

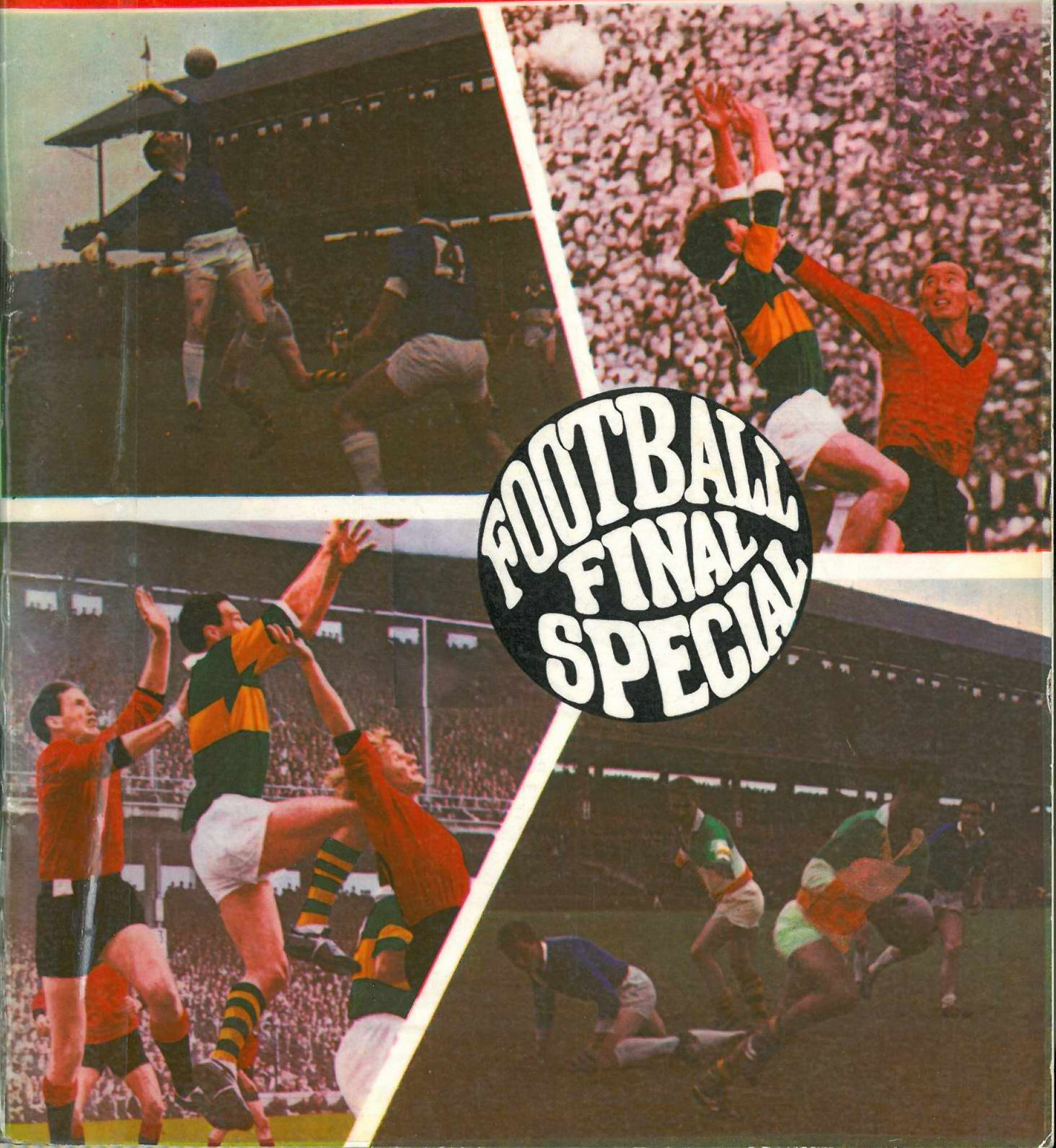
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OCTOBER, 1969



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ALL-IRELAND FOOTBALL FINALS

i bPáirc an Chrocaigh

28th September, 1969

SENIOR — 3.15 p.m.

CIARRAÍ v UA bhFAILGHE

MINOR — 1.45 p.m.

DOIRE v CORCAIGH

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To Hill 16 Terraces—via St. Joseph's Avenue off Clonliffe Road.

To Cusack Stand (Upper and Lower Decks)—via Belvedere lane
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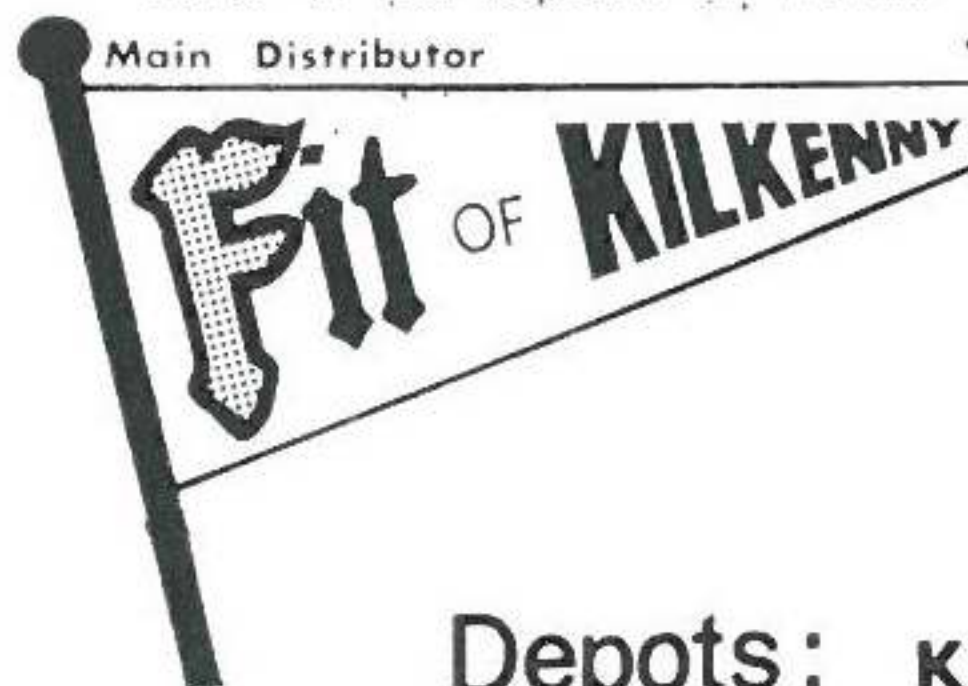
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OFFALY'S QUEST

"IT is always an exhilarating experience to see new faces in an All-Ireland final. When those new faces come from a county like Offaly, the joy of the genuine G.A.A. follower is really deep and the welcome is really big.

Offaly, the "faithful" county of the Association, make their first-ever appearance in an All-Ireland football final this year. They can be sure of a heart-warming reception from the huge crowd who will pack Croke Park. . . ."

The foregoing paragraphs began a leading article which appeared in GAELIC SPORT in September, 1961. With the necessary insertion of "second" instead of "first-ever", the words are as apt now — and uttered with the same sincerity—as they were eight years ago.

The Offaly senior team faded from the scene—though never very far from the front rank—after defeat by Down in the final of 1961. But perseverance, courage and dedication, allied to considerable football ability, have reaped their rewards again this year and, after an unhappy appearance against Kerry in the National League final in May, they are now back in the All-Ireland final, for the second time in the county's history.

We welcome them back. And we welcome Kerry, too, that wonderful county from the south, whose football tradition is the shining light of Gaeldom.

To the outsider, it might seem a lop-sided test—Kerry seeking their 21st title, Offaly their first.

We predict that it will not be so.

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Raymond Smith

Can Offaly do what Down did?



P. McCormack



J. Egan



W. Bryan



G. Hughes

By RAYMOND SMITH

OFFALY can have their finest hour—if they beat Kerry in the All-Ireland senior football final. It is one thing to win the Sam Maguire Cup—the achievement becomes all the more historic if Kerry are beaten on Final day.

Down forged a special niche for themselves in football history when they did just that in taking their first title, they beat Kerry again the following year on their way to defeating Offaly in the Final—and last year Kerry were their victims for the third time.

There has been this feeling about Offaly that they have the ability to reach a Final but cannot rise sufficiently to the heights at the ultimate stage to win out. Is it that they lack this final classic touch that marks out potential champions from the apparently 'unlucky' losers?

When I posed this question to John Dowling of Offaly's inability to win out at the ultimate stage in senior grade, the Offaly Co. Secretary would not accept my line of thought. He argued that in the present Offaly side there are men who won a minor crown four years ago and nearly won the under-21 title last year. In effect, then, they have proven their title-winning ability at Croke Park in the lower grades—and have the experience now to go on and win the highest honour.

John amazed me with his confidence in Offaly's ability to upset the odds on Kerry. He admitted that Offaly like being under-dogs. And when I spoke to veteran full-back, Greg Hughes (who will definitely call it a day after the All-Ireland), he too made it clear to me that the more the public go for a Kerry win, the more Offaly like it.

Many people in assessing the prospects for the Final are "reading" the match on Kerry's victory in the League decider. But John Dowling thinks that it was not a match at all after a man from each side went to the line. I agree with him that one must not judge Offaly on that day. They are a far different side now.

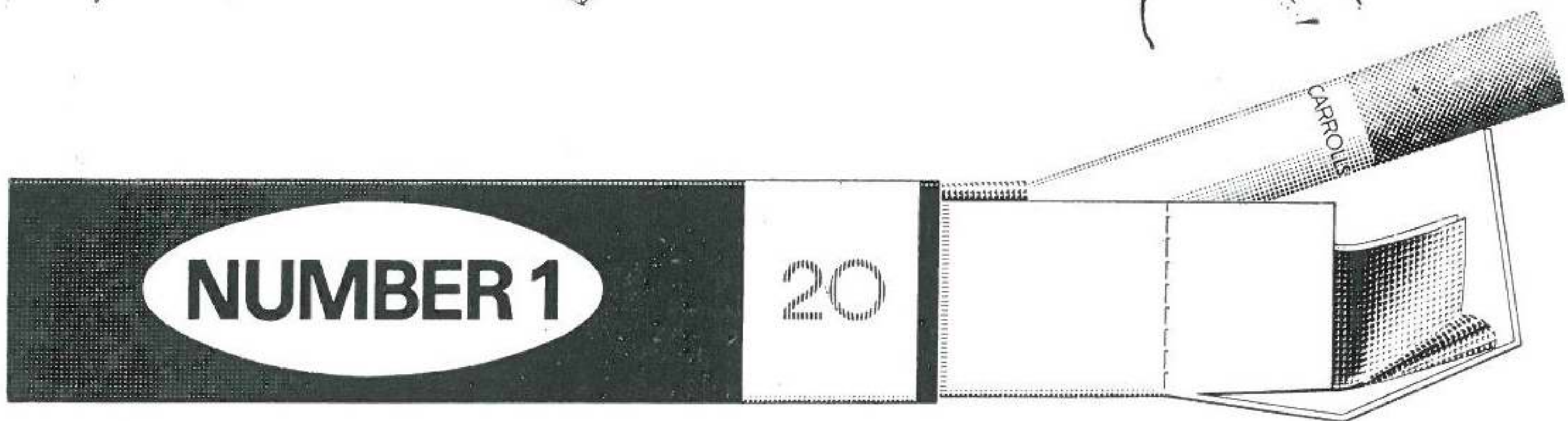
Joe Keohane assured me that Kerry are not judging Offaly on the League Final either. Joe knows from experience that there is a world of difference between a League Final and the heat and tension of an All-Ireland Football Final. As he put it to me, if its close going into the last ten minutes one mis-kick, one lucky break can swing the match dramatically one way or the other. An All-Ireland Final is a law unto itself—you never can tell, you can never predict with certainty what the result will be.

There are those who have argued that Offaly beat Cavan because

they were lucky enough to hit upon a wet day in the replay and the conditions suited them. Mick Higgins would not accept this at all as an excuse for Cavan's defeat—and John Dowling expressed the view that Offaly would have done better on a dry sod.

Cavan failed because they lacked a guiding brain at centre-forward (a Jim McCartan or a Paddy

● TO PAGE 7



**but Carrolls Number 1
are out on their own!**



The Offaly team who beat Kildare, 3-7 to 1-8, in the Leinster final at Croke Park on July 27.

● **FROM PAGE 5**

Doherty); they failed too because after Newman and Carolan had "broken down" the ball in the midfield jumps for possession the half-forwards were not on hand to pick up the loose ones; thirdly, you cannot win an All-Ireland semi-final if you concede soft goals like one or two of those Cavan gave away (I have in mind, especially, the third goal which really shattered their hopes). They never moved as a team—the full-back line started shakily and never had the command and authority that the Offaly full-back line displayed in the drawn game and the replay.

People thought that Paddy McCormack, Greg Hughes and Johnny Egan just could not go through the replay without making some error—and Hughes not only held Charlie Gallagher but made some really magnificent clearances.

What of Offaly? The question now is: Have we been underestimating them? Or is it that Cavan had not the ability to exploit weaknesses in the Offaly set-up?

Mick Higgins argued that Cavan played very badly in the replay and yet the scoreboard showed them only four points behind at the end. He believes that Kerry will win

the Final because Kerry's half-forwards, given mid-field superiority, have the capacity to open the gaps in the Offaly defence—and round off their movements effectively.

Kildare were favourites to beat Offaly—but Offaly surprised them. All neutral opinion was behind Cavan in the replay—and Offaly again surprised.

Nicholas Clavin had a great hour at centre-back and he has capable flankers in Eugene Mulligan and Mick Ryan.

Willie Bryan and Larry Coughlan will be Offaly's key men in the Final. You cannot escape from the fact that if they fail to keep the O'Connell-Crowley partnership in check, Offaly's prospects must be greatly diminished. Down kept a good check on O'Connell in last year's Final by putting a net of a few men around him. O'Connell will win any man-to-man duel in the air—Offaly must have a plan to hold the Valentia Island star if they are to get an even break at centre-field.

Offaly's attack impressed in the replay against Cavan. There were some fine scores—like Sean Evans' left-footed drive for the opening goal, McTeague's great point and the Hickey - Kilroy - McTeague

movement that brought a picture point by McTeague near the end.

Is there any player in the game to-day with a finer body swerve and side-step than Tony McTeague? I doubt it. He is a joy to watch when in full cry. Sean Kilroy has a real touch of class in his play—he is a match-winner in his own right. Pat Keenan had a good match in the replay but on a cold analysis Offaly must look to McTeague and Kilroy to make the openings—and must trust on the Kerry full-back line falling into errors under pressure (as Cavan's did) for the goals to come.

Offaly must overcome this indefinable thing which is the Kerry tradition on Final days. You can argue as long as you like that if you have the team, as Down had it in 1960-'61 and again last year, tradition fades like a summer flower in autumn. But have Offaly a team to equal the power and drive of the Down attack in 1960-'61 and the O'Neill-Doherty axis in 1968. I doubt it.

But neither are Kerry world-beaters by any yardstick. It's a pedestrian year—one of those lean years that happen now and then, like 1954 and 1966. And in a year like this, Offaly could upset the Kerry men.

Meet John O'Neill; Fiery corner forward; Family man; Ledger Supervisor Allied Irish Banks



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TONY McTEAGUE

talking to

SEAN O'DONNELL

OFFALY play it hard but they also play it clean and above all they most certainly are not as rough as some press reports would make them out to be. These are the very words spoken to me by Fr. Tom Scully, trainer of Offaly's football team when I met him in their Dublin hotel after the drawn game between themselves and Cavan.

Fr. Scully declares that the press aim their pens at Paddy McCormack, in particular, and he regards this as very unfair to a player who has given loyal service to his county over a number of years.

Talking of Paddy McCormack reminds me that he, along with John Egan and Greg Hughes, also played on the 1960 and '61

teams and like they say down in Offaly, in order to keep up with the younger members of the team Greg Hughes has to move with the "times" and make no mistake about that for the Kells based Offaly full back, by the fitness he showed against Cavan, is doing just that.

Tony McTeague is but one of the more youthful members of the side and a real live wire in the forward line and it would be a bad day if the Ferbane player did not score at least a point or two for his county and you just watch out for him next time Offaly are playing for when Tony McTeague gets the ball the odds are 100/1 that it will be a score.

I had a few words with McTeague after his county played that memorable drawn game with Cavan and this is how it went.

O'D.—Tony, you have a wonderful ability at frees, to what do you attribute this?

McTeague — I suppose it is because I started so young and kept at it, you see I practice quite a lot as it is the only way to become accurate.

O'D.—How do you compare the present Offaly side to the 1960 and '61 teams?

McT.—Oh, we are equally as good as them and I have no doubt at all in my mind about that. The present side is much younger, of course, and there is plenty of speed in them which is a tremendous asset in championship football.

O'D.—Do you feel Offaly have their best side on the field at the moment?

McT.—Not quite Sean, because in my opinion there are other players in the county who deserve a chance to prove themselves and I hope the selectors will take a look around in the coming season.

O'D.—How good are Kerry and

do you think they will win the All-Ireland?

McT. — Well, physically they are a powerful team, therefore they are exceptionally good in the air because of their height. However, as for speed, I have no doubt that Offaly are faster on the ball any day and as for Kerry's chances in the final, I believe that if their opponents (and you know who they are) face up to them like any other side and knock off any psychological effects the Kingdom may have on them they could very well beat the mighty kingdom.

O'D.—How then do you explain your own defeat by Kerry in the League?

McT. — Unfortunately, playing Kerry seems to have a psychological effect on our lads and we will just have to shake it off soon and as far as I am concerned, the sooner the better.

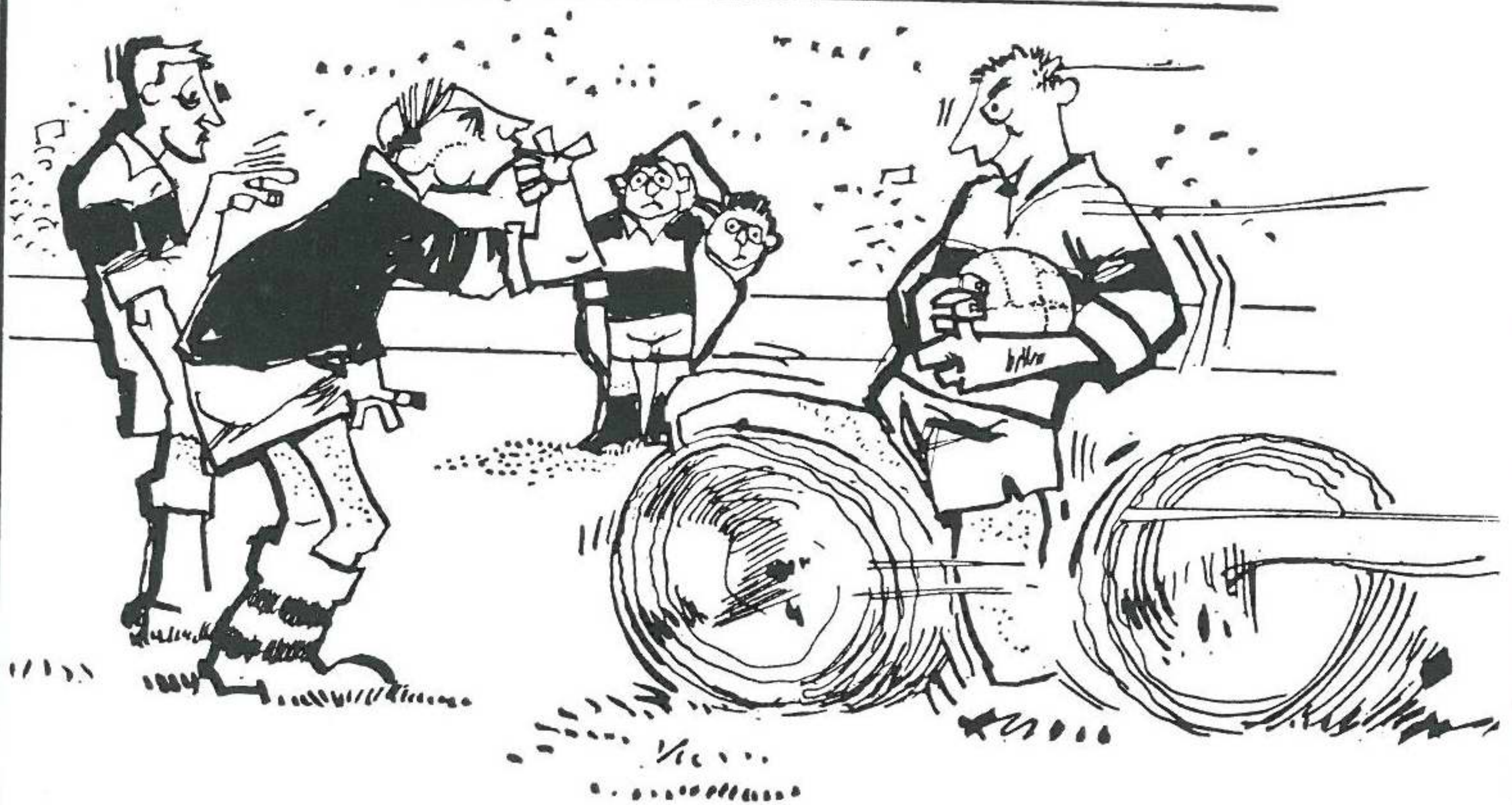
O'D. — Would you like any changes in the rules of the G.A.A.?

McT. — Yes, there are two things I would like to see happen. Firstly, I believe the Ban should go as I cannot see any harm in watching other sports and let's face it, we can learn from the other fellow just like he can from us. Secondly, I would definitely like 13 a-side football to be given a try because as I see it 15 a-side is too many for a small club ground anyway where more injuries result from the lack of space.

O'D. — What other interests have you apart from Gaelic football?

McT.—Well, I have a general interest in all sports and I study every sport as closely as I can in order to see what I could learn from it. I also love dancing and meeting the fair sex and above all else I love a game of poker any time, any place, when time permits it.

