

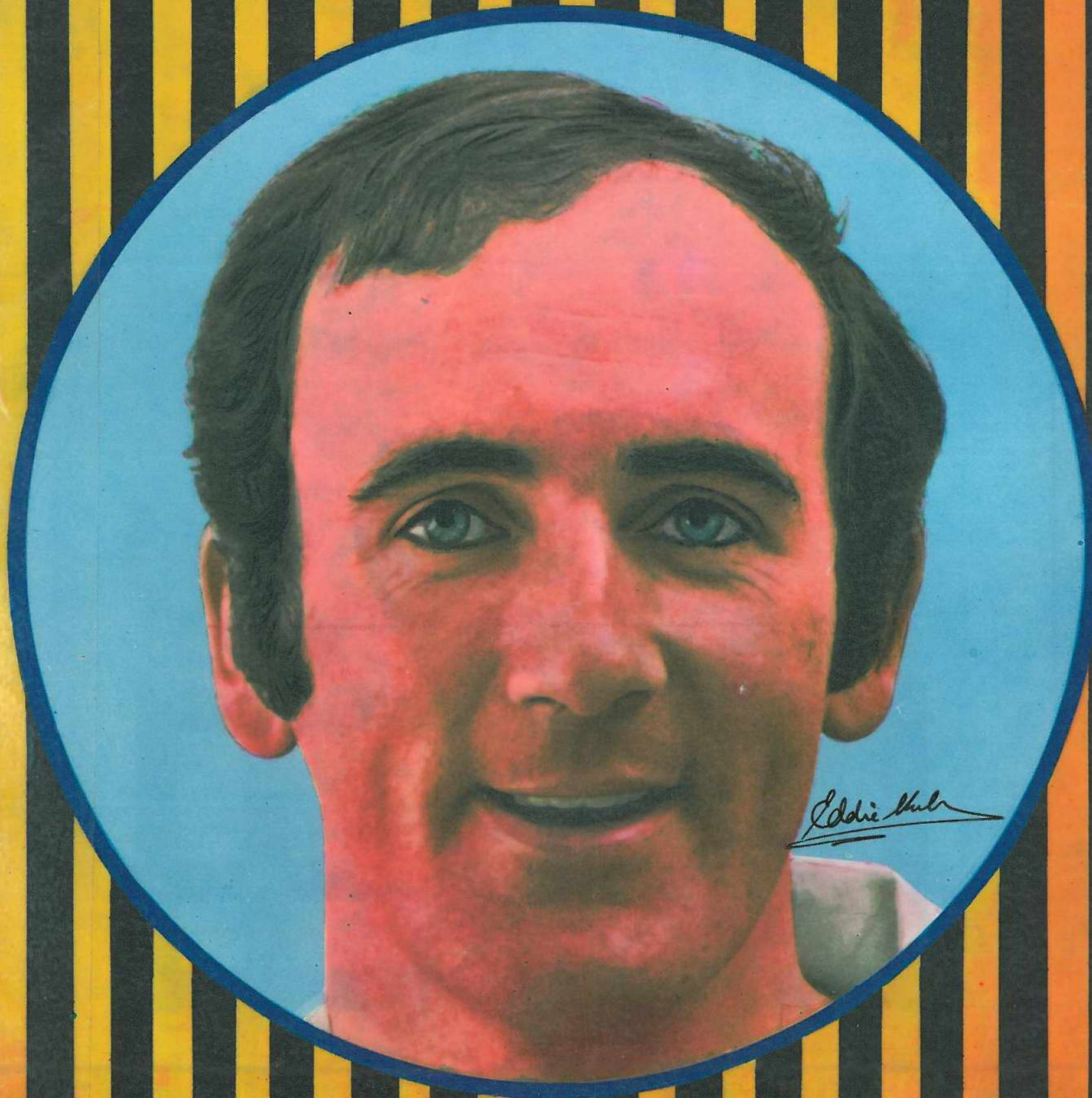
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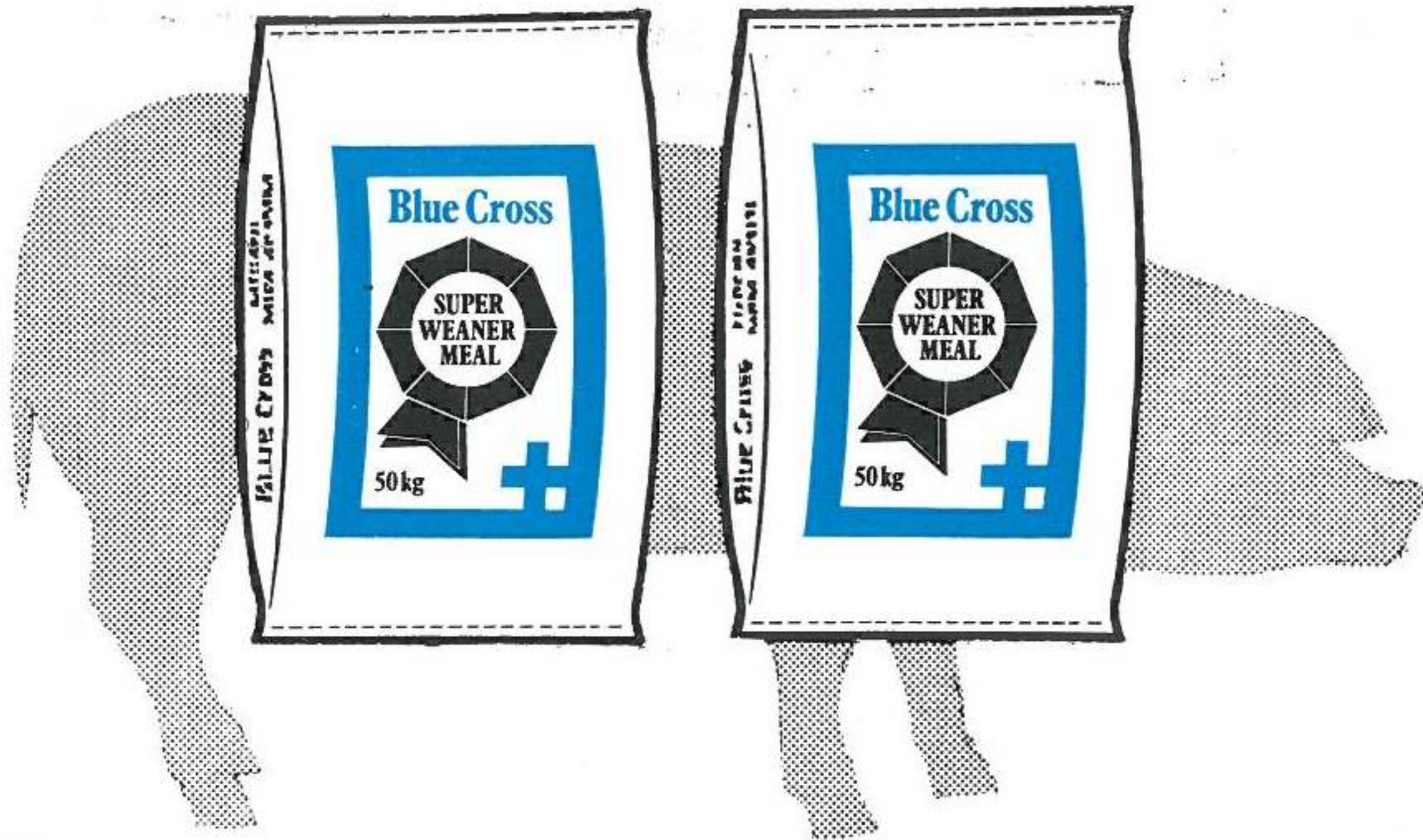
Gaelic Sport

NOVEMBER 1972

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Eddie Mulr



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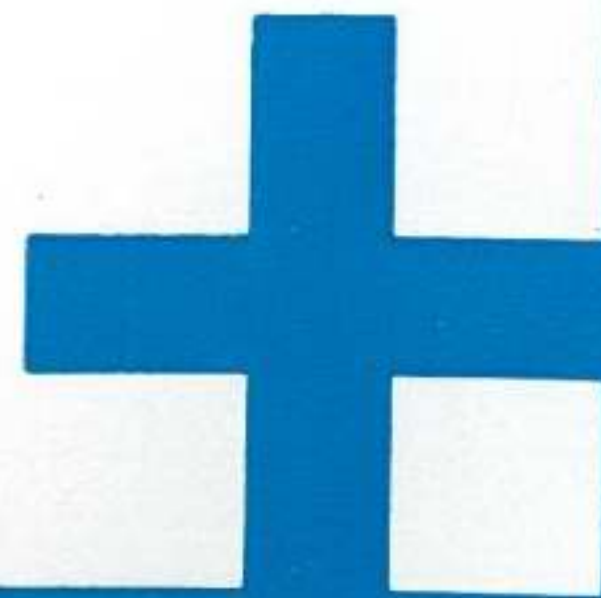
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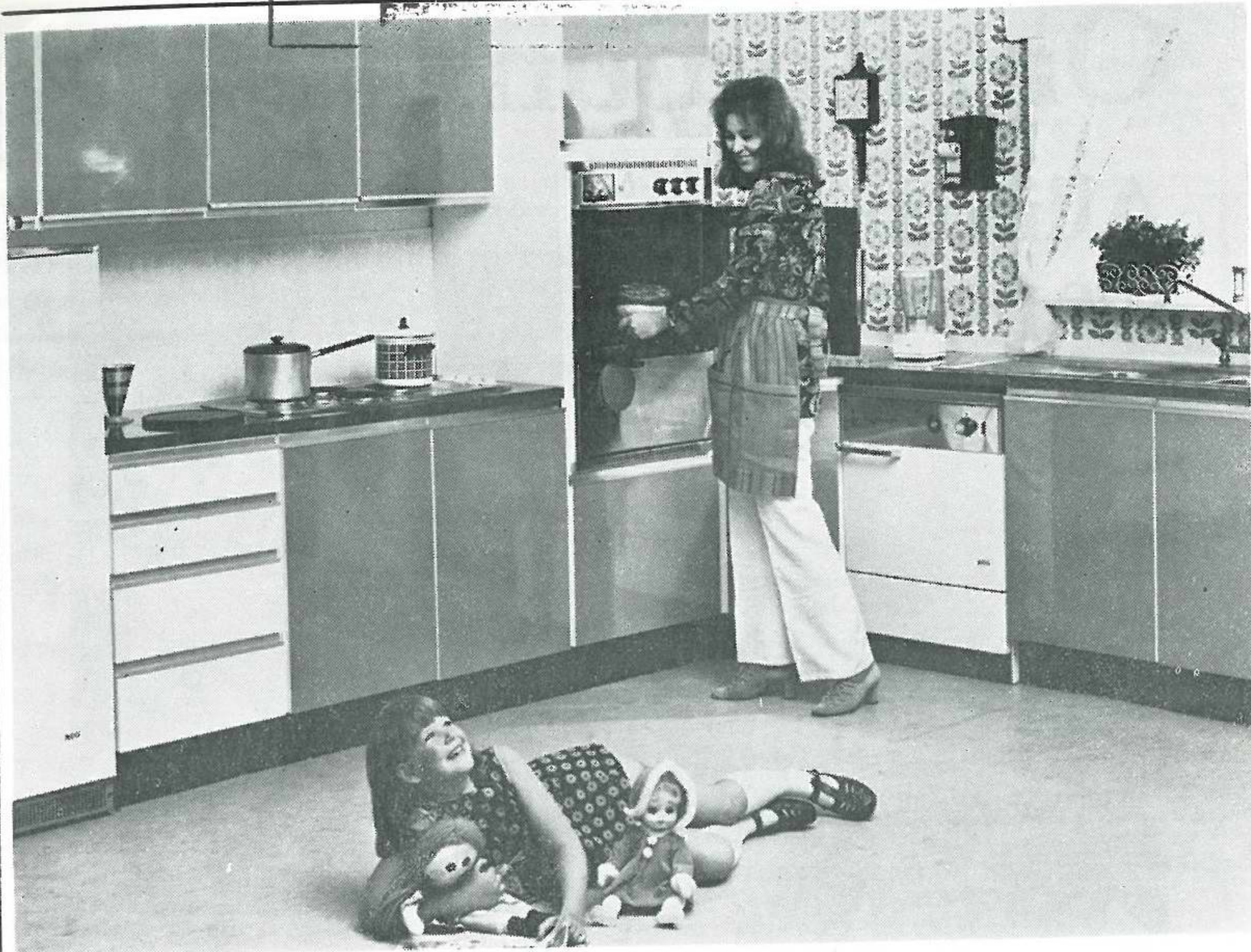
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Gaelic Sport

Vol. 15. No. 11. November, 1972

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COVER PHOTO

OUR front cover personality this month hardly requires an introduction — wherever hurling is played or talked about, the name of Eddie Keher will inevitably crop up. Eddie has adorned hurling, with his consummate skill and artistry, for many years now and we join with all lovers of our National Games in wishing him many more active years in the famed Black and Amber.

SUPERB OFFALY

A couple of weeks have gone by since the replay of the All-Ireland football final, but it is not too late to pay tribute to Offaly who scored a magnificent victory over Kerry.

They proved themselves one of the great teams of the modern era and from now until next summer, at least, will be regarded as favourites to win the elusive hat-trick of titles.

It has been said of Offaly that they showed they were worthy All-Ireland champions by beating Kerry in the final. That is a great compliment to Kerry but, when you think of it, the tribute is really a reflection on all teams who won finals in which the Kingdom was not involved.

It suggests that when Offaly beat Galway — as they did last year — or Meath beat Cork, some vital element was missing from their triumphs.

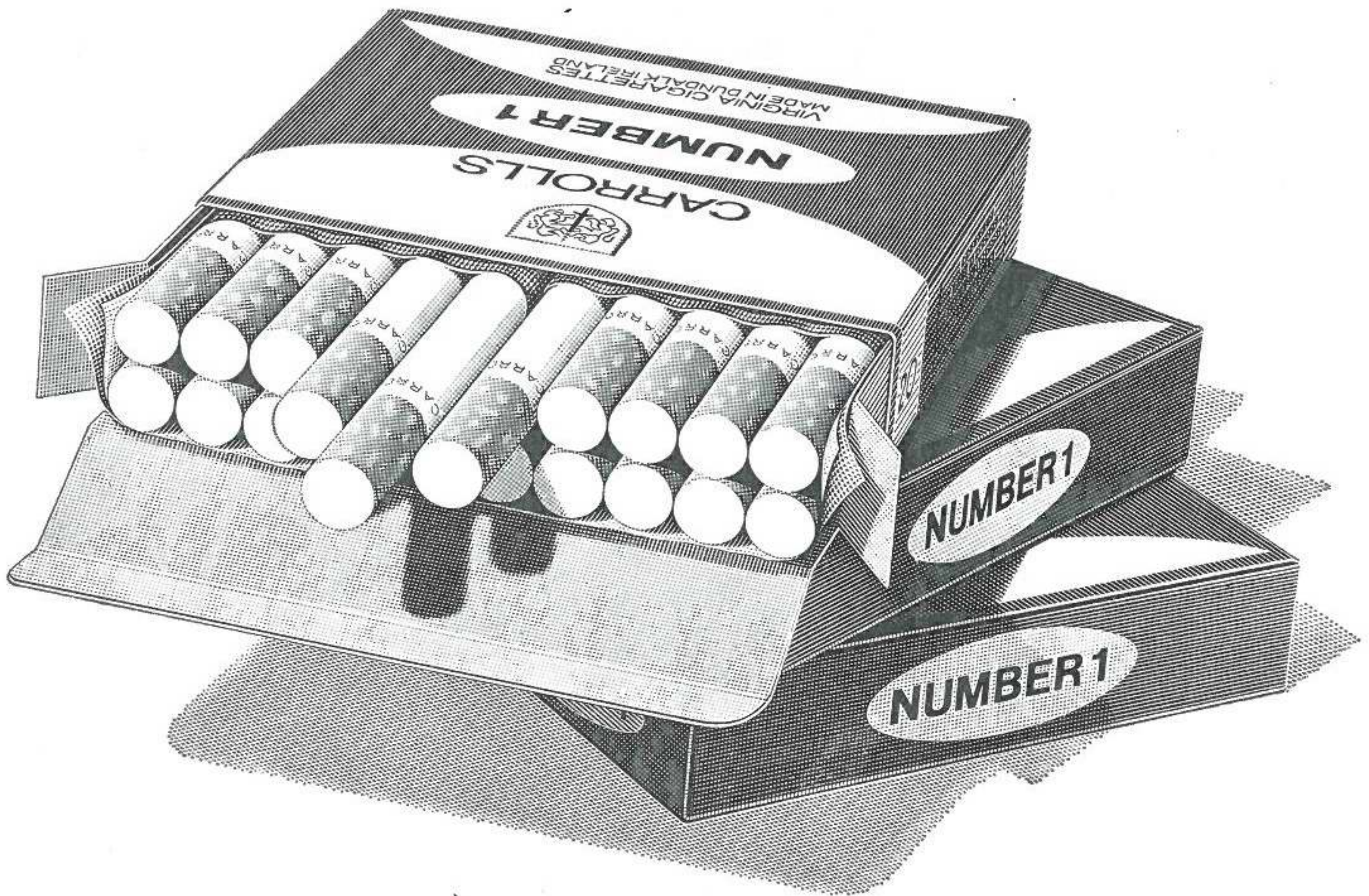
That is not so. The two best teams of any year meet in the All-Ireland final and it is wrong to imply that the victors were not worthy champions because Kerry were not their rivals in the ultimate test.

Kerry will be the first to appreciate the point.

It is true that Offaly's victory on October 15 gave them greater satisfaction than their historic win over Galway a year previously. That is a tribute to Kerry's eminence in the game. Nevertheless, they didn't have to achieve that success to prove that they were worthy champions of Ireland in 1971. To suggest otherwise is to detract something, however small, from any final in which Kerry are not involved. Kerry, kingpins of the championship, would not wish the All-Ireland to be diminished in that way.



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I have much pleasure in conveying through "Gaelic Sport" my sincere congratulations to the Kilkenny team on their splendid victory in the All-Ireland Hurling Final.

This was a truly memorable occasion, providing for the many thousands who had the privilege of watching the game an unforgettable display of hurling in keeping with the G. A. A.'s unique tradition of outstanding sportsmanship.

Both the winners and the losers in this great Final have added yet another glorious chapter to the proud and exciting story of Cumann Lúth-Chleas Gael and have made an outstanding contribution to the further enhancement of our national games.

