

JANUARY, 1977

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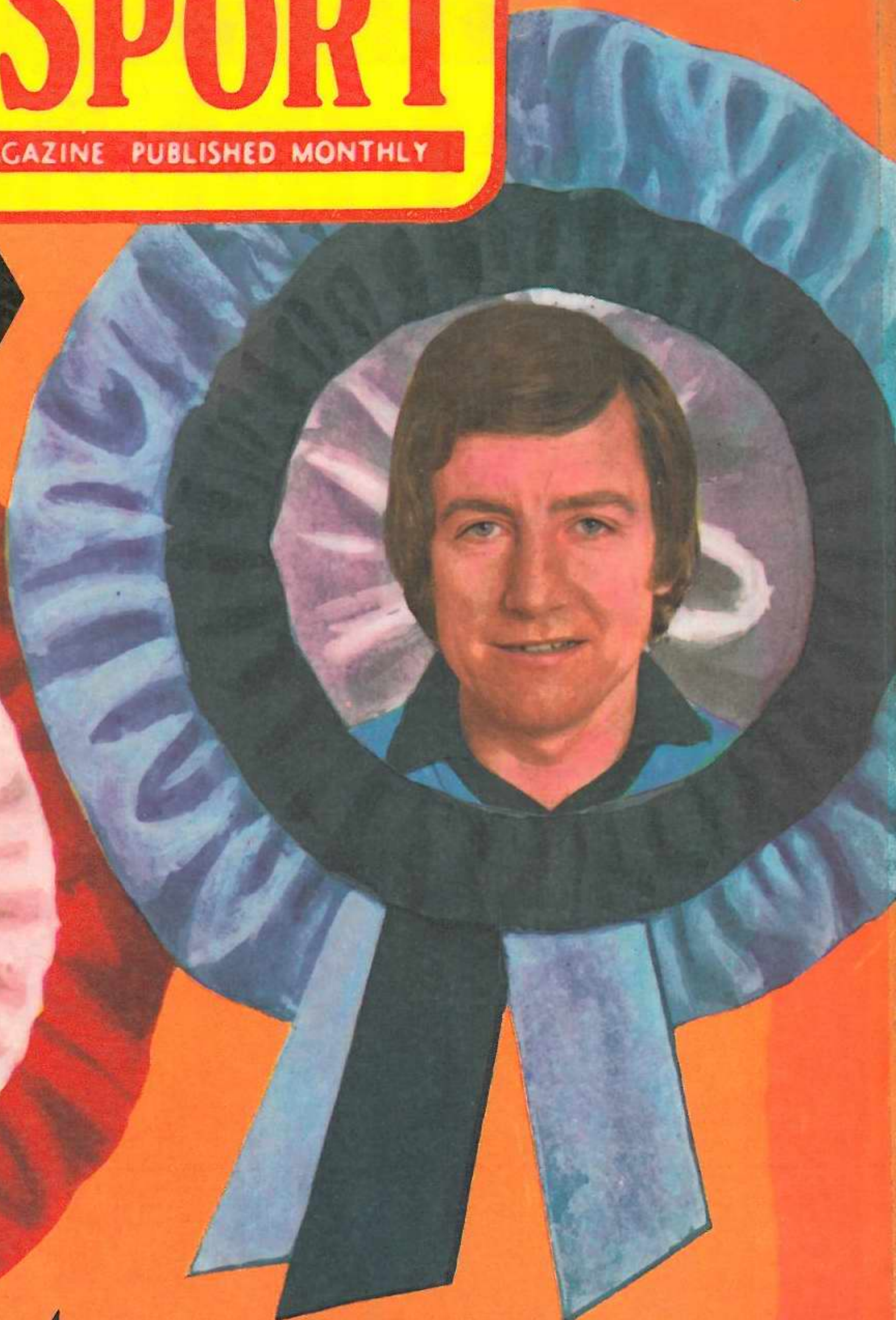
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GAELIC SPORT

IRELAND'S LEADING GAELIC GAMES MAGAZINE PUBLISHED MONTHLY

GAY O'DRISCOLL 

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★



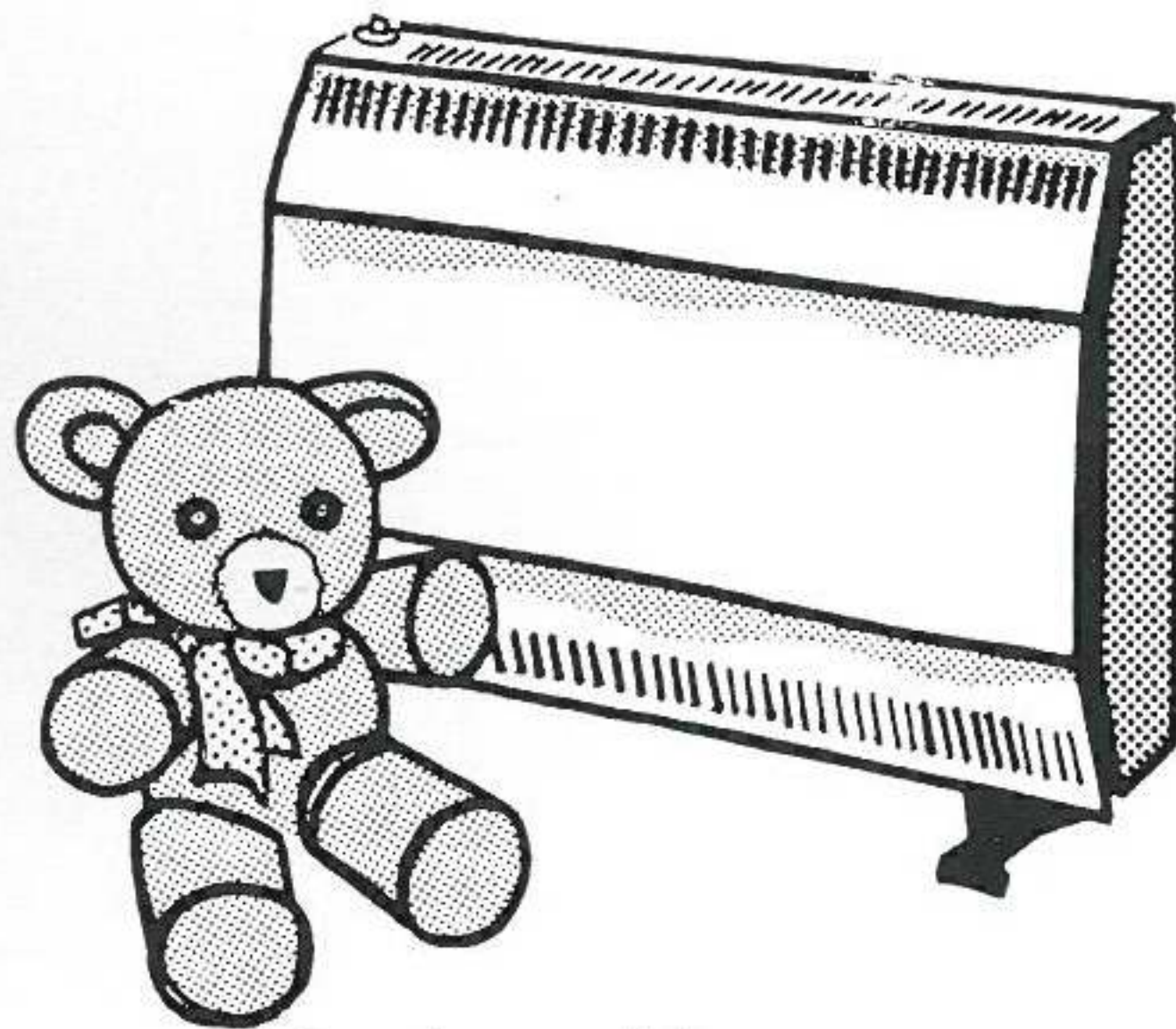
DENIS COUGHLAN 

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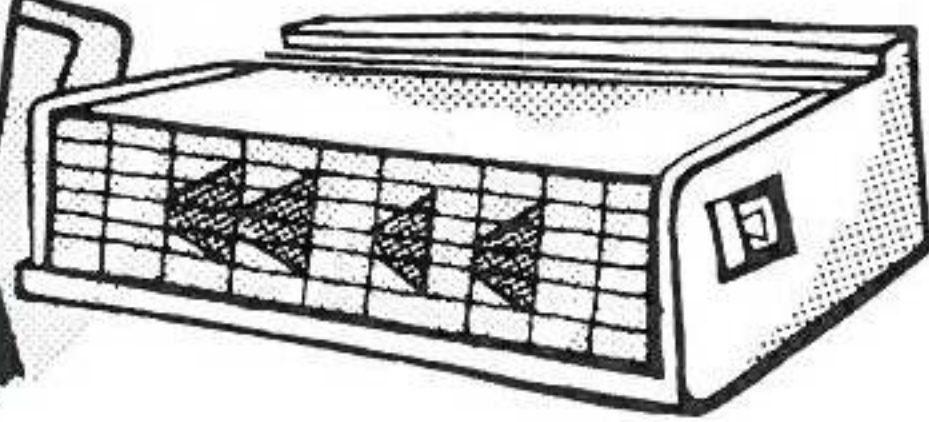
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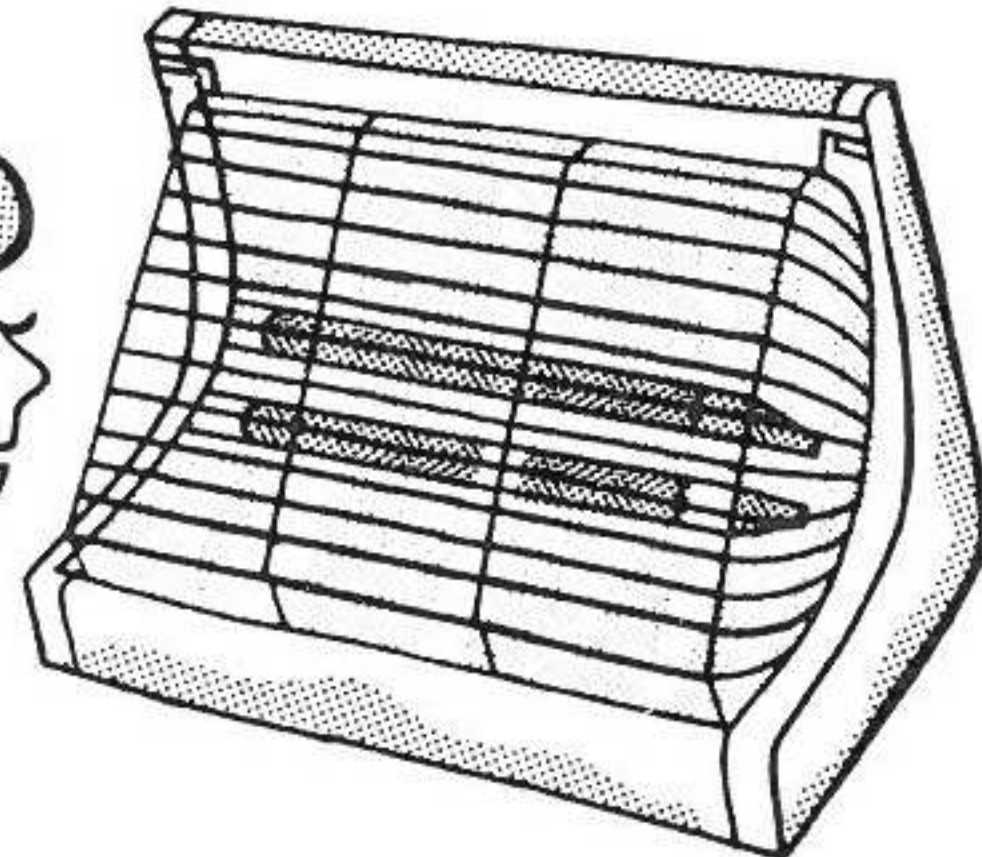
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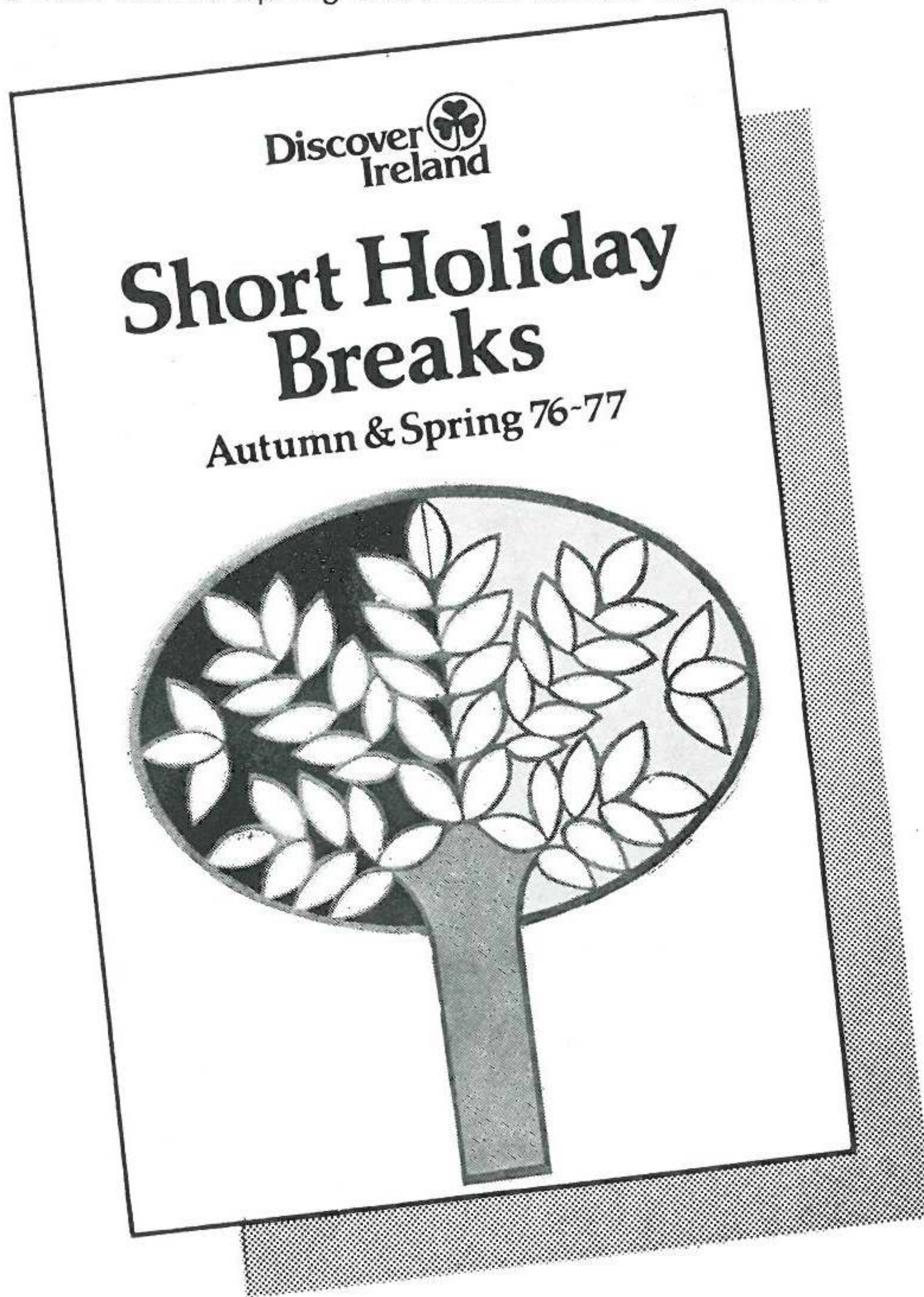


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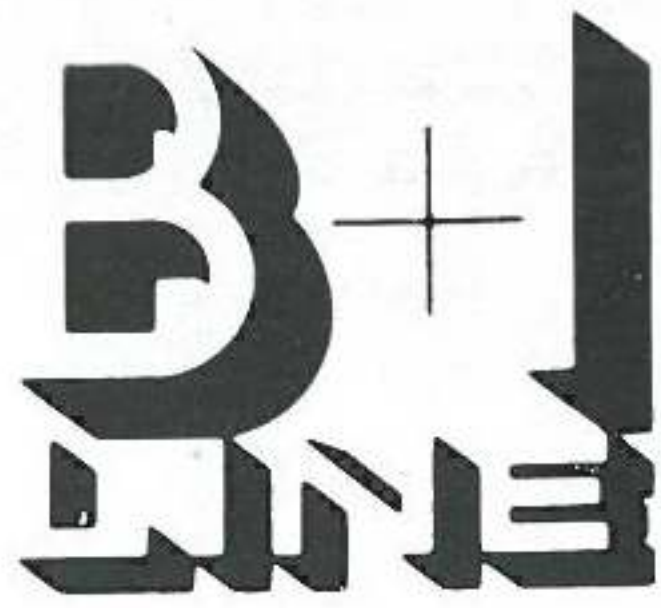
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Kevin Moran (Dublin), Pat Moylan (Cork),
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Gaelic Sport

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CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
<i>Andy Croak</i>	4
<i>Top Ten of the Year</i>	5
<i>Consistent form put Gay in front</i> — by Jim Bennett ...	9
<i>Handball Chiefs Chase the Girls</i> —by Sean Clerkin	13
<i>Ladies Please</i> —by Kitty Murphy	14
<i>Moondharrig's Diary</i>	17
<i>Ulster, Connacht set a headline</i> —by Mick Dunne	21
<i>Denis Coughlan—our Hurler of the 1976 Season</i> —by Eamonn Young	24
<i>The Future of Dublin Hurling</i> —by Mick Dunne	28
<i>The Camogie Scene</i> —by Agnes Hourigan	31
<i>Guaranteed Irish</i>	33
<i>Savings and Investment</i> —by K. M. Clarke	35
<i>Farm Buildings</i>	37
<i>On The Spot</i> —compiled by Tony Keegan	39
<i>Rob the Rich to feed the Poor</i> —by Jay Drennan	42
<i>Enjoy the game at your leisure</i>	44
<i>Junior Desk</i> —edited by Jack Mahon	45
<i>Colour Cut-Out</i>	49

THE exciting series of matches that marked the pre-Christmas programme of the National Football League helped to hammer home just what great potential this competition has as a vehicle to keep Gaelic football firmly ahead of its competitors.

But by no stretch of the imagination can it be said that the Football League is realising anything like its full potential in this regard under the present structure.

The chief aim of any League should surely be to maintain the interest of all teams for as long as possible. Only in this way can a League competition generate the type of consistent talking points and interest necessary to ensure that the competing teams in general and the game in particular benefit to the fullest possible effect.

Yet, as we stand on the threshold of a New Year, and with the Football League final still over three months away, we have already reached the ridiculous position that as many as 17 counties have bid farewell to title hopes for the 1976-77 season.

Even more depressing is the fact that many of these counties will not have a single competitive game at senior level as a result until the Championships start in early summer.

The present arrangement, of course, has the merit of smoothing the way for the American tour in May. But is this too high a price to pay to accommodate the U.S. trip?

We have no wish to belittle the efforts of the Exiles in the U.S. They are keeping the games going there against great odds and deserve encouragement — not criticism.

Equally, we are still in favour of hurlers and footballers gaining as many rewards as possible for the time and effort they are putting into the national games. This is all the more important, in fact, in these days when players in other sports are in line for attractive tours abroad.

At the same time, the over-riding commitment of all should be to the general body of players at home, the backbone of the G.A.A. In other words, what we need is a League plan that will ensure that the counties generally are fully occupied over a much longer season than is the case at present.

As it is, while the top counties are getting plenty of action at present, the lesser lights need more matches than is the case under the current set-up.

By all means, let's keep the U.S. tour as a top priority. But let the lesson of the present unsatisfactory situation that will see so many senior teams out of competitive fare for much of the opening months of 1977 be learned, and acted on for the future.

We don't intend to make any suggestions here as to proposals for a new look National League in football. Suffice to say that the time is ripe for a radical re-appraisal — a re-appraisal that will result in a better deal all round for ALL the counties.

COVER PHOTO

ON our front cover this month we proudly feature our Top Ten Stars of '76, both in football and hurling. Unlike other G.A.A. awards, the Top Ten winners emerge from points accrued over a full playing season—not just the more glamorous big-match occasions. Consistency throughout the entire season is necessary to triumph. Bearing that in mind, we feel sure there will be few to argue about our winners—Gay O'Driscoll (Dublin) and Denis Coughlan (Cork). Well done lads!