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 —



OFFALY CAN WIN . . . IF THEY HOLD O'CONNELL

"THIS is the best Offaly team I ever played on." High praise indeed for the midland combination which will attempt to prevent Kerry from becoming the first county to take twenty-one All-Ireland titles on the last Sunday in September. But the man who spoke those brave words, star full back Greg Hughes is one who is well equipped to compare the respective merits of Offaly teams over the past dozen years or so. When the faithful county was making a big name for itself in the football world back in the early sixties Greg Hughes was proving himself as one of the best players in his position in the game. Flanking him at that time were two up and coming corner backs in Paddy

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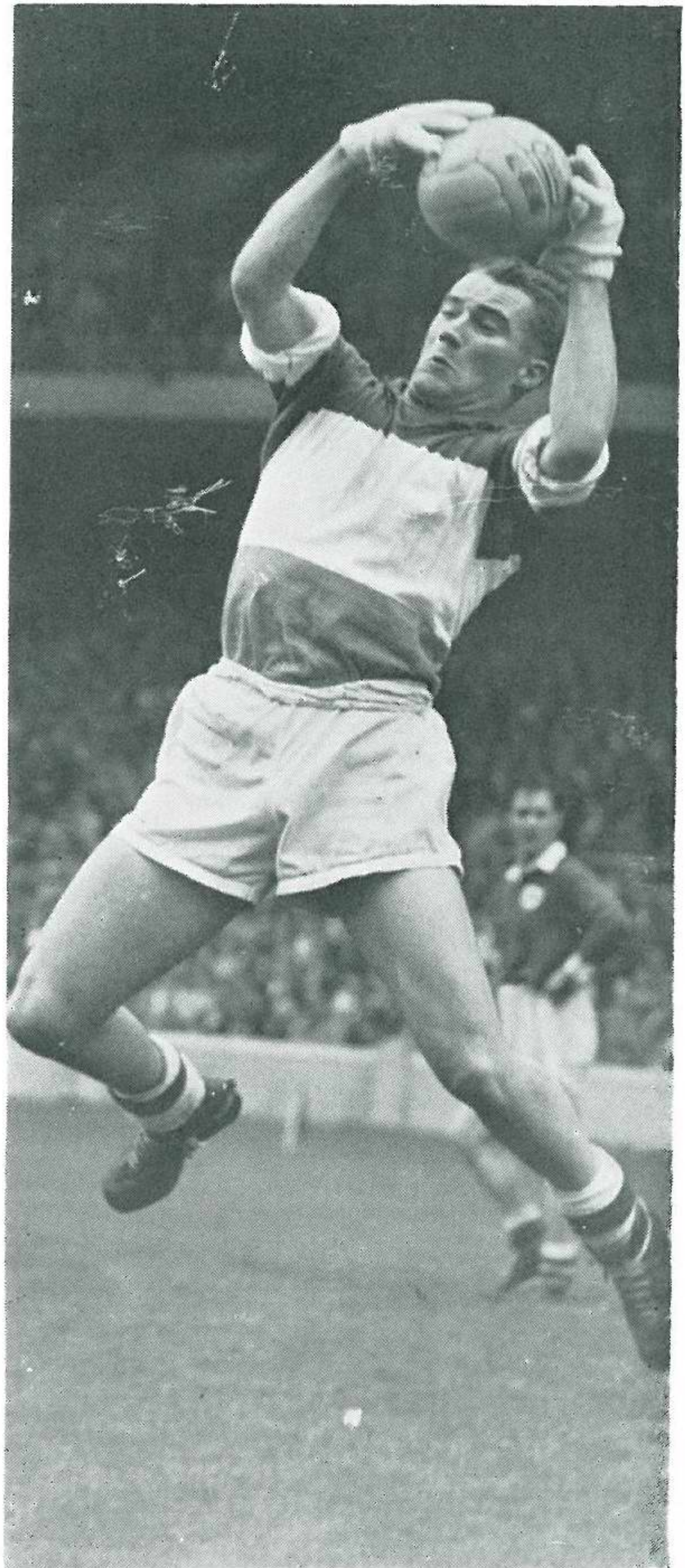
By  
**NOEL  
COOGAN**

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McCormack and Johnny Egan. Nine years and many games later this great-hearted trio are all performing as effectively as ever and

this is one of the main reasons why the gallant midlanders are having their most successful season since

● TO PAGE 13

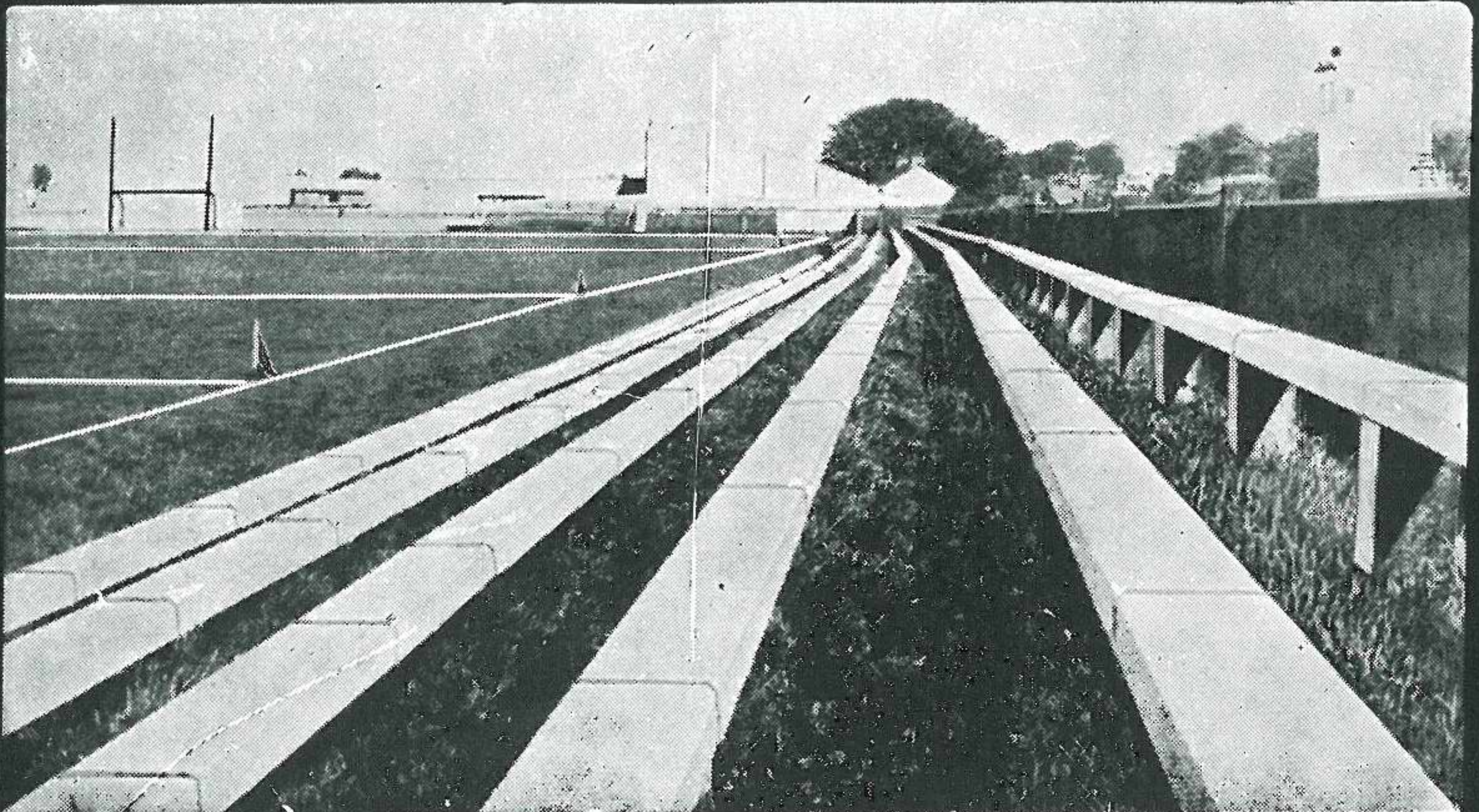


A fine action study of the Offaly full back, Greg Hughes.

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● FROM PAGE 11

the early 'sixties.

When Down made their big breakthrough by taking their first All-Ireland title in 1960 and then retaining it the following year the nifty Northerners were hailed far and near as one of the greatest football teams in the history of the game. But if that Down side was one of the greatest then Offaly weren't far behind them and there are many supporters of the Leinstermen who will tell you even to this day that their county was most unlucky against the Mournemen in each of the first two years of the present decade. And if the present Offaly team is better than that side they must be a really good one. But Greg Hughes was most emphatic when I spoke to him immediately after he helped his county to defeat Cavan in the semi-final replay.

I then went on to question him about Offaly's prospects of succeeding where they so narrowly failed eight years ago. I reminded Greg of the drubbing Kerry handed out to the midlanders in the League final a few months ago and asked him if the championship final would be a different game. "It most certainly will be a different game" I was assured. The big strongly built full back is of the opinion that this Offaly team is improving with each outing and that they were not tuned up for the League final to the same extent as they will be for the championship decider.

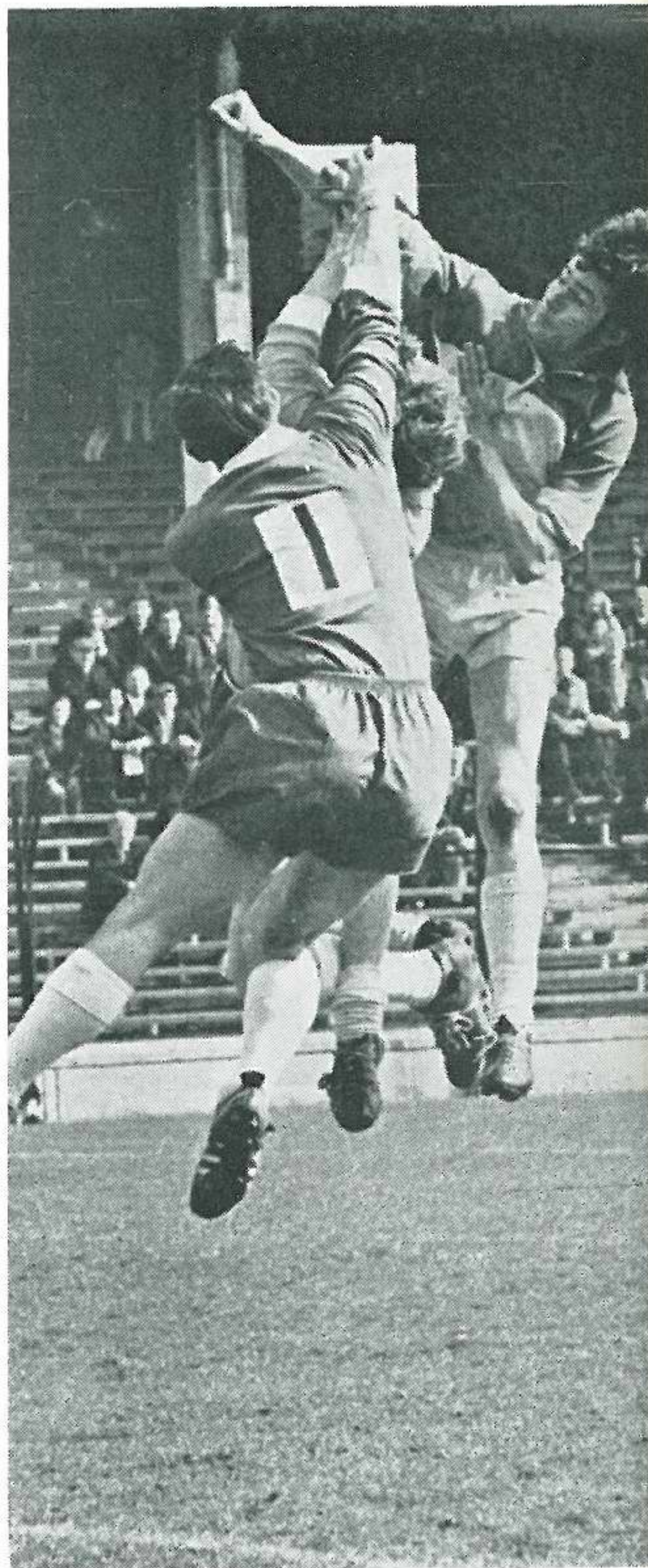
There are many who may not be in favour of the hard man to man style of football which is part and parcel of Offaly's game but on the other hand one can hardly fail to recognise the great spirit which is implanted in the hearts of the wearers of the tricoloured jerseys. How many times during the past months have these gallant warriors snatched victory from the jaws of defeat or refused to accept defeat

when it literally stared them in the face? Such a spirit wins All-Ireland titles and if Offaly don't succeed this year it will hardly be for the want of trying.

Now, don't get the impression either that Offaly can't play attractive football. Remember the opening half against Cavan in the replay when the Breffni defence was cut open on many occasions as opposing attackers neatly flicked the leather from one to the other in the most menacing fashion. The same snappy type of football was very much in evidence against a highly rated Kildare side in the Leinster final. After the drawn semi-final there were many who held the opinion that Tony McTeague was the only dangerous attacker that the midlanders possessed. But after the replay all such rumours were well and truly buried as the remaining forwards more than took the burden from McTeague by picking off their scores in grand style.

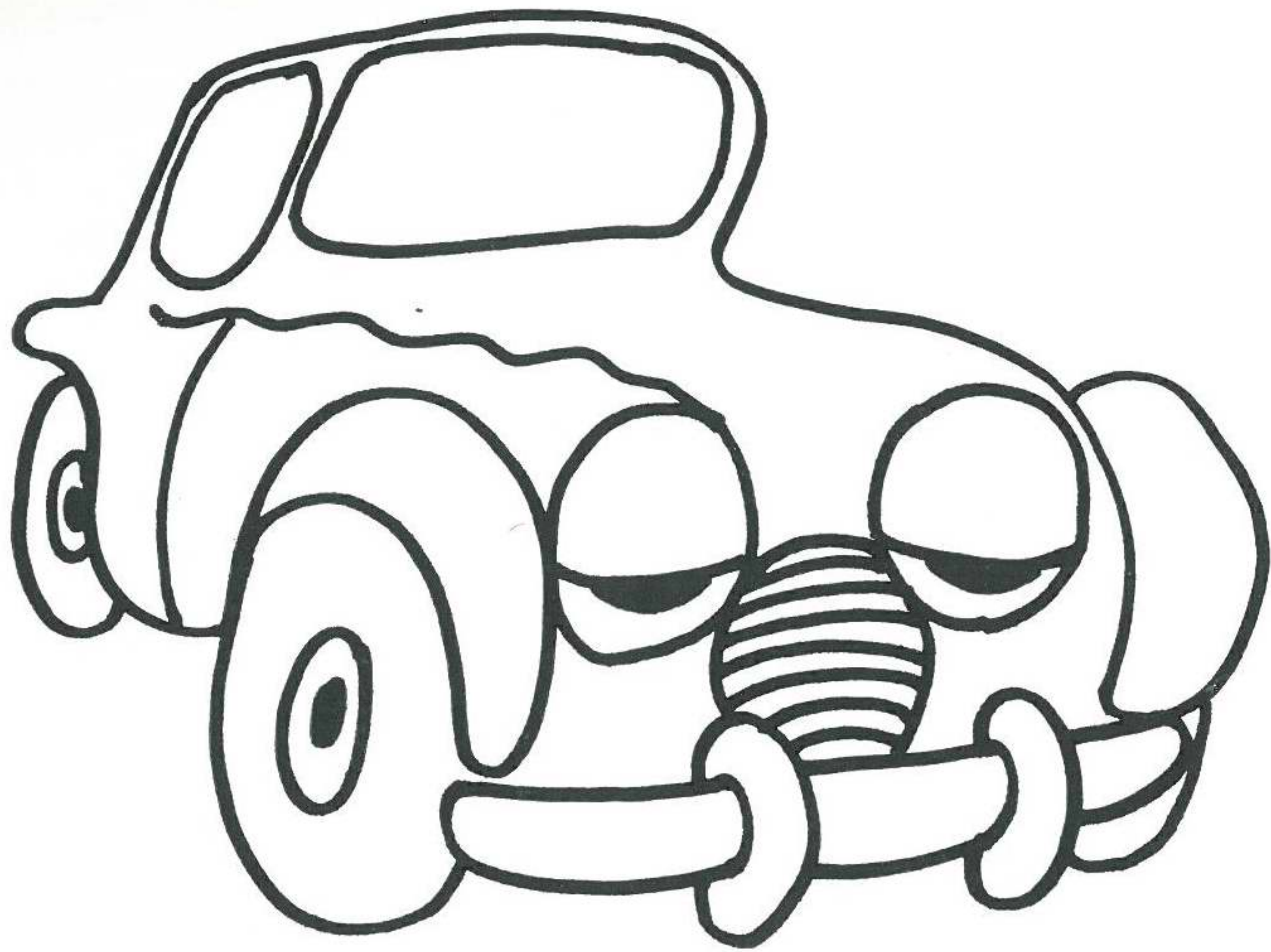
The more I think of this final the more convinced I become that midfield will have a vital bearing on the outcome. Can Mick O'Connell be held? If the Valentia maestro could be blotted out then Offaly's chances would be rosier. He excelled in the League game and this threw tremendous pressure on the midlanders' defence. The loss of a centre half back left a long gap down the middle which Kerry so vastly exploited to their own advantage. In the second half of the Cavan replay Offaly's midfield faltered and a similar pressure was thrown on their rearguard. They didn't falter but they certainly appeared at panic stations on a few occasions. Larry Coughlan and Willie Bryan have vital roles to play in this final. If they can give a reasonable supply to their front men and if on the other hand they manage to prevent their defenders from being overworked then Offaly will be in there with a real chance.

If Offaly can take that long



Sean Kilroy of Offaly (right) in action against Donegal in the National League semi-final last April.

awaited title nobody will begrudge it to them. And above all nobody will begrudge All-Ireland medals to that great long serving trio, Messrs. McCormack, Hughes and Egan. But as already stated much will depend on the midfield exchanges and how Mick O'Connell plays.



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**NEW ESSO
EXTRA WITH
*vitane***

puts back the power. 

THE KERRYMEN MUST BEWARE

Says JAY DRENNAN

HAVING readily disposed of Cavan in the re-played semi-final, Offaly are now ready and more than willing to face up to Kerry in the All-Ireland final.

Judging them on their displays against the Breffni men, especially in the replay, this in a sound Offaly side. Admittedly, their midfielders did not shine in the second Cavan game, but they did enough in the first hour to show their true potential. Both in defence and attack, Offaly will not be lacking—but let's begin at the beginning.

The first thing, perhaps, to avoid is to lay too much stress on the fact that Kerry were substantially the better team when they met Offaly in the National League Home Final.

It would be unreasonable to think that they could exercise the same dominance just as it would be unreasonable to think that Offaly did not benefit from the unpleasant experience of such a sound beating.

In fact, it seems to me to say a great deal for the resolution and character of the Offaly side that they were required to plunge straight into the hurly-burly of the Leinster championship immediately after the League calamity, and that they did so with never a flinch.

Their impressive solidity in all their games shows that they were not a heartless side riding a suc-

cess-wave, but a team which has set targets before it and will achieve them if it is within the capacity of their physical make-up.

To go straight back after a sound defeat and begin building a fresh building of hope is a mighty test of character, in my opinion, especially as the defeat came in the last ditch after a tough hard campaign to reach that threshold of success.

I yield to nobody in my valuation of the importance of character in a team which hopes to reach for the top. Without it, certainly, they are lost. With a large and sturdy segment of it, a team can turn its abilities to the very maximum advantage. I fear such a team at all times. In that respect, I must admit to the feeling that Offaly will be very dangerous opposition for Kerry. Kerry players have said they were hoping for Cavan opposition, and I can see their point. It would be inhuman to expect them to put aside all thoughts of the last encounter with Offaly; complacency is a thing which can creep in at the back door of the mind, willy nilly.

Offaly's defence was unable to contain the coordinated, shifting emphasis of Kerry's attack, and the trouble there was aggravated by the fact that O'Connell and O'Dwyer were coming through from centre-field and retaining or

recollecting possession to make extra men all the time. The root of the problem for Offaly's defence must lie, to a large extent, outside their own control in the hands of Larry Coughlan and Willie Bryan or any other who may take a place in the centre.

Given an even break at midfield, Offaly's backs are match-hardened enough and tight enough in close marking to give the Kerry men plenty to think about and little target to shoot at.

But, can they hold the centre; can they hold O'Connell in his mighty best mood, and Crowley in his eternal activity? In attack, Offaly might expect a little more change from their business with Kerry than in their drawn semi-final when McTeague alone looked like scoring. There is no doubting Tony's wonderful sharpness, but there is some cause to doubt the penetration of others.

Yet, they might find some open spaces in Kerry's lines: they might from some frees; and everyone knows that the present generation of Offaly footballers are so confident in McTeague as a marksman that being fouled is, in itself, an important part of the game. Offaly are vigorous—sometimes too much so—but, they will remember that there is hardly a team in the country which so resents and can so effectively combat over-vigorous tactics used against them as Kerry.

Their two games against Cavan will have done Offaly a lot of good. One hour of championship football is worth more than all the challenge games put together. One could have slept quite soundly through the recent Kerry-Kildare challenge game.

To sum up, my feelings are that Offaly in the All-Ireland final will bear no resemblance to the team we saw in the League final. They will be a much more confident side and they will certainly make the Kerry men go at full stretch for the sixty minutes—but Kerry have O'Connell!



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HENNESSY

TOP TEN

AS might be expected, Kilkenny and Offaly dominate the top ten ratings this month. The Offaly men had two opportunities — against Cavan — to show their paces and several of them came out of the test with great credit.

Kilkenny's second half performance in the All-Ireland final against Cork was one of the finest hurling exhibitions of the decade. The men who shaped the Nore-siders' great win are duly honoured in the list below.

