

**ATHLETICS:**

**NEIL CUSACK RETURNS TO U.S. IN TRIUMPH**

Presentation marks great year for young Limerickman

BY CHARLIE MULQUEEN

**NEIL CUSACK**, the only Limerick city man to represent Ireland in athletics in the Olympic games, will be 21 this Saturday. On Sunday he returns to the United States where he will resume his studies in Business Management at East Tennessee State University, leaving behind the golden moment when he raced to a tremendous victory by 22 seconds in last Sunday's Round the Houses race.

At a pleasant luncheon in Cruise's Hotel, Limerick, yesterday, Neil was made a presentation of a silver salver by Mr. Paddy Reid, area manager, Beamish and Crawford, to mark his many outstanding performances in 1972.

These included:  
● Setting new Irish figures twice for the 10,000 metres, first at the AAA Championships in the White City, when he finished 5th in a world-class field, and later in the Munich Olympics.

● In America he became the fastest ever 20-year-old over the marathon distance.

● Among many other triumphs in the States was a great victory in the Inter-Collegiate Championships. He also won the National Cross-Country A.A. in Chicago, beating Olympic champion, Frank Shorter, in the process. Unfortunately, he allegedly veered the wrong side of a flag in this race and was disqualified.

**Loneliness**

Speaking at yesterday's function, Neil spoke of the loneliness of long distance running. "Often when I'm plodding along on cold, dark days, I wonder if it is all worthwhile; whether anyone really cares. But a presentation such as I am receiving here today helps to put these thoughts behind it. It makes me conscious of people's interest, and I only hope I can reward this trust in me. My ultimate goal is to win the marathon in the Montreal Olympics, and will work dedicatedly towards this."

Neil indicated that he would probably remain in the States after finishing at East State in another eighteen months. "The opportunities are greater in the States, and so I hope to remain there until after '76, although my heart will always be here in Limerick, where many people have been so helpful to me."

Neil also mentioned that he would be back in Limerick in another eighteen months.

**Sean O'Sullivan**

Cusack flies back to the States on Sunday, and accordingly will be absent for the County senior cross-country championship, in which he was expected to have a great contest with the ageless Sean O'Sullivan, who must now be favourite to win his 14th title in the last sixteen years. Only twice has O'Sullivan lost to John Downes in 1961 and to John Cregan in 1966, and with Cusack an absentee on Sunday, he must again be the most likely winner.

Cusack, meantime, will be winging it back to Tennessee, where he will prepare for his next big assignments—the world-famous half marathon in Puerto Rico in February and the international cross-country in Ghent, Belgium, in March. Cusack fully appreciates the importance of these races. County will afford a reliable yardstick as to his true ability in the top echelon of world athletics.

**Sponsorship**

Later on, in April, Neil will set his sights on the prestigious Boston invitation marathon. The previous best Irishman in this event was Clare's Pat McMahon when he finished third four years ago. On present form, Cusack must offer very strong resistance to any opposition in all

these races. The question of sponsorship in athletics was raised at yesterday's function by Mr. John O'Donnell, chairman of Neil Cusack's home club, Limerick, and the former national sprint champion.

Mr O'Donnell paid tribute to Beamish and Crawford for this kind presentation to Neil Cusack. He hoped that many other local firms would see their way to offering material assistance to athletes and athletics.

The Mayor of Limerick, Cllr. Paddy Kieley, congratulated Neil Cusack on his many achievements, and referred to him as Limerick's ambassador on the American Continent.

"I am glad that a firm such as Beamish and Crawford have shown their appreciation of his efforts in making the presentation," he said.

**P.E. College**

The Mayor also referred to the new Physical Education College.

"The College will be opened at the end of January, 1973. I welcome this, and hope that the youth of Limerick will take advantage of this tremendous boon to the district," said Mayor Kieley.

Yesterday's presentation was a gesture of both support and appreciation for the most exciting in Limerick sport, no matter what code. Neil Cusack returns to the States this weekend with the best wishes of all Irish sportsmen. With luck, he will end Ireland's long list of failures in Montreal in 1976.

