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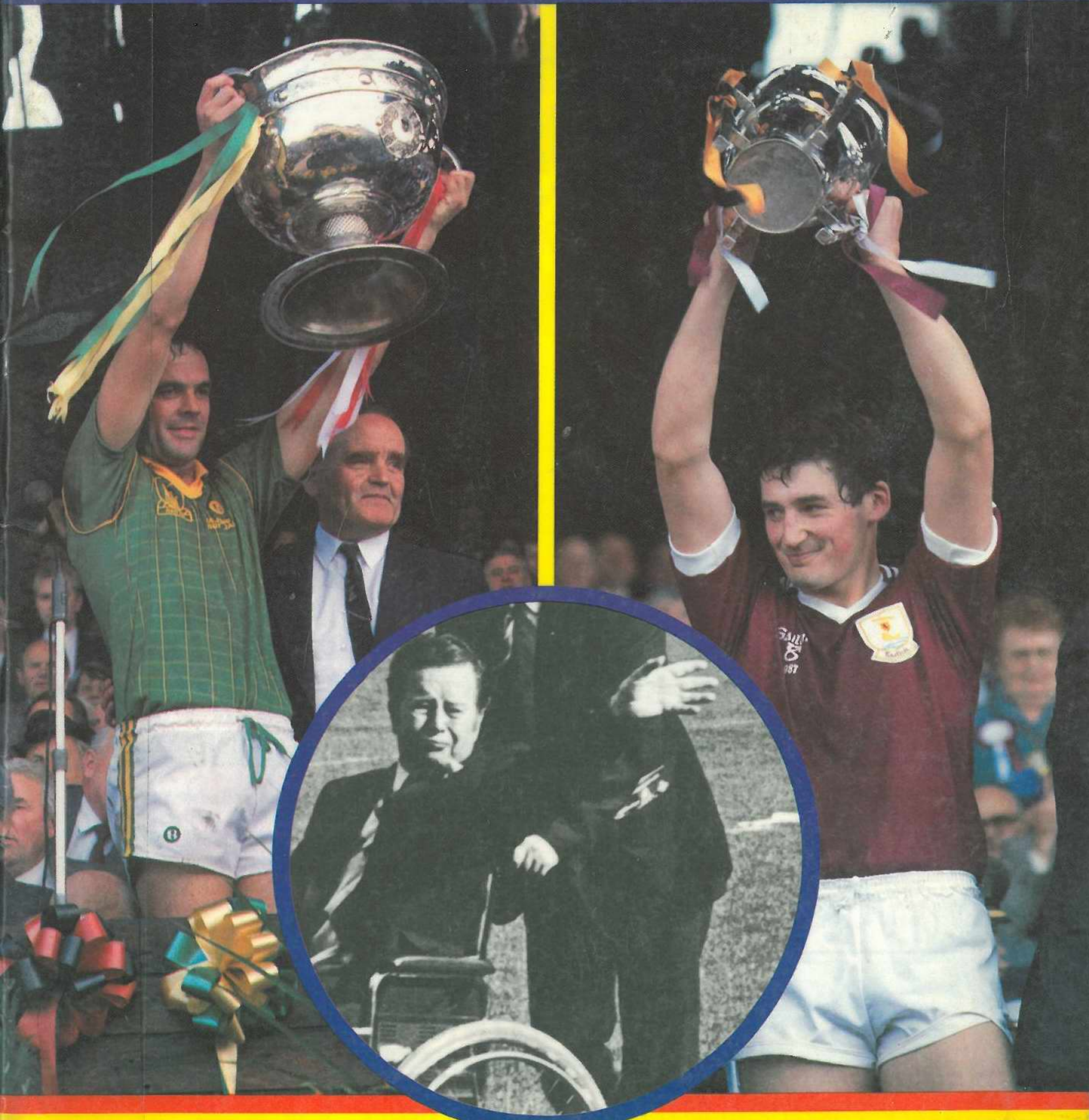
GAAELIC SPORT

THE CHOICE OF THE STARS

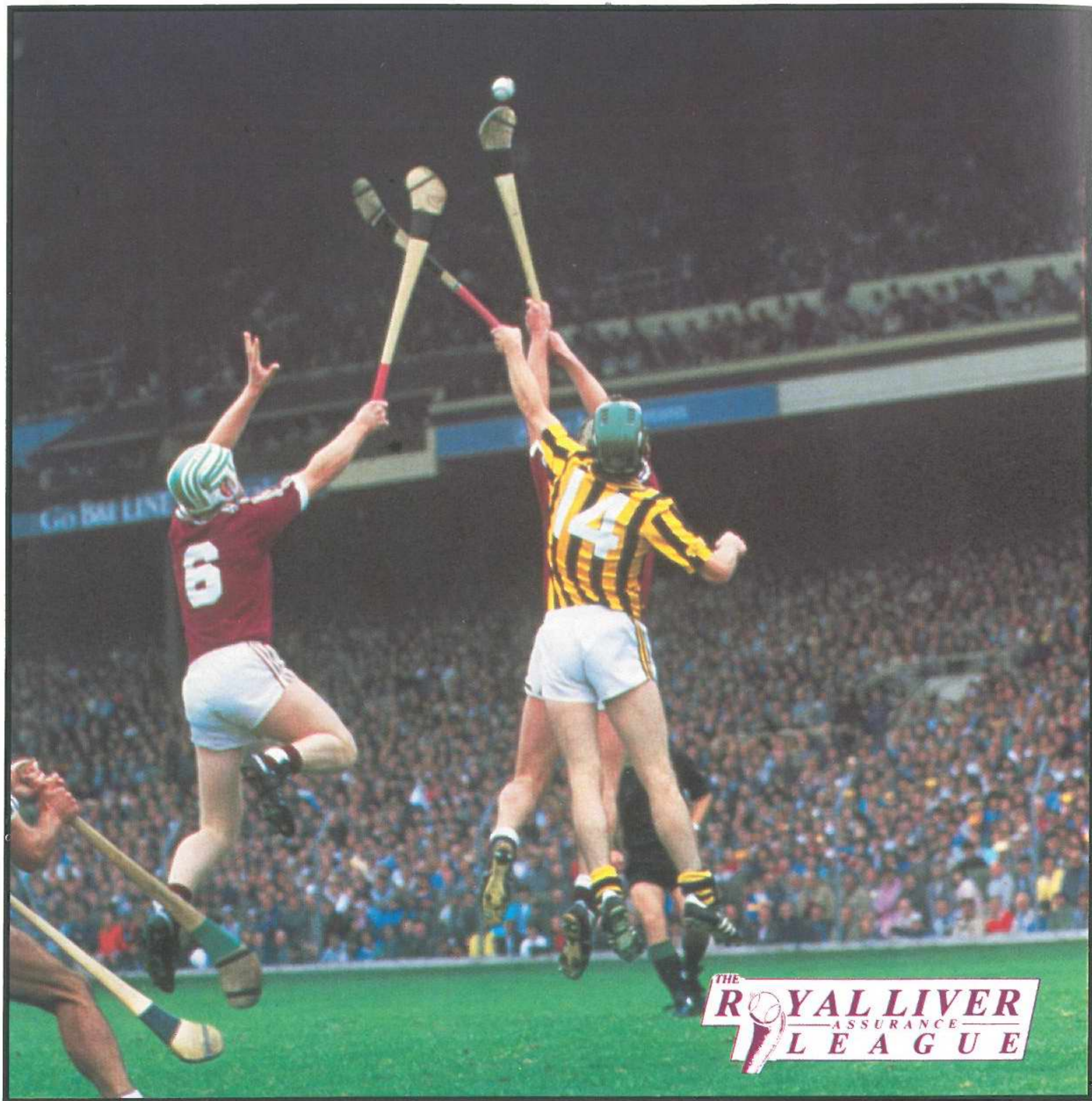
IRELAND'S LEADING GAELIC GAMES MAGAZINE SINCE 1958

WINTER EDITION, 1988

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COVER PHOTO: The caption on our front cover — The Joy and the Sorrow — is very well illustrated by the expressions of joy on the faces of the Meath and Galway captains, Mick Lyons and Conor Hayes respectively. Both men achieved the ultimate honour, leading their county's to All-Ireland victory. Their justified joy is in sharp contrast to the sad sight of Michael O'Hehir, overcome by emotion, as he acknowledges the resounding applause from the 68,000 spectators, prior to the start of the '87 football final.

GAELIC SPORT

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SERIES HAVE POTENTIAL, BUT...

AFTER the sparkle of the final game in the Test football series it would be easy to wave the flag enthusiastically in favour of establishing the matches between Ireland and Australia on a permanent annual basis.

Easy because that concluding game was top-class entertainment. It was a match that, despite the Australian win, which also gave the visitors the title over the three games, spectators still went home from Croke Park well pleased with the fare provided. In short, the game was an excellent propaganda exercise for the series.

Certainly, Irish and Australian officials have come a long way on the road towards perfecting an attractive and crowd-pleasing new game. The sport is fast, exciting, and laced with scores. All the indications are that the potential is there to develop the game in time into a sport to not only rival the best around but prove more spectacular and more appealing than most.

Another encouraging pointer was that while there were some unseemly incidents, the games generally were played in the right manner with the emphasis on skill rather than on brawn. The Australians in general were not as aggressive as so many had loudly forecast before their arrival in this country.

All of which indicates that much ground has been gained since the Test competition proper was introduced just about three years ago. If the rate of progress is maintained and improved during the Ireland visit "down under" in 1988, then there will undoubtedly be a strong case for putting the series on a permanent basis thereafter.

A strong case, that is, for the Test series as a competition in its own right. But the Irish-Australian game cannot be looked at in isolation. The Test series must be viewed against the backdrop of the situation here at home.

Let's be blunt about it — we just cannot be complacent about the position of our own games. Hurling is not making anything like the progress one would expect in an organisation that is now over 100 years old, and the position of football nation-wide also leaves much to be desired.

Both games are played all over the country, but few will dispute that the overall standards are low. Only a handful of counties in each code can entertain genuine ambitions each year about winning an All-Ireland Senior title.

That's a sorry state of affairs as the G.A.A. strides out into its second century.

A case can be made for devoting the time and money being spent on furthering the Australian cause, on steps to improve the general health of football and hurling.

It can be argued as well that the international games cater for an elite few at the expense of the majority of footballers.

And, there are those who point to the way the programme has been disrupted this winter because of the Test matches.

No Football League games were played in October or on the first Sunday of November because of the Australian visit, and as a result, some rounds of the competitions were played in December.

All pertinent points, but hardly strong enough to make a worthwhile case for erecting the "STOP" sign on the international front.

Surely efforts to improve standards at home must be on an on-going basis year after year, and can be pursued irrespective of events on the international scene. As for League ties in December, we had such matches in hurling and football time and again in the past, long before the Test idea was even born.

What about the argument that the Test games cater for an elite? Possibly, but the other side of the coin is that players in the weaker counties have an added incentive to train harder because of the Test games. After all, if footballers like Mick Fagan (Westmeath), Noel Roche (Clare) and Pat O'Byrne (Wicklow) can win international honours, why not footballers from Waterford, Tipperary, Fermanagh or Carlow?

The point that needs to be stressed here is that the internationals can help to improve standards as footballers realise that lack of success by a county team is not in itself a barrier on the road to an Ireland jersey.

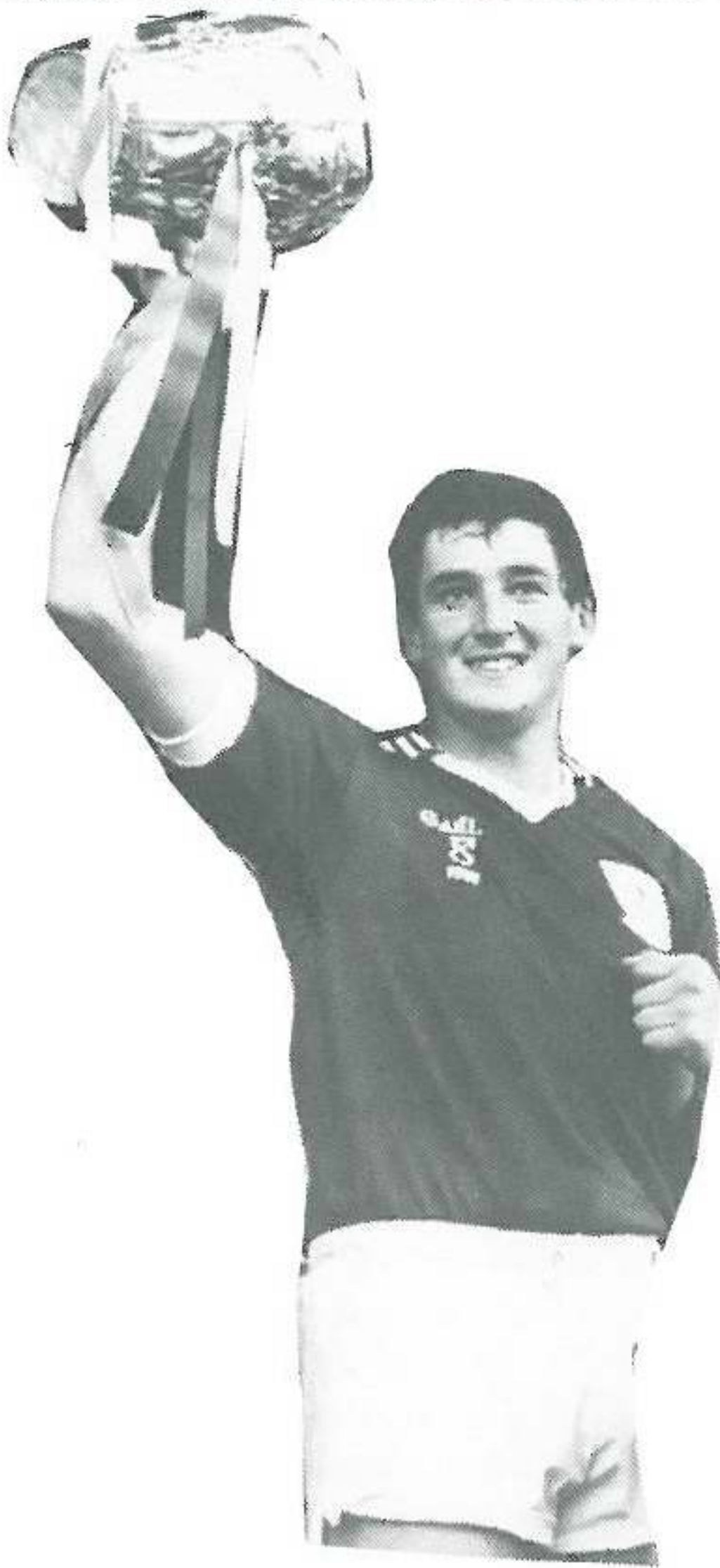
Let's not forget the fact either that the attendance of 27,000-plus at the final Test match shows that the support is there among the supporters for the games.

Our view therefore is that the G.A.A. should press ahead as strongly as possible on cementing relations with Australia in a bid to produce an annual Test series — or at least one every two years — despite the obvious cost factor involved. And at the same time continue the good work in perfecting the new game.

This does not mean that matters at home should be neglected. The G.A.A. can only do that at their peril with so many other counter-attractions competing for support these days. But moves to improve matters at home, and the international games can go along hand-in-hand, and so put the G.A.A. in an even stronger position to cope with the demands of the 21st century.

Jimmy McQuaid

EDITOR



●CONOR HAYES

WHAT a year for Conor Hayes! When the tall Galway man walked up the Hogan Stand steps at the end of the All-Ireland senior hurling final in early September to accept the Liam McCarthy Cup he became the first from the county to lead Galway to the big double of the National League and All-Ireland championship in the same year.

The first leg of the double was achieved at Thurles back in May when Hayes and his merry band of men beat Clare to capture their first League title in a dozen years.

But Hayes did more than lead Galway to an outstanding double. He took his place in history in impressive style as he walked tall over the year with high quality performances. One of his best games was in the All-Ireland senior final, a match in which he succeeded where others failed in keeping the tireless

Historic day for Conor!

First man to lead Galway to league and All-Ireland double

BY DAVID PURCELL

and lethal finishing Kilkenny man, Liam Fennelly, scoreless.

An outstanding feat that in itself, but the full back also found time to prompt his own forwards with well-delivered clearances, and generally proved the best possible team leader with hurling that was polished, assured and always progressive. Yes, a performance worthy of a history-making double achievement for Hayes and for Galway.

However, few could have been surprised at the quality of Hayes' play during 1987. After all, he has been a most dependable hurler with Galway and Connacht right through the 'Eighties, and has firmly established himself as one of the leading full backs in the game. He now has achieved every possible honour and distinction in the game as a senior, and that, apart from saying much for his own talents, is an indication of how Galway's hurling fortunes have changed dramatically in the present decade.

Conor first caught my eye as a brilliant right full back in the Galway team that won the All-Ireland under-21 title in 1978. He then appeared to have the skills and sense of vision to match his height and develop into an outstanding defender at senior...and that promise has been more than fulfilled by the six-footer from Kiltomer. Since gaining his place in the county senior team soon after that underage medal win, Hayes has been in there pulling his weight in the best possible manner for Galway and

has also proven a major plank in the platform that eventually proved the foundation for the Western county's greatest success story ever in 1987.

Hayes had not long to wait for the sport's choicest — and for Galway men — very rare awards. He did much at full back to fashion in 1980 Connacht's first Railway Cup final win in 33 long years. By the following September he had collected the second medal in the senior hurling shamrock as right full back in the team that won Galway's first All-Ireland senior hurling crown since the 1923 championship.

It looked then as if fate was to share all of its top sporting honours with Conor Hayes and Galway hurlers, but the fickleness of sporting endeavour was to become very apparent for Connacht folk after that.

There were Railway Cup title wins, noteworthy feats in themselves in view of all the barren years that had gone before 1980, but the National League and the All-Ireland senior championship began to prove most elusive jackpots yet again for Galway.

All-Ireland final defeats in 1981, 1985 and 1986, and an unsuccessful outing against Kilkenny in the League decider of 1986 were poor rewards for some outstanding displays by top class Galway teams over the years.

When Galway went down to Cork in the Liam McCarthy Cup tie of 1986

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Mick climbs his "Everest"

Eight long years of hard work finally ends in triumph

BY SEAN BELL

NO matter what the future holds for Mick Lyons, Sunday, September 20, 1987, is bound to command a special place in his life. After all, it is not every day that a man has the distinction of captaining an All-Ireland senior football title winning team, and for the full back from Meath there was the added rare honour that when he stepped up to receive the Sam Maguire Cup after the triumph over Cork he became only the fourth man from the county to raise the trophy in a victory salute.

Football final day 1987, then, must surely rank as the high point in the long football career of the solid defender from Summerhill. He left his stamp, too, on the match in a big way.

Admittedly, Lyons started shakely enough, but he improved as the game went on, and for much of the match was a tower of strength at the back. Time and again he foiled the Cork attack, and he led his team with great gusto and that forceful and determined brand of football that one associates with Lyons.

A true captain in every sense of the word, and at the end the fruits of victory . . . yes, it was quite a day for Mick Lyons as he joined an elite group in football at 29.

It took the stalwart full back some eight years to advance along the road from a senior inter-county debut to the game's highest honour. Years that were punctuated with many disappointments as Meath — like the other counties in the province — laboured in the shadows of Dublin. It was not until last year that Lyons won

the first of his two Leinster senior medals.

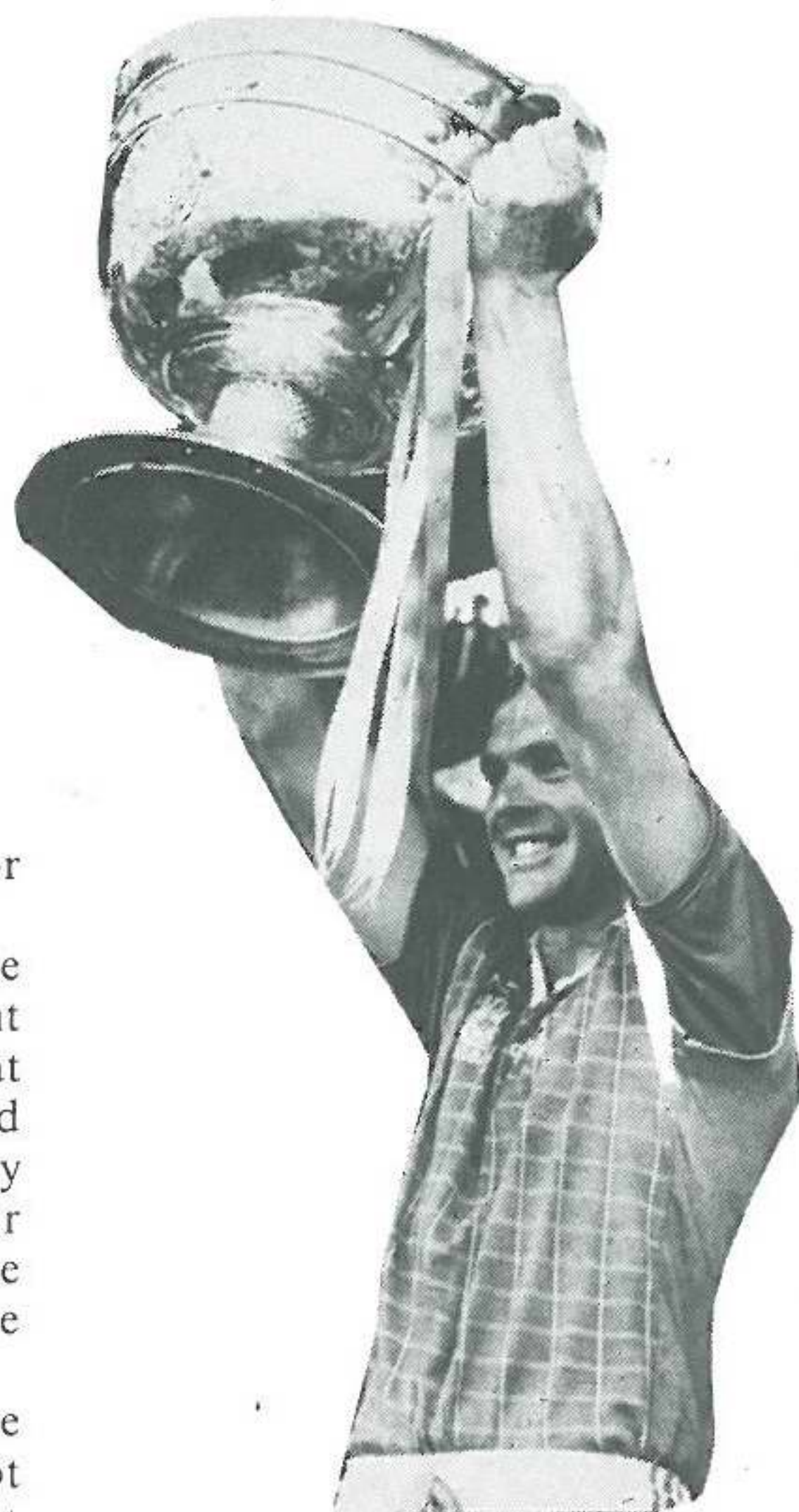
It was not all heartbreak for the Meath man, though. He was a bright light in an accomplished outfit that won the Centenary Cup in 1984, and the following St. Patrick's Day helped to strike a then rare blow for Leinster as the province regained the Railway Cup after eleven years in the wilderness.

