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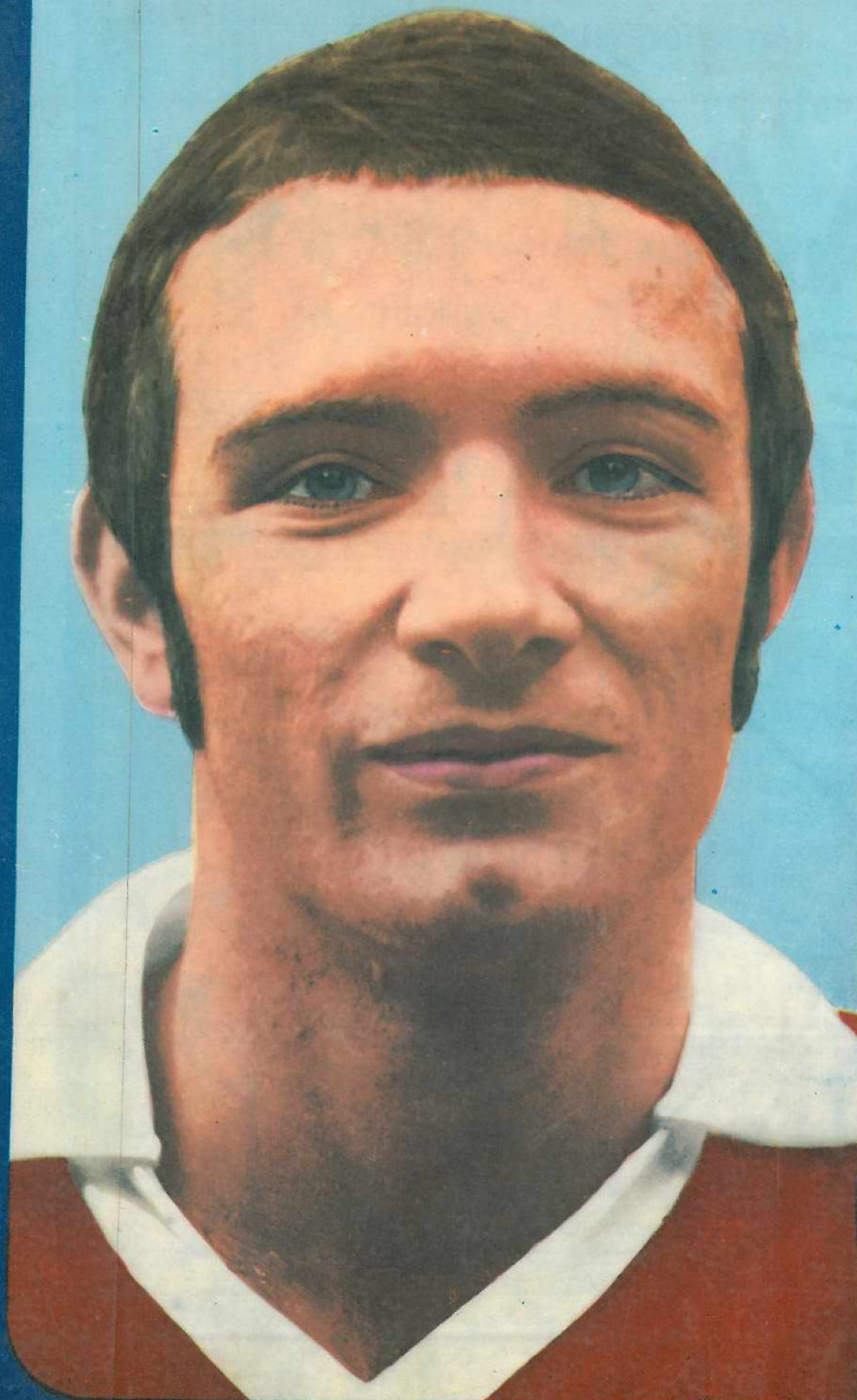


GAELIC SPORT

IRELAND'S LEADING GAELIC GAMES MAGAZINE PUBLISHED MONTHLY

DECEMBER 1973

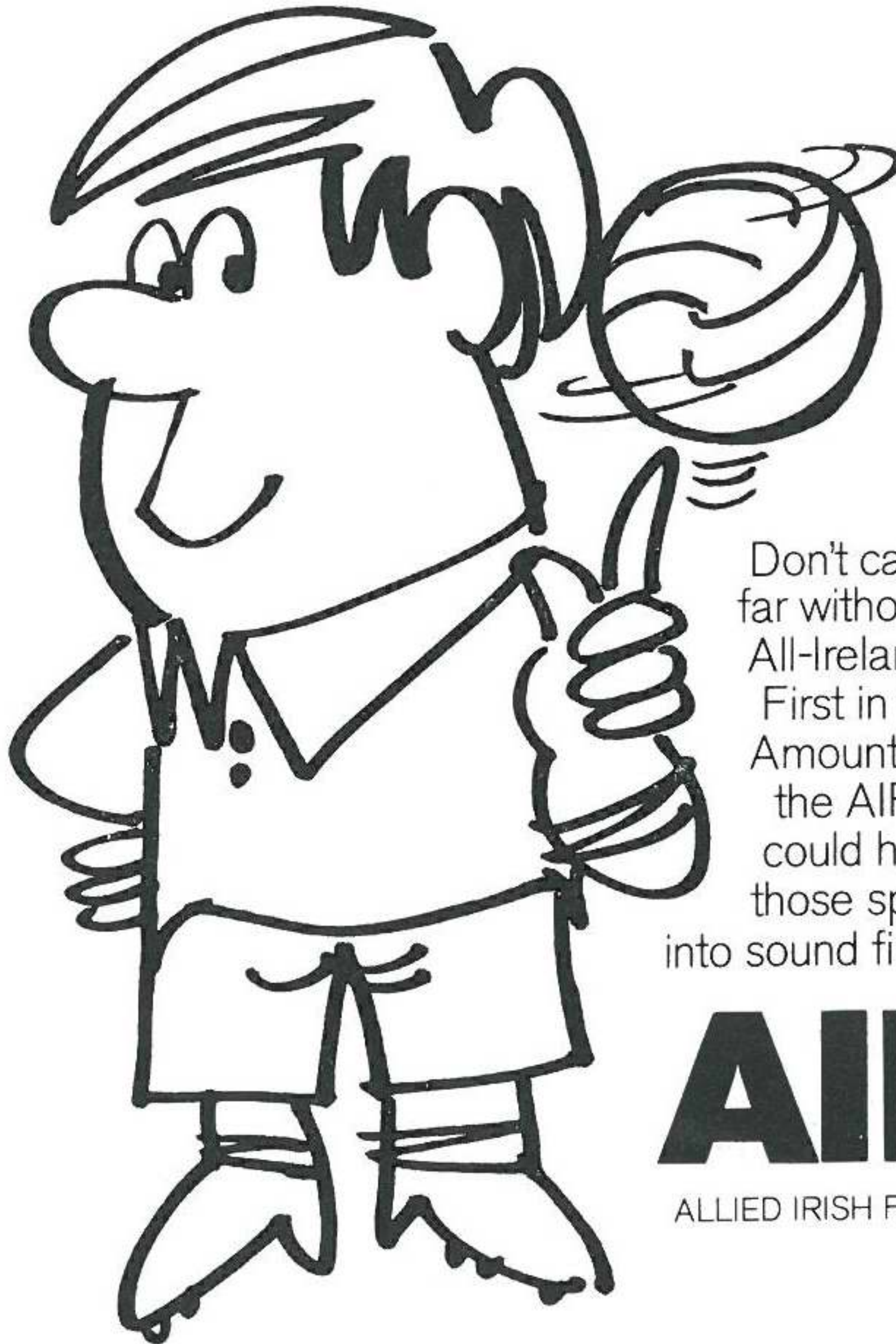
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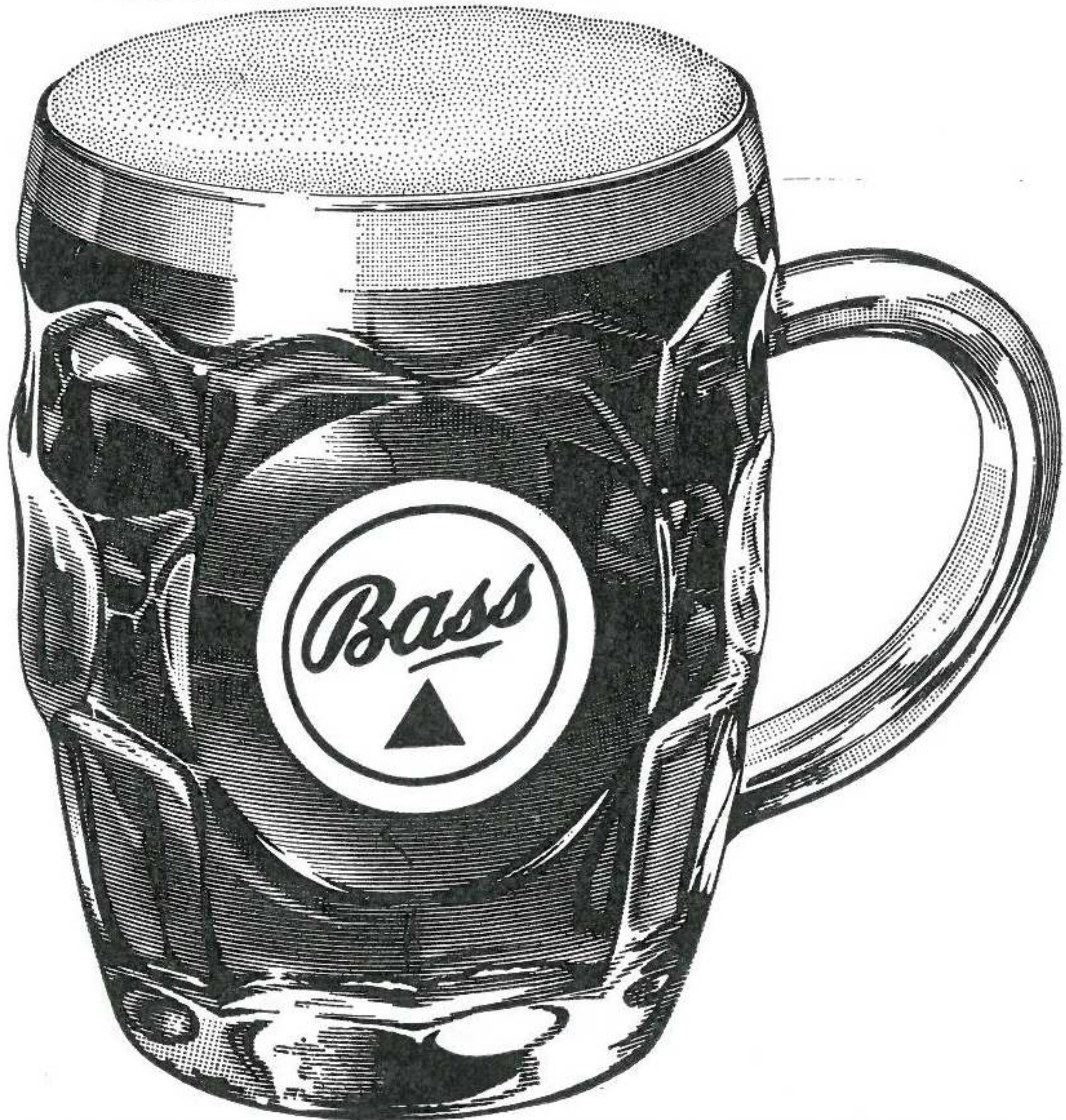
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A GOOD MOVE

MID-WINTER is not a good time for competitive match-play, let alone for the launching of a new series of representative games. Nevertheless, there must still be a warm welcome for the decision to match the Carrolls All-Stars against the Rest of Ireland in football and hurling.

The fact that until now enthusiasts had not a chance of seeing the Carrolls All-Stars in action at home was the only unsatisfactory feature of an ambitious promotion that has given an exciting new dimension to the Gaelic Games scene.

It is to be hoped that these games will not only become annual attractions, but that they will be played on dates when weather conditions are likely to be inviting, from the spectator's point of view.

The appeal of the new games will be enhanced by the fact that they will be played under the

experimental rules, although matches like these invariably suffer because they lack the genuine competitive element. It might be a good move, then, to introduce a Player-of-the-Game award. This would give the hurlers and footballers an added incentive to pull out that little extra that would do much to add worthwhile "bite" to the matches.

As for the Carrolls selections, the most striking feature is that only four counties are represented in hurling. It can rightly be argued that this is a fitting tribute to Kilkenny and Limerick as they provide twelve hurlers between them.

However, the fact that so few counties are represented in the selection must put the spotlight yet again on the general position of hurling, and underline once more the need for imaginative new moves to advance the game nationally.

A GOOD YEAR

IT has been a good year in Gaelic Games. True, there were black spots, but these were more than compensated for by many top-class matches, sporting displays, and the exciting way in which followers flocked in large numbers to games at club and intercounty level.

Our wish now is for a Happy Christmas for all associated with our great games, and also for our readers and advertisers.

COVER PHOTO: **I**N choosing Jimmy Barry-Murphy to be our cover star, we are not alone paying tribute to a young man who even at this early stage of his career shows signs of developing into one of the all-time stars of Gaelic football, but we are also paying tribute to the whole Cork football team on their great achievement in bringing home the Sam Maguire Cup to the banks of the Lee after an absence of twenty-eight years.

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Top Ten

TYRONE STAR IN SPARKLING FORM

FRANK MCGUIGAN is ending the season as he began it — in sparkling form. He made his entry to our Top Ten in the initial table of 1973, in the March issue, at nine points, and he is up there with the front runners again this month.

The young Tyrone footballer, who turned on a splendid display in the Grounds' Tournament semi-final, is second in the chart with eight points, and this boosts his record over-all to 30 points. As it was not possible to consider performances in the Grounds' Tournament final at time of going to press — that and the subsequent matches will be assessed for the final chart in January — McGuigan could finish very high in the annual ratings.

The man with the best points record for the month in both football and hurling, however, is Willie Bryan. This elegant footballer made an important contribution to Offaly's win over Cork in a crucial National League game at Cork with a cool, purposeful showing, during which he subdued three home players.

An interesting new face in football is Hugh Griffin, who capped a workmanlike performance in Roscommon's shock win over Galway at Roscommon in the League by scoring 1-3.

In hurling, Waterford's great

start to the League campaign is reflected in the fact that two players from the county, Pat O'Grady and Jim Greene, head the chart.

On the broader front in hurling is it surprising to find that only three hurlers improve their over-all ratings this month, Jim O'Brien (Limerick), Pat Quigley (Dublin), and Tom Byrne (Wexford).

Quigley, who is Dublin's new

scoring expert, becomes the only hurler from the county to earn a place in two separate monthly charts this year.

FOOTBALL

9	W. Bryan (Offaly)	9
8	F. McGuigan (Tyrone)	31
7	S. Lowry (Offaly)	15
7	M. Kearins (Sligo)	14
7	P. Rooney (Down)	13
7	M. Furlong (Offaly)	13
6	K. Rennicks (Meath)	12
6	H. Griffin (Roscommon)	6
6	J. Walsh (Kerry)	6
5	B. Morgan (Cork)	33

HURLING

8	P. O'Grady (Waterford)	8
8	J. Green (Waterford)	8
7	J. O'Brien (Limerick)	13
7	B. Murphy (Cork)	7
6	P. Quigley (Dublin)	12
6	D. Martin (Offaly)	6
6	P. Moloughney (Offaly)	6
6	J. O'Leary (Kildare)	6
6	C. McCarthy (Cork)	6
5	T. Byrne (Wexford)	16



● Frank McGuigan

IT has been said many times that if the Sam Maguire Cup could talk it would speak with a Kerry accent. And understandably so, because Kerry have won the trophy no fewer than 15 times — and that is by far the outstanding record for any county in this regard.

Nevertheless, it is still true to say that the Cup is at last back in its true "home". Sam Maguire, who is commemorated by Irish sport's most coveted award, was born in Dunmanway, and gave sterling service to the G.A.A. and the I.R.B. He captained London in their unsuccessful All-Ireland senior football finals of 1900, 1901 and 1903.

Sam Maguire was a Protestant and he died early in 1927. Soon after his death the Cup was presented in his honour to the G.A.A. for the All-Ireland Senior Football Championship. The first winners were Kildare, captained by Bill Gannon, who beat Cavan in the 1928 decider.

Cork folk had to wait until 1945 for the joy of cheering on a team from the county to victory for the first time in a Sam Maguire Cup battle. That year a talented outfit led by the late Tadhg Crowley at centre half back beat Cavan.

Few, then, could have envisaged that the wings of time would have wafted up to 1973 before Cork again won the Cup. But if the wait was a long one, it certainly proved well worthwhile in the end.

The quality of Cork's work all round when taking the trophy at the expense of Galway was worthy of the rare occasion. The Leesiders displayed enterprise, ideas and flair in an all-round high powered performance that must rank as one of the best ever by a Cork football outfit.

Sam Maguire cup back in its true home

Cork supporters showed in no uncertain manner their great appreciation of the efforts of the team and of the men behind the scenes. They displayed that appreciation in their joyous enthusiasm and delight at the presentation of the trophy to Billy Morgan, and again the following evening when the triumphant team brought the famed Sam Maguire Cup home to a tumultuous reception; one of the greatest ever accorded to any sporting team in this country.

The All-Ireland Championship campaign was a spectacular one score-wise for Cork. It opened on a solid note with a worthwhile tally of 2-14 against Clare at the Cork Athletic Grounds. Then, high scoring displays against Kerry in the Munster final (5-12 to 1-15) and Tyrone in the All-Ireland semifinal (5-10 to 2-4), followed by the best score ever recorded in a national football decider (3-17 to Galway's 2-13), gave an exciting new dimension to Cork forward play.

Surely, now, the ghost that has haunted Cork football for so long — poor marksmanship — has been finally laid for all time.

One young man who must get much of the credit for the im-

proved Cork scoring rate is our front cover personality, Jimmy Barry-Murphy. He hit a goal on his senior Championship debut against Kerry in the Munster final, bagged two more in the semi-final, and then completed an impressive—and rare—scoring double in finals.

In the 1972 All-Ireland minor football decider this tall dual player from the St. Finbarr's club did much to sink Tyrone by cracking home 2-1. In that senior show-down with Galway he almost unbelievably helped himself to exactly the same score as in the minor decider a year earlier!

Jimmy, who made his senior football debut with Cork against Longford in a League tie last February, has also an All-Ireland minor hurling medal and an U-21 hurling medal.

In the decider this exciting 19-year-old finisher was just pipped for ranking as Cork's top scorer of the day by Ray Cummins, who made the best possible entry into the Hall of Fame. The 6 ft. 2 ins. tall St. Michael's man won an All-Ireland senior hurling medal in 1970, and Cork's football triumph earned him ranking as only the 10th man in history to

play in victorious teams in All-Ireland senior finals in both codes.

Cummins took over the job of place-kicker during the decider, and he made such a good job of it that he hit seven points from frees. He scored one point from play to finish the top scorer in the final, and made a further important impact for Cork with his clever touches in general play.

