

ST. MICHAEL'S R.C. — A DECADE OF GLORY



The first of many... the 1979 Junior A Eight who brought the first Irish Championship to St. Michael's.



Leander winners: Winning the famous Cork Regatta Trophy in 1985 were (from left): Justin Sherin (capt.), Pat McInerney, John Hayden, Mark Sheehan, Pat Leahy, Philip Clifford, Niall Deloughrey, Larry Sherin (stk.), Paul O'Driscoll (cox), Dermot Henihan (coach).

UNPRECEDENTED SUCCESS RATE

OF ALL the outstanding local sporting achievements of the past decade, St. Michael's Rowing Club continuing successes would be hard to equal.

Winners of ten Irish Championships since 1979 and with 59 of its oarsmen being chosen to row for their country, the club has wound up on several occasions during this period as most successful overall in the country.

And yet, it took 78 years to win its first Irish title. Founded in 1901, it was 1979 before the first I.A.R.U. Cup was triumphantly borne back to the club, and it has never looked back since.

INTERNATIONAL HONOURS LIST

Damien Masterson* (2), Rory O'Brien, Niall Hogan (2), Dermot Woodhouse (2), Derek Daly* (3), Barry Smith (2), Austin Leddin, Philip Hackett, Pat Leahy* (4), Paul O'Driscoll (2), John Hickey, Mark Murphy, John Cumiskey, Larry Sherin* (4), Pat McInerney, John Hayden* (2), Phillip Clifford* (2), Donal Hanrahan* (3), John Dalton* (4), Brendan Murphy* (3), Liam O'Neill* (2), Eamon Ryan* (2), Phillip Hyden*, John Callinan*, Brian McInerney*, Tom Larkin* (3).

* Denotes winner.
() Denotes no. of singlets.

Total no. of singlets: 59.

One of the first signs that the club was emerging from an almost seventy years solid, if unspectacular stint, came in 1969 when with Paddy Treacy captain, St. Michael's dominated Irish rowing to such an extent that up to forty regatta race wins were recorded, a feat that remains unequalled in Munster since. In 1970, with Ted Phayer at the helm, some important senior wins were attained, and the foundations were being slowly laid for what was the undoubtedly the finest rowing epoch the city has seen in 120 years history of local rowing.

Around that time, a highly motivated young man, Dermot Henihan, amongst others, had dreams of making St. Michael's great. Having attended international coaching sessions on the Continent, Dermot returned and shared the newly acquired acumen with his coaches, and applied them to an enthusiastic bunch of young oarsmen. This was to set the club on a course which has been an ongoing story of success ever since.

Shape

The shape of things to



John Dalton, St. Michael's, the first Limerick man to win five championships of Ireland medals.

CHAMPIONSHIP WINNERS

Niall Hogan (2), Niall Deloughrey (4), Dermot Woodhouse, Derek Daly (2), Barry Smith, Austin Leddin, Phillip Hackett (2), Pat Leahy (2), Paul O'Driscoll, Declan Hartnett, John Hayden, Richard O'Brien, Larry Sherin (2), Jim Aherne, Declan Higgins, Dan Sheehan, Neil Dennehy, Pat Rogan, Mark Murphy, Seamus Frahill, Damien Masterson, Rory Hickey, John Cumiskey, Tom Larkin (4), Donal Hanrahan (3), John Dalton (5), Brendan Murphy (3), John Madden (4), Eamon Ryan (2), Liam O'Neill, Damien Hickey (2), Eoin Kearney, John Callinan (2), John Goodwin, Phillip Hayden, Joe Keane.

() Denotes no. of championships.



Justin Sherin... coach to the great junior squads of the past few seasons.

TRAINING

St. Michael's doors at O'Callaghan Strand are always open to aspiring oarsmen and the following are the times for training:

Elite/Intermediate: Monday, Wednesday and Thursday at 6.30 p.m.

Novices Tuesday, Thursday and Friday at 7 p.m.

Junior under 18, 17, 16 and 15: Tuesday, Thursday and Friday at 5 p.m.



Dermot Henihan... one of the architects of recent St. Michael's achievements.

come came in 1978 when Damien Masterson became the first oarsman rowing locally to gain an Irish singlet.

This came in the home international which saw Damien winning the junior A sculls.

