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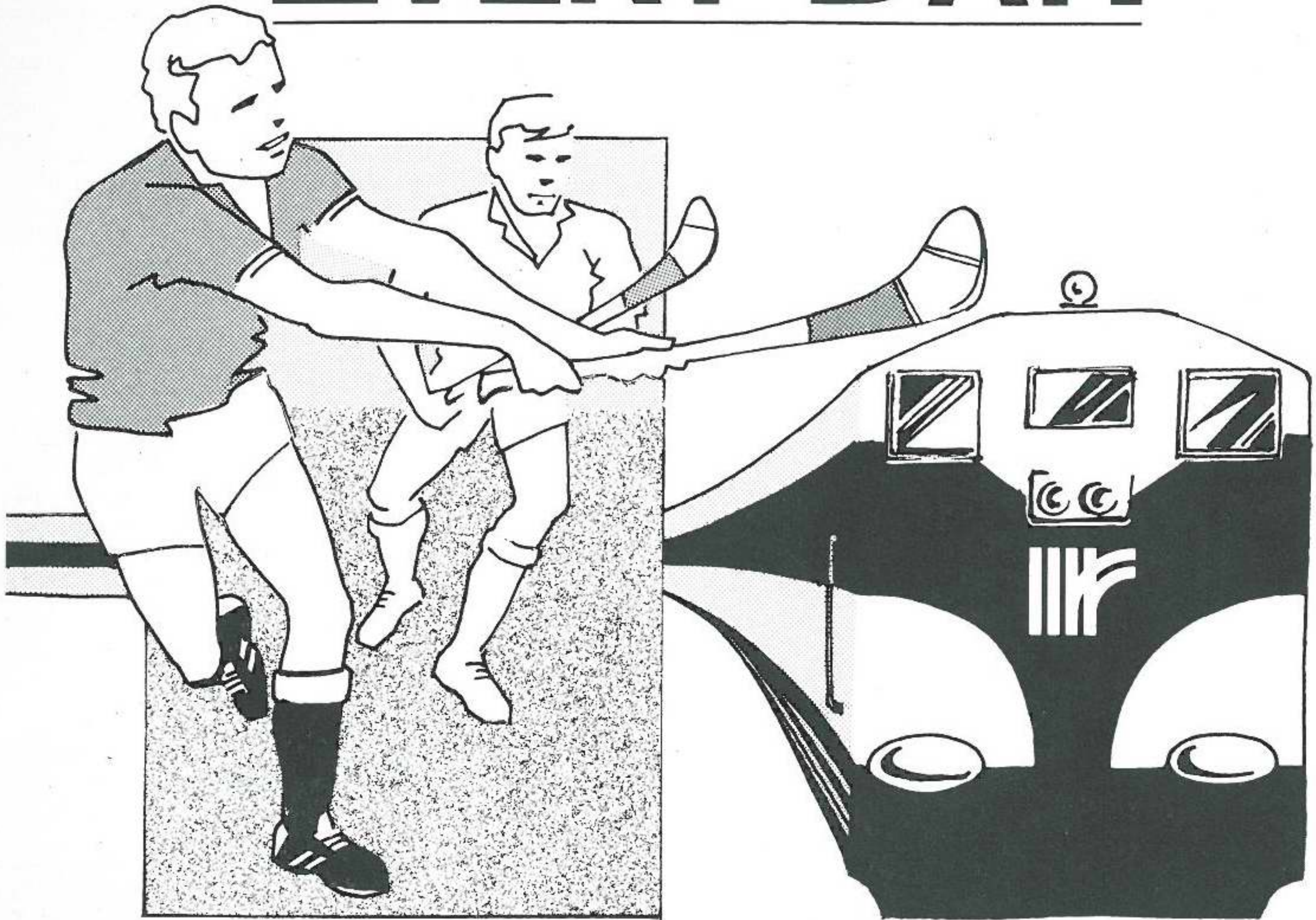
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ALL-IRELAND FINAL, 1987

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TIOBRAID ÁRANN v UÍBH FHAILÍ

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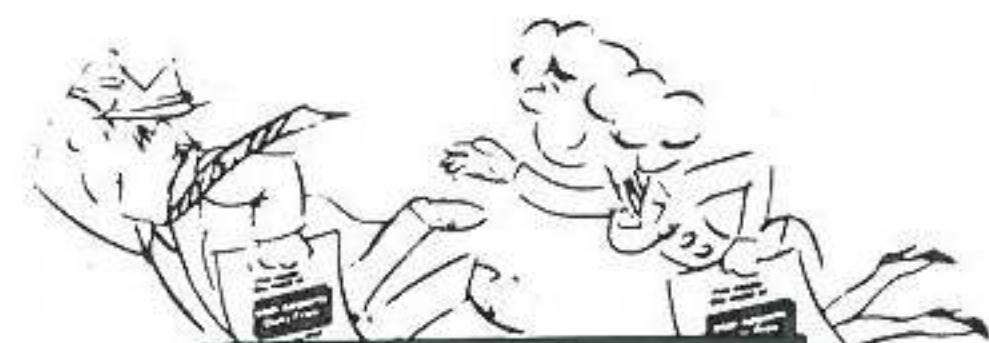


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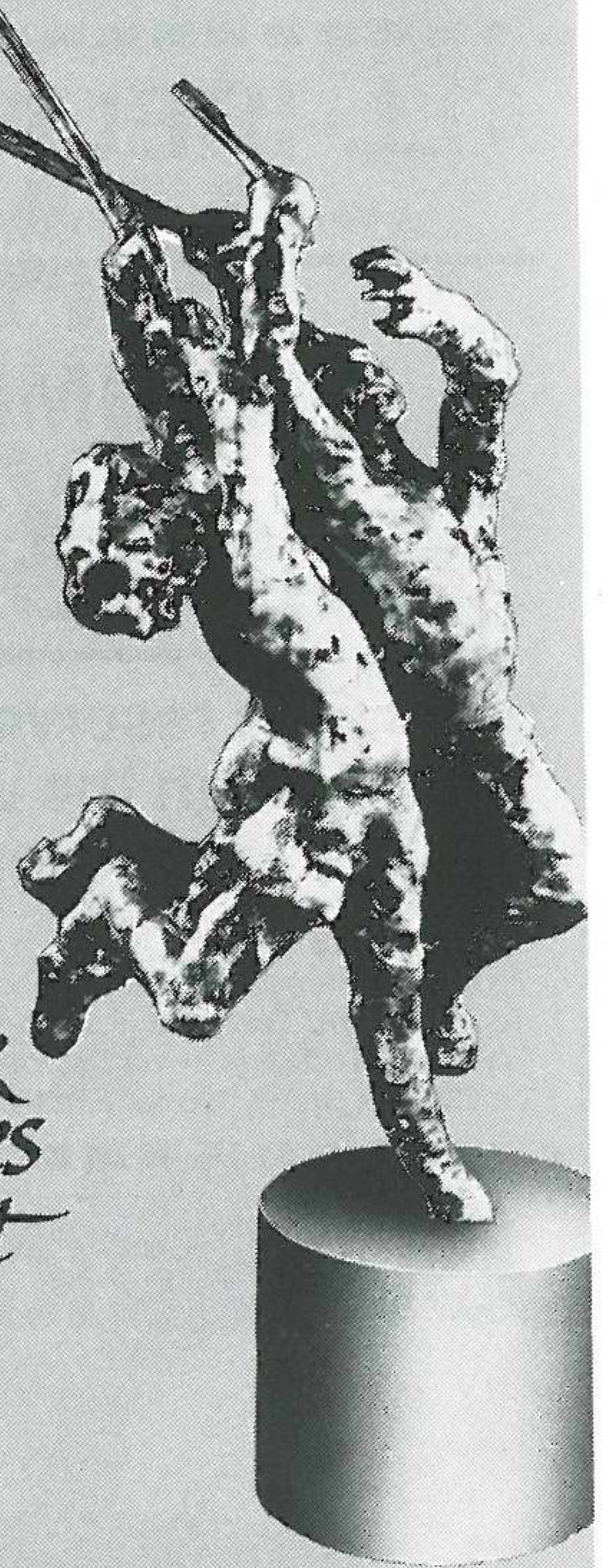
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COVER PHOTO: Our front cover features All-Ireland Hurling Finalists, Galway and Kilkenny.

GALWAY, 1987 League Champions. Back row (l to r): Steve Mahon, Michael Coleman, Tony Keady, Conor Hayes, Pierce Pigott, Anthony Cunningham, Brendan Lynskey and Martin Naughton. Front row (l to r): Joe Cooney, Michael McGrath, Sylvie Linnane, Peter Murphy, Tony Kilkenny, Eanna Ryan and Ollie Kilkenny.

KILKENNY, Leinster Champions. Back row (l to r): Joe Hennessy, Christy Heffernan, Lester Ryan, Richie Power, Sean Fennelly, John Henderson, Liam Fennelly. Front row: (l to r) Ger Fennelly, Kevin Fennelly, Harry Ryan, Paddy Prendergast, Ger Henderson, Liam McCarthy, Liam Walsh and Pat Walsh.

GAELIC SPORT

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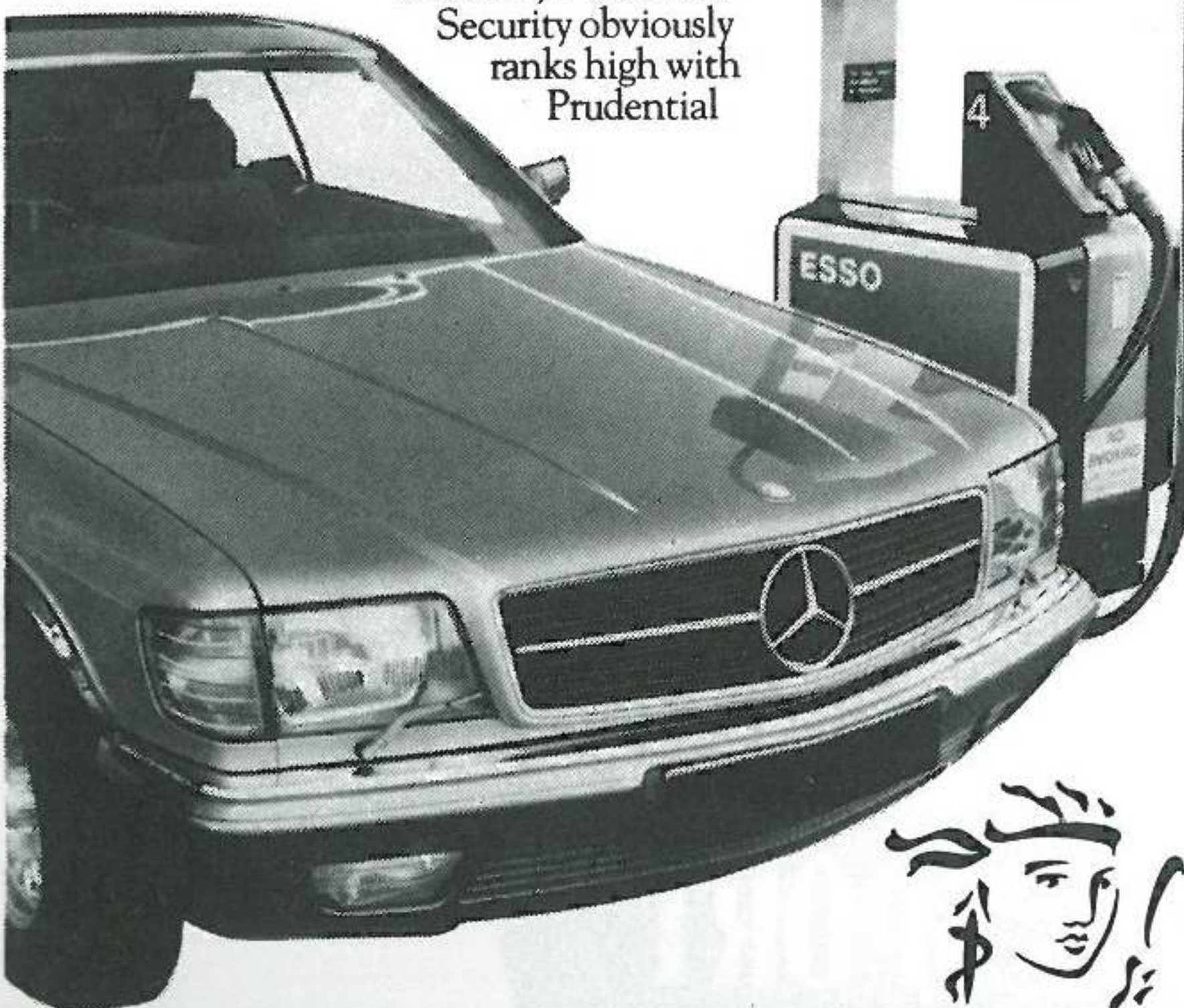
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GREAT FINAL IN PROSPECT

A reward for dedication and perseverance by Galway, and for a fighting come-back by Kilkenny. That, in brief, is a summary of the background to the meeting of these counties for the All-Ireland senior hurling championship of 1987.

Galway perseverance? It would have been understandable had they faded from the scene for a time after their All-Ireland final loss last September. Defeat in a final is shattering at any time, but all the more in Galway's case, as not only did they start favourite, but they took the runners-up role for the second year in succession.

Fair play to the men of the West, however. Not for them any wallowing in self-pity. Instead, they quickly shook off the set-back, started to pick up the pieces, and did such a good job that they were rewarded with the National League title last spring—their first in a dozen seasons. An encouraging omen that for the hopes of another crack in the autumn at the McCarthy Cup!

However, while Galway spent the summer idly kicking their heels, except for challenge matches, Tipperary were getting the type of competitive match-play that so many maintain is the real key to glory.

Five games, including one over 30 minutes extra time, brought them back to the top of Munster after an absence of 16 long years. New heroes had arrived in the hurling world.

Coming up to the semi-final day there were those who argued loud and long that Tipperary's very competitive and long summer campaign would offset the Galway big-match experience. We know now, of course, that the men from the West proved their critics wrong yet again, and enhanced their status as semi-final specialists of recent times with a cracking winning performance.

The refusal to knuckle down under the heavy burden of that second successive All-Ireland final defeat has paid off to a big degree. Now, Galway have a chance to complete the job to the satisfaction of all concerned by capturing a trophy that has eluded the county since 1980.

The Kilkenny come-back? If the clouds were wintry around Galway way back on the first week of September, there were even more gloomy faces by the Noreside a month or so earlier.

Not simply because Kilkenny crashed to Galway at Thurles in the All-Ireland semi-final. But because the defeat was so completely unexpected and shattering in its execution. After all, Kilkenny beat Galway in the

1986 League final, and marched back impressively to the Leinster throne after a three year break.

The eleven points defeat at Thurles seemed to herald a long spell in the doldrums for Kilkenny. However, the hurlers and officials—as in Galway—refused to except such a position.

Now, they have a double reward for their persistence in the meantime. A return to the All-Ireland final scene after a four year break—and any All-Ireland final outing is always welcome—and the best possible chance to wipe out the memory of a defeat that still cuts deep in the Kilkenny hurling wounds to this day.

An intriguing background, then, to this renewal of rivalry by most of the men who were on opposite sides at Thurles just over a year ago in the All-Ireland semi-final.

A stark background as well in terms of All-Ireland titles. Kilkenny are in line for their 24th championship; Galway are winners of only two.

Kilkenny, winners over Galway in the two most recent finals between the counties, 1979 and 1975. One could go on and on, but we have said enough to help provide some inkling of the extra special nature of this final.

The teams are capable of providing a great final. Let's hope that the occasion will not be spoiled by excursions on the playing fields by mentors to the same degree as we saw in the Galway-Tipperary game. Hurling's big day deserves better decorum than that.

So, good luck to Galway and Kilkenny. May the better team win.

Finally, a word of encouragement to Tipperary. You scaled great heights in Munster, and time is still on your side. Take heed of the achievements of Galway and Kilkenny in putting set-backs of 1986 behind them. There is a good lesson there.

A lesson that if taken to heart, now that the initial pangs of the great disappointment of the second Sunday of August have eased somewhat can lead to greatness in the not too distant future.

Jimmy McQuaid

EDITOR

FINAL WILL BE KEEN AND CLOSE BUT G

by
Seamus
Walshe

IT is an ironic quirk of fate that Galway, a county that has ploughed such a lonely furrow in the West for so long, and can point to just a brace of All-Ireland senior hurling titles, takes the field this year in a McCarthy Cup tie as favourites for the second season in succession.

Changed times, undoubtedly. Especially when the opposition in 1986 was provided by Cork, and this year it is Kilkenny facing up to the Connacht men. Two of the strongholds of the game, counties who have developed the winning habit over the years, and as a result lead the All-Ireland title rankings.

Galway did not justify their favouritism last year, but I don't think they will be found wanting this time. In saying this I have no intention of belittling Kilkenny's chances.

No keen student of hurling — and I like to think that I am just that — would be guilty of such a blunder. Any Kilkenny team must command the height of respect in a final, and this is true of the present side.

I did not see them in their semi-final win over Antrim, but there was much to admire in the way that Kilkenny came back to beat Offaly in July and retain their provincial crown.

We saw all the traditional charac-

teristics of Kilkenny hurling in that game. Speed, classical touches, fighting heart — remember Kilkenny were six points down at the break — and all this was laced with some top class individual performances.

In particular, there was the finishing skills of the Fennellys, Ger, who shot nine points from his midfield position, and Liam, who collected his team's two goals.

We saw sterling defensive work, especially from the half backs, and good midfield and forward play. Yes, Kilkenny are ready for this big test.

But so, too, are Galway. I go further and say that they are better equipped now than they were in the finals of 1985, when they lost to Offaly, or last year.

Where they score heavily now on the past title bids is in maturity. There was a cool, polished and assured approach about their play against Tipperary that was absent in the last two finals. At no stage in the semi-final did Galway panic.

Looking at their approach overall, it seemed to me that they had the confidence of the champions they are — Ford League champions. They did lose their way a little in the second half, especially in attack, but whereas other Galway teams would have panicked, this side simply stuck coolly to the job on hand, worked intelligently for the break and when it

came snapped it up with alertness and accuracy in front of goal.

I expect Galway's defence to do a better job in containing the Kilkenny forward division than the Offaly rearguard.

Liam Fennelly, Christy Heffernan, Harry Ryan, probably Kieran Brennan, who went in as a substitute in the Leinster final, and their co-attackers need no lessons from anyone when it comes to scheming scores. They will certainly put plenty of pressure on the Western defensive barrier.

But just look what Galway have going for them in defence! There is Peter Finnerty, a hurler who has established himself as the best right half back around, and who fully justified the expense involved in bringing him home from the U.S., where he has been working, for the semi-final.

Conor Hayes is not easily out-hurled at full back, and Sylvie Linnane continues to get through an amount of good work in every match. This trio are well supported in the other positions and I can see the Kilkenny forwards finding score-opportunities at a premium.

What of the Galway attack? I did not think that Joe Cooney stamped his personality on the semi-final to the same degree as some earlier



Joe Hennessy, Kilkenny.