The ratings have been compiled from games played between August 24 and September 14, inclusive.

HURLING

- (10) T. Carroll (Kilkenny)
- (9) P. Henderson (Kilkenny)
- (9) G. McCarthy (Cork)
- (9) M. Lawlor (Kilkenny)
- (8) J. Treacy (Kilkenny)
- (8) M. Coogan (Kilkenny)
- (8) E. Keher (Kilkenny)
- (8) A. Maher (Cork)
- (7) W. Walsh (Cork)
- (7) D. Clifford (Cork)

FOOTBALL

- (9) G. Hughes (Offaly)
- (9) A. McTeague (Offaly)
- (9) N. Clavin (Offaly)
- (9) P. McCormack (Offaly)
- (8) S. Duggan (Cavan)
- (8) W. Bryan (Offaly)
- (8) H. Newman (Cavan)
- (8) E. Mulligan (Offaly)
- (7) E. Cusack (Cavan)
- (7) T. Lynch (Cavan)

Eamonn O'Donoghue



THERE were four minutes left in the All-Ireland Under-21 football final of 1967, and Mayo, with a two points lead, looked poised for the title. Then, dramatically, up popped a young Kerryman to show that he could prise open a defence, and shoot hard and straight.

It was a moment with a fairy tale-like quality about it as Eamonn O'Donoghue left-footed the ball to the net to put Kerry into the lead for the first time. Mayo swept back to hit the equaliser, and won the replay, but in that flash of vintage form, O'Donoghue displayed the potential to blossom into the type of finisher who might turn the scales in favour of his team at any time.

Since then the Ballylongford man has had much to compete with as a Kerry senior team regular. Indeed, so much emphasis has been placed, understandably, on the majestic play of Mick O'Connell, the cool football and sharpshooting of Mick O'Dwyer, the skills of Pat Griffin and the deeds of youthful right winger Brendan Lynch, that I'm inclined to regard Eamonn O'Donoghue as one of the most under-rated members of the Kingdom squad.

Admittedly, he has not as a senior left his stamp on any game to such dramatic effect as in that Under-21 final. His scoring record is not very impressive, there have also been games in which he failed to score, and his all-round work generally has not been as spectacular as that of others in the line-up.

But, while many a forward

punctuates scoring barrages with spells of comparative obscurity, Eamonn O'Donoghue has the virtue that he consistently produces a brand of progressive football that is a vital factor in earning scores for Kerry.

If he is not hitting the scores himself—and I remember his splendid five points against Tipperary in a League game at Tralee earlier this year—he is foraging, carrying, unsettling the backs, and linking up expertly in moves leading to scores. O'Donoghue and Griffin set up a goal by Dom O'Donnell late in the first half that put Kerry on the way to victory against Mayo in a League replay at Galway in April for a Divisional final place, and another classic example of his ability to unobtrusively blend in to telling effect in a defence splitting move was the way he linked up with Lynch to put Mick O'Dwyer through for a memorable third Kerry goal in the League "Home" final win over Offaly.

Yet, had Kerry won, rather than lost, the 1967 Munster senior final, we might now be discussing Eamonn O'Donoghue the goalkeeper, rather than the attacker. After a couple of years in the minor inter-county grade as a forward, he was pressed into service by Kerry senior selectors

By
**OWEN
McCANN**

in an emergency as goalkeeper, and he proved such a success that he wore the No. 1 jersey in the 1967 Munster campaign.

The final at Cork was a remarkable game for O'Donoghue. He started out in the last line of defence, and he performed there very creditably. Then, late in the game he was moved upfield in a bid to strengthen a struggling attack. That was the end of the O'Donoghue era as a goalkeeper, and the beginning of his senior career as a forward.

Nonetheless, it was a long wait until the next chapter began—in a play-off in the League with Limerick at Tralee in March of last year. And although he later figured in a number of challenges, his next competitive game was not until last year's Munster final.

He was handed the No. 12 jersey for the first time for that game and he did much to end Cork's winning run in the South with a good display, which he highlighted with a goal and a point. Since then, the left half forward spot has been his own, and he has shared in all of Kerry's subsequent triumphs, and also won two interprovincial jerseys this year.

Eamonn O'Donoghue, who is a brother of the full-back, is 23, and at 11 st. one of the lightest members of the Kerry team. His role is a vital one, for the half forward line, which is moving so superbly this year, must carry much of Kerry's hopes of opening up the way to that long awaited 21st All-Ireland title.

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WILSON HARTNELL



THE MAN AT THE "MIKE"

By JACK MAHON

WE have come to take him almost completely for granted. The odd mistake he makes is exaggerated and nauseam by his critics. In the eyes of many he has his favourite teams and his favourite players. Be all that true or untrue, I for one, think there will never be another like him.

Like most youngsters, I grew up idolising the man whose epic broadcasts of countless games gave me so many thrills and disappointments. He never failed to create excitement. We were all budding Michael O'Hehirs, carefully trying to mimic the nasal voice and characteristic changes of tone of the man

we all hoped would be singing our praises one day.

The pride he gave us when he mentioned our little town. How we grew to know Moy-carkey, Toomevara, Holycross, Bennettsbridge, Cornafaen, and all the strange sounding names of famous hurling and football strongholds.

He seemed so much part and parcel of the main G.A.A. programme that the setback which saw him ease off from work for a fairly long period made us appreciate his worth all the more. He creates a wonderful atmosphere, generates tremendous enthusiasm, is obviously sincerely keen and lost in the games he has helped in no small way to popularise. Long life to you, Michael O'Hehir.

A browse in the record book

THE first All-Ireland football final that of 1887, was played at Clonskeagh, Dublin, on April 29, 1888. Limerick Commercials beat Louth Young Ireland, 1-4 to 0-3. The Commercials Club had been in existence before the G.A.A. itself and had played a famous game against the Limerick Butchers in 1883, the year before the Association was founded.

* * *

The record attendance for an All-Ireland football final was set up at the Down v. Offaly game in 1961, when 90,550 spectators crowded Croke Park.

* * *

Between 1897 and 1908 Dublin appeared in nine All-Ireland finals, winning eight. In those nine finals no goal was scored against them.

Only two counties—Wexford in 1915-16-17-18 and Kerry in 1929-

By
SEAMUS O CEALLAIGH

30-31-32, have succeeded in winning four successive All-Ireland football titles.

* * *

Dan O'Keeffe is the only man who won seven All-Ireland senior football medals. He secured them with Kerry in 1931, 1932, 1937, 1939, 1940, 1941 and 1946.

* * *

Only two counties have won the All-Ireland Senior Hurling and Football titles in the same year—Cork in 1890 and Tipperary in 1895 and 1900.

* * *

William J. Spain, a Nenagh man, who helped Limerick Commercials win the All-Ireland football final in 1887, became the first of the eight dual title holders when he won All-Ireland hurling honours with Dublin

Kickhams in 1889. He emigrated to America shortly afterwards.

* * *

Limerick, more generally associated with hurling, hold an unique football record, as in their only two appearances in an All-Ireland final the footballers of that county proved successful.

* * *

Jack Flavin, Moyvane, won All-Ireland football medals with Kerry and Galway. Paul Russell won Railway Cup medals with Munster and Leinster. Born in America of Kerry parentage—Bob Stack helped Kerry win six All-Ireland titles. He came to Ballybunion as a child.

Two players gained All-Ireland football honours with two counties and inter-provincial football laurels with two provinces. They are Bobby Beggs, who won a Railway Cup medal with Leinster

● TO PAGE 64

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KERRY—BY FOUR

POINTS, AT LEAST

Says Raymond Smith

IT is one of those years when the majority of neutral opinion sees no other result only a Kerry victory.

Perhaps you may say it's based on form—they won the League and did nothing wrong on their way to Croke Park—but the judgment is not a result of a close analysis of form really that Kerry can hardly fail now at the ultimate obstacle when their "bogey" teams Galway and Down have fallen by the way-side.

I put the question to Jerome O'Shea and he gave me as good an analysis of the prospects as I could wish to get from anyone who knows from experience what it entails to win an All-Ireland crown. I don't have to tell you about that now-famous save of his under the crossbar in the 1955 Final that won the day for Kerry as Dublin, after a late penalty goal, fought tigerishly for a draw or outright victory. No, I don't have to tell Kerry men of that save—for it's etched in the mind of every supporter of the Green and Gold who was in Croke Park that day.

He knows his football. And he speaks with the authority of one nurtured in the home of the great Jack Murphy, hero of the 1926 drawn game against Kildare. Jerome O'Shea was the first Cahirciveen man to have the honour of playing on a successful Kerry team in an All-Ireland final. Jack Murphy died before the replay in 1926.

Jerome maintains that Kerry must win out now because the one

team capable of exploiting any weaknesses in the defence are out of the championship. And that team, of course, is Down.

It's not that Kerry have suddenly in the space of twelve months eradicated every single loophole in defence—it's that the opposition this year will not be able to find the gaps as O'Neill, Doherty and the quicksilver Down attackers were able to do in 1968.

Jerome played against Down in 1960-'61 and knows the power they can apply in attack when in full cry.

Kerry are a better side than last year. Of that there is no doubt. Certainly they look a better team up front. Pat Griffin is attaining full maturity now at centre-forward and with speed and talent on the wings and no lack of punch inside, Kerry have been piling up big scores in challenge games.

Of course, it can be argued that challenge games are not a criterion on which to assess the prospects in an All-Ireland final but when a team that can shoot up no less than 20 points twice in the space of a fortnight, then one must sit up and take notice, no matter how weak the opposition.

In the final analysis, many people see 1969 as Kerry's year because it's O'Connell's year. I mean to say, whatever doubts may have been entertained about the Valentia island man being one of the greatest footballers of all time, have been wiped out by his form this season. In the autumn of his



B. Lynch



P. Griffin



P. O'Donoghue



S. Fitzgerald

career, he seems to have found a new spring-time of glory.

The edge of speed may be gone but because of the very fact that he conserves his energies for the big moments, O'Connell is all the more effective now.

And Kerry are playing round O'Connell as a key stone—not, I emphasise, as the only foundation stone. For too long the policy seemed to be "give it to O'Connell" to the exclusion of all else. With O'Connell as often as not thinking

● TO PAGE 22



● *Down star Paddy Doherty opened up the Kerry defence last year.*

● **FROM PAGE 21**

two months ahead of ordinary colleagues, moves tended to break down time and again.

Now O'Connell is playing to his colleagues and they are combining very effectively with him. Immediately he wins the jump for possession at midfield, it is noticeable that he punches the ball out to a waiting colleague on the touchline as he finds himself harried. This seems to be done by pre-arranged plan, for sometimes he seems to have recourse to the gambit without even looking (one ball he punched in the challenge game against Kildare actually went into touch because the link man happened to be out of position at the vital moment — but it was only once).

O'Connell prefers also these days to send passes of pinpointed accuracy to Pat Griffin or chest-high right into Mick O'Dwyer. The movements are opened from midfield and immediately O'Connell is seen on the move, the forwards break to leave a loose man-over. Similarly, when Pat Griffin has possession, his colleagues break from their men and O'Connell is seen coming through to supply the extra man.

So Kerry, while not abandoning the traditional catch-and-kick game of which they are still the undoubted kingpins, have at last awakened to the fact that there must be a fluid approach in attack and that movements must start out of midfield or even from the half-back line and be carried through by a swift-moving, combined half-forward line.

The ball must be brought to the opposition rather than kicked in from midfield to the square, hoping for the best. The days when O'Connell could drop a pinpointed centre to Tom Long, knowing that it could bring a vital score are gone now. The game has changed and Kerry know it.

Jim McCartan, the great Down player, said to me once that what won the All-Ireland for Down in 1960 was the realisation that when you brought the ball to the Kerry-men you could beat them. Down knew they could not match Kerry in fielding—but they could beat them in forward tactics.

Kerry were sore, and very sore with Joe Lennon when he said a few years back that Kerry football was ten years behind the times. Others were expressing similar sentiments (I wrote in the same vein more than once after the defeats by Galway in 1965). But it rankled with Kerry-men that a Down player should start telling them what was wrong with their game. Were not Kerry coming up in the "Ghost Train" long before Down were even heard of as a footballing force?

The failures and disappointments that attended Kerry's efforts since the All-Ireland success of 1962 (and that was only against a poor Roscommon side), made Kerry wake up and see their mistakes. They realised they had to move with the times if they were to return again to their rightful place in the sun. The Galway and Down influence could not be ignored forever. It was no mere coincidence that the two counties who had themselves learned from

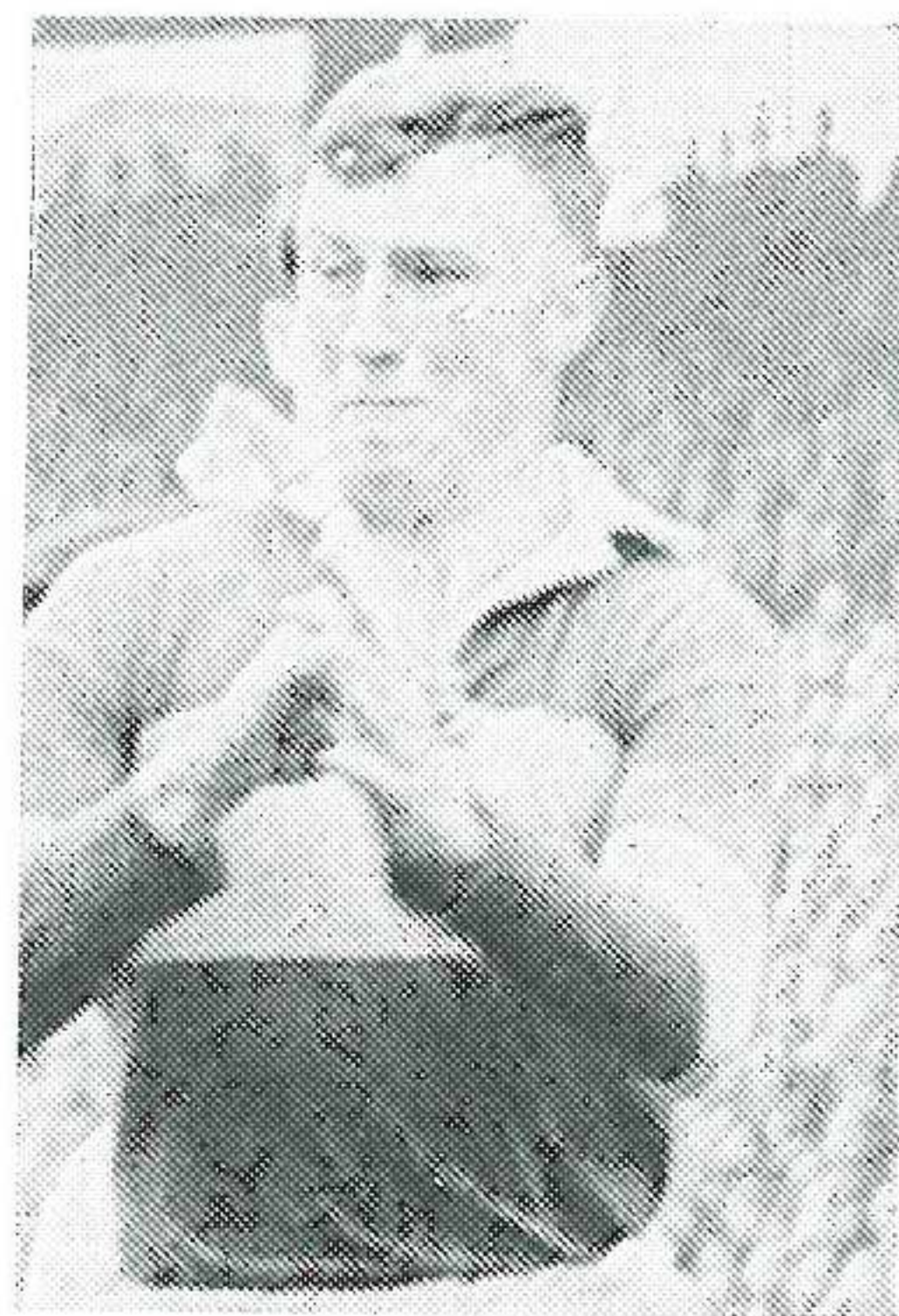
the Dublin machine of 1955 and advanced on Dublin's ideas should be capable of mastering the Kingdom whenever the chips were really down.

The year 1969 has so far been the Year of O'Connell. Will the All-Ireland be remembered as O'Connell's Final?

Ten years ago, he really burst on the Croke Park scene as "O'Connell" when he played a blinder against Dublin in the All-Ireland semi-final. But he did not have a good game in the final.

He did not set the scene alight against Down either in 1960 and in 1962, after another blinder against Dublin in the semi-final (I remember the way the Kerry supporters in the Hogan Stand rose to him as one man after his great point from the touch-line that really halted Dublin's rally), he did not make any real mark on the Final.

Indeed, while he has won a number of vital semi-final ties for Kerry, he has yet to walk off the Croke Park pitch on an All-Ireland final day with the cheers of the crowd ringing for him. Last year he was a marked man—Down never had less than three men in a ring around him in the jumps for possession and Kerry did not have a



DONIE O'SULLIVAN

plan to counter this leech-like attention of their trump card.

This year he is going to be a marked man also. I mean can you expect any team to allow O'Connell loose for the hour when the Sam Maguire Cup is the prize to be won?

Jerome O'Shea feels that O'Connell is due one blinder in an All-Ireland final but Jerome is wise enough to realise, too, that a player of O'Connell's calibre must rise above very close tackling to provide that hour. Can he do it? Jerome feels that O'Connell owes it to himself to set the seal on an outstanding career by making the crowded stands and terraces rise to acclaim him this year.

He must see out the sixties as he saw out the fifties. Then he can hang up his boots with pride—if he wants to.

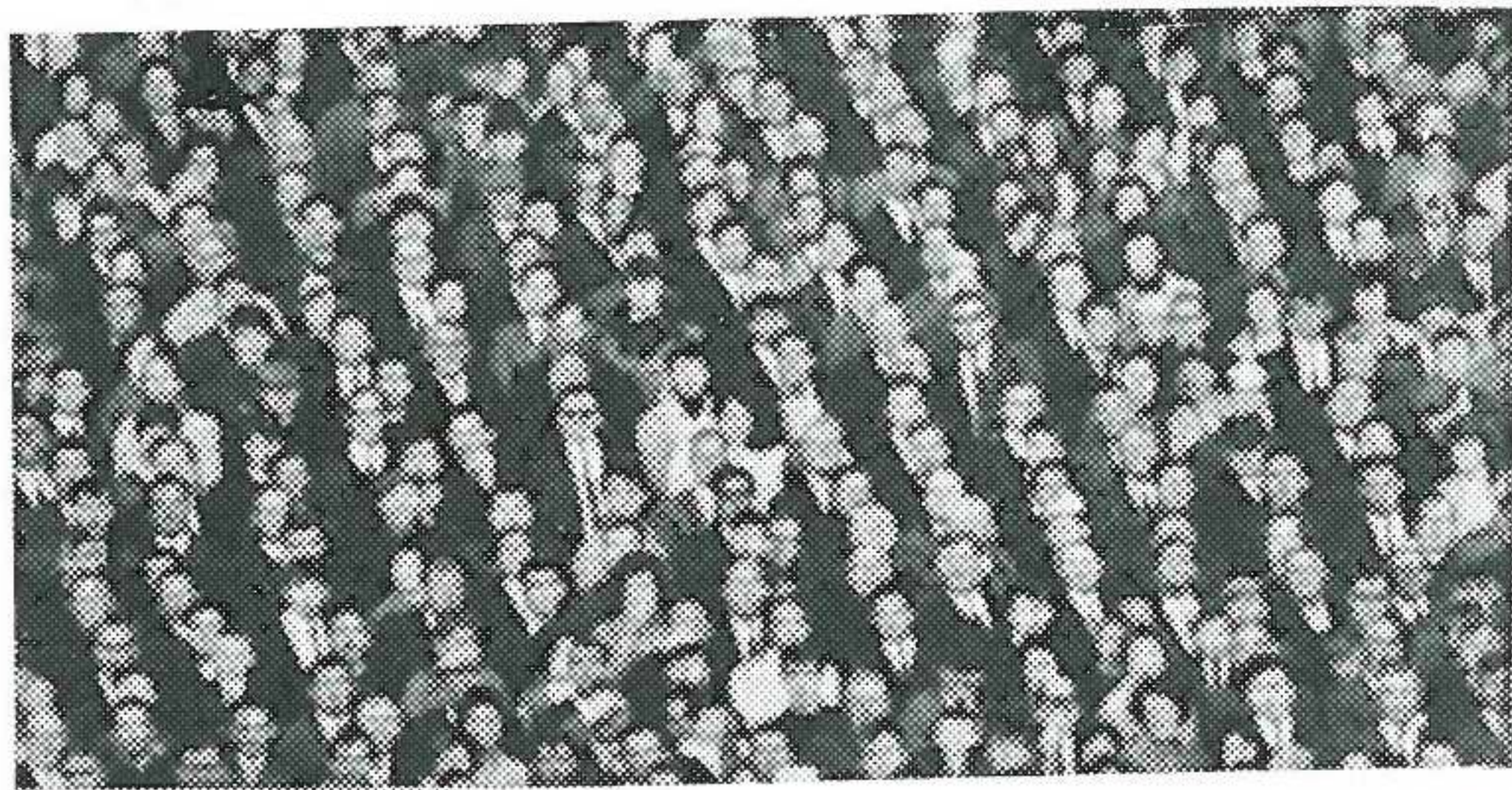
When I asked him earlier this year, if this was his last season, he didn't commit himself. He was playing from Sunday to Sunday. He loves the game so much that it will not be easy to say goodbye to the scene.

But O'Connell is the great individual, looking for no accolades, no cups or trophies to seal his class. His football is the badge of his greatness—his unique talent, his fielding and his superb kicking. It creates the mystique. For he is O'Connell — the O'Connell we thrilled first to in 1959. There is only one O'Connell—as there was only one Ring.

