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AUGUST, 1964

Vol. 7. No. 8



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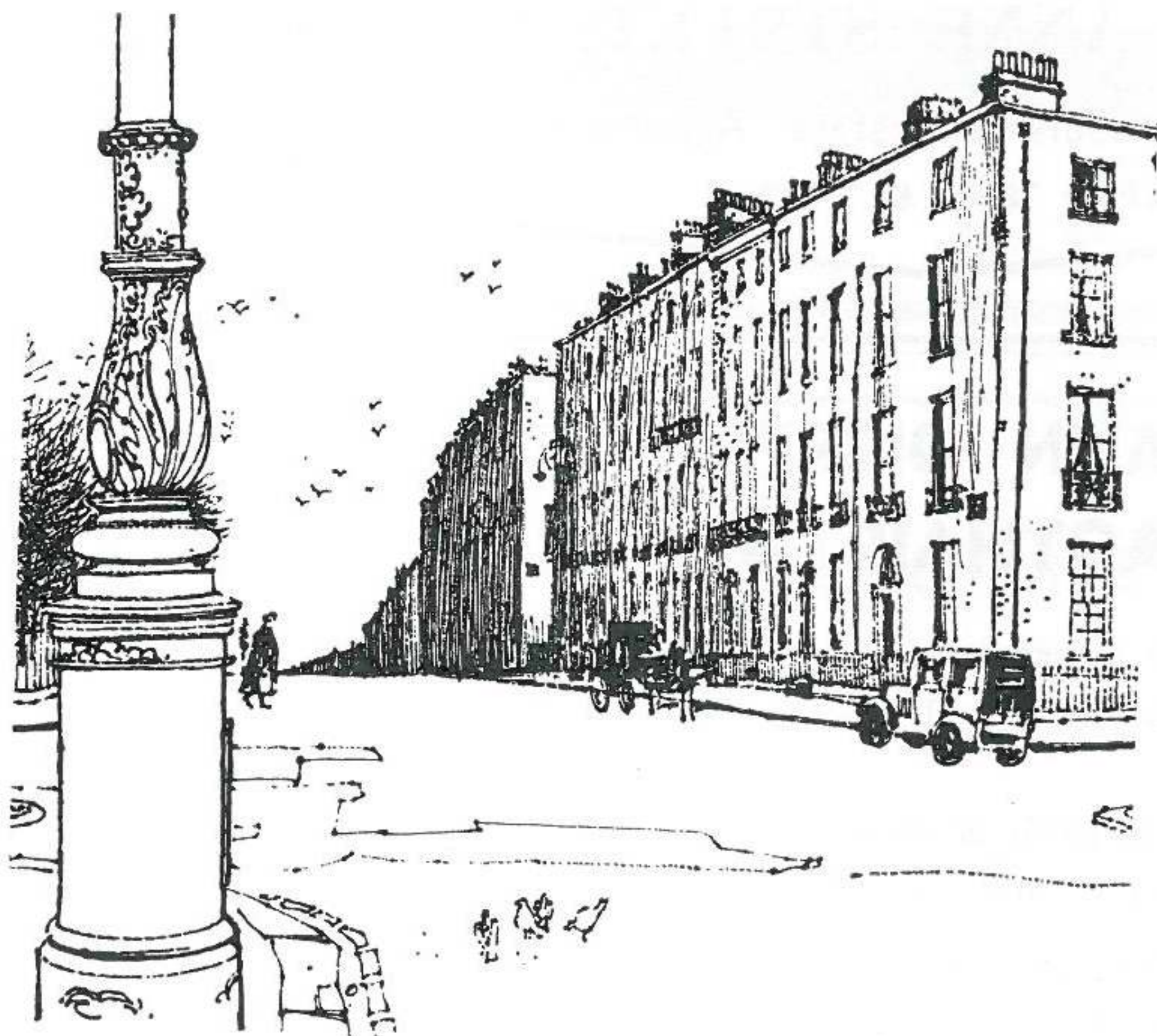
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CAPS

A PASSIVE APPROACH

ON the question of the revival of the Irish language Cumann Lúthchleas Gael is committed both by tradition and Rule. However, this commitment appears to be generally accepted within the Association in a purely passive sense—as if goodwill towards the language was in itself sufficient and needing little by way of practical contribution.

There have been, of course, the odd exceptions to the general situation. The Ulster Council has done much, while more recently the Munster Council, with its language course for club officials, has taken a step in the right direction. So too, to a lesser extent, has the Connacht Council who, earlier this year, accepted a motion originating in Carrick-on-Shannon which asked that one Council meeting per year be conducted in Irish.

However, these are still but minor and isolated innovations, having little bearing or affect on the vast structure of the Association as a whole. Surely the time is now opportune for considering more sweeping and progressive schemes.

There is at present an invigorating spirit of enthusiasm for the language being rekindled throughout the country. It is hoped that it will culminate in a realistic Government White Paper later this year. When this arrives will the G.A.A. as an organisation be to the forefront in its implemen-

tation? Regretfully it cannot be said at this stage that there is any guarantee that it will.

Having become accustomed to many decades of passive support for the language, the G.A.A. will need to make a very definite effort to rouse itself to the state of awareness where it can distinguish between goodwill and good works. From now on only good works will count.

It is time therefore that every unit of the Association gave serious thought to this question. Platitudes no longer will be sufficient to satisfy national obligation. Practical schemes, earnest endeavour and an overall sense of honesty are required.

In this latter regard it must be accepted as a basic premise that proficiency in the language is very desirable, if not essential, for those holding administrative positions at club, board and council levels.

This was very much emphasised in the recent case in Co. Donegal, where, in an objection before a divisional board and involving a Gaeltacht club, it was requested that the hearing be conducted in Irish. The request was later withdrawn out of respect to the chairman who stated that he was not competent to deal with the case in Irish.

At this meeting the chairman's goodwill towards the language was clearly and unquestionably demonstrated . . . but when it came to the real issue, goodwill alone was grossly inadequate.

Gaelic Sport

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DOWN'S PREMIER CLUB HAS ITS OWN BUS!

By **MATT FITZPATRICK**

GLENN John Martins—Down's premier club and one in which the name McCartan is held in highest esteem. The McCartans are Glenn's pride and joy. Through them this rural club, which has little more than a hundred households to choose from, has shared in the making of G.A.A. history. It is a proud honour and one which Glenn cherishes.

The club was founded in November, 1931, by quiet spoken Armagh-born school teacher, Louis Trodden, who also became the club's first chairman. When Louis called together the people of Glenn, Barr and Donaghmore to the Glenn Hibernian Hall on that November evening it was "not to inaugurate a football club merely, but to enrol in a movement that stood for the complete obliteration of foreign sham and give expression to the true national ideal".

The club decided to perpetuate the memory of Loughmore's "Honest" John Martin, schoolboy

friend of Newry's John Mitchel, a great patriot and who lies buried in Donaghmore Churchyard, only a few hundred yards from the present playing pitch of the club.

The late Owen Finnegan, George McParland, Tommy Mackin, James Savage, the late Hugh McConville and the O'Hares, James, Tom, Hugh, Frank and Arthur, a family always associated with the club, were some of the early officers.

Just one year after its foundation, Louis Trodden was transferred to his native Armagh and George McParland took over as chairman, a position he held until he retired in 1948.

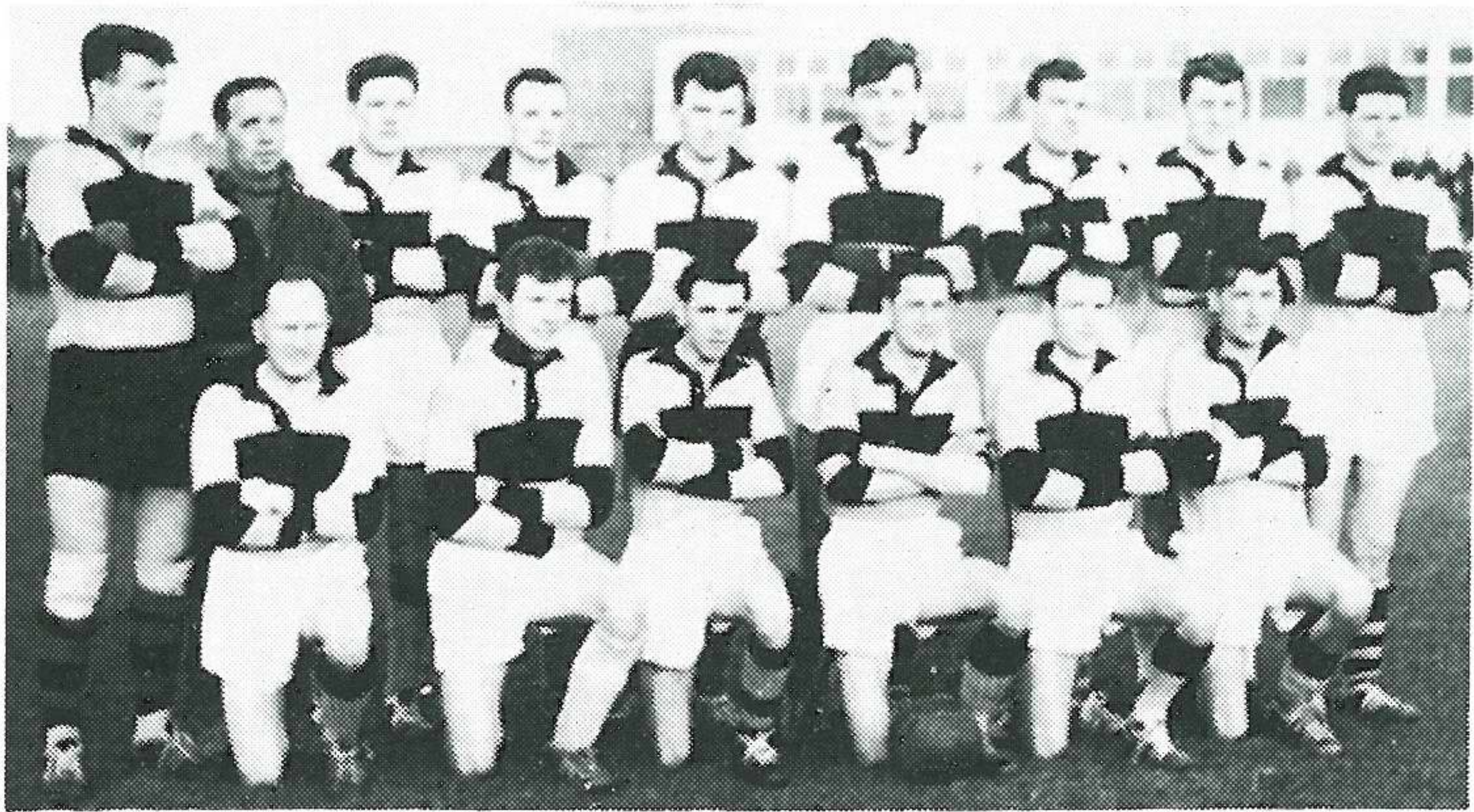
Success on the playing field was slow to come to Glenn and the first trophy won was the McCartan Cup in 1933. In 1937 Glenn won their first Down county title, the junior championship and they also captured the South Down and Mourne League, a title again won in 1939. Players who helped win these first county trophies included Colman, Paddy and Danny O'Hare, Hugh

McConville, Tommy McParland, Jimmy Kennedy, Harry Murtagh and Tony Morgan and it was in the latter year that they won the first Down Feis "sevens" a title which has since gone to Glenn another six times.

The club gained no major successes during the 'forties, but nonetheless club spirit was never higher just then. Owing to the war travel was restricted and bicycles had to be used for all outings.

In 1946 Down won All-Ireland honours for the first time in the junior grade and Glenn is proud that Kevin O'Hare and Dan Kennedy (another great family name in the club) helped the county to this historic victory.

In 1954 came the big breakthrough with the winning of the Down senior league title. Many of the present players figured in that historic win including James McCartan, his cousins Seamus, Dominic, Gervase; Dan and Denis Smith; Finbar Conlon; Paddy and



● *Glenn—the reigning Down Senior Football Champions—a rural club with a proud heritage and a confident approach to the future. Included in this picture are James and Dan McCartan, two Glenn men who helped to make football history and of whom, the club is particularly proud.*

Gerry Bagnall, and Dan and Seamus Kennedy. The League was also won in 1958, but it was the following year that the club won its first county championship title. After a series of failures at the semi-final stage they went on to beat Rostrevor in the decider.

In 1960 P. J. McElroy returned to Down and joined the club and with Fergus Conlon, John Lennon, a brother of Joe's, and Paddy Hurley, they helped in the 1962 and '63 championship triumphs.

One achievement of which the members are very proud and that has been the purchase of a club bus which not only serves as transport for players but also brings supporters and with Down being in Croke Park so often these last years, Glenn have always had their bus available for club members to travel and cheer their heroes.

The Glenn playing pitch is at present at Four Mile House outside Newry on the main Belfast road and is the property of Seamus

McCartan, a cousin of James and Dan, and uncle of Val Kane, the 'teenage marvel who looks like having a great football future with both Glenn and Down. A missen hut acquired after the war serves not only as dressing rooms but also all the requirements of a club house. However, it is the earnest wish of all the present members and officials that in the near future a permanent ground will be found with proper facilities.

But it is not only on the playing fields that the John Martin club has won distinction and honour. They also boast a very active athletic club which is affiliated to the N.A.C.A.

Numerous All-Ireland athletic titles have come to Glenn in recent years. Mickey Jennings, won several shot putting titles, Kevin O'Hare, who figured on the Down All-Ireland junior football side of 1946 captured the 16 lb. shot title and Frank Monaghan, has won the discus title.