Peter Finnerty, Galway.



Kieran Brennan, Kilkenny.

ALWAY TO PUT ON A WINNING SHOW

games I have watched him play, but he is still a very gifted attacker.

Brendan Lynskey is a forceful full forward, who must be closely and consistently watched and Eanna Ryan proved a bright new hero for the League champions against Tipperary, finishing with 1-4.

You don't need me to single out the praises of such as the Henderson brothers, John and Ger, Paddy Prendergast and Joe Hennessy in the Kilkenny backs. They have all proven their class and ability time and again and were prominent against Offaly.

The Galway forwards showed a tremendous appetite for work against Tipperary. They moved with speed and worked well for one another. I can see them putting the Kilkenny defence under the type of pressure that the rearguard has not experienced in the championship so far.

Midfield could prove a department where Kilkenny could exercise strength. Ger Fennelly is a great asset here; a hurler who knows what is required in general play in this crucial area and who compliments his work with his expert free-taking.

Lester Ryan is also an effective unit. I thought he had a grand game against Offaly, and I can see this pair setting a strong pace for the Galway men.

But Steve Mahon and Tony Kilkenny are no mean performers either. They have tons of hurling ability, are in no way over-rawed by any opposition and I don't believe they will let the side down.

Galway's reserve talent is also strong. Peter Murphy is on hand as goalkeeping reserve — a goalkeeper with All-Ireland senior final experience and an All-Ireland under-21 medal to boot.

Noel Lane, who has scored so many crucial goals over the years for Galway, went in as a substitute and let all and sundry see that he still knows where the goals are by ending the Tipperary hopes with his team's third goal.

And, it was nice to see P.J. Molloy, probably Galway's greatest chance-sapper of all time, back in the thick of things again as another of the substitutes last time out.

Plenty to recommend Galway then. On the other hand, one must also ask the important question: Are they an All-Ireland final team? Two defeats in two successive finals after two morale-boosting and well-deserved semi-final wins raises some niggling doubts about the side's ability to deliver the goods in the top game of the year.

No such doubts exist about Kilkenny. They have won three finals in three appearances since their last

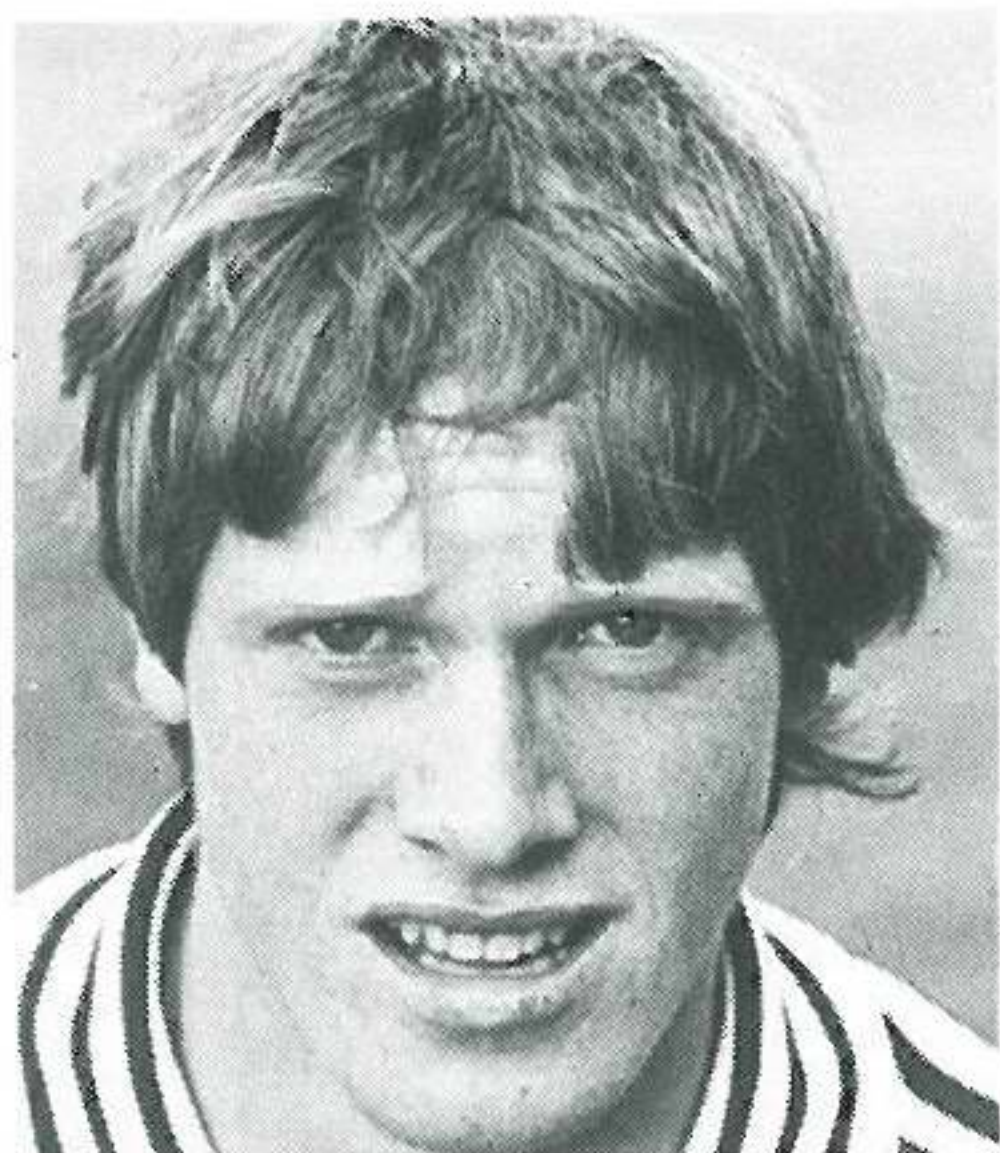
defeat at this stage by Cork in 1978. The fact that victory is almost expected from Kilkenny at this stage is bound to prove an added spur to the Noresiders and the fact that so many of the side have also enjoyed winning appearances might give them some advantage, especially in the early stages of the game.

But even if the memories of the last two final defeats haunts many in Galway just now, I believe firmly that that maturity I talked about earlier on will ensure that the crew of '87 will not be in the least unsettled come throw-in time, and from then right throughout the 70 minutes.

Don't get me wrong. It is going to take a tremendous effort by Galway to make it a case of third time lucky. Kilkenny will benefit from that game against Antrim and the added training sessions they also have had — since the win over Offaly.

But the belief, then, that Galway's backs will do a better job against the opposition than Kilkenny's and that the maturity they now bring to their play will ensure that the forwards from the West pounce on the slightest chance and turn it to good account, I side with the West.

It will be keen, close, with some good passages of hurling. But by the day's end, the memories of the recent final setbacks should be erased in Galway with a winning show.



Joe Cooney, Galway.



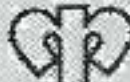
Liam Fennelly, Kilkenny.



Sylvie Linnane, Galway.

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GALWAY:

MEN FROM THE WEST'S KNOWLEDGE, GREAT EXPERIENCE AND COOL MEASURED APPROACH SHOULD ADD UP TO A WINNING FORMULA

WE have'nt won anything yet". I was startled by the comment of a man close to me colourfully bedecked in the maroon colours as we wended our ways from Croke Park after that exhilarating All-Ireland senior hurling semi-final.

I was thinking myself at the time about the Galway performance in forging out the six points win over Tipperary; trying to decide if it was the best I have seen from a Connacht team. Then, suddenly, here was one of the West's own, not lavishing praise on his men, but apparently not fully satisfied with what had been achieved on the day.

As I recovered my composure, I began to appreciate the sentiments of the Galway supporter. The win, exciting though it was, will count for nothing in the end if Kilkenny are not beaten in the big one, just as was the case in 1985 and 1986, when semi-final glory turned sour in summits with Offaly and Cork.

All the same, now that I have had more time to ponder on matters, I believe that were I a Galway supporter I would be a great deal happier about the McCarthy Cup prospects after this latest win than following any semi-final triumph of the past.

Tipperary are an emerging team with class hurlers in all sectors. They were hungry for success after such a long spell in the shadows, and they enjoyed fantastic support at headquarters. It reminded me at times of the following Dublin enjoy on big match days at headquarters.

The new Munster champions as a

result presented the sternest possible challenge to Galway, and it is a measure of the Westerners' ability that they took the test in their stride. It seemed to me that the Maroon brigade felt they had a point to prove; that their position as League champions meant they were going into the match in the role of principal actors, rather than as men in supporting parts, as has so often been the case in the past.

By **Ronan Fearon**

There was a refreshing approach to their hurling. They did not run Tipperary ragged as was the case against Kilkenny last year, but the Premier County hurlers proved much more formidable opposition than the Noreside outfit at Thurles in '86. That fact enhances the Galway win.

The League champions have profited much from their two All-Ireland final defeats, and their march to the top in the winter competition last season. They now look to have a genuine belief in themselves. They remain as hungry as ever for an All-Ireland title, but this hunger is harnessed now by the type of measured and unflurried approach that no team from the county has had in my time.

In short, I cannot see the men from the Western stronghold being unsettled by an early reverse in the final. They look able to cope with any knocks that may come their way, and to maintain the composure that is so crucial in a time of crisis.

One has only to recall how they reacted to Pat Fox's great goal — and it was an exhilarating score at that — in the 20th minute of the second half. The score gave the Munster champions a point lead, and Nicholas English further fuelled the Tipperary revival with a quick point.

MEN OF STEEL

Many felt that the Westerners would wilt after that, but not these men of steel. They came back with courage and conviction, and in the end were full value for their six points win.

That Galway had the ability to take that Fox goal and English's equally demoralising point in their stride and battle back for a win is a vital plus mark in their favour in my book.

Another is that they have found a bright new inspiration up front in Eanna Ryan. No longer must they look principally to Joe Cooney for the magical touches and accurate points to lift the side in moments of crisis.

Cooney remains a mighty weapon in the Galway armoury. He had not an outstanding game by his own standard against Tipperary, but he still played well and hit some fine points.

Now, in addition to Cooney, Kilkenny will have to keep a special watch on Ryan, who found gold in Croke Park as he illuminated the day with his sparkle and scoring flair — 1-4 from play.

But it was hardly all that

■ TO PAGE 11

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GALWAY, League Champions, back row: (l. to r.) Steve Mahon, Michael Coleman, Tony Keady, Conor Hayes, Pierce Pigott, Anthony Cunningham, Brendan Lynskey and Martin Naughton. Front row: (l. to r.) Joe Cooney, Michael McGrath, Sylvie Linnane, Peter Murphy, Tony Kilkenny, Eanna Ryan and Ollie Kilkenny.

● FROM PAGE 9

unexpected that Ryan strode the scene like a giant. After all, while Cooney captured much of the spotlight with a quality show in the League final as he scored 2-6, Ryan was in there pulling his weight in brilliant style.

He had an outstanding hour, as he first of all teased and tormented the Clare defence from right full and then later did much to bolster up an ailing midfield. Yes, Ryan is no "Johnny come lately", and he looms now as a serious threat to Kilkenny.

In singling out Ryan and Cooney for special mention, this is not to say that the other members of the attack are not capable of taking on the Noreside back division. Brendan Lynskey, a tremendously hard worker at full forward, and their colleagues, can do much to create the chances for their scoring duo with their intelligent play.

Yes, Galway are better armed up front than for a long time.

Their defence shaped up well against Tipperary into the bargain. Admittedly 2-17 is a hefty enough score to concede, but balance that

against the dynamic play of Peter Finnerty at right half, the tenacity of Tony Keady, and the heights to which the full backs are capable of rising, and Kilkenny can expect no favours around goal.

Long-serving Steve Mahon was one of the semi-final heroes. He did much to ensure that his team had the advantage around midfield for most of the game.

Galway have plenty of cover available in their substitutes panel to increase their options if things are not going well. We saw Noel Lane revive memories of many a goal grabbing exercise of the past when he found the Tipperary net after going in as a second half substitute.

P.J. Molloy, whose scoring expertise meant so much to Galway over the year, also appeared as a sub against the Munster champions, and could prove a vital link in the final story.

Peter Murphy won a National League medal in goal last May, and has of course All-Ireland final experience as well at senior.

Pearse Pigott, another League medallist — he was at No. 4 against

Clare — is there as well, so that in everyway Galway look better equipped for an All-Ireland final test than even on that day they made the long awaited breakthrough in 1980 by capturing the county's only championship since 1923.

It is unlikely that Galway will make the mistake of treating Kilkenny lightly in the final. These hurlers have had too much of the hurt of defeat in the summit to make such an error.

They also know that they have yet to prove themselves. It is all very well, as my passing companion at Croke Park on semi-final day put it, to win a penultimate game, but the big one is the final.

Galway waited a full year after the crash to Offaly to erase the memory of that setback. They failed last September. They now appreciate better than most what is needed for a Liam McCarthy Cup win.

That knowledge, allied to the tremendous experience in the side, and that cool measured approach that I talked about earlier, will, I feel sure add up to the formula for a winning show from the gallant men of the West.

