

Gaelic News

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Offaly with verve

"NOT wishing them any harm or anything like that, but I wish to God somebody had beaten Kerry on the way," said Offaly mentor Paddy Gorman as we stood on the sideline at Edenderry and watched Alo Kelly and Fr. Scully put the Midlanders through the grind.

Paddy Gorman was, of course, thinking of the League final in May when Offaly collapsed in a heap of inferiority complex against the Kingdom.

Maybe he was thinking, too, of his own intercounty footballing days — 1931 to 1938 — when all Offaly could hope for was a round in the Leinster championship and Kerry

were a team one travelled to view in awe and to later boast of having seen.

The current generation of Offaly players grew up in a less football class-conscious era. Down had chopped Kerry to near normal proportions and Galway had then come along and re-emphasised their limitations. But the young Offalymen of 1969 are still their fathers' sons

... and their fathers were the men who travelled to see Kerry.

There is, therefore, that extra dimension to Offaly's task. If their opponents were Mayo or, indeed, any other county the undertaking would be normal — but Kerry provide opposition which is as much mental as physical.

Still, they are a gritty

bunch these Offalymen. They have been in training since early Spring when the League started going well. They train punishingly. An Offaly training session is longer than that of most counties and the pressure is kept on throughout by Fr. Scully and Alo Kelly. Indeed, Alo puts as much into it as do the players — urging, running, sweating and roaring them on.

Outsiders are to some extent surprised at Offaly's sudden return to the forefront. At the beginning of this year they were nowhere.

However, those who have kept a close eye on the county's affairs are not surprised. There has been an excellent and gradual build up and a return to the glory of 1960 and '61 simply had to come.

Bord na Scol is doing a fine job in the county with a host of juvenile competitions. From these came the successful county minor team of 1964 — nine of whose members are on the current senior side.

From the 1964 minor success there was a graduation to last year's under-21 final.

The position now is that Offaly have a considerable pool of young dedicated players — with a few hardened veterans like Greg Hughes bridging the gap with the 1960-'61 side. They are in this year's final somewhat prematurely and win or lose they should keep the county in the big-time for quite a while.

The evening I watched them train the enthusiasm was so intense that they seemed unaware of the falling darkness. My photographer companion was using a flash-light long before the training ended and above us a pale moon hung in the sky as the Offalymen raced, frog-leaped and did physical jerks which at times seemed to have them attempting to field the moon.

On two sides of the pitch there were lines of



Fr. Scully lines up his Offaly charges.

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cars with the Midlanders' more dedicated followers seated in them viewing the proceedings. Inside on the sidelines, too, there were a few hundred followers.

As we were coming off the field, some fireworks blazed into the sky above Edenderry some shortway

distant. It was probably totally unconnected with the players but one could not avoid the thought that some Offaly folk were rehearsing the celebrations which could well breakout simultaneously all over the Midland county at about 4.45 on September 28.

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John Dowling seems quite happy as he talks to Pat Monaghan.

Offaly — happy underdogs

"WE are going to win the Final, despite the fact that Kerry will start odds-on favourites," was the emphatic summing-up of Offaly Co. Secretary, John Dowling when I talked to him in Barry's Hotel after the defeat of Cavan.

Why did he think Offaly could upset the odds? "Because we love being under-dogs. We were under-dogs against Kildare and we triumphed. We were under-dogs both days against Cavan but we came out on top in the end. And all neutral opinion sees no other result to the final only a Kerry victory. That is the way we like it. I believe that we can show that this Offaly side — improving all the time — is far better than people think."

I pointed to the fact that some judges were maintaining that while Offaly had the ability to win semi-finals and get to finals, they did not seem to be able to win out at the ultimate stage? I pointed to their failure in 1961.

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John Dowling indicated to me that Offaly had won a minor title in 1964 and just failed to take the under-21 crown last year. "So that quite a number of our present side have the right kind of experience. Mick Higgins, the former noted Cavan star, believes that Kerry will do it. "I thought we played very badly in the replay and yet there were times in the second half when weaknesses were revealed in the Offaly team which I feel Pat Griffin and Co. will exploit to the full."

I met Joe Keohane, the Kerry selector under the Hogan Stand as I was coming out.

JOE KEOHANE
Joe confessed that Kerry had been more afraid of meeting Cavan — and in this, I believe, the former great full-back was expressing the general feeling in the Kerry camp. But at the same time he was quick to point out that the Kingdom are not taking Offaly for granted. "The All-Ireland Final is a law unto itself. You must never go on the form shown in previous games on the way to Croke Park. In a tight finish, one lucky break can decide. To say that Kerry are going to win easily because they beat Offaly convincingly in the League would be very foolish on our part. We are not going to make the mistake of under-estimating Offaly. They beat Cavan, the conquerors of Down and that fact alone makes them worthy challengers. Over-confidence has ruined many a team's chances on the big day. We will insist that this Kerry side does not fall into this trap."

Joe confided that the first ten minutes will be decisive. If the Kerry attack clicks in that vital opening period, then they should go on and forge victory — if they are held in check, then victory may not come so easily.

Back to John Dowling. I mentioned to John that my own reading of the League Final was that the loss of John Smith was a greater blow to Offaly than the loss of Pat Griffin to Kerry — because it opened wide gaps for the speedy Kerry wingers.

John said that the League Final was not a game at all after Smith and Griffin went off. "You can completely disregard the result of that match, as far as I am concerned. We are a far different side now — we are fitter and the games in Leinster and the two matches against Cavan have given the

players new confidence in their ability to win out."

TOM O'REILLY
I also had a word with "Big" Tom O'Reilly and he does not believe that Kerry are a great side. His view was that when Mayo got going at midfield late in the game, they very nearly pipped Kerry. People might argue that Kerry were unlucky not to get a goal or two, but the plain fact was that but for a missed free, the Connacht champions would have forced a draw.

For my own part, I feel that Cavan had the football to beat Offaly but you cannot hope to win an All-Ireland semi-final if you are going to concede soft goals. The third goal crippled whatever chance they had. It meant that instead of being in a position to whittle down a five points lead point by point they had to go looking for goals and as "Big" Tom O'Reilly rightly put it, you never get goals when you are desperately seeking them. "Go for the points — and the goals can come with the breaks when you least expect them."

I think that Kerry's greater footballing skill will see them through. Have the critics being under-estimating Offaly, as Kilkenny were under-estimated against Cork? As John Dowling has said, the League Final result can be discounted. Offaly have kept on winning in the championship. The full-back line of McCormack, Hughes and Egan did not put a foot wrong in two hours against Cavan.

Nicholas Clavin emerged with new stature in the defeat of Cavan and I was taken too by the football played by wing-half Mulligan. Larry Coughlan and Willie Bryan hold the key to victory against Kerry. My own contention is that if O'Connell hits peak form and domi-

nates this sector, then the Kerry half forward line will win the day. Coughlan and Bryan must get a 50-50 break of the exchanges if Offaly are to have any chance.

TONY McTEAGUE
The Offaly attack was quite impressive in the replay against Cavan. Tony McTeague has the finest side-step of any forward playing the game today. He brings the ball impishly to his man, knowing he has the ability to beat him and his opponent knows he is going to be sold a dummy — yet often can do nothing about it. McTeague at his best is a man Kerry must nullify. Hickey had a very good game too in the replay and Evans took the first goal very well indeed.

I believe that the Kerry defence can be prised open by slick movements. The weakness as evident in the full-back line against Down last year has not been fully eradicated. Can Offaly emulate Down? That is the question.

Offaly got a two-goal start against Down in 1961 — but failed in the end. They must prove that they have the ability to rise to it and sustain a match-winning effort for the hour on Final day. They have the ambition — Kerry have the tradition. The Kerry tradition is something not easily overcome in a Final. Down overcame it in 1960 and again last year.

I doubt myself that Offaly can do it this time — but I do hope that it provides as exciting an hour as the hurling decider. Certainly Gaelic football needs it. The Offaly-Cavan replay was a sad disappointment, marred by no less than 49 frees. If this is Gaelic football, give me hurling any day — and let the Commission on the revision of the football rules act now to define the "tackle" and do away if necessary with the full-back and full-forward.

— Raymond Smith.

Offaly en route

June 29: Offaly, 3-14; Westmeath, 1-8 — Croke Park.
July 13: Offaly, 3-9; Wexford 1-10 — Croke Park.
July 27: Offaly, 3-7; Kildare, 1-8 — Croke Park.
August 24: Offaly, 0-12; Cavan, 1-9 — Croke Park.
September 14: Offaly, 3-8; Cavan, 1-10 — Croke Park.
Total aggregate: For, 12-50; Against, 5-45.
Average per match: For, 2-11; Against, 1-9.
Offaly scorers to date in the championship: A. McTeague, 1-30; S. Kilroy, 3-3; S. Evans, 2-3; P. Keenan, 2-2; P. Monaghan, 2-2; S. Cooney, 1-3; W. Bryan, 0-2; A. Hickey, 0-2; K. Kilmurray, 0-2; M. O'Rourke, 0-1.

Garryowen take London title

IT was a case of third time lucky for the Garryowen club, when they defeated Parnells by 2-7 to 0-11, to take the London senior football championship recently. In 1967 and '68 Garryowen were the losing side in the final, but this year they made no mistake.

A goal by Beara man Stephen O'Sullivan after 20 minutes gave them the lead for the first time and they retained this to the end. A second goal late in the second half by Dunmore player Eamon Glennon clinched victory for Garryowen and gave them their first title in London since 1958.

Star of the winning team was Pat Bradley, from Westmeath at full forward and centre forward, while Cavan man Peter Pritchard had a fine game at left full-back.

Parnells, who were without their centre forward Noel Reilly, had outstanding players in John Jennings and Martin O'Malley (Mayo) and P. J. Fitzpatrick (Kerry).

Referee Paddy Finnegan sent off a Parnells player to-

wards the finish, but it was an isolated incident in a sporting game. Incidentally, this was Paddy Finnegan's last London final, as he is soon to give up refereeing to return home to Monaghan. His loss will be sorely felt in London football where he was a highly popular official.

Garryowen will be anxious to add the Tipperary Cup to their championship win and have already qualified for the final, in which they will meet St. Mary's or Parnells.

It was a timely twenty-first birthday present for Galway man Tom Roche, who is shortly to emigrate to Australia.

But the man for whom this victory meant most assuredly, was Garryowen's secretary Frank Duignan, the man who has kept the club in the forefront of London football for so long. Nobody in London G.A.A. circles has put more into the game or helped out more young players from Ireland than Frank, and this victory is some reward for his dedication.

Offaly at home at Croke Park

Offaly have played all their five championship games at Croke Park. The drawn game with Cavan was the only match in which they failed to score a goal. They scored three goals in each of their other four championship games.

Offaly's only other appearance in an All-Ireland

senior football final was in 1961 when they went under by 3-6 to 2-8 to Down. The County's sole All-Ireland football success was registered in 1964 when the minors won out.

The junior hurlers won two All-Ireland titles as far back as 1923 and 1929.

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GAELIC NEWS

A Round Of Hypocrisy

In a few weeks time we will have the commencement of the National Leagues. In football it appears that the majority of the Groups intend to play a double-round. We can only wonder who is fooling who.

Every year at county conventions and at Congress we hear plaintive utterings all over the place on how club games are being wiped off the face of the earth by a superfluity of intercounty games and it is the same people who always raise the war-cries.

They claim they want fewer county games in order to give the club games a chance. But how many of these same people will take their courage in their hands and reject the concept of the double-round League? The answer would appear to be very few.

One of the major incentives for the double-round League

is to make money. But is this not a rather short-sighted approach when it means that hundreds of ordinary club players, supposedly the life-blood of the Association, are left standing idle while the county team plays a League game.

It is remarkable that out of all the maze of intercounty competitions existing at the moment no county has voluntarily decided to opt out of any grade. Even those counties which annually oppose the retention of the Junior grade still continue to play in that grade each year.

In one sense the arrival of the double-round League is the most serious blow yet to club games. If ordinary club players cannot get a game of Gaelic football in winter-time because the county team is playing they will quickly be encouraged to play soccer or

rugby as both these games are in full swing in winter-time.

But such a line of reasoning seems to fall on deaf ears as far as many county legislators are concerned. Who worries about club games or club players when there are big glamour games to be played, big gates to be collected and plenty of publicity to be had in the newspapers?

If we keep on increasing the number of intercounty games, especially in an artificial manner such as the double-round League, we can dismiss any hopes entertained at the moment of restoring the former greatness of the clubs as playing units. And if this aspect of club life cannot be revitalised all the great social centres being planned at the moment will be for decorative purposes only.

Monsignor Hamilton

ALL the big men are going. Monsignor Hamilton was among the biggest the G.A.A. has ever had. He wasn't, of course, big in stature but he was immense in all of the qualities which mark a man apart.

He died last month at the Clare hurling final with the parish with which he was most associated, Newmarket-on-Fergus, well on the way to retaining their title. The Bishop of Killaloe, Dr. Michael Harty, was sitting with him and he attended to him. It was not an unbecoming setting.

He was a very physical person. His personality always came across forcibly and, probably more than any other man of his era, he could carry a G.A.A. meeting with him — be it county, provincial, Central Council or Congress.

It was he who got through the motion to have the 1947 football final played in New York. The motion did not seem to have a hope but, with great emotion and thunder in his voice, he raised it from an impractical idea to being a great national gesture.

He pointed out that 1947 was the centenary of the Famine's blackest period when the coffin ships brought our forefathers in their scores of thousands and heaped them, both dead and alive, on the American shore.

We should mark the occasion, he said, by returning to the U.S. in triumph and displaying the full splendour of our young manhood before all of America. It would represent both a gesture of thanks to the U.S. and a demonstration of our triumph over adversity.

To the surprise of most, he carried Congress.

He tended to give the impression of gruffness, but he also had a fine sense of humour. Probably the best story of which he was part stems from his trip to the U.S. with the Kerry footballers in the 'thirties.

The journey was, of course, by boat and during the voyage an American lady of indeterminable age

confessed to some of the Kerry players that she had a wonderful holiday in Ireland but it had been, to some extent, marred by the fact that she did not get an opportunity to kiss the Blarney Stone.

As Kerry men will, they told her that she would derive all of the benefits of kissing the Blarney Stone by kissing somebody who had kissed it.

She immediately asked if there was anybody on board who had kissed the Stone and they told her that there was only one such person — Fr. Hamilton, as he then was.

With great persistence the American lady sought out Fr. Hamilton and, at length, explained her predicament to him... concluding with — "and I am told that you kissed the Stone, Father."



"No Madam," came the reply, "I didn't kiss the Blarney Stone — but I sat on it."

During his half-a-century of G.A.A. administration, Monsignor Hamilton held every major office other than the Presidency. And, of course, he would have been President were it not for the tradition whereby clerics do not stand for that office.

He was Chairman of the Clare County Board for many years; served a term as Chairman of the Munster Council and, until 1965, was Clare's Central Council representative.

He was again Vice-

Chairman of the Munster Council until last Spring. He would have automatically succeeded to the Chair but declined to take the office.

As a member of the Central Council he also represented the New York G.A.A.—a dual role which did not continue with his passing from the Council.

Monsignor Hamilton was also, of course, a founder of **GAELIC WEEKLY**; always maintained an active interest in it and its successors and contributed to them under nom de plume on various occasions.

As late as two weeks before his death, he was discussing **GAELIC NEWS** with this writer and expressing satisfaction at its success. He spoke with enthusiasm of its future and the role it could play.

If Monsignor Hamilton represented one aspect of the G.A.A. over others, it was its national role. He constantly advocated the maintenance of the Ban and all things which stamped the G.A.A. as more than a sporting organisation.

Yet, he once opposed the Ban. This was following the Treaty. He took the Treaty side and joined the Free State Army as a chaplain. In this context he advocated the removal of the Ban in the mid-twenties because he saw it as a reflection on the State.

However, the Free State quickly paled for him and as soon as he realised it did not mean the Ireland which he had envisaged, he changed his mind about the Ban, coming back to his original position of forcibly advocating it and all things national. He was never again to budge from that stand.

At the time of his death, he was Dean of the diocese of Killaloe and parish priest of Nenagh.

A truly big man has gone from the G.A.A. scene... and the real pity is that they don't make them like him anymore.

Ar dheis Iamh De go raibh a anam uasal.

— B.M.L.

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Where the titles went

KERRY (20) — 1903, 1904, 1909, 1913, 1914, 1924, 1926, 1929, 1930, 1931, 1932, 1937, 1939, 1940, 1941, 1946, 1953, 1955, 1959, 1962.

DUBLIN (17) — 1891, 1892, 1894, 1897, 1898, 1899, 1901, 1902, 1906, 1907, 1908, 1921, 1922, 1923, 1942, 1958, 1963.

WEXFORD (5) — 1893, 1915, 1916, 1917, 1918.

CAVAN (5) — 1933, 1935, 1947, 1948, 1952.

TIPPERARY (4) — 1889, 1895, 1900, 1920.

KILDARE (4) — 1905, 1919, 1927, 1928.

GALWAY (7) — 1925, 1934, 1938, 1956, 1964, 1965, 1966.

CORK (3) — 1890, 1911, 1945.

MAYO (3) — 1936, 1950, 1951.

LOUTH (3) — 1910, 1912, 1957.

LIMERICK (2) — 1887, 1896.

ROSCOMMON (2) — 1943, 1944.

MEATH (3) — 1949, 1954, 1967.

DOWN (3) — 1960, 1961, 1968.

Tony McGee Reports From Ballinascreen On Derry Minors

If spirit and determination alone could win an All-Ireland final then Derry minors would be home and dry. Never before have I seen anything to equal the determination that prevailed throughout the county over the past few weeks. Officials, players and supporters were all caught up in the hub of excitement that swept the county.

But make no mistake about it spirit and determination are not the only qualities this present Derry minor squad are endowed with. During a training session under lights at Ballinascreen with Sean O'Connell in charge I watched them going through a gruelling hour's preparation for the big day. They are a talented

Hoping For A Repeat Of 1965 Success

bunch of boys with loads of ability. They are strong tacklers and high fielders but above all their forwards play an attractive brand of combined football.

This year Derry have played eleven games and won them all. They have met and defeated every county in Ulster except Cavan.

At the beginning of the season they were not regarded as potential All-

Ireland champions but their opening championship win against Down (5-10 to 0-1) made many sit up and take notice. That was at Easter and the Derry boys had to wait until July before they played Antrim in the semi-final.

"This long lay-off did not help the team and it definitely showed in their play against Antrim," selector and well-known referee Phonsie Maynes said.

A week later they accounted for Tyrone by 1-9 to 0-5 in the Ulster final and whilst still not at their best they showed a big improvement from the semi-final. However, it was in the second half of the Leath-na-h-ear training ses-

session against Monaghan that the Oak Leaf youngsters served notice that they intended bringing back the Tom Markham Cup to Derry.

Due to the troubles up

sions were disrupted before the All-Ireland semi-final and after getting a week's postponement they came through a rather rough hour against Wexford to win by a point.

I asked the inevitable question. How was the '69 side rated in comparison to the '65 team and it was Ballerin's Bernie Mullan, another selector, who supplied the answer. 'This side has more teamwork and skill. They are naturally fit and in my opinion are a better footballing side,' he said.

Phonsie Maynes was quick to point out that this was the first year that Derry won the minor league and this had given them great confidence.

None of the Derry mentors or players have seen Cork play except on television but they all agree that this is no drawback. They said that they never saw Wexford before either and reckoned that it was better that way. No Cork and Derry teams have clashed since the early fifties when the two counties met in a junior semi-final.

Sean O'Connell believes that Derry will beat Cork and has some good theories to prove his point. "We

continued on page 9

Meet The Players

Kevin McGahon (Ballerin): Goalkeeper — very small to be net-minder standing only 5' 6". Plays corner forward for his club and is a brother of Sean McGahon who played midfield for Derry juniors this year. He is an apprentice joiner and a former north-west juvenile boxing finalist.

Philip Burke (Banagher): Played in the first round against Down and then lost his place until he went in as a reserve during the Ulster league final. Selected at right back for the All-Ireland semi-final. He is very strongly built and has been a corner back for three years with Banagher senior team. He is a farm worker.

Liam Murphy (Dungiven): A St. Columb's student, was full back on the minor county team last year too. A tall, lanky lad he is a brother of Andy Murphy who went in as a reserve against Kerry in the junior semi-final at Tralee and turned the tide Derry's way. Liam plays senior club football.

Pat McGuickian (Ballinderry): Was a reserve last season and is still only 17 years old. He is a brother of Derry senior players Mick and Adrian and a student at Rainey Endowed College, Magherafelt. Like Adrian, during his college days Pat plays rugby and has had a trial for Ulster colleges. Has three years of senior club football behind him and at around 12½ stone he is a strong corner back.

Frankie McCotter (Kilrea): Presently at St. Patrick's H.S., Maghera and a former St. Columb's student. He is a cousin of senior half back Phelim. Frankie didn't show up too well in pre-season trials but came into the side against Tyrone in the league. A tearaway type of wing half back.

Hugh McGolderick (Bellaghy): An apprentice joiner he started his county career this season as a corner forward, later went to midfield and is now at centre half back. Another lanky player standing just under 6'. Hugh is the real joker of the party and he plays guitar and banjo proficiently.

Robbie Hasson (Dungiven): He has been a St. Columb's player for the past four years. Although small he is a good wing half back, being a strong runner and a tough tackler. Nephew of Niall who was a Derry senior star in the early fifties.

Eugene Lavery (Lavey): Height 6' 1" weight 12½ stone. Is the tallest player on the team. A St. Pat's student but wasn't discovered as a footballer until this year. He will be a minor next year again. An

Ulster Colleges basketball player he is a cousin of former centre half Colm Mulholland.

Mickey Moran (Glen): Just an inch smaller than his midfield partner Laverty and like the latter will be a minor next season also. Another St. Pat's student and basketball player he comes from the same club as Derry senior Seamus Lagan and like most of the boys in the Derry team he plays senior club football. Started off at left half forward this season.

Seamus Mullan (Ballerin): Brother of '65 star Brendan who also played in the No. 10 jersey but has since turned to soccer with Fulham. An expert free-taker from anywhere inside the 50 yards he has scored 2-18 in the championship so far this year and scored 1-7 against Monaghan in the league final. A student at St. Columb's he was a county player last year and will also be eligible next season.

Brian Ward (Ballinascreen): Captain: This is his second year on the team also. He has won three minor championship medals with his club and also plays senior football. A great fielder he distributes the ball to good effect. He is a very intelligent and unselfish player who usually makes scores for his colleagues rather than taking them himself. Plays basketball with St. Columb's (Ballinascreen) and is an electrician.

Terence McWilliams (Kilrea): Left half forward Terence already has an All-Ireland medal having been a member of the successful Antrim Vocational football team that won the title in 1968. He is at school in Ballymoney. A cousin of senior star and minor trainer Sean O'Connell. McWilliams wears contact lens. Unlike O'Connell he is lightly built but very fast.

Martin O'Neill (Kilrea): Missed the Ulster semi-final and final but came back into the side at corner forward for the Wexford game. Martin is a brother of Leo and Gerry and he has sampled club football in Antrim also. He is a student at St. Malachy's College, Belfast and is a brilliant ball player and solo-run expert. He scored five points against Wexford from play and five against Monaghan in the League final.

Sean McGahan (Ballinascreen): A 5' 11", 13 stone full forward. Despite this he is a speedster who carries a ball well and feeds the incoming forwards. A holder of four minor championship medals he works in the family haulage business. It was a leg injury that kept him out of the Derry team last year. Plays great football at full forward for Ballinascreen senior side.

Emmett Brolly (Claudy): As

well as being the left corner forward he is also the reserve goalkeeper but plays as a half forward on the Claudy senior team. Another tall player he has been troubled with a leg injury these last few months. He is a factory worker.

Michael Bradley (Slaughtneil): A Belfast construction worker Michael played for his club in the recent Derry senior championship final. Again around the 6' mark he has come in as a substitute various times this season but a crop of injuries has been a drawback to him.

Brian Kearney (Doire Colm-cille): Brian didn't return with the Derry team from Dublin after the semi-final. Instead he entered Dalgan Park where he is now studying for the priesthood. An ex-St. Columb's student he has been in the county team for three years but this season spent a spell in England during the summer. Went in at left half back during the Wexford game and is the most experienced boy on the panel.

Gerry O'Neill (Greenlough): Gerry wasn't discovered until the middle of this season and is now reckoned to be the best prospect in Derry for many years. At 6' and 12 stone he is a great fielder. Played centre half back against Monaghan and went in as a sub. against both Antrim and Wexford. Against Antrim he scored the winning goal and against Wexford he gained the penalty.

Brendan Kelly (Ballinascreen): Another St. Patrick's student he played corner forward in the Ulster final. This is his second year on the team and will be available next season also.

