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GAA



# Gaelic Sport

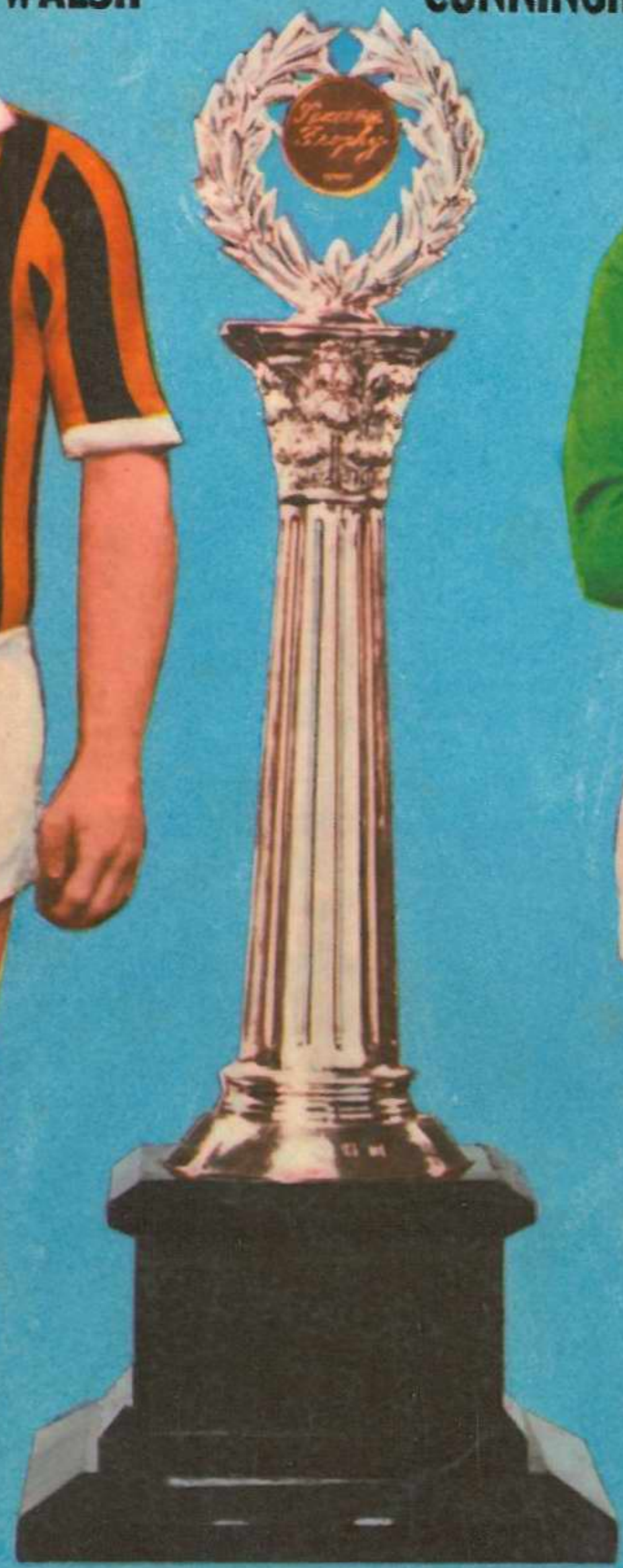
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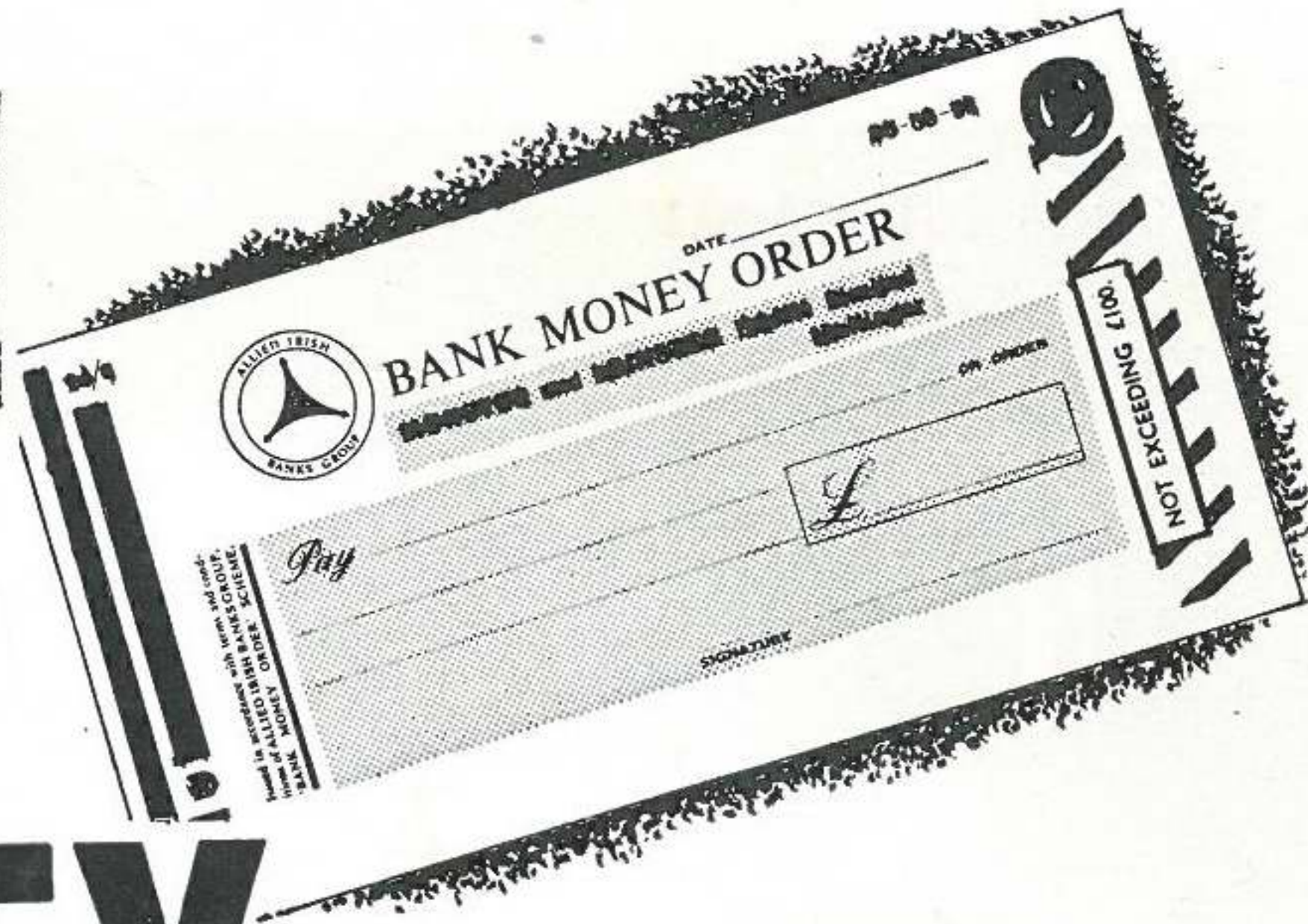


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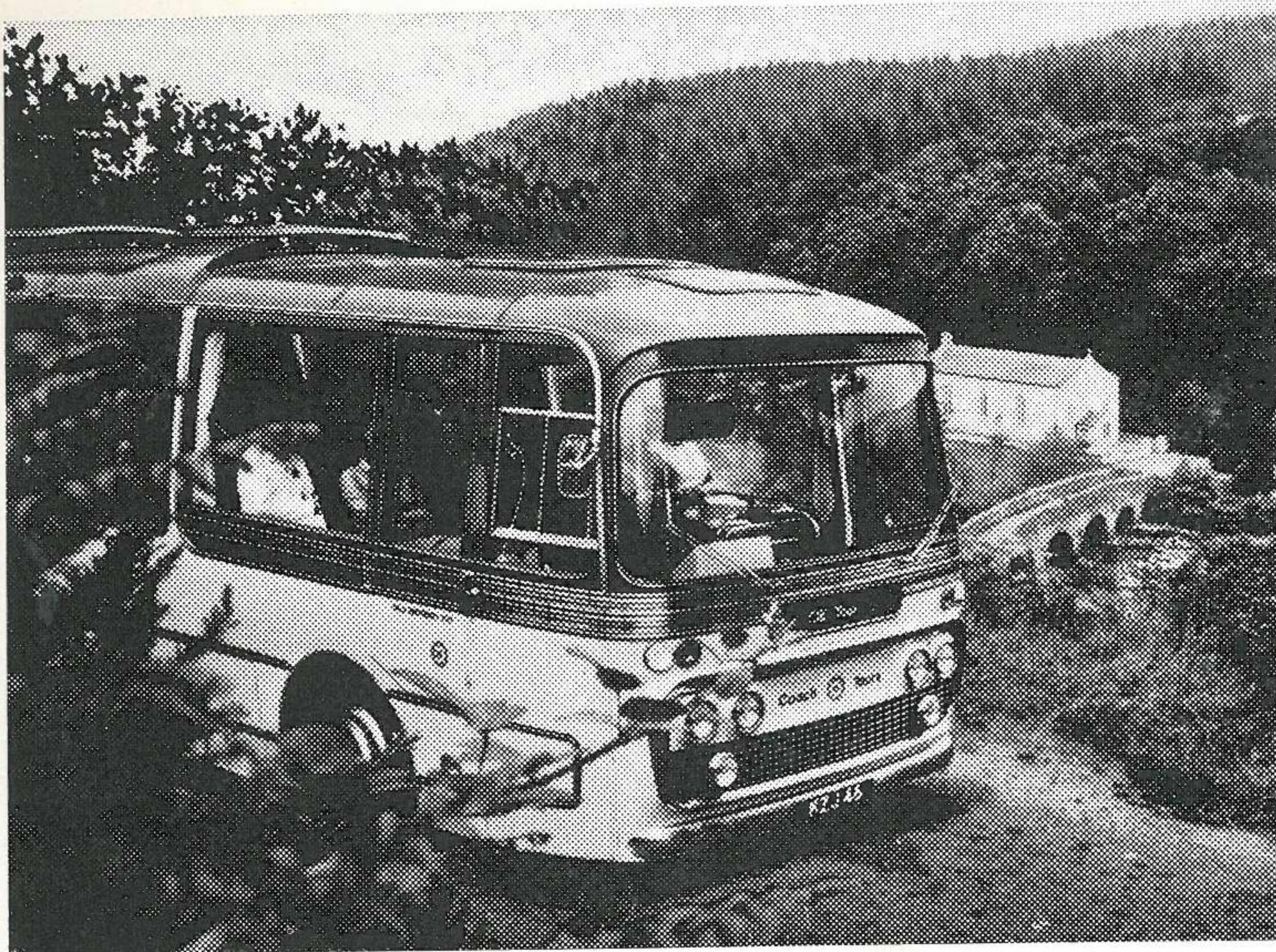
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# Gaelic Sport

Vol. 11. No. 2. February, 1968.

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## INDEX

	Page
Mac Lua talks to the Editor	4
Pat Cronin interviewed by Sean Murphy ... ..	6
Is Football really a Threat to Cork Hurling? —by Tim Horgan	9
Texaco Stars ... ..	11
Crystal-gazing —by Dan McAreavy	13
Mick Mellett talks to Sean O'Donnell ... ..	14
It's Kilkenny Again! —by Jay Drennan	16
Handball—by Alleyman ... ..	19
Sue Cashman: A Pen-picture by Agnes Hourigan ... ..	20
Camogie Comments —by Agnes Hourigan	21
Football's Bright Young Men —by Owen McCann	26
Michael Kearins interviewed by Sean Rice ... ..	28
Scribblings of an Old Footballer—by Eamonn Young	34
Moondharrig's Diary ... ..	38
Ulster Never Had It So Good —by Owen McCann	40
Ulster Want to Forget "Black '67"—by Seamus McCluskey	42
You Said It! (Money for Letters) ... ..	44
Fifty Years of the Harty Cup —by Seamus O Ceallaigh	46

## Well, Mr. Minister?

ONE of the most acute forms of frustration experienced by the editor of a monthly magazine is when, in the valley period between issues, something happens, or is said, that calls for critical comment but the distance of the next publication date imprisons one in impotent silence. It is like sitting at home watching a television debate in which one is champing to take part.

We found ourselves in that situation when the Minister for Education, Mr. O'Malley, made his Shannon rugby dinner speech, in which he said that secondary school students should be free to choose their game, and implied in further remarks that if he had any control over private schools he might choose it for them.

The lapse of time has not been a disadvantage, for it has given us a chance to examine all the nuances of the Minister's words and to assimilate the content of the ensuing controversy.

Was Mr. O'Malley speaking as Minister for Education or as President of the Football Association of Ireland? We believe that he spoke as a politician, with the politician's craving for next morning's newspaper headlines, and that he calculatedly chose to antagonise the G.A.A. to achieve that end.

Despite what his defenders have said since, we believe that the only meaning to be taken from Mr.

O'Malley's words was that he wished to see Gaelic games replaced by rugby and soccer in the colleges that now give allegiance to the G.A.A.

If the Minister desires to contradict our interpretation of his remarks, we shall facilitate him with ample space in these pages at any time he pleases. In a letter to Jim Barry of Cork (published in the papers) some days after the rugby dinner, the Minister referred to soccer as "the ordinary working man's game." If he chooses to accept our challenge, we should like him to answer this question: Why has soccer been officially boycotted as a competitive game in the posh colleges of Dublin and its periphery?

Is it for the same reason that Gaelic games are boycotted—because the managements of those establishments, Catholic and others, fear that the introduction of the "peasant" and "working-class" pastimes might offend their fat-fee-ed clientele, the snob middle class and *nouveau riche* of the Pale?

The old school tie shall not be permitted to mate with the cloth cap and muffler or with the brown boots and blue serge Sunday suit.

Yes, Mr. O'Malley, tell us; as President of the F.A.I. please do tell us what you meant when you said that students of secondary schools should be allowed to choose their sport.

## Meath's important mission

THE editorial in our December issue commented on the slovenly appearance of footballers and hurlers who let their stockings sag around their ankles—even in All-Ireland finals. In an article that starts on page 14 of this issue, Mick Mellett, the Meath footballer, disagrees with our remarks, saying that he has always worn his socks down around his ankles, and will continue to do so.

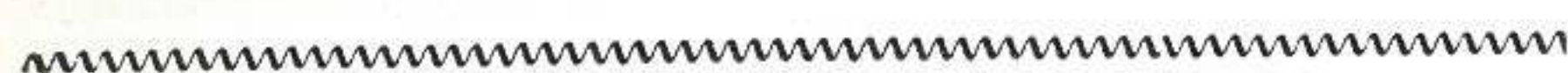
In a month's time Meath will visit Australia. They will go there as ambassadors of Gaelic football and of Ireland. We are confident that they will accomplish that mission with credit to the game and to their country. We are confident also that officials like Fr. Tully, Liam Creaven, Peter McDermott and Jack Fitzgerald will ensure that part of that credit will be gained by a properly togged-out team, whose socks are all pulled up. Meath are visiting a foreign country. Even a small thing like sagging stockings could damage the image of the game and of Ireland in the eyes of a foreign public. We hope Mick Mellett will have second thoughts.

**B**RENDAN Mac LUA'S book, THE STEADFAST RULE has developed, not alone into a best seller but also has become one of the most controversial publications ever published in the G.A.A. world. Recently I found myself faced with a rather unique task, that of interviewing my predecessor, for as readers of this magazine will recall, Mr. MacLUA was formerly Editor of Gaelic Sport, a position he relinquished on his appointment as Executive Officer at Croke Park.



*The Editor, Thomas McQuaid.*

# That Book



**EDITOR:** What was your motive in writing this book?

MacLUA: I am not quite sure—in the sense that it was not a case of having one single motive. First, as a journalist, I was conscious that here was something that “had a book in it”, so to speak. As well as that, I am very keen on history. Then, too, I have long felt that the Association is hiding its great historical heritage and failing to pass it on to its younger members. Finally, I was very conscious of the variety of half-truths and distorted arguments which were being levelled against the Ban and I felt that it was necessary that someone should carry out a complete study of the history of the Rule. All of these things motivated me.

**Ed:** “The Steadfast Rule” has been described as a telling defence of the Ban. Do you agree with that description?

MacL: Partly. My position was

this. I set out to produce an academic history of the Rule, based on facts and all of the available sources. This involved the complete story—the unfavourable as well as the favourable aspects of it. I did this. As well as that, I subordinated by own pro-Ban views to the facts. All of the reviewers, with two exceptions, acknowledged that I had done this.

If I had produced a purely propaganda book it would immediately have been recognised and dismissed as such. Contrived propaganda was not required. History is very kind to the Ban. It is its real propagandist and the Rule needs no other.

**Ed:** You say that the G.A.A. is hiding its great historical heritage. Would you care to elaborate on that statement?

MacL: The G.A.A. has made a vast contribution to Ireland. Primarily, that contribution has

been a nationalistic one but, as well as that, the Association has greatly helped the social and moral development of our people. I feel that the Association has largely failed to give its younger members a consciousness of this. Its national heritage is the G.A.A.'s greatest treasure and there is no more effective way of awakening a sense of commitment, purpose and loyalty in the younger members than by giving them a proper appreciation of it.

**Ed:** Does your book not do this?

MacL: It probably makes a contribution but I feel that there is much more to be done. The written word is only one of the means of doing it.

**Ed:** How vital is the Ban to the G.A.A., in your opinion?

MacL: In the spiritual sense, that it is the means by which the G.A.A. commits itself to the national purpose for which it was founded, I consider the Ban to be absolutely basic to the whole existence of the G.A.A. The Rule, no doubt, has materialistic benefits as well, but I feel that these are entirely secondary to the fact that the Ban has evolved into an instrument which decides whether or not the G.A.A. continues to remain a nationalistically committed organisation. You know, and

## ***The author of 'The Steadfast Rule' talks with the Editor***



*Brendan Mac Lua.*

this is something which is often forgotten, those who, down the years, have kept attacking the Ban have also contributed substantially towards its evolution into the nationalistic emblem of the G.A.A. Most of those who have attacked the Ban have done so because it was too nationalistic for them. By attacking the Rule they precipitated its defence and awakened in the defenders a deep sense of its nationalistic importance to the Association.

**Ed: There is no doubt in your mind that the Ban will not be removed next Easter?**

MacL: No doubt whatsoever. The Association has no intention of relinquishing its national commitment as represented by the Ban.

**Ed: What about Rule 29 and the dancing position? What are your views on this?**

MacL: Rule 29 is not part of the Ban, as such. This Rule has a completely different history. Ceili dances were composed by the Gaelic League at the turn of the century and the G.A.A. adopted them as a gesture of support.

Personally, I favour the retention of Rule 29 because if it were removed the decision would probably be distorted by people who would wish to have it seen as the thin end of the denationalising wedge. I further favour its reten-

tion because it appears to be a choice between an official endorsement by the G.A.A. of what is Irish and what is not Irish.

I would like to see consideration given to a practical third alternative—some means by which the Association could make a major contribution towards Irish culture. This is the purpose of Rule 29. As at present framed, the Rule is not as successful as it might be. Therefore, consideration should be given to the possibilities of making the Rule a success.

