Ireland final. Do you remember that?"

"Yes" said Frank, rather taken aback, for it was now evident that our "friend" knew his facts. "But listen to me now, one swallow never made a summer and one match never decided a great team. Where were Dublin in 1928"? Without waiting for a reply Frank went on. "Take Cork in those years: they won the championship in 1926, '28, '29 and '31. Now doesn't this count for more than just one 'flash in the pan'?"

"We're talking about one year and not ten" says our "friend" "and I'm saying that the Dublin team of 1927 would have beaten the Cork team of 1931 or 1926 or any other county in any other year for that matter. If they could do that, then they were the greatest hurling team to win a championship."

Realising that he was "shot-down" somewhat on the Cork team of 1931, Frank was quickly into his stride again. "Tell me this and tell me no more," says he, "did you see Limerick beat Kilkenny in the 1936 final?"

"I did" says the stranger.

(Continued on Page 56)

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# Anna Mai Brennan

By Agnes Hourigan

THE steady improvement in the all-round standard of Leinster camogie is one of the most gratifying features in the recent history of the game. Time was when Dublin, Wicklow and Louth were the only strong counties in the Eastern province, but now all twelve counties play in the championship and from the displays given in this year's competition one feels that such counties as Laois and Kilkenny, and possibly Louth and Wexford would give a very good account of themselves in the All-Ireland championships, were Dublin not continually barring their path to provincial honours.

And yet, watching the Leinster Final some few Sundays ago, one could not but feel that Dublin's superiority in the province is now gravely threatened; for, while their opponents Laois were, on the score-board, badly beaten there was far less between the sides on the actual field of play.

Indeed, Laois has come very much to the fore in Leinster in recent years, when any bit of luck at all might well have brought the O'Moore County girls into the honours list. And no one has done more to further the game in her native county than their hard-working mid-fielder Anna Mai Brennan.

Anna Mai as she is known far beyond the confines of her own Ballylinan, began playing competitive camogie as a twelve-year-old on the foundation of the local club.

That was nearly thirteen years ago, and it is the proud boast of the Ballylinan girls that their club has been to the fore in Laois ever since its foundation.

They have won the county title five times and Anna Mai Brennan was on every winning side.

Her father, a great enthusiast for the game, saw to it that she had transport to every match, and Mr. Brennan and the Brennan family as a whole have played a big part in the progress of the game not alone in Ballylinan but in the county.

Anna Mai soon won her place on the Laois side when the county affiliated again to the Leinster Council and has been a consistent performer in the county tunic ever since twice narrowly missing victory in exciting junior games for the Leinster title against Kilkenny.

In recent years she has been joined on the county side by her younger sister, Eileen, who is also a player of well above the average ability.

The Leinster selectors chose Anna Mai on their Gael-Linn Cup selections in three consecutive years, 1957, 1958 and 1959, so that she is the proud possessor of three inter-provincial medals, and, as she proved in the Leinster Final, she is

(Continued on Page 55)



