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YOUR CITY YOUR PAPER

WEATHER

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TODAY
SUNSHINE PERSISTS
WITH SOME CLOUDY
SPELLS AND
TEMPERATURES OF 21C

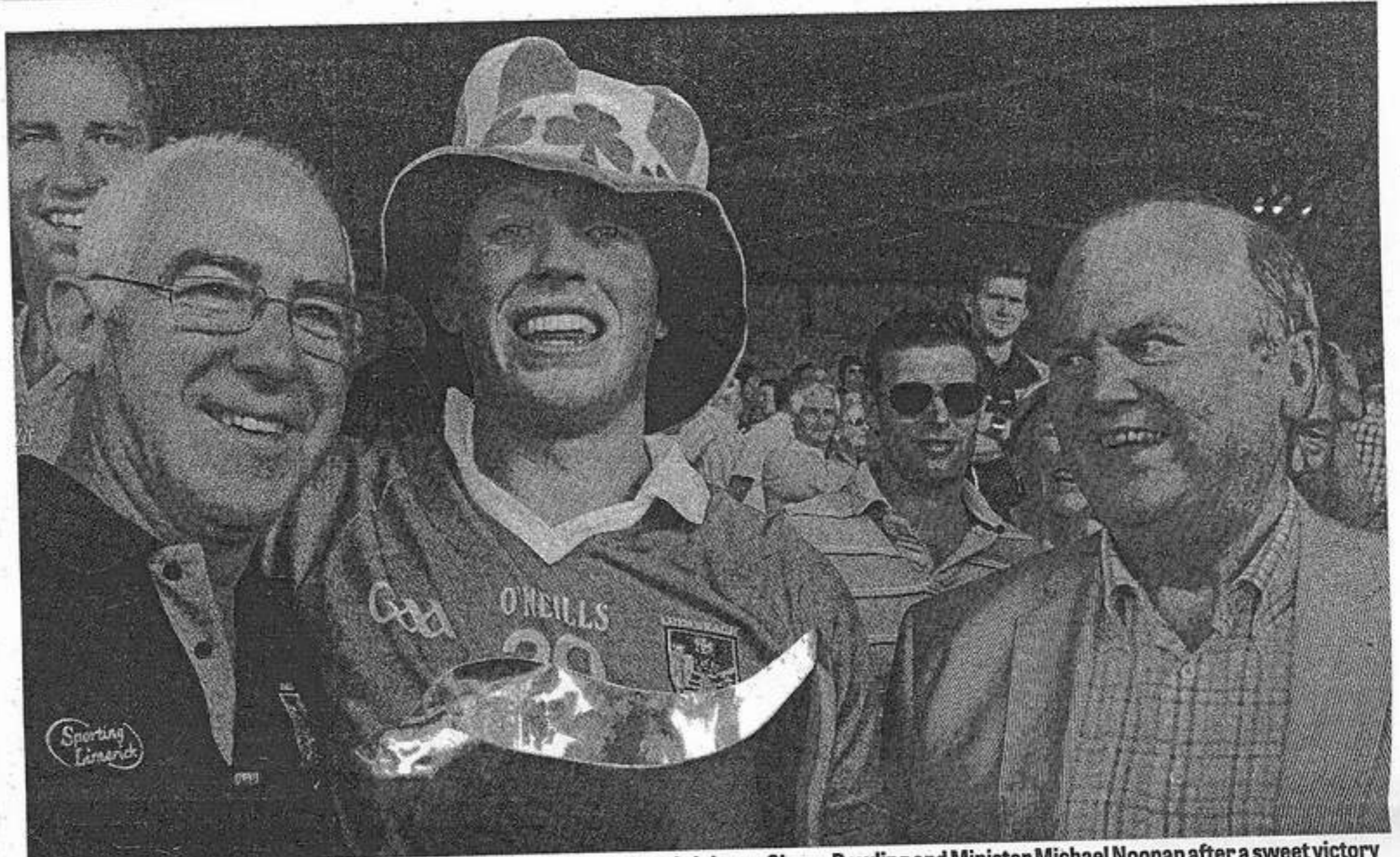
TOMORROW
CLEAR AND SUNNY
TO START WITH A
POSSIBILITY OF
SHOWERS LATER

WEDNESDAY
SUNNY SPELLS AND
SHOWERS WITH
TEMPERATURE IN THE
LOW TWENTIES

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PARTY TIME: PUBS PACKED OUT AS LIMERICK FANS REJOICE



Na Piarasigh chairman Timmy O'Connor celebrates with his overjoyed clubman Shane Dowling and Minister Michael Noonan after a sweet victory

Joy unconfined as the city celebrates

NICK RABBITTS
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LIMERICK enjoyed the mother of all parties last night, as the county's hurlers were crowned Munster champions.

Pubs across the city and county came alive with songs and revelry, as celebrations went on into the small hours.

For the first time since 1996, Limerick became Munster hurling champions, seeing off Cork by 0-24 to 0-15.

And the minor team also remains firmly in the hunt for All Ireland glory after coming from eight points down to rescue a thrilling 2-19 to 2-19 draw with Waterford in the dying minutes. They will replay on Tuesday week, with a neutral venue yet to be confirmed.

In the senior game, the dismissal of Cork full-for-

ward Pa Horgan just before the break gave Limerick a numerical advantage, but sharper shooting in the second half prompted an outpouring of emotion at a packed Gaelic Grounds.

As members of the 42,730-strong crowd made their way back into town, dreams were in the air of All-Ireland glory.

The Treaty men will first have to get through a tough semi-final at Croke Park on August 18 - but after yesterday's events, the belief is that anything is possible.

Caherdavin man John Giltenan, who travelled from London to watch the game said: "I would not want to get too cocky, but at the same time, it is a very realistic possibility."

Mayor Kathleen Leddin - who celebrated Limerick's win with "four cups of tea" - said one of her sons is already trying to book a ticket for the All-Ireland final.

"They have come so far, and are a very dedicated team, and I feel they can go all the way," she said.

The mayor, who lives just metres away from Páirc na nGael, added she is "absolutely elated".

She said: "My voice is still very scratchy, and my ears are out of action from all the noise in the stands. The team deserve it, because they have worked extremely hard under trying circumstances."

Sean Lally, manager of the Strand Hotel, said that judging by the atmosphere, it feels like Limerick are already All-Ireland champions.

"Everything is going right for Limerick - the place is hopping. The buzz and vibe is unbelievable. It is like Limerick has just won an All-Ireland! It is a brilliant result, great for the city, and great for the region," he said.

Stephen McDonagh, one of the members of Limerick's

last Munster-winning team in 1996, enjoyed a quiet celebration to "bask in the glory of what has been achieved."

"There have been a lot of disappointing days over the last 17 years. It was extra special the match was on in Limerick. It is a fantastic feeling," he said.

