

MARCH, 1977

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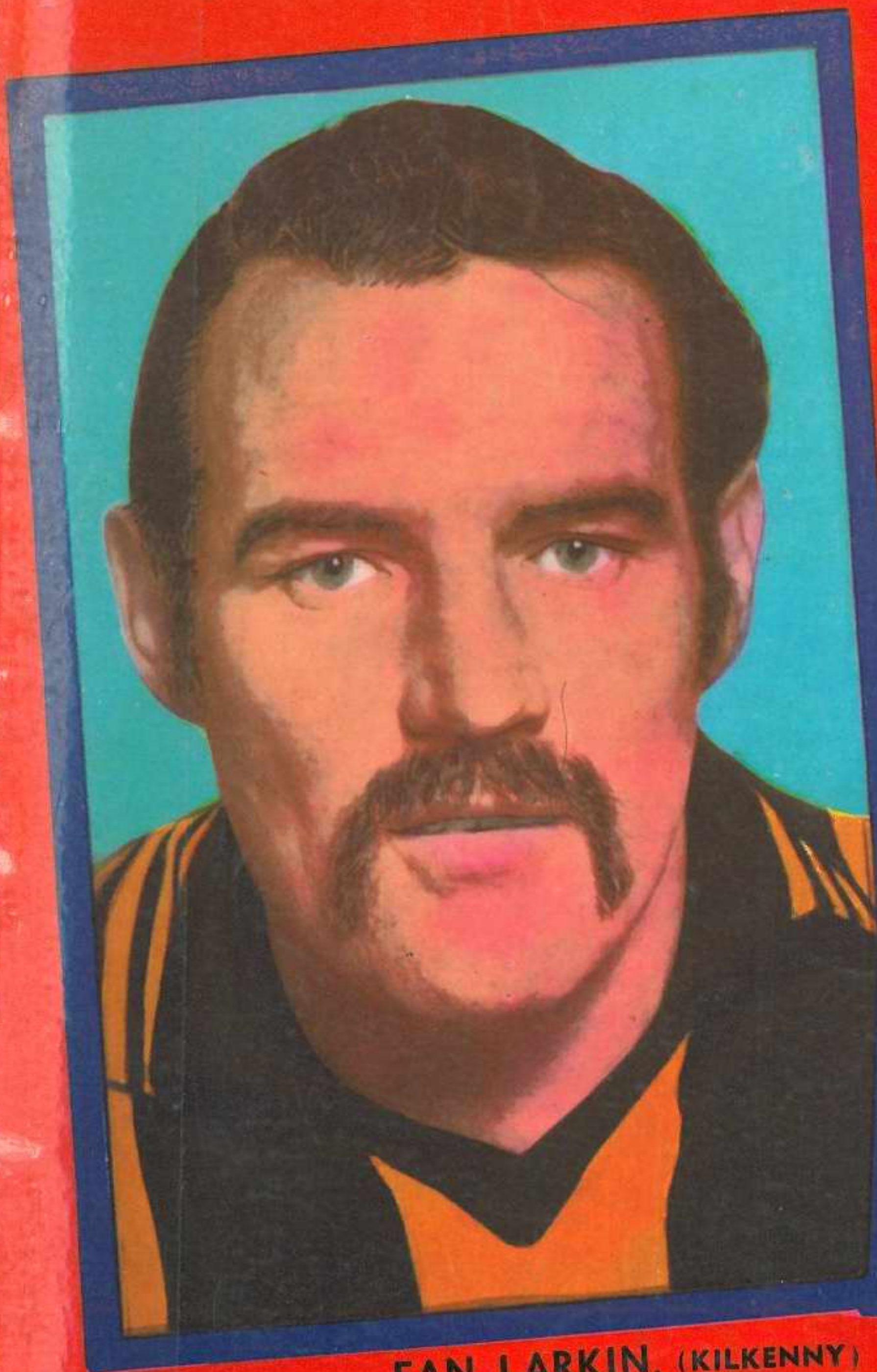
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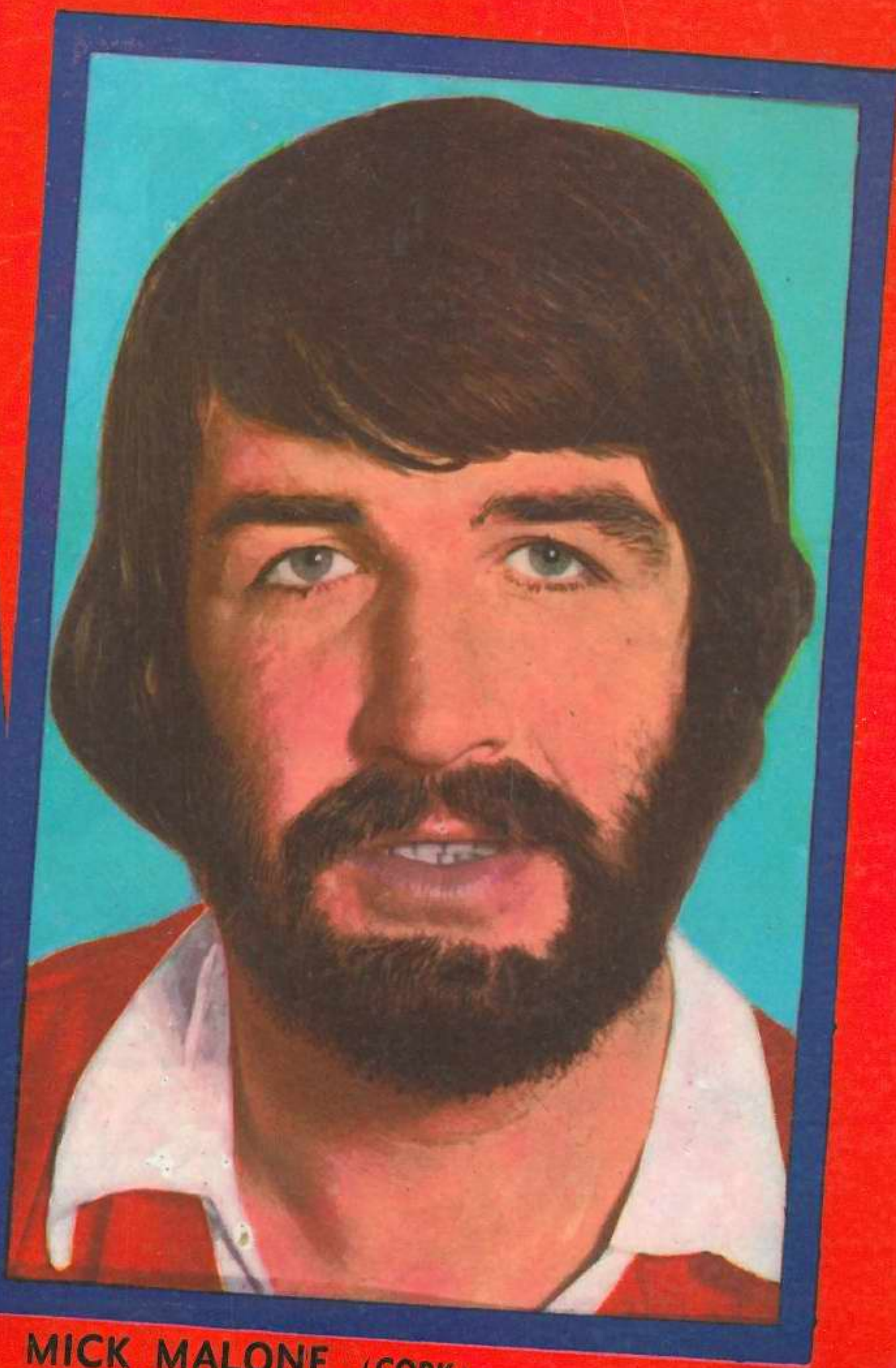
GAAELIC SPORT

IRELAND'S LEADING GAELIC GAMES MAGAZINE

PUBLISHED MONTHLY



FAN LARKIN, (KILKENNY)



MICK MALONE, (CORK)

'PLAYERS I ADMIRE'

By Eamonn Young

Helping so many people, in so many ways.



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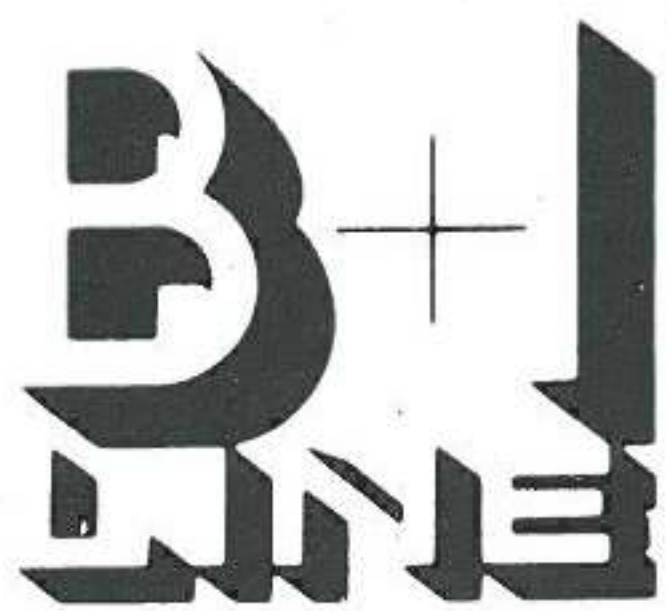
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of the month award*



Congratulations to recent award winners –
Pat Spillane (Kerry), Colm Honan (Clare),
Mickey Lynch (Derry), Mick Brennan (Kilkenny),
Tony Doran (Wexford), Willie Murphy (Wexford),
Kevin Moran (Dublin), Pat Moylan (Cork),
Paddy Cullen (Dublin), Noel Skehan (Kilkenny).

Gaelic Sport

Vol. 20. No. 3

March, 1977

Offices:

80 Upper Drumcondra Road,
Dublin 9.

Telephone 374311.

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EDITORIAL COMMENT

THE Gaelic Athletic Association's wonderful work in providing healthy recreation for the young men of the country does not need to be stressed here. More and more, too, the Association is playing a vital role in the community life of the nation.

In this latter field, we believe that a recent Management Committee move is deserving of much more attention than it has generally received. This is a decision to make the Croke Park car park on Jones's Road available to the local residents' association as a play-centre for children under 14 years.

The move is of importance to more than the children and parents of the area concerned. Obviously, they are the ones who will benefit most in the long-term from this welcome new facility in their area.

But, on the broader scale, the Management Committee have set an interesting headline. Remember, land is at a premium in and around Dublin, and accordingly, is fetching astronomical prices, yet here we have the G.A.A. using a prime site as an investment, not in bricks and mortar, but in the youth of the area around Croke Park.

Surely there is food for thought here for business concerns in general? These may be the days of galloping inflation, and of tight credit, but the other side of the picture is that vast sums of money are still being spent each year on the sponsorship of such as horse-racing, golf tournaments, soccer, tennis, and, of course, Gaelic games.

We are not opposed to sponsorship. We have said in the past, and repeat now, that sponsorship, with the right safeguards and properly applied, can do much good for sport — and there has been plenty of evidence of this.

But has the time come for a change of approach by the commercial world, or at least for a change in emphasis? Remember, the G.A.A. is not the only organisation with a vested interest in youth.

The schoolboys of today are more than the senior footballers and hurlers of tomorrow — they are the work-force, and the leaders of the future.

The G.A.A., as a voluntary organisation, can do just so much. Organised and well-run competitions, a strong regard for high standards of sportsmanship and give and take, can do much to build the character and discipline of the young man or woman.

This important work can be helped along greatly by the provision of proper social amenities at all levels of community life.

It would be wrong to think that the recent decision with regard to the play-centre at Croke Park was but the beginning of the G.A.A.'s interest in furthering social amenities. This is an area that the organisation has been active in for a long time, in fact.

But we hope that the latest development will encourage fresh thinking by concerns outside of sport in this vitally important field of amenities for young people, be they playing fields, club houses or play-areas. After all, the dividend to be reaped in this regard is a rich one, because Ireland's best investment of all is her people.

COVER PHOTO

THIS month we posed a question to a man who has been writing in GAEILIC SPORT since its introduction way back in 1958—his name Eamonn Young. We asked the effervescent Eamonn to do a piece on "players he admired" and they turned out to be the two very popular hurlers that are featured on our front cover this month: Fan Larkin (Kilkenny) and Mick Malone (Cork). Eamonn takes a closer look at the careers of both men on pages 9 and 11 in this issue.

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Tyler

Wexford and Mayo stars

Top Ten

set the pace in hurling and football

THE long and exciting campaign for the Top Ten stars of 1977 swings into action this month, and with our initial charts of the year comes the exciting news that Messrs. John Tyler & Sons Ltd. will from now on sponsor the entire feature. Full details are published on page 36 in this issue; sufficient to say here, then, that this splendid and generous gesture will give a new appeal to what has long since been established as one of the most talked about aspects of Gaelic Games.

Who are the players challenging for the premier places in the first Tyler Top Ten review, covering the period up to and including the Railway Cup semi-finals of February 13? Competition has been very keen, with important National League ties having preceded the interprovincials, but nonetheless, two names still stand out prominently — Tommy O'Malley and Mick Jacob.

O'Malley had a big hand in Mayo's win over Roscommon at Tuam in early February in a National Football League Division I North play-off. Apart from his good work in general play, he shot three first-rate points, and the Mayo man followed on a week later with an eye-catching display in Connacht's win over Leinster in the Railway Cup at Navan. He was also very accurate in his shooting in that game, finishing with 1-6 to his credit.

And Jacob? He illuminated the January gloom with a stellar show when helping Wexford to share National Hurling League points with Limerick at Limerick,

and he kept in the mood with another fine performance that had much to do with earning Leinster their Railway Cup final ticket at the expense of Connacht at Enniscorthy.

Among those who led the opposition to this pair were Ger Feeney, who was very prominent in Mayo's win over Roscommon in the League, Michael Sheehy (Kerry), a hero for Munster against Ulster in the Railway Cup win in football, and Pat O'Connor, whose efficient all-round hurling and goal-scoring ability did much to boost Clare's record to 13 unbeaten appearances at Tulla in the League clash with Kilkenny in late January.

But taking everything into consideration, O'Malley and Jacob are the men who must finally go to the top of the football and hurling charts with nine points apiece.

An interesting feature of the football line-up is the appearance of Vincent Henry, winner of an All-Ireland Colleges' senior medal with Carmelite College, Moate,

last year, and again in Colleges' competitions this season. He had a good competitive senior inter-county debut at centre half forward in Offaly's win over Wicklow in a League Division II semi-final at Croke Park, and earns a six points rating as a result.

Good as well to see Kerry once more represented in hurling, with the honours going to their new interprovincial Pat Moriarty, who is one of a number on six points.

FOOTBALL

- 9 T. O'Malley (Mayo).
- 8 G. Feeney (Mayo).
- 8 M. Sheehy (Kerry).
- 8 S. Bonner (Donegal).
- 8 P. Spillane (Kerry).
- 7 M. Judge (Galway).
- 7 W. Brennan (Laois).
- 6 V. Henry (Offaly).
- 6 P. Tinnelly (Cavan).
- 6 M. Martin (Leitrim).

HURLING

- 9 M. Jacob (Wexford).
- 8 C. Doran (Wexford).
- 7 P. O'Connor (Clare).
- 7 S. Foley (Limerick).
- 7 P. Moylan (Cork).
- 7 P. J. Molloy (Galway).
- 6 M. Quigley (Wexford).
- 6 P. Moriarty (Kerry).
- 6 J. Power (Clare).
- 5 M. Brennan (Kilkenny).

ANDY CROAK

The writer with the rasping comment

Notice: viper ink is not the worst

A COUPLE of the Dublin daily papers reserve spaces in their literary pages where poets may unload their accounts of the whispers of the Muse.

I haven't yet seen the name C. D. Hoax printed in those pages, and more's the pity for his is a unique talent.

I refer to the gentleman (lady?) whose poetic end product appears in the vicinity of these words. I'm sure we should feel honoured that he chose GAELIC SPORT for the publication of this creation rather than one of the more well-known literary outlets.

The fact that the work takes a swipe at one A. B. Croak is neither here nor there. Even the wounded fall down in admiration before art of this kind.

In every great work, be it poetry, prose or painting, there is a central point, a kernel, some-

times difficult to find, sometimes striking you like a blinding light, which reveals not only the nature and calibre of the artist but also his grasp of the medium in which he labours.

In Mr. Hoax's poem this point is to be found in the third line of the third stanza ("Why don't he take this viper ink"), an illuminating and awesome insight into the author's facility with the English language.

Unfortunately, Mr. Hoax did not append an address to his contribution, an omission which does not permit us to mail him a due reward for his effort. But that matter is easily settled. I invite him to call to our offices, where I shall be awaiting his arrival to settle the account personally.

The fact that the word has a notorious meaning should not

cause us any surprise when somebody pops up with the surname Hoax. The world is full of the most peculiar names, if only we had time to look for them.

Take my own name, Croak. I've met dozens of people who just doubled up with laughter upon hearing it for the first time. But I've ceased to be embarrassed about that anymore.

In fact, I possess another peculiarity, though I seldom speak about it. When my birth was registered, a question mark was placed after my surname, for reasons I've never been able to discover. Perhaps the registrar was being funny, or just plain incredulous.

At any rate, my full legal name should appear in print like this — Andrew Bartley Croak?

It is firmly believed in learned circles that it was this phenomenon which gave rise to the universal saying, "placing a question mark after his name."

Needless to say, I'm not a bit ashamed of the distinction. The main reason I don't use it is that it might cause problems as a signature on cheques.

◇ ◇ ◇

IT WAS too bad that Tom Prendergast of Laois lost his trip to America only a few days after his name was announced as a replacement on the All-Stars football team.