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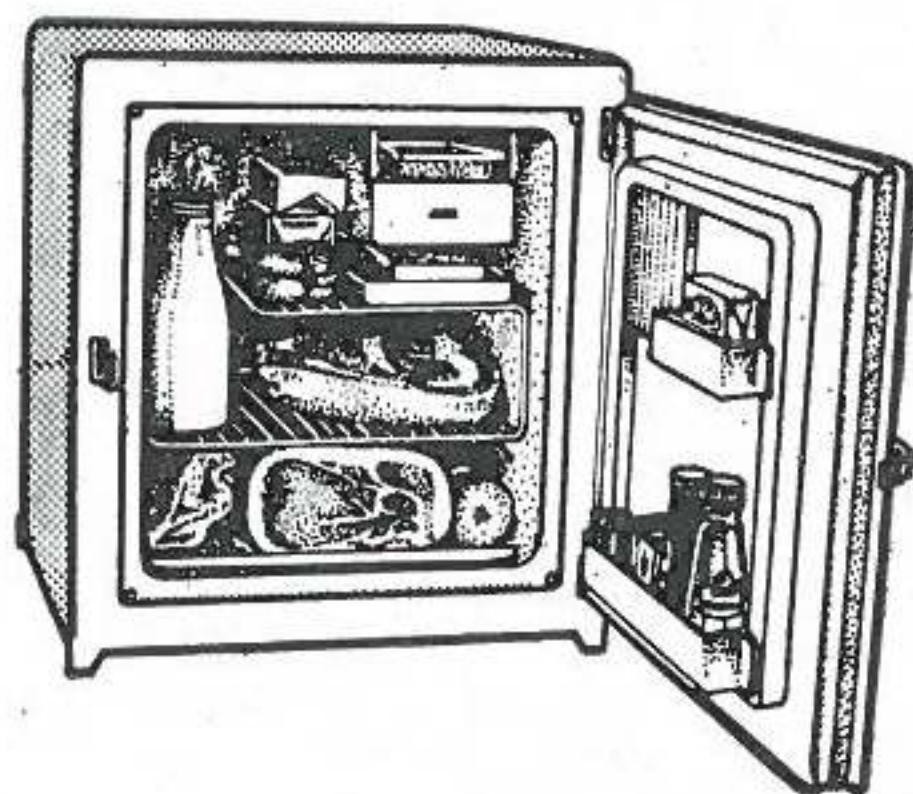
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**CAMOGIE : Continued from Page 53)**

still at the peak of her camogie career.

Nor has she spared herself on the executive side of camogie, an aspect which players too often neglect for she was for some years an official of the Laois Board as well as in recent times vice-chairman of the Leinster Council.

Considering that she is so busy in other fields, Anna Mai Brennan's devotion to camogie is all the more praiseworthy.

Since her schooldays she has been on the staff of the National Ploughing Association and in recent years has filled with distinction the very important and responsible post of Secretary of that organisation, a position that takes her all over Ireland as well as far overseas, where she has won a host of new friends.

It is to such as Anna Mai Brennan that we must look for the camogie leaders of the future, and certainly the game has no more ardent supporter than the girl from Ballylinan who has high hopes yet of achieving her greatest ambition of helping Laois to win a Leinster championship. And after all, if a Leinster championship is won All-Ireland honours cannot be far behind.

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**G**IRLS! Doff your hats, your berets, your headscarves, or what have you, to the Round Tower (Clondalkin) juvenile camogie team which won the Dublin under-15 League this year.

Not one of these girls had ever played the game prior to the formation of the team in February, 1960. Then, dedicated practice paid off when the under-15 League started in April, 1961.

Out of eight matches—one of them a walk-over—Round Tower won six and drew one. And their scoring record: 32 goals for; 9 goals 2 points against.

The Round Tower players in our picture above are: Back row (l. to r.)—A. Gallagher, G. Mackey, M. O'Hara, A. Kavanagh, J. Brady, G. Garland, E. Murphy. Front row (l. to r.)—K. Keogh, P. Kiernan, F. Downey, M. McLoughlin, R. Brady.

(Continued from Page 51)

“Well” ? says Frank.

“They were no bad team” says the stranger.

“No bad team” shouts Frank, now in top-gear, “what do you mean ‘no bad team’—they were a great team and would have knocked sparks off your Dublin team of 1927. They came back from an American tour that year and a week later went straight into the Munster final against Tipperary. They won that game with half a dozen goals to spare and they beat Galway in the semi-final.

“In the final they trounced Kilkenny 5-6 to 1-5. I remember it well, and Kilkenny were reigning champions at that. Sure, there were never men like those who wore the Green and White in 1936—the Mackeys, the Clohessys, Garrett Howard, Timmy Ryan, Paddy Scanlon . . . all great men. Not even the Cork team of 1931 could hold a candle to them” And with that Frank finished and reached for his untouched pint—which, no doubt, he now felt he deserved.