**Ed: To go back to your book—how long did it take you to write it?**

MacL: The actual writing did not take very long once I had completed the research. I decided to write the book as far back as 1963 and I began a casual form of fact-collecting then. I worked at this in spasms—a week now and a week again — type of thing. Incidentally, I should mention that this was a spare-time work and had nothing at all to do with my job as Executive Officer at Croke Park. By early 1967 I had completed the research and then wrote the book.

**Ed: If you were to write it again would you do it any differently?**

MacL: I don't think so. One reviewer, whose opinion I respect,

felt that I might have put more "flesh" on the facts. On reading his comments, I was inclined to think he was right. However, on further consideration I reverted to my original view that it was best to stick to the facts without embellishment or dramatisation of the various events.

It is possible, though, that I should have given a little more dimension to the leading figures in the book. The keen student of G.A.A. history already "knew" the main figures, such as Frank Dineen, T. F. O'Sullivan, Dick Blake, etc., but not so the average reader.

**Ed: Why did you choose the title "The Steadfast Rule"?**

MacL: Because it seemed to sum up the Ban. I also may have been influenced, unconsciously, by Paul Gallico's book of some years ago on St. Patrick. He called it, "The Steadfast Man."

**Ed: Have you another book in mind?**

MacL: I have a few—but having them in mind and getting down to writing them are two different things.

*THE STEADFAST RULE* by Brendan MacLua and published by Press Cuchulainn, 58 Haddington Road, Dublin 4. Price 8/- (post free).

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# Pat Cronin

*talking to*

## SEAN MURPHY

**T**HE "foot and mouth" close-down of G.A.A. activities in December may well have deprived Clare's Pat Cronin of being the top hurling scorer of 1967. For with a total of 11-71 he tied with Eddie Keher (Kilkenny) and, with the Kilkenny ace sharpshooter out of action and the Galway game on hand, it looked odds on that Pat would have edged ahead to become the first known Banner County player to take such an honour.

However, the twenty-six-year-old catering instructor, who hails from Newmarket-on-Fergus and works at Rockwell College, had the satisfaction of topping the championship scoring list with a total of 2-19 from three games—one point ahead of Keher.

Pat Cronin is a dedicated hurler who trains diligently. His Christmas schedule even included a daily training spin!

He began his hurling career at a tender age and won Clare county championship medals in juvenile and minor grades with Newmarket-on-Fergus. He first donned the club's senior jersey at sixteen years of age and in the intervening period has won four county S.H. championships and one junior football medal. His collection also includes one Railway Cup (H) medal.

Both of Cronin's parents hail from Castlemaine, Co. Kerry — his father is a cousin of Jim, Paddy and John Cronin of football fame. But Pat has his adopted county at heart as I discovered when I interrupted one of his Christmas training spins to have the following conversation.

**Murphy—Were you disappointed that the Galway game was postponed and so deprived you of a chance of forging ahead in the scoring charts?**

Cronin — Not really. I was more than satisfied with my feat. After all, was not my great rival, Eddie Keher also at a disadvantage, due to injuries. Anyhow, I honestly believe that the prevention of the dreaded disease was far more important at this stage.

**M. — To what do you attribute your scoring ability?**

C. — A high percentage could be termed luck but any forward can notch scores if he possesses speed, sense of position and a little daring thrust. Striking practice from all angles is also necessary if one is to develop accuracy.

**M. — When a schoolboy, who was your hurling idol?**

C. — I started playing hurling very early in life but, strange to relate, I had no real idol although I always admired Christy Ring, Jimmy Smith and Nick Rackard. I had no aspirations to reach inter-county standard in hurling. In fact, my first appearance in a Clare jersey was on a minor football selection. But gradually my interest switched to the camán and

I have no regrets for the change of mind.

**M. — Who was the best player you encountered?**

C. — Without a doubt, Seamus Cleere of Kilkenny.

**M. — What is your favourite position?**

C. — Right or left half forward.

**M. — How do you rate the present Clare team?**

C. — They are a great team but, unfortunately, we don't seem to be able to maintain our effort for a full hour. I feel this is going to be our season. We have been so near and yet so far in recent years that our breakthrough must be close on hand. We certainly owe it to our supporters (the most loyal in the country).

**M. — Do you fancy your chances in the Munster championship and what about the concluding stages of the League?**

C. — It is very difficult to forecast the happenings of the Munster championship, but with a tightening up, our fifteen should be equal to the best. As to the League, we looked impressive when ousting Limerick but Cork will be a tough nut to crack. If we qualify for the decider I would like another clash with Kilkenny.

**M. — Is hurling in a healthy state in Clare and how is the revival scheme progressing?**

C. — At senior club level the standard was never higher and, contrary to general trends, seems to be improving. In the under-age groups the County Board have done great work organising various competitions but apart from the established areas their efforts seem to have failed. This is definitely true of the western end of the county where football continues to be the number one pastime. Where you have a good, active senior club there is no fear of a decline of hurling in that district.

**M. — Any rule you would like to see changed?**



C. — Not really. But I would like to see players who are sent off for rough play getting severe penalties. And also that referees be afforded greater protection from howling spectators who seem to blame the "man in the middle" for their team's defeat. We had a bad name here in Clare for incidents but, thanks to the "get tough" attitude adopted by Jack Daly during his term as chairman skirmishes are now few and far between.

M. — What are your views on the Ban?

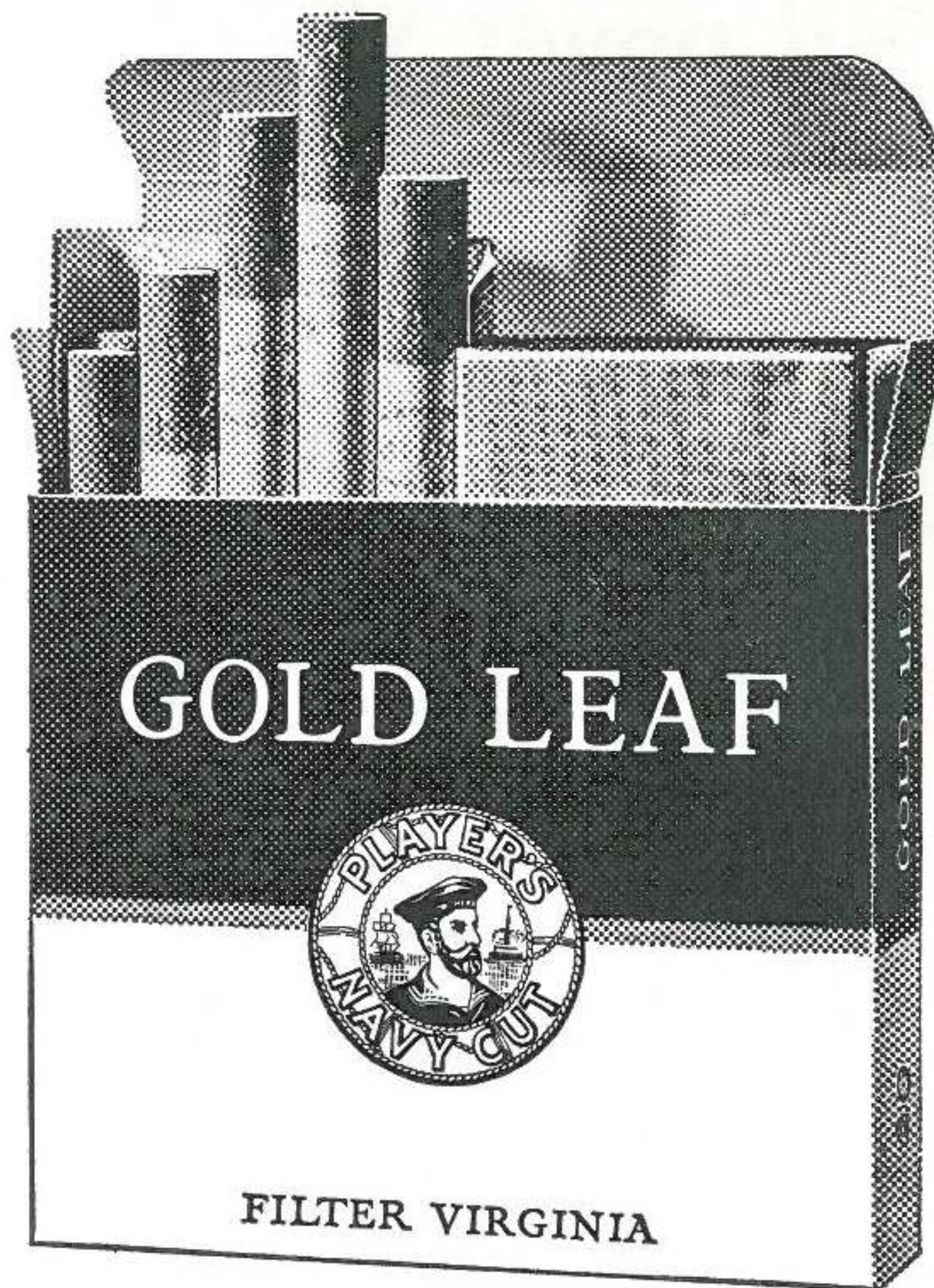
C. — Well, soccer and rugby are played by only a small minority in Clare and, consequently, the foreign games ban doesn't concern us greatly, but while I am a member of the G.A.A. I will abide rigidly by Rule 27. If it is ever removed I feel the G.A.A. authorities will have to introduce a "closed season" from November to February.

M. — Are you satisfied with the social activities provided by the G.A.A.

C. — Definitely, yes. Despite the criticism from all quarters on the subject I feel the officials are doing their work but the players and supporters are not pulling their weight. To quote an incident. Our local club opened a community centre where it was hoped players would gather to play cards, rings etc. at night, but the nightly attendance of players was practically nil! Likewise, a few years ago, after a county final, the County Board provided a meal for the teams but the seats remained empty as the contestants left for home. I feel each club should provide entertainment suitable for their own locality.

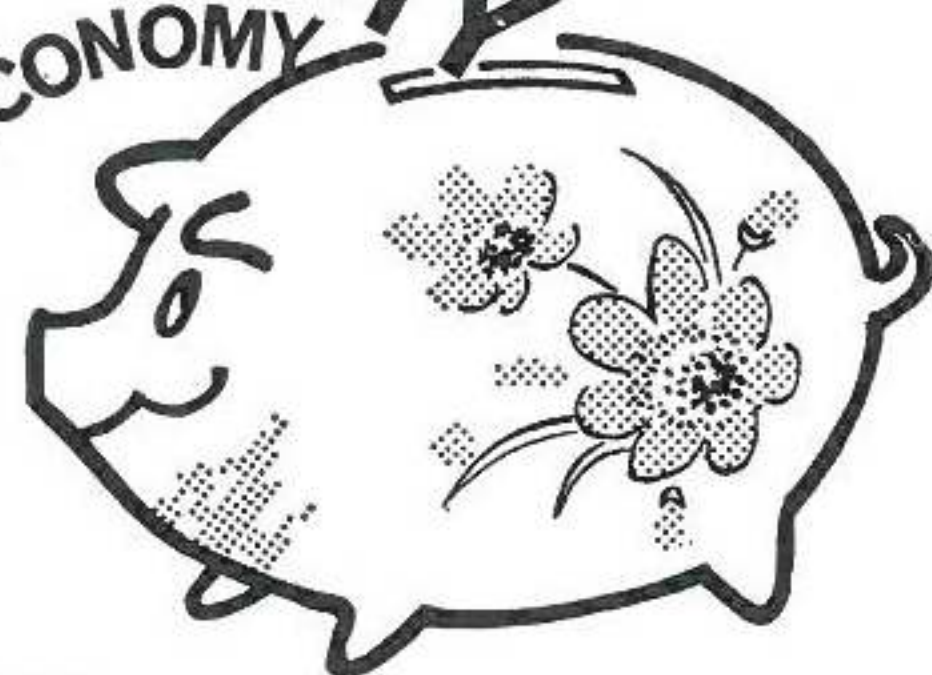
M. — What are your ambitions?

C. — (A) To help the present Clare team win an All-Ireland hurling title and (B) to maintain an active interest in promoting hurling amongst the youth when my playing days are over.



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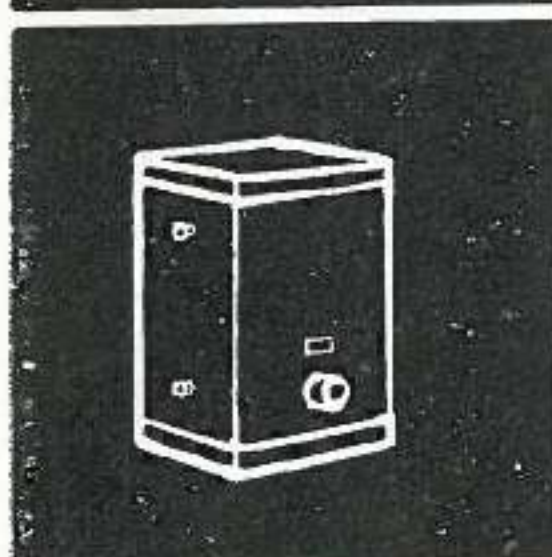
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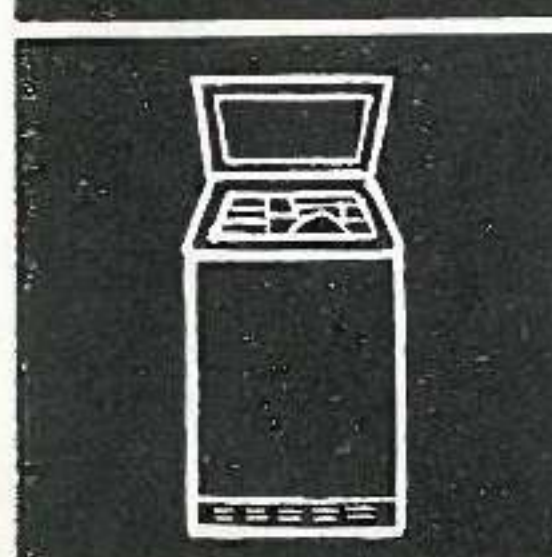
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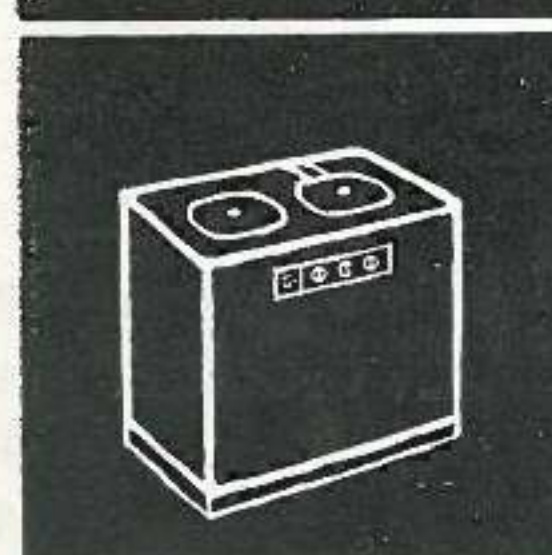
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# **IS Football really a threat to Cork Hurling**

**Asks**

**TIM HORGAN**

**I**F the Cork footballers win the All-Ireland, it'll be the end of hurling in the city."

This rather startling comment came from a veteran Leaside hurler on the eve of last year's All-Ireland final. He spoke with the conviction of a medical specialist diagnosing the greatest threat to his patient's health and added gravely, "I know it sounds terrible for a Corkman to say so, but I'm hoping Meath will beat us on Sunday."

Many readers will be surprised at this pessimistic view of the survival of hurling in Cork, but it must be added that this man's opinion was in one way unique. There were many long-serving hurling supporters who felt the same way about last year's final. Their county loyalty was much too strong for most of them to entertain hopes of a Cork defeat, but still they viewed the consequences with noticeable uneasiness.

As it happened, Cork didn't win the All-Ireland and the alleged threat to the ancient game was cast aside for the time being. But the prospects of a Leaside football success in the near future are not very remote and it is worthwhile to consider what such a victory would do to alter the position of hurling in Cork.

Hurling holds a very special place in the sporting life of the southern capital. No other large urban area in Ireland allots such an exalted position to the country's most ancient sport and treats all other codes, both native and non-native, in a secondary manner. A county hurling final in Cork can attract an attendance of over thirty thousand while less than half that figure can be expected at the corresponding football decider.

This unique situation is quite intriguing when one considers that Gaelic football predominates throughout rural Ireland, while soccer holds a firm grip in urban

centres. But the overwhelming popularity of hurling in Cork City is easily understood when one remembers how successful Leaside teams have been, down through the decades.

A glance at the G.A.A. honours list reveals that no decade has passed without an All-Ireland hurling title going to Cork. This is significant, but equally important is the fact that from time to time the Rebel County has ruled the hurling roost for a lengthy period. Between 1928 and 1931 for example, Cork won three All-Ireland titles. In the 'forties the county hurlers brought off the record four-in-a-row and the 'fifties saw the All-Ireland trophy remaining in Cork for three successive seasons.

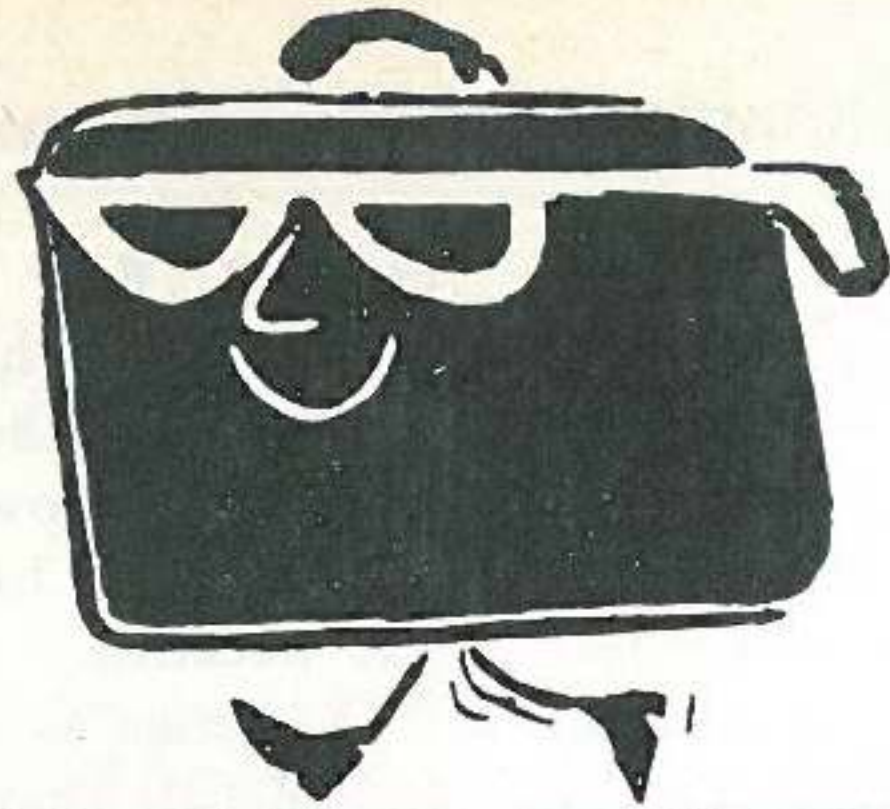
Each of those eras produced some of the greatest exponents the game has seen, notably Eudie Coughlan, Jack Lynch and Christy Ring. Their influence on the growth and development of hurling was tremendous.