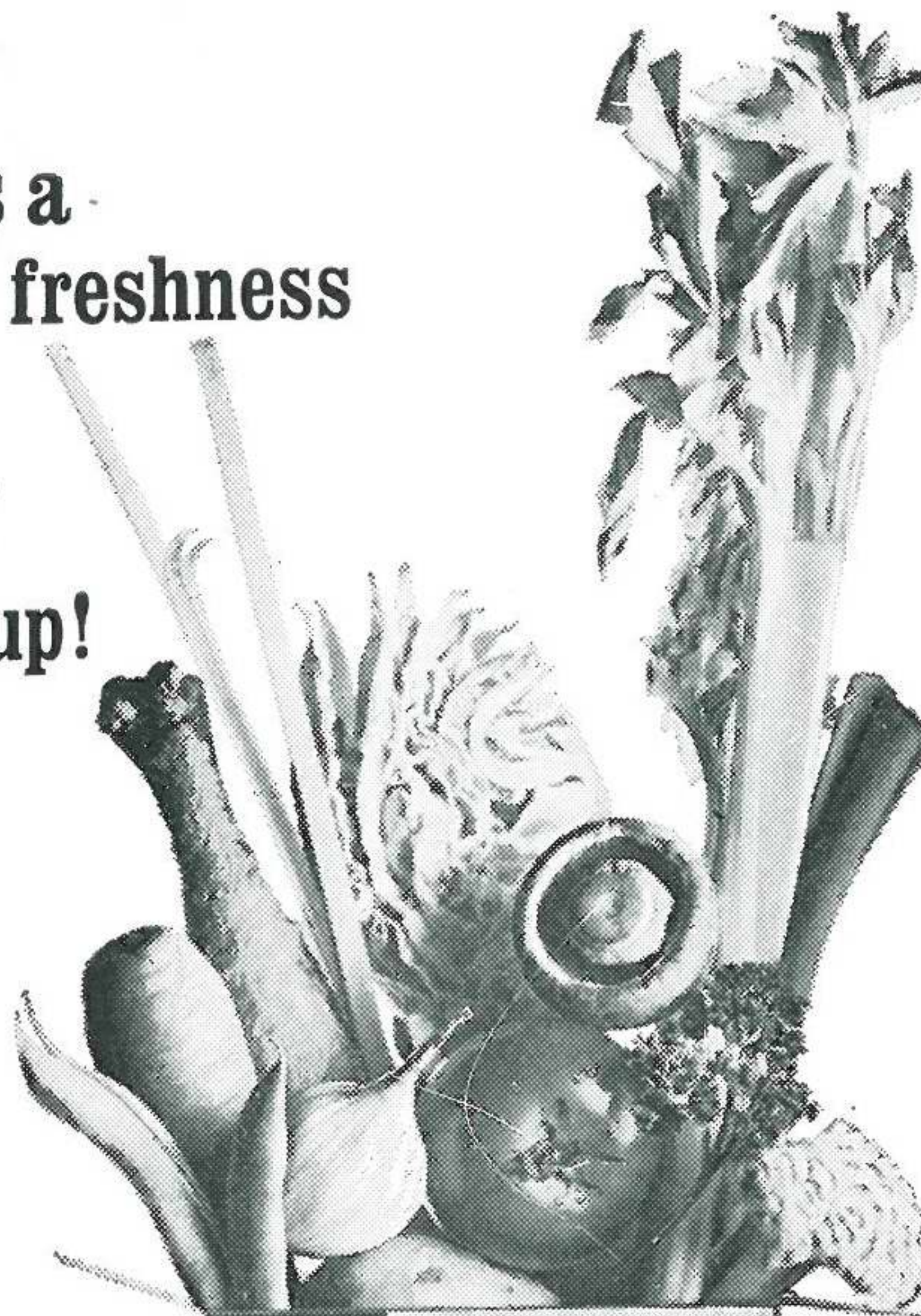
Many of the early club members and players have passed to a Heavenly home but Louis Trodden's great foresight and faith has been fulfilled and will always be a shining light for those of future generations of John Martin's players and officers.

As in all country clubs, family tradition rank high and many generations of families faithfully serve the club. The O'Hares, Murtaghs, McCarthys, McCartans, Conlons, Kennedys, Sands, Bagnalls and Gallaghers have all contributed to the fame of the club and many have down the years worn the red and black of Down.

To the McCartans of Donacloy, particularly James and Dan, and Seamus Kennedy and the many others too numerous to mention I say thank you for assisting me in this all too brief look at a great club.

Next month I will take a trip into Co. Derry to have a look at football champions Bellaghey.

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A UNIQUE DISTINCTION

By FEAR FAIRE

THE Laois Hurling Board and the Kiltrush Town Council hold a unique distinction—they are, as far as I know, the only two bodies in Ireland who refused to pass the “Let the Language Live” resolution which has been unanimously adopted by every other body and group before which it has come.

Scores of city, town and urban councils and many, many more lesser known bodies have readily adopted this motion during the past two months—as indeed has every county board before whom it came. But not Kiltrush Town Council and not the Laois Hurling Board.

Kiltrush marked the resolution “read,” the Laois hurling body did something similar — they decided to defer it.

When the motion came before the Laois County Board it was readily adopted—but not mind you without strong opposition from the Hurling Board Chairman, Mr. D. Phelan.

From the report I have read of that meeting, Mr. Phelan trotted out most of the old and unfounded clichés—“Irish is no use when one has to leave our shores in search of a living.” And of course there was the one about how Irish was making “dunces” out of primary school children.

Following Mr. Phelan’s eloquence and touching logic a Mr. D. Kerry proposed that the resolution not be adopted. Oddly enough there was no seconder—not even Mr. Phelan. But, of course, by then it was obvious that

the vast majority of those present strongly favoured the language resolution.

Among those who had spoken in its favour was the county’s dual star, Ollie Fennell, the great Bill Delaney—who said that the language and the games were one, Co. Chairman, Jack Conroy, and many others.

Mr. Phelan was very much on the losing side.

ONE GAME

Life can be full of surprises—and indeed frustrations. Take the case of the people who a few weeks back turned up at Skryne, Co. Meath, for what promised to be an entertaining three-game programme.

First on the bill was an intermediate championship game between Warrenstown Agricultural College and Donaghmore—but it wasn’t played. Donaghmore could not travel. The loyal public whiled away the hour as best they could—at least there were two more games coming up.

However, before the second game began it was learned that the third game had been called off. That left but one. At least that was certain to be played for the players could be seen togging out.

Seneschalstown (no, it is not a misprint) were the first to take the field and they trotted out looking in fine fettle. Then their opponents Ratoath followed. They

looked much the same—and why wouldn’t they, for both teams were wearing identical jerseys.

Of course, the game could not be played until a replacement set of jerseys was had. A search was begun. The local team, Skryne, were playing away from home so there was no set of jerseys there. Eventually a dash by car was made to Warrenstown and believe it or not but there was a set of jerseys there and they were given with a heart and a half. What is more the car returned safely and the match was played—even if it was an hour or so behind time.

Some of the crowd who had come to see three games and who only saw one — and that away behind time, were rather annoyed. But, of course, you will always have that type. Couldn’t it have been worse—there might well have been no match at all, or it might have snowed or something.

VIOLATED RULE

Last month I listed quite a number of clubs who were violating Rule 29 with regard to dances. This Rule carries a penalty of at least four weeks’ suspension.

This month I didn’t have the time to make an equally thorough search for culprits but nonetheless here are a few more:—

Wicklow—Laragh, Newtown and Kilcoole.

Kerry — Laune Rangers and Waterville.

● TO PAGE 43



CONGRATS TO LOUTH FOR A JOB WELL DONE!

By **JIM O'BRIEN**

ONE of the most thorough investigations of its kind that I, in many years of association with Gaelic affairs, have heard of was recently held by the Louth County Board. A special committee was appointed to investigate a flare-up at an abandoned junior football game between Dreadnots and Naomh Fionbarra and it certainly did its job.

The committee sat for twenty-one hours and interviewed thirty-three people, including the referee, linesmen, umpires, players, officials and neutral spectators. It then presented its findings to the Board in a clear-cut and precise manner. They were adopted and acted upon to the full.

All in all it was a most expert and professional piece of work and it does credit to all concerned. Certainly no one can point the finger at Co. Louth or its Board and say that they are shirking their duty in dealing with incidents.

ANNIVERSARY

This is anniversary year for Kilkenny—and in more ways than one. It was in 1894—seventy years ago that they appeared in the first of their twenty-nine All-Ireland senior hurling finals. It was actually the 1893 final and it was played in the Phoenix Park in June 1894, with reigning champions, Cork, winning 6-8 to 0-2.

This is also the anniversary of

Kilkenny's first All-Ireland victory—that of 1904—although the final was not played until two years later.

Speaking of anniversaries only three counties have managed to celebrate the golden jubilee of their first victory by recapturing the title fifty years later — Tipperary (1887 and 1937), Kerry (1903 and '53) and Wexford (1910 and '60).

POC FADA

The All-Ireland Poc Fada championship, postponed from Whit due to the death of Pádraig O Caoimh, goes on on Sunday, August 23. Certainly Ollie Walsh must once again start favourite to take the title. The Kilkenny ace has hit some mighty ones on both sides of the Atlantic this year.

DECISIVE WIN

There are beatings and beatings—but did you ever hear of a more decisive score than 21-12 to 0-1? Yes, a winning margin of 74 points. That is what Mountmellick recently had to spare over Portarlinton in a minor hurling game.

TED LAFFEY

And speaking of Mountmellick reminds me. Laois Football Board Secretary, Ted Laffey, made a

comeback some time ago with the local junior football club. Now I don't know what age Ted is but I do know that he won a junior championship medal in 1941.

WEXFORD MINORS

Many of my Wexford friends were more disappointed over the defeat of this year's minor hurling side than they were over the senior failure. The Slaneysiders had seven of the 1963 All-Ireland winning minor fifteen and had been expected to do it again. However, Kilkenny proved their masters.

I have heard criticism of the approach to training shown by some of the Wexford youths—especially by some of last year's players.

Incidentally Kilkenny will have eight of this year's minor side available again next year—and two of them go on to 1966.

VERSATILE PLAYERS

What a busy season it has been for many young players. Wexford's, Oliver Cullen, and Westmeath's Pat Bradley, have represented their respective counties in all grades of football and hurling this year—excluding of course minor.



● OLLIE WALSH . . . another
Poc Fada title?

Numerous other players have played in three and four grades—especially in Wexford where there seems to be an outstanding wealth of talent.

ATTENDANCE

It is interesting to note that this year's Meath-Louth S.F. clash at Croke Park drew a considerably smaller crowd than did their championship meetings at the same venue in 1951 or '53. In 1951 there was an attendance exceeding 42,000 while two years later it was over 38,000. This year there was a crowd of 32,375.

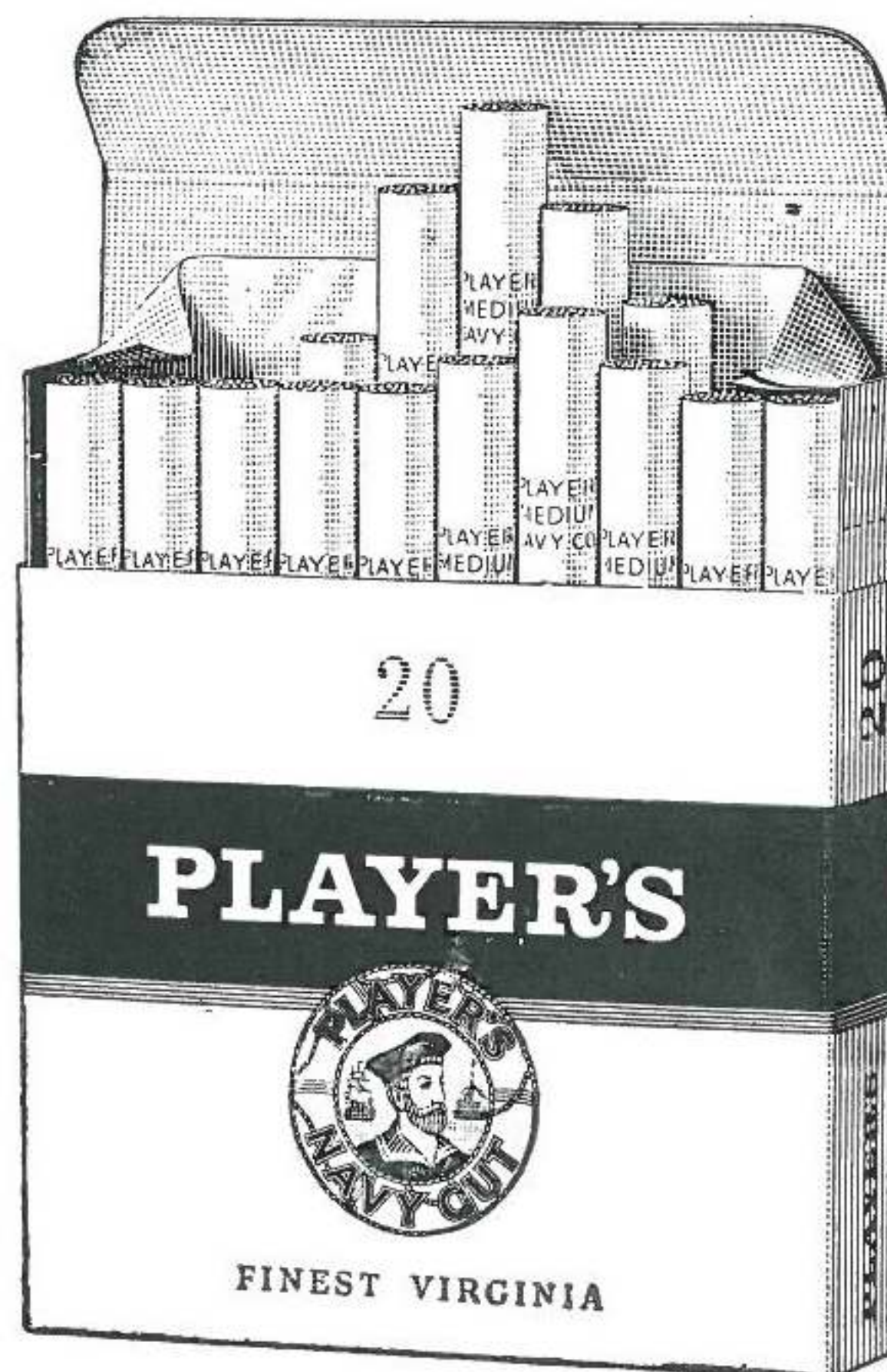
EDDIE KEHER

Eddie Keher had to produce more craft and skill recently in helping Rower — Inistioge beat Galmoy in the 1963 Kilkenny junior hurling final replay than he has had to do for quite some time with the county fifteen.