“By the way” says the stranger “you mentioned Garrett Howard—what age was he in 1936” ? “He must have been in his thirties,” says Frank.

“He was, and nearer to forty” says our friend. “Would you agree that he was a better hurler, say, when he was twenty-seven or twenty-eight” ?

I tried to catch Frank’s eye and warn him, but before I could do so he had gone and put his foot in it. “Naturally, he was a better man at twenty-eight than he was at thirty-eight” says he.

“Well” says our friend, whose line of argument and shrewdness I had now come to respect immensely, “when Garrett Howard was twenty-eight he was playing with Dublin and as a matter of fact that was his age when he won an All-Ireland with Dublin in 1927.

“Garrett Howard was at his peak then, as were

our other great stars like Mick Gill, Matty Power, Tommy Daly, “Fowler” McInerney, Jim ‘Builder’ Walsh, Dinny O’Neill, Martin Hayes, Ned Tobin and the rest of them. They were all at their peak in 1927.”

I knew Frank was livid at having slipped-up on Garrett Howard, but attack is the best method of defence and no one illustrated this better than Frank. “O.K. so Garrett Howard was with Dublin in 1927, what does that prove” ?

“It proves one thing conclusively” says our friend “namely, that Dublin had a far better left half-back in 1927 than Limerick had in 1936.” And with that he looked at his watch and announced that he had to leave us.

I wondered if Frank was glad or sad.

Just as our friend was about to bid us good-night, Bob spoke up. Like myself, he had left the floor to Frank and the stranger and perhaps it was the somewhat defeated look on Frank’s face that prompted him to make a final rally on his behalf.

“Before you go, answer me one question” says he, “how many Dublin men—that is Dublin-born men—were on that great team of 1927” ? The stranger stopped and looked first at Bob and then at Frank. “None” says he. “I’m sorry to say that none of those men were natives of Dublin—well good-night to ye.” And with that he was gone.

There was silence for a minute and Bob called for another round.

“You know” says Frank, “I’d have given a five-pound note to have thought of that—that there wasn’t a Dublinman on that famous 1927 team of his—a five pound note I’d have given.”

“Well, a man can’t think of everything” says I consolingly. Frank was not listening.

He would remember our “friend” for a long time.



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Of course they praise him then. And it would be all very funny if it didn't make the wise men look so foolish.

It happened this year. Ring, they said, should chuck it—he's keeping some good young man off the Cork team. And then the Cloyne man came out and beat Waterford in the Munster championship.

The praise after that didn't last long; for when Ring didn't beat Tipperary in the Munster final the old "ulogone" went up again.

So it seems that if Ring doesn't score four or five goals in every game he plays—even at the age of 41—he doesn't rate very highly with the critics, or with the sporting public whose staple diet nowadays must consist of sensational headlines

Since the question has been asked so often, let's put it again. Is this man too old for hurling at 41; should he quit the game now?

The answer rests with Ring himself, or with the Cork selectors. It is rank impertinence for anyone else to suggest it.

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# THE LONG WAIT

By EAMONN MONGEY

PERHAPS it's peculiar to me; perhaps it's peculiar to those of us who have been through it all before; but, nowadays, on the morning of every All-Ireland Final, my thoughts invariably go out to those 30 players involved. Because, believe me, for these players there is no day like All-Ireland Day—from any point of view.

The long championship campaign, the punishing hours of training, the newspaper and radio publicity, the innumerable questions from innumerable fans—all this builds up tension and excitement which reach their peak in those last few hours before the "off". And it's truly amazing in how many different ways this tension and excitement react on different players.

Some players can't bear to talk about the match at all; some must talk about it—eagerly, anxiously; while some couldn't care less whether they talk about it or not. But a good Co. Board always tries to give the players something to do to keep their minds occupied.

After Mass and breakfast, if the team is already in Dublin, there is usually a walk. Sometimes it might be along the seashore; sometimes it might be in the Phoenix Park. Anywhere is acceptable as long as the players are away from it all and as long as there is fresh air in abundance.