ANDY CROAK

The writer with the rasping comment

I WILL kick off with an apology to my wide and devoted circle of readers. As you can see, my column is cut back to half its usual length in this issue, and no doubt you will assume that this has something to do with the Christmas festivities.

Well, I did have a nice time, thank you, but Croak is not the sort of fellow who shirks his duty because of the effects of a couple of jugs of punch or a few glasses of hot claret

The truth of the matter is this. I was left utterly speechless for two weeks at least by the fervour and vigour of the G.A.A.'s most recent campaign to clean up their games.

I am referring, of course, to the suspension of Cork's Gerald McCarthy because he used a few rude words to the referee at a National Hurling League game last October. Fan Larkin of Kilkenny was also hauled up for some alleged offence of the same kind.

MUST PRESS ON

Bravo, the G.A.A. must press on in this direction with all the determination and resources at their command.

And they must not be diverted from their course by any silly talk about the so-called misconduct of players striking one another with fists or hurley and tripping, ankle-tapping and pull-

ing down in the fashion of the rugby tackle.

All that is a part of the game. You see, football and hurling are still he-men's games, so don't mind what the namby-pamby fellows tell you. If you can't take a sly dig in the ribs or a punch on the snout, you shouldn't be out there playing among men.

The association's main aim now is to stamp out the four-letter word. I say they should place an outright ban on it. After all, it is not racy of the soil. The ban could be introduced simply by sending motions forward to Congress from the conventions.

BAN THE "MOTION"

Come to think of it, the word "motion" itself could be banned, too. Because it is really only a euphemism for another nasty four-letter word.

Is motion-speaking still a part of the Scór competitions

My comments on the Carrolls All-Star football team in our last issue have brought several letters from readers. Almost all of them deplore the omission of Ulster players from the selection. And hard words are also spoken about the passing over of the Dublin full forward, Jimmy Keaveney.

Because of lack of space in this issue, I will quote from only one of the letters. I will print extracts from the others next month.

BIG EFFORT TO CLEAN UP POLLUTED PITCHES

Marie Dunk (that seems to be the surname), of 15 Loreto Crescent, Rathfarnham, Dublin, writes:

"I agree with what you said about the selection of the Carrolls All-Stars. In my opinion the selectors did a very bad job this year and I think that a team representing the country in the U.S.A. should have footballers from each province.

"I think it was disgraceful that not one player was picked from Derry. Even though I am not a Derry supporter I think they have some very fine players, as I have seen them in action many times e.g. Anthony McGurk and Gerry McElhinney.

BEST IN IRELAND

"I agree with you that it was a thundering disgrace that full forward Jimmy Keaveney was not selected, for I think that he is the best in Ireland.

"I think there should be a vote by the people who see their teams in action. At the time of the selection there should be a form in the daily newspapers for people who have a real interest in Gaelic football to fill in. I am sure there would be a big difference in the team from what the Carroll's selectors pick."

Thanks, Marie. I'll reserve my comment on your idea until a later date.

It could happen you'll win the prize—I mean take the biscuit.

Gaelic Sport-stars of 1976

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

O'Driscoll and Coughlan tops

THE past year ranks as the season of the defender in football and hurling. Not only have Gay O'Driscoll and Denis Coughlan emerged as the GAELIC SPORT stars of 1976, chosen through our Top Ten ratings, which are based on performances over the year as a whole, and not just on a few of the more important matches of the campaign, but defensive stars dominate the hurling line-up, and one of the joint runners-up in football is Anthony McGurk.

O'Driscoll gained a total of 27 points to finish five points ahead of McGurk and Pat Spillane. He made his entry into the charts for the first time in June with his highest listing of the year on eight points, and he won his place in three subsequent reviews — September, October and November.

Although Denis Coughlan was inactive for all of the pre-Christmas National League programme he still had enough points to his credit earlier in the season to enable him to resolutely just hold off the challenges of all comers in hurling. Eight points back in May helped the Cork half back to his present position — on a 23 points ranking.

He also boosted his prospects by gaining nine points, his highest of the year, in the September table for his superb role in Cork's win over Limerick in the Munster final at Pairc Ui Chaoimh early in August.

Coughlan just pipped Ger Henderson, who finished a point behind in second place in hurling. The young Kilkenny star lost a chance to edge through when injury kept him out of his



● Brian Mullins
(Dublin)

● John Horgan
(Cork)

county's concluding game of the year in the National League against Wexford at Nowlan Park in November.

Henderson made his first appearance in April when he gained six points. He added to his record with places in the charts of August (8 points) and November (8 points).

McGurk's high position was helped along by a stellar show back in April. His power-packed display at centre half in a dramatic Derry win over Cork in the National League semi-final put the Ulster man on top of the May football line-up with nine points.



Paddy Moriarty
(Armagh)

He followed on by winning his place in the August and September charts with six and seven points respectively.

Pat Spillane just joined McGurk on the post by winning five points in the current table. He first found favour in April, and the latest entry marks the young Kerryman's fourth appearance.

Hurling provided quite a wide spread of counties with 76 players from fifteen counties finding favour. Cork, Clare and Kilkenny lead with eleven hurlers, honoured, and Cork also boast the only hurler to win maximum points in any one month.

Pat Moylan earned that unique position after his wonderful show when helping the Leesiders to their never-to-be-forgotten All-Ireland senior final win over Wexford.

Nevertheless, that achievement was still not enough to help the Blackrock midfielder into the final Top Ten of 1976.

The only footballer to match the Moylan feat of maximum points was Brian Mullins. Remember his magnificent contribution to that splendid Dublin win over Kerry for the Sam Maguire Cup?

● TO PAGE 7

**look
forward
to the
future...**

...with the friendly



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● FROM PAGE 5

Superb fielding, a high work-rate, and a capital goal plus a point clinched the accolade for the big St. Vincent's man as Gaelic Sport star of the final, and with it ten points in the November table.

Dublin had more players honoured than any county in either code. In all, thirteen gained places in the chart, with eight appearing more than once.

Kerry take second place in football, with ten players, but surprisingly enough, only three, Michael Sheehy, Pat Spillane and Ger Power, were included more than once in these monthly reviews.

A total of 78 footballers drawn from twenty counties featured over the year.

Only two men, however, found favour in both football and hurling. Pat Dunny had the rare distinction of winning a place in both codes in the same month—June.

He gained seven points for his part in a history-making Kildare win over Dublin at Aughrim in May that gave the county their first Leinster senior hurling championship success. Earlier, a good display in Kildare's O'Byrne Cup final win over Wexford at Wexford at the end of April saw the versatile dual-player from the "short grass" county hold down a place in football in June on six points.

Another on six points in June in football was John Galvin, who capped a fine display in Waterford's surprise Munster championship win over Tipperary at Dungarvan in May by shooting six points. He made his only entry in hurling in November on seven points.

THE FINAL PLACINGS

FOOTBALL

- 27 G. O'Driscoll (Dublin).
- 22 A. McGurk (Derry).
- 22 P. Spillane (Kerry).
- 19 A. O'Toole (Dublin).
- 19 T. McGuinness (Derry).
- 19 P. Moriarty (Armagh).

- 19 J. Duggan (Galway).
- 18 B. Mullins (Dublin).
- 15 K. Moran (Dublin).
- 15 D. McCarthy (Cork).

HURLING

- 23 D. Coughlan (Cork).
- 22 G. Henderson (Kilkenny).
- 21 P. Hartigan (Limerick).
- 21 J. O'Gorman (Clare).
- 20 J. Horgan (Cork).
- 20 M. Jacob (Wexford).
- 19 B. Murphy (Cork).
- 19 L. O'Brien (Kilkenny).
- 18 E. Cregan (Limerick).
- 16 T. Doran (Wexford).

THIS MONTH'S RATINGS

FOOTBALL

- 8 T. O'Malley (Mayo) 8

- 8 R. Whitley (Cork) 8
- 7 F. McGuigan (Tyrone) 13
- 7 J. O'Gara (Roscommon) ... 7
- 6 T. Drumm (Dublin) 13
- 6 M. Martin (Leitrim) 12
- 6 J. Cassells (Meath) 6
- 5 P. Spillane (Kerry) 22
- 5 P. Moriarty (Armagh) ... 19
- 5 J. Duggan (Galway) 19

HURLING

- 8 N. Skehan (Kilkenny) ... 8
- 8 P. McLoughney (Tipperary) 8
- 8 J. Keogh (Tipperary) 8
- 7 P. J. Molloy (Galway) ... 13
- 7 M. Moroney (Clare) 7
- 6 J. O'Gorman (Clare) 21
- 6 E. Grimes (Limerick) 6
- 6 G. Lohan (Clare) 6
- 5 M. Jacob (Wexford) 20
- 5 E. Donnelly (Antrim) 5

LEADING GROUP

At this juncture it is interesting to take a look briefly at the careers of some of the men who dominate the Top Ten line-up for 1976.

Gay O'Driscoll was born in County Cork, but has played all his football and hurling in Dublin. He had a great year in 1976, winning All-Ireland senior medals with St. Vincent's and Dublin, as well as a National League souvenir.

In the inter-county senior ranks since 1966, Gay helped Dublin to their last three Leinster senior football titles, and he was also to the fore in the 1974 Sam Maguire Cup break-through. A Carrolls All Star of 1975, he has played for Leinster in the Railway Cup, and has represented Dublin as well in senior hurling.

This consistent defender, who will be 31 in March, won seven county senior football championship medals, and one senior hurling award with his club.

Denis Coughlan took his place among the exclusive ranks of players who have played on All-Ireland senior title winning

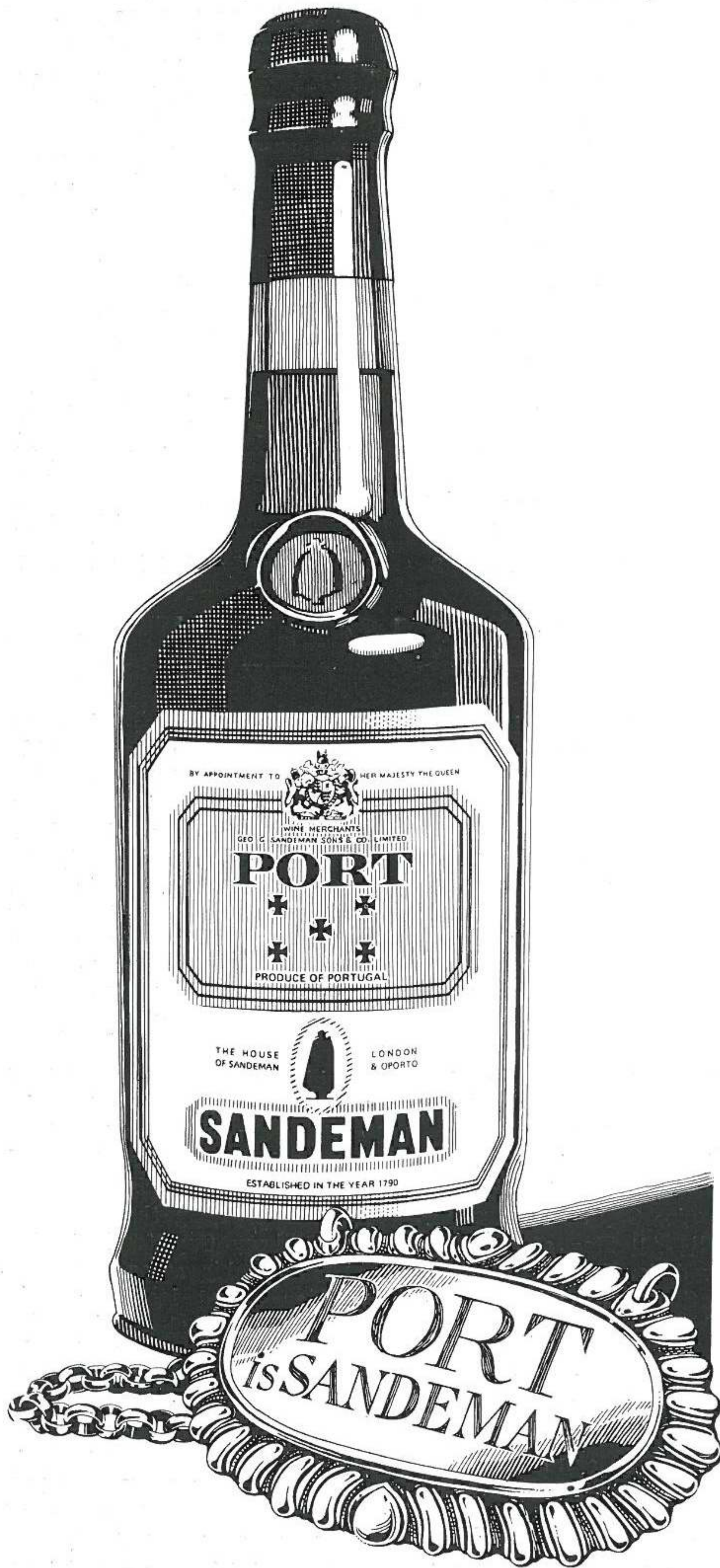
teams in both codes when he helped Cork to that memorable win over Wexford last September. He was at midfield when the county won the All-Ireland senior football championship for the first time in 28 years in 1973.

The Glen Rovers club man is 31. He won an All-Ireland under-21 championship medal in 1966, and also appeared in the senior inter-county grade that year. The following senior football championship campaign he captained Cork, who were beaten by Meath, in the All-Ireland decider.

Denis has won two National Hurling League medals, was in the Munster team that won the 1972 Railway Cup football title, and gained his second Carrolls All Star award last month in hurling. He was also in the Glen Rovers team that brought the All-Ireland club senior title to Cork in 1973.

Ger Henderson is one of the most exciting young talents in senior hurling. A brother of Pat, he won All-Ireland under 21 medals in 1974 and 1975. Now firmly established as a first team

● OVERLEAF



● FROM PAGE 7

regular, Ger, who was a member of the official All-Ireland senior title winning panel of 1975, but did not play in the win over Galway, held down the left half back berth in Kilkenny's win over Clare in the National League final replay last June.

Anthony McGurk is one of the most versatile footballers in the land. He made such an impact at centre half back last year that many are inclined to forget he won a Railway Cup medal with the Combined Universities in 1973 as a forward, and also a Carrolls All Stars award that year at No. 15.

McGurk, who is 26, has three Ulster senior medals, a Sigerson Cup (Universities' Championship) souvenir with Queen's for 1971, and was honoured by the Carrolls All Stars selectors at centre half in 1975. He won an All-Ireland under-21 medal in 1968.

Pat Spillane was to the fore with Munster in their successful defence of the Railway Cup in football last St. Patrick's Day. He also helped N.C.P.E., Limerick, to win the Higher Education final, and the All-Ireland title triumph over St. Patrick's, Maynooth. In addition, he collected his second successive All-Ireland under-21 medal when Kerry beat Kildare in September.

Pat is 21, and made his senior inter-county debut in the 1974-75 National League. He won an All-Ireland senior medal in 1975, and is a Carrolls All Star of 1976.

Pat Hartigan is one of the great full backs of the modern hurling era, a fact that is hammered home by his five Carrolls All Stars awards in a row from 1971 to 1975 inclusive. Pat has also shared in all of Limerick's major triumphs — the National League title and Oireachtas Cup wins of 1971, and the All-Ireland senior championship of 1973.

Consistent form put Gay in front

THE Editor has been in conclave with some of his close advisers for some time now; they have welcomed neither knocks on the door nor rings on the telephone. This morning, however, white smoke was noticed percolating under the office door, at which stage we leant our shoulders to the drive and burst it open to find them in an exhausted but exhilarated condition.

Before knocking off for a week's Christmas shopping they imparted the news of their deliberations: the results of the GAELIC SPORT Top Ten Ratings for 1976. Before taking his leave, however, the Editor smiled cunningly at me and said: "Gay O'Driscoll is the Football Star of the Year—you write about him!"

He was, of course, remembering the set-to which occurred in these pages last year when I was involved in an argument about the merits and demerits of the month-by-month system of selecting the top hurler and footballer. He was probably also remembering the fact that colleague, Jay Drennan, had made a stout case for Brian Mullins as the star footballer of 1976 in last month's issue, as well as the fact that the All-Star selectors had not included O'Driscoll in their fifteen.

No matter! It doesn't take a feather out of me, for there is no doubt that developments over the last year have tended to favour

By
Jim
Bennett

Gay O'Driscoll (No. 2) seen here in typical role of backing up his colleague Sean Doherty (in possession).



my view on the matter rather than that of those who feel the other way. Nothing contributed to this turn of events so much as the annoyance expressed about the All-Star selection. To tell the truth, many of the things said then were excessive and failed to contribute to the argument at all because they used tactics of over-kill.

Nevertheless, there were more reasoned views which were as telling if not as noisy as some of the louder and more strident voices. And the particular point of interest which gave me the greatest satisfaction was that the

players—in a few cases—began to make suggestions that there was something rather doubtful about the "once-for-all" style of selection of the Players of the Year and that, perhaps, an organised points system over the whole course of the year would have greater guarantees of satisfaction for all.

Therefore, let us seek some of the points which made Gay O'Driscoll come out on top of the year's month-by-month tables which you have seen building up in succeeding issues of GAELIC SPORT. No doubt, for a begin-

● TO PAGE 11

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GAY O'DRISCOLL—OUR FOOTBALLER OF 1976

● FROM PAGE 9

ner, it would have been next to impossible for the result to have been other than a Dublin player in 1976 since their record was something that spoke for itself and gave their players the best chance to impress at the best levels from the beginning of the year until the end.

They all had their spells, of course, and a reasonable case might be made for several of the Dubliners, depending on which way you went about making the case, whether picking out a couple of plums or searching the whole cake.

One of the things that was most important to Dublin through the course of the year was the fact that they were in the process of changing their half-back line. The one which had served well in their initial burst to fame in 1974 and which was partially serviceable afterwards did not measure up to requirements in 1976. The fact that three new players were introduced in this line without a bother was hardly just an accident, nor even a tribute only to the quality of the new men — though it was that, of course.

Mainly, however, it was a tribute to the stability of the defence into which they found themselves introduced, with such powerfully reliable corner-backs behind who were not only corner-backs but also moppers-up of all kinds of crumbs, spillings and stains, sealers of cracks and general all round handy men, Jacks of all trades and pretty close to being masters of most of them.

The pair were Gay O'Driscoll and Robbie Kelleher.

There was another factor also which cropped up some time in the middle of the year when the thought got about that Sean Doherty had lost his form and confidence and that the hard grounds were giving him a hard time. I must say the thought struck me, too, that Doherty was just a bit off-colour for a while. But, if he was, we shall never be able to prove it because he was surrounded by a cloak of concern and next thing we knew he was back to the kind of form he showed in the All-Ireland final. O'Driscoll and Kelleher covered in front and behind, and if Sean were a bit off in his timing it would not matter because the corner men were sure to be around.

Nor is it possible to say the forwards owe nothing to the stalwart corner men and more even to Gay than to Robbie in this respect, for there is no limit to the amount of yardage O'Driscoll is willing to make up along the right side to push play forward, cut off a possible source from which an opposing counter-attack might originate, or simply to carry a move on. And how that benefits those forwards who do not have to worry about that right wing being strung out to such an extent that if play is returned the opposition may well have space to generate dangerous momentum before they run into defenders.

The midfield itself—and Brian Mullins, in particular — may have had cause to thank the same

resourceful corner backs, for, in the heat of the Galway semi-final, when Mullins was finding few sparks and creating no openings for the forwards while Galway were still galloping hard in fast pursuit, it was an intercept by O'Driscoll and a placement across to Kelleher that opened the way for the goal that decided that match.

Gay O'Driscoll then reaps the rewards of consistency which the points rating offers. And for him, as for others of the Dublin team of 1976 it testifies to special qualities because he was one of the old guard as it were who soldiered through the bad days before coming to the plenty of recent times. It must have been harder for them to believe the gospel which Heffernan preached to them for they had so often and so dishearteningly seen failure.

A further reason why Gay O'Driscoll scores must be that which weighed also in favour of Brian Mullins, but alone in his favour — that they had been part of the St. Vincent's team which won the All-Ireland Club championship, thus stretching their consistency into a longer portion of the year.

