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Gaelic Sport

NOVEMBER 1971

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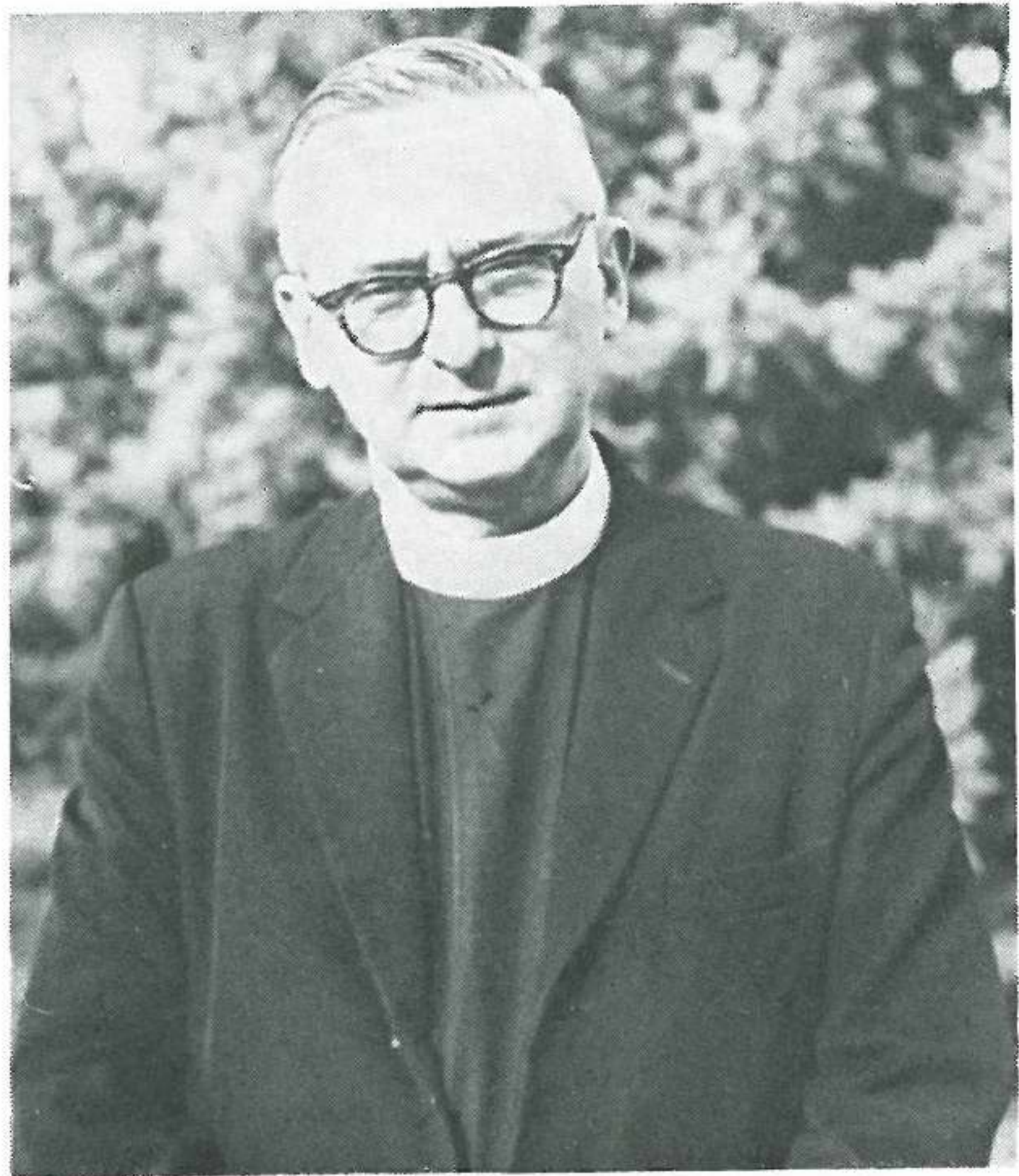
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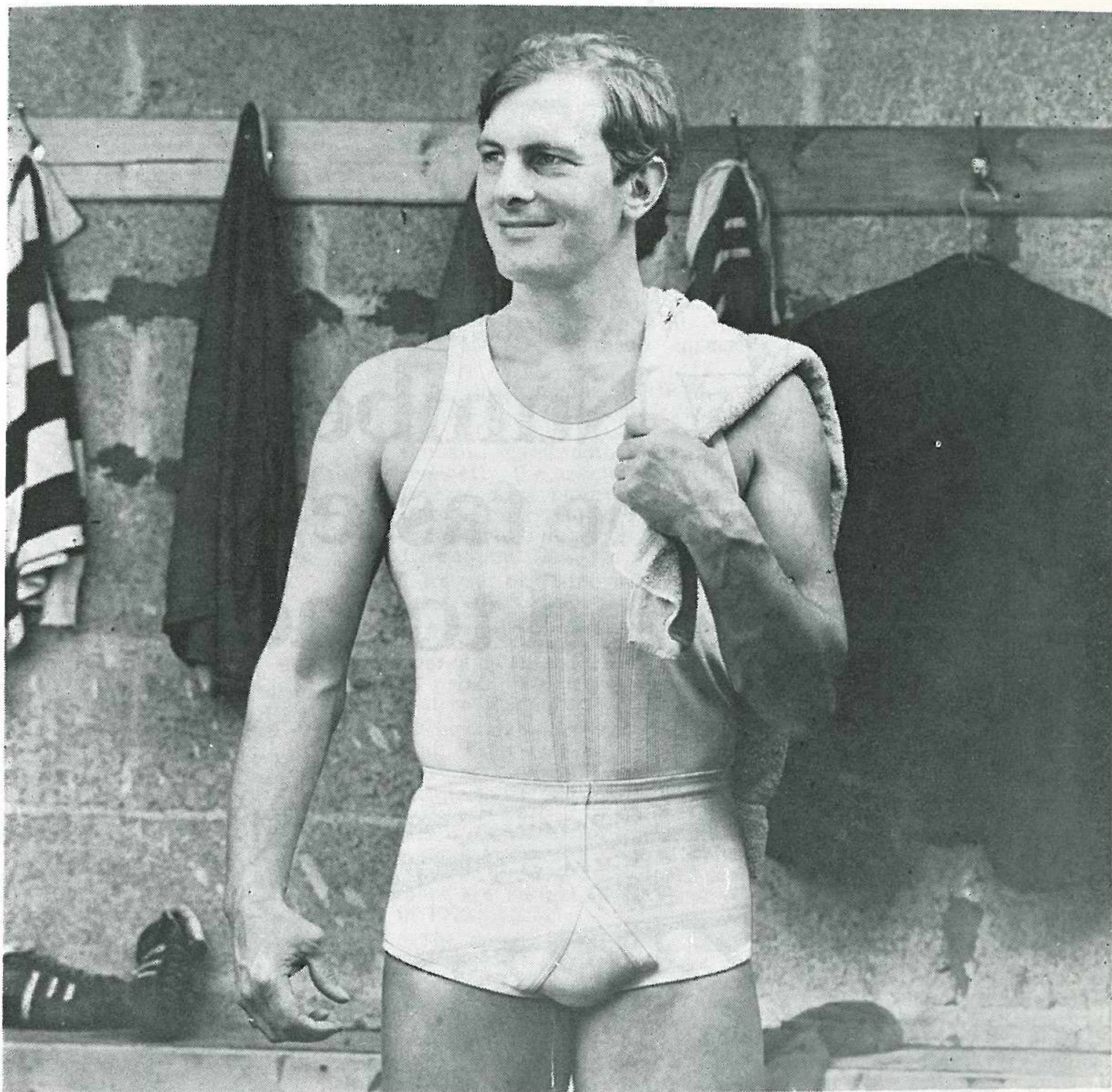
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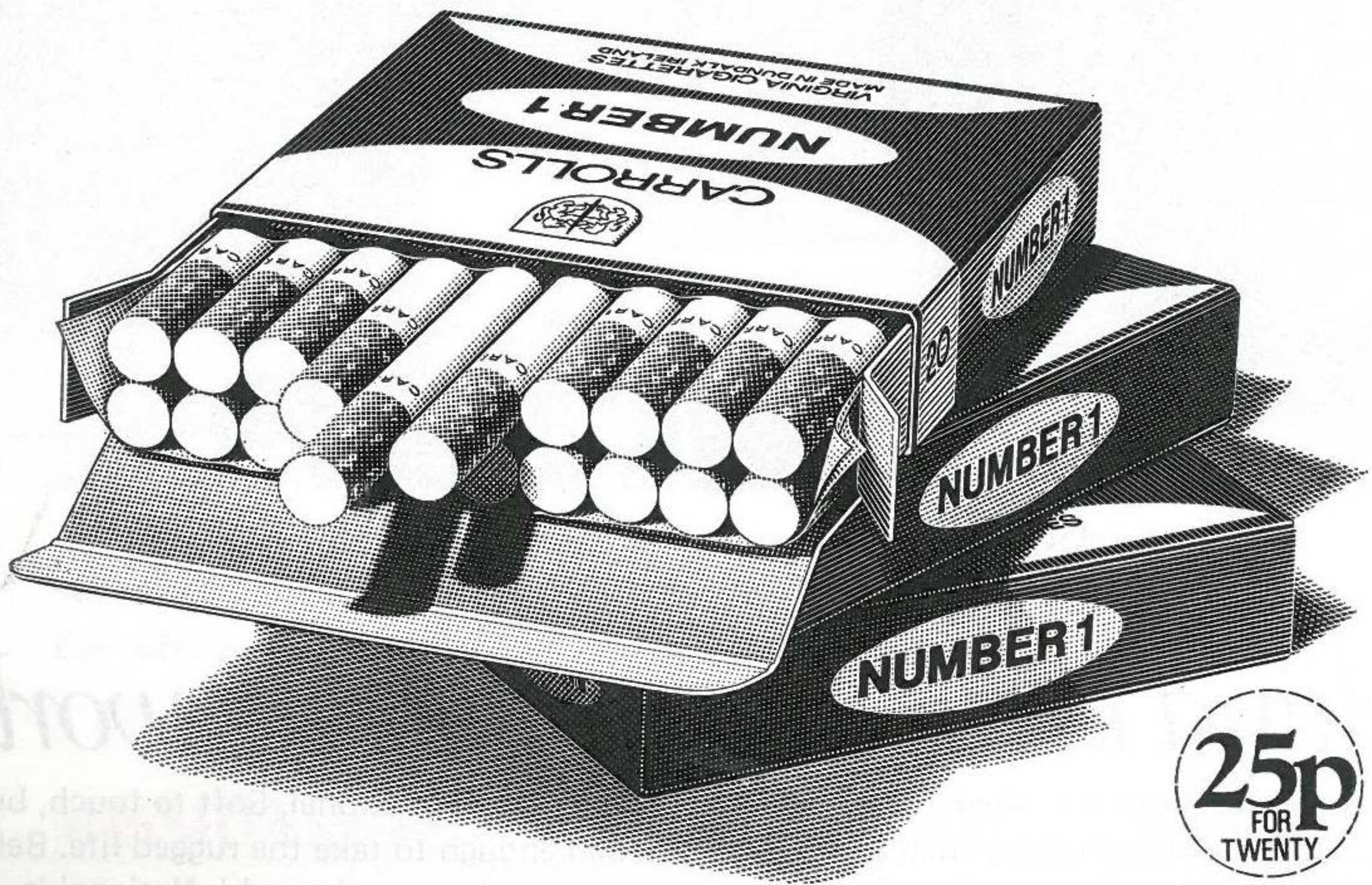
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COVER PHOTO

WE are proud to feature on our front cover this month Willie Bryan, captain of the victorious Offaly team. To Willie and his colleagues we extend sincerest congratulations on their historic win and hope that it is the first of many.

NOT GUILTY?

COMMENTS in an article written for a monthly magazine are occasionally dated when the publication appears in print—that is when the comments concern current affairs.

The main leading article in our October issue was an example. GAELIC SPORT was on sale for the All-Ireland football final; consequently, the article was written several days before that event. It called for immediate talks on the resumption of tours between Ireland and New York.

As the magazine was going to press, news broke that talks had been arranged for the week after the final. So, our plea was answered even before it appeared in print. We were pleased by that co-incidence.

The talks—between Pat Fanning, Seán Ó Síocháin and the New York officials, Eddie Burke, Terry Connaughton and Donal Keating—were fruitful. The way is now clear for a new agreement between the Central Council and the New York Board and tours are certain to be resumed in 1972.

The recent furore over the unauthorised traffic of players to New York for week-end games will not affect the restoration of good relations between the two bodies. There is a risk of some embarrassment, but this can be avoided if diplomacy is the guide in whatever disciplinary action may be taken against the trip-

pers and the New York clubs who invited them to travel.

It is obvious that the New York officers have not been a party to the alleged breaches of the regulations formulated by the Central Council last May. But these men have been placed in a difficult position by some of their own clubs.

Once again, production deadlines make comment hazardous. The whole matter may have been cleared up by the time these words are published.

Nevertheless, this question needs to be answered: Were all players in this country and all clubs in New York fully informed of the Central Council's regulations, or did the Council assume that publication of the document in the newspapers was sufficient notice to all concerned?

If the latter is the case, the players and the New York clubs have a sound defence. If the regulations were not circulated to all County Boards and clubs, the allegedly guilty parties can rightly plead ignorance of the rules. It is a technical point, but it would stand up in a court of law.

And there is another question: How many County Boards and clubs in Ireland turned a blind eye to their players' transatlantic journeys since last summer? Here we have the very delicate matter of (alleged) guilt by association. The Council must ensure that justice prevails.

Taoiseach's letter

WHEN our funnier political columnists have space to fill, they fall back on the continuing interest of the Taoiseach, Mr. Jack Lynch, in the games of which he was such an outstanding exponent. Whatever their political affiliations, G.A.A. men, we feel, ignore the funny columnists' cheap jokes. It is praiseworthy that the Taoiseach has maintained his deep interest in the national pastimes. That he has been able to do so in grave political crises is remarkable. We all need safety-valves, outlets to relaxation, however brief. Mr. Lynch has again shown his interest, as his letter on page five of this issue testifies. We thank him for taking the time to write to us and, through us, to his fellow Gaels.

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It gives me great pleasure to convey through "Gaelic Sport" my heartiest congratulations to Tipperary and Offaly on their All-Ireland victories.

Both games were played in accordance with the highest traditions of Gaelic sportsmanship and for this their full share of the credit must be given not only to the proud victors but to the gallant losers - Kilkenny and Galway.

For the many thousands of followers of Gaelic games who watched these two great contests, the 1971 All-Ireland Finals will be recalled with pleasure and with pride.

Tipperary, with its proud record of twenty-two All-Ireland victories, and gallant Offaly, third time lucky, well deserve our congratulations and our thanks.

The fighting spirit of the Offaly men, their tenacity and their skill which culminated in their first ever All-Ireland win, ensures that the 1971 Football Final will have a special place in the annals of the G.A.A.

For Kilkenny and Galway who all but made it, and all the other teams, whose gallant and sporting, though unsuccessful, efforts at earlier stages, have built up the All Ireland Finals to the great national occasions that they now are, there will surely be another day. Molaim go hárd a bhuaidh agus iadsan a chaill.

Jack Lynch.

Goulding strikes oil!

Revolutionary new fertiliser discovery by
Goulding sold to a Texas oil company



One of the most important announcements made recently by the Goulding Group concerned the sale by Goulding of the patents for a newly developed process for manufacturing highly concentrated fertiliser to Pennzoil United Inc., the multi-million-dollar Texas oil and mining corporation, who also produce fertiliser raw materials.

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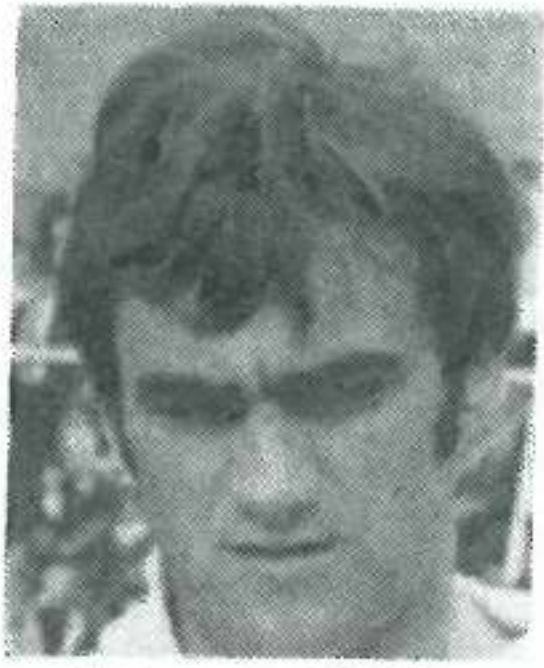
This is the kind of endeavour that the Goulding Group are able to bring about by constant application in the fields of research and development. It points the way Goulding are going in Irish industry. Other companies in the Group are showing in their diverse fields a steady confident progress. These are the youthful, progressive Group members, who have made their presence felt in recent years, bringing about something of a transformation in the Group which is still going on. Keep watching...

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THE FOOTBALL FINAL IN RETROSPECT

TO OFFALY THE JOY AND THE GLORY

By Jay Drennan

THE transience of all things human is borne in upon us in strange and continual realisations. How curious that now, in the aftermath of the great event, the thought of Offaly's All-Ireland should inspire such sentiments first in the mind. Dreams are dreamt and seldom realised. But, there is a haunting magic in striving for some dreamt of goal that is, in some respects, nearly as enchanting as its realisation. Who was it that said: "Better to travel hopefully than to arrive"?

There was that climactic day in Croke Park, when the rains bucketted down to baptise the newly-crowned infant champions. And after that there was the

hilarious, overjoyed celebration of the native pride throughout the county as players came home and showed themselves and their prize to all. And then it was all over—or nearly over.

Of course, the memory will sustain and the pride will not easily be watered down. Offalymen are men of substance now, in G.A.A. circles; no longer supplicants or hewers of wood. They enter the elite and must now bear the burden of all who cross the barriers of social class.

But, the most affecting thing is that now it is all over; all the desire for that first title; all the hope that flamed and fed on faith and trust in the county and its men; all the fears of fail-

ure and the sweet and bitter feelings of pushing near the objective and failing. It has been achieved. What now? It all seems like an anti-climax. What can a League mean after that first All-Ireland?

Worse, what kind of incentive does a second All-Ireland create by comparison with the first—small beer, surely. It is the change that has taken place in Offaly's position and in their status: they have now to make their own incentive: they must fashion it out of pure love of the game or pure pride in their county—there is no outside factor as before. Like Kerry, whose greatness surely is in their incredible headstrong belief that, though some counties are allowed by their men to win an All-Ireland now and again to let the honour go round a bit, the honour really rests in the Reeks and must be brought back there regularly and with grandeur just to make the point clear to others.

That is the kind of attitude which Offaly will now have to fashion if they are to become a county of true greatness and one which adds to faithfulness the power of striking awe in opponents. That's as high a mountain to climb as the first title ever was, and it takes longer, and it is less tangible and, therefore, more easily lost sight of as an objective and a worthy goal. Putting it very bluntly,

● TO PAGE 9

Mind your own business.

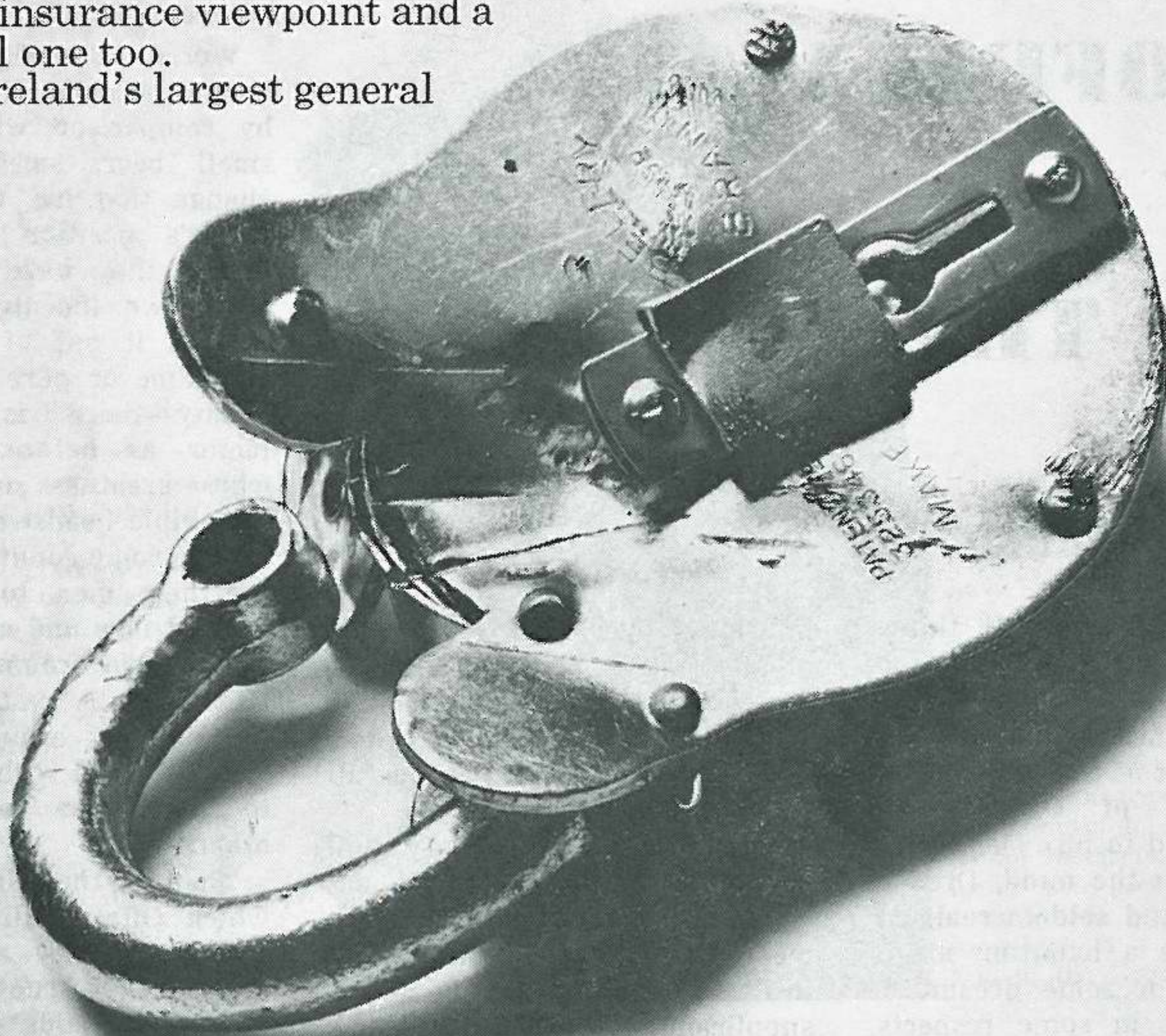
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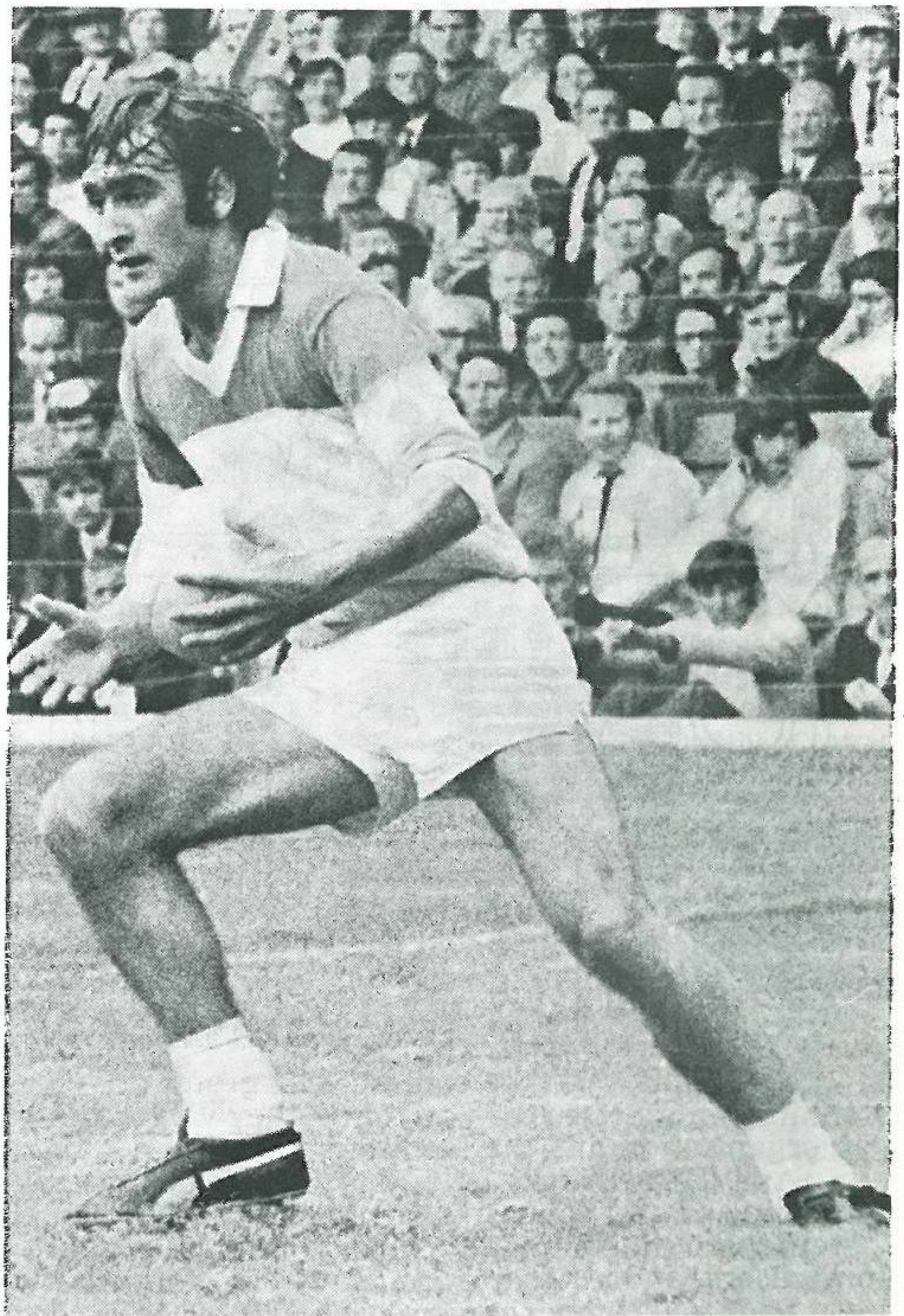
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● FROM PAGE 7

shorn of a great deal of its meaning and for that reason not quite fairly: will Offaly be just one more county which won their way to the All-Ireland by faith and sweat, but who never became a great county. Will they win another crown, perhaps, or two, or even more, and then fade away and seldom be heard of again for many years until perhaps another generation tries again to revive the spirit. Or will they become as Kerry, Tipperary, Kilkenny, Wexford, Cork, Galway, variously in hurling and football—counties who can never be counted out of the reckoning, who may have a bad year this year, but might come all the way to the top next year and feel no need to give a reason for such a volte face?

Well, Offaly have honoured the Association in their winning as in their striving for their first crown. They were disappointed many a time. An Offalyman once told me of the endless number of Sunday evenings he had slumped his way back home at the end of another year of hope, with the rain inevitably falling softly as though the gods were crying in sympathy. Grey evenings reflecting the grey in the heart of a disappointed man. It was well that there was another evening of rain and grey skies, but with the sun breaking through as though in comment on the occasion.

The game was seldom inspiring, though I confess to an unusual tension in the feeling of the crowd and in myself both at the beginning and as the end came near. There was some kind of inevitability at work, though, and it was hardly the threat of Galway goals that made the last seconds wearing. Like the hurling match, however, there was a world of significance and meaning in the final for the

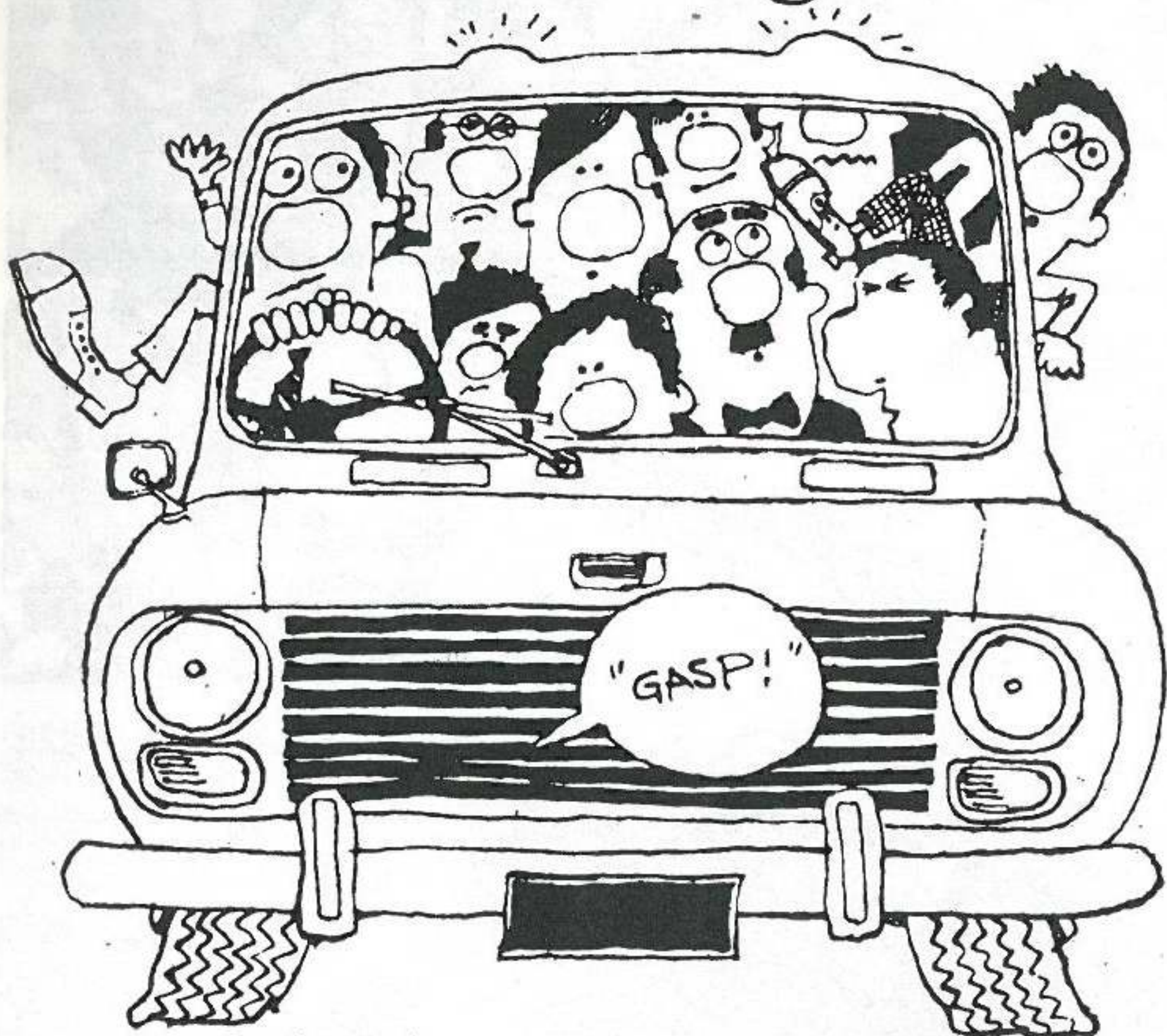


● In this action shot from the Cork-Offaly All-Ireland semi-final game, Kevin Kilmurray's expression typifies the steel determination of the entire Offaly team throughout this year's championship campaign.

counties taking part; and for the rest, it was like looking through the window at a Christmas party while standing barefoot in the snow. The rest of the Association have every right to hope to see a great final; but they have no right whatever to complain if they get less. To them it can never hold the meaning it holds

for the counties involved. And for Offaly, at least, winning was the be all and end all: they did well to win when you remember how much below their best they played. But neither their victory nor the manner of it is any of our business. To them the glory, and the rightful joy.

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TOP TEN

THE football list this month is entirely taken up by members of the All-Ireland final teams — Offaly and Galway. Granted, the game was not great, but there were several individual stars on both sides, perhaps the most outstanding being the new champions' right half back, Eugene Mulligan.

Mulligan was brilliant when nearly all of his team-mates were moderate in the first half and his consistency was unquestionable right through the 80 minutes. For that performance he deserves the maximum 10 points.

FOOTBALL

- (10) E. Mulligan (Offaly)
- (9) P. J. Smyth (Galway)
- (9) L. Sammon (Galway)
- (9) N. Clavin (Offaly)
- (9) T. J. Gilmore ... (Galway)
- (8) J. Smith (Offaly)
- (8) S. Leydon (Galway)
- (8) M. Heavey (Offaly)
- (8) W. Bryan (Offaly)
- (7) J. Duggan (Galway)

HURLING

- (9) F. Cummins ... (Kilkenny)
- (9) P. Hartigan ... (Limerick)
- (9) R. Bennis (Limerick)
- (8) E. Grimes (Limerick)
- (8) P. McDonnell (Cork)
- (8) M. Browne (Wexford)
- (8) G. Lohan (Clare)
- (8) J. O'Brien (Limerick)
- (7) P. Enright ... (Waterford)
- (7) D. Martin (Offaly)



JUSTICE DONE

RARELY can an "outside" success have brought such satisfaction to Ulster followers as Offaly's historic triumph in this year's All-Ireland decider. It is fair to say that the victory has been hailed throughout the nine counties; not that the North has suddenly gone sour on Galway—always and still a favourite county here—but rather because justice has at last been done the Faithful one.

I have a feeling too that nowhere has the win been more sincerely acclaimed than in the Mourne where those famous struggles at the beginning of the sixties remain fresh in the memory. There is particular satisfaction among the Down men that Paddy McCormack who tried so valiantly to thwart them in the past should have got his reward at the third attempt.

Yes, it is the genuine popularity of Offaly's success—with its clear message of encouragement to all those counties who have not yet broken the championship barrier—that will be one of my most abiding memories of 1971.

And of course there was that indefinable magic of final day, especially when history is made. For the third time in my life I had seen a county win its first All-Ireland title and just as I can recall the uncontrolled—indeed uncontrollable—joy and emotion of the Roscommon supporters in 1943 and those of Down some 17 years later, so I will savour for a very long time

the sight and sound of the Offaly following in 1971.

It is totally to understate the case to suggest that it was a moving scene even for neutrals—and I don't believe there were really very many in the rain-soaked 70,000-plus crowd who did not claim allegiance one way or the other when the final whistle signalled that "Sam Maguire" was bound for Tullamore.

Having said all that, what a pleasure it would be to add that the quality of the play matched the occasion. However, in the interest of truth it must be stated that this was a mediocre final with the boredom of a first-half—it seemed a great deal longer than those 40 minutes—only relieved by the victors' fight back after the interval. There was far too much disjointed play with those brave and memorable deeds in altogether too short supply.

And, oh, those 66 frees! I am not blaming referee Paul Kelly, who would have been justified in blowing more often. Not that it was a dirty match, certainly not, but how those rules require the most searching examination.

For Offaly, however, it will always remain the greatest final ever, with every score, every courageous deed in defence, every move in fact, assured a place in the web and woof of the county's story. I appreciate the position and in acknowledgement I feel the critical faculties should be stilled.

Well done, Offaly! If only Limerick had pulled it off in the hurling it would have completed the most talked-about double in the history of the Association.

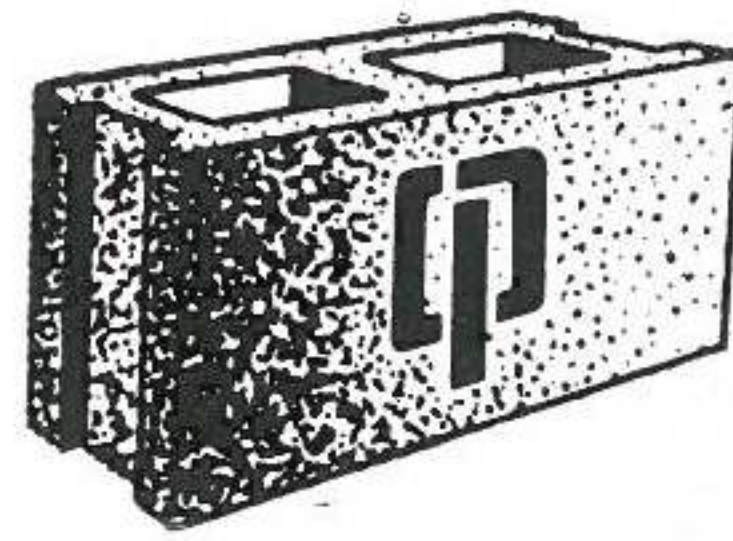
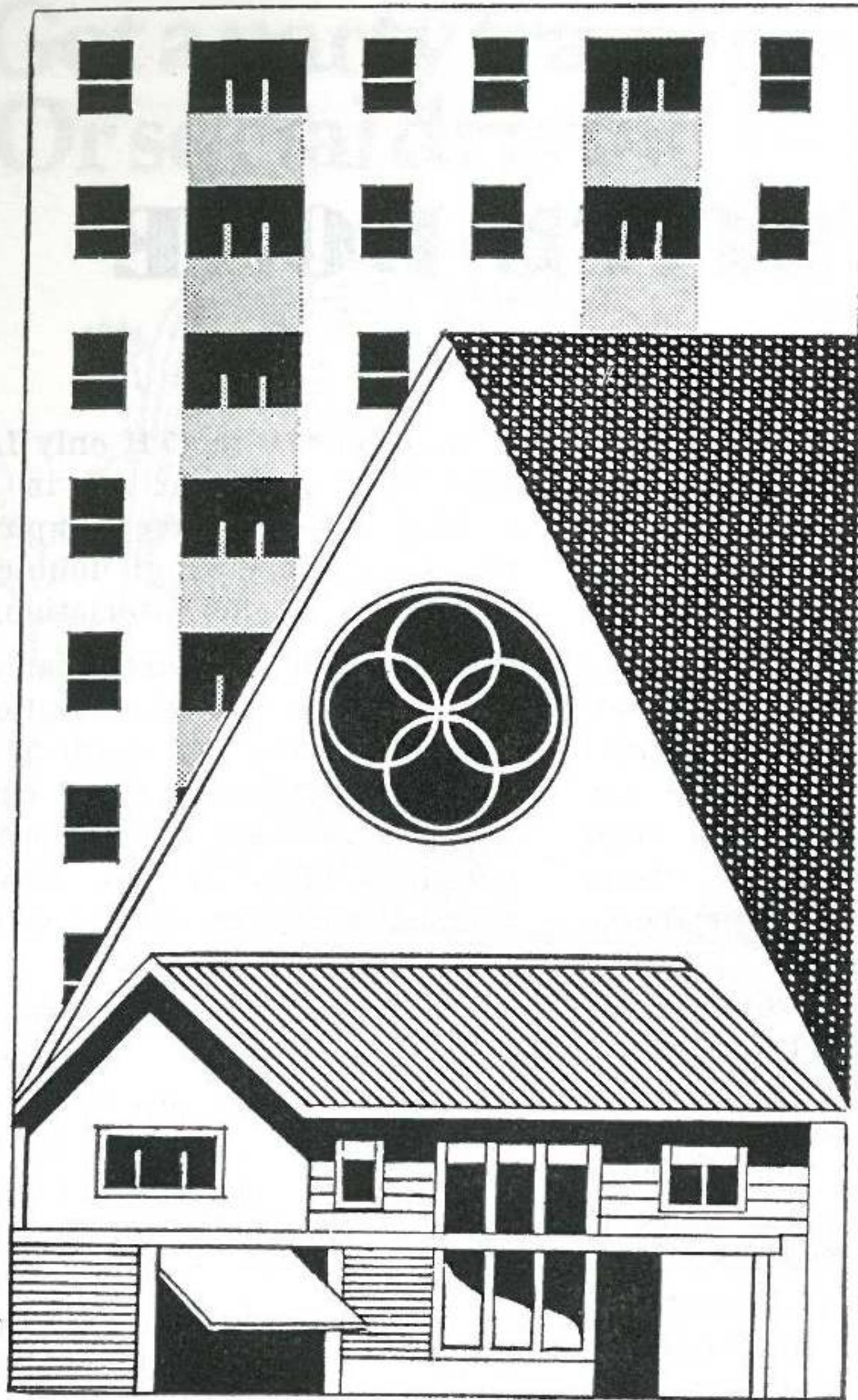
But back to the vital bread and butter issue of the National Leagues. In the aftermath of the publicity surrounding the championship finals, two important decisions taken by the Central Council may not have received the attention deserved.

I welcome the introduction of scoring averages to determine placings for both promotion and relegation in the event of ties, while the legislation outlawing the postponement of fixtures speaks for itself.

As Armagh secretary Gerry Fagan told me: "The play-off system is probably the fairest, but with such a dearth of Sundays the sudden death of the scoring average will assure the minimum of delay, so vital if such a major competition is to retain interest throughout."

Last year I opposed this idea when an attempt was made to bring it in at the last minute, but now with everybody aware of the conditions before a ball is kicked, there should be few complaints.

Incidentally, there is a tremendous demand in Ulster that RTE should put out a full-length "Match of the Day" recording on Sunday evening throughout the League campaign. I am sorry to say that I don't believe anything will come of the suggestion.



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MULLIGAN WAS MAN OF THE MATCH

FEW Faithful County footballers have played a bigger part in bringing Gaelic glory to Offaly over the last few years than stalwart defender, Eugene Mulligan. The brilliant Rhodeman has been starring in the tricolour jersey since 1964, when he assisted the Midlanders to an historic first and, to date, their only All-Ireland minor football title. It did not take Eugene very long to develop his obvious football talents for he was a mere sixteen years old when gaining that national under-18 medal.

Mulligan has continued to go from strength to strength since that September day seven years ago. He served the county minors in the following two seasons before graduating to wearing the Offaly under-21 jersey for four consecutive campaigns. 1968 was the most successful of these with the Midlanders' taking provincial honours before failing against Derry in the National decider.

The previous year, Eugene Mulligan made his debut on the Offaly senior team, in an October league game against Kerry. He has not lost his place since and in addition to the familiar right half back berth has given service as a corner back and at centre half back.

But it is the number five jersey

that seems to fit the exuberant Rhodeman best and few opposing wing forwards get anything soft when facing him. Testimony of such a statement lies in the fact that Mulligan's opposite numbers in his two All-Ireland senior final appearances to date each failed to register a single score.

While many of his team mates failed to strike the form they were capable of producing in the 1969 final against Kerry, Eugene excelled by turning in a top class display, holding the highly vaunted Eamon O'Donoghue scoreless in the process. But indeed Mulligan had been magnificent right through the championship campaign of that year.

He was no doubt hoping that Offaly would go one better the following year, 1970, as he was honoured with the captaincy. But disappointment was again his lot with the Faithful County so dramatically failing to Meath in that never-to-be-forgotten Leinster final.

But better things lay in store for Offaly men and 1971 will long live in the memories of Midland Gaels. 1971 will also be remembered as the year in which Eugene Mulligan really blossomed forward as one of the finest exponents of Gaelic football in the game at present. His performances in all games this year have

been right out of the top drawer, particularly his contribution to Offaly's success in the All-Ireland Semi-final and Final.

Let's look back to that Semi-final against Cork, first. Here Eugene's work rate was enormous. Not wishing to confine his activities to defending alone, several excursions into the opposing half were made by the adventurous wing back. Judging by the quality of his overlapping one couldn't help feeling that Mulligan was taking a leaf out of ace English soccer star, Terry Cooper's book, who employs such tactics with so much success for Leeds United.

On now to that long awaited day for Offaly in the final against Galway and here Eugene Mulligan was my man of the match. While all of the Offaly players were stars in their own right in that great second half revival, many of them appeared to be disinterested in the proceedings during much of that opening period. But not so with Mulligan, who played his heart out at a time when everything seemed to be going wrong for most of his colleagues. His efforts must have been an inspiration to his comrades.

Now that Eugene has gained that elusive All-Ireland senior medal there may well be further honours in store for him within the coming months. In my book, he is the number one right half back in the game and should gain a berth on the All-Ireland All-Stars award winning selection. Similarly he must be a leading candidate for the "Footballer of the Year" award and the coveted Texaco trophy that goes with it. As an ardent admirer of his unlimited skills I certainly will not begrudge Eugene Mulligan either form of recognition.

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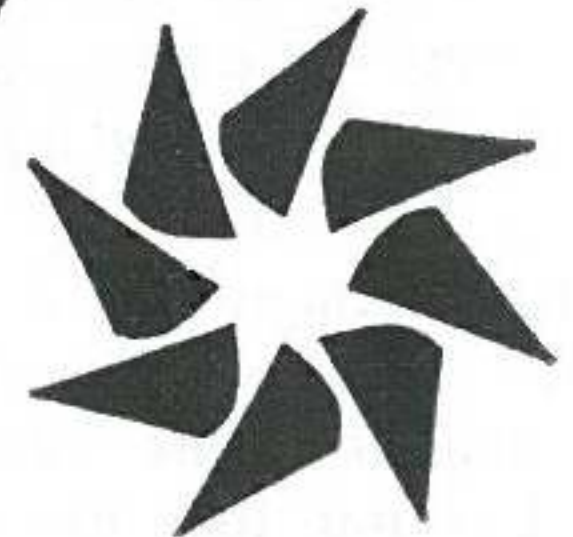
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THE GREATEST **EVER** **FROM OFFALY**

ANY team that wins a county's first All-Ireland senior football title must obviously rank among the great ones. But can Willie Bryan and his talented company of history-makers really be hailed as the Master Offaly team of all time? Or had the county better combinations in the past; teams that reached their peak, say, in golden eras of football, and were kept out of the honours list by selections well above the ordinary?

Like, for instance, the Offaly squad of 1961 that lost the county's first All-Ireland senior final appearance to Down. The Ulster county had moulded in that period of glory an outstanding combination; an efficient and smooth-moving outfit that must rank beyond dispute among the truly great teams in the history of the game.

Yet, during those stirring days in the early 'Sixties, Offaly showed that they were not all that far behind the great Down side. After all, there were two intriguing clashes between the counties in the 1960 All-Ireland semi-final before the Northern standard-bearers qualified for a first final outing, and the Leinster

By
OWEN
McCANN



*PADDY McCORMACK . . .
medal at last.*

county also made a great bid to lower Down's colours in the 1961 decider.

So, was that outfit that lost 2-8 to 3-6 to Down just over ten years ago a better side than the present one; a team with the skills and class to rank as the greatest Offaly side of them all?

A strong case can be made for that undoubtedly top-rate team, and I would also be prepared to argue that the all-round standard in this year's race for the Sam

Maguire Cup was not as high as in the 1961 Championship.

Having said that, however, my vote must still go to the team that made September 26, 1971, such a memorable day for Offaly. After all, you can't really argue with major success — especially when it comes after a record of consistent performances over a period of three seasons.

Offaly's win over Galway was the county's 12th success in the

● TO PAGE 17

A Question of Caring

Wicklow has always had the power to attract people with its beauty and its amenities. When the E.S.B. came into Wicklow, it added to the beauty. The magnificent Poulaphouca lakes came into being and have been stocked with fish to lure the angler



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● FROM PAGE 15

Championship since the summer of 1969, as against one draw, and only two failures—to Kerry in the 1969 All-Ireland final, and to Meath in that never-to-be-forgotten and high-scoring Leinster decider of 1970. A team has to have something special to chalk up a record like that over such a long period, and especially in these days when competition is so keen.

Yes, this is a first rate Offaly selection, one that displays enterprise, ideas and flair. Where it may fall down in comparison with the 1961 side is at the back.

It could be hard to find a better full-back line in any era than the Paddy McCormack, Greg Hughes and John Egan bulwark of the 'Sixties. Willie Nolan was a highly dependable goalkeeper, and Phil O'Reilly, Mick Brady and Charlie Wrenn provided plenty of experience and class in the half-line.

To illustrate the power Offaly then had at the back—the county supplied no fewer than six players in the Leinster defence in the 1961 Railway Cup final win over Munster.

The present rearguard has men who can compare individually with those great stalwarts of the last decade, but the defence still does not appear to have the all-round solidarity of the 1961 set-up.

However, I'm convinced that Fr. Gillooly's company of trend-setters score in more ways than one over the 1961 squad in attack.

Harry Donnelly needed lessons from no one in the art of putting over the points—he finished the 1961 season with a score of 7-99 (120 points) in 24 games which still stands as the Leinster record for all competitions.

Tommy Greene, Donie O'Hanlon and Mick Casey were also to the fore in a lively enough scoring division.

TOP SCORERS OF 1971

THE leading scorers in the 1971 Senior Hurling and Football championships are:

HURLING

Points		Score	Games	Average
55	E. Keher (Kilkenny) ...	4-43	4	13.75
44	M. Keating (Tipperary) ...	6-26	4	11.00
31	R. Bennis (Limerick) ...	2-25	3	10.33
17	T. Ring (Westmeath) ...	2-11	2	8.50
17	J. Flanagan (Tipperary) ...	2-11	4	4.25

Keher thus passed out the 1956 hurling high-point of 12-15 (51 points) scored in four games by Nick Rackard (Wexford). And Keating is a new leader for Munster.

Previous to this Jimmy Doyle (Tipperary) set the pace for the South with 36 points—a tally he reached in 1960 (6-18) in four games, and again in 1962 (4-24), also in four matches.

FOOTBALL

Points		Score	Games	Average
38	A. McTague (Offaly) ...	1-35	5	7.60
31	S. Leydon (Galway) ...	4-19	5	6.20
27	M. Kearins (Sligo) ...	0-27	3	9.00
26	E. Condrón (Laois) ...	3-17	4	6.50
23	D. Coughlan (Cork) ...	1-20	3	7.66

McTague equalled the football peak of 38 points established by Charlie Gallagher (Cavan) at 3-29 (38 points) in five games in 1965.

In Connacht, Cyril Dunne (Galway) was the pace-setter until this year with 0-28 in four games in 1964.

However, the outstanding impression that remains with me over the years is that Offaly lacked generalship up front.

The present attack may also not have a real director of strategy in the sense of a Sean O'Neill, Pat Griffin or Mattie McDonagh, but it still, nonetheless, is a highly efficient force.

It's a division that can display co-ordinated, fluid play, one bristling with industry and enthusiasm, and most important of all, a department that has been making the most of scoring opportunities.

Then, of course, there is also a man to match Donnelly's scoring feats in Tony McTague.

I think, too, that to-day's men have more to recommend them at midfield. Willie Bryan and

Kieran Claffey may not have exactly scaled the heights in the All-Ireland final, but here are two footballers of tremendous potential.

If it were possible to back this pair against any of the variety of combinations Offaly employed in the 1961 game (and they had at least three different pairings in operation during that game) I would be on the side of the All-Ireland medal winners.

Over and above all, I'm convinced that the present team is the best pure footballing combination I have ever seen from Offaly.

So, there you have the main reasons why I feel Willie Bryan and his men are entitled to rank as the Master Offaly team of all time. What do you think?

PLAYER'S

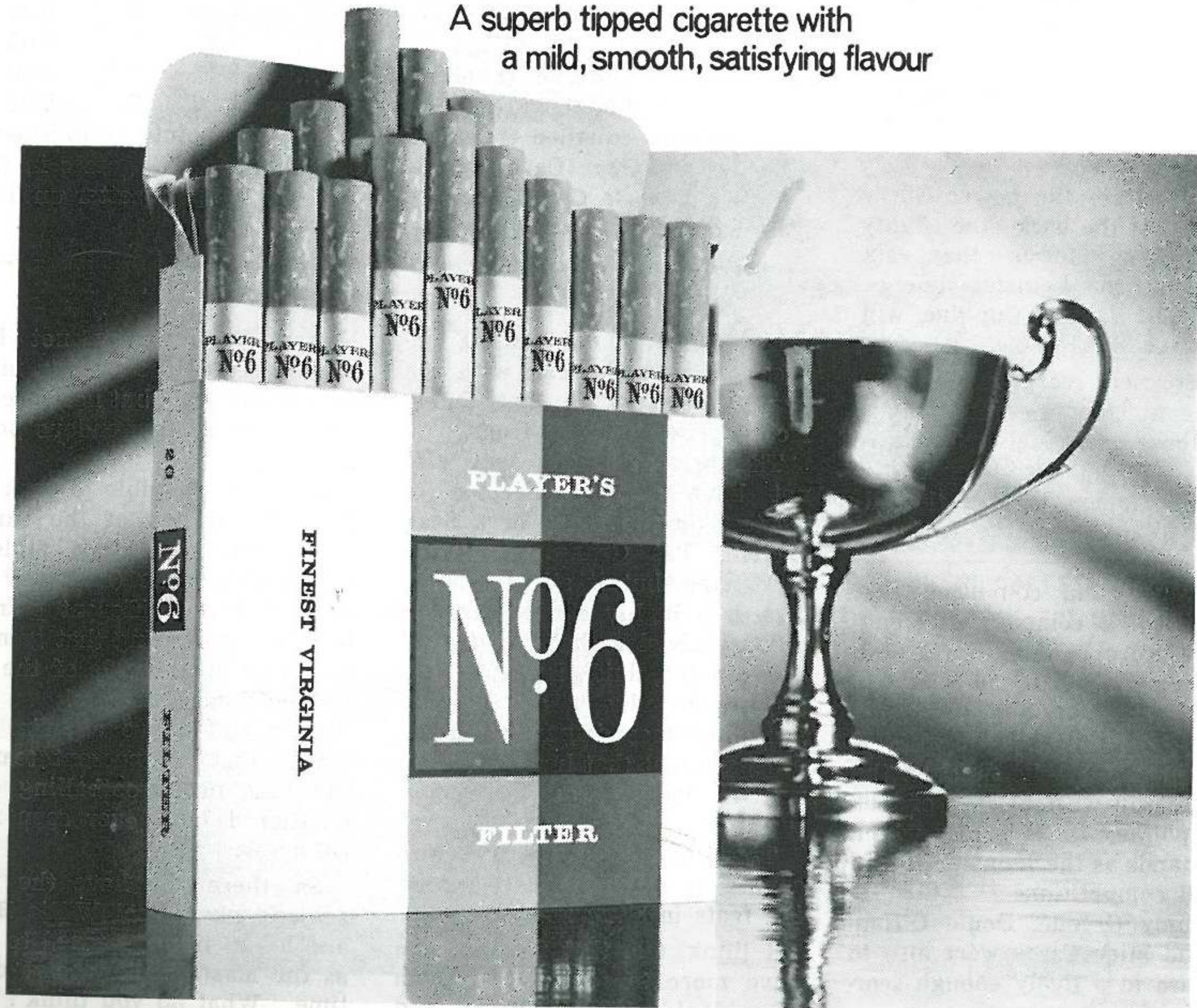
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Football Immortals

BOOK REVIEW by OWEN McCANN

"... IN THESE
PAGES,
PEOPLE AND
GAMES COME
TO LIFE
AGAIN"

—Pat Fanning

"READERS of 'The Football Immortals' will find themselves involved with famous players and participants in the memorable games and events that fill the pages of this exciting book. For this is no dreary narrative; in these pages people and games come to life again."

Thus writes Mr. Pat Fanning, President of the G.A.A., in the course of a Foreword to the important and mammoth production of virtually 400 pages of text and photographs that is the exciting new edition of Raymond Smith's "The Football Immortals."

And how right Mr. Fanning is! One could not get a more comprehensive, a more informative and a more entertaining review of all the great days, the great games and the great men in the long and colourful history of the game than this. In short, the high standard set by the first edition in 1968, which proved such an outstanding success, is proudly maintained.

It would be wrong to assume, however, that this latest edition is merely an up-dated version of that of three years ago. Certainly, all the major happenings in football in the meantime are covered splendidly, including Kerry's successful World tour.

But the 1971 book covers a great deal more. There is a completely new selection of superb pictures, ranging from a splendid action shot in colour on the cover to a sequence that

vividly captures the full brilliance of D. J. Crowley's goal in the 1970 All-Ireland final, from prints illustrating some of the matchless skills of such as Mick O'Connell and Sean O'Neill to those always so interesting and nostalgic team photographs.

An exciting new dimension is also provided by the opening chapters spotlighting memorable days author Smith spent in the company of Mick O'Connell on Valentia Island in the summer of 1970.

Here we learn much of the Mick O'Connell away from the

roar of the crowd. Of his life on the island, his belief that there must be constant practice if perfection is to be maintained, and how a leaf on a branch of a tree can play a part in his practise of a running leap.

Here, too, we learn of his tributes to such as Jim McKeever (Derry), ("The finest fielder of the ball I have met at midfield"), and that he feared the wind at Croke Park more than anything else on the day of an All-Ireland semi-final or final.

These opening four chapters
● OVERLEAF



● A happy group pictured at the reception sponsored by Player-Wills (Ireland) Limited to launch the new edition of "The Football Immortals". (L. to R.): Niall O'Flynn, Public Relations Manager, Player-Wills; Kevin Beahan, former Louth footballer; Senator John Doyle, former Tipperary hurler; Raymond Smith, the author; Paddy McCormack, Offaly, and Bobby Beggs, former Galway footballer.

● FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

are among the most absorbing I have ever come across. In this section, too, the author chronicles the earlier, epoch-making events up to 1930.

"By means of this flash-back technique, I hope to show how the tradition created by men like Dick Fitzgerald, 'Aeroplane' O'Shea and Con Brosnan forged that pride in the Green and Gold which inspired O'Connell to the dedication which has made him the idol of the young", writes Raymond Smith in the book. He has succeeded admirably in that aim.

The chapters from the 'Thirties have been retained from the 1968 edition, and are enhanced by in-depth coverage of the top games right up to the 1971 All-Ireland Galway-Down semi-final. Everything you want to know about Kerry's memorable and ambitious world tour is here, too.

The narrative ends where it

began, back again on Valentia Island last summer, spotlighting O'Connell on the great players and his views on retirement.

Weigh in a comprehensive records section, with the results of all the All-Ireland senior finals, the National League deciders, and the Railway Cup games, as well

"For this second edition of "The Football Immortals" the author is indebted to Joe Walsh Tours Ltd., who, I understand, have contributed generously, and, with Player-Wills and the support of other concerns have made it possible for the author to pursue necessary research and enabled the publishers to produce a really attractive edition."

PADRAIG Ó FAININ,
(Uachtaran C.L.G.)

as the teams for the Championship and interprovincial deciders, and it all adds up to incredibly good value for money at only 50 pence.

The book is also superbly produced.

After all this it may seem churlish to make one small criticism. I do feel, however, that it was a mistake to omit the index. I found this an invaluable reference guide in the 1968 edition, and I know I am going to miss the index in the future as I repeatedly turn to the 1971 edition for reference work.

However, this is a small point, and if you fail to buy this book you will miss out on a lot.

The Football Immortals. A Popular History of Gaelic Football by Raymond Smith. With a foreword by Mr. Pat Fanning, President of the G.A.A. Printed and published by Dublin Creative Press Ltd., Creation House, Botanic Avenue, Dublin 9, for 50p.

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They want Cork out of the under-age games!

SHOULD Cork be debarred from under-age competition? The question reminds me of the yarn about Sonny Liston in training for a fight with somebody when poor old Sonny was belting the noggins off everybody.

The pressmen visited his camp and one of them who, like some of the professional journalist friends of mine (who shall be nameless this time) wanted the world to know he was a knowledgeable chap, said to Sonny, "Are you punching as hard as you used to, Champ? You don't seem to be hitting with the same power."

"Punchin' hard?" rumbled the big lump of ebony. "Listen feller, if I punch any harder dose guys won't even show up."

Sonny was muscle-bound from beating those fellows around just then but nobody suggested he should be debarred just to give the others a chance. Cork this year have contested four under-age finals, winning three. So we talk about ruling them out. Now I'm not particularly fond of Corkmen myself—I've met too many of them—but a championship is a competition in which the idea is to nominate the best, usually the hard way. To aim at anything less is just silly.

One reason Cork has been doing well in the under-age

games is because of the playing population. Must an area be penalised because of the modern trend in urbanisation or because decent Corkmen rush their wives over the county bounds from places like Bennetsbridge and Bohola to have their sons delivered in Cork? Or should Cork dismiss the good teachers, lay and clerical, the good organisers and the selectors just because the boys trained hard to win?

The championships must continue as they are and if Cork don't win another for years we must just sit and moan away about it. Cork have won a lot; the county has also lost a lot, and you'll notice it's the chaps who are used to being beaten take it best in the end and also take their gains with a champion's humility.

Between 1903 and 1919 Cork won no All-Ireland. I wasn't moaning then simply because I wasn't around, but it was one of the things that upset my father till the day he died, for he talked about two finals in which he said Cork should have been crowned champions. But I was around from '54 to '66 and during which no senior cup came to the Lee and I certainly did moan enough. So, just because Cork is up now, in under-age games, is no reason for all the rest to commit suicide.

Most of the counties don't take as much notice, I think, of the minor and under-21 competitions and so to win is difficult. "The difficult takes time, the impossible a little longer," said Napoleon, an old friend of the family's and that's the motto for those who want to get places in any sphere.

We talk about try, try and try again and we tell yarns about weary Robert Bruce lying bated out on the flat of his back in an Antrim cave watching a spider trying to swing himself from one side to another on his silken line. Friend spider just wasn't getting anywhere. Neither was Robert in his laudable desire to hunt the English south of the Scots border. In the end the spider gritted his molars, and with one mighty swing caught on to the other side of the cave. The web was begun. Up jumped Robert with a hurroo, galloped madly back across the sea, and started all over again to belt the English with an energy something fierce, and put the run on them south of the border.

Trying to win an All-Ireland in games is not quite as serious and not as hard either, so perhaps we should talk less about the Bruces of this life and just get out and follow their example. The country is full of young footballers and there are a fair number of hurlers also who would make the grade if they were trained as carefully as the present champions, and here I take a moment off to point out that the excellent Mayo minor football team which beat Cork in the final didn't grow overnight on the nearest bush.

The next and very natural question is: why don't Cork win more senior championships?

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The Cork minor hurlers of 1971—Still champions of All-Ireland.

● FROM PAGE 21

Well, the county wins a fair number of hurling cups and it wouldn't be good for the game if they won much more. As I have often mentioned, the spirit of Jim Barry hovers benignly over the teams at half time and if there is a lessening in Leaside fire after the interval it's all for the good of the weaker counties.

In football, the reason the senior team hasn't won much for the last twenty-five years or so is because they aren't good enough. This year they were too young and lacking in the power that lit up Croke Park on a rainy day and brought the cup to the county that dearly and deservedly wanted it. In football, Cork simply isn't ready to win a senior All-Ireland and may not be for another few years. The average age of the present bunch is about twenty-three and unless there are a few real stars that's too young.

In fact, there is no guarantee at all that the under-age star will become a senior monarch. One reason is that he may not train as hard when he is bereft

of the close guidance available in his younger days and the other is that the lads in the rest of the country who are not coached as consistently in the pre-21 era may become integrated with teams already formidable who have that coaching and training. Men like these not only play good football but they stick so close to you on the field that you can hear their hair grow. In that atmosphere the under-age champion who has not grown up, doesn't stand a chance.

This is not necessarily true in the case of the Cork under-age champions. I would like to see them have another three years before we get impatient. Just now there are so many questions being asked about them one could think that instead of being an average age of twenty-three they were being wheeled around a geriatric ward.

Should the under-age dual star concentrate on one game? Yes, I think so. Concentration in any sphere if allied to normal ability must bring success in proportion to that ability. When ability is dissipated

the results are usually not so good for the diverse activity demands above average ability and not all the dual stars, as we so blithely call them, have this.

Usually they are simply good ball-players and when they are well known in the top class they are carefully and sometimes unceremoniously herded out of the game. We have had good men playing well in the two games but I always think how much they would have been just that bit better had they concentrated on one, say worked at inter-county football and aspired to good senior club hurling. There's an old Persian seanfhocal saying "Ní thig leis an ngobadán an dá thráigh a fhreastail" and a gobadán could fly.

So there you are. Instead of banning Cork from under-age competition why not congratulate the county on its deserved success and point her out to the rest as an example of what leadership and guidance does for youth?

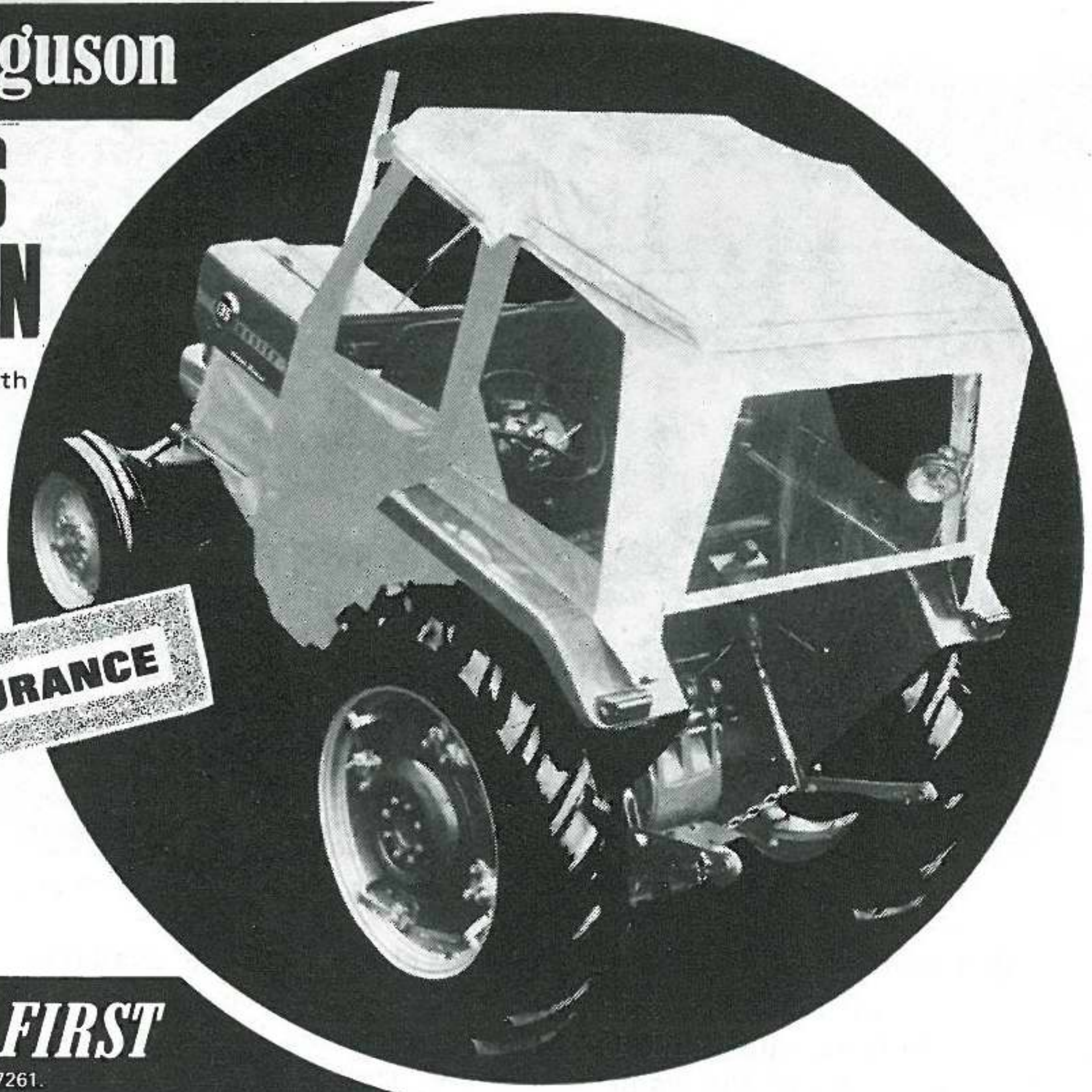
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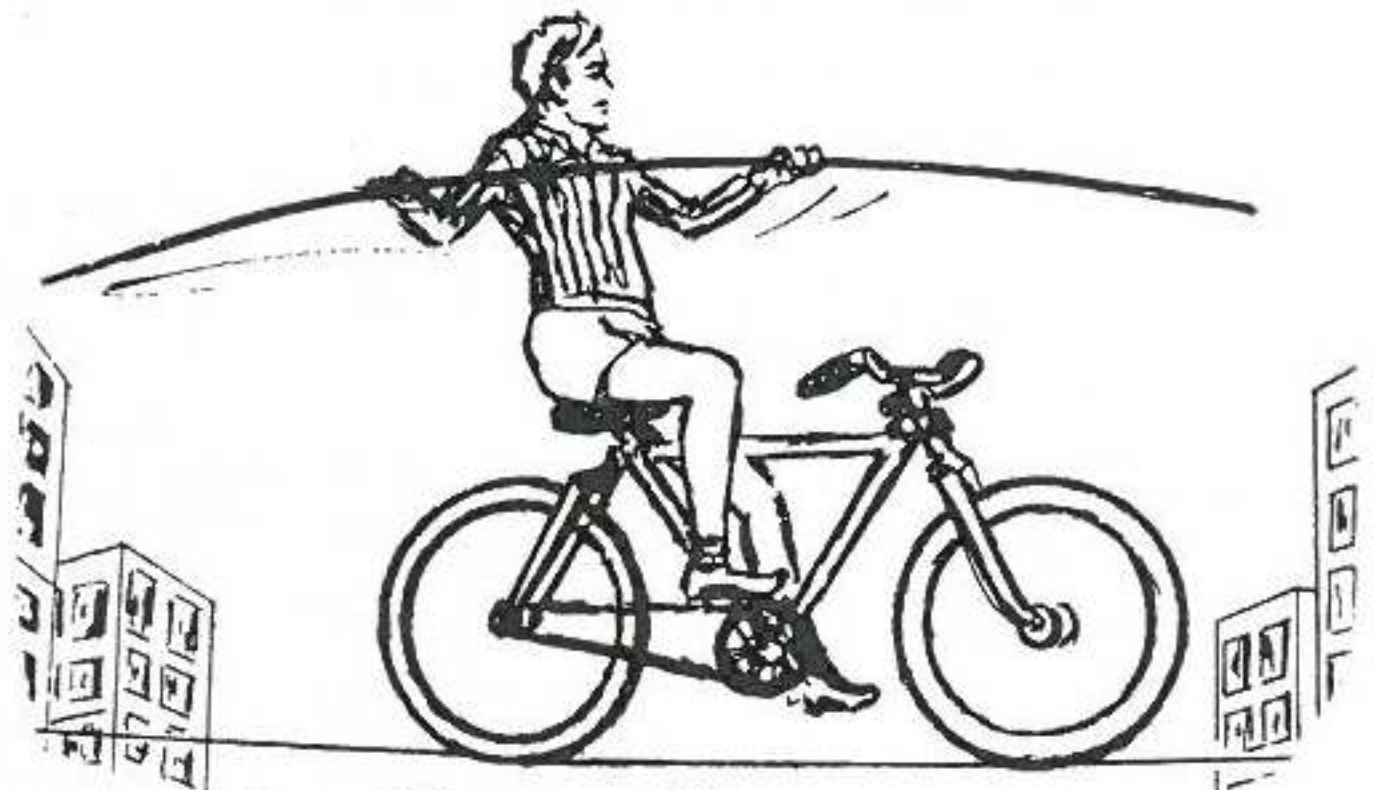


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DO YOU WANT TO SEE NEXT YEAR'S ALL IRELAND?

WHEN you consider the hundreds of G.A.A. matches played almost every Sunday of the year and the distances faithful followers travel to them, you will realise that G.A.A. fans use the roads very extensively. And nowadays, travel means danger. In 1969, the number killed on Irish roads was 462. The position was much worse in 1970, when a total of 540 met their deaths and this year, so far, the toll looks like being even heavier and setting a new record. It now seems almost inevitable that in the three year period ending on 31st December next no less than

1,500 of our people will have met tragic, untimely, and in many cases unnecessary, deaths. The statistics show that more than half the accidents happen on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, so it will be realised that in travelling to matches followers must take particular care to ensure that gaiety or enthusiasm will not interfere with the serious business of driving.

In the past ten years or so, traffic on Irish roads has doubled and with the increase in danger the Minister for Local Government has been making praiseworthy efforts to keep the public reminded of their obligations to themselves and to others on the roads. With the use of television, radio, the cinema and the newspapers to spread the message of road safety, there can hardly be a driver in the country who has not heard wise words of advice in one form or another. Unfortunately, however, there is plenty of evidence to show that a lot of the advice is going unheeded and that a great number of drivers are not obeying the regulations which are there for their own safety.

We ask each of our readers to ask himself if he is one of those who is contributing to the present tragic situation.

Do you work on the land? If you do, the chances are that you drive a tractor—and these can be dangerous too. Only too often we read of tragic deaths in overturning accidents, either on the roads or on the farm. Over a year ago, regulations were introduced compelling the owners of newly-registered tractors to fit them with safety frames and this again was done only after careful consideration by the Minister for Local Government and after it had been proved that the safety frame saves the life of the driver if his tractor overturns. But supposing your tractor is not

that new? Well, the chances are that it will last for many years to come, and it could in that time kill or injure yourself, a member of your family, or one of your workers. Why not get a safety frame fitted to it, even though the law does not compel you, and work it with an easy mind?

Most people are conscientious in their ordinary day-to-day lives, but they are often less particular in their use of the roads, and this is a pity, since it is on the roads of today that people are doing more harm to each other than in any walk of life. Every vehicle has a number of essential safety features, and under the Road Traffic Acts the owner is legally obliged to keep them up to scratch. Perhaps he can get away with neglecting them, for the time being—but he shouldn't congratulate himself on that, because these laws are there for the protection of himself and the general public. Do you arrange for a regular mechanical check on your vehicle? Or do you depend on what has come to be known as "crisis maintenance"? If you do, you'll hardly keep on escaping the consequences of your own negligence. If your vehicle is serviced regularly it prevents excessive wear to valuable parts and is cheaper in the long run. Naturally, the first thing you'll think of is brakes, and it is essential that these be kept in perfect condition. But there are other vital items too. It is illegal to drive with bad tyres, and that is because they skid so easily and can kill you if one of them bursts while you are travelling at even a moderate speed. So, if you have a bald tyre, get it replaced without delay. Your steering, lights and wipers are also vitally important and their effectiveness can mean literally the difference between life and death, either to yourself or somebody else.

AT LAST, THE GREAT REWARD

IT is always a pleasure to welcome a new name to the list of All-Ireland champions in any grade, but when the newcomers are listed in the select ranks of senior football-title holders, and when that honour is achieved by a county that has striven patiently for success through most of a decade, the pleasure is increased twenty-fold.

Certainly, if ever a county has earned the right to a senior title it is Offaly, designated as Leinster's Faithful County by that doyen of Secretaries, Martin O'Neill, nearly five and twenty years ago.

Those were the days when, despite every adversity Sean Robins and Seamus Cloonan were doing such tremendous work for the native games around Birr and Tullamore, and Offaly was sending out teams year after year in every grade, despite the fact that victory in any really important event obstinately refused to smile on the tricolour banners.

I, and many another one besides me, remembers a time when we were all a bit surprised at seeing an Offaly man selected to referee an All-Ireland senior football final, and, at that stage, who would have believed the strides the county was yet to

lively and thrilling hour. But the dauntless Cork lads kept coming back at them and the excitement in the closing minutes was tremendous as, with Offaly leading by a single point, Cork kept hammering away at the Railway goal.

With the last seconds ticking away, Cork staged an all-out offensive that seemed certain to yield a goal, but with absolute disregard for personal safety, the Offaly goalkeeper brought off a great save. He went down in the process, and a Cork forward sought to harry the ball over the last inches past the line. But the referee intervened to give a free out and Offaly survived to gain that very first football title. After the long whistle I remember looking at my programme to ascertain that Offaly goalman's name. I have no reason to forget it since, because he was the same man as is between the posts almost ever since, Martin Furlong from Tullamore.

Indeed there were an astonishing number of those Offaly

ingly headed for the greatest margin of victory ever recorded in a Leinster senior football final.

But maybe they became complacent, maybe they had run themselves out of steam, or maybe they misjudged this first 80 minute game.

Anyway, dauntless Meath came back at them in astounding fashion and after the greatest

provincial final I have ever seen, or ever hope to see, Meath emerged narrow winners of a memorable thriller.

After that footballing folk began to shake their heads about this Offaly side. People began saying that maybe they hadn't got what was wanted when the chips were really down, and certainly it looked, in some of their

● TO PAGE 28

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OFFALY

take?

True, I had seen the Offaly-men play Kilkenny in a Leinster senior hurling final at Croke Park away back in my childhood, but they had never been heard of again at senior level in all the years I was following hurling round the provincial circuit.

They did produce some strong footballers, and around the middle forties they were among the top-ranking footballers in Leinster, but break through into the big time they never could.

A decade later they started to come again, and again they were foiled more than once when victory seemed within their grasp.

Finally the legend began to grow that Offaly just could not win a big game in Croke Park, but finally they broke out of Leinster at last, on a wet day in 1960, and it was, I suppose, a rather remarkable coincidence that the rains came again on the last Sunday in this September to see them win the Sam Maguire Cup for the first time.

Anyway, in 1960 and 1961, had they got the breaks, Offaly might well have been All-Ireland champions instead of Down. A kick of the ball is all there ever was between them, and luck was cruel to Offaly in both years.

The seniors wilted a bit after that, but then came 1964 and a fine minor side set the bonfires blazing from Clonbullogue to Clonmacnois. These youngsters from the O'Connor County swept right through the championship until the final, and there they led resurgent Cork through a



Tony McTague



Martin Furlong

youngsters whose names have been growing more and more familiar as the years roll by, John Smith, Mick Ryan, Willie Bryan, Jody Gunning, Eugene Mulligan, and of course the Golden Boy of Offaly football ever since then, Tony McTague from Ferbane.

Most of them marched on together to reach an All-Ireland under-21 final but failed to Derry. Then, in 1969 they came storming out of Leinster for the third time, went right on to the All-Ireland against Kerry but just lacked the final touch of 'savvy' that might have brought them glory.

Undaunted, they came back to win the Grounds Tournament final, and came out in the 1970 season among the warmest favourites ever for the Leinster senior title. Against Meath in Croke Park that day I have never seen any Offaly side play football of such bewildering brilliance and they went to their dressing-room at half-time seem-

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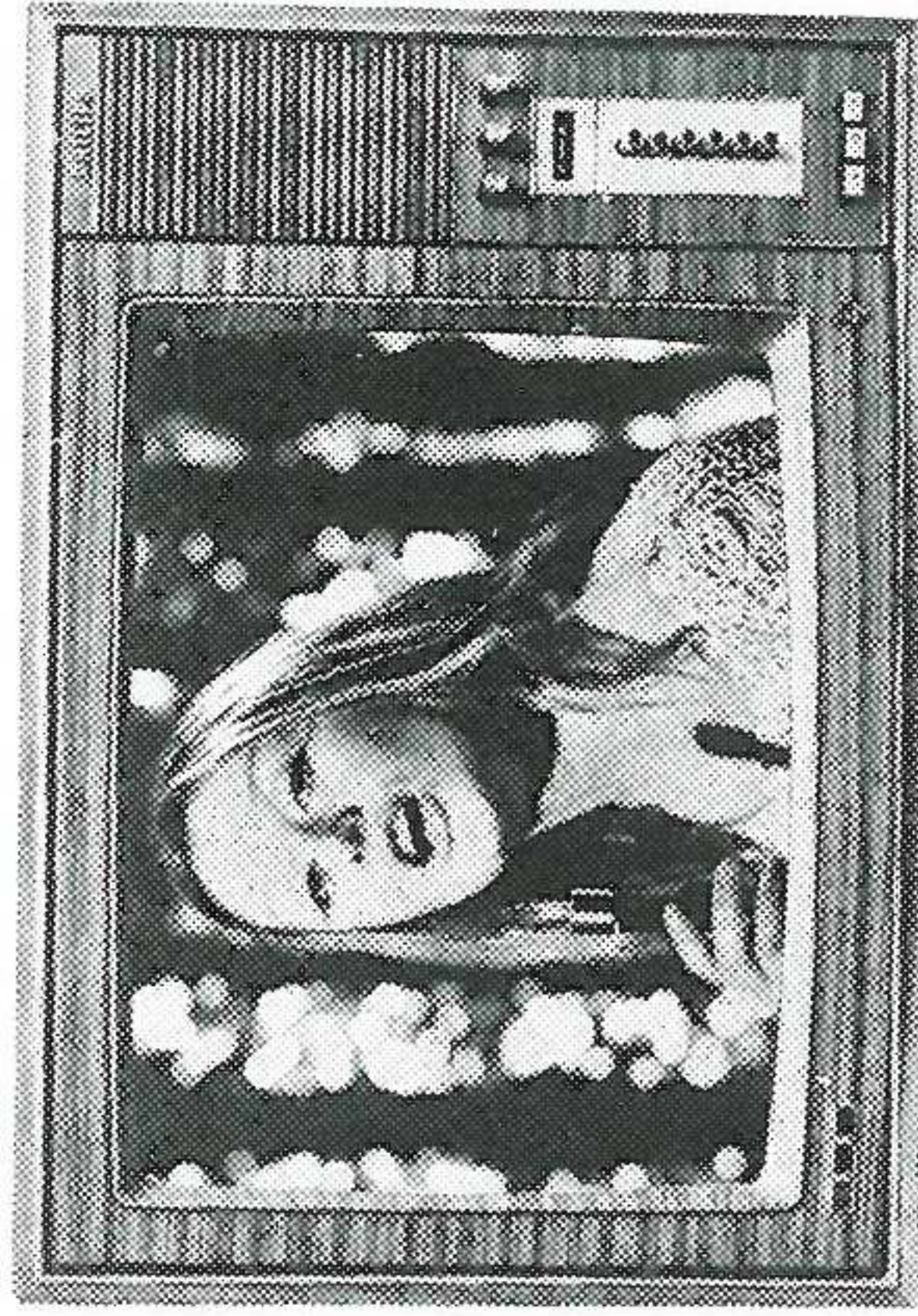
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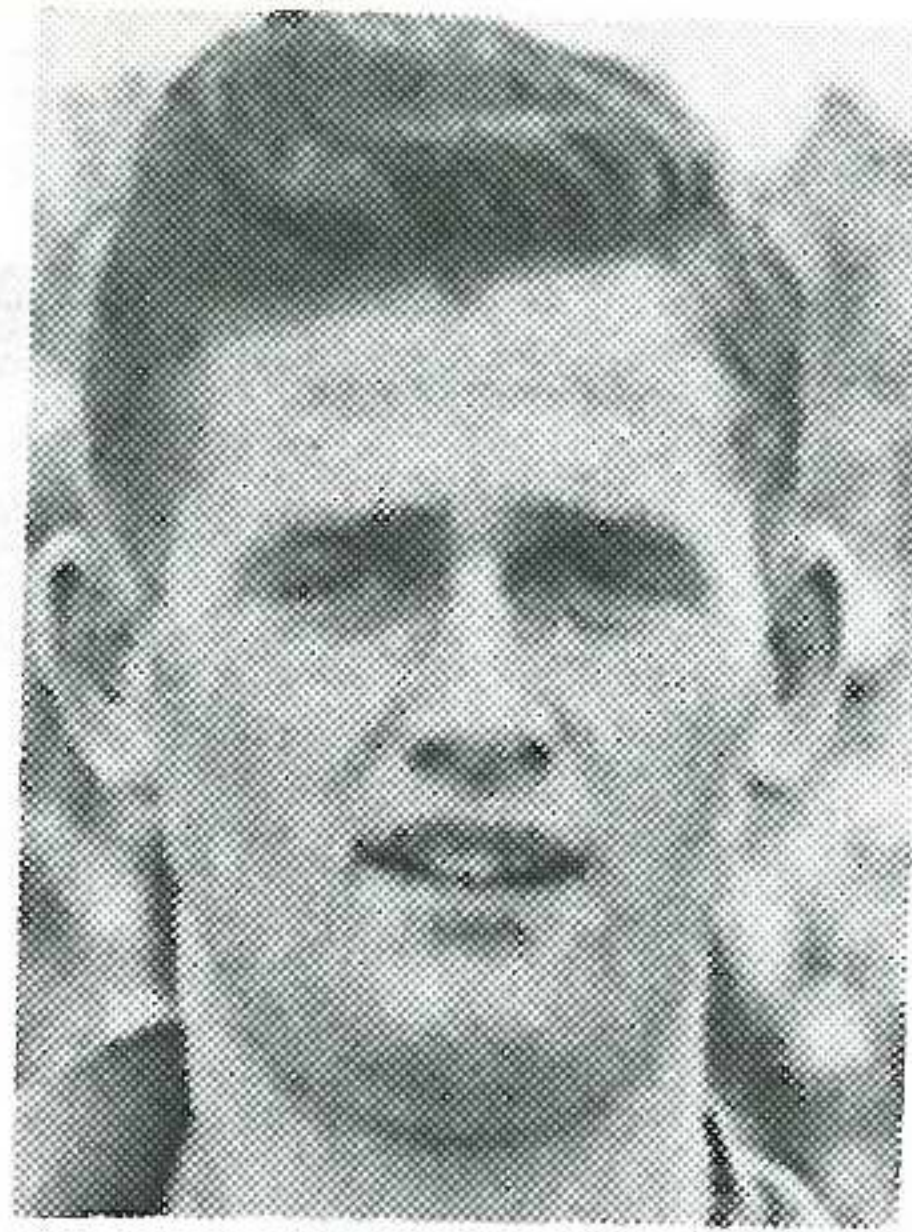
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● FROM PAGE 27

League matches at the back end of last season, that they had lost some at least of their faith in themselves.

But then came the spring and as they girded themselves for the new campaign the writing was really on the wall for anyone to read. They held Kerry to a draw at Tralee, they walloped Galway at Ballinasloe, and if they were not all that impressive when accounting for Longford in their first championship game at Mullingar, they did a good day's work when accounting for their close neighbours Laois at Portlaoise where few teams can travel all that hopefully. And of course they really set tongues wagging when they fairly obliterated in the Leinster final a Kildare side whose supporters had fondly hoped was going to revive at long last the ancient glories of the Lily White.

Cork, having given All-Ireland



Paddy McCormack

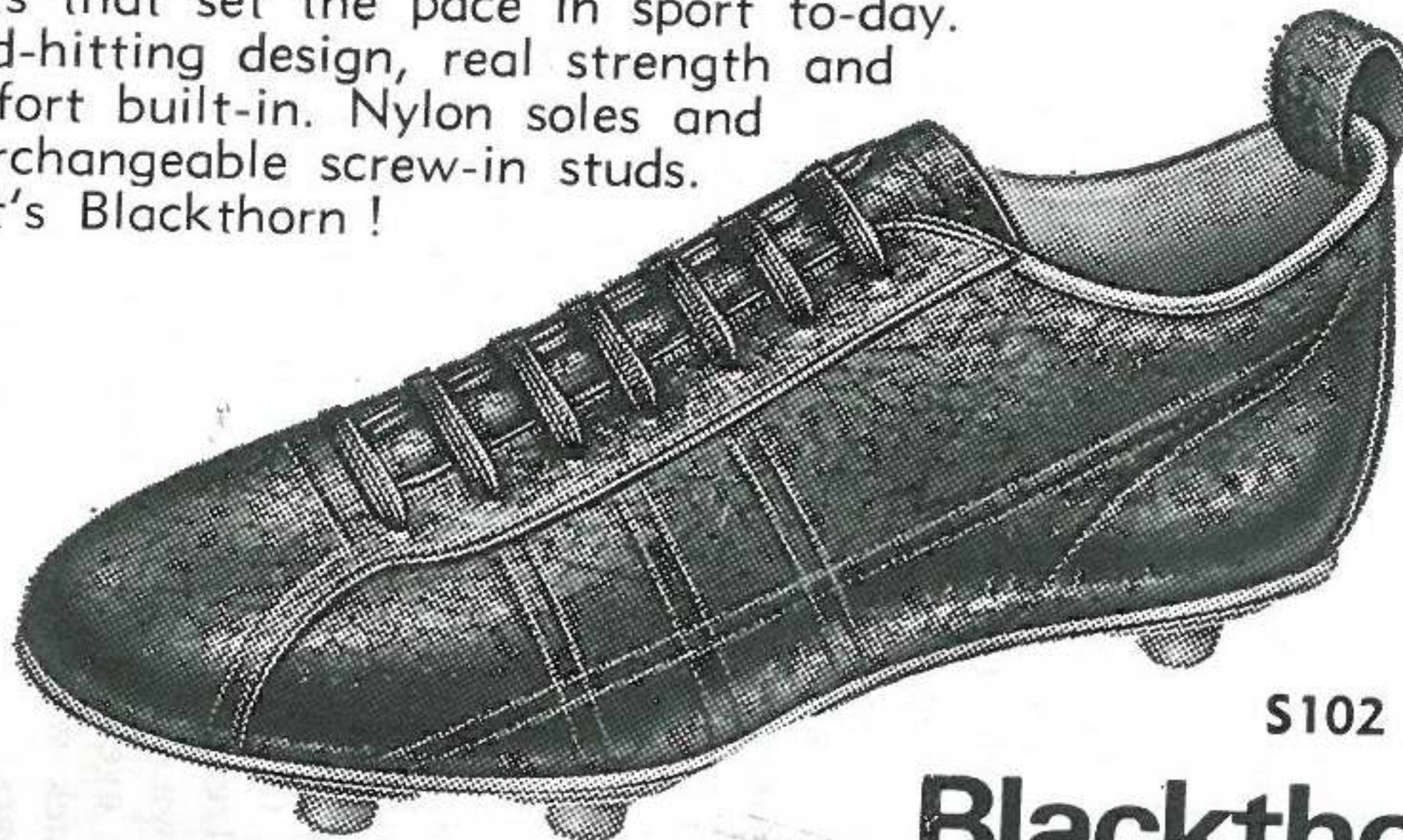
champions Kerry a six-point start and an eleven-point beating in the Munster decider, were confident enough facing Offaly in the semi-final, but Offaly won far more decisively than their final margin suggested and so in popular esteem went firm favourites into the final against Galway.

That final is history now, and not a single moment of it will ever be forgotten in Offaly, but the fact remains that for two teams of such talent the football was never memorable and often mediocre. However, the closing stages compensated in excitement for anything the game may have lacked in classic football, and when it was all over, the Offaly players, mentors, officials and followers at last had seen the day the county had awaited for more than 80 years, the day a senior All-Ireland title was brought home to the Faithful County.

As we watched the scenes of almost tearful enthusiasm that followed the last whistle a Tipperary man near me said. "Tis a good job all that rain came. Otherwise they'd light so many bonfires they could burn the whole county." "Yerrah," said I, "wouldn't it be worth it, after striving so long."

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THE PURCELLS OF HANDBALL

By ALLEYMAN

HAVE you ever been to Ballymore Eustace in Co. Kildare? Perhaps on your way to better known Blessington, you may have fringed on the village, but certainly if you have had any handballing interests, its compact ballcourt must have been your rendezvous at some stage or other.

I watched a game there a few Sundays ago and as the marks came rolling back in crystal-clear tones from the front of the gallery, I paused for a moment and looked for the marker.

Here, in fact, was an official who, for so long has passed unheralded and unsung, that it was time to focus the spotlight on him for a spell.

For such is Doctor Purcell. Unobtrusively he has worked zealously for handball in Ballymore Eustace and Kildare, and like many great officials has invariably shirked the limelight. Yet, when there is a game to be refereed or marked, a journey to be made to any alley in the country, or a word of encouragement required by a Kildare player, the esteemed Doctor is always at hand.

Thus, the Purcell story commences, and it is hardly just coincidence that the Doctor's sons, Dan, Billy, Matt, James and Paddy, were not alone proficient players from an early age but, like their father, keenly interested in every aspect of the game.

Their early development in a handballing sense makes interesting reading, their latter escap-

ades are marked with triumph, but as in all successful stories, with tragedy also.

On February 21, 1963, Paddy who had reached the minor hard-doubles final the previous season, was abruptly snatched from this earthly scene, and at once an irreplaceable void appeared in the Purcell family and in the Kildare handballing picture.

I remember Paddy turning in a few magnificent performances—he was equally good at both softball and hardball—and his stylish touches earmarked him as a player who would reach the top.

Modesty was his greatest characteristic, for he appeared completely oblivious to his own capabilities—a fact which probably accounted for the nerves he was inclined to show in the ballcourt.

Besides handball, Paddy was also a recognised cross country runner, and while at school was not found wanting at football either.

The young Purcells spent their earlier days in Dublin, but in 1947 moved to Naas, and in 1950 to their present home in Ballymore Eustace. The encouragement of their father and the proximity of the alley spurred in them a desire for handball

From 1953 onwards their names have in turn been making handball news whether in colleges, club or inter-county competition.

Matt, who was the best player in the family, had the unique distinction of representing Kildare in all four minor grades for four

successive years. In 1958 at the tender age of 15 he took his first All-Ireland title when partnered by Robin Winders, a feat which he repeated in 1960 with Jackie Byrne.

That same year Matt also landed the elusive hard-singles trophy. His final year in the minor grade, 1961, should have been the crowning one of his career but having qualified as the Kildare representative in the four grades, injury and illness caught up with him and it proved to be rather a nightmare season.

In 1963 Matt transferred his allegiance to Dublin, the county of his birth, and played in both the hard singles and doubles. In the latter with Mick Sullivan as partner, he won a Leinster title, but was beaten in the All-Ireland semi-final by the Gilmores of Cavan.

While Matt is best remembered as a player, anybody who attended the Annual Congress in 1962 cannot forget the efforts he made to revolutionise the game with his "time-basis" motions.

He was unsuccessful, but there is no doubt that the changes that have taken place in the meantime can be partially attributed to him.

Meantime, the other members of the family still continue to give unstinted service to the game. Indeed one could write a volume on the "Purcells of Handball".

As a unit they have spared no effort in fostering the game and it in turn has greatly benefitted by their presence.

JUNIORS STOLE SHOW

THE highlight of the camogie year has through the last decade been All-Ireland day at Croke Park, but it was an odd thing this year that the highlight of Final Day was not the senior

game between Cork and Wexford but the curtain-raiser, the junior decider between Dublin and Cork.

True the standard of play in the senior game has rarely if ever been higher but maybe it

was because of the high excitement that marked the closing stages of the junior game, while the senior final became, long before the end, something of an anti-climax.

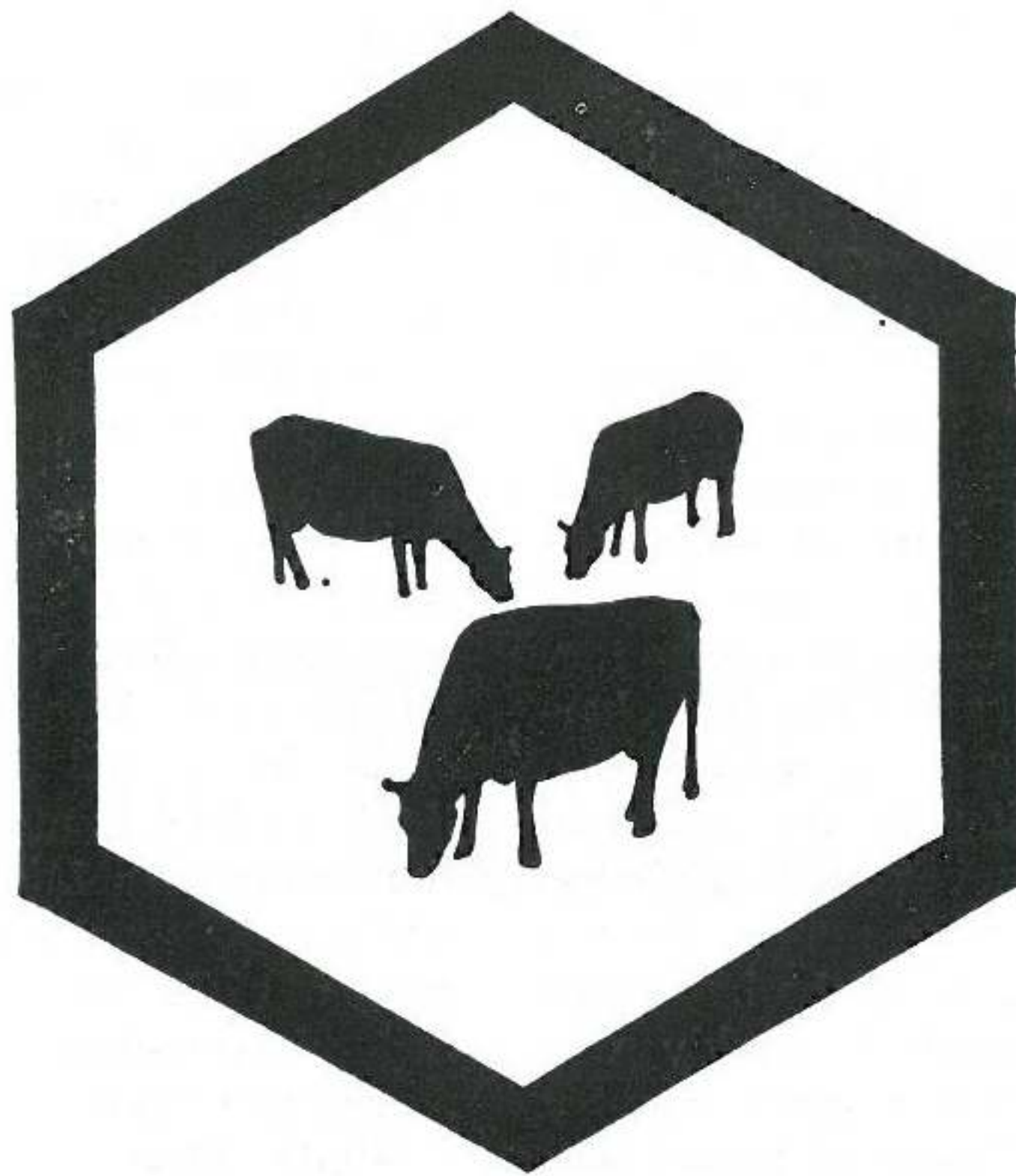
That was probably because shortly after the restart there could be few further doubts as to the outcome. Once Cork broke a long Wexford siege and broke away for their fourth goal there could only be one result, and though the standard of play remained consistently high, the competitive interest had gone, as far as players and spectators alike were concerned.

But that was a result that looked anything but likely through most of the opening twenty minutes of this game when not alone did Wexford make much of the early running but the Leinster champions must have been well ahead were it not for some really superb goal-keeping by Eleanor Cummins who on my book was the outstanding star of the day for the winners.

In addition there was the brilliant defence of the whole Cork rearguard with Marie Costin and Hannah Dinneen particularly brilliant.

Then just before the interval came a quick rush of well-taken Cork scores by Anne Comerford and young Rosie Hennessy and from these hammerblows Wexford never really recovered.

In fairness to the losers, they made a tremendous effort in the eight or ten minutes after the resumption, when they fairly swarmed around the Cork posts, but again they met with an absolutely unyielding defence and when Cork broke away for an-



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other great goal from Rosie Hennessy there could be no further fate but that the O'Duffy Cup was destined to stay by the Lee for at least another year.

So Cork proved very conclusively their right to the proud title of All-Ireland champions, a further fitting tribute to the tremendous work that has been done for the game in the county in recent years by those most conscientious of officials Lil O'Grady and Mary Moran. As for Wexford, on the day they were well beaten, but one could not help but feel that this was not their true form. They seemed to lose their earlier self-confidence when Cork took those vital scores so well just before the interval. Nor will I ever be convinced that the Wexford mentors did not help hamper their own cause when they moved Margaret O'Leary back from midfield after the interval. The great player from Buffer's Alley was too far removed from the scene of action when Wexford made their big effort immediately after the restart. Had she been then at midfield she might well have engineered the scores her county then needed so badly but so narrowly failed to get.

But as I have said earlier it was the junior game that provided the high excitement of the day, although the standard of play did not measure up to that of the senior sides.

This was especially so in the first-half when the occasion seemed to be weighing heavily on both sides who were more intent on not making a mistake than in trying to play with the carefree ease of which both teams were capable.

But when the tension wore off in the second half, we saw some really fast and spectacular camogie. Excitement mounted steadily as Cork cut the arrears to two points and then went ahead

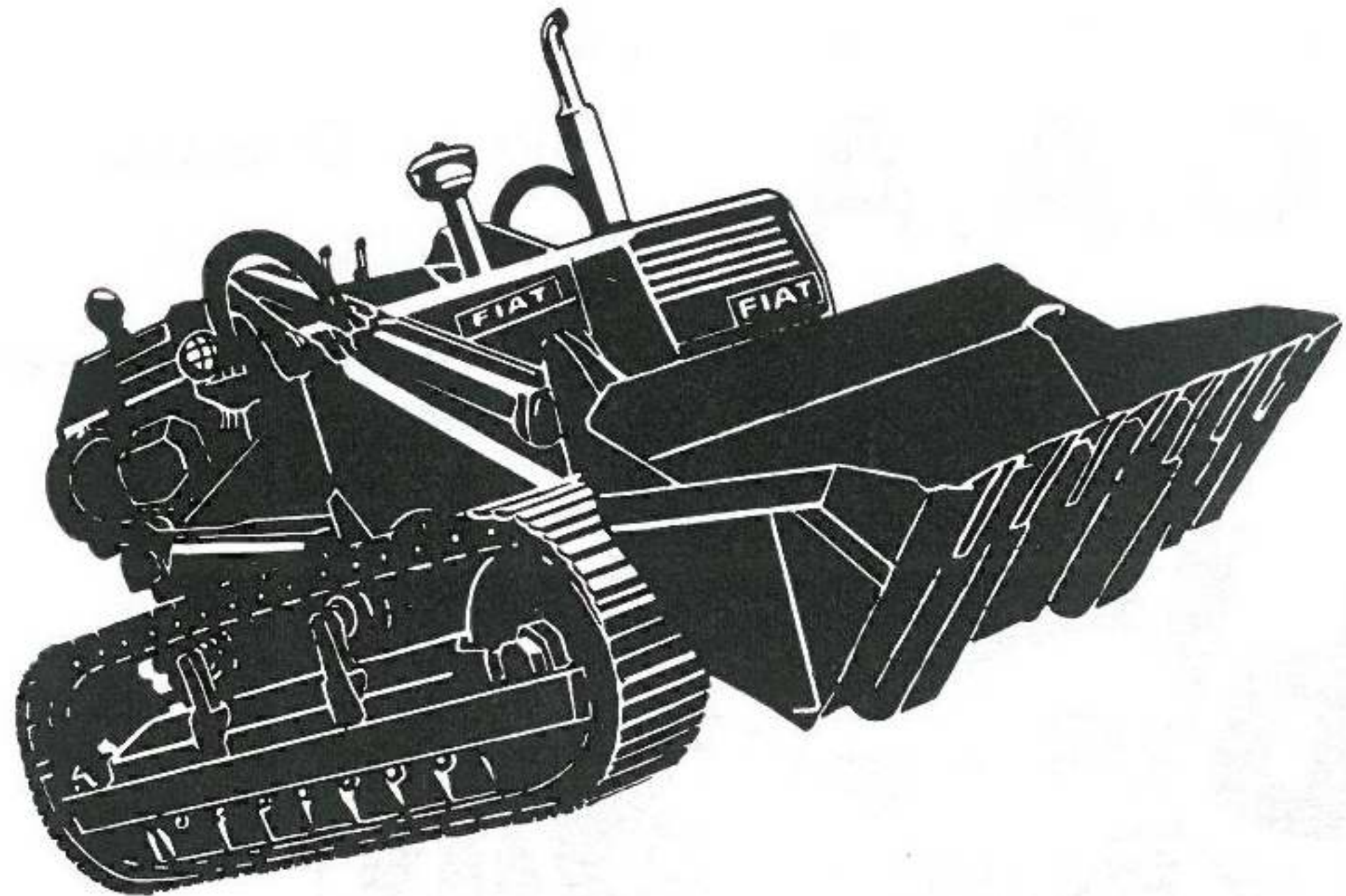
with a goal. Dublin edged in front again and were a goal clear when Cork threw everything into a last all-out onslaught. But though the ball was driven to the very goal-line, the Dublin defence admirably marshalled by their captain, Pat Morrissey, refused to yield, and the holders survived, but by no more than an inch or two.

Again the Dublin defence took

most of the honours with Mary Raymond another brilliant goalkeeper and Jenny Dooley a wonderful fullback. Farther afield, Marion Conroy, Miriam Higgins and Evelyn Sweeney were all impressive.

As for a game Cork side they must be wondering what they have to do to win a junior title for this was their third narrow defeat in four seasons.

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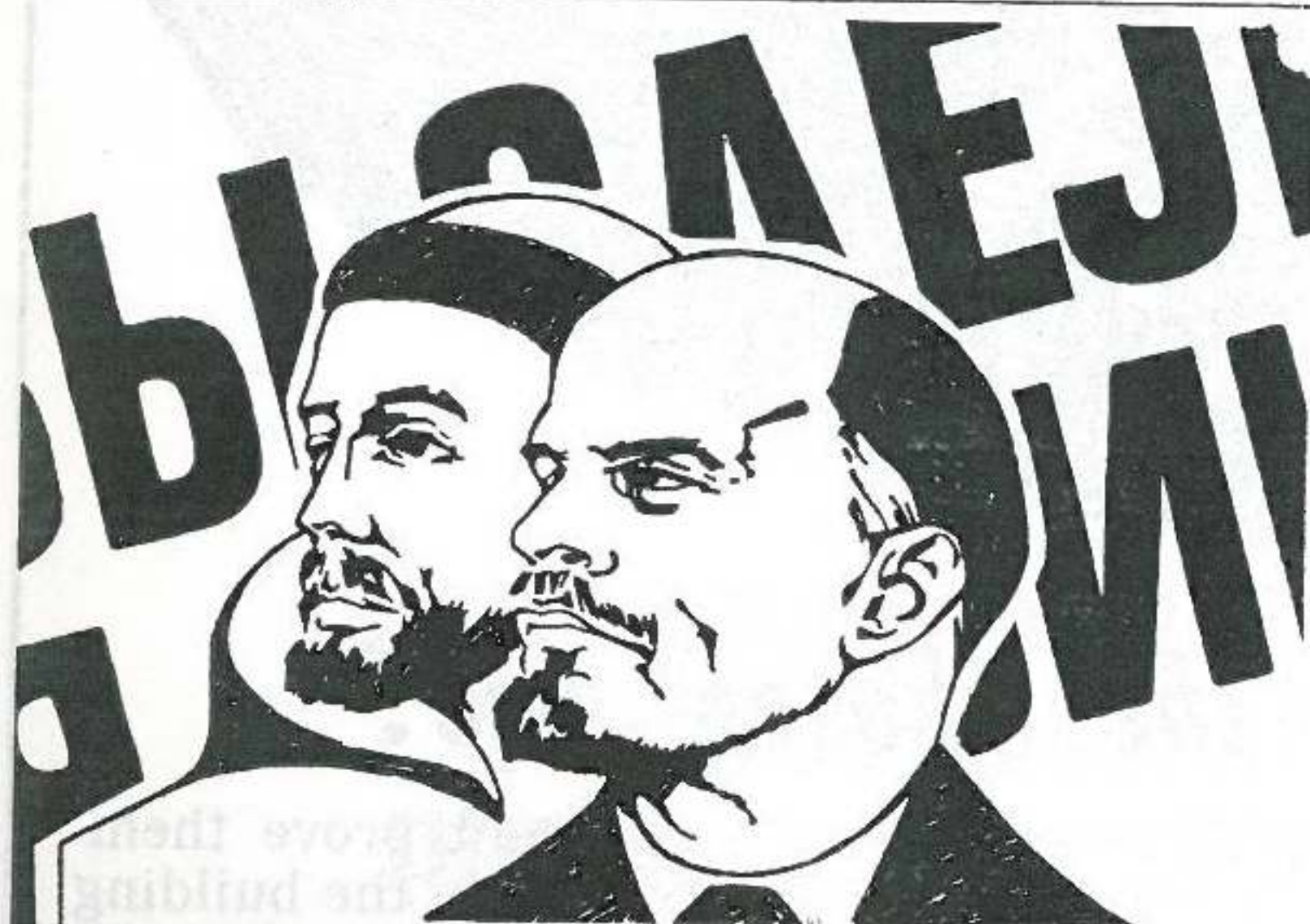
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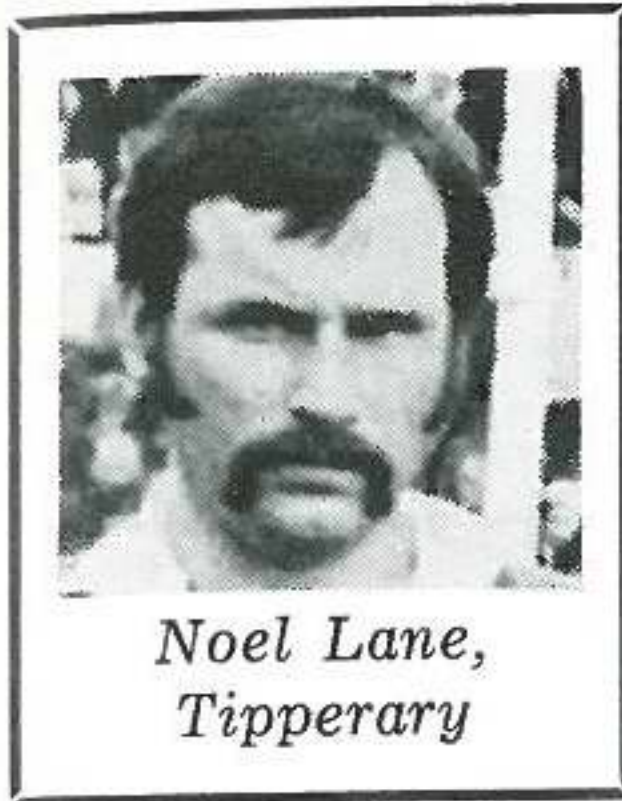
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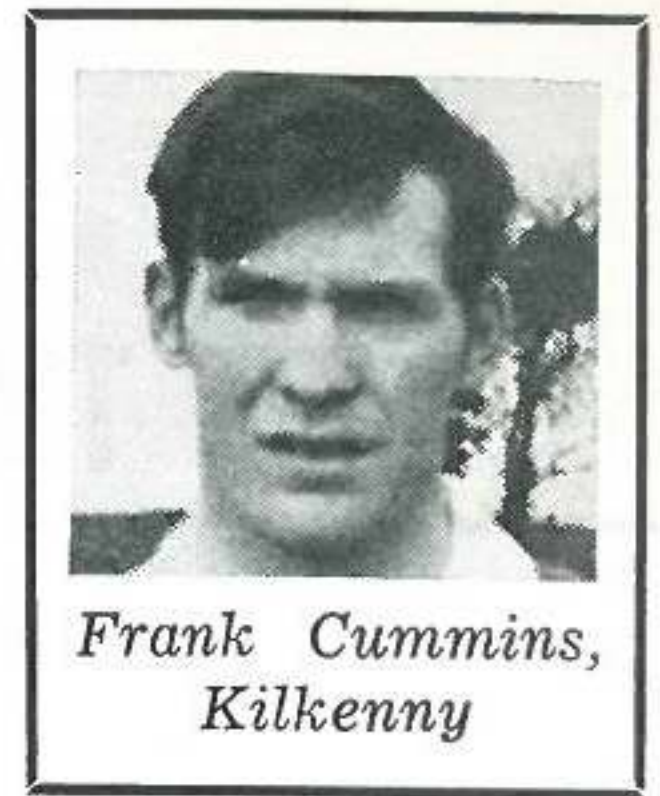


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CARROLL'S G.A.A. ALL-STARS

SIXTY-TWO HURLERS WERE NOMINATED

THE Carrolls G.A.A. All-Stars Hurling Team was selected from a total of 97 nominations, which included some duplications. In all sixty-two hurlers were nominated for the 1971 team by a panel of leading G.A.A. journalists.

The complete list of nominations for the Carrolls G.A.A. All-Stars Hurling Team was:—

GOALKEEPER (8)

Paddy Barry (Cork), Mick Butler (London), Jim Hogan (Limerick), Damien Martin (Offaly), Pat Nolan (Wexford), Peter O'Sullivan (Tipperary), Noel Skehan (Kilkenny), Ollie Walsh (Kilkenny).

RIGHT FULL BACK (8)

Pat Hartigan (Limerick), Noel Lane (Tipperary), Fran Larkin (Kilkenny), Tony Maher (Cork), Pat McDonnell (Cork), Tony O'Brien (Limerick), Jim O'Donnell (Limerick), Dan Quigley (Wexford).

FULL BACK (6)

Pa Dillon (Kilkenny), John Faul (Galway), Pat Hartigan (Limerick), John Kelly (Tipperary), Pat McDonnell (Cork), Dan Quigley (Wexford).

LEFT FULL BACK (5)

John Gleeson (Tipperary), John Horgan (Cork), Jim O'Brien (Limerick), John Quigley (Wexford), Jim Treacy (Kilkenny).

RIGHT HALF BACK (8)

Matt Browne (Wexford), Christy Campbell (Limerick), Pat Lawlor (Kilkenny), Justin McCarthy (Cork), Gerald McCarthy (Cork), Tadhg O'Connor (Tipperary), Con Roche (Cork), Niall Wheeler (Antrim).

CENTRE HALF BACK (5)

Pat Henderson (Kilkenny), Teddy Murphy (Galway), Tadhg O'Connor (Tipperary), Jim O'Donnell (Limerick), Mick Roche (Tipperary).

LEFT HALF BACK (7)

Phil Bennis (Limerick), Martin Coogan (Kilkenny), Len Gaynor (Tipperary), John Horgan (Cork), Gerald McCarthy (Cork), John Quigley (Wexford), Con Roche (Cork).

CENTRE FIELD (6)

Dave Bernie (Wexford), John Connolly (Galway), Frank Cummins (Kilkenny), Bernie Hartigan (Limerick), Mick Roche (Tipperary), P. J. Ryan (Tipperary).

CENTRE FIELD (7)

John Connolly (Galway), Frank Cummins (Kilkenny), Bernie Hartigan (Limerick), Justin McCarthy (Cork), Willie Murphy (Wexford), Mick Roche (Tipperary), P. J. Ryan (Tipperary).

RIGHT HALF FORWARD (5)

Ritchie Bennis (Limerick), Eamon Cregan (Limerick),

Paddy Fahy (Galway), Eddie Keher (Kilkenny), Francis Loughnane (Tipperary).

CENTRE HALF FORWARD (10)

Ritchie Bennis (Limerick), Eamon Cregan (Limerick), Pat Delaney (Kilkenny), Tony Doran (Wexford), John Flanagan (Tipperary), Mick Graham (Limerick), Mick Keating (Tipperary), Francis Loughnane (Tipperary), Moss Murphy (Kilkenny), Noel O'Dwyer (Tipperary).

LEFT HALF FORWARD (5)

Ritchie Bennis (Limerick), Eamon Cregan (Limerick), Eamon Grimes (Limerick), Pat Hegarty (Cork), Eddie Keher (Kilkenny).

RIGHT FULL FORWARD (10)

Mick Bermingham (Dublin), Ritchie Bennis (Limerick), Mick Brennan (Kilkenny), Eamon Cregan (Limerick), Donal Flynn (Limerick), John Flanagan (Tipperary), Mick Keating (Tipperary), Charlie McCarthy (Cork), Jim McNamara (Clare), Moss Murphy (Kilkenny).

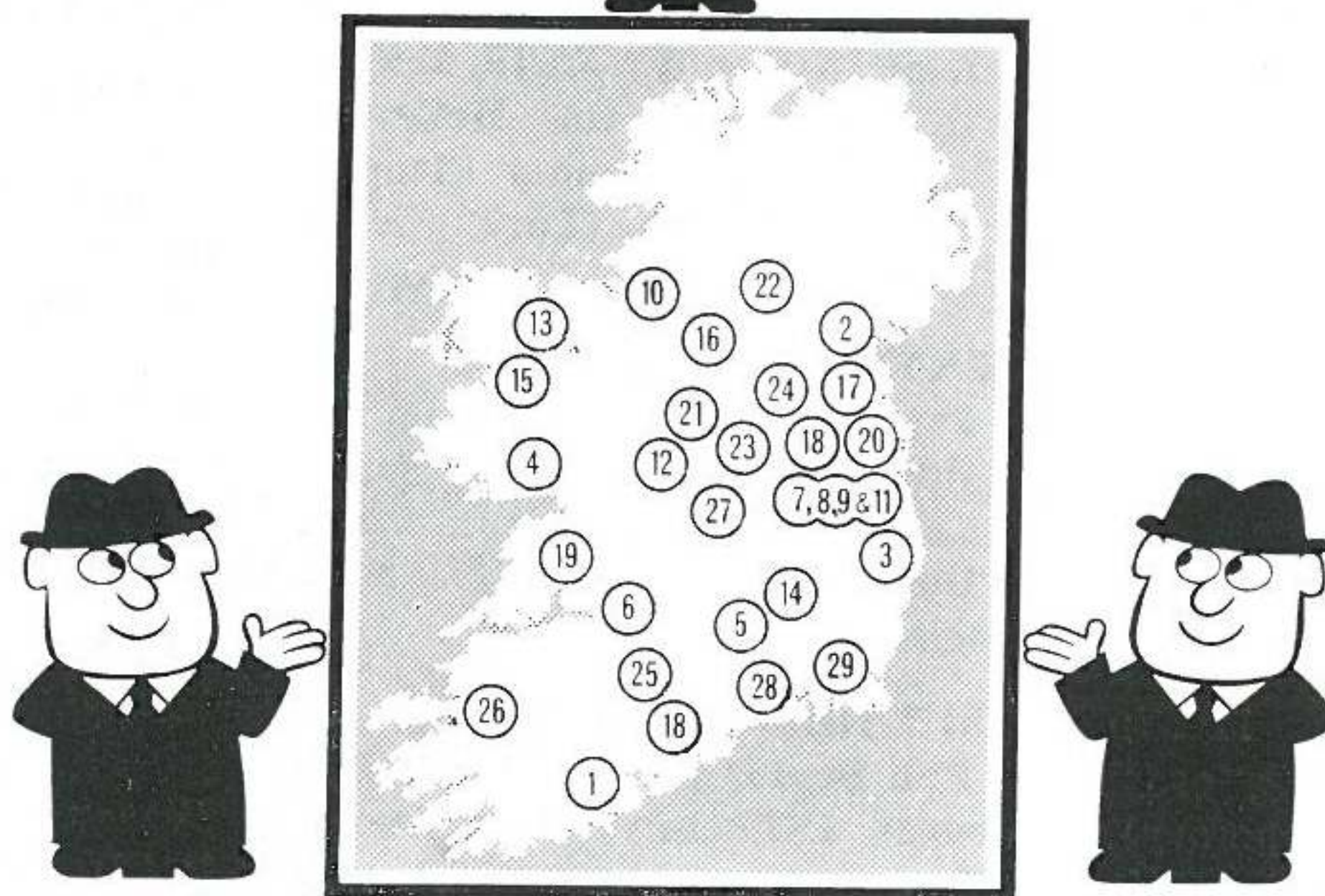
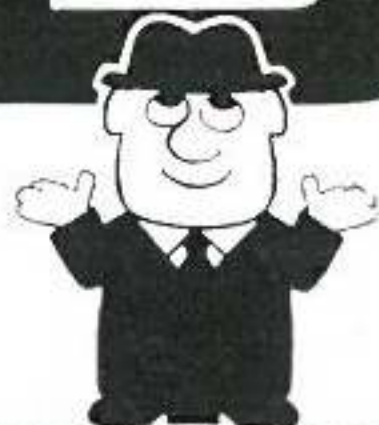
FULL FORWARD (3)

Ray Cummins (Cork), Mick Keating (Tipperary), Kieran Purcell (Kilkenny).

LEFT FULL FORWARD (4)

Mick Bermingham (Dublin), Eamon Cregan (Limerick), Eamon Grimes (Limerick), Mick Keating (Tipperary).

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IN THIS ISSUE WE TURN THE SPOTLIGHT ON

Irish Building Societies

LINDA

COLLINS

GETS BEHIND

THE SCENES

AND COMES

UP WITH

ALL THE

ANSWERS

HOW do you feel about building societies? If you're young and fancy free you don't think much about them. If you want to buy a house you cultivate them slavishly till they give you a mortgage. If you're already a mortgage holder you probably feel, grumpily, that you're being held up to ransom by your building society. What right have they to charge you an interest rate of nine per cent on your hard earned money? What do they do with all the cash they collect? Why is it so hard to get a loan in the first place? Who's making all the money out of building societies? Where's it all going? Are the faceless men making fortunes from that monthly or quarterly payment which most of us find it such an effort to meet in these inflationary times? Why are house prices so high? And land prices? Is it beginning to be beyond the range of an ordinary worker to own his own house? What the hell, in fact, is going on?

It was in the mood of seeking truthful answers to these questions—the sort of questions that are in everybody's mind these days—that I began talking to some of the top representatives of some of the biggest building societies in Ireland. And there's another poser—why are some building societies so much bigger

than others? Does the rule of "the bigger, the better" apply? Any reader who has followed me so far will have gathered that I'm a complete novice when it comes to financial affairs, but the conclusions I reached will be of use to readers, because notwithstanding the flood of information contained in the newspapers and magazines, most people are novices when it comes to reading the financial features. The questions in my mind are in the minds of many other people also.

"Why do they spend so much money on advertising?"

And talking about questions—it's a sore point with many people that building societies spend so much money on advertising. Why do they do it? I put that one to T. S. Fleming who is the Investment Manager of the Educational Building Society, and his answer was that, relatively, they don't spend all that much. What his company spends on advertising in a year might service slightly less the 50 loans—and that isn't

● TO PAGE 37

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FOCUS ON IRISH BUILDING SOCIETIES

● FROM PAGE 35

a great number in terms of the mortgages actually advanced. The societies need investments flowing in from the ordinary public so that they can carry on the business they were formed for—loaning money to people to buy houses. They've got to compete with all the other investment media also eager to attract money—from the Government onwards. So they've got to publicise themselves. Mr. Fleming gently suggested that now the societies were geared to making their ad. campaigns more effective—and this is what makes them stick in people's minds. For years the societies slumbered, unconscious of just how important it was to let the public know just why they exist and what their functions really are. And the myth-makers got busy, turning the building societies into a sort of Robber Baron group, out to mulct everybody.

Which, apparently, isn't true at all. As I got the story from Mr. Fleming and Mr. John Skehan of the First National B. S.—another of the big societies—they're co-operative societies whose sole purpose is to lend money to people anxious to buy houses. Maybe you knew it all along but I hadn't been so sure. Building societies *can't* lend money to developers anxious to build office blocks. Personal fortunes *can't* be made by their directors (if you want to know what the directors earned in any one year, look it up in the annual accounts which the building society you're involved with is compelled to send you). The societies *can't* speculate in land. They *must*, by law, publish full and open accounts of all their dealings each year and circulate them to members. And if you're a borrower with a grievance you

can go along to the annual general meeting and air it—many do.

“Why do they charge 9% on loans?”

So why do they charge that much-resented nine per cent on loans? Well, to attract investors they've got to offer them that famous five and a half per cent tax free which most of us know is over eight per cent gross! The workable margin between what they pay out on investments, allowing for limited tax concessions from the Government, and what they get in from borrowers is obviously pretty narrow—narrower than the margin, for instance, on which banks allow themselves to work. It is $1\frac{1}{4}$ per cent in fact. Out of this they've got to pay all their administrative expenses and really it amounts to a bit of a juggling operation. Building societies in England are allowed far greater leeway, taxwise, than the Government grants them here.

If you agree that it's good for the country that as many people as possible should own their own homes, then building societies do provide a valuable social service. Before the war, Irish people just weren't interested in owning their houses—particularly in the cities. Why should they be, when there was plenty of opportunity to rent? But afterwards came the big demand and today more than 60 per cent of the 700,000 houses in Ireland are owner-occupied. More and more people are anxious to buy houses, and more and more cash is flowing into the building socie-

ties. Those two facts complement each other and it would appear, then, that there ought to be no problem about getting a loan. But house prices are rising, due to increased demand, so the money covers fewer loans than it did. And the societies, therefore, state quite straightforwardly that they'll give first preference on a mortgage to a client who is already saving with them.

“Anxious to finance mortgages—but to the right people”

All of them underlined this fact to me quite forcibly. They're anxious to finance mortgages—it's what they're in business for. But they want to give the mortgages to the right people. If you can open an account with a building society and save regularly over a period of time, you're proving to them that you're a good loan prospect. Raising the deposit is a thorny problem these days. A man earning an average salary or wage can only hope to meet the increased price of a house by stepping up the amount of his deposit. The societies won't lend you an amount which would involve you in repayments totalling more than a quarter of your salary every year. This is a sensible rule and not to be quarrelled with because a higher rate would involve an unbearable financial burden. They're getting more lenient about taking a wife's earnings into account nowadays, so if your fiancée has

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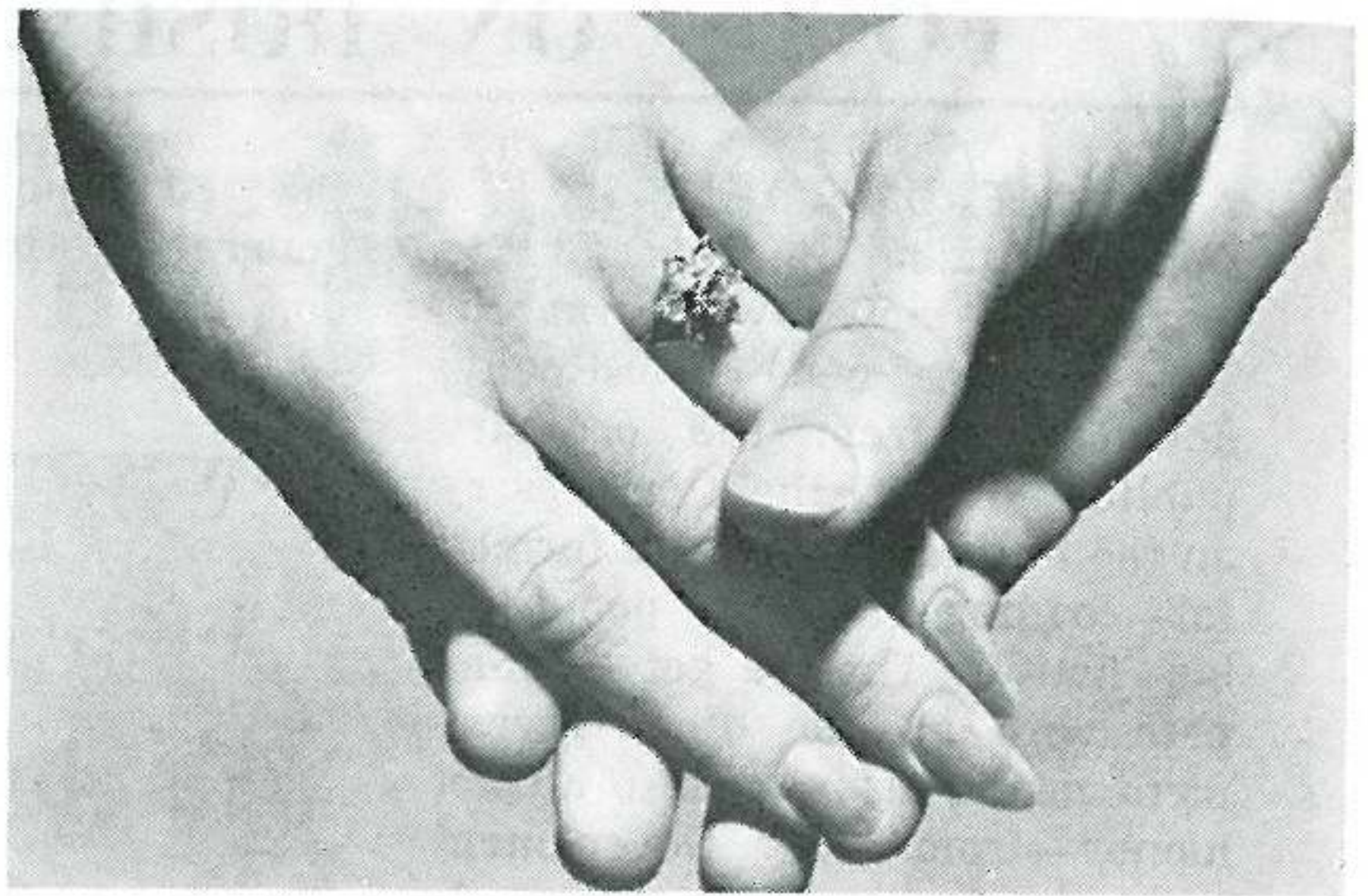
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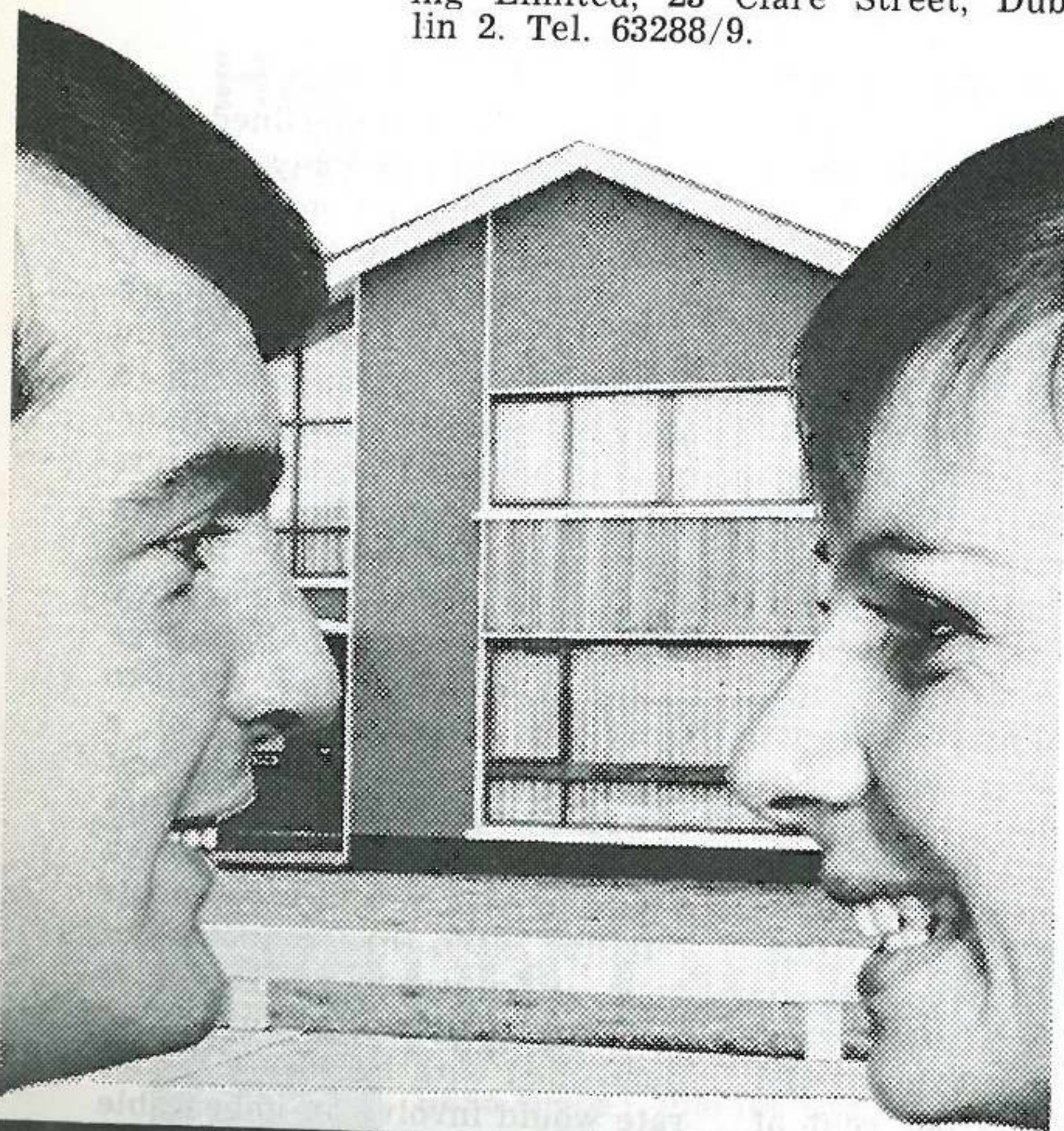
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FOCUS ON IRISH BUILDING SOCIETIES

● FROM PAGE 37

reasonable prospects of keeping on her job, it helps to mention this when you apply for a loan.

“Special scheme to help young savers”

To help young savers who hope to buy a house eventually, many of the building societies have introduced schemes which make the task of salting away the deposit just that little bit easier. The most radical, perhaps, is that offered by the Irish Civil Service Building Society. To qualify for a loan, a minimum of £1,000 must be saved with the society for a period of two years or longer. They pay interest on the money, so it would take two years to save this amount at £40 per month, or a little over three years and six months at £20 per month. Many young engaged couples have proved they can do it. When you've saved the requisite amount, you're entitled to a loan of up to two and a half times your annual salary. Knowing definitely that there is a loan in prospect once the target has been achieved is an incentive worth having. Mr. Dorgan of the I.C.S. struck an encouraging note about house prices. He says they have stabilised somewhat even in the Dublin area where shortage of land for development has been pushing them ever upwards, and thinks it is possible and realistic now to plan for a house in a certain price range and be reasonably sure of getting it. The I.C.S. had an investment structure up to recently which was rather different from that of the other societies and

which limited its growth but that's now changed.

“Regular savers get preference on loans”

The First National is a society big enough to be among the top four in Ireland, but still maintaining a lot of personal contact with clients. Mr. Skehan, who runs things from the Grafton Street head office, is everyone's idea of a benevolent bank manager and functions in rather the same way. A personal assessment of someone's character and outlook carries a lot of weight with him and the society is in the fortunate position that the people it deals with, both borrowers and savers, are still individuals to it. He emphasised that his society too gives preference on loans to people who have proved they can save regularly.

The amount saved isn't all that important, in fact it can be quite small, but it helps to prove that you can set yourself a target and reach it. The Group Savings Scheme he talked about seemed very interesting. Here the First National instals a savings scheme in a factory, an office or any employment centre and agreed weekly or monthly savings are deducted from the salaries and wages by the accounts department and sent on to the society in a single cheque. The saver never handles the money and that makes it so much easier to save it. Mostly it is young men and women who participate in this scheme and sometimes they're not even engaged to be married, but sensible enough to know that some day

their thoughts might turn that way.

“Rather ten small savers than one large one”

Mr. Fleming of the E.B.S. said frankly that he'd rather have ten small savers adding a fiver a month to their accounts than a large depositor giving them ten thousand pounds in a lump sum. So if you've only got a small amount to save, the building societies will welcome you more warmly than if you're a millionaire—something you can't say of other financial institutions!

Finally, an interesting development on another front: Merchant Banking, the well-known and prestigious firm, have a Home Plan in operation by which savers can earn a nice rate of interest on small deposits which, having mounted up, can go to swell the building society deposit. The suggestion is that it is no harm to put the Home Plan in operation concurrently with savings in a building society. It steps up the rate at which people can save and as Sean Lynch who operates the Home Plan says, it's better to “suffer” for six months and save every possible penny, for the sake of future advantage in the form of a larger deposit. Merchant Banking have a connection with the Gallagher Group who are extensive and quality-conscious builders of all types of housing in the Dublin area, but participation in the Home Plan does not in any way tie the investors to buying a home from Gallaghers.

An Cluiche Ceannais Peile

le Seán O Dúnaigín

DEINTEAR comhgáirdeas le foireann Uíbh Fáilí as ucht an chéad Chraobh Uile-Éireann a bhuachain. B'é an triú iarracht acu é agus bhí an lucht leanúna ar fuaid na tíre, cé is moite de mhuintir an Iarthair is dócha, ina bhfábhair. Lasmuigh den mórtas cine chuir sé gliondar mór ar chroí an scríbhneora seo mar gur ainmnigh sé iad mar churaí, chomh fada siar le mí aibreáin, in "Gaelic Sport".

Ó bronnadh an corn Somhairle Mag Uidhir i 1928 níl ach sé chontae "nua" taréis a n-ainmneacha a chur air — An Cabhán 1933, Maigh Eo 1936, Roscomáin 1943, An Mhí 1949, An Dún 1960 agus Uíbh Fáilí 1971. Samhláitear dom go dtiocfaidh contae nua i réim gach 11ú bliain (féach na trí cinn deiridh 1949, 1960 agus 1971) agus mar sin go gcaithfear fanacht go dtí 1982 don chéad fhoireann nua eile. Cé bhéadh ann? Aontraim nó Tír Chonaill, Laois nó Longphort b'fhéidir.

Tá sé do-chreite go bhfuil 17 gcontae nár bhuaigh craobh na hÉireann sa pheil go fóill. Is é Uíbh Fáilí an contae is lú daonraidh a bhuaigh an craobh go nuige seo (51,000) ach má ghlactar leis go bhfuil dhá thrian de dhaonradh An Dúin nach suim leo na cluichí náisiúnta chífear nach luíonn an bua a thuilleadh leis na contaethe móra ach leo siúd is díograsaí is cuma beag mór iad.

As na 15 contae a bhuaigh Craobh na hÉireann ó 1887 anall is léir gur leis an iománaíocht is mó a chlaíonn agus a chlaofidh trí cinn díobh, Luimneach, Tiobrad Árann agus Loch Garman. Is féidir a rá mar sin nach bhfuil ach dosaen contae ar féidir leo an corn a bhreith leo bliain ar bith.

Ag an am céanna is iontach mar is féidir leis an "cumhacht" nua a theacht chun cinn agus spéis thar chuimse a mhúscailt ionntu féin. Smaoiním, go háirithe, ar na fóirne cumasacha a tháinig go Páirc An Chrócaigh le blianta beaga anuas ach nár bhain an craobh amach eadhaon, Aontraim, Doire agus Ard Mhacha.

I mbliana bhí an Uíbh Fáilí cúig chluiche a imirt sa chraobh-chomortas. Gan áth-imirtí a chomhaireamh ní raibh ag na Gaillimhigh ach ceithre cinn dála An Dún agus Corcaigh dá mbeidís sa chluiche ceannais. Ar an fáth sin, imeasc fáthanna eile, tá mé i bhfábhair an crannchuir oscailte do na craobh-chluichí. Bhéadh a leithéid rí-spéisiúil agus d'fhéadfaí leanacht leis na craobhacha Cúigí, dá mba gá, mar chomortais ar leith.

Is dócha go mbainfí cuid éigin den "náisiúnachas" ón ócáid dá mbeadh dhá chontae ón Chúige céanna san iomaíocht lá an chraobhchluiche—ar an lámh eile dhe ba dhíol spéise iad na cluichí ón chéad sraith aníos go

háirithe dá mbeadh ceann de na fóirne ag imirt sa mbaile nó cóngarach dó. Ba bhreá liom féin Cill Dara agus Ciarraí ag imirt craobhchluiche in aghaidh a chéile ag stáitse ar bith, nó, abair, Maigh Eo agus Laois i ngleic le chéile nó fiú Baile Átha Cliath agus Doire sa choimhlint arís.

Mar eolas dóibh siúd gur breá leo staitisticí tá cúig chontae gur éirigh leo dul chomh fada leis an ggraobhchluiche ach nár bhuaigh, eadhon, Aontraim, Ard Mhacha, Doire, Laois, agus Muineacháin.

I gCúige Mumhan tá dhá chontae nár bhuaigh craobh na Cúige, Portláirge agus An Clár; i gCúige Iaighean tá ceithre chontae sa riocht céanna, Cill Chainnigh, Cill Mhantáin, Iarmhí agus Longphort; i gConnacht tá Sligeach agus Liatroim insa "dochadas" go fóill agus i gCúige Uladh níl ach Tír Chonaill agus Fearmanach nár bhain craobh na Cúige leo.

Tá dhá chontae a bhuaigh craobh na Cúige ach nár éirigh leo dul chomh fada leis an ggraobhchluiche, Ceatharlach agus Tír Eoghain.

Tugann foireann Uíbh Fáilí misneach agus uchtach do na contaethe nár bhain an craobh amach go fóill, go háirithe, os contae beag é, agus ar an ábhar sin is breá leis an lucht leanúna iad a bheith mar churaí na hUile Éireann 1971.



Liam Sammon

'SURE WE'LL BE BACK NEXT YEAR'

- GALWAY

"WE will be back next year, and we will take the title, too." That is a remark that is invariably bandied about in the dressingroom of the defeated team on All-Ireland final days. And like many another old quip, it can frequently have a ring of truth to it.

Galway lost the 1963 All-Ireland senior football final to Dublin, but hit back to write the county's most glorious chapter ever by winning the next three national championships. Meath lost to Galway in 1966, and the following September the Sam Maguire Cup was brought back

to the Royal County in triumph.

Then, there was Kerry's failure to Down in the 1968 final. The "knowing ones" trumpeted that the "death-knell" of Kerry football had then been sounded, but how superbly the Kingdom footballers silenced their knockers with those successes of 1969 and 1970!

Can the present Galway football crew maintain this tradition in 1972? The Westerners have certainly a lot going for them.

For one thing, time is very much on their side, as this is essentially a young team — no fewer than nine are under 24 years of age. This year's testing championship campaign will also be invaluable in furthering the team's development. It is from the experience gained in provincial finals, and outings in the All-Ireland series proper that players mellow into that cool, unfurried and poised approach that means so much in the make-up of any team with designs of getting right to the top.

Galway have another strong base on which to charter their thrust for glory next year—their defence. The impressive new ratings with which 22-year-olds Jack Cosgrove and Tommy Joe Gilmore emerged from the recent championship campaign augurs well for the future.

They also have a vital bonus point in P. J. Smyth. After his superb exhibition in the All-Ireland final, few will not agree that the Tuam man has all the hallmarks of a 22 carat goalkeeper.

In the remaining positions are men with the ability and persistence to make their contributions towards ensuring that the path to the Galway goal will be hard for opposing attacks.

The Connacht champions are

also well served in midfield talent. Liam Sammon is a great asset. He gets through an amazing amount of effective work in every game. Billy Joyce can be an able lieutenant, while on hand is Jimmy Duggan, so tremendously experienced at only 23, to help out if needed.

But one must be a good deal less enthusiastic about the attack. Apart from the many costly wides shot in the first half of the All-Ireland final, the all-round level of performance in general forward play was not impressive either. It is in this department that Galway will have to do most of the polishing up of rough edges in the months ahead.

However, they have good foundations around which to shape and perfect the division. Remember, Joe McLoughlin, who missed the All-Ireland final because of an injury, was their second highest scorer starting the Offaly game, and was eventually only pipped for the rating at the end of the final by a point by Frank Canavan.

McLoughlin is a hard worker, and an accurate free-taker, who should figure prominently in Galway's plans for the future.

Pat Burke, Emmet Farrell and Michael Rooney have all their best years ahead of them, of course, and Frank Canavan is only 25, and another valuable link in the roll call of talent.

Then, in the background is Seamus Leydon, who is reported to be taking a rest from competitive inter-county football this winter, but will be available again for next year's Championship.

He may be the oldest member of the squad at 29 this month, but the quick-silver Dunmore artist has still much to offer Gal-

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Ireland's Prestige Events

① First among favourites comes Paddy, the whisky with the best breeding in Ireland. Put it on your calendar: Paddy, the thoroughbred.

② Easter Monday at Fairyhouse is one of Ireland's greatest races: The Irish Grand National. Sponsored by Irish Distillers, Ltd., it is worth running for. A purse of £10,000 attracts the best in steeplechasers from both islands.

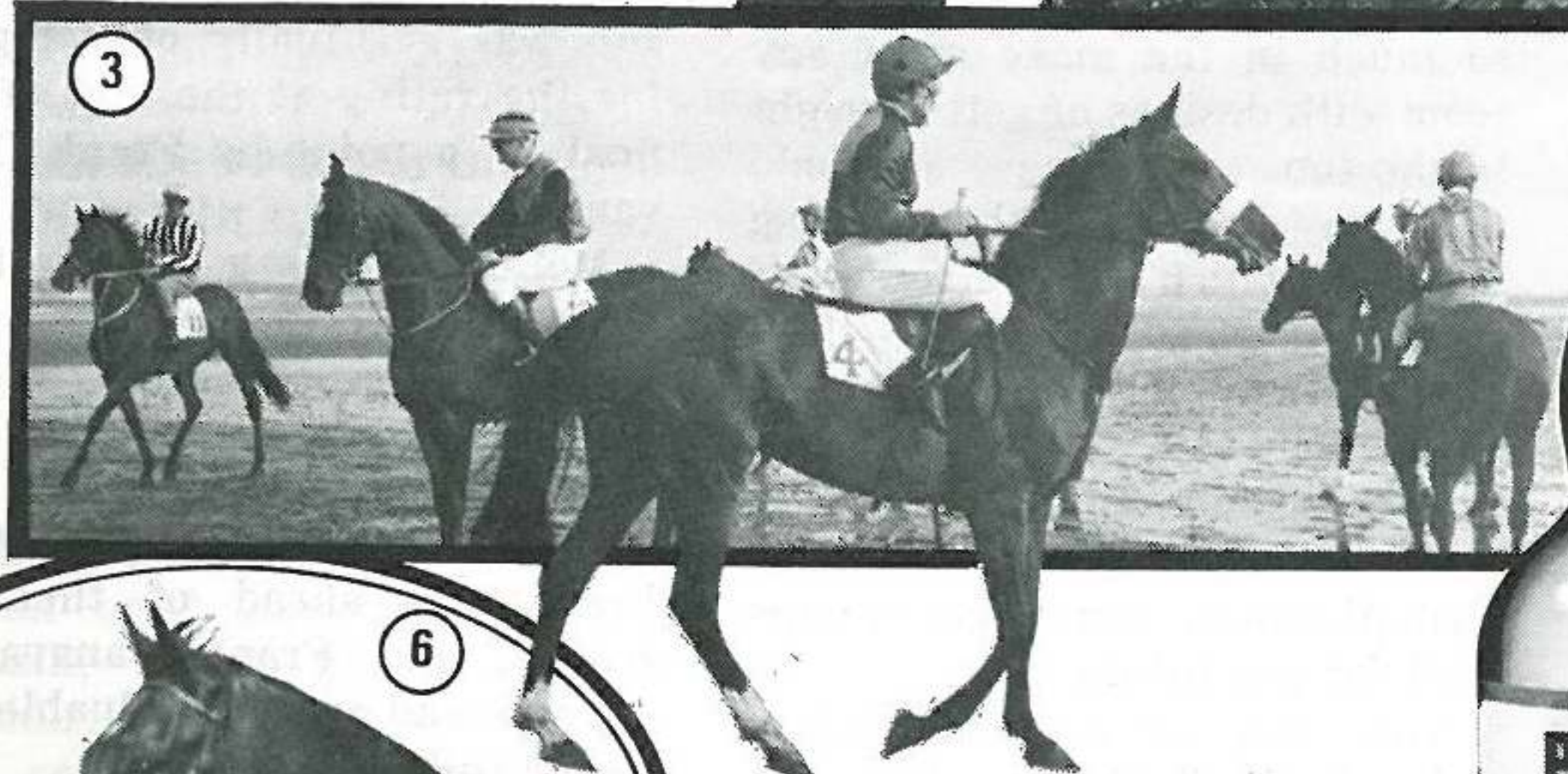
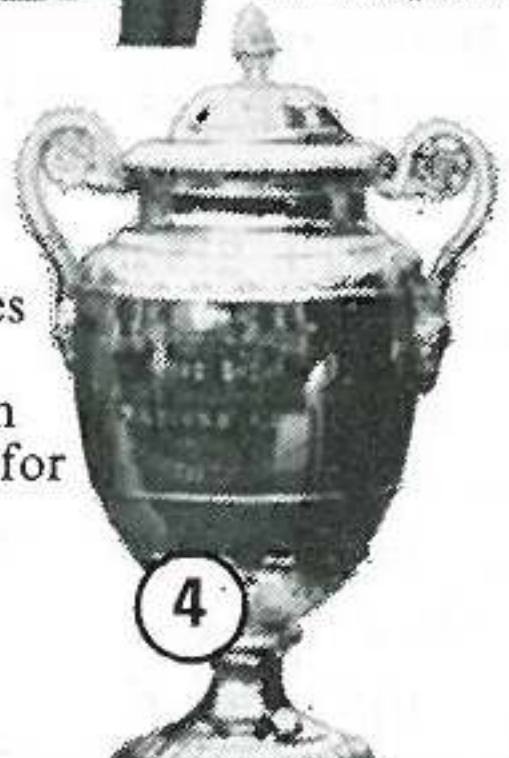
③ The race course at Laytown, County Meath, is under water every day. It has but one meeting a year and is the only officially sanctioned meet run on the strand. The venue changes yearly according to the tide.

④ The Aga Khan Trophy is the climax award to international jumping at the Dublin Horse Show. The Irish team, always mounted on all-Irish horses last won in 1967.

⑤ Punchestown retains the most authentic steeplechase atmosphere in Ireland. Spectators are free to chose their own vantage point for the races and are not confined to the stands. Until 1960 the course included stone walls. Even now, with modern brush fences two races for

certified hunters use the traditional bank jump.

⑥ The Irish Derby is Europe's richest purse. Since the Irish Hospital Trust has sponsored the race, it has become one of the international fixtures. The majority of winners have been foreign-bred, including the great Canadian Nijinsky.



Paddy
The Thoroughbred

THE HURLING FINAL

TRIUMPH FOR FRANCIS LOUGHNANE

IT has always seemed a little unrealistic for outsiders to mention that such and such an All-Ireland was rather disappointing, or that it failed to provide the sort of spectacle that would enrich the Association's image. When all is said and done, the All-Ireland is a thing whose significance is paramount to those who are playing the final, and, in truth, the rest of us can only get a little of the pleasure and the thrills by proxy, as it were.

In other words, it can have mattered little to Tipperary that this year's final was not considered one of the great ones; to them, it was all that it ought to have been — a spirited showing, a promise of quite a serviceable team for the immediate future of the county's fortunes, a sound and always likely victory, and a breaking of the apparent grip that Kilkenny felt they were at last able to get against Tipperary.

Most of all it brought them back into the mainstream of glamour teams in hurling. These years since 1965 must have seemed endless to those who had been spoilt on success for the last couple of decades. As befits the Tipperary temperament, they rejoiced quietly and then went

By
**JIM
BENNETT**

home satisfied that all was well with the world and that God's heaven had not shifted too far from normal. But, deep down they must have felt great satisfaction, for the fear was creeping over them that they were being by-passed by emergent Cork and threatening Limerick. Their efforts in defeating Cork in Oir-eachtas and League semi-final last year were important, but it was probably the defeat in the League final which shocked them into whipping up a little extra.

The All-Ireland was a triumph for Loughnane, in the first half, whose constant busying of himself round the field drew attention so effectively from Mick Keating that people began to forget his special threat and the other forwards were all looked

upon as individuals with their own part to contribute. It could have scarcely been better for Tipperary: Keating was hardly in one of his devastating moods, anyway, so it could have been fatal had the onus fallen as heavily as one expected upon his broad shoulders.

On the other hand, it gave him a chance to be generally useful and serviceable to the side in a general kind of way which he seldom gets an opportunity to show. In the end, of course, it was as inspirer and driver that he played the major role; under this unexpected pattern of play, Roger Ryan grew in reputation to something approaching his physical stature, John Flanagan went another step on the way to

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Jimmy Doyle who went on as a sub in the All-Ireland Final and won his sixth medal.

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fulfil the hopes he once inspired and then seemed destined never to actualise. Dinny Ryan added to his incredible record in the Tipperary jersey — Munster final, Munster final, All-Ireland semi-final and final being his first four matches in the colours. But Loughnane's first half was what shifted the balance and spread the threat away from Keating so that it enveloped the whole line at one stage or another.

In retrospect, Kilkenny must have been sorry about the way the game went. They could have won; but, of course, they did not really deserve to on the day. Before the game, we discussed two possibilities here: the way to attack the suspect Tipperary full-back line and the general style to be adopted by Kilkenny. These were significant points; just as significant now as before.

In the event, Kilkenny had enough of the ball from time

to time. They did feed plenty of the ball in to the full-line of forwards. But, there the threat ceased because invariably the fulls went to catch and bustle in themselves, instead of creating the stalemate situations which all the year have been the danger to the Tipperary backs. And there was no speedy follow-up by the half-forwards which would make the dangerous breaks deadly for Tipperary. The result was that Peter O'Sullivan was able to dash out to meet several lobs, able to cut off many half hit doublers from the labouring full-forwards, and, in general, able to govern the situation around the goal however pressed his fulls were.

The second point was the style of play which Kilkenny would employ: would they rely on the same sort of physically wearing game which served them in breaking the Tipperary hoodoo hold over them in 1967,

or try to raise the standard of skill in the game by reverting to the traditionally styled Kilkenny game. It appeared to me before the match that the temptation would be to opt for the same style which tamed the elderly Tipperary of 1967; but that the correct thing to do would be to test the sections of Tipperary which might possibly be meagerly skilled though bursting with enthusiasm and will to try.

In fact, Kilkenny went for the straight confrontation: they were now the elders (comparatively speaking) and it was they who succumbed. Had they tried to play it with more of the Kilkenny ball-play, who knows, they might have embarrassed Tipperary some more. Yet, it is doubtful, for Tipperary were really in there with a will to bring back the pride and spring to the step that was missing from Knocknagow.

the hallmark of
distinctive writing paper



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GALWAY

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way. And, the lay-off he had before this year's Championship did not dull his edge, so he could yet again prove a decisive influence in 1972.

Another encouraging pointer for the future is that Galway won the All-Ireland minor title in 1970—a feat that points to a good supply of top-class talent on the way up in the county.

I feel, then, that the Western county can certainly make a good imprint in the League, and also capture some of the headlines in 1972. But will next year prove to be Galway's for an eighth All-Ireland senior title win?

I would not be prepared to go that far at this stage. Let's wait instead to see how the attack fares in the testing games over the coming months.

**DAMP
VIEW
OF
OFFALY'S
DAY
OF
GLORY**

IT is the pleasant things one wishes to remember. I think I shall remember only the rain. Perhaps the huge tide of emotion that swept over the Offaly crowd will stay for a while inside my sodden skull. But the memory of the rain will have washed over this impression long before the next final.

Those last minutes of triumph were indeed moving. Offaly people must have seen everything from childhood visions upwards as Willie Bryan pushed the Sam Maguire Cup into the Croke Park air.

It was as if all thoughts, all experiences and longing were suddenly released in those belching throats around the Hogan Stand.

How they won will not matter. Like me and the rain they will want to remember only the fight-back of their heroes, and the waves of victory wafting to their own nostrils.

The first half produced not a single sign of such a wave. More crunch and punch than football for a while looked like ruining what had been a thrilling prospect.

And then they settled.

Well, Galway settled. Nothing it seemed would go right for Offaly. Liam Sammon and Willie Joyce had taken to punching the ball at midfield and Jimmy Duggan and Seamus Leydon and Frank Canavan were mopping it up.

But neither Duggan nor Canavan nor any of the rest were all that accurate, and this was an extravagance Galway could not afford.

Yet few were prepared to accept they would not win. They were the absolute masters in the

second quarter, far superior than I could have imagined before the game.

And the roar that greeted them when they re-emerged for the second half was strangely absent for the Offaly men, as if they too sensed defeat.

It was then the heavens opened. And as we, out there in front of the Cusack Stand, cowered beneath the rain's onslaught and watched Frank Canavan take a point that should have been the goal that would have wrapped up the game, we thought even then it was all over.

And then Offaly clicked. Rather Nick Clavin clicked—as if the rain had turned to petrol and bursted the dying embers of their play into a flame of action. All over they began to glow. Clavin had come to midfield, had begun to sally through the Galway defence. And hope was restored.

And the rain drummed down, like long rods of steel, and through them we peered in agony. And I got a glimpse of Murt Connor, the rain glistening round him, poking out his foot . . . and saw the net bulge . . . and heard the rumble of sound that greeted his goal . . . and felt a clammy shirt on my back.

And I wished the game would end. And we moved back under the shelter of the upper deck of the stand. And it was miserable to stand for the wet clothes found new, dry skin.

Now it was Galway's turn to attack. Seamus Leydon had a goal, and they were level again. But by now we knew Offaly would win.

Would it ever be over? And then it was. History was made.

But all I wanted now was to change my clothes.

**Stop Smoking
and win the
game of your
life**

An Roinn Sláinte

JUNIOR DESK



**A forum for
the
young reader**

DEvised AND WRITTEn

By JACK MAHON

JUNIOR DESK gets bigger and, we hope, better. More readers, more letters, more friends.

The competition sponsored by The National Savings Committee brought in the biggest entry to date. But then, the prizes were great. I was delighted, too, that so many readers wrote for complimentary copies of the Connaught final programmes which I helped to produce. Still have a few left, so a 4p stamp will get any "Junior Desk" fan still interested a complimentary copy of both programmes.

Talking of competitions, the lucky prize-winners of the National Savings Committee competition entitled "Great Savers", namely, **Liam Jones** of Mountshannon, Co. Clare, and **Patrick O'Sullivan**, Ballinspittle, Kinsale, Co. Cork, had a dream All-Ireland week-end, highlighted by a gala dinner and cabaret in Jury's Hotel on the Saturday night before the game.

Seán Ó Siocháin and Padraig

Ó Fainín, the Ard Rúnaí and Uachtarán of C.L.G., called in to pay their respects and meet the prizewinners. The popular selected stars, Mick O'Connell (football) and Ray Cummins (hurling), attended the dinner. Ray drove all the way from a wedding he attended in Baltimore that morning to be present. Not being used to driving in Dublin he found himself caught in the All-Ireland traffic for about an hour and so he missed being with us at the start. Hence, no sign of Ray in the photographs!

But you young followers down in Blackrock can rest assured. He was with us all right. The first thing he said to me was that when I wrote about Féile na nGael, the juvenile hurling festival held in Thurles in July, I never mentioned that Blackrock, or should I say the Rockies, won it. Well, I'm saying it now and I'm sorry. O.K. you young Rockies? O.K.! Anyhow, it was a great night with Hal Roache, Austin Gaffney and Kay Toal

(although young Patrick O'Sullivan wasn't very much interested in fashion!). I'll leave it to the prizewinners themselves to say what it was like.

The All-Ireland? Of course I was disappointed Galway didn't win! But Offaly have been a long time waiting and no one begrudges them their overdue success. Our cut-out this month is Tony McTague of Ferbane, that man with the magical feet.

He hadn't his best game ever in the final but nearing the end of the game he was showing all his peculiar class, lobbing some great centres across the goalmouth and pointing some crucial frees, including a "50" with a very wet ball.

Tony was one of our smaller cut-out features before. He is a worthy choice for the full page series.

All you young readers in Offaly and elsewhere are urged to paste this photograph on your bedroom wall. Don't mind Mammy. Blame

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JUNIOR DESK :: JUNIOR DESK :: JUNIOR DESK

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me for suggesting it. On behalf of Junior Desk, I say congratulations to Offaly on their first success.

The hurling final was a lot better than the football game. Second half was wonderful. Fair play to Tipperary. It's hard to beat them. I thought Kilkenny a shade unlucky. Still, they lacked the devil of such Tipperary All-Ireland newcomers as Tadhg O'Connor, Francis Loughnane and Noel O'Dwyer. I say newcomers, though all are pretty experienced by now.

Liam King, too, played with wonderful fire. But spare a thought for Limerick, who might have had a share in this final. They certainly shared the hurling limelights of the year with

Tipperary, Cork and Kilkenny.

Speaking of newcomers, I think it fair to say that Tommie Joe Gilmore, or T.J. if you wish to call him that, is the greatest newcomer of all in 1971. Unheard of last year he has now developed into the best centre half back in the game. We have a future cut out here. Not to mention that superb All-Ireland final display of goalkeeping by P. J. Smyth of Tuam. Another unheralded man prior to the final.

One other thing before I leave the county sphere and the championships. Wasn't the minor football final great? The hurling decider was good, too, Cork just shading Kilkenny but the scoring in the football final was superb. Some great goals. Good goals make games. Don't you

agree?

The two Mayo forwards I really liked were John Keane on the "40" and his Claremorris colleague on the left, little Mick Higgins. The latter bears a proud football name (you younger readers will not remember Mick Higgins of Cavan but you missed something for there is no forward around to-day like Higgins).

Apologies, there is one—Seán O'Neill—but the position I'm really talking about is centre half forward—the "40"—and in this position to-day we have no equals of Higgins. We had some great ones in this position. Seán Purcell was the best in my book. There was also James McCartan and Ollie Freaney and Paddy Carolan and Mattie McDonnell and, of course, Mattie McDonagh. Don't tell me you Dublin youngsters have forgotten Mickey Whelan. But to get back to Mayo in the minor final the play of John Keane was superb. The bearded centre half-back, Connie Moynihan, was great, too.

If I missed the Clare S.F. final at Doonbeg, I didn't miss the drawn S.H. final between Newmarket-on-Fergus and neighbouring Clarecastle in Ennis (gate receipts £1,300).

This was a great game, highlighted by a star display from the crowd's favourite, Clarecastle's rather heavy forward "Wax" Guinnane. Here we obviously have a crowd-puller on the Clare club scene. A pity these fine Clare hurlers cannot generate the same enthusiasm in the Clare jersey.

Clare is a great G.A.A. county where club rivalry has never been higher. Inter-county success is long overdue them. Old favourite Jimmy Cullinan is still a very wholehearted and accom-



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plished hurler. But where has Pat Cronin gone to? The gate receipts at the replay, which was won by Newmarket, were £1,500. Nice club gate that.

During the summer it was my pleasure to meet some of my Junior Desk friends. At the end of August, who should call only that fine Irish man an tAthair Mac Cárthaigh of Carraig na bhFear school in Cork. Seven of the students from the school, of which he is President, were on a caravan holiday in Salthill. I recommended the all-Irish show "Seoda" in the Taibhdhearc Theatre to them and went myself, too. This was a real Irish night. Nothing phoney. Tré Ghaeilge ar fad. Perhaps a little too much Irish dancing. But when it's Celine Hession that is dancing you could watch all night. I introduced Frank Evers, who with his seven children attended the show, to the Carraig na bhFear boys at the interval in the foyer. Need I add G.A.A. was the topic.

As a result our Galway All-Star

team is travelling to play the Carraig na bhFear senior team in a challenge game, spending the weekend in the college. I'll tell you all about that later.

We haven't much of a "Mail-bag" this month. That's why I'm rambling on and on. Recently, with all your letters I haven't had much of a chance!

Did ye get copies of the second edition of Raymond Smith's book "The Football Immortals". Every club library should have a copy. At this stage I'm sure you are all looking forward to "Our Games". I look forward no end to this annual every year. It is an awful pity we haven't more. We miss the "Cuchullainn Annual" and the "Gaelic Weekly", too.

Who would you like me to interview? I'm committed to interviewing Paddy Downey ("Irish Times") and Micheál O'Hehir, but I'd like to know your popular choice for interview. Fr. Cleary, the ruffian, has lost our questions! If you see him

around, remind him. But he is a busy man and is doing a whole lot of good and in my book is one of the outstanding men we have in Ireland.

So write in and tell me who you'd like me to interview. A referee? How about Paul Kelly? Or Frank Murphy? Or John Moloney? Or Mick Loftus? Seldom do we see the referee in focus. It's a thought.

So that's it for another month. The Leagues are starting as I write. Let us hope the G.A.A. powers mean what they say and

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I.N.T.O.

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FOILSEACHAIN RIALTAIS AN STUARA,

BAILE ÁTHA CLIATH, 1

● FROM PAGE 49

that there are no postponements. Last year's final was spoilt because it was so close to the championship. Too long delayed.

In looking forward to reading the letters nominating the stars of the All-Ireland finals. Some have arrived. I'll announce the prize-winners in the December issue. As to my own stars, Francis Loughnane (hurling) and Eugene Mulligan (Offaly). I've chosen men from the winning teams. But of course we had P. J. Smyth, T. J. Gilmore, Eddie Keher's scores and don't forget the referees. Send on your letters about anything—just anything to:

**Junior Desk,
Gaelic Sport,
80 Upper Drumcondra Road,
Dublin 9.**

From the Mailbag

Maire Nic Chanainn, Cor Cruinn, Baile Mac Naí, Dún Dealgán — "My favourites are Mick O'Connell, Jimmy Duggan (football), John Horgan and Ollie Walsh (hurling). More interviews with players please."

Michael Beirne, Corrachole, Ballinamore, Co. Leitrim — "My favourites are Billy Morgan, Jimmy Duggan and Joe Corcoran. A cut-out of Billy Morgan, please?"

John Hahessy, 51 Ard Mhuire, Carrick-on-Suir, Co. Tipperary — "Limerick stars in the Munster final were Pat Hartigan, Christy Campbell, Richie Bennis and Eamonn Cregan."

Stephen Motherway, Condons-town, Dungourney, Co. Cork — "The chat between Eamonn Young and Justin McCarthy in the hurling final issue was great."

My favourites are Justin McCarthy, John Horgan, Willie Walsh, Ray Cummins, Ray is a great player."

● *I agree with you. It was one of the best pieces I've read in GAELIC SPORT for years. What a wonderful character is Justin. Not to mention "Youngy". I don't think ye appreciate Eamonn Young enough down in Cork (J.M.)*

J. Ryan, 50 Oliver Plunkett Terrace, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary — "My grandfather, who is now 84 years of age, played for Carrickshock and looks forward to GAELIC SPORT every month."

Michael Joyce, Distillery Road, Newcastle, Galway — "My favourites are Peter O'Sullivan, Ollie Walsh, Tom Ryan (hurlers); P. J. Smyth, Seán O'Neill, Brendan Lynch (footballers). Cut-out of P. J. Smyth, please."

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TONY McTAGUE, OFFALY

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A DREAM came true for the two lucky prizewinners in our Junior Desk "Great Savers" competition sponsored by the National Savings Committee. Eleven year old Patrick O'Sullivan from Kinsale and sixteen year old Liam Jones from Mountshannon in Clare, who shared first prize in the competition, had a dinner in their honour with some of the G.A.A.'s top names at Jury's Hotel, Dublin, on the eve of the All-Ireland Football Final. Pictured with the winners are, from left: Eric Hall, Chairman of the National Savings Committee; Kerry's Mick O'Connell; Junior Desk Editor Jack Mahon; Pat Fanning and Sean Ó Síocháin, President and General Secretary of the G.A.A. Ray Cummins, Cork hurler and footballer also attended the dinner.

WHY SMOKE?

YOU may have tried smoking already. Ask yourself if you honestly liked it. If you did, you are an exception. Most people, when they try their first cigarette, find that it gives them a choking cough, makes them sickish and makes them dizzy.

You'll find that the vast majority of smokers will admit that they wish they had never started. There are many reasons for this. Heavy smokers waken in the morning with an unpleasant and exhausting cough; they don't enjoy their food nearly

as well as non-smokers; their breathing is affected, and this, in turn, affects their ability at games. If you want to be good at games, you'll find that most really good athletes don't smoke at all.

More serious than any of these, however, is the fact that scientists have discovered that heavy smokers run a far greater risk of getting cancer of the lungs than do non-smokers, and lung-cancer is a disease which results in death in most cases.

Then there's the question of cost. If you start smoking, you will probably find yourself, in

a few years, with a craving that only 40 cigarettes a day will satisfy.

At present average prices, this will cost you £3.25 a week or over £165 a year. Think of all the clothes you could buy with this money, or the holiday you could have with it, and then think about starting to smoke. Remember—smoking is costly, smoking is wasteful. At best, it does you no good; at worst, it can lead to a disease that will kill.

Be sensible. Don't smoke.

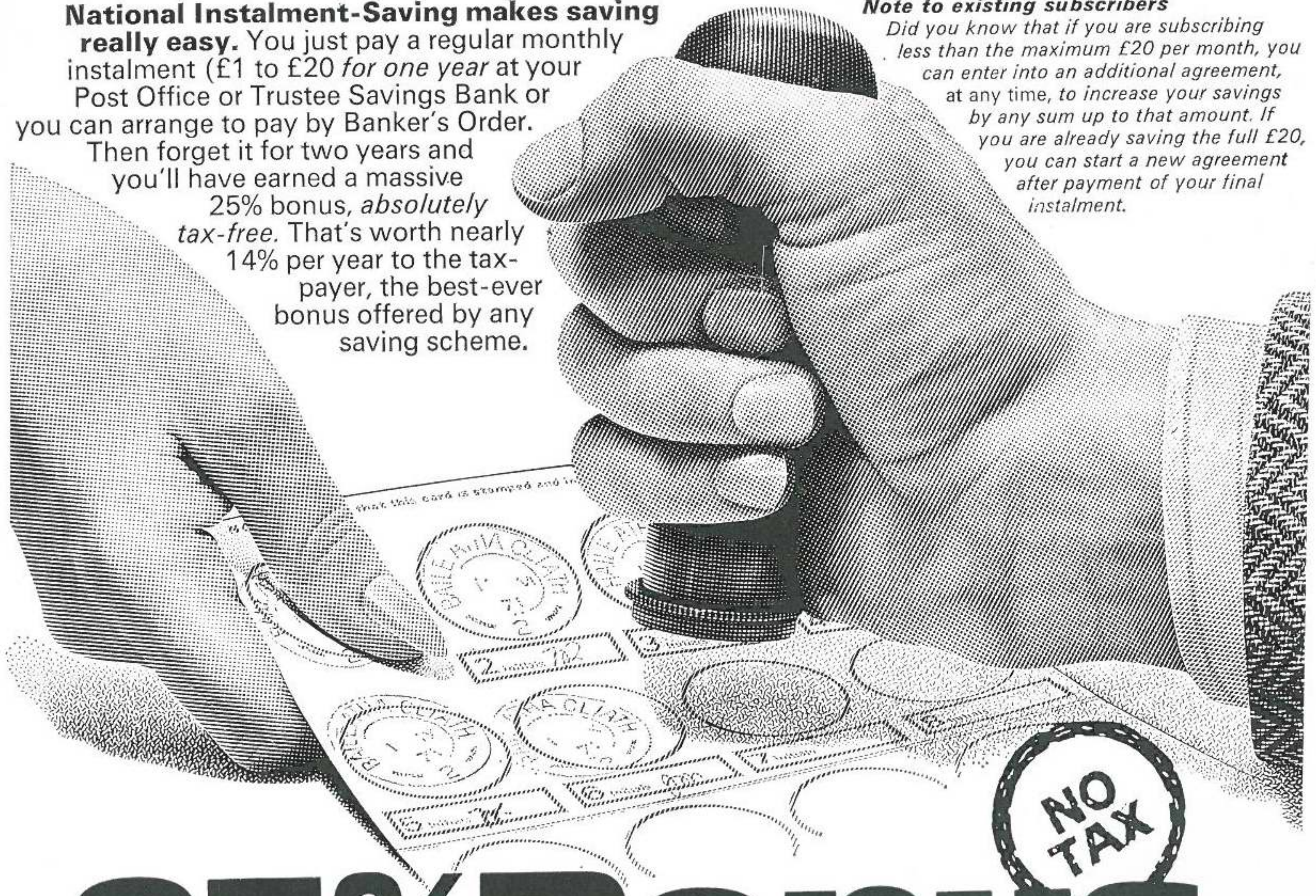
—*Foilsithe ag an
Roinn Sláinte.*

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Did you know that if you are subscribing less than the maximum £20 per month, you can enter into an additional agreement, at any time, to increase your savings by any sum up to that amount. If you are already saving the full £20, you can start a new agreement after payment of your final instalment.

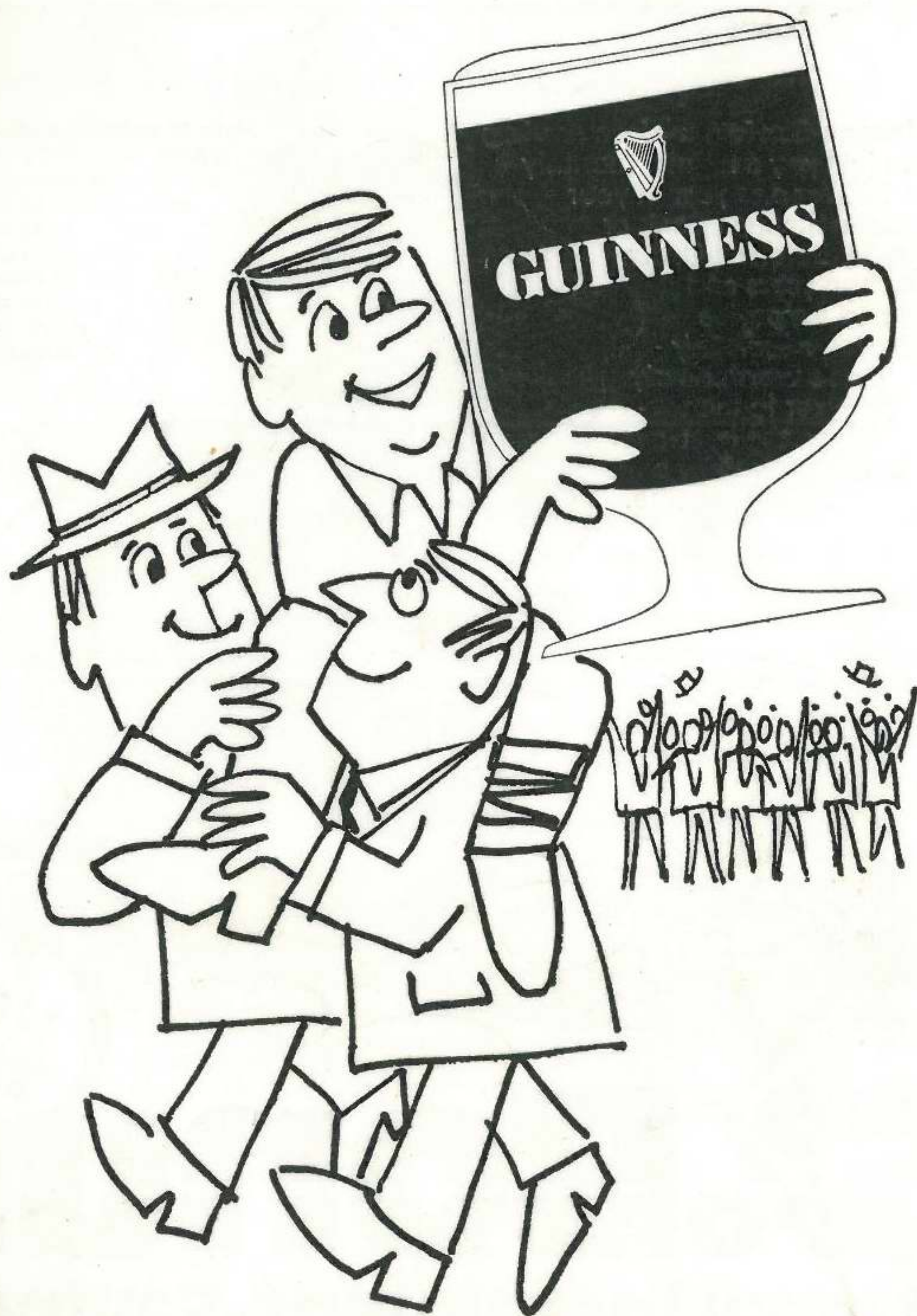


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