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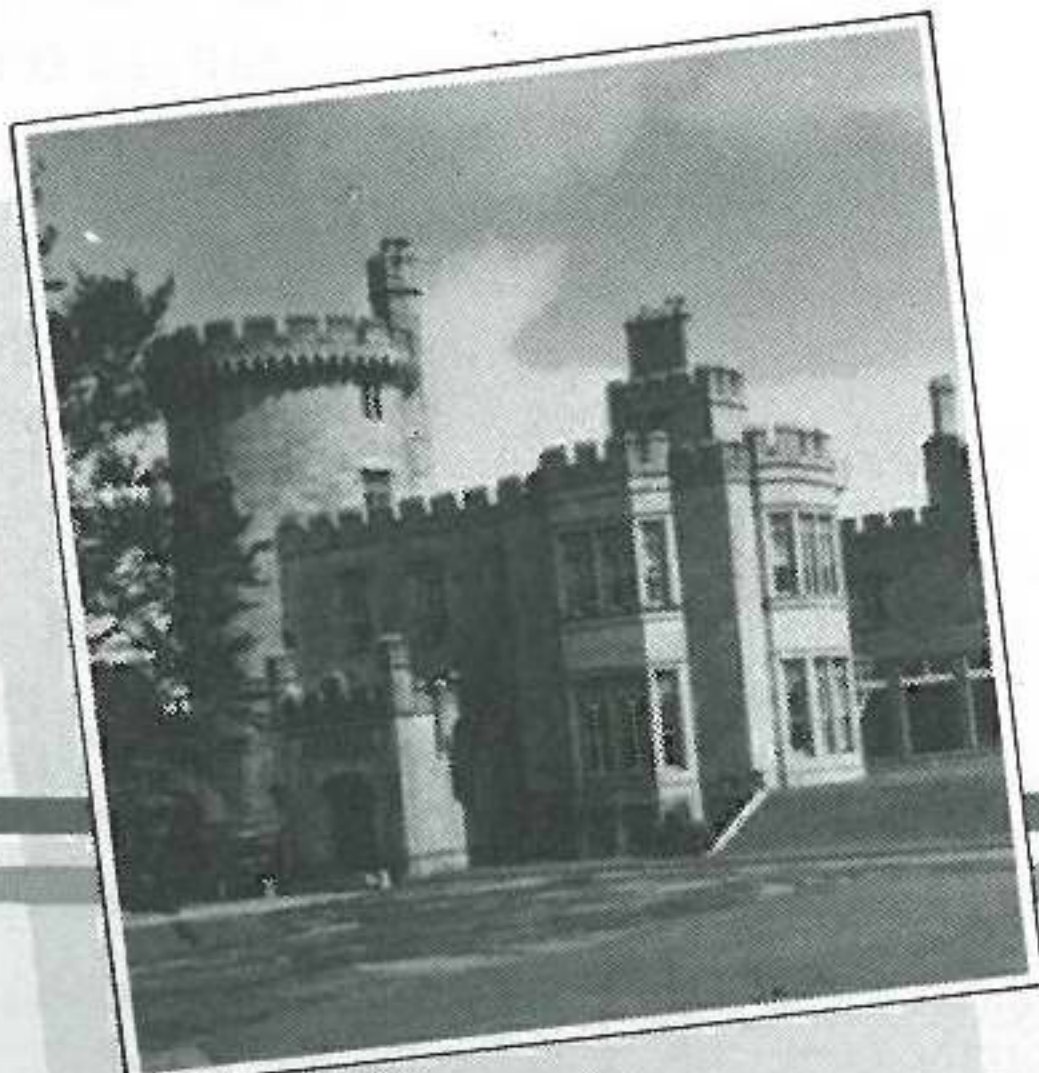
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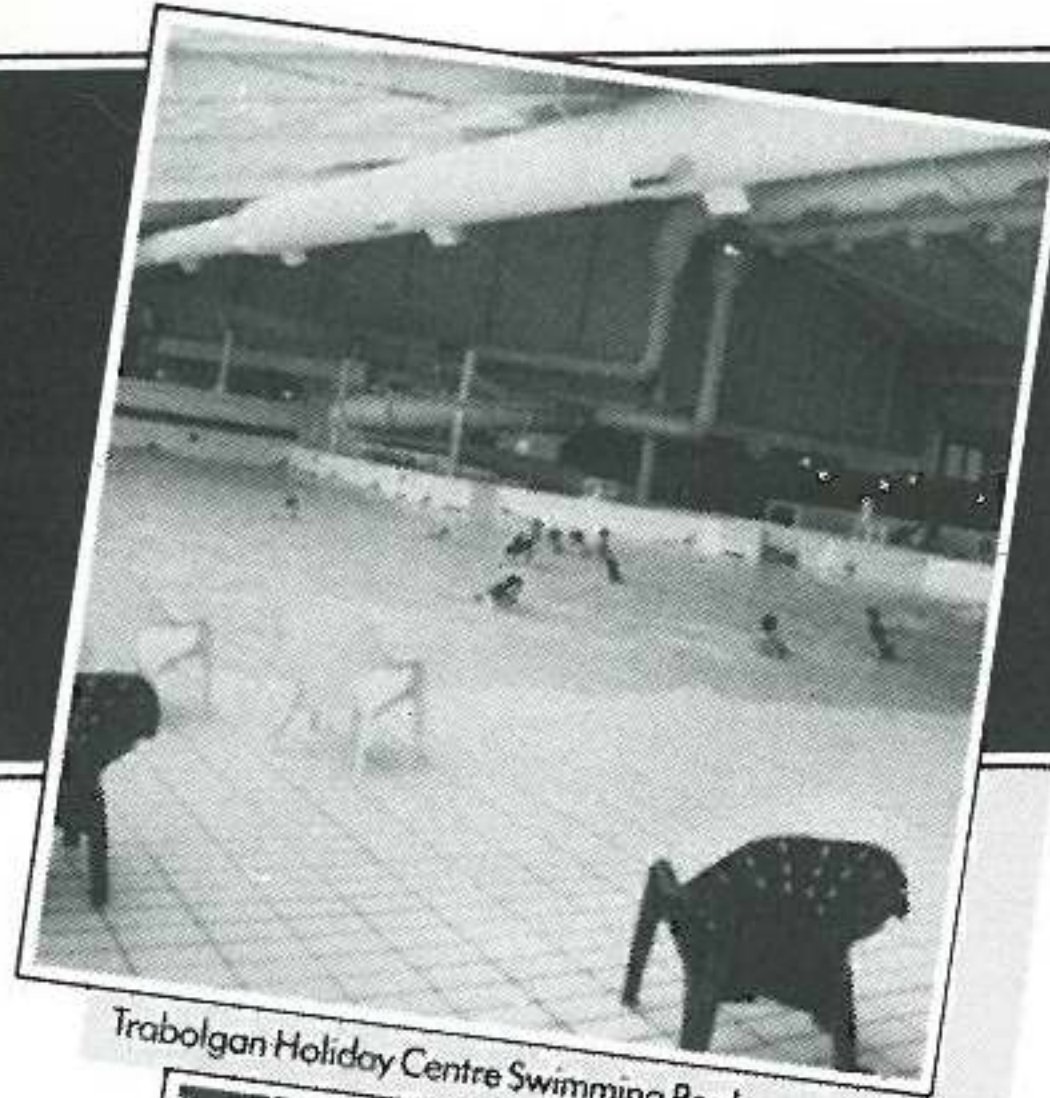
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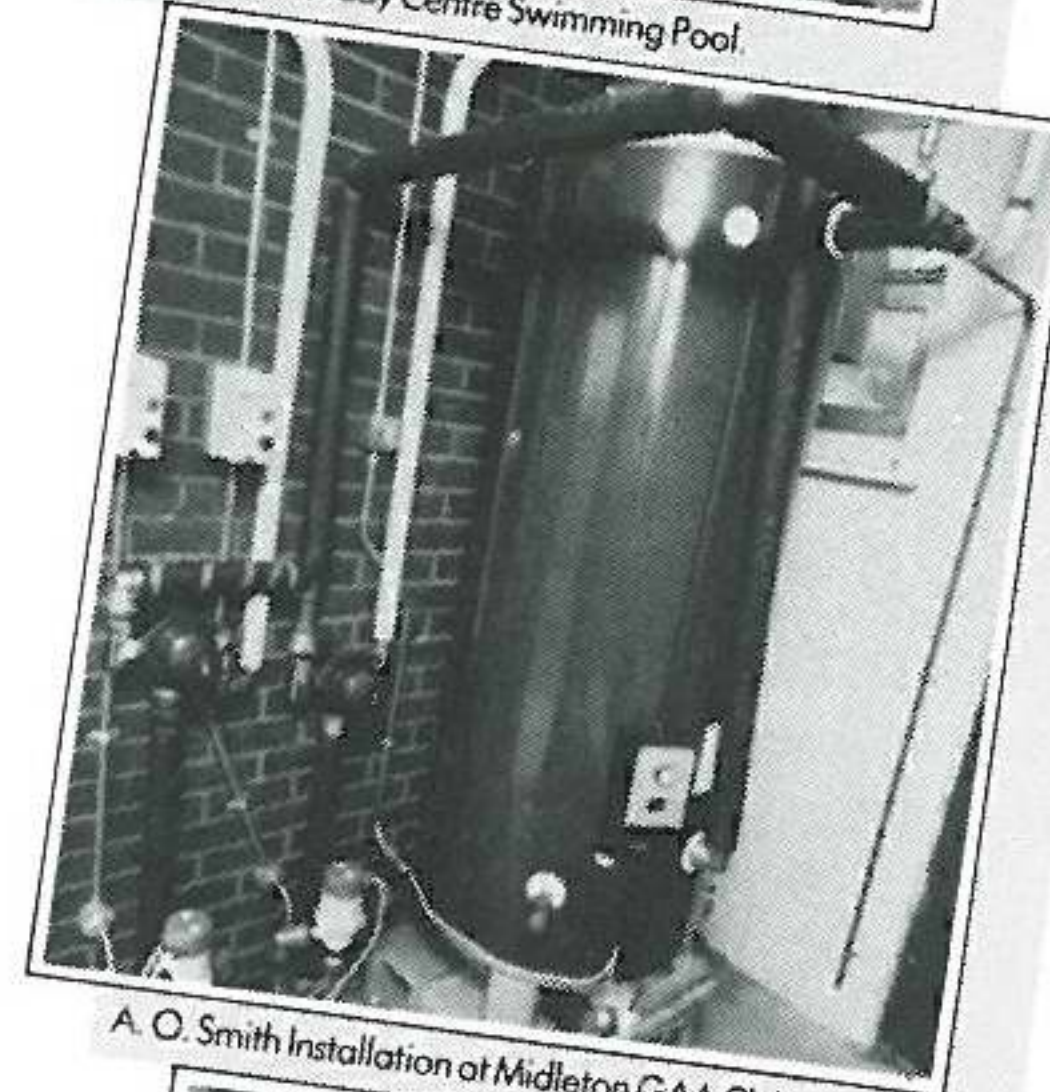
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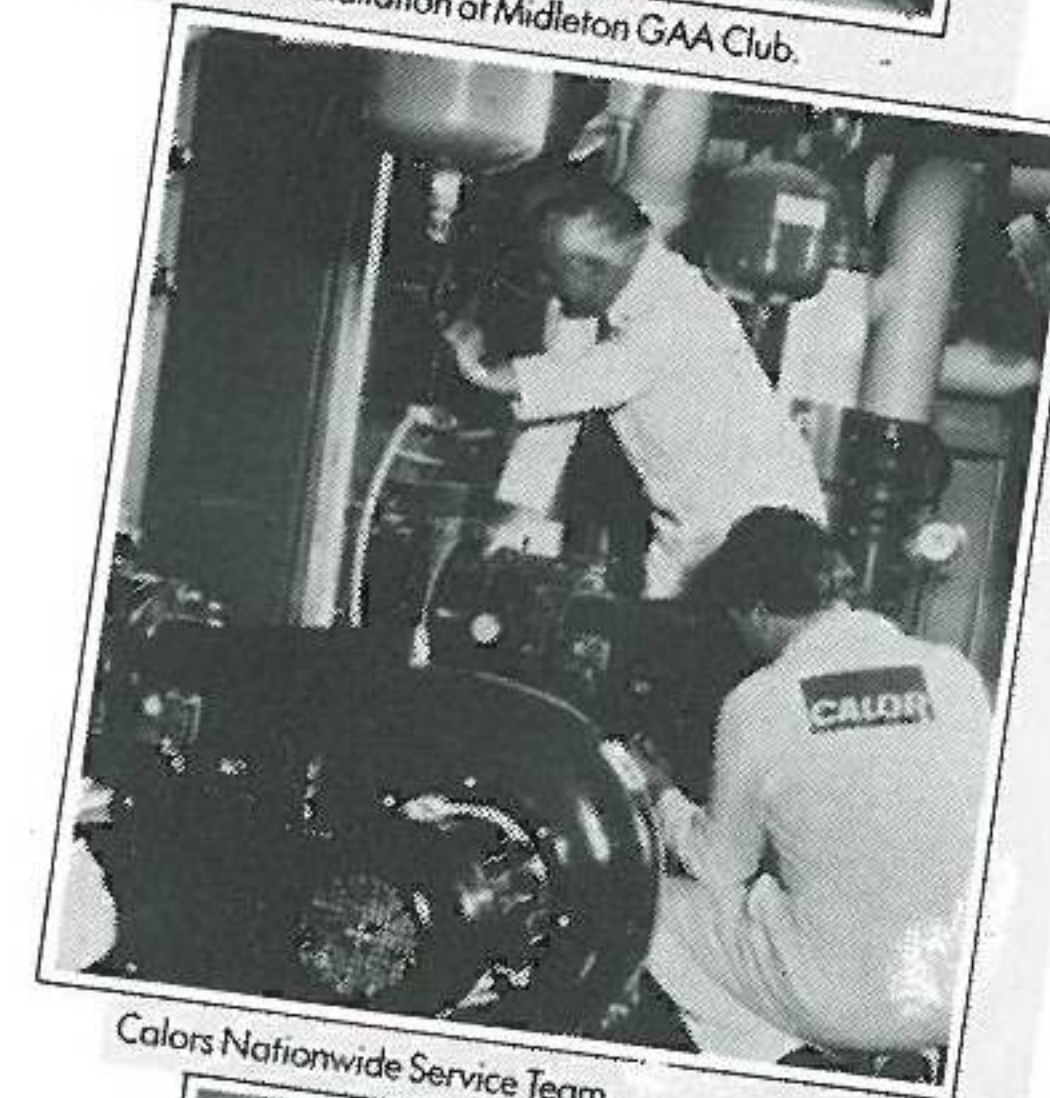
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“A TEAM WITH TOP CLASS HURLERS IN ALL SECTORS”

Says Jim O'Neill

THE years may have run out in football terms for the mighty men of Kerry in their Munster final replay with Cork in early August, but the hurlers of Kilkenny, with a squad that included eight who have passed the 30 years mark, proved that this is not completely the year of the young man in Gaelic Games by retaining their Leinster senior championship.

Kilkenny's performance when beating Offaly in the delayed provincial decider was hardly vintage Noreside hurling. Nevertheless, there was still plenty to admire as the defending champions recovered from a poor showing in the first half to produce their renowned competitive qualities, and bounce back in style for a deserved three points win.

Offaly looked the part in the first half. They hurled with authority, took some excellent long-range points, and were hardly flattered by their lead of six points at the break.

Kilkenny struggled to find their form in that opening period, but I

am sure that I was not the only one in the big crowd at Croke Park who refused to “write off” at that stage the defending champions prospects of retaining their crown. This county, so steeped in hurling tradition and skill, has a flair for battling back strongly in the second half of major games, and that standard was well maintained in the latest Leinster final.

There was a new conviction and authority about Kilkenny's play from the restart. So much so that even though it was not until 14 minutes from the end that Kilkenny took the lead for the first time, I was convinced after about ten minutes that the tide was running the way of the men from the Noreside.

Offaly, who had scored so freely in that opening half — they hit 0-14 — only managed three points after the change of ends. Kilkenny, on the other hand, cracked home 1-9. Certainly, a startling change of fortunes there.

It is a cliché to say it nowadays, but Kilkenny were very hungry for

success on the restart. They had to be. Otherwise a team with so many hurlers who have sipped so often at the sweet Cup of Success would not have had the willpower or the legs to have put the poor start firmly behind them, and come out battling with renewed vigour and enthusiasm from the restart.

Obviously, the shock drubbing from Galway in last year's All-Ireland semi-final at Semple Stadium still hurts. The only way that can be eased now is by an All-Ireland title win — and the sooner the better.

HARD GAME

But how good are Kilkenny? I would not rate the side on a par with the All-Ireland title winning teams of 1982 and 1983. The Leinster champions are still not sure of their ideal formation — look at the changes during the provincial final — and the defence creaked at times especially in the first half, against Offaly.



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1987 LEINSTER CHAMPIONS



KILKENNY, Leinster Champions, Back row: (left to right) Joe Hennessy, Christy Heffernan, Lester Ryan, Richie Power, Sean Fennelly, John Henderson, Liam Fennelly. Front row: (left to right) Ger Fennelly, Kevin Fennelly, Harry Ryan, Paddy Prendergast, Ger Henderson, Liam McCarthy, Liam Walsh and Pat Walsh.

FROM PAGE 13

However, I have little doubt that the Kilkenny men will profit from that hard game at Croke Park. Competitive match-play is the best form of training. Moreover, the outing against Antrim at Dundalk was also bound to prove invaluable in the build-up to have Kilkenny finely tuned for the showpiece match.

The Easterners have some good assets as well. At a time when many teams are "crying out" for forwards with the ability to regularly put away the goals, Kilkenny have two of the best around — Liam Fennelly and Christy Heffernan.

Fennelly bagged two grand goals against Offaly to once more prove his special gifts in this match-winning art. He is the type of fast, incisive forward with the keen eye for an opening who must be closely and constantly watched. He is a real match-winner, and a forward who could have supporters rousily rendering the Rose of Mooncoin after the big game.

Heffernan did not hit a goal in the Leinster final, but this cannot take from the fact that he, too, is an expert at finding his way through. He has done so time and again, and has by far the best record of any forward in this field.

With this pair prompting matters up front, Kilkenny have a lot going for them in attack. I thought, too, that Harry Ryan showed good form in the last couple of games in the championship, and he could cause plenty of problems for his marker.

I said earlier that Kilkenny's defence creaked a bit in the early stages of the Leinster final. One must balance against that the fact that Joe Hennessy, Paddy Prendergast and John Henderson, in particular, contributed greatly to the retention of the provincial crown.

CALLING TUNE

Hennessy made light of his 31 years with as good a display at right full back as any has produced there this year. He was especially effective when Offaly were calling the tune, doing much to end attacks, and he also helped to send his own forwards on to the offensive with his long clearances. In the second half he continued to hurl with plenty of purpose and dash.

It is all happening for Prendergast, who was 29 last February. Granted, he is no stranger to All-Ireland senior final winning glory, but in recent times he has helped his club, Clara, to their first Kilkenny senior hurling title last September and now has led

the county to a provincial crown.

He did it in style too, leading by example at full back. John Henderson was very sound as well.

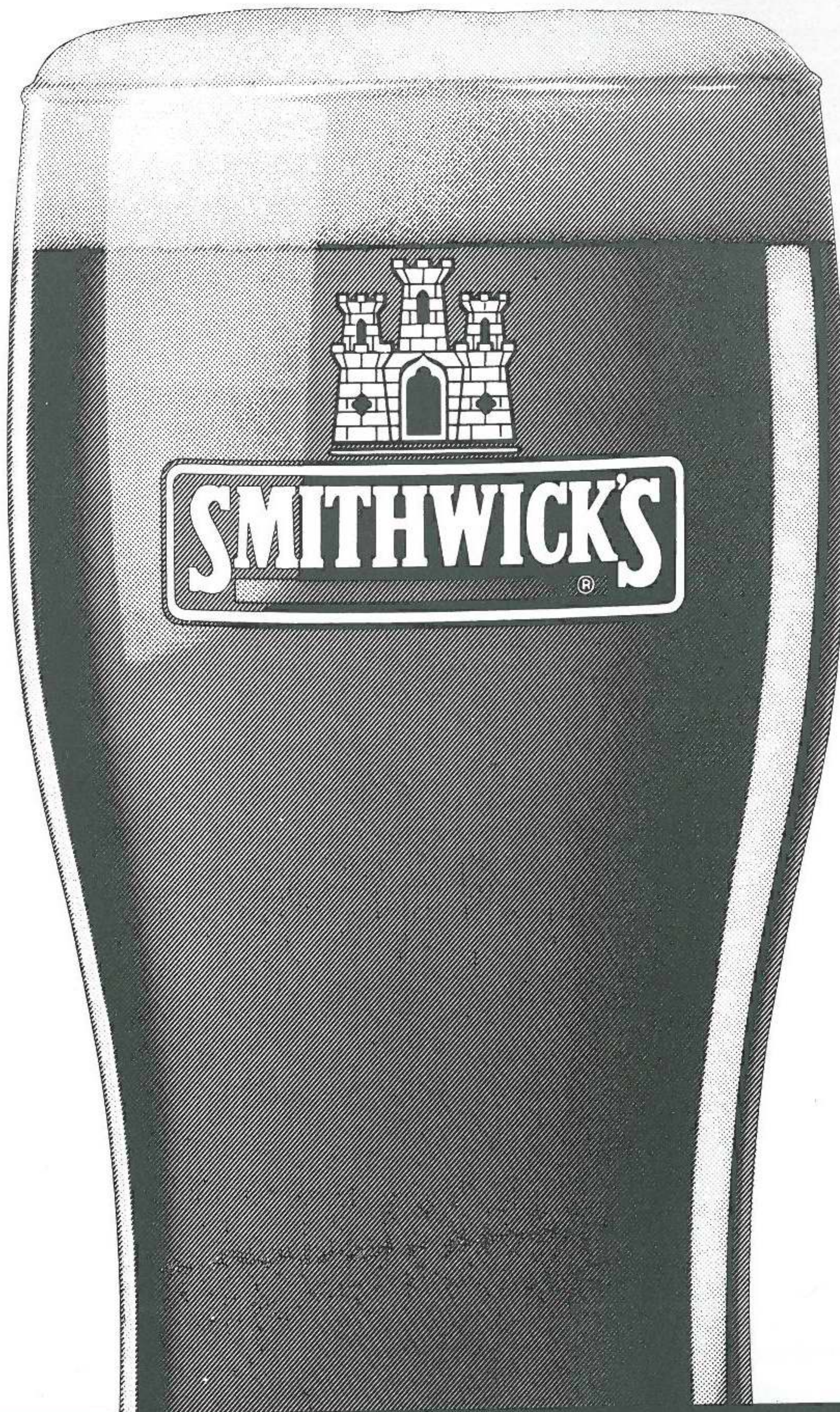
The half backs did not overall match the standard of their inside trio, but we know from experience that Liam Walsh, long-serving Ger Henderson and Sean Fennelly are men capable of delivering the goods when they are needed most.

So, where does this leave Kilkenny? A team with top-class hurlers in all sectors, a side with an excellent free-taker in Ger Fennelly, and some of the best goal-poachers around. A team with its own distinctive brand of classical hurling that is likely to be schooled to perfection again come final day.

A team that has not yet struck the high note in terms of hurling excellence, but still has won through to another final, and is quite capable of reaching the heights in the surge for the Liam McCarthy Cup.

That's my reading of Kilkenny. They will still not start favourites in the final, but I am convinced they are quite capable of going all the way. That is providing they find their top form from the throw-in, and do not allow their opponents to rush off in much the same manner as Offaly. Such a start would probably prove too costly for Kilkenny.

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EAMON YOUNG recalls the marathon Munster Hurling Championship of '87 that brought credit to all ... but at the end of the day

TIPP WERE TOPS

THERE was never a hurling series like it — and I think never again. Our championship opened with the game between Tipp and Kerry in Killarney and I had two very good reasons for hoping that this would be a good hour: first there are some very genuine men organising hurling in the Kingdom and then our delightful hurler of the recent past, Con Roche of the Barrs had trained the Kerry-men. Though Tipp won, as expected, it took a very fine 1-10 from Pat Fox to see the Blue and Gold home, for Kerry shot two smart goals by John Hennessy and Brian Neenan in the first half making the interval score



A jubilant Richard Stakelum, the Tipperary captain, is carried shoulder high, with the cup, around Fitzgerald Stadium, Killarney, after their pulsating victory over Cork.

ten points to six in favour of Tipperary.

On the same day Limerick beat Waterford by four points in Thurles, as Cork back from the All-Stars tour, pulled themselves together for the date with Garryowen in Thurles. Then came the game between Clare and Tipperary in Killarney and this was the one the Banner would win for they had stopped Tipperary by a goal in the League semi-final at Cork in April and indeed were on course at half time with a point lead. Scores were level four times after the break but then disaster, and Ref. Terence Murray, struck: Clare full forward, Tommy Guilfoyle, started the via dolorosa to the sideline leaving Clare to face 24 lonely minutes and fifteen urgent sons of Tipperary. Powerful hurling by centre back, Sean Stack, and seven accurately placed balls by Cyril Lyons kept Clare in the hunt and what a roar from the hurling men of Corca Bascinn when, one minute into injury time, the Clare left-corner, Gerry MacInerney, rounded his man and hammered a powerful shot to the back of the net and the final whistle, sweet in the ears of Claremen, left them at 1-13 apiece.

