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Gaelic Sport

MAY, 1973

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NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE FINALS

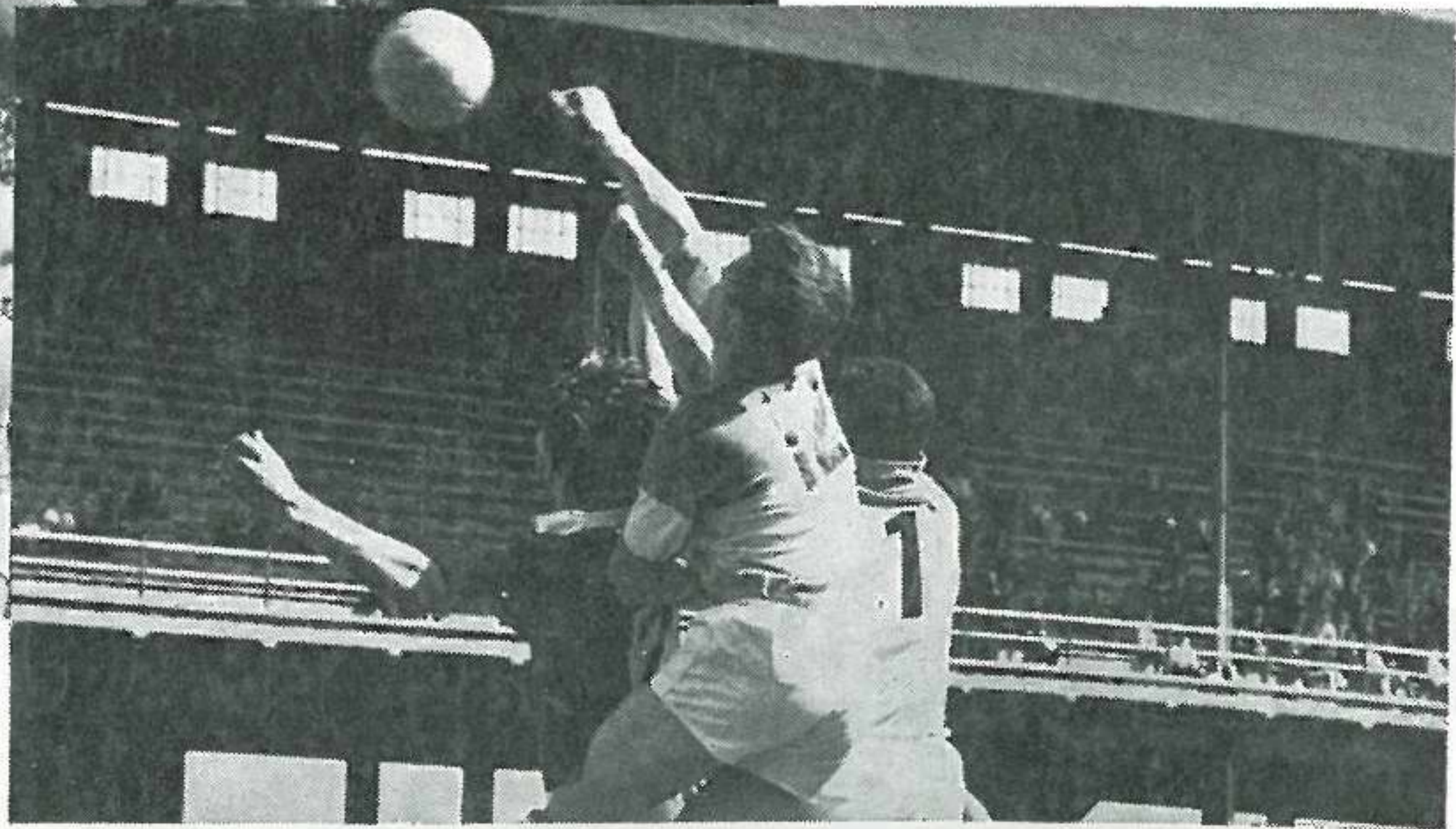
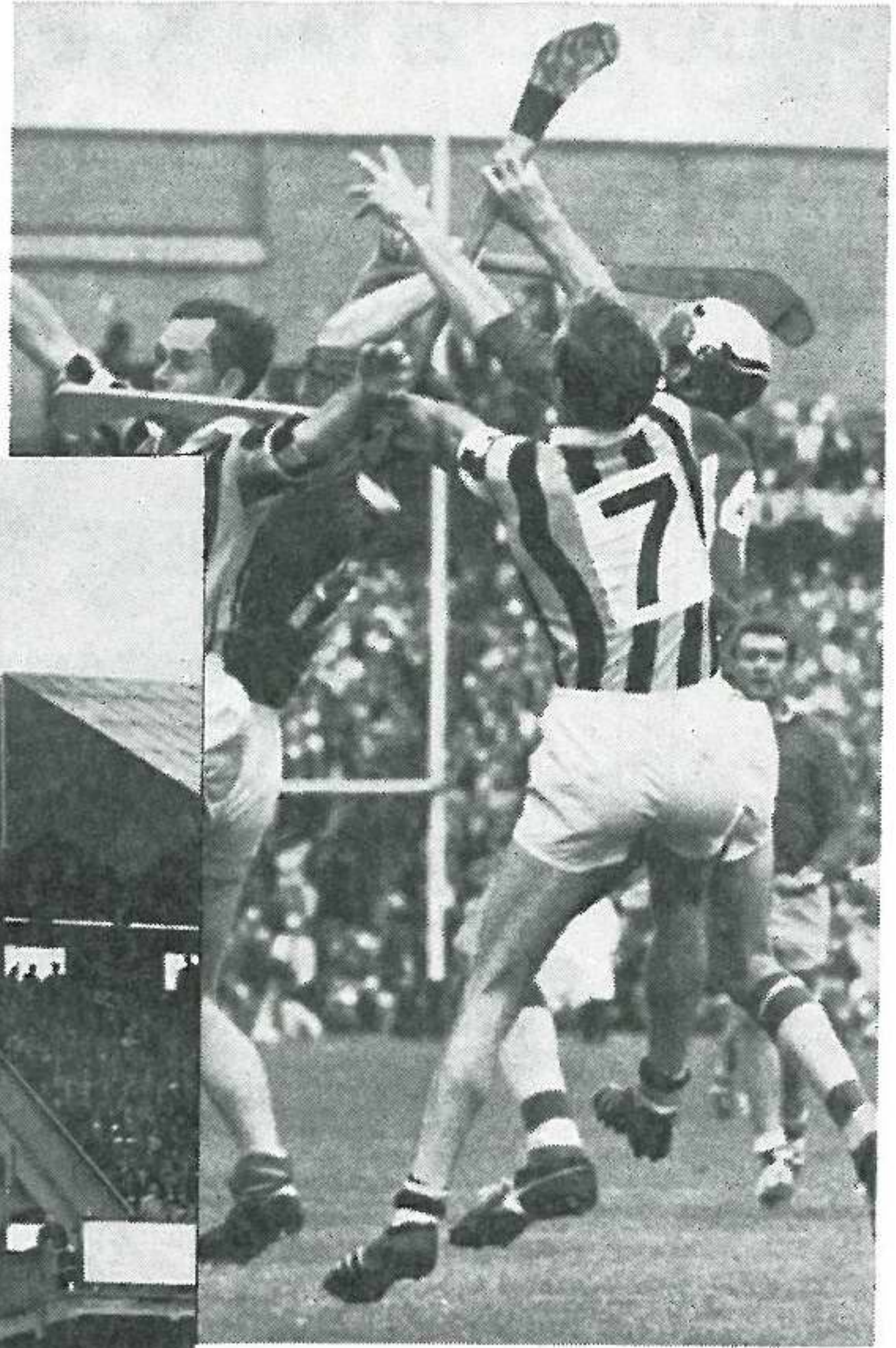
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NATIONAL HURLING LEAGUE FINALS

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A DAY OF SHAME

NO one can condone the disgraceful scenes at Croke Park after the Derry-Kerry draw in the National Football League semi-final last month. Nor is it good enough to attempt to explain them away on the grounds that they were either out of character with the general Croke Park scene, or a product of the violent times in which we live.

The cold, hard and undeniable fact is that April 8, 1973, was a dismal and tragic date in the annals of the G.A.A.

The prompt decision of the Activities' Committee to hold an investigation was not only an indication of how seriously officials viewed the unfortunate incidents, but of a willingness as well to face up to the situation in a responsible manner.

Following incidents at Thurles in December during and after a Tipperary-Cork National Hurling League game — incidents which were mild in comparison with those witnessed at the national headquarters — the Tipperary County Board was fined £100.

But the distinction has to be made here that Croke Park is not, of course, a home ground for Derry, or any other county for that matter.

This, in turn, raises the question of the responsibility for stewarding at Croke Park, and what, if any, are the duties of officials of the competing counties in this regard.

Long before the final whistle, it was obvious that trouble was brewing for the referee as groups of spectators in ugly mood massed along the side line after two Derry players had been ordered off.

In view of this, coupled with the small band of Gardai in evidence, many are asking—and not without justification it would appear—why more Gardai were not called to Croke Park, in anticipation of trouble, especially as there is a Garda station within 200 yards of the ground.

The Activities' Committee is the body in control of fixtures. Consequently, it is reasonable to ask if this Committee is, in effect, the one ultimately responsible for the over-all stewarding and Gardai arrangements at Croke Park.

If this is, in fact, the case, another point is immediately put into focus: was this Committee sitting in judgment on itself, at least in part, at the investigation into the whole sorry affair?

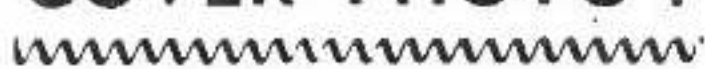
It is essential that the unwholesome features of last month's game are analysed from every possible angle to try to ensure that the savage scenes of April 8th never again occur at any game played under the aegis of the Gaelic Athletic Association.

Finally we must pay tribute to the superb display of courage shown by referee Paul Kelly.

As we said earlier, it was obvious to everybody at the game, including Paul Kelly, that the referee was going to be assaulted when the final whistle blew. In the circumstances a lesser man could have courted the sympathy of the mob by ignoring the infringement that afforded Kerry the opportunity to equalise in the dying seconds of the game.

The G.A.A. can be rightly proud to have a man of such high integrity among its ranks.

COVER PHOTO :



OUR front cover picture depicts Offaly's Martin Furlong throwing caution to the wind as he dives at the feet of Kerry's Dan Kavanagh during the All Ireland football final last year.

Picture by Bobby Hopkins.



● Brian McEniff

SAVAGE SPECTACLE WIDELY CONDEMNED



● John Egan

REACTION from practically all sections of the G.A.A. to the ugly spectacle that was Croke Park on April 8 on the occasion of the Kerry-Derry National Football League semi-final, was one of outright condemnation and regret. For those among us who enjoy a sporting contest and abhor violence, it represented a sickening exhibition of savagery and brutality in its most naked form.

Many prominent Gaelic personalities have already spoken out against the incidents of that dreadful day. Here we print some comments from other notables.

Brian McEniff (Donegal capt):
"Gaelic Games remind me of ice hockey: more fouls are committed off the ball than on it. Consequently I feel strongly that linesmen should be invested with the authority to penalise players for misdemeanours.

"The tackle of course will have to be defined. At the present it's possible for some full backs to get away with punching a rival forward. There is no uniformity among officials on the tackle. If a situation arose similar to the Croke Park affair again, I think the referee would have to be firm from the start and send anyone to the line who strikes another. I'm surprised that Derry indulged in the alleged savagery at Croke Park. I have always found them a hard but clean side."

Jimmy Grey (Dublin Co. Board Chairman):

"There is an obvious need for

greater protection to be afforded the referee. Any incidents such as these have an infinitely wider relevance for Dublin football than for the remainder of the county, because of the fact that we organise so many competitions at all levels. However I don't honestly believe it will affect the numbers coming into the game."

Packy McGarty (Leitrim star):

"This type of behaviour will destroy the image of Gaelic football. The Cork-Tipperary game was bad enough, but this latest affair, coming so soon afterwards, is a terrible blow to the Association.

"Nowadays referees have a really tough job. Paul Kelly has always appeared to me to be very fair, and like many other players I think it's time umpires and linesmen were given some power to help the referee with his decisions."

Jimmy Duggan (Galway player):

"The affair is a horrible reflection on the G.A.A. Since it happened everyone is talking

By
**JOHN
O'SHEA**

(of the
'Evening Press')

about it. People are beginning to compare it with what happens in South America where moats are needed to keep the crowds from invading the pitch.

"I do feel that Croke Park is too open to invasion. I can't see why an 8 ft. high wire netting is not erected around the ground. The pitch is for the players and nobody else. If something like that occurred again it could do the G.A.A. irreparable harm."

Simon Duignan (former referee):

"It's ludicrous to think that in this day and age referees can be subjected to the sort of treatment meted out to Paul Kelly. It most definitely should and must be stamped out.

"One point must be driven home to players and officials alike . . . they must accept the referee's decision. He is the boss once the teams go on the field."

Johnny Egan (ex-Offaly full back):

"If I wasn't such a diehard follower, I would never again go to Croke Park. The incidents were a slap in the face to all genuine supporters of Gaelic games. I feel certain they will have the affect of dissuading quite a lot of young lads to take up the game.

AMERICAN

ALL-STAR

TOURS TO

CONTINUE

*RUMOURS TO THE CONTRARY
LACK CREDIBILITY*

EARLY last month as a party of 80 hurlers, footballers and their officials (as well as a plane and a half of their relatives and other supporters) were jetted up, up and away from the Bay area of California, which lay bathed below them in 70 degrees of sunshine, they were satisfied they had taken part in another successful G.A.A. visit to San Francisco.

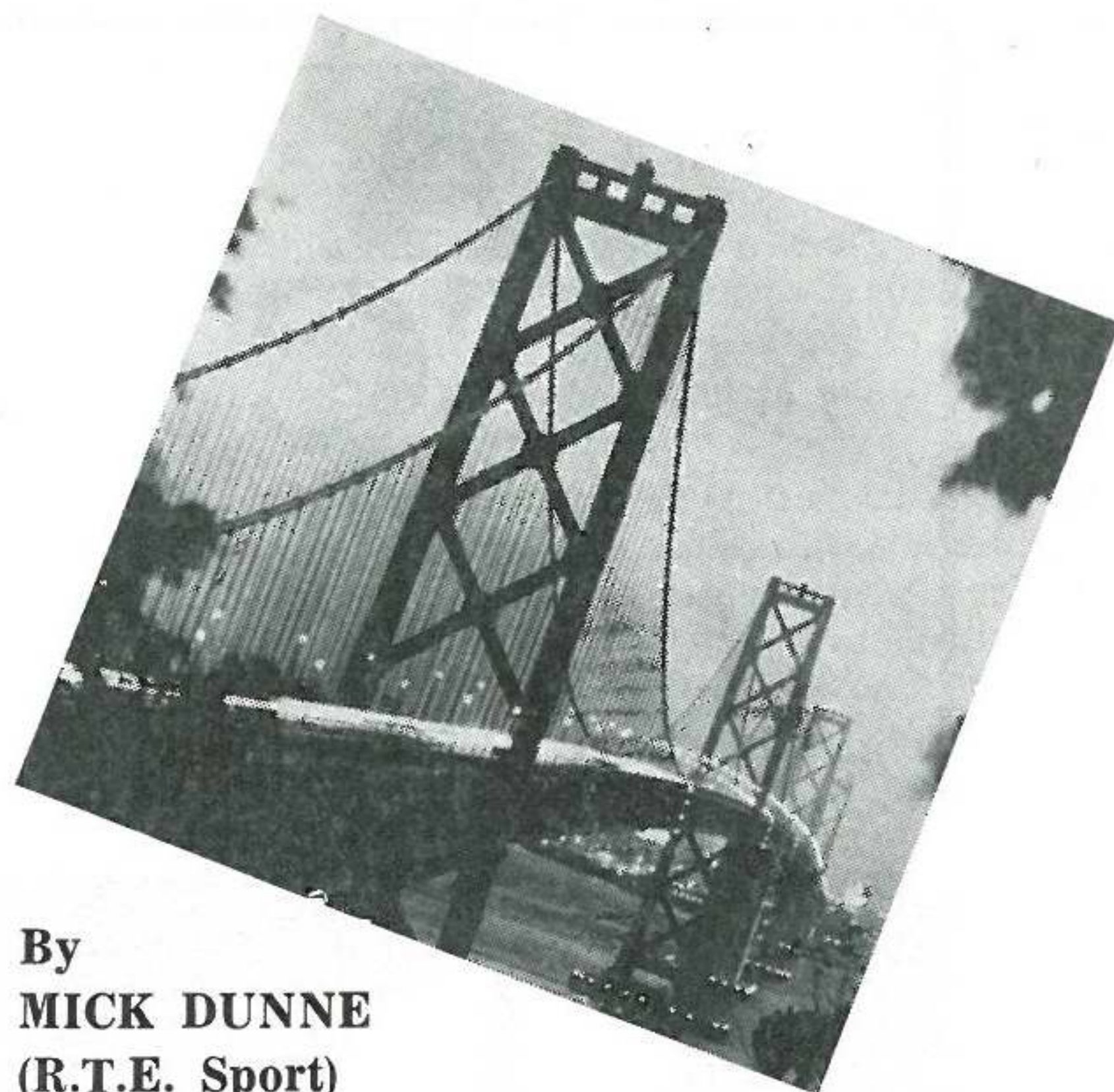
But, 14 hours and 7,500 miles later, they arrived back in Ireland, which was being swept by harsh March winds, to discover that there had been suggestions during their absence about this being the last visit to San Francisco. This opinion had been expressed by two writers in Sunday newspapers—one of them a journalist.

Take it from me, this came as a surprise to the members of the Kilkenny, Offaly and Carroll's All-Star parties, for at no time during their visit had they heard any hint that there would not be another trip. In fact, Sean O Siochain, Director General of the G.A.A., expressed amazement that this should have been suggested. With the then president Pat Fanning and Management

Committee member Con Murphy, Sean took part in lengthy discussions on the eve of the Irish party's departure with the committee of the United Irish Societies, who organised this trip for the past three years. He declared: "At no stage during that meeting was there a suggestion that there would be no other tour. Indeed, it was emphasised right through that meeting that they were going to have these tours next year and in the years ahead. And they immediately settled the dates for next year—March 24 and 31."

