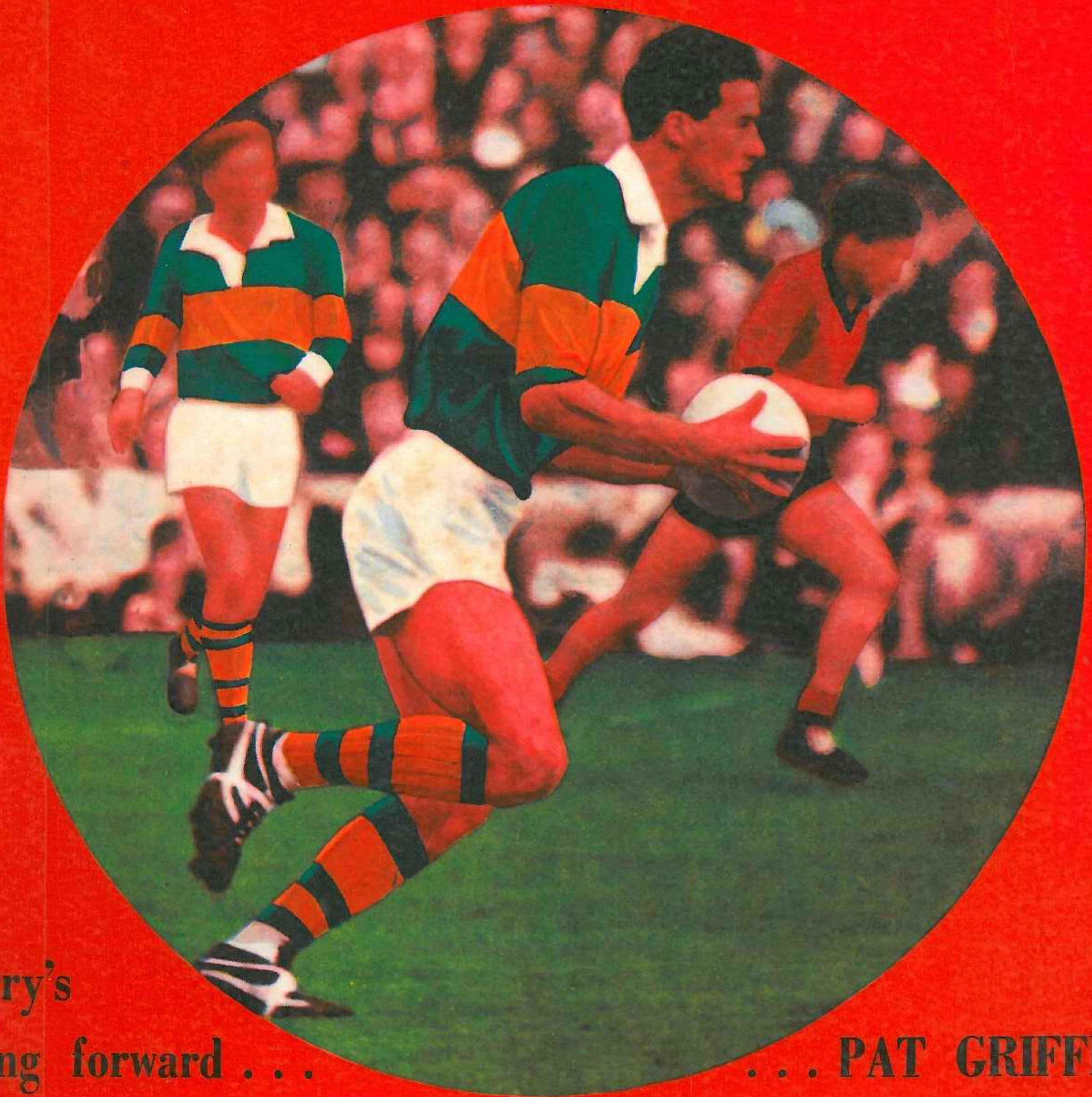


95 GAA

# Gaelic Sport



Kerry's  
flying forward . . .

. . . PAT GRIFFIN  
jets off on a solo

TO ALL OUR READERS A HAPPY CHRISTMAS

TWO SHILLINGS

DECEMBER 1969



# Fringe benefit

We didn't have Mrs. McGuirk's laundry in mind when we went into this business. Still, we can't complain. One result of soaring sales is a lot of empty bags. And once a bag has done its job, carrying fertilizer that will give more grass, better cattle, bigger prices and higher exports, we're glad to see it get an extra lease of life. Like the people at NET it's just doing a little bit more than it's supposed to.

# NET FERTILIZERS

Manufactured in Arklow by Nitrigin Éireann Teo.

LYNCH

# MAKE THIS A WARM CHRISTMAS

**E**VERYONE likes to get a gadget for a gift—especially if it's something they wouldn't feel justified in buying for themselves. If you're making out a presents list you'll surely see something to please at least one or two people in this selection of electrical items which we've chosen specially for our readers. No gift costs more than twenty pounds—in the case of something as high as that we're assuming the whole family would be clubbing together to buy it—but many of them cost a good deal less than this.

For a family present: how about a 'Sunliner' infra-red wall-heater to hang in the bathroom and make bath-time pleasanter for everybody. Designed to go on the wall high out of reach and controlled by a pull cord switch, it is ideally safe in use and costs £4-14-3d.

Is there a toddler in the house? Or a new baby? Then a convector

heater is just the thing for the bedroom or living room. It can be mounted on the wall or free-standing and portable. Thermostatic control means a constant temperature can be maintained. The two-kilowatt GEC convector heater in grey and walnut is well designed and good value at £8-11-0.

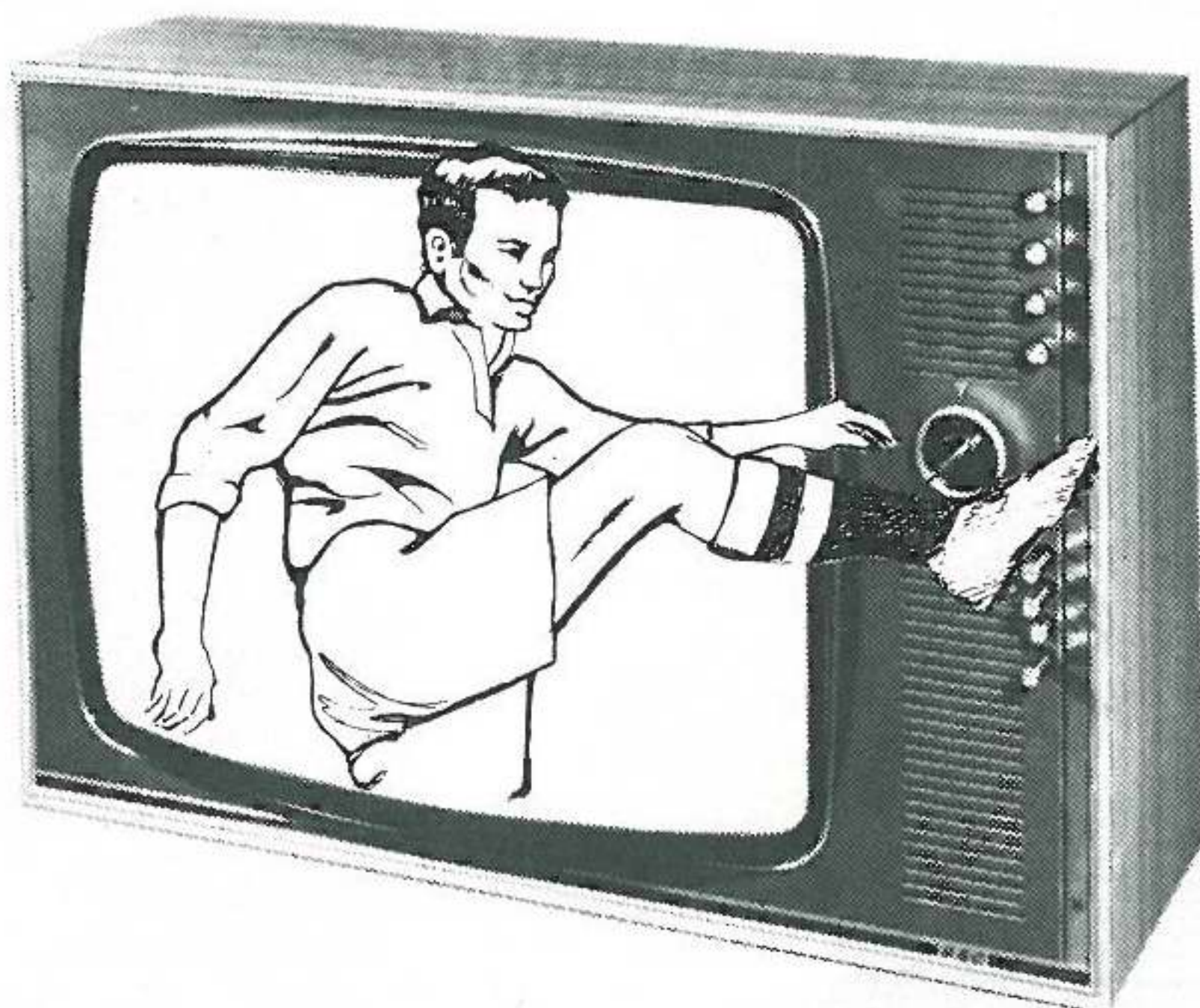
A nice cup of tea . . . easily made in an electric kettle. Buy an all-chrome GEC kettle, sleekly styled and efficient, for a son or daughter living away from home, then they'll never be short of a cup of tea. Three pint, four-pint or six-pint size, costing from £5-10-0 to £7-15-0.

The harassed Mum who does all her own washing and ironing won't know what she's been missing till you buy her a GEC Steam Iron—gets the clothes ironed in half the time, and gives a better finish too. Easy to work, it can also be used as a dry iron. Price £5-15-0.

Maybe a newly-wed couple would be the people to give a Toastmaid automatic pop-up toaster to. This is the best value in pop-up toasters we've seen, at £5-15-0. Will toast the bread lightly, golden brown or dark according to how you set the dial—no chance of leaving it to burn! There's a snapout crumb tray for easy cleaning.

A teen-age daughter or sister would thank you for a hair-dryer—to give her an excuse to spend even more time doing her hair! Morphy Richards have a good selection, from the smaller hand-held dryers which cost £5-10-0 to the luxurious 'Salon' and 'Vanity' dryers which come complete with hood, hose and stand, just like at a real hairdressing salon. Some models have a blowcomb attachment for wave-setting children's hair.

Nearly anybody, from the harassed family cook to the retired grandfather would be glad of a GEC Snackmaker—a nifty little table top cooker which can produce full-sized meals. Fine for flat-dwellers too—you can grill a steak and boil two vegetables in twenty minutes. The Snackmaker costs £10-17-0.



## On the ball!

### the new 20" and 24" GEC T.V. sets

New GEC "all square" 20" and 24" television receivers give a better than ever picture. For crisper sound to match the crisper picture, a high sensitivity loudspeaker faces directly towards you. VHF and UHF tuners for 405/625 line reception.

# **G.E.C.** Homemakers

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# Put Marley on the floor —that's where it belongs

**M**AYBE by now you've got the worst of the pre-Christmas decorating over and done with. The walls have been covered in emulsion or wallpaper, the ceiling has been whitened, the loose skirting board has been repaired and you've hung the new lampshade. And still those noises of domestic complaint keep up a faint buzz in the background of your mind—"what about the floors—well, what about the floors?" Well, what about them? Are you putting down something new underfoot this year? If you intend to, look around at some of the newer products instead of merely ordering a roll of something 'the same as last time'. Even should you buy something very similar to what you got last time, the designs and colours at least can

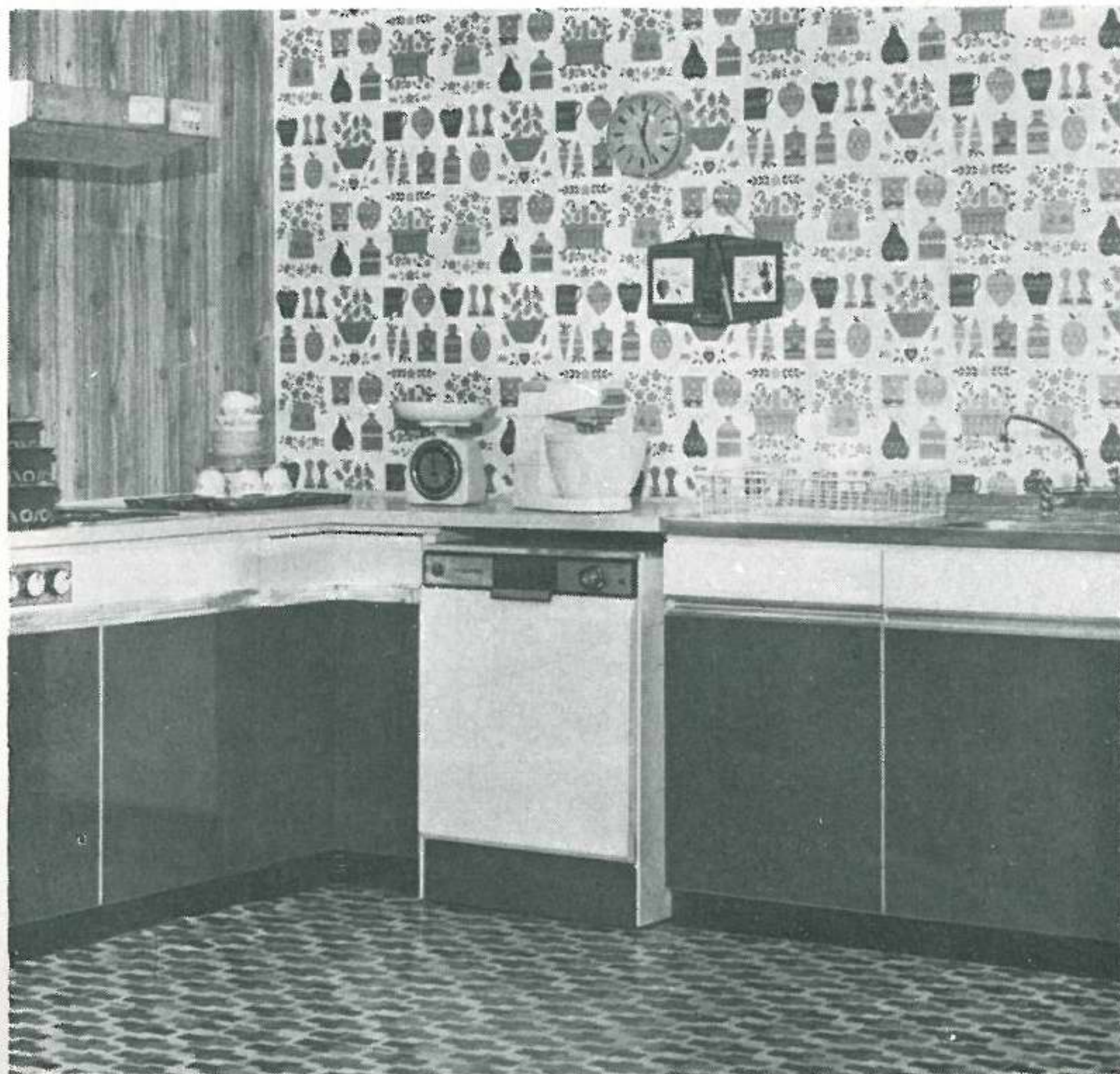
be different.

It pays to chase up a few new ideas, and in the process you could find yourself solving a few problems you thought were unsolvable. The problem of noise, for instance is something which people with young families feel they just have to live with. With toddlers and school-goers around the place, carpets aren't a good proposition except in the room that's kept for formal occasions only. Everywhere else you need something which is wipeable, washable, spongeable and preferably doesn't need polishing or much maintenance other than an occasional mopping over.

It's impossible to find such a flooring which will also be quiet underfoot—or is it? Have a look at products such as Marley's new Vinylaire and you may change

your mind. Vinylaire is a really ingenious idea. It's a sheet flooring with a printed and textured vinyl surface, the pattern protected by a shield of transparent vinyl which means you need never take a polishing cloth to it. It is also very safe for children and old people, being virtually non-slip. The real ingenuity, however, comes with the backing which is bonded on to it. This is a resilient foam vinyl interlayer that has bubbles of air locked into it to give both warmth and comfort underfoot. On top of this there's a further layer of Aquacord, which is rubber-impregnated asbestos. In architectural terms this provides 'additional thermal insulation'. What that means in everyday language is that the floor is very warm and comfortable to stand on. The foam backing also means that Vinylaire is almost as quiet as carpet to walk on. So there you've got a combination of qualities worth looking into. Vinylaire comes in rolls six feet wide, in a variety of patterns and colours. It can be laid on almost any floor and you can either stick it down completely or merely stick it round the edges and at the seam-joints.

Then there's Marleytex which is something so new in the carpet line that you'll hardly have heard of it—but it's coming into the shops by degrees. Basically, this represents a revolutionary approach to flooring, and is intended to give the hard-wearing qualities of vinyl or linoleum plus the comfort and quiet of carpet—at the right price. Marleytex costs about a quarter of what you'd have to pay for conventional carpeting with the same life expectancy. Made all of nylon, it has no raised pile, but the hairs lie horizontally, the nylon being punched into a tough fibre base by machine. Because the fibres lie horizontally, the carpet will resist staining very well and is unsurpassed in its ability to withstand crushing. It gives luxury in colour and texture plus very hard wear indeed under the toughest conditions. And, of course, it is very quiet. At the moment it's used in hospitals, schools, offices—places where a flooring needs to be really tough—but there's no doubt that once the housewife and home handyman discover it, Marleytex will find a place in their plans too. It needs no underfelt and can go on practically any level floor.



● Marley Consort as seen above, is fast becoming the most popular floor-covering in Ireland.

AMERICAN CITY LIBRARY  
REFERENCE DEPT.

# I was floored

Marley Consort really does shine like new again, with only a quick wipe with a damp cloth! (That's because it's protected by a tough, thick vinyl shield, my dealer tells me). Besides nine-inch tiles, it comes in three, four and six-foot widths. And the patterns are simply super. But be sure you ask for Marley Consort by name. Now, how about another coffee?"



 **MARLEY**  
**CONSORT**



*Photographed at Springfield Stables, Co. Dublin. Mr. C. B. Harty, owner.*

# Churchmans tipped Made to measure for man-size pleasure

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all round.

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all through.

Fit for men who go for pleasure.

Take action... pack Churchmans tipped.

**Churchmans Extra Size**

**5 1/2 for 20**

# Gaelic Sport

Vol. 12. No. 12. December, 1969.

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## COVER PHOTO

OUR front cover this month features that flying forward from the Kingdom, Pat Griffin. On page 39 of this issue Noel Coogan turns the spotlight on Pat and highlights some of the outstanding feats by the Kerry forward in his career to-date.

## SHAME

AS a sporting event, the South African rugby team's current tour of Britain and Ireland does not interest us. Like everybody who abhors the South African Government's apartheid policies, we are, however, concerned with the fact that the majority of the jolly old rugby chaps in this country are willing—indeed delighted—to welcome an all-white team which represents the tyranny of Dr. Vorster's racialist regime.

We add our voice to the widespread condemnation of this implied support for the oppressors of the coloured people of South Africa.

But that is not the primary purpose of this article. We wish to draw attention to the hypocrisy of the jolly old rugby chaps who, whenever in the past there was a public controversy about the G.A.A.'s Rule 27, were the first to cry: "Keep politics out of sport."

Rule 27 has nothing to do with politics. Critics of the G.A.A. have used the catch-cry because it was a convenient smear. Nor has it anything to do with racialism.

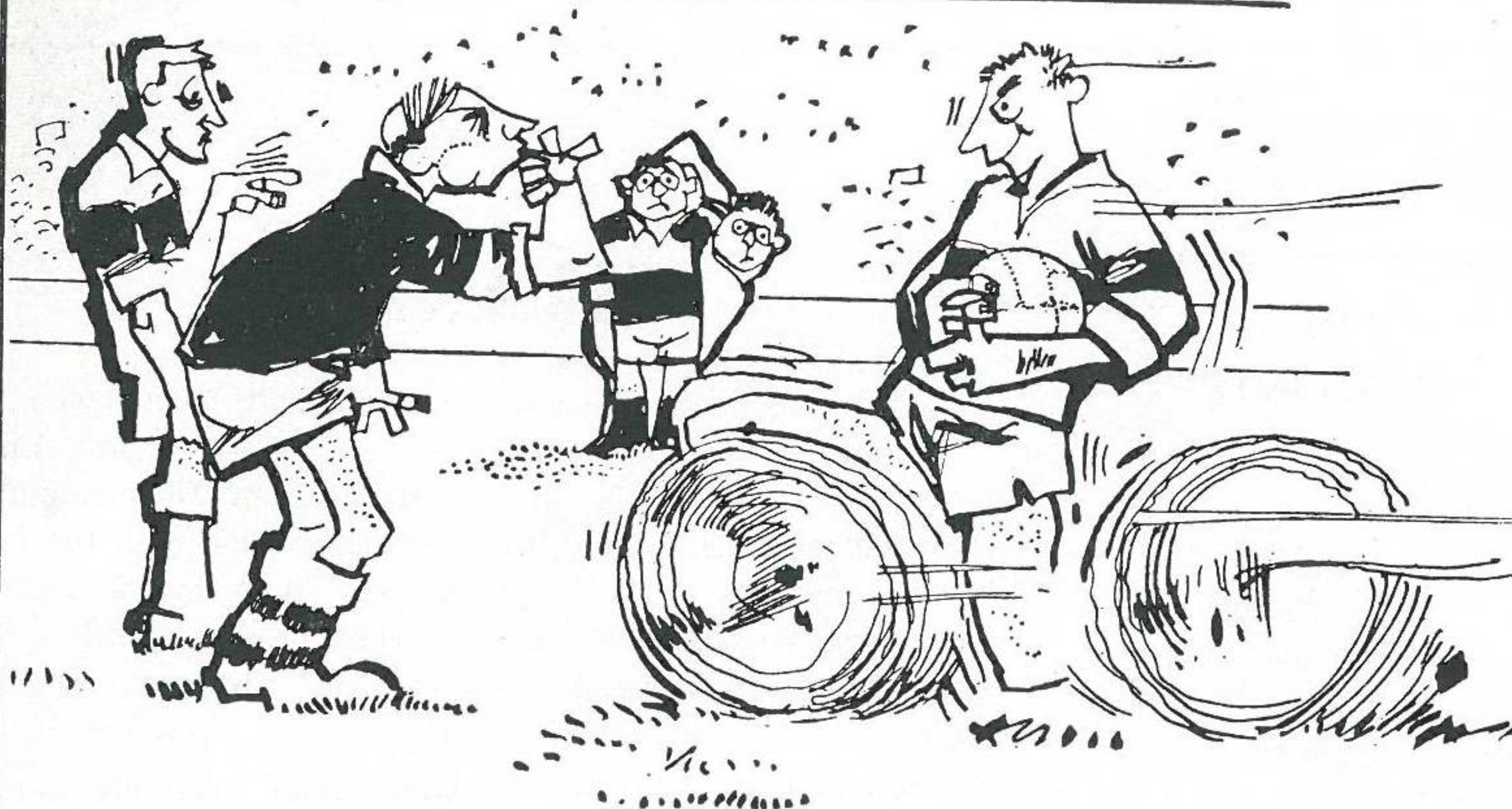
Apartheid in South Africa—and Rhodesia—has brought politics into sport. Coloured sportsmen are excluded from South Africa's international teams.