On the following Sunday, Cork was regarded as home and dry against a Limerick team in Thurles, but what a land we all got. Many of the lads in red were poor on the day but the spirited play of the Eamonn Cregan-trained Limerickmen caused much of that. Five minutes from time I was sure it was all over because Teddy Mac Carthy grabbed the ball at full forward and when a left handed point was on, had a go for goal and was stopped. Our last chance gone, I thought, and then that famous loose ball, that so often rolls to somebody in the last minute danced happily along to Ciaran Kingston who, without pausing even to say "thanks" slipped it over the bar as we heaved a great sigh of relief, went home to lick our wounds and wonder what went wrong.

So off to Killarney on the following Sunday, June 21st, to see if Clare with fifteen could finish off the job half-done by one man less. The drop that Cork got in the drawn game on the previous Sunday was nothing compared to the chasm that yawned after Bobby Ryan slapped home a goal in the second minute and Nicholas English added another before the

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●FROM PAGE 17

break. That half-time score of 2-9 to 0-4 said Tipp were on their way to the final. They added enough to make the final tally of 4-17 to 0-8, an emphatic warning to all of us who had said they were missing too many scores and wouldn't go very well this year. The warnings for me were the whipping power of the half-backs, Stakelum, Kennedy and Delaney, the real help Joe Hayes gave the skilful and energetic Colm Bonner at midfield, the thirty yard flying solo of Donie O'Connell before he crashed that ball to the net, and the 3-12 scored by the Tipp full-forward line of which Nicholas English had 2-4, all based firmly on the quick reflexes of goalie Ken Hogan.

The story continued in Thurles on the following Sunday when Cork lined out against Limerick for the replay but this was surely our day and the Garryowen men never knew what hit them. From the beginning we sailed smoothly along on the crest of a vivacious and skilful wave and steered our way home with a 3-14 to 0-10 scoreline to support our satisfied smiles.

Both sides got down to real preparation for the game fixed for Thurles in a fortnight — the match that had to be won. Babs Keating, remembering the thrill and intensity of the '84 final, when Cork kept the crowd guessing until the very end, hoped for a repeat of the excitement if not the result. He was glad it was Cork and reminded us that Tipp had a few old scores to settle.

It wasn't a happy time for Tom Cashman who pulled a hamstring before the replay with Limerick, forcing the selectors to ask retired Dermot MacCurtain if he would fill in? Bravely the skilful Rockies man of the dainty flying feet took his place and right well he played. We all agree we were lucky to have him for the big one in Thurles.

Gerald MacCarthy, the great centre-fielder, said that while the Cork defence was shaky enough in the Limerick replay it settled quickly and Johnny Crowley's return had a steadying effect. But the forwards would have to play up he felt and

indeed half of them were only fair in that last game in contrast with Tipp whose forwards Pat Fox, Nicholas English, Aidan Ryan and Donie O'Connell impressed Gerald a lot in their destruction of Clare.



NICHOLAS ENGLISH

Lightning decision earned extra time.

Ger Cunningham pulled a thigh muscle before the game and we watched nervously as he ran to take his place. The game started at a furious pace; the Tipp men were like greyhounds released from the trap. Aidan Ryan had a lovely point from the wing and a few minutes after, Nicholas English added another when, unmarked he could have taken off on a solo. Tipp had a real grip at midfield where Joe Hayes and Colm Bonner were flying, so our backs had a rain of sliotars falling to them with angry wasps of Tipp forwards chasing in a way that showed they were flying fit. It was then I recalled that Jack O'Shea had been down in Tipp helping with the training. Tipp's half backline, the captain, Richard Stakelum, John Kennedy and Paul Delaney tore into everything with

fierce speed that didn't spoil their ball control and generally it was clear that Cork were in real trouble, for our forwards missed a few chances the tenacious Tipperary rearguard allowed. It was John Fenton who kept us in touch, for of the seven points we scored he drove over five. Tipp's four point lead at half-time was only half what they deserved and we sighed with relief hoping for a change after the interval.

That second half was a minute on when Ciaran Kingston drove a fine shot high left to the Tipp Goal. Across the goalmouth the burly figure of Ken Hogan and the outstretched hurley brought a reflex save, the best I've seen for years. Kevin Hennessy and John Fitzgibbon shot but John Heffernan, Conor Donovan and Seamus Gibson covered off that goal like watchdogs on guard and though Cork were now playing with far more confidence the scores were not coming. Tipp were still four points ahead when Nicholas English was sent to the full forward position and my heart sank a little as the tired Mac Curtain was forced off by injury. Jim Cashman went right half back and Paul O'Connor tore into it at centre field. A minute after a high ball dropped to the Cork twenty one; English and a few defenders pulled on it, a Corkman landed on his back and English was suddenly without the hurley and the ball hopping straight towards the Cork goal. After it, like a cat, darted the Tipp forward, controlled it with the right foot and then the left, and as Ger Cunningham advanced, tapped the sliotar smartly with the right foot straight to the side of the net. Maradona couldn't have done better. Tipp went mad then and the seven points lead told me emphatically that the game was over.

But it was then the mighty rally came from the brave men in red shirts, for Jim Cashman's fire, Michael Mullin's speed and Tony O'Sullivan's swerve and neat accurate striking that brought three points, showed us all this game wasn't over. Cork two points down and ten minutes to go! Aidan Ryan

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DONIE O'CONNELL
playing great stuff.

●FROM PAGE 19

and Pat Fox left us off the hook when scores were there but it was the small deadly Fox who swung over the point at five minutes to go and there was a goal between them. Fenton precise and immaculate, drove a point like a smith drives a nail and then Kevin Hennessy got it in his hand, played it across the square where Kingston, whose point saved us against Limerick the first day, slapped that ball like lightning to the back of the net. Cork a point up and the time nearly gone! There was no delay in the puck out and in seconds the sliotar came out of the air at centre-field Fenton got it on his stick, waltzed downfield and with a delightful quick whip sent it soaring between the posts for that two point lead. Now I knew we had won it. Two minutes left and Tipperary get a fifty yards free. Fox stuck it over the bar. A minute to go, it seemed like an hour. In a last desperate effort Nicholas English tried to tear his way through and the ref's whistle told us that Tipperary were saved. They were, for Pat Fox's ciotog stroke raised the last white flag and the final whistle sounded. I felt a traitor

because I admit to being glad. Tipp had that game wrapped up and nearly lost it. Imagine my surprise when I saw on the faces of my three sporting friends the same smile of relief that Tipp were not beaten. Off we went down town quite happy, knowing we would hammer them the next day, and over in Andy Fogarty's we told them so until they got so cross they sent out for Jim Devitt, once a handy bit of a Tipp hurler, to come up and stop us beating them in singing also. Out of his bed he came in answer to the call and that competition also was judged to be a draw.

Gathered outside the Thurles Sarsfields building at Semple Stadium we agreed that Tipp would not come to Cork for the replay. They had been too long down to take any chances. In fact they refused even to toss, and the Munster Council made the decision (which I suspect Tipp anticipated) by fixing the game for Killarney where since the All-Ireland win over Kilkenny, fifty long years ago, Tipperary have been hunting very happily.

It was an angry Cork during that fortnight but the boys trained happily and forgot the talk. It takes a lot of complaints to raise a white flag. "Tipperary were afraid to travel" one paper screamed in six column one inch capitals. That saddened a lot of us. If we had been down for sixteen years we wouldn't travel an inch towards Thurles. The first question Cork had to answer in that exciting week before the Killarney replay was: will Tom Cashman play? Dermot Mac Curtain was out because of a leg injury and his friend, Cashman, was still very doubtful. Further, our forward line was not playing well and we were sadly aware that no less than twelve of our 1-18 came from John Fenton's fruitful stick.

On Wednesday the team was known and we were glad to see Tom Cashman back in his own place at right half back while Mick Mullins dash would be a plus at right wing. Tipp lost Joe Hayes through injury and tall Pat Fitzelle came in at midfield to partner his Cashel comrade, Colm Bonner. Jerry Williams whose injured ankle caused

him to miss the drawn game recovered his right wing position from John McGrath.

Tipp felt more confident after that drawn game where they came from behind at the last moment and their captain, Richard Stakelum, said the team, only eleven of which had played in their first senior final would be happier than Cork in Killarney because they had already played well there.

Theo English said that John Fenton must be curbed and we smiled a little, for the only brake you can put on a free-taker is by not fouling, and Fenton's sideline pucks are seventy yards anyhow. Still we all knew that we had made a team of Tipp and they would be far more confident now. That self assurance added to adequate hurling skill and what I was afraid was superior fitness, would put us up against improved opponents. We could only hope that our men also would be improved. Seamus Durack said that Killarney would suit Tipp and of that I personally had no doubt. I had a close-up view of that tremendous goal from a 21-yard free scored by Babs Keating against Limerick there sixteen years ago when, after Doney Nealon had, or had not, charged the ball. Keating wiped the blood flowing into his left eye and hammered that sliotar through a forest of hurleys to the back of the net.

A million cars chased each other over the county bounds to Cill Airne and a Corkman on the way from Dublin spent an hour going fifteen miles on the road from Limerick. Thousands, young and old, faces as animated as the blue, gold or red they wore, laughed, shouted and sang as they surged up to Dick Fitzgerald's stadium, outside which, after all the hullabaloo about tickets, the damn things were thrown away.

Inside it was the gayest gathering I ever saw and when that sliotar was thrown in the crowd roared its head off for everybody felt this was going to be another great game. How we Corkmen loved that opening fifteen minutes, for not only were our men flying but Pat Fox and Richard

●OVERLEAF

●FROM PAGE 21

Stakelum, normally so reliable, sent five frees wide. It was five points to one in our favour after twelve minutes and only Ken Hogan's keen eye and cat-like spring robbed Ciaran Kingston of two goals but with ten minutes of the half to go, Nicholas English, who alternated between left wing and full forward, was suddenly seen behind our full backs, where he raised a snap ball and without handling, hammered it to the net. In spite of Cork supremacy we led at half time only by 1-10 to 1-5, a copy of the first half in Thurles but in reverse for then it was all Tipp.

Tipp played with more resolve in the second half and when Pat Fox's shot struck the crossbar I thought it broke down inside the line. When it was cleared away we didn't complain. In the last quarter Cork were still a point in front but with twelve minutes to go all hell broke loose when from play Pat Fox swung over the leveling point. On the halfway line Tom Cashman had gone off and both Jim Cashman and John Fenton were both slowed up by injury but the stands rocked as we leaped to applaud a perfect slap on a high ball by Tony O'Sullivan to the back of the net. What a disaster when the goal was disallowed. Two points from Tipp failed to stop Cork who tacked on three and we were still in there with half a minute to go, leading by one point, when Hogan's long puck-out passed a knot of struggling players, hopped thirty yards out to be grabbed by English who darted away goalward, and just when our men had him bottled up, snapped from a resourceful brain the lightning decision that hand-passed the sliotar over the bar. The sides were level and we faced into extra time.

Before the extra time I was sad to see Jim Cashman trotting around the field trying to persuade himself not to limp. Gallantly he failed and withdrew in favour of Sean O'Gorman. Ger Fitzgerald and John Fenton had two points and Michael Doyle came on for Tipp at full forward. With a point ahead we waited for the last fifteen minutes of extra time.

The crowd was quiet at this



JOHN FENTON, Cork's sharpshooter, pictured with Ronnie Delany, receiving the B&I award.

beginning of the end. We all knew this was it. There would be no more draws, for men on both sides were down getting cramped muscles massaged. A Tipp cheer greeted Fox's free point to level and then the stadium exploded in thunder as Donie O'Connell's point put Tipp ahead for the very first time in a tumultuous afternoon. Two minutes later the Tipp centre forward raced through again and whipped a hard right handed shot that bounced off Richard Browne right to the waiting Mick Doyle, who from close range, slapped it neatly to the net. Three minutes later Richard Browne took off on a fast solo, ran into trouble, was dispossessed, and when Pat Fitzelle swung it back low, Doyle was there again to kill all Cork hopes and the green flag waved. John Fenton hammered in a 21 yards free but the clearance set Tipperary attacking and Donie O'Connell had the last

word with a grand goal to make the final score 4-22 to 1-22 and all Tipp went mad.

The crowd surged on to the field and gathered in thousands around the stand as Michael O Conchuir the Munster Council chairman presented the cup and when Richard Stakelum, nephew of the great Pat, burst into "*Sliabh na mBan*", I saw tears in John Lanigan's eyes and there was at least one Corkman joined in (though I didn't sing with operatic gusto) "I never saw the like of it" said Lanigan and I agreed though he was talking about the picture of dancing, screaming and cheering joy below him while I pondered sadly on the 3-2 Tipperary got in the last period of extra time when we scored one lonely point. That tells its own story, doesn't it?

Good luck to Tipp. They were always men of heart and too long they were down.

Profile on Peter Finnerty, Galway

A PERSONALITY PLUS PLAYER WHO CAN INSPIRE GALWAY TO VICTORY ON FINAL DAY

By Paul Murphy



SUDDENLY, it is 1985 all over again for Peter Finnerty. Then, he burst on an unsuspecting hurling public as a powerful unit in a great half back line that set the scene for a sensational Galway win over Cork, then All-Ireland champions, in a national senior championship semi-final in the rain at Croke Park.

Finnerty, Tony Keady and Tony Kilkenny excelled at half back from first to final whistle. Their excellence was such that they combined in a half back division that exercised an influence on a win to a degree that no single line had in any game in years prior to that.

All three are still in the Galway colours, though the half-back formation has been changed somewhat. And, as for Finnerty, he is back in his old position after a spell in the U.S., and hurling with more guile, but yet again in the same exciting manner that won him such praise in 1985. The six-footer from Mullagh left his imprint in a big way on yet another semi-final last month. So much so, in fact, that I made him by far the Man-Of-The-Match against Tipperary. There was also his great save on the line in the first half and at a vital stage.

There were those who doubted the wisdom of the Galway selectors in bringing Finnerty — along with Gerry McNerney — back from the U.S., where he has been working for some time. Not that such enthusiasts doubted the ability of the right half back, but rather that his long absence from the big-time would dull his edge.

After all, Galway won the National League title in May without the guiding influence of Finnerty. Was this not, then, an indication that they could see off Tipperary without the tall defender?

Apparently, the selectors felt that they needed both Finnerty and McNerney, who also was an absentee against Clare. Both answered the call, and even those who doubted the wisdom of the selectors action at the time, must have

rejoiced that both were there to stiffen the challenge to Tipperary.

Especially, Finnerty. No disrespect to McNerney, who had a fine game, but it was really Peter Finnerty's day on the second Sunday of August. This was one of his best games ever. Time and again he nipped in to end Tipperary attacks; time and again the Galway attack benefitted from his deft clearances; time and again the side was able to regroup because of the utter dependability of the man in the No. 5 jersey.

But is this not what we have come to expect from Peter Finnerty? He has been such a shining star of the premier grade since he first really captured national prominence in that 1985 semi-final, that we have now come to expect play of the highest calibre from the right half.

He has regularly since then been producing hurling of the highest quality, and against Tipperary demonstrated that he has matured into the type of personality-plus player who could inspire Galway to a memorable triumph on final day.

ALL-IRELAND

Finnerty has packed a lot of hurling at All-Ireland standard into his short enough inter-county career — he was only 23 last March. Those who make a point in getting to Croke Park for the curtain-raiser on big match days will recall the budding skills of Galway's full back in their unsuccessful All-Ireland minor final against Kilkenny in 1981. He also played in the losing Minor final team of '82.

Finnerty did more than enough those days to indicate he was a young hurler to note. And that impression was confirmed — to this writer at least — when he showed much of the skills that were to earn him such praise as a senior at right back when he sparkled in the No. 5 jersey as

● OVERLEAF

Galway beat Tipperary in the All-Ireland under-21 final of 1983.

Even though the game's top honour — All-Ireland senior medal and League souvenir — have so far eluded Finnerty, he still has had much success as a senior.

The gifted defender was honoured by the Bank of Ireland All Star selectors — 1985 and 1986 — and was right half back for Connacht when they regained the Railway Cup in March 1986 — his first interprovincial medal. He made his Railway Cup final debut in 1985 at right full back.

Although Finnerty missed out on the League final against Clare in the spring, he still can claim a big share of the success story, as he played in earlier games in the winter competition.

Finnerty, like so many more in the Galway team will be hoping now that it will be a case of third time lucky. Defeats from Offaly in 1985 and Cork last year have only sharpened his determination to get on the winners rostrum this time.

Galway are no one-man team. They have accomplished hurlers in every sector of the team, men who are capable of taking a grip on the game and steering a winning course.

And none more so than Peter Finnerty. He showed that against Tipperary, just as he showed in the 1985 All-Ireland semi-final against Cork, when he was also the Man-of-the-Match in the view of many, myself included.

With the added craft he has gained in the meantime, and on his sparkle last time out, I feel that Peter Finnerty is capable of proving a great motivator for Galway against the men from the Noreside.

