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GAA

GAELIC SPORT

THE CHOICE OF THE STARS

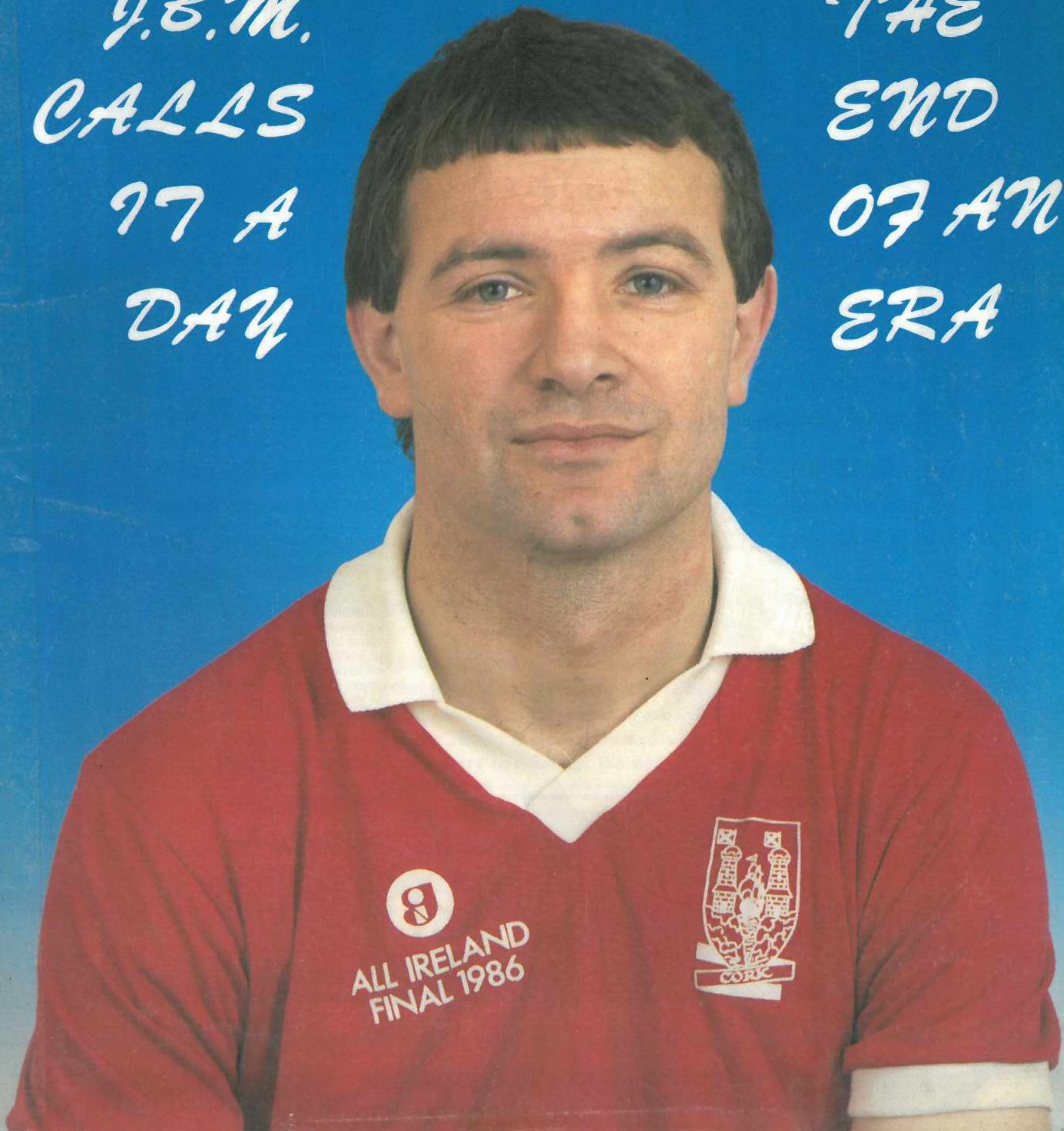
IRELAND'S LEADING GAELIC GAMES MAGAZINE SINCE 1958

SUMMER EDITION, 1987

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COVER PHOTO: It is fitting that on the front cover of this issue we should feature Jimmy Barry Murphy. Whether playing for the 'Barrs or Cork or for his country as a representative of the Bank of Ireland All-Stars Jimmy never gave less than 100% effort. Apart from his obvious genius as a hurler Jimmy was the epitome of a sportsman — a fine example for youngsters to both admire and try to emulate. We wish you every happiness in your retirement Jimmy and on behalf of all our readers we thank you for the many thrilling memories that you have left us.

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Vol. 30 No. 2 Summer 1987

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THE NEWS IS NOT ALL BAD

IT'S a strange old world to be sure. Open your daily paper or switch on your T.V. and what do you get every time . . . doom, gloom, wars, strikes and much more. But do you notice that the news always seems to be bad or even worse than bad, if that's possible. Some days you'd wonder why you ever got out of bed.

But for followers of Gaelic games there is always one topic that keeps us sane in this mad world . . . we always have the games to provide us with endless discussion.

Was Ring better than Mackey? Is Jack O'Shea better than Mick O'Connell? Is the present Kerry team the best ever? How about the Down men of '60 and '61 or the Dub's of the mid-seventies? The questions are both endless and unanswerable. But that doesn't inhibit the discussion.

And then there are the sports columnists. They are always good for a laugh. Day after day, evening after evening, they try to dig up some incident or other and proceed to blow it up out of all proportion . . . and most times it's the good old G.A.A. that gets the snide comments.

However let us not be too hard on these poor souls. What would you do if you were in their boots or shoes, with a sports editor breathing down your neck and he wanting more and more of the stuff of controversy. After all that's what sells papers.

How they must have rubbed their hands with glee when Cork refused to come back on the park to play out extra time against the Dubs. Now there was controversy with a capital C. The juiciest happening since the '83 football final. (What ever did happen in the tunnel anyway?).

But, as the fella said, there's always two sides to every story and one would be less than honest if one refused to admit that, on occasions, the Association does, from time to time, shoot itself in the foot. But here one must reflect on the size of the Association . . . its thousands of members . . . its hundreds of teams . . . its multitude of officials, and bearing this in mind, it's only logical that events crop up

that do tend to denigrate the image of the G.A.A.

Within a huge organisation, as the G.A.A. is, the best one can hope for, is that these unsavoury happenings can be kept down to a minimum. It would be folly to think that events will not occur in the future that will bring discredit to the Association, after all its membership is made up of ordinary men and women from all walks of life.

And since the garden of Eden, ordinary men and women have been doing extraordinary things . . . and will continue to do so. It would be a dull old world indeed if it were otherwise.

Apart from the Man from Nazareth, none of us are perfect. All we can do is soldier on and try to do our best — one can't do more.

So the next time you open your daily paper or switch on the telly don't let the bad news get you down. Tomorrow's news will probably be worse.

Console yourself with this thought. Just imagine if that momentous meeting in Thurles, back in 1884, had never taken place. Consider the consequences. No G.A.A. No All Ireland championships to look forward to each year. No golden memories to sweeten our days . . . Munster Hurling final day, the Artane lads parading before the Big Ones on the first and the third Sundays in September.

So you see, it's not a bad old world, when all is said and done. Just sit back and enjoy it. Until your county is knocked out of the championships that is!

Jimmy McQuaid

EDITOR

Jack Mahon talks to Tommy McQuaid about "Junior Desk"



Jack Mahon.

Q. What is the future of "Junior Desk"? Is your decision to cease it irrevocable?

A. That decision was coming for months. Ever since "Gaelic Sport" stopped appearing as a monthly. The Mailbag section — the lifeblood of the 'Desk' — was lessening and becoming stale — and maybe my own enthusiasm was waning. 17 or 18 years is a long time. I'll never forget my initial enthusiasm. How I waited for the first letters to arrive. I have never enjoyed writing anything more than those early years with "Junior Desk". Yes "Junior Desk" has ended unless "Gaelic Sport" comes back as a monthly magazine. If this were to happen, yes I'd reconsider. That of course would require a substantial cash injection for the magazine in these recessionary times.

Q. It is common knowledge that "Junior Desk" was read by all the top men in the Association, who saw it as a fine vehicle for allowing the youngsters to express their opinions on the various subjects relevant to G.A.A. matters. Are you disappointed that it is being allowed to die?

A. Yes. I know all the top men read it and made no bones about saying so to me. In fact I was encouraged by all the people who came up to me at Congress in Wexford and lamented its passing. The Ard-Stiúrthóir, Liam Ó Maolmichil has always been an avid reader and has written to me about its demise. Dr. Mickey Loftus has also lamented its cessation. Paddy Downey (*Irish Times*) and Mick Dunne (*R.T.E.*) and

"IT WAS BAD POLICY TO PUT TWO MONTHLY MAGAZINES IN OPPOSITION"

Derry Gowen (Cork) are others. It was a great vehicle for youthful G.A.A. opinion. At the moment the G.A.A. is attaching great importance to the youth and included a segment of Congress for youthful delegates only. Yes, I am disappointed that the column has been allowed to die.

Q. In recent years a number of "Junior Desk" readers expressed concern that "Gaelic Sport" was no longer appearing every month, as it had done, for so many years. The primary factor for "Gaelic Sport" no longer appearing as a monthly was the introduction of "Gaelic World" as the Official Organ of the Association. Do you think it is rather ironic that "Gaelic Sport", which had served the Association faithfully down through the years should ultimately be squeezed out of existence by that same Organisation that it had sought to serve?

A. I have no axe to grind with "Gaelic World" to which I contribute "Western Notes" betimes. This question embarrasses me somewhat for I was on the Communications Committee which recommended the official imprimatur for "Gaelic World", though absent from the vital meeting which endorsed it. Fears were then expressed about the possible consequences for "Gaelic Sport", But that decision was taken — right or wrong — and we must live with it. In its early days "Gaelic World" was a much more meaty magazine with a much bigger official input than now. Yes, I'd have to agree that the official imprimatur



Tommy McQuaid.

given to "Gaelic World" has brought about the current dilemma of "Gaelic Sport" and "Junior Desk". An official monthly magazine should not have been put in direct competition with an already existing monthly which served the G.A.A. well. In hindsight it was bad policy to put two monthly magazines in opposition, catering for the same market and looking for the same advertising people.

Q. Since you announced the cessation of "Junior Desk" have you had any reaction, verbally or otherwise from any G.A.A. officials.

A. I have already alluded to this. Successive Presidents since the inception of "Junior Desk" have always backed it. Some of Seamus Ó Riain's former students used to write. His own grandson is an avid reader (notice I still regard it as a live column?) Pat Fanning and Con Murphy give it great support. It is the letters from readers that make me sad. Nuala Redmond of Mountrath writes: "On opening 'Gaelic Sport' I turned as always to 'Junior Desk' first and I read of the decision to terminate it. I really hope this won't happen..."

Gerry Pender of Aughrim, Co. Wicklow, possibly my most loyal Mailbag man says: "... "Gaelic Sport" won't be the same without "Junior Desk..."

Tony Maher of Tullow writes: "Junior Desk" will be missed by the younger boys and girls. *Anything that is ever any good never lasts.* "Gaelic Sport" is only published now and again and now, your column is gone."

Q. I am sure you have kept every issue of "Gaelic Sport" on file since you first introduced "Junior Desk". If so, can you let us have some of the most famous letters or quotes. I can recall in the early days you received great encouragement from men like Mick O'Connell, Ray Cummins and many more. Could you quote some of their comments?

A. Yes, I have kept every issue of "Junior Desk". Here I would like to thank all the G.A.A. stars who always responded so favourably and so quickly to any approaches from me. G.A.A. players are very generous and they all loved "Junior Desk". I remember the first time I met the present Cork hurling captain, Tom Cashman. The first thing he mentioned to me was "Junior Desk". When Pat Carroll, the great Offaly hurler, died so tragically last year in the middle of a great career, someone wrote to me and said that they would like me to research contributions from Pat to the Mailbag section when he was a youngster. This one appeared in "Gaelic Sport's" Junior Desk of 1/2/'73:—

Patrick Carroll, Newhall, Shara-vogue, Co. Offaly: "Keep up the good work in 'Junior Desk'. I play hurling with Coolderry and my cousin Pat McLoughney plays for Offaly."

My comment after that letter read: "Offaly hurlers have been in real tough luck lately. J.M." I notice too a letter

from John Coleman, Dunmore, Co. Galway from the issue of May, 1973. John won a Junior Football All-Ireland medal in 1985 and captained Dunmore HacHales senior football team last year. He wrote "Dunmore is the best town in Ireland for football. Can any other little town boast of so many stars present and past."

My comment was "I won't disagree! J.M."

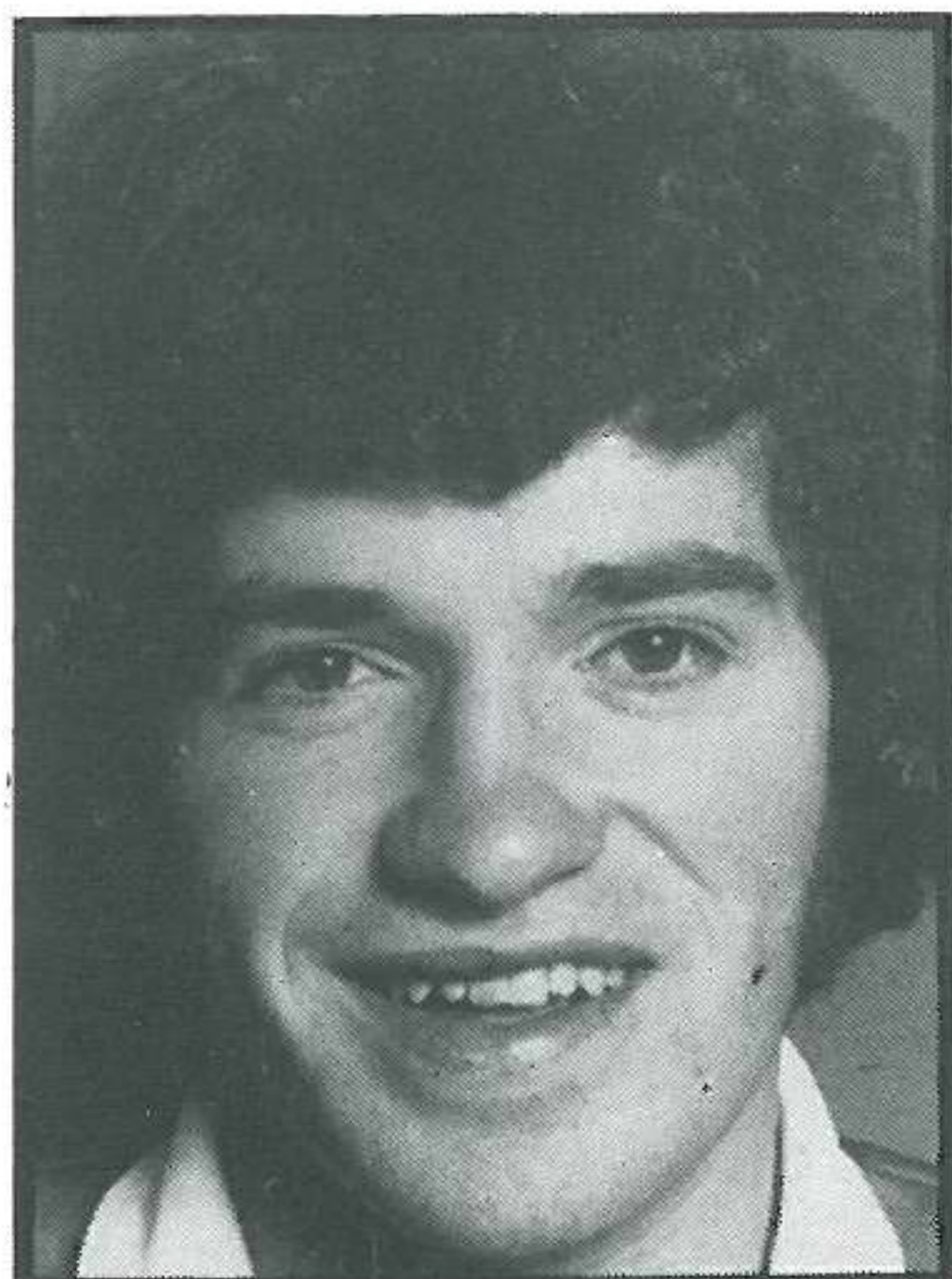
Eoghan Corry, the well-known sports journalist was a constant contributor and helped to set up with Dermot McCarthy of Bath, England, the Programme Collectors' Club in Croke Park, another great facility for G.A.A. fans which has also been allowed to fade away. As Tony Maher writes "Why must the good things of life terminate?"

As I look back through the files I notice a superb interview with Michael O'Hehir in the August issue of 1974, with twelve questions answered specially for "Junior Desk" readers. But I could go on and on. Young G.A.A. supporters became friends through the column. I would hope that many of them were inspired to give service to their clubs and counties as players and administrators. Programme collectors are a league unto themselves. But what really excited me was the open innocence of most of the letters and their avid admiration for the Mick O'Connells, the Jimmy Barry

Murphys, the Joe Cooneys and the Mikey Sheehys of the G.A.A. Mention of the last man reminds me of a time in a pre-All Ireland issue when I replied to a poser in "Junior Desk":— "Who, in your opinion, is the most complete footballer in Ireland?" I replied, nominating Mikey Sheehy and saying why. It was one of those All Irelands v. Dublin which Kerry won in '78 or '79 and in which Mikey had scored a famous goal. Afterwards I met him outside the Hogan Stand being congratulated by his many attractive sisters, but he still found time to say to me: "I don't deserve the rating you gave me in "Junior Desk" and it was he who mentioned it first. I will always cherish those letters and feel pride at what "Junior Desk" achieved.

Q. Even at this late stage, is there any way you feel the G.A.A. could prevail on you to continue with "Junior Desk"?

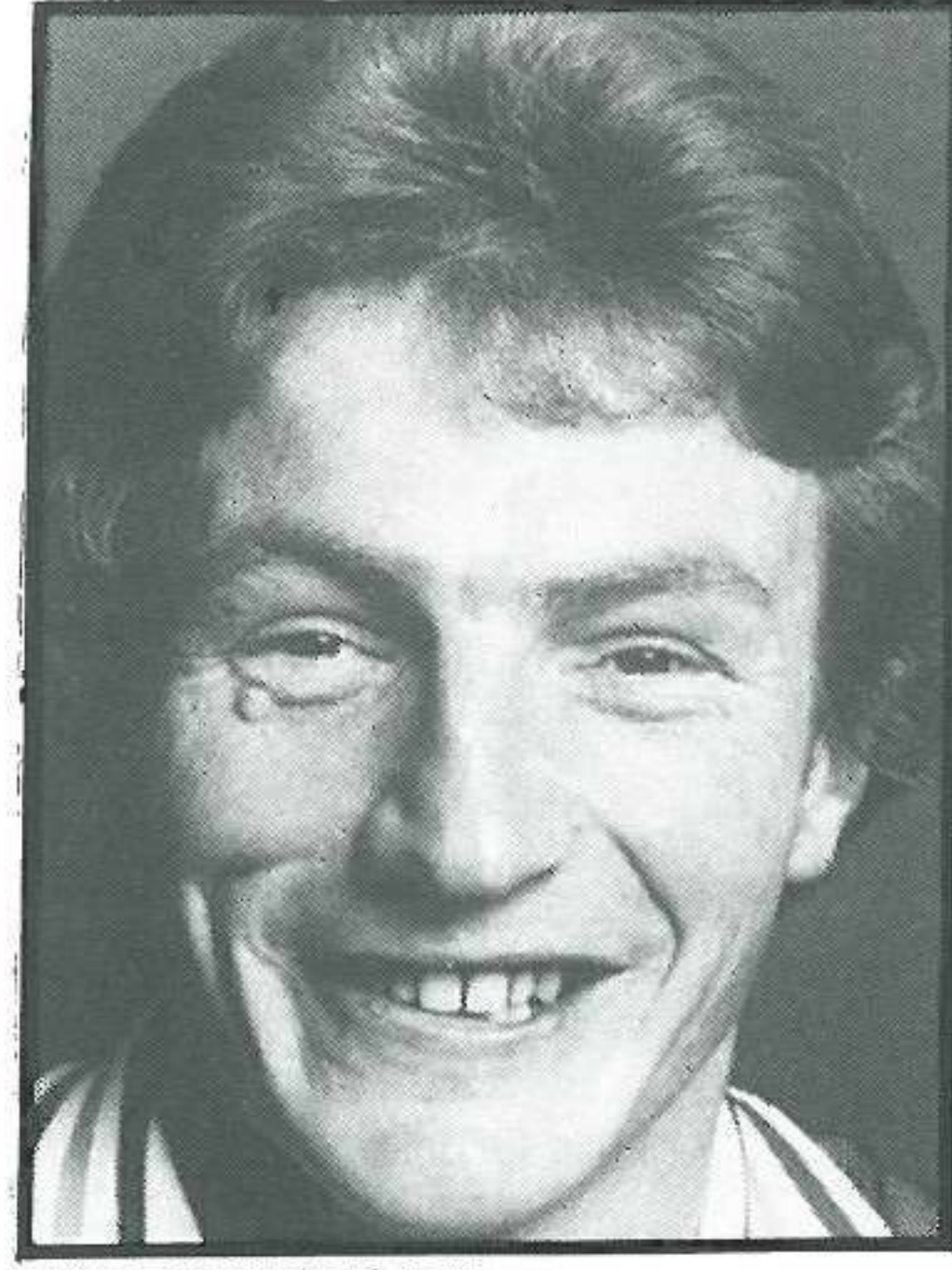
A. I really don't want to answer this one. "Gaelic Sport" obviously needs a cash boost to make it a monthly again. If the G.A.A. can see it's way to getting the magazine going again then its a new ball game. It's time to talk now while "Gaelic Sport" still exists. Gerry Pender has asked me to do a special All-Ireland "Junior Desk" for this year. In deference to Gerry I'll do that for the Hurling Final issue. So all you "Junior Desk" fans — past and present — write in to that one, and at least let us go out in style.



