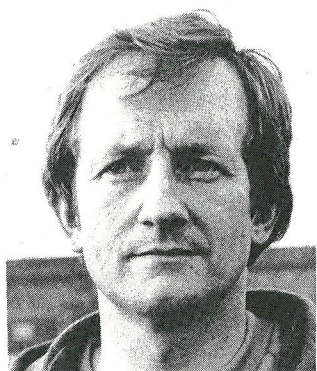
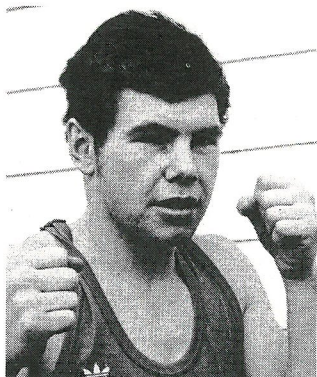


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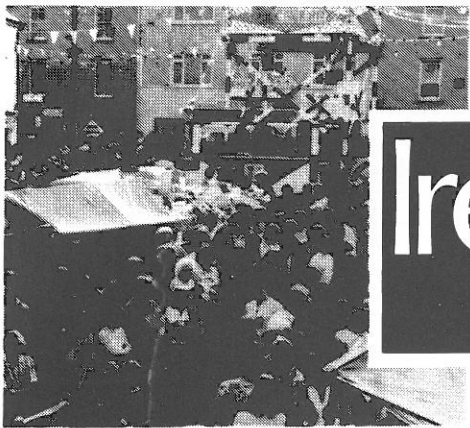
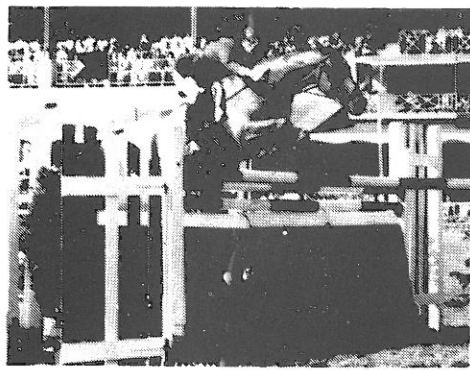
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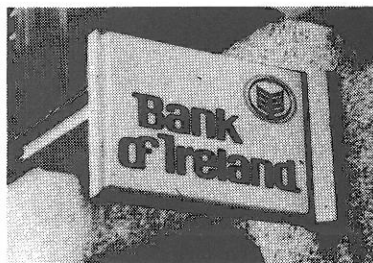
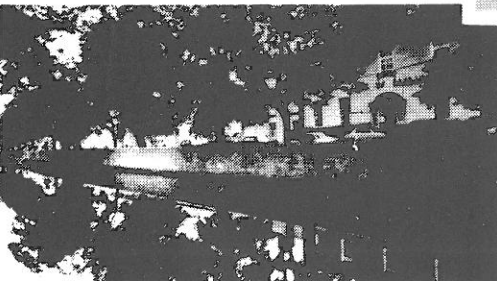
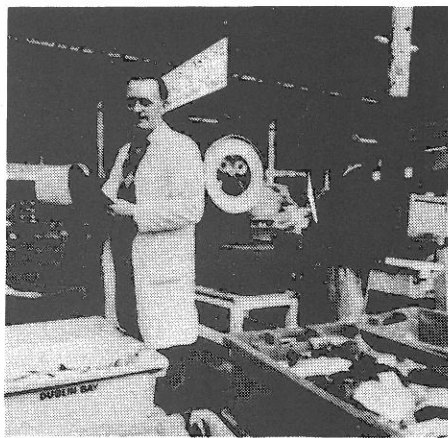
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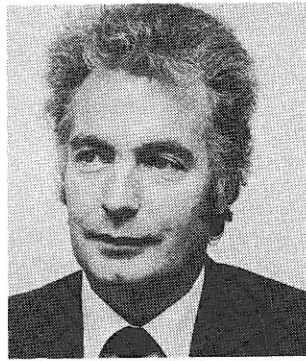


Michael Hunt, Manager,
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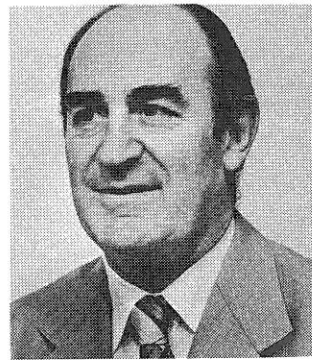
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FOREWORD

With each passing year, it becomes more difficult for the Limerick Echo to select its Sports Personalities. We are increasingly torn between those whose names are household words, and those who, through their own genius, have recently joined the galaxy of Limerick sports stars. Recognising the necessity to omit a very great number of those who deserve to be honoured, we pay tribute to the selected few, confident that all sporting endeavour will be honoured as well.

It is particularly gratifying for us, in the Limerick Echo, to observe that these awards, now in their fourth year, have become the premier accolade in sport in the region. We are happy, too, to be able to extend recognition to some of those who, in areas outside of sport, have contributed in no small way to the well-being of the community in which we live. We are delighted to take this opportunity to accord the Hall of Fame award to Triple Crown rugby player and Young Munster stalwart, Tom Clifford, whose brilliance, both as a player and administrator has been accepted for nearly forty years.

Likewise we are happy to be able to record the appreciation of Limerick to Al Finucane, one of Limerick's most famous soccer sons, and captain of Waterford in its Cup success in 1980. The consistent style and brilliance of hurler, Liam O'Donoghue, coupled with his unique versatility, well suits him for the Most Entertaining title.

In the sporting categories themselves, who could omit Eoin Hand, Limerick United player/manager, and manager of the National team. His record of success since coming to Limerick is so well known as not to require restatement. Brilliant Lion, Colm Tucker, takes the Rugby title. Colm, it is now accepted, is one of the most under-rated players in the country.

Irish Olympic athlete, Michael O'Shea, has consistently brought glory to Limerick A.C. in middle distance running, but he has also distinguished himself in cross-country. Of Ivan Morris it can be truly said that he is the unsung hero of Limerick. Magnificent winner of the European Club Championships in Spain last year, this was but the high-point of a brilliant season last year. And to do so while recovering from a broken arm was to demonstrate the greatness of the man. Eamonn Cregan has played for his county for an astonishing fifteen years. His ability to score from seemingly impossible positions has made him a national legend. In 1980, even in defeat, Cregan scored 2-7 against the Galwayman in Croke Park.

Marie Crawford's tenacity has finally paid off, and the Catholic Institute woman has worn six caps for Ireland in the 1980 Hockey season, having been on the Munster side since 1972. If John Hayes did nothing else than train the winner of the 1980 English Greyhound Derby, it would be enough to win the Greyhound Racing Award. But John has, in a remarkably few number of years, scored a phenomenal success with many other dogs, including recent prize-winner You Genius. Mick Ahern, the long-serving Janesboro goalie is accepted as being Limerick's finest Junior Soccer keeper, and Mick defended for the Limerick District League in three Oscar Traynor successes.

Paddy O'Flynn is "Mr. Basketball" in Limerick, with a terrific reputation as player and coach, worthy of the Basketball trophy. Pat McGarry of St. Munchin's retained his All Ireland Handball Doubles title last year, a fitting glory after a decade at the top. Tony de Loughrey, boxing international of great standing and greater promise, and the country's best amateur middleweight takes the Boxing title.

Andrew McNamara's successes in horse-racing in 1980 put him well within the top ten trainers in the country, with both the Galway Hurdle and the Player-Will Amateur Handicap to his credit.

We honour too three people whose contributions to Limerick's civic life and community awareness is quite outstanding. Sr. Mary Carmel O'Donoghue, Patrick Kelly and Tommy Drennan. To each of them our gratitude. We hope, through these fourth annual awards, and, indeed through the newspaper itself, to continue to contribute to the betterment of Limerick in sporting and in community effort. We would like to feel that we can help to bring about the recognition of Limerick as a place in which such people as we honour here rise to unrivalled heights.

John W. Harriott
Chairman, Limerick Weekly Echo

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HALL OF FAME

TOM CLIFFORD

Ireland hasn't won the Triple Crown since 1959. One man who would love to see the mythical Crown return to Ireland is Tom Clifford, the loveable Young Munsterman who was a member of Tom Clifford's all-conquering side in 1949.

Tom had many ups-and-downs in a fantastic career as a Young Munster, Munster and Ireland prop. He won a Triple Crown, a place on one of the finest British and Irish Lions teams and 14 Irish caps - yet he never was fortunate to pick up a Munster Senior Cup medal. The latter, of course, was a great disappointment for Tom, but he was a playing member of "Munsters" in that ever-so-long valley period extending from 1938 right up to the present day.

GREAT PROP

And although Clifford was widely regarded as one of the greatest of all Irish props, he didn't always command the support of Irish selection committees. For a start, he only came into the side in the first place when J.C. Daly, another thundering Munster prop, turned professional. Chris Daly had been a member of the front-row of 1948 along with A.A. McConnell from Collegians and Karl Mullen, who was to earn undying renown as captain of the back-to-back Triple Crown teams and who led the Lions to Australasia in 1950.

Edmund van Esbeck wrote in his "One hundred years of Irish Rugby"... "with Daly gone, there was a vacancy at prop forward and the selectors turned to another Munster man, Tom Clifford, from the Young Munster club, and a very fortunate



Tom Clifford holds the match ball used in Ireland's Final game against Wales in 1949, when victory for the Irish resulted in a memorable Triple Crown success.



Training with John Robins (Wales) before the first test against New Zealand.

choice he turned out to be... Clifford, a forward in the typical Munster mould, tough and uncompromising, proved an able ally to Mullen in the front-row".

The 1949 year didn't start off all that well for Ireland. France, whom they had beaten the previous year in the old Stades Colombes, came to Dublin and surprised the home side by 16 pts. to 9. That set-back, however, only resolved to make Ireland into the most determined side in the championship. Sean Duffley in "The Men in Green" wrote... "the forwards were lightish, about 13½ stone average, but players like Christy Daly, Jimmy Nelson, Colm Callan, Tom Clifford, Bob Agar and Leslie Griffin were as hard as granite and all were faster than average. After the 1948 success, Daly turned to Rugby League. His replacement at front-row was Clifford, a soul-brother with a wicked grin, a ready wit and who once played in a final Irish trial in his stocking feet because his boots hurt. He came though it safely, too."

TRIPLE CROWN

Ireland began the Triple Crown campaign with a 14-5 victory over England and even then the selectors weren't satisfied. They brought in Noel Henderson of Queens University in the centre to begin a most illustrious career against the Scots. He and his even more famous cousin, Jackie Kyle, were righty



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regarded as two of the greatest backs to represent Ireland and like all other members of the side in those days, they were great friends of Tom Clifford.

Scotland had a fine side in those days and had already beaten France and Wales by the time Ireland reached Murrayfield. But Ireland won 15-3 with the dynamic Corkman, Jim McCarthy scoring both their tries and the brilliant Bective Rangers full-back, George Norton, kicking the remainder. And so Ireland set off for St. Helen's, Swansea on March 12th., 1949 in search of an historic second Crown in a row - but on the most forbidding of all rugby territories. It all came good in the end for Ireland with McCarthy grabbing the vital try and Norton converting to leave Ireland winners by 5-3.

This undoubtedly was the high point of Tom Clifford's career and why he has been the recipient of so many honours and plaudits over the years. Ireland just lost the Crown and the Championship to Wales in 1950 at Belfast, and in the summer of that year the Lions set sail for "down under". Tom Clifford was an automatic choice and he was accompanied by eight Irishmen, Karl Mullen as captain; George Norton, Mick Lane, Noel Henderson, Jackie Kyle, Jimmy Nelson, Billy McKay and Jim McCarthy.

HAPPY

It was a marvellously happy tour for many reasons, not least for the contribution of the merry Irishmen and notably Tom Clifford. Wrote Sean Diffley in his "Men In Green"... "Clifford perpetrated the song, the One-Eyed Riley to such effect on the tour that it virtually became top of the pops out there. Those of us who know Tom well have never quite made up our minds whether this was a tribute to Tom's singing ability - or a reflection on New Zealand's musical taste".

So Tom, a fearless and very tough forward on the field of play, was beloved by every rugbyman. Surprisingly is the fact that he first made his mark for Munster as a back-row and played everywhere in the pack for Young Munster. It will also

Admiring the photograph of the Lions team which toured Australia and New Zealand in 1950.

be news to many that Clifford was an excellent goal kicker and indeed was so adept with his feet that he once dropped a goal for Munster at Ravenhill! Many a great game he played for his beloved Young Munster and with them he won two leagues but never a cup.

SELECTOR AND COACH

That disappointment is long behind Tom now, who laboured for club, province and country for more than twenty years and then unselfishly put a lot of his time and knowledge back into rugby as a selector and coach. He is still an ever-present at Greenfields and took at least as much pleasure from last season's long-awaited Munster Cup triumph and their present great run of success in league and club matches. His sons, Michael and Gerard, are making considerable strides in the black and amber and it's only a matter of time that we see them trot out at Thomond Park on Munster Cup day.

A true star of the past and now a near-legend in this country, Tom Clifford is a worthy recipient of the Hall of Fame award.



Kicking through for Ireland v Wales in 1950.

EIGHTY FOUR YEARS YOUNG **a look at the Limerick Weekly Echo** **by Martin Byrnes** **Editor**

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 Whiskeys 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 immediate 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, this time 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.

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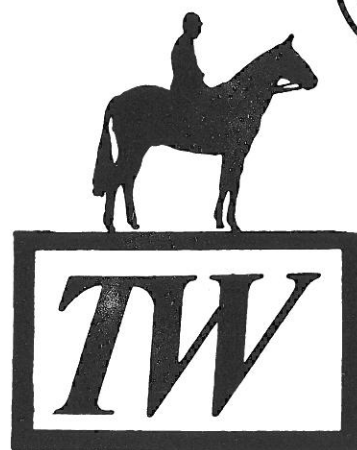
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Tom, pictured with his Young Munster colleagues in March, 1950.