This brings up again the severity of the Carrolls selectors' rule about sportsmanship. It seems to me very unjust that a man who

Hoax on Croak's pen

When A. B. Croak takes up his pen,
And writes about the game,
The poison oozes forth ad lib,
That guy don't have no shame.

He slams the boys up top so hard
And squeezes with a will,
The truth, as Fr. Leo says,
Is hidden — such a pill.

Anon, he writes, with mercy none
And passions do explode
Why don't he take this viper ink
And smear another code.

But you, or I, or me or him
Dear A. B. does not shield,
A hurler on the ditch was he
And never on the field.

C. D. HOAX.

is sent to the line for retaliation — as Prendergast was — suffers such a heavy penalty. In fact, his penalty under G.A.A. rules was only the minimum two weeks suspension, which shows that his act of misconduct was of a minor nature.

After the incident, one of the Dublin papers, I think it was the *Irish Press*, printed a story that Prendergast's friends in Laois were making a collection to send him to America anyway.

In my opinion, that is not a wise move. If Prendergast is sent to America in that way he will lose much of the public sympathy there was for him when the news of his axing broke.

I believe his friends in Laois, and elsewhere, would do a better day's work if they made a very big noise about the injustice of the rule that deprived him of his place on the touring team. Public opinion, loudly voiced, is still a powerful weapon.

When a player was omitted from an All-Stars team a few years ago (I think it was Mickey Kearins of Sligo), there was some talk that Carrolls cigarettes should be boycotted in his county.

Mind you, I've said nothing. But if the G.A.A. supporters in Laois were to organise and apply a boycott like that, it might pinch the sponsors hard enough to force our friends, the selectors, to change their unjust rules

But, as I said, I've said nothing. I'm just thinking aloud, a habit I picked up from Richie Ryan.

◇ ◇ ◇

RUMOUR HAS it that the G.A.A. had an awful lot of trouble fixing up the New York end of the American tour. And don't be too sure that the crux is fully solved yet.

There was quite a hassle, I'm told, about the financial split between the New York Board and the Central Council. I can't blame New York. They supply

CROAKETTES

WELL, now. What do you think of Clare? To win six National League matches in a row is a rare achievement, and Clare have done that in a section which includes the All-Ireland champions, Cork, the League titleholders, Kilkenny, the All-Ireland finalists, Wexford, as well as Tipperary and Limerick.

Obviously, Justin McCarthy, the man Cork sacked, is having a strong influence on the team as coach and tactician.

Naturally, Clare are aiming to win the League, but, in my opinion, it would be a much greater boost for them if they won the 1977 Munster championship.

They are quite capable of that, but they'll have to be wary of redoubtable Tipperary in the first round.

◇ ◇ ◇

THE Carrolls selectors did a

neat about turn when picking the replacements for the American tour. They cold-shouldered Ulster when handing out the All-Star football awards last November and then, a few weeks ago, they went and picked five players from the province to fill in the vacant places on the touring side.

How's that for an admission of guilt? I was glad that Anthony McGurk of Derry got this honour, at least.

But in falling over backwards to appease the angry G.A.A. men of Ulster, they made another blunder. If the 1976 All-Ireland finalists, Kerry, were worth five places on the All-Star team, surely the Kingdom had another player or two worthy of selection as replacements for the Dublin men.

What about Tim Kennelly and Ogie Moran?

the goods (in other words, the dollars) and the Central Council stick out a hand for the lion's share, having put up no financial backing in the first place.

They say that John Kerry O'Donnell wasn't very keen about staging the games at Gaelic Park. I wonder who persuaded him to change his mind?

Would you believe, the President, Con Murphy? Con and John Kerry have great respect for each other, in spite of the historic hostility that exists between Kerry men and Corkmen.

Allied Irish Banks are reported to be coughing up another £5,000 for the New York end of

the tour, but how long will that last? They get damn all publicity out of their sponsorship, and big business is not in the business of sports sponsorship just for fun.

And speaking of sponsorship, did any of you see that photograph of Pat Heneghan of Carrolls lighting a cigarette for Sean Ó Síocháin at an Aer Lingus press conference?

It appeared in one of the Dublin papers and full marks to the photographer for catching an historic moment.

I've been waiting since to hear an explosion in Rosmuc. Rosmuc, as you all know, is Father Leo Morahan's parish.

Illustration shows head from reverse side of Irish one pound note.



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PLAYERS I ADMIRE (1)

'Fan' Larkin of Kilkenny

By EAMONN YOUNG

IN the '33 final Kilkenny had a full back line of real brilliance in Paddy Larkin, Peter O'Reilly and Ned Doyle. Larkin though small in stature was as solid as a rock and if a forward thought he could push the Stephens player aside in his dash for goal he was in for a rude awakening." The speaker was Mick Mackey the inimitable centre-forward of the thirties and forties in conversation with Raymond Smith.

Though not creating anything like the impact of men like Mackey (that is if there was another hurler like Mackey) I too, had a small taste of the power Paddy Larkin carried in a frame, not quite as stocky as that of his son. And they were about the same height. So I wasn't surprised when Fan broke on to the All-Ireland scene in that great final of '71 when Tipp won by three points. Fan wasn't on the team in '72 but he burst back in the following year when Limerick's dash and Kilkenny injuries left the Nore-side seven points down at the end.

In '74 Fan along with jubilant Kilkenny players was on the Hogan Stand at the end when Limerick paid the price and again in '75 when a good Galway side went down and we all wondered

★
**FAN
LARKIN
(Kilkenny)**

★

how we were going to stop Kilkenny from breaking almost every long-standing record. Yes, just then we were all getting frantically jealous of Fan Larkin and the rest of those fellows in the waspish jerseys.

Fan Larkin's greatest attribute for me, is heart. It surely is this extreme durability which causes him to practise the craft of the ash with the dedication which surprised even Fr. Tommy Meagher who said "On the Tuesday after we beat Galway in '75, I was in Fan's area of the city and there he was sauntering towards the local pitch with hurley and gear thrown over his shoulder." Wouldn't you like to be marking

a man like that?

The Larkins have always been dedicated to the game and above all to "The Village" or Stephens, and for many years when things were not going well for the side the grit of the family came from, and gave to, the hurling and competitive qualities that beat the best of them in the Kilkenny championship of '75.

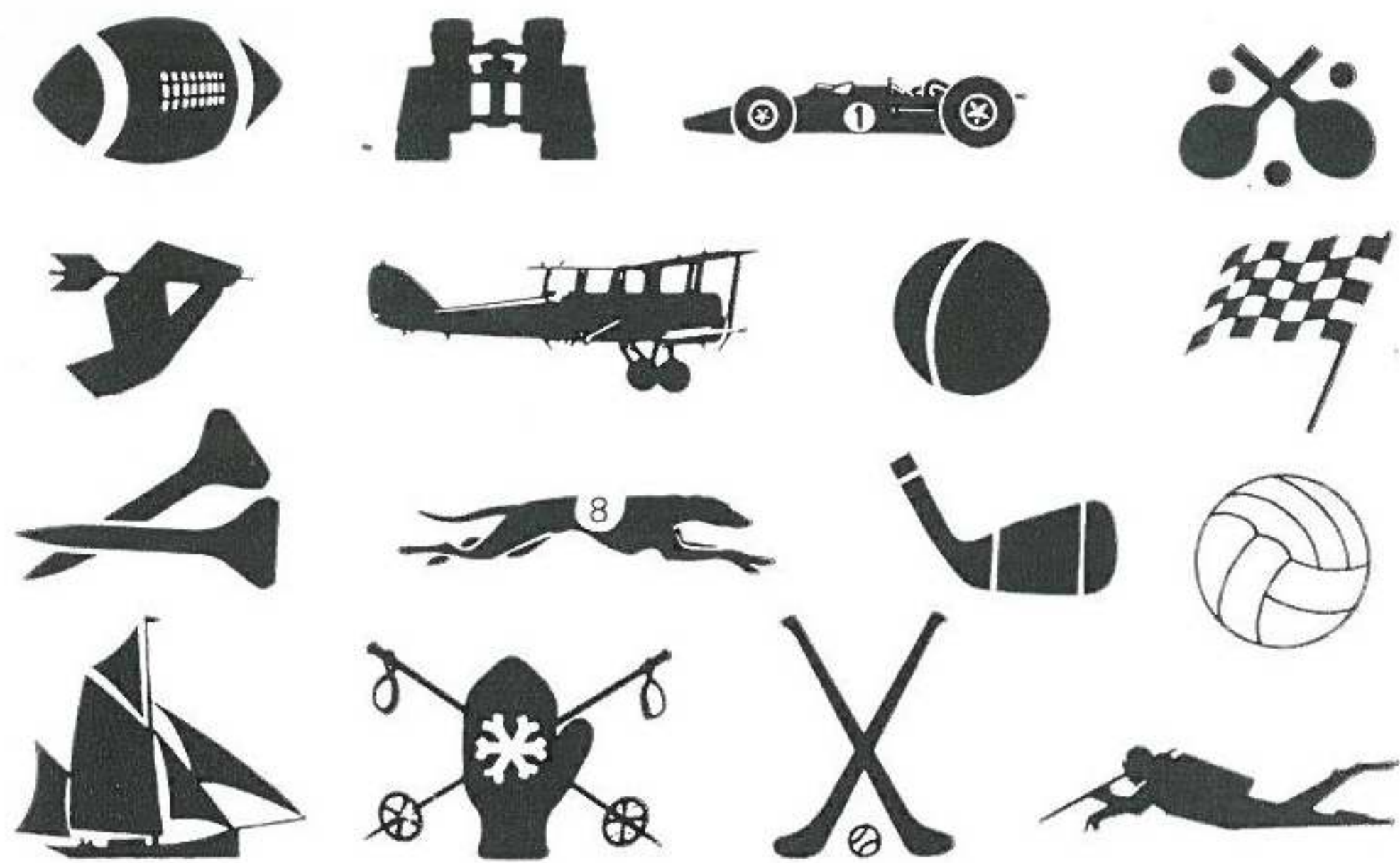
"He is an extremely talented player," said Fr. Meagher.

"In my book one of the very few really skilled hurlers. He is the complete hurler."

But Fan Larkin's worth isn't measured in his playing qualities

● TO PAGE 11





**Here's to
enjoyment**



Slainte Mineral Waters 45 Montpelier Hill, Dublin 7.

● FROM PAGE 9

alone for like some more of the greatest players all over the place he has a direct organisational interest in the youth and has often taken charge of a juvenile team in the morning before turning out for Stephens or Kilkenny in the afternoon.

The days when I admired Fan Larkin most were those when he stood four-square between goal and the redoubtable Ray Cummins, who on his day is really a remarkable hurler. Cummins, who was able to use his great height to take the sliotar out of the air with the hand, even when opposed by the strongest and tallest opponents, found nothing easy against the Kilkenny back

whom he dwarfed in the rectangular frame of the goalposts.

I watched them very carefully and found that Larkin simply stood firmly under the high ball, concentration pointed like the tip of a needle, in the falling ball and with the same steely precision he brought his stick against the leather either tapping the ball away or making the successful completion of the Corkman's undeniable skill a very hard thing to do. Then when the sliotar went away to the side he was after it like a whippet, powerful shoulders hunched and the smart tap which drove the ball away was born of the incisiveness and precision that is born of the incessant practice Fr. Tom Meagher talks about.

Now I'm not saying that he's a better man than Ray Cummins. In fact I'm not saying that any man is better than the Rockies player, when that man is playing well. But what always roused my admiration is the way the versatile and practised hurler we call Fan Larkin, by use of his quick brain, fast feet, lightning anticipation, and good striking can raise the morale of his side and cause us on the other side of the fence to grind our teeth.

Long may he revel in the fast, skilful, and exciting play of the goalmouth where only the fastest hitters, the hardest men and the shrewdest hurlers can bear the heat of the All-Ireland championship. Paddy Larkin . . . Fan Larkin . . . who is next?

PLAYERS I ADMIRE (2—but not necessarily in this order!)

Mick Malone of Cork

HE was only a little lad, about eight years of age and the ditch was high so the man lifted him over it and set him down on the hurling field. The small lad took his hurl and got stuck in there with the rest. That was out in Daniel O'Leary's field in Farran and the small boy was named Mick Malone, who even then was able to make the under-14 team. As the song says:

"The baby's a man now, he's toil-worn and tough", but it's like yesterday when he was playing with Ballinora minors and Dan Leary's field wasn't big enough to hold the twenty-five young men who hurled there on the summer nights so the hurling exodus was on to Killumney where Colm Sheehan, full forward for Cork in the great win of '66 and his brother Finbarr took over the leadership of the young lads who had been encouraged

so much by the local curate Fr. Murphy.

It was in '67 that Mick Malone first drew on the red jersey when they picked him on the minor team. It was a great day for him and right through that year he hurled his heart out as only a lad will who loves the game and the excitement that goes with it. Glory of glories they went all the way, and beat a good Wexford team in the final. Mick then seventeen won his place again on the following year but this time the boys from Forth and Bargy got their own back. Pat Moylan of the Rockies and Jimmy Barrett of Nemo who won a football medal in '73 are the men Mick remembers best on that side, but he sighs for what Paddy Ring could have done. Paddy is the son of Willie John, Christy's brother and what a player.

Fr. Bertie Troy was in charge

of the young men and Mick Malone gives him great credit for his handling of them. Fr. Bertie had a good year with Cork seniors last year and if dedication means anything we'll hear more of him. The remarkable fact about Mick Malone, and one he doesn't even want to discuss, is that he has won no less than four under-21 medals. I get a little tired of reading the laborious recitals of medal-winning but one simply cannot ignore the merit and consistency of the lad who played in six All-Ireland under-age finals. It could happen only in Cork, Kilkenny, Wexford or Kerry and a man is lucky to be born in such counties, especially Cork. They say you should never ask a man where he's from, for if he's a Corkman he'll tell you and if he isn't it isn't quite fair to ask him. In '69 Mick Malone

● TO PAGE 13

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● FROM PAGE 11

played senior with Cork in tournament and got his regular place in '71 when after a disastrous day the boys went down to Limerick in the first round. Mick Malone, at left corner on the day hurled with the fire we came to know so well and had a fine goal that was disallowed because of a man inside the square. Tipp. beat Limerick that year and in the final had three points ahead of Kilkenny in a great final where the score was 5.17 to 5.14.

In the following year Cork were magnificent in the final against Kilkenny for sixty minutes of the eighty-minute game. Remember Con Roche's eighty-yard point from left half back, which sailed into the upper air over the Canal End? And then Kilkenny took over. I'll never forget it. All hail to the chaps from the Nore. In '73 Tipp. scored five goals against Cork mostly through Roger Ryan's honest virility and when in '74 Cork ran away with the League young Malone seemed at last to be on the way. Down to Walsh Park to play Waterford and when Paddy Barry was charged in the net this very game player threw his broken hurley in disgust and bad luck; it struck the umpire. With fourteen men Cork held out as long as any side could and went down gameily. We would have been happy to see Waterford win out. In '75 with the Munster championship at last under their belts Cork looked set for the final. In Croke Park a fast Galway side thought otherwise and once again were back in our boxes and grinding our teeth. Would that All-Ireland ever come again, asked many a player with the desirable and laudable impatience of youth.

In '76 the big stadium was opened in Cork and we hoped that Tipp., than whom there is no more gallant side, tough and all though they are, would come down to open it in the champion-



● Mick Malone (Cork) in typical action in the 1972 All-Ireland Hurling final, pursued by Kilkennymen Eamonn Morrissey and Pat Henderson.

ship. This didn't happen and instead we had a terrific game in Limerick where a little-fancied side in blue and gold were quite unlucky to see Martin Coleman in masterly form. Cork's escape by one point was great and we didn't mind the slightest; we were through. The Munster final against Limerick was over at half-time and the five snappy points by Mick Malone had a lot to do with it, Wexford were nearly stopped by Galway and at last in the final Mick Malone and his comrades under the leadership of earnest Ray Cummins brought home the McCarthy Cup and all the sorrow of half a dozen years flowed away in the cheers, the laughter and the smiles of

the thousands of delighted Cork people in Croke Park and at home. That was Mick Malone's big day and as he says himself "I don't mind telling you we celebrated it well". They had earned it, for the noses had been to the grindstone for a long time before.

Since then the great honour, next to an All-Ireland, I suppose has been given to Malone. He has been picked on the All-Stars side, up there with the very best. And that's the reward of the little fellow who had to be lifted over the fence to play hurling. There's not a man but will applaud the distinction for if ever a man put his whole heart into an hour's playing, it is Mick Malone of Farran and Eire Og.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★
 ★
 ★ **LADIES** ★
 ★ **PLEASE** ★
 ★
 ★ **EDITED BY** ★
 ★ **KITTY** ★
 ★ **MURPHY** ★
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 ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

IS there anything worse than a toothache. One night last week a few of us decided we'd go out for a nice meal. We were having a little something in advance to whet the appetite when I felt as if I were being lifted clean off the chair. For a split second the sight left my eyes and my ears shut out the world. I could have panicked and I'd forgive myself for doing so. However in the interest of the company and the paying public I remained calm. I didn't speak since I feared that any movement whatsoever could cause me to be launched into space once more. What was it I asked myself. I feared the worst and my fears were justified. I had a tooth-ache. After a few minutes silence I took another sip from my glass and I duly experienced a repeat performance. "You've gone quiet" — one of the party quipped. Not really, I said, I'll bounce back again in a minute. I didn't want to break the news as yet. I always pity anyone with a bad toothache but at the same time whenever I have one myself I hate saying so. I suppose deep down I consider a pain in the tooth a little childish which of course is far from being the case. I patiently stayed

in place anyway saying nothing but smiling agreeably when I felt eyes focussing on me.