MIKEY SHEEHY:
"I don't deserve your rating".



TOM CASHMAN:
"The first thing he mentioned".



PAT CARROLL:
"Keep up the good work in, Junior Desk".



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As Jimmy Barry Murphy bows out he talks to Eamonn Young about the Past, Present and Future



THE tall brown-eyed young man with the walk of a step-dancer paced quickly across the hotel floor in a grey suit that so neatly clad the athletic form. A broad smile, a firm square shake of the hand and, across the table from the brisk alert young businessman, I get down to work.

“Where did ye get the name Barry Murphy I asked?” “You tell me” he countered with a pleased smile because years ago my grand-uncle told you.” Caught out again. I rolled back the years to the afternoon when that lovely man Dinny Barry Murphy who played in five finals between ’26 and ’31, winning four, told me the family tradition was that one day St. Finbarr, on his way from his school in Cork to his lovely monastic refuge beneath the hills and amid the waters of Gúgán Barra stopped to eat at a house of the Murphys in Cloughduv and thereafter they added the name of the saint. A beautiful thought.

“Look” I said, “you don’t need many questions from me. Tell us all about yourself for Tommy McQuaid and **Gaelic Sport**. You know what will interest readers especially the boys and girls and when I want to butt in I’ll throw you a question. Tell us first about the family.” He needed no further word.

There has been a hurley in the Barry Murphy family for a long time. Cork had been without a senior win — just imagine it — from 1903, when my grand-uncle John was picked on the team of 1919, my county had been beaten in the previous five finals, and

the selectors, led by Sean MacCarthy and Canon Eddie Fitzgerald were desperate. What a great day when Cork beat Dublin in the final. Sean Ó Murphy, Balty Ahern and Mattie Fuohy’s uncle “Sailor” Grey were on the side and Eudie Coughlan, who left us recently, God rest him, was sub.

In 1926, John’s youngest brother Denis, known as Dinny Barry Murphy, came on the side. He must have been a very good player at wing half back and also forward. He won it in ’26, lost in the final of ’27, and won again in ’28 and ’29 and played his part in the great three-final decider in ’31, along with Jim Hurley, Gah Ahern, Eudie Coughlan, Fox Collins and the others. They gave each player a lovely replica of the MacCarthy Cup.

My father, John, was mad about hurling. He played on the wing for the Barrs. He was very fast and a grand striker. He started the Lough Parish Leagues and was also chairman of St. Finbarrs, a fine old club that I’m very proud of.

My father used have me out in the garden striking a tennis ball against the wall, again and again. The hurley was very small but still it was too heavy. He kept me at it, encouraged me, praised me . . . God rest him, he was wonderful. It was he who put me in love with skill-training. I did a lot of it and I love to see young fellows at it. The suburban park at Bishoptown was a good place for a few pucks and the green fields were beside us. It was a happy childhood and we all

loved to play.

In Colaiste an Spioraid Naoimh, across the field from my home, I played games with great joy, especially hurling, guided by Brother Lambert, and after the Leaving Cert I was out in the big world though not so far away, at the County Hall in the V.E.C. run by the Kerry footballer, Bobby Buckley. In ’71 I was delighted to get my place on both Cork minor teams and happier still when we won the hurling. It was a great thrill and what happiness in the following year when we slipped home over Tír Eoghain in the minor football final. It was in the Autumn of that year I made the senior football side in a game against Longford, down the park in Cork, and came under the wing of Doney O’Donovan who, along with John Clifford, were the two best coaches I have met.

Doney, who has a good football brain, has a grand way with him and we looked on him as a father-figure, for whom we all would climb up the flagpole. He trusted us a lot and knew we wouldn’t let ourselves, Doney, or the county down by drinking much, staying out late, or smoking. I’m a fairly easy-going fella and I like that kind of coach, a man’s man, who has a lot of understanding. In fact I don’t like that loud shouting we sometimes hear in the dressingroom before the game. I know the men who carry on that way have the very best intentions but for some players it does more harm than good. The real coach for

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• FROM PAGE 7

me is the man who has played the game, has learned a lot about it, is genuinely fond of his players and pours into them a quiet confidence.

We all know a player must be physically fit to be any good and it is clear that late nights and smoking, which I think is real bad news, are hostile to the whole idea of fitness. A player must set a standard for himself and settle down to attain it. We all know this can't be done in a few nights but demands patience and sincerity over months.

The practice of skills has always attracted me. I hit the tennis ball up against the wall as a small boy until I had the knack of it and many a day we belted balls up and down the road. Players can never get too much of skill training. Look at all the skills in hurling: the puck, hard, soft, high, low, ground-putting, batting down, doubling on the ground or in the air, hooking, blocking down, lifting the sliotar, sideline cuts and all kinds of frees. You could spend the rest of your life practising half of them. Very often today boys play a lot of games and while I know they can be great fun, they should not be allowed to interfere with skill-training. After all in a game, a boy might not strike a dozen balls, so how will he master any of the skills unless he goes out to practise. Anyway there's nothing more relaxing and enjoyable than a nice stick, a bunch of happy friends and the white sliotar coming at you fast.

After gaining a reasonable standard of physical fitness and a satisfactory degree of skill we must teach our young players functional play or how to play your place. Most lads simply go for backs or forwards — I always played forward — but there's a big difference between, say, wing half forward and on the square, both of which positions were given to me on pretty important days.

The half forward's job, as everybody knows, is to keep the ball going, while the job inside is finishing. It's a great help to get involved in the game early on and it usually builds up confidence, so a



In this action shot from the '86 Munster Hurling final, Jimmy Barry controls the sliothar with his foot although pressured by three Claremen.

player should go hard for every ball in his area. Blocking down and hooking are important parts of this involvement and many a time they brought a player into a game with a chance to use the other skills, especially striking for a score.

This urgent desire to get involved in the play is most important when you're put into the full forward line. You simply must settle down fast and avoid stupid mistakes. It takes a lot of work to get the sliotar up around the other fellow's goal. You must concentrate then and be both quick and careful. You must keep the ball in play, break back fast, create a chance for yourself or your friends. There's no point in getting caught out by the corner flag and then trying the impossible shot. That's usually a waste of time. There's nothing worse than a hasty ill-timed pull leading to a silly wide — then you've got to stand back and watch the goalie puck it out ninety yards.

The half-forward may like to solo in and get his own score, which is fine, but if he delays the play until the men

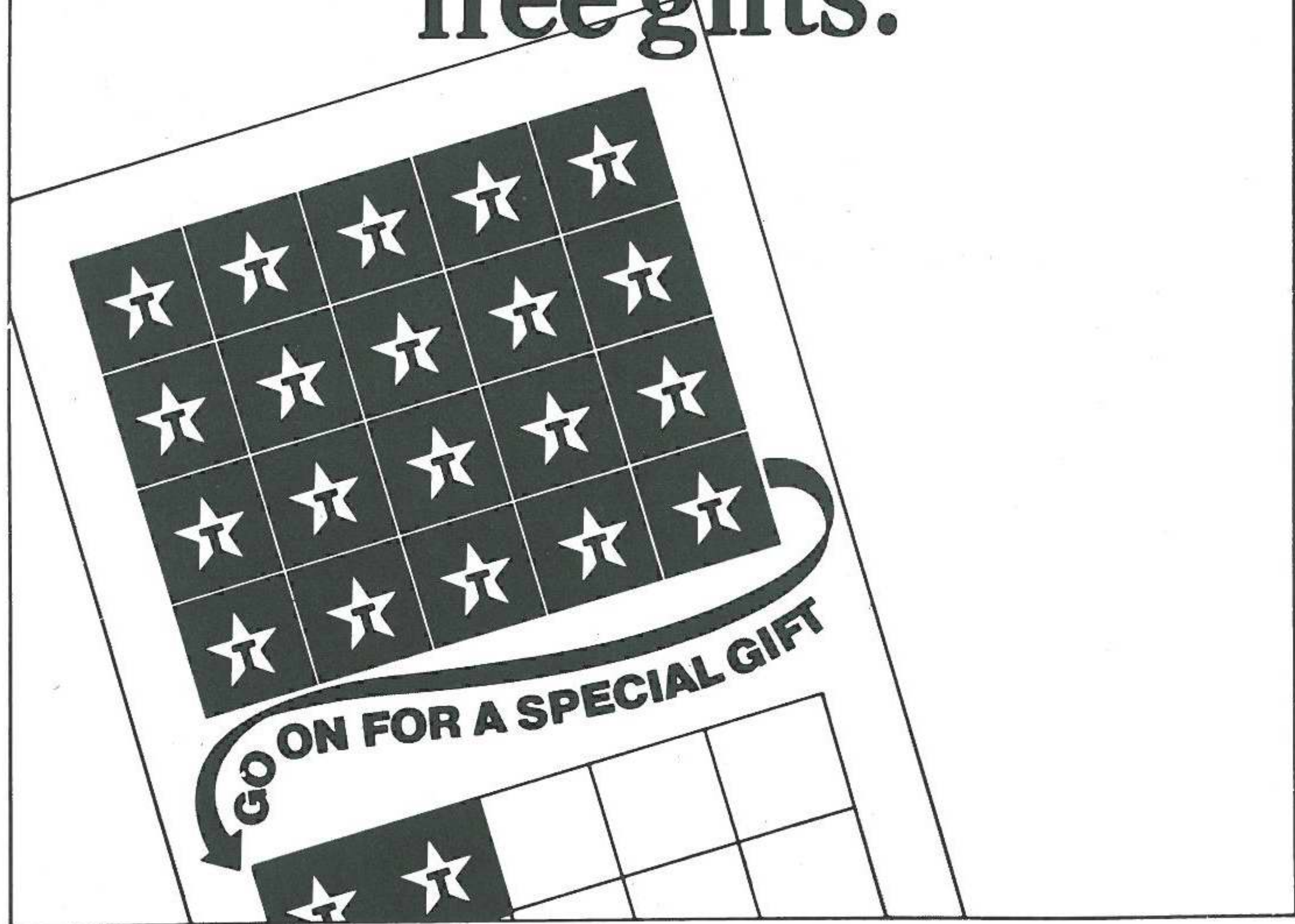
inside are closely marked before letting it through, he is making another bad mistake. Every place on the field has its own special way of playing and this the young lads should learn early. The coaches can teach them and in school the teachers are especially suited to this.

After our Cork team practices, in the early days, I used enjoy very much the team talks carried out by Doney O'Donovan. We used learn a lot about how to play our places and all the lads used join in the discussions. They were good players and intelligent men so they were worth hearing. The discussions brought us closer together and indeed they had a wonderful easy, relaxing effect on the tension which is bound to build up in the days before the game. Kerry, Tir Eoghain, Galway and Dublin footballers were the sides to watch in those days and it did us all untold good, in several ways, to sit down in an atmosphere of happy friendship while we tried to take them apart and

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● FROM PAGE 9

build up our own defence or attack against them.

Tension has a terrible effect on a player, I know that all players get a dose of it, some worse than others and there are times when a normally steady player will be badly effected by personal affairs that perhaps have nothing to do with the game.

Like everybody else I get a little excited, but usually it only makes me think harder and react faster. That is good! But I did have a bad dose of tension once. It ruined my game and made me unhappy for the lads and my county. I was captain in '82 against Kilkenny and you can guess what that honour meant to me. If I hand't been a Barry Murphy it mightn't have been so bad but as I walked around Croke Park, I thought my own family, my hurling father, my grandfather and my grand-uncle were all there to watch me. I got wound up. I didn't play well. The memory stays with me.

My advice to every young player affected by tension is to forget about himself even if he is captain, he must remember there are 14 more out there along with him and any one of them can win a game. All he has to do is play his part.

A player's age, I think, has little to do with this tension. When I won my first senior All-Ireland I was 19. They tell me I had a good day and that I played a cheeky game. Maybe I looked that way. Anyway I was relaxed and enjoyed the day. Maybe as a player ages he has a clearer view of responsibility and if so he must tell himself to relax and that the other 14 are good men. In '82 there were nights when I hardly slept a wink and if this little story helps some player, young or old, then some good will come of it.

So as I've put it to outline briefly my thoughts on how to become a good player, a boy must become physically fit, practise the skills until he can perform them with his eyes almost shut, learn all the tricks of playing his place, study the playing styles of both friends and opponents and when all that is done eat good food and get plenty of sleep so that, on the day, a cool head will set the

brain sending lightning messages to fast hands and feet.

We always say that hurling is a game of skill but I doubt if we think enough about this. The boy may not be really skilful at anything and so he has a long way to go before he becomes a good hurler. We must encourage them to practise ball play a lot and praise them when they strike



A proud moment for this young Cork lad as Jimmy Barry Murphy obliges him with his autograph.

the sliotar without handling, like some fine players I've seen. Boys shouldn't have to use sticks far too heavy for them. Sport in general, as well as hurling in particular, is so important today, that parents should always consider a new hurley for their sons and daughters when buying a present. Think of it: there are few to beat it.

I'm very fond of both games. I like to watch them and to play them and of course we're always wondering if a change for the better can be made. In hurling I don't like the hand-pass. Spectators generally don't like it because it reduces excitement and anything that does this should be

viewed very critically. Hurling is a game where a small ball is struck cleanly by a graceful stick. We should keep it that way.

In football I'm sorry to learn that we're getting only about 26 minutes of continuous play in the hour. The kick-outs and the frees take a long time. The Australian kick-out helped a lot to raise the level of excitement and there's a lot to be said for letting the player who is fouled, kick the ball away quickly from his hand. Just now we have to wait until all the backs have taken up their men and a great advantage is lost.

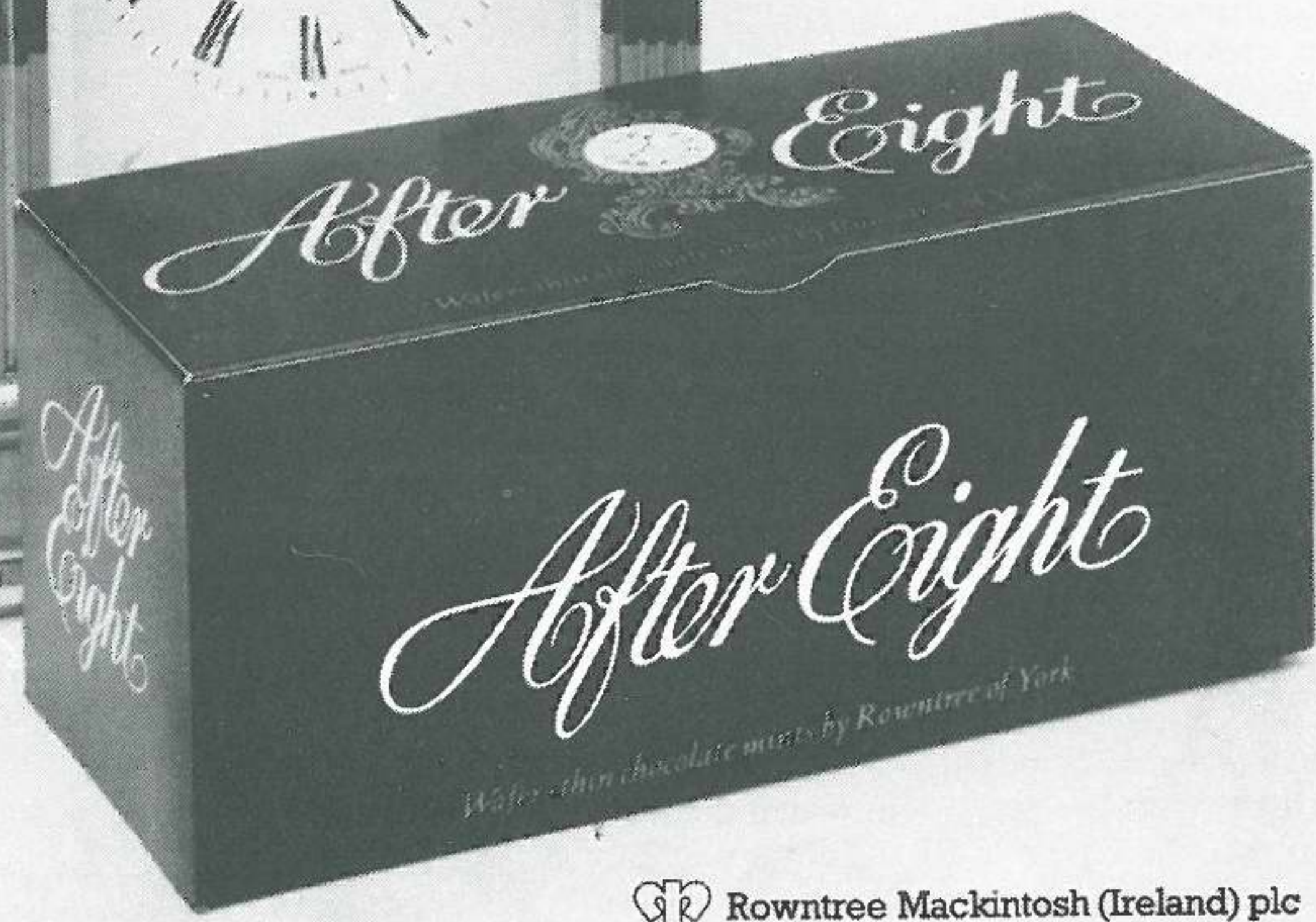
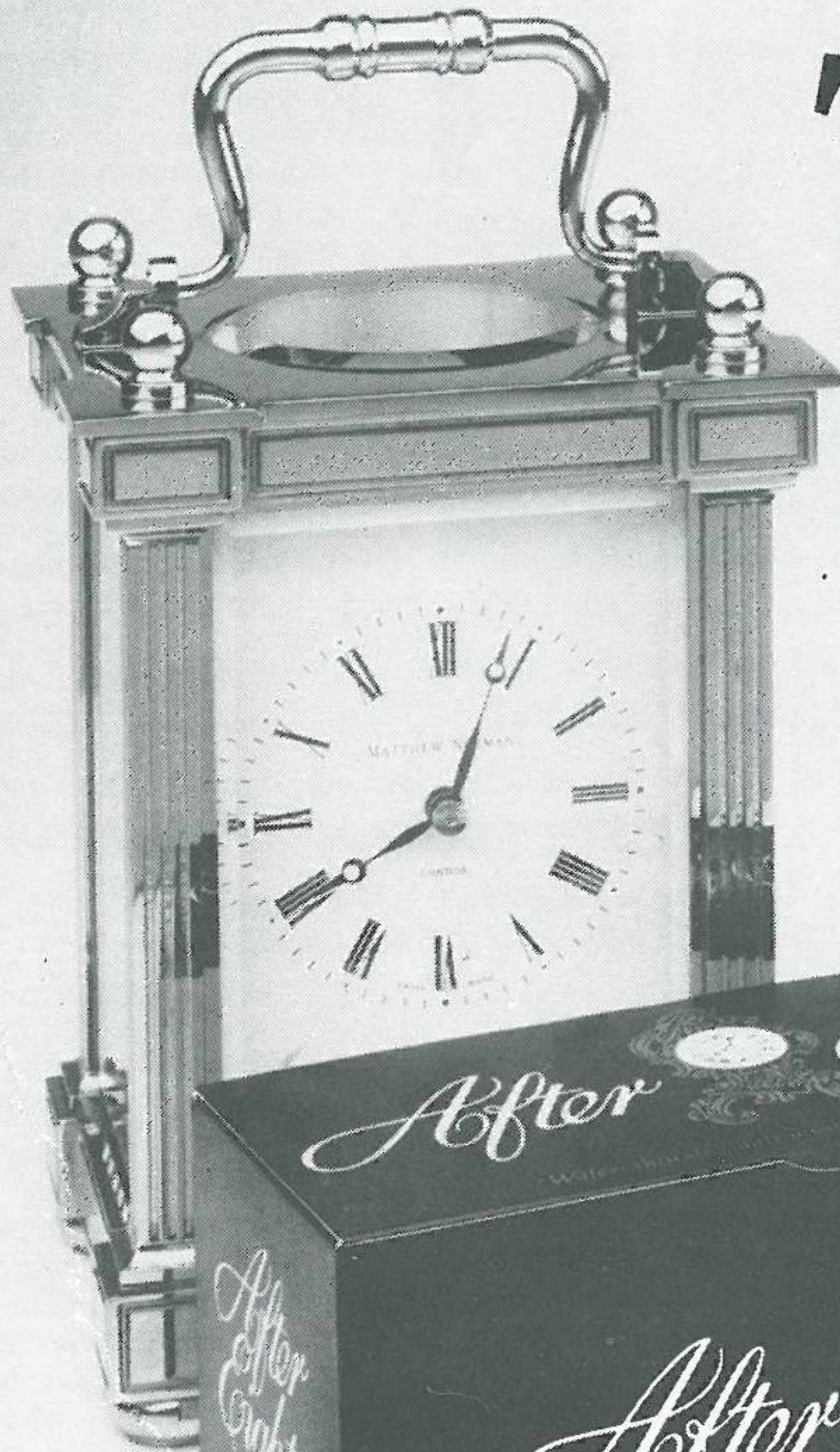
The man who wishes to play both games well, has to be tireless and dedicated, in addition to being good. His personal life may or may not stand up to it even if his body will. Between club and county, at minor, under 21 and senior, there are a lot of games. I doubt if a player is wise to embark on the whole schedule. The man who tries to do justice to his county, his comrades and himself in hurling and football may be wise to opt out of the National League, in one code. Here's where understanding selectors, with a genuine sense of sport come in.