A first cap for Munster v Leinster in 1944. Paddy Reid (Garryowen) sits on Tom's immediate left.

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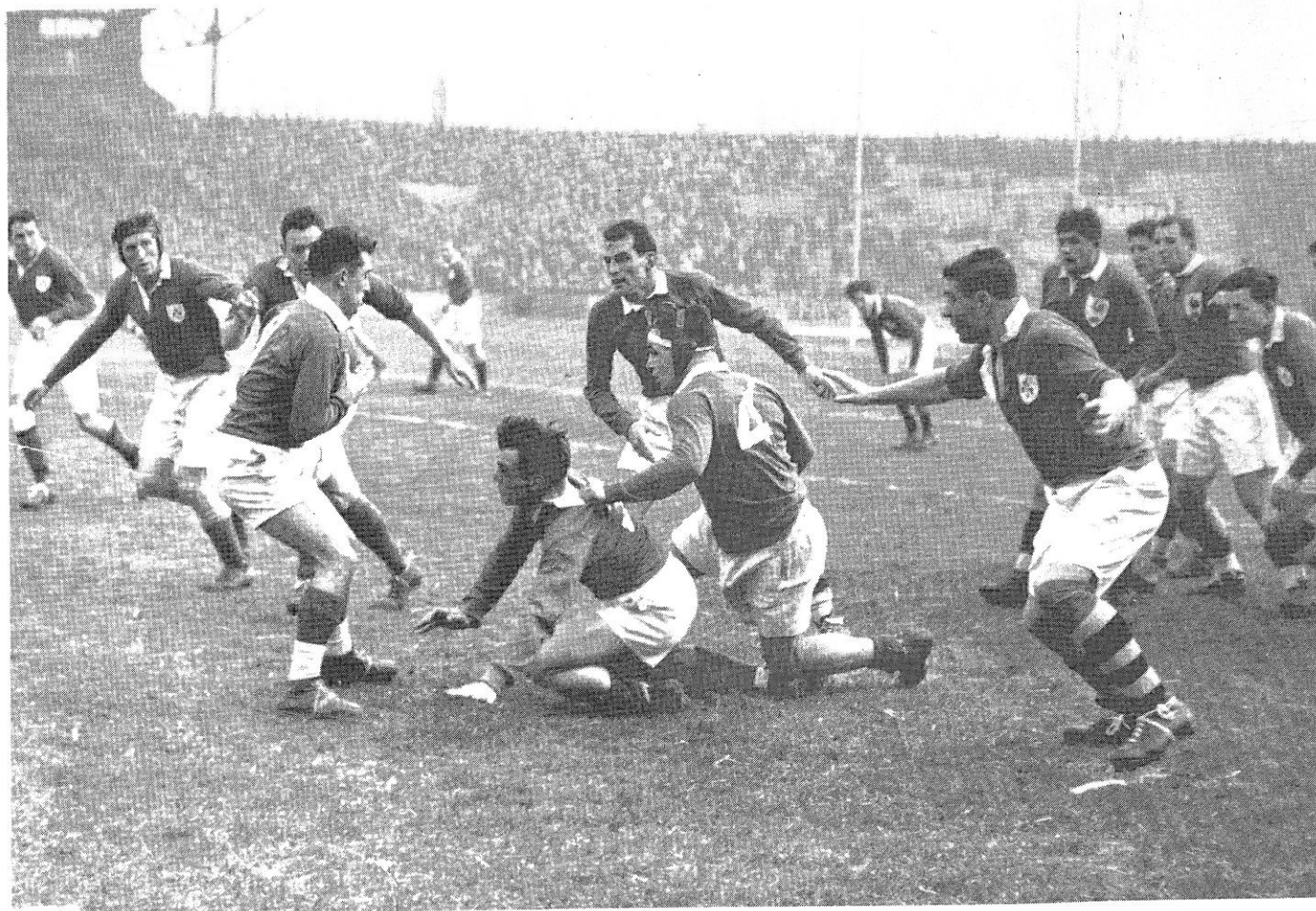


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Sealing off the gaps against France in 1950.



At the height of his career in Paris in 1952.

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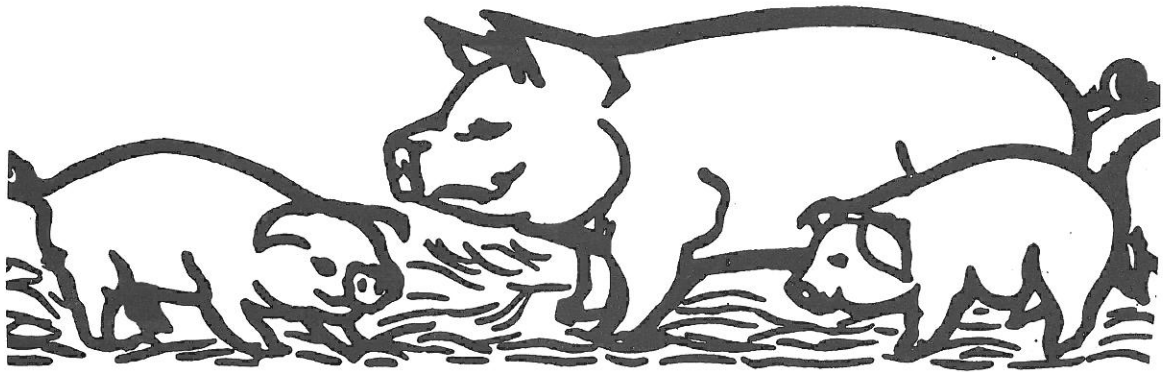


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In action for the Lions against Canterbury, in Christchurch, in June 1950.

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With the Irish team which played France at Lansdowne Road in 1949.



A one-handed pass from Tom Clifford in the 2nd test against Australia in 1950.

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An attempted blockdown against Gordon Rimmer (England) at Lansdowne Road.

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ATHLETICS

MICHAEL O'SHEA

Michael O'Shea, (26) Limerick Athletic Club, our Athletic Star of 1980, started the year in the snow of New England at Providence Rhode Island. He had set two goals for himself at this early stage of the season. The first one he achieved in March at Paris in the World C.C. Championships when he was a member of Ireland's team that defended the silver team medals won in Limerick the previous year. Having the honour of being second Irish finisher in 51st place (behind John Treacy's 18th position) compared to his Limerick position of 43rd the previous year. O'Shea set out on a carefully planned training programme on his return to the U.S. aimed at obtaining his second objective namely selection to Ireland's Olympic team at 5000 meters.

From the turn of the New Year O'Shea had to overcome a number of difficulties, not least a series of minor injuries. His preparations for Paris were mainly confined to a number of indoor races. Here the 6 ft. 2 ins. O'Shea found difficulty in mastering the tight eleven laps to the mile tracks. He was working part-time with Cross International the World famous Pen Company, after graduating from Providence College with a B.A. degree in Marketing and Business Management. On the evening the Irish Team was selected for Paris word came through that Michael had shattered his previous best 5000 meters time at Toronto when recording 13-35-6 the previous night which only went to endorse the correctness of the decision taken an hour previously by the Irish selectors.

On a previous trip to Canada in Ottawa Michael ran 3000 meters in 8-01-8 behind none other than Suleiman Nyambui, Tanzania, 7-57-1. Nyambui went on to collect the Olympic 5000 meters Silver medal in Moscow behind Yifter.

ACHIEVING QUALIFYING TIME

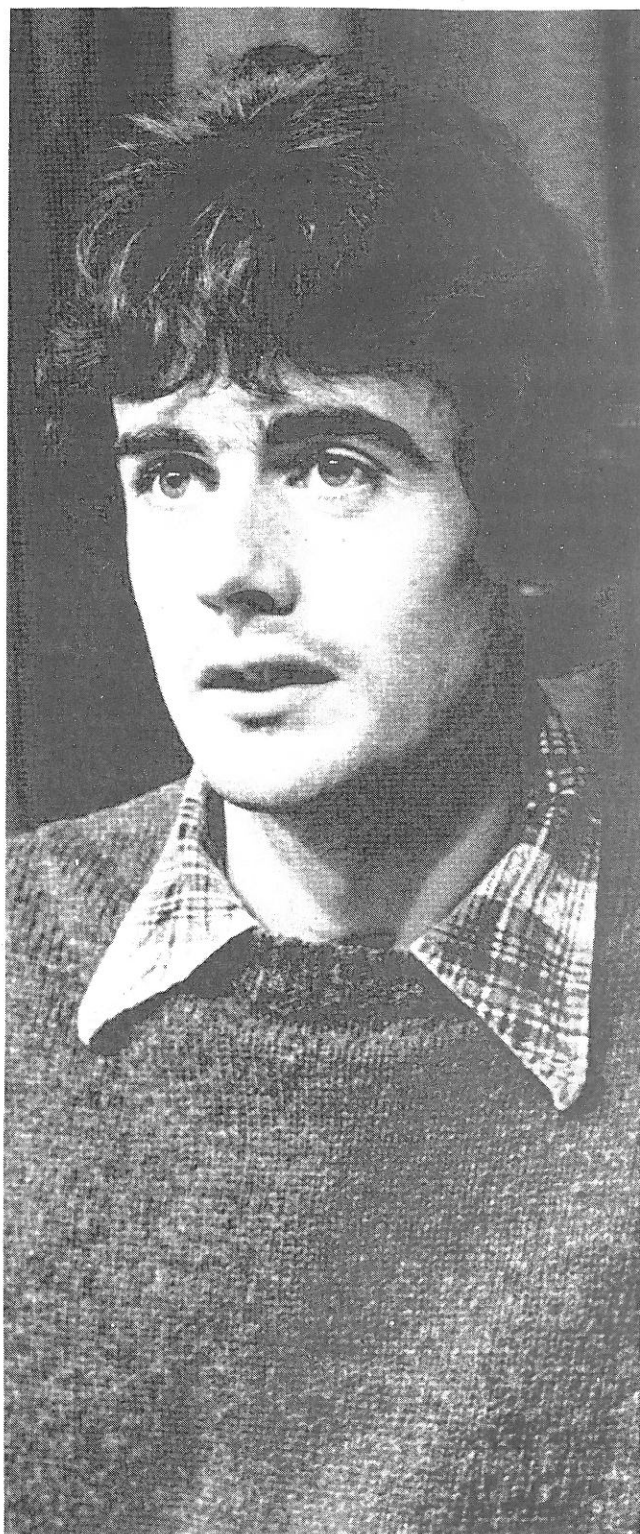
Michael with plenty of encouragement from dual World C.C. Champion, John Treacy, and his former college coach Bob Amato, kept up a twice daily training routine, in between two bouts of flu. While performing adequately in his races, his form was still not good enough to break the Olympic qualifying time of 13-35 for his favourite 5000 metres.

He came home to Ireland with the intention of putting all his eggs in one basket at Cork City Sports held on the excellent new track at the Mardyke. On an ideal evening for the task at hand and in a star studded field O'Shea was in an aggressive mood from the gun, staying with the fast early pace which reached 1600 metres in 4-18-4 Mick McLeod and Julian Goater, England, Nat Muir, Scotland, John Treacy and Michael all kept the tempo flowing. The spectators were by now enjoying the best ever 5000 metres race in Ireland. O'Shea was forced to drop back from the leaders with over two laps remaining but showing plenty of grit and determination he fought every step of the way to the finishing line and was rewarded with the Olympic qualifying time of 13-32-2 behind McLeod's personal best of 13-23-2. Treacy missed Eamon Coughlan's Irish record by .04 when running 13.24.0.

Within hours O'Shea had been added to Ireland's squad by the Olympic Council of Ireland.

INTERNATIONAL VICTORY

The following week Michael won the 5000 metres 14.01.1



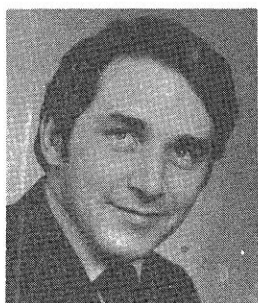
Michael O'Shea.

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Mick O'Shea in action for Providence College.

in Copenhagen when Ireland scored her first ever victory in a triangular International against Scotland and Denmark. In the intervening weeks before departure for Moscow, O'Shea was prominent at Club level, when gaining valuable points in the opening rounds of the Omega League at various distances between 400 metres and 1500 metres. He had one last International race over one mile at Crystal Palace, London, this event turned out to be very physical and entering the final straight O'Shea was forced off the track, but recovered to finish just outside 4 minutes.

MOSCOW DISAPPOINTMENT

Michael's performance in Moscow was anticlimatic as he never got going in his 5000 metres heat, and was dropped by the leaders four laps from the finish. His time was 14.3.0.

He was unwell for the remainder of the teams stay in the Olympic village, and it was generally agreed by the Irish party that O'Shea suffered more than anyone else from what came to be known as "Moscow Tummy".

EARLY ATHLETIC INTEREST

Michael, born in Limerick on September, 16th, 1954, is son of Mrs. Breda O'Shea, Rixtown Tce., Limerick and has two sisters and two brothers, one of whom Eugene was very prominent at School level. His early education was obtained at Limerick C.B.S. Sexton Street where his talent was spotted by Bro. Joseph Perkins, who later became National President of Community Games. Michael completed his second level education at Gormanstown College, and during this stage of his

career his coach was P.J. O'Sullivan.

He represented Ireland first in 1971 when he won the 1500 metres International Student Games title in Madrid. He repeated this victory the following year in Rome when he captured the Games record. He also won the 1500 metres for Ireland in the Annual Schools International between England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland in 1973 in an excellent time of 3.47.3.