Yet, Irishmen have played for British rugby teams in South Africa and now an all-white South African team is being welcomed to our shores.

By playing against them, or by going to watch their matches, they are tacitly supporting Vorster's racialism.

We wait, impatiently, for the next time that one of these bods tells the G.A.A. : "Keep politics out of sport."

# 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** —





PATRICK CARVER RECALLS THE  
BIG EVENTS OF THE 'SIXTIES

## END OF AN ERA

**I**N a very little time from now, on the last stroke of midnight on the 31st of this month, the 1960s will slip away gently into history.

For the young people, now comes the exciting challenge, the inquisitive step into the unknown of the 1970s. And for those of us a little older . . . another awareness of age, a little nostalgia, a touch of sadness for an era that is gone irrevocably and can only live again for us in cloudy memory.

And what will we remember of this decade in relation to our traditional games of hurling and football and to the great men who graced the sporting scene during the years that seemed to steal so quickly from us?

The 1960s opened up with the resounding impact of healthy promise as Wexford, far-out outsiders in an All-Ireland hurling final, swept to a tingling victory over a powerful Tipperary side, and Down, the new emerging force in Gaelic football, took the Sam Maguire Cup north of the Border for the first time, with a streamlined win over Kerry.

Down maintained their surging pace the following year but shortly afterwards, it seems to me, the momentum was lost.

In hurling the old reliables, Tipperary, Kilkenny and Wexford raced back into power and towards the end of the decade they were joined by Cork to restore the complete and utter domination of the Big Four.

Kerry, never long out of the limelight, stepped to the front in football for a little while, Dublin

had their brief hour in the sun and they were followed by Galway in their memorable three-in-a-row.

Meath came out of the shadows in 1967 and flickered for a little while and then came Down in a last burst of glory.

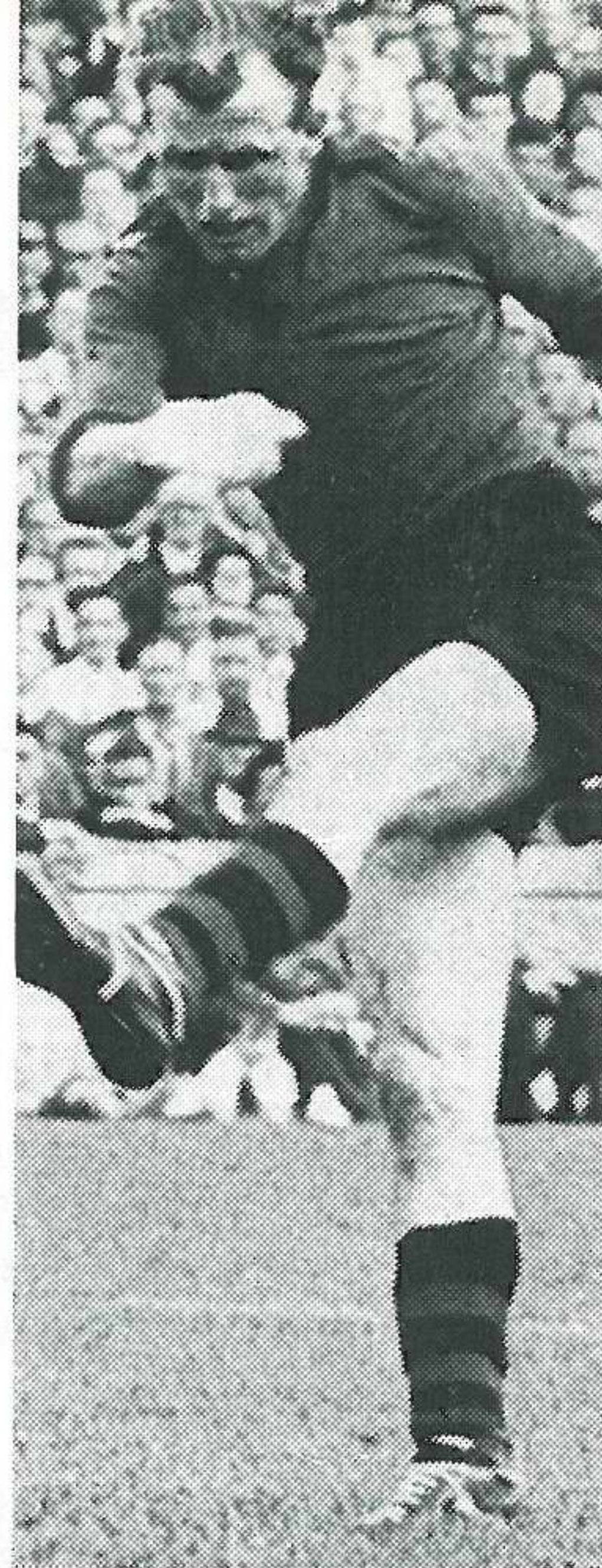
Finally, as so often before, Kerry rounded out the decade and this time they did it with the impressive grand slam of the All-Ireland, the National League and the World Trophy.

But to name the teams of the 1960s . . . well, what do you think?

In hurling, it must rest between Tipperary, Wexford and Kilkenny. Despite their heartening win in 1966, after twelve heart-breaking years without an All-Ireland title, Cork can not be included.

That 1966 victory was more an emotional experience and triumph, created by almost desperation than anything else. Measured against the men who lost in this year's All-Ireland final to Kilkenny, the team of three years ago was not a great

*Paddy Doherty, as he appeared when playing at the peak of his form for the great Down team of the early 'Sixties.*



one. And, with so many youngsters now on the side, one senses that Cork are perhaps a team of the 1970s than of the decade which is now dying.

Wexford's two All-Ireland victories in the 1960s were both against the odds but somehow or other, I could never put them in quite the same class as either Tipperary or Kilkenny, both of whom maintained a steady pace throughout the last 10 seasons.

And, in my opinion, Tipperary must be the hurling team of the 1960s. They collected four All-Irelands and, no matter how one looks at them, they were always the team to beat. I would give them just a narrow edge over Kilkenny.

The 1960s brought three All-Ireland football titles to Galway, three to Down, two to Kerry and

● TO PAGE 9

# Esso guaranteed tubes, batteries and accessories are here!

You know and trust Esso for outstanding petroleum products.

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Look out for Esso's new range of tubes, batteries and accessories. At Esso service stations which carry this sign.



If it's Esso it must be good. 

● FROM PAGE 7

one each to Dublin and Meath.

And one can rule out immediately the last two. After 1963 Dublin faded rapidly and were well out of things by 1969. Meath promised a lot but they, too, disappeared after their great tour of Australia.

And, despite that three-in-a-row gallop, I still remain to be convinced that Galway were one of the great teams of the 1960s. Their domination arrived at a time when football standards had dropped considerably. Indeed, I can still recall vividly, how fortunate they were to scrape through to the All-Ireland final of 1966 against an extremely mediocre Cork side. But for some inexplicable decisions by the Cork selectors on that extraordinary day, Galway would never have qualified for the final.

For me, the title of football team of the 1960s must rest between Down and Kerry. And perhaps if there were another year in the decade—with this present Kerry side looking all set for a great run—I might be inclined to name the Kingdom.

But my vote goes to Down. In the early years of the decade they brought a new, refreshing, exciting quality into Gaelic football—a streamlining that was subsequently to be copied by other sides—and in 1968, they gathered forces again, with good youngsters to supplement a few crafty veterans, to take their third All-Ireland title.

And what of the individual stars of the 1960s?

One recalls the ease and style of Kilkenny's Eddie Keher in the 1963 hurling final, the class of Wexford's Billy Rackard, the towering defence of Peter Doolan for Cork in 1966, the constant threat of Tipperary's Jimmy Doyle in every game . . . and the performance of so many others.

In my evaluation, and again it comes down and rests on a steady

*Christy Ring, whose great inter-county hurling career ended just a little over six years ago.*



consistency over 10 season of first-class hurling, Jimmy Doyle of Tipperary takes the top place.

In football, I would place Kerry's Mick O'Connell just ahead of Sean O'Neill of Down.

O'Neill made his name early on as a half-forward, but the passing years matured him into a full-forward of immense dimension. One always felt that he was the great force behind Down's impressive performances.

But O'Connell, moody, enigmatic, but always the perfectionist, showed in 1969 that he was better, if anything, than the youngster of the early 1960s. For my money, the king of Valentia was the supreme artist of the decade.

I would be a fool—a vain one at that—to believe for a moment that most of you will agree with my choices. These are personal opinions; if you think differently—and many of you will—why not write and tell me so. Why not kick off the 1970s with a good argument?

And what other memories are there of the 1960s?

There was, of course, the visit of the Australian Rules footballers to Ireland and the new life they injected into our own Gaelic football. They taught us

a lot and showed the way our own football could be improved. One can only hope that the negotiations now under way between Australia, New York and the G.A.A. will eventually pave the way to international competition and to an overhaul of the present code of Gaelic football.

And there was the passing of Cork's peerless Christy Ring from the hurling scene, to be followed by Tipperary's John Doyle with his eight All-Ireland medals that equalled Ring's record.

Billy Rackard, Des Foley, Paddy Doherty, Niall Sheehy, Noel Tierney and many, many others too, faded away gracefully into retirement.

On a happy note there was the election of All-Ireland star Jack Lynch to the lofty office of Taoiseach?

But, on an extremely sad note there was the lamented death of Pdraig O Caoimh, who had been General Secretary of the G.A.A. for so long.

Time marches on inexorably and sadly . . . and we are left with memories.

So before we march into the 1970s, spare a few moments to think of the decade now over in Gaelic sport.

What will YOU remember?



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And it's quite a group to join — three great Banks, 438 offices, all giving you the same high quality services in the same friendly, efficient way. And how do you join? It's easy, just walk into any branch of the Munster & Leinster, Provincial or Royal Banks, open an account and you're in, you've joined Ireland's most progressive Banking Group — AIB.

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# ALLIED IRISH BANKS

Munster & Leinster Bank, Provincial Bank, Royal Bank

## GALWAY WERE THE GREATEST!

Says SEAN RICE



CYRIL  
DUNNE,  
*still only*  
*26 years old.*

**T**HE curtain fell rather limply. For, although the final year of the swinging Sixties was not the flop which many maintain, the outcome, nevertheless, was not unexpected. Kerry looked home and dry from the beginning.

But we in Connacht will not complain. You see, we have the memory of Galway to warm us in the cold nights ahead. And we will be insisting that they were the team of the Sixties.

Down will dispute this. Their argument will be based on those great displays in the opening years of the decade when they brought the Sam Maguire Cup over the border twice in succession—and then came back in the twilight to snatch it again.

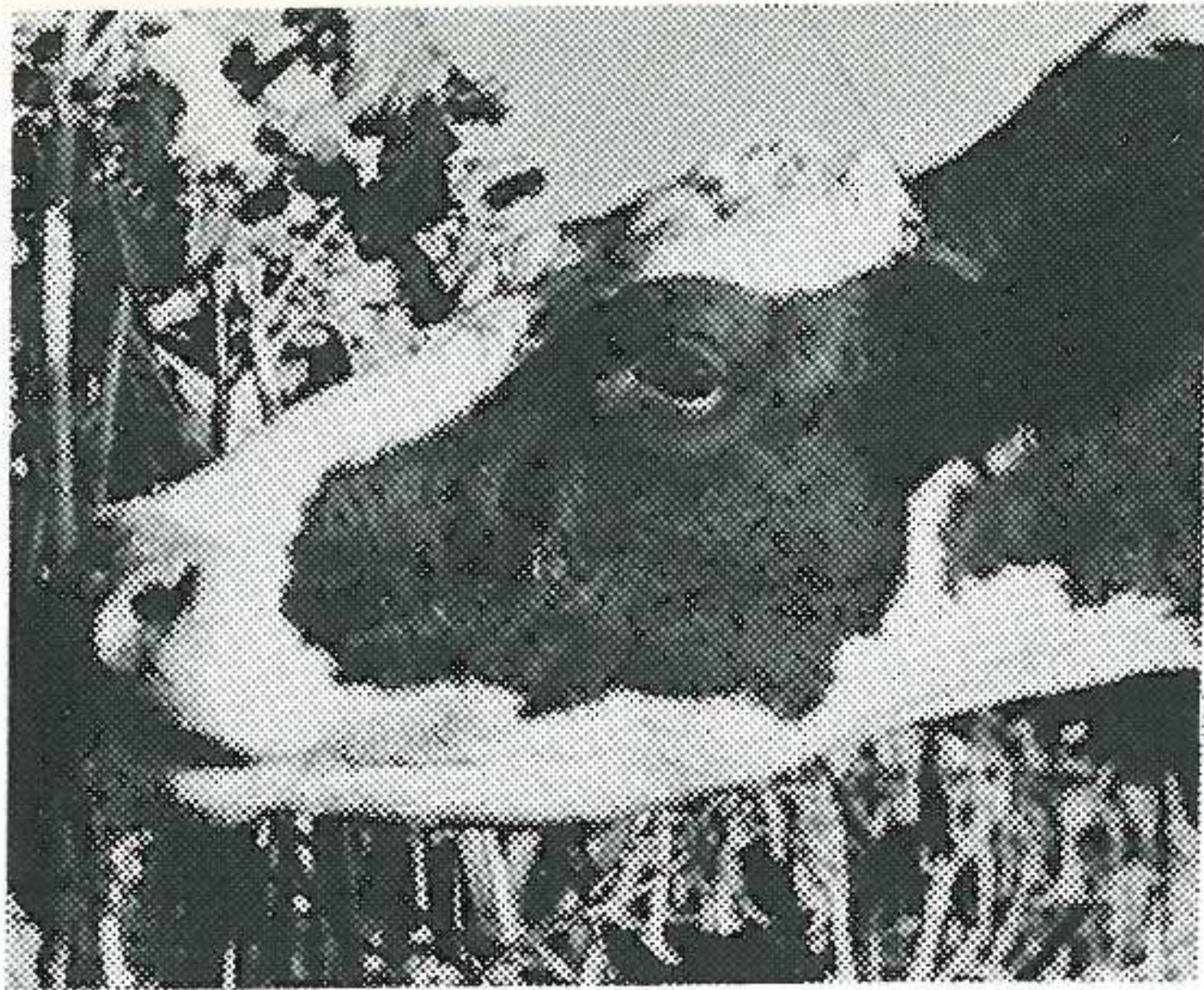
It is a valid claim. And the sands of time will never choke the memory of their achievement; the bursting seams of Croke Park that day when they

met Kerry, as Lennon and Doherty and O'Neill burnished the style begun by Dublin a few years before; the magic of Seán O'Neill in their most recent win; the defending of Tom O'Hare—Oh, yes, they are entitled to argue.

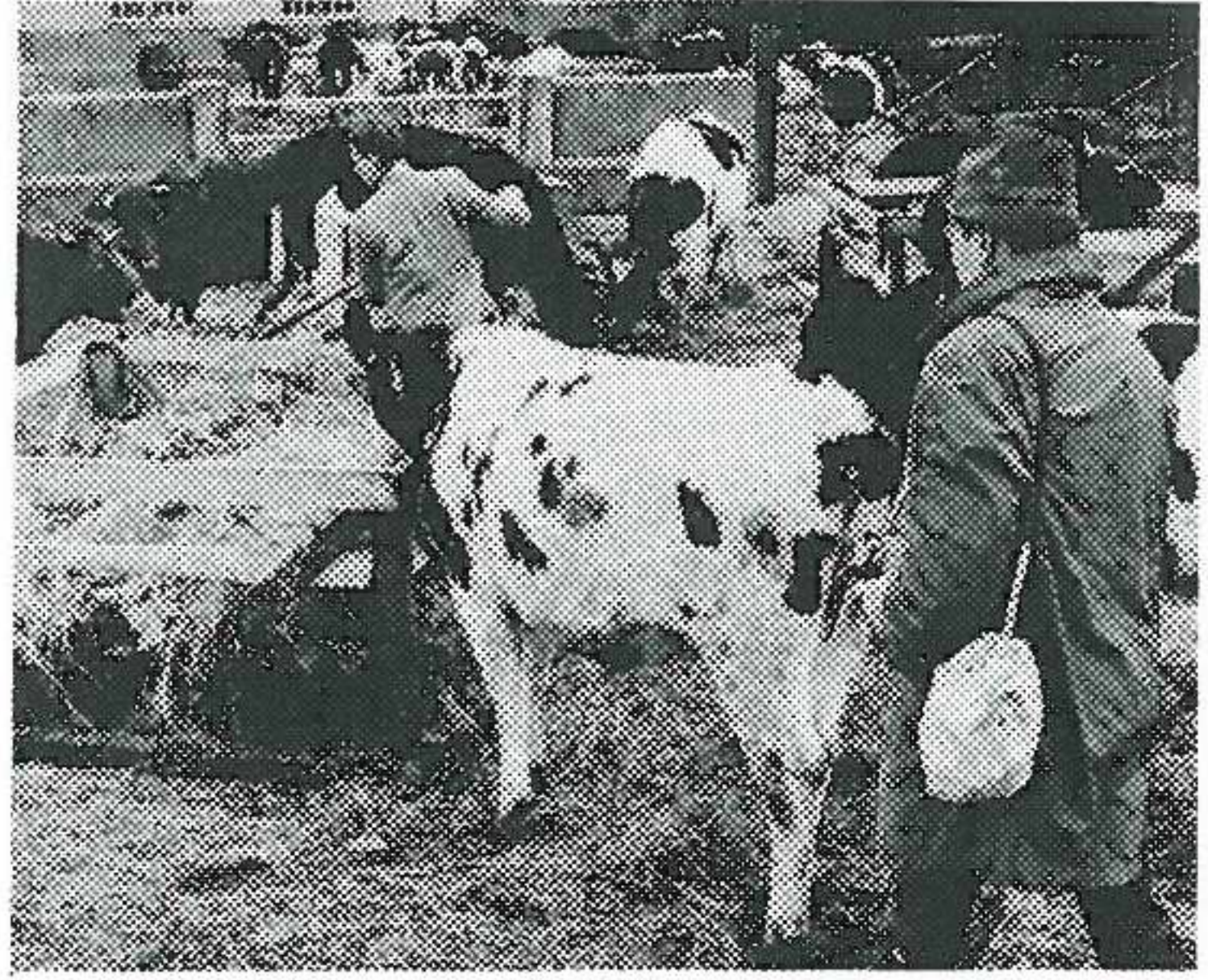
But we will not be put off. Galway, who won six Connacht titles, three All-Ireland titles on the trot and contested four in all must elbow them out. The perfect balance and sense of timing, the thrust of their front rows never once abandoned that team in those three great years.

