

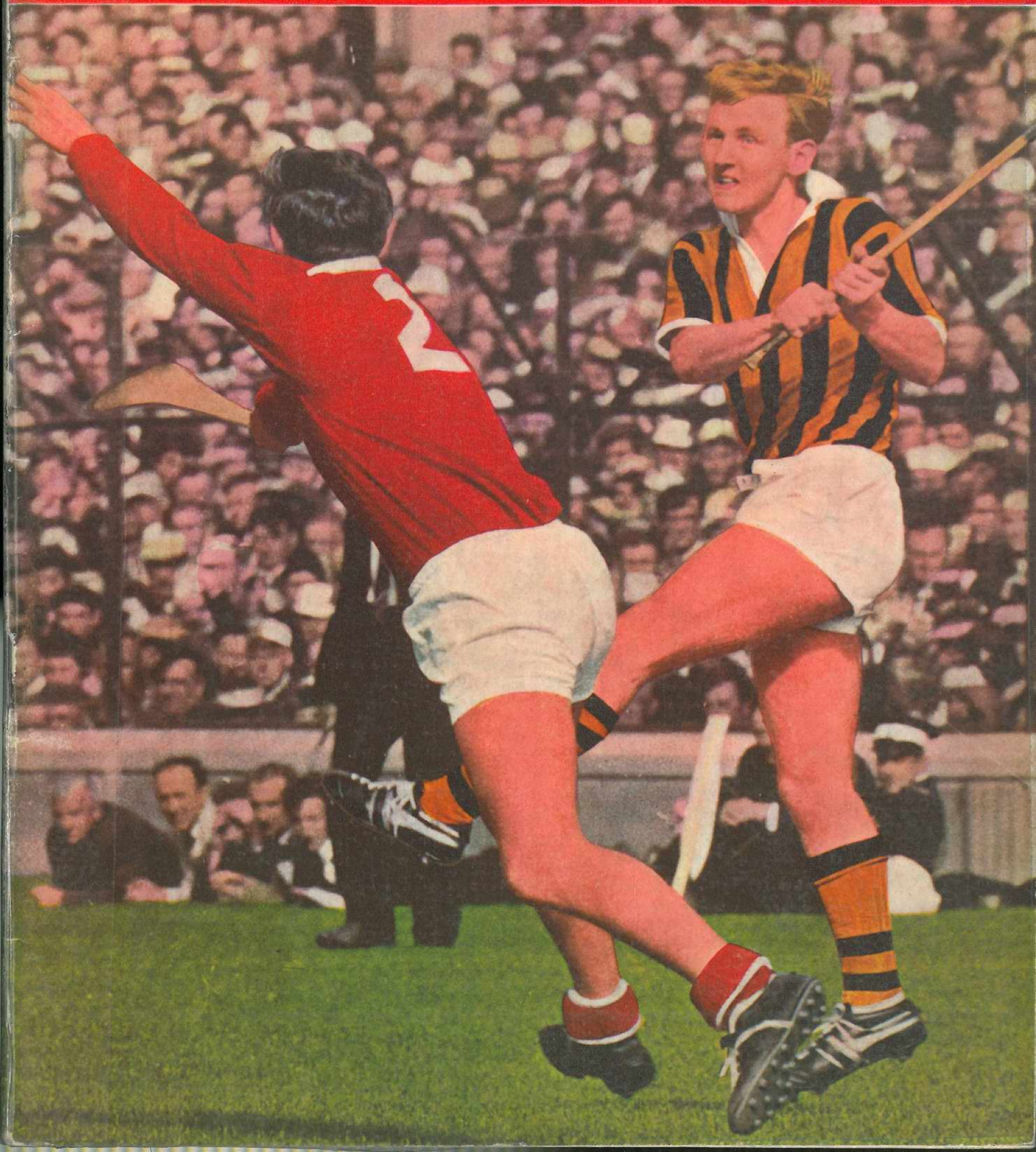
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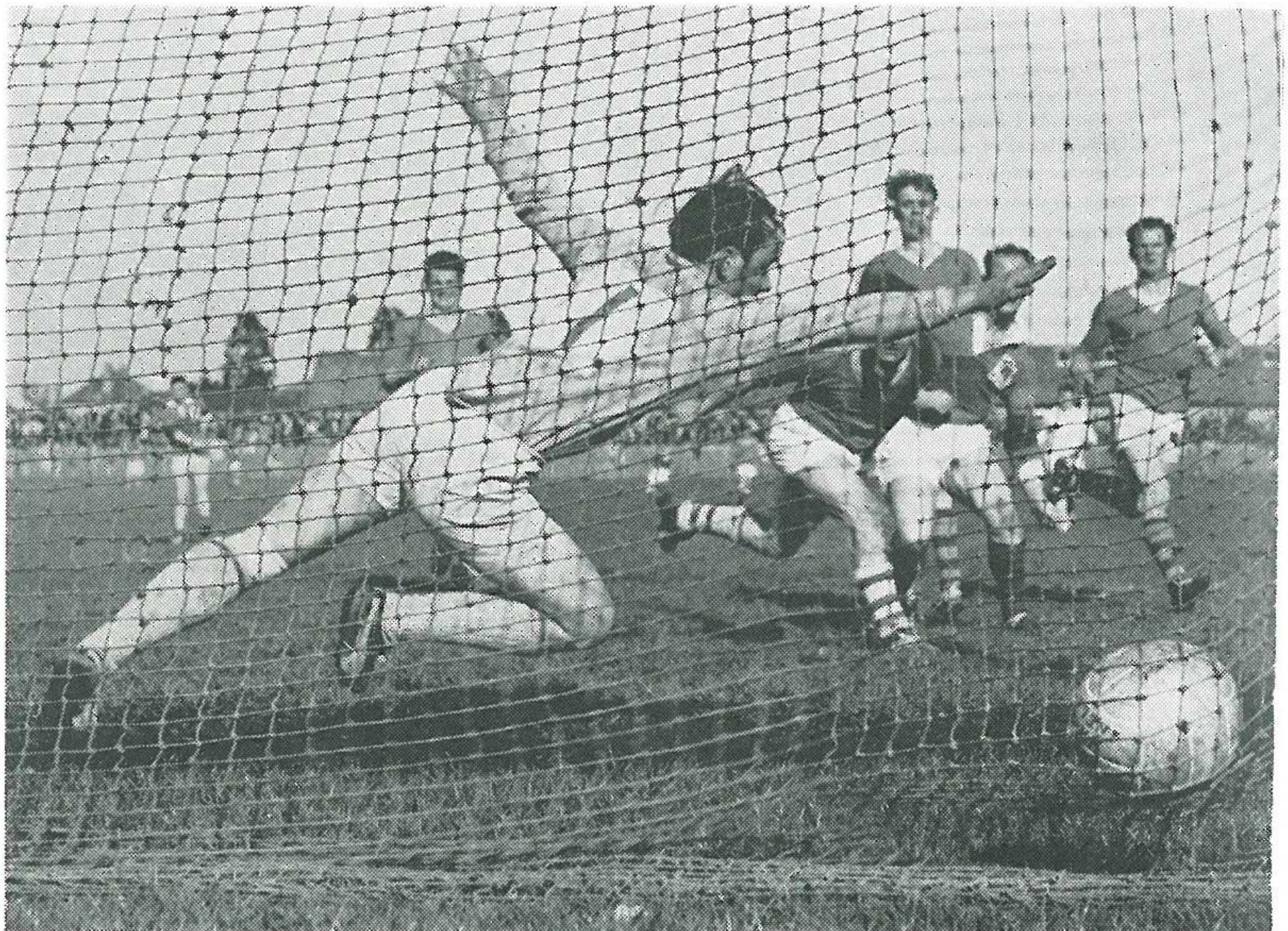
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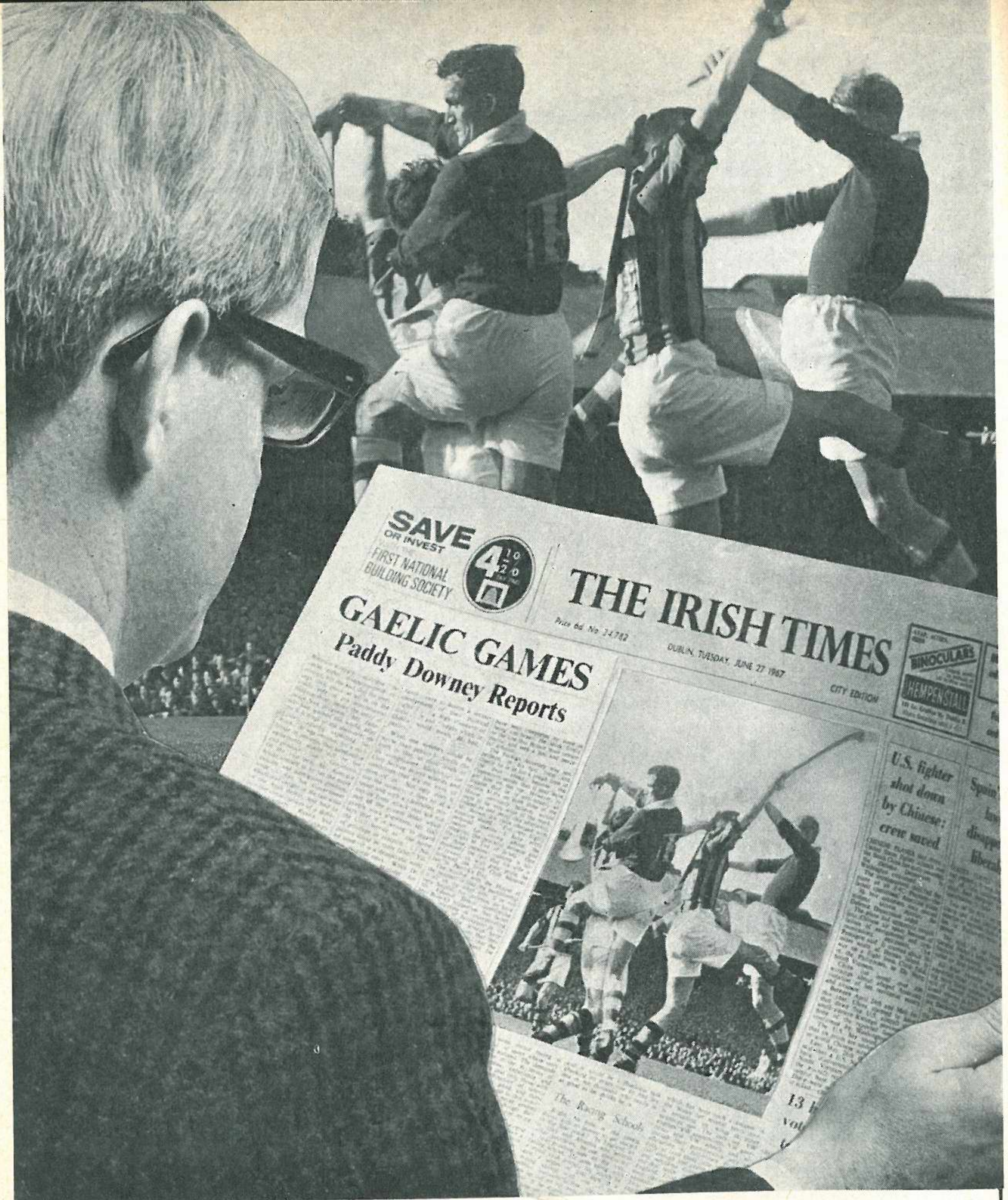
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Gaelic Sport

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COVER PICTURE

A colourful moment of action from last year's All-Ireland final—Peter Doolan, the Cork right back, and Tom Walsh, Kilkenny's left corner forward, meet in a goalmouth battle.

Comment

Breathing space

SINCE our last issue Galway crashed to Mayo and a truly great team is no more. It was, of course, inevitable. The top in recent years has become a most demanding area. It demands sacrifice, dedication and non-stop activity of a kind undreamed of when Kerry scored their four-in-a-row.

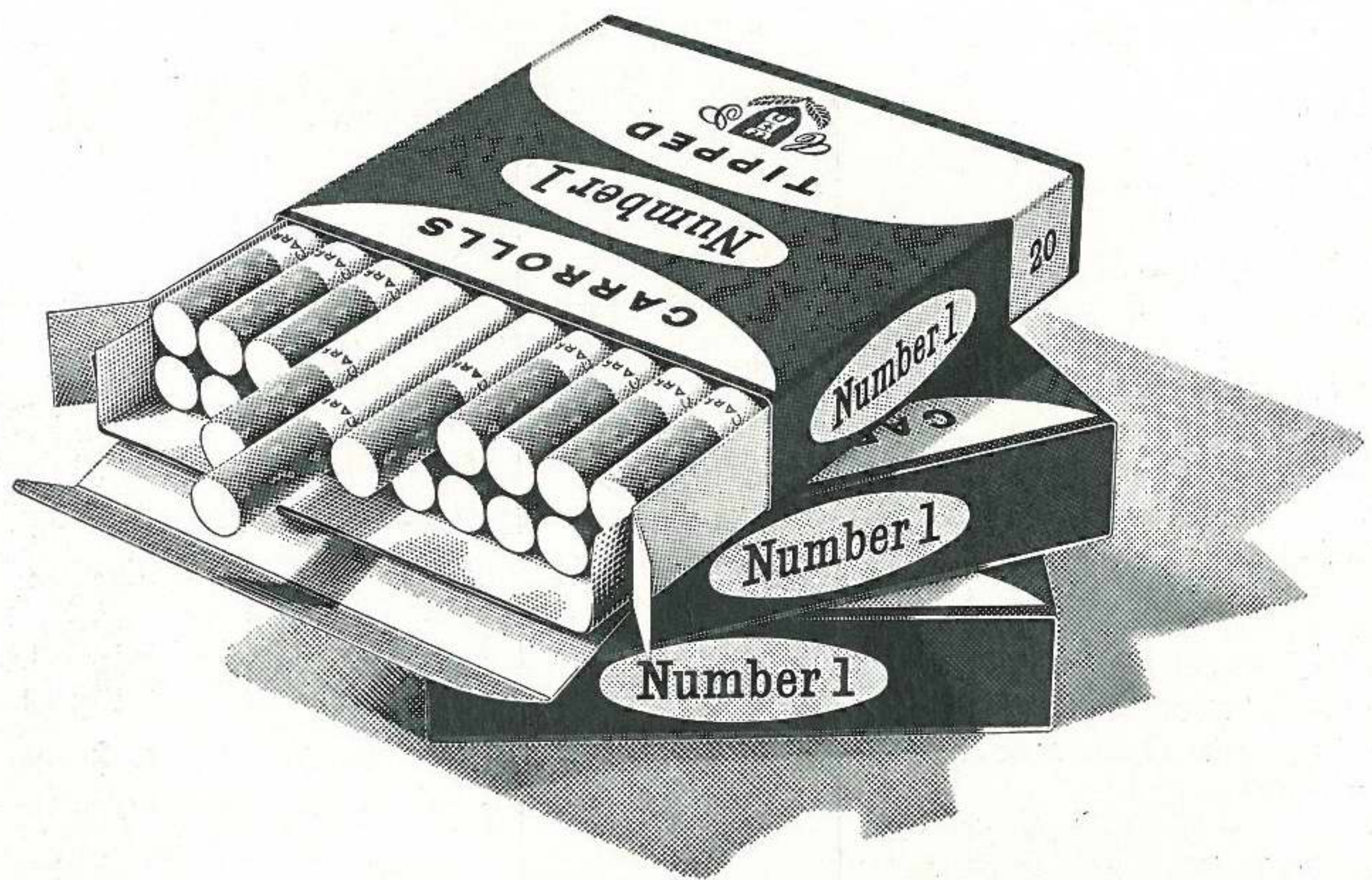
The Galway players gave generously to Gaelic football—but there is a physical limit to all such giving. The well eventually runs dry and then there is no more . . . for a time.

But, of course, Galway will be back. Never in the history of Gaelic games did so young a team complete so glorious and so lengthy a chapter. Given a rest and an opportunity to replenish, most of the Galway men we grew to know so well during the past four seasons, will come bouncing back—and they will still be young.

