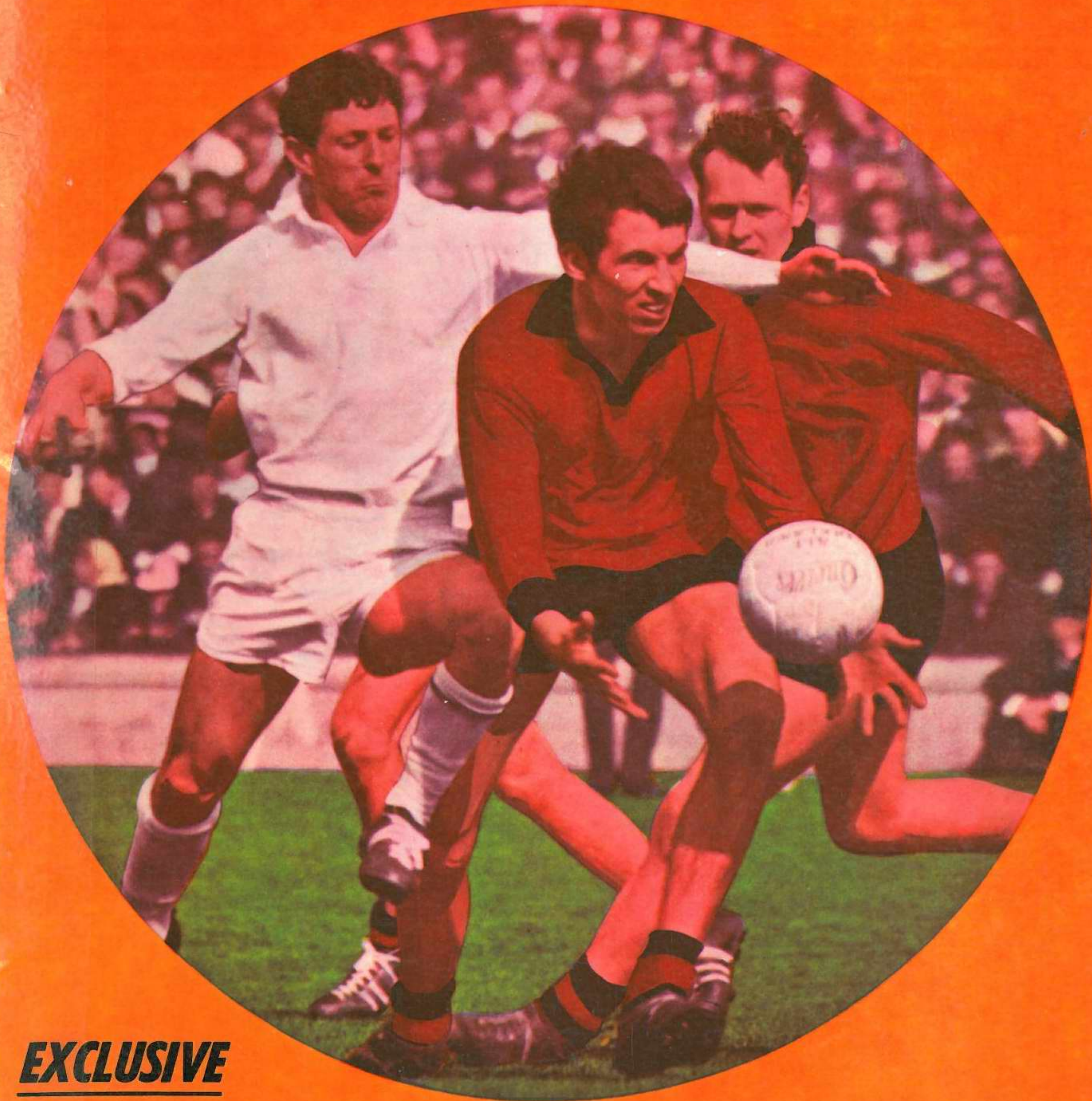


98 GAA

# Gaelic Sport

TWO SHILLINGS

MARCH, 1970



**EXCLUSIVE**

Jack Mahon Interviews Mick Dunne

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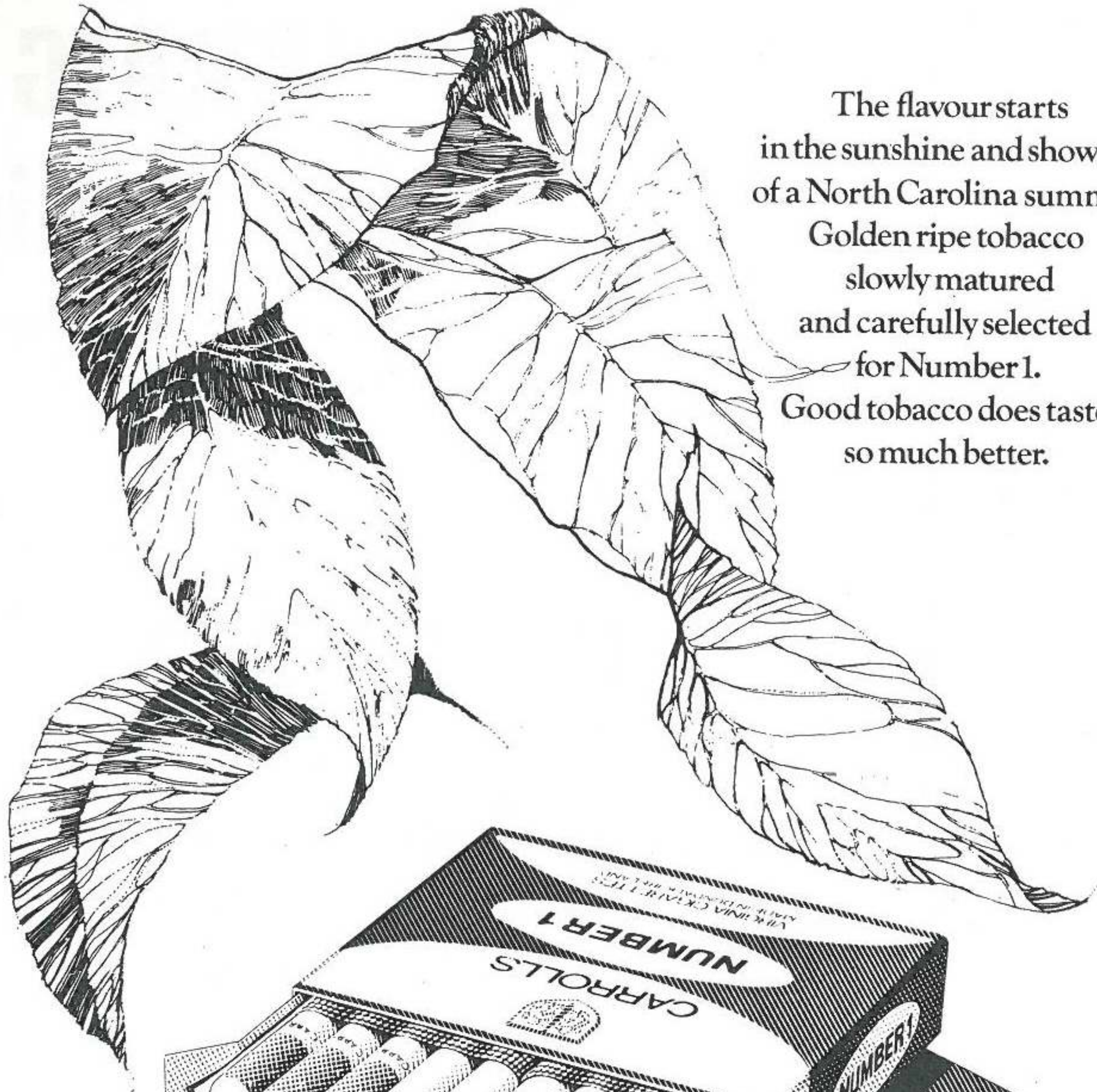
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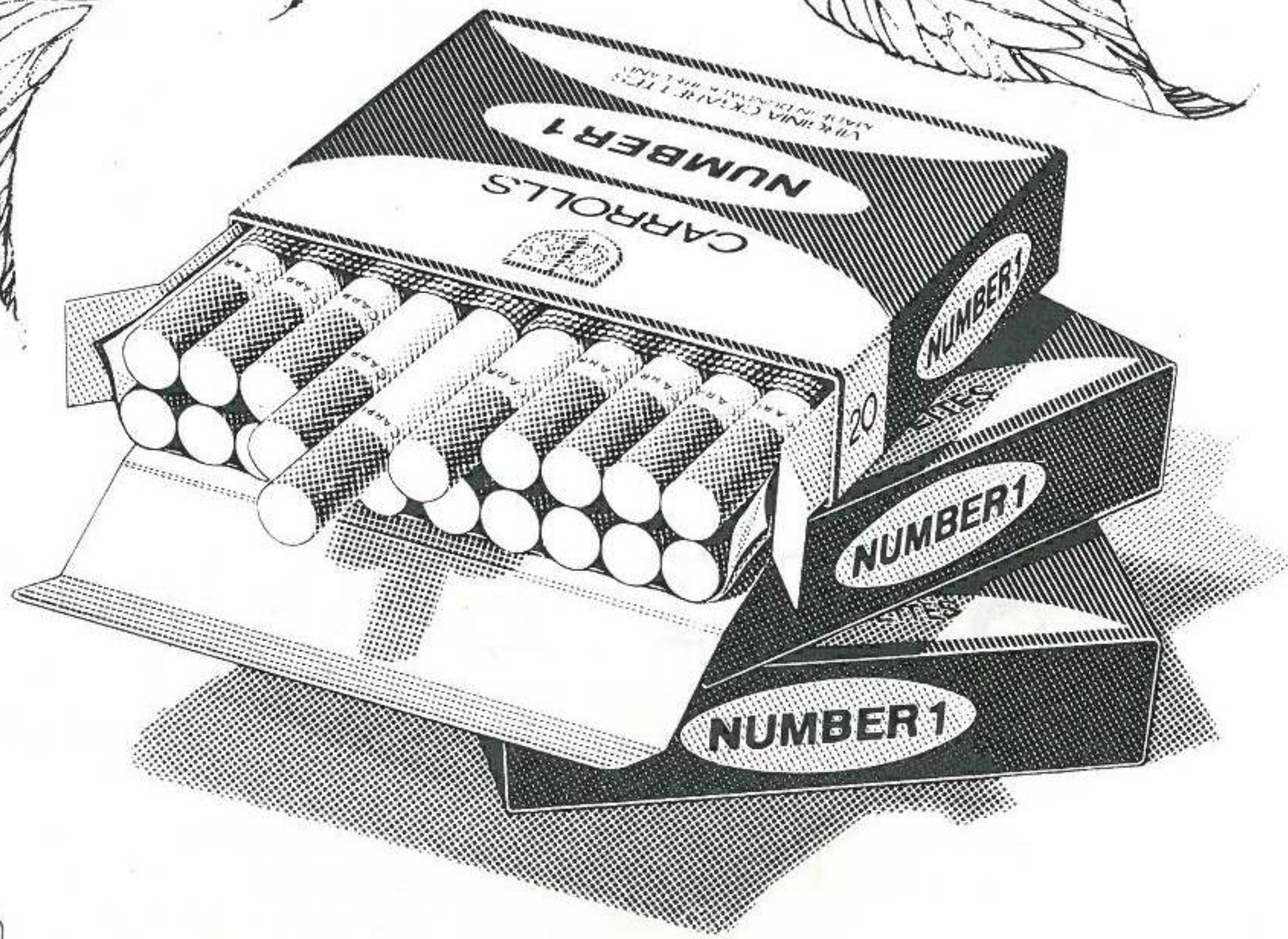
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# Gaelic Sport

Vol. 13. No. 3. March, 1970.

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## COVER PHOTO

OUR cover photo this month features an action shot from the Galway v. Down National Football League Semi-Final game at Croke Park on the 28th April, 1968. Jim Milligan (Down) is shown in the foreground being pressed for possession by Galway's Colin McDonagh. The Down man in the extreme background is Peter Rooney.

## CONGRESS ON CIRCUIT

CONGRESS goes on circuit this year. For the first time in more than half a century, the annual assembly of the G.A.A.'s legislators will move out of Dublin. Galway is the venue for the event at Easter—which falls at the end of this month—and it is expected that it will rotate around the provinces after that.

Any move, whether by Government or other bodies, to "decentralise" is to be welcomed. The capital city is top-heavy: provincial cities and towns have been by-passed for too long by the big conference organisers, who seem to think that the facilities they require, in accommodation and communications, are available only in Dublin.

Political parties have set an unfortunate example by holding their Ard-Fheiseanna in the capital every year. As a result of a Galway proposal at last year's Congress, the G.A.A. have now set a lead.

They have broken with established tradition. There is no reason why they should regret it. For one thing, Congress delegates will enjoy a change of scene. The spotlight of publicity and the influx of people will benefit the various centres.

Only one group of people may suffer from the change: the newspaper reporters who cover Congress and their colleagues in the head offices of the papers in Dublin and elsewhere, whose pro-

duction deadlines may be seriously upset by delays in transmission of "copy".

Those delays can be avoided if the G.A.A. makes sure that adequate facilities are made available for the pressmen, at Galway this month and wherever future Congresses may be held. The Western Regional Tourism Organisation are helping the Association to organise Congress 1970. The onus of facilitating the press now rests as much upon them as it does on the officers of the Central Council.

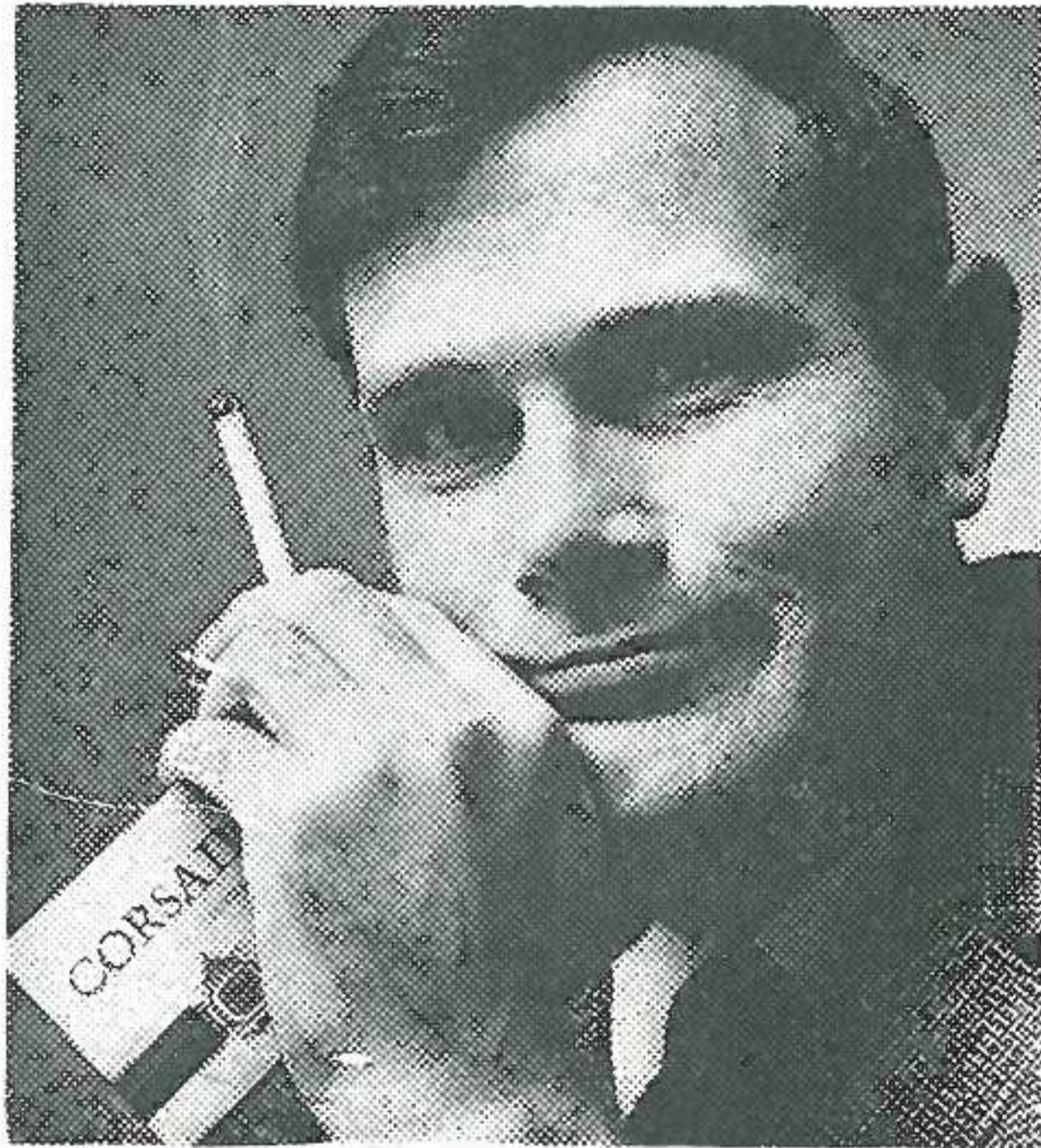
Outside of Croke Park and a few other grounds, the G.A.A. is not noted for its interest in the conditions under which pressmen report games. Seating and shelter for reporters are not provided at many big venues. That is a shameful state of affairs.

The coverage of Congress is a very exacting task for the press corps, not only in the matter of accurate reporting which applies to any run-of-the-mill game or board meeting—but also in the volume of the material they produce.

Facilities to set up adequate communications with their offices will be paramount at the forthcoming assembly in Galway. If the organisers fall down in this instance, the amount of page space allotted to Congresses of the future (except when held in Dublin) may be of necessity curtailed in the morning papers.

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**They're only 4'7d.**



**You pay less tax, that's why.**

CRE/18a

# LEINSTER SELECTORS MADE A BIG MISTAKE

Says NOEL COOGAN

WHEN I read the Leinster football selection to represent the province in the Railway Cup semi-final against Connacht my first reaction was one of amazement and utter disgust. How could the selectors be so blind as to omit the best left half back in the country? I am of course, referring to Meath's Pat Reynolds who was awarded the number seven spot on my "team of the year" in the December issue of GAEILIC SPORT.

The fact that the Royal Countyman failed to gain recognition from the Leinster officials does not alter his rating in my form books.

Since Pat Reynolds was sprung from the substitute's bench to make his senior inter-county debut against Louth in the 1964 Leinster semi-final, he has not looked back and his consistent brilliance has been a feature of Meath's many successes over the last few seasons.

The Walterstown defender has not lost his place since that summer day nearly six years ago. He was only eighteen years old then and this debut presented a make or break test for the immature youngster. Being thrown into the big-time at such tender years has often proved the undoing of promising newcomers and many of them tend to fade from the limelight because they gain inter-county honours at too early an age.

But not so with Reynolds, and from a promising eighteen year old in 1964 Pat has developed into a positively brilliant and fully mature twenty-four year old in this, the first year of the seventies. Of course, with forwards it is easier for spectators to look back and single out the

outstanding performances in their careers by recalling scores taken or made. Perhaps a brilliant save or a neat clearance will not stick in the mind as long.

But in the case of Pat Reynolds it is a trifle difficult to select his foremost display for his county, as consistent brilliance has been a hallmark of his play since first wearing the green and gold jersey. When Meath bridged a thirteen year gap by taking the All-Ireland senior football title in 1967 their left half back gave a performance in stepping with such a momentous occasion.

On the other hand when the holders lost their crown, losing to Longford in the following year's provincial semi-final, Reynolds was one of the few members of the team to recapture the form of the previous autumn, proving that he does not need to be on a winning side to display his unlimited footballing talents.

These are just two games which immediately come to mind. There are many others which would come back if pressure was exerted on the brain. While Pat has been wearing the green and gold jersey with great distinction, he has also turned in many inspiring hours in the black of his club, Walterstown. This club has progressed from junior ranks to the intermediate grade and are now one of the leading senior teams in the county. Their inter-county hero has played more than his part in such progress.