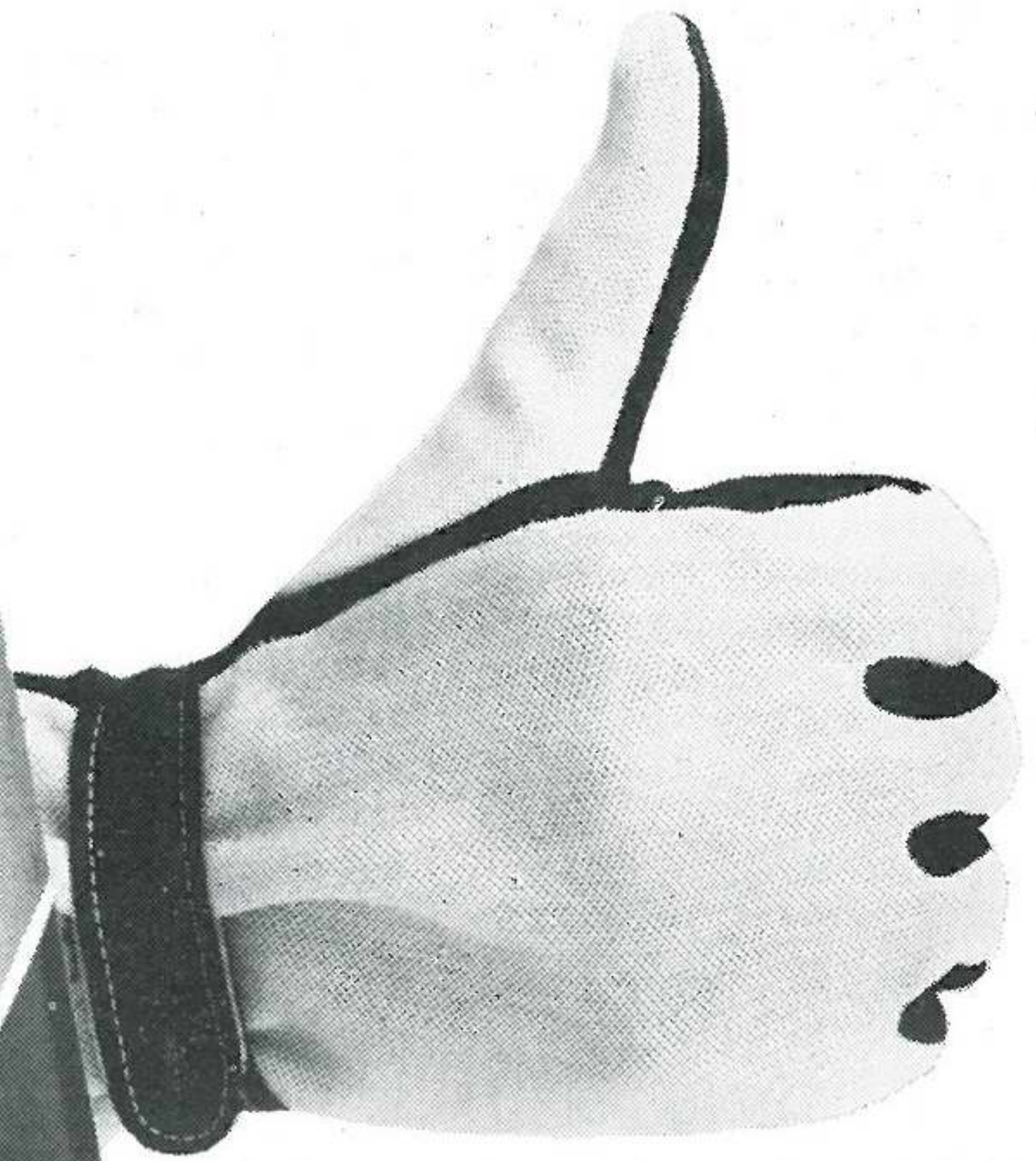
It may have been far from Gay's mind when he was playing along at hurling and football equally a few years ago and with little likelihood of success in either that he would now be coming out of the assessments for 1976 as the top footballer of the year. Faith moves mountains, indeed.

GAELIC SPORT—THE MAGAZINE THE PLAYERS READ

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HANDBALL CHIEFS CHASE THE GIRLS!

ONE of my main wishes for handball in the new year that now greets us would be geared towards an extension of the game for girls.

Admittedly, it has made considerable progress since its inception in 1970, but, just now, it appears that a new impetus is needed to promote it on a wide-spread basis.

Handball for girls is something that might not have been treated seriously some years ago but thanks to the hard work of the girls who promote it and the support given by the Irish Handball Council it has now acquired a recognised status. Why the flurry to popularise this branch of the sport?

From my point of view I would make the argument that the G.A.A. may well provide the main National Identification Tag for our people in the future

Thus, it is evident that our clubs must be strongly based, with an emphasis on the family unit, hence the direct involvement of girls in a G.A.A. activity.

This argument might specifically apply to the G.A.A. Club that embraces all our National Games but, even in the case of the Handball club operating as a separate unit, the involvement of girls is of paramount importance. It has already been proved many times that, where, Women's

Liberation applies in the Handball Club, those clubs have been enhanced socially and financially.

Frank Flynn, the Chairman of the Oldtown club in North County Dublin summed it up admirably when I spoke to him recently.

"Our club is dependent on sixty-five families in the village for its existence. From the situation where we had only minimum facilities a few years ago the Club can now boast a court comparable with the best in the county."

"I can assure you that without the direct involvement of the girls in the sport and thereby in integration of the family unit into the Club we, in Oldtown, would not be in the strong position we are to-day."

Flynn's remarks withstand verification for not only has the court been modernised but the debt on it is nearly cleared and now the emphasis is on building a Community Centre.

On the other hand, there is the sound argument, that handball is an ideal game for our fair sex.

For them it has proved to be somewhat intriguing, since it constantly requires an even balance of mental and physical cohesion. The absence of physical contact is important, while, it is superfluous to say that the ambidextrous quality of the game

makes it a leader in the field of physical fitness.

"Live Longer — Play Handball", the catchy slogan used to promote the game nowadays does, in fact, specifically denote the real qualities of handball.

When girls took to the game first there was a doubt expressed that it would be detrimental to their hands, but, in the light of experience, this has proved to be without foundation.

The special handball used has no damaging effect on the hands at all, so much so that gloves are rarely used.

As an aside it should be recorded that the outstanding players in the country at present are Mavis O'Toole and Elizabeth Nichol, both from Dublin.

They have remained unbeaten in singles and doubles respectively since organised handball for girls became a reality some six years ago. However, it is equally encouraging to note that many young players from such places as Ballymacelligot, Talbot's Inch, Cashel and Donegal are also making an impression and will obviously be geared for senior stardom in the future.

But, back to my original theme that the game for girls would be extended in 1977 and immediately an earnest appeal goes out to all clubs through the country.

Please extend the role of girls beyond the category of making sandwiches and serving tea and encourage their involvement in an active sense. Your Club will be all the stronger for it.

Gaelic Sport will as usual play its role in extending the game of handball and will be pleased to accept any queries or suggestions.

Send them to us at 80 Upr. Drumcondra Rd., Dublin 9. Meantime, lets all make 1977 — Handball Year for Girls.

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 ★ **LADIES** ★
 ★ **PLEASE** ★
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 ★ **EDITED BY** ★
 ★ **KITTY** ★
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THE Government makes life very difficult for me and my equals. They have no sense of appreciation whatsoever. Before an election they come around looking for votes. They promise all kinds of favours to entice you to give them your Number One. What happens when they get in? I'll tell you. They put all the promises into a big black box. They lock the box, the key is thrown away and you and I are completely forgotten about. Having done that much they get down to business. They set about complicating the simplest things. They confuse me and in the heel of the hunt I can't get a Driving Licence without passing a Test. That's what I'm telling you — these fellows that you and I put into high places pay us back in a very funny sort of way. Maybe it doesn't bother you but it upsets me. As a serious minded, policy conscious member of the electorate I am entitled to my upsets — after all one must have something to fall back on . . .

I had to pass the Test so I had to learn How to Drive. I made judicious enquiries from a few friends who had made the grade. They were slow to recommend any particular school but they all advised that

I should learn the right way. This I resolved to do. I looked up the Golden Pages and picked out a few centres. I sent away for details and got back plenty. Each school had its own special attraction. Some picked up the Learner at her own door and left her back there exactly one hour later. Others had an introductory indoor course. This was very highly recommended. The idea appealed to me even though door to door service wasn't included here. Anyway after some deliberation I opted for the school with the indoor introduction to driving and away I went.

I came armed with my Pay in Advance to Lesson No. 1. This particular requirement was common to all the schools. A good number had gathered in the waiting room so I concluded that I had at least picked a popular place. The receptionist was cheerful and businesslike. She gave each one of us a little card which we were told to fill up. We all sat down and awaited further instructions. After a few minutes names were called out. Some went in to an inner room while more were escorted outside. I wondered what fate awaited me. I soon found out and was directed to join the ranks in the inner room.

This room was very well equipped. Each one of us had our own little car. We were shown by means of a film the whole step by step procedure of driving. It involved all kinds of movement with hands and feet. It all sounded terribly complicated. Great emphasis was placed on the word co-ordination. I was flabbergasted by the whole affair but I couldn't figure out how one could find time to perform all those oper-

ations and still remain composed. After all I know several drivers who behave quite normally behind the wheel. Maybe they're all bluffers, but they do manage to move hands and feet without disrupting the whole of society.

During my time in the room I noticed a peculiar piece of equipment hidden away in the corner. I didn't ask any questions but after three of these indoor sessions volunteers were sought to operate this mysterious outfit. My curiosity got the better of me so I stuck my neck out. This was a perfect little car model. It was such that you imagined you were driving on this wide roadway which was being rolled on the screen in front of you. My job was to keep the car on the road. That would have been fine had there been nothing else but the highway. Unfortunately there were houses, parks, people, dogs, cats, in fact everything that should be there but not at this particular time.

I knocked down everything that cropped up in my way. I didn't go around any corners, just went straight ahead through parks, trees, people — the lot. A red light should flash each time I did something wrong. In my case the light stayed on for the full duration of the fortunately there were houses, trees. The only thing I did right was to keep my foot down. In fact my problem was to ease up. The more alarmed I became the more weight I put on the pedal. The result was nothing whatsoever to be proud of. The instructor was ever so tactful. He told me I didn't do one blessed thing right but not to worry that since that particular school opened ten years previously he did have one other like me.

How did she eventually get on, I asked? Fine, he said, 'twas only the other day she passed by this window on a bicycle!

That did it. I had enough. Not only were my nerves in shreds but I was being insulted as well. I shouldn't have come in here at all. I know my own limitations and this indoor business is not my scene. I'd be far better off getting right into the thick of things from the word go. I made up my mind there and then to change schools. I let a week go by and then off I went again. This time a kindly gentleman escorted me to a waiting car. 'Twas a small car — a Mini. This disappointed me. I had hoped for a more dramatic debut. There were huge "L" plates all over the car. I hated that. I didn't want the whole country to know I was a learner — they'd find out soon enough. Anyway there's something very basic about the word "Learner" especially when it relates to lady drivers. Why not call us Trainees of Followers of Fangio or something vague that would leave everyone wondering.

I was directed to the passenger seat while my instructor commented "I'd better take it from here." 'Here' was a long black narrow alley that had a light at one end and extended from there into the darkness. The car was dual controlled. I had heard reference to this term before but never knew what it meant. Every picture tells a story so when I saw two mirrors and double everything else I got the message. Anyway my friend manoeuvred and manipulated confidently and smartly and within a minute we were out in the middle of the traffic. He choose to get away from it all and very shortly we came to a halt in a

quiet traffic-free little roadway. The area had all the appearances of a contented settled residential area. I hoped it would be left like that but deep down I had my doubts. Now, says he, I'll let you have a bash. He got out and I shifted myself over to the driver seat. This was my big moment — I remained cool but felt important.

We won't move too far this evening, he said. He needn't have worried — we weren't going to move at all. He made me check doors, adjust the mirror and check gears and handbrake before I put the key in the ignition at all. He explained the reason for these procedures and it all made great sense. Turn on your engine now, he said. I looked at the key and then tried to put it in upside down. That didn't work so I tried it the other way. That did the trick. I turned it on and put my foot down strong and bold on the accelerator. So much thought I for this quiet little neighbourhood. I could scarcely hear my ears above the roar of the engine. At least I was making progress but to get the car moving presented a little more difficulty.

Bring out your clutch 'til you get gripping point, came the instruction from my left. I didn't look at him at all; just kept my eyes focused straight ahead. Any movement at this stage would, I felt, upset everything. I couldn't risk that — not yet anyway. Gripping point — I liked that. It sounded good. The idea of me recognising this delicate mechanical moment amused me but I kept a straight face. I began the operation ever so slowly, bringing the left foot out very carefully. I was waiting for the magic moment but it was slow in coming. I decided I'd hurry things

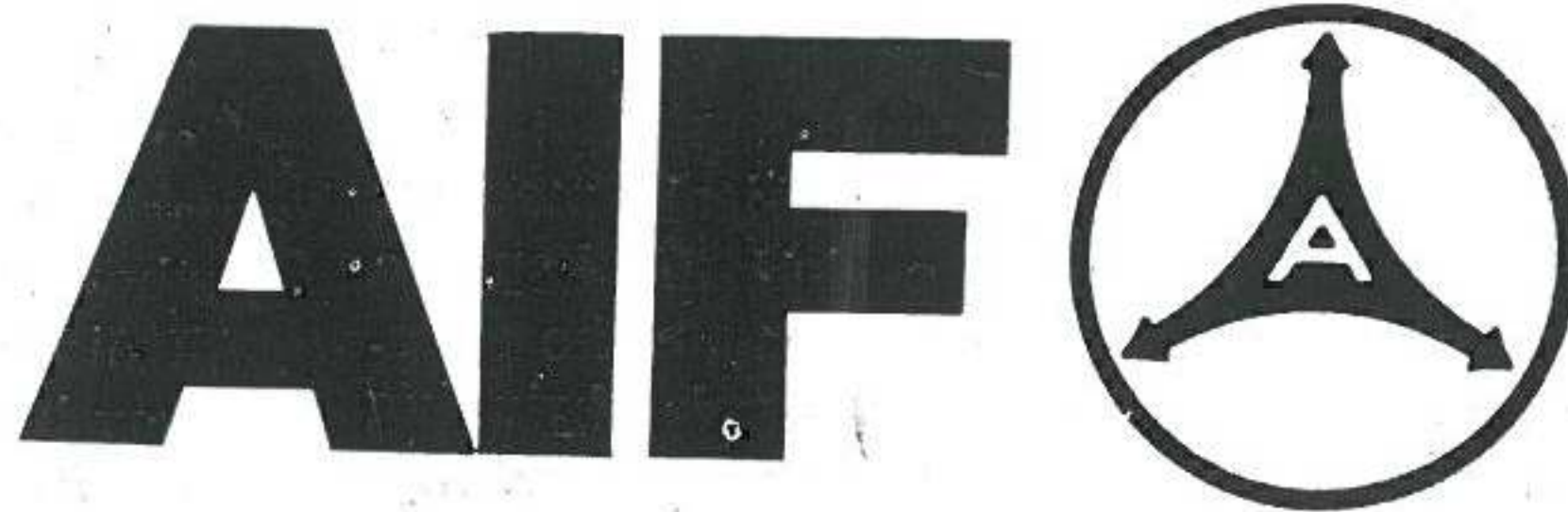
up. Something happened alright. The car jerked forward. My friend jerked upwards. There was a lot of spluttering. I held on tight to the steering wheel. He looked across. I smiled and he made a brave attempt.

We'll try again says he. 'We' of course was the Royal Plural — he meant me. I sat bolt upright once more and proceeded with caution. This time I was more successful. I brought out the clutch beautifully and gripped the elusive point at the vital second. We moved! I couldn't believe it. We didn't get too far but we definitely moved. That was excellent, my friend said and this time I'm sure he smiled. Would you like to do it again? I didn't particularly want to because I know a repeat performance was too much for me to hope for. And so it was. My driving was complete for that night.

We got back to the school and I went inside to hand in my card. Everything all right, Madam, asked the busy receptionist. I wasn't quite sure how I should answer that but I got over it by saying "Fine" twice. I was asked when I'd like my next lesson. I wanted so badly to say "This day twelve months" but my instructor interjected with "The sooner the better." I ignored that — just in case anyone might think I was touchy. I'll put you down then for the same time next Thursday, said my lady friend. That suits me, I said, making a smart U turn and getting out of there as fast as I possibly could. I had mixed thoughts about returning but I did and from there on would you believe I never looked back — after all that's what my mirror is there for!

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A LOOK IN THE CRYSTAL BALL

WHAT happened in 1976 is now history. What matters now is what is likely to happen in 1977. There is, of course, a very distinct advantage about prophesying at this time of year. Few people will remember by next December exactly what any particular prophet forecast as far back as January.

On the face of it, one would imagine at this stage, with the preliminary stages of the Leagues already completed, the possible results of the Winter and Spring competitions would be the easiest to forecast. On what I have seen to date, Kerry are, for me, the long-odds favourites to collect the title and the trophy next April. Kerry, one feels, have not deliberately set out to win this League at the start, but they did not go out to lose it either. But although never at full strength, they played fine football all the way before Christmas and with one other game between them and the final, are likely to be fresh for the decider.

Dublin, of course, will have to be reckoned with as, manifestly, the farther they go the harder to beat they are going to be.

From the Northern Section of the First Division we still have a play-off in prospect for first and second place between Tyrone, Roscommon and Mayo. Whichever goes through to the semi-final could take beating. Mayo have the greatest football potential but rarely sustain their effort. Roscommon have the greater determination, but sometimes tend to lose concentration when concentration is most needed. Indeed, Tyrone could be the best bet to reach the final from Division One North. And if they do, Frank McGuigan and Company could be very, very hard to beat.

But of course we can't ignore the challenge from the Second Division either. After all, Meath came out of the Second Division to take the League title the year before last. There you can take your pick from Offaly, Laois, Waterford or Wicklow in the South and Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Down or Armagh in the North.

Of these, for me, the most likely to reach the quarter-finals look likely to be Offaly, Down or Cavan, and, believe me, any of these three, or any team that beats them, will be well qualified to represent the Second Division in the closing stages. But, looking forward from here, one must give the

pre-play-off vote to the Kerry men, since they will not have to meet Cork again.

As for hurling, Kilkenny will manifestly be there again in defence of the title won at such eventual cost last July. Clare are going great guns, and once again one cannot rule out the representatives of the lower grouping, most notably Galway.

But, although they have run a very uneven course thus far, I would count Tipperary as the most dangerous outsiders at this stage, even though they have lost to both Clare and Kilkenny. Like the Dublin footballers, the farther they go the more formidable they are going to become, and while Kilkenny and Clare look the most likely finalists at the moment don't forget Tipperary, or the fact that the county has won more League titles than any of their rivals.

Mixed up among the knockout stages of the League, of course, will be the Railway Cups. This season, with Ulster and Connacht already well ahead with the organisation of their probable teams and Munster having begun to take the football series seriously over the last couple of seasons, only Leinster remain short of any hints of preliminary preparation. And doubtless that, too, will come.

It all presages a new refreshing approach where we had too often feared the real lack of interest had occurred, among some of the players and provincial officials. The public, who are rarely fooled, long ago sensed lack of dedication and stayed away in great numbers, with the result that the fervour of the entire competition seemed to become just that little bit weaker each year.

But just as soon as the public realise that all players and officials alike are going to put as much in for the province as they do for their county, the crowds will be back. I have no doubts at all about that. And by the way, on St. Patrick's Day, I would not be surprised to see Munster repeat last year's double.