Back in the hotel again it's usually time for a pre-match lie down, and this is where the tension usually builds up. After all, how can players, trained to the last ounce, lie down for an hour just before what for many will be the greatest event in their sporting lives, and forget all about it?

Everyone shows some sign of nerves. Some yawn though they're not tired; some walk in and out of the room—monotonously and unnecessarily. Some tell jokes. A wit is always welcome at a time like this and is always sure of a good audience for, at this stage, the players will laugh at anything.

Somehow or other, those minutes tick slowly by until suddenly there's a shout of—"All right, boys: all up!"—and up they get. Downstairs a cup of tea helps to banish some of those butterflies, and, then, it's off to the pitch.

On the way, some of the players recall omens likely to produce victory: "The dressing-room near the Railway End is the lucky one"; "The team that wins the toss wins the game"; "The inside team in the parade always loses"; etc., etc. Nobody really believes all this but it helps to pass time en route.

At last the dressing-room is reached and inside, as the hands of the clock move on, so the excitement and chatter mount. "Have you garters?" "Do you want gloves?" "Would you like a rub?"

(Continued on page 63)



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- ★ Succeeded in introducing into Dublin Ballrooms Ceili Bands where until then they were not permitted to play.
- ★ Collected hitherto unpublished old Irish Songs and Ballads, set to music and sung in Gaelic for Old Time Dances, Barry's, 1949 to 1958.
- ★ Opened the City of Dublin to bands—members of the newly-formed Ceili Musicians' Union, the A.I.T.M., September 21st, 1957.
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MEET YOUR FRIENDS FROM HOME AT  
THE HIBERNIAN

(Continued from Page 31)

Invariably, the team that carries too big a quota of players who are going or are gone over the top, does not succeed in winning a title.

Of course, it goes without saying that for a team to aspire to All-Ireland honours, its players must have quite a measure of SKILL.

In fact, all the remarks about the other qualities pre-suppose that skill is present at all times.

It is this, allied to the other factors, which produces All-Ireland winners. There is nothing so pleasing to the eye as well executed moves and scores and the example par excellence of this, is, of course, the inimitable Christy Ring. His artistry can light up even a dull game and he has that rare gift which often enables him to win games almost on his own.

But important as skill is, it is not everything, as any Dublin fan who followed the footballers in the years prior to 1955, will tell you.

In those formative years the Dubliners brought a new style to the game. They introduced precision passing, with players dovetailing and running into position for passes and yet they did not achieve anything like the success which had seemed so likely when they burst dramatically on the scene.

And the reason? Although they had skill to spare they lacked grit and determination and were not over-endowed with luck.

Undoubtedly there are exceptions to these rules. It does happen that a team without one or more of the qualities mentioned wins out but I think that they only prove my contentions.

However, looking back over the past 25 years very few teams have won All-Ireland titles, which did not possess all, or nearly all, of the talents.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

All action pictures in this issue of "Gaelic Sport" are by courtesy of Irish Press Ltd.

## Memories of football in West Cork

# OUT RUSHIN' IN THE OLD DAYS

By EAMONN YOUNG

AS youngsters in Dunmanway we dreamed about football. And a man's prestige among the townspeople was coloured by his activities during the Trouble and his ability to drive a long ball over in Bernard's Field.

For there was a great tradition. In 1897 the Michael Dohenys (called after the rebel who stayed a few days with his reverend uncle while on the run) contested the All-Ireland football final, and though they were well beaten we were always told that the Dublin fellows took them out and made them drunk on the night before the game. We often thought those city slickers didn't have to coax very much.

There were twenty-one aside in those days and it stands to reason that there was much more bodily contact than today and far less of the stylish stuff which the old timers still dislike.