And, when they do come back, Croke Park will welcome them all the more, for it is in such a comeback that the men in maroon will truly cap their greatness.

where does the quality come from?

from a tobacco, broadleaf
from an eye, watchful
from a hand, skilful
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Carrolls stands on quality

Does Tralee pavilion mark beginning of an era?

ONE must hope that the recently opened G.A.A. pavilion in Tralee marks the beginning of an era. This building represents a realistic effort to meet the social needs of our time and to put the Association on a basis from which it can continue to hold the position which it has enjoyed for the past eighty years.

It strikes us as obvious that all County Boards and all large clubs should be progressing on the lines indicated by Dr. Jim Brosnan and, in this regard, it should not be forgotten that the type of expenditure incurred in Tralee is not by any means necessary to provide an adequate premises.

Where the very best and the most modern can be provided, it should be provided—but in less affluent circumstances an adequate building can be erected for one tenth of the £23,000 cost incurred in Tralee.

There are now quite a number of firms supplying excellent pre-fabricated and sectional buildings. These can be quickly erected and are attractive and modern in appearance. As little as £2,000 is sufficient to provide a structure which would be capable of accommodating meetings, social functions, offices, etc. This same building could even, with a little planning, be used as dressing-rooms as well.

There is a great urgency in all of this. Dr. Brosnan has stated that his scheme is somewhat of a guinea-pig from which other counties will learn. This, of course, is true but it is questionable if, in some areas, there is even time to wait for the result of the Tralee "experiment".

Indeed, the case can even be made that Dr. Brosnan's dynamism has come too late in Kerry where it is obvious that Gaelic games have slipped backwards to an

alarming extent. Kerry would appear to have made the mistake of thinking that tradition conquered all. But how wrong this viewpoint has proven to be. Social conditions are more than a match for tradition.

The hard facts of the latter half of the 20th century are that only modern thinking, expertise and methods can keep the G.A.A. to the fore—not alone in urban Ireland, but also in rural Ireland.

It may well be that the time

has come for a blueprint scheme—something on the lines of the Hurling Scheme—which would aim at modernising and equipping the entire Association.

We live in an era of national planning. Individual and isolated efforts do not meet the urgent requirements of to-day. Neither will a Dr. Brosnan here and a Dr. Brosnan there—each working in isolation—solve what currently

● Continued Page 7.

Need for a scheme to modernise whole Association

By 
THE EDITOR

DR. BROSINAN



The coming stars

By JAY DRENNAN

VERY often we are blinded by the starlight from the big names, so that we ignore too long the coming stars, and suddenly wonder how these younger fellows got to be so good and why we didn't notice them before. Many people who go regularly to the games do not gain the maximum enjoyment from the experience, because either they do not watch on a sufficient number of levels or else they recall in that "inward eye" too few aspects of what they actually saw. "The Art of Watching Football and Hurling"—there's a subject for an article or a thesis . . . but let me not be tempted.

As I was about to say—how do we miss the coming stars? We who think ourselves knowledgeable, we are surprised by them when they force their stardom upon us. Two principal reasons: (i) partisan feeling, and (ii) fascination with the established greats, bring it about, I think. How often, watching and waiting for touch of class, the master stroke from one of the big stars, have we failed to notice why we have to wait so long between touches. It takes a bit of time to realise that the big star is, quite simply, being played out of the game by a youngster.

Who, now, are the coming men? Who, soon, will find the boots of the Mattie McDonaghs, the Seamus Leydens, the Joe Lennons, the Charlie Gallaghers, the Seamus

Cleeres, the Austin Flynns, the Theo Englishs?

You can write in capitals the name of Jackie Devine, of Longford. Whether his county ever realises its full potential or not, this is a player whose quality will out. Heady, thoughtful, he does not rush headlong at every possession of the ball; but he has the confidence of cool selectivity, appraising the situation. Then where the gap appears clear he has the sprint to cleave through, he is strong in build, and he has the accuracy from the outfield to reap a rich harvest in points.

Devine is not alone in this Longford team destined for big name acclaim. It depends a lot whether they can make that big breakthrough; if they can, they have the individually gifted players that will bring joy to the hearts of many far from their own county.

Another midlander sure to be a big name is Tony McTeague—but then the most obdurate is hardly blind enough not to have noticed Tony. My first sight of him in Leinster minor championships is a burned-in memory: the game opened quietly, and after a minute there was a free for Offaly—60 yards out, 5 yards from the touchline. The tousled, fair, chunky chap with the hunched shoulders hustled over, placed the ball, dotted back a few paces, steadied . . . The ball flew, true as an

arrow, falling ten clear yards behind the netting.

The whole crowd gasped—I have often heard about and read of crowds gasping, but only this once have I actually experienced it. Shocked from their somnolence in the summer sun, and from their conversations and their searching for good seats in the stand, they gasped. It was countable seconds later that they cheered.

Away from forward subtleties, there is a terrier of a corner-back in Kildare who will cause many a forward to cry tears of frustration. He has the courage of the great corner-backs, the instinct for covering the spot where danger will be two moves from now, the hands, the agility, the spirit, and a decent clearance to boot. Jimmy Cummins.

To the surprise of many, only this summer have the Cork selectors begun to acknowledge the worth of Denis Coughlan. Lithe, sweetly made for football, he has a magnetic attraction for the ball around centre-field or half-back. Educated hands and educated feet. He can set a forward line moving or carry a ball through swiftly and smoothly. But, he can be as good as a half-back. Where he will make his name, or whether it be in hurling that he makes it, I do not know, but people outside St. Nick's and the Glen will hear more of him.

● From Page 5.

confronts the Association at large. But a development plan for the entire Association would.

Finance does, of course, provide a major problem. But this is not an insoluble one. It can be done. Indeed, it must be done by one means or another. Otherwise what is currently a decline in some areas will become universal. Once this happens it may well be too late.

DAN McAREAVY

The decision of one of our regular contributors, Dan McAreavy, to resign from the position of Chairman of the Armagh County Board is regretted by everybody whom we have heard discuss this matter. More to be regretted is, of course, the fact that he found it necessary to take this drastic action in protest at the inadequacy of suspensions passed by his Board.

Dan McAreavy is one of those able young legislators who are endeavouring to bring new thinking and new efficiency to the G.A.A. One automatically links him with such as Dr. Brosnan, Fr. Leo Morahan in Mayo and the former Clare Chairman, Jack Daly. These men represent the future of the G.A.A. and they have the acquired knowledge, enthusiasm and all-round ability to make that future a bright one.

We have not sufficient knowledge of the incidents involved to comment on the suspensions considered inadequate by Dan McAreavy. However, we do know that Armagh cannot afford to be without such a man—no county can for such ability is not in abundance.

Until this entire affair is righted and Dan McAreavy is firmly back in the Armagh chair, a stigma will attach to that county. Let us hope that the matter is quickly dealt with and put in order.

Would it be too much to hope that this will have been done even before this issue of GAELIC SPORT appears in print?

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smoothest smoking,
don't say a word.
Say two:**

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SHELL



***Jim could run like a bat out of h . . .
And kick most amazingly well,
But the ref took his name
Ere the end of the game
For powering his footwear with Shell.***

GOOD MILEAGE —





JOE LANGAN.

MAYO ARE BACK

By

CHRIS MURRAY

The Conquerors of Galway

OVER the past year or two in this column, I have been presaging Mayo's football revival, especially after Fr. Leo Morahan, that dynamic Louisburgh man, whose father was a legendary politician and teacher, took over as County Chairman. Last year's Connacht final display was the beginning. Then followed the minor All-Ireland win and Mayo's magnificent Cuchulainn Cup triumph over Kildare. The end of the year saw a superbly confident Galway hammer them at Tuam but in the League divisional decider at Castlebar, Mayo were back again. Ever since they have trained consistently and assiduously under Mulranny man Seamus Daly and Ballina star Willie Casey. Their recent successes were expected in their native county.

Who are the men behind this team apart from Fr. Morahan, Seamus Daly and Willie Casey? The quiet man behind the scenes is Secretary, Johnny Mulvey—another Louisburgh man—whose dedication and sincerity is never challenged. To him above all congratulations are tendered for his tenure of office has been a very long wait for a team like this. Other mentors include Dr. Mickey Loftus, Johnny Biesty and Tiernan O'Reilly to name but a few.

What of the players? Who has been the personality of the team? I think immediately of three—Joe Langan, John Morley and Joe Corcoran in that order. Joe Langan has been playing for Mayo since 1960, very often ploughing a lone furrow at midfield. A great U.C.G. player, he has consistently been honoured by the Connacht selec-

tors and in Mayo's resurgence has been a leading figure. Though not an ideal centre-forward, his recent displays in the position, apart from some wild shooting, were first-class.

Captain of the team, John Morley of Kiltimagh, at centre-half back, is the powerhouse—strong, willing and able. Earlier in the year he expressed the wish to be stationed as a Garda as near to Mayo as possible so that he would be convenient to the training headquarters. His wish was granted. The former St. Jarlath's College star is as strong as a lion and has a tremendous lash at a ball.

Finally there is Corcoran. What can one say about one of the nicest Mayo footballers we have seen in many years. Not since Willie Casey has a finer stylist come out of Connacht. Beautifully balanced he seems to glide away from the opposition and has perfect ball control. A quick mover too.

Mayo have taken over from Galway in Connacht and are well fit to carry the Connacht mantle in search of All-Ireland honours. The road will be difficult but there is an aura of confidence surrounding this green and red outfit. It was obvious in all their Connacht championship games especially against Galway.

Now that I've mentioned Galway, tribute to them for the sporting manner in which they accepted defeat. They proved their greatness once again. In beating them, Mayo played Gaelic football in the best style of Galway's years of glory. We wish Mayo the best of luck in their quest of an All-Ireland title.

JOHNSTON, MOONEY & O'BRIEN'S BREAD WINS

Gold Medals



three

GOLD MEDALS

*and one bronze medal at the 46th
International Bakers Exhibition*

OLYMPIA LONDON



JOHNSTON, MOONEY & O'BRIEN.

The growth of a club

I WAS in attendance at the Dublin County Handball Board meeting in June, 1956, when the Johnston Mooney and O'Brien Club first made its entry into Metropolitan Handball. Chairman at the time—the late Austin Clarke welcomed the affiliation, and, in extending his wholehearted support, opined that he foresaw a great future for the club. Frankly, few of us shared his optimism.

For one thing, there were no star players amongst the members to supply a title-winning boost, while experience also tells us that any type of business organisation does not lend itself to the communal spirit that can be found, for instance, in the parish club. But the handballers of J. M. O'B. certainly proved us completely wrong. In the eleven years of its existence, players from the well-known bakery have adorned Dublin handball with a distinctive enthusiasm, and sincerity.

Consequently, in that span of

years 'Bridge men have consistently won county championships, particularly in the novice grade, at the same time lending a hand on the broad administration field of the County Board.

I can, for instance, well recollect the feats of Larry Lacey and Mick Parr who won the Novice Doubles in 1958 to be followed in latter years by the victories of John Foskin, Tommy Kearney, Eamonn Breen, Jim Curran, Nick Deevy, Paddy Boylan, Joe Kelly, Christy Drudy and Paddy Breen.

Tommy Land was another star performer who emerged from Ballsbridge to put his name on many trophies some three to five years ago. He was possibly one of the most complete players the club ever produced but, just when he was on the verge of entering senior ranks, his clubmates were disappointed to learn of a premature retirement.

Success-wise the club has had lean years too, as can be evidenced from the records of 1965 and 1966


which indicate that none of their players attained prominence in County leagues or championships. However, that spell has now passed and at the present time such players as Tom Ryan, Tim Dwyer, Larry Lacey, Paddy Breen, Tom Dwyer and Kevin McGrath are all in the running for major honours.

When a sports club flourishes like the J. M. O'B. Handball Club, it is inevitable that one finds its grass-roots are embedded in the vibrance of an enthusiastic committee or a sheer dedicated administrator. Very little investigation is needed to find out that in this instance the pendulum swings very heavily in favour of one John Foskin. He, in fact, is the real instrumentalist of handball at Ballsbridge.

They speak highly of him in the Bakery, and rightly so, for this Mullinavat man, genial yet outspoken, is one of those unobtrusive workers who do so much

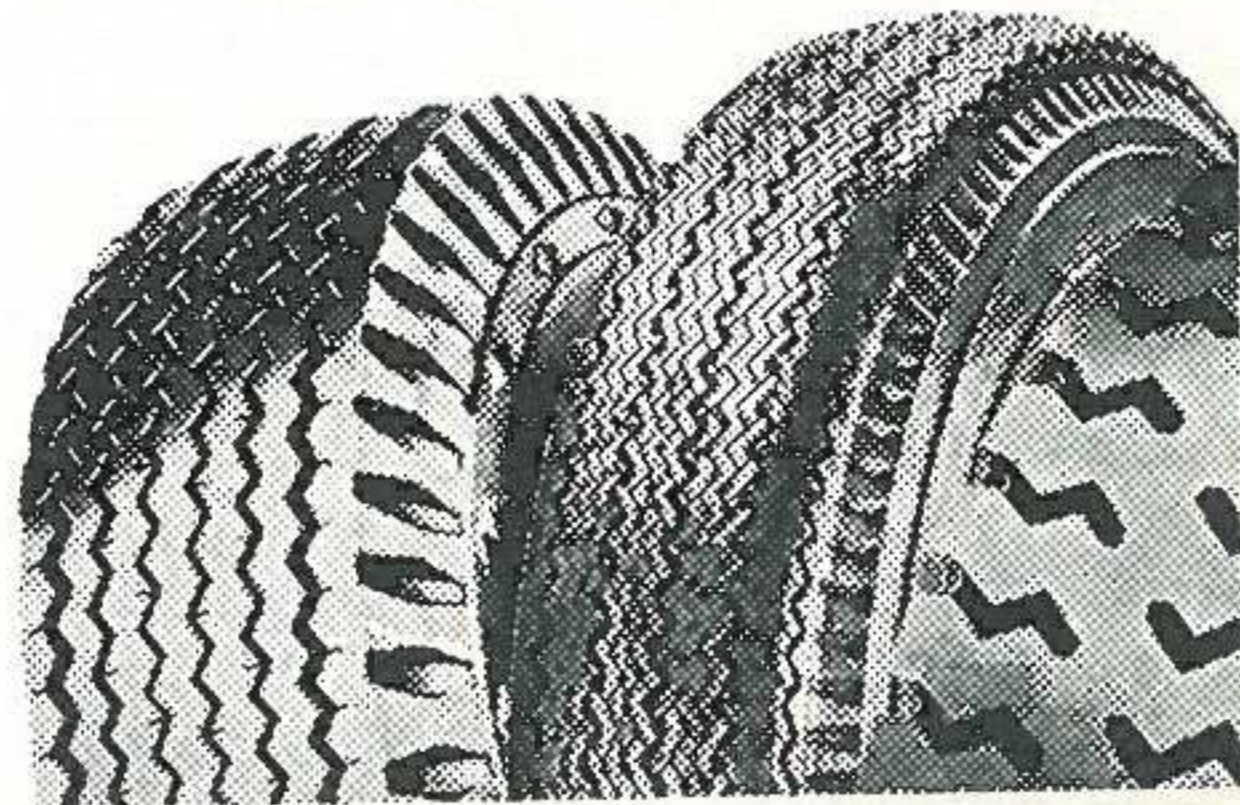
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MOTORISTS WISE ECONOMISE with...

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● From Page 11.

towards the advancement of the Association. Since its inception, John has been on the Committee of the club, sharing in its many successes, yet never daring to turn his back on it in times of tribulation.

His worth has also been recognised at County Board level where in the position of Chairman he has guided Dublin most successfully for the past two years. It is interesting to note that John for the past seventeen years has been a member of the famed Faughs hurling team. Even still he is not hesitant to wield the caman for the club if called upon.

A special tribute must also be reserved for Paddy Boylan and Dan Aherne. They are ever at the ready to give a helping hand where the interests of the club are to be served.

As, in all clubs, there are members who did their bit either as

players or administrators for a time and then departed the scene. Normally replacements are not that easy to come by, but in Ballsbridge this problem is non-existent.

At random such men, who very definitely pull their weight, as Pat Breen, Andy O'Connell, Tom Dwyer, Tim Dwyer, Ronnie Bruen, Kevin McGrath, Tom Ryan, Eamonn Breen, Jim Kennedy and Larry Lacey, come to mind.

