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## Limerick All Ireland Hurling Finalists 2007

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### Limerick ready to tame the Cats

by John O'Shaughnessy

LIMERICK hurlers will enter the history books this Sunday when they become the first local team in any code to parade their skills in front of a 'live' audience of 83,000.

Their All-Ireland final against Kilkenny, at Croke Park, will be beamed back home to a giant screen at the corner of O'Connell Street/Roches Street, where upwards of 15,000 are expected to converge and hopefully, party into the wee hours.

It is estimated that over one million people will tune in to their TV sets nationwide, while the game will also be viewed by exiles in several countries.

"We just couldn't buy that kind of exposure", said county board secretary James Hartigan, expressing confidence that Limerick city will again be centre stage on Monday evening, "when we return with the McCarthy Cup".

Green and white are very much the dominant colours throughout city and county and as fans approach the metropolis at the weekend, they cannot but observe that Tommy Moran of the Red Cow Hotel, and former county team sponsor, has not forgotten his roots.

Continued on page 4.

**weather**



**WARMER** weather ahead as cloud clears and temperatures rise by a couple of degrees. Looking good for Sunday.

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## Editorial

### Limerick pride

SUNDAY, September 2, is the day all Limerick is waiting for with baited breath and thumping hearts.

All this week, the green and white has been flapping throughout the city in the gentle summer breeze but come Sunday, thousands of those flags will be hoisted on high, waving vigorously and triumphantly in recognition of this gallant Limerick team's dogged, determined and dynamic progress to Croke Park.

"This team has character", is one of the finest accolades paid to our All Ireland hurling contestants. And the fact that it comes from their manager, the man, who with their trainer, Dave Moriarty has lifted the team to their full potential, make it all the more insightful and relevant.

While this summer will go down in history for the damper its unsporting weather imposed on the nation, the mood in Limerick for the past couple of months has been charged with uplifting excitement. We are, after all, on the road to Croke Park to do battle with Kilkenny and bring back to Limerick the long sought title of All Ireland champions.

While they have given us every good reason to believe that they can skillfully and sportingly scoop victory on the day, it has to be said that a match is a match and the vagaries of luck can play their own capricious part in favouring one side over another. What we are all expecting from this gutsy Limerick team is their best shot - their best in this case, being an adrenaline-fuelled, mentally focused, self-believing squad that with every clash of the ash will drive each other on towards victory. This team has character - that character will be there to spur them on, should they falter or fall behind. It will unfurl as forcefully as the supporters cheers will drive them on to victory.

## In brief

### Slow take-up on Aer Lingus seats

By John O'Shaughnessy

AER Lingus has already hit turbulence on its Belfast-Heathrow service.

According to a report in Wednesday's Irish Examiner, Aer Lingus has sold a mere 34 of its 8,352 seats available for the first eight days of its new service.

In contrast, it has disposed of 757 seats for the last eight days of its Shannon-Heathrow flights next January. They will commence operations in Belfast from January 14.

There are six flights scheduled to carry 174 passengers each between Belfast and Heathrow every day when the new flights come into effect.

According to figures obtained by the Irish Examiner, on the second day of the route starting only one seat has been bought. The biggest daily take-up so far is on Jan 17, when there are eight seats booked.

# Limerick ready to tame the Cats

Continued from page 1.

Hotel and guest house bedrooms in Dublin have been snapped up, many at exorbitant overnight rates, and every mode of transport has been availed of.

With all due respects to Kilkenny, going for their 30th All-Ireland title, all other 31 counties will be rootin' for the Shannonsiders, stuck on seven crowns since they were last successful in 1973.

If Limerick are looking for an omen, it is that four of them were won at the expense of Kilkenny, having suffered just one loss, in 1974.

Manager Richie Bennis and nephew Gary Kirby, have transformed Limerick's fortunes inside nine months. When this writer interviewed Kirby on RLO last year, he said he would sit by for a couple of years before throwing his hat into management with the county team.

Within weeks, Joe McKenna stood down and Kirby, together with Bennis, offered to fill the gap. The rest is history.