Reynolds usually lines out at midfield in club matches and was tried in this position against Kildare in last year's first round championship game. Perhaps he was unlucky enough to come up against Jack Donnelly at his bril-

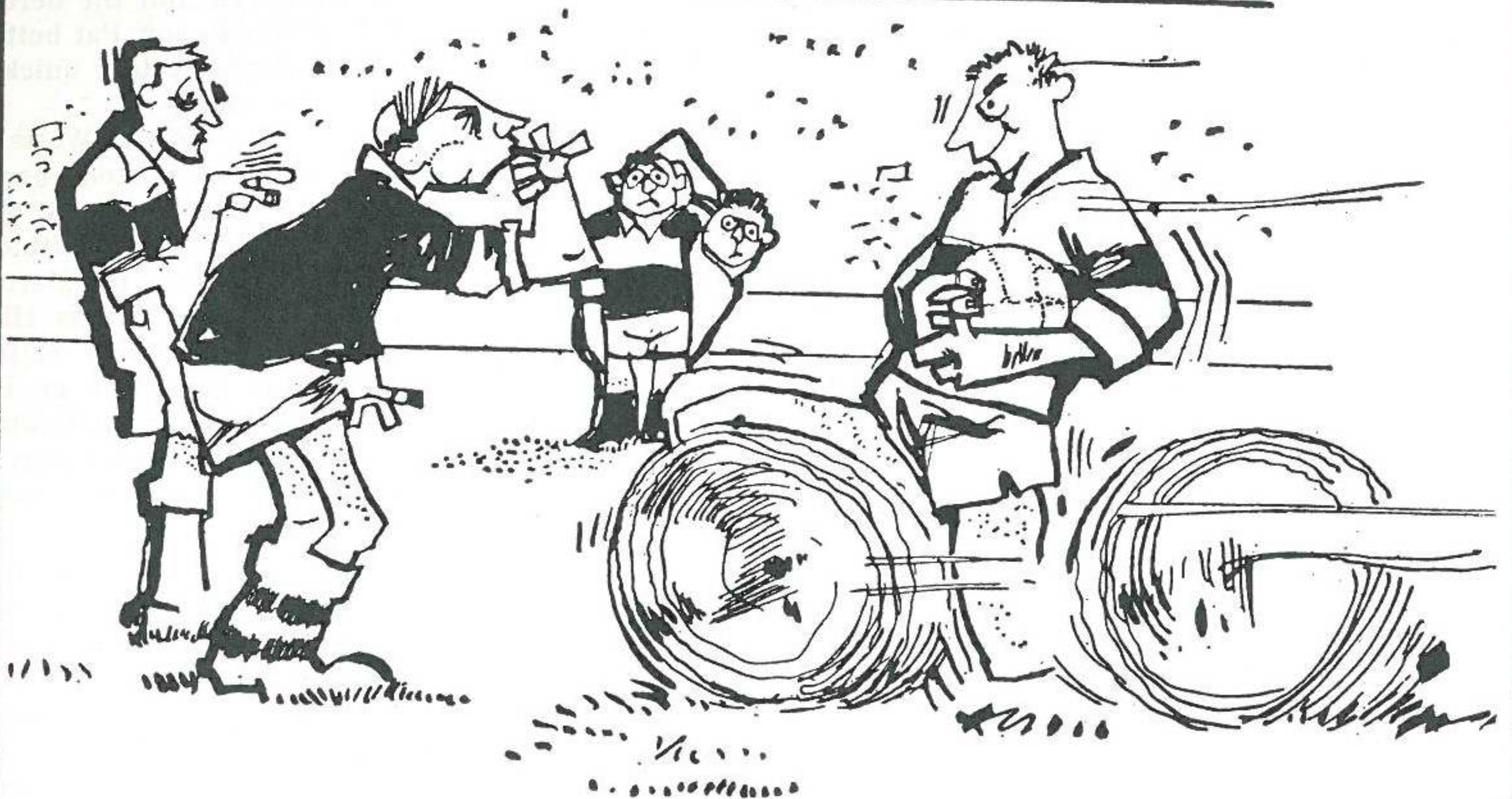
liant best to show his real worth in that vital area. But the defensive role seems to suit Pat better and the county selectors quickly switched him back.

Although the great Walterstownman may be listed as a defender he is undoubtedly one who firmly believes that attacking movements can be started from defence. Many of his slick upfield passes or quick sallies have resulted in scores at the other end. Another delightful feature of Pat Reynolds's play is his tireless energy and unceasing work rate.

A few weeks ago I saw him playing in a county trial at Pairc Tailteann, An Uaimh. The pairing was the Meath 1967 title winning team versus a Rest of Meath selection and the object was obviously to try and form some kind of an idea as to what shape the county side would take in the coming months. Many men had a chance to prove themselves before the selectors in this match. But Reynolds had no need to do so. His current form was well and truly proven and while some of his title-winning team-mates had sadly fallen from their high standards of a couple of years ago he had progressed strongly in the opposite direction. Bearing this in mind one could not have blamed Pat for strolling through the trial in a casual manner.

But the great Meathman was not content to do just what is asked of him and in his usual untiring fashion he was clearing his line one moment, setting up an attack the next and shooting for scores another. Just another example of the attributes which goes towards sorting out the difference between a good player and a great one.

# 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** —





**JAY DRENNAN** discusses the big, big question in GAA circles this month

## **WHO'S NEXT FOR THAT HOT SEAT?**

**T**HE Presidency of the Association has now, at length, come to be recognised as the all-important position it is, and the result is the amount of interest which has been paid to the nomination and consideration of candidates this year. I cannot remember a time when there was such a fever of excitement surrounding the election. Indeed, I remember a year when the business of the election of a new President was rather inclined to be considered as just one of those things by many of the delegates at Congress. There were times when they were not particularly pushed about who got the job.

No doubt that was a virtuous situation in itself, since it probably meant that the delegates were quite satisfied with the candidates—that all were worthy fellows and none of them would be unworthy of the job. Did I say job? It was considered for a long time as an honour, first and foremost, and as a rather burdensome honour with quite a lot of time involved, only in the

second place. All men of stature who had spent the greater part of a lifetime in the service of the Association were considered eligible, and, of those, the one of most eminence was usually elected.

Not any more. Every county is conscious of the fact that the best man must get the job, nowadays, and they have shown this by their selection and backing of candidates at their Conventions or County Committees. Even when they had no interest in the position themselves, directly, with no candidate of their own, nor even a friend of long-standing from a nearby county, there has been intense interest shown in the merits of those who are on offer.

To this extent, it is possible, in some manner, to estimate which of the candidates will do well when the election comes up for decision. There will be some, of course, who will play their cards near their chests, and there will be a few surprises, where apparent promises will not be honoured, but, in general



*SÉAMUS Ó RÍAIN . . . who will succeed him as President?*

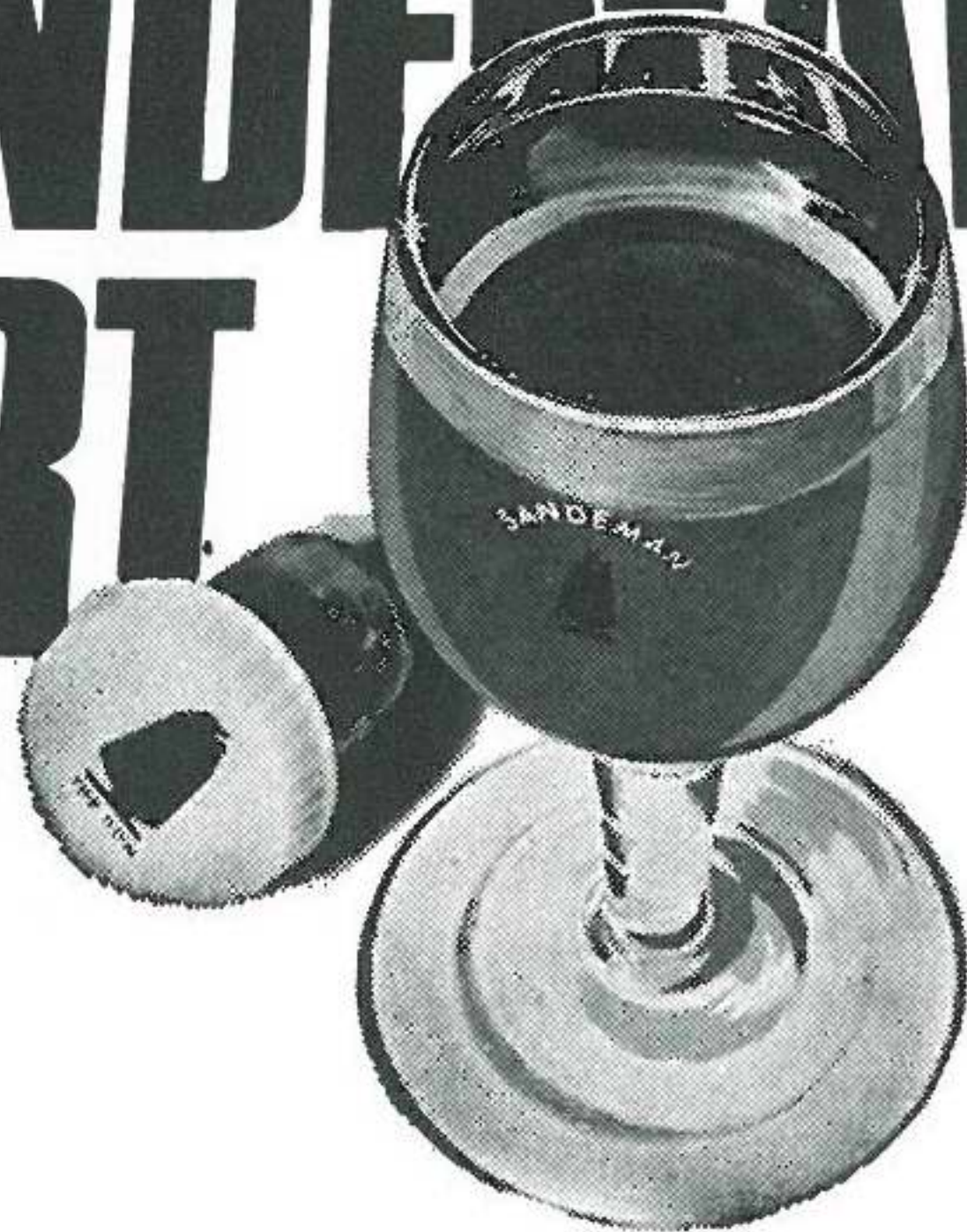
the methods of the contest for President might be likened to that for the Presidency of the U.S., where the primaries give a solid and, usually, dependable indication of the result of the General Election.

A great deal of interest, of course, has surrounded the candidacy of John "Kerry" O'Donnell, and, it may be that the fact that his name has been in the field since early on has stimulated some of the serious consideration which has been given to this year's election at local level.

O'Donnell, too, has been quite strongly supported, and there seems to be a strong groundswell of opinion which says that it is fed up with the slow, steady progress through affairs which has been traditional. They appear to be declaring for a new deal when they have declared for O'Donnell, and, in my mind, there is little doubt that the same opinion would have backed any candidate who promised the same dynamism as O'Donnell.

● TO PAGE 8

# SANDEMAN PORT



*The.*  
**wine  
we all  
know**

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## ● FROM PAGE 7

O'Donnell himself has said nothing about his plans in public, but I have it from a reliable source that he will not stand for the Presidency. If he does not, the whole picture will have to be re-painted again, and, of course, the votes which are tied up for him will have a tremendous bearing on the final decision depending on whom they will go to.

As this is not at all clear, since we do not know what the second choice of the majority of those who nominated O'Donnell would have been, it is a matter, merely, for surmise that they would go to the candidate next in order of progressiveness in the changing current of to-day's world; the one whose record of getting things done would be comparable to O'Donnell's.

Two old favourites are back in the field again: Tom Woulfe and Padraig O Fainin. In Woulfe's case, certainly, and in O Fainin's to a certain extent, attitudes to these men tend to become polarised round the Ban rules. Woulfe has been a long time in favour of deleting the Ban rules; O Fainin has been equally courageous in opting for retention. It is certainly to be hoped that the undoubted ability and capacity for work of both men will not be lost sight of because of other things.

There is a whole bunch of candidates in the field, in fact. Feeney from the North will command his own strong backing and must seem likely to put up a strong fight. Woulfe can go nearer than ever before. O'Donnell, if he ran, would be in at the kill. All this is easy to ascertain from a glance at the amounts of support already openly committed to these men.

O Fainin stands a slight favourite, I suppose, this year, though not so hot a tip as he

## ● TO PAGE 56

# THE EDITOR MADE ME

## WIGGLE MY TOES!

THAT a prophet is not without honour except in his (or should it be her?) own country was never conveyed to me more forcibly than was the case the other day when I got a letter from the Editor asking me to comment 'as forcibly as I wished' on a report in a paper that volley-ball, basket-ball and international games of that kind are pushing camogie out of the convent schools.

And the reason that his letter made me really wriggle my toes was quite simply this. Less than two years ago, in these very pages of this magazine, I laid down or thought I laid down the law in my views on these very matters.

I pointed out that in some schools the trend was away from outdoor games towards those that could be played indoors, or at least on covered courts in all weathers, and I said I thought this, while commendable in bad weather, could be a sad mistake by depriving children of outdoor exercise.

I said that while I had no objection to gymnasium or hard-court games as such, I felt that field games and such open-air exercises must be encouraged as well.

Furthermore, I pointed out that while international competition was a great incentive, it must also be remembered that as far as I know, the teams concerned had to put up their own expenses for many of these international trips, and that was an aspect that had to be taken into consideration.

I did point out that as an answer to international com-

petition at Colleges level, the Camogie Association must at least provide national competition. And at least some people must have read what I said, because within twelve months we had the first All-Ireland Colleges camogie championship, and the success of that venture has been the most outstanding feature of camogie in the past couple of years.

Now, unless I read the newspaper article in question entirely out of context, the reference to basket-ball and volley-ball driving out camogie was in the context of one Munster county. But it would be very unfair to the Convent schools of that county to suggest that they had abandoned camogie in favour of those games.

I have been in close touch with Colleges camogie since Colleges games began to be properly organised on a wide scale within the past decade and never in that period had we until this year, Convent schools affiliated from that particular county.

This year as a result, a direct result in my opinion of the establishment of the All-Ireland Colleges championship four teams, representing two Convent

CAMOGIE

by

Agnes

Hourigan

schools played from that county in the Munster championship.

That is at least a beginning where we had nothing before and judging by the amazing expansion of the Munster Colleges championship this year, I have no doubts at all that, just as soon as schools realise that there are properly organised competitions in which pupils are welcome to take part, the number of schools participating will grow even larger.

Let us take Leinster, a province with which I have been pretty closely connected as far as the development of the game in the schools is concerned.

Leinster has better facilities for the playing of basket-ball, volley-ball and such games than any other province. Yet, year after year, the number of schools participating in the provincial camogie competitions has increased. Beginning with six less than ten years ago, there are now 22 schools affiliated, and between senior and junior competition this season there are nearly thirty teams in the field—a record.

What is more, in the process of helping to organise these competitions I have never met anything but enthusiasm and co-operation from the Convent Schools and their superiors. In my experience, through all these years, there was only one instance of a group of schools—three of them—abandoning camogie for any other game, and these schools had never taken part in the Leinster camogie competitions, but had conducted a confined competition between themselves.

Schools from eight of the twelve Leinster counties are at present playing in the provincial camogie championships. How many counties are represented in the Leinster Schools basket-ball championships, or the Leinster

● TO PAGE 10

● FROM PAGE 9

schools netball championships, if such competitions exist?

One snag that does arise is this. That many schools and convents complain that they find it hard to get camogie coaches.

Well, that matter, please God, will not be a problem much longer. The fact that a team from Sion Hill is taking part in the newly formed post-primary colleges competition in Dublin means that the physical education teachers from that institution will have a ground-work in camogie in future. In addition, the Leinster Colleges Camogie

Council are holding a coaching course at the Presentation Convent, Mountmellick, during the Easter holidays which will be open not alone to members of their affiliated teams but to all P.E. teachers and Games Mistresses within the province who care to attend.

Personally, I see no reason at all to believe that any other games are pushing camogie out of the convent schools. You cannot push out what, in most instances, was never there. Only in the last few years has organised competitive camogie been available to the Convent Schools of Leinster. I have found in

almost every case where schools have been approached and the case for camogie put to them, that the response has been most enthusiastic at every level from Reverend Mother down. Before we criticise any school for not playing camogie, let us be sure of two things: (1) that there is a suitable competition in which that school can play and (2) that a direct and personal approach is made by the organisers of those competitions.

If these two conditions are fulfilled I have never found the results to be anything but encouraging, net-ball or no net-ball, basket-ball or no basket-ball.

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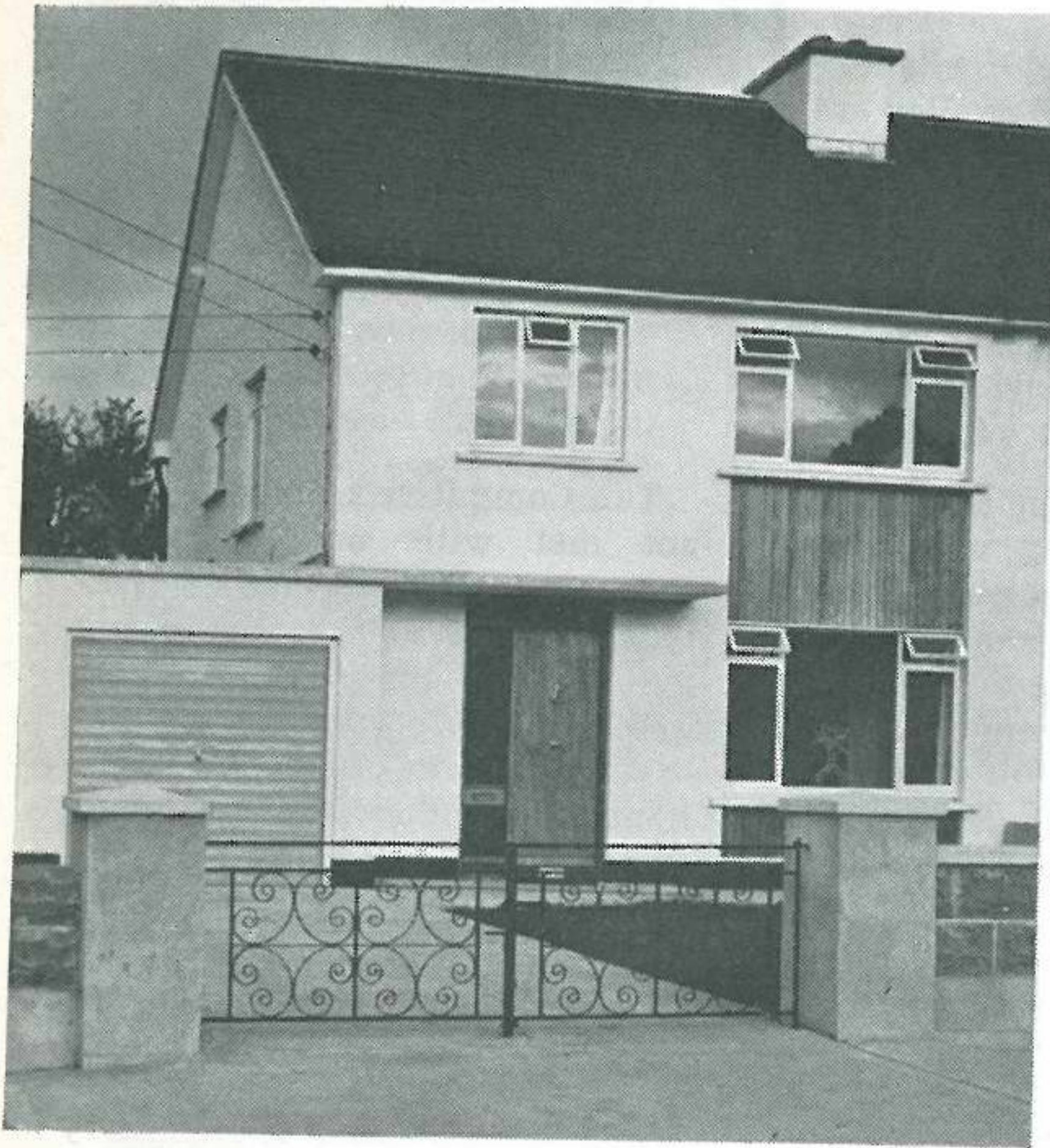
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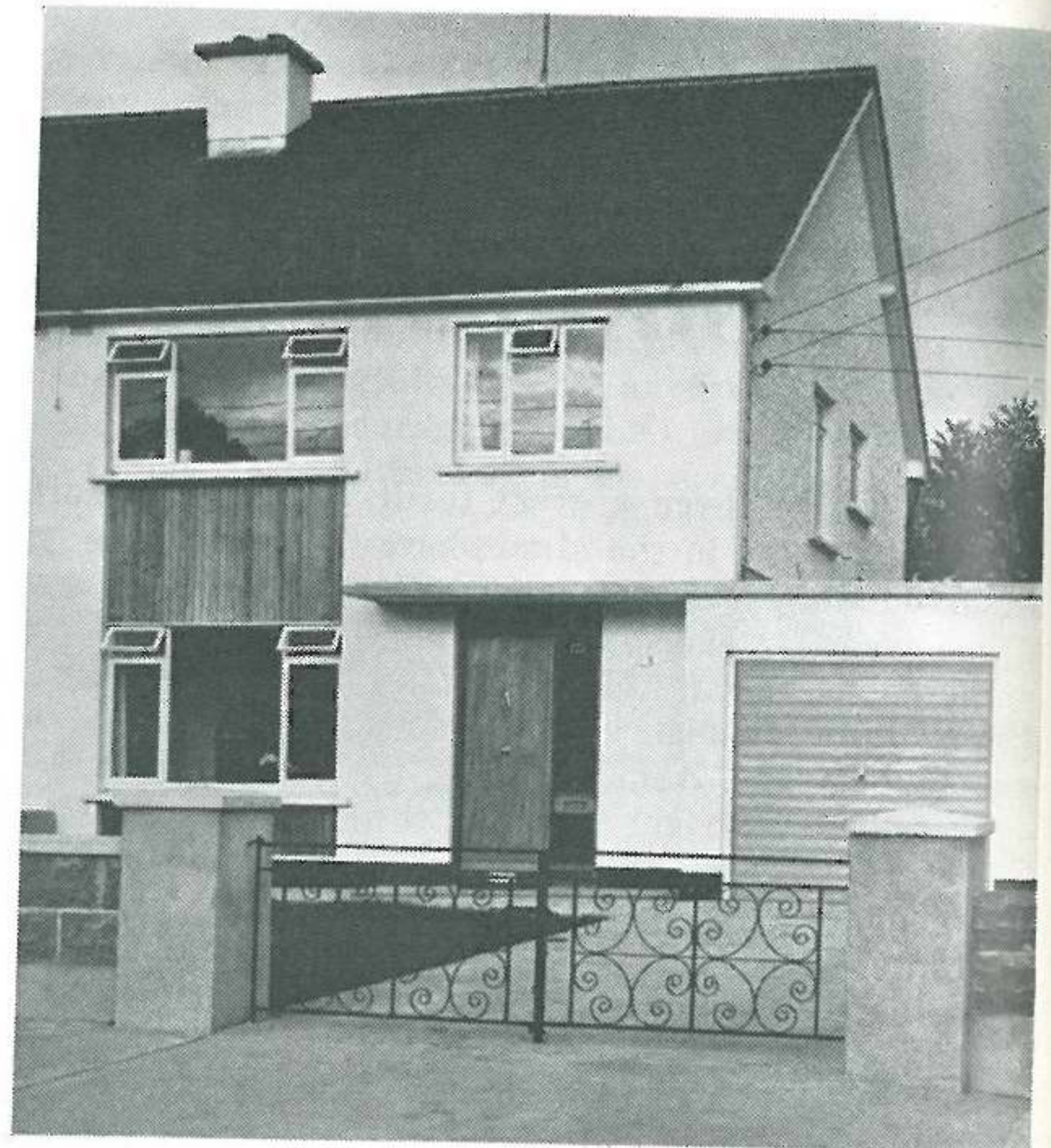


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G.S.M.