Well, for own part, as long as the original pioneers retain an active interest, and committee members remain imbued with the present unselfish dedication, handball at Ballsbridge will not be given any opportunity to become dormant.

The only note of pessimism that could possibly be sounded is the fact that the club has no playing quarters that members can call home. Even in the early days of the club a "knock-about" was

Pictured at the annual dinner of the Johnston, Mooney and O'Brien Handball Club: Front row (l. to r.): T. Dwyer, J. Kelly, P. Grange, R. Bruen. Back row (l. to r.): J. Foskin, S. Clerkin, D. Aherne, M. Sullivan (Dublin senior player), P. Boylan.

possible during lunch hour, on the old stable wall. Unfortunately for handball, progress deemed that it should go, so now the members are compelled to seek practice elsewhere.

On the other hand it must be deemed a certainty that the management of Johnston, Mooney and O'Brien are not oblivious to the success and achievements of the Firm's handballers. In that context it is not out of place to assume that the provision of a ballcourt is ever a concern of the management. Let's hope so!

TOP TEN

THIS month's Top Ten lists are based on individual inter-county performances during the period from Sunday, June 11, to Sunday, July 16, inclusive.

Clare-based Tipperaryman, Tom Ryan, heads the hurling list as a result of first-class performances with his adopted county against both Limerick and Galway. Tipperary's ever-green Theo English is in second place.

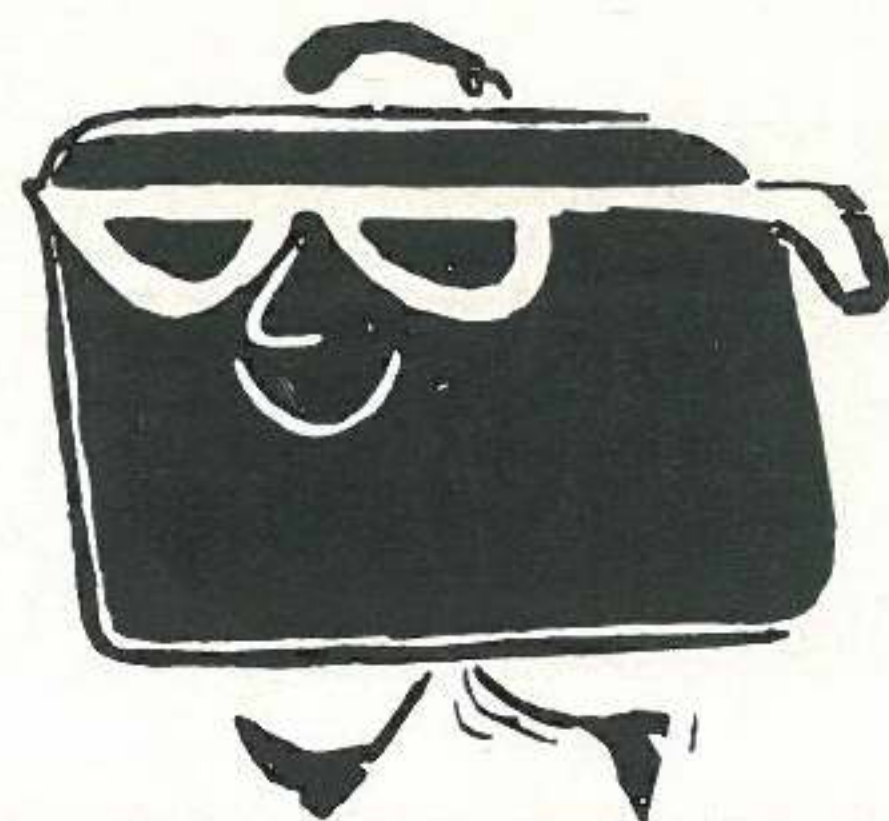
Tony McTeague, the Offaly scorer-in-chief, tops the football list, followed by Sean O'Neill of Down and Mayo's Joe Langan.

HURLING

1. Tom Ryan (Clare).
2. Theo English (Tipperary).
3. Liam Danaher (Clare).
4. Tony Wall (Tipperary).
5. Eddie Keher (Kilkenny).
6. Olly Walsh (Kilkenny).
7. Donie Nealon (Tipperary).
8. Dan Quigley (Wexford).
9. Mick Foley (Waterford).
10. Peter Cosgrove (Galway).

FOOTBALL

1. Tony McTeague (Offaly).
2. Sean O'Neill (Down).
3. Joe Langan (Mayo).
4. Joe Corcoran (Mayo).
5. Charlie Gallagher (Cavan).
6. Seamus Taggart (Tyrone).
7. Colm McAlarney (Down).
8. John Morley (Mayo).
9. Billy Morgan (Cork).
10. Jackie Devine (Longford).



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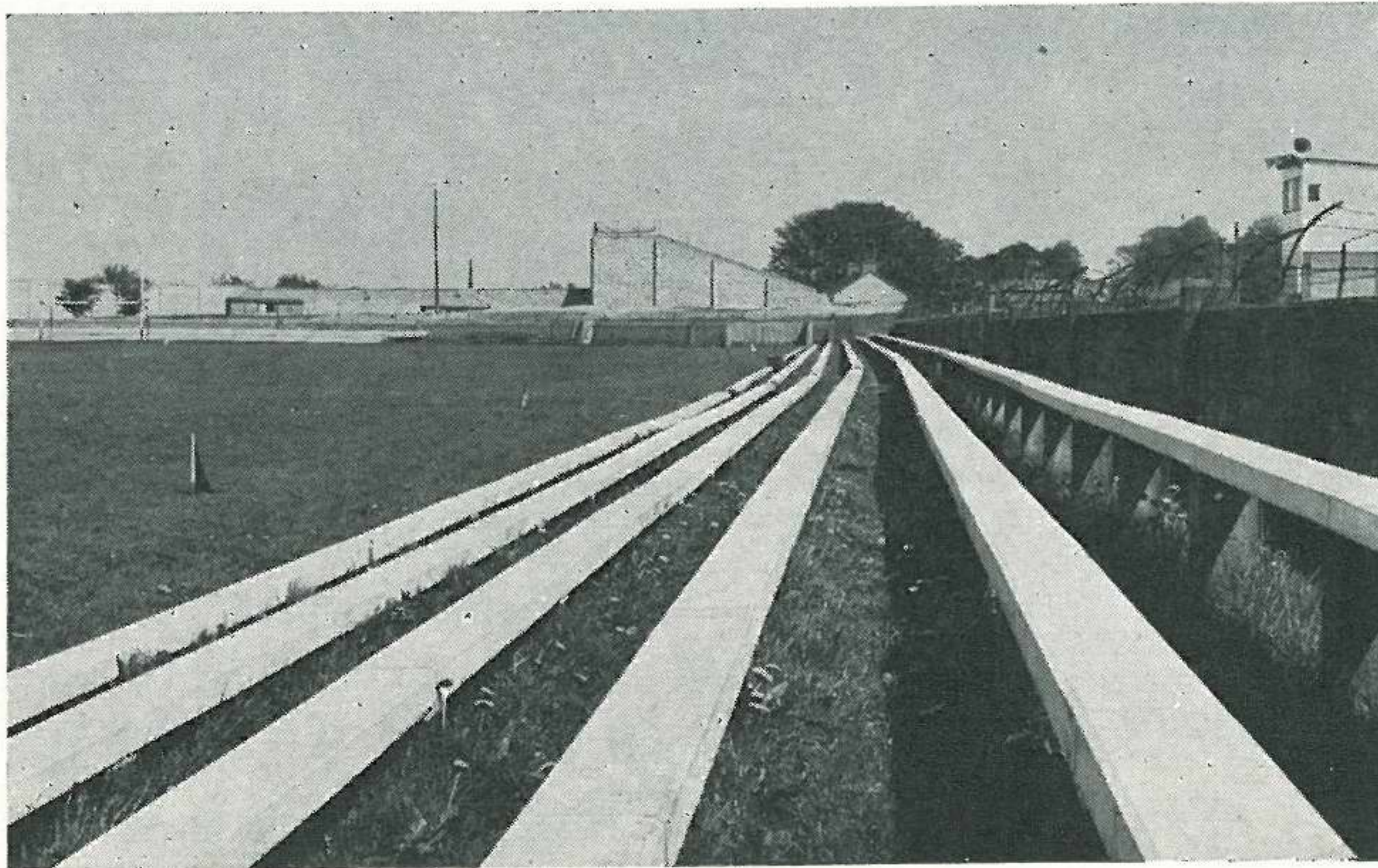
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MOONDHARRIG'S DIARY

AUGUST has been for more than forty years the traditional semi-final month in the G.A.A. championships. The fact that August is also the traditional month for holidays for the vast majority of people has also added greatly to the crowds and the atmosphere at these semi-final matches.

One great pity, of course, is that nowadays we have semi-finals in football only. The hurling semi-finals, which used to be such great attractions in their own right, have gone with the wind these ten years, and more is the shame on us that we have left hurling decline to such a sorry pass.

Indeed it is one of the great arguments for the Open Draw that we would have All-Ireland semi-finals once again. However, never being one who believed in destructive criticism, here, as I have so often done before, I am going to put forward a helpful suggestion, even though very few people have ever listened to other suggestions that I have made down the years.

Now, my suggestion this time would be a simple method of providing All-Ireland semi-finals, and something of the Open Draw, without interfering in any way with the provincial championships as at present constituted.

I would suggest that the provincial finals in Munster (including Galway, of course), and in Leinster, be played out in those provinces in the usual fashion, but that both finalists in each province should qualify for the All-Ireland hurling semi-finals. In these games the Munster champions would play the Leinster runners-up in

one semi-final, while the Leinster champions would play the Munster runners-up in the second.

That system would provide us with a pair of excellent semi-finals, and the certainty of a good final to follow, and yet would, at the same time, detract in no way from the revenue of the Provincial Councils.

A system very similar, except that League groups take the place of provinces has brought entirely new life to the closing stages of the National League in recent years, so I cannot, for the life of me, see why two similar semi-finals should not also bring tremendous added interest to the closing stages of the senior hurling championship every year.

The football semi-finals are, of course, still great occasions, but nowadays, when they are all played at Croke Park (and I enjoy them all there), I often find myself thinking back nostalgically to some of the great semi-finals, both hurling and football in my time at provincial venues.

One of the first venues at which I saw an All-Ireland semi-final played outside Croke Park was at Birr in the early 30's when a Galway side which had so sensationally failed to Clare in the previous season gave the run around to All-Ireland champions Kilkenny for forty minutes and served up a really sparkling display of hurling in the process.

However, the Tribesmen ran out of steam in the last twenty minutes, and Kilkenny, reprieved for the second time that season, (Dublin had led them by four goals at half-time in the Leinster final at Wexford Park) availed of

the let-off to go on and beat Limerick in a hard-fought All-Ireland final.

The next exciting semi-final I remember was the football game between Kerry and Laois at Waterford in 1937. When I think back on it now it always seems to me that this was a really remarkable venue to which to bring these two counties.

But the old Urbs Intacta rose magnificently to the occasion, and so did the teams, for they gave us one of the most exciting football matches I was ever lucky enough to witness.

Even after 30 years I still carry two vivid impressions of that match. The first is that Laois must surely have won if Tommy Murphy, then only a school-boy, had not to retire injured; and the second is that Laois would have won anyway were it not for some amazing saves by Danno Keefe between the Kerry posts.

There were a couple of wonderful semi-finals in which Cavan took part. One, I think it was in 1934, when they lost narrowly, at Tuam, to Galway, a game of really wild excitement with the crowd, in high excitement, far in on the field before the long whistle ever blew.

The second was in 1937 when Cavan beat All-Ireland champions Mayo, at Mullingar, and every single member of the winning side was carried shoulder high all the way from Cusack Park, through the streets of the town, to their hotel.

Through the war years (or the Emergency years as we called them) the habit of playing the

● Continued Overleaf.

● **From Previous Page.**

football semi-finals at Croke Park became established and I have never been at a football semi-final down the country since.

On the other hand, it was after the Emergency that I saw the most exciting hurling semi-final of my life and both were at the same venue, Birr. In 1945 I thought Kil-

kenny lucky to beat Galway at the Offaly venue, but 1945 was only in the halfpenny place compared to what we saw on the same pitch almost exactly two years later.

There was tremendous confidence behind the Galwaymen that year for they had won the Railway Cup unassisted on Easter Sunday, beating the pick of Munster with something to spare. And they were up against a Kilkenny side that had failed to Tipperary in 1945, been routed by Cork in the 1946 All-Ireland final and had provided the bulk of the Leinster line-out that went down to Galway in the Railway Cup semi-final.

Galway had, therefore, every right, to hope that they could take Kilkenny in their stride and go on to win the All-Ireland title for the first time since 1923. And for a long time it looked as though they must do just that. Indeed they looked to have the game sewn up when they led by a couple of points with the game already into 'lost' time—there had been a great number of stoppages.

At this stage Galway missed more than one chance of clinching victory, and Kilkenny came back to balance the scores in a really hectic finish. At that a great number of the crowd began to leave the ground under the impression that the result must be a draw and everybody was saying Galway should have won.

But the drama of that remarkable game was not yet over. The referee felt that, due to the many stoppages earlier, there was still some time left. He allowed another thirty seconds, and during that time one of the Kilkennymen—was it Terry Leahy or Jimmy Langton?—sent the ball sailing high between the Galway posts and the Noremens snatched belated victory.

And to over-brim Galway's cup of sorrow, Kilkenny went on to win the All-Ireland on the first Sunday in September.



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## DECLINE

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By VINCENT MURRIHY

AS an ardent member of the G.A.A. I never liked to see any stronghold of Gaelic games failing badly. But I feel that this is the position in Limerick where, according to an article by J. O'S. in the "Limerick Leader" the prospects of the county hurling team 'suddenly nose-dived back to the gloom and depression that has haunted Limerick Gaeldom for the best part of 27 years'.

I hope all that he has to say in his dismal picture of the Gaelic scene is not correct, because if it is then one can only conclude that Limerick is nearly lost to the G.A.A.

He traced the success of the side in 1966 and pointed out that they certainly held out great promise for 'big things' this year. But then came a crash in the form of a rare hiding by Wexford in the National League semi-final and

this was followed by the exit from the All-Ireland championship race at the hand of neighbours Clare, whom they had previously beaten in the League.

J. O'S. demands an immediate inquiry into the state of hurling in the county and goes on:

"To talk about hurling or football in places where sportsmen congregate in the city is like inviting trouble. Even the more loyal Gaels, bitterly disappointed at the recent heavy defeats by Clare and Wexford seem to be more convinced than ever that Limerick's future as a hurling power is non-existent".

According to a county Board official whom he interviewed the attitude seemed to be that the first round championship games were very seldom taken seriously; the real work only started if the team was going well.

He traced the effects that the slump has been having on hurling in the city and county. Four teams — Young Ireland's, St. Patrick's, Claughan and St. Brendan's were forced to give walk-overs in under age ranks in the week immediately following the defeat by Clare.

He went along to Dean Punch G.A.A. Park to see two juvenile fixtures but neither of them took place because teams failed to make an appearance. But as he passed through nearby Caledonian Park (a soccer ground) he beheld no less than ninety boys engaged in soccer competitions which commenced at 2.30 and would not be concluded at 9.00 p.m. Many of these boys were chosen to take part in the Gaelic fixtures the same day but obviously gave preference to soccer.

A few days previously J. O'S. visited Rathbane grounds to see a first-round under-16 hurling game and from the two teams involved he counted no less than 13 prominent soccer players.

"There was a time", he comments, "when soccer and rugby were confined solely to the city, but now it is a common sight to see teams from G.A.A. strongholds like Askeaton, Newcastle West, Abbeyfeale and Castleconnell to mention but a few taking part in these games."

● Continued Overleaf.



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G.S.



PETER OWENS

● From Page 17.

He can only conclude that the G.A.A. is rapidly on the decline generally in the county while other codes are rapidly making ground. For this he points out that in the other codes, games are played more regularly, and there is much better social life, more trophies to be won, etc.

J. O'S's concluding comments are painful to anyone who is genuinely concerned about the welfare of the G.A.A.:

"Dean Punch Park is lying idle most evenings of the week while at nearby Caledonian Park more than half-a-dozen games are taking place.