They have assembled an excellent squad of players and restored pride in the jersey.

Here, one must not forget that the foundation was laid five years ago by Dave Keane, Dave Punch and John Meskell who, with the bulk of the current panel, brought three All-Ireland under 21 titles to the county.

Kirby and Bennis have introduced a new style of management, throwing doors open to all at the end of each game.

The latter has been in the wars for his sideline antics, which, if not in keeping with the official textook, has endeared him to those who yearn for days of old when emotions were not bottled up inside.

Limerick will stay in a secret hide-away on Saturday, and after the game will head towards the Red Cow, where all 1,000 function tickets have been sold.

Kilkenny are overwhelming favourites at 4/1, with the Shannonsiders available at a very generous 10/3.

There are odds of 16/1 for Limerick to score first, lead at half time and again at full-time.

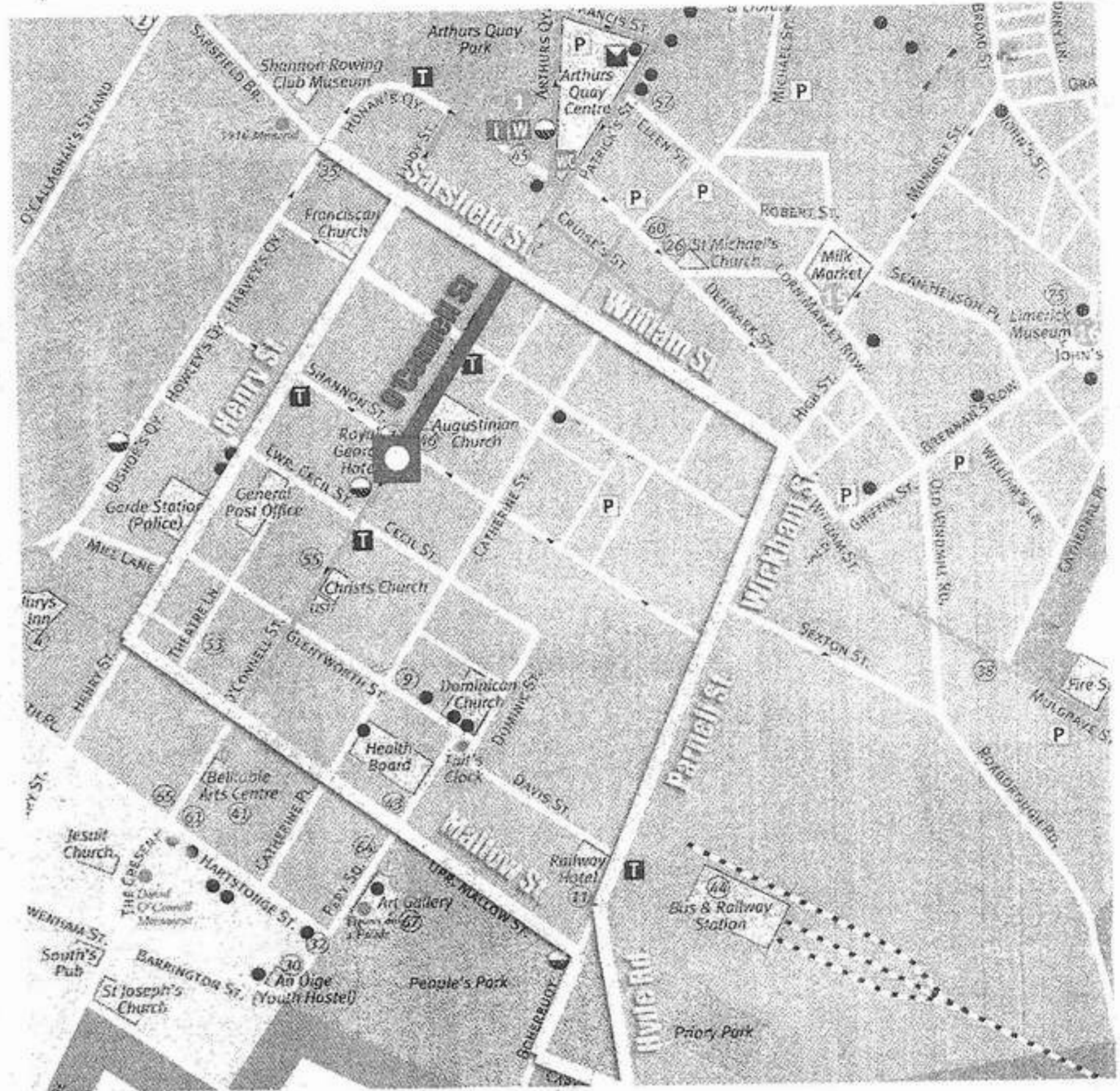
The vast majority of the pundits

have opted for Kilkenny, but Limerick will take comfort in that it was no different when they clashed with Waterford in the semi-finals.

Should Limerick deliver on the day-and there is local confidence that they will oblige - the likelihood is that Sunderland director Charlie

Chawke, will have them as his guests for an upcoming Premiership game at The Stadium of Light, as first hinted in the Limerick Post.

## BIG SCREEN TRAFFIC RESTRICTIONS



**Diverted Traffic Route** **O'Connell St. Closed**  
**Position of Big Screen** **Access to O'Connell St. from William St and Thomas St. ONLY**

Traffic restrictions will be put in place in Limerick city centre on this Sunday for the live telecast of the All-Ireland final on the big screen at the corner of Roches Street/O'Connell Street, and again on Monday evening for the hurling team's return from Dublin. Consult map.

## Traffic plans for big screen final

By Mary Earls

O'CONNELL Street is to be closed to traffic from the junction with William Street to the Roche's Street junction from 6am this Sunday, in preparation for the big screen which is due to show the All Ireland final between Limerick and Kilkenny live.

Traffic will be allowed up Sarsfield Street, William Street, Parnell Street, Mallow Street and Henry Street.

The public can access the big screen on O'Connell Street from the William Street and Thomas Street junctions from 1pm on Sunday. There will be no access from Bedford Row or Roche's Street.