Sean Coyle (Dungiven): Sean only started to play football last year. Was midfield in the Ulster final against Tyrone. Was a reserve in his club's junior side in the championship, went in as a substitute and the following Sunday was promoted to senior ranks. Plays basketball along with Sean O'Connell and is an apprentice bricklayer.

Vincey Convery (Ballinascreen): Also a student at St. Patrick's he played right through the Ulster championship. Is a tough corner back and a good place-kicker. He is the utility man of his club team.

Mickey McGlone (Ballinascreen): Still a minor next year Mickey usually plays at half back. Plays in the Ballinascreen intermediate team and is a good free-taker.

James McGilloway (Sean Dolans): Only came into the panel after the Ulster final. A St. Columb's corner forward, lightly built but fast and accurate.



Brendan Kelly

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**Matt
Fitzpatrick
Reporting**

New Champions In Two Counties

**News From
The North**

COUNTY Down club Bryansford revived old glories of the twenties and thirties when they defeated Burren to recapture the Down senior football championship at Clonduff. Their victory was a triumph for hard work and consistency.

Bryansford despite a lapse into obscurity about twenty years ago have always made a notable contribution to Down football teams.

But now a new generation of footballers has emerged and no doubt will blaze a new trail for the club. Players like Oliver Burns who could become the Down full back of the future, midfielder Cecil Ward already an international basketball player was the man of the final with a superb display at midfield. Forward Willie Kane, Brendan Neeson, Paul Neeson and Michael Cunningham are all players that can look forward to county honours before long.

To the men behind the club it has been a great year. Team manager and trainer Sean Smith, who told me before the final "to have my shirt on his side." Chairman Eddie Morgan

that quiet spoken man that talked the new champions on to their pedestal, Arthur Brannigan and Nicky Cunningham the hard working club officials and to the players it has been a year to remember.

Down Fermanagh way Teemore Shamrocks emerged with a one point win over Irvines-town in a thrilling game that again produced one of the best and certainly the most sporting finals in years.

It's over 40 years since the Shamrocks won the Erne county title and I was more pleased than anyone else that at last they have won their way back to the top.

I saw them earlier in the season and marked them down as good prospects. They are young and talented and play a crisp brand of football.

Teemore hold a hallowed name in Fermanagh football and in the first three decades of the century they proved to be well nigh unbeatable. On many occasions the entire club was picked to represent the county and the late Charlie Brady, who played with the club, told me many times about those days. He talked of the day that Teemore representing the Erne County held the might of Cavan to a point in Belturbet when the Breffni men were the real kingpins in the

province.

I was particularly pleased that at last long serving Jim Cassidy won a county medal. Jim and myself played minor, junior and senior for the county and even after two decades the fair-haired Jim is still going.



COLM McALARNEY

New names like the O'Reillys, the Fitzpatricks, Jim Owens, Peter Hegarty and Brian McCaffrey are sure to appear on future Fermanagh selections.

In Tyrone it was that genius of the magical and mercurial Frankie Donnelly which guided Carrickmore to their win over Coalisland when the "old man" himself scored a last minute point from a free to give them victory.

It was felt that Carrickmore with their youthful side lacked with experienced players could not match the dash and determination of Jody O'Neill and his men from the 'Island.

But Carrickmore proved themselves a good side and aided by Frankie Donnelly the Kerrs, particularly Peter Paul at midfield, Kieran Harte and Frank McMahon proved their worth in a thrilling final.

Leitrim Fontenoy's, the first club ever formed in Down and the first Down side to play in Croke Park over five decades ago make this a memorable year for the club. Their new Park is a sight to behold. As flat as a billiard table the completely enclosed Fontenoy's Park will be without doubt the finest in the county. When properly completed it will have full facilities with club rooms and all amenities.

In a real rural setting in East Down under the shadows of Slieve Croob the new ground is a triumph for the club and its members and supporters for all the work on the park has been done by the members themselves and starts off free of debt. Quite a feat in itself.

Leitrim of course is the home club of Colm McAlarney and Willie Doyle as well as former Down star P. J. McElroy and it does not confine its activities to football alone with most of

the players talented hurlers as well.

Since last I wrote many things have happened. Down have lost their titles and apart from the Wembley trophy the sideboard is bare but after seeing the Mourne men in action against Galway in that recent challenge in Croke Park it does not look black at all. New faces like Anthony King, Noel Milar and Dan Connolly as well as James Morgan have come to stay and the heights can be scaled again.

Paddy Doherty has retired and although he came back for that charity game he tells me "No matter how much the selectors want me this is definitely the end. I will of course continue to play for Ballykinlar."

Times are really high in Antrim at the moment with the Under-21 footballers lifting the county from the depths. The policy of team manager Tommy Hall is paying off at last and this young side . . . eleven are available for the competition next year again . . . should live things up in Ulster in the years ahead. I like this side. They have guts, determination and ability that as yet has not been tapped.

Over the past few weeks two great Gaels have passed to their Eternal reward. Standish

O'Grady one of Cavan's great players who captained the side defeated by Kerry by a single point in the controversial All-Ireland semi-final at Tralee is with us no more but his feats on the field of play still live on.

It was sad news that reached me from New York that Bellew McManus had died suddenly in that American home of so many Irish people. Bellew was a great Fermanagh player and a member of the Teemore club and I am sure he would have liked to be present to see them win the Fermanagh title this year.

He was married to Bridie O'Neill the famous Antrim camogie star and a sister of Harry O'Neill of the great Antrim teams of the middle 40's and early 50's.

The owner of the Liffey Tavern in New York the jovial Bellew, was a close relation of mine, and his house was a meeting place for exiles and the one topic was football.

When I was in New York with the Down party last October we spent many pleasant evenings in his company and realised what it means to an exile to have such a place to meet friends and enjoy each others company.

To Bridie and his son I wish all my sympathy. Go ndeanaidh De trocaire ar a anam.

CAMOGIE



Joan Murphy (left) Wexford's reliable full-back in action.

WEXFORD until now had the remarkable record of being the only school. Now that has been rectified. Enniscorthy has the distinction of providing the first Convent School

team in the county to enter for the Leinster Colleges competition.

This means that there are now schools from the majority of the Leinster counties affiliated. Already Dublin, Meath, Laois, Kilkenny, Kildare and Wicklow have schools participating, and in addition to Wexford there are strong possibilities that entries will be received this season from Offaly and Westmeath.

The successful inauguration last season of the All-Ireland Colleges championship has, of course, proved a big incentive and led to greatly increased entries also in the other provinces, notably in Ulster and Munster.

The number of Colleges playing competitive camogie is now so great that it is high time a Central controlling body was set up to deal with Colleges' affairs alone, and with this end in view a meeting of representatives of the provincial Colleges Councils has been called by the Central Council of the Camogie Association with a view to setting up an All-Ireland Colleges Council.

o o o

● Joan Fitzpatrick of South Presentation, centre-forward on the Cork side in the junior All-Ireland final is sister of the lad who captains Cork in the All-Ireland minor football final, Eamonn Fitzpatrick.

● Mary Shannon, full-forward on the Wexford team in the All-Ireland senior final is sister of former Wexford hurling star, Dick Shannon.

● Anne Carroll who will captain U.C.D. during the coming season is the dri-

ving force behind an attempt to organise a competition for the various institutes of higher education which will include the Universities, Training Colleges, and Physical Education Schools.

● Toronto Shamrocks, the camogie champions of America are on a short tour of Ireland as I write. I hope to cover their progress in detail next month.

● When Derry reached the All-Ireland junior camogie final the Northern County had earned the right to play in Croke Park for the first time since 1954 when they put up a good game against Dublin in the senior final.

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LEAGUE AND CHAMPIONSHIP

Seeking That Elusive Double

WHEN Kerry line out in the 1969 All-Ireland final they will be seeking the second leg of the League-Championship double, the completion of which is generally regarded as conferring the final seal of greatness on any team.

Since there is usually a lapse of four to five months between the finals of the league and championship, it is the complete test of a team's consistency over the year. It is no surprise, therefore, that relatively few football teams have captured the elusive double and indeed many in winning the first leg have left themselves with not enough in reserve, physically or psychologically, for the early rounds of the championship.

From a statistical point of view, the National League has had a rather haphazard history, since it lapsed for a period during World War II and did not commence until 1927 when the championship was over 40 years in existence.

However, if we take the ten years 1927-'37 and the period 1946-'69 we get a total of 34 National Football League campaigns. Taking the corresponding number of championships we find that in this 34 year period the League Championship double was achieved ten times as follows:

Kerry — 1929-'31-'32, '59; Down — 1960-'68; Mayo — 1936; Cavan — 1948; Dublin — 1958; Galway — 1965.

On the other side of the scale as far as Kerry 1969 are concerned, we have the

facts about League winners who played in All-Ireland finals and did not win.

In the 34 years in question, the League winners also qualified for the All-Ireland final 13 times and in only three cases were they unsuccessful in the championship final. In 1951 Meath defeated Mayo 0-6 to 0-3 in the League final but when the same teams met in September of 1951, Mayo turned the tables on a score of 2-8 to 0-9. But perhaps the difference that year could be accounted for by the fact that Mayo had not got Padraic Carney in the League final but he was back in all his glory for the All-Ireland.

Meath claimed that the fact that their players had been vaccinated prior to the All-Ireland final (they were due to leave for the U.S. on the Monday following the game) affected their play to some extent.

In the League final of 1955, Dublin beat Meath 2-12 to 1-3 and repeated the dose more convincingly 5-12 to 0-7 in the Leinster final, on their way to an All-Ireland final meeting with Kerry. In what was certainly the most talked about final of modern times the Metropolitans were foiled of the double by a superb Kerry side. The final score that day was Kerry, 0-12; Dublin 1-6.

The last League winning team to fail in the subsequent All-Ireland final was Cork in 1956.

By a strange coincidence Meath were the losing

League finalists for the second successive year, this time going down by a single point 0-8 to 0-7. Helped, no doubt by the fact that All-Ireland champions Kerry were sensationally beaten by Waterford, Cork won their way

result was Kerry 1-7, Kildare 2-3 and in the All-Ireland final Kerry had three points to spare 1-8 to 1-5. Two late points by the two John Joes, Landers and Sheehy, clinched victory for the Kingdom that day in a game which drew a then record crowd of 43,800.

Kerry were also involved in the 1965 series but this time they were on the wrong end of the stick. In the League final of that

year a dramatic late goal by Seamus Leydon gave Galway victory by 1-7 to 0-8 and so deprived the Kingdom of a trip to the U.S.A. Galway, having enjoyed their June trip returned home to qualify for the All-Ireland final where they again faced Kerry. The League verdict was confirmed on a score of 0-12 to 0-9 after a rather undistinguished game during which three players were sent off.

So the overall pattern of League - Championship statistics would appear to favour Kerry as League winners playing in the All-Ireland final since ten out of the last thirteen League winners to qualify for the All-Ireland final were successful.

And if Kerry win on Sept. 28 they will move further ahead in the list of teams who have recorded the League - All-Ireland double in the same season.



Neilly Duggan denied the double in 1956.

through to the All-Ireland final against Galway. Cork lost this final by 3-7 to 2-13 despite a great second half rally and great goals by 'Toots' Kelleher. That was the day that Frank Stockwell scored 2-5 from play at full forward for Galway.

The only other League-All-Ireland double statistic to be mentioned is that on only three occasions in our 34 year period have the same two teams met in both finals. It happened in 1929, Kerry v. Kildare, 1951, Meath v. Mayo, and 1965, Galway v. Kerry.

The only occasion on which the League final result was reversed in the September meeting was in 1951 (Mayo and Meath) a year we have already dealt with. In 1929 the League

Fr. Tom Scully—man behind Offaly

IF there is one single factor which more than any other has brought Offaly to their second All-Ireland final appearance, it is the presence in their training camp of Fr. Tom Scully, O.M.I.

And now that he is available again to take full charge of preparations for the final with Kerry, Offaly supporters will be further encouraged. For the progress of Offaly from obscurity at the beginning of 1969 to the place in the September sun in which they now find themselves is directly related to the presence of Father Scully.

Fr. Scully first came into prominence as a coach when he brought Belcamp College out of the football wilderness to contest two All-Ireland finals against St. Columb's, Derry and

Colaiste Chríost Rí. It was early this year that he first turned his attentions to coaching his native Offaly and his influence was immediately felt.

However, Fr. Scully was missing from the Offaly training camp for the concluding stages of the League and for the Leinster championship. As in other years, he spent the summer vacation doing relief parochial work in the Oblate Community House at Quex Rd., Kilburn.

But when August came, Fr. Scully was back to supervise preparations for the games with Cavan and it was no coincidence that Offaly turned in their best displays in these.

This was especially true of the forward line which in the drawn game was purely a one-man set up on the part of Tony

McTeague. What a change in the replay, when the whole line moved together and three different forwards scored well-conceived and perfectly executed goals.

Such a decisive improvement between the two games is a tribute to the efficiency of Fr. Scully as a coach. But more important, it is a very good reason why many of the experts who were preparing to stake their life savings, and the wife's pin money as well, on a Kerry win in the final are now having second thoughts on the matter.

Already this year, Fr. Scully has improved Offaly enough to beat Kildare, and Cavan at the second attempt. Now they face Kerry for the second time and who's to say it won't be a hat-trick of lessons well learned.

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REMEMBERING

'46

WE were to be on the road at 5.30 a.m. sharp, as Dublin was a mighty long drive. One hundred and fifty miles. And we had not managed to get any tickets.

BY BRIAN GERAGHTY

It was in my father's car that we were to go — an elaborate looking Hillman with the registration IM 8003. There were six of us — my parents, uncle John and two enthusiasts from the village, one of whom played regularly with the county team, and of course, myself. A fair crowd for the ol' Hillman but it was used to transporting twice as many sheep, and I am sure it didn't mind. It would be a feather in its cap to have visited Dublin, because not every car in our village

could boast of such an achievement and beside I was only a nipper of seven at the time. It was 1946 — the men from Roscommon pitted against the might of the Kingdom and the Westerners favourites. All the ingredients for a great game. My first All-Ireland!

We were up at about the 4 o'clock mark, and were ready for the road about five. I was in the back of the car between the two men, but I was to be transferred to one of their knees when my uncle would join the party after six miles. We were to collect him at his house.

My head was full of everything. Croke Park of which I heard so much, and about which I had dreamed so often was to become for me a reality. And maybe Kerry would win. If they did my day would be made, even though the rest of the party would suffer disappointment. They were all for Ros-

common, but I was Kerry mad. Provincial loyalty meant nothing to me at that stage, and I was such a wild Kerry supporter that I would probably have even cheered for them against Galway. But I got sense not long afterwards.

SLEPT IT OUT

We arrived at the uncles and after a deal of knocking and throwing pebbles at his bedroom window his head appeared, "I slept it out," he said.

"Slept it bloodywell out," bombarded my father. "I knew we could not rely on him you know, I knew it from the very start. It's too late now to be thinking of Dublin if we have to wait for him to dress and have breakfast. What could you expect..."

My father was furious. Even though my mother and the others were very disappointed they managed to contain them-

selves. And usually my father was the quiet one. It must have been the fact that he was from the Roscommon border.

The uncle was up and downstairs in no time. He was never one for detail but today he must have laced his shoes and put on his tie and combed his hair all in the one movement. I had a great smack for him. Always game to play with us children, he was the favourite uncle of all the clan. I felt sorry for him now, but I knew that he would get out of the scrape. And so he did, as ever.

In no time we were on the road again, everyone happy and smiling and the old Hillman eating up the miles on the road — to Ennis! Since we would not make Croke Park we might as well compromise and go somewhere else, so Ennis was decided upon. All the uncle's reasoning was in vain and I'm sure that it was the very first time that an All-Ireland final was played at the Queen's Hotel, Ennis.

LISTENING IN

For that was where we spent the day. We had a good lunch, and then settled in to listen to the game on the radio. A crowd from Kerry, whose car had broken down en-route to Dublin were sharing the little battery-set with us and what a day we had. Everything was flowing, and taken in the right spirit. And the game ended in a draw.

Handshakes were widespread at the result. Even some of the Kerry crowd acknowledged me. And we all vowed to be at the replay.

And so we were. No messing this time. The uncle was brought up to stay in our house the night before the game, and we were at an mbothar on schedule.

I can only remember bits and pieces of the day, my first introduction to a centre which was in the future to give me many happy hours. A kind Kerryman, probably thinking that I was from some part of the Ring took me on his shoulders, as it was pretty chalk full 'neath the Cusack.

Kerry won. The score was 2-8 to 0-10. But Roscommon seemingly had the winning of things. "Too much going for goals," my father angrily remarked afterwards, as we fed in the Spa Hotel.

I can remember John Joe Fallon shooting for goal more than once and the great Danno showing his class. Also I can remember Paddy Kennedy at mid-field for Kerry, because my father pointed him out to me before the game telling me that he was a great player. Also Bill Casey and Bat Garvey, because the name Bat appealed to me. It is not a common name around Galway.

JIMMY MURRAY

My most vivid memory, however, is of Jimmy Murray breaking through on a solo run for Roscommon. His golden head contained a great football brain. I had just learned "The Bard of Armagh" at this time and was fascinated to find the strolling player in the Roscommon colours in the person of Jimmy's brother Phelim. The fact that the chap in the song was Brady and the other Murray did not confuse me in the slightest.

Funnily enough I have no memory of "The Bawn" from that game, as he was to become a great favourite of mine in just one or two years.

Years afterwards when I began to play county football myself I met some of the players who starred that day. Jimmy Murray, whom I learned to address as "Jamsie" became a great friend and married the sister of a school pal of mine. I got to know Donal Keenan well and in 1962 when I had to ring Store Street Garda Station, for one reason or another, the voice at the other end belonged to Sgt. Liam Gil-martin.

PADDY KENNEDY

I was not long working in Dublin before I hit the Crystal in pursuit of toe-tapping and other nocturnal activity and the sophisticated and indeed very youthful looking manager in the monkey-suit and dickie-bow turned out to be the same Paddy Kennedy.

Down in Killarney last year for the Kerry-Australian game my Kerry friend pointed out Gus Cremin. He looked about thirty-five... and Eddie Walsh was great company after the game. And I shook the hand of "The Bawn". A small world it is.

Meeting these great men today the thing that strikes me most of all is the manner in which they have all kept so young looking. And this was emphasised more recently. I was on the phone to a lady who attended the dinner a few months ago for these two teams at Roscommon. She could not believe that they all looked so young. And the occasion brought her back the years, as surely it must have each of them. At least judging by the depth of their friendship and warmth of their greeting for one another, each of them must be thankful that he has the other to remind him of twenty years ago.

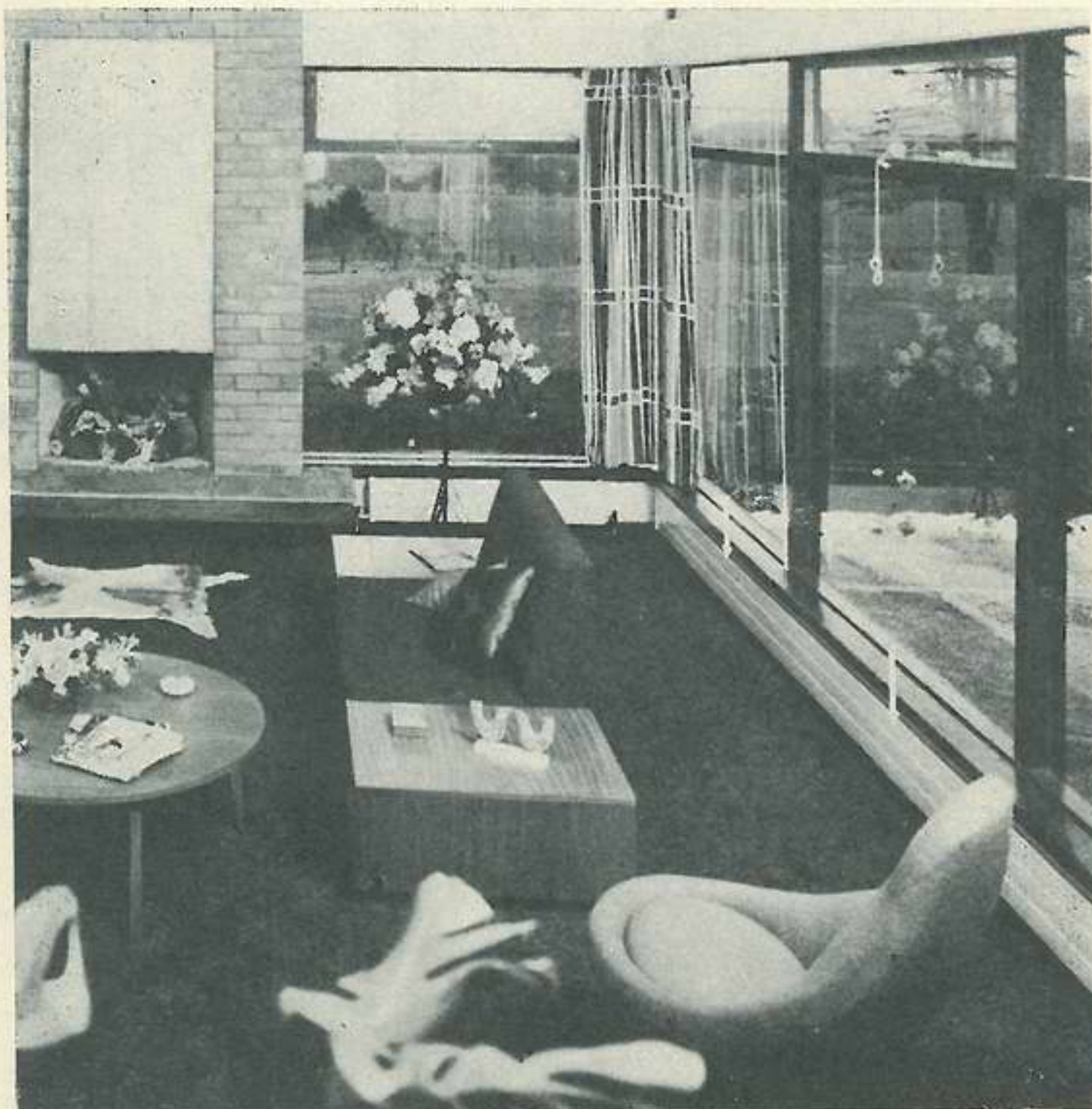
A small world as I've said and not a bad one.



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They Didn't Like The Hand-pass

AS older readers will remember Kerry did not take at all kindly to the hand-passing style displayed so effectively by the Ulster team of the early 'forties. This is how the late "P.F." described his first view of the Ulster machine.

"Though we had read Dick Fitzgerald's book, and played and looked at the games since we were small boys, Ulster produced a brand of play whereof this world holds no previous record. In the words of the song we 'never saw the likes of it before.' In the Mayo machine, Moclair, full forward, was the fulcrum of the attack.

In the Ulster technique that role was filled by the "40" man, Murray. He moved out to mid-field. Having got possession, on being tackled, he slung the ball out to the wing; the wing man hand-to-toed, or otherwise progressed and, when pressed, lobbed it back to Murray who, when pounced upon, slung another long ball again to the winger or the corner man and then awaited the return pass. The man finally in position for a score flung the ball either above or below the bar.

"This technique was something new to us, a mixture of basket-ball and rugby. Where was it learned, this new style of Gaelic football, exploited by players, the vast majority of whom had never been seen, in Croke Park, and hailing from

counties which had never won an All-Ireland, or are unlikely to do so in our life time. 'And still we gazed and still the wonder grew' that no whistle sounded. Ulster led by 6 points to one at the respite."

However, that game of 1941 ended in a draw and the 14 Kerry men, plus Eamonn Young, won the replay by 2-6 to 1-6. The following year though Ulster beat Munster handily in the final, "P.F." was even more caustic in his comments on the non-football Ulster style.

True enough, most of that Ulster team never won All-Ireland medals as "P.F." had forecast they wouldn't — although it is interesting to recall that the "villain of the piece," Murray on the "40" did become President of the G.A.A.!

Behind the Scene on Final Day

FOR those behind the scenes, All-Ireland final day at Croke Park begins as early as May.

The very first step is arranging to have the tickets printed. The operation is not altogether removed from the printing of money. There is the same sort of secrecy; similar safeguards against forgery; colours have to be switched each year and for each final to eliminate any sort of sleight-of-hand; duplication in numbers must be avoided at all costs and the various series of numbers must be worked out carefully.

Croke Park is well used to doing it now but the same degree of concentration and care is involved each year and for each senior final.

The printing of the tickets is but the first stage in the entire ticket process. In August comes the dispatch. In the case of those who have five-year seats; it is

form a very substantial pile.