Furthermore, it was learned that this meeting agreed to other details of next year's visit. The matches will start at one o'clock and 2.30 each Sunday to facilitate the Irish journalists, who travel with the teams, and an additional dual-player will accompany the All-Stars team to act as an extra substitute in both hurling and football.

To understand this annual trip to California, it is necessary to remember that the playing of the four Festival Games, which are a very important part of the whole visit, are only a part of the over-all affair. The visit of so



By
MICK DUNNE
(R.T.E. Sport)

many Irish people to the City by the Bay is an extension of the San Francisco Irish Community's celebration of St. Patrick's Day. They begin with the parade on the Sunday after March 17—and this year it was the biggest ever, lasting over four hours under the direction of Charles O. Finlay, who is the owner of baseball champions, The Oakland A's, and ice hockey's Golden Seals.

These celebrations continue over a 16-day period and they include concerts, dinner-dances, a St. Patrick's Mass and choral festival at the beautifully-modernistic St. Mary's Cathedral as well as the matches at Balboa Stadium. Therefore each of these activities forms an integral part of the whole celebrations and none stands alone from the others.

What made this year's visit of the footballers and hurlers so successful—apart from the social side of the trip—was the very high degree of competitiveness in the games. Says Sean O Siochain: "There was real, good, hard football and hurling of the highest quality. We had a fantastic exhibition of hurling the first

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● FROM PAGE 5

Sunday and a real will-to-win game of hurling the second Sunday and this was climaxed by an equally hard game of football following it. I think the public out there feel now they're getting real value for their money in that it isn't just pucking or kicking a ball around but that these lads are out to show them what hurling and Gaelic football are all about."

For the players there is a wonderful opportunity to see the sights of one of the most beautiful cities in the world, there is the warm hospitality of the residents of the Bay Area—Americans as well as Irish and Irish-Americans, and this is something Fan Larkin and Pa Dillon can vouch for since they were entertained royally by a family who have no connection with this country—and, of course, the glorious weather.

On a very personal note, I could not write about the trip without recording the kindness shown to me and others by John Duffy and his wife Monica. A former Monaghan footballer, John was chairman at one time of the San Francisco Board and played at left full-back against Down in Balboa Stadium in 1962. He now takes the role of "announcer" at the Gaelic games in the Stadium and "announcing the games" in America means doing a commentary for the spectators much like the course commentaries we have here at race meetings. John Duffy won wide praise for the manner in which he quickly identified the players, the majority of whom were strangers to him up to three days before the first match.

To these gracious people, to others like Kevin Downey (this year's president of the U.I.S.), Tim Driscoll, Sheila Brosnan and many, many more, those of us who made the trip owe a deep debt of gratitude.

THEY BETTER SEND FOR BILLY GRAHAM

THOUGH the crowds have tended to fall off somewhat in recent years, it must be admitted right away that the Wembley Tournament was the brightest idea ever thought up by the London G.A.A. Boards.

Bringing Gaelic Games to the world-famed Wembley Stadium, was, whatever way you look at it, an inspired idea, and has given the Association a prestige on the other side of the Channel that the hard-working and dedicated Gaels of Britain had hitherto lacked.

But there is a difficulty. And that difficulty, as far as these Wembley games are concerned, remains now exactly the same as it was at the beginning, the provision of contests of sufficient competitive interest to draw the crowds, and to hold the crowds.

And the crowds are hard to draw, and harder still to hold.

The playing of semi-finals at Wembley on the Saturday, with a final at New Eltham on the Sunday was, on the face of it, a commendable move. But a great number of the people who turned up at Wembley, either could not stay over to see the New Eltham final on Sunday, or else, if they were London-based, were not all that keen on going to New Eltham in any case.

This year the London Board, nothing if not far-sighted, make another enterprising bid to lure the crowds, providing, as a unique attraction, the one and only public appearance of the actual Carrolls All-Stars of 1972 playing competitive hurling and football as real teams, on Whit Saturday, and Whit Saturday only.

So Wembley will see what nobody in Ireland has even seen, the selected All-Stars actually playing together. And allowing for the sharp criticism of individual choices, nobody can gainsay that, by and large, the All-Stars represent the pick of our hurlers and footballers.

But what remains to be seen, and what nobody can forecast in advance, is how the sporting public

for Gaelic Games in Britain will respond. It also remains to be seen if these contests between the All-Star hurlers and Tipperary and the All-Star footballers and Kerry are going to arouse top competitive reaction from the players, and to arouse the interest of the Gaels of Britain in general and the Gaels of London in particular.

Besides, the curtain-raiser to the All-Star games is an attraction in its own right. This preliminary match is a football challenge between Ulster champions Donegal, making their first Wembley appearance, and the pick of the footballers of Britain.

If the Irish in Britain do not come this time, it is surely obvious that they want to see, not the stars, but genuine competition. But I sometimes wonder, too, if we are not expecting too much from these Wembley games? We are inclined to judge the attendance against soccer and Rugby League Cup final attendances at the same venue. After all these games correspond to our All-Ireland and draw full houses, as one would expect. G.A.A. matches, let's face it, will never fill Wembley. Personally I

MOONDHARRIG'S DIARY

feel the London Board will always be doing well if they can attract a 20,000 crowd. If the present games succeed in attracting that number I, for one, will rest content.

If the attendance falls short by any considerable number of that figure one wonders what the London Board can present that could possibly be more attractive?

The only suggestion that I can make is that perhaps the All-Stars be listed to play the Rest of Ireland in both codes. Every year, when the Gaelic Games writers of the National Newspapers announce their All-Star teams, the country is suddenly full of experts, all of whom are confident that they could pick a team to beat the All-Stars?

Well, why not give all these experts their chance. Perhaps, GAELIC SPORT itself, or, failing that, one of the national newspapers would only be too glad, after the All-Stars have been selected, to sponsor a competition in which their readers, by popular vote, would elect Rest of Ireland hurling and football sides to play the All-Stars at Wembley?

Such a situation should certainly provide the missing competitive element, with the All-Stars all out to prove they deserve their rating, and the rest equally determined to show themselves the better men.

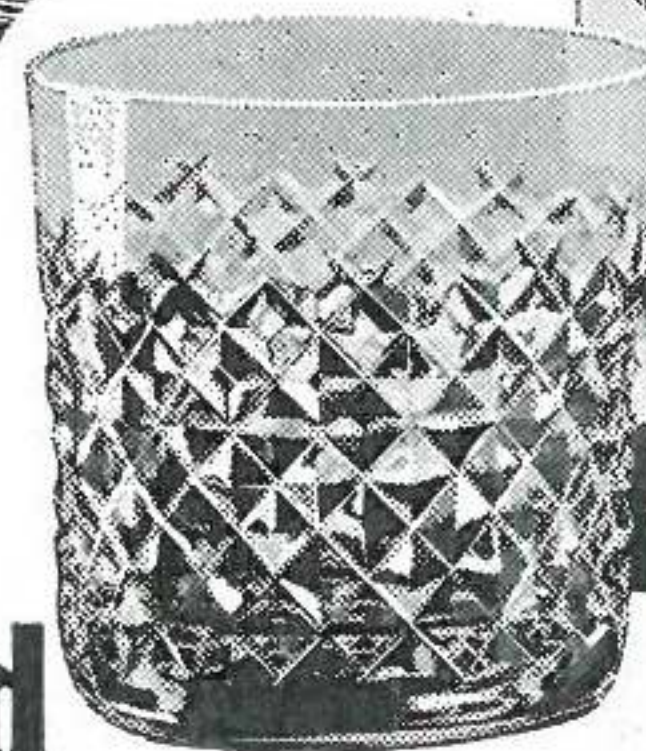
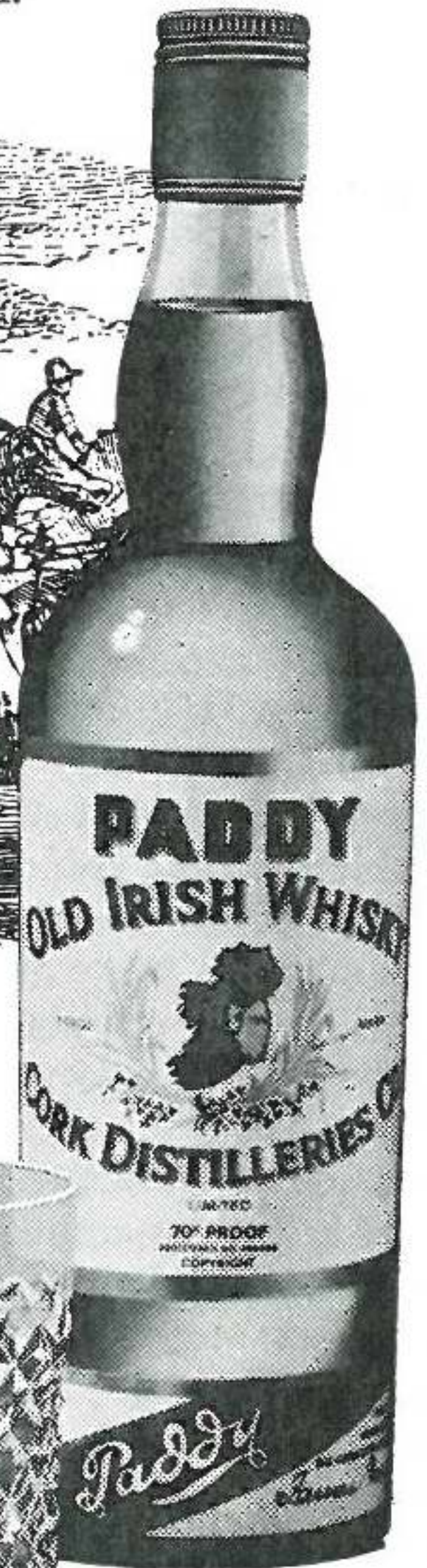
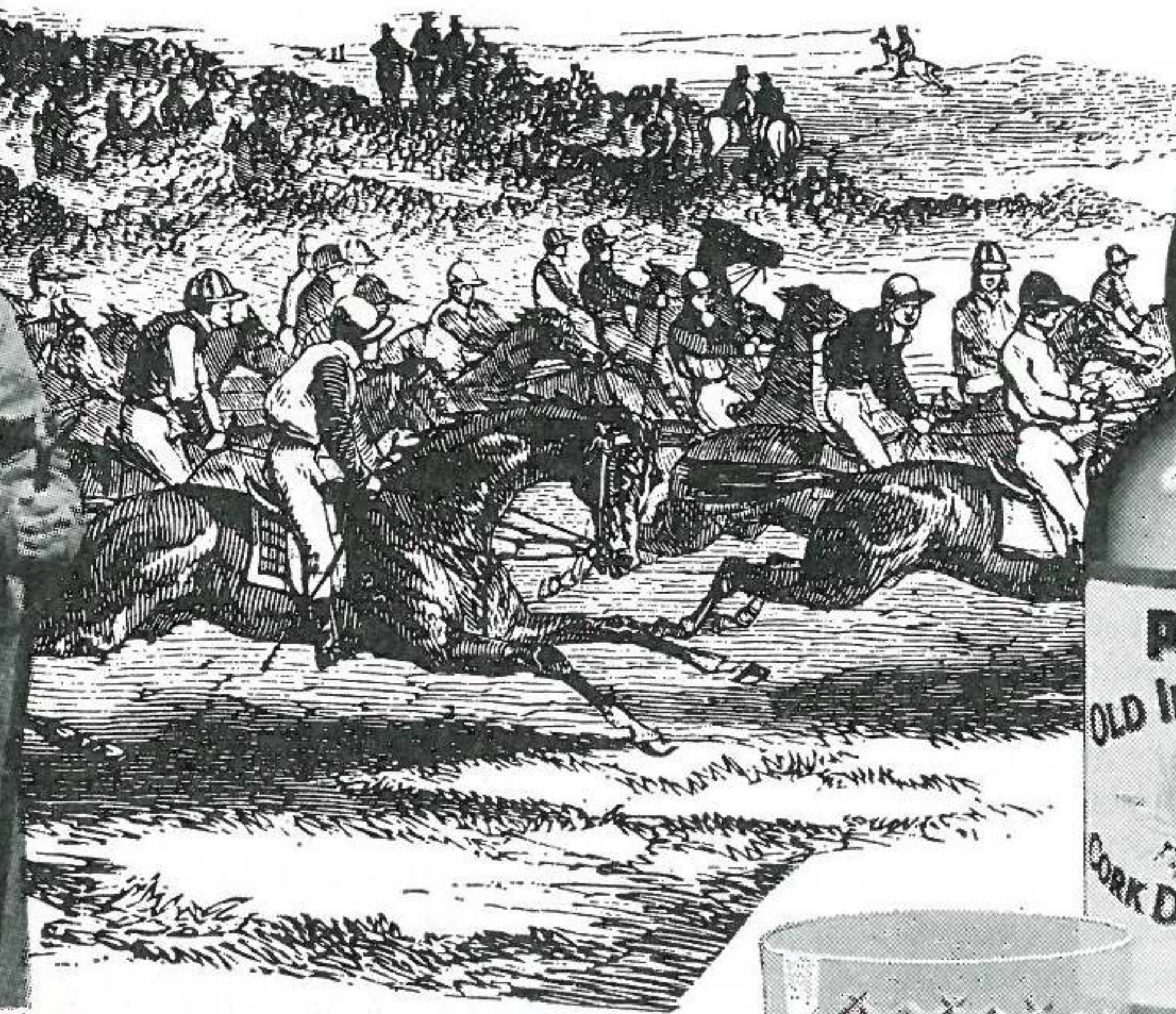
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International winnings by Irish-bred horses have mounted steadily with the years and with the enormous increase in stakes. In the last decade, Irish horses have won their owners over £2 million annually.

Ireland, home of great horses, is host to an international array of owners. German, French, English, Indian, Japanese and Americans have stud farms here as well as the incomparable holdings of the late Aga Khan.



Paddy The Thoroughbred

TOP TEN

McGUIGAN LEADS IN FOOTBALL RATINGS

PLAYING activities last month were dominated by that stormy Derry-Kerry draw in the National Football League semi-final. Enough has been said and written, however, about the unsatisfactory aspects of that encounter, but what, if any, were the good points.

Admidst the shambles, Eamonn O'Donoghue, Donie O'Sullivan and Anthony McGurk did manage to embellish the game with some worthwhile memorable moments.

O'Donoghue must surely rank as the most under-rated forward in the game. Time and again his great work-rate, foraging and carrying have served Kerry superbly, but these qualities have somehow still failed to put the Ballylongford man firmly into the national spotlight as a major match-winner, possibly because his scoring rate is not so high. Against Derry he was in there working consistently from first to final whistle, and his ability to unobtrusively blend in, and keep the side ticking-over was a major factor that enabled the defending champions to gain a draw.

O'Sullivan complemented O'Donoghue's good work with a tremendous display of back play at its best. This came only a week after the Kerry man had, apparently, turned on much the same sparkle when captaining the All-Stars against Offaly in San Francisco.

McGurk was another who was in action in San Francisco. Over there he did a good job of work in marking Tony McTague, and

followed up in the League semi-finals with a brace of goals for Derry. For good measure, he also delivered the goods when switched into the defence during that game.

In hurling, it is just impossible to keep Francis Loughnane, who was our Top Ten hurler for 1972, out of the spotlight. Francis is another who showed up impressively in the games in the U.S., and on his return he caught the eye in Tipperary's outings against Kildare and Limerick in the National League.

Loughnane is showing the way

out front with 23 points, having earned a rating every month so far. But it is early days, and one who may yet prove a serious rival for Loughnane is Mick Jacob (Wexford), steadily establishing himself as one of the best centre half backs around, and whose work over the past month leaves him with a total of 16 points for the year.

FOOTBALL

8	E. O'Donoghue (Kerry)	15
8	D. O'Sullivan (Kerry)	8
8	A. McGurk (Derry)	8
8	M. Ryan (Offaly)	15
7	M. O'Dwyer (Kerry)	7
7	F. McGuigan (Tyrone)	16
7	A. McTague (Offaly)	7
7	C. McAlarney (Down)	13
6	B. Morgan (Cork)	6
6	M. Furlong (Offaly)	6

HURLING

8	M. Jacob (Wexford)	16
7	F. Loughnane (Tipperary)	23
7	P. Nolan (Wexford)	7
7	M. Brennan (Kilkenny)	7
6	A. Heffernan (Waterford)	14
6	J. Walsh (Kildare)	13
6	D. Duggan (Waterford)	6
6	R. Ryan (Tipperary)	6
6	P. Hartigan (Limerick)	13
6	R. Bennis (Limerick)	13



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PACKETS CARRY A GOVERNMENT HEALTH WARNING

By
EAMONN YOUNG

How will Kerry line up for the Munster football championship?

I DON'T see much change in the Kerry side of '73. Do you? They're not too happy themselves about this Munster final. But then for years this has been the hard-headed and sensible outlook. Last November they came to Cork to play the home side in the Park and won respectably. Johnny Walsh and Murt Kelly told me afterwards over a drink that they were quite worried about the result, and were very happy to have won.

Since then the side has come along the well-worn path of green and gold endeavour and now they stand as good a chance as anybody of pulling off a Munster final as a step to Croke Park.

What happened last year? They met a solid side in Offaly. That's the first answer. There are many might-have-beens but the Offaly man will tell you there should have been no replay. We were all satisfied that whatever was in it at the final day belonged to Leinster. There wasn't a lot. Now the question is who is going to stop the men of Uí Failghe from equalling Galway's three-in-a-row as a step to equalling Kerry and Wexford's mighty four?