Another factor which helped the popularity of the game in Cork was the outstanding quality of the fare produced in the championship by the leading clubs, Glen Rovers, Blackrock and St. Finbarrs. This gave the County final a special place in the southern sports calendar and to this day "the little All-Ireland," as it is called, is the most popular club game in the country.

It is interesting to note that 22,429 spectators attended last year's county final between the Glens and the Barrs, while the Munster football decider, between Cork and Kerry, attracted 18,500 to the Athletic Grounds. Both games were played in atrocious weather conditions.

While success on the All-Ireland field and top-class exhibitions by the clubs at home helped hurling to become Cork's number one

● Continued overleaf



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game, the failure of the other codes to make an impression left the hurlers in a supreme position. Gaelic football was regarded as an inferior game played by the country cousins. Soccer failed to bring back national honours to the city and rugby was too exclusive to threaten hurling supremacy.

If these games were to wrest some of the popularity from hurling, they would have to do so by winning national titles when Cork's hurling fortunes were low. Gaelic football "struck" in 1945 when the Leesiders took the Sam Maguire Cup, but the hurlers were back the next year to resume a long series of All-Ireland triumphs. Soccer made its mark around the same period, but the time was not ripe for any inroads into hurling's supreme position.

Since 1945, no Cork soccer club has won an F.A.I. title, and, of course, Cork senior football teams have failed to bring home an All-Ireland also. Hurling was never really threatened until a few years ago, when the county team struck a very lean period. However, this spell ended with a major triumph in 1966 and the real strength of the game's popularity was seen in the wild scenes of enthusiasm after Cork had won the title.

The survival of hurling as Cork's top sport required an All-Ireland success in the 'sixties, and when that was achieved, the game was injected with a new lease of life.

Why then, should loyal hurling supporters fear a decline in the game's popularity so soon after the 1966 victory? The answer lies not in the fortunes of hurling itself, but in the rapid rise of Cork football teams during the past few years.

Up to 1961 the Cork minor footballers had never won an All-Ireland. To-day they have two national titles under their belt, as well as a string of provincial successes. The senior footballers have come to

● TO PAGE 48



Ollie Walsh

## OLLIE WALSH

That goalkeeper was young Oliver Patrick Walsh from Thomastown, who had two further years of minor competition ahead of him and who, though he never won a medal in that grade, very nearly snatched victory for his county in one such final when he came outfield to give an equally brilliant exhibition of mid-field play in the closing quarter.

After a brief spell with the juniors he was promoted to the Kilkenny senior side and since he first made his mark on the senior inter-county scene in 1957 he has remained one of Ireland's top goal-minders ever since.

His record speaks for itself. Three All-Ireland's, two National League's, four Railway Cup

● TO PAGE 13

IT is remarkable, when you come to think it over, that up to now only one Kilkenny hurler has received the Texaco — until recently the Caltex — award. That man was Seamus Cleere, in 1963. Now comes another wearer of the Black and Amber and one of the most famed ever to wear that colourful jersey, goalkeeper Ollie Walsh.

This award comes as the climax of an outstanding career, that is as yet far from finished . . . a career that goes back to the early 'fifties, when a relatively small boy playing in the goal for the Kilkenny minors in a Leinster final on a pouring wet day was cheered all the way to the dressing room by the crowd, even though Kilkenny lost, so brilliant had his exhibition been.

# TEXACO STARS OF 1967



Bertie Cunningham

## BERTIE CUNNINGHAM

NO TEAM ever wins an All-Ireland final in any grade without at least one 'solid man' who bears the brunt of battle right through the campaign. Meath were blessed during 1967 that they had such a solid man at centre-half-back in burly Bertie Cunningham from Ballivor, who was the corner-stone of the side right through the 1967 championship, just as he had been, but not quite so commandingly, through 1966.

And yet, it may not be entirely fair to Cunningham to refer to him as just a solid player, for he is considerably more than that. He is a tremendously steadying influence in defence, always quick to cover off his two dashing wing-halves, always there to help the full-back line in an emergency, yet

he is anything but defensive-minded.

A man who, once he gets the 'feel' of a game, can 'read' that game speedily, Bertie Cunningham is always quick to come out to the support of his mid-fielders and, what is more, can range up to drive the long ball through to his half-forwards and thus, with one move, transform defence into attack at a vital moment.

Moreover, he is both accurate and effective from long-range frees and has landed more than one all-important point from the fifty-yard mark, and beyond.

Yes, Bertie Cunningham was a key-man in Meath's All-Ireland victory but then, he has been a vital link in the Royal County's chain of successes that have

● TO PAGE 13

# A.I.

# CATTLE BREEDING

THE popularity of this method of breeding cattle — A.I. — is reflected in the ever-increasing demand on the service throughout the country. Now over a million per annum.

Below we publish a list of the A.I. Cattle Breeding Stations and their respective branches and telephone numbers :—

<b>Ballyclough Cattle Breeding Station</b>		
	Mallow	85
Bruree .....	Bruree	12
Newmarket .....	Newmarket	37
Kantohar .....	Ballagh	4

<b>Dairy Disposal Co. Ltd., Ennis</b>		
	Ennis	21220
Ennis .....	Ennis	21006
Market St., Clifden .....	Clifden	14
Ennistymon .....	Ennistymon	6
Mayoralty House .....	Galway	4196
Crowe St., Gort .....	Gort	47
Kilrush .....	Kilrush	7
Scarriff .....	Scarriff	8
Circular Road, Tuam .....	Tuam	24403
Castleisland .....	Castleisland	240
Listowel .....	Listowel	23
Ardfert .....	Ardfert	2
Dingle .....	Dingle	3
Castlemaine Milltown (Co. Kerry) .....		18
Cahirciveen .....	Cahirciveen	7
Castletownbere ....	Castletownbere	3
Kenmare .....	Kenmare	5
Rathmore .....	Rathmore	23

<b>Galtee Cattle Breeding Station</b>		
	Mitchelstown	271
Drombanna .....	Limerick	46326
Dungarvan .....	Dungarvan	114
Tipperary .....	Tipperary	155
Mogeely .....	Midleton	67101
Castlelyons .....	Castlelyons	10

<b>Leinster Cattle Breeding Service</b>		
Main Station, Balgaddy, Clondalkin		
	Dublin	592476
North Quay, Drogheda	Drogheda	8434
Athboy .....	Athboy	35
Enniscorthy .....	Enniscorthy	186
Mullingar, Green Road	Mullingar	8298
Bath St., Wicklow .....	Wicklow	141
Tullow .....	Tullow	266

<b>North Western Cattle Breeding Society Ltd.</b>		
	Sligo	2125
Main St., Ardara .....	Ardara	7
Baylough, Athlone .....	Athlone	2579
Dowra .....	Dowra	8
Ardnaree, Ballina .....	Ballina	285
Church St., Claremorris	Claremorris	115
Letterkenny .....	Letterkenny	136
Kilmastranny .....	Ballyfarnon	9
Churchtown .....	Carndonagh	51
Rathscanlon .....	Tubbercurry	48
Altamount St. ....	Westport	141
Dungloe .....	Dungloe	5
Elphin .....	Elphin	14
Ballintra .....	Ballintra	12
Ballinamore .....	Ballinamore	41
Corner House, Roscommon		
	Roscommon	6224
Main St., Belmullet .....		
	Belmullet	33

<b>South Eastern Cattle Breeding Society Ltd.</b>		
Dovea, Thurles .....	Thurles	110
Killenaule .....	Killenaule	15
Kilkenny .....	Kilkenny	88
Piltown .....	Piltown	13
Waterford .....	Waterford	47721
Nenagh .....	Nenagh	204
Rathdowney .....	Rathdowney	43
Birr .....	Birr	133
Kilkenny .....	Kilkenny	450

<b>South Western Cattle Breeding Society Ltd.</b>		
Shinagh, Bandon .....	Bandon	171
Macroom .....	Macroom	66
Clonakilty .....	Clonakilty	119
Timoleague .....	Timoleague	22
Tarelton .....	Tarelton	11
Skibbereen .....	Skibbereen	106
Bantry .....	Bantry	97
Drinagh .....	Drinagh	11
Ballinhassig .....	Ballinhassig	5
Carrigaline .....	Carrigaline	8
Ballincollig .....	Ballincollig	871102

# ARTIFICIAL INSEMINATION A.I.

## OLLIE WALSH

● FROM PAGE 11

medals, seven Leinster senior championships, two World hurling championships, several appearances either for Ireland against the champion county or for the champion county against Ireland, and the remarkable record of never having played on the losing side in any of these exhibition games.

There is a fallacy about Ollie that he does not normally reach top form in an All-Ireland final. That is wrong, for he has played in seven finals, won three lost three and drawn one. The tally of goals against him in such games must be balanced against the number of amazing saves he made.

And here is the really amazing thing about Ollie Walsh. He never modelled his style on anybody, because he was too busy hurling during his earlier days to spare time to see the greats of other counties in action.

## BERTIE CUNNINGHAM

● FROM PAGE 11

brought three Leinster titles and one All-Ireland in the past four seasons.

Oddly enough, he is the only man from the Meath minor team who won All-Ireland honours in the fifties who has come on to win the premier award in the senior grade. He was a corner back when he won that minor medal, but he has long moved out into the half-back line, and has found his ideal billet at centre-half.

A hurler of no mean ability, he has also worn the Meath jersey in the caman game. Bertie Cunningham comes of a noted Meath Gaelic family, and his closest rival for this coveted Texaco award may well have been his colleague Jack Quinn.

DAN McAREAVY

## CRYSTAL-GAZING

LAST month I listed those persons and events which I considered had made notable contributions to the G.A.A. scene in 1967 and already "the errors of my ways" have been pointed out to me in the most unmistakable fashion. But at the risk of bringing another hornet's nest about my head I propose to crystal-gaze on this occasion and nominate the possible sources where we may look — twelve months hence — for the "stars" of 1968.

1 — Our referees. Somehow I am convinced that 1968 can well be the most important year ever for these key members of the Association. With competitions mushrooming at an amazing rate it is essential that the man-in-the-middle should be better equipped than ever as — numerically under-strength — they face another exacting programme.

Surely, every possible up-lift in status must be accorded these most loyal servants. Can they not have their own board in every county, their own council in every province and their own executive at Central Council level?

2 — The president and general secretary must press on with a decentralisation policy and bring "Croke Park" to the country in schemes of which the Leadership Courses are an excellent example.

3 — County committees must be more than mere forums for unravelling the most technical, involved and petty trivialities which club "lawyers" can concoct.

The county committee is charged with developing every facet of the

Association within its territory and therefore it must give the lead — by gearing itself to the conditions of the day — for the general advance.

When I became Armagh chairman a veteran Gael told me: "If you have not the guts to lead at least have the guts to leave." I regret that I have not been able to implement his advice — either way — but I know what he meant all the same.

4 — Clubs must divest themselves of all the conservatism with which they have been shackled for far too long. New thinking is called for to kill the theory that a club is a club if it has fifteen players who take part in a game every other Sunday. Instead, the club can, and must, become the focal point in its parish or community.

5 — An honest re-assessment of the hurling position in the weaker counties would, I believe, do more for the revival than a matter-of-fact acceptance that progress is satisfactory. And can football clubs really square their conscience by paying the £1 levy only?

6 — Is it too much to hope that RTE will accept its responsibility towards the Association by giving that coverage to which it is entitled? And in this connection, UTV and the BBC might also think again!

7 — Would it not be possible for Congress to be streamlined without loss? Last year's twelve-hour session seemed, in many ways, a

● TO PAGE 48

# MICK MELLETT OF MEATH



**W**HAT would normally be the main topic in G.A.A. circles in the month of February? You would say the Railway Cup competitions. Many would agree with you. But since this is Leap year, and the unusual is sure to happen, I feel that the interprovincials will be overshadowed by Meath's visit to Australia in March.

So, in order to get a better understanding of the whole affair, I dropped by to have a chat with twenty-two years old Mick Mellett, who, like his well-known brother, Padraic, proudly displays the fáinne in his lapel. A native of Connemara, Mick moved to Meath in 1956 and with brothers Colm, Seamus and Joe all playing for the Martinstown club, Meath can be very proud indeed, of the Mellett family.

Our interview went as follows:—

*O'Donnell—What are your feelings about the forthcoming trip to Australia?*

Mellett—I feel very thrilled about it all and I am looking forward to it very much. It is one of those rare opportunities which a G.A.A. player gets in his playing career and for that reason I am deeply grateful. We are very fortunate in Meath that we happen to be champions at this particular time.

*O'D.—Can you tell me about the arrangements for the trip?*

M.—Yes. We will leave Dublin on Sunday, March 3. Our first stop will be in Rome and our first game in Sydney against a local selection. From there we will go to Melbourne to play the All-Australian team and after that we will travel to Auck-

land in New Zealand. We will then return to Melbourne and from there set off for home.

*O'D.—A huge sum of money is needed to finance the trip. Is this a big worry for the Meath County Board, and how are they coping with it?*

M.—It is, indeed, a big worry because they are doing it all on their own and not dipping into any G.A.A. funds for help. They are now running a raffle, with tickets going at £1 each. The prize could be a trip with the team to Australia. Perhaps some of the big firms who trade in Meath will come to our aid. Harry Beitzel has assured us of support to the value of 12,000 Australian dollars.

However, with about £10,000 to raise for the trip, any of your readers in GAELIC SPORT who would like to subscribe can send their subscriptions to the Co. Secretary, Liam Crevin, Peter McDermott or Colm Cromwell, all in An Uaimh.

*O'D.—Do you think that these trips to Australia by the All-Ireland football champions could become an annual event or, to give it an international flavour, would you prefer to see a team chosen from the pick of the country to represent Ireland?*

M.—To be honest, if Meath were to win the Sam Maguire Cup for the next year or two, I would be all for sending the champions, but even if we were in that position, sure we would need to be millionaires to be able to go every year. Therefore, an Ireland team would be more suitable.

*O'D.—How do you think this Ireland team should be selected?*

M.—That is a difficult one. My suggestion is that a representative from each of the four provinces be chosen by their respective Provincial Councils, and that they take notes from month to month on the performances of the players who catch their eye. Then, at the end of the year, they could all meet with, say, Michael O'Hehir as chairman, and nominate their Ireland team.

*O'D.—Have you any idea of the type of pitch you will be playing on in Australia, or what to expect in regard to weather conditions?*

M.—For a while that was a problem, as we feared that certain clubs would not allow us to play on their grounds. This has now been overcome and we will be playing on a cricket ground, which will mean a hard surface underneath and a hard and fast game in the making. As for weather conditions, it will be autumn when we arrive and the weather should be warm. I would like to mention here that John Kerry O'Donnell was anxious to have us stop off at New York on our way back but because of the fact that it will be winter and conditions may vary so much from the Australian climate, we had to decline his offer.

*O'D.—Now to the most important question of the trip—training. Many people are anxious to know if it is any different from that for the All-Ireland?*

M.—No difference at all. It consists of lapping around the pitch and playing and practising the type of



## Talking to SEAN O'DONNELL

Gaelic football most likely to beat the Aussies. There isn't any weight-lifting or body-building, as some people seem to think. We are not going out with the intention of wrestling, you know.

*O'D.—In my interview with Harry Beitzel, the Australian team manager, (published in GAELIC SPORT recently) he spoke of how seriously the spectators take the game over there. Does this worry you in regard to your team's safety if, say, the pitch were invaded?*

*M.—I hope it will not come to that. I believe they do take football very seriously over there but not having been there before I did not think of that aspect of the trip. Indeed, it could be quite serious if such a thing were to happen. If Meath go out and play a good sporting game I believe we will have nothing to worry about either.*

*O'D.—How would you compare the style of the Australians to that of New York, having played against both teams?*

*M.—The Aussies are a much faster team; they are much taller men, of course, and are unbeatable in the air. As for New York, they tend to play a closer and rugged type of football, unlike the Aussies who prefer to concentrate on the ball and its whereabouts.*

*O'D.—What did you admire most about the Australians as a team?*

*M.—I was greatly surprised by their fitness and their great determination and will to win. It must have meant an awful lot to them to defeat us, but they are a fine bunch of lads, on or off the field,*

● TO PAGE 33

## Good husbandry starts with good health



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**JAY DRENNAN**  
*Looks forward  
to the new  
hurling season  
and pluckily  
picks the  
champions of  
1968. He says . . .*

---

IT is early days yet for peering into the glass of time to try to discover what reflections there are which would indicate the 1968 champions. But, early as it is, the attraction of forecasting, draws one on, and the rashness of so early a forecast is made more attractive by its remoteness. The man who picks the champions of September in February will always think himself a veritable soothsayer of Gaelic games; he pleasantly forgets the fact that nothing but sheer luck could make his forecast correct.

The prospects for this year seem varied, and not unblemished; there are certain weaknesses which are still awaiting remedy. The whole hurling picture, for instance, is far from satisfactory. Towards the year's end, Clare had, perhaps, emerged as the nearest challengers to Kilkenny, and nobody could say that Clare are really up to the highest standards. I do not decry their efforts, nor underestimate their potential; but in spite of plentiful qualities of youth, fitness, determination and ambition, they are lacking in the skill which makes champions and in the experience which enables champions to produce the form of champions. I do not say that these missing ingredients may not be added to the pie, either by a few new plums supplied by shrewd selectors, or by the results of cooking in the heat of the battle of experience.

Kilkenny, naturally, were the team of 1967, though this team

# It's Kilkenny again



*"Pa" Dillon*



*Seamus Cleere*

could hardly claim to be the most illustrious of the county's champions. They still depend too much on individuals, but, equally, it is clear that they are overcoming this dependence by having learnt to be workmanlike. One would be inclined to rate them much higher if it were not for the slump in the earlier part of the year (including the loss of the League) and their indifferent home form since the All-Ireland.

But this may not be altogether a fair attitude to take since any team is due some off days and since the team after the All-Ireland and New York has been denuded of two of its acknowledged stars — Keher and Tom Walsh — and occasionally lacking the services of other top men.

Yet, one fears that Kilkenny without Keher and Walsh is a far

different proposition to Kilkenny when they enjoyed their services. The defence is an admirable set up which has been drawn tight and armour-plated through many hard-fought games. Since the All-Ireland it is on them that the burden of maintaining Kilkenny supremacy lies! and this is not natural in a county whose whole strength has always lain with brilliant forwards, and whose philosophy has always been rather "the team which scores most scores wins" rather than "the team which concedes least scores wins."

But then, Keher should be back for the new championship with all his instinctive feeling for where the posts are. In the light of the present moment, there appears to be no power in the land to threaten their supremacy in 1968; if one arises, it will have made a lot of improvement between now and June.

Wexford, of course, must have the capability. But Wexford have been far from successful so far in blending together the wealth of talents which the underage teams have paraded in the last two or three years. The transition to senior grade is no "cakewalk"; and sometimes the brilliance of youth is a mixed blessing, not always indicative of real return in maturity.

It will, however, be surprising if they do not provide a very strong challenge to Kilkenny, and it will surely be between the two of them that Leinster's crown, and

maybe even Ireland's, will be decided.

That one can be so positive of such an outcome in Leinster is, in itself, an indictment of standards in the rest of the province. The Hurling Plan is still a long way from bearing even its first fruits at the senior level of competition, and there may be many more years of imbalance among the hurling counties to be endured.

Neither can Munster offer such an exciting prospect as the province has traditionally offered. There is a distinct low in the graph of form in the south: their performance in the Railway Cup in recent years has emphasised this gradual decline, and this year's competition will be looked forward to with interest to see whether Leinster further lengthens the lead built up in the last two competitions.