UNIQUE FAMILY DOUBLE

Michael O'Shea displayed an early liking for Cross Country running and won many Limerick, Southern region and Irish underage titles. In 1973 he won the Irish Senior Schools C.C. title at Templeogue College, the significance of this occasion became doubly obvious when his younger brother, Eugene running for Limerick C.B.S. won the same title at Rockwell College in 1975. The only brothers ever to win this prestigious award.

Michael O'Shea was the first of many Irish Athletes to join Providence College on an Athletic Scholarship and was an immediate success gaining All American honours in 1974, 1975, 1976, 1978 and he never figured on a losing Providence College team. On one occasion he finished seventh in the N.C.A. A.C.C. Championship which was evidence that his selection on the Irish Junior Team in Waregem, Belgium in 1973 when he had as team-mates Gerry Deegan and Gerry Kiernan, was the correct one.

Michael O'Shea has given the sport of Athletics good service as can be gleaned from the above brief resume. Michael is a worthy winner of our Athletic award from fellow Limerick Internationals, Neil Cusack, Robert Costelloe and Kieran Finn.

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BASKETBALL

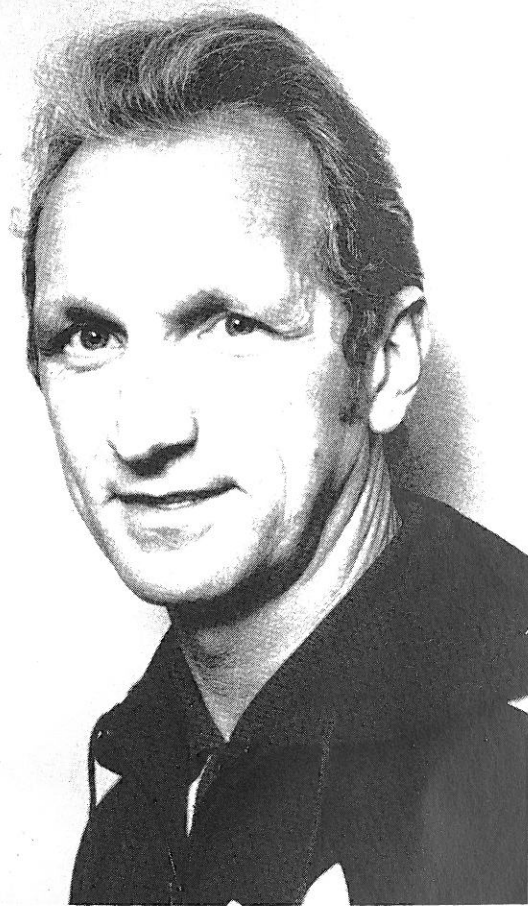
PADDY O'FLYNN

Paddy O'Flynn, who receives our Basketball award, has long been one of the guiding lights of the game, not only in Limerick, but throughout the country. For more than twenty years he has been involved with players at all levels of basketball and all over Ireland, many have benefitted from his coaching. A 'Parish' man by birth (although "adopted" by the 'Soda-cakes' at the age of two!) Paddy was educated at St. Munchin's C.B.S. and Sexton Street C.B.S. where he played hurling and football with Ralph Prendergast, Vivian Cobbe, Ger Tierney, Mick Tynan, Niall Day, among others, on the Harty and Frewen Cup teams. He then went to St. Patrick's training college in Dublin, and after qualifying as a teacher, was appointed to his old school — St. Munchin's C.B.S., where he is now vice-principal.

In the late '50's, he became responsible for the organisation of basketball in Limerick and with players such as Jack Donovan, Ger Tierney, Brendan McNamara and others, formed Eire Og Club (later to be known as Celtic Basketball Club). These were soon joined by Bernard Kennedy, Eamon O'Connor, Tom Cross, Tony Fitzgerald and travelled the country playing in tournaments. Paddy represented Limerick on numerous occasions, and was honoured in two seasons by the Munster selectors. However, by the mid-sixties, he realised the necessity of a youth policy, and since he had the ready-made material in his own school, he founded St. Colm's in 1965. Always a keen student of the game, he spent each summer in Belfast attending the basketball coaching courses, organised by the Basketball Association. There he got the benefit of the best coaches from America and Britain and became a qualified coach and referee. As all the members of St. Colm's were pupils at his own school or at Ardscoil Ris, Paddy became involved in Munster Schools' Basketball, and acting as Secretary for five years, saw the game spread to every county in the province. Ladies' basketball came to Limerick in 1968, when St. Colm's formed the first team in the city, and Paddy took on the coaching of players in Presentation School. That same year he was honoured by the Irish Schools' Association by being appointed coach to the senior boys' team and he remained in this position until 1971. During this time he helped form the North Munster League for girls' schools, and travelled through Clare, Limerick and Tipperary coaching and assisting various schools. He organised courses for teachers and within a few years saw the game firmly established.



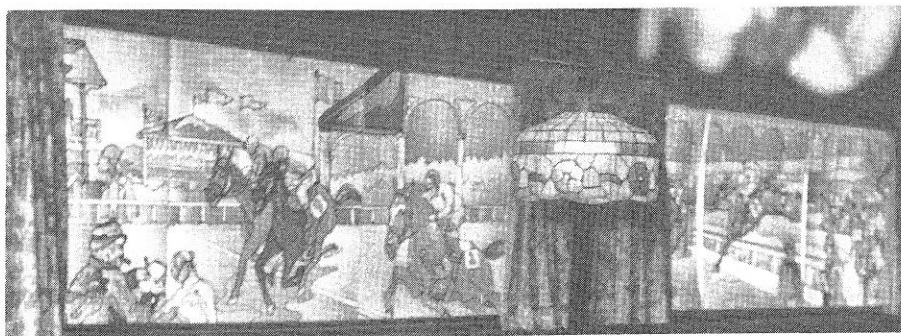
Paddy O'Flynn (right) passes on a few hints to the St. Colms players.



Local boys to make good under Paddy's coaching were Tom Carr, Fonsie McCoy, Gerry O'Mahony (of Garryowen fame) who played for Ireland U/15, and Len Hehir, Fergus Reynolds, and Cyril O'Regan (U-18). In 1969, Limerick basketball came into its own when the boys of Ardscoil Ris won the All-Ireland Colleges' U/15, and Paddy was Player-Coach to the Limerick team which won the Junior All-Ireland. At this time also, R.T.E. were running a series on sport, and commissioned Paddy and Eamon O'Connor to do an instructional film on basketball. This ran for six weeks and was extremely popular, especially in those places where St. Colm's boys had played.

ST. COLM'S

Local youth clubs and Community Games were constantly calling on Paddy to act as coach or referee, and with some of the original members of St. Colm's boys growing up, they were able to help out in various places. Notable among these were Tom Carr and Des Bourke (who is the present Captain of the senior team). During the mid-'70's, basketball began to change, in that the inter-county and interprovincial series faded and



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LUNCHES SERVED DAILY



The St. Colms Basketball team with the coach Paddy O'Flynn (extreme right - back row).

FOREIGN

inter-club games took on a new importance. Once again, St. Colm's were to the fore and became the only club to win the Munster Junior Cup for two successive seasons (74, 75). Paddy had the pleasure now of playing in competitions with the "boys" who had grown to be young men, and the bonds of friendship mixed with discipline helped to maintain a high standard in the club. With the introduction of the National League, St. Colm's decided to enter its teams. The ladies acquitted themselves extremely well, and won out Div. Two in 1978-'79. The men's team finished in the top four for three years and were runners-up in the National Cup. Finally in 1979-'80, a further ambition was achieved when Paddy now "retired" guided his team from Division Two into Division One. The blend of experienced players like Des Bourke and Tom Carr with up-and-coming stars like Seamus Woods and Pat Shanahan formed the backbone of the squad which brought top-class basketball to Limerick. In local competition, St. Colm's have figured among the trophy winners every year, often achieving the "double" of League and Cup — the only club to do so.

On the coaching and refereeing scene, Paddy has achieved the distinction of having refereed all levels of game from local Street leagues to All-Irelands and he was appointed by the Department of Education to the In service Course for P.E. Teachers in 1978 at Thomond College. Since 1979, he has been on the coaching staff at Dungarvan for the annual courses organised by the Basketball Association.

Paddy was responsible in 1978 for the first trip abroad by St. Colm's when the club was invited to represent Ireland at the Golden Jubilee celebrations of Hansa S.V., in Friesoythe, Germany. The boys and girls were so popular, that a new bond of friendship was formed and now reciprocal visits are arranged every two years. At the moment, the members are making preparations for the German players' trip to Ireland next summer.

Married with two children, Paddy feels that the success of his club is due in no small way to the encouragement, enthusiasm and patience of his wife, Pauline. A past-pupil of Presentation, she played senior basketball for her school, and with her experience as a school coach she takes a keen interest in the club. Also, a dedicated group of players — young and a little older — means that the future looks good. The senior players are now turning their hand to refereeing and coaching and Paddy feels that the next few years will see St. Colm's maintain their position in Irish Basketball. Big changes are on the way. Nearly all the top teams are now "importing" American players on a professional basis and the structure of the game is rapidly changing from the old all-amateur player to the semi-pro. and full pro. This is going to cause big problems for clubs like St. Colm's, but attention to basics in coaching and dedication to an ideal will see the club through.

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BOXING

TONY DeLOUGHREY

With 14 caps as a middleweight to his credit, the real possibility of an Olympic medal and a very promising career ahead of him Tony DeLoughrey has established himself as a one-man task force in the annals of boxing.

Born in St. Mary's Park in 1959 Tony's early days are not by any means extraordinary. Like so many other young lads, he attended C.B.S. Sexton Street, where he fell in with tradition and in no time wearing the school colours in Ireland's oldest game — hurling. He left school to work for a couple of years in a bakery before eventually joining the army.

Shortly after he enlisted, Tony was transferred to Clonmel where he remained for a year before he eventually returned to Limerick, where he has spent the last four years.

In the army, Tony had the full run of the gymnasium and other such sporting facilities. This delighted him for he had always felt that schools had been sadly lacking in their sporting facilities. For the boy who is not attracted by academic subjects there was very little on offer.

Using the equipment and facilities available to him, Tony had in no time whipped his body into supreme shape. His introduction to boxing wasn't by any means an easy one. He recalls that he was a very slow learner if not a hopeless case entirely. He was merely a juvenile tipping around, and had made very little headway after two or three years in the sport.

It was then that a new trainer arrived at the Barracks in Limerick and began to show Tony the ropes. John Lee saw the potential in Tony, and developed his handplay from the orthodox to southpaw and that was when things really started to happen with Tony. Tony also realises that he owes a great deal to Sgt. Frawley, his physical training instructor, who has discovered muscles that Tony never knew he possessed.

Tony's brother, Jerome, took up boxing around the same time as Tony and, indeed, he has already stamped his initials on the book of success. Only a few months ago he became the Junior Welterweight Champion of Ireland.

Both Tony and Jerome are juvenile coaches at St. John's Boxing Club in Limerick and are full of expertise as they point out the finer points of the martial art to close on a hundred young boys at the club.

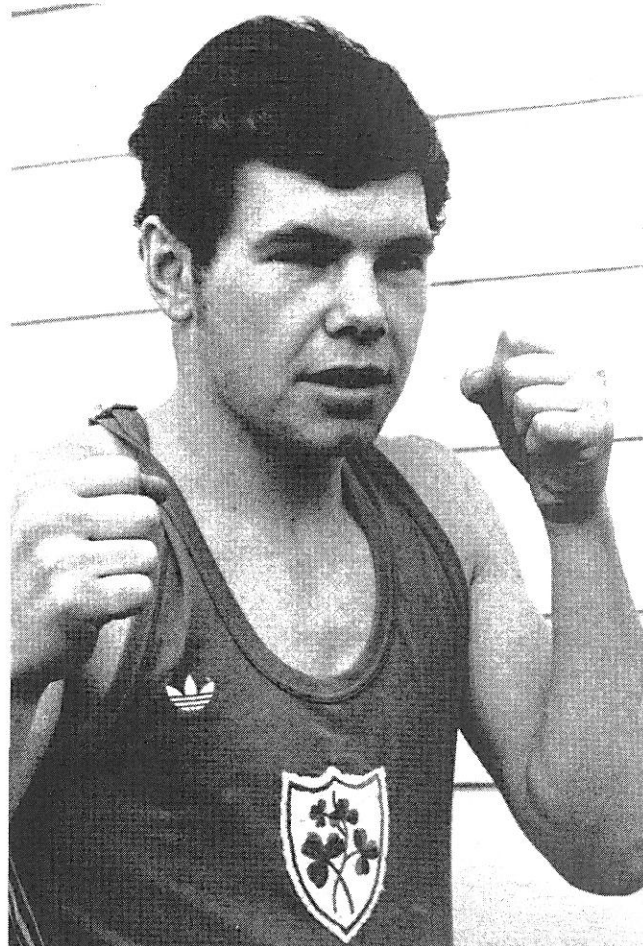
Although there is no history of boxing in their family the DeLoughrey's share a common exciting interest in the sport.

SUPPORT

Tony's parents supported Tony from the very beginning and are proud of his many successes. Yet, there is some apprehension about Tony's love for the sport.

They genuinely fear that, because he is an established and well known boxer, the chances of him getting hurt grow more numerous.

Tony's progress accelerated with the help of his new trainer and the use of the facilities at Sarsfield Barracks. Now he is a full time boxing instructor with the army. Tony had his first victory in a Limerick Juvenile Championship. Not long after that he followed up with a win in the Munster Juvenile series. During the same year in which Tony had his first victories, his brother Jerome was also making steady headway as he romped home to finish the year as the best juvenile boxer in Munster.



TITLES

Despite his defeat in the Irish Championships that year Tony battled on, and through sheer determination won three more Munster titles. One of Tony's biggest setbacks and, indeed, an even bigger disappointment was his defeat in the final of the national juvenile championships in 1977. He put this loss behind him however, and strode on to win numerous championships throughout the following years.