One remembers as well the powerful work of the six-foot defender against Australia in the first of the Test series proper during 1984. And, last year Lyons did much to shape the glorious success by Ireland "down under" in the second series. He did not line out at the start in any of the three games, but was an interchange player for each, and so played his part well in bringing home the trophy.

Plenty then, to enthuse over for Mick Lyons before the glory season that was 1987. He also had bright moments with his club, winning a Leinster senior medal eleven years ago, and had a superb game at centre-field when Summerhill last captured the Meath county title in 1986.

Nor has his talents been overlooked by the Bank of Ireland selectors. They first honoured Lyons for his ability as full back in the Centenary Year team.

A second such award came the Meath man's way earlier this year, and I am prepared to wager now that he will step up for another award at the next Bank of Ireland All Stars banquet in Dublin.



MICK LYONS

FAMILY AFFAIR

Mick, of course, is not the only member of his family capturing the limelight in football. His younger brother, Pdraig won a Railway Cup medal in 1986 — Mick was not in that side — and held down the left full back spot when Meath finally ended Dublin's dominance in Leinster in the championship decider of last year.

A county senior since 1982, Pdraig was a powerful centre half back for Summerhill when they won last year's Meath county title, and he accompanied his brother in the touring party for the Test series in Australia.

Pdraig was hampered by injury problems during the championship campaign, and was among the official substitutes panel for the All-Ireland final. However, he was eventually sent in as a late substitute

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●FROM PAGE 4

— a game for which they started in the unusual role of favourites — there were those who said that the defeat would prove the final straw on the camel's back and, after all that had happened before, result in a long lean spell for the county.

THE DOUBTERS

But Hayes and his colleagues were not prepared to accept that. Instead, they knuckled down once more to the task of picking up the pieces again, and reaped a rich reward by capturing the League title in May. Even so the doubters remained. They told us there was a world of difference between the League and the championship, and that Galway would learn that to their cost in the second half of the year.

Well, now we all know Galway proved their critics wrong. And, the leadership and determined play of Conor Hayes was most influential in the sequence of wins that finally ended with the return of the McCarthy Cup to the county after a seven year absence.

Galway hurling, I would suggest, has at last "come of age" this year. They showed that their League title win was not a "once off" affair by regaining the All-Ireland, and in the process the class of '87 emerged as one of the greatest Galway combinations of all time, and one of the code's best-ever teams.

All of which adds immeasurably to Conor Hayes' feat in captaining Galway to the big double.

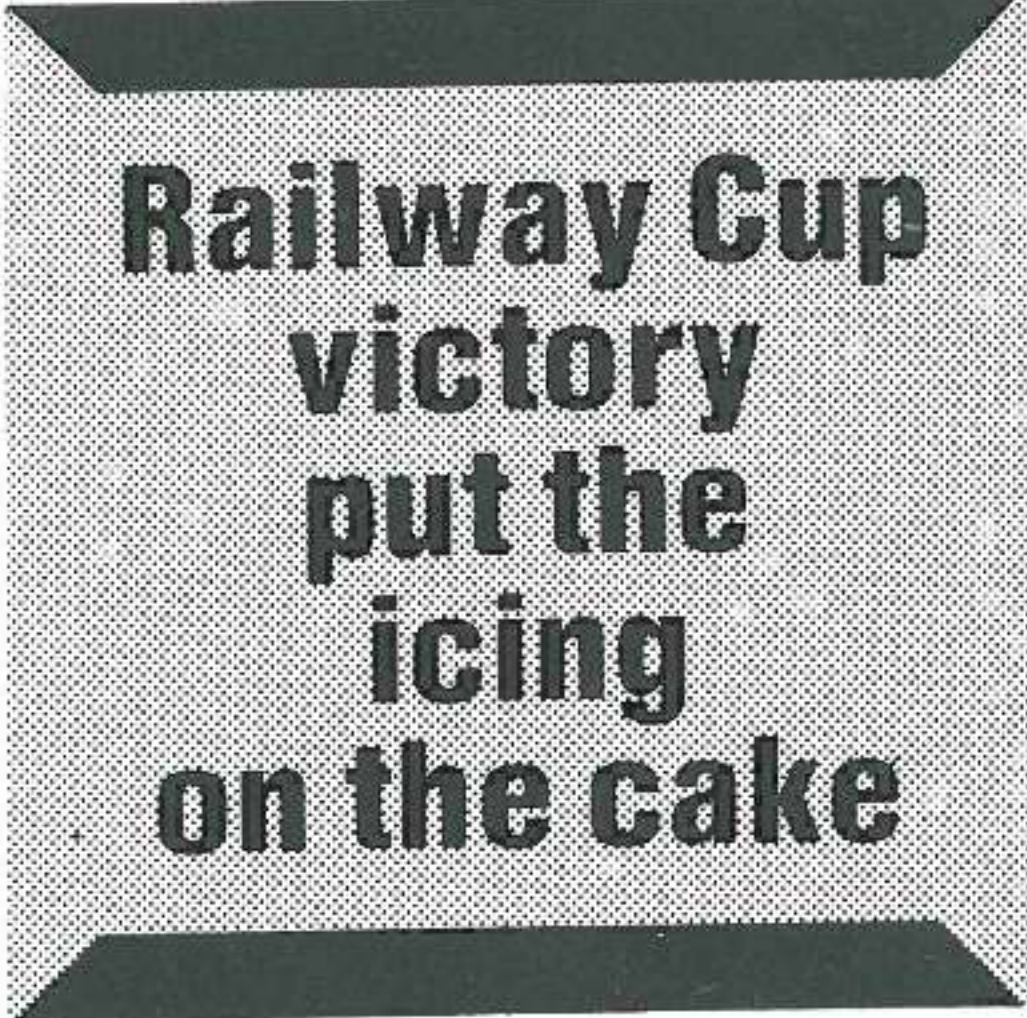
Later in the year 15 Galway men — representing Connacht — went on to give added depth to their performances in the League and championship by retaining the Railway Cup at Ennis in early October. Three top titles for Galway in the one year! Who would have believed even a few short years ago that such would ever prove the case for Galway?

Yes, times have changed — but Galway have helped to make the change with a gifted company of hurlers who had the will and the determination to put regular heart-

breaks on finals days behind them and come out battling courageously again.

The latest Railway Cup triumph by the West brings into focus the fact that Conor Hayes has had a very successful innings in interprovincial hurling. Since collecting that initial medal in the rare win of 1980, he has also won medals in 1983, 1986 and 1987. That is another barometer for the standard of hurling produced by the Galwaymen in the 'Eighties.

Hayes was 29 last June. The vast experience that he brings nowadays to his hurling is evident in his mastery of full back play. He is a most difficult man to outwit, a tireless worker and hurler who rarely gives supporters a moment's worry. Even though now in the autumn of his career there can be little doubt that he has much to offer Galway for a long time to come, and will prove yet again a mighty pillar in their bid to capture further glory in 1988.



**Railway Cup
victory
put the
icing
on the cake**

Finally, I don't think that 1987 has finished in showering top awards on Hayes, I was amazed on checking up the records to find that Conor only won his first Bank of Ireland All Star earlier in the year as full back in the 1986 team.

I was convinced that in view of all he had given to hurling over the past seven or eight years that he had at least a couple of Bank of Ireland awards. Whatever about that he should certainly pick up another for 1987 by retaining his No. 3 position in the next selection.

It could not happen to a nicer chap, or a more sporting and wholehearted hurler.

●FROM PAGE 5

during the game to make it a double joy-day for the Lyons family.

Mick Lyons captured his second national medal of the year when he went in as a substitute for Leinster as the province beat Munster at Newbridge in October to retain the Railway Cup. Later he appeared with Ireland in the Test series.

A pretty full campaign, then, in senior inter-county football for Mick Lyons, who never fails to give 100 per cent effort in any game, and whose fearless and wholehearted brand of football is so effective, and so thrilling to watch.

Now he needs only the National League medal to complete the senior set. With the competition only really moving into gear as we went to press, it is a little difficult to hazard a guess as to Lyons' chances of capturing the final medal. However, Meath on their All-Ireland final performance, and with so many capable players on the fringe of their selection as well, must be one of the front-runners.

The county has not won the title, incidentally, since 1975 when Meath shocked Dublin, then All-Ireland senior champions, in the final.

There are those who say that time is now running out for Lyons, whose 30th birthday will be early in the New Year. His form this year surely gives the lie to that assertion. After all, Lyons was as enthusiastic and determined as ever. No forward found him an easy man to get around, and it is true to say that in match after match he was right on the top of his game.

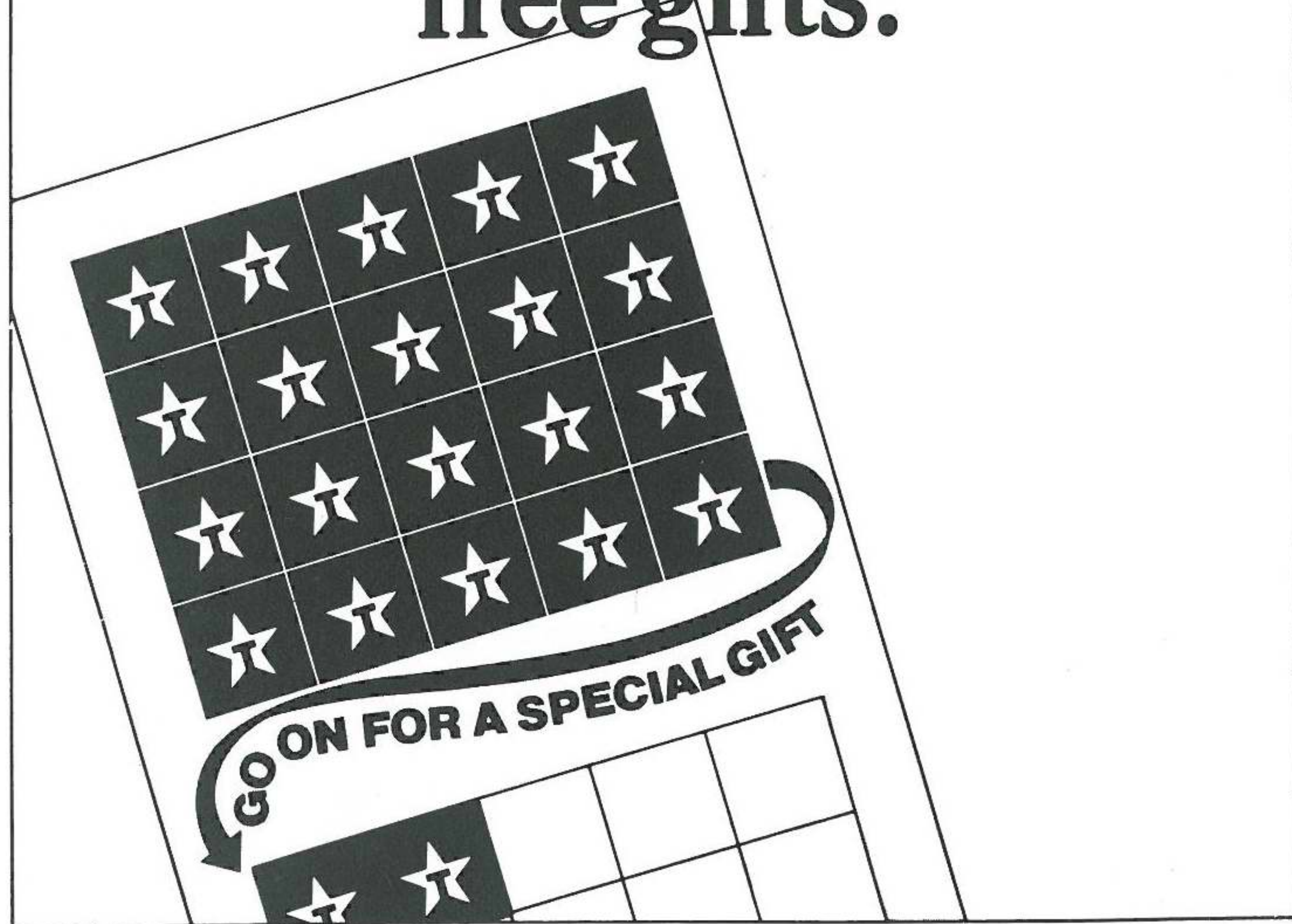
More than that, I would argue, the Summerhill back did more than enough to indicate that he is capable of doing an excellent job for the county for a long time to come.

Indeed, with the confidence of an All-Ireland title winning captain behind him, Mick Lyons may well go on to produce the best football of his long career so far!

I find that thought very reassuring just now in these dark days of winter as we impatiently look forward to sunshine and competitive play in the New Year. Football needs personalities like Mick Lyons.

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On behalf of All G.A.A. fans we say "thank you, Michael"

ALL-Ireland football final day is special. Irrespective of who the finalists are, there are never enough tickets to meet demand.

Remembering back to the early sixties, when those marvellous men from the Mournes could attract crowds of 90,000 plus, it is conceivable that 100,000 or more would flood in to Dr. Croke's Stadium on All-Ireland final day, if accommodation permitted, such is the current popularity of our national games.

On Sunday, September 20th last, a near capacity crowd of over 68,000 were in attendance and, as ever, the atmosphere, coming up to kick-off time, was electric, as we waited impatiently for that magic moment when the contestants would run out onto the green sward. But on this occasion the day was to be extra special.

At about ten past three a group of semi-veterans emerged from the central entrance under the Hogan Stand and proceeded out onto the park to form a guard of honour. With hindsight we know now that this group of distinction, consisted of the survivors of the Kerry and Cavan teams that contested that historic '47 football final in faraway New York. Within minutes of taking up their positions, a man in a wheelchair emerged, being pushed by a younger man.

There was a lapse of seconds before the 68,000 onlookers realised that the sad occupant of the wheelchair was Mr. G.A.A. himself — Michael O'Hehir and the young man entrusted with the equally sad task of pushing the wheelchair was his son, Peter.

Suddenly all bonds of parish, town, county or provincial loyalties were forgotten, as 68,000 mouths were opened in unison and a roar, that even the angels must have heard, exploded.

It was a mighty moment.

This expression of goodwill was not lost on the recipient, for Michael O'Hehir, the Voice of the G.A.A. for nearly fifty years, was crying like a youngster. It's true to say, that at that moment, Michael was not the only one shedding tears.



Michael O'Hehir, seen here with his son, Peter, gives a tearful wave to the crowd, at Croke Park, on All-Ireland football final day.

Most everyone can remember what he, or she, was doing at that tragic moment in 1963, when the news came through that President Jack Kennedy had been assassinated.

It could be said with equal confidence that every Irishman and woman still alive and privileged to have listened in to Michael O'Hehir's wireless commentary, from the Polo Grounds, of the '47 final, could tell you where they were on that memorable occasion. The writer was sitting on a window sill, in front of a half-opened window, in a small seaside resort, some 20 miles outside Dublin — Skerries by name. Bobby Beggs' town.

I can hear, even now, as the game neared its end, Michael O'Hehir pleading with his American hosts "Please, please, don't cut us off."

Michael O'Hehir, probably more than any other one man, has done most to popularise our National games and, if, in time, the G.A.A. build a stand at the "Canal" end, it would be just tribute that such a stand be called after the man who had the unique talent of bringing the game into one's home and through his powers of description, make one feel that one was actually at the game itself.

Thank you, Michael, for so many magical moments of listening pleasure.

BY TOMMY McQUAID

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MY

HURLING TEAM OF THE YEAR

by Noel Horgan

PICK your hurling team of the year for our Christmas edition". said Tommy McQuaid, and three players — Cork's John Fenton, Tipperary's Nicky English, and Galway's Joe Cooney — immediately sprang to mind.

Their skills shone resplendently in a season which produced a disappointing All-Ireland final but contained plenty of stirring action on the lead-up, particularly in Munster where Tipp emerged as champions for the first time since 1971, with an extra-time victory over Cork in a replay.

It was no fault of the immaculate John Fenton that the Rebel five year reign in the southern province was terminated, however as his vast talents almost saw Cork through despite obvious shortcomings in attack, caused, no doubt, by the retirement of Jimmy Barry-Murphy.

The 32 year old Midleton stalwart — voted "Hurler of the Year in 1984" — had a marvellous season in the Cork colours, emerging as the main architect of Limerick's demise in the provincial semi-final replay when he

bagged a goal of rare splendour. Johns unerring accuracy from frees helped him to accumulate a massive tally of 1-38 from four championship outings and he delighted purists with crisp striking and shrewd positional play which confirmed his rating as the leading mid-fielder in the game.

The magical Nicky English also enhanced his reputation during Tipps overdue return to the upper echelons.

A highly-rated attacker for the past few years, there were those who felt that the plaudits on the Lattin-Cullen craftsman previously may not have been entirely justified.

His critics contended that, for all his deft touches, he had yet to prove that he was capable of exerting a major influence at championship level and that operating alongside moderate Tipp forwards had caused Nicky to look more impressive than he was.

In Pat Fox, Donie O'Connell and Aidan Ryan, Tipp were well-equipped up front this season but Nicky remained their most outstanding forward and it was significant that whenever the premier county men appeared to be in trouble, it was to English they turned for inspiration.

Invariably, he produced the goods with flashes of sheer genius which were sufficient to steer Tipp to provincial honours and remove all doubts regarding his own greatness.

The Majestic Joe Cooney bagged 1-8 in Galways opening league game against Cork at Pairc Uí Chaoimh and maintained his devastating form throughout the campaign, finishing with 2-6 in the final win over Clare.

By his own standards, he was somewhat subdued in the All-Ireland series but still emerged as a key figure in attack, employing craft and vision to

create regular openings for his colleagues while picking off some good scores himself as well.

Fenton, English and Cooney would have to be included on any list of outstanding hurlers for 1987.

Selecting a team around them required more consideration.

Normally, form on All-Ireland final day counts for a lot when picking a team of the year but this seasons showpiece was a less than memorable affair and one might be inclined to overlook several of the performers involved on that account.

Yet, Galway, in recording a league and championship double, displayed admirable consistency which surely entitles the Tribesmen to form the bulk of the team of '87.

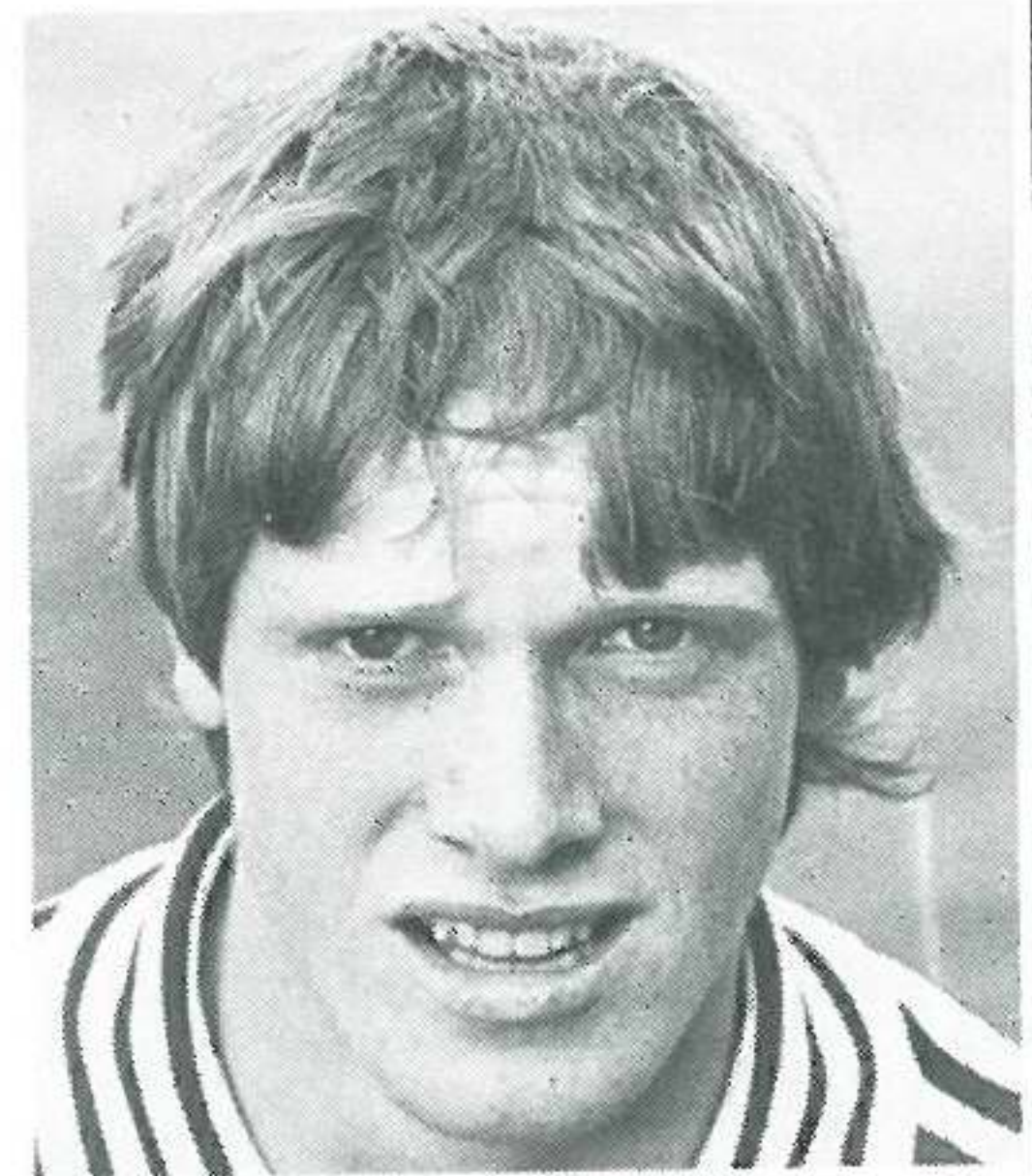
Captain Conor Hayes has to be included at full-back while it would be difficult to ignore the claims of the lion-hearted Sylvie Linnane for a place in that line also.