The match they lost was the beginning of it all. The "Terrible Twins", Seán Purcell and Frank Stockwell, had just retired and most of the new material had come from the minor team that won the All-Ireland final in 1960. Some were still in their 'teens when they shocked Kerry in the

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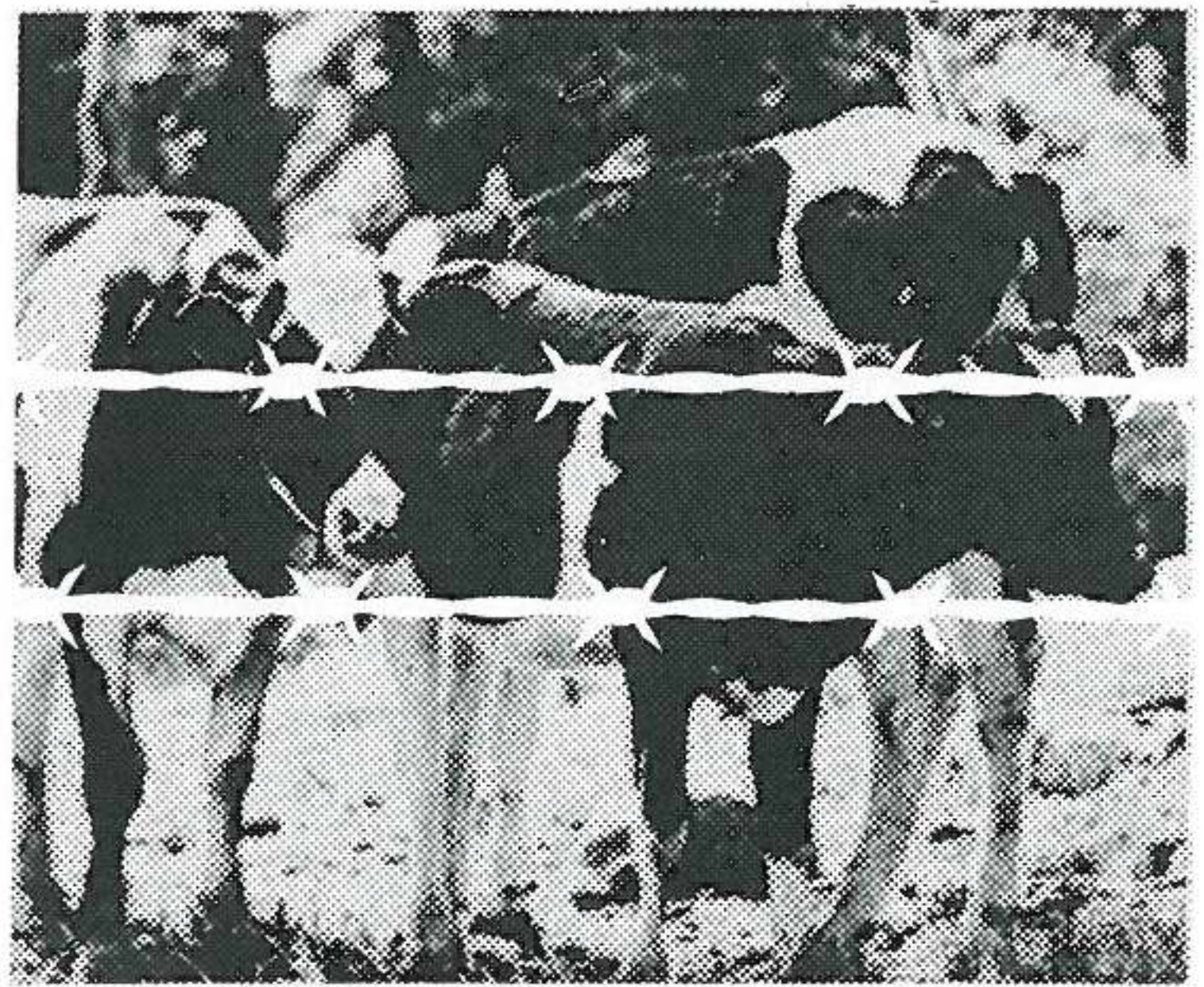
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**Now she's completely free of hoose. Not a trace of cough.**



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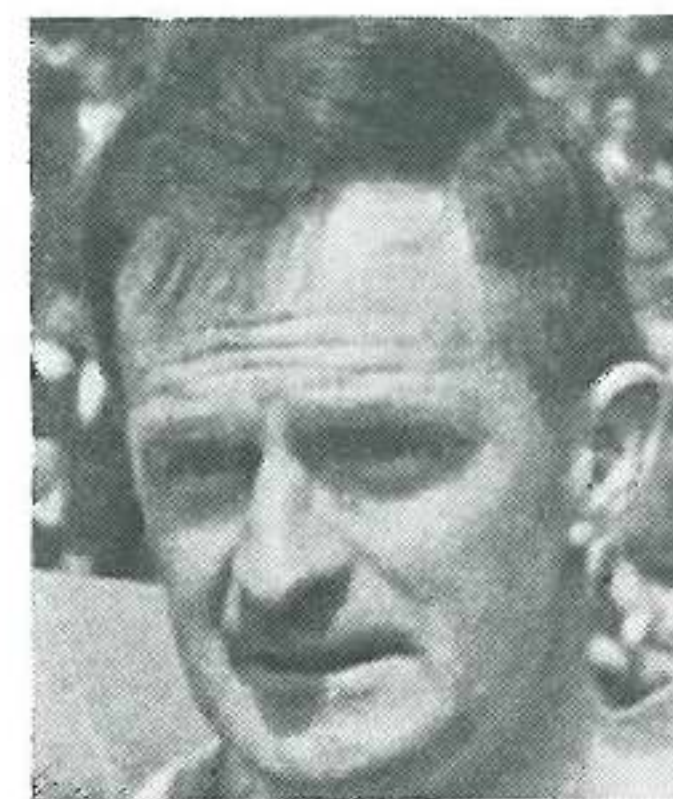
TRADE MARK



**Formula:** Tetramisole 3% W/V; Sodium Metabisulphite B.P. 0.1% W/V; Sodium Edetate B.P. 0.13% W/V; Propyl Hydroxybenzoate B.P. 0.02%; Colour 0.5% W/V; Citric Acid B.P. 2.0% W/V; Water to 100%.

## JAY DRENNAN NAMES HIS FOOTBALL STARS OF '69

# THE LEADING HALF DOZEN



Johnny Culloty

IT was a strange year, wasn't it, in some respects. How many would have thought it would bring the complete justification of the two old favourites, Kerry and Kilkenny. You would have thought they had shot their bolt a year ago; now, here they are, much the same in composition, cocks of the walk with heads in the clouds.

Kilkenny, of course, were humbled by New York, but you know how it is after a big win and on a first-class holiday trip. Boys will be boys, and fitness and preparedness will not be of ideal standards. No disrespect to New York, but it was the two great victories over Cork which made the year for Kilkenny and placed them up there on a pedestal, undisputed best in the country.

Kerry, of course, have even more to boast about: they have whacked everybody in sight, and by substantial margins at that. They fell to Down in Wembley, but they were neither at full strength nor in high key for that encounter. Every other county they met, New York, too, were beaten with a decisiveness that makes this Kerry team walk tall within the Kingdom's boundaries.

"Sure, we had to win it", said one of the players to me after the celebrated twenty-first, "We'd have had a dog's life down at home". And who said Kerry people were not too bothered that

they lost three finals in the sixties while trying for the 21st?

And the Stars of the Year? As I write, I cannot say what the infallible *Gaelic Sport* points system will say about that when all the monthly figures are added up, but, I have my ideas anyway.

**Mick O'Connell:** Obviously, and not because of his reputation, but rather in spite of it. He triumphed over the horrible burdens which expectation of brilliance place on him, to play inspiring football all through the year. Pushed to full-forward after last year's All-Ireland, because he did not manage to win the game on his own as so many expected, he worked his way back out to centre-field, raised the whole quality of the game being played by the Kerry team by the simplest method—example—and continued right through the year to produce at the right time the irresistible burst of magical football that cracked the will of every opposition.

And was there a vital score

throughout the year that Micko did not have a foot or hand in? Not so brilliant in the All-Ireland? But, remember the scare he put in the Offaly men, so that others were able to find the going easier because of the fear of O'Connell.

**Johnny Culloty:** A fine and inspiring captain of the All-Ireland championship side, who never failed to inspire his men in, perhaps, one of those positions where inspiration is easiest if you are a superb practitioner, and most difficult if you are anything less. I saw a lot of Culloty and Kerry, and I may say that there are a whole flood of pictures racing before my mind of sound saves that looked spectacular and spectacular ones that looked sound. What game was there when a slip by Culloty in any of a dozen cases might not have put Kerry on queer street? Cool as a breeze; like Solomon in his judgement; but, most of all a rounded footballer, who never fumbles the football in a crisis, but handles it like an extension of himself.

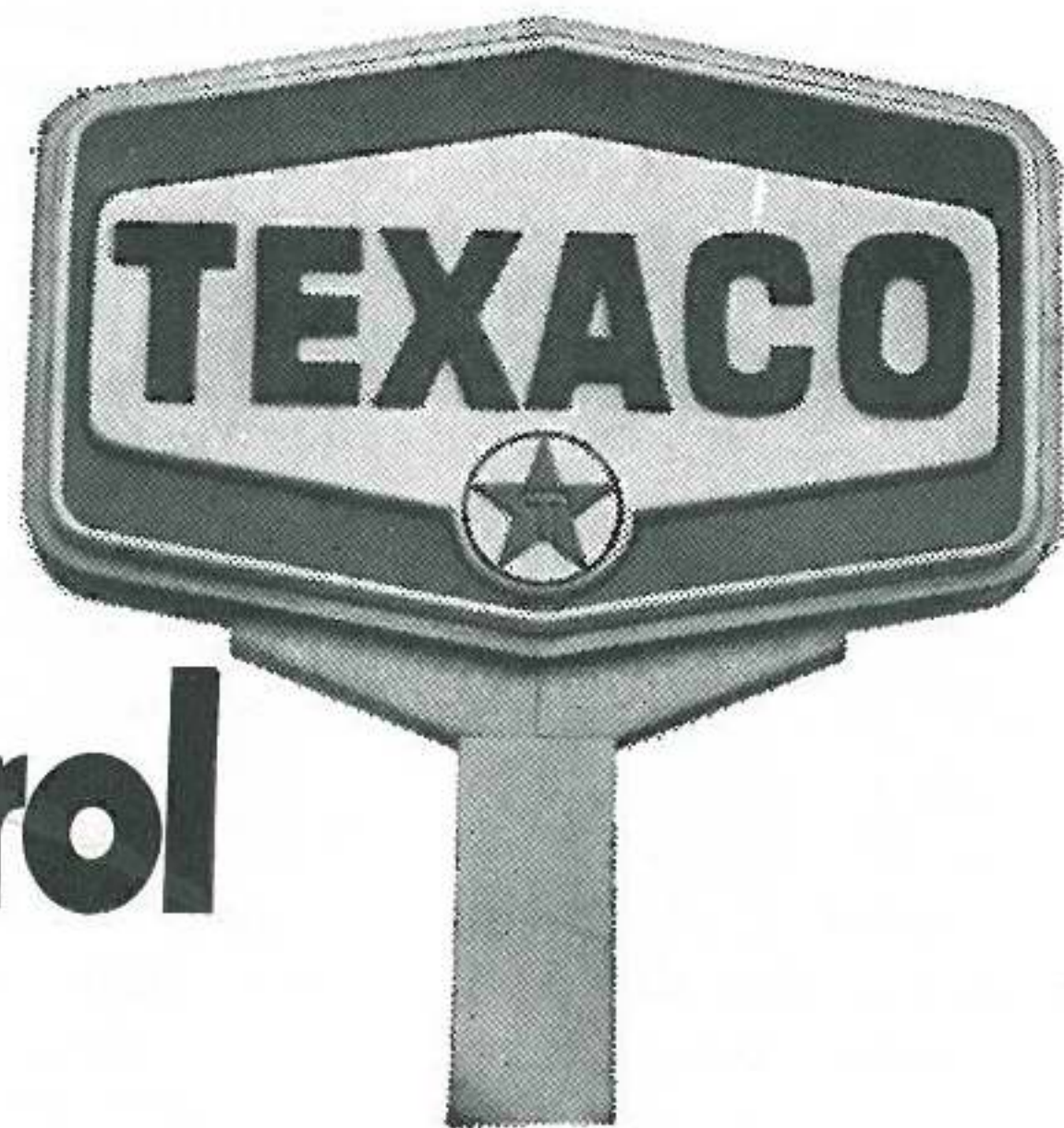
**D. J. Crowley:** The All-Ireland final, of course, but, not that alone. In every game he improved, and helped to make one of the finest midfield partnerships

● TO PAGE 15

**Texaco announce  
a radical new fuel:**



**The new  
clean power  
anti-wear petrol**





● FROM PAGE 13

the game has known. His controlled solo runs were something classical and never to be bettered; his single-minded dashes through the opposing defence when a chance afforded itself; and his amazing work-rate and eagerness for the ball, which was just what O'Connell needed in a partner, to allow him to concentrate on the devastation of the opposition with the occasional burst of "out of this world" play.

Against Cork, against a surprisingly stubborn Waterford, and, of course, against Offaly, it was Crowley's runs through hard man-to-man defences which disrupted the defences and produced vital points. He had a wonderful year; his only problem is how to live with the reputation it has earned him in the future.

**Nicholas Clavin:** The Offaly player who has grown most in stature throughout a wonderfully successful year: beginning as a wing-half back, and later showing fine form both there and at centre-half, it was not until installed at centre-field in the post All-Ireland games that he fully revealed the enormous potential he had. Tireless and completely fit, a good judge of the play about him, he exercises an extraordinary influence on a game.

Because of his appetite for work he plays an awful lot of the ball, but—and this is a big mark in his favour—he never holds the ball for the mere pleasure of holding it. What would he have meant to Offaly had they discovered his midfield powers a little earlier?

**Gene Cusack:** Here was the most exciting forward discovery of the year. I rate him ahead of Liam Higgins of Kerry, who made such strides also, but whose finish is not yet so polished. Cusack got Cavan's most vital scores, but he also got some really brave and thrilling ones

## A CHRISTMAS WISH

**T**HE Christchild must have played. He had the lamb the shepherds gave, but it would have been too big when he was one year old. In Egypt He had sand for castles and perhaps got camel rides from friendly Arabs. Back home in Nazareth he may have raced with John the Baptist, or mountain-climbed alone. Certainly he played. He took delight in flowers, watched the chirpy sparrow and saw the eagle soar. Did He get boat trips from fishermen on the inland sea and there seize up His future team?

Christ plays at Croke Park, Thurles, and Cill Patrick. He lives in the hurler striking, in the Kerryman leaping, in the old veteran who scans the scene with misty eyes. Yes, He's there. He plays in the Artane band. He chases every sliothar. He fights for every score.

Let's ask the Christchild to bless our games which, being a child, he understands. We are little children when we play. Be as little children, He once said. Of course, He also wears the white shirt of England and wins a triple crown for Wales. He plays at Dalymount, Lansdowne and Croke Park. Why can't we play together?

COLUMBA MANSFIELD, O.S.A.

which did not count for so much because his team was on the losing end. I consider his goal against Offaly in the replayed semi-final the best score of the year that I saw. He is a really worth-while acquisition for Cavan now that Charlie Gallagher has left the game.

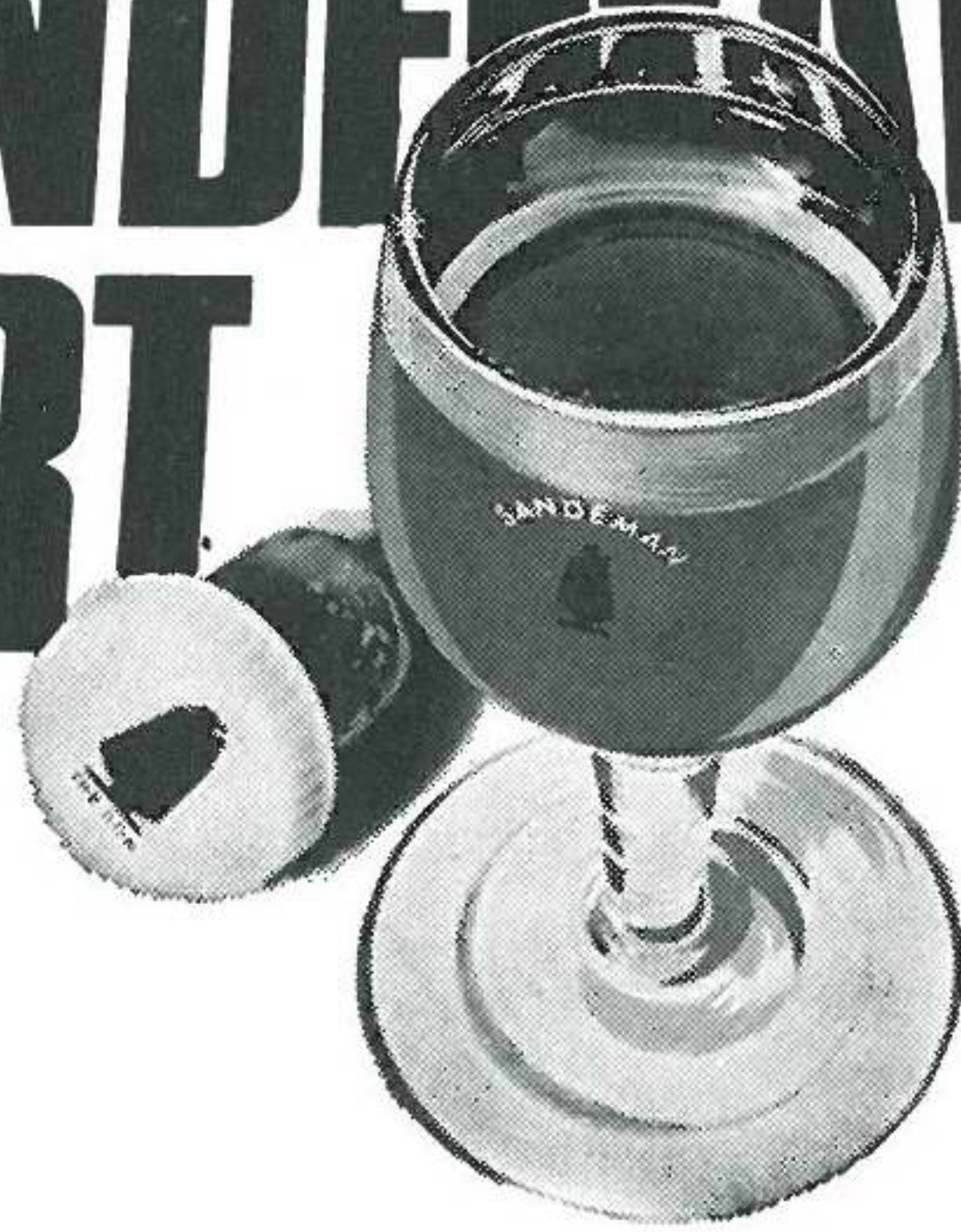
**Billy Morgan:** This last of the six choices which the Editor has permitted me is rather against the rules: one wants to judge on

outstanding usefulness throughout a season, and it is only logical that the stars must be those who had most opportunities for showing their worth. I am selecting Morgan on one display which I shall not easily forget—his play for Cork in their losing Munster final match against Kerry in the Cork Athletic Grounds. Kerry pulverised Cork, to tell the truth, reducing them to shambling impotence. But, with all their possession and all their points, their ambitions to get even one goal were thwarted by the magnificent Morgan. Four or five of his saves were quite the most wonderful I can recall from any goalkeeper. That performance deserves recognition, I think.

### NEXT ISSUE

Jay Drennan will list his leading hurlers of 1969 in our next issue.

# SANDEMAN PORT



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## A SURVEY OF THE CHARTS

By OWEN McCANN

THE All-Ireland Under-21 football final replay of 1967 was a bonanza game for Willie McGee. He shot four golden goals for Mayo in their win over Kerry, and in the process served notice that he was destined to become a brilliant headline-setter in one of the most important essentials of successful forward play — mastery in out-gunning goal-keepers.

It has not taken the Burris-hoole man long to live up to that great promise. In the Grounds' Tournament semi-final replay with Offaly he shot a goal of particular importance—his 14th of the year and a score that earned for him a proud place in only his second full season in the record book.

Starting this year the goals' record in the code for a full season's campaign was 13, and was held jointly by Paddy Doherty at 13-97 (136 points) in 24 games in 1960, and Johnny Joyce (Dublin) at 13-16 (55 points) in 14 engagements in 1962.

McGee took 23 games, including his outing with Connacht during their U.S. tour in May and June, to reach that new peak. And in his next game, against Tipperary in the National League, he added on a further brace of goals.

In view of this dynamic pay-off punch in front of goal, it is surprising to find that the Mayo player failed to score in no

fewer than seven matches on the way to that new achievement. His highest match score of his senior career was achieved against Down in a tournament game last June at Crossmolina, when he goaled three times.

In sharp contrast to his goal-grabbing achievements is his points record. At the time of going to press he had landed 17—just one more than his goals tally.

After 37 outings in the premier grade, McGee has 20-24 (84 points), or 2.27 points an hour.

His goal record is shown up in even more favourable light when we compare it with the achievements of the top goal-getters in the game at present. Sean O'Neill leads with 56 points from 182 games; John Keenan has 44 after 157 outings, and Sean O'Connell scored 42 in 134 matches.

When one considers these scores against the number of games played in each instance, and then review McGee's high score after a mere 30-odd games, the indications are that the Mayo man has what it takes to go on in time to outshine all the great goal-scorers of modern times.

Of the other young footballers displaying more than ordinary skill in bagging the goals in confident style, one of especial promise is Gene Cusack. He got a goal in all but one of his six championship games this year, and at the time of going to press, he was second in the nation-wide list to McGee with nine green flags.

Cusack is a vital link with the end of an era—the Charlie Gallagher era. He will rank as Cavan's top scorer of 1969, and we have to go back to 1962 for the last year that Charlie Gallagher did not fill this role. Jim McDonnell led the Breffni chart for that campaign with 4-30 (42 points).

Here it is worth-while to



● WILLIE MCGEE

digress a little to highlight some of Gallagher's outstanding scoring achievements. In 1969 he established the Cavan county record at 6-107 (125 points) in 20 games.

When he bowed out of inter-county football in the autumn he had 49 goals and 680 points (827 points) to his name from 190 games. His greatest match-score was 2-10, a tally he impressively punched into the record book at Carrickmacross in May 1966 in a Wembley Stadium qualifying game against Down.

In hurling, the tremendous goal record of 35 established by Nick Rackard (Wexford) in 19 games back in 1956, will not even be remotely approached this year. Nevertheless, Charlie McCarthy and Tony Doran continue to rival McGee in this code as young men who may scale dramatic new heights in the goal-

getting stakes in the 'Seventies.

