

LIMERICK ECHO

AND SHANNON NEWS

Seventh Annual Sports Personalities

Michael O'Hehir

ONE OF OUR OWN



OUR HOST and compere for the Seventh ECHO Sports Personalities Ball will once again be 'Mr Sport', Michael O'Hehir. For as long as anyone can remember, Michael has represented Ireland as a gentle ambassador of our sportsmen and our culture. He has been Head of Sport in RTE, and a frequent contributor to radio and television in Britain and America.

He is also himself an ECHO Sports Personality.

In 1982, the ECHO selectors sprang one of the most closely guarded surprises on Michael in the middle of the Awards Ceremony itself. Out of the blue, the Earl of Dunraven and Editor Martin Byrnes confronted Michael in 'This Is Your Life' style, and presented him with his own award, for distinguished services to sport.

Michael O'Hehir is a valuable national asset.

NO ROOM AT THE INN

WE'RE SORRY but the Two Mile Inn just can't take the number of people who asked to be invited to our Sports Personalities Ball. For comfort and catering reasons, we have had to confine the numbers.

'Since Christmas, people have almost besieged our O'Connell Street offices', said Editor, Martin Byrnes. 'We don't like refusing anyone, but we had to draw the line somewhere'.

Apart from the eighteen award recipients, the gala occasion will see the premier civic dignitaries of the region, famous sporting names, past and present, and the leaders of local business and industry. And the entire LIMERICK ECHO staff will be on hand to ensure a perfect evening.

Senior lensman Denis MacDonald will be there to record the happiness and fun, and we shall bring you a special report in our issue of April 28th on our night of nights.

After seven years, the Gala Ball has grown to become the premier social function in Munster. And, after 88 years of unbroken service to Limerick, we at LIMERICK ECHO are proud to have done it.

HALL OF FAME
TER CASEY



JUNIOR SOCCER
SEAN HEHIR



SOCCER
AL FINUCANE



HORSE RACING
ANDREW McNAMARA



SWIMMING
ANNE MULCAIR



GREYHOUNDS
DES HANRAHAN



OUTSTANDING
CONTRIBUTION
TO SPORT
PAT HARTIGAN



OUTSTANDING
SPORTS ACHIEVEMENTS
BERNIE HARTIGAN



ATHLETICS
FRANK O'MARA



LADIES ATHLETICS
OLIVE BURKE



GOLF
TOM CORRIDAN



HURLING
PAT HERBERT



RUGBY
DICK SMYTH



ROWING
LARRY SHERIN
NIAL DE LOUGHRY



HOCKEY
MARY POWELL



We Salute Our Sports Heroes

A MASSIVE budget has been earmarked by LIMERICK ECHO to give local sports stars and the dignitaries from the area the night of their lives. For the seventh successive year, our SPORTS PERSONALITIES' BALL has expended in scope, and is now the biggest en-

tertainment function in the country.

Our 600-plus guests will be treated to a champagne evening, hosted by our directors. Top entertainment will be led by Denis Allen and his band, and, of course, the presentation pageant will be compered by 'Mr. Sport' himself, Michael O'Hehir.

The entire sparkling Two Mile Inn has been taken

over for the evening of Wednesday, April 18th as LIMERICK ECHO'S way of saying 'thank you' to our top achievers in sport and community endeavour.

And to mark the occasion, we bring to you, our readers, this souvenir supplement to pull out and keep. It's our way of thanking you for supporting local sport and for supporting LIMERICK ECHO.

COMMUNITY AWARD
BRID DUKES



COMMUNITY AWARD
BOB NESBITT



COMMUNITY AWARD
MAUREEN RONAN



Eighty Seven Years Young

**LIMERICK
ECHO**
AND SHANNON NEWS

A LOOK AT THE LIMERICK ECHO BY MARTIN BYRNES — EDITOR

LONDON, in May of 1897, was preparing to celebrate the diamond jubilee of Queen Victoria. Limerick, on the other hand, was preparing to sabotage the celebrations.

In Limerick too, on May 15, the first issue of The Limerick Weekly Echo appeared.

The new paper described itself as "the only Limerick weekly", and featured in its first issues "a special story series by Carmen Sylvia, Her Majesty the Queen of Roumania". It carried court, Corporation, and general news, along with sporting and feature articles and outspoken comment. In fact, as the paper approaches its 84th anniversary, the proprietors and staff still strive after the same comprehensive news coverage, the same interesting features, and the same provocative comment.

The paper was founded by Christopher O'Sullivan at 13 Sarsfield Street, Limerick City. Its cover price was one penny, each Saturday. The paper consisted of four broadsheet pages.

From the beginning it took its name "Echo" seriously, reflecting public opinion fairly rather than championing causes, lost or otherwise. Its first major story, the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, was reported from both sides. The congratulations of the Chamber of Commerce and other statutory bodies was recorded in depth, as was the Nationalist action of draping all statues in the City with black crepe, and of flying black flags from every flagpole, including on City Hall, and the refusal of part of the City workforce to remove these adornments.

The fledgling paper also reported on national and foreign events. It had to, as the sale of daily papers in Limerick was minute at the time. People relied on their weekly to bring them all of the news of interest.

And apart from major catastrophes, the ECHO also reported, in its first month of existence, on the activities of "Jersey Lilly" Langtry at her California ranch, on the state of lion hunting in South Africa, on the annual exportation of 80,000 cwt. of dried flowers from Sinkiang Harbour in China, and on the graduation of the first Jewish lady lawyer in New Zealand.

EXPANSION

By 1901, the ECHO was making so much of an impact that Christopher O'Sullivan decided to restructure his paper. He brought the Weekly Echo forward to Friday, and launched a new publication, Limerick Echo, to be published on Tuesdays. O'Sullivan's proud boast was that his paper circulated widely not only in Limerick, but also in Clare, Tipperary and Kerry and was "largely sent to the United States and the Colonies".

O'Sullivan was apparently not subject to false modesty, and boldly carried on his letterheading that the Echo was "the best weekly newspaper published in Munster".

In 1901 also, O'Sullivan faced his first libel suit, which was fortunately settled by a simple apology without compensation having to be paid. Thereafter the proprietors and editors of the Echo have been wary of the dangers of using inexperienced contributors.

Over the succeeding years, the Echo saw the birth of many papers in Limerick, and the death of all of them except the Limerick Leader.

Some of the early advertisements were both quaint and indicative of the mentality of the age. For example, J. Hughes was charging a mere shilling for a bottle of Tricotrin, "the Parisian corn cure", while Cole, Nelson and Company, the Limerick bicycle makers were trying to persuade people to buy their "Shannon Cycles" because one of them was being ridden by the Hon. Miss Frazer of Castleconnell.

Copes would sell harmoniums to customers with four guineas to spare, while Looney's were selling American bacon. Gleeson's on the other hand were offering Special Malt Whiskey's at 24/- per gallon.

CONTROVERSY

From the beginning, the ECHO did not shy away from difficult subjects. It took the side of Bishop Dwyer in the famous Bruff Controversy, in which the bishop was trying to establish his authority over Christian Brothers' schools.

Politically, the paper reflected growing nationalist sympathies, and frequently editorialised against interference from London in Irish affairs. Both before and after the break with Britain, the Echo fulminated against the tragic drain on the area caused by emigration.

The paper supported to the hilt the modernisation of the twenties, notably promoting the Shannon Scheme, though not forgetting the fishermen, who feared that the scheme would put them out of business.

In the days of Foynes' heyday as a flying-boat port, the paper reported all of the exciting doings, and later was among the first to give its full support to both Shannon Airport and its industrial estate and town.

But it was still a small paper. Its readership was not as large as it might be, and the economic climate made expansion impossible. The standard of writing remained remarkably high, however, and its coverage of events was amazingly comprehensive.

With the death of its founder, Christopher O'Sullivan, the paper passed to his widow, who, frankly, lacked the experience to direct its affairs with the managerial acumen which was needed.

But even in decline, the paper never missed an issue. It continued to chronicle events in Limerick and beyond each week. Its loyal supporters remained true. But it seemed that its days may be numbered.

The Second World War hit the economy of Limerick still harder, and the paper had to struggle to survive. News of Limerick-born war casualties was unfortunately a regular feature, as well as details of Army and L.D.F. activities locally. But still, the paper survived.

SAVED FROM THE BRINK

Rescue came in 1947, when George Ivan Morris, the writer and publisher, came from Dublin and purchased McKerns' Printers at Glentworth Street. His brother, Tom, took over as managing editor of the ECHO which the Morris' bought at the same time.

The paper gave viability to the printhouse, and the foresight of the Morris family saw to an im-

mediate improvement in the paper. From a single six-page edition, the family expanded the format to at least eight pages, and produced a second edition. These were originally called First and Final, but this soon changed to County and City.

Right from the beginning, the new owners made changes which were unheard-of in Irish provincial newspapers. Firstly, they carried news items on the front page, relegating the comment, features and general advertising to inside pages. The ECHO was also the first provincial in the country to carry photographs on the front page as a regular inclusion. Pictures, in fact, became one of the trademarks of the ECHO in those years.

But this momentum for change backfired some years later. After fifteen years of uninterrupted expansion in size, scope and circulation, the owners decided to take the next logical step. They changed the paper's format from broadsheet to tabloid - again a first in Ireland.

THE NEW ECHO

In 1971, the ECHO separated from the McKerns' organisation. A new company of Limerick businessmen was formed to take over the paper, and firstly Tom Tobin and later Arthur Quinlan went in as managing editor. McKerns continued to print the paper under contract until November 1974.

In 1975, the company changed hands again. The Harnett family, the present owners took over the paper, effectively merging with Eurotype Ltd. The staff was expanded, and the managerial and editorial functions were separated. Frank Hamilton was appointed Editor. This writer took over as Editor in 1979.

SUCCESSFUL POLICY

One of the unusual aspects of the ECHO through its entire history has been the number of its journalists who have succeeded in national publications and in broadcasting. The paper has been seen as a hard and comprehensive training ground for reporters.

Partly due to this success, and partly because of enlightened management, the paper has always had at its disposal a young, imaginative and progressive staff, who have kept up the outspoken investigative tradition of this old publication.

The policy of the paper at present is as it has always been - to inform, not to influence, to entertain and amuse, not to depress or decry, to be part of Limerick's life rather than to stand aloof. The paper tries to be in tune with the feelings of the people and to reflect these in its columns.

The success in recent years of the newspaper would seem to indicate that this moderate and sympathetic approach has the support of the people. The ECHO is one of the very few provincial papers in Ireland which has not had to implement cutbacks during the current recession.

On a personal note, I am grateful to the directors, advertisers, gardai, local bodies and to all of the people of our circulation area for the unfailing confidence which they have shown in the ECHO, and the support which they have afforded to my office in developing the ECHO to yet better standards.

Foreword

RIGHT from our inception in 1897, LIMERICK ECHO has encouraged local sporting endeavour. We have seen sport as an integral part of the life of the area, and the sporting community have loyally supported us in return.

It was only fitting, therefore that when, in 1978, we hosted our first major function to hail the achievements of the previous season of our sportsmen and sportswomen, we felt that we were strengthening the bonds between the paper and the community of sport. But we could not have foreseen then just how the function was to grow. LIMERICK ECHO Sports Personalities Ball is, without question, now the largest and most glittering function in Munster and the biggest of its kind in Ireland.

However, as the function itself grows in size and prestige, so grows the difficulty which our selection jury faces in choosing our award recipients. We decided some years ago to limit the number of awards to fifteen in the sporting area and three in community endeavour. We did this so as not to dilute the value of the awards and to ensure that each laureate joins the list on merit only and after the most rigorous examination of his or her achievements.

But we feel that even by excluding so many others that we are, in a special way, paying tribute to them also, because, if the list were longer, it would be our pleasure to include them also.

It is our honour this year to admit Ter Casey, Bateman Cup Veteran, to the Hall of Fame. So great a legend as Ter deserves no less.

Al Finucane, the ageless soccer star is a legend in his own time, and Frank O'Mara, the amazing athlete, was the obvious choice in his discipline.

Ann Mulcaire, again, was obvious choice in swimming, and the strength of Dick Smyth in leading his Thomond players was exceptional.

Others in the list, such as Sean Hehir (Junior Soccer) and Olive Burke (Ladies Athletics) are having our awards bestowed on them while their careers are hardly fully begun.

Some of the list was also fairly easy to select, such as Pat Herbert (Hurling), Tom Corridan (Golf) and Mary Powell (Hockey).

In Greyhound Racing, we pay tribute to a man who was 'Mister Greyhounds' for so long — Des Hanrahan. On the rowing front, Laurence Sherin and Nial de Loughrey.

Andrew McNamara returns to take the Horse Racing accolade, and Pat Hartigan receives his award as the person who has made the Most Outstanding Contribution to Sport.

Bernie Hartigan, richly deserves the award for Outstanding Sports Achievement.

Our community award rerecipients are also extremely deserving. Brid Dukes, who created the Belltable and who was also such a force behind this year's Civic Week was an immediate choice. Maureen Ronan, the public face of ADAPT, has seen a few of her dreams come true lately. And Bob Nesbitt, of the Wheelchair Association is also a most deserving choice.

The acid-test of the wisdom of our selection jury is this: would a person wish to add a name, but would he be honestly able to subtract one to make room?

Yet again we hope that these awards will add to the sporting and community life of the region, of which we feel so much a part.

John W. Hannett
Chairman, Limerick Echo

AUTOGRAPHS

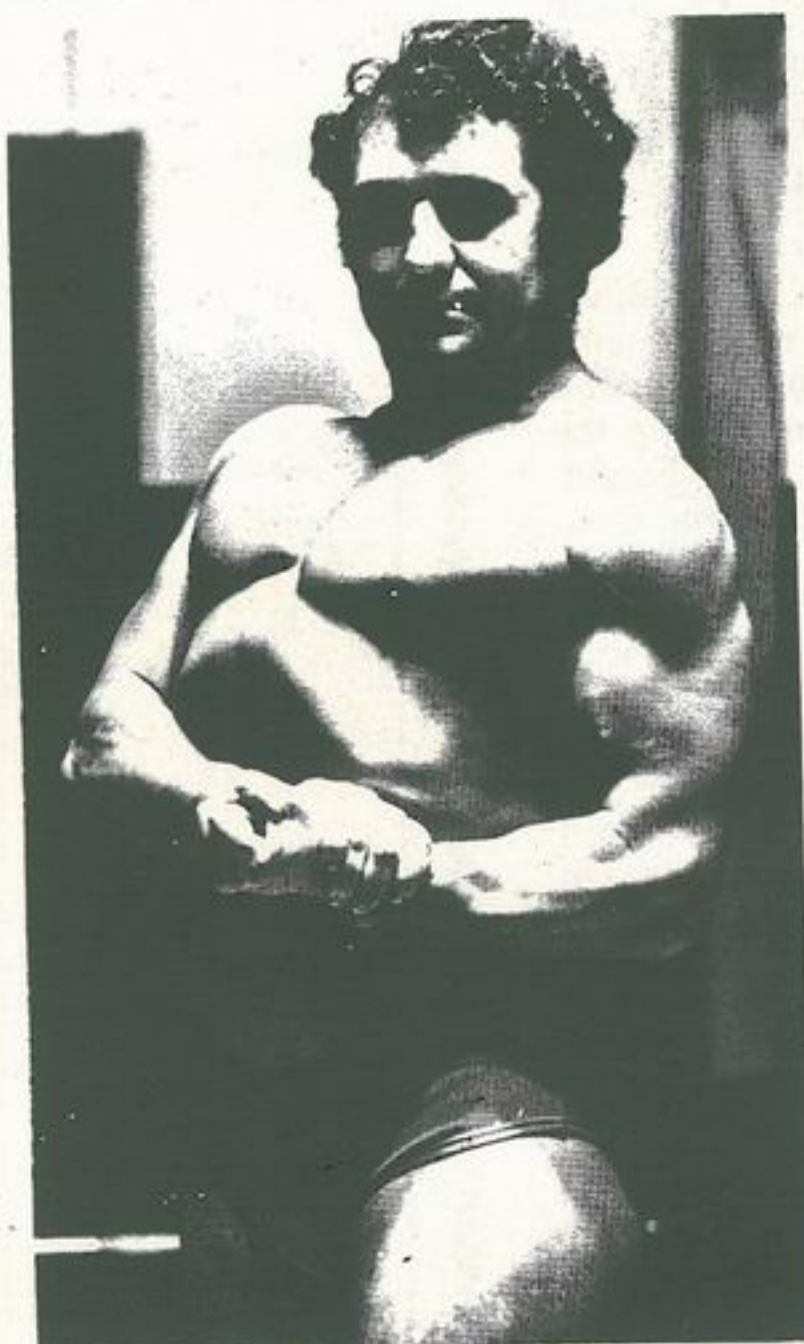


De Beers
Shannon

Flashback To Previous Sports Award Winners 1982



JOHNNY WALSH — a remarkable soccer player.



TOMMY DILLON — strength that made a champ.



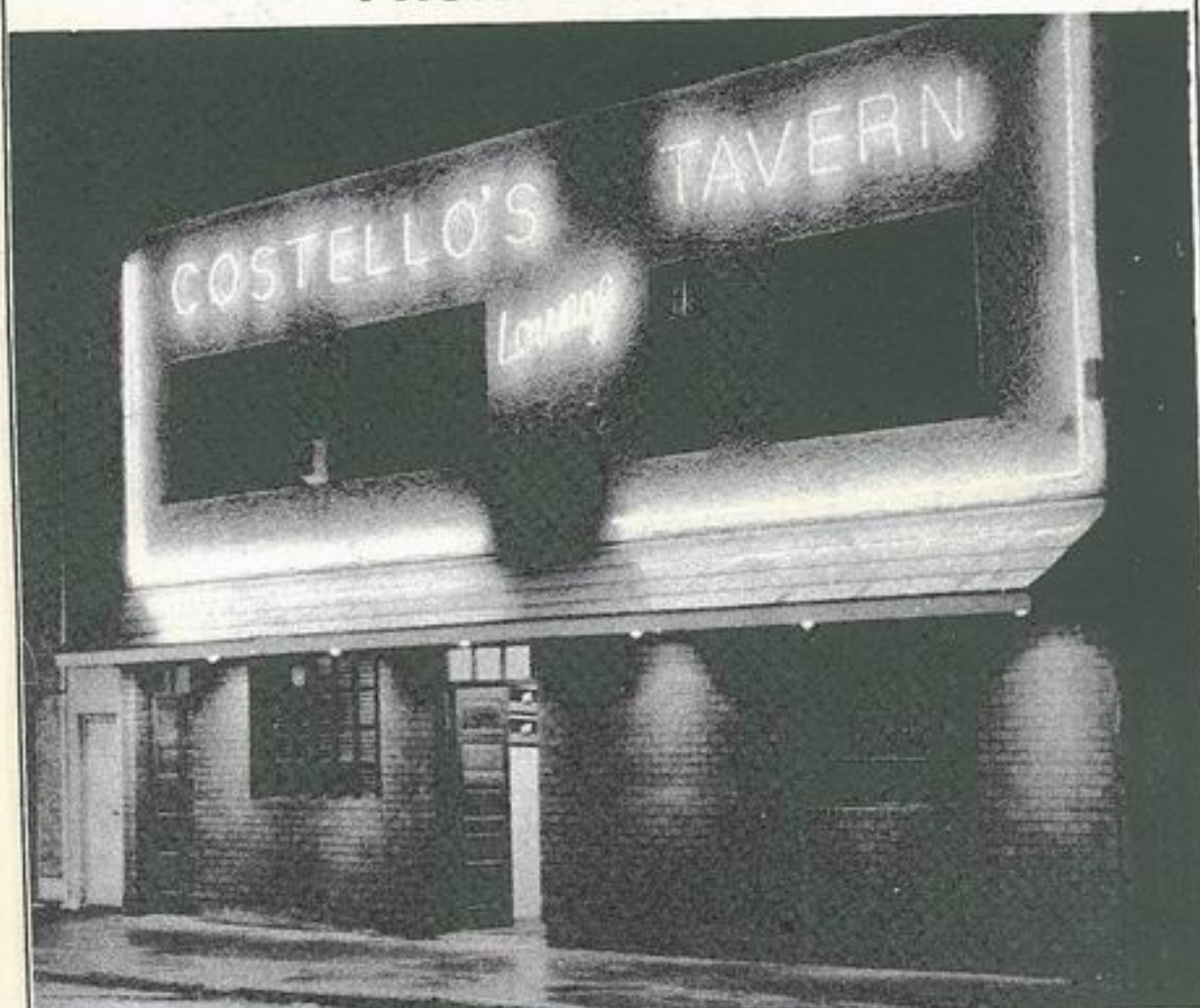
TONY WARD — Rugby and Soccer glory in the same season.



"LOCKY" — The Lionhearted.

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TER CASEY - HALL OF FAME

THE term a "legend in his own lifetime" is bandied about these days to describe just about anyone who has made his or her mark on a variety of activities. It's a description that is often ill-fitting but in a Limerick context it could hardly be more appropriate to describe J.C. Casey, known far and wide simply as Ter. Although now well into his 70s, Ter Casey strides around the streets of his beloved Limerick with a sprightliness that could well be the envy of a man many years his junior.

Casey learned his rugby, as did all the Young Munstermen of his era, on the old "Bombing Field" and with his sturdy, hardy frame, inevitably gravitated towards the "darker" regions of the scrum.

Those were the days of "first up, first down", but in modern terminology Ter was a prop forward - and a very good one, too. His arrival on the scene coincided with the golden era of Young Munster rugby culminating in their never-to-be-forgotten Bateman Cup triumph in 1928. The standard of Irish

rugby at the time could hardly have been higher and even though they had beaten a fine Constitution side in the Munster final, Young Munster were given little chance against a star-studded Lansdowne XV in the Bateman decider.

It is common knowledge, even to this day, that Young Munster carried all before them, thanks largely to a superb pack in which Ter Casey was so good that the Irish selectors were at last forced to sit up and take notice. People think it is hard for a

Limerickman to gain recognition nowadays ... back in the twenties, he had to be twice as good as his rival and bearing that in mind, Ter's ability was reflected in his selection against Scotland in 1930 and England in '32.

He should have won many more caps, but he was happy with his lot. To this day, he remains a quiet, placid and contented man, safe in the knowledge that his place in the history of Young Munster and Ireland is assured by his two Munster Cup medals (1928 and '30) and those two coveted green caps.



The Irish team against England in Dublin, 1932. Standing, extreme left, back row, is Ter Casey of Young Munster who was winning his second cap. And Young Munsterman, Danaher Sheehan (RIP) is seated on ground, left.

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Flashback To Previous Sports Award Winners 1982



MICK HOURIGAN — horseman supreme.



PHIL SWART — the man who brought Limerick Race Track back to life.



PAT AND MONITA HOLLAND — London honours in Greyhound Racing.

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OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TO SPORT PAT HARTIGAN

AT THE age of seventeen, Pat Hartigan did the seemingly impossible. In that year he played Harty Cup hurling, under 21 hurling and football, intermediate hurling, junior football and, in October, joined the seniors in the hurling league, playing at right half forward against Clare and senior football against Cork at right half back. And he represented Ireland against Spain in the shot putt. Now, at 33, Pat Hartigan is still one of the country's premier sportsmen - despite having to retire from field sports due to an eye injury. His contribution to sport in general is unparalleled in its diversity, dedication, success or example-value.

Starting with Dean Ryan and Harty Cup level with Limerick C.B.S., Pat was marked for greatness from the beginning. 'Big Pat' has, over two decades, been an outstanding exponent of hurling, football, shinty, and shot putting, as well as in that most energetic of hurling variations - an poc fada.

From an early stage it was clear that he would follow his elder brother, Bernie, in creating hurling headlines. And, like Bernie, his driving force was always that of active competition and enjoyment. These sportsmanlike qualities caused him ever to improve his own performance, because when he reached the highest levels, his only serious opponent was himself.

Pat's hurling achievements are legendary. However, its related game, shinty, was also well within his ambit, and he represented Ireland on eight separate occasions in internationals against Scotland, many times as captain.

His hurling skills saw him in six All Stars tours of America in his favourite full-back position. A further All Star honour came his way in 1981 following his victory in the poc fada.

The year 1983, at an age when most sportsmen would be considering the less exhaustive pursuits, saw Pat producing a devastating series of shot putting efforts, culminating in a personal best of 52ft. 1½ ins., at the National Championships at Santry in July. As luck would have it, however, Paul Quirke was in marginally better form on the day. It was all the more appropriate, therefore, that the excellent decision was reached to appoint him as captain (non playing) of the Irish athletic team which competed the following month at Santry in the European 'C' finals.

In August also, Pat inspired the Limerick A.C. team to take the Omega National League for the second time in four years.

Not content with strict athletics, Pat also won the All Ireland Poc Fada over the Cooley Mountains in a record 71 strokes - an average of 111 yards per stroke. He had won the same event in 1981, and had come second in the controversial 1982 final.

Pat has travelled with his skills to compete in such diverse places as Warsaw, Madrid, Luxembourg and Lisbon, New York and Copenhagen.

Now, his athletic prowess seems to have no end, and he is devoting much of his available time to help raise money to send a Limerick A.C. team to the European Club Championships in Milan in early June.

Pat Hartigan has entertained thousands with his skill. His career has been watched on television in many countries. Nobody could be more appropriate to receive the 'Outstanding Contribution' award.



Pat Hartigan (2nd right) pictured with the Limerick mentors before the Munster Final against Cork.

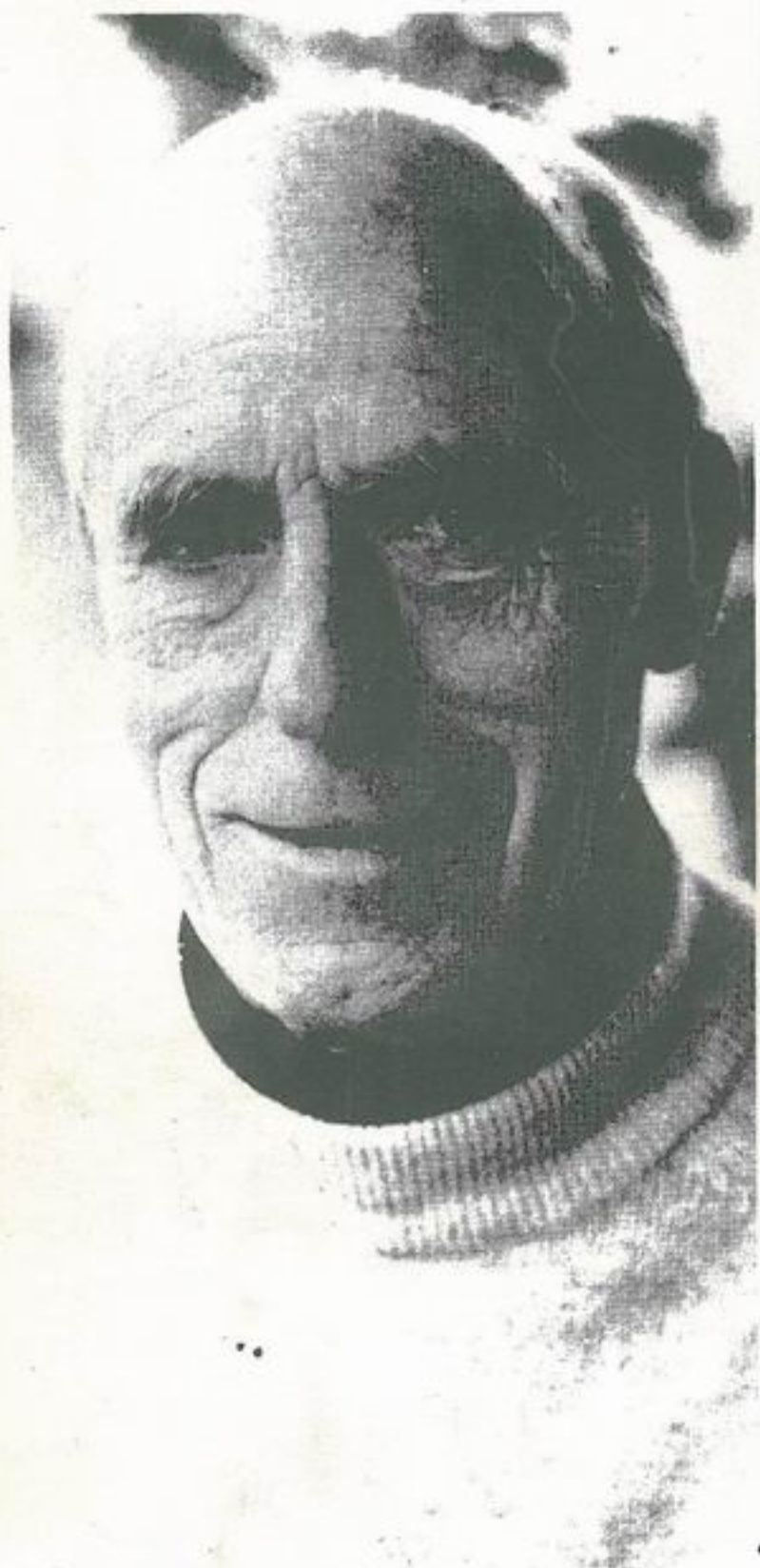
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Flashback To Previous Sports Award Winners 1982



STAN DE LACY — Greatness is not tempered by age.

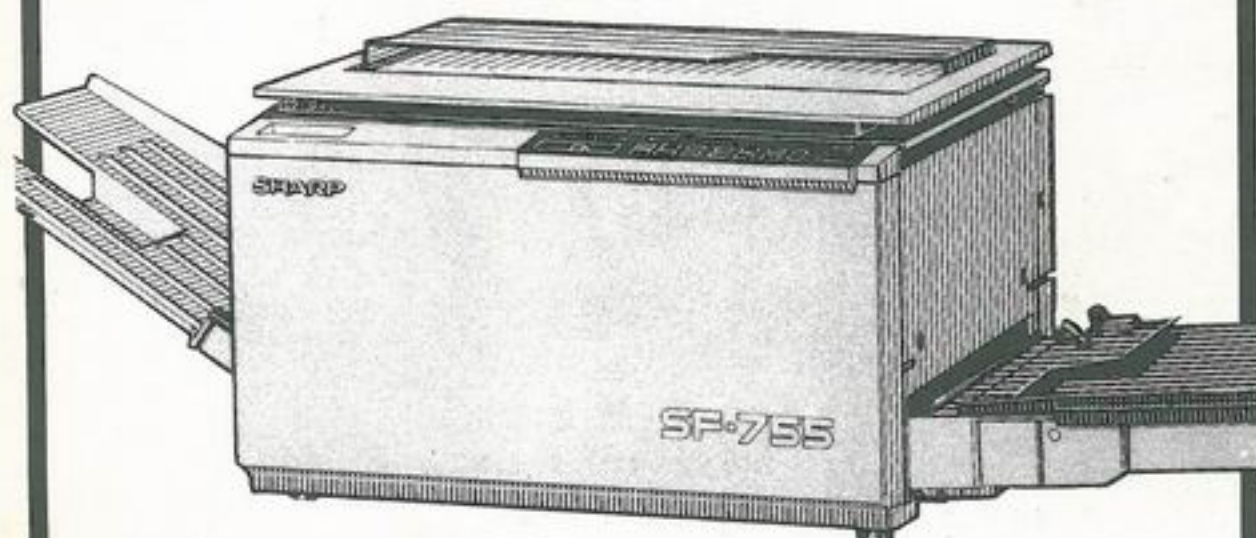


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BERNIE HARTIGAN OUTSTANDING SPORTS ACHIEVEMENTS

BERNIE HARTIGAN travelled to Puerto Rico in September 1983 to represent Ireland in the World Masters Track & Field Championship. He won a gold medal in the hammer and a silver discus event.

This is just one of many reasons why LIMERICK ECHO is very proud to present Bernie with the Outstanding Sports Achievements Award. The forty-year-old star hurler, footballer, field athlete and dedicated sports organiser continues to bring fame and honour to the City and County of Limerick.

Success in Puerto Rico was the culmination of a great career of weight throwing at international level. He has represented Ireland in all four throwing events, and captained our international teams with distinction.

As a hurler, he was part of the 'CBS Sexton St. set' who went from colleges competition to wear the

senior inter-county jersey. He won a National Hurling Medal in 1971 and was on the 1973 All-Ireland victory side. During leaner years he was the mainstay of the side in defence, mid-field and attack, as required.

Limerick isn't noted for Gaelic Football prowess — but Bernie could hold his own with the finest players in the country. He won a Munster colleges medal in 1961 and was part of the old Christians team which took the County Football Championship at their first attempt. The Munster selectors called him up for Railway Cup duty again and again. And he showed that none of the magic had ebbed when he competed

in the 1982 TV Superstars and established a football scoring record.

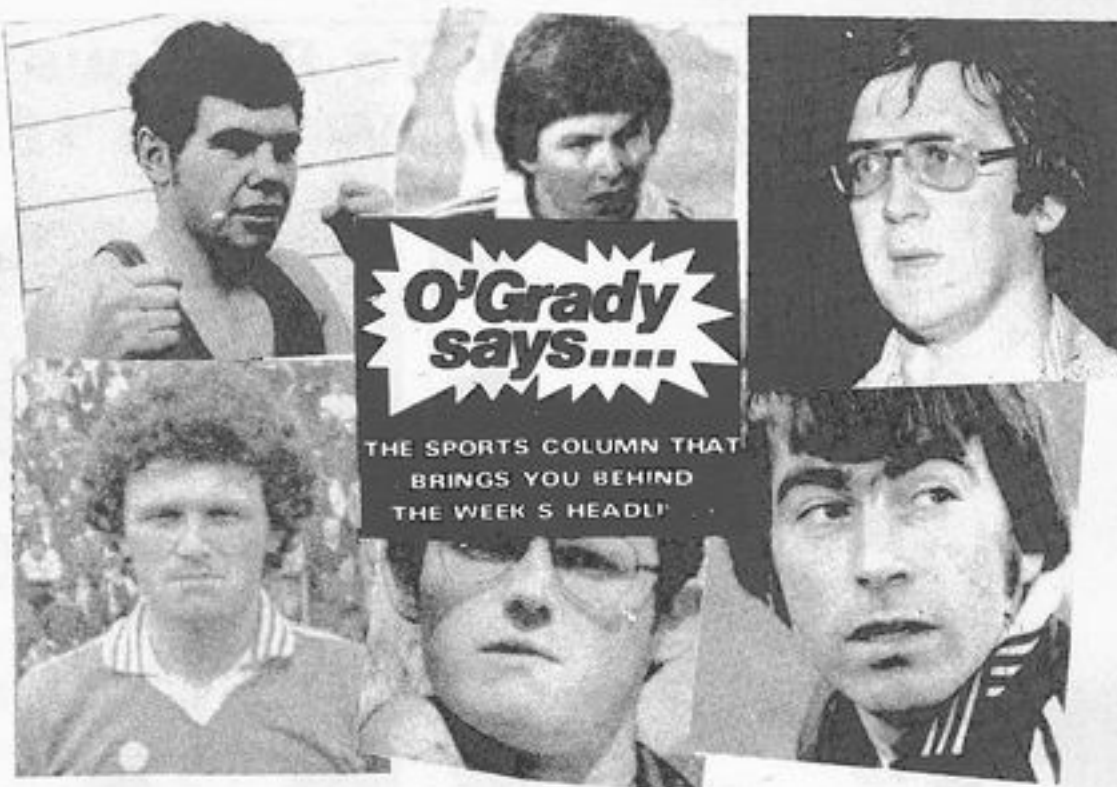
Not content with competing, Bernie has worked very hard for his own club, Limerick AC. As part of their 1977 centenary celebrations he brought Greece to Plassey for a full international match against Ireland. On that

day he scored his international best hammer throw at a marvellous 60 metres.

He took on the job of transport organiser for the

1979 Cross Country Championships held in Greenpark Race Course. Afterwards the President of the European Athletic Federation remarked that

Bernie was the most efficient transport director he'd seen in twenty years of athletic events worldwide.



A few encouraging words from Texaco.

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Every year since 1958, we at Texaco have devoted a little energy to encouraging the sportsmen and sportswomen of Ireland through the Texaco Sports Star Awards.

Recognised as the highest accolade in Irish sport, these awards are Texaco's way of saying "well done" on behalf of the Irish people, to Ireland's finest athletes.

Of course, at Texaco we encourage other things as well: national growth, industrial development, investment in Ireland's future — and no-one is more aware than Texaco that Ireland's young men and women are her future.

So we look on the time and energy we devote to the Sports Star Awards as a real investment in the Ireland of tomorrow.

And that's encouraging for us too.



Putting our energy into Ireland's future.



Bernie Hartigan proudly displaying his gold and silver.

Flashback To Previous Sports Award Winners 1982



RONAN TYNAN — Handicap no obstacle.



FR. JOE YOUNG — The spirit of Southill.



SHAUN O'DOWD — Free time to charity from Limerick's "Mr. Musk".

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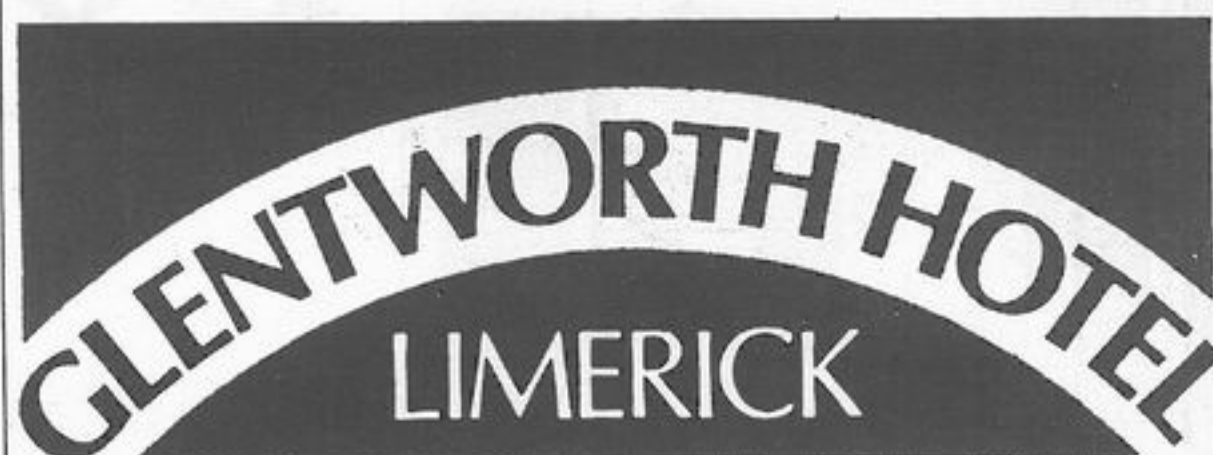
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FRANK O'MARA - ATHLETICS

THE HEART of every Limerick man and woman will be with 23 year old Frank O'Mara over the next couple of months. If the Limerick athlete can stay clear of injury he will almost certainly line up with some of the world's premier 1,500 metre specialists at the 1984 Olympic Games in Los Angeles.

That this would be an honour which Frank O'Mara richly deserves cannot possibly be denied. Because over the past few years the athlete has established a reputation which has put him among the most outstanding of Limerick's sportsmen.

Frank first came to public prominence following the first World Championships in Helsinki. His phenomenal finishing kick over the last 280 metres of the race saw him overtake nine world class 1500 metres/miler specialists. In doing so he gained a place in the semi-finals.

Frank is a former student of St. Munchin's College and, indeed, it was there that his interest in athletics was really aroused. With the encouragement of the College President, Fr. Gerard McNamee and Declan O'Donoghue, Frank's natural abilities as an athlete told during this period when he collected no fewer than three gold medals in the Student Games.

It was his running abilities which won Frank a scholarship to the University of Arkansas in the United States. This proved to be a golden

opportunity for Frank as he gained invaluable experience on the American circuit.

To date Frank has represented Ireland in the European Cup in Luxembourg, Warsaw and Dublin. He also donned the green for the Westathletic Championships in Holland. In the lead up to the 1983 World Championships Frank participated in International events in Stockholm, Helsinki and Nice where he achieved the qualifying time for the 1500 metres event in the Los Angeles Olympic. (His qualifying time was 3.37.70).

In the Harp Mile run in Cork last year O'Mara finished the race in a time of 3.52.50 behind two of the world's all time greats - Steve Scott of the USA and John Walker of New Zealand. That performance was good enough to rank him at number seventeen in the World last year.

In the American National Collegiate Athletic Championships in Texas, Frank joined the ranks of such famous Irish athletes as Eamonn Coughlan and Ronnie Delaney when he took the U.S. Collegiate title in a time of 3.40.51.

At the famous Penn Relays in Philadelphia Frank helped the University of Arkansas Medley relay team to victory and, in doing so, ended the reign of Villanova University who had dominated the event for sixteen successive years.

In the Yoplait Irish National Championships at Santry Frank raced his way to an impressive National Senior title at 1,500 metres. The win, which he recorded in a time of 3.44.11, marked the athlete's first ever National Senior title.

FRANK O'MARA wins a 1,500 meters race in the U.S.A.



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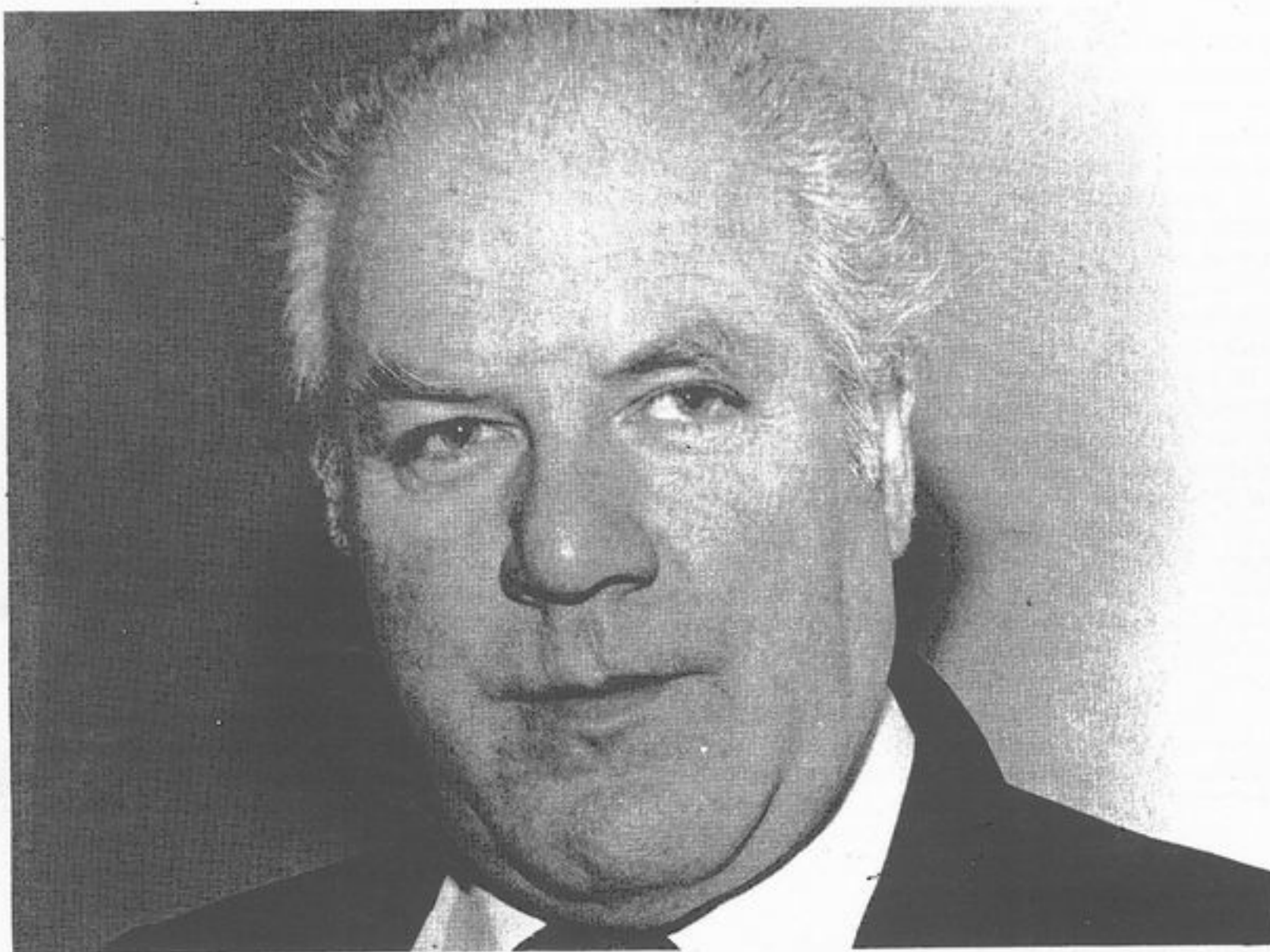
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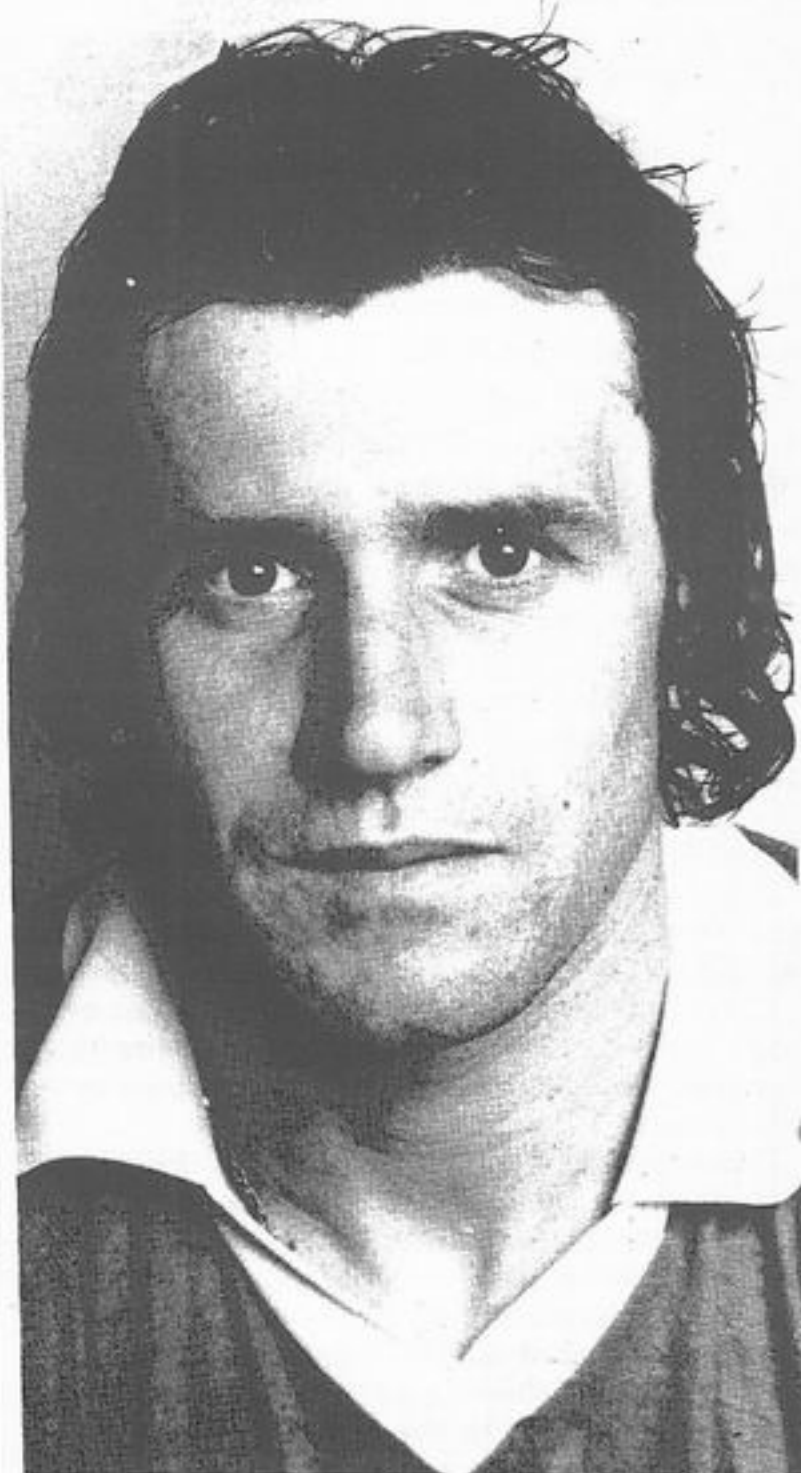
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OLIVE BURKE - LADIES ATHLETICS

AT SEVENTEEN, Olive Burke is the toast of Parteen and of her school - Laurel Hill. An international athlete at schools, junior and senior level, she has already accumulated enough victories to make even a much older athlete green with envy. And Olive is still merely starting out on her career.

It all started six years ago when one small girl decided to take an interest in Community Games. Soon, she was representing Clare at the National finals at Mosney. Concentrating on the 80 and 100 metre hurdles and the 100 metre flat, she soon came to the attention of the international selectors. August 1982 saw Olive competing at senior level against Wales, and she returned her second last best performance of 14.24 seconds over the 2 ft 9 ins hurdle.

But that was not all Olive had achieved in 1982. She had been chosen for international competition in schools and Celtic internationals. At both Cork and Cardiff, she won each of her hur-



dles races, and, later in the year, at Crystal Palace, London, took the 100 metres hurdles in the WAAA Junior Championships.

In 1983, Olive could hardly put a foot wrong. She won titles at every outing - North Munster, Munster and Irish

Schools. At the Cork City Sports, Olive won the 100 metres in style, and her time qualified her for the European Junior Championships at Vienna. Not only that, but her talent was increasing, as she now turned her hand to the 4 x 400 metre relay, with success. Everything she



did brought additional points for Limerick AC in the Tissot National League.

As the year progressed, Olive won her first national senior title - with a time only ever beaten by an Irish girl in the event, 13.93, - and breaking her junior record.

In Lisbon, in the Junior West International, she took third in the 100 metres hurdles against the cream of the continent. Again, at Edinburgh in the Schools International, it was gold in the 80 metres hurdles and the Celtic International in Antrim saw a first in the 100 metres hurdles.

The European Juniors in Vienna had a difficult ending for Olive when, though doing well, she tripped and fell.

Olive has received many accolades for her achievements. For one so young with so much ahead of her, our adjudicators are not only paying tribute to her fine year in 1983, but are also expressing their confidence for a sparkling career in years to come.

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BRENDA WALSH — Javelin honours for Limerick.

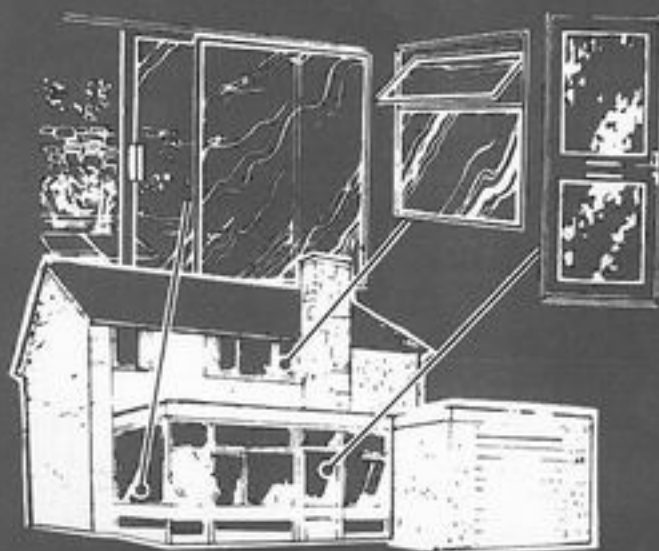


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GOLF

TOM CORRIDAN

CASTLETROY IRISH CLOSE CHAMPION

NOT ONLY did Tom Corridan (25) win the Irish Amateur Close Golf Championship at Killarney last August, but he went on a month later to lead the Irish team to its first success in the Home Internationals in 28 years.

At Portmarnock, playing number one as befits the champion, he first beat the English leader, then the Scottish champion, Colin Dalgeish, one of the finest amateur golfers in the world, and remained unbeaten with a halved match with the Welsh champion. His performance was the finest, for it was the first time that the Irish Close Champion was unbeaten and the first time that Ireland had a clean sweep of victories in the Home Internationals.

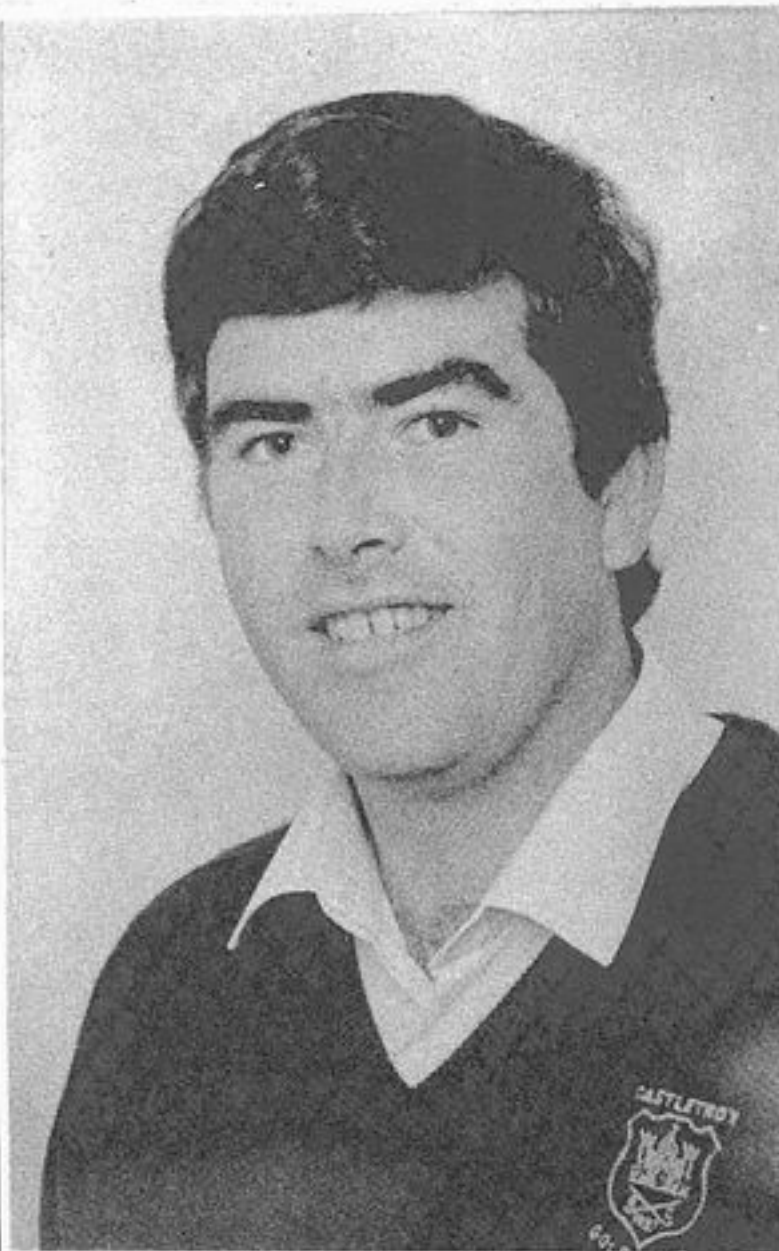
Tom Corridan has had a remarkable career as a golfer. He

has held a handicap at his native Ballybunion since he was ten years of age and was on the club Junior Cup side at thirteen. Starting with wins in the Kerry Boys in both 1974-'75, he went on to win the Munster Championship and in 1976 he conquered the other three provinces as a boy, and was for these three years on the Irish team. He had a spectacular nine under par win of the Irish Youths Championship in 1978 at Thurles.

The Kerry born youth was on the Irish team that won the European Junior Championship at Oslo

in 1977 and Czechoslovakia two years later. The following year at Royal Dublin he was a member of the Castletroy side that won the Aer Lingus Irish Youth trophy and the team were only beaten in the European final by Denmark. Then came the Shannon Scratch Cup win in 1980 and the Castletroy Senior Trophy on the following two years.

It was only natural that Tom should become a champion, for he was born beside the fifth green at Ballybunion which in his boyhood was the



finishing hole on this great links. His father Tom Corridan Senior, a farmer, is a useful golfer and his mother Ann has had many

golfing victories and was for some years a member of the Ballybunion Senior Cup side.

When the young

man came to Limerick to study as an Architectural Technician at the College of Engineering at Moylish he gave up golf and also an opportunity to go to the United States to play under the guidance of a leading professional. It was only natural that he should have joined the Castletroy Club, for it was the late Denis Cassidy the former professional who first cut down a set of clubs for the boy in short pants. That was after he had seen him swing one of his mothers clubs with such natural skill. That natural easy style has remained always with him, and although he is now more than six feet three inches in height and in excess of 15 stone, he has the most gentle and sensitive touch around and on the greens. This description could also be applied to the personality of one of Irelands most exciting golfers for many years.

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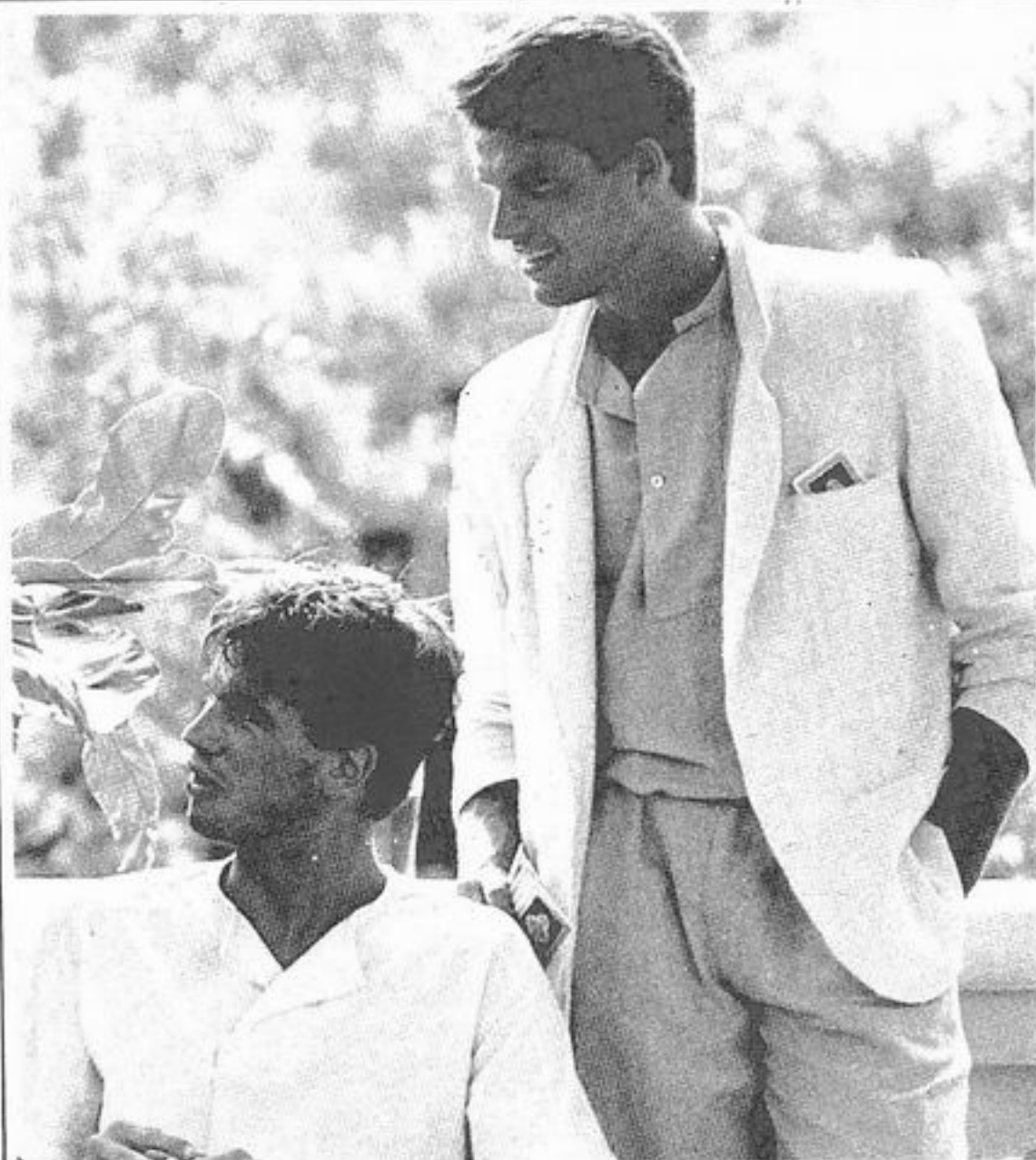
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HURLING PAT HERBERT



THE NAME of Herbert, like that of Mackey, is synonymous with Limerick hurling and in the presence of Pat Herbert, the famed Ahane club have a hurler who is certainly equipped in every respect to carry-on a proud club and family tradition at intercounty level. A regular at left corner-back on the Limerick team for the last 3/4 seasons, Pat Herbert's progress in the competitive inter-county hurling scene has been such that he is now widely regarded as the best left corner-back in the country.

In his early days, however, that rate of progression to hurling defender par excellence hardly looked on the cards. Never short on courage or tenacity, the effect of Pat's game was often spoiled through an enthusiasm which saw him concede needless frees on occasions. That one weakness in his game apart, however, Pat Herbert was certainly worth a regular place in the Limerick team long before he made the eventual breakthrough. Even now, years after the event, good judges will tell you that Limerick would have won the McCarthy Cup in 1980 had Pat Herbert been introduced at an early stage to curb the menace of Galway's Bernie Forde.

Eventually, though, the player staked a regular berth on the county team and with experience and maturity gradually eliminating the hurling indiscretions of his earlier days, Pat Herbert became a corner-back fit to rank with the best. Indeed, the consistency of Herbert's hurling was such that a considerable weight of opinion soon suggested that he was the best corner-back in the country.

In 1983, his performances in the county jersey added weight to that opinion. Quite brilliant alongside Leonard Enright, Mossie Carroll and Liam O'Donoghue in the National Hurling League cam-



paign, Herbert was instrumental in Limerick reaching the Final — which they eventually lost to Kilkenny. And in two Championship outings against Cork, the Ahane hurler was again quite superb in defence. At the highest level, Herbert's contribution and excellent record had been virtually without blemish. Imagine the dismay of Limerick hurling then, when Kilkenny's Dick O'Hara, and not Herbert, was nominated as left corner-back on the Bank of Ireland All-Stars team.

Certainly, Dick O'Hara is a hurler of considerable merit, but Limerick folk were convinced that Pat Herbert was hard done by in the 1983 All-Star nominations. How appropriate it would be, then, if the Ahane defender were to gain his first All-Star award in Centenary Year. Most of all, Pat Herbert would dearly like to win a McCarthy Cup medal — give his, and Limerick's, current form, that All-Star/All Ireland double could easily be on the cards for brilliant Pat Herbert in 1984.

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RUGBY DICK SMYTH

FEW RUGBY teams have achieved the remarkable level of consistency as that of Thomond, the North-City club which has dominated junior rugby in the province for over a decade. And ever-present during that period of dominance was Dick Smyth, the remarkable veteran forward who, incredibly, found time to double as player and club president in 1983.

Once captain of the Possibles team in a Youth international soccer trial, Dick Smyth has been associated with Thomond's cause in rugby ranks since the mid-sixties. In his early rugby days, Dick won a City Cup medal as a winger against a star-studded Garryowen XV. Soon afterwards, however, the transition from back to forward was made with Dick quickly establishing a permanent berth for himself on the Thomond first XV. In 1971, alongside Peter O'Halloran, John Bromell, Donal McMahon and Martin Leonard, Dick was at wing-forward on the team which created history by winning the Munster Junior Cup for the first time — Thomond beating Gar-

ryowen, who were chasing a Senior/Junior Cup double, by 6-3 at Thomond Park.

Easily, Dick Smyth could have chosen to move into senior ranks at any stage of his career, but he opted to remain as a junior player with Thomond, the North city club having good reason to be thankful for Smyth's loyalty and contribution over the years. Whether at wing-forward or his more familiar second-row role nowadays, Smyth has been an inspirational figure in Thomond's famed royal blue colours. All told, Dick has a tally of three Munster Junior Cup medals — after the initial success in 1971, Dick was on the team which beat U.C.C. 15-9 in Tho-

mond Park in 1980 and, a year later, was quite brilliant on the side which, against all the odds, fashioned a memorable 7-6 final victory against College in Musgrave Park.

To that hat-trick of Junior Cup medals, Dick can add nine North Munster League victories, seven appearances on winning Transfield Cup teams and four Inter-County victories with Limerick. On a personal level, his tally of nearly thirty inter-provincial caps surely constitutes a record, while Dick's contribution to junior rugby received its most fitting testimony in 1980 when he became the first winner of the Willie John McBride "Mr. Boots" trophy —



a perpetual award, made on an annual basis, for those who have made a significant contribution to junior rugby.

Equal satisfaction to the Munster Junior Cup successes came for Dick Smyth in 1981 and 1983 when

Thomond won the Limerick Charity Cup against senior opposition. In 1981, Dick was a heroic figure on the team which beat Young Munster 13-12 and in 1983, Thomond's 6-3 Final victory over Bohemians gave Dick his second

Charity Cup medal and the added satisfaction of having played with success for Thomond against all the local senior clubs. A fearless and tough competitor, Dick Smyth is a worthy recipient of our 1983 Rugby award.

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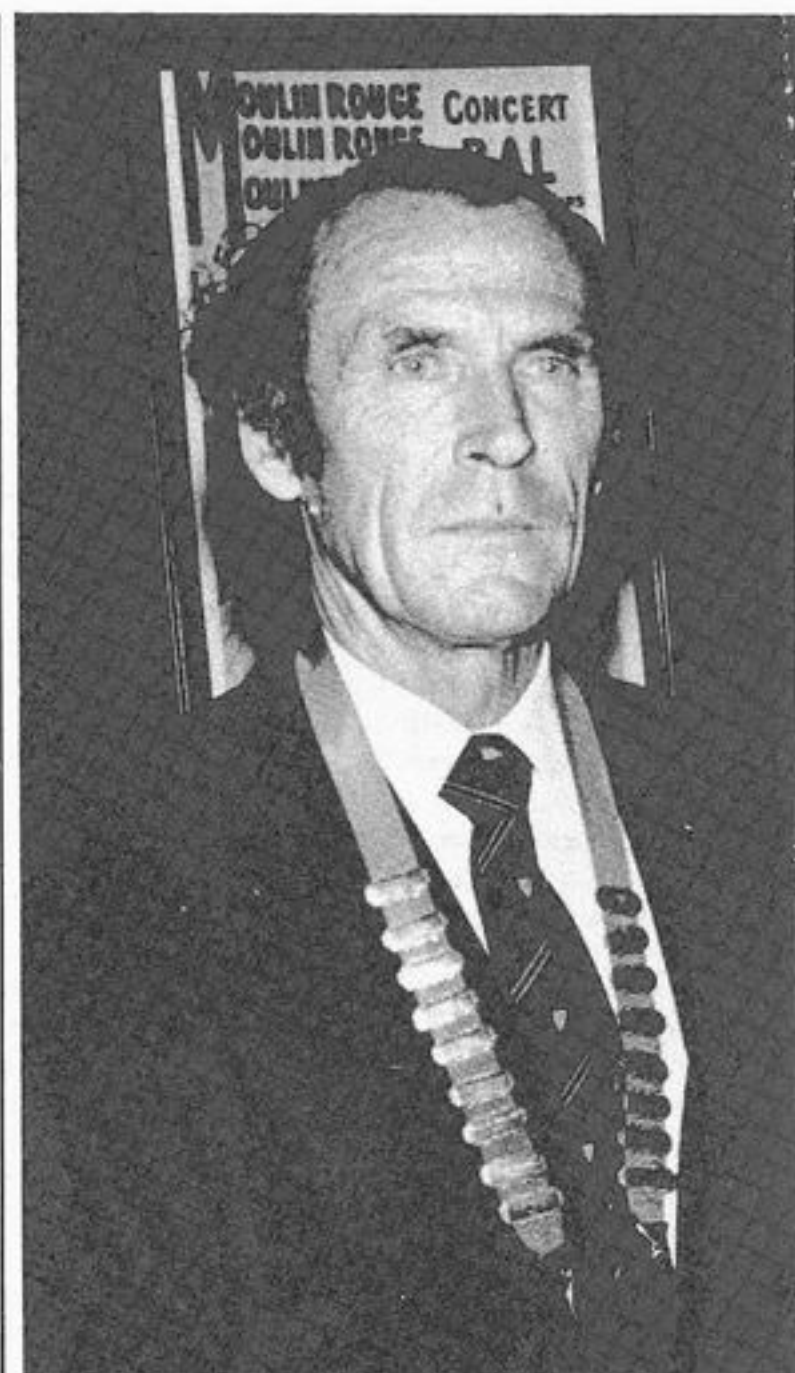
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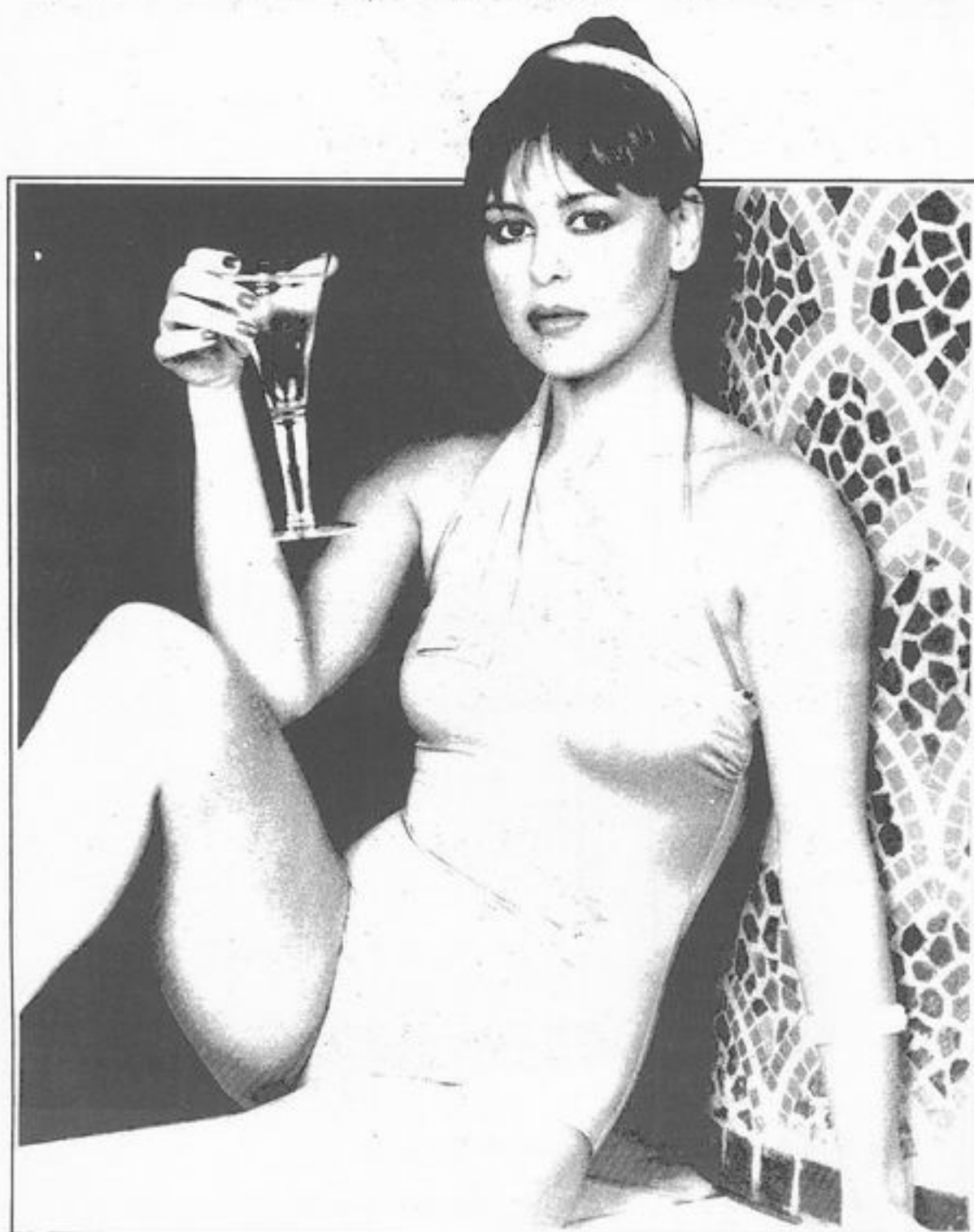
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SEAN HEHIR — JUNIOR SOCCER

FEW JUNIOR soccer players in Ireland, let alone Limerick, could boast of a sporting career as illustrious as that of Sean Hehir. The 23 year old Star Rovers' centre half defender has not only been capped for Ireland but he actually captained the Irish International junior side which met the Isle of Man in Dublin during the 1981/'82 season.

Yet despite this, if you were to ask Sean what he feels was the highlight of his career to date, he would tell you that it was the 1983 Munster Junior Cup final in which Star beat Ballynanty Rovers by two goals to one.

Sean took up the game of soccer over twelve years ago with Don Bosco soccer club. The team, under the guidance of the late Paddy Brennan, won the Under 12 League before Sean moved on to play schoolboy soccer with St.

Brigid's.

At the age of seventeen Sean was again on the move, this time to Star Rovers where he carved a niche for himself on the minor team. Three years, and a minor league medal, later he joined the Star



Sean Hehir, third from left, back-row, pictured with his team mates at Priory Park.



Sean Hehir, (extreme right) displays his first ever Junior International Cap. Sean and team mate, Pat Boland, (left) and Frank Flynn were presented with their caps at a special function at the Pike Inn last year. Also in the photograph is Mick Noonan, FAI Junior Selector.

junior team where his skills as a football player really began to flourish.

During the 1981/'82 season Sean captained the Star Rovers side which won the Limerick Area Final of the FAI Junior Cup and advanced as far as the national semi-finals of the Cup in which they were beaten 2-1 by Cherry Orchard of Dublin.

It was as a result of his performance in the Cup that Sean, along with team-mate Pat Boland, were selected to the Irish junior side which met Scotland later that season. A short time later Sean was honoured with the captaincy

of the Irish side which met the Isle of Man in Dublin.

In spite of these remarkable achievements Sean's fondest memories lie with Star Rovers' successes in both the Munster Junior and FAI Cups.

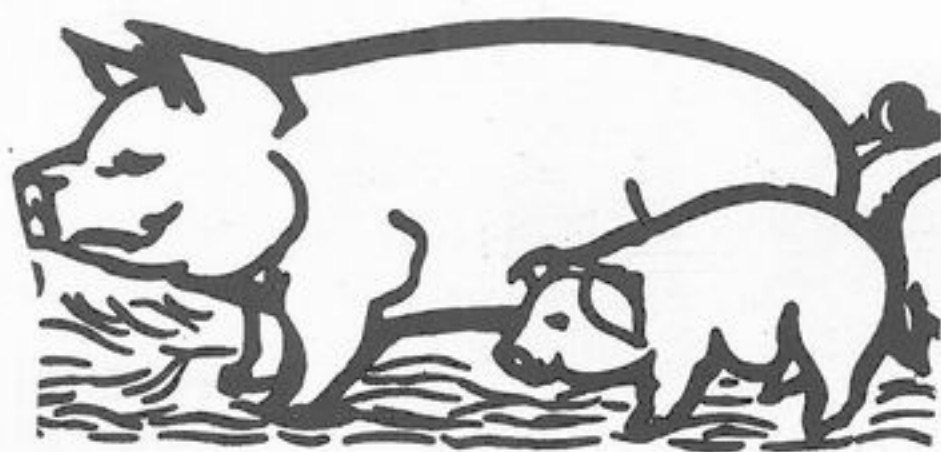
"Don't get me wrong. It's great to get a cap. It's what a lot of fellows play for. It's a great honour especially for me as everyone knows how hard it is to get a cap if you're not playing for a Dublin club. But despite this I think my most memorable game was our MFA Cup final victory over Ballynanty Rovers. I enjoyed the game and was playing

with my own team who are a great bunch of lads", Sean says.

Sean attributes his success to the Star Rovers Committee who, he says, are a great credit to the Club. "Their tremendous work, particularly over the past few years, deserves a lot of praise. They helped me out a great deal", Sean admits.

As for the future Sean claims that he would love to play cross-channel soccer but reckons that he has no real chance of this. "Once you're outside of Dublin nobody really pays any attention to you", he concludes.

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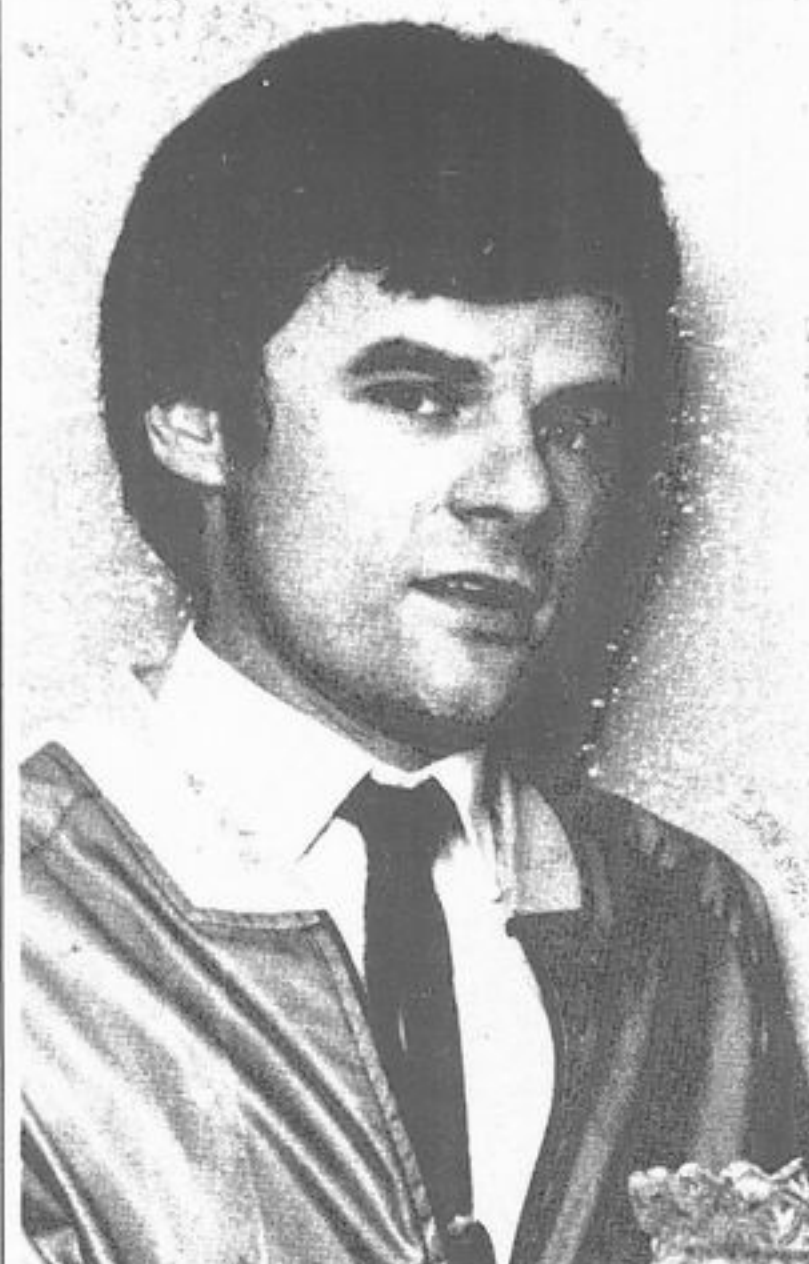
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MARY POWELL HOCKEY



MARY POWELL is part of the reason why Ireland's international hockey status has risen so dramatically in the past twelve months.

She played on the historic Intercontinental Cup winning side that surprised the rest of the world in Kuala Lumpur last April.

Now she has retired from international playing, but still continues to help the team in a very practical way. She's the official physiotherapist to the Irish women's hockey squad.

Mary is proud of Ireland's rise to fame. "We were ranked nineteenth in the world before our victory in April — now we're ranked ninth. We've lost only two of our last nineteen internationals".

Mary plays with Lansdowne nowadays but most of her hockey was played in Leinster with Muckross. She has won a host of trophies and honours, including: seven Leinster Cup Medals, seven Leinster League medals, and seven All-Ireland medals. She has numerous Leinster caps and played for Ireland schools and under 23 level.

She has a total of 26 full international caps and also captained Ireland. The intercontinental Cup victory also brought her an added bonus. "I scored my one and only international goal in one of the earlier games", she remembers. "As a defender I seldom had that opportunity in competition at this level".

Ireland face several less important competitions in the run up to the world cup in Vancouver in 1986 and Mary hopes to contribute to continued success.

She continues to work as a physiotherapist specialising in sporting injuries and says 'there's never any shortages of those in this sportsman city'.

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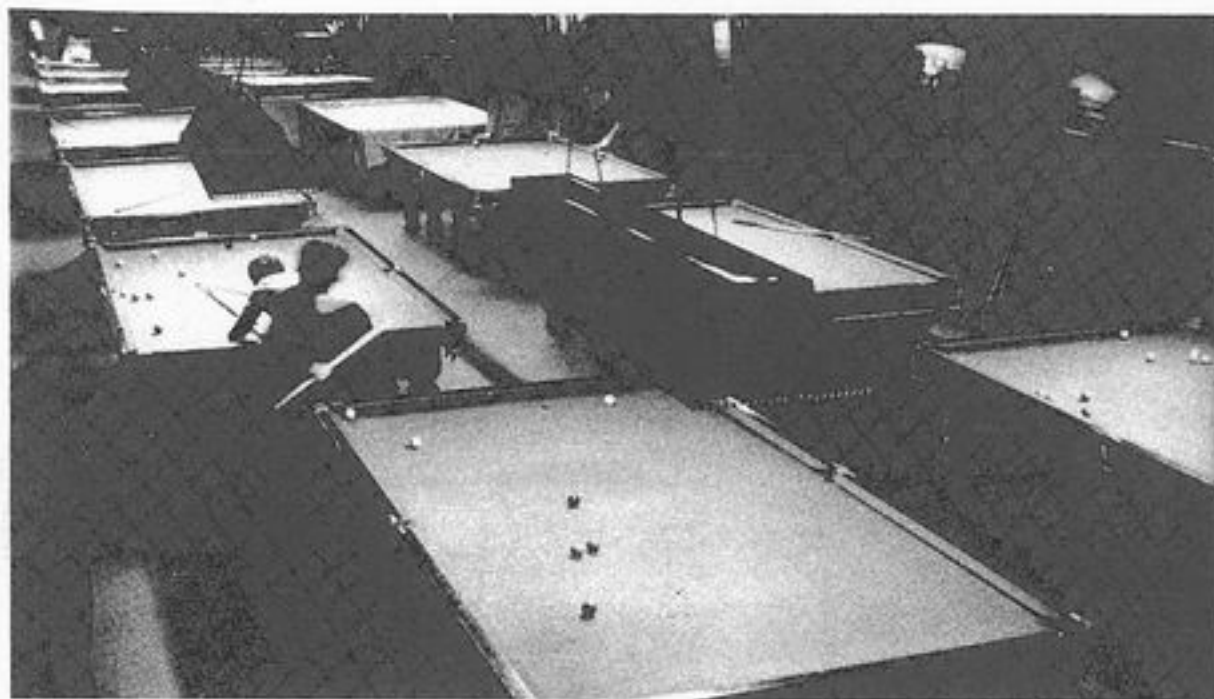
JOE McKENNA — Still none better.



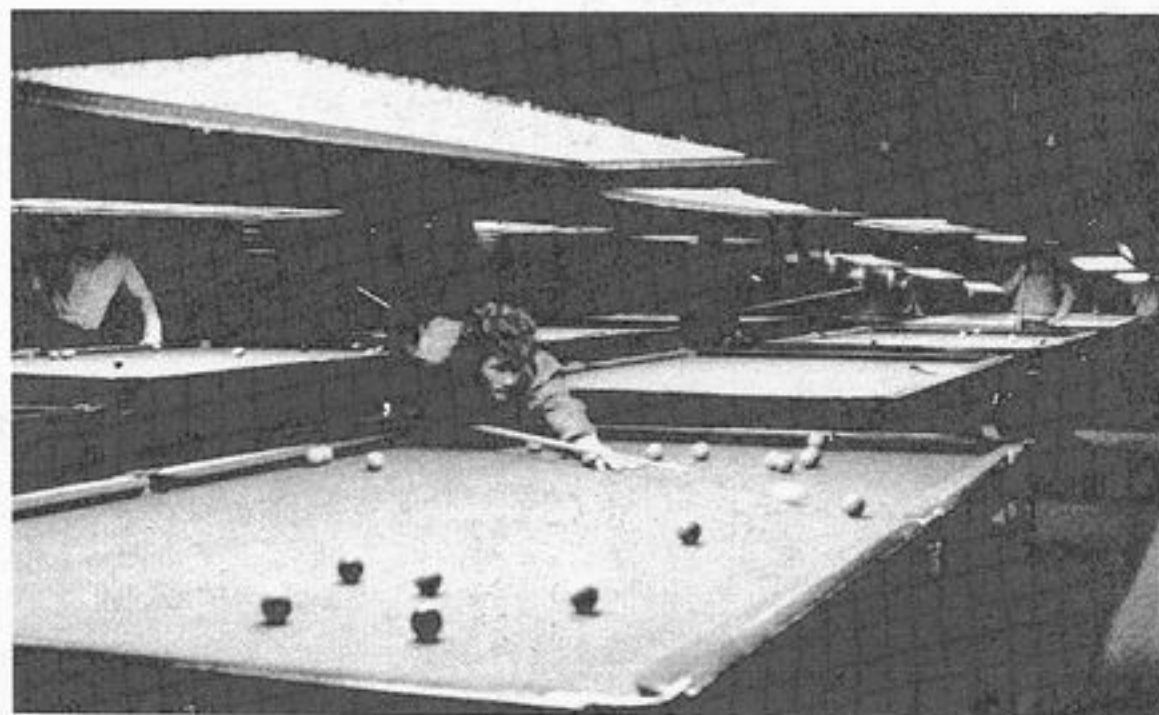
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ONE HUNDRED and twenty years of rowing on the Shannon at Limerick has not produced a finer pair of oarsmen than Larry Sherin (27) and Nial de Loughry (23), winners last year of the Irish Elite Coxless Pairs' Championship. Then they went on to represent Ireland at Strathclyde in Scotland where they won a clear length gaining four points to help the Irish squad bring back the Home International Rowing Championship.



Coxless pair racing, in which these two Limerickmen excel, is recognised worldwide as the most severe physical class of this very testing sport. Although in the light-weight class, which is for oarsmen averaging eleven stone weight, at the Irish Championships at Athlone last year, they beat the Garda Heavy-weight crew who went on to finish in the World Championships in New Zealand. Throughout the Home Internationals they beat Heavy-weight crews. Some understanding of the quality of their rowing can be judged from the fact that at Strathclyde they started off last. Then between 800 and 1,000 metres they came through Wales and passed the home champions at 1,600 metres. With 250 metres

to go they were down one length on England and passed the finishing line the same distance in front.

It was the same at Athlone. They were 1½ lengths down on Garda and the twenty fast strokes they asked for seemed to last for a hundred. Then they cut through Gardai with Lady Victoria (Queens University Past), the holders and Home International Champions finishing in third place.

The Limerick men won the Elite Coxless Pairs at the Cork Regatta and were in the St. Michael's Four that won the coxed invitation spring at Fermoy.

Larry, who is the third son of Mr and Mrs Larry Sherin of Corbally, began his rowing career in St. Munchin's College in 1973. With three others, his brother Justin, Leo Murphy and Gay Cullinane, they introduced rowing to NIHE. He stroked the St. Munchin's Crew that represented Ireland in the World Junior Championships in 1973. At NIHE he qualified in Business Studies and is now employed as an Accountant at Universal Insurance Company of Ireland at Shannon.

Nial de Loughry began rowing with St. Michael's in 1977. He was in the crew which won the Irish Intermediate Championship (formerly Junior) in 1980 and has the distinction of being one of the few oarsmen in Ireland or elsewhere to have won championships at Junior, Intermediate and Elite classes.



In 1981 he took a year off and went to work in San Francisco and on his return took up training again and it was then in partnership with his friend Larry Sherin that he was successful in the Elite Championship last year.

He qualified as a draughtsman at the College of Engineering, Limerick and is now a consultant. Second son

of Mr and Mrs Michael de Loughry, Mayorstone, his father rowed with Athlunkard Boat Club.

They both pay tribute to their coach, Dermot Henihan (St. Michael's), who is Irish Team Manager for the Lightweight World Championships to be held in Montreal next August.



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SOCCER AL FINUCANE



INEVITABLY, the controversy which surrounded the Limerick City-Limerick United saga dominated the soccer headlines in 1983. When the dust settled, however, and that nearly forgotten group — the players — got back to action on the field, one man strode the Market's Field stage like a colossus. Incredibly, at an age when the vast majority of his peers had long since departed the competitive scene, Al. Finucane continued to give classic displays in the heart of the Limerick defence week after week.

With Kevin Kitzpatrick in retirement and injury dictating that Joe O'Mahony, Brendan Storan and Pat Nolan should miss a huge portion of the season, the experience and guile of Finucane was never more badly needed in the Limerick team. And how the great indestructible of Irish football responded to the challenge. Alongside youngsters like Billy Daly and Gordon Cowpar, Finucane was always the steadying influence, using the experience gained over 20 years in football to cover the gaps left by inexperienced colleagues. Certainly, the influence of Finucane was profound on the younger players with Gordon Cowpar, particularly, benefitting richly from the experience of playing alongside the former international.

If 1983 was another year of remarkable contribution from Finucane, it was no more than par for the course from a player who has had few, if any, equals as a quality defender in Irish football since he first came on the L.O.I. scene in the early sixties. Fittingly, Finucane's footballing prowess has received the highest accolades. In 1967, having already played in two losing F.A.I. Cup Finals against Shamrock Rovers, Al. was nominated as the Irish Soccer Personality of the Year. That same year, he gained the

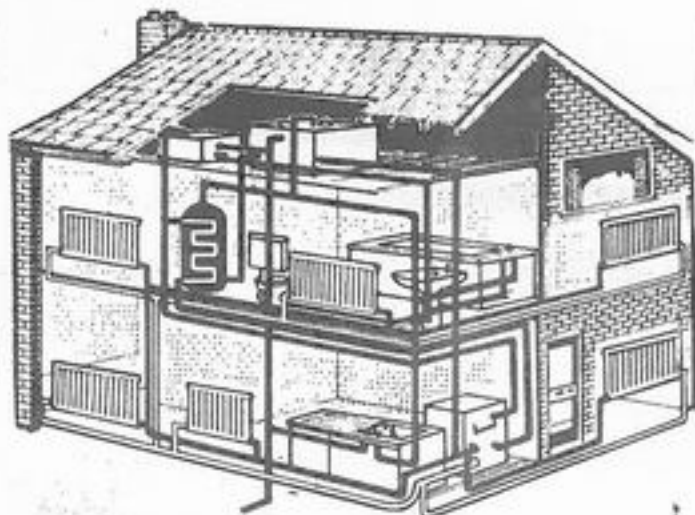


first of eleven full international caps against Turkey in addition to establishing himself as a regular member of L.O.I. representative teams.

1971 was a real red-letter year in Al's soccer career as he captained Limerick to a first-ever F.A.I. Cup success — the blues beating Drogheda 3-0 at Dalymount Park. Months later, Al had the unique privilege of captaining the full international team against Austria in Linz. Later in his career, Al. added further F.A.I. Cup medals when he captained Waterford to beat St. Patrick's Athletic in 1980, while he was left-full on the Limerick team which beat Bohemians 1-0 in 1982.

Boasting an impeccable sporting temperament, never having been ordered off during his long career, Al. Finucane is an outstanding model for any youngster entering the soccer code. Just one major honour in soccer has eluded him — a league winner's medal. Playing better than ever at the moment and with no imminent thoughts of retirement, Al. Finucane might well fulfill that cherished ambition before he finally calls it a day.

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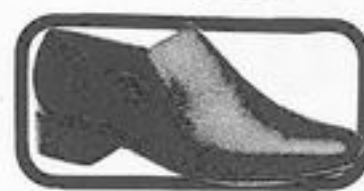
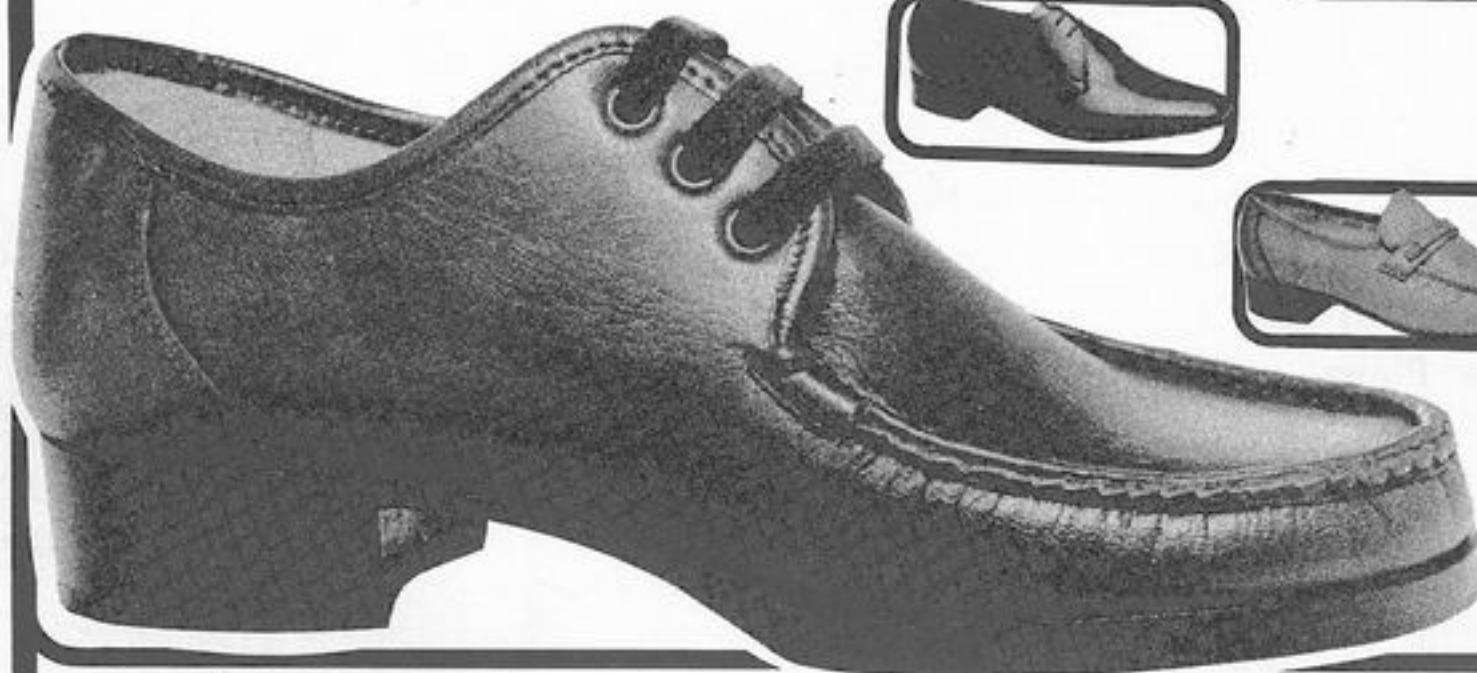


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HORSE-RACING ANDREW McNAMARA

ON THE National Hunt scene, three races rank above all others. At Cheltenham, the Gold Cup and Champion Hurdle dominate, while at Aintree, the Grand National retains its unique charisma for the sporting public. Realistically, most trainers are content to have a horse capable of competing in these races without ever harbouring thoughts of eventual success. In 1983, however, Croom-based trainer Andrew McNamara so nearly achieved a historic double. At Cheltenham, in the Champion Hurdle, Andrew turned out Boreen Prince in splendid fettle to run the race of his life before finishing second behind the Mercy Rimell trained Gaye Brief.

A few weeks later, all eyes were on the Grand National at Aintree, where Andrew's unconsidered outsider Yer Man, ridden by Val O'Connell, was quite magnificent in defeat as he came in third behind Corbiere and Greasepaint. Put into perspective, inside a month Andrew McNamara had trained horses to figure in the frame in two of the three most competitive and

prestigious races in the National Hunt calendar — a remarkable feat by the popular Croom-based trainer, who has made a significant impact since joining the training ranks a few years ago.

In many ways, 1983 was a case of so near and yet so far for Andrew. A raging-hot favourite and a virtual handicap certainly for the Sweeps Hurdle, Boreen Prince

sustained a minor leg injury and had to be withdrawn at the last moment. In addition, Andrew had the frustration of seeing his charges fill second berth in no fewer than twenty races. For all that, Andrew is philosophical about racing and given any sort of luck is happy that his charges will regularly be appearing in the winners enclosure in the months and years ahead.



In that vein, Andrew McNamara is quite enthusiastic about the future prospects of young bumper horses Irishfallen Man, Major Row and Beauty's Home, while he is confident that Seven Specs, who bolted home in a Maiden Hurdle at Roscommon recently, will make up into a decent hurdler in time. Andrew is also

very happy with the prospects of some two-year-olds who have yet to make their reacecourse debuts.

Of course, Boreen Prince remains the star of the McNamara stable and the advent of this exciting hurdler into the chasing world should certainly enlighten the Novice Chase scene in 1984. As he has amply

demonstrated in the past with the likes of Boreen Prince, Yer Man, Elbeejay, A. Sure Row, Another Row and Rent-A-Row, Andrew McNamara is a match for the best when he has the right material at his disposal. With any luck in running, his charges should certainly be chalking up the wins in 1984.

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ANNE MULCAIR - SWIMMING

ALTHOUGH only fifteen years of age Anne Mulcair has already achieved one of the highest accolades open to anyone in sport. The Askeaton swimmer has been selected to the 1984 Irish Olympic Swimming Panel. And, with any bit of luck, Anne could well find herself representing Ireland in Los Angeles this Summer.



Askeaton swimmer, Anne Mulcair.

Anne, who is a pupil at the Salesian Secondary School, Fernbank, has been swimming competitively since she was a mere six years of age. And although the expression, "like a fish to water", might be the most hackneyed and tired cliché going, it is undoubtedly the most apt way to describe Anne's affinity to the water. Because Anne was born into a swimming family. Her father, mother and two sisters are all accomplished swimmers.

Anne set her first record at a very young age when she became the first Irish swimmer to win a gold medal at Butlins. But that only marked the beginning of what, to date, has proved to be a remarkable if not incredible sporting career.

In 1981 Anne collected her first national medal in the 400 metre front crawl but that has long been overshadowed by a succession of European and international victories.

Last year was probably the most successful period in Anne's swimming career. In February she competed, and came 5th in the 400 metre



The Mulcair family following the 1983 Thomond Swim. From left: Anne, Mary, Sheila, Sheila Junior - (winner of Thomond Swim), Michael and Elaine.

and 100 metre front crawl events in a major European gala in Offenbach, Germany.

In March she swam for the Irish Schools team in the quadrangular gala in Cork and took gold in the 100, 200, 400 and 800 metre front crawl events at the Irish Spring Championships in Tuam.

The following month she took first place in the 200 metre front crawl and 3rd place in the 100 metre front crawl at an international meet in Aberdeen.

In June of last year Anne was kept particularly busy with an international meet in Cardiff, (in which she came 4th in the 800 metre front crawl event), and, following a

week long special training course in Leeds, Anne competed in the Leeds Open Meet collecting first place in the 200 metre and third place in the 100 metre front crawl events.

Later the same month she helped the King's Hospital Relay Squad, with whom she trains, to victory in the 4 x 50 front crawl event of the Aer Lingus International Meet (in doing so the squad set a new Irish record).

Anne also notched up a series of individual victories at the Aer Lingus Meet taking first place in the 100, 200 and 400 metre front crawl events as well as first place in the

400 metre Individual Medley race.

At the Irish Age Group finals held in Cork last July Anne was again in top form to take golds in the 200 and 100 front crawl events and the 200 metre Individual Medley.

In August Anne represented Ireland in the European Junior Championships in Mulhouse, France.

In September Anne was selected to the Irish Olympic Swimming Squad by the Irish Amateur Swimming Association and, through intensive training, is now only 2.5 seconds off the Olympic qualifying time for the 100 metre front crawl.

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DES HANRAHAN - GREYHOUNDS



ONE OF the great characters and personalities of the Limerick sporting world, Des Hanrahan will be an extremely popular winner of the Greyhound award. Des in his early years was a first-class rugby and soccer player who played cup football with Shannon and Bohemians and in the League of Ireland with Limerick. But as his journalistic career expanded and flourished, he had little time to pursue these activities, especially at week-ends.

So he concentrated more on writing and broadcasting about his first two sporting loves, mainly with the "Old Limerick Chronicle" and with RTE and in later years his fluent commentaries did much to enliven race meetings all over the country.

He had always been deeply involved in greyhound racing and it was to be the centrepiece of his sporting activities. Des owned many a good dog himself, and has been a nominator of the Irish Cup event at Clounanna for twenty years, as yet unfortunately without success.

He continued as Sports Editor of the "Limerick Leader" group up to October 1965 when he was appointed Executive Chairman of Bord na gCon. At the time, it was seen as the perfect means of rewarding a man who had done so much for greyhound racing and coursing, but Des looked upon it in a different light and set about making the industry one of the best organised, financed and controlled in the country. That he succeeded is beyond question and in those 19-odd years he projected the image of greyhound affairs in the most favourable light.

He has now retired and is turning his attentions to yet another sporting pastime - Golf. The members of Castletroy have already had a sample of Des's ver-



satility and our spies out that way suggest that it won't be very long before he lands a really big prize. And when that happens, Des Hanrahan, as in all other walks of life, will be a most popular winner.

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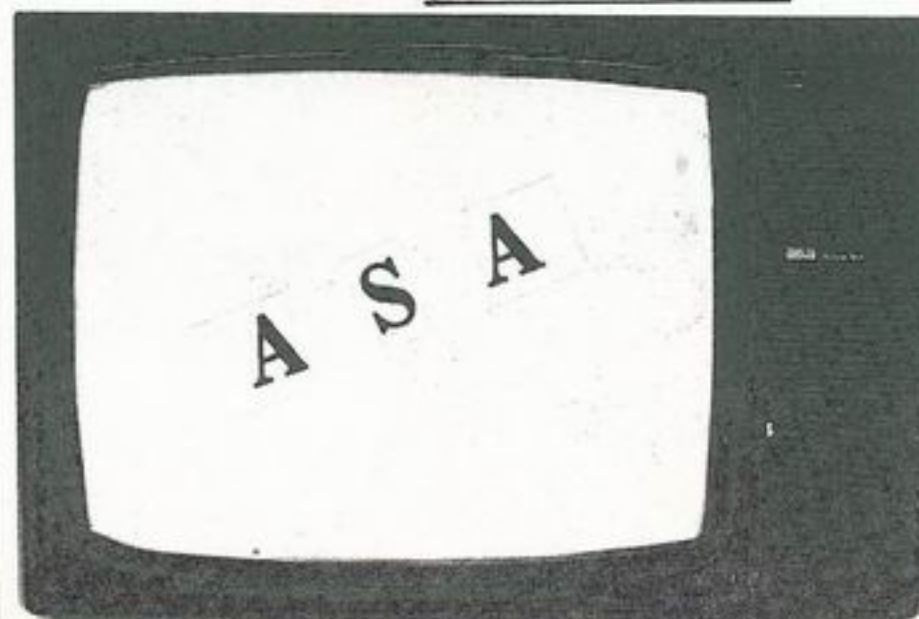


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BRID DUKES COMMUNITY AWARD

BRID DUKES is a busy woman. She bustles about all day and half the night running the Belltable Arts Centre. For her it's a way of life and it's not an easy one.

Her biggest problem as administrator of the region's arts centre is catering for everyone's tastes. Someone is always complaining, but that never bothers Brid.

She relies on her life's experience in theatre and a gut instinct when choosing a show or an exhibition for the Belltable. It usually pays off with full houses and happy audiences.

Touring groups from London, Belfast, Dublin, Galway and even South Africa have walked the boards at the Belltable. Some of the country's best known artists have hung their work in the gallery.

Local amateur groups use the venue for their productions and local artists use the gallery.

Brid Dukes is ambitious. She is not content with a suc-

cessful arts centre. Her plans for the future include forming the Belltable's own professional theatre group before the end of 1984. The group will tour nationally and locally bringing a unique community theatre concept to the region.

Cllr. Jack Bourke is chairman of the Belltable Board of Directors. He describes Brid Dukes as the most professional arts administrator in the country. His association with her goes back to the days when he ran the City Theatre. She worked there as a stage director during the seven-

ties and prior to that in the Abbey in Dublin.

"She's enthusiastic and adventurous and willing to do anything to ensure the survival and success of the Belltable", says Cllr. Bourke.

He also expressed the hope that she will become directly involved in the revamped Civic Week of 1985.

It is three years since President Hillery cut the ribbon and declared the Belltable Arts Centre open. Since then Brid Dukes has succeeded in having it recognised as a national venue for art exhibitions and theatre.



Brid Dukes.

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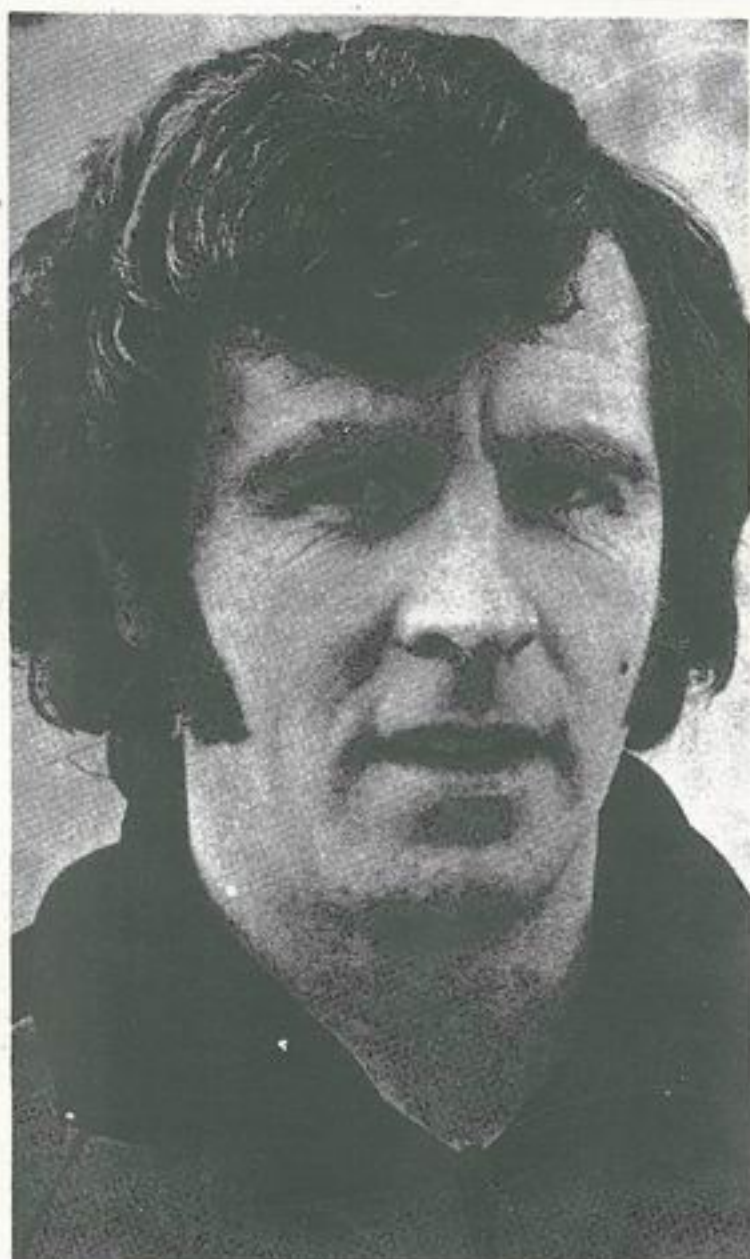
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BOB NESBITT - COMMUNITY AWARDS

WHEN Bob Nesbitt saw a hundred disabled people enjoying themselves and competing in the Irish Wheelchair Association's third annual sports day at Plassey last July he felt fulfilled and happy. It's the sort of thing he works to help achieve.

But Bob is the first to tell you that he's just one of many volunteers who work quietly to make more integration into everyday life possible for the handicapped.

"I'm accepting the community award on behalf of the handicapped people of Limerick, their families, friends and all who try to understand their needs and respond to them. I hope that by accepting it the cause we work for will be advanced", Bob told LIMERICK ECHO.

The Co. Antrim-born Manager of Limerick Cargo Handling Ltd. has been involved with the local branch of the Irish Wheelchair Association since he came to Limerick in 1974. His then two-year-old son, Ciaran was, and is, severely handicapped, and this made Bob highly aware of the needs of the disabled.

Bob was asked to help out by driving some disabled people to a function. That was the start. He went on to become local IWA Chairman for eight years. Just this year he handed over to Arthur Ellis, but his involvement has by no means ceased. He's

still Chairman of Limerick Co-ordinating Committee for the Handicapped, formed in 1981 - The Year of Disabled People. They organise the annual Plassey sportsday with the help of campus management and staff.

Bob believes there's a fund of community goodwill and cooperation in Limerick. He says it shows every time the handicapped appeal for funds or ask for practical help. But 'public awareness and administrative initiative are still very much lacking'. He's been disappointed with the aftermath of the disabled's special year.

"Disabled people are entitled to equality of opportunity. If that means they should have more attention and a little money to help them integrate into everyday life - they must have it. The public can help by pressurising administrators and politicians into acting on this".

He tell us his wife, Mary, has shown 'exceptional patience' as his years of involvement made heavy demands on home life. Ciaran is now twelve and attending a special boarding school in Dublin. His father's dream is that he could go to a school in Limerick. The other children: Geraldine who is now married, Eamon, a final-year engineering student and young Aideen, have always helped too, he says.

Bob is also a fanatical Bohemians rugby supporter and backroom mentor. He has high hopes of 1984 bringing success.



Bob Nesbitt - Community Award winner.

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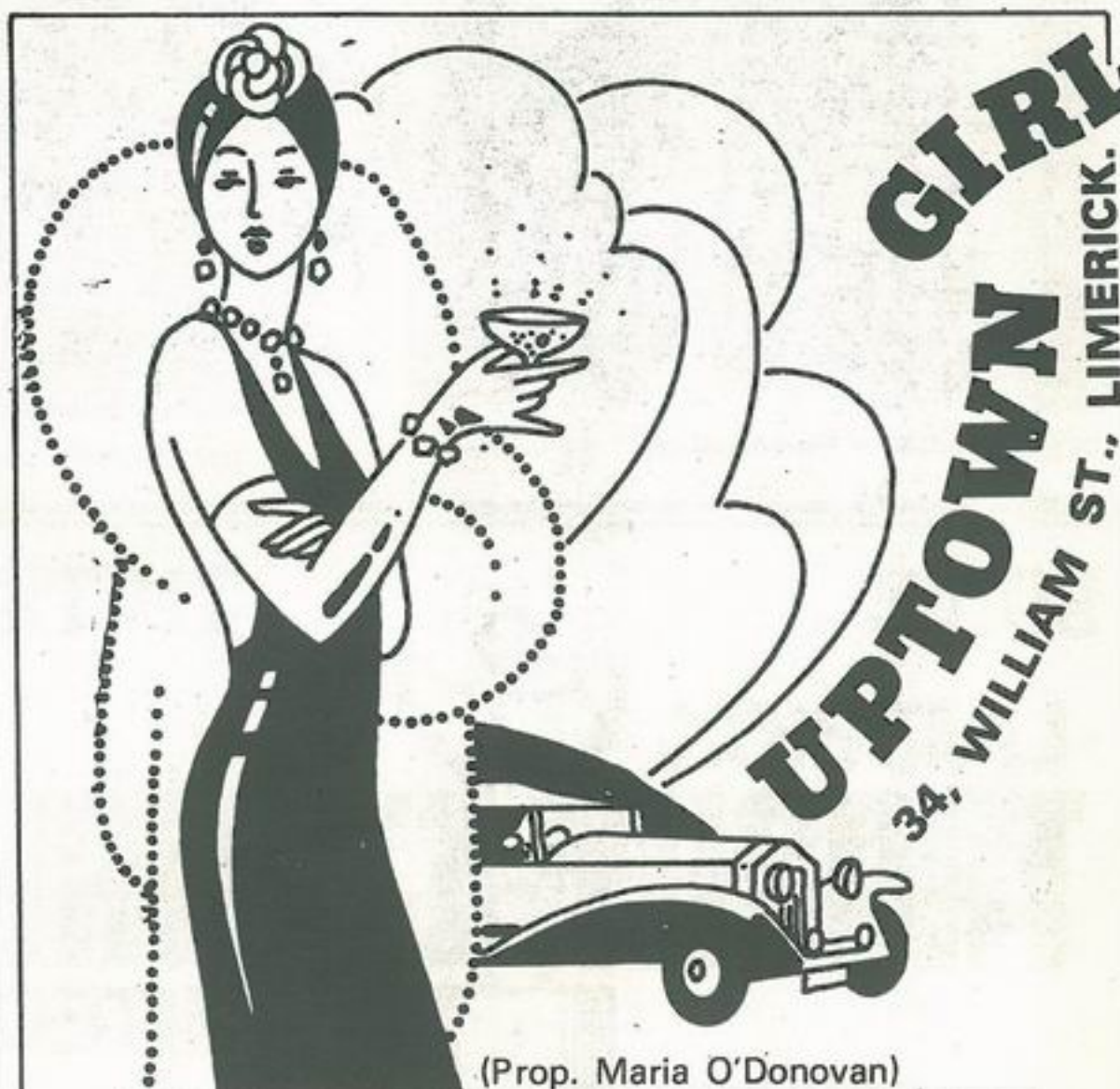
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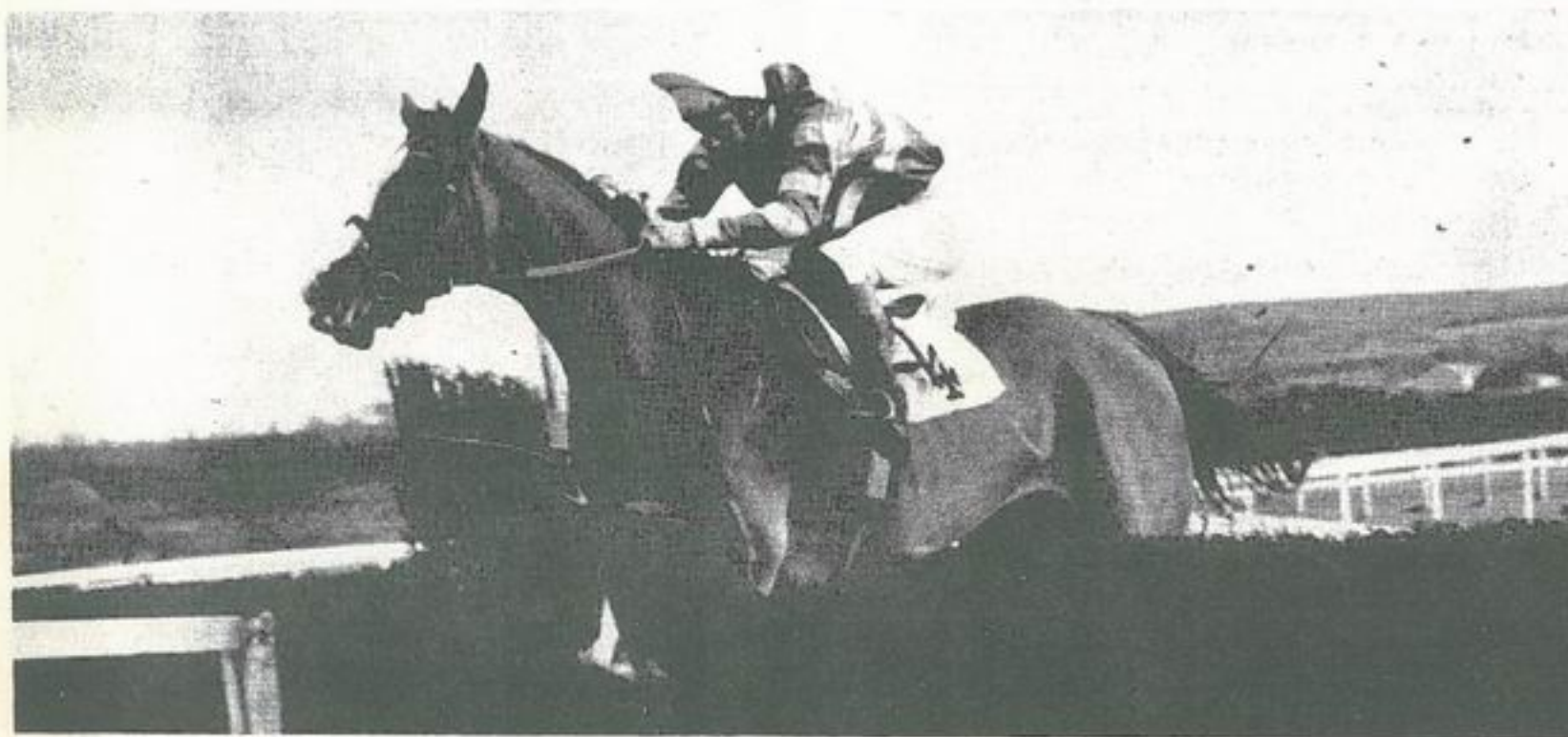
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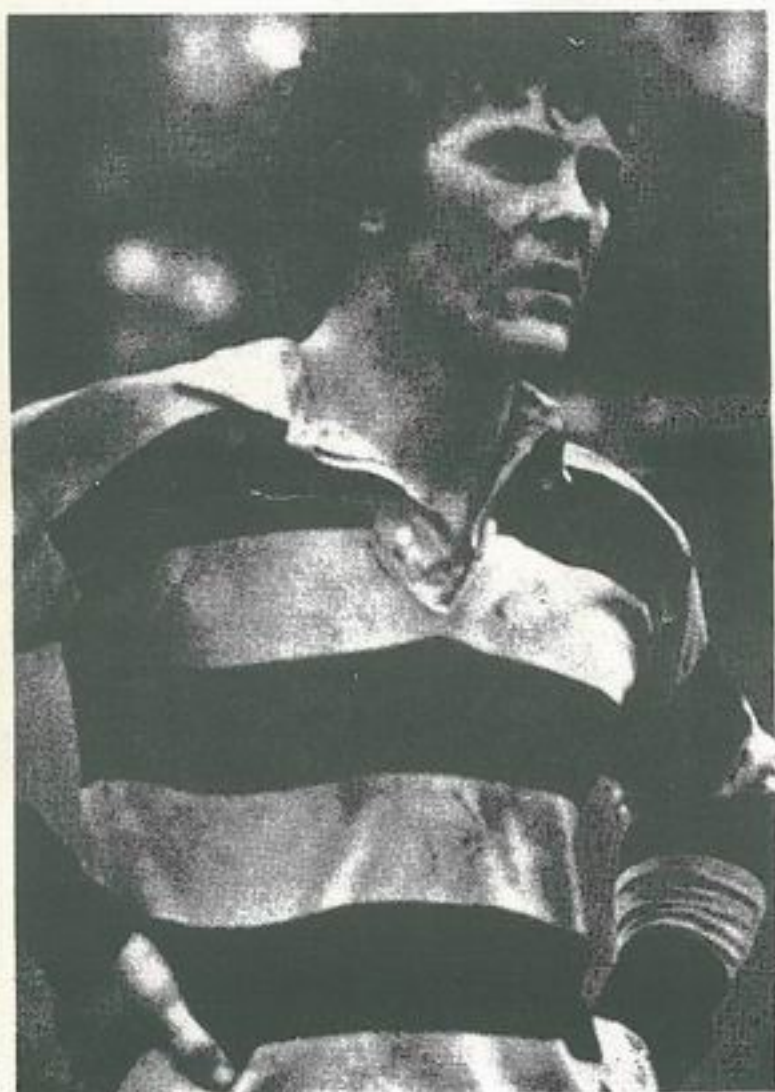
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COMMUNITY AWARD MAUREEN RONAN



THERE are very few people on call twenty four hours a day, seven days a week, every week of the year. Maureen Ronan, the administrator of ADAPT is one such person.

An energetic woman, Maureen has been involved with ADAPT, voluntary organisation which provides shelter for battered wives and their children in the whole Limerick region, since its inception in 1974.

Today she is full-time administrator of the organisation's £170,000 comfortable refuge in the former St. Brendan's School, Ballinacurra Weston. She is the public face of a group of hard working women who have put ten years effort into ensuring that adequate facilities for battered families are available in this region.

The new ADAPT refuge was opened in December of 1983 by the Minister for Women's Affairs, Mrs. Nuala Fennell, T.D. Its opening was the result of a lot of sweat, tears, hard work and fundraising. Maureen helped to co-ordinate a lot of it and no one was surprised when she was appointed administrator to run the refuge of eight family units and offices. She is helped by a full-time social worker, a house mother, a resident caretaker and a tough loyal team of volunteers.

ADAPT have suffered many setbacks over the years. The saddest day for the organisation was the day of the Pope's visit to Limerick in 1979. The roof of their first refuge, in the old delapidated city dispensary building near St. John's Square, came crashing in and the building had to be abandoned.

That refuge operated since 1976 and in its short three year existence cared for over 6,000 people. After the calamity many thought Limerick's shelter for women had closed forever. They were wrong. They didn't take into account the resilience of people like



Maureen Ronan and her colleagues in ADAPT.

Against all the odds they managed to keep a skeleton service going. They organised a counselling service and a daily clinic staffed by a social worker in the City's social service centre. Meanwhile they raised over £70,000 cash and convinced the Government to give them an additional £100,000 to purchase and renovate the present premises.

Today ADAPT provide a vital service for families who would otherwise have no one to turn to for help. Battered families, suffering in loneliness and fear, flock to the refuge for comfort, protection and advice.

Maureen Ronan and all the supporters of ADAPT have made this possible.

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