Billy Field, although he had virtually no play in the All-Ireland Championship proper because of an injury, and Jimmy Barrett emerged as Cork's top scorers for the entire campaign. Field hit 2-14 in two games in Munster, and then retired injured after only a couple of minutes against Tyrone in the semi-final. Barrett bagged 4-8 in four games.

However, a team needs a good defence to give the forwards a chance, and Cork certainly had just that. The brilliant goalkeeping and imaginative football of Billy Morgan, a powerful left flank of defence in Brian Murphy and Con Hartnett, and the dependability of Frank Cogan were among the chief "props" of a bulwark that was both a major stumbling block to the Galway forwards, and a powerful base for the Cork attack to build on.

Over the four-match campaign as a whole, Cork called on a total of 22 players for active service. They included Robert Wilmot and Martin Doherty who each had one game — against Clare in the first round.

Donal Hunt was another in action in that game, and he made a further appearance as a substitute in the All-Ireland final. Seamus Coughlan substituted against Tyrone and again against Galway, Teddy O'Brien went in as a substitute in the All-Ireland semi-final, and Michael Scannell filled a similar role in the concluding game.



The Cork captain, Billy Morgan, holds the Sam Maguire Cup aloft after his county's great victory over Galway in the All-Ireland football final of 1973.



Wherever the familiar faces are seen you're likely to find us, too, in one way or another. **Player-Wills.**

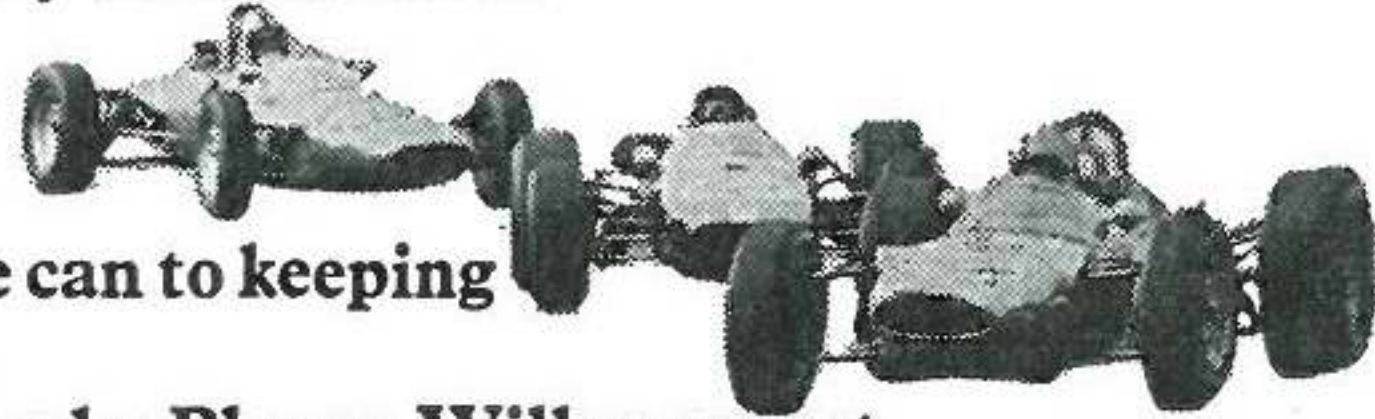


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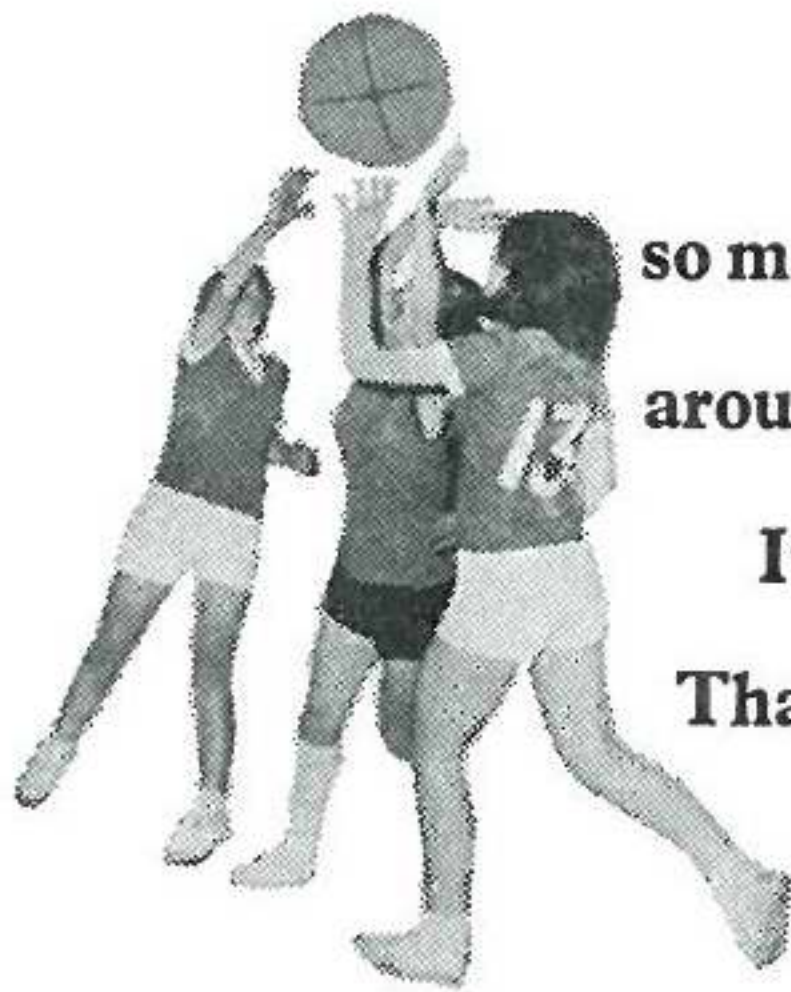


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REVISED RULES

MUST GET

A FAIR DEAL

By MICK DUNNE (of RTE SPORT)

WHEN Congress considers the proposed revision of the playing rules in Sligo next Easter the delegates, for the first time, won't be taking a step into the unknown. They will already have seen the revised rules in operation.

The Grounds' Tournament showed-off the changed football rules — they were seen either in Croke Park or by those watching the matches on television — and counties, at the request of the Management Committee, will have used the new rules in their own hurling and football competitions. So delegates going to Congress will be armed with complete knowledge about the feasibility, the suitability or, indeed, the disadvantages of the suggested alterations.

This is the very important factor of the current move to have the rules changed in order to improve our games as more attractive spectacles. It shouldn't be overlooked that this will be the first time revised playing rules go to Congress after first being tried-out in experimental matches.

Up to now this lack of a prior experimental stage has been a most serious deficiency in any review of the playing rules. It meant delegates went into Congress not knowing if the suggested changes would, in fact, im-

prove or harm the games. Arguments in favour of the proposed changes or declarations about their worthlessness could only be speculation, for the delegates hadn't seen them in use.

And, under the method of reviewing the rules up to this, the only way delegates could see them in actual play was to pass them into the Official Guide and have them come into force one month after Congress for every game, be it unimportant tournament or crucial championship tie.

Moreover, acceptance meant having these rules in existence for five years. So we were stuck with the bad as well as the good, the useless along with the worthwhile, for those five years.

It was this fear of the unknown that hung over Congress three years ago in Galway when the last revision of the rules was considered. The delegates were patently scared to take the step into the dark and it wasn't just because they were conservatively-minded or unprogressive. When you can't be sure of the worth of something — and have to live with the consequences of acceptance for five years, even if these consequences are disastrously detrimental to the games — you play safe. Understandably people decide the dog they know is better than the one they don't know.



John Moloney, the noted Tipperary referee, who is a member of the Rules Revision Committee.

This isn't the case now. Delegates at the next Congress will be able to stand up and declare that such-and-such a change is beneficial because it worked well in a particular game or games . . . or that another proved to be unworkable in actual play. Nobody can say they haven't prior knowledge.

Another very significant feature of the present review is that any changes made next Easter will operate only for **one** year. If accepted and then proven to be faulty in the 1974 championships and the '74-'75 Leagues they may be changed back, or altered in some other way, at the 1975 Congress.

Because of this I expect the new rules will be favourably treated in Sligo and probably most of them accepted for the year's trial.

Unlike the larger Review Committee, which sent their proposals to the 1970 Congress, the current five-man body headed by President, Donal Keenan, do not preface their recommendations with a statement of intent. But their intention is similar and unmistakable nonetheless. They set out from the premise that present-day football is foul-ridden and free-scarred. This is generally acknowledged. So they examined the rules which could

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● FROM PAGE 9

be altered to reduce the amount of fouling. And anything which achieves this is laudable.

It is an irrefutable fact of modern football that tactics and training, and the greater emphasis on fitness and speed, have been counter-productive by tempting the opposition to foil them by fouling. Therefore the introduction of an enlarged rectangle, the limitation of the solo-run, the prohibition of forwards entering the smaller parallelogram before the ball, are designed to cut down on fouling in the area where it occurs most — around the goal-mouths.

Lots of people will have reservations about the return of the hand-pass, but it may enable a player to get rid of the ball fractionally faster than the fisted-pass and consequently have the ball away before he can be fouled. There will be doubts about the value of not allowing a direct pick-up in football, hurling adherents will be almost unanimously opposed to not allowing the ball to be lifted into the hand, but nobody could frown on the desire to cut out off-the-ball obstruction — the aggravating third man tackle.

But whatever one's views on all or any of the rules, even if opposed to them delegates to Congress must remember they aren't being asked to accept them permanently. So let's make this plea to the 300 men who go to Sligo with the power to do great good for hurling and football: give the revised rules a fair trial for one year. They must be brought into operation for that year so that they can be put to the full and lengthy test of a complete playing season.

Whether they remain for the period 1975-'80 is irrelevant. All that matters next Easter is that they be given the chance of proving themselves worthwhile or useless.



● *Dermot Earley of Roscommon.*

New record for O'Leary

By Owen McCann

S EAN O'LEARY, that exciting young Cork hurler with the dynamic finishing edge, probably established a new individual scoring record for under-age competitions when he helped himself to a whopping 2-14 in the county's win over Galway in the All-Ireland Under-21 semi-final at Galway in late October. Unfortunately, I have no records of scoring achievements in the under-age competitions, but one appears on firm ground in assuming that the Youghal hurler's one-man demolition job at Pearse Stadium sets a bright new stan-

dard in this grade of hurling and football.

It is not in the least surprising that O'Leary proved the hurler to turn on the style so spectacularly in that game. The year 1972 was his first full season as a senior with Cork, and he right away established himself as the ace goal-getter in the game; a tremendous accomplishment for one so young.

At the end of 1972, O'Leary had 24 goals to his credit, plus twelve points, from 15 games — a new goals record for Cork. The old one stood at 22, a figure twice

reached by Christy Ring. The great Cloyne artist accomplished it in ten games in 1959, and in thirteen matches in 1961.

The Ring tally of 22 also stood up until the end of 1972 as the best annual bag in hurling for any county since Nick Rackard (Wexford) established the goals record in 1956 at 35 in 19 games.

All in all, then, a tremendous start by O'Leary to his senior inter-county scoring career. He finished Cork's second highest marksman of that year.

In the season now drawing to a close, the young Youghal star has not been finding the way through to goal with the same fluency as in 1972, but nevertheless, he has still been banging in the scores impressively enough.

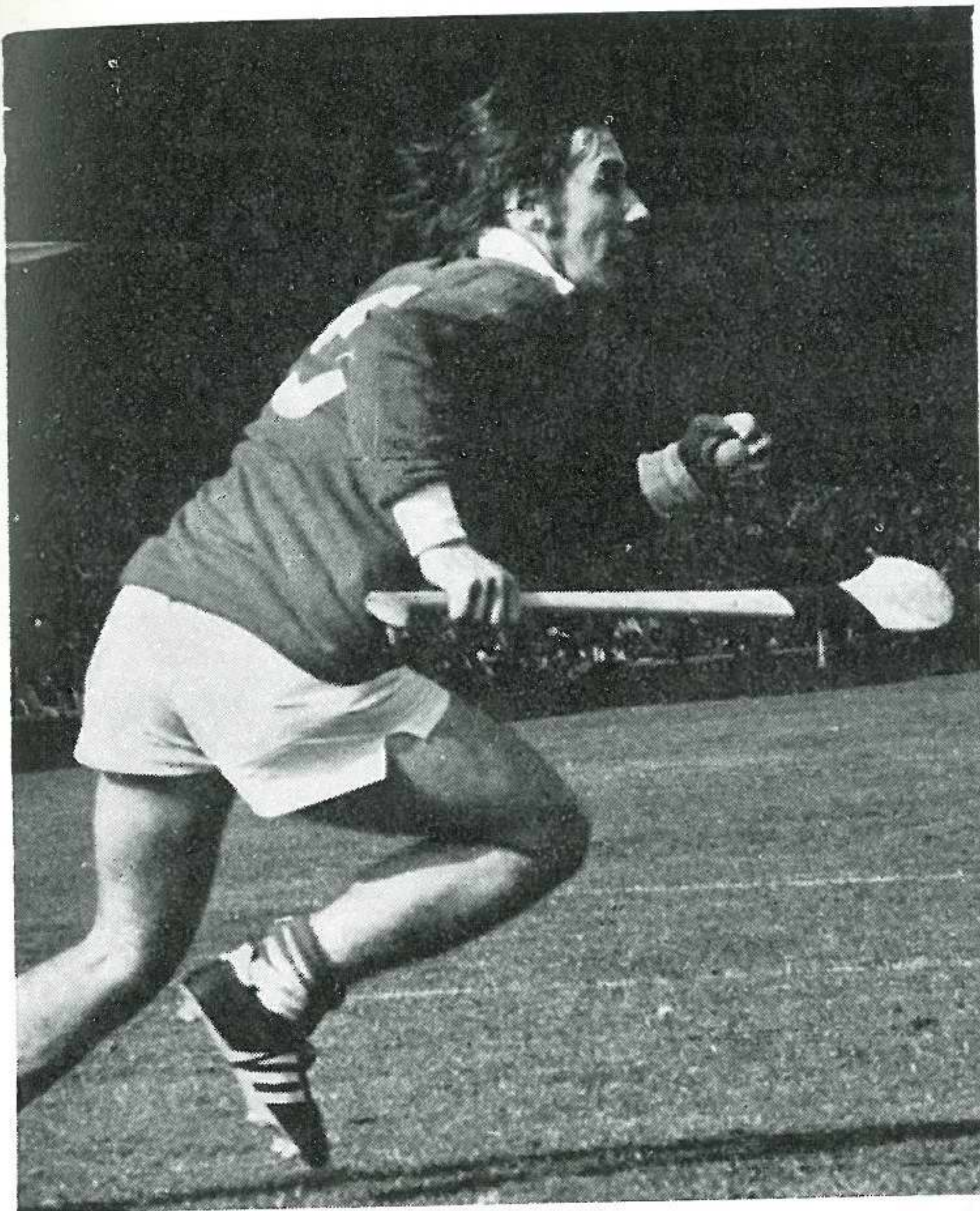
Some of the top individual barrages by Corkmen are brought sharply into focus by that O'Leary spectacular against Galway. Inevitably, Christy Ring sets the pace with 6-4 against Wexford in a National Hurling League game at Cork in November 1959.

Some years earlier, the Athletic Grounds was the scene of a six-goal spree by a Cork footballer, when Eamonn Goulding grabbed a half-dozen against Carlow in a National League tie in February 1957.

Connacht were on the receiving end of a powerful sharpshooting presentation from that man Ring in the 1959 Railway Cup final. He finished with 4-5 after his name that day.

In more recent times, one recalls Charlie McCarthy's 2-8 against Clare in the Munster hurling final of 1972 at Thurles, and 1-10 by Denis Coughlan against

● **TO PAGE 13**



Cork's Sean O'Leary . . . a record score in under-age competition?

● FROM PAGE 11

Tipperary in a Munster senior football semi-final at Clonmel in July 1970.

However, Cork players are not the only forwards in the lime-light this year. Tony Doran, another current senior with a rare flair for getting consistently among the goals, earns a special ranking through a fine bag of 3-5 against Dublin in a Walsh Cup senior hurling semi-final at Parnell Park, Dublin, in August.

That's the best individual feat by a Wexford hurler since Paul Lynch hit 4-2 in a National League win over Laois at Portlaoise in March 1969.

And, mention of Laois—hurler George Lanham can take two bows. Against Westmeath at Portlaoise in the National League in February he scored 3-6, the best haul by a hurler from the county since John Fitzpatrick notched 3-3 against Meath in a National League Division II semi-final at Croke Park in April 1965. Then, last May at Birr, Lanham put up 2-7 against Offaly in the Championship.

It has been a good year score-wise for Francis Loughnane. He hit 28 in the League semi-final replay with Limerick at Birr in April, a match that went to extra time, and in the Munster final

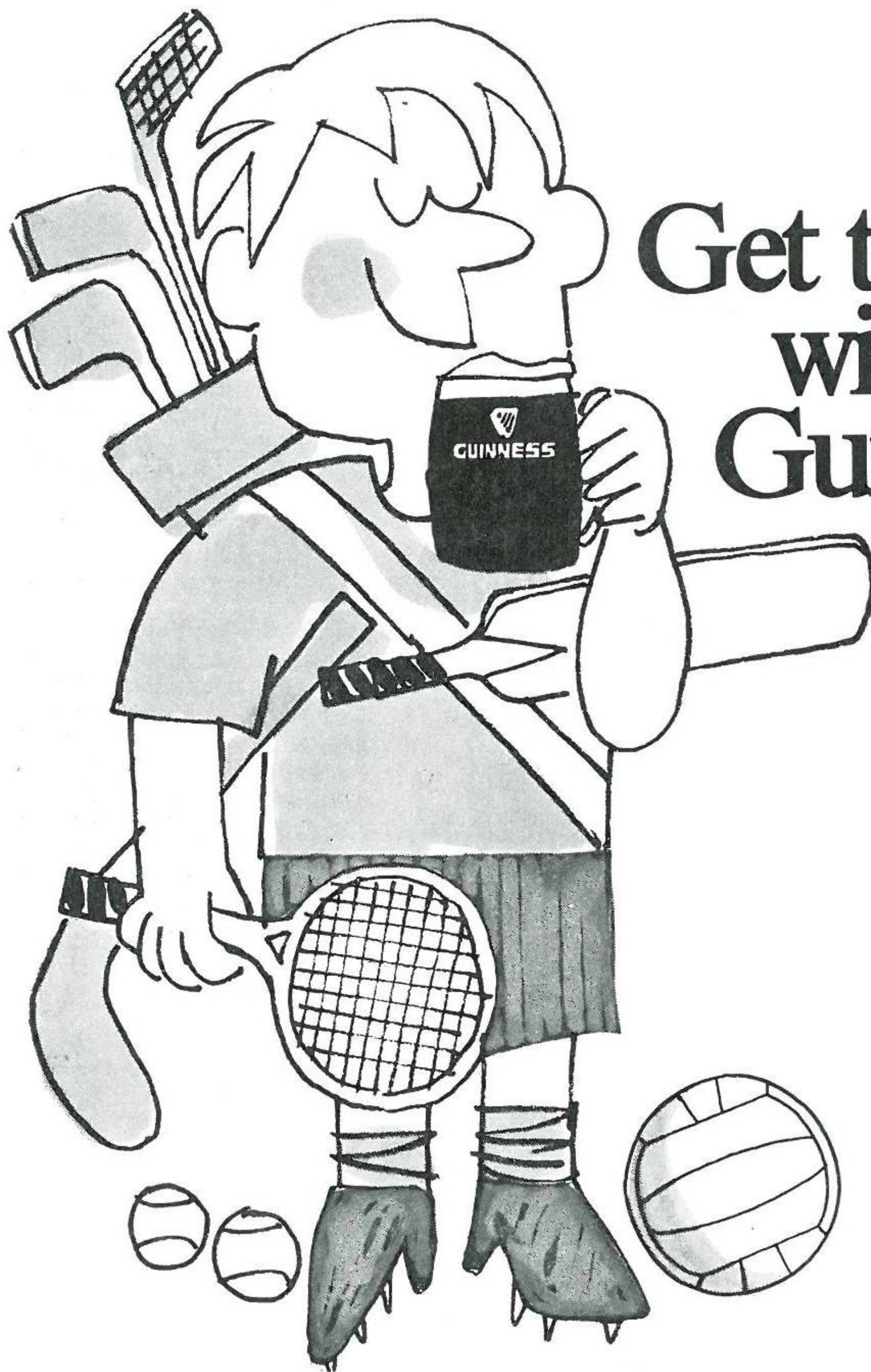
boosted his yearly record in fine style by shooting 2-10. That was the best by a Tipperary hurler since Michael Keating captured the headlines with a 2-12 against Galway in the 1971 All-Ireland semi-final at Birr.