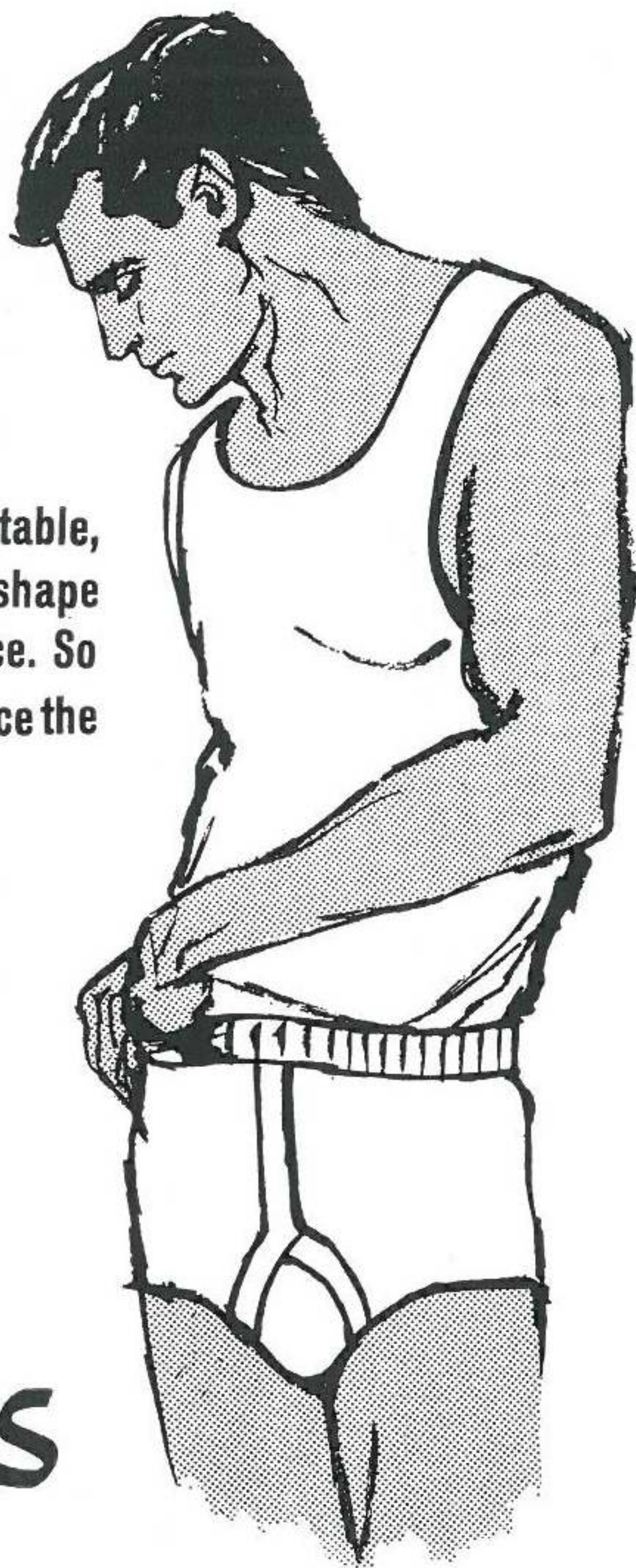
The Cork man is proving the goal specialist of hurling for 1969. In the Oireachtas final he recorded the 40th of his senior career after 50 games. He failed to score in only six of those ties.

This is proving a vintage year for McCarthy, in fact. When all the scores are added up at the end of 1969, he is virtually certain to rank as Cork's first century of points-plus hurler since Christy Ring—and may also have a new Cork record to his credit.

Ring was Cork's last 100 points-plus scorer with the Cork county record of 22-38 (104 points) in 13 games in 1961. He also achieved the only other three figures total for a year's campaign by a Cork man since 1955—22-35 (101 points) in 10 games in 1959. Those goals tallies of 22 are also the highest for Cork in the period under review.

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# ★ *Christmas*

# ★ *Crackers*

★ **By**  
★ **EAMONN YOUNG**

**T**HE frost was white on the grass in Dan Connell's field and the watery, winter sun wouldn't melt it in a month. But we didn't care, for the hurleys were out and the sliotar was rocketing up and down between myself and the brother who rejoiced in the strange name of Fachtna, called after a West Cork saint who, incidentally, never since protested.

We would belt the ball madly to get warm and then Curly Burke, the red-head from the Chapel Cross, would come bounding over the wall and we would have one pucking the ball to the pair who were, as we used put it, "out rushin'."

The rivalry was fierce for Curly was at school in the home of hurling, Farranferris, Cork, while we were rather poor relations in that respect anyway, being noted alumni of the Augustinians in New Ross. Curly is now a parish priest in Scotland and Fachtna, too, has travelled. I'm still hurling balls up and down the Dan Connell field of my mind.

Those Christmas holidays were wonderful, for we used come home to show what great men we were in a house where eventually there were seven sons and seven daughters. When my late

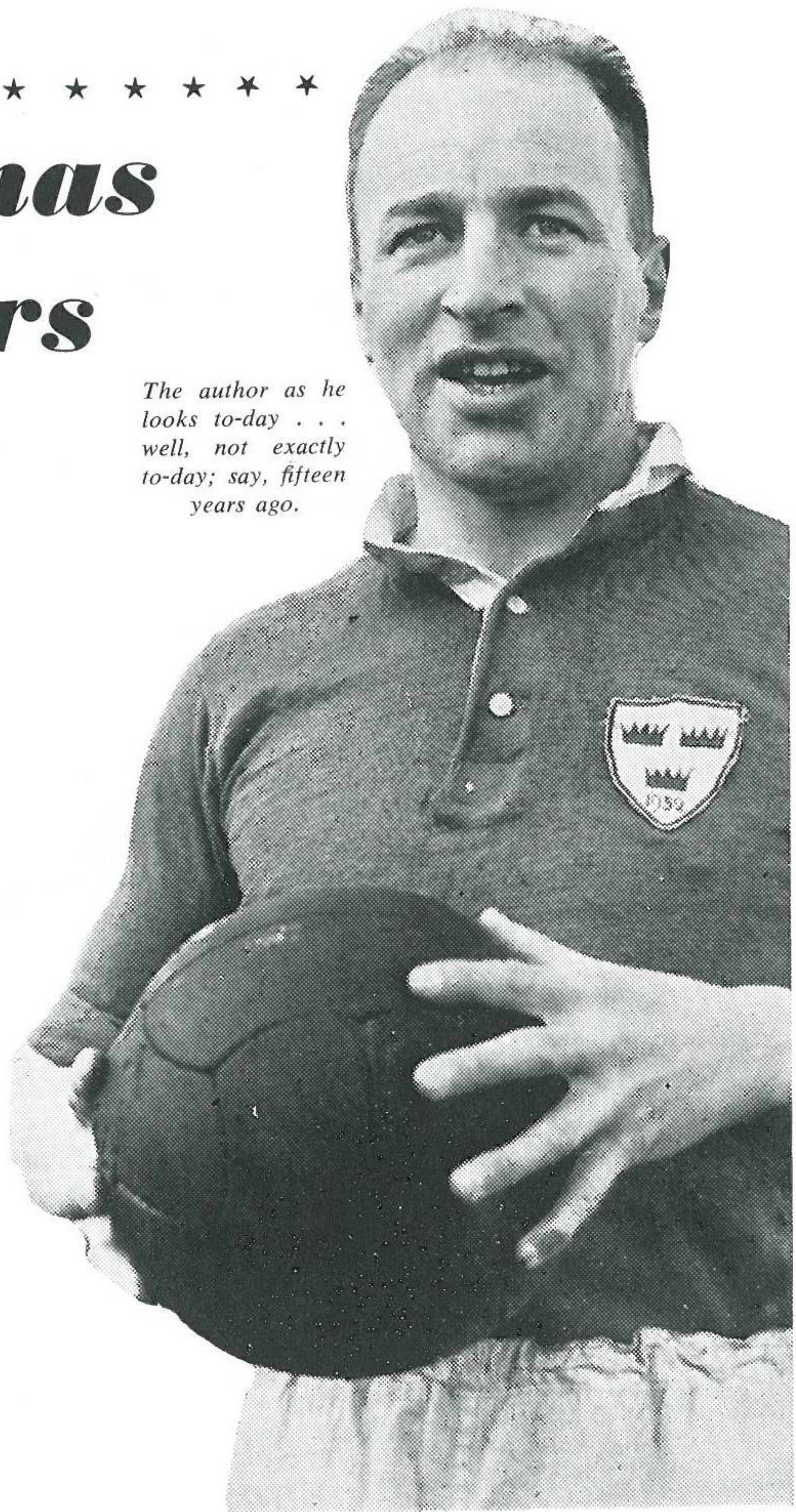
father had a few jars he would add with a glint in his eye "and seven All-Irelands"; but that's only me blowing our coal in a sneaky manner. Brother Jim owned five of the seven so there

wasn't a lot for the rest of us to crow about.

The father used come out to see us hurling, for it was he who provided the sticks. They weren't

● TO PAGE 21

*The author as he looks to-day . . . well, not exactly to-day; say, fifteen years ago.*



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WILSON HARTNELL

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

● FROM PAGE 19

bought in the shop and, indeed, I doubt if the country schoolmaster's budget allowed for such luxuries. We all ate.

He used cut an ash tree that his eye was on for months and get one of the chaps in the sawmill to slice a dozen sticks from it. Then Uncle John, who was really my mother's uncle, would take them away, and bending his small frame over the white timber with the smoke from his pipe curling up around the rim of his bowler hat, he'd plane the wood until that shining blade of ash rested in the hand of the bright-eyed youngster who thought he owned the world.

Of course, the big moment in Dan Connell's field would come when brother Jim would take his place on the field. Jim was pretty useful, having got his place on the Dublin minors in both codes, but the other men a year older had what we regarded as deadly efficiency in striking and the way he lifted and struck made me very jealous; though I knew that by the summer holidays I would be better.

Then the old man himself would come out. I suppose he was forty-eight at the time. From playing cards in the hall late at night and reading a lot, his sight wasn't good and what I couldn't understand at all was how he could meet that ball coming down out of the air and drive it thirty yards. And not just once. When I missed it I used get mad.

After a few hours of this we had enough for the day. The play provided a wonderful stage for us men of various ages to renew acquaintances again after the three months separation, for there's no doubt that the males of a family, especially if they're all headstrong and self-

★★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

opinionated, tend to bash off on their own egotistic paths away from one another, unless a chance is given now and then to bring them together again.

This is where sport shines. The other day I was reading Tomas O Criomhtháin's Island Man, that great story about the life of the people on the Blaskets, whose like will not be seen again.

At Christmas time, the whole island would get involved in a hurling game. On the sand it was played and, sound enough, they had two referees, one from each side. The captains picked the teams, one by one, as we all did when young and, of course, it got just a little humiliating for the chaps who were left to the end. I saw the same happening on the football coaches courses in Gormanston last summer and towards the end Shay O'Connor, the Dublin footballer, got down to picking even me. Fortunately for all, I wasn't going to play.

But anyway, the islanders played in bare feet and whenever the sliotar went into the water someone charged after it, sometimes up to his neck.

Which reminds me of the wet day in Bandon when St. Nicks were beating Clonakilty and the football was kicked into the flooded Bandon river and Jack Lynch jumped in, swam to the ball and got it back to finish the game.

I told you Nicks were ahead, and Nicks won. That's why the Taoiseach never worries about getting into deep water.

The hurling the Blasket Islanders played must have been real old-fashioned, healthy stuff because as Tomas O Criomhthain says, "for the twelve days of Christmas there was no man on the island who was able to drive a cow to the hill, because of a

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

sore back or sore bones. Some had bruised feet and another was limping for a month".

Good old days they were. But that was the time when a man from Dungourney or Redmonds wouldn't go down injured for fear he'd disgrace his family.

There was one match, however, which never brought an ounce of satisfaction to my father. This wasn't a hurling match, but in the big ball game, and it was played in Bernard's field, now called after the Dunmanway man, Sam Maguire. Eric Bernard, father of Denis, now in New York, who played a lot of good football for Cork in the Fifties, was in the goal and my dad was at full back. The father was well finished at the time but they kept him on because, like all old fellas, he was "awful cute".

Anyway, the high ball came down and who shouted to whom I don't know. Eric said he cried: "All right, Jack", and the father said he knew it was his ball. Anyway, the two went for it collided in mid-air and you know where the ball went . . . laughing all the way to the net.

To his dying day Dad maintained that Eric made the mistake, and Eric says still, Jack was wrong. The only neutral comment I can make is that the father went home through the fields.

But there it is. They played the game anyway . . . in Dunmanway or the Blaskets, in Dungiven or Donnycarney, and while young men chase a ball, try hard to get it . . . and laugh it off when they lose, we won't as a nation go far wrong.

A happy Christmas . . . and don't forget to throw the dirty togs and boots on the floor for the mother and sisters to pick up. Those vicious complaints are part of their growing up. Women must be sportsmen, too.

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# A WINTER OF DEBATE

By  
**Seamus O Ceallaigh**

PLAYING fields are almost deserted now, yet December is a very important month in the club calendar.

The new programme of social activity should be in full swing, but the response of the clubs has been in general disappointing.

This is to be regretted as it is evident for a long time that some serious effort must be made to establish greater social contact within the Association.

Clubs must realise their responsibilities in this vital matter and live up to their obligations if the very noticeable decline in interest and enthusiasm is to be arrested.

Clubs have a great responsibility also to their members in the matter of giving all of them the opportunity of participating in the government of the Association.

Individual members of the G.A.A. have the right of putting forward proposals on any aspect of G.A.A. policy or administration but this right must be exercised through their club.

For this reason it is of the utmost importance that clubs hold special general meetings to

which all members should be invited, during the month of December, so that any proposals may get due consideration and be in time for submission to the County Convention, which is the machinery through which matters for All-Ireland Congress must be channelled.

- We hear quite frequently members complaining of this, that and the other thing as being wrong with the G.A.A. — and there is often a lot of substance in what they say.

These members, however, have the remedies in their own hands, and they owe it to the Association to take the necessary steps to offer their suggestions towards a solution.

Constructive criticism is good for any organisation and should be particularly helpful to the G.A.A. at this juncture when it is facing so many challenges, and must adjust itself to rapidly changing times.

The club has frequently been referred to as the foundation stone of the G.A.A.—the hub around which the whole movement revolves.

The question therefore that must be probed is whether all our clubs, or even the big majority of them, are capable of living up to what is required of them?

There must be a grave doubt—at least concerning some, who are really only clubs in name, for in performance their value to the Association is, to say the least, questionable.

The lot of some of these could be improved by a determined effort on the part of Divisional and County Boards to guarantee them a reasonable number of games each year.

This is one of our big failings—and one that is frequently stated by players who turn to other codes, where they appear to be assured of plenty of match play.

This whole question could profitably be examined and some club member might come up with a solution.

This is the occasion, which only occurs one in five years, for the revision of playing rules, and careful consideration could be given to the question of necessary reforms.

Thirteen-a-side teams appear to be popular enough from what we have seen so far of this formation in the college ties, but the enlargement of the parallelogram would further brighten play by eliminating crowding of the goal space.

The smaller number would help many clubs who sometimes find it difficult to field fifteen players and it might be worth a trial, at least for some competitions, to confine a team selection to fifteen and allow these to go on or off as they pleased during the hour, provided, of course, that only thirteen were actually playing at any time.

Foul play spoils many games by taking away from their attractiveness and every endeavour should be made to eliminate it as far as is possible.

Some rule alteration might help whilst another deterrent would be stricter penalties. A penalty instead of an ordinary free for fouls committed inside the twenty-one, in both hurling and football, would reduce a lot of the ugly work around goals.

I think also it would help a lot if players were not allowed catch a ball but made hit, kick or fist away. This would do away with high fielding in Gaelic football, which is quite spectacular, but too often invites the push in the back or other efforts at offsetting which are not in accordance with the rules.

Punctuality is another matter demanding attention. The existing rule fails to bring home to the player the urgency of personal effort, as few worry over-



much if the club has to pay a fine as a result of their carelessness.

A more practical idea might be the awarding of a point to the opposing side, in addition to the fine, for every minute a team was late fielding out. A similar arrangement might apply to any excess of the permitted ten minute interval at half time.

Wrong numbering of players is very irritating and denotes slipshod club management.

More and more players are leaving the rural areas and going to work in big centres of population—oftentimes quite some distance away. Many opt to play for their home clubs, and this often poses fitness problems. They should be allowed play both for their native parish, if required, and for a club in the area of their work. This would cut out a lot of illegal trafficking, and assist players in their training. A clash of interests might occasionally occur but players have their own ways of ironing these out.

Club members will have other ideas on reforms which they think might help the Association, facing what is now—and will remain—an uphill struggle.

There is, of course, a brighter side too, and the big advance in the number of clubs developing their own grounds is a worthwhile achievement. It is a heavy burden now but a very essential amenity.

Clubs already equipped in this regard should press on with plans for a proper pavilion where they can build a regular social life—one of the big needs for future survival.

Firm action by the responsible authorities in dealing with those indulging in rough and dangerous play has had a very salutary effect and is already showing dividends. The pressure must be kept up until our games are completely rid of all such undesirables. The progress already

evident and most welcome can be consolidated by continued evidence that such tactics will not be tolerated on Gaelic fields.

It is a trying time for organisations such as the G.A.A., but our Association has faced far more

serious challenges in the past, and with the earnest support and co-operation of all its clubs there is no reason why it should not go into the 'seventies even stronger than at any time previously in its history.



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# THE LOUD HAILERS

By PHILIP RODERICK

CORK were about to play Tipperary in the National Hurling League at Thurles—and most of us were almost demented from the stream of messages which were pouring out through the public address system.

It was non-stop. Children of various shapes, sizes and hues had been found and could be collected at the stand entrance after the match . . . cars were obstructing the entrances and would the owners remove them . . . minor, junior, under-21 matches had been arranged all over the place and would take place on certain days and at various venues.

The incessant messages were beginning to take their toll. Tempers were fraying just that slightly. Could nothing be done to put a stop to them?

But then came a moment of pure joy. An announcement that made us forget everything that had gone before. A message to be remembered in the days to come.

"If Mr. — from Cork is in the crowd, would he please ring Cork"—said the announcer.

Perhaps fearing that he might not get a response, he repeated the message—this time with the punch line that made our day.

"If Mr. — from Cork is in the crowd, would he please ring Cork immediately." Then came a pregnant pause—"His girl friend needs him—urgently."

It gave us all food for thought. And, indeed, some weeks later,

when I re-told it over a few drinks in Dublin, it sparked off a stream of reminiscences not only about the sayings of announcers but also the rich statements that sometimes spill out unconsciously from dedicated hurling and football supporters.

For instance, do you remember the classic announcement at Croke Park in 1966 during the Cork-Kilkenny All-Ireland hurling final?

"A return ticket to Cork has been found. The owner can collect it at the office after the match."

Or of the announcement — almost a regular occurrence at some ground or other every year — "A young child has been found lost. Would his father or mother collect him after the match."

About five or six years ago, at a Cork venue, I heard a delighted variation on that particular theme.

Without a touch of humour in his voice, the announcer said: "A young child—it's either a boy or a girl—has been found lost. Would its father kindly collect it after the match."

And there was the time up North at an Ulster championship game when I heard an announcer say:

"Would the owner of car number —, kindly remove it immediately. He has got a doctor jammed up against the wall."

And supporters can almost be as entertaining as some of the announcers. The next time you

are in a pub after a match, just listen to some of the things that are being said.

There was the Kerryman I overheard in a Dublin pub just an hour after Derry had shattered the Kingdom in the 1958 All-Ireland football semi-final.

No one could have been more scornful of Kerry's display that day.

"They couldn't fight, feud nor play a melodeon," he said bitterly.

Or the Corkman who denounced one of his county's cumbersome forwards who had kicked an inordinate number of wides against Kerry in a Munster championship game.

"He's like an artillery piece," —he shouted despairingly—"If we could wheel him into position he'd be great."

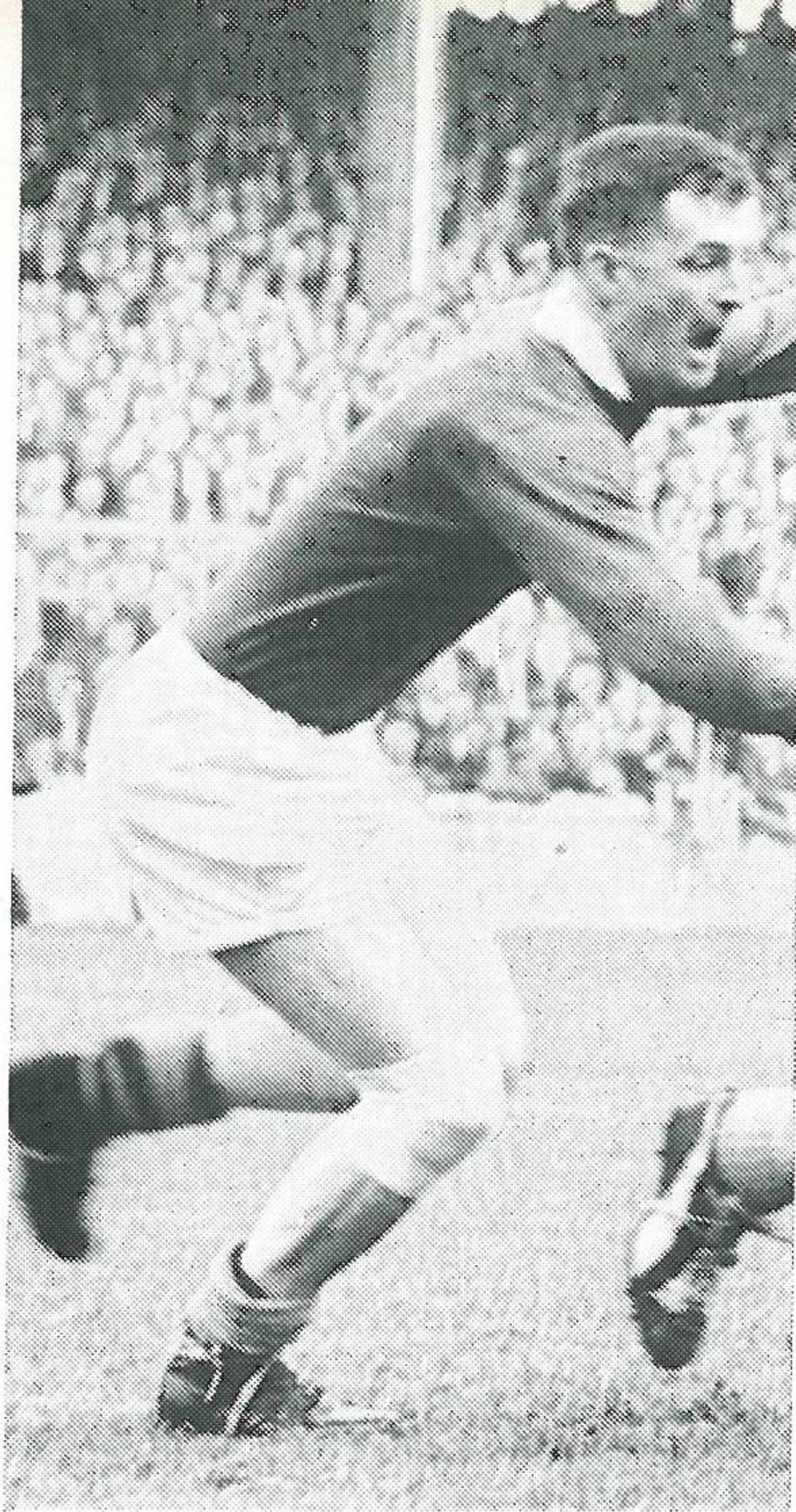
But supporters, too, can be generous when praise is merited.