OFFALY YOUTH

All is not lost for Offaly football. There is plenty of talent in this year's under-21 side and also a few to watch in the minor fifteen. Morale with the county seniors this year was the lowest in over a decade. It is now up to the youth to put the Midland county back in the football forefront.

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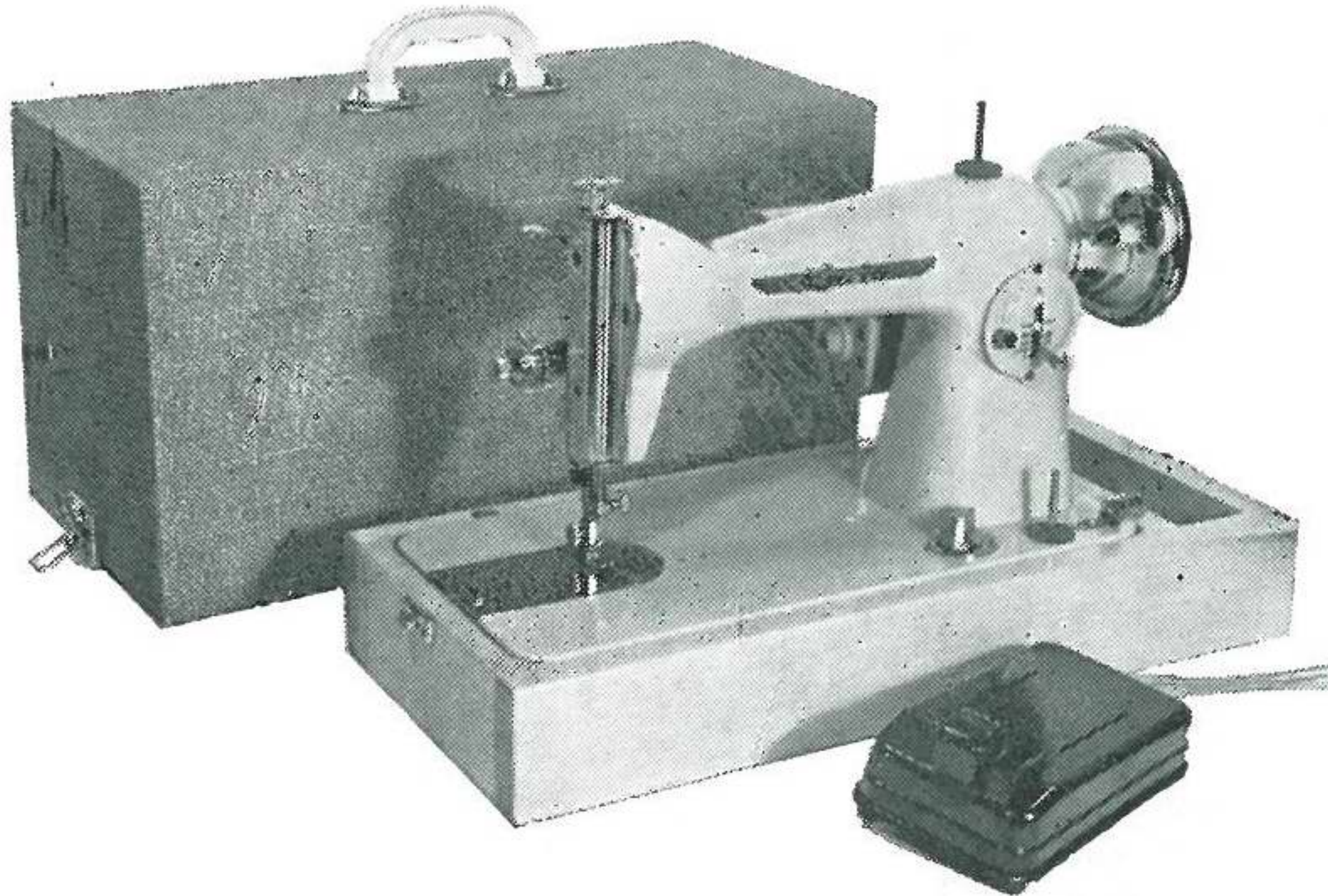
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'RINGEY'

Yes, he'll be back on the Cork team

SAYS EAMONN YOUNG

"WILL RingeY be back?" a man asked me after Cork's very welcome win over Waterford. He hadn't seen the Maestro in action for a long time as Christy's activities have been confined to club competition—something which has not happened since 1937, nearly thirty years ago.

Anyway here's the answer and it ends with a question mark. Christy Ring who stripped at about twelve stone ten years ago began to put on weight steadily as a man should with the years. But about three years ago, when I was prophesying confidently that he would be playing good hurling until he was fifty, the hurling magician began to show considerable extra poundage. His speed went and while more powerful than ever in body, his legs were not able for the increased weight. Anyone could see he was going—fast.

Christy got married to his charming Rita and to the great joy of all the twins arrived. God took one of them. No doubt the cross weighed heavily on the Cloyne man's stout shoulders.

From the Summer of last year when he was on the fringe of the

county team without that great enthusiasm that always drove him, he dropped gradually into the background and showed no real desire to play.

Early this year the Glen made him their captain once again and on that Sunday's papers was the announcement of the Munster hurling team to play Connacht. The familiar name was missing. The Glen side began to prepare for the championship using up those many friendly, challenge and league games to get the round pegs out of the square holes. Still there was little sign of the veteran.

The Cork selectors, Jim Hurley, always an admirer of the Cloyne man; John Lyons, who won three in a row with him; Jack Barrett, Micka Brennan and John Quirke who shared with him in the hurling epic that extended from '39 to '47 covering seven finals; all debated individually and collectively the wisdom of putting Christy Ring back on the Cork team.

Many of the public, including myself, were for his return. Others felt that the time had come when the young men should carry the

banner without the inspiration of the leader.

Meanwhile RingeY was in fact exercising himself and in the most unlikely manner.

He had taken up squash rackets—handball played with a racket in a covered court. Being an indoor game it makes the player sweat a lot and the hot and cold showers give one a delightful sense of well-being. Moreover the game in which one pits brains against a smart-moving opponent demands quick reaction, speed over three yards and all-out efforts to retrieve a fast ball and return it. The game suits those with that fast murderous temperament which is essential to success in championship competition. No wonder it appealed to RingeY.

In fact he is very skilful at it and would have been a class player had he taken it up earlier.

Then came the game in Cobh when Cork were down to play Tipperary and some of the regular players were not available. At right corner forward the selectors decided to try Christy Ring, so

● TO PAGE 13

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● FROM PAGE 11

as to satisfy themselves and the public.

Ringey didn't turn out; his thigh was sore.

On the following Sunday night the annual Procession night game between the "Barrs" and Glen was to be played. I asked him if he were turning out.

"My next game will be in the championship with the Glen," he replied quietly.

So it was.

In Ballincollig the Glen turned out against the divisional team Muskerry and there at last was Ringey looking slimmer than the crowd had seen him for years.

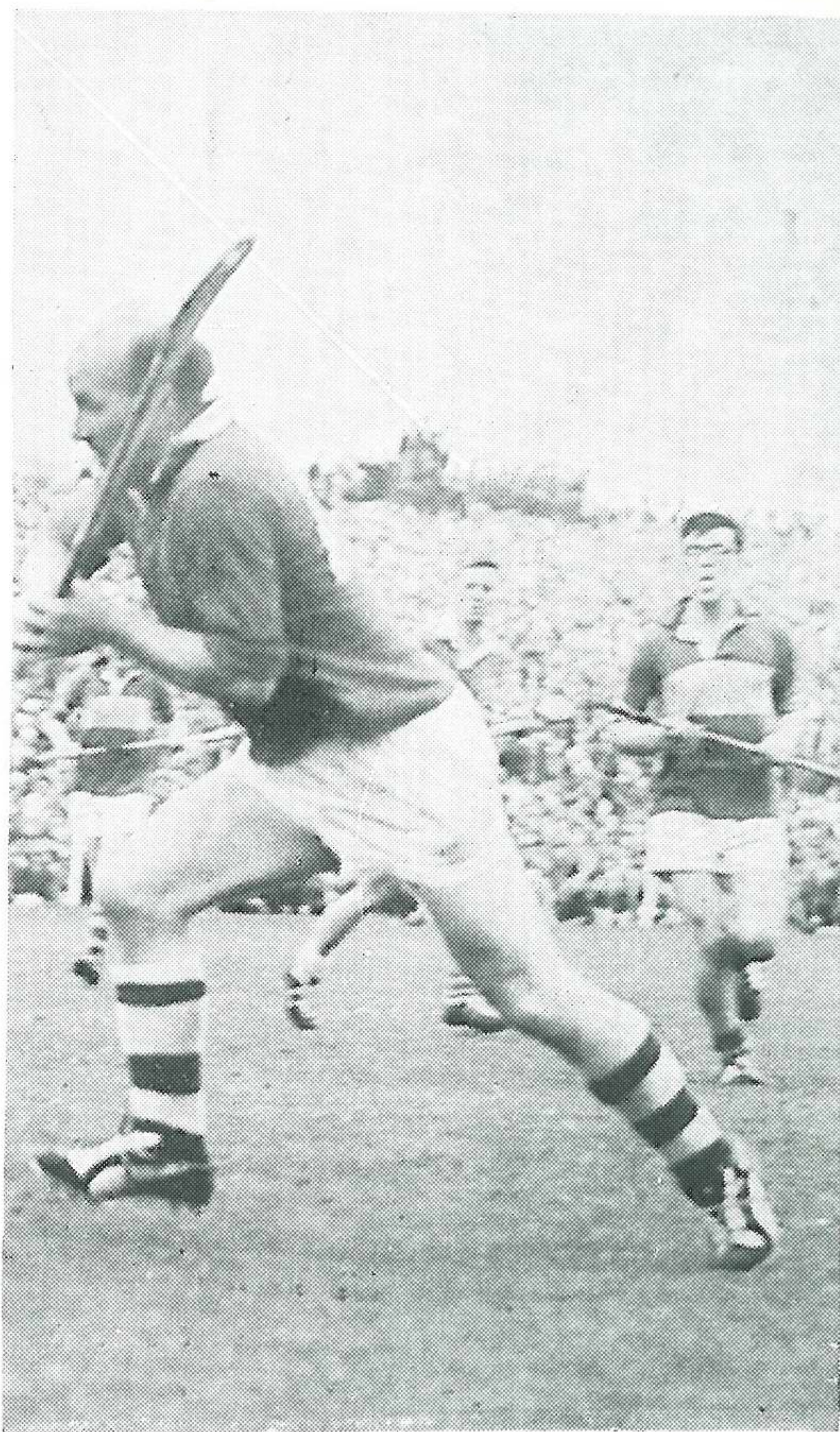
They said that fourteen of the Cork selection had already been chosen for the championship game against Waterford and that the selectors would note the remaining six that day.

I hoped—and expected — that Ringey would get the goals. Early on from a high ball that landed in the square he flicked in a lovely goal and I said to myself "Here it comes."

But from there on he seemed slow (by his own standards) and in the second half he didn't seem at all as interested as he might have been. Also he was too often on the ground. That was the answer, said a lot of people after the game and sure enough on performance that day the Maestro was gone. But Dan Coughlan, the Glen selector, said to me after the game: "He is fitter-looking than I've seen him for a long time. But he seemed weak. Maybe he knocked off the weight too quickly."

And that's exactly what I think.

Ring who is a very powerfully built man now should strip at thirteen stone or a few pounds underneath it. He had been away over that and the body must adjust itself to the sudden reduction in weight. When that happens and if Ringey continues to maintain his enthusiasm I see no reason why



● *CHRISTY RING . . . the Maestro will be back.*

my prophesy will not come true and he will give us good hurling until he's fifty.

Will he be back on the Cork team? The man in the street will say "No" more often than

"Yes," after the Ballincollig game.

As for me the answer is an unqualified "Yes."

Let's wait and see—perhaps he will even be back before you read this article.



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CONALLACH . . TAKES A

AT LAST! A

A CLUB championship has at last been inaugurated in Ulster and has proved a great success. The Western section of the championship was sponsored by the go-ahead St. Molaise club, Irvinestown, and the Eastern section by St. Johns, Belfast. I feel that this competition will develop into a first class attraction in future years.

SEAN O'CONNELL

The Derry County Board has appointed Sean O'Connell to take charge of the County junior team who play Meath in the All-Ireland semi-final on August 6. This is a wise decision as both Sean and Fr. Shiels of Swatragh have given great attention to the Derry minor team. I feel that with a little tightening up in defence this junior team with such excellent forwards as Frank O'Loane, "Nipper" Quinn, Barney Hurl, George Magee and Phil Stuart will go places.

And by the way congratulations to Phil Stuart on his recent marriage to Elizabeth Patricia Rooney of Belfast. Back from his honeymoon in the Costa Brava he will be all set to win an All-Ireland junior medal in compensation for that elusive senior one which evaded him in 1958.

DINNY McKEEVER

And from good news to bad—Dinny McKeever has retired from inter-county football. The loss of

CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP STARTS IN ULSTER

ULSTER SPOTLIGHT

both the McKeevers is a big blow to Derry. Although Dinny was often misplaced by the selectors he was always one of Derry's stars when he played at Croke Park. Let us hope that he will at least be able to play with his club—Ballymaguigan.

ST. COLUMB'S P.P.

St. Columb's College, Derry, was for many years not allowed to take part in the McRory Cup and what a pity? In a recent challenge at Celtic Park, Derry, St. Columb's past pupils which included Leo O'Neill, Tom Scullion, Brian Devlin and Brian Mullan, Derry, and Felix Quigley, Fermanagh, defeated an all-star selection which had in its line out Sean O'Donnell, John Hannigan, Donegal; Patsy Gormley, Charlie O'Connor, Derry; Charlie Gallagher, Cavan, and Mick Brewster, Fermanagh.

PAIRC UÍ MHUIRÍ

A new park — Pairc Uí Mhuirí was opened recently at Dunleer, Co. Louth in memory of its former parish priest, an tAth. Lorcán O Muirí, founder of Coláiste Omeith and later Coláiste Bhríde Rann na Feirste. Father Murray was a great Gael and his memory

will be treasured for ever in Donegal. One of the most prominent members of the Dunleer Park Committee was Joe Sharkey from Annagry, Co. Donegal, a life long friend of the late Fr. Murray. Joe Sharkey is also treasurer of Coláiste Bhríde.