Access for disabled people will be catered for at a specially designated area by the Roche's Street junction, near The Chicken Hut.

The consumption of alcoholic beverages will not be permitted at the event and any alcohol found will be confis-

cated.

A fun day out for all the family, the big screen viewing of the game will be preceded by highlights of Limerick's last All Ireland win in '73, and good

luck wishes by local personalities such as Jerry Flannery, Pat Shortt, Celia Holman-Lee and Ger O'Rourke will be relayed.

The homecoming party for the

Limerick team will take place on Monday, whether they win or lose. Throwing-in at 7pm, at the stage where the big screen is situated, the same traffic restrictions will apply.

### Shannon loses Minsk service

BELAVIA, the Belarusian Airline, has confirmed suspension of its weekly winter service between Minsk and Shannon, commencing from October 25.

Citing the poor performance of the route, coupled with rising operational costs for pulling the service, the airline said it will not make a final decision on their summer services to Shannon until early in the near year.

### Pallaskenry crash victim named

A MAN who died in a road traffic accident at Cowpark, Kilcoman, on Tuesday morning, has been named as 32-year-old Trevor McCarthy.

The fatal road traffic collision occurred at approximately 1am on the N69. Mr McCarthy, the car's only occupant, was removed from the scene and brought to the Mid Western Regional Hospital where he died on Tuesday afternoon as a result of his injuries.

The cause of the accident is still under investigation by gardai at Pallaskenry.

### Limerick prisoners protest

AROUND 50 prisoners took part in a sit down protest in the yard of Limerick Prison on Tuesday afternoon in what is believed to have been against new drug measures in the prison. It is believed that the inmates were protesting against the introduction of a sniffer dog who is being employed in the prison's visiting area and is proving valuable in the war against drugs inside prison walls. However, prisoners are also reported to be unhappy with sanctions imposed by the prison governor on those caught bringing in drugs.

The sit down protest started just after 4pm and lasted about 30 minutes. Nobody was injured and the prisoners returned to their cells soon afterwards.