Will Kerry stop them? If they don't in '73 they'll certainly have to in '74. Anyway most folk say the bunch that wore the Kerry sweater in '72 will not do so. And yet I see very few changes. Take a look at the final side of '72: Fitzgerald, O'Sullivan, O'Donoghue, Fitzgerald, Prendergast, O'Shea, Paud Lynch; O'Connell and O'Keefe, Brendan Lynch, Kavanagh, Eamonn O'Donoghue, Gleeson, Higgins and O'Dwyer. Most teams change a lot in twelve months especially if they have been beaten and with the exception of Seamus Fitzgerald, whose back injury appears to be healing, the remainder seem to be ready for the road again. If that is so who are going to take their places off them?



T. Prendergast

M. O'Shea

M. Gleeson

Eamonn Fitzgerald in the goal won't ever be any more happy than Paud O'Donoghue about that Pat Fenning goal in the All-Ireland final when a short kick-out, which did not come up to the requirements of dropping the ball outside of scoring range came back in and wrapped itself in the net. Yet Fitzgerald had a good year generally and O'Donoghue had his best so far. Again Down didn't drop Eamonn McKay and Leo Murphy when Offaly scored a similar goal in the opening minutes of the '61 final. I see the pair on the job again while there's nobody going to take the place of grim, stimulated, athletic Donev O'Sullivan whose long career sees him as earnest as ever—and more luck to the Killarney teacher, who incidentally has a year's experience also in American football. Will Derry Crowley take over from Seamus Mac Gearailt? Between them one sees the left full back job filled and at right half back while Tom Prendergast, a fiery admirable man, is not playing with the same delightful elan as formerly he will probably come back again when the chips are down for the Kilworth forester is a man and a half, when it's put up to him. Mick O'Shea as everyone knows wants to play at left half back which would ask John O'Keefe big, powerful and solid to drop back from the halfway line to the pivot position of defence. Paud Lynch might in consequence move to centre-field with perhaps Donal Kavanagh who last year was on the forty and now is full of enthusiasm for the new season.

Will that leave in Pat Griffin at centre-forward? The Clonakilty based Garda may be back in form running as well as ever. He was a good player to cut through a defence and at the end of that snipe



J. O'Keefe

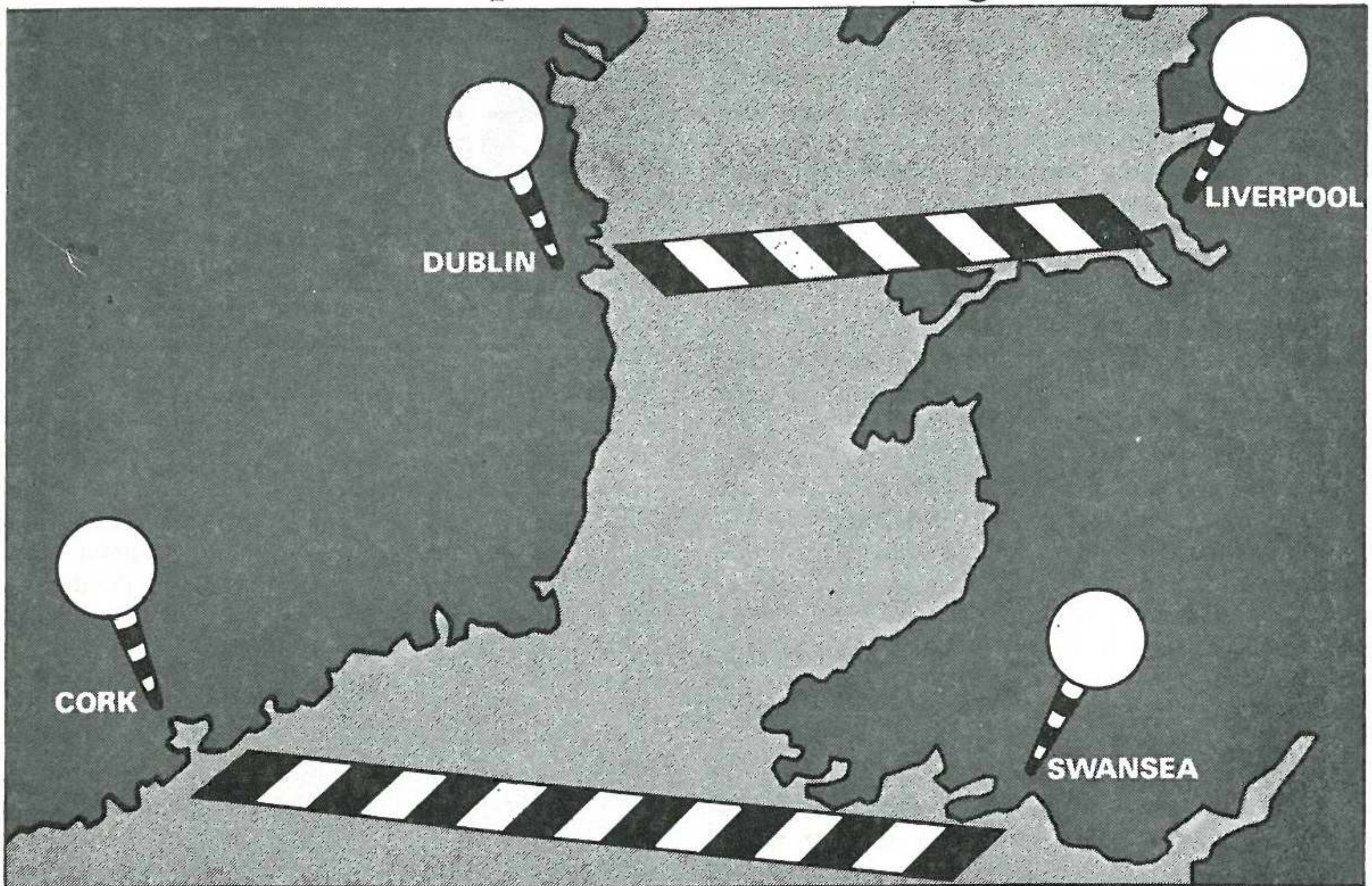
D. O'Sullivan

E. O'Donoghue

● TO PAGE 13

B+I LINE

The pedestrian crossing



For a lot of reasons which we can't go into here, we've come to be known as the car-ferry people. And, to a large extent that's exactly what we are.

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● FROM PAGE 11

like dart there was always a man to take the pass and finish it if Griffin didn't do so himself. Brendan Lynch dancing around to his left foot is pretty near a cert on the right wing and the same can be said of crafty, controlled Eamonn O'Donoghue on the left. Mick Gleeson was written off generally I think mostly because he didn't seem to have the same enthusiasm as in early days but the latest news is that the Dublin-based teacher is fit, active and very anxious. If that is so he won't be easily pushed off the side. Liam Higgins of Lispole is back at full forward and then there's the big question about the two truly great men from South Kerry, Mick O'Connell and Mick O'Dwyer.

When a young player plays badly they tell him for goodness sake to get down to training; when the older man has an off day they tell him to pack up. O'Connell had a good year generally last year and will not be passed over I think if he wants to play. He's still a tremendous performer and his place is at midfield, though he should also be valuable in the full forward line if he makes up his mind to it.

In O'Dwyer's case his finishing games were out of the O'Dwyer standard. He hinted before last year's final that he might pack in, but a man changes his mind. My opinion is now not worth a damn; but that of the Kerry selectors and of the distinguished player himself is and between them I feel they'll make no mistake. The Waterville player is still a powerful man in every sense of the word and they don't have another free-kicker of his type.

So that's a Kerry fifteen all available and in most cases ready to go. So where's the change going to happen? Derry Crowley looks a possibility at left fullback and Pat Griffin not by any means new is on tap. Johnny Walsh's son Jacky who has a most disconcerting way of wriggling past defenders is certainly in line for a forward position and Jim Sanders is another who might make it. Mick O'Sullivan of Kenmare, Liam Foley who had a few games at full forward before they dropped him off the selection and a cadet named Mick O'Connor who brings a pair of good hands to centre-forward are others who will be under public scrutiny and the Garda named John Egan now stationed in Cobh may



● MICK O'CONNELL

have booked for himself during the games against Kildare and Dublin a place on the twenty if not on the fifteen, by scoring well in both games.

So there are twenty-three including last year's fifteen. Kerry have the advantage of being engaged in regular top-class competition which participation they deserve. As a result they have the chance not only of tuning up their men to championship pitch but also of testing new material in good company. This stands to them when the championship comes around and just now they are preparing by important games for this Munster series of which they are rightly apprehensive but in which they certainly have a great chance. After that they're as good as anyone—if they get out of Munster.

So I see the old bunch available and half a dozen new men ready and willing to be tested. How more fortunate can a county be? Fair play to them for their earnestness about football entitles them to a spot of luck, a mercurial goddess which has so often smiled maternally on her sons from the Kingdom.



S. Fitzgerald

P. O'Donoghue

B. Lynch



● Michael Considine

ANOTHER UPSWING DUE FOR CLARE

WHERE exactly is Clare's position in the hierarchy of hurling counties? They have spent the last year mystifying those who felt they knew something of their form, and it is no less difficult to know now where they stand. After an unpromising League campaign in 1971-72 they ended up with a victory over Kilkenny that appeared of little significance at the time but which was later to be remembered.

Limerick appeared to have taken no notice of it, however, because they suffered the big shock of the hurling championship last summer when losing to Clare at Cusack Park. In a stirring display it seemed to many that Clare had shown qualities and potential that could make them a very live threat to all in Munster. The victory gave them entry to the Munster final, a fact which may not have been the best thing possible, as it turned out, because Cork struck super-human form and wiped the floor with the Claremen in that final.

Little was then thought of or heard from Clare until the present League began; and even then, Clare began almost unnoticed to accumulate points. The draw with Limerick on Limerick soil went a long way towards silencing the jeremiahs who had shouted "fluke" when the championship win over Limerick had been examined in the light of the Munster final defeat by Cork.

Of course, you could look at it another way and say that another stroke of the ball would have made that a win instead of a draw—two points instead of one. Similarly, they could — perhaps should—have beaten Tipperary when they met in Tipperary's Treacy Park, in a low-key game that showed Clare in a pretty fair

light. A fine win over Cork at Ennis went a long way to compensate for those lost points, to assuage the wounds of Thurles in July, and to bring Clare to the top of the League table for the Christmas break.

It had been a workmanlike showing through from October to December; it seemed to guarantee a place in the play-off of the League, particularly as there were four teams to get such a chance. But, after the Christmas break, the pattern of up and down form was revealed again as form and concentration, even effort, touched a low trough against Wexford at home, and with that the chance was lost. In the end it would have taken a victory over All-Ireland champions Kilkenny in their own Nowlan Park to qualify, and they were never in the hunt in a points' scoring game.

It was, of course, a crucial blow to lose the services of Michael Moroney, the hard-grafting mid-field man who has been the best Clare hurler over the last few years. His suspension was a bad blow and an annoying one as a result of some incident at a club game in which he was not even playing. But, it weakened the final Clare effort crucially; and they could ill-afford it because they are not entirely happily served in all other positions by

any means.

Watching them a few times in the League, it struck me that they are suffering the deprivations of so many struggling teams: the defence is adequate enough when it tries enthusiastically and makes up any deficiencies in skill and command by assiduous covering of colleagues. And this would, of course, call for a lot of effort and a large expenditure of energy, which means a high degree of fitness. But, that would be possible; it could be achieved.

However, it is part of the requirement for such defensive success by doubling the cover, that the defenders be given normal amounts of rest periods as the pressure is eased by centre-fields and forwards placing nearly equal amounts of pressure — however ineffective — on the opposing defence.

But, if the ball keeps sailing back into defence no later than seconds after it was cleared, because the centre-field or half-forward line was unable to even neutralise the opposing lines of players, that defence must eventually crack, however willing it is.

It is so with Clare — especially without Moroney at mid-field, where no other player has adequate experience or class. Worse still are the forward lines. Getting the ball in not very favourable positions, they are inclined to play with desperation, trying to connect with the ball for an attacking stroke before even the thought of attack — but rather of possession—should be bothering

By **JAY**

DRENNAN

them. Such over-large efforts inevitably come unstuck, even if carried on for two or three strokes—and back goes the ball into defence.

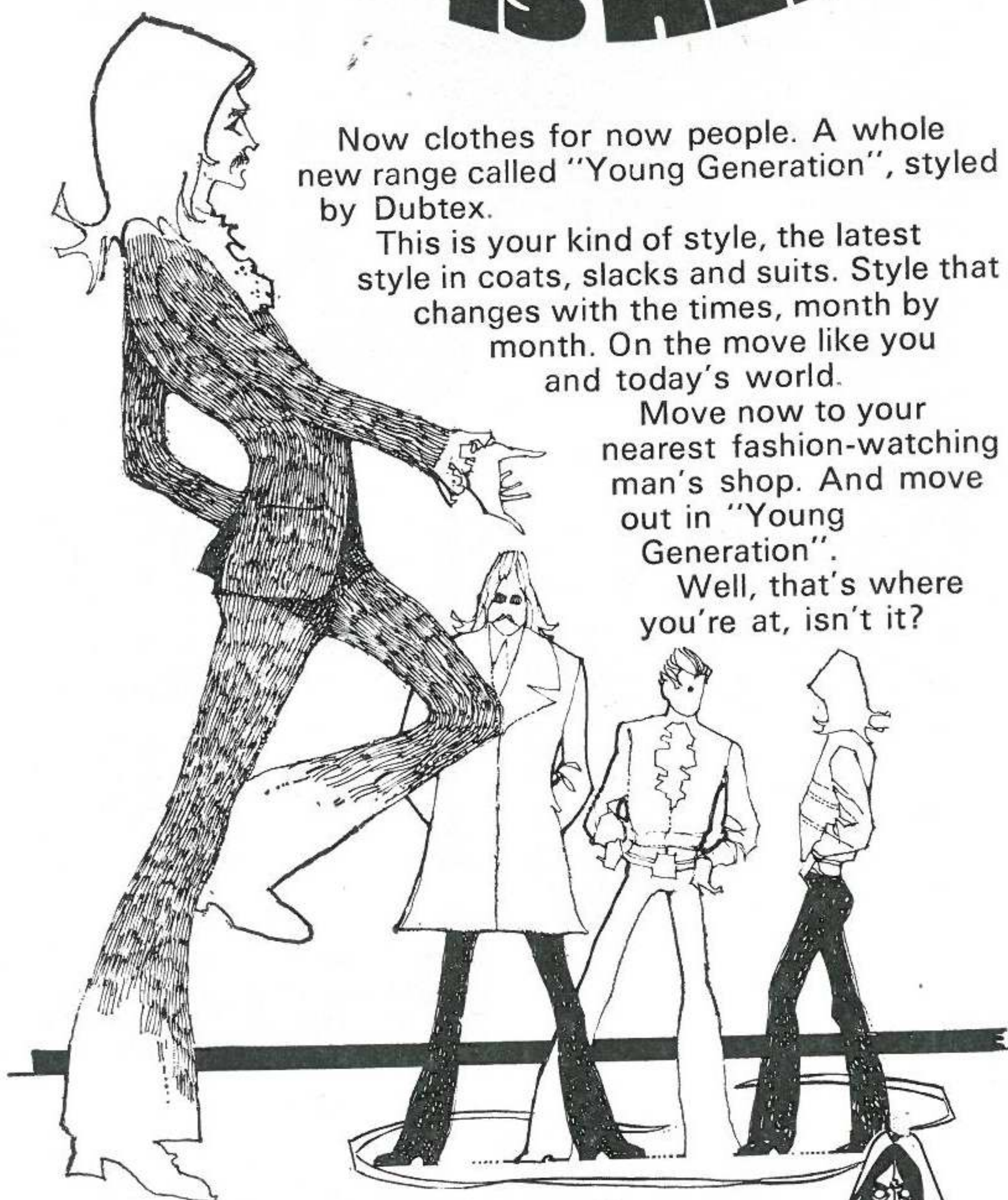
The inside line, because the service is either bad or haphazard under pressure, are drawn further from goal, find they have to “chance their arm” on quarter-chances, with the result that the ball ends up trickling to the goalie, or misdirected to some other defender who (completely without pressure) is able to land the ball deep in the Clare defence.

There is a final result from all this which is equally bad: the forwards get so few clear chances that the pressure on them to score plays merry hell with their confidence, so that the best chances are made a “hash” of.

A line of hard-grafting half-forwards, contesting every ball with fanatical energy and determination, upsetting the command of the opposing halves, or one really powerful as well as skilful man—at centre-forward, probably — would make the biggest difference to Clare's chances. Whether they are available is doubtful. Of course, one good centre-field is needed, and some inside forwards with the “gift”. But. I am not so sure that these would not develop from present personnel if the half-line has a player in it like Kilmurray in football, or Delaney, or Tom Cheasty of recent memory.

As it is, they would not be among my favourites for the Munster championship, except that one must always remember that, after the recent low, it is time soon again for another up-swing.