In years to come I feel men will be telling their sons of the Year of Mick O'Connell. Maybe they will be telling them, too, that they were in Croke Park on the fourth Sunday in September when O'Connell had one of his finest hours. They will be telling them how he forged victory for Kerry, maybe with just quiet, masterful dictation of the trend of play, maybe in a blaze of skill and footballing genius.

He will leave his imprint on the hour—of that I have no doubt. And for me it must be Kerry by four points, at least, this time.

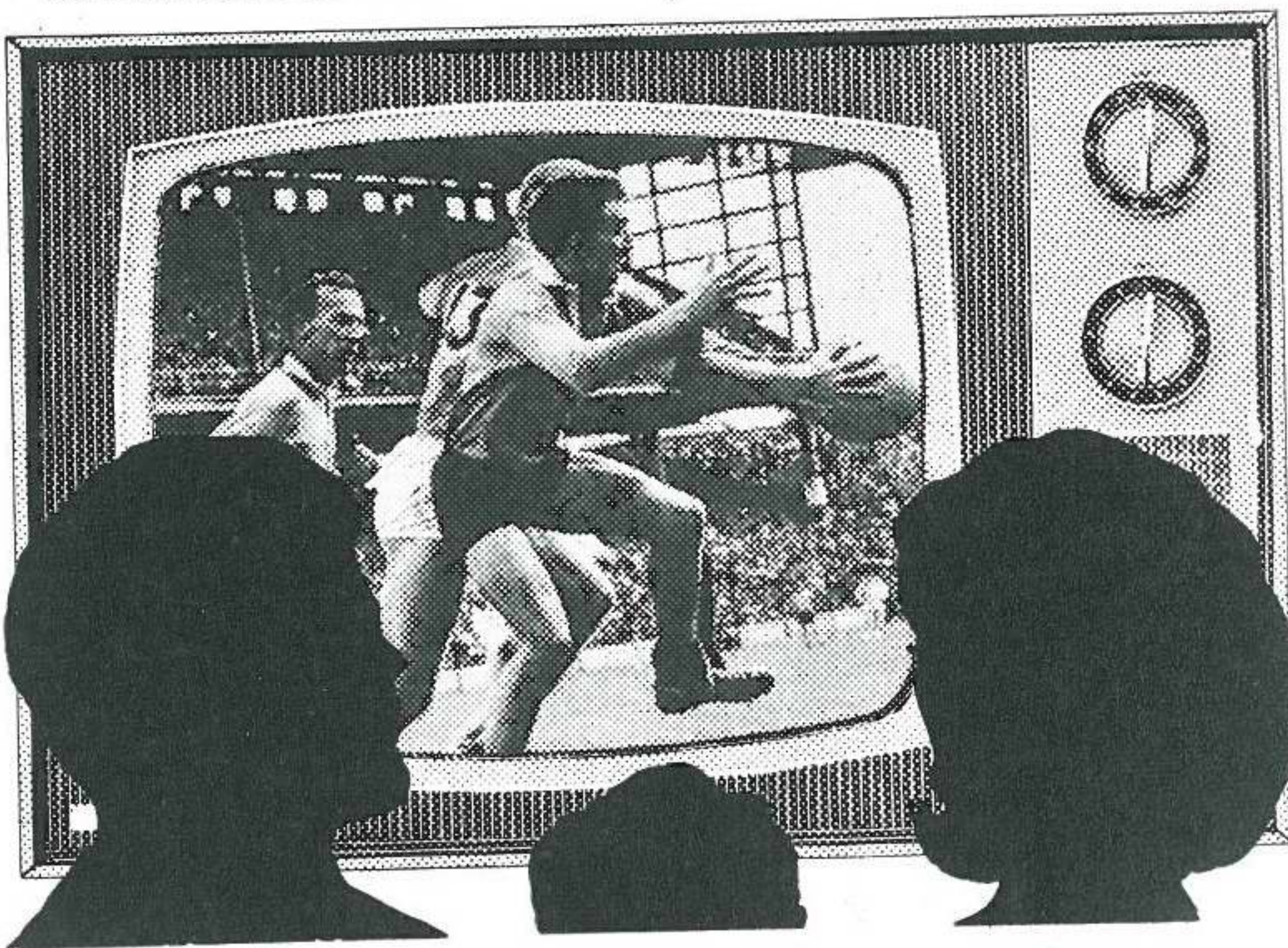
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● The Kerry team who defeated Cork by 0-16 to 1-4 in the Munster final at Cork on July 20th. Mick O'Dwyer, who is spotlighted in the article below, is standing on the extreme right of our picture.

★ ★ ★ ★

★ ★ ★ ★

MICK O'DWYER

A PROFILE

By JACK MAHON

THE first time I saw him play was on a beautiful sunny June day on the occasion of the opening of Pearse Stadium in Salthill in 1957. His position was at left half back and like most newcomers to the senior county scene he was rather green then. Now some twelve summers after we have come to recognise the same black wavy hair, the humble almost crouched gait that one has come to associate with many great Kerry footballers, of one Mick O'Dwyer of Waterville, who has given sterling service to Kerry over the years.

Mick has retired more than once. Never for the sake of headlines. He has always been forced to return. Nowadays he has come to be regarded as the great utility man in the forwards. Most often he operates in the left corner, where he avails of the half-chance to score from foot or hand. But when occasion demands, as in New York this year, he can perform excellently at centre half forward and, if needs be, at left half back, the position in which he achieved fame in his early senior days of the late 'fifties and early 'sixties.

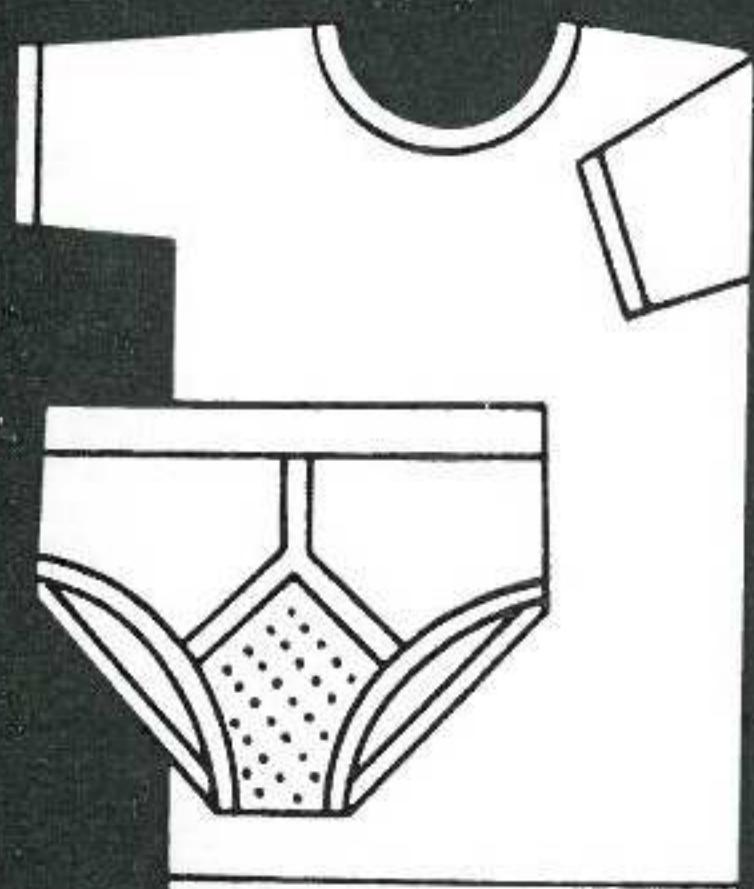
A grand place-kicker, too, he performs this exacting task without any frills and with great accomplishment. When he misses, the gait is even more modest. Silently he berates himself. Never for him the gyrations of the younger generation, who seem obliged to show their agony to a television audience.

The quiet, yet very determined garage proprietor from South Kerry is one of the most popular players in Ireland. A great friend of Mick O'Connell's, he knows the Valentia Islander

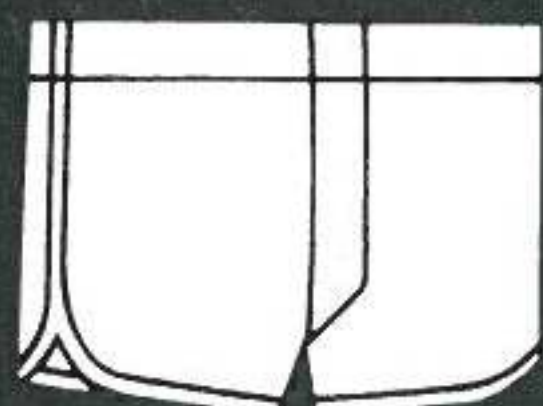
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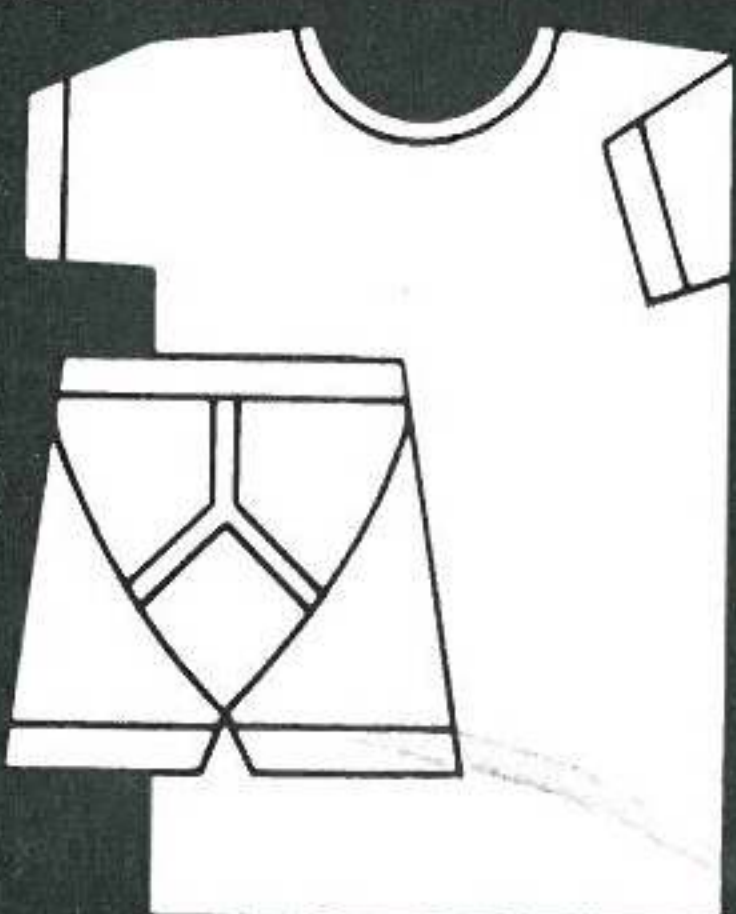
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MICK O'DWYER

● FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

better than anybody and there has always been a reciprocal appreciation of ability between the pair. Becoming a county selector — quite an honour in Kerry where there are only five and these are elected by club ballot—has had its problems for Mick. But when Kerry needed him and this has been often, he is always there.

I often think that Mick O'Dwyer should still be playing at left half back for Kerry (no offence to the brilliant Mick O'Shea, who with Brendan Lynch, is the best to come out of Kerry since O'Connell, O'Dwyer and Tom Long burst on the scene).

Versatility has often been a bugbear to men like Mick and Cavan's Jim McDonnell and in latter times Pat Reynolds of Meath. For O'Dwyer was one of the greatest left half backs ever to come to Croke Park—a position which has produced more brilliant performers than any other, possibly. Christo Hand, Jim McDonnell, Stephen White, Mick Greally, Sean Quinn, Martin Newell, Mike O'Shea, John Joe Hagan, Joe Lennon, Nicky Maher, R.I.P., Pat Reynolds, Colm Kennelly, were all brilliant performers in the recent past in the position and I can recall no greater duels in that area than those between Mick O'Dwyer and Sean O'Neill in the early 'sixties and earlier.

Perhaps it is fitting that in this, Mick O'Connell's greatest year, his friend from Waterville should also find a new lease of football life and play better than he has for years. Like O'Connell, Mick O'Dwyer is as clean as a whistle and is another shining example of the great footballer who never resorts to spoiling tactics to achieve his ends.

WILSON HARTNELL

EAMONN YOUNG

IN the last sixty-six football finals, Kerry have played in thirty three, thus leaving half of the finals to the rest of us. Of the thirty three in which the Green and Gold appeared they won 20. Much as it hurts me, I must admit the Kingdom has dominated the football scene.

It was in the 1903 championship, played two years late, that Kerry won their first All-Ireland football cup, but straight away they seemed to settle down to the job and by 1915 they had appeared in eight finals, winning five, before the great Wexford four-in-a-row bunch led by Gus and Sean Kennedy of New Ross took over. That's where the tradition started.

But why do we speak in such respectful terms of the thing called tradition? What we mean is simply success and that triumph comes not from anything emotional like being a direct descendant of Brian Boru, or something, but from a rather unattractive facet of human endeavour called hard work.

I believe that Kerry men in those days just worked at their football. Needless to say, they didn't shed tears over it, only enjoyed the matter to the full. But it does seem obvious that in these years, a lot of Kerry men lived and dreamed football. They thought about it and they taught it to one another. The result is that by 1914 Dick Fitzgerald could write a book which is still worth reading to-day. The last player I saw reading it was a chap named McKeever from Derry while on the course at Gormanston. And he knows a fair amount about football.

This practice of the skills of football brought results to Kerry and it can be said that, by 1915, the county had taken its place in the van. From 1915 to 1922 they didn't appear in an All-Ireland, but the reason is clear enough, I think,

COCKS OF THE WALK

and, in fact, in at least three years they didn't get out of Munster.

But after the Civil War there was a bunch of boys behind the barbed wire on the Curragh who must have thought about nothing else except nationality and football for they played a lot and when they came back to Tralee the Kerry team of '23 saw a radical change of personnel. Of the ten finals between '23 and '32 Kerry played in a remarkable eight winning seven.

These were the days of Con Brosnan (who was not behind the barbed wire but in the army, in fact), Bob Stack, John Joe Sheehy, Johnny Riordan, Paul Russell, Jack Walsh, Joe Barrett and their comrades.

By that time, Kerry certainly had won what we call a tradition and it is fair to say that by 1932 football had become a religion of its own beneath the peaks of the Kingdom. To a great extent, the football was based on Tralee and it was the undeniable skill of the



Joe Keohane, Kerry's majestic full back of the late 'thirties and 'forties. Holder of five All-Ireland medals.

men from Rock Street and Strand Road that made the country boys refer sarcastically to some of the less robust who were clever with the ball, but not strong, as "Tralee knackers".

In the mid-thirties the schools in Kerry were caught up in the fever of football and joining the Tralee C.B.S. came St. Brendan's and Dingle Christian Brothers. This was the Joe Keohane—Paddy Kennedy—Sean Brosnan—Paddy Bawn—Bill Casey—Bill Dillon—Gega Connor era which produced what I think was the greatest football teams I have seen.

When football is going well in the schools the county team is bound to be good, and when the county has no school which takes a real interest in football, you can throw your hat at the prospect of success, for the contribution of dedicated priests, brothers, and teachers to the improvement of skill is very significant.

● TO PAGE 29

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● FROM PAGE 27

Today they are doing more than ever in the matter all over the country and where they work at it results will always come.

From '37 to '41 they appeared in all the finals, losing only one, on a replay to Galway in '38, and ending a great era with a win in '46 and a New York swan-song in the following year.

There came a change in affairs then, I think: Up to this time the main reason Kerry won was because they worked hard for success, they won it, the game became a religion and caused intense pride.

Kerry have often been accused of dirty football. In fact, they play the cleanest game in the country and have done so for so long it doesn't matter.

It was in '46 they beat Antrim in Croke Park in a semi-final and those were the days of the palm-pass which was snappy enough until some teams began to throw it around. Unfortunately, Antrim, who had some fine players over-used the pass and solo. Kerry backs had little answer but the shoulder into the chest which, after all, is fair. Undoubtedly there was some pulling down also, which is unfair, and which remains a blot on the present-day game.

In any case, about twelve months after in a pub over in Lahinch a Kerry friend of mine, a big strong man was being pulled over the coals about football by an Antrim tourist. Fair play for our friend, he kept his patience for a long time but the Belfast man rubbed it in. At last the big man from the Kingdom could stand it no longer.

"By hokey" says he "if someone would only throw a high ball in between us . . . I'd . . . I'd make bruscar of you".

Is it significant that since '46 which, after all, is twenty-three years ago, Kerry have won only four All-Irelands. This makes me suggest of another reason for Kerry's successes in the past. I think the other counties generally did not study their football. There

are, of course, notable exceptions but it is more than likely that in the last twenty years there are more people around the country practising in a less haphazard way with their eyes on Croke Park.

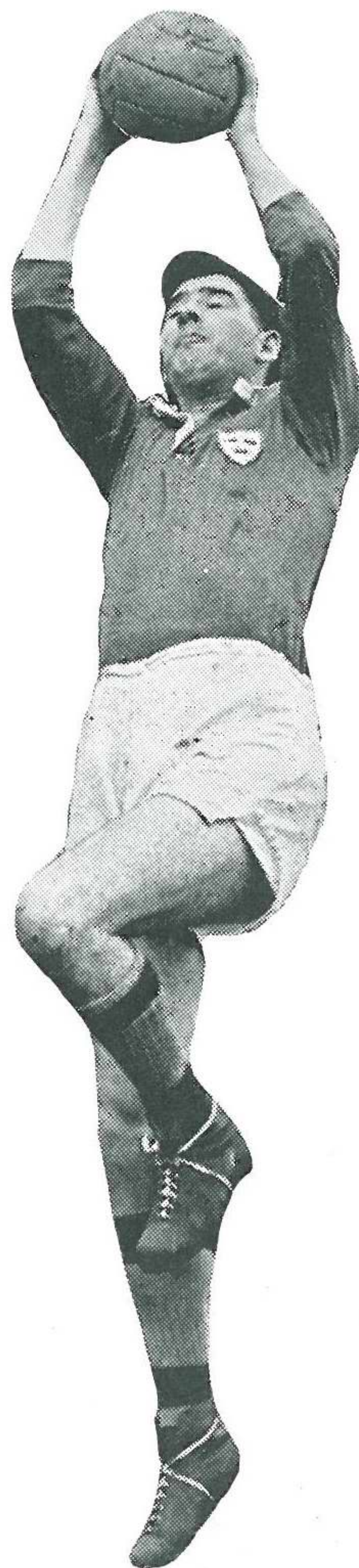
Kerry often complain that the easy passage in Munster is a great handicap. Dr. Eamon O' Sullivan and Paddy Foley of the "Kerryman" often wished that Cork were better and I think they were right, for a formidable Munster final (which, of course, Kerry would win) would leave the boys better poised for the semi-final.

On the other hand, the fact that a team, already skilful and strong was able to bank on getting into the semi-final was an advantage also and for the young player in Kerry, glory always beckoned. I think this in it's way, also contributed to the success.

The last reason for the great name won by the Kingdom lies in the people themselves. I have often referred to the place as the last refuge of the Firbolgs but maybe the Firbolgs were tough men and good footballers. Whether or no, I can never gaze across the wide, lonely valleys to where the sheep are bleating on the sides of those great mountains, or fill my lungs with the glorious air of the peaks while the sun flashes in the mirrors of water away below in the glens, without thinking that the people whom God sent to live in this place, must be a spot out of the ordinary.

The liquid eloquence of falling water, the long silence of the great upland and the steel of the black mountain ridge shearing it's way through the mists of the morning, have left their mark on the people who call the place home. No wonder I love beating them.

John Cronin, who, after a term in the Cork colours, joined his native Kerry and became one of football's great centre half backs of the 1950s. He won All-Ireland medals with Kerry in 1953 and 1955.



MOONDHARRIG'S DIARY

DECADES OF KERRY HEROES

"KERRY, aroo, I was born and reared in it" used to be something of a cant phrase in the ceili halls of Dublin long ago. We all used it in the impoverished but spacious days of the '30's, even if we were never nearer to the Reeks than where the tram-lines ended in Inchicore.

And it was a proud thing to be able to wear the Kerry badge in those same '30s, because, in that decade, the Kingdom really ruled the football fields. In fact, between 1929 and 1941, a total of 13 seasons, Kerry won eight All-Ireland senior football titles. And that is as near to supremacy as anyone can ever hope to get.

Anyway, I wasn't there to see them win in 1929, and I did not get in on the act until 1930 when, on a dull and dreary afternoon I saw my first All-Ireland football final.

I was a bit blasé about it, for, although I was then only a school-kid in my middle-teens, not too long promoted to long trousers, I had seen several hurling finals, and, to tell the truth, I had no great regard at all then for this football game.

I supposed it was all right for semi-soccer types from the cities, and probably for people from far-off places that could not grow decent ash for camans, but in those days I looked upon football as an entirely inferior game.

To be tolerated if you could not go see a hurling match, but a very poor substitute at the best of times for the clash of the ash and the song of the sliothar.

I must be pardoned by football



Ned Roche, Kerry's full back in their All-Ireland victories of 1953 and 1955.

followers for holding those opinions. I was young at the time and knew no better.

And I can thank those Kerry-men of the '30's for educating me to the stage of seeing that football could be just as good a game as hurling—in its own way, of course.

Anyway, the Kerry-men began my education back there in 1930 when they wiped the grass of Croke Park with Monaghan's brief All-Ireland ambitions.

It would be nice to record that I remember every kick of that, my first All-Ireland football final, but, to be perfectly honest, my memories are as hazy as was the day. I remember a few clever passages between John Joe Sheehy—I think it was the last

day he ever played in Croke Park—and one of the Landers brothers. I also recall some high mid-field catching, but whether it was provided by Con Brosnan or Bob Stack don't ask me.