Is maith atá ár meas agus ár mbuíochas tuillte acu.

The Internationals

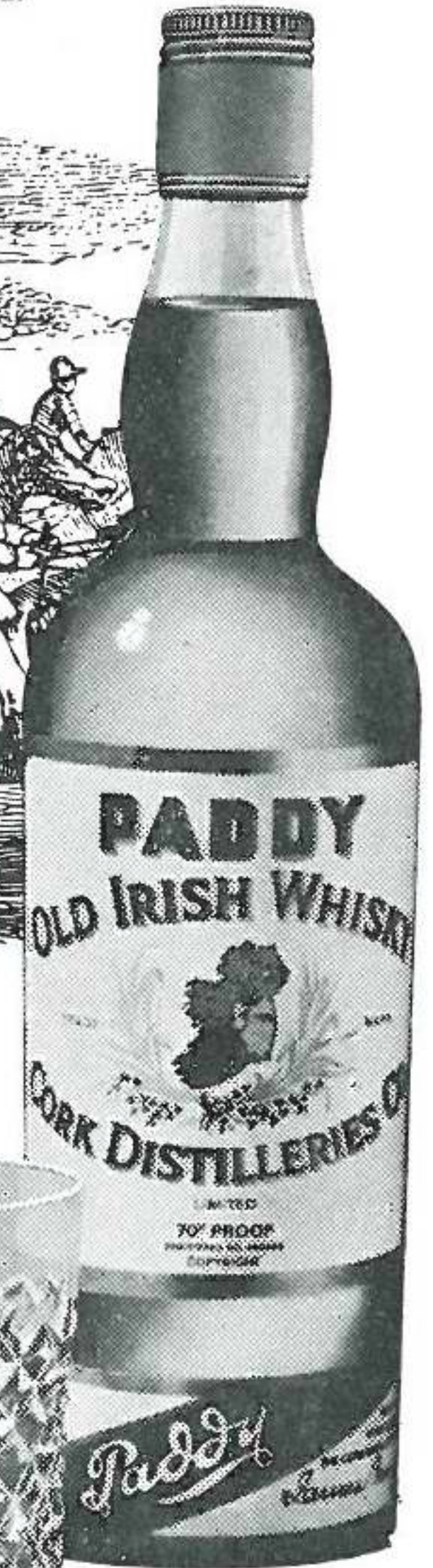
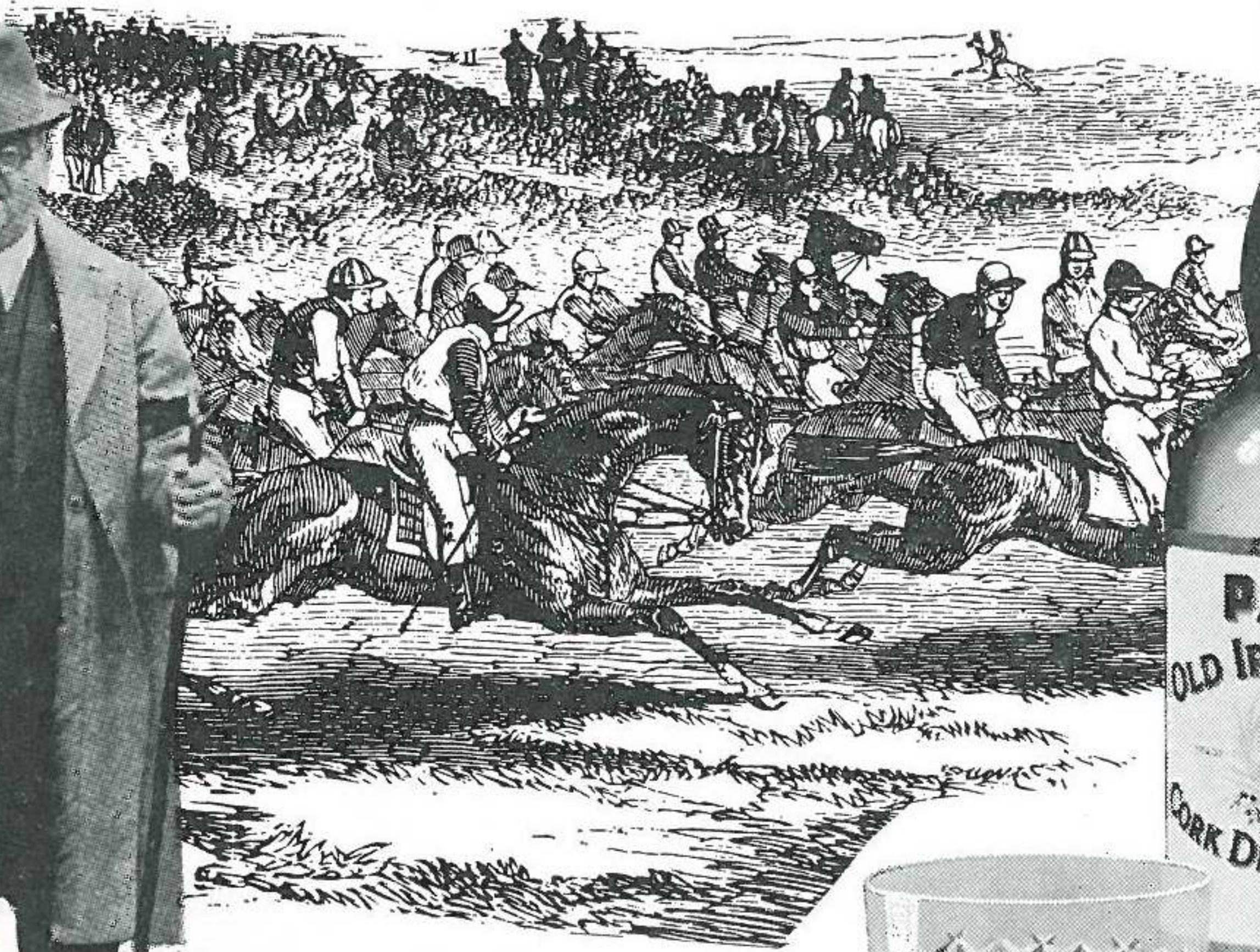
Pure Irish breeding makes Paddy the champion of whiskies. Paddy the thoroughbred, is becoming an international favourite exported to more than 25 countries throughout the world.

The Kentucky Derby is perhaps the most sentimental horse race in the world. "The Race for the Roses" includes an enormous horseshoe-shaped bouquet of rose buds draped over the winner and viewed through the softening mist of one or more mint juleps.

International winnings by Irish-bred horses have mounted steadily with the years and with the enormous increase in stakes. In the last decade, Irish horses have won their owners over £2 million annually.

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holdings of the late Aga Khan.



Paddy
The Thoroughbred



● Mick Ryan

SPLENDID WIN FOR GREAT OFFALY TEAM

WHAT a way to win an All-Ireland senior football title! Normally, any county would have more than the usual cause for celebrations after a successful defence of the Sam Maguire Cup in a replay with Kerry, but the manner in which Offaly shook off a double hammer-blow caused by the loss of both John Cooney and Eugene Mulligan through injuries in last month's match, and then hit back to hand the Kingdom a drubbing must surely mark their 1972 win as the ultimate achievement by any county.

Certainly, if there was a better one in football in the past I would like someone to tell me about it. Of course, there are the knowing ones who will argue that Kerry were a moderate team, but these are the very people who were to be found loudly trumpeting the cause of the Kingdom before both the drawn final and replay.

That's another factor that added to the quality of the Offaly victory effort. It is doubtful if All-Ireland champions ever went into a final with so little nation-

wide backing as Offaly carried into the clashes with Kerry. This could well have hit at the morale of their players, and sapped their belief in themselves, especially for the second game. But we all know how superbly the men from the Midlands rose to that challenge.

It was only to be expected that Paddy Fenning's goal in the 49th minute for Offaly, which had such a decisive influence on the outcome, earned a "lucky" tag in

some circles. But was it really a lucky score? A goal is always "on" from the type of long and high shot Fenning sent into the Kerry goal, and that was also by no means the only match-winning score of its type recorded this season in the Championships.

No, nothing can disguise the fact that this is a great Offaly squad, an outfit boasting a panel of players who can give the county the flexibility for formations necessary to superbly meet emergencies such as those that presented themselves in the replay when first Cooney had to retire, and then Mulligan went off. This strength in depth is the hallmark of true greatness.

Willie Bryan has rightly been royally hailed for his magnificent part in hammering out the glory win. Undoubtedly, one could not be anything but highly impressed by his spectacular fielding and clever football all through, and especially during the final 25 minutes, when he set up so many Leinster attacks.

Nevertheless, the man who captured my admiration most of all was Mick Ryan. The right full may not have been as spectacular as Bryan, but, my good-

● TO PAGE 9

FR. PADDY MAHON

THE death of Fr. Paddy Mahon brought deep grief to everyone who knew him — and everyone in the G.A.A. knew Fr. Paddy.

As a person, he was kindly, good-humoured and lovable. His friendship, and many knew it, had the deep warmth of the West. As a G.A.A. official, he gained much distinction during his tenure as chairman of the

Galway Football Board — including the honour of leadership when the county won three successive All-Ireland football titles in 1964, '65 and '66.

We offer sincere sympathy to his family, of whom the most celebrated is his brother Jack Mahon, former Galway centre half, and esteemed editor of GAELIC SPORT's "Junior Desk."

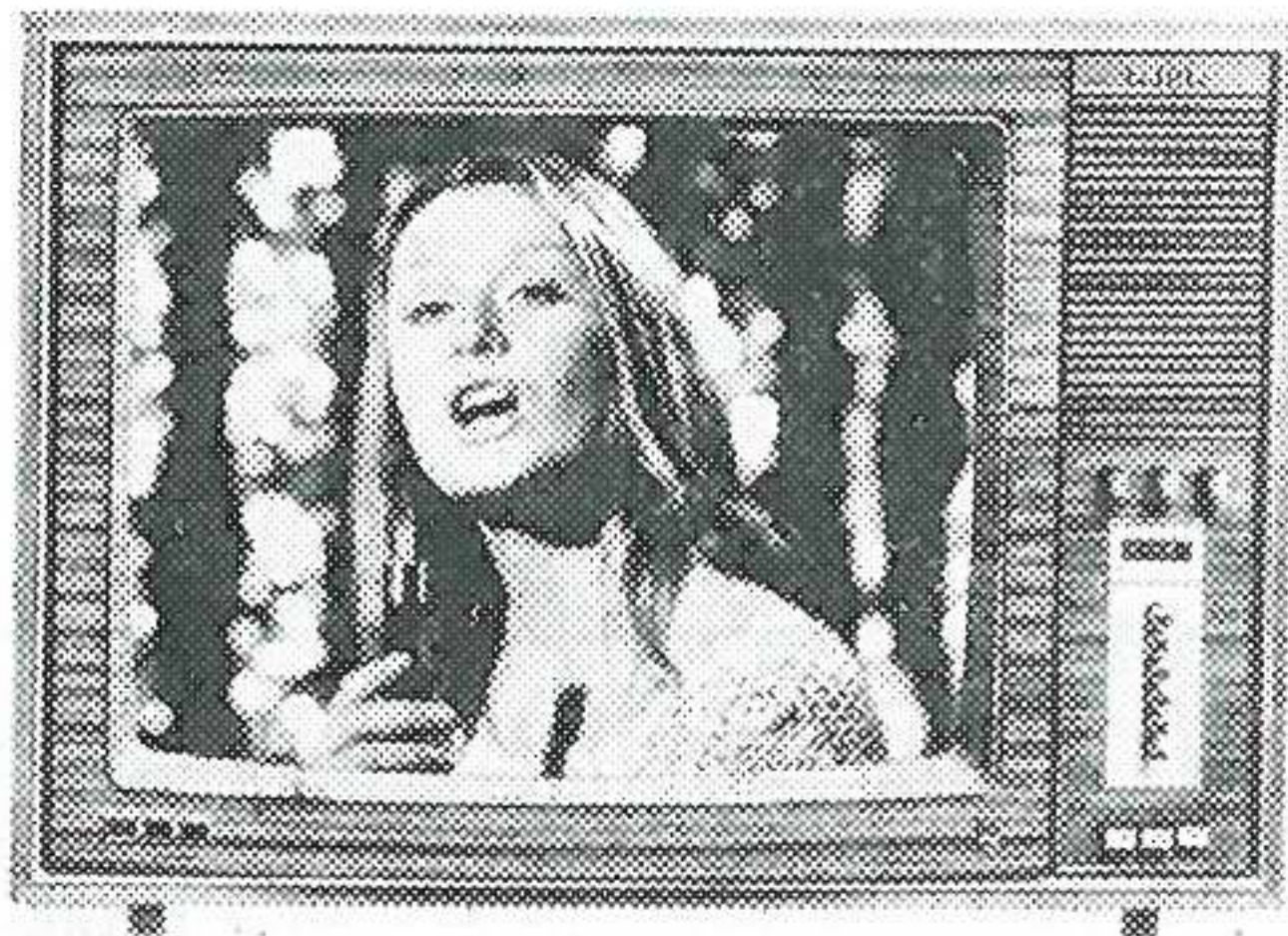
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TOP TEN

THE top mark of 10 points rarely goes to a player in these ratings. Offaly's right full back, Mick Ryan, is accorded the distinction this month for his superb performance in the replay of the All-Ireland football final against Kerry.

Others may pick Willie Bryan as the man of the match. He, too, was superb in the second half. But, in our opinion, the accolade belongs to Ryan for his consistently brilliant display over the 80 minutes.

FOOTBALL

- (10) M. Ryan (Offaly)
- (9) W. Bryan (Offaly)
- (9) M. O'Connell (Kerry)
- (9) D. O'Sullivan (Kerry)
- (9) P. Fenning (Offaly)
- (9) P. McCormack (Offaly)
- (9) P. O'Donoghue (Kerry)
- (9) M. Furlong (Offaly)
- (8) L. Coughlan (Offaly)
- (8) P. Lynch (Kerry)

HURLING

- (9) F. Loughnane ... (Tipperary)
- (9) M. Cummane (Clare)
- (9) S. Power (Tipperary)
- (9) L. King (Tipperary)
- (8) E. Campbell (Galway)
- (8) D. Martin (Offaly)
- (8) R. Bennis (Limerick)
- (8) J. Foley (Limerick)
- (7) S. Cooke (Kilkenny)
- (7) E. Keher (Kilkenny)

● FROM PAGE 7

ness, what an unyielding and vital barrier he put up all through.

The Doon club man never put a foot wrong throughout the entire 80 minutes. With sure-fielding, strong-tackling, keen positional sense, and steady, all-out endeavour, he did more than any other back in my view in closing the door on the much vaunted Kerry attack.

Yes, Mick Ryan is my man of the final replay. Indeed, I make his performance the best I have seen from a defender in a decider since Tom O'Hare turned on a real tour-de-force for Down in another defeat of Kerry—that one was in 1968.

But Ryan and Bryan were not the only stars. Also very impressive was the way that Murt Connor grabbed his chance when sent in from the substitutes' bench for the injured Cooney.

The cool, authoritative manner in which he went about his work, not to mention the fact that he helped himself to a brace of valuable points, caused one to wonder why the young Eire Og man had been dropped from the team in the first place.

Then, there was the versatility of John Smith that paid off so handsomely yet again, the alertness of Martin Furlong . . . one could go on and on, for right throughout the field, Offaly were well served by everyone of the eighteen men who appeared in the replay. Every one played his part, some in greater measure than others, but each can rightly feel that he had a worthwhile role in fashioning such an historic and memorable victory.

The future must look very bright for Offaly. They have proved themselves a team that is one well above the ordinary, and with a rich pool of top-class talent from which to draw, they are going to be hard to keep out of further honours over the next twelve months or so at least.



● John Smith, Offaly's most versatile player.

And what of Kerry? It seems to me that we have reached the end of an era in more ways than one.

Down severely dented the armour of those many disciples of tradition in major games by beating Kerry in the Championships of 1960, 1961 and 1968. But the Kingdom's achievements in latter years had the tradition supporters back again in virtually full cry this past season.

However, the impressive way in which Offaly defied tradition and setbacks on October 15, 1972 must surely cast a long shadow. After all, a somewhat similar position with regard to Kerry and tradition had also long existed in Ulster as far as Cavan were concerned.

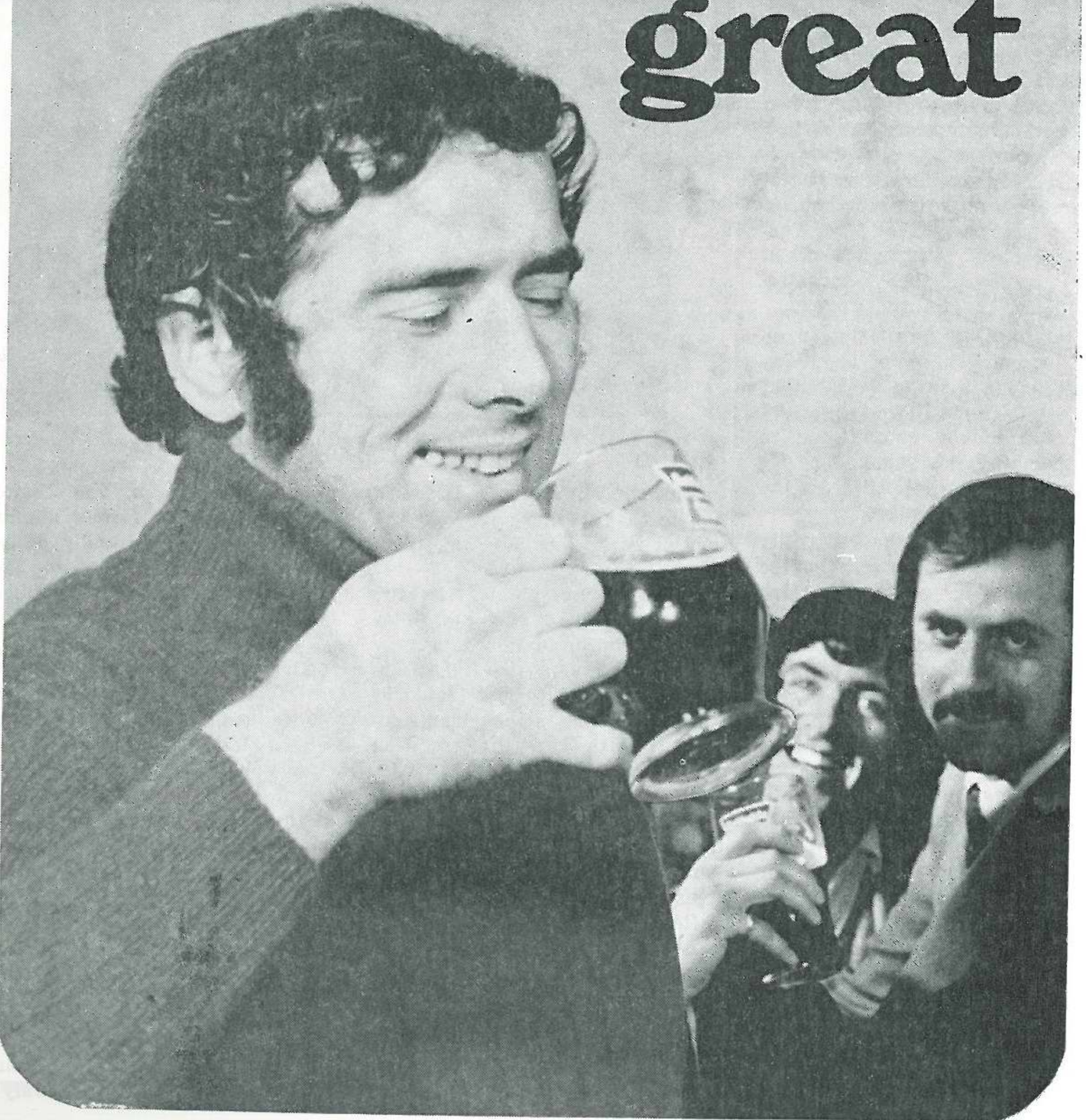
The past decade, however, has brought a big change because of the number of counties that have

pulled off wins in the Ulster series against the former dominant power. So, I frankly doubt if clashes with Kerry in the future will be quite as intimidating tasks as they have been for so many counties in the past.