In 1978 Tony was beaten yet again this time at the hands of Terry Christle in the finals of the Irish Senior Championships. During this time Tony's talents and style were quickly picked up by the Irish selectors and between 1977 and 1979 he was capped three times for Ireland.

Donning the green singlet twice against England and once against East Germany, Tony had only a single victory which was a big enough achievement in itself.

Tony was only nineteen at the time and feels that he wasn't

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Tony De Loughrey's hand is raised in victory after his international middleweight victory against Manfred Jessmon (West Germany).

ready for it though it was great to represent his country. Through inexperience, and because it was only his first cap, he was out of his depth and his first International fight was stopped in the third round.

On that occasion Mick Courtney of England brought about Tony's end in that fight. Three months later the two met yet again but this time Tony lost marginally by a split decision.

His victory fight over East Germany came through after what Tony described as "a pretty scrappy fight".

INTERNATIONAL

Of his entire career to date, Tony has never been more satisfied than when he is wearing Irish colours in the service of his country. He has done this no fewer than fourteen times and describes it as the greatest honour that can possibly be extended to any man.

The Danes, Germans, Canadians, Russians, Americans and English have all felt the fury of Tony's fists at international level. Of all of these he has most respect for the Russians who are bigger and a lot fitter than most other opponents.

He has experienced genuine fear against Russian opposition. "At times like that you're feeling very nervous and feel as if you want to run back out the door".

Tony has had much success in his most recent international matches more notably against Denmark and Wales. He fought both out at the National Stadium in Dublin.

Tony is now hopeful that he has the ability to make the Irish Olympic boxing team for the games in California in 1984.

Tony would in no way describe boxing as a violent sport. He would rank rugby as perhaps the most dangerous sport of all, explaining that more people get broken necks and legs from this type of sport than from boxing. As far as banning the sport is concerned — which is the view of many anti-violence sportspeople — Tony feels that such ideas are for the most part over acted.

Tony marks everything down to one major ingredient —

fitness. For this reason he watches his diet and trains strenuously throughout each week. Between his hours working out at the gym at Sarsfield Barracks and the time he spends with the youths of St. John's Boxing Club, Tony is probably Limerick's only super-fit sportsman.

Tony, who turned 22 only last February, has fond memories of 1980 as his winning displays for Ireland in International fights against Scotland and Wales firmly established him as the best amateur middleweight in the country.

Tony maintains that without the help of John Lee, John Kidney and Pat Joyce he never would have reached international standards. From his early days these three people were key men in making Tony what he is today.

ARMY BOXER

Tony has had quite a successful career as a boxer with Sarsfield Barracks. After joining the Defence Forces, Tony competed in the All-Army competitions in Ballincollig in 1977 when he won the Light-Middle title, and in the Curragh in 1978 where none of his opponents lasted the distance — after that, Tony was temporarily debarred from competing in All-Army competitions. It was disappointing for Tony, but reading between the lines it was probably one of the biggest compliments that has ever been paid to any boxer — for the simple fact of the matter was that Tony had taken on and beaten anything and everything that the Army had produced.

As Tony continues to set the pace for all amateur boxers throughout Ireland, his aims are no doubt focused on Los Angeles. In the meantime intense training is the name of the game as Tony brings his abilities to the very top.

Tony is a credit not only to his native city Limerick but to the entire population of Ireland, and it is with great pleasure that the Limerick Weekly Echo endorses his tremendous achievements yet again, with the honour of acknowledging Tony as Limerick's leading boxer.

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GOLF

IVAN MORRIS

It will surprise many to know that Ivan Morris is anything but a one-sport man. This misconception, admittedly, is understandable in that Morris has been closely and singularly associated with golf for over a decade and very successfully, too.

In his youth, there wasn't a game Ivan couldn't turn to and quickly master. He was, for example, a very skilful soccer player and no mean boxer, either. Rugby, though, was his forte during the teens and he had many of the attributes that make up the classical full-back.

Short and well-built, he was razor-sharp off the mark, an excellent fielder of the high ball and could kick the ball prodigious distances. Those people who squeeze their eyes shut and can't bear to watch the modern, round-the-corner method of the Tony Wards and Olly Campbells, would be loud in their praise of the Ivan Morris goal-kicking action. For he used to tee the ball up rocket-style and with a beautiful sweeping action and high follow-through, could land penalty goals from halfway with little trouble.

SCHOOLS RUGBY

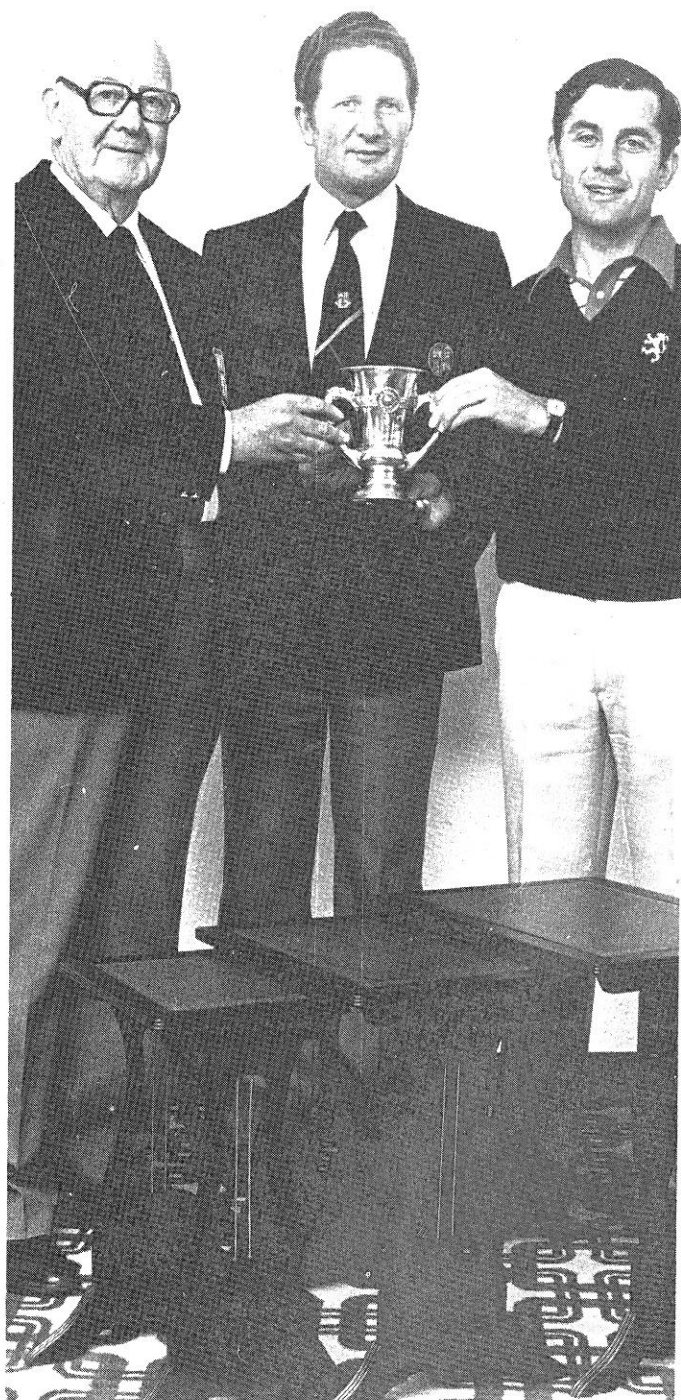
The Crescent College that Ivan and his contemporaries attended inherited a proud rugby tradition but they hadn't won the Munster Schools Junior Cup in ten years when they entered the competition in 1961. At the end of the day, though, they were the champions, a side that was led by Brian Reddan and included such as Kevin Uniacke, Ken Quin, St. John Kelly, Gerry O'Callaghan, Fergus Leahy, Tom Barry, Derek Hickey and the current Munster Branch President, Mick Wallace, beat their Jesuit-sister college, Mungret, in the final. Two years later, more or less the same panel, still led by Reddan and augmented by the very useful Colman Feore, Charlie O'Connell and Des Gallivan, won the senior title for Crescent for the first time since 1951.

On leaving the Crescent, Ivan continued to play rugby and turned out with Old Crescent. But the golf "bug" was beginning to bite deeply. His father, Tom, an Irish hockey cup medal winner with L.P.Y.M.A. in the forties, was a keen member of Limerick Golf Club and introduced not only Ivan, but his brothers Robert, Brien and Dermot to the game. All became decidedly useful, but Ivan was to go on and achieve special honours in the game without, to his great regret, never playing for Ireland.

"I'd trade the lot for that honour", he says with candour and few would doubt him. He will travel anywhere for a game and is at least as keen as he was in the mid and late 60s when he first began to emerge as a potential champion. At 35, it may be felt that his chance of an Irish cap has come and gone, but those who recognise the excellence of his striking with wood and iron and his resolve to succeed would advise against betting too heavily on it.

CAPTAIN'S PRIZE

In 1980, for example, he underlined just how good he could be. There were many outstanding performances, not least his victory in the captain's prize at Ballybunion. The great Kerry links was battered by rain and gale-force winds with the result that many "packed it in". But Morris, playing off 1 handicap, defied the lot and returned a fantastic 69 gross to win with 39



Tom Morris, President of Limerick Golf Club, presents his prize to his son, Ivan. In centre is Vincent Finucane, Captain Limerick Golf Club.

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LIMERICK COUNTY GOLF TEAM

The Limerick Team defeated in the semi-finals of the Munster Section of this year's Johnnie Walker All Ireland County Golf Championship played at Lahinch (19-10-'80).

From left: Ivan Morris, Dermot Cross, Billy Rice, Paddy O'Looney, Brian Begley and Dermot Morris.

points. He later won his own father's President's Prize at Limerick Golf Club, so his ability to take on the "hooks" off such a daunting handicap must be recognised as an outstanding achievement.

A loyal clubman, he plays in everything at Ballyclough and his name appears on many a trophy out there. In Championships and major stroke-play events, he is invariably there or thereabouts. He places special emphasis on the Scratch Cup at Castletroy and in 1980 won it for the third time. That success clinched Ivan's place on the Munster team that travelled to Newcastle, Co. Down with only an outside chance of winning the Interprovincial Championship. But, under the inspired captaincy of Limerick's Vincent Nevin, they swept all before them and brought the title south for one of its very rare visits.

Ivan Morris won many a valuable point for his side that week and impressed everybody with the quality of his shot-making. Alas, it didn't make sufficient impression on the Irish selectors and he failed to get into the six-man or eleven-man teams. Surely very few would suggest that many inferior players to Ivan Morris have represented Ireland in recent times.

But there was a lot of golf to be played and how well he did in the interests of his club's senior cup side. Probably his most valuable contribution was made in the Munster final at Lahinch when Ivan came from dormie 2 down to beat the very useful Denis O'Sullivan, an Irish International and Cork Golf Club No. 1, at the 20th. in the vital top match. That success saw Limerick through to the All-Ireland finals which, by a stroke of good fortune, were played at Lahinch.

SPAIN

The old reliables like Jackie Harrington, Vincent Nevin, Ivan Morris and Billy Rice were all there and they duly clinched their second Irish Senior Cup medals with a final success over Sutton, the Leinster champions. Limerick had won the same title in 1976, and when representing Ireland at Brussels in the European Championship, had finished a creditable 6th. This time, the venue for the KAS International trophy was Santa Ponza in the Spanish holiday island of Majorca.

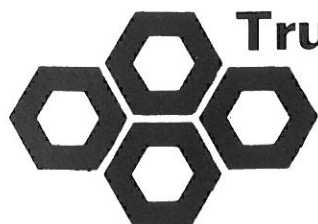


The Limerick Golf Club Senior Team which won the Irish Senior Cup at Lahinch in September, 1980.

In front (L. to R.): Jackie Harrington (1979 Echo Sports Personality), Dr. J.A. Holmes (Team Captain), Vincent Finucane (Captain L.G.C.), T.P. Morris (President, L.G.C.), Vincent Nevin (Echo Sports Personality 1977/'78).

At back: Michael Roberts, Jack Lynch, Pat Walsh, Billy Rice, Michael Galvin, and Ivan Morris (Echo Sports Personality 1980).

The weather was anything but kind and Limerick were determined with a powerful side of Harrington, Nevin and Morris to go all the way. They won it alright in the end, but by just one shot, and it was a fighting round of 80 in atrocious conditions by Ivan Morris that clinched a magnificent Limerick success. What a fitting manner for Ivan to round off the memorable year of 1980!



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GREYHOUND RACING

JOHN HAYES

Behind every good dog there is a good trainer. But put 30-year-old Limerickman, John Hayes, in charge of a good dog and the chances are that most Irish tracks will soon be resounding with the name of whatever dog he may be training at the time. This would quickly be replaced with surprise however, when it was learned that John took out his trainer's licence only a little over five and a half years ago. Since that time he has had success after success, more notably with the well known "Indian Joe" a dog who, at two years and nine months, took the Easter Cup last April before competing in and winning the English Derby Golden Jubilee held in White City in London last June.

As a trainer John Hayes couldn't be more of a natural to the trade. His reputation is ever-widening as more and more respected and well known owners seek out his incredible talents. Most tend to be well prepared to pay out the right sort of money for well-bred young stock and the rest of the work is left to the most reliable man from Lisnagry on the outskirts of Limerick.

John has always had the ability to bring a racer to it's peak with utmost precision. Although this may seem hard to believe as at any one time John may be catering to the needs of anything up to 14 dogs. Seventy-two winners for Hayes last year certainly speaks well for his abilities and expertise as a trainer.