I remember one particularly exquisite judgment of Mick O'Connell some years ago on a day that the Valentia man had fielded an extremely high ball in a Grounds Tournament game against Dublin.

"O'Connell went so high," said a Kerryman in a pub, "He almost kissed his friends, the angels."

But one could go on and on . . .

So why not listen just a little in future? Even if a game is bad, there can still be rich entertainment . . . from our announcers and from those who play no other role than that of critical spectators.



JOHNNY CULLOTY

**A**ROUND this time of year it has become a habit with many Gaelic football supporters to sit down and select their "team of the year". No doubt, when these same supporters gather in groups to deliberate on this very topical matter there will be many a friendly argument as the merits of various players are compared for different positions.

A very interesting aspect of this kind of team picking is the way such selections are inclined to vary from year to year with the changing fortunes of different counties. Of course, it is all so easy for footballers from teams

reaching the concluding stages of the championship to stake their claims for inclusion on national selections. But, on the other hand most of us tend to forget the many talented performers who are unlucky enough to be wearing the colours of counties which failed in the opening rounds of the title race.

With the possibilities of a really international world championship looming up the need may soon arise to select such a team to represent Ireland against America and Australia. If such a competition were in the offing next spring one wonders

# TEAM OF THE YEAR

*But will it really win kudos from everyone — or anyone?*

what our team would look like.

I've been thinking about this and after much deliberation I arrived at a conclusion by narrowing it down to fifteen men. My thoughts went something along these lines.

Starting at the beginning many names flowed through my mind in search of the ideal netminder. While goalkeepers of the calibre of men like Danny Kelly, Paddy Cullen, Sean McCormack and Billy Morgan would hardly let me down, it is hard to overlook the brilliance of the pair who did duty on All-Ireland final day, Johnny Culloty and Martin Furlong.

The latter is a most promising 'keeper and could yet become one of the greatest players in his position that the game has produced. On the other hand, Culloty has played a captain's part in Kerry's victory march and it is hard to overlook him.

Now for the full back line and if there is a better man than Meath's Mick White for the No. 2 spot, then I await his identity with interest. His general soundness played a major part in bring-

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**By NOEL**

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# THE YEAR

one?

ing his county major honours two years ago and he continues to perform with a sort of efficiency which makes him stand out among individuals who aren't exactly hitting the headlines.

In the other corner, Seamus Fitzgerald will be all the rage, but Tom O'Hare, who was in a similar position twelve months ago, hasn't disimproved enough to be omitted. For the vital full back berth Greg Hughes will be most people's choice. He was mine, too, until the All-Ireland final where the veteran Offaly man was found wanting.

The memorable display by Antrim's Seamus Killough in the national under-21 decider against Roscommon sticks in my mind as one of the finest exhibitions of full back play seen for some time. He has been filling the left corner back berth for the Glensmen in the senior grade and would hardly let us down in the No. 3 jersey against any opposition.

Offaly would gain two of my half back allocations. Play-anywhere Nicholas Clavin proved himself one of the game's most



TOM O'HARE (No. 4)

improved performers. His best games were played in the centre and despite regrets at having to leave out sturdy defenders like John Morley and Pat Mangan, Clavin must be the choice.

On his right is placed up and coming Eugene Mulligan whose progress rate falls little short of the St. Carthage's clubman. To complete the line I put forward Meath's brilliant left half back, Pat Reynolds who has been consistently brilliant over the last few seasons. And he is the choice despite very strong claims from Kerry's rising star, Mike O'Shea.

This team would hardly be complete without the maestro himself and if fit and able Mick O'Connell would be a tremen-

dous boost to any team representing Ireland. Despite a great year for D. J. Crowley, Colm McAlarney strikes me as being a more polished footballer and on recalling his majestic hour in last year's final you realise what I mean. Still, Din Joe would be the choice if the Valentia man happened to be unavailable.

Now to the attack and who better to lead it than Pat Griffin. The choices for the wings are Pat Keenan and John Murphy. The former is another of the many Offaly men who have made great strides along the road to the top over the last few months. His goal against Mayo in the Grounds Tournament semi-

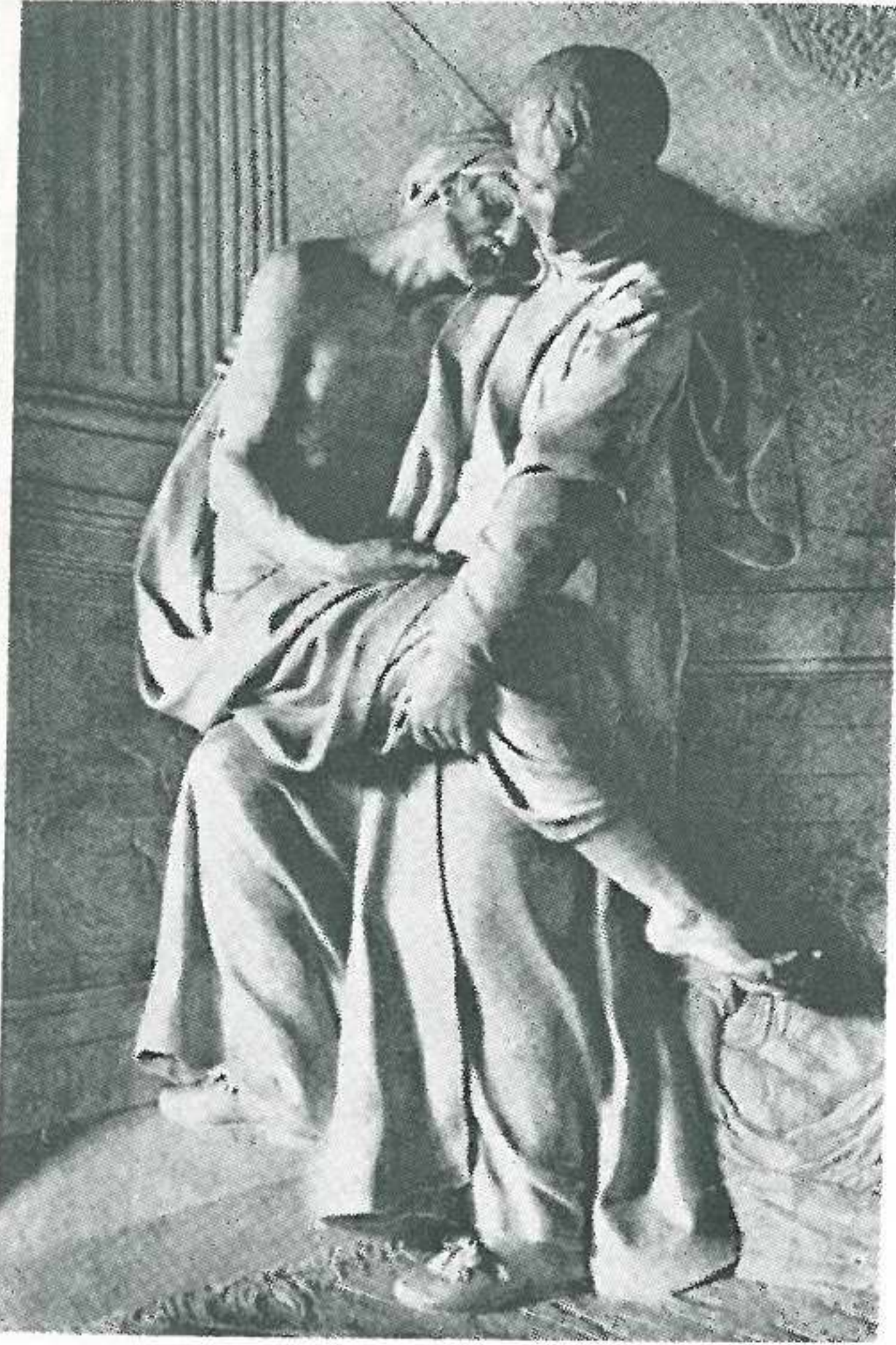
● TO PAGE 28

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## COOGAN

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His sanctity,

His mission of goodness and salvation.

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Gardiner Street, Dublin 1.**

● FROM PAGE 27

final replay was as good a score as seen at any Gaelic venue for some time and in a World Cup, the dashing Pat would be Gaelic football's answer to George Best. Certainly his rocket-like shot to the top of the net against Mayo reminded me of the great Eusebio in the last World Soccer Cup.

Murphy's claim to the left wing berth is equally impressive and the youthful Down player is fast achieving football maturity.

To fill the full forward berth we have another Down man and who better than football's greatest forward, Sean O'Neill. But for the presence of O'Neill the number fourteen jersey would go to the big Mayo attacker, Willie McGee, who has been making himself such a big headache for defences of late.

Still, I just couldn't leave out the red-haired Garda and in he goes in the left corner or perhaps as half of a double full forward act. To complete the line-out is Cavan's lone representative, Gene Cusack, who could prove ideal in setting up chances for O'Neill and McGee.

So my Ireland selection is: **J. Culloty** (Kerry); **M. White** (Meath), **S. Killough** (Antrim), **T. O'Hare** (Down); **E. Mulligan** (Offaly), **N. Clavin** (Offaly), **P. Reynolds** (Meath); **M. O'Connell** (Kerry), **C. McAlarney** (Down); **P. Keenan** (Offaly), **P. Griffin** (Kerry), **J. Murphy** (Down); **G. Cusack** (Cavan), **S. O'Neill** (Down), **W. McGee** (Mayo).

That gives us four Downmen, three each from Kerry and Offaly, two from Meath and one each from Antrim, Cavan and Mayo. It would be asking just a little too much for this team to meet with unanimous agreement from football supporters throughout the land. But then, it would take some searching to find the man who could put forward an Ireland selection to please everybody!

# MAYO LOST

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

# STAR TO

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

# ROSCOMMON

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**W**HAT Mayo lost in Dermot Earley, Roscommon gained. And that is the way it will remain. For Dermot was born in Castlebar but moved to Roscommon with his parents when he was six years old.

And ever since he emerged as Roscommon's brightest football hope since the days of Gerry O'Malley, the rumours have been flying in Mayo that soon he will return—to play with his native county.

I have news for those people. Dermot Earley is not going to play with Mayo.

"I have heard those rumours, too, and many people ask the same question", he told me. "But Roscommon is my county and I hope to continue to play for it. It would be difficult to change from the county in which one has grown up".

Army lieutenant Dermot is such an established player now, at 21 years of age, that he seems destined to rank among the greats of his county. He was only fifteen when he played minor football for Roscommon—against Leitrim in 1963. And two years later he had his first outing for the senior team in the Gael Linn competition which was also against Leitrim. Already he has won two Railway Cup medals, two Connacht under-21 medals, an All-Ireland under-21 and a Connacht minor medal.

A senior medal has so far eluded him, but he is optimistic. "I would not like to sound overconfident, but I think we have

the ability to go places next year. We have young, but experienced, players and the spirit in the county is good. So it is up to us to go out as a team determined to win the championship. If we get the breaks, I think we can do it next year", he said.

I posed the question because I knew they had been beaten by lowly Limerick in the current National League and I wondered if it had done much damage to the spirit of the team.

"Without taking from Limerick's victory, Roscommon had a very bad off-day. We never really got going and when Limerick got their third goal all the fight was knocked out of us. I think we were confident too, but we will be a different team for the rest of the League".

He said the spirit of the team was not affected by that defeat, for each player knew one another well and most had been playing together since their minor days. He was right. For a couple of weeks later they hammered fancied Kildare in the same National League.



●  
"If I could fetch and deliver like Mick O I'd be well satisfied," says Dermot.  
●

## ROSCOMMON'S

DERMOT

EARLEY

TALKS TO

SEAN RICE

Like many other great players, Dermot has had his share of positional switches on the Roscommon team. To his credit he has excelled in all—defence, centre-field and attack. But his preference is for midfield.

"In defence and attack one is limited to a certain pattern of play, whereas at midfield one can move into defence or attack when needed and have more room and scope. One can also dictate play from midfield. My second choice is attack, but I do not like centre-half back at all".

I asked him for his views on reducing teams to 13-a-side. "I think it would open up forward play much more and would create more scores. I think it should be given a try for at least one League or championship to see how it would go. I imagine there would be fewer fouls and less holding and tackling".

But he would not agree with the suggestion that the ball should be picked directly off the ground. "No, I think this is a skill when executed properly is easily done and very attractive, especially the 'chip'".

"If picking the ball directly off the ground were allowed, players would start diving on the ball and fighting for it, thus holding up play".

The Roscommon man says that Mick O'Connell was the player on whom he based his style. "If I could only fetch and deliver as he can, I would be satisfied", he said.

A small matter of filling

# THE VITAL GAP

By  
**OWEN  
McCANN**

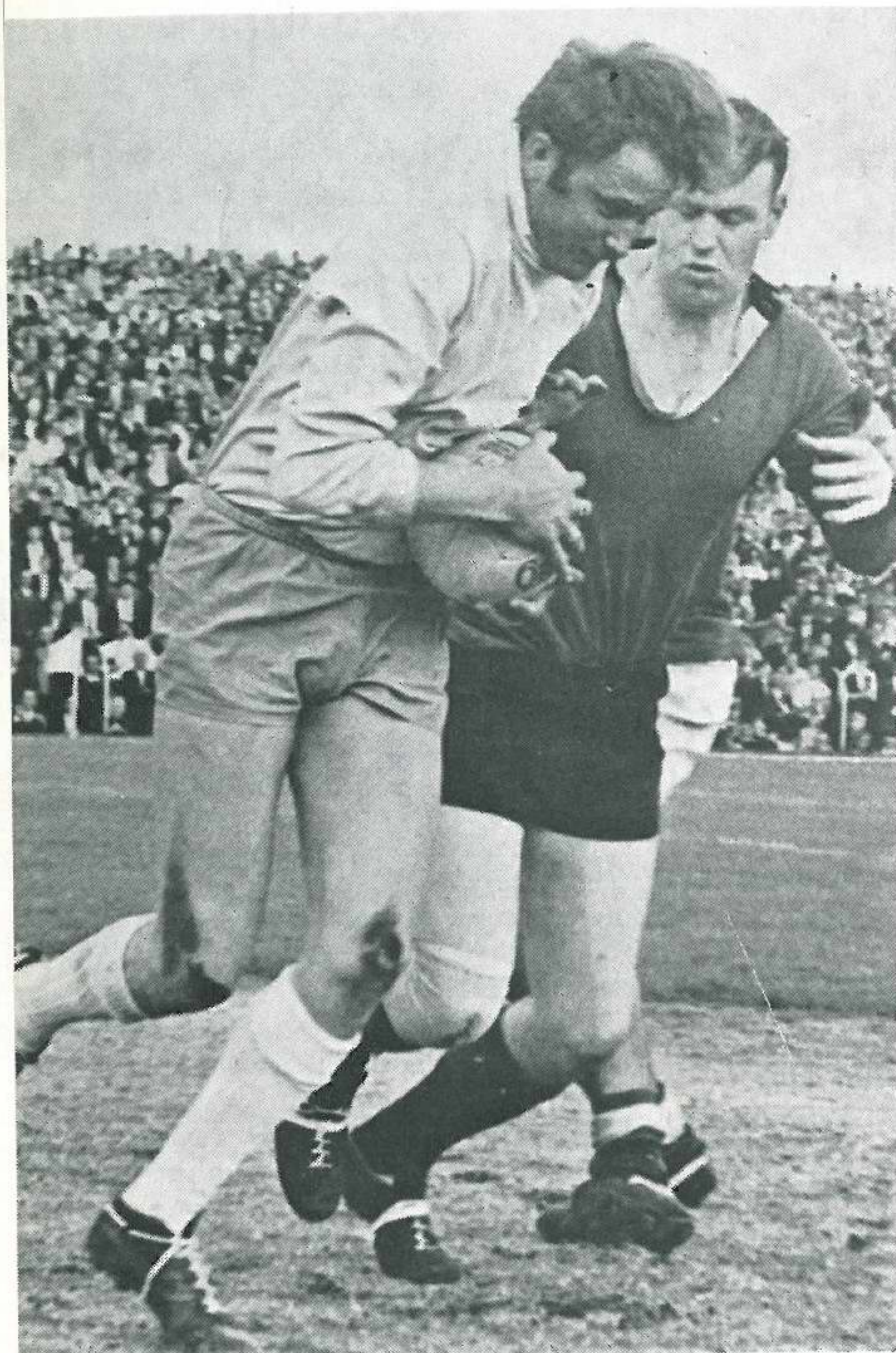
credentials for another Leinster jersey.

Then there is the doyen of Leinster interprovincials Ollie Walsh. He made his debut in the side in 1958, and was an automatic selection down the years. He made his 20th appearance in the Leinster green in the 1968 final, which must rank as an all-time high for a goalkeeper.

In 1967 the Thomastown man had the distinction of being the first goalkeeper to captain Leinster to a Railway Cup final win. That success earned for him the further distinction of being the first Eastern hurler to win four Railway Cup medals.

Walsh's return to the big-time this year has, of course, been a highly successful one. He has proven beyond question that at 32 he remains a player above the ordinary, a man on whose capacity for the incredible victory is so frequently forged.

Obviously, then, Leinster's selectors are also going to find it



*Paddy Lyons, the Cavan goalkeeper, who has staked strong claims to a place on the Ulster team. He is seen here in action against Down in the 1969 Ulster final.*

**G**OALKEEPERS rarely had it so good in hurling and football as in 1969. And this is likely to pose some intriguing problems for the Railway Cup selectors in the coming weeks.

Take hurling in Leinster. Pat Nolan is the man in possession in the provincial side. He was one of the few real stars of the team that crashed sensationally to Connacht in the semi-final last March.

Nolan was to the fore in later National League games, and he had a splendid hour in the final with Cork, but Wexford's early exit from the championship kept him out of the limelight for a lengthy spell.

Nevertheless, there can be little doubt that he remains one of the outstanding goalkeepers in the land, and in view of this, plus the fact that he is the "man in office", he certainly has strong



hard to overlook the strong claims Walsh has for a recall to duty.

But Nolan and Walsh are not the only contenders. Damien Martin displayed all the hallmarks of goalkeeping at its brilliant best with a masterly exhibition in Offaly's shock Leinster semi-final win over Wexford in June. Only 22, his form since then has also been very impressive.

And what of the Munster football selectors' task in deciding between Johnny Culloty and Billy Morgan?

Captain of an All-Ireland title winning team is invariably a strong factor in favour of any player gaining interprovincial honours. In Culloty's case this claim is also backed up by a year of consistent goalkeeping excellence, dominated by some inspiring and match-winning saves in the game that really mattered—the All-Ireland final.

There is much to be said, then, for recalling the 33-year-old Kilkenny man to the Southern Blue. He last appeared with the side in the 1966 final with Ulster.

At the same time, Billy Morgan's claim for a further vote of confidence is a particularly strong one. In four appearances with Munster—he has held down the post without a break since the 1967 semi-final—the Cork man has been soundness itself, and in the provincial decider at Cork in July, he took what few honours were going for the home squad with some tremendous saves. He has maintained his brilliant form in the current National League.

Ulster will have a newcomer guarding their net next year, as Seamus Hoare, who has worn the No. 1 jersey since 1964, and leads the Railway Cup medals list for Donegal with four souvenirs, is no longer in inter-county football.



Paddy Barry John O'Donoghue

Paddy Lyons could become the first Cavan man in quite a few years to gain this position, while Danny Kelly is bound also to have many supporters.

George Eagleson (Antrim), who would assuredly have won favour before now but for the brilliance of Hoare, could beat

them all in the North, however. He impressed me with his qualities in the Ulster championship, and he has been nudging the selectors also with his good goalkeeping in the National League.

John O'Donoghue or Paddy Barry for the Munster hurling team? The Tipperary man did much to fashion Munster's win after a replay over Connacht for the 1969 title, and he also had another top-class season in the county jersey. This year gave O'Donoghue, incidentally, his first Railway Cup medal in four appearances—he played also in

● TO PAGE 51

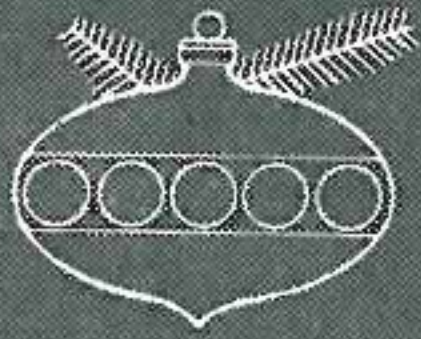
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AT Christmas time even the most world-weary of us look forward to getting ourselves a few items of clothing. If you're lucky you'll be swamped with presents of such things as ties, scarves and socks from devoted female relatives (And don't despise them: women nowadays have very good taste when it comes to choosing clothes for men). The major items like a new suit or overcoat, however, will be a case of buy-it-yourself. It lessens the pain of parting with hard-earned cash when you are able to buy something which really pleases you, suits you and is good value for money, and there's a case to be made for going to a men's speciality shop to achieve all these objectives, rather than relying on a department store.