Programmes

Work on the official programmes begins about a month before final day. Advertising has to be solicited. It usually comes without a hardsell. Most of the advertisers are regulars. The articles and photographs have to be acquired and these too can be acquired without any loss of stride.

All of this is not to say that the programmes are trouble free. The problem is the team selections. The printer is standing by with the task of having 35,000-40,000 programmes completed and he seldom has more than five days as rarely will the four teams be selected before the week-end prior to the final. The heat is really on, when some county drags on into the week of the match before selecting.

One year recently the

programmes and, eventually, the final rounding up of boys and proceeds.

There is as much money involved in programme selling on All-Ireland day as there is in gate receipts on the occasion of a good National League game.

Glistening Sward

The playing area has long been the pride and joy of Croke Park on final occasions — its sward glistening in the sun. This does not become so of its own accord. It requires careful doctoring by groundsman Con O'Leary and his helpers — as was done before him by the late Jimmy Curran and by his father prior to that.

And all the time during the preceding days the other arrangements have to be made — the stewards have to be got; there is also a team of paid workers. Gardai have to be hired. (The Gardai inside the ground are hired by the G.A.A. from the De-

an army in units — each unit under a chief steward and assigned a particular area to man.

Then there are the stiles-men and the workers — both groups paid for their services. Then there are the men in blue with a number of Sergeants and one or two Superintendents in charge.

In all, there are in the region of 400-500 men (and excluding programme sellers) inside Croke Park from an early hour — each man with a rather tiring day ahead of him, during which he will receive no lunch and must settle for a hurried sandwich.

Miss Match

Most of these men will not see the minor final. Some will see neither game but the majority will manage to grab a seat or a vantage point just as the senior game is beginning. By then they will be dog tired, having been on their feet or worse for over five hours without a break.

Since the advent of the seats under the Cusack Stand, All-Ireland day is particularly rough on the stewards who man the terraces. It is no longer a question of directing the people in. They have to be packed in and this is not easy.

The group of spectators which comes in early will probably sit down on the terrace steps. Those who come after them tend to stand so that a solid human ring is formed around those who are sitting. When these spectators eventually stand up the ring around them invariably holds so that valuable space within the ring is not being utilised.

The stewards on the terraces are constantly trying to contend with this type of thing — trying to get spectators to move in close and endeavouring to keep the passage-ways open. Very often it simply cannot be done. Always it is very hard work which carries with it the risk of abuse, or worse from the spectator who has "paid his 5/- (or 7/6 as it is now) and is damned if he is going to move down there for anybody."

Then there are the spectators who cannot see the match and expect the steward to do something about that. "Ye took our money at the gate and we are entitled to see." And, of course, they have a point — but what can the poor steward do about it.

When there were no seats under the Cusack Stand the discontented spectator could move along from the Canal End right over to Hill 16 and usually en route he found a better vantage point. Now he is boxed in on either Hill 16 or the Canal End and there he must stay.

It makes life tough for the stewards.

But it all eases when

the senior game gets underway. The men who manned Croke Park since morning begin to relax. Usually most of them are so tired that their enjoyment of the game, if they

can see it, is greatly diminished.

And if it is close towards the finish they get worried . . . anything but a draw and having to do it all over again!

DERRY MINORS (continued from page 5)

can win the tussles at midfield and this will take the pressure off our defence. Our forwards are good enough to get the necessary scores to win," Sean assured me.

I mentioned that Cork teams are usually strong and hard tacklers but he answered that by saying that they couldn't be any tougher than Wexford.

Left half back, Robbie Hasson from Dungiven, echoed the sentiments of all his colleagues when he told me, "I can't see us losing the final. The spirit and determination amongst the boys is terrific. We have come from behind in a few of our games this year — especially against Antrim and Wexford — to win. We have got the speed and ability to beat Cork."

In 1965 St. Columb's College won the Hogan Cup and as half the Derry minor team was in the college side it was a natural assumption that the under-18s would do well. This

year there was no fore-runner to Derry's victories. These youngsters have taken their followers by surprise and even those quite close to the team were not confident that they would reach Croke Park. But the win over Wexford was all the better because of this.

Secretary Pat Mullan said, "Because of personal reasons I wasn't able to get to Dublin for the semi-final but it was sweet music to hear the result on the radio that evening."

Now Derry is all agog with excitement. Very optimistic but not over-confident that the Tom Markham Cup will be back in the county again this month and with players like Seamus Mullan, Eugene Lavery, Hugh McGoldrick and Sean McGahon to mention just a few, striving towards that end, the followers have good reason to feel this way.

Yes, spirit and determination they see as the key to success once more.



The still quietness of Croke Park early on the day of an All-Ireland final. Soon it will become a hive of movement.

a very slow operation. Again there is the checking and re-checking and finally 10,000 tickets are dispatched by post in their ones, pairs and threes.

Then the various County Boards get their allocations on the basis of the number of clubs in each county. Finally, there is the balance which will be sought by many times more people than there are tickets.

Two weeks before each final the traditional advertisement is placed in the newspapers stating that all tickets have been distributed and that there are none on sale. Only the "outsiders" believe it. The rest have their letters in to

programmes had to go to press before a certain county picked its team. A provisional line-out was included and the eventual selection did not correspond in team placings. It was then necessary to persuade the county to have the players wear the numbers which corresponded with the programme.

From the rush in printing the programmes, the exercise moves to arranging to have them sold. Various Dublin schools and juvenile clubs undertake the task, providing in the region of 220 boys. It all requires organisation with depots operating for the retrieving of cash, the replenishing of the lad who has sold his bundle of

department of Justice and are paid for). The bands have to be commissioned. A check-out must be done of V.I.P's attending — the President; the Cardinal. They have to be received and conducted to their seats.

While these things and many more go on during the week prior to final day, the pressure for tickets builds and builds — until about three days before the game when it eases and the unlucky ones simply give up.

On match day itself Croke Park comes alive at about ten in the morning. A few hundred voluntary stewards, drawn from Dublin clubs, move in like



have a

HENNESSY

Mix it with soda water or ginger ale — or simply sip Hennessy straight. That's the long and short of it.

DAN Kiely, Chairman of the North Kerry Board, must be among the G.A.A.'s most enterprising officials. Some time ago, he offered to raise £1,000 each year if the County Board agreed to match this sum to pay Mick O'Connell to coach juveniles throughout the county on a full-time basis and next month a fund-raising trip for the North Kerry Board, to the United States, which he organised will take place. Recently we talked to this young businessman about the Kerry team and the All-Ireland football final.

Q.: Do you think that this year's Kerry team is superior to last year's side?

A.: Yes, very definitely. It's mainly the same team as last year and as they've been playing together a year longer they've got to know one another's play a lot better. As a result, this year they're playing as a team whereas last year they were inclined to be individualistic. The young-

er players from last year's team have also matured and the side has also benefited from the introduction of new players such as Mick O'Shea, Seamus Fitzgerald, Mick Gleeson and Liam Higgins.

Q.: Kerry are passing and swinging the ball around more this year. Do you think this is a wise move?

A.: I do, but I thought they overplayed the ball against Mayo. The half-forward line is good enough to score points from 35-40 yards so there's often no need for all the passing that takes place near the goal. The forwards would be better off taking their point from far out, rather than trying to walk the ball into the net.

At the same time, I believe Kerry have taken a step in the right direction by introducing more passing into their game as aimless kicking doesn't pay dividends in present-day football. It's essential that a player should try to find

This time we will make no mistakes—

Says Kingdom Official

last year's All-Ireland final defeat will have any effect on the team?

A.: It will make the team a lot more determined to succeed this year. Meath were beaten in the 1966 final and came back to win the following year and I feel that Kerry will do the same this year.

Q.: What is the general consensus of opinion among Kerry people regarding the final?

A.: The general feeling is that it will be Kerry's turn this year. The players themselves realise the enthusiasm of the supporters and they are determined not to let them down. An All-Ireland success would also do wonders for the game in the county and create more interest among the juveniles. There is tremendous enthusiasm about this All-Ireland final and I would say there's more interest in football in the county now than there was four or five years ago.

Q.: Were you pleased with the showing of the team against Mayo in the All-Ireland semi-final?

A.: I was, even though,

I suppose, they were lucky enough to win in the end. Kerry, I thought, were two or three goals the better team, but they were just unfortunate enough to hit the upright and crossbar a few times. I think Kerry must have used up all their bad luck on that day.

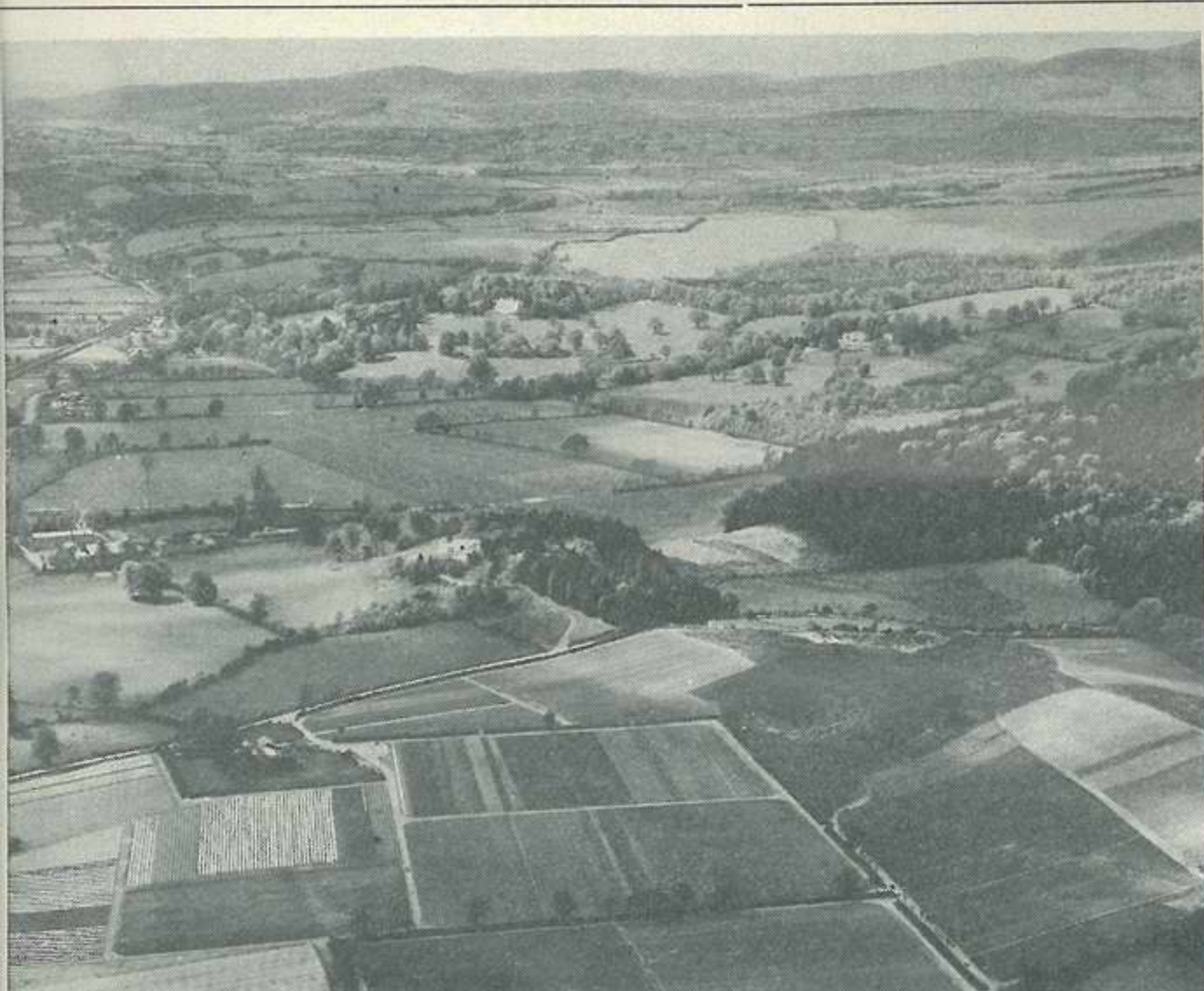
Q.: Do you think they can improve on this form in the final?

A.: Yes, I do. The forwards can't be so unlucky again with their shooting. They'll have ironed out this over-elaboration in their play. I think this will make a big difference to the team's performance in the final.

Q.: Do you think the team depends too much on Mick O'Connell?

A.: They may have a year or so ago but I don't think they do now. O'Connell's presence in itself is an inspiration to the team and he is a great encouragement to the side but I think the team is sufficiently mature and well-balanced not to be put off their game if O'Connell has an off-day.

a teammate whenever he kicks the ball. I feel that if the Kerry forwards become a little more direct, the team will have achieved



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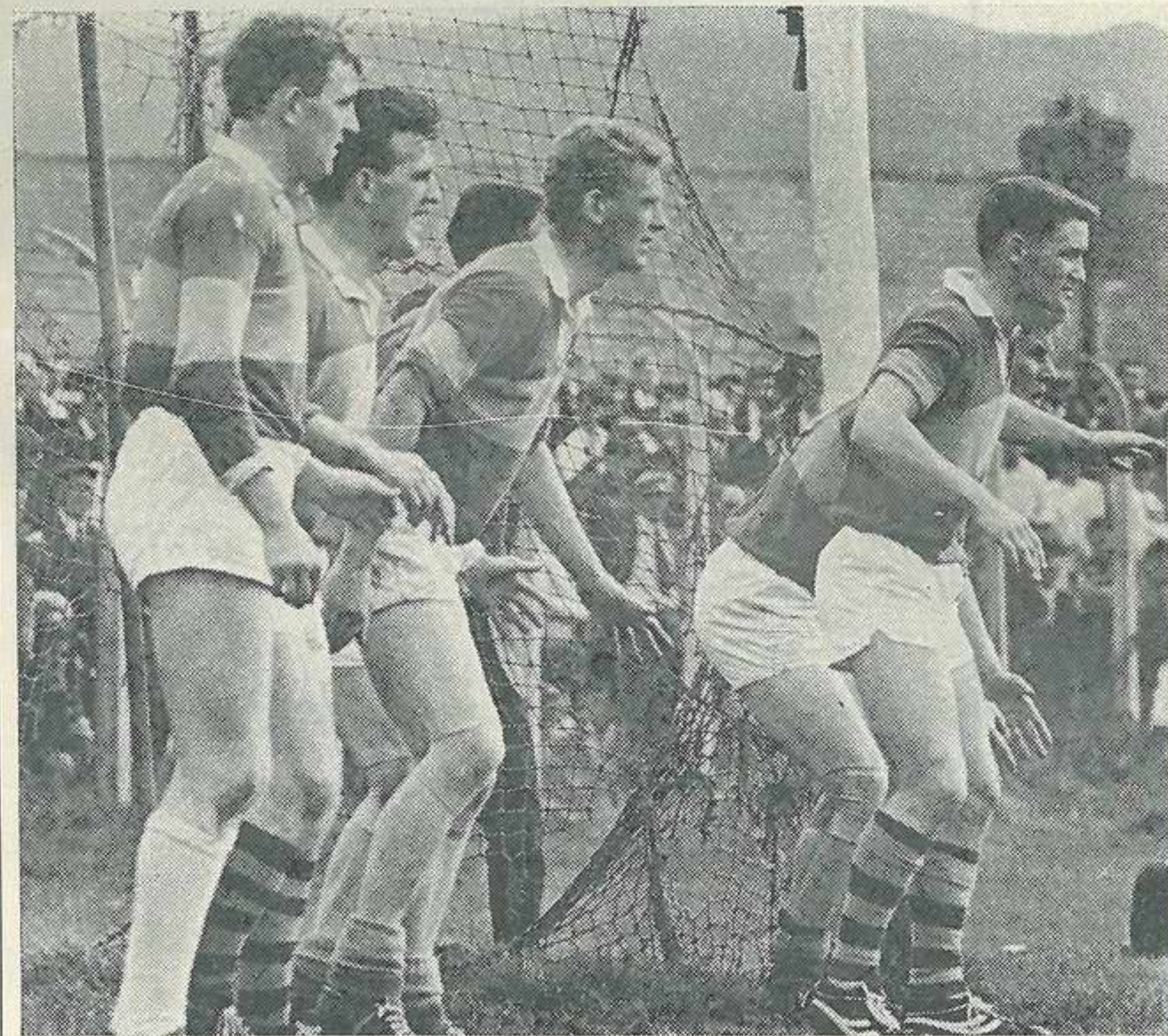
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ved the ideal blend of good fielding and the right amount of combined play.

Q.: Was Kerry's change in style prompted by their lack of success in recent times?

A.: It probably was as Kerry, in recent times, have lost many matches that they should have won. The forwards were getting plenty of the ball but they were generally too individualistic and, as a result, they failed to get the necessary scores. Now they're combining well, playing more as a team and getting a lot more scores. Of course, Mick O'Connell played a leading part in bringing more combined play into Kerry's game.

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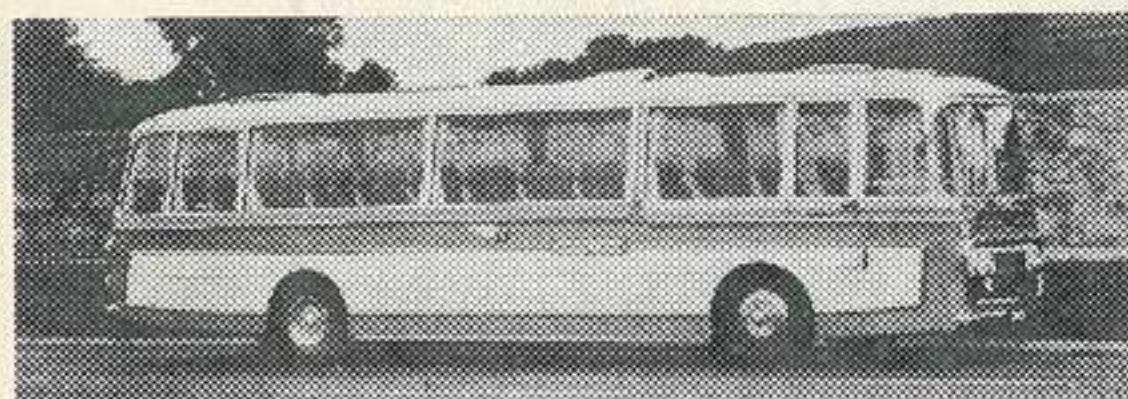
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By John O'Grady

IT'S a paradox worthy of Chesterton that your hurling man enjoys no All-Ireland Final like the football one. He cares less about it and so, ironically, appreciates it all the better. Under no emotional strain, he sits back in a mood of impartial benevolence. A fine high catch evokes his applause whatever the colours of the catcher. At the hurling final, if his own county is involved, every single thing done on the field is either good or bad, black or white, positive or negative. His awareness of a skilful or a brave piece of work by an opponent is a cold and unenthusiastic reaction. Only his own excite warmth.

But now, on the fourth Sunday in September, the emotional stakes are nothing like so high for him. He is in carefree, holiday mood. None of that awful tightness in the pit of the stomach as they parade round. No impulse to pray, or to shut the eyes, for fear of seeing the break of the ball go wrong in a close finish. No temptation to get into verbal conflict with a neighbour who seems, to his sensitive ears, to be doing a little too much running down of his county's players, its record or its tactics of the moment.

Nearest To Parity

The chances are that he has nothing at all to mar his judicial frame of mind. Only a Corkman, a Dublinman or a Galwayman ever had much occasion in recent decades to worry about a football final equally with a hurling one. Of the current Big Four in hurling, Tipp and Kilkenny haven't a notion about getting to the football decider, and Wexford have less than they did before their hurlers revealed themselves in the Leinster final of 1950. Cork, by a considerable distance, are nearest to parity between the sister games.

Personally, I never know whether to be proud or embarrassed at the football final. There are temptations in each direction for a hurling-minded observer. He can hardly fail to note that the house is fuller than it was three Sundays earlier. Exceptions to this rule are rare indeed. Cork and Wexford did it in the mid-'fifties, but we see precious little sign of the quality to repeat it now.

Open Draw Argument

The hurling man, watching the footballers march round, listening to the swelling, challenging cheers, has to grant that here are the qualifiers from a truly All-Ireland entry of 31. Even the number has a lovely round completeness in it, almost as if Ireland had been parcelled out by nature for an all-in championship which would work out with mathematical perfection. An argument for an "open draw," if ever there was one!

By sad contrast, the hurling series is a fragmented, uneven thing, lop-sided geographically, more regional than truly national. Thoughts like these might perturb him a little. But, then, he might just as naturally feel proud in his minority status, as possessing something they all haven't got in equal proportions.

Players Appear Half Naked In The Hurling Man's Eyes

To me, as a young fellow paying no great heed to football as played round Thurles, the first impression at important football games in Croke Park was that the players seemed somehow incomplete, walking round with their hands hanging. You know the way hurlers will look throwing their hurleys into a casual heap and setting off on training runs. Fancy a Christy Ring playing football, as he often did with St. Nicks. Why, the man looked half-amputated!

On account of this nakedness, I've always admired footballers, going out there without any artificial aid to courage, wide-open at times to a crushing charge by a hurtling and ill-disposed fourteen-stone opponent, who keeps coming hard even when he knows he's a little late in arriving. But there is a sort of rough justice in football. The biggest coward on the field can do the most damage in hurling. In football, he wouldn't even try it. Of the small men who took what was going, unruffled and undeterred, I've always thought the late Paudie Sheehy one of the finest. True, he toggled out with surprising strength of limb, but he never had the shoulders of your typical football specimen. Frank Byrne of Meath was another of the smaller fellows who acted upon the old saying about "an te na bfuil laidir," and relied upon being more than usually "glic."

Deep Respect

Tradition is all-important in hurling. Every one of the great hurling counties seems to have an individual flavour to its way of playing the game. So I confess to a deep respect for tradition in the football world also. To me, football means Kerry, Galway, Mayo, Cavan — and Down in deference to more recent glories. It does not really stretch into the "second division" of the less regularly prominent. The authentic aura of Jimmy Murray's Roscommon has been fading ever since, while I can't put the recent Meath All-Irelanders anywhere near Brian Smyth's team of '49.

I'm dead prejudiced against the basketballers and hand-passers. I know the argument goes that the instant long-kick technique achieves spectacle at the risk of losing possession, that it is haphazard and often means getting rid of the ball without thought of who gets it next. Carried to excess, this is certainly true. But a proportion of, say, three to one in favour of the long as opposed to the short ball makes a nice blend.

Too much short stuff clogs up the works, gets them bunching and spoiling. Under the quickly delivered ball they simply haven't time to gather in the sort of numbers that means no clean possession to anyone, but ugly slapping and scragging and endless frees. Of course, if the long kick is also an up-into-the-clouds kick, half the players on the

field could be under it before it comes down. The raking medium-high one or the well-judged drop-kick, as practised by the late John Joe O'Reilly, gives the advantage to the man who breaks first for it. That's the sort of football this hurling follower likes to see.

Being too young to see the catching of Keohane, Dillon and Kennedy at its best, I was intensely thrilled to see Paddy O'Brien of Meath in '49 take lovely clean possession against Mayo in the semi-final and Cavan in the final. His timing of the jump was superbly confident, especially against Mayo. It was the late P. J. Duke who was the shining star of the final, to my inexperienced eye.

I sometimes wish we had a system of zones laid out on the football field within which only certain players could enter — almost like trade union rules about "who does what." Sounds ridiculous, I know, but how often have you seen half-backs advancing to a ball round midfield and ending all hope of a man-to-man duel for the midfielders — and half-forwards — similarly falling back. All right, I know you can't really legislate for these things. At this point, apologising for my intrusion into other folk's business — and before I say even queerer things — this benevolent neutral bows out. I hope it's a grand open final this time. Maybe we'll slip a Tippman in there to keep the peace between them.

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I'm Preparing to Pay My Bet . . .



BY RAYMOND SMITH

I am preparing to pay a bet I laid in a moment of abberation in the Glenalbyn Club two years back. The bet was that Kerry would not win an All-Ireland senior football title for five years and the man, who accepted it, wrote it down on one of those circular table mats that extol the goodness of a certain beverage!

It was locked away in a safe place — a reminder to me now that no matter how low Kerry may appear to have sunk into the doldrums, you must never underestimate their footballing prowess. For they come back eventually as sure as the swallows in season. And if they come back, as they have come back this year dedicated to the task on hand, they are almost certain to win out.

Down could have saved me. Maybe even Galway (though patently not as powerful as in 1964 or '65).

But when these two counties, whose forward play permits them to find the gaps in the Kingdom defence, fell by the wayside in their own provincial

finals, then I could only say as the Captain said in "Juno and the Paycock" — "the blinds is down. Joxer, the blinds is down." It is one bet I will not regret paying — if Mick O'Connell strikes one of his glory hours in victory.