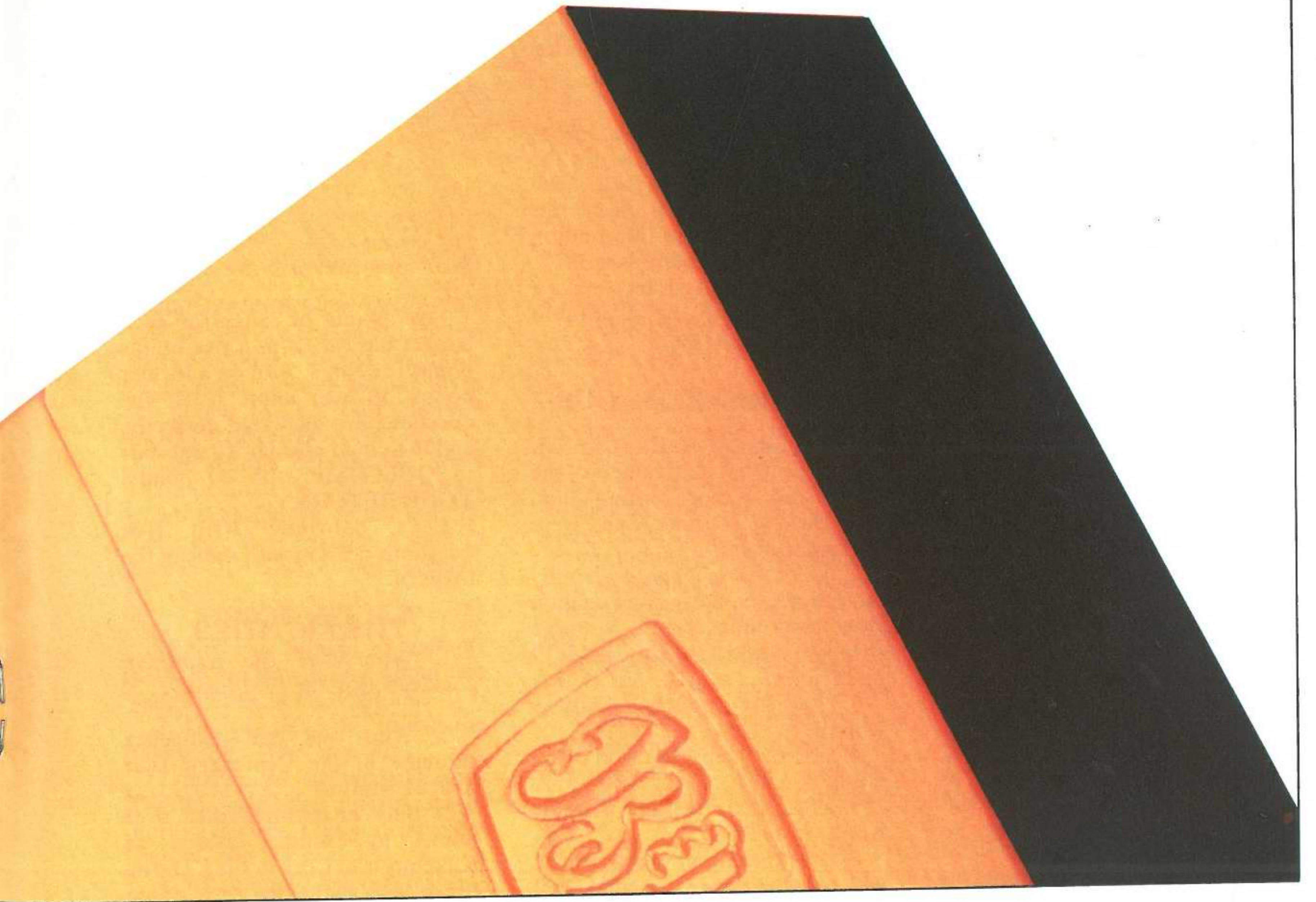
They say that Gaelic Games lack personalities today, compared with the past, Finnerty is one who is doing much to disprove that theory, and I am convinced he will further knock that argument on the head in the McCarthy Cup tie.

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MOKERS DIE YOUNGER

Government Warning

QUIZTIME

BY VINNY MOORE

IT'S that time of the year again ... the colour, the thrills, the excitement of All-Ireland hurling finals day is almost with us once again. Elsewhere in this issue you will read all about the finalists and some of the personalities in the latest chapter of the never-ending story that is the annual quest for hurling's top prize.

I must admit that I am looking forward to the games with great anticipation. I feel we are in for some wonderful hurling, but I will leave the predictions and the profiles to other contributions to the magazine.

Instead, let's try and add to the interest in the build-up to the games in my own individual way, QUIZTIME, that question and answer feature that I am glad to learn from letters, so many readers of GAELIC SPORT enjoy so much.

I am not going to concentrate on the 1987 games, but instead bring a little variety to the scene by concentrating on finals and topics of other days. Not too far back, I hasten to add, in order to ensure that our younger readers will not be left out in the cold.

As usual, there is a built-in points system, just to give that added bite

to the quiz. But scoring points, while always welcome, is not the real aim of QUIZTIME. The purpose is to provide enjoyment and possibly a little information along the way for many as well.

So, here goes. And, let's make a start with the prize they all want to win in senior hurling:

THE McCARTHY CUP

1. The Liam McCarthy Cup was first presented to the winners of the All-Ireland senior hurling final after the 1921 decider. Who were the first winners?
2. Cork have won the trophy more times than any other county. How many times has the Munster stronghold taken the Cup — 17, 19 or 22 times?
3. How many times have Galway won the trophy?
4. Has the Cup been won by an Ulster county?
5. Who was presented with the trophy in 1980?
6. Only one hurler was presented with the Cup three times after final wins. Can you name the hurler in question?
7. How many McCarthy Cup ties have we had since 1975 without a Munster team in action?
8. A difficult one this one, perhaps. Dublin were engaged in the first McCarthy Cup final. True or false?

9. Who ranks as the last goalkeeper to be presented with the McCarthy Cup on final day?

10. Kilkenny brought the Cup to Leinster for the first time in the 1922 championship season. They were last champions in 1983. Was that their 16th, 18th or 20th Cup win?

Five points on offer for each correct answer, with a five points bonus for No. 8. Add on a further bonus of five points if all the questions are answered correctly, and this could result in a great start to QUIZTIME with 60 points! YOUR RETURN

Let's continue with five questions dealing with some of the finals of:

THE EIGHTIES

1. Who were the respective goalkeepers in the 1981 final?
2. Who was the goal-getter supreme in the Centenary Year final at Thurles?
3. Billy Fitzpatrick rifled over points in exciting fashion as Kilkenny beat Cork in 1983. Did he finish with eight, ten or a dozen golden scores?
4. Both finalists scored at least one goal in every decider in the 'Eighties so far, except one — 1981. What county failed to notch a goal in that game?
5. What county has won the greatest number of titles in this decade?



Not too difficult a section this one, I believe. As a result, no bonus marks on offer. Just five points for each correct answer, adding up to 25 points for a "Full House." **YOUR RECORD**

The seniors capture the lion's share of finals day, but it is also a great occasion in minor affairs. Let's give the teenagers a look in here in QUIZTIME with a special:

MINOR REVIEW

1. Not too difficult to start off with. What was unique about last year's under-18 hurling final?
2. Galway have still to win the minor title. True or false?
3. It is not all that long ago since Dublin contested an under-18 hurling decider. Can you name the year of their last outing?
4. When were Tipperary last All-Ireland minor champions?
5. Kilkenny are Leinster's most successful county in the series with a dozen titles. But when was their last success?
6. One of the heroes of last year's minor final was very prominent with Cork in the senior grade this

season. Who is he?

7. What trophy is awarded to the winners of the minor final?

8. Finally, name the year of the last draw in an under-18 final. It is not as difficult as it appears at first glance to answer this one. Just pause and think of some recent games. Now, there is a strong clue.

Another section of five points for each all correct answer. Collect a five points bonus in the event of a 100 per cent return here. Total points possible: 45. **YOUR SCORE**

We conclude Quiztime with a somewhat unusual photograph, and one that is eye-catching and very interesting in its own right, let alone as a basis for a competition. This is the centrepiece of our popular:

PICTURE PARADE

1. Who is the high jumping hurler in our photograph?
2. The game which saw this action from our high-fielding personality was taken during the 1982 Leinster final. What county

won that final?

3. The hurler in the centre went on to join the ranks of All-Ireland title winning captains that year. Who is he?

4. Name the county beaten by the Leinster champions in that season's All-Ireland semi-final.

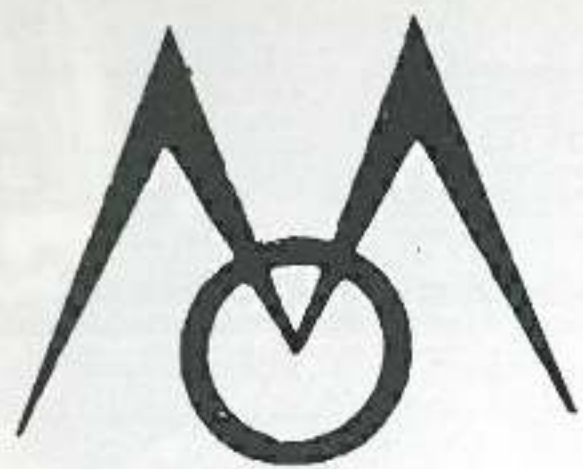
5. All the three hurlers in our photograph played in the All-Ireland final last year. True or false?

As this ends the quiz, I am just a little generous by awarding six points for every correct answer, plus a ten points bonus if all the questions are correctly answered. Points on offer: 40. **YOUR FINAL BAG**

HOW DO YOU MEASURE UP

Total number of points possible: 160. An excellent rating for a return of 140 or more. 120 to 140 points merits a very good marking, and 100 to 120 is good.

● **ANSWERS ON PAGE 45**



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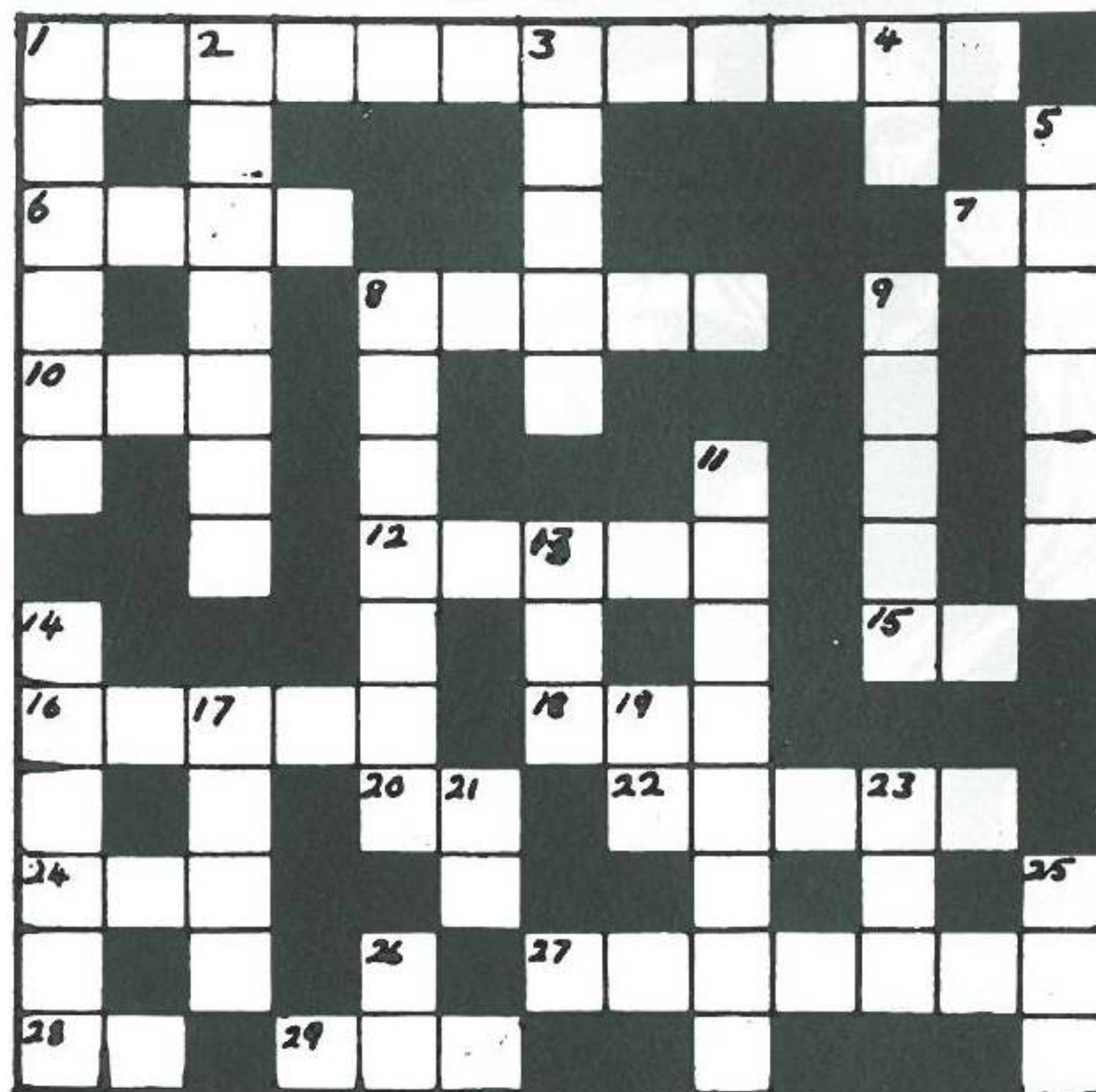
DEvised BY
MARTIN O'SHEA

ACROSS

1. This forward, who is still very prominent in the game, led Kilkenny to their last All-Ireland senior hurling title in 1983 (4,8).
6. These do much to help eliminate controversy with regard to goals scored in hurling and football (4).
7. Kilkenny's left full back and captain in their 1986 Leinster senior hurling final win. Initials (1,1).
8. John was right full forward in the St. Finbarr's team that won the All-Ireland club senior football title on St. Patrick's Day (5).
10. A popular and shorthand version for "or nearest offer" (1,1,1).
12. Cork's tally of goals in their Munster senior hurling semi-final replay win over Limerick during the summer (5).
15. Scorer of Cork's late, late goal in their provincial senior hurling final draw with Tipperary in July. Initials (1,1).
16. Manus was a top scoring hero for Donegal in their All-Ireland under-21 football final replay win over Kerry in June (5).
18. Every forward likes to land a of scores in a match (3).
20. Tipperary's hurling captain of 1987. Initials (1, 1).
22. Everyone hopes for this type of game (5).
24. Nerves can be this in a tight finish in a competitive tie (3).
27. Many argue that the provincial senior football title that is the hardest to win is this one (7).
28. Initials of one of hurling's greatest-ever score-getters and a long-time regular in modern times with Kilkenny (1,1).
29. Popular form of a Christian name, as used by Clare hurling defender, Loughnane, for instance (3).

DOWN

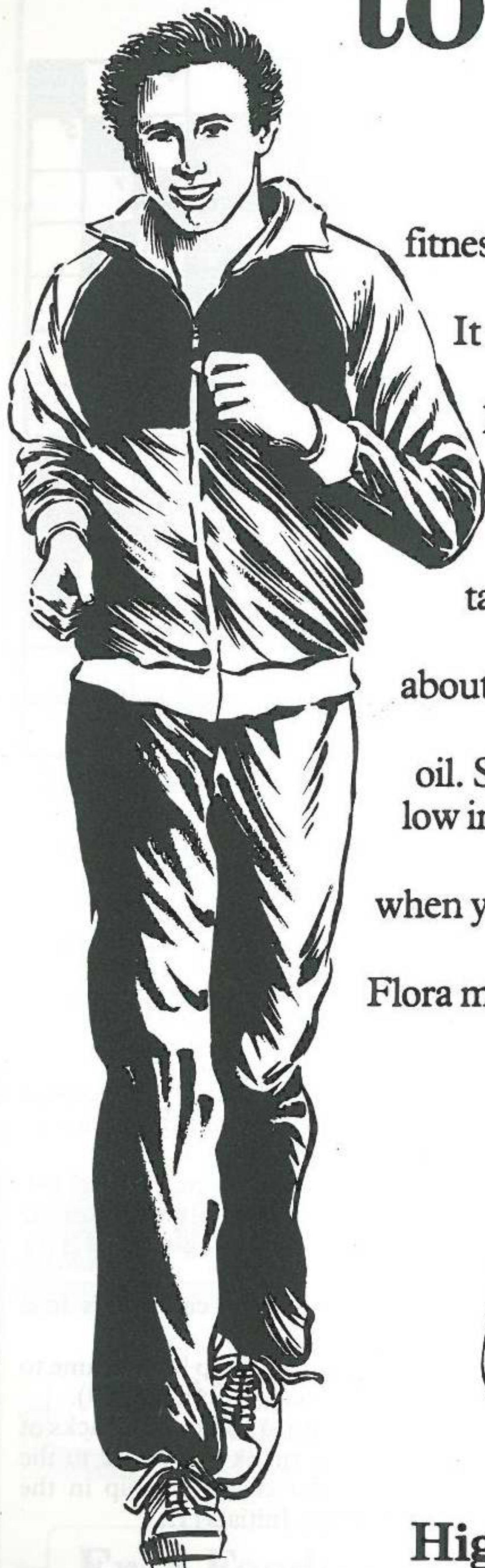
1. Winners of the All-Ireland "B" hurling title this year (6).
2. Christian name of Galway's Cunningham, who scored 3-3 in his team's Ford Hurling League semi-final win over Waterford in April (7).
3. And another Christian name — this time of Cork football half back Cahalane (5).
4. Initials of Kilkenny's right half back in their Leinster semi-final win over Wexford in June (1,1).



5. Galway's captain in this year's Ford Hurling League final win (1,5).
8. This player is usually pencilled in for a position when there is a doubt about a regular due to injury as the position remains open, (1,1,5).
9. One of the greatest-score-getters in football, and a Ford League medalist this year (1,4).
11. Probably Tipperary's best known hurler for some years past (1,7).
13. This will suffice for right full back (1,1,1).
14. Wexford's left full forward in their unsuccessful Leinster senior hurling semi-final against Kilkenny in June (1,5).
17. A boring match is often called "just one long . . ." (4).
19. Waterford's captain in their Ford Hurling League semi-final against Galway in the spring. Initials (1,1).
21. The common style for Saint (2).
23. A personality-plus player is often called this in a team's pack (3).
25. Mayo's senior football championship hopes came to this when least expected in July at Castlebar (3).
26. Initials of one of hurling's outstanding full backs of modern times who made a quick comeback to the Limerick team in the senior championship in the summer after health worries. Initials (1,1).

●SOLUTION ON PAGE 24

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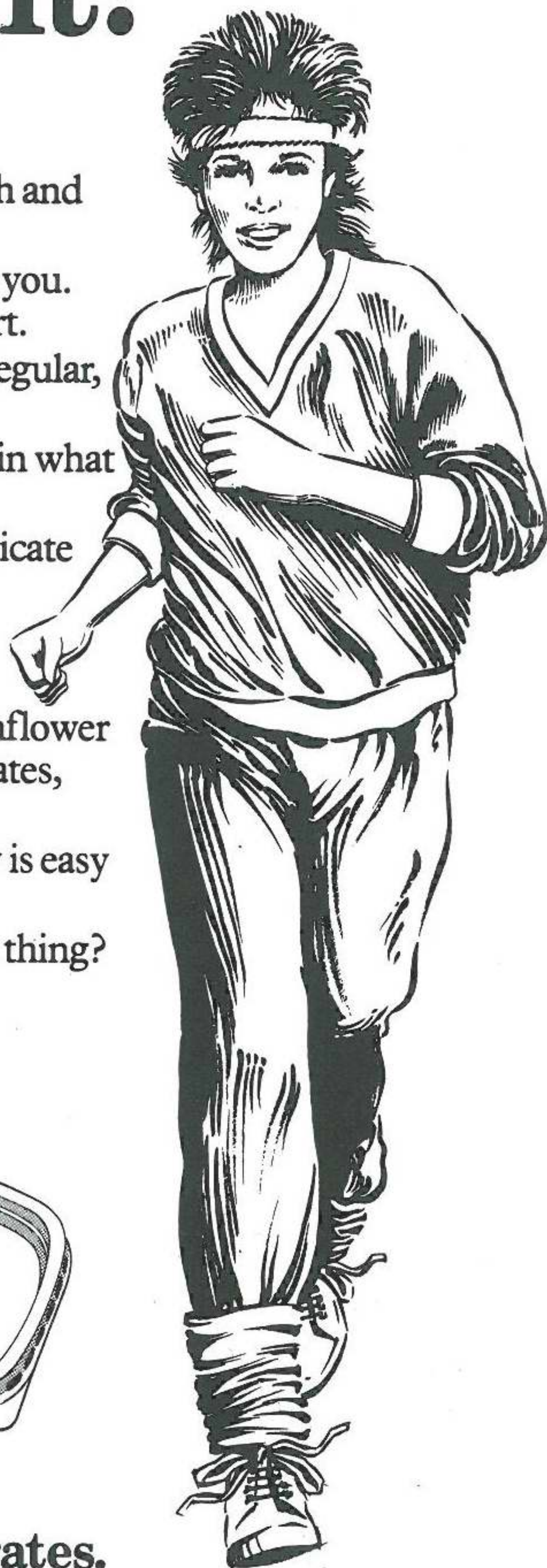
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JOHN FENTON

SCORE TAKER SUPREME

By Noel Horgan



IT is rather remarkable considering the poor form of their attack throughout the campaign that Cork came so close to achieving a record sixth provincial title on the trot this year. Apart from some individual excellence, most notably from Teddy McCarthy, the Cork forwards seldom managed to function fluently as a unit in either game against Limerick and they were less effective in the drawn provincial decider with Tipperary.