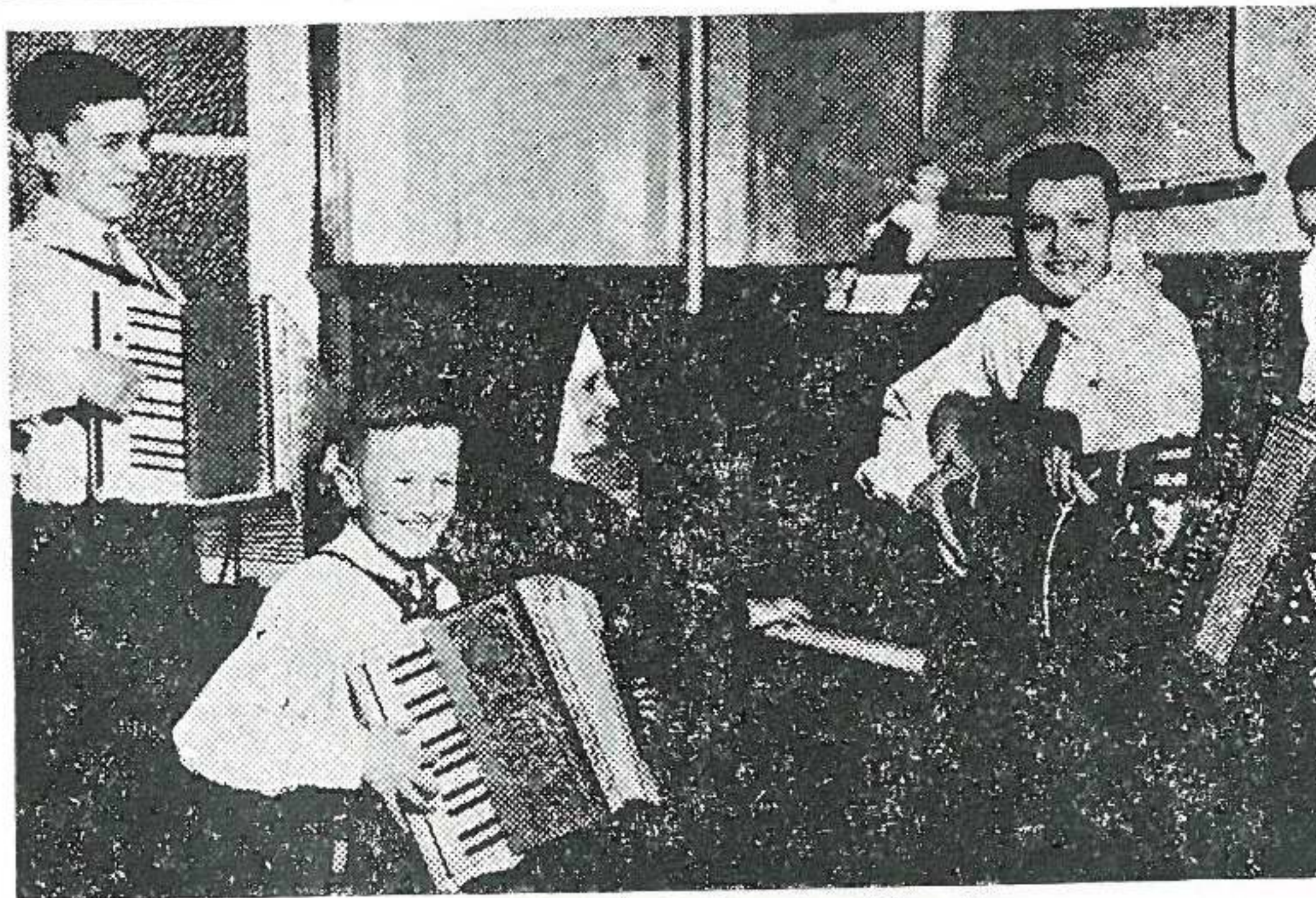
Tipperary cannot be said to be the great power of the past unless they experience some extraordinary luck in mending their leaky ship with the first blow of the selectorial hammer. The ranks of the great are decimated by retirement and the burden of the years. At least four or five brilliant youngsters, all succeeding at the first time of asking, would be necessary to re-vamp the formula, and give enthusiasm and fresh vigour and mobility to supplement the craft and cunning of the long-standing veterans.

And there are several trump cards in the old pack which will be dealt again with effect: Donie Nealon is still, perhaps, the single most effective hurler in the country, virile and skilful and crafty and capable, if really needed, of holding the centre of the field for Tipperary. If John McKenna re-

covers his peak of fitness he will have a big role to fill; if Larry Kiely were not torn between divided loyalties he would still be a most valuable man. Mick Roche must have many years, yet, of commanding play in him; while the form of the All-Ireland final would suggest that new wing-half backs will have very limited chances in the blue and gold jersey. The more you consider it, the more healthy do the chances of Tipperary become.

Cork are an enigma; one sometimes is forced to the conclusion that the 1966 win was more the product of a communal need expressing itself in a supreme effort of the collective will to win than on the ability of the team. But, fair play, it was a curious year, without much luck for Cork, in 1967. They have never been able

● TO PAGE 23



A musical interlude for the Sligo boys

## NAZARETH HOUSE

HAMMERSMITH, LONDON, W.6.

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For the reception of Aspirants to the religious life Houses of Study have been opened at: Nazareth House (St. Brigid's), Mallow, Co. Cork; St. Teresa's, Nazareth House, Fahan, Co. Donegal, and at Nazareth House, Hendon, London, W.4.

Novitiates have been opened at Nazareth House, East Camberwell, 6; Victoria, Australia, and at Nazareth House, Los Angeles, California, U.S.A.

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# HANDBALL

## NEW COURT IN THE OFFING

THE dedication of the handballers attached to Johnston, Mooney and O'Brien, the well-known bakery in Ballsbridge may shortly be given special recognition by the management.

I can reveal that the company's executives are so pleased with the handballers that they are giving serious consideration to the possibility of building a ballcourt.

In fact, it appears that they would be prepared to get the construction of it under way immediately, were it not for the fact that the question of a suitable site is presenting quite a problem. But I am confident that a solution will be found, thus providing the dedicated handballing community of Johnston, Mooney and O'Brien with a base to indulge in the sport that one automatically connects with the Ballsbridge firm.

So, it's bouquets all round, to the management for an awareness of the need to provide this amenity, not to mention its obvious indication of the synchronised staff-management-labour relationship that exists.

When I spoke to some of the J. M. & O'B. players about the proposed new court, they were unanimous in singing the praises of the company for coming to the aid of the Handball Club in such fashion.

Enthusiasm has reached such a peak about the suggestion, that the players themselves are prepared to put in quite an amount of

voluntary effort on the project when the green light is given. It would, of course, be a boost to Dublin handball as well, for the J. M. & O'B. players would be able to play all their home games in their own court, which would relieve the present strain on the few alleys throughout the City.

Co-incidentally, the fortunes of Dublin Handball at present are being adroitly fashioned by a J. M. & O'B. man—John Foskin.

When I sought out the affable, quiet-spoken, Mullinavat - born Faughs hurler and, needless to remark, a J. M. & O'B. player and executive, he was characteristically modest of his part in the flourishing image that is presented by Dublin handball to-day.

"While competitively and organisational-wise the game in the Metropolis is securely anchored," he said. "I have burning ambitions to see Dublin with many more playing courts. They are absolutely essential if the magnificent work which is presently being undertaken by the Minor Board is to get the proper final schooling at senior level.

"I certainly appreciate the sentiments expressed by the County G.A.A. Chairman, Tom Loftus, in that he would provide the handballers with a playing court in O'Toole park, but I am disappointed that he has not received the necessary support from his fellow board members.

"Neither must I let the oppor-

tunity pass without commenting on the two Corporation Courts in Nephin Park, which were partly constructed by the Corporation, but have been left in their present unfinished condition for over a decade."

When I asked John for his views on the game, more or less on a general basis, he expressed delight with the introduction of "School-boy" and "Over 40" competition.

"On one hand the very roots of the game are being fostered and on the other, a system is satisfactorily in operation, where the interest is being retained," he said.

"Since these competitions were initiated I am glad to say that retirements are at a minimum."

As I spoke to the County Chairman, one of J. M. & O'B's best-known players — Paddy Breen — crossed our paths.

I interjected to congratulate him on his outstanding feat last season in winning a Novice Doubles title with Larry Lacey. For the "Whacker" as he is popularly known in Dublin Handballing circles, this was a history-making event.

Despite the fact that he has been competing in Dublin Championships for over a decade this was his first outright win. Larry Lacey had been on the winners' rostrum before — in fact he has the distinction, in partnership with Mick Parr of bringing the

● TO PAGE 29



## SUE CASHMAN

### Year of major honours for Antrim player

By AGNES HOURIGAN

**I**F ever I saw natural talent in a young camogie player, that talent was displayed by Sue Ward of the St. Dominic's school in Belfast when first I saw her play in an Ulster Colleges final some half a dozen years ago. She was only in her early 'teens then, but she already had all the attributes of a star, except one.

She had speed, tireless energy, bubbling enthusiasm. She could strike with length and accuracy almost as well off right hand or left. She had a very keen sense of anticipation, remarkable ball-control and stickwork for one so young and she was already a born leader. Sue Ward, as she was then, lacked only one attribute of greatness—that steadiness that only experience can bring.

Soon Sue swept right to the top of the camogie game, for in the same year she captained St. Dominic's to win the Ulster Colleges title, captained Deirdre to win the Antrim championship, captained Antrim to win the Ulster championship, and also captained Antrim to the All-Ireland final, in which they failed narrowly to Dublin.

Indeed, as the camogie years went by young Sue Ward must have often wondered if Dublin were always to stand like some in-

superable barrier between her and the supreme achievement she craved, All-Ireland victory. Time and again Antrim reached the final only to be beaten by the Dublin girls. In addition, her club, Deirdre, won the Antrim title in six successive years, but the two times they reached the All-Ireland club final, they lost at Croke Park, to the Dublin champions, Celtic, and at a home venue, to St. Patrick's, Tipperary.

Came 1966 and Antrim reached the All-Ireland final once again, and once again the opposition was provided by Dublin. Sue was very keen on victory in that game because she was getting married the same week, as she thought. But she mistook the date of the final, and discovered too late that on final day she would be on her honeymoon on the Continent.

Every effort to change the flight schedule failed and so when Antrim and Dublin fielded out for that final, Mrs. Sue Cashman was hundreds of miles away.

And to add to the irony of the situation, Antrim lost by just two points, and almost certainly the result must have gone the other way had their captain been available.

But Sue Cashman did not give

up, perhaps she felt she owed it to Antrim to compensate for the final she missed. Last year she not only returned to camogie but trained harder than ever. And the result of her endeavours is camogie history now.

In the drawn final against Dublin it was Sue Cashman who landed the equalising point for her county in the last minute. In the replay it was she who dominated the game in the last ten minutes and sent Antrim on to victory after Dublin's great rally had threatened to snatch the cup once more.

And so Sue Cashman climbed the steps of the Hogan Stand to receive the O'Duffy Cup at last and no player in Ireland more deserved that honour.

To crown a great year Sue played on the Ulster team that won the inter-provincial title and the Gael-Linn Cup for the first time, defeating Leinster in the final.

But another honour was yet to come. The Sports Editors, when they came to naming their sports stars of 1967, chose Sue Cashman as the camogie star, and she becomes only the second camogie player to attain to that coveted honour. And so, after the years of frustration, Sue Cashman's camogie genius has been amply rewarded at last.

# ***It took Dublin defeat to ignite revival***

**H**AVING for so many years felt like a prophet crying in the wilderness as far as camogie was concerned, I am a bit bewildered now at the speed with which the pastime is being acknowledged right, left and centre, and the relative ease with which, after all, it is so suddenly being accorded its proper place in the hierarchy of National Games.

Even the Sports Editors, those gentlemen of whom I have often talked so unkindly in the past because they so consistently chose to ignore the game of the Girl Gaels, have taken the unprecedented step of naming a camogie player to the panel of Texaco Sports Stars in two successive years, while the G.A.A., from the President down, has suddenly come to realise that camogie is the complement to both hurling and football.

For all these developments we should give thanks above all to the players from Antrim and Dublin who, by their brilliant displays in the All-Ireland draw and replay, brought camogie to all the prestige and position it has so long deserved.

And since I do not want to go back over old ground again, I

would just like to point out that Dublin and Antrim have been playing camogie that was just as good for the past half-dozen seasons, but the public never woke up to the fact until last September.

That would seem to bear out, too, what has been a firm contention of mine for years, that there was no hope of a real revival in camogie until Dublin were beaten.

Well, more power to Antrim. They achieved the seemingly impossible and thus helped revive interest in the game the whole country over. But this revival of interest, so long awaited, provides a challenge in itself. It is up to us now to avail ourselves of the impetus to spread the game in all those counties in which organisation has been hitherto lax and where camogie has always been struggling.

And this year we have a very good opportunity of spreading the new-found interest because, in 1968, for the very first time, we will have an All-Ireland championship in the junior grade.

This should provide a great opportunity for the advancement of the game in the weaker counties. In Leinster and Ulster already, the weaker counties are allowed

field their best teams in the junior grade. I would extend this privilege to all four provinces and this would give an opportunity to such counties as Sligo, Roscommon, Kerry and Clare, to take part in an All-Ireland competition with a reasonable chance of success.

As I presume that the junior final will be played in conjunction with the senior final, we would thus have a great chance of having four counties represented in Croke Park on final day, and that should prove very much an additional boost to the game.

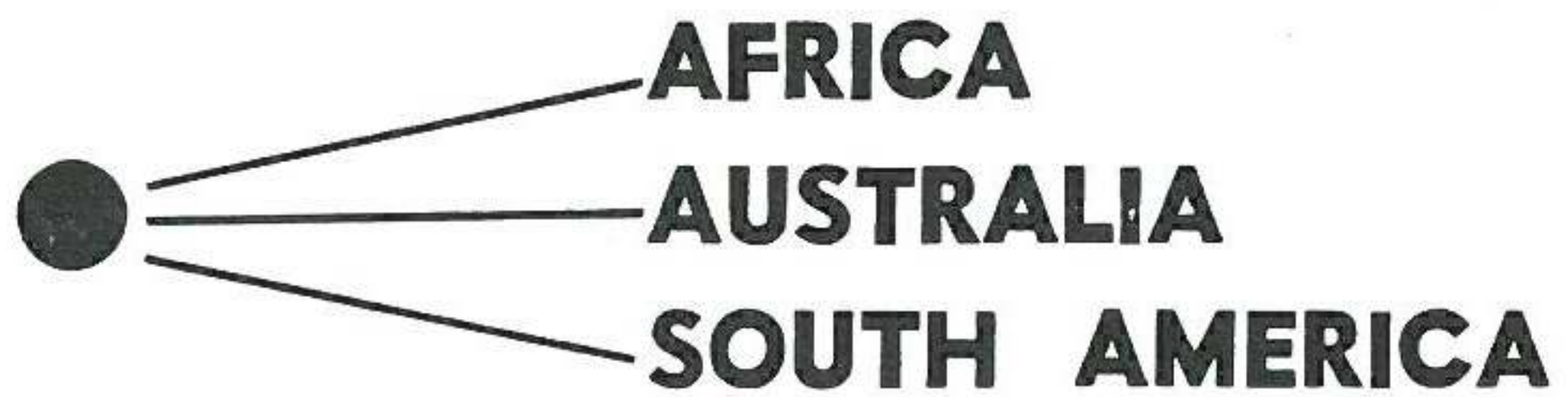
In the first place, such a situation would be bound to bring an improvement in the attendance. In the second place, the junior players and their followers would have the advantage of being able to see the top stars in action and this would be bound to lead eventually to an all-round improvement in playing standards.

There are two further steps I would like to see taken to advance camogie through the year ahead. First, it is absolutely essential that a further drive be made to spread the game in the schools, especially the vocational and secondary schools. Great progress has been made in the Leinster Colleges, and Ulster, of course, led the way in this regard, but something must be done in Munster and Connacht. The best way to force the issue would be for Congress to institute an All-Ireland Colleges, championship and thus give the school-girls a top honour to play for.

The vocational schools must be brought in too. And when we have the schools really going in all four provinces the time will then have come to make our big request to the G.A.A. That is to ask the Gaels to see to it that every G.A.A. club be encouraged to sponsor an associated camogie club.

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● FROM PAGE 17

to consolidate on the basis of their victory of 1966 because of injuries and absences; new players who were included often fought against the prejudice that they were in the team until the incumbent was again available.

Teamwork suffered more than skill. Indeed, I would go so far as to say that all through 1967 the Cork hurlers, as individuals, were somewhat more complete players than the previous year; it was the teamwork and the *esprit de corps* which failed to reach the same fanatically high level.

If, then, Cork used up all their luck in 1966, perhaps they have used up all their ill-luck in 1967, and are due again for a new turn on the wheel of fortune. That would be the medicine for a new onslaught from Leaside. They will scarcely suffer again the unkind fate which befell them in Waterford last year; I have always had the feeling that they were approaching their best form on that day when some underestimation of Waterford caused their downfall.

It appeared to me (and the Wembley performance against Kilkenny bears it out) that they had reached a point in a well-planned schedule which was to be gradually pepped-up to bring them to near-peak for the Tipperary match and subsequent encounters on the way to the second All-Ireland. How they would have fared against Tipperary, later, is problematical; but I cling to the view that Cork were not as bad as Waterford's showing against Tipperary made them out to be. They might not have been too far short of the second All-Ireland had they survived that torrid first round.

Limerick, if not going backward, seemed to be standing still. Waterford, Dublin and Galway are marking time until a new generation gives new life. Offaly have made encouraging but limited progress.

The total picture shows only five main characters: Kilkenny, Wexford, Cork, Tipperary and Clare. It is a dismal picture for hurling. As in-breeding produces a debilitated generation, too much of the same pairings and too much predictability in games produces a lack of interest. It is to be hoped that it will be otherwise.

I fancy a Kilkenny victory again; especially since several new

players have been integrating themselves into the team with marked success, and the same fifteen need not necessarily bear the burden. But, failing that, it may well be a Wexford-Cork final, and that would bring back memories; would equate with the patterns of development in hurling through the age groups in the last few years; and would make the elements of memories for the future.



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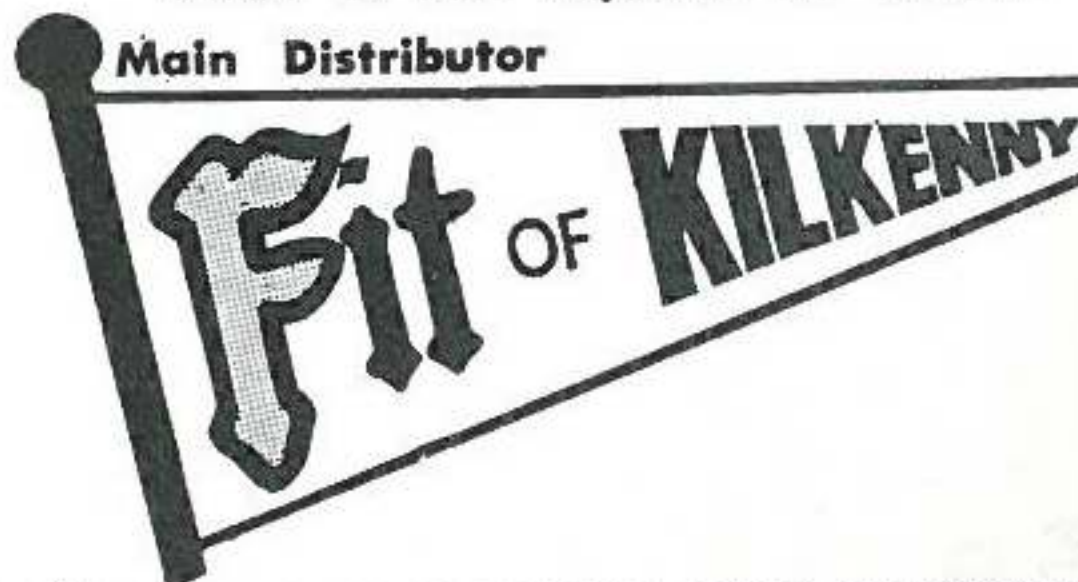
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## FACT ONE...