# MICK DUNNE OF THE IRISH PRESS

**In an interview  
with  
JACK MAHON**

## A WRITER'S FORUM

**I**t is unusual for a former player to interview a well-known Gaelic games reporter. The boot is usually on the other foot. **MICK DUNNE** of the Irish Press is as well known throughout Ireland as any of the football or hurling stars he has helped largely to create. In twenty years of sports journalism with the same paper, Mick has come to know all the great players of that time. As a college games reporter, he saw the future stars parade, saw some of these flower to full potential later.

Mick, and indeed the other top G.A.A. reporters, is more deeply involved in the G.A.A. perhaps than anyone else in Ireland. The G.A.A. is his bread and butter. He must be constantly on the alert, quick to become aware of any change to the Association, its officials, its players. Together with John D. Hickey (Irish Independent), Paddy Downey (The Irish Times) and to a lesser extent, Val Dorgan, Seán Óg Ó Ceallacháin, Donal Carroll and the Belfast daily G.A.A. men, he has formulated objective G.A.A. opinion in the 'Sixties.

The first three writers particularly are household names in every G.A.A. home. Their names are mentioned hourly especially

at peak G.A.A. time (high-summer) in almost every G.A.A. gathering. It is a great tribute to them that they contribute so much to public opinion and conversation. I wonder do they realise how much of a responsibility they carry.

All three men are friends of mine. But then, they are friends of every G.A.A. county player of the past twenty years. But perhaps I know them better than most. Each has his own distinctive style. Mick Dunne is the superb statistician. Foolproof filing system, I would imagine. Seldom wrong factually. Always nattily dressed, favours American cigarettes. John D. Hickey, of the colourful phrases, obviously a very loyal Tipperaryman, more dogmatic than the others and more given to expressing personal views. Gives the truest, overall picture of a game. Paddy Downey, the best mixer and raconteur of all three. Has the best sense of narrative and in pre-All-Ireland training camp stories is easily the most readable.

Perhaps it is because I grew to know Mick first that I have selected him here. Maybe it is because, of all writers, he seemed to remain more loyal to Galway than anybody else. Or maybe because . . . let's leave it at that.

## **Boot now on the other foot!**

**Mahon**—When did you join the Irish Press?

**Dunne**—I joined the firm in May, 1949, as a junior librarian and transferred to the Sports Department in September, 1950.

**Mahon**—How did you apply for the job? Did it just happen or was it something you always wanted?

**Dunne**—It was something I always dreamt about as a youth. The journalistic idol of my youth was "Green Flag" of the Irish Press. However, I answered an advertisement for a post in the Irish Press Library and, after some time, there was an opening in the sports department for a junior journalist.

During my Library days I had been doing two-three paragraph reports of Dublin club games at week-ends. Somebody thought well enough of these to have me transferred to the sports room.

**Mahon**—Where are you from? I ask this question genuinely for it is

● TO NEXT PAGE

**The  
hallmark of  
distinctive  
writing paper**



**made in Ireland  
for discerning people**



● FROM PAGE 13

a tribute to your unbiased writing that it doesn't come through to the public as much as with P. Downey and J. D. Hickey.

Dunne—Judging by letters I have had from readers over the years I am from—Galway, Down, Kerry—or as one person I was introduced to lately said: “Really, I always thought you were from Kilkenny, you write so much about them.” In fact, I am from Clonaslee (did you say, where?) in County Laois.

Mahon—Had you your G.A.A. heroes in your youth? Who were they?

Dunne—Growing up in Laois, naturally, they were Tommy Murphy and Bill Delaney. They were the idols, and because of those great Laois-Kerry clashes in the Thirties, Paddy Kennedy was the ogre . . . but that meant I regarded him with a mixture of awe and fear. The hurlers I specially admired were Jimmy Langton and Harry Grey and, of course, we all had a special attachment to Harry even though he was playing with Dublin, for he was Laois-born. One of the great pleasures my job has given me is the fact that, in latter years, I have come to know all of these men well.

Mahon—You started off as a colleges' G.A.A. reporter. Was this a difficult chore? Perhaps, you could tell me in brief how you made the grade to become the paper's top G.A.A. man?

Dunne—Far from being a chore, reporting the colleges' games, as I did from 1951-'57, was sheer joy because of the exceptional high standard of play at that time. From the few colleges' games I have seen lately I think the standard has fallen off among schoolboys since that time. As well as covering colleges' games midweek — and they were played mostly on week-days in those years — I reported a county game every Sunday. Therefore reporting two, three, sometimes four games each week gave me valuable experience quickly. Then in re-

organisation in the Sports department in late 1957 I was appointed Senior G.A.A. reporter and six years ago I was given the title, G.A.A. editor.

**Mahon**—Was it always G.A.A.? If so was this the way you wanted it?

**Dunne**—Unlike most other junior journalists who cover sport in general for some years and later specialise in one or two sports, I was designated to Gaelic games from my entry into the Sports Department. This was the way I always wanted it. Occasionally since then I have helped out in an emergency; in fact I was lucky enough to have had this happen in August, 1958, and I reported the famous Herb Elliott 4-minute mile at Santry. However, having been born in a G.A.A. county, reared in a Gaelic atmosphere and educated at a Gaelic games playing college, my real attachment in sport has first and foremost been to Gaelic games.

**Mahon**—As a sports journalist who most of all influenced your style? I remember admiring W.P.M. and A. P. McWeeney in the Independent about ten or fifteen years ago. Today Henry Longhurst, Michael Parkinson and Brian Glanville impress me. How about you?

**Dunne**—That's obviously because you buy the wrong papers! Seriously, I can't remember being influenced by one particular style... one learns from all the best writers; each writer develops his own individual style which evolves over the years. I am an avid reader of newspapers, but I have wasted all those years if I have not learned something from the best journalists without setting out to copy anyone's style. One thing I can say: the writers who impressed me most ten-fifteen years ago would not today.

**Mahon**—But then all these I've mentioned got or get plenty of space in their respective papers as you do now. Is it difficult for the



*MICK DUNNE, and his wife Lily, pictured with their children (from left): Eileen (12), Moira (7), and Una (10).*

**junior reporter to make the breakthrough?**

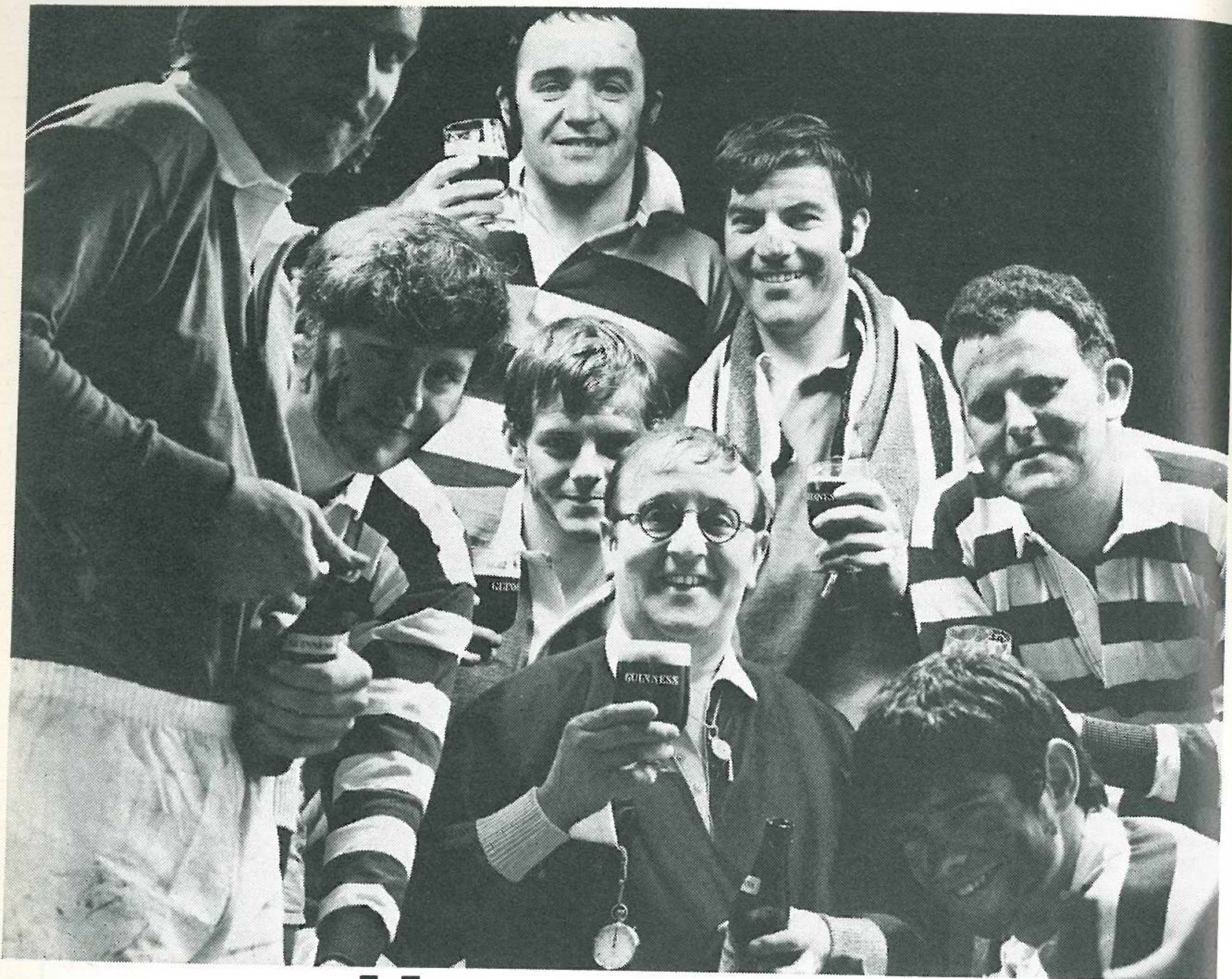
**Dunne**—There is no breakthrough in the way it happens in the theatre: a famous producer descending on an amateur performance and overnight you are a star! It may be a case of being in the right place at the right time, say, if someone leaves your newspaper, or moves to another department, and the sports editor or editor believes you are capable of stepping into the vacancy. It may be a case of applying for a job on a paper and getting it—or one paper asking you to leave your own and join them to fill a vacancy. I suppose the Irish

Press management were satisfied with the work of my earlier years to put me in charge of the G.A.A. when the opportunity arose. Certainly, my experience gained at colleges' games helped.

Nowadays there is a formal training course in journalism (Rathmines College of Commerce); in my early days you mostly learned on the job with the help and advice of your older colleagues. I was exactly two weeks in the I.P. sports room when I was sent to London for an All-Ireland junior football final—and I had never even been in London before! Needless to say

● TO PAGE 17





# Home or Awayness

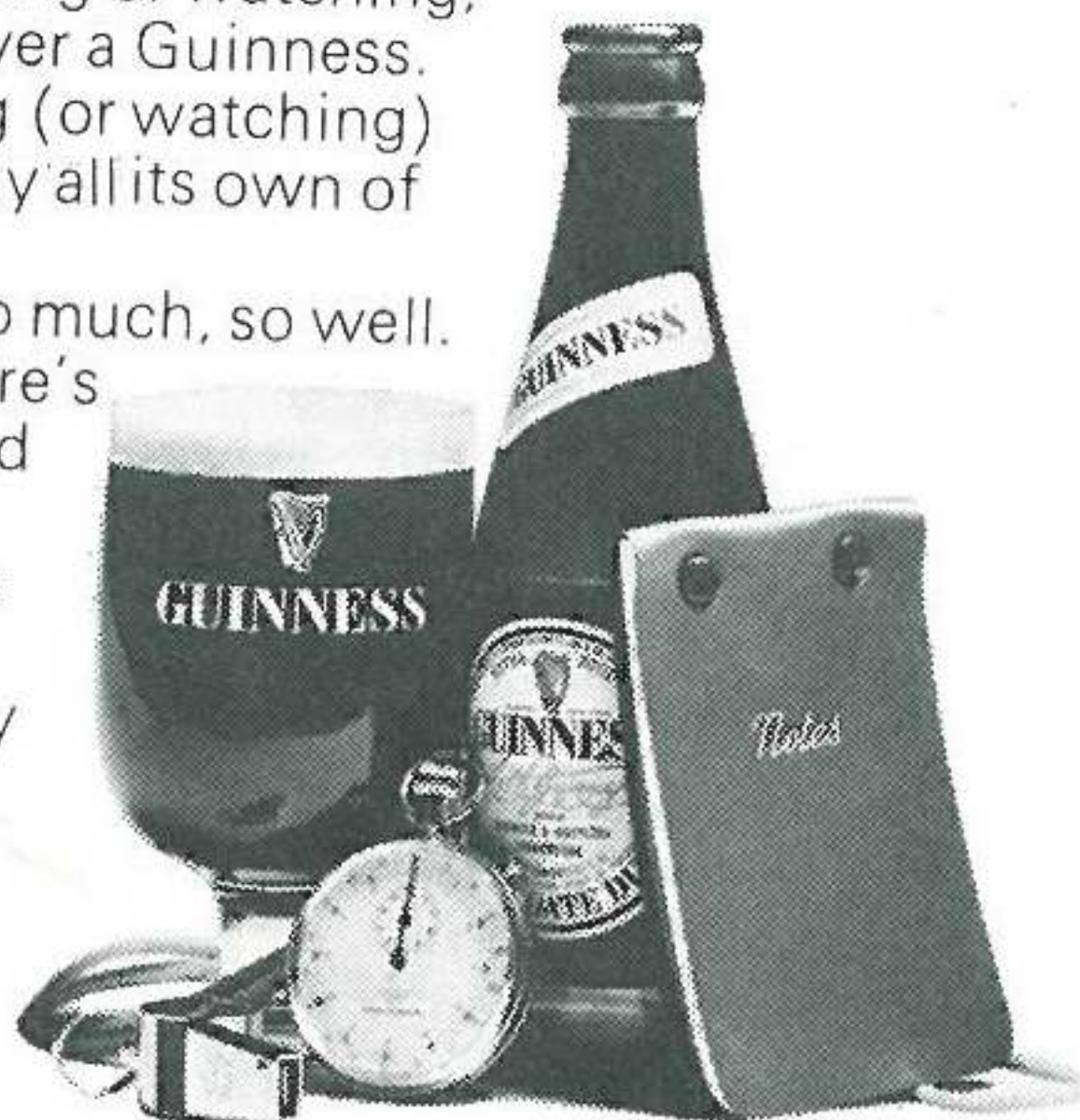
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There's more than goodness in Guinness

GD598C

● FROM PAGE 15

I was scared stiff, but it worked out all right—at least I was not sacked when I got back.

**Mahon—Do you feel that journalists in general are able to meet the challenge of the television age?**

**Dunne—**Is there a challenge? Even when the All-Ireland finals are televised live, and therefore seen by millions of people rather than just thousands as pre-1962, the sales of the newspapers increase on the following morning. On the Monday after the finals the average daily sales of the Dublin morning papers increase by 33½% in the two competing counties, 25% in the remaining very “strong” hurling or football counties (say Tipperary, Wexford, Limerick last year in hurling; Mayo, Galway, Down, Meath, Cavan etc. in football) and about 10% in almost all the other counties. So the fact that people have seen the game the day before does not mean that they still do not want to read about it.

Apart from the live telecasts, television only skims the surface of the current news: because of the limitations of the medium it cannot cover the news in depth with all the details, comment and statistics found in a newspaper.

**Mahon—**I’m sure you’ve some experience of television. How does it compare?

**Dunne—**Different, mighty different, but very interesting. From the occasional appearances I have made I find it a pleasant experience and because of the difference to newspaper journalism I find it an intriguing challenge.

**Mahon—**Do you like being recognised or have you got used to this now?

**Dunne—**Are any of us so blessed with the virtue of true humility that our pride is not stirred by praise or recognition? There is some pleasure in being recognised by your readers, but it is not always a blessing . . . !

**Mahon—**Have you ever thought of writing a book such as “Twenty Years of G.A.A. Journalism?” You

have every chance you know. Yourself and John D. Hickey edited an “Our Games Annual” on one occasion but as far as I remember it was much too statistical for the ordinary reader.

**Dunne—**A book . . . yes, I have thought about it and thought about it; in fact, I am exceptional at thinking about it, but have never gone further. Too lazy, I suppose. The “Our Games” you mention was at a time when a regular format for the annual had not been fully developed or decided upon. Look at the first two or three editions and not one bears any resemblance to its predecessor or successor. In the 1962 edition, John Hickey and I brought the statistics of the



*The great Tommy Murphy of Laois—one of Mick Dunne’s youthful idols.*

G.A.A. up to date for the first time since 1957. Together, the hurling and football records have not been brought up to date since ’62.

**Mahon—**Have you your favourite colleges, venues, clubs, counties players and officials?

**Dunne—**As I said earlier, at some time or other I have been accused of a thousand prejudices. But no professional sportswriter, if he values his job and his reputation, can afford to have favourites or prejudices which sway his writing. After a year’s hurling and football you write hundreds of thousands of words about many teams, but most about the All-Ireland champions and by the end

of that year you are bound to have someone tell you: “Oh, you can only see one team.” Recently, my wife was introduced to a lady who said: “Your husband writes the G.A.A. He’s a great Kerryman isn’t he?” Last year it was Kerry, a few years ago Galway and before that Down.

**Mahon—**Do you find the G.A.A. much too sensitive to criticism?

**Dunne—**Aren’t we all! Certainly all sports organisations are; if you don’t believe me then spend a month in the sports department of a newspaper and read the letters or listen to the phone calls. The G.A.A. is no exception.

**Mahon—**Have G.A.A. games deteriorated? If so how much and how in your opinion can the deterioration be curbed?

**Dunne—**Football has. Hurling has constricted to the traditional hurling areas, but the standard has not fallen off a great deal. The speed-up of football and the greater emphasis on team-work have been blessings in disguise because defenders have more and more to resort to “tactical” fouling, pulling and dragging, to stop forwards, especially the cute, nippy forwards.

**Mahon—**Will we ever get the Unionists in the North to play our games? Putting it another way will we ever make it possible for them to play Gaelic games with us?