So much for the Leagues and the Railway Cups. What about the championships? In hurling, of course, there is not that much new to add. Despite the efforts of Kildare, Offaly and Dublin, it is almost impossible to see anybody but Kilkenny and Wexford qualify for the Leinster final. In both counties some of the great old stalwarts are fading, but

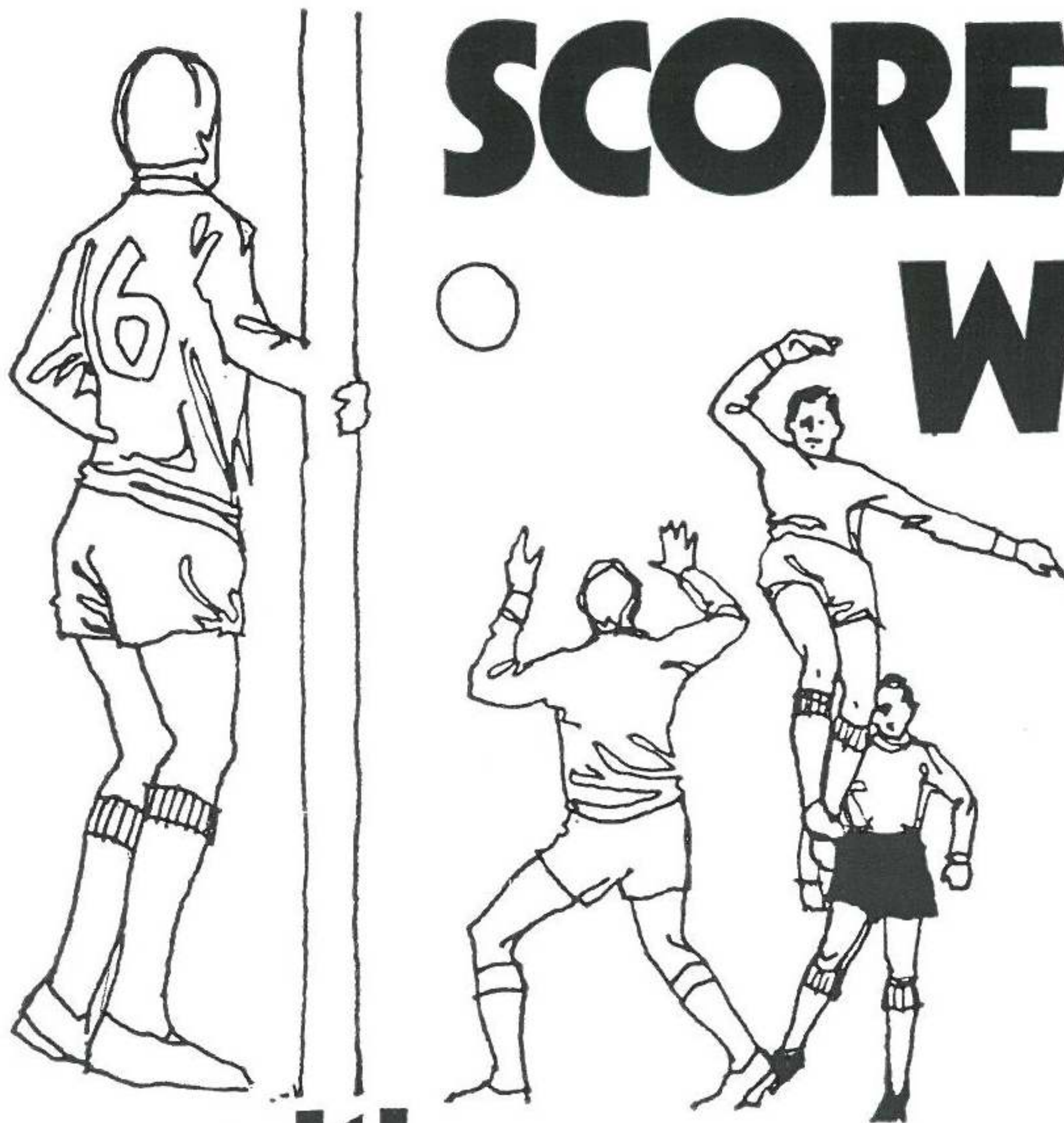
● TO PAGE 19

St. Bernard

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● The Dublin team, winners of the National Football League in 1976. From left: (back row) Anton O'Toole, Jimmy Keaveney, Pat Gogarty, Sean Doherty, Paddy Cullen, Pat O'Neill, Bobby Doyle. (Front row) Brian Mullins, Kevin Moran, Robbie Kelleher, Tony Hanahoe (capt.), David Hickey, Kevin Synott, Paddy Reilly and Gay O'Driscoll.

● FROM PAGE 17

Kilkenny have been airing a greater number of promising youngsters, and though Wexford may again raise their game at the sight of the black and amber, Kilkenny look the better bet to take the Eastern title back and that would carry them to the final.

In the South, Waterford do not seem to be getting back sufficient all-round power to really bring them into the reckoning come championship time. So it looks like being again a four-cornered struggle. Cork, my long odds pre-championship favourites for the title a year ago, turned up trumps for me then, and they should be back in top gear by the summer. But they have become a little disjointed. Limerick could prove an unexpectedly strong force, but they have not found replacements in sufficient quantity and may again find themselves gallant losers.

Clare must again be the side to reckon with, and if they can win the League, the championship might not be beyond them. But they have yet to prove themselves outside the League or in Croke Park, and we must wait and see can they go all the way.

And that brings us to Tipperary, and I believe they have the material to win the championship . . .

if they do not win the League. They may not have the power-in-depth to achieve the double.

On the football front, one can hardly go outside Dublin or Meath to look for potential Leinster champions — Laois could prove the biggest danger to either — and it may take Meath another year to match the Dubliners in Croke Park in the championship.

In the South, of course, it will be a Kerry v Cork confrontation, and I would not write off the Corkmen, even at Killarney, if they can find greater productivity in the forwards.

Tyrone, Derry, Armagh, Down and Cavan look the strongest up North, and I have a premonition that, this time, Cavan will be back. The greatest problem, however, may be found in the West.

Galway, Mayo and Roscommon could be very evenly balanced, and Leitrim have sprung a few surprises in the League. Galway, because they are such great championship battlers, may just retain the title.

All-Ireland champions? Dublin? Kerry? Cork? Maybe Tyrone? . . . and what a great day for the game that would be.

I leave you to make your own final selection.

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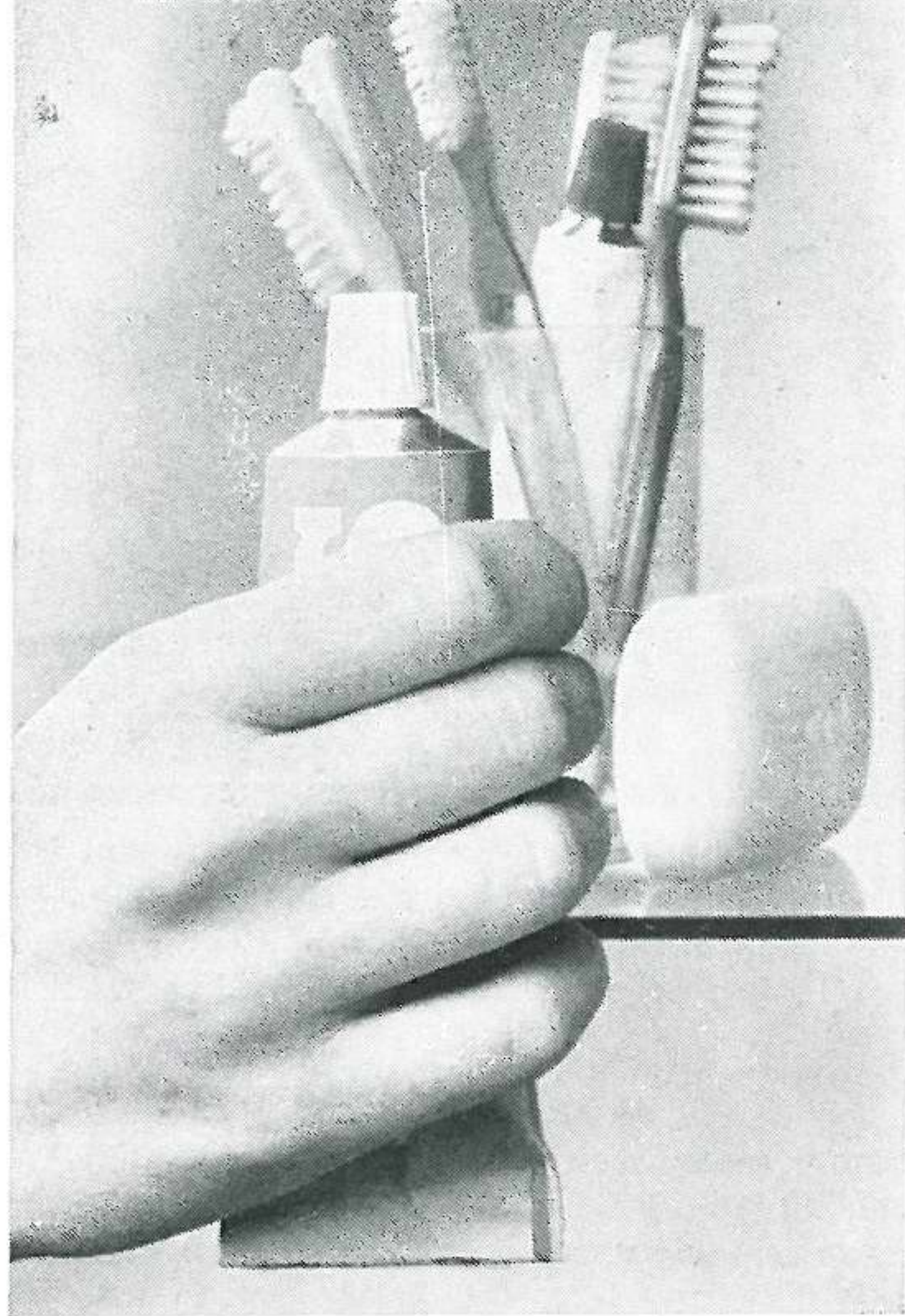
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Ulster, Connacht set a headline

By MICK DUNNE (RTE Sport)

MAYBE it's too late to save the Railway Cup competitions from the extinction with which they have been threatened in recent years because of the public's disinterest. If so, it's a pity that Ulster and Connacht left it so late to entrust a sole selector with the picking of their football teams.

Ulster's unprecedented move in granting Sean O'Neill absolute responsibility for this year's team—and Connacht's decision to follow their example by giving Johnny Geraghty a similar role—may, of course, be merely the result of concern that they have not had the inter-provincial championship in a long while—six years for Ulster, eight in Connacht's case.

But taking a broader view of the unusual attitude now being adopted by these two provinces, it is possible to recognise it as something that could rekindle the motivation of players chosen for the Railway Cup series and consequently revive the interest of the general public. Because there can be no doubt that one of the many factors—and there have been several—which contributed to the public's apathy towards the competition in latter times was the feeling—real or suspected—that teams were picked on a basis of proportional representation for all the counties in each province as much as from a desire to field the strongest possible side.

However, all of this may be something we could examine in greater detail at another time, for—as already mentioned—there have been many reasons for the decline in the once glamorous and always entertaining Railway

Cup competitions.

What is without question is that the two provinces have done something never previously undertaken. Of course, teams—notably Ulster in football and Munster and Leinster in both games—have been brought together under a coach or manager, but in each case the team had already been chosen by a group of selectors before being put into the care of an individual.

Moreover, Ulster and Connacht could not have picked two better men to coach their teams. Both O'Neill and Geraghty distinguished themselves in football, Sean gaining a record eight Railway Cup medals and Johnny, although having only one inter-pro souvenir, was one of the greatest goalkeepers of modern times. But, most important of all, they are two very concerned and intense students of football tactics, men who put a great deal of deep thought into their own play and whose study of the game will be of great benefit to their provinces.

O'Neill has a slight advantage in that the invitation to him went from the Ulster Council early enough for him to nominate a panel of 40 players before the first half of the National League got underway, so he has been able to watch those in contention for



● SEAN O'NEILL . . . absolute responsibility for Ulster's '77 Railway Cup squad.

places show their current form. Geraghty, who has a panel only one less than Sean's, told me that "League form, commitment and fitness" will be the deciding factors when he comes to name Connacht's side.

Johnny played for Connacht in goal 1965-'68 inclusive. In that time he collected one Railway Cup medal—in 1967 when he was unbeaten in the two matches, Munster in the semi-final and Ulster in the final failing to score a goal against him. Indeed, of seven matches he played for his province (and these included a draw in the '66 semi-final against Munster) no goals were scored against him in five. The six times he was beaten were confined to two games—the '66 replay when Michael Keating and Con O'Sullivan had a goal each for Munster and in the '68 semi-final when Ulster's goals were shared by Sean O'Neill, who got three, and Sean O'Connell who obtained one.

At the start of Geraghty's career in senior football it was ironic that he had to vie with his Mountbellew club-mate for Galway's goalkeeping jersey. That was in 1964 when he took over from Michael Moore, who was the club's netminder while Johnny played as a forward for Mountbellew, for the Connacht final against Sligo. He remained in

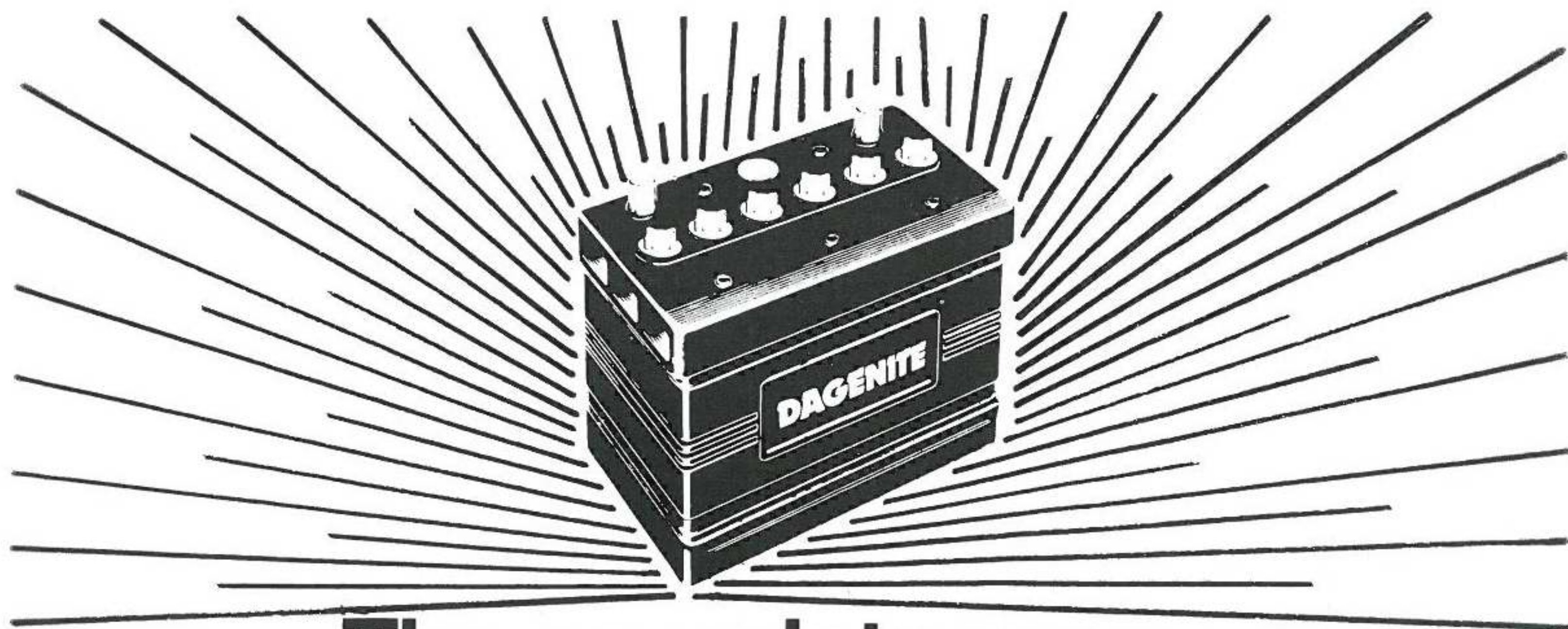
● TO PAGE 23

GAA Reporting by Paddy Downey in THE IRISH TIMES



Paddy Downey, Gaelic Games correspondent, writes with knowledge, insight, sound judgement and a flair for capturing the colour and thrills of the big occasion and big occasions are many in Gaelic Games. His reports and comments are balanced and fair but then, you'd expect all that from a writer who has won the **Gallaher Award** for the best National Sports Story of the Year — not once but twice in succession — and that's the highest prize there is in Irish Sports journalism. Read **The Irish Times** and judge for yourself. Of course it's not just a one-man team. You'll like the rest of them too.

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● FROM PAGE 21

possession of the goalkeeping position right through Galway's successful three-in-a-row championships with only one brief absence from the side . . . and even then — the 1968 drawn provincial semi-final against Roscommon — he was brought into replace Frank McLoughlin after Roscommon had scored three goals and he was retained for the replay as well as the remainder of the championship.

He stayed as the regular goalkeeper until the following March and made his last major appearance as the county's goalkeeper in the National League divisional final against Cork in Limerick. But perhaps it's significant that Galway changed goalkeepers four times in the next eight months of 1969 — Michael Moore returning for the championship, Gay Mitchell making an appearance in the Gael-Linn Cup in August, Moore back again for the start of the National League in October and P. J. Smyth going on the team for the League tie against Laois in November.

During his term on the Galway team Johnny gave many splendid displays of goalkeeping — almost acrobatic agility, eagle-eyed alertness and thoughtful placing of the ball when he cleared it away from his square. But two in particular stand out vividly in my memory.

One was in Gaelic Park on a scorching June day in 1965 when the local New York football team overpowered Galway in the first leg of the National League final everywhere except on the score board. Their own shooting ability helped to keep their victory down to a single point, but an even

greater contributing factor was the remarkable goalkeeping of Johnny Geraghty.

The second occasion was in the 1966 All-Ireland semi-final against Cork. Sixteen minutes into the second half Cork's Niall Fitzgerald was put through for a shot at goal and with the Galway defence in disarray he had Geraghty at his mercy, but as Niall steadied to shoot Johnny leaped out from his line and got a boot out to deflect the shot. Five minutes later he dived right

at Fitzgerald's boot when Niall had another chance.

Having taken a course at Strawberry Hill College in England — and indeed helping the school to win the Carroll's seven-aside competition at Belfield in 1971 — Johnny has been teaching physical education for the past six years in Galway city. His ability as a football coach was underlined last year when he took charge of the Galway side that won the All-Ireland minor championship.



● Connacht supremo, Johnnie Geraghty, seen here in action. Johnnie's displays in goal contributed greatly to Galway's three-in-a-row, back in the '60's.

GAELIC SPORT—THE MAGAZINE THE PLAYERS READ

Denis Coughlan—Our of the 1976 season

By EAMONN YOUNG

TWELVE stone eight pounds and thirty one years of age the tall dark pleasant man sat relaxed in the arm-chair by the window as a bright November sun shone across the Lee Fields below us and held back the mist that would come curling in when the sun's golden head had sunk beyond the hills of Inniscarra.

"I feel very well thank the Lord" said Denis Coughlan "and I want very much to continue hurling. This time twelve months I had retired and then decided to come back. I knew this was breaking all the rules so I made up my mind that the come-back was going to be a success. That's why I trained hard and anyway I like training, for I don't find relaxation in either drink or cigarettes. In the early months of '76 I felt good and I'm glad to hear you say I played well. I had a very good year thank goodness and that great county championship with the Glen crowned the season for me. The fact that I was knocked out at the end of the first half and the lads won the game in the second, without me makes me admire them all the more".

"Anyway you rightly ask me will the same challenge be there again this year. I think it will for this time we have two men on the Cork selection committee and also it is quite probable that Martin Doherty, a very dedicated player, will captain the Cork side. So I have every reason to know that they'll be looking to me to play my part well and this I intend to do. This should be enough to motivate me and send me training."

"The Cork hurling side hasn't

been doing well but then we have never had a full side since the championship. If we can win the League, well and good, and certainly a team should go all out to win whatever competition calls it. Even if we don't win the League there's no reason why we shouldn't go hell-for-leather for the championship. Our selectors have the right attitude; they're hard men who ask for results. We don't have as many good forwards as backs and I will be very happy when Ray Cummins and Seanie Leary are fit again."

"The dual commitment is one of which I had a lot of experi-

ence. For a while I found it very hard to play both games well and now that I'm concentrating on one I find life far more enjoyable. The young lad who wishes to be good at both must watch himself carefully. He must train well and lead a very regular life for the standard of fitness demanded is high. Also there's that great problem of injuries. I don't know if I recommend dual playing at high level. I suppose it's a matter for the player himself."

"I'm a sales director in a firm here in town and the beginning of my day is usually spent in an office for two hours. After that

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I go out and much of my work then is in a P.R.O. capacity. I like my work and it brings me into contact with all sorts of very interesting people. Needless to say on a Monday (as well as on the other days of the week) people are interested in my comments on games especially the ones in which I played. Like all players I enjoy giving my opinions and while I don't think I'm always right I suppose I'm not always wrong either. The important thing is the great interest people have in the games!"