We were called in for our meal. Maybe the change to something hot might solve my problem. It didn't. I sat agonisingly for about two hours and I really envied the happy gang all around me. Why was I picked out to suffer. I felt as if my face had extended a couple of feet to the North West. I broke the news. Look, I said, I've a terrible toothache and I feel rotten. That's too bad, they all agreed. Try and forget about it, one of them advised. I have tried, I replied, and it's just not possible. Look, I said, I'll go home and with the minimum of fuss and the maximum efficiency I collected my coat and bag and away with me.

I came back to the flat to be greeted with 'You're home early.' What an astute observation I thought bad temperedly to myself. I've an awful pain in my tooth — can any of ye give me anything to take it away. I was informed that there was a small bottle with pink stuff somewhere and 'twas excellent for my complaint. A search got underway and after twenty minutes solid searching and general disruption the pink bottle was found. I noticed there was an expiry date on the bottle which had long gone. However I felt there could be a second (and dare I say humbly!) far more important expiry date if matters didn't improve. I read the instructions which were straight forward and simple— provided you had a bit of cotton wool. That little item caused further commotion but a bit was pulled out of an empty jar of tablets, thus solving that problem.

I saturated the cotton wool with the expired pink liquid. This

was then to be pressed into the aching molar. Sounded simple but the tooth was in the top row at the back and everytime I placed it as directed it fell down on to my tongue. This caused a certain amount of amusement to everyone except myself. After five or six attempts and the same number of failures I gave up. My tongue had gone completely numb but the toothache was live as ever. Nothing for it then but to suffer on till morning. This I did.

The pain was still there next morning. I sneaked a few hours sleep — it didn't do me much good because I dreamed about the dentist. I had had enough so I resolved to make my way to the dentist there and then. Since I had no particular favourite myself I looked up the Golden Pages. There were hundreds of them listed under Dental Surgeons. The 'surgeon' bit did little to calm my anything but steady nerves. Desperate ills need desperate remedies and I set off for the nearest tooth doctor.

I was greeted at the door by a charming vivacious receptionist who asked me if I had an appointment. I told her I hadn't so she asked me if I wanted one. No, I said I don't want an appointment, I just want a tooth out. That's not possible says she still smiling. Fine I said and did not engage in further conversation. I was not at all pleased but there was more at stake than the mood of the moment. I'd consult the good old reliable phone book again.

I was making my way across the road when a kindly old lady stopped me. "Missey," said she, "you should cover your mouth. You could get an awful dose going around like that and you at the dentist." I hadn't the heart to disillusion her. I took a scarf out of my

bag and I went away pretending. I left the scarf on till I got to the phone box where I exposed my face to the world once more. I consulted the Phone Book and this time I was smart and phoned. The first fellow told me he wouldn't take out a tooth that was paining. That's funny I thought since I wouldn't be bothered getting it out at all if it weren't paining me. I had no option but to accept his refusal though I knew now what not to say to the next fellow.

The pain at this stage was secondary to the job of getting someone to take the tooth out. However, my next attempt was successful and I was in the dentist's high chair within half an hour. The dentist did his best to make me feel relaxed but how could anyone possibly be at peace looking at all that stainless steel and clinical enamel. That was nothing to the shock my system absorbed when I saw the gadgets with claws that I knew were destined for my mouth. My teeth were tipped and tapped and I nearly went into orbit when he hit the offender. Does that hurt, says he. I couldn't speak and, everything went black in front of me. I swooned, there was a little bit of fuss. I was assured everything would be alright and I was handed a glass of water. I drank it and tried to regain the composure a glass of water is reputed to give. The dentist appeared a trifle anxious and tried to engage me in friendly conversation. I did my best to be chatty but my mind was bothered at the thought of what was to come. I had a brain-wave. "Could I be put out," I asked. "Why dear, not at all—I would never do that to a nice lady," said he with all the charm he could muster. He had misunderstood me completely. I meant to ask if I could have an anaesthetic but do you think

I could remember the word. I was slightly embarrassed at this stage and I chose not to pursue the subject further.

Now we'll take out that nasty old tooth, said he, as he approached armed with the long needle. He tested the needle to make sure it was operating satisfactorily. I put my head back and opened my mouth as wide as I possibly could. The dentist stuck the needle into my gum and pressed for what seemed an eternity. I gripped the chair and hung on for dear life. I thought he'd never stop and I honestly expected the point of the needle to pop out above my left ear. He must have had similar fears himself because at that second he cautiously and gingerly withdrew the needle. I sighed with relief. The operation was repeated on the other side of the gum though the experience was not quite as traumatic this time. I was then left on my own for a few minutes while the freeze set in. Gradually all feeling left my mouth and jaw and soon I reckoned my troubles should be over. The dentist broke the silence every now and then but in between I heard a strong male voice from the next cubicle ask if there would be much blood. I hadn't thought about such gory details but mind you the idea was not at all pleasant. I coughed and tapped my feet in case I might hear any other disturbing possibilities.

The dentist had the set of claws in his hand at this stage and he confidently walked towards me. He really was the kind of fellow who appeared to love his work. I opened my mouth again but it wasn't as easy this time. I closed it and made a second attempt and I felt just then that the mouth of the Amazon was nothing to mine. He chucked and tugged and

chucked again. I honestly thought my head was about to be severed in two. However, 'twas all worthwhile—one more chuck and there it was in front of my very eyes. I couldn't believe it and what a relief — knowing that the root of that particular evil was gone forever.

I was ushered back to the waiting room for recuperation. I actually enjoyed sitting there. I watched the gold fish sweep over and back, up and down through their watery world. I could now watch them with admiration and interest. There was a general air of activity around the place. From various snippets of conversation I gathered that quite a few youngsters were paying their fist visit to the dentist. Lucky people — the unknown held no fears for them. The seasoned campaigners however were that little more apprehensive. There was plenty of reading material scattered all around the place but nobody was relaxed enough to read. Pages were being flicked over at a great rate and the advertisements and pictures merely punctuated the movement.

Having observed the scene for about twenty minutes I was quite happy to make my way back home. My face was swollen and I felt generally uncomfortable. I hailed a passing taxi. I thought he'd have difficulty in interpreting my muttering but within ten minutes I was back to base. I had been warned not to drink anything too hot or too cold so I poured myself a cup of tea and promptly forgot about it. For the rest of the evening I accepted in a martyr-like fashion all the sympathy that came my way. 'Twas great but I still say there is nothing worse than a toothache.

Good bye — see you next month.

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Jubilee memories of the Railway Cups

I WOULD hate to see the Railway Cup competitions discontinued, because I grew up with them. I remember my father standing outside our front gate and asking Wattie Dunphy if he would be available for the choir in the local church on St. Patrick's Day and Wattie Dunphy, who was then the captain of Kilkenny, said that he couldn't be there because he had to go to Dublin that day to play a match.

It transpired that the match to which he referred was actually the first Railway Cup hurling final, a game still treasured in the memory of the old-timers as a classic of the camán code. Leinster won by the narrowest of margins and Wattie Dunphy captained them to victory. Since the same Wattie was one of my childhood heroes, no wonder the Railway Cups have been of particular interest to me ever since.

Yet, because it was impossible for me to get to Dublin for the National Festival during my school and college days, it was not until I came to Dublin in the middle of the '30s that I ever actually did see a Railway Cup final.

In those days it was the accepted thing that Munster usually dominated the hurling and indeed, until the rise of Wexford some twenty years later, Leinster hurling victories were comparatively rare events, but still the finals were nearly always exciting.

From my earliest years of Railway Cup hurling I particularly remember a few men from the less-famed counties, particularly Larry Blake of Clare and Charlie Ware of Waterford, followed by two other Waterford men, John Keane and Christy Moylan. This was probably because the great Limerick, Cork and Tipperary stars were all well known to me from championship games.

Leinster of course in those years used to be exclusively composed of Kilkenny and Dublin players, and it was not until the early 1940s that I first remember seeing players from other Leinster counties distinguish themselves. The first I remember to do so was a stalwart Laoisman called Andy Bergin. If I were asked to name the most consistent Railway Cup hurler I saw in what we will call my first decade of the competition, I think I would have to opt for the late Paddy Phelan of Kilkenny whom I watched give some magnificent displays in those years. Indeed there were occasions when he seemed to be playing the might of Munster almost single-handed.

But from the start of the 40s the man who dominated the Railway Cup hurling scene was Christy Ring. I saw the man from Cloyne and the Glen Rovers and Cork play in twenty-two consecutive finals, a record that nobody else can ever hope to equal. He was on the winning side 18 times, and captained Munster to victory on at least three occasions. Yet, perhaps because we became so accustomed to seeing him as an integral part of Munster teams through two decades, and so used to seeing him lead the scoring returns, I have no really outstanding memory of Ring from the Railway Cups, except one of almost perpetual invincibility.

Through the most of the 'fifties that whole-hearted Clareman Jimmy Smith became almost as much of a permanent feature of winning Munster sides as the one and only Ringey. But in those same 'fifties, the Wexford resurgence began to make itself felt.

Nicky Rackard had first appeared in the Leinster line-out in 1943 but he had, almost unbelievably, to wait until 1956 before securing his first medal as he was injured when Leinster had at last ended Munster's long dominance over them in 1954. Nicky's last appearance with Leinster was in the 1958 final, 15 years after his first, and he still had only one medal!

Before Ring's last appearance in Croke Park on Saint Patrick's Day another man had appeared in the Leinster jersey who was yet to better Nicky Rackard's record. That was Kilkenny's Eddie Keher, who first wore the green jersey with the gold harp in 1961 while still in his teens, was on a winning side for the first time in 1964 and now has run his string of St. Patrick's Day Awards to eight the greatest number ever by a Leinsterman in either hurling or football . . . and Keher is still there 16 years after his first Leinster appearance!

★ ★ ★

During my first years watching Railway Cup football finals the dominant province was Connacht and the man who really took my fancy year after year was the dashing Paddy Moclair from Mayo. Then Leinster began to come back into the limelight, and, for I suppose the best part of 15 years, any Eastern football team would have looked naked if it took the field without one or more of the Laois Delaneys

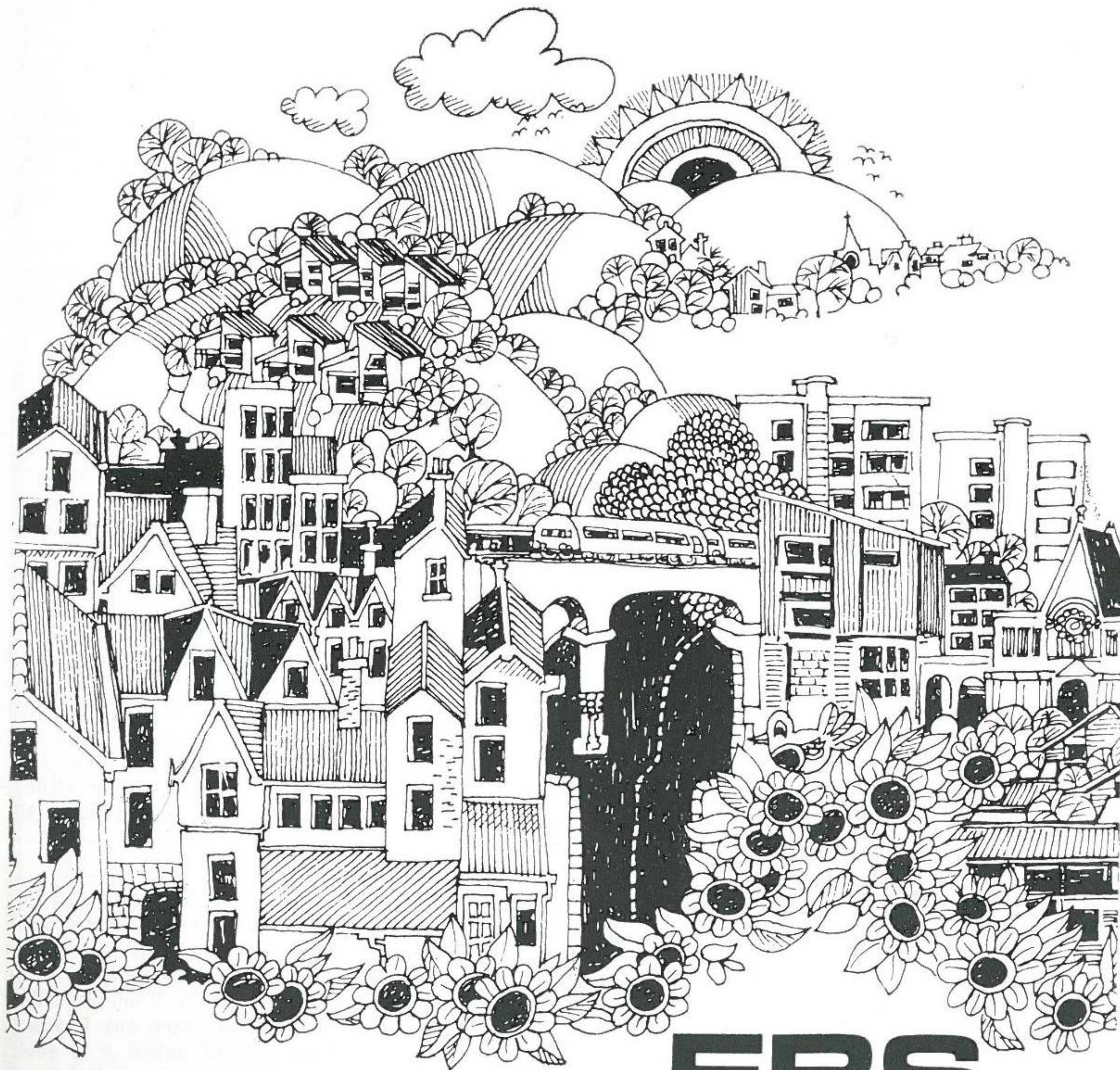
● TO PAGE 19

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● Flashback to 1949 and the Munster football team that won the Railway Cup for the second year in a row: Standing (left to right) — Jim Barry (manager), T. O'Connor (Kerry), J. Lyne (Kerry), C. Duggan (Cork), M. Cahill (Tipperary), P. B. Brosnan (Kerry), E. Dowling (Kerry), T. (Gega) O'Connor (Kerry), Andy Scannell (Selection Committee). Kneeling — M. Finucane (Kerry), C. McGrath (Cork), B. Garvey (Kerry), captain, P. A. Murphy (Cork), N. Crowley (Clare), Jim Cronin (Cork), D. O'Donovan (Cork), M. O'Driscoll (Cork), P. Brennan (Tipperary).

● FROM PAGE 17

from Stradbally. Jack was there for years and Bill lasted longest of all and I must sit down some time and figure out exactly how many Railway Cup appearances the family made between them all.

Then we had the rise of Ulster and the best half-forward line I ever saw in Croke Park, Kevin Armstrong of Antrim, Alf Murray of Armagh and 'Sticky' Maguire from Derry.

Peculiarly enough one of the greatest all-round footballers I have ever seen, Tommy Murphy from Laois, made relatively few Railway Cup final appearances, but he did bring the crowd roaring to their feet on his very last appearance. Called in from the reserves bench during the second half of a game which Connacht seemed well on the way to winning, the Graiguecullen man gave an inspired exhibition and powered the Leinstermen to a five-point victory.

Only in rare flashes did I see Munster show to advantage in my first couple of decades watching the Railway Cup, but they did come with a flurry towards the end of the 'forties winning three times in four seasons, thanks largely to Jackie Lyne and Paddy Bawn Brosnan, Kerry, Con McGrath, Cork, and the burly Tipperaryman Mick Cahill of Mullinahone.

By then a most remarkable Leinsterman had made his first appearance on the Railway Cup scene, a certain Kevin Heffernan from Dublin who first

played for his province in the semi-final of 1949 and bade his farewell in the final of 1962, thirteen years and seven medals later. But already a new Railway Cup 'regular' had appeared on the scene, that unforgettable Ulsterman, Sean O'Neill from Down. He won his first St. Patrick's Day medal, in his third interprovincial season in 1960, and his last in 1971 as full forward, having moved to the full line as the years sapped some of the blinding speed but none of the football genius. So today the man from the Newry Mitchels holds the proud position that he is the only footballer in Ireland who can lay claim to eight Railway Cup medals, one more than Kevin Heffernan and Jack Delaney.

With all those memories to treasure back across the years to their very beginning is it any wonder I treasure such a soft spot for the Railway Cup competitions? Nor do I see any reason whatever why they should die. With a new and more urgent approach in all provinces; with football supremos now in Ulster and Connacht (and what better men than Sean O'Neill and Johnny Geraghty?), with all four provinces indulging in trial matches and training sessions, it is obvious that the officials and the players are taking the games far more seriously than was the case a few seasons ago. And once the public are convinced that the players and the officials are really in earnest again about these Railway Cup games the crowds will be back.



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THREE GREAT HURLERS SHARE GREAT NAME



Enda O'Connor
(Clare)



Teddy O'Connor
(Wexford)

BY MICK DUNNE (RTE Sport)

THREE O'Connors, all unrelated, have been involved in this year's Railway Cup hurling competition — Tadhg and Enda with Munster and Teddie with Leinster. Clareman Enda is the only one of them still to win an inter-provincial medal.

Tadhg O'Connor, Tipperary's long-serving right half-back, was the first of the trio to appear on the Railway Cup scene, but he cannot have happy memories of the first year he was chosen for Munster. In 1972 he was picked to make his inter-provincial debut, but — as it turned out — it was delayed another 12 months. Having been named as Munster's right-back for '72 he was sent to the line in a National League match one week before his province's Railway Cup semi-final against Connacht at Portumna, so he missed both the semi-final and the St. Patrick's Day final.

A year later he did have the honour of wearing the Munster jersey and he has been on the side since with the exception of 1975 when he was omitted.