I hope the games with the Australians will continue. I find them very exciting and anyway it's a great honour to represent your country, a prize which is before every boy, provided we settle down to control the game a little more firmly.

I love hurling. Apart from being so important in my own life it has always been part of living for my wife, Jean, whose father Mick Kenefick captained a Cork senior hurling team to an All-Ireland win during the great forties. My mother has gone to matches even when nobody belonging to her was playing and as for the Barry Murphys they've being hurling hard for seventy years anyhow.

It's a great game, played by fine men, all over my native land. I'm proud to be part of all three and I look forward, please God, to many more years when Croke Park will rock in thunder as out from the tunnel comes the red jersey.

Time
for a
treat.



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PRESIDENT ELECT JOHN DOWLING WILL MEASURE UP SUPERBLY TO THE TASK AHEAD

says Peter Moloney

THE election of John Dowling as the latest President-Elect of the Gaelic Athletic Association could have surprised very few followers of Gaelic Games. In saying this I am in no way being disparaging about the credentials of the other contenders in the election for the position at the Annual Congress at Wexford, but the Offaly man was always the front-runner after his defeat by Mick Loftus for the position three years earlier.

It was clear then that Dowling enjoyed strong country-wide support. At that Centenary Year election in Belfast, the Tullamore official was only beaten by Loftus on the third count by 146 votes to 125. The 'knowing ones' said then that it was merely a "red light" along the road to the Presidency for John Dowling, and the 'knowing ones' have been proven right.

Dowling, who is now set to become Offaly's first President, will bring a wealth of experience in a variety of roles to the highest office in the Association. It was as a referee that he probably earned his national profile in Gaelic Games, but down Offaly way they will tell you of the Post Office official's expertise as an administrator, and he has also made

his mark in this regard as well on a provincial basis.

As a referee, the Midlander achieved a rare double in 1960 when he took charge of the All-Ireland senior hurling final, in which rank outsiders Wexford shocked Tipperary, and then was the man in the middle on that historic afternoon when Down beat Kerry to take the Sam Maguire Cup across the Boarder for the first time.

However, he had experience of the tensions of Croke Park on All-Ireland final day as a referee prior to that double. In fact, he made his debut as the man in the middle in a showpiece game in 1959 when he refereed the meeting of Kerry and Galway for the All-Ireland senior football title. Later in his career he took charge of the hurling finals of 1962 and 1968.

John Dowling has had a long innings as Secretary of the Offaly County Board — 23 years. In that time the county has enjoyed remarkable success in hurling and football, and the County Secretary has richly played his part in paving the way for history-making events.

Events like the first Sam Maguire Cup triumph of 1971 when Offaly beat Galway in the All-Ireland senior football final. Like 1981 when incredibly, Offaly joined the ranks of counties with All-Ireland senior titles in both grades when a gifted squad of hurlers brought home the Liam McCarthy Cup for the first time. That must surely have been one of the greatest days in the life of John Dowling.

More recently we had another famous first — and one that augurs well for the future of Offaly hurling — when well tutored young men from the Midlands won the All-Ireland minor hurling crown for the first time ever last September. Added point to that success was provided by

the fact that the final triumph was at the expense of such a renowned hurling county as Cork.

If Dowling's term of office as President is enriched to even as small a degree as that success story as County Secretary, then the G.A.A. will be doing really well over the coming years.

The President-Elect also "served his time" on the way up with the Leinster Council. He was the provincial Chairman from 1981 to 1984, and that experience is bound to serve him well in his onerous task ahead.

The G.A.A. will face more demanding challenges than ever in the future, if we take television alone, which is taking up so much of our time and leisure hours these days, and is bringing so many sports to our firesides. Some weeks before we went to press, the television challenge was increased by the advent of a special sports channel on television. No doubt this added dimension to the "box in the corner" will create problems attendance-wise at our games, particularly in the winter months.

The Association has been fortunate in its leaders down the years. The men who have filled the post of President have performed their duties with skill, with dignity and to the best possible cause of the G.A.A.

John Dowling, then, walks in a proud tradition. There can be little doubt that he will measure up superbly to the task ahead.

The Offaly official is 55, married with four children. I know that I am voicing the wishes of all not only at GAELIC SPORT, but all readers of the magazine in extending good wishes to John Dowling.

He has come a long way and enjoyed much success along the road as well. But the best has still to come!

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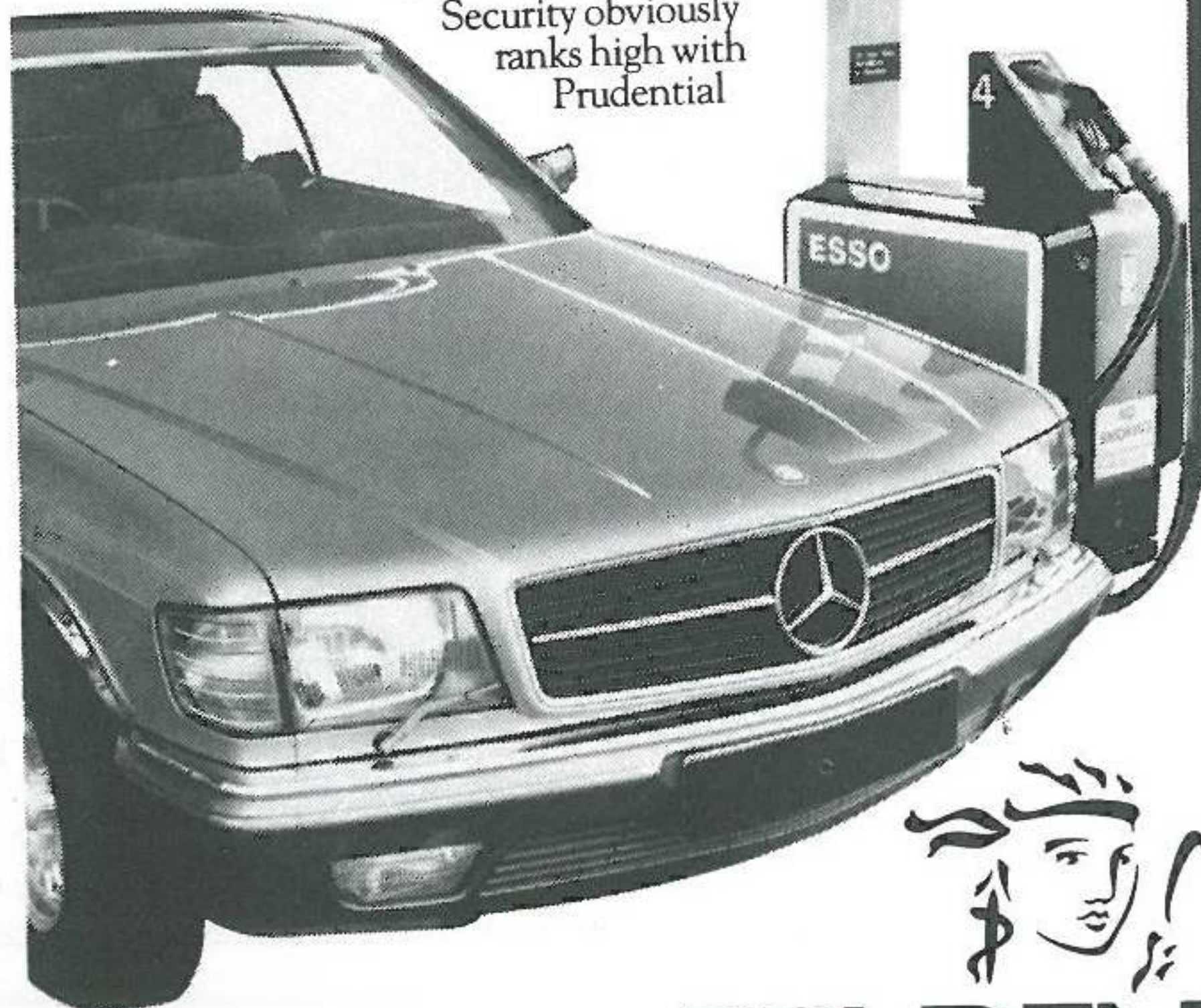
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GAME IN THIS COUNTRY HAS STALLED

AT A CROSSROADS – PROMOTIONAL DRIVE

IS NOW NEEDED ON A NATIONAL BASIS

MICK Tyrrell from Clonmel took over the Presidency of the Irish Handball Council at the congress in March and is now set to lead the organisation for the next three years. It is an onerous task by any standards and suitable only for somebody with the dedication and sense of purpose that characterises the Tipperaryman. Everybody will wish him well in negotiating the tricky hurdles that lie ahead.

The handball game in this country, has, in my opinion, stalled at a crossroads and definitive leadership is called upon to direct it in a forward spiral. I gauge that a promotional drive is now opportune, on a national basis. This situation emerges from the fact that, while many courts have been constructed in the last two decades it is an undeniable fact that many of them are not being used to their full potential. I believe that this deficiency can be attributed to the lack of compact administration and a particular failure in the area of public relations.

It thus behoves all units of the organisation to be up and doing, with the emphasis on participation by all sections of the community and liaison with all groups in a particular area. **I again question the wisdom of promoting three different codes of the same game, namely softball, hardball and the 40×20 game.** I have long since made the argument that hardball is now a dormant art and should be removed from the playing charter. By

the same token I am equally certain that similar arguments will be justifiably made in the not too distant future that the playing area for the game should be standardised. We could be moving towards the era where the 40×20 code, will, in fact be the accepted standard game for Irish Handball.

Another problem that must be directed towards the new President concerns the state of the game in Dublin. This is something that I have highlighted continuously, but no action has been taken. With a large proportion of the country's population based in Dublin, it is logical to suggest that the image of any game is mirrored by the status it holds in our Capital city. In the case of handball that barometer does not show an impressive reading and indeed were it not for the efforts of a few, that flickering light could, long since, have been extinguished. However, recriminations are futile, hence, one must hope that even at this late stage a combined effort by the top administrators in the G.A.A. and from the handball council will set the wheels of a major resurgence in motion.

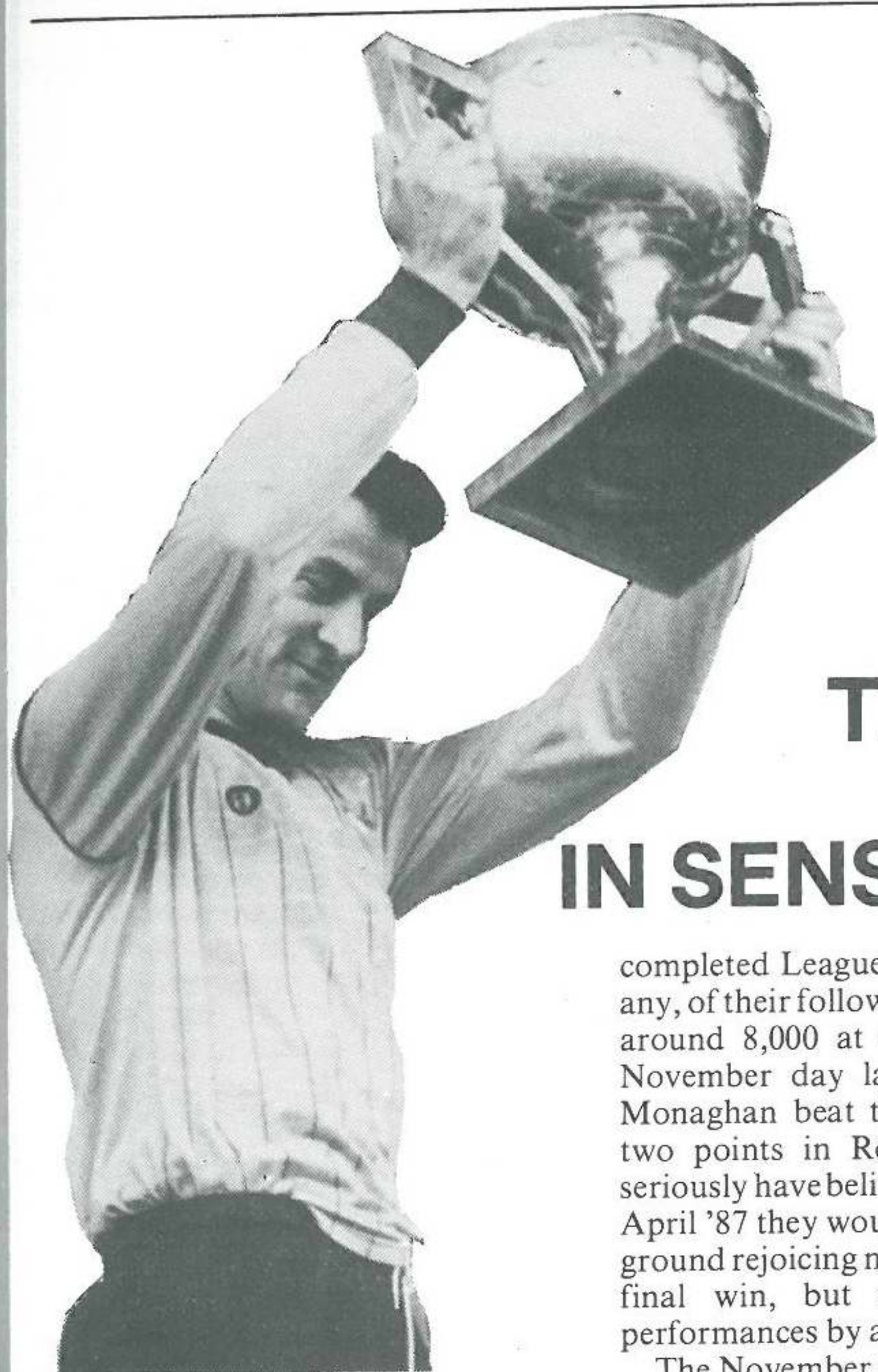
If President Mick Tyrrell did nothing else during his term of office only to complete a successful promotional drive in Dublin his presidency will have been an unqualified success.

At this time of year one's thoughts are obviously directed to the ballcourts and the impact of players on

the national championships. I find myself with the belief that Kilkenny's Michael "Duxie" Walsh will be to the fore and may readily take the Coca Cola title again. Though only in his early twenties he has rightly earned the tag as the wonder man of Irish Handball. It just seems that he has the capacity to keep on winning and my only regret is that he will be missing out on the trip to Australia for the international games next year. He is under suspension from international matches at the present time, and while one would not question either the reason or the severity of the sentence, it might not be out of order to make a plea for the removal of the suspension. His contribution to the game over the years, deserves that consideration.

In doubles competition it is likely that the fabled Quish Brothers from Limerick will, again, be in the shake up for ultimate honours. They have been playing with a renewed confidence in recent times following the deserved recognition they received as recipients of the B & I award for their outstanding achievements in 1986.

There is also a host of young players, ready and confident to make their marks on this year's events. They have a distinctive role to play in the destination of the honours, however, I am hesitant to suggest actual names in the knowledge that there is many a slip between cup and lip.



Proud Dublin captain, Gerry Hargan, holds aloft the Ford Football League trophy after Dublin's memorable win over old rivals Kerry in the League Final on the 26th of April last.

WHAT a turn-around — and what a comeback! When the history of the National Football League comes to be written in full, the climb back from the ashes of three defeats in the opening rounds to the sunshine of a golden title win that was Dublin's success story in the 1986-87 Ford League will command a very high place.

I doubt if there has been anything to match the Dublin story in the just

completed League. Certainly, few, if any, of their followers in the crowd of around 8,000 at Croke Park on a November day last year who saw Monaghan beat their favourites by two points in Round Two, could seriously have believed that come late April '87 they would leave the famed ground rejoicing not only in a famous final win, but one of the best performances by any Dublin side.

The November gloom increased at Tralee as Kerry made it three defeats in the first three League outings for Dublin by recording a two points win. But, how superbly Dublin put those setbacks behind them!

They have not tasted defeat in competitive football in the meantime, and in their upset triumph over red hot favourites Kerry in that glorious final, they served notice that football by the Liffeside is alive and well, and raring to go for the big double by capturing the Sam Maguire Cup.

The Dubs of the 'Seventies gave some cracking displays, but the sparkling showing from their heirs when seeing off the Kingdom in one

of the best League finals on record was as good, if not better, than anything we saw from the giants of the last decade.

All the more so because the Dubliners started as such outsiders. It must have been years since any Liffeside team went into a national final with so little general support as the squad that threw down the gauntlet to the All-Ireland champions.

So many were so convinced that Kerry were "home and dry" that the real surprise is that the game attracted such a great attendance as 35,181. What would the crowd have been if the general view on the week leading up to the final was that the match was wide open? Undoubtedly, it would have been much greater.

Still, that was a splendid attendance and one that says much for the pulling power of Gaelic football.

And the Dubs and Kerry responded with a game that did much to restore faith in our national game, and whip up enthusiasm to a new high for the up-coming championship season.

THE DUBS RISE FROM THE ASHES TO TAKE LEAGUE TITLE IN SENSATIONAL FASHION

Full marks to Dublin. Written off as "no hoppers" after an undistinguished semi-final win a week earlier over Galway at Portlaoise they quickly proved they were not going into the game as mere "lambs to the slaughter." Right from the throw-in they took the match to Kerry, and that blistering start gave them the confidence and the assurance to battle on bravely for the ultimate reward.

Ciaran Duff has rightly been widely praised for his contribution to the 1-11 to 0-11 win that brought the title back to the capital after a break of nine years. The bearded Fingallians man got his team off to the best possible start with his well-taken goal after only a few minutes, and he went on to give one of his best displays in the Blue jersey.

But what about young Declan Bolger, a minor only last year? Or the other newboys like Glen O'Neill and David Carroll?

Oh, yes, the final win was no mere one-man show from Duff for Dublin.

MIDFIELD GIANT

Bolger was a giant in an area where Jack O'Shea has been such a brilliant match-winner for so long for Kerry. The young midfielder gave a top-class display of clean fielding and intelligent distribution, and it says much for his part in the success that O'Shea did not dictate matters in his customary style.

O'Neill and Carroll were solid units in a tight rearguard that kept a tight reign on the inventive Kerry side. Mick Galvin, another of the newcomers, had a fine game at full forward.

Among the more established men, few played better than Mick Kennedy, who got through an amount of useful work. And Dave Synnott, although not by any means an old stager — how could he be at only 22 — but a familiar figure in the Dubs colours nonetheless, showed class and ability in his onerous job of marking Pat Spillane.

Yes, Dublin had many giants on the field of play. But let's not forget the men behind the scenes either. The success was also a major

breakthrough for manager Gerry McCaul and his fellow selectors, Sean Doherty and Tony Hempenstall.