In the replay McCarthy again sparkled on the forty yards mark but the attack lacked real thrust and penetration and Cork were unable to put the game beyond Tipp's reach when they dominated matters for most of the first-half.

Jimmy Barry-Murphy's retirement was clearly an incalculable loss and the manner in which the Cork attack was adversely affected by his absence served to emphasise the significance of his contribution to the Leesiders success in recent times. Yet, Cork were within seconds of retaining their Munster crown until Nicky English popped up to score an equalising point which saved the day for the youthful Tipp side and presented them with an opportunity to use their superior stamina to grab three goals in the last ten minutes of extra-time and bring the honours to the Premier county for the first time since 1971.

Had Tipp faltered, there is little doubt that they would have laid the blame squarely on the shoulders of

Cork's immaculate midfielder John Fenton whose scoring feats this season enabled him to take a prominent place among the greatest sharpshooters in the history of hurling.

In all, Fenton bagged a massive tally of 1-38 from four championship outings and it is fair to say that without him, Cork's dethronement would have been of a far more ignominious nature. His goal in the replay with Limerick was one of the finest ever seen and will forever remain etched in the memory of those privileged to witness it.

It came after Tomás Mulcahy pushed a ball into Fenton's path about 35 metres from where the Midleton man knocked it forward before unleashing a powerful drive from the ground which rose rapidly and then dipped delightfully to sink into the net leaving Limerick's ultra-competent custodian Tommy Quaid stranded. No other player in the game at the moment could have executed such a spectacular strike from that distance.

The score illustrated John's matchless expertise and caused one to reflect ruefully on the folly of previous sets of mentors which ensured that the gifted 32-year-old was forced to wait until 1984 to gain regular inclusion on Cork's first fifteen. Prior to that, Fenton, whose link with the senior side stretches back as far as 1976, when he won an All-Ireland medal as a substitute, was indeed the victim of some very rough justice.

Unfairly accused of lacking steel, he was never given ample

●TO PAGE 43



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JOE HENNESSY – ONE OF THE MOST EXCITING CAMPAIGNERS IN MODERN DAY HURLING

Profiled by Paul Ryan

JOE Hennessy has had a long innings with the Kilkenny senior hurling team, and over the years he has turned in many top-class displays. The passage of time, however, is resting lightly on his shoulders, judging by the high quality of his work against Offaly in the recent Leinster final.

This was the James Stephens' club man in his most commanding mood. There was a spring to his step that belied the fact he was 31 last January. He went about his task not only with his customary skill and industry, but with an infectious enthusiasm. It was non-stop effort to good effect all the way, and during the closing stages he was playing with the same vigour and drive as in the early stages.

Time and time again the Noreside right full was to be seen nipping in to cut out the danger to his own citadel, and then initiating attacks at the other end with long and deft clearances.

I would not go so far as to say that Kilkenny would not have won without Hennessy, but certainly they would have had an even steeper hill to climb than was the case on Leinster final day had he been absent. His contribution all through, but especially in that trying first half when Kilkenny were under such strong pressure at the back, was incalculable.

However, this is what we have now come to expect from Hennessy, such has been the consistently high standard of his hurling over the years. Centre field, half back, full back line or on occasions in the attack, it has all been the same to Joe. He mastered all roles to a degree that has made him one of the most valued members of the county senior team over the past ten years or so.

Hennessy is a product of Kilkenny C.B.S., and won an All-Ireland minor medal at right half back in 1973. The versatility that has marked his play as a senior was in evidence in his days in under-21 games.

Joe was right half forward in the Kilkenny team that lifted the All-Ireland Under-21 crown for the second time in 1975 and two years later collected his second such national medal in the grade — but at No. 5.

EARLY ACTION

The stylish hurler from the Kilkenny city club was early in the action at national senior finals level as well. He went in as a substitute when Kilkenny played a draw with Clare in the 1976 National League final, but he did not appear in the replay, won by the Leinster county.

That was to prove merely a “stop light” along the road to success for Joe Hennessy. He was at centre field when Kilkenny next won the League in 1982 and collected another medal for the winter competition in 1986 when his contribution — including the excellent marking of danger man Joe Cooney — at right half back was enormous in the final win over Galway.

In senior championship hurling, there has been the agony and the delight for Hennessy. He was in the side that lost to a great Cork side in 1978. A year later, it was joy all the way for Hennessy and Kilkenny as Galway were beaten for the Liam McCarthy Cup, with the James Stephens' man to the fore at midfield.

He was still at midfield when the title was next won in 1982, but had moved back to right half back for the successful defence of the trophy



the following September.

Understandably, Joe has been regularly in favour with the Bank of Ireland All Stars selectors over the years. He picked up his fourth trophy in the 1984 selection. Three were won at right half back and one at midfield. More proof that, of the Hennessy versatility.

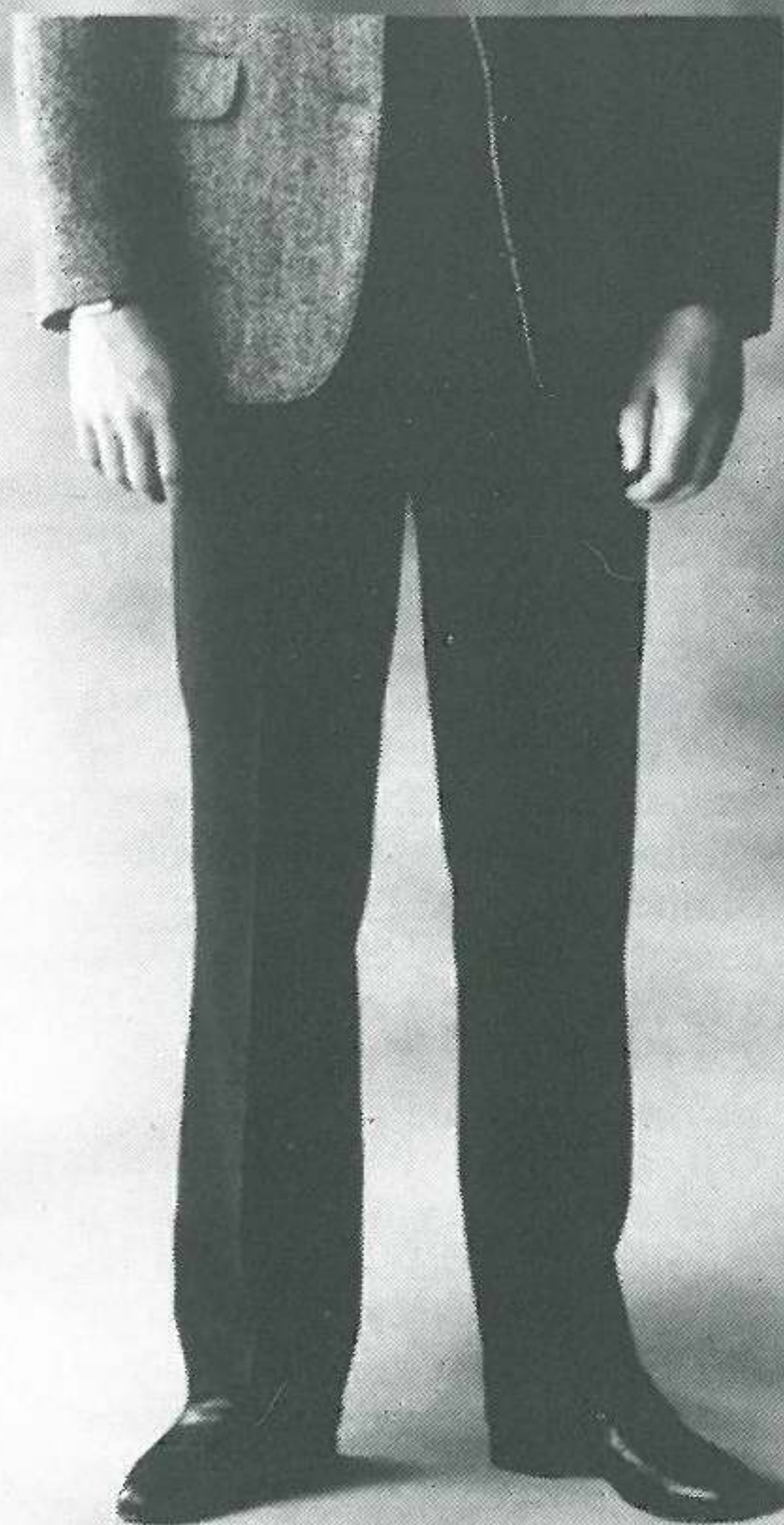
Plenty, then, for Joe Hennessy to look back with pride on during his years in hurling. But while all the honours are worthy indications of his skills and of the part he has played in the hurling scene over the years, time will bring confusion as to what precisely the Kilkenny man has won over the years. Time, however, will not dim the fact that in the past ten years or so, Joe Hennessy has carved out his own niche as one of the most exciting campaigners in modern hurling.

Judging from what we saw of Hennessy in recent times, he is not ready yet to move over and make way for young blood. He has shown that he can still sparkle at the highest level with the best around and that he is also enjoying his hurling as much as ever.

All this must give encouragement to followers of Kilkenny as they anxiously await the latest McCarthy Cup summit. With Hennessy in there pulling his weight so effectively, the county's chances must be enhanced no end.



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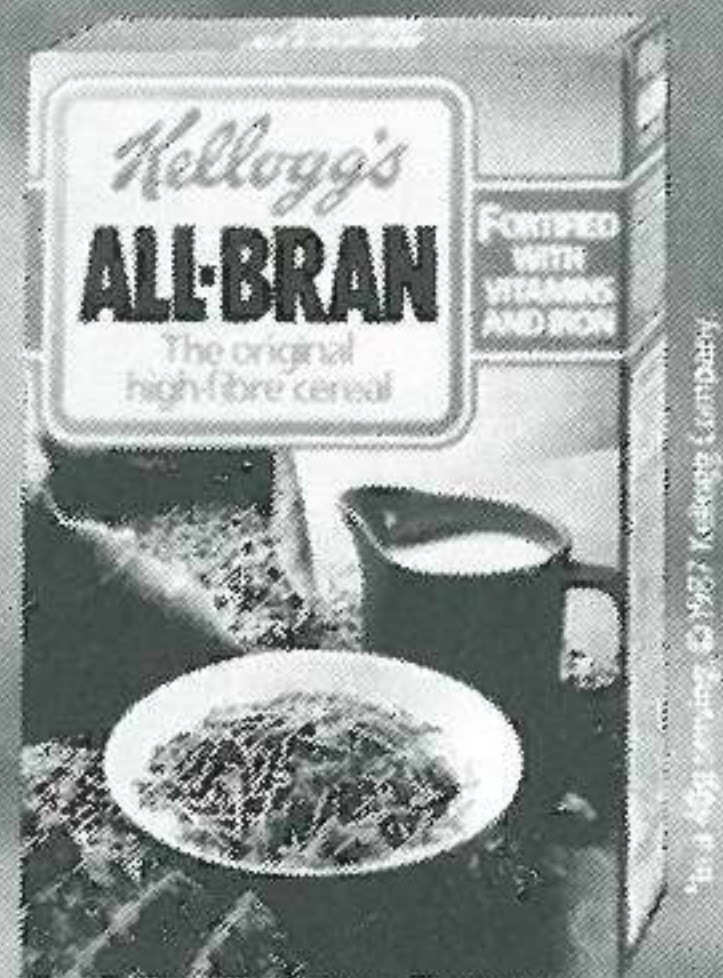
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BERNIE Farrelly, a sixteen year old Kildare schoolgirl, stepped into the shoes of superstar Angela Downey when she clinched the 1987 Gradam Tailte title. Angela had earlier decided not to defend the laurels which she had worn with such distinction.

Bernie was introduced to the Kildare team during the National League campaign and is a player with an exciting future. She showed her competitive edge in holding off a strong challenge from Kilkenny's Claire Jones.

The Gradam Tailte competition has failed to find favour with the majority of our top class players. Dublin was represented by a junior graded player and Cork did not bother to send a contestant. Whether the competition can be re-vamped to reach its original goal remains to be seen.

Bishopstown proved at Feile na nGael that the team with star players is not necessarily the best. Featuring in the Division One final for the third time, they fielded twelve girls unknown by reputation even within their own county. However, instead of waiting for a star player to turn match winner, each girl knuckled down to her task and brought the trophy to the Cork City club for the first time.

The standard displayed at Feile was not on par with previous years. Hopefully, this trend will be reversed when the 1988 Feile is staged in Laois-Offaly. Claire Lynch, a Galway player with a neat style carried off the Feile Skills competition. Red-headed Anne O'Dwyer (Clare) was a close second. Nicola Moore (Dublin) took third spot. Sinead Millea (Kilkenny), who looked very well on the ball but made a few errors, was a good fourth.

The most pleasing aspect of the provincial minor championships was the emergence of Armagh in Ulster. Based on the successful Keady club, Armagh made a historic breakthrough. With ten of

the team eligible next season, Armagh will be looking for greater things. The strong counties of this grade, Galway, Cork and Dublin, maintained their grip in the other provinces.

The winning minor teams of 1983/85 proved that they are maturing satisfactorily as Cork eased their way through the Munster Junior championship. Kildare and Carlow are the two top sides in Leinster. Tyrone improved as the season progressed to challenge Armagh for Ulster honours. None of the other Connacht counties have reached the stage of seriously testing Galway or Roscommon.

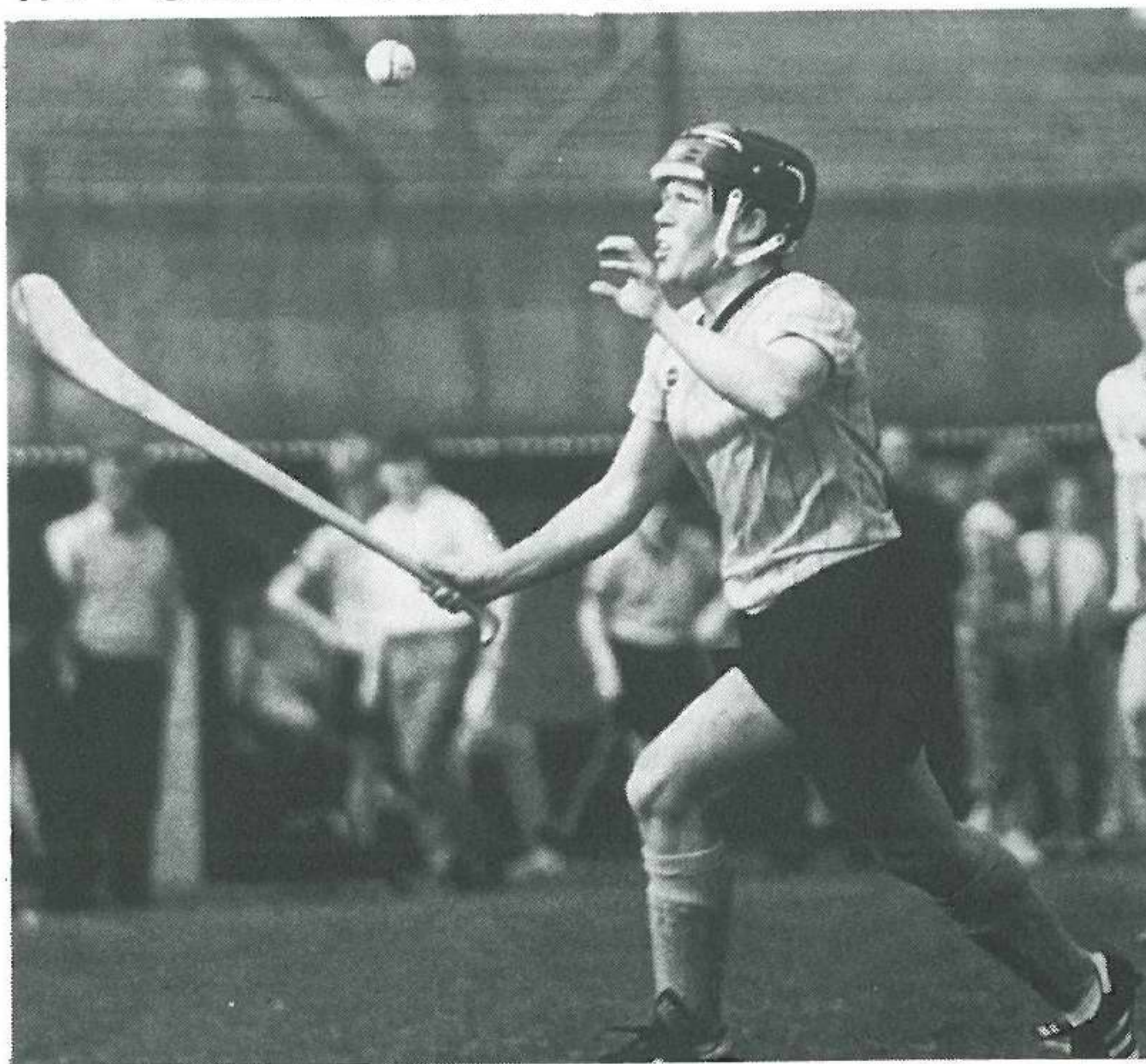
Will Angela Downey be the dominant figure of the 1987 Senior Championship? In the National League final she exhibited all her class and skill and indicated that she

has not lost her appetite for success. At the time of writing several counties remain in the race but it is hard to visualise any of them lowering Kilkenny's colours.

The withdrawal of Tipperary and Down from the senior championship was a major disappointment. Emigration was a factor in both decisions. Failure to find adequate replacements reflects a shallow well of talent. The extent of the ground to be made up in both counties may be measured by the lack of success at junior and minor levels.