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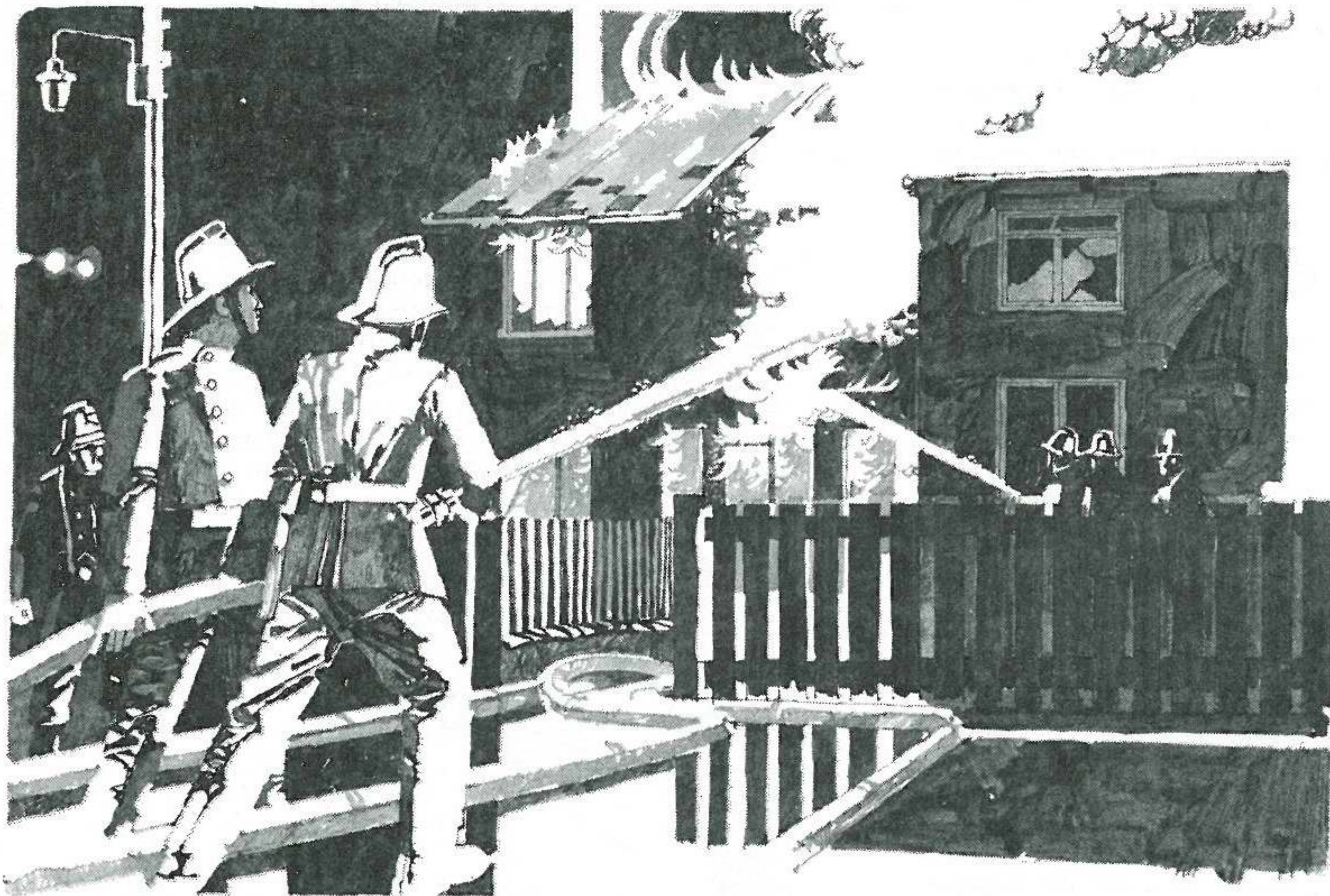
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Giant-sized production

"AN DEISEACH", the Waterford G.A.A. Year Book 1973, is one of the most impressive publications of its kind I have come across. It is a giant-sized production in every way—116 extra large pages, each measuring some twelve inches by nine inches, of text and photographs, and set off in an eye-catching full colour picture on the front cover.

Seamus Ó Braonain, who needs no introduction to regular readers of GAELIC SPORT, edits the yearbook, and he has got together a first-class team of writers, who deal with every aspect of the Association in Waterford in a lively and entertaining manner.

The year in inter-county hurling and football is comprehensively covered, the county's footballer (Pa Walsh, of Cill Rosanta) and hurler (Davy Duggan, of De La Salle) of 1972 are put into focus, and one of the most interesting features of all is an in-depth look at Erin's Own, the club of the year in the county.

Another feature details the basis on which the above selections are made. We are told that playing record, consistency, loyalty to club and county are among the factors taken into consideration in choosing the players of the year, and that activity, facilities and social activities are some of the headings under which points are allocated in the club selection.

An out of the ordinary

By **OWEN McCANN**

touch is provided by a short but very interesting article by a Spanish visitor to Ireland, Guillermo Gutierrez, who was at last year's All-Ireland hurling final. "A manly and exciting game" he describes hurling, and goes on: "Sporting also. Each 'number' covered, watching his equal on the opposite side; everyone struggling bravely, running up and down from the starting until the end. I think it is the kind of game that could be prone to expressions of bad temper; but I am amazed how the match was carried forward in the most sporting and competitive way."

Also of much more than local interest is a striking tribute, mainly pictorial, to Pdraig Ó Fainín, who has just, of course, completed his term as President. One of the pictures recalls his days as a hurler with the Cnoc Sion side.

Indeed, the pictorial content is one of the best features of this well produced annual. There are many excellent photographs, embracing teams, individuals and "shots" from matches.

I like, too, a short unsigned piece, "Star Material", which rightly gives some of the young teenage prospects in the county a place of honour.

Liam Ó Conchubhar has some interesting points to raise in "Referee's Whistle". Like the fact that at "most games too many people gain access to the playing field

and this is very often the source from which trouble arises."

And again, another "annoyance which I encountered is that I have often to appeal for a sliothar at the commencement of a game. The officials of both sides tend to hold back in the hope that the other side will provide the ball."

Nor are the ladies forgotten. There is a splendid camogie section by Eibhlin Ui Chui-min, complete with photographs, and the handball scene is efficiently covered by Pat Noctor.

The annual contains many valuable records. The champions of 1972 are listed, as well as the Senior Hurling and Senior Football Champions down through the years, and the winners each season of the Players of the Year awards. However, these important statistics are given over a number of pages, independent of each other, and I do feel that it would enhance the appeal of the yearbook in the future if all the records were grouped together on the 'one page, or in a special records section.

All in all, however, "An Deiseach" is a credit to all concerned, a magazine that is a "must" for every Waterford fan, and one that is also full of interest to non-natives of the county as well.

"An Deiseach", Waterford G.A.A. Year Book 1973. Editor Seamus Ó Braonain. Price 40p. Available from The Editor at Abbeyside, Dunganarvan.

Ár bPáircne

B'fhéidir nach mbreathnáíonn sé chomh corraitheach le bheith ag faire ar chluiche ceannais Uile-Éireann, ach dar linne agus na mílte feirmeoir ar fud na hEireann, is anseo a scoráiltear na fíorscoir.

Scoir atá in a dtoradh ar thraenáil theicniúil, obair i gcomhar agus taighde nua-aimseartha. Mar sin, an chéad uair eile a bhfeicfidh tú an fómhar á bhaint ar son Comhlucht Siúicre Éireann, lig liú asat — taimídne ar thaobh na fóirne baile.



Comhlucht Siúicre Éireann Teo.

THE RAILWAY CUPS

By
Jay Drennan

THESSE have been hard years for the Railway Cups — no less, perhaps, than for the Railways after which they are named. And like the railway system they have their share of critical attention, pruning, pushing, pulling and dragging, and still without arriving at the solution to the malaise.

It is not necessary to be a grey-beard to remember a time when the St. Patrick's Day games roused a considerable amount of interest, caused much discussion and when the results were remembered beyond a week or before the following year's games. At one time, I can remember that the worst thing about the Railway Cup games was that the programme used to start too early for my commitments of that time, so that it was a terrible struggle to get there in time.

Yet, somehow, there never were such exciting Railway Cup hurling finals as those in which Connacht played in the '40s, when the great powers of Munster and Leinster were being put to the acid test by the Westerners. Nor has there been such interest, I think, in the football since Ulster first made the grade in that same decade and played such exhilarating stuff against more traditional styles of Munster and Leinster.

Is there anything to learn from that? Well, maybe that, in hurling at least, too much sameness has crept like a paralysis over the finals because Munster and Leinster are always in opposition, and, indeed, from year to year,

more or less the same players. Not that the teams of this year are identical with those of eight or nine years ago, but that the changes from year to year are usually few; so while the changes in personnel occur over a period, the evolution from year to year is almost imperceptible. If we are sometimes guilty of saying that we wouldn't welcome another All-Ireland final between Kilkenny and Tipperary soon again, because they have been meeting too often in big competition, how much more true that the same pairing and similar personnel might be expected to stale.

Now, there seemed to be something more of a perking up of interest last year in the football when Munster came forth with intentions of breaking a long losing sequence. It appears that a new interest by Leinster in the football is now called for to get a drive into next year's competition. But, in spite of the need for variety, and almost in contradiction of what I have said, I cannot feel that the introduction of the Universities into the competitions has made, in any way, for improving them.

From a playing point of view,

of course, the Colleges footballers certainly contributed something of real worth to the games this year—beating Ulster and Leinster and drawing with Connacht is sufficient proof of that, apart from the quality of the football played. Yet, it shows a loss of direction in planning the competitions to have them in: because it says that the real business of the Cups is not to have an inter-provincial competition at all, tapping the provincial loyalties of players and supporters, but rather to have good games with nice combinations of players under any port-manteaux title you wish to serve the fare.

There is a division here between attitudes: whether we want to attract by high-class fare alone, played in something of a vacuum competition-wise, or whether we place the trust in the competitiveness and the identification with the teams, irrespective of the quality of the play. It appears to me that it may be difficult to get the crowds to watch the provinces compete; but it would be next to impossible to get crowds to see even the best promised fare in a competitive vacuum.

Was it the special ebullience, character and devastating skill of Christy Ring that carried the hurling games for so long? Or was

● OVERLEAF



● *The Leinster hurling team who retained the Railway Cup in the final against Munster on St. Patrick's Day last.*

● **FROM PAGE 19**

it coincidental with his fading from the scene that the disenchantment occurred in Railway Cup competition. Again, perhaps, a straight yes or no would not be telling the whole truth?

However, it does strike one that the thing which has most caused the Railway Cup competitions—in particular, the St. Patrick's Day Croke Park finals—to lose their grip has been the proliferation of other events. In two respects: one, in regard to the games themselves; the other, in regard to extraneous activities.

From a games point of view, there is a choking collection of indigestible fixtures of all kinds on the football and hurling menu. This is not only true of club and county commitments, but at all grades of those commitments, so that a keen follower will as much relish the opportunity of staying at home and getting a break from the glut as going to another match.

Whether or not the amazing complex of fixtures is to the advantage entirely of the player of the games one must not pontifi-

cate, but, for the follower, at least, it is disastrous. It takes something like a computer memory and information bank, nowadays, to keep up with all that goes on. It has even become a standard attitude by officialdom that their main bother is to get fixtures "out of the way"—get them played by hook or by crook. This leads to too many games hurriedly arranged or rearranged, times or venues changed at a moment's notice, and no notice at all to the public.

Even minor and under-21 and junior championship games are run off on week evenings without more than cursory mention of the fact: it is little wonder that the crowds do not turn up to these matches.

But, far worse is the effect that this is having on the general attitude of the follower. He finds little interest in games that are pushed through to complete a schedule; he is very little interested in many of the unimportant games in that schedule anyway. But, in his eyes, the whole currency of matches, their quality and competitiveness, is becoming

devalued. Before long, if not already, even the glamour of the real championship will have some, at least, of its gloss knocked off by this devaluation process. The Railway Cup has been suffering from some of it.

Regularity of National League fixtures makes inroads on the potential interest in Railway Cup; All-Star tours make another little furrow; a string of Sundays pursuing games will make another hole through urging the supporter to thankfully stay home for once, avoid the traffic and look in comfortably on TV.

But, the second aspect exists too: the proliferation of extraneous activities on St. Patrick's Day. Big parades in all the major cities and towns are bound to affect the potential attendances in Croke Park, for it is so often the same enthusiastic people who will be taking a part in organisation or participation in these parades. Other social, political or public occasions have more numerously affixed themselves to the National holiday. All have a correlation with the Croke Park final attendances.

Decade of service to Cavan football



● RAY CAROLAN

THERE have been few more consistent performers on our Gaelic football fields over the past decade or so than the Cavan midfielder, Ray Carolan. The brilliant Cuchulainn (Cross-Mullagh) clubman has been serving his native county with distinction since the early 'sixties and it is certainly no fault of this grand player that the Breffni county has been having such lean times in inter-county competition of late.

Cavan have been without an All-Ireland senior football championship since 1952 and also the famed royal blue jerseys have not graced Croke Park on the fourth Sunday in September since then.

However, Ray Carolan's career to date has been highlighted by a certain amount of success and personal satisfaction. Four Ulster senior medals came the way of this classy footballer and as a result four appearances in All-Ireland semi-finals at Gaelic Headquarters. But on each occasion Cavan's hopes of making the national decider were dashed.

In 1962, Roscommon surprisingly proved too good for the Ulster champions, coming out on top by 1-8 to 1-6, while two years later Kerry trounced Cavan to the tune of 2-12 to 0-6. Carolan was at mid-field on both occa-

sions, but when his county reappeared in the penultimate championship stage he had switched back to centre half-back. This time Cork pipped the Breffnimen by a single point on the score of 2-7 to 0-12 in the 1967 All-Ireland semi-final.

Cavan, with Ray Carolan a guiding light at centre-field, regained the Northern crown in 1969. But this time Offaly, after a replay, denied them a final place.

As well as giving tireless service to his county Ray has also been more or less a permanent fixture on the Ulster team since initially donning the saffron jersey in 1963. In that year he helped the North to a Railway Cup success, which proved to be the beginning of a golden era for Ulster in this competition. Carolan lost his place when his pro-

By
**NOEL
COOGAN**

vince retained their title in 1964, but was back to share in further successes in 1965, '66, '68, '70 and '71, giving him a fine total of six Railway Cup medals.

While Ulster may have slumped somewhat in the inter-provincial ratings, Ray continues to command a regular berth on their side and was again selected this year, but had to cry off through injury.

That may have been one of the reasons why the Combined Universities came out on top in that semi-final at Breffni Park.

For, make no mistake about it, there are few more accomplished mid-fielders in the game than the durable Carolan.

The work rate of this burly campaigner is second to none. Cavan's lack of success has not resulted in any noticeable lessening of his enthusiasm for the game he obviously loves. Now in the autumn of a glorious career, time may be running out for Ray Carolan.

Recent events do not suggest a return of former glory days for Cavan. But this is no fault of Ray's and if the Breffni county had a few more like him then everything would be okay.

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Inside view of Longford's title prospects

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

LONGFORD have never won the All-Ireland senior football title. Yet, they showed such dash and spirit in their opening League ties this term, that it seemed the end of their period in the honours "wilderness" was in sight.

Wins over Kerry, Galway, Kildare and Dublin, had the G.A.A. world sitting up and taking notice. But the enigmatic Longford then proceeded to squander their League hopes with successive defeats by Offaly, Roscommon and Cork.

How do Longford rate their championship prospects following this rather peculiar League campaign? Let those "on the spot" take up the challenge.

SEAN DONNELLY (full forward):

From the outset we have had our sights trained on the championship. Our concern in the League was to avoid relegation. Accordingly we concentrated on winning our home ties. We never really had any designs on the League title.

Now with the confidence gained from a useful run in the League we are prepared to beat any team

in the country. There are few better defences in the country than ours, while our midfield is also improving satisfactorily.

Granted we in the attack could step up on our marksmanship. But it's important that we have been able to pinpoint our weakness. We can now work to alleviate the trouble. The players are available, it's just a case of settling on the right blend.

The attitude of the Longford players is also developing nicely. We realise the magnitude of the job ahead, and we are preparing confidently for each challenge.

This team has been improving over a two year period. It has plenty of potential and in the light of recent displays, I see no reason why any team should deprive us of the Leinster championship this year.

SEAN MURRAY (team trainer):

Longford have the ability to go the full way this year . . . but first we must solve our forward problem. Our only source of worry is the fact that our forwards have yet to knit as a unit. We must try and make them be-



● **SEAN MURRAY** . . . the Longford team manager

lieve in themselves and not be afraid to go for scores.

I have absolutely no fears about the ability of our defence or midfield to compete with the best. Also we have suitable replacements for these areas.

The game against Offaly must have given the lads quite an amount of confidence. They must know now that they are a match for any team.

We are glad too that in Kildare and Offaly we have a really tough draw. Kildare will prove difficult to beat on their own ground, but by our League performances, we have shown that we tend to play better when the chips are down.

This Longford side can, and I think will take the Leinster title. After that? Well any team that gets out of Leinster must have a wonderful chance.

SEAN RYAN (full back):

The match against Kildare will be crucial. We would find it hard enough against Kildare in Longford, but having to play them in Newbridge will test us to the full.

● **TO PAGE 25**

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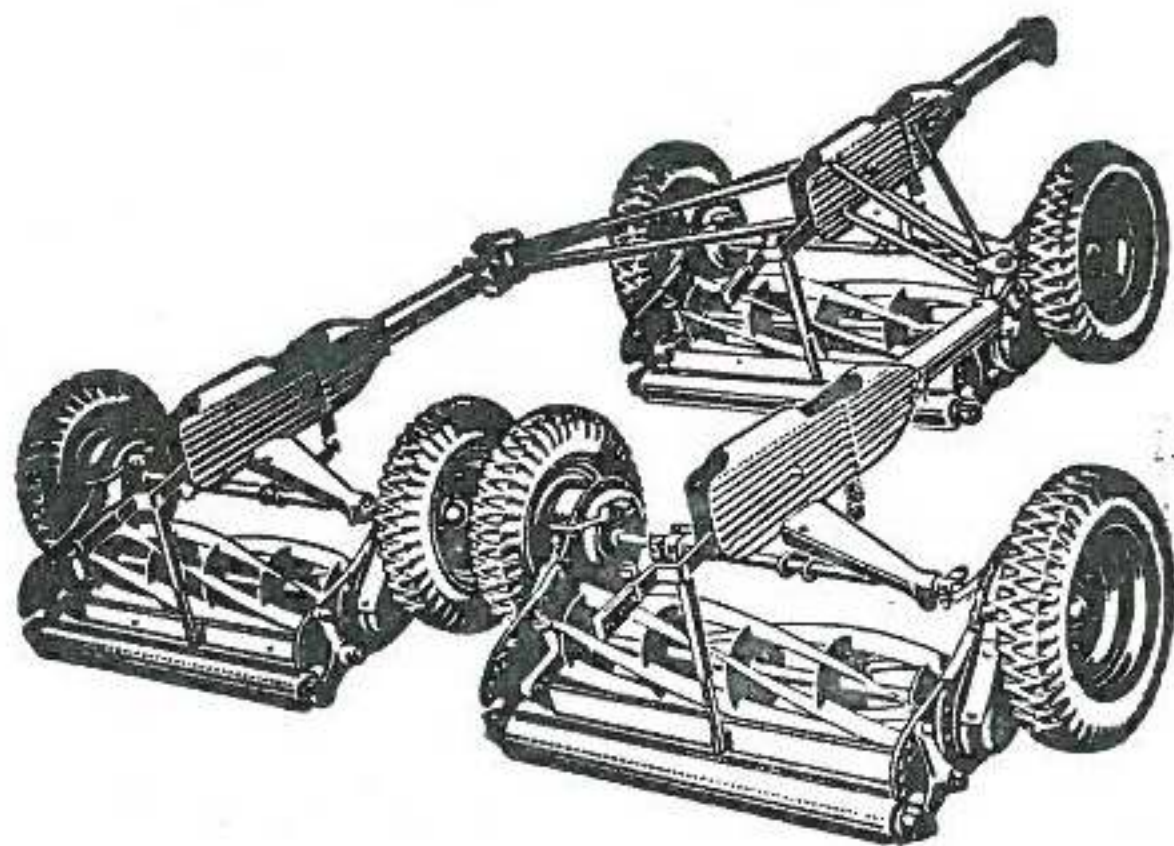
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TRIP FOR HANDBALLERS

By MICK DUNNE

A NEW area of international competition for Irish handballers could open up next year as a result of the visit to San Francisco by the G.A.A. party in March . . . and I am glad to say I had some little part to play in it. With RTE producer-director Michael O'Carroll I was privileged to play handball in San Francisco's plush Olympic Club last year and when I visited the club again this spring Mike de la Pena, the club's handball coach, told me they would be delighted to arrange special exhibition matches for Irish handballers next year. And I know from talks with officials of the Irish Handball Council that they have hopes of sending players to America next March when the All-Ireland champions and the All-Stars visit California.