They were "thrown in at the deep end" when their appointments were only confirmed coming up right to the start of the past season's League. They had little time to gear themselves for the challenge ahead, and it was probably not surprising — in hindsight — that Dublin started so badly with those defeats from Meath, Monaghan and Kerry.

However, the mentors were not discouraged. They went about the job of rebuilding the fallen Dublin machine with shrewdness and determination, and they reaped their rewards on the last Sunday of April. The title win was as much a triumph for this trio as it was for the players on the field of play on the day.

And, as for McCaul in a matter of a few mere months he has emerged from the "Heffshadow," and is now casting his own shadow as a title winning team manager.

Yes, the Dubs are back. Kerry's invincibility has been broken — some would say only temporarily — but football has become more alive as a result of the League final result.

The game has received a much needed shot in the arm. Can Dublin go on to follow up what has been

achieved so far by regaining the Leinster and All-Ireland titles? Are Kerry really over the top, or were they not up to peak form against the Dubs?

These are some of the questions of the moment; questions that help to increase interest and anticipation of what is to come in the provincial championships — and later in the year at All-Ireland level.

Well done, then, Dublin. And full marks to Kerry. They took their defeat in the style of true champions.

SAD NOTE

Finally, I must conclude this column on a sad note. Since our last issue, one of the legendary figures of hurling, Jimmy Langton, of Kilkenny, passed away.

Jimmy was one of the true stylists of the ancient game. He had a great career that spanned some two decades, and won All-Ireland senior medals in 1939 and 1947. He also captained Kilkenny in their unsuccessful final of 1940 against the Mick Mackey-led Limerick.

Langton, who won eight Leinster senior medals, was named at left half forward in the hurling team of the century chosen during the Centenary Year.

We extend sincere sympathy to his widow and family.

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Significant decision at Congress

- teams permitted to accept sponsorship.

ONE of the most significant decisions taken at Congress concerns sponsorship. Hitherto, the Camogie Association has held a conservative view on this subject. The meeting balloted by six votes to permit teams to accept sponsorship and to wear the sponsors name on jerseys if this be a condition of the arrangement.

Supporters of the motion felt that camogie was losing out to other sports in this area. Sponsors are prepared to put money into sport but they want something in return. They see the easing of restrictions as a way of cashing in.

Reservations were expressed by those who wondered if pride in the club or county jersey would ever be the same. The introduction of outside influences has led to a loss of identity in other sports. They were concerned that this decision would be the first step in that direction.

There has been much talk of compulsory insurance over the past number of years. It eventually received the seal of approval and is

now mandatory for all players. This development will ease the apprehension felt by many team officials.

Ard Comhairle tabled a motion requesting each club to raise £50 to aid central finances. At its first hearing it failed by a mere three votes. A re-run in the future may succeed.

**BY
MARY MORAN**

The controversial area of latitude for students of higher colleges was clearly defined. A student may represent both her college club and her home club provided that the latter is not in the same county as the college club. This rules out any attempts to get a second bite at the county championship cherry.

Efforts to revitalise the Gael-Linn interprovincial series by staging the event over a weekend have not been successful. The two-year pilot scheme came to an end without any call for its extension. The format

returns to the original with semi-finals and finals on separate weekends.

The playing season has become over-loaded with fixtures. Provincial Councils and County Boards find it difficult to squeeze in their competitions following the publication of Árd Comhairle's fixture list.

To help relieve the situation the National Junior League will commence in October. While this will aid those drawing up fixture lists, matches played at that time of the year are of little use in the preparation of teams for the following season's championship.

**Playing season
has become
overloaded
with fixtures**

Twelve years ago Annual Congress left its Dublin base and has circulated around the provinces ever since. The move has proved most successful. Limerick were superb hosts for this year's event. The organising team of Eithne Neville, Fr. John Ryan, Tom O'Brien, Bernie O'Dea and Bríd Stokes left no stone unturned to make it a memorable weekend.

Congress 1988 will be a marathon affair. In addition to the usual business of the gathering, a new President will be elected. Playing rules and the report of the special Commission will be before the meeting. It is unlikely that one weekend will be sufficient to deal with the heavy agenda.



• **Dublin delegates at Congress in Limerick, from left, Gretta Gray, Aine Derham and Anne Carey.**

QUIZTIME

BY VINNY MOORE

WITH the Ford Leagues in Football and Hurling having been successfully completed, and all the discussions about the extra time game that was not, on the first Sunday of April involving Cork now firmly behind us, interest turns inevitably to the promise of the championship season ahead.

It should be an exciting one if happenings in the League are anything to judge by. And, as the pulse quickens for the great days ahead — hopefully they will be great ones in hurling and football — I have tried to mirror matters in this edition of QUIZTIME by devising a review that incorporates some of the best that has happened in 1987 with a brief look ahead to what could be in store in the championship.

Here I should explain that in looking ahead, I am not trying to put the focus on forecasts of things to come, but rather on more tangible grounds for example, Tyrone are in line to complete a rare double in provincial senior football this year in that it is a long time since any county won two Ulster crowns in a row. If you can say when such a feat was last achieved, then you might do really well in my LOOKING AHEAD feature. At any rate, I believe you will

understand the reasoning behind the series of questions when you reach this particular section.

As usual, marks are on offer for each question with the aim to add that little more competitive bite as usual to QUIZTIME. I hope you will enjoy the Quiz, that you will learn something new as well, and that this feature will in a small way help to get you in a good mood for the big games ahead.

So, pencils at the ready, and let's make a start with our longest section of all, one of ten questions, and one which will help to show just how closely you have been following events in Gaelic Games since the start of the month.

Here I must warn you that I have moved away somewhat at times from the main stream of Gaelic Games activities. But I think that adds to the appeal of the section. At any rate, let's start with:

THE YEAR SO FAR

1. Cork made a successful defence of the Fitzgibbon Cup, the Universities' senior hurling championship. True or false?
2. Name the winners of the Ashbourne Cup, the senior camogie championship for the Universities

3. Abbey C.B.S., Newry, won the Ulster Colleges' senior football title last St. Patrick's Day. Who were runners-up for the title?

4. The G.A.A.'s Annual Congress was held in Wexford in March. The same week-end the Camogie Congress was also held. Where did the camogie delegates meet?

5. St. Finbarr's won the All-Ireland club senior football title on St. Patrick's Day. Was the win over Roscommon's Clan na Gael the Barr's first, second or third final win in the competition?

6. How many times have Clan na Gael won this title?

7. Borris-illeigh beat Rathnure in the hurling final on St. Patrick's Day. But what club lost the All-Ireland semi-final to the Tipperary men? ..

8. What county had the distinction of being the only one to complete the divisional series of games in the Ford Football League this season without losing a single point?

9. The National Handball League final in the 40x20, or American court size, was played in March at Crinkle. The finalists were Clare and Dublin. Name the winners

10. Clare made a spirited performance when losing to Kerry in a Ford League quarter-final tie at Ennis early in April. How many points had Kerry to spare at the final whistle?

Five points for every question answered correctly, and a bonus of ten points for ten all correct answers. So, this section of QUIZTIME could get you off to a great start with 60 points. Your score

From past events this year to upcoming happenings in the months ahead. I am not going to ask you to try and forecast the likely winners in the various championships; that would be impossible to measure in a question-and-answer feature like this. But, this series of six questions is based on what one could term the aims of some counties in the championship campaign. I call this section:

LOOKING AHEAD

1. Cork will be striving to chalk up their fourth, fifth or six successive Munster senior hurling title in the upcoming series. Your selection?

2. Kerry will be hoping to defend an unbeaten run in the Munster senior football championship that stretches back now to what particular year?

3. Tyrone will defend the Ulster senior football title. In what year did a county last make a successful defence of that title?

4. Meath, of course, are holders of the Leinster senior football crown. Should they succeed in their aim to retain the title it will mark their first double since 1971. True or false

5. Galway hurlers have been very prominent in the All-Ireland senior championship of late. They will be striving to get into their third or fourth successive McCarthy Cup tie this year. Your choice?

6. The teams engaged in the curtain-raiser to the All-Ireland senior football championship in September will be hoping to return home with what trophy?

Five points for each correct answer, and a bonus of five if you "go through the card". So, 35 points on offer for this section overall. YOUR RETURN

Over now to one of the most popular aspects of QUIZTIME, our special Picture Quiz. This time the series is a little out of the ordinary in that it is not based on a team photograph. See how you fare out and just how much you are:

IN THE PICTURE

1. This photograph was taken before the All-Ireland senior football final of what year?

2. Who are the rival captains?

3. Name their clubs



4. How many times did the player on the right of the picture captain a Sam Maguire Cup winning team prior to that particular game?

5. What position did the player on the left of the photograph line out at the start of that final?

6. Who is the referee in the photograph?

7. How many points had the winning team to spare at the final whistle... ten, twelve, or seventeen? Your choice?

8. Finally, how many goals were scored in that game?

Each question, other than No. 3 is worth five points. If you answer No. 3 correctly collect a five points bonus. And, if all eight questions are correctly answered then a further bonus is available — of another five points. In all, then, this section could boost the points tally by a noteworthy 50 points. YOUR TALLY

Let's end the QUIZTIME on a short enough five questions general.

REVIEW TIME

1. Where was last year's Munster senior hurling final played?

2. Who are the reigning All-Ireland Coca Cola Senior Doubles Champions in handball?

3. Dublin were beaten by Kilkenny in last year's All-Ireland senior camogie final. In what year did the Dubs last win the title?

4. The Railway Cup competitions were not played as usual during the last springtime. They are scheduled for the autumn. What province won the last football title?

5. Who was chosen at right full forward in the Bank of Ireland All-Stars Hurling team announced earlier this year? It may help you to know that the player in question carved out a slice of history with his selection

No bonus points here. Thirty marks in all, six for each correct answer, on offer. HOW DID YOU SCORE?

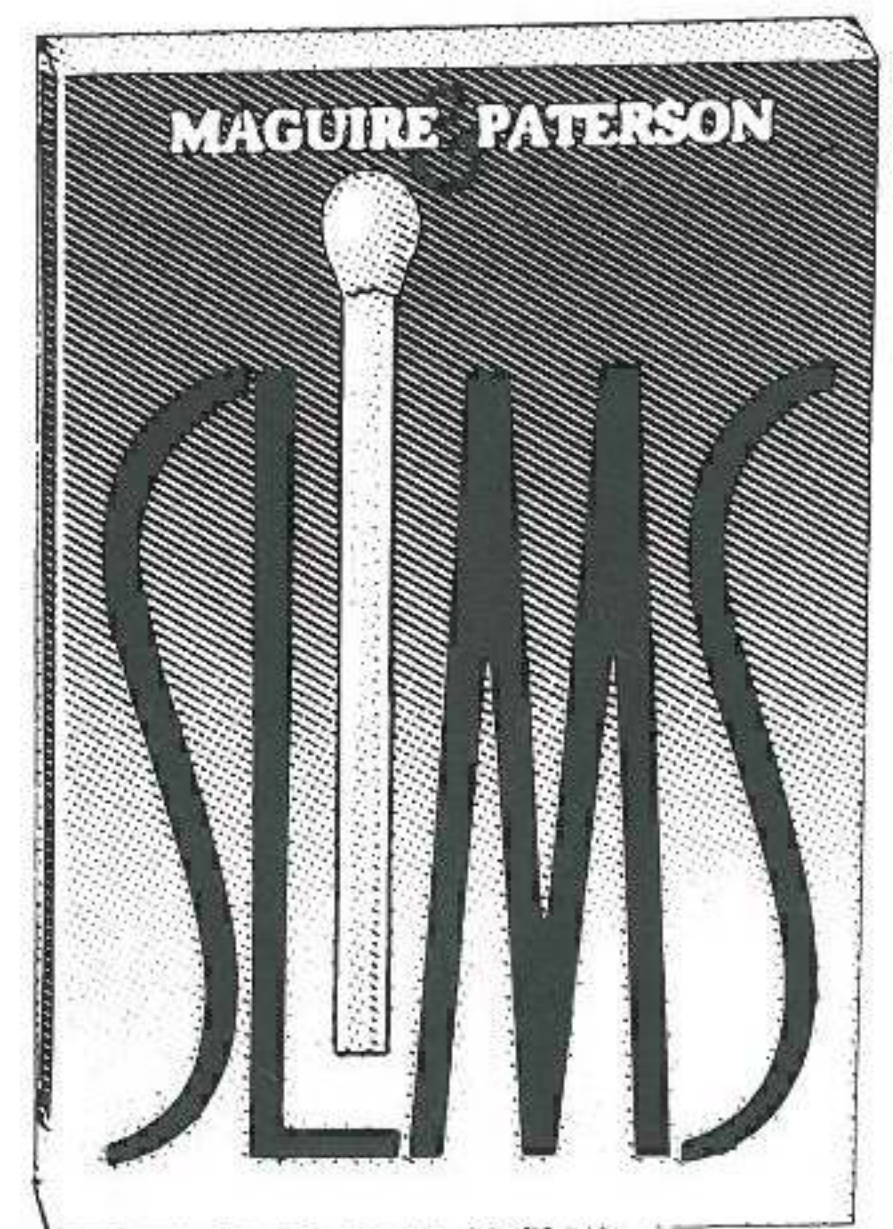
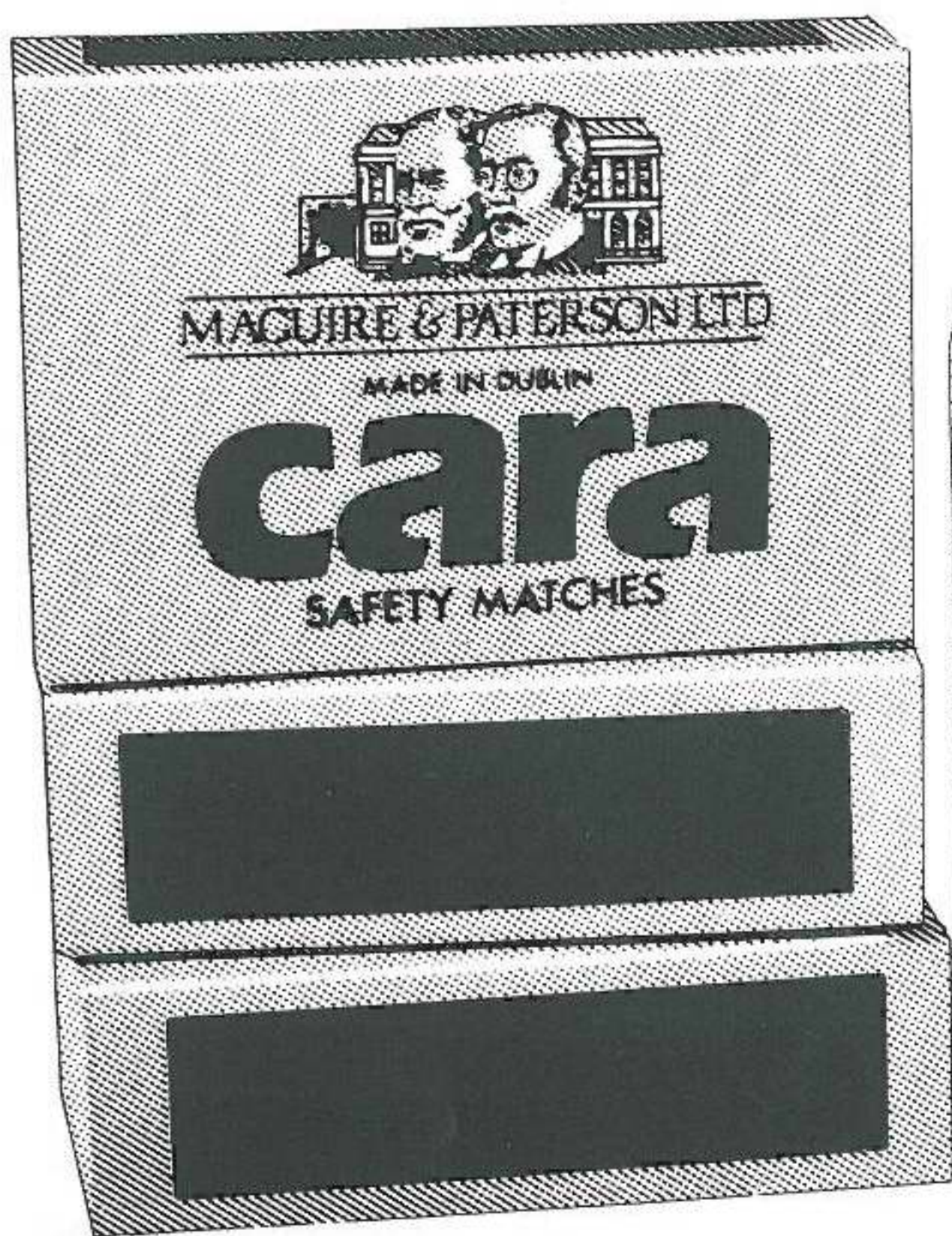
THE TELL TALE TABLE

The total number of points possible in QUIZTIME: 175. An excellent rating must be the order for 160 points or more. 140 points to 160 qualifies for a very good marking, and 100 to 140 earns a good return.

●ANSWERS ON PAGE 48.

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MUNSTER MEDLEY
by Seamus O'Neill
MUNSTER MEDLEY

KERRY'S "knockers" have been having a field day since the Ford Football League final. They have been loudly telling all who care to listen that the Kingdom have come to the end of the road, and are also faced with a long period in the doldrums.

What poppycock! Really, we have been listening to that record with almost monotonous regularity since Seamus Darby's late, late goal for Offaly deprived Kerry in 1982 of a record fifth All-Ireland senior football crown in succession.

Kerry picked up the pieces so well after that shock that they have now three more All-Ireland championships and one League crown to their credit. Not bad going that for a team that has been living on borrowed time in the view of so many.

Now, let's look rationally at the recent loss to Dublin. First it must be said that the Dubs deserved their win, but having said that, let's delve a little into the League final in an effort to try and show that Kerry are not "gone."

The All-Ireland champions put in some wholehearted efforts over the winter months, and at a time when many of the "knockers" were telling us that the Kingdom were not interested in the League. When the chips were really down in the run-in they were not found wanting either.

Here, I am thinking of Kerry's loss at Killarney to Monaghan in the divisional series, and their comeback to beat the Farney men in the League semi-final.

Then, defeat by Dublin was no disgrace. After all, the final produced a standard of football that was not matched in any of the earlier games in the League, and Dublin also hit the type of form that they had not reached in a long time prior to the final. It was their best showing in a long time, yet in the end the "old men" from Kerry were still only a goal behind at the final whistle.

Indeed, but for untypical misses in front of goal from the usually so reliable Ger Power and Mikey Sheehy, the All-Ireland champions might well have completed the big double of All-Ireland and League titles.

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THE KERRYMEN
— JUST YET!

My own feeling is that if the usually so reliable Power had accepted his big chance in front of the Hill 'Sixteen goal in the first half as Kerry were coming back strongly after a poor start, the men of the Kingdom would have eventually pulled through. That must remain a matter for conjecture now, but the miss does help to illustrate that the Southerners were always in strong contention for the honours once they got into their stride after their bad start.

Remember, the Kingdom were rocked by a Ciaran Duff goal in 75 seconds, but took that hammer blow well in their stride. A measure of the team's greatness.

Nor did Power's miss weaken Kerry's resolve. Similarly, after Sheehy's miss, which came at a crucial stage in the second half when a Kerry goal could have dramatically altered the destination of the title, the great-hearted Southern players did not concede defeat. They kept battling on.

So, while Dublin, as I have said, deserved their win, Kerry were always in the game with a real chance after they had shaken off the early goal by Duff and some quick morale-sapping Metropolitan points.

If one looks closely at the final, then, in the above light, it is clear that, while victory alone is concrete, Kerry can still take plenty of satisfaction from their performance.

LONG TIME

Granted, there were occasions when it did appear that time was catching up on some of their long-serving

●OVERLEAF



Ger Loughnane, Clare in action during the recent Ford Hurling League Final. Clare played so well in this match that their long awaited Munster title cannot be far off.

●FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

campaigners. Men like Sheehy, Pat Spillane, 'Ogie' Moran, Ger Power and Paudie O'Shea have been in the top rank since around late 1974 or early 1975. That's a long time, and these players have also packed a lot of football into unusually busy — as well as successful — careers.

Yet, is there any team manager in the country who would not welcome one or all with open arms to his team for the championship?

Sure, time is running out fast for the long-serving Kerry men. But I would not be prepared to take any bets that Father Time will catch up on the long-serving campaigners in this season's championship.