**Dunne—**We may make it possible for them—and don’t forget we would have to change from Sunday sport—but it is a pipe-dream to expect (or hope?) that they would play Gaelic games. We must be realists and admit that people born and reared (indoctrinated?) in a Unionist atmosphere would not touch anything Gaelic. To them, Gaelic games are “foreign” games. Neither would many people in the south play them, not even many of the schools which now play other games. The Ban has nothing to do with this; it is merely used as an excuse. It’s really an attitude of mind, the result of upbringing in a certain en-

● TO PAGE 18

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## ● FROM PAGE 17

vironment. It's much the same in England; certainly rugby people and rugby schools wouldn't "touch" soccer with a 40-foot pole.

**Mahon**—Will the Ban be gone before the year is out?

**Dunne**—Not possible before Congress 1971 at the earliest and even then it will not go. Of course, it's going, slowly—ever so slowly, but when? I used to think 'not in my lifetime', but now I believe it could happen before this new decade ends.

**Mahon**—Name the greatest players, greatest scores and the greatest games you've seen (five in each case and not in order).

**Dunne**—Oh, dear . . . there have been so many great players I have been privileged to see—and so many I didn't have the privilege of reporting on. Let's stick to the ones I have written about as a sportswriter and that cuts out the immortals I have seen such as Tommy Murphy, Paddy Kennedy, the late Dan O'Keeffe, and Mick Mackey. The greats I have reported regularly: Sean Purcell, Mick O'Connell, Sean Flanagan, Sean O'Neill, Kevin Heffernan. In hurling: Jimmy Langton, Christy Ring, Tony Wall, Seanie Duggan and Ollie Walsh.

Great scores: Oliver McGrath's cheeky goal in the 1960 senior hurling final for Wexford, a miracle goal by Patsy O'Hagan for Down from the left corner flag of Wembley Stadium in '59, the Purcell-Stockwell goal in the 1957 National Football League final against Kerry, Mick O'Dwyer's first goal in the replay of last year's Grounds' Tournament final and most of Ringey's goals for Cork were worth remembering.

Memorable games I have covered were the '58 Wexford-Limerick N.H.L. final, the '59 drawn All-Ireland hurling final (Waterford v. Kilkenny), the 1960 Wexford-Tipperary final, the 1959 Kerry-Dublin football semi-final, but the one that was sheer delight was the Kildare-Cork 1965 under-21 football final.

**Mahon**—Do yourself and, if I may call them, your rival reporters Paddy Downey and John Hickey always cover the same game and do you travel together to games in the country?

**Dunne**—Not always the same game, there are Sundays when we are at different venues. Occasionally we travel together but hardly more than three or four times a year.

**Mahon**—Isn't there a danger that travelling together to games would tend to present a collective rather than an individual viewpoint in your reports. How do you combat this?

**Dunne**—Travelling TO games presents no problem. By the time we start to travel back (on the few occasions we are together) we have already written our reports and phoned them to our papers. So there's no problem there really. Every sportswriter I know has a sense of urgency to get down to writing his report immediately after a match and have it transmitted to his paper (by phone, or teleprinter in some cases) as soon as possible — chat, food and/or drink comes later, often much later. As anyone who has seen us G.A.A. writers operating in, say, Limerick, at a Munster final knows we usually spread out along the press bench—or move to separate positions on the stand—and get to work with pen or typewriter within minutes of the final whistle. I can honestly say that in 20 years of sportswriting I have never known a case of a collective viewpoint having been presented. If three people—or ten—see a game the same way that doesn't mean they have held a conference about presenting a collective view of the game.

**Mahon**—Remember the Tipperary and Derry assertions of a "gang-up" on your part a few years ago. I thought they were both very childish at the time but they had a point, however small it was.

**Dunne**—You could hardly agree they had a point if you believe it childish. In the unfortunate after-

math of the '68 League final there was an accusation of a "gang-up" but I don't think that even the Tipperary people who were most angry with us really believed it. As it happened at that game, Paddy Downey, John Hickey and I were well spread out on the Croke Park press box that day, and not sitting side-by-side, and we travelled back to our offices separately in our own cars. I assure you, at no time did we discuss a "gang-up". Just think about it for a minute: what would we have to gain by "ganging-up" on any team or teams? On the contrary we would have a lot to lose—our credibility and respect among our readers, but mostly our jobs. If any reporters were irresponsible



*MICK O'CONNELL, most of whose great games for Kerry were reported for the "Irish Press" by Mick Dunne.*

enough to decide among themselves that they would "slam" a particular team they could expect to be sacked by their newspapers—and deservedly so.

**Mahon**—Are you inclined to overdramatise the sporting occasion? What are you inclined to seek in a story?

**Dunne**—Overdramatise . . . certainly not, consciously or deliberately. An All-Ireland final or any other "big" match is filled with drama and atmosphere and as a lover of hurling and football I become immersed in the atmosphere of the occasion. I try to reflect this atmosphere and the enjoyment of a game, but I never set out to

● TO PAGE 39

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## EVEN ST. PATRICK MUST BE FED UP!

THE old adage that a change is as good as a rest is applicable to football as much as any other part of our life. Rather than lay off for a period because of the strain of competition we should change our routine for a while. The change in itself is often the cure for flagging interest.

There is little need to convince anyone any more that interest in the Railway Cup competition is flagging and sagging badly. That it should do so was almost inevitable — for the competition was basically an exhibition competition from the start—just a G.A.A. show-piece for St. Patrick's Day celebrations. In its early days and indeed up to the last five years or so, it was quite successful—as a celebration of St. Patrick's Day. What it has never been, I think, and what it should always have been—was the top class competition it could have been.

If one is prepared to overlook the gross inequalities of provincial playing strength, I suppose the idea of an inter-provincial competition was a winner. Other sports organise them and revel in them, so why not the G.A.A.

It was a pity that this competition was selected to honour St. Patrick, for its failure now may reflect on our attitude to our National Saint.

The fundamental error made was in the playing of the competition at the beginning of the season rather than at the end of

it. The standard of performance in the preliminary rounds has deteriorated pathetically and with it the spectator attendance or, one could argue, spectators found more interesting things to do at this time of the year than watch half-fit or unfit players flounder about on a cold Sunday afternoon in February. They would wait for the final and if it were a good day, they'd go up to the Park or if not, they'd sit at home and with their shamrock neatly pinned to their coat lapels, sit down in the comfort of their own home to watch the game on T.V. Who could blame them?

I believe that the Railway Cup competition could be a glamour event. I think it could fulfil many useful ends like producing a very high standard of play, promotion for the better county players, develop better relations between counties within the province and it would be a fitting climax to the year's events.

As it stands, it is badly organised and administered, it is practically ignored by Munster, and it serves little useful purpose. It has become an embarrassment almost to the G.A.A.

If we must do something big in the G.A.A. to honour St. Patrick and to put the Association in the forefront of National Organisations which do something big on March 17, I think we should declare St. Patrick's Day as the opening day of the season, fix as many matches as we could for that day and thus ensure that all over the country

G.A.A. people would be playing or watching local games. In this way, a great tribute would be paid by the G.A.A. and this tribute would involve thousands of players and tens of thousands of spectators.

I don't believe that a provincial team ever represents the best team that could be produced because of the methods of selection. Selectors from various counties fight for "their" man and once he's on they're satisfied. This method of selection is responsible for less than full-strength county teams also. If there were a provincial team manager appointed each year at the beginning of the season he could tour the province and select a panel. Then he could have a couple of week-end trials and finally select the team he thought would win the competition for the province.

This method would encourage players throughout the season and the team would be selected when performances were fresh to mind—not months and months after the events. Provincial panels should be picked soon after the provincial finals and the Railway Cup should be played soon after the All-Ireland final.

The present Grounds Tournament is an anti-climax—poor man's All-Ireland so to speak. But the Railway Cup would round off the season on a high note.

● OVERLEAF

● FROM PAGE 21

The Munster team this year without the Kerry players will have less chance than usual. Munster's record in Railway Cup football is indicative of their attitude to the competition — they've lost interest in it. The suggestion that an all-Kerry team represent Munster in the first round and then depart for

Australia shows that they had relegated the competition to the realms of a practice match. Pity.

Ulster has a very good record in Railway Cup competitions, but over the past ten years I've often wondered how things fare in other provinces. I remember arriving in the dressing room in Casement Park one day and meeting some Donegal players there.

Neither they nor I had been notified that we had been selected, that the game was on, where to meet or anything!

Perhaps with International Tours coming up each Spring, the Railway Cup will be retimed for October. If this happens, there is a great future for it. If not, it will continue to fade into eventual oblivion.

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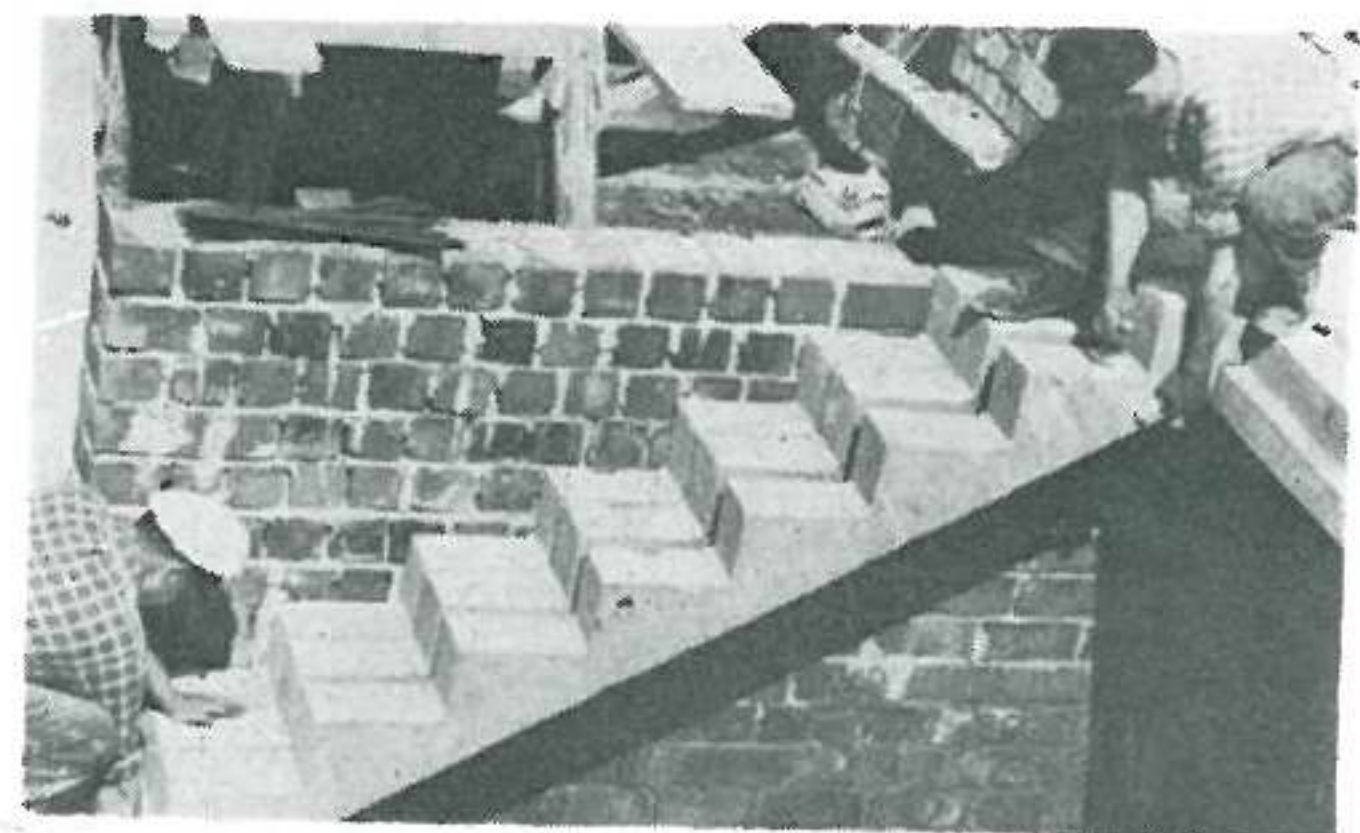
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# **EAMONN YOUNG RECALLS THE HALCYON DAYS OF THE RAILWAY CUP GAMES**

I STOOD in the foyer of the Central Hotel in Exchequer Street, Dublin, and waited. The small nineteen-year-old (that was me) was wearing a light waterproof coat, for it was February. Underneath was a pair of white knicks and a jersey. The jersey was blue with three crowns on it and Jack MacCarthy, of Tralee, had given it to me. His

job was to turn out a Munster football team, and I was one of the players.

Paddy Bawn Brosnan and Gega O'Connor passed out. They took an odd look at me and I saw they were dressed in clothes. They had their cases and were rather obviously bound for a game the same as I was. But they were dressed. It was then I found out there were no cars, those being times of petrol shortage, and the end result was that I travelled to Croke Park on the top floor of a bus in togs on a very cold day. I felt a bit foolish.

But they were great days, for people took an interest in the Railway Cups, an interest stimulated by the preparation put in on the football field by Kevin Armstrong, John Joe Reilly, Alf Murray, Jim McCullagh and others of the north. Others, in other provinces worked for the thing also but to Ulster in those days we must hand it.

They didn't always win but they raised the blood pressure on the side-line and that's half the battle.

In hurling at the time you had Paddy Clohessy whipping them out from centre-back, Jack Lynch striding freely on the half-way line and that thunderous, black-headed wedge of muscle and guile they called Mackey at centre-forward.

John Quirke of Cork, and Jacky Power, now in Tralee, two of the great all-time versatile players, delighted the crowds and altogether the hurling was out of this world.

Paddy Kennedy, big Joe Keohane, and later Noel Crowley, of Clare; Packey Brennan, of Tipperary; Willie Geraghty, Willie Goodison, Gerry O'Malley, Tom Langan, Sean Flanagan, Padraic Carney, Mick Higgins, Weesh Murphy, Tadgo Crowley, Sean Purcell, Neally Duggan, Con McGrath of Clifden, these were men that made the Railway Cups

a day of great play and delighted enthusiasm, for what the people wanted was standard not so much result, though God knows, the players worked hard enough to win.

They often wonder what happened the Railway Cups. Surely the answer is simple enough. They have dropped in status because of greater overall entertainment.

One of the reasons the G.A.A. hasn't the same attraction for the people of Ireland just now is because there are so many more forms of entertainment outside as a result of travel and that figment of imagination called the affluent society. The same number of people are entertained by a more diverse number of recreations.

In addition, the people of to-day (many of whom were born fifty years ago) are not so tolerant of restrictive practises, whether or not they are aimed at a desirable maintenance of national standards.

So we have fewer people interested.

Another reason why the St. Patrick's Day games are not the highlight they were is because the G.A.A. now provides more big days than there were.

The representative games between All-Ireland champions and the Rest, the tussels with the Combined Universities and the selection of this misnomer they called the Ireland teams, have taken away from the inter-provincial series also.

Once there were two or perhaps three high-lights. There was the All-Ireland, which still holds its own and we would want to make sure that it stays that way; there were the Railway Cups and the interesting National League finals.

Players who hadn't a great chance of an All-Ireland, like myself, were very interested in

● TO PAGE 25





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● FROM PAGE 23

the Railway Cup. We regarded it as an honour to be selected, and we trained hard to prove we were worth it (not always with success).

To-day, I think, the players generally are just as interested for while there are chaps who don't train, it was the same in my day. As against that, there are young men to-day who work very hard for the games and often I think it's the public and not the players who are responsible for the drop in interest. The man on the terraces has a lot of rival entertainment now that he didn't have twenty years ago, not the least of which is television, which generally speaking is desirable.

The way to bring back the Railway Cups some way along the popularity road (for they'll never recapture their former glory) is to make them more highly competitive. Let the Railway Cup be a stepping-stone to something else. Say the selection of a real Ireland team to play America, Australia or Britain, or a qualification for a tour of some sort to Australia or the Cardinal Cushing games.

Imagine how hard the man from Fermanagh, Monaghan or Clare will work for a Railway Cup game if he feels that, in addition to the medal and the hour in the sun, there's also the prospect of another reward which, because of an accident of birth, is completely outside his sphere.

One doesn't play for rewards. The game, the thrill of playing and meeting men on and off the field is the real reward, but who objects if a slice of the legitimate good things of life is thrown in? Carpe Diem.

For many on their way in to the games to-day there will be memories of fine players like Jimmy Smyth, John Doyle, Jobber McGrath, Jimmy Langton, Paddy Grace, Lory Meagher,

●  
JOHN  
O'DONOGHUE  
(Tipperary and Munster)  
and below

OLLIE  
WALSH  
(Kilkenny and Leinster)  
have both  
represented their  
respective  
provinces in  
Railway Cup finals.

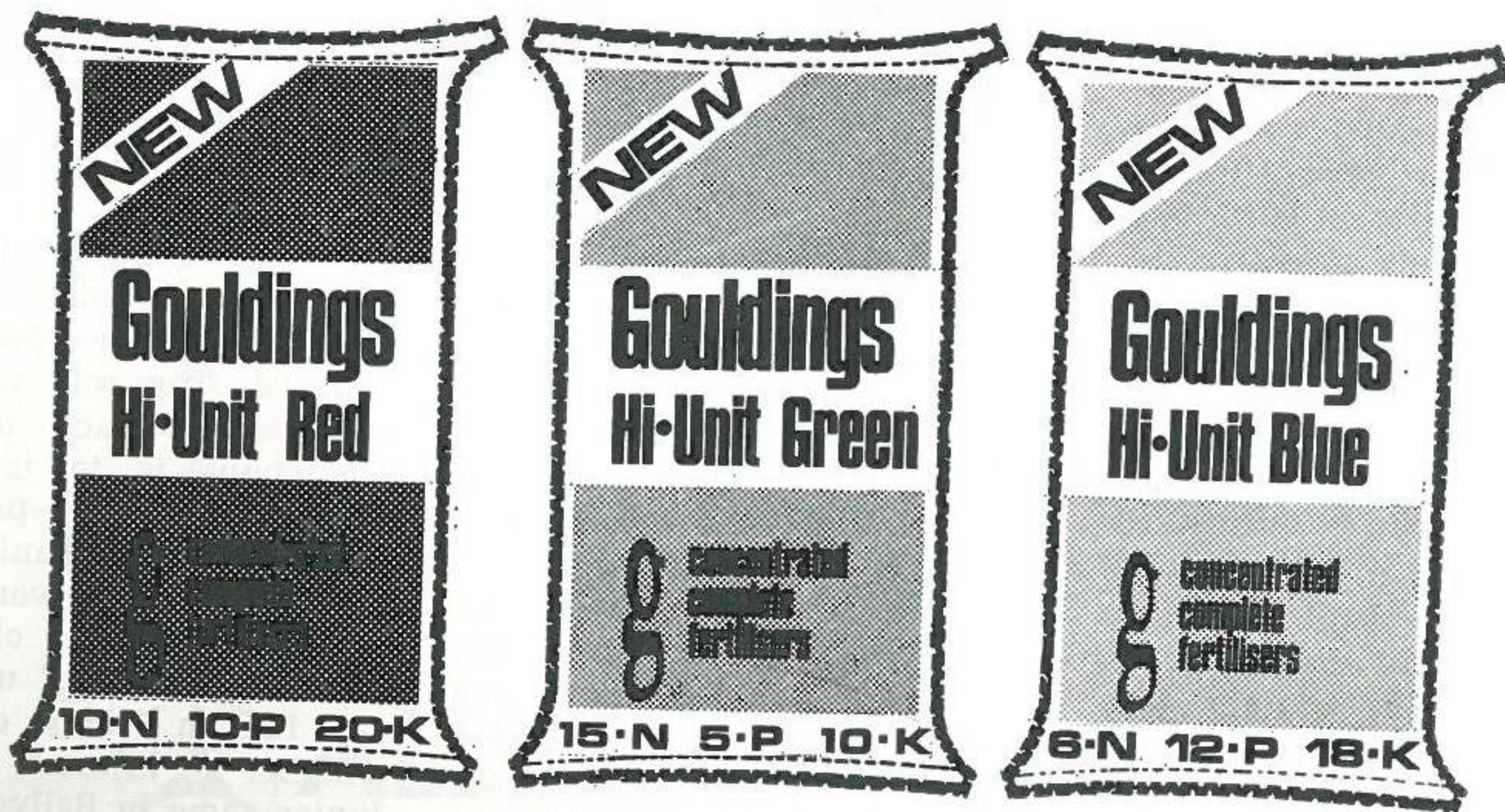


Charlie MacMahon, Des Foley, Sean Kenny and a hundred more. No doubt, there will be a thousand who will sigh for the superb skill, strength and goal-madness that was Christy Ring. But those days are gone. It's the present, not the past, and not the future, that matters. So if we can fill the unforgiving minute with sixty seconds worth of distance run each St. Patrick's Day we are doing ourselves and, in consequence, the world a favour.

The structure of the Railway Cups has not changed. It's the times and the people have changed. The way to help the competition reach towards its old status is to increase the rewards. If the principle is agreed the mechanics of the things are easy to work out.