**IN THE CHRONICLE SOCCER PAGE**

The sacking of Frank O'Farrell by Manchester Utd. made headlines throughout the world. "Hotspur" has just returned from a visit to Manchester, and you can read his views on United's ever growing problems in a special article in the Chronicle Soccer Page.

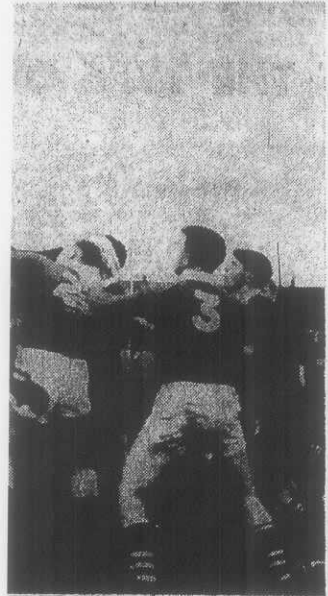
Reports on Geraldines and Southpark Rangers A.F.C. dinner dances will also appear, as will an article on St. Munchin's A.F.C. presentation of awards.

Don't forget to place a standing order with your newsgagent for the Saturday Chronicle.

**Doon G.A.A.**

Doon G.A.A. Club will hold its annual general meeting at the Parochial Hall on this Saturday night at 8 p.m. All members are welcome to attend.

Printed and published at Offices, 54 O'Connell Street, Limerick, by the proprietors, The Limerick Leader Ltd., and circulating in the City and Counties of Limerick, Clare, Tipperary, Cork, Kerry and Galway. Transmissible through post in Great Britain and Ireland at newspaper rate of postage, and at magazine rate of postage to Canada and Newfoundland. Printed in Ireland.



game at Thomond Park in 1963. Mick Carey, Gerry Murray, Paddy on 6-3. The teams meet again at y 16th and a special feature ap- is issue.

**is on Saturday**

**TER ATION IFIES**

**ILLY DRILLED SIDE**

**QUEEN**  
the 7th All Blacks to come on Jan- nsity. There will be mid-week sess- the week after. Then on the week- ck on the Saturday and gather in ler coach Noel Murphy.

surprise of major proportions if the Cork side doesn't achieve a comfortable victory.

**FRIENDLIES**

Old Crescent and Shannon are involved in senior friendlies on Saturday. Old Crescent will be in Ballinasloe and Shannon play Highfield in Cork.

**FIXTURES**

**Saturday:**  
Munster Senior League—Con- stitution v. Young Munster, Cork, 2.45; Bohemians v. Garry- own, Thomond Park, 2.45, R. G. Armstrong.

Senior friendlies—Ballinasloe v. Old Crescent, Ballinasloe; Highfield v. Shannon, Cork, 2.45.

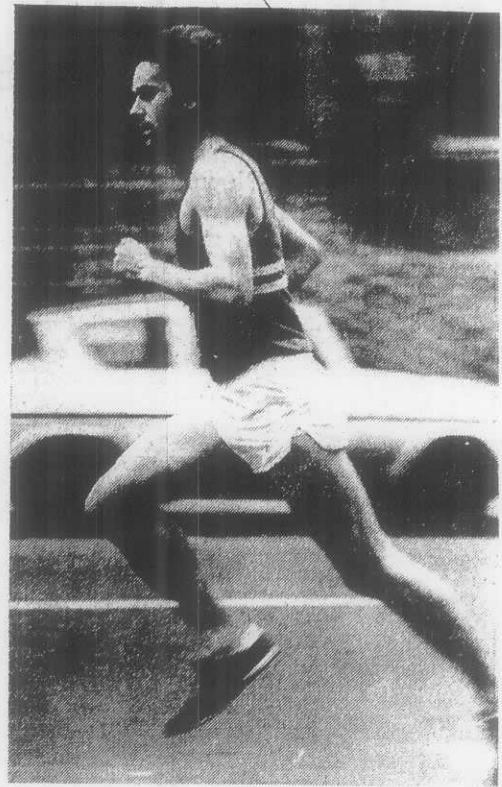
Under 20—Bruff v. Shannon, Bruff, 2.45, M. McInerney.