You know, to my mind, Gaelic football has suffered of late through too much fouling. Take any big game and jot down how many scores come from close-in frees — it is an indication in itself of the manner in which the game has deteriorated in this respect.

In the drawn game between Cavan and Offaly, the Cavan forwards in the closing stages thought nothing of pulling down the Offaly backs in order to keep play around the Offaly area. They knew that the clearances could not go much beyond midfield and Ray Carolan, lording it then in this sector, would almost assuredly put them back quickly on the attack again. It is one thing to have backs pulling forwards down close to their own goal area, but when forwards themselves begin to pull down the backs, then you know where Gaelic football is heading.

For me now it's stars like Mick O'Connell and Sean O'Neill who add that appeal that makes the watching of Gaelic football worth while. Some games are so foul-ridden that it's just a long yawn having to sit and watch them. But at least when Down or Kerry are engaged, you know that O'Connell and O'Neill are going to deliver the goods — they are so intent on the ball that they haven't much time to bother stooping to pulling and dragging.

I wrote in "The Football Immortals" that Mick O'Connell was the most classic exponent of the game of football I had seen. Granted, he could be subdued by carefully-planned tactics, granted he could be exasperating at times because of his failure to tackle back after being beaten for possession, but if you wanted to see the game played in all its purity, if you wanted to see fielding, kicking and distribution of the ball at the peak of perfection, then the one man who could demonstrate all the arts in an explosive ten-minute spell when he caught the mood of inspiration was Mick O'Connell.

He was, I always felt, the personification of perfection on the football field. You could not judge O'Connell merely on how he emerged in a hard tussle over the hour — just as you did not judge Jimmy Doyle on the hurling field. Players who managed to tie down Jimmy Doyle in some games are not heard of today when the immortals are being discussed — yet the Thurles man must go into the annals of the game as an artist of the

camán.

Any hurler or footballer can be beaten, just as a golfer of the Palmer or Player class can hit an off day—but that doesn't automatically mean that the man who finished ahead of Palmer or Player is a better golfer.

this year than in 1968 is that they are stronger where it matters most — in attack.

Pat Griffin impressed me very much against Kildare. Granted it was only a challenge but what caught my eye was the manner in which the half-line was

Final might have been completely different if Sean O'Neill had not got that amazing goal when he chased a ball that appeared to be going wide of the post.

Anyway, it's no good assessing what might happen if it were Kerry and

Down this year. I know I would be going for Down if they were in the Final and I would be going for Kerry to beat Galway — if the Westerners were still there.

Jerome O'Shea recalled to me that in 1954 Kerry looked as big a certainty as they do this year — and Meath upset all the odds. Kerry can flop when it looks too much of a cake-walk for them while they can rise to supreme heights when they appear really up against it (as in 1955 against Dublin and again in the 1959 semi-final against the Metropolitans).

I am not saying they will walk away with this year's Final by any means — but I cannot see them being stopped now at the ultimate obstacle.

Too clear in my mind is the memory of the determination written on Joe Keohane's countenance as he said after the League Final: "We will win the All-Ireland if we get over Cork."



Joe Keohane talking to Mick O'Connell and D. J. Crowley as the players come off the field at half-time in the semi-final against Mayo.

Last year the "O'Connell knockers" had a field day after the All-Ireland Final. They had reason, I suppose, to be critical. Down had laid their plans effectively and it was not one man O'Connell had to cope with in those jumps for possession, it was often two or three. And Kerry had no pre-arranged plan to allow O'Connell to escape the Down net.

This year it's different. When O'Connell sees that the shackles have been put on by the opposition after he has won the jump for possession, he quickly punches the ball out to a waiting colleague (it's no mere coincidence either that the man is in the right spot at the right time). And when he breaks away from midfield, Pat Griffin and the wingers are already on the move and Mick Dwyer is waiting also in the corner for a pin-pointed pass if it comes. Thus, while O'Connell's own tally may not be of shattering proportions, you find that he may well have a hand in many of the scores. He is the creator of movements, no longer the go-it-aloner because of lack of a proper plan of attack. The team is built around him and not on him.

His genius is an integral part of the match-winning formula but not the sole ingredient any more. O'Connell prefers it that way.

But in case I may seem to fall into the old trap of painting this as a one-man outfit, I think the reason Kerry are a better team

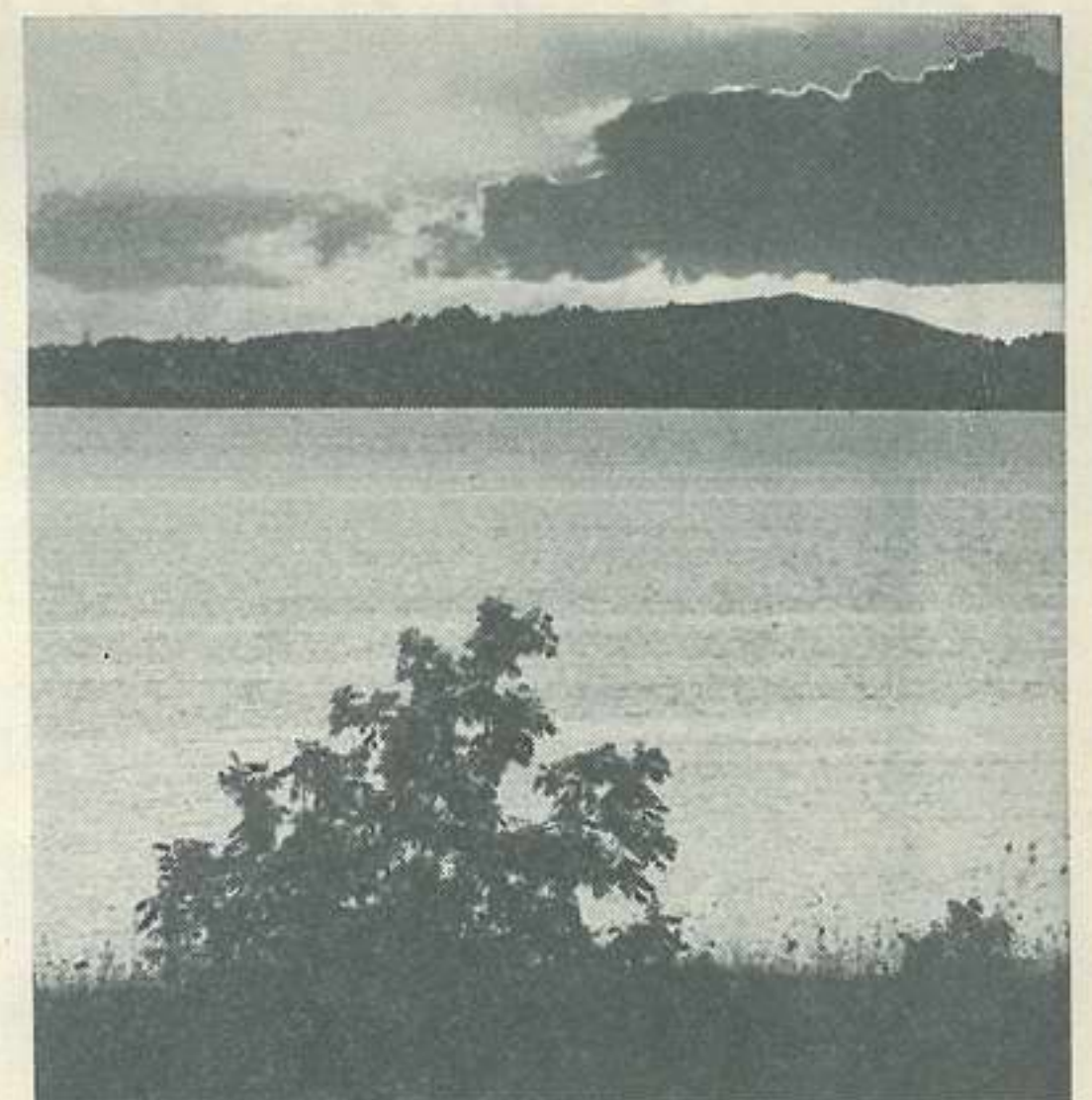
closely built around him. Liam Higgins is a go-ahead, foraging full-forward and, indeed, this line has not only class but punch.

Some may point to the lack of goals against Mayo. When I made this point to former star Jerome O'Shea he said it was an old maxim to go for the points and the goals would assuredly come in their own time. Kerry got enough points to win it against Mayo — that they did not get a few goals was due, I feel, to the luck of the game more than anything else. The woodwork robbed them of at least one certain goal.

Kerry left no doubt about the merit of their victory over Mayo — even though they might have been pipped (or at least held to a draw) in the end.

I remember coming down from Croke Park after the League Final with selector Joe Keohane and he said that Kerry would win the All-Ireland if they got over Cork in Munster. That was before Kerry went to the States. The Kingdom took no chances — and got the Munster Final put back, so that their players would have an opportunity of coming back to fitness after the trip.

Kerry had it much easier against Cork than expected. There are Kerry men I know who would like to see the team facing up to Down this year — and beating them. It could be argued, I suppose, that last



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The declining standard of sportsmanship in minor grade emphasises . . .

BY FRANK DOLAN

The Role of the Hatchet-Man

THE degradation of minor football in recent years reached its ultimate conclusion in Croke Park on August 31 when Derry beat Wexford in the second All-Ireland semi-final.

Instead of seeing thirty young men playing an honest-to-God hours football in legitimate pursuit of victory, we got in this one game the culmination of the unseemly trends which have been displayed in Gaelic football for the past half dozen years.

The theory is that any player can play only as well as he is allowed to play. In other words the basic thinking in competitive football is, negative in origin. Rather than say 'Let's try to do things better, than the opposition,' many teams are saying 'Let's prevent the other

side from playing well and we won't have to play so well ourselves.'

In the Derry-Wexford game two points were obvious early on: 1) the Wexford forwards could get goals from half chances; 2) the Wexford backs were unable to cope with the inter-changing movements of the Derry forwards. As Wexford gradually lost control of the midfield play, the first point became less important while, at the same time, the second one became the dominant theme of the game.

It was at the point when these two phases of the game were interchanging that the referee's lack of authority first showed itself. Instead of a mere pulling down, the Wexford backs also added in an extra bit of punishment.

The referee took no action apart from the awarding of frees. On the principle 'Give an inch and they will take a mile' the referee quickly found that things were almost out of control.

Players were standing no more than ten yards away from placed balls and getting away with it. Eventually, and inevitably, a Wexford back was sent to the line almost at the end of the game — the stable door had been locked long after the horse had gone.

It would be very easy to simplify this game by saying that Wexford were the only guilty party but, of course, this would not be true. Both sides indulged in ankle tapping, jersey pulling, tripping, elbowing and shadow boxing with equal degree of expertise. Obviously, the players were well practised in their black arts.

In fact, the dirtiest incident and certainly the most dangerous was a karate type blow administered by a Derry half-forward to an opponent in a part of his anatomy that was certainly well below the belt.

Don't get the idea that this game was any worse than most. It wasn't, but the inefficiency of the referee helped to highlight the bad points. This game was yet another indication of the way minor football has been influenced by the behaviour at senior level, where the fundamental doctrine is to win the game at any cost. If senior players, especially big name players, are seen to be consistently getting away with using foul tactics, it is only natural that minor players will see the road to greatness for themselves as lying in the same direction.

Our good and pious football officials nowadays don't like the word 'hatchet-man.' They claim there is no such thing. I defy anybody to show me a successful team in the 'sixties that hadn't got, at least, one such player, often, I admit, one who could operate within the rules.

Even top world-class soccer teams admit the need for such players, while last season's Welsh rugby team proved that even that sport can use them, too. The main function of the 'hatchet-man' is to ensure for his teammates the protection that the referee should be supplying but very often does not. There is nothing unusual about this — unofficial law enforcement has been in existence since the beginning of time. Even Al Capone had to have a bodyguard!

The trouble with minor teams is that they scarcely ever have the loving and kind protection of a hatchet-man, because in under-18 all are equal and in a one year campaign, such as minor grade provides, there is little opportunity for this type of character to emerge. The result is that if the referee is failing in his job several 'mini-hatchet-men' emerge in the course of a game.

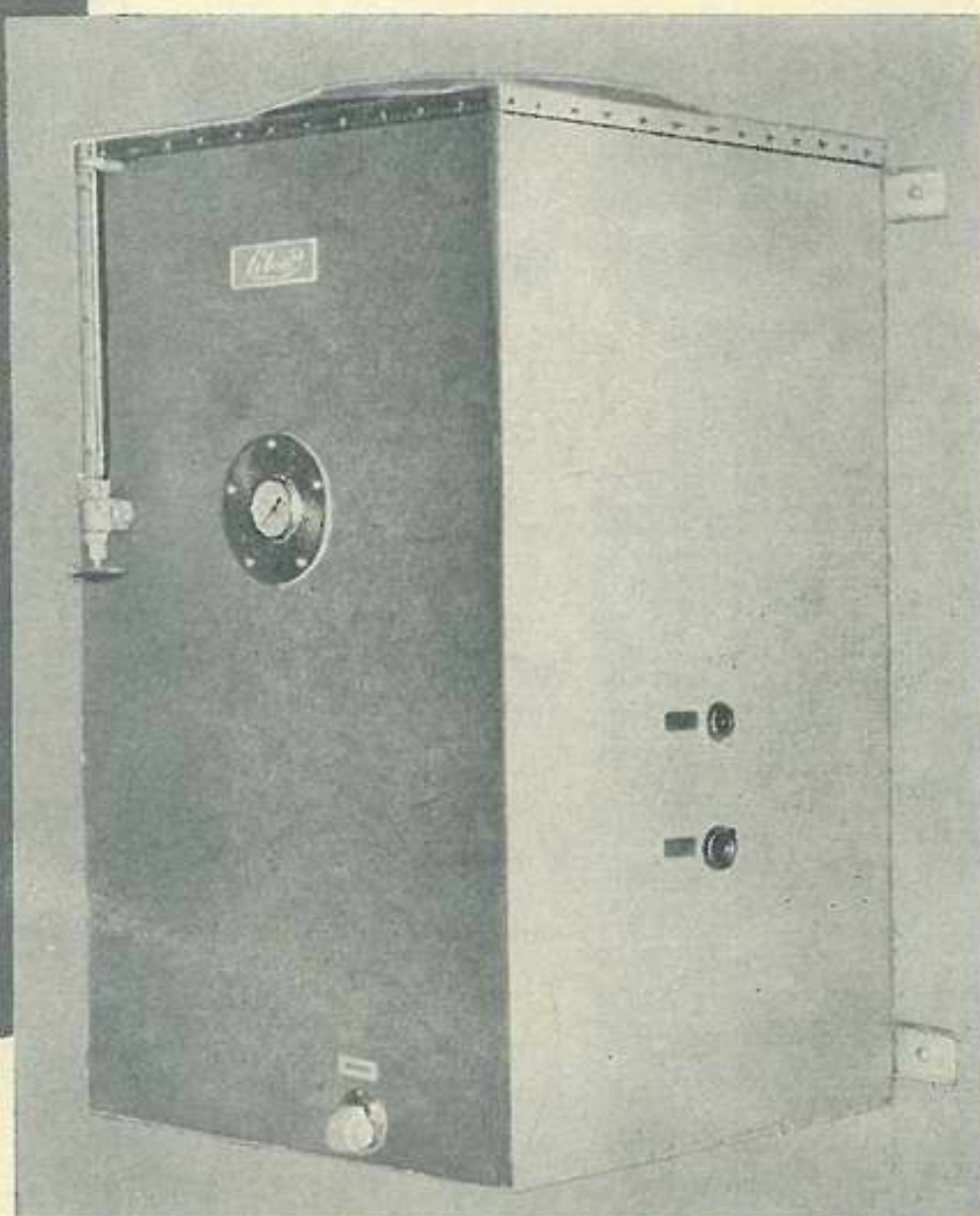
So in minor games, refereeing is of vital importance. Egoism is strong among minors and any attack from an opponent will entice retaliation, in order to prove who is the best man. In senior grade, players are clever enough to avoid such confrontations, preferring usually to wait until they get their chance to return the 'compliment' on the quiet.

Apart from much stricter refereeing, what is most needed in minor grades is a change of approach by officials in charge of teams. As long as dirty players are treated as heroes, as happens at the moment, we will get more and more dirty players. This is the age of heroes.

I wonder if any official condemned the action of that Derry forward on the Wexford player who was sent off?



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Statistics have it sewn-up for Kerry

It should be Kerry. It ought to be Kerry. If it is not Kerry the validity of statistics and form and tradition and everything else that enters into computing the winners on paper must take a hard knock.

BY JIM BENNETT

Look, for instance, at the line through the League performances and results, when Kerry defeated Offaly hand-

somely, leaving little doubt as to which was the better team on that day. The fact that Offaly and Cavan have found themselves equally matched in the first playing of their semi-final, indicates that Kerry would have the edge on either Offaly or Cavan. The question is, of course, how much one can rely on a game in the League — even one so important as the Final of the League, and even with an American trip attached for the winners.

It is well known that a team which finds itself over-played one day, often tightens its belt a few notches, cuts out some of the drift-wood in its play and makes a much better showing the next time out against that same opposition. But, what of Cavan? Would they have the measure of Kerry at the first time of asking? Kerry have been playing a game which has placed them almost half a class above the rest, except in their encounter with Down in

Wembley. And Down are a different kettle of fish for Kerry-men.

Indeed, it would be hard to feel confident that Kerry would beat Down had they come through to the final. With most other counties, however, and Offaly and Cavan seem to be among them, Kerry have the same old superiority feeling that they always had for most of this century.

RELAXED FOOTBALL

There is, perhaps, one thing which might touch a sore spot in the Kerry armour: they have been playing relaxed football almost all the year, learning early that they were the masters and trading on that knowledge to play with ease and confidence to bring out their full and stunning array of skills. The game in New York and that against Cork in the League might be instanced to show that they can still summon their best when the going is tough, but, generally speaking, the last time they were on tense trial was against Down in the 1968 All-Ireland final. On that day they were unable to make their skills tell or to gain that relaxed grip on the game and it slipped away from them.

Is there some possibility, then, that the occasion (and its rich dividend of 21st championship and restoration of Kerry pride) will produce some tension in them, affecting their confidence and their natural necessity to see that their brand of play is superior?

So much for the short time;

but, there is an even stronger line in tradition if one were to pursue it. Gaelic News pointed out recently that Kerry revel in winning finals in years ending with 9 — 1909, 1929, 1939, 1959 . . . In fact, they have never lost a final in a year which ended in 9. Or you might attend to the fact that the sixties are the leanest decade this century, so far, and that it would be completely out of character with the tradition of Kerry football if a second All-Ireland were not to be captured to go with that of 1962. In every other decade since they began winning in 1903, they have won, at least, three times.

A LONG WAIT

Kerry have never been more than seven years without a title except in the troubled period 1914 to 1924 which would not constitute a violation of that record. This year they reach the same limit in time as that which faced them in 1953, when they won after going seven poor years without the senior crown. What is more, their opponents on that occasion were a team of hopefuls of that day, from Armagh, rather than one of the established sides of the day.

Again one might point to the cavalier fashion in which Kerry treated Kildare and Westmeath in recent challenge games as part of their warming up process for the final. In case someone doubts whether they are as good now as their League results would have us believe, it is possible to point to the parallel through Cork's

form. When they faced one another in the early part of the year, in the League, Cork played enormous football in out-gunning the Kerry men in large sections of the field, failing only on the scoreboard to prove their worth when Kerry snatched a late goal. Later, in mid-summer, when they played the Munster final in opposition, the counties were unrecognisable as the same; Kerry toyed with the Corkmen, gave them every opportunity of creating some kind of score, and then tore them to miserable shreds. That power performance was one of their most impressive.

In the end of it all, of course, you can make a case for anything with statistics. You might say that there is as much likelihood that Cork's League form was true as there is that it was their championship performance which told the real story. You could say that Mayo's score, if not their general play, left one with the impression that little had changed since the League when the teams drew — unimpressively. You could say that Down were decisively too good for Kerry in Wembley and that Cavan were unbothered by Down. You could say that Offaly would never again be so outplayed by Kerry as in the League final. But, there are not too many people around today who would believe you if you failed to come up in the end with the conclusion that Kerry are the likely All-Ireland winners for 1969.



Marching forth to defend the heritage of the Kingdom . . . Johnny Culloty, Brendan Lynch, Mike O'Shea and Mick O'Connell.

The Pride of Kerry men

FOOTBALL means a lot as a fine game and wonderful sport to many people. But, to Kerry men it is something entirely different from its meaning to you or me. In any case, to many of them it is still 'caid' and the attitude towards the game is symbolised somehow by the very independence of the terminology.

Kerry's story is long and wonderfully honourable. It is sung in ballad and poem and always the theme uppermost is pride — pride in the Kingdom which begot such players, pride in the players themselves and pride in the past and future players who will wear the green and gold. There is no football like Kerry football, they believe. And even though they have been willing to watch and note improvements in styles and techniques in the modern game, they would be hurt if it were suggested to them that when they began to play these new styles they would not be better at it than anyone else until now.

There seems some destiny about Kerry football; they did not win an All-Ireland until 1903, but they believed themselves the rightful champions in 1893, and when final suc-

cess came it was accepted as only their due. They have gone on through the century looking on success as their due. In turn, they have felt it their obligation to develop the game of football into something greater and more delightful than ever before. Kerry style was the envy of all for the best part of half a century, and it is Kerry's aim that their newly developed co-ordinated play will set a headline for others for the future.

KERRY NEVER LOSE

No Kerryman who is worthy of his salt will ever be able to acknowledge arguments which lead to the conclusion that his team will lose. In the minds of those men Kerry can never lose — victory and glory are a vocational thing to which the county is called and must not deny the call. What matter then, if some match or matches turn out to have an unfavourable result, it is only a human interference with destiny. Kerry will be back to reign in their Kingdom — as inevitably as night follows day.

Listen to Bryan McMahon's "Old Kerry Footballer":

"Even now my limbs tell an answer

To the Croke Park cheer

As borne on the murmurous air above

It fills Ireland from Malin to Clear

And now I raise my head

Not in grief nor in sadness grey

But rather in pride to whisper

— I had my day."

The poets of Kerry no less than the ordinary folk cannot get away from the grip of football. If football has benefited from Kerry's participation, Kerry men have gained a great amount from being footballers. What would they have been otherwise? What else would have filled the Messianic void in their make-up? And like the old footballer of the poem the keynote is pride.

And because they are proud as the leaders in the game, Kerry play stylish and dashing football by conviction and by tradition. And when they lose they lose gracefully. Their behaviour and their control is exemplary on the field because there is something more than a personal honour in wearing the green and gold — rather does one have placed on one's shoulders the responsibility of bearing a heritage.

— JIM BENNETT.

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The Final Analysis

Analysis No. 1

By
Raymond Smyth

THE All-Ireland final, as I saw it, turned on two vital moments — the goal that Kilkenny snatched just before half-time and the knocking out of their forceful centre-forward Pat Delaney.

The first had the effect of sending the Noreiders in at half-time with the knowledge that one goal would leave them square again. The second had the effect of bringing out of them all the classic hurling of which we knew they were capable of producing — and rather than retaliate by resorting to "use of the ash," they swept Cork aside in a controlled spell of magnificent play that left no doubt in anyone's mind who were the masters on the day.

Then, too, the Kilkenny defence had stood up under the impression that there would be a free for a foul on one of their backs, as Charlie McCarthy came in along the back-line

and slammed home a dramatic opening goal from a seemingly 'impossible' angle. Ollie Walsh seemed to have the ball well covered in the case of the movement that brought the second goal, but Eddie O'Brien deflected it at the last minute and it was enough to send up the green flag.

But balancing those two goals (which Kilkenny folk claim were of the 'lucky' variety) was the inescapable fact that tall full-forward, Ray Cummins was unlucky not to get, at least, one goal for Cork in this half — and, indeed, on my reading of the play, Kilkenny were fortunate not to be nine points down at half-time, as Tipperary were in the Munster final.

However, a Kilkenny side which served up one of the most inept first-half performances I can recall, stormed home like real champions and

I will always retain memories of the manner in which every member of the team lifted his game during the last twenty minutes. And none more so than Pat Henderson (my man of the match), Jim Treacy, Eddie Keher and Martin Coogan (what a really glorious half-back display he gave?) and Ted Carroll (his corner-back performance was a model, for me, of the whole art of defensive hurling). But then Carroll and Coogan had held the defence together in the first half when cool heads were needed to prevent a Cork avalanche.