This year he was chosen as centre half-back for the southern province although he has more regularly played as right half with Tipperary. However he is not a stranger to the centre and it was in that position that he made his Railway Cup debut four years back. He was also centre

half-back on the Tipperary under-21 side that won the All-Ireland championship in 1967.

Following his displays with that under-21 team he was chosen a year later for the Tipp. senior side and he went into the team for the Oireachtas semi-final of '68 against Kilkenny.

Tadhg has the distinction of being the first player from Roscrea to captain a Tipperary team in the All-Ireland senior hurling final, an honour he had in 1971 which was a year he also played



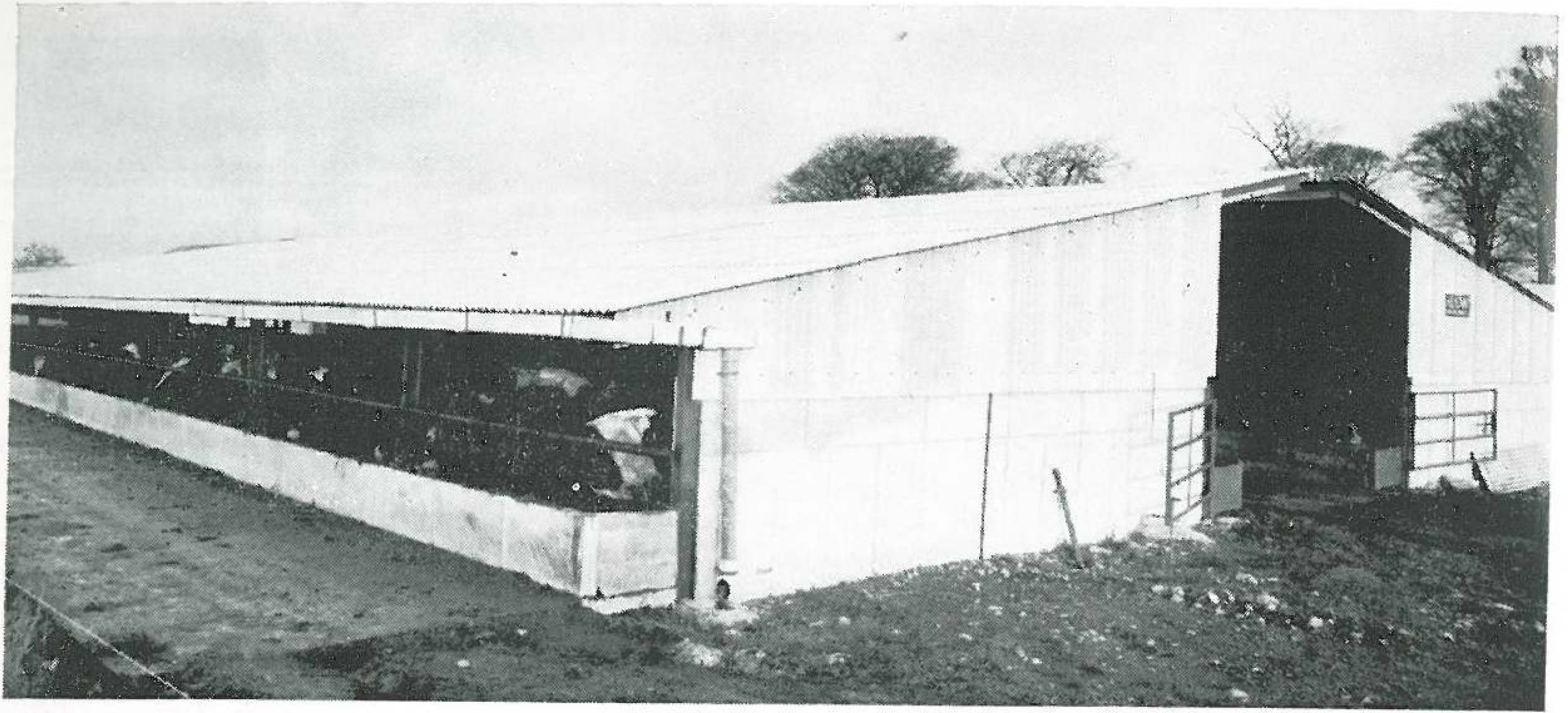
Tadhg O'Connor
(Tipperary)

a big part in helping Roscrea capture the All-Ireland club championship. But he had to wait until last St. Patrick's Day to obtain his first Railway Cup medal when Munster, at last, ended Leinster's long dominance.

Teddie O'Connor, the sterling Wexford defender who has played in all six defensive positions, first wore the Leinster jersey as a 1972 substitute and the following year when he was the province's right corner back he gained his first medal. He was omitted in '74 but got another medal two years ago as a substitute. He remained among the subs last year, but was recalled to the defence this year, this time as left full-back.

Like his Tipperary namesake, Teddy was an under-21 in 1967 and later that year he first appeared on Wexford's senior team, playing in all back positions including left half, which he filled in the 1970 Leinster and All-Ireland finals.

Enda O'Connor, the youngest of the trio, was 23 last October. He earned selection as Munster's centre half-forward this year as a result of his superb performances in Clare's attack during the current National League.



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THE CAMOGIE SCENE

By AGNES HOURIGAN

THE Camogie Association is certainly looking to the future and has been working hard to increase and expand its activities at all educational levels. The most spectacular advances through the last decade and a half have of course come in the Post Primary schools. Since the setting up of the provincial Colleges Councils the progress has been phenomenal, and now all four provinces can boast of a multitude of Colleges teams, even in counties with very little previous tradition in the game such as Cavan and Donegal. The rapid equalisation of standards is proved by the fact that since its institution less than a decade ago, the senior title has gone to all four provinces in turn while it is also remarkable how the rise of the game in the Colleges has been reflected within a very few years by the rise of the same counties on the inter-county championship fields.

Another encouraging feature in recent seasons has been the enthusiasm with which the game has been taken up in many of the technical schools with Leinster particularly prominent in this regard. With the number of teams still increasing in this sector, it is no wonder that the demand for qualified coaches is insistent.

No wonder that the National Coaching Course will again be conducted in two sections this year, with a special course for would-be Colleges' Coaches at the end of June, and the normal Course scheduled for mid-July.

Although the Ashbourne Cup intervarsity Camogie competition is the oldest in the entire Association it was not until the set-

ting up of the C.C.I.A. the Higher Institutes Council less than five years ago that any attempt was made to organise the game at a competitive level in the Third Level Colleges outside the Universities. Here too the progress has been remarkable. Now in addition to all seven Universities, all the teacher-training Colleges including the two P.E. Colleges in Limerick and Jordantown together with the Regional College of Letterkenny and Carlow all compete in the C.C.I.A. League along with the Universities. This year, in this very month of March actually, we will see the inaugural series of a new competition, a knock-out championship for the non-University Institutes on the same lines as the Ashbourne Cup. This will be hosted by St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra.

This month will also see another innovation, a coaching course for C.C.I.A. members which will be held at the National College of Physical Education in Limerick. As distinct from the summer courses, this will be a course for players in the basic skills of the game, and is aimed at improving the standards of the game even further at third level, although the level of competence shown in the C.C.I.A. seven-a-side for First-Years at Belfield shortly before Christmas would be hard to surpass.

Since so many of these students will be teachers in primary and secondary schools in a year or two, making them competent camogie players and therefore all the more enthusiastic for the game is obviously an important step in ensuring that the rising generation will have competent

and capable teachers of the game at all educational levels in the none too distant future.

This will be particularly important in the Primary sector, where to date the organisation of the game has made the slowest progress. But the Primary Schools Council though not yet in existence for more than a couple of years has already made commendable progress. There are thriving primary schools competitions in several counties.

One difficulty has been that only few primary teachers were interested enough to give the requisite co-operation. But with the Training Colleges participating so enthusiastically in the C.C.I.A. Leagues it is reasonable to expect that this situation will be steadily changing for the better year by year. So the future at Primary level must also be bright.

Also at juvenile level a very helpful factor has been the introduction of Camogie into Feile na nGael. It was generally accepted that the display of the young Camogie players in Cork last year astounded the majority of the male spectators, and we can confidently hope that this Summer the standard of the Camogie teams will be just as high.

The addition of Camogie competitions to the Willwood Tailteann games will also be a help, and I would personally like to see far more Camogie teams competing in the Community Games. This is an opportunity of introducing Camogie to those who perhaps have never before seen the game and we should I feel make better use of this opportunity than we have done to date.



**Jimmy
Barry-Murphy**



**Robbie
Kelleher**

JIMMY BARRY-MURPHY, Gaelic games most notable dual player wants to see the 'palmed pass' and the 'palmed shot' taken out of hurling.

The flying Corkman believes hurling would benefit from its abolition. "It's not hurling, it's more like handball," he says.

Murphy adds "It is taking much of the skill out of hurling. If a player is in trouble, he simply drops his hurley and palms the ball. Where is the skill in that?"

"I believe the player should be made use his hurley, whatever the circumstances. Many players find it easier to palm a goal than to shoot for goal. Moreover it gives the goalkeeper little chance.

"The palmed pass and shot will lead to players throwing the ball. A referee has to be very quick to spot whether the player is fouling the ball or not.

"Hurling would be even more skilful if the palmed pass and shot were abolished."

TONY DORAN, perhaps the leading exponent of the palmed shot in present day hurling, predictably takes a different line. "It's always been in operation, why take it out now."

"Why change for the sake of change. I feel the palmed pass speeds up the game. The player surrounded by defenders could do little if the palmed pass was not legal.

"As regards the goalkeeper, I feel he has a reasonable chance of saving from the palmed shot.

And it's a fact that there were few palmed goals scored in last year's championship.

"Furthermore a player would be left in quite a spot, if having lost his hurley in a tackle, he was forced to drop the ball on the ground. And it's a very common thing for a player to lose his hurley in a clash of sticks.

"I would be opposed to any change which would see the

Jimmy says 'he be banned f

By JOHN O'SE

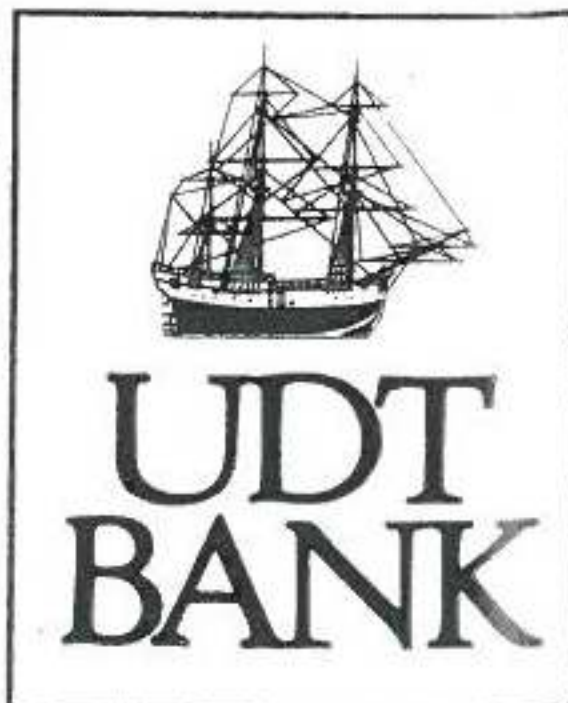
palmed shot or pass going from hurling."

Younger brother COLM DORAN is on the same wavelength. "It would make life very easy for the backs, if forwards could use only their hurleys to pass or shoot. I would consider it relatively simple to mark a forward, who was relying only on his hurley.

"If it were abolished, I felt it would reduce the number of goal

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Hand-ball' must from hurling

HEA (Evening Press)

mouth incidents. And surely that would lessen the excitement for the spectators."

◇ ◇ ◇

ANOTHER talking point of late has been the failure of forwards to pick off long range points with any degree of consistency.

We return to JIMMY BARRY-MURPHY for a comment on this one. "Indirectly I feel Dublin are

the cause of this disease which is sweeping Gaelic football.

"Dublin realised they had this weakness and set about compensating through speed and team work. They had the players and the level of fitness to achieve this.

"Other teams have tried to emulate them, but did not have the ability. Most other teams would, I believe, be better ad-



Tony
Doran



Colm
Doran

vised to concentrate on long range shooting.

"I feel too that few teams practice long range shooting. We have become obsessed with physical fitness and elaborate tactics. It's very possible there is too much emphasis on coaching.

"I would hope that county teams would realise the benefits of having a 'pot' from out the field."

BENNY GAUGHRAN, the Louth midfielder, believes long range shooting is a "dying art". Teams want to retain possession at all costs — they are afraid to have a go in case they miss.

"We have become convinced that fitness is all important and that if we run and hold possession we can win. This works for some teams — but only for some.

"It's a fact too, of course, that players no longer give the time to practising the skill."

ROBBIE KELLEHER feels that other counties are foolish to copy Dublin's style. "Dublin forwards are traditionally inaccurate. Our forward line of the past few years has been inaccurate.

If we were to win, we knew we would have to develop a formula which would get us the scores, in spite of this weakness.

But I'm sure there are many inter-county teams with accurate forwards in their ranks. These teams should be playing the old style game. We would have taken our long range points, had we been able to do so."

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Watch out for Antrim!

I know that they may have flattered to deceive in the past but when Antrim footballers enter the championship fray this

year we can expect to see a fiddle-fit side, players chasing every ball, the hand-passing weapon being fully exploited and

a complete ban on any slackening in concentration throughout the 70 minutes.

That, at least, is the plan—and ambition — of team manager Kevin Armstrong who, in a lengthy chat with me, has forecast a very good year for the county "if only we have that wee bit of luck which has been denied us for so long."

And despite that awkward first round hurdle — away to Monaghan on May 29 — Kevin, one of the all time greats of Gaelic football and still as always the most modest of men, feels that fortune has been reasonably kind in the draw with Antrim, Monaghan, Cavan and Armagh in one half, leaving the other finalist to come from Down, Fermanagh, Tyrone, Derry and Donegal.

The boss — though I have a feeling he does not relish the tag — has tremendous faith in his present panel of around 28 players, several of the 1971 under 21 squad among them, and when he finds about three more players for whom he is presently scouting, the probable championship line-out is likely to emerge.

Armstrong paid a generous tribute to his predecessor Jimmy Ward whose departure from the management scene he genuinely regrets. "Jimmy was building on all the right lines and I am doing my best to complete the work he had in mind," he remarked. "We have plenty of youth, allied with the experience of such as Andy McCallin and John Burns and I am confident that we can mould a combination which will get re-



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PANTILE

sults.”

The choice of three Antrim men — his son Pat, J. P. O’Kane and J. McKiernan — on the Ulster side had come as a great boost to morale and should instil more and more faith into the panel.

When I asked him how the present side compared with that of the late forties and early fifties, Kevin Armstrong sold me one of the famous dummies which used to make him the terror of defences throughout the country.

“You see it is a different game now involving a new style with the recent changes in the rules giving the forwards a tremendous advantage. A forward in possession today should do one of three things — score, shoot wide or win a free. If the present laws — especially the introduction of the big square — had been in operation in my time I think we would have been in the Guinness Book of Records for the number of penalties we would have gained.”

His strategy is simple and uncomplicated. “Players must be fully fit, be prepared to chase every ball and on no account allow lax periods during the game,” he stressed. “Of course the handpass is a most vital gambit and Ulster sides should exploit it to the full. We will certainly be paying attention to this department.

I have a hunch that J. P. O’Kane — “one of the finest players in the country,” according to Armstrong — is in for a special grilling in the handpassing art. “J. P. seems to be in some difficulty mastering this technique but I am sure it will come right,” Kevin commented.

On a more general note Kevin Armstrong would welcome an open draw in the championship, a “genuine” National League of

four divisions and the championship and league played off together throughout the summer. Such an arrangement would, he feels confident, give a real injection of interest.

About the best players he had played with, he had no hesitation in nominating Jim McCullough — “we’ll never see his likes again” — and Alf Murray (Armagh), “Sticky” Maguire (Derry), Mick Higgins, Tony

Tighe and the late John Joe O’Reilly (Cavan).

“But I have no doubt that legendary figures will emerge from today’s players just as they do in every sport. I am not a great believer in harking back to the so-called good old days,” he quickly added.

Before talking to the Antrim chief I had Antrim among the outsiders for the championship. Now I am not so sure.