I do retain a clear memory of Sheehy scoring an angled point from well out towards the left corner, in front of the present Nally Stand and that is about all. While the only memory I possess of Monaghan is of their great forward Christy Fisher, trying to burst through, and being quickly grounded.

The next time I saw Kerry in a final was against Kildare in 1932, but it was not an exciting final. Kildare were carrying too many veterans and, after holding Kerry for forty minutes, fell away in the closing stages.

Still I was glad to be present, because that was the day that Kerry equalled Wexford's four-in-a-row All-Ireland record, and because I have never since seen a football half-back as good as Paul Russell was that day, and because, for the one and only time I was privileged to see the three Landers brothers playing on the same All-Ireland field.

After that, the blinds came down on Kerry football for three or four years and when I saw them back in Croke Park, against Cavan in the All-Ireland final of 1937, they had changed considerably, and so had I. Kerry had only four or five of their 1932 side still on duty and I had become considerably more acclimatised to football.

It was in 1932 that I first saw

such new stars as Joe Keohane at full-back, Bill Myers, Bill O'Sullivan, Paddy Kennedy, and Gega O'Connor. And, since Kerry still had a couple of the Landers brothers, Johnny Walsh, Tim O'Donnell, Miko Doyle and that astounding goal-keeper, Danno O'Keeffe, no wonder they became not alone the top team in Ireland again, but the team most worth watching.

Oddly enough, and I was captain of a hurling team in Dublin by then, I was not impressed by the 1937 replay between Kerry and Cavan, because I thought it was far, far too rough.

However, compensation was not too far distant, for the drawn final of 1938 between Galway and Kerry was the best All-Ireland decider I ever saw. Kerry lost the replay—without Joe Keohane—but were back to win the 1939 final from Meath.

By then, Dan Spring, "Gauxie" Gorman, Murt Kelly (although Murt had been in All-Ireland class for quite a while), Eddie Walsh and Bill Casey had joined the green and gold ranks, and by then I was converted to football and it was these Kerry men of the '30's who had wrought the change.

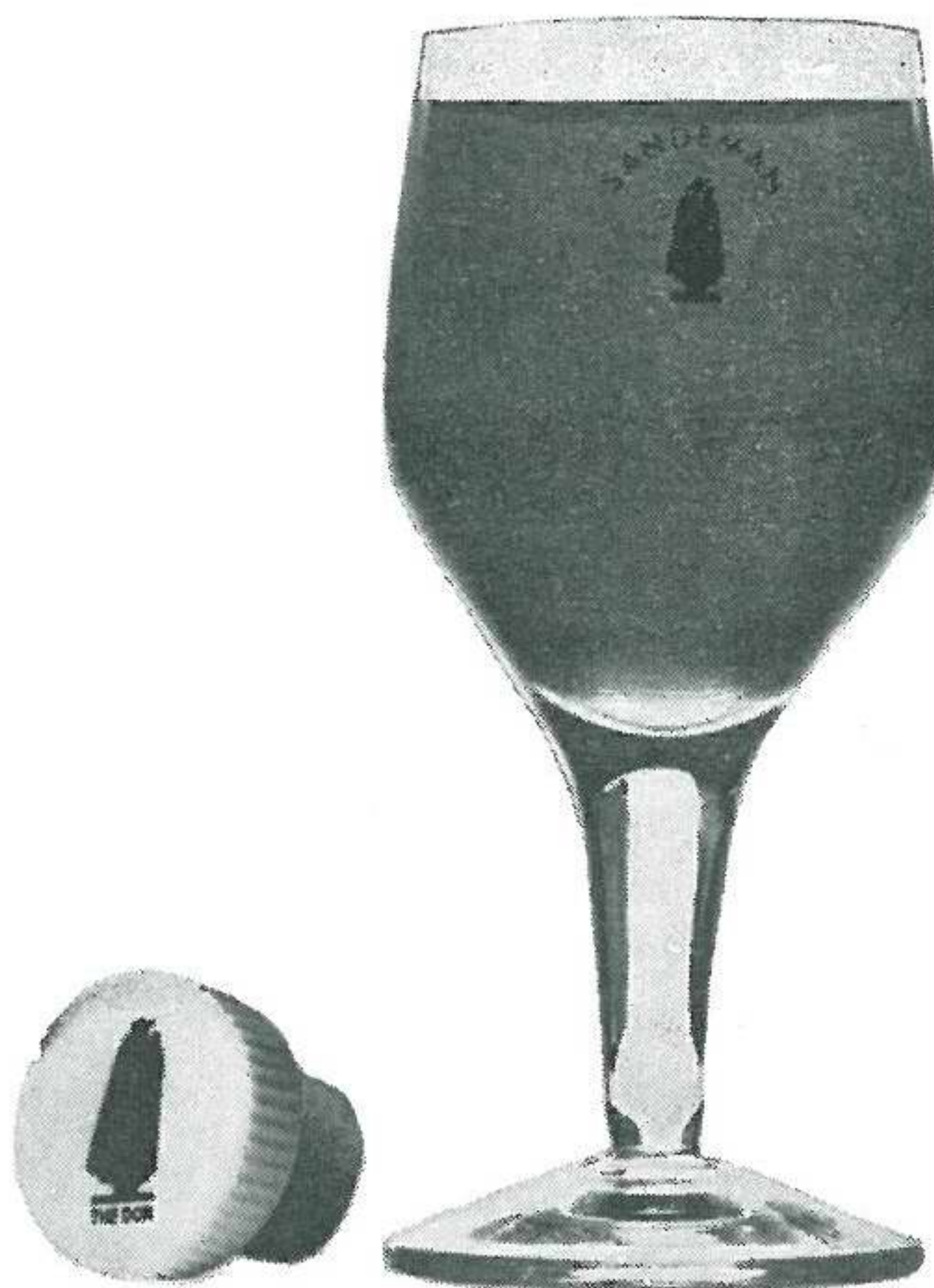
But there is no point in asking me how the Kerry men of today compare with the Kingdom stars of 30 years ago. Every team to its own time, and every decade is a different decade.

For instance, I have not seen a better footballer than Mick O'Connell come out of Kerry in my time, but there is no point in asking me, either, to compare Micko with Paddy Kennedy or Coneen Brosnan or Bob Stack. They were all match-winners on their day, and they all had many match-winning days. Maybe I rate O'Connell as the best, as of now, but Micko is still with us, while the rest, unfortunately, are only memories.

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FITNESS FOR GAELIC FOOTBALL—2



BY JOE LENNON

IN my book *Fitness for Gaelic Football*, I have dealt with the three main components of fitness—mental fitness, skill fitness and physical fitness. The introductory sentence to the section on mental fitness reads "I believe that fitness for football is as much an attitude of mind as it is a physical condition of the body." And elsewhere in this section I wrote that "... perhaps in the long run, of the three (components mentioned above), mental fitness is the most important."

In this article I want to develop the idea that the attitude of the players and of the team as a whole is essential for success.

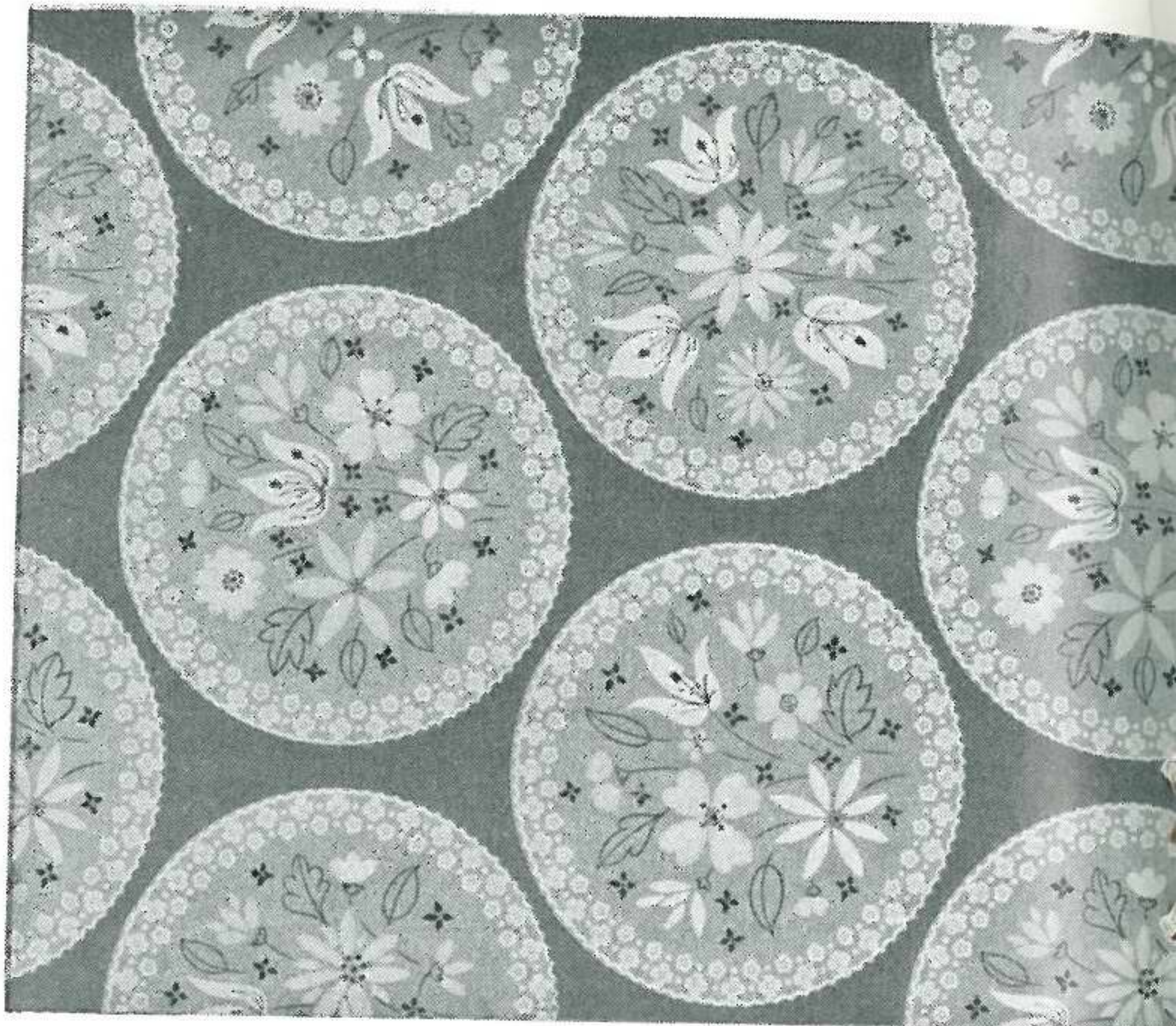
Every player and every team for that matter portrays his or its attitude to the game in every

rush to get "fit" just before the first round of the club championships. This "get fit quick" approach is bad for both the players and the game. For the incentive to get fit seems to be prompted by the chance of winning a medal rather than by the long term aim of playing better football and enjoying one's football better ALL the time.

It seems to me that too few players are prepared to spend the time necessary to acquire a good level of fitness and then maintain that fitness—irrespective of his team's fortunes.

In a way the organisation of our competitions contributes to this weakness. I feel certain that if every player could be certain of say, three games a month at least, we would see a tremendous improvement in our attitude towards the game.

Viewed as a long-term recreation, Gaelic football should be



game. By simply watching a player or a team in action for a few games, one can get a good idea what those attitudes are. Dirty play and dirty togs reflect certain attitudes of mind just as good sportsmanship and clean equipment reflect clear thinking and respect for the game and the players.

I think it is true to say that the incidence of county and club teams appearing on the field in dirty togs and jerseys is on the decrease but the incidence of dirty play has not shown a similar marked decrease. I think it is also true to say that a much higher proportion of players have a higher degree of fitness (physical) now than ten years ago, but since there are probably fewer active players now than in 1960, it is difficult to draw firm conclusions.

It is a fact, however, that over the past decade, more and more teams have lengthened their period of preparation for the championship thus producing more fit teams in the first round of the club and county championships.

Obviously, if all teams increase their fitness by say fifteen per cent, a marked improvement in the standard of play will be obvious even though there may not be any change in the relative merits of the competing teams.

However, one of the most disturbing features of our attitude to the game and to competition manifests itself annually in the

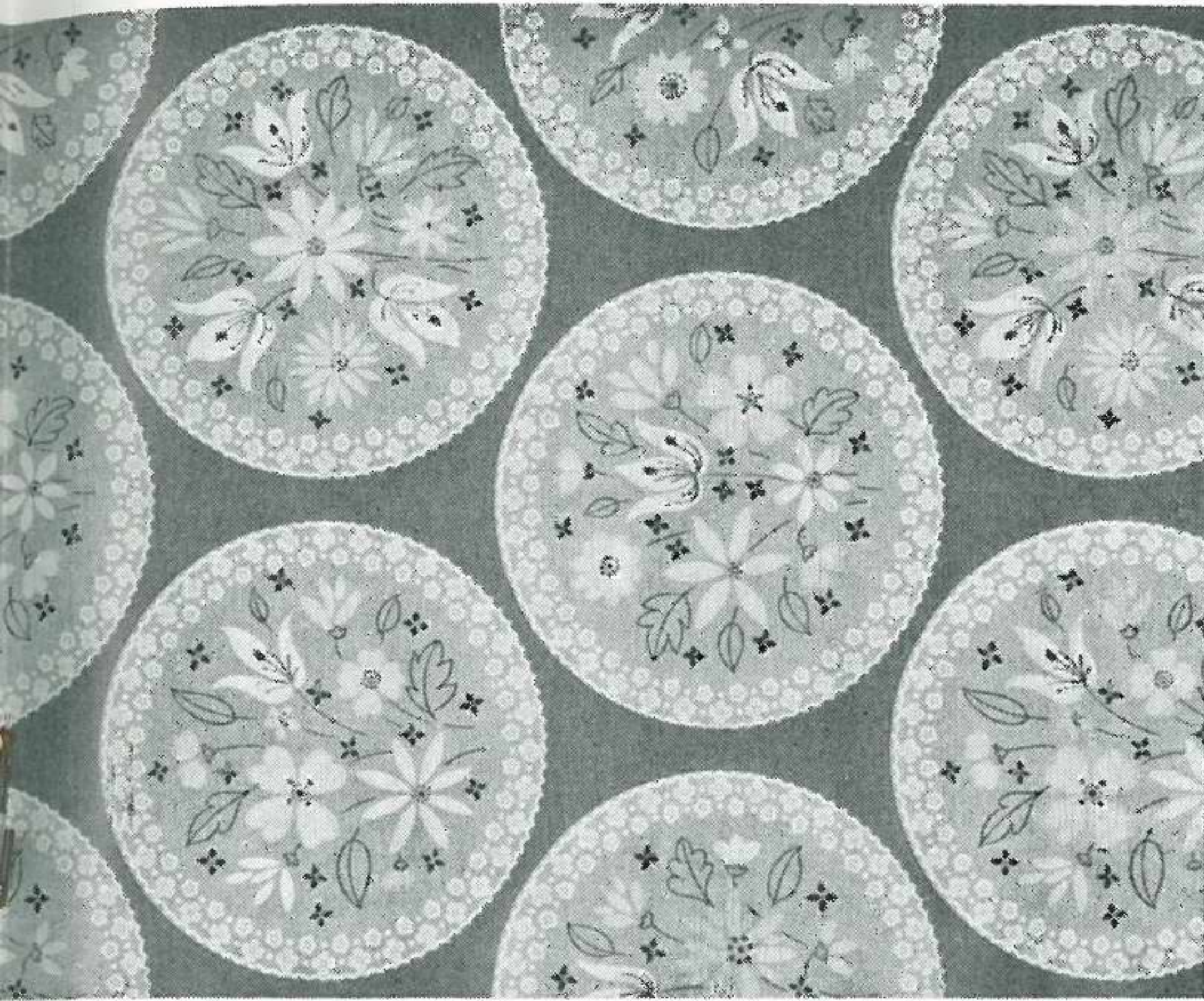
be played successfully and with satisfaction up to at least the age of thirty-five or six for the majority of players. The fact that this is not so at present is largely explained by this "get fit quick" attitude which merely produces occasional peaks of fitness each year and, of course, as the years go by, the process of shaking off the lethargy of unfitness becomes more and more difficult.

In general, I believe the attitude of many players to the game is summed up by saying that they do the minimum training in the hope of getting maximum benefit. The sooner that this attitude is replaced by a desire to enjoy one's football for many, many years irrespective of medals and trophies, the sooner will football do for the players what it is supposed to do — recreate them.

Allied to this change of heart, I feel sure that if every club in the land required its players to have clean togs, socks and jersey for every match a significant improvement in our attitude to the game would result.

In general, what I should like to see in the clubs and counties is a greater spirit of involvement. I would like to see players and teams committing themselves to the game more wholeheartedly for the whole season. For it is only when one does so, that one realises that with rare exceptions, one only gets out of the game (in terms of satisfaction and enjoyment) something less than one puts into it.

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CORK SEEK THREE-IN-A-RROW

THE Cork minor footballers return to Croke Park on September 28 for their third consecutive All-Ireland final. Having beaten Laois in the 1967 decider and Sligo in last year's final, the red-jerseyed brigade will be seeking the elusive three-in-a-row this time at the expense of Derry.

The Cork minors have become such a familiar sight in Croke Park on All-Ireland final day that few people realise how recent the Leaside rise in the minor ranks has been. It was not until 1960 that Cork reached their first All-Ireland minor football final, but since then they have appeared in four different deciders, winning the 1961, 1967 and 1968 games and losing by a point to Offaly in 1964.

When Cork appeared in their first final in 1960 they met a Galway team which included such promising youngsters as Enda Colleran, Sean Cleary, Christy Tyrell and Seamus Leydon. The Connacht champions scored an impressive win, but the following year Cork were back in the final, with Frank Cogan and Flor Hayes in their ranks, and went on to win their first All-Ireland title by beating Mayo.

In 1964 Tony McTeague was mainly responsible for Offaly's victory and Cork's defeat in the final. (Eric Philpot and hurling star Charlie McCarthy were on the Cork team that year). But after a defeat by Mayo in the '66 semi-final, Cork marched on to the final in '67 and inflicted a heavy defeat on Laois. They beat

Sligo in the '68 decider and now face Derry in their sixth All-Ireland final.

The men behind the scenes in the Cork success story are the five friendly selectors who have been guiding the young footballers for the best part of a decade. Silver-haired Donal O'Sullivan from Beara, was an outstanding footballer himself in the 'thirties. He won county

medals with Beara and captained the Cork senior team in 1934. Owen McAuliffe from Glanworth, played with Cork in the late 'Fifties and early 'Sixties and has been coach to the county minor teams for the past three years. Tom O'Sullivan (St. Finbarr's), Tadgh Drinan (Redmonds) and Dave O'Brien (St. Nicholas) are the other astute mentors who have a long and

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memorable association with the Cork teams.

The current team made light work of beating Kerry in the Munster final and scored a good win over Galway in the All-Ireland semi-final. Cork will enter this year's final as favourites, a title no team enjoys, but it won't be their first time in that position. They were fancied to beat Laois in '67 and did so by seventeen points, but their victory over Sligo last year taught them a valuable lesson. They led by eleven points after six minutes of the second half, rested on their oars after that, and found their lead whittled down to a single point with only a minute to go. And it was this lone score that gave Cork their third All-Ireland title. The present side is not likely to take things easy at any stage of the game against Derry.

Five players from last year's team will be lining out for Cork again this year. Martin Doherty of St. Nicholas' was a member of the Cork hurling team which played Kilkenny in this year's All-Ireland final and will be eligible again next year. Connie Hartnett (Millstreet), Hugh Sullivan (Kanturk), Declan Barron (Bantry) and John Coleman (Millstreet) are the other star performers seeking their second All-Ireland medals.

These will be joined on the team by Bertie O'Brien and Eamonn Fitzpatrick (St. Finbarr's), Gerald O'Sullivan (Castletownbere), Dan Moloney (Fermoy), Pat Barry (St. Nick's), Brian Murphy (Nemo Rangers), Emmet Hallinan (Macroom), Donal Curran (Ballypheane), John Courtney (Glanworth) and P. J. Lonergan (Fermoy).

Only two counties have brought off the three-in-a-row so far — Kerry (1931-'33) and Dublin (1953-'56). Will the Cork minors join this elite on September 28? It could easily happen.