The crash against the Leinster team also suggests that the time has come for a major re-building job by Kerry. Fortunately, the county has plenty of promising talent, and with the achievements of the past to spur on the young men, it is inevitable that Kerry will soon be back knocking on the door.

Meantime, though, it must be Offaly to brilliantly take over the spotlight that Kerry have held so often in the past. And, with success comes further fields to conquer . . . like a first National League title next May. What price, now, that title for Offaly?

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Apathy in other provinces baffles Northmen

By
DAN
McAREAVY

I HOPE I will be pardoned for straying outside the provincial boundary in order to address a brief message to the rest of the country

In Ulster, the club championship is boiling up to the most exciting climax since the competition was accorded official status. The standard of play is, on balance, probably the highest ever and with Bellaghy from Derry (holders and All-Ireland champions), Clann na Gael (Armagh), Crosserlough (Cavan), Castleblayney (Monaghan) and Ardboe (Tyrone) still in the hunt (at the time of writing) he would be a shrewd judge who would name the eventual winners.

Thanks to the organisation and drive of the Ulster Council and

the responsible attitude adopted by the counties the competition is well on the way—indeed, if it hasn't already arrived there—to becoming one of the most popular features of the year's programme.

So far so good. Until one listens to the doubts being freely expressed here about the attitude of the other provinces—and headquarters too.

When the competition was given national standing in heaps of time for the 1970 championship I hailed the move as one of the most progressive to hit the Association. Since then however—or so it appears up here—Leinster, Connacht and Munster have treated the idea with apathy. It is difficult too, to make the Ulsterman believe that Croke Park has ever given its

wholehearted and unqualified blessing.

"Remember", I was told, "how Bryansford, after winning out in Ulster in December 1970, had to wait 11 months before getting a tilt at the Kerry champions in November 1971."

I was also reminded that in the same year the Down champions were forced to take the All-Ireland semi-final by default after it proved exceptionally difficult to facilitate Galway Fr. Griffin's in the matter of dates.

Last year Bellaghy were, I suppose, comparatively lucky to have the final against University College Cork six months (!) after winning the Ulster crown but then, following a most embarrassing piece of chopping and changing, the game was played off on a Friday evening at Croke Park. Not even the enthusiasm of the Derry supporters could take away from the unreality of what ought to have been a real glamour occasion. The absence of a trophy merely added insult to injury.

Now it is feared that the same fate awaits our 1972 standard-bearers. Has a single game been played yet in Leinster, Munster or Connacht in this year's club championship? Is there once again going to be that interminable delay which can only knock the stuffing out of popular support?

So far in Ulster the competition has always been completed by the end of the year at the very latest. It baffles officials, players and supporters in the North that the rest of the country cannot do likewise.

Of course there is a theory that in G.A.A. circles any Ulster initi-

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● FROM PAGE 11

ative—and the club championship was one—must be tested for about 20 years before it gains general approval. I hope that this is not true.

SCÓR AGAIN

And remaining with club activity I am glad to note that the Scór Seachtó will soon be on the rounds again.

With the Ulster final already fixed for February 25 a very hectic period indeed faces the organisers of the club, district and county heats.

I am pleased to see that the junior section (under-16) is to be an All-Ireland affair but the date for the final — December 9 must have come as a tremendous shock to a great many people. Candidly, how all the junior tests are to be played off in such a short time puzzles me.

Regarding the adult contest I notice the solo dancing is to be reinstated—and rightly so—but I very much regret the axing of the set dancing.

The motion speaking also disappears in favour of a "novelty act" lasting a maximum of five minutes. If this succeeds in bringing a drama flavour to the competition I'll be all for it.

THANKS, BOB!

I cannot close this piece without a word of thanks to the player who gave me the most pleasure in the past month, who made my All-Ireland final day for me.

The man I mean is of course Cork minor Bib Wilmot who gave the greatest performance against Tyrone that it has been my good fortune to see for many a long day.

Of course I would have loved Tyrone to have won but candidly I didn't begrudge Cork the honours when they have players like him.

HAVE you noticed how the right half back position in football is producing some of the brightest and most exciting personalities in modern-day competition? In 1970 it was that great hearted little campaigner from Kerry, Tom Prendergast, who emerged as the footballer of the year. Last year, that mantle was taken over in dramatic style by another brilliant star in the No. 5 shirt—Offaly's dashing Eugene Mulligan.

And, when Donegal surprised and delighted the nation with the high quality of their football in that gallant All-Ireland semi-final bid against Offaly, the high tradition for excellence and sparkle at right half back was superbly maintained by Brian McEniff. In fact, his was as polished and classy a performance at right wing back as any we have seen in a major game.

That says much for the talents of the Bundoran man, considering that the meeting with Offaly was his—and Donegal's—greatest occasion in football, and as such all the more an unnerving challenge for that.

However, McEniff is no "Johnny come lately" when it comes to turning on the style. Up until Donegal made their big breakthrough by winning their first Ulster senior championship in July, the county had been experiencing a long, lean period. Nevertheless, McEniff was still in there consistently pulling his weight with his steady, wholehearted play and all-out endeavour.

Nor did his good work go unnoticed outside of Donegal. In 1970 he was called up to the Ulster team at right half back for the semi-final with Munster, and went on to prove one of the stars of a squad that regained

the Railway Cup after an interval of two years.

He was again at right half when Ulster retained the title in 1971 against Connacht, and last February the Donegal man was called up from the substitutes' bench during the unsuccessful semi-final defence against Leinster.

Then, came further representative honours in the Spring with the Carrolls All-Stars squad in the two games with Offaly in San Francisco.

So, despite Donegal's lack of major successes, Brian McEniff has well and truly proved his ability at national level to stand upsides with the very best of them.

The sure-fielding and determined half back has a double virtue in that he is also the Donegal team manager, and his qualities in this direction, allied to his powers on the playing field, must make him one of the biggest assets in football at the present time.

The coming months appear full of exciting promise for Donegal. With the confidence that must flow from their long-awaited first Ulster crown, and that so encouraging debut in the All-Ireland series, the county must have a great chance of winning the National League



● Brian McEniff

Great year for Brian McEniff

Division II crown come Spring-time.

Such an achievement would be invaluable in helping Donegal to weld their many gifts and individual skills into the type of smooth moving and self-assured outfit that could pay-off in the winning of the greatest prize of them all next September.

Brian McEniff is a man superbly equipped to play a leading role in the Donegal bid to measure up to this latest interesting and demanding challenge. Coolness under pressure, crispness in the tackle, soundness in his covering, and imagination and deftness in bringing his team sweeping out from defence into attack are mighty weapons in his make-up.

His flair for intelligent and well-controlled runs down the right wing can help to unsettle any defence, inspire his teammates, and enable him to put his name on the score sheet with vital points — recorded more often than not when they are needed most.

With the dedicated Brian McEniff employing his artistry, and Donegal's fine side also all out to live up fully to the newly-won reputation, all the excitement and glamour of League football are unlikely to be confined to the premier division in the coming months.

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WHY DID CORK HURLERS FAIL?



● Ray Cummins

By EAMONN YOUNG

THE answer is pretty simple: they met Kilkenny. No I'm not being naive and I'm not being smart. Take a look at the answer. What does Kilkenny mean to you. How do you analyse the word Cork. In sport Kilkenny has always meant hurling. Other laudable facets of endeavour there have been beside the Nore but hurling is the thing. What did the word Kilkenny mean in '72?

It meant about one hundred and twenty mature and pretty skilled hurlers who tussled their way through the '71 county championship and at the end about quarter of that number came to the top. They hurled their way through Leinster in '72 showing the usual skill and verve that is an integral part of the Kilkenny history. Bad Kilkenny teams there have been (though John Quirke of Cork, maintains there is no such thing) but they have all been able to use the stick. This side was beaten last year but remember it went most of the way and some Kilkennymen say that they should have won it last year. Again there's nothing more stimulating than a defeat if your heart is right and ball-players in the big-time are not faint-hearted. So Kilkenny had the hurling ability and the motivation. What else had they?

They had an eighty minute game against Wexford and they drew it. They drew it with fourteen men. And they had another eighty minutes for which they

prepared steadily. They had a canter against a solid Galway side. Then they had time to prepare for the final.

Now I don't know Mick Lanigan except to nod in his direction but I often admired his running and hurdling. A lad told me that Lanigan high-jumped five feet eleven while at Rockwell. Whether this is true or not, we know enough of the man to say that he knows what athletic training is all about, and of course I have been convinced for at least ten years that the only people who really train in this country are the athletes, because they are generally tough men who run alone in all sorts of weather without the stimulation of applause, of photographs on the paper or the praise of some journalists who have more heart than judgment. So a team trained by an athlete, especially a successful one, should be in trim provided that athlete has the knack of man-management. This I hear Mick Lanigan has.

Then there's Fr. Tommy Meagher with whom I hurled as a lad and whom I got to know as an adult. Here is a quiet pipe-smoking, intense man who thinks. We all think, but in the moment of excitement how shrewd is our thinking? I make no bones about admitting I lost my head one day as Cork selector when we were playing Kerry. My friend Doney Donovan pulled me back to earth. It was momentary but

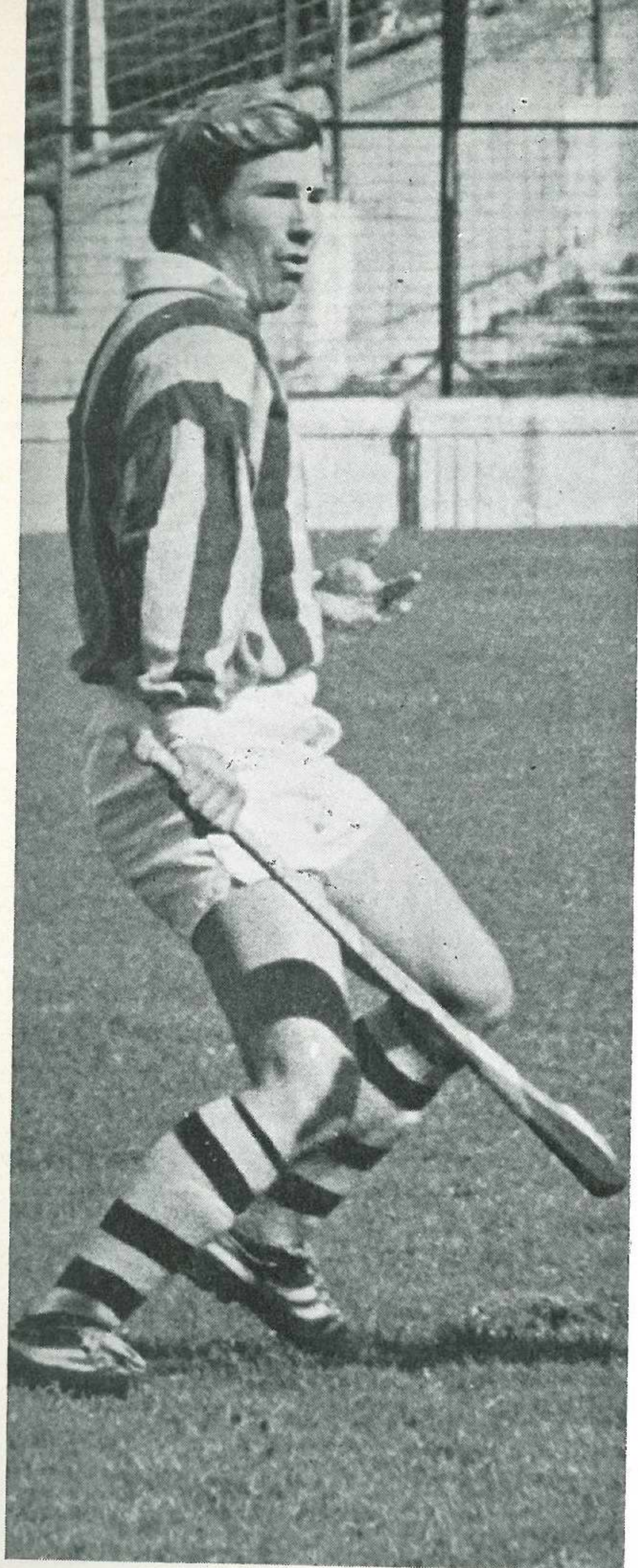
culpable. We won incidentally. Tommy Meagher doesn't strike me as a man who would get a brain-storm in a tight moment. Neither does Paddy Grace and there are a few more.

So with Kilkenny able to hurl, in pretty good physical and emotional shape, well guided from the line and playing in their fourth successive eighty-minute game one must agree there they should have been quite formidable.

Cork also were trained, by a very dedicated man named Fr. Donal Coakley. I wouldn't ask for better but I don't think he saw as much of his men as did his opposite number. It wasn't exactly anyone's fault. Injuries, exams, etc., etc. . . . all interfered and as we all know it takes at least six months steady work to get a man to All-Ireland trim. Likewise Cork had good men on the sideline and I would remind the critics of the changes the selectors made in the games against Tipperary in the championship. Without sideline thinking that day it would have been a Tipp-Kilkenny repeat. But in the final less went wrong on the field for Kilkenny and all one can say then is that for them the remedy was easier to effect.

Cork didn't have enough hard games. They beat Tipp in the League after a good game (without Mick Keating) and slipped away from Limerick in the

● TO PAGE 16



● NOEL SKEHAN

● FROM PAGE 15

League final when they were nearly caught. What few suspected is that neither Limerick or Tipp were good. I said at the time that this was so.

A young Waterford team looked good against Cork. But how good were Cork in the first round? They drew with Tipp when the Premier bunch should have sewed it up and on the second day with an improved Cork side there was only one answer. Unfortunately the Clare game was an anti-climax and we Cork people were sorry not only for Clare but for ourselves. The London affair simply showed that they had a few men who were good enough in any company . . . but not enough.

And so Cork walked into an All-Ireland final believing they were ready. We knew that they could hurl and John D. Hickey asked me a few days before the game what I thought. This is what I said: "If this Cork side is as fit as Jim Regan and Fr. Buckley would like them their good hurling will make it very hard for Kilkenny to win".

That's just what I felt and if you remember the final you'll recall that the men in red showed they could hurl. We all knew they could. But did they keep hurling for the eighty minutes? It is obvious to all now that in hurling anyway a big lead is of little use with twenty minutes to go unless you are able to keep plugging away. It's too easy to score from fifty yards when you have got away from your opponent.

I admire Kilkenny and always have. I congratulate them once again on their fitness, their generalship, their hurling and their well-won All-Ireland and look forward to the future when, let's hope, we'll give them a large spoonful out of the same sporting bottle.

THE LOT OF THE REF.

By NOEL COOGAN

REFEREES are probably the most degraded and belittled band of men in Gaelic games circles. How often do we hear of these brave individuals being physically assaulted after a game. Such incidents occur at G.A.A. venues up and down the country Sunday after Sunday, year in year out. I have often heard it said—and rightly so—that it takes a very special breed of man to become a referee. Certainly it is not every person who would be prepared to put his life in danger week after week for a meagre "few bob".

But the fact of the matter is that there would be no games were it not for referees. Then one would think that the people within the Association would have more respect for and look after better the Knights of the Whistle. While there are quite a few poor referees in the G.A.A., that is still no excuse for abusing them.

But the powers that be at the top can have no alibis for not making an all-out effort to improve the general standard of handling of Gaelic games at every level, from the humblest of junior games up to All-Ireland finals. True, some worthwhile progress has been made in this direction of late, but the plain truth is that the overall situation still leaves an awful lot to be desired.

This is particularly so in football where the difference between fouls and non-fouls is often rather difficult to define. The obvious fact that all is not well at the top was clearly reflected in this year's All-Ireland senior football final with referee Fintan Tierney's handling being subjected to criticism from various

quarters. And while much of the verbal abuse which has been hurled in the general direction of the unfortunate Cavanman over the last few weeks was rather unfair, one feels, the G.A.A. men at the helm seem to have rowed in with the critics in changing the official in charge for the replay.

Of course, the referee's lot is not being made any easier by the most complex set of playing rules that one could possibly find in any ball game. Indeed so complex are they that referees are far too often in the dark when forced to make vital decisions. I recall some months ago thinking up an imaginary incident which could happen in a game of Gaelic football and putting it to two referees in my locality, asking what their decisions would be. Not surprising, I received two completely different answers. It has been said on more than one occasion that there is a lack of uniformity in the interpretation of football rules among our men in the middle.