INDIAN JOE

In the case of Indian Joe, owned by Kevin Frost, John never put a foot wrong. In late September of '79 a huge crowd gathered at Shelbourne Park to witness the final of The Grand Kennel Stake. Tough Decision and Hume Highway, the National Produce Stakes winner and successful in the Alan Tuthill '575' at Shelbourne Park two weeks earlier, dominated the betting. But on parade, Indian Joe looked so good as to prompt even the most knowledgeable of greyhound men to change their bets.

As it turned out for those who ignored the form on the cards the venture paid dividends as Indian Joe made all the running and held Hume Highway's late flourish by a neck to win this 550-yard feature at 6-1 in a very fast 30.53 seconds.



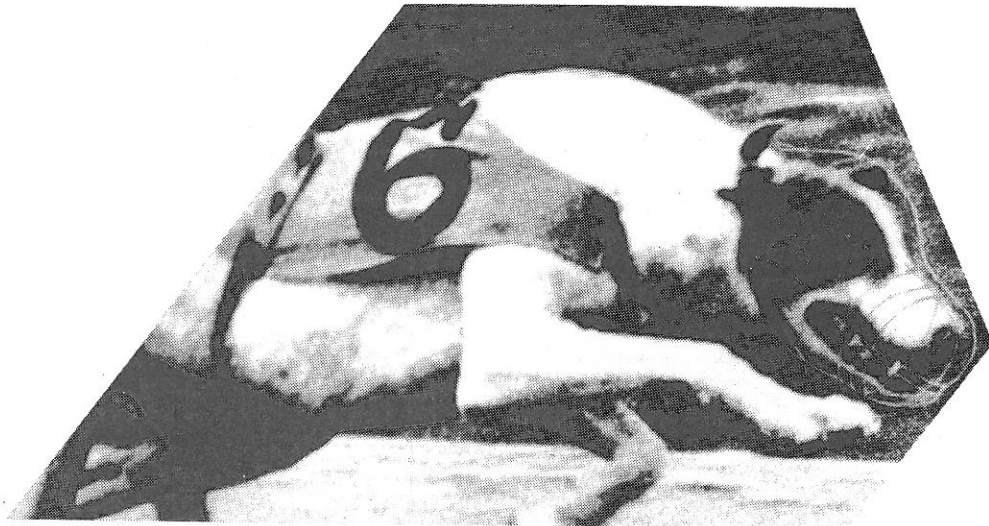
John wasn't always the great doggy-man that he is now, however. Before discovering his skills as a trainer John was an avid follower of horses. But coming from Limerick as he did it was only a matter of time before he eventually became involved with greyhounds.

His training began with the well known Steve Gleeson who taught him the necessary requirements which it is evident have been put to the best possible use by John.

PROFESSIONAL

John Harnett was one of the first to realise the true talents of Hayes and proved his belief and support by becoming the first to entrust a greyhound to John's charge. When Hayes went professional and took out his licence in the Summer of '75 he had extremely good fortune when he found himself with Cindy's Speck, owned by Kevin Frost. That dog was to make John Hayes a track name as he won the Warrell Stake at Shelbourne Park in 29.05 secs. before hitting London's White City where he was to triumph in the Anglo-Irish International without having any previous experience of the Wood Lane Circuit.

In 1978 John had victory in the Guinness Puppy Stake in Limerick with Funny Idea, a dog which had quite a hurdling season ahead of him until he had the misfortune of inflaming an old injury in the Cork Grand National Final and had to be rested.



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Top greyhound handler, John Hayes, pictured with one of his charges.

To John Hayes' mind the greatest dog that he has ever trained was Limerick Echo, the puppy sensation of 1978. John is adamant that had Limerick Echo not come to grief at such an early stage in his career, he would have been one of the all-time greats.

Unfortunately for John Hayes and moreover for his owner, John Harnett, Chairman of the Limerick Weekly Echo, the puppy was to have a successful but very short career. Limerick Echo, the first company owned greyhound in Ireland, beat some of the best as he romped through to the final of the McAlinden Gold Cup. A bad bang however put paid to his hopes of triumph and also inflicted permanent injury.

After several months off the track in addition to a while at stud Limerick Echo was attended to by a bonesetter and it looked 'all systems go' for a crack at the Carrolls Derby in 1979. In the first round he scored a trap-to-line victory in 29.45 but only four nights later he was injured permanently and was never to race again. Limerick Echo has since been retired to stud but a worthy stand-in was found by way of You Genius.

Trained once again by John Hayes, this dog proved his ability in winning the Kingdom Puppy Derby at Tralee.

VICTORY AGAIN

John Hayes, who now figures with many of the big names in trainers such as Ger McKenna, Matt O'Donnell and Paddy Keane, proved his worth yet again throughout 1980, when he guided Indian Joe to victory in the Easter Cup last April. This was a much talked about success for John but the icing on the cake came in June when Indian Joe went to White City in London and took the most prestigious English Derby Golden Jubilee which netted £35,000.

In the days leading up to the race, Indian Joe was never left unattended. Valued at £50,000 — and later sold for that figure — Indian Joe had kennel companions in John Hayes' and John Grimes' who both ensured that no harm would come to the 2 years and nine month old dog.

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HANDBALL

PAT MCGARRY

Pat McGarry must rank as one of the most celebrated handballers in the world. 1980 has proved to be yet another outstanding year for Pat. He has retained his title as All-Ireland Singles and Doubles Champion.

In the All-Ireland Handball Singles Championship Pat came up trumps defeating Cecil Windors (Kildare) at Tipperary in a memorable final. Then together with Joe Bennis, he succeeded in taking the All-Ireland Doubles Title bringing honour to Saint Munchins Club and to Limerick.

And because of his dedication to the game Pat feels certain that a lot of young people in Limerick should be encouraged to take up the sport.

Pat himself derives great satisfaction from the game and trains ten out of twelve months of the year. He feels that if more facilities were available Limerick would be bursting with potential champions.

Pat who has been playing Handball for the last fifteen years is, for the third year running figured in the Limerick Echo Sports Personalities Awards. It is indeed a fitting tribute to this man who has brought honour and fame to the City of Limerick and to his own Club Saint Munchins.

His career has been a chequered one but he has always put in the commitment that makes winners and there is no doubt about it Pat is a winner.

TRADITION

It is no surprise that he has risen to such fame in his Handball career. He comes from a family steeped in Handball tradition. His elder brother Tom is well known for his feat in winning the prestigious Gael-Linn competition on two occasions. In addition to this Tom has achieved prominence and honours at G.A.A., Soccer and Rugby.

Having such a well known sports personality, as a brother would have been a disadvantage to any other youngster, but not to Pat.

At eighteen he heard the call of Handball, and began to concentrate chiefly on this game. Under the watchful eye of his first trainer, Mick O'Brien, Pat made an immediate impact at national level, winning the Minor All-Ireland Softball Singles Title in 1966 - thus equalling his brother Tom, who had won the title eleven years before.

This was all Pat needed to set him on the road to success. And only a year after his Minor triumph he destroyed all opposition to go on and win the All-Ireland Junior Softball Singles Title. That very same year, he also won the All-Ireland Under 21 Softball Singles Crown. He continued to win this coveted Crown on three consecutive occasions.

It must be recognised as a major achievement that after only three years in the game, he had succeeded in winning five major Irish Titles.

UNIQUE DISTINCTION

After making such an impact at Minor and Junior level it is no surprise at all that he quickly made his mark at senior level. In 1969 he had the unique distinction of winning all four Munster Titles; the Softball and Hardball Singles, the Softball doubles with Mick O'Brien and the Hardball Doubles with Mick McAulliffe.



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That unique distinction put him on par with the famous Kerry Handballer, Paddy Downey, who had managed to achieve the same feat in the early sixties.

These Munster successes paved the way for Pat to advance to the latter stages of All-Ireland competitions and eventually he made it through to the Softball Singles Final and the Hardball Doubles Final, with Mick McAulliffe as his partner. Unfortunately he was defeated in both finals, by a Kildare team in the Doubles, and by a Louth player, Joey Maher in the Singles.

These defeats triggered off a chain of events which resulted in a series of near misses at the All-Ireland stages for Pat.

1974/75/76 were lean years for Pat. He was defeated in the All-Ireland each year by Mayoman Peadar McGee. However, despite that run of defeats Pat kept on trying with the enthusiasm he is noted for, resulting in him gaining his just rewards in 1976 when he won the Gael Linn Trophy.

In excess of two thousand competitors set out to win that Trophy and Pat had an easy win over the Dubliner Pakie Ryan.

1976 was a great year for Pat as he was a member of the Limerick Team who won the National League and he also won the All-Ireland Softball Doubles.

REVERSAL

Unfortunately 1977 didn't hold such good store for Pat, who had, what could have been a string of All-Ireland victories grasped from him due to illness. This setback didn't deter Pat who fought back with courage and was once again on top of the national scene in 1978 fighting for the All-Ireland Hardball Singles Final. In that match he was closely beaten by Cecil Windors (Kildare). Undaunted by the defeat he went on to win the Hardball Doubles Final with Joe Bennis as his partner. They beat Greg Lawlor and Cecil Windors (the Singles Champion).

Then in 1979 things really started moving for Pat, who for the first time won the Singles Title in a closely contested match with Mayoman Peadar McGee. The man who had whipped the Title from his grasp on three previous occasions.

Before a packed house in Roscommon, McGee and McGarry went into action and the match that ensued will be spoken of as a classic encounter for many years. McGarry lost the first two sets, and when he trailed 17-19 in the third one it looked as though he would once again taste defeat in an All-Ireland Final.

STAMINA

With a marvellous burst of stamina he rallied superbly to win the third set 21-19. The comeback was too much for the Mayoman and Pat went on to win the remaining sets 21-10 and 21-5. At the end of this marvellous contest the spectators showed their gratitude to the two 'Masters' of the game by giving them a standing ovation.

In a similar fashion, Pat's All-Ireland Hardball Singles success over Cecil Windors in Tippeary in 1980 was a rich measure of compensation for the 'Final' defeat suffered in 1978 in the same competition when Windor foiled Pat's plans.

However, Handball is not Pat's only claim to sporting fame. At youth level he was chosen as a final trialist at soccer. That was back in 1966 when he among others lined out with Limerick United's great stalwart Joe O'Mahony, who was subsequently capped. With Treaty Sarsfields Pat proved himself as a Gaelic Footballer and Hurler winning many Under-age honours with the Thomondgate club.

However, nowadays Pat dedicates his time entirely to handball, and with a long string of successes behind him, he is recognised as one of the finest competitors in the world.

In handball there is just one honour eluding him, that is the 'grand slam' of all four major trophies in the 60 x 30 game. The elusive one is the Softball Singles Title which he has yet to gain. Having won honours in Hardball Singles and Doubles as well as Softball Doubles, it is going to be his ambition to carry off the 'grand slam' in 1981.



A smiling Pat McGarry gets in some handball practice.

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HOCKEY

MARIE CRAWFORD

In March 1980, Marie Crawford's long wait was over: After eight years perseverance, she finally gained her well deserved place on the Irish Ladies International Hockey Team.

Playing in her usual club position, Marie, a Catholic Institute stalwart, saw her years of dedication rewarded when she lined out on the Irish Team to play Scotland in the Home International series at Ayr.

It was the pinnacle of her hockey career, and Marie in her own words said: "It was the icing on the cake for me. All the hard work, the training and the sacrifices were worth every minute of it".

It was the first of six caps and even though they were held to a scoreless draw by a very strong Scottish side it was still the most important game in Marie Crawford's life.

Her second cap came two weeks later when she played against Wales in Cork. Unfortunately again this game ended in a 1-1 draw.

Marie, once again, gave her best. The late Vera McWeeney, legendary hockey correspondent with the Irish Times described her as being 'An outstanding Irish forward who harried the Welsh defence like a belligerent Irish Terrier'.

Still in the Home International Series, the Irish team, and Marie, headed for Dublin, to play England. The outcome of this game was a little disappointing with England winning 2-0, taking the Triple Crown home with them.

However, the disappointment was short lived as shortly after Marie was bound for Cologne in Germany to play in an international tournament. Marie won another three caps playing against West Germany, Holland and Great Britain.

All the excitement and glory of representing her country were part of an ultimate reward for Marie, who has dedicated her life, to the sport of hockey since she first started playing at Laurel Hill Convent.

EARLY DAYS

From school, Marie, after much indecision decided to join Catholic Institute and she hasn't looked back since. She played Junior with 'Institute' and after two years was selected to represent Munster at Junior Level. It was the beginning of her journey to the top.

Graduating from junior inter-provincial to club senior level, Marie made a big impact when Catholic Institute won the Munster Hockey Cup for the first time in twenty years, back in 1971. Marie, a very young player at the time, scored fourteen goals in 'Institute's' campaign for the Cup that year. The final played in Cork against U.C.C. saw Marie at her best scoring two goals, one in extra time, giving Institute a 2-1 win over U.C.C. bringing the much coveted Cup back to Limerick. It was during that game that Marie's immense talent as a forward was recognised. She was described by her team-mates at the time — as a quick thinker and one of the best attackers in the country.

1972 saw Marie on the Munster Senior side, and since then she has been a regular on the team — in fact, she has never been dropped from the Munster side. A deserved tribute to her dedication and love of the game.

In the years that followed Marie continued playing with marvellous consistency with Catholic Institute and with Munster. However, despite many Irish trials and three years on



reserve teams, there were no signs of international honours for this truly magnificent hockey player.

MEMORIES

However, despite years without international recognition, Marie, has wonderful memories of her days playing with Catholic Institute. 1979, being one of the most memorable.

After winning the Munster Senior League, 'Institute', won through to the Senior Cup Final against Belvedere. Marie's vast experience certainly helped in that success but, she herself is fast to praise the efforts of her team-mates, particularly citing the merits of Marie Bartlett.

The 1979 Munster Final success saw Catholic Institute advance to the Irish Finals at Park Avenue, Dublin. Catholic Institute were defeated despite the efforts of Marie and her team-mates. The score at the end of that game was 1-0 after a tense and closely fought game — losing out on that All-Ireland medal was a great disappointment to Marie.