# Limerick's All Stars

WIN lose or draw this Sunday, some Limerick hurlers will be rewarded with one of the greatest awards they can receive.

The All Stars is a team picked to represent the best 15 hurlers and footballers in any given year. Limerick, with their spot in the final will be guaranteed around five gongs. Who gets them is anyone's idea. Whoever it is though will be joining an illustrious bunch of former Limerick greats. Below are Limerick's previous winners and the years they won the awards.

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| 1966 - Bernie Hartigan<br>Kevin Long                               | 1991 - Gary Kirby  | 1995 - Gary Kirby   |
| 1971 - Pat Hartigan<br>Eamon Cregan                                | 1992 - Tommy Quaid<br>Ciaran Carey   | 1996 - Joe Quaid<br>Ciaran Carey<br>Mark Foley<br>Mike Houlihan<br>Gary Kirby |
| 1972 - Pat Hartigan<br>Eamon Cregan                                | 1994 - Joe Quaid<br>Dave Clarke<br>Ciaran Carey<br>Mike Houlihan<br>Gary Kirby<br>Damien Quigley | 2001 - Mark Foley   |
| 1973 - Pat Hartigan<br>Sean Foley<br>Richie Bennis<br>Eamon Grimes |  |   |
| 1974 - Pat Hartigan<br>Joe McKenna                                 |  |   |
| 1975 - Pat Hartigan<br>Joe McKenna<br>Eamon Grimes                 |  |   |
| 1978 - Joe McKenna   |  |   |
| 1979 - Joe McKenna   |  |   |
| 1980 - Leonard Enright<br>Joe McKenna<br>Eamon Cregan              |  |   |
| 1981 - Leonard Enright<br>Liam O Donoghue<br>Joe McKenna           |  |   |
| 1983 - Leonard Enright   |  |   |
| 1984 - Paudie Fitzmaurice<br>Paddy Kelly                           |  |   |



Former Limerick captain Ciaran Carey and Martin Storey, Wexford captain, are pictured prior to the 1996 final.

## Doon to Croke park

It's a long way from Doon to Croke Park, but there will be fewer parishes represented in a more diverse way than this cross border parish on Sunday. There are two GAA clubs in the parish, Doon in county Limerick and Glengar a junior club in county Tipperary. Sunday September 2, All Ireland hurling final day, three lads from the parish will be involved in Croke Park on three different teams. Darragh Stapleton of Kilmoylan, Doon, plays in the mini sevens games sponsored by the I.N.T.O. and the GAA. Thomas Treacy of Glengar, Doon, is a member of the Tipperary minor hurling panel. He played against Clare in the first round of the Munster Championship and Michael Fitzgerald of Gurtavalla, Doon, is member of the Limerick Senior hurling team. All three are also ex pupils of Doon C.B.S. primary school. Interesting also is that Micheal Fitzgerald played in the mini sevens in Croke Park ten years ago in 1997, Tom Treacy played in the mini sevens in Croke Park in 2002 and Darragh Stapleton will play this year 2007. Now that's consistency.

## KIERAN O'DONNELL TD Limerick East Constituency



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# Rain fell in torrents-followed in equal measure by tears of joy

Harry Greensmyth recalls a great day of 34 years ago

THE record of Limerick wins over Kilkenny in All Ireland senior hurling finals is quite impressive, four in all and a fifth on the horizon. On Sunday, both counties will be striving to take the McCarthy Cup back to Shannonside or Noreside.

The last time that Limerick enjoyed success over one of the nation's greatest hurling counties was in 1973, when Eamonn Grimes captained the victorious men in green.

All - In trains were in vogue at that time and C.I.E. laid on meals and, of course, booking of seats was at a Railway Station. There was huge excitement in Limerick on the Saturday preceding the final and again on the Sunday, as hundreds of fans with green colours made the city and county a scene a sight to match the excitement of the occasion.

The Mayor of Limerick Mick Lipper, a train driver by profession, was at the controls as the train left Limerick station with the team and officers. Croke Park was the destination on the Sunday and the same for the supporters starved of success going back to 1940, when Kilkenny tasted defeat to Limerick and it's the same next week when Limerick will be chasing a first in 34 years.