Veteran Steve Mahon — whose ability to pace himself to perfection ensured that he was going stronger than most of the younger players in

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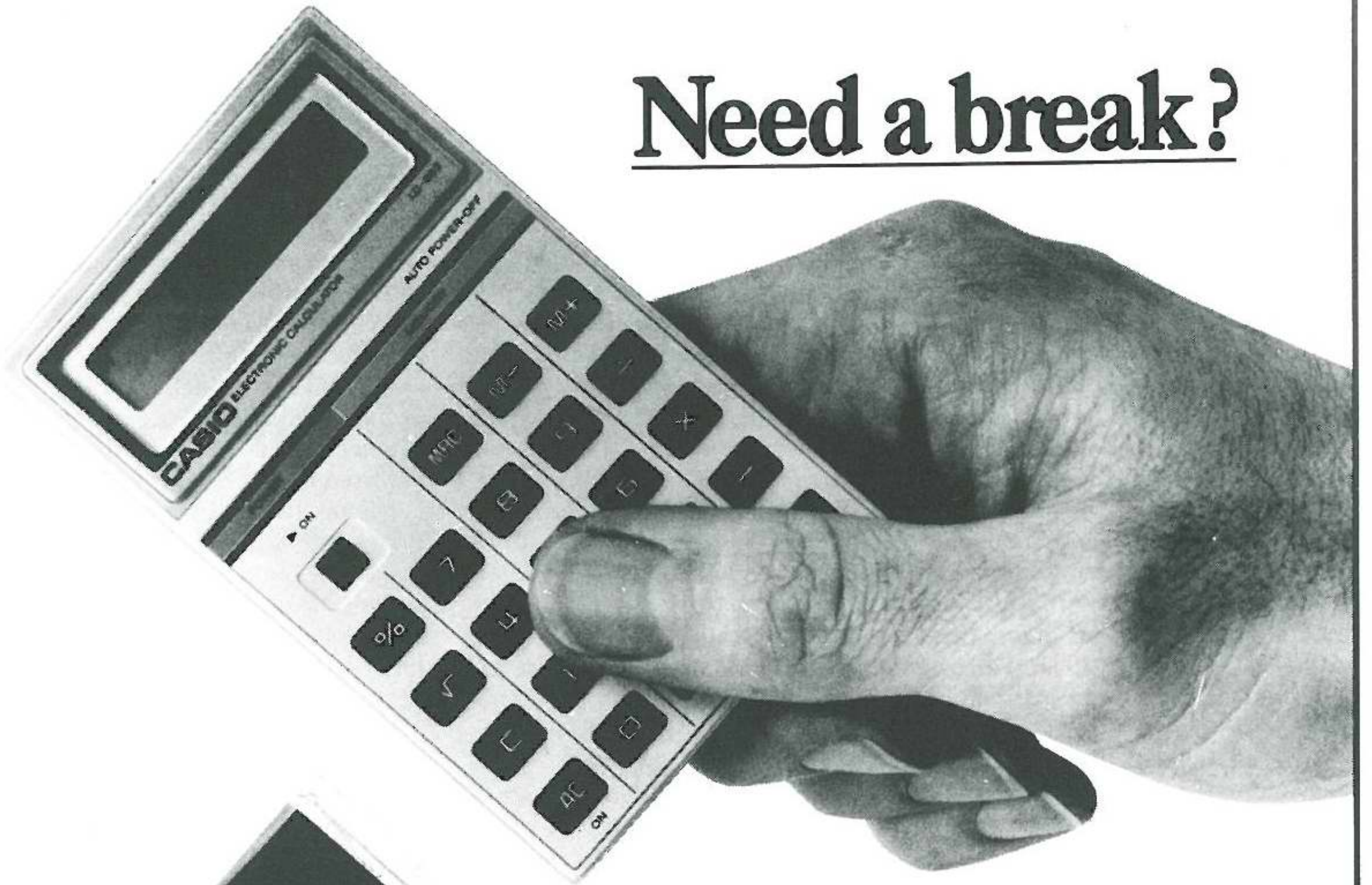


Joe Hennessy, Kilkenny.



Joe Cooney, Galway.

Need a break?



Count on Kit Kat.



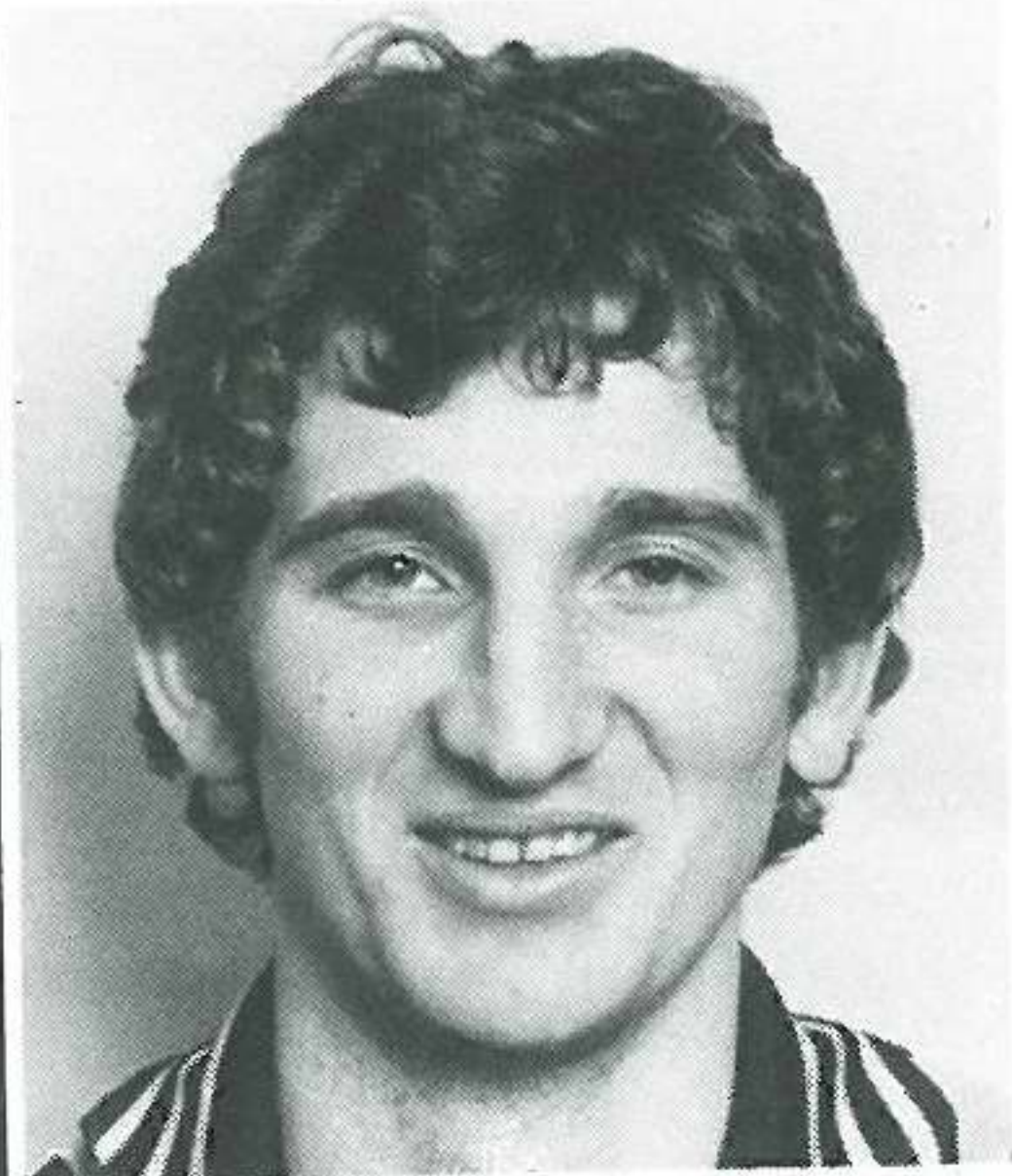
Sylvie Linnane, Galway.

●FROM PAGE 11

the crucial closing stages of both the semi and All-Ireland finals — deserves a mid-field berth while one feels bound to include the champions half-back trio of Finnerty, Keady and McNerney en bloc despite the worthy claims of Offaly's Brendan Keesham for a wing-back slot.

John Commin's two fine saves from Liam Fennelly in the All-Ireland final, undoubtedly, won the day for the Westerners and he had to be considered for the position between the sticks but others with strong claims were Tipps Ken Hogan, Cork's Ger Cunningham and Limerick's Tommy Quaid.

The latter gave an exhibition of goalkeeping at its very best in the drawn game with Cork which almost



Liam Fennelly, Kilkenny.

inspired an obviously inferior Limerick fifteen to a shock victory and he gets the nod here.

To complete the defence, one would have to include Kilkenny's evergreen Joe Hennessy at right corner back even if it meant the omission of Sylvie Linnane who played most of his hurling in that post also during the year.

Sylvie, however, is equally at home in the left corner and one has little hesitation in accommodating him at No. 4.

Liam Fennelly did not have the happiest of All-Ireland finals on Conor Hayes but he remained the player most likely to unhinge the Galway rearguard, nevertheless. His goal-grabbing deeds on the road to the decider were instrumental in enabling Kilkenny to advance, particularly against Offaly.

Similarly, Pat Fox made score-taking look deceptively easy during Tipp's provincial campaign and is an obvious choice at right corner forward.

A full forward line comprising, Fox, Fennelly, and Nicky English, indeed, appears most intimidating.

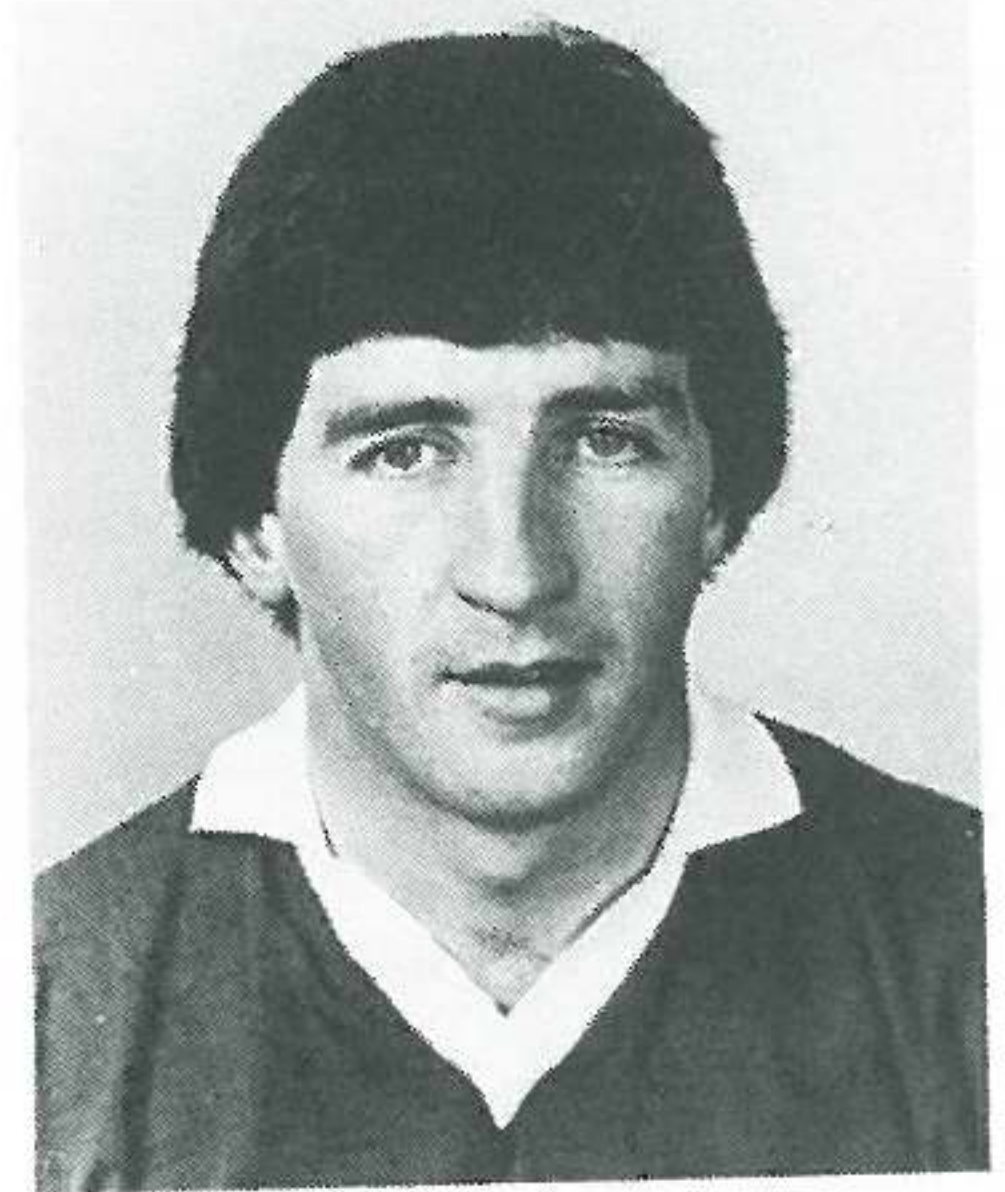
Cork's Teddy McCarthy almost single handedly took on the Tipp rearguard in the Munster final replay and enjoyed considerable success.

His spectacular leaps to win possession were a sight to be savoured and made life most uncomfortable for the Tipp defenders who regularly committed fouls on the Sarsfields man which were invariably, punished by John Fenton.

Teddy gets the No. 11 shirt on my team with the versatile Joe Cooney on his left and Ger Fennelly on the opposite wing.

Ger had a poor All-Ireland final but was superb in the Leinster campaign when his accuracy both from frees and from play were vital to Kilkenny progress.

Although, he operated mainly at midfield this year, Ger is no stranger to attack either and, in my view, would be capable of greater penetration than the majority of wing forwards on view in '87.



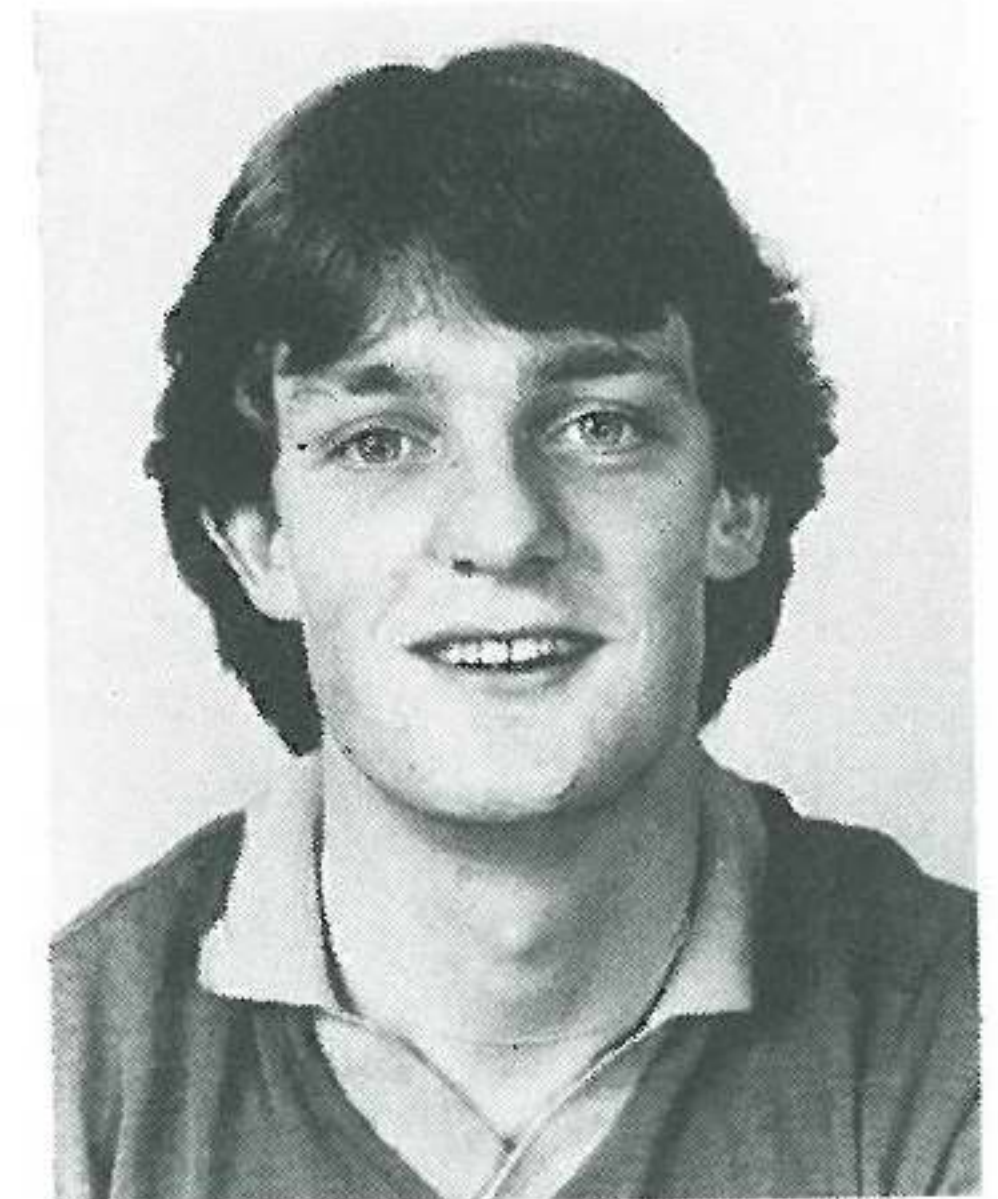
John Fenton, Cork.

Looking over my selected fifteen, I noticed that most are either at, close to, or over the thirty mark.

Is this, I wondered, an indication of declining standards and is there to be a dearth of real quality performers in the next decade?

Then, I thought again of English and Cooney and my concern eased somewhat.

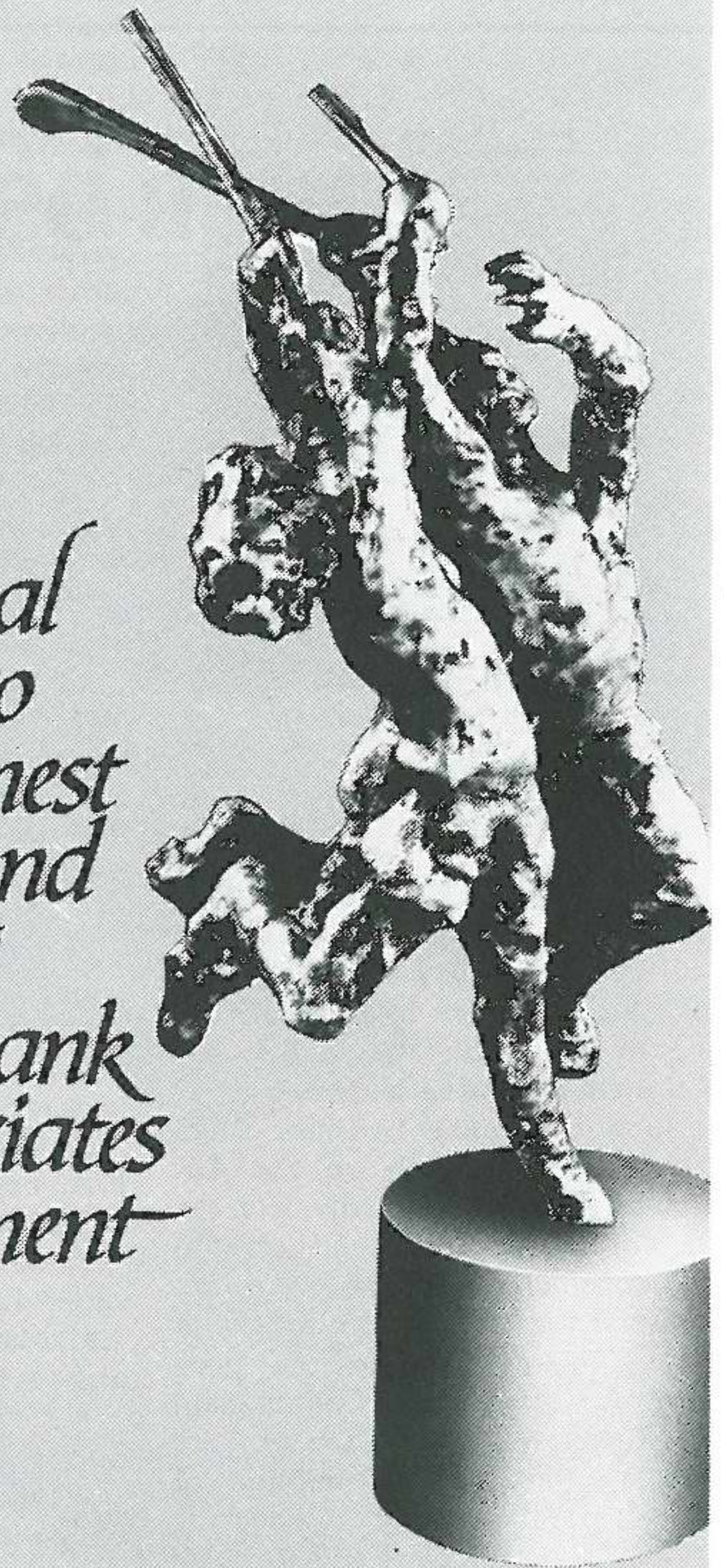
My team of '87, reads as follows: T. Quaid (Limerick), J. Hennessy (Kilkenny), C. Hayes (Galway), S. Linnane (do), P. Finnerty (do), T. Keady (do), G. McNerney (do), J. Fenton (Cork), S. Mahon (Galway), G. Fennelly (Kilkenny), T. McCarthy (Cork), J. Cooney (Galway), P. Fox (Tipperary), L. Fennelly (Kilkenny), N. English (Tipperary).



Nicky English, Tipperary.



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EAMON YOUNG POSES THE QUESTION

TO COMPROMISE

OR NOT

TO COMPROMISE?

AND PUTS FORWARD HIS WHYS AND WHY NOTS



LET'S first take a look at the arguments AGAINST continuing this fooball with the Australians.

Does Ireland give its full blessing?

That's very doubtful after the difficulty Eugene Magee had in getting a full Irish side because of home fixtures. Nothing less than full co-operation at home is enough in an international series. If we can't have that we reveal weaknesses and, worse still, we may not put up a good show.

Its true also that, in Australia, everybody isn't behind the series and that's one of the reasons why gates were low there, last year. Surely that's not the scene for successful competition.

Now we hear the Aussies have lost their sponsor in '88. We all seem to be losing money on this innovation. Ireland lost £60,000 on the two earlier tours and we needed £100,000 at the three games this year to clear the debt. We got £59,000 (five thousand more than in '84) and it must be presumed that there is still a debt. Money isn't everything and if there is real compensation, in some other way, the loaf may be worth the money. But many sound men say there is little value in the series and that the money lost would be far

better spent on coaching Gaelic football in weaker areas, here at home.

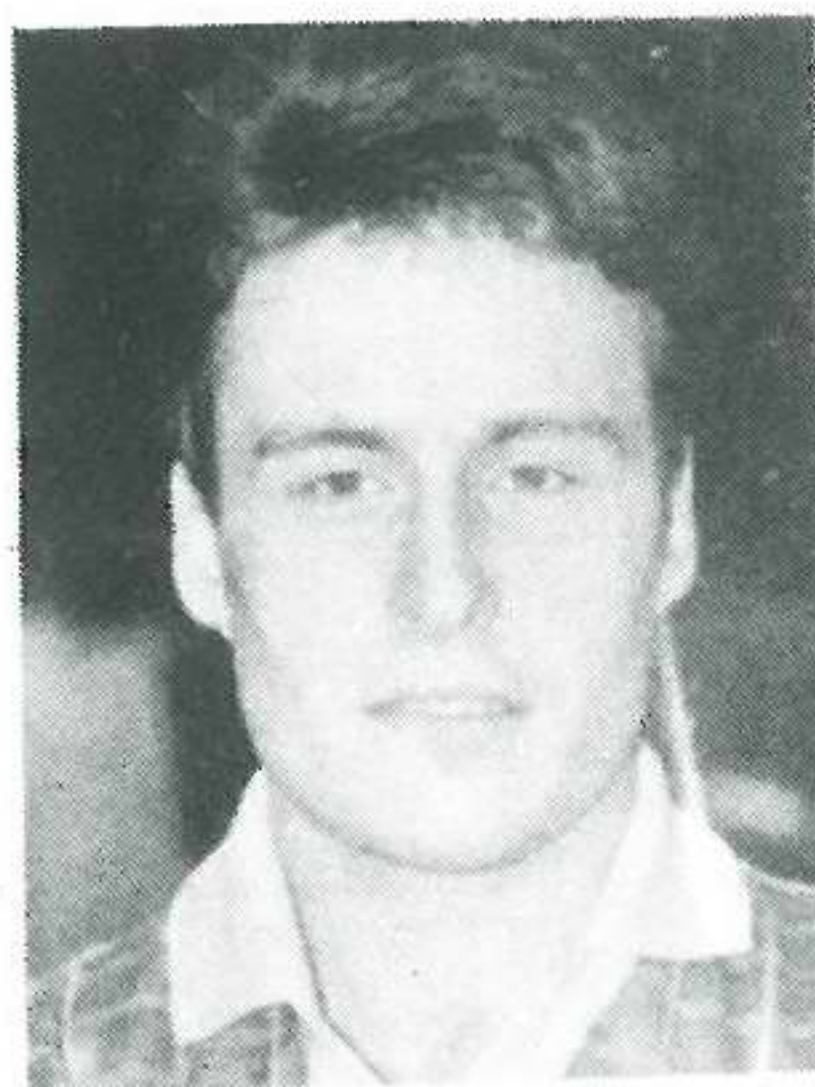
The differences in footballs remains significant and it seems that next year, if there IS a tour, the oval ball will be used. Of course any player of reasonable skill will feel at home with either ball after some training. Still we should have advanced far enough by now to have decided on one ball or the other.