We took a sample buying trip round Best's of Westmoreland Street recently and proved the point to our own satisfaction. First of all, it was nice to meet assistants who

● OVERLEAF

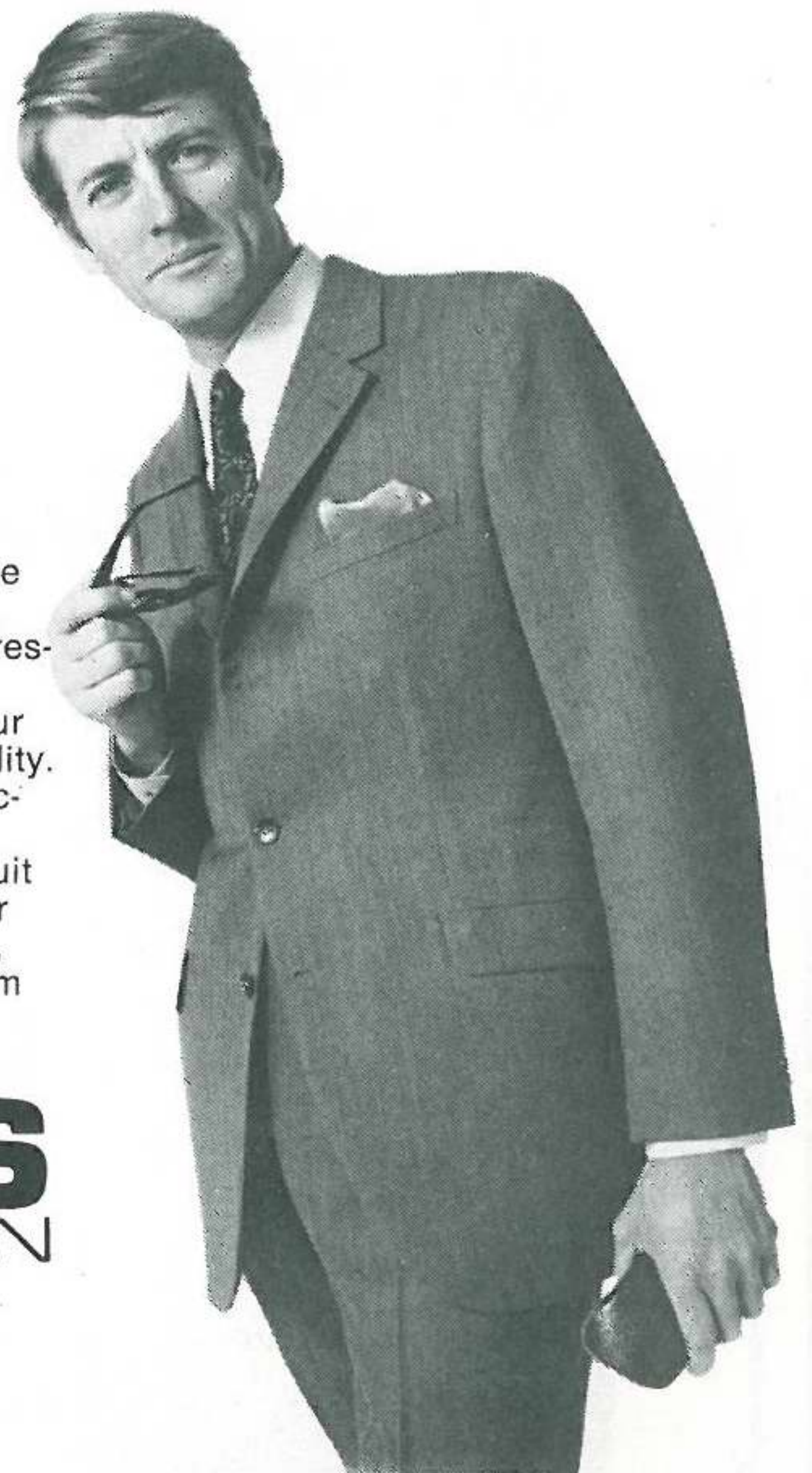
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● FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

were genuinely interested in finding out what we wanted to buy—without putting the pressure on. Like a lot of men, we had a vague dissatisfied feeling that the clothes we were wearing were 'wrong'—somehow. A Best's assistant, reassuringly mature in his approach, was able to tell me that all that had happened was the cut of my suit was five years out of date. He suggested a look at a few of the new slim-fit suits—and I shied away like a frightened horse until the first jacket actually lay across my shoulders. Then the message came through loud and clear: It looked a good jacket, a nice jacket, not a bit 'mod' or hippie—but it had the smart look I had been admiring on other men as I passed them in the street. When it came to the pants I found they were cut to fit well at the waist, and tapered to the ankle in a pleasing way. The suit I tried had turn-ups and I was surprised if not distressed to learn that for the past few years turn-ups had been dispensed with—now they're in again, and so quite new to the market. During my own session at the suit department, no less than five good men and true came in, were fitted immediately from the rails with suits which appeared as though they had been tailored for them inch by inch. We learned that Best's carry something like thirty sizings in suits so it's almost impossible not to fit a customer. However, if the impossible happens, they've got a good made-to-measure service. Prices for ready-made suits hover around twenty pounds: some are under, some over. The newest fabrics are very light in weight, comfortable to wear and much in demand by men who lead energetic travelling lives.

After that it was over to overcoats and again I had that vague feeling that the coat I wanted

● TO PAGE 36



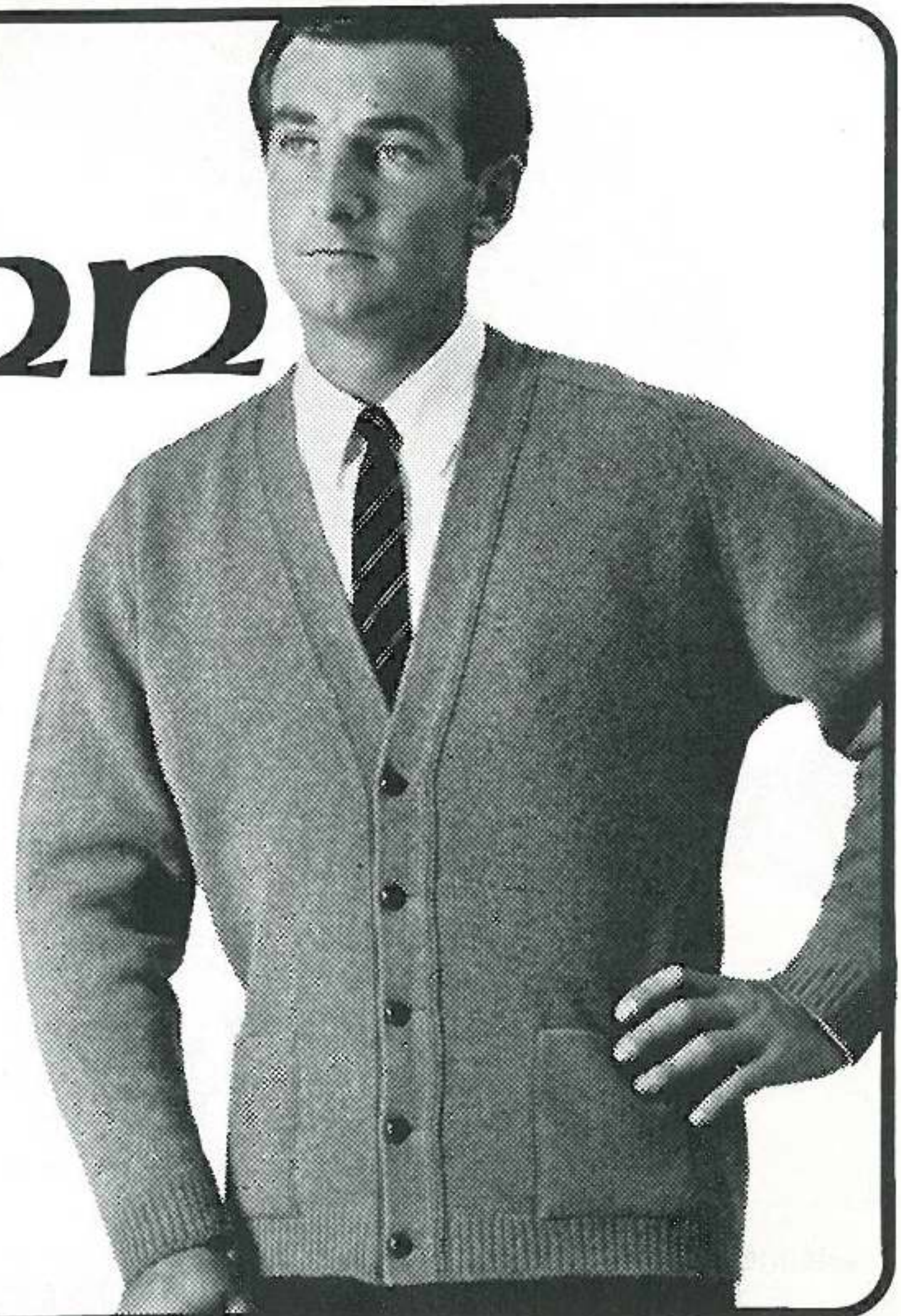
● *No Fuss . . . No Bother . . . shopping at Best's is both leisurely and relaxing.*

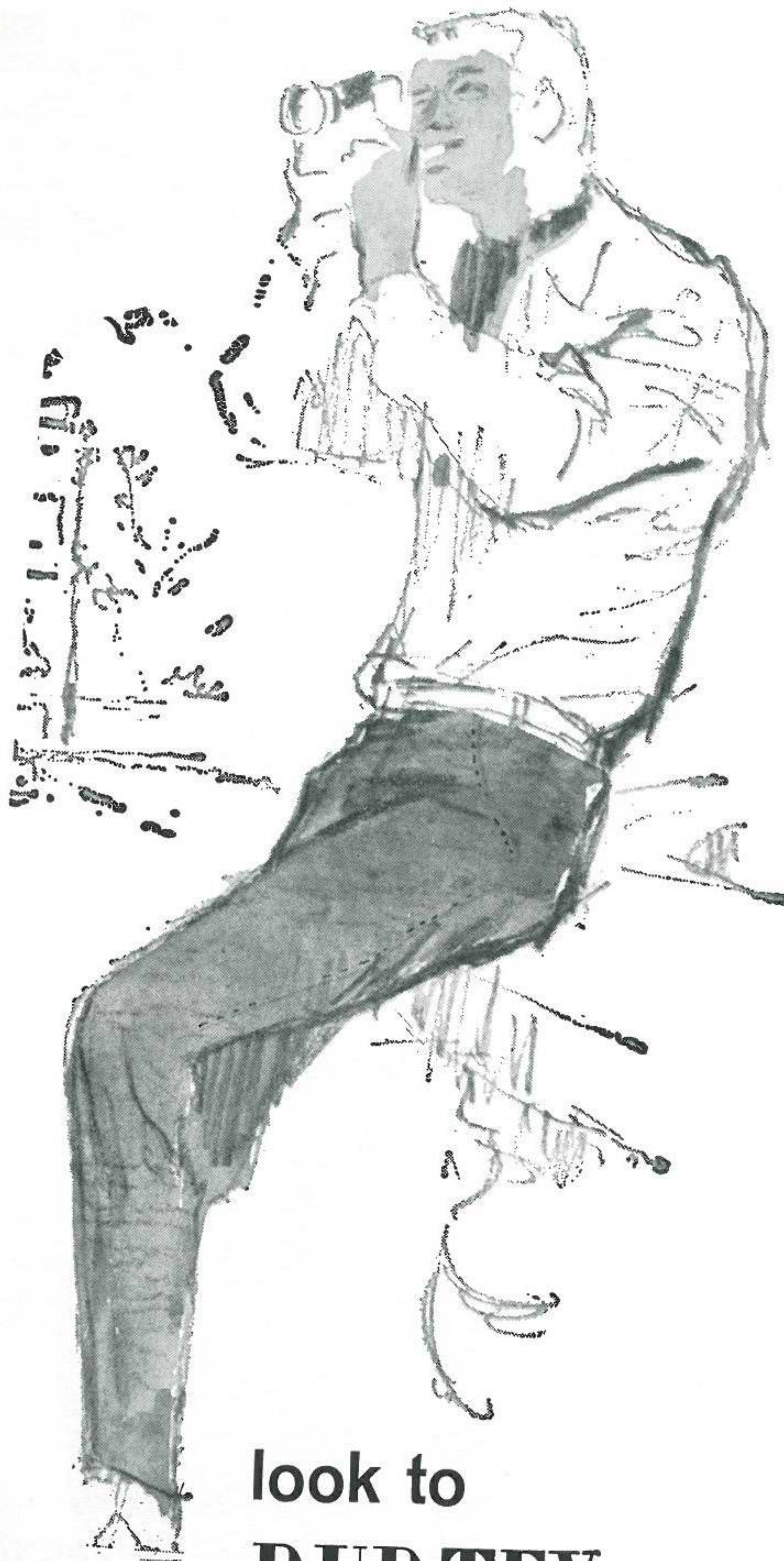
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● FROM PAGE 34

was to be 'the same as last time—only different'. I discovered that the best-looking coats were those which, like the suits, were cut on slim-fitting lines. They were all fairly short and the versions I liked best had fly-front fastenings and high collars. These are really practical for keeping out the cold. The wool coat which my hypothetical eye fell on cost a practical thirteen guineas—nothing to break even a modest bank balance.

Thoroughly satisfied, having had a quick look at the newest rough-textured shoes in buffalo-skin (it's really Irish leather but treated to get that special texture) which look as though they're hand-made but actually are factory products, I decided on a browse through the casuals. Here there was plenty to be learned as well, so if you feel your sister is going to give you a pullover for Christmas or your mother has it in mind to give you a blazer, steer them into Best's at the psychological moment and make sure they have absorbed these small items of news first.

*Item No. 1:* Blazers are back as big news in casual wear for men. Not the old-style kind you wore while the Brothers were educating you, but a double-breasted version with wide 11-inch vents at the sides and instead of metal buttons, ones covered to match the cloth of the blazer.

*Item Two:* The Turtle-necked sweater is more up-to-date than the old style V-neck. What's a turtle-neck? A sort of half-polo, with the roll gone from it. If you've yearned for coloured ganseys then this year you'll be in the fashion if you wear one in bright or dark blue, mid-green or—wait for it—red. This good strong red, a nice holly colour, turns up in sweaters and cardigans in shetland wools, cashmeres, lambswools and Botanies.

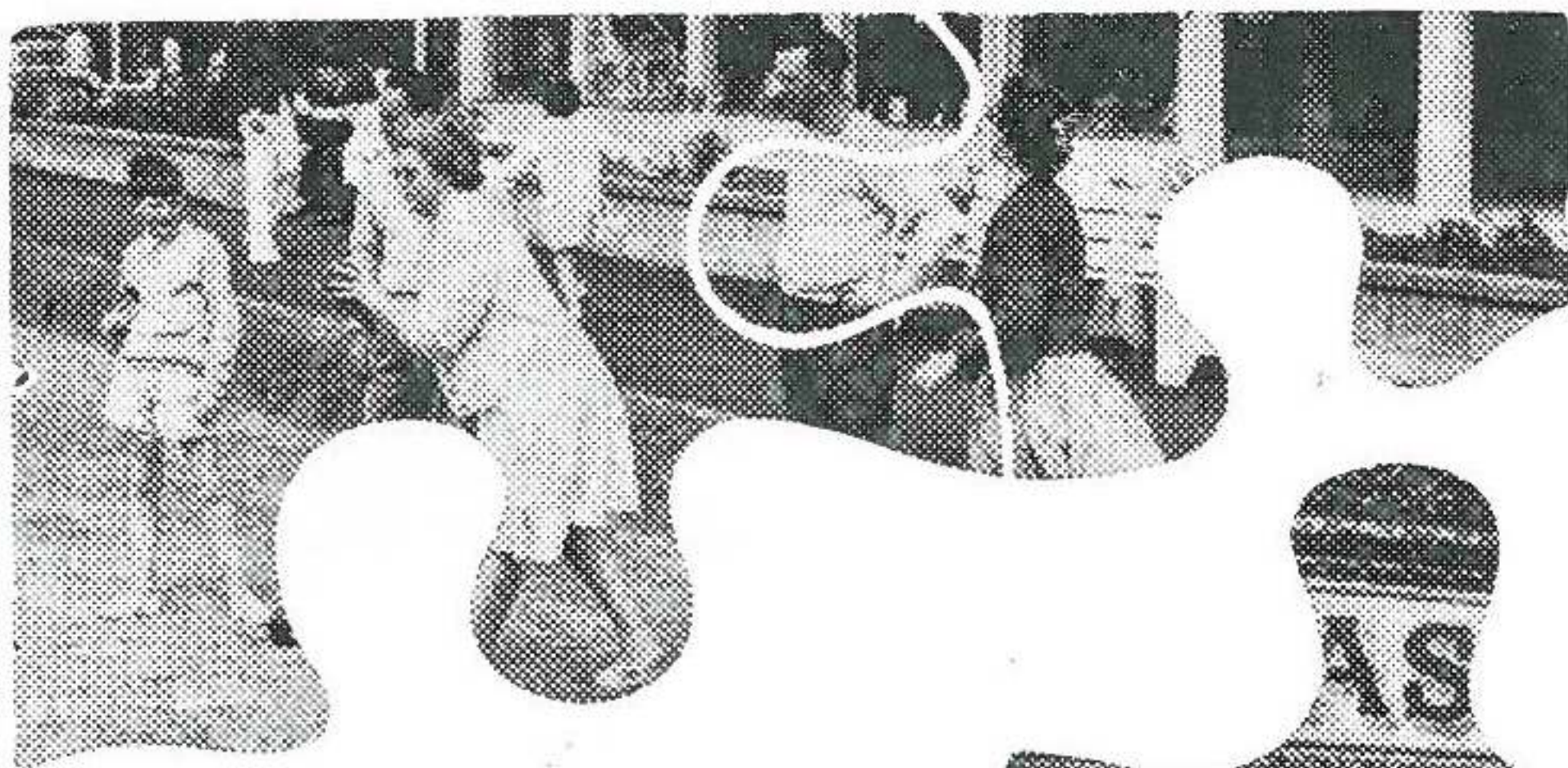
*Item Three:* To wear with a

sweater in one of these new colours, get away from grey flannels and pick a pair of pants in a colour like navy blue, or even pale blue. Failing that you can have fawn. The pants will be neatly tapered—though Best's are firmly of the opinion that flared trousers for men—bell-bottoms like the sailors wear — are definitely a coming trend.

*Item Four:* If you're to be the lucky recipient of a dressing-gown, make sure it's short and chunky instead of long and droopy. It should have a nicely cut tailored collar instead of a saggy roll and ought to be in a fabric such as towelling.

*Item Five:* If you've been maddened for years by the barrage-balloon bulge which develops round your waist when you try to tuck a shirt into your waistband, look out for the newest fitted shirts, nicely shaped to obviate that problem. Best's will be having the first of them produced in Ireland.

*Final Item:* If all this talk of new developments has left you feeling a bit dizzy, relax. What we've described aren't the way-out mod clothes worn by the freaks—they're the up-to-date clothes worn by the man of today who takes an interest in his appearance and who wants to appear well dressed and smartly turned out without going into the bankruptcy court. In fact, what Best's offer you gives you doubly good value: their clothes are good value in terms of material, cut and finish which are first class. But they're also good value in terms of styling: Best's have successfully formulated a method of adopting the subtler changes of men's fashions and using them in clothes which won't feel uncomfortably 'way out'. Wearing these styles, you feel like a man of today, only a bit smarter than the rest. And that's a formula we all want to adopt.



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## A Profile

By NOEL COOGAN

# PAT GRIFFIN

WHEN the 1969 All-Ireland football championship was all over and as supporters assembled in public houses and other meeting places to "replay" the games, there can be little doubt that certain Kerry players were mentioned more freely than others for the parts played in making this the "Kingdom's" most successful season for some years.

Certainly name like Johnny Culloty, Seamus Fitzgerald, Tom Prendergast, Mike O'Shea, Mick O'Connell and D. J. Crowley were used appraisingly with a certain frequency, and rightly so.

The Kerry forwards had not a particularly good hour in the final and because of this, most of us are inclined to make false assessments when considering the real worth of the champions' front line. Although the southerners did not exactly hit the high spots as far as getting the ball between the posts is concerned in the national decider, there have been many other occasions during the year when the Kerry attackers amassed totals of which any forward line would be very proud.

Centre half-forward is a most vital position in any front line. Looking back on line-outs of All-Ireland winning teams over the past few years one finds that nothing but footballers of the

highest calibre have filled this berth on the victorious combinations.

Such a player is Kerry 40-yards man, Pat Griffin. The Clonakilty-based Garda has played more than his part in bringing that elusive twenty-first title to the "Kingdom." Perhaps he may not have put as many scores on the board as former players filling that position on title-winning teams, but on the other hand Pat is fully aware that football is a team game.

When the Glenbeigh clubman gains possession he invariably makes the best possible use of the ball and quite a few defenders have suffered moments of anxiety as Griffin made tracks towards goal. This sort of uneasiness was very much in evidence in the Offaly rearguard in this year's final and on a day when the Kerry attack was far from being itself Pat Griffin stood out as the man who threatened most danger when he got the ball into his hands.

The Kerry forward leader is also the type of player who is just as dangerous when not in possession. He will read the game with an above average amount of intelligence and more often than not will position himself in an advantageous area when his side are mounting an attack on the opposing citadel.

While Griffin never goes out of his way to get his name on the scorers' list, he nevertheless has the occasional hour in which he breaks out and shows his fellow forwards how to get scores.

Such a game was the 1968 All-Ireland semi-final against Longford when Pat scored 1-4 to cap a magnificent hour. Another game in which he excelled was this year's National League semi-final against Westmeath, when the Cork-based star scored one of the best goals of the year.

The League home final was surely the shortest and also one of the most frustrating games Pat Griffin experienced in his career to date. Being sent off after only three minutes put a slight blot on his perfect conduct sheet.

But then it is most difficult to stand by and watch your teammate being kicked on the ground!

Strange to relate, Pat fitted on the Lily White jersey of Kildare before wearing the famous Green and Gold. He played minor football for the Leinster county in 1962 and later represented the same county in the senior grade.

Griffin was working in Clane at that time. When he returned to his native county, the Kerry selectors were not slow in recognising the talents of this rising star and called him into the second half of the 1963 Munster final against Cork.

Pat Griffin has never looked back since that day six years ago. He had to accept the disappointment of being on the losing team in an All-Ireland final three times before taking a winners' medal.

Many more honours look in the offing for him and if they do not come his way it will not be his fault. If there is a better centre half forward than Pat Griffin playing Gaelic football at present then I have yet to see him.

# HARRY COURTNEY

## POSTHUMOUS TRIBUTE TO A GREAT SPORTSMAN

By

PHILIP RODERICK

**H**ARRY COURTNEY, a small, humorous, twinkling-eyed Kerryman, was never too sure that he was, in fact . . . Harry Courtney. As he often told me, in his soft rich Killarney accent, there was always the little doubt in his mind that he might have been his own first cousin.