Under 14—Young Munster v. Richmond, Greenfields, 12 noon; Bohemians III v. Old Crescent III, back pitch, 2.45, M. Lynch.

**Sunday:**  
Garryowen II v. Presentation, Doonadoyle, 2.45, P. Davy; Boh- emians II v. Nenagh, Thomond Park, 2.45, G. Joyce; Young Munster II v. St. Mary's, Green- fields, 2.45, M. Reddan; Thom- ond v. Shannon II, Shelbourne Park, 2.45, J. Allen; Newport v. Clonwilliam, Newport, 2.45; Car- rick-on-Suir v. Bruff, Carrick-on- Suir, 2.45; Carrick-on-Suir II v. Bruff II, Carrick-on-Suir, 2.45.

Under 16—Thomond v. Young Munster, Shelbourne Park, 12 noon.

Clonwilliam v. Blackrock, Tip- perary, A. O'Sullivan.



Neil Cusack on his way to a great victory in Sunday's Round the Houses Race.

**Senior Soccer: Locals travel to 'bogey' venue**

**Limerick face the mighty Harps**

BY TONY PURCELL

**FINN HARPS**, surely one of the most attractive sides in the country, who lost 3-2 in a memor- able top-of-the-table clash with Waterford last Sun- day, will be more than anxious to get back on the winning trail at Ballybofoey on Sunday when they face Limerick in what should be an exciting game.

Limerick have never triumphed at the Co. Donegal venue since the Harps came into the League of Ireland almost four years ago. Indeed, the locals re- cord is very bad against Harps, having only beaten them once at the Markets Field some 3 years ago.

Thus the chances of improv- ing the position away from home on this occasion would appear very slim for Limerick, whose failure to cash in on many scoring opportunities has been painfully obvious in the past three years.

They lost 1-0 to Bohemians at Dalymount Park, having been completely on top territorially; they gave Waterford a rousing game a fortnight ago when they drew 0-0 in a tremendously ex- citing encounter, and then last Sunday Limerick had to wait until the 70th minute before getting the equalising goal to draw with Athlone Town.

**URGENT ACTION**

Thus the need for at least two goal-scoring forwards is very apparent at the present time, and unless the Board of Directors and Player-Manager, Amby Fogarty, take urgent steps in this direction, then Limerick are going to find goals extremely hard to come by. With such a solid defence and an adequate enough mid-field trio, it is a pity that the side badly lacks scoring power.

Des Kennedy was very dis- appointing last week, and I will not be surprised if Tony Mcaney comes back into the front line alongside Tony Fitzgerald and Colin Mathier, both of whom have fared well in the last two outings.

**OVERLOOKED**

One player I feel who should

be included in the defence is Richie Hall. He was overlooked for the game with Athlone Town, having apparently re- covered from the leg injury sus- tained against Bohemians which forced him to miss the Water- ford clash.

Hall, it will be recalled, was Limerick's "Player of the Year" last season, and has been play- ing rather consistently well be- fore Amby Fogarty decided to operate in the back four.

Hall, I understand, stormed out of the dressingroom before the start of last week's game on being told that the team was unchanged for the second week running. It appears he was never asked if he was fit to play, and the player was not considered, even though he had recovered from the injury.

It will be interesting to see if Hall returns to the team on Sunday.

**CHANCE**

Finn Harps confidence was affected somewhat by last week's defeat at the hands of Water- ford, but they still have a chance of getting back to the top of the table if they beat Limerick and Waterford slip up against Cork Hibernians in the big match of the day. However, Hibernians will find it extremely difficult to overcome Waterford on last Sunday's scintillating performance.

The Harps are a great foot- balling side to watch, and with such talented players as Terry Harkin, top goal scorer; Jim Nichol, Jim McDermott, Peter Hutton and Jim Smith included in the side, they look certain to hold a distinct edge in attack. However, I will not be surprised if goals are at a minimum with two fine defences in action.