**IRELAND IS ONE OF THE THREE BEST FED NATIONS IN THE WORLD**

**I**RELAND has been for many years one of the best fed countries in the world. At the same time one out of every three of the population of this earth is on the verge of starvation.

The majority of the world's people do not have enough to eat, cannot read or write, are badly housed, and have not proper medical care. The number of people suffering from malnutrition is equivalent to 500 times the population of the Republic of Ireland.

Nearly 1,700 men, women and children die every hour because they have not enough to eat. This amounts to the appalling figure of 40,000 every day dying from malnutrition.

**Remember, we are talking about people;** men earning as little as £15 a year and living from hand to mouth; women who cannot feed or clothe their families; and children whose survival is constantly threatened by hunger and disease.

The problem of World Hunger has always existed but to day it constitutes a major international crisis. The first indication that the world was waking up to the problems was the decision of the United Nations to declare the 1960's the

## FACT TWO...

**ONE OUT OF EVERY THREE PEOPLE IN THE WORLD IS ON THE VERGE OF STARVATION**

sponsoring projects in India, Kenya, Brazil, Nigeria and Tanzania.

The projects include the education of young native boys in modern methods of farming, training mothers in the preparation of the proper food for their young starving children, clearing and cultivating land, providing fertilisers and seeds, drilling wells for badly

## FACT THREE...

**1,700 MEN WOMEN AND CHILDREN DIE EVERY HOUR FROM SHEER HUNGER**

needed water supplies and many more practical tasks. For it is only by educating the native populations in these starving countries and passing on to them the necessary know-how, that they will eventually be in a position to grow the food for themselves.

This is the important thing, not temporary relief, but knowledge,

## FACT FOUR...

**YOU CAN HELP TO RELIEVE THIS SITUATION**

education, showing the natives how it's done, and in this way they and their families will be in a position to help themselves — **HELP for SELF-HELP**, that's what it's all about.

Help Gorta to help those poor unfortunate people to help themselves — Gorta headquarters are at Earlsfort Terrace, Dublin 2.



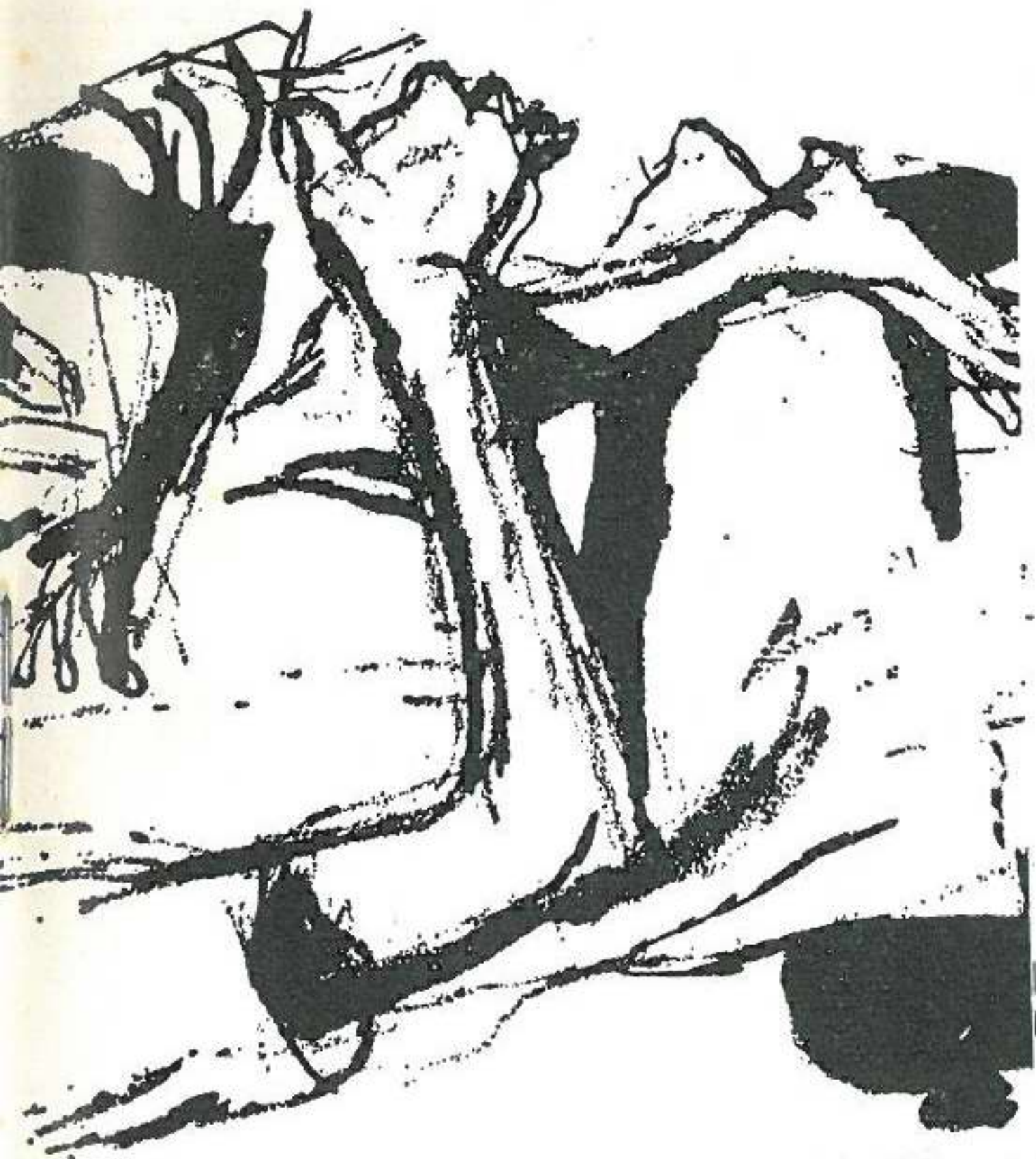
**Half the world  
has not enough  
to eat.**

"Development Decade" — a ten-year planned onslaught on poverty that would, it was hoped, result in a marked improvement in living standards. For nearly seven years the Freedom from Hunger Campaign and its affiliated bodies have helped to explain the seriousness of the crisis and the ways in which it can be peaceably resolved. Results have been slow to show themselves, but are now emerging. People DO care. They WILL respond, if given a lead and a practical channel for action.

Gorta — the Freedom from Hunger Council of Ireland, is the Irish National Committee affiliated to F.A.O.'s Freedom from Hunger Campaign and was inaugurated under Government auspices late in 1965 to promote the objectives of the Campaign in Ireland.

Gorta is a broadly-based organisation which is representative of all sections of Irish community life, its functions are, briefly to disseminate information about the Freedom from Hunger Campaign and to strengthen the determination of the Irish people to assist in the alleviation of World Hunger: to organise the collection of funds and the provision of other resources to help bring about the social and economic progress of the developing countries.

It does NOT aim at the temporary relief of hunger through "emergency relief," the problem is so vast that the only long term solution is to help the hungry countries to grow more food themselves, in other words **HELP** for **SELF-HELP** and in line with that policy, Gorta is now engaged in



**At this moment, 1,500 million human beings have not enough to eat. One in every three of these barely exists at starvation level.**

Appalling though this is, it is daily growing worse, as the world's population outstrips food production at a frightening rate.

Emergency relief is not enough. Only a world-wide effort to remove mass hunger and malnutrition wherever it exists can possibly hope to stem this tidal wave of human misery and death.

Such an effort is being made. The UN Freedom from Hunger Campaign is an international movement, which is spearheading the attack on hunger through national committees in the better-off countries.

GORTA was inaugurated by the Government as the Irish National Committee; it consists of people in all walks of life, and its name comes from **An Gorta Mór**—the Great Famine, with all its grim connotations for Irish people everywhere.

GORTA is not an organisation for temporary relief. It is a planned campaign of help through self-help, and every penny it can raise will be multiplied a thousand-fold through the development of projects

that enable the hungry to help themselves by modern food-raising techniques.

GORTA is helping to: Increase milk production in **India**; give agricultural training in **Brazil**; drill wells for water in **India**; provide water for 18,000 persons in **Kenya**; give training in farming methods in **India**; train women in nutrition in **Nigeria**; teach young farmers in **Tanzania**. Many other projects are planned to **HELP THE HUNGRY TO HELP THEMSELVES**. Please send a donation to **GORTA, St. Stephen's Green House, Dublin, 2.**

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**THE IRISH FREEDOM FROM HUNGER CAMPAIGN**

# Football's

## bright

### young men

ARE football's bright young men poised to make a sizeable imprint in the coming Railway Cup games? From what I have seen of such as teenagers Colm McAlarney, Mickey Niblock, Jimmy Hanniffy and Jack Donnelly in recent years, I am convinced that here are certainly young players with what it takes to steal much of the thunder from the more established stars in the intriguing battles ahead for the 1968 interprovincial title.

McAlarney is a dazzling starlet who has come a long way in a hurry. I'm not surprised, though, for I well remember being very impressed by his potential on a July afternoon in 1966 when he completed a notable Ulster medals double at Casement Park. At centre half back and later at midfield, he contributed nobly to Down's win over Derry and later in the minor decider.

Then, with senior appearances to his credit against Tyrone and Antrim in the earlier rounds, he went in as a substitute against Donegal in the senior final, and duly completed a provincial medals double in the same afternoon.

Colm has since been efficiently furthering his football education in the most testing "College" of all — the tough senior inter-county grade. I saw him in a number of matches in the top flight last year, notably the Ulster final, and he is certainly fully living up to all my expectations.

He moves well, both on and off the ball, and he is sure in his fielding. He is also quick to see an

opening, and quick to avail of it. He makes intelligent use of the ball and is blossoming into an efficient and accurate marksman.

I now confidently look to Colm to carve out another notable niche in his football apprenticeship by marking his first appearance in the Ulster jersey with a fine performance as their centre forward against the Cup holders, Connacht.

Niblock was one of the brightest lights in that real galaxy of starlets that gave Derry their only All-Ireland title in any grade at minor in 1965. I still vividly recall one particular flash of genius by the Derry youth at a time when it was dramatically needed most. Derry were trailing Roscommon by two goals after only about ten minutes of the All-Ireland semi-final, when the Magherafelt youth gained possession, and broke through for a gem of a goal.

And, in the final win over Kerry, he highlighted another efficient forward display by initiating brilliantly the movement that culminated with Phil Friel scoring not only Derry's second goal, but as good a goal as seen in any grade in recent years.

Since savouring those power-packed displays in the No. eleven minor jersey, I have been closely watching Niblock's progress. I last saw him play against Down in the championship at Newry in June, and it was obvious in that game that he was steadily maturing as an efficient tactician, clever at distributing the ball. And, judging

## OWEN McCANN

*names four stars  
who can steal  
the thunder in  
the forthcoming  
interprovincials.*

by reports I have had since, particularly of his polished and very purposeful forward exhibition against Longford in the League last November, he has further advanced up the ladder of greatness.

Niblock, in fact, took the No. two spot in the GAELIC SPORT final Top Ten of 1967 — the first of what I feel will be many "appearances" in these rankings in the years ahead.

Meantime, I now see his outstanding qualities of speed in both thought and off the mark, drive, skill in ball control and distribution, and his own pay-off punch in front of goal, as assets that will make him an outstanding "cog" at right half in Ulster's striking force at Cavan.

Hanniffy and Donnelly have, of course, both been in the senior grade somewhat longer than the Ulster teenagers. However, these talented footballers have still also their best years ahead.

I well remember Hanniffy as a smart-moving and accurate attacker in the St. Mel's, Longford, teams that won the All-Ireland Colleges' senior championship in 1962 and 1963. He got his really big chance in senior football as left midfielder against Meath in the 1965 Leinster semi-final at Croke Park. He has gone from success to success since then, and last year he had the distinction of finishing as Longford's top scorer with 0-38 in ten games.

Hanniffy is an exciting young pulse-raiser, whose artistry and ability stamp him out as a player

whose class would stand out in any company—no matter how talented. He will be a dynamic and forceful unit on his interprovincial debut at centre forward in Leinster's bid to advance and beat Munster at An Uaimh in their quest for a trophy they last held in 1962.

Jimmy, incidentally, is maintaining a family tradition. His father, also Jim, played for Longford and Galway, and was centre field in the Leinster team that beat Connacht in the 1945 final.

Donnelly was a brilliant performer in the team that put Kildare back on the All-Ireland football winners list in 1965 after an interval of thirty-seven years. With his sure fielding and methodical centre-field play, he was a superb link between defence and attack in a great combination that beat Cork in an exhibition of all that is best in the game for the under-21 title.

In the senior grade in 1966 Jack demonstrated his prowess as a talented score-getter by taking second place in the Leinster chart that year with 0.74 in twenty games. Small wonder after that achievement that he won his first Leinster jersey against Ulster at Casement Park last February.

During the past year the Kildare footballer went on to provide many further instances that he has all the qualifications needed to graduate in time among the all time "greats" of football. He could prove a match-winner for Leinster at centre-field.

McAarney, Niblock, Hanniffy and Donnelly, then, are the four bright young men above all others I will be watching especially closely in these appealing Railway Cup games ahead. Just as they have already all given me much to debate with my friends, I'm convinced they will, with their undoubted talents, figure very prominently in discussions concerning these interprovincial matches—and in many important games in the years ahead.

## MAYO'S FORESTRY SCHEME

**M**EMBERS of the Mayo under-21 team who won the All-Ireland title last year were guests of honour at a function given by the Mayo G.A.A. Board in Castlebar.

Among the attendance were Mr. Seamus Ryan, President of the G.A.A. and the General Secretary Mr. Seán Ó Siócháin.

As well as receiving their All-Ireland medals at the function the under 21 players received a potted yew tree each. Making the presentation Rev. Leo Morahan, chairman of the Mayo G.A.A. Board, explained

the symbolic link between the county and the yew tree.

"Mayo in Gaelic means the 'plain of the yew trees'. The yew tree is forever green and is part of our history", he said.

"The tree becomes a timber which traditionally is found to be more enduring than iron".

The Rev. chairman said he hoped the trees would be planted and that, in future, victorious teams in the county would be presented with yew trees so that Mayo might once more become the plain of the yew trees.

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# MICHAEL

## KEARINS

### *talks to Sean Rice*

**H**E plays with a county that has never won an All-Ireland title. Yet, he has been acclaimed as one of the greatest forwards in Ireland to-day.

His name is a household word in every corner of Connacht. But Sligo's Michael Kearins has never won a provincial championship medal.

That's the irony of Gaelic football.

Michael Kearins has become the plaything of remorseless football fate. He has suffered the unending disappointment of successive defeats by other counties in Connacht.

And yet he has not relented. He has pitted his strength against something that is stronger than himself and has held his own. He has constantly plugged away, always hoping that somehow, sometime the breakthrough will come.

Could it be that success is not far away? Could it be that the fact that Sligo have qualified for the group semi-finals of the National League is an indication that the shackles have at last been loosened? Could it be that Sligo's win over near neighbours Mayo in a challenge recently is the beginning of a breakthrough?

Time alone will tell. Success is doubly difficult to achieve for a team that has never won an All-Ireland title. But success could not come too soon for a man like Michael Kearins. He deserves a break.

I talked to the unobtrusive Sligoman recently and the following is the trend of the conversation:—

**Q.—What age are you now, Michael?**

A.—I am 24.

**Q.—How long are you playing football?**

A.—Eight years.

**Q.—How many clubs have you played for?**

A.—Two, St. Patricks (Dromard) and Ballisodare.

**Q.—Did you play minor football.**

A.—Yes. I played minor for Sligo in 1960 and I had my first game with the senior team 1962. I have been a regular since.

**Q.—Why do you think Sligo have not won a Connacht championship?**

A.—I would say it is due to lack of enthusiasm in the county.

**Q.—Do you ever get tired of this failure year after year?**

A.—Sometimes I get disheartened, but I am always hoping we will make the breakthrough.

**Q.—Do you foresee Sligo making a breakthrough in the Connacht championship in the near future?**

A.—If the team play with the same spirit and determination that they have been showing in the past few outings, it is quite possible.

**Q.—What is the standard of football like in Sligo?**

A.—I would say club football is at a very low ebb.

**Q.—Are the youth playing the game?**

A.—Not enough.

**Q.—Has the standard of football in Ireland dropped?**

A.—No. If anything the game has improved. It is much faster and played much more intelligently.

**Q.—Would you like to see the toe-pick done away with?**

A.—No.

**Q.—Or any change made?**

A.—I think referees should be stricter. That's all.

**Q.—How many times have you played for Connacht.**

A.—I have played five times and won one Railway Cup Medal.

**Q.—Have you ever thought about moving out of Sligo or playing for any other county?**

A.—No. I will continue to play for Sligo.

**Q.—Who do you think has the best team in the country at the moment?**

A.—I think Galway are still the best.

**Q.—So you are going to tip Galway to win the Connacht championship this year?**

A.—Yes.

**Q.—Care to forecast the winners of the All-Ireland title?**

A.—Cork or Galway.

**Q.—Who is the best player you have encountered?**

A.—John Donnellan, with Dan McCartan a close second.

**Q.—Don't tell me Michael, your dearest wish is to win an All-Ireland title?**

A.—Yes, Sean, with Sligo of course.

● FROM PAGE 19

first Dublin medals to the Bakery, many, many years ago. Mick does not play nowadays but still shows a keen interest in the Club, always at the ready to give a helping hand.

The two Toms — Ryan and Dwyer are also very much to the fore in competitive fare these days. In fact, they are beginning to make the same impact in handball as they have as hurlers with Young Ireland's hurling club. Tom Ryan won the Ritz Cup, a local competition within the Company, and the Dublin Novice Championship, in which Dwyer was runner-up.