The direction from the sideline for Kilkenny was the best I have seen — the sharpest, the most decisive (how Tipperary and Clare followers must have envied it!) In sharp contrast, was the failure of the Cork mentors to "read" the areas where they were really losing it. And most of their

troubles stemmed from mid-field, where from an early stage the whole trend of the play, with Lawler and Cummins playing so magnificently for Kilkenny, cried out for a switch.

Instance Kilkenny replacing right half-forward Claus Dunne before half-time when it was clearly obvious that it was not his day after a long lay-off from intercounty hurling. And instance too the brilliant switching of Eddie Keher to centre-forward on Willie Walsh, who was able to contain Delaney but had not the class to stay with Keher when he got going. Why did not Cork make a switch earlier at midfield? What did they expect to gain by moving their strong wing-back Donal Clifford to wing forward (could he not have moved in centre-back after Eddie Keher and Walsh switched to centre-forward, with Charlie Cullinane going back in full-forward?)

Analysis No. 2

By
Jim Bennett

SO the "Cats" were not such tame pussies after all. They certainly scratched the Corkmen badly. Ah, but the loss of Justin McCarthy was crucial? By no means: for, nobody could have reversed the fury of their clawing assault; nor was Willie Walsh in any way inadequate; nor, indeed, did Kilkenny gain any serious advantage through the centre-forward position at any time except near the end, when all was inevitable anyway.

Well, then, were Cork overconfident? Hardly, since it is the average disposition of Corkmen to be always brash and self-confident, hearing nothing of defeat until it stares them in their eyes.

The simple truth is that Cork were outhurled and out-thought

by a more mature, more calculating, more skilful team which played the best game Kilkenny have won in two decades.

Those who think style and the importance of contrast in styles to be a thing of the past or a thing of theoretical importance only, must now realise that it is a tangible and real quality. Cork's helter-skelter dash — Kilkenny's mature solidity as a basis from which to raise their game to electric Noreide craft.

It had to be early, if Cork were to be confirmed in their favouritism; and it had to be early if Kilkenny's backs were to man the barricades and hold the Cork onslaught within reason. Cork would go off like a firework; how well could

Kilkenny's defence smother the flame before it did serious damage.

Straight from the throw-in Cork were hot in the chase; a flurry, a clearance to touch, a tangle in Kilkenny's defence, and Charlie McCarthy was racing deliberately in along the goal-line to make an angle and slap the ball through it for a wonderful opening tonic. The next three or four minutes were the deciding stage of the game, in my opinion. Against Tipperary, in Munster, Cork crashed in more goals to go with the first. Hegarty bubbled and fizzed, Cullinane high-stepped it all over the park, Charlie McCarthy moved in and out, ducking here, darting there, Eddie O'Brien kept running, hoping, and Ray Cum-

mins kept stretching his hand for high ones with great incaution. But, they never got the other goals.

In fact, Kilkenny chipped off some points in intervals of weathering the storm — frees by Eddie Keher. It was in repulsing this crucial raid that Kilkenny won the game and in quelling another when Cork got their second goal. At this time, Henderson was working terribly hard to try to keep in the same half of the field as Cullinane; Willie Murphy was having to fight Croke Park nerves as well as Pat Hegarty; Pa Dillon was having a nightmare time trying to find a way to curb Cummins and his whole game was suffering because of it; Jim Treacy had taken a little time to recover from the shock



Charlie McCarthy (partly hidden behind Willie Murphy No. 5) beats three Kilkenny backs to crash the ball to the net in the second minute of the game.

Analysis No. 3

By
Donal Collins

CLEVERNESS won for Kilkenny their latest All-Ireland success. Cleverness on the field and more especially in the dugout. And in this, they were helped by a marked absence of the same quality among the Cork team officials.

While Kilkenny made the match-winning moves, Cork switched themselves out of the game. The first decisive move by Kilkenny was the replacing of Claus Dunne after twenty minutes. Most teams would have said 'We'll leave him there 'till half-time and he might improve,' but not Fr. Maher in the Kilkenny dug-out. When it was obvious that Dunne hadn't recovered his touch after his long absence he was replaced by Pat Kavanagh. Immediately the absolute dominance enjoyed up to then by Gerald Mc-

Three of Ireland's top hurling writers review this year's hurling final.

Could not Gerry McCarthy have been switched to midfield in the last quarter, considering the way he was simply 'flying it' on the day?

But it's so easy to be wise...

Suffice it to say, in summing up, that Kilkenny's greater experience and class proved too much for a younger, less experienced Cork side, who could not vary their tactics when the edge of their fire and speed were blunted (they needed a wise old head — a man like Ring in his heyday!).

But I left Croke Park convinced of one thing — it's Cork to win Munster in 1970 and the team that beats Cork will be All-Ireland champions next year.

And Eddie Keher (maybe unconsciously) echoed my feelings as he received the McCarthy Cup.



Ray Cummins goes highest to grasp the ball in the Kilkenny goalmouth.

of the first McCarthy goal.

Ted Carroll, but most of all, Martin Coogan pulled Kilkenny through at that moment of crisis. Some of Coogan's covering was out of this world. Half a dozen pieces of quick thinking, knowing the game inside and out, which he performed in that half could be enshrined in a collection of great moments of defensive hurling.

Again Kilkenny had to stand firm when Hegarty got his goal after about twenty minutes. They blanketed off the Cork forwards more easily this time, and when the "Cats" exercised territorial superiority for the first continuous period, in the five minutes before the interval, it was a reaction by Cork (unconsciously, perhaps) after their all-out effort for decisive

scores. Thanks to Kilkenny's defence, they did not get enough of them; and, thanks to them, in the moment of reaction, Lawlor's point and Brennan's goal were scores of real significance.

By half-time, then, Kilkenny had proved themselves to themselves. They had held the surging Cork effort, and even hit back with psychological effect. They came out after the interval with the bit between their teeth and showed that Kilkenny style and Kilkenny grandeur is not dead.

The pattern of the Tipperary Munster final was repeated almost to a letter. But, Kilkenny had grit in the tough opening period which Tipperary did not have; they were able to keep their scores moving, even

though in arrears — which Tipperary failed to do, even though given the chances. And Kilkenny were fit and confident and dedicated enough to come back with a real will to win — which Tipperary did not.

Martin Coogan, because he was marking the man who was the key to Cork's dashing attack, was the major match winner; Willie Murphy was not far behind, though unable to keep Hegarty entirely subdued; Carroll, though opposed by a less able lot over the hour, played a great part in the cover against the Cork Flying Column in the early period.

But, I thought unknowns deserved most of Kilkenny: Joe Millea and Martin Brennan, the only two forwards who came into nobody's assessment of

Kilkenny's scoring power, struck the vital blows. Pat Kavanagh and Mick Lawlor, rejected by the selectors, were the men who should get most credit for never bearing a grudge and playing better than ever they did before. And to the team mentors must go a generous share of credit for breeding a wonderful team spirit in the whole squad, and for remedying their almost deadly error in playing Dunne in good time before any grievous damage was done.

It was the kind of All-Ireland all considered, that is worth while winning: it must have left Kilkenny folk crowing in sheer delight; and for the players it was a vindication of character and craftsmanship that will live for many a day.

Carthy was diminished and it got less and less as the game went on.

Cork made their first blund-

er by installing John O'Halloran at corner-forward for the second half to the exclusion of the adequate Eddie O'Brien. O'Hal-

loran was never a corner forward and a wiser move would have been to accommodate him further outfield or hold him in

reserve, as Kilkenny did with Paddy Moran.

Kilkenny's final tactical blow was the switching of Eddie Keher to centre forward in the faint hope that he would escape the clutches of Donal Clifford. And Nore side officials must have laughed all the way to the reception later on, when they reflected on how Cork fell for the ruse by failing to move Clifford in after Keher to the centre. It was Keher's late points which closed the door on Cork's chances.

On playing ability, there was little between the sides, but, in tactics, it was Kilkenny all the way.

And that is why they, and not Cork, are All-Ireland champions.



Ollie Walsh



Pat Henderson



John O'Halloran

For The Record

KILKENNY 2-15 CORK 2-9

Figures of the game

First half					
	Goals	Points	Wides	Frees	Seventies
KILKENNY	1	6	4	12	1
CORK	2	6	2	7	0
Second half					
	Goals	Points	Wides	Frees	Seventies
KILKENNY	1	9	5	8	2
CORK	0	3	6	6	2
TOTAL					
	Goals	Points	Wides	Frees	Seventies
KILKENNY	2	15	9	20	3
CORK	2	9	8	13	2

ATTENDANCE

66,844

LINEOUTS

KILKENNY: O. Walsh, T. Carroll, P. Dillon, J. Treacy, W. Murphy, P. Henderson, M. Coogan, M. Lawlor, F. Cummins, C. Dunne, P. Delaney, E. Keher, J. Millea, M. Brennan, T. Murphy. Subs.: P. Kavanagh for Dunne; P. Moran for Delaney; S. Buckley for T. Murphy.

CORK—P. Barry, T. Maher, T. O'Donoghue, D. Murphy; D. Clifford, W. Walsh, G. McCarthy, D. Coughlan, R. Tuohy; T. Ryan, C. Cullinane, P. Hegarty, C. McCarthy, R. Cummins, E. O'Brien. Subs.: J. O'Halloran for O'Brien; J. Murphy for Tuohy; S. Looney for Ryan.

Referee — Sean O'Connor (Limerick).

FIRST HALF SCORE

TIME:

- 1½ mins.: Cork goal — C. McCarthy.
- 4 mins.: Kilkenny point (free) — E. Keher.
- 8 mins.: Cork point — P. Hegarty.
- 9 mins.: Kilkenny point ('70') — M. Coogan.
- 11 mins.: Cork point (free) — C. McCarthy.
- 14 mins.: Kilkenny point (free) — E. Keher.
- 15 mins.: Cork point ('70') — G. McCarthy.
- 16 mins.: Kilkenny point — E. Keher.
- 18 mins.: Cork goal — E. O'Brien.
- 19 mins.: Kilkenny point — E. Keher.
- 22 mins.: Cork point — E. O'Brien.
- 24 mins.: Cork point — C. McCarthy.
- 26 mins.: Cork point (free) — C. McCarthy.
- 27 mins.: Kilkenny point — M. Lawlor.
- 29 mins.: Kilkenny goal — M. Brennan.

Half-Time — Cork 2-6; Kilkenny 1-6.

SECOND HALF

- 1 min.: Cork point — C. McCarthy.
- 6 mins.: Kilkenny goal — J. Millea.
- 11 mins.: Kilkenny point (free) — E. Keher.
- 13 mins.: Cork point (free) — C. McCarthy.
- 14 mins.: Kilkenny point (free) — M. Coogan.
- 16 mins.: Kilkenny point — P. Kavanagh.
- 18½ mins.: Kilkenny point — M. Brennan.
- 22 mins.: Cork point — C. McCarthy.
- 23 mins.: Kilkenny point — M. Coogan.
- 24 mins.: Kilkenny point — P. Moran.
- 25 mins.: Kilkenny point (free) — E. Keher.
- 26 mins.: Kilkenny point — E. Keher.
- 28 mins.: Kilkenny point — E. Keher.

Full-Time — Kilkenny 2-15; Cork 2-9.

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Liam Campbell Reports



THIS month I've been asked to write about Kerry, and it's both a hard and an easy assignment; easy because I've seen them so often and in such varying circumstances this year, hard because they are like a jigsaw puzzle that I just can't quite complete. But, at least, I can have another shuffle of the pieces.

It's as well to start at the beginning, and the beginning of this story of Kerry's quest for the 1969

All-Ireland title must surely be at the final whistle in last year's All-Ireland final. They were then a well-beaten team, having failed yet again to Down, and there were those who spoke of Kerry being finished for good and all. For any other county except Kerry, things might indeed have been finished.

I next saw Kerry in serious competition at the Cork Athletic Grounds on April 27 this year, against Cork in the Division 3

National League play-off. Here the Kingdom were little better than plain atrocious, and that's being honest about it. They were beaten sick everywhere but on the scoreboard, and it was only some desperate shooting by Cork and a last-gasp goal by substitute Liam Higgins that gave them their win. In the opinion of most, they should all have been arrested for daylight robbery!

One thing I remember well from that day at Cork, though... it was the first time ever that I had seen Mick O'Connell (he started at full-forward) taking over the job of raller-in-chief, the father-figure of the team. I am convinced that, without his leadership that day, Kerry would never have won. Though we didn't realise it at the time, it was a sign of things to come.

Offaly in Defeat

May was a good month most of the way for Kerry. They took care of Westmeath in the League semi-final, and in the final Offaly really made it easy for them, although the Midlanders must have learned a lot from that defeat. Anyway, Kerry were booked for the States, and all went merrily until the following Saturday, when on far foreign fields (Wembley, to be exact!) they ran into Down on their way back, and again they failed against the one type of football that they don't, it seems, know the answer to.

Of course, they were short some good players, but Down weren't at full-strength either and Kerry must have been fitter. One way or the other, there was no doubt about the fairness of the result at the end. In fact, Down looked so good that it was my opinion they'd win the All-Ireland again this year... if they could get out of Ulster! No need to remind you that Cavan put a stop to these ideas.

Then it was over to New York, for the second leg of the National League final; the first session had ended

even. The heat was fierce, the pitch was like a rock, New York were geared for the full sixty minutes, and Kerry started without O'Connell. At half-time it looked like we were going to add the National Football League to our list of exports. But Kerry brought in O'Connell, and he won the title for them... it was as simple as that.

He generalised the whole team, inspired colleagues to do things they didn't believe they could do (neither did I!) and scored the equaliser himself. New York, as I said, were geared for the full sixty minutes, but that was all. They blew up in extra time and even the Radio and TV All-Stars would have beat-

wasn't roughed-up or anything, but got plenty of chances to get going; yet Kerry won by only a single point.

So we come to the big one; the big bid for the twenty-first title, the one (as in 1964, 1965 and 1968) they must win, if they are to survive. I may as well say this much now: even if they don't win, let there be no panic — they'll survive all right. But on September 28 much will depend on Mick O'Connell; much will depend on the amount of pulling-down that the Kerry defenders allow themselves, since they did a lot of it against Mayo; much will depend on D. J. Crowley's bustling trips up

the middle; much will depend on the amount of the ball given to Brendan Lynch; much will depend on how the Kerry full-backs stay with their men; above all, much will depend on how well-adjusted the opposition will be mentally to facing the Kerry jerseys in an All-Ireland final. There are so many question-marks about the whole thing, and they'll all be wiped away in sixty short minutes.

My final word on Kerry: for a team of players with a collective talent that is less than brilliant, they have achieved much. This is the type of team that wins All-Irelands where more showy outfits might fail.



Mick Morris — urging on from the dug-out against Mayo.

en them as the heat and the years got them down.

Against Mayo

The Munster championship wasn't what you'd call tight, and Kerry's next big test was the All-Ireland semi-final against Mayo; by this time they must have been in a more optimistic mood with Down safely gone. Yet Mayo, inferior in nearly every part of the field, very nearly held them to a draw; again it wasn't Kerry's fault that they got through by a point... Seamus O'Dowd isn't a Kerryman. And in the Mayo game O'Connell

Just Fancy . . .

Barney Royce of Wexford won All-Ireland medals in 1915, '16, '17 and '18 as well as six Leinster championship medals without ever playing in either an All-Ireland or a Leinster final. He was a substitute in all of those games.

1915 All-Ireland junior semi-final between Kerry and Galway. It was played at Limerick on March 24, 1916, but had to be abandoned in the second half because of a very heavy fall of snow. The referee was Harry Boland.

A letter to the press following the first of the three meetings between Kerry and Kildare in the 1903 'home' final suggested that the replay be fixed for the Crystal Palace, London.

Wexford were trained for the 1914 final by Jem Roche who a few years earlier had fought Tommy Burns for the heavyweight championship of the world.

One of the last major games to be played before the 1916 Rising was the

Dublin received £1-14-0 expenses for the 1898 final against Waterford, which was played at Tipperary town.

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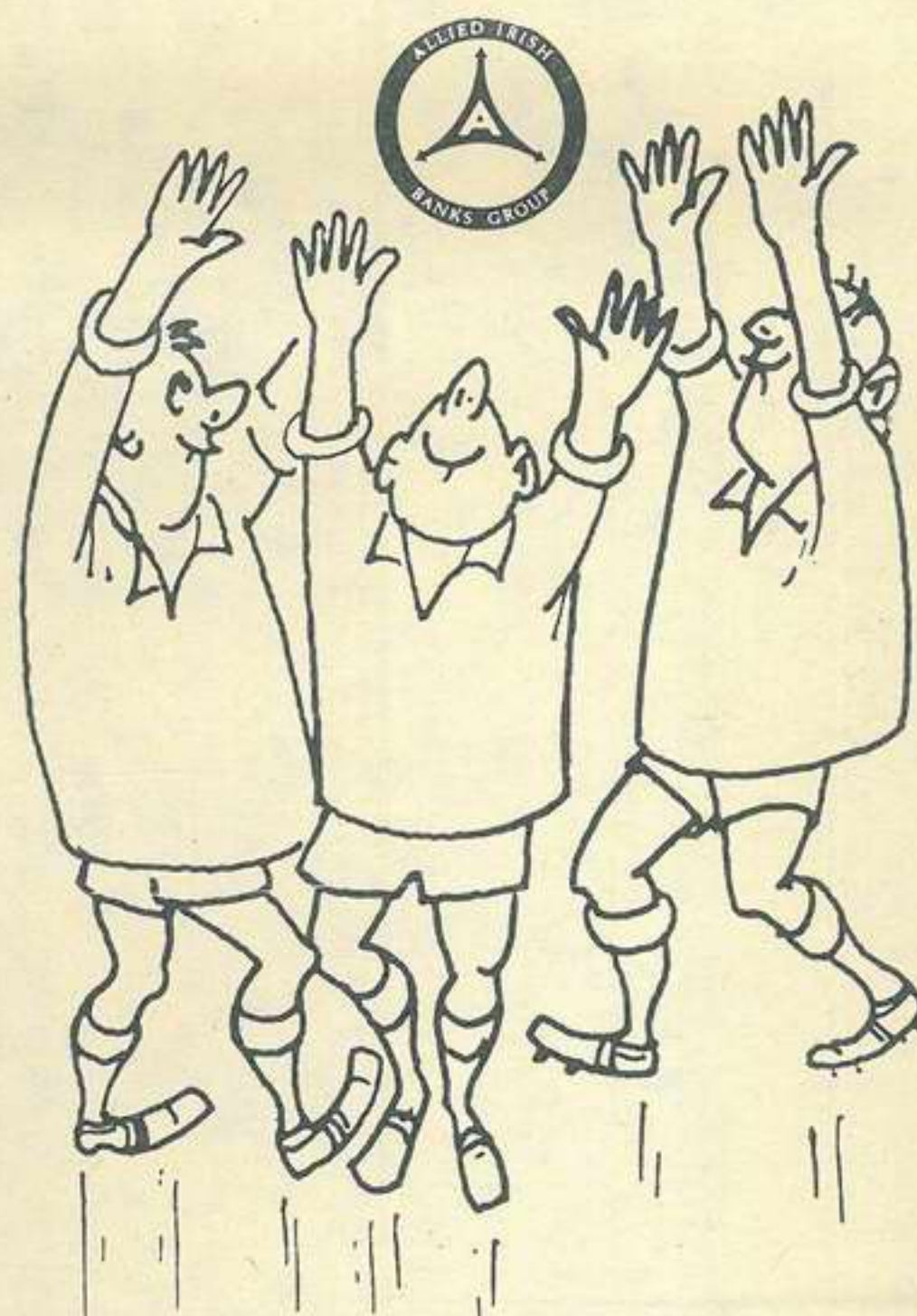
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If one looks back, one is impressed by how much the G.A.A. has achieved. If one looks ahead one is impressed by how little the status quo is likely to last. The process which contributed to the greatness of the G.A.A. and which is now contributing to its decline is an interesting one. It is one well worth examining, and if we understand it properly, we may be able to ensure that the future of the G.A.A. will be as promising as its past is proud.

Every nation, every people, in fact every community, has a certain collective identity which must find expression through certain structures. In this sense, we speak of the soul of a people being expressed through such structures as music or literature or language or through its own distinctive art or architecture. There are thousands of structures which a people uses to express itself — everything from religion to politics to sport. It discovers and builds and shapes these

structures through a long process of trial and error, and sometimes it does not succeed in developing adequate structures at all.

It is one of the glories of the G.A.A. that it provided a first-rate structure through which the Irish people could express themselves. It took the rather crude forms of hurling and Gaelic football that existed in the mid-nineteenth century, and shaped them and organised them into something, through which the nation and every county and parish within it could express itself in a way that was never possible before. People lived and suffered and prayed and cheered and identified with their parish and county teams to an extent and intensity that was never achieved in any other structures or organisations whether political, social, economic, or even religious.

Indeed, the period 1880-1916 was a tremendously creative one in the number of new structures it developed in an effort to ex-

press the soul and spirit and collective identity of the Irish people — the G.A.A. in sport, the Gaelic League, in language and culture, Sinn Féin, in politics, native trade unions in industry, the Volunteers and the Citizen Army, in military matters, and many others. And eventually, all of these combined to try and create a new political structure for the Irish people.

However, once people find adequate structures they inevitably seem to fall in love with them. They refuse to believe that life can be or should be organised in any other way, and they cling leech-like to outdated structures long after they have fulfilled their usefulness. The structures remain static but not so the nation, or the people, or the community. These latter are living and growing and developing, and pretty soon a new generation comes along with a new spirit and a new identity which cannot be expressed through

the old structures and organisations. Being a Gael 1970 style is a very different thing from being a Gael 1880 style or even 1916

AN ALTERNATIVE

style. And if the G.A.A. insists that the Gaels of 1970 must express themselves through the structures and organisations and mentality of 1916 or even of 1960, then it will become as irrelevant in sport as the present Sinn Féin has become irrelevant in politics or as the Gaelic League is rapidly becoming irrelevant in language and literature.

Of course, a nation needs its past and needs roots. But roots are something living, something from which springs growth and development. Too often in Ireland we have plucked up our roots and framed them on the wall and expect people to bow before them. Even the Chinese nowadays have given up ancestor worship. Nobody today wants to march backwards into the future. They want to express themselves through structures which are living and meaningful, not through those that are dead and dry and dreary. They have no time at all for the annual crop of convention clichés about "the good of the Association," nor will they be attracted by an organisation which continues to multiply meaningless matches until the very players have grown weary of them. I do not wish to appear too critical, especially as some of the best hours of my life were spent both playing and watching G.A.A. games. All I am really trying to say is that unless the G.A.A. radically changes its present style of patriotism there will be so few people left in it that it will be quite easy to wrap the green flag round them.

All this might seem to be a preface to a direct attack upon the Ban on foreign games. This is not so. I would not waste the time of intelligent people by a discussion of that sort. The Ban has become totally irrelevant and the quicker and quieter it is dropped, the better. Indeed, soccer and rugby are no more foreign to Ireland than the very core of the G.A.A. organisation, the Irish counties which have no real basis in Irish tradition, but were created by Queen Elizabeth I, in order to expedite the work of the tax gatherer, the sheriff and the hangman. Seventy years ago the

G.A.A. was more nationalistic and less conscious of it; today it is less nationalistic but more conscious of it.

My main argument is something like this: the G.A.A. was successful because, through Gaelic games, it succeeded in expressing people's identity firstly as Irishmen, and secondly as Irishmen, belonging to specific parishes and specific counties. The games themselves were almost entirely secondary to "the glory of the little village." People went to see teams win rather than to see a good match. This is still true to some extent but it is changing rapidly. There are many reasons for this:

Firstly, in the past twenty - five years, international competition has become a major feature of sport. Television has brought this competition right into everybody's home. Consequently, nationalism and patriotism are more likely to find expression in supporting the national soccer or rugby teams, or in backing our athletes at the Olympics, than in supporting Gaelic games. And the fact that the G.A.A. rejects something one is interested in, makes one in turn want to reject the G.A.A. It even rejected our athletes because they didn't belong to the N.A.C.A.

Secondly, and much more important, people no longer identify themselves in the same way as formerly, with local teams. Local pride and patriotism, in so far as it does still exist, no longer finds expression through the local G.A.A. team. People are much more geographically mobile than formerly and it is difficult to develop real attachment to teams outside one's native place. The city's suburbs are the extreme example of this process. And then, nowadays, there are so many other things to do and so many other and newer ways to express and enjoy oneself! The glory of the little village doesn't matter any more. People have gone elsewhere to shop, gone elsewhere for entertainment, gone elsewhere to work, so it's a bit difficult to get enthusiastic about a mediocre hurling or football club. A few still go out



"...for the sport that's in it"

For the way he *should* have played it.
For the way you told him so at the top of
your voice. And for the good dark drink
that gave you your voice back.