But there is an ironic touch as well to the Loughnane scoring run. Last year he achieved a personal best when he finished second nationally with 16-65 (113 points from 16 games). He looked nicely placed to leave that high-point in tatters when the start of the League found him with 11-17 (103 points) from 13 games. However, a broken arm interrupted his playing career, and up to press time he had not played with Tipperary in the competition. All the signs as well were that he would not return to the side until the New Year.

One man who did step out impressively into new territory was Dermot Earley. He put up his best bag for a match early in the year at 0-10 against Offaly in a Football League tie at Roscommon, and that was an important foundation on which to build for a new personal best. By the end of October he had passed out his previous top annual returns of 3-41 (50 points) in 22 games — and he made it in six fewer games than in his trend setting year of 1969.

Peter McGinnity earns honourable mention for 1-9 against Tyrone in the drawn Dr. McKenna Cup senior football semi-final at Irvinestown in May, the outstanding match score by a Fermanagh player in years.

Finally, what about an Antrim hurler banging in thirteen points in a National League tie? Well, it happened at Waterfoot in Antrim in October when Willie Richmond had a big hand in a win over Westmeath. His actual score was 3-4.



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HURLER OF THE YEAR

By JAY DRENNAN

SEEMS strange that in this year of excitement and Limerick victory at long last, that there seems no obvious, outstanding choice for hurler of the year. Everyone seems to have his own choice. That usually means they were all much of a mediocre muchness, or that there were many super stars.

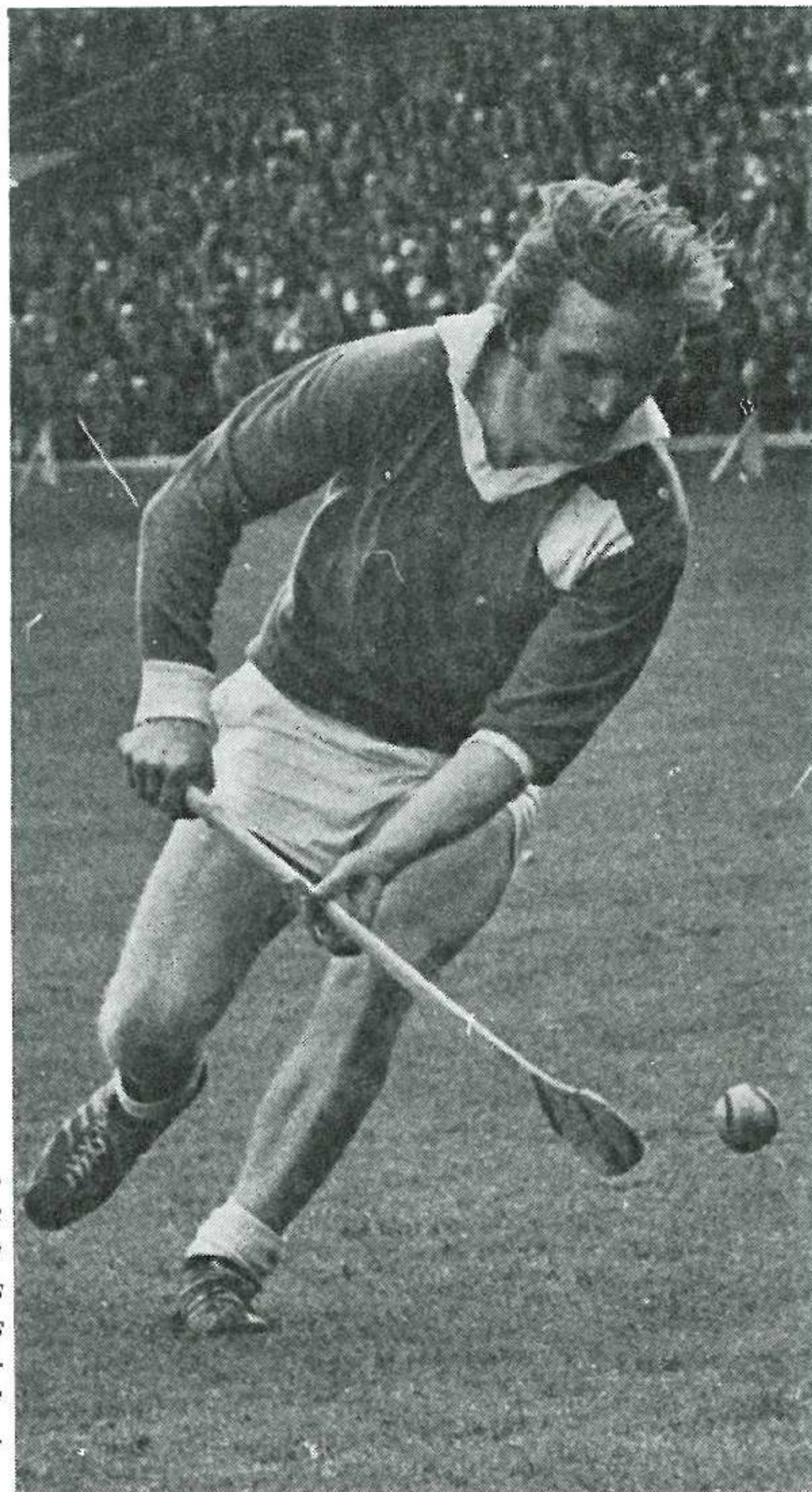
I am not altogether sure that there were many super stars, but it is certainly not a question of an overall mediocrity. It is a long time since I can remember enjoying a hurling year so much; nothing seemed certain, everything was fresh and there was little threat of any stranglehold being exerted by a couple of strong counties like Tipperary and Kilkenny sometimes have done.

Far be it from our minds to decry Tipperary and Kilkenny, and, indeed, it is, I suppose, the greatest tribute one can pay them to say that it was a joy to most neutrals this year that the two did not meet in the All-Ireland.

In this open atmosphere, Wexford surprised everyone, especially Kilkenny and Limerick, in winning the League. A League, incidentally, which showed Waterford and Clare in an interesting new light; and established Limerick's fighting ability in overcoming Tipperary.

Then Limerick coming through for that longed for All-

● "Eamon Grimes, my Hurler of the Year who truly played a captain's part in Limerick's magnificent All-Ireland victory," writes Jay Drennan.



Ireland in a championship that had shown an extraordinary equality between at least seven counties; found Wexford far behind their finishing League form when facing Kilkenny; confirmed Kilkenny as the county of hurling craft.

All this variety, equality and novelty spread the net wider in seeking the hurler of the year. Any list must include Seamus Durack of Clare for the remarkable speed of eye and courage; Len Gaynor of Tipperary steadily holding together a some-

times un-Tipperary-like defence and giving poise and polish to the play.

Paddy Barry for recapturing almost all his self-confidence, reaction-speed and concentration. Brian Murphy whose high-class defensive work was as good in hurling as in football, which is saying something.

The polish and calm skill and command of Mick Jacob of Wexford, and the dash and forcing play of Colm Doran from wing-half; indeed, the cavalier spirit

● OVERLEAF

● **FROM OVERLEAF**
of Tony Doran in whipping in goals and whipping others to raise their game according to his example.

The imperious and powerful

play of Padraig Horan at centre-half back for Offaly in a team that was on an unlucky streak and suffering a series of unfavourable results by small margins.

The sound dependability of Noel Skehan for Kilkenny, a remarkable consistency that has never once given a chance for any disgruntled supporter to say: "If only Ollie Walsh were there . . ."

Liam O'Brien, lively and fluid and always active at midfield, his carrying forward and rifle strokes from anything within 70 yards a feature of the year's hurling. The irrepressible bundling, drive of Pat Delaney, exhausting to opponents and almost exhausting to watch. The eternal accuracy of Eddie Keher, the speed of his decisive action and the sprint to possession and the economy and crisp assurance of his shooting.

From the newly exciting Waterford side, Paddy Coady, perhaps, or Shamy Hannon, dare devil dashing fellows who care nothing for reputations; or the tidy little grafter Mossie Whelan who sometimes goes unnoticed until you realise that his strokes here and there, pushes and scoops, and first-time purveying of the ball has given his side a winning share of possession; or the rumbustious Liam Canning, like a tick in the flesh of every defender around him.

But, the final claim must narrow itself to Limerick. They did the big things and did them well this year. It was a great uplifting of their performance to carry their often achieved initial brilliance to final consummation. The cause of the uplift must measure the difference between 1973 and other years. Seamus Horgan? Certainly, he paid his way wonderfully, in his very first year of inter-county activity. The save late on against Tipperary was crucial in winning the Munster title — lost somewhat in the penumbra of Ritchie Bennis's late point from that famous 70. But, Jim Hogan had never let Limerick down; the

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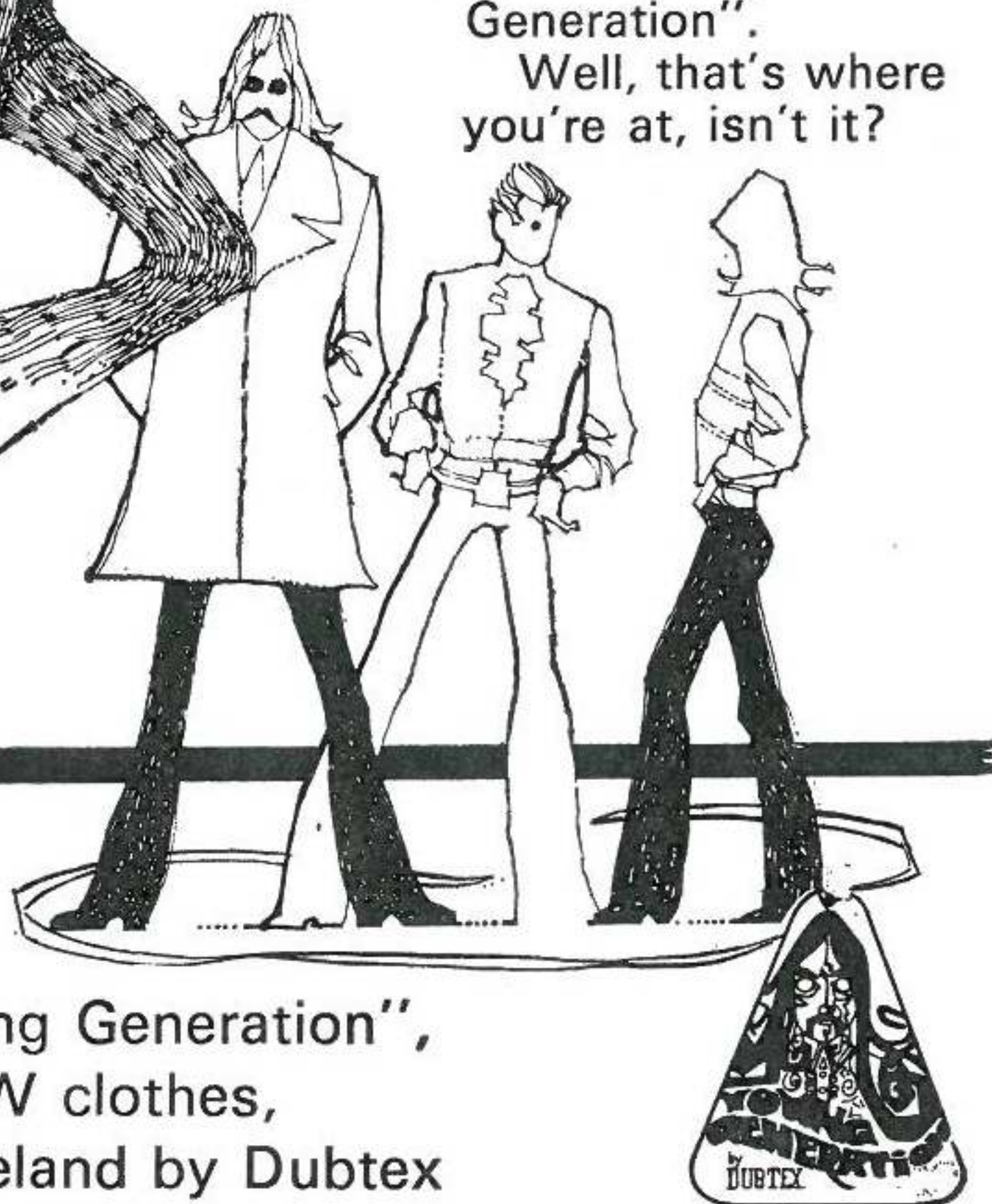


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JOHN O'KEEFFE ON WAY TO STARDOM



● John O'Keeffe

By EAMONN YOUNG

JUST how good is this chap going to be? At twenty-two he stands about six one, all fourteen stone of him. Keen, dedicated, intelligent and with a lot of first-class training and competition behind him he would be looked on in any professional game like boxing or paid football as quite an investment. And don't forget they look for the same things as we do in this game which will remain amateur as long as we Irishmen retain our commonsense.

John O'Keeffe of Trailli has an All-Ireland Colleges medal with Brendan's Killarney, was sub on the Kerry team of '69 which beat Offaly in the final, won an All-Ireland against Meath in the following year and lost one against Offaly last year. He had a mighty game in the League final of '71, was very sound against Cork in the Munster final of last year and showed further manliness in the League Final against Offaly this year when a Kerry team which was supposed to be over the hill beat the champions. He has Railway Cups with both Munster and the Universities and this year tacked on a county championship with U.C.D. To crown a career which at twenty-two aims at epic level he fielded out with Austin Stacks in the Kerry county final. After thirty-seven years they won it.

John's father Frank who now runs a furniture store in Trailli

was himself a fine player. Not a big man but lively as a cricket with plenty of power behind the shoulder and hip, Frank used his brains, skill and general ability to help Jacky Lyne, Teddy O'Connor, Paddy Kennedy, Gega O'Connor, Paddy Bawn, Dan Kavanagh, Batt Garvey and the rest to beat Jimmy Murray's great Roscommon team of '46. This side (of which we haven't heard as much as I would have liked) beat Cavan and the Kingdom in the finals of '43 and '44. The Dan Kavanagh of those days, now Cork County engineer is the father of John O'Keeffe's playing comrade Donal, who like John is ploughing the academic furrow, but in Cork. Dan, himself a Dingle man, played at centre field in two All-Irelands but for Galway and had the hard luck of going down to Kerry and Dublin in '41 and '42.

To take a look at this man John O'Keeffe, walk into a classroom in Dublin where he is a primary teacher and note the earnestness and will to work which radiates from the big frame. The broad straight face, the calm voice, the steadiness of eye all show very plainly that here is an earnest man, a thinker who perhaps yet has not even approached his true worth in either the physical or mental spheres.

Watch him at night as he listens to the lectures in U.C.D. talking on the delightful subjects

called arts and wonder what will this trained, powerful ball-player be in the years ahead.

His best place is I think at centre-back and were I a Kerry selector that's where he would be playing. Centre-backs aren't easy to find and while I have nothing but admiration for the gallant man who roams the wide spaces of the middle of the field he comes in greater numbers than does the centreback who may not be a better man, but who has to be more of a specialist. There's a world of waiting, darting, covering, out-thinking and fair virility in the centreback position and it seems to me if a man is good enough for the job in the inter-county arena it's wise to leave him there. I just don't know if O'Keeffe prefers centre-field to the defensive job and we can leave the placing of the men to Murt Kelly, Joe Keohane and the boys.

For me a study of ball-players like John O'Keeffe is a pleasure. I am very attracted by earnestness, readiness to impose self-discipline in the cause of personal, academic and emotional advancement. I am convinced that the young man who plays an Irish field game learns a lot about life and manliness in the relaxed field of practice and the hard high-tension hours of competition. Self-reliance, co-operation with others, readiness to efface

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MOYNIHAN FULFILLS YOUTHFUL PROMISE

By
Sean Rice

IT was not surprising to see the name of Con Moynihan pop up again. Two years ago he hit the headlines when as centre-half back he played a leading part in bringing the All-Ireland minor football title to Mayo.

He was the one who picked up most of the publicity following that Mayo win. And there are many who still talk about the heights to which he rose in pegging back waves of Cork attacks during the second half of that game.

It was said he would be an automatic choice for the Mayo senior team in the League that was to start a few weeks later. But many forgot that Mayo were not short of a centre-half back at that time. John Morley had been manning the spot with distinction. To have him replaced by Moynihan was unthinkable in Mayo.

So the young Mayoman had to wait.

There have been very many instances in Mayo of minor starlets failing to make the senior grade. It is a matter that has evoked considerable comment and for a while it looked as if Moynihan's potential might not be fulfilled either.

Strangely, he could not command the centre-half back berth even on his own club team . . . Ballaghaderreen. They were competing in the Mayo intermediate championship when Moynihan rose to eminence on the minor team. But he was playing in the forward line on the Ballaghaderreen team.

He was in good company of course. For not even his colleague, and county star, John Morley could command the

centre-half position on that Ballaghaderreen side. His position was at full forward.

It was a team that grew in strength and maturity built around such players as Sean Kilbride, Frank Burns and Morley. They went on to win the intermediate title and the following year won the Mayo senior championship . . . at their first attempt.

All of that was good moulding material for the talents of Con Moynihan although he never attained the same level of performance for his club during those years as he did while playing with the county minor team.

But earlier this year he was chosen as centre-half back on the Mayo under 21 team. And his abilities as a defender began to blossom once more. In almost every game he seemed to stand out high above his colleagues in defence and played no small part in steering that team to the final of the competition which they lost to Kerry.

He seemed more at ease in the back line and his performances could not go unnoticed. John Morley had for some time vacated that position on the Mayo senior team and it had never afterwards been satisfactorily filled.

So Moynihan took over for Mayo's first game of the current National League series against Westmeath early in October. His

selection was no surprise, but the fact that the whole under-21 defence, with the exception of goalkeeper J. J. Costello, was also selected did raise many eyebrows.