Harry came into this world far away back in 1870 and it so happened that a boy was born to his uncle and aunt around about the same time. And in Killarney, in those days, there was little point in wasting the services of a parish priest when it came to the matter of christening the two infants.

On the appointed day, the two children, then a few months old, were duly brought towards the church. Not to it . . . for, first of all, there was one of the local taverns to be passed. With an hour or so to spare, what better place to while away the time.

And so, parents, relations and friends retired for the cup that cheers and the time was not wasted in too much talk. The infants, of course, could not be introduced to a pub at that early stage and they, identical in their christening robes, were left outside the door.

Time passed, as it always does with good company in Kerry, but, eventually, the time came to repair to the church.

And, as Harry told me a few years ago. "No one was too sure then which of us was which. But the christening went on and from that day to this I have never known for sure whether I am

Harry Courtney or my own first cousin."

But, Harry Courtney or not, the man I knew as Harry Courtney, grew up to become one of Ireland's greatest sportsmen. And he aged to become the most gentle of men—a rare Irishman of true humility, who had nothing but good to say for everyone he ever knew.

It seems hard to credit that Harry Courtney was a great athlete, sportsman and personality before the birth of the modern Olympic Games — and yet was alive to watch on television the Mexico Olympic Games of 1968. Or that he was famous long before Kerry won their first All-Ireland football title.

Back in 1896, the year of the first of the modern Olympic Games, Harry Courtney set a world record in the standing hop, step and jump with weights. That record is still an Irish and world best today. And with the event now obsolete, his record must endure for all time.

He competed with the best. He once beat the immortal Tom Kiely in a weight event and was third to the famous Waterford solicitor, Peter O'Connor, when he set a world record of 24' 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ " in the long jump at Ballsbridge in 1901.

Harry was an Irish champion for many years and, indeed, had the Irish been more interested in the Olympic Games then, he might have been among our first Olympic champions.

But Harry was more than just an athlete. He had a passionate love for Gaelic games and men like Dick Fitzgerald, Eamonn O'Sullivan and Jack Myers were his intimate friends.

To talk with Harry, as I did many times, was to live almost a century of Irish sport. His memory was astonishing and the stories rolled out of him about great runners and jumpers, great football players and great All-Ireland finals. And he talked of the 1890s just as vividly as he did of the Kerry teams of the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s.

And his stamina, too, was extraordinary. Indeed, if he is looking down on me now, I know he will forgive me for telling this story about him.

I went to visit him on his 97th birthday and I took a photographer along with me. As it happened, the photographer was an Englishman, little versed in the ways of the Irish—and, worse still, a temperate drinker.

At Fitzroy Avenue, Drumcondra, where Harry lived, the first sign of true Kerry hospitality was a bottle of solid Irish whiskey.

Harry himself never had any reluctance to sample fine Irish malt and he joined with us — round after round. Some hours later — and I knew that I had more than a drop in me—I felt it was time to go.

But Harry would have none of it. At his prompting, and this brooked no refusal, we all retired to a local public house in Drumcondra for a few pints.

Harry was no stranger to the pub—indeed, one got the distinct impression that he was a dearly loved and honoured acquaintance of everyone in the place, from the manager down to the youngest apprentice—and the pints flowed.

When I eventually got up to go — steering an English photographer, much the worse for wear towards the door, Harry was still holding court, still talking eloquently about sport of an era that had passed long before most people in the pub were born.

Next day, my photographer friend, nursing a sore head, said to me — “If that’s what your Harry Courtney is like at 97, I’m glad I didn’t meet him when he was a young fellow.”

I wasn’t feeling too well myself and, quite frankly, I was just a little worried that Harry might not be in the best of health after his birthday celebrations.

But while I was suffering, a message came to me from Harry. He hadn’t enjoyed a night so much for years and hoped that I would come up to see him again—as soon as possible. No matter what happened, I wasn’t to miss his 98th birthday.

Yes, indeed, Harry Courtney was a wonderful man and he will always occupy a special place in my memories of famous sportsmen and great champions.

This year, Harry had just two ambitions left. He wanted to reach the 100 mark — and, of course, he wanted to see his native Kerry win the 21st All-Ireland football title at last.

He didn’t make either of them. Passing the 99 mark was no trouble. But the Lord, looking for another Irish friend, called him home just before Kerry beat Offaly at Croke Park in September.

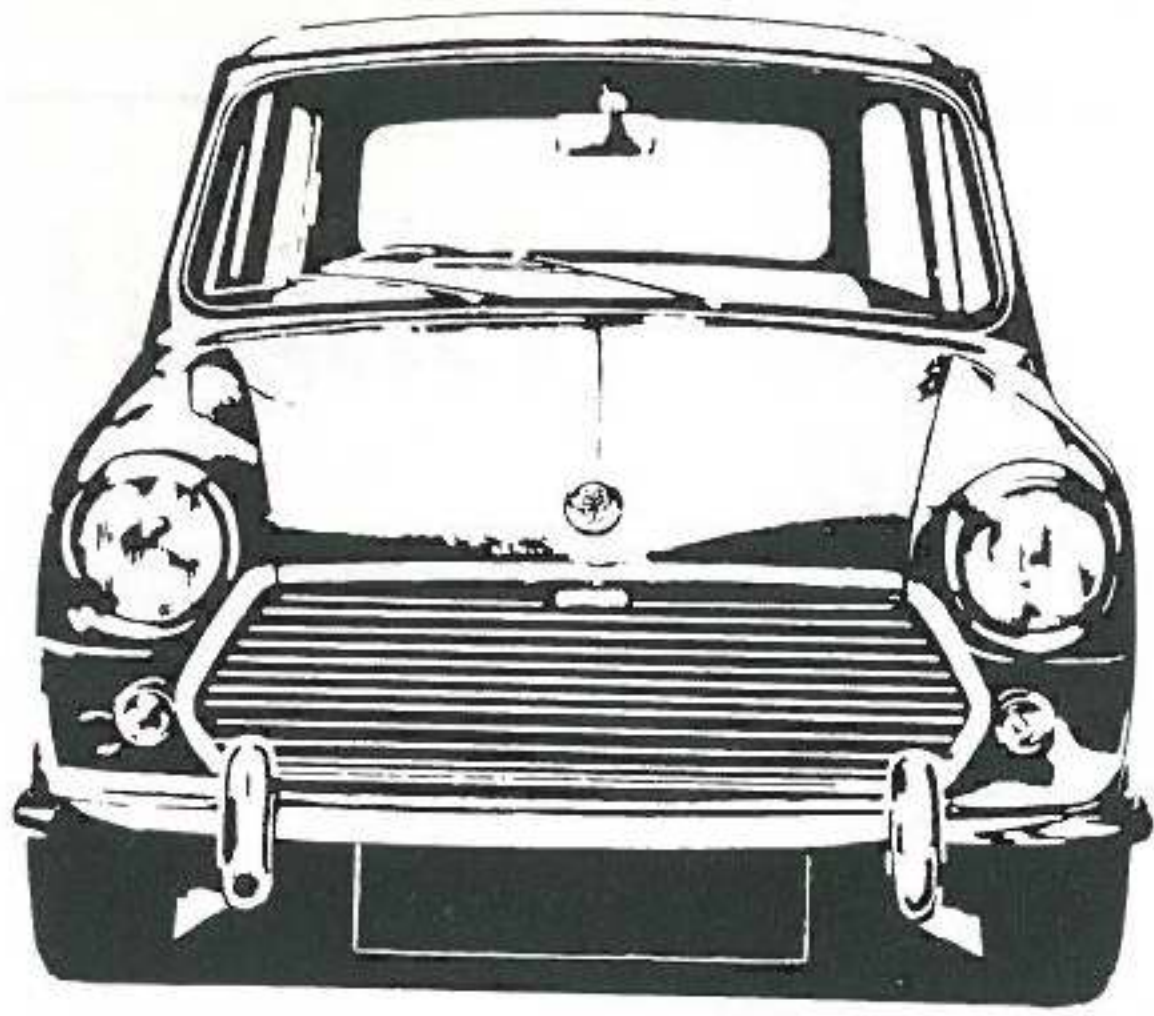
All I hope is that he got the result. God bless you, Harry Courtney.

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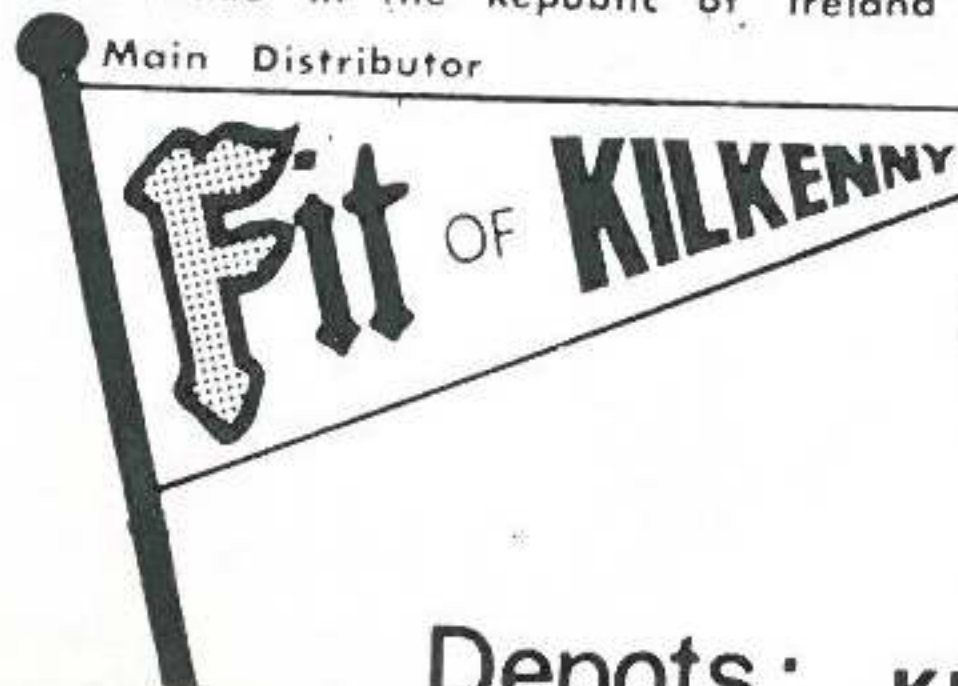
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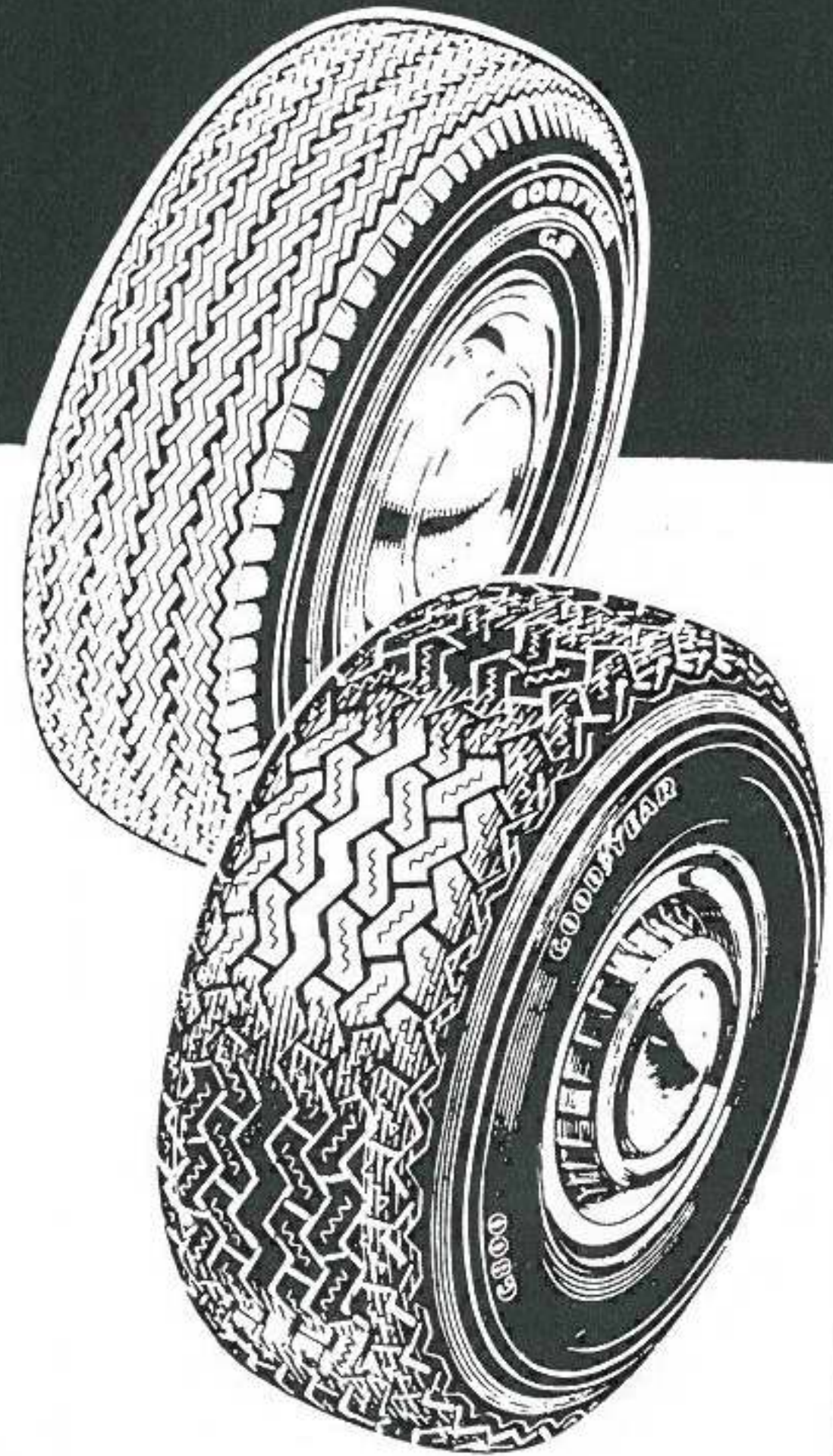
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# CAMOGIE REVIEW

By AGNES HOURIGAN



Margaret O'Leary

ON the camogie fields, 1969 would probably go on the records as one of the most successful years in the history of the game, were it not for the relatively poor attendance at the All-Ireland final. But that can be largely explained by the fact that the two counties most directly involved in the Northern troubles, Derry and Antrim, were playing in the senior and junior finals.

Otherwise, it was a year to remember that got off to a non-too-encouraging start when the snows came to hold up the first big event of the year, the Ashbourne Cup competition at Belfast.

However, those indomitable University girls played the semi-finals on a surface of frozen snow and Dublin and Cork went to Athlone later on to decide the final in which a very well-drilled U.C.D. squad regained the title after a three-year lapse.

The first All-Ireland Colleges camogie final, played at Croke Park, was a truly historic occasion. The standard of play was remarkably high and if Presentation Convent, Kilkenny, deservedly took the honours, their rivals from St. Aloysius in Cork must as deservedly share in the credit for sending the new competition off to a tremendous start. The annual Congress was full of life and promise and the championship that opened shortly afterwards, again proved that the all-over standard has levelled out

to an extent that nobody would have believed possible a few years ago.

In Leinster, Wexford came through for the second successive year, but only after close games against Kilkenny and Dublin. Cork lost their Munster title to Tipperary, but there was very little between the sides, while Antrim got a scare from Derry in the North.

But this was not Antrim's only scare, for they were almost caught by a late Galway rally in their semi-final. Champions Wexford were even more hard-pressed by Tipperary in the second semi-final, and it was only two great late goals by Margaret O'Leary that turned defeat into victory.

The final lived up to all expectations. Antrim, after taking some time to find their feet, came sweeping into the game in the second half, and seemed to have gained the day when a fine goal by Wexford substitute Cathy Power put Wexford in front at the vital moment.

Similarly in the well-contested junior final, Cork seemed to have got control when Derry struck back for a well-earned, if hard-won victory.

The inter-provincial championship again produced good fare, but Ulster disappointed against Leinster in their Croke Park semi-final. In the final, Leinster travelled to Cahir, where their combination proved too much for the talented individuals of Mun-

ster, and they easily retained the Gael-Linn Cup. This was a series that saw the very welcome re-appearance of that great Dublin forward, Una O'Connor.

The club championship was again contested by St. Paul's, the holders, from Kilkenny and Ahane, the Limerick and Munster champions, with St. Paul's retaining their title.

It was again a year of fine individual performances. The great star, Margaret O'Leary, had again a memorable year. She was again the star of Wexford's march to the Leinster and All-Ireland titles, gave a wonderful display for the Leinster side in the inter-provincial semi-final against Ulster, and played a big part in the retention by her club, Eoghan Ruadh, of the Dublin league and championship for the third successive year.

The next player on my list is also from Wexford, the Slaney-side captain, Bridget Doyle, who moved successfully from the wing to centre-back, and also starred in her club's county championship victory.

Antrim's Mairead McAtamney, by her brilliant display on the wing, stole much of the honours of the All-Ireland final, and once again proved herself the most stylish and effective striker of the ball in the game. Another player who did very well throughout the year was Ann Carroll, who was the driving force behind Dublin's Ashbourne

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## A BLANK SPOT IN MY MEMORY

THROUGH the past years I have constantly and consistently defended the annual Railway Cup competitions against a great deal of criticism. Now I wonder if in conscience I can do so any longer and for a rather odd reason.

To be brutally truthful, when I sat down to write on the events of the past year, I found that the St. Patrick's Day games had made so little impression on my mind, that I could not recall off-hand, a single incident from either game.

True, after some hard thinking, I did dredge up some memories of the Connacht hurlers' brave bid to achieve a completely unexpected victory, and their heroic rally that brought the equalising point and a replay at Galway, which Munster won. But I still have to admit that I had to go back to the March newspapers before I could even be sure who had won the football game!

And believe me, it is not very often that any big game is rep-

resented only by a blank spot in my memory. Which is why I wonder if I can continue to defend the Railway Cup series any longer, especially as I can vividly recall highlights of many less important games around the same time.

There was, for instance, the league divisional final clash between Westmeath and Dublin at An Uaimh, and then Westmeath's gallant stand against Kerry in the Football League semi-final. The League final was a bit of a disaster, with Offaly absolutely unable to get off the ground at all against Kerry, but the Hurling League final was a different matter altogether, with an absolutely dedicated Cork team conquering even the best endeavours of the 1968 All-Ireland champions, Wexford.

When I saw Cork that day I made them my firm All-Ireland favourites with one proviso, that they had, possibly, in racing parlance, come to hand too early in the year.

Held to a draw by Clare next time out, these Cork lads seemed to have learned their lesson, and the way they dealt with Tipperary in the first half of the Munster final, made it look as though the All-Ireland medals were already theirs for the taking.

But the first doubts about them arose during the first twenty minutes of that second half at Limerick. Tipperary without ever looking like a great side, edged down the lead little by little, and though Cork came back triumphantly again in the closing stages, there was a suspicion there that the Cork dedication was beginning to thin out.

Meanwhile, over in Leinster Offaly had sprung the hurling sensation of the year when they

defeated All-Ireland champions Wexford in their Croke Park semi-final.

Kilkenny, in the depths of despair a few months before, were rallied by the captaincy of Eddie Keher and the return to the colours of the one and only Ollie Walsh. But though they scored freely against Dublin, that victory at Wexford did not impress the experts, even though some newcomers in the Noreside attack showed a considerable amount of promise.

What was more, the Noremens, although they finished a couple of points to the good, never really conquered Offaly in an epic Leinster final, in which a hat-trick of goals by Paddy Delaney, and the fact that Offaly consistently went for points rather than chance the save of Ollie Walsh, were the two factors most commented on.

What very few noticed at the time was that these Offaly hurlers was as fast, as fit, as determined and as good as any team we have seen grace Croke Park in a long, long time.

Anyway, the next step in the hurling championship was the All-Ireland semi-final in which Kilkenny, though rarely beyond half-speed, again ran up a remarkable score, but they still lacked Cork's sharpness, which was why almost every expert in the country plumped for a Cork win in the final. And again Cork looked the part of League champions for forty minutes. Then Paddy Delaney went down injured, the ailing Paddy Moran came in, and from there to the end the Noremens were a team transformed, surging on to irresistible victory.

As to what happened Cork? One thing I felt was that they

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● FROM PAGE 45

had taken too much out of themselves too early in the year. Then, when the pinch came in later big games, they had no more reserves of dedication left.

That, I thought, was proved again in the Oireachtas final, when they once again began to wilt when one of their players was sent off and Kilkenny again turned on the steam.

But they have a great fund of up and coming hurlers on whom to draw, they are unlikely to burn themselves out so early next season and they must remain very live prospects for 1970.

In football, the surprises did not come so thick and fast though there were a few of them on offer.

No matter from what aspect you looked at it, this was Kerry's year, and they dominated the scene from the late spring on. Yet, they were lucky that they did not go out of the League campaign relatively early on when they snatched a draw with Mayo at Limerick.

From there on, however, there was no stopping them. Despite a hard run from Westmeath in the semi-final, they swept through the League here at home, and proved their worth by beating the New Yorkers in extra time

after two hard drawn games across the Atlantic.

They relaxed in the closing stages of the All-Ireland semi-final against Mayo, and almost paid the penalty, but they were very worthy winners in all the circumstances of what proved a disappointing, wind-swept final against Offaly.

Moreover, they proved how much they had come on in a few months by the ease with which they accounted for New York in the World Cup final.

The star of the side in the final was undoubtedly D. J. Crowley, but Mick O'Connell, when the mood was on him was still the footballer supreme. And yet, in the heel of the reel, I wonder if the bulk of the praise should not be given to the Kerry captain, Johnny Culloty?

It was he, one felt, who, by his understanding and advice, held the whole side together, and by word and example he proved conclusively that even in goal, a good captain is a good captain.

The most heartening thing I saw for the future of the game, was the skill and enthusiasm of the younger generation of hurlers from Antrim, Roscommon, Kildare and Offaly. You know, the work of the hurling enthusiasts is at last beginning to bear fruit, but only just in time.