The Olympic Club of San Francisco vies with the New York Athletic Club for the distinction of being the leading

sports centre in the U.S.—although our hosts in downtown San Francisco left us in no doubt which they consider is away in front. It has a membership of 8,000 alone in the city club — their Lakeside golf club has as many more—from the leading business and professional members of the city and there are 300 active handball members ranging over all adult age groups. In February this year its five courts on the fifth floor of the club's Post Street premises staged the U.S.H.A. West regional championships with competition continuing non-stop from 7 a.m. to 12 midnight over four days.

Mike de la Pena told me that the exhibition games they had in mind for the players would be against the top handballers in San Francisco as well as other specially invited Californians like Dr. Steve August, the West Coast champion from Los Angeles. Mike will put this proposal

in a few weeks to the monthly meeting of the Olympic Club's Board of Directors, one of whom is Joe Hehir, an Irish-American who took part in a special RTE programme we filmed at the club last year. Another prominent member we played with this year was John Egan of Galway-Limerick parentage who is a vice-president of Macy's department store chain. He told me: "The Irish handballers would be assured of a warm welcome because we've got lots of Irish among our members."

Pat Fanning, the outgoing President of the G.A.A., was taken on a tour throughout the Olympic club's luxurious and opulent premises and he is enthusiastic about the possibility of handballers visiting San Francisco.

Incidentally, two leading Irish handballers, Pat Kirby and Joey Maher, have played in the Olympic Club.

● FROM PAGE 23

I'm all against the present system of arranging championship ties. I think it would be much better if the games were staged at a neutral venue.

If we can develop the knack of taking scores from long range, Kildare, Offaly and the rest will need to watch out. The lads will not go into the championship with any inferiority complex. The performance against Offaly banished any inhibitions we might have had

FRANK SHERIDAN (midfielder):

If we can produce the same effort in the championship as we did for the League, Longford can

go places in 1973. Following our wins over Kerry and Galway we now have the experience of success, which is a good thing.

Longford however depend to a large extent on the determination of our players. We are a small county with limited resources, so it's imperative that everyone pulls his weight. Happily I feel the present bunch are a dedicated group, craving for success.

The influence of Sean Murray has been very noticeable. He is a tremendous team manager. Yes, I would say we are pretty confident in Longford at the moment.

JIMMY FLYNN (former County Chairman):

Longford seem to do better when faced with a tough draw. Consequently I think they can surmount the Kildare and Offaly hurdles . . . with a share of luck.

It's a fairly useful Longford side. The backs are as sound as we have ever had, but I think they are still beset by forward problems. That they are a young bunch should be to their advantage, while Sean Murray's coaching and advice is invaluable.

It's also significant, I think, that unlike former years, the side appears to be well endowed with reserve strength. I reckon they have about eight good backs, and three fine mid-fielders.

Gaelic Scrapbook

1926 WAS A YEAR OF M

A YEAR can mean different things to different people. For some it may mark the end of an era in their personal relations with happy or unhappy connotations. On a larger scale the vagaries of the weather or some scientific breakthrough can forever fix a particular year.

For Irishmen and women the year 1926 will always be fixed, with tragic memory, firmly in their minds. It was in September of that year, on All-Ireland football final day, that more than 50 people perished in a fire that swept through a make-shift cinema in the small village of Dromcollogher, Co. Limerick. The building in which the conflagration took place was a wooden structure situated over a store which was housing timber. The performance was only a short time in progress when the blaze broke out. Scarcely a house in the village escaped the horror of this terrible tragedy. The nation poured out its sympathy and in a practical demonstration of feeling a Relief Fund was established and most generously supported. The great cowboy star of the period, Will Rogers, appeared at a charity show and helped to swell the fund. Sorrow hung heavy over the land as the

victims were laid to rest.

Congress was well attended on April 4, and quite a good deal of important business was gone through. Among the more important issues to emerge was the election of a new President, Mr. W. N. Clifford of Limerick who defeated the outgoing President, Mr. P. D. Breen of Wexford, by 68 votes to 55. The ban was raised by Dublin and after

ton, Chicago, Buffalo and San Francisco. In all they played seven games, scoring 75 goals and 36 points against 21 goals and 13 points! The manager of this grand team was Tim Crowe and they were trained by no better man than the legendary Wedger Meagher. The tour was organised and promoted by P. J. Cahill, Chicago G.A.A.

Galway, Cavan, Kerry and Kil-

By TONY REID

discussion its removal was defeated by 80 votes for and 23 against. It was also agreed that in future extra time (fifteen minutes each way) be played in the event of a replay ending in another draw. The Press in general was severely criticised for its apparent anti-G.A.A. attitude.

On the playing fields it was Munster's year all the way. Cork became National hurling league champions, and Clare won division two of the league. Tipperary hurlers, led by their captain John Leahy had a great tour of the U.S.A., playing in New York, Bos-

dare came through testing provincial battles in football while hurling enjoyed a classical year with some tremendous battles being waged. Tipperary and Cork met in the Munster final and a splendid hour's hurling was in prospect. Unfortunately the crowd that invaded the Athletic Grounds in Cork was far too large and after twenty minutes' play, with Tipp. leading by 1-2 to nil with the aid of a strong breeze, the referee called a halt to the proceedings when the spectators, seeking to gain a better vantage point, spilled onto

MANY MEMORIES

the pitch. The match was re-fixed for Thurles and this time the game ran its full course, ending in a draw after a wonderful hour's hurling. Again the crowds flocked back to Thurles for the replay and another thriller ensued in ideal weather conditions. It took a masterly performance by Cork to win the day by 3-6 to 2-4.

Kilkenny, meanwhile, battled through Leinster beating Dublin by a point in a thrilling semi-final and then accounting for a game Offaly side in the final.

The stage was set for a Cork-Kilkenny battle, a prospect that set the hearts beating faster in hurling aficionados.

However, disappointment reached a low level because the Kilkenny squad never raised a gallop against the Rebel County who won by 4-6 to 2-0, the Black and Amber failing to score in the second half. The Cork back division of Sean Og Murphy, Maurice Murphy, Regan and Mick Murphy contained the threat of men like Dick Grace, and the two Dunphys. Up front, P. Delea had a magnificent hour for Cork.

Kerry and Kildare qualified for the football decider and

revived memories of the great Kerry-Kildare days of the early nineteen hundreds. The fans were not let down in the first game when both sides provided a brilliant exhibition of the sport in the best traditions of both counties. Both sides were so well matched in the skills that a draw was an extremely equitable result, Kerry 1-3 Kildare 0-6.

The replay took place six weeks later and again a great struggle ensued. A strong sun blazed down on the heads of the thirty players sapping the energies of even the fittest man. The Kerry defence was masterly, resisting the best efforts of the Kildare side which was inspired by the immortal Larry Stanley. There was never much between the sides and when Mahoney accepted a pass from Bailey to score a fine goal in the second half the Lilywhites' fate was sealed. The final scoreline, Kerry 1-4 Kildare 0-4, was just about right. The main difference between the two sides was Kerry's smarter fielding and sounder combination. The only pity was that Larry Stanley had to finish on the losing side after his trojan efforts in the two games. Anyone recalling these two enthralling battles will for-



● Eudie Coughlan who played with Cork in 1926.

ever recall his major contribution to two memorable occasions.

When the dust of the many games had finally settled in 1926 it transpired that the G.A.A. had enjoyed one of its most successful years ever with the games of the Gael firmly in favour throughout the thirty-two counties of Ireland. But the painful memory of the tragedy of Dromcollogher overshadowed all else that happened in the previous twelve months.

PRESS CUTTINGS

By NEIL McCAVANA

TEAM manager is a position that is becoming more and more fashionable in football and hurling. But what are the duties and responsibilities of a team manager? Well, these have been spelled out very clearly by Mayo. The county has appointed All-Ireland footballer Aidan Swords, of Charlestown, to the position of team manager for one year, and Pat Staunton, who trained the Mayo team in 1972, has been re-appointed trainer for 1973.

I take those facts from Mayo G.A.A. Scene by "Gus" in the "Mayo News". He goes on to report:

"In a statement issued by Mr. Johnny Mulvey, Secretary of the Board, the terms of reference of the new Team Manager's appoint-

ment are outlined as follows:

"(1) The County Board may appoint a team manager for a period of one or more years. It may dispense with his services at the end of any year.

"(2) The Manager's primary purpose is to co-ordinate the efforts of all who are directly involved in the preparation of the team. To this end he will familiarise himself with the players especially by attending training sessions.

"(3) The Manager is in full charge of the County Senior team, and is responsible to the County Board for preparation of the team for their successive engagements. Under his direction the team trainer will train the players and the team coach (where there is one) will plan

tactics and strategy.

"(4) The Manager, after consulting the selectors, will pick the team for each game. He will be in sole and complete charge of the team on the day of the game and will be personally responsible for any changes and replacements.

"(5) Players will be expected to give total and immediate effect to the orders given to them by the Manager. They will also be responsible to him for any breaches of team discipline—realising that maintenance of same will be in the best interests of retaining a united team effort.

"(6) In the absence of the Manager, his duties will be carried out by an official who will be appointed by him for that occasion."

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KERRY'S THANKS

It is old hat, now, that Offaly beat Longford in the League before going off to San Francisco, and by their success let Kerry through to the last four on scoring average. However, many outside of Kerry will still be unaware of the reaction in the county to the Offaly triumph.

An unsigned piece in "The Kerryman" put it this way:

"Offaly, if they had so desired, could have let Longford win last Sunday, thus eliminating Kerry.

"But that would have left a stain on their character and, in fairness to them, they played their hearts out to make victory possible.

"As their most powerful rivals, it is only fair that we should recognise the fact that they have done us such a good turn. Apart from anything else, it means a lot in financial terms to be involved in the concluding stages of the League."

BANJAXED COMPUTER?

Away from the sporting pages, Pat O'Leary is an entertaining columnist of "The Guardian", of Wexford. He covers a wide scene outside of sport, but recently I came across an interesting piece in his column on hurling affairs. He was commenting on an inter-county hurling match at Bellefield in Wexford, and concluded:

"Despite all the moans, the game is as popular as ever. An early March attendance of seven to eight thousand in Bellefield is not bad. What does raise large queries in the mind is the Leinster senior final attendance over the last three years. Average 18,000 at H.Q. and National Stadium! Nine or ten thousand from each county! Could it be that bad, or is the computer banjaxed?"

PALE SUBSTITUTE

If you were given the choice of

watching a game live on television, or in person from the sideline, what would your reaction be? As far as I am concerned there would be just no contest—I would opt for the actual match any day.

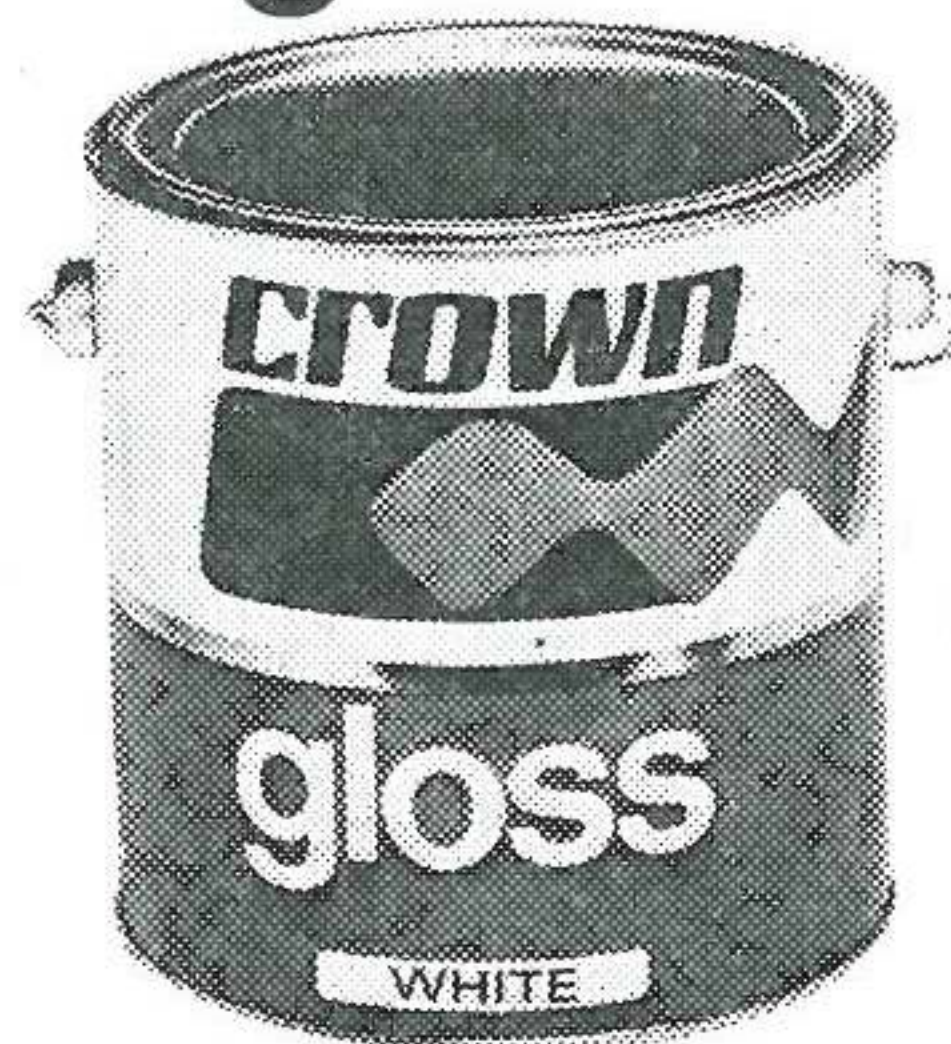
So, I was more than interested to read some comments on this subject by the unnamed contributor of G.A.A. Digest to "The Sligo Champion":

"A recurrence of the 'flu pre-

vented me from travelling to headquarters for the Railway Cup games on Saturday last," he wrote. "I did, however, see the contests on TV but the experience only served to emphasise, if indeed, such were necessary, that watching sport on the small screen is but a pale substitute for actual attendance where one captures the intimate atmosphere that all adds up to one's enjoyment of the game."

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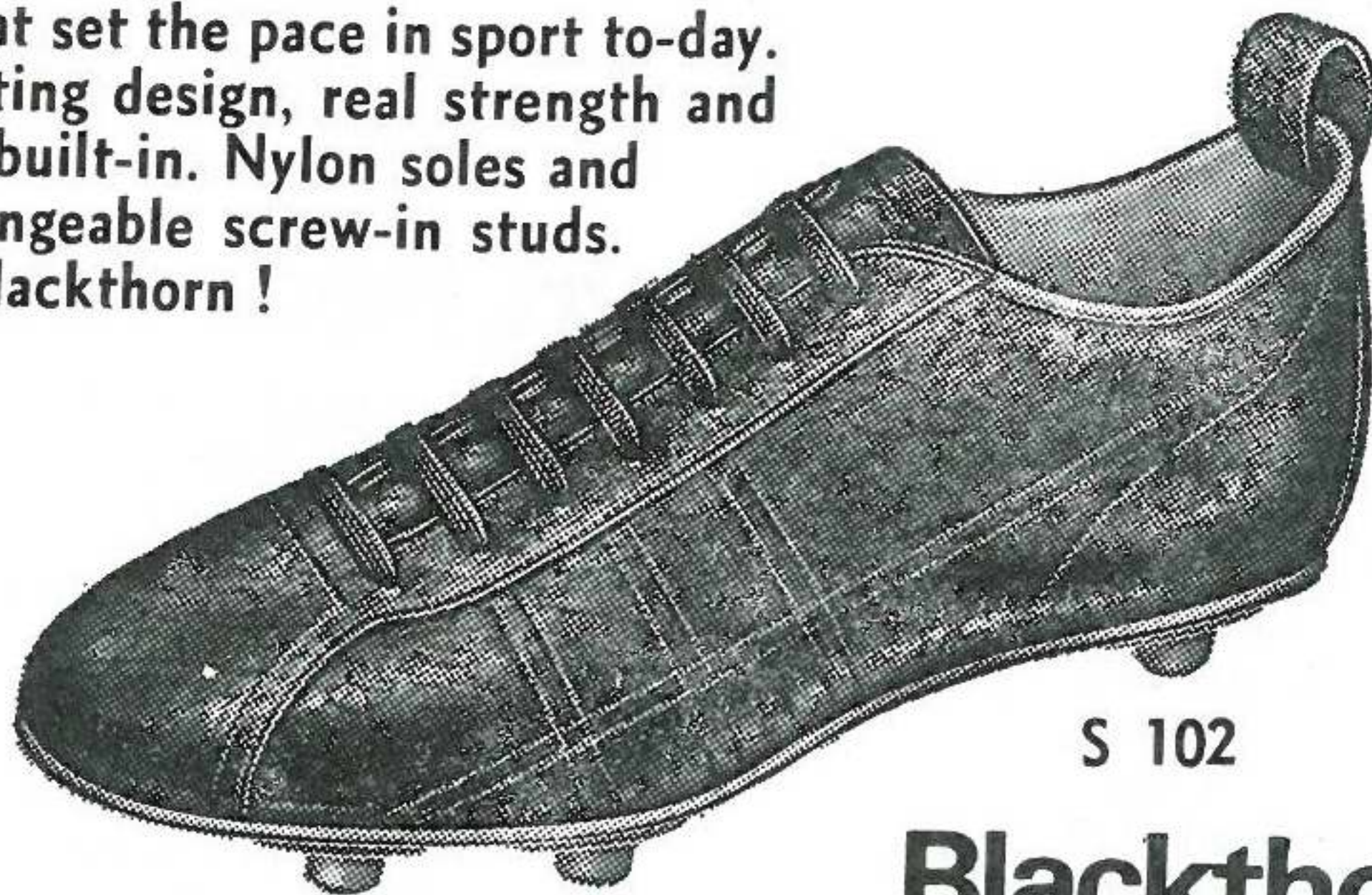
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Historic Congress

met under

old Hogan stand

THE All Ireland G.A.A. Congress at which the National Leagues were established was attended by over a hundred delegates and assembled in a room under the then recently erected Hogan Stand in Croke Park (This particular stand is now in Pairc na nGael, Limerick). The date was April 12th, 1925. President of the G.A.A. at the time was the late P. D. Breen of Wexford.