The same year a splendid Junior B Eight went undefeated and the following season, the crew, stroked by Niall Hogan, won the club's first Irish championship at Coleraine, the Junior A Eights. There was many a tear shed that week-end by older members who had waited a life time for such a moment.

St. Michael's were now on song, and with the nucleus of this crew won the Intermediate Eights Championship (formerly junior) at Innisca, It had been thirty-five years since a Limerick club had won this race.

Formidable

1983 saw the formidable partnership of Larry Sherin and Niall Deloughrey winning the Elite Pairs Championship, the first time it was brought down South. The following year was the most momentous of all. At Blessington Championship Regatta Sherin and Deloughrey retained their pairs title and the intermediate eight made it a unique double. With three of the national lightweight eight (Larry Sherin, Niall Hogan, Niall Deloughrey) and Pat McInerney (sub.) that had finished in a magnificent fourth place in the World Championship at Montreal, St. Michael's were expected to make a fair bid for the elite eights championship.

The ensuing race has since entered the annals of Irish rowing folklore... in one of the greatest contests ever for this

greatest Irish prize, the locals were beaten, in racing parlance, by a nose by Neptune.

1985 saw the famous Leander trophy won at Cork for the first time by the club and also heralded the start of an era that has since made St. Michael's the dominant force in junior rowing to the detriment of such strongholds as the North and Galway.

That year saw them winning the fours title, but it was at O'Brien's Bridge last year that they really took off. Here the four retained the title but the real excitement was reserved for the eights race. Here St. Joseph's of Galway were expected to gain a record fourth in a row, but amidst euphoria that had not been witnessed in local rowing for many decades, "St. Mick's" swept to an historic victory under the expert coaching of Justin Sherin.

Tenth

The ninth national title was acquired this year at Blessington when the Junior Eight retained their title against odds on favourites Carlow, coming from well behind like true champions, to foil the Barrow men. And to make it eminently fitting, the tenth championship of the decade was annexed when Brendan Murphy and John Dalton came up trumps in the junior pairs.

Many clubs would be content to rest on their oars, as it were, after such a period of superlative achievement. Not St. Michael's, though. Plans are already afoot to maintain the momentum and make the coming decade as spectacular, even if more so, than that which just preceded us.



Niall Deloughrey (left) and Larry Sherin, dual Irish Elite Pair Champions.

Supporters Club

St. Michael's Supporters Club, founded in 1977 and still going strong. Without the financial support of this group, the club would never have reached the heights that it did in the past decade. During this era, the Supporters Club have purchased no less than three eights, one coxed four, one coxless pair, one speedboat and engine, 26 oars, one rowing ergometer, and gave financial support to the club's domestic and international rowing. It has been reckoned that this support over the years was worth in the region of £47,000.

The Supporters Club members are always on the lookout seeking new people and new ideas. Anyone who thinks they could lend assistance should come along to an open meeting in Cruise's Hotel on Thursday, Oct. 15, at 8.30 p.m. All past members, members, parents and friends are welcome to attend.

INTERNATIONAL WINS

Junior Sculls: 1978, Wales.

Elite 2: 1983 Scotland, Mens 8 and Junior A 8: 1985, Nottingham. Lightweight 8, 1986, Amsterdam.

Junior A 8: 1986: Scotland.

Junior A 8: 1987, Wales.



The first St. Michael's crew to win abroad... Nottingham 1983.

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1987 champions... St. Michael's Junior Eight, winners of the Irish title. From left: Brendan Murphy (stk.), John Dalton, Damien Hickey, Joe Keane, Tom Larkin (cox), Phillip Hayden, Brian McInerney (sub.), John Madden, John Callinan, Justin Sherin (coach). Missing from pic. was John Goodwin.



Intermediate Eights champions of 1984 pictured with admirers. Missing from photo was Damien Masterson.



Junior Eights And Fours Champions of Ireland, 1986, at O'Brien's Bridge. Front Row, from left: Damien Hickey, John Callinan, Tom Larkin (cox), Liam O'Neill and Brendan Murphy. Standing, from left: Dermot Henihan, vice-president; Ted Phayer, president; Donal Hanrahan (stroke), John Madden, Eamon Ryan, John Dalton, Austin Leddin (captain), and Justin Sherin (coach).

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