"There can be no hiding the truth. The many city clubs are finding it extremely difficult to field at full strength, and more often than not they have to fall back on illegal players to make a full fifteen. Such situations are certain to continue until Limerick can re-establish themselves as a force in the hurling world. To stop the slide is not going to be easy, but unless we make an absolute and promising recovery in the immediate future our ailments are going to be with us for many more years to come".

Being an outsider I am reluctant to offer advice to those in charge of Limerick affairs. However, I would say to the Limerick officials: take courage into your hands and set about re-building the Association in the city. Make the county senior team realise that the whole future of Gaelic games in the city is in their hands and that it is on their displays that the well-being of the games depend.

There is no doubt, though, but that this is a major undertaking and one which should concern the G.A.A. authorities at the highest level. Limerick may well need some outside help and advice in this matter and if so it should be made available. There is much too much at stake here.

How times have changed

BY the time this August issue of GAELIC SPORT appears on the book stalls, another Ulster final will have been played. What a fascinating transformation has come over the Ulster senior decider when one compares the 1967 final, played in luxurious and spacious surroundings, and before tens of thousands of spectators, with the first recorded Ulster final played at Drogheda on a scorching June day in 1888. In that little-publicised final of eighty years ago, Maghera McFinns (representing Cavan) and Inniskeen Grattans (representing Monaghan) finished all-square at two points each.

A report of that particular Ulster final states that big crowds from both the competing counties flocked into Drogheda, but the gate receipts did not even reach a three-digit figure. Compare this with the "takings" of the last twelve Ulster finals, which were as follows:—

- 1955 (at Clones)—£3,138-15-3.
- 1956 (at Clones)—£3,236-15-7.
- 1957 (at Clones)—£3,205-6-6.
- 1958 (at Clones)—£2,713-12-6.
- 1959 (at Clones)—£3,542-4-4.
- 1960 (at Clones)—£3,817-12-0.
- 1961 (at Belfast)—£4,841-4-0.
- 1962 (at Belfast)—£5,300-18-9.
- 1963 (at Cavan)—£4,507-1-6.
- 1964 (at Belfast)—£3,517-9-6.
- 1965 (at Clones)—£3,778-1-6.
- 1966 (at Belfast)—£1,701-10-0.

Before the turn of the century, Ulster finals were dominated by Cavan, who took nine Ulster titles in succession from 1891 to 1899, inclusive, a feat never since equalled by any Ulster county.

Nearest approach to this record was made by the Breffni men themselves, who made a seven-in-a-row from 1931 to 1937, and yet another seven successive titles from 1939 to 1945. Best record by any other Ulster county was by Antrim, who had a very successful five-in-a-row from 1909 to 1913.

Armagh's first success in an Ulster final came in 1890, but the Orchard County later lost to Middleton (representing Cork) in the All-Ireland semi-final at Clonturk Park. That history-making Armagh side was: Joseph Donnelly, James McGerrigan, Patrick Knipe, Hugh O'Neill, Thomas Allen, Patrick Molloy, Jack Mullan, James Degan, Jack Fitzpatrick, James Lennon, John Vallely, Henry Thomas, William Thomas, Ned Mallon, James Corr, Bernard Corr, William Slevin, Owen McKenna, John Mulholland, Hugh Carbery and Charles O'Neill. Armagh again reached the following year's Ulster final but were beaten by Cavan.

Antrim were also early contestants in Ulster finals and took their first Northern championship in 1900 and held tight to it for the following two years. They took it again in 1904 and, after success by both Cavan and Monaghan, started their successful five-in-a-row run in 1909. The earlier part of the second decade was completely dominated by the Glensmen, whose hurlers were also in rampant mood at this stage, taking the Ulster senior hurling crown on six successive occasions—1908 to 1913.

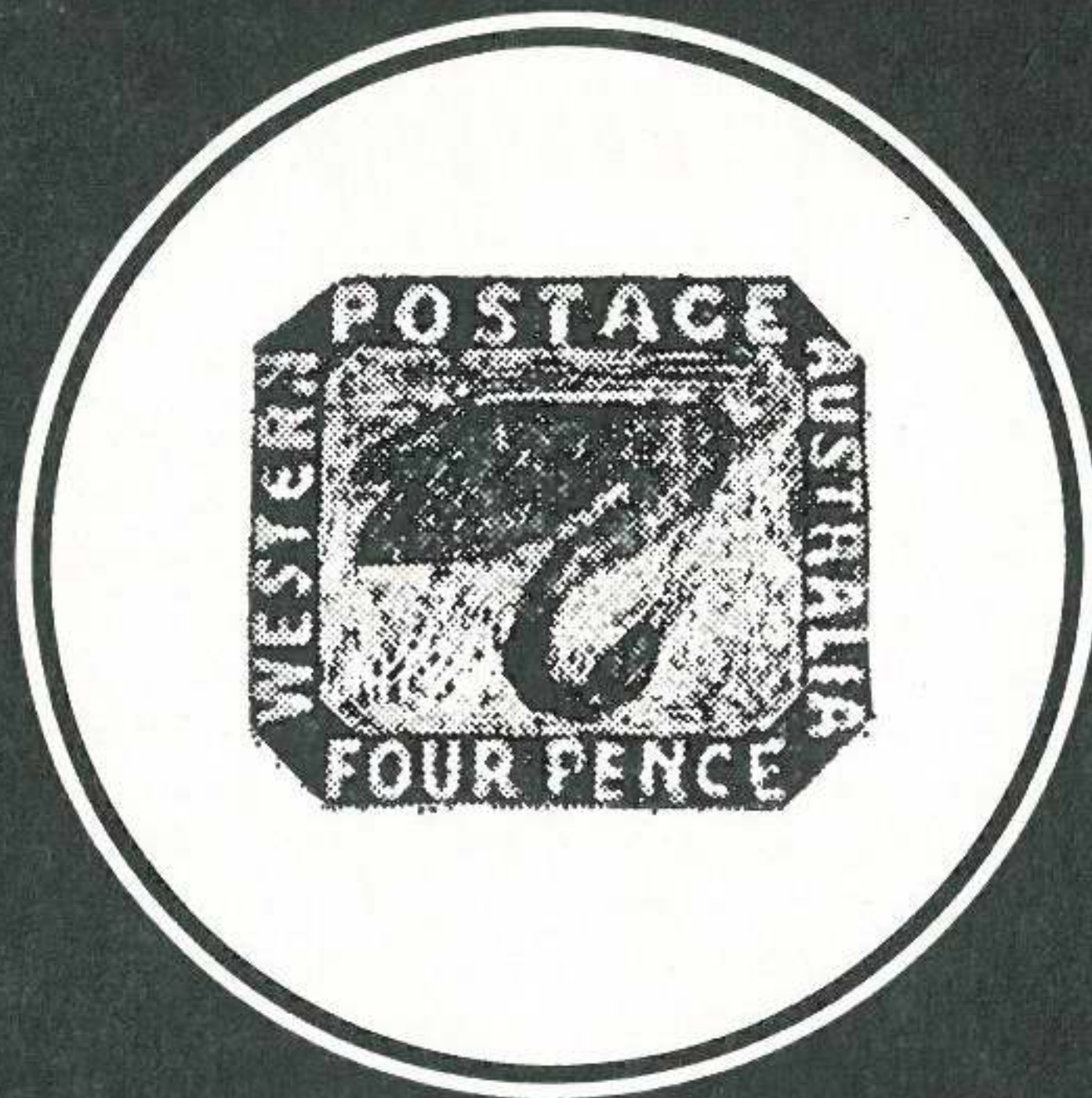
In fact, in 1911, Antrim mentors had more faith in their hurlers than in their footballers — so much so that they picked the hurling side before they selected the football team, and including H. Sheehan and others, who would otherwise have been automatic selections on the football side. The hurlers, however, lost to Limerick in the All-Ireland semi-final, while the footballers defeated Kilkenny (3-1 to 1-1) in their All-Ireland semi-final on the same day. Antrim thus qualified for their first-ever football final, but lost to Cork. The following year, with both Ulster titles again under their belts, they beat Kerry (3-5 to 0-2) in the All-Ireland football semi-final but lost to Louth by five points in the final.

Derry first won their way into the Ulster final against Monaghan in 1907, but apparently became involved in a crux over travel arrangements and failed to field. Fermanagh first competed in the Ulster S.F.C. in 1905, when they were beaten by Monaghan (0-4 to 0-1) at Carrickmacross, but did not reach an Ulster final until thirty years later, when they lost by 2-6 to 2-1 to Cavan in the 1935 decider at Belturbet. Their last appearance in an Ulster final was in 1945. For the record, those 1905 and 1945 Fermanagh teams were:—

1905—E. McGurrin, F. Curry, M. Martin, T. Clarke, T. P. Clarke, and J. Martin (Shamrocks), P. Sheehan, J. McCarthy and P. Faulkner (O'Neills), C. Murphy, N. Corrigan, N. J. Corrigan and

● To Page 21.

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● From Page 19.

H. Murphy (Art MacMurroughs), J. Reilly, F. McManus and George Wilson (Sons of Erin).

1945—J. Gallagher, E. McQuillan, B. Gallagher, M. O'Grady, P. Keenan, R. Shannon, P. Duffy, T. Durnian, B. Cassidy, B. Lunney, P. Fox, P. Clarke, C. Creamer, A. Breslin and G. O'Reilly.

One of the greatest Ulster finals on record was that of 1929 when Monaghan and Cavan played a draw at Breffni Park (1-4 each). Monaghan won the replay 1-10 to 0-7 before 10,000 spectators at Carrickmacross. The Ulster final of the following year (1930) between the same two counties was a complete reversal of the 1929 final as Cavan fielded only a token force and Monaghan won easily. There had been a dispute over the venue (Carrickmacross) and the Breffni side was not at full strength. During the War years, these near neighbours met in two Ulster finals, with Cavan winning both—1943 at Cavan and 1944 at Clones.

Tyrone first competed in the Ulster senior football championship in 1889, but did not reach the final stage until 1941, when they were beaten 3-9 to 0-5 by Cavan at the Athletic Grounds, Armagh. The previous year (1940) Down had made their first appearance in an Ulster final, losing heavily (4-10 to 1-5) to Cavan at Breffni Park. Derry also fell to Cavan when they first contested an Ulster final. This was in 1955, when the Breffni representatives won by 0-11 to 0-8 on a scorching hot summer day at Clones.

Last county in the province to reach the Ulster senior football championship final was Donegal, who had to wait until 1963 before they had a team strong enough to contest an Ulster decider. They lost 2-11 to 1-4 to Down at Cavan's Breffni Park.

Some Ulster finals have been played outside the province. As

*Séamus O Riain,
Uachtarán,
Cumann Lúth-
cleas Gael,
congratulates
Seamus O'Hanlon
after his great
victory in the 1967
Ras Tailteann.
This was
O'Hanlon's third
successive victory
in the 10-day
event and his
fourth over-all.*



already stated, the first recorded Ulster final (1888) was played at Drogheda. Dundalk was the venue for the 1931 Ulster final in which Cavan beat Armagh by a single point—scored in the last minute of the game. Dundalk was again the venue for the 1942 final in which Cavan swamped Down 5-11 to 1-3. In 1939, Cavan and Armagh contested the final at Castleblayney, but this proved a hectic encounter and the game was unfinished. The replay was fixed for Croke Park — the only Ulster final ever to be played at G.A.A. headquarters. Cavan won by 2-3 to 1-4.

The present Ulster Final Pro-

gramme idea was started by Secretary Gerry Arthurs in 1957, and these very informative and attractive booklets are among the finest of their kind in the country. They might, however, include some more interesting items such as famous Ulster teams or teams which contested previous Ulster finals, etc., etc. The one or two little errors might also be corrected. After all, Derry did win one Ulster senior hurling championship—away back in 1903 they defeated Antrim by 2-7 to 2-5 in the final at Belfast on October 18, and I'm quite sure the Derry folk would like to have it recorded for posterity.



CYRIL DUNNE.

END
OF



MATTIE McDONAGH.

AN
ERA



PAT DONNELLAN.

THEIR GLORY WILL NEVER DIE

By JAY DRENNAN

THEY shook hands and clapped their victors on the back. Then the joyous crowd engulfed them, but this time, they shouldered past quite ignoring them. Wearily, they pushed unnoticed through the throng to their dressing room—subdued, disappointed, flat. But, also, strangely relieved. It was all over at last. The glory, the adulation, the succeeding victories, the pressure. Now the spotlight had shifted; they could relax in the shadows a little, for the first time in four years.

So it was that Galway fell. Honourably they bestrode the football world, honourably they fell. In defeat as in their long-strung list of successes they showed the cleanly, upright ideal of conduct by which they have been walking examples of all this Association stands for; our debt to them is great: the honours the Association has given them the opportunity of winning themselves, are no greater than the honour they have done the Association.

Like veteran warriors from prolonged action in the front lines, they have deserved their furlough. If some of them call it quits, or some others never again touch the

heights, they have all well and graciously earned the right to joggle their grandchildren on their knees, and tell them how "once upon a time" grandad beat all of Ireland. And a very good time it was, say I.

Degrees of greatness will be argued—they always are. But the place of these men in the Halls of Fame is assured. Where sporting men and women come together in years ahead, and when the talk turns on football, the names of Mattie McDonagh, the Donnellans, Cyril Dunne, Seamus Leydon, Martin Newell, Noel Tierney and Bosco McDermott, and all the others, will filter in and out through their talk, twined through other names of other generations . . . Larry Stanley, Dick Fitzgerald, John Joe Sheehy, Joe Barrett, John Joe O'Reilly, Sean Purcell. . . . They have achieved greatness on one of life's roads! their vintage needs no bush.

It is sad always to see a great team topple. I was sad to see them so reduced to a flicker of their fire. And they have been such a delightful team to watch that there were few who truly wanted to see them beaten, just

for the sake of change. I am delighted for Mayo, of course, and clearly they have talents and sleight of foot and hand to offer us, which cannot be denied.

But, Galway had been our constant familiars, like well-known friends; we knew their little idiosyncracies and waited for them—Cyril Dunne taking those careful backward steps, adjusting the waistband of his shorts, and planting his hands on his hips, the ritual preparation for frees; or Mattie McDonagh when he got possession in a crowd, shaking himself like a horse bothered by flies; or the curious spavined action of Pat Donnellan on a solo run.