It is only fair to point out that some useful progress towards rectifying such a situation is being made in recent months with referees' committees being formed in various counties. In the G.A.A. any Tom, Dick or Harry can referee a game. In this respect it would hardly be a bad idea to take a lead from another sport, namely soccer. In Association Football would-be referees must pass a testing examination dealing with the rules of the code before they are allowed to handle or even run the line in an official match. In that sport such a ruling applies to even the most humble of junior matches.

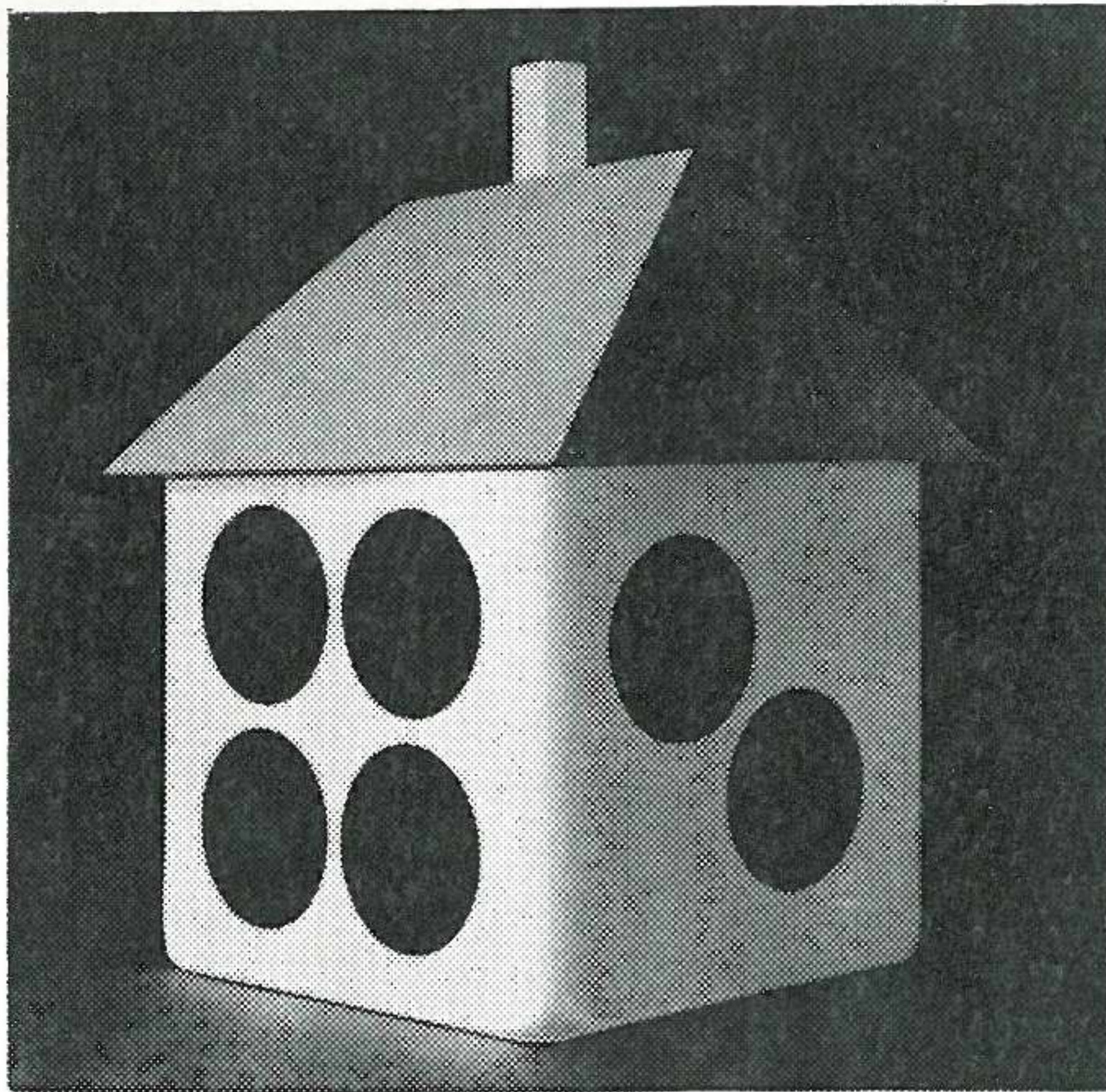
Certainly in games like Soccer and Rugby the right kind of image is being presented with linesmen and touch judges being neatly togged out. So much different from the shabby, uncultured impression that most of our linesmen and umpires present, even at many important ties.

In Gaelic Football or Hurling it is nothing new to see a so-called official running up and down the sideline with a cigarette or even a pipe hanging out of his mouth. Surely it is not asking too much in this day and age for all linesmen and umpires to be suitably garbed, particularly on major occasions. White coats for the latter should be available at as many grounds as is possible.

The job of an umpire is of great importance and great care must be taken in appointing those to do duty, as these men can often mean the difference between the winning and losing of a match. It would be desirable to have recognised referees running lines and doing umpire at inter-county games.

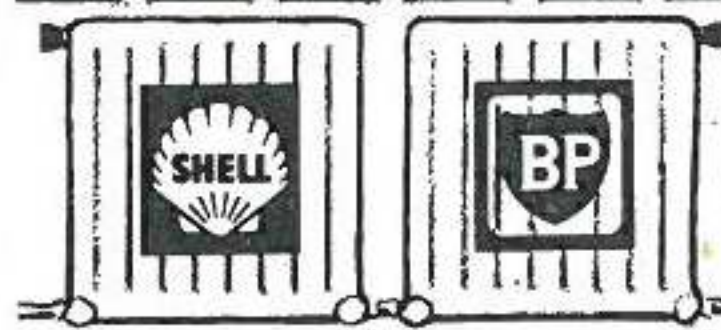
Perhaps some of these demands may sound somewhat unrealistic, but then there is so much that could be done towards improving the overall situation. Perhaps well tutored professional referees for major matches would be another wise move. But above all the men in the middle must get a better deal from the G.A.A. Clarification of certain confusing rules and a forward step towards a more uniform interpretation of all playing laws are goals to be aimed at. For the sake of the image of our national games something must be done soon.

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SCORESHEET



● Tony McTague

WHILE there have been some impressive individual scoring achievements in football and hurling this year, it is inevitable now that most of the long-standing records in the charts will still hold their own doggedly for another year at least when all the goals and points have been finally added up for the 1972 campaign.

Take the premier goal scoring achievement for a full season's programme of inter-county games, embracing all competitions, as well as challenge games and inter-provincials. It was put up as far back as 1956 at 35 goals by Nick Rackard (Wexford) in 19 hurling engagements.

The leading goal-grabber in hurling and football just now is that exciting young man from Cork, Sean O'Leary, who is only in his first full season as a regular with the Leaside outfit. The Youghal man has been finding the way through to goal in expert style, but even so, he was only half-way at press time towards the big Rackard bag with 19 goals from 12 games.

On the other hand, it seems inevitable that O'Leary will still comprehensively emerge this season as a bright record-maker in his own right. Currently, the Cork peak is 22 goals, a tally twice reached by the immortal Christy Ring. In 1959 he bagged the total in ten games, and in 1961 he got there in 13 outings.

If O'Leary improves on that

By OWEN McCANN

score he will earn another distinction, as the 22 goals figure is the best since the Rackard spectacular in 1956.

Football also provides some thundering top-line events from the 'Fifties. Leading the way is Frankie Donnelly with a whopping 117 points (5-102) in 22 games in 1957 for the Tyrone county record.

Next in line is Sean Purcell's chart-topping mark for Galway at 11-74 (107 points) in 22 games in 1958. When we consider all that Galway accomplished during the 'Sixties and that the Purcell score still stood firm, it seems likely that here is another entry that is destined not to be scrubbed out for a long time yet to come.

Similarly, with Dublin no longer anything like the power they once were in football, when will the now almost thirteen years-old record of 101 points (5-86) in 17 appearances by Ollie Freaney in 1959 be improved on?

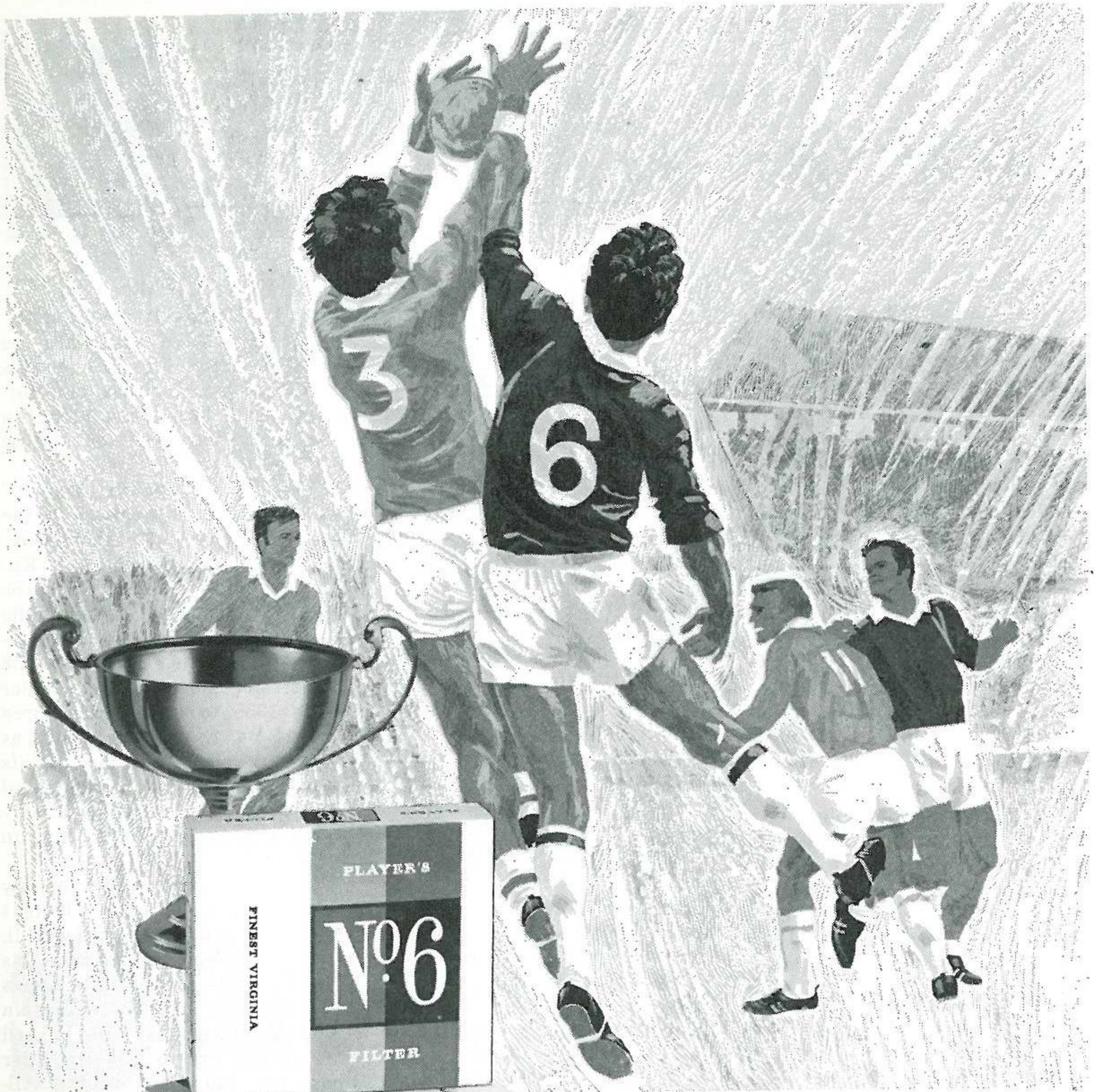
Of much more recent vintage is the football target in the goals stakes they all have to beat. Willie McGee (Mayo) holds sway as a result of his performance during 1969, when he found his way through to the net on 17 occasions in 27 matches.

It's most unlikely now that the red-headed Mayo man will be knocked from his throne this year at least, for not one forward has been displaying a really exciting flare for getting among the goals.

Top of the points league? Understandably enough the honour belongs to that ever-present in the charts from Kilkenny, Eddie Keher. Surprisingly enough in setting the standard last year at a thundering 141 points, the Noreside stylist became the first hurler since 1955 to even reach three figures on the points scale, as distinct from goals and points combined. The old record stood at a modest 91 points by Jimmy Doyle (Tipperary) in 17 ties in 1969.

Tony McTague may possibly relieve Michael Kearins (Sligo) of the leading role in football. He has to improve on 135 points by the Western star in 24 games in 1968, but the Offaly captain is well on the way. He pushed his points figures for the year past the 100 mark in the All-Ireland final replay — his 15th outing of the campaign.

After all that, let's end with a player from one of the less fashionable counties who IS on the record-making trail. Phil Dillon is the name, and he will probably take over the premier spot for Laois in the chart from Christy O'Brien, there since 1965 with a 10-18 (48 points) marking from 13 matches.



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Stories of mice and men



● John Kerry O'Donnell

IF you have ever talked to John Kerry O'Donnell for any length of time, you'll probably have noticed by now that he has a delightful and very articulate way of illustrating his points and arguments by telling neat little stories which always have some passing association with his own family.

I'll give you a case in point, particularly because in this instance I enjoyed one of these stories very much.

We were sitting in the Skylon Hotel on the morning after the drawn All-Ireland football final and, having exhausted our comments, opinions and post-mortems on the game, we gradually drifted into some mild chat about the relationship between the New York G.A.A. and the G.A.A. here.

It would be a breach of confidence on my part to reveal here just what that discussion was all about but in the course of emphasising a certain point, John Kerry said that it reminded him of something that had happened back in Kerry when he was a young fellow.

There was this woman, he said, and he suggested that she was a close relation, and every morning before the workmen on the farm began work, this good woman provided them with their food, which consisted of a large jug of milk each and some bread and butter to go with it.

One of the workmen it seems, took a large swallow from his jug—and then, looking down, made the sad and quite surprising discovery that there was a mouse in the jug.

"There's a mouse in my milk," he said indignantly — "Look, there it is".

With that, the good woman of the house bent over, put her hand into the jug, withdrew the mouse and threw it away.

But the workman refused to drink the milk after that . . . and that drew the caustic comment from the good lady of the house.

"I don't know what to make of you", she said, "you won't drink your milk with a mouse in it—and you won't drink it when there isn't a mouse in it."

Think that over . . . and perhaps you might just have a suspicion of why John Kerry told that particular story.

★ ★ ★

What did go wrong for Kerry in that drawn All-Ireland football final?

Everyone has offered a theory by now and there have been enough words written about it to fill a Bible-sized book.

I liked the one from a certain Kerry player who was out on the field that day and to protect the innocent—or perhaps the guilty—I'm not going to part with his name.

"You know, we had our usual

talks and discussions before the game", he told me, "and I thought I knew just what was going to happen out on the field. But look what happened. Mick O'Connell was playing one game, the 14 of us were playing another and we never got together for the full 80 minutes".

There's something in it.

★ ★ ★

So Pat O'Leary has resigned from the Cork hurling selection committee—and I'm sorry to see him go. Maybe he will be back again someday in the future. I hope so.

Despite all the chat and rumours of trouble between the selectors and other members of the Cork Board after the All-Ireland hurling final, there was nothing sinister behind his decision to resign.

As he put it to me: "I need a rest. I've been on the go, morning, noon and night for the past four years and I feel now that I have had enough for the moment, anyway. It's about time I devoted some attention to my children, who have been growing up over the past four years and I haven't been around to notice it."

But he will still take in a hurling game every Sunday — and enjoy it for a change. "I'm afraid you don't enjoy hurling games that much when you are a selector"—he told me.

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DON'T WRITE OFF UNCLE JOHN

THERE it was in the Sunday newspapers. A very nice, interesting item on the sports pages. Beautifully written, of course—and it told us the welcome news that “Tearin” Tom Doyle and Aidan Doyle, the only two survivors of Wexford’s four-in-a-row All-Ireland victories between 1915 and 1918, were still hale and hearty and full of good life.

Uncle John, I’m sure, was delighted to read that . . . but at the same time, I would say that he was a little put out about it, too.

For there are, in fact, three survivors of those four famous victories and Uncle John at 74 happens to be one of them. He is, I can assure you, just as hale and hearty as the two Doyles and he still puts in a solid day’s work every day on the farm outside Enniscorthy.

As a matter of fact, he is probably a fair sight fitter than I am—and I’m a good 20 years younger than he is. We walked up Clonliffe Road together for the All-Ireland football final between Kerry and Offaly and he was half a step ahead of me the whole way.

He’s not my Uncle John, of course. He is Uncle John to Nick and Billy Rackard but they talk all the time about him as Uncle John and everyone else

now calls him Uncle John—so Uncle John he is.

To give him his full name, he is John Doran and if you care to check up the records, you’ll find that he played on the Wexford team that beat Tipperary in the 1918 All-Ireland football final. He was only 18 at the time and it was his first and last All-Ireland appearance.

So, just to keep the records in order, let’s have it right now that there are three survivors of those great Wexford All-Ireland teams of the 1915-1918 era.

And I sincerely hope that a few officials down in Co. Wexford remember that fact—and make sure in future that Uncle John gets his tickets for the All-Ireland finals.

For as it happened this year, he arrived in Dublin on the morning of the All-Ireland football final without an All-Ireland ticket. And fit and all as one may be at 74, Hill 16 is no place for a man who won his All-Ireland medal back in 1918.

But he got to the final—and for that a deep word of thanks must go to another All-Ireland football medal winner. None other than “Weesh” Murphy of Cork.

When I met Nick Rackard at 1 o’clock on the day of the final, he had just the one problem and that was to find a ticket for Uncle

John and at that stage of the day the chances appeared to be hopeless.

But we walked up to Barry’s Hotel in the hope of meeting someone who might just have one—and we had the good fortune to run into “Weesh” Murphy. He was holding a ticket for a friend of his but once he heard about Uncle John, there was no hesitation or delay. He just handed over the ticket and that was all there was to it.

And, “Weesh”, if by any chance you read this, maybe it will make your day just a little better to know that Uncle John thoroughly enjoyed himself and more than likely added on a small prayer for you in his nightly quota.

Uncle John and myself walked up Clonliffe Road to Croke Park and he was like a two-year old waiting for the starter’s gun. God knows, I had the feeling that he was going to his first All-Ireland but then I know that he has hardly missed one over the last 50 years.

His ticket was used well. As he told me :

“You can talk about anything under the sun, but in the end, there’s nothing quite like an All-Ireland final. It’s the only thing that counts in sport in Ireland.”