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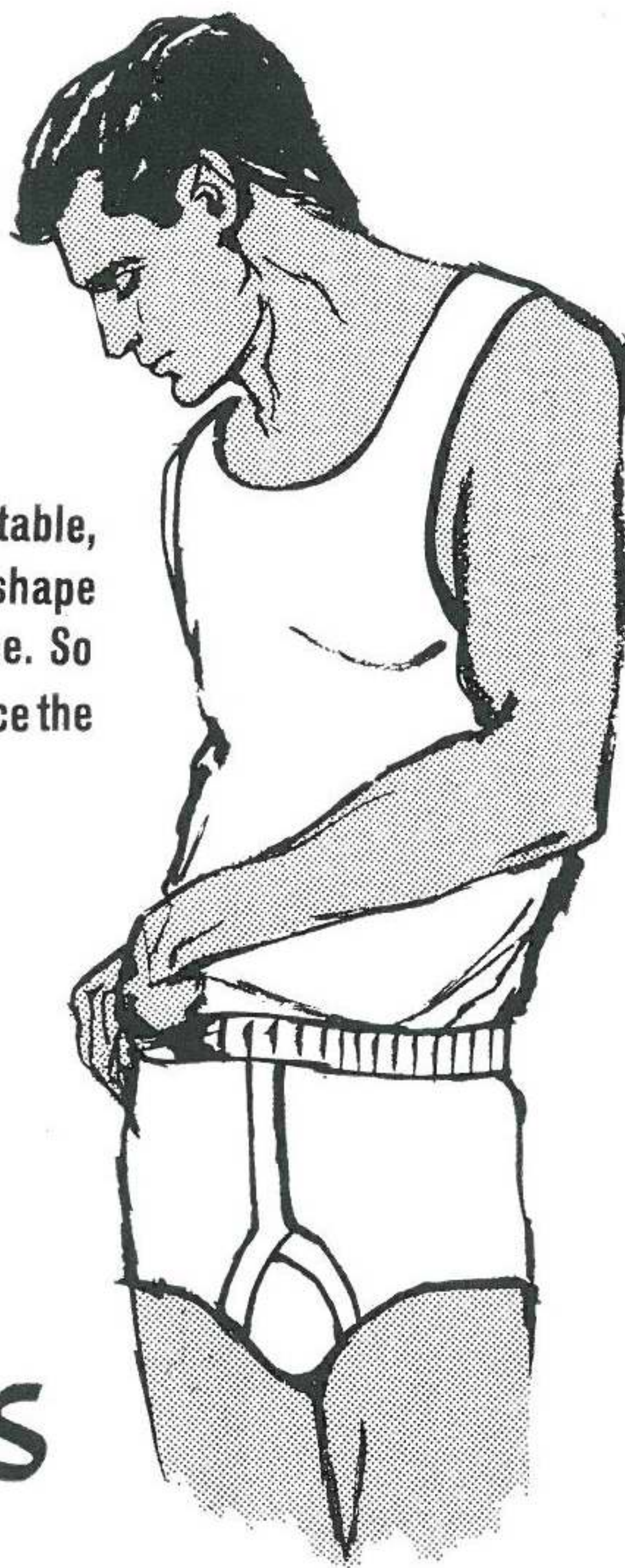
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Derry can beat the odds!

DERRY may have been one of the biggest disappointments of the 1969 Senior championship, but the gloom that followed that failure to Cavan has been swept away by the minor team's feat in getting through to the All-Ireland final. The recent win over Wexford could not compare with a jewel of a performance by Derry against Roscommon in 1965, for the county's first All-Ireland semi-final win.

Few will really worry about that, however, for the important thing is that Derry are in another national final, and, as in any county where All-Ireland titles can be counted on the fingers of one hand, this final is something special, a match that has really gripped the imagination of all associated with the national games.

It is fitting, too, that Derry's last All-Ireland final of the decade should be an under-age one, for above all, it has been the young footballer who has been in the vanguard of what ranks as Derry's greatest era.

The golden-days could be said to have started in March, 1965, at Dungannon when St. Columb's, Derry, in only their second year in the competition, won the

McRory Cup for the Ulster Colleges' senior football title against St. Michael's, of Enniskillen. That team went on to beat a Jimmy Duggan-led St. Jarlath's, Tuam, side and Belcamp O.M.I., Dublin, after a replay, to land Derry's first All-Ireland title in any grade, Colleges' or inter-county.

If Derry had a long wait for the big break-through nationally, it was not long before the county was back again. In July, a team that included a number of the St. Columb's side won the county's first Ulster minor title. Then came that win over Roscommon, and the Tom Markham Cup joined the Hogan Cup, the Colleges' trophy, in Derry after the final hour against Kerry.

Last year it was the Under-21 footballers of Derry. When Kerry lined-up against the Oak Leaf county at Ballinascreen, Ulster was without a win in an All-Ireland semi-final in this Championship, introduced in 1964. Derry set that right, and out-scored an Offaly team that included a number of this year's senior team. That was the third All-Ireland title in the history of Derry football.

Right at the start of this year's Ulster championship campaign

Derry raised hopes of a great run with a resounding 5-10 to 0-1 win over (wait for it) Down. Down are never an easy team to beat in any grade of Championship football, let alone at minor, and a win of that magnitude must stamp this Derry team as "something special".

Performances since then have not been nearly as spectacular, but Antrim, Tyrone and Wexford have still all been disposed of in a way which suggests that Derry supporters have good grounds for optimism regarding their team's chances of going all the way. Another encouraging factor for Derry fans is that in between the Ulster final and the game with Wexford, the team gained further impressive laurels with a decisive win over Monaghan for the Ulster Minor League title.

Derry have great scoring power. Seamus Mullan alone has hit 2-19 (25 points), and Sean McGeehan and Martin O'Neill are others who could keep the umpires busy in the final.

Eugene Lavery is a first-rate midfielder, and if the defence was caught out at times against Wexford—that 3-4 was the highest score recorded against Derry in the campaign—supporters are confident that Hugh McGoldrick, Pat McGucken, Liam Murphy and their colleagues will do their part by putting the shackles on the Cork forwards.

Cork are likely to start favourites after their decisive win over Galway, but this does not worry Derry. The county has upset the odds before, and with solidarity in defence, skill around midfield, and plenty of scoring potential the formula is certainly there to enable Derry to beat the odds again.

THREAT FROM AMERICA

WHEN the World Championships are held in this country next May, it can be taken for granted that the American representatives will be the greatest threat to our chances of victory.

While, apparently contradictory, this fact is a source of great pride to Irish handballers, for the simple reason that it was Irish immigrants who introduced handball to America.

The first four-walled championship handball court in the United States, known as "Casey's Court" as a tribute to the fabled Irish player of the same name who built it, was constructed in Brooklyn, N.Y. in 1886.

Consisting of a front wall 30 feet high and 25 feet wide, with cement side walls 65 feet long and a rear wall 12 feet high, it was acknowledged as one of the finest courts ever built in that country.

There were many memorable games played there with an international flavour, not the least of which was the marathon of November 29, 1887, when Casey tackled John Lawlor, the Irish champion, in the second stage of a twenty-one game World Championship.

The first series took place at Cork on August 4, 1887, when Lawlor won by six games to four.

It was little wonder that, when they met in Brooklyn, the gallery could not accommodate the vast numbers who wished to see it.

Unfortunately, the issue fizzled out like a damp squib as Casey won seven straight games and, in turn, the entire match.

In succeeding years he continued to extol his qualities as a player and retired undefeated around 1900.

While the game, as brought into America by Irishmen, was

the hardball type, something, akin to what we still know it as, it was not long until the softball made its appearance.

It was in the form of a coverless tennis ball, and, synonymous with the construction of smaller courts, the game swept through the cities of the United States.

Experiment, in time, saw the introduction of a much smaller type handball, and, this immediately gave the game an added impetus. It spread quickly, especially, in the Middle West, which came into prominence as a centre of concentrated activity.

The Detroit Athletic Club led the way, erected wonderful four-walled courts, and at considerable expense invited prominent players from various parts of the country to compete in tournaments.

The first of these was held in 1915, and was won by Fritz Seivered of Cleveland, who repeated the feat in 1917. In 1918, another representative of the East, Bill Sakmann was crowned champion. While the Detroit Athletic Club was holding these invitational tournaments, four-walled handball was making a strong bid for recognition on the Pacific Coast.

Shortly, budding champions were emerging from Los Angeles and San Francisco.

In time, the three organisations which now promote handball in the United States were born. The Amateur Athletic Union held its first championship in Detroit in 1919, and this was won by Bill Ranft of the Los Angeles Athletic Club. The Y.M.C.A. held its first National

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Championship in 1926 and, since, both these organisations have sponsored tournaments annually.

In 1951, the United States Handball Association was officially founded, with Robert K. Kendler as President. Mr. Kendler has made many contributions to the development of handball, principally in his pioneering the use of glass in the construction and re-modelling of four-walled courts. His generous support was a major factor in the erection of the beautiful all-glass court at the Aurora, Illinois, Y.M.C.A.

Nowadays, there are three officially recognised games of handball in the United States, namely, one, three and four-walled handball.

One-walled handball is chiefly confined to the Metropolitan New York City area and is not at all popular in the Middle West, or on the Pacific Coast. Three-walled courts with front and two side-walls (no back wall) are not very plentiful either and this type of play is confined mostly to Detroit where the annual U.S.H.A. Championships are held.

Three-walled type courts are a recent innovation in the parks and playgrounds of New York City. They comprise a front wall, back wall, one side wall, with the other side open to allow spectators an opportunity of seeing the various shots and skills of the players.

Four-walled handball is, of course, the most popular, and is practically the only branch of the code played outside Metropolitan New York City.

Every City throughout the country and Canada has at least one four-walled court available while handball activity is also a must in the Y.M.C.A., Y.M.H.A. and major private clubs.

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LADIES, IT'S NOT HURLING!

THE fact that, despite the disturbed condition of the area, two Six-County teams, Derry and Antrim, were still able to reach the All-Ireland junior and senior camogie finals, is in itself a tremendous tribute to the dedication of the players and officials, and proof positive of the strength of the game in the North.

But the fact that the training of both sides was very seriously interrupted should bring home to camogie players in the South the many difficulties with which their sisters beyond the Border have to contend.

The All-Ireland semi-finals provided two very exciting games, with Wexford, magnificently led by Margaret O'Leary just getting up to pip Tipperary in the closing minutes at Wexford, and Antrim barely holding out against a late Galway rally in the other semi-final at Glenariff.

What a great pity, though, that the game at Wexford should have been over-robust and resulted in two players being sent to the line for the first time ever in an inter-county camogie game. All honour to the referee, Mrs. Nancy Murray, of Antrim for sending the players off, and to Central Council for taking stern subsequent action.

It was action that had to be taken and it was taken none too soon, for there has been too great a tendency towards over-robust

play from certain teams for some time past.

Not that I blame the players concerned. To my mind, the fault rests almost entirely with players and mentors who are themselves completely unfamiliar with the rules of camogie and who mistakenly imagine that camogie is the same as hurling.

The result, is that they encourage their charges to indulge in



Margaret O'Leary
Wexford star

far too much bodily contact and from this all the subsequent trouble arises.

The solution of course is not as simple as it seems. The first step is to see that all coaches and trainers must provide themselves with a set of camogie rules and train their teams according to this and not according to the hurling rule-book.

But the long term solution must lie in the institution of coaching courses throughout the country for players, trainers, officials

and mentors alike, with an extra course for referees.

Some counties and provinces have already shown the way, and where these courses have been given, the effects have been spectacular and the improvements of standards have been almost unbelievable.

The sooner such courses are available in all areas the better.

Actually Leinster have another coaching course coming up soon, while Leinster Colleges are already making plans for a big get-together at Easter.

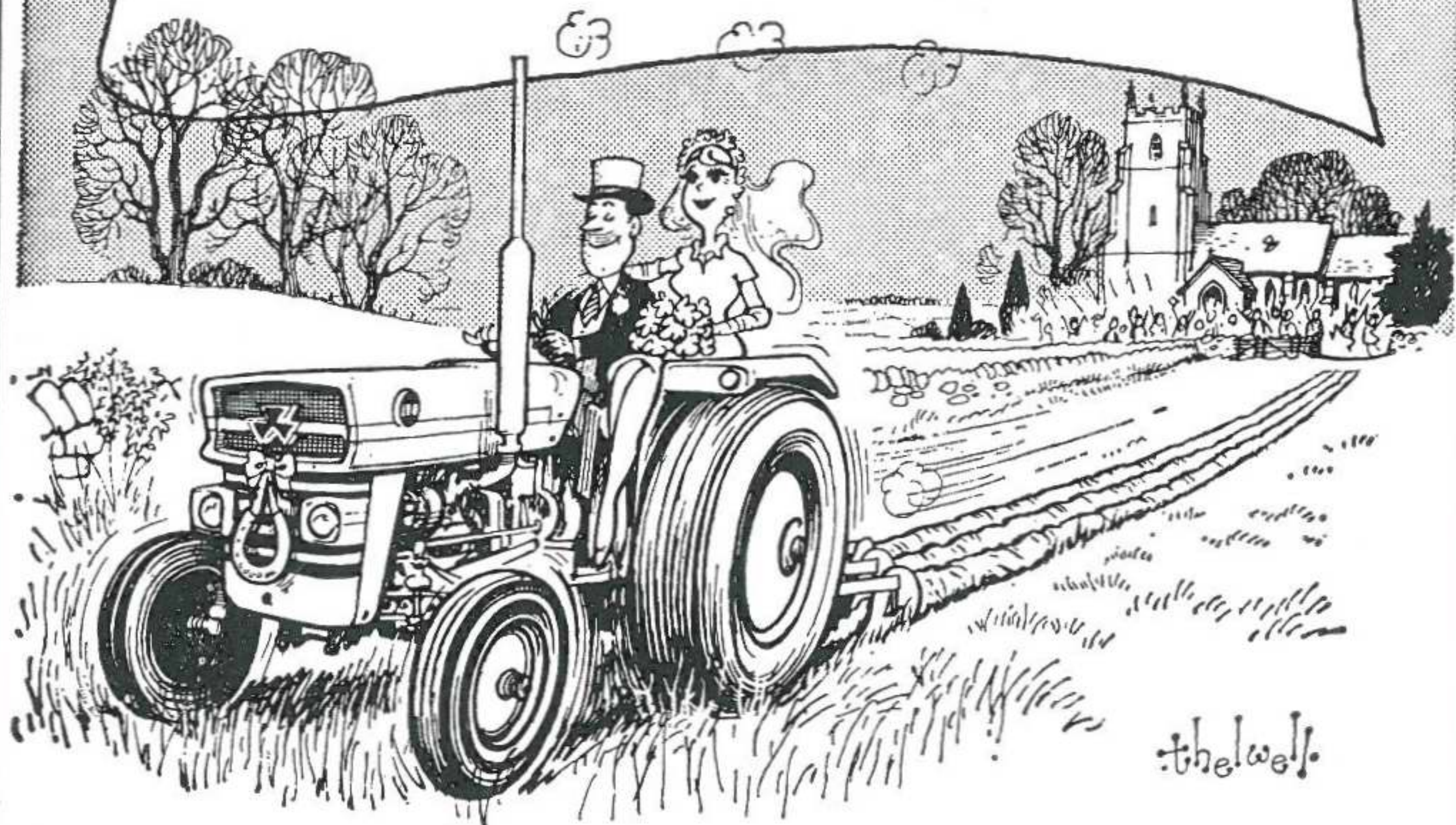
And, speaking of Colleges, the first All-Ireland Colleges championship proved so successful a year ago, that Central Council has called a meeting of four representatives of the Colleges Councils to see about the formation of an All-Ireland Colleges Council.

Such a step is only logical, and will obviously make for the smoother working and co-ordination of the Colleges' games in all provinces.

The foundation of the game must be laid in the schools, and besides, there is a very important long-term objective that the Colleges can achieve.

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Twenty Wins

1903—Beat London, 0-11 to 0-3, at Jones' Road, Dublin, November 12, 1905; Tady O'Gorman, Captain. 1904—Beat Dublin, 0-5 to 0-2 at Cork, July 1, 1906; Austin Stack, Captain. 1909—Beat Louth, 1-9 to 0-6, at Jones' Road, Dublin, December 5, 1909; Tom Costelloe, Captain. 1913—Beat Wexford, 2-2 to 0-3, at Croke Park, Dublin, December 14, 1913; Dick Fitzgerald, Captain. 1914—Drew with Wexford 1-3 to 2-0, at Croke Park, November 1, 1914; Replay: Beat Wexford, 2-3 to 0-6, at Croke Park, November 29, 1914; Dick Fitzgerald, Captain.

1924—Beat Dublin, 0-4 to 0-3, at Croke Park, April 26, 1925; Phil Sullivan, Captain. 1926—Drew with Kildare, 1-3 to 0-6, at Croke Park, September 5, 1926; Replay: Beat Kildare 1-4 to 0-4, at Croke Park, October 17, 1926; John J. Sheehy, Captain. 1929—Beat Kildare, 1-8 to 1-5, at Croke Park, September 22, 1929; Joe Barrett, Captain. 1930—Beat Monaghan, 3-11 to 0-2 at Croke Park, September 28, 1930; John Joe Sheehy, Captain. 1931—Beat Kildare, 1-11 to 0-8, at Croke Park, September 27, 1931; Con Brosnan, Captain. 1932—Beat Mayo, 2-7 to 2-4, at Croke Park, September 25, 1932; Joe Barrett, Captain. 1937—Drew with Cavan, 2-5 to 1-8, at Croke Park, September 26, 1937; Replay: Beat Cavan, 4-4 to 1-7 at Croke Park, October 17, 1937; Miko Doyle, Captain.

1939—Beat Meath, 2-5 to 2-3, at Croke Park, September 24, 1939; Tom "Gega" O'Connor, Captain. 1940—Beat Galway, 0-7 to 1-3, at Croke Park, September 22, 1940; Dan Spring, Captain.

1941—Beat Galway, 1-8 to 0-7, at Croke Park, September 6, 1941; Bill Dillon, Captain. 1946—Drew with Roscommon, 2-4 to 1-7, at Croke Park, October 6, 1946; Replay: Beat Roscommon, 2-8 to 0-10, at Croke Park, October 27, 1946; Paddy Kennedy, Captain. 1953—Beat Armagh, 0-13 to 1-6, at Croke Park, September 27, 1953; James Murphy, Captain. 1955—Beat Dublin, 0-12 to 1-6, at Croke Park, September 25, 1955; John Dowling, Captain. 1959—Beat Galway, 3-7 to 1-4, at Croke Park, September 27, 1959; Mick O'Connell, Captain. 1962—Beat Roscommon, 1-12 to 1-4, at Croke Park, September 23, 1962; Sean Og Sheehy, Captain.

DUBLIN

(Colours: Sky Blue, with White Collar and Crest)

Seventeen Wins

1891—Beat Cork, 2-1 to 1-9, at Clonturk Park, Dublin, February 28, 1892; John Kennedy, Captain. Note: At this period goals were supreme and outweighed any number of points. 1892—Beat Kerry, 1-4 to 0-3 at Clonturk Park, Dublin, March 26, 1893; John Kennedy, Captain.

1894—Drew with Cork, 0-6 to 1-1, at Clonturk Park, Dublin, March 24, 1895; Replay: Cork 1-2, Dublin 0-5, at Thurles, April 21, 1895. Unfinished. Awarded to Dublin. Note: At this period a goal was equal to five points. John Kennedy, Captain. 1897—Beat Cork, 2-6 to 0-2, at Jones' Road, Dublin, February 5, 1899; Paddy J. Walsh, Captain. 1898—Beat Waterford, 2-8 to 0-4, at Tipperary, April 8, 1900; Matt Rea, Captain. 1899—Beat Cork, 1-10 to 0-6, at Jones' Road, Dublin, February 10, 1901; Matt Rea, Captain.

1901—Beat London, 0-14 to 0-2,

at Jones' Road, Dublin, August 2, 1903; James D'Arcy, Captain. 1902—Beat London, 2-8 to 0-4, at Cork, September 11, 1904; Jack Dempsey, Captain. 1906—Beat Cork, 0-5 to 0-4 at Athy, October 20, 1907; Jack Grace, Captain. 1907—Beat Cork, 0-6 to 0-2, at Tipperary, July 5, 1908; David P. Kelleher, Captain. 1908—Beat London, 1-10 to 0-4, at Jones' Road, Dublin, October 1st, 1909; David P. Kelleher, Captain. 1921—Beat Mayo, 1-9 to 0-2, at Croke Park, June 17, 1923; Eddie Carroll, Captain.

1922—Beat Galway, 0-6 to 0-4, at Croke Park, October 7, 1923; Paddy Carey, Captain. 1923—Beat Kerry, 1-5 to 1-3, at Croke Park, September 28, 1924; Paddy "Macker" McDonnell, Captain. 1942—Beat Galway, 1-10 to 1-8, at Croke Park, September 20, 1942; Joe Fitzgerald, Captain. 1958—Beat Derry, 2-11 to 1-10, at Croke Park, September 28, 1958; Kevin Heffernan, Captain. 1963—Beat Galway, 1-9 to 0-10, at Croke Park, September 22, 1963; Des Foley, Captain.

GALWAY

(Colours: Maroon, with White Collar)

Seven Wins

1925—Beat Cavan, 3-2 to 1-2, at Croke Park, January 10, 1926; Michael "Knacker" Walsh, Captain. (Note: This was a substitute competition for the championship—awarded to Galway). 1934—Beat Dublin, 3-5 to 1-9, at Croke Park, September 23, 1934; Mick Higgins, Captain. 1938—Drew with Kerry, 3-3 to 2-6, at Croke Park, September 25, 1938; Replay: Beat Kerry, 2-4 to 0-7, at Croke Park, October 23, 1938; John Dunne, Captain. 1956—Beat Cork, 2-13 to 3-7, at Croke

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Park, October 7, 1956; Jack Mangan, Captain. 1964—Beat Kerry, 0-15 to 0-10 at Croke Park, September 27, 1964; John Donnellan, Captain. 1965—Beat Kerry, 0-12 to 0-9 at Croke Park, September 26, 1965; Enda Colleran, Captain. 1966—Beat Meath, 1-10 to 0-7, at Croke Park, September 25, 1966; Enda Colleran, Captain.

WEXFORD

(Colours: Purple, with Yellow Shoulders)

Five Wins

1893—Beat Cork, 1-1 to 0-1, at Phoenix Park, June 24, 1894; match unfinished; Thomas Hayes, captain. 1915—Beat Kerry, 2-4 to 2-1, at Croke Park, November 7, 1915; Sean Kennedy, captain. 1916—Beat Mayo, 2-4 to 1-2, at Croke Park, December 7, 1916; Sean Kennedy, captain. 1917—Beat Clare, 0-9 to 0-5, at Croke Park, December 9, 1917; Sean Kennedy, captain. 1918—Beat Tipperary, 0-5 to 0-4, at Croke

Park, February 16, 1919; Jim Byrne, captain.

CAVAN

(Colours—Blue, with White collar.)

Five Wins.

1933—Beat Galway, 2-5 to 1-4, at Croke Park, September 24, 1933; Jim Smith, captain. 1935—Beat Kildare, 3-6 to 2-5, at Croke Park, September 22, 1935; Hughie O'Reilly, captain. 1947—Beat Kerry, 2-11 to 2-7, at Polo Grounds, New York, September 14, 1947; John Joe O'Reilly, captain. 1948—Beat Mayo, 4-5 to 4-4, at Croke Park, September 26, 1948; John Joe O'Reilly, captain. 1952—Drew with Meath, 2-4 to 1-7, at Croke Park, September 28, 1952; Replay: beat Meath, 0-9 to 0-5, at Croke Park, October 12, 1952; Mick Higgins, captain.