In 1973, Limerick fans has a taste of the famed Park in the May national hurling league final against Wexford. They suffered a nine-point defeat and once more, it was doom and gloom for local hurling.

To make matters worse there was disagreement regarding a trainer, this problem eventually left to Dick Stokes, Jim Quaid of Feohanagh, Denis Barrett of Bruff and Sean Cunningham of Doon. This quartet decided to give the task of trainer to Mick Cregan, an Army officer and a son of Ned Cregan, a star of Limerick hurling in the 1930's.

Jackie Power was the team coach during this period and he did a great job of work with Mick Cregan in cementing a team to challenge for national honours.

The full backline that did duty against Wexford was more or less discarded for the championship with Willie Moore reverting from full forward to corner back and Pat Hartigan at full back, a position that he made his own for many more seasons.

Then there was the moving of Ned Rea from full back to full forward. This was a very significant change as it succeeded in putting that bit of extra bite into the last line of attack, something that was missing until he wore the number 14 in the Munster final at Thurles against Tipperary.

Eamonn Cregan was centre forward against Clare in the opening round of the Munster championship - left full forward against Tipperary in the provincial final and back again to centre forward in the All Ireland semi final in Ennis, against London.

His selection at centre back was the talk of the hurling world in the All-Ireland final against Kilkenny. It proved to be the move of the year.

Richie Bennis, an ice cool operator, sent over the winning point in the Munster final of 1973. Some Tipperary folk argued that the sliothar skimmed the post on the outside, but the umpire with the responsibility of raising the white flag, did just that to send Limerick supporters into a frenzy. The next outing against London was a rather tame encounter as they won 1-15 to 0-7.

Sunday 2, the date of the final, was to be Kilkenny's day even if they were without the injured Eddie Keher and other leading players. An officer of the Kilkenny county board expressed fears that his county would not overcome this adversity and how right he was. But in fairness, it must be stated that



Limerick would beat any team on that wet Sunday, regardless of who were playing.

The clouds burst open a few hours before the game. Fans of both teams made no delay in buying plastic macs on sale by people on the road to Croke Park. It deluged down all through the match and when Limerick led at half time 0-12 to 1-7, the rains were on the back burner. Limerick fans were anticipating the best.

A little over a half an hour later the President of Ireland was presenting Eamonn Grimes with the Liam McCarthy Cup and Limerick were champions.

There was no stopping Limerick that day. Mossy Dowling scored a vital goal and a point, Richie Bennis scored 0-10, Eamonn Grimes 0-4, Frankie Nolan and Ned Rea 0-2, Joe McKenna and Bernie Hartigan 0-1 each.

The team was - Seamus Horgan from famed Tournafulla, Willie Moore from Doon in the east, Pat Hartigan, a hurling supremo, South Liberties, Jim O' Brien from Bruree, Phil Bennis, later to manage Limerick to minor and under 21 All Irelands, Eamonn Cregan, a star defender in this match, Sean Foley a gem at wing back, Richie Bennis the man at the helm this year, Eamonn Grimes the leader who led by example, Bernie Hartigan a former South Liberties under-age great, now representing Old Christians, Mossie Dowling, from the banks of Lubagh, Liam O' Donoghue, Mungret, the baby of the team at the age of 21, Frankie Nolan, a wily forward from Patrickswell, Ned Rea who learned his hurling where St. Eimhin once ruled, Joe McKenna from Shinrone and Tom Ryan a well known hurling man from Ballybrown came on as a substitute.

The new champion's returned to Limerick to a welcome yet to be repeated. First stop was Castleconnell, the hallowed home of Limerick hurling since the days of Tyler Mackey - in the Dublin Road to the cheering of thousands and to Charlotte Quay for the last welcome for that never to be forgotten week - end.

A civic reception from the Mayor of Limerick and the Corporation followed. The team were wined and dined at every GAA function in the county as the All-Ireland was talked of at every opportunity and the six goals that passed into the Tipperary net was also remembered with pride.