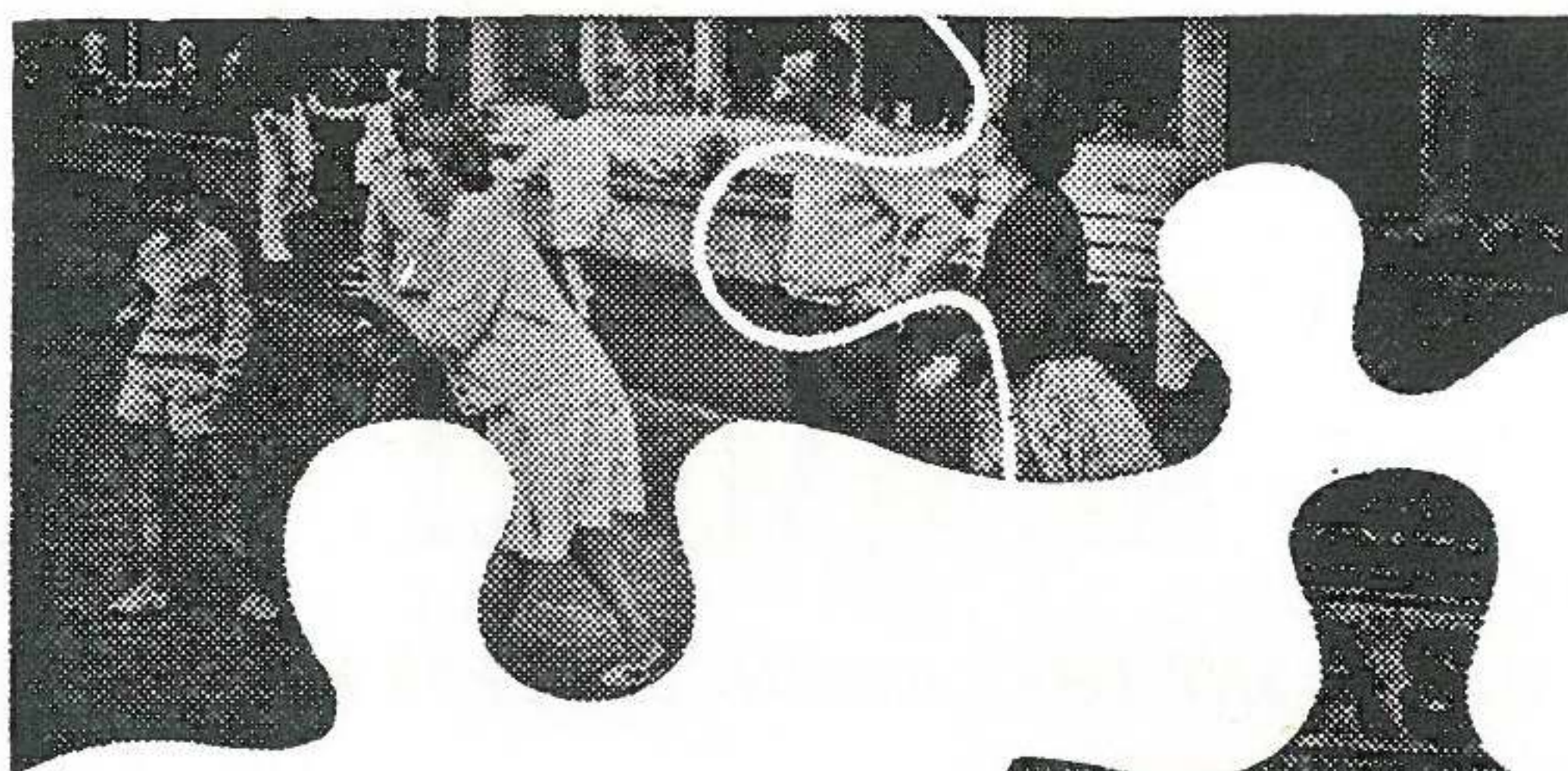
Other well-known G.A.A. men associated with the Club include Tommy Kearney, the well-known referee and Jimmy Morris, an executive with the Benburb's Club. I was told too of the tremendous effort put in by such as Eamonn Breen, Ned Tuite, Jack Connolly, Jim Kennedy, Paddy Boylan, Tommy Land, Joe Kelly, Kevin McGrath, Tim Dwyer and Ronnie Bruen.

But to a man they speak in glowing terms of Secretary Andy O'Connell, Treasurer Dan Ahearne and, of course Chairman Foskin.

I glean that, essentially, this is the trio on which the great J. M. & O'B. Handball Club as it is now constituted, is based. And, with the good news of the proposed Alley, they are destined to see it to further glory.

Proudly fingering an invitation to the Club's Annual Dinner, I left Ballsbridge, secretly marveling at the spirit and loyalty of the men who have helped to build a miniature handball empire.

Next Month J. M. & O'B. will have a new £500,000 plant in full production due to the ever increasing demand for their products. Surely there is a moral here, proving beyond doubt, that when labour and management are pulling together or to use a sporting phrase "playing on the one team," the inevitable result must be a successful one.



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**F**EBRUARY is a dull, depressing month, and I'm sure most readers will agree with me. But in recent years I've found the ideal antidote which I now pass on to you with my compliments. My cure for the "February blues" is to do a tour of the various travel agencies in the district plus a visit to all the other tourist bodies like C.I.E., Aer Lingus, Bord Fáilte, in fact anybody remotely connected with holidays is contacted each and every February.

Having fortified myself with all the beautiful brochures, which these kind people issue free-of-charge, I then snuggle up beside the fire, and let the winds blow or the snow and sleet beat against my window pane—I don't mind, in fact I'm oblivious to it all, because once I get engrossed in my holiday brochures I am immediately transported to these faraway places of blue skies, perpetual sunshine, golden sands, beautiful girls vieing with each other for the pleasure of my company. Oh! beautiful February.

There was a time, and not so very long ago either, when holidays, whether at home or abroad was the prerogative of a chosen few. But my, how things have changed, especially in the last ten years, tourism is now big business and for most countries, it represents their largest source in revenue. Certainly this is true of our own country.

However, enough said about the economics of tourism as a business.

How about the individual planning of one's own holiday. The first step, I suggest, is to decide the location. Most Irish people, I know, alternate their holidays each year between Ireland one year and overseas the following year.

Well first let's have an outsider's opinion of Ireland, which I feel is a good thing, because living among such beautiful surroundings one tends to take things for granted. This is Elizabeth Nicholas, travel



writer for the "Sunday Times" talking and I quote:

"I find there something that I have found nowhere else in the world; a space, a breadth, a sense of as-it-was-in-the-beginning that is unique. It is as though, in Ireland, one had miraculously walked like Alice through a Looking Glass and entered a world that reflects an era one had thought gone for ever.

"An era of peace and calm and leisure, an era where people still had time to laugh, to joke, to muse and day dream, to savour slowly the good things of the world—to be *polite*.

"All I can say is that I have, in Ireland, felt a deeper, stronger sense of peace and tranquility, of joy and happiness than I have felt anywhere else on earth.

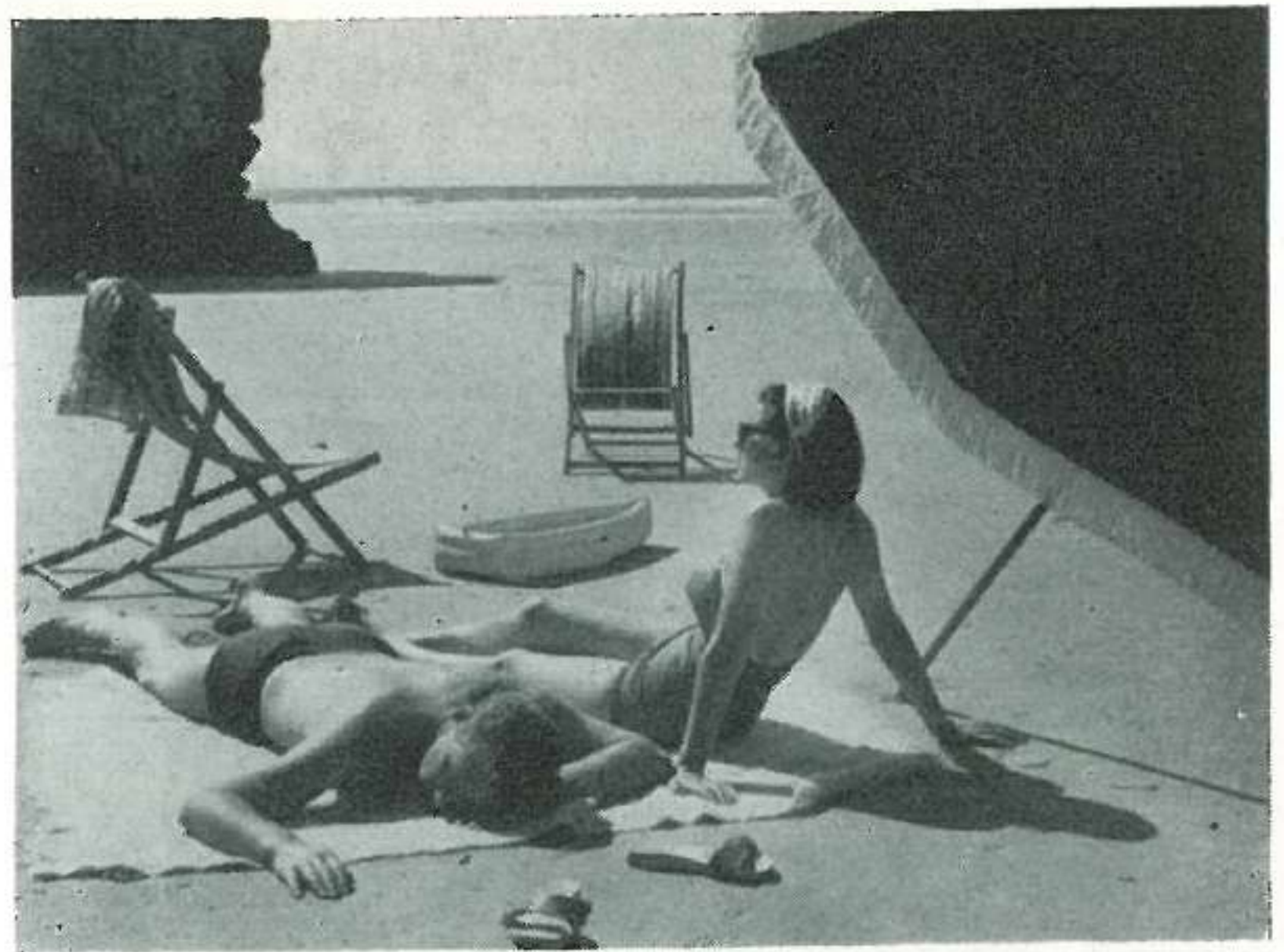
"There it is. That is how I feel about Ireland. I do not think it matters where you go; my heart is pledged to Kerry and the South-West, but Connemara, Donegal, the coast of Clare, the austere majesty of Achill Island, the beautiful rolling landscape of the South-East, all these are wonderful, too. The thing is to go; to see Ireland as it is to-day; to glimpse the world as it was before man laid upon it his disfiguring imprint; to see the sands and the sky and the hills as they were in the beginning . . . You will not, I swear, regret it, if you make this your holiday this year".

Thank you Miss Nicholas.

Assuming that you are spending your holidays in Ireland, just a few hints regarding your mode of holiday. If, like me, you're the lazy type who likes to be driven around in a luxury coach then contact C.I.E. and ask them to let you have a copy of their Tours Programme, 1968. Of course, there are many independent coach tour operators who also cater for large party outings. Companies like Premier Coaches of Dublin, M.V. Coach Tours of Drogheda and Eamon Reeves of Enniscorthy. If

● CONTINUED OVERLEAF

*It's often said that Irish men are lazy . . . but this takes the biscuit.*



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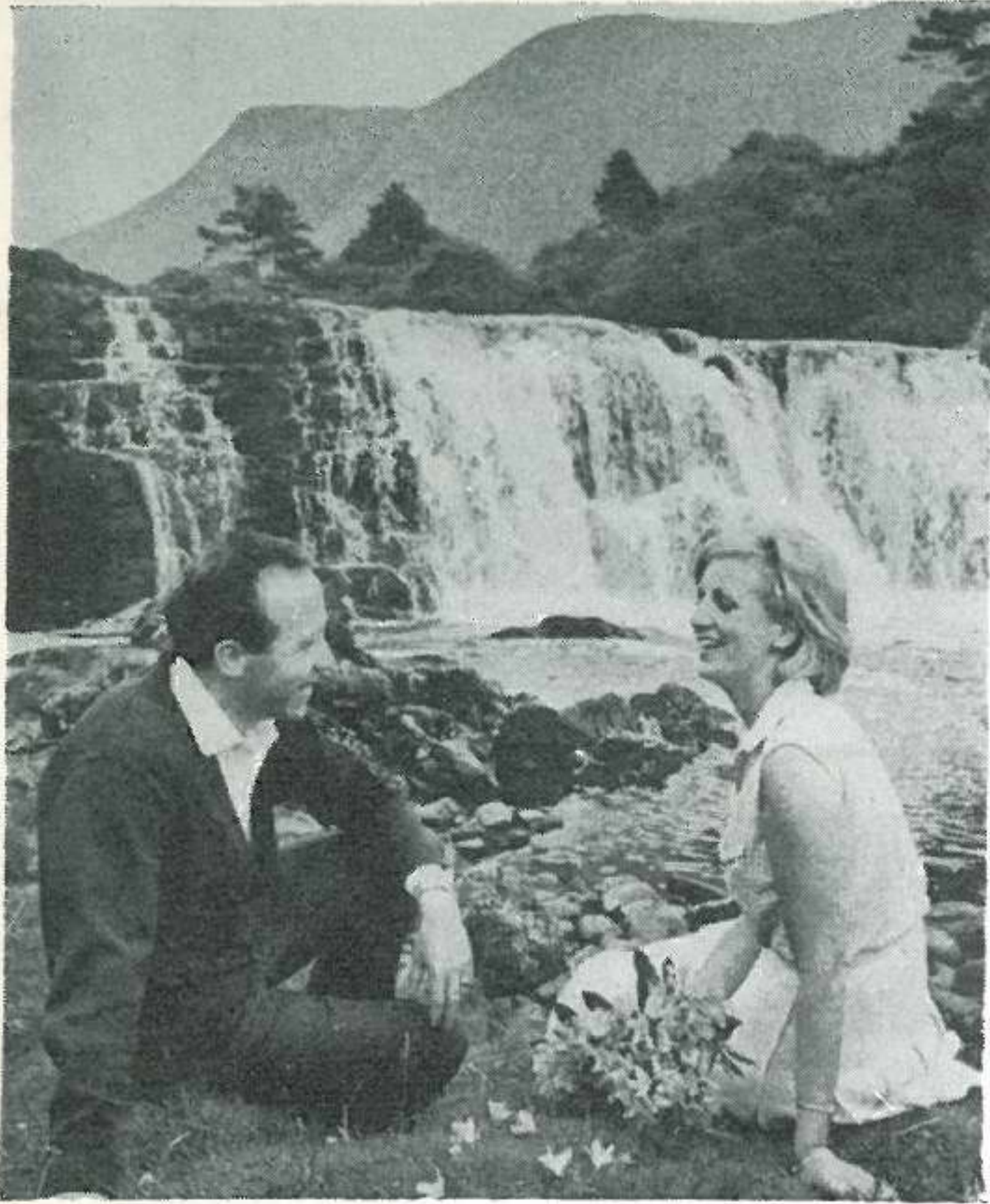
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Anyway I hope you have the best holiday of your life in 1968, as for me, I'm back to my fire and my brochures. Roll on Summer.

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● FROM PAGE 15

and it is was a pleasure to be associated with them.

*O'D.* — Which member of the Australian side did you have to mark?

*M.*—I was marking John Gillard and, I can tell you, he was no leprechaun but a fine, sporting player every inch of his six-foot frame. Indeed I look forward to meeting up with him again.

*O'D.*—Looking back on that game and your own county's defeat, how do you feel now?

*M.*—Quite honestly, I believe they caught us on the hop. After winning an All-Ireland your ambition is not as sharp as it should be and, of course, we did not know what to expect. We never thought they could be so fast.

*O'D.*—As a result of that defeat, many people rate Meath's chances as very slim. Do you agree with them?

*M.*—Definitely not; it is most unfair to pass judgment on us on that display. I feel certain that, had we played them a week later, we would have won. But you can take it from me that we are going out to Australia determined to beat them and proudly hold our place as true champions of Gaelic football. You wait and see.

*O'D.*—Ever since their visit here, people haven't stopped talking about changing the rules of the game. Would you favour any changes?

*M.*—Except for the hand pass, I am satisfied with the rules. I feel that the return of the handpass would speed up the flow of play considerably.

*O'D.*—Did the Aussies use the hand pass?

*M.*—They did not. In fact, they were throwing the ball around to one another, but they did it so fast that most spectators thought it was the hand-pass, Australian style.

*O'D.*—What did you think of their native game—Australian Rules—as compared with Gaelic football?

*M.*—I was amazed at the speed of it, but, overall, I feel that Gaelic football is by far the more attractive. It is much too easy to score in their game.

*O'D.*—When the Aussies came to Ireland they brought with them their Digger's hats and so were easily recognised. What will be Meath's identification mark when they arrive in Australia?

*M.*—I presume we will all wear green blazers for the trip, but if we are to be typically Irish we

should wear our socks down around our ankles and give the Australian press something to comment on, just like the Editor of *Gaelic Sport* in his editorial of the December 1967 issue.

*O'D.*—Do I take it that you disagree with the Editor of *Gaelic Sport* in his exhortation, "Pull up them socks"?

*M.*—I disagree, yes, and I wonder has he ever played Gaelic himself. If so, I would like to remind him that a player who wears his socks down around his ankles is no more slovenly or careless than the fellow who wore long knicks and long stockings, as I presume they did in the days when Mr. Editor used to play. I would like to add that I always wear my socks down around my ankles and will continue to do so. Take, as an example, one of Galway's best dressed players, Seamus Leydon, who always wears his socks down around his ankles.

*O'D.*—This question may be a little premature, Mick, but do you think that Gaelic football will benefit in any way from this trip?

*M.*—It may not benefit immediately, but due to the great publicity it is getting in Australia at present some good is bound to come from it, sooner or later. If Meath can enhance its reputation by this visit we will feel all the happier for it.

*O'D.*—Who do you most admire in present day football?

*M.*—I have always admired Seamus Leydon and have tried to fashion my style of play on his. Jack Donnelly of Kildare is a wonderful man for high balls and he never fails to thrill me. Frank Cogan of Cork is, perhaps, the hardest man to get by that I ever came across. And, of course, how could one forget that complete forward, Paddy Doherty.

*O'D.*—One last question—apart from football do you have any special interests?

*M.*—Well, I also play hurling and won some medals at it. I have done some cross-country running, too, and when I get the chance I like to play the accordion.

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## EAMONN YOUNG—Y(E)ARNING FOR FUN

### The scribblings of an old footballer

**L**AST time I wrote as an old soldier; now I am scribbling as an old footballer. In fact, I'm getting fed up of that ancient tag and, as John Doyle said after Tipperary had won their last All-Ireland, I suppose they'll be expecting me out on crutches soon. However cheer up old horse, there's only one foot in the grave yet. And, anyway, I'm at least five years younger than Dave Guiney.

My first leap backward will take you into the misty days of thirty years ago when I saw a feat in dead-ball kicking that was not my privilege to see repeated.

As schoolboys we were watching a game in Barrett's (now Kennedy) Park, New Ross, where the Augustinians were trying to push ajar for us the door to education. It was a beautiful day in May and we were all very happy as the summer days were drawing near and we had visions of holiday swimming and playing and all the rest of it.

The first game was a minor affair. I forget the sides but our interest was in a burly, red-haired fellow named Tom O'Donoghue from Clonegal whom I used spend some agonising days trying to mind in the school matches simply

because all the good fellows were too cute to go on him. There's a sucker born every minute.