The institution of the Leagues did not get the headlines in the newspapers the following morning.

The introduction of a new rule giving players the option of playing for their native or adopted county—since known as the "Declaration Rule"—caught the imagination of the sports writers as the outstanding decision of a Congress that might be said to have marked a definite turning point in the affairs of the G.A.A.

The country was only emerging from the evils of Civil War, and the efforts to keep the G.A.A. clear of the repercussions of that bitter conflict were reflected in another ruling of Congress ordering that "no club be

called after a living person or after any political or semi-political organisation."

The punctuality rule also dates from this Congress, which then ordained that "teams taking the field after the appointed time forfeit the match even though winners on the score."

That referees were a problem then as now can be judged from a debate, the result of which was a decision to form a referees association, consisting of at least four from each province.

The suggested establishment of National Leagues in hurling and football gave rise to a rather lengthy debate and the matter was discussed from many angles before a decision was reached.

This was in favour of the idea, with the recommendation that a secondary competition be arranged for the weaker hurling counties

Cork, Dublin, Galway, Kilkenny, Laois, Limerick and Tipperary participated in the premier grade of the first hurling league—the final of which was played on May 16th, 1926. The

venue was Cork Athletic Grounds and the contestants Cork and Dublin. The Leesiders ran out comfortable winners (3-7 to 1-5) after a most entertaining game.

Five counties — Clare, Kerry, Offaly, Waterford and Wexford figured in the secondary hurling league, which Clare won, with Offaly runners-up.

The only county missing from the line-out in the first national Football League was Derry. The qualifying rounds of this were played on a provincial basis. Leinster formed three groups and the winners were Dublin, Laois and Longford. Kerry won in Munster; Antrim came through in Ulster, and, although Galway won the Connacht section it was Sligo who represented the province in the subsequent play-off.

The final was played at New Ross on September 19th, 1926, and the result was Laois 2-1, Dublin 1-0.

The Leagues were interrupted during the war years, which accounts for the fact that this month's finals are the forty-second of the series.

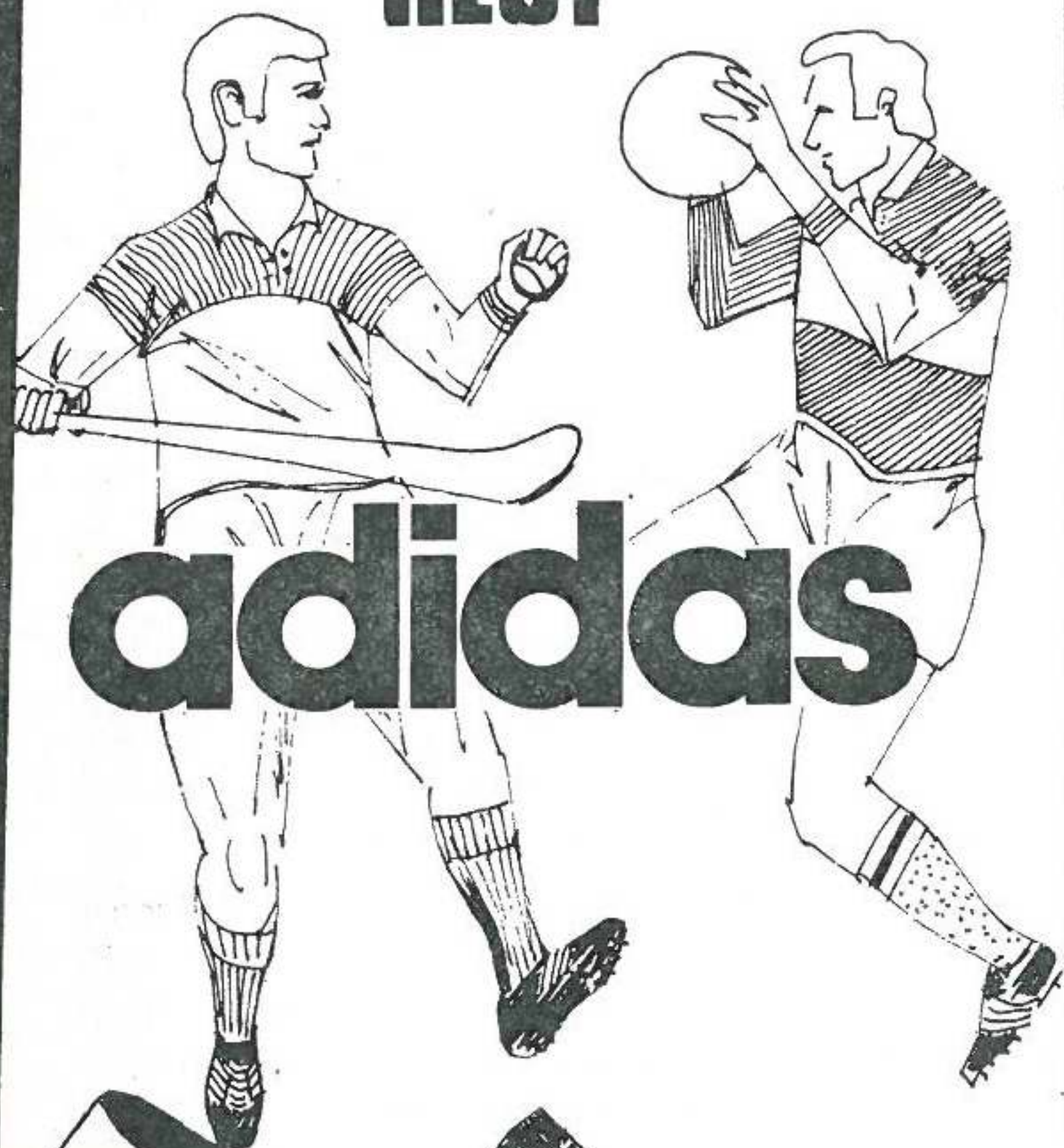
Tipperary hold the most League titles of any county, with thirteen won in hurling. Mayo and Kerry share top place in football with ten apiece.

Limerick hold a hurling record in that they won five years in succession (1934 to 1938) but Mayo went better in football winning six successive titles (1934 to 1939) and seven in eight years (1934 to 1941).

A great fillip to the Leagues was the admission of New York in 1949, and the football Cup crossed the Atlantic the following season for the first time.

● TO PAGE 33

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● FROM PAGE 31

**The Roll of Honour reads:
HURLING****Tipperary (13)**

- 1928—Beat Galway 1-5 to 1-2.
1949—Beat Cork 3-5 to 3-3.
1950—Beat New York 1-12 to 3-4.
1952—Beat New York 6-14 to 2-5.
1954—Beat Kilkenny 3-9 to 1-4.
1955—Beat Wexford 3-5 to 1-5.
1957—Beat Kilkenny 3-11 to 2-7.
1959—Beat Waterford 0-15 to 0-7.
1960—Beat Cork 2-15 to 3-8.
1961—Beat Waterford 6-6 to 4-9.
1964—Beat New York 4-16 to 6-6.
1965—Beat New York 6-19 to 5-20.
1968—Beat New York 6-27 to 4.22.

Cork (9)

- 1926—Beat Dublin 3-7 to 1-5.
1930—Beat Dublin 3-5 to 3.0.
1940—Beat Tipperary 8-9 to 6-4.
1941—Beat Dublin 4-11 to 2-7.
1948—Beat Tipperary 3-3 to 1-2.
1953—Beat Tipperary 2-10 to 2-7.
1969—Beat Wexford 3-12 to 1.14.
1970—Beat New York 5-21 to 6-16.
1972—Beat Limerick 3-14 to 2-14.

Limerick (7)

- 1934—Beat Dublin 3-6 to 3-3.
1935—Beat Laois 6-6 to 2-2.
1936—Beat Dublin 7-2 to 4-4.
1937—Beat Cork 11-6 to 5-1.
1938—Beat Tipperary 5-2 to 1-1.
1947—Beat Kilkenny (replay) 3-8 to 1-7.
1971—Beat Tipperary 3-12 to 3-11.

Kilkenny (3)

- 1933—Beat Limerick 3-8 to 1-3.
1962—Beat Cork 1-16 to 1-8.
1966—Beat Tipperary 0-9 to 0-7.

Wexford (3)

- 1956—Beat Tipperary 5-9 to 2-14.
1958—Beat Limerick 5-7 to 4-8.
1967—Beat Kilkenny 3-10 to 1-9.

Dublin (2)

- 1929—Beat Cork 7-4 to 5-5.
1939—Beat Waterford 1-8 to 1-4.

Galway (2)

- 1932—Beat Tipperary 4-5 to 4-4.
1951—Beat New York 2-11 to 2-8.

Clare (1)

- 1946—Beat Dublin (Replay) 2-10 to 2-5.

- 1963—Beat New York (Replay) 3-10 to 1-10.

FOOTBALL**Mayo (10)**

- 1934—Beat Dublin (Replay) 2-4 to 1-5.
1935—Beat Fermanagh 5-8 to 0-2.
1936—Beat Cavan 5-2 to 0-3.
1937—Beat Meath 5-4 to 1-8.
1938—Beat Wexford 3-9 to 1-3.
1939—Beat Meath 5-9 to 0-6.
1941—Beat Dublin 3-7 to 0-7.
1949—Beat Louth 1-8 to 1-6.
1954—Beat Carlow 2-10 to 0-3.
1970—Beat Down 4-7 to 0-10.

Kerry (10)

- 1928—Beat Kildare 2-4 to 1-6.
1929—Beat Kildare 1-7 to 2-3.
1931—Beat Cavan 1-3 to 1-2.
1932—Beat Cork 5-2 to 3-3.
1959—Beat Derry 2-8 to 1-8.
1961—Beat Derry 4-16 to 1-5.
1963—Beat New York 1-18 to 0-10.
1969—Beat New York 2-33 to 2-24.
1971—Beat Mayo 0-11 to 0-8.
1972—Beat Mayo 2-11 to 1-9.

Meath (3)

- 1933—Beat Cavan 0-10 to 1-6.
1946—Beat Wexford 2-2 to 0-6.

- 1951—Beat New York 1-10 to 0-10.

Dublin (3)

- 1953—Beat Cavan 4-6 to 0-9.
1955—Beat Meath 2-12 to 1-3.
1958—Beat Kildare 3-13 to 3-8.

Galway (3)

- 1940—Beat Meath 2-5 to 1-5.
1957—Beat Kerry 1-8 to 0-7.
1965—Beat New York 4-12 to 0-17.

New York (3)

- 1950—Beat Cavan 2-8 to 0-12.
1964—Beat Dublin 2-12 to 1-13.
1967—Beat Galway 7-8 to 1-16.

Down (3)

- 1960—Beat Cavan 0-12 to 0-9.
1962—Beat Dublin 2-5 to 1-7.
1968—Beat Kildare 2-14 to 2-11.

Cork (2)

- 1952—Beat New York 1-12 to 0-3.
1956—Beat Meath 0-8 to 0-7.

Laois (1)

- 1926—Beat Dublin 2-1 to 1-0.

Derry (1)

- 1947—Beat Clare 2-9 to 2-5.

Cavan (1)

- 1948—Beat Cork (Replay) 5-9 to 2-8.

Longford (1)

- 1965—Beat Galway 0-9 to 0-8.

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Perhaps it's significant that one of their main Dublin outlets is the distinguished jewellery house of Hopkins & Hopkins in O'Con-

nell Street. We always knew this firm had historic associations but until we spoke to the present managers we hadn't realised they had been specialising in every aspect of the jewellery business since 1787. Imagine, Hopkins & Hopkins has been continuously at work since eleven years before the '98 Rebellion. What better example of quality —plus—could one ask for? Besides their extensive business in watches and rings (the diamond engagement rings here would be a temptation to even the worst of women-haters) Hopkins & Hopkins employ a large staff on the manufacturing side. When an item like a trophy or a set of medals is commissioned, the work is done on the premises by skilled Irish craftsmen.

It seems natural somehow to move on from there to discuss menswear, because nowadays men buy their clothes not just to “cover themselves and be decent” as my grandmother used to say, but to look good in. Let's admit it, we all like to know we look well, and a well-tailored outfit is the best way of ensuring this. Dubtex suits and slacks don't need to be introduced to our readers but we can say that in recent seasons Dubtex, while maintaining the quality of their garments which first made the name famous, have added that elusive “Plus”—by injecting a whole lot of fashion ideas into the clothes they make. It's not that you'd find a Dubtex suit way-out or difficult to wear. Quite the reverse. But when you put

it on, it does something subtle for your figure. The flattery is in the modern cut and once you've tried one of these new styles we bet you never go back to the old conservative line. A three-piece suit with long side vents and shaped lapels is the thing to buy these days and Dubtex can put them on the market for between £20 and £30. Though John White, the managing director of the firm, does seriously recommend buying now if you're going to buy, because fabric prices will take a huge upswing in the Autumn.

Good news, too, from Mr. White, for people contemplating the purchase of a pair of new slacks. Comfort is “in”, once more—to be fashionable you don't have to look as though you've actually been poured into the trousers. While still snug-fitting, they are easier-fitting and the same thing applies to jackets. If you want to be really up to date, buy a pair of wide Oxford bags with turn-ups—and make sure the fabric is a check.

A lot of foreign note paper is coming into the country but the home-produced stuff is standing up well to the competition and even increasing its sales. Belvedere Bond is doing this by concentrating on providing quality—or maybe in this case it should be described as Quality with a capital Q. You'll surely know it already by name and appearance. Recently the packaging on Belvedere Bond was further improved by putting a tear-strip on

● OVERLEAF

● FROM PAGE 35

the outside cellophane wrap. Soon Belvedere Bond will be bringing out new sizes of notepaper and envelopes to conform to international postal standards and plans for presentation gift boxes are in the pipeline. Now that many people like to have notepaper engraved or printed with their own address and telephone number, Belvedere Bond is a frequent choice. These Irish-made writing papers and envelopes are exported to the West Indies, to African countries, and are sold as far away as Malaya and Hong Kong. So when we get quality on our own doorstep which foreigners go to a lot of trouble to import, we'd be foolish if we didn't take advantage of it.

What does the plus factor consist of when it comes to quality foods? We'd say it was probably freshness. And the supermarket best known for the

freshness of its products is Five Star. I'm a regular customer at one of their branches so I know what I'm talking about. The delicatessen counter is a joy to shop at, because the stock never gets that "tired" look one sees too often elsewhere. The vegetables and fruits, I notice, are now graded in accordance with Common Market regulations and the butchering is really skilled. At the meat counter in Five Star, you don't have to buy an item that's been prepacked on a tray and covered in cellophane. These are available of course, but you've got the option of asking the assistants to show you something else if you don't fancy anything in the display. I've sometimes bought just a single chop this way—and got pleasure and satisfaction out of the way I was treated. This all-Irish owned firm now has seventeen branches throughout the country. For a supermarket chain, they must

have the best record of service to customers in the business. All their staff seem to be senior, trained people and they take a deal of interest in what you're buying, if you ask for advice or help.

Cleanliness is another "plus" at Five Star. My local branch is spotless—even at those hectic times like Friday evening or Saturday afternoon when the customers are coming in droves. The non-foods section is being developed well in branches, too. Besides drapery, one can purchase household hardware, cutlery, crockery, etc., at most of these and at Rathmines and Carlow they are going in for gardening supplies too.

Maybe we've said enough to prove that "Quality-Plus" is something which can apply to every aspect of life and living, and that it's something we can find for ourselves if we look around.

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PAT MURPHY MAY BE OUSTED

IN another couple of weeks the Provincial Championships will commence and, from then until the end of September, there will be a continuous series of non-stop activity.

In the interim we will witness some ding-dong struggles, the inevitable hard luck stories, and, perhaps the emergence of a few new starlets on the handball horizon.

R.T.E. has played its part in whetting our appetites for the coming campaign.

Their recent top-ace tournament was a magnificent success and already has given handball a respect from the casual sportsman that it had not previously enjoyed. Pat Murphy the twenty-two years old player from Taghmon in County Wexford was the star of the series and was seen to emerge successful from some cliff-hanging finishes.

As a result of these victories Murphy has established himself as the unconquerable to the casual observer and his virtual monopoly of the softball grades must give stability to that view.