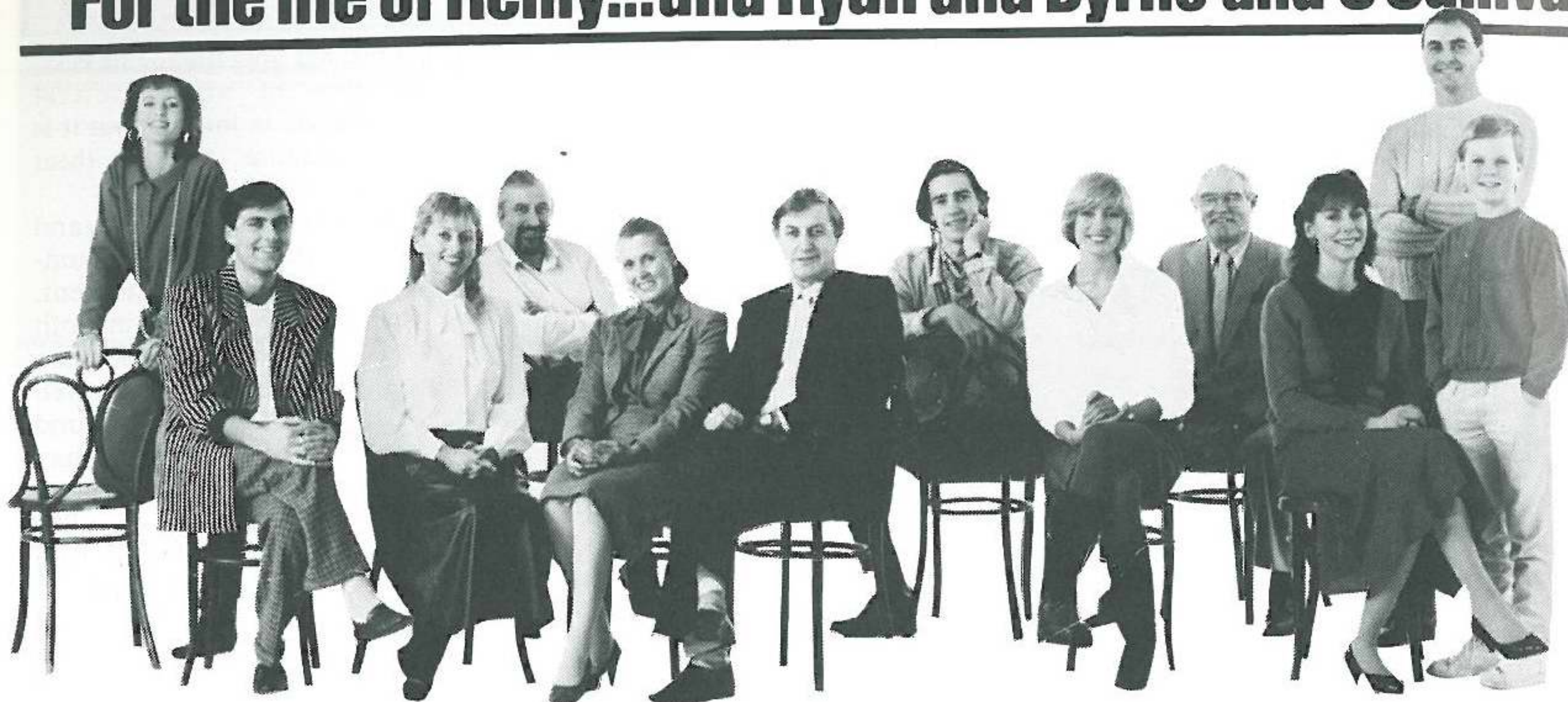
There is talk of Down and Tipperary seeking regrading. It would be a pity to see Tipperary, who have contested six All-Ireland senior finals, taking a backward step. Hopefully, the heroic deeds of their hurlers in the Munster championship will inspire the Tipperary girls to emulate them.

IN FULL FLIGHT...



Angela Downey collects the ball in full flight during the recent National League Final.

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THE IRISH TIMES

"MICKY" WALSH ENJOYS A MARVELLOUS SEASON

THE name Michael Walsh in the context of handball conjures up thoughts of a sprightly young Kilkennyman who has been the dominant figure in the game these last few years. There is another Michael Walsh, however, who has been playing a significant role both as a player and administrator for over twenty years. A native of Roscommon Town he has come to the forefront this season with the winning of two All-Ireland Senior titles.

It was the realisation of a dream for the Connacht player, who is normally referred to as "Micky" and it also bridged the gaps that existed since his minor victories in 1970 and junior success in 1976. There was general acclaim amongst fans when he made the breakthrough. Not only in the context of victory itself but as a recognition for the superior sportsmanship, which Walsh displays in victory or defeat.

Walsh made his bit of history in the All-Ireland 40 x 20 campaign and while his namesake "Duxie" was not around to contest the final stages having conceded a walk over to Greg Sheridan of Cavan in the semi-final the merits of the new champions victory could not be decried. Facts were proving that Walsh was enjoying a marvellous season.

In the Connacht championship he gave early warning that he was in top form by beating the great Mayo veteran, Peadar McGee and followed this with another all star performance against John Herlihy of Cork in the semi-final. When he beat Greg Sheridan of Cavan in the final, the new champion's cup of joy had been filled.

With this victory under his belt, Walsh was supremely confident as he lined out in the handball championship and after a number of outstanding performances annexed this title also.

His All-Ireland final clash with Tom O'Rourke of Kildare in early July will rank amongst the epics of handball. It also demonstrates the even mixture of aggression, skill and determination that comprise the new champion. O'Rourke opened in style and was placing his shots so well that Walsh could do no better than return them to the front wall, whereby the Kildareman would duly score an ace with a butt or a side passing shot. The Kildareman was in full control as he went on to win the first game 21-16 and seemed to have the match in safe keeping as he led 18-12 in the second. But Walsh refused to give up. He turned on a great defence and went about totting up the aces himself. He eventually won the second game and boosted by that, went on to win the third and thereby, the title. **It was a superb feat by Walsh, and a great boost for himself, county and province. Well done Micky.**

The performance by some of the young players in the 40 x 20 and handball championships have been a revelation and augur well for the future evolution of the game. Without a doubt the kudos must go to the young Louth player Peter McAuley, who has been to the fore in the minor and junior championships. He has won titles in the 40 x 20 and handball grades and has qualified to participate in senior ranks next season. McAuley is certainly a very attractive player and demonstrates a maturity in his

play that will stand him in good stead in senior ranks.

Meath's Tom Sheridan, who figured prominently in minor ranks last year climbed an Everest by winning a senior title. He joined up with former junior champion James McGovern and they produced a number of scintillating performances before accounting for Limerick's famed Quish brothers, Tom and John in the final.

A review of the season's outstanding performers thus far, would not be complete without reference to the fabled Pat Kirby who recently won the USHA Handball Masters Singles championship for the seventh time in eight years. It was a magnificent feat by any standards and his seven titles is an achievement that is hardly ever likely to be equalled. In fact, back in 1982 he became the first player to win a third consecutive Masters Singles title. But success is a ritual for Kirby.

In late April, Kirby won the USHA Invitational Masters Singles title in Albuquerque (New Mexico) and followed this with a doubles victory at the prestigious Annual Gateway tournament in St. Louis (Missouri). It was an extra bonus for the Clareman this year when he also took the doubles title, an achievement that is put into context when it is realised that he is now 51 years old and would in fact, be eligible to compete in the Golden Masters Championships. But Kirby has given unstinted service to handball over the last quarter of a century. In America and back in Ireland, he has amassed titles and achieved records that may never be surpassed. Moladh dhuit Pat.



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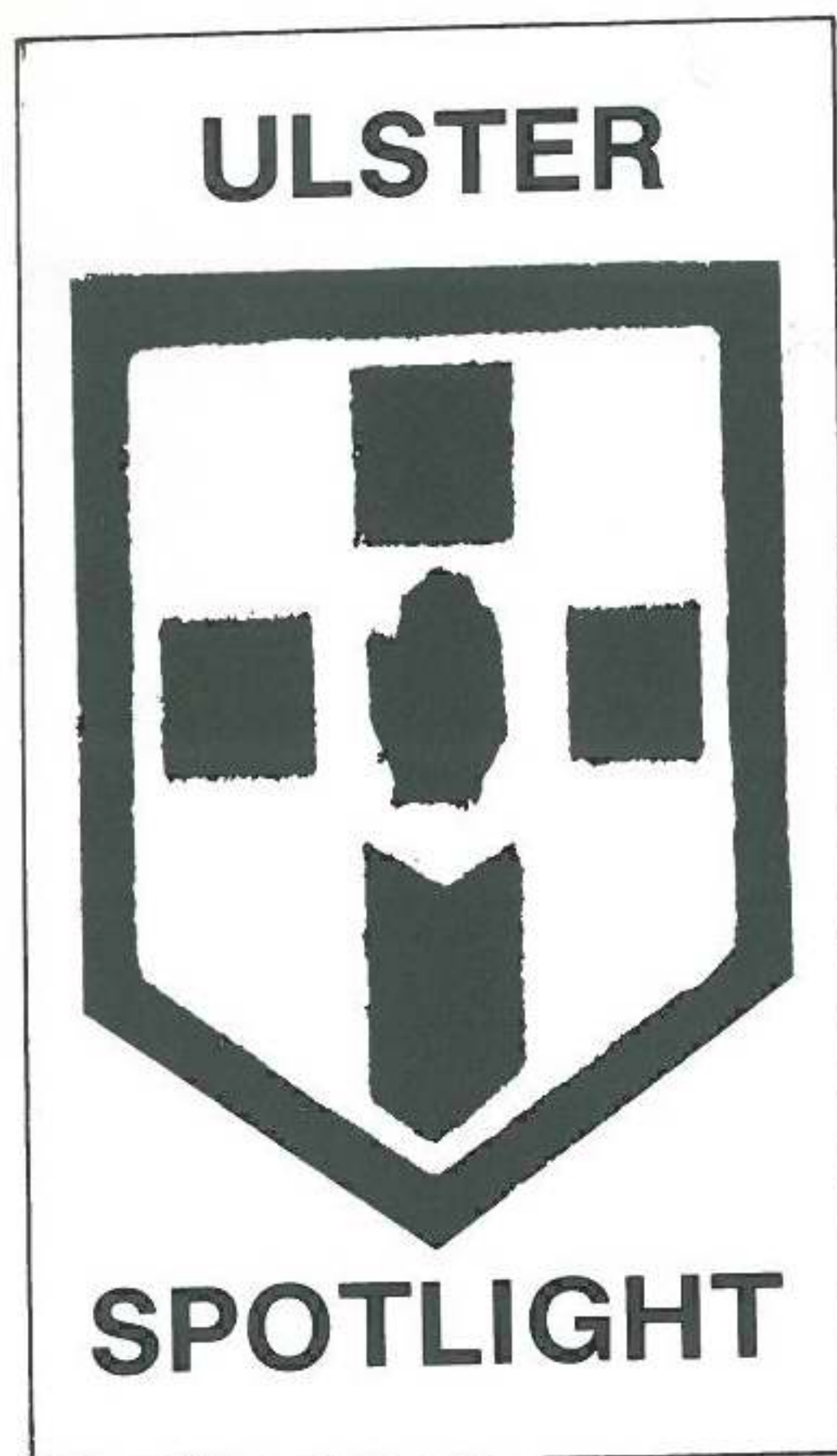
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ANTRIM HAVE HURLERS TO FOLLOW IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF LAOIS AND OFFALY

says Padraig O'Baoighill

on the Bank of Ireland All-Star trip. His two brothers Eddie and Brian were previously honoured.

Offaly and Laois have made the breakthrough in Leinster to be formidable opposition for any hurling county. Antrim have the hurlers to follow in their footsteps. But when will we see the breakthrough? It would be difficult to see a Northern hurling team dethroning the winners of the replayed Munster final? Counties with remarkable hurling skills such as Antrim must get more competition if they are to take the major awards in the senior championships.

Junior Hurling:

In the Ulster J.H.C. Monaghan took the laurels and compensated

in a small way for the unexpected defeat of the senior footballers rated by many as the best team in Ulster. Many hurling festivals take place in the province. In Newcastle over 600 juveniles took part in their 14th Annual Féile na nGael while Belfast hosted a very attractive Festival of Hurling. The All-Ireland special minor hurling competitions for weaker counties is a great help to promote the game in the province.

Ulster Final:

When Derry captured the Ulster crown again on that hot Sunday in July some of their best players were outstanding hurlers. Man of the match Tony Scullion from Ballinascreen is an excellent hurler as are Joe Irwin, Hugh Martin McGurk and big Brian McGilligan

WITH emigration from this country on the increase it was felt that London would be strengthened and could make their way to the semi-final of the All-Ireland S.H.C. Hurling is always tough in London and they put up a great show in Casement Park only to be beaten by five points by the Glensmen. So Antrim went on again as Ulster's hurling representatives and faced Kilkenny in the All-Ireland semi-final.

There are great hurlers in the Glens. Loughgiel and Cushendall have proved their class in the All-Ireland club championships. The McNaughtons, Donnellys, McKillen and others can hold their own with any company. Two Donnellys and McNaughtons scored 3-10 between them in the game with London. At the All-Ireland Féile na nGael in Ennis St. Paul's Belfast won the major competition and in the process defeated teams from the country's stronghold of hurling. In all 84 hurling teams and 32 camogie teams took part and they all paraded through Ennis on the Sunday. Des Donnelly one of the famous Ballycastle brothers was honoured this year as a replacement

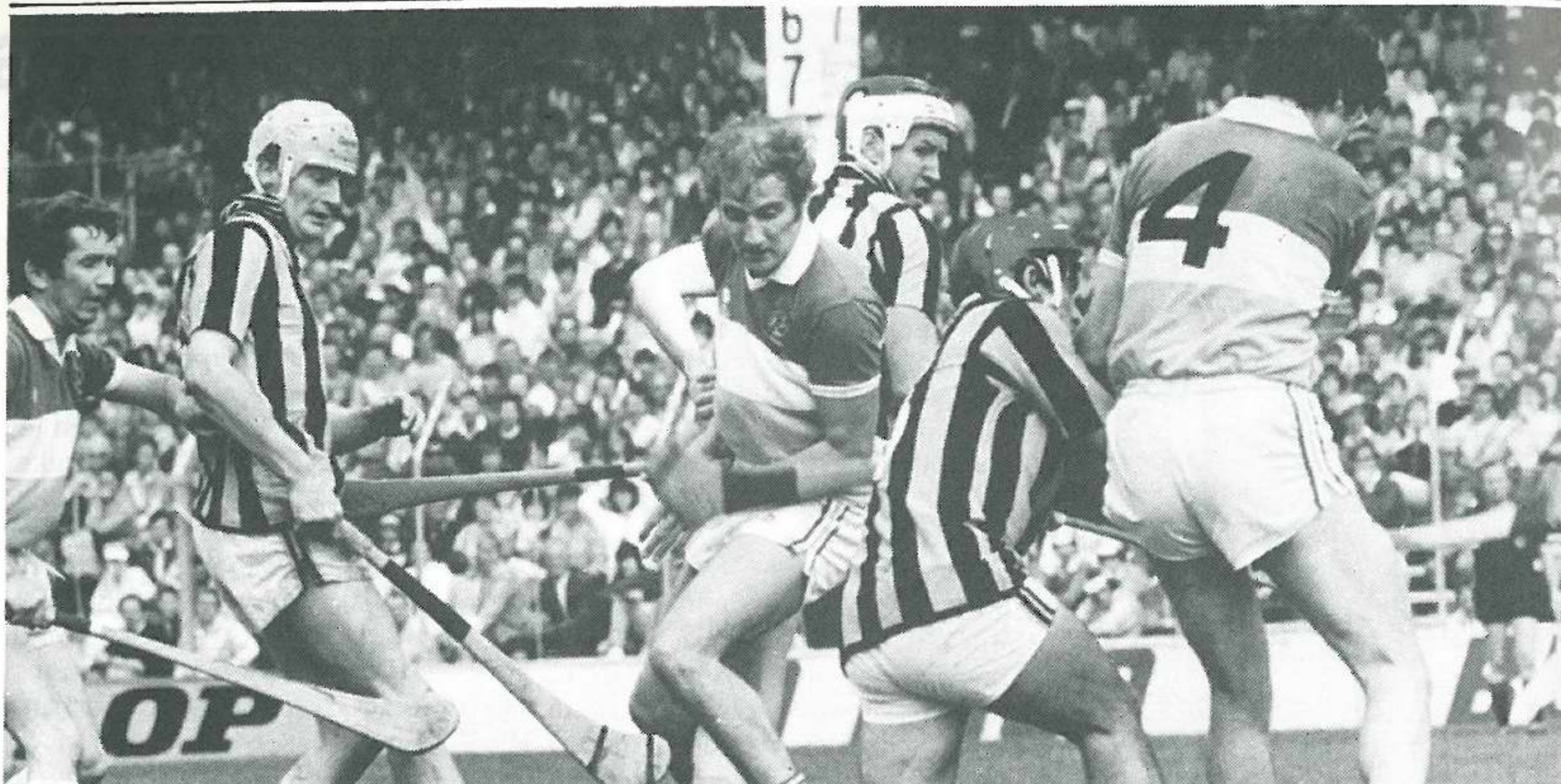
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WHERE'S THE SLIOTHAR?



This picture taken from a recent clash between old rivals Kilkenny and Offaly captures the intensity of Championship Hurling but in this exchange all of the players seem bemused by the absence of the sliothar!

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who starred against the Australians. This was not one of the greatest finals but Derry's consistency all year stood out in the end, with the ever-reliable Dermot McNicholl playing well all year.

With the introduction of McKerr and Kernan the defence resisted heavy pressure and Quinn, Scullion, Irwin and McGurk proved to be on a par with the great Derry defence of '58. Their defence reminded me of McLarnon, Gribben, Breen, Mulholland keeping the Kerry forwards at bay in that year's All-Ireland semi-final in Croke Park. But the present forward line has not a Sean O'Connell.