Meanwhile, the old formula won't fail those of us who still see fun in manly competition, whether it's in Croke Park or the junior game in Ballysodare.

# Gouldings keeping Ireland fertile



# THE PACE SETTERS

By OWEN McCANN

**N**OW that that formidable two-some from Ulster with the smooth finishing technique, Paddy Doherty and Charlie Gallagher, are in inter-county retirement, Cyril Dunne is proving the pace-setter in football in the scoring stakes. The Galway sharpshooter, however, is trailing well behind the crack-shots of hurling, Jimmy Doyle and Eddie Keher, who have both passed out the 1,000 points mark.

It's going to be a long time before any footballer achieves this tremendous feat, for Dunne and Mickey Kearins are the only raiders in this code in the 600 points bracket. The Galway forward's score is 39 goals and 513 points, which gives him an 18 points lead over the Sligo ace. Kearins, however, is the outstanding harvester of points, as distinct from goals and points combined, in football, and he also has the No. 1 match average at an impressive 5.32 points.

"Mr. Goals" is Sean O'Neill, the only man to better the half century at 57. The Down star has also been the busiest player in both football and hurling with 186 engagements. Sharing second place in the goals chart in football are Sean O'Connell and John Keenan with 45 each. Connacht now take over from Ulster as the leading province in the chart with four places. The remaining two spots in the top six go to Ulster.

Eddie Keher is the goals-getter supreme in hurling with 115. He has played two games



● SEAN O'NEILL (Down) the only man to top the half-century in goals.

fewer than Jimmy Doyle, and his lead over the Thurles man is four goals. A see-saw struggle, then, in progress in this regard between these probably greatest score-grabbers of all time.

The accompanying charts are based on scores recorded in all inter-county games (League, Championship, tournament and challenge), Railway Cup and representative ties.

## SCORING CHART

### HURLING

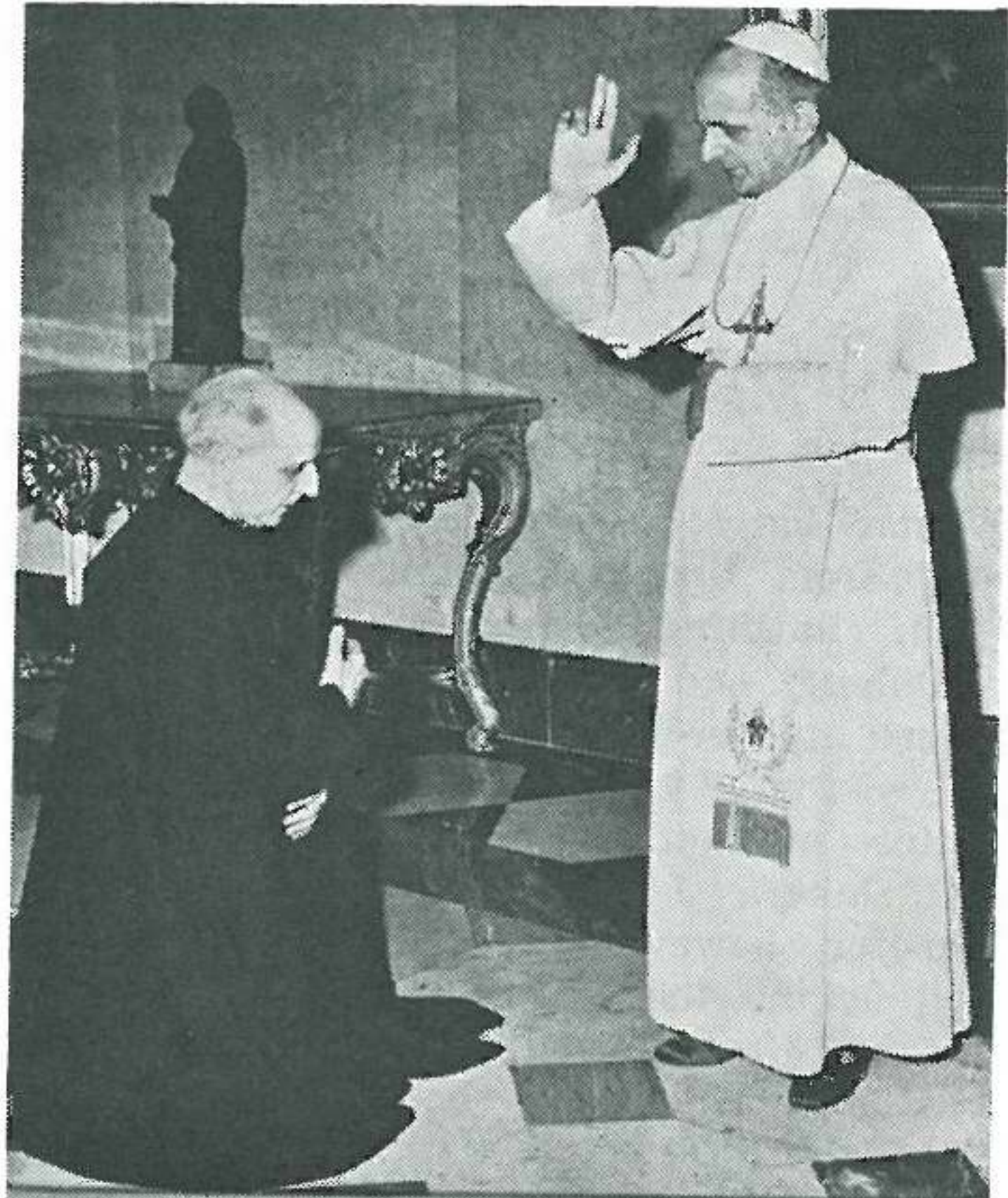
Pts.		Gls.	Pts.	Games	Average
1,071	J. Doyle (Tipperary) .....	111	738	170	6.30
1,003	E. Keher (Kilkenny) .....	115	658	168	5.97
373	P. Molloy (Offaly) .....	58	199	60	6.21
272	P. Cronin (Clare) .....	35	167	64	4.25
270	M. Keating (Tipperary) .....	49	123	71	3.89
242	C. McCarthy (Cork) .....	40	122	59	4.10

### FOOTBALL

Pts.		Gls.	Pts.	Games	Average
630	C. Dunne (Galway) .....	39	513	165	3.81
612	M. Kearins (Sligo) .....	16	564	115	5.32
573	S. O'Neill (Down) .....	57	402	186	3.08
545	S. O'Connell (Derry) .....	45	410	139	3.92
518	J. Keenan (Galway) .....	45	383	161	3.21
449	J. Corcoran (Mayo) .....	27	368	107	4.19

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# THE EXCLUSION RULES

. . . are they too exclusive?

By MOONDHARRIG

WHETHER those of us in the all-too-often somnolent South like it or not, the trend of events across the Border in the Six Counties must have a profound effect on the whole future approach of the G.A.A. to a number of problems that have, in any case, always been subjects of controversy.

The position has, perhaps, been aggravated by the efforts of Mr. Brian McRoberts to make use of the Association's Exclusion Rules for his own political purposes, but Mr. McRoberts, in actual fact has not, and should not have, any relevance to these problems at all. He is merely, if I may coin a phrase, a gadfly in the ointment.

In the first place, even outside the Six-County context, the present Exclusion Rules are being queried by an ever-increasing number of the Association's members, and they are the people whose views count, not the posturings of aspiring politicians.

Rule 29, the 'foreign dance' rule was altered by last year's Congress to the point of absurdity when old-time waltzes were permitted at official functions. If an old-time waltz is not a foreign dance, what is? Better scrap the rule altogether, as may well be done at the forthcoming Congress, than retain it in its present ridiculous form.

The principle behind that rule originally was the excellent one of encouraging ceili dancing. Why do we not do something positive to foster Irish dancing, instead of adopting a purely negative approach?

Surely, every G.A.A. club that holds a social function should be willing to set up an instructional class at which native dancing could be thought? Or is that too much like hard, constructive work?

Rule 27, the ban on foreign games, is now, let us face facts for once, more honoured in the breach than in the observance.

Where it is applied at all it is only applied to two of the prohibited games, rugby and soccer. I am tired of the silence that ensues every time I ask the simple question that I have been asking for years: When was a member of the G.A.A. last suspended for attending either a hockey match or a cricket match?

Or by the same token, how many players have been suspended of late for attending rugby or soccer matches?

Now, if the feeling against the Ban Rule is so mixed down here, the situation becomes even more confused across the Border, where the emphasis on ecumenism has been so much stressed in recent times, and where, in some rather diverse ways, quite a number of different shades of opinion are trying to follow Wolfe Tone's advice of discarding "the names of Catholic, Protestant and Dissenter and substituting the common name of Irishman".

Now for reasons over which none of us have had any control, the G.A.A., despite the rule which says it must be both non-political and non-sectarian, is almost entirely a Catholic organ-

isation. That, if you like, is due to an accident of history, but it is a fact just the same.

Now, it is easy to maintain that non-Catholics are not interested in the G.A.A. anyway, and that statement is largely but not completely true. On the other hand, can we Catholics in the Association point to any attempt that we have ever made to attract non-Catholics into our ranks? Have we made a single attempt to make our non-Catholic brethren interested? My sad answer must be: none that I know of.

Remember, almost all our important matches are played on Sundays, and that gives no opportunity to conscientious members of various Protestant Churches, who have qualms of conscience about Sunday sport, of ever participating in our games, whether they wish to do so or not.

By tradition, a bad tradition I grant you, almost all non-Catholic schools play rugby or hockey.

As long as Rule 27 is rigidly maintained these schoolboys will never get the chance of even testing their skill on a Gaelic field.

It is easy to denounce a section of our population as West Britons, but, before doing so, let us ask ourselves quite honestly, what endeavours have we made to induce them into the ranks of Gaeldom?

Oh yes, they can come in if they abide by our Rules, but our Rules were not made with these

● OVERLEAF

● FROM PAGE 29

people in mind. Either we want them to be Irishmen or we do not.

If we do not, fair enough. We all then know where we stand, and we leave our earlier friend, Mr. McRoberts, in the comfortable position of saying he was right about the G.A.A. all the time; they are only a collection of bigots. If we do want them, we will have to woo them. And the first way of doing so is by frank

reassessment of the Exclusion Rules.

The principles of the Association must stand undiminished, as they have stood for almost ninety years, but the application of those principles must always be a more flexible matter. The present Ban Rules were introduced in the early 1900's and introduced in an Ireland where such sports as golf, tennis, basketball and table-tennis were unknown, the latter two for the

good reason that they had not yet been invented, the first two because an ordinary honest-to-God Irishman then stood very little hope of even being left past the gate of either a golf club or a tennis club.

That was why the game of golf, which was then probably the garrison game par excellence, escaped the ban that was, for very good reasons, imposed on the other garrison games of rugby, soccer, cricket and hockey.

Nobody could then have visualised a golf course in every Irish town, or a pitch-and-putt course at every Irish cross roads, any more than they could have visualised a time when soccer escaped from the British regiments in the Phoenix Park to become the delight of people like the Spaniards and the Brazilians and the Italians.

The Exclusion Rules were brought in to help in the preservation and cultivation of our own games and pastimes and traditions and they did a good job. It is time we all had a good hard look at the present situation and made up our minds once and for all whether exclusion rules are the best way of fostering these games and traditions in a changed and still changing world. To a rising generation that abhors compulsion of any kind, I honestly believe the rules tend to do our unchanging ideals and common cause more harm than good.

One further point, that Derry motion about asking a non-Catholic prelate to throw in the ball at an All-Ireland final. I, as a Catholic from Baptism, am all for the principle, but it may be hard enough to put into practice. Might we, for a start, invite some non-Catholic dignitary to become a patron of the Association, as Parnell was a patron, and Douglas Hyde was a patron?

For the life of me, I cannot see why not.

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# SEAN RICE TURNS THE SPOTLIGHT ON MAYO'S

## JOE CORCORAN

FOR some time Joe Corcoran was so far ahead of anyone else in the Mayo attack that it was a one-man show. An opposing defence had only to concentrate on stopping Corcoran to stop Mayo. It was as simple as that.

He was something of a Mick Kearins and a Packie McGarty; less tough, but more stylish, more feathery footed, more perceptive. Yet, less forceful. The others had strength to reinforce their skills. Corcoran had only skills. He tried to offset the disadvantages of toughness by a pattern of weaving play. Kearins and McGarty would contest every ball and then burst their way through a defence. Corcoran didn't bother so much to contest; he depended more on the break or a pass from a colleague and on his speed to beat an opponent. That was all right when he was younger and had the speed.

But in the last year or two the burst of speed off the mark deserted him and he took to criss-cross action that kept him in possession but did not bring him any nearer goal. One had only to shadow him to make his play in-

effective, and it landed him in trouble more with his own followers than with his opponents.

Few will disagree that the Mayo left half forward is one of the most stylish in the game today. But too much was expected of him, even by his colleagues in attack. They were content to fight for possession but to leave the scoring to Corcoran. This was not planned. It was something that developed unconsciously over the years and it benefitted no one.

The emergence of Willie McGee in the Mayo attack has in recent times brought about a change in Corcoran's play. Both have begun to hit a high level of thought and understanding between them. Intricate passing movements have brought exhilarating goals and Corcoran has even taken to battling for possession. It is as though, in McGee, Corcoran has found the player he has been silently seeking over the past ten years.

Mayo's National League tie with Kerry at Tralee last month would seem to prove this point. Corcoran was Mayo's best forward even though pitted against

no less a man than Tom Prendergast. He mixed it. He tackled where once he would be content to stand aside if he did not himself think he had more than a fifty per cent chance of winning the duel. And although for once his shooting was off he did cause concern among the Kerry defenders. Ask Tom Prendergast.

It was the Mayoman's scoring power that first attracted the attention of the selectors. In the 1958 minor championship in which Mayo were beaten by Dublin in the final, Corcoran scored a total of five goals and eighteen points during the campaign. It is considered a record for a minor. For many years he has continued to be the county's top scorer, but this came about mostly because of his accuracy with frees. He has lost little of his ability to tap over points from the most acute angles. And indeed his long range shooting with both feet has always been delightful.

But somewhere along the line his approach took a wrong turn. Willie McGee's emergence as a powerful full forward has straightened it out somewhat and both look like being a formidable partnership even if, at 29, Corcoran is approaching the autumn of his career.



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**FEEL**

**AT**

**HOME**

By **PATRICK DAVID**

**I**F you think of it, there are a thousand reasons why Kerry are making a trip to Australia and around the world after that.

There's the pride in it. An Irish team crossing the world to play our traditional game of Gaelic football on far-off foreign fields.

There's the prestige, too. Kerry have always been the standard-bearers of Gaelic Football—right from those old and far-off days of Laune Rangers

and Killarney. What better team to act as our ambassadors of sport?

Or there's the reward. Throughout 1969, Kerry were the team of the year, sweeping all before them and winding up with an unprecedented grand slam of all the major titles—the All-Ireland, the National League, the Grounds Tournament, the World Cup.

They deserve the trip, more so than any team before.

There are lots of other good reasons, too. But, here, let me tell you about one that you may not have thought of. One that never entered into my head, until I got a letter recently from a distant relation of mine, who lives 300 odd miles from Melbourne.

He has been out in Australia for twenty years, since just after the last war—and he has never been home since.

We correspond rarely. Only when the mood strikes us. All I really know about him is that he married an Irish girl out there and has four Australian children . . . and that originally he came from just outside Rockchapel. A Kerryman by birth, an Australian by necessity . . . but by pride still a Kerryman after twenty years of Australian suns.

I never knew that he had any abiding interest in Gaelic football. From the little I remember of him here in Ireland, his visits to Croke Park were few and far between and I cannot recall him as a deep or intense supporter of either Kerry or Gaelic football.

He could still be the same for all I know. But from his recent letter, he wants to see Kerry in Australia.

For him it means a link with Ireland for the first time in recent years.

But here is part of what he wrote to me.

"I can't tell you how de-

lighted I was to read in the Australian papers that Kerry might be coming out here in March. It's the most wonderful thing I have heard for years and I sincerely hope that it comes true.

"For years I have always told the kids about where I came from and in their way, they know a fair amount about Ireland. As you probably know, there are a few G.A.A. clubs here in Australia, but quite honestly, I gave up attending any of their meetings a few years ago. Most people when they come out here are very Irish at first, but gradually, they become more and more Australian and eventually they drift away and one loses touch with them.

"There is no hope now that I will ever go home again. And I'm reconciled to that for a long time now. But if I can't go home, this visit of Kerry means that home can come to me. I'm sure there must be a few men on this team who will know where I come from. Maybe some of them might even know some of the people I knew years ago.

"I can't tell you how excited I am about the whole thing. It will be like Christmas in March. So if there is anything you can do, make sure that they come."

He cannot be the only Kerryman in Australia who wants to see the All-Ireland champions. And it's not really that they want to see them play football. More important is the opportunity to meet someone from home again, to hear again a long-forgotten Kerry accent . . . to talk again about places like Tralee, Ballybunion, Listowel, Castleisland, Glenbeigh . . . and even Rockchapel.

For all of them, this visit of Kerry to Australia can only be . . .

Well, what else? . . . as my relation, John Curtin, wrote . . .

Christmas in March!

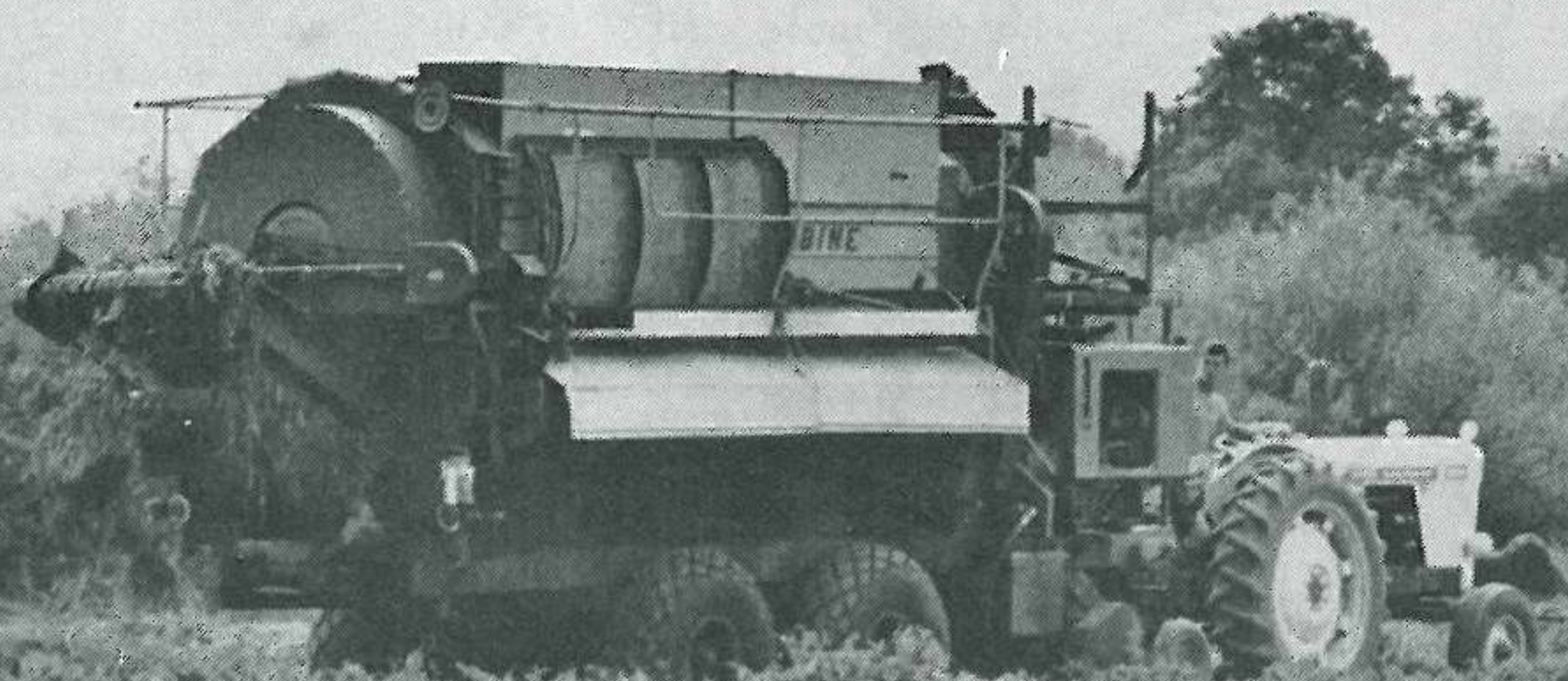
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# Hooray for October!

**T**HE green light has been given for the erection of a super-de-luxe ballcourt in the vicinity of Croke Park for the World Championships. Work, in fact has started, and it is expected that the project will be completed and ready for use by the middle of May.