Con Flynn, a small, wiry and very tough little man, who now has gone to his reward, was one Sunday evening listening to the modern players after a game. One of them described how a star of the opposing side leaped up into the air, fetched firmly, landed running and belted a great ball down the field. Then a minute afterwards he did the same and our narrator went through it in detail. When the third ball came we listened to another recital and once again our young athlete bounded like an antelope and kicked it out of sight. With a look of contempt Con Flynn walked

slowly away, and then taking the pipe out of his mouth, he said without turning: "T'was a damn bad man that let him."

They used to train hard in those days, and as their life was harder—spent more on the feet and less in the car or office—they probably were better able to take and give rough charging.

But they ran a lot also and with bowl-playing and athletics to help were probably very good players. On Sundays they might run from Dunmanway to the Clubhouse a pub about four miles away and the last man in bought a gallon of porter. Imagine how you would feel half a mile from the pub—and you grinding along second last.

The good teams in Cork just then were Kinsale, Macroom, Lees and Youghal and Con Flynn was telling us about a great day when they beat Kinsale over in Innishannon.

The boys journeyed the twenty miles by that modern vehicle the long car, drawn by two horses and able to seat about ten men. On their way home after the victory the rain came out of the skies so the boys jumped off the long car at the next hay-rick and put gwawhls of hay across their knees. As it became wet it was dropped to the floor and new, dry hay substituted at the next rick. "And" says Con "when we got home we spread it out in Tim Patsy's field. We turned it and dried it and a few days after we sold it for thirty bob a ton."

The spirit was always high though

defeats came more often than victories when I was young. They were going off to play Barley Hill and I remember gazing open-mouthed at the "good min of this town" (though someone always maintained that the best weren't picked at all—something which really hasn't changed, has it). Anyway, one of the officials, who like all good officers never kicked a ball in his life was the custodian of the new football. On it was written in bold, black letters the slogan, "Death or Victory". There was no win—but no hari-kari either.

These boys of the thirties played in Skibbereen and while the game was a great one the followers on both sides went a little wild and afterwards in the streets there was a mild disagreement which eventually led to a free-for-all, from which a friend of mine escaped in an extraordinary fashion. When being knocked to the ground he lashed out with his boot, accidentally blew in the panel of a public-house door which the owner, taking the hint, opened. The alcoholic oil smoothed troubled waters—temporarily.

The row flared up again and it annoyed Timothy Jim, who stripped fighting fit at seven stone eight. Dancing with rage, his elbows sticking out like sparrows knees he shouted, "lev me at him," while men of weight and substance formed a wall of human flesh. "Lev him out" screamed Timothy Jim, "if he's sixteen stone, I've a punch to knock him."

We used to play football over in Dan Crowley's field with a ball held by Frankie Drişcoll the captain. Three places we had—goal, full-back and out rushin'. I used be out rushin' and at half time (judged by the sun) we'd jump over the wall to the pump and drink enough to kill a horse. Then at it again till the Angelus. Many a hammering I got but nothing took so much effect as when I kicked an older

(Continued overleaf)

(Continued from Page 61)

and more sophisticated lad in the shin and in answer to my apology he would say "Ah what harm;" and pityingly "Sure you can't help it." A more sensitive (or sensible) type than I would have given it up. He did.

In some places I believe that in addition to the three places they had centre-fielders and wingers; but that refinement must be regarded as an advance in athletic culture not general among the youth of our day.

But the fundamentals were well taught. My father, the local "Master", took a great interest in football because, no doubt, of a certain skill he himself had picked up the hard way. He drummed into us the importance of kicking with the "bad" foot and often we had periods when that only was used. All that mattered,

he said, was a high firm fetch and a forty yards kick "over the lath." The game has not changed.

While the day, as a tiny fellow, I kicked the ball over my head is the one I blame for all the hours wasted chasing a bag of wind, that which I remember best is when three of us were called into the senior classroom and picked out of the hat for the three senior captains. At last I was playing with the big fellows.