However, it wasn't the only disappointment of 1979. Marie wasn't chosen for the Final Irish Trials. Her Irish Trials record goes as follows:

Marie's first Irish Trial came in 1975 followed by one in 1977 and one in 1978. All hopes of selection seemed dashed. Then she was passed over for a final trial in 1979. Then it seemed that all hopes of international recognition were gone forever.

RECALLED

Typically though, Marie persevered and after a superb inter-provincial campaign with Munster in 1980, she was recalled to

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the Irish Trials and selected to play at inside-left against Scotland at Ayr.

She was thrilled and friends from Catholic Institute, from Limerick, from Ireland and from the United States wished her well on the hard won success that she so greatly yearned for and deserved.

Having reached such a peak Marie's immediate ambitions are to win an Irish Cup Medal. She has been on the losing side in four Irish Cup Finals with Catholic Institute.

Marie's favourite player and team-mate with Catholic Institute, Marie Bartlett, had the following to say about Marie's selection for the Irish Team in 1980:

'In my view, Marie was desperately unlucky to miss out on international selection over the years as she has been a marvellous forward. When she was finally selected to play for Ireland last year, there was no one more delighted than myself as she really deserved the honour'.

EXPERIENCE

Marie herself says, that to represent one's country at any level is a truly wonderful experience and she will never forget how it felt running out on to the pitch at Ayr to play in her first International against Scotland. And she hopes that lots of young hockey players will have the same experience that she has had.

It is indeed wonderful to see a decade of perseverance at a highly skilful game like hockey paid off with international recognition. And indeed Marie has given ten years of complete dedication to hockey. And still continues to do so.

Looking back on it, she has no regrets, except she wishes that in her schooldays there had been more organised competition at that level. She welcomes the great moves in that direction in recent years and says it will encourage more young people to become involved in the game and will be a great aid in giving us better Internationals and good prospects for the forthcoming Olympics in 1984.

Marie (second-right - front row) pictured with her Catholic Institute colleagues.

Now that Marie has reached a peak in a long and eventful career as a hockey player the Limerick Echo wish to congratulate her on the work she has done in the interest of hockey and feel that it is only fitting that she should be included in the Roll of Honour for the Limerick Echo Sports Personalities Awards for 1980.



Marie Crawford in action for Munster against Connacht.

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November National Hunt Sale	1st—6th November
December Sale of Horses In Training, Yearlings, Mares & Foals	7th—10th December

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HORSE RACING

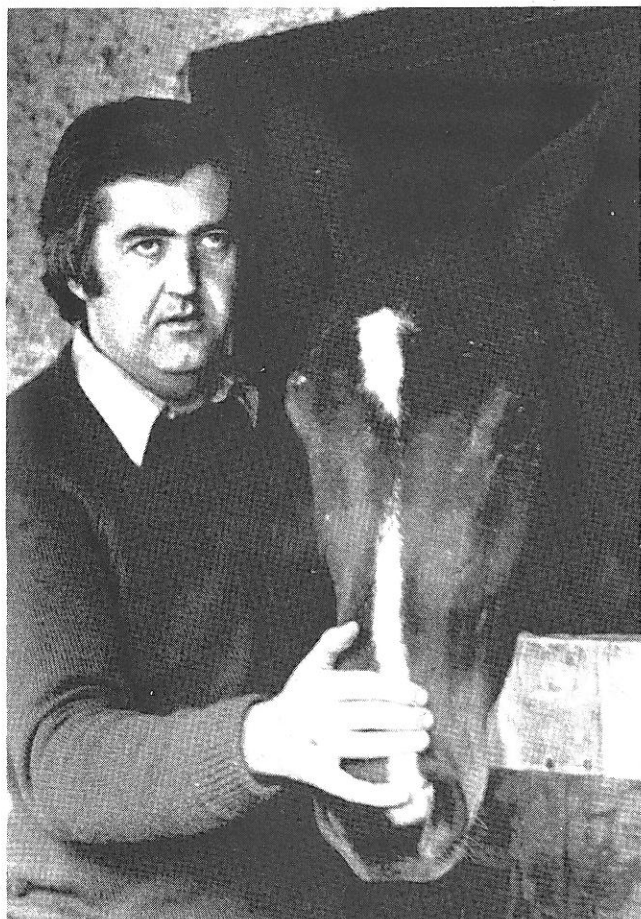
ANDREW McNAMARA

Andrew McNamara gave up his veterinary practice in 1973 to become a racehorse trainer. Since that time, when he trained only three horses, Andrew McNamara's ability as a trainer has blossomed and been recognised by many owners. His career is still mushrooming and last year, the number of races his horses won soared to twenty.

Andrew was born in Limerick in 1945, into a family where horses were a way of life. His father owned a small farm in the county on which he bred horses. Each year, his father would breed three or four horses and sell them as yearlings. At the age of nine Andrew went on his first hunt and began picking up the 'horse sense' which was to be so useful in his profession.

Andrew went to school in the Crescent and at weekends he learned to ride at Gerard Hogan's. During his time at school and later at College he rode seven winners in the half bred class and raced in several point-to-points. Andrew left school and studied veterinary at U.C.D. from 1964 to 1969 when he qualified.

For five years after qualifying, Andrew McNamara worked under practicing vets in Askeaton, Rathkeale, and Kilmallock. Then, in 1975, he set up his own practice in Croom. At this time too, he bought his first horse, 'Coral Surprise' and began training him for the track. After six months of training 'Coral Sur-



Andrew McNamara, the brilliant Croom-based trainer pictured with one of a talented string of racehorses.



prise' ran in his first race at Thurles ridden by Tommy Kinnane, the horse won.

The day after his first victory in racing circles, Andrew was approached by owner, Matt Russell, who asked him to train two of his horses. Andrew accepted the challenge and began devoting all of his time to the training of the three horses.

All three horses began winning races, and in 1978 Andrew McNamara had gained quite a respect and appreciation in racing circles.

His stable jockeys were Tommy Kinnane, Paddy Kieley and Johnny O'Dea, all amateur. Niall Madden, a former winner of the Echo Racing Award, began his amateur career at the McNamara stables and was later to turn professional and become McNamara's number one stable jockey.

SUCCESS

In 1978 horses from the McNamara training stables began winning in all the major race meetings. 'Matty White' won nine races in that one year. While 'Drake's Nephew' won in Fairyhouse, won two races in Clonmel and one in Wexford. 'Matty White' won in Naas by twelve lengths and in Limerick Junction by fifteen. Tommy Kinnane was interviewed on R.T.E. after the historic Limerick Junction win and said: "Matty White

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Andrew McNamara holds Rent-a-Row, one of the leading money-spinners of the 1980 racing season.

will be the next Monksfield".

In 1978 McNamara stables had eight winners up to May and two more in December. Andrew McNamara was only two years in the training business and already had managed to produce one potential 'Monksfield' and several promising young horses.

In 1979 the stables continued their success story and won, during that year a total of fifteen races. 'Rent-a-Row', owned by insurance broker Tim Duggan, joined the ranks and was to become McNamara's most famous horse.

Rent-a-Row won three races that year. 'Matty White', meanwhile, won the Kerry Cream Chase in Tralee, with £3,500 prize money. By winning this race 'Matty White' qualified for the Grand National. He was unable to run because of a tragic injury.

Another newcomer to the stables 'Downpatrick' also showed his potential that year by winning two races and 'Shannon Knight', also owned by Tim Duggan, won his first race.

In 1980, Andrew McNamara, in his fourth year as a trainer, saw his horses win twenty races. 'Rent-a-Row' became a force to be reckoned with. In that year he ran in eleven races, won six and was second four times. 'Rent-a-Row' was second in the Player's Amateur Handicap and the Galway Hurdle. He won the O'Malley Hurdle race, ridden by Niall Madden in his first ride as a professional jockey. 'Rent-a-Row' went on to win two more races at Limerick Junction, including the Harp Lager Hurdle, and a flat race in Killarney.

'Downpatrick' won in Leopardstown, ridden by John Quealey, while the stables had a double in Killoggan, where Rosamer and Dromoland Hill won a race each.

'Dromoland Hill', is owned by Andrew himself and named after the Hill where his first horse, 'Coral Surprise', was sadly found dead. Three other horses, 'Pithead', 'Money Boy High', and 'Rich Nephew', showed potential by winning that year.

WATCHING

Andrew modestly hopes that 1981 will be another success year and tips 'Rent-a-Row' as a horse which should be watched.

A trainer's world, however, is not all roses. Andrew McNamara explained that for a horse to earn its keep, it must

win at least three races a year. In Ireland there are plenty of races for a top class horse to enter but not so many for an average horse. Trainers, therefore, find themselves saddled with an average horse and nowhere to race him. A horse of such a calibre can be ready for racing for up to two months before he finally finds a race. Andrew would like to see more opportunities to race the average horse.

The Government also make it hard for the trainer by taking 7½% on course betting tax and 20% tax on off course betting. It is very hard, complains Andrew, to make any money. It has become so hard for trainers that many of them have gone to Britain.

Horses, too, are sometimes unpredictable. 'Matty White', who was tipped by Tommy Kinnane as a potential 'Monksfield' injured himself and for two years Andrew McNamara used his veterinary skill to try and bring him back into form. 'Matty White' deteriorated and eventually had to be put down. Injuries and infections are probably a trainers greatest fear and it helps when a trainer is also a vet.

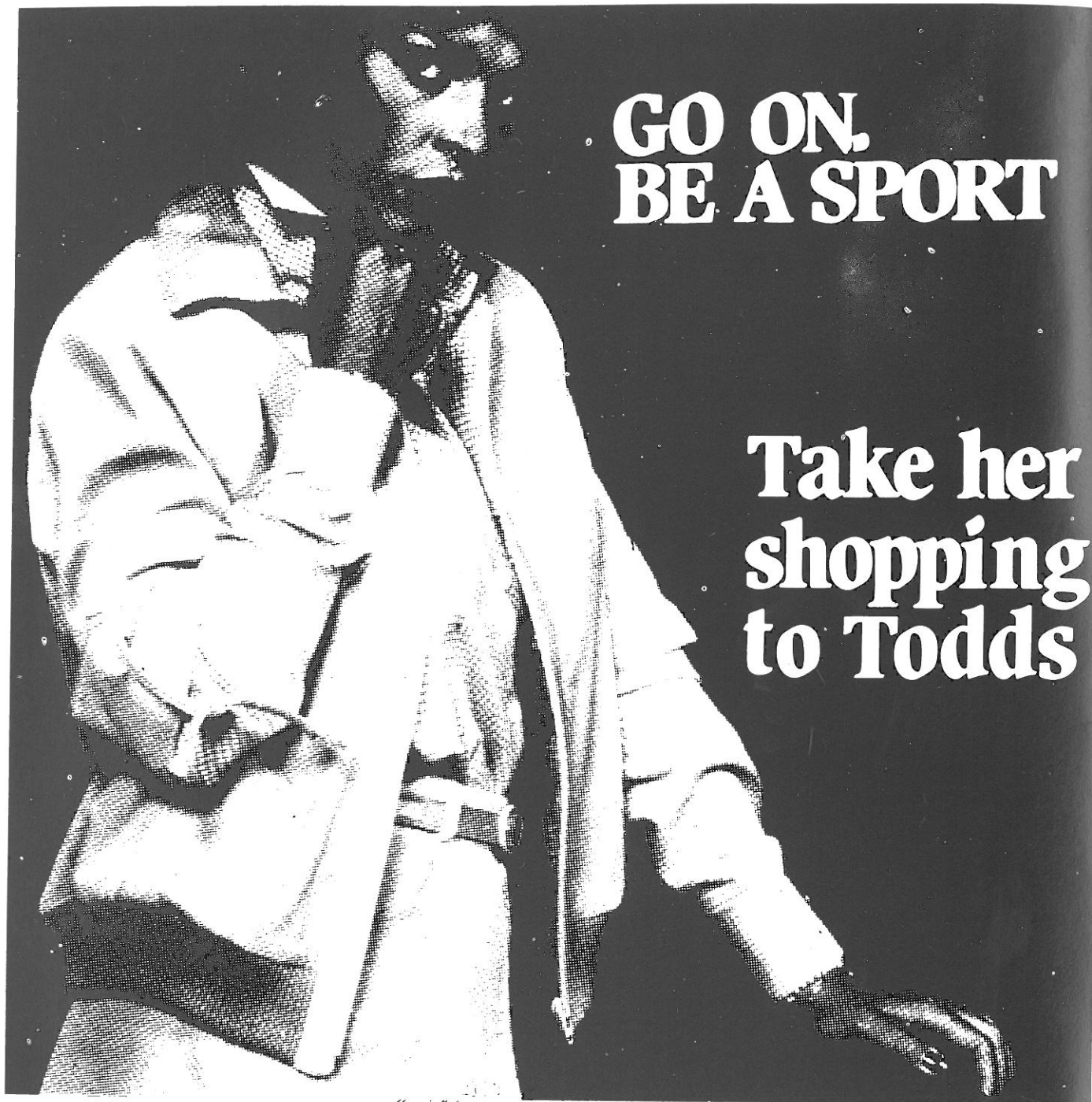
Andrew McNamara's favourite racetrack is Tralee which brings back happy memories. In Tralee Andrew won his first flat race, his first hurdle race, his first steeplechase and had his first double. He has had a winner in Tralee every year for the last five years, starting with 'Choral Surprise', Andrew's first horse, who won there in 1976.

His most memorable moment was when 'Menacco Prince' stormed home in the Handicap Hurdle at Limerick Junction, to win by fifteen lengths. And his first win ever with 'Choral Surprise' also sticks in his mind, he added: "every winner is a memorable occasion."

"Bookmakers", he says, "are part and parcel of Irish racing". The Tote system, used on the continent which transfers all profit back to the course, he believes would never catch on over here.