TIPPERARY

(Colours—Blue with Gold Hoop)

Four Wins.

1889—Beat Laois, 3-6 to nil, at

Inchicore, Dublin, October 20, 1889; Gil Kavanagh, captain. 1895—Beat Meath, 0-4 to 0-3, at Jones' Road, Dublin, March 15, 1896; Paddy Finn, captain. 1900—Beat London, 3-7 to 0-2, at Jones' Road, Dublin, October 26, 1902; John Tobin, captain. 1920—Beat Dublin, 1-6 to 1-2, at Croke Park, June 11, 1922; Ned O'Shea, captain.

KILDARE

(Colours—All White.)

Four Wins.

1905 — Beat Kerry, 1-7 to 0-5, at Thurles, June 16, 1907; J. M. Murray, captain. 1919—Beat Galway, 2-5 to 0-1, at Croke Park, September 29, 1919; Larry Stanley, captain. 1927—Beat Kerry, 0-5 to 0-3, at Croke Park, September 25, 1927; Mick Buckley, captain. 1928—Beat Cavan, 2-6 to 2-5, at Croke Park, September 30, 1928; Willie Gannon, captain.

CORK

(Colours—Red with White Collar.)

Three Wins.

1890—Beat Wexford, 2-4 to 0-1, at Clonturk Park, Dublin, June 26, 1891; Jim Power, captain. 1911—Beat Antrim, 6-6 to 1-2, at Croke Park, January 14, 1912; Mick Mehigan, captain. 1945—Beat Cavan, 2-5 to 0-7, at Croke Park, September 23, 1945; Tadg Crowley, captain.

MAYO

(Colours—Green, with Red Hoop.)

Three Wins.

1936—Beat Laois, 4-11 to 0-5, at Croke Park, September 27, 1936; Seamus O'Malley, captain. 1950—Beat Louth, 2-5 to 1-6, at Croke Park, September 24, 1950; Sean Flanagan, captain. 1951—Beat Meath, 2-8 to 0-9, at Croke Park, September 23, 1951; Sean Flanagan, captain.

LOUTH

(Colours—Red, with White Collar.)

Three Wins.

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at Croke Park. Kerry refused to travel following dispute with Railway Company. Jack Carvin, captain. 1912—Beat Antrim, 1-7 to 1-2, at Croke Park, November 3, 1912; Jim Smith, captain. 1957—Beat Cork, 1-9 to 1-7, at Croke Park, September 22, 1957; Dermot O'Brien, captain.

MEATH

(Colours—Green, with Gold Collar and Cuffs.)

Three Wins.

1949—Beat Cavan, 1-10 to 1-6, at Croke Park, September 25, 1949; Brian Smith, captain. 1954—Beat Kerry, 1-13 to 1-7, at Croke Park, September 26, 1954; Paddy McDermott, captain. 1967—Beat Cork, 1-9 to 0-9, at Croke Park, September 24, 1967; Peter Darby, captain.

DOWN

(Colours—Red, with Black Collar.)

Three Wins.

1960—Beat Kerry, 2-10 to 0-8, at Croke Park, September 25, 1960; Kevin Mussen, captain. 1961—Beat Offaly, 3-6 to 2-8, at Croke Park, September 24, 1961; Paddy Doherty, captain. 1968—Beat Kerry, 2-12 to 1-13, at Croke Park, September 22, 1968; Joe Lennon, captain.

LIMERICK

(Colours—Green, with White Collar and Shield.)

Two Wins.

1887—Beat Louth, 1-4 to 0-3, at Clonskeagh, Dublin, April 29, 1888; Denis Corbett, captain. 1896—Beat Dublin, 1-5 to 0-7, at Jones' Road, Dublin, February 6, 1898; Con Fitzgerald, captain.

ROSCOMMON

(Colours—Yellow, with Blue Collar.)

Two Wins.

1943—Drew with Cavan, 1-6 all, at Croke Park, September 26, 1943. Replay: Beat Cavan, 2-7 to 2-2, at Croke Park, October 10, 1943; Jimmy Murray, captain. 1944—Beat Roscommon, 1-9 to 2-4, at Croke Park, September 24, 1944; Jimmy Murray, captain.



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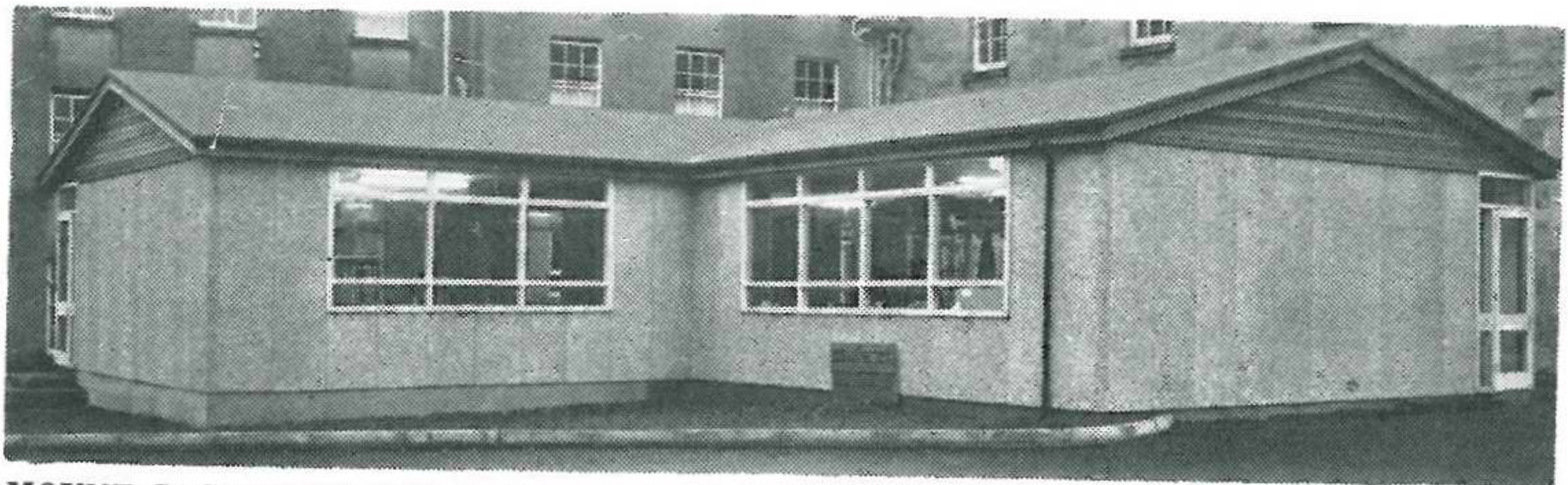
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THE OIREACHTAS TOURNAMENT

By SEAMUS O CEALLAIGH

THE Oireachtas hurling competition celebrates its thirtieth birthday this season. The first Oireachtas match was played in 1939, when Limerick hurlers were invited to play the All-Ireland champions, Kilkenny, at Croke Park.

Limerick, who led to the interval, 2-1 to 1-3, created a big surprise when they captured the honours, 4-4 to 2-5. The teams in that first final will be recalled with interest:

Limerick—Paddy Scanlon (goal), Paddy Carroll, Mick Kennedy, Tommy Cooke, John Mackey, Paddy Clohosey, Peter Cregan, Timmy Ryan, Tony Herbert, Jacky Power, Mick Mackey (captain), Paddy Kelly, Dan Givens. Paddy McMahon, Jim Roche.

Kilkenny—J. O'Connell (goal), P. Grace, P. Larkin, P. Blanchfield, P. Boyle, W. Burke, P. Phelan, J. Walsh (captain), J. Kelly, J. Langton, T. Leahy, J. Gargan, J. Mulcahy, J. O'Brien, J. Phelan.

Only a mere handful witnessed that first final with the result that the organisers turned to football for a few seasons but without

arousing any real interest. The football deciders were:

1941: Kildare (2-6) and Dublin (3-3) drew, and the game was not replayed.

1942: Dublin 1-6; Cavan 1-3.

1943: Roscommon 1-6; Louth 0-6.

1946: Antrim 2-7; Laois 0-10.

It was not until 1947 that the present competition — Comórtas Aghas, was established, and the whole thing put on a permanent basis.

In 1956 a record for the competition was set when 37,227 spectators saw Wexford, then All-Ireland champions, beat Kilkenny.

The Oireachtas Cup is the only major hurling trophy that Cork has not won.

The competition is the G.A.A.'s contribution to the revival of the Oireachtas, and the final is played on Oireachtas Sunday each year. The trophy is a beautiful and unusually designed cup, with the bowl resting on standards shaped as hurleys.

The Oireachtas hurling winning record is:

Tipperary (8 successes): 1945—

Beat Galway, 4-6 to 4-3. **1949**—Beat Laois, 2-8 to 1-6. **1960**—Beat Cork, 4-11 to 2-10. **1961** Replay—Beat Wexford, 2-13 to 3-4. **1963**—Beat Wexford, 4-15 to 3-12. **1964**—Beat Kilkenny, 5-7 to 4-8. **1965**—Beat Kilkenny, 2-12 to 2-7. **1968**—Beat Cork, 1-9 to 1-6.

Kilkenny (6 successes): **1940**—Beat Cork, 7-11 to 1-6. **1947**—Beat Galway, 2-12 to 2-6. **1957**—Beat Waterford, 4-10 to 3-5. **1959**—Beat Galway, 6-6 to 5-8. **1966**—Beat Wexford, 4-7 to 1-7. **1967**—Beat Clare, 4-4 to 1-8.

Wexford (4 successes): **1951**—Beat Kilkenny, 4-7 to 3-7. **1953**—Beat Clare, 5-11 to 4-5. **1955**—Beat Kilkenny, 3-11 to 3-4. **1956**—Beat Kilkenny, 0-16 to 1-9.

Galway (3 successes): **1950**—Beat Wexford, 2-9 to 2-6. **1952**—Beat Wexford, 3-7 to 1-10. **1958**—Beat Wexford, 5-16 to 2-4.

Dublin (2 successes): **1944**—Beat Galway, 6-6 to 3-6. **1948**—Beat Waterford, 3-6 to 2-6.

One success each. **Limerick: 1939**—Beat Kilkenny, 4-4 to 2-5. **Clare: 1954**—(Replay) Beat Wexford, 3-6 to 0-12. **Waterford: 1962**—Beat Tipperary, 4-12 to 3-9.



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KERRY HAVE JUST ONE ENEMY

Says

JIM BENNETT

KERRY have been so superior to any other side in the run-in to the 1969 All-Ireland final that they stand as clear favourites. Favourites do not always triumph, and favouritism breeds many ills, but, even in this, Kerry may have had their lesson just at the right time. The victory over Mayo, in the semi-final, was as comprehensive as any semi-final win could be in the general play, yet, only a point separated the teams on the scoreboard.

How come? Complacency? Not exactly, I think, but something else equally deadly. Kerry began that match with Mayo with all the most desirable elan and application. O'Connell, the King himself, applied his wonderful skills immediately to destroy the Mayo midfield; Kerry began to show a superiority through the field. So clear was their supremacy that they found possession plentiful. This, in turn, led them to use it with a less miserly attitude than champions ought. The goal became desired instead of the point; because they were well

ahead in the play, they did not take the precaution of taking every possible opportunity of going equally well ahead on the scoreboard.

They certainly did not begin in a complacent mood in that game, but, a form of the disease crept upon them. That form took the aspect of over-elaboration—of all things. When did we ever think that Kerry, stronghold of the direct style, often told by others in the last decade that they would never get anywhere until they spiced their catch-and-kick with passing, would see a day when they passed too much. But, on that day they made four passes do the work of three, three for the work of two, and the scores did not come so steadily as the measure of their general superiority would have dictated.

Nevertheless, one must remember that they did dominate a large measure of the play, and also that they are highly unlikely to be allowed to forget their failing as they prepare for the big test, and you see just how formidable they are as opponents.

No longer is the same over-burdening reliance placed on the shoulders of the unique Mick O'Connell. Seldom, in fact, have I seen the great one so frolicsome nor, indeed, so devastatingly effective. All the old glory is there—"I caught a couple of good ones," said he, commenting on his wonderful performance against Mayo with a typically monumental understatement. But, his greater desire to shoot points and ignore better positioned men who might or might not score, is a singular advantage to Kerry—if he had a fault always, it was in his over-generous spreading of lovely passes to lesser men. And, he is covering ground like a boy of little more than half his age.

The major share of the credit for the splendour of O'Connell's play as well as for his own buz-

zing performances goes to D. J. Crowley. Once cast in an inhibiting full-forward role, Crowley is a beautiful player at midfield. Top class worker, non-stop harrier, delightful control and judgment of the solo run. The two combine to exhibit all the best things in midfield play. It is because of the pairing that so many favour Kerry firmly. Without a combination of equal brilliance no team can hope to survive against the Kingdom. The midfield is still an area which exerts enormous influence in any game.

It was their attack which first gave this Kerry side a claim to fame, and most people will remember the sparkle of this section of the side last year when the defence and even the centre-field was not so universally acceptable. Curiously enough, Kerry approach this year's final with a quaver or two about the form of the forwards and with far greater confidence in the ability of the backs.

Even the most brilliant set of forwards run out of form and inspiration some day. This Kerry line has a lot going for it, even at its lowest ebb, but, it can be wonderfully effective as well as stylish when on the crest of the wave. The tendency towards the extra pass, the lack of that complete conviction in shooting to score from far out rather than playing it safe with the lob to the square, are symptoms of the loss of that best edge. This was clearly visible in the semi-final against Mayo. Will it have been smoothed out and cajoled out of the players in their preparation for the final?

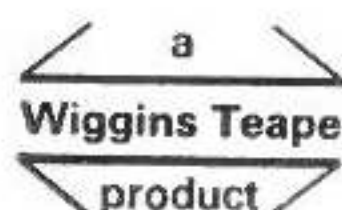
But, in defence, Kerry have shown a great improvement, though some severe critics might still find fault with some of their marking and the ease with which lanes open through them against

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● FROM PAGE 49

a probing attack. Since last year, after all, they have discovered brilliance in Mick O'Shea and Seamus Fitzgerald, a bonus of busy briskness in Tom Prendergast, a vein of continued good form by the veteran Seamus Murphy, and improved form from Paud O'Donoghue.

Centre-half back seems to plague them, and just when Mick Morris was settling in he suffered injury in the Munster final; Donie O'Sullivan, while less than completely comfortable in the position, seems likely to settle down to workmanlike performance there. Yet, in the winter, when Kerry were as rickety as last year in the defence it was the unlucky Denis O'Sullivan who played a couple of mighty games and helped steady them. Now, Denis is recuperating from a knee ailment and can only watch from the sidelines as the formation which he helped towards maturity goes after the elusive twenty-first All-Ireland for the county.

Taking a line through the performances of the opposing teams when Kerry gutted Offaly in the National League final at home, would not be helpful for Kerry, nor constructive for an outsider. The tensions and pressures are more severe in the All-Ireland final, and sometimes teams rise to great heights to challenge opponents which seemed to have established complete superiority over them. Yet, in grandeur of concept there was no comparison between Kerry and Offaly in that League game. It is difficult to find proof of massive improvement in Offaly's play since then, while they and Cavan proved to be of very equal calibre. Indeed, one can only conclude that Kerry will start firm favourites, and, to me, it appears that their only enemy is the kind of self-induced over-elaboration which nearly cost them dear against Mayo.



Mick O'Connell

JACK MAHON POSES A QUESTION FOR THE PUNDITS

IS O'CONNELL THE GREATEST ?

THIS is a question nobody can answer. Harder than the usual Ring or Mackey in hurling for both these actually opposed each other. Mackey in the twilight of a great career; Ring in the dawn of his own. It would be cheeky of me or anybody to try to answer the question. We can have opinions and we can voice them. That's about it.

My good friend from Tralee Paddy Drummond—and he is no bad judge—always claims Miko Doyle was the greatest of all Kerry men. So we can see that some Kerry men do not confer the title of king of Kerry's football kingdom on O'Connell.

Perhaps a better question might have been "Mick O'Connell—Is he Kerry's Greatest Midfielder Ever?" This narrows the field considerably and again it would be cheeky of me to try and answer that one, for my memory spans the last twenty years only and Kerry's greatest triumphs were before my time—and then I'm not a Kerryman.

Raymond Smith in his book "The Football Immortals" chose O'Connell as his "numero uno."



Jack Mahon

In reviewing that book elsewhere I chose to disagree with his opinion. Seán Purcell has always been my choice as the greatest footballer I have seen. Some readers will immediately think that much of this is Galway pride. But no member of Galway's 1964-66 team could be compared with Purcell with the exception of youthful Jimmy Duggan. The highest compliment I can pay him is to say he is the most stylish Galwayman I've seen, **after** Purcell.

In Dublin football circles they will tell you that there is no one like "Micko", as he is popularly

known in Kerry. He played some wonderful games against Dublin. He has gone on record as saying that Dublin were a grand team to play against. We need only cast our minds' eye back to 1959 and 1962 to remember O'Connell's sheer brilliance against Dublin.

In Galway, however, Mick's star is not that high. For his performances against Galway have never been of the stellar class and Frank Evers, Mick Garrett and John Donnellan in turn proved his master in key Croke Park championship games.

Neither were his games against Down ones to be remembered, for Down seemed to be able to evolve a policy of mastering "Micko" and it usually proved effective.

In 1960 I thought it a pity that Down's bulldozing tactics cut O'Connell down to size but last year there was no such obvious policy. McAlarney and Milligan were rampant. O'Connell appeared at times to be disinterested and committed the cardinal championship error of not following up. Coming away from that game I felt it was O'Connell's swansong.

But no. A "new" Mick O'Connell has emerged in 1969. It all began in Pearse Stadium, Salt-hill, in the replay of the league game against Mayo. Ever since his play is ever so much more gritty and determined. Where before he sometimes seemed aloof and grinned in disdain at some foolish mistake of a teammate, he now openly admonishes the same mistake, seldom smiling, often sullen. No one ever doubted his capability of mixing it with anybody. He seemed above "casting an eye for an eye" and appeared to ask himself "why bother" when some over exuberant and much less talented performer tried to grind him

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IS O'CONNELL THE GREATEST

● FROM PAGE 51

(O'Connell) down to his own (opponent) level.

Now as different from a year ago, Micko chases every ball. He uses his weight more but he hasn't sullied his play in any way. No pulling or dragging from Mick. Why play at all if one has to resort to this, he seems to ask an opponent with his eye after such an indiscretion. His catching is well-nigh perfect.

He seems to glide to the ball and can sway in mid-air. His kicking, radar-like in its accuracy. Watch him place a pass to a team-mate, often from a distance of 40 yards. Robot-like. He lets the ball down very low to the boots and has a beautifully stylish method of lofting a centre to the goal mouth on for a score with the left foot.

Pat Griffin does the same almost but is less fluid in the movement. (What a great team-man Griffin is). If I have any fault with the O'Connell of the moment it is that the mass media have made a football god out of him after his new style of 1969. To such an extent that referees bend backwards to help him. I have the height of respect for referee Paul Kelly, but he hardly allowed a Mayoman to look at Mick in the semi-final this year. Even O'Connell does not want opponents to stand on ceremony to him. He expects a fight to get the ball and does not expect opponents to stand aside. Anyone bred in Kerry football does not expect any such ceremony; in fact never gets it. So referees should not give it and neither should opponents. You don't have to try and bury Mick O'Connell to beat him. Far easier to play the ball at all times as he does himself. Far more meritorious too.

Yes, I have the height of respect for Mick O'Connell. He

would be a midfielder on the greatest team I've seen. With him as partner I'd have Mayo's Padraic Carney, the ginger-headed dynamo from Swinford. What a pairing they would make. How different Carney is in style and make-up from O'Connell. Carney all out from the word go—non-stop action, irrepressible, unbeatable. Perhaps the pairing of the Carney-like Din Joe Crowley with O'Connell is one of the reasons that we have the new flair to the Valentia Islander. For Crowley, who has improved so much from the green novice he appeared in last year's All-Ireland final, is giving the ideal type of support to O'Connell.

Of the other midfielders I have seen I could not fail to mention Derry's Jim McKeever and the wonderful duel he had with O'Connell in 1958. Victor Sherlock of Cavan, a brilliant left-footer; Paddy Casey of Offaly and New York; Jim Rogers of Wicklow; the Mutt and Jeff Dublin partnership of Jim Crowley and Mossy Whelan; Frank Evers, Mick Garrett; the great Purcell v. Carney duels in Roscommon in 1948; Sean Brosnan of Kerry; Eric Ryan and Mick Burke of Cork; Liam Gilmartin of Roscommon; the roasting Seamus Murphy of Kerry gave Mick Carley of Westmeath in a Railway Cup final was brought home to me by the manner in which Willie Bryan outclassed the taller Hugh Newman in the drawn All-Ireland semi-final this year; in current times there are no better than Jimmy Duggan, Colm McAlarney, Willie Bryan and Ray Carolan.

Duggan, though Mayo's P. J. Loftus put the shackles on him twice lately, is the top midfielder of the younger generation and I look forward to seeing him oppose O'Connell. Both are foot-

ballers who decry the pull and drag that is all so much part of practically all footballers' repertoire at the moment. It is a consolation to find the Jimmy Duggans, Tony McTeagues, Brendan Lynchs, Sean O'Neills, Joe Corcorans and others still around, above all, to find the Mick O'Connells still, after years of football, trying to educate by example the younger generation in pure football as it should be played. Long may you play Micko.