Anyway, Tom was playing a great game at centre-field and really took the crowd's fancy. Towards the end he faced up to a fifty. It was a lovely white ball; the grass was dry and the sun shone. Up he came and drove that ball high and handsome about twenty feet over the bar and almost over the fence at the back of the goal. It probably was a seventy-yard kick.

In the senior game there were some excellent players like Sacker Furlong, Paddy Mythen, Joe Donoghue, Stephen and Peter Hayes, for just then Starlights from Enniscorthy and Volunteers from Wexford were right in the top class of Irish club football and the Model County itself was devoted to football with hurling a struggling second.

Remember, they had the glorious example of the Kennedys and the rest who won four championships in the '15-18 period, a feat that has been equalled by Kerry, but not beaten (and probably won't).

Anyway, in the first half of a fine club championship, Joe Donoghue, namesake of our college

friend, faced up to a fifty. A hefty man with an immaculate kick, we applauded when Joe drove it right between the posts upstairs. Still, Tom Donoghue's was a longer kick.

In the second half Starlights had another fifty. Again Joe Donoghue walked over and again right true she sailed; the white flag went up. It still wasn't as long as Tom's kick.

About ten minutes to go and Starlights in trouble; another fifty. Volunteers didn't like it as Joe Donoghue trotted up. This was another perfect ball just a little lower and there was a mighty heave of bodies in the goalmouth. Then a mightier roar for the ball was in the net.

So, a goal and three points off four fifties in one afternoon by the O'Donoghue's. Some kicking.

Tommy Murphy of Graigueculen, Laois, who went to school in Knockbeg, was probably the most unusual player I have ever met. In '37 he played with Laois, who had been beaten in the final by Mayo in '36. Murphy was only a boy, yet he didn't just play with the county, he starred, at centre-forward.

In the Leinster Colleges football championship of the '36-37 winter we went across to Carlow to play formidable Knockbeg. It was a good day out and the chance of a big feed. We heard they had a very good full forward. The game wasn't long on when we knew, for a lanky loop of a lad up there (I was at right wing . . . fortunately) had scored no less than five goals on pretty good opposition.

Paddy Dunne of Laois was playing at centre-back for us. He told me that after the last goal the lanky devil came out to centre forward and said to his Knockbeg comrade:

"Go on in there [to full forward] and have a shot".

And there wasn't a bit of egotism in it. But Paddy wanted his own man to stay so much he could have held him around the neck. Tommy Murphy was one of the best on a Laois team that might have won the All-Ireland in '37 and then he went back to Knockbeg to play in the Leinster Colleges again . . . in junior football, a competition organised for lads of under-17 on the first of August. Sure, we hadn't a hope.

It was down in Kenmare in 1940 that I learned a lesson that stayed with me all my life (and the merit of it isn't gone yet, in spite of the old age). I often repeated it to young players and I believe it holds true in more than games.

I was at centre field and marking Gega Connor of Dingle, who used train very, very hard (as Paddy Bawn Brosnan will tell you). I was pretty fit myself, but not quite in the other fellow's class. The first ball that came we went hard for it—he was in front. As it came out of the air it was his ball, except for the slight brotherly pressure in his back. The ball fell to me and I did something with it.

I was settling down waiting for the next ball and very pleased with myself when Gega ground into my ear:

"Listen, Young, if the ref. won't give me fair play then, by Jove, I'll get it for myself". The fact that the reference to Jove isn't quite accurate adds a little emphasis. It was pure football from that on, though one mustn't think that the fact that Gega was Munster middleweight champion had anything to do with it.

The late John Joe O'Reilly was a good player on the field . . . perhaps I'm wrong not to say great, for I don't see any better. He ran the hundred in ten and one-fifth (off a bad start) and weighed just nicely on thirteen stone. He loved the game and was never happier than when training. He played with the Military College when we were cadets and



*Tommy Murphy of Laois.*

loved to horse us around the hills and valleys of Kildare and Wicklow.

This good man, like all soldiers, had the habit of calling a spade a spade, incidentally, and at times we deserved worse. The first game he played with us was in the Camp championship and I thought he was hopeless and very cross. It was later I found out that twenty pounds had been stolen from him that day, and as the old-timers always say, that was a lot of

money in those times, especially to a second lieutenant. In fact, it's a lot of money now also, as the wife tells me after seeing the Christmas bills.

But John Joe in normal form was a flier and what made us all admire him even more was the fact that he was a born leader and organiser, as anyone who played on the Curragh teams will tell.

Carlow had a great side about '41 with Jim Morris, Luke Kelly and Jimma Rea top-class players.

John Joe took us down to play them and we drew, which was a feat. We beat Stradbally another day at home when most of the Delaney's were playing and I don't forget the tussle between our man Jim Doherty, now living in Athy, I think, and Mick Delaney, a first-class centre-back.

It was hard to get away from Mick, but Jim Doherty at the time was an Ulster regular. Twice he slipped Delaney in the first half but was too far out to do any

● TO PAGE 37

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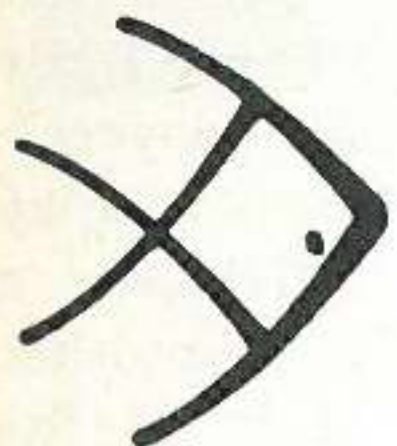
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● FROM PAGE 35

damage. I ran outside him waiting for the pass (the palm pass, remember? But you weren't born then). Did Jim pass? Not at all. Whether he wanted his name on the paper or didn't trust me I don't know, but he simply shot two balls from twenty-five to thirty yards and each of them rocketted into the back of the net. I never saw it done since.

I didn't see Paul Doyle play (You may wonder why I don't say 'the late Paul Doyle', but the older I get the less time I have for this eternal reference to the men who are dead. They live in my memory and that's how they'll stay).

Anyway, Paul Doyle was stationed on the Curragh and he practised very hard. He was a left winger of the star class. To make himself more of a curse to the opponent, Paul used to go down the plains not far from the present MacDonagh pitch and practise free-taking. The target was a square basketball board at twenty-five yards . . . and the personal target was eight hits out of ten.

To tell the truth, I don't think we practice like that to-day, probably because the average man has so many games he doesn't have quite the same time for practice.

I could go on yarning all night but there are two more short stories I'd like to tell. One concerns Cork's first National League win. It happened in '52 and I was captain. We beat the Jim Crowley-Mick Moylan-Ollie Freaney-Kevin Heffernan Dublin team very, very narrowly and, incidentally, a star on that side was Brother Eugene Crowley, now teaching in the De le Salle school in Ballyvourney, who is a townie of mine from Dunmanway.

Anyway, in the final proper we beat New York in Croke Park and my outstanding memory of that day was the first ball which six feet four Pat MacAndrew got. He turned on the run and with full bodily impetus let it off. I would say it was seventy yards long . . .

maybe more, and whether it was longer than Tom Donoghue's fifty or not, I have never since got the same sense of distance in kicking.

Anyway, when the game was over someone threw the ball to me, as I was captain, and the usual thing is to get all the names on it ('your usual signature, an X' as Denis Conroy once said to a very distinguished Munster priest). Big Pat MacAndrew intercepted and was walking off with it, I got stubborn and instead of being animated with a sense of hospitality to our American visitors, with the chance of attracting the approval of Bord Fáilte, I ran over and asked him for the ball.

He wasn't giving it away and so I asked him again with a lot more emphasis. He just looked down at me from the fourteenth storey and I could see the shutters come down over the eyes. I wouldn't give in and kept on demanding the ball, at the same time impeding his way to the dressing room. By this time a bunch of kids were all around quite delighted with the chance of excitement.

Then one of them chanted: "Ah, go on Yank, give the little fella his ball". That broke the ice. Pat gave it to me, and I trotted across to the nearest New Yorker, whose name was Ryan, and made him a present of it. We had claps all round.

The last one concerns an old school friend of mine, Cormac Dineen of Millstreet, the man who

said to me as we went out to play Dublin that year, and the stands nearly collapsed before the sound waves as Ollie and the boys ran out of the tunnel.

"Don't worry, Youngy, only fifteen of them can play".

It was in the Munster championship and Cormac was at right full back. Six feet, very lean, very fast and tough as barbed wire, nobody got away from him. We went into the attack for a moment so Cormac had time to size up his opponent and was quite happy to see a small, neatly-togged, friendly fellow trotting up armed only with a big smile and a warm handshake.

"You're Cormac Dineen", says he. "Sure I often read about you in the papers. It's an honour to be marking you".

"Who are you coddling, Bud?" says Cormac to himself, as he glanced coldly at your man. But the chap appeared to be sincere and, as Cormac said, "sure, after all, he was right, I wasn't too bad anyway."

Then the ball came and Cormac collected a most unmerciful belt in the mouth that rocked him on his heels. All I saw was the lean Dineen chasing a small man to the sideline and tearing at him like a cat. It was when we abused Cormac we found out the story. Don't worry about your enemies but keep a close eye on your friends.

And with that charitable advice I'll close down for the night. Slán beo.

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# MOONDHARRIG'S DIARY



*Peter Darby captains Meath against the Aussies.*

TO me the first of February really means the start of the New Year. I am always prepared to concede January, if not to the year gone by, at least to that betwixt-and-between time that stretches through the black bowels of winter from the first day of December to the last day of January.

But once February comes I am tired of the firesides and the easy-chairs and the talk about times past and times to come. I am hungry for the outdoors again during leisure time, with a whisper of spring in the air, and the clash of ash and the thud of a football, and the roar of the crowd.

In the Gaelic world, January has been convention time for fifty years, and I sometimes wonder are we becoming entirely creatures of habit, that most counties continue to hold their conventions in the first month of the New Year when it surely would be just as easy to hold these annual gatherings in the last month of the old.

Anyway by January 31 the conventions are all over and we are all set to face into the playing year ahead. Whether we shall be able to do so right away this time is still uncertain as I write. The threat of the foot-and-mouth epidemic still hangs over Ireland, but Mr. Blaney has given his blessing to Seán O Síocháin's request for a resumption.

And when a resumption does come, we will have a whole host

of vital games on top of us, the Railway Cup semi-finals, the Grounds tournament final, decisive matches in the National hurling and football leagues. But the most exciting thing of all that is to happen this spring is the trip to Australia by the Meath footballers.

The All-Ireland champions, have in my opinion, been wrongly berated for their failure to Australia in that challenge game at Croke Park last October. Any other team in Ireland, caught by surprise as the Meathmen were, would have been swept out of the way just as Meath were. And Mayo, when they met the same Australians, were a team forewarned.

Besides, Meath, after not alone winning the All-Ireland, but also accounting for New York in the subsequent World Trophy final, were, I well believe, mentally tired men, yet they had already played that great drawn game with Cavan in the Grounds tournament semi-final. Now, many folk choose to believe that it is foolish for Meath to go to Australia, because if the Australians could beat them so readily in Croke Park, they must annihilate the Royal County completely when they get them Down Under.

With that line of reasoning I do not agree at all. I do not expect Meath to win in Australia; that would be expecting too much; but I do expect the All-Ireland champions to give a very good account

of themselves, and to do an amount to enhance the prestige of Gaelic football in the sub-continent.

Moreover, I expect that their trip will be an asset to the game here at home. Although some doubting Thomases have come into print since, I remain convinced that we have a lot to learn from the Australians and that Meath will not be wasting their time down there.

There are no shrewder men than the Royal County mentors and I believe they will learn a lot from this Australian trip and that what they learn will be turned to good use and to the lasting benefit of the games here at home.

Nor will Meath be away so long that their absence will have any really detrimental effect on their commitments here at home. Their National League calls will not be hard to fit in and the only real problem that arises is posed by the fact that seven of the champions are listed on the Leinster Railway Cup panel.

Well, that should not be an insuperable problem, either. In the first place, of course, Munster might end the whole problem by defeating Leinster in the semi-final, but while the Leinster side selected did not meet with anything like universal approval in the eastern province, it seems extremely unlikely that a Meath-powered side will fail before the home fans at An Uaimh.



And if Leinster do win, there is no real reason why the Railway Cup football final could not be postponed.

While there is a standing rule that the All-Ireland hurling final should be played on the first Sunday in September and the All-Ireland football final on the fourth Sunday of the same month, no such rule applies in the Railway Cup competition. By tradition, the finals are played on St. Patrick's Day but this need not necessarily be the case.

Two hurling finals, one a replay, have taken place on Easter Sunday while in the year that the Hogan Stand was opened the Railway Cup hurling final was not played until June.

So I see no reason at all why the fixtures should not be re-arranged to meet the position. The Leinster-Munster semi-final could go on as scheduled, while, to make up a full programme on St. Patrick's Day the Ulster v. Connacht football game could be held back and played with the hurling final on the National Festival. And even if this arrangement was not acceptable to the Connacht and Ulster people, there should be no difficulty in getting a suitable football game to put on for the St. Patrick's Day crowds.

Surely there will be a league match to be played off that would draw the crowds, or a good Colleges' match would prove very entertaining.

As for the Railway Cup football final, I see no reason why it should not be played on Easter Sunday. And if the powers-that-be do not want the game to clash with Congress, why not play it off on Easter Monday?

I remember seeing a Railway Cup football final played on an Easter Monday during the emergency years of World War II and I was amazed at the number of people who turned up to see

## A bouquet from Cork

**WE** say a sincere and modest "thank you" to Máire de Faoithe, of Blarney Road, Cork, for her kind remarks in the following letter:

*Sir,—Congratulations on your January issue of "Gaelic Sport". As a camogie fan, I was delighted to see the coverage given to my favourite game.*

*While going through the various Gaelic games publications over Christmas I remarked*

*that I had yet to see a camogie photograph in colour. Maireadh and Ally made a very attractive cover and will help to brighten up my "black and white" scrap-book.*

*Your choice of Maeve Gilroy for the first article in the series on Camogie Stars was excellent. She is a real star in every sense.*

*All in all, your January issue was well worth two shillings. Keep up the good work. Wishing you a very happy New Year.*

Munster and Ulster to battle for the trophy.

But one thing I do hope is that we shall see a bit more life in the Railway Cup hurling competition this year. Last season there was a notable lack of enthusiasm, even

in the final, and unless the players put a bit more heart into this competition, it will not be long until it ceases to become any kind of attraction, even for died in the wool hurling enthusiasts such as myself.

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**Best wishes to the Meath Footballers  
on their coming Australian tour.**