It is likely there will be a great many sore heads in Limerick this morning. But after 17 years of Munster Senior Hurling pain, it is worth it.

See LeaderSport pages 26-32 for full coverage of both the senior and minor matches. See also the weekend Leader for more extensive coverage.

WHAT DID YOU GET UP TO?

+ HOW DID YOU CELEBRATE OUR MOMENTOUS MUNSTER FINAL VICTORY? GET IN TOUCH!

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GAA - MUNSTER MINOR HURLING CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL

Ryan says Limerick can pick it up a level

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LIMERICK hurling manager, Brian Ryan insisted he was disappointed his side hadn't manage to secure a dramatic last gasp victory over Waterford in their hugely entertaining provincial final at the Gaelic Grounds yesterday. Limerick - who had been eight points down with 10 minutes remaining - produced a storming late comeback to send the thrilling decider to a replay. That game will go ahead on Tuesday, July 23 at a neutral venue, yet to be confirmed.

Ryan remains confident Limerick can up their performance another level for next week's replay.

Limerick manager Brian Ryan said: "I am disappointed not to have won the game. We had two chances in the last 30 seconds to win the game. We will take what we get at this stage.

"This is Waterford's fourth game in this year's Munster championship and they had extra time. It stood to them.

"They are an experienced outfit. We don't have as much experience. This is our second championship game. Waterford hit the ground running with the benefit of those matches.

"It took our lads some time to get to the pace of the game. We really got into it only in the last 20 minutes.

"There is great character in those young men.

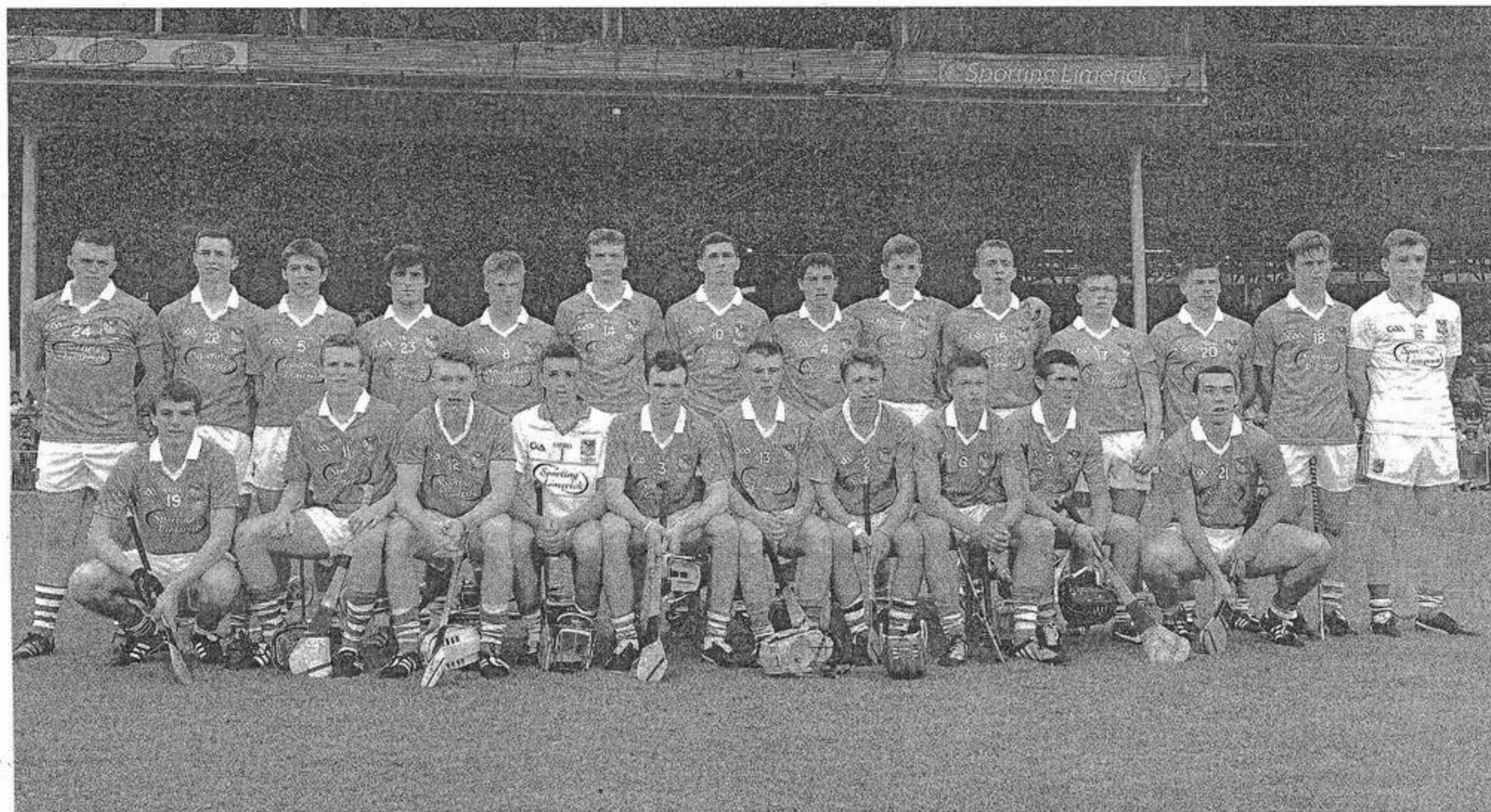
"We have a strong group of players and they all put their name in the hat for selection. That is the way to have it.

"This is a young team. We have seven guys under-17 years of age. The physicality of the Waterford guys was evident today. It is a learning curve for us and we are on the upward arc of that curve.

"I am happy there is another notch in us. A lot of players didn't play up to their full potential.

"It's back to the training ground for us now. We need to cut out our mistakes.

"It was a big occasion for young fellas. They performed admirably given the circumstances."



The Limerick minor hurling panel before their Munster final with Waterford in the Gaelic Grounds. Replay details will be announced today by the Munster Council

LIMERICK ROAR BACK TO DRAW

LIMERICK 2-19

WATERFORD 2-19

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LIMERICK minor hurlers' Munster odyssey is set to continue after the Shannonsiders produced a storming comeback to earn a thrilling draw with Waterford in their final shoot-out at the Gaelic Grounds yesterday. Substitute Tom Morrissey netted a brilliant goal in the final minute of normal time to earn an unlikely replay for Limerick in this high-scoring encounter with a fancied Deise side.

Limerick, seeking their first provincial title at this level since 1984, looked all set to endure further heart-

break when trailing by eight points, 2-18 to 0-16, with a little over 10 minutes remaining.

However, the Shannonsiders, cheered on by the large home support, were handed a lifeline in the 56th minute when top scorer Ronan Lynch blasted a 20-metre free to the net.