The tackle is still causing trouble. After the '84 games in Ireland I was

quite unhappy and the following year I feared that the games in Australia would be even more destructive. All the time I had in my mind the picture of a fine young Irishman coming home in a wheel-chair and in case anybody thinks I'm a scare-monger ask a doctor about the likely effects of a hard tackle on the neck, by one thirteen-stoner on another, both going fast.

This year the tackling was not vicious but in at least two important cases, in the final game at Croke Park, its use was completely contrary to the tenets of fair play and, after all, one of the reasons we play games is to honour fair play and teach it to those who don't.

The fact that in both cases the tackle was on an Irishman isn't the point. I'd say the same if it were an Aussie. Dermot McNichol, surely a grand player, was careering through towards the Railway goal when he was caught from behind and thrown on the ground. Twice it happened. Twice he almost certainly would have scored. Its just the same in rugby, one may say, but that's not true at all. The player in that manly game is going flat out for the line with the ball under



BERNARD FLYNN

"Received unnecessary aggressions"

●TO PAGE 16

●FROM PAGE 15

his arm and he's caught by an opponent, coming usually from the side, and who may be handed off. Neither player is impeded in anyway and neither is executing any particular skill, for hard running and fierce determination are not in themselves skill.

How different the Compromise Rules when the man with the ball is going flat out but, controlling the ball by skill and concentration, is slowed up slightly. His opponent has no such impediment: he simply rushes in from behind and, grabbing his man, dumps him on the ground. So we have an incident where great skill, speedily executed, entertains and excites but is then destroyed by a speedy virility where no real skill exists.

That's not games play.

Yet this lack of fair play exists after three tours and countless words of debate, so how can we blame people who say: "if you can't draw up a sound set of rules, then scrap it?"

Control was truly disastrous up to this year. I for one, was never sure which the Aussies really wanted; football or fighting — a doubt which caused me to write here twelve months ago: "*If the Aussies want football let's give them football. If they want fighting let's simply continue the evening's sport up in the National Stadium. Instead of bringing twenty footballers, let's ask the Aussies to bring sixty, equally divided among footballers, boxers and wrestlers. It would make a great week-end's sport*".

Though the three games this year revealed less hooliganism, there still was some aboriginal activity that was no credit to the men guilty of it. In the third Croke Park game, Bernard Flynn, a fine forward, went over to get the ball from an Australian after the ref had blown for a free to Ireland. The visitor shoved Flynn away very strongly with his hand. Flynn staggered and came back once again to get the ball. This time the Aussie shoved him so hard the Irishman fell back on the ground. No harm was done but as a completely

unnecessary show of juvenile aggression I found it very distasteful and truly foreign to competitive sport. Later an Aussie, Paul Roos, who had been sent off, returned to the field. Control, how are ye!

Here are a few pieces from what I wrote twelve months ago on the same subject. They're set down to show that there is **some** change and for the better.

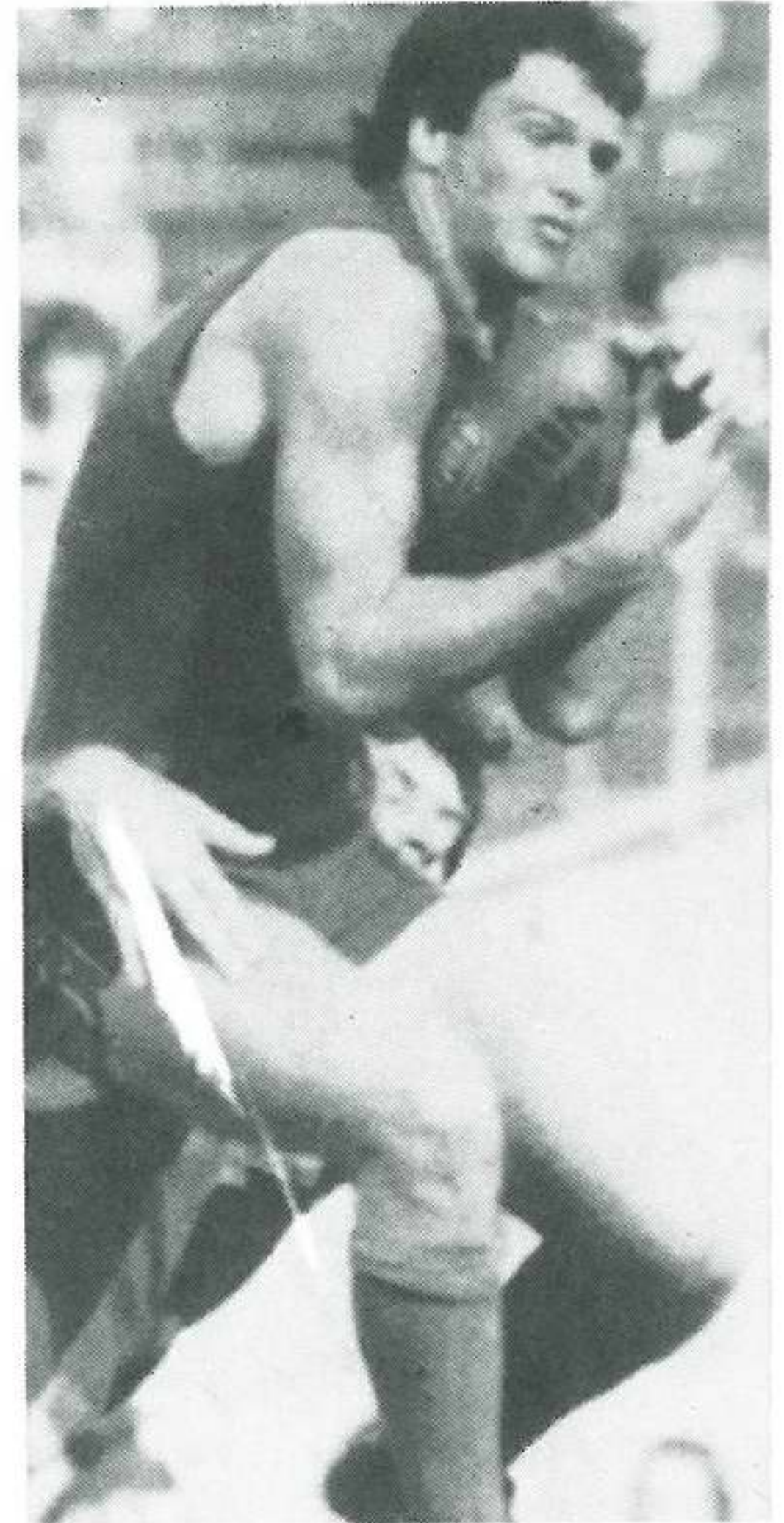
"During the game in Cork (the first played by Aussies over here) I told Rowan Sawers, the Australian ref., that his reffing was a disgrace. Quite rightly he told me to get off the field. The tragedy was that both of us were right. I refused to attend the dinner after that Cork game (not that anybody gave a dam) and in my report to the Munster Council, I recommended that unless we could control these games in a manner demanded by normal sport, they should be abandoned."

Needless to say I wasn't invited to go to Australia in '86 and indeed I was glad because I feared the games would be more vicious still and if a fine young Irishman was to be brought home in a wheel-chair, I didn't want to be part of it. However, they came home safely and I wrote:

"Now that it's all over and we've won and the boys are home we feel great. But for heaven's sake let's think it all over a bit more carefully than we did for the last two years. There are surely enough wise men on both sides to hammer out some kind of an agreement that will avoid a further riot, with a ball as an excuse, when the Aussies come again (as I believe they will)."

Another paragraph was: "*The compromise games are far more exciting than the rather pallid stuff that now goes as Gaelic football and there's a spot of hard, manly contact that is good for our youth. Surely all we have to do is decide on the rules and stick to them.*"

The last piece of interest is: "*I hope we'll continue these international games. They are a reward for the top players especially those from the weak counties, and it's a good thing to knock holes in this insular wall of ours*



PAUL ROOS

"Control, howareye!"

anyway. But our preparations for the next series must surely be a bit more businesslike than what we did in the last two years. Mick Loftus told me over twelve months ago that the Railway Cup of '86 might be played under Compromise Rules. What a pity we didn't. What a pity the Aussies didn't do likewise and we could have exchanged refs."

Eugene Magee and the Australian coach, Neil Kerley, favour continuing the games and Mick Loftus is confident about the future. Jimmy Kerrigan, voted player of the series three years ago, likes the speed of the game and Pat Spillane thinks it's a great game that the crowd will enjoy. I believe that among themselves, the Aussies play hard but fair. If both sides do just this in the "Compromise" we can't ask for more.

Peter MacDermott, Meath's champion captain, has followed the games with Australians, both at adult and school boy level since 1967 when

the Aussies came, saw and conquered, at the expense of Meath and Mayo on successive Sundays. His experience and unflagging support for these games with our friends down under, make his opinion far more authoritative than mine and I was glad to get it. A resume of his letter set down in fluent detail may be summed up as follows: To make the tours pay we must market the games better and so increase gates. The reasons for the small gates in Australia are several, the most important being the existence of no less than three football bodies, one of which was probably more interested in its efforts to promote Aussie Rules internationals in London, Vancouver, and Los Angeles last year. The press did not play its vital part either, perhaps because the game



there is controlled by money anyway.

As players pick up the compromise rules quickly, the lack of preparation is not seen as a disadvantage but we should continue the present special competition we have for the colleges. The oval ball is not suitable.

Peter is in favour of the quick kick-out, kicking one's own frees and from the hand, the six steps and two hops; the mark and play-on, the tackle and the clean lift off the ground. The suggestion that a certain amount of aggro is necessary to draw the crowds is wrong and the win-at-all-costs attitude is also bad. Though the '87 series was an improvement we do need greater control. Gaelic football, deteriorating as a spectacle, is now being propped up by team rivalry. We need a better game. The Compromise Rules give us a good game, though it is still in swaddling

clothes.

Yes, says Peter, we should continue, and the words of Sean Ó Siocháin as he bids farewell to Harry Beitzel and his Galahs in '67 are recalled: "This experiment has been too much of a success to be anything other than a beginning."

My own view is that in the fourth year of the "Compromise" and twenty years after the opening games, when genuine Australians and experienced articulate Irishmen, of whom MacDermott is one, have

contributed sincerely we should now be able to make a true assessment.

Control is clearly not adequate; the rules are not quite satisfactory; the tours are not paying for themselves, thus depriving us of money needed for coaching; neither country plays enough, at home, under the rules thus producing a hot-house plant that may not survive the cold air of public indifference. Surely however the vital point is that this is a great game, if properly played.

Yes, let us see it again.

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GREAT NEWS FOR YOUNG READERS SAYS JACK MAHON

Junior Desk is back, thanks to the G.A.A.

THE good news is that *Junior Desk* is on the way back again, it will reappear in 1988. Our gratitude to the G.A.A. who are sponsoring the column, especially to Liam Mulvihill, the *Árd Stiúrthóir* and Dr. Mickey Loftus, our President, who backed the idea and the entire Management Committee for approving it. We will reappear in much the same format as before but with some new ideas, while keeping the best of what we had. Reviews of G.A.A. books, requests from programme collectors but not dominated by them, a *Mailbag* section that will become as popular as before. Plenty of prizes. Some interviews. The usual Cut-Out. And more. So get *Gaelic Sport* in 1988 and stay with it.

THE MAILBAG

So I want *Junior Desk* to become a forum for young G.A.A. folk once again. I want to hear from young G.A.A. followers' and don't be afraid to write. Send me on a photo of yourself. Tell me about the games you play. Who you admire. Who your heroes are. Who coaches you. Your greatest G.A.A. thrills. If you have a hobby like scrapbooking tell me. I still keep scrapbooks, would you believe me if I told you I have over 100 scrapbooks going back almost 40 years. And I have every

issue of *Junior Desk* in those scrapbooks.

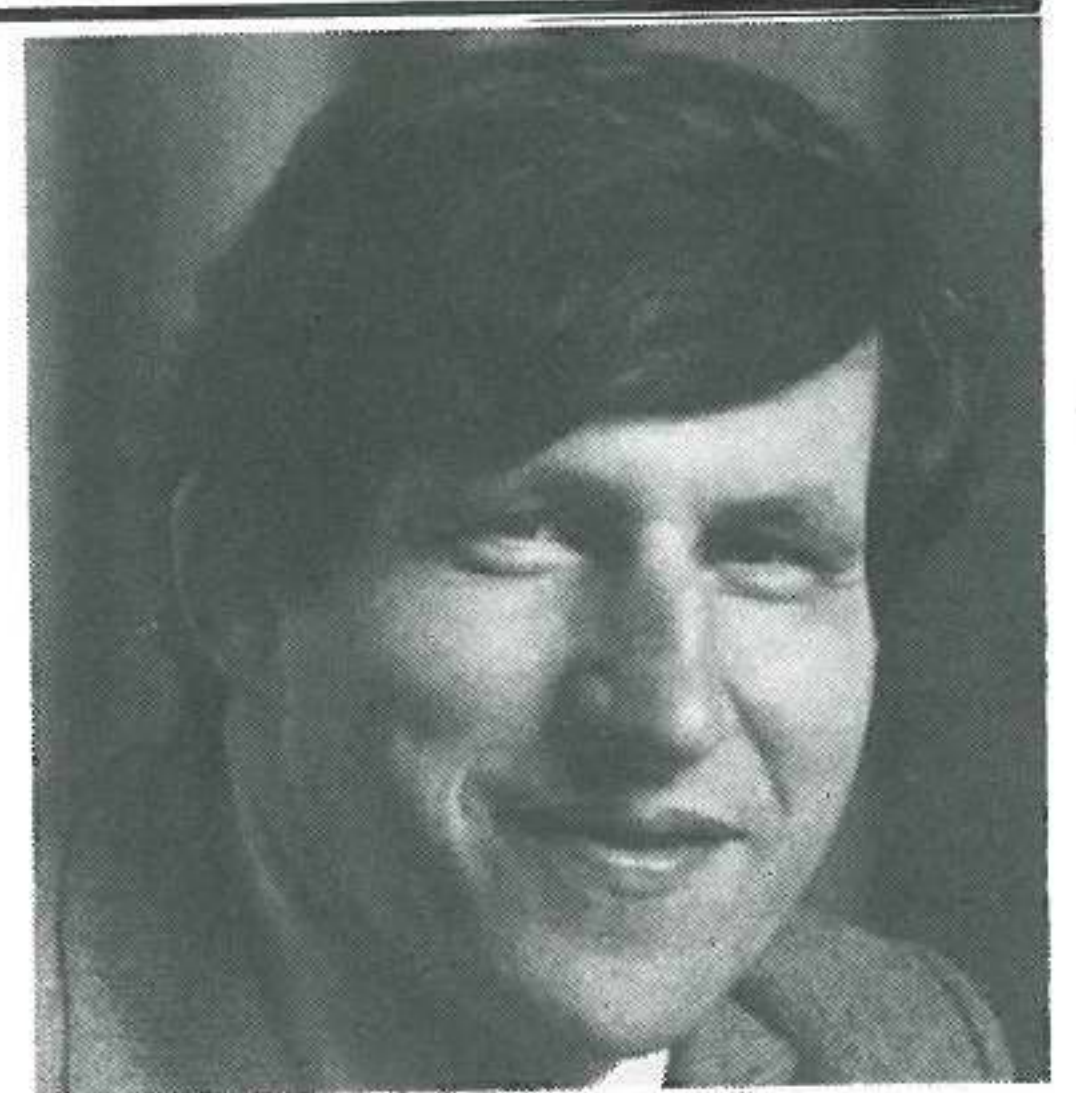
TEN PRIZES

So for our first appearance we are offering ten Surprise Prizes for the 10 best letters to reach *Junior Desk* on or before February 10th, 1988. Please keep your letters relatively brief and write in your own words, on *one side* of the page only. Write on any G.A.A. theme. Praise or criticism are equally welcome. Tell me what you thought of the visit of the Australians. Should we have the *Sunday Game* all year round? Will Kerry come back? Do you miss Michael O'Hehir as much as I do? Is Jimmy Magee the greatest sports brain in Ireland? Michael Ó Muircheartaigh, isn't he

especially that time after Christmas when we have no games. I can't wait to get going to games again. Sunday after Sunday. Who were my stars of 1987? In hurling they would have to be Joe Cooney, Nicholas English and Joe Hennessy. In football, Dermot McNicholl, Colm O'Rourke, Larry Tompkins and my own countyman, Val Daly. 1987 was a great year for Galway hurling. The greatest occasion of the year for me was the packed arena that was Croke Park for the Galway v. Tipperary All-Ireland semi-final. Live telly wasn't going to stop the Tipperary people from coming to Croke Park after such a long absence. Paddy Collins continued to impress as the outstanding referee, but it worries me that so



MICHAEL LOFTUS



LIAM MULVIHILL

"Both men are keen fans of *Junior Desk*"

great too? And what of our sportswriters. Do some of them criticise the G.A.A. too much? Who would you like me to interview? Say, for instance, Liam Hayes of Meath. Is it difficult for him to write about the game he plays? I loved his article on the day of the football final. Hayes on Hayes! Quite superb, I could go on and on. But you must now get out your pens and start writing. Letters before or by February 10th, to *Junior Desk*, *Gaelic Sport*, 139A Lr. Drumcondra Road, Dublin 9.

CHRISTMAS, 1987

And now we have come to Christmas, 1987. I hate the Winter,

few good young referees are surfacing. My favourite sportswriter is still **Paddy Downey** (*Irish Times*). His report of the '87 Munster Senior Hurling final drawn game was quite superb.

Paddy is kind to players and always writes as if he really loves the games, which of course, he does. An interview with Paddy is a must for our new *Junior Desk*. Agreed? By the way, did you know that Paddy was Editor of *Gaelic Sport* from 1958 to 1963.

BACK AGAIN

Other people I admire very much are Pat Spillane of Kerry, Tom



●PAT SPILLANE in full flight... "The Kerryman is one of my favourite players" says Jack Mahon.

Prendergast of Laois, Cyril Farrell and Bill Joyce of Galway, Dublin's goalkeeper, John O'Leary. I admire too, the great fielding of Willie Joe Padden, the beautiful strokes of John Fenton and I long for the return of Wexford hurlers. Last but not least, Galway to win a Senior Football Championship title again and soon. That's all for now, I'll sign off by

wishing a Happy Christmas to all of you. I am really delighted that Junior Desk is back again and I'm looking forward to hearing from all of you. To me, you are not just readers, but more like family and again, my thanks to Liam, Mickey and the Management Committee for making it possible for all of us to be reunited in 1988.

CUMMAN LUTH-CHLEAS
GAEL — COMHAIRLE
ULADH

Gaelic Athletic Association
— Ulster Council

FIXTURES 1988

SENIOR AND MINOR FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS

- May 25th Fermanagh v Armagh
(Irvinestown)
- May 22nd Monaghan v Cavan
(Clones)
- May 29th Derry v Down
(Ballinascreen)
- June 5th Tyrone v Antrim
(Omagh)
- June 12th Armagh/Fermanagh v
Donegal
(Armagh/Ballybofey)
- June 19th Semi Final A
Monaghan/Cavan v
Derry/Down
- June 26th Semi Final B
Tyrone/Antrim v
Fermanagh/Armagh/
Donegal
- July 17th **FINAL**



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THE ROYAL LIVER NATIONAL HURLING AND FOOTBALL LEAGUES

PREVIEWED BY SEAN MOORE

THE opening round of the Royal Liver National Hurling and Football Leagues did much to brighten the approach of winter. There were those who felt that the competitions would lose out in the after glow of the sparkling Test series, particularly the final cracking game between Ireland and Australia.

But a mere seven days after the end of the Test programme along came the footballers of Dublin and Meath to provide at Croke Park one of the best games of the year — and in the worst possible weather conditions — to set the new Football League campaign off on the best possible note. That bright start was maintained with some value-for-money games in hurling and football in the lead-up to the Christmas break.

At this juncture he would be a brave man who would take a stand with any team in hurling or football as probable title winners in '88. The position in each code is still much too fluid for such a forecast to carry any credibility, and too much can also still happen over the second half of the campaign to make a mockery of the pre-Christmas form.

Even so, some interesting pointers are emerging. One is that the footballers of Dublin and Galway hurlers are not going to be easily relieved of their titles.

I expected a special effort from Dublin in the pre-Christmas games. They had a tremendous early incentive to make a special effort in their opener with Meath — the chance to avenge their Leinster final defeat of last July. That was just the type of challenge to ensure that the Dubs put their best foot forward at the start.

And, they did just that! Not only because they earned a draw with the All-Ireland champions, but played their part nobly in providing a memorable game.

On the other hand, I felt prior to the League, that Galway might be prepared to rest on their laurels after their greatest year ever that brought them the hurling treble of

the National League, All-Ireland championship and Railway Cup (they represented Connacht in the inter-provincial competition).

Not a bit of it. Hurling's team of the year served notice that there was no intention of moving over to make way for new champions if Galway could help it by starting the defence with another win over their All-Ireland final opponents, Kilkenny. The Westerners may have spluttered a little after that on occasions in the pre-Christmas programme, but they still displayed hurling skills and a real appetite for success that showed they are not jaded by all their successes this year.

Back to Dublin. I like the way the Football League champions are shaping up. They have a number of testing problems to solve, especially up front, but appear to be doing a good job in picking up the pieces after the Leinster final set-back.

FINAL HERO

Kieran Duff, who was such a bright League final hero against Kerry in the spring, is coming into his own as a score-getter. He has been impressively on the target so far, and is backing his finishing powers with skilful general play.

If Dublin can find strong support in the scoring line for Duff, they will be well on the way to a return to the top. This support is all the more necessary as the man who has been their ace marksman for so long, Barney Rock, is likely to be unable to return to the side until the championship because of injury.

Meath, despite an uncertain start to the League, must be among the more fancied starters as well. Then there is Kerry.

They have been giving a big number of non-All-Ireland senior medalists their chances to show their paces, and right well many fared before Christmas. In addition, Pal Spillane, Tom Spillane, Sean Walsh, Charlie Nelligan and John Kennedy have been providing valuable know-how in helping

●OVERLEAF



PICTURED above are the reigning Hurling League and All-Ireland Champions, Galway and the reigning All-Ireland Football Champions, Meath. Both of these teams will no doubt figure very prominently in the 1987/88 Royal Liver National League campaigns.

●FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

the newcomers to settle down, and showing as well that they have still much to offer the Kingdom. Yes, Kerry's displays this spring should repay watching.

Let's not write off Cork either. They had, like Meath, an uncertain start to the League, winning only a point from their first two games, but there is plenty of potential in their side. The more the All-Ireland final defeat disappointment fades into the past, the more I feel the Munster champions will bounce back to cause their opponents plenty of problems.