CHEETAH



SPORTS

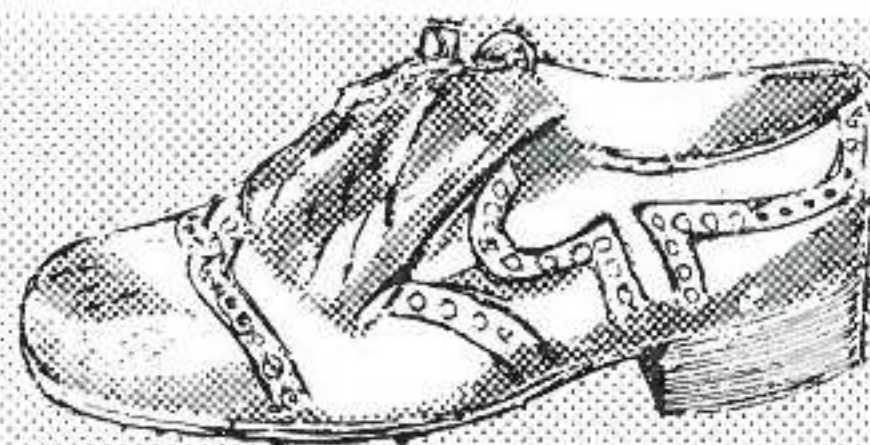
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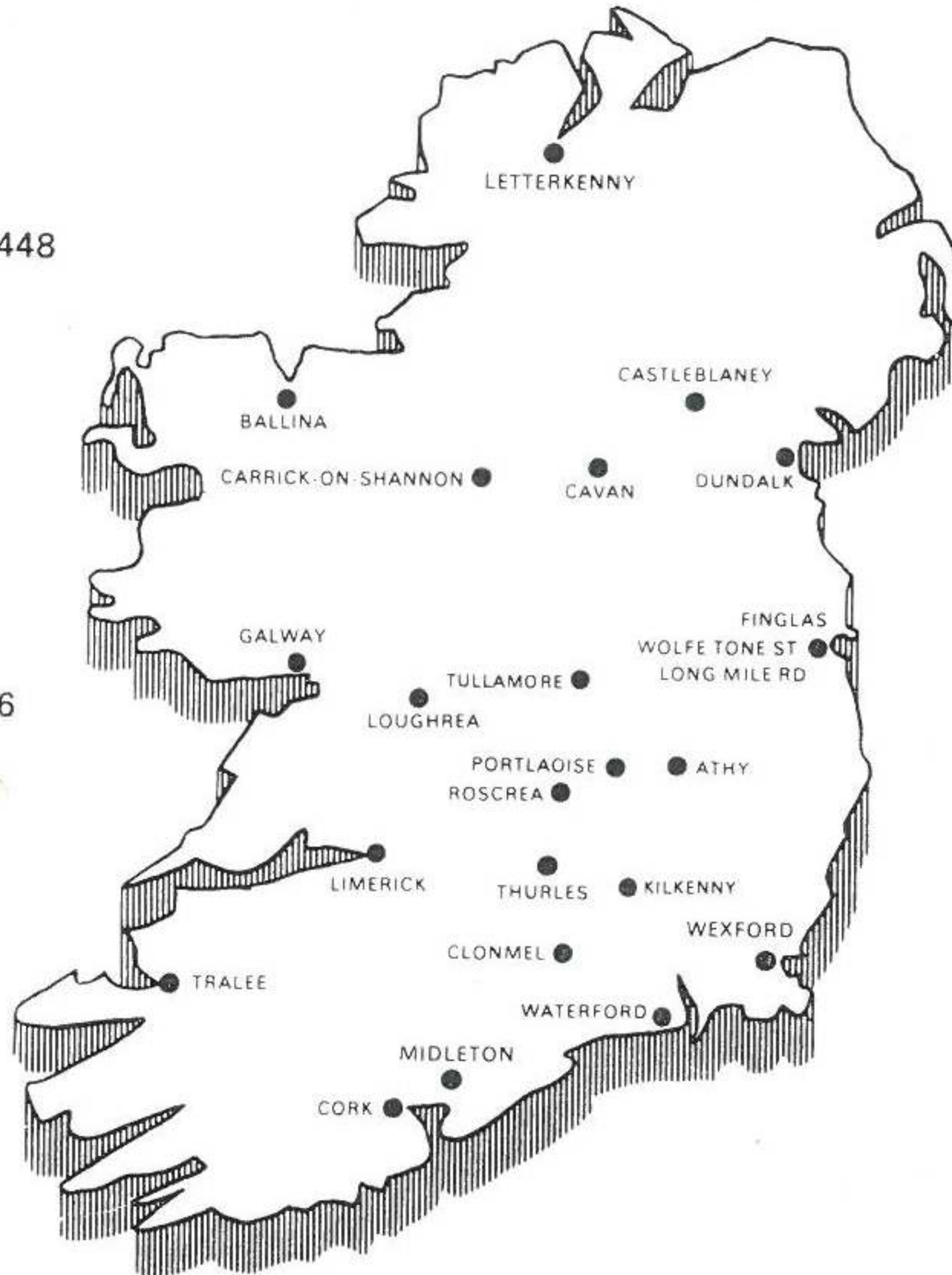
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Players from the 'struggling' teams worthy of high honours

THE leading players from the successful counties must inevitably command the lion's share of the top awards in hurling and football, but it is always nice to see men from the less fashionable counties getting "in on the act" now and then. And, this year opened on a high note in this regard for a number of stars of teams that have been striving long and hard without any real successes at senior level.

I am thinking, in particular, of footballers like Mick Carty (Wexford) and Michael Martin (Leitrim) and Dublin hurler Vinny Holden, all of whom celebrated the opening weeks of the year by winning interprovincial honours, and places in the panel of replacements for the Carrolls All Stars for the attractive U.S. tour.

Wexford football should get a big boost from Carty's "double first". After all, although the county has a tradition in the game

that stretches back to the early days of the Association, the lack of success in modern times must have conditioned many a Wexford footballer to the belief that players from there had no genuine opportunity of capturing any major national awards.

But Carty's call-up by Leinster and by the Carrolls All Stars selectors is proof positive that talent can pay a handsome dividend — even if a county is not in the top rung of the game in question.

The Wexford defender has consistently proven his worth in the highest company. I can recall some eye-catching performances from this Castletown native with U.C.D. in the Sigerson Cup (Universities' Championship) and in the Dublin and All-Ireland club championships.

Indeed, this accomplished footballer captained the student-team to the big double of the Sigerson Cup and the All-Ireland club title in 1975. He was at midfield in

the All-Ireland final win over Nemo Rangers, and centre half back in the Sigerson Cup triumph against Queen's.

Prior to those medal wins, Carty helped U.C.D. to their 1973 and 1974 Dublin County Championship successes, and won his first Sigerson Cup medal in 1974 as a midfielder.

On the inter-county scene, Mick Carty, who is 24, has been one of Wexford's most consistent performers, and I was not in the least surprised when he won his place at centre half back in the Leinster team for last month's semi-final with Connacht — the first player from the county to gain a place in an actual Railway Cup football team in some years.

I have little doubt either that whatever the future holds for Wexford football, Mick Carty will gain many more headlines with his skilled and progressive play.

Michael Martin is not allowing the grass to grow under his feet. He is only 20, but is in his second year as an interprovincial, having been first honoured by Connacht in their unsuccessful semi-final with Leinster last year.

More than that, this talented young footballer has already emerged as one of Leitrim's most exciting prospects since the days when the legendary Packie McGarty and top scoring Cathal Flynn were prominent figures in the football scene in the 'Fifties and early 'Sixties. His selection for the coming U.S. tour is a splendid tribute to his budding talents, and must benefit Leitrim football standards as well.

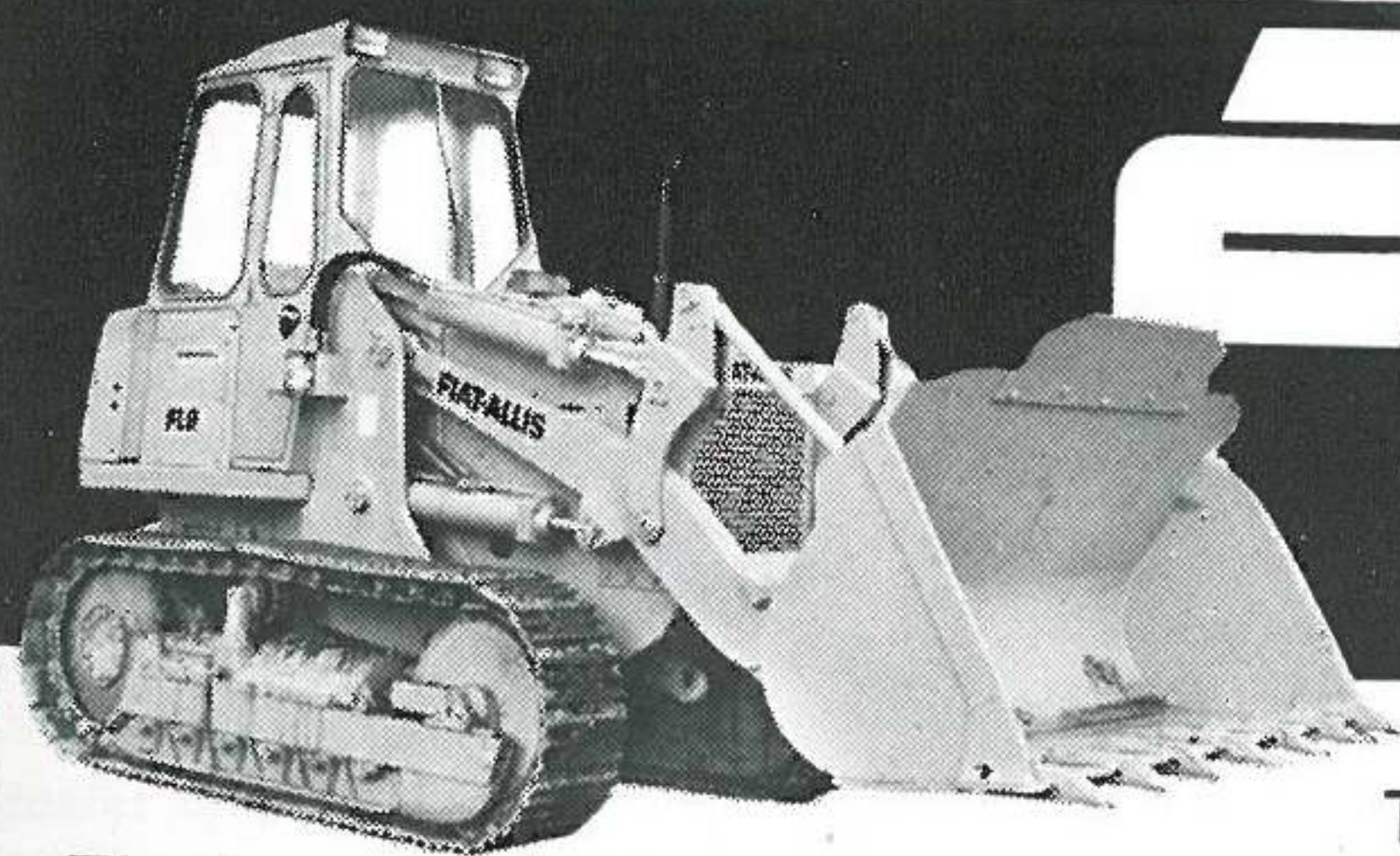
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GO-AHEAD WESTMEATH CLUB

GAELIC SPORT is always happy to learn from club officials about the history and achievements of their clubs. A special word of thanks, then, this month to Christy Hickey, Secretary and P.R.O. of Castle-town-Geoghegan G.A.A. Club, which is situated ten miles from Mullingar, for some interesting news about his club.

Christy tells us that there are in fact two very active clubs, hurling and football, run by separate committees, but with one secretary looking after the affairs, and they field twelve teams.

The hurling club is one of the oldest in Westmeath, dating back to 1915, and it won the county senior title six times between 1923 and 1964. Many club men have represented the county over the years as well, while four, Pat Jackson, Gerry Whelan, Willie Shanley and Eamonn Clarke were in the side that brought the All-Ireland "B" hurling title to Westmeath in 1975.

The club has 120 adult members, and 160 juveniles, and is providing its own park with dressingrooms, complete with hot and cold showers. Already

£5,750 has been spent on this ambitious project, and a further £3,000 will be spent on the venture this year.

The football club, known as St. Malachy's, has a membership of 80 adults and 75 juveniles, and players have over the years represented the county in senior football.

The two clubs take part in SCOR, the G.A.A. Adult Talent competition, and in Scór na nÓg. They have won numerous county titles in Scór, as well as two Leinster crowns, and contested two All-Ireland finals.

PLAYERS FROM STRUGGLING TEAMS WORTHY OF HIGH HONOURS

By Owen McCann

FROM PAGE 29

In fact, with the county very much on the up-grade again, despite the disappointments of defeats from Cavan and Donegal that put paid to interest in the National League at the end of January, Michael Martin, with his genuine talent, and cool, progressive football, could well prove the man to provide the impetus to get Leitrim very much into the national spotlight again in the months ahead.

Dublin hurling has been experiencing a lean spell for some years now, despite encouraging and pulse-raising performances from time to time by the county senior side. However, this has still not prevented Vinny Holden

from making a strong impact in the game in the senior ranks in recent years.

Holden, one of three brothers who have played with the county, has graduated superbly from under-age competitions. Not only that, he is a versatile performer.

Vinny was centre half forward when Dublin lost the 1972 All-Ireland under-21 final to Galway, and he has appeared with the county in the meantime in the senior grade in a number of positions at the back and in attack.

Then, there was his outing at full back for the Rest of Leinster in a trial in January, followed by a first provincial jersey at No. 6 in the semi-final with Connacht last month. He was thus the sec-

ond member of this bright trio of brothers to play for the province, as Michael went in as a substitute during last year's unsuccessful final with Munster.

Vinny, who was named Hurler of the Year by the Dublin Supporters' Club in January (another deserved tribute to his many fine qualities), is a strong, determined and wholehearted campaigner. In short, a player who has, like Carty and Martin, shown that any young man can expect to make an impact nationally in top-class hurling or football, no matter what the rating of his county team in the game — providing he has the skills and the ability.

My hope now is that many other players from the less fashionable teams will make as big an impression in the months ahead as have this trio in recent times. Nothing would be better for the game, as exciting new faces among the established stars for major honours, give an added zest and appeal to the scene.

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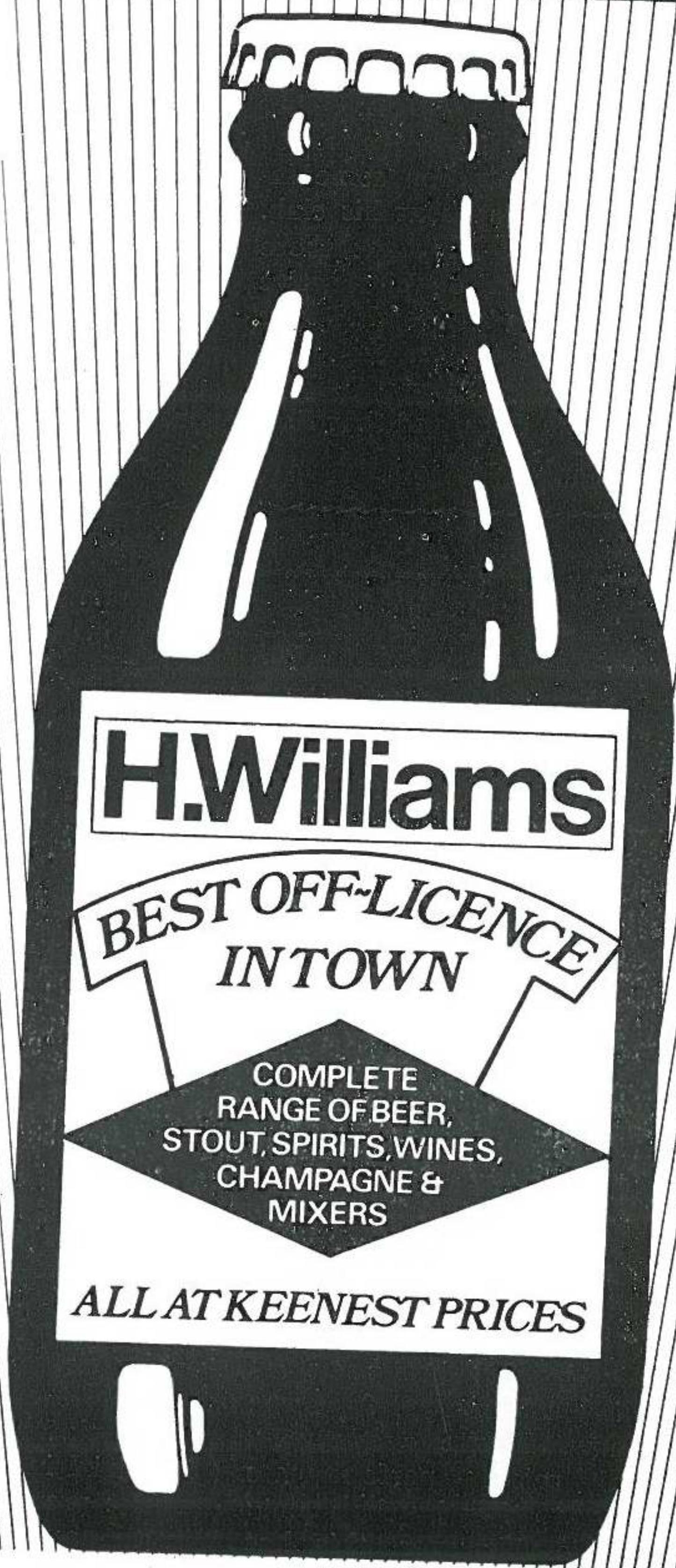
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IF you're old enough to have joined the collar-and-tie brigade, it's a sure bet that you've worn a Gilt Edge tie at some time. Maybe you wore your first Gilt Edge tie when you made your First Communion. 'Gilt Edge' has an international sound to it, which perhaps does something to obscure the fact that Grogan Brothers, at whose factory in Dublin these ties are designed and made, comprise one of the most brilliant success stories the Irish textile business has produced.

When they tell you about it they make it seem easy. They knew a little bit about making ties, they started their own business in a small way and then after a few years it began to take off. What they don't tell you is that their particular combination of talent, expertise and hard work is the equal of what you'd find anywhere in the world — perhaps that has something to do with the way Gilt Edge ties have done so well on the home market against fierce competition from imports. Nowadays Gilt Edge neckwear is worn by the men of many European countries and they like these ties as much as we do.

Gilt Edge knitwear for men and boys is another thriving aspect of this Irish business. Again, the policy is to give the customers everything from good-class fashion merchandise to the classic jersey cardigan. And yet another, more recent, success has been their launch of Farah slacks on the Irish market. Farah are beautifully tailored in gaberdines and hopsacks and have a reputation for perfect fit. All that, and they can also be easy-care. No wonder that today 'Farah' is almost as well known as a name in men's clothing as 'Gilt Edge.'