The Kerry men are bound to profit greatly from the training stints they will have during the coming months. The training is bound to have an extra edge as a result of the League final defeat. There is no danger now of complacency; not let me hasten to add that there ever is down Kerry way. But the loss to Dublin will put the Kerry men on their toes to a degree that would hardly have been quite the case if they had returned home with the League trophy.

There is nothing that these Kerry men would enjoy better than another crack next September at Dublin and a chance of revenge in the one game that matters most — the All-Ireland final. If the champions of Munster and Leinster are to meet this year, it will be in the concluding round.

However, long before that Kerry will have a really serious test against Cork at Pairc Ui Chaoimh. It seems inevitable that we will have the old firm again in the Munster final, and Cork showed plenty of promise when drawing with Dublin in that controversial League quarter-final in Dublin.

Some argue that had Cork played the extra time, they would have won, as they were going so well at the end. I am not so sure about that.

Still, if Cork can put all the controversy of that League quarter-final with Dublin behind them, and produce their best in the Munster grade they could hand Kerry plenty of problems.

Even so, I am still sticking with Kerry to hang on to their Munster title — Pairc Ui Chaoimh or not for the final. After that? Well, it is a little early yet, for an All-Ireland title forecast, except to say: Forget that talk about Kerry being 'gone.' They're going to take relieving of their Munster and All-Ireland titles.

TOUGH, CLARE

Over now to hurling, and tough luck to Clare on losing the Ford Hurling League final. But what a great performance they put up in the showdown with Galway at Thurles.

The Banner County are on the right track. A gallant effort against Cork in the Munster final, and now a brave showing in the Ford Final.

Keep the heart up, Clare. That long awaited Munster senior hurling title may not be all that long delayed after the evidence of the Thurles game.

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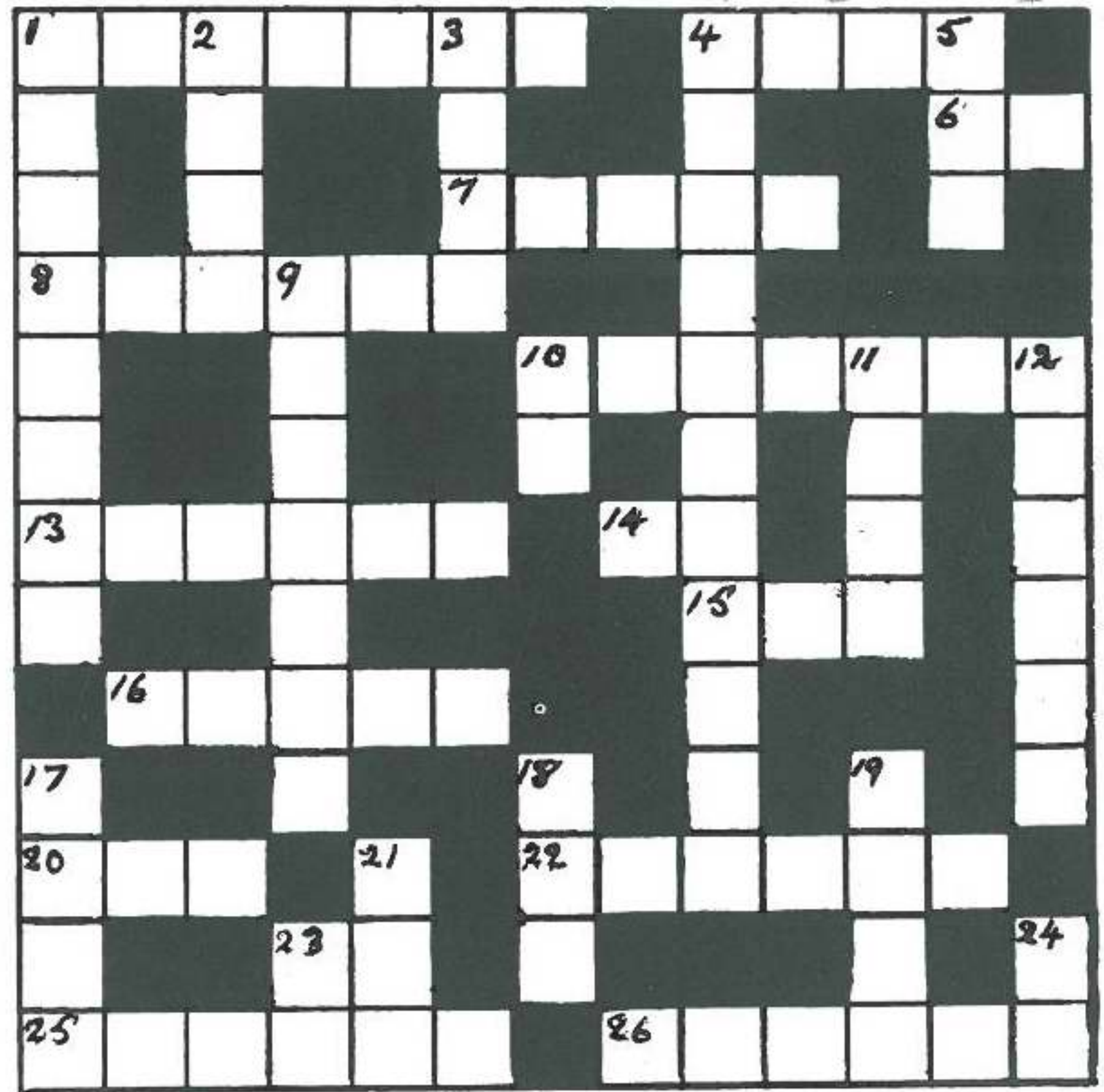
DEvised BY
MARTIN O'SHEA

ACROSS

- 1— A goalkeeper well above the ordinary in football, but who was not honoured in the last Bank of Ireland All Stars selection. (1, 6).
- 4— A popular form of a Christian name. It may be a help if you recall Grimes, who was a sharpshooting forward with Waterford in senior hurling in the late 'Fifties and 'Sixties. (4).
- 6— This will suffice for Outside Broadcast, something we are familiar with these days in Gaelic Games. (1,1).
- 7— The chase for the National Hurling League title is an county competition. (5).
- 8— This type of finishing by attackers generally results in defeat for their team. (6).
- 10— A forward in Kilkenny's All-Ireland senior camogie title winning team of last year, who uses an abbreviated form of Christian name. (2, 5).
- 13— Liam has appeared in attack with Mayo in senior football this year. His surname will solve this section of the crossword. It might remind one of a country. (6).
- 14— Initials of Tipperary's lone All Star in the 1985 Bank of Ireland hurling team. (1, 1).
- 15— Popular form of a Christian name, and a link with one of the outstanding goalkeepers in senior hurling (3).
- 16— Des has been seen in attack with Armagh in senior football in recent times. (5).
- 20— It could be said of the Kerry footballers generally that they are now this type of hands at championship play. (3).
- 22— A person who sells county team hats at matches could hardly be rightly called this. (6).
- 23— This will suffice for "Early Arrival". (1,1).
- 25— Centre half forward in the Tipperary senior hurling team. (1, 5).
- 26— John has been a score-getter for Offaly footballers in recent times. (6).

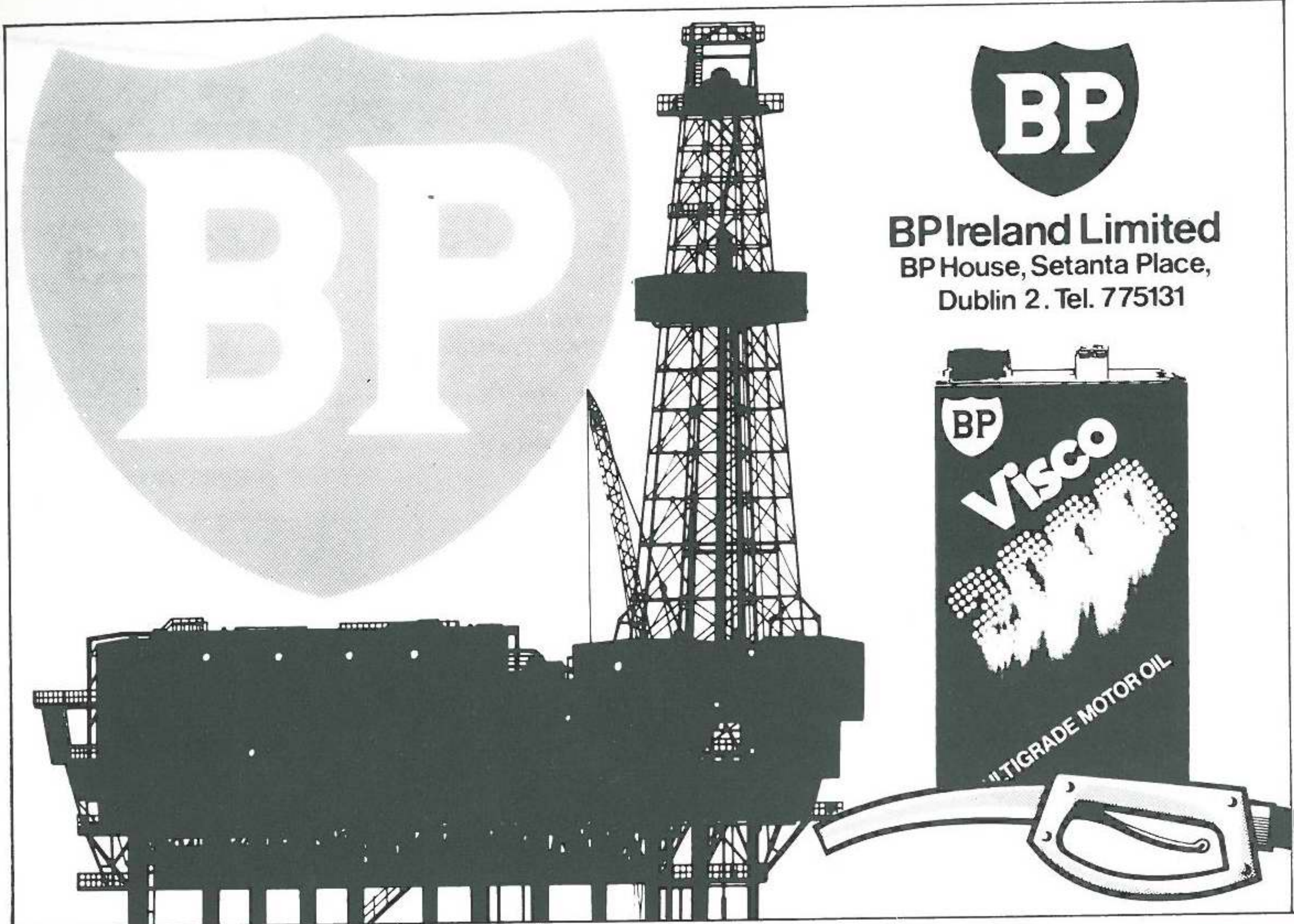
DOWN

- 1— Latest President-Elect of the G.A.A. (1, 7).
- 2— Noel has scored many grand goals for Galway hurlers (4).
- 3— Many supporters prefer to travel to matches by this form of transport, rather than by car or coach. (4).
- 4— Paddy is a stalwart of Kilkenny's defence in hurling. (11).



- 5— Initials of Limerick's right half back in that dramatic National Hurling League quarter final with Tipperary, and one of their longest serving campaigners. (1,2).
- 9— Lack of this is generally a serious worry for club and county treasurers. (7).
- 10— Initials of a prominent young Kerry forward from Ballylongford. (1, 1).
- 11— Not distant in place, time or degree. (4).
- 12— Kerry's points total in their Ford Football League semi-final win over Monaghan. (6).
- 17— Christian name of the half back who led Laois to the Ford Football League title last year. (4).
- 18— This will suffice for National Hurling League. (1,1,1).
- 19— It can be said that the minor football championship is a competition. (4).
- 21— A Galway forward who was a member of the Australian touring party last year, favours this form of a Christian name. (3).
- 23— Initials of a well-known contributor to GAELIC SPORT, and who is a former Cork county footballer. (1,1).
- 24— Initials of a Clare footballer who captured plenty of headlines in the early rounds of the just concluded Ford League by scoring 3-7 against Kilkenny at Ennis. (1, 1).

• SOLUTION ON PAGE 48



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

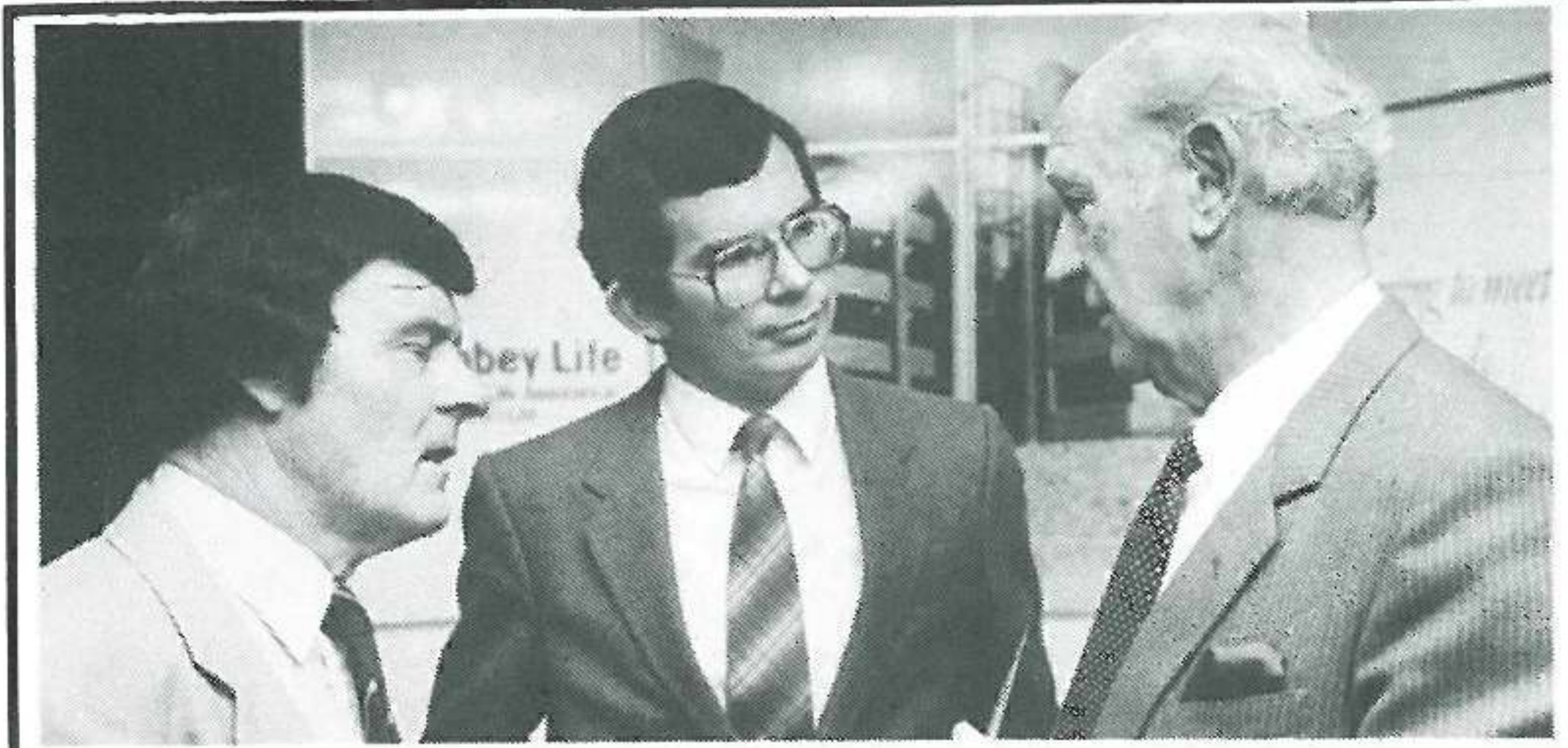
I believe "Gaelic Sport" should introduce a 'Letters to the Editor' column and I hope the following letter will contribute to it.

Having read with great interest Tommy McQuaid's interview with G.A.A. Director General, Liam Mulvihill, I would like to make the following points:-

The major talking point in G.A.A. circles these days is the fixtures structure and the major problem is the time of the year the Leagues are played in. I think no games should be played in the months of December and January, the last week of November and the first week of February. It looks like we will never have the Leagues played with the championships in the summer. I do not agree with this, like a lot of people, but it would disrupt the club fixtures and after all the clubs have the most players in the Association and the club is the basic unit of the Association. But the way things are now teams like Leitrim, Fermanagh, Sligo and Longford will never win an All-Ireland because the majority of counties right now play seven League games in winter and one game in the summer and that's it.

The inter-county scene is only for the elite I am afraid. Despite all of this, I think this year is bringing some welcome changes in the G.A.A. season, like the playing of the All-Ireland inter-county championships at U.21 level in May; the playing of the Railway Cups in October and the staging of the Ireland-Australia games in Ireland in October-November. The Junior Inter-county tests are finished. This is unfair on junior players but interest overall was not great. They also added to the fixtures glut. Every other year when the All-Irelands are finished the G.A.A. season was finished, but not this year. There is a lot to look forward to after them.

The once great Railway Cups are on the deathbed and if this year's change to October does not save them, then it's 'curtains' for the interprovincials. Players should be



Pictured above at the launch of the book "History of Civil Service Gaelic Football Club" sponsored by Abbey Life Assurance are (L. to R.): Tom Crotty, Vice-Chairman, Civil Service Gaelic Football Club Ciaran McGettrick, Company Secretary, Abbey Life Assurance and Jack Lynch, former Taoiseach.

much fitter this year and spectator interest should be better, especially after the championship season.

The Compromise Rules promise much and I hope they will be a success and I believe large crowds will see them here in Ireland in the fall of the year. I think their future lies with the Australians. They are very keen on an international outlet for their game. Their violent conduct cannot be tolerated. Also, the Australian public do not seem to be very interested in the idea. I also believe the oval ball should not be used. Testing times for the Railway Cups and the Compromise Rules games and if they fail we will be left with the inter-county and club games only.

Thanks for publishing this letter.

Yours in G.A.A. Sport,

**John Gerard Sullivan,
Pulleen,
Ardgroom,
Bantry,
Co. Cork.**

Dear Editor,

I DON'T think that the present system of the four provincial champions playing semi-final games to qualify for the All-Ireland final is a fair system at all. I think the open draw should be brought in and I'm sure many readers will agree with me. In hurling Cork have now won 5 Munster titles in a row but there are other strong hurling counties in

Munster, like Tipperary, Clare and Limerick who would beat most counties in Ireland, but they will always find it difficult to win a Munster title because they must come up against Cork. If there was an open draw, this would not happen. Also Galway only have to play one game to reach the All-Ireland final and this isn't fair either.

In football, any Munster county will always find it very difficult to win a provincial title because they have to beat Kerry to do so. If there was an open draw, this would not happen. In Leinster also there are some strong football teams like Laois, Offaly and Meath but Dublin nearly always win Leinster.

The open draw would be much more exciting because it would pair together some counties who have never even played each other before at a knock-out level of a competition and I think this would be good for the game. The competition in Ulster football is so strong that the provincial champions rarely retain the title. The open draw system would give Ulster teams a fairer crack of the whip.

I hope you can find space to print my letter because I think these few points are very important.

Yours faithfully,

**Shane Deevy,
Richmond House,
Cappoquin,
Co. Waterford.**

ALL-IRELAND HURLING CHAMPIONSHIP PREVIEW

LOOKS LIKE A KILKENNY VERSUS GALWAY FINAL

says Noel Horgan

HAD a poll been conducted in March among hurling enthusiasts regarding the outcome of this year's race for championship glory, it is a fair bet that many would have rated Cork as favourites to retain the McCarthy Cup. The Leesiders had comfortably qualified for the knock-out stages of the league despite the fact that they rarely fielded more than half the team that had produced such a magnificent performance in last September's All-Ireland win over Galway.

They suggested that Cork possessed a wealth of reserve strength and the Rebels appeared better equipped to achieve ultimate honours than they had done at the same time in 1986. Developments in April, however, saw Cork's prospects take a dramatic downward

plunge.

Firstly, Cork were eliminated by unfancied Waterford in the league quarter-final and then came an even more staggering blow when the great Jimmy Barry-Murphy announced his retirement.

The signs were ominous when Barry-Murphy was reluctant to confirm his commitment to Cork's cause at the start of the year and Cork folk should have been prepared for his departure. Yet, like someone who finally loses a terminally ill relative or a worker in an ailing company who eventually is made redundant, Cork's hurling fraternity was left reeling by the severity of the loss despite its long-term inevitability.