"Hurling is the greatest game of all and it will continue to hold



● DENIS COUGHLAN . . . "I had a great advantage starting with a club like Glen Rovers."

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people. Still hurleys are very dear and if there is a shortage of ash in the country then we must do something about it. I should like to see a cheap hurley in the hands of every youngster and when young parents go shopping for Christmas I like to see them bring home a few small sticks for the kids."

"I'm living near Carrigtwohill and my six year old son Johnathan goes to the school there, where I hope he'll be half as good as those great hurlers Willie John Daly and Mattie Fouhy. Margaret Ann is only three and very much with her mother yet. Margaret, my wife is a Dublin girl and sister of Pat Hallinan who played a lot of hurling up there."

"I had a great advantage in starting with a strong club like Glen Rovers where Jimmy O'Rourke and Davy O'Brien took me over at an early age. We learned a lot very young and I was lucky enough to be on a Glen winning side at 19 and with St. Nicks the football side in the

● OVERLEAF

● FROM PAGE 25

following year. In fact four years in succession we beat that great crowd the Barrs. We won the hurling in '64, the football in '65 and '66 and then the hurling again in '67. We pulled out of the championship in protest in '68. Maybe they were lucky," he added with a grin.

"I was lucky also in the inter-county sphere for after being beaten in the football final of '67

we won it in '73 and after being a sub on the hurling team in '70 I was in there doing my best in '76. I have two sisters Catherine in Sligo and Anne in London. Both are married but I feel a bit sad always about my mother who God bless her is strong and healthy out in Blackpool. Margaret O'Flaherty is her name, for my father John died rather unexpectedly in 1968, before he was sixty".

Here Denis's eyes lit up when I

told him that the last time I met John was at a match in which Denis played at left half back against Wexford. It was a happy day for the father for his son played a ringing hour.

"The Association is making great strides these days" continued the tall Glen Rovers player, "and even though I don't drink, I think the clubrooms are far better now than they used to be. No doubt there is a temptation to drink but in my experience there is a far greater sense of responsibility among players which offsets this. A man can't drink and play; his pals will soon let him know anyhow if he goes out of line and altogether the discipline of playing is a very good thing for the young people of the community.

"We must do something about the fixture list however. That close season is needed by the more active players especially. In fact it is needed by all players and we all like to think that between the first of November and February 1 we can engage lightly in all sorts of other pastimes and so return refreshed for the hard but beautiful competition again. I think we can alter many of the series to telescope the fixture-list. For instance the Munster club championships in which the Glen hurlers and Barrs footballers are now engaged in December could be played off over a week-end in May. Why not play on Wednesday and Saturday or on Saturday and Sunday. There are only two games. I'm sure the same could be done with many other competitions. It does seem we could start the National Leagues in July. This sensible re-arrangement of fixtures will come I think, but we must be asking for it. We players hope that writers like you, and the journals generally would focus a little more attention on this problem which at the moment is about the biggest one

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the players have. And after all while players are not the whole Association they do form a very important part of it."

"The playing rules need to be kept under review all the time and indeed this is being done. I am not in love with the hand-pass either in hurling or football and feel that no score should be made with the hand in either. I have great respect for Tony Doran and am not at all sure he wouldn't be just as hard to stop if there were no hand-pass."

"And to finish, I'm a happy man to be a member of the greatest club of all, Glen Rovers. They taught me all I know and backed me up wherever I was. There's a wealth of good hurling advice in Blackpool — and a fair bit of it in football too — and they're with you all the way. That's why we're so hard to beat. We play for the hour, win, lose or draw and we have a fair spot of brains on the line. I admire tremendously John Clifford and Christy Ring among the others and many a time Christy Ring has taken me aside privately during the week far from the pitches and told me just what he wanted me to do when the sliotar was thrown in. I always think over what he says, and try to do it well. I find it easy to work on sensible and well-considered advice. No man is an island!"

By this time the twilight has softened over the valley of the Lee and the lights flamed a gentle orange on the far side of the Mardyke. Denis Coughlan unfolded his length from the arm-chair and shaking my hand wished that soon I would be out of hospital (where they had lodged me after a rolling stone on the Galtees had decided to look for moss on top of my Kojack head). I thanked him, and we ended on a note of complete unanimity, when I wished him as good a year in '77 as he had in '76.

Don't get me wrong... being in the Civil Service doesn't mean being in the Civil Service

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**Lucht déanta
na
mBrioscaí.**

The future of Dublin hurling

By
Mick Dunne
(RTE Sport)

DUBLIN people whose concern is for the welfare of both Gaelic games in their county — and their numbers are not anything as huge as the hordes currently following the football team — are not taken in by the euphoria that pervades the county since last year's double football triumph.

They will not be satisfied until hurling has gained such strength that the county team can have some, if not all, of the success now being enjoyed by the football side. Dublin officials would settle for a lot less in hurling, I am sure, for they are knowledgeable enough to know that hurling has rarely, if ever, been on a level with football in the county, even at the best of times.

Still there were periods when the state of Dublin hurling was not nearly as unsatisfactory as it is today. As I write the prospects for the New Year are not good and once again Dublin have been hanging precariously over the edge of a cliff which has relegation at the bottom of it. So a breakthrough is needed now

more than at any time in any other decade in the past.

That break can now only come in the championship, for there is little hope of the county qualifying for the last six who go into the knock-out stages of the league. And, of course, such a breakthrough is easier thought about than accomplished . . . as anyone who knows the history of Dublin hurling in modern times knows only too well.

Perhaps, no one is more conscious of the position of Dublin hurling than Jimmy Gray. Not only is he the county chairman, but he is a hurling man first and foremost, even though he did play football with the county, and he was the outstanding goalkeeper on the last Dublin side to reach the All-Ireland hurling final (1961)

This was Jimmy's rueful reply when I asked him what the future held for the hurling team: "If I had the answer to that all our problems would be solved."

He added: "It boils down to three things: 1) the proper psychological approach to the thing by the players, 2) a bit of luck

and 3) a little bit of know-how, which is missing at the moment". And chairman Gray emphasised: "There's no question of apathy among the players, they're very sincere in their approach. Every effort is being made to change the situation. Nobody has done as much as Jimmy Boggan, the team-manager. He's very modern in his approach and he has developed a great interest among the players. In fairness to them, they do all the right things except hurl well when it's most needed.

"Obviously there's a big inferiority complex and knowing they have so much more to win than anyone else they're all the more anxious. That was particularly evident in Tulla when they hurled just as well as Clare, but an anxiety to get goals meant they didn't take the points that were there to be scored. Perhaps, one good free-scoring forward would mean a lot, but there's no ready solution. It's hard work and more of it."

If Dublin are to drop down to the less-glamorous Section B of the League it would not be their

● TO PAGE 29

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● FROM PAGE 28

first time there and Jimmy Gray doesn't see it as the end of the world. "We were there before in hurling — and football, too — and we could use it to build up for the championship."

It should be remembered that only three winters ago Dublin's footballers were in a lower division and I still recall Kevin Heffernan's comment on that stay in Division 2 which he made to me just two days before the 1974 Leinster final. "The opposition wasn't very strong, but the team were winning matches and that's important when a team has got out of the habit of winning."

In this year's hurling championship Dublin are due to play Offaly in Portlaoise on June 5 and the winners qualify for a semi-final with Kilkenny. So, judging on Kilkenny's form to date in the league, a breakthrough for Dublin, even if they overcame Offaly, would be a massive turn-up in form. Irrespective of how Kilkenny might be playing in June, they represent a county that has proved to be the biggest obstacle to Dublin teams for over three decades. Dublin have not beaten Kilkenny in the championship since the 1942 provincial final and the most they managed in the meantime against black and amber sides was to draw in 1953, '57 and '58.

On occasions when Dublin did get through they either beat Wexford (as in their last successful Leinster final) or it was Wexford who knocked-out Kilkenny.

Dublin has never lacked good hurlers and Patsy Cunningham, the Holden brothers, Harry Dalton and Joe Towell are key players in the current side. Jimmy Gray says: "We've got good hurlers and those that are in the panel are the best available in the county. It's the nucleus of a good team, but maybe we want one or two more. But unlike football, we don't have a large supply of play-

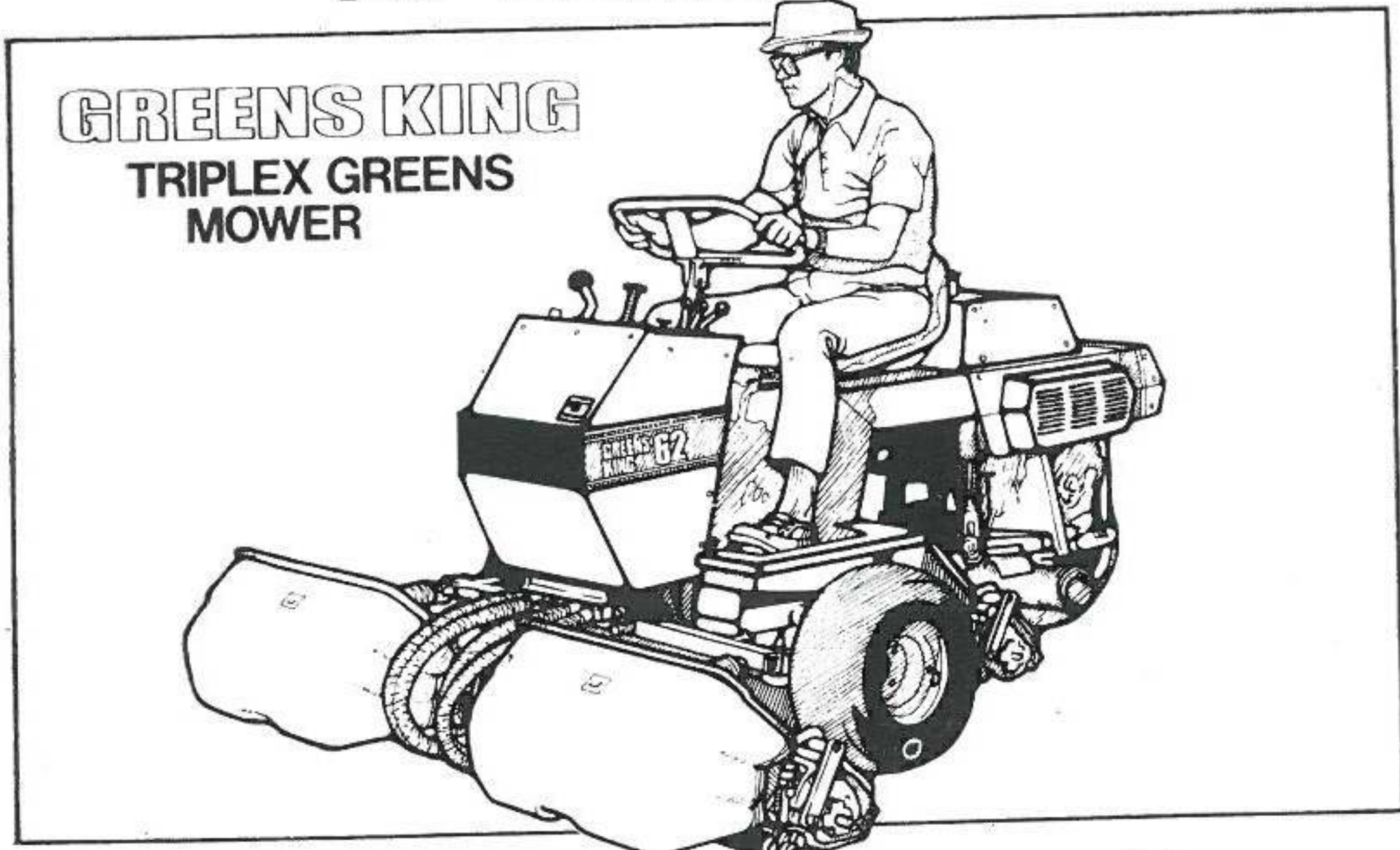
ers from which a team can be picked to fit into a plan or to adapt to certain tactics. In hurling we pick the players and then find a method that best suits them."

The Dubs footballers brought about a significant change in the sports-going habits of Dubliners when their success attracted throngs of youthful followers and the All-Ireland champions are doing admirable promotional work for football, and ensuring

that the interest among the youth is maintained, by their visits to schools and colleges which have continued right from the All-Ireland final. Consequently every Dublin match—be it in Croke Park, nearby Navan or far-away Tralee — is attended by swarms of Dublin supporters.

Let's hope the day is not too far off when we might witness the same hordes of Dubs supporters flocking to the county's hurling matches.

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THE CAMOGIE SCENE

By AGNES HOURIGAN

THERE was a time when the Camogie game, except perhaps in the big cities, more or less went into winter-quarters from mid-Autumn until late Spring. Indeed for many years the only Camogie people to brave the rigours of winter were the Ashbourne Cup players who fielded out in their inter-varsity series every February, come what might.

It became an article of faith for them that the Ashbourne went on despite war, or weather, civil commotion or even Act of God, and they maintain that tradition still. But they are no longer, when they take to the February fields, a kind of token that Camogie has survived the turn of the year, and will come into full bloom again when the grass is greener and the sun warmer.

Nowadays Camogie continues almost the whole year round. Indeed currently the Colleges are not the only ones to continue playing on a more or less country-wide basis into early December, resuming again at the end of January.

Nowadays because of the growing number of competitions, activity on the adult fields continued until the end of November, and would have run later but for weather considerations. As it is the Provincial club championships have not been fully completed which means an abnormally early return to playing activities in mid-January to clear the way for the All-Ireland semi-finals

and final in the ensuing weeks.

This year, too, the closing stages of the National League will have to be played off in January and February to ensure that the final is played to schedule in March. It had not originally been intended to play important League games in the heart of winter, but, for a variety of reasons, the Fixtures Committee had no alternative.

Weather caused more than one postponement of some vital games, and, in addition the champion clubs from counties with League commitments were also caught up in the club championship. The net result has been that the League competition has been spun out unduly.

For instance, Tipperary, who qualified for the final by winning the Eastern Zone back in October will not play again until the March final. So long a delay tends to evaporate the interest of players, officials and the general public alike.

However, we must remember that this, the inaugural National League competition, had to be organised at relatively short notice and the experience gained in running this first series is bound to be turned to good effect when planning for the new season ahead, and ironing out the snags that were bound to arise in connection with a first venture.

Meanwhile, just before Christmas, there was a most heartening day at Belfield when the C.C.I.A., the Council of the Higher Institutes, held a seven-aside blitz for

first-year students. Some ten Universities and Colleges sent teams and the quality of the play and the evenness of the standard between the competing teams was remarkable. What was even more remarkable, however, was the enthusiasm of all those involved.

There have been complaints that girls coming to the Universities and other Third Level Institutes for the first time, find themselves lonely, and can have difficulty in acclimatising and adapting to the very changed circumstances in which they find themselves. Some may find it hard to make friends.

In bringing so many First-year students with a common interest in Camogie together in such a congenial atmosphere so relatively early in the Academic Year, the C.C.I.A. did a good day's work, not alone for our game in the Universities and Colleges, but helped all these girls make new friends both within and without their own Colleges. Certainly the amount of talent displayed among these First Years would seem to ensure that the Ashbourne Cup competition, the C. C. I. A. League and the special Higher Institutes championship for non-University Colleges should be particularly entertaining through the months immediately ahead.

The Ashbourne, by the way, is being hosted this year, for the first time ever by Dublin University, who already have begun preliminary preparations.



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The Irish Olympic team went to Montreal wearing 'Oregon' from Clarks internationally famous Polyveldt range. Supplied by Clarks Ireland Limited, this light but hard wearing shoe has proved extremely popular with all sportsmen for casual wear.

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CLARKS SPRING IN TO 1977

... new range for sportsmen

THERE will be a big welcome from sportsmen for the new range of sports shoes which Clarks will be introducing into the shops around next February. One of the best in the range is called Fastnet, which has been designed as a sailing shoe and is totally proofed against salt water, even down to the rust resistant eyelets for the laces but which looks enough like an orthodox casual mocassin to be worn for many other occasions. The reason Clarks are particularly proud of Fastnet is that it is the best-seller of the new sports range and was made in their Dundalk factory for export all over the world, so that's one up for Ireland.

Bob Aubertin who looks after Clarks affairs here, explained that the company employ 700 people making shoes in Dundalk, mainly children's footwear. This makes them by far the largest employers of labour in the Irish footwear industry today and welcome news is that the numbers employed went up by 16 per cent this year, which is a change from what we've been hearing about other Irish factories. All the production from Clarks Dundalk fac-

tory is sent to a central warehouse in England and then redistributed along with their other merchandise according to retailers' requirements. In fact Clarks export for more shoes than they import, so there is a considerable net benefit to the country in having their business operating from here.

Now that they have entered the sport and leisure field it is expected that Clarks will be setting pretty high standards in this area — again, good news for fellows who are getting tired of having to buy new training shoes every couple of months. They appear to be the only 'normal' footwear manufacturers marketing a range of sports footwear and they are giving the same care and concern to design and production in this area as they give to their general ranges which have a superb reputation for reliability.

Their training shoes and others will be on sale in retail footwear shops so these are the places to look for them, on special display racks.

Clarks researched things thoroughly before producing this range and a panel of doctors and sportsmen sat in at every stage

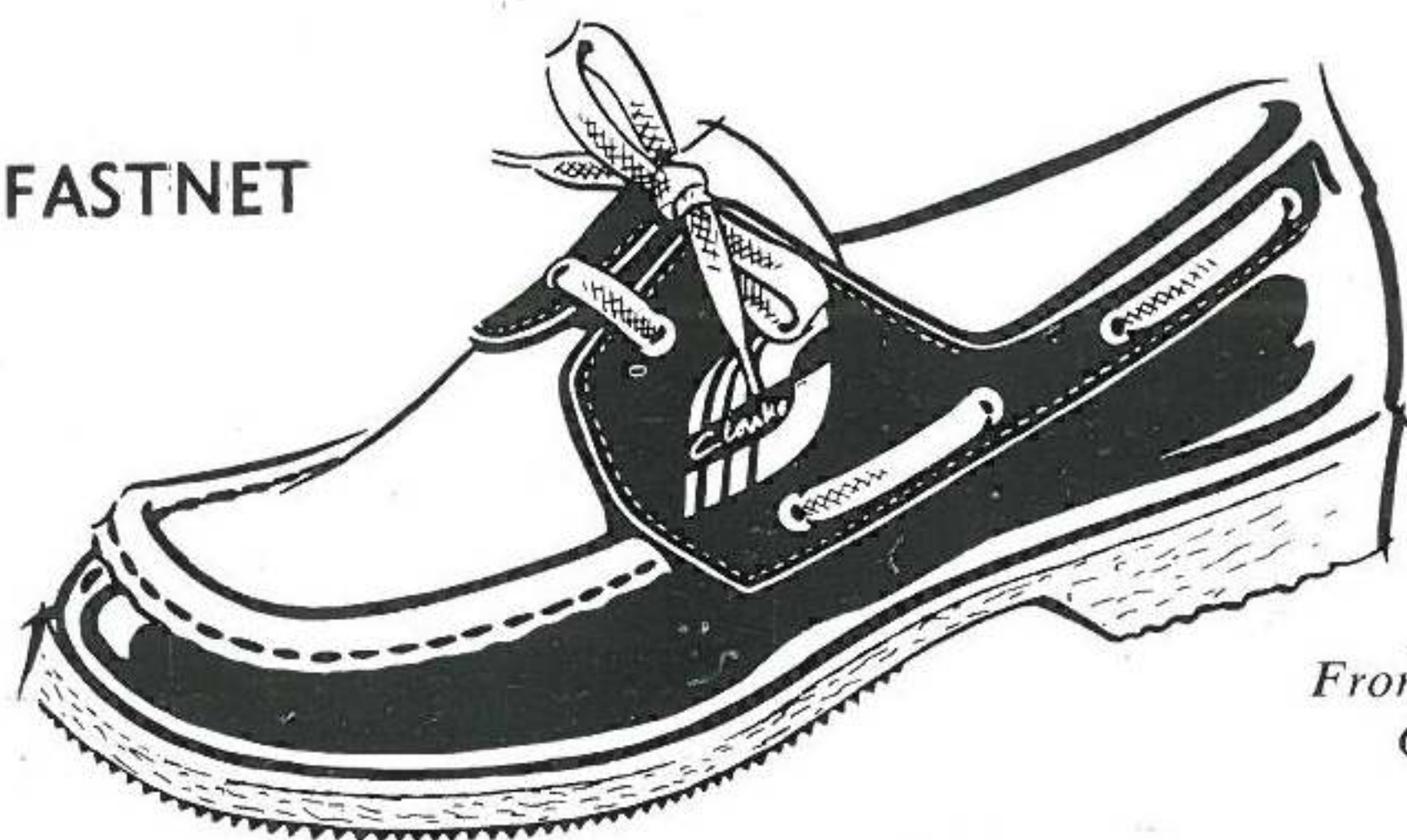
of the design process as consultants which perhaps accounts for the superb comfort of this sports footwear. Most sports shoes look attractive but some can be kind of hard on the feet, while durability can't automatically be expected either. Clarks began by getting the basics right — good components, good design — and then the shoes more or less automatically turned out to be attractive in themselves. The one they recommend for bowls would be perfect for handball and another to look for is the 'Jogger' which is ideal for exercise. Golf shoes from the range, besides being waterproof, have tungsten-tipped studs, which means the studs will definitely last as long as the shoe.