# Ulster never had it so good

SAYS

~~~~~

OWEN McCANN

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ULSTER may have failed last St. Patrick's Day in their bid to become the first province to win the Railway Cup in football five years in succession, yet the North never had it so good in this competition as in the 1960's generally. In 15 games between February 1960, and that failure to Connacht in last year's final, Ulster lost only three matches — a 1961 semi-final at Casement Park, and the 1962 final, both to Leinster, and the 1967 decider. Their run of nine wins from a 1963 semi-final to last year's semi-final triumph over Leinster in Belfast now stands as the longest unbeaten record by any province in football.

By regaining the football trophy

last year after an interval of nine years, Connacht went one up in the story of their Railway Cup meetings with the North. The provinces first met in a 1933 semi-final, and, including that game, they have met in all in 12 semi-finals, and three deciders.

Connacht opened in superb style with five wins off the trot, but since breaking the Western monopoly in a 1942 semi-final (they went on to win their first title that year), Ulster has had the edge, with seven wins to Connacht's three.

Overall, however, the record shows that there is not much between the provinces. It's "Even Steven" as far as the semi-finals

are concerned with six wins apiece, while Connacht triumphed in two of the finals, for a total of eight wins to Ulster's seven.

The coming Ulster-Connacht game will be the third at Cavan. The West won in 1938, and Ulster had their most decisive win at an 11 point margin (5-6 to 1-7) in the last Breffni Park clash in 1962. Only other meetings in the North were at Monaghan in that initial 1933 clash, and at Casement Park in 1956, when Ulster triumphed.

Further proof of how finely the issue generally, is balanced between these provinces is underlined by the scoring returns. These show only a mere point between the provinces! They are also almost unbelievably similar at 23-113 (182 pts.) for Ulster, and 23-112 for the West.

That's not all! Connacht's most decisive winning points margin is also 11 minors. They finished in front by this total in three games—the 1936 final, a 1937 semi-final at Carrick-on-Shannon, and coincidentally, the first clash at Cavan! So, will history repeat itself at Breffni Park in 1968!

Leinster have a good lead over Munster in football. They have won 15 games as against the South's nine, with one match drawn. But, a further break-down of the figures reveals the interesting fact that, as far as the semi-finals go, Munster's record is just as good as Leinster's. The provinces share 12 semi-finals equally between them. In finals, however, it's an impressive 9-3 for Leinster, with one drawn.

Leinster have scored 43 points more in these games at 36-168 (276 pts.) to Munster's 33-134

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## ALLIED BANKS' RECORD

**S**TAFF members of Allied Irish Banks, the £300 million group formed by the union of the Munster & Leinster Bank Ltd., Provincial Bank of Ireland Ltd., and Royal Bank of Ireland Ltd. have had a highly successful year in sport in 1967.

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among the most successful organised bank sports. In Hurling the IBOA Cup was first played for in 1961, current holders are Provincial and the event was won by Munster & Leinster in 1963 and 1964. In Gaelic football the IBOA competition was instituted in 1952. Munster & Leinster now hold the trophy and also won out in 1956 and 1957.

Pride of place among the many G.A.A. stars employed by A.I.B., must go to that prince of hurlers, Eddie Keher of Kilkenny, Eddie works with the Provincial.

(233 pts.). Seventeen points is the most clear-cut margin by which either province has won one match.

Leinster and Munster last met at the semi-final stage in 1963 at Tralee, when the former proved successful. We have to go back to 1957 for Munster's last semi-final win over Leinster. That was at Cork, and it also ranks as the South's last win over Leinster.

Munster have been out of the Railway Cup winners list since taking their sixth title in 1949. 1957 is the year that also marks the last semi-final win by Connacht over Ulster in a game played at

Sligo. These provinces last met in a semi-final in 1963.

In hurling, Leinster's meetings with Ulster opened on a really sensational note with a 3-1 to 2-3 victory by the North at Belfast. That was in 1945, but it proved a case of a "False Dawn." Ulster, who lost the final to Munster 6-8 to 2-0, have since not only failed to record a win against Leinster, but they have also not won a single match against the other provinces. As for Leinster, they will be chasing their tenth win in 11 games with the North this month. To date they boast 71-74 (287 pts.), as against Ulster's 28-31 (115 pts.).

Munster and Connacht have clashed 26 times in hurling between a 1928 semi-final, and a 1966 semi-final. Munster have won 18 semi-finals, and drawn two other semi-finals. Munster, in fact, have not lost a single semi-final in the history of Railway Cup hurling.

There have been six Munster-Connacht hurling finals, and the South were successful in all but that of 1947 — Connacht's only win in a decider in the competition's history. Munster had their biggest win over Connacht in a 1931 semi-final at Birr — 10-9 to 1-2, a margin of 34 points. Munster scored 132 goals and 199 points (595 pts.), and Connacht raised 56 green flags and 141 points (309 pts.).

Connacht last won a hurling game on St. Patrick's Day, 1959, when they beat Leinster 2-14 to 3-7 — but in a semi-final. That year's final was played in conjunction with the official opening of the new Hogan Stand in June.

Finally, here is the Railway Cup Roll of Honour starting the current games:

**FOOTBALL:** 17 Leinster (1928 to 1962); 10 Ulster (1942 to 1966); 8 Connacht (1934 to 1967); 6 Munster (1927, the year of the first final, to 1949).

**HURLING:** 29 Munster (1928 to 1966); 11 Leinster (1927 to 1967); 1 Connacht (1947).



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# ULSTER WANT TO FORGET 'BLACK '67'

Says SEAMUS McCLUSKEY

ULSTERMEN will quickly want to forget the bleak and dreary 1967, which proved completely fruitless as far as All-Ireland titles was concerned. Yet, strangely enough, Ulster followers have never been so optimistic as they are at the moment, even though the New Year is, as yet, only one month old.

Perhaps they feel that things could never be so bad again as they were last year and that no matter how badly we fare out in 1968, it just could never be worse than "The Black '67". That, however, is a rather negative attitude and I have the feeling that the Ulstermen have a much more positive approach in their optimism for 1968.

Northern hopes for the coming year are based on the belief that

standards within the province have been gradually improving over the past months. This was very evident in the displays of Ulster teams in the National Football League campaign prior to the Christmas close-down. Cavan and Derry qualified for the semi-final stages in their division, despite the presence of Longford—one of Leinster's best—in their section.

Donegal and Down, too, reached the divisional semi-final play-offs. In fact, the only section which failed to produce a Northern semi-final was the Westmeath-Dublin -Armagh -Monaghan section, but even here the displays of the two Ulster teams was much above what was expected and, had Lady Luck smiled a little more favourably on them, at least one of these sides would have had an

interest in the concluding stages of the League.

Armagh made all the running against Westmeath at Lurgan and gave a really sound display against the Metropolitans at Croke Park, while Monaghan must consider themselves the most unlucky side in the whole series. They had Dublin really on the run at Carrickmacross, where the visitors were mighty lucky to survive by a single point.

In their concluding game against Westmeath at Ballybay, fortune really deserted them and the Midlanders scraped through—again by the minimum margin. A very doubtful penalty for the winners and the missing of two fourteen yards frees in the dying seconds by the otherwise very reliable Seán Woods were the deciding factors in this extremely close encounter.

These League displays have certainly proved very encouraging to Northern followers of these counties and it is obvious that the conditions at present prevailing are the exact opposite to those which prevailed at the beginning of 1967. At that stage, standards were also level—but for a very different reason. The then leading counties had fallen to the level of the weaker counties, giving a false impression of where Ulster stood in relation to the standards in other provinces.

The introduction of the Northern sides into competition with counties from the other provinces, however, changed all that, and now county officials in the North have a much clearer view of how their counties stand in relation to the rest of the country. Now it is clearly obvious that the majority of the counties in the North have raised their standards to those of the leading county

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teams—and this certainly is a wonderful boost for Northern hopes during the coming year.

Youth has also made a major break through in Ulster during the past six months and the main credit for this must be to Paddy O'Donohue and his Down officials for giving such a lead by introducing so many teenagers into the Red-and-Black brigade from the Mournes.

Names like John Murphy, Colm McAlarney, Peter Rooney and John Purdy are going to come frequently to Northern tongues for a very long time to come and, I venture to say, are most likely to create an even greater impression on the world of Gaeldom than did the famous McCartans-O'Neills-Doherty era—and that would really be something worth living through.

Derry followed Down's lead with the introduction of most of the great 1965 All-Ireland minor champions side which is now coming into maturity. Perhaps it is a little early yet to expect major honours to come to Mickey Niblock, my namesake Seamus McCluskey, Seamus Lagan and company, but their time of glory is coming—and quickly.

In my own Column in the *Northern Standard* in September, 1965, following their great win over Kerry in the final, I predicted that these Derry boys would bring All-Ireland senior football championship honours to Derry in 1970—I still stand by that prediction.

It will be a tragedy, however, if players of the Colm Mulholland and Micky Niblock calibre are allowed to transfer to another code, as this would seriously jeopardise the chances of the Derrymen in such an effort. The latter player, I am told, was considering such a change recently—let's hope his selection on the present Ulster Railway Cup team will change his mind in the matter and convince him that his future in the G.A.A. world is a really bright one.

Derry has been most unfortunate in the past by some of their leading players spurning loyalty to their own county and refusing to bring glory to Derry, simply by yielding to the glitter of foreign gold and the very temporary honours that other codes can give them. They forget that in fifty years' time, the people of Ireland will remember the "Great Derry-

men and great Derry Teams" of the late 'sixties and early 'seventies, but there will be little mention of those who turned their loyalties to the Irish Football Association and its kindred organisations.

However, I think that the 1965 Derry minor side and the great St. Columb's teams of the same period are made of sterner stuff and have more respect for their county than to spurn such inevitable honours for the sake of foreign-backed but very devalued £. s. d.

In a way, it is a tragedy that Down and Derry are drawn to meet in the first round of the Ulster senior football championship 1968—at Ballinascreen on June 9. I would like to have seen them meet at a much later stage in the provincial title race.

Cavan are still much "Cocks-of-the-North" and will prove hard to beat in 1968, but in nearby Monaghan, accent is again on Youth. Of the team which ran Dublin and Westmeath so close in the League, nine players are in the under-21 category.

Is it any wonder, then, that hopes are at present so high in the North.

---

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# Hearken to Harkin!

**S**HOULD the All-Ireland senior football championship be played on an open draw? That question is a very live topic throughout the country—judging by the number of letters we have received since we posed it in this competition last month. The “pros” and the “antis” were about evenly divided and once again the quality of the entries was exceptionally high.

After longer deliberation than usual, the judges decided to award the first prize of ONE GUINEA to Brendan Harkin, Mountjoy West, Omagh, Co. Tyrone. He writes:

THE VERY concept of Open Draw

involves an equal chance for all, while the present system tends to load the dice. Some counties are faced with a long and arduous campaign, as opposed to the relatively short provincial championship of others.

The weaker counties, with a tradition of defeats weighing against them, can only hope for glory in a defeat by a creditable performance. With an open draw these counties would at least have the prospect of meeting fresh opposition.

Note how Monaghan, for years among the also rans in the Lagan Cup, surpassed all expectations by their display against leading

Leinster counties in the current League.

However, we are neither psychologically nor financially prepared for an open draw. If the All-Ireland final of 1968 were to feature Tyrone and Down it would be a failure crowd-wise. Our inherent sense of parochialism has been so nurtured by the present system that it has extended to provincialism.

Very often the most avid Gaelic football fan, whose own county is not involved, only attends the All-Ireland final if his province is represented.

A more daring League grouping could be the indoctrinating force to the eradication of this provincial outlook—a springboard for an open draw championship. Moreover, the financial problem an open draw would entail could be surmounted by the judicious distribution of funds realised from a more exciting League.

Here's looking forward to that All-Ireland final between Tyrone and Down of '72.

Sixteen-year-old Miss Mary McManus, the Garda Station, Enniscrone, Co. Sligo, takes the opposite view—and very strongly, at that. Her entry, just a wee bit too long, wins her a subsidiary prize of HALF A GUINEA. Mary says:

NO, I SAY the All-Ireland senior football championship should not be played on an open draw. The “Munster Final”, the “Ulster Final”, the “Leinster Final”, the Connacht “Derby”—who has not looked forward with eager anticipation to these annual events in the Gaelic



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calendar? What names, what memories come crowding in to the minds of old-timers? Is there any valid reason why these traditional games should not be carried on?

The playing of our games on a provincial basis gives each and all an opportunity of travelling to see their favourite teams in action. Make no mistake about it, if a supporter sees his own team go down, he then transfers his support to the team from his neighbouring county or, at least, to a county within his province. When the eventual provincial champions emerge, all the Gaels of the province unite to lend their aid in cheering those champions to victory on All-Ireland semi-final day.

Moreover, playing of the games on a Provincial basis makes certain of a bumper crowd, as the venue will, in most cases, be central. This would not be the case if the championship were played on an open draw. For instance, if Wexford were drawn against Galway, Derry against Kerry, Cork against Antrim, where would the neutral venues be found?

How many of the ordinary rank and file supporters—the loyal members of their parish clubs, those who support with their shillings and pence the Association year in, year out—could afford to travel? Perhaps they would not have the chance to see their county team in action for even one game in the senior championship.

Striving for their respective provincial championships, players from neighbouring counties get to know each other's style of play, etc., and afterwards this serves them in good stead when the best are called upon to stand shoulder to shoulder for the honour of their Province on St. Patrick's Day, in the Railway Cup Final.

If a county is unable to win an All-Ireland championship in a

## MONEY FOR LETTERS

**A**ND there is more money to be won this month—on a subject that no-one will be too shy, nor too uninformed, to write about! The question is: "SHOULD THE G.A.A. RETAIN THE BAN?"

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certain year, the winning of the Provincial championship; with its excellent cup and trophies, is a great consolation prize. Provincial championships ensure that there will be three such teams each year in the senior football championship.

If unable to journey to Croke Park, may I hope that all our faithful followers will for many long years to come, hear the voice of Micheál Ó h-Eithir make such comments as: "Under the Cusack Stand I see a little

glimmer of green and gold and here come the champions of Munster, the men from the Kingdom" and "on the far side I detect a mixture of blue and white and here come their opponents—the men from the north—the Champions of Ulster—Cavan".

What a glorious sight as the men from the North and the men from the South face the tricolour on Hill-16 and proudly stand to attention for "Amhrán na bFiann".

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By  
*Seamus O Ceallaigh*

# **FIFTY YEARS OF THE HARTY CUP**

ONE of the greatest of our hurling competitions is undoubtedly the storied Munster Colleges annual test for that prized and ever glamorous trophy — the Dr. Harty Cup, which celebrates the Golden Jubilee of its foundation this year.

The struggle to introduce Gaelic games to the schools and colleges was a long and difficult one, and it was thirty years after the establishment of adult championships before the first permanent series got under way with the commencement of the Dr. Harty Cup ties—now the oldest of all the school and college competitions.

To Cork County Board goes the honour of being the first body to set school competition in motion. In January, 1902, the Board offered a pair of shields for inter-school games within the county setting up a special organising committee for the purpose. Douglas were first winners of the hurling trophy and Macroom proved successful in football.

Tipperary followed the Cork lead fairly promptly, and early in 1903 their Schools Committee was formed "for the purpose of promoting national pastimes in the schools of the County. The Chairman was Mr. E. J. Delahunt.

Dublin were next to fall into line and the County Schools League was established towards the end of 1904. In the hurling final O'Connell Schools beat Synge Street, and in the football decider Artane triumphed over James' Street.

Meanwhile, the Central Council had communicated with the heads of all secondary schools and colleges intimating that hurling and football competitions would be started for them should sufficient support be forthcoming.

The response was most disappointing, yet it established the fact that hurling was being played at the period in six colleges—De la Salle, Waterford, Rockwell College, Cashel, Presentation College, Cork; St. Patrick's and All Hallows, Dublin, and St. Peter's, Wexford.

The first known inter-college game took place at Newbridge late in 1905, when College of Science hurlers, Dublin, beat the boys from Dominican College, Newbridge by 6-4 to 2-4.

The Munster Colleges were the first to make a concrete move in support of Gaelic games and at a

conference in Mallow on December 14, 1907, the acting chairman, Very Rev. Dr. Sexton, President of St. Finbarr's College, Farranferris, Cork, dwelt at length on the importance of supporting the national games. He believed the establishment of school and college competitions would give a great fillip to the G.A.A. and bring educational establishments more in touch with each other. He was very pleased with the big response which proved that the professors and students were anxious to foster our own sports and to develop Irish muscle and brawn by native methods.

Five teams entered in senior hurling—St. Flannans, Ennis; St. Colman's, Fermoy; St. Finbarr's, Cork; St. Munchin's, Limerick and St. Brendan's, Killarney. The line out in senior football was only four—High School, Clonmel; Queen's College, Cork; Wilton, Cork and Thurles. The biggest muster was in Junior Football—St. Finbarr's, St. Colman's, North Monastery, Rochestown, Patrician College, Mallow—all of Cork; Clonmel High School and the Monastery, Tipperary, from the

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#### **DUN LAOGHAIRE**



Premier County; with St. Brendan's of Killarney and St. Munchin's of Limerick. Very Rev. Dr. Barrett of St. Colman's was the first chairman, and the secretary was Mr. J. J. Walsh, who was later to become the first Minister for Posts and Telegraphs in an Irish government, and Director of Aonach Tailteann.

The first Munster Colleges senior hurling final was a thriller, St. Colman's, Fermoy, beating St. Flannan's, Ennis by a solitary point, 4-1 to 3-3. It was played in Limerick, with Mr. Jim Riordan, chairman of the County Board as referee.

Shortly afterwards, Most Rev. Dr. O'Callaghan, Bishop of Cork, in presenting the Cork Colleges Cup to the students of St. Finbarr's College, said that the national game of hurling was an excellent one for Irish boys. It was a clean and manly sport, which built up the frame and taught self-reliance and self control. In time to come many of them would be, as priests, in a position to do much through the native games for the physical and moral well being of young men.

The 1908 All-Ireland G.A.A. Congress, held at Thurles, adopted a motion proposed by Mr. J. Millar of Laois, "requesting Irish parents when sending their children to boarding schools to give a preference to those schools in which Irish games were encouraged".

At the following All-Ireland Congress in was decided to extend college activities to the whole of Ireland but it was November 26, 1910 before a Leinster Council came into being. This was mainly as a result of the endeavours of Professor Doody, Ph.D., of St.

Enda's, Rathfarnham (of which Padraic Pearse was founder and principal) who arranged the convention, held at the Shelbourne Hotel, Dublin.

The chair was occupied by Very Rev. John Doody, President of St. Kieran's College, Kilkenny, who spoke at length on the merits of Gaelic games and the duties of those in charge of educational establishments in Ireland to support and encourage them. Rev. Fr. Kelly, St. Mary's College, Knockbeg, and Padraic Pearse, St. Enda's College added their voices in support of the inauguration of Leinster inter-college leagues in both hurling and football, which were agreed to unanimously.

Entries were received from Trinity College, National University College, Albert Agricultural College, College of Science, St. Patrick's Training College, Marlboro' Training College, St. Enda's College, Knockbeg College, St. Kieran's College; St. Peter's College, Wexford; Dominican College, Newbridge; Good Counsel College, New Ross and Mount St. Joseph College, Roscrea.

The officers elected were: Chairman, Very Rev. J. Doody, St. Kieran's College, Kilkenny; Vice-Chairman, Padraic Pearse, B.A., B.S., Principal, St. Enda's College; Treasurer and Secretary, D. P. Burke, M.A., Dublin.

The first colleges "All-Ireland" was decided at Thurles in May, 1911, when the pick of the Munster Colleges beat Leinster in hurling.

The most celebrated of all college trophies—the Dr. Harty Cup—presented by Murroe-born Most Rev. J. M. Harty, D.D., Archbishop of Cashel and Patron of the G.A.A.—has inspired more healthy

rivalry among the young hurlers attached to the various Munster teaching establishments than even the storied All-Ireland Cup could rouse in a score of crack county teams.

That is the story behind the Dr. Harty Cup, which is a trophy steeped in tradition.

Rev. Fr. Corboy, S.J., Mungret College, presided at the meeting of the Munster Colleges Council to which the Dr. Harty Cup was first presented. The North Monastery delegate to that meeting was Professor H. St. J. Atkins, later President of University College, Cork. It was the expressed intention of the distinguished donor that the Cup should one day grace the sideboards of all the Munster hurling colleges. From the time of its first offering, in 1918, the winning of the trophy became a burning ambition and many unforgettable struggles have been witnessed between youthful teams from the great hurling counties of Munster.

The first great Dr. Harty Cup final was played at Thurles, on April 25, 1918. Most Rev. Dr. Harty threw in the ball, and afterwards, presenting his Cup to the winning captain, he said:

"Hurling is one of the most manly, most ancient and most graceful games the world knows. It was Irish and helped to foster an Irish and a manly spirit—the spirit which was so essential to-day. There should be no Irish boy but should be proud of this magnificent and Irish game of hurling".

Many of the great games played for the Dr. Harty Cup, and the men who figured in them, will be reviewed in our March issue.

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● FROM PAGE 10

the forefront in the past few years also, losing narrowly to Galway in the '66 semi-final and to Meath in last year's decider.

As a challenge from the non-native codes is not very strong in Cork — soccer sank to a low ebb in the city last year and rugby is still an exclusive sport — many readers may wonder why there should be any objection by G.A.A. followers to the rise of Gaelic football. After all, hurling and Gaelic football are not in opposition to one another, and countless players in Cork, and elsewhere take part in the two games. Why should hurling followers complain if football becomes popular.

The answer to this rests in the fact that while football has invaded almost every county in Ireland with a reasonable degree of success, hurling is still confined to a small number of counties. Cork City has become a very strong centre of hurling over the years, so strong in fact, that the Rebel County has been regarded for a long time as a "hurling county" even though the game is practically unknown in places like Beara in West Cork.

Hurling cannot afford to lose

such a great stronghold as the Munster capital, and, happily, it is in no grave danger of doing so at present. But with the rise of football in the city and the general improvement of team standards, the ancient game may well lose the monopoly of support it has commanded for so long. Such a loss would inevitably lead to a decline in the number of people attending the games and, indeed, in the number of players who choose to take part in hurling matches.

What can be done to solve the problem, if "problem" is the correct word to use at this stage? It would appear that the Cork senior hurlers must show a return to top form in the championship and keep pace with their football counterparts, if hurling is to retain its prominence in the city.

Another first round collapse like that at Waterford last June could prove fatal to the game in Cork. But if the county hurlers do well and keep their supporters happy the game will continue to prosper and gloomy comments, like that expressed at the beginning of this article, will not be heard so often from devoted hurling enthusiasts.

## CRYSTAL-GAZING

● FROM PAGE 13

waste of time when one considers the nett result.

8 — Perhaps the number of new authors will continue to grow for, after all, in extent the literature of the Association bears little comparison with the importance of the greatest national organisation in the country.

9 — The various grounds committees have a golden chance to make the most important contribution in the coming year. Proper playing pitches with even modest facilities will become more and more a "must" with the continuing expansion of our games.

10 — A one-man-one-job system throughout the Association would serve a useful purpose for several reasons. Those who hold down several offices are dedicated and selfless men, but by sharing the load they would do more justice to themselves and involve more — particularly of the younger people — in the everyday workings of the Association.

So let us have more delegation of authority and let the so-called "plum" roles rotate with more regularity. In this way, perhaps, leaders will emerge who might otherwise remain among the "unknowns."

Perhaps I have gone far enough; possibly I have been too critical and maybe there are other fields more worthy of mention. Be that as it may, I have no doubt that 1968 will once again see new records set and more history made on the playing fields and in our council chambers.

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**B**ECAUSE of pressure on space our regular monthly Crossword has been held over. This popular feature will appear again in our March issue.

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Sat., May 4th

Wed., May 8th\*

Sat., June 8th

Wed., June 19th\*

Sat., July 6th

Fri., July 26th\*

Sat., July 27th

Wed., Aug. 7th\*

Sat., Aug. 10th

Sat., Sept. 7th

Sat., Oct. 5th

\* DENOTES EVENING MEETING

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