Since first emerging on the inter-county hurling scene in 1975 Jimmy Barry-Murphy has been a regular match-winner, playing a key role as a score-poaching half-forward during Cork's three-in-a-row success in the mid-'seventies. Barry-Murphy revelled in the company of such experienced colleagues as Ray Cummins, Sean O'Leary and Charlie McCarthy but when they left the scene, he took on the role of attacking leader and was primarily responsible for keeping Cork to the forefront during the current decade.

The game can ill afford to lose a player of his talent and charisma and one can safely assume that Barry-Murphy's departure will be regretted by hurling aficionados everywhere. Yet, feelings of sadness at his retirement are bound to be mixed with certain relief in some quarters. For the championship race in Munster, which Cork looked odds-on to win at the start of the season, is now very open indeed.

For all that, Cork must be fancied to account for either Limerick or Waterford and qualify for another provincial decider. Despite their commendable progress in the league, Waterford have a long road to travel before they can be regarded as a major force while Limerick look but a pale shadow of the Shannonside team that regularly came close to achieving championship glory at the start of the current decade.

Granted, veterans like Tommy Quaid, Leo Enright, Liam O'Donoghue and Jimmy Carroll are still going strong but the team overall is inexperienced. One suspects that Eamonn Cregan's plans are geared towards long-term success and that a championship breakthrough this year would prove an unexpected bonus to Limerick's supremo.



LEONARD ENRIGHT... still going strong in the Limerick colours.



JOE HENNESSY... forms part of the nucleus of a formidable Kilkenny outfit.

It is in the Munster final that Cork are likely to encounter the first real taste of the severity of life without Jimmy Barry-Murphy. Tipperary or Clare will provide the opposition and the outcome of their clash looks most uncertain. There has been little between them in their current championship jousts.

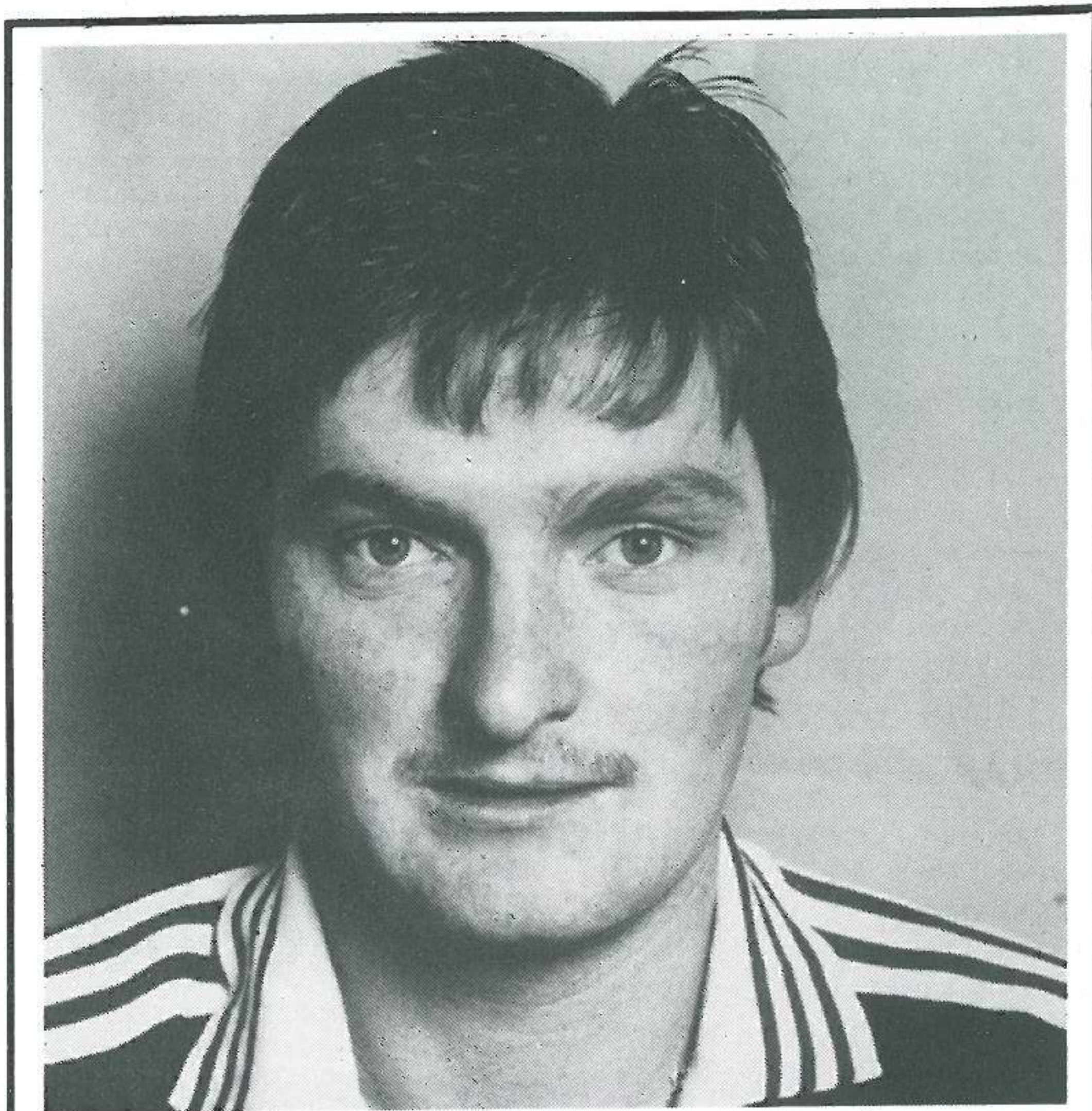
In 1984 Tipp needed a late goal to secure a single point success while the following year, the sides finished level although Tipp won the replay convincingly. Last season Clare turned the tables, producing a late surge at Ennis to win narrowly and provided Cork with a severe test in the Munster final.

Clare will have derived considerable benefit from the experience and will be quietly confident of advancing at Tipperary's expense again. Significantly, however, Tipp were without attacking ace Nicky English when they fell last year and he was also missing when Clare pipped Tipp by a goal in this year's league semi-final. The inclusion of Nicky English could tilt the scales in favour of the Premier county this time.

Tipp to qualify for the Munster final, therefore, where their chances of achieving provincial success for the first time since 1971 will be viewed with unusual optimism. In their 1985 Munster final clash with Cork, it was the brilliance of Barry-Murphy at full-forward that decided the issue. His absence will surely encourage the Tipp men and, boosted by Borrisoleigh's win in the All-Ireland club series and possessing an enormous desire to restore the county to its former exalted position, they will not be easily defeated.

Cork, however, possess quality players in John Fenton, Tom Cashman, Pat Hartnett and Tony O'Sullivan and, if Kevin Hennessy and Tomas Mulcahy can reproduce the form they displayed in last year's All-Ireland final, their attack may still carry enough power to ensure victory.

The prospect of achieving a record sixth provincial title on the trot could provide Cork with a spur that even the victory-starved Tippmen may find hard to combat.



NOEL LANE . . . with superb individuals of the calibre of Noel on the team, Galway will take some beating this year.

The failure of a Leinster side to qualify for the concluding stages of the league has caused many to disregard the prospect of All-Ireland honours going to the eastern province. Offaly have clearly lost ground since their '85 triumph while Wexford, without a provincial title since 1977 have done little to suggest that they are set for a return to the top.

Kilkenny, however, can never be underestimated and in seasoned campaigners like the Hendersons, the Fennellys, Kieran Brennan, Joe Hennessy and Richie Power, they have the nucleus of a formidable outfit. The Noresiders should emerge from Leinster and qualify for the All-Ireland final.

Galway, especially in view of Cork's recent setbacks are, in my view, the team that will take all the beating in the forthcoming championship. At the Cork victory dinner earlier this year

coach Johnny Clifford said that the Leesiders' win in the final was all the more meritorious because it was achieved against a great Galway team and the Cork supremo suggested that the Tribesmen would prove their greatness in the future.

I support that viewpoint and feel that Galway's rewards will come sooner than later. Possessing a well-balanced team laced with outstanding individuals like Tony Keady, Joe Cooney, Sylvie Linnane, Conor Hayes, Noel Lane and Peter Finnerty, I expect Galway, always at their peak in the semi-final, to account for the Munster champions at the penultimate hurdle. And the Westerners, benefitting from last year's disappointment, are unlikely to be found wanting in the decider although their probable opponents, Kilkenny, will hardly succumb as easily as they did in the semi-final of '86.

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CONNACHT



COMMENT

By Kevin Malone

MARTIN McDermott and Paul Sammon were two of the giants of the St. Mary's, Galway, team that went close to writing a bright new chapter during the sprint in the All-Ireland Colleges' senior football championship.

The Galway school booked a first final appearance in 18 years, and turned in a great-hearted performance when losing by a late point to St. Mel's, Longford, in early May.

McDermott was prominent in the attack all through the campaign with Mary's, and Sammon was also very much to the fore, but at the other end of the field at left half back. Both are players of skill and genuine promise.

If the surnames of this talented twosome strike a familiar chord in the memories of many enthusiasts, that is hardly surprising. Martin and Paul are walking tall in proud family traditions.

Martin's father, Bosco McDermott, played many great games with Galway. He was a tenacious left full back in the team that scaled wonderful heights for Galway in the 'Sixties by winning three All-Ireland senior championships on the trot. He also won a Railway Cup medal in 1967.

Bosco continues to give much to the game. He has been the St. Mary's coach for some seasons, and under his charge the school regained the Connacht title last year after a break

of 17 seasons, and then came this year's near brush with an historic first national title.

Paul's father, Liam, is also a former Galway football great. He won his spurs with the powerful Galway team of the 'Sixties in the last year of glory, and won his solitary All-Ireland senior medal in 1966.

Liam captained Galway in their unsuccessful Sam Maguire Cup games of 1971 and 1973, and also played in the losing Sam Maguire Cup bid against the then emerging Dubs in '74.

In more recent times Liam, who distinguished himself both as a forward and midfielder, was prominent as assistant to Kevin Heffernan, the Ireland team coach, on the successful tour of Australia last autumn.

Like Bosco McDermott, he continues to give much to the game on the home scene, and assisted in the preparation of the St. Mary's outfit in the just concluded Colleges' programme.

Although the Hogan Cup, the top prize for Colleges' football, went to Longford and not Galway, two Connacht counties, Roscommon and Leitrim, still had cause for celebration.

Eoin Donlon was a brilliant link at midfield for St. Mel's. He hails from

Strokestown, and has been on the Roscommon county under-16 and minor panels.

Right half back Martin McGlynn, from Kiltubrid, has played with Leitrim in minor football, and Thomas Reilly, of Gortletteragh, the St. Mel's full forward, has also had a spell as a member of the Leitrim under-18 panel.

Incidentally, while on under-age competitions, full marks to Galway on winning the All-Ireland Vocational Schools hurling title for the eighth season in a row! A tremendous record, and one that augurs well for the future of Galway hurling at senior level.

DIVISIONAL FINAL

Mention earlier of Leitrim brings to mind the fact that the county made a gallant effort to take a national title in hurling (would you believe?). Powered superbly by midfielders Gerry Dourigan and Jimmy McLoughlin, the Leitrim squad gave Tyrone a great run at Enniskillen before losing a thrilling National League Division IV final by two points.

Better luck next time, Leitrim!

NO JOY

The year has brought not a great deal of joy nationally for

•TO PAGE 35

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SPEERENCE DEPT.



Pierse Piggot clears for Galway during this year's Ford Hurling League Final as Sylvie Linnane keeps Clare's Gerry McInerney at bay. Galway's Joe Cooney had an outstanding game on the day and proved what a valuable player he is on the Galway team.

●FROM PAGE 33

Roscommon in senior football. First came the unsuccessful endeavours of Clan na Gael in their All-Ireland club championship final against St. Finbarr's, of Cork, at Croke Park. As a result, not only "Clanns", but surprisingly enough, Connacht has still to wait for that long overdue first national club crown in the code.

Then, came Roscommon's relegation to Division II for next season's Ford Football League following their defeat by Armagh by three points in a relegation clash at Cavan in early April.

However, despite that drop to the lower division, I would not discount Roscommon's chances of making a worthwhile impact soon again in football. They have some outstanding footballers; men like Bank of Ireland All Star Harry Keegan, Seamus Hayden, Owen McManus, Seamus Killoran at midfield, Emmet Durney, a very efficient free-taker, Paul Earley

and Tony McManus.

With talent like that on which to build, the county is unlikely to remain very long in Division II.

NO RECORD

Peter Murphy can feel happier than most as a result of Galway's superb win over Clare in the Ford Hurling League final. After all, he contributed in rich measure to the triumph in the sharply contrasting roles of forward and goalkeeper. He appeared in the attack in some of the opening rounds, but was back in goal for the semi-final and final.

I don't think Peter created a record as such. If I mistake not, Tommy Quaid, that famed Limerick net-minder, shone both as a forward and goalkeeper when the Shannonsiders won the 1984-85 title.

Still, Murphy deserved great praise for the parts he played both in attack and in the last line of defence in the long-awaited League title triumph.

What more can one say of Joe Cooney, who had such a superb outing at Thurles against Clare?

At only 22 he must surely rank as the most efficient forward in the game; a lively and tireless raider who is a constant worry to any defence with his deft runs and positional sense, and a forward with a flair for putting away the goals and points.

Even more noteworthy than his scoring of 2-6 in the final win over Clare and his good general play in attack, was Cooney's efforts in defence in the closing minutes. He found the energy and the class to help out at the back as Clare made their last ditch effort to swing the game their way.

There was Joe Cooney playing a powerful part in thwarting the Banner attack in a manner that reminded one so much of Pat Spillane at times in football.

Yes, a remarkable hurler is Joe Cooney, from Sarsfields.

KERRY, GALWAY, MEATH AND MONAGHAN TO CONTEST 'SEMI'S'

says Paul Costello

IF form in the Ford Football League is anything to go by, then, the chase for the up coming All-Ireland senior championship is destined to shape-up into another show-down between Kerry and Dublin for the Sam Maguire Cup. The draw keeps the champions of Munster and of Leinster apart this year in the semi-finals.

The Munster winners are due to meet the Connacht champions in the first semi-final on August 16, and a week later the king-pins in Ulster will oppose the winners of the Leinster crown. So, it could well be that Kerry and Dublin will meet in the 1987 final, and I know many who are convinced that this will prove the case.

I am not so sure myself, however. Experience has shown that League form is not always the best guide to the championship, and as well as that Kerry will have to travel to Pairc Ui Chaoimh for the Munster final in July.

Don't get me wrong, you followers in Clare, Limerick, Waterford and Tipperary! I know your counties will be competing in the Munster senior football championship, but realists that you are, I also believe that you will agree with me that it will be the sensation to end all sensations if Kerry and Cork fail to qualify for another show-down for the Southern crown.

Cork are an improving side. I am not going to go over old ground with regard to their League quarter-final draw with Dublin and the extra time controversy. But that game did

suggest to me that Cork are on the right track.

The old failing that has dogged Cork teams for so long is still there — the inability to create scoring chances. On the other hand, John O'Driscoll, the hero of the Australian tour last October, and one of the most exciting prospects in the country, did show his colleagues the way with some grand long range points against the Dubs.

If his colleagues in attack, and at midfield can provide him with stronger support in this regard, the Leesiders could have a profitable summer. They are shaping up well,



TOMMY DOYLE
footballers like Tommy are in a special class when helping to open the way to victory.

and have potential match-winners in Niall Cahalane, and Denis Walsh in defence, Paddy Hayes and Donal Culloty at midfield, and O'Driscoll and another of the Australian tourists, Jimmy Kerrigan, who is making a good job of his transfer from the half back line to defence.

Ground advantage as well will be worth a score or two for Cork, so that if they can get their act together, particularly in the finishing line, they could hand Kerry some costly lessons.

Still, there were no signs in the Ford League that the Kerry men were tiring of life at the top. There was a lightness in the step of many of their most renowned campaigners that belied their long spell in the big time.

Footballers like Pat Spillane, Mikey Sheehy, Ger Power, Eoin Liston, Tommy Doyle and Paudie O'Shea remain in a special class when it comes to producing that little extra that can mean so much in opening the way to victory.

Time must be catching up now on the Kerry men. We have said that more than once in recent years! Still, I think they will be good enough to keep Cork waiting at least another year for a return to the top in the South.

THE ULSTER SCENE

Early in the Ford League I thought that Monaghan were the best bet to win out in Ulster. Even though they lost to Kerry in their semi-final I still think the Farneymen have more going for them than the other counties.

Down have flashed a warning to Monaghan and defending champions Tyrone by winning the always competitive Dr. McKenna Cup in mid-April for the first time in fifteen years. Pat Donnan, in goal, Ross Carr, at left half back, Liam Austin in midfield and sharpshooting Brendan McGovern and Brendan Mason are among the gifted players in a smart-moving outfit that must command respect.

Tyrone have gone back a lot since their gallant All-Ireland final failure to Kerry, but in fairness it must be said they have been badly hit by injury problems. Nevertheless, I doubt very much if they will prove strong enough to hold on to their crown.

Derry have produced some under-age teams in recent years, but like Cork have not been reaping the reward at senior level. And their five points League quarter-final defeat from Monaghan is hardly a good advertisement for the championship — despite what I said earlier about form in the points competition not being the most reliable of guides.

Donegal, Armagh and Antrim have all accomplished players, but hardly squads with the all round strength and class to challenge realistically for the top honour in the province.

What of Monaghan? Gerry McCarville, Declan Loughman, Ciaran Murray in defence, David Byrne at midfield, and Ray McCarron, Eugene Hughes and Eamonn Murphy are some of the assets that help me to incline to them. Remember, too, that they will have brilliant young Stefan White, the former Colleges' ace, and a leading scorer with his native Louth in recent years, in their attack.

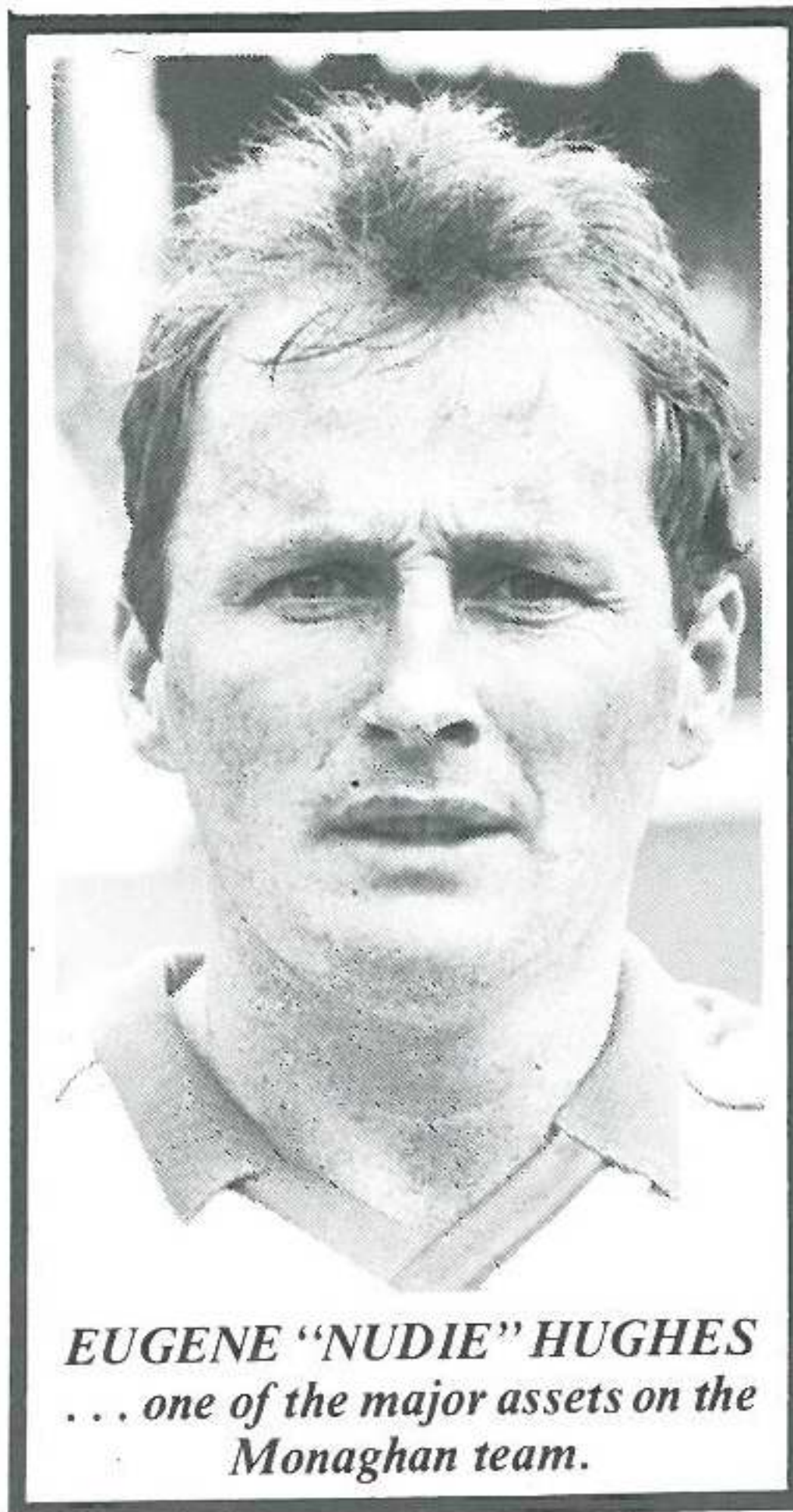
I fancy, then, that despite their League set-back against Kerry, Monaghan will come out on top in Ulster.