Moynihan filled that role as if he had been in the position for years, and seemed to have benefitted greatly from the under-21 campaign, and there are those who now see him becoming as dominant at centre-half as Morley was a few years back.

He is not by any stretch of the imagination an elegant player. But he is thorough. He does not jump high, but when he reaches for the ball is difficult to disturb. Strength is perhaps his biggest advantage.

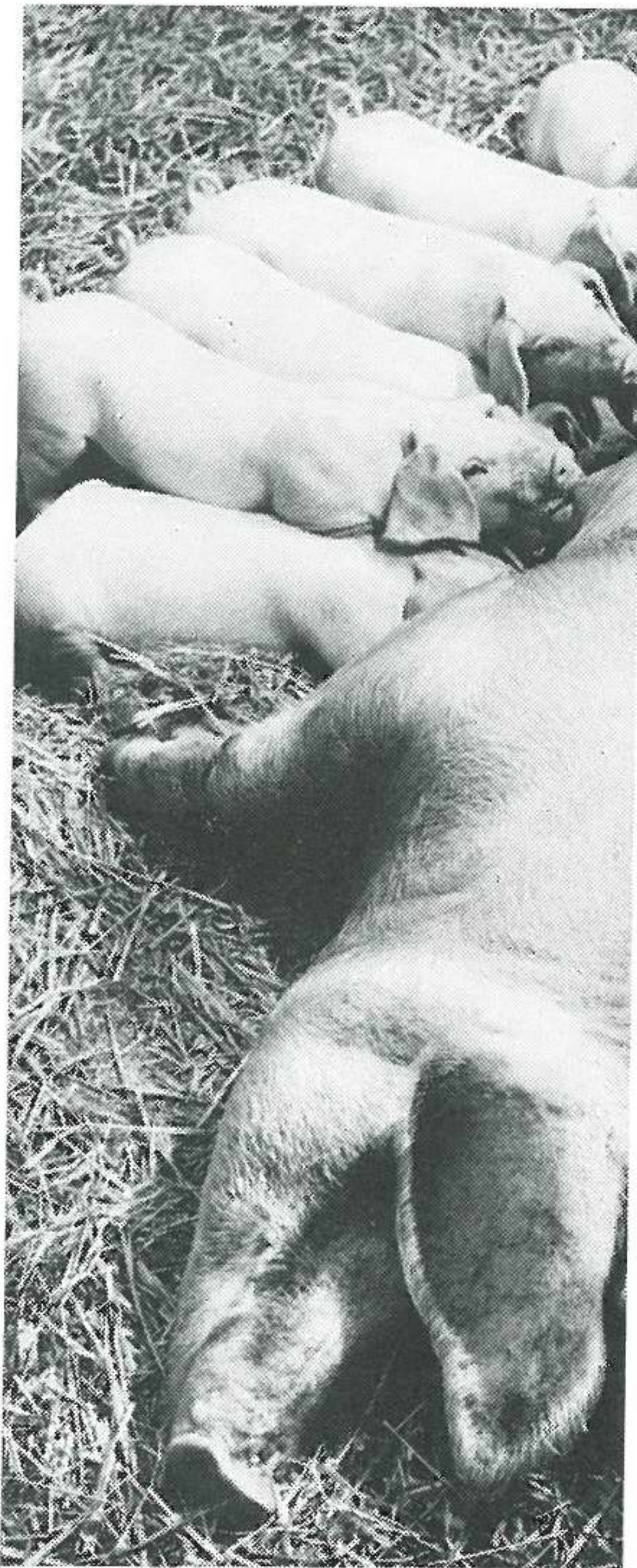
He has not completely rid himself of a tendency to make sudden solo bursts down field . . . something that has often backfired and which he has yet to fully cure.

But for all that he is capable of weighing up situations and of directing play from the vital position. And the fact that he does not have to fit in with "strange" defenders has added enormously to his aplomb.

It is a long and pitted road to the top in Mayo football. Con Moynihan is playing now as if he holds no fears for the journey and Mayo have been doing reasonably well in the current League. If the bug of hopelessness does not catch up with him the young Ballaghaderreen player could yet prove to be the spark that would light fires in the hearts of other Mayo footballers.

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CORK FOOTBALL HAS COME TO MATURITY

By SEAMUS O BRAONAIN

CORK is unique, we all know that. But, Cork is just a little odd, as well. Your average Corkman is a curious mixture of the superiority complex and the inferiority complex.

You've heard of the Kerryman with the inferiority complex, who thought he was no better than anyone else. But, it must have been a Corkman who invented that one; and it must have been his expression of inferiority at dealing with Kerry men.

Most of the time, Corkmen are aggressive in believing themselves best; the rest of the time they are occupied in a self-denigratory flow of crisp humour that seems like "laughing it off" but is, really, to hide the hurt of discovering an inferior area in their character.

Now, hurling and football slot somewhere into the pattern. For the average Corkman over the years is it not correct to say that in hurling they expected to win, felt victory was their right and expressed hurt and amazement at defeat but never allowed that it came about because they were not as good as the opposition.

Yet, in football, the same average Corkman fears defeat all the time, thinks of victory as a bonus, and covers himself with a protective skin of jocose comment . . . as though it was just a bit of gas and didn't really matter.

The average Corkman, however, does not cover the far West, all the way along the Kerry border, where they have always taken their football seriously and thought themselves no less good than anyone else. It must have been a bit bewildering for them to find the rest of the county taking a different view. To them, often, it must have seemed that the defensive veneer of self-deprecating humour was really their own laughing at them. And they have been slow to warm to hurling which must have seemed the reason for the levity.

There is still a large element of that "two sides of the road" attitude, but there has also been a change over recent years. It began, perhaps, in the 1940s when Cork hurling supporters realised that there was such a thing in their county as football, and that it could even bring honour.

But, that was a passing phase; the real inroads were made when for the first time, probably, the vague uneasiness crept into Cork hurling minds that maybe, after all, they had no divine right of winning. The nervous system even told them that

there existed a possibility that they were not **always** the best—that there might be times when, in fact, they weren't. The long passage from the mid-50s until 1966, with so many unbelievable bad results was the real time of re-evaluation.

The Junior All-Irelands of 1951, 1953 and 1955 were probably thought of as interesting diversions. Ringey and his men having been about the serious business of taking hurling titles at that time. But, they have some significance because, 1945 apart, and the long distant 1890 and 1911 excluded, they were the only All-Irelands of any kind won by Cork in football to that time.

Then, quite suddenly, minor footballers began to spring up with some real quality, even at a time when minor hurlers were not asserting themselves. Of course, it took a typically long time for these minors to get a return commensurate with their worth—the old Cork football problem.

Several fine teams had tried and fallen short, had been overhauled by the minor hurlers picking up their example, and both have marched together since then—on an equal footing. Even then, the attitude behind hurling helped the 1964 All-Ireland minor success, while the minor footballers were unable to take the county's first title in the grade until 1967—a double-year, symptom of the equal footing.

Minor football, 1968, 1969, 1972; minor hurling, 1969, 1970, 1971. And from that start, the equal footing has gradually spread into under-21 cementing the situation.

Away back, what was it like then? To answer a question like that there is nowhere better to go than to the considered opinion of the greatest expert of all — Carbery. He grew with the G.A.A., played and watched and lived football (and hurling) all his life. He says:

In the early days, Cork County and City had teams second to none. Midleton, indeed, won the All-Ireland in 1890 — led by Jim Power of the great Ballywalter family of athletes. But, there were parish and suburban teams as good as Midleton — rattling rural brigades from Clondrohid (Macroom) who were most unlucky to lose to Young Irelands in 1891; Drumtarriffe (Duhallow) who felt they were cheated out of the final in their unfinished game against Wexford in 1893;

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the Dunmanway Dohenys, who astonished all the critics when beating the holders Limerick Commercials in the Munster final of 1897; the Nils (Cork City) who ran Young Irelands to a draw in 1894; the Lees, another grand side who went into the 1907 final, before winning outright in 1911; Fermoy, 1906 finalists, who only lost to Kickhams in the last kick of the ball—Cork footballers held a high place then.”

And of the personalities of those days and later, he had this to say:

“John McCarthy, of Lees, was one of the best backs in the period—his place-kicking of superb length. I saw him drive a heavy ball 68 yards at Copper Alley grounds, Youghal. His brother Ned was also a mighty back with a huge kick. A namesake, Con McCarthy, of Lees and Dunmanway, was a lion in defence. Ned Buckley, a native of East Cork, captained the Lees through their most flourishing period.

“Jim (Doheny) Murphy, of Nils, was full-back for Cork in their best days—a natural footballer, he shone later in New York selections.

“Dave Kelleher, of the Lees, played through many title games, a fine athlete and footballer; Tom Irwin (hurler and footballer) another brilliant Leesman, and Paddy Walsh of Bandon who captained Kickhams in their All-Ireland years.

“Willie Mackessy was a hurling star and fine sprinter, but as a football winger he had no peer.

About his own brother, Carbery modestly quotes other opinion—none other than that of the one he himself thought the greatest, of whom he said: “Other footballers had talent; Dick Fitzgerald was a football genius born.”

Dick Fitzgerald, greatest authority of his time, considered Mick Mehigan (Lees) as the best half-back of his period. ‘A powerfully built man with safe hands,’ Fitzgerald wrote, ‘good judgement and a long kick.’

“Curry O’Shea, Sean Lehane, Sean Kelleher of Macroom, Senator Dan Corkery — all fine footballers. J. A. Beckett, a brilliant winger, had few equals as all-rounder. From Fermoy came Martin Connors, Daly, Linehan, Paye and O’Sullivan.”

Carbery was writing about 1940, and, in saying little of Cork football after 1915, he was only reflecting the picture as it appeared to most people of my generation, too. We might have heard of Dr. Kearney, or of Donegan or Cotter who forced Railway Cup attention, but it all began in the early 40s. First, when Dick Harnedy and Eamon Young forced their way to the Railway Cup team for the replay against Ulster in 1941—it had been all Kerry in the drawn game on St. Patrick’s Day. In 1942, at Tralee, Kerry had an uncomfortable close call. But, 1943 was when we saw that Cork could do something

in football: two hectic, electric games in the Park that brought new names to our childhood football matches: Ned Courtney, “Weeshie” Murphy, Tadhg Crowley, Jim Cronin, Togher Casey . . . 2-3 to 0-9, and 1-5 to 1-4 the second day.

The old story of a game lost that might have been won by more convinced players against Cavan brought that year’s progress to an end. Kerry got their title back in 1944, though it was Tipperary who put Cork out; and they nearly did the same in 1954 before Cork beat Kerry again to prove it wasn’t all a dream. Conviction brought them through two touch-and-go games against Galway and Cavan which would never have been won by a Cork team before or after that year.

It was the great Clon-Fermoy era; what a team Clon. were! And what a figure Tadhg Crowley. Occasionally, Robert Mitchum would ring a vague bell of recognition—but he was only a pale shadow of that magnificent looking Clon. man. Long, whip-lash Fachna O’Donovan. The Napoleon figure of Eamonn Young. The tigerish redhead from Bere, “Weshie” Murphy . . .

Next year, they lost to a surprising Kerry; and the year after was the day Joe Keohane rested his foot on the ball while waiting for “innocent” Jim Ahern to take the penalty. They couldn’t get back until 1949—it was too late for this team; and 1952 was too early for a rebuilt side. As well as that Cavan seemed to have the Injun Sign on Cork in semi-finals.

Only themselves could have beaten the powerful team of 1956 and 1957, and they did through combined gross shooting errors and total lack of tactical guidance. Then 1966 was another might-have-been, while the team that could allow itself to lose the 1967 final could do anything. They were in the final mainly because of Con O’Sullivan’s efforts, yet they succeeded in playing that final as though their sole purpose was to keep the ball away from their own potential match-winner.

Narrow losers but good triers in 1971 against Offaly in ascendant; another team began to show its possibilities. They had demonstrated a new panache in the Munster final victory over the old enemy, Kerry.

Repeating the pattern of the side of the ’40s, they returned two years later in the same dashing style but even greater power and self-confidence. The pattern of 1945 was repeated in 1973. That part needs no retelling.

But, this newest victory will bear more fruit than that of 1945, because football is deeper-rooted now, more evenly based with hurling, able to stand on its own feet and make the best from victory in forging a tradition for the success of future generations. It has been a hard sweat, but football in Cork has come to maturity.

CAN CORK WIN THE DOUBLE NEXT YEAR?

ASKS EAMONN YOUNG

"WHAT are Cork's chances of a senior double in '74?" I asked an experienced Corkman.

"A wran's whistle in a hurricane", he said. So that's the first answer. Not saying I'll agree completely let's have a look at it.

Dublin have been in line for a senior double on many times. To go back only to '42 they won the football when Peter O'Reilly, Bobby Beggs and "Beefy" Kennedy were playing well. That year they were beaten in the hurling final. Look at the names: Ned Wade, Harry Gray, Mattie McDonnell, Mick Butler, Jim Byrne and Jim Mullane. I think "Beefy" Kennedy was on the hurling team also. The men who beat them were the Cork four-in-a-row side and that gives an idea of Dublin's wealth. Dublin lost the hurling again in '44 and '48 so we must take it that this county was in line for two All-Irelands in the year.

Right up during the fifties when Kevin Heffernan, Olly Freaney, Des Ferguson and the rest were as good as any, Dublin were again in line for the double which didn't come mostly because Wexford and Kilkenny were too good in hurling and I think it is fair to say that in the sixties except for the final they lost against Tipp in '61 Dublin hurlers were not quite as formidable in Leinster as formerly. Remember they did win a football cup in '63.

Take Cork. We won the double in 1890 and have contested the finals since. We were beaten in both in '56 (by Wexford and Galway) and might have gone on from a semi-final which we lost in '66,

a year when we won the hurling. In '67 we were beaten in the football All-Ireland. In Cork's case the weak partner normally was the football team.

Before proceeding allow me to digress for a moment to say that in 1911 we won the football. The hurling came south in 1905 but we were thrown out of the championship as a result of the Kilkenny objection to the Cork goalie, Sonny Jim McCarthy who was a reservist on the Munster Fusiliers. The tragedy of an All-Ireland lost on the re-play was deepened by the fact that had Cork won an all-time record would probably have come to a great performer, for Jerry Beckett the school-teacher from Kilgarvan would have ended a winner of three All-Ireland championships: a football in 1911, a hurling and an Irish 220 yards. Later his son Billa became Irish half mile champion while Derry won both hurling and football medals in the forties.

The foregoing would lead one to the conclusion that only Cork and Dublin could win a dual All-Ireland mainly because of their playing population. I suppose one could add Galway at any time for the Westerners do play good hurling and are pretty keen on it. Wexford were good footballers and have four in a row to prove it and Tipp in an open football draw might worry a lot of people, without interfering with their hurlers either. But for the moment the best bet for a double is Cork.

Let's make an estimate of the situation. Firstly as stated the playing population must exist.



● Billy Morgan, captain of the victorious Cork football team speaking to members of the staff of Beamish and Crawford at a reception for the team in the Cork brewery. Mr. R. P. Beamish, President, Beamish and Crawford and Mr. J. J. O'Leary, Production Director, were also present.

Secondly the players must have real merit . . . All-Ireland merit. Then very good guidance is necessary and where do you leave this thing called luck, or bad luck when your three best men are injured in the championship?

Cork have the playing population and indeed the schools are reaping a harvest of good young players for the last ten years. The change here is that the schools are now turning out footballers as good as any. This they were not doing. Can we take it that the merit is present? Results show that for now anyhow they are good enough in football but there is some doubt about the hurlers. Limerick are very fit and will be eager to go again while Tipp have beaten Cork in the Championship with what they themselves rightly called a miserable score of four points. Of course the five goals were a help. But Cork were bad. If the hurlers can't improve we can throw our hat at it.

That's where the expert guidance comes in. In football they have the same selectors and Doney Donovan but the hurlers have changed. Jack Barrett the county chairman is the most experienced and one might expect that he would be the dominant personality (though the assumption might be faulty). However we must assume that the men behind the team know enough about hurling, so that requirement seems to be fulfilled.

Luck will play its part for a team just as well as against so that cancels itself out and we have no control over it anyhow so let's forget it for now.

The merit of the teams seems to be the nub of the question. If one remembers that there are Seamus Coughlan, Billy Field, Robert Wilmot, Teddy O'Brien, Seamus Looney, Mick Scannell and Jerry Lynch to be considered as footballers one must

agree that the footballers are for the moment in there with a good chance if they can beat Kerry in Cill Airne next year—and that's going to be quite a job.

The hurlers are not doing very well. Paddy Barry, Tony Maher, Brian Murphy, Con Roche, Martin Doherty, Noel Dunne, John Buckley, Denis Coughlan, Gerald McCarthy, Teddy O'Brien, Frank Norberg, John Horgan, Pat Moylan, Willie Walsh, Ray Cummins, Seanie Leary, Pat Barry (Glen), Charlie McCarthy . . . eighteen and there are more. I don't know if they're good enough; they don't know, and nobody knows. This I do know: if they were coaxed and cajoled, urged and stimulated, blamed and castigated all in the correct proportion and raised to peak fitness it would take a good side to stop them.

But there's one more problem: that of the dual player Ray Cummins, Denis Coughlan, Brian Murphy, Teddy O'Brien, who could be playing in two inter-county championships. In addition they would be closely marked in club hurling and football championships so that their chances of surviving unscathed through a hard summer up to and including the toughest of competition in September are rather less than par. In addition can one be sure they will retain form? I do think there is too much talk about this and that it has entered players' minds until they have become more mentally fragile than one would normally expect of hardy men. But there you are, it has. I am convinced that the fit well-trained man who faces up to life in an affirmative manner has a great chance of avoiding injury or of healing quickly. If however he has that feeling of apprehension — downright fear of injury—in the back of his head and if he's also afraid to train regularly for fear he'll kill himself

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ULSTER VIEWPOINT

By DAN McAREAVY

AFTER the very disappointing returns from the All-Ireland championship series, when only the minor football crown came North, Ulster counties have made a less than spectacular start to this season's National

Football League. Indeed, relegation fears rather than title aspirations are commonplace among mentors and supporters.

One leading official whose charges were expected to be there or thereabouts at the final

shake-out summed it up rather well when he told me: "It looks like a lean Christmas unless our luck changes in the next couple of rounds. The trouble about relegation is that it can take a team so long to get back up again. Our experience has been that it is fully harder to take points from at least some of the teams in Division II than those upstairs."

I am writing this piece on Saturday, November 3 — just after returning from the Offaly-Cork Grounds Tournament semi-final — and although it is early days yet in this season's League the omens for Ulster are, as I say, far from favourable at this stage. We seem to be at the bottom of the trough in that cycle which hits all areas.

Admittedly Down and Tyrone have both won their opening fixtures — at the expense of Cavan and Westmeath respectively — but our other representatives in Division 1B now find themselves in rather sticky positions.

Cavan have lost both their matches — to Down and Derry — while Fermanagh find themselves in the same boat after those defeats at Sligo and at home to Mayo.

Understandably the Erne mentors are concerned about these results for they are now faced with collecting enough points from their clashes with Down, Tyrone, Cavan, Westmeath and Derry to ward off those whispers about relegation. Arguably, Mayo and Sligo are the strongest combinations in the group but experience has always shown that points in the bank over the Christmas period can be a great deal more useful than those



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still to be earned in the New Year.