But I always longed for action and a few years after while playing at centre-forward in the under-14 the ball was down at our goal where a bunch of lively lads from the city were kicking hell out of it.. I asked my man if he could stand on his head. He said he couldn't but he'd bet that I couldn't either. Like any young man with red blood in his veins I got annoyed and proceeded to show him, so there I was,

waving my legs in the air when the ball came up. I can still hear certain people roaring. And the naughty things they said.

And the day we played in senior championship. We didn't like the field and blamed it for being beaten. But all was not lost. BEFORE the game, two well-known educationalists measured the pitch and to their delight found it two and a half feet short. When that was multiplied by the width, height, converted to square inches and the first number you thought of, added to it, anyone would think we had to play on a postage stamp. We were beaten in the replay.

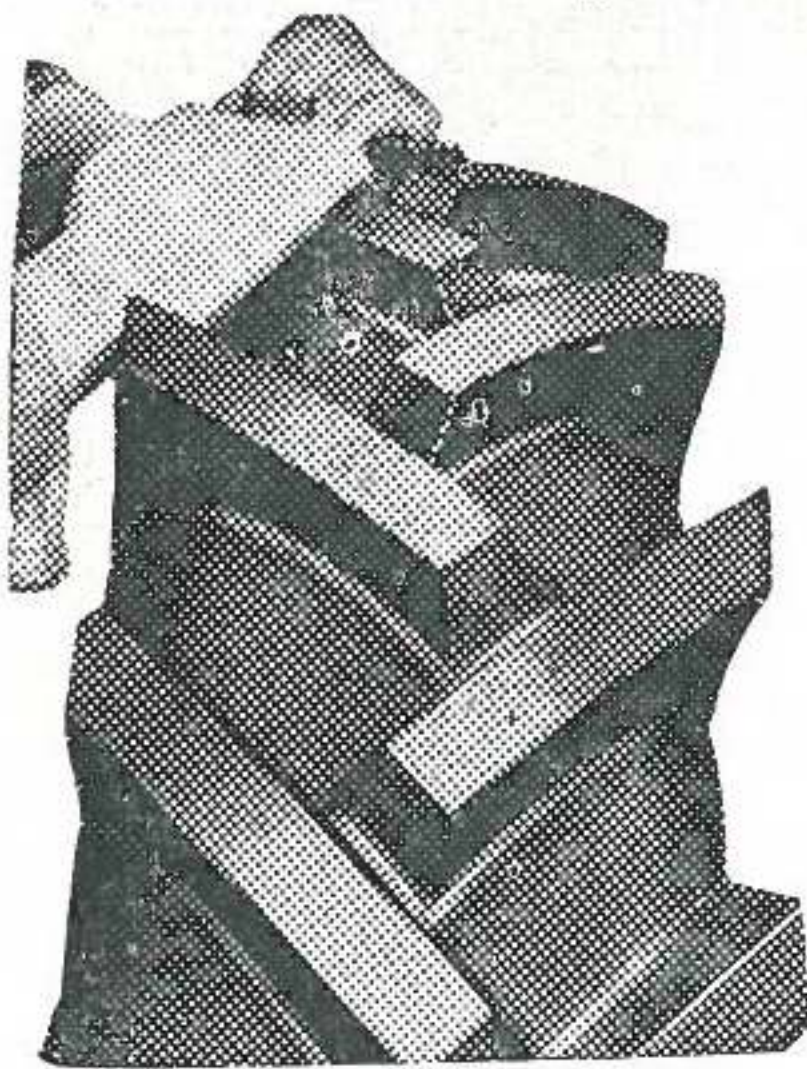
The barber's shop was the place where all the authoritative talk about football was done and the criticism used be razor-edged, but usually anonymous. "I can tell you there are min in this town who'd be just as pleased if the team was bate," etc. etc. If we had a few more like Gerald Bourke, the barber, not many of them would beat us.