Na Piarasigh clubman Lynch finished with a terrific personal haul of 1-9, while the highly impressive Cian Lynch struck over four points from play in the opening half.

The industrious Barry Nash, moved to midfield in the second half, chipped in with three fine points from play.

Limerick's Pat Ryan and Waterford's Stephen Bennett traded further points in the closing stages, before Morrissey netted the equalising score in a high octane encounter.

Limerick, who had dethroned All-Ireland champions Tipperary in the Munster semi-final, did have a couple of chances late on to sneak victory. However, those efforts drifted narrowly wide.

To be fair, it would have been very harsh on Waterford had the visitors not managed to secure a replay.

Limerick will be looking to make a quicker start to the replay than they did in yesterday's drawn encounter.

Waterford led right the final until Morrissey's equalising goal when the Ahane teenager showed admirable pace and composure to strike.

On a steaming hot day and given the lively nature of the playing surface, this was always going to be a high-scoring affair.

Things looked somewhat ominous for the home side as Waterford eased into a use-

ful 0-9 to 0-5 lead half-way through the half.

However, the excellent Cian Lynch kept Limerick well in touch, hitting over some terrific points from play.

Limerick survived a scare just four minutes before the break when Waterford were awarded a penalty.

However, a combination of Colin Ryan and Barry Nash managed to block Stephen Bennett's goal attempt.

Limerick shipped two goals in the third quarter from Stephen Bennett and Micheal Harney to fall well adrift.

However, the Shannonsiders outscored their opponents 2-3 to 0-1 in the closing 10 minutes to earn a replay.

The Munster Council are expected to announce details of the replay today (Monday) with next Tuesday, July 23, heavily mooted as the likely date.

TEAMS AND SCORERS

SCORERS: Limerick: Ronan Lynch 1-9 (0-8 frees, 0-1'65), Cian Lynch 0-4, Tom Morrissey 1-1, Barry Nash 0-3, Pat Ryan 0-2. Waterford: Patrick Curran 0-6 (0-1'65, 0-1 free), Stephen Bennett (1-2), Austin Gleeson 0-3, (0-2 frees), Micheal Harney 1-0, Colm Roche, DJ Foran (0-2) each, Shane Bennett, Conor Gleeson, Adam Farrell, Michael Kearney (0-1) each.
LIMERICK: Colin Ryan (Pallasgreen); Jamie Porter (Monaleen), Richard English (Doon), Sean Finn (Bruff); Stephen Ryan (Doon), Sean Flanagan (Feohanagh-Castlemahon), Andrew La Touche Cosgrave (Monaleen); Jamie Butler (Feohanagh-Castlemahon), Ronan Lynch; Barry Nash (South Liberties), Daragh O'Donovan (Doon), Cian Lynch (Patrickswell), Dean Coleman (Doon), David Dempsey (Na Piarasigh), Pat Ryan (Doon). Subs: Graham Whelan (Bruff) for O'Donovan (37 mins), Stephen Power (Ahane) for Flanagan (42 mins), Tom Morrissey (Ahane) for Coleman (47 mins), Michael Casey for Porter (50 mins).
WATERFORD: Gavin Power; William Hahesy, Kevin Daly (Capt), Cian Leamy; Tom Devine, Austin Gleeson, Shane Bennett; Michael Kearney, Michael Harney; Adam Farrell, Stephen Bennett, DJ Foran; Patrick Curran, Colm Roche, Conor Gleeson. Subs: Cormac Curran for Farrell (40 mins), Mark O'Brien for Gleeson (54 mins), Paul O'Connor for Harney (57 mins).
REFEREE: Fergal Horgan (Tipperary)

SPORT

GAA - MUNSTER SHC FINAL

LIMERICK PLAYER RATINGS

NICKEY QAUID 8

Somehow the ball stayed out on two occasions in the opening 20 minutes when Cork looking certain to goal. In the dying minutes of the half he caught one superb ball on the crossbar.

STEPHEN WALSH 8

Just like the Tipperary game he led from the front. Had a couple of tricky moments with Patrick Horgan in the first half but was a tower of strength in the second half with one memorable caught.

RICHIE MCCARTHY 9

Another tower of strength from McCarthy at the edge of the square. Seamus Harnedy got a few scores off him but how many times did McCarthy stand firm and clear ball, especially when the pressure came on in the first half.

TOM CONDON 8

A bit like the Tipp game had anxious moments against Jamie Coughlan at the start of the second half but once he settled normal service resumed where Condon broke tackles and clear ball to break Cork hearts.

PAUDIE O'BRIEN 8

What a point from the vice captain to open the game and settle Limerick in the opening minute. Took a blow to the head from Horgan for the sending off but continued to out-hurl Patrick Cronin, especially in the first half.

WAYNE MCNAMARA 9

The Adare man was wing back last season but now brilliant at the heart of the defence. Saw his man Cian McCarthy replead at half time and then curbed Cronin in a rejigged Cork attack in the second half.

GAVIN O'MAHONY 8

Came up against speed merchant Conor Lehane from the start but was never troubled as he deprived his marker of possession. Was a constant launch pad for attacks and a great link man when Limerick had extra man in second half.

DONAL O'GRADY 8

The captain led from the front with some great challenges to win 50-50 balls in the first half. Superb delivery into attack and in the end he played the final 10-minutes at wing back where he kept Cathal Naughton quiet.

PAUL BROWNE 8

Had a great battle with Daniel Kearney. Ran himself from defence to attack and always available for a pass. A bit wild with shooting at times but notched one lovely score in the first half.

DAVID BREEN 8

Caused all sorts of trouble to the Cork rearguard with some great solos in the first half. Fouled for a number of

frees which Declan Hannon converted. Created a goal chance with one run but his shot flashed wide.

JAMES RYAN 9

The Garryspillane man isn't a renowned scorer but ended as the top scorer from play with three fine points. A trojan amount of work at centre forward and still had time to supply passes for a number of scores.

SEAMUS HICKEY 8

The Murroe-Boher man was in defence as often as he was at wing forward. His role is the cover as much ground as possible and he did. The final ball often let him down but all was forgiven with a brilliant second half point.

SEANIE TOBIN 8

A point in either half from the corner forward is a nice return. Worked hard to drag the defence out of shape and found himself fouled for frees, which were converted by Hannon.

DECLAN HANNON 8

Played more of the game at full forward than was predicted. Crashed through for a brilliant early point in the first half. Finished with eight points, which included a memorable line ball and a fine second half point.

GRAEME MULCAHY 8

The Kilmallock man may have been quiet but for his time on the field he still hit two points and especially when the supply lines weren't brilliant in the first half in a two man full forward line.

SHANE DOWLING 9

Played the final 25-minutes and did what was asked of him with crucial scores to help open the gap on Cork. Also created a score for Declan Hannon with a perfect delivery.