There is no doubt that they were a great team; in any age only a truly great team could win three All-Ireland titles and miss another in the final, all in a row. How they rank among the all time greats, is a thing for long unavailing debate. It is, however, to be considered that they owed something for the universally high appeal which they had to the fact that their entry coincided with the big impact of television on Gaelic games. Their audience was in millions rather than thousands when they displayed their wares

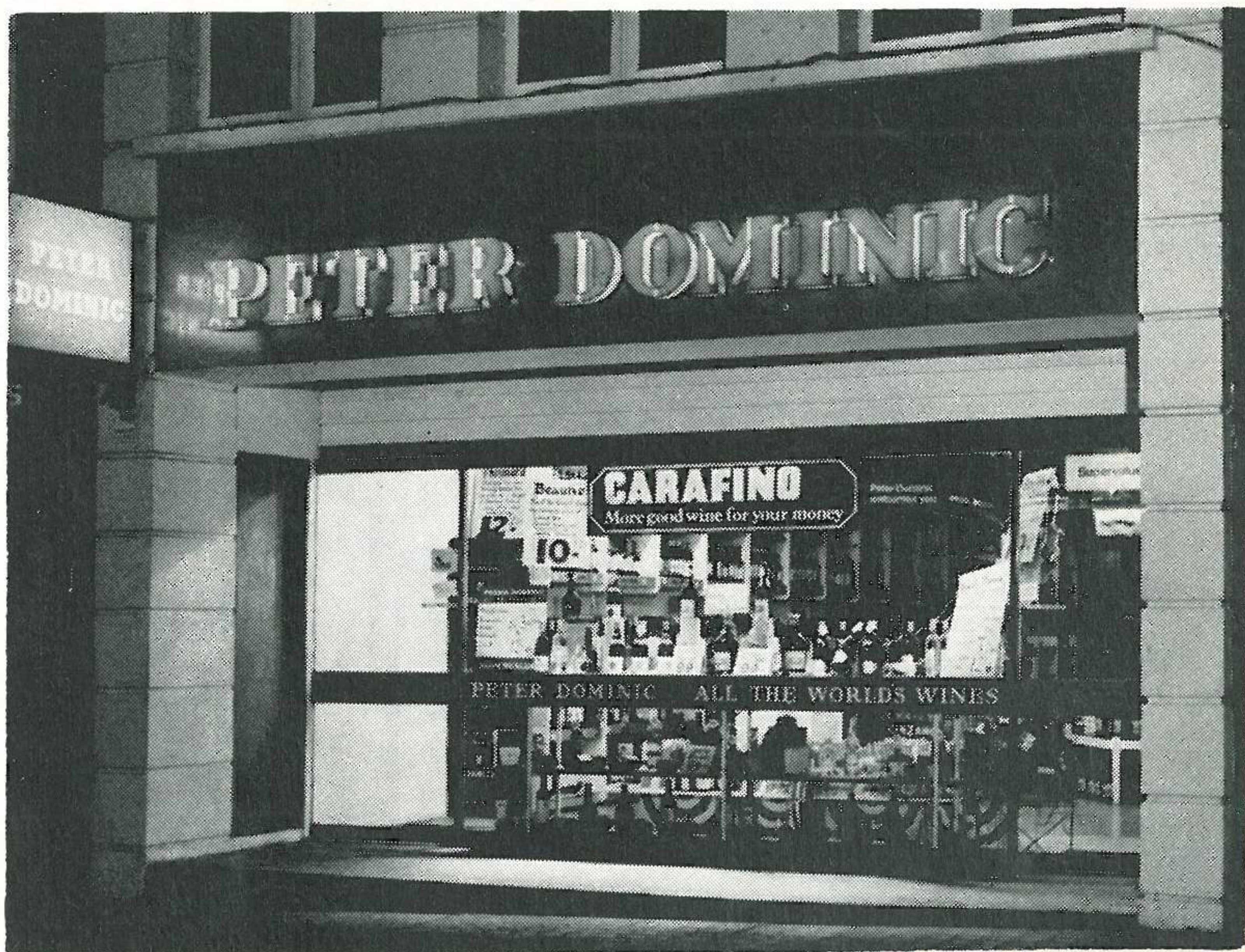
on All-Ireland occasions. People who would not know more than the name of Galway before TV could tell you about the styles and achievements of the individual Galway men. It will be hard to fill their places with equal credit to the G.A.A. as a whole.

The worst effect of their long trek was mental. You could imagine it in the results from New York in the League two-leg final; the strange absence of final kick to make the margin closer the first day, and the inability to keep the heat on, the second day. You could see it in their game against

Cavan in Wembley, when they could not seem to force themselves into first place in the dash for the ball, nor force themselves to shoot their scores from some old-style build-up. But, it was saddest of all apparent in the Mayo match, where they ran willingly and well, but their defence kept funnelling backwards and their attack pressing sideways. They were unable to summon the freshness of approach so well exemplified by Mayo, who had no fear of committing themselves completely into every defensive clash, meeting the danger near its source, and

whose forward work was the ideal of enterprising directness.

So the scene changes, and in its change we see the prospect of pleasurable hours watching resurgent Mayo; in their time of ascendancy in the 'thirties and their last great team at the end of the 'forties and beginning of the 'fifties, there was a thrill and joy all its own about their play. "Mayo football" was then as charged with meaning as "Galway football" has been these last four years. There is every possibility that it can be so again . . . and soon.



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Hurling at lowest ebb?

NINETEEN SIXTY-SEVEN has proved a most disappointing year for Munster hurling and some of the leading counties assert the game was never so low in the province.

The defeat of the crowd-pulling pair—Cork and Limerick in the opening round, deprived the Munster Council of anything approaching a record season—for the big cities pack in the spectators in big numbers when they reach the exciting closing stages.

Inquests are already being held in some of the counties on their poor performance and I hope to return to this subject at a later date and report what steps are being taken to remedy what appears a serious situation.

TRALEE SOCIAL CENTRE

Kerry have pioneered a new departure in the development of social life within the G.A.A. With the erection, at Austin Stack Park, Tralee, of the first big pavilion, designed as a Social Centre where dinners, dances and other functions can be held, in addition to providing four first-class dressing rooms, complete with all modern conveniences, including showers and toilets.

It is planned to have restaurant facilities available on all occasions

The hurlers are up in arms about the grouping proposed for them, and they—very rightly so—see themselves the Cinderella of the Cork, Limerick, Clare, Galway, Dublin line-up. Most fans will agree that inclusion in this company would be of no help to hurling in the county, considering the dismal record in the Munster Intermediate championship. The Kerry mentors have countered with a suggested grouping with Galway, Offaly and Laois, and this is certainly a much more realistic approach.

Division One of the League should be confined to the big lights of hurling—Dublin, Kilkenny, Cork, Limerick, Wexford, Waterford, Tipperary and Clare; and it would do all the counties a lot of good if a reversion to the old system was agreed, whereby they all participated in the one group, with, if necessary, the top four playing off in semi-finals and final.

MOYVANE SPORTSFIELD

Moyvane Sportsfield Committee plan an expenditure of £2,000 on a boundary wall of some two hundred yards and seven feet high. Provision is also made for the erection of dressing rooms complete with all modern amenities.

McQuaid, at Holy Cross College, Clonliffe Road, Dublin.

DENIS PATRICK LYONS

Denis Patrick Lyons of Abbeyfeale, who has died, was a grand-nephew of the great Father Casey, the patriot Parish Priest of Abbeyfeale of Land League days, and a former Chairman of Limerick County Board G.A.A. "D. P."

whilst residing in Cork won a county senior football championship medal with the renowned Lees. He was also a member of the Cork City Battalion of the Irish Volunteers in the glorious years of the War of Independence. On returning to Abbeyfeale he developed extensive business and

● To Page 27.



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when games are being played, and it is hoped that participating teams will gather there after a match and that the social contact so established will help in the development of a spirit of friendliness and good will that will react to the general good of the Association.

The building is an ornate looking two-storey structure with viewing balcony. The total cost has been in the region of £23,500 of which Kerry County Board have provided the lion's share, £12,000. The Munster Council chipped in with £6,500 and the Central Council contributed £5,000.

The Kerry clubs are very much behind the project and they have agreed to forgo expenses for five years in order to assist the County Board make their contribution. This is a very fine gesture but one that should in the long run help the clubs, who will be thrown more on their own resources and forced to organise their own functions in order to bridge the financial gap.

KERRY ARE NOT SURE

There are mixed feelings in Kerry about the proposed new National League groupings.

Whilst all are agreed that there is only one worth while game to be expected from the Kilkenny, Kildare, Waterford opposition, the prospects of an easy passage in the earlier stages has its appeal in that it might be possible to rely more on a home selection and so avoid the hefty travelling problems previously encountered, and often so unwelcome in the late months of the year.

Dr. D. Geaney and his hard working committee are busy raising funds for the erection of dressing rooms fully equipped with showers, etc., at Castleisland Gaelic Grounds. A seven-a-side tournament in which teams from Cork, Limerick and Kerry participated proved a big attraction.

JERRY M. COLLINS

The death has occurred at the fine old age of eighty-five of Jerry M. Collins of Currans—an outstanding athlete in his day—and a man who pioneered collective training in the G.A.A. when he coached the Kerry team for the historic Croke Cup football ties with Louth—games that aroused nation-wide interest and proved so successful as to enable the Association to buy the old established City and Suburban Sports Field at Jones' Road, Dublin, which is now the National Stadium—Croke Park.

FORMER CLOONEY HURLER

Very Rev. Sean McNamara, P.P., Glastonbury, who has died, was a former Clooney hurler who played with the parish in its heyday during the late 1930's. When Father McNamara's remains were brought to his native Doora for burial, a guard of honour of his former hurling comrades was present and shouldered the coffin both at the airport and in the cemetery.

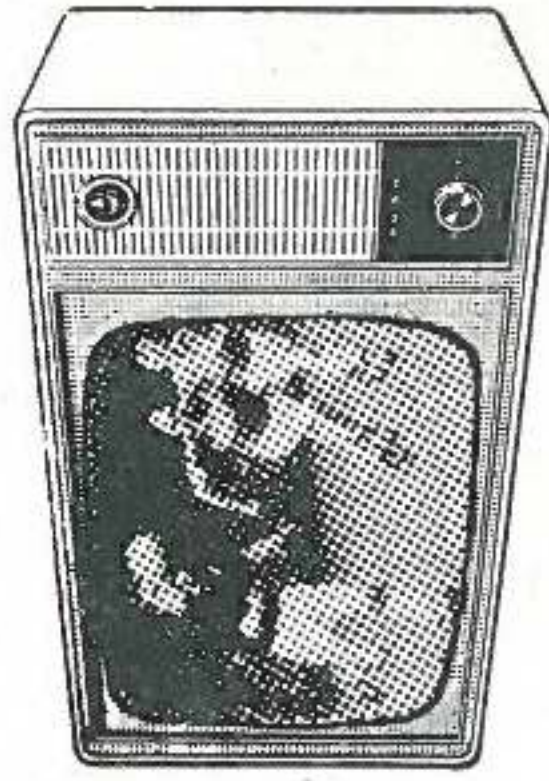
ORDAINED

Former Miltown Malbay and Clare County footballer, Father John Meade, a member of the Holy Ghost Congregation, was ordained recently by Most Rev. Dr.

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FOR THE SETS AND THE SERVICE

Are the Camogie players of to-day more
skilful than the pioneers of 60 years ago?

The old ladies say 'No'!

By AGNES HOURIGAN

THE most interesting argument about camogie I have heard for a long time took place during the opening of the new Dublin playing pitches in the Phoenix Park in the middle of June. There were a couple of ladies there who had played in the very earliest games in the Phoenix Park more than sixty years before and who had taken part in the very first Dublin camogie competitions.

These old-timers maintained that the players of their time were every bit as dexterous with the camog as are the greatest players of today, even though they were then hampered by the skirts that all but reached the ground. And yet, watching the exhibition game that followed the opening of the pitch, I could not but help wonder if those pioneers of the game were looking back through rose-coloured glasses, for the game we saw on that sunny June Sunday could not have been a finer exhibition of camogie as it is played at its best today.

True, the competitive element was lacking, it might have been a very good idea if someone had thought of providing a set of medals for the winners, but the fact that the Dublin Board were using this game as an unofficial trial match for the county team was very obviously present in the minds of many of the players.

And when it was all over, all I could say was this, that if the girls who first played camogie in the Phoenix Park more than sixty years ago were better than these players of the present they would need to have been very good in-

deed, because the effectiveness and artistry of many of the players in this game have never been surpassed in my time watching camogie.

A very pleasing feature of this Phoenix Park reopening was the fact that we had the privilege of seeing, back in the Dublin tunic for the day, one of the greatest players of them all, Annette Corrigan, in her prime the finest mid-fielder that Dublin has ever produced, and, as well, possibly the most sporting player I have ever seen in any game.

It was Annette Corrigan who, in the closing minutes of a particularly closely contested All-Ireland final, dropped ball and stick and went to the assistance of an injured opponent. She won half a dozen All-Ireland medals, was never on a losing Leinster side, and retired from inter-county play at the peak of her career, because she felt she might be keeping younger players off the team.

She has, however, continued to play inter-club camogie for U.C.D. and has contributed a great deal to the spread of the game by her work in the Leinster Colleges Council of which she is Secretary. It was a very nice gesture by the Dublin Board to insist that Annette field out in this North City versus South City game, and not alone did Annette show us many of the touches that made her the greatest player in the game, but she once more proved that no player can be a greater inspiration to any team than she, because, as you might well expect,

the South City selection won. Needless to say, Annette was their mid-fielder.

I was also extremely pleased to see among the attendance Miss Nuala Connolly. After all her father, the late Joseph Connolly, was, when Chairman of the Office of Public Works, a very good friend indeed of camogie. That was, of course, to be expected of him for he had a keen interest in the game, and another of his daughters, Dr. Ethna Connolly, captained U.C.D. to an Ashbourne Cup victory some twenty years ago, if my memory serves me right.

But the really extraordinary thing about the opening of the new pitches in the Park was that Sean O'Duffy was the man who was there to perform the opening ceremony. And Sean O'Duffy, organiser of the game since 1911, was also the man who secured the first camogie grounds there, from Michael Collins, in the early 1920's. He got the second ground about a dozen years later, and he was there once more in 1967 to open these new pitches.

Nobody will ever be able to assess the work that Sean O'Duffy has done for camogie down the years. If organisers had profited by his example at local level, I have no doubt that camogie throughout the country to-day would be almost as strong as is the Gaelic Athletic Association.

It was also revealing at that Dublin occasion to hear the old-timers talk about the arguments that were put up against camogie

sixty years ago. It was no game for girls! It was bringing the young womanhood of Ireland into disrepute! Woman's place was in the home and not on the playing fields, which were the prerogative of one sex only! But the sad part of it was that I am afraid the same mentality is to be found here and there in Ireland yet.

I hope I am not right, but I fear that I am, when I say that the big opposition to camogie in some parts of the country is this, that the men still do not believe that Irish girls are entitled to have a game of their own, that they have no right to spend their spare time, any part of their spare time, playing organised games in the open air, and that camogie is no more than a nuisance. Oh, I know you will not be told exactly that in so many words, but the inference is there just the same.

And so, because they do not get a fair deal in this respect, the girls are taking off to the cities and the bright lights at home and overseas, and who can blame them?

When the girls leave a locality, the young men do not linger long there afterwards. Why should they? In fact, I feel that one of the ways of helping to curb emigration, one of the obvious ways, would be the formation of a camogie team in every parish to give the girls a focal point for their activities. As well as everything else, it would help develop their pride in their own locality and if the club were run in conjunction with the local G.A.A. club it could provide a gathering point for all the young and Gaelic-minded people in the parish.

But I have said all this so often before, that I am beginning to wonder if there is any real point in saying it again. Still, if I make even one convert to my viewpoint in every county each time, I suppose I will have made some progress.

● From Centre Pages.

farming interests and built up a noted Friesian herd.

UNIQUE DISTINCTION

A man who won an All-Ireland hurling medal with an association rival to the G.A.A., playing for Limerick against Wexford; and who also figured in the 1910 All-Ireland G.A.A. Final, in which Wexford beat Limerick; has died at an advanced age. He was Mick Feely of Croom, described by many old timers as one of the greatest centre half forwards of his day, and a remarkably accurate scoring man off frees. His active span was a lengthy one and he was a warm favourite with comrades and opponents alike.

DAN O'KEEFFE

Fermoy born Dan O'Keeffe ("Danno") who has died, held the record as holder of the greatest number of All-Ireland Football medals. Seven times he was on winning Kerry teams, and, in addition he won a Junior All-Ireland medal in 1930. He captured all the great honours a footballer could command—County, Munster and All-Ireland championships; National Leagues and Railway Cups. He had the distinction, too, of playing in the only All-Ireland Senior Championship final to be decided on foreign soil, but he was on the losing side on that occasion—the 1947 Cavan v. Kerry decider at the Polo Grounds, New York.