After their encouraging outing against Cavan much-changed Derry came a cropper against Sligo for whom Mick Kearins proved the vital ace in the Western pack.

With 35 players on his panel Oak Leaf boss Harry Cassidy has ample opportunity for experimenting, although I know that he'll be as anxious as any follower in the county to hit the winning blend as soon as possible.

In Division IIB Antrim are moving into gear very nicely indeed with four points in the bag from those visits to Monaghan and Leitrim and of course there is the news that Casement Park is to become available again after what seems an eternity of "occupation".

Donegal have three points from their two games and Monaghan have a 50 per cent return — losing to Antrim but defeating Armagh who find themselves really in the basement.

By the time this appears two more rounds will have been played off. Let's hope the Northern challenge for league honours will have stepped up considerably. But there is an awful lot of leeway.

Back to that Offaly-Cork Grounds Tournament semi-final and the first official trial for the new rules.

Candidly I must confess that I have rarely been so disap-

pointed by any exercise in a reasonably lengthy connection with the Association. The proof of the pudding is in the eating but the first helping as served up by the All-Ireland champions of this year and last fell very flat indeed.

Personally I don't believe that the reason for such an anticlimax after all our expectations is hard to find — far too much was hoped for from all concerned.

Players were expected to have learned several new rules and put them all into practice in the very first game. It was simply asking too much. Even referee Patsy Devlin, one of the members of the Rules Committee, seemed strangely worried about orchestrating the entire production.

As I saw it the rule change which had the greatest single effect on the game was the one concerning the pick-up. Here it was almost amusing to see the players resisting the temptation to do it old-style with the result that there was an inordinate amount of hesitation and untidiness. And is it such a difficult exercise to stab the ball up into the chest?

Amazingly there seemed little demand for the return of the palmed pass but the new protection for the goalkeeper is clearly here to stay. However, the high scoring anticipated did not materialise with defences playing it super cautiously in

the new enlarged parallelogram.

Overall I am in favour of the proposed rule changes. With hindsight perhaps it can be said that it was a pity to introduce so many in the one package.

Meanwhile the nominations for the Carrolls All-Stars Awards have raised quite a few eyebrows here and not least concerning the 20 places allocated to Ulster out of the initial panel of 67.

Fans are wondering how many of these 20 players will gain favour when the Ulster selectors sit down to pick their side for the Railway Cup series.

Northern nominees on the Carrolls list were of course: Peter Mulgrew (Tyrone); Pauric McShea (Donegal); Mat Trolan (Derry); Ciaran Campbell (Fermanagh); Micky Hughes (Tyrone); Malachy McAfee (Derry); Gerry O'Loughlin (Derry); Frank McGuigan (Tyrone); Colm McAlarney (Down); Aidan McMahon (Tyrone); A. McGurk (Derry); G. McCann (Antrim); S. McIlhatton (Tyrone); P. Hetherington (Tyrone); M. Carney (Donegal); Paddy Moriarty (Armagh); Sean O'Neill (Down); Fionn Sherry (Fermanagh); Joe Whinston (Donegal) and Joe McIlroy (Tyrone).

Somehow I feel the Ulster selection will range beyond this particular list. For one thing it's hard to imagine a Northern Railway Cup side without a Breffni man in sight.

'74 DOUBLE FOR CORK?

● FROM PAGE 25

then he'll never do as a dual player in two All-Ireland championships. One has to build up an emotional toughness, if it does not already exist.

So that's the problem Cork has. I doubt if we're quite good enough to beat the champion hurlers and we do have the dual player problem, which

does not appear to be resolved in the only way I can suggest: opting for one game or other before the league begins and taking a chance in the championship.

It looks as if Cork will not win the double in '74 but all the same there is a sporting chance and what fun to looking forward to that chance. We didn't think we'd win the football this year did we? It would be a great honour, a colossal achievement and we just might do it. "The difficult takes time, the impossible a little longer".



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RTE IGNORE OUR FINAL

THE All-Ireland between Cork and Antrim was the best exhibition of camogie I have ever seen at Croke Park, and my experience goes back to the late '30s. The standard of play, especially before the rains came, was almost unbelievably high, and I do not believe that there was an unbiased spectator present who did not heave a sigh of regret when Antrim failed to snatch what would have been a well-deserved equalising point in the last seconds.

But the killing part of this final was that it was almost completely ignored in quarters where it had previously been the custom to give a modicum of publicity at least to camogie finals. Radio Eireann did not give the game any great pre-match publicity, but they did fit a commentary in to their Sunday afternoon programme, and they did give a summary of the game in their Sunday evening review of the day's matches.

But as far as Telefis was concerned, the Camogie finals, except for a routine reading of the results on the Sunday night programme, just did not exist. Surely that is not as it should be.

In previous years, the Camogie finals got at least a minute or two of preliminary publicity on the television sports programmes during the week before the games. Then, in several years, at least a cine-camera was sent to Croke Park to bring back a few minutes of the final for transmission later in the week.

But this year, as far as visual preliminaries, match-coverage, or any reference afterwards, the Camogie finals just did not exist as far as Telefis was concerned. I am told that Antrim did, however, get some publicity from one, and possibly from both, of the Belfast stations.

It is all very well to call down imprecations on Telefis for ignoring us, but the thing now is to ensure that we do not waste time in annoyance at being slighted. Harboursing grievances does little good no matter how legitimate those grievances may be. What we have to do now is to set about ensuring that we are not neglected next year.

I am sure that, if Central Council asked for a meeting with the Head of Sport Fred Cogley, they would be favourably and courteously received. It would then be up to the delegation to state their case for far better coverage of our game by Montrose.

That case is a very good case, but unless we state our case very fully and very forcibly, pointing out that we are the biggest women's sporting organisation in Ireland, stressing the number of our clubs, the number of affiliated schools, the multitude of our players, and the country-wide interest in our finals, we are not going to get the publicity that our Association deserves.

We have to 'sell' Camogie to Telefis. If we state our case properly I firmly believe we will get the proper publicity and coverage, but we are not going to get either unless we work for both.

We are, if we do no more than grieve and complain, going to get exactly what we are getting at the moment . . . nothing.

So surely it is up to Central Council to act now, and now may even be too late to ensure proper publicity for next year's final.

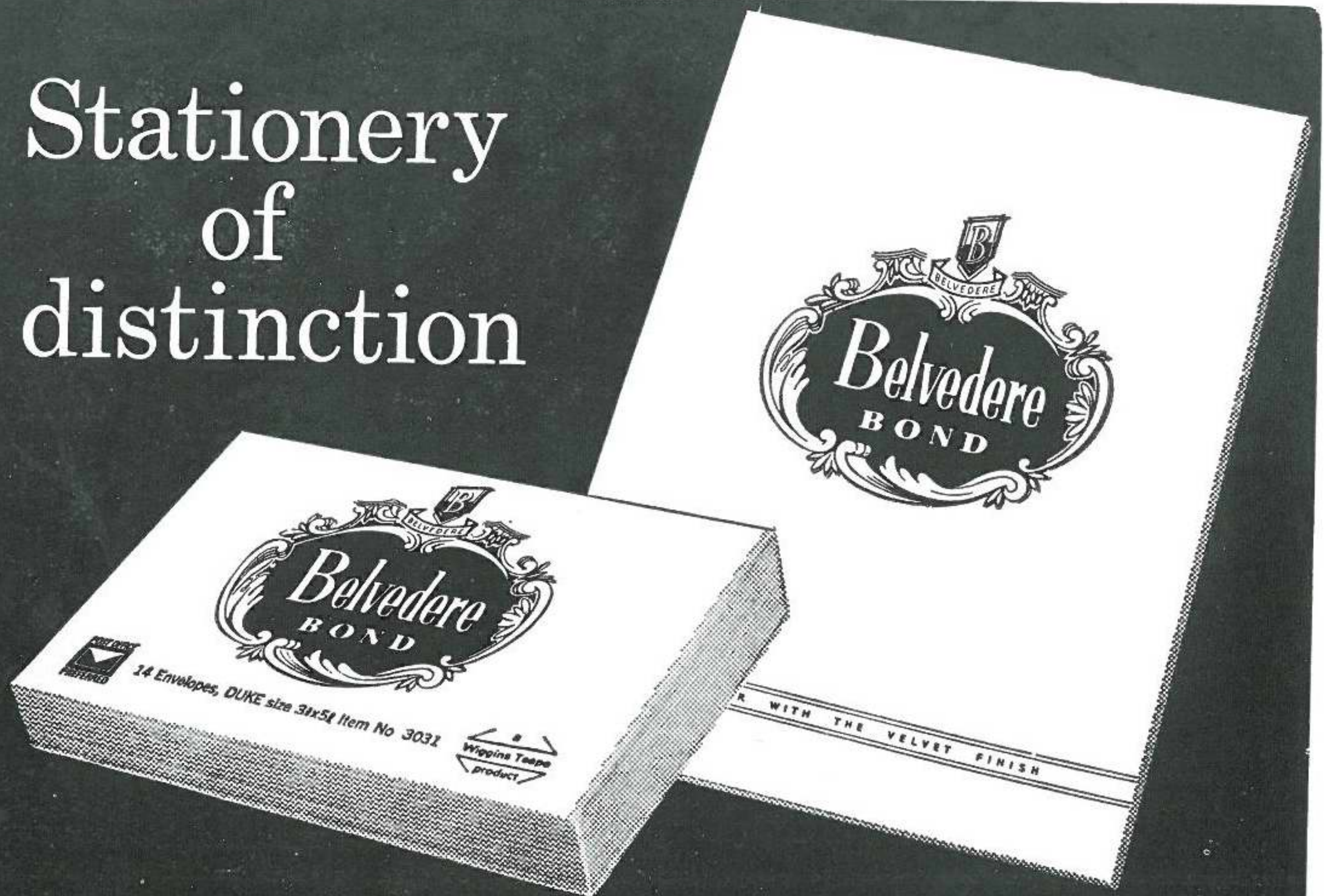
In the meantime let us get back to this year's games. In the first place congratulations to Cork on achieving the unique double of taking the senior and junior titles on the same afternoon, to young Caly Riordan for featuring on both sides, and to County Chairman Mary Moran for doing so much to lay the foundations of both victories.

Secondly, congratulations to the Gaels of Cork for turning out in such force to give the Camogie team a fitting welcome home. Thirdly, a resounding cheer for Antrim, who, after overcoming so many difficulties to put a team in the field at all, not alone reached the All-Ireland final, but went within a puck of the ball of winning back the title.

But again, when one looks back on this greatest of finals, there is another regret, and that is that the attendance once again fell so far short of what it should have been. Time and time again down the years suggestions have been made for bringing more people to Croke Park on All-Ireland final day. None of them have been acted on, that I know of, at any official level. Again there is no use regretting the past. We must look firmly to the future. County Boards, Provincial Councils, and Central Council alike should get to work and, between now and the next championship, work out a nation-wide plan to make Camogie Final Day the national occasion it should be.



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A WIGGINS TEAPE PRODUCT MADE IN IRELAND

League system needs a major overhaul

OF late there has been much talk and a lot of fairly justified criticism about the system presently operating in the National Football League. Certainly this competition is badly in need of a major overhaul. Mis-matches of games like Roscommon v Tipperary and Offaly v Wicklow are just not doing the image of the game any good and it is indeed absolutely ludicrous to expect people to hand out good money to witness something of which the outcome is a foregone conclusion long before the "contest" takes place.

So, as a result of the lopsidedness of this competition "gates" have been tending to be lower than in other years. Last Winter I remember attending a National Football League game in Breffni Park, Cavan, and so sparse was the "crowd" then that the patrons could be counted without much difficulty. But, still if the right kind of pairings are made the crowds will come along. When I went along to Páirc Tailteann, Navan, on October 28th to see the Meath v Louth Division Two tie I was pleasantly

surprised. I knew that there was great enthusiasm for football in the Royal County and in the weeks previous to this local derby National League tie crowds of 6,000 and 4,500 had turned up for the County Senior and Intermediate Championship final. But, somehow or other, I did not think that this same enthusiasm would be carried forward to an inter-county game.

However an attendance of 5,000 representing a £1,000 "gate" passed through the turnstiles for this clash of old and great rivals. The long lost fans must have returned in anticipation of a return to the "good old days" when Meath-Louth games were usually of the classic mould.

The match of a few weeks ago may not have been exactly in that category, but still the big crowd did witness some truly splendid football from Meath. This was probably the most efficient performance from the wearers of the green and gold in many a long day. Handing out a ten points trouncing to the Wee County must have had supporters talking in terms of titles.

A heartening feature of Meath's fine recent progress has been the fine form being displayed by a few young and less experienced members of the side.

In goal, Frank Carberry, after his first year between the county posts, has already proved himself as one of the most impressive of the up and coming net-minders in the country. Further out in the back line Brendan Murray is fast developing into one of the best defenders to come out of the county in recent years. Murray's versatility has been standing Meath in very good stead as he has occupied every defensive position as well as lining out at midfield and in attack.

Up front 19 years old Gerry Farrelly from the St. Bricin's, north Meath club, has proved himself a real find at full forward. This cool and intelligent young attacker shot 2-2 against Armagh and had a capital hour against Louth. Others like Ollie O'Brien, Jimmy Burke and Petey Cromwell have been proving their worth in a new look Meath forward line.

But while these newcomers have been delivering the goods in no uncertain manner one old, more familiar figure who has been turning in some tremendous displays is midfielder Ken Rennicks. He was a revelation in that he has blossomed forth as one of the really great centre-field men of modern football. Such an assessment makes one wonder why Ken did not gain a single nomination for the Carroll All-Stars XV.

Make no mistake about it. This Meath team is going places and this writer feels that they can win the Second Division of the League. On then to the Leinster Championship and that eagerly awaited showdown with Offaly.

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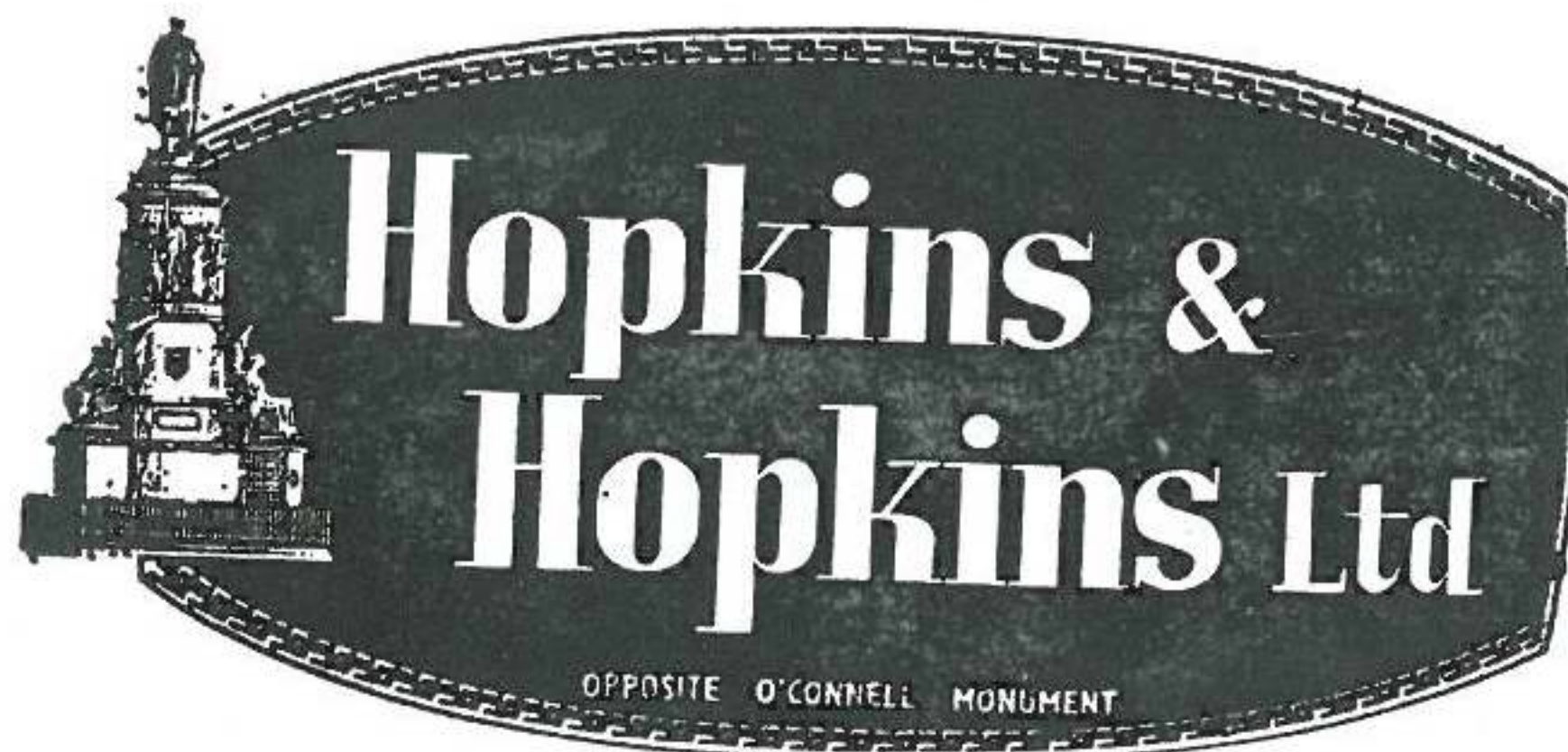
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Christmas gifts

By SHEILA KEEGAN

CHRISTMAS is coming and the goose is getting fat. Or more likely it's the turkey that's fattening. Maybe it's time for us to update the next line of the old verse which goes 'please put a penny in the old man's hat. If you haven't got a penny a half-penny will do, if you haven't got a ha'penny God bless you'. Surely the old man deserves ten pence in the hat this Christmas, or failing that then fourpence or fivepence? We've got to allow for inflation! At any rate, this is the time of year when most of us feel prosperous and the idea of giving and receiving presents and going to the odd party is very pleasant.

COLOUR FOR CHRISTMAS

For many families, a present for 'the house' can be the most rewarding of all. It might be a co-operative effort, with everyone chipping in on the cost. Could this be the Christmas you instal a colour T.V. set? One of the best for colour is Siemens, the company which can draw on enormous experience when it comes to making sets. Siemens equipment was used to televise the Munich Olympics — in colour. Their latest sets are the last word in viewing comfort. As well as being beautifully styled, they're outstanding technologically and their Vericap tuning system which is electrical rather than manual, makes tuning very stable. That's an important point with a colour set. Another feature is the automatic frequency control of the set—meaning once you tune into a station the set locks onto it and there is no drifting to other stations. You can also regulate

the tint control and colour saturation control to get exactly your own colour preferences. Sometimes changes in voltage can occur, and voltage may get particularly low in winter in some districts. Siemens colour sets will work within the range of 170V to 250V without any deterioration in performance, which is another plus in their favour.