CONOR ALLIS 8

Played the final 20-minutes as a fourth man across the half forward line. Won some early ball and helped to stop the Cork defence get any foothold. Picked up an ankle and will hopefully be ok for next month.

CATHAL KING 8

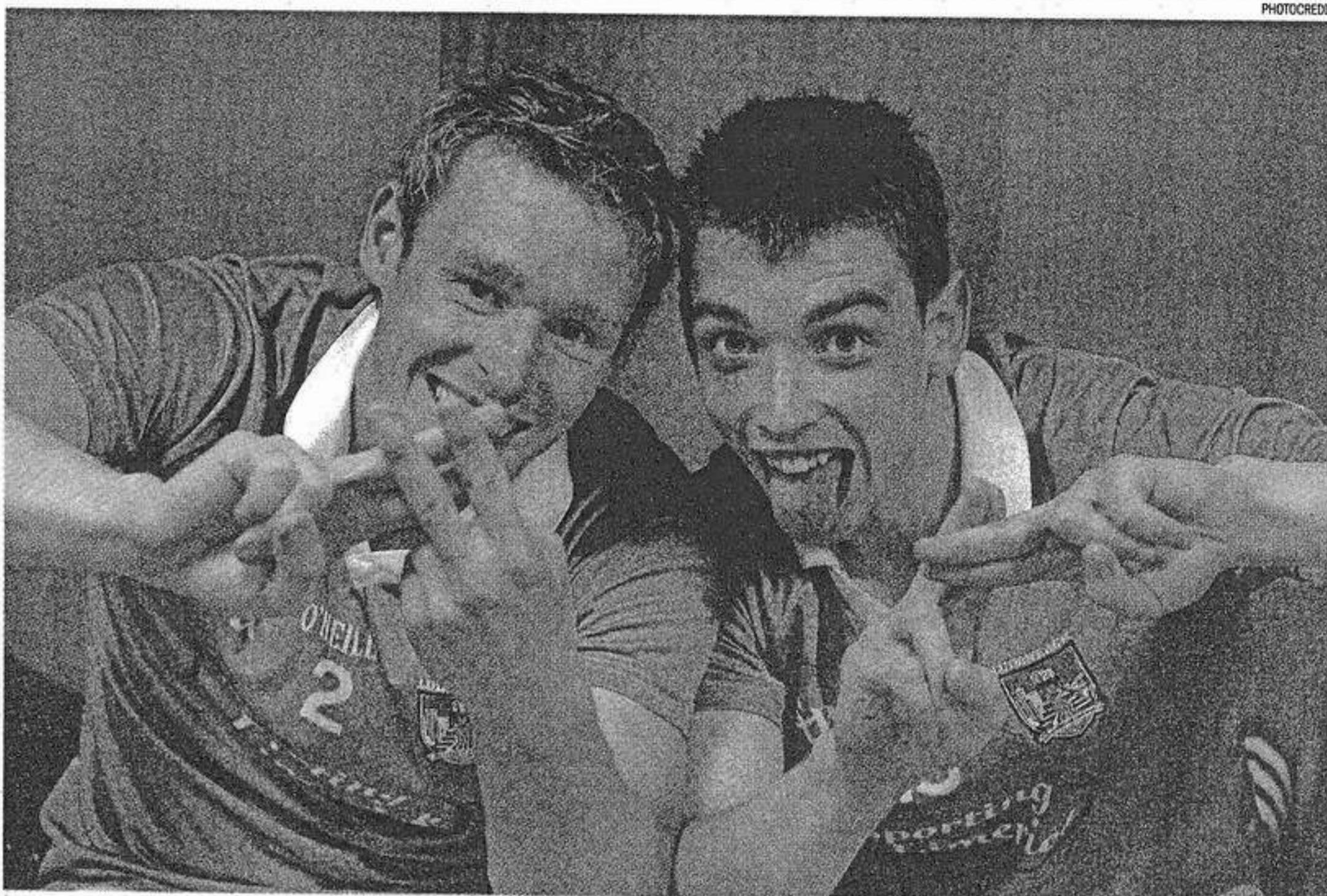
Played the final 10-minutes in midfield when Limerick's management looked for fresh legs in the middle third. One of three Na Piarasigh subs used.

CATHAL KING 9

Introduced with five minutes to play and really put the icing on the win with two of the finest scores that will be seen this season.

NIALL MORAN 8

The last of the five subs used. Made immediate impact when fetching puck out and soloing forward to fire over the final score of the game as a just reward for one of the longest serving members of the panel.



Happy days: Limerick players Stephen Walsh and Seanie Tobin celebrate in the dressing room after their Munster SHC final win over Cork

What dreams are made of, says O'Grady

"It's just what dreams are made of," beamed Limerick captain Donal O'Grady.

It was over an hour and a half since he lifted the Munster senior hurling championship cup in the Mackey Stand and still he couldn't stop smiling.

"It's sport and it's unbelievable - the hair stood on the back of my head about 10 minutes to go," he explained. "It's so hard to put it into words," he gasped.

"When we were eight up, I felt we were getting the scores at the right time, which is crucial. We got two or three and then they came back with one or two but we got one, two, three, four and I remember giving a smile to Wayne Mac that we were safe," he recalled of the final minutes.

"I couldn't believe that my father was one of the first on the field and it's about the first time that I have seen him in on the field since I started to hurl," he said with a broad smile of contentment.

"It's just great - we weren't going to leave it after us today," he stressed.

"We knew there was a big game in us and it wasn't going to be for the want of trying."

He recalled the hurt of losing April's Division 1B hurling league final to Dublin and said that pain was a motivating factor.

"I think losing the Division 1B league final was a factor - there was such hurt in that dressing room. It wasn't too long ago and that hurt was there for Tipperary and John Allen drove it home to

us about remembering that dressing room," outlined O'Grady.

"The one thing that we drove home was that we wanted to play the game and not the occasion. I thought in the first half we were under a little bit of pressure and weren't hurling that well but continued to work. I didn't realise that they hit 10 wides, which maybe shows they were dominant," he recalled.

"We kept on plugging away. I thought the Cork full back line were outstanding in the first half and I knew Graeme and Seanie didn't get much ball and a few words were said at half time and then straight away they scored and that's great character - we started the second half well and that helped us,"

said the Granagh-Ballingarry man.

"The one thing about Cork is that they are great stickmen and they will destroy you if you give them space and you can see that even against 14-men we didn't curb them until the final quarter when we got to grips with the game - we just had to tighten up and eventually we pulled away," he said.

"There was a stiff enough breeze and at half time so we were happy enough - obviously the sending off played its part but I thought there was a lot more in us.

He added: "I had a good feeling through the second half, even though we started with two sloppy frees".