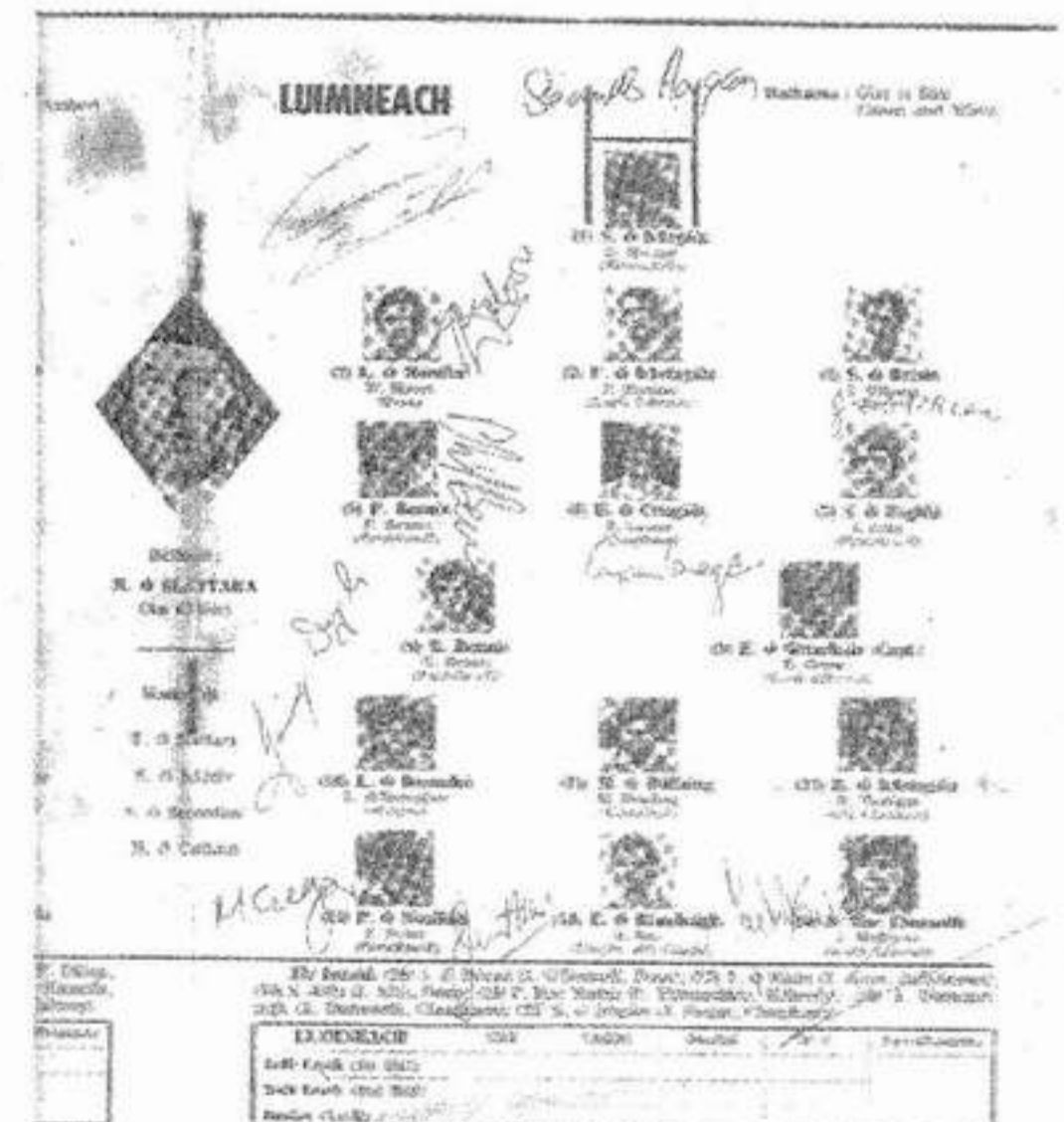
Out around Ballysheedy, the homeland of Eamonn Grimes, there was a royal welcome for Liam McCarthy.

