

LIMERICK BOXERS OF THE PAST

RUGBY NOTES

Will Ireland Win?

(By N. M.)

The Last Of The Old Guard: Tommy Cooney

(By J. M. "K. C.")

BEFORE passing from the old Joe Carmody, a local middleweight. pioneers, there are a few and his three fights with Willie Fitznames yet that deserve to be recorded in these notes. Notable one is that of Tommy Cooney, boxer, footballer and gymnast, a son of the then well-known Thady Cooney, whose lively stables in Davis Street and fox hounds were known throughout the south of Ireland. Thady Cooney was afterwards proprietor of Cooney's Circus.

But with the son's career I am now interested. He was splendidly developed young man; the star three-quarter of the old Limerick Co. Rugby Club, a champion amateur gymnast, having won this title at a competition open to all Ireland, at Transfield Circus; also a similar title for two performances on the trapeze and horizontal bars. His partner on that occasion was the well-known "Dyke" Fitz. As a boxer he achieved most prominence. His physical make-up developed by his early athletic training, enabled him to absorb punishment and give it. Rugged, aggressive, and as hard as nails, these attributes he demonstrated in his great fight with Tom Davis, a champion light-weight from London, at the old Theatre Royal, and which he won. Davis was then principal sparring partner to Joe McGrath, the only Irishman who fought for the bantam championship of the world against Billy Plummer.

A GREAT FIGHT.

Yes, Cooney fought a great fight that night and received a great ovation. He also fought Micky Head, of Dublin, the Irish light-weight champion (who fought Jim Dalton), and several other fights with the best at that time, but I have not the details of them. A great controversy arose between himself and Jim Dalton. They were matched, but the match eventually fell through over a question of weight.

Cooney also had a very popular boxing school, whose membership comprised such noted boxers of the time as Bob Kerr, Tim Ryan, Denny ("Kid") Madden, and a host of others.

Cooney afterwards toured Ireland with his father's circus, having as his sparring partner the famous Jack Hickey, who once fought Bob Fitzsimons, the middle and heavy-weight champion of the world (Hickey was born in Killee). They both gave exhibitions and took on all comers during the tour. Cooney later emigrated to America. Of his career there I have no records.

Mickey Hartigan.

For business and private reasons Mickey never sought publicity or the limelight of the public ring, but I have recollections of some of his private "scraps," particularly one when he gave Tom Davis (mentioned in these notes) a classic boxing lesson. Yes, "Mickey" is so unassuming I know he would prefer me not to mention them, but they were many. But as a competent judge of boxing for his expert knowledge of the game, his eye for spotting a "natural" and his advice always ready to give to aspiring young boxers, Micky stood supreme.

Jack Gleazer.

It is surprising how many famous carmen graduated from the boxing game. Healy, J. Grant, Hartigan, Gleazer. Jack Gleazer's fame as an carman will go down to posterity, and as a boxer he also deserves honourable mention. He learned the game early in the Dalton Boxing School. Jack was no text book boxer, but a fighter. His defeats of Sergeant Gray, an Army champion;

A letter appeared a short time ago in a mid-week issue of your paper from Mr. F. Mills, hon. secretary, Limerick County Boxing Board, in which he mentions about some cups presented to the Limerick Industrial Association by prominent citizens and others.

I am asked to state, on behalf of the late Mr. J. A. Dalton, who was a member of the Association, and an organiser of the tournament at which they were competed for, that he held in trust for a few years for the Association, hoping that they would revive their tournament, three cups, viz., "The Robert O'Sullivan Cup" (welterweight), "The Bernard Cup" and the A.A.A. Cup (Army). During his last illness he gave instructions to his wife to return the cups to the donors. This she has done, and asked me this week to hold the three signed receipts she received in acknowledgment from the donors.

I expect more information on this subject later, which I will convey to the Secretary, Limerick County Boxing Board.

The Close of This Series.

Before closing these notes on "Limerick Boxers of the Past," there is one whom some very old readers of these notes may remember. He was known as "Aunt" Ryan. He came from Pennywell, a very good heavyweight. I saw him fight at Transfield Circus a Dublin heavyweight, but he was beaten that night. I have no further record of him.

I have written these notes from my scrap book, records and memory in the hope that they may act as an incentive for our young boxers of to-day, and to revive the memories of our older generation. I may write a further series dealing with the more recent boxers of our time and the present day.

Tail End.—More American Stuff.

When Jack Sharkey wrestled the World's Heavyweight Championship from Max Schmelling, the German, it will be remembered that Sharkey's seconds on three occasions had to cut his hair, as it was continually falling over his eyes. "Bugs" Baer, the American sporting writer, describing the fight, said:—"Sharkey won the championship on points and three hair cuts, but 'twas a close shave. After the sixth round his seconds gave him an 'Eton Crop.' Well, then, it would be unmanly to hit anything wearing an 'Eton Crop.' So starting the seventh round Sharkey slapped Schmelling around for enough of rounds to grab the official groceries. But he was a sad looking champion at the finish. His left eye was closed tighter than a farmer's pocket-book on Broadway, and a beautiful cauliflower adorned his left ear that would do a family at Hollywood for a week. Yes, this Schmelling boy smacks harder than a crocodile with two tails. There was no doubt that Sharkey won most of the rounds on good, clean punching. And there is no doubt that the German is a great puncher, and can absorb more beating than the seat of a bad boy's pants. Poor Schmelling couldn't understand how a man can take three quick haircuts and get stronger. Samson took only one from Dallah and it whipped him. But Max, Samson got nothing. You got £20,000."