This is tremendous news for handballers, in so far as they will have a base, with the most modern amenities. And, certainly, a real handball stadium is something that has been a great drawback to the game, since the advent of the era, in which both players and spectators have demanded specialised facilities.

This is not a castigation of the many fine courts we have throughout the country, but, in point of fact, it has to be admitted that none of them can accommodate the crowd that would wish to see a World Championship. Neither has any of them, those little perks such as a canteen, boardroom for meetings or Press conferences, or heating facilities which are so necessary nowadays.

The new Court will be revolutionary in so far as the side walls and back wall will be made entirely from glass.

The advantages from such an innovation are so obvious as to hardly warrant mention. The main advantage will be that of a clear view for every spectator who attends the games.

This is a big difference from the present type of Court which is traditionally constructed with

concrete side and back walls. The only vantage point can be from a gallery at the back wall. However, under this system it is only the handful of spectators directly behind the back-wall who can view a game in its entirety.

The other spectators, by reason of the angle of their viewing, miss most of the actual back-wall play, and, one does not need to be a real student of the game to realise that it can, and usually is the most exciting.

The new Court, which will accommodate something in the region of 1,000 spectators, will rectify this situation, so that in the future, handball as a game of expertise, skill and stamina is going to be mirrored in its true image.

As for the World Championships themselves, it had been intended to hold them in May, but this date has now been changed to October. The actual delay in the construction of the Court was certainly a factor in the alteration of dates, though, it has been categorically pointed out that, if required, it would be fully completed for the May date.

In effect, there was intimation from some of the competing countries, that, since previous World Championships had been held in October, why not this one. And, it has been confirmed by all the competing countries that they will be here in October.

Another major point is that it will afford the Irish Handball Council an opportunity of increasing the Fund, specially de-

signed to defray the expenses of the new Court.

While the initial response was quite slow, it is encouraging to hear, that, in latter times, the Public has become aware of the significance of staging the World Championship. The recognition of handball for a Texaco award has been a further boost in this mammoth Fund-raising venture.

If the G.A.A. Clubs turn up trumps the effort will have been a major success. In theory, if every club in the country contributed a meagre five pounds towards the Fund, it would benefit to the extent of about £15,000.

**Reality is an entirely different matter.**

On an internal level the delay will mean that the Handball Council will revise its thinking on the system for choosing their representatives for the games. It now stands to reason that the winner of this year's Singles Championship will automatically represent us, while the same system may also apply in Doubles.

It means that we are about to witness the most exciting season in Irish Handball. In a couple of weeks time the Provincial Championships will get under way, so, we can expect every senior game to be fought with the tenacity of an All-Ireland Final.

I am glad that the games have been deferred to October. We are at least sure that they are on, that a new court is under way, and that a hectic championship season lies ahead.

Hooray for October!



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*Cyril Dunne*

**By OWEN McCANN**

# HIGHLIGHTS OF THE RAILWAY CUPS

**D**ON'T count me among the "knockers" of the Railway Cup tests. The interprovincials have lost much of their glamour, but I would still not support any move to scrap these competitions. Apart from the fact that they are the only avenue for players in the weaker counties to national medals—and this, alone, is a vital point in their favour—I would regret their passing for purely selfish reasons.

The Railway Cup selections invariably provide plenty of "meaty" talking points just when fans need them most, and the games have also provided some of the most memorable moments in football and hurling. Besides, I have a hunch that the clouds are beginning to lift.

Admittedly, the crowd at last year's finals of 9,166 was the lowest in modern times, but it was still a wonderful tribute to the games that even 9,000-odd fans turned their backs on the comfort of the fire-side, and the live telecast to brave

the heavy rain and bitter cold last St. Patrick's Day. Remember, too, that, with all due respects to Connacht, the hurling game was not a great drawing card.

Then, last year's finals provided top-class fare. The players, who could have been excused for an indifferent approach, went about their work with refreshing enthusiasm and determination, and gave the Railway Cups, as a result, a great boost. Now, if we only get a little good weather for a change on March 17 next, the long hard haul back to the old popularity peak should be successfully launched.

The 'Seventies could thus be studded with some golden memories on the Railway Cup scene... memories like the majestic free-kick exhibition from Paddy Doherty and Cyril Dunne that was the 1965 final.

Effortlessly, and with pin-point precision, the Galway man pointed no fewer than 10 frees, and Doherty's immaculate left foot was

responsible for seven points from placed balls. Not only that, neither footballer failed in that super-show to convert a single free. It will be a memorable hour that will produce a better display of the art of free-taking.

The Down star made the occasion even more memorable by scoring five points from play to achieve at 0-12 the highest total by any footballer in a final in the past 14 years.

To earn the distinction of being the only man to win two Railway Cup medals on the same afternoon is a proud achievement, but Des Foley did more than merely put his name into a unique place in the record books when he completed this great double in 1962.

His performance at midfield in hurling was as good a display as any that has graced the Railway Cup. Four different Munster hurlers "marked" Foley during the hour, but he was unbeatable, and the powerhouse of a win that brought the title back to Leinster after a six year interval.

Foley, understandably, did not reach the same brilliant heights in the football final, but he still made an outstanding contribution at midfield in completing the Leinster double at the expense of Ulster, the East's last football title, incidentally.

And, talking of impressive showings—there was Paddy Molloy's debut in the hurling final of 1965. He had the onerous task as left-half of marking Jimmy Doyle, and he came through with colours flying. Molloy was a vital cog in Leinster's success, and thus became the first Offaly representative on an actual final winning team.

That was the last year a new name was added to the list of counties represented in final winning teams. In football, we have to go back to 1963, when another newcomer, P. T. Treacy, played

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himself into "overnight stardom". He marked his first appearance in a final with a cultured display of football, and accurate shooting, and finished the top scorer of the game at 1-4. Ulster beat Leinster that day to leave Treacy the first Fermanagh man to win a medal.

In 1967, Ulster's bid to become the first province to win five football titles in a row was spiked by as good a goal as any seen at Croke Park. About 90 seconds from the interval, Enda Colleran, Joe Langan and Seamus Leydon all shared in working the ball through to Mickey Kearins, and the Sligo man supplied the final flourish in brilliant fashion by cracking home a delightful goal. That score put Connacht into a

four point lead, 1-7 to 0-6, and they went on to beat the Northerners by a point.

Almost 20 years earlier, Connacht had their greatest hour yet in hurling. In the final at Croke Park—the game was played on April 6, 1947 — they came up against a Munster team skippered by "Mr. Railway Cup" himself, Christy Ring, and held the Southerners to an almost unbelievable score of 1-1.

The Westerners banged home 2-5 themselves to lift the Railway Cup for the only time so far. Among the stalwarts of that team, an all-Galway selection, and also the only one county team in hurling to take the title, were Sean Duggan, a prince among goalkeepers, Josie

Gallagher, M. J. "Inky" Flaherty and John Killeen.

Twelve years later Ring was still going strong. In the 1959 final with Connacht, in fact, he had his most celebrated hour, when he helped himself in regal style to 4-5, the highest score in any decider in the past 14 years. The Cork man won a record 18 medals in 44 appearances between the 1942 final, and 1963.

The first finals were both played on St. Patrick's Day, 1927. The hurling clash between Leinster and Munster was a titanic game, with the East emerging victorious by two points. The football match was doubly-historic. An All-Kerry team beat a Connacht side that had gone through special training at Ballinasloe by 2-3 to 0-5, the only year that a one-county selection won this title. Hard to credit that two decades have come and gone since Munster last won out in football.

Gerry O'Reilly, one of Wicklow's most celebrated footballers, was a brilliant star of a history-making afternoon in 1954. As right half back, he subdued three Connacht players in turn in a win that saw the province equal their 1928-30 run of three titles on the trot. Leinster won the hurling title also that day, and the crowd was 49,023, which still stands as the attendance record.

A year later, Paddy O'Brien (Meath), Stephen White (Louth) in defence, Jim Rogers (Wicklow) and Paddy Casey (Offaly) at midfield, and Ollie Freaney and Cathal O'Leary (Dublin) were prominent in a final win over Connacht that left Leinster the first province to win four titles in succession.

The Railway Cup winners' chart is, starting this month's finals:

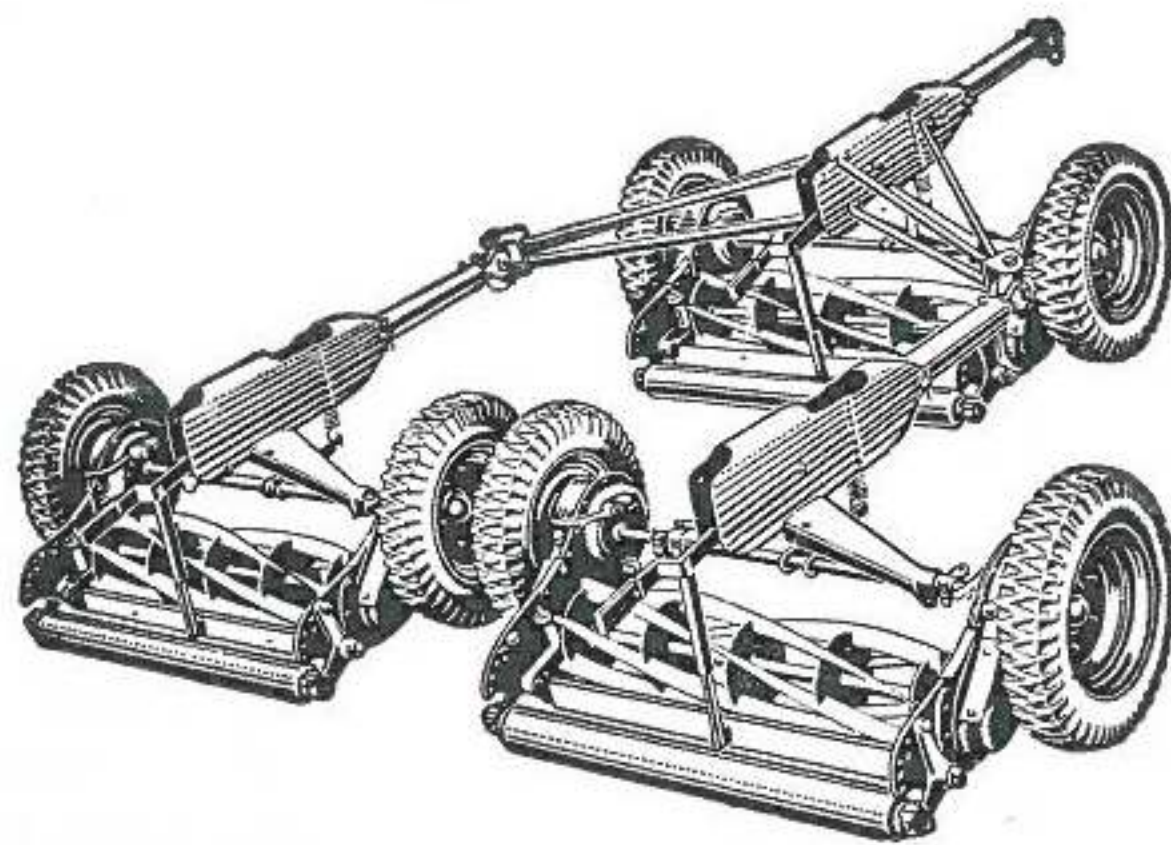
**FOOTBALL:** 17 Leinster (1928 to 1962); 11 Ulster (1942 to 1968); 9 Connacht (1934 to 1969); 6 Munster (1927 to 1949).

**HURLING:** 31 Munster (1928 to 1969); 11 Leinster (1927 to 1967); 1 Connacht (1947).

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● FROM PAGE 19

overdo it. If a game is an absolute thriller, tense and exciting, I believe in saying so in my report; if it's not I also say so.

There is a modern trend in some journalistic circles to get a "story" at all costs to the extent that "The Story" is the be all and end all. This is a type of journalism I have never practised, nor have my counterparts, John Hickey and Paddy Downey, nor have many of the sportswriters on Irish papers. I see my job as being engaged to present a comprehensive service to my paper of news and comment about what is happening in Gaelic games. If what is happening to personalities connected with the games, to counties or committees makes good stories so much the better. But the primary objective is to provide a flow of news, comment, views and interviews.

**Mahon**—Has the machinery of editing and sub-editing which means so little, if anything at all, to the man in the street ever placed you in an embarrassing position?

**Dunne**—This happens at some time or other to every sportswriter, but the embarrassment passes so quickly that one rarely remembers it for long. I once had an error in transmission or editing of a report of a match in which a London team scored 1-10, but the "0" was dropped from the result. On Monday morning I travelled back to Dublin by train with the London players and you can imagine the "razzing" I got about "robbing" them of nine points. Not long ago I wrote about a forward sending an unstoppable shot to the net, but it appeared in my report as an "unspeakable" shot.

**Mahon**—It strikes me that well-established players find it so easy to make headlines and it takes a relatively long time for a new star to receive the blessing of the "big three". Am I being unfair? What I mean is that you the three senior G.A.A. editors have the power to

create a new star. So like the New York theatre critics.

**Dunne**—The New York theatre critics known as the "Butchers of Broadway" KILL productions, so I'm glad you think we have the power to create. But I disagree, surely a new "star" creates himself, creates his own glory; we merely record his achievement of it. Anyway, county selectors are too shrewd to be influenced by us if their judgment of a young player's worth doesn't coincide with ours. The established players get more headlines often because they are the ones on whom the teams are relying most, so what they do—or don't do—has more significance.

**Mahon**—On the other hand there are some people who feel you are

responsible for making tin gods out of some players, blowing them up to stellar proportions for little reason. Unfair again?

**Dunne**—There are some players who have flair or personality or are characters on the field and naturally attract attention — the spectators' attention as well as the sportswriters'. But the danger in the sportswriters' case is that if you "blow-up" a player, rather than present a balanced account of his deeds, you may be let-down with a bang the next occasion that player takes the field.

**Mahon**—What do you dislike most about journalism?

**Dunne**—Question and answer interviews.

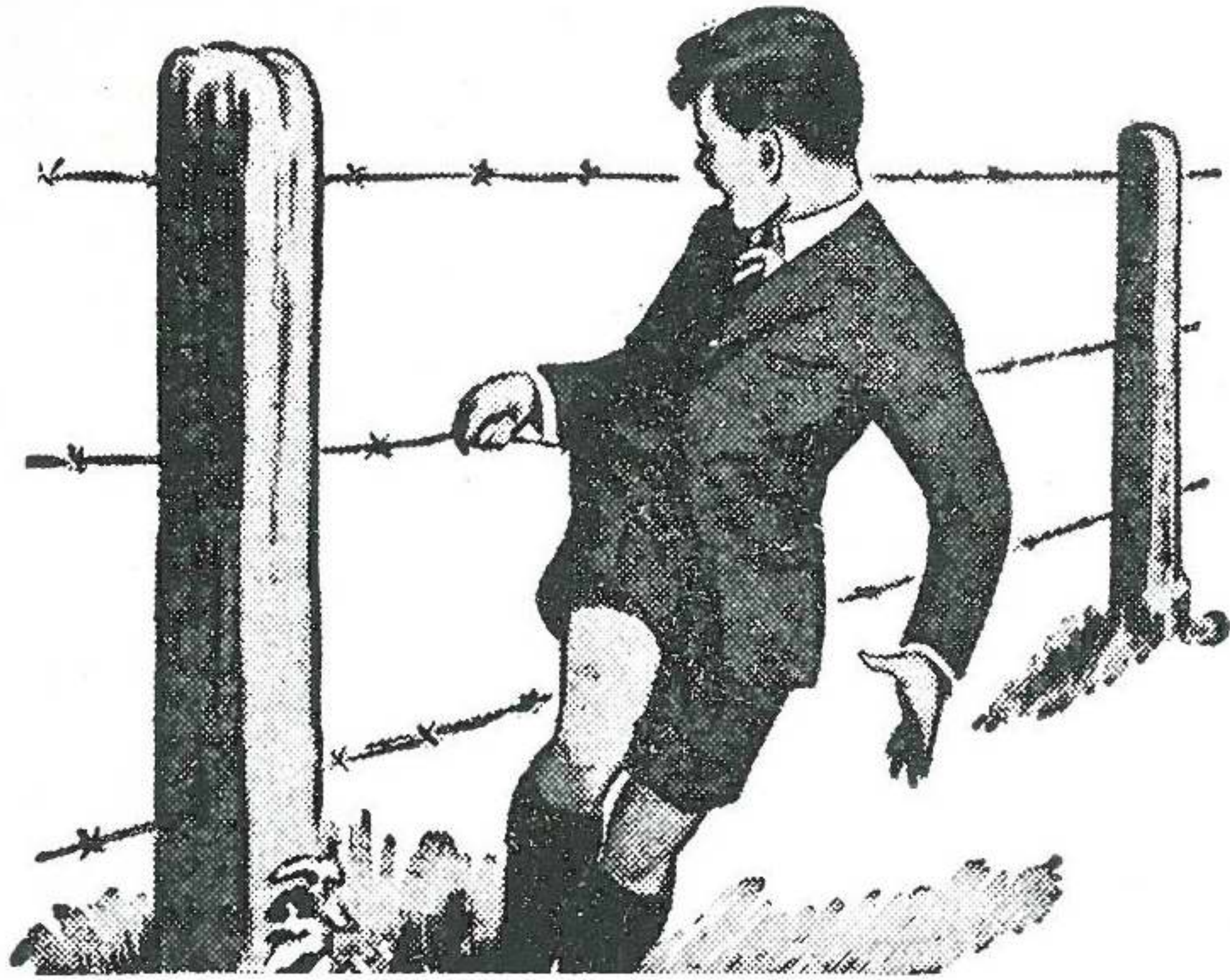
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# BUY IRISH

. . . to be sure!

By TEDDY FLYNN

WHAT'S in it for me if I buy Irish? Or is the entire concept outdated?

We asked that question last month and pose it again here. Is it a sentimental gesture nowadays to pick something with the "Made in Ireland" label on it? We don't think so. There was a time in the early days of the Gaelic League when we were just beginning to rediscover our national identity and Irish people bought Irish goods for purely patriotic motives — even if the goods themselves were more expensive than the foreign alternatives. Then came the Tariff walls and we had more or less no choice but to buy Irish.

Nowadays we have an educated social conscience and we know that when we buy something made at home we're helping to keep fellow citizens in employment. At the same time, we all have to cope with a rising cost of living and we've become a hardheaded crowd when it comes to spending money. We demand value. The point is, Irish goods are usually value for money. They have to be.

We talked to some of the businessmen who are producing Irish goods—some of them brilliantly successful on the export market — and discovered that shilling for shilling they offer us value as good as any import. And



● GENTS OVERCOAT BY DUBTEX

better in a lot of cases. Take those Dubtex slacks, for instance — surely every man in the country now owns, has owned or will own a pair of these in the near future. When you buy Dubtex you do so in company with an awful lot of foreigners spread around the globe who have discovered that these slacks are something special.

And they're buying Irish from no sentimental motives but because it offers them value. John White, Sales Manager of the firm which makes Dubtex clothing, studies his market at International level. He's dedicated to producing a better menswear product in less time and at a more competitive price than ever before. He's prepared to study methods and techniques in France, Italy and Scandinavia

to achieve this—and then to train Irish workers in the new methods.

The firm is opening a new factory at Ballymahon in Co. Longford which will be one of the most progressive in Europe and its products will, quite literally, travel round the world.