In a previous issue we dealt fairly comprehensively with the full range of sports equipment and accessories which can be bought at the new lower ground floor department at Arnotts of Dublin. Now the goods are even more accessible since Arnotts adopted the six-day week which means one can shop there on Saturdays as well as the other days of the week right up to half past five or thereabouts. The Saturday opening is a great convenience for week-end visitors to Dublin.

The man who buys in all the gear for Arnotts sports department, Joe McGann, is a keen sportsman himself and he follows the policy of trying to foresee every need and cater for it. It is a rare customer who will not find here all his requirements. It is worth emphasising too that, girls being as sports-conscious as the men these days, and many of them active sports participants, the department is by no means an all-male preserve. One is as likely to meet Granny down there stocking up with a few golf balls as one is to meet her grandson or grand-daughter buying track suits.

In addition to stocking all the basics for sports and athletics, Arnotts also have exclusive rights to some merchandise which one won't find elsewhere. All stocks are laid out in open displays so that they can be easily examined and apart from having what you want, Arnotts is a good place for shopping in a hurry. Don't forget to look in, next time you pop down Henry Street.

"In our end of the business the quality of the goods is taken for granted. It has got to be excellent. It is really design and colour that make you a leader" they told us

at Youghal Carpets Dublin showrooms in Trinity Street. It was so that they could maintain their reputation as leaders in these two areas that Youghal launched their new 'Rhinestone' range some little time ago. It has been brilliantly successful — and from the consumer point of view it has been a winner in another context as well, since it has a price advantage of about a pound a square yard over comparable Youghal qualities.

It is in its outstanding design and colour content, however, that Rhinestone really makes an impact. The big achievement here, perhaps, is that none of the designs fall into any rigid classification of 'antique' or 'contemporary.' The panelled Persian design for instance, could look traditional in a traditional setting, but one could also visualise it mixing very happily with modern furni-

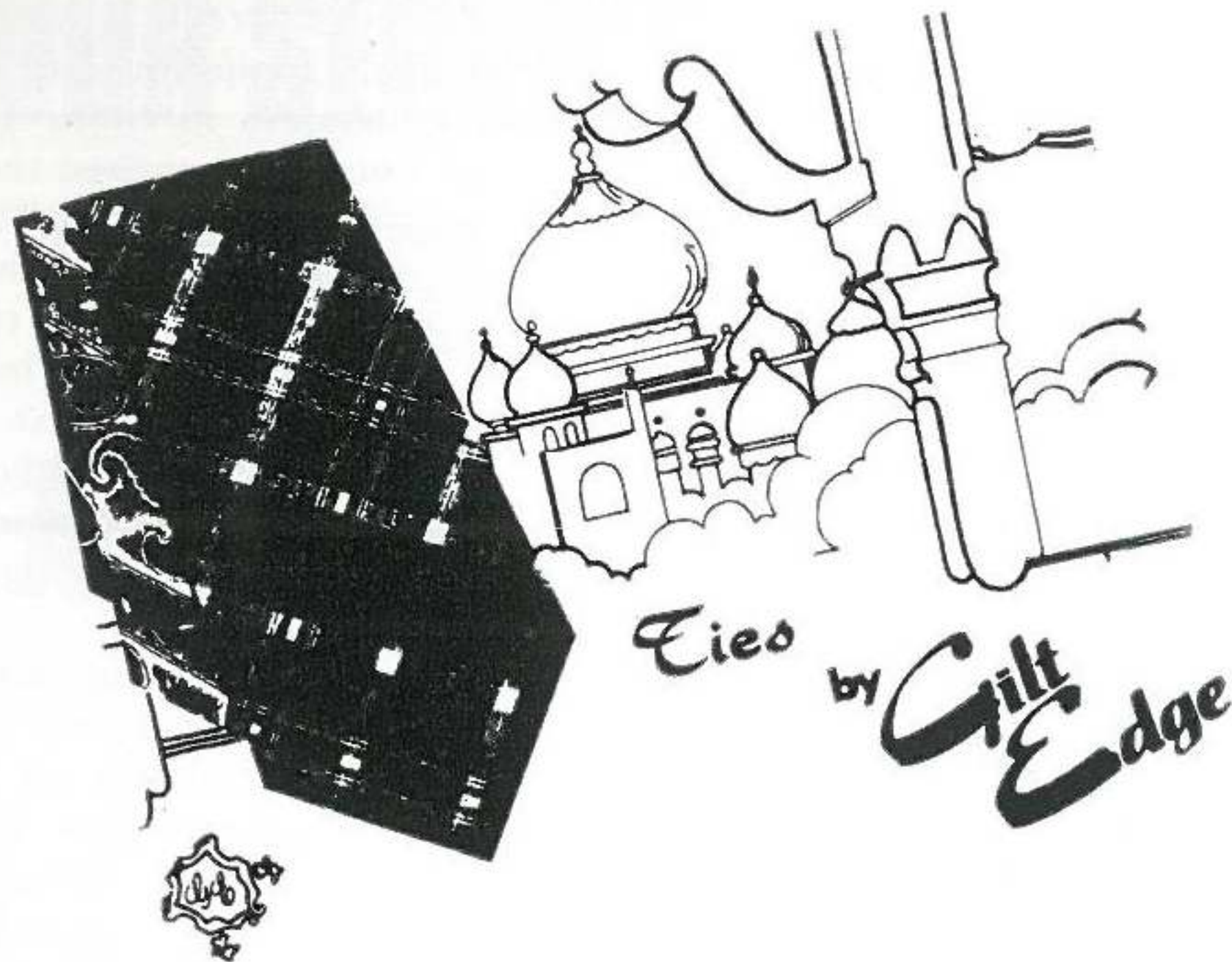
TO PAGE 44

CHEETAH for CHAMPIONS

GOOD news for Irish sports people is the advent of the Cheetah Sports Shoe on the home market. Distributed here by Geany & Company it is a very high quality shoe indeed.

Its distinctive stripes and excellent finish, together with leather uppers, all point to its makers having had very many years of experience in the shoe business. And this is so. Made by George Ward at Leicester, the Cheetah Sports Shoe is the result of painstaking research, consultation, allied to skill born of decades of work with fine leather.

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IRISH HOLIDAYS ARE BEST

MANY of us proved last year that you could exploit the patriotic way of enjoying yourself by staying in Ireland for your holidays. Those of us who did, in fact, scored over many who went abroad and ran into worse weather than we had here, currency troubles and overbooked planes. Now, after a baddish winter and with the weather pundits predicting another fine summer, is the time to get in the mood — and if you study the small print in some of the Bord Failte literature you could find yourself convinced that it's cheaper to get away than to stay at home.

The Group Weekends, for instance, which operate right through the year are a case in point. They have been planned particularly with the group organiser in mind. If you're one of those, you can now offer your club members a number of very attractive weekend breaks in many parts of Ireland. There are trips to nearly everywhere, but if the area you're interested in travelling to isn't on any list, then a phone call detailing your needs is all that is required to get the whole thing organised, and a programme can be arranged specially for you.

Prices are calculated for a minimum group of thirty people and are based on twin-room occupancy. Your group for instance could enjoy a mediaeval week-end in Limerick or Ennis, Saturday morning to Sunday evening, attending the famous mediaeval banquet at Bunratty Castle on Saturday night, for £16.35 per person — or even less if the trip is organised before the end of April. A weekend in Tramore at the Majestic Hotel is only £14.50 in the high season. These all-in programmes include transport to and from Dublin. Groups outside Dublin can take advantage of

special fares offered by CIE.

For people interested in spending the odd weekend in Dublin, amazing bargains exist, geared to everything from the Grade A hotel to the Bord Failte approved guesthouse. A browse through the literature is well worth while.

For teenagers there are the summer camps, gaining in popularity every year, which can be a wonderful way of providing educational and activity holidays for young people during the long drag of the summer holidays. Kids in the 8/12 age group for instance can do a Junior Explorer course at camp, learning about orienteering, map reading, navigation, environmental studies, drama, public speaking, painting, canoeing, and gymnastics. It sounds energetic enough for even the most ebullient sub-teen.

Another course is billed for the 'self reliant teenager' of 13/16, teaching him/her all about radio, photography, household repairs, crafts, art, cycle maintenance and so on. And now for the first time

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Adidas has been a pioneer in the history of sports shoe production for 20 years. Some impressive dates: 1949 first multi-studded football boot, 1951 first 4-spiked track shoe, 1953 first screw-stud for football boots, 1955 production of track shoes with outer ball reinforcement, 1957 manufacture of football boots with nylon soles, 1960 first track shoe with nylon sole and injected spikes, 1964 production of interval training shoes. In 1968 practically 85% of all athletes participating in the Olympic Games wore adidas.

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TOP TEN SPONSORED

IT is with great pleasure that we are able to announce that from this month of March onwards the Top Ten in GAELIC SPORT will be sponsored by John Tyler & Sons Limited.

Each month the winner of the football and hurling categories will receive a shoe voucher for £15 and at the end of the year the overall winner in football and hurling will receive a magnificent inscribed perpetual cup and replica. In addition, the first three in both the hurling and football Top Ten of the year will receive shoe vouchers for £20, £15 and £10 respectively. We know that this sponsorship will be welcomed by readers and players alike.

Our Top Ten feature has been in operation since 1963. Over the years it has become one of the most looked-forward-to

features in GAELIC SPORT and has regularly aroused tremendous interest amongst players, officials and the general public.

Many great players have also figured in the charts. Past winners include such 'greats' as:—

Sean O'Neill (Down)
Eddie Keher (Kilkenny)
Jimmy Keaveney (Dublin)
Mick O'Dwyer (Kerry)
Michael Keating (Tipperary)
Willie Bryan (Offaly)

From now on Ms. John Tyler's sponsorship will give a further appeal to the feature. It will mean extra awards to be won each year and help to focus greater interest in the performances of the players. We feel that we can look forward to an exciting campaign in the months ahead thanks to this latest sponsorship.

● FROM OVERLEAF

a French language course has been organised within the ambience of Camp Ireland, with a leavening of French students to ensure that everyone develops an authentic French accent. Again, details are well worth chasing up for oneself.

At the other end of the age-scale, attractive holidays have been organised for senior citizens. The Yeats Country Ryan Hotel in Sligo gives special rates for June and July, and in May one can have a full week there for £38.50 which includes nightly entertainment, a half-day sight-seeing tour, a welcome drink and a farewell party and many other extras. For one pound more, senior citizens can have a week in the famous Lisdoonvarna health centre with every moment packed with entertainment, should they wish it.

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HANDBALL TOPICS

By SEAN CLERKIN

PAT Kirby (Clare), Murty McEllistrim (Kerry), Peadar McGee and Pat McCormack (Mayo) are the four lucky players who will travel out to America with the All-Stars in Hurling and Football on April 27th and return on May 15th. During their stay in America they will represent Ireland in international matches in Los Angeles and San Francisco.

They will also participate in the U.S. National Championships which will be held from May 8th to 15th, so, obviously, the handballing workload for the period will be a heavy one.

We can be happy, however, that in this quartet we have a dedicated team that will do us proud both in the quality of their play and as sporting ambassadors. They won their travelling tickets on merit alone. Pat Kirby was declared an automatic choice by virtue of his dominance in the 40 x 20 code during the past year, while the other three emerged from trials sponsored by Atlas Travel. Indeed, these same trials proved to be highly popular and attracted 32 players in the Singles and over 40 in the Doubles.

In the singles event McEllistrim had a fascinating struggle with the veteran Joey Maher and literally won on the post in the third game, after Maher had led at different stages by 12-2, 14-6 and 20-18.

The doubles contest was no less intriguing as McGee and McCormack threw everything into the fray to deprive Dan and John Kirby of the trip.

This will be McCormack's first American handball trip and it

should be of immense value to him in the context of experience and skill development. He is already one of handball's emerging stars, having won a Minor title in 1971 at the softball code, to be followed with a Junior victory in 1974.

This year he proved conclusively that much of his undoubted potential is untapped by partnering Peadar McGee to victory in the final of the All-Ireland Senior Handball Doubles grade. The significance of this victory is realised when you read their conclusive three straight sets win over Kildare's Matt Purcell and Greg Lawler in the final.

McGee does not require an introduction since he has graced the handball scene with distinction over the past fifteen years. The old code of handball is his forte, as evidenced by his record, which shows that he has won the Senior Singles crown on the last five successive occasions.

He has, of course, included softball medals in his total bag of 14 All-Ireland successes, and amongst these one can easily recall some of the great exhibitions he and Micky Walsh gave in the early 'sixties. He has played in America previously but it was at a stage when the small courts were in their infancy in this country and, needless to say, he did not make any great impression. This time the bearded, bespectacled, thirty-four-year-old Newport ace will be a different proposition.

Murty McEllistrim, the Kerry representative on the team, comes from Ballymacelligot, a club to which he has given great

service not only as a player but also as an organiser and administrator. It could even be suggested that he was mainly instrumental in having the 40 x 20 court built in Ballymacelligot.

While McEllistrim relishes the American trip and is thankful to handball for the honours and friendships he has derived from it, an ambition burns within him to win an All-Ireland Singles 60 x 30 title. He has reached the final on three occasions, appeared to have the title within his grasp more than once, only to see it narrowly slip from him. I am not making any rash predictions in saying that it will come his way in the next couple of years—his zeal and enthusiasm will see to that.

The side will be captained by Pat Kirby, the Clare Dynamo, who has been the outstanding handballer in this country in recent years. Whether it be in the 60 x 30 or 40 x 20 codes, Kirby has introduced science to the game, but not to the exclusion of the steel nerve and abundant stamina, both of which he seems to have in copious reserve. Last year, he made a big impression on the trip and included amongst his achievements an outright victory in the Southern Californian Open Championship.

A man of immense determination, Kirby will be anxious to bring further distinction to Irish handball and to help the other three players in reaching their full potential against, possibly, the best handballers in the world.

We wish our men well.

Farmers

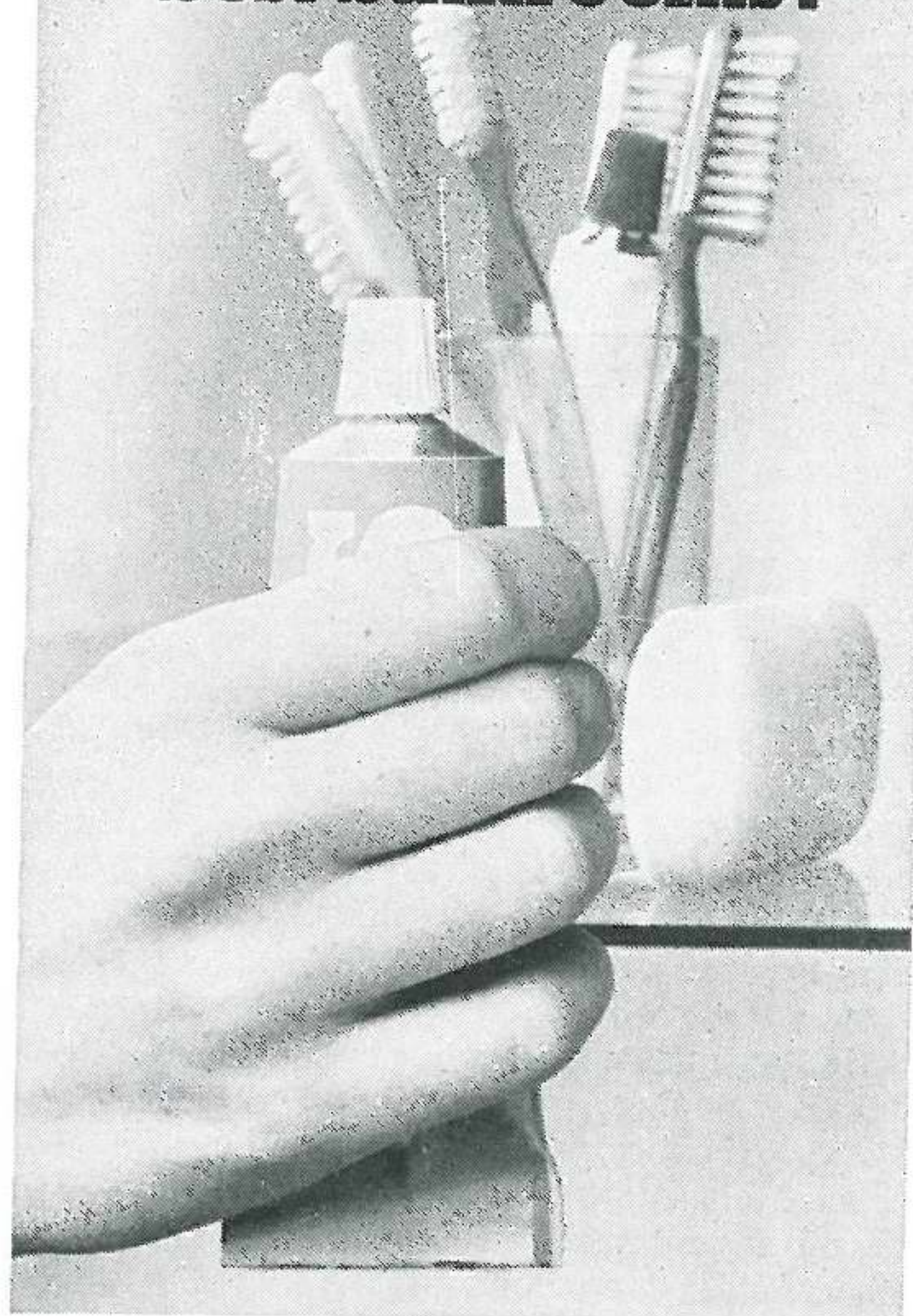
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ON THE SPOT . . .

A QUIZ compiled
by TONY KEEGAN

THE bright young men of football and hurling have provided some of the most exciting talking points of recent times. Look at the way that Kevin Moran captured so many headlines last year — yet he only made his competitive senior debut with Dublin as recently as last April!