Come to think of it, he’s quite right, isn’t he ?

And before I finish, here’s a little thought for Irish Distillers and Powers and the people who organise the great Wexford Sports Stars dinner every November.

There are only the three survivors now of that wonderful time in Wexford football—“Tearin” Tom Doyle, Aidan Doyle and John Doran.

Would it be a nice idea to invite them to this year’s banquet ?

I’d like to meet them—provided, of course, I’m invited, too.

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★ Nearly a great game! ★

★ ★

WELL, did you enjoy the hurling final? You didn't? Then the back of my hand to you, for you must surely be the most insufferable crotchet that ever existed.

Corkmen will have suffered, too, of course, but, even in their misery there must have been an exquisite enjoyment of the whole spectacle with its heartily fought hither-and-thither excitement. It was particularly grim for Cork that they should have been run out of it in the end of the hunt by a team which, by all appearances should have been displaying elderly frailty at that stage.

Let us say it now, however, before the overall impression submerges us, that Cork's hurlers deserved better from their supporters than to be given the freeze treatment when they returned to the city on the Monday evening after the finals. Both minors and seniors had lost; both gave good displays; both were overcome by exceptional performances by Kilkenny; both had done the county proud earlier in the championships; both might have benefitted from tougher opposition in the last two rounds before the final. Especially, both sides were heroes when they were winning. Why so little consolation now in their time of sadness?

Can it be that Cork support—known through the length of the land as the greatest bonus that any county possesses—has bred a new generation which values only the winner? But, how could all the older generations be suddenly missing; where were the middle-aged and even the elderly? Does it not strike the

supporters that while they were disappointed by the outcome, that the players were far more in need of consolation. After all it was their sweat and effort and even a little of their blood that was spilt in the triumphs; they had strained muscles and hearts and wills to get ready for that final. What it must have meant to them. And it was they who had to take the beating out there on the field before millions of pairs of eyes, when the whole audience is counted. Supporters merely cursed in their stand seats or their terrace standpoints.

Everyone finds it easy to jump on the winning bandwagon. It is the losers, more especially on important occasions—club or county—that need the support; winning is its own reward; losing is a lonely business which can only be alleviated by the heart-warming rallying of the true supporters. Not alone that, but I would say that the seeds of next year's triumphant celebration are sown in many a rallying round sad losers. The players do not forget the debt they incur in that lonely moment.

To return to the game: a splendid one. Or, rather, a great match: teams closely matched, a struggle of men of great and unyielding character, heroic quality in the deeds and the timing of their doing; players rising above doubt, age, youth, experience and inexperience to display the best of a great sport.

And a very good game, too, though not great, if one wants to keep that superlative for those unique occasions of purest poetry in the hurling style and skill. The

striking of the Kilkenny men was in the highest bracket; that of Cork was not—perhaps this was the single most noteworthy difference in the teams.

In the play, there was no notable ground striking; on the contrary, there were some notable ground misses, like Hegarty's, in the early hassle when all was still in the melting-pot, and he found himself running on to a ball that broke in his path ten yards from goal and clear.

There was no overhead striking worth even a mention; just a couple of scuffed doublers, and some overhead passes or centres swept along. But, nothing of the real hallmark of hurling in the classical sense as the greatest game on earth, for it is the most difficult skills that mark any game to its highest point. Too much picking, twisting and making sure: cerebral rather than instinctive, as the finest things in hurling have always been. Too many scores taken with exaggerated difficulty—ones that Christy Ring would have put in in a wink of an eye, but which were secured after a couple of extra moves here.

But, mainly, no overhead hurling of skill, no ground hurling of crispness and character. So, I have said my say. Now, to add that this final had everything else, and all those other things in great abundance. That is why it was very nearly a great game. But, though not quite a great game, it was certainly a great match. Very simply, thank you all so much—all Kilkenny and all Cork—for an afternoon to cherish in the memory.



● Eddie Keher

KEHER: N

EDDIE KEHER has been in the national spotlight over the past ten years or so with a consistency that few, if any, in hurling or football can match, yet the passing years, far from taking their usual inevitable toll on reflexes and the fluent execution of skills at the highest level, appear to be giving the Kilkennyman a new dimension that now has him more truly than ever a brilliant star apart.

The major part he played in Kilkenny's win over Cork in that never-to-be-forgotten All-Ireland final in September helps to underline this. The Noresiders' had many bright stars that day, but it was the transfer of Keher from left full to left half forward with a little over twenty minutes of play remaining that proved a decisive influence on the outcome. In addition, he coloured the game with his customary spot-on finishing technique — a tremendously impressive bag, in fact, of 2-9.

All this at 31 years of age, and after seasons of almost non-stop action on the inter-county senior front. Nor is this half the story. Last year the sweet and accurate-striking hurler from The Rower-Inistioge well and truly put into the shade everything he had previously accomplished on the scoring scene. Or indeed, for that matter, anything achieved by any other player in hurling or football.

In 17 appearances during the

MASTER CRAFTSMAN

1971 campaign, embracing games in all competitions, he put up a majestic score of 8-141 (165 points) to smash a hurling record that had stood for some 15 long years. Back in 1956 big-hitting Wexford full forward Nick Rackard had established the peak at 35-50 (155 points) in 19 games.

Keher's score last year also passed out the football record of 13-122 (161 points), which stands to the credit of Mick O'Dwyer (Kerry) from 26 games, including those on the world tour, in 1970.

The high-powered finishing of the master craftsman from Kilkenny last season is seen in even more impressive light when we take into account the fact that in two earlier campaigns he played more games than during the 1971 series.

But, as the old saying has it, "You ain't heard nothin' yet." This year the ever-vigilant Nore-sider is in even more dynamic form. He put up a new record for the Championship by shooting 6-45 (63 points) in five games, and at press time, all the indications were that he will eventually this year leave his own record-making achievement of last year for all competitions, a proud high-point though it is, broken into smithereens!

So, now you will appreciate more fully what I meant when I said earlier that the passing years are giving Eddie Keher a

new dimension that has him now a shining star in a unique class.

What an amazing career this remarkable hurler has had! In the premier inter-county grade since 1959, after having won two All-Ireland Colleges' medals and four Leinster awards as a minor, he has rarely been out of the scoring pace-setters.

One does not have to recourse

By
OWEN McCANN

to records to remember the way that he captured the national limelight in 1963 with a tour-de-force when popping over 0-14, ten points from frees, against Waterford in the Liam McCarthy Cup final on the way to his first All-Ireland senior medal. That grand score helped him to break a century of points (goals and points combined) for a full season for the first time in his career.

Since then he has reached three figures every year except in 1964—a wonderful tribute to his razor-sharp technique, and a proud record not remotely approached by any other player in either code.

Keher's flashes of genius, and his expertise in the making and taking of scores, have also helped Leinster in a prominent

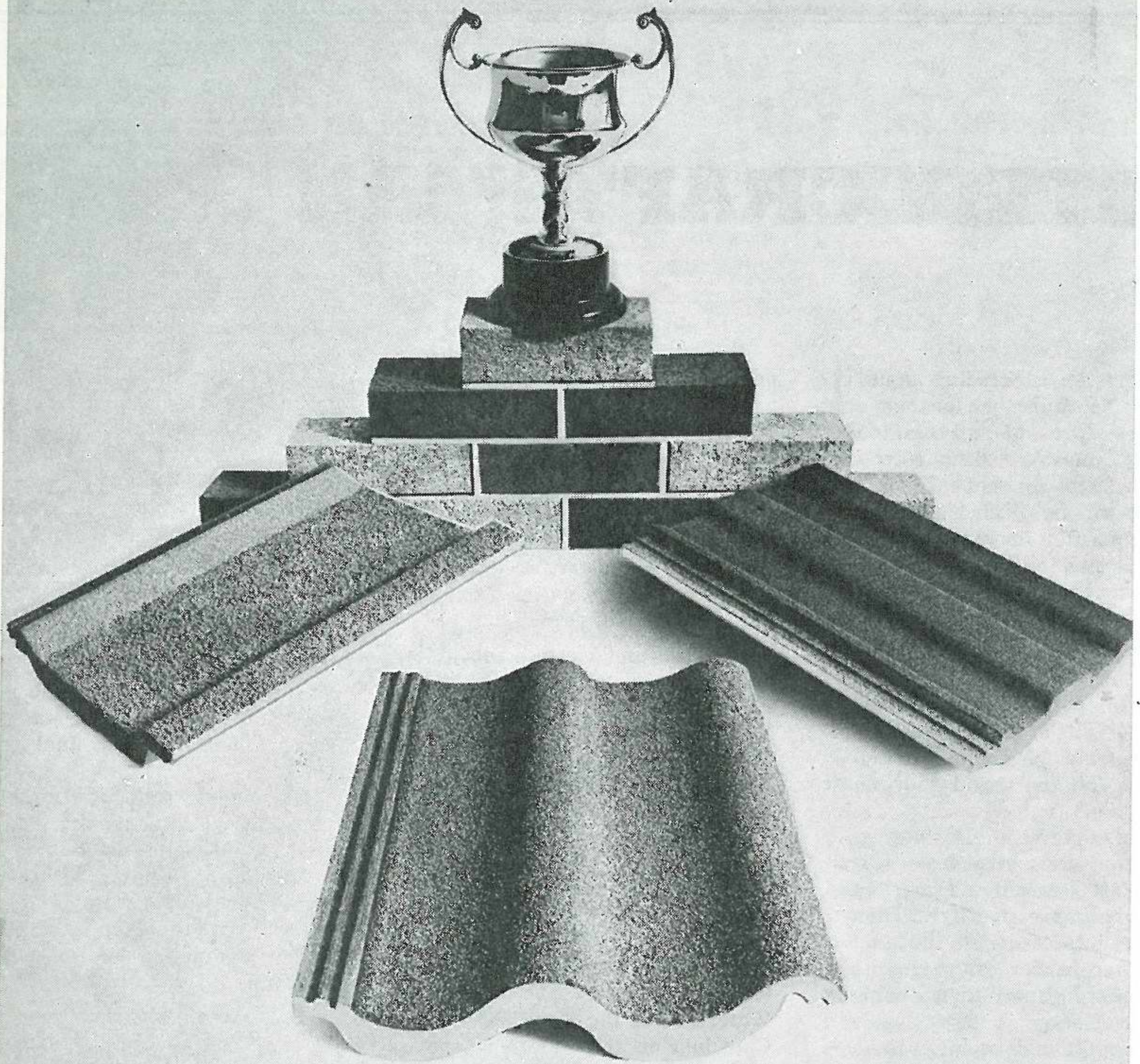
way in the Railway Cup. He has shared in every one of the province's last five title wins—1964, 1965, 1967, 1971 and 1972.

And, when Kilkenny made an important breakthrough in May 1966 by beating Tipperary in the National League "Home" final, for the county's first major final win over the "old enemy" in 43 years, Eddie Keher had a big hand in fashioning that success. Four years earlier he won the first of his two National League medals in a final with Cork.

His medals collection includes Oireachtas Cup souvenirs, and as well as 1963 and last September he played on winning All-Ireland senior final teams in 1967 and 1969, a year in which he had the added distinction of captaining Kilkenny.

Last year, although on the losing side, he put his name in a special way in the game with Tipperary by scoring the highest recorded individual bag in an All-Ireland final—2-11.

It will be interesting now to watch how Eddie Keher's great career develops further, especially in the context of his appearances in recent games at left full forward. It does not appear unreasonable to assume, though, that he can go on for a long time yet delighting hurling enthusiasts, and tormenting defences, with those flashes of real genius that have kept him such a commanding figure for so long.



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● Members of the Irish American Handball Association teams on their visit to Na Fianna Gaelic Centre. Left to right: Jim Fitzpatrick, Brendan O'Boyle, Bertie O'Boyle (Chairman, Na Fianna Handball Section), Larry Dolan (President), Jackie Walsh.

HANDBALL

By ALLEYMAN

The wider horizons

THERE was a new emphasis placed on the importance of international handball with the recent visit here of a New York team from the Irish American Handball Association.

This organisation which was formed only recently by Larry Dolan, well-known sportsman and columnist, who toured most of the major handballing centres in the country and gave a succession of skilful exhibitions.

Dolan, who was the brain behind this unique trip and has a fanatical interest in handball, explained to me that the purpose of the tour was to cement a closer bond between the American and Irish Associations. He hopes that an Irish club will see fit to pay a reciprocal visit to Broderick's Court, the home of the I.A.H.A. in the coming year.

Dolan was also adamant that his team came here, not with the intention of ultimate victory, and the sporting decorum of the

players both on and off the court certainly proved the point.

A revealing feature of the tour was the quick adaptability of the visitors to the larger Irish court.

Despite the fact that they were accustomed to playing in 40 ft. x 20 ft. courts they were well able to hold their own with our top men.

This was particularly evident on the eve of the Football All-Ireland in the new court at Croke Park when Jackie Walsh and Harry Hyde defeated former World Champion Joey Maher and Niall Cahill.

Indeed, the magnificent performances of the Americans again raises the point as to the future of the game here in relation to the size of our courts.

It has now been proved, conclusively that while American players can readily adjust themselves to our larger type courts, the reverse is certainly not operative.

The question then poses itself

—should we adjust our game to the 40' x 20' system.

The immediate observation, of course is the complete impracticality of adjusting our game overnight to the American style, for the simple reason that the vast majority of courts here are standardised to the 60' x 30' regulations.

But it does call for a stated policy by the Irish Handball Council that new courts should be built on the American style.

Dolan, for instance, thinks that we should set our sights on a policy that the small court is the thing of the future, at the same time pointing out that all new developments should be properly completed with roofing designed to take the ceiling shot, a maple floor and central heating. I would, personally, go along with this theme for a number of reasons.

The most vital, in terms of handball economics is cost.

● TO PAGE 33

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MOONDHARRIG'S DIARY

Thanks for the memory, chaps



● Noel Skehan

FROM the long-term viewpoint, I have only one complaint about the hurling final between Kilkenny and Cork—it made a bit of a hames of the subsequent football final between Offaly and Kerry. Rightly or wrongly consciously or subconsciously, we all trotted along to Croke Park on the last Sunday in September expecting just as thrilling a display as we had seen on the first Sunday in the same month.

And with due respects to the footballers they did not give themselves a chance in the world of measuring up to the men of Cork and Kilkenny when those characters really let their hair down and settled in to showing us what a thrilling game hurling can really be.

It would be hardly fair to rate this hurling final yet in terms of other finals in the past, but I have not seen a better or more satisfying clash between Cork and Kilkenny and I have watched them every time they met in a final since 1926. And the highest praise that could be given it was accorded afterwards by a Kilkenny enthusiast who said as we walked down Jones's Road, 'Begor you sir, it was so good, I'd nearly have gone home satisfied even if Cork had won.'

Tributes just as remarkable came from characters who have no great affiliations to the hurling game. There is one man, probably one of the oldest and most knowledgeable rugby men in Ireland, who oddly enough

has not missed a hurling final in nearly fifty years. So impressed was he that he called into my house late on Sunday night to tell me what a great match it was . . . as if I didn't know.

My wife, who has been maintaining for years that hurling is on the wrong road, claiming that bodily contact and brute strength was beginning to take over from pure skill, came home and admitted that there was hope for the game yet when it was played as Cork and Kilkenny played it on that particular day, while a very interesting comment came from some friends of mine who spent that day watching the hurling final and who had watched the Olympics on colour television. Their reaction was unanimous. "Well, we may not be able to make any impression at Munich, but we have the hurling, and it beats the lot."

Indeed the only other regret I had about this hurling final was that I did not see it on the colour television. I believe it was something almost as well worth seeing as the actual game itself. But, please God Mick Dunne might give us a re-run in the slack of the Gaelic Year after Christmas.

Looking back on it now, it was a match of many facets. There were two occasions, about two thirds of the way through the first half, and about a third of the way through the second, when it looked as though Cork

had enough of an edge to pull away completely. Yet I was talking to one of the Cork players afterwards and he told me, "Up on the stand it might look as if we were pulling away, but I can tell you, that was not the position down on the field. Kilkenny kept coming back at us all the time, and remember even though they were behind at half-time, they had scored oftener in that first half than we had."

I asked him how he felt when the Munster men moved into that eight point lead in the second half. "I never felt there was eight points in it no matter what the score-board said, and I'll tell you this much, once Kilkenny really came at us in the last quarter, there did not seem to be anything we could do about it. There were black and amber jerseys everywhere, and they all seemed to be hitting that ball a mile."

For me, before the game, two men's reactions on the Kilkenny side must, I felt, be crucial, Noel Skehan in goal, and Pat Henderson at centre-back. As it was both of them excelled themselves, and provided two prime factors in Kilkenny's victory. Skehan saved some impossible shots, and all of them at vital moments. Henderson stood like a wall across that field, but what was more he got back into his towering clearances the immense length that turned desperate defence into dangerous attack.

● TO PAGE 33

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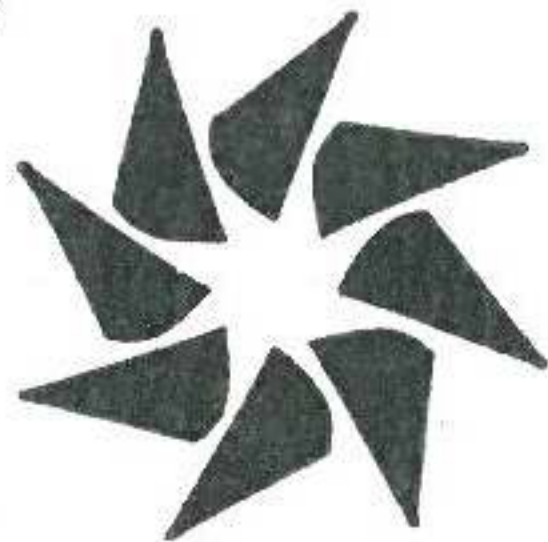
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BUY IRISH NOW

The Central Executive Committee of the Irish National Teachers' Organisation appeals to the members of the Organisation to give their maximum support to the campaign "BUY IRISH NOW", initiated by the Minister for Industry and Commerce, and urges them by talks to their pupils, to bring the campaign and its importance in the National Economy to the notice of their parents.

THANKS FOR THE MEMORY

● FROM PAGE 31

The third big point in Kilkenny's favour was the mid-field display of Liam O'Brien a man of whom most of us expected no more than that he would keep his end up, while Frank Cummins did the hurling. As it was it worked out the other way, with O'Brien, all through, the outstanding mid-fielder on view and constantly pegging back Cork's first-half lead with those invaluable points from long-range frees.