Down and Donegal in Division II, and Division III side Tyrone, possibly on course to regain some of the sparkle that brought them to the 1986 All-Ireland senior final, are other counties who may well be there at the final shake-up.

But as I have already said, I would still not like to nominate any team at this stage for a League title. I maintain that if I did I would merely be clutching at straws, and hoping to look wise after the event, should my tip come up.

However, I have no hesitation in making a forecast in hurling — Offaly will be back in the premier Division next season. They always looked the team the other Division II counties had to beat from the start of the Royal Liver title chase, and things have turned out that way.

Offaly's performances have been purposeful. They are improving with every game, and could go close to the League title proper.

Contrast the Offaly revival with Cork's fall from grace. The Leesiders look to have a real uphill task to avoid relegation to Division II for next season.

It will not be the end of the world for Cork if they go down. Their pre-Christmas form was admittedly disappointing, but it must be said that they were short key players in the various games for a variety of reasons. Still, for a county with such a wealth of talent, it is surprising that Cork did not make a better start to the League.

At the same time, the Rebel County is always a different proposition in the championship than in the League. Even if they go down when all the divisional games are completed, I would be prepared to bet then that Cork will still go on to make a strong impact in the championship.

THE REVIVALISTS

The best feature of Division I has been the revival of the two "W's" — Waterford and Wexford.

Waterford can feel well pleased with their performances so far. Sure, they have faltered after a great start, but they have come a long way since their Division III days a few seasons back.

Many will welcome the signs of Wexford stirrings. There has been a special magic about the Slaneyside hurling since the days of the Rackards in the 'Fifties, and more than Wexford folk would celebrate if top scoring Jimmy Holohan, John McDonald, Eamonn Cleary and their colleagues made 1988 the return of Wexford to their old hurling glory.

What of Tipperary? I thought they were heading for greatness after their Munster final win and their gallant effort against Galway in the All-Ireland semi-final, the

hurling match of the year for me.

I'm not so sure, now. I believe that on the signs provided by some of the League games before Christmas, the Premier County will need to sharpen up in attack, and improve their defensive qualities as well if they are to get back into the national honours in the New Year.

B E N S O

SMOKI

Still, they have the nucleus of a good team, and the experience gained from last season's championship is bound to be invaluable. Maybe, Tipperary will not go all the way in the League, but they will prove formidable opposition for the best.

So, where does that leave us? I will content myself by

saying Offaly to get back into Division I in hurling and make a showing in the battle then for the 1987-88 title. Galway, Wexford and Waterford also to show their power in the concluding rounds in the ancient game.

And in football, it's Dublin, Meath, possibly Kerry and Down to capture most of the limelight.

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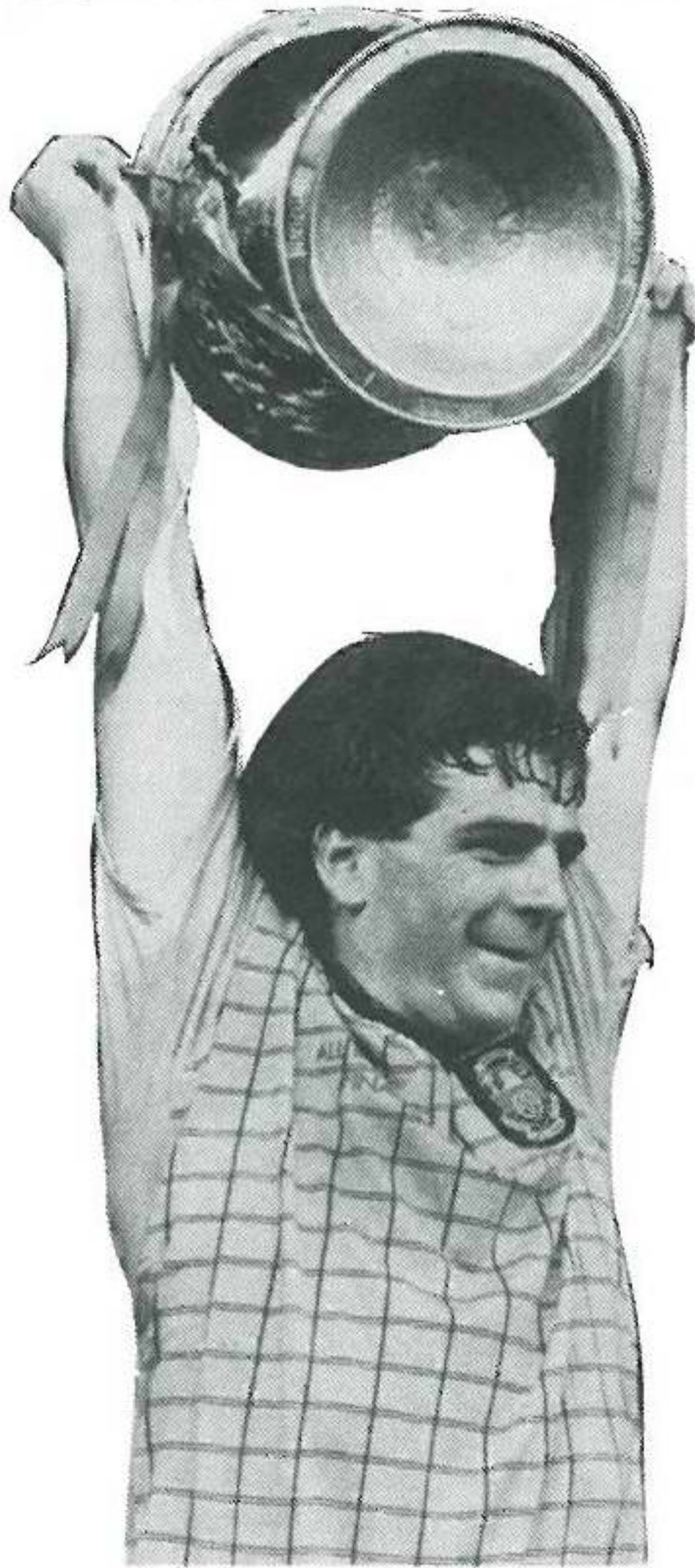
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ULSTER SPOTLIGHT WITH PADRAIG O'BAOIGHILL

TWO ALL-IRELAND TITLES FOR THE PROVINCE



Mark Quinn, Captain, Down Minor Footballers holding aloft the All-Ireland trophy after his teams thrilling win over Cork in September's final.

CONGRATULATIONS to the Down minor and to the Donegal under 21 teams for bringing two All-Ireland football Championship trophies to the province. It is encouraging to see the young men of Ulster holding their own in the tough All-Ireland competitions at a time when our senior and Ulster provincial teams are well below their high standards of previous years. Derry lacked forward penetration in the All-Ireland semi-final and were in no way as competent a team as the Derry team backboned by Jim McKeever, the Gribbens and Sean O'Connell which reached the All-Ireland final in 1958. In the minor game it was great to see the youthful James McCartan bursting through the Cork defences in similar style to his father while his brother Brian partnered the tall Hanaway at midfield and big uncle Dan gave advice from the sideline. Their trainer Peter McGrath also

trains the St. Colman's College team who are riding on the crest of a wave at the moment. Players such as Duggan, Quinn, Degan's, Mason, Murray, McGivern will be heard of again. This victory may sparkle the Down senior teams to go for next year's Ulster Championship. They have as good a forward line as there is in the country and Tony McArdle of Burren continues to score goals in the All-Ireland Club Championship. The County Board have arranged trials on a county wide basis to prepare a good team for the Royal Liver League. The Minor team was strong in defence but may be young yet for a senior encounter.

And while on County Down, I wish to pay tribute to a great Down player of the past and trainer of many a Down team — Gerry Brown who retired from the Abbey CBS Newry recently where Sean O'Neill was one of his greatest pupils. The celebration to mark his retirement in Carrickdale Hotel Newry in October was a night to remember. Another previous Down mentor in the sixties, Maurice Hayes is now Northern Ombudsman.

As for Donegal they have a good number of the 1982 All-Ireland under 21 winning team such as McHugh, McMullan, Mulgrew, Molloy, Reid, Gallagher, McDermott, Maguire, Carr to join in with the best of this year's under 21 team which should give them a formidable combination. And another member of that 1982 winning team Michael McBrearty of Donegal Town, a P.E. teacher, has been appointed manager of the Offaly senior team.

A worthwhile survey on emigration in the county was carried out by the Co. Board recently with a view to creating 200 jobs by next April. According to the survey emigration is now worse than the fifties with up to a thousand players leaving the county over the last few years. The worst hit clubs were Cloughaneely and Naomh Muire in the Roses. The County GAA Officers had a meeting with Leonard Roarty Co. Donegal Development Officer and they hope to

provide work under Manpower' Social Employment Schemes. A worthy effort indeed.

Former Cavan footballers, Ray Carolan of Cross and Hughie McInerney of Redhills along with Tom O'Dowd and Paddy Maguire as selectors will assist team manager Eugene Magee for the coming seasons. When Kingscourt narrowly defeated Ballybay in the Club Championship, Jim Reilly again gave a masterly display and continued to do so for Ulster and for Ireland against the Australians. His brother Terry had a great game for Kingscourt at full back while Faulkner and McArdle were good in the half back line. In the Ulster final Kingscourt went down narrowly to Burren — their forwards missing good chances in the last ten minutes. This was a great game of football played in poor weather conditions.

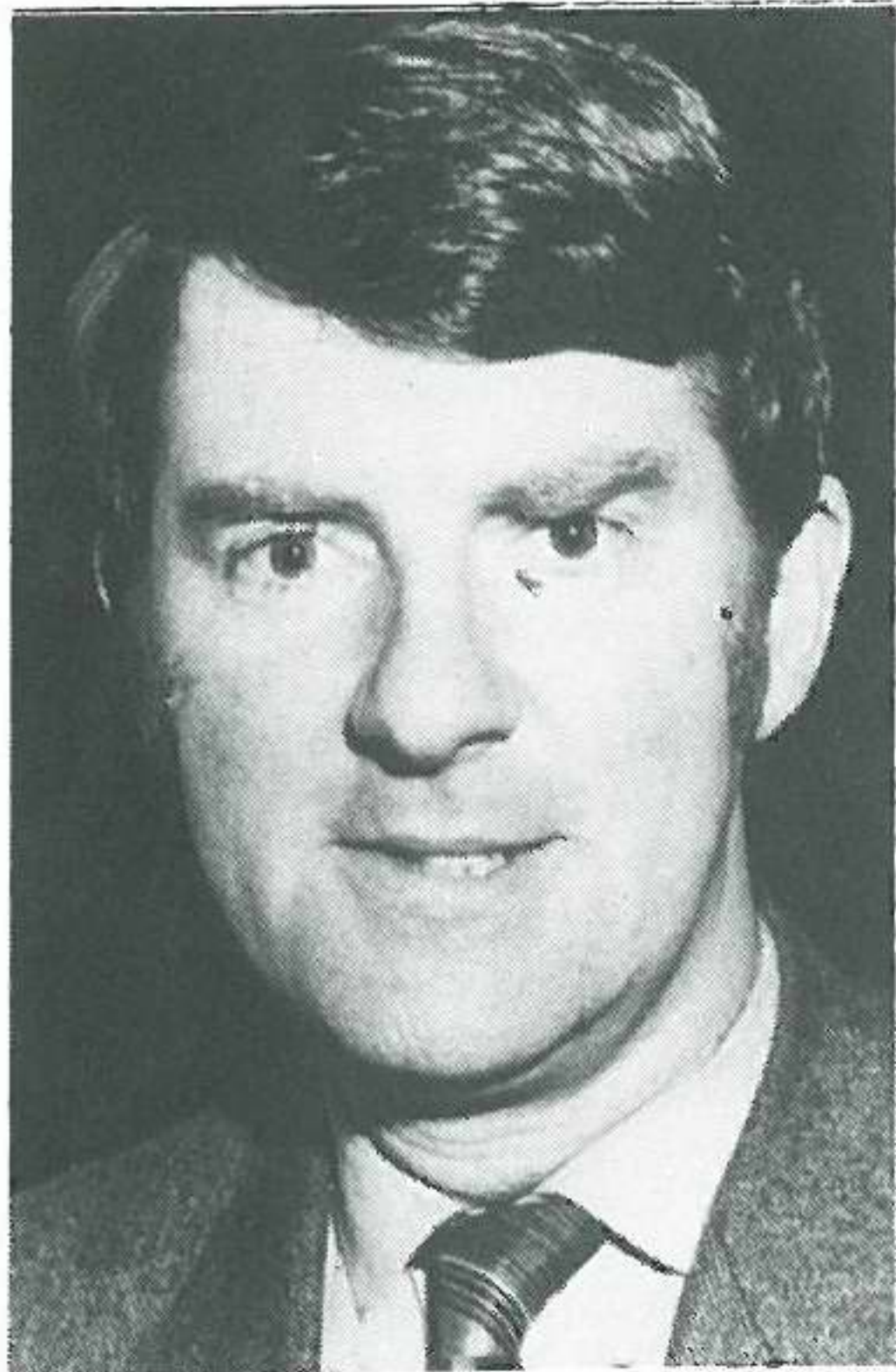
Donal Donnelly of the St. Enda Club in Omagh is the new manager of the Tyrone football team. In our college days Donnelly's Restaurant in Castle St. in Omagh was the meeting place after McRory Cup games and always a great centre of Gaelic activity. Donal and his brother Sean were then playing with Omagh CBS. They afterwards played with Tyrone minors and both were on the great Tyrone team of 56/57 — the best Tyrone team in my opinion to leave the county. It is not every day that we will get players of the class of Eddie Devlin, Jim Devlin RIP, Iggy Jones, Jack Taggart, Frankie Donnelly, Thady Turbett and Jody O'Neill to name but a few. Donal Donnelly, Headmaster of St. Patrick's High School Omagh won a minor All-Ireland medal with the famous Tyrone minor team of 1948 and two Ulster Championship medals in 1956 and '57. He won six Tyrone senior Championship medals with Omagh as well as helping Art McRory in preparing Tyrone County teams.

Although Derry City is a major centre of population there is not a city player on

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the county team. A city always dominated by soccer, Gaelic games did not make any worthwhile breakthrough. We had some great players from the city such as Micky McNaught and Tom McGuinness and progressive clubs such as Sean Dolans. We had also the great St. Columba's College team which won national honours but the overall percentage of youth playing Gaelic games was small. An enterprising development at present in Celtic Park on the Lonemoor Road could change the course of Gaelic games in Derry. Up until now there was no first class Gaelic pitch in the city but this scheme undertaken by the City Board and costing more than £160,000 will develop two playing pitches, changing rooms, spectators facilities and the provision of parking areas. Long serving central council representative Tommy Mellon and the City Board would like to have Celtic Park developed as a suitable county ground. Croke Park authorities have recognised the work being done by the City Board and have designated the area a



Eugene McGee, Manager, Cavan.

priority zone in their urban development programme. Derry's success in this year's Ulster championship created an interest in the city and many buses went to Clones and Dublin. A Donegal-Derry Ulster Championship clash in Celtic Park would draw a great attendance.

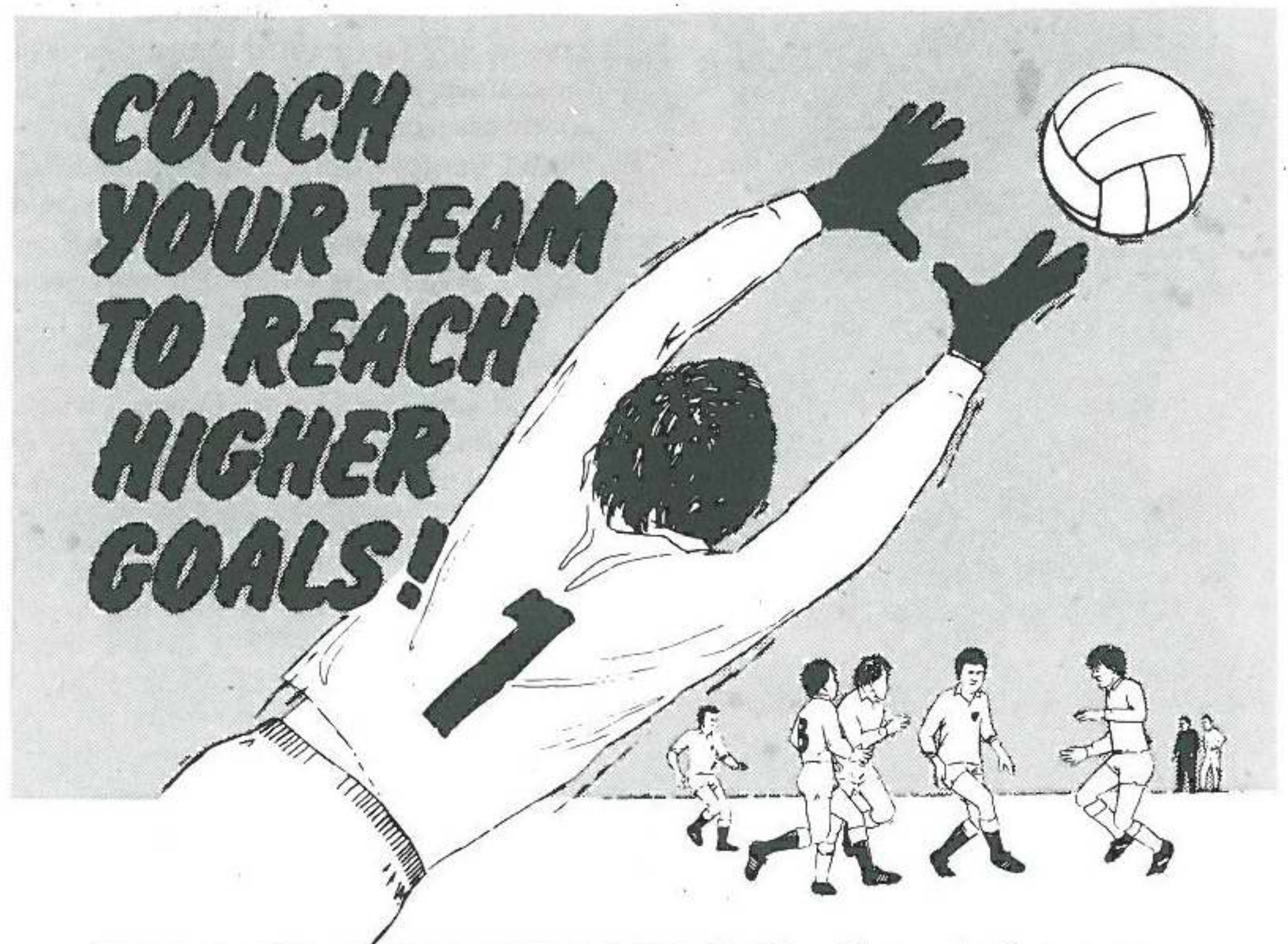
Ulster's hurling victory in the Railway Shield and Antrim's impressive displays in the All-Ireland Championship shows the continuing progress of hurling in the

province. And we are not forgetting the progress of Northern teams in the junior series and the Armagh cailini's display in the All-Ireland Junior Championship. Cushendall, backboned by the McNaughton brothers won the Antrim Senior H.C. and Danny McNaughton who played brilliantly for county and province was chosen hurler of the year. He also got the man of the match award for his display at full forward against Kilkenny and will be an important player in Antrim's quest for honours in 1988.

It is rather difficult to explain Ulster's poor display against an under strength Munster team in the Railway Cup series as Brian McEniff seems to have devoted time to this commitment. I wonder are some players at this level getting too much

football? After all they are only amateurs.

In the Royal Liver League, Monaghan have experimented with playing Gerry McCarville at full forward as they have a good selection of defenders. Gene Sherry has impressed at full back while the return of Brendan Murray and Fergus Caulfield has strengthened the defence. Another former county footballer Bernard Brady of Killevan was top scorer in Parnell's Dublin win over Baltinglass in the club championship while he previously captured a Dublin senior championship medal. And the Smith brothers of Ballybay have won minor and senior county championship medals in the one year — Finbarr captaining the minor team — a great achievement for two promising young footballers.



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Christian Brothers

CAMOGIE COMMENT BY MARY MORAN

THE year 1987 belongs to Kilkenny. Two years ago, Bridie McGarry lead her county to a unique National League and All-Ireland Championship double. Captain again this season, Bridie stepped up to receive the two major trophies in senior camogie and had a hand in winning the Club Championship and the Gael-Linn Cup for good measure.

Prior to 1970, Kilkenny were regarded as also-rans in the camogie world. Seventeen years later, the county's position on the Roll of Honour is third place behind Dublin and Cork. Seven All-Ireland Senior Championships and four National League titles have gone their way.

Angela Downey, Bridie McGarry, Anne Downey and Liz Neary have long been reckoned as the stars of the Kilkenny team. With her memorable displays this season, full-forward Breda Holmes now ranks alongside them. Bidy O'Sullivan, Marie Fitzpatrick and Clare Jones will harbour special memories from the campaign.

Kildare will always remember 1987. Camogie was introduced to the short grass county in 1908. Years of striving and disappointment were forgotten as their loyal and overjoyed supporters cheered Geraldine Dwyer as she received the New Ireland Cup. It was very pleasing to see players like Miriam Malone, Anna Dargan, Pat Keatley, Marianne Johnson, Rose Merriman and Geraldine Dwyer, who have given much to the game, awarded with an All-Ireland medal.

Galway remain on top in the teenage scene. A minor side containing exciting prospects in Mary Treacy, Triona Dolphin, Aileen Brett and Bridget Fahy retained the All-Ireland crown.

St. Raphaels, Loughrea etched their own special niche in colleges history when they lifted Corn Sceilg for the

third successive year. Nine girls were part of the three victories. Of these, Angela Cooney, Anne Fahy, Brid Stratford and Deirdre Costello have already advanced to senior inter-provincial camogie. No small credit is due to their coach Cyril Farrell who, no doubt, regards 1987 as a special year.

The new Colleges Sevens proved to be an outstanding success. The new trophy commemorates the late Agnes Purcell. The young players thoroughly enjoyed the seven-a-side game. Claire O'Callaghan, Frances Broderick, Helen Cagney and Eve Watson combined delightfully to bring the cup to St. Marys, Charleville. To underline their rating in the college arena, the school also captured the All-Ireland Colleges Junior championship.

Spectators at the National Feile in Clare were concerned that the standard was not as high as in previous years. Division One winners, Bishopstown (Cork) brought better teams to Feile in other years and lost. While the present

team is short on big names, they stuck to their task with great determination and were rewarded.

Unrelenting rain spoiled the Club Championship final and erased any hope of a repeat of the epic encounter between St. Pauls and Glen Rovers in the year before. Defences came out on top and the only goal of the match by Breda Holmes decided the issue in favour of St. Pauls.

Leinster retained the Gael-Linn Cup without undue stress. Munster came back to snatch the junior interprovincial trophy when it appeared that Ulster had it sewn up. Bernie Farrelly (Kildare) took over as Gradam Tailte champion and Claire Lynch (Galway) was a deserving Feile Skills winner.

1988 looms around the corner. It will welcome a new president and the report of the Special Commission. An event to capture the imagination will be Dublin v The Rest of Ireland in June as part of the Millennium celebrations. Perhaps Dublin will have an All-Ireland in mind as well.



Proud Kilkenny captain, Bridie McGarry, receiving the O'Duffy Cup from President, Mary Lynch.

COMHAIRLE LAIGHEAN C.L.G.