# TOP TEN

THE following ratings were compiled from games played between October 26 and November 16.

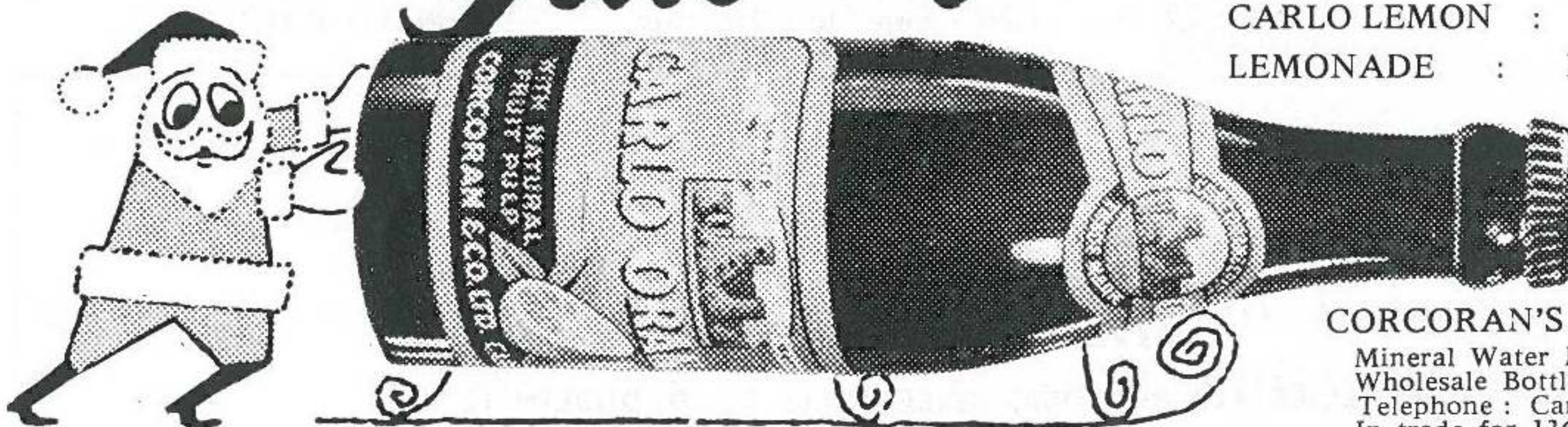
## HURLING

- (9) D. Murphy ..... (Cork)
- (9) W. Murphy ..... (Kilkenny)
- (9) P. Moran ..... (Kilkenny)
- (8) P. Barry ..... (Cork)
- (8) B. Hartigan ..... (Limerick)
- (8) C. Cullinane ..... (Cork)
- (7) M. Roche ..... (Tipperary)
- (7) E. Keher ..... (Kilkenny)
- (7) D. Martin ..... (Offaly)
- (7) T. J. Semple ... (Tipperary)

## FOOTBALL

- (9) S. Downes ..... (Clare)
- (9) W. McGee ..... (Mayo)
- (8) W. Bryan ..... (Offaly)
- (8) M. Furlong ..... (Offaly)
- (8) D. O'Sullivan ..... (Kerry)
- (8) P. McMahon ..... (Clare)
- (7) W. Morgan ..... (Cork)
- (7) J. Langan ..... (Mayo)
- (7) T. Prendergast ..... (Kerry)
- (7) J. Quinn ..... (Meath)

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# THE BAD SPOTS IN THE CURATE'S EGG

By  
**JAY DRENNAN**

LIKE most years, 1969 was not completely satisfactory; there are always some things that leave a bad taste in the mouth. And while one does not want to be over-critical of matters which, on the whole, formed only a small part of the overall picture, it is, perhaps, even more desirable that they be condemned just because they were only a small part of the total canvas.

One of the most disappointing things was the continued deterioration in the standards of the minor game. This refers not merely to quality of play alone, but also to qualities of dedication, interest and application. But, it refers even more sadly to the definite decline in the attitude of the youngsters, for there was further evidence of the win-at-all costs mentality, and further proof that the minors no longer are satisfied to play the game fairly and within the rules.

The Wexford-Derry All-Ireland semi-final comes to mind as the single most outstanding example of a bad-tempered match, but they were others which, in part, at least, were its equal. On the whole, it must be sadly admitted that the minors are showing themselves apt pupils of their

seniors in all the less desirable aspects of the game.

Since, in all fairness, it must be admitted that the lack of sporting qualities appears more in football than in hurling, I must add my second disappointment with minor competition: the very poor standard of the minor hurling championship up to the final. Even then, it was only some outstanding displays by individual Corkmen which raised a match, which at all times, lacked the necessary competitive bite that is supplied by even scoring.

The Munster championship, however, was very disappointing this summer: the final was a game in which mistakes were more easily numbered than good movements. In a game like hurling, where the practised skills play such an important part in making a player or a game delightful, it would appear that the present generation of youth are simply not satisfied to give the time and the love to the game of hurling. There are not that many youngsters around who have mastered the skills of the game so that they can delight the onlookers with a pure exhibition of the stylish best, such as minors were traditionally expected to do in the years gone by. In this

aspect, at least, things have not been getting better with the years.

I admit that there was plenty of earnest endeavour to be seen in the minor hurling championship, but, I am afraid, not the exquisite display of skills with which youngsters who had played and practised until the hurley was almost an extension of their hands adorned the minor game. This may well be a social phenomenon, because there seems no time now for that sort of practice: no specialists, in this age of specialists.

Almost on the same theme, and, perhaps, in some way related, I deplore the fact that the games have begun to run down in many schools where they were a key part in the educative process. I do not wish to be considered impossible to please, and I know that there is a standard which has seldom been bettered in the senior football and hurling championships of the schools and colleges. But, you will notice that the bigger schools are gradually coming into their own, and that I would like to mention one point there is little place any more for the smaller schools in medium-sized towns who once used to do

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## BECKERS TEA

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# FITNESS FOR FOOTBALL—3

By JOE LENNON

**T**HE good football team should have fifteen attackers and fifteen defenders—on the field at the same time. That is, all players on a good team and, indeed, all good players should be able to defend and attack.

The old idea that a team is comprised of a goalkeeper, six backs, two midfielders, and six forwards is out of date. The day is gone when a player like a left corner forward operates only in the left hand corner of the field. Gone also are the days when the big full-back can allow a centre-forward to rove around freely.

Very definite and more realistic tactics have now replaced these old notions, and in addition to the all-attack, all-defence teams some other important tactics are in operation in most of the better inter-county games—especially for set plays like the kick out, fifties and the throw in.

This new concept of team play is based on the simple argument that when a team is in possession of the ball, all players, irrespective of their position, should be thinking defensively. That is, they should be thinking of minimising their opponent's advantage and of regaining possession. All players on the team in possession of the ball should be thinking of exploiting possession to the full by trying to ensure that an attempt to score is made before they lose possession. "The hardest thing to do in football is win possession," and to concede possession without getting in an attempt at scoring indicates that the team has not accepted the importance of thinking out their game logically.

It is difficult enough to win the

game with possession or with "plenty of the ball" as we say, and hence to concede to the opposition even a fifty-fifty chance of regaining possession is to risk winning.

Hence, players will have to learn to switch their thoughts quickly from exploiting possession to regaining possession frequently during each game.

From the goal-keeper out, every player's first thought should

be to produce a score or at least a scoring attempt. It is obvious then that goal-keepers and full-backs should be as much concerned with starting scoring movements as forwards are with completing them. Rather than simply kick the ball out any old way and hope that one of your colleagues gets it, backs and goal-keeper should try and make it as easy as possible for

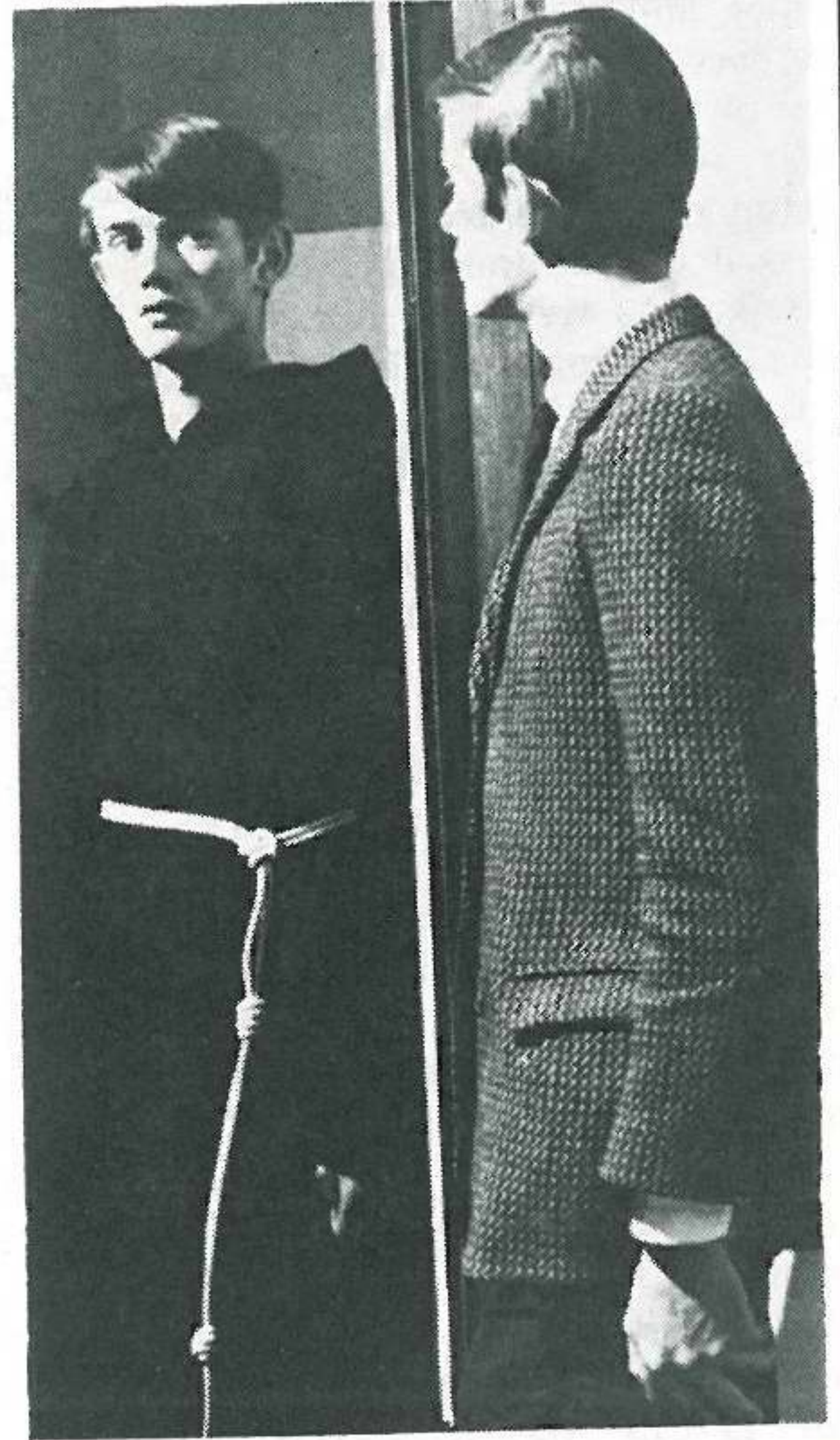
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## ● FROM PAGE 49

their midfield or half-backs to get their clearances. This requires two things—the thought to make the pass or clearance easy to receive and the skill to perform the kick or pass.

All kicks except those which are shots at goal should be thought of as passes. Occasionally, of course, defenders are doing well even to get a hurried kick at the ball never mind place it accurately, but if the pressure is put on defenders to read their team's position constantly, they will find that even when under severe pressure, they will find their colleagues more frequently.

So the game is really two games' attack and defence. There is a group of principles of play which applies to both attack and defence in slightly differing ways but on the whole the principles of play apply equally to attack and defence. We have already discussed one of these principles—safety. As we have seen, safety in attack requires all players to ensure they do not risk possession till they try a shot.

For defenders, it requires all players to ensure the opposition have to risk possession often by lifting the ball, passing too frequently, shooting at speed from narrow angles, shooting with the weaker foot and so on.

In general, the player will make a much bigger contribution to his team and his team will make more use of its chances if more thought goes into their preparation and play.

The throw-in is a simple set piece and yet it has not been well exploited yet. I think that the two tallest players on the team should work out a simple tactic for getting the ball from the throw-in. If you have big players in the line out, here is an obvious place to use them.

Kicks out from goal are the most frequent set pieces and yet we have not done a great deal of

work on this, tactic-wise. We still see the big, long, high kick-out repeatedly sent straight up the middle.

However, it is becoming obvious to me now that a team should have a group of players contesting each kick-out with set purposes. When the opposition kicks the ball out, two half forwards and two mid-fielders should be in the vicinity where the ball is going to land. Only one player should rise, the other three should be there to pick up a loose ball or assist the man in possession.

In modern football, the kick-out is one of the most important pieces of play in the game. And every team should do a great deal of work in this particular skill. It is becoming very obvious now that the goal-keeper who can

kick out the dead ball well is a tremendous asset to the team. If and when 13-a-side comes in at county level, all goal-keepers will have to kick out the ball.

The first important thing to bear in mind when kicking out a ball is to ensure that it lands well away from the loose forward. Secondly, that it lands in an area where your team has strength in the air either as catchers or deflectors and also strength on the ground to collect the loose ball should it be broken down. Thirdly, the kick-out should be carried as the game demands—long and high and long and low as well as to the wings and the centre.

*Fitness for Gaelic Football* has a section dealing with the principles of play and their application to attack and defence.

## THE BAD SPOTS . . .

### ● FROM PAGE 48

great and exciting things. What of Thurles C.B.S., for instance? Have they been rationalised out of existence as a power in the hurling field of the Harty Cup?

It may not be altogether because of the new system of education and its emphasis on grouping schools, but, I have seen several schools recently which caused great stir in their area with thrilling deeds in junior championships, and even a run in the senior, where the games, nowadays, are almost a dead letter. Once the schools were a stronghold and foundation of the future structure of the Association. We shall have to be careful in the future that a great area for worry does not grow out of the more recent frantic emphasis on scholastic rather than complete education.

Apart from this complex of thoughts about youth problems, only from among those which caused me annoyance throughout

the year. It occurs in football, and I got the impression that it was happening more often than ever before, and certainly more often than was reasonable. It is the fist tackle, to coin a phrase. I refer to the occasion when a forward is making ground through a hard-pressed defence and is met with a crunching fist in the face. I feel that the mere awarding of a free is a totally inadequate punishment for this brutal and dangerous action. Particularly, since the player who receives it is so open and unsuspecting of such an assault.

On a broader front, I am distressed that there is still such a wide gap between thought, speech and action in bringing the Association up to date, to say nothing of getting ahead of the times. While pleased with the concern voiced about the need for change and development, it is obvious, still, that there is a chasm in time and effort between those words and the total commitment and effort which will be needed to bring the ideal of change into full fruition.

● FROM PAGE 31

the 1965 semi-final and final. Leinster were successful that year.

Barry played for Munster in the two games of 1967—his only outings with the side. Leinster were champions in 1967, and when the trophy went back to the South in 1968, Mick Foley (Waterford) held down the last line of defence.

It has been another good year for Barry, with outstanding displays in the National League final and a splendid showing in the Munster decider among the dominant features. Performances those to tip the scales in his favour in Munster?

In sharp contrast, the Leinster football selectors will have no hesitation whatever in making their choice. "Streets ahead" of all other challengers is Martin Furlong, who won his second jersey in this year's semi-final

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failure to Munster, and who has I feel what it takes to blossom into one of the greatest goalkeepers of all time.

In Connacht, it also looks as though Peter Brennan (Sligo), who won his first Railway Cup medal last year, will hold on to the post.

As for those other goalkeeping jerseys, I forecast they will go to Walsh, Culloty, Lyons and Barry.

The draw for the Railway Cup for 1970, incidentally, is:

**Football:** Connacht v. Leinster, at Castlebar; Ulster v. Munster, at Croke Park. Both semi-finals on February 22.

**Hurling:** Connacht v. Ulster (preliminary game), at Galway, February 8. Semi-final: Munster v. Connacht, at Limerick, or Munster v. Ulster, at Croke Park, on February 22.

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# THE GREATEST

## ● FROM PAGE 11

semi-final of 1963 and lost narrowly the final to Dublin because of inexperience.

It was plain sailing after that, although their paths to each final were always tough. But that was the thing about Galway. They had that ability to pace themselves so that they would be at their peak only for the final.

The players could also adapt themselves to any position. Their mentors often made what looked the most bizarre changes when the team was in trouble—and they rarely failed to work. It was a measure of their greatness that they could settle in any position and make a success of it.

So most of them had won three All-Ireland medals at an age when others were still hoping to win their first. Even today players like John Keenan, Enda Colleran, Cyril Dunne and Seamus Leydon are still only about 26 years old, and will be around for some time yet. And if their displays in the present National League would seem to indicate that the sparkle has deserted them who is to say that when the right youngsters come along they will not still be around to guide them to another title.

For many, of course, the road has already ended. Bosco McDermott, Mattie McDonagh, Noel Tierney, John Donnellan and a

few others have certainly called it a day. They have their medals to play around with now. We have the memory.

Everything else in Connacht pales under that success. Things happened which in another decade would be important. There were the displays of Gerry O'Malley in the Connacht finals of 1961 and 1962, when almost on his own he beat the then young Galway.



MATTIE McDONAGH

—Thanks for the memories!

There was the retirement of Seán Purcell and Frank Stockwell—the end of an era. There was the rise of Sligo in the National League and of Galway's hurlers. There were the battles between Mayo and Galway, which many claim helped Galway in their All-Ireland wins.

But none fits in when discussing Galway football. They are on a limb of their own, and there they like staying.

## ● FROM PAGE 43

Cup victory early in the season—and subsequently not alone starred with St. Paul's on their way to a second successive All-Ireland club victory but gave an outstanding display for Leinster in the Gael-Linn Cup decider. In the South the player that impressed me most was the young Tipperary star, Margaret Cleary, who turned in a series of consistently good displays for her county and her province.

And of the younger generation, none were more impressive than the two Lizes—Liz Garvan, of St. Aloysius, Old Aloysians, Cork and Munster, and Liz Neary of Presentation Kilkenny, St. Paul's, Kilkenny county and Leinster.

### FOILSEACHÁIN NUA

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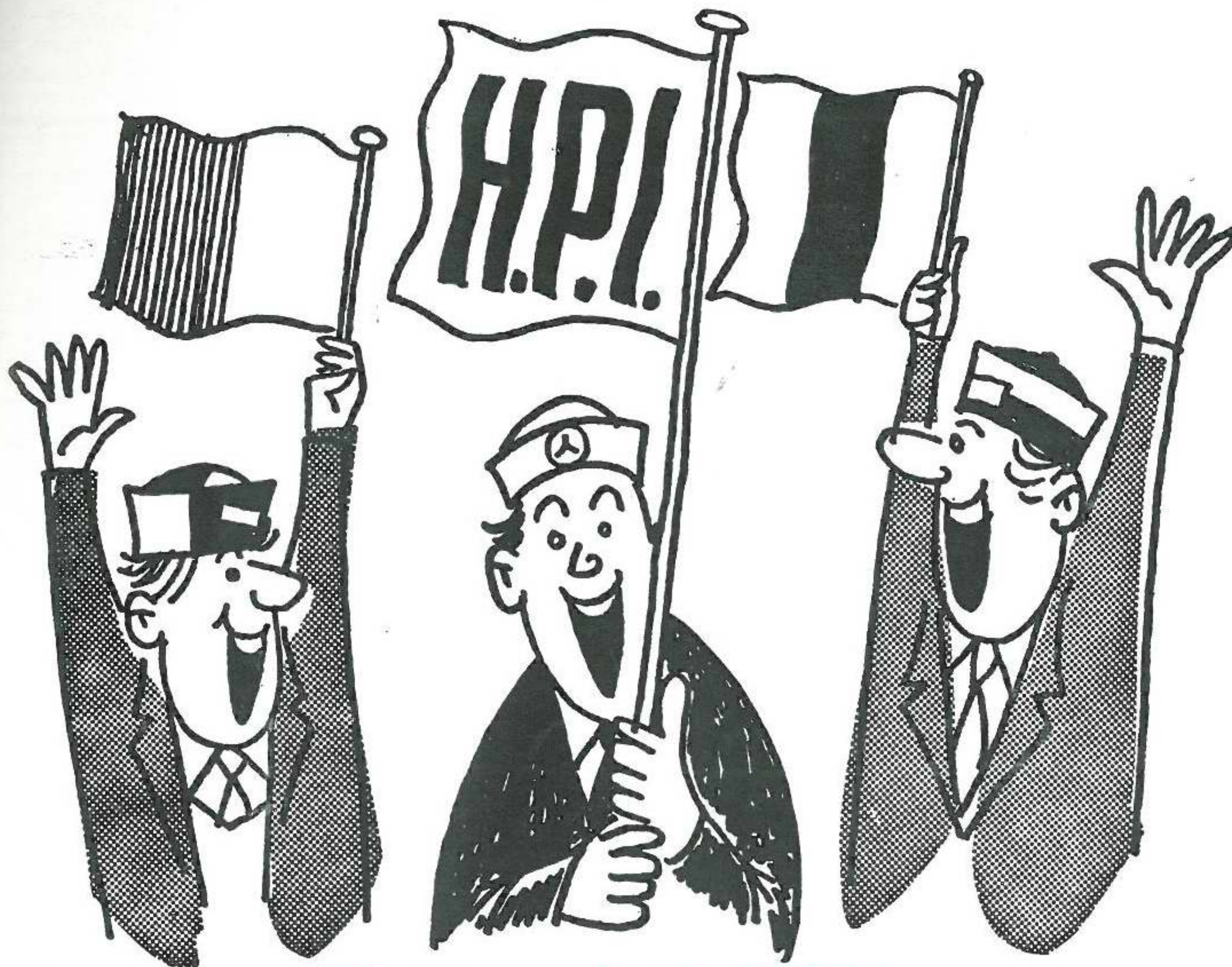
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