GUINNESS naturally

G.A.A. STRUCTURE

Rev. Dr. Liam Ryan, who gave this lecture at the G.A.A. seminar at U.C.G. last June, is a former Limerick hurling star of the 'fifties. He was recently appointed to the Chair of Sociology at St. Patrick's College, Maynooth.

of loyalty, just as a few still run the club out of loyalty — but each year ... a little fewer.

Nowadays, people identify with excellence in sport more than with any other single item. Promise a world record and you will fill Santry Stadium; promise a good match and you will still bring the crowds to Croke Park or Dalymount or anywhere else. Modern man has become a spectator. Perhaps, it is the effect of television. He struggles for identification and involvement — by putting a few bob on a horse in the National, or by waving a flag in Croke Park, or even by casting a vote in a general election. Most of the time, however, he is aware that he is merely a passive spectator on the sidelines of history and is quite contented to let someone else be the hero, provided he gives value for money.

The man who has seen Eusebio crack in goals in the World Cup, or Kip Keino run his opponents into the ground in the Olympics, will demand a little more than jersey pulling and fourteen yards frees in Croke Park. Ireland has changed utterly in the past ten years, and it is only the G.A.A. officials and players who continue to act as if it were yesterday that Matt the Thresher was the pin-up-boy in the homes of Tipperary. But mention the need for change at any G.A.A. gat-

hering or convention and the experience can be quite frustrating. Nobody listens to you, because while you are speaking, they are merely thinking up answers.

In short, there is no substitute for excellence. As the loyalty and nationalism and patriotism decline, people become much more conscious of the standard of the games. Nowadays, this is the major topic of G.A.A. conversation. And, as people demand a higher standard of play, there are so many factors militating against it:

Firstly, there is the question of organisation of competitions. These are still based on the belief that Ireland is a rural society, composed only of parishes and counties and that people are interested in watching these compete against each other. People may still be interested in senior games and possibly minor, but they have little interest in junior and intermediate intercounty matches; the same may be said for the under-21 competition. Recent policy in the G.A.A. has been to multiply matches. Unfortunately, more matches simply means more bad matches.

Secondly, the players themselves still believe in a win at all cost policy. In football, especially, the number of frees committed by supposedly top-class players in Croke Park is appalling. Any forward who rounds his opponent and goes off on a solo-run is invariably fouled. There are too many situations in Gaelic games where it is an advantage to foul.

Thirdly, with a few outstanding exceptions, refereeing is rather poor. The majority of referees seem to suffer from an inferiority complex with the result that they feel obliged to impose their authority on a game in the first ten minutes. This leads to a succession of whistles which completely disrupt and often destroy the flow of a game. Rarely, is the advantage rule used.

Fourthly, while games are probably less rough now than formerly, people are demanding a higher standard. The recent policy of severe penalties is

ineffective. Penalties are too severe and only make martyrs out of the players suspended. The whole history of crime shows that severe penalties were rarely a deterrent. Fining the club, rather than suspending a player, would be more effective.

Fifthly, the parish as a basis for the club is inadequate. Due to a declining population, most country parishes cannot support a proper team. This is one of the main reasons for a declining standard in the rural areas. It may be necessary to abolish the parish rule completely and give players complete freedom to play with whatever club they like within a county.

Finally, clubs should have a much greater autonomy. At the moment, a secretary cannot even sign his name in English or someone raises an objection. Virtue which requires to be ever guarded is scarce worth the sentinel. Lest I be accused of being merely critical, I give here an organisation of the G.A.A. as I would like to see it. I think that there is urgent need for a reorganisation of this kind if the G.A.A. is to progress rather than decline. I think that this structure, which I propose, would provide the first real opportunity to extend hurling to all 32 counties.

County Level

1) Limit the G.A.A. season to 36 Sundays — roughly from the first Sunday in March to last Sunday in October. The winter months November — February are simply not suited to G.A.A. matches.

2) Of these 36 Sundays, 18 are to be devoted entirely to hurling, 18 to football. In other words, hurling and football to be played on alternate Sundays throughout the entire country. No deviation from this rule allowed.

3) The present Provincial Councils should be abolished, leaving just County Boards and Central Council. There would then be no provincial championships. There should be no intercounty matches except senior and minor: abolish all other grades.

4) There would be two intercounty competitions — championship and league.

League: Three divisions of 10 teams in each. The top 10 counties in the country in Division 1, next 10 in Division 11, etc. Promotion and relegation of two teams from each division each year. The bottom two teams in Division III would be dropped altogether for the year and replaced by the two dropped the previous year. This would account for 32 counties. Each county would have nine matches; the top two in each division could play off against each other for victory in that division. Altogether, the League would occupy ten Sundays in the year.

Championship: played on a knock-out basis. Open draw for the entire country. The hurling championship to be played on alternate Sundays in June and July with the All-Ireland final on the last Sunday of July. The football final to be played on alternate Sundays in August and September, with the All-Ireland final on the last Sunday in September, e.g.

1st Sunday in August: All 16 first round matches.

3rd Sunday in August: All 8 second round matches.

5th Sunday in August: All 4 third round matches.

2nd Sunday in Sept., two semi-finals.

4th Sunday in Sept., All-Ireland final.

This system would give each county at least 10, at most 15 matches throughout the summer. This would seem to be an ideal number. Its advantages

over the present system need scarcely be stressed. For the present, the hurling championship could be confined to the top 16 teams in the country. Drawn games could be played on evenings. Under no circumstances, short of the outbreak of war, should any match be postponed. The entire system would be easy to operate, fixtures predictable, and the time-table set out from the beginning of the year.

Club Level

At the club level, the games should be organised on a basis somewhat similar to that outlined for the intercounty games. Again, a season of 36 Sundays running from March to November, 18 devoted to football and 18 to hurling. There should be no club games on Sundays when the intercounty championships are being played. Since these latter would take up just five Sundays for hurling and five for football, it would reduce to 13 the number of Sundays available for club games.

Again, junior, intermediate and under-21 grades should be abolished, and the clubs organised like the counties into divisions — 10 teams in Division I, 10 in division II, etc., with promotion and relegation of two teams from each division at the end of the season.

Again, there should be two competitions, championship and league. League matches would require nine Sundays. The champ-

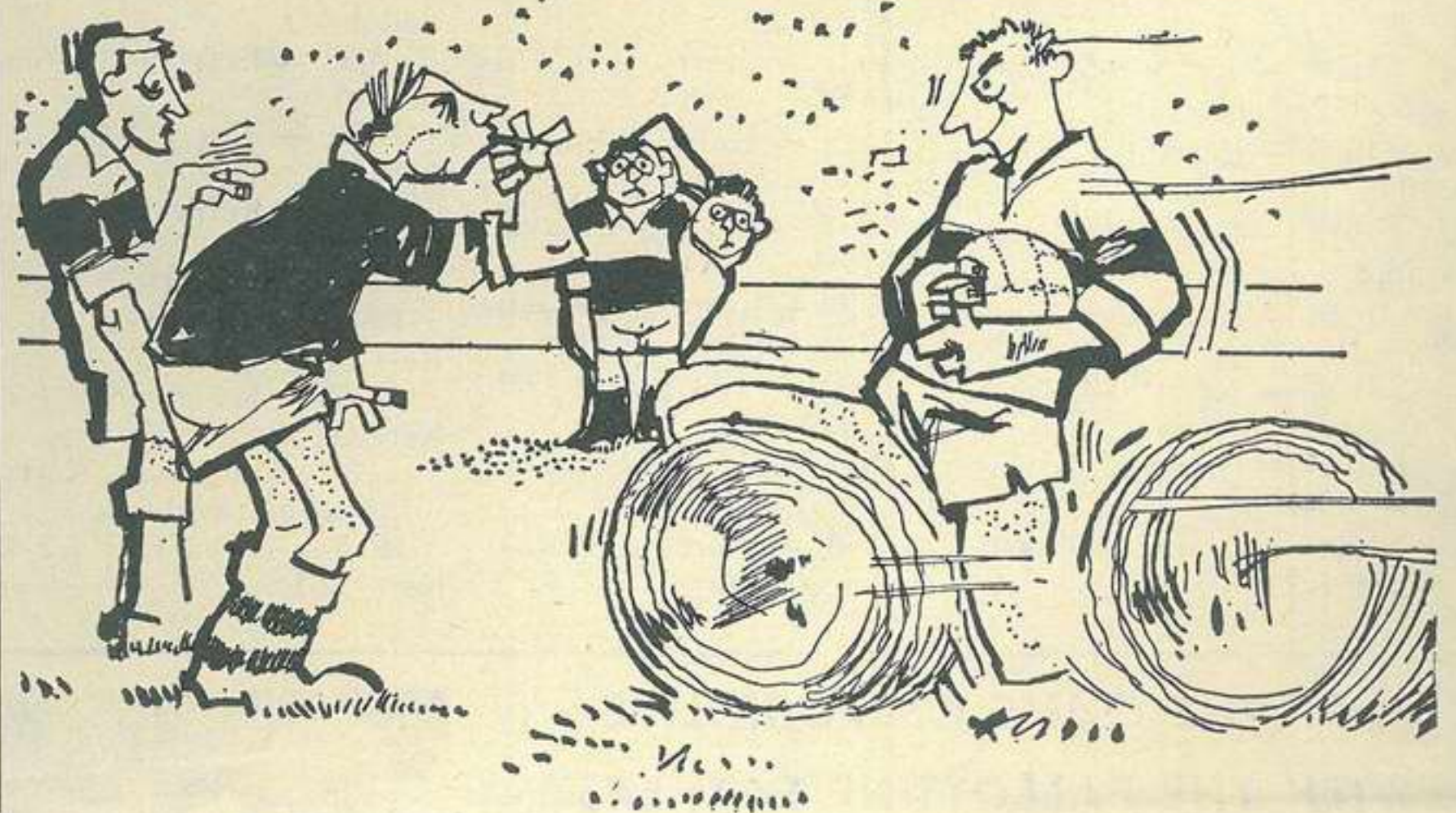
ionship, if contested by the top 16 teams in a county, would require just four Sundays; if by the top 32, just five Sundays. At the very most, 14 Sundays is all that is required, and it would guarantee each club at least 10 top class games each year. Every club in the county would be in action on any particular Sunday, and not just one or two, as at present.

The Sundays devoted to hurling at the county level could be devoted to football at the club level and vice versa. Thus, on the Sundays when the county team played the football league, the clubs within the county would play the hurling league.

As regards the organisation of the clubs themselves: I think that the parish rule should be dropped and clubs allowed to recruit players possibly from anywhere in the county. As regards the social activities of clubs, this should be left entirely to the ingenuity of clubs themselves. They should be given a free hand to develop and expand in whatever fashion they wish.

All this is very sketchy and possibly confusing. It needs to be developed much more than is possible in a twenty minute talk and its implications carefully studied. However, I think that it does provide a framework within which the G.A.A. at club and county level can confidently face the challenges of the latter decades of the twentieth century.

SHELL



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

GOOD — MILEAGE



Kerry's Record

The following is Kerry's list of All-Ireland and National League titles:

Senior Football (20): 1903, '04, '09, '13, '14, '24, '26, '29, '30, '31, '32, '37, '39, '40, '41, '46, '53, '55, '59, '62.

Senior Hurling (1): 1891.

Junior Football (10): 1913, '15, '24, '28, '30, '41, '49, '54, '63, '67.

Under-21 Football (1): 1964.

Minor Football (7): 1931, '32, '33, '46, '50, '62, '63.

National Football League (8): 1928, '29, '31, '32, '59, '61, '63, '69.



The 1959 Kerry team which beat Galway in the All-Ireland final.

Kerry's unmatched record

● Kerry and Wexford are the only counties to have won the All-Ireland senior football title four years in succession. The Kingdom recorded their four consecutive wins in 1915-'18 inclusive and the Model county their victories in the period 1929-'32 inclusive. Kerry also won the All-Ireland title three times in succession, once — 1939-'41 inclusive.

● Kerry's longest period without figuring on the All-Ireland winners' list was between 1914 and 1924.

● Kerry have figured in five All-Ireland final re-

plays — they were victorious in 1914, '26, '27 and '46 against Wexford, Kildare, Cavan and Roscommon respectively, while their sole defeat was in 1938 against Galway.

● Kerry's greatest winning margin in an All-Ireland senior final was in 1930 when they defeated Monaghan by 3-11 to 0-2 while their heaviest defeat was inflicted on them in 1960 when they went under by 2-10 to 0-8 to Down.

● The only occasion on which Kerry lost two successive All-Ireland senior

finals was in 1964 and '65, when they lost to Galway in both deciders.

● Kerry captain Johnny Culloty, leads the Kingdom All-Ireland senior medal winners list with three All-Irelands (1955, '59, and '62) while Mick Dwyer, Seamus Murphy and Mick O'Connell each has two medals — 1959 and '62. Pat Griffin, Mick Morris and Paud O'Donoghue were on the defeated All-Ireland final sides of 1964, '65 and '68.

● Kerry conceded four goals while they scored only one goal in their

three championship games. In the three games they scored 1-48 for an average per match of 0-17 while they conceded 4-21 for an average of 1-8. They defeated Waterford by 1-18 to 2-7 on June 15, Cork by 0-16 to 1-4 on July 20 and Mayo by 0-14 to 1-10 on August 10.

● Mick O'Connell heads the Kingdom's championship scoring list with 0-13. Other Kerry scorers are Mick Dwyer (0-10), Brendan Lynch (0-7), Pat Moynihan (0-5), Mick Fleming (1-1), D. J. Crowley (0-3) and Pat Griffin (0-3).

Won and lost

1903 — Kerry 0-11; London 0-3.

1904 — Kerry 0-5; Dublin 0-2.

1909 — Kerry 1-9; Louth 0-6.

1913 — Kerry 2-2; Wexford 0-3.

1914 — Kerry 2-3; Wexford 0-6.

1924 — Kerry 0-4; Dublin 0-3.

1926 — Kerry 1-4; Kildare 0-4.

1929 — Kerry 1-8; Kildare 1-5.

1930 — Kerry 3-11; Monaghan 0-2.

1931 — Kerry 1-11; Kildare 0-8.

1932 — Kerry 2-7; Mayo 2-4.

1937 — Kerry 4-4; Cavan 1-7.

1939 — Kerry 2-5; Meath 2-3.

1940 — Kerry 0-7; Galway 1-3.

1941 — Kerry 1-8; Galway 0-7.

1946 — Kerry 2-8; Roscommon 0-10.

1953 — Kerry 0-13; Armagh 1-6.

1955 — Kerry 0-12; Dublin 1-6.

1959 — Kerry 3-7; Galway 1-4.

1962 — Kerry 1-12; Roscommon 1-4.

DEFEATS

1892 — Dublin 1-4; Kerry 0-3.

1905 — Kildare 1-7; Kerry 0-5.

1910 — Louth w.o.; Kerry refused to travel.

1915 — Wexford 2-4; Kerry 2-1.

1923 — Dublin 1-5; Kerry 1-3.

1927 — Kildare 0-5; Kerry 0-3.

1938 — Galway 2-4; Kerry 0-7.

1944 — Roscommon 1-9; Kerry 2-4.

1947 — Cavan 2-11; Kerry 2-7.

1954 — Meath 1-13; Kerry 1-7.

1960 — Down 2-10; Kerry 0-8.

1964 — Galway 0-15; Kerry 0-10.

1965 — Galway 0-12; Kerry 0-9.

1968 — Down 2-12; Kerry 1-13.

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STEPHEN SYNNOTT

By BRENDAN MAC LUA

THE LAST TESTIMONY OF A SPORTSMAN

A few weeks prior to his recent death I sat with Stephen Synnott while his vivid mind recalled a lifetime.

"You would never guess," said he, "the last time Cocker Daly and the rest of us played."

"Sometime in the late 'twenties maybe," said I.

"Not at all," he replied. "We played a match at the beginning of the War. I think it was 1941. John Miller, the jeweller, put up a set of medals and we had a veterans match, North Dublin versus South Dublin, in aid of the Oblate Fathers. Most of us old-timers played — the Cocker, two Synnotts, Johnny McDonald, Thomas McAuley, and most of the old O'Tooles' brigade lined out with North Dublin. Larry Stanley played with the South."

"The first game ended in a draw and there was a replay. We were all very serious about it. In fact, there was a row in one game. I remember, too, a priest coming into the dressing-room telling us to take it easy that we were not up to that sort of thing anymore. We didn't pay much heed to him."

"Who won in the end?" I asked.

"We did," he replied with some emphasis. "We still could beat them."

Cocker Daly

I asked him what sort of a man was the Cocker.

"He never smoked nor drank," said Stephen, "and he swam every day of the year. He also kept pigeons."

"I will always remember his last match against O'Tooles. I think it was in 1926. He had a row with Paddy McDonnell. After the match we were down

at the Five Lamps and the Cocker comes along and walks straight up to McDonnell. To everybody's surprise all he did was shove out his hand. 'Shake hands, McDonnell,' says he, 'I have found out at last that you are a better man than I.' That was the Cocker."

A few days prior to the 1908 home final between Dublin and Kerry, Stephen Synnott purchased a pair of new boots. He was then a young man but had yet to play for Dublin. Early on the morning of the match, Thomas McAuley called and borrowed the boots. They served Dublin well that afternoon at Thurles when the Metropolitans beat Kerry by 0-10 to 0-3.

"McAuley," said Stephen Synnott, "was a great character. Coming home on the train that evening from Thurles, he swiped a huge bunch of bananas at Portarlino."

Frank Cahill

The O'Tooles Club was founded by Frank Cahill in 1901 — primarily as a hurling club. The Synnotts, Stephen, John and Josie, and others who were later to be remembered as O'Tooles' men, had founded the Emeralds Club. They won the 1914 All-Ireland junior football title, beating Mayo in the final. Frank Burke was also a member of the Club.

The 1914 junior final was played early in 1916 and the Club then went senior and qualified for the Dublin senior semi-final. Their opponents were Hibernians. Shortly before the game Emeralds learned that two members of the Hibernians team had assisted the British forces dur-

ing the Rising and because of this they refused to play Hibernians. This decision led to a split in the Emeralds Club and eventually the club disintegrated and most of its players joined O'Tooles. These former Emeralds' players — three Synnotts and the two Careys among them — were to later form the backbone of the great O'Tooles team. Paddy Carey had the further distinction of captaining Ireland in the 1927 Tailteann Games.

"O'Tooles' greatest victory," said Stephen Synnott, "was our win over Garda in the 1926 Dublin final. The Garda had won the hurling championship with probably the greatest team ever put on a field (they walked through the All-Ireland in 1927) and were all out to score the double by beating us in the football final."

"The Garda football team contained as many stars as did their hurling side — eleven of them were picked on the Tailteann Games fifteen. But we beat them by two points. There was a gate of £700 and that was good money back in 1926."

"After the match a brother of Larry Stanley's, Pat, who had been invalided from the British army, said to us: 'That bloody team of yours would have won the War.'"

Dick Fitzgerald

"The first time I saw the Volunteer uniform," continued Stephen Synnott, "was in 1914 in Killarney and the man who was wearing it was Dick Fitzgerald."

Shortly after that, Frank Cahill introduced most of the O'Tooles' men into the Volunteers. Frank Teelin was one of them.

"One evening after we beat Kickhams in the final," said Stephen, "Mick Lawless and Tom Ennis caught two Auxies, disarmed them, and chained them to the railings of the Ivy Church, North Strand. It was as good a way as any of celebrating our victory."

The Club purchased their historic headquarters at 100 Seville Place in 1914. Bidding against them was the Ancient Order of Hibernians. From the months prior to the War of Independence, 100 Seville Place was as much a military headquarters as it was a sporting one. Over forty members of the Club were on active service. Michael Collins and Harry Boland met there regularly.

At one period when the premises were being watched, the Volunteers had Dublin Castle tipped off that an important meeting was in progress there. They then waited for the raid with guns placed on the railway bridge overhead and everything in order for a major ambush. The lorries and the tenders came but they stopped at Amien Street corner and never came down into Seville Place. Two nights later they came back and tore the place apart.

Sean O'Casey

It was Sean O'Casey who founded the O'Tooles Pipe Band. Much of his dialogue was gathered at 100 Seville Place.

A strange thing about O'Tooles was that they never acquired a playing field. They trained at Fairview Park and the Phoenix Park.

"We met Joe Norris in the Phoenix Park," said Stephen Synnott. "He had been with Hibernians but, because of the two fellows who helped the British Army during the Rising, he would have no more to do with that club. We invited him to join us and he did. His great duels with 'Knacker' Walsh of Galway were among the greatest I have seen."

"Did you know," asked Stephen, "that I was the umpire that was struck in the 1943 Roscommon-Cavan final?" I hadn't known.

He umpired many of the great games following his playing career. "Dan O'Keefe," he said, "was not alone a great goal-

keeper but he was also a perfect gentleman."

Padraig O Caoimh

"You must have known Padraig O Caoimh well?" I asked.

"Of course, I did," he replied and continued: "I'll tell you one simple story about Paddy O'Keefe and it will sum him up for you as good as if I talked about him all night."

"I was refereeing the 1937 All-Ireland minor football final and as I was about to enter the ground I spotted two old-time Dublin players standing against the wall on the other side of the road. They were two old men who had played with distinction for the county back on the 1890's. 'Are ye coming in,' says I. They hesitated a bit and then went on to tell me that the gatemens had refused to let them in."

"Now remember this was back in 1937. Money was scarce and these two old players were existing on a meagre old-age pension. They simply had not got the money to pay in. Indeed, none of us had much in those days."

"I left them there and went into the grounds and looked for Paddy O'Keefe. When I found him I told him about the two outside and who they were. He immediately called his chief steward and told me to go out with him and point out the two men. I did this and had then to go about my own business of

togging out to referee the minor game."

"After the match I learned what happened. The steward brought in the two old players and Paddy O'Keefe then assigned each of them a simple duty which amounted to little more than sitting down and viewing the match. However, when the match was over both old-timers found to their delight that they had earned a pound each for carrying out their 'duties.' It was a fortune to them."

"Yes, that was Paddy O'Keefe and he was a truly great man."

Fitting Monument

Stephen Synnott saw every All-Ireland final from 1905 to 1968. He rated Mick O'Connell as good as any of them. O'Connell and Larry Stanley would be his all-time midfield pairing. Jack Higgins too would be on that greatest-ever team. So would Paul Russell, Paul Doyle and Jackie Ryan. Paddy McDonnell would captain it because he was the greatest of all captains.

Stephen Synnott died shortly after that conversation. He had lived a long and fruitful life, had played the game and had shared in the making of history.

A few weeks later O'Tooles went out and won their first-ever Dublin senior hurling title. Stephen Synnott would have preferred that to a great monument of stone.



The Sam Maguire

The Sam Maguire Cup was first presented for the All-Ireland Senior Football Championship for the 1928 final, when Kildare beat Cavan, 2-6 to 2-5. W. Gannon captained Kildare that year and since then Kildare have not put their name on the trophy.

o o o

Kerry won the Cup for the first time in 1929 and, in all, the Kingdom's name has been inscribed on the trophy 13 times up to 1962.

o o o

The Tom Markham Cup has been the prize for the Minor Football Championship final winners since 1941, when Roscommon were the first holders.



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Kerry have had all the luck

— good and bad

WHENEVER anyone talks to me about luck on the Gaelic fields, I always have one ready answer, that every team makes its own luck. What is more, every county gets its right and proper share of that same luck, and as proof positive of that contention I always cite the instances of Kerry in 1937 and 1938.

In 1937 Kerry were blessed with luck in three successive games, and won an All-Ireland that they should never have seen. In 1938 they had the All-Ireland medals all but on their watch-chains, but let them slip right through their fingers.

BY OLD-TIMER

Now I did not see Kerry play in Munster championship of 1937, but I did head down from Kingsbridge on a bright and sunny Sunday morning to see them play Laois in the semi-final.

Now Laois had been in the All-Ireland final against Mayo in the previous year — a final that doesn't bear thinking about. The Laois men played all their football on the training grounds through the fortnight before the big day, with the result that, when they got to Croke Park, it took them all their time to march round after the Artane Band. They seemed stuck to the ground, and Patsy Flannelly, Henry Kenny and thirteen other Mayomen had such a field-day that they must have thought it was Christmas Day on that fourth Sunday in September.

But that quartet of Laois Delaneys who survived the debacle, Danny Douglas and a gangling youngster named Tommy Murphy, came storming through Leinster, and were it not for over-elaboration, and the worst of bad luck, they must have beaten Kerry, even at Cork, with five or six points to spare. Indeed, on their chances, they could well have won by ten. And yet Kerry, in some magical fashion, escaped with a draw.

Laois, having travelled to Cork for the drawn game, seemed entitled to a Leinster venue for the replay, but Croke Park was out of action — the Cusack Stand was being built, and the builders' men were on strike, — so Central Council in its wisdom fixed the second game for the Waterford Gaelic Field.