The famous hurling trophy was in the heartland of the Ryans of the Strame a famous hurling family that lived across the road from the Grimes

family - South Liberties led Limerick to win an All Ireland in Croke Park and all of Donoughmore, Knockea and Roxboro, were proud of the contribution that Grimes, Hartigan and McKenna had made to this win as were all of the panel of players that hurled themselves into hurling lore.

At the heart of these celebrations was J P McManus, the chairman of South Liberties - he was the youngest chairman to hold such a position and he lived quite near Eamonn Grimes, before the turn for Bushyisland.

A new generation of players has emerged to equal the men of 1973. We are all confident that they will deliver and end another long spell in the hurling wilderness.



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# Five All-Ireland and holy medals sold for one shilling

By Harry Greensmyth

THE first of Limerick's seven All Ireland hurling titles was won in 1898 for the 1897 championship. Played in Tipperary town, Limerick, represented by a Kilfinane Emmetts selection, defeated Tullaroan of Kilkenny 3-4 to 2-4.

LIMERICK had the better of Clare at Greenpark Racecourse in the opening round of the Munster championship and Cork suffered the same fate in the provincial final at Tipperary, losing 4-9 to 1-6 in the final of the 1897 series.

Limerick were captained by Denis Grimes of Kilfinane. Sean Og Hanly, another great Kilfinane man, was one of the greatest hurlers of this era and writer P.D. Medigan. In his greatest team of his time, selected Sean Og as full back. Sean Og is now resting in Kensal Green cemetery in London. Maurice and Paddy Flynn and Mick and Jim Finn, were the first Limerick brothers to win an All Ireland. Jim Flood died in 1918, victim of the black flu, and his daughter Catherine died the same day, and as in an effort to curtail the disease both were buried on the day they died.

There is a story around the Kilfinane district that an auction of household goods included a basket of holy medals, buttons, studs and five All Ireland medals. The lot was purchased for one shilling and if this story is true, there are five 1897 medals somewhere.

Kilfinane, Cappamore, Caherline, Croom and Ballingarry had players on the team, which wore ankle guards. Hurleys were home made and the journey to the final in Tipperary was by train or horse trap. Jim Flood went to two training sessions in Kilfinane prior to the final on a neighbour's horse. This was the preparation for



this All Ireland decider.

Limerick team - Denis Grimes, James Sean Og Hanly, Maurice and Paddy Flynn, Mick and Jim Finn, Paddy Long O' Brien, Tom Goatee Brazill, Mick Downes all of Kilfinane, Sean Condon, John Hynes, Pat Butler, Pat Mulcahy all of Cappamore, Jim Reidy, Pat Cathrell of Ballingarry, Jim Flood of Caherline and Paddy Buskin of Croom.

Jack Mulcahy of Cappamore, may have played some part in this final, if so, two more sets of brothers must be named.

Title number two was won in Waterford in 1919, for the 1918 crown. Wexford conceded the original fixture in 1918 due to a severe form of the flu in the county, but Limerick refused a walk over and in January of 1919, the sides crossed camans. It was a facile win for Limerick 9-5 to 1-3. Willie Hough was the winning captain. The team was Mick Murphy, Young Irelands; Mick Rochford, Cloughaun; Paddy Kennedy, Pallas; Paddy McInerney, Young Irelands; Jack Keane, Castleconnell; Willie Hough, Newcastlewest; Denny Lanigan, Young Irelands; Dan Troy, Cloughaun; Jimmy

Humphries, Murroe; Dick Ryan, Pallas; Willie Gleeson, Fedamore; Willie Ryan, Cappamore; Tom McGrath, Cloughaun; Bob McConkey, Young Irelands; Paddy Barry, Boher.

The fight for Independence and the Civil War and objections, delayed the playing of the 1912 final until March 1923 with the McCarthy Cup the prize for the first time. Limerick beat Dublin 8-5 to 2-2 and Bob McConkey claimed the cup from Dan McCarthy, President of the GAA.