The Connacht championship has not been all that inspiring in recent times, and the coming series is hardly likely to really stir the blood.

Mayo looked to have given their hopes a boost when they beat Meath in the League in March, but then

along came Galway with that shock quarter-final success against the Royal County.

Galway did not set the scene alight when losing their unbeaten League record to Dublin in an undistinguished semi-final at Portlaoise. With a little more steadiness in attack, especially when playing with the wind in the first half, they might have pulled through.



EUGENE "NUDIE" HUGHES
... one of the major assets on the Monaghan team.

Roscommon were, of course, relegated to Division II as a result of a defeat from Armagh in a play-off tie in April, so it would seem that Galway have most to offer in the West.

Barry Brennan and Val Daly could pose plenty of problems for opposing defences. Seamus McHugh and Mattie Coleman are towers of strength in defence, and Galway have some other capable players throughout their team.

I think they will be good enough to hold on to their Connacht title.

In Leinster, the future appears to be strictly a "two horse" race with Meath, the defending champions, and Dublin, the front runners.

Meath shipped a shock league quarter-final defeat from Galway;

Dublin beat the Westerners in the semi-final. On paper, then, it looks like Dublin have more going for them than Meath.

Again, I am not so sure. I have a feeling that had Meath and not Galway provided the opposition to the Dubs in the semi-final, the men from the Liffeside would have bowed out of the competition.

Meath have not been scoring well of late. They will need to sharpen up in this department if they are to keep their Leinster title, but I think they can do that.

Similarly, Dublin's scoring rate has not been over-impressive. Barney Rock remains the main threat with his free-taking especially, but he is also effective in general play.

The Metropolitans seem to be a little uneven at midfield. Meath have possibilities here in their combination of Liam Hayes and Gerry McEntee.

The "Big Two" have plenty to encourage them in defence. The Lyons brothers, Padraig and Mick, Bobby O'Malley and Terry Ferguson will do much to ensure a rocky road to the Royal County goal.

Similarly, the steady and so dependable Mick Kennedy, Gerry Hargan, now earning long delayed recognition for his qualities at full back, Dave Synott at half back and, of course, John O'Leary in goal, can ensure that scores are hard to earn against Dublin.

Will it, then, be Dublin or Meath for the Leinster title? Or can such as Wexford, Laois, or even Louth cause an upset or two?

Dublin have a somewhat easier passage to the final than Meath, who are likely to find Laois their biggest threat.

I have not lost faith yet in Meath, and I will take them to hold on to their crown.

My "Big Four" then are Kerry, Galway, Meath and Monaghan. No change from last year, except in Ulster, where change is the norm rather than the exception.

And the All-Ireland title? Well, let's wait and see how my provincial forecasts work out before tackling that one.

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NORTHERN SPOTLIGHT WITH PÁDRAIG O'BAOIGHILL

IN recent years Ulster Champions Tyrone suffered more through injury than any county. They had similar problems during the Ford League campaign but this could not be an excuse for their poor showing and their relegation to division three.

However an improvement in the McKenna Cup boosted morale and Art McGrory will intensify training to ensure that they are fully fit for that important first championship game with an improving Antrim side at home in Casement Park.

Although new players such as Devine, Munro, McKeown, O'Hagan, Kilpatrick, Gallagher have showed up well, it is evident that Tyrone must have all their top class players who were missing such as McGarvey, Lynch, McCabe, Ball and McKenna available if they are going to be a serious threat in the 1987 championship.

Sigerson Cup:

Tough stuff it always was and a great breeding ground for coming county stars. Derry players, Enda Gormley, Dermot and Cathal McNichall scored five of Polyteck College Jordanstown's six points at Bellaghy in early March to take the Sigerson cup home to Belfast for the

second year in succession by defeating U.C.C. in the final. The cup is back now in the province where it belongs. The donor Dr. Sigerson was a Strabane man. Other county players who were prominent in that great victory were Derrymen Barry Young, Cathal Glass and Rory Scullion, Barry Breen, D.J. Kane, Down, Canavan of Armagh and Stephen Conway, Tyrone.

Colleges:

Our congratulations to that famed nursery of Gaelic football Abbey C.B.S. Newry and manager Val Kane for capturing the coveted McRory Cup at the expense of old rivals St. Colmans in Davitt Park Lurgan in March. James McCartan who scored four points for St. Colmans is a son of the famous James McCartan as is midfielder Brian. Shane O'Neill is a son of Kevin O'Neill, All-Ireland medalist in the 1960 team. Another Colmans player with a great future is Oliver Reel. As for the Abbey, look out for Stokes, McMahan, McCreesh, O'Hare and Lyons especially.

Declan Brennan of Clontibret, an up and coming Monaghan star was the leading light in McCartan's

College defeat of Armagh C.B.S. in the Dr. McLaron cup at the same venue when he scored six of his teams 12 points. Other prominent McCartan players were Tony Murphy, Luke Brennan and Seamus McCarville. Congratulations to Manager Niall Moyna son of famous Monaghan player of the fifties Tommy Moyna of Scotstown ably assisted by Fr. Pat McHugh and Vincent Lee. **This was their first major trophy since 1956.**

In Camogie St. Patrick's High School, Dungiven won the Senior B. Championship final at Glen and former Derry star Sean O'Connell principal of St. Patrick's was present on the sideline to help the girls to victory. In the All-Ireland senior colleges championship St. Patrick's Maghera were beaten by a strong Cork team, St. Mary's Charleville but the young Maghera boys made amends when St. Patrick's High School won the Corn na n-Óg Trophy.

Co. Down:

Brendan Mason of Loughinisland and Down is a forward of exceptional ability and skill and it is good to see that he will give full commitment to

●TO PAGE 41



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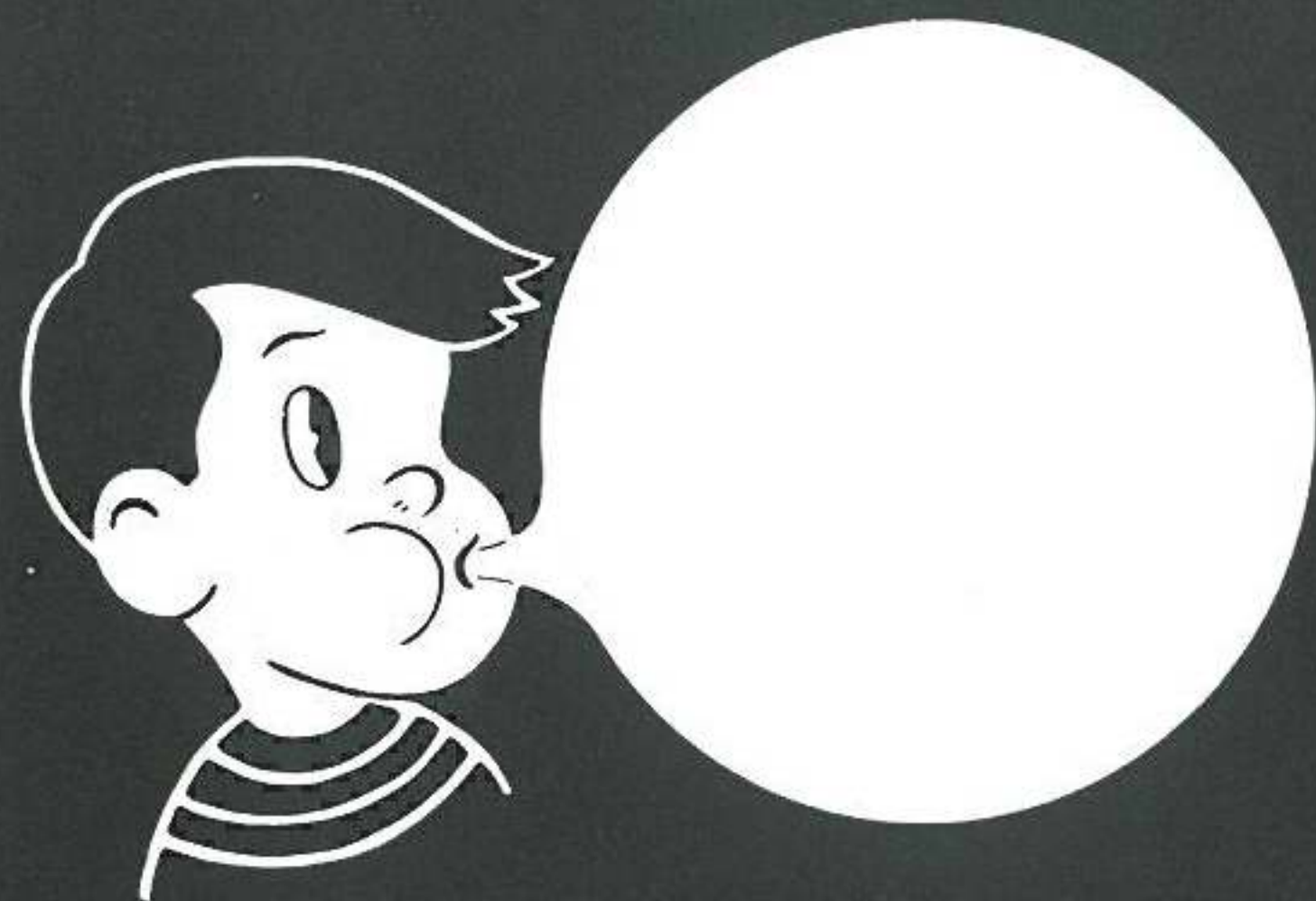
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DOWN '81 ...



PICTURED above are the 1981 Ulster Champions, Down, which was the last time the County won the Ulster title. Many Down supporters feel that they would have won the title in '86 but for a disputed goal in Clones, however with all the same players competing in the 1987 championship Down followers are quietly confident of regaining the Ulster crown this year.

●FROM PAGE 39

the Down Senior team in this year's championship. It was previously reported that a Portadown soccer club was hoping to get his service. Since the deletion of the Ban, managers have had problems with players trying to play in different codes and it was necessary for Donegal Manager, Tom Conaghan to take strong action. **It is only fair that all players give full commitment to their County in the Championship and what a battle this year's Ulster Championship is going to be.** Many Down supporters blame the disputed goal in Clones for denying them a place in the All-Ireland semi-finals in 1986 and with all that team available they are quietly confident for 1987. They have the most accurate forward line in the province but their defence has yet to prove themselves.

Des Newtown:

The Roscommon Town born Donegal left corner back who plays for Inishowen club, Urris, is a son of a famous Leitrim player, the tall J.P. Newton. His mother comes from Letterkenny and his brother John Newton is presently playing for Roscommon. Des won an U-21 All-Ireland medal with Roscommon in 1978. Like Tyrone, Donegal were rather disappointing in the League but with Mulgrew and Carlin now back it will be difficult for Armagh or Fermanagh to come out of Ballybofey with a win on June 14th.

Stefan White:

Monaghan were playing some good football but they were not getting the scores. In that regard I feel that it is a good omen for them to get the services of Stefan White son of a

famous footballing father Stephen White of Ardee who won an All-Ireland medal with Louth in 1957. Since coming to Blayney he has been a great asset to the Faughs team and his quick burst of speed to get the unexpected goals is what is necessary if they are to dethrone Cavan who did well in the McKenna Cup. If he can get to know the Monaghan attack with a fully fit Eamonn McAneaney in action the Farney men could fulfil the ambitions of most of their supporters in this year's All-Ireland series. After all they showed in Killarney in March that they can play with the best. And did I hear of another Monaghan player who served his county well playing a blinder for Parnells in the Dublin Championship? **Yes! Bernard Brady is playing better than ever.**

AG OBAIR LEAT...

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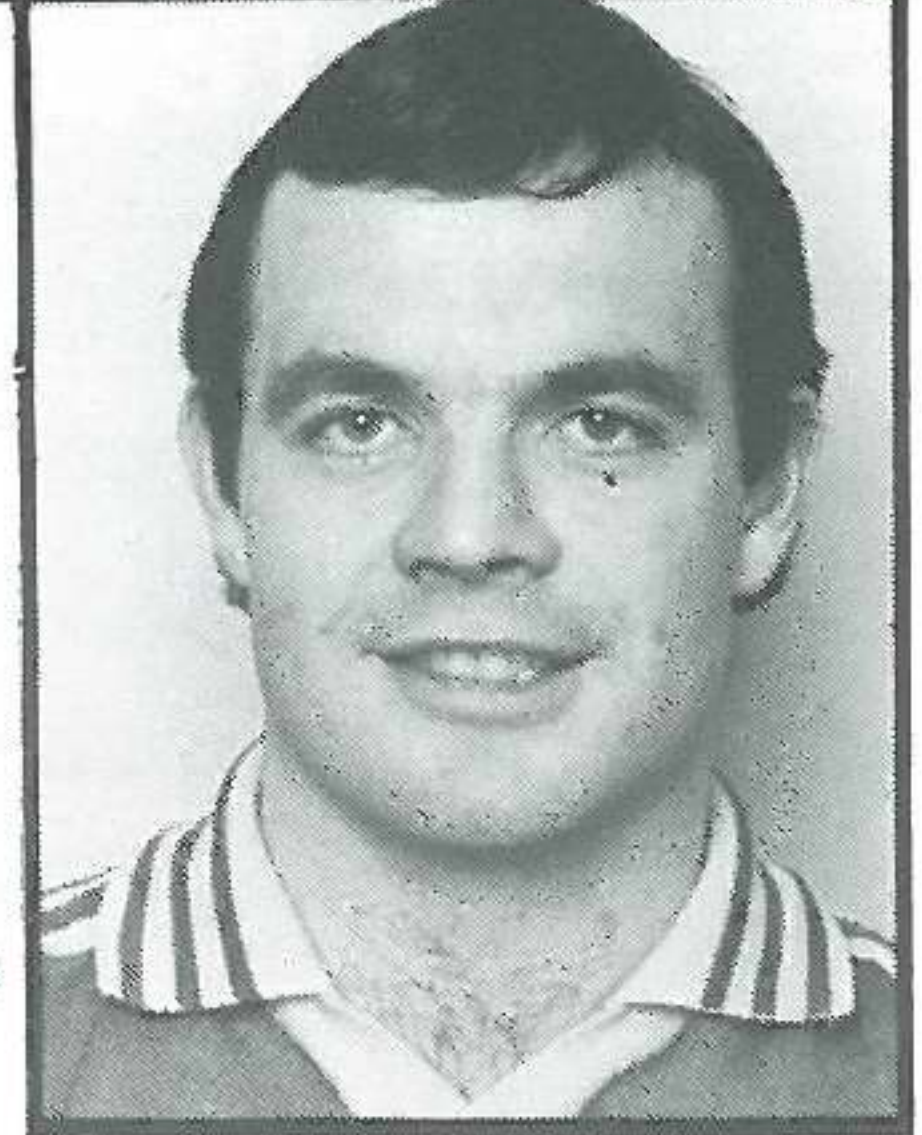
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THE IRISH TIMES



• PADRAIG LYONS

THE LYONS BROTHERS



• MICK LYONS

THE Lyons brothers, Mick and Pádraig, are men many in Meath look to as defenders to do much to burnish the bid for a successful defence of the Leinster senior football championship this summer. Small wonder, as the brothers are well equipped to take on such assignments.

Mick collected his second Bank of Ireland All Star award at full back earlier in the year. He is the type of solid defender who is not easily outwitted by even the most gifted of full forwards. He has proven that time and again, and now at 28 brings to his solid and dependable play a wealth of top-class experience.

Experience that is not confined to clashes with Irish opposition. One recalls the powerful work of the Summerhill club man against the touring Australians in the first Test series proper played in this country during Centenary Year. Mick played in all three games in that series, and was consistently to the forefront.

He also had a big say in shaping the successful tour that was Ireland's in Australia last October. The six-footer did not line out in any of the starting teams in each of the Test series, but he was one of the interchange players for every match. As such he made a strong contribution to the overall triumph that was Ireland's in the series.

A wholehearted and determined battler, Mick has given great service to Meath since he first joined the senior team in 1979, it is a tribute to

his own skills and to the consistent brand of football he has produced in the top-flight that he has carved out such a well-deserved reputation at full back in view of the fact that Meath have not enjoyed a great deal of success during his spell in the team.

The high point must surely have been last July when Mick had a splendid game against Dublin in the Leinster final as Meath marched to their first title in 16 long years. That was not his first provincial senior medal, though, as around about ten years ago he helped Summerhill to take the provincial club championship.

by
**Seamus
Walshe**

Lyons won his first Bank of Ireland award in 1984. He had much to celebrate on St. Patrick's Day of 1985 as well when he helped to strike another rare blow in the game as a member of the Leinster team that won the Railway Cup for the first time in eleven years.

Padraig gave the family further cause for Railway Cup joy when he won his first medal as left full back in the team that retained the Cup in 1986. Mick was not in that side.

Last year, too, Padraig was a leading light in the defence in that provincial final win over Dublin, holding down the left full back spot. A double joy-day for the Lyons family!

Long before that we saw both to

the fore at national level when they helped Meath to the most unique final win in senior football — the Centenary Cup decider triumph over Monaghan at Croke Park.

FIRST SINCE 1977

Pádraig also won his spurs with the Ireland squad to keep very much in step with his older brother. Just before leaving the pair were in sparkling form with Summerhill as they inspired the way for a win over Seneschalstown that earned the club a first Meath senior football final win in nine years.

Mick was majestic at midfield, and Pádraig hatched his display with a showing that made him a tower of strength as pivot.

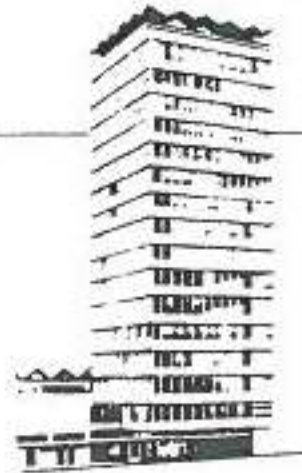
Pádraig is 25, and joined the county senior team in 1982. He has steadily developed into a top-class defender in the meantime, and like his brother can be depended on to play his part really well in the upcoming bid to keep the Blue Riband of Leinster in the Royal County. Pádraig is a former Meath "Footballer of the Year" award winner; a distinction he gained in 1984.

The Lyons brothers are again this year displaying first-class form and that is encouraging for Meath followers at a time when the senior championship hopes have taken something of a knock as a result of a demoralising finale to the Ford League that saw the team lose their final group tie to Mayo, and the quarter final to Galway.