Maybe it's just a question that we're all getting used to luxury these days, but once you have viewed colour for any length of time, black and white television seems insipid. There are good arguments on the side of renting one's colour t.v. set from a company such as Marlin. They have useful experience in the rental field and were the first to set up a piped network in Sutton, Co. Dublin. The fantastic advantage, of course, is the service. When a colour t.v. goes a little bit 'off' it doesn't do to 'give it a blow with the back of your hand' — my uncle's unfailing recipe for his fifteen year old black-and-white gogglebox. No, far better to let an expert serviceman have a look at it, and Marlin guarantee they can put one on the job within twenty four hours of receiving your call. Mr. O'Shea, their General Manager, told us that now is the peak period for installation of new sets — so if you'd like to be viewing the Christmas Day film in colour, act now. The point about Marlin is that you'd have to be pretty unlucky to need the serviceman except very rarely, because when the set is installed correctly, that's half the battle. (All their engineers are especially trained for colour work.) But should you need him, he'll get there fast.

And think of the pleasures to come, like watching an All-Ireland final — in glorious colour!

RTV rentals have service outlets all over the place — as well as that catchy radio ditty which everyone identifies with them. They make it easy for anyone to get organised for viewing, any time. When I called to their shop at Stillorgan Shopping Centre recently, I was quite astonished to notice it was mainly young people who were signing on for new rental agreements or dropping by to pay current rental. But apparently it's not just the married couples who rent from them, but youngsters in flats, and students and so on. Some teenagers even think it worthwhile to have a second set in the house, so that they can view alternative programmes to their parents!

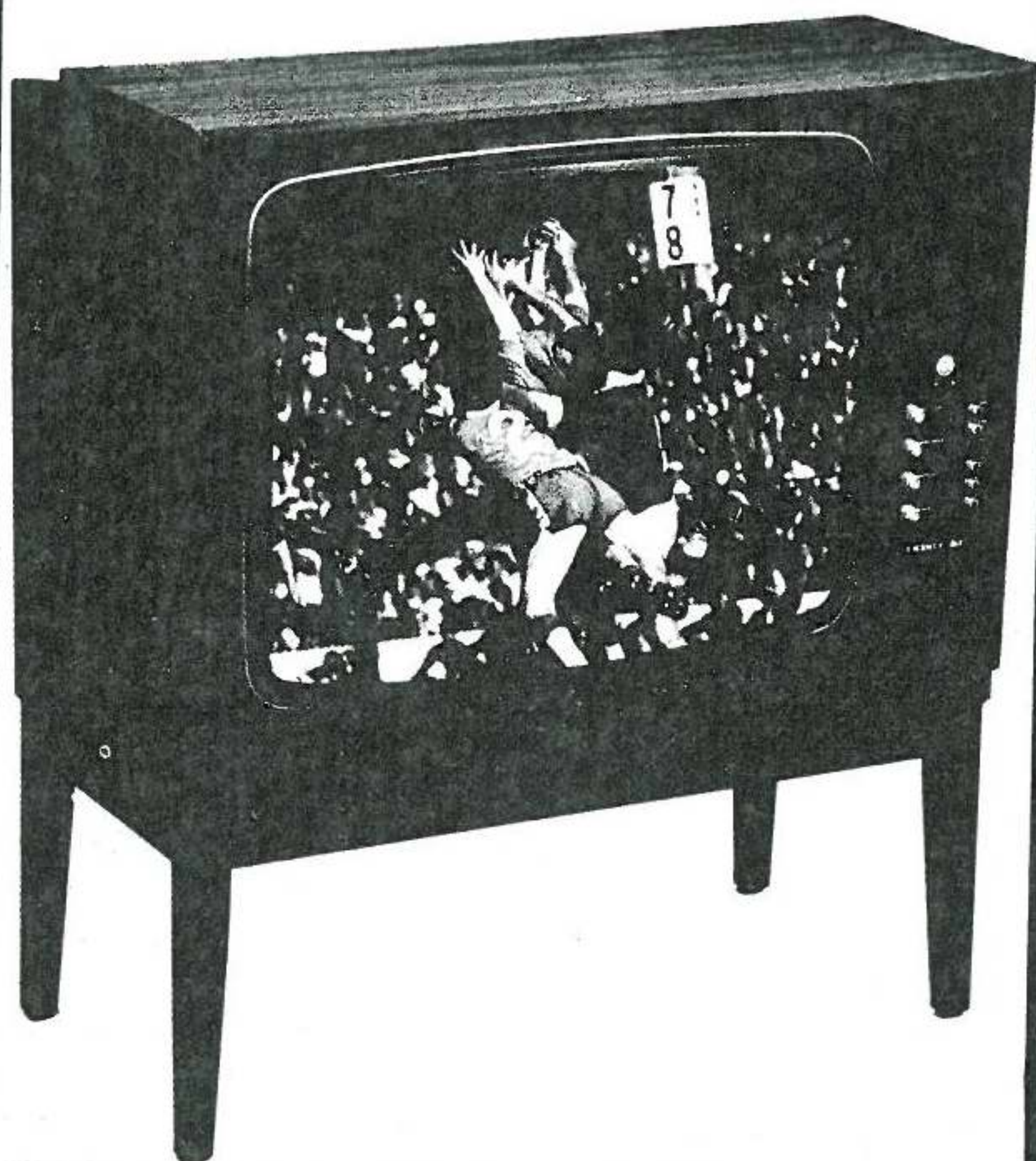
★ ★ ★

Say you want to give someone a present, but you want it to be of real, practical use and you can't think of a suitable article. Then you give that person money. The local post office is the place to go for information. And this month they have plenty of interesting information to hand out, since new interest rates were announced only a couple of weeks ago which make it even more worthwhile to hold Savings Certificates or join the National Instalment Saving plan. Savings Certs are handy Christmas presents. After five years each pound invested will be worth £1.50. Now if you hand somebody a pound it's ten to one they'll go out and spend it. But give them a savings cert and they'll put it away, thinking of what it will mean to them later on. An admirable way of starting people on the savings habit, this is, without being too preachy.

If you know the person pretty well, and are familiar with their circumstances, you could do

● TO PAGE 35

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So pick up a copy of The Christmas Holiday Guide at your local Tourist Office. It's free. Browse through it. Then choose. And have yourself a very, merry Christmas!



**Discover
IRELAND**

● FROM PAGE 33

worse than start them off with the first instalment on a National Instalment Savings project. Anything from the smallest amount allowable to the largest — which is twenty pounds — would do. Then it's an impetus to them to keep up the good work of saving for the rest of the year. But as we said before, you can't do better than go to the local post office for this type of information.

They were handing out free glasses of sherry the last time I dropped into my local Five Star supermarket. It was to allow us to become familiar with the taste of the various types — dry, sweet, and so on — in preparation for our buying in of the supply for Christmas. There's always something interesting like this going on at Five Star and particularly this month they're excelling themselves when it comes to stocks and display. Some supermarkets don't bother to make the merchandise look attractive but at Five Star it is always laid out well. And the selection of Christmas goodies — everything for the family including toys — is really tremendous. Five Star is a good place to buy vegetables and meat because they bring in fresh supplies every day.

More and more people are spending Christmas away from home, and liking it. A friend of mine who spent Christmas with her husband and five children in a hotel, reckoned that it cost no more than it would have set them back to stay at home. And she had a great rest and holiday which she certainly wouldn't have got at home. Irish hotels all over the country are giving remarkable value this year with their special Christmas programmes and you can get all the details from a special Bord Failte bro-

chure.

They offer all sorts of activities — visits from Santa, naturally, but also swimming and surfing contests (in their own pools), paper

VALUE FOR MONEY

For anyone remotely interested in Gaelic games (and who reading Gaelic Sport is not?) the ideal present at Christmas time is surely the Our Games Annual. Each year this eagerly awaited publication continues to amaze us in that it manages to improve upon what we had thought was the ultimate in value for money.

This year is no exception. Where else could you get top class articles by Brian McMahon, Mick Dunne, Eamonn Young, John B. Keane and Owen McCann and all for 40p. Jack Mahon has included a stimulating Junior Scene section which should appeal to all ages.

The ever popular photo section provides a visual record of the year's activities with its action and team pictures.

Our Games is indeed a present for all the family. Come to think of it why not buy a couple and avoid rows.

chases, attendance at sporting events and so on. Many of them have laid out super programmes for the children too. This could be the best Christmas present of all to give yourself or the whole family — a happy Christmas without the work. The brochure is available from Bord Failte and tourist offices.

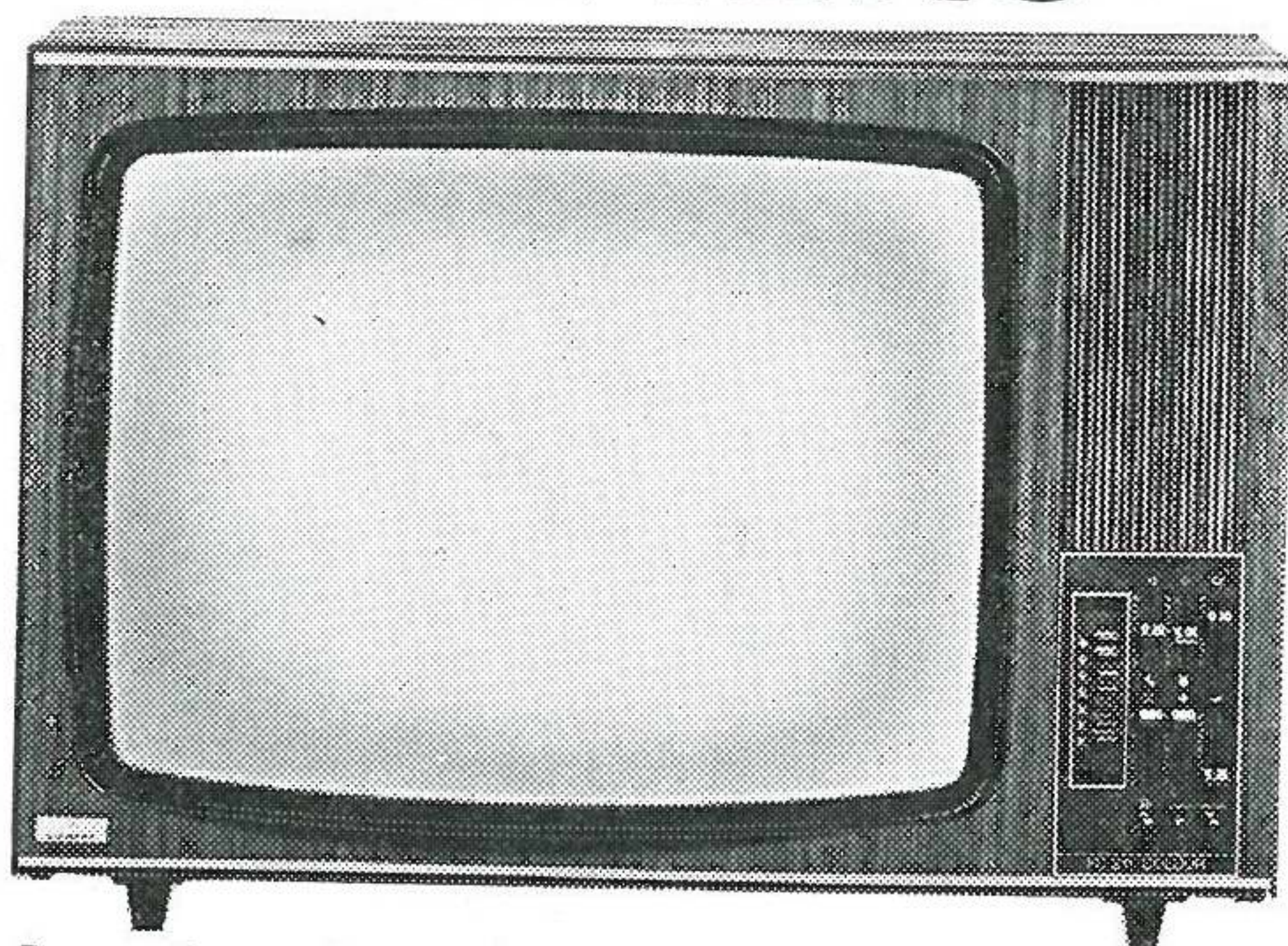
For a gift to remember, a good

watch is hard to beat. Girls rate it second only to that significant diamond ring. We went along specially to have a look at the Omega range which contains a mouth-watering selection in all sorts and styles for both men and women. Mr. Pyke, their Irish Manager, showed us a dream of an electronic watch. The mechanics of it are based on a tiny tuning fork driven by a battery. When you hold it close to your ear you hear not a tick but a tiny 'ping' such as a tuning fork makes. Omega guarantee in writing the accuracy of this watch and it won't gain or lose more than one minute in a whole month. That's unbelievable accuracy and the watch also needs maintenance only about every ten years since it has so few moving parts inside. Their selection of stopwatches is wide-ranging too and all the models are very advanced. Some of them come in holders, to be worn round the neck, and in cases which protect the watches even though they are already shockproof. Yachtsmen and swimmers can have Omega watches which are totally proof against water. In fact, if you're thinking of buying a watch for someone, the only thing to do is to call in to an Omega stockist and ask for a brochure, besides looking at all their stocks. Hopkins & Hopkins of Dublin have a long-standing association with Omega and carry huge selections from this company. This company is also known for its involvement with sportsmen and a helpful sales staff. Omega is the biggest factory belonging to SSIH, a Swiss company which controls many famous watch firms. The American astronauts wore Omega watches in space — and you can buy identical ones in Ireland today!

● OVERLEAF

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● FROM OVERLEAF

If you're looking out for small, reasonably priced gifts to give people, notepaper fills the bill admirably. Apart from other advantages, it's a 'unisex' item which can be given to men or women, and will be made use of you can be sure by all age groups, young and old. Wiggins Teape this year supplement their nicely packed Belvedere Bond with 'Symphony', a coloured writing paper and matching envelopes. 'Symphony' sets come in shades like fawn, lilac, pink, blue, green and primrose. The packs have transparent lids to display the contents inside and for something under 50p you get twenty four envelopes and forty sheets of writing paper.

When the poor father of the family has handed out all the gifts, or more likely all the money to buy everybody's gifts, he'll feel stony-broke once more. In that case, he ought to go out and buy himself a good suit, say from the Dubtex range. Nothing like it for helping you to feel prosperous again. And since Dubtex have worked miracles with prices this year, it won't cost as much as you expect. The only warning is — don't let your teenage or twenty-year-old son near the 'Young Generation' range or he'll demand a new outfit too. And he'll justify it on the grounds of it being good value. Come to think of it, so it is, so maybe buying it for him isn't an extravagance after all.

THE Directors and staff of "GAELIC SPORT" take this opportunity to wish all our readers a most holy, healthy and a happy Christmas.

HANDBALL

Historic tour

BY ALLEYMAN

THE Na Fianna G.A.A. Club from Mobhi Road in Dublin made a special kind of history last month when it sent a team of handballers to New York for a series of games.

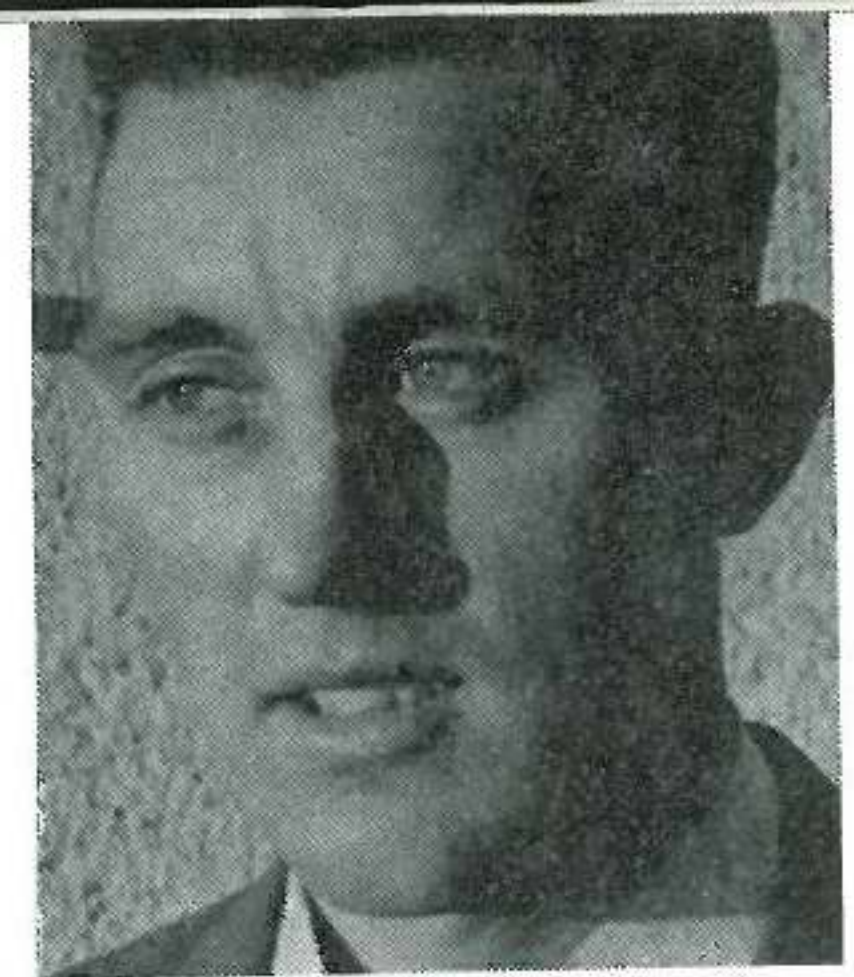
It was the first handballing mission of its kind and having accompanied the group, am happy to report that it was an outstanding success.

Led by Mick Sullivan the Na Fianna Group had guest players in Brian Colleran (Mayo), Packie Hoare (Roscommon), Matt Purcell, Paddy Monaghan and Eamonn Deegan, all from Ballymore-Eustace, together with club Secretary Donal Hickey, Bertie O'Boyle and Christy Cullen, who established quite a reputation for himself as a games commentator on the trip.

Ladies handball in the club was represented by the Bryan sisters, Ann and Betty, Elizabeth Nichol and Stasia Clerkin. Indeed, this quartet caused quite a stir on the American circuit, for in all instances where they played in four-walled courts they were signalling the liberation trends in areas hitherto considered as the sole preserves of men.

One is compelled to record with due appreciation, the welcome and hospitality which was accorded to the group, from the time it was met on landing by Brendan O'Boyle and Jim Fitzpatrick and throughout the following three weeks, which transpired to be a continuous series of games, receptions, presentations and sight-seeing tours.

Besides Fitzpatrick and O'Boyle the success of the tour was ensured by other Irish American players like Larry Dolan, who led a team on a tour of this country last year; Harry Hyde, who has



Jim Fitzpatrick
U.S.H.A. Singles Champion.

made regular appearances in our courts; Tom Kessler, President of the Yonkers Club, Patrick Sherwin, who has been prominent in the promotion of handball for many years and Tom Maxwell, brother of Dublin player, Joe.

The Good Shepherd Juvenile Football Club was also very much to the fore in ensuring that the Fianna trip would be a memorable one.

The group was received by Bill Kennedy, the East Area Commissioner of the U.S.H.A., while Bob Kendler, President of the latter body complimented the team on making such an historic tour and expressed his appreciation of the work being done for handball in Ireland.

There is little necessity to state that in the actual games, the Irish players were not capable of matching the skills of their hosts.

This situation arises through the variation in the sizes of the respective courts.

In this country we play on a 60' x 30' court, while the American sized court is 40' x 20'. The variation of 1,000 sq. feet in floor area means that the techniques of both games are poles apart.