MONAGHAN RESURGENCE

Who said that Monaghan football was in the doldrums? Their minors have proved otherwise and the seniors gave Down a great game in Ballybay. Joe Carroll outfielded and out-manoeuvred no less a man than Leo Murphy and if they can get four or five up-and-coming footballers to team up with Seamus McElroy, John McCabe, Jim O'Hanlon, Benny Moen, Paddy Duffy and Tony Loughran, they will do well in the Lagan Cup in the Autumn.

And shortly after that game with Down one of Monaghan's greatest and most wholehearted players of the late 'thirties, Billy Mason of Castleblayney, passed to his eternal reward. Go gcuitighidh Dia solus na bFlaitheas da anam.

GLASGOW

And over in Glasgow another Castleblayney man Brian McKenna

turned in a good hour for Wolfe Tones when they beat St. Mary's Wolverhampton 4-6 to 3-4 in a challenge at Glebe Farm, Birmingham. The Sexton brothers of Cavan, Timmy Donnelly, Monaghan; Paddy O'Donnell, Brian Boyle and Sean McGarvey, Donegal, were outstanding for Glasgow and for the losers Jim Smith, Armagh; B. Collins, A. Carragher, J. Keenan all played well. Joe Lennon, the Down footballer, was an interested spectator.

PORTRUSH BIGOTRY

While Gaelic football is going well in Scotland and England, why not spare a thought for the efforts of Father Dillon in Portrush, Co. Antrim. The town's first ever club was started by Fr. Dillon, himself a former St. McCartan's College and Roslea footballer, in 1960 but the field which he acquired was ploughed and the goalposts burned by a hostile crowd who evidently wish to continue as minions of the imperial power. Nothing of a Gaelic nature is tolerated by the anglicised people of this North Antrim town. This small club continues against overwhelming odds and it should get the full support of the highest councils of the organisation. Such a club was crushed by the same forces in another Antrim town — Lisburn. Let us take a stand at Portrush!

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THE FOOTBALL AMBASSADORS

OFF on the most extensive tour ever undertaken by a unit of the G.A.A. go the New York footballers later this month. I wish them slán abhaile and I know that they will bring credit to themselves and to Gaelic Games.

They leave New York on August 21. Ahead lie San Francisco, Auckland, Sydney, Perth, Honolulu, Hong Kong, Rome, London and finally Birr where they play Offaly on Sunday, September 20. They will remain over in Ireland to see the football final and then it is back to New York on September 28.

It is truly a tremendous tour—the type of thing which only John Kerry O'Donnell would think of. He himself went on a like journey some time back and no doubt the idea was born then.

From the football point of view the most interesting part of the tour will be the meeting with Australian football champions, Geelong at Geelong on September 6.

Many hold that Australian football grew from among Irish exiles of a century ago and it certainly retains many of the features of old-time Gaelic football. A compromise set of rules will be set out for the game with New York and I look forward to hearing what happens.

The only regret I have about this tour is that it is not the New York hurlers instead of the footballers who are making the trip. The gallant hurlers have gone so near to winning the National League both

this year and last year that they are more deserving of the honour—but of course, it could not be.

It had to be football for sufficient opposition could not be had for a hurling team at the various venues. Still I have no doubt but that John Kerry O'Donnell will in his own good time come up with something equally worthy for the hurlers.

CLARE-DONEGAL

Clare and Donegal are many miles apart but they have much in common these days. First of all they both abandoned their traditional jerseys in favour of one-colour sets, but more important they both failed badly at the big moment.

Personally I had never expected Clare to even extend Tipperary. You simply cannot produce a team in a matter of six months and expect them to beat all before them. It is an impossibility—especially when you start from such a low level as that on which Clare had been resting since 1955.

They certainly tried though—packing in more challenge games than any county I can think of in recent years. One might question though the point in those long and tiresome journeys to Dublin and Wexford.

Open to criticism too perhaps is the impression which was given that success was being aimed at immediately rather than on a gradual basis.

However, full marks though to the Banner County for having gone about the job with enthusiasm and vigour. They failed—so what. If they have what it takes, the beating and the odd few errors which may have been made will benefit them and they will be the wiser and more experienced.

I firmly believe that a county can learn more in defeat than in victory—provided, of course, that they are willing to learn. Tipperary are qualified masters and they taught a clear-cut lesson.

If Clare are the team I believe they are they will be back next year—less obtrusive perhaps but a much improved side.

What of Donegal though? This time last year they were where Clare are now. Donegal took its big fall in last year's Ulster final and failed to get back up off the floor and come again.

It is difficult to know why. It is, I suppose, a combination of factors but I still do not write them off by any means.

Both Clare and Donegal have youth on their side and while there is youth, perseverance and patience can do the rest. Much too depends on the players themselves. The player who loses heart is naive and probably never had the necessary mentality to make the big-time anyway.

Gaeldom will be keeping an eye on both these counties during the year ahead. Let's see them get up and come back fighting.

YOU NEED SKILL AND

INTELLIGENCE TO HANDLE

A GROUP OF PLAYERS

SAYS EAMONN MONGEY

HANDLING a football team or a hurling team is something which calls for skill, intelligence and delicacy of a high order. After all, players too suffer from the frailties of human nature and, as such, differ widely in physique, ability, mental make-up, background, outlook and as many other things as you care to mention.

Now, by "handling" I don't simply mean training or coaching a team, I include also selecting, switching, managing and even the selecting of a captain. All these deserve the closest attention but I'm not sure they always get it.

Most people, of course, consider training or coaching as handling a team. But even here there is great need for mature thinking. Men don't make good trainers or coaches just because they were good players themselves. A trainer or coach needs far more. He must have all the necessary knowledge and, above all, he must be able to communicate it to his trainees, whose respect he must be able to command. Unfortunately, men at times are pressured into training or coaching jobs for which they are most unsuitable. As often as not they follow a pattern of lapping, press-ups, toe-touching, etc., without ever knowing why they do those things or if, indeed, they might be doing more harm than good. This is particularly true

when players are reaching a peak for example around All-Ireland final time. Here great delicacy in handling a team is called for or they will go over the top.

On this particular point one could not do better than recommend Joe Lennon's book on coaching. Here, Joe gives some thoughts which should be uppermost in any coach's or trainer's mind or, at least, suggests what he should look out for. It is obviously designed to make trainers or coaches *think* about their jobs.

Selecting, positioning, switching and generally managing a team on the field often calls for a different type of personality but it also calls for thought. Many a promising young player has been tried and discarded after one trial, or has had his spirit broken by being "taken off," unnecessarily and thoughtlessly.

A selection committee should be small in number but made up of men who have the time to travel and see all the players in action. Once a team has been established it shouldn't be switched around needlessly. If for example, a player is not available for a particular game, a substitute should be put into his particular position, and there should be no indiscriminate switching around of the rest of the team just because one player is missing. Above all, selectors

should not be panicked into decisions.

I remember, for example, how, eight days before Mayo played in one All-Ireland final, the selectors met to pick the team. At the time our goalkeeper had not been beaten all during the championship. One member, however, got up and stated that the goalkeeper was weak on his right-hand side and it was dangerous to have him in goal. He was dropped! Came the All-Ireland final and the substitute goalkeeper let in the first goal in the championship campaign. He made a gallant effort and saved the next shot but was injured in the process. Our original goalkeeper came on — and there was no further goal scored!

Of course, selectors are more prone to panic when managing the team from the sideline. John Dowling, the former Kerry captain, once told me that he saw a substitute being put on a team and taken off again after ten minutes and during that time the ball had reached neither the player nor his opponent.

Players, of course, should be selected with an eye to their particular opponent. After all, when a team comes up against a Christy Ring, a Jimmy Doyle or a Mickey Whelan, a particular type of player is needed to mark him. Otherwise,

● TO PAGE 19

● FROM PAGE 18

if such a star "cuts loose" it knocks the heart out of the whole team. Alternately when he begins to "cut loose" a switch should be made to curb his activities. Speed and decisiveness are necessary here. There is no room for the mentor whom the occasion freezes into inactivity.

In all these things a captain can play an important part—if he is asked to! More often than not, though, captaining is regarded as an honour and not as a responsibility. A captain should be a leader of men and, as such, should have the confidence of his whole team. But it's quite impossible for a team to look up to a player who barely gets his place on the team and who is made captain just because his club happens to win a county championship. Very often the morale of the team suffers as a result.

There are many more aspects to "team-handling" consideration of which would pay rich dividends. In particular one must mention looking after the creature comforts of the players. This is not simply a matter of ensuring that players have good dressing-rooms to tog out in. It covers the whole orbit of travelling, entertaining and accommodating them.

Like all other human beings, players like to know that they are appreciated; always giving them the best ensures a happy team, and a happy team is invariably a successful one. On this, one may instance the case of the Down team.

Under the inspired secretaryship of Maurice Hayes, who has always put the players above all else, Down have had the most successful campaign of all our teams in recent years. They have never been beaten more than twice in any year in the last five. They have won two All-Ireland titles two National Leagues and played in two more League finals, as well

as winning innumerable other competitions.

When one considers all these honours and the financial advantage which followed to the Down

County Board from these four National League campaigns one readily appreciates how the careful handling of any team is, in reality, a very sound investment.



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IT'S HOLIDAY TIME!

By AGNES HOURIGAN

ALTHOUGH the All-Ireland final is not due to be played until the first Sunday in October, and the first of the semi-finals is not scheduled until the last Sunday in August, the provincial camogie semi-finals were all played off early in July.

So far from complaining about the long gap between the last of the provincial finals and the first of the semi-finals, I am all in favour of this six-weeks' respite. After all the vast majority of camogie players belong to the age-group that customarily take holidays in July and August and it will be a relief to them that they have not, as so often in the past, to interrupt their holidays to return to play an important game for their counties.

As it is, I hear that the Gael-Linn Cup semi-finals, fixed for late July and August have run into difficulties also and may have to be changed.

* * *

Incidentally, I feel that the Congress decision to ask for aid for this competition should be implemented. The costs of running it are extremely high, and one feels that Gael-Linn, or some similar organisation, should be asked to contribute something towards the cost of this inter-provincial series, which has never paid its way, and which has, for some years past, imposed an enormous strain on the resources of Central Council, even though the players have, in many

instances, paid their own travelling expenses.

Similarly I think that many of the clubs who have entered for the Jubilee Year Champion club competition are going to find the strain pretty tough on their resources if they have a successful run in the competition.

Of necessity, the travelling expenses will be high, and I cannot see the 'gates,' except perhaps in the semi-final stages, going even part of the way to cover the costs.

But then finance has always been a big-bug-bear in camogie and while the tremendous enthusiasm of players and officials will always ensure that the game will be well played, it is very hard to organise it on a fitting basis right through the country without proper finances. It is my personal opinion that Central Council should, at the earliest possible moment, set up a special finance committee to discuss ways and means of bringing behind the game the sinews of war that camogie so sadly needs.

I would bring into this committee not alone present officials of the Association but also those good friends of camogie, who are to be found throughout the country and more especially in the G.A.A.

* * *

To come back to the provincial finals, the close finishes in three of the four provinces upheld my contention of last season that the standard of camogie is levelling out

very much indeed. In Munster and Connacht a single score would have changed the verdict, while the fact that Dublin beat Wexford by a margin of thirteen points was no reflection at all on the closeness of the Leinster final.

* * *

Mayo almost shocked Galway in the West; Tipperary did shake the reigning champions Cork in the South, and the only team to retain the provincial title with ease was Antrim, who routed Derry so easily that they might well have hoped for a tougher test in order to estimate their own true potential.

One interesting fact from the provincial finals was this. Last Winter and the Winter before Orla Ní Shiocháin of Holy Faith Convent, Clontarf and Anne Carroll of Mercy Convent, Callan, were on opposite sides in the final of the Leinster Colleges championship.

It is now quite possible that they will also be in opposition in the All-Ireland final, for Orla was on the Leinster championship winning Dublin side, while Anne was the star of the Tipperary side that came through in Munster.

More remarkable still, they will again be in opposition in the Leinster Colleges' championship in the season ahead. In fact, I understand that Orla Ní Shiocháin, who is eldest daughter of Seán O Siocháin of the G.A.A. has still two years of schools competition in front of her.

Can Sligo hit the big-time?



● GERRY O'MALLEY . . . a reward for greatness.

SIX months ago most people would have forecast a Galway-Mayo Connacht senior football final but it almost wasn't. Gallant Sligo went within an ace of upsetting the appiecart and most neutral observers at their game with Galway felt that they at least deserved a draw.

The question now is will Sligo maintain their current and very promising form and go on to break into the big-time during the National League or in next year's championship campaign; or alternately are they destined to become another Leitrim with a frustrating series of near-and-yet-so-far games?

Two years ago Sligo showed equal promise but surprisingly failed to live up to it. Now they are a much more mature and experienced bunch of players — having learned a lesson or two on the way. They certainly have the talent. All that is necessary now is the discipline and determination to steady up and get on with the job. We will see.

PAT DONNELLAN

Spare a thought for Galway's brilliant Pat Donnellan, who underwent a cartilage operation on his knee last month. Pat suffered the knee injury towards the end of a Dunmore-Tuam game at Tuam, last

February and is out of the game ever since. Anybody who knows how much Pat loves his football wishes him a very speedy recovery.

DERMOT GANNON

In Leitrim's three game marathon series with Roscommon, their most outstanding newcomer was their right corner forward Dermot Gannon. Dermot, currently a bank official in Castlebar, is fulfilling his early promise with St. Mel's College, Longford. On his displays in the championship, I look forward to seeing him in the right corner of Connacht's attack in 1965. But that is a long way off.

GREAT VETERANS

A noteworthy feature of this year's Connacht championship was the very fine performances by ever-popular veterans Gerry O'Malley and Packy McGarty. On numerous occasions in the past both were written off as "finished" but they always came back to prove the experts wrong. This year their contributions were as great as ever.

Could it be that the U.S. visit enjoyed by both men in early Summer rejuvenated their enthusiasm? It was a reward much deserved by these two great players who have never won All-Ireland medals.