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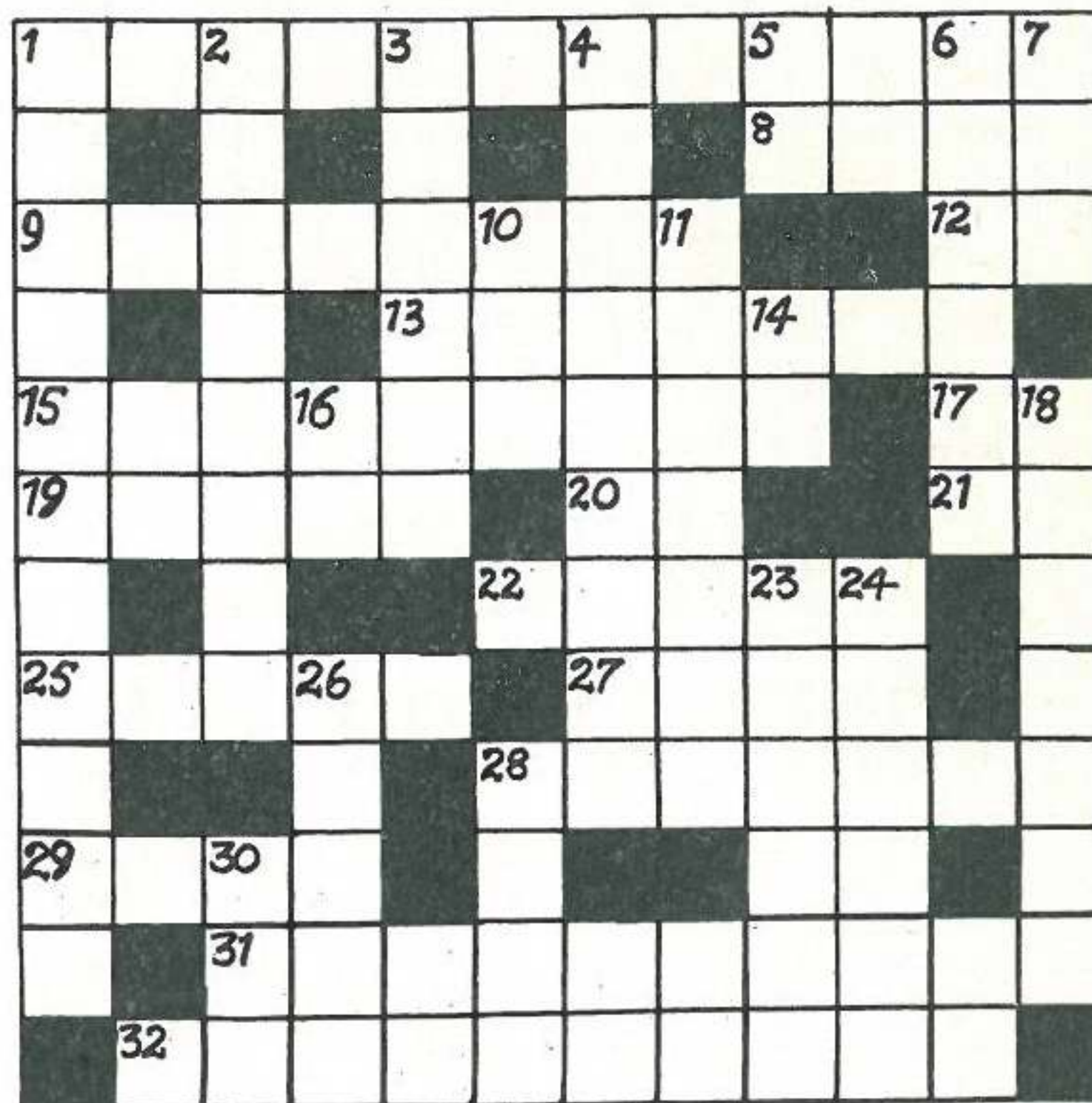
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Eireann

CLUES ACROSS :

1. Some teams adopt this policy regardless of sportsmanship. (3, 2, 3, 4)
8. A much travelled Clare footballer— P. J. (4)
9. Trophy competed for in Ulster section of National League. (5, 3)
12. Indefinite article. (2)
13. If there are — — there will be no replays. (2, 5)
15. Rin Tin Cis is genuine and inward. (9)
17. Portion of Boo becomes exclamation of awe. (2)
19. When approached from other side they are entrances. (5)
20. His Majesty, possibly ? (1, 1)
21. His 7-7 in a match was quite a tally. Initials. (1, 1)
22. A slog for what wins matches. (5).
25. Wides. (5)
27. URUW (sic) (4).
28. Dangerous forward who has been missing from Galway line-out for some time. (1, 6)
29. Irish hat, reversed to make exclamation of praise for the boy. (4)
31. Seems like two people's Christian names, but it's a Dublin forward, in fact. (5, 5)
32. Down's most experienced minor in last year's All-Ireland. (1, 9).

CLUES DOWN :

1. Offaly goalie a few years ago. (6, 5)
2. Vine gate towards defensive tactics. (8)
3. A court-game in nets, which is excellent training for football and hurling. (6).
4. Crowd reaction to a score. (4, 5)
5. A little company. (2)



6. Part of the year. (6)
7. Nat is bronzed. (3)
10. Dowdall. (3)
11. A grade of competition—one of the low ones. (7)
14. Athletic Club ? (1, 1)
16. In brief, the correct foot to use. (2)
18. Wicklow, Leinster star half-back. (7)
23. Home of Clann Eireann, one of our model clubs. (6)
24. Verse W to find that deceptive side-step. (6)
26. RCHEC (sic) (5)
28. Hairdresser would make good corner forward—both need to be able to ——. (4)
30. Yearly club get together. (1, 1, 1.)

Solution: Page 48.



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Stíl cliste, suntasach a chleactaigh siad; ag an am céanna níor thréig siad an pheil bhunúsach a chleactaigh muintir na Gaillimhe ariamh, an t-ardbhreith agus an raid fhada agus bé an meascán stíle a ba ciontsiocair lena n-éifeacht. Duine ar duine ba pheileadóirí chuhasacha iad foireann na Gaillimhe agus is trua, ar bhealach, go bhfuil a ré thart. Ar bhealach eile, is fearr gan an craobh bheith in aon dúiche ró-fhada.

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Sna laethanta seo na mion-sciortaí cloisim an corr-ógánach a rá go bhfuil sciortaí na gcailíní sa chluiche chamógí ró-fhada. Cé nach bhfuilim ró-oilte ar na rúdaí seo, ceapaim gur cuma fén ngiorracht fhaid is a bhíonn riteoga á gcaitheamh ag na cailíní. Bh'fhearr ar chaoi an bith nach mbeadh an téarma "sean-nósach" comhchiallach leis an gcluiche chamógiachta.

AR DHEIS DÉ

Is deacair a creidiúint go bhfuil an cúlbaire ba cliútúla dá raibh ann, 'Danno' Ó Cuiv, imithe ar shlí na fírinne.

Bé an taon pheileadóir a bhuaigh seacht mboinn Uile-Éireann agus lean a réim ó 1931 anall go dtí 1948. Cé go raibh "clúdach" aige ó bheirt de na lántacaí a bh'fearr ariamh, eadhon, Joe Barrett agus Joe Keohane, níl aon dul as ná gurab é Danno an cúlbaire gan locht.

Deinim comhbhrón lena mhuintir

tir agus guim solas na bhFaitheis ar a anam.

TROID

Tá sé náireach nuair a bhíonn troid ar an bpáirc imeartha, is cuma cén cluiche atá i gceist. Ach tá an gráin dearg agam dóibh siúd a ghlacann pé deis a bhíonn ann lucht leanúna agus imreoirí na gcluichí naisiúnta a mhaslú má tharlaíonn griolsa le linn nó taréis cluiche. Ar an lámh eile dhe is ina dtost a bhíonn siad nuair a tharlaíonn an rud céanna in áiteacha eile, cuirim i gcás sna Stáit Aontaithe áit a bhfuiltear ag iarraidh an cluiche soccer a thabhairt i réim, le cúpla mí anuas.

Táid ag glacadh leis go raibh spéis ag an "lucht spóirt" seo in imtheachtaí fóirne as Tuaisceart na Éireann a bhí ag imirt sa chomórtas phoncánach úd; is beag cluiche a d'imrigh siad ná raibh troid fíochmhar ar an bpáirc ach diabhal focal a chuala mé ó na "scríobhnóirí litreacha." An saoire, bhféidir?

M. V. O'DONOGHUE

(1952-1955)

By *TERENCE ROYNANE*

**PRESIDENTS
OF THE
G.A.A. (17)**

AFTER a whole succession of National Teachers in the Central Council Chair, the sequence was broken in 1952 when Michael Vincent O'Donoghue succeeded Micheál Kehoe as President, but the change was one of degree more than direction. For Vin O'Donoghue, as he was popularly known, though not a National Teacher was still a teacher—a Secondary Teacher in the Christian Brothers School in Lismore, County Waterford.

Galway-born son of a Waterford father and a Tipperary Mother, Vin O'Donoghue graduated from University College Galway and was, in fact, the first and thus far the only U.C.G. graduate to head the Gaelic Athletic Association.

Returning to County Waterford, he played a very active part in the Fight for Freedom and was

Engineering Officer of the West Waterford Brigade.

After the troubled days were over, Vin O'Donoghue became a very prominent hurler, and won an All-Ireland junior medal with Waterford in 1931.

Like so many other devoted Gaels, when his playing days were over, he devoted his immense energy and many talents to the administrative side of the Gaelic Athletic Association. First prominent in the West Waterford Board for several years, he later became Chairman of Waterford County Board and then made an even greater impact during his term as Chairman of the Munster Council.

Elected President at the end of Micheál Kehoe's term, Vincent O'Donoghue was a fearless and forthright President who was as

outspoken in his pronouncements as he was unbending in his principles. He delivered many stirring vindications of the ideals of the Association, one of which received wide publicity being reprinted by popular demand, and he did a great deal to try and regularise the relations between the Gaels at home and the G.A.A. in New York, being largely instrumental in the setting up of the St. Brendan Cup competition between the home National League champions and teams from across the Atlantic.

Like all the other past Presidents of our time, Vin O'Donoghue did not cease to work for the Association when his term of office was over. He still continues to be a pillar of the Association throughout the Decies and in West Waterford in particular.

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EXPERIMENT!

Says Dan
McAreavy

ONE of the criticisms most often levelled against the G.A.A. is its alleged opposition to change. And without conceding that there is any real merit in the charge I am bound to say that when the smoke clears away following Congress each year there is a fair volume of evidence pointing towards conservatism in our deliberations.

Change for the sake of change is not a good policy but I often feel that if an experimental period could be introduced several worthwhile ideas would stand a better chance of reaching the statute book than under the present arrangement.

I believe many people are reluctant to support a proposed change of rule without seeing it tested in practice. Realising that if the change goes into the Official Guide it will require five years and two thirds of Congress to revert back, there is an understandable reluctance to support new ideas in case their practical application proves less attractive than the theoretical arguments advanced by their sponsors.

What we need, therefore, is a period of grace in which our playing rules can be "played" with under proper match conditions.

In this direction the suggestion of Mr. Patrick (Poppy) Fearon—the former Armagh and Ulster star who has given a life-time of service to the Association in a variety of roles—is worthy of serious consideration.

Poppy's suggestion may well sound revolutionary but in the

interest of the continuity of play and an improvement in the basic arts of playing foot-ball it has much to recommend it.

"I would simply eliminate the lift or pick-up as it is known to-day", he told me. "And I feel certain that such a move would not only reduce the number of stoppages which riddle so many of our games but it would also improve the standard of play by encouraging the art of fast accurate kicking of the ball".

Mr. Fearon continued, "As I see the game at the moment there can be only one result when there is a ruck for possession of a ground ball—either a player fouls the ball on the ground in attempting to lift it or is himself fouled. If, however a player had to pull first time most of the present unsatisfactory 'footering' in melees would disappear and forwards and backs would be amazed at the tremendous accuracy which would soon be achieved".

To me the idea seemed radical but when I considered the many scrimmages which develop throughout the field during a game because of this obsession of having to effect a pick-up when direct methods would in all possibility pay off more handsomely I confess that I became most interested.

"It would be illegal to stoop to pick up a ground ball", Mr. Fearon added, "but otherwise no other rule would be changed and catching would, of course, remain."

Maybe two teams will give the "no-lifting" idea a try-out sometime or better still perhaps the

organisers of one of our innumerable tournaments will seize the initiative. It could well be that the "gimmick" would pay off handsomely.

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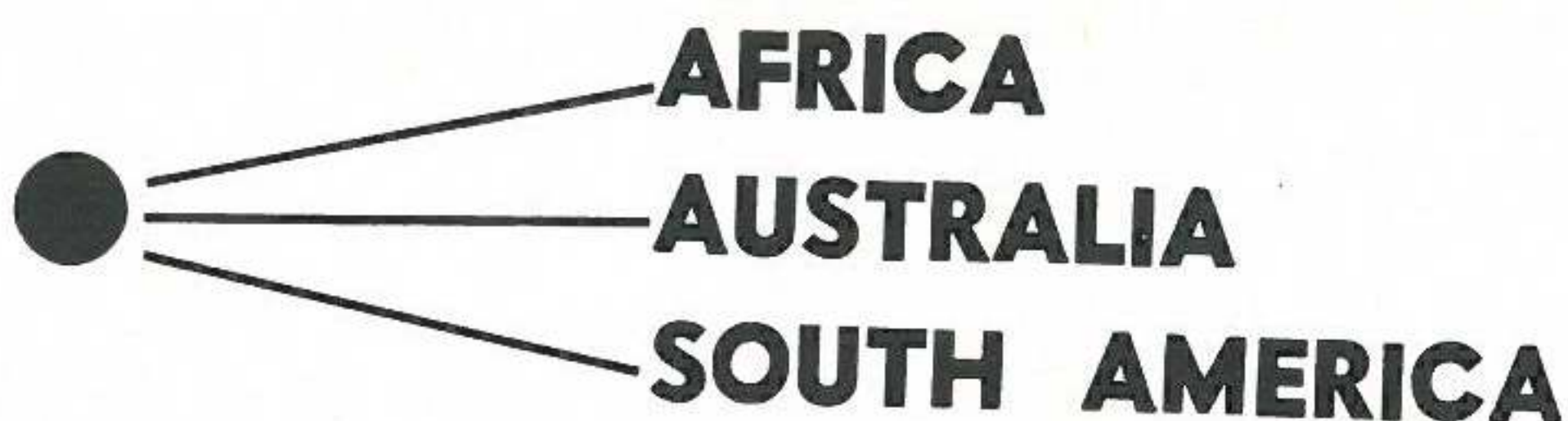
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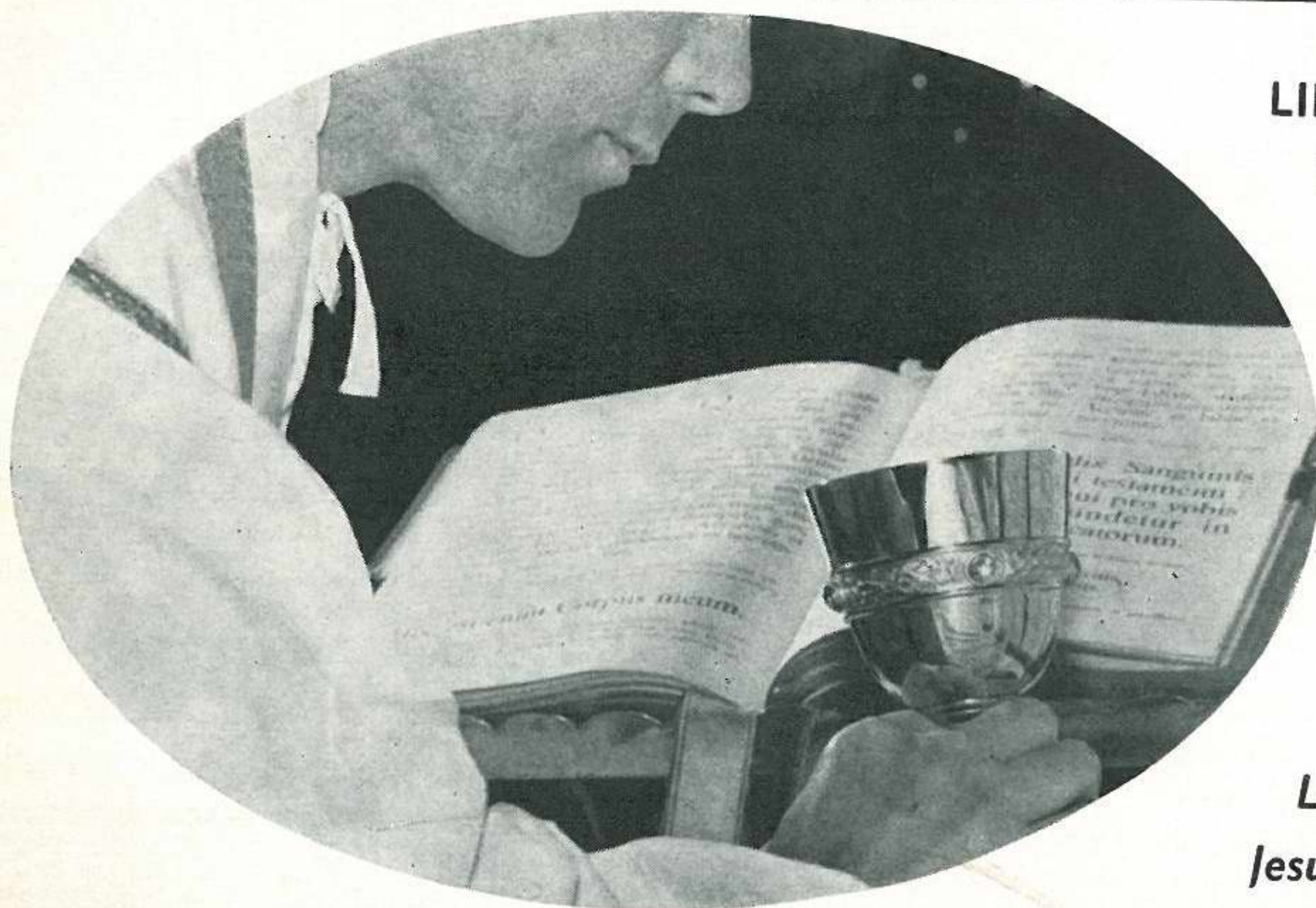
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Watching from the wings

THERE was a time not so very long ago, when the presence of Christy Ring on the green sward of the Gaelic Grounds, Limerick, could attract a crowd of over 60,000 to a Munster hurling final. A time too, when the Croke Park terraces would be packed on St. Patrick's Day for his annual show of brilliance amidst the cream of the country's hurlers in the Railway Cup competition. And of course, there was that day, revered in the memory of all Corkmen, when he would lead the Rebel County to the ultimate triumph in the All-Ireland championship.