To go with all these new ideas Clarks have also designed a range of bags for sportsmen in which all the gear can be carried around handily. You can choose from a shoulder bag, a hand grip and a tennis/badminton bag which has a special compartment for the all-important racquet.

Another success story not enough people know about has to do with the batteries most of us put in our cars. Chloride (Irl) Ltd. has been manufacturing batteries in Ireland for the past forty years and doing it so well that they have a virtual monopoly of the battery business here. Two hundred people are employed and it's not just a question of assembling imported components, as happens with the motor industry generally. Chloride make the batteries from beginning to end, using whenever possible all-Irish materials. They even recover their own scrap lead.

Twenty per cent of production is now exported and Exide batteries are sold to places like Abu Dhabi, St. Kitts and the Virgin Islands. Mr. Langan of Exide told

FASTNET



From the new Clarksport Range

● OVERLEAF

● **FROM OVERLEAF**

us he manages to sell to people through French, German and Arabic which isn't bad going for an Irish businessman!

Exide are now injecting a further £600,000 into their factory here so as to increase efficiency still further. It is due to the efficient methods of production which have been introduced over the years that batteries today haven't quite doubled in price since 1961. This rate of increase

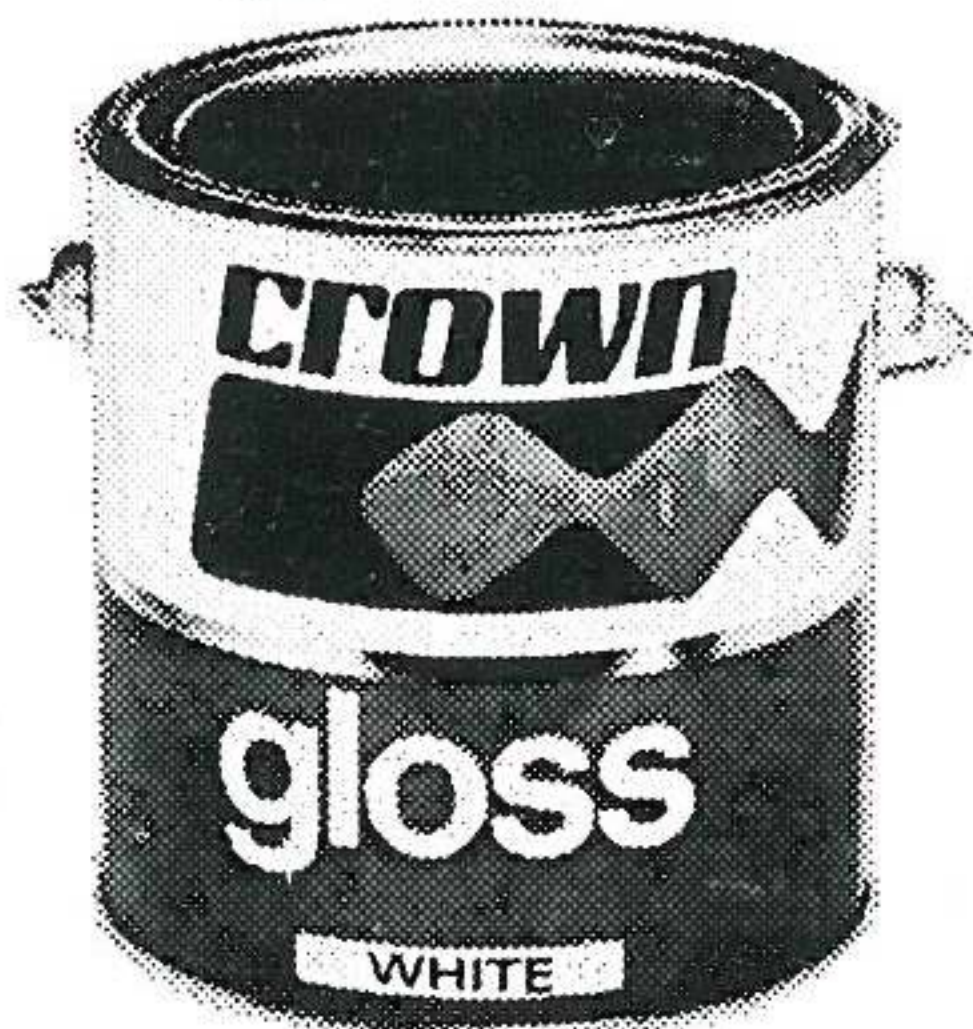
of course, means batteries today actually cost less than they did then.

Some people have written to Exide to tell them that they have had as much as 12 years of trouble-free service from their batteries — if Exide and Dagenite batteries can behave so well for some people, it must be because they respond to minimum care and attention.

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● **TO PAGE 35**

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CROWNING GLORY

DOING some early Spring decorating, whether you tackle the job yourself or call in the decorators, is a Spring tonic in itself

The Crown paints range is fabulous this year and contains those sophisticated subtle shades that are such a joy to use. The Company tell us that most Irish people still buy far more white paint than any other colour — and in itself that indicates a sensible choice. But maybe this Spring is the year when we'll become adventurous.

Ask at the paintshop if they have a copy of the Crown Book of Colour and Design and a look through it will tell you all you need to know about how that wallpaper you fancy can be hung so as to look its best.

The shop for all your requirements for home decorating is Monsell Mitchell, Pearse Street and Sir John Rogerson's Quay, Dublin. They cater specially for the do-it-yourself handyman and their experienced staff can be relied on for expert advice and assistance.

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FARM BUILDINGS— The Changing Scene

By K. M. Clarke of Tegral Building Products Ltd.

OVER recent years farming methods in Ireland, as elsewhere, have greatly changed. These changes, which have improved farm incomes and reduced the farmer's work load, have created a demand for well designed buildings suited to their purpose.

With the short to medium term prospects for agricultural prices and incomes at a more attractive level than at any time in the past, the potential for significant growth in farm building output is very great.

The necessity for increased stocking rates, intensive production and more efficient utilisation of labour for profitable beef production has seen the development of simple well designed buildings for cattle housing. These buildings, nowadays, usually consist of two monopitch or lean-to sheds with slatted floors over slurry pits separated by a feeding passage down which a tractor may be driven to bring the feed to the troughs at the front of each pen. The two roofs are usually kept a few feet apart over the passage to allow ventilation, and the side walls usually

have hinged baffles or open sheeting to allow the entry of fresh air.

The floor space required per animal varies from 15 sq. ft. for 5 cwt. animals, considerably less than in other systems. As the animals are on slats, no bedding is required, so there is a saving on the cost of straw and its handling. There is no pollution problem as manure storage is part of the system. The greatest advantage of this type of building is, of course, the reduction in labour involved in feeding and management.

In dairying, the development of self-feed silage systems has been of great significance. In these systems the cows are housed in individual cubicles in sheds or lean-tos to the shed containing the silage and are free to feed ad lib.

An Foras Taluntais recommends that only two types of milking parlour should be considered by the majority of Irish farmers, namely the abreast and herringbone types. The herringbone parlour has become the most popular as it can cope with herds of between 20 and 240

cows. Its greatest advantages are its ease and economy of installation and its high milking rate.

Herringbone parlours can be installed in quite simple buildings and one of the most popular is known as the "Morepark" in recognition of the development work carried out by the Institute. It consists of an L-shaped building with the milking equipment in the long arm of the L and the dairy and pump room in the short arm. Frequently, the milking area of this building has open sides.

Increasing investment in expensive machinery and rising feed costs has led recently to the building of many multi purpose storage buildings, the use of which varies with the seasons. These buildings are usually 'A' roofed structures with rooflights. Portion of these buildings are frequently set aside as workshop areas with good lighting from a concentration of rooflights.

Considerable research and development is being carried out by the Department of Agriculture, the universities and the Agricultural Institute, as well as commercial interests into the improvement of the design and layout of farm buildings. This research, coupled with the Irish farmer's traditional ingenuity which has led to today's efficient farm buildings is bound to lead to interesting new developments.

● FROM PAGE 34

you could be helping the Irish economy — nice thought that we can be patriotic and enjoy ourselves at the same time! Irish Biscuits, since they moved to their new factory in Tallaght, have one of the best equipped biscuit factories in Europe. In fact visiting it is rather like visiting a space-age fantasy land which epitomises efficiency. The people there describe it as 'a lovely place to work'.

Today Irish Biscuits employ 2,000 people directly and 5,000 people indirectly, in Ireland. Ten per cent of all their production is exported. The consumption

figures are awesome: 75 tons of flour per day, 20 tons of sugar a day, 18 tons of fat and 7 tons of syrup, go to make up all those nice little packets which we all consume with such enthusiasm.

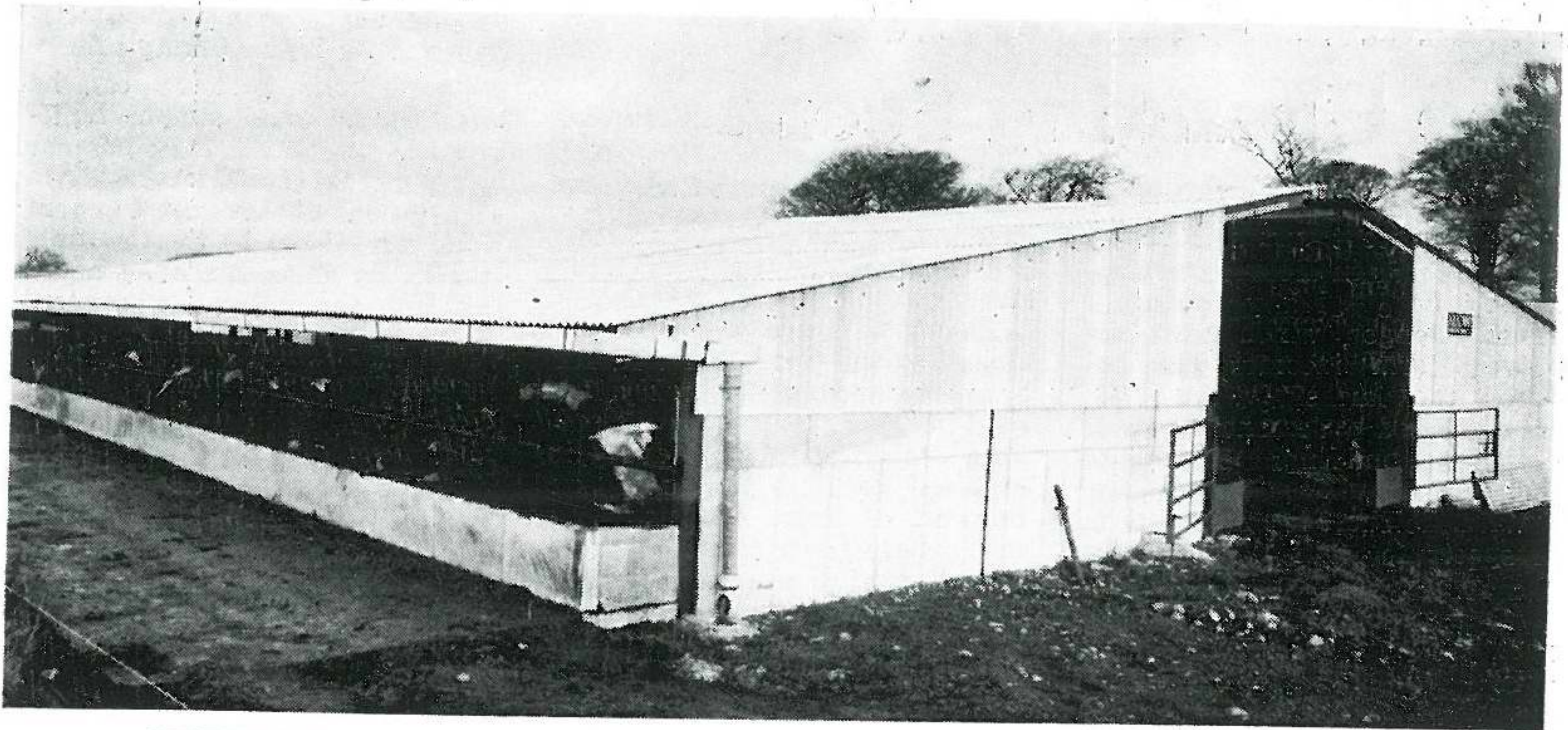
Ireland invented the cream cracker — yes, that was a first for the old Jacobs. Today Irish Biscuits make the cream crackers sold in Marks & Spencers food stores—made to the highest standards of hygiene anywhere.

Raelbrook, the foremost name in shirt manufacturing, have been making top quality shirts at their Blackrock and Skerries factories since 1957. Over 180 people are employed and the output is in the region of 10,000

shirts a week.

The latest continental designs, allied to quality Irish manufacture, mean that they have succeeded in producing a top quality 'value for money' product. The fact that over 40% of their output is exported shows that they can compete successfully on the international market.

Latest news from Raelbrook is that the casual style of shirt with two epaulettes and pockets will be 'all the rage' next summer. Their Pilot shirt caters for this sector of the market and should be a great success in the warm summer days. This is a good thought for these dark winter evenings.



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THREE WAYS TO PROSPER

United Dominions Trust have no less than three schemes to help people make the most of their money. Under their Regular Investment plan you deposit a certain sum every month for a specified number of years and at the end of that period you find your deposit has grown considerably. Any sum from £25 can be deposited, on a monthly basis. This is a good way to save for some major purchase like a car.

Under UDT's Capital Growth scheme you can deposit any amount from £200. UDT put the interest onto your money every six months and your interest starts earning interest too. It's a good idea for people who don't need the use of their money for a couple of years but want to make it grow. Parochial or institutional funds make good use of this scheme. Then there's the Monthly Income scheme from which you get a cheque every month representing the interest on your deposit—retired people and others find this very handy.

Be independent—SAVE

AT first sight it appears more exciting to spend than to save. But if you are constantly spending then you will never have enough to afford something really special such as a bicycle, a trip to an All-Ireland final, a holiday and so on.

The secret of achieving these goals is to save regularly. A small amount saved every week is much better than saving large amounts now and again. Once you acquire the savings habit your money quickly mounts up.

Having the backing of savings gives you independence and security. If a bargain suddenly appears on the scene then you can take full advantage of it while the spender cannot.

It is well to remember that your money can work for you if you invest it correctly. There is no point keeping your savings in an old sock when you can earn 7% interest per year with the Post Office. You can open a Post Office account with just 50p and after that it is up to you.

The Post Office gives you a deposit book so you know exactly how much you have.

Saving is not only important for the individual but for the nation as well. Personal savings make up the pool of money from which new schools, hospitals and factories are built. This in itself creates jobs and increases the nation's standard of living.

The National Savings Committee publish a number of free booklets which should help you on the savings trail. "Money-craft" for pupils and teachers deals with money in relation to the individual, business, trade and the economy.

"Secure Ways to Save" lists all the State-guaranteed schemes available while "School Leavers' Guide" gives advice to those about to leave school on how to organise themselves. These booklets may be had free of charge by writing to the National Savings Committee at 72 St. Stephen's Green, Dublin 2. No stamp is required.

WATCH TIME

AT the Irish offices of the prestigious Swiss watchmakers' society we saw the latest and most beautiful watches for ladies by Omega. The cases and straps were especially designed and made in Italy in 14c gold and they have all the design flair for which Italians are famous. The watch bracelets are in fact knitted from fine gold wire which makes them very flexible and they form the perfect complement to the sleek dials and of course top-class watch mechanisms supplied by Omega. Each one would represent a superb investment at from £345—and of course you're buying a beautiful piece of jewellery too.

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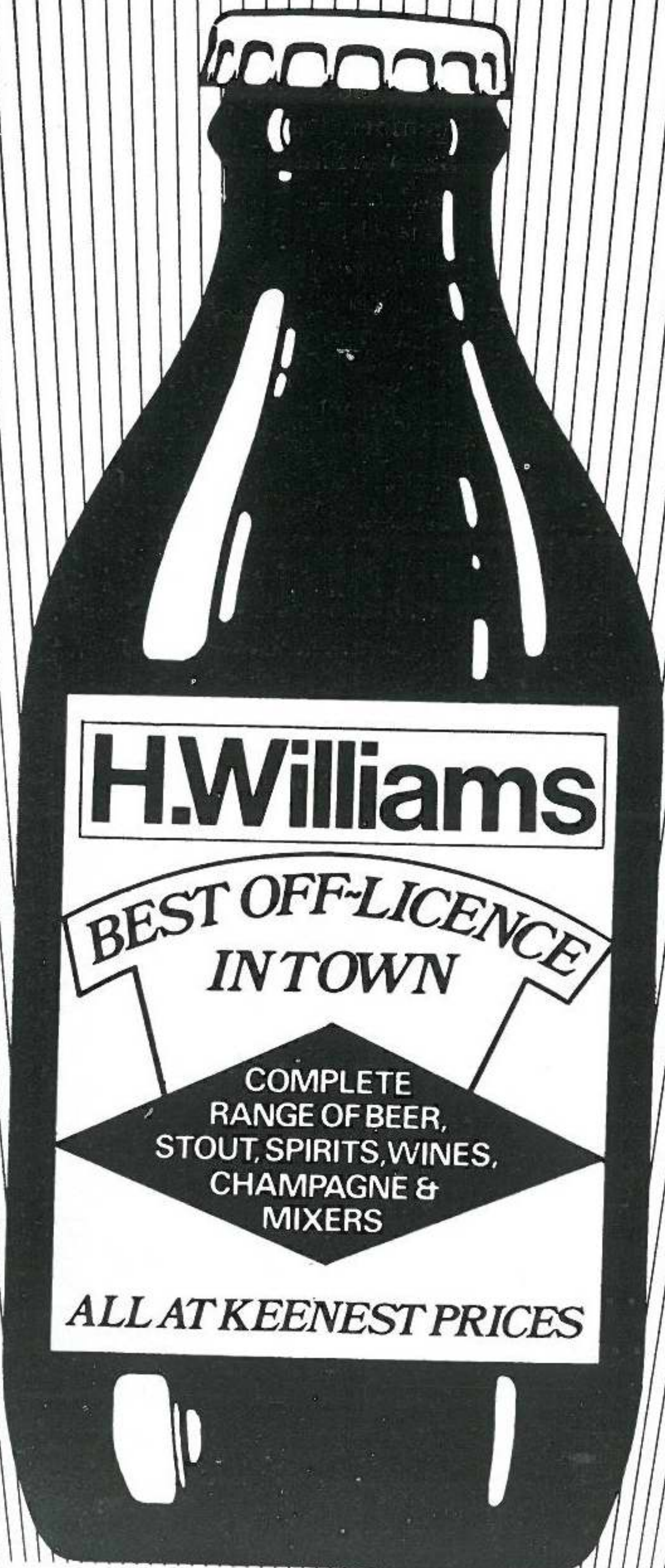
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ON THE SPOT...

Compiled by TONY KEEGAN

THAT was the year that was! And as 1976 takes its place in the annals of history, and we eagerly look forward to the year ahead, what better way to bridge the turn of the seasons than through a quiz that helps to revive memories of the campaign that is now history?

ON THE SPOT . . . does just that this month, but at the same time, with such a strong emphasis just now on players of the year, games of the year and exciting moments in the premier grade, our quiz provides an added challenge by dealing in the main with events other than inter-county senior affairs at All-Ireland winning level.

After all, even the must luke-warm enthusiast knows that Cork and Dublin won the premier awards last year in the Championships. But can you say, offhand, who took the Ulster minor football title?