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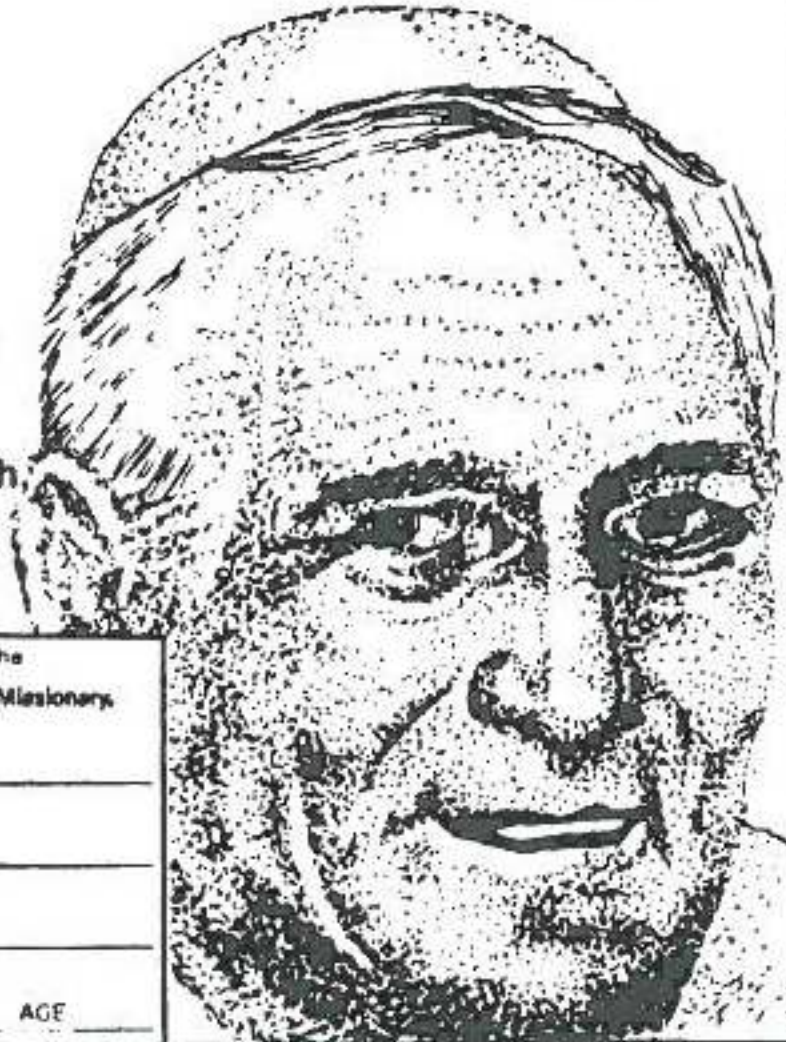


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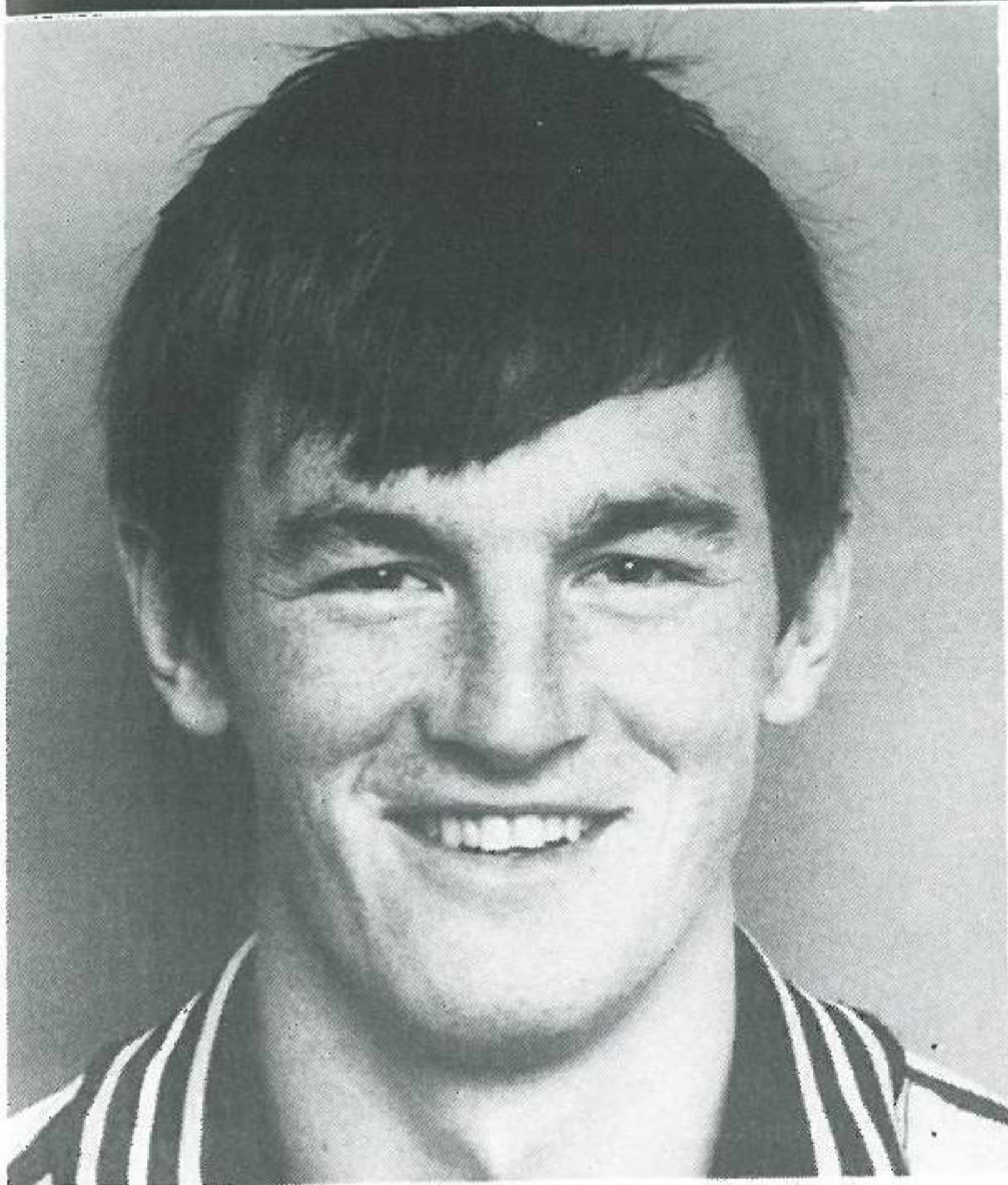
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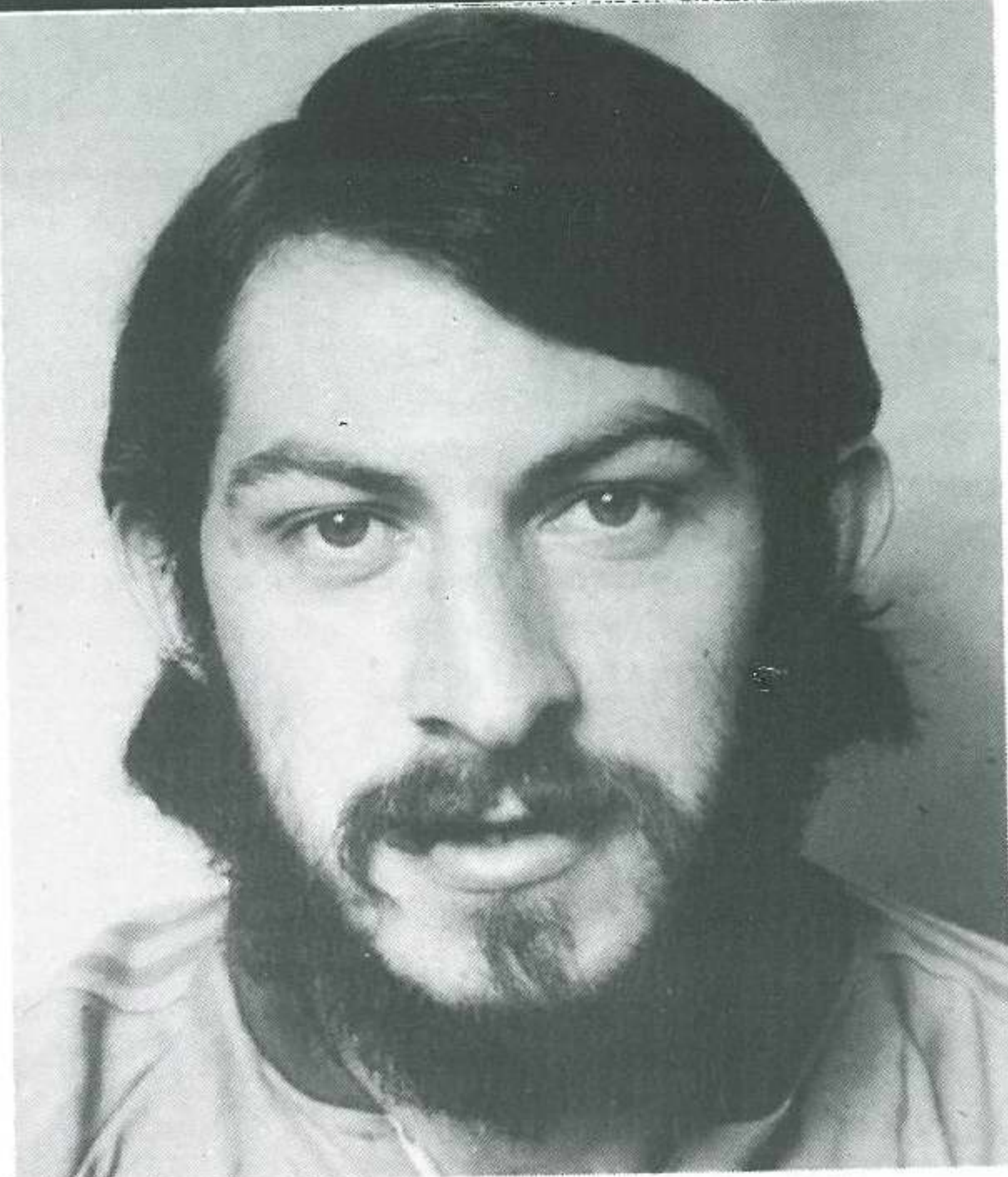
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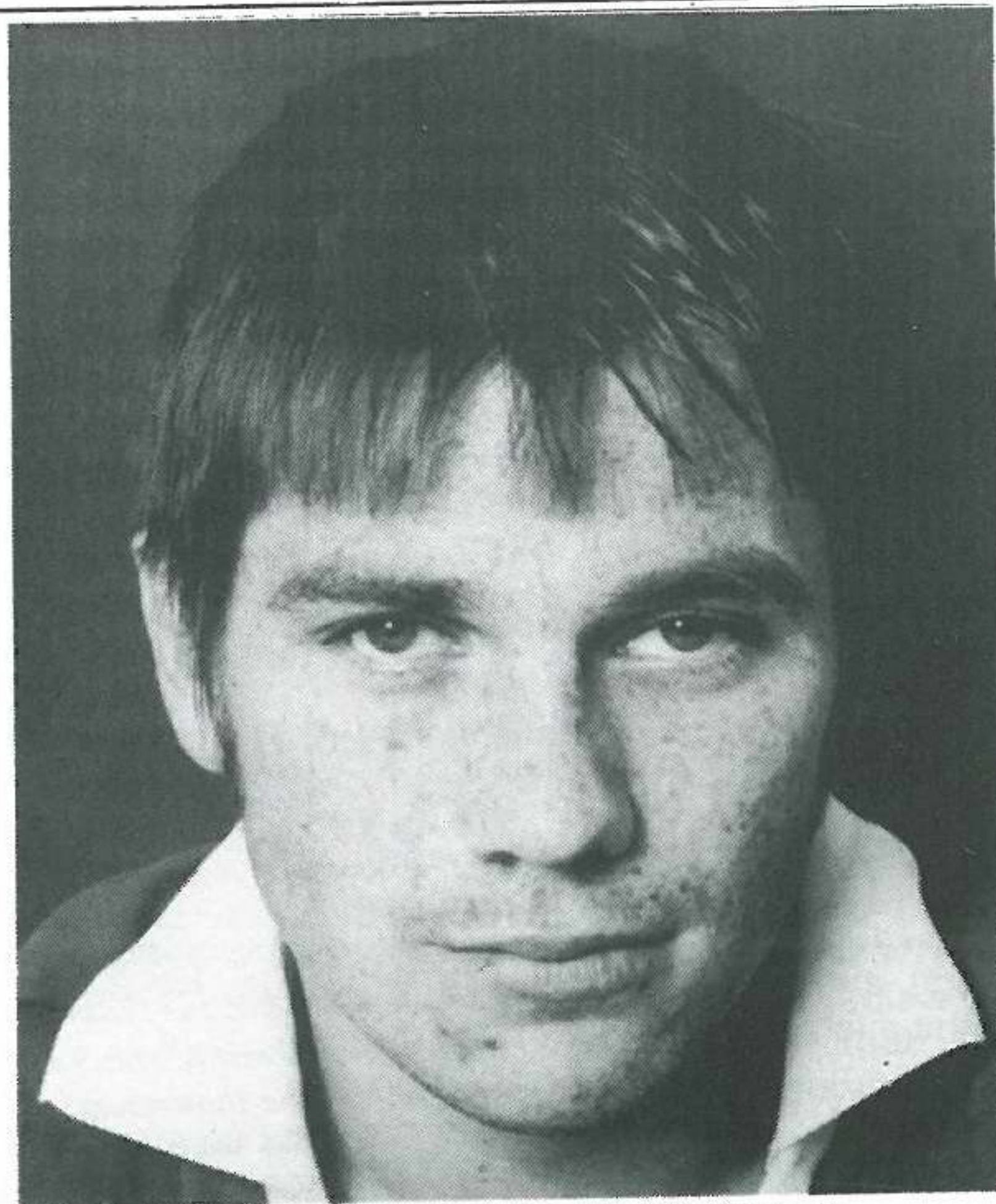
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LOOKING BACK...

by John Redmond

DID you know that almost forty years ago Kilkenny beat Cork in a classic All-Ireland senior hurling final, or that the All-Ireland senior football final of 1947 was played in far-off New York?

Well, Kilkenny and Cork did provide one of their many classic encounters when they met for the 1947 hurling crown, and that year, too, as a result of a decision at the annual Congress earlier in the season, the football final went to New York.

The Congress of '47, in fact, decided to send General Secretary Pdraig O Caoimh and Connacht Council Secretary Tom Kilcoyne to the American city to investigate the possibilities of playing the final in New York. They travelled, presented their report to a Central Council Meeting, and as a result of that report it was decided by 20-17 to play the game in America.

That was an ambitious undertaking at the time, as the world was just picking up the pieces again after the devastating years of the 1939-45 World War II. But it was an undertaking that proved a huge success, and one that did much to further the cause of Gaelic Games not alone at home but abroad.

In this issue as we look forward in some contribution to the upcoming championships, it is entirely appropriate to launch a new feature, LOOKING BACK, with reviews of two of the great finals of all time — the hurling and football deciders of 1947. Hard to credit, almost now 40 years back in the mists of history!

REVENGE FOR KILKENNY

Two last gasp points by the legendary Terry Leahy earned

victory from the jaws of defeat in their 1947 clash with Cork before an attendance of 61,510. The 0-14 to 2-7 win was rich compensation for the Noresiders for their nine points defeat in the 1946 decider.

Every minute of the 1947 showdown had its quota of thrills, but a memorable match really reached a wonderful climax with a nerve-tingling and tension filled last quarter.

The evenness of the scoring, sweeping end to end play, first time striking in the air and on the ground were among the chief qualities that made the decider such a magnificent one. Indeed, many rate the game the greatest hurling classic of them all.

Kilkenny defended the Railway goal in the first half and played against a stiff breeze. They turned over at the break ahead by 0-7 to 0-5.



"Now Cork is be't, the hay is saved," the thousands wildly sing. They speak too soon, my sweet gorsoon, for here comes Christy Ring." (PHOTO: Courtesy of "The Clash of the Ash" by Raymond Smith).

Kilkenny lost Peter Prendergast, their centre half back, who was having a splendid game marking Christy Ring, early in the second half through an injury, and they found it difficult to get into their stride.

A long puck out by Kilkenny goalkeeper Jim Donegan was collected by Terry Leahy and he steadied Kilkenny with a lovely point. A sideline cut by Jim Young went to Con Murphy who sent on to Mossie O'Riordan. He beat a crowded Kilkenny defence for the first goal of the game, and Cork were ahead for the first time — 1-7 to 0-9.

The thrills came fast and thick after that, and Kilkenny regained the initiative with points from Shem Downey and two by Leahy coming up to the end. They looked assured of the title, but with time almost up a long puck-out by Cork's right full Billy Murphy was collected by Con Murphy, who sent it to Joe Kelly. The left full forward made no mistake as he got the goal that seemed destined to keep the McCarthy Cup by the Leaside for another year as Cork led 2-7 to 0-12 with time all but run out for Kilkenny.

However, a free to Kilkenny brought a Leahy equaliser. The puck out was won by right full back Paddy Grace, who made ground before parting to Leahy, and the cultured centre half forward coolly slotted the sliotar over the bar for a late winning point. The full time whistle went on the puck-out.

Prendergast, who did not concede a score to Ring, Leahy, Jim Donegan, excellent in goal, Jim Langton, with delightful body swerves and superb general play, and Liam Reidy, who formed the left wing of the attack, sparkled

CAVAN . . . ALL-IRELAND CHAMPIONS 1947



1947 All-Ireland Champions, Cavan, pictured above prior to their historic win over Kerry in New York. This was the only All-Ireland Final ever to be played outside Ireland (L to R): back row-P. Lynch, T. Tighe, D. Benson, B. O'Reilly, V. Sherlock, T.P. O'Reilly, M. Higgins, P. Donohue, B. Cully, J. Wilson, J.J. Cassidy, E. Carolan, P. Fitzsimons. Front-W. Doonan, V. Gannon, S. Deignan, J.J. O'Reilly (Capt.), P. ('Gunner') Brady, P. Smith, O.R. McGovern, T. Sheridan, S. Morris, P.J. Duke, J. Stafford.

for Kilkenny.

Right full back Billy Murphy, whose lengthy puck-outs were a feature of the final, captain Sean Condon at right half forward, the O'Riordans, Mossie and Gerry, and Joe Kelly, the full forward trio, were Cork's leading hurlers.

Terry Leahy was Kilkenny's top scorer with six points, Jim Langton hit three points, Shem Downey two, and Jack Mulcahy, Tom Walton and Liam Reidy a point each.

Joe Kelly was joint top scorer for Cork with Sean Condon. He hit 1-1, and Condon notched 0-4. Mossie O'Riordan 1-0, Jack Lynch and Christy Ring a point each, were the other marksmen for the Leesiders.

The game was refereed by Phil Purcell, of Tipperary.

THE UNIQUE FINAL

The football final was unique — the only senior football decider in the All-Ireland championship played outside of Ireland. Cavan and Kerry journeyed all the way to New York to decide their meeting for the 1947 title. There was an attendance of 34,941 on September 14 at the Polo Grounds for a game that was played in intense heat.

Kerry had a blistering start and raced off to an early lead of eight points. Goals by Batt Garvey, left

half forward, and midfielders Eddie Dowling helped the Kingdom to this great start, and Cavan looked down and out. However, thanks to excellent interpassing, and a lively attack, cleverly prompted by Mick Higgins on the '40', the Ulster men rallied superbly, and goals by Joe Stafford, right full, and Higgins transformed Cavan. So much so that they were ahead at the break by 2-5 to 2-4.

Cavan really excelled in the second half. Their forwards were majestic, particularly full forward Peter O'Donoghue, who displayed uncanny accuracy from frees. Only for the brilliance of Dan O'Keefe in the Kerry goal, Cavan would have finished even more decisive winners than the scoreline of 2-11 to 2-7 in their favour suggests.

O'Donoghue was really the hero of the day. He kicked eight immaculate points, and such was his imprint on the game that the American sportswriters dubbed him the "Babe Ruth" of Gaelic football.

Babe Ruth, of course, was one of the legendary figures of baseball, and the Polo Grounds was a leading baseball pitch at the time of the '47 Gaelic football final.

P.J. Duke, Simon Deignan and John Joe O'Reilly, who captained the team, put up a powerful

barrier at half back for Cavan. Stafford, Higgins and Columba McDyer in the attack were others who provided O'Donoghue with superb all round support in what must rank as the Breffni County's greatest-ever performance.

Gega O'Connor opened the scoring in the final, with a point for Kerry, and had a good game as well. Batt Garvey's goal was a brilliant solo effort, and the second of the afternoon was, of course, that one by Kerry midfielder Eddie Dowling.

Joe Keohane, full back, Paddy Kennedy, left full, and, of course, goalkeeper supreme O'Keefe were best for the Kingdom.

The match was refereed by Martin O'Neill (Wexford), and Michael O'Hehir vividly brought all the thrills to enthusiasts at home with his graphic commentary live from the Polo Grounds over the then Radio Éireann.

Today when we take live television coverage from the other part of the world almost for granted — remember how little we marvelled at the technology involved in bringing the Test series last October to our screens — it is hard now to appreciate the impact created by that live broadcast from so far away.

Yes, the 1947 All-Ireland senior football final was something special — in more ways than one.



TOMMY CONROY
Dublin

TOMMY'S creative work at centre-half forward was a key factor in fashioning Dublin's last All-Ireland senior football final win in 1983. He was also prominent in the position in the unsuccessful Sam

Maguire Cup ties against Kerry in 1984 and 1985.

This St. Vincent's club man graduated to the top grade after a successful career in under-age competitions. He represented Dublin at minor in hurling and football, and won a provincial medal in the big-ball code at under-18 in 1981.

A member of two Leinster senior

final winning teams, Tommy was in Leinster's attack in the Railway Cup title triumphs of 1985 and 1986, and won his only Bank of Ireland All Star award in 1985.

This six-foot plus dual county medallist has been absent from Dublin's team for a lengthy spell, but as he will only be 24 in October time is still on his side for a return to the top rank.

Tradition in the making.