Those days of glory are now over, and the familiar figure of the great hurler from Cloyne no longer dominates the big-time G.A.A. scene. New names and new faces have filled the programmes since "Ringey" played his last intercounty game four years ago, and Cork have won an All-Ireland title without him. His departure from the Munster championship was not appreciated at the time, and most Cork supporters expected to see him back in the red jersey after his enforced absence from the 1963 campaign. But despite letters of protest from

disappointed followers, and several outstanding performances, which proved how effective he still remained, Ring was not recalled to the Cork team. Instead younger veterans like John Redmond, Pat Barry (Sarsfields) and John Bennett were brought back, while the old maestro watched on the sideline.

When he lined out in the Cork colours for the last time, Ring was 43 years of age. This was well past the usual retiring age for normal performers, but by then most observers had ceased to regard the evergreen star as a "normal performer." He was 33 when he won his record-breaking eighth All-Ireland senior hurling medal (1954), yet he was still good enough to become top scorer in Gaelic games seven years later (1961). But by 1964 the Cork selectors felt the old hero had had his day, and the famous figure of the corpulent Glen Rovers star was not to grace the Munster championship again. Young blood was needed, the mentors said, and "Ringey" was omitted from the team to play old rivals Tipperary in the Munster final.

As a result Cork incurred one

of the heaviest defeats ever in a provincial decider and the mighty Tipp. men ran out deserving winners by five goals. The story was even worse the following year, when the Blue and Gold laid low the Red and White by no less than six major scores. In the meantime Ring was doing all in his power to show how little he deserved to be dropped.

He led his club to the county final of 1964 against the southside rivals, St. Finbarrs, whose line-out included several members of the Cork team. The 'Barrs were favourites, but by half-time it was apparent that Ring's brilliance would occasion their downfall. It did indeed, and a typical "Ringey Special" shook the 'Barrs net just before the interval and shattered their morale. Ring himself ascended the rostrum to receive the coveted trophy after the game, and with childish glee he enumerated the four decades which saw the county title going to the Blackpool club. He had participated in three of them.

The following year Ring was back again to help the Glen in the Munster club championship, and inspired by his scores the Cork side faced Mount Sion (Waterford) in the final at Cashel. The hurling wizard lined out as a corner forward and had his first goal midway through the opening session. But the match was abandoned ten minutes before the end and the replay did not take place until the following Easter Sunday at Limerick. Once again the old magic touches were to be seen—the flick of the wrist, the dazzling stick-work, the lightning stroke and the well-positioned pass to the loose colleague. But the highlight of the day was a sizzling shot by Ring which rocketed to the net late in

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● From Page 35.

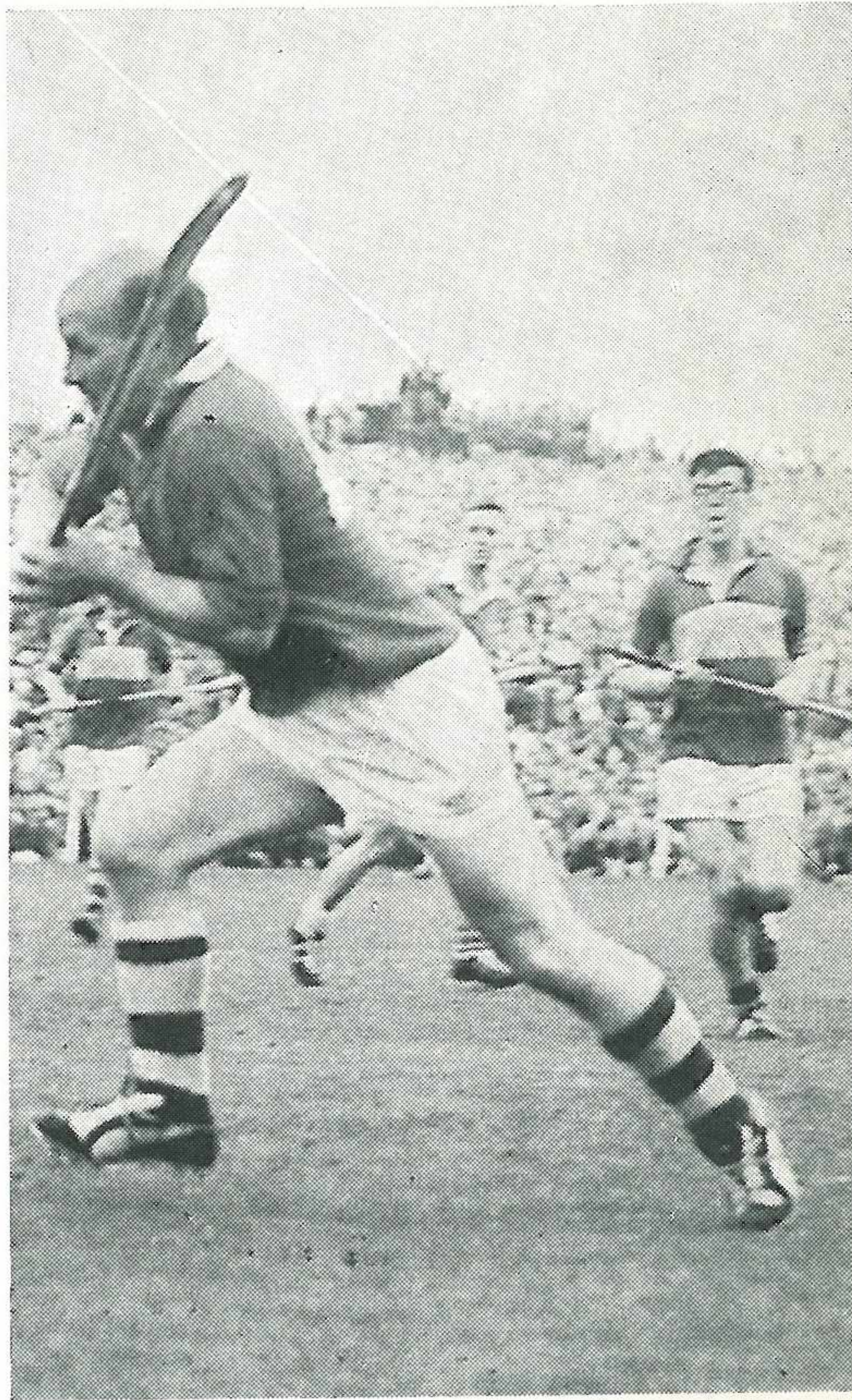
the second-half to clinch the issue. Glen Rovers became the first Munster Club hurling champions, thanks to the artistry of the man who had rendered them sterling service for over 25 years.

He travelled to the United States for the Cardinal Cushing Games shortly after this triumph, and in two memorable matches out there Ring had seven goals to his credit. At home Cork lost to Kilkenny by four goals in the League semi-final and once again the Leaside supporters looked forward to the return of the star veteran. But when the championship came around, it was the maestro himself who declined to play.

An old thigh-injury, aggravated by a heavy fall in the New York game, was troubling him and he felt he wouldn't do his county justice. So for the third successive season Cork took the field without "Ringey." But this time Ring's protege Seanie Barry, who had been trained under the maestro at Farranferris, and who had participated in the instructional scenes of Louis Marcus's film "Christy Ring," was introduced to the Cork team. The rest is history.

Cork won the All-Ireland title of 1966 without the man who had done so much for the county during the past quarter-century. But in their delight and celebrations after the game last September the supporters did not forget the architect of so many previous victories. His name was carried proudly through O'Connell Street after the match, as if he had been there in action himself. He could have been too, if he had coveted that elusive ninth All-Ireland medal. But when the Cork selectors had listed him on the panel for the provincial decider, the Cloyne star declined the offer. Ring hadn't been fit enough to take part in the opening games. It was not for him to deprive a younger

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THE OLD MASTER IN ACTION

BITS and PIECES

By VINCENT MURRIHY

KERRY have been having their own problems of late in the hurling world, particularly the trouncings that their minor and Under-21 sides have got. Now they find themselves being considered grouped with counties like Galway, Cork, Limerick, Clare and Dublin for the forthcoming National League. Naturally they are by no means elated at the prospect of facing opposition like this and they intend to ask not to be included in this Division.

Said County Board Chairman, Dr. Jim Brosnan: "We would have absolutely no chance playing against counties like Clare and Cork, who would give us a trouncing at any time. This will kill hurling in the county and not revive it".

* * *

It's always very pleasing to win a provincial medal in any year but Mayo's Padraic Bruen had the distinction of winning two junior provincial medals this year—one in football and the other in hurling. The tall Westport man was one of the stars of the Mayo junior side that defeated Galway in the provincial football final, while he enjoyed equal success on the junior hurling side that ousted Sligo in the decider.

* * *

Pity Clare footballers! They were caught in a dilemma as to whether they should 'rob' their junior team and make an all-out attempt at the senior title or keep the juniors intact and try and win out in that grade.

As it happened they decided on the former course of action and an unfortunate one it turned out to be. For their senior footballers were beaten by Cork and when the depleted juniors faced Kerry in the Munster semi-final they were beaten by three points.

However, they gained some measure of compensation from the stirring performances of their Under-21 side which defeated fancied Cork.

* * *

It will be a very quiet summer (football-wise) in Galway's home of football—Dunmore this year. Never before at such a stage was all so quiet.

For the past four years the county football team has been providing Galway followers with an abundance of entertainment, and as Dunmore supplied John Keenan, Bosco McDermott, Seamus Leydon and the Donnellan brothers to the side there were very few free Sunday's. In addition the local senior team—MacHale's were always in the concluding stages of the championships, which lasted until mid-September.

Now, however, following Galway's first round defeat by Mayo and Fr. Griffin's (Galway city) defeat of Dunmore things will sure be quieter!

* * *

It was interesting to see the number of prominent G.A.A. stars that stood for election in the various Co. Councils and other local bodies all over the country.

In the West John Donnellan was joined by his brother Pat on the Galway Co. Council, while in Sligo ace marksman Micky Kearins was elected. Longford's John Donlon, Tipperary's John Doyle and Meath's Pat Collier were others to be given the councillor's tag.

* * *

Few counties have been so long in the Gaelic wilderness as Sligo. They were beaten by Mayo in every grade of football in the opening round of all the championships this year. This was a pity for I have never seen officials work as hard to get up a really good minor team. Since last February they have been labouring feverishly to produce a proper blend but a number of decidedly soft goals gave Mayo an easy victory over them.

However, they have the spirit that is so important to keep going so don't be surprised if they make the breakthrough in the very near future.

* * *

Who would have thought that Mayo would have been the first county to lower Galway's colours. In fact they lost five of their six previous games—being beaten by Galway in the League play-off, by Galway again in a tournament game, by Kildare, Longford and Donegal in challenge games and losing the latter by 0-13 to 0-6!

But such is the magic and unpredictability of championship football that after no one had given them a chance against the champions, they beat them by no less than 11 points.

The rise of a star

FROM the role of a star of schoolboy competitions to ranking as a key figure in a senior intercounty side is a difficult step that the majority of rising players invariably take some time to accomplish—but Seamus O'Dowd has made it in jig-time. Not only that, he has, with his dynamic football, and his ability in the making of scores, already carved out a niche for himself as a brilliant young match-winner in his own right.

Remember last year's All-Ireland minor championship? As a cool, purposeful midfielder with the scoring touch, the Ballina youth nobly forged a real captain's part in bringing the title back to Mayo after an interval of 13 years. Then, last May, his cultured and workmanlike play, which he highlighted by heading his team's scoring list with eight points, did much in fashioning a 1-11 to 2-5 win over Galway that earned Mayo another crown—the 1967 Connacht junior title.

Against Galway in the Connacht senior semi-final in June. O'Dowd had the type of senior intercounty championship debut that most rising players dream of, but so seldom achieve. He proved one of the most efficient units in the Mayo machine, and five minutes after the interval he set his stamp on the game in a manner which will be talked of for years to come,

Mayo were leading 1-8 to 1-5 when O'Dowd collected the ball some 40 yards from the Galway goal, and set off on a superbly-controlled pulse-raising solo run that he climaxed by scoring a goal that not only clinched the issue, in effect, for the challengers, but will be really hard to beat for my accolade as Goal of 1967!

O'Dowd, who was one of the stars of the Ballina Stephenites' team that regained in 1966 the Mayo senior title last held in 1955, was promoted to the Mayo senior attack for the start of the 1966-67 League campaign. In this tough grind, he soon showed that, despite the higher class of the opposition, he still had sufficient know-how and the ability to translate possession and opportunities into scores by cracking home an impressive 2-4 in his first three engagements. While he has not since quite maintained that scoring rate as a senior, his tally of 4-11 (23 pts.) in 10 matches at 2.30 points and hour, still stamps him as a real danger to the best of rearguards.

Indeed, he was Mayo's ace marksman in that resounding win over Galway with 1-3. And that, in the white-heat of his first senior championship game, and playing on "enemy territory" to boot, was undoubtedly a splendid achievement for the 1966 minor skipper!

O'Dowd is speedy, both off the

mark, and reliable in his fielding. He moves intelligently, and uses the ball well. And that sensational scoring move that shocked the 24,000 crowd at Pearse Park in the Connacht semi-final shows, too, that he is capable of producing a real flash of genius . . . the type of daring, adventuresome move culminating in a brilliant score that is both such an inspiration to his own team, and a morale-damper to the opposition.

For all that, Seamus O'Dowd, of course, is still only serving his football apprenticeship. There are many, many more testing hurdles ahead before he can finally graduate with honours into the ranks of the top performers of football. And, the game is so fickle, and the going so tough, and at times discouraging, that down the years we have had many instances of brilliant minors illuminating the scene in the senior grade in their teenage days only to fade eventually, and quickly into oblivion.

But, equally, there are many instances of top-class minors more than fully living up to the great promise displayed in their teenage days. From what I have seen of Seamus O'Dowd, both as a minor and a senior, I'm convinced that, whatever the future holds for Mayo football, he will take his place in time among the ranks of those players who have done just that!

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● From Page 37.

player of a medal, after three of the hardest matches had taken place. And as usual he was more respected for his wise decision.

But anyone who thought the glories of 1966 would bring to an end the illustrious career of Cork's greatest exponent of the art of hurling, couldn't have been more mistaken. Looking slimmer and fitter than ever, he led Glen Rovers in his 27th county championship against the favourites U.C.C. in the second round at the Park last June. Seanie Barry, John O'Halloran, Ned Rea (all of U.C.C.), Gerry O'Sullivan, Denis O'Riordan, Denis Coughlan, Finbarr O'Neill and Patsy Harte (Glen Rovers) provided a galaxy of top performers for the large attendance. But it was the 47-year-old hurling wizard who stole the thunder once again.