Clár na gCluichí 1988

PEIL SINSIR

	DATA	IONAD
1. Ceatharloch v Laois	22/5/1988	Ceatharloch
2. Ceatharloch/Laois v Ath Cliath	12/6/1988	Ceatharloch/Portlaoise
3. Longphort v Iarmhi	22/5/1988	Longphort
4. Longphort/Iarmhi v Cill Mantain	12/6/1988	Longphort/Muileann Cerr
5. Uibh Faili v Loch Garman	22/5/1988	Tulach Mor
6. Uibh Faili/Loch Garman v Cill Dara	5/6/1988	Droichead Nua/Loch Garman
7. Lu v An Mhi	5/6/1988	Droichead Atha
8(a) Ceatharloch v Longphort/Iarmhi/Cill Mantain	26/6/1988	Tulach Mor/Tulach Mor/ Droichead Nua
8(b) Laois v Longphort/Iarmhi/Cill Mantain	26/6/1988	Tulach Mor/Tulach Mor/ Droichead Nua
8(c) Ath Cliath v Longphort/Iarmhi/Cill Mantain	26/6/1988	Muileann Cerr/Tulach Mor/ Droichead Nua
9(a) Lu v Uibh Faili/Loch Garman/Cill Dara	3/7/1988	Pairc an Chrocaigh
9(b) An Mhi v Uibh Faili/Loch Garman/Cill Dara	3/7/1988	Pairc an Chrocaigh
Craobh: 8 v 9	31/7/1988	Pairc an Chrocaigh

IOMAINT SINSIR

1. Laois v Loch Garman	29/5/1988	Cill Chainnigh
2. Cill Chainnigh v Laois/Loch Garman	19/6/1988	Pairc an Chrocaigh
3. Ath Cliath v Iarmhi	29/5/1988	Cill Chainnigh
4. Uibh Faili v Ath Cliath/Iarmhi	19/6/1988	Pairc an Chrocaigh
Craobh: 2 v 4	10/7/1988	Pairc an Chrocaigh



QUIZTIME

BY VINNY MOORE

ANOTHER playing year has run its course... a year that brought a wind of change in football as the Kerry-Dublin dominance of the All-Ireland title was broken at long last, and one that saw Galway hurling reap the reward for wonderful efforts over the 'Eighties with their most successful campaign of all time.

Quiztime will help to revive memories of the past season with a series of questions that concentrate in the main on events over the concluding months. I have tried to cater for all followers, those who are interested mainly in football, hurling, handball or camogie by incorporating questions covering all games. This also helps to provide a varied test for the follower who likes to think that he or she is very expert on Gaelic Sport in general.

EMPHASISING

But, of course, as I keep emphasising, the purpose of the Quiz is to provide a little enjoyment, revive memories of great days and great events of the recent past — and also of disappointments for many — rather than proving a strictly competitive exercise for the Masterminds.

I have as usual incorporated the points system, but this is more of a guide to help show how you fare overall rather than as a measurement to show if you are really an EXPERT to beat them all.

I am starting this latest QUIZTIME with a short exercise on

the All-Ireland championship winners of 1987. In each section listed, one champion team is missing.

The side in question could be minor, junior or under-21. It would be too simple to omit the All-Ireland senior champions, of course.

What you should bear in mind is that in some provinces no Junior Championships were run off in football or hurling. Other provinces promoted such tests in both codes.

However, when you study the clues I think you will quickly get the idea. For instance, in our leading set in football, Meath obviously won the senior title. Down won in minor. I will let you work out the grade in which Cork triumphed, and that leaves just one other grade, and if you work out that particular championship it should help you to decide on the successful team.

A little word of advice here, however. The championship won by our missing champions in football was played a little earlier in the year than usual in 1987.

So, that's a useful clue, I feel, to get you off on the right note.

Let's get QUIZTIME underway now with the opening section covering seven separate sections, and which I simply entitle:

THE MISSING CHAMPIONS

- Football: Meath, Cork, Down and
- Hurling: Galway, Cork, Offaly and
- Camogie: Kilkenny, Kildare and
- Connacht Football: Galway, Galway and

- Ulster Football: Derry, Down and
- Munster Hurling: Tipperary, Cork, Tipperary and
- Leinster Football: Meath, Dublin, Kildare and

Five points for each correct answer provided. A total of 35 points on offer then to start the Quiz. YOUR CHAMPIONSHIP RETURN

Let's keep on the short snappy theme with which I have launched the latest Quiz with an exercise that will help show just what you recall of the two major games of the year. I call this selection:

ALL-IRELAND SENIOR FINALS

1. How many goals overall were scored in the football final?
2. And, how many goals were scored in the hurling summit?
3. This question will, I think, require a little extra thought. The winning teams, Galway in hurling, and Meath each had a common factor on the individual front, other than their success in the final. This had to do with a leader. Any idea at what I am driving at here? A further clue: The player in question in each team played in defence.
4. Who had charge of the football final?
5. Who was at left midfield for Galway?
6. Who refereed the hurling final?

Five points once more for each question answered correctly, other than No. 3. There is a five points bonus for the right answer here, so this section could boost your points tally by 35 points if you get all the correct answers. DID YOU?

Over now to a somewhat longer section covering happenings in the concluding rounds of the championships in football, hurling, handball and camogie. I call this series:

TOPICAL TOP TEN

1. Who won the All-Ireland Coca Cola senior softball singles title in handball?
2. Who captained Kilkenny to the

•TO PAGE 31

GAA Reporting by Paddy Downey



Paddy Downey has been Gaelic games correspondent of *The Irish Times* for more than twenty years.

In that time he has earned a nationwide reputation for his knowledgeable and perceptive reporting of hurling and Gaelic football . . . for his sound judgement and the flair with which he captures the colour and thrills of the big occasion—and big occasions are many in Gaelic games.

His reports and comments, his criticism when that is necessary, are always balanced and fair. But then, you'd expect no less from a writer who has won the Gallaher and Benson & Hedges awards as Sports Journalist of the Year four times in all in the past fourteen years.

That's the highest prize there is in Irish sports journalism.

Read *The Irish Times* and judge for yourself. Of course it's not a one-man team. You'll enjoy reading the rest of them, too.

THE IRISH TIMES

AN GHAELTACHT... suiomh do thionscal de rogha ar aon áit eile sa domhan.

Údarás na Gaeltachta – An Áisínéacht Stáit atá freagracht as forbairt
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DESIGN / JIM CONNELLY



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●FROM PAGE 29

All-Ireland senior camogie title?

3. What county lost to Kilkenny in the above mentioned camogie tie?

4. What was special about Kildare's win in the All-Ireland junior camogie final?

5. P.J. Molloy won his first Galway senior hurling championship medal in October. Name his club side

6. What club won the Connacht senior football championship title in mid-November?

7. Name the county team manager in football at inter-county level during 1987 who played in goal and helped his club to lift the county senior championship towards the end of the year

8. Leinster retained the Railway Cup in football early in October. Where was the final played?

9. Ulster achieved a rare breakthrough in interprovincial hurling in the early autumn. Can you say what that breakthrough was?

10. Brian Stafford was top scorer in the All-Ireland senior football final. Did the Meath man pop over five, six, seven or eight points?

Another chapter of five-pointers, with a worthwhile bonus for the perfect return of ten correct answers of ten points. So, 60 points on offer for this section. YOUR RETURN

After that lengthy series it is over to our popular:

PICTURE QUIZ

1. The team photographed here won an All-Ireland senior hurling title in comparatively recent years. Name the team and the title winning year

2. The captain of the side is fourth from the left in the front row. Who is he?

3. Who is the hurler on the extreme right in the front row? Hardly any need to say that he has been one of the top scorers in the code in recent times

4. What county lost to our Picture Quiz team in the final in the year in question?

5. One of the hurlers pictured here announced his retirement from inter-county hurling in 1987. Where is he placed in our photograph?

The points tally on offer here is 25. No bonus marks. YOUR SCORE

Let's end QUIZTIME FOR THIS ISSUE with a brief look-back to the

TEST SERIES

1. A simple one to start. Who captained Ireland?

2. How does the overall score now stand in the Tests since the series was introduced in 1984?

3. Who was the leading scorer for Ireland in the concluding game at Croke Park in early November

4. Last but not least, name the Australian referee during the Test matches

Let's keep in step by awarding five points yet again for each correct answer, with a five points bonus if you "go through the card" with a full house. So, you could end QUIZTIME with 25 points. DID YOU?

HOW DO YOU MEASURE UP

The points total on offer in QUIZTIME is 180. A return of 160-plus merits an EXCELLENT Certificate. A score of 130-160 qualifies for VERY GOOD. And, help yourself to a GOOD rating for 100 points to 130 points.

●ANSWERS PAGE 44

GAELSPORT 1988 ANOTHER MAGNIFICENT PRODUCTION

by Bill Kiely

"GAELSPORT" the very popular G.A.A. youth annual is

now on sale in the shops. The price is unchanged from last year at £3.95

and for the excellent content and magnificent photographs in the annual it really is a steal. It makes a great Christmas present that any young Gael would treasure.

The very colourful front cover features a fine action shot from this year's All Ireland Senior Hurling Final.

Among the varied and excellent articles in "Gaelsport" is "Royal Flush" which gives an account of the All-Ireland Final between Meath and Cork in which the men from the Royal County achieved a memorable victory.

"Nicky's Nack" is a profile of Tipperary's all-star forward Nicky English and in particular his memorable goal in the Munster Final which, of course, was scored without his hurley.

"Happy as Larry" looks at Cork's prolific point scorer, Larry Tompkins.

"Maroon Doon" focuses on Galway's win over Kilkenny in the All-Ireland Hurling Final.

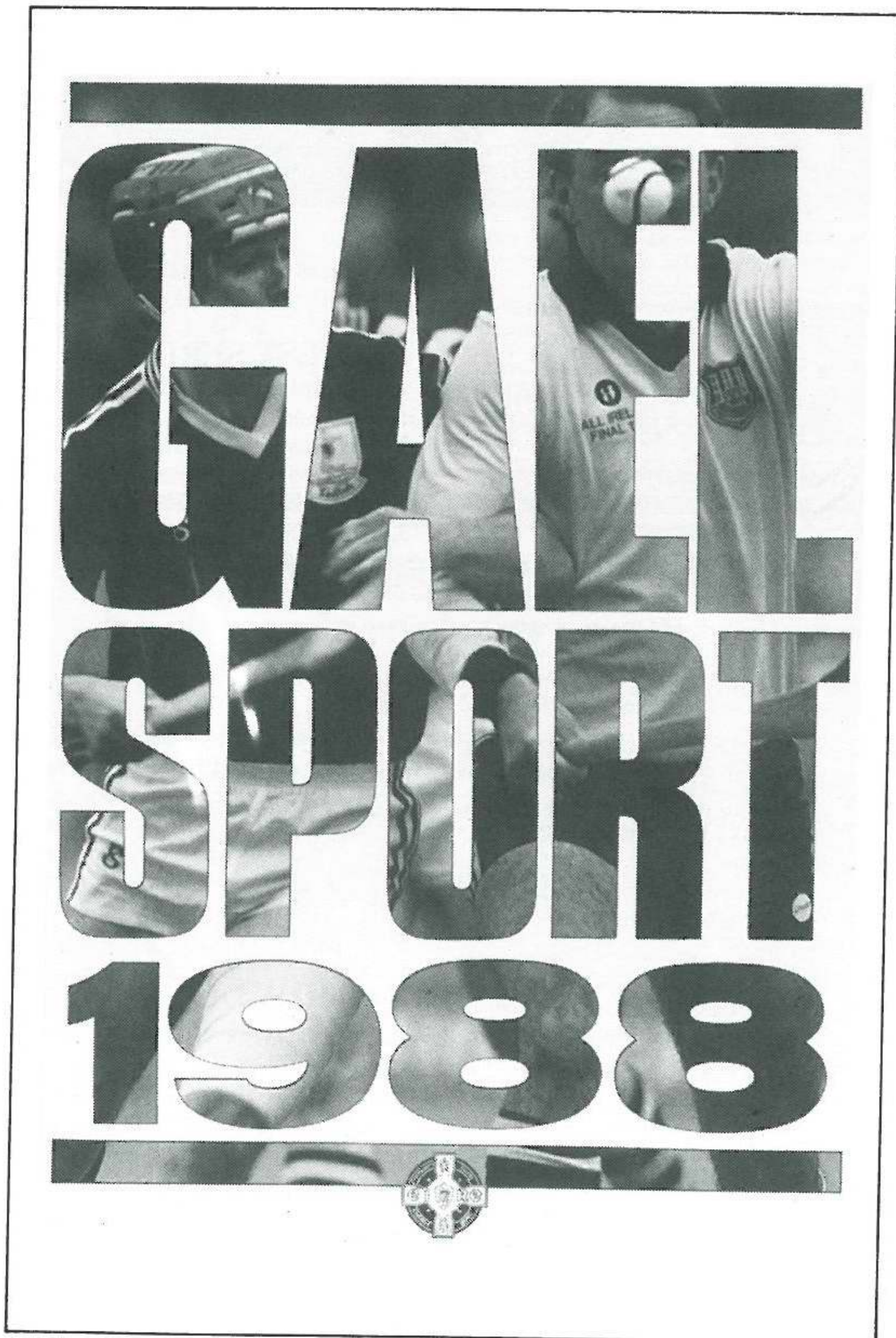
"Antrim's Tantrum" is a review of the All-Ireland Semi Final between Antrim and Kilkenny which had Antrim coming so near — and yet so far — to beating their vaunted opponents.

"Rub-A-Dub-Revival" recalls Dublin's march to victory in the National Football League.

"Tip Top" remembers Tipperary's memorable '87 championship run.

These are but a few highlights in what is a wealth of highlights in this year's "Gaelsport" Annual.

The standard is easily as good, if not better, than previous year's and once again all credit must go to the "Men behind the scenes" who are Pat Daly, Eoghan Corry, Billy Stickland and Ray McManus. Well done lads!



HANDBALL ROUND-UP

WHEN the Irish Handball team leaves for the World Championships in Australia next March, the premier singles spot will be filled by the young Louth player, Peter McAuley from the O'Rahilly's Club in Drogheda.

This represents a major achievement by the latest starlet to hit the forefront of the handball scene.

His feat really falls into context when it is realised that during the past season he was still in the business of winning minor All-Ireland titles.

Indeed since his first breakthrough in 1984, when he won the under 15 USHA Championship, McAuley has been meticulously climbing the handball tree.

This season he came of age in winning a number of titles at minor and junior levels in the 40x20 and 60x30 codes though his final trial clash with senior 40x20 champion, Micky Walsh of Roscommon could rank as his greatest triumph.

Picture the scene as Walsh, enjoying the fruits of his All-Ireland title win in the 40x20 championship, appeared to have a relatively easy task against the Louth youth.

When he had the first set safely tucked away and was leading 13-3 in the second, general predictions appeared to be materialising.

We had reckoned without the raw determination of McAuley, who, at that point, chose to turn the game completely and went about reducing the deficit.

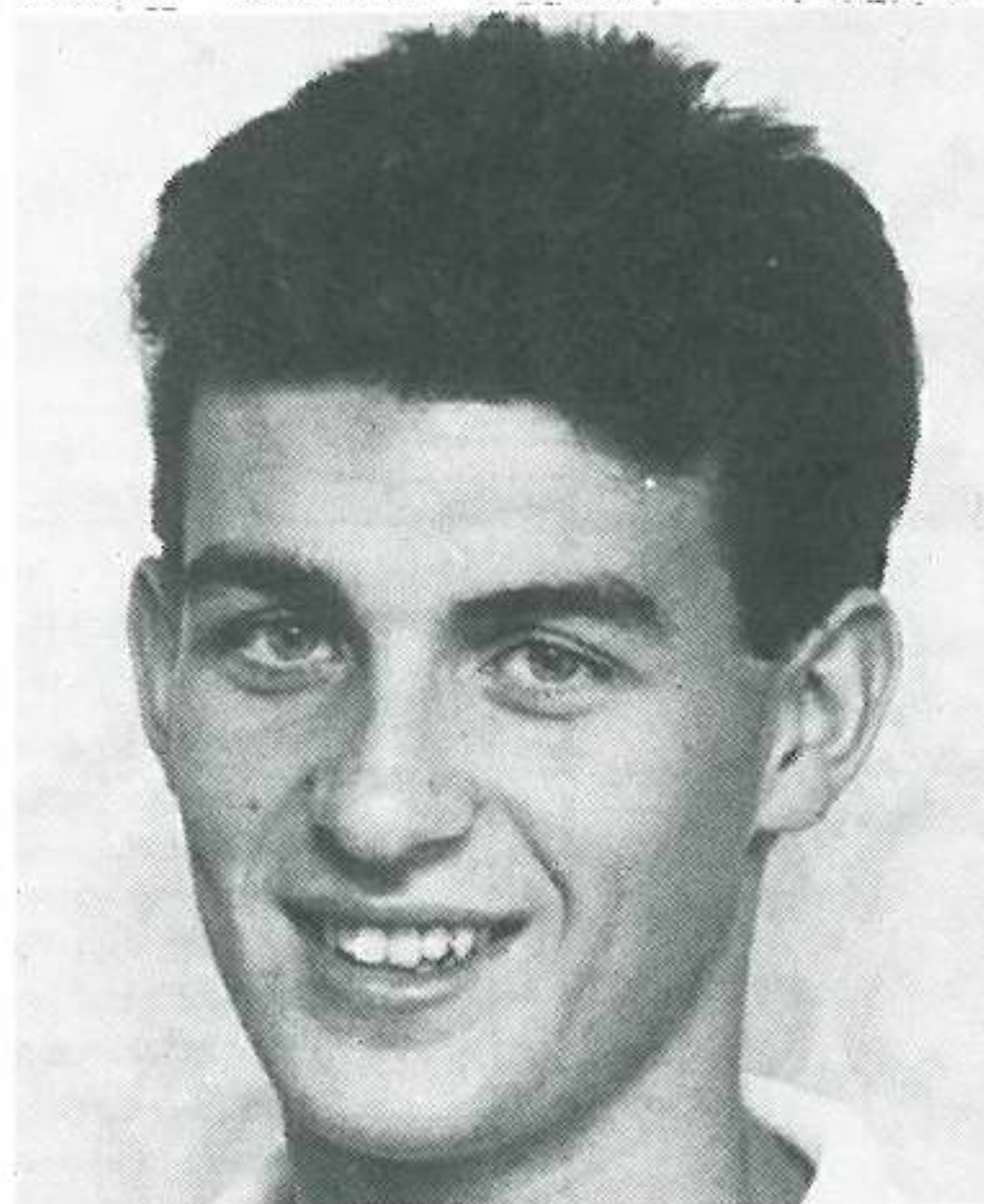
The rest is now a statistic.

After a two hour marathon, McAuley, had pulled back to level the game and, then in the tie breaker, turned on the style to win the coveted trip.

Now, the country's sportsmen will wish him well in his quest to come back with the world title.

He has a sound sporting pedigree to back him.

His father Jack, who has been his coach and advisor won a Louth senior football medal with the O



●Peter McAuley, Louth.

Rahillys in 1965, while his mother's brothers, incidentally, are the well known golfers, Paddy McGuirke (Co. Louth) and John McGuirke (Howth).

It was predictable that Sue Carey, who has dominated ladies handball in recent years would win a trip to Australia and she will be accompanied by Bartella Myther, the rising star from the Coolgreany club in Wexford.

It will be recollected, that, in the summer of 1986, Carey climbed a Handball Everest.

She arrived back from the World Championships in Kellowna with the singles and doubles titles, the latter in partnership with the skilful Oldtown player Liz Hall.

Another fact worth mentioning about these games in Australia is that the Irish manager will be Caimin Jones, a former President of the Irish Handball Council.

This is due recognition for one who has played a major role in the development of handball at all levels.

He was the guiding light in the construction of so many courts in his native Clare, still plays a practical role in coaching young players and reckons that the very future of the game can be found in efficient administration.

Indeed, it is interesting to note that some of these aforementioned facets of the game, covering youth, court construction and administration are being addressed by Michael Tyrrell, who, earlier in the year took over as President of the Irish Handball Council in place of Tommy O'Brien, who had completed his three year term of office.

Michael is conscious that a revised programme is necessary to motivate a much wider range of adults in organising handball for the young people, while this is also allied to the construction of many more courts in lightly populated areas.

On this latter theme, I take leave of this issue by congratulating the St. Brigids G.A.A. Club in Blanchardstown, Co. Dublin. This progressive club has given the game in Dublin a magnificent boost by constructing two handball alleys in the club's complex. St. Brigids have set an example not alone for other G.A.A. Club's in Dublin, but, indeed, for units of the Association throughout the country. I have often said that a handball alley is the best alley for any G.A.A. Club.



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The Franciscans.

"The Lord gave me some brothers."

This is the simple way in which St. Francis chose to describe the beginning of what was to become the Franciscan Order. His choice of the word 'brother' was deliberate because it summed up for him what those who followed his way of life were to be: not 'followers,' not 'disciples,' but brothers; people who take the Lord's command to 'love one another as I have loved you' with complete seriousness.

The Franciscans are brothers, in that they are called to live the Gospel not alone, but in community; and it is in community that they draw closest to God.

Our entire brotherhood is missionary, with each friar sharing the missionary vocation. Our mission is not to lands but to people, to particular and local communities, to whom the Father, speaking through the Church sends us. To those to whom we are sent we wish to be brothers, friends and servants. We have a very special place in our hearts for those people who long for a new meaning to life; for those who thirst for the fullness of truth, for human dignity, justice and freedom; for the poor and the sick; for the neglected and rejected of the world. 'When God gave me some brothers, there was no one to tell me what I should do; but the most High himself made it clear to me that I must live the life of the Gospel.' (St. Francis)

He's a FRANCISCAN

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Franciscan Friary,
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051-40015.



Munster Medley by Seamus O'Neill

TIPP. AMONG PACESETTERS IN DIVISION I WHILE CORK IN DANGER OF RELEGATION.

STAND by for some headline-making performances in the New Year by the hurlers of Tipperary. That's my confident forecast after the Munster champions' run in the pre-Christmas series of games in the Royal Liver League, in which they see out the old year among the pacesetters in Division I.

Some lost faith in Tipperary after their All-Ireland semi-final defeat by Galway, even though the counties provided one of the best games in hurling in the past year.

However, Tipperary have too many outstanding hurlers to allow such a setback to lower their spirits. And, they have proven the point in the first half of the League.

I'm convinced that men like John Heffernan and Seamus Gibson in defence, Colm Bonner and Joe Hayes at midfield, and Pat Fox and Nicholas English in the attack can do much to have Tipperary moving sweetly and in title winning form in 1988.

And, from a county sitting pretty to one in the lower regions of Division I — surprisingly Cork. What price a League meeting next year between Cork and Derry in hurling.

Sounds incredible, yet it could happen. Cork are in danger of relegation from Division I, and one of the big success stories of hurling in recent seasons has been the steady advance by Derry. They are nicely placed just now to secure promotion in the New Year to Division II.

I tell you a game between Derry and Cork in competitive hurling at Dungiven would certainly arouse tremendous interest in the Oak Leaf county!

It's surprising that Cork have fallen so badly from grace in recent months, as the county has consistently turned out top class under-age

teams in recent years.

However, come the championship, I believe we will see a much more formidable Cork.

Furthermore, the quality of the hurling produced by Midleton and Na Piarsaigh in the Cork county senior final was such as to indicate that there is little really radically wrong with the game by the Leaside.

Midleton won a cracking game by 2-12 to 0-15. Na Piarsaigh were appearing in their first final, and took a long time to find their feet. They trailed at the break by an intimidating seven points, but came out full of fight and spirit for the second half and made a tremendous bid to chalk up an historic win.