However, those closely connected with the game will point out that Murphy was beaten in the Gael-Linn Competition this season by his fellow countyman Joe Howlin who is not even rated in the top flight of players. If as is predicted Richie Lyng will declare for Wexford this year there could be a tremendous struggle within the county before the provincial contender emerges. On this basis it is quite on the cards that Murphy the reigning singles and doubles softball champion might not even get the opportunity of defending his titles.

The one thing we can be cer-

tain about is that, irrespective of who the Wexford representative is he will be in full flight towards that elusive All-Ireland title.

Is Joey Maher about to make another attempt to establish himself as the King of Irish Handball?

This question is very relevant after his performances in the Top-Ace Tournament when he went to the Final and gave Murphy a good run for the laurels.

Maher seems to have made a full recovery from the back injury that dogged his efforts last season and, realising the grim determination that grips his efforts, it would be foolhardy to write him off.

We may also have the novel experience this year of watching a father and son partnership making a big effort to land the Doubles title. Here again Maher will be under the spotlight when he takes the court partnered by his fifteen-year-old son Micheál. The latter, under the astute tuition of his father has made dramatic improvement in the last few months and obviously has championship winning potential.

As for the other Leinster contenders I would not be surprised to see the Offaly ace Pat Sheeran pull out all the stops this season in yet another effort to win a senior title.

I consider him as one of handball's greatest stylists, ambidextrous and shot perfect.

If he could acquire some of the determination of players with only a fraction of his skill and who have won senior titles, he would be well-nigh unbeatable.

Séamus McCabe stands alone in Ulster. For the past ten years

he has monopolised the senior grade there, and, indeed, is the best case that could be put forward by those who claim that the handball championships should be organised on an open draw system.

Peter McGee, the unpredictable player from Newport will, as usual, be attempting to carry the Connacht colours. He will, however, be severely challenged by Pat Clarke from Roscommon, who is not a stylish player by any means, but more than compensates for this deficiency by full-blooded consistent play. I am expecting to see Clarke make his big break this season.

The position in Munster will be equally intriguing. Can Murty McEllistram the Kerryman from Ballymacelligott, who has promised so much at senior level but thus far has failed to achieve his ambition of a senior singles title come again to make another serious challenge?

Pat McGarry, Limerick's main hope cannot be dismissed either.

In the final analysis it may be the reigning World Champion, Pat Kirby, who will make the running in these coming championships. An Irish senior title is his big ambition and even if age is not on his side, the task is not beyond him.

While the singles games undoubtedly command the greatest attention, the players I have already mentioned, will also be very much in the reckoning in doubles competition.

When one considers that the next few months will also see championships in Minor and Junior grades, Willwood Tailteann, not to mention handball, it can be seen that the handball follower will be adequately catered for.

HOLIDAY COMPETITION RESULTS

THE response to our Free Holiday Competition, so graciously sponsored by Bord Failte, was truly magnificent.

You will recall, that in our April Issue, we published four pictures of well known Irish Beauty Spots and landmarks and requested readers to identify the pictures, the first three correct solutions drawn "from the hat" to be the winners.

The first correct entry to be drawn, and consequently the winner of the first prize of a Holiday Voucher valued £50, was **Elizabeth O'Brien, Baltard, Doonbeg, Kilrush, Co. Clare.**

The winners of the two runners-up prizes

were **Cathal Hunt, Antogher Road, Roscommon** and **Tomás Mach Eochaidh, 193 Pearse Road, Dun Laoire, Co. Dublin**, and they each receive a free holiday voucher valued £25.

Congratulations Elizabeth, Cathal and Tomás, we hope you have a most enjoyable Irish Holiday and to Bord Failte our sincere thanks for their gracious sponsorship. We join with all our losing entrants in expressing the hope that Bord Failte will continue to promote Irish Holidays through the medium of GAE LIC SPORT.

The correct solution to the competition was: **Picture (A) Killiney Bay; (B) Cliffs of Moher; (C) Lough Gill, Co. Sligo; (D) Shandon Church, Cork.**

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GAE LIC SPORT—THE MAGAZINE THE PLAYERS READ

The Camogie scene

By AGNES HOURIGAN

THE annual Camogie Congress the first ever held outside Dublin seemed to get new life from being transplanted to Galway. There seemed to be an added liveliness and freshness to the debates and the arrival of the Mayor of Galway to officially welcome the delegates and the Congress to the old city by the Corrib was much appreciated.

Congratulations to new President, Mrs. Nancy Murray of Antrim who has already given the Association such sterling service as player, as coach, as trainer, as chairman of the Antrim Board and of the Ulster Council. Straightforward and dedicated, not given to mincing her words, Mrs. Murray comes to office at a time when Camogie is making big strides forward. She already has very close affiliations with the G.A.A. and is the very person to pursue the question of closer co-operation between both bodies that seems to me to be so essential to the advancement of our native games in the years ahead.

After electing a new President, the most important steps taken by Congress were the decision to run the senior All-Ireland on the Open Draw system and the decision to set up a minor championship.

The case for and against the Open Draw was argued at considerable length and a variety of views were expressed, but the final decision was, to my mind, a good one. The senior championship will be played as an Open Draw for three seasons with the existing senior championships in Leinster and Munster continuing as separate competitions.

The three year period will give

a chance for the up and coming junior counties to build their strength, and if present trends continue we should be able to reassess the whole position in three years time.

The draw turned out to be admirable as in no case were counties from the same province drawn in opposition to one another. For those who may have missed the pairings elsewhere, they are: Dublin v Galway; Antrim v Kilkenny; Wexford v Tipperary and Cork the holders got a bye. In the second round the winners of Wexford and Tipperary play Antrim or Kilkenny, while Cork take on Galway or Dublin.

The decision to start a minor championship is also to be welcomed, but there are difficulties which may be solved by the Galway addendum that the competition not start until next season.

The question of age limits is difficult in some respects as these tend to differ not alone in different provinces but in different counties. However, this is not insurmountable, and I look forward to a very lively All-Ireland series in this grade next season.

It was also heartening to hear that the coaching film will shortly be available, and that the National Coaching Course, which reverts to Gormanston this year is again assured of success, and that there will be a special course for coaches and P.T. teachers.

In view of the nationwide interest aroused over the last couple of years by the All-Star Awards in hurling and football, the Editor has asked me to comment on the possibilities of having similar Awards in Camogie. Well, the desirability of such an

award is undeniable but there are snags which immediately come to mind. In the first place a sponsor is essential, and the sad fact remains that with the exception of one award by Elvery's no firm has shown any great inclination to include Camogie in the scope of its sponsorship.

The most obvious sponsors for Camogie All-Star Awards would be "Camogie" magazine, but this is an entirely voluntary undertaking, and while I feel the magazine would be the ideal medium for choosing the All-Stars a commercial sponsor would still be needed to make the presentation of these Awards, and the value of these Awards themselves, worthwhile. And where are we to find such sponsors? The alcohol trade is obviously out; the soft-drinks trade could be hard to convince, the cigarette firms are already heavily committed.

Yet there are firms that depend heavily on female custom, and surely some of these might be approached? The "rag trade", the cosmetic combines, the domestic appliance manufacturers obviously depend on our goodwill, they are obvious targets. Why not try them?

As to who is to choose the All-Stars, if the idea ever becomes an actuality? The number of women in the country who write regularly on camogie in national papers could be listed easily on the fingers of one hand. But they in conjunction with the Editor of Camogie magazine, and the Provincial Secretaries would I am sure do a good job. After all they are the people who have the best chance of seeing most top players in action.

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ARMAGH UNDER SCRUTINY

WITH an administrative set-up which must be among the most streamlined in the country; with officials whose dedication cannot be called into question; with an internal programme to satisfy the most exacting standards and with a proud tradition of allegiance, Armagh seems well equipped to continue to play its full part as one of the vital 32 cogs in the Association's great national wheel. And so it is.

Even a casual perusal of its "Fixture list '73" booklet confirms that Armagh—despite the fact that the majority of the population are certainly not pro-G.A.A., to put it no stronger—remains one of the great strongholds in the organisation. (Incidentally Armagh was one of the first counties, if indeed not the first, to publish its entire season's programme in advance).

Admittedly all is not perfect. The county has its quota of petty parochialism; at times interest is not as keen as it might be; on

occasions competitions have fallen behind and, of course some of the games are marked by what are euphemistically described as incidents; and is enough being done to face the national problem of ensuring the allegiance of the younger people?

But the overall picture, and not the blemishes, ought to be taken as the real barometer of the county's internal health. (This is the second time I have used the word "internal". I hope the reason will emerge later).

The number of club games played at all levels in Armagh is staggering; the hurling drive might have had more momentum but this should not be taken as in any way denigrating the efforts of those responsible for the revival campaign in such pockets as Keady, Portadown and, of course, Armagh City itself; camogie is flourishing with an excellent spirit of co-operation between the G.A.A. and its sister organisation; for those who so

rightly emphasise the importance of the social side there are the very successful club and county dinners and the growing involvement in the Scor Seachtó while the county's contribution to the Club Development Scheme needs no embellishment here.

This thumbnail sketch—pressure on space forbids further elaboration—surely indicates that Armagh has little cause for worry on the "home" front, the front which, unfortunately, rarely finds its way into the media.

But I have digressed rather seriously. When the Editor was suggesting his guideline for my piece for the May issue he wondered what had gone wrong with Armagh at inter-county level. In other words, what about the other Armagh?

Rightly or wrongly it does appear that a county's national image is compounded by the measure of success—or lack of it—achieved in the championships

● TO PAGE 42



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● FROM PAGE 41

and National Leagues. With respect to the image-makers I believe that the status of the Association within a county is more important and that is why I have laid some stress on the "internal" situation.

But what has gone wrong with Armagh as an inter-county force? I do not wish to sound facetious, but candidly if I had the answer to that question I would long since have conveyed it to chairman Tom Lynch, secretary Gerry Egan, team manager Gene Larkin and their committee who are, I know, most anxious to restore fallen fortunes.

In the thirties I thrilled to read and listen to reports of Armagh successes. Then in the late forties and early fifties came those epic battles with Cavan in the Ulster championship culminating in that 1953 All-Ireland final showing against Kerry. (These golden days had been foreshadowed by an All-Ireland junior final appearance in 1948 while the minor side won the highest honours a year later).

Lagan Cup successes—a pass to the National League semi-finals in those days—established the county as a real force in Ulster in the fifties while that titanic battle against Down—the reigning All-Ireland champions who went on to retain their crown—in the 1961 provincial decider hardly hinted at the decline to come.

Since then—apart from an Ulster minor title in 1968—the county's record has been a major disappointment to officials, players and to the most loyal supporters to be found anywhere.

Various methods have been tried and several team managers have been invited to lift the side, with Gene Larkin, a former county and Ulster star, and presently vice-chairman of the county committee, occupying the hot seat.

It is difficult to detect any fixed pattern in the many prescriptions offered for improvement, but there is a great deal of support for the theory that some players are more interested in wearing the club than the county jersey. Personally I would say that the restoration of faith and pride in being selected for the county is the most vital key to the future.

Nothing succeeds like success and I have no doubt at all that when Armagh resumes the winning trail the honour of representing the county will be properly revalued.

County secretary Gerry Fagan is seriously concerned, too, about the "Saturday" players who have been free agents since the removal of Rule 27. "Players selected for the county must give first allegiance to the county," he has stressed. Here again pride in the jersey looms large.

And are there too many clubs in Armagh? I have no intention

of suggesting any reduction either in the playing population or the opportunities which exist for everyone who wishes to participate, but would fewer clubs with more teams attached to each not produce a higher standard in the senior competitions? That way perhaps real county material might more readily emerge.

The question of a reduction in the number of clubs is a thorny one and it would, perhaps, be an impertinence on my part—a comparative outsider now—to press the point.

But I remain keenly interested in the future both internally and externally. When I had the honour of acting as the county's chairman I often said that I would not rest content until Armagh were back as Ulster kingpins. Today I repeat the sentiment—and I take comfort from the fact that there are so many who feel the same.

Handyman Hints

If you intend to wallpaper your home this year why not call to the Crown Wallpaper store at 24 Sth. Great Georges Street, Dublin. Bill Guest, the efficient and courteous manager, will be glad to advise you in choosing the paper to suit your particular room and pocket. Here are some tips from Bill which should make the do-it-yourself decorators job that much easier.

1. When preparing a wall for papering remove old paper, fill large cracks and holes and wash down with warm water. Distemper, whitewash and any other loose flaky material must be washed and scraped off before papering.

2. For a small patterned paper it is best to start at the window and work towards the door. If the paper you are using has a large motif, centre the motif on the most important wall, probably the chimney breast, to prevent the room acquiring an unbalanced look.

3. Use Crown Wallpapers for all your rooms. Many Crown papers are washable which means they can be sponged clean of stains. Vinyls are tougher still and can be scrubbed.

The cluttered world of the talented youth

SUPPOSE for a moment that you were a brilliant young player, just 18 last month, and now in University in your first year. You would, of course, have a long list of fixtures stretching through trials, challenges and practice outings with the competitive games for Freshmen at inter-varsity level. Being a good player you would get into the full college squad and play through the League, the Fitzgibbon or Sigerson Cup, and any county commitments or championships in which the University team was taking part.

Being really good you would then get on the Combined Universities team for the Railway Cup competitions. Meantime, however, you will have been playing for your home county throughout the League campaign, maybe even getting to the knockout stages. You must not forget that you will be needed to play minor for your county having been under 18 on January 1st, 1973, so at this time of year you will be called upon to play a practice game or two as the team

is being modelled. There will be that championship to be played out in the next couple of months.

But, also, there is the senior team on which you are now a regular fixture and they will be limbering up for the senior championship — trials, practices, a challenge or two—unless the county did get to the final stages of the League when it is a bit more demanding than just challenges.

Now, now, aren't you almost forgetting that there is the under-21 championship—but you are reminded by a note from your county secretary who tells you the details of practice, challenges, etc., and the date for the first championship engagement.

The first rounds of the county championships are already upon your University club, meantime, with other rounds to follow, probably. But, here is an insistent note from your home club secretary that tells you he has been able to persuade the Boards in your home county to grant postponements until you are free to get home and play for them—and

they expect to do well this year in minor and under-21 as well as senior. Oh, and since you did not play senior championship last year, you will be able to line out with the juniors in the first round of that championship, at least.

Just about this time you are informed that since there has been a defection from the All-Stars side to travel to San Francisco, you have been nominated to go as replacement.

Suddenly, complications arise: the county minors draw their first game in the championship; the under-21 match is abandoned because of failing light ten minutes from the end. At a later stage, the county seniors draw their second round match. And while all that is happening, the club minors have to replay their championship game because of an objection, the juniors draw their match, and the senior match was abandoned five minutes from the end when the crowd rushed the pitch.

At which point, having heard the bad news that you have failed your examinations because of lack of time to study, you have a total physical and mental breakdown. And the man who comes to see you when you are convalescing does you no good at all by saying: "You know, you can consider yourself lucky; suppose now that you had been equally good at both hurling and football—that's when you'd have something to worry about." While you are laid up, incidentally, you missed the Gaeltacht tournament with your club, the Wembley tournament with your county, the Special M.F. League with your county team, three suit length tournaments with your club and one Church Building Fund tournament, and you had to decline an invitation to go to play in New York, all expenses paid.

DURACK MAINTAINS GREAT TRADITION

By OWEN McCANN

OVER the past few seasons many long-serving footballers and hurlers, some past the 30 years mark, have been consistently grabbing the inter-county spotlight, and showing the youngsters a thing or two. Nevertheless, the future of the games is still in safe hands, for throughout the country are the exciting young men with the skills and the individual flair necessary to make the legends of tomorrow.

Only last month I spotlighted one such youngster, Tyrone's teenage football midfielder Frank McGuigan, and almost before my remarks had appeared in print, he was further emphasising his tremendous potential in far-off San Francisco in an All Stars jersey against Offaly. Now, what price young Seamus Durack, the Clare hurling goalkeeper, to take his place in the near future in an All Stars line-up?

Durack, like McGuigan, has not let the grass grow under his feet. He has not reaped any harvest so far in inter-county medals, for it is some years since Clare last won an important title, but this has not prevented him from matching skills and wits with opposing finishers with a degree of poise and dependability that is rare for one so young.

Indeed, the fact that the Clare No. 1 has greatly impressed many shrewd judges, and collected two Munster jerseys into the bargain,

despite his county's lack of important successes, is all the more a measure of his rare gifts. After all, it is invariably easier to star in a winning combination than to consistently deliver the goods with a side struggling for the big breakthrough.

One of the best judges of hurling and hurlers I know is Jimmy Smyth, himself a Clare man, and who walked tall during a great career with such legendary figures as Christy Ring (Cork), John Doyle (Tipperary) and Wexford's Tim Flood and Nick Rackard.

Jimmy won no fewer than eight Railway Cup medals between 1952 and 1963, and is now on the Croke Park staff. A few months ago when I interviewed him for GAELIC SPORT he had this to say of Durack:

"He is on a par, if not better, than many of the great goalkeepers Clare have had."

That's praise, indeed, especially when it is remembered that down the years Clare, the county of one of the greatest goalkeepers of them all, Dr. Tommy Daly, has been brilliantly served by the men who have soldiered in the vital gap.

But that it was well deserved was clearly evident to even the most casual observer of hurling seeing Durack in the national limelight for the first time in the Railway Cup. He was one of Munster's best performers in

their failure to Leinster in the final.

The new Clare star has himself succeeded one of the county's big name goalkeepers — Pascal O'Brien, who wore the Munster jersey in the 1971 Railway Cup. Soon after that competition, Seamus Durack, who had earlier appeared with the county senior squad in competitive hurling, settled in as O'Brien's successor in the premier side.

In the meantime, he has steadily and efficiently sharpened up his many strong points—instant reflexes, brilliant saving, coolness, daring, sure-catching and swift and deliberate clearances. And, it was certainly not his fault that Clare, after a great start to the 1972-73 National League, failed in the end to get into the hunt for the "big kill".

In the county's failures to Wexford at Ennis in February, and especially in the loss to Kilkenny in the final game in Kilkenny in March, his work had the touch of the master. In fact, he was not beaten once by the Noreside finishers.

The bright young jewel from the Banner county, who is this month's Cut-Out in Jack Mahon's popular Junior Desk, has himself a good idea of what a forward needs to find his way through to goal.