Then, there were many eye-catching individual performances in the minor and under-21 championships, displays which helped to hammer home the point that the future of hurling and football is in safe hands.

So, what do YOU know about the young lions of Gaelic Games . . . the up-and-coming personalities who are likely to be prominently to the forefront in the years ahead?

ON THE SPOT . . . this month provides an opportunity to test your knowledge on this score with an opening ten-question personality section in which the emphasis is exclusively on the bright young heroes.

Each question is worth four points, with some bonus points to be gained on the way.

THE YOUNG HEROES

1. This defender won All-Ireland medals at senior and under-21 last September. Who is he?

2. Another All-Ireland medalist of 1976, this time at minor, he has since made his mark as an accurate finisher in competitive senior inter-county play. Again,

who is this young man?

3. I have already mentioned Kevin Moran. But can you say what age the youthful Dublin centre half back is?

4. Sean Walsh, whose appearances as a substitute last year proved such an exciting feature of the senior football championship scene, is now a regular with the Kerry senior team. What is his home club?

5. Vincent Mullins (Tipperary) and Padraic Coyne (Galway) have something in common as far as achievements last year are concerned, other than the fact that they won All-Ireland minor medals. Can you say what the common denominator is?

6. One of this quartet, Vincent Henry (Offaly), Ger Mulcahy (Cork), John McElligott (Kerry) or Paul Donnelly (Tyrone) hit the highest score in a provincial minor football final last year. Your selection? And help yourself to a four-point bonus if you also give the scoreline correctly.

7. This one should not prove too difficult, especially if you read last month's GAEILIC SPORT. Simply name the club of our February colour cut-out personality, Gerry McElhinney (Derry).

8. Somewhat more difficult this time. This non-Cork man was in goal in the first All-Ireland championship game at Pairc Ui Chaoimh last July, and later

played in the first All-Ireland senior match at the same venue. Six extra marks for your score total if you get this one correct.

9. Denis Moran, who played in the No. 10 jersey for Kerry in the Sam Maguire Cup game with Dublin was at centre half back in the All-Ireland under-21 final win over Kildare. True or false?

10. Can you list the clubs of the following: Joe Hogan, who captained Tipperary to the All-Ireland minor hurling title win, Tom Cashman, centre half back in Cork's All-Ireland under-21 hurling championship winning XV, and Kerry goalkeeper Charlie Nelligan?

The ten bonus marks mean that this Section has a total of 50 points on offer. YOUR SCORE.

Now a complete change of subject. Here is a short five-question exercise with the emphasis on:

TITLE DEFENCES

1. What year did a county last make a successful defence of the National Football League title?

2. Derry are in line this year for their first hat-trick of Ulster senior football championships. Can you name the county that last won three Northern senior crowns in a row, and also the years of that achievement?

● TO PAGE 41

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● FROM PAGE 39

3. Have Kilkenny ever won the National Hurling League title two years on the trot?



★
4. The two hurlers pictured above were in the Munster teams that won the 1969 and 1970 Railway Cup hurling titles. Who are they?

5. Two men captained Galway in their historic run of three All-Ireland senior football championships in a row in the 'Sixties (the only such treble by a Connacht team). Name the players in question.

Each of these questions is worth five points. Total possible: 25. YOUR SCORE

Finally, as this is the month

of the Railway Cup finals, let's end with a sharp-shooting feature on these games.

RAILWAY CUP TREBLE

1. Jimmy Barry-Murphy put up one of the best ever goal scoring barrages in a football final when he won his first medal in 1975. Did the Cork man score six goals, four or three in the win over Ulster?

2. One of the best scoring feats

in the football series was achieved by John Timmons (Dublin) in a Leinster win over Munster in a 1962 semi-final at Tullamore. He hit 0-15, 1-12, or 1-10. Your selection?

3. Who was in goal for Munster in last year's hurling final win over Leinster?

Again five points for each question, and a total of 15 in all. YOUR SCORE

THE ANSWERS

(Printed in reverse to avoid distraction)

60 Good.
Excellent; 70-80 Very Good; 50-

Total Marks Possible: 90. 80-90

RATING

Shimmers (Tipperary).

1. Four goals; 2. 1-10; 3. Seamus

RAILWAY CUP TREBLE

1966).

(1964), Enda Colleran (1965 and

thy (Cork); 5. John Donnellan

(Tipperary) and Gerald McCar-

1961; 3. No; 4. Noel O'Dwyer

row; 2. Down, in 1959, 1960 and

League for the fourth year in a

1. 1974 when Kerry won the

TITLE DEFENCES

ie Nelligan (Desmonds).

Tom Cushman (Blackrock), Char-

9. True; 10. Joe Hogan (Roscrea),

hurling semi-final with Wexford;

team in the drawn All-Ireland

guarded the net for the senior

final to Cork in July, and also

lost the under-21 hurling semi-

in goal in the Galway team that

agher; 8. Frank Larkin, who was

scored 3-3; 7. St. Mary's, Ban-

goalkeeper; 6. Paul Donnelly (he

ills; 5. Each won his medal as a

be 21 in April; 4. Kerin's O'Rah-

McMannus (Galway); 3. He will

1. John Crowley (Cork); 2. Gay

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Too many cooks could spoil the broth . . .

By Jay Drennan

NOTHING has been so indicative of the changed emphasis in the G.A.A. in post-Commission times than the number of major Committees which sit at national levels and deliberate the issues which are of greatest importance in the Association. At times one inclines to wonder if issues have not to be thought up in order to provide fodder for the great Committee wheels to break.

The Commission, of course, was right in its acceptance of the fact that the G.A.A. had become something more complex and more difficult to manage with the passing years and its growth in size and ramifications. It was also conscious that the same passage of time had created an environment in which it became quite a complex and hectic business to organise an ordinarily sized business or Association, never mind the massive centipede that the G.A.A. had become.

So they concluded that here

was an organisation which could only be tackled in the same way as the most successful big-business enterprises are tackled — allowing for what obvious differences there are, of course. So we have Managing Directors, Directors with responsibility for production, sales, research and development, etc., meetings of the Board, and an annual shareholders meeting. And it is all very fine and makes a nice logical flow-chart, but like many a similarly structured enterprise, it can mean a growing sense of disaffection among the ordinary

working men who labour in the field and on whose sweat the whole thing is built.

That is the big question mark which stands always against the Commission structure and will always have to be studied and monitored for danger signs. The G.A.A. has been from its beginning and by its very nature a movement of the people — indeed, one of the few areas in which people had a real say in a manner which they strictly guarded knowing it gave them a part to play that could be as significant as they wished to make it at any level which they chose. It was their Association, their games, their personal effort made it what it was at local level; the few who wished could move to further areas of influence, but those who remained could still make very sure that they kept a finger on the pulse right to the top.

Often the protective feelings of the hundreds of thousands manifested itself in the “us” and “them” expression — an indication of a measure of dissatisfaction at some credibility gap between the top officials and the ordinary members. The greatest danger with the heavy committee structure and increasing centralisation not only of decision-making but of the generation of ideas on which decisions are made, is that it may institutionalise and make permanent a gulf (not just a gap) of credibility.

The consequences would be catastrophic, for any loss of enthusiasm and drive in the individuals who go to make up the Association would be a betrayal of the very reason for its existence.

Naturally, such a thing could not be farther from the intentions of those who sit on committees at National level, but it is their constant temptation to become isolated in the ivory-towers which such committees provide for those willing to see them as such. It is their temptation

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that they are placed in a position in which they may look from a lofty viewpoint which they call perspective, but which is, in fact, detachment, on the broad field of the Association before them and, settling themselves comfortably in their seats, begin to play chess with the pieces. If you have ever seen fathers spend most of their Christmas Day playing with their sons' toy soldiers you will realise how real that temptation can be.

But the toy soldiers do not mind having their positions plotted for them and their ranks drawn up tidily and to a mathematician's delight. Hurlers and footballers and their officials and supporters are no toy soldiers or chess men; they are not alone flesh and blood, but extremely headstrong specimens of the human race — concerned, as they are, for the institution which they feel most proprietorially their's.

Perhaps we are over-reacting, but the thought of a Committee for the improvement of the standards and quality of hurling and football has really taken the biscuit. This no doubt is to be brought about by the consideration of what might be done in regard to the rules to bring about such an enhanced condition of things. And, of course, the plotting of new or better competitions that might bring it about.

But, it is probably a sign of the times we live in and a fair indication of the way in which progress has added our brains that we should even think of having a committee which will have as one of its main guidelines the improvement of the standard and quality of play in hurling and football. It brings things to an ultimate nonsense, in my opinion.

So, the cattle have broken into the wheat-field and have settled down to "guzzle" the nice new crop. So you call a committee meeting and after much discussion between yourself, the wife, the youngsters and Grandad, by majority vote you decide the way in which the new fencing should be erected so that they will be kept out in future. And nobody bothers to drive the cattle out of the wheat.

There is no connection whatever between a group of people sitting on the seats of comfortable chairs making interesting observations, points of order and amendments and improving standards of football and hurling. That is done the way Dublin did it; or the way Clare and Galway did it or the way the majority of counties have **NOT** done it. By work, sweat and practice, lubricated with enthusiasm. It is nothing but a symptom of sickness in the games and the players and officials and coaches of the games when the only thing that strikes their attention in regard to improving the games is to

change the rules.

The bad tradesman finds fault with his tools.

Not that I would be against changing rules, in principle. But I am totally against the present running for cover by every second half-baked performer who bleats about changes that should be made in the rules when he wouldn't know from Adam whether they should be changed or not since he never tried the old ones . . . or, perhaps, never read them.

It is, I think, not unconnected with this whole malaise that Co. Secretaries over a large range of territory referred in their reports to their Conventions that the degree of loyalty given to the Association and its games has vastly deteriorated — with players taking part in every other sport they feel like on week-days and especially Saturday, and then "honouring" their G.A.A. club or county with the fag-end of a wearing schedule and an enthusiasm that has trickled down to nothing.

How about a Committee to fix that . . . and the rest will follow without committees. Or, if one may be so bold as to suggest so terrible a thing, perhaps the rule that does exist demanding first loyalty would be imposed instead of sitting like a dried flower in the rule-book. But, no doubt, that is one of the rules which are conceived of as needing change.

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These are just a selection of the more important Croke Park games from which you can choose in 1977.

Railway Cup Football Final, 17th March.

Railway Cup Hurling Final, 17th March.

Leinster Hurling Finals, 24th July.

Leinster Football Finals, 31st July.

All-Ireland Football Semi-

finals, 14th and 21st August.

All-Ireland Hurling Finals, 4th September.

All-Ireland Football Finals, 25th September.

Handball: All-Ireland Semi-finals, 14th and 21st August.

Handball: All-Ireland Finals, 3rd and 24th September.

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North West



ment including the provision of a new Clubhouse with changing rooms and showers.

Football clubs from many parts of the country have already enjoyed the fun and facilities at Bundoran including dancing, the indoor heated swimming pool and an 18-hole championship golf course.

As a special offer to visiting clubs, groups can have a weekend at Bundoran Hotel (dinner Friday to breakfast on Sunday) for £15 fully inclusive at any time of the year other than in July and August. This unbeatable offer does not include a crack at St. Joseph's — that and any other aspects of your visit can be arranged through the Regional Tourism Office, Stephen Street, Sligo. (Tel. 071/3107).

TOP WATCH

OMEGA, the famous Swiss watch people, asked GAELIC SPORT to pop along to look at a new item of merchandise recently which they were quite excited about. It turned out to be their newly launched quartz watches for men and many people are going to be very interested in these. Cheap quartz watches have been getting rather a bad image recently as people have complained about batteries being difficult to replace or fit, and a general lack of after-sales service. But when a name like Omega moves into the field, the name of the game is changed indeed.

All the prestige and expertise

of the Omega name backs these watches which at the moment are available in two versions, each guaranteed to keep accurate time, give or take five seconds a month. Sounds a bit incredible, doesn't it? Indeed Mr. Pyke of the Omega office here said that even three years ago if one had claimed for a watch, as he does for these, that it would lose or gain no more than one second per week, watchmakers around the world would have laughed themselves silly. Yet now Omega have made it happen.

The cases are slim and well designed and a battery for one of these Omega watches costs only £1 and will give a year's running time.

● FROM PAGE 33

ture. The 'Woodcut' design (which comes in three colourways) has an elegant unobtrusiveness and yet is intrinsically interesting. It would be easy to live with on any floor.

Youghal are ready, able and willing to give advice to any potential purchaser of their carpets. They stand over their product and are proud of it. They approve of people getting a bargain — and advise customers to shop around by all means before buying, so as to get the best price. But the thing to remember is to buy the right kind of carpet, not to be tempted by cheapness into getting an item that can be nothing but unsatisfactory.

JUNIOR DESK: DEVISED AND EDITED BY JACK MAHON



WE have such a big MAILBAG and G.A.A. Yearbooks to review that I have no space to myself. I've had to hold the Pat Spillane interview 'till next month. Anyhow you've been reading enough of me in the Sunday Independent!

CUT OUT

Our cut-out this month is Mick Ryan of Offaly. I remember him as a really great college star with St. Mel's College, Longford one of the greatest football nurseries of them all. He developed into a great senior star and became one of the best corner backs in his time, now a very fine full back. We hope he continues to star for Offaly.

JUNIOR DESK AWARDS 1976

A very sincere thank you to all Junior Desk fans for sending on votes in the above competition. Paddy Downey has been the No. 1 Journalist every year so far. This is a marvellous achievement and a great credit to the man himself who has remained as enthusiastic about G.A.A. affairs as he was when first I met him as Editor of the Gaelic Sportsman followed by the Gaelic Weekly and Gaelic Echo.

Paddy, one of Ireland's most experienced and respected journalists, was afterwards Assistant Sports Editor of the Sunday Review and Sports Editor of the Evening Mail. Now Gaelic Games Correspondent and Assistant Sports Editor of The Irish Times he edited Our Games Annual for several years.

JUNIOR DESK AWARDS 1976

TOP FOOTBALLER

Brian Mullins (Dublin). No. 2 — Kevin Moran. (Dublin).

TOP HURLER

Tony Doran (Wexford). No. 2 — Pat Moylan (Cork).

TOP CAMOGIE STAR

Helena O'Neill (Kilkenny). No. 2 — Angela Downey (Kilkenny).

TOP HANDBALLER

Pat Kirby (Clare). No. 2 — P. O'Reilly (Kilkenny).

TOP JOURNALIST

Paddy Downey (The Irish Times). No. 2 — Padraic Puirseal (Irish Press).

TOP REFEREE

Tie: John Moloney (Tipperary). Paddy Collins (Westmeath).

TOP OFFICIAL

Con Murphy (Cork). No. 2 — Kevin Heffernan (Dublin).

SCORE OF THE YEAR

Jimmy Keaveney (Dublin). (Goal v. Galway). No. 2 — Tony Doran (Wexford). Pat Moylan (Cork).

Most popular choice of all, Pat Kirby. No. 2 — Paddy Downey.

REVIEWS

Many Junior Desk readers are delighted with our reviews of G.A.A. Yearbooks, Club Annuals and assorted books on G.A.A. themes. Since the last issue I have received the following. Details regarding price and address of publisher at end of each review.

MEATH YEARBOOK, 1977

Noel Coogan, the Editor once again of the Meath G.A.A. Yearbook, is obviously a very committed G.A.A. man. In his Editorial he deplores the great lack in Meath of a weekly paper which gives proper coverage to the G.A.A. scene in the county. He is talking about the Meath Chronicle and bemoans the fact that his county lacks the great service supplied by such tremendously G.A.A. orientated provincials as the Anglo Celt, the Westmeath Examiner and The Kerryman (not all Kerry G.A.A. men

agree on this). The Drogheda Independent is praised for its G.A.A. news presentation but Noel suggests that this paper should use more relevant photographs. It's a good Annual embracing all of Meath's G.A.A. activities in 1976. Every G.A.A. fan will be interested in Fr. Paddy Tully's Six Greatest Meath Footballers (Wouldn't this be a good idea for the Meath Chronicle for a popularity poll?). Peter McDermott has a fine article on Father McManus, obviously one of the greatest footballers of all-time, as Paddy Moclair of Mayo will verify.

(Price 75p does not include postage from Mr. Noel Coogan, 66 Flower Hill, Navan, Co. Meath).

KERRY G.A.A. YEARBOOK 1977

This is the second edition of the Kerry Yearbook and Michael Lyne the editor and publisher deserves great credit for industry and initiative. For believe me it's difficult to get articles out of people. You'll get plenty of promises but . . . Anyhow this is far better than last year's effort. It still has a few flaws like the lack of an index of articles and contributors at the start or on the back page, no price on cover or elsewhere, quite a number of printing errors which suggests bad proofing or hurry for a deadline. But its contents are superb and more than any yearbook I've read (and I've read them all almost), this one fulfils what a yearbook should be doing i.e. reviewing all G.A.A. affairs of the county, preserving history and looking to the future, as well as keeping apace of the national scene. Michael Lyne himself has

● OVERLEAF

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● FROM OVERLEAF

written some fine articles but the real highlight for me is Cathal O'Leary's tremendous article on what it takes to win an All-Ireland.

Anyone who reads this Annual cannot but be impressed by Micheál Ó Ruairc's tales of the Past, his easy style, his great grasp of Kerry G.A.A. history and his humour. In an article in the Yearbook I suggested a Kerry G.A.A. History. Michael Lyne and Micheál Ó Ruairc have made a beginning and P.F.'s (the late Padhraic Ó Foghlú of Tralee and **The Kerryman**) great work will be a great help.