Michael Mullins, after being moved from left half to centre-half forward, did much to spark Na Piarsaigh into top gear after the re-start. He was in fine form, and very accurate in front of the posts as well.

No joy for Cork in the All-Ireland club senior camogie final. Glen Rovers, a club renowned the country over, had a double joy day in the national final of this championship in 1986 when they beat St. Paul's, of Kilkenny.

However, the Noreside girls had their revenge in this season's All-Ireland final. That was a Kilkenny double over Cork in 1987 as the counties met in the All-Ireland senior final in September, and the Leinster girls won that tie.

Pat Spillane, one of the most honoured footballers in the game, and one of the all-time greats, will have a chance of further glory in 1988. This time as county skipper.

Spillane was one of the heroes of the Kenmare side that beat Dr. Crokes, of Killarney, after extra time, in the county senior football final replay. And as a result, Spillane will

captain the Kingdom in their bid to regain the Munster and All-Ireland crowns next summer.

Many feel that Kerry have reached the end of an era as a result of their Munster final defeat by Cork in a replay at Killarney in August. I am one of those who hold that view.

I think it will be some time before we again see Kerry turning on the style that kept them at the top for so long.

That's not to say, however, that they will be down and out for a long time to come. They have introduced some very promising newcomers in the current League, and most of their younger players have shown up well.

Despite what some critics maintain, there is plenty of talent in the Kingdom, and Kerry will provide plenty of problems for the top teams in the months ahead.

Nevertheless, they may still find it beyond their capabilities to regain the Munster title next year. Cork have a good side, and are sure to profit from their experiences of 1987.

Still, it gives an added interest to the scene in the South to watch the Kingdom revival bid.

Newcastlewest, of Limerick, have plenty of cause for celebration these days. They caused an upset by beating Cloughaun in the Limerick county senior football final to capture the trophy for the first time. **And at the time of writing, the club had booked their place in the Munster senior football final. Pretty good going that.**

Shay Fahy, the former Kildare footballer, has much to enthuse over. He has collected two major trophies in his adopted county of Cork — a Munster senior championship medal, and a Cork senior championship souvenir with Nemo Rangers, who captured their eighth title this year.

First county senior football title for Newcastlewest, Limerick.

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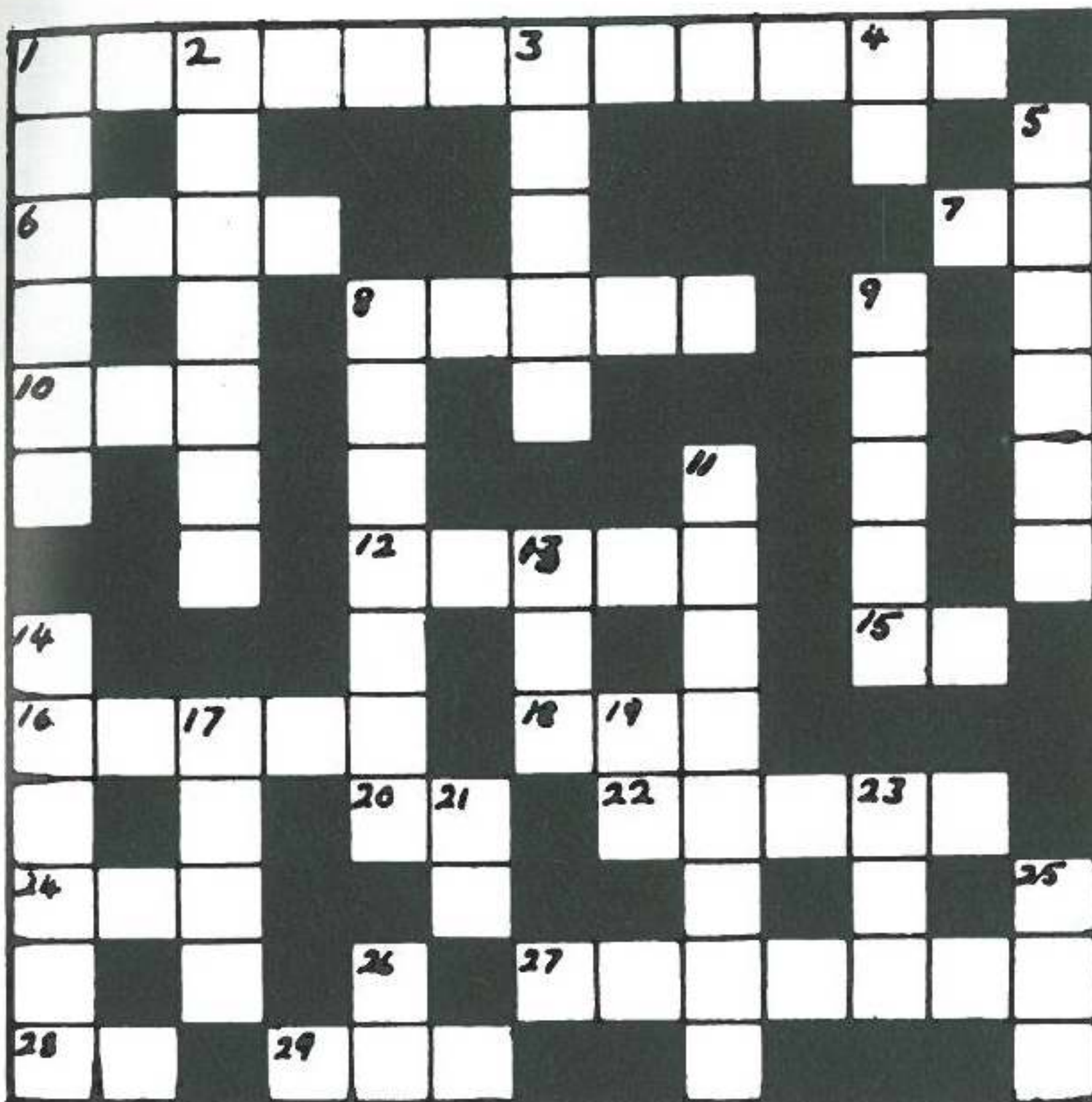
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CROSSWORD

devised by Peter Moloney



ACROSS

1. This top scoring forward is one of the outstanding personalities in camogie and won her seventh All-Ireland senior medal last September. (6, 6).
6. The long years in top-class senior football finally took this on the Kerry players last summer. (4).
7. Initials of Limerick's leading marksman in senior hurling. It may help you to know that he has generally been wearing the No. 13 jersey. (1, 1).
8. Brendan has been a top scoring forward with Offaly footballers for some years and helped Leinster to retain the Railway Cup early in October. (5).
10. Some supporters often visit this type of establishment after a match to celebrate a success or "drown their sorrows". (3).
12. Peter Finnerty played on this part of the half back line in the All-Ireland senior hurling final with Galway. (5).
15. Initials of Derry's top marksman in the senior football championship campaign last summer. (1, 1).
16. Mick . . . is a prominent forward with Longford in senior football. (5).
18. This will suffice for referee. (3).
20. Another initials exercise. Here we want those of a brilliant goal-getter and classy forward from Tipperary in hurling. (1, 1).
22. A non Cork native who won a Munster senior football medal last August. (1, 4).
24. Every forward likes to see a shot at goal end here. (3).

27. Cork's full back in the Munster senior hurling championship campaign. (1, 6).
28. Kilkenny's left half forward in the All-Ireland senior hurling final of '87. Initials. (1, 1).
29. A goalkeeper in hurling or football needs to have this, it is generally said. (3).

DOWN

1. This county put up a great performance when losing an All-Ireland senior tie at Dundalk last August. (6).
2. Ireland's Vice-Captain against the Australians. (1,6).
3. Despite what many had forecast at the start of the Test Series, the Australians displayed more skill than this in their games with Ireland. (5).
4. Cork's left half back against Meath in the football final, who played for Ireland in the last Test series. Initials. (1, 1).
5. An All-Ireland senior medalist with Meath in September, who only made his debut for Ireland in the Test series in the final game due to injury and proved one of the team's top marksman of the day. (1, 5).
8. Meath's centre half back in the Sam Maguire Cup win. (1, 6).
9. Runners-up for the National Hurling League title last May. (5).
11. Brian was the outstanding scoregetter in the senior football championship in the past year. (8).
13. Popular form of a Christian name as favoured by, say, Cork's ace goalkeeper in hurling, or Kilkenny's centre half back in the All-Ireland senior final in the same code. (3).
14. Colm won a Munster senior hurling medal with Tipperary at right midfield. (6).
17. Some footballers and hurlers are as industrious on the playing fields as these small insects. (4).
19. These initials will suffice for a term many use to describe a drawn game — the match finished "Even Stephen". (1, 1).
21. Initials of Dublin's centre half back in the Leinster senior football final. (1, 1).
23. Meath and Galway followers will spend many hours this winter telling and retelling . . . the All-Ireland senior titles were won in '87. (3).
25. There was no joy for supporters from the banks of this River as far as All-Ireland title wins were concerned in the past year. (3).
26. A former footballing ace, who is now a popular contributor to GAELIC SPORT. Initial (1, 1).

●SOLUTION PAGE 44



By Paul Fay

THE draw specialists! That's Parnells, of Dublin, one of the oldest clubs in the country, but still newcomers in 1987 to the Leinster senior football championship.

When Parnells finished all square with Portlaoise in the Leinster club final at the end of November, it was their third draw in the championships.

They drew with Baltinglass at Parnell Park in round two, and won the replay at Aughrim. Then came another draw, that one against Offaly champions Ferbane at Portlaoise. Once more the Dublin outfit came out on top at the second attempt.

Parnells was one of the first clubs to affiliate to the Dublin County Board when the committee was established soon after the formation of the G.A.A.

However, the club was out of the Dublin senior football championship winning circle from 1945 until last summer. That's why this year sees Parnells in action in the Leinster title race for the first time.

Their team is an interesting blend of native and country-born players.

Half back Greg Walsh won an All-Ireland minor medal with Dublin as a corner back in 1984, and Jim Bissett has worn the county senior jersey at midfield.

Brian Talty (Galway), Donal Fitzgibbon (Limerick), Bernard Brady (Monaghan) and Kevin Early (Mayo) are among the non-natives in the selection.

But perhaps the most interesting member of the team is John Prendergast, who was born in the U.S., played minor for Mayo, and has seen action in the current Royal Liver National League with Dublin at full forward.

All in all, an interesting company of footballers . . . that's Parnells.

Incidentally, in sharp contrast to their spate of drawn matches in the provincial championship proper, Parnells did not play a single draw on their way to the Dublin county senior championship.

Still on the Dublin theme, and it is good to see the county making a strong bid to get back into Division I of the Royal Liver Hurling League.

The ancient game has for long been overshadowed by football in Dublin and one can only have the height of admiration for those who keep working away in their bid to get Dublin back into the top rank at the stick game.

The Dubs finished their pre-Christmas programme with eight points from a possible ten.

The Dubs have some fine hurlers in their side. Niall Howard is proving a very adept score-getter and Shane Dalton is another lively forward who knows where the goals are.

I've been much impressed, too, by Derek Finn, Jim Lyng and John Twomey, who have the potential to blossom into a powerful half back line.

The Dubs could repay watching in 1988.

OFFALY BACK

But, of course, the real headline-makers in Division II are Offaly, who finished the pre-Christmas League programme with the proud rating as the only team in the Hurling League with full points. All of which means that the Midlanders will be back in the Premier Division again next season.

And a word, too, about Wexford. The magic created around Wexford teams in the days of the Rackards, Tim



●The legendary Nick Rackard of Wexford.

Flood and the Quigleys, has passed for many.

It's a bit early yet to say if a long-awaited Wexford revival is finally at hand, but things are looking up.

George O'Connor, who had been out of the team from the Leinster semi-final loss to Kilkenny in the summer because of a broken thumb, made a splendid comeback against Cork and showed up well at left half forward.

Wexford have one of the best chance-snappers around in Jimmy Holohan, and half back Sean Flood, midfielders John Conran and Billy Byrne and, of course, O'Connor are others who could do much to fuel the revival hopes in 1988.

Another encouraging pointer for Wexford hurling: Rathnure, who were runners-up for the All-Ireland club senior championship last March, retained their Leinster title by beating Portlaoise in the final.

DOWN UNDER

Louth had no representative on the Ireland team against Australia in the Test football series, but the county has still a giant of international sport on the Gaelic Games scene in Peter McAuley, from Drogheda.

He won the World under-17 handball singles championship in



●Pictured above are Parnells of Dublin, one of the oldest clubs in the country, who drew with Portlaoise in the Leinster senior football final.

Canada in 1986 and has now earned the right to represent Ireland at senior singles in the next World tests to be held at Melbourne next March.

McAuley, who has had a wonderful career in under-age handball, will probably be the youngest competitor at senior "down under." He earned his place by coming out on top in international trials. There is more about Peter in this issue's handball column.

MEL'S DOUBLE

Not much publicity as far as I saw for St. Mel's big double in Colleges' football in recent weeks.

The Longford boys regained the Hogan Cup for the All-Ireland Colleges' senior football championship in May after 24 years in the wilderness by beating St. Mary's, Galway, in the final.

The same schools met in the final of the novel inter-colleges international rules competition at Croke Park and once more the boys of Longford came out on top. They won by six points.

I don't know if there was a great deal of merit in the Colleges' competition under the international rules. The test certainly received very little publicity which was perhaps understandable as the series was played in conjunction with the senior Test games.

But, the schools games did give our budding stars competitive experience at the international rules game and that might prove beneficial in the future. Especially if the Test games become permanent features of our calendar.

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GALWAY BACK IN FULL FLIGHT AS WESTERNERS MAKE "CLEAN SWEEP" in '87

GOOD to see Galway back in flight again after their loss to Cork in the All-Ireland senior hurling final. That setback does not appear to have dented the team's morale and I believe Galway could go on to great things in 1987".

That's what I wrote in my column in the Winter edition of **Gaelic Sport** last year, and my goodness, how the men of the West lived up to that forecast. Here they are a year later with a "full house" in terms of hurling trophies, with the National League, All-Ireland championship and the Railway Cup all now in safe keeping in Galway.

To say that 1987 has been the greatest year ever in the annals of Galway hurling is to state the obvious. The season, however, was more than that, for I don't believe that any other single county has ever completed this big treble.

Remember, Connacht were represented by an all-Galway selection in the Railway Cup and I think I am right in saying that no other county has ever provided the entire selection in an interprovincial title winning appearance.

Highlights from the past year for Galway? I remember in a special way Anthony Cunningham's scoring expertise against Waterford in a League semi-final at Portlaoise in April, when he finished with 3-3.

Then, there was the sheer brilliance of Joe Cooney, and his exciting scoring technique into the bargain as he helped himself to 2-6, in the League final win over Clare.

Nor will I easily forget the sparkle of Eanna Ryan as Tipperary were beaten in a pulsating All-Ireland semi-final. Last but by no means least, there was the sheer magic of Gerry McInerney at left half back as Galway sent Kilkenny packing in the All-Ireland final.

There were many other highlights, but those are the performances that

stand out for me.

Well done, Galway! If ever a county deserved such glittering success after so many disappointments in major finals, it is the Western county. You certainly deserve your mid-winter break after a busy time.

What an unhappy contrast is provided in football. Not a single All-

recompense when Connacht, with a late opportunist goal from Leitrim's Michael Martin, beat Ulster to win the first Railway Shield final. Pleasing enough that in its own right, but we have not savoured a Railway Cup final win since 1969.

That's too long a break for a province with such a proud tradition in football. All I hope now is that 1969 is not to prove the last-ever title win, as there is talk yet again, about scrapping the Railway Cup.

The one bright light on the football scene continues to be provided by that truly remarkable club from Roscommon, Clan na Gael.

Shortly before Christmas they captured the Connacht senior football title for the fourth year in succession — a record sequence for the series. They beat Mayo champions Ballina Stephenites in the final.

An outstanding feat that and one that marks out Clanna Gael as by far the leading club side in the West during the present decade.

Clans, it will be remembered were beaten in the All-Ireland senior club final by a strong St. Finbarr's, Cork, outfit last March. That was a disappointing setback, but in view of the way in which the club has picked up the pieces in the meantime, there must be genuine optimism about the Roscommon men's prospects of making the long-awaited breakthrough nationally in the New Year.

An All-Ireland title would be a just reward for all the efforts Clan na Gael have put in over recent years. My advice to them is: Remember how Galway came back from disappointing setbacks in major finals in hurling to enjoy such success in '87.

Strange but true. Mayo is not a county in the top ranks of hurling, but that has still not prevented them from producing top-class finishers in the game.

One recalls Joe Henry, who has



Ireland inter-county championship for the county in the past year and Mayo the province's only Division I team in the Royal Liver League.

And, when are we ever going to see Connacht win the Railway Cup again

**NO OTHER SINGLE
COUNTY HAS EVER
COMPLETED
THIS TREBLE**

in football? I thought the recent games might bring about a welcome change, but instead, the Western standard-bearers went down to Leinster in the semi-final at Newbridge.

I suppose there was some

been one of the biggest hitters in the game for some years, and has also turned on the style with Connacht and won a Railway Cup medal in the code.

Now, I see that Johnnie Cunnane is showing a nice line in the scoring stakes with Mayo in hurling. In a recent game in the National League he scored 4-2 against Carlow at Aughamore. A fine feat that, but

added point was given to his achievement by virtue of the fact that Cunnane scored all but a point of his team's tally in that game.

Finally, Western folk have just a little more interest than customary in the exploits of the Dublin club, Parnells, in the Leinster senior football championship.

The reason? One of the stars of the North Dublin side is Brian Talty,

who was in Galway's Connacht senior football title winning side last August, and has, of course, been a regular with the Western county for some time.

Brian is a former St. Jarlath's College, Tuam, player and appeared with the school both as a goalkeeper and a forward. He also won an All-Ireland Colleges' medal with Jarlath's.

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Government Warning

MY FOOTBALL TEAM OF THE YEAR

by Liam McCarthy

MANY would have us believe that football today is sadly lacking in exciting personalities. That this is far from being the position becomes abundantly clear when one gets down to the nitty-gritty of putting together a national side based on performances over the past year.

Decide on any position you like to make a start, and you will quickly find that competition for the job is very keen . . . keener, I would suggest, than for many years.

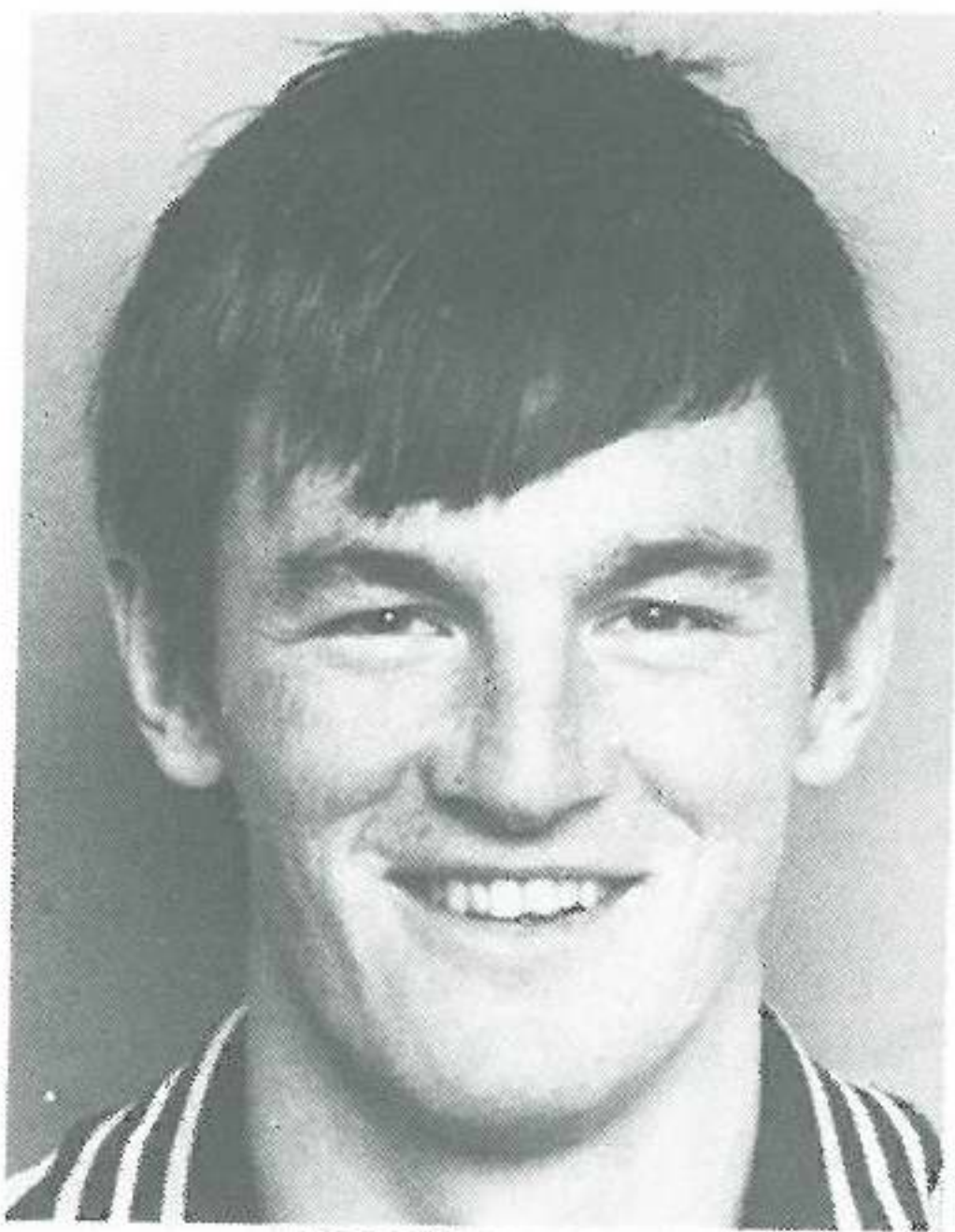
Oh, yes, some names immediately spring to mind. They include John Kerins for goal, Robbie O'Malley at right full back and Brian Stafford at full forward. But what about Michael McQuillan, John O'Leary, Paud O'Shea, John Fallon, Michael Sheehy and Christy Ryan?

All must be considered, I maintain, when one makes a conscious effort to select a truly creditable national team, rather than one based in the main on the All-Ireland final sides, or a selection with a strong base from one's own particular county.