While recognising the fact, that handball was initiated in Ireland and thereby retains a traditional heritage, it is interesting to note that the Americans saw fit to reduce the size of the court considerably.

The advisability of standardising our courts accordingly has often been mooted and having seen the American game I am now of the opinion that the best interests of Irish Handball would be served in the small court.

AVONMORE

Most housewives are familiar with the name Avonmore — the name they see regularly on the supermarket shelves, in their homes, on trains, in pubs, in restaurants, on television. Which is not surprising since Avonmore butter is the brand leader in butter. They'll also be aware of

St. Ivel Cheese by Avonmore and new Avonmore honey.

Naturally, most people won't know too much about the home of Avonmore. This is Avonmore Creameries, set in the heart of Co. Kilkenny at Ballyragget, a massive milk processing plant which in 1973 is being supplied with 77 million gallons of milk for butter, milk powder and

casein. Most of this, of course, is for butter.

This vast complex has recently been expanded and a new cheese factory and casein plant have been constructed — the whole creamery is now big enough, in fact, to process 500,000 gallons of milk per day. That's a lot of milk and a lot of confidence in the future.

THE NORBERTINE FATHERS

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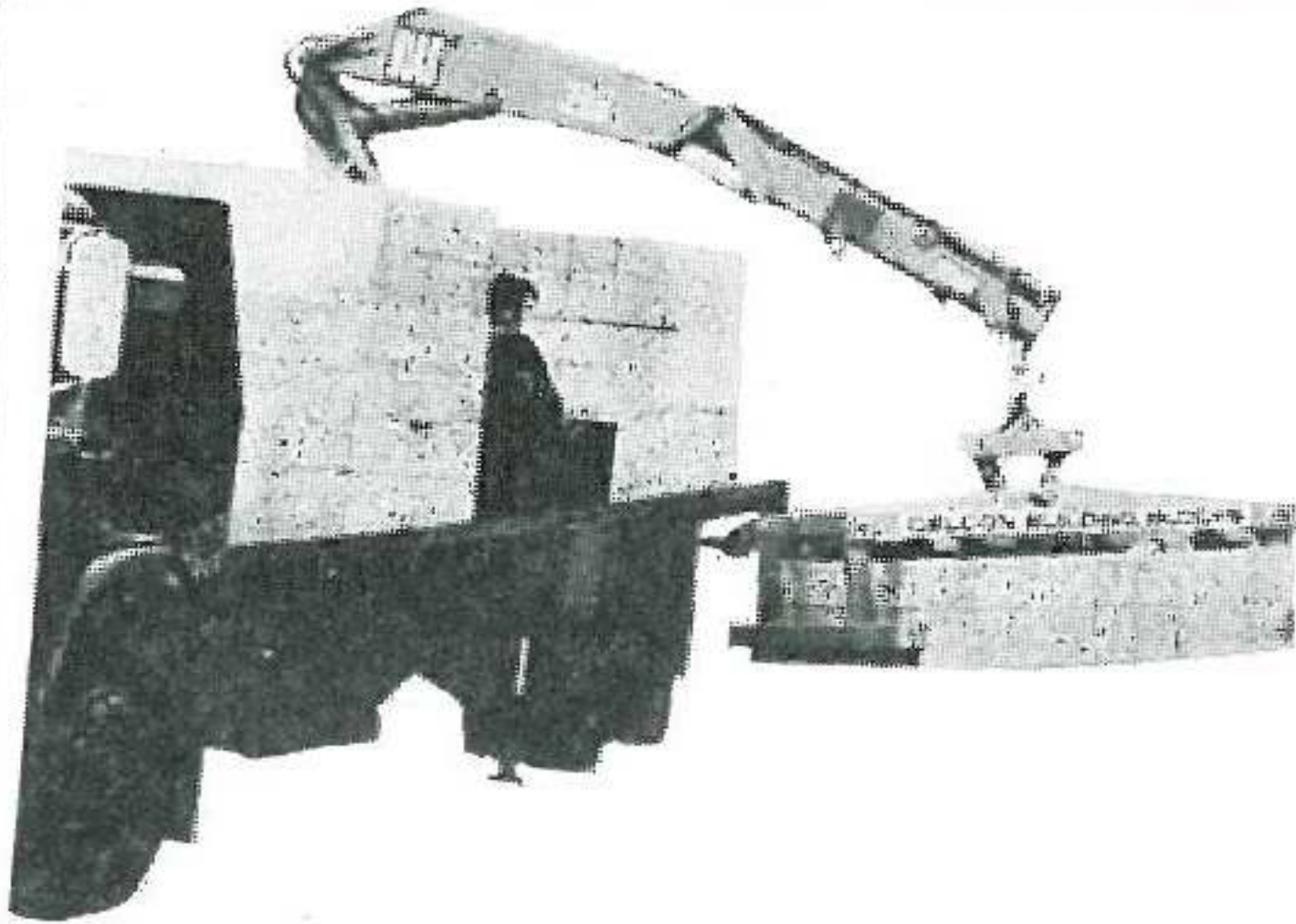


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Moondharrig's Diary

THE GREATEST MOMENT OF THE YEAR

FOR me, 1973 was a year chockful of games and incidents that will cling in the memory, but surely the most memorable moment of all came in the last seconds of the thrill-filled Munster senior hurling final between Limerick and Tipperary at Thurles.

There we were, the scores level between two teams that had given their all in a fierce but fair battle for provincial supremacy. There was referee Mick Slattery from Clare racing towards the goalmouth and there was Richie Bennis from Patrickswell bending over the sliothar as conscious as we were that he must score direct for time was up.

It was a breath-stopping moment as the auburn-haired Bennis bent and lifted and struck. The ball sailed high and straight, and though Tipperary players seemed to claim that it was going wide, there were two immediate proofs that the imperturbable Bennis had landed the winning score. The first was the obvious joy and relief of some of the Limerick forwards as that ball passed over them on its way, and the second was the fact that the green and white Limerick flags had started to rise from the crowd directly behind the posts before ever that ball had fallen.

So that last puck won the game, and if you care to look at the situation won the All-Ireland. If Bennis had missed, who would be All-Ireland champions today?

They have no doubts about the answer to that question in Limerick, of course, but you might not get the same reply in Tipperary. Indeed I know a few people down Thurles way who are still adamant that the last "70" should not have been a "70" at all but a puck-out from goal, just as I know a multitude of Limerick folk ready to swear to the exact opposite.

Myself, I freely admit that I was too far away to form an exact opinion and in such instances I always go by the umpire's decision. That is why the umpire is there.

That Bennis free was for me the highlight of



● *Richie Bennis*

the entire Gaelic year followed closely, not by Limerick's great victory in the All-Ireland final, fine an achievement though it was, but by the unbelievable fervour of the reception for those Limerick hurlers when they returned home with the title and the trophy.

Hungry for success, that was exactly what the Limerick followers were, and not alone in 1973.

But, fair dues to them, when their hurlers finally did achieve that so long-desired success those faithful supporters showed their appreciation with a fervour I have never seen equalled, not to say surpassed. I saw strong men weep with delight as the Liam McCarthy Cup was borne back at last into Garryowen na Gloire, and that is a sight one does not often see when a triumphant hurling team comes home.

And what a change of scene it was from that afternoon in May when so many of these same Lime-

● OVERLEAF



● *Ray Cummins the versatile Cork forward who now holds All-Ireland winners' medals in both hurling and football.*

● **FROM PAGE 39**

rick players had trooped disconsolate off Croke Park after being so comprehensively and so unexpectedly defeated by Wexford in the final of the National League.

We have, I fear short memories, and there is no harm in recalling that the man who broke Limerick's heart that day was goalkeeper Pat Nolan from Oylegate-Glenbrien who saved impossible shots, especially in the first half, and made those saves look simple.

It was that game too that provided the second-best individual effort that I saw on the hurling fields of 1973, that colossal last minute clearance by John Quigley, that travelled three-quarters of the length of Croke Park to be finished for the clinching goal by Tony Doran.

But for collective hurling style and skill, I do not think I will ever again see a display to surpass the hurling Kilkenny played in the second quarter of the Leinster final against these same Wexford League winners. From goal to full-forward that day Kilkenny were a smooth, swift, effective and efficient hurling machine that mesmerised not alone the opposition but the spectators by the power-packed precision of their work.

The only performance that bears comparison was the football Cork played against Kerry from about the fifth to the 30th minute of the Munster

final at the Athletic Grounds just one week later. This was a show of almost unbelievable brilliance that blinded the Kerry men, who by an odd coincidence, had also won the League title convincingly and somewhat against the odds.

Kerry came back at them, of course for a while in the second half, but one always felt that Cork would come through fairly easily as they eventually did. The reason they fell away for a while was perhaps that they themselves had been bedazzled by their own early display.

There were many other matches, of course that come back to mind, not least Leinster's strong finish to win the Railway Cup hurling title.

This was the first time these Leinstermen had ever won the interprovincial title three years in a row, and how many of you remembered that a left halfback from Laois named Mick Mahon played a man's part in that success even though opposed by the great Francis Loughnane.

In football my man of the year was Kerry's John O'Keeffe, even though he was like the rest of his Kingdom colleagues, overwhelmed by that Cork avalanche in the Munster final. Yet he was the sheet-anchor of the Universities first Railway Cup victory, played a vital role in Kerry's retention of the National League title, starred in turn for U.C.D. and Austin Stacks in winning the Dublin and Kerry County championships, and had begun the year by buttressing the Dublin students to victory in the Sigerson Cup.

We saw brilliant football too at Wembley where Kerry wiped the eye of the All-Stars with a superlative display. And I hate to have to say it, but who was again one of the outstanding performers that day? John O'Keeffe.

Not that Kerry stole all the Wembley honours. The hurling All-Stars avenged their football colleagues by conquering Tipperary, and if anybody thinks that was an exhibition match, forget it. Sure the hurling that Saturday afternoon in a London heatwave was as hard as any I have seen in an All-Ireland final, or in a Munster final for that matter.

Unluckiest team of the year? Kilkenny supporters will stake a claim there, but who can tell now what would have happened on the first Sunday in September even if the Leinstermen had been at full-strength? Derry followers will have their own tale of woe, and not with reason, but for myself, I think the team that deserved to win and didn't were the Galway minor hurlers who made the fatal mistake of so many a county before them, they let Kilkenny come back at them in the last ten minutes.

Finally, on all Gaelic fields I found it a most satisfying year, and my best thanks to players, officials and spectators alike for the many enjoyable hours they gave me.


~~~~~  
~~~~~

The shape of the Leagues as the teams take a break

By
MICK DUNNE
(of RTE Sport)

~~~~~  
~~~~~

IN financial terms the difference between the two sections of Division 1 in the 1972-'73 National Football League amounted to £7,921. The games in Section A were worth that much more to the counties who took part in it than the Section B matches were to the other eight counties in Division 1.

The general gate receipts last season brought in £11,343 to be divided between Offaly, Kerry, Galway, Cork, Dublin, Kildare, Roscommon and Longford. But there was only £3,382 in Section B for Derry, Sligo, Cavan, Fermanagh, Westmeath, Laois, Meath and Mayo.

Offaly, being All-Ireland champions, came best out of the League with £3,506 as their share of general gates. They wound-up with a total of £7,160 because they got to the final. Their conquerers in the final, Kerry, got £1,747 from general gates and had a total of £5,063 at the end of the competition.

The largest share-out from general gates in Section B was £582 to Mayo.

In the new season, which got under way on October 14, the disparity is likely to be even greater, for Section A should prove to be more attractive than ever.

It includes most of the "big guns" of football with Tyrone the only provincial champions in Section B. The powers of football in Section A are the last three All-Ireland champions, Cork, Offaly and Kerry as well as Galway, who were runners-up this year and in '71.

Here are the intriguing contests we can look forward to in Section A . . . Offaly v Kerry on December 9 and, in the New Year, Kerry v Galway, as well as Offaly v Galway. Cork — as it happens — have had all their toughest matches in the first half. For them there remains after Christmas only Wicklow and

Longford to be taken care of.

By the time this issue of the magazine appears in print Cork will have their big confrontation with Kerry in Killarney.

Cork have had Offaly in the Athletic Grounds, but they are travelling to Longford, Roscommon and Tipperary. Still, they should be able to pick up enough points to ensure themselves a place in the semi-finals next April.

What of Kerry? A lot will depend on two matches, I believe, the November 25 game against Cork and their visit to Tullamore on December 9. If they lose both, they will be under pressure during the remainder of the League — not only not able to afford any other slips, but also hoping for defeats for Cork and Offaly.

This League has shown us that Offaly were not disheartened by their failure to capture three championships in-a-row and that their semi-final defeat has made them all the keener to come back to the honours list.

It's worth recalling that Offaly never won the League and they may have been somewhat lax about it last season because they had set their hearts on another championship. Now they have no such mental distractions. This makes them all the more formidable this winter.

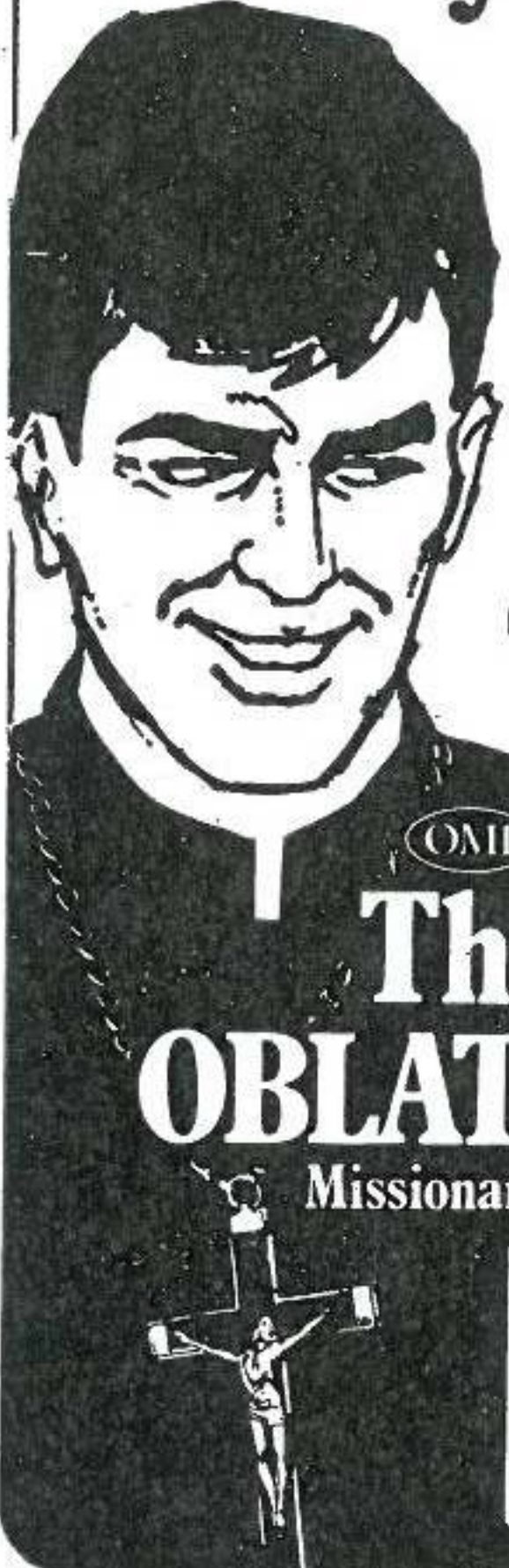
Galway have time on their side, but the heavier ground conditions prevailing in the National League won't help a lot of their players, especially their light forwards.

In Section B a lot of attention will be on Tyrone. They beat Derry, last year's semi-finalists, at home on November 11, they are at home also to Cavan (December 9), and by now have encountered Down in a repeat of the Ulster final.

Sligo, the fourth semi-finalist last spring, are enigmatic and they concede ground advantage to Down and Mayo this season.

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● FROM PAGE 41

So my four semi-finalists next spring would be: Cork, Offaly, Tyrone and Down (or Sligo).

In hurling, we can't go beyond Limerick and Kilkenny when trying to predict the semi-finalists. They played a draw in October and there was so much entertaining in the second half of that tie that most of us will look forward to another clash between them. In the League final, possibly? But Wexford will have a lot to say about that.

Like Cork in football, Limerick will have gained tremendous self-confidence from their championship success and nobody is going to take points easily from them in the League.

I expect Tipperary to join the two provincial champions in the semi-finals, but I wouldn't bet against Waterford making such an impression now that they have gained promotion, that they won't be the fourth semi-finalists. They certainly got away to a good start.

● FROM PAGE 17

oneself in the cause of the team are all part of the real sportsman's make-up and when in addition the player is training and studying outside of his job it suggests that this man has a lot to give.

That tired word called "star" has been, over the years, used sparingly by me, for I prefer to retain its real meaning of something which shines and continues to shine out above the others. There have not been that many in the last thirty-five years and I'm not saying that John O'Keeffe is one. But what I do find interesting is the progress of this young man, who has size, weight and brains, towards a pinnacle in his sporting life. Each of us has his niche. How high will O'Keeffe go? I'm convinced that failure to reach the top will not be found in a reluctance to try. And all the world loves a trier.

● FROM PAGE 16

goalkeeping could never have been faulted.

Pat Hartigan may have been somewhat more influential at full-back than previously, or than he had been in other positions. But, surely Pat was always outstanding.

Jim O'Brien has had a great record of consistency, but hardly ever such brilliance as in 1973, yet that was just a matter of degree over his performance in other years. Similarly with many of the others.

But, there were those who raised their game so significantly as to revolutionise the impact of the team in the matter of effectiveness. Willie Moore in the corner-back position was one such: he sealed that gap with improving confidence and skill through the main part of the year. Ritchie Bennis, of course, raised his effort and efficiency in contesting possession and holding a grip on the game, as well as maintaining his great accuracy under all the extra demands.

Bernie Hartigan, until near the end of the year, put a great deal more widely spread effort into his work; it meant a lot in winning vital possession. Eamon Cregan, of course, was massive both in defence and attack and his contribution was crucial — but hasn't it always been?

Liam O'Donoghue added some zest and a bit of finishing instinct at a few vital moments; and Moss Dowling contributed a tremendous zest and work-rate that occupied several defenders often, even if his scoring was unpredictable — in spite of that golden All-Ireland goal. He was, however, a source of great improvement.

Ned Rea, of course, had a dramatic effect and it might never have been possible to withdraw Cregan had his presence not allowed it. He certainly was

a serious reason for the uplift. But, I narrow the matter to three: Sean Foley, magnificent, adaptable, a hurler of great scope as well as skill, a host in himself, whose All-Ireland final display did only justice to his role for Limerick from the first time he came into the side; Frankie Nolan, not a spectacular figure on the field, you tend to miss his best work, tidy, tenacious, accurate; Eamon Grimes, the captain, a player whose role



Frankie Nolan (Limerick) Seamus Horgan (Limerick)

was revolutionised with the duties of leadership.

Most people were in raptures about Foley this year; it is something of a credit, therefore, to this magazine that it selected him as the hurler of the year *two years ago* when a large number of people did not even realise there was such a man alive.

At that time, he was our choice because he had done so much to raise Limerick to the standard that won for them the League of that year. It was the year he was introduced to the side, at midfield, and it was our judgement that by steady, constant grafting he had given Limerick the strong backbone that enabled the more volatile elements to spark more effectively.