Back to Croke Park for the 1934 final. Dublin were again the opposition and a draw was the outcome. For the replay, Paddy Scanlon was ill and Bob McConkey was injured. Tommy Shinnery and Jacky O'Connell replaced them. Title four was won on a scoreline of 5-2 to 2-6.

Limerick's golden age was at its peak when the county crossed camans for the 1936 decider. Because of the American tour by Limerick in 1936, they were given a place in the Munster final against Tipperary winning 8-5 to 4-6. Mick Mackey scored 4-6 in this game.

Kilkenny provided the opposition before 51,235 people at Croke Park. The final score was 5-6 to 1-5. Mick Mackey captained the team.

Perhaps 1940 was the year in which Limerick proved to be the team of the era. They again faced Kilkenny at Croke Park and triumphed 3-7 to 1-7. This win preceded the long wait until 1973, and even a longer wait to the 2007 final.

The 1940 team - Paddy Scanlan, Jim McCarthy, Mick Hickey, Mick Kennedy, Tommy Cooke, Paddy Clohessy, Peter Gregan, Timmy Ryan, Jim Roche, John Mackey, Mick Mackey, Dick Stokes, Ned Chawke, Paddy McMahon, Jackie Power. Subs. Tony Herbert, Dave Hurley, Mick McCarthy, Dan Givens, Paddy Mackey and Paddy Kelly.

Tony Herbert and Tommy Cooke are the only surviving members of the 1940 team. Tommy Cooke won a Munster junior hurling and football medal in 1939.

The seventh crown of 1973 is remembered by a lot of Limerick people, but on Sunday next a new generation will be hoping to see them rise to the top. A Limerick win looks on the cards.



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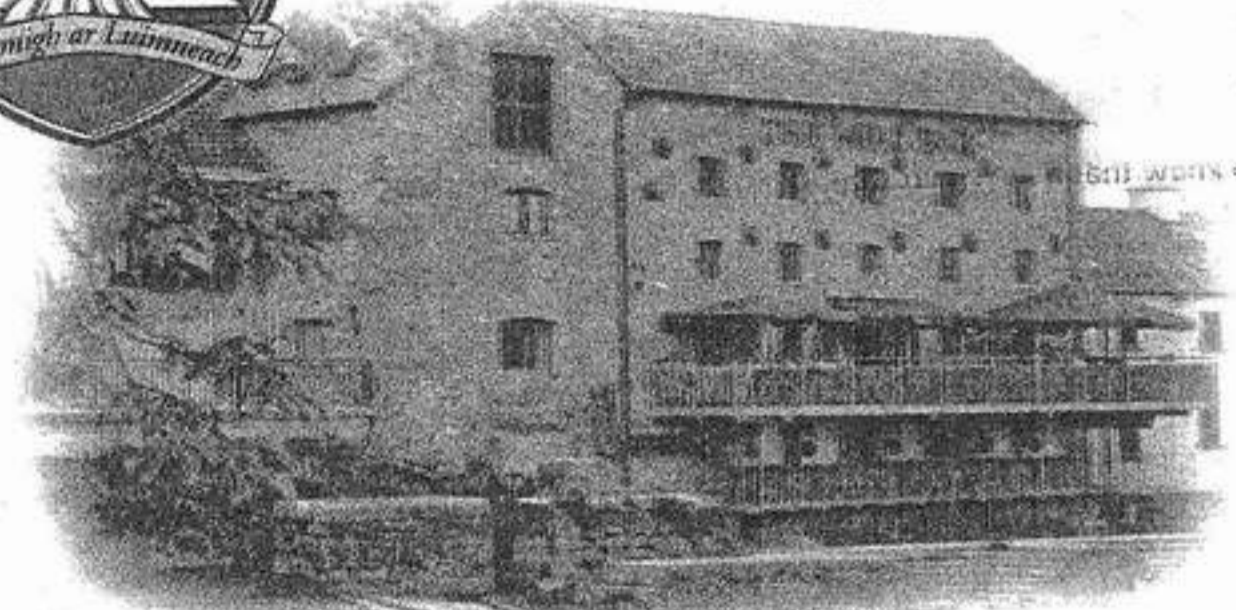


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