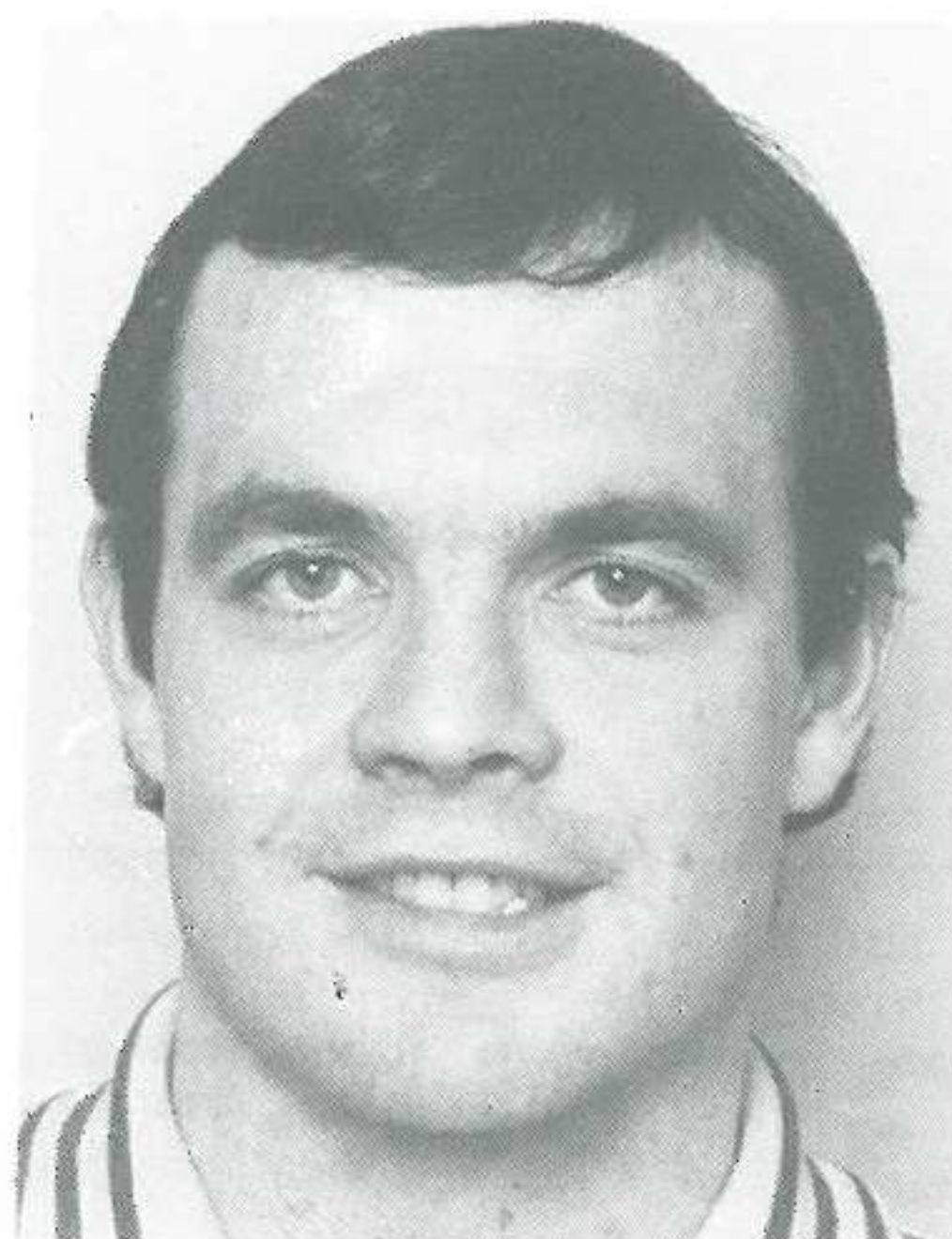
Let's start in goal. McQuillan was very prominent in Meath's march to the All-Ireland senior title, and his credentials for the job are first-class. Equally, it must be said that Kerins kept a great goal for Cork, and brought off some splendid saves. I recall in particular two memorable saves he pulled off in the second half of the drawn All-Ireland semi-final with Galway. Those were from point blank range shots by Gay McManus and substitute Gerry Burke.

Then, there is O'Leary. He was a vital influence in Dublin's march to the National League title in the spring, and he had a very good championship season as well, even if the Dubs went out at the end of the Leinster final. Then, the Dubliner was prominent again as Leinster retained the Railway Cup in October.

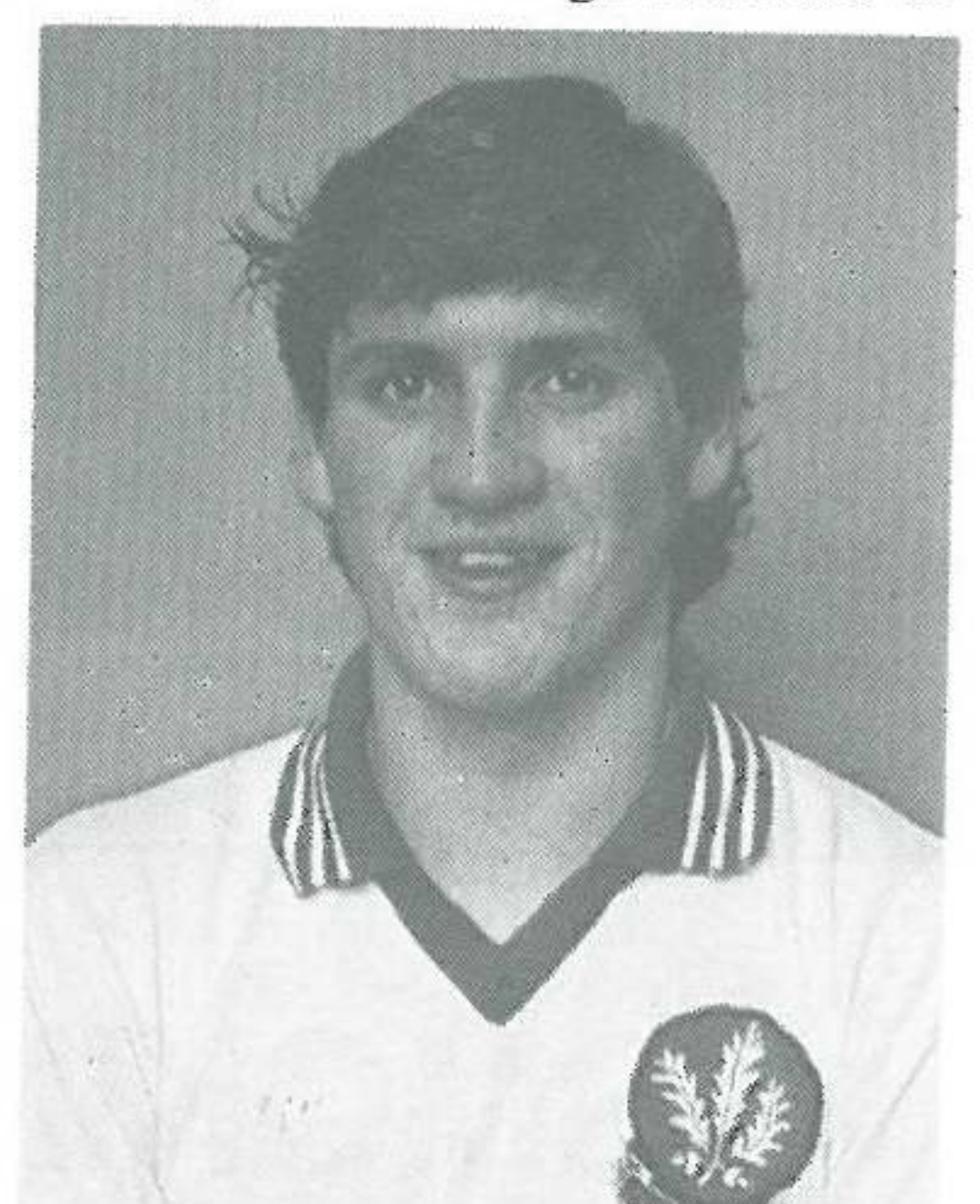
O'Leary, of course, also captained Ireland in the Test series against Australia, a further tribute that to his brilliance as a net-minder, and to the high standard he



•JOHN O'LEARY



•MICK LYONS



•DERMOT McNICHOLL

maintained over the year. However, I don't think we should use the Test matches as a guide when picking a national team for 1987 as that was not strictly Gaelic football.

I just mention the Test matches in passing to illustrate two points — O'Leary's consistency that was rewarded with the Ireland captaincy and the terms of reference I set myself in choosing my own side. In other words, I am concentrating exclusively on displays in our own game.

So, the more I look back over the past year, the more I feel that the dependable O'Leary is the man for the No. 1 jersey in my team.

O'Malley was a key figure in bringing the Sam Maguire Cup back to Meath. He had a splendid season and a good All-Ireland final as well.

But O'Shea did well with Kerry in a year in which the Kingdom were runners-up for the National League title and were only deprived of their provincial and All-Ireland titles in a Munster final replay by Cork at Killarney. He had plenty of football in 1987 and everything he did bore the stamp of the typical O'Shea brand of forceful and effective play.

In a disappointing season for Galway, John Fallon was one of their better players at right full back. He almost won the first clash with Cork when he popped up to hit the lead point two minutes from time. The Leesiders eventually equalised, of course, and won the replay.

However, my choice must still be O'Malley, who impressed time and again with his intelligent play and high work-rate in the Meath success story.

SCORING ACE

Brian Stafford was in excellent scoring form with Meath. He was the outstanding scoring ace in the championship and did much valuable work as well with his crafty general play at full forward.

Mike Sheehy played at right full in the championship, but I recall a fine showing from the Kerry man at full forward in the League final, and Christy Ryan, of Cork, will also have his supporters.

Still, I feel it must be Stafford in view of the high quality football he produced over the championship season and his lethal finishing in front of goal.

Let's stay up front. Dermot McNicholl was Derry's top player in Ulster, but was hampered in the All-Ireland semi-final against Meath because of an injury that eventually forced him to retire.

He is a very gifted player and I make him a strong contender for centre half forward.

I've not forgotten Larry Tompkin's contribution to the Cork revival or his scoring feats that have become part of the folklore of the game. Nor am I overlooking Joe McNally's good displays with Dublin at centre half forward.

Even so, I still make Dermot McNicholl the man for the No. 11 jersey.

On his left I must go for Kieran Duff, who was Dublin's man-of-the-match in the League final win and

maintained a very high standard of play, as well as a good scoring rate right up to the concluding weeks of the year in the 1987-88 Royal Liver League.

Galway, Connacht senior champions, and not a player on the team so far. Well, Val Daly can set that right. I put him ahead of the field for right full forward.

That leaves two positions in the attack. A strong case can be made for top scoring Derry man Enda Gormley, who played some sparkling football all year, for the right half spot, but I'm going for one of Meath's heroes, David Beggy. Similarly, while there are a number of strong contenders for left full forward, top of my list is another Meath man, Bernard Flynn.

Cork readers will, I feel sure, be getting anxious at this stage. After all, their county finished All-Ireland senior championship runners-up, but I have not found a place for even one member of their squad.

Let's set that right. How about Niall Cahalane at right half back, and Teddy McCarthy at left midfield?

I think Cahalane is the front-runner by a long chalk for the No. 5 jersey, but quite a few must come into consideration for left midfield, including Liam Hayes (Meath), Brian McGilligan (Derry) and some would argue, young Declan Bolger (Dublin).

Still, the hard-working and versatile McCarthy, who had a very busy time as a dual player in 1987, is the man whom I rate deserving of the honour.

THE OTHER SPOT

One could expound the cause of quite a few players for the other midfield spot. Plunkett Murphy, who led Derry to the Ulster title, Shay Fahy (Cork) and Hugh Blehein (Galway) will undoubtedly have their supporters.

However, the past season was probably Gerry McEntee's best in a long and distinguished career in the Meath jersey. I also thought that his second half performance against Dublin in the Leinster final was quite superb, one of the highlights of the year, in fact, and so he is the footballer who wins my vote.

The All-Ireland champions provide some of the best pace-setters for the remaining positions in the team.

Take full back. Gerry Hargan has to be in the hunt after his excellent leadership of Dublin to the League title, but as against that Mick Lyons did really well as Meath's skipper and full back. I go for Lyons.

Liam Harnan, the Meath pivot, is a player whom many would almost automatically ink in for centre half back, and let's not forget the good work either of Terry Ferguson at left full back.

One cannot easily overlook the performances in the latter spot of Galway's Seamus McHugh, or solid Derry man Tony Scullion. Then, there is Mick Kennedy, one of the most under-rated defenders in the game in my book.

The St. Margaret's man had another solid, rather than spectacular year with the Dubs, won a League medal into the bargain and I plump for him at left full back.

TO PAGE 44

ALL THE ANSWERS...ALL THE ANSWERS...ALL TH

THE MISSING CHAMPIONS

FOOTBALL: Donegal, winners of the under-21 title. **HURLING:** Limerick, champions at under-21. **CAMOGIE:** Galway, minor champions. (Kildare won the junior crown and Kilkenny the senior). **CONNACHT FOOTBALL:** Galway, who won all three Connacht titles, senior, under-21 and minor. There was no junior in the West. **ULSTER FOOTBALL:** Donegal at under-21. Again no junior series in the North. **MUNSTER HURLING:** Limerick at under-21. **LEINSTER FOOTBALL:** Laois, champions at under-21. (Dublin won the junior).

ALL-IRELAND SENIOR FINALS

1. One. Scored by Colm

O'Rourke of Meath. 2. One again. The scorer was Galway substitute Noel Lane. 3. Galway and Meath were each captained in their All-Ireland final wins by their full-back — Conor Hayes and Mick Lyons respectively. 4. Pat Lane (Limerick). 5. Pat Malone. 6. Terence Murray (Limerick).

TOPICAL TOP TEN

1. Michael "Duxie" Walsh (Kilkenny). 2. Bridie McGarry. 3. Cork. 4. This was Kildare's first All-Ireland title in any grade of camogie. 5. Athenry. 6. Clan na Gael, Roscommon, who took the crown for a record fourth year in succession. 7. Billy Morgan, who guarded the net for Nemo Rangers in their Cork senior final win over Imokilly in mid-November. 8. Newbridge. 9. Ulster

beat Munster at Ennis in the first Railway Shield hurling final of the modern era. 10. Seven points.

PICTURE QUIZ

1. Our team in focus captured the All-Ireland senior hurling title of 1986, and is, of course, Cork. 2. Tom Cashman. 3. John Fenton. 4. Galway. 5. The hurler who retired is Jimmy Barry-Murphy, and he is positioned in our photograph second from the left in the back row.

TEST SERIES

1. John O'Leary (Dublin). 2. 2-1 in favour of Australia. Australia won in Ireland in 1984. Ireland won "down under" last year, and the Aussies, of course, were successful this season. 3. Bernard Flynn and Pat Spillane with 14 points each. 4. Rick Kinnear.

FOOTBALL TEAM OF THE YEAR FROM PAGE 43

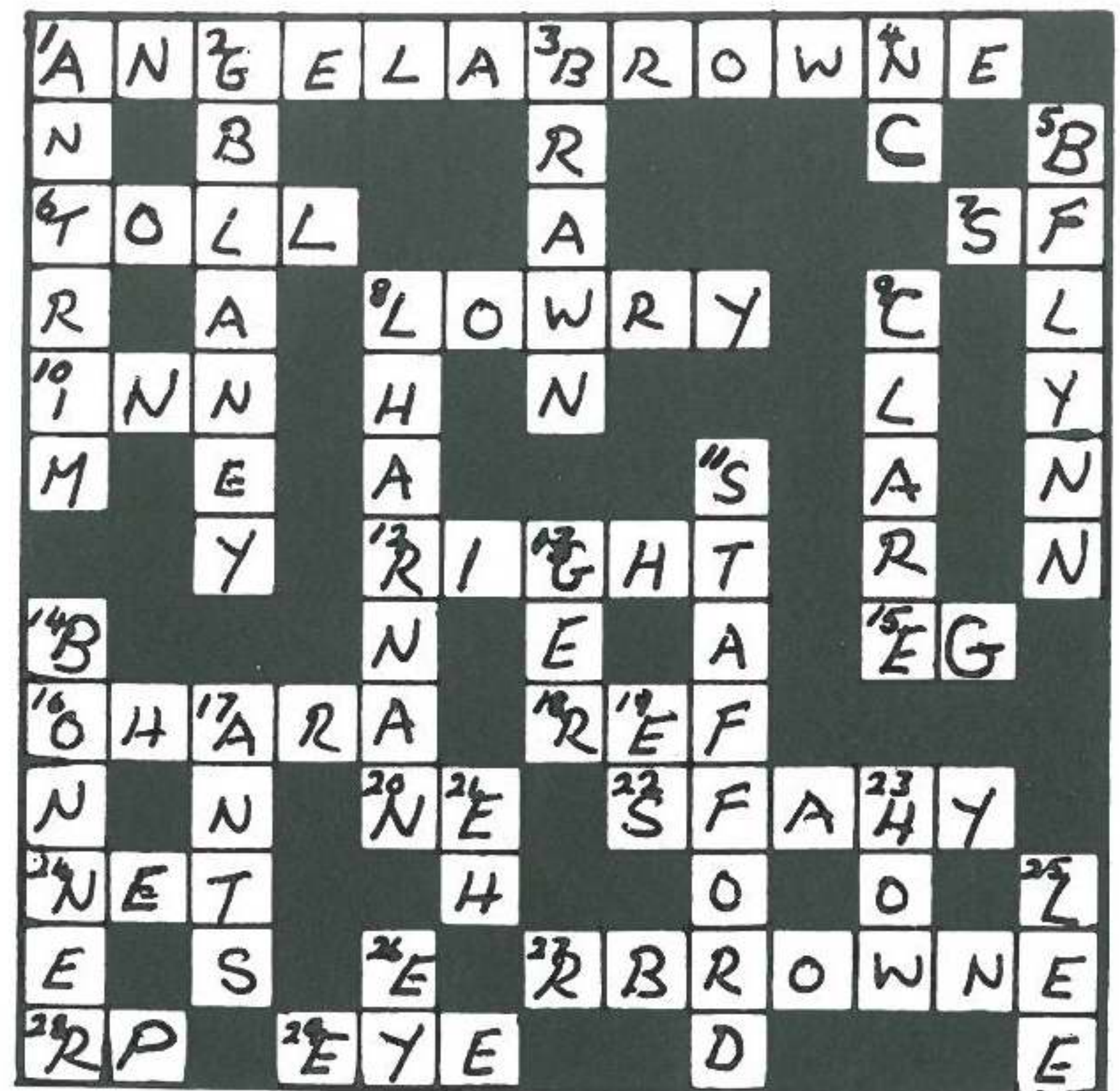
Centre half back? I'm passing over Harnan, much as I admire the Meath man. I am also passing over Cork captain Conor Counihan, and going for one of the men who helped to bring the Ulster title back to Derry — Joe Irwin.

He has been a stalwart for the Northern county for some time, had a major influence on the Ulster title win last Summer and played very well against Meath in the All-Ireland semi-final.

That leaves left halfback. Mattie Coleman, of Galway, is the type of wholehearted footballer I greatly admire, but the more I consider this position the more I believe the man who must go into the team here is another of Dublin's League title winning stars — Noel McCaffrey. He was inspirational against Kerry in the final and played very well in the championship and in the pre-Christmas League games.

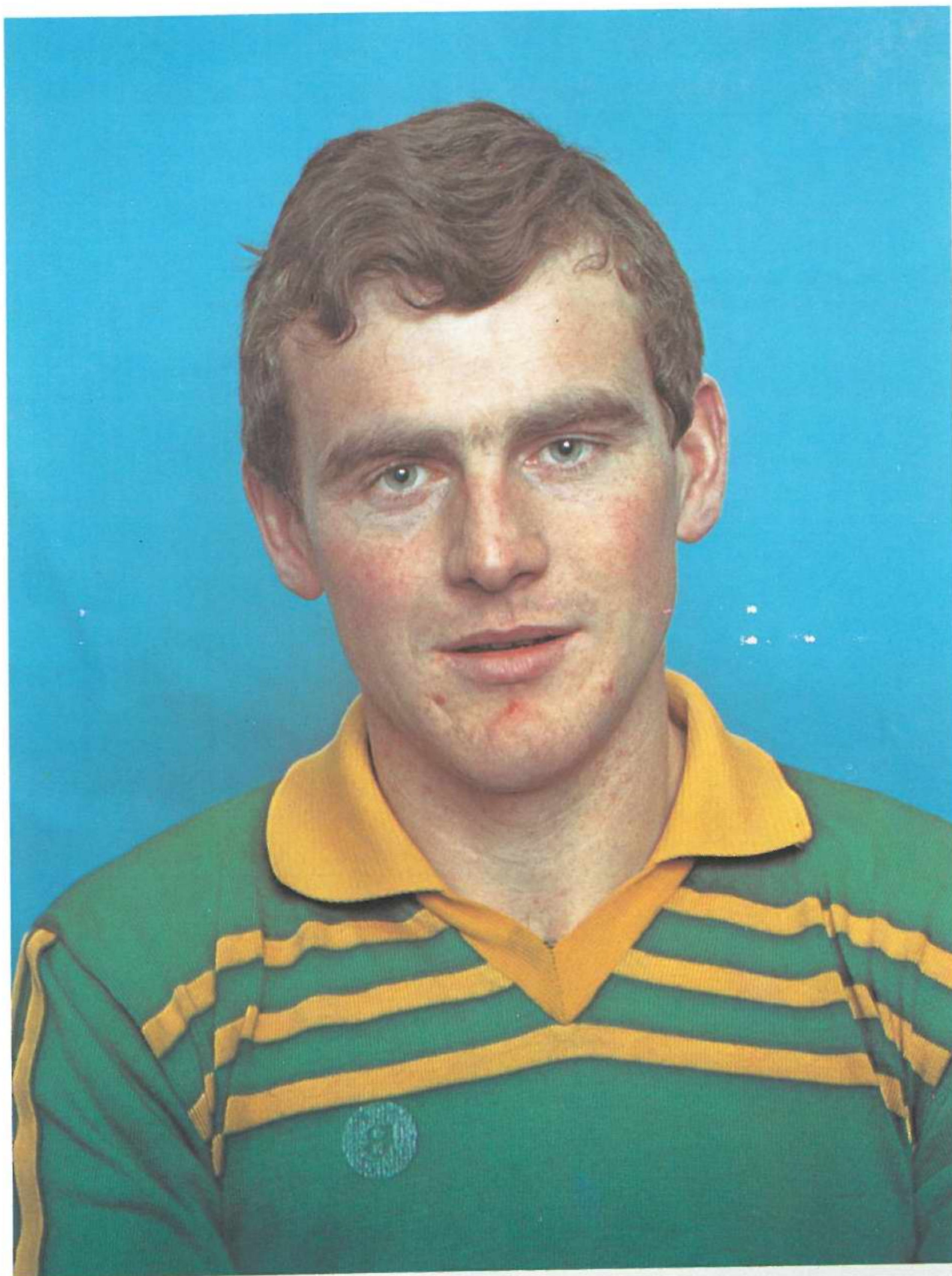
That leaves my team:

John O'Leary (Dublin); Robbie O'Malley (Meath), Mick Lyons (Meath), Mick Kennedy (Dublin), Niall Cahalane (Cork), Joe Irwin (Derry), Noel McCaffrey (Dublin), Gerry McEntee (Meath), Teddy McCarthy (Cork), David Beggy (Meath), Dermot McNicholl (Derry) Kieran Duff (Dublin), Val Daly (Galway), Brian Stafford (Meath), Bernard Flynn (Meath).



•CROSSWORD SOLUTION FROM PAGE 37

ALL THE ANSWERS...ALL THE ANSWERS...ALL TH



**COLM O'ROURKE
MEATH**

A goal and a winners medal was the big double that crowned a long wait for Colm in September when he proved an influential figure at right full forward in Meath's first All-Ireland senior football final win in 20 years.

He was still in his teens when he first won his spurs with the county senior team in 1975. Over a year later a serious leg injury threatened to end O'Rourke's career prematurely, but he battled back bravely to return to the county senior team in 1978. After that, however, he had to wait until the recent show-down with Cork for his All-Ireland senior final debut.

The six-foot plus O'Rourke is 30. He was in the Meath team that won

the Centenary Cup in 1984, captured his only Railway Cup medal the following year, and won Leinster senior medals over the last two campaigns.

A Bank of Ireland All Star at full forward in 1983, Colm was topscorer for Skryne with 1-4 as they went down to Navan O'Mahony's in the recent county senior final. He was bidding for his fifth senior county medal.

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