My brother and I put up a false team on about twenty doors a few nights before an important game. The sexton was playing full-back, the greatest talker in the town was at full forward with a view to persuading the other fellows to let him score and a man who wouldn't take a big breath for fear t'would kill him was at centre-field. Most of them got a great kick out of it. And then there was that honest limb of the law who endured one of our drunken footballers on the night before a game and took him home rather than let the team down.

They were some great fellows, good footballers and good sports. May the sun shine on them and the green sod rest lightly on the men who have heard the whistle. As one of them said, "Put a couple of goal-posts over me in case I might get up out of the aul' box during the night and kick a few points."

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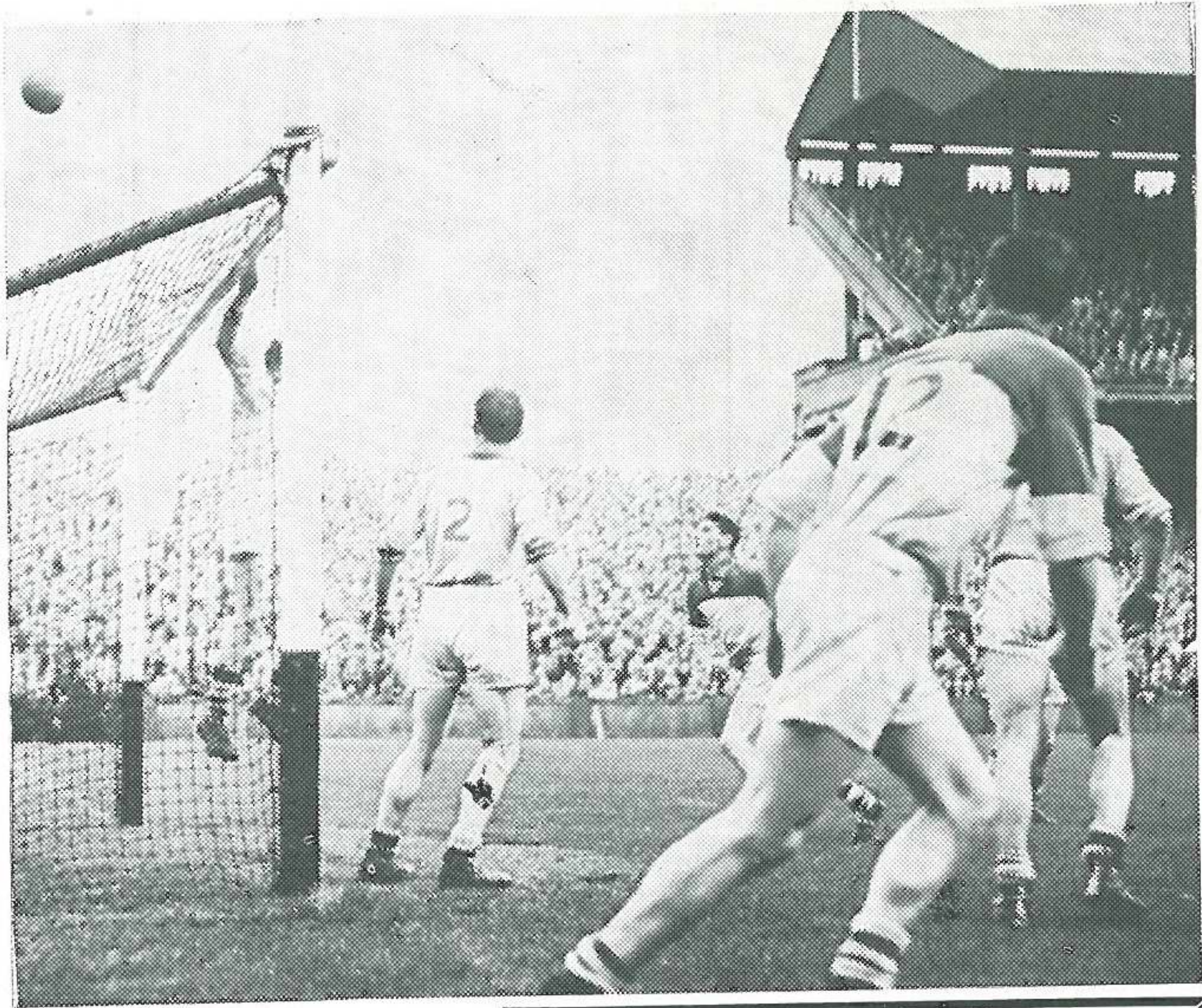
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 enough to stop  
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 point in the  
 All-Ireland  
 football  
 semi-final at  
 Croke Park on  
 August 20.  
 Looking on are  
 Roscommon  
 right-back  
 J. J. Breslin  
 (No. 2) and  
 Offaly left half  
 forward  
 Tommy Greene  
 (No. 12).