And on top of all there was the inspired move of the Kilkenny mentors in switching Eddie Keher out from the corner to his favourite left wing position at a vital stage in the game. He gave Kilkenny inspiration with the rather lucky goal from the touchline, but thereafter the veteran from Rower-Inistiogue was the man who really shattered Cork.

It has been an almost accepted fact on the hurling fields for some time past that Keher had given up fighting for the ball, and was content to snoop around looking for the loose one. But there he was in the midst of it, battling like a tiger for every ball and winning more than his fair share of possession too.

What is more, when Keher began to cut loose Paddy Delaney cut loose with him, and between them they turned the Cork half-back line into a shambles. Where Delaney got this idea of beating the ball off the ground from I don't know. People tell me since that Mick Mackey used to do it, but I have no clear recollection of seeing the Ahane Wonder use this particular gambit, but certainly it paid off, and I suppose half the kids of the country are trying to do it now, and making a hame's of it.

At the end of it all, every Kilkennyman was a hero, not least of them veteran Martin Coogan, sent in at a vital moment in an emergency to a position he had never played in before, but where he hurled as though it was his favourite berth.

As for Cork, it just was not their day, but, fair play to them, they hurled it out to the end without rage or rancour, accepted defeat like the men they are, and outside their own county, lost no prestige in this defeat. One thing puzzled me though. I know Pat Hegarty was not too fit beforehand. Yet I can only assume that he was not taken off in the closing stages but retired injured. If he was taken off he should not

have been. In fact when I saw him getting a message from the side-line I assumed the selectors were going to do what they did when things looked blackest in the drawn semi-final against Tipperary at Limerick, that is to move "Heago" back to the half-backs to save the day.

Finally the best of luck to every man who played in that game. Hurling needed a boost, it could not have got a better or more timely one.

★ ★ ★

There is no need for me to tell Jack, and the rest of the Mahon family what a blow the death of Fr. Paddy was to all his friends, and they were legion. Ni beidh a samhailne le faghail againn. In Iotlann De go gcastar sinn aris.

THE WIDER HORIZONS

● FROM PAGE 29

Where clubs, nowadays, tend to satisfy themselves with the mere essentials of a concrete box and haybarn roofing, they could opt for the smaller building and have it completed with the facilities that would put the game on the plane it deserves.

The small court is also the ideal training ground for the ever increasing number of younger players, and, into this category must also be placed the upsurge of interest shown by ladies in the game.

It is superfluous to say that a small court policy will standardise the game at international level. In a very short time, our representatives would have little fear of the difficulties that now confront them in American and Canadian courts.

It should be stated of course, that some far-sighted officials have already opted for the small court in this country. The lead

was given by Rev. E. T. Neville who built one in Oldtown, North County Dublin. This theme has been generated by the American team who certainly did not disparage our mode of play, but, rather in the words of President Dolan, enjoyed every minute of it.

The star of the tourists was undoubtedly Harry Hyde, who still retains all the craft and skill that characterised his play here some fifteen years ago. Rather than disappoint his fans, he played in most matches, even though suffering from the effects of a wasp sting, which eventually compelled him to pull out of the last few matches.

When it is realised that the team paid for the tour out of their own pockets, their value as sportsmen and ambassadors of the game is truly appreciated.

They have returned home in the knowledge of having won our hearts and of a job well done.

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But what about the money?

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THE ANSWERS

WHEN I hear someone refer to "galloping inflation" I think of Nijinsky in his best days, flying down the course leaving all the other horses behind. Inflation isn't going quite as fast as that, but all of us are conscious that prices do keep climbing.

What would have been a good fistful of money three years or even two years ago won't stretch very far today. I don't know about you, but my reaction to this situation is periodic attacks of stinginess. I create a financial plan for myself, I make budget projections just like the professionals, I save huge amounts (for two weeks) and then the easing-off process takes over. Soon I'm back to my normal disorganised state. Financial hardship is something I've never known in any real sense but I seldom get that prosperous feeling either. To tell the truth, I think I'm pretty typical.

When I talked to people who make their living out of lending money to people like you and me, I found them surprisingly frank. There is no mystique about borrowing any more. If you are entitled to a loan you'll get it and it's like another friendly business transaction.

Your commitments are written down for you in black and white, so you know from the outset how much your loan will be costing you each month. As the people in Allied Irish Finance put it, they're extending a necessary service and succinctly enough they say "our motto is—if you're selling a product, sell it. If you're giving a service, give it." As far as they're concerned, they've taken over where the ordinary bank manager has left off. When overdrafts are virtually unobtainable, personal loans come into their own.

Allied Irish Banks throughout its whole structure is very closely involved with the agricultural community and has undertaken quite a few imaginative projects which will brighten the texture of farming life in years to come. It is also committed to Irish games in quite a big way—one has only to think of the giant sign which dominates Croke Park! Allied Irish Finance is

in fact very like a bank in its own approach to the way it does business. Contact is on a personal level and at the same time one of the main advantages is a flexible approach. If one or other of their "readymade" schemes don't suit you, they'll probably be able to tailor something specially for your requirements. You can do business with them by post, or at the nearest branch office, or through any Allied Irish Bank.

Worth knowing about is their Farm Improvements Plan—you get a cash loan and then repay every month by banker's standing order. People usually get a farm loan to buy a tractor, a harvester or other machinery, or to instal a water supply or improve an existing one. But any project geared to making the farm more productive and prosperous will get sympathetic consideration. For industrial concerns there are leasing schemes which to the uninitiated brain like mine, seem to work like magic, creating capital out of nowhere. Again, the nearest A.I.B. or the local branch of Allied Irish Finance is the place to make enquiries.

If you are thinking of buying a tractor Massey Ferguson has the answer. Their MF 135, a 47 h.p. model selling at around £1,500 complete with safety cab is the world's most popular tractor. If you want a bigger model the MF 188 also complete with safety cab can be yours for around £2,270. For farmers doing a lot of silage work this model will well repay their investment.

Television has had a lot to do with making us familiar with the initials, ACC. They stand of course for Agricultural Credit Corporation—a body which was set up with the help of a "kitty" from the State and then began to look around for independent ways of financing itself. Its brief

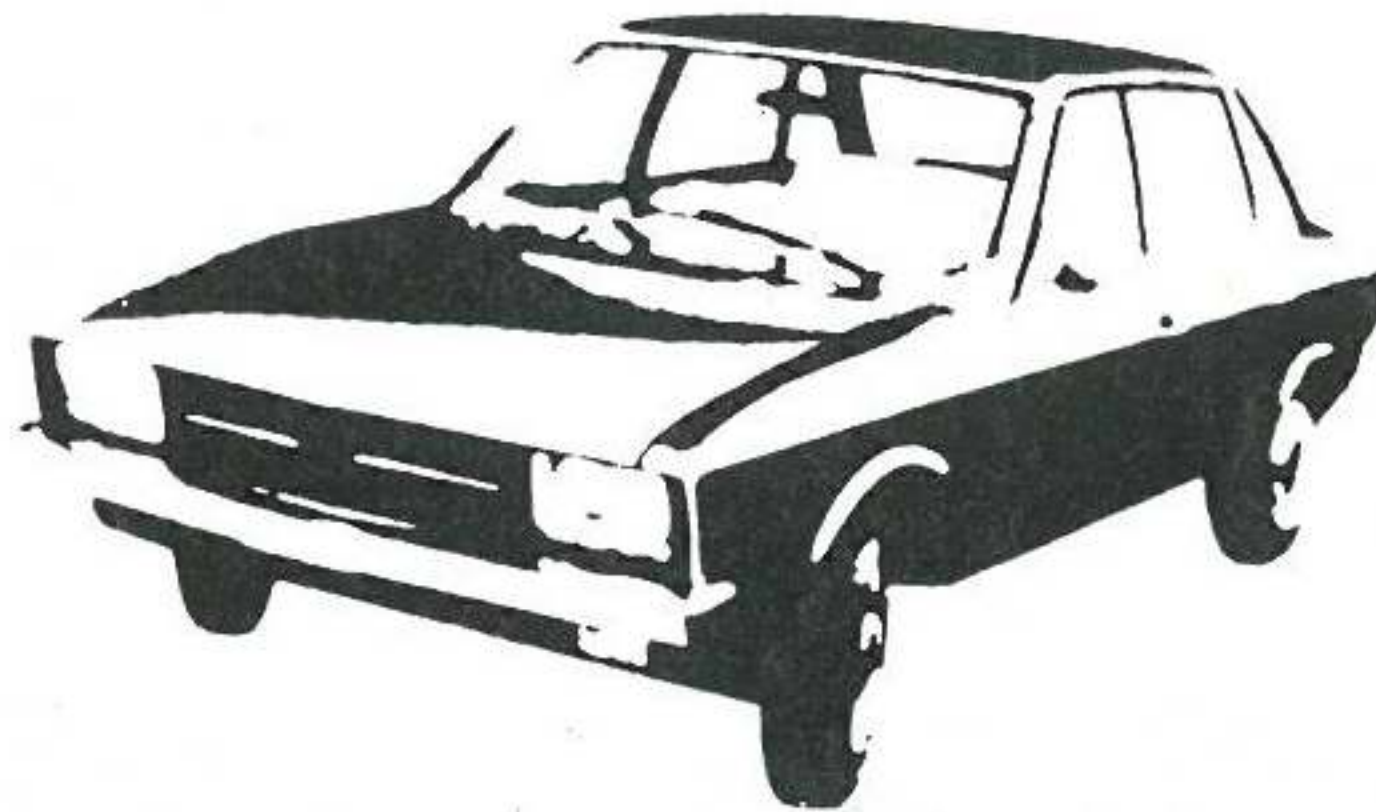
● TO PAGE 37

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WHAT ABOUT THE MONEY ?

● FROM
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was to advance money to the farming and agricultural communities for productive uses. By dint of clever management, and a terrific repayment rate on the part of Irish farmers who have got loans from ACC up to now, the Corporation is able to offer very attractive interest rates to investors. The longer you leave your money with them—in other words the longer the notice of withdrawal you're prepared to give—the better the rate of interest. Minimum deposit is a hundred pounds and that could earn you seven per cent interest every year. Small farmers and those who have farms in the undeveloped areas of Ireland come well within the brief of ACC. The Corporation can lend up to two-thirds the value of a farm and with property prices increasing almost daily, it is finding

that many farmers are actually under-estimating the value of their holdings. Up to £200 can be advanced entirely without security. This service is particularly useful for a small man who might want to buy some stock or supplies of fertiliser, because it offers him a real chance to increase his own income quickly. Twenty-three area officers, all of them graduates in Agricultural Science, cover the country for ACC and are responsible for seeing that the right people get the loans that are right for them. It's not just a question of totting up a man's record and assessing his credit rating—they take a constructive social attitude and generally, they can give help where it is really needed. The fact that Irish farmers are very conscientious about paying off commitments is what enables

ACC to operate on small margins and offer good interest rates to depositors. Last year, deposits with ACC went up a nett million pounds, and they lent seventeen and a half millions. The predominant customer is the farmer but businesses based on agriculture—beef processing plants, mushroom industries, bacon factories and so on can benefit from ACC's help. The attractive thing about saving money with the Corporation is the feeling that it is being put to good use by members of the farming community itself.

Mercantile Credit has a special appeal for motorists and many of us have bought our cars through this company which is the recommended one with the Henry Ford Co. in Cork. They are an enterprising outfit and were the first in the country to introduce the personal loan schemes now so popular which allow a borrower to repay a loan nett of tax. That



Massey Ferguson

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was back sometime in 1956 or '58. In the past they conducted hire purchase but with changing times Mercantile Credit have moved fully into the banking world and are a fully-fledged banking institution. They see their role as educating people about how to buy what they need.

A special scheme is run by Mercantile Credit to allow people to instal central heating through Irish Shell and BP. Their contacts with the motor trade are extremely wide but they will also lend you money to pay for anything from a deep freeze for the kitchen to flying lessons for yourself! Letting the borrower have the actual cash to conduct a deal for himself works out far better for him than the old-style hire purchase arrangement whereby you didn't own whatever it was until the final instalment was paid. Not only are the interest

rates cheaper, but you can make your initial purchase "cash down" as it were. When equipping a kitchen, for instance, this facility is enormously useful because you can take advantage of special offers and so on.

Being warm and comfortable all the time at home can make an unbelievable difference. "Creating your own private climate" is how the Irish Shell and BP expert describes it and nobody could sum it up better. If the central heating in somebody else's house strikes you as stuffy and airless, don't be put off. You can always turn down your thermostat in your house to get the exact degree of heat—or coolness—you want. It makes every corner of the house liveable in at all times, and there is no more need to shut off the parlour every winter while everybody congregates in the kitchen.

Since we've talked a lot about the rural community in this feature, it seems relevant to state that Irish Shell and BP seems to be the oil company with the most extensive connections in country districts. They even supply oil for domestic heating to houses on the Aran islands. Local authorities in Ballina, Sligo, Newbridge and other spots have built or are building housing schemes which incorporate central heating from Irish Shell. And they say they've yet to let down a customer in oil deliveries, no matter where he lives. So even if your house is on top of Carn tuathail, oil-fired heating needn't be just a dream. The man who invented the "private climate" phrase also offered a bit of advice. Pay particular attention, he said, to having the house well insulated if and when you are

● OVERLEAF

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WHAT ABOUT THE MONEY ?

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having central heating put in. It doesn't cost much to insulate the roof and it can make a tremendous difference in terms of comfort and also reduced running costs.

A central heating system can only be as good as the men who instal and service it and here Irish Shell and BP score again with their highly trained heating contractors and service engineers. Their service people are travelling the 26 Counties and are employed direct by the company. If you don't happen to know the name of your local Shell contractor, a postcard to Shell's head office at Hatch Street, Dublin, will bring you this information without delay.

All through Ireland, the piles of bright orange containers holding bottled gas are a frequent sight and I have often reflected that it's a compliment to our collective honesty that they can still be left on the roadside or pavement like that, with no one to guard them. Nowadays the bottled gas people, Calor-Kosangas, can offer many more facilities than the orange cylinder which fuels the cooker in the kitchen. They can give you spot heating in the form of portable stoves—quick, clean and safe—or they can provide fixed room heaters through the whole house, or they can build a warm air gas-fired central heating system into your new house while it's under construction, or they can instal a radiator system. All these systems can be combined with a water-heating operation. The warm one is very economical and should be investigated by anyone planning to build a house. Mercantile Credit run a special credit loan plan with Calor/Kosangas to enable people to instal one or any of these systems.

Calor/Kosangas will supply

you with a half-ton tank, for for which you pay a small rental each year, and this is topped up from time to time, thus ensuring you never run out of gas. When it comes to choosing a system, many choices are open. The Abergas boiler would have an appeal on account of its small size and unobtrusive appearance. If you don't want a large and cumbersome boiler in the kitchen this is one to look at. In spite of its small size the Abergas will heat a large house or a small one with equal efficiency. It has no pilot light but an electronically controlled spark instead. I approve, because I seem to put the evil eye on pilot lights — I just look at them and they go out. Potterton, Parkray and other well known names in the central heating field are all working with Calor/Kosangas in the central heating field.

Schools, churches, canteens, clubhouses and such places are becoming interested in gas-fired balanced flue convector heaters which give the cost-cutting advantages of individual heaters combined with overall central heating comfort. Leaflets are available about these.

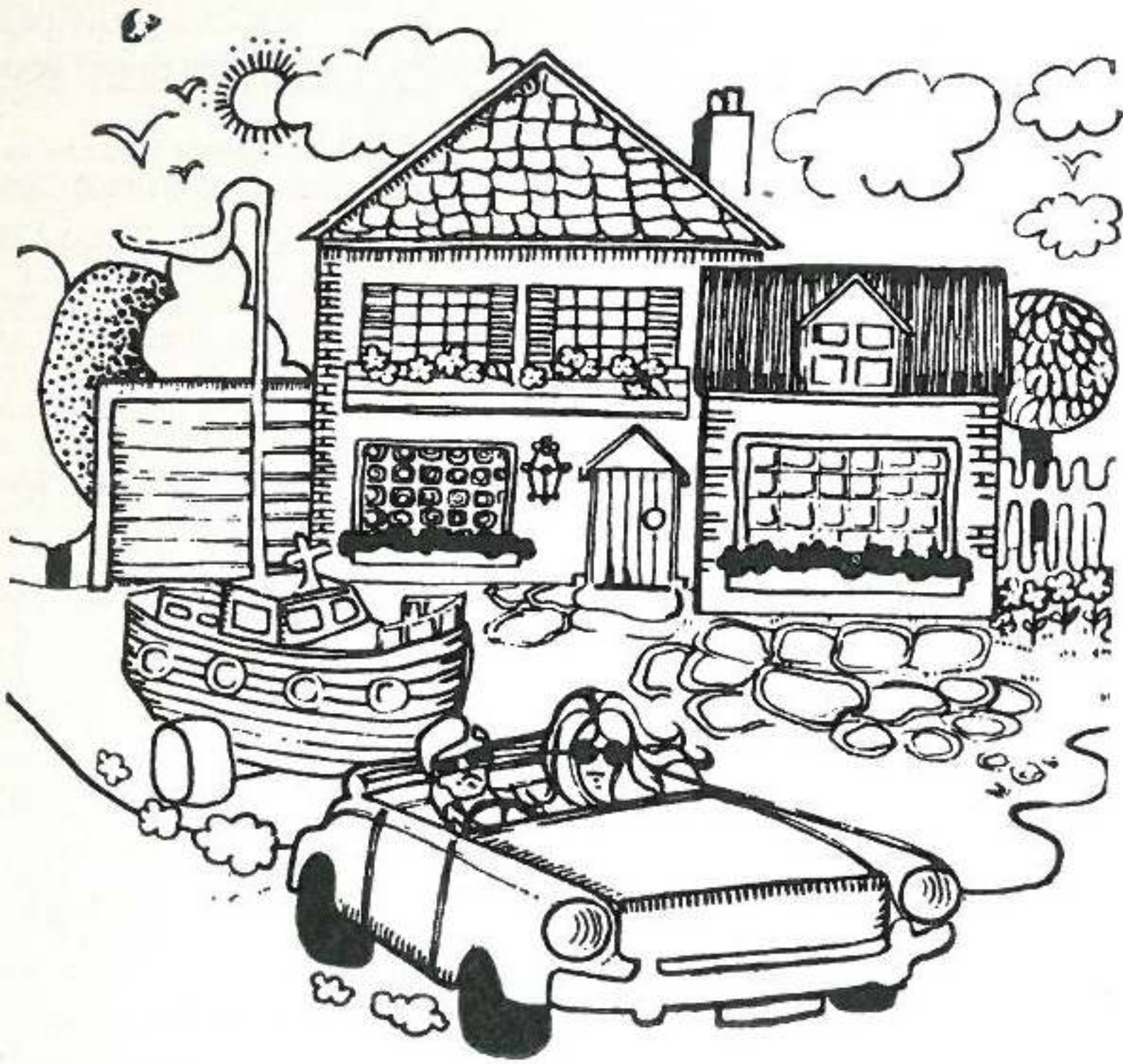
A willingness to spend money constructively on the part of consumers is a healthy sign for the economy, according to the spokesman for Foster Finance who was able to tell us that at the moment things are looking bright in this sector. Foster Finance, which is part of the huge Bank of Ireland Group, has eight branches throughout Ireland at the moment and plans are in hand to open a few more. Their spokesman made the further point that while practically every other item one can think of has been going up in price, rates for borrowing haven't been following suit. So it could be

argued that it is now cheaper to borrow money than it was before. Indeed, rates for certain types of industrial borrowing have dropped as several agricultural concerns can testify

Apart from car business and central heating, which are two areas where Foster Finance are particularly well organised on the lending side, the company is finding that there is a surge of interest in colour t.v. on the part of the public. More and more families are taking the big step and buying a colour set—and Foster Finance, of course, is there with help when needed. You can finance a colour t.v. through a straight loan, or it may be possible to come to a leasing arrangement. People who prefer to enter into an agreement with their local television dealer—this has certain advantages, service being perhaps the most important of them—might well find that he has organised his gradual payments through Foster Finance.