Minor Final:

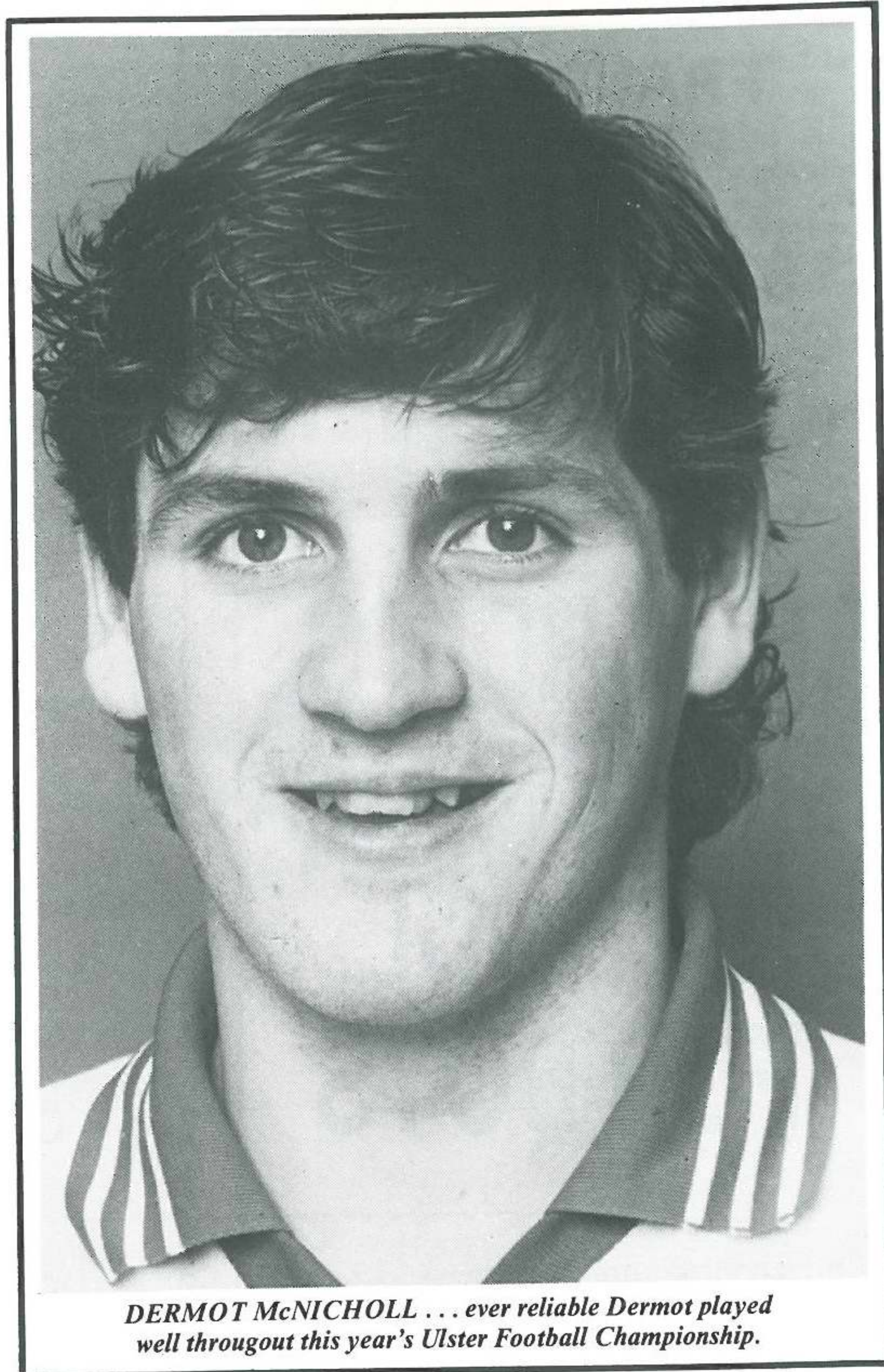
There was at least one bright light in the minor game and that was the display of Larry Duggan of Burren at full-back. Down can look forward in the coming years to solving that problem position on the senior team. Two sons of James McCartan contributed to the victory — James scoring a goal in true McCartan style.

Ó Doirnín:

With only 14 men Armagh went down fighting to the end with some very good displays from McGurk, McQuillan, Skelton, Short and Canavan. In the county the G.A.A. continues to flourish. In Forkhill the new Peadar Ó Doirnín playing field was officially blessed and opened by Cardinal Tomás Ó Fiaich. After celebrating Mass, the Cardinal outlined the history of Ó Doirnín the famous local bard and referred to the splendid setting beneath the Ring of Gullion — a great day for men like Pat Toner who has worked with various committees on this project for years and to local county panelists Des McCoy and Joey Cunningham. The Forkhill club is one of the oldest in the country. It was amalgamated with Mullaghbawn for a while but it is now back on its own with O'Doirnín.

Under 21:

Comhgháirdeachas le Tír



DERMOT McNICHOLL . . . ever reliable Dermot played well throughout this year's Ulster Football Championship.

Chonaill a bhuaigh Craobh faoi 21 agus a thug an corn arís na contae a bhuaigh siad roimhe i 1982. Ba as iar-dheisceart fúrmhór na foirne, cainteoirí Gaelige cuid mhaith acu agus bhí a bhfúrmhór ar an fhoireann mhaith míonúr a bhí acu cúpla bliain ó shoin.

This was a good Donegal Under 21 which beat Kerry in the replay at Hyde Park, Roscommon. Manus Boyle as promising a Donegal

forward as I have seen in years, Barry Cunningham, Barry McGowan, John Connors, John Cunningham, Tom Ryan, Daniel Gallagher and S. Ward will be a great asset to a Donegal senior panel in the years to come. With a good few of the 1982 winning team playing as good as ever we could see Donegal making a serious bid for the championship in '88 as they did in 1983.

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●FROM PAGE 31

opportunity to prove himself and, invariably, when things began to go wrong, Fenton was the first to suffer. Sometimes his treatment seemed justified but it was fairly understandable that he had difficulty in concentrating fully on his task while forever forced to keep an anxious eye out for any movement from the reserve bench.

John seemed set to become a regular in 1979 when he shone in a championship win over Tipp but as Cork struggled and eventually fell to Galway later that year, he predictably, was the first to be whipped off. Again Fenton sparkled against Limerick in the classic League Final replay in 1980 but his maltreatment at the hands of the Cork selectors continued.

John's unfair removal in the '83 final against Kilkenny appeared to be the final straw and rumour spread that he no longer wished to be involved in the inter-county scene. What a tragedy it would have been had Fenton been allowed to fade into obscurity, thus denying purists throughout the country the opportunity to savour his polished skills.

Fate, fortunately, took a hand as Midleton, inspired by Fenton's midfield brilliance, captured the county title four weeks later and he was encouraged to continue in the top flight. His decision signalled the beginning of the glorious revival of his inter-county career as he led Cork to All-Ireland honours, Munster to Railway Cup success and was honoured as the Texaco 'Hurler of the Year.' By 1986 John Fenton had collected his fourth consecutive All-Star award and copious other honours including three Jurys Cork sportstar awards.

Some observers feel that John enjoyed his best ever campaign with Cork this year. Apart from his machine-like accuracy from frees, John paraded his vast repertoire of skills in general play, especially in the replay with Limerick and the drawn encounter with Tipperary. In the latter game, Fenton's maturity and confidence was

obvious as, despite poor support, he employed shrewd positional sense and crisp economical striking to counter the exuberant efforts of Tipp's Joe Hayes and Colm Bonner and kept Cork's flag flying in the middle.

His deeds then prompted the following tribute from Tipp selector, Theo English, himself a star midfielder in the 'sixties: *'I have no doubt that Cork would not be winning so many games if Fenton was to play on the opposite side. Clare would have won last year if they had*

him in their ranks and so would Galway in the All-Ireland final. He is so dominant.'

Tipp's win over Cork in the replay suggests that the eternal war for supremacy between Munster's hurling giants has, at last, begun to turn in favour of the Premier county. This is a very young Tipp side which is capable of further improvement and for the first time since the early seventies, Cork are unlikely to start as favourites for provincial honours next year.



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QUIZ ANSWERS... QUIZ ANSWERS... QUIZ ANSWERS

1. Limerick, who won a final that was not played until 1923. 2. 19 times. 3. Twice — 1923 championship and 1980. 4. No. 5. Joe Connolly, of Galway. 6. The late Christy Ring. He led Cork to their final wins of 1946, 1952 and 1953. 7. Four: 1975 (Kilkenny beat Galway), 1979 (Kilkenny beat Galway again), 1981 (Offaly beat Galway) and 1985 (Offaly beat Galway again). 8. True. Dublin lost that 1921 decider to Limerick. 9. Noel Skehan, who marked his debut in a senior final by leading Kilkenny to their win over Cork. 10.

16th time.

THE EIGHTIES

1. Damien Martin (Offaly) and Michael Conneely (Galway). 2. Seanie O'Leary, who scored two goals, and a point, against Offaly in the Cork win at Thurles. 3. Ten points. 4. Galway, beaten by Offaly by 2-12 to 0-15. 5. A little twist to this question in that Kilkenny, Offaly and Cork all share the honours with two titles apiece.

MINOR REVIEW

1. Offaly made their debut in an All-Ireland minor hurling final. 2.

False. Galway won their only title so far in 1983. 3. 1983. 4. 1982. 5. 1981. 6. Michael Mullins, who was a free-scoring left half forward for Cork last season. 7. THE IRISH PRESS Cup. 8. Limerick and Kilkenny played the last draw in a minor final in 1984 at Semple Stadium. The Shannonsiders won the replay at the Thurles venue.

PICTURE PARADE

1. John Henderson (Kilkenny). 2. Kilkenny beat Offaly by 1-11 to 0-12. 3. Brian Cody. 4. Galway. 5. True.

ANSWERS... QUIZ ANSWERS... QUIZ ANSWERS QUIZ

THE sun splits the rocks as I pen these notes high on a headland overlooking the Furbo beach I love so much. I have just read Brendan Kennelly's Tribute to Ballybunion in the *Irish Independent* series "A Place in My Heart." I always enjoy what Brendan writes, whether it is a tribute to his old school in Tarbert and the beautiful learning atmosphere created by the headmistress or the Ballylongford he grew up in and still adores, or the high fielding and long kicking of Eddie Dowling who starred for Kerry in the '40's. My sister Eithne, who married a Ballylongford man, the late Brendan Creedon and lives in Tarbert, brought me to a club game in Ballybunion in 1948 and I had the privilege of seeing the great Eddie play. Truly I have never seen a better fielder of a football.

Here in Galway in that period, we had a man rather similar in stature, strength and ability, named Tom Sullivan of Oughterard. Tom is dead now, but there is no Galway footballer save Sean Purcell who has the same folk hero image as Sullivan. I idolised Tom Sullivan and will never forget his displays for Galway in '45 and '48. Now that's a fairly long-winded intro. to my very last Junior Desk.

The main talking point of the year to date has been the return of Tipperary as a hurling power again. They have been coming for years. So near in '84. Never too far behind very good club teams all the time. Good under-age teams like Mayo and Cork in football. But 1987 has brought them back and they will be a hurling force for years to come. For that success which was accompanied by a share of luck, full credit to "Babs" Keating and his co-selectors Donie Nealon and Theo English and to a superb team excellently marshalled by captain Richard Stakelum, a man who has also become so articulate on telly.

Speaking of telly "The Sunday Game" continues to improve and is now a marvellous programme that I

simply wouldn't miss for anything. The analysis is good but I do think the Man of the Match award for the Munster final replay should have gone to a Tipp man. After all, it was Tipp's first title in 16 years and as Richard Stakelum said "*Tipp's hurling famine is over.*" Every plum should have gone Tipp's way that day. So it was a wee bit parochial of Donal O'Grady to select Teddy McCarthy — great as he undoubtedly was. I may be wrong, but Teddy to me is more natural at



Richard Stakelum, Tipperary captain ... "Tipp's hurling famine is over".

the big ball game. And my man of the match would have been Pat Fox in the right corner of Tipp's attack. He shoots points as naturally as Billy Fitzpatrick used to do for Kilkenny or Jimmy Doyle used to do for the Blue and Gold. No dilly dallying or a need for a second look at the posts. Sometimes no need to look at them at all.

Everything Nicky English does bears the hallmark of class. That booted goal the first day is my G.A.A. memory of '87. His goal the second day was equally special. It is nice to see them back but no plaudits at all to their cornerback's unceremonious bumping of Tony O'Sullivan into the back of the net after the disallowed goal which must

have been a close if not doubtful decision. Tony was making his way out and I loathe these off the ball intimidatory acts geared to cow forwards. For me this was the only blemish in a great Tipp success.

I admire Johnny Clifford greatly. He has overcome many setbacks to lead Cork back to the top, many of a personal nature. But he did himself less than justice in abusing the referee's performance after the game. There are times to shut one's mouth. One has to be gracious. The moral is, think twice before giving quotations after being beaten. And never give one if you feel sore. Better to sleep on your thoughts then.

I must talk about the two Michaels. We still miss you Michael O'Hehir, but having said that, it is only fair to state that Michael O Muirheartaigh from Kerry is doing great too. How he keeps it going, never missing a beat, astonishes me. Poor Donie Nealon will never wear an overcoat in public again! Nice to see Jimmy Magee doing G.A.A. at last and to see Mick Dunne not being ignored to the same extent that he was. No G.A.A. media-man I know has a greater feel for the G.A.A. than Mick, with the possible exception of Paddy Downey (Irish Times), whose report of the drawn Munster hurling final was masterly. Both Paddy and Mick will criticise the G.A.A. when that criticism is deserved.

And the G.A.A. certainly deserves criticism these days. But the channel for me is by way of motions etc. Certainly it was embarrassing to be a G.A.A. member at times lately. The games are and should be our first priority. Now and always. Rock concerts etc., can be held in the Phoenix Park or Lansdowne Road or Leopardstown. Never again in Croke Park at the expense of our games.

A few other comments on events of the summer to date. Nice to see Derry re-emerge in Ulster and Cavan also back in the big time. That great gentleman of Gaelic football, Jim McKeever certainly deserves credit

●OVERLEAF

for much of Derry's success. Good too to see Donegal win the U-21 crown. I saw them draw with Kerry in Tuam and in Manus Boyle at full-forward they have a pledge of quality. And for Derry no one did more to inspire them to an Ulster title than that human dymano Dermot McNicholl. The Limerick U-21 hurlers are another team to watch, as Limerick come to the fore in the years ahead. In Connacht I was thrilled to see my own county win all three titles in Connacht — the Senior, U-21 and Minor titles. Mayo were shattered to lose both Connacht titles to Galway in Castlebar on Connacht final day. They have a very loyal support who outnumbered Galway by at least 3 to 1. On that occasion no one did better than young John Fallon of Tuam Stars to win the day for Galway. Mayo must wait another year at least.

For years now we have been reviewing G.A.A. books for Junior Desk. So we will keep up the habit to the end:-

(1) **G.A.A. Coaching News:** Price £1. Articles from Br. O'Grady, Mike Power, Eddie Keher, Niall Moyna, Tommy Moran, and Fr. Seamus Gardiner. Can be got at the G.A.A. Shop in Croke Park.

(2) **The Clear Air Boys:** An East Kerry G.A.A. History by Donal Hickey and Tony Leen is the history of the East Kerry G.A.A. Board. I received my copy from Kerry Chairman Sean Kelly, a man for whom I have great admiration. Tony Leen is a staff journalist with "The Kingdom", Killarney. Write to him for details of price etc. It is a lovely book. Many gems with all East Kerry clubs getting space.

(3) **Bohernabreena Jubilee Book 1937-87:** This is Joe McNally's club and Sean Doherty is their coach and the club is really coming to the forefront now. Details of the commemorative booklet from Willie Roche, Jubilee Committee Secretary, 147 St. Maelruan's, Tallaght, Co. Dublin.

(4) **History of Annanough G.A.A. Club (Co. Laois), 1891-1986:** Incorporating the old clubs of Moyanna and Vicarstown, compiled by Tom Murphy. This is a mammoth book of

over 300 big pages. Plenty of social history as well. Price £10 (without postage) from Tom Murphy, c/o Nilands, Tuam Road, Galway. Plenty of photos too.

(5) **Proud and Upright Men:** The early history of the Tuam Stars G.A.A. club up to about 1900. Marvellously researched book. Tells of Parnell's visit to Tuam in 1884. That's in the first chapter. Great stuff. A must. £5 from Noel O'Donoghue, Dublin Road, Tuam, Co. Galway.

(6) **Cork G.A.A. A History 1886-1986:** Written by Jim Cronin. Great

front cover of Pairc Uí Chaoimh. Very statistical. One for any G.A.A. library. Details from Cork County Board Secretary, c/o Pairc Uí Chaoimh, Cork.

I'm going to miss writing about the Cut-Out. This time it is Cork's Ger Cunningham. Last night in the Sacre Coeur Hotel, Salthill, a Clare girl asked me to name the greatest hurling goalkeeper in the game. I hadn't to delay long. Ger Cunningham has been Ireland's best goalkeeper since Noel Skehan.

Finally, one of the first things I ever encouraged young G.A.A. fans to do

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was to keep scrapbooks. I am still a scrapbook fanatic, having now I'm sure 150 scrapbooks of G.A.A. events going back almost 40 years. My current scrapbook is full of Stephen Roche (what a great ambassador for Irish sport). And I'll keep the hobby up. Here's wishing we have a great hurling final occasion as always.

Slán agus beannacht. I really enjoyed Junior Desk. Slán Arís.

FINAL LETTERS

Dear Jack, — I am sad to see that you have finished with Junior Desk in "Gaelic Sport". I would like to thank you most sincerely for all the letters you published for me and my son. I have made many friends through Junior Desk. You were always very fair in your comments about players and games. You would be the right man to have in Croke Park as P.R.O.

The G.A.A. has come in for a lot of abuse over the U-2 concerts in Croke Park. It was the second year in a row that the pitch was in a bad state for Gaelic games. They should lease the pitch to the F.A.I. for the home games for our international soccer games. They would make more money and no damage to the pitch either. But we are still living in the last century with the G.A.A. They are really having a great year with all the draws we are having.

We have seen the end of a great football team in Kerry. It is a wide open championship in hurling and football. Do you have a copy of the hurling league final 1987 programme? Could you send me one if you have it. Best wishes for the future,

Kieran Rosney, 181 Grotto View, Athlone.

The final letter to Junior Desk from one of our most faithful scribes over the years says it all. Thank you Dermot McCarthy. It makes all the work of the last 17 years worthwhile:

Dear Jack,

I am very sorry to learn that "Junior Desk" is coming to an end. I first wrote to you in 1975. Through "Junior Desk" I made contact with programme collectors all over

Ireland. I now have a fine collection of programmes, yearbooks etc. These include programmes of every All-Ireland final (hurling and football) involving my native Cork since 1947. I also have the 1945 football final programme. In addition I managed to get a complete set of 1984 Centenary county SHC and SFC final programmes.

One of the great things about "Junior Desk" was that it put me in touch with G.A.A. fans, young and old. I am pleased to say that I still correspond with people I first wrote to twelve years ago. It is as if we are all

members of one big family.

"Junior Desk" may fade away but its memory will live on in the minds of those of us who were honoured to be associated with the column. You can indeed have pride in what "Junior Desk" has achieved.

Thanks for the memory,

Sincerely,

Dermot McCarthy, Carbery, 20 Fairfield Road, Bath, England.

(Thank you, Kieran, for your very complimentary comments. As usual your letter contains many words of wisdom! J.M.)

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GER CUNNINGHAM Cork

GER, who was 26 last month, is unquestionably one of the greatest goalkeepers of all time in hurling. He first stepped into the Cork senior team as a teenager in the autumn of 1980, and over the years since then he has measured up

superbly to the most serious examinations in the white-heat of top-class competition.

The six-foot St. Finbarr's Club man graduated to the senior ranks after winning All-Ireland minor medals in 1978 and 1979. His collection of awards as a senior, which includes two All-Ireland championship medals, a National League souvenir, three Bank of

Ireland All Stars trophies, and the Texaco Hurler of the Year award for 1986, helps to underline just what a degree of excellence and consistency he has maintained in almost seven years at the top.

Ger is courageous, alert, cool under pressure, and his puck-out is very long, as befits a man who last year took the All-Ireland Poc-Fada title over the Cooley Mountains for the third year in succession.

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