(Continued from page 59)

“Where’s so-and-so?” Eventually, the noise gets so bad that someone shouts—“Quiet!” That’s worse!

But somehow or other the moment of truth arrives. Last minute speeches! Last minute instructions Last-minute encouragement!—and then you’re out through a dark tunnel and break into sunlight.

A roar, rising to a crescendo, breaks out from thousands of throats. Everywhere there are faces—banks of faces, lines of faces; and everywhere there are flags—hundreds and hundreds of them. But all this is only incidental: there’s work to do.

The photographs! The parade! The National Anthem! Sometimes, while standing to attention, the butterflies come back. Sometimes the knees begin to knock. Sometimes a little shiver runs down the spine. But it’s all over in a minute.

The ball is thrown in! The game is on! It’s great to be alive—and playing in an All-Ireland final.

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# LETTERS to the EDITOR

Dear Sir,—Could I ask for your readers' views on this interesting question: What county turned out the best senior football team during the past 20 years?

I have argued the point with a couple of friends, one of whom holds that the Meath team of 1949 was the best; the other sticks by the Roscommon side of 1944—but then, he is a Connacht man!

My own opinion is that the Kerry team of 1955 topped the lot. But I am prepared to change my mind if Down produce the sparkling display that I expect them to in the final against Offaly.

"Spaceman".

Drogheda.

## DRIBBLE

(Continued from Page 45)

"traditional" football saying that this article is enough to put any self-respecting Kerryman off his food. May I remind these "traditionalists" that Jackie Ryan, the Landers brothers and the great John Joe Sheehy excelled in ground play, especially dribbling. Kerry-men these, and wonderful exponents of high fielding and long kicking.

Yet, the only players to have reached any degree of mastery in ground play in present day football, with the exception of the few, notably Paddy Doherty of Down, were all from the county which first perfected the "Catch and Kick" style—Dublin. Paradoxical, isn't it?

Sir,—I am a Dublin man, which, of course, automatically makes me an Irishman—or does it? My problem is this—Why is there such a terrible psychological cold war (sometimes not so cold. Remember Portlaoise?) continually going on between Dublin people and their country cousins?

Surely the important thing is that we are ALL IRISHMEN. I am not Solomon. I cannot apportion the blame to either side of the "Pale". But surely it is time all of us Irishmen stopped to think. In 1916 there was no distinction. If our island was threatened tomorrow surely the words "culchie" and "jackeen" would lose their meaning.

When in any part of the country, on business or holiday, I always find the local people most friendly and helpful. Why then, when a

big match comes up, does this mass prejudice rear its ugly head?

"Perplexed."

Dublin.

Sir,—Sean Feeley, in his article on long-term men in the June-August issue of Gaelic Sport, forgets Jim Smith and Willie Young of Cavan, whose playing careers extended over a longer period than any of those he mentioned. Jim Smith played for Cavan for 18 years—from 1919 to 1937, whilst Willie Young's career was even longer. He played from 1918 to around 1930 in the forward line and from then to 1937 in goal, and staged a comeback for the 1940 Ulster final against Down—a 22-year period in all.

Malachy Smith.

Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford.



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