Perhaps, therefore, we may be forgiven, not least by the excellent Foley himself who has developed now into a complete hurler of highest class, if we give the palm to Grimes on this occasion.

Eamon was just one of those volatile elements we spoke about

until he inherited the captaincy through leading the county champions. The change in the player was quite remarkable; from an often ineffective, occasionally brilliant wing-forward, not always fit enough to do himself justice or single-minded enough to befit his talents, he became a rallying figure. Committed totally to his team and realising that the only way to lead is from the front, he forced himself to a standard of fitness that enabled him to bubble away at midfield keeping the whole team on the boil. Never so splendidly as in those tough games when the chips were down; pre-eminently in the All-Ireland final. It was the best example of what a captain can be; just as it was also the best example of what captaincy can do for an individual.

So, we shall be happy to settle for Eamon Grimes as hurler of 1973.

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G.A.A. PERSONALITIES RECALL HIGHLIGHTS OF 1973

with JOHN O'SHEA (of the *Evening Press*)

THE 1973 gaelic games season has all but drawn its last breath, but before we pass into perhaps a new era in the development of our national games, let's recap on the highlights of the past twelve months. For their most memorable moments in the year passed, we asked some prominent personalities.

MARTIN QUIGLEY (Wexford)

Wexford's National League win must be the big one for me in 1973. At the time of the success I felt we were on top to stay.

It was quite a shock when we fell to Kilkenny. However it will take me a long while to forget how well the lads played in the League final.

Of course apart from the League, Wexford made no impression and consequently my memories of the year revolve around that 80 minutes.

JIMMY DUGGAN (Galway)

Need you ask . . . beating Offaly in the All-Ireland semi-final of course. It was particularly enjoyable as they were bent on achieving the three-in-a-row.

Offaly had deprived us of the Sam Maguire Cup in 1971 and it's always nice to avenge such a defeat—especially within two years.

PHIL GANNON (Roscommon)

"Our invitation to play in the Cushing Games in New York was without doubt the feature I will best remember of 1973.

It was great to travel over, and better still to overcome Kerry in the Games. It had long been Roscommon's ambition to play in New York and we hope it will not be long before we appear there again.

PAT MANGAN (Kildare)

I would like to look back on

some notable achievement by Kildare during the year, but alas this is not possible. We had a bad year, and in the circumstances my selection to the All-Stars gave me my happiest moments.

I thoroughly enjoyed playing for the All-Stars in both San Francisco and at Wembley.

T. P. MURPHY (Down)

Something off the fields gave me my greatest thrill last year—the introduction of the new rules to Gaelic football.

I have long felt that changes were needed and I applaud the committee for coming up with such bright suggestions. I'm convinced the standard of our games will improve substantially as a result.

MICK RYAN (Offaly)

Lowering Cork's colours in the Grounds Tournament gave me my biggest thrill. Most gaelic fans were saying that Cork would not lose until they met Kerry in next year's Munster final. Well it gave me a lift to see Offaly do it.

The win was significant also in that it helped restore any confidence we might have lost through our failure to retain the All-Ireland.

VINCENT LOFTUS (Clare)

There was nothing to match Limerick's All-Ireland hurling victory for me. What a wonderful thing it was to watch a side



● Pat Mangan (Kildare)

like Limerick play well above themselves in the most important game of their lives.

Personally I did not think they had it in them after their showing in the League final, but what a display they produced when the chips were down.

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JUNIOR DESK



By
**JACK
MAHON**

THIS issue of "Gaelic Sport" is dedicated to Cork's All-Ireland Football triumph. No one in Galway begrudges Cork their success. They were superb from goalkeeper and captain supreme Billy Morgan to left corner forward Jimmy Barrett. My only regret was that Galway didn't extend Cork that little bit more. The early Cork goal tended to spoil the game as a contest. Only once or twice did Galway get at Cork and it took a magnificent rallying solo run and point from Tommy Joe Gilmore to get Galway going at all.

Points from the game I'd like to remember were the coolness and sheer expertise of Jimmy Barry Murphy in taking his second goal; the high fielding and general defensive ability of Brian Murphy, Con Hartnett and Frank Cogan in particular; the power and fitness of Denny Long; the accuracy of Ray Cummins and his fantastic overhead point after being stopped stone cold by a head-on collision with Brendan Colleran; Tommie Joe's great run and score; the sheer guts of Liam O'Neill when Galway were being over-run, the class of Jimmy Duggan once he got moving and the dependability of Joe Waldron at corner back. Morgan Hughes, too, showed his class when moved to the open spaces midfield. But Cork's play was brilliant. Like Limerick they have brought a huge breath of fresh air to the G.A.A. scene and every G.A.A. man says well done.

JOHN MALONEY

Our Cut-Out this month is the former Longford star goalkeeper John Maloney, currently starring in New York, whose goalkeeping record in helping Longford out of Division II of the League two years ago could hardly be surpassed. The Longford Slashers' star is one of the first players from one of the less glamourised G.A.A. counties to be featured here. So we say Fáilte and hope the Editor honours a Tyrone man for the first time soon.

JUNIOR DESK AWARDS

This year again we have our own Junior Desk Popularity Poll. Once again I'm asking all

Junior Desk readers (all under 21 on 1/1/74) to nominate their stars of the year on the enclosed coupon and send it on to me to reach this office before January 1. This year again we hope to present specially prepared Junior Desk scrolls to the lucky seven and to the four competitors nearest in their forecast to the chosen seven we will present similar scrolls.

Last year Paddy Downey ("The Irish Times"), Pat Fanning and Patsy Devlin all communicated with me to say how thrilled they were to be chosen by you Junior Desk fans for this signal honour. So don't forget to

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● FROM OVERLEAF

enter and select your stars. Every vote of yours will count in the selection of the stars.

PATSY DEVLIN

Patsy Devlin, 38 Páirc Gort Mór, An Oghmaigh, Co. Tír Eoghain, the well known referee writes . . .

"My sincere buíochas to all the junior readers of Junior Desk who selected me for the honour of Top Referee '72. It is a great tribute and I look upon it as important as actually refereeing

the All-Ireland final."

Thanks for the nice remarks (J.M.).

JOBBER McGRATH

Finally I'm grateful to Noel Daly, of Mullingar for informing me of Jobber McGrath's great feat in helping Lough Lene Gaels to a Westmeath J.H.C. medals in 1973—23 years after he won his first J.H.C. medal. Noel asks is this a record. Certainly the legendary Jobber deserves our congrats. Over to you readers—can you beat that?

cool clever approach." — (From Gerry Pender, Ballymorris, Upper, Aghrim, Arklow, Co. Wicklow.)

"Denis Long who played a blinder."—From Patrick Nolan, Carrigslaney, Kilbride, Co. Carlow.)

"Billy Morgan for his brilliant saves."—(From John Mullarkey, Cloonkeen, Dunmore, Co. Galway.)

"The great-hearted Billy Morgan—an inspiration and a great captain."—(From Donal Hanrahan, Corracunna, Mitchelstown, Co. Cork.)

"Billy Morgan for his fantastic saves." — (From Tom Moore, Walshtown More, Midleton, Co. Cork.)

"Denis Long — the best midfielder in Ireland."—(From Mortimer Kelleher, Alverna, Mardyke Walk, Cork.)

"Denis Long—the best attacking midfielder I have yet seen."—(From Terry Doyle, Ballymorris, Upper, Aghrim, Co. Wicklow.)

From the Mailbag

MY FOOTBALL FINAL STAR

"... ice-cool goalman and inspiring captain Billy Morgan."—(From Joseph Woods, Cloneyogan, Lahinch, Co. Clare.)

"... star midfielder Denis Long." — (From Sean Skeffington,, Ballyheane, Castlebar, Co. Mayo.)

"... great goalkeeper Billy Morgan."—(From Anthony Skeffington, same address as Sean.)

"Dinny Long for speed and fast passing. Thanks to Tyrone for the jerseys for training." — (From Michael King, Pollardstown, Co. Cork.)

"Billy Morgan, a great goalie and captain." — (From Anthony Clancy, Knockroe, Ennistymon, Co. Clare.)

"Con Hartnett — the iron man of the Cork defence." — (From Anne Fitzgerald, Dooleague, Islandeedy, Castlebar, Co. Mayo.)

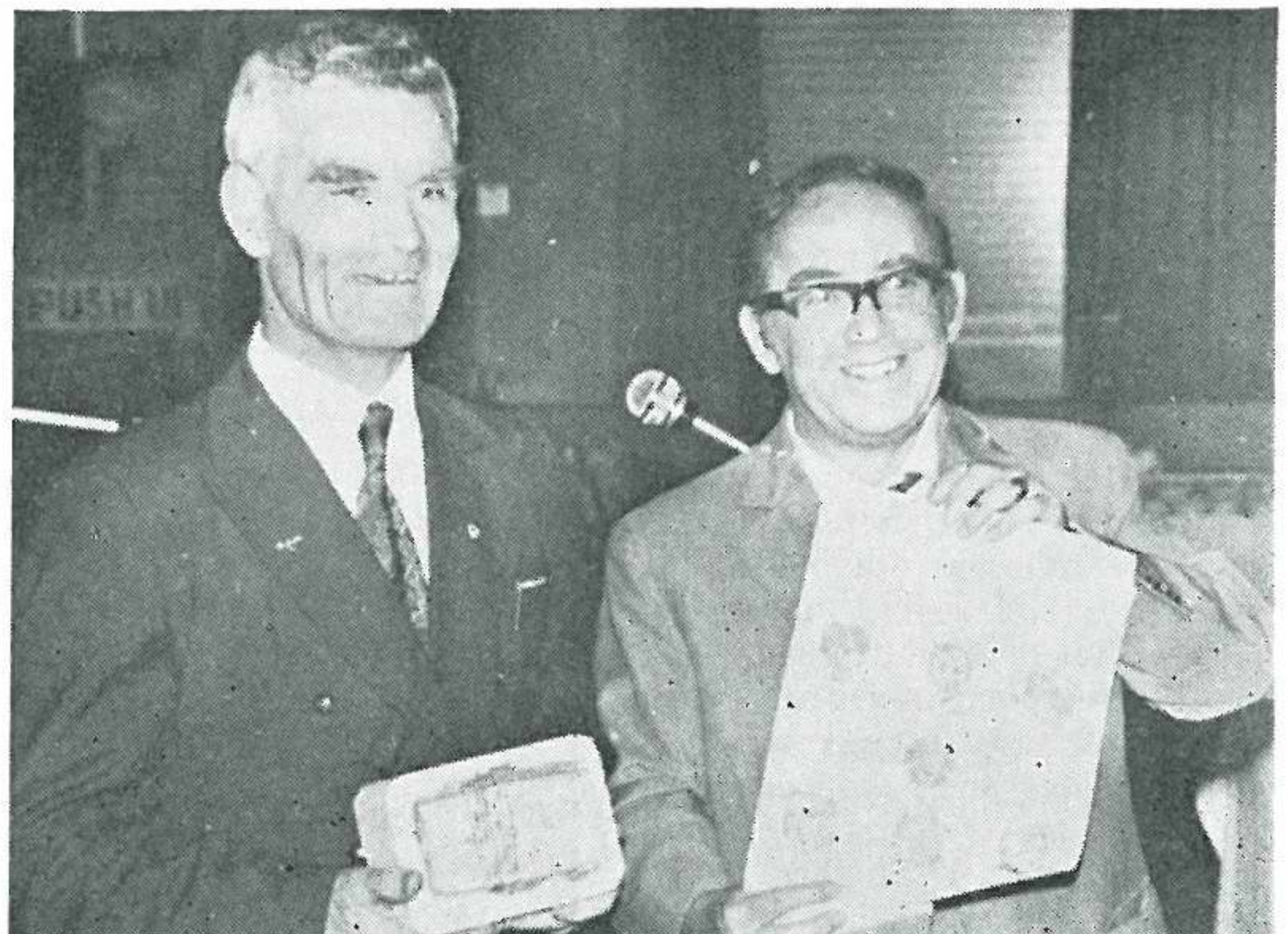
"Frank Cogan for long sweeping clearances turning defence into attack."—(From Kevin Galen, Hazelwood, Lough Gill, Sligo.)

"Frank Cogan for experience." —(From Timothy Sexton, 53, Main St., Mallow, Co. Cork.)

"Ray Cummins for inspira-

tion."—(From Martin Fox, Prinstinstown, Delvin, Co. Westmeath.)

"Jimmy Barry-Murphy for his



Our photo shows Patsy Devlin, chosen by Junior Desk readers as the outstanding referee of 1972, and Gaelic Sport Editor Tommy McQuaid, at a recent reception for the Tyrone Senior and Minor teams at the Crofton Airport Hotel, Dublin, when Patsy was presented with his Scroll of Honour and a memento to mark the occasion.



● Frank Cogan the Cork back who has been chosen by Seán Mullaney as his "Man-of-the-Match".

"Jimmy Barry-Murphy whose two goals were shattering to Galway. He proved his all-round sportsmanship by honestly admitting his first goal was intended for a point."—(From Michael Joyce, 8 Distillery Road, Newcastle, Galway).

"Dinny Long whose solo runs were a treat to watch." (From Michael Moran, Muckresaune, The Neale, Claremorris, Co. Mayo).

"Denis Long stood head and shoulders above all others at mid-field catching magnificently. Very like Mick O'Connell." — (From Patrick Leogue, Ballina, Geashill, Co. Offaly).

"Billy Morgan for real coolness." — (From Paddy White, Inchbeg, Freshford. Co. Kilkenny).

"The whole Cork team were magnificent but Frank Cogan

was my man-of-the-match."— (From Sean Mullaney, Castle-town, Portlaoise, Co. Laois).

"Tommy Joe Gilmore for his great point in the 38th minute. He came sweeping upfield, tore past friend and foe and lashed over a great point." — (From Mary O'Grady, Ballyconnoe North, Lisdoonvarna, Co. Clare).

THE PRIZEWINNERS

I am giving 4 prizes of the new G.A.A. scarf to the following:

- (1) Michael King (Cork scarf);
- (2) Anne Fitzgerald (Mayo scarf);
- (3) Michael Joyce (Galway scarf);
- (4) Mary O'Grady (Clare scarf).

Sorry we couldn't have more prizes to distribute among such a fine entry. But my thanks to all concerned.

That finishes the **Mailbag** for another month. As I have said already we have no competition as such this month but don't forget to fill in the **Junior Desk Awards 1973 Coupon** and when you are posting it drop me a line too on any topic you want to discuss like the rule changes experiment, the All-Stars selections, becoming a Pen Pal, your favourite star, your team trainer, your school team, your favourite game. Tell me what is it about G.A.A. games that thrills you. In the meantime don't eat too much turkey or plum pudding for Christmas or you'll never be able to get fit again. Write anyway and before I sign off Beannachais Na Nollag oraibh go léir. Write to :—

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Tailpiece—I will review all the Annuals in next month's issue of Junior Desk.—(J.M.)



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**JOHN
MOLONEY**

Longford

Age : 24

Height : 5-10

Weight : 11-7

Position :
Goalkeeper

Club : Donegal,
in New York

**CAREER
HIGHLIGHTS**

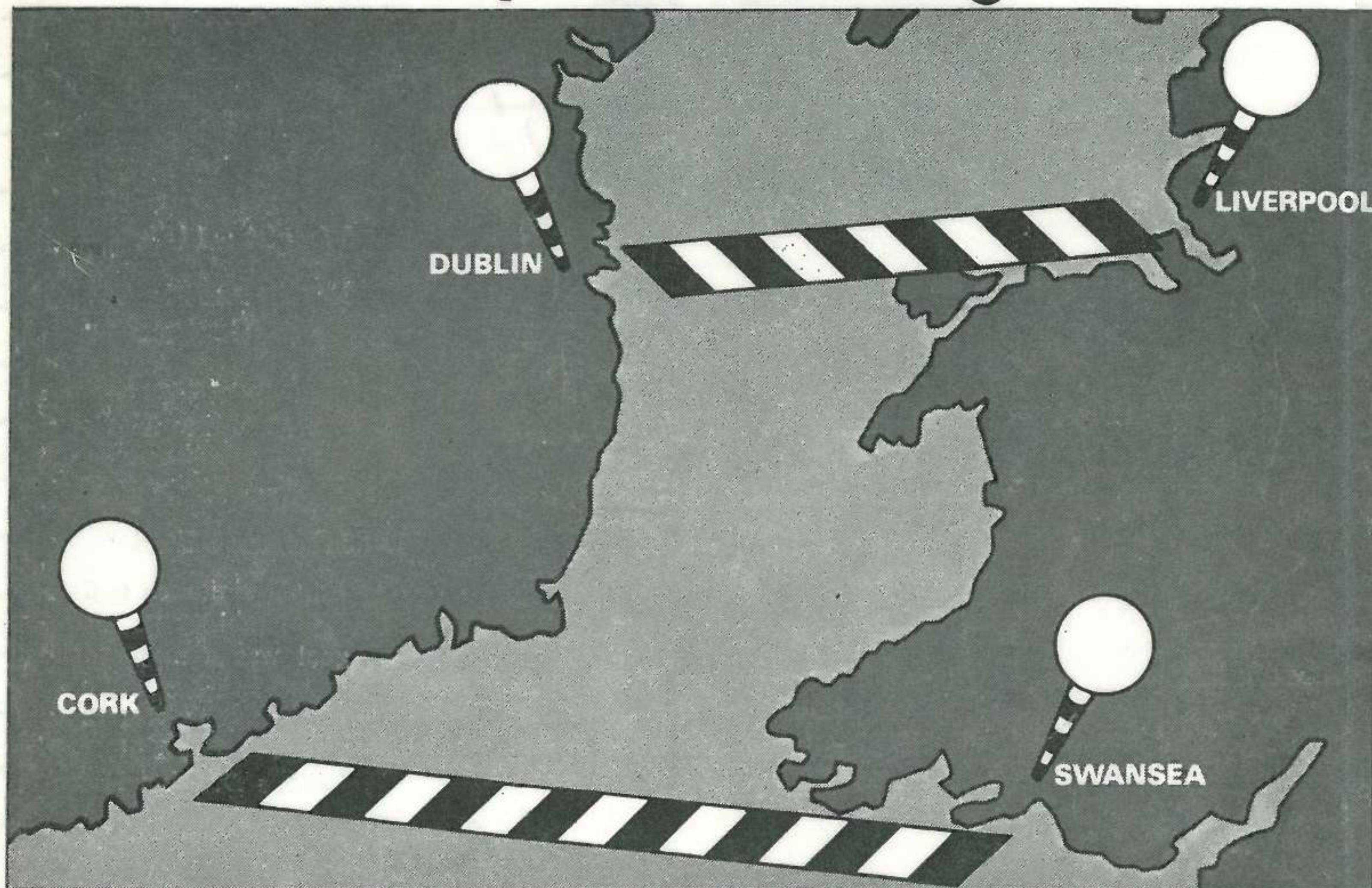
John's vigilance and dependability in goal was a major factor in Longford's march to the 1971-72 National Football League Division II title. In that campaign the county did not lose once in nine games.

Earlier, he won a County Senior Football Championship medal with Longford Slashers in 1971.

He went to New York about a year ago, and has been turning in brilliant displays in goal with the Donegal side that had reached the New York League final as we went to press.

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