The "harvest payment" used to be the farmers' favourite way of paying back a loan but nowadays they seem to prefer the monthly repayment system which is smaller and easier to manage and budget for. The switch in attitudes is a result of the growing use of cheque books by everybody and a resulting tendency to balance the household books by the month instead of by the season.

On central heating, Foster Finance take the attitude that they must be satisfied with the installer before they will grant a loan. This is a valuable safeguard for the person having the system installed because it protects him against the cheapjack installer and almost guarantees a good job. If there is no Foster Finance branch office in your vicinity, then the manager of the local B of I is the man to put you in touch with it.



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★ The Camogie scene ★

Surveyed by AGNES HOURIGAN

SOME of us may have been disappointed with the All-Ireland senior camogie final in which Cork retained the title for the third successive year by defeating Kilkenny. Not that it was a bad game, far from it, but because although it could, and possibly should have been the greatest final ever played it never succeeded in living up to its pre-match promise.

Perhaps the players were far too keyed up to really relax and give of their best, and in this regard it is notable that the winners produced their best camogie of the game when they were four points in front in the closing stages.

Personally I thought that the biggest factor in Cork's victory was the experience the Leaside girls had acquired in their two previous All-Ireland victories, because on the day they had very little superiority over a Kilkenny side that had improved very much indeed since last those counties met in the All-Ireland final of 1970.

But where Cork did have a very definite edge was in the back-field where their defenders completely subdued the Kilkenny attack.

There were many moments of individual brilliance, and many thrilling moments, but over all, the tension was too great, and the marking too close to give us anything like the fast, open and exhilarating play we saw in the opening game, the junior final between Galway and Wexford.

This lived up to the reputation that the junior series has so rapidly acquired of always producing a close and most enjoyable game. Wexford in the first half, often looked as though they

would surprise the considerably more experienced Galway girls, but the craft and combination of the Western representatives very deservedly saw them through in the end.

And the junior final also gave us the individual star of the day in the Galway centre-back, Kathleen Quinn from Ballinasloe, who not alone gave a faultless display of defensive play but who also constantly turned defence into attack with her long clearances.

Next in line for the winners I would place young Josie Kelly at midfield who for the second time this year played a major part in winning an All-Ireland medal for her side, as she also starred for Presentation Convent, Oranmore, in the Colleges final.

Then of course we had Galway and Connacht chairman, Jane Murphy from Mountbellew who has done so much to revive the game in her native county during the last couple of seasons. She was always an inspiration to the whole team and her solo-runs and clever distribution of the ball from centre-forward played a big part in finding loop-holes in the Wexford defence.

But Wexford can rest reasonably content with the result. Although beaten they gave a very good account of themselves, they are a very young side, and they are bound to be back in the honours list very soon.

Although the crowd was not nearly as good as one might have expected in view of the potential and actual entertainment provided, still there is a growing sense of occasion now about All-Ireland camogie final days. It was very heartening, too, to see suggestions that I have made

here being acted upon. One was that schools should organise trips for their teams to see the All-Irelands. I saw several schools teams present in Croke Park, together with their teachers, many of whom were nuns. My other suggestion that clubs should organise trips for the day also met with some response, as I found more than one club that had chartered a mini-bus to come up.

I hope that this trend not alone extends but continues and it would be a good idea if the various Colleges Councils recommended a trip to the All-Ireland as an ideal preliminary to the competitive Colleges season. There is also more ground for such an approach when one remembers that so many of the players on the competing teams are themselves former Colleges players, in fact Kilkenny had two players who are still at school.

But possibly the biggest talking point of all at and after the finals was provided by the new-style uniforms worn by Galway and Kilkenny. I heard some criticism, but the general reaction was one of complete approval and certainly it seemed to give the girls considerable freedom of movement. On the other hand, it must be pointed out that it was Cork, wearing the old-style tunics, who won the senior honours.

Finally on my own behalf, and on behalf of his many friends in the Camogie Association, I would like to express my sincere sympathy with the relatives of the late Fr. Paddy Mahon, and particularly with his brother Jack. Fr. Mahon had a great interest in camogie as he had in all things Gaelic.

CLUB THE CENTREPIECE

By SEAMUS O CEALLAIGH

IT is only in the order of things that we should at this stage take a look at what is, and has always been the basic unit of the G.A.A.—the individual club.

These were particularly prominent in the early days of the G.A.A. when the champion club of the County had to go it alone in the fight for All-Ireland honours.

Typical of the outstanding clubs of the infant years of the G.A.A. was the Limerick Commercial, who were first winners of the All-Ireland senior football championship away back in 1887—a success they were to repeat nine years later.

The Commercial club was remarkable in that it was in existence prior to the actual foundation of the G.A.A. in 1884. The man behind the coming into existence of this great club was Dan Ryan, a farmer's son from Park, Rossmore, Thurles. Educated at St. Jarlath's College, Tuam, it was intended that he should study for a professional career. He had a taste, however, for commercial life and entered the drapery business in Limerick, where he remained for a number of years before transferring to Dublin.

Dan was a versatile athlete, champion oarsman and step dancer, who became interested in the revival of Gaelic football

some considerable time before the actual foundation of the Gaelic Athletic Association.

Under rough and ready rules which he drew up in collaboration with another football enthusiast, Pat O'Connor, he gathered together a group of men, mainly from the big Limerick drapery stores, and proceeded to give exhibitions of the code, which aroused quite some interest, and induced the formation of other clubs in and around Limerick City.

The first great Gaelic football match was played at the old Ballinacurra Racecourse, Limerick, eighteen months before the G.A.A. came into existence—the contestants being the Commercial and Limerick Butchers. The latter were a powerful body of men but not as expert as the Commercial, and had to go under.

This victory fired the Commercial players so much that they became really enthusiastic and worked like trojans to make the game a success. In early 1884 they played their next big match—this time against Meelick, and had another win. Soon after they met St. Patricks, well led by a fine footballer in Captain Gough. This game was played in the Canal fields, close to where St. Patricks have their present fine headquarters, and once more

Commercial had a well earned victory.

Up to this time, the club was more or less a private one. John McNamara was President, Tom O'Connor, Captain, with Dan Ryan as Secretary. With the launching of the G.A.A. Dan saw its great possibilities, and he summoned a special general meeting for the purpose of extending operations. The move was highly successful, all the Commercial athletic young men of the city were invited to become members and immediately the ranks were filled by some of the best athletes of the city and surrounding districts. At the first subsequent meeting of the committee, Dan Ryan truly boasted: "I have now an army of athletes that would do honour to any county and the G.A.A. must go ahead." Shortly afterwards Dan became captain.

Limerick at this period was a rugby stronghold and Dan's language was looked upon as very outspoken. However, his wildest hopes were realised, because the Commercial proved extremely successful.

With a strong team, matches were arranged against St. Johns, St. Michaels and St. Patricks—all of whom met defeat. Much could be written of these games and the rivalry that grew up between the various city teams. By 1886 clubs had sprung up

everywhere and Dan Ryan fixed up matches with every team in the county—winning as he went along.

Tipperary and Cork were also very active, and the first real inter-county match was arranged for Good Friday, 1886, between the Commercials and the "Lees" of Cork—afterwards one of the big clubs of the G.A.A. Following a stubborn contest the Commercials emerged successful. Shortly afterwards they travelled to Kilrush by special steamer—a trip full of pleasure and delightful scenery that but few of the younger generation have enjoyed—and defeated the local footballers—then a coming force in Gaelic ranks.

The next big fixture was at Bansha—where they played a pair of matches—against Bansha and the Tipperary "Rosannas"—two slashing teams. Commercials were victors in both. On that occasion the first special train over the old Waterford and Limerick railroad was organised for a Gaelic match and had to be guaranteed on behalf of the

Association by Dan Ryan and Maurice Fitzgibbon.

Later in 1886 they travelled to Limerick Junction to meet the famed Bohercrowe team, and defeated them after a fast match. To complete a very busy season they again defeated the "Lees" at Cork and Kilmacduane at Kilrush, besides several teams through the neighbouring counties.

Also in 1886 Limerick Commercials organised a monster athletic sports at the Markets Field. E. J. Long was the big figure behind this venture. The meeting was so successful and was so well patronised and appreciated by the public that they were continued for three successive Sundays and netted £310, big money in those days. Many powerful athletes competed and the members of the Commercials club proved their worth by winning the lion's share of the prizes.

Now to the ever-memorable year of 1887. Just as the first championships were announced Commercials met an early disappointment in the loss of their captain, D. H. Ryan, whose commercial

pursuits called him to Dublin, where he quickly engaged in re-organising the famous Kickhams club.

Strange to relate the choice of a successor to Dan fell on a non-player, Pat Treacy. Limerick by then had two County Boards, following a split at the County Convention. Consequent on this no Limerick team participated in the first All-Ireland hurling championship.

The rival board was formed by a very prominent clergyman, well known in the Land League movement—Rev. Fr. Sheehy—against the "old" Board, as they were called, and over which Paddy O'Brien ("Twenty") presided.

In strength of numbers the Boards were fairly evenly balanced and struggled hard for supremacy and recognition at headquarters. The Commercials, even at the loss of numbers stood by the "old" Board, who were the founders, believing they were working in the best interests of the G.A.A. The Father Sheehy board carried away many of the

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GRAND PRIX THRILLS

Action photo from this year's Exciting Players No. 6 Grand Prix which took place on September 2nd and 3rd last in the Phoenix Park, Dublin. The £1,000 first prize was won by Alan Rollinson after a very close finish from an international field.



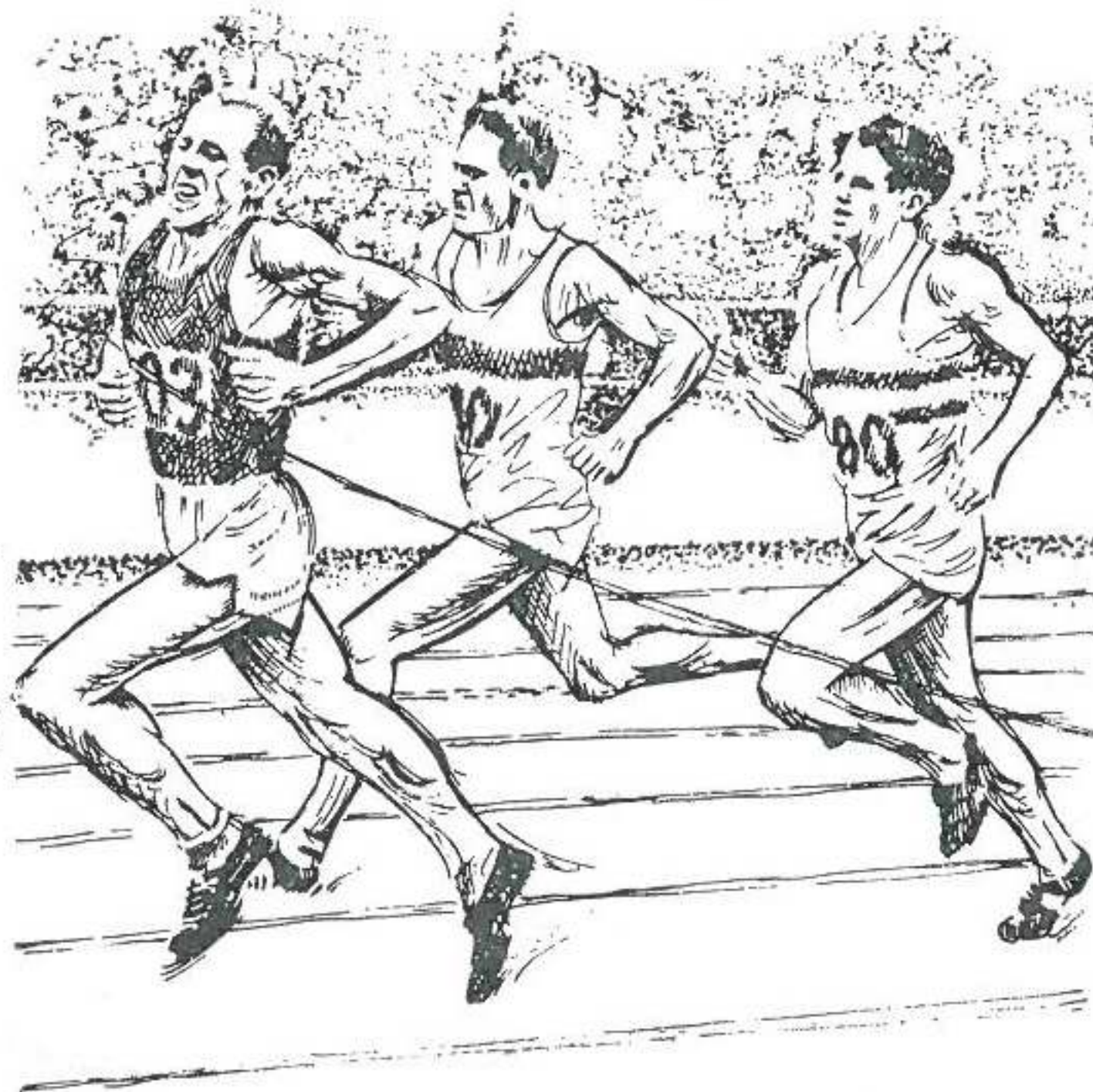
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● FROM PAGE 43

leading clubs, and they played out a separate championship in both hurling and football.

Under the "old" Board the Commercials won out in easy fashion and were partnered by the South Liberties in hurling. Now stood two rival champions and no decision from the Central Council as to which was the legally constituted one.

At last it was decided that both champions should play off and the winners be recognised. The rival boards were called together, and the venue was arranged for Croom, with Central Council officials in charge. Relations were strained and the contests were expected to be very hot. The eyes of Munster were fixed on Limerick—in fact all Gaelic Ireland was interested.

The Commercials and South Liberties decided to travel by train, and it came to their lot to get the first "special" for the G.A.A. over the old Great Southern and Western Railway system. After great pressure and a guarantee, they succeeded but on this occasion it took six trains to accommodate the living freight for Croom—so high did feeling run and so strong was the Association. These were all a Commercial and Liberties following, as the others travelled by coaches—of which there was also a considerable number.

It was a hectic day at Croom, and after a vigorous match of fast, robust play the Commercials won from St. Michaels. It was a desperate struggle of rapid, furious play in which South Liberties overcame the Murroe challenge—thus putting the "old" Board in the ascendant.

In the opening round of the All-Ireland championship—played for the only occasion on the open draw system—Commercials met Dowdstown (Meath) at Elm Bank, Dublin.

In a nice, scientific game they were victorious by 3-2 to 0-2. For the next round it was another visit to Dublin, where their opponents were Kilmacow (Kilkenny). It proved a desperate struggle which ended in a draw of 1-10 each. That day blew a storm and scientific play was out of the question. Three weeks later at Bansha, the pair met in the replay.

In bright sunshine, in a beautifully equipped meadow field close to the Glen of Aherlow, the teams toed the line. For a time the well nigh invincible Kilmacow seemed to be winning, but once the Commercials settled down there was no stopping them; their ground-work and rushes carried everything, so the Kilkenny boys had to submit to defeat. Kilmacow had earlier defeated Lees 0-4 to nil.

Commercials were in the All-Ireland final in which their opponents were Dundalk Young Irelands (Louth) who had disposed of Ballyduff Lower (Waterford) 1-8 to 0-3, and Castlebridge (Wexford) 0-7 to 0-2.

The final was played at Clonskeagh, Dublin, on 29th April, 1888. The contest was fought in a fine sporting spirit, it proved a wonderfully fast game, scientific and clever. Louth did a good deal of clever hand-work and the Limerick play was characterised by a fine defence and spirited rushes. Dundalk led at the interval 0-3 to 0-1 but Commercials put in a fine finish, to win 1-4 to 0-3.

Many of the victorious side afterwards left their native land. P. J. Spain, before emigrating to America, made history by winning a hurling championship with Dublin. Michael Slattery made his home in Australia; James Purcell carried a Gaelic championship medal to the Philippines; whilst Timothy Fitzgibbon, Richard O'Brien, Ned Casey and

Denis Corbett all went to the land of the stars and stripes.

Congratulations poured in from all sides on the manly way in which they fought out the championship and won with undisputed merit the first and one of the greatest championships of the G.A.A.

Another generation of the Commercials returned in 1896 to again annex that coveted trophy—the Gaelic football championship of Ireland. They disposed of Cork, Waterford and Tipperary to take the Munster crown. Then they met, in Dublin, the famous Metropolitan Young Irelanders and achieved a magnificent victory, that reflected the highest credit on the dashing and unconquerable Limerickmen.

In Dublin they met opponents worthy of their steel in every respect; holding a splendid record and enjoying renown with the Blue Ribands of 1891, 1892 and 1894 to their credit. It was a great All-Ireland decider played in a fine sporting spirit.