That's just one of the type of questions featured in our three part quiz. There are some bonus questions included, and details of the points to be won and lost are given at the end of each section.

For a start, let's take a look back at some of last year's

TITLE WINNERS

1. Who won the All-Ireland Vocational Schools' Football Championship last May at Croke Park.

2. St. Jarlath's, Tuam, lost the All-Ireland Colleges' senior football championship decider last May. Can you name the winners of that game

3. The Dr. McKenna Cup competition is a knock-out senior football test confined to the

Ulster counties. The winners of the 1976 series were Derry, Armagh, or Monaghan. Your selection?

4. Now a chance for the ladies to forge ahead, and a question at the same time to tax the memories of the mere males. The All-Ireland senior camogie title went to Kilkenny last September. But was the national junior crown won by Down, Dublin, or Cork?

5. Our first bonus question. Five extra marks if you name the four provincial minor football championship winners of 1976. If you fail to get all four correct, help yourself to just one point for each provincial winner named correctly.

Each question is worth five points, other than No. 5, which yields ten points for an all correct answer. Total score possible: 30 points. Your tally.

Now a chance to see how well you know your clubs in this five-question feature on:

CLUB REPORT



1. The players above are (right) Pat Spillane, of Kerry, and Ger Henderson, of Kilkenny. Name their clubs?

2. James Stephens, Kilkenny,

made history on the double last year in the All-Ireland club senior hurling championship. What we want here is for you to give full details of that unique double.

3. Most enthusiasts will remember that Portlaoise shocked St. Vincent's of Dublin, the defending champions, in the Leinster club football championship in November. But can you remember the Laois champions' winning margin?

4. Another chance to make up lost ground with this bonus question. Who were runners-up for the All-Ireland club senior hurling and football titles last March?

5. One of the longest serving footballers in the game, Sean O'Connell, won his first Ulster senior club football medal at the end of November. Name the Derry forward's title winning club side?

Again, 30 points are on offer here, five for each question answered correctly, plus that five points bonus for No. 4. Your score.

Finally, the spotlight here is firmly on the players. And a warning, some of these questions may cause you to scratch your head. But again, some extra points are available for the more difficult ones.

PERSONALITY PARADE

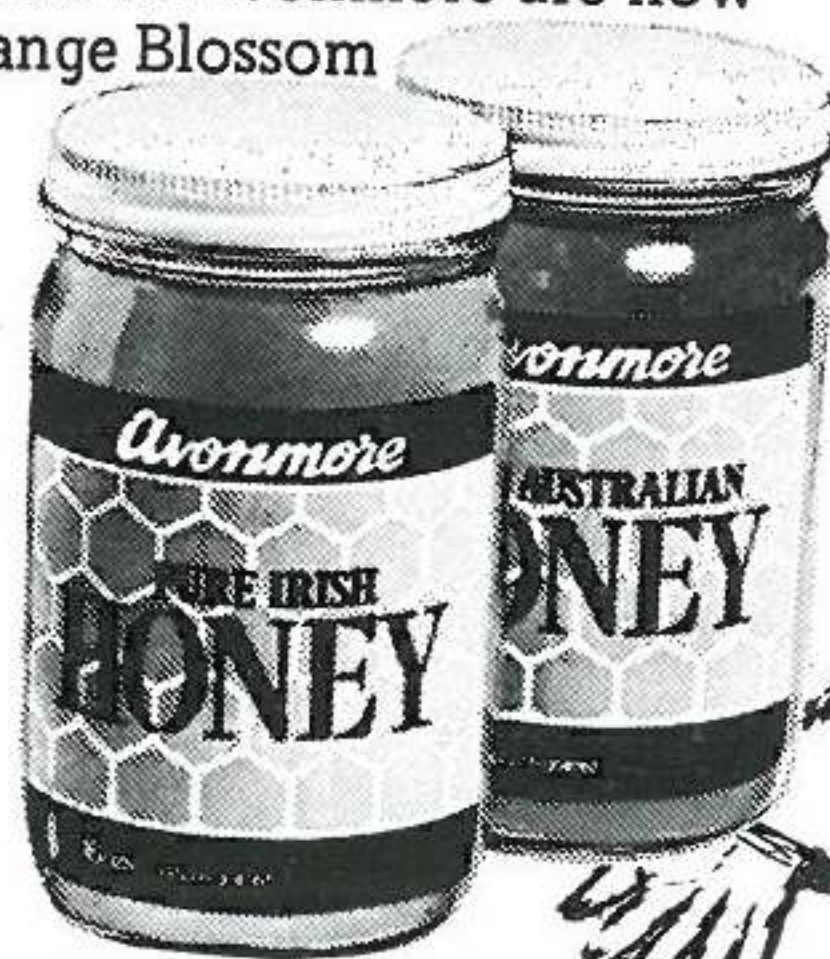
1. Not too difficult a one to start with. Who captained Kilkenny to their 1976 National Hurling League final replay win?

● TO PAGE 41

UP THE BEES

Our reporter, puzzled by this mysterious banner, asked a prominent player. He explained that since Avonmore Honey is great for making champions the bees ought to get some credit, too. In fact, he got it from a reliable source that bees in Spain who heard of the fame of Avonmore are now making Spanish honey from the nectar of Orange Blossom and Rosemary for Avonmore. Try it. Maybe you'll add a Spanish touch to the game!

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● FROM PAGE 39

2. Five additional marks for naming the player who lined out at full forward for Derry in their Ulster senior football final replay with Cavan in July?

3. The following players all appeared in the senior championships at inter-county level in the past year — Pat McAneaney, Michael Cosgrave, Richie Dunford and Frank Holohan. What we want here is their respective county team, and again a five marks bonus for all correct answer. Otherwise just one point for each county correctly named.

4. This hurler who has made his mark as a forward and a back, achieved one of the best individual scoring returns in the senior championship last season. Who is he?

5. Two Clare hurlers helped Munster to their Railway Cup final win over Leinster last March. Can you name them?



6. The two players pictured above were prominent with their county teams last year without, however, getting among the major medals. Who are they?

7. Another question to show just how expert you are on minor affairs. Select from the following list the players who led their counties to All-Ireland minor title wins last September: Goal-keeper Vincent Mullins or midfielder Joe Hogan (Tipperary), and midfielder Gerry Burke or full forward Gay McManus, of

Galway?

8. Another chance for lady readers to come into their own. Who captained Kilkenny to their All-Ireland camogie senior title win?

9. Galway's left half back in their All-Ireland senior hurling semi-final replay with Wexford at Cork also captained the team that day. Who is he?

10. Finally, not too difficult a one really if you think about it.

This footballer did not play one full senior championship game in the past campaign, but still made a major impact on the football scene?

Each question is worth five points, except Numbers 2 and 3. The bonus marks for those questions mean that 60 points in all may be won here. Your score

HOW YOU MEASURE UP

Total marks possible: 120. 100 or over: Excellent. 80 to 100 Very Good. 60 to 80: Good.

ANSWERS

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1: Templeogue (Pat Spillane); The Fenians Johnstown (Ger Henderson). 2: They are the first Kilkenny and also the first Leinster club to win the hurling All-Ireland crown. 3: One point. 4: Blackrock (Cork) in hurling, and Roscommon Gaels. 5: Ballerin. PERSONALITY PARADE 1: Fan Larkin. 2: Christie Kerry. 3: Monaghan (Pat Griev. 4: Eamonn Cregan (Limerick), who scored 4-1 against Cork in the Munster final. 5: John Callinan, and Ger Loughnane, who went in as a substitute. 6: Mick Crotty (Kilkenny) and John Connelly (Galway). 7: Joe Hogan and Gerry Burke. 8: Mary Fennelly. 9: Iggly Clarke. 10: Sean Walsh, who made a number of important appearances as a substitute with

1: Galway. 2: Carmelite College, Moate. 3: Monaghan. 4: Down. 5: Galway, Cork, Tyrone, Dublin. CLUB REPORT TITLE WINNERS 1: Galway. 2: Carmelite College, Moate. 3: Monaghan. 4: Down. 5: Galway, Cork, Tyrone, Dublin.

I.N.T.O. BUY IRISH NOW

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

SOME NEW YEAR MUSINGS BY JAY DRENNAN

LET'S TAKE FROM THE RICH AND GIVE TO THE POOR

RECENT events have conspired to place a bright light on the All-Stars Tour. First there was the remembered inconvenience of the tour of 1976, even though much was forgiven because of the tie-in with the Bicentennial Celebrations. Then came the questionable selections on the All-Stars team itself which raised hackles in several quarters and transferred itself into a close attention to broader issues in the

tour than the selection of the players involved.

Next and latest of the factors that have caused the build-up of doubts and caustic comments was the terrible scramble of games left to be sorted out in the dead of winter. Teams, individuals, officials, spectators — all seemed equally inconvenienced and annoyed by the log-jam and the circumstances which made it impossible to shift a whole section of the programme back until after Christmas because there was no room there either, packed as February (and even January) is with heaped up fixtures.

As the weather, the energy and the tempers got worse, and all began to long for a rest, covetous thoughts were directed more and more precisely towards the several weeks of high season time and weather which was used up in 1976 by the All-Stars tour.

The reaction was that, if only that time had been available for use in the field of inter-county competition, in particular, there would now be no need for the dragging of weary limbs across wintry landscapes more out of obligation than pleasure.

One can overreact in the moment of weakness, when the resistance is low and everything seems to be a suitable subject for complaint. That is probably one of the reasons why one hears the voices of complaint so much at this time of year. It is the weather and the short evenings, the hardship of keeping in any

kind of training, of course, but it is surely also because of the time of year and the fact that it is the fag-end of a long eleven months.

I think that wrong conclusions can be drawn often in such hard-pressed moments. So, maybe, we should be a little circumspect. Yet, there is a lot in what many players and officials are saying — that we cannot afford three weeks (or more) out of the peak-point of the season just to accommodate the elite of the All-Stars and All-Ireland champions.

Why not have the tours at the back end, someone suggested? Why not, indeed, since in California, at least, one feels the weather would be a pleasant change from muddy, or frost-bitten fields in Ireland. But, there is then the problem about New York, even more firmly grabbed in the grip of bitter weather at this time. And, of course, there is the problem of robbing Peter to pay Paul, as it were — making the top players pay for being so good by sending them off to grind out more football and hurling, while the less good are comfortably sitting down to a nice end of season rest at home.

It may be a question of an elite taking advantage of the majority just now, but that is no reason to try to equalise that by victimising the elite.

There was also a question of the sponsorship of the All-Stars event by a large tobacco concern and whether that could be made to square with the professed intentions of the Association to

log-jam of fixtures not helped by mid-season tours

foster all that goes to create the cliched "mens sana in corpore sano". There is, it appears to me, a rather substantial number of GAA people which has found itself with a rather tender conscience as a result of this particular argument. They feel there is something in it; they do not wish to make it a lever to unship the All-Stars idea; they know the GAA could not afford that kind of junketting out of its own pocket; so they turn their uncertain frame of mind on another aspect — that of the manner in which the tour is interfering with the activities of the Association in general.

It is all such a mess, really. If it were a matter of clear-cut issues you could stand back and weigh the facts and arguments in the balance and make a definite decision one way or another. But, the All-Stars tour is not just a tour, full stop. There are overtones and causes and effects.

Some form of honour for the top players is surely not to be considered a bad thing in itself. Neither are tours in themselves a bad thing; indeed, the truth is, of course, that the whole philosophy of the GAA on sustaining with moral assistance the efforts of exiles and their descendants to keep the games going abroad makes the idea of touring a good one, in itself, perhaps, even, a necessary one? Again one cannot be clear because of the doubt about the degree of sincerity with which that view is espoused.

Finally, one might even go to the limit of credibility and say that touring in prime time need not be disastrous, as such, either, because that only means more prime time for the other aspects of the GAA which require attention, and which, indeed, are constantly hollering for room to breathe — county championships in every grade; minor and under-21 championships, Feile na nGael, inter-firm, schools, colleges and

third-level educational competitions . . .

But, when one has said all that, one has to acknowledge the fact that certain priorities must be decided upon. And whether it is a matter of sending the All-Stars and All-Irelanders on tour in the high season or at the end of the year, it all really boils down to the same thing in the end. There are too many games, too many weary players filling in time because of prior obligation to club, county, firm, university, school, or grade, or most of these together.

To be brutally honest, it doesn't bother me that much if some player decides to play so much that he does himself a mischief: he ought to know better, or be better advised. But, it does bother me that there can only be one result to all this crazy rush to play in everything all the time, and the quite unhealthy belief that if it is not a competitive game it is not worth a toffee.

This must, inevitably lead to weary players, lacking in inspiration. Worse than that, it must lead to a decline in the standard of football and hurling. It is not any great coincidence that there has been a definite decline in most grades of the games since the proliferation of grades and competitions began to take effect in the last ten or fifteen years.

In times gone by when there were far fewer games, any county which went on tour was in fear and trembling lest the tour would affect their team's performance in the following championship at home. Indeed, it often did, or was presumed to have done. Nowadays, however, with two, three or four times as many calls on the players, the question at issue boils down to whether the best players should go on tour and play to the point of tiredness, or whether they should stay at home and do the same thing. **Because** that is what it would mean if the

tours were done away with, and, even at that, it would mean only a minimal improvement at the end of the year, since there is some kind of variation of Parkinson's Law at work here ensuring that games proliferate to fill the available (and unavoidable) time.

Meantime, who bothers to set any value on training any more? How can they, when they haven't a minute? The only ones who can afford the luxury of training time are those who are down the "boithrin" as far as competitions are concerned because they are small and poverty-stricken—both clubs and counties. And, while they have the time to work on their game, they haven't the incentive.

Take a decision, I say, to cut out 25 per cent, at least, of present competition. Then search until that 25 per cent has been found — otherwise, by going the opposite way about it, nothing will ever get cut out. Then make every effort to spread the games about more; give a bit more to the poor; take a bit more from the rich. If necessary, force players to choose between grades and competitions when they are eligible for too many. Give a bit of breathing space, for goodness sake, and let people see where the light is. Then it will be possible to say whether there should be tours or not, and when? Until then we are simply fooling ourselves into thinking that this has anything to do with the chaos.

Much more to the point, however, it will be a move in the direction of improved standards, for even if young players make no greater effort to train and improve their skills in the new time given them, they will be fresher, at least, and more anxious to play ball, instead of the present situation where they are either dragging their feet to play or hardly know where to find their boots since the last time.



BILL WALSH,
Regional
Tourism
Manager,
South-East

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SEAN BROWNE,
Manager,
Shannonside
Regional
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Organisation

THE Shannonside Region — counties Clare, Limerick and North Tipperary — has special associations with the G.A.A. It was in Thurles that the Association was founded and indeed Limerick has hosted more Munster Hurling finals than any other centre.

Two centres therefore with modern stadia and a variety of attractions and good accommodation which G.A.A. followers would enjoy. In both centres, dog racing, horse racing,

cinema, theatre, golf, bingo are available to G.A.A. groups. A wealth of things to see and do and all the maps and guides to help you plan a local tour will make your stay in Limerick or Thurles as enjoyable and as memorable as any All Ireland. Try it and see next time there is a big match. Bring your friends, avoid the pre-match rush and post-match traffic. For example, in Limerick, from lunch on Saturday to after lunch on Sunday, it'll cost £11.85 per person (inclusive of dinner, all taxes etc.). In Thurles the price, exclusive of dinner is £8.25 for a single, £16.00 for twin.

◆ ◆ ◆
WE in the Sunny South East are very proud of the fact that within our Region we have

four of Ireland's leading hurling counties. As Regional Tourism Manager and a former inter county player I would urge Gaelic Clubs and Groups who may be travelling to any one of our major stadia to consider spending a weekend with us to enjoy our first class accommodation, our excellent amenities and our evening entertainment at Kilkenny, Waterford, Wexford, Clonmel and Dungarvan.

EXPERT ADVICE

MR. Dwyer of the Educational Building Society, in a recent interview, said that putting one's money into a deposit or share account is particularly worthwhile when one is saving money on a planned basis. Deposit rates went up a bit last November, the tax arrangement which allows interest on accounts to be paid nett of tax cuts out a lot of form-filling and makes putting in and taking out one's money very simple. And it does help, if you go looking for a mortgage, to be able to demonstrate that you can save on a regular basis — it's almost a character test really. The Educational Building Society is easy to save with because it has got branches almost everywhere you can think of and they keep regular office hours.

Unique fund-raising venture

THE ambitious Erne Gaels club in Belleek have come up with a fund-raising venture that is not only one of the most unusual and exciting I have come across, but also unique of its kind. This takes the form of a special porcelain plate, which combines the flavour of the G.A.A. with some of the finest attributes of the country's ancient heritage and culture.

The plate has been produced in a limited quantity by the world famous Belleek Pottery. The design and modelling were by Oisín Kelly, sculptor and contributing designer to the Kilkenny Design Workshops.

The centrepiece of the plate contains a crest similar to that of the G.A.A.

A second band around the plate carries the profiles in relief of

eight famous G.A.A. personalities and bridges many eras in the Association's history. The profiles are of Michael Cusack, Maurice Davin, Dr. Croke, Sam Maguire, John Joe O'Reilly, Pádraig O Caoimh, Michael O'Hehir and Christy Ring.

The plate will sell for about £12 to G.A.A. clubs, and may be obtained direct from the Erne Gaels club in Belleek, Co. Fermanagh.

For well over one hundred years Belleek has had an international reputation for the manufacture of fine pottery. Nowadays high quality porcelain produced with the aid of Litherland electric ovens have speeded-up production without any loss of quality. The processes of production are still carried on by hand.

JUNIOR DESK



By
**JACK
MAHON**

IT'S 1977. First of all a happy New Year to you all and may Junior Desk continue to flourish. So many letters were held back last month for lack of space that I am asking you all to write to the Editor to ask him for an EXTRA page. I've been asking now for many years. I won't write anything at all this month myself. Only to say congrats to our Cut-out Noel O'Dwyer of Borrisoleigh, still one of the top hurlers in the country and a great sportsman. Noel has suffered many injuries and still soldiers on. He will be one of the big men in the Tipperary comeback which is not too far away judging by their great minor team of 1976.

MAILBAG

Jack Naughton, Brackagh, Horseleap, Moate, Co. Westmeath thinks programme collecting is a very interesting hobby and although only at it for little over a year, has over 50 different programmes. Jack agrees with Eoghan Corry's views about programmes, especially regarding surplus programmes being sold at reduced prices. Jack, like Eoghan, thinks that overseas soccer programme collecting is too commercial. Jack is very interested in getting county final programmes and would like readers to swap some county final programmes with him. He praised the Westmeath, Offaly and Derry county final programmes.

Talking about the All-Ireland S.F. final, he is critical of our

football becoming like handball. "Kicking a ball in hurling should also be banned." Kevin Moran is his footballer of the year, with Anthony McGurk his No. 2. "Tom McGuinness is the most consistently brilliant midfielder in the country." His hurler of the year would be one of the following three: Denis Coughlan, Tony Doran or Mick Jacob.

● *I'm delighted to see that county final programmes are improving so rapidly. I was most impressed with the North Mayo Junior F.C. final programme, also the Westmeath, Kerry and Galway county final programmes. I'll say more on this later.* (J.M.)

Donal Ring, Coolavokig, Lissacreasig, Macroom, Co. Cork. "The colour covers on the Gaelic Sport All-Ireland issues were superb. My stars of the hurling final were Pat Moylan and Mick Jacob. I don't agree with Seamus Woulfe that Cork are running the G.A.A. but I agree with Patrick Byrne of Kiltegan regarding the handpass in football and dropping the hurley to palm the ball in for a score in hurling. The handpass should be abolished. I think that the penalty should stay in both games.

"The Lucozade chart is great. I have it on my bedroom wall. My stars of the football final were Kevin Moran and Brian Mullins. My footballer of the year would be Brian Mullins and my top hurler Denis Coughlan. Junior Desk fans should have a guest player each month with fans asking him questions."

● *Now, Donal, I'm asking you to nominate a hurler and a foot-*

baller as our guests for questions. So pick your men and we will organise it. (J.M.)

Sean Furlong (age 11), Kilmacleague, Dunmore East, Co. Waterford. "My Dad brought me to both All-Irelands this year. John O'Keeffe is a very good footballer. He is one of six stars I have pinned up on my bedroom wall."

● *Who are the other five? I'm delighted to find so many Junior Desk fans pasting our own G.A.A. stars on their bedroom walls. Don't tell Mammy I said it but keep pasting your G.A.A. pin-ups on the wall.* (J.M.)