The College had the breeze behind them in the first-half but six minutes after the throw-in Ring sent a shot towards the goal, which completely dumbfounded the custodian and gave the Glen a valuable head-start. Later on he flighted over two fine points, and then in the second-half he grabbed a dropping ball, lost his hurley, but palmed the leather to a colleague who booted it to the net. This sealed the fate of the students, and though Seanie Barry had a goal and a point at the other end before the finish, the Glen emerged victorious once more.

The days of Ring-dominated provincial championships and packed terraces for Railway Cup finals may be over but for the county he has served so well, since he appeared as a minor star in 1938, Christy Ring is still the greatest forward in the game, and no sane Corkman would even suggest his retirement at this stage.

Who knows, the Cork selectors may be prompted to request his assistance again in the future?

Third annual hurling course

By **BRIAN DOHERTY**



Packy McGarty . . . still unrewarded.

A RECORD attendance is expected at the third annual Hurling Course which begins at its usual venue, Gormanston College, on Sunday, August 6. The course will last one week and will, as always, be under the charge of the versatile Des Ferguson.

I have met a number of people who attended this course in either 1965 or '66 and all were loud in their praise—not alone of the excellent work done but also of enjoyment which was had.

This year's Course has been extended to cater for "return

students", who will be given an advanced form of instruction.

There is great credit due to those who have developed this very important undertaking—especially to Des Ferguson, Fr. T. Maher, the Kilkenny trainer, and Donie Nealon.

SORRY FOR DONEGAL

I must say that I was very sorry for Donegal. Their exit in this year's Ulster championship was a severe blow, for this appeared to be their year in Ulster—if not beyond it.

In the past one could put their

championship failures down to lack of experience but this year they appeared to have reached full development in that regard and their display against Galway in the National League semi-final raised the hopes of all who had any sort of a fancy for the men from the North-West.

Still, all is not lost. If this team keeps faith in itself it will be back. Let's hope so for they deserve such a break.

MAYO AND MCGARTY

It is good to have Mayo back in

● **Continued Page 48.**

PROVINCIAL TITLE-WINNERS

By OWEN McCANN

WITH the provincial senior championships having just drawn to a close, it is interesting at this stage to compare the records of the counties in the provincial tests. As we went to press before the 1967 titles were won and lost, I could not include these figures in this summary, but the latest returns will still not cause many major alterations in the chart.

For instance, Galway have a commanding lead over all others with 85 senior titles from both codes. However, this total includes all the years the Corrib County went into the All-Ireland senior hurling championship proper as Connacht champions without having played a single game in the West. Galway, who have been in Munster senior hurling since 1959, have 60 hurling crowns, and 25 football titles.

Similarly, Antrim, who take second place, gained many of their 43 Ulster hurling championships without playing a single match. They also took 11 senior football titles.

However, leaving aside the Connacht and Ulster hurling championships, Dublin, of the 16 counties with titles in both codes, have by far the most impressive dual record with 29 football crowns, and 23 hurling awards.

Cavan boast the longest provincial reign in either code—other than in Connacht and Ulster hurling, of course. They were Northern king-pins for nine suc-

cessive seasons from 1891 to 1899 inclusive. Kerry were just foiled of equalling this record by old rivals Cork in the 1966 Munster football decider.

Wexford and Kildare share the Leinster football record with six titles in a row. The Slaneysiders reigned from 1913 to 1918 inclusive, and the All-Whites' years of glory were from 1926 to 1931. Over in the West, Mayo completed in 1910 the first Connacht run of five successive football titles. Galway equalled that feat in 1960.

The tops in hurling stands to the credit of Cork with five Munster titles from 1901 to 1905. They also set the national record for the code of four All-Ireland senior hurling crowns in a row in 1941-44, but thereby also hangs a tale. For, although national champions in 1941, Cork were still not Munster champions that year! The provincial finals were delayed because of an outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease, and Cork and Dublin were nominated to contest the All-Ireland final. Cork won 5-11 to 0-6 in September, but in October at Limerick they went under 5-4 to 2-5 to Tipperary in the Southern final.

Four successive titles has proven a most elusive target in Leinster hurling. Kilkenny have six trebles to their credit, Dublin boast one hat-trick, and Wexford won out in 1954-55-56, but that bogey of four successive crowns still remains to be smashed.

Donegal have the most unusual

placing of all in the chart. We regard this North-West county chiefly as a football stronghold, yet they edge in with two Ulster hurling titles! Indeed, Donegal is the only one of the 28 counties listed that had not won a single football title.

PROVINCIAL TITLES

Titles	Football Hurling	
	Football	Hurling
85 Galway	25	60
54 Antrim	11	43
52 Dublin	29	23
50 Kerry	49	1
48 Cork	18	30
46 Cavan	45	1
42 Kilkenny	3	39
36 Tipperary	9	27
28 Mayo	28	0
23 Wexford	10	13
14 Limerick	2	12
13 Monaghan	11	2
11 Kildare	11	0
11 Roscommon	11	0
10 Meath	10	0
9 Louth	9	0
8 Laois	5	3
7 Down	6	1
6 Waterford	1	5
4 Armagh	4	0
4 Clare	1	3
3 Derry	1	2
2 Donegal	0	2
2 Offaly	2	0
2 Tyrone	2	0
1 Carlow	1	0
1 Leitrim	1	0
1 Sligo	1	0

Fermanagh, Longford, Westmeath, Wicklow are the only counties still without a single senior provincial crown to their credit.



The Donegal team which failed to Down in the Ulster semi-final on July 2nd. The defeat was another bitter championship experience for the men from Tír Conaill who have made valiant attempts to break through the Ulster barrier over the past three seasons. Perhaps the long-sought title will come in 1968!

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LONGFORD CAN STAY AT THE TOP

QUITE a few Longford supporters to whom I spoke to since their defeat by Offaly were particularly despondent. "It was this year or never for that team", said one of them. "Interest will now wane and we will be back to square one in no time".

Personally, I don't agree. In fact, I would go so far as to say that Longford are not likely to return to "square one" for many a day. Once a county like Longford, which had been in the wilderness since the G.A.A. was founded, breaks the barrier into the big-time they are not likely to slip back into oblivion.

And Longford did break that barrier in no uncertain manner. They won a National League title. In doing so they laid low the psychological bogey and proved themselves a match for the best. This self-confidence, once acquired, takes a long, long time to die.

Nor does it belong to any one team or group of players. By winning the 1966 National League, Larry Gillen, Sean Murray and Co., saw to it that an inferiority complex was something which no Longford team in any grade would suffer from in our time. And in my book it is an inferiority complex more than anything else that keeps most counties perpetually down.

Longford may not win an All-Ireland title in 1968—or a League title either, but they will be there with as good a chance as the next when both competitions open. What more can any county ask for.

Certainly, it will be a long time again before anybody lists Longford with the weak football counties. To have achieved that much was no small feat.

THE LAST SURVIVOR

Willie Losty, the last surviving member of that great Kildare team of 1903-'07 died recently in New York. He was 84.

"Steel" Losty was one of that select group of players who put



Sean Murray

Gaelic football on a new plain in those early years of this century when Kerry and Kildare rivalry popularised the game and developed its inherent skills.

Kerry triumphed in 1903 following three memorable games, while Kildare came back to take the honours in the 1905 decider, played in Thurles in June, 1907. Willie Losty emigrated to America shortly after that victory.

DUBLIN HURLING

"What is wrong with Dublin

hurling"? The question was asked a thousand times following the heavy defeat by Kilkenny in the Leinster championship. My answer may not sound particularly brilliant but I stick to it nonetheless. I say that there is nothing seriously wrong.

Sure, they took a hiding against Kilkenny—but then show me a team which has not taken a hiding against Kilkenny in recent times. Cork, Tipperary, Clare, Wexford, Waterford—you name them and they all took hidings against Kilkenny in one competition or another during the past eighteen months or so.

On the other hand Dublin beat Cork in the League and should have beaten Clare.

No, I say leave Dublin hurling alone. They have a young team and plenty of minor, under-21 and intermediate talent coming along. Every county has its days when nothing goes right. Dublin had such a day at Carlow.

It may take three or four years, but I am more than confident that within that period the Metropolitans will, at the very least, contest a senior All-Ireland final.

WESTMEATH AWARDS

Hurler John "Jobber" McGrath and footballer Paddy Dunne were honoured at the recent Mullingar Steak Festival. New awards for the "Greats of Westmeath" were sponsored by the Athlone Mineral Water Company.

While McGrath gave years of loyal service to Westmeath, Paddy Dunne will best be remembered as a Galway and Connacht player.

GIANTS REFRESHED



John Doyle

By JAY DRENNAN

THERE is much to be said for cunning and the lessons hard-learned from experience. Tipperary are showing us that. It was, when you come to think of it, too much of a good thing that they should suddenly have qualified for wheel-chairs in a few short weeks after they were clearly the best team in the country—indeed, one of the best we have known in hurling. The game against Limerick last year was the result, we now see, of the cumulative effect of tiredness from long success, lost edge of incentive, hard pressed ageing muscles needing a rest.

The rest could not have been enforced at a better time had it been prescribed by a doctor—just what the doctor ordered, so to speak. And, this year, with a whole year far from the madden-crowd, taking it easy and not overtaxing their limits in the League, they have returned to subtle smoothness those overtaxed muscles, and now those veterans are poised for one more final fling. What's better still, they have developed, in their year of obscurity, a violent almost tangible thirst for more honours before they call it a day. The last is often the sweetest, they feel.

They surely want to win a ninth

for John Doyle, and when I saw him line out against Waterford, he looked astonishingly fit and fresh, his stomach muscles as flat as a teak plank and as hard, thighs firm and youthful. In the play he looked quite sharp, though clearly lacking the old-style fire, and a turn of speed. But, enough of that; we shall doubtless be plagued with nothing else but Doyle's chances of a ninth medal, from now until the end of Tipperary's road—wherever that may lie.

Waterford played like Waterford teams without Tom Cheasty have quite often tended to play over the last decade—lacking the dash, the ability to rally and fight against adversity instead of allowing it to overcome them. Astonishingly, Waterford seemed built on midget scale beside the Tipp. men, where they had seemed man-sized against the red jerseyed Corkmen; and it was not altogether due to any optical illusion caused by the magnifying effect of the broad gold band on the blue jerseys.

The only new Tipperary man—Noel O'Gorman—looked impressive in his covering off, his interceptions, and strong positive

defensive work. I shall look forward to seeing him subjected to more severe championship testing; certainly, he fits well physically into the Tipperary team, a strapping well-made fellow, long in the leg, and muscular in the trunk.

Stamina will, no doubt, be built up gradually, and speed improved upon with a steady rather than rigorous training spell—clever Tipperary training folk will avoid tiring this veteran squad with too much hard grinding either in training sessions or practice matches; I expect them to keep form, but how good the team that could beat them will have to be is not yet clear.

The game against Waterford was certainly wrecked as a test, and as a Munster championship spectacle, by the neargale force wind which assisted Tipperary for twenty or so minutes and which waned to an ordinary enough breeze for the remainder of the game. In the circumstances, it would have been interesting if Waterford had had the advantage of these elements, for then it would have shown a real test of Tipperary, and saved the game from the one-sidedness of which it died at a tragically early age.

Raymond Smith expresses concern on the sad

DECLINE IN HURLING

HURLING enthusiasts everywhere have reason to be deeply concerned about the sad decline of the game in some of the greatest strongholds.

It is not alone that standards have dropped but that one begins to see less and less hope of a few counties ever getting back into the championship limelight.

I have in mind, in particular, Galway, who took another heavy defeat in the Munster hurling championship this season—this time at the hands of Clare.

Clare had earlier trounced Limerick, who have not won an All-Ireland crown since 1940—a lapse of twenty-seven years.

Waterford were overwhelmed by Tipperary in the Munster semi-final at Cork. I would not mind that defeat if I saw the signs of a Waterford revival in a year or two, but I am sorry to say that I cannot see the Decies county staging a come-back now for quite a few years.

Dublin failed again in the Leinster championship; the prospects that Offaly, after their sensational defeat of Tipperary last year, might develop into worthy challengers in the senior championship, have not really materialised and Laois have dropped sadly from their 1949 standard, when they were capable of reaching the All-Ireland Final.

So the stark reality of the situation is that in Leinster the senior championship scene is dominated by just two counties. Wexford and Kilkenny, who have now farmed the title between them since 1961—the last occasion Dublin managed to win the Provincial crown and get to the All-Ireland

Final. In Munster you have a contracting situation also with Cork and Tipperary still the most powerful pair in the championship, as they were of course for most of

the fifties—and Clare in 1967 emerged as the strongest challenger to the supremacy of these traditional rivals.

● To Page 48.

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● From Page 47.

Who really wants a championship in which you might say that the All-Ireland winners will in all probability come from four counties in any one year—Cork, Tipperary, Wexford and Kilkenny—

The results since 1960 bear out what I mean—Tipperary (4), Wexford (1), Cork (1), Kilkenny (1).

Perhaps Clare could do it, perhaps Limerick might eventually stage a come-back, perhaps Waterford might even regain their 1959-'63 glory, perhaps Dublin or Laois might even become worthy challengers in Leinster—but where is the certainty

Does anyone really see the tight grip Wexford and Kilkenny have on the Leinster crown being broken?

When John Doyle, Kieran Carey, Tony Wall, Theo English and some of the other Tipperary veterans call it a day, the Premier County may for a time lose their dominant position, but this will not be a result of the other counties in Munster reaching Tipperary's 1964-'65 standard but because there will come a levelling of standards.

Recent statistics, released by the Agricultural Institute, show that our rural population continues to decline at an alarming rate, whereas in the past ten years the population of Dublin city has jumped by no less than 26 per cent. The biggest decline in population is in the West and North-West. The movement is not alone to Dublin but also into the other cities and towns—and we must also take into account 30,000 annual loss through emigration. And as the drift from the land and the rural areas continues, so the rural teams, which have long provided a back-bone of talent in every county, must suffer more and more.

Counties like Tipperary, Cork and Kilkenny stand on their great traditions and love of the game

inculcated in the youth from the cradle, you might say.

I remember when talking to Nick Rackard in his home a few years ago during my research in Wexford for my hurling history, "Decades of Glory," the great Model County full-forward said to me that he had no fears for the future of the game in Wexford. There had been such a tradition created in the 'fifties, he maintained, that the youth of the county would want to emulate those feats for years to come.

I agree with Nick Rackard that hurling is safe for quite a while in Wexford—they have taken the Leinster minor crown again in 1967 and there is tremendous enthusiasm for the game in the county.

But remember that tradition—the tradition created by Mackey and his men—did not save Limerick.

Neither did it save Galway.

Tradition alone cannot halt the sweeping tide of events—and the inexorable tide in this instance is the movement of population that leaves the rural areas more and more denuded.

I see the youth turning to foreign games in the cities—thus killing the prospects that even if talent moves from the rural areas into the big centres of population, it must follow that the town and city clubs will benefit.

The policy, to my mind, must be to preserve at all costs the game and the love of the game in the great hurling strongholds, for if it is allowed to fall away in these, then there is less hope still of preserving it at a high level.

If we adopt a policy of endeavouring to extend to the non-hurling counties, we may become like an army that stretches its lines of attack so widely that it becomes vulnerable in the centre.

And the vulnerability of the game at present to further decline is very depressing indeed.

LOOKING AROUND

● From Page 41.

the big-time. One does not have to be very old to remember with pleasure those years of the early 'fifties when Padraic Carney, Tom Langan and Co. brought such glamour to Gaelic football. It appears likely that Joe Langan, Joe Corcoran and their men will do likewise.

One regret, though, is that gallant Packy McGarty should once again be on the losing side in a Connacht final. No man deserves a medal more.

DANNY FLYNN R.I.P.

The untimely death of the former Down trainer, Danny Flynn, came as a shock to G.A.A. followers throughout the country. Aged only 56, Danny leaves behind him a very proud record which will always stand as a monument to his memory.

Another blow to Ulster Gaels was the more recent death of the provincial Chairman, Fr. McNally. In office only six months, he had already established himself as a popular and efficient legislator and he will be sadly missed.

Ar dheis Dé go raibh siad.

CROSSWORD SOLUTION

● From Page 29.

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