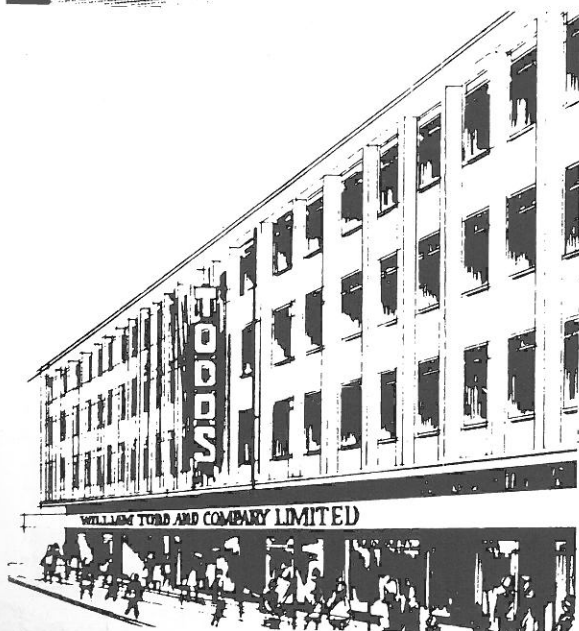
Most of the owners who give their horses to be trained have been dealing with Andrew since he began. They are loyal and believe totally in his ability to train horses. An odd one, he says, asks him to train a horse and then takes the horse away after a few months. This rarely happens.

Looking to the future, he hopes that he will have a winner at Cheltenham, and that six-year-old 'Rent-a-Row', will this year come in first instead of second in the Galway Hurdle.



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HURLING

EAMON CREGAN

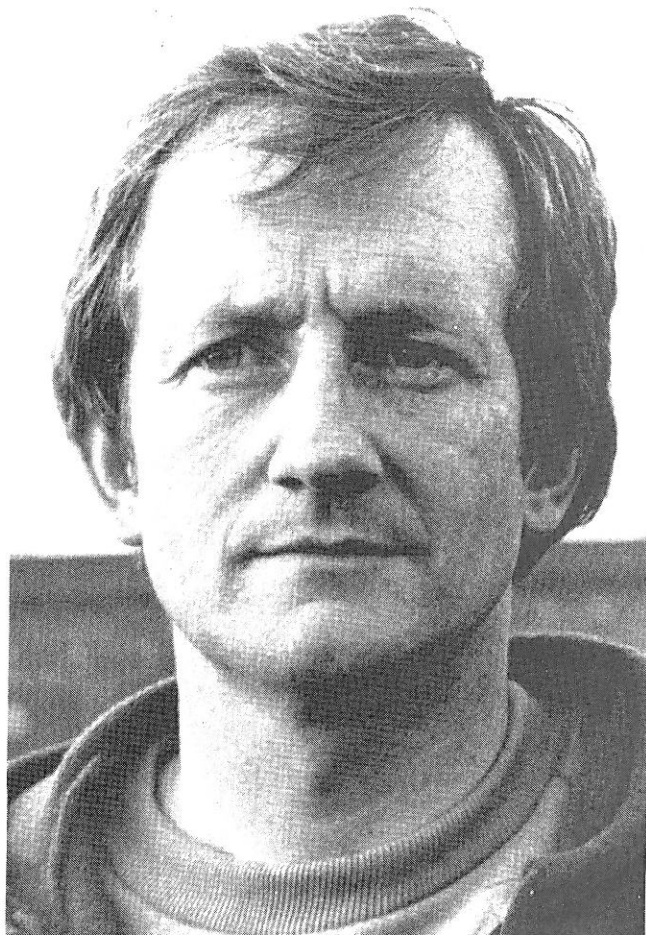
Those who saw Eamonn Cregan in his earliest hurling days with St. Patrick's N.S. were always convinced that his natural talent was such that he was destined to make a big name for himself in hurling circles later in life. Young Cregan, perhaps, had a headstart over most of his schoolboy contemporaries as his late father, Ned, had won an All-Ireland Senior Hurling medal with Limerick in 1934, and the sport of hurling was a constant topic of discussion in the Cregan household. With St. Patrick's, in Olo and Spillane Cup competitions, Cregan's class was such that he was often a one-man matchwinner in himself — quickly, other schools realised that if they were to entertain any hopes of beating St. Patrick's, a policy of detailing two, if not three, players to mark the youngster with the nickname, Blondie, was essential.

Moving into minor ranks, Cregan was the guiding light in a Claughaun team, which included Mick Graham and Billy O'Gorman amongst others, which won the County Minor Hurling Championship in 1962 — after that victory, it was inevitable that Cregan was going to be nominated as captain of the county minor team for the 1963 championship campaign. During that year, with Cregan as the driving force in midfield, Limerick advanced confidently through the Munster Championship, beating the Francis Loughnane powered Tipperary in the final, before eventually going under to a strong Wexford team in the All-Ireland final itself. Numbered amongst Cregan's colleagues on that fine minor team were Jim O'Brien, Andy Dunworth and Brian Cobbe, while Richie Bennis and Eamonn Grimes were sitting on the substitutes bench.

COLLEGES HURLING

If that All-Ireland defeat proved to be a bitter disappointment in young Cregan's sporting career, the Limerick C.B.S. student received a rich measure of compensation a year later when he captained the famed Sexton Street School to a historic first All-Ireland colleges success. On the way to that Croke Park success over St. Peters, Limerick C.B.S. had ended a 32-year wait by bringing the Harty Cup back to Shannonside — beating St. Flannan's of Ennis in the final at Limerick's own Gaelic Grounds. Though that team included quality hurlers like Eamonn Grimes, Brian Cobbe, Noel O'Gorman, Seamus Shinnors etc., there was no doubt but that Cregan, playing at midfield, was one player who made it all 'happen' for Limerick C.B.S. To this date, I can honestly say that I have not seen a more effective colleges hurler.

Side by side with his hurling activities in those days, Cregan was also an accomplished gaelic footballer with his club, Claughaun, and also with the county. Just one year after leaving school, Cregan was part of the county team that gave success starved football followers a brief vision of Camelot — being a key-figure in the Limerick team which, at half-time, threatened to cause a major upset in the Munster Final by beating Kerry, before eventually the sheer strength in depth of the Kingdom won through in the end. Like another of his colleagues, Mick Tynan, Cregan would surely have made a big name for himself in football ranks but for the fact that Limerick were invariably one of the cinderella football counties. As a footballer, Cregan had skill and vision in abundance — believe me, his talent was such he would not have been out of place on the slick-moving Kerry team of the present era.



SENSATIONAL UPSET

With Limerick football generally in the doldrums however, Cregan wisely decided to concentrate most of his energies on hurling — with almost immediate impact at inter-county level as it happened. In 1966, Tipperary travelled to Cork's Athletic Grounds as the hottest favourites imaginable to overcome the challenge of an untried and untested Limerick team. Chasing their 3rd All-Ireland victory on the trot, Tipperary included some of the greats of the modern game; John Doyle, Liam Devaney, Theo English, Mick Roche and Donie Nealon all were the famed blue and gold jersey that memorable day in Cork. It is now part of history, of course, that Limerick caused one of the most sensational upsets in hurling by beating Tipperary, with Eamonn Cregan stamping his name on the game in indelible fashion by notching a brilliant 3-5.

RENEWED HOPE

The early seventies, brought renewed hope in Limerick hurling circles as youngsters like Pat Hartigan and Sean Foley came on the scene to lend their assistance to Cregan, who was now



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widely regarded as one of the finest hurlers of the era. That influx of new blood added immeasurably to Limerick's potential and, after a gruelling N.H.L. series, Limerick finally made the long awaited breakthrough in 1971 when they beat Tipperary by a solitary point in the N.H.L. final in Cork. And while Richie Bennis has been widely lauded for his matchwinning point, it is doubtful if Limerick would have won that game at all but for the genius of Cregan, who scored two goals from play and made Limerick's third goal scored by Claughaun clubman, Mick Graham.

Though sensationally beaten by Clare in the Munster Championship in 1972, the verve and flair of that young Limerick team was to receive its ultimate reward in 1973 when the McCarthy Cup returned to Shannonside after a long 33 year wait. In the Munster Championship games that year, Cregan had been a brilliant scoring forward against Clare and Tipperary, scoring two goals from play against each team — with Limerick beating Clare by two points, while they had a solitary white flag to spare over Tipperary in the Munster Final in Thurles. After that spectacular scoring spree, Cregan responded to the pleas of the county selectors by reverting to the centre-back position for the All-Ireland final, where he gave a peerless defensive display against Kilkenny's dangerous Pat Delaney.

In 1977 and 1978, when Limerick lost in successive Munster Championship games to Clare, it did appear as if age had finally caught up with the Claughaun stalwart. A yard or two had gone off his pace, while Cregan also tended to get involved in one or two physical confrontations that, at the peak of his career, he would have treated with disdain. In truth, it could be said that Eamonn took a year or two to adjust to the fact that he was coming back down to the level of ordinary hurling mortals.

At the start of the 1979/1980 season, it appeared that finis had finally been written on an outstanding hurling career when Cregan accepted the position as a selector of the county hurling team — with a county-by-law prohibiting an individual from accepting the dual mandate of player and selector. Not surprisingly, the media duly churned out suitable sporting obituaries to mark the end of a hurling era. One fact that seemed to escape many people, however, was that Cregan himself had never announced his retirement. In fact, those close to the man will tell you that Cregan was looking for the best of both worlds — having decisive say in team selection and management in his capacity as selector, while still remaining on as an active player. That willingness to involve himself in selectorial affairs was no surprise as Cregan has always held strong views on team selection and tactics.

As it happened, the county board insisted that the letter of the bye-law be observed with the result that Cregan opted out of his position as selector and then duly came out of 'retirement' to assist the county team. The return of their most experienced player considerably boosted Limerick's fortunes as a N.H.L. campaign which appeared to be going nowhere suddenly took off. For his part, Cregan was, if anything, as effective as at any time during his long career. The Claughaun man came to grips with his loss of pace by staying in close to goal. Equally, Cregan reverted to the tactics of his younger days by concentrating solely on getting possession of the sliothar — the days of getting involved in 'niggly' confrontations with defenders were over. With Cregan inspiring them, Limerick took on a new stature in hurling.

UNIQUE SCORING

After qualifying for a play-off against Offaly to decide who would contest the quarter-final stages of the N.H.L., Limerick relied heavily on their veteran corner-forward's unique scoring ability to see them through — Cregan scoring 2-5 in Limerick's narrow victory. Another Cregan brace of goals scored in the quarter-final against Wexford saw Limerick advance to meet Tipperary in the semi-final. Though Cregan had to retire with an injury in that game, Limerick struggled to a hard-bought success that resulted in their reaching the league decider against Cork — with hindsight, it is doubtful if Limerick would

have reached that League Final were it not for the return to active service of Cregan. In the N.H.L. Final itself, and also in the replay, Cregan with the considerable help of Joe McKenna, proved more than a handful for the Cork defenders, but a rather lopsided combination, with glaring weaknesses at midfield and in the half-forward line, eventually proved to be Limerick's undoing.

In the subsequent Munster Championship semi-final game against Clare, Cregan's tally of 2-5 helped Limerick to a rather hard-earned victory over their Banner County opponents, with his second-half goal in that outing being a real beauty. The veteran corner-forward verbally encouraging his young colleague, Ollie O'Connor, to hold possession in a long 40 yard run before committing Clare's Jim Power, to the tackle. Freed from the attentions of Power, Cregan was able to take O'Connor's handpass in style before hitting an unstoppable 20 yard shot past Seamus Durack. In the Munster Final, at the new-looking Semple Stadium, a typical opportunist goal from Cregan gave Limerick an inspired start against favourites Cork. With Liam O'Donoghue, Leonard Enright and Sean Foley hitting new heights of endeavour on the day, and with the wily Cregan brilliantly accurate in his freetaking, Limerick avenged their N.H.L. Final defeat in spectacular fashion.

It is now part of recent history, of course, that Galway smashed Limerick's hopes of All-Ireland glory by beating them on the first Sunday in September at Croke Park. On the day, Cregan was one of the few Limerick hurlers to hit anything like his true form. After Galway had gone into a seven points lead after just 10 minutes play, Cregan brought Limerick back into the game with a marvellous goal. Indeed, Cregan's quickness of thought and action in that scoring movement was such that many of the spectators at Croke Park were unsure as to how the Limerick forward had succeeded in getting the sliothar past Michael Conneely — in his television commentary, Michael O'Hehir described the goal as being "a deflection from Eamonn Cregan". As it actually happened, with his hurley held from behind by Conor Hayes, Cregan displayed rare opportunism in handpassing Jimmy Carrol's centre past Conneely. Far from being a mere 'deflection', that goal was the product of sheer hurling genius.

Throughout 1980, indeed, Cregan notched many scores that will live long in the memory. Against Cork in the replayed N.H.L. Final, and also against Clare and Galway in the Championship, the Limerick attacker scored some delightful points from play with the 'modus operandi' in each instance being the same — gaining possession near the sideline, feinting infield to take his immediate marker away, before turning back onto the touchline and then bisecting the posts with his pinpointed shooting. That remarkable accuracy saw Cregan hit the splendid tally of 5-18 in his three Championship outings, with the Limerick corner-forward heading the scoring charts for both the N.H.L. and Championship. And playing with the Bank of Ireland All-Stars in America in October, Cregan achieved a milestone in his career by reaching his century of goals in competitive competitions. Nomination for that All-Stars hurling team, indeed, was another little bit of history in the Claughaun veteran's career as Cregan was the sole survivor from the original All-Stars selection of 1971.