"The subs that came on were outstanding."

GAA - MUNSTER SHC FINAL

How the drama unfolded on a magical day for Limerick

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It was a day of high drama in the Gaelic Grounds on Sunday as the Limerick hurlers claimed their first Munster title in 17 years. Here's our blow-by-blow-account of the action.

1 min - Limerick take only 18 seconds to take the lead. Paudie O'Brien points from just inside half way after taking a pass from Seamus Hickey

1 min - Cork reply immediately as Daniel Kearney levels things up

2 mins - Declan Hannon gets his first point when he bursts on to a loose ball to point from play

3 mins - Limerick go two up after the referee spots an off the ball foul by Stephen McDonnell on Seanie Tobin. Hannon taps over the straight forward free

7 mins - James Ryan wins a Limerick puck out, takes on the Cork defence and fires over from just outside the '45

8 mins - Pa Horgan gets Cork's second point after a pass from Seamus Harnedy

11 mins - Harnedy gets his first score after Cork work the ball the full length of the field

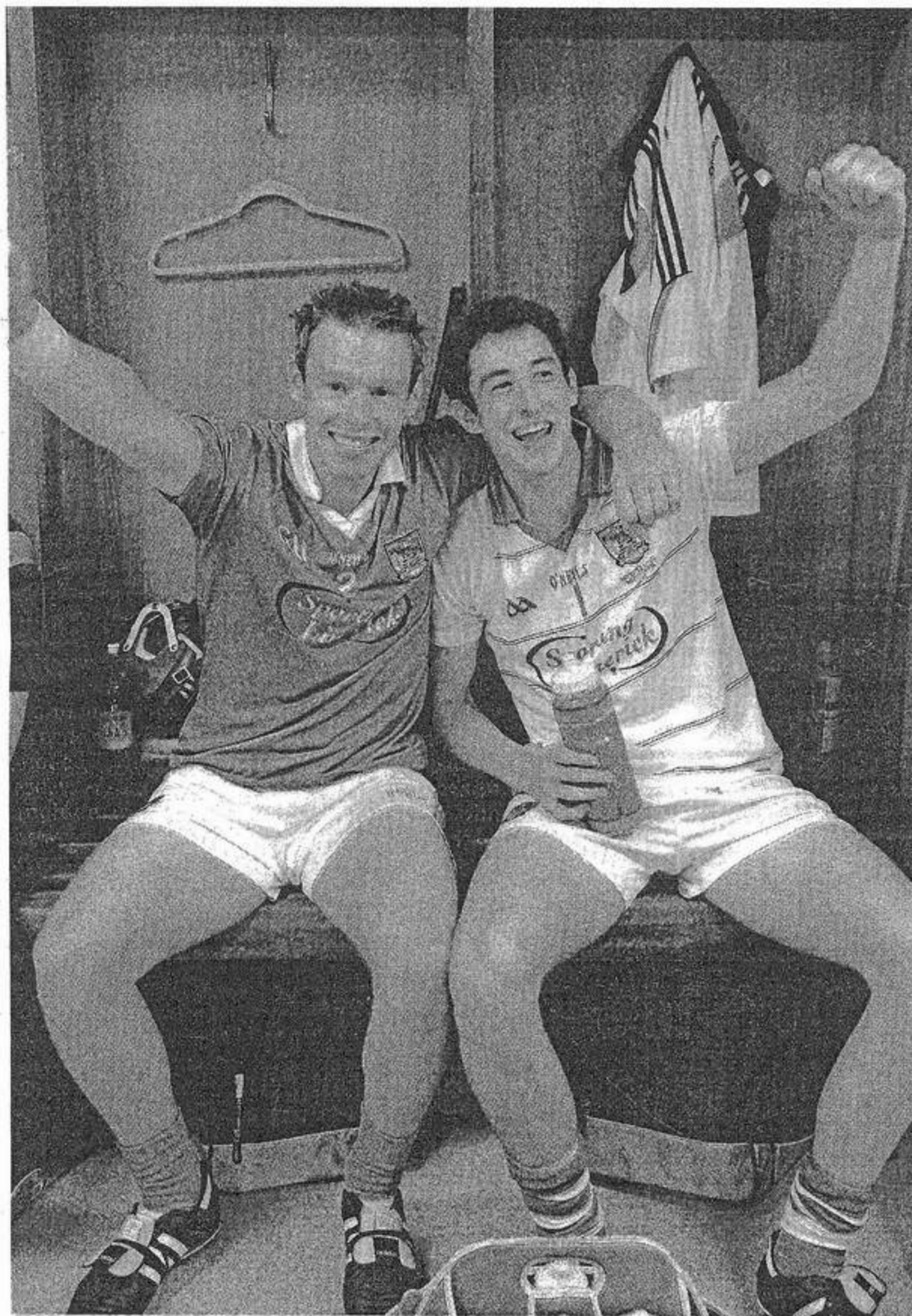
14 mins - Declan Hannon misses a long-range free and Cork come back down the field where Pa Cronin is fouled by Paudie O'Brien and Pa Horgan level things at 0-4 each

16 mins - Pa Horgan puts Cork in front for the first time when he points from play

16 mins - Cork almost get the first goal of the game but Horgan's effort flashes across the face of the goal and wide

17 mins - Graeme Mulcahy shows a glimpse of his class when he takes on the Cork defence and gets his first point to level things up

19 mins - Another let off for Limerick as Nickey Quaid is blinded by the sun and drops a high ball but



Celebration time: Stephen Walsh and goalkeeper Nickey Quaid show their delight after the game

Richie McCarthy is on hand to take the ball of the line

19 mins - Luke O'Farrell puts Cork back into the lead when he points from play

22 mins - David Breen earns a free for Declan Hannon to tie things up again

25 mins - But Cork take the lead again when Pa Horgan points a free after McCarthy fouls Harnedy

26 mins - Cork are on a bit of a roll now. Pa Cronin has acres of space to point after being set up by Tom Kenny

27 mins - David Breen is again fouled for a free. Declan Hannon again is on target to leave one between them

29 mins - Seamus Harnedy gets on the end of a long ball to restore Cork's two-point advantage

29 mins - Paul Browne is set up by Donal O'Grady and after missing a earlier chance he makes amends to cut the deficit once more

30 mins - Cork get another half goal chance but Richie McCarthy blocks bravely and the danger is cleared

31 mins - But Cork are on target again moments later when Cronin gets his second from play

33 mins - After wides from Paul Browne and James Ryan, Sean Tobin stops the rot with his first from play

34 mins - And a minute later, Donal O'Grady powers forward, is fouled and Declan Hannon levels things up again

35 mins - The game's biggest talking point arrives when Cork's full-forward and free-taker Pa Horgan is given a straight red card for a wild pull on Paudie O'Brien. It seems accidental and the decision seems harsh but Limerick head for the dressing rooms tied at 0-10 each but with numerical advantage for the second half