Now that we are in the middle

of the colleges vacation and that all is silent about the U.C.G. conflict with the Galway Football Board, it might be no harm to suggest that now is the time for a few level-headed men to settle this dispute. For the record I am completely behind the Galway Board in their attitude and feel U.C.G. should revert to the old system that satisfied everybody in the past.

ENGLISH CLUB TOURS

Now is the time for tours of Ireland by the clubs in England—a practice which has grown very popular in the past few years and one which I commend highly. St. Vincent's (London) are one of the many clubs on tour at the moment playing games in Cavan, Longford, Mayo, Kildare and Galway. The schedules are hard but it is a healthy and enjoyable way to spend a holiday.

JOE LENNON'S COURSE

Unfortunately I will not be able to attend Joe Lennon's Coaching Course at Gormanston this month, but I do hope Connacht will be well represented. While on this matter of courses is it not past time that we in Connacht followed Ulster's and Munster's lead by conducting an Irish course for officials annually in our own Con-nemara Gaeltacht?



SMAOINTE FÁNACHA

LE SEÁN Ó DÚNAGÁIN

TÁ, ins gach gné den tsaol ach-rannach seo, dream a thugann órdaithe agus dream a chomh-

líonann na hórdaithe sin. Deirtear gurbé an duine is fearr le hórdaithe a thabhairt an té ba thúisce a chomhlíonadh órdaithe agus é 'na bhall den íosaicme.

Deirtear, fosta, nach ceart órdú a thabhairt murar féidir é chomhlíonadh gan mórán dua agus cinnte ní cheart órdú atá in aghaidh dlí Dé, atá mí-mhórála nó in aghaidh gnás bheatha chine, a thabhairt.

Thug Coiste Láir an Chumainn Lúchleas Gael ordú uatha tamall ó shin fé éadú moltóirí i bPáirc an Chrócaigh. Le roinnt Domhnach anuas bhíos sa Pháirc úd agus níl an tordú á chomhlíonadh.

An amhlaidh nach bhfuil an feisteas ar fáil i bPáirc an Chrócaigh? An gceapann na húdaráisí nach raibh ciall leis an ordú sa chéad dul síos. Mura gceapann cuirtear an téadach ar fáil agus cuirtear d'fhiacaibh ar na moltóirí é chaitheamh.

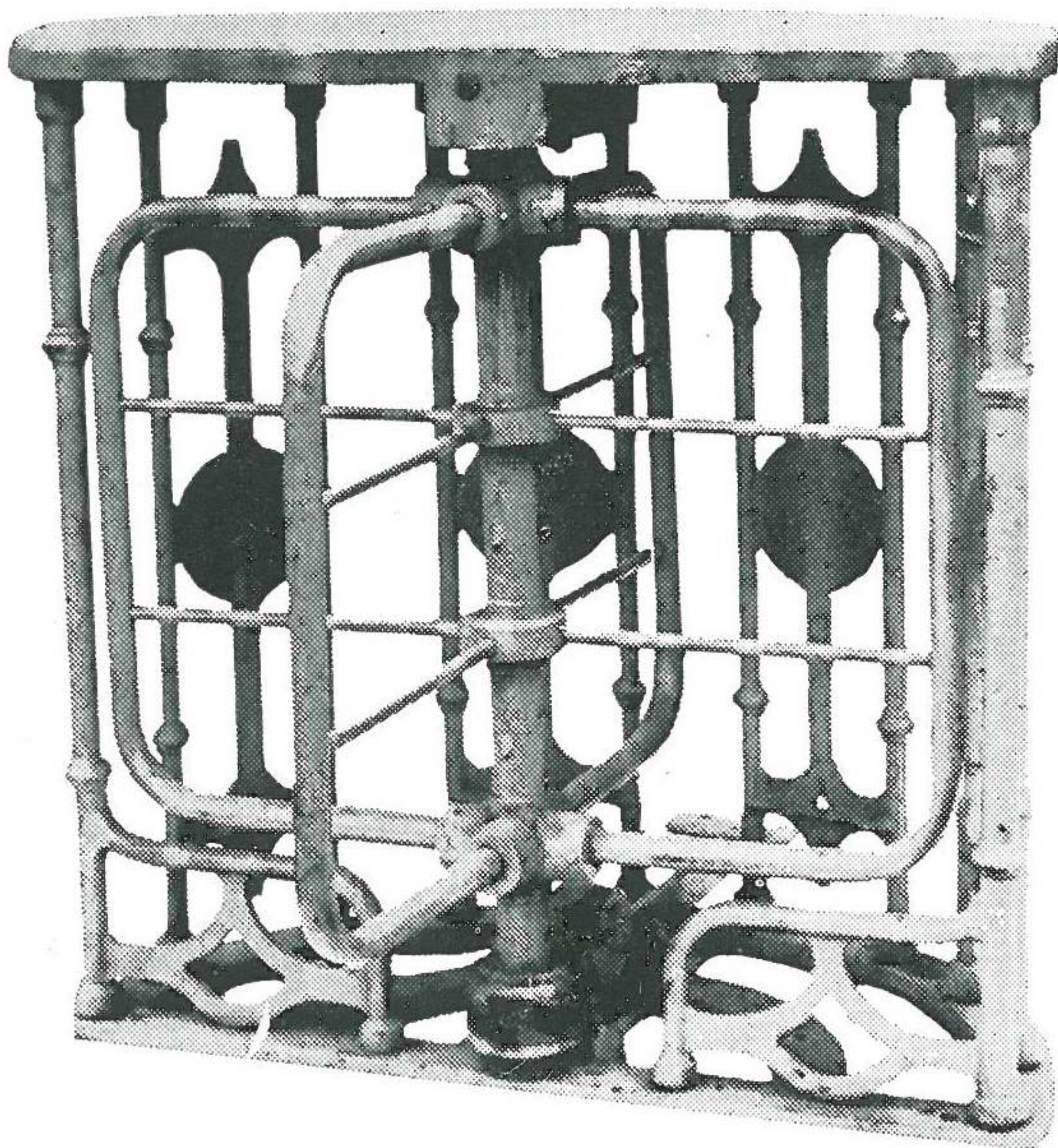
Rud eile fé órdaithe. Ní bhíonn meas madra ag an íosaicme ar an té a thugann órdaithe agus nach bhféachann chuige go gcomhlíontar iad. Más fiú ordú a thabhairt is fiú é chur i bhfeidhm.

AN COMÓRTAS ÚD

Tagraim arís don chomórtas fé bhun bliain ar fhichid. Is fada an lá ó chéad-mhol mé an comórtas seo agus thug mé na fáthanna. Bhí mé ag siúl go gcealófaí na comórtaisí sóisear. Bhí mé ag siúl le comórtas a choinneódh na mion-úir le chéile i gcomórtas dá gcomhaois agus a seachnódh na "seanfhir" ar a dtugtar "sóisir."

Ach chím anois go bhfuil roinnt mhaith de na hógánaigh seo ar fhóirne sinsearacha a gcontae chomh maith. Ceart go leor muna

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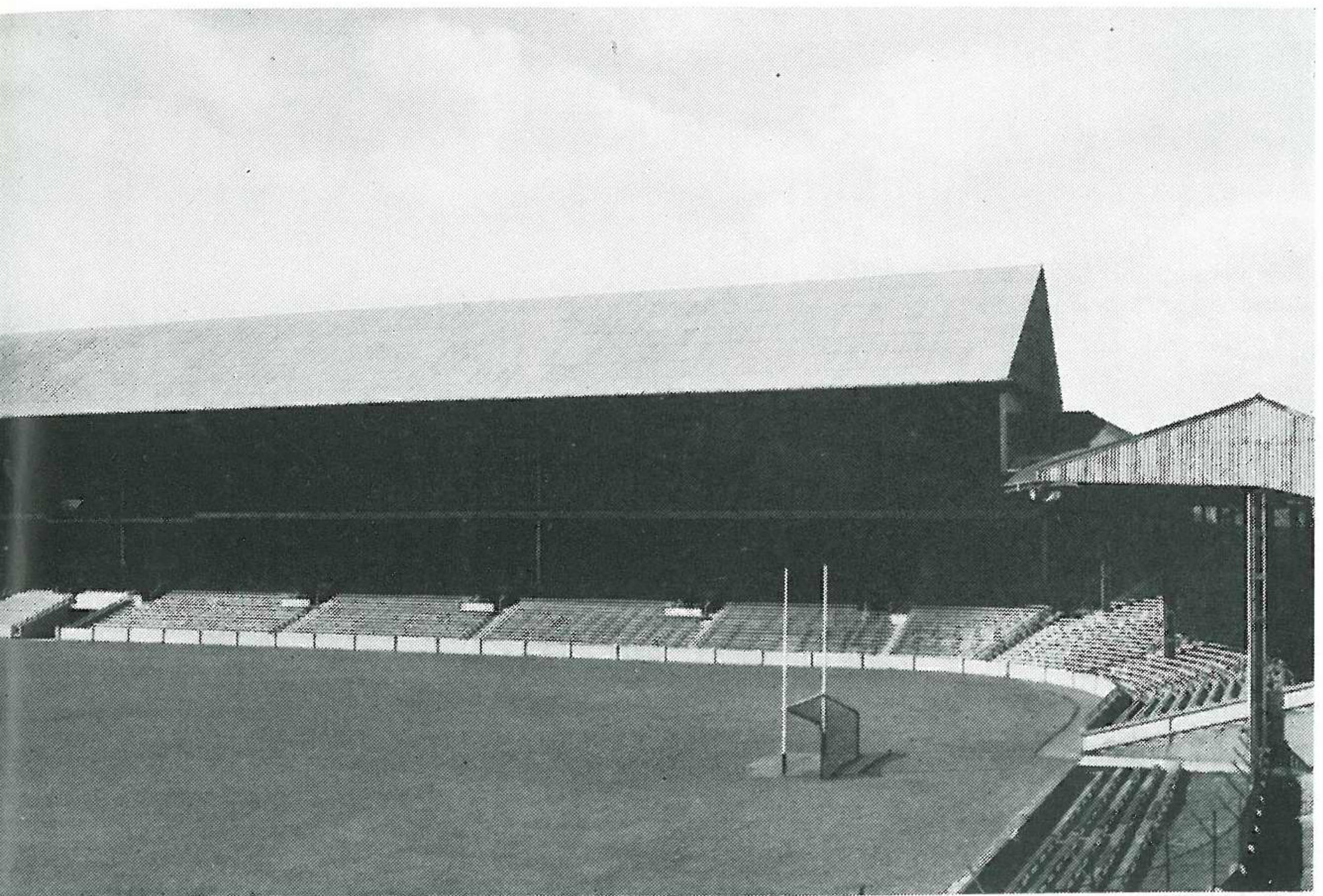
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THE LISTS

TOP TEN

THIS month's Top Ten ratings are based on individual performances in games played from and including Sunday, June 21 to Sunday, July 12. It is interesting to note that newcomers to big-time competition head both lists.

In hurling Kilkenny's Tom Forrestal gets pride of place on the strength of his sparkling display against Wexford in the Leinster semi-final. Meath sharp-shooter, James Walsh, heads the football list.

These lists are compiled by our editorial staff. They form a precise monthly record of inter-county performances and from them at the end of the season we will tabulate the Top Ten footballers and hurlers of 1964.

Follow the feats of the stars in these ratings.

HURLING

1. Tom Forrestal (Kilkenny).
2. Gerry O'Sullivan (Cork).
3. Tom Walsh (Kilkenny).
4. Paul Lynch (Wexford).
5. Noel Gallagher (Cork).
6. John Doyle (Tipperary).
7. Ned Colfer (Wexford).
8. M. Og Morrissey (Waterford).
9. Jim Cullinan (Clare).
10. Austin Flynn (Waterford)

FOOTBALL

1. James Walsh (Meath).
2. Mick Kearns (Sligo).
3. Packy McGarty (Leitrim).
4. Davy Carty (Meath).
5. Michael Wallace (Mayo).
6. Jack Quinn (Meath).
7. Paddy Doherty (Down).
8. Des Foley (Dublin).
9. Paddy Holden (Dublin).
10. Joe Carroll (Monaghan).



● TOM WALSH . . . Kilkenny's young star forward is No. 3 in this month's hurling Top-Ten ratings.

● **AR LEAN. O LEAT. 23**
bhfuil an iomarcha cluichí le himirt, ach don chontae atá ag dul ar aghaidh go maith sa dá ghrád ceapaim gur chóir dóibh na hógánaigh fhágáil sa chomórtas dóibh féin amháin.

FREAGRA

Scríobh fear óg chugam tamall ó shin. Corcaigheach é agus é ag freastal ar Choláiste na gCapusín-

each in mBaile an Róistigh. Togha na Gaeilge aige agus rinne sé scrúdú na hArdteiste i mbliana. Tá a sheoladh cailte agam. Má fheiceann sé an sliocht seo (agus táim cinnte go bhfeicidh! Léigheann sé "Gaeilc Sport" gach mí), ba mhaith liom cloisint uaidh arís agus freagród na ceisteanna úd.

FREASABHRACHT

Dúirt duine le déanaí, agus a lán

chéille 'na chuid chainte, gur amaideach an rud é cluichí tábhachtacha a bheith ar siúl ins gach Cúige an Domhnach céanna.

I mbliana, cuir i gcás, bhí craobhchluichí i ngach cúige ar an lá céanna. Tá na mílte daoine i lár na tíre, ach go háirithe, a rachadh chuig gach cluiche díobh siúd dá bhféadaidís.

Tá go leor Domhnach saor agus is fiú féachaint isteach sa scéal seo.



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● ALL-TIME GREATS . . . the victorious Kilkenny team of 1939.

MEMORABLE FINALS

by PATRICK CARVER

HAVE you ever noticed how people love to talk about all the great All-Ireland finals they have seen? Hop into any pub in Ireland on the night of a final or on the nights after it and first listen to how the old-timers—and the not-so-old old-timers—trot out all the talk of the great games they saw.

Very often you will find people insisting that a certain final was really great for the simple reason that their own county won. But such is not a fair opinion. The same final remembered by a prejudiced losing supporter can be downright bad.