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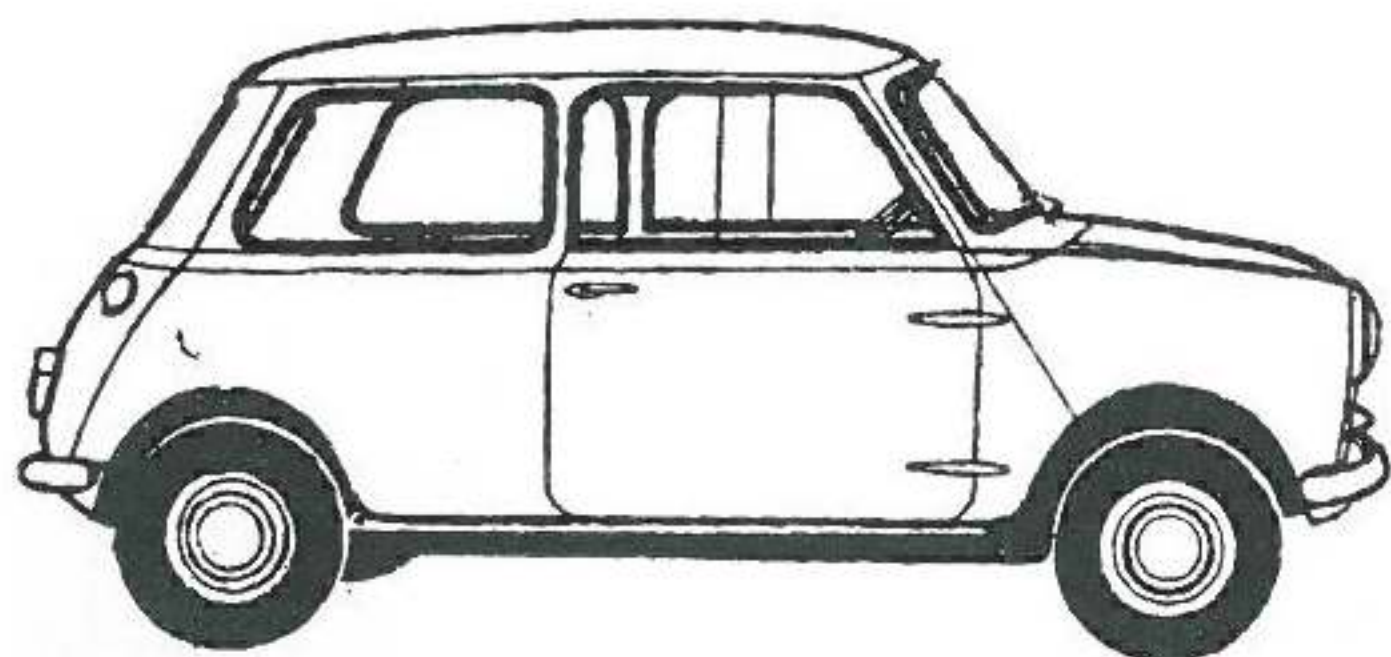
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Says JACK MAHON

IN these days when referees are being blamed in every sport in every country how nice to see Tipperary referee John Moloney praised by all and sundry after his fine display with the whistle in the drawn Offaly v. Cavan semi-final.

His handling of the late tackle was superb on that occasion. The only time I faulted him in the whole hour was the occasion he failed to blow up a Cavan midfielder for dumping Tony McTeague unceremoniously when this could and should have been avoided.

It is not the first time I have had cause to praise the tall Tipperaryman. People outside Connacht may not know who Paddy Bluett of Mayo is. Since I was a gasúr, he was always part and parcel of every Mayo championship occasion, usually parading round the field alongside the Mayo captain holding the green-and-red flag aloft. A Ballina man, I understand his name is not Bluett at all, but he is known by no other.

At the replay of the Under-21 All-Ireland final between Kerry and Mayo in Ballinasloe two years ago, Bluett, as always, was there marching alongside yet another Mayo captain. At the end of the march around referee John Moloney, in as fine a human touch as I've seen on a G.A.A. field, asked the bould Paddy would he like to throw in the ball. Paddy, of course, was thrilled to be accorded such a unique honour. These are the things that are worthwhile recording. Well done John Moloney.

MAYNOOTH'S FIRST

This will be the first year for a student in St. Patrick's College, Maynooth, to play in an All-Ireland final. I refer, of course, to Kerry's Mike O'Shea, that brilliant left halfback who since the relaxation of rules is the first to avail of this singular honour denied to countless footballers in the past (hurlers have played because the summer holidays always included the hurling final).

Worse still, students were often on retreat at this time and didn't hear the result until some days afterwards. Remember 1959 when John Kennedy, Galway's brilliant long-kicking corner back was a student and couldn't play. In the early 'fifties Sean Freyne captained the Mayo minor team as far as the final but like the others couldn't field on final day. So on behalf of the countless footballers down the years who were denied this honour I wish Kerry's dynamic O'Shea every good luck. He wears the Maynooth mantle very worthily.

FINAL PROGRAMMES

The All-Ireland final programmes for the past number of years have been a major improvement on previous ones. They have become very worthy mementoes of great occasions. But I'm still not completely satisfied with the newstyle programmes—on two points: Firstly, there is not enough information given about the minor finalists and, secondly, the size or page format is too big and cumbersome.

But once again I must record disappointment at what I would term the "excuses" for programmes which were on sale at the drawn and replayed Con-nacht finals this year. Why not hire a professional journalist to remedy this serious ill in Con-nacht in the future.

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TONY'S GOLDEN YEAR

By OWEN McCANN

"WHO are the 'Young Eagles' with the all-important score-getting ability who are most likely to soar to the heights of brilliance attained in expert and consistent marksmanship by such experienced performers as Jimmy Doyle, Eddie Keher and Cyril Dunne?"

That was an intriguing question I posed in "Gaelic Sport" back in April, 1967, and in the panel I went on to nominate, one of the two footballers named was Tony McTeague. How superbly he has justified that vote of confidence!

His exhibition in the drawn All-Ireland semi-final under the very bad conditions that day was as good a display of sharpshooting as any we have seen, and brought back memories of the palmy days of Paddy Doherty and Cyril Dunne, in particular. Effortlessly, and with pin-point precision, he matched the outstanding experts of the game with his free-taking in chalking up seven superb points. He also showed that his talents are by no means confined to notching scores from frees alone. His three points from play were not only well-taken, but object lessons in making the most of every scoring opportunity by avoiding hasty and ineffective kicking.

With that exhibition McTeague really took his place among the Scoring Wizards. I would now rate him as the greatest Offaly scoregetter of all time, which is high praise, indeed, when we remember the qualities of that

other mighty finisher from the county, Harry Donnelly. He holds the Leinster record for a full season's campaign at 7-99 (120 points) in 24 games, significantly enough in Offaly's last All-Ireland final year in 1961.

Tony McTeague's marksmanship (he is, of course, by far Offaly's top scorer) — revive memories of another great campaign by this Fermoy native. In 1964 Offaly won their only All-Ireland football title in any grade so far, and in that march to the minor crown, McTeague scored more than half of the team's total for the entire series of 7-55. His record for the five match programme was 2-35 (41 points), which works out at a whopping 8.20 points a tie.

He was promoted to the senior county team shortly after that championship win and he has since been getting the scores with remarkable consistency for Offaly. Indeed, in only one full intercounty senior game so far has he failed to score! That was a League encounter with Tipperary at Clonmel in October, 1966.

In two other matches he also failed to score, against Meath at An Uaimh in a Byrne Cup tie in August, 1967, and against Ulster in a Railway Cup semi-final at Croke Park in 1966, but in each game he only went in as a substitute.

As was the case in that great minor championship run, Tony McTeague's goal scoring record

as a senior is not as impressive as some of the great marksmen of the past, and present, but when it comes to picking off the points in flawless fashion, he is a master in his own right. His score from 59 senior outings, including those two appearances as a substitute, and, the recent replay with Cavan, is six goals and 280 points (298 points), which works out at 5.0 points a match.

The Offaly sharpshooter's ten points in the draw with Cavan, while his championship peak, is not his highest total for one game. In the League semi-final with Donegal last April, he hit 0-11.

Those impressive totals have helped him greatly to already better this year his previous best for a full year's campaign embracing all competitions of 1-65 (68 points) in 16 games, for ranking as third in Leinster and eight in Ireland in 1966. He goes into the final with (77 points) in 12 games, and therefore, barring injuries, is virtually assured of becoming the first Leinster footballer to score 100 points in an annual campaign since Harry Donnelly set up that provincial peak in 1961.

All in all, then, for Tony McTeague, who is now 23, this is a golden year. And he himself could be the man to put the final brilliant flourish by hitting the most important scores of his career so far—the scores that could mean the Sam Maguire Cup arriving in triumph in gallant Offaly.

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D. J. Crowley

By Jay Drennan

D. J. SENTENCES HIS OPPONENTS TO HARD LABOUR!

HARD Labour — that's what Kerry's own D.J. has been handing out in large helpings to all opponents since he switched back to centre-field on the county team. D. J. Crowley was really the most surprising discovery Kerry made in recent years. Those of us who only knew him as a full-forward of rather moderate success in 1967 and 1968, did not think too much about the switch to centre-field when it occurred. Admittedly, he looked good when pulled back in the closing stages of the All-Ireland final, but that seemed like "one of those things."

However, when the League got under way it was clear that Kerry were serious about the conversion. Mick O'Connell was in-

side at full-forward and Crowley out in the midfield. Both were quite good, even if Crowley's greatest asset was work rather than inspiration, and O'Connell looked cooped up in the tighter space in front of goal. It was a moderately good switch.

After the game with Mayo, in the League, at Limerick, which was drawn, the selectors played the trump card by switching O'Connell back again to the middle to partner Crowley. That was the touch needed. Crowley worked away like a beaver, but, now, his work was bearing fruit, for he had the genius and imagination of O'Connell beside him. O'Connell drew the focus of attention away from Crowley so that Crowley was able to hammer

away and occasionally skip away on solo runs.

But, the contribution which Crowley has made to O'Connell's play is as important as his own personal contribution. By holding the midfield area and fighting out every ball which drops there he has made it possible for Mick to indulge in those devastating sorties of his into attack or defence. Crowley himself is no lazybones when the opportunity presents itself for a run through and a scoring shot; while, in his command of the fast, controlled solo-run, D.J. is an example to all.

Baby-faced and fresh as a button, you would never take Crowley for much of a footballer. He is a Garda in Clonakilty, Co. Cork, and logs more miles than most in attending to training. But, it was off the field that he caused greatest anxiety to Kerry when he suffered minor injuries in a car crash which looked a lot worse than it was. This occurred shortly before the semi-final against Mayo, and, though not completely recovered, he showed that there was not a whole lot wrong with him against the Western champions.

The understanding of one another's game makes his partnership with Mick O'Connell so effective. They are a pair with similarities and vast dissimilarities. But, in one thing—zeal for the game of football—they are remarkably alike. It will take a really priceless pairing to outplay them this year or any other year while they hold the form which has put them on top of the tree.

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THE KERRYMEN'S CRUSADE

FOOTBALL history breaks down to two more or less equal sectors: the part which belongs to Kerry; and the part which belongs, in parcels to the others. The Kingdom has been somewhat understrength in the last few years, yet, they have brought the touch of fascination, the excitement and the vague expectation of something out of the heroic tales of ancient heroes to their matches.

Kerry made football; Kerry set its standards further and further out ahead of the pursuers for the most of its decades. If they have lost the touch in the sixties to the Downs and the Galways, it must be remembered that they are chasing this year their second championship of the decade, and they have lost the final on four other occasions. Not an eclipse. But, dissatisfying to the people of Kerry.

Dr. Eamon had died, two finals in a row were lost to Galway without conviction, then two Munster championships were lost to Cork. Things were near desperation behind the Reeks. Men grew more silent on football matters, and more caustic and cynical on all other topics. The personal fulfilment which the Kerryman draws from the achievements and the style exhibited by their county team is a great social factor.

Men tore their hair, others turned to drink, and a few left their wives in this term of strain which seemed to cast doubt on the corporate virility of Kerry-men. Mick O'Dwyer, horror-

struck at the tapering spirit in the county, pitched the middle-aged comfort of a chair on the selection committee to the devil, grabbed his boots from the hook on which he had hung them up, and began again the trial by sweat. He was a man of great spirit to try to make a return to the county scene at that time, with little to gain with a team which showed but small hope for the immediate future, and with all his hard won reputation to lose.

John Kerry O'Donnell began to make desperate gestures in New York, signifying that Kerry-men abroad as well as at home felt uncomfortable in their inferior role. O'Donnell, they say, offered to train the selected representatives of the county.

At home, county board and selectors looked for the replacement for the late Dr. Eamon who would again work the oracle for their men. The great man of the forties and fifties, Jackie Lyne, was found to be among those burning for the revival of the Kingdom challenge. Who better to symbolise the best in Kerry

football, and the best in Kerry spirit? Since the return of O'Dwyer and the coming of Lyne to the trainer's bench, the team has never looked back. Green last year in many positions and only beginning their drive, they still reached the final, enlisted an enormous amount of support within and without the county boundaries, and were beaten only by an exceptional Down performance.

Unlike the old Kerry idea of resting for the winter conserving the energies for the following summer, they plunged without a break into seriously contesting the League. It is not necessary to comment on the powerful charge, rolling up to almost irresistible proportions, which carried them to victory in that campaign. Mayo, Cork, Westmeath, Offaly fell to progressively heavier falls. The Kingdom were claiming their crown, and it was an impressive and powerful show based firmly on pride.

To New York, and neither tough opposition nor heat could check their advance. Back again to the championship, Waterford and Cork were dispatched with majesty; Mayo were outplayed but barely outscored in the semi-final, and so Kerry stand to-day at the ready for the big final. It means a lot to them: more, perhaps, than most of their finals down the years. Victory well earned and convincingly scored will set the world to rights, and establish God in his heaven.

By

JIM

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DONIE O'SULLIVAN

Interviewed by NOEL COOGAN

DONIE O'Sullivan has been one of Kerry's soundest defenders over the last few years. The Killarney man, who has figured in numerous positions for his county, was on the three Kerry teams which were beaten in the All-Ireland finals of 1964, '65 and '68. This year he will no doubt be hoping to go one better. I had the following interview with Donie recently:

N.C.—What were your feelings after the semi-final against Mayo?

D.O'S.—I was very satisfied. I thought we were lucky to survive by a point in the end but also unlucky not to have been in a very safe position fifteen minutes from the end.

N.C.—Did you expect such a hard game from Mayo?

D.O'S.—Yes, indeed. Drawing with Galway and beating them convincingly in the replay was a good warning.

N.C.—Is this the best Kerry team you have ever played on?

D.O'S.—This is easily the best balanced Kerry team I've played on.

N.C.—Has there been any step-up in training since the semi-final or were Kerry at their peak in that game?

D.O'S.—No. The training programme has been much the same since the later stages of the League and I hope we will reach our peak on the last Sunday in September.

N.C.—What kind of game do you expect the final to be?

D.O'S.—I expect it to be better than the previous few finals with more concentration on open football, especially around midfield.

N.C.—Kerry's forward line seemed to indulge in a lot of over-elaboration in the semi-final. Would you like to see less of this in the final?

D.O'S.—I'm sure we will see less of this in the final.

N.C.—You have played in a lot of different positions for Kerry. What is your favourite position?

D.O'S.—At this stage I don't really know, but if I had a choice

I think I'd take right full back.

N.C.—Who are the best players you have opposed in your career to date?

D.O'S.—Paddy Doherty, Charlie Gallagher, John Keenan and Mick Moynihan (New York) top the list.

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● FROM PAGE 19

in 1935 and with Connacht in 1936 and 1937, and All-Ireland senior medals with Galway in 1938 and Dublin in 1942; the late Caleb Crone, who won All-Ireland medals with Dublin in 1942 and Cork in 1945, and secured inter-provincial medals with Leinster in 1944 and Munster in 1946.

* * *

The year 1947 will be remembered as the only occasion on which the All-Ireland senior football final was played outside Ireland, when, in the Polo Grounds, New York, Cavan scored over Kerry by 2-11 to 2-7.

* * *

Malachi O'Brien of Limerick Commercial, who kicked a goal from midfield when playing against Meath in the first All-Ireland Football Championship, was invited to dine with Lord de French, in whose Park the game was played.

* * *

Sam Maguire was captain of the London team in the All-Ireland senior football finals of 1900, 1901 and 1903. A magnificent cup to commemorate his memory is now

the trophy for the All-Ireland senior football championship.

* * *

Sean Og Sheehy, who captained the 1962 Kerry All-Ireland winning team had two brothers, Paudie and Niall also as playing members of the side in that final. Their father, the renowned John Joe skippered winning Kerry teams in the All-Ireland finals of 1926 and 1930.

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Kerry took part in two All-Ireland (home) football final replays with Kildare in 1903, before going on to beat London in the final proper. Other drawn All-Ireland final games in which the "Kingdom" men participated were one with Wexford in 1914; one with Kildare in 1926; one with Cavan in 1937; one with Roscommon in 1946; all of which they won; and one with Galway in 1938 which they lost.

Kerry head the list of All-Ireland Football winners with 20 titles to their name; Dublin being

next with 17. Other counties in order are: Galway 7, Wexford, Cavan, 5 each; Tipperary, Kildare, 4 each; Cork, Mayo, Louth, Meath, Down, 3 each; Limerick, Roscommon, 2 each.

* * *

Only seven counties have succeeded in winning senior All-Ireland honours in both hurling and football: Tipperary, 21 hurling and 4 football; Cork, 20 hurling and 3 football; Kerry, 20 football and 1 hurling; Dublin, 17 football and 6 hurling; Wexford, 5 football and 5 hurling; Limerick, 6 hurling and 2 football; and Galway, 7 football and 1 hurling.

* * *

All Ireland Minor Football winners—Dublin (7): 1930, 1945, 1954, 1955, 1956, 1958, 1959. **Kerry (7):** 1931, 1932, 1933, 1946, 1950, 1962, 1963. **Roscommon (3):** 1939, 1941, 1951. **Mayo (3):** 1935, 1953, 1966. **Cork (3):** 1961, 1967, 1968. **Cavan (2):** 1937, 1938. **Louth (2):** 1936, 1940. **Tyrone (2):** 1947, 1948. **Galway (2):** 1952, 1960.

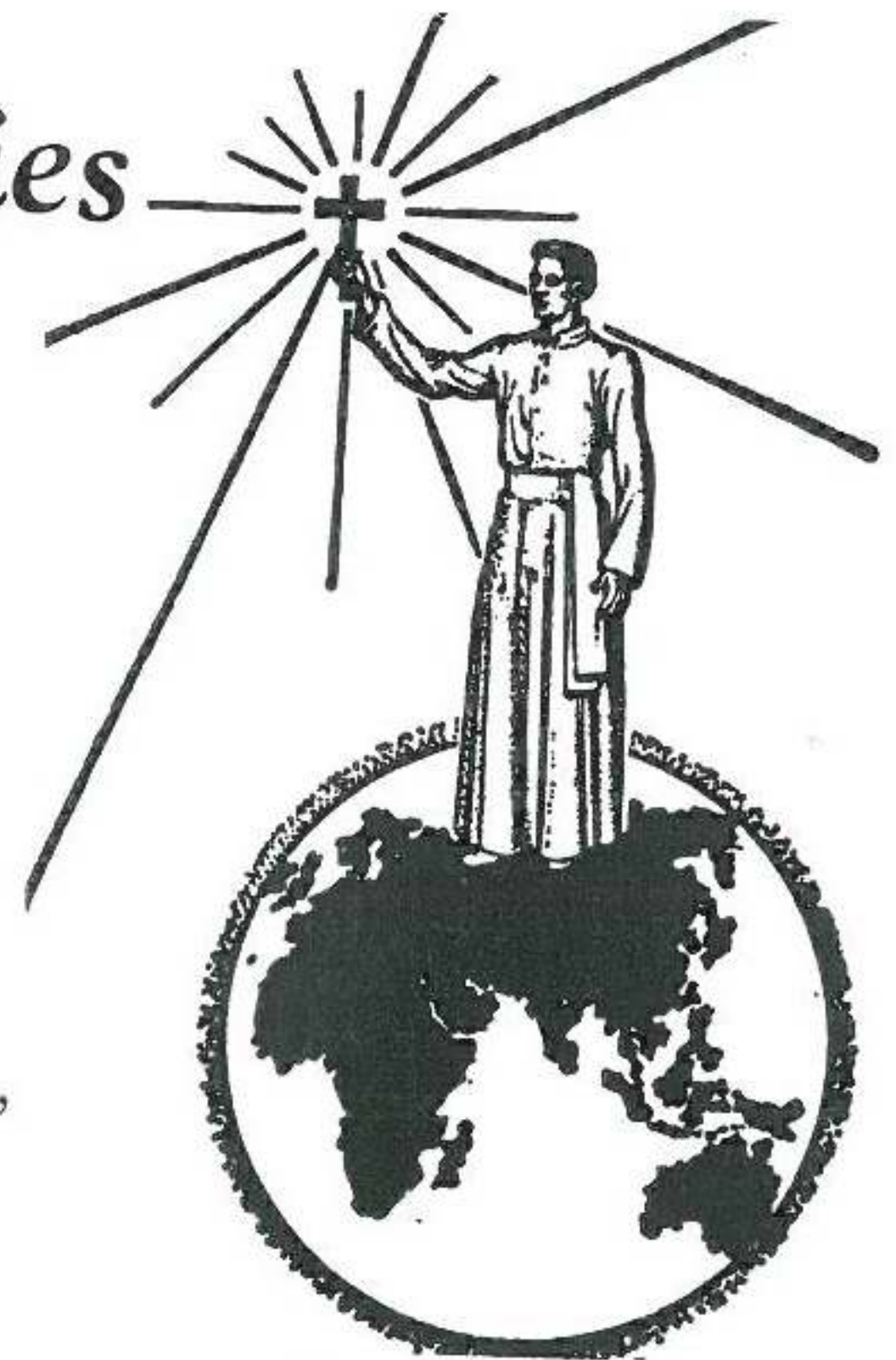
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