DANNO KEEFFE

A huge crowd turned up to see Kerry win. Young Tommy Murphy was knocked out at a vital moment, but, even so, Laois must have advanced to the final only for some inspired goalkeeping by the bold Danno O'Keeffe.

So Kerry, as things stood, seemed to have used up more luck in those two semi-final games than many a team comes

by in a whole championship campaign, but we hadn't seen the half of it yet.

In the meantime, Cavan, who had been the 1935 champions, and those 1936 champions from Mayo had met in the other semi-final at Cusack Park in Mullingar — and what a day out that was for a foot-loose and fancy-free neutral spectator such as myself.

The crowd was immense — Mayo claimed afterwards that intrusions of the overflow onto the playing pitch robbed them of match-saving and maybe match-winning scores in the closing minutes — the excitement was infectious, and the winning Cavan players were carried shoulder high to their hotel down in the town.

No wonder that when, the building strike being over, the Central Council decided to fix the final for Croke Park, half the country seemed to be gathered in Jones's Road. The whole section where the Cusack stand was being built was fenced off — with the result that, long after the gates had been closed, hundreds if not thousands of eager enthusiasts hoisted themselves over the barbed wire barricades that the builders had set up, and unofficially opened the Cusack Stand twelve months ahead of schedule.

TWO KERRY GOALS

But, by the time the big game was ten minutes old, the Cavan supporters must have



Danno Keffe

been wondering if the risks they took were justified. Bang, bang . . . just like that, in went two Kerry goals and it looked as though there were plenty more where those came from.

And then Kerry suddenly seemed to sit back on their

laurels and Cavan, without seeming too happy about it, started to pick off a point here and a point there. Then, quite suddenly, the game came to life. A stocky Veterinary College student by the name of Paddy Smith, whom a lot of wiseacres said was too small for inter-county football anyway, picked up a pass around midfield cantered right through the Kerry defence . . . and, bingo, the leather was in the net, the fat was in the fire and we had ourselves a brand-new ball game.

It was nip and tuck, and tuck and nip, all the way from that to the end, but, though Kerry kept level, it was Cavan who were now making the running. Upfield they surged in the last minute, over the Kerry bar went the ball from a flick-shot, and when the happy Cavan supporters didn't pull down the Cusack Stand before it was ever put up *ni la fos e*. But, in all the excitement, only a very few spectators, and not all the players, noticed that the referee had disallowed the score.

He adjudged that the ball was thrown, and he gave a free out. I was as near to the incident as the ref, was — I was in the front row of sideline seats behind the Kerry goal — and I would have allowed that point but it was his opinion that counted and not mine.

BREFFNI CHEERS

Canon Hamilton, who was giving the radio commentary, thought Cavan had won especially as the last whistle blew immediately after the kick-out while the Breffni supporters were still cheering.

But, no matter how much they

cheered, the official result was a draw . . . and there is no need to add that Kerry won the replay . . .

Then, exactly a year later, Kerry and Galway met in the 1938 final, and, good luck to them, they gave us the best All-Ireland senior football final I ever saw. There is no point in describing it here. If you didn't see it, you wouldn't believe me anyway.

All I want to come at here is the luck end of it. This time it was Galway who led, and Kerry who came back to force the pace in the closing minutes.

Time was almost up when Kerry, on level terms, forced a '50'. I would have taken a bet that Sean Brosnan — at least I think it was he, I hope I'm not wronging him — would kick the winning point. But he dropped it just short, and the ball was scrambled out for another '50'.

Fifty number two sailed straight for the target, but it also dropped just short, and was again hooshed over the end-line by a desperate Galway defence. Again from the third '50' Brosnan sent the ball dead straight, but again it fell just short of the bar. A defender punched the leather out.

A Kerry forward pounced on it and flashed it over the bar . . . but the whistle had gone for full time.

And when they met again, Galway won handily . . . which just goes to show that, even in Kerry, there is no such thing as a consistently lucky team. As I said at the start, you have to make your own luck.

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Carlow footballer Charlie Keegan says:

It's Kerry for me

THIS is Kerry's year. That's what nine people out of ten are saying about the outcome of the 1969 All-Ireland football final. It's doubtful if a team has ever seemed such a "dead cert" to win the Sam Maguire Cup.

As a neutral observer, I also, have been very impressed by Kerry and lean towards a Munster victory. Kerry's form throughout the League and subsequently has been one of utter dependability. They have been improving steadily and if the side erupts into the dynamic force it can be, then nothing will stop them taking the title to the Kingdom and to Munster, where it has not rested since 1962.

It is seven long years since Kerry won the All-Ireland title by beating Roscommon in a "no contest" final. On three occasions since they have reached the final, but were out of luck to meet two of Ireland's most brilliant method sides at their peak — Galway and Down.

Mention of Down brings me to one of the main reasons why I think Kerry will win. It was Down who revolutionised Gaelic football with their brand, which captured the imagination of the entire country. They met and conquered Kerry in the 1960 final and since then the Kerry men have found Down a bogey which they have seldom overcome.

In fact, Down are the only team to have beaten Kerry this year. That was in Wembley when the Kerry men failed to demonstrate the class of the opposition. When the news came through that champions Down had lost their crown in the Ulster final, the door was

opened for the Kerry men.

Kerry's dominance this year coincides with Mick O'Connell's greatest year in the Green and Gold. He, more than any other player, has captured the headlines and he has seldom played with greater authority, determination and dash since he first came to the public's attention in 1958.

But O'Connell is surrounded by outstanding players like veterans Mick O'Dwyer and Johnny Culloty and young stars Brendan Lynch and Eamon

O'Donoghue. They are strong in defence and the indestructible D. J. Crowley is an ideal mid-field partner for O'Connell.

The forward line has tremendous striking power and their very sizable tallies in every game speak for themselves. With a bit of luck and a less capable goalkeeper than Mayo's Eugene Rooney, they would surely have scored at least two goals in the All-Ireland semi-final.

Yes, I am inclined to agree that 1969 is "Kerry's Year."

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KERRY AHEAD



At Last — An Insurance Scheme For G.A.A. Players

London shows how it can be done

BY DONAL COLLINS

AN advertisement that caught my eye in the August issue of *Gaelic News* was that of Emerald Insurance Brokers Ltd., 324/326 Holloway Road, London, N.7. The advertisement stated among other things that it arranged Personal Accident Policies specially designed for Gaelic footballers and hurlers. For as little as £6 per year all accidents were covered with the following benefits:

Temporary Total Disablement — £20 per week for up to 104 weeks.

Loss of Eye or Limb — £2,000.

Death Benefit — £2,000.

Being one of the many who consider the G.A.A.'s own accident scheme totally inadequate and having always understood that insurance companies would not cover playing injuries for anything less than a substantial premium, I was naturally very interested.

I wrote to a player-friend in London and asked him what he knew of Emerald Insurance Brokers Ltd. and if he had ever heard of their accident scheme.

In less than a week I had a letter in return. My friend had not alone heard of the scheme but he was availing of it as, he told me, are a great many G.A.A. players in London. It was first-class, he said.

I then wrote to Emerald Insurance and sought specific details. These I received by return.

Firstly, Emerald Insurance is an all-Irish con-

cern. Sligo senior footballer Tony McDonagh is a director as is former Garryowen G.A.A. Club player Tony Beatty of Waterford. Both are accountants.

The firm is a rapidly growing one which does a wide range of general insurance business — particularly among the London-Irish business community.

The insurance cover for players arose because of the fact that two of the company's directors were playing Gaelic games and naturally, as business men with responsibility, were concerned at the possibility of injury.

This prompted the two accountants to examine the situation and, following various approaches to British insurance companies, they succeeded in getting one major company to provide general accident cover which included games injuries.

The result now is that this excellent scheme is in operation. For £6 per year a non-manual worker is covered against all accidents — be they on or off the playing field. The manual worker (who is considered to provide a greater risk in the course of his employment) has the same coverage for £9 per annum.

Six of the London hurlers who played Kilkenny in the All-Ireland semi-final are covered by the scheme — as are countless other G.A.A. men in London.



Offaly — marching on to glory?

Emerald Insurance Brokers, and in particular its Gaelic games playing directors Tony McDonagh and Tony Beatty, are certainly to be commended for having initiated this coverage.

It just shows what can be done when men who know what they are about tackle something . . . and to think that on this side

of the channel we have always been told such coverage could not be provided.

Any club truly concerned for the well-being of its players should note the London scheme and consider paying part of each premium with the individual players being encouraged to pay the rest.

It Happened . . .

Antrim played in two All-Ireland senior football finals in 1912. The 1911 final took place on January 14, 1912, while the 1912 final was decided on November 3 of that year. Antrim were beaten in both games.

A frozen solid river Liffey provided the most unusual 'pitch' of all for a football game. It happened in the centre of Dublin in January, 1740.

One of the biggest upsets on record was the defeat of Kerry by Antrim in the 1912 All-Ireland semi-final. The previous year Cork had beaten Antrim 6-6 to 1-2 in the All-Ireland final and, when Kerry easily defeated Cork in the 1912 Munster final, their semi-final meeting with Antrim appeared little more than a formality.

However, on the morning of the game the Kerry team went to a wedding. That afternoon, Antrim beat them 3-5 to 0-2.

Jack Flavin of Moyvane won senior All-Ireland medals with both Kerry and Galway, while Bobby Beggs of Skerries, having played with Dublin against Galway in the 1934 final, played with Galway in the 1938, '40 and '41 finals. In 1942 he was back with Dublin and helped them beat Galway in that year's final.

The late Paul Russell was only 17 and had never played for Kerry in any grade, nor had he taken part in any trial game, when selected to play with Kerry in the 1923 All-Ireland final.

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MICK GLEESON — turning the full circle

WHEN Mick Gleeson won his place on the Kerry team for this year's Munster final as a corner forward the wheel of inevitability could be said to have turned the full circle. For a couple of years now, it has been obvious to informed observers of the Kingdom team and the football talent available to it that Gleeson would be a decided acquisition to the side.

But when 1968 slipped by and Kerry still chose to ignore him, despite an obvious lack of talent in a few positions, there were many who were inclined to forget about Gleeson.

In September of last year when Kerry were in dire straits for a player to fill the centre half-back berth for the impending All-Ireland final against Down, Mick Gleeson was one of several possibilities mentioned. But he was away down the list for the job which eventually went to Mick Morris.

The fact that he was in line for this key job in defence less than twelve months ago and now finds himself in the Kerry full-

forward line is easily enough explained. Mick Gleeson was until recently only thought of in Kerry football circles as a defender.

When Kerry won the junior All-Ireland in 1967 Mick Gleeson filled the centre half-back position mainly on the strength of some fine performances he turned in there for St. Patrick's Training College, Drumcondra during the previous two years. In the early summer of 1967, he was a key figure in the St. Patrick's team which swept through the Dublin under-21 championship and no doubt the many knowledgeable Kerry men in Dublin quickly sent the word home.

In October of 1967, Gleeson moved to the other side of the city and joined the U.C.D. team which, at that time, also included Donie O'Sullivan, a member of Gleeson's home club The Spa.

Mainly on the suggestion of O'Sullivan, the U.C.D. selectors placed Mick Gleeson at full forward, where, in a very short time, he established



Mick Gleeson being tackled by Joe Early in last year's Sigerson Cup final.

himself as an automatic choice for that position.

In January 1968 he played a leading part in U.C.D.'s victory in the Sigerson Cup and later in the year toured the United States with that club. But all this seemed to go unnoticed by the Kerry selectors or perhaps they were just waiting for more conclusive evidence.

Came 1969 and, again eligible for junior grade, Gleeson was selected for the Munster championship but again at centre half-back. When Kerry won the League without Gleeson on the panel it looked as if his chance had gone for another year but the Kerry selectors not content to rest on the laurels of victory eventually added Gleeson to the panel and in the Munster final and All-Ireland semi-final, he played at right corner forward.

While he is probably more than satisfied to be wearing No. 13, there is no doubt but that if Mick Gleeson were playing at full-forward he would feel even more at home and might be of greater use to his team there. It was from this position that he scored that delightful fisted overhead point against Mayo in the semi-final.

But wherever he plays, it is certain that Gleeson will bring the same dedication and toughness to his play. You won't see Mick smiling very often in the course of the game — he goes out to win first of all and, with this end in view, he is uncompromising for the full hour. And it is my guess that against the full-back line Kerry forward's face on Sept. 28 a player of Gleeson's style will be worth his weight in gold to the other Kerry forwards.

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Cork Minors Attempt To Equal The Record

A familiar sight at Croke Park on All-Ireland final day will be the red-jerseyed brigade of minor footballers from Cork. Having beaten Sligo in last year's final and Laois the previous year, the Cork boys will be bidding for the elusive three-in-a-row when they face Derry on September 28.

BY TIM HORGAN

The Cork minor success story began as recently as 1960 when the county footballers appeared in their first All-Ireland final. They were beaten that year by a Galway side which included stars like Enda Colleran, Christy Tyrrell and Seamus Leydon but the following year Cork came back to win the All-Ireland with a fine victory over Mayo in the final. Frank Cogan and Flor Hayes were members of the historic 1961 side.

Three years later Cork reached their third final but lost to Offaly by a point after a thrilling game. Tony McTeague was



The Cork team which won last year's minor final.

the man who fashioned Offaly's win with a string of well-taken points, while Cork had Eric Philpott and hurling star Charlie McCarthy in action the same day.

Having lost to Mayo in the semi-final the previous year, Cork came through

to the decider in 1967 and gave a magnificent exhibition of football in beating Laois. Denis Long and Donal Hunt graduated to the county senior team after that victory, while several other players went on to the Cork Under-21 side. Last year the Cork

minors were back in Croke Park for their fifth final and defeated Sligo by a point in the end.

And so the Leeside youths return to Croke Park this year in quest of the rare three-in-a-row. Only two counties have managed to win three

consecutive titles in the history of the minor football championship. Kerry were victorious in the three-year period 1931-'33 and Dublin were successful from 1954 to 1956. Will Cork do it this year?

The present team includes five of the players who

helped Cork to beat Sligo in last year's final. These are the star defenders Martin Doherty and Connie Hartnett, midfielder John Coleman and forwards Hugh Sullivan and Declan Barron. In addition, the side has some very impressive performers in Pat Barry, Emmet Hallinan, P. J. Lonergan and Eamonn Fitzpatrick, the team captain.

The Cork minors have appeared in Croke Park in three finals and an additional semi-final during the past five years. They missed out in 1965, strangely enough, when Derry created a big impression on winning their first All-Ireland.

So this year's final brings Cork and Derry together for the first time. Most people outside the Rebel County will cheer for the gallant Derry boys this time but the red-jerseyed stars from Cork look like bringing off the three-in-a-row. It'll be the completion of a great success story in minor football for the county, if they do.

Fitness For Gaelic Football

It is most unlikely that the book 'Fitness for Gaelic Football' will ever become famous by that name. It is much more likely to be known as 'Lennon's Book' a tribute no doubt to the author. For ten years now, Joe Lennon has engendered a fair share of controversy with the result that he is now one of the best-known personalities in Gaelic football. Such a situation is a very agreeable one for any author and it could well add a great deal to the sale of Joe Lennon's latest book.

But in truth 'Fitness for Football' deserves to be a sellout on its own merits alone. For years now every man who has been in charge of the physical preparation of football teams has, at one time or another, found himself at a loss when he needed guidance on some problem related to his task. Up to now, there was no source of readily available information on the subject except the local 'expert,' whose advice is generally more of a liability than an asset.

Basically what Joe Lennon has done in this book is to provide a practical and easily understood manual of physical fitness preparation for football teams. Every exercise is explained in detail and in most cases there is an accompanying illustration or photograph.

Really, in this book

there is every thing that the average trainer should know. There is also much that the average trainer of today does not know. Whether the natural conclusion to these two statements will follow, i.e. that every football trainer should have a copy of 'Fitness for Football,' remains to be seen. Certainly such a situation could only be for the general betterment of the game.

As was the case with Lennon's first book on coaching, there will probably be the same arguments raised against 'Fitness for Football' — that it will standardise the game and leave no scope for private initiative.

There is no more logic in this reasoning now — there is much less, in fact — than there was then. Many coaches have learned a great deal from 'Coaching Gaelic Football



Joe Lennon

for Champions,' although very often they won't admit this.

This latest Lennon book can have an even wider appeal since every team manager will agree that physical fitness is a prerequisite to any form of

team success, whatever their views on coaching may be.

At 8/6, this book is the best investment that anybody looking after football teams could make in 1969.

— D. C.

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Birthday Present for Johnny Egan

HAS the same line over held throughout a decade of top-grade inter-county football? Certainly, this writer has never come across anything to match the feat of Paddy McCormack, Greg Hughes and Johnny Egan who first made headlines in the 1960 campaign as Offaly's solid last line of defence and who now, in the last year of the decade, are still holding them out.

This great trio came together and stayed together. They were members of the 1956 Offaly minor team

and all three came on to the senior team during the 1957-'58 season.

McCormack actually made his senior debut as a forward — playing in the left corner against Louth in the 1958 Leinster* championship. It wasn't until the beginning of the 1960 campaign that he moved to defence.

Since then, McCormack has, of course, played in many positions but following some indifferent form in recent years, he has refound himself since returning to the old right

full-back berth.

Greg Hughes made his senior debut at left full-back with, strangely enough, Johnny Egan filling the full back position. They swapped shortly afterwards.

Hughes was an outstanding athlete as a youngster. He won a number of Leinster youths' sprint titles and later won many Garda athletic events.

Johnny Egan was also a good all-round athlete and

was awarded a cup for being the best all-rounder at Ballyfin College in 1958.

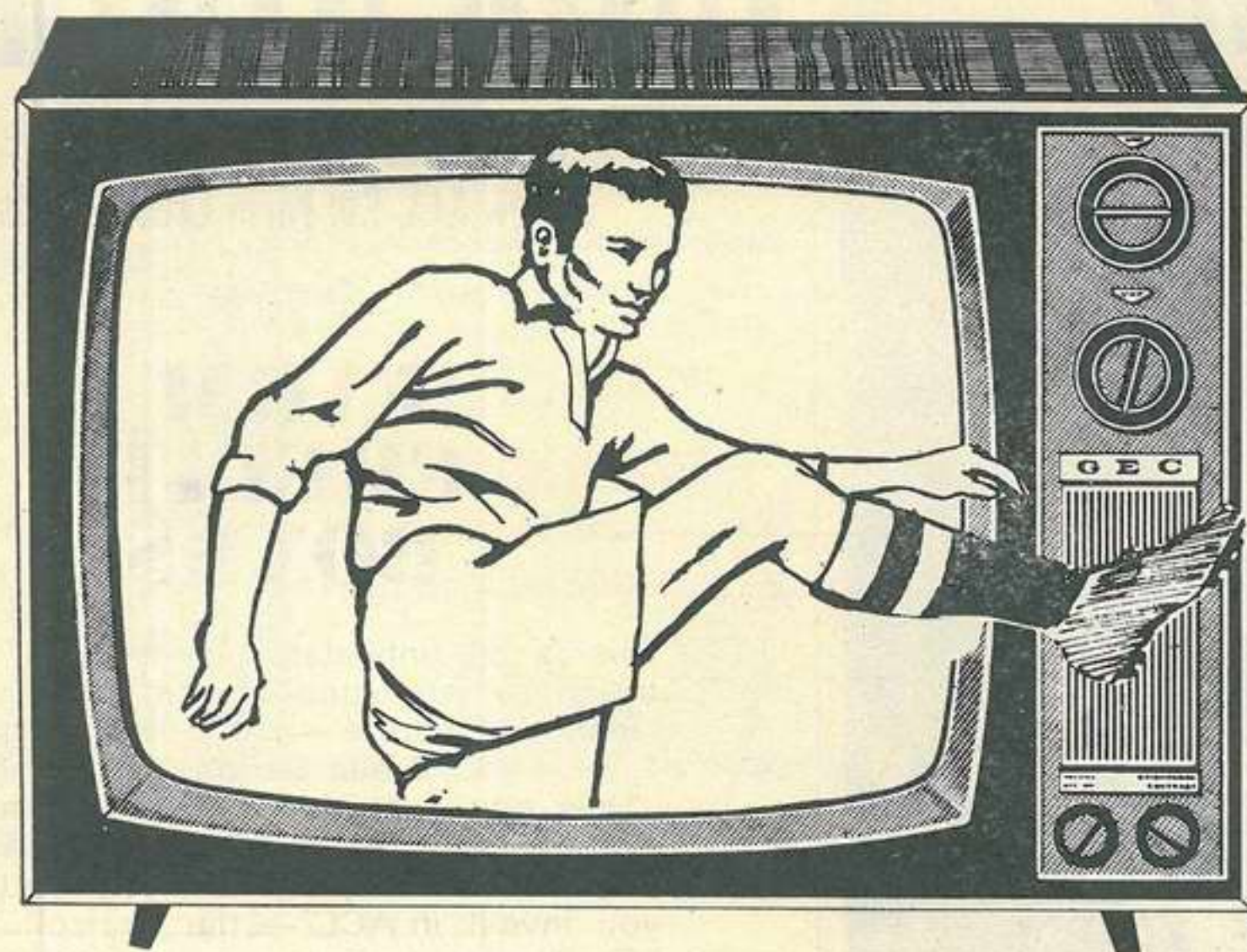
He helped Ballyfin win the 1957 Leinster Colleges senior football title — playing at full back. He also had an outstanding

year as a minor full back in 1957.

Johnny Egan celebrates his 30th birthday on Friday, September 26 and he will be looking forward to a very special present 48 hours later.



Johnny Egan drawing level with Eugene Mulligan in an all-out sprint during training.



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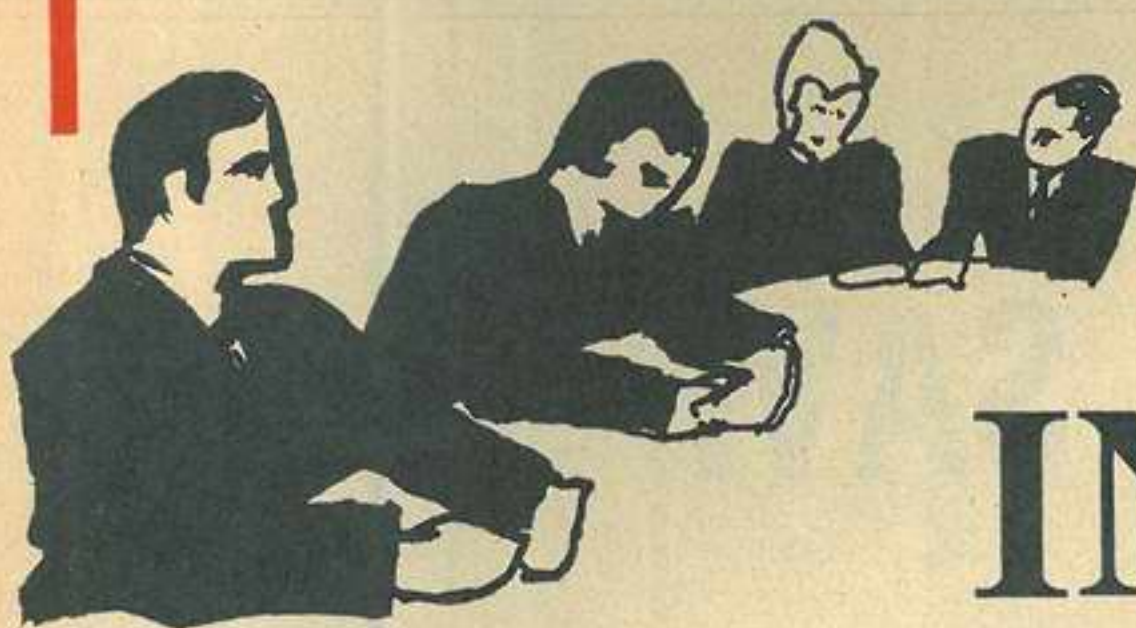
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IN SESSION

Central Council Ranges Wide

THE Central Council covered a fair amount of ground at its meeting of September 6.

The President, Seamus O Riain, explained the credit scheme conceived by the Policy Committee and recommended by the Executive. It was agreed one person would be appointed in each county to explain the scheme in detail to the clubs and ascertain how many would be willing to take part. Provided sufficient clubs were interested, the scheme would be proceeded with.

The meeting was informed that the Commission, which is examining the entire structure of the Association, had already met once. It would meet again prior to the end of September.

The Rules Revision Committee had held three meetings but much more remained to be done.

The three-man Committee dealing with the Talent Contest had decided to issue a booklet on its proposed programme, while the Committee considering means of extending Irish dancing in the Association had also progressed and was now seeking a meeting with the Department of Education.

The President explained that the History Committee was still becalmed.