I remember him playing in attack for Clare in a classic game with Tipperary last July in the Munster Under-21 final. He

FIXTURES WANTED

● The Editor invites Clubs everywhere to avail themselves of "Fixtures Wanted" corner. Address your requests, with full details, to :

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80 Upr. Drumcondra
Road, Dublin 9.

finished as his team's top scorer with 1-3. It was not good enough to prevent Tipperary from lifting the title, but the match further emphasised the natural talent and genuine class of Durack.

One way or another, though, Seamus Durack, with his expert judgment and growing expertise, is himself now destined to carve out a lasting place among the goalkeeping giants of hurling . . . another in the great tradition of Clare stars in the last line of defence.

A Chara—The Rathmore club fields teams in under 12, under 14, under 16, minor and two adult teams. We would be interested in:

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(3) Going on a weekend trip to a club from outside Kerry.

You may contact me (chairman) regarding any of the above.

DAN V. O'CONNOR

Barraduff,
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A Chara—We would welcome fixtures on nearly all

Sundays of the coming season. The only Sundays we couldn't play would be those when County Championship games and Armagh's County games were being played. We are in a Football County, yet we can field teams independent of footballers. We have under 12, 14, 16, Minor teams and for purposes of playing down South we would class our Adult team as being Junior Grade. We're willing to accept teams up to Armagh and we'll travel as far south as is feasible in one day. We could perhaps arrange half-way venues. All enquiries to myself as Match Secretary.

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Dear Moondharrig . .

As one who always enjoys reading your article in GAELIC SPORT, I must confess to being amazed to read the following: "Only once in the past 40 years has a professional man sought the highest office in the G.A.A."

That was an extraordinary and erroneous statement indeed.

Do you not consider teaching a profession? It may not be as lucrative as medicine or as well

thought of, in the "circles" you allude to, but it has always been, in Christian times, accepted as a profession and by thinking people as one of the noblest of the professions.

The Greeks, of course, did not accept the teacher as a professional perhaps, but certainly 99.9% of people to-day, I think, would accept that Alf Murray, Seamus Ryan, etc. are members of a profession and, in fact, I

would imagine they would feel a bit hurt at your remarks.

However, I suppose even Homer nods occasionally, so we make the point without malice and hope to read and enjoy your articles in the future.

Yours, etc.

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ONCE again it is the time of year when the sunshine begins to show up the cracks in the paintwork, the carpet seems to be definitely faded, if not threadbare, and when the wallpaper seems to have finally succumbed to the grubby hands of the children.

Running repairs can only achieve so much. What is really needed and what is often cheaper in the long run is redecoration.

This may not be as big a job as it sounds. On a recent visit to Monzell Mitchells, Pearse Street, Dublin, I was pleasantly surprised to see that very many of the products are designed to cater for what could be termed the intermittent handyman—that is the handyman who is persuaded by the wife to remember each Spring those techniques of decoration he has just managed to forget.

A good example of this is the Crown Wallpaper you don't have to paste. It is already pasted and all you have to do is to unroll it onto the wall from a special trough (provided free of charge) which you have filled with water.

Monzell Mitchells have expanded their wallpaper section in the last few years and can provide expert advice on how to achieve

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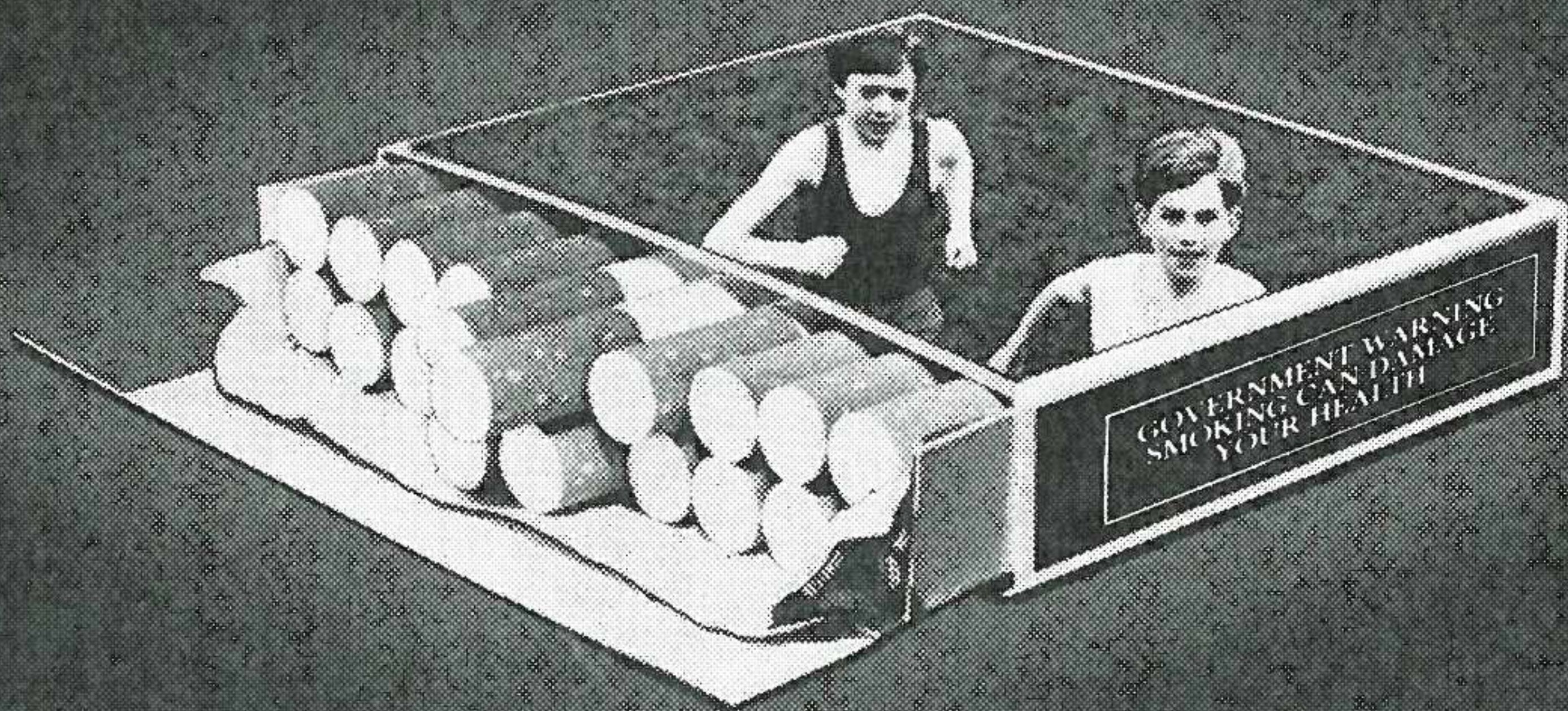
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JUNIOR DESK



By
**JACK
MAHON**

AT last — we have a Clare Cut-out. Clare's star goalkeeper Séamus Durack. What a wonderful little goalkeeper. Was he ever better than against Limerick in the championship at Ennis last year? Such courage. I watched the Clare v Galway S.H.L. game in Galway before Christmas in the company of Seanie Duggan, Galway's great goalkeeper of yore. One of Durack's saves on that occasion drew spontaneous applause from Duggan. Class recognising class. In presenting this first Clare full page Cut-out, I would like to place on record my appreciation of the many loyal young readers of Junior Desk in Clare. The county has a great Gaelic tradition especially West Clare with its association with Irish music and the old style Irish dancing.

PRIZE LETTERS

Keep on writing letters. This month I ask all young readers to write a short letter (not more than 100 words) on "What I would like in Junior Desk". For the 10 best suggestions I will give a prize of **An Deiseach—the 1973 Waterford G.A.A. Yearbook**. So get busy. Write about anything you'd like to see in Junior Desk. Wives of stars. Girl friends. Photos of stars at their work. A pen friend section. The forwarding address will be given at the end of the

column. All letters to be in by May 10th.

CAD IS AINM DÓ?

Last month we introduced Gael Linn's weekly personality poser "Cad is ainm dó". It proved very interesting and we will continue to include these brain-teasers in the months ahead. Try the following 5 G.A.A. teasers and see how good you are before looking at the answers.

1. Last year he played no small part in helping his province achieve its most notable victory in almost a quarter of a century. He thus became the first man from his county to win a coveted award while playing with that province.
2. A dual performer, he has represented his county with distinction in both codes. He is also a noted athlete and has gained four Irish titles in different field events. On one occasion he helped his club win a senior championship game and that same afternoon won four county championship titles in athletics.
3. An outstanding past player, his place kicking played no small part in helping his county to win its two Senior All-Ireland triumphs. Later he established himself as one of the top administrators in the G.A.A. It is possible that this year he may bring even greater honour to himself and to his county.

(The above teaser was set in March. The honour predicted may now belong to the man in question!)

4. One of the most exciting and talented young players in the G.A.A., he played in four different championship grades last year. He won two provincial titles with his county and was unlucky not to have led one of the teams to victory in an All-Ireland final.
5. For almost a decade and a half he has given sterling service to his county as a player and in later years as a player and an administrator. Three times he was honoured by being picked on the Combined Universities team and has won one provincial championship and two National League medals. To show he still enjoys his football he was top scorer in the provincial championships last year although his team didn't reach the final.
(Correct answers at end of column).

G.A.A. YEARBOOKS

The trend continues. More and more county G.A.A. Year-Books appear. This month I am reviewing three more. And I'm told Kildare and Westmeath have produced one for their respective counties. (Would their editors please send on copies if they want them reviewed).

(1) **MAYO G.A.A. YEAR-BOOK 1972** (35p includes post-

● TO PAGE 51

CUT-OUT - - - - -



★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ **SEAMUS DURACK, CLARE**

● FROM PAGE 49

age from Tom Courell, Editor, Castlebar, Co. Mayo).

The high points of this—the third—Mayo G.A.A. Annual are: (1) A very comprehensive and detailed two-page analysis of club affairs in Mayo in 1972, listing club officials, teams fielded, objectives, activities, etc. I found this most interesting and recommend it to other Yearbook editors.

(ii) A tough, straight-from-the-shoulder article by Mick Connaughton of Claremorris entitled "Why I Quit" in which he tells the story of his being attacked after refereeing the drawn Galway v Roscommon game in Roscommon last summer and the subsequent handling of the affair by the Connacht Council. I have always thought the Connacht Council handled this affair very badly indeed. No wonder Mick Connaughton felt a grouse. If we don't back our referees and protect them in every way then we may as well suspend our games. It is a very honest article. I liked, too, the statistical section and the profiles of Paddy Moclair, Big Pat McAndrew from Bangor, Tony Henry the hurler from Tooreen and Ned Flynn's article on refereeing.

(2) AN DÉISEACH—WATERFORD G.A.A. YEARBOOK, 1973. (Price 40p does not include postage from S. Ó Braonáin, Editor, Abbeyside, Dungarvan, Co. Waterford)

Quite superb—the best county G.A.A. Yearbook I have yet seen. (See Owen McCann's review on page 17)

(3) OFFALY GAELIC GAMES ANNUAL (35p includes postage) (Editor: Rev. William Behan,

The Presbytery, Summerhill, Co. Meath).

This—Offaly's first official Co. Board publication—is a credit to Editor Rev. W. Behan. Well laid-out on quality paper, it carries many tributes to the present all-conquering Offaly football team. Its team of writers includes the top daily men: Paddy Downey, Tom Browne, John D. Hickey, Padhraic Puirseál and Donal Carroll. What I liked best were all the newsy little fillers at the ends of articles, the San Francisco story by Nicholas Clavin, the fine behind-the-scenes article entitled "The Background

to Triumph" by Green Flag, the Hurling Review by Br. Denis, the "Magnificent Seven" All Star centrepiece which could be framed in every Offaly house, and a history of the games in the Offaly Vocational Schools by Donncha Mac Suibhne, C.E.O. No sphere of G.A.A. activity is omitted. The old (Mick Casey of Rhode), the exile (The London Letter), primary schools, Refereeing (Mick Spain), Handball, Offaly's men in New York, an Offaly Quiz (tough enough too) . . . All in all an outstanding first production.

From the Mailbag

This month we are offering 10 prizes in the Prize Letter Section—a copy of the recently produced Mayo G.A.A. Yearbook for the ten lucky ones. So here goes:

Harry Kavanagh, Wexford Rd., Arklow, Co. Wicklow. "Tony Doran is the best forward in the game."

Gerry Pender, Ballymorris Upper, Aughrim, Arklow, Co. Wicklow. "Why aren't G.A.A. players fashion-conscious?"

● *We are improving here, Gerry, especially at the major games but there is still great room for improvement. Offaly set a great example. (J.M.)*

Michael Mulvihill, Shronowen, Listowel, Co. Kerry. "I would like to get a Kerry jersey."

● *Don't tell me that in this day and age it is not possible to get a Kerry jersey for a young boy in Listowel. (J.M.)*

Joseph Woods, Cloneyogan, Lahinch, Co. Clare. "The Letter of the Month idea is great. Great to see a Belfast man among the Cut-Outs. I hope its a Clareman soon. Michael Moroney was very

unlucky to lose his All-Star trip. How come Denis Coughlan was selected despite his being sent to the line last year?"

● *Joseph, you always set us thinking. This month's Cut-Out should please you a lot. Yes, it was tough luck on Michael Moroney but I don't know the facts so I won't comment. About the Denis Coughlan incident obviously the All-Star selectors felt he was sent to the line in error. (J.M.)*

"Offaly Admirer", 9 Dunville Ave., Ranelagh, Dublin 6. "I enjoy Junior Desk and wish all the sportswriters were as exact as you. Owen McCann was in error recently when he stated Offaly won an Under-21 football title. In fact Derry beat them in a final by 3-9 to 1-9."

● *Owen McCann is human. Still he is THE greatest G.A.A. statistician and started it all. Top Scorers, I mean, etc. For good or bad! (J.M.)*

Jack Naughton, Brackagh, Horseleap, Moate, Co. Westmeath. "Could we have Cut-outs of Dermot Earley and Peter

● OVERLEAF

JUNIOR DESK :: JUNIOR DESK :: JUNIOR DESK

● FROM OVERLEAF

McGinnitty (Fermanagh)?
Where can I get the Westmeath
G.A.A. Yearbook?"

● *I'd like to know the latter myself.*
(J.M.)

Eithne Roche, Emanc, Bel-
clare, Co. Galway. "I enjoy
GAELIC SPORT every month."

John Coleman, The Square,
Dunmore, Co. Galway. "Dun-
more is the best town in Ireland
for football. Can any other little
town boast of so many stars,
present and past?"

● *I won't disagree!* (J.M.)

Billy Moran, Ballyspillane,
Midleton, Co. Cork. "I am 13 and
in 6th class and play on the
school team. I want a Cut-out of
Mick Roche."

● *Hope Mick is back again soon.*
(J.M.)

Bob Condon, Ballintotas,
Castlemartyr, Co. Cork. "I love
GAELIC SPORT and we get
'Solo', too. When I come home
in the evenings I do the jobs on
the farm. I can drive the tractor.
My favourite hurlers are
Brian Murphy and Mick Malone."
● *Keep doing the jobs on the farm
every evening. How many thousands
of city boys would love to be with
you and can't.* (J.M.)

Mortimer Kelleher, 2 Alverna,
Mardyke Walk, Cork City. "When
I grow up I would like to have
a Quiz column on Gaelic Sport
and even I might take over from
Tommy McQuaid as Editor."

● *Now, Tommy, you have a con-
tender for the hot seat.* (J.M.)

Michael Kirby, Lisnally, Ros-
brien, Co. Limerick. "I am glad
the row over Joe McGrath is
over."

● *So am I.* (J.M.)

Michael McGrath, Ox-Park,
Cloughjordan, Co. Tipperary.
"The Letter of the Month is a
fine idea. Please use more
colour photos and less ads. Have
a 'My favourite player' column
or a 'Mystery Man' column."

Kevin Gallen, Hazelwood,
Lough Gill, Sligo. "I think the

cover photo of the March issue
with the sextet of Cork's All-
Stars was great."

Liam Jones, Derryoran, Mount-
shannon, Co. Clare. "The March
cover was marvellous."

Michael Collins, Sherkin
Island, Skibbereen, Co. Cork.
"Players should have the proper
numbers on their jerseys for all
G.A.A. games."

● *I couldn't agree more. We don't
attach enough importance to proper
dress and correct numbering.* (J.M.)

Bertie Cassidy, St. Macartan's
College, Monaghan. "There is
not enough of a relationship be-
tween the G.A.A. and other Irish
cultural organisations. Biling-
ualism should be more common
in the G.A.A. Our rich musical
heritage should be exploited
more. Less ads, please and more
pictures."

● *Any relation of Bert Cassidy, the
former Fermanagh star, a great
friend of my late brother, Fr. Paddy
Mahon?* (J.M.)

Eileen Walsh, Colmcille's Hos-
pital, Loughlinstown, Co. Dublin.
"I want to join a Camogie club."

● *Camogie authorities please note.*
(J.M.)

RESULTS OF

CAD IS AIMN DO

- (1) Jim Wall (Waterford)
- (2) Bernie Hartigan (Limerick)
- (3) Dr. Donal Keenan (Roscom-
mon).
- (4) Frank McGuigan (Tyrone)
- (5) Sean Donnelly (Longford)

P.S. Had cards from Mick O'Con-
nell from New Zealand and
Honolulu. We will get him
to talk of his travels on
Junior Desk later, D.V.

THE LUCKY TEN

The lucky ten are: Gerry Pen-
der, Joseph Woods, John Cole-
man, Billy Moran, Bob Condon,
Mortimer Kelleher, Michael
McGrath, Kevin Gallen, Michael
Collins and Bertie Cassidy.

I have already mentioned the
top 10 letters for the June issue.

So keep the pens busy and re-
member the subject—"What I
would like in Junior Desk".

Write to —

Junior Desk,
c/o Gaelic Sport,
80 Upper Drumcondra Rd.,
Dublin 9.

Till next month slán agaibh
go léir.

Jack Mahon

Cuimhní Cinn
Udar Ghaeltachta

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