While it's true that John White is the reverse of the sentimental old-style "Buy Irish because it's your duty to me" businessman, he is a real enthusiast for the job of making clothes—that's why he's so good at producing and selling them. It gives him satisfaction to feel that it's now within reach of every Irishman to be well-dressed and he feels it's a healthier trend that young men should be interested in spending their money on

● TO PAGE 43

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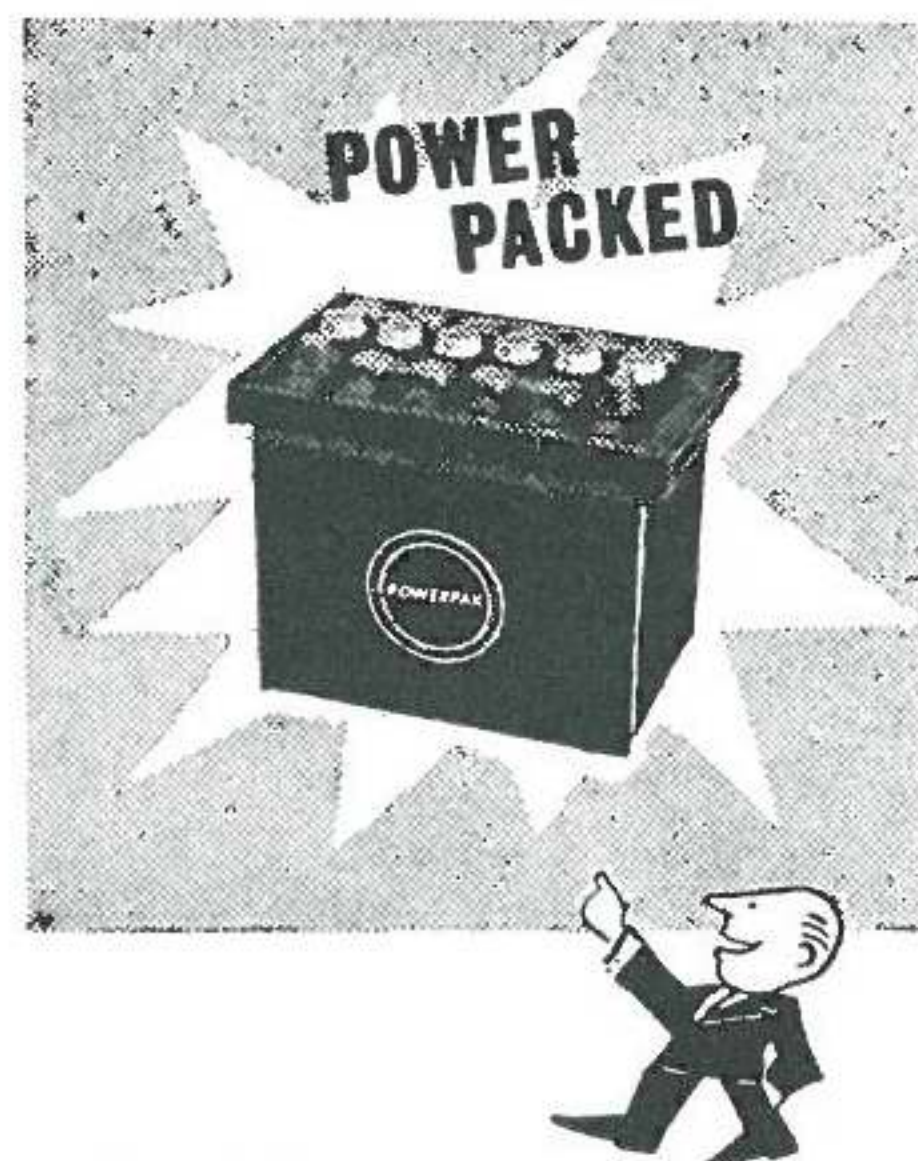


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● FROM PAGE 41

clothes, holidays and good food for themselves and their families.

The newest slacks to look out for from Dubtex are in polyester/wool combinations. The addition of the artificial fibre to the wool means it can stand up better to friction and therefore will wear better. Some of them have interesting patterns, some of them are jacquard weaves, and possibly you'll pick a pair with semi-flared bottoms to the trousers. These are tipped for great popularity but you can also buy the more orthodox slacks if you insist on being conservative.

The sophisticated clothing industry catering for men in Ireland means that everything is on our side if we wish to dress well and look up to date. Style points are in step with world trends and the lighter colours and weights of fabric now being introduced will cheer us up—not to mention our wives! When you consider that Dubtex, for instance, make for men, boys and youths and that they run about forty different sizes it sounds as though it would be impossible not to be well dressed.

There are other fields where the Buy Irish message is not quite so clear and hasn't been brought home to us yet. I was crestfallen when I realised, after my first introduction to T. J. Reynolds and C. T. Farrell of Powerpak, a firm founded by them in 1961, that up to that very moment I'd never been conscious that I had a choice between buying an Irish car battery and a foreign one, when I wanted a replacement put in my car.

Powerpak make batteries for trucks and for tractors also, so that's something to file away for future reference. Powerpak sell very well on a competitive market and provide a product and a service equal to any of the im-

ports. It was nice to hear that batteries are one item which haven't gone up in price since 1960. In fact the price has dropped a bit, due to production methods having been improved.

You can even deliberately decide to buy Irish when it comes to threading laces into your football boots. El Jay laces are made in Ennis and are good enough to be exported in large quantities both to England and the six Northern counties. Colours can be red, blue or yellow as well as conservative black and there are two lengths, 60 inches and 72 inches, to choose from. Naturally the longer lace will give a tighter, more secure boot but the choice is yours. The El Jay factory at Ennis probably produced the cord which is threaded through your anorak this minute, and they make elastic in Ennis too and have just invested in very expensive machinery so that they can seek further perfection in their products.

Men's underwear all looks the same—white vests and pants—but again, other things being equal, why not buy the stuff that's Irish made? By buying


vests and pants under the National brand, for instance, you're doing yourself no harm.

A very good way of supporting the Buy Irish idea, of course, is to spend your holiday at home! However, nobody denies the attraction of jetting off to foreign parts as and when it can be afforded and when you do—choose right. You could fly by Aer Lingus for one thing, and you could book your holiday through an Irish travel agency. In fact the home-based "package holidays" these days are great value and will work out, probably, cheaper than flying to London and joining a tour there. Aer Lingus tell us they can now offer holidays in Yugoslavia and Greece for around eighty quid. Formerly, travelling from London, you'd hardly manage this type of holiday for a hundred and forty pounds.

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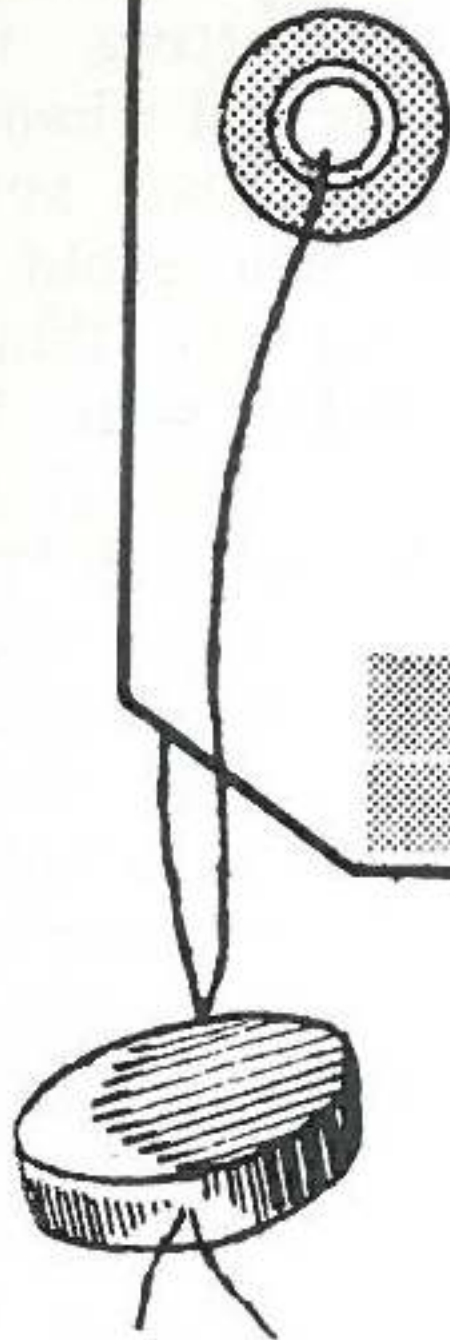
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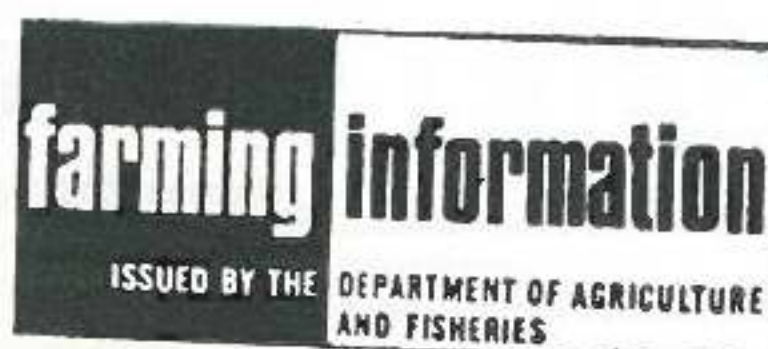
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**COCKSFOOT** Ferdia.



● FROM PAGE 11

members—there must be that many backs—who feel that the dice is loaded against them unduly. The argument is made, for instance, that the defender, guilty only of a technical foul while in the possession of the ball and about to clear would cost his side two points, while the forward who commits the most aggravating foul gets away with only an ordinary free-out against him.

I am led, also, to believe that, if the recommendation were passed, the penalty would still stand in the manner of the recent past, and because of that, it would be possible that a rough handling in the square which resulted in a penalty and was kicked over the bar would result in a score of only one point, while a technical foul by a defender would mean two points if it were an ordinary 14 yards free.

As I see it, the playing rules will not take anything like such a hammering as some people think. One of the things which seems to have considerable backing is the permission to pick the ball directly off the ground. There has been a groundswell of opinion in its favour ever since the Australians came, though, of course, one must remember that it was not this alone that enabled them to beat Meath and Down when they came here on tour.

I was rather set thinking by a strong plea for keeping the toe-pick, which suggested that there will be far greater danger to the players, now that no pick-up is allowed. The tendency will be, it was held, for players to put down their hands for the ball all the time, forgetful for their safety, and there will be boots flying everywhere in view of the fact that first time along the ground will be the only way to gain quick possession and the

only way to counter the hand-pick when the ball is low.

The President's special Committee which is examining the whole structure and organisation of the Association is carrying out an onerous task, but one would like to have some kind of interim report from them and an estimate of when they will be able to release their full findings.

This Committee is doing the really important work, and, though the games are always important and should always be improved where necessary, the room for such improvement is rather scarce, where as the doubts about the validity of the Association's organisational and administrative structure for the 70s are harriving us always.

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# MEMORIES OF BILLY MORTON

By PATRICK DAVID

HE was a small, strutting, irrepressible, arrogant man. With a strident, cajoling, powerful Dublin accent that was twice the size of the man.

The face, with its ever-chang-

ing flashes of mood, never looked Irish. The hooked nose, the intense eyes, the long, silvery Byronesque hair, always immaculately groomed gave him the faint, elusive and yet very definite look of a Frenchman, or

perhaps a Pole or even an Italian.

A showman, granted. He lived in the full, unrelenting glare of constant publicity, favourable or otherwise—and revelled in it.

The life he lived away from his family—and they, too, had to share in it—was centered on only one thing—his beloved Santry Stadium.

And now, in one tragic moment of accident, that same Santry Stadium has become his memorial—an abiding memorial to Ireland's richest sports personality of the century.

The one, the only . . . and the lamented Billy Morton.

Most of the great stories about him have already been told. By his good friends in the Press, who loved him, for himself and for the unending stream of good copy that streamed from everything the same Billy essayed or did.

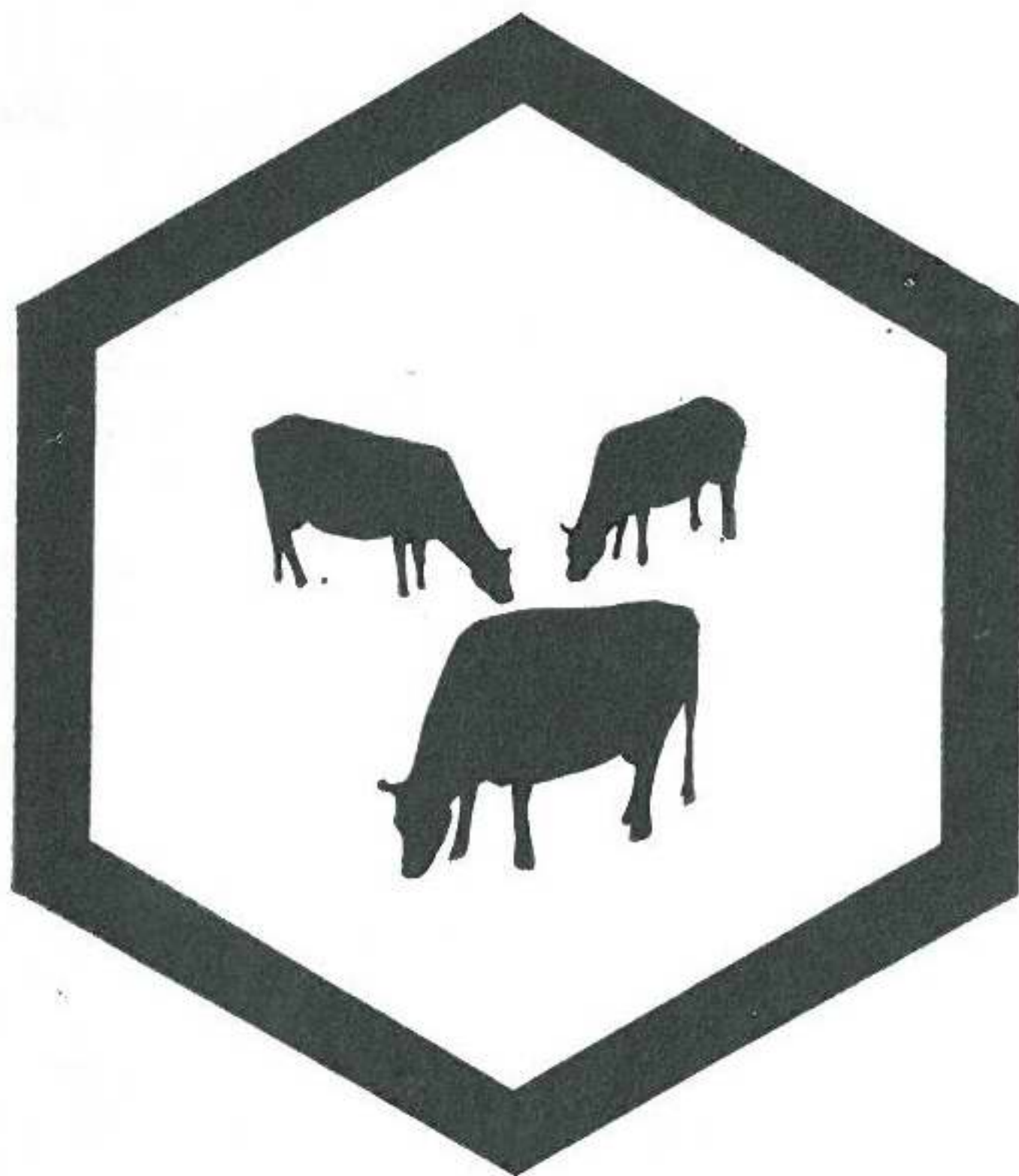
But there is one that I can tell. I was there with Morton to enjoy every rich, enduring moment of it.

It was just after the last war. We were in England for an athletics meeting. Not a very important one but Morton was there in a bid to bring some world-class athletes to a Dublin that had been starved of international athletics for years.

The man with all the power in England then was the late Jack Crump, the great commanding force of the British Amateur Athletic Association.

Morton approached him to ask for athletes for Dublin—and was almost brusquely cold-shouldered.

But Crump did not know his man. A brush-off was Morton's call to battle—total battle.



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An he strode into war with the most unusual weapon of all time.

"Mr. Crump"—said he—"How long has it been since you've eaten a fresh egg?"

Crump was halted as though he had run into a brick wall.

"Some years"—he said, obviously puzzled.

"Well"—said the bold Billy—"It so happens that I have a dozen of the sweetest, freshest Irish eggs you ever saw or tasted. And I'm looking for someone to take them."

Crump was hooked. A dozen fresh Irish eggs in those days of an eggless Britain was a manna from heaven that no one could ignore."

Morton had cast his line well. The hook was imbedded. Now came the gradual, gentle drawing in of the line. The persuasive play of the rod.

"Do you think there is any possibility that we might get Douglas Wilson to Dublin"—he asked quietly.

Douglas Wilson was then the pin-up boy of British miling. The A.A.A. champion and the man that everyone wanted to see.

"Well, I daresay there is a possibility"—Crump was now being hauled ashore—"Let's say that I think I can arrange it."

Billy gave another gentle tug on his line. "Now Alan Paterson, the A.A.A. high jump champion . . . would there be a chance of getting him to Dublin?"

Crump, one could see, was almost on his marks to hand out a firm "No". But Morton had not finished.

"I happen to have a second dozen of those fresh, Irish eggs. Might your good lady be interested in them?"

Crump, his British aplomb now in total disarray, collapsed after that.

What chance had he then against a Morton . . . who had six

dozen of those fresh Irish eggs with him?

Morton got all the athletes he wanted . . . and he was off and running then on the great international campaign that in the time to come was to bring Herb Elliott, Peter Snell, Al Thomas, John Thomas, Kip Keino—and anyone else you care to mention—to Dublin.

We all have our memories of

Billy Morton. In some way, he touched us all in sport.

He has gone now. The great light that illuminated Santry Stadium, that gave us all hope for better and brighter things in Irish sport, has been quenched.

Long, unfortunately, before its time.

From all of us, and for every memory you gave us . . . thank you Billy Morton.

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# OVERSEAS TOURS COULD PROVIDE THE NECESSARY STIMULUS TO ATTRACT THE YOUTH TO OUR RANKS

Says SEAMUS O CEALLAIGH

WHEN the Gaelic Athletic Association was in its infancy the Executive conceived the idea of sending teams of hurlers, footballers and athletes to America, in an effort to enter into competition with the athletes of other countries, and to give exhibitions of our distinctively native games.

As a result of the "Invasion" as it was called, it was hoped for a threefold benefit (a) the establishment of G.A.A. clubs across the American Continent; (b) the inauguration of annual international competitions in hurling, football and athletics, and (c) the collection of badly needed finance.

Forty-eight players and athletes made the trip and with seven officials the full party totalled fifty-five. The expenses of the project was estimated at £1,000—a big sum in those days.

The party left for America on 16th September, 1888, and were accorded a great reception when they arrived there.

From the athletic point of view the "Invasion" could be rated a success in that the athletes displayed fine form and broke many records whilst the games attracted much attention, and the foundation of the G.A.A. in the States was laid.

It was a disaster on two counts, however. Seventeen members of the team did not return when the remainder sailed for home on 31st October, and a heavy finan-

cial loss was incurred, causing a debt that remained for many years and seriously hampered the progress of the Association in Ireland.

The failure of the "Invasion" financially, forced the abandonment of the proposal to re-establish the old Tailteann Games, or something approaching to the festival, which under this name, was a national institution in ancient Ireland centuries before the famed Grecian Olympiads.

Thirty-six years later—in 1924—the G.A.A. spearheaded the revival of the Tailteann Games, which proved a glittering success, attracting athletes of Irish blood from every corner of the globe and establishing international competition in hurling, football and handball which proved very attractive and commended a splendid entry.

Two further Tailteanns were organised—in 1928 and 1932. The latter was held in the shadow of the big depression, following the great American stock market collapse and many former patrons were unable to provide the expected support. The result was a heavy financial loss.

Government assistance was sought in order to continue the Games in 1936 and when this was not forthcoming the organisers were forced to abandon the idea.

Nationally this was a disastrous decision for the Tailteann Games



*Martin O'Neill (above) was in charge of the whistle in the historic 1947 All-Ireland Final between Cavan and Kerry played at the Polo Grounds, New York.*

could now be an outstanding tourist attraction of international standing; whilst for the G.A.A. it lost an unique opportunity for

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### ● FROM PAGE 49

the development of international competition.

Meanwhile, in 1926, a Tipperary exile in America conceived the idea of organising a tour of the United States for the Tipperary hurlers, who were then All-Ireland hurling champions.

This was the first and greatest of the American Tours—a coast-to-coast trip that proved a tremendous success.

Many more were to follow until, in 1947, Cavan and Kerry travelled to the Polo Grounds, New York, to play a history-making All-Ireland Senior Football Final.

Regular competitions were eventually established between the National League winners at home and New York teams but it has not proved a completely happy relationship and the future of these competitions must still be regarded as uncertain.

The visit of an Australian Rules football team to this country a few years ago; Meath's successful tour of Australia shortly afterwards, and now Kerry's trip there, has added a new dimension to this whole question of overseas competition.

It must be admitted that Gaelic games need international matches in this highly competitive age when many youths are so critical of what any particular code has to offer them.

We have to combat the lure of soccer and the big publicity associated with star world figures and the huge transfer fees they command—or the social status that we are told goes with rugby, and the chances of landing a good job such contacts are said to provide.

The national appeal of the G.A.A. and its work in the Irish Ireland sphere no longer provides the incentive for a great number of Irish youth to join its ranks, or remain therein. Some other attraction is necessary, and

international competition could be the answer.

However, this is something we obviously cannot rush into without careful thought and deep consideration of all the factors involved.

The first matter to be examined must be the question of cost and whether the Association can afford to gamble on a project that could put a millstone of some £20,000 per annum around their necks.

If we have money of this kind to spend we know how valuable it would prove to many clubs striving to provide playing field and community centre amenities.

Secondly, if international competition is to be established it must be on the basis of all Ireland selections, not county teams, and I would even put a stipulation that no county have more than one representative in football, permitting two per county for hurling. Only by this method will the full benefit to all the counties be achieved.

A third and very important factor is the question of a proper governing authority. There is no concrete evidence of this at the moment.

Individuals, no matter how well intentioned or sincere, cannot provide a correct basis for a departure of such vital importance so it is imperative that no rushed decision be taken—rather that the whole question be examined in a cool and detached way, and the general welfare of the clubs and the Association at home carefully weighed against any advantages international games might offer.

**RON BARASSI, the Galahs' captain and coach, making a spectacular "catch" during one of Meath's matches in Australia in March of '68.**



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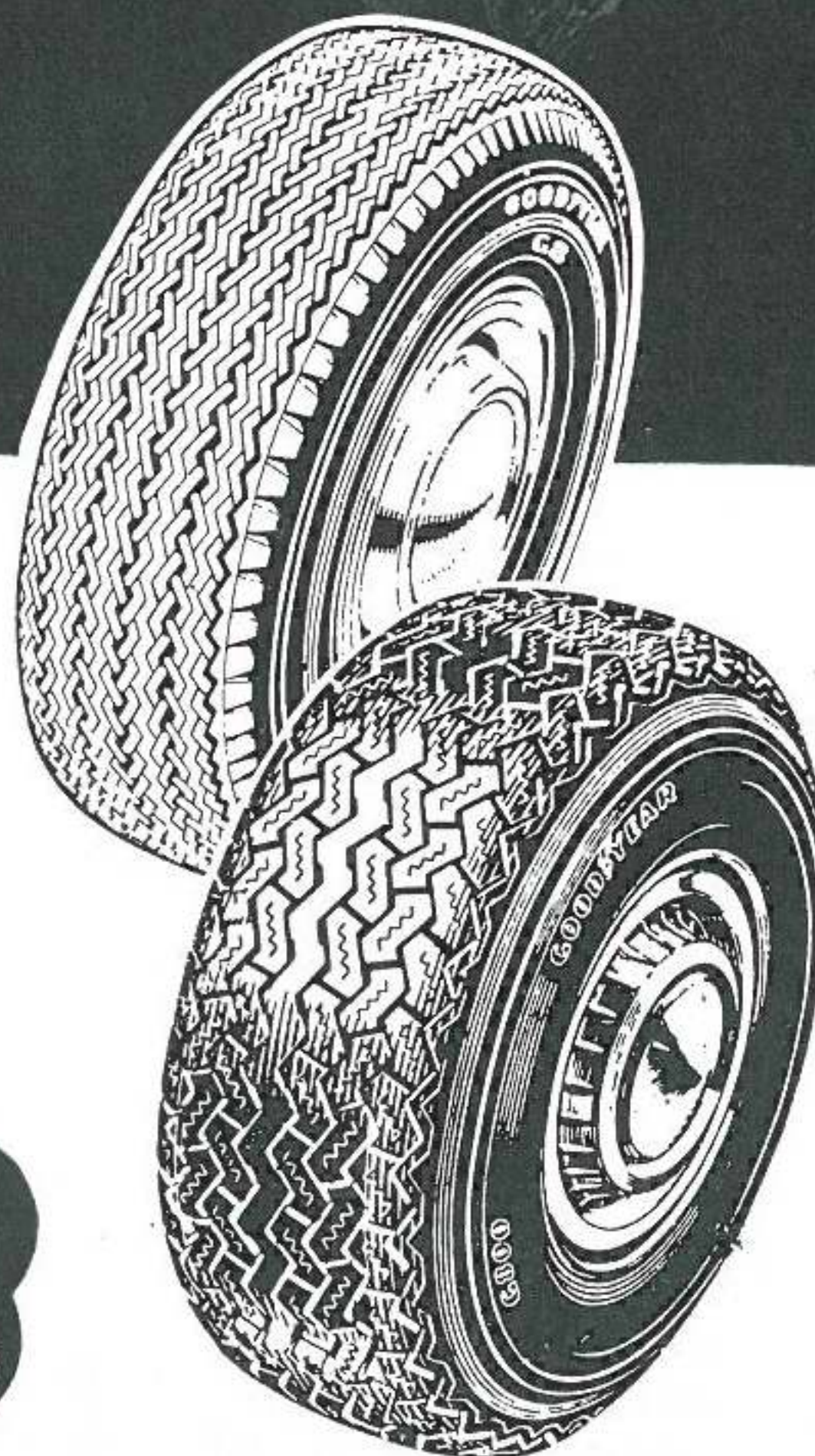
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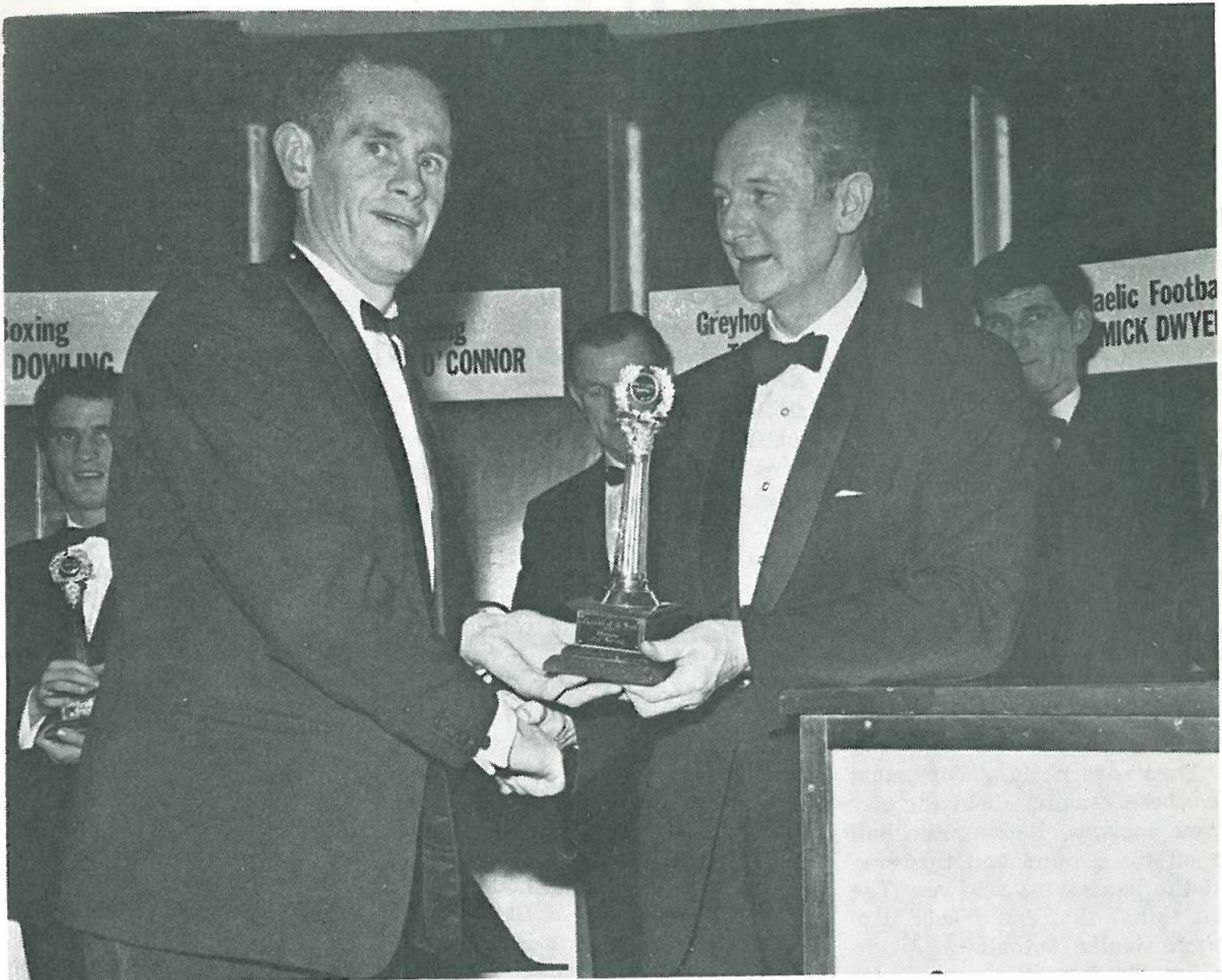
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# PROUD NIGHT FOR TED . . .



**TED CARROLL**, voted the outstanding hurler of 1969 by the sports editors of the Irish daily newspapers, is shown here accepting his award from An Taoiseach, Jack Lynch, at the recent Texaco banquet in the Gresham Hotel. Mick O'Dwyer, voted footballer of 1969 can be seen in the background.

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**DUN LAOGHAIRE**

# TIME, GENTLEMEN, PLEASE!

. . . to get rid of the "solo"

By PATRICK DAVID

YOUR man at the other end of the bar was . . . well, to put it kindly, he was nicely. Happily nicely.

But then so was I. And in the mood for conversation. All we needed to break the ice was just a word.

In our state, perhaps a little philosophy? Or maybe politics? The state of Ireland, Jack's tour de force at the Fianna Fail Ard-Fheis . . . ? The field of conversation was vast.

"Tell me"—says he—"Do you know anything about the rules of the G.A.A.?"

"A fair amount"—I told him—"But I don't think I'd qualify for any G.A.A. Board."

"Then"—says he—"You must have been reading about the proposed changes. Picking the ball up off the ground and throwing out the hand-to-toe solo run. The best things that could ever happen to Gaelic football."

"I wouldn't go all the way with you"—one couldn't give him all his own way—"I'd agree about picking up the ball. But I'm not

too keen on dropping the solo run. After all it is a . . ."

"Don't say it"—he was aggressive all of a sudden—"I know what's coming. You're as bad as those fellows I heard on **Gaelic Report** the other night. It's a skill. Isn't that what you were going to say?"

"Skill, me Aunt Fanny"—he now had the look of a man who was firmly entrenched for the night.

"Will you tell me when it was ever a skill? Do you remember Sean Lavan of Mayo? Of course, you don't, you were too young to remember him playing football. He was one of the first to use the hand-to-toe run. And as far as I am concerned, it was the greatest curse of a thing that ever came into Gaelic football. It slows up the game and when it's not done with a little elegance, it looks the most stupid thing in football."

His voice now was rising. "Have you ever seen any Gaelic player use the hand-to-toe with

either ease, elegance or comfort?"

I had to get a word in somewhere. "Well, there is Din Joe Crowley of Kerry. He looks good when he does it. He is never awkward when he hops the ball on his toe."

"Go on, go on"—he was  
● TO PAGE 56

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## New Ireland select officers

AT the 43rd Annual General Meeting of the New Ireland Assurance Company Hurling Club the following Club Officials were elected for the the 1970 Playing Year :—

President of Club: Dr. M. W. O'Reilly. Vice Presidents: Elected en bloc. Chairman of Club: Padraig O Nuallain. Vice Chairman: Padraig Thornton, Jim Dwyer, Joe Phelan, Willie Holmes. Hon-Secretary: Mick Brennan; Asst. Hon-Secretary: Paddy Troy. Hon-Treasurer: Liam Byrne; Asst. Hon-Treasurer: Ignatius Byrne. Senior Captain: Christy Hayes; Senior Vice Captain: Liam Byrne. Intermediate Captain: Pat Mitten; Inter. Vice Captain: John Tobin. Junior "A" Captain: Peter Farrell; Junior "A" Vice Captain: Tom Carew. Under 21 Captain: Tom Carew; Under 21 Vice Captain: Peter Farrell. Senior Board Delegate: Christy Hayes. Junior Board Delegate: Gerry Corcoran. Minor Board Delegate: Paddy Troy. Club Trainer: Christy Hayes. Asst.-Trainer: Willie Holmes, S. Carew, Ignatius Byrne.

Committee: Messrs. Joe Phelan, P. Farrell, G. Corcoran, J. Neville, D. Ryan, W. Holmes, T. Carew, Joe Ryan, S. O Laoire, P. Cleary, C. Hayes, S. Carew, L. Byrne, S. Rohan, M. Brennan, P. Mitten, P. Troy, Ig. Byrne, Fr. Eoin Murphy.

# TOP TEN

IT is pleasant to be able to include Ulster representatives in any list of outstanding hurlers. Two members of the Ulster side which scored an unexpected but merited victory over Connacht in the Railway Cup preliminary game receive due recognition in our hurling rankings this month. They are S. Branniff (Down) and S. Burns (Antrim) whose mid-field performances were the vital factors in their provinces notable success in Galway on February 8th.

The lists given below are com-

piled from games played between Sunday, January 25th and Sunday, February 15th, inclusive.

### HURLING

- (9) M. Foley ..... (Waterford)
- (9) P. Branniff ..... (Down)
- (9) S. Burns ..... (Down)
- (8) C. Cullinane ..... (Cork)
- (8) D. Clifford ..... (Cork)
- (8) M. Quigley ..... (Wexford)
- (8) F. Loughnane  
(Tipperary)
- (7) P. Byrne ..... (Tipperary)
- (7) P. Nolan ..... (Wexford)
- (7) P. Dunny ..... (Kildare)

### FOOTBALL

- (9) M. O'Shea ..... (Kerry)
- (9) D. J. Crowley ..... (Kerry)
- (9) N. Clavin ..... (Offaly)
- (9) W. Bryan ..... (Offaly)
- (9) T. Prendergast ..... (Kerry)
- (9) E O'Donoghue ..... (Kerry)
- (8) D. Earley ... (Roscommon)
- (7) E. Cusack ..... (Cavan)
- (7) A. McTague ..... (Offaly)
- (7) S. O'Connell ..... (Derry)

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# PRESIDENCY

## ● FROM PAGE 8

was three years ago when he was pipped on the post by Seamus O Riain. Before that, he ran a spirited and cloes thing with Alf O Muiri. So, if perseverance means anything, O Fainin has a head start. Furthermore, a strong support has been building up for him—Cork leading the way in recent weeks. His quite amazing record of work and dedication to the Association's furtherance, will also stand in his favour. And, he might even pick up some of O'Donnell's votes, if that worthy candidate does not run.

Canvassing disqualifies, or so the spirit of the rules says, in regard to any post in the Association. It is true that the candidates for the Presidency have to be particularly careful in this regard; but, nonetheless, there are always friends of the candidates — often unknown to the candidates themselves—who do sterling work in sounding the ground on their man's behalf. It is likely that when the delegates assemble in Galway, there will be some experts among them who will be able—within a half-dozen or so—to say what the voting will be.

I, however, have not such close information to hand, and must say that I would fancy a close run three-cornered fight between O Fainin, Woulfe and Feeney, and it might be anybody's race. The second count might be a revelation, as it was last time. In what could prove a photo-finish I feel it will be O Fainin for the hot seat.

## ● FROM PAGE 54

smiling now—"I knew you'd bring up Crowley. But how many more can you name who could do it properly? Even Mick O'Connell, and there's no better player, never looks happy when he tries hand-to-toe. Every time he does it, he has to pause. He breaks the rhythm of his running to do it."

"Well, there's Pat Griffin"—I had to make a stand—"He's not bad at it."

"Wrong again"—he told me—"Just think of Griffin. He rarely uses the hand-to-toe as a solo run. He uses it just to beat a man. Can't you see him now. He hops the ball on his toe and then slides around his man immediately. Griffin rarely wastes time."

"There must be others"—and goodness knows I was finding it hard to think of them at this stage—"How about Red Collier of Meath?"

He silenced me with a salvo of indignation. "Don't make me laugh. Red was the most awkward man in the world when he tried hopping the ball on his toe. Everything else he did was magnificent. But hand-to-toe? Get away from me."

"Kevin Heffernan maybe?"—I was getting cautious now—"Brendan Lynch, Tony McTague . . . ?"

"No"—and he was as emphatic as ever—"Kevin used it at times, but only like Griffin—to beat his man. Heffernan didn't need it. He was far too intelligent a player to waste time with a move that would only slow up his game."

"And as for Lynch and Mc-

Tague, I'll grant you that they had the ability to hop the ball on their toes with some degree of elegance. But just think of how often they slowed up attacking moves. And how often they infuriated their own supporters."

He was dead correct all the way. Hopping the ball on the toe on a solo run has never been a skill. It has never been more than a time-wasting, pointless exercise, rarely providing any worthwhile result.

And just think. How many players can you remember who performed it with a smooth, streamlined elegance . . . ?

Precious few, I imagine.

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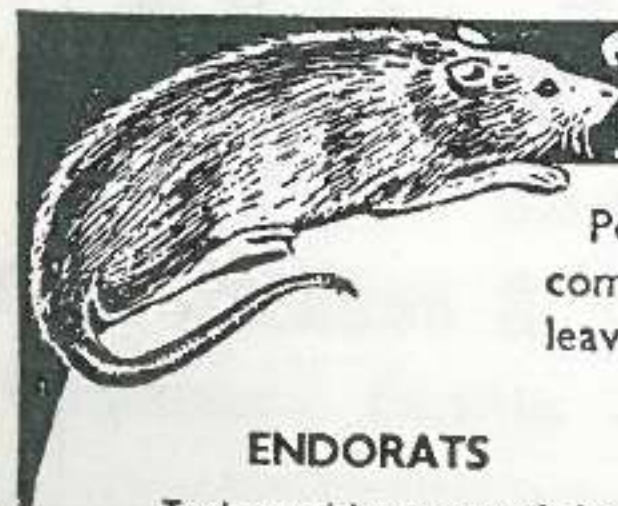
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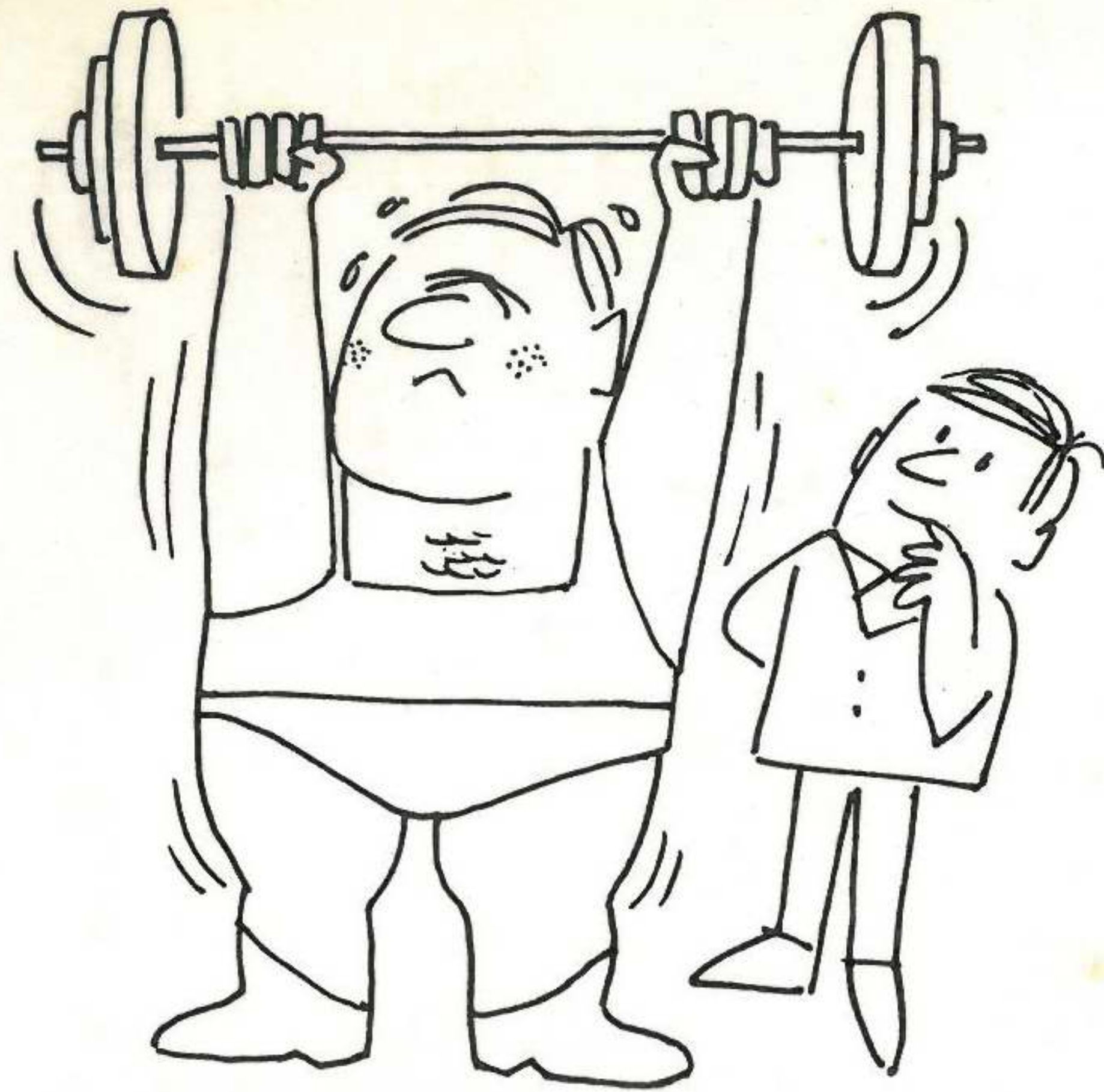
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