A new Committee, to recommend the best type of club rooms cum com-

munity centre for G.A.A. clubs, was appointed. It comprises of Alf O Muiri, Brendan Devlin and Jack Fitzgerald.

The President also reported on the meeting of County Secretaries at Gormanston College. It was a fruitful get-together, he stated, with discussions taking place on methods and the best use of office equipment.

Mick Duffy (Monaghan) asked if any consideration had been given to his proposal of financial assistance to County Secretaries.

The President replied that the expenditure suggested was not likely to give the best return. He asked Mick Duffy to withdraw his motion (which had been held over from a previous meeting).

Mick Duffy declined. The motion was then put and defeated by 22 votes to 10.

The President reported on recent negotiations with R.T.E. A fee of £6,500 was agreed upon, he stated. R.T.E. had since sought to televise the Cavan-Offaly replay but, following consultation with the General Secretary and the Trustees, he had turned down the request because of the disruption it would cause to club games.

Fr. McGee (Longford) said that this decision by the President complied with a notice of motion from his county which was on the agenda. He was concerned, though, that Central Council was not given an opportunity to decide regarding the television fee. They had been told by the President at Congress that the fee would be brought back to the Central Council for decision.

Micheal O Ruairc (Kerry) said that £6,500 was a most inadequate fee. Attendances at major games were very poor because of television and the Association was throwing money away. "As businessmen, we are the greatest fools in Ireland," he added.

It was agreed that R.T.E. be allowed take a video-tape recording of the semi-final replay for showing later that evening and that no fee would be charged for this.

Fr. Neville (Handball Council) reported on the response by G.A.A. clubs to the raffle in aid of the fund to stage the World handball championships in Dublin next May. Only 78 clubs had returned tickets and the total came to £193-9-6.



Seamus O Riain

The President commented that it was very disappointing and that, as a result, the plans for the new handball alley would have to be pared.

Paddy Ryan (Chairman of the Munster Council) said that he wished to avail of the opportunity to refer to an omission on his part at the last meeting when he reported on Kerry's New York visit. He had forgotten to pay tribute to John D. Hickey of Independent Newspapers who had reported on the tour throughout.

Jack Daly (Clare) said that there was very little real work being done at Central Council meetings and what was being done could be disposed of in one hour.

The General Secretary was asked to provide a breakdown of the All-Ireland ticket distribution. He stated that there were 32,000 seats. County Boards were allocated on the basis of 3½ per club — this amounted to 12,000; there were 10,000 five-year tickets; the competing counties received a total of 4,500 and the balance was distributed from Croke Park.

Micheal O Ruairc drew attention to his notice of motion on the agenda which sought to have the general admission to All-Ireland finals reduced from 7/6. He referred to the contraction at Croke Park since the inclusion of

the seats under the Cusack Stand and pointed out that people without seats were now forced to stand at the poorest vantage points in the ground "They are not getting value for money," he added.

The motion was seconded by Dublin's Bob Freeman, but when the President pointed out that it could not apply to this year, it was agreed to withdraw the motion on the understanding that the question would be raised again.



Mickey Duffy

John Dunne (Galway) referred to his notice of motion for an increase in team allowances. Hotel charges had greatly increased since these allowances were conceived, he explained.

It was agreed to have the Executive examine the position and also that of Central Council travel allowances.

Gene Fitzgerald (Cork) referred to his county's motion regarding an investigation into the suspension of Con Roche. New and irrefutable evidence had come to light, he stated.

The President stated that it could not be entertained.

The Cork delegates pressed the matter strongly but the President was adamant and ruled him out of order.

When applications from the Leitrim senior football team and the Crosserlough club team to travel to New York came before the meeting, the General Secretary remarked that it was "good to see some ask for permission."

Permission was granted subject to the usual conditions.

Tommy Mellon (Derry) asked if a letter had been received from his Board regarding the All-Ireland minor semi-final between Derry and Wexford.

The General Secretary said it had, but that, as the referee's report had

still to come, the matter could not be discussed.

Referring to the CUN-AMH collection in aid of the Six County refugees, the President stated that the money would be given to the Irish Red Cross for distribution, provided it found itself in a position to undertake the task.

Donal Whelan (Waterford) said that many people were dissatisfied with the Red Cross in this situation. It had denied help to the dependents of victims of previous Six County troubles.

Frank Muldoon (Donegal) remarked that the Association should have been to the fore in making a direct subscription — as had been done in the case of the Army Boys Band.

The President reported on meetings which the Executive had with representatives of the N.A.C.A. and B.L.E.

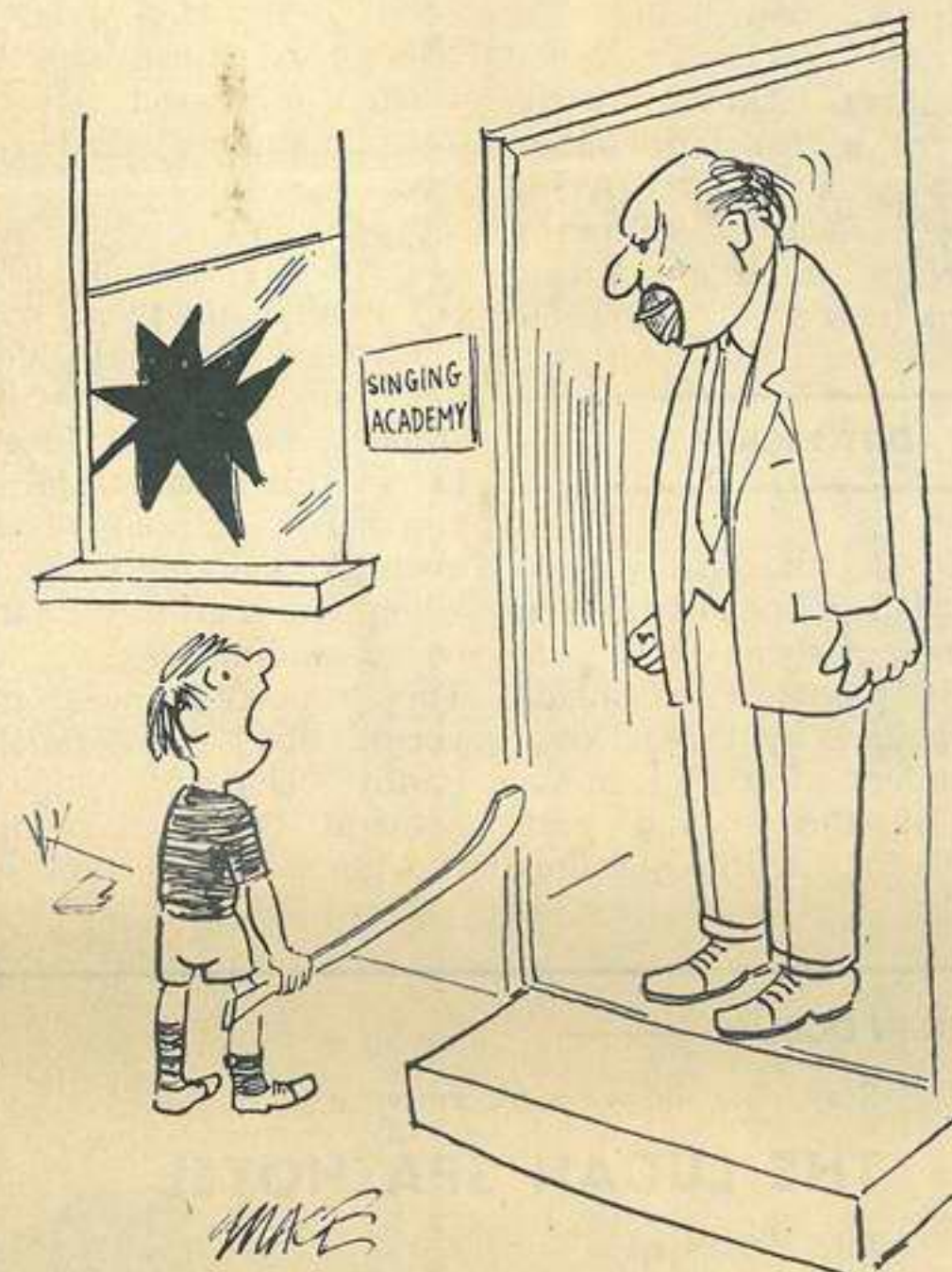
The Council went into

camera to discuss the report.

It was then decided to postpone a final discussion until the next meeting because of the lateness of the hour and the fact that many delegates had gone home.

Jack Daly (Clare) stated that he had been instructed by his County Board to express their feelings of disappointment and bitterness at the suspension of Clare Chairman John Hanly. A similar offence was committed in Croke Park last year and the officials in question were not suspended. His county wished it to be known that it stood solidly behind John Hanly and that it considered the Association poorly served by his suspension.

The President said that he wished to deny a rumour that the referee's report concerning John Hanly had been discussed by the Executive.



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WHEN NINETY THOUSAND SAW OFFALY MAKE HISTORY

THE year 1961 will be remembered by Offaly followers as the year in which their lion-hearted footballers went so near to winning the most coveted prize in football. Only a point separated the Faithful county and the reigning All-Ireland champions, Down, at the end of a bruising contest which was watched by the biggest recorded gathering ever to attend a sporting event in Ireland — 90,556.

BY PADDY HICKEY

Indeed, had Offaly been awarded a penalty when Tommy Greene was blatantly pulled down inside the square by three Down defenders after five minutes of the second half, with the score standing

3-4 to 2-3 in Down's favour, it is very likely that the Midlanders would be seeking their second All-Ireland senior football title this year, instead of their first. However, Offaly did not receive even a fourteen yards free, the ball was cleared and Jim McCartan increased the Ulster champions' lead with another point.

Ironically enough, Offaly were also involved in a controversial penalty incident in their 1960 All-Ireland semi-final drawn game with Down when the Northern champions were awarded a dubious penalty when the Faithful county were leading by a goal. The 'spot-kick' was converted by the reliable Paddy Doherty and it brought Down back into the game. Offaly fans will



Paddy McCormack, Harry Donnelly, Greg Hughes, Johnny Egan, Donie O'Hanlon, and Phil O'Reilly — six of the men who brought Offaly to the verge of glory in 1961

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BEST WISHES TO KERRY ON SUNDAY

well remember that the Northerners won the replay by 1-7 to 1-5.

Although also defeated in the 1961 final Offaly players and supporters alike took heart from the magnificent challenge that the team had given a Down combination which is rated among the greatest sides in the history of the game. Any doubts about the ability of the Mournemen were dispelled in the All-Ireland semi-final the previous month when they scored a six-points victory over Kerry, in what is generally regarded as one of the finest games of football ever seen in Croke Park, and, few teams were ever more severely extended to the limit of endurance than Down were by the challenge of the debutants from Offaly.

After only 40 seconds of the game, Down had slipped into the lead with a point from Paddy Doherty but the huge enthusiastic Down following was rocked into silence a minute later when Offaly struck their first blow. It began when Peter Daly picked up the ball in the middle of the field and passed the ball accurately across to Harry Donnelly on the left wing. The Air Corps sharpshooter cut into the middle and lobbed the ball across to Mick Casey in the right corner forward position.

The burly Rhode blacksmith moved into the centre and punted a high

speculative shot into the goalmouth. The ball appeared to be sailing harmlessly over the bar, but at the last minute it dipped and landed in the back of the net to the amazement of goalkeeper Eddie McKay and, more than likely, Mick Casey.

Down had barely recovered from this body blow when Offaly struck again — just a mere four minutes later. Harry Donnelly was again involved. A minute after Donnelly had displayed his accuracy from frees, he picked up a long clearance from Paddy McCormack and lobbed the ball high into the Down goalmouth. Down full-back Leo Murphy and goalkeeper McKay left it to one another and centre-forward Peter Daly profited from their carelessness to run in and hit the ball past McKay, to leave the score 2-1 to 0-1 in Offaly's favour, after only six minutes play.

Sean O'Neill brought Down back into the game with a point in the eighth minute and the colourful Jim McCartan changed the whole complexion of the game, twelve minutes later. Doherty received the ball from midfielder Jarlath Carey and punted into the square where McCartan was under it. McCartan turned in a flash and crashed the ball past a helpless Willie Nolan in the goal.

In the 23rd minute Doherty proved his worth

by paving the way for another goal. From his left half-forward position, he sent over a high cross that appeared likely to drop wide on the other side of the posts. However, the ever-alert Sean O'Neill made sure that it didn't. Grabbing the ball, he dashed out a few yards to widen his angle and then smacked the ball to the net.

And so Offaly, who had been six points in front after only six minutes were now sensationally a point behind. Parity was restored when Tommy Cullen booted over a point after 25 minutes. Four minutes later Tony Hadden, placed by Doherty punched Down into a point lead but Donnelly levelled with a point from a placed ball, in the 29th minute.

The first half was thirty and a half minutes old when Down received a half-time morale-booster. Offaly were attacking at the time and full-forward Donie O'Hanlon was about to gather the ball when Patsy O'Hagan booted it upfield where it was collected by Tony Hadden. Hadden sent the ball into the goalmouth where it was broken down by full-forward P. J. McElroy to Brian Morgan. Morgan gathered the ball on the run and gave Willie Nolan no chance with a blistering shot. So, despite their initial scoring barrage, Offaly retired to the dressing-rooms at the interval three

points in arrears.

After the spine-tingling exchanges of the first half, spectators were eagerly awaiting the second period but, unfortunately it never rose to the heights of the first. However, the stamina-sapping pace and the rugged tackling of the first half was probably responsible for the decline in standard.

Just after Offaly had their strong appeals for a penalty ignored, Jim McCartan drew first blood for Down when he pointed, but Harry Donnelly reduced Down's lead to three points once again, in the eighth minute. Paddy Doherty, in the twelfth minute, and Harry Donnelly, after fourteen minutes, exchanged points to leave Offaly trailing by 3-5 to 2-5, entering the last quarter.

The stage seemed set for a determined Offaly rally but their hopes received a set-back when Jarlath Carey pointed in the 18th minute. However, the Midlanders refused to be daunted and points from Harry Donnelly and Sean Brereton in the 21st and 29th minute, respectively, left only two points between the sides with a minute remaining. Down were hanging on desperately to their lead at this stage and, in their efforts to thwart the Offaly forwards, conceded a 21-yards free.

The record-breaking attendance waited in deadly



Willie Nolan leading the men of '61.

silence for the kick to be taken but, with the Down goal packed, all kicker Harry Donnelly could do was to chip the ball over the bar. Offaly supporters roared on their favourites with great gusto after this score but the final whistle was blown when the kick-out landed and Down were champions by the narrowest margin since 1948 when Cavan beat Mayo by 4-5 to 4-4.

Had the game continued for another two or three minutes, Offaly would very likely have won the game, or at least equalised, as they had the Down team completely on the run in the final five minutes. After the game the Offaly players, while disappointed with the result, were pleased with the fine

performance they had put up. All were unanimous in their view that Tommy Greene had been taken down in the square and team captain Willie Nolan said that even from his own goal he saw Greene being pulled down.

Although defeat was their lot, Offaly lost no prestige in this defeat — in fact, they gained it — and while that Down fifteen is regarded as one of the best sides to win a senior All-Ireland football crown, Offaly deserve to be labelled one of the unluckiest teams in championship football.

Naturally enough, the Offaly line-out is a much changed one from that which did duty in the 1961 All-Ireland decider but

those great players Paddy McCormack, Greg Hughes and John Egan provide a nostalgic link with the fine 1961 side. It would be only fitting that these three players who have rendered

such magnificent service to Offaly would be rewarded with an All-Ireland medal this year.

Followers may like to recall the Offaly line-out which was so unlucky on

the last Sunday of September in 1961. The team was: Willie Nolan (capt.), Paddy McCormack, Greg Hughes, John Egan, Phil O'Reilly, Mick Brady, Charlie Wrenn; Sean Brereton,

Sean Ryan, Tommy Cullen, Peter Daly, Tommy Greene, Mick Casey, Donie O'Hanlon, Harry Donnelly. Subs.: Frank Weir for Casey, Sean Foran for Ryan, Frank Higgins for O'Reilly.

HANDBALL

THE many obstacles which have confronted the Special Committee designated to organise next year's World Championships have yet again been added to with the announcement by World Champion Joe Maher, that he proposes to retire at the end of this season.

The thirty-five-year-old Drogheda player who has won every honour the game can give him in this country and can boast of five Canadian and one American title as well, reckons that he is not playing the quality handball he should and in addition finds his business commitments cutting across his training.

For those of us who have followed his progress since returning from Toronto nearly two years ago, it would be impossible to fall in line with his claim of being off-form.

Results can be the only yardstick. The simple truth is that he has not been beaten in a National Com-

petition since coming home.

In that time he has displayed on many occasions the skill and determination that are necessary attributes of a World Champion.

Memories are easily revived. Like his senior singles clash at Ballymote in the Final against Murt McEllistrim of Kerry last year.

McEllistrim was in his very best mood that day and won the first game.

He roared into the second game with the confidence of that first set victory behind him and indeed at different stages of the second set led 13-8 and 18-13.

It appeared that Maher's victory run had come to an end.

It hadn't of course. He came back to win a cliff-hanger showing in real fashion the tremendous skill and flair for the big occasion in not allowing himself to be panicked when the chips are really

down.

In the intervening twelve months he has remained unbeaten. Though on numerous occasions we assumed that the inevitable defeat which must come some time was at hand—such as the senior hardball singles semi-final this season against Seamus McCabe when he literally scraped returns from the floor. He just refused to submit to the absolute fitness and dexterity of the Monaghanman.

We also recollect the first round Leinster championship tie against Jim Doyle of Dublin. Doyle had one of his best displays. He won the first and led 19-12 in the second.

Two more aces and history would have been made. But Maher as ever came back with a supercharged performance to win on the post.

Few people know about his extraordinary feat against Pat McGarry of Limerick in the Softball

singles final this season.

After coasting to an easy victory in the first set he took a heavy tumble in the second and dislocated his right shoulder.

McGarry took full advantage of the misfortune and ran up a big lead.

However, the story has the same ending as on so many other occasions. Maher just refused to give in and came back to win.

So, for my part, and, indeed for all other handballers who hope to see Ireland win the World Championship next May, we hope that he will change his mind.

The point is that there is no player in the country even capable of extending him.

And, that comparison is made on Maher's own admission that he is not fully fit. If between now and next May he decided to reach peak fitness, he should win that coveted title for Ireland.

Let us hope that he will make this decision.



The Down defence holds out against Offaly.

Na Gaeil thar lear

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In The News with Bacchus

Take-Over In New York

Football supremacy in New York changed hands recently. Kerry, for several years unbeatable in championship football, were hammered into submission by Monaghan in the final of the delayed 1968 K.O. competition.

Monaghan's rise to the top from obscurity a few years back has been a meteoric one. Their team has been strengthened bit by bit and is made up of players from the northern counties mainly.

Like Kerry in the past, Monaghan have the backing of an extremely wealthy businessman in the person of Alan Clancy, who could be said to have invested wisely and well from a football point of view.

Having got his team to the top, it will be interesting to see how Clancy can withstand the challenge of other teams and other managers.

Kid Stuff

All the newcomers to Gaelic Park this summer haven't been from Ireland. A couple of Sundays back there was an exhibition juvenile football game between two out-of-town teams — New Haven and Hampden.

It was the first time since the late 'forties that under-age football had been played at Gaelic Park.

Hair-Raising Story?

Just to prove that everybody who goes to All-Ireland finals in Croke Park is

not very interested in the actual games I give you the following gem of a quotation from a Radio Eireann programme of the day following the hurling final.

It came from a Miss Aileen Orpen and she said: "There wasn't a boy in sight with hair below the tops of his ears and I saw hundreds of young girls with not one mini-skirt between them."

The second half of that sentence is certainly a bit ambiguous but Miss Orpen must have had too many false eyelashes on if she couldn't see any long-haired youths on the terraces or on the field.

And as for mini-skirts — if she had to throw an eye on the Railway Wall, she would, without any shadow of doubt, have seen quite a few skirts which left no doubt whatever about their 'mininess'!

'Special' Treatment

Many G.A.A. people were singled out by the B Specials and Paisleyites in Belfast during the recent troubles.

The Sarsfields Club had their premises at Dover Street broken into and burned to the ground.

Paddy O'Hara's popular and ornate pub suffered a like fate — as did Leo Murphy's brother's pub.

James McCartan's pub at Donaghcloney, Co. Down was earmarked for destruction but neighbours, many of them Protestants, placed a guard on it during the most troubled period.



See Doctor Weds

Doctor Weds

There were plenty of footballers in Kilmuckridge Parish Church, Co. Wexford when Dr. Bernard Brady, Donegal and Ulster player and doctor in attendance at Croke Park matches was married to Miss Margie Rath.

Pictured above with the bride and groom and the bridesmaids are, from left, Kevin Beahan (Louth), Sean Murray (Longford), Jimmy Whan (Armagh), Mr. Joe Brennan, Minister for Labour, Anton Carroll (Donegal) and Fr. Liam McDaid (Donegal). The latter, who is a clubmate of the groom with St. Josephs, Bundoran-Ballyshannon, performed the ceremony.

Birds of a Feather

For many years players and officials have been complaining about the lack of social life in the G.A.A. and the few opportunities opposing sides have of meeting after games and it was

as if in response to this general feeling within the Association that the G.A.A. initiated the banquet for the All-Ireland final contestants some years ago.

However, if one is to use the dinner organised by the Kilkenny and Cork Associations at the Green Isle Hotel on the night of the All-Ireland hurling final and the official G.A.A. banquet at the Intercontinental Hotel on the following day, as a criterion then a lot of players and officials don't seem particularly interested in fraternising on making acquaintance with their rivals in the opposite camps. At the various tables at each function, the majority of the players were solidly entrenched in their respective 'ghettos,' while the officials were not blameless in this respect either.

It seems a pity that players and officials do not avail of the banquet to erase feelings of bitterness which may have arisen during the course of a game. However, if the players and officials find it difficult to intermingle at the official G.A.A. banquet, surely the Association would be acting in its own interest by assisting them to do so. This could be done unobtrusively by assigning players from opposing sides to the same tables. After all, if they don't do it fairly soon the whole

purpose of these get-togethers will have been defeated.

Three-Quarters of a Ticket

I'm sure quite a few people are wondering where the 30,000 stand tickets for the All-Ireland finals go each year. Well, the breakdown goes something like this:

Five year tickets already sold: 10,000. Allocation to G.A.A. clubs 12,500. Allocation to the four competing teams 4,500. This gives a total of 27,000 and the remainder go to the various officials such as Central Council delegates, Colleges, Vocational and University Councils, Handball and Camogie Association, etc.

If after all that there are any left over they are given to the competing counties. This allocation to the clubs is made on the basis of 3½ per club. However, it is not advisable to

turn up at Croke Park on Sept 28 with three quarters of a ticket!

Men at Work

Have you ever wondered what goes on at Central Council meetings? You haven't? Okay, have you ever wondered what your own county's delegate does at these meetings?

The following is a check on how often the various delegates spoke during the four and a half hours of the meeting on Sept. 6: It refers to actual discussions and does not include questions etc. and casual comments.

M. Duffy (Monaghan) 10; M. O Ruairc (Kerry), 8; B. Freeman (Dublin), F. Muldoon (Donegal), 7; Fr. McGee (Longford), T. Fitzgerald (Meath), M. Kehoe (Wexford), T. Dolan (Roscommon), 5; M. Maher (Tipp), N. Purcell (Kilkenny), J. Dowling (Offaly), Fr. Cremin (Westmeath), M. Campion (Kildare), G. Fitzgerald (Cork), J. O'Connell (Limerick), D. Whelan (Waterford), T. Mellon (Derry), 4; J. Conroy (Vice-Pres.), P. Drummond (Voc. Schools), 3; M. Feeney and P. Ryan (Vice-Pres.), P. McNamara (Trustee), Fr. Neville (Handball), B. Moore (Antrim), J. Daly (Clare), P. McFlynn (Down), 2; T. O'Riordan (Leitrim), J. McMorro (Sligo), S. Murray (Louth), G. Nicholls (Wicklow), E. McGee (Universities), T. Maguire (Cavan), 1.



Nick Purcell

So there you have it, with Mickey Duffy 'Top of the Pops' closely followed by Micheal O Ruairc.

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on Wed. & Thurs. 22nd & 23rd October

Over 100 Competitors Taking Part
£500 in Cash Prizes — 20 Perpetual Challenge Trophies.
National Finals of Wholemeal Bread-Baking Competitions.

'Queen of the Plough' Dance, Thursday Night,
in Arcadia Ballroom, Cahir.
Music — Donie Collins

Particulars from: The Secretary, N.P.A., Ltd.,
Ballylinan, Athy. 'Phone 25125.