(Price 75p (including postage) from **Mr. Lyne, B.A., Valentia, Co. Kerry.**)

CLARE YEARBOOK — 1977

This is Clare's first official yearbook — they had one in hurling and in football in separate years before — and it is big, bulky and colourful. The colour cover is outstanding. It is printed on quality paper and includes details of all G.A.A. activities in the county in 1976. It has a Quiz, a 2-page centrepiece giving information of clubs in the county (a great reference for press and clubs), a Co. title role of honour list in all grades (covering 2 pages), an article on Clare's H. club in New York among many other fine features. There are some misprints and a sameness about the print and the layout and the yearbook lacks an index of articles. Still it is great value and a credit to editor Seamus Ó Sullivan.

(Price 75p does not include postage from **Séamus O'Sullivan S.P.S., Shannon, Co. Clare.**)

MAILBAG

Norman Rochford, The Square, Gort, Co. Galway wants to know where he can get a few good G.A.A. books.

● *The reviews earlier will help Norman. (J.M.)*

Tommy Maher, Age 15, Main Street, Urlingford, Co. Kilkenny thinks the Railway Cup football and hurling finals should be changed to a different date and that they should be run on a league basis. He wants Cut-Outs of Handballers.

● *How about Pat Kirby for instance? (J.M.)*

Noel Maher, same address, nominates his All-Ireland stars of 1976 as Ray Cummins, Tony Doran, Paddy Cullen and Ger Power.

Seamus Ryan, Ballyvadd, Kilmacthomas, Co. Waterford is looking for the **Our Games** of 1966 and 1967 and will pay for them.

● *Any reader with a spare copy please get in touch with Seamus. (J.M.)*

Brendan Ryan, 1773 Páirc Muire, Newbridge, Co. Kildare thinks GAELIC SPORT is the best magazine in the business but finds it hard to get every month.

● *GAELIC SPORT can be obtained through O'Connor's, Main St., Newbridge. (J.M.)*

Gerald Traynor, 893 Francis Street, Edenderry, Co. Offaly thinks the handpass is ruining Gaelic football.

● *The new Rules Committee will look into it. (J.M.)*

Dermot Woulfe, 11 Foxfield Avenue, Raheny, Dublin 5 (Age 10) goes regularly to G.A.A. games and has great faith in Limerick (H) and Dublin (F).

Pat Harrington, Curraclough, Lissarda, Co. Cork has many favourite stars among whom is Michael Martin of Leitrim.

● *It is nice to see Leitrim footballers on the road back. (J.M.)*

Breda Harrington, same address, is 8 years old and wants a Cut-Out of Ray Cummins.

Mary, another member of the Harrington Clan, has Billy Morgan and Sean Murphy as favourites.

Patrick Caffrey, Age 12, Kiltomey, Lixnaw, Co. Kerry thinks Junior Desk is great. He is in the Finuge U-14 team and his trainer is Jim Deenihan. Patrick wants the height and weight of Brian

Mullins.

● *Brian is a large man! Height 6 ft. 4 ins., Weight 14st. 7 lbs. and as a bonus he was born 27.9.1954. (J.M.)*

Kevin Barry, Whitechurch, Co. Cork tells me his Dad composes ballads and encloses one on the 1959 final between Galway and Kerry. I include the last 8 lines of the poem where I'm mentioned myself!

"Their gallant opponents all sportsmen

Purcell, Mahon, Kissane and the rest

You battled with honest endeavour

To bring the Sam Maguire trophy west.

Whenever true Gaels revive memories

And recall Kerry teams down the line

Upsides with the valiant and bravest

Place the men of Nineteen-fifty-nine."

Dermot McCarthy, Carbery, 20 Fairfield Road, Bath, England BA1 6JG who is one of our most avid readers and loyal correspondents is intensely interested in programme collecting and makes the following points for Junior Desk readers.

"In recent years programme collecting has become a major hobby among G.A.A. fans at home and abroad. There is now a large number of enthusiastic collectors. Some hold interesting and worthwhile collections.

A keen collector will always be on the look-out for programmes. People with programmes for which they have no further need can find a ready market at a reasonable and fair price.

Then, of course, there is the person who buys a programme on the occasion of a big game, such as county or provincial finals, and not being a collector discards it. Have you ever considered passing it on to someone who would be glad to have it? You would have the satisfaction of knowing your programme would become part of a cherished col-

lection of a keen and loyal supporter of a particular team.

A keen collector will not be interested in marked programmes. So it is important to keep them in mint condition. A record of team lists, substitutions, scores, etc., can be kept by inserting a newspaper cut-out in the programme.

Finally, there is the question of pirate programmes. Games such as the almost inevitable annual confrontation between Cork and Kerry in the Munster finals provide publishers of pirate programmes an opportunity to sell their shoddy goods. Supporters can put these people out of business by making sure they are purchasing the official match programme before they hand over their money."

● *Thanks Dermot. (J.M.)*

S. Murphy, Shamrock Bridge, Ballydaly Lr., Rathmore, Co. Kerry, thinks GAELIC SPORT should have a spot the ball competition every month.

G.A.A. Fan (name and address enclosed): "Sometimes in your Junior Desk you might encourage your readers to keep newspapers of Gaelic Games and put them in scrapbooks. I have kept newspapers in scrapbooks, mostly of Kilkenny hurling in fair detail since 1956 and I still get hours of enjoyment from them, especially during the long winter nights.

I entered the recent Lucozade G.A.A. Competition for the seven year All-Ireland tickets — I did not see the results printed anywhere — maybe you might print them if you have them. I am sure many readers would like to know where these tickets went."

● *I don't know any details of Lucozade Competition results. Yes, I'm all for scrapbooks and have over 80 myself. (J.M.)*

Gearóid Mac Cába (Tyrone referee) has sent on some photos of the referees' get together in Galway last September. Mickey Loftus of Mayo and Brendan Hayden of Carlow were among many famous referees present.

Thomas Lydon, Loughwell, Moycullen, Co. Galway wants Michael

O'Hehir's tapes of the All-Ireland finals of 1964, '65 and '66.

● *Can any reader help? (J.M.)*

Marie Dunk, 15 Loreto Crescent, Rathfarnham, Dublin 14 is a Dublin fan and her favourites are Tony Hanahoe, Kevin Moran, Brian Mullins, Paddy Cullen and Jimmy Keaveney. Marie wants a Cut-Out of Tony Hanahoe and Brian Mullins. Also copies of 1974, '75 and '76 All-Ireland football programmes.

● *Can any reader help Marie? (J.M.)*

Patrick Byrne, Spynans, Kiltegan, Co. Wicklow writes to criticise the running of the G.A.A.'s Scór na nÓg competition in Co. Wicklow with particular reference to the disqualification of Rathdangan in the group singing section because there had to be at least three in a group.

● *Perhaps the organisers of Scór na n-Og in Wicklow will answer Patrick. (J.M.)*

Michael Kirby, Convent Street, Listowel, Co. Kerry cannot agree with Mary Cullinane of Killarney. In his opinion Jimmy Barry-Murphy is a much better footballer than hurler. Michael thinks it is rubbish for a player to be banned from an All-Star football team because he is sent off in a hurling game. Regarding Kerry he wants Mike Sheehy at full-forward, Paud Lynch at full back, John O'Keefe at midfield and Sean Walsh in the half-forward line. Michael wants a Cut-Out of Eddie Webster "a great back" and is thrilled to see a Kerryman on the Munster hurling team. He is glad that Galway and Dublin forsook all the ugliness of the All-Ireland semi-final in a great N.F.L. match recently.

● *Michael you win a prize of a Kerry scarf with this letter. (J.M.)*

Paul Gallagher, 24 Main Ave., Derrybeg Park, Newry, Co. Down is full of praise for Willie Walsh and thinks Liam Austin will be a great player.

● *Nice to see Down on the way back. (J.M.)*

Denis McSweeney, Golden, Cashel, Co. Tipperary thinks Tim

Kennelly is the most under-rated footballer in the country. He regards John O'Keefe and Jim Keogh the best full backs in the country in football and hurling respectively.

Anne Walsh, 6 St. Stephen's Park, Castleisland, Co. Kerry would like a Cut-Out of Eamonn Cregan or Paudie Fitzmaurice. Anne is 17 and would like a boy pen-pal from Limerick or Galway.

● *Come on lads. (J.M.)*

Gerard Lyons, Creagh, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway would like a colour photo of a county team each month. Current Galway footballer Tomar Barrett trains Gerard at school. Gerard thinks Gay McManus is brilliant.

Paul Maher, Clashagad, Dunkerrin, Birr, Co. Offaly tells us about the great night the Moneygall U-12 team had in the Legion Hall when they got their North Tipperary and Co. final plaques. He drank five bottles of lemonade and had plenty of sweets as well as a superb dinner. Many of the senior players and plenty of guests were present. He was a very proud lad.

● *His letter wins a Tipperary G.A.A. scarf. (J.M.)*

Gerry Pender, Ballymorris Upper, Aughrim, Arklow, Co. Wicklow thinks I should interview John Connolly or P. J. Molloy or Sean Silke for Junior Desk.

Donal Bonner, Derryhenny, Doochary, Lifford, Co. Donegal was at the match between Donegal and Cavan and loved it. Donegal's star was Paul McGettigan. He wants a Cut-Out of Seamus Bonner or Seamie Granaghan.

● *Donal wins a Donegal bob-cap. (J.M.)*

Jimmy Moroney, (15¹/₂), 9 Lr. Market Street, Ennis Co. Clare wins a Clare Bob-cap for the following letter:

"The colour pics. which appear in GAELIC SPORT are sometimes kinda weird for example the Dublin and Kerry teams which appeared on a recent issue. To me it looked like a negative that had

● **OVERLEAF**

● FROM OVERLEAF

been coloured in. Not that I am an expert on colour photography or anything like that.

But I must admit the colour pic of T. Doran in the November issue was excellent. Before I leave I would like to ask you one question if I may — do you ever remember little picture cards being published (similar to those soccer cards sold in chewing gum packets)? The ones I am referring to depicted Gaelic footballers showing the skills of the game. These cards I think were coloured green on the back. I would be grateful if you could tell me who published these cards or if they are available at all now. I think they were published between five to seven years ago."

● *Perhaps some reader may be able to help with the information on the cards. I think Devlin's Sweet cigarettes were the people concerned. Bad weather can reduce the quality of photographs occasionally.* (J.M.)

Joseph McElligott, Glenoe, Listowel, Co. Kerry will swop the Kerry '69 G.A.A. Yearbook for the 1976 Dublin G.A.A. Yearbook. His favourites are Jimmy Deenihan (F) and Tony Doran and Pat Moriarty (H).

Martin Hayes, Belyeve, Cobh, Co. Cork thinks Derry, Cork, Dublin, and Galway will come out of their provinces in football in 1977, Cork or Galway winning it out. His favourites are Liam Sammon, Liam O'Neill and Billy Field.

Sean Furlong, Kilmacleague,

Dunmore East, Co. Waterford has pasted another star on his bedroom wall. He now has seven G.A.A. stars on the wall. They are N. Skehan, L. O'Brien, J. B. Murphy, D. Coughlan, M. Quigley, J. O'Keefe and G. Power. His favourite team is Offaly and he has spent some very good holidays in Offaly with Martin Furlong. Martin took him to some very good matches. "Paddy Fenning is a wonderful footballer and I would like him on my wall too."

● *For this grand letter Sean, who is 11 years old, gets an Offaly bob-cap.* (J.M.)

Michael McGrath, Ox Park, Cloughjordan, Co. Tipperary wonders why I hadn't a two-part quiz in the Our Games. Michael suggests an opinion poll in the newspapers in the selection of the All-Stars and feels more emphasis should be placed on the League rather than the Championship.

● *Can't agree with the latter. The championship is the great test.* (J.M.)

Eddie Flynn, Fanningstown, Piltown, Co. Kilkenny loves Junior Desk and would like more G.A.A. on T.V. He would like a T-shirt with a hurler on it. His brother John would like a Cut-Out of Eddie Keher.

● *Welcome to Junior Desk Eddie.* (J.M.)

Harry Kavanagh, Kish Cottage, Arklow, Co. Wicklow has a great gradh for Colm Doran, brilliant in any position in the half back line. Colm trains young boys in the skills of hurling.

● *Harry you win a Wexford pennant.* (J.M.)

J. J. Ryan, Top Cross, Lisgoold, Leamlara, Co. Cork tells us about a song written about a football game between Midleton and Lisgoold in 1889. J. J. had a grand-uncle playing for Lisgoold named Nobly Con Ryan.

● *Now that's a bit of history and wins a Cork bob-cap. The score by the way was Lisgoold 1-0, Midleton 0-1.* (J.M.)

Tommy Flaherty, 40, Lower Salthill, Galway thinks R.T.E. is improving in their coverage of the G.A.A. "but their editing of games is terrible." Tommy feels all the goals should be shown in the highlights of a game. He also thinks the line outs and substitutes of the two teams and the name of the referee should be given, the throw in at the start of each half and the ends of each half. He would like an opinion from the commentator at the end of the game. Tommy liked my short story in the Our Games and hopes Ulster and Connacht do well in the Railway Cup football competition.

● *For such a fine letter you win a Galway scarf.* (J.M.)

That's the Mailbag for this month. Muiris Uasal de Prionnbhiol (G.A.A. Shop) is sponsoring another Junior Desk competition next month. So be sure to get a copy and in the meantime write about anything to:—

**Junior Desk,
Gaelic Sport,
80 Upper Drumcondra Road,
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MICK RYAN **(Offaly)**

Age: 30
Height: 5 ft. 11 ins.
Weight: 13 st.
Club: Doon
**Position: Centre
Half Back**
**Senior Inter-
County Debut:
1964.**

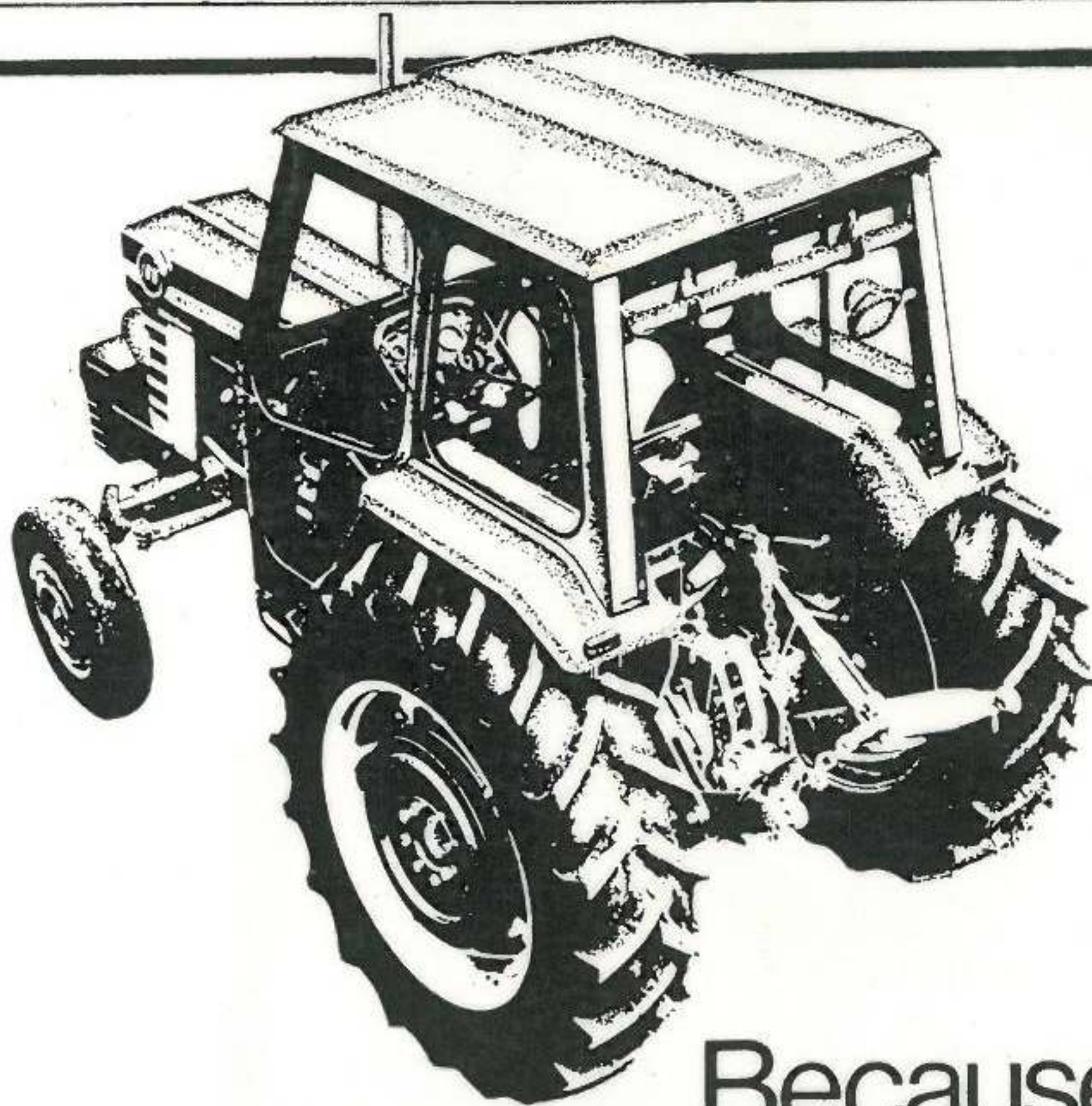
CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

Mick, who has played in most defensive positions, is a link with Offaly's golden era of 1971 and 1972 when they won the Sam Maguire Cup two years in succession.

He also collected two All-Ireland Colleges' senior football medals in succession with St. Mel's Longford, (1962 and 1963) and helped Offaly to their only national under-18 championship win in 1964. A week after that minor triumph he was called up to the Offaly senior team against Laois at Tullamore in the National League.

Mick also won Carrolls All Stars awards in 1972 and 1973, and he was in the team that last brought the Railway Cup to Leinster in 1974.

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