But, in your own memory, how many All-Ireland finals have been memorable? If you are like me with memories of All-Irelands going back to the early 1930's how many finals would you classify in the "great" category.

Take hurling for a start. If I were asked to name the finals I reckon

to be memorable, there are just two from the 1930's that I would like to see again—1935 and 1939. Of course, remember that I missed out on the 1931 series.

The 1935 final was really worth seeing. It built up to a dramatic climax and I can still see Mick Mackey, with rain streaming from him, battling his way upfield trying for the score that would give victory to Limerick over Kilkenny. It was a gallant effort but it failed and Kilkenny were champions again.

Four years later in 1939, Cork and Kilkenny, in thunder, lightning and rain, played a glorious game and again there was that fantastic finish with Kilkenny getting the winning point in the closing minute.

You may disagree, but, although I am a Corkman, I would not give you twopence for the hurling finals between 1941 and 1950. They were just finals; nothing more and certainly they were not memorable.

From 1951 to 1960, there were three finals that I would like to see again, the 1954 game, when Cork beat Wexford; 1956 when Wexford reversed things and the first meeting between Waterford and Kilkenny in 1959. The rest you can have and mind you, that also goes for the finals of the 1960s.

In football, there are just a few games I would love to see again—if only it were possible. Galway's win over Kerry in 1938, Kerry and Meath in 1939, Kerry and Roscommon in 1944, Dublin and Kerry in 1955; were the best finals I have seen over the past thirty years and I would put them streets ahead of anything else.

I know you will not agree with me—I would think of you as mad if you did—but the next time you are having a drink in your local just put my question to your friends. Ask them for their opinion of the best All-Ireland finals over the last thirty years.

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The GENTLEMEN of HURLING . . .

THUS far we have had a good year on the championship fields—I would not have swapped the first half of the Kilkenny-Wexford match at Croke Park or the last ten minutes of the Cork-Waterford match at Thurles for anything I had seen since the closing stages of last year's All-Ireland final. Neither have I witnessed for a long time as convincing a display of football as Meath gave in the early stages of the Leinster football championship when defeating Kildare.

But above all else we had one demonstration in the past few weeks that will linger for a long time in my memory and that was the spontaneous applause from the whole crowd to the Kilkenny and Wexford teams as they left the field at half-time in their Leinster hurling semi-final.

I have been going to Croke Park on and off for forty years and never previously have I seen or heard such a tribute to the players. I was on the top deck of the Hogan Stand, a favourite perch of mine, and the moment the half-time whistle blew, every spectator there irrespective of what colours he or she was sporting stood up and clapped both teams impartially until the last player had vanished into the dressing rooms.

Now I think the contrast that brought such an unprecedented outburst of applause from the spectators was the fact that here there was none of the "nark" and "needle" that are so common nowadays in all too many matches.

MOONDHARRIG'S

DIARY

For instance in almost every football match in Croke Park lately one sees one side or the other trying to "sneak" a couple of yards one way or another when the ball is placed for a free out-field. These Kilkenny and Wexford hurlers disdained such petty advantages. They stepped up to that ball where it lay, belted it to the other end of the field and no more about it. A small point, maybe, but a very important one.

Not a player queried any decision by referee, linesman or umpires and perhaps best of all was the genuine affection with which the two teams congratulated one another when the game was over.

And remember, over the last decade or more the rivalry between Kilkenny and Wexford has been as keen, if not keener, than any other rivalry in the country. Yet rivalry that should be an example, and a shining example at that, to all the rest of us.

How keen that rivalry is was proved this season. The two counties met in all four grades of the Leinster hurling championships this year and after the end of all the clashes the verdict stood at two victories each, Wexford having won the Intermediate and Under-21 games, while Kilkenny won the senior and minor clashes.



● MARTIN O'NEILL . . .
Secretary of the Leinster Council. Now his son keeps up the tradition.

However, if Wexford are to maintain their present position in hurling, some of their minor stars will need to remember that solo running away from the opposing goal does not win matches.

And talking of Wexford, I am told that the S. O'Neill who played for O'Tooles against St. Vincent's in the recent Dublin senior football final is a son of Leinster Council Secretary, Martin O'Neill and thus maintains in the fourth generation the remarkable football traditions of this famed Ferns family.

Martin O'Neill's grandfather, who was also Martin O'Neill, played for Ferns and for Wexford. Martin of Leinster, as it is apt to call him, and seven other grandsons of old Martin all played for

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Wexford. Martin II, who has been Leinster Council Secretary since 1928 played at left full-forward for Ireland in the Tailteann Games of 1928 and 1932, won a Leinster senior football medal in 1925 and a Leinster junior hurling medal in 1926 with Wexford. In 1936 with Wicklow, where he was then living, he won an All-Ireland junior football medal and later that year was on the Ireland team that beat Britain in the only international game ever played in junior football.

The versatile Martin also won the All-Ireland senior softball doubles for Wicklow in 1930 and 1931, partnered on each occasion by the late Luke Sherry of Bray.

Almost equally famed as a referee, Martin took charge of three All-Ireland senior football finals, Kerry and Kildare in 1932, Mayo and Laois in 1936, and the final most famed of all—the Cavan v. Kerry decider at the New York Polo Grounds in 1947.

As well as Martin, brothers Des and Joe played football not alone for Wexford but for Leinster, as did, of course, Martin himself. The remaining brothers Paddy, Colm, Aodh, Seamus, Carthage and the late Michael all played for Wexford in one grade or another.

Already Martin's sons are making their mark in the game and Martin Oge, or Martin III, an Army officer, has starred for the Wexford football team in several recent seasons, as had his brother Michael before him.

In fact Michael and his uncle Joe played together for several years on the Wexford senior football side.

But the O'Neills are not the only fourth generation family in Wexford to attain prominence with club if not with county sides—the Kearneys, the Courtneys, Lynchs and Whelans of Ennis-corthy all earn full marks in this respect.

PACKY McGARTY

FACE TO FACE WITH SEAN O'DONNELL

ONCE again another Connacht senior football championship has come and gone and Leitrim and its long-serving hero, Packy McGarty, have been defeated. But this is nothing new. McGarty is in fact the product of defeats, but so great a player is he that he has risen far above them to make virtually every appearance a personal triumph.

Without All-Ireland or senior provincial medals he has won recognition as one of the outstanding players of his era. With a great heart and extraordinary football ability, he has often lone-handed carried the banner of Leitrim into battle and always — be it victory, or defeat, that flag has come home with honour.

Memories of McGarty's great hours will live while football is played in Connacht—memories of heroic efforts, his jersey often torn to shreds by players who in vain tried to halt him. The might of Galway has often shook and tottered because no man could match him. Mayo, Roscommon, and Sligo have known defeat because they had no answer to him.

And so this great player plays on—year after year. At sixteen he was a Leitrim senior and at thirty-one he is still the unconquered and unconquerable. I recently had the pleasure of this interview with him.

O'Donnell — Do you think

Leitrim has any chance of winning an All-Ireland senior football title in the foreseeable future?

McGarty—I doubt it — but you never really know. A county must always keep trying. Victory isn't everything.

O'D.—*Why do you think Leitrim are not succeeding?*

McG.—Emigration is the root of all the trouble. The county is very much hit by it and has been for years. It is a tremendous drain of talent and there seems to be no end to it. If it continues, the position with football in the county will get even worse.

O'D.—*Has your enthusiasm for the game been affected by the fact that your chance of ever winning an All-Ireland medal has been so slim?*

McG.—No. I would certainly like very much to win an All-Ireland medal but there are plenty of other honours. We often forget that it is a great honour to represent one's county.

O'D.—*Is there any particular county that you look forward to playing against?*

McG.—Yes, Mayo. Their style is much the same as Leitrim's.

O'D.—*Are there any changes in the Rules that you would advocate?*

McG.—I would like to see a

penalty being awarded for a foul committed inside the fourteen yard line. This would lead to much better forward play. I would also like to see thirteen-a-side being given a try. This too I think would produce more attractive football.

O'D.—*To what do you attribute your football success?*

McG.—Enthusiasm I suppose but I also had the benefit of a great mentor and coach in Master Mark Keegan—a wonderful teacher both in the class-room and on the field. I owe him much in this regard.

O'D.—*Who would you rate as the best players you have had marking you?*

McG.—Gerry O'Malley, Jim McDonnell, Seamus Murphy and Donegal's Joe Carroll, spring most easily to mind.

O'D.—*Had you any football idols as a schoolboy?*

McG.—Yes, Pdraig Carney and Tony Tighe.

O'D.—*Is there any particular type of player that you do not like opposing?*

McG.—Not really. Of course all forwards get most trouble from the player who sticks close right through the game.

O'D.—*What game gave you most satisfaction?*

McG.—The 1958 Connacht final against Galway. We lost as usual, but it was quite a game.

O'D.—*Have you any other sporting interests?*

McG.—Yes, I like boxing very much—also tennis and hunting.

O'D.—*And as a final question Packy, how long more do you intend to continue in intercounty competition?*

McG.—I find it difficult to think about retiring. My recent American visit greatly renewed my zeal for the game and I am very proud of having been honoured by the Gaels of New York. You can take it that I will be with Leitrim right up to the day the selectors think I have served my usefulness.

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JOHNSTON, MOONEY & O'BRIEN.

A STABLE WALL WAS THEIR ALLEY!

IT was back in the Summer of 1955, that the handball club of Johnston, Mooney and O'Brien, the famed bakery at Ballsbridge, was born. Like most things that flourish it had a modest beginning, and to get an insight into its historic origin, we must visualise ourselves standing by the old stable wall in the spacious grounds of the bakery and watching two employees, John Foskin and John Shanahan, playing a game of handball with an old sponge ball.

Such was the way the two John's whiled away the time, between lunch and the return to duty. Neither did their private duels go unnoticed for shortly they were joined by Pat Darcy and John Sullivan, who is now, incidentally, a member of the Garda. The contagion had set in, the Breadmen of Ballsbridge had been smitten with a handball fever. So much so, that when Paddy Shanley suggested one day, that they play a tournament at 1/6 per head, to defray the cost of trophies, the response was tremendous.

Needless to remark the standard was not very high but the enthusiasm of the participants knew no bounds, and every game was played with championship fervour. Come final day and Jack Murphy fought out a wonderful rubber with John Foskin, winning by a solitary ace. Thus, the Johnston, Mooney and O'Brien Handball Club had been well and truly established.

The members themselves had played their part in earnest, but it should go on record, that they received wonderful co-operation from Michael Saunders, the then Chairman of the D.M.G. Club, who

afforded them the facility of using the Castle Ballcourt.

The Chairman of the Dublin Board at the time, the late Austin Clarke, also gave them every assistance, and accepted the affiliation, with open arms when the J.M.O.B. Handball Club, first made its official entry into Dublin handball in 1956.

One wondered at that time, would it, in fact surmount, the devious obstacles which confront every club, or was it basically, only a mushroom affair.

Well, eight years must surely be a fair test of the strength of any organisation, and in that time the handballers of the well-known bakery, have adorned Dublin handball, with a distinctive enthusiasm, sincerity and quality of players.

Between 1958 and the present day 'Bridge men have consistently won county championships, particularly in the novice grade, while

some of the greater stalwarts have for years been lending a hand on the administrative side of Dublin's handball.

In the playing courts, I can well remember the feats of Larry Lacey and the veteran Mick Parr, who won the novice doubles in 1958, to be followed in later years by the victories of John Foskin, Tommy Kearney, Eamonn Breen, Jim Curran, Nicky Deevy, Paddy Boylan, Joe Kelly, Christy Drudy and Paddy Breen.

In the last couple of years another new star has arisen in the form of Tommy Land, who has won a couple of trophies and shows tremendous potential.

At the start of this little story, many of the initial incidents were centred on one John Foskin. Well, that is just as it should have been, for the genial, quiet spoken Mullinavat man, has really formed the

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● MEMBERS of the Johnston Mooney & O'Brien Handball Club: left to right (standing, back row): J. Keane, T. Land, J. Kelly, J. Hickey, D. Bruen, C. Drudy, R. Bruen, T. Carney, P. Gorman, T. Dwyer, P. Ryan. Left to right (front row): P. Shanley, D. Aherne, J. Foskin, E. Breen, P. Boylan.

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THE DAY BUDDY THE BASEBALL PLAYER TURNED STAR HURLER

IT was a first round match in the divisional hurling championship and, for all the world, it looked as though we would not be able to field a team. A sad state of affairs in a Cork town yes, but this was 1938 and hurling was not a flourishing game then in our North Cork barony.

We did everything to try to field a full team but on the Saturday before the match we could muster only fourteen — and a more ill-assorted fourteen you could not imagine. We had one Mickie Healy who had played on the Cork minor team and I am prepared to swear that he won an All-Ireland medal the same year that Christy Ring and Eamonn Young won their first — but outside of Mickie there was not a true hurler on the side.

We had a budding weight-thrower who did not do too badly in the years that followed; we had at least six men who in the previous years had excelled at a foreign game in Mungret College; we had a red-hot bowl player — and we had a few venerable veterans who had been old when Eudie Coughlan and Dinny Barry Murphy were fledglings on the Cork hurling team.

But no matter how hard we tried we could not find a fifteenth man. Someone suggested we should recruit our local camogie star and draft her in. This was ruled out; she had most beautiful hair and even the glory of playing in a divisional hurling match would not drive her to cut her beautiful tresses down man-size.

Then in Kearney's pub, late on the Saturday night, inspiration came. Our host, John himself, suggested we should try "the Yank."

"The Yank" was, needless to remark, an American. A nephew of people living in Kanturk, he had been sent home from America on a

holiday, but at this stage his holiday was going into its second year.

Buddy — everyone called him that — had never shown any aptitude or enthusiasm for sport. A sound distinguished pint drinker, and a gallant escort at any time for the town's young ladies, he rarely bothered to visit the sportsfield; yet for all that he was always happy to lend a sympathetic ear to our public house "post-mortems" on local sports functions.

Would Buddy make a fifteenth man? That Saturday night, with the pints flowing freely, he was the answer to all our problems. Who did not remember Canon Sheehan's "Glenanaar" and that heart-warming rousing story of Ter Casey, the returned "Yank" who, at one time single-handed had beaten the parishes of Ardpatrick and Cloghroe?