Patrick Byrne, Spynans, Kiltegan, Co. Wicklow wants to know where he can get a Wicklow jersey.

● *Write to G.A.A. Shop, Croke Park, Dublin 3, and ask for their current price list.* (J.M.)

Ger Dowling, 5 Upper Johnstown, Waterford is very critical of the poor stewarding at the recent Kilkenny v Tipperary N.H.L. game at Nowlan Park, Kilkenny, when so many young Kilkenny boys invaded the pitch after every Kilkenny score. They could easily have been injured and are a huge distraction to both teams but especially to the rival goalkeeper. "Besides, it presented a rotten image of our G.A.A. games on telly." This is Ger's second time writing about this lack of stewarding at this venue and he feels that Kilkenny Co. Board should do something about it. Ger praises Kevin Moran and Brian Mullins for their All-Ireland displays. He is

● **OVERLEAF**

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● FROM OVERLEAF

critical of the fact that no Waterford hurler received an All-Star nomination.

● Great letter. Watching that game in Nowlan Park on TV, I too was appalled at the lack of stewarding and the high jinks of the young Kilkenny fans as they made a nuisance of themselves after every home score. It presented a very poor image of our game. I love youthful fervour better than anybody but this wasn't fervour. Nowlan Park has allowed this to happen too often. (J.M.)

Des Kelly, Ballycoogue, Woodenbridge, Avoca, Co. Wicklow is very critical of R.T.E. and asks Fred Cogley to restore a G.A.A. programme like *Gaelic Report* on R.T.E. Des feels that as Gaelic football and hurling are the top spectator sports in Ireland, R.T.E. should reflect that popularity fairly.

● Des, you'll have to admit that R.T.E. has improved and is now reflecting the strength you mention. But it must continue to improve. (J.M.)

Majella Byrne, Spynans, Kiltegan, Co. Wicklow thinks Junior Desk is great and is writing for the first time. Majella would like a T-shirt with some hurlers or footballers of today on it. She wants a Cut-Out of Richie Bennis. Her favourites are Mickey O'Sullivan, R. Bennis, Jimmy Barry-Murphy and Martin Quigley.

● Nobody ever forgets Jimmy Barry-Murphy. (J.M.)

Dónal Ó Duibhir, 27 Ballintemple, Blackrock Rd., Cork is 9 years old and plays left half back in hurling. Donal lives near Páirc Uí Chaoimh and hasn't missed a game in it yet. "Christy Ring, Jimmy Brohan and Pat Moylan brought the McCarthy Cup to our school after the All-Ireland and we got a half-day. At school our class has a big collection of G.A.A. programmes, magazines and books. Cork should have beaten Kerry in the Munster final." His favourites are Eamonn O'Donoghue, Pat Moylan, Jimmy Barry-Murphy, Eddie

Keher and Ray Cummins.

● Failte, Donal, to Junior Desk. You must have been pleased with the November issue with the coloured Cut-Out of Eddie Keher and Eamonn Young's fine interview with Ray Cummins. (J.M.)

Norman Rochford, The Square, Gort, Co. Galway is 10 years old, plays with his team, The Square, in football and expects to play for Gort at a future date.

● Welcome to Junior Desk. One of Galway's greatest ever hurlers came from Gort, namely Josie Gallagher, not to mention his brother Stephen and Tadhg Kelly. (J.M.)

All the above letters were held over since the last issue so please forgive me if I have to shorten all the other letters unduly or if a name appears twice as I'd like to include all letters.

Séamus Ó Duinn, (Rúnaí), Bord na nÓg, C.L.C.G., Co. Wicklow sends on copies of the Wicklow S.F.C. final programme between Hollywood and Baltinglass. Anyone wishing to get a copy of same can do so if they write to Séamus Ó Duinn, Ballyduff, Arklow, Co. Wicklow enclosing a P.O. for 20p.

● Programme collectors please note. (J.M.)

Conal Byrne, Garryvadden Rd., Blackwater, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford says his favourite sport is hurling and his favourite players are Tony Doran, Mick Jacob and Iggy Clarke.

Michael O'Hara, Patrick St., Mountrath, Co. Laois is highly critical of the Dubs, in particular Jimmy Keaveney, Bobby Doyle and Tony Hanahoe, who wouldn't stop to sign an autograph for him in Portlaoise on the occasion of Portlaoise's win over St. Vincent's. On the other hand he praises Kilkennymen Pat Delaney, Nicky Orr, Eddie Keher, Fan Larkin and Liam O'Brien who, after being heavily beaten by Wexford in this year's Leinster final, found time to sign autographs for him. "In fact Pat Delaney gave me his hurley and gave my brother, P.J., his No. 11

jersey."

● Michael, this is a serious complaint. Now there is a time and a place for everything and perhaps you caught the Dubs at the wrong time. I know Jimmy Keaveney well and he is a great sportsman and gives so much of his time every week to the juvenile members of his club. So does Bobby Doyle. Tony Hanahoe is a great sportsman too. Perhaps, Michael, you'll be hearing from them when they read this. (J.M.)

Teresa Byrne, Spynans, Kiltegan, Co. Wicklow is full of praise for Anthony McGurk of Derry and Tony Doran of Wexford.

Antonia O'Brien, 5, St. Mary's Ave., Urlingford, Co. Kilkenny is 16 years old and writes to thank those who helped her to get the Kilkenny G.A.A. Yearbooks of '73 and '74. Her favourites are L. O'Brien, P. Delaney, M. Brennan, E. Keher and B. Cody in hurling and M. O'Sullivan, G. Power, P. O'Shea and P. Spillane in football. "Eddie Keher will keep on scoring goals."

W. F. Carberry, 54 Poleberry, Waterford is anxious to swop tapes of games that he has and has the following list of programmes and magazines for sale or exchange.

Gaelic Stars of the Year, 1970, '72, '73, '74; World of Gaelic Games 1974; Limerick Heroes 1973; Solo Magazine, Oct., Nov., Dec., 1972, Sept. '73; An Cúl, Dec./Jan. 1974/'75, Feb./Mar., July, '75; N.F.L. finals, 1975, 1976; All-Ireland Hurling Semi-final, 1976, Draw and Replay; Railway Cup finals, 1969, '70, '75; All-Ireland Hurling finals 1965, '66, '67, '73, '74, '75, '76; All-Ireland Football Semi-final 1970, '75; Munster Hurling final 1976; Munster Football final 1975, '76; All-Ireland Football finals 1965, '67; Connacht Football final 1972; N.H.L. (Draw) 1976.

● Readers interested in any of the above should write to Mr. Carberry. The same applies to any

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reader interested in tapes of games. (J.M.)

Christopher Hannon, 1879 Kill, West Naas, Co. Kildare wants details of Séamus Ó Riain's Moneygall Hurling Story and the following is his best Ireland team since 1960:

P. Cullen (Dublin), Donie O'Sullivan (Kerry), John O'Keeffe (Kerry), Tom O'Hare (Down), John Donnellan (Galway); Nick Clavin (Offaly), Pat Reynolds (Meath), Mick O'Connell (Kerry), Des Foley (Dublin), Sean O'Neill (Down), Micky Kearins (Sligo), Tony McTague (Offaly), Paddy O'Doherty (Down), Mick O'Dwyer (Kerry), John Keenan (Galway).

● *Would some readers help re the Moneygall story? The team is good, too. (J.M.)*

John Jones, 39 Legilly Road, Dungannon, Co. Tyrone is 11 years old and thinks Frank McGuigan, Gerry McElhinney and Colm McAlarney are the three best footballers in the north.

● *All great men. (J.M.)*

Declan Keane, Moyglass, Loughrea, Co. Galway wants a Cut-out of John Connolly or Tony Doran and loves Junior Desk.

Brendan Dwyer, Scrahanagnave, Sneem, Co. Kerry plays at mid-field for Sneem U-12 team and has as favourites Tod Nolan, Pat Moriarty, Mike Sheehy, Fan Larkin, Eddie Keher, Iggy Clarke, Ray Cummins and Eamonn Creghan.

Gerald P. Hussey, Ardshillane, Sneem, Co. Kerry says his favourites are John Egan and Eddie Keher and loves Páirc Uí Chaoimh.

Joseph Woods, Cloneyogan, Lahinch, Co. Clare looks back on the year, visited Thurles Stadium three times, saw both Leinster finals (when Anton O'Toole and the Doran brothers were the stars) and the Dublin S.H.C. final, and was thrilled by both All-Ireland finals. Joseph feels that V.I.P.s should come in time to see the All-Ireland finals and here he feels Jack Lynch always sets a great example. He saw many

other games including the Camogie and Oireachtas finals and the Cork v Dublin N.F.L. game. "But for me July 11 in Páirc Uí Chaoimh was the best day of all. I never enjoyed anything as much as this Cork v Kerry draw. To the two teams I say thanks for the memory." His two stars of the year are Tony Doran and Anton O'Toole.

● *Great letter as usual, Joseph. I thought the replay between Cork and Kerry a much better game than the drawn one and I saw both games. (J.M.)*

Conal Mac Aonghusa, Ceo Meala, Cnoc na Rós, An Carraig Dubh, Co. Atha Cliath, writes to Junior Desk for the first time. His school won the U-12 H. and F.C. in Dublin at Croke Park last season. "My favourites are David Hickey, Brian Mullins and Brendan Kelly in football and Tony Doran is great in hurling."

Gerard Gormley, 16 Ardmore Road, Derryadd, Lurgan, Co. Armagh is 9 years old and favours Wexford hurlers John Quigley in particular. His local club is Sarsfields. "Conor McGowan takes us for hurling on Saturdays and he plays hurling and football for Armagh. I was at the All-Ireland S.H. final this year and enjoyed it. Sarsfields won the Armagh S.F.C. title this year for the first time."

● *Fáilte to Junior Desk, Gerald. It's nice to have one of the county team like Conor McGowan to coach you on Saturdays. (J.M.)*

Mark Sweeney, 71 Valley Park Road, Finglas South, Dublin 11 who also writes for the first time, likes Tony Hanahoe, Jimmy Deenihan, Pat Spillane, Denis Moran, Noel Skehan, Liam O'Brien and Ray Cummins. Mark wants a pen-friend in Kerry between the age of 10 and 13.

● *What about our Sneem fans and other Kerry readers? Note Mark's address. (J.M.)*

Paul Maher, Clashagad, Dunkerrin, Birr, Co. Offaly loved the All-Ireland S.F. final. He is full of praise for Tipp's Philip Fan-

ning and Clare's Colm Honan. Paul's brother Brian who is 9 years old wants a Cut-out of Brian Mullins or Denis Coughlan.

Gerry Pender, Ballymorris Upper, Aughrim, Arklow, Co. Wicklow regards this year's hurling final as the best he has seen. His stars were Pat Moylan, Denis Coughlan, Mick Jacob and Tony Doran. His football final star was Kevin Moran.

● *It was a classic. (J.M.)*

J. J. Ryan, Top Cross, Lisgoold, Leamlara, Co. Cork another first timer to Junior Desk thinks the hurling final was the best game ever.

● *Yourself and Gerry Pender have something in common. (J.M.)*

Martin Hayes, Belyellv, Cobh, Co. Cork thinks Ray Cummins is great. "He deserves to be captain of Cork's hurlers."

● *He doesn't play for the Glen! (J.M.)*

John O'Donovan, Ballyfreen, Oola, Co. Limerick loves Junior Desk and finds the letters very interesting. He feels the Cut-outs should be autographed and wants a Cut-out of Mick Carty of Wexford.

● *John O'Donovan is an old friend of Junior Desk. Your idea is good, John. (J.M.)*

Stephen Quinn, Gort, Co. Galway is full of praise for Terry Leary, Christy Ring, the late Nicky Rackard and Kevin Hefferman.

G. J. O'Connell, 41 Berkeley Road, Hillingdon, Middlesex, England complains that he wrote to the Cork Co. Board and enclosed a cheque for a £1 for "A Man and a Stadium." In September he wrote again and has received no reply.

● *This is certainly not the usual Cork efficiency. (J.M.)*

Cathal Ó Torna, 72 Claremont Court, Glasnevin, Dublin 11, is 12 years old and plays for Na Fianna U-14. His favourite is Kevin Moran "who has an attacking streak in him like Ger Power." He wants a Cut-out of

● **OVERLEAF**

● FROM OVERLEAF

Bobby Doyle.

Muredach Noone, Corrimbla, Ballina, Co. Mayo loves Junior Desk. "In 1951 Mayo last won the All-Ireland S.F.C. and the football they won it with is in our school. Fr. Peter Quinn, one of the Mayo players, presented it to the school. (He is a past pupil of the school)."

● Isn't that a lovely idea for a past-pupil to present the All-Ireland

football to his school? Has this happened any other county? (J.M.)

G.A.A. Fan, Cheylesmore, Coventry, Warks was at the Dublin v Cork S.F.L. game in Croke Park and liked it. He missed the football final for the first time since 1945.

● That's some record. (J.M.)

Christopher Callaghan, 44 Stockhill Road, Ashly, Scunthorpe, South Humberside, D.N. 2L. G., England wants as much information about Gaelic football

as possible. He is anxious to learn about the game and Galway is his favourite team.

● If any Junior Desk fan has any books to spare about Gaelic football, please write to Christopher. (J.M.)

One of the Bonner family of Derryhenny, Doochary, Lifford, Co. Donegal who forgot to give his Christian name is full of praise for Kevin Moran.

Desmond Brennan, 62 Lyndon Road, Olton, Solihull, Warwickshire is very anxious to compile G.A.A. statistics and has bought all the G.A.A. books he can lay hands on. He was at the football final and visited the G.A.A. Shop. He wants a copy of the Ulster final programmes this year.

● Programme collectors please note Desmond's address. (J.M.)

Gerald Traynor, 983 Francis Street, Edenderry, Co. Offaly is proud of the fact that Edenderry won its first Offaly J.F.C. in 43 years and its first title since the minor team won in 1964.

Liam and J. J. Ryan, Top Cross, Lisgoold, Leamlara, Co. Cork have written a fine account of a local game between Ballincurrigel and Templenacarraige which ended in a draw. The game was played in Lisgoold.

Patrick Byrne, Spynans, Kiltegan, Co. Wicklow is still critical of R.T.E.'s coverage of Gaelic games. He wants films of old games and a G.A.A. Match of the Day every week.

My thanks to Gerry Pender for sending on the Wicklow Co. final programme and to Paddy Flanagan for the superb Westmeath programme. John Clarke of Tullamore has sent on the Offaly programmes and they are very good too. Mick O'Dwyer of Kerry sent me on the very well produced programme of the South Kerry final between Waterville and Valentia.

I must close. A happy New Year to you all and I hope 1977 is a great G.A.A. year. Write about anything to

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**Noel
O'Dwyer
(Tipperary)**

Age: 27
Height: 5 ft. 11 ins.
Weight: 13 st.
Club: Borrisoleigh
**Position: Centre
Half Back**
**Senior Inter-
County Debut:
1968.**

**CAREER
HIGHLIGHTS**

Noel, who is a very versatile hurler, was at centre half forward when Tipperary last won the All-Ireland senior title in 1971, and collected Railway Cup medals as a forward in 1969 and 1970.

A former county minor, he helped Tipperary to their All-Ireland under-21 championship win of 1967, and was called up to the county senior team in a challenge game against New York at Birr late in 1968.

Last March, Noel, who has played in every forward position, as well as mid-field and in the half back and full back lines with Tipperary, won a third Railway Cup medal — but on that occasion as centre half.

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Carlow Road
Phone: (0507) 21176.

Ballina
Bachelors Walk
Phone: Ballina 816 817

Carrick-on-Shannon
Cortober
Phone: Ck-on-Sh. 321/2

Castleblaney
Muckno Street
Phone: C'Blaney 101

Cavan
Dublin Road
Phone: Cav. (049) 31448

Clonmel
Thomas Street
Phone: (052) 22433

Cork
18 Mary Street
Phone: (021) 21941

Dundalk
Quay Street
Phone: (042) 2324/5/6

Finglas
North Road
Phone: 343222

Galway
Fr. Griffin Road
Phone: (091) 65128

Kilkenny
Carlow Road
Phone: (056) 22402/
22140/22428

Letterkenny
Port Road
Phone: Letterkenny 60

Limerick
St. Nessian's, Dooradoyle
Phone: (061) 40011

Long Mile Road
Dublin 12
Phone: 508227

Loughrea
Bride Street
Phone: Loughrea 352

Midleton
Cork Street
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2 Coote Street
Phone: (052) 21776/7

Roscrea
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Phone: Roscrea 401,
445, 446.

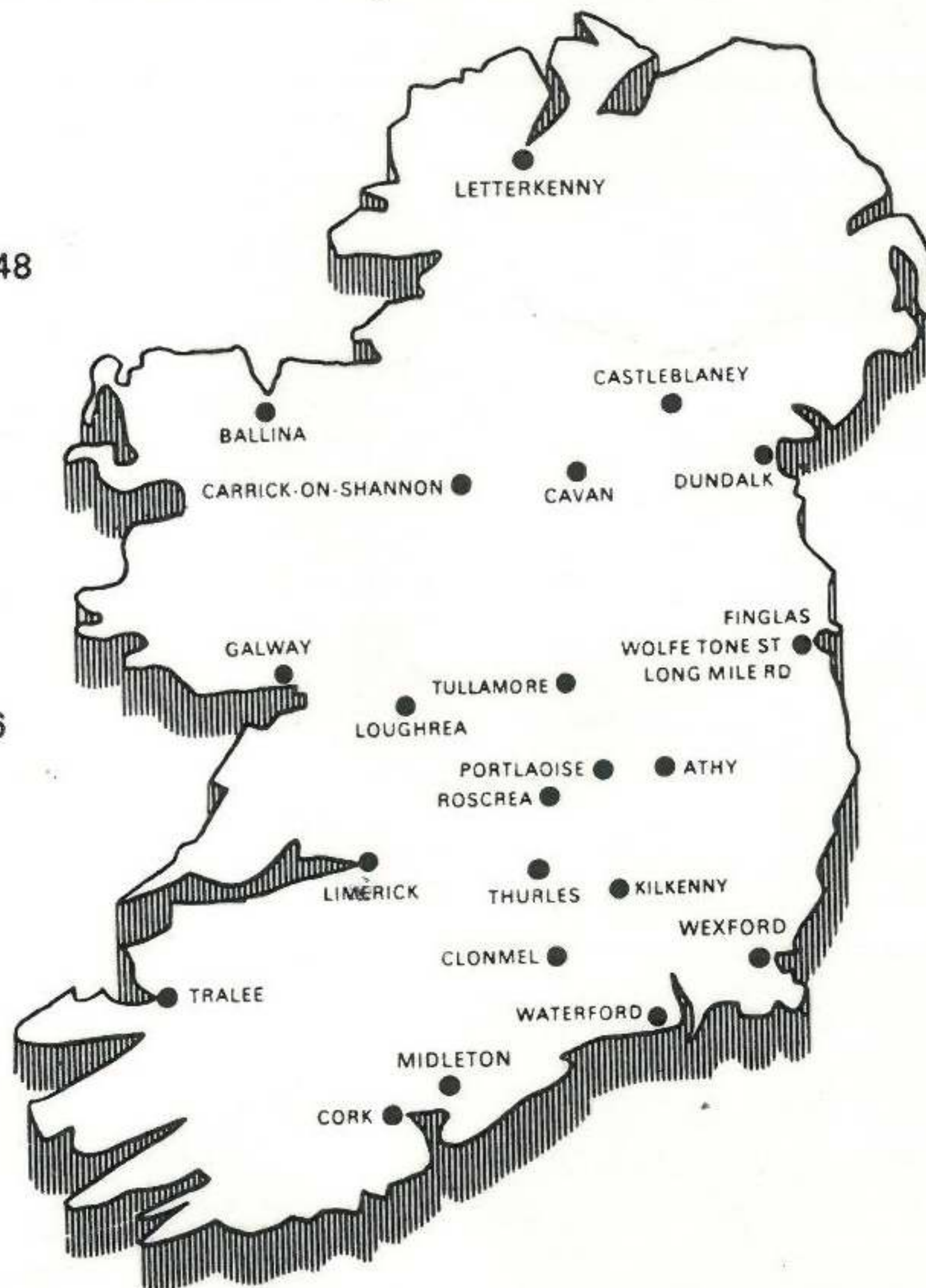
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