SECOND HALF

36 mins - Graeme Mulcahy wins a Limerick puckout, heads straight for goal and takes a handy point to put Limerick into a lead they'll hold for the remainder of the game

38 mins - Seanie Tobin is fouled by Lorcan McLoughlin and Declan Hannon lands the free for his sixth point of the game

41 mins - Jamie Coughlan, introduced as a half-time sub, points a free from near the sideline to narrow the gap as Cork introduce Cathal Naughton for Conor Lehan

42 mins - James Ryan's influence continues to grow and he takes a pass from Seanie Tobin for his second point

43 mins - Coughlan is fouled by Tom Condon, and he points the free himself from a position similar to the first. Limerick are still one up

44 mins - Tobin gets another point, this time after a pass from Paul Browne

45 mins - After putting in a very honest effort, David Breen is called ashore and replaced by his club-mate Shane Dowling

48 mins - Stephen Walsh fouls Harnedy but Coughlan misses the free and within a minute Shane Dowling sends a long ball into Hannon on the edge of the square who makes a fine catch before pointing to put Limerick three clear. It's a crucial moment in the game

51 mins - Dowling certainly makes his presence felt as he points off his left to put Limerick four in front. Conor Allis joins the action in place of Graeme Mulcahy

53 mins - James Ryan adds his third point, a massive effort from out near the sideline on the open stand side

54 mins - Seamus Harnedy replies for Cork and the giant Michael Cussen comes in at full-forward in place of Luke O'Farrell. For Limerick, Cathal King comes in for the injured Paudie O'Brien

58 mins - Cathal Naughtan points on the run for Cork to reduce the gap to three once again and a minute later Pa Cronin adds one from long range. Game is still alive

59 mins - Seamus Hickey has been busy all afternoon and he replies immediately

61 mins - Anthony Nash puts a Cork puckout out over the sideline and Declan Hannon puts over a delightful sideline cut from in front of the stand

64 mins - Shane Dowling gets another point, this time after getting on the end of a clearance from Donal O'Grady

65 mins - Kevein Downes is just seconds on the field but Cork gift him possession and he makes them count with his first score. Limerick are now six up

68 mins - Downes puts his hand up for a starting spot the next day with a delightful point from a tight angle

69 mins - Shane Dowling gets his third point since coming on and Niall Moran also marks his introduction with a fine effort. Limerick are 0-24 to 0-15 up and the crowd are ready to invade the pitch

72 mins - Dowling misses a late free but it's immaterial as the long-suffering Limerick supporters invade the Gaelic Grounds pitch and erupt in joy when Donal O'Grady lifts the Munster trophy

SPORT

GAA - MUNSTER SHC FINAL

Joyous scenes in the Gaelic Grounds as Limerick end their 17-year wait for Munster championship glory

GLORY DAYS AS LIMERICK GET THE JOB DONE IN STYLE

LIMERICK 0-24

CORK 0-15

MATCH REPORT

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THE famine is over. For the first time since the summer of 1996, Limerick are Munster senior hurling champions.

Champions for the 19th and John Allen's side did it in style.

Not content with dethroning champions Tipperary in the semi-final, Limerick were able to bring their game to another level to beat Cork in yesterday's thrilling final.

Backed by a majority of Limerick supporters in the 42,730 attendance in the sun baked Gaelic Grounds, Limerick never really looked in any trouble in a superb second half performance.

Jimmy Barry Murphy's Cork had asked questions of Limerick in the opening half but once the home side hit the front in the second half there was no denying victory.

In first half injury time Cork were reduced to 14-men when Patrick Horgan was red carded for a wild pull on Paudie O'Brien and The Rebels nev-

er recovered.

Or in deed they were never allowed the recover. They were to score just five points in the second half as Limerick assumed control to ease towards a nine point win.

Not the in wildest dreams could Limerick supporters have thought that the title would be all but secure with five minutes to play.

Such as the margin in the end that all four sides of the playing surface were lined with eager Limerick fans ready to embrace their new heroes at the final whistle.

From the very throw-in Limerick laid down a marker and resumed the same high tempo performance that had seen them past Tipp.

Paudie O'Brien fired over from distance within 30 seconds.

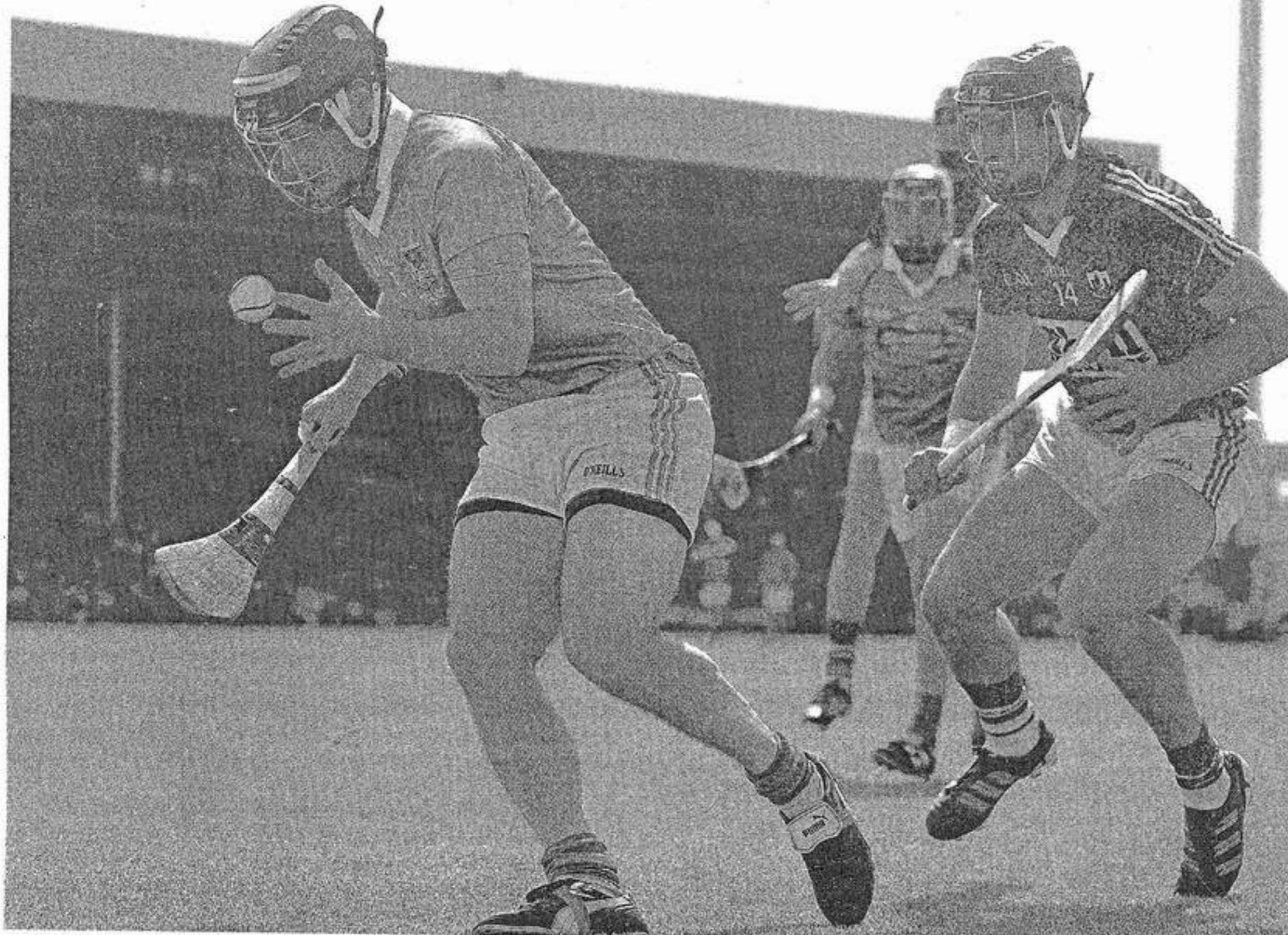
By the seventh minute mark, the lead was 0-4 to 0-1 with James Ryan getting through a lot of work to maintain traffic towards the Cork goal.

But Cork eventually found their feet and led 0-5 to 0-4 with 15-minutes played.

Indeed they went close to goal but for some last ditch defending from Nickie Quaid and his full back line.

But after 11-minutes without a score Limerick settled with Graeme Mulcahy pointing.





Steady on: Limerick full-back Richie McCarthy (above) is first to the ball against Cork in Sunday's Munster SHC final; below - Donal O'Grady lifts the trophy after the game; opposite page - Shane Dowling celebrates at the final whistle

Allen heaps praise on players as the famine ends

REACTION

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LIMERICK manager John Allen has heaped praise on his players, deflecting any attention away from himself.

Allen came to Limerick in the Autumn of 2011, replacing another Corkman Donal O'Grady.

In Allen's two year stint Limerick have had their setbacks but the former Cork All-Ireland winning manager constantly emphasised that Limerick were on a journey.

Yesterday, they reached that journey and defeated his native county.

"I can only appreciate how significant today is, maybe I don't appreciate it enough. I can see it in the reaction today and the reaction the last day and the build up to this game that this means a huge amount," said a beaming Limerick manager.

"I am so delighted for the players because they have put in a huge amount of work for this - all inter-county players are hard working but these players are very honest and I am thrilled for them," he said.

"This is about the players and everyone else in the back room team - I am only pulling the strings together right now. It's about a honest hard working group of players," he stressed.

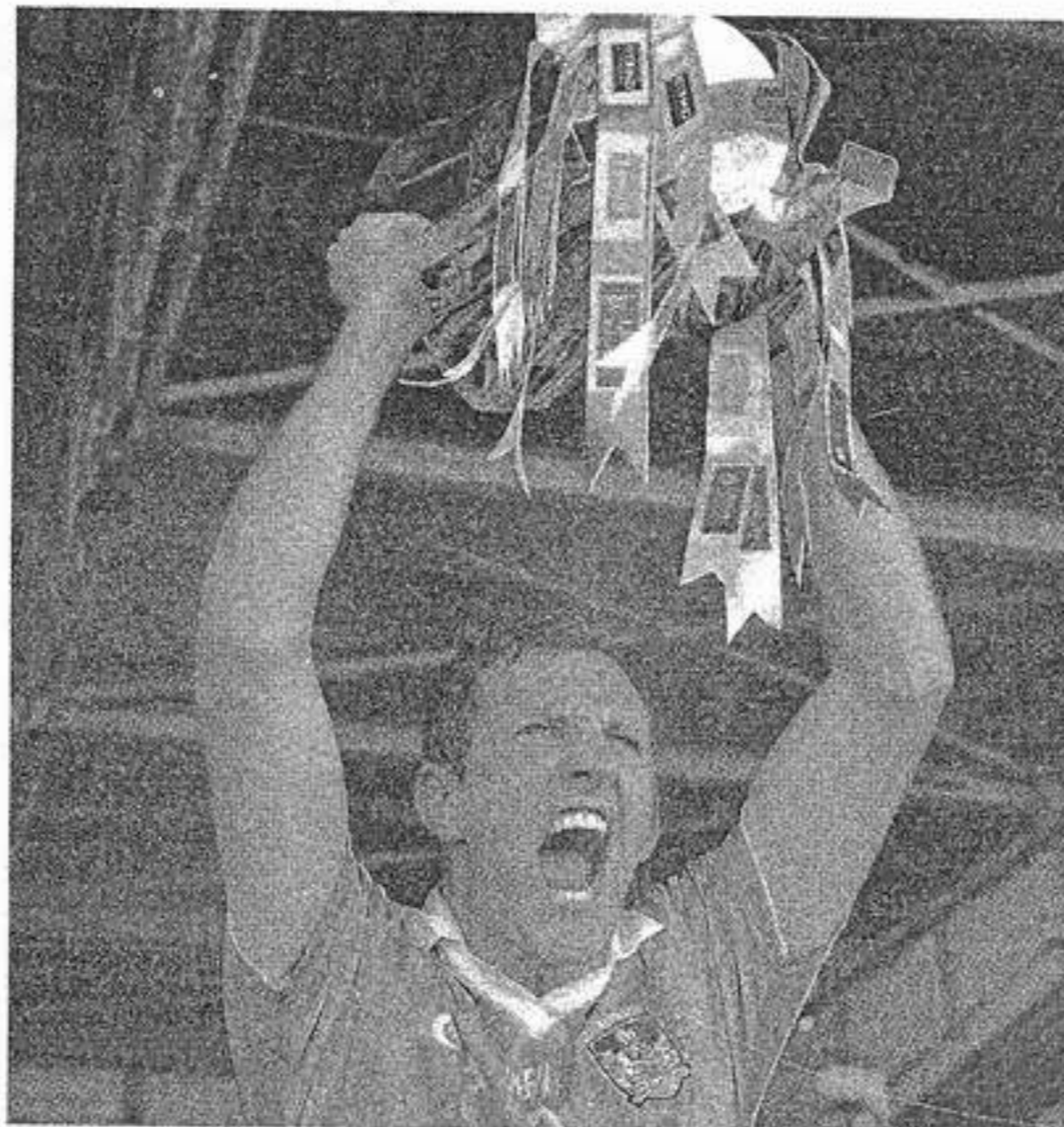
"You allow players to be leaders on the field because they have to be - there is no point me shouting from the sideline. Over the last year and a half we have tried to ensure that they know what they are doing - they knew what to do when we had the extra man and we played it properly. There was a plan and the players stuck to the plan and fair play to them."

Allen went to the losing Cork dressing room afterwards but admitted to no mixed feelings.

"There is a bond that develops over time and I am wearing a Limerick jersey now," he said as he accepted more congratulations at the victorious dressing room door.

"It's a great feeling with minutes to go that we knew we were going to win - often they go down to the wall. We were able to use five subs and it was great to see Niall Moran come in and get a score and win a Munster medal. I was particularly delighted as one of the older players that he won it on the field," explained Allen.

"We never dominated the first half and while we started well enough we were never in charge of the game but we took a hold of the game straight away after half time and played much better I thought. I won't say I could never see us losing the game but we were in command for most of the second half."



TEAMS AND SCORERS

SCORERS - LIMERICK: Declan Hannon 0-8 (5frees, 1lineball), James Ryan, Shane Dowling (1free) 0-3 each, Graeme Mulcahy, Sean Tobin, Kevin Downes 0-2 each, Paudie O'Brien, Paul Browne, Seamus Hickey, Niall Moran 0-1 each. **CORK:** Patrick Horan 0-4 (2frees), Seamus Harnedy 0-3, Patrick Cronin, Jamie Coughlan (2frees) 0-2 each, Daniel Kearney, Conor Lehane, Cian McCarthy, Cathal Naughton 0-1 each.

LIMERICK: Nickie Quaid; Stephen Walsh, Richie McCarthy, Tom Condon; Paudie O'Brien, Wayne McNamara, Gavin O'Mahony; Paul Browne, Donal O'Grady; David Breen, James Ryan, Seamus Hickey; Graeme Mulcahy, Declan Hannon, Sean Tobin. Subs: Shane Dowling for David Breen (46mins), Conor Allis for Graeme Mulcahy (51mins), Cathal King for Paudie O'Brien (57mins), Kevin Downes for Sean Tobin (65mins), Niall Moran for Seamus Hickey (69mins).

CORK: Anthony Nash; Stephen McDonnell, Shane O'Neill, Conor O'Sullivan; Tom Kenny, Lorcan McLoughlin, William Egan; Christopher Egan; Conor Lehan, Cian McCarthy, Patrick Cronin; Luke O'Farrell, Seamus Harnedy, Patrick Horgan. Subs: Jamie Coughlan for Cian McCarthy (h-t), Cathal Naughton for Conor Lehane (41mins), Michael Cussen for Luke O'Farrell (54mins), Stephen White for Lorcan McLoughlin (59mins).

REFEREE: James McGrath (Westmeath).

From there to the interval it was nip and tuck.

Cork looked to take a lead to the dressing room but Sean Tobin and a Declan Hannon free tied up the game at 0-10 each.

But the first half had one final twist.

The game was in injury time when Patrick Horgan was shown a straight red card.

Limerick resumed with Richie McCarthy as the extra man and as the game progressed the luxury of a spare man in defence was to prove key.

Mulcahy reopened the scoring inside a minute but two frees from Cork sub Jamie Coughlan had the game at 0-13 to 0-12 with nine minutes gone in the second half.

In the remaining 24-minutes Cork were to score just three times as Limerick hit them for 11 points.

Seanie Tobin set the ball rolling and Declan Hannon followed with another point and all of a sudden the lead was three points and the Limerick subs began their now customary introduction.

Shane Dowling was first and within five minutes he found the range to stretch the lead.

Then came one of the scores of the game when Limerick worked the ball through

defence to Seamus Hickey in the half forward line. He found James Ryan, who duly fired over his third point of the day to open a five point lead.

Cork ralled though - Seamus Harnedy, Cathal Naughton and Patrick Cronin all pointed.

That left it 0-17 to 0-15 with 11-minutes to play.

Limerick took over from here.

Hickey pointed, then a Declan Hannon line ball curled between the posts and Paul Browne latched onto a loose ball to punish Cork.

Limerick were on a roll and weren't to be stopped. Dowling added to his tally and with five between the sides even the most hardened Limerick fan was daring to dream.

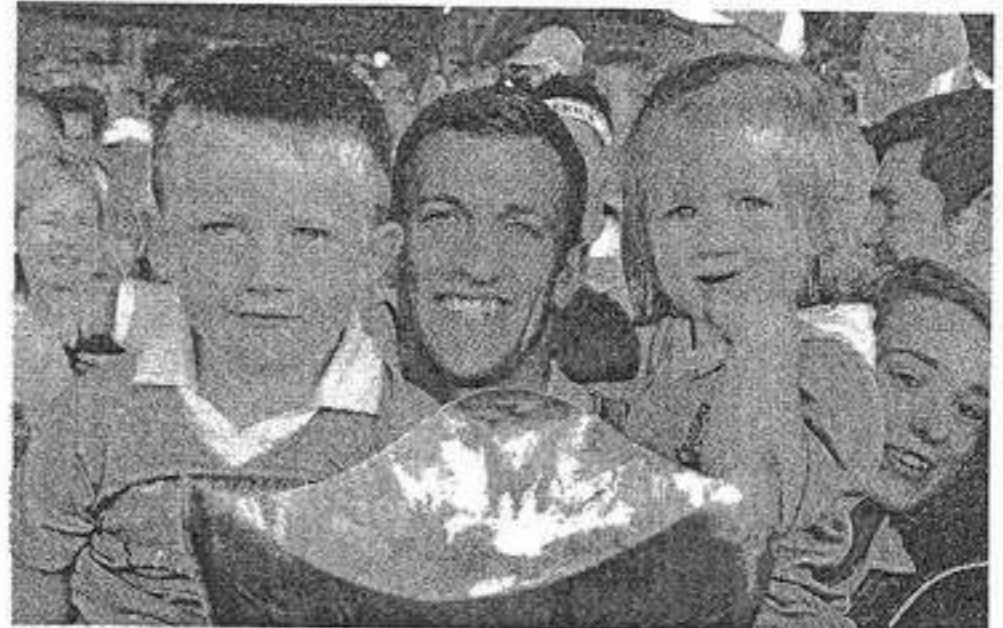
Another sub - this time Kevin Downes.

First touch and another point.

The gap increased and the nerves eased.

Limerick were to be Munster champions. Niall Moran was the last of the five subs and he had the final say on the scoresheet.

The wait to celebrate proved too much of a wait for some as the pitch invasion commenced but it was almost worth the wait to see the scenes on the pitch at the final whistle.



Limerick captain Donal O'Grady holds the cup, along with his children, Danny, aged 3 and a half, and Anna, aged 2, after victory over Cork in the Gaelic Grounds on Sunday