RARE COMPLIMENT

Even if he lost out on an All-Ireland winners medal in 1980, Eamonn Cregan's performances during the year did much to consolidate his reputation as being one of the finest hurlers in the country. Fifteen years after his senior inter-county debut, the Claughaun man's reputation was as high as at any stage of his long career. Though less fleet-footed than of yore, Cregan was the one Limerick attacker that opponents dreaded when he had the sliothar in his hand — his eye for a goal and sharpness of thought were still as keen as ever. Certainly, Limerick hurling has had few finer sons than Cregan, whose value and contribution to Limerick's cause was aptly summed-up recently when, in an interview with Michael O'Hehir, the legendary Mick Mackey suggested that "Eamonn Cregan is one of the greats of modern hurling".

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RUGBY

COLM TUCKER

Naas Botha, the high-scoring Springbok out-half, realised the best side at the Lions' disposal during last summer's tour of South Africa before the Lions management! John Hopkins of the "Sunday Times" wrote a most interesting book on the tour and quoted Botha as saying that the Lions team for the third Test was their best and he wondered why they had taken so long to realise this fact. He stated further ... "Colm Tucker is a very good player".

Sadly, the damage had been done by the time the back-row was re-jigged. Puerile defence had allowed an inferior South African team to chalk up two wins and then followed a desperately lucky success for the home side in the third Test. Tucker made an auspicious debut that day but said afterwards: ... "that defeat is the biggest disappointment of my rugby career".

On a personal note, the powerfully-built Shannonman who by this stage of the tour had filled out to almost 16 stone, had nothing to worry about. The Springboks scored only one try as against nine in the first two Internationals and the back-row defence was decidedly superior. Tucker fitted in perfectly beside Jeff Squire and fellow-Irishman John O'Driscoll and they were duly retained en bloc for the fourth and final Test.

LION

At long last, the Lions got their reward for persistence and outstanding good humour in face of the cruellest misfortune. They won narrowly enough but Tucker swears that "we were 20 points the better side". There is certain evidence to back up Colm's view, for many penalty kicks at goal were missed and the Springboks only kept the rampant Lions out on occasions by the skin of their teeth. That was the final game of the Lions tour and the ever-cheerful Tucker had enjoyed an experience shared by precious few other Irishmen. Wins by the Lions over the Springboks are few and far between and indeed they have never won a series in South Africa. Never had they been whitewashed either, so that last-gasp victory at the Loftus Versfeld was welcome in the extreme!

So Colm Tucker returned to an adoring Limerick, a little tired but understandably elated by how things had turned out for him on tour. He was justifiably proud of the impression he made and many critics considered that his performance in the last Test excelled even that of O'Driscoll, who in many books was the star of the whole tour.

And yet the likeable 27-year-old Limerickman has no guarantee of his place in the national side. Unfortunately, for Colm, the competition for Irish team places isn't keener anywhere than in the back-row. Not only are there three fine no. 8's in Willie Duggan, Donal Spring and Mike Gibson, but good flankers are two a penny.

On the face of it, one could reasonably expect Tucker and O'Driscoll to be automatic choices on the basis that if they were good enough for the Lions, they should be good enough for Ireland. But that would be to ignore Fergus Slattery, who has become an institution on the Irish team over the years. It may be harsh to say so, but no man has turned in so many anonymous performances over the past four years or so and still retained favour.

Slattery, furthermore, is the "outgoing" captain, and as we are at it, let's not forget Nigel Carr from Ulster and Christy Can-



tillon from Cork Con. The opposition is strong alright, but we have no doubt that Colm Tucker is made of the right stuff and that he will establish himself over the next few months as a regular member of the Irish pack.

EARLY DAYS

The fact that he has never had things too easy won't harm Tucker's prospects. As so many others have done and will continue to do, Tucker came up through under-age ranks with Richmond and St. Marys, and also played with St. Munchins College before moving on to Shannon and almost instant recognition as a big, strong wing-forward who could run hard, tackle keenly, bring the ball through on the ground with consummate ease and tremendous effectiveness and kick the odd prodigious penalty goal when it was most needed! Come to think of it, we haven't seen Tucker in the latter role in recent months and club captain Terry Fitzgerald would do well to bear this aspect of Colm's game in mind.

Tucker made his first appearance for Munster in 1974 and played against the All Blacks that year. He was subsequently dropped for a year or two but was back in time to play a major role in the famous victory over Graham Mourie's New Zealanders in October, 1978. By then he had picked up two Munster Cup medals with Shannon and his first International cap was only just around the corner.

INTERNATIONAL

He made his debut against France in January, 1979, in a drawn game at Lansdowne Road. He crossed the line that day but had the ball dashed from his grasp at the vital moment. He was retained for the visit to Cardiff where Ireland (with Tony Ward outstanding) scored a record 21 points and yet were beaten, chiefly by their own silly mistakes. Crazy, Tucker was dropped to make way for the return of Willie Duggan on the flank and he didn't wear the green of Ireland again until

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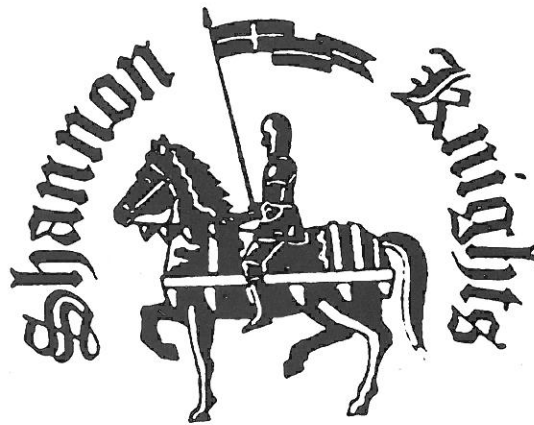
Colm Tucker in a typically powerful burst for the Lions in South Africa.

February, 1980, when he came in as replacement for John O'Driscoll at Paris.

He had a blinder and one great run almost led to a try in the corner by hooker Ciaran Fitzgerald. Many people felt it was a fair score, but be that as it may Tucker had done enough to convince the Lions selectors that he was the type of man they wanted for South Africa. Not so Ireland, however, who immediately

returned him to substitute duty.

Now, after a good campaign for Munster and bursting with the ambition of making an Irish team place his own, the Limerick Area Manager for Murphys Brewery will play his heart out over the next few weeks driven on by the knowledge that all Limerick is behind him. Colm Tucker is that popular a sportsman!



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SOCCER

EOIN HAND

It is a fitting tribute that Eoin Hand, who directed Limerick A.F.C. to their first League of Ireland title in twenty years, is included in this year's Limerick Echo Sports Personalities Roll of Honour.

His part in bringing the league trophy to the Market's Field, has been underplayed especially by his own modest utterances but it was he who lifted Limerick from their unhappy position as a middle-of-the-league team to the jubilant scenes at St. Mel's Park, Athlone, on Sunday, April 20th. last year.

The win had very advantageous side effects for Limerick soccer, including the media attention surrounding Limerick's marvellous campaign, which helped focus the spotlight on many local players who, otherwise, might have had their talents ignored by national press and television.

Surprisingly, the league medal was Eoin Hand's first cup or league medal in either Irish or cross-channel competitions. His talents, though, have not gone unrecognised. Eoin has been capped 19 times for Ireland and last year was given the honour of managing the Irish team.

TO BEGIN

Eoin began his soccer career in Dublin playing with local club Drumcondra, a club he was to return to after a spell of British soccer. Selectors for Swindon Town were quick to spot his potential and Eoin was signed for Swindon in 1964. His time abroad as a professional helped to nurture and mature his talents and gave him an insight which was invaluable in the years ahead.

Eoin played on the Swindon side with two first rate players, Don Rogers and Roger Smart. Both were part of that historic 1969 League Cup Final victory over the mighty Arsenal at Wembley. That final was played in Monsoon conditions but Eoin wasn't part of the history making team.

The six-foot-odd Dubliner returned to Drumcondra who were then League of Ireland members but in 1969 Eoin once again left 'Drums' for Portsmouth.

During his time with Portsmouth Eoin, in the '70's, was capped 19 times for Ireland. He played beside the likes of Liam Brady, Gerry Daly, Steve Highway and countless others, and had the often thankless task of sticking close to a man. Eoin was noted for tight and uncompromising play and has kept many dangerous international players out of a game.

To maintain his fitness level, Eoin spent his summers playing football in South Africa and returned there during the close season each year. In fact Eoin was delayed coming to Limerick because he was involved in the Bobby Charlton World Eleven in South Africa.

TO LIMERICK

Eoin arrived in Limerick in August 1979 and set about his task of player/manager amid much press speculation and, at a time when the club was experiencing some problems.

When he finally was installed as manager Eoin Hand had two aims, the first, to play attractive football and secondly, to strengthen his squad with local talent if at all possible. He saw his new job as an adventure and a challenge. "I want to get into management", he said at the time, "and this club has poten-



tial". Commenting on the difference in facilities between Ireland and England, Eoin says there is no comparison, "Everything is top class over there. There's no real comparison".

Prior to coming to Limerick, Eoin had a short spell in 1978, playing League of Ireland football with Shamrock Rovers before Portsmouth contacted and invited him back to Britain. This experience of Irish league football helped Eoin in his decision to return to his native soil and manage Limerick.

Eoin had complete control in choosing who wore the Limerick jersey, unlike the previous season where caretaker manager, Roger Connolly, was assisted in team selection. At the time, Eoin said he would like to see Limerick finish as near to the top of the League table as possible but was confident that they would be one of the fittest and most attractive sides. "They'll be very sharp and hopefully we can play attractive football too".

The first match, in a gruelling and nerve-sapping campaign to the title, was against league debutantes U.C.D. which Limerick won by two goals to nil. Critics were still sceptical but some had noticed Limerick's new-found confidence and flair. Eoin Hand was still looked upon with suspicion by Market's Field regulars who put the win down to the inexperience of the U.C.D. side. This was Eoin's first taste of League of Ireland football with the "blues".

However, all scepticism was dispelled, in the following game when Limerick played Cork United not a league match but an important landmark in Eoin's Limerick career. Eoin Hand answered his critics in a most decisive manner by giving a virtuoso performance at midfield for the Blues, and scoring all of his side's goals in a decisive 4-1 victory. The ovations that Hand received after scoring his 3rd. and 4th. goals were proof that the player/manager had broken the barriers that existed between himself and the supporters at the Market's Field.



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DAVE MAHEDY (left) and a mud-spattered Eoin Hand celebrate a tremendous 4-3 League victory over Waterford at Kilcohan Park.

A tradition was established at the Market's Field that day which ensured Eoin a standing ovation for every other goal he scored in the coming hard fought League campaign and chants of 'Eoin, Eoin, Eoin' echoed from the field every other day. Eoin Hand had begun a 'love affair' with Limerick soccer supporters which was to culminate in a blue and white brigade invasion of St. Mel's Park, eight months later.

Many of the games throughout the season, and leading up to the Limerick's win, were filled with tension and frayed nerves were in evidence but finally the character that Eoin Hand instilled in his team won through.

COMPLIMENTS

In the aftermath of that monumental league success, there were many public occasions when Eoin was warmly, and deservedly, complimented for his part in bringing the League trophy to the Market's Field. On each of these occasions, though, the Limerick manager was at pains to underplay his own role, while at the same time, lauding his players for their honesty and commitment. His modesty did not do him justice, but praise of the players was valid as nothing could have been achieved without the efforts of Joe O'Mahony, Kevin Fitzpatrick, Pat Nolan, Johnny Walsh and Co.

Eoin had inherited the nucleus of a strong team, with the vital blend of youth and experience, and he knew that there was no possible way that the team was going to finish near the bottom of the table. However, it must be admitted that a manager must have some outstanding qualities to his credit if he leads a team to victory in his first season at the club.

Eoin was helped by former Limerick team managers Ewan Fenton and John Herrick who continue to contribute to local soccer. Fenton has left a marvellous legacy in the club and Herrick rivalled only Eoin Hand in demanding nothing short of

total effort from his players.

Trainer and coach Dave Mahedy did much to flog the team into a fitness which was evident during the winter months when playing, sometimes up to the ankles, in mud. Mahedy gained instant respect from the Limerick players.

Eoin Hand too gained instant respect and has made the game more enjoyable for each of the Limerick players who say that his professionalism has taken the chore out of playing. He set strong example by playing himself out of position from the day he joined the club. Being a centre back the most obvious thing for him to do was to accommodate himself at that position but instead he played at midfield, not wanting to disturb Brendan Storan who proved to be one of the best young pivots in the league. Then, when Tony Meaney joined the team on a permanent basis, he moved to the right in midfield to accommodate him. The willingness on Eoin's part, in twice being prepared to try new positions for the sake of his team, was not lost on his squad.

Tactically, Eoin Hand has few rivals in Irish football. From the outset with Limerick he opted for a 4-3-3 policy and never once wavered in his determination to put opposing teams under pressure by attacking. Eoin Hand's honesty and commitment has ensured that a new chapter was written in the history of Limerick soccer.

Eoin's genius was not lost when it came to appointing a manager of the national side to replace outgoing Johnny Giles. Eoin regards the task as his greatest challenge and honour. This year he will be spending some time in Dublin because of Ireland's hectic international schedule but next year there are few games and Eoin will be able to relax into his newfound manager's position.

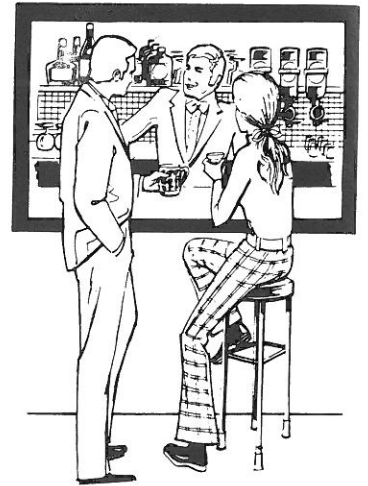
Eoin who is reigning Limerick citizen of the year signed a three year