The "Yank" would play; we decided that. And Buddy, God bless us, was in thorough agreement, even though he was riding high on "Cloud Seven" when we put the proposition to him that night. Like the gentleman he was, he refused to have second thoughts on the Sunday. He had given his word — he would play.

Eventually before a large crowd — large because news of Buddy's debut had got around — we turned out at the Sportsfield. Buddy, of course, was the cynosure of all eyes — and why not? He stopped us all in our tracks!

You see, we had no official jerseys. Micky Healy had a Cork jersey, there were a few Mungret and Rockwell jerseys, an old Durlallow jersey of 1920 vintage and I was tastefully arrayed myself in a Sunday's Well jersey that had seen much hard work in its day.

Buddy's outfit was a work of art. He had green silk shorts, cut well up on his legs; a scarlet singlet with the words "Grant Street Boys" printed across it in huge letters of gold; a baseball cap in startling white and a pair of black and white boots which he called "cleats."

We put a hurley in his hands and God knows it looked for all the world like a scimitar. He waved it around like one of the Red Branch Knights. We deposited him between the posts with instructions to hit everything and then we lined out.

To our horror, our opponents were fielding the "Tiger" Crowley. We being under the happy impression that he had been suspended — and here he was again to plague us.

The "Tiger" sad to say, was no gentleman on the field. He hit first and never bothered to ask the questions afterwards.

However, there was nothing we could do about it at this stage. We were stuck with the "Tiger"; all we could hope was that he would remain reasonably quiet.

The "Tiger" did not stay quiet. Within a matter of a few minutes he was up to his tricks and had

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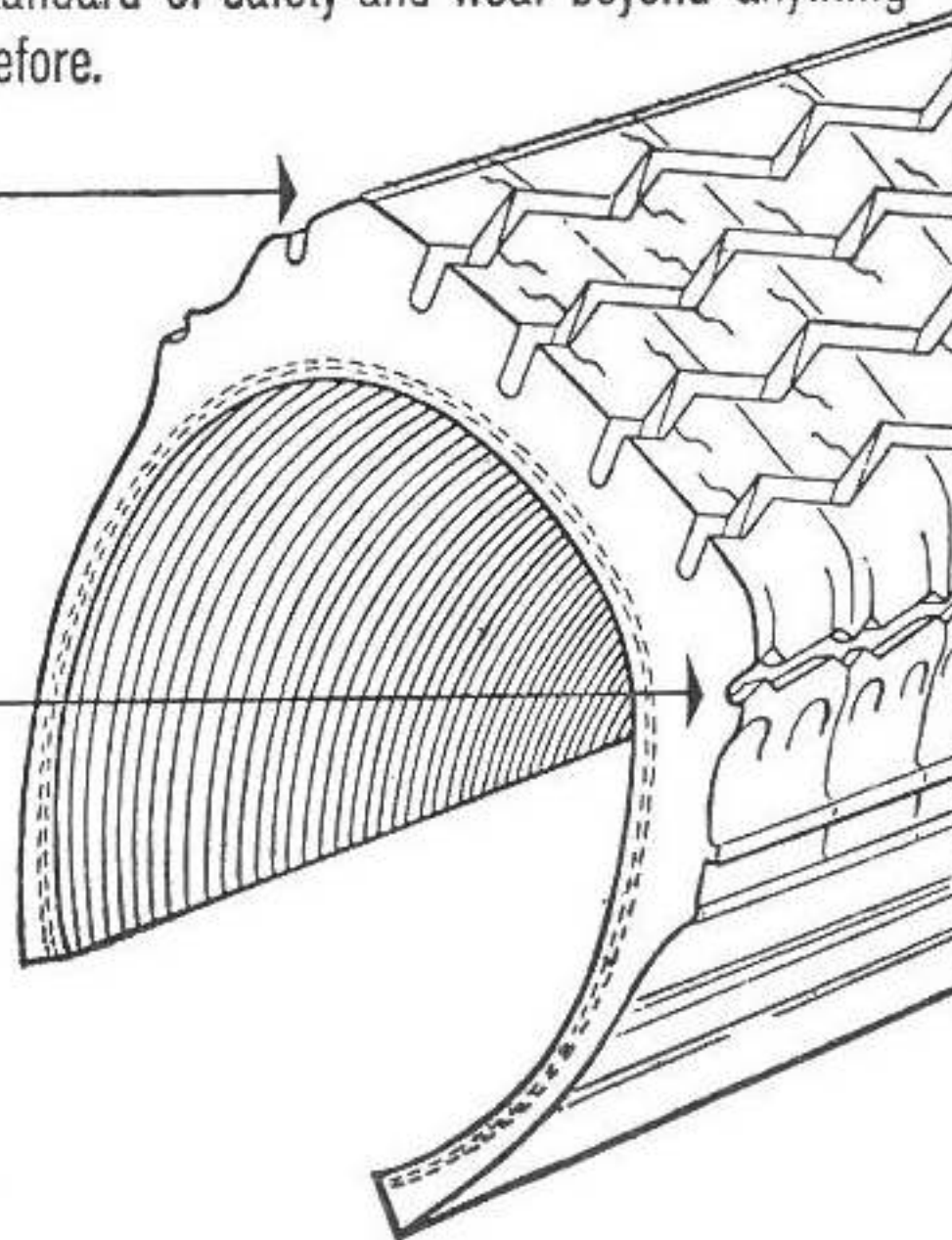
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WHY do we train? We train to get fit. What is fitness? Fitness (for football) is the ability to play efficiently and to recover rapidly from one's efforts.

Most of us have asked ourselves these two questions and got these answers—at some time. The ability to perform skilfully under stress and recover quickly from the effects of the exertions, is conditioned by a number of complicated mechanisms both mental and physical. Though this is hardly the time or place to dwell on the physiological aspects of respiration and circulation or the psychosomatic characteristics of motor educability, it is important that we should be aware of some of the major factors which are involved in training.

At this year's Bisham Abbey Conference on physical education, the experts on fitness gave their views on the factors involved in various sports and I don't think anything new was added to the list which every footballer could compile if he thought about it. The experts are all agreed that strength ranks high on the list for the improvement of fitness and acquisition of skill. (We can't



By **JOE LENNON**

really separate these two in football).

We could benefit from some expert advice on strength training schedules for footballers. Since this is so highly specific, it would be unwise to give other than general directives. We could teach our players how to maintain strength throughout the playing season and close season with a **minimum** of effort. The value of isometric work has not been fully established for general activity but I feel it has a lot to offer Gaelic footballers. The sign of a great games player is that he performs well below his maximum effort.

This he can do because he is so strong and because he has a high level of fitness.

Skill, dexterity and tactics are also involved in fitness and thus should have a part in our training schedules. The more skilful we are, the easier we find it to perform well, with less effort needed recovery is quicker. The easier we can make a skill by reducing it to its fundamentals or a movement by tactical planning the fitter we become. Since strength is essential for the efficient performance of most skills in football, if we wish to perform

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FOOTBALL IN THE 'SIXTIES

● FROM PAGE 39

efficiently well below our maximum effort, we should spend some time concentrating on increasing strength both in particular muscle groups and generally. If the kick is weak, we could increase the length and improve the form more quickly by strengthening the large muscle groups fore and aft of the leg and with a little more conditioning work on the stomach muscles.

Endurance is what most of us aim for in training sessions. The feeling that one can go on and on even towards the end of a strenuous game is most satisfying. Endurance involves the cardiovascular system (heart, arteries and veins), general condition and local and general muscle endurance. An efficient systemic flow will remove the waste products of exercise from muscle tissue and supply the working muscles with nutrition to carry on. The efficiency of the heart as a pump in this circuit is obvious but perhaps it is not quite so obvious that it is not sufficient merely to work to become fit, we must work hard. The pulse rate should be on a high plateau for sustained periods and occasionally should be pushed to maximum. There is little or no value in training if we do not work above two-thirds of our maximum effort and push ourselves to the limit periodically in each session.

In training, you should work hard always trying to extend the ability to hang on a little longer and you should approach the point of exhaustion regularly to find out how far you can go. Repetition sprints or solo runs should be done under increasing stress rather than wait for complete recovery before repeating. The trainer who urges 'just one more' sprint is the man who is most likely to be of benefit to the player.

This brings me to the question of motivation. The importance of this factor is difficult to estimate on a scale of values with strength, skill, endurance, etc. I feel it comes first and from it everything else flows in greater or lesser degree. The incentive must be there also but the effect which powerful motivation can have on rates of learning, acquisition of strength and skill is phenomenal. Every coach should be able to use this factor skilfully and effectively. The personality of the coach and the player should be resilient. Both should be urging on all the time to greater efforts and both should be well tempered for the shocks of competition.

As the level of fitness rises, the knowledge that you can stay the pace so much easier has many important benefits. It reduces anxiety, increases confidence, and relieves mind and body. Among footballers with high personal

standards only those achieve high levels of performance under competitive conditions who rate high in stability and low in anxiety. The absence of anxiety and neuroticism in training increases the rates at which skills and fitness are improved upon. As well as the stabilising effects of fitness, proneness to injury and recovery from injury are reduced.

What then are the quantitative and qualitative factors involved in training for Gaelic football? Almost everybody has enough spare time to keep in first class shape if the time is spent thoughtfully. Boredom and monotony are the great enemies. Each session should contain a high proportion of top quality work and every session should call for sustained periods of work under pressure and periodical work to exhaustion. If it hurts, it is usually doing you good.

With only an hour a week to spend in two sessions one should spend a few minutes warming up; seven or eight minutes strengthening work; seven or eight minutes pure training — sprints, jumps, weights; and most of the rest of the period on skill training and practice, saving a few minutes to warm down at the end. If this type of schedule is followed twice a week, one should be fit enough for senior club football.

Having said all this, one is bound to think of the criticisms and the one that comes to mind first is that of Hemingway when he said: "Speed and endurance in animal athletes — dogs and horses—depend at least as much upon breeding and selection as on training." However, the Dean at Violet Hill in my time there used to say: "Maybe we can't make a silk purse out of a sow's lug but we can make a mule run as fast as a slow racehorse." There are an awful lot of "mules" playing Gaelic football to-day.

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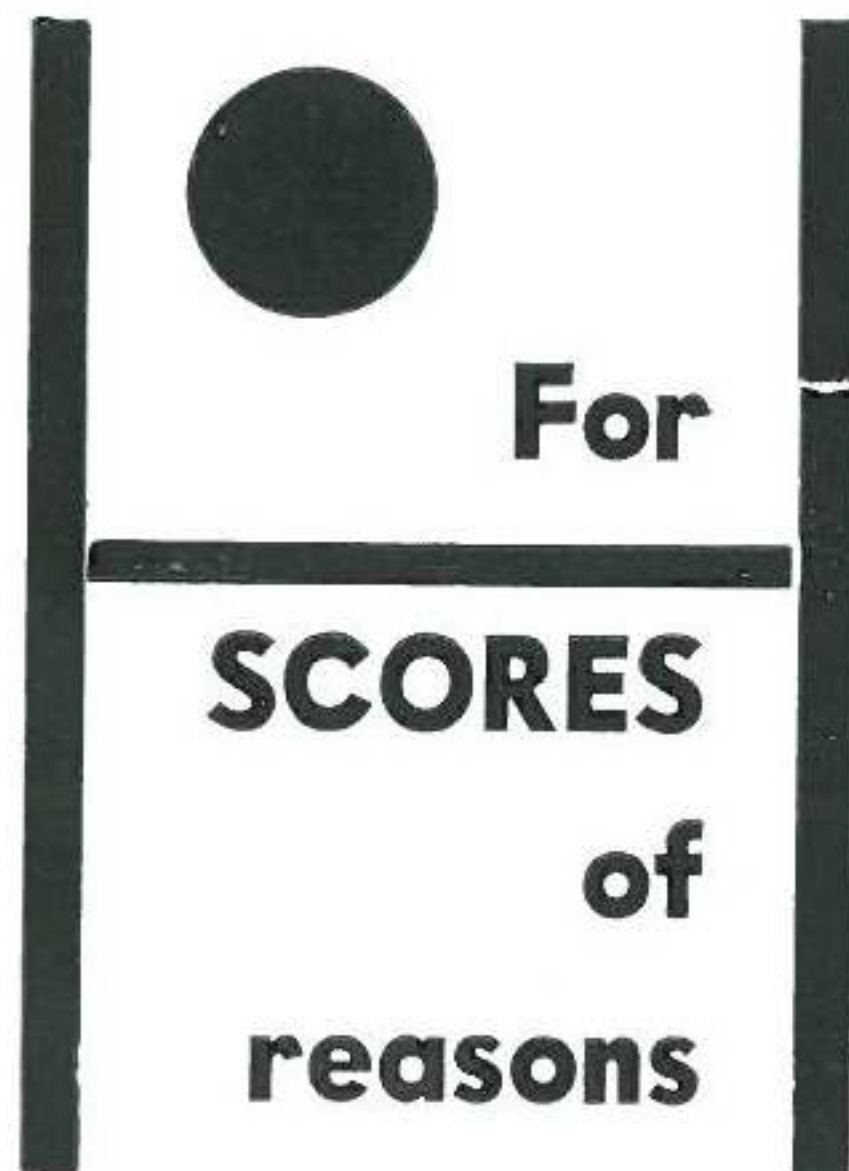


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● FROM PAGE 35

axis around which the Ballsbridge club revolves. Outspoken in his beliefs, John has also been a member of the Faughs Club for the past fifteen years, and at the present time lends his vast experience to his own club as Chairman, and the Dublin Handball Board as Vice-Chairman.

But not far behind comes Christy Drudy, another Faughs man and a tireless worker in the cause of handball.

Tommy Kearney, the hurling referee, is Vice-Chairman of the club. In its earlier years he was one of the most enthusiastic, and even if his appetite has waned somewhat lately, one thinks he is only having a temporary respite.

Then, there is Dan Aherne, the treasurer, who fills the post so capably that the club funds are always at a respectable level. Tommy Land is Secretary and fills the post admirably.

I could go on and on citing the merits of J.M.O'B's. loyal handball brigade. There is for instance, the "Whacker" Paddy Breen, P. Boylan, R. Bruen, J. Morris, M. Parr, M. Fitzmaurice, M. Hobbs, Austin English, F. McDermott, N. Tuite, F. Graham, A. O'Connell and M. Breen, and the late Martin Kennedy, who never spared himself, for the love of the game.

At Ballsbridge, there is ever an awareness, that the handballers command respect.

As marks of appreciation the Ritz Social Club, presented a magnificent cup for singles competition, while the Bakery Social Club did likewise for doubles competition. The management of Johnston, Mooney and O'Brien take an active interest in the affairs of their handballing employees and pride in their every success and every new endeavour. Perhaps they may, some day, provide the Club with an alley, it could call its own, for if there is one drawback that hampers the progress of this gallant club it is lack of playing facilities.

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already promised quite a few of our boys that he would see them after the match.

The "Yank" distinguished himself in the first half. Someone drove a long high ball into the goalmouth and it dropped down towards Buddy. Any other goalkeeper would have waited for it to land but not our Buddy.

He advanced, took his stance, gave the hurley a few twirls—for all the world like a baseball player on the diamond—and struck out. To a great roar of encouragement he drove it far upfield.

With scant regard for the possibility of heart failure on our part he did this several times and never failed to hit the ball.

At half-time Buddy confessed he was tired of being goalkeeper. He needed a little action. For the second half we moved him to full-forward. Again he was a sensation. Someone cracked a ball in towards the goalmouth and again Buddy did his hurley twirling act. The full-back, terrified, moved out of range . . . and Buddy planted the ball in the back of the net.

This was far too much for the "Tiger" Crowley. A showman to his finger-tips he took an extremely dim view of opposition. Buddy, in the colours of the rainbow, was stern opposition. "Tiger" moved up to mark Buddy and by "marking" he had no intention of just standing by Buddy's side.

Their meeting was brief—but, from the crowd's point of view, rewarding. When the ball dropped near them, Buddy started his hurley-twirling again. Crowley did not believe him and stood his ground. But the "Tiger" should have believed him. Buddy swung and met the ball—and Crowley—dead on. The ball went one way; Crowley went straight down.

The next few moments were hectic. Crowley bounced to his feet, made for the "Yank" with all artillery firing. But to no avail! With one of the neatest and certainly the most explosive uppercuts I have ever seen, Crowley went back to renew his friendship with the grass.

A few of Crowley's team mates intervened but they joined the "Tiger." There was no necessity

for us to join in; Buddy was in full command of the situation.

It took a few minutes to sort things out but a diplomatic referee eventually got the game started again. The only difference now was that Buddy was in the middle of the field and complete monarch of that area. Nobody would go within a mile of him!

We won the game and Buddy was the hero of Kearney's pub that night. The party went on for hours. By the time we were finished we had won the divisional championship and were talking in terms of the county title.

But, God love us, we never got a chance to play any further in the divisional championship. We were thrown out on an objection.

Not against Buddy, oddly enough as we all expected—but against me. That Sunday's Well jersey was the cause of all the trouble.

But even if he had gone on in the championship, our star turn, Buddy, would not have played.

As he told us—"I had a good game, gentlemen, but as my Mom always said, a man should quit on a winning streak."

● FROM PAGE 7

Mayo — Ballycastle and Mayo Abbey.

Again some of these dances were run openly — others were organised in the guise of a "supporters' club." It strikes me that this Rule, which prohibits the organising of foreign dances, is most violated in Co. Wicklow.

However, when it comes to breaking this Rule during the past month pride of place must go to Athboy, Co. Meath. The local hurlers won the O'Growney Cup at Feis na Mí some time ago and decided to celebrate the occasion. The O'Growney Social Club came on the scene and all, including the Trim team who were their opponents, gathered in the local ballroom where they danced to the Merry Minstrels.

And to think that it was all done in the name of Fr. Eoin O'Growney. It strikes me that they heard of him but know nothing about him in his native Athboy.

BALLINASCREEN

Meath are due to play Derry in the All-Ireland junior football semi-final at Ballinascreen this month but it could be that the Royal County will not make it. At least the last I heard was that not a man in Meath knew where Ballinascreen was.

The Rev. Chairman of the Meath Board told a meeting last month how he had carefully examined two maps and could not find any trace of a Ballinascreen in Co. Derry or anywhere else for that matter. There was nobody

present who could throw light on the missing venue.

This may all sound very strange to Ulster readers who are as well used to making the trip to Ballinascreen as Leinstermen are of journeying to An Uaimh — for Ballinascreen is Derry's leading venue. However, Fr. Tully is quite correct when he states that Ballinascreen cannot be found on the map.

On all maps that I have seen it is marked as Draperstown—and the Northern Ireland authorities very much insist that it remains Draperstown.

The G.A.A., of course, uses the name Ballinascreen and I hope Meath will too when they journey up into our Fouth Green Field.

'Til next month then—Slán agus beannacht.

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PLANNING FOR TOMORROW

FIELDS are big news in Munster just now, and with the completion of the Munster championship campaign work is expected to get under way on three major field projects.

The Rebel County people have the biggest job of all but one that is long overdue. A first rate field in the Southern capital is an urgent necessity, and one that is assured of substantial patronage over a good spell each year, with local club ties often attracting what would be regarded as satisfactory inter-county gatherings elsewhere.

The Cork Gaels have now completed the purchase of a fine parcel of land which they can develop to their hearts content. It is to be hoped they will plan it with an eye to the future and make ample provision for all the amenities spectators of a quarter of a century hence are likely to demand.

Delay in their case has been a blessing in disguise, in that they can profit from the mistakes made elsewhere, and plan on the assurance of patronage that appeared only wistful thinking when the other big fields in the province were being developed.

If Thurles had only known forty years ago that some day they would be asked to accommodate sixty thousand spectators they surely would have planted their pitch nearer the centre of the grand

expanse of ground they possess. Instead they put it in one corner, and have to spend a lot of money now in buying additional land so that they may expand in the direction where development is still possible.

Limerick made the mistake of siting their pitch too near the main Limerick to Ennis roadway. They have been hampered a lot because of this—all the more galling when it is realised they have a big patch of ground at the opposite end outside the enclosure, and of which practically no use is made.

Field planners in Thurles and Limerick must often regret the monies spent on projects, some of them quite elaborate, which later had to be scrapped as further development was called for.

All this could have been avoided were proper plans drawn in the first instance. It is easy, of course, to say so now, but things were very different then and even what would be rated very small money by modern standards was very hard to come at thirty years ago.

I had first hand experience of this for I was secretary of the first development committee in Limerick. We needed £2,000 to level the pitch. In addition to lodging the title deeds to twelve acres of land fronting the busy Ennis Road we were forced to get Limerick business people go

guarantors for well over the amount required before the Bank would advance us anything.

When the money was nearly exhausted and our work uncompleted we had to make do with very inferior filling material in order to finish the job, because additional money just could not be got. In fact, a few generous traders who supplied necessary materials had to carry the baby for a prolonged spell so precarious was the position.

There is still need for planning, and a more realistic approach to the requirements of the Munster sporting public. A careful study of the situation over the past decade during which attendances rocketed, reveals that only on three occasions during that period was any difficulty experienced in accommodating all those who were anxious to see a Munster championship tie. In actual fact, only once, in 1961, were would-be patrons refused admission because a ground was unable to take them.

Was the peak reached that day? Some good judges maintain it was. Factors which require careful consideration in this regard include a falling population and changing habits resulting in more general ownership of motor cars. With the gradual introduction of the five-day week, the week-end is becoming

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ing more of a family affair, and the seaside is the family favourite. So poor father must drive the folk there and content himself with listening in to the game.

The closing of many small railway stations must also affect the crowds. All of these provided their quota on a big match day and with such facilities denied them in the future there is bound to be a falling off in the numbers the trains must bring to a game.

There is a considerable school of thought favouring a ceiling of from sixty to sixty-five thousand as likely to be sufficient to cater for the biggest gathering. This body of opinion feels strongly that development is still needed but that it should proceed along the lines of providing the greatest comfort for a fixed number rather than unlimited room of a rougher type for the odd out-size crowd.

Patrons have long since indicated their willingness to pay for first class accommodation and good business men would cater for that demand. We must remember that seating for say twenty thousand people might be availed of eight or ten times in the year, whilst a sixty thousand venue on the experience of the past decade might have a

capacity crowd only once every few years.

Prudence would suggest that present planning be centred on accommodating the patron who is going to provide a steady revenue over the next decade. The regular fan deserves all the comfort we can give him and when that is satisfied it is time enough to do something for the very occasional visitor. We will be in a better position anyway to judge then whether a demand still persists for the bigger capacity venue.

Cork have the opportunity of planning our first modern stadium but whilst it may be no harm to ensure that a ninety thousand venue be possible should ever the need arise, it is hardly realistic to suggest the development of a field of such capacity at this stage.

We all know the Athletic Grounds had its limitations and that many would-be spectators tried to avoid it on particularly attractive occasions. We cannot however ignore the fact that something like thirty-five thousand represents the largest crowd which ever gathered there, so sensible people will agree that a sixty thousand ceiling would be more than adequate for present requirements. By all means leave the room

to extend the accommodation to even the hundred thousand, but wait until the fifty thousand mark is well passed before making any move in that direction.

Over development is a serious danger as the cost of upkeep can prove considerable, and the burden of rates and other charges could cause a big drain on resources. To cut the cloth according to the measure is the sensible approach in field planning as in tailoring, and our governing bodies would do well to keep that in mind.

We all agree that our patrons deserve the very best, but first duty must be to the regular fan who rarely misses a game, be it club or inter-county.

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PENPOINTS

A Chara, — Patrick Carver the writer of the article "The Big Hitters", in your July issue, is scarcely the type of man who would deliberately cause dissension within the ranks of the G.A.A., but I fear the suggestions at the end of his interesting article would do just that.

There are three paragraphs there to which myself and thousands of others would strongly object. The first offending paragraph reads: "So wouldn't it be a nice idea to put this long puck business on a proper footing by establishing a competition on the lines of the All-Ireland championship." It amazes me to imagine that this interesting writer does not yet know that there exists to-day, an official All-Ireland (and most spectacular) long puck championship. It is, of course, Poc Fada na hEireann, held on the Cooley Range, Co. Louth, each Whit since 1961; with the full approval of Congress, the Central Council, provincial Councils and County Boards. The 1963 Annual Congress unanimously accepted the recommendation that each county send two contestants to take part in the Puc Fada contest.

The Poc Fada is held on Whit Monday, but this year owing to the death of Padraig O Caoimh it

was postponed until Sunday August 23.

The idea of the All-Ireland Poc Fada arose from the efforts of a dozen men and two hundred boys in the Fatima district of Dundalk, to promote hurling among the youth of the town and district, the birth-place of Setanta (Cúchulainn) the first great hurler we read of.

From this exact place little seven-year-old Setanta set out on the 30-mile journey to Eamhain Macha, the court of the Red Branch Knights (now Armagh), driving his hurling ball before him. Some of the pattern of the modern Poc Fada is taken from this now famous "cross-country hurling" of over two thousand years ago.

From 1961 great hurlers have travelled from many counties to take part in this most spectacular event, and thus help bring back the great game to the Northern counties. In this way understanding men from the South are giving a fillip to the schemes of the Northern promoters of hurling.

The rúnaí's list of entries shows men from Dublin, Cork, Derry, Wexford, Louth, Waterford, Cavan, Limerick, Kildare, Meath, Armagh, Offaly, Antrim, Tyrone, Kilkenny and Tipperary, all in earnest con-

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test for the championship and the title "The Hurler with the Longest Puck." Leading Kilkenny and Tipperary players were to fly specially from London this Whit for the event, but due to the postponement this was not necessary.

The club of enthusiast, Cumann Ógra Naomh Moninne, organise the event, and excellently too, for the most unselfish reasons, for they get no monetary profit from it, and seek none; but they get the great satisfaction that their enterprise, though not enthused over by writers and commentators is out on its own for originality and as a means of spreading interest in hurling in Ulster and North Leinster (a veritable non-hurling Pale of recent years).

Surely Patrick Carver, who in his article pines for the Poc Fada contest "between the minor and senior finals on All-Ireland day"—in Croke Park, of course—surely he must know by now that one of the greatest obstacles to the spread of hurling is to confine it to limited areas, which includes "Head-quarters."

As one who has brought boys and men, in groups of fifty and

sixty, for years to big games in Croke Park, I cannot be accused of nursing an anti-Croke Park prejudice; but neither can I easily forget the words of wisdom in what we might term the 'apologia of the Association' on page 25 of the Treoraí Oifigiúil: "The G.A.A. was founded not merely to promote and develop physical fitness, to proclaim champions, or to assemble vast gatherings of onlookers . . ." Besides, could Patrick Carver say why he is calling for an All-Ireland Poc Fada contest when one is already established and flourishing? His anxiety recalls to my mind the clamouring of some 'football-only' enthusiasts for a "most necessary" extra football league, as soon as they saw the boys taking a serious interest in hurling in a 'football county.' This is the sort of 'unity and tolerance' that some of our members are showing to each other, in the face of outside pressures.

For our games to flourish every tendency to over-centralisation must be carefully checked and every effort must be made to improve playing facilities (pitches and all that should go with them) in as many areas as possible, within reason, of course. These are old

arguments, to be sure, but these days they need to be shouted as loudly as possible if they are to be heeded and become effective against the ever-increasing trend of the big-city-mentality. There are still those who wish to view all that is best in our sporting traditions from the comparatively plush comfort of the Hogan stand, and let the clubs "go to pot".

But it is better for the Billy Murphys, the Paddy Ryans, the Ollie Walshes and the Denis Murphys to head for the Cooley Mountains in the North and hurl away to the delight of thousands, some of whom saw a caman for the first time three years ago and many of whom viewed their *First Hurling Match Ever* on T.E. Lá le Pádraig, 1962.

Should we not be ashamed that such is the case in a so-called free Ireland thousands of years after the game was born?

These men and boys in Dundalk who run the All-Ireland Poc Fada, are doing exceptional work for Gaelic Games—and against big odds; what they deserve is praise and encouragement. Their work is on a proper footing.
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COVER PICTURE

Our cover picture this month might appear to be a preview of this year's All-Ireland football final—indeed it could well be. But somehow we don't think the men from Breffni or the standard bearers from Leinster would agree with us.

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