WE are on the eve of our international campaign, for tomorrow (Saturday), Ireland clash with France in Paris.

Much has been written about our chances, and many of the critics deem we will have a fifty-fifty break, and with that opinion I agree. Three seasons ago at Lansdowne Road we were surprisingly defeated. The following year it was our team carried the big surprise when defeating the Frenchies at Paris. Last season we flocked again to Lansdowne Road, and this time got surprise No. 3, when the French lads steamrolled our team to defeat.

We, who are unable to make the trip, will have the pleasure of listening in over the air, for the game will be broadcast from Paris by Dr. Ronnie Thornton, and relayed through Radio Eireann. Good for Radio Eireann, though many thousands were disappointed that the Final Irish Trial did not come over that station.

Our team arrived in Paris fit and well, and all in once piece. The major loss will be the absence of Jim McCarthy, the atomic wing forward, who is replaced by A. B. Curtis of Oxford University. The latter player gave a dazzling display in the trial, and Ireland are fortunate at the moment, that most of her players can be replaced by such sound substitutes. Last year, over-confidence paid the price, and quoting Karl Mullen, the captain, who stated, "that he thought the main danger to his team would be over-confidence." Let us hope that the players will have learned their lesson, and if they have, I expect that we will win our first big test, and then go on to create an all time record of winning the mythical "Triple Crown" for the third time in succession.

Munster Junior Cup.

Probably the outstanding game in the tourney will take place on Sunday next, when the keen old rivals, Shannon and Richmond, take the pitch at Thomond Park. Both those teams have had impressive form in the Cup in years past. But of latter years they have not hit the headlines. I would say that both fifteens are about on level terms. Each set of forwards know every trick of the game. Their back lines are not very impressive, and that's why I think that the side whose forwards last the pace will win.

Preceding this match the juvenile teams of Thomond and Bohemians will line out at 2.30 on the second pitch.

Young Munster's under eighteen had a big win over St. Mary's last Sunday, and look like a team that is going to offer stiff opposition to all comers.

The Munster Junior Cup game between C.I.E. and Thomond was indeed a poor exhibition. The former side undeservedly got home by a penalty goal. A little penetration in the loser's back line would have made all the difference.

Garryowen lost their Senior League game against U.C.C. Their forwards had complete mastery in the tight, but delayed action tactics when letting the ball out to their backs misfired.

Young Munster had Ballinasloe as visitors, who proved no match for the home side, who romped home rather easy winners.

Bohemians travelled to Galway and won their first game of the season, when defeating U.C.G. Let's hope this is going to be the turning point for the lads in red.

At Thomond Park "Bohs" and Young Munster try conclusions in league game. Kick-off, Schools.

On Thursday next Park, the Munster school open their interprovincial when they oppose Con is a game I fully expect win. Connacht have schools from which material, and they are congratulated on their keep the game going, the Munster team—(Rockwell), N. Keane (do.), M. O'Donnell (C McNamara (do.), M. Enwelling), S. Collins (St. Mu McEvoy (Rockwell), (P.B.C.), J. King (C.B.C. (Rockwell), T. Nádall (Dane (Mungret), T. Du cent) (Capt.), F. Guir chin's).

At Crescent Grounds Crescent College, ente Mary's College, Gay friendly. The home stud too strong for the visit out easy winners to the points to nil. Play was open and some fiery for were the order of the d O'Donnell (2 tries), M (tries), Geary and Hanr each). Leonard cony rahan's try.

Old Crescent are pi most travelled junior Limerick, and the fi go, the better they ge to judge from their h results. On Sunday th one of Galway's sent Galwegians, in Galway, fident that the juniors other scalp to their pressive belt.

Young Munster's ju travel to Tipperary to engage the local side, in a friendly.

Teams.

Fixtures.

Saturday, Jan. 28 (Mu League) Bohemians Munster, Thomond Park Referee, K. Quin.

Sunday, Jan. 29 (Mur Cup)—Shannon vs. Richn ond Park, 3.15 p.m. O'Sullivan.

Sunday, Jan. 29 (Juve Thomond v. Bohemians Park, 2.30 p.m. Referee.

Crescent College wi friendly against St. Mu lege at the Crescent C morrow (Saturday) at 4

On Sunday morning the Crescent Grounds will have a trial game, versus the rest.

Young Munster (v. B Downey, S. O'Connor, S Sullivan, D. Cowhey, J J. Lysaght, A. O'Connor gan, E. Morgan, F. O'Ke non, J. Moran, M. Griffin

Young Munster (v. C Sunday at Tipperary B. Kelly, S. Gavia, J. Hartigan, F. Cowhey,

M. Mulcahy, J. Madigar laghan, M. Galvin, J. H Meehan, T. Small, W. A

Bohemians (1st XV.) J. Connolly, V. Lane, F. Enright, M. Walsh, F. Ryan, H. Bolster, T. M Downes, J. Gilligan, D. O'Sullivan, T. Fitzgerald

Old Crescent—G. O'D Rigney, N. Quaid, P. O'Grady, L. Nestor, J. Wood, T. Hayes, T. Farr ris, W. O'Brian, D. R Spillane, A. O'Donovan.

RUGBY

MUNSTER SCHOOLS JUNIOR CUP

1916 MEMO MEETING OF COY

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