Sixteen seasons in all, ranging from 1887 to 1927 Commercials were champions of Limerick County, and during all their years of renown have been considered with the great individual teams of the land. They held the Murphy Cup in 1896, 1897, 1907 and 1909.

Always great upholders of athletics they organised a first class meeting every year. In 1899 their's was probably the greatest club gathering of all time and it attracted a huge crowd to the Markets Field. There were three hundred and fifty entries, including Denis Horgan, Peter O'Connor, the Leahy's and J. M. Ryan—all record holders. P. J. Leahy in the high jump cleared 6 ft. 5½ in. to rank a world's record. Ireland boasted some wonder athletes then and the Markets Field witnessed deeds that the Olympic arena would be proud to commend.

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REFLECTIONS ON THE DRAW

By JAY DRENNAN

FRRIENDS—and I feel justified in considering all readers my friends through that curious empathy that passes between us—can sometimes be a cross, though they are always a consolation. For instance, how they have belaboured me with the headline on my Hurling final preview in the September issue: "Cork to take Sweet Revenge for '69 Defeat."

Well! Of course, I could have tried to save face by pointing out that I had suggested all the critical positions in which outstanding Kilkenny performances could—probably would—win the game. But, experience teaches that it would be better to sit tight, say nothing, and wait for an occasion when you can be equally smug.

And this time, we hadn't long to wait. My friends, it is my turn: "They are, by the evidence of past form and the best comparisons that one can make today, extremely well matched. It will surely be a close game and a hard won one; one in which perspiration will be lost before winners are declared. But, it is scarcely possible that it will be one of those memorable spectacular finals. . . . For that special quality of spectacle and delight you must have a contrast in styles as well as closeness of match and individual quality of players." Fair enough advance view of the football final? That was GAELIC SPORT, October issue.

Enough of navel contemplation! And apologies. But, it is simply not possible to make mention of the Kerry-Offaly draw without pointing out again the fact that it is asking too much to have scintillating football from teams so similar in style and so well matched in strengths.

Both these teams have done exciting things in dealing with opposition which was less skilful, less-strong-willed, more fancy or more fragile than themselves. But, here was something like the meeting of the irresistible force and immovable mass. Perhaps it was because too many too easily overlooked this fact that most people were disappointed with the drawn game. There were certain things which did disappoint, yes, but they could have been accidents in any game. It was a fact that here was an intense clash, an unyielding battle for every ball, a grit and determination, a mental and moral stamina that was almost Grecian.

The Labours of Hercules, The Odyssey, men striving with heroes and Gods, were no more intensely engaged in their struggles to overcome opposing forces and unfavourable Fates. Was there a single easily got or easily played ball. How those backs ran their guts out covering back, hounding the raiding attackers. At both ends.

How those attackers raced about, probed when in possession, died gamely before every raid was raised. And how their unhappy nerves twanged when they did get the occasional sight of the posts, as error in shooting compounded previous error.

One hundred per cent for effort.

Now, having credited all concerned with the sincerity of their striving and the gallant refusal to submit to any setback or to the threat of stalemate which so long hung over the match like a fierce tug-o'-war, it is also true that in some respects one had to admit disappointment.

Spectacular and brilliant play,

open and explosive, naturally was absent. To me that was no disappointment: it was expected.

But, one did look for some basic command of the skills of the game, and some slight flexibility in tactical plan. Fielding was not without uncertainty; too many people were almost entirely concerned with the breaking of the ball from the fetcher—willy-nilly, often, with no more than the vague hope of keeping a dying attack still breathing, or delaying the inevitable return of the ball into defence.

Kicking was startlingly poor. The majority seemed to have trouble kicking it beyond the length of their shadows. Again and again, efforts to deliver the ball stunned it rather than drove it. One might harshly conclude that it was the lack of practice at kicking the ball, since everyone seemed so intent on only kicking if all possible means of carrying it personally failed or were foiled.

It was fair comment that Mick O'Dwyer had to fist over the equaliser, after more promising positions had been lost through inefficient use of the foot. Indeed, there was that extraordinary occasion when Kavanagh—sent staggering across goal by a beautifully timed shoulder from Martin Furlong—could not have failed to tap the ball into the open net with his fist, yet insisted on drawing an unbalanced foot from under his falling body to prod the ball wide.

This is not to embarrass Kavanagh who—though he missed three absolutely golden goal chances—at least worked with such stubborn and durable courage as to create the chances he

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● FROM PAGE 47

missed. It is said rather to indicate the overall fault that constipated the game: a terrifying lack of thought. Every man seemed to stick with machine-like mindlessness to some preconceived notions: whether these notions were of their own conception or whether they were the master stencil of background planning.

There seemed no way in which the players could vary their approach, or would. Both sets of forwards ran with the ball, again and again, into the mouth of defensive cannon. The same feed was made through the same clogged-up channels all the way.

One feels like making more allowance for Offaly in this: after all they were having slightly more effect with their efforts. And Offaly have not developed any variation in approach through their years near the top —they always play the same essential pattern, putting a lot of effort into bulldozing, or scheming an opening near the posts.

But, with Kerry, it is another matter. The mark of the forwards has always been the variety of their possible strategies: striking in among the opposing defences from different and ever-changing angles; and if that did not produce results, or if it became stale through overuse, they fell back and hoisted the long Kerry kicks over the bar.

Then again, Offaly were bound to be the more insecure of the two in this match: so much, not only for the present, but even of last year's achievement, resting on the thread of success.

What extra ingredients could we desire? A refitted Nick Clavin, of course; and for Kerry, Big Match Din Joe Crowley, revitalised to show what variety means, and to give an object lesson of the solo to those who, by overuse, are making the very name a dirty word.

JUNIOR DESK

A section for
the
young reader



PRESENTED BY JACK MAHON

THE hurling finals were great. What a day for Kilkenny (minors and seniors). The senior game was the greatest All-Ireland I have seen. It had everything. Even the unusual—like Pat Delaney's new gambit of hopping the ball off the ground with his hurley. I can see young boys all over Ireland trying to emulate the feat. Write in and tell me what you thought of it. Kilkenny had many stars but Pat Henderson was my man of the match. What great heart this man has. I'll talk about Pat again later.

The football finals were less exciting but I tend to agree with Kerry's Brendan Lynch that we demand too much from these games. The build-up is so intense that we don't easily forgive any failures. What a great goal Brendan scored. And he is such a modest fellow. Once when he was here in Galway playing in the Sigerson Cup for U.C.C. I brought him to my school to introduce him to the pupils. The students simply couldn't get over his modesty. Another man of great heart. Remember the time he put Larry Coughlan flying with what I considered a legitimate shoulder charge. Not that I'm blaming referee Fintan Tierney who received far too much

abuse, especially from Offaly players who should know better. I'll talk about the replay next month.

OUR CUT-OUT

Our cut-out this month is Wexford's Tony Doran—the man from Boolavogue. Lanky Tony of the tearaway style really hit the headlines in that famous All-Ireland victory over Tipperary in 1968. Especially in the second half of that game. He really destroyed Tipp. that day. As fearless as they come, Tony reproduced much of his 1968 brilliance in the two games with Kilkenny in the Leinster final this year. I have always had a soft spot for Wexford ever since the glory days of the Rackards, Tim Flood, the Kehoes, Ned Wheeler (one of my particular favourites), Jim Morrissey, Nick O'Donnell . . . Even the mention of their names re-

calls the epic games of the 'fifties. Tony Doran's name is just as sacred in Wexford and I know many Junior Desk fans have been clamouring for this Cut-out for some time.

MAYO PROGRAMME

Congratulations to the Crossmolina G.A.A. club and the Mayo Co. Board for the magnificent 36-page programme prepared for the Mayo S.F. and Inter. F. finals in Crossmolina on Sunday, October 1. It even surpassed the Carlow production of last year. All County Boards in Ireland would do well to write to Mickey Loftus or Tiernan Reilly for a copy of the programme as a guide to the type of programme that **should** be available at **all** county finals and indeed **all** N.F.L. and N.H.L. games. Well done Crossmolina—you have set a fine headline.

From the Mailbag

Anthony Clancy, Knockroe, Ennistymon, Co. Clare — "I was delighted to see Galway win the Under-21 hurling crown. It will do a great deal for hurling in the West."

● *Me too, Anthony. (J.M.)*

Dan Moore, Walshtown More, Middleton, Co. Cork — "The All-Ireland hurling final was fantastic."

● *Perfect description—best sporting spectacle I have ever seen. (J.M.)*

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CUT-OUT - - - - -



★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ **TONY DORAN, WEXFORD**

JUNIOR DESK :: JUNIOR DESK :: JUNIOR DESK

Joseph Thompson, Fathana, Mountrath, Portlaoise, Co. Laois — "I would like a Pen-pal with G.A.A. interests around 12 years old from Co. Cork (a boy of course)."

● *No trouble in finding one. So, start writing you JUNIOR DESK fans in Cork. There are some great JUNIOR DESK girl fans there too, Joseph! (J.M.)*

Tommy Cullen, Ballavarra, Graiguenamanagh, Kilkenny (10 years) — "My star of the hurling final was Eddie Keher, the iron man from Rower-Inistioge."

● *A great hurler, surely, whom I have admired for many years. (J.M.)*

"Setanta", Ennistymon, Co. Clare — "Hurling was Ireland's national pastime long before it became organised under the Gaelic Athletic Association. In one part of the south it was known as Scoubeen! The teams were usually parish selections. The number of players on each side often varied from 50 to 100. Points were not then in vogue. If and when the ball was driven into the ditch all the players would shout "Highraddy" which was a rule that the ball would be then placed between a player of either side in front of the nearest goal. Both players would pull on the ball and the game was restarted. A player finding himself obstructed had only to say the word "Dhush" and the way was cleared. The ball was twice the size of that used today. In the game of Scoubeen some players excelled in the art of carrying the ball on the hurley-stick — "Mick Mackey style". This manoeuvre was called a "drebeen". One scoubeen game is still talked about. It took place in 1870, some 500 players are said to have taken part. The game lasted for five hours. Such

was the game that thrilled so many in the past, and present and, we hope, in the future as well."

● *I found the letter so interesting historically that I have included it in full. (J.M.)*

Tom Moore, Walshtownmore, Midleton, Co. Cork — "Noel Skehan was Kilkenny's star on All-Ireland day. One save from Mick Malone was great."

● *I remember the save well. (J.M.)*

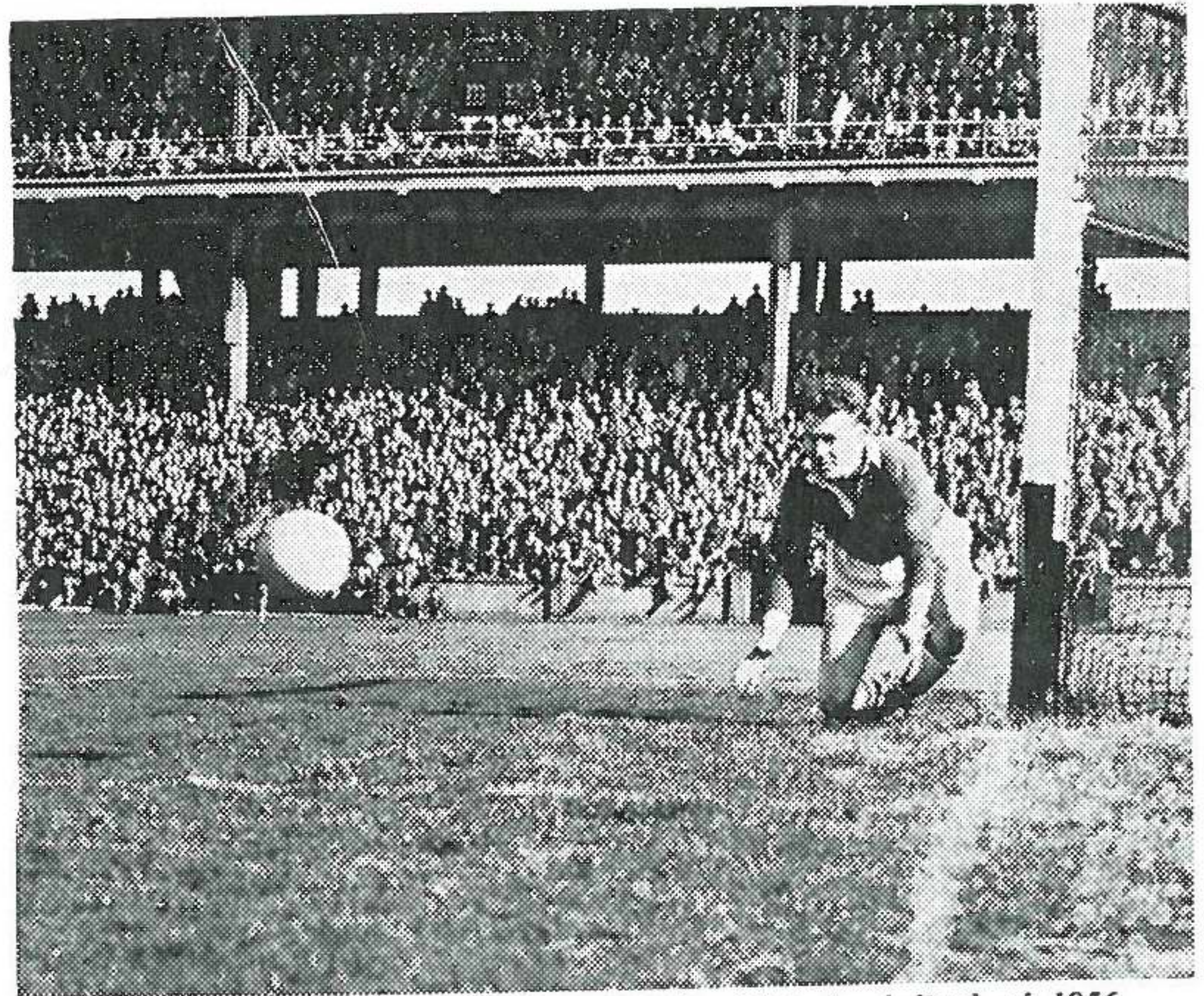
Brendan McMenamin, C.T.C. Ltd., 22 Drury St., Dublin 2 — "Further to my letter to you which you published in GAELIC SPORT in connection with the G.A.A. Supporters' Tie, I would like you to know that on my return to the office from holidays a letter was awaiting me from County Antrim. This gentleman was very keen to get a supply of G.A.A. Supporters' articles — such as a Kit-bag or any other article with the emblem. He ap-

pears to be very interested in Gaelic Sport and Gaelic products, and I feel you would be interested to know that this Supporters' Tie is now penetrating through to the Six Counties as well as one market in England.

"We have also been in touch with the American market within the last three or four weeks, and so far have had one positive reply. If this continues the G.A.A. should be well displayed at social events such as Dinners etc., which we feel would be a good thing for our country."

● *Great to hear of the success of the G.A.A. tie. Glad to see you are advertising it well in all G.A.A. programmes, Annuals, Yearbooks, etc. Ray Cummins of the Sports Centre, 36 Princes Street, Cork is the man to contact regarding the G.A.A. Kit-bag. I understand that cuff-links and tie-pins bearing the G.A.A. emblem are in the process*

● **OVERLEAF**



● *Jack Mangan . . . in action in the All-Ireland final of 1956.*

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● FROM OVERLEAF

of being produced and I welcome this too. Keep up your good work, Brendan. (J.M.)

"Ciarraí Fan," Clontarf, Dublin 3 — "Thanks for including my tribute to Donegal. In my hurry, I forgot to mention all the Donegalmen, notably Alan Kane, their great goalkeeper. Appearance-wise and in his impeccable handling of the ball, I thought he resembled Galway's Jack Mangan."

● *Sweet praise indeed. (J.M.)*

Joseph Woods, Cloneyogan, Lahinch, Co. Clare — "The G.A.A. Tie prize, which I won, was lovely. I enjoyed the Ray Cummins' interview very much."

● *I'll mention your request to the editor later. (J.M.)*

"Ciarraí," Fionn Radharc, Ath Cliath — "Well done for the Ray Cummins' interview. His date of birth was impressive, showing exactness. Take Mick O'Dwyer. His age seems to yo-yo around 34-35-36 with such rapidity that he must have a birthday every month. How much easier to put down his date of birth. I know he was born in 1936."

● *Please send me on your name and address as I want to contact you for more reasons than one. Some of your letters are the best I have yet received since I first wrote on G.A.A. affairs. (J.M.)*

Gerard Murray, Main Street, Charlestown, Co. Mayo — "It's great to see the G.A.A. on the move. The G.A.A. kit-bags and ties are fab. There should be a weekly G.A.A. magazine. Why doesn't GAELIC SPORT advertise itself on RTE? Sales would increase rapidly. Same with the kit-bags and ties."

● *Over to your Mr. Editor, Ray Cummins and Brendan McMenamin. (J.M.)*

Stephen Murphy, Doonan, Donegal Town — "Sorry Donegal lost to Offaly. My favourite players are Donal Monaghan, Séamus Bonnar, Alan Kane, Pauric McShea, Brian McEniff, Martin Carney and Seamie Granaghan. Give us a Donegal cut-out."

● *As soon as possible, Stephen. (J.M.)*

Gerry Pender, Ballymorris Upper, Aughrim, Arklow, Co. Wicklow — "Ray Cummins is the best full forward in hurling since Nick Rackard of Wexford."

● *A great compliment to Ray. (J.M.)*

COMPETITION

Because of the drawn All-Ireland football final and the delay in playing the Under-21 (F) final I have postponed the date for final receipt of entries for the competition "The Stars of the All-Irelands '72" until November 15. Just to refresh your memories the competition is open to all UNDER 16 on 1/11/72 and special notice will be taken of age. Entrants are asked to write not more than 100 words about the stars of this year's All-Ireland finals — ANY GRADE. Be neat and write on one side of the page only. There are FIVE prizes of Raymond Smith's latest book "The Clash of the Ash" for the lucky winners. Remember, entries must be in before November 15.

So that's it from the Mailbag for another month. Annual time is here again. I hope to have the 1973 edition of the CON-NACHT GAELIC GAMES ANNUAL on sale in December. The OUR GAMES will be there too and a welcome return is being made by the CUCHULAINN ANNUAL published by Fostra Press Ltd. I'll have much more

to say about all three next month. If you have anything to say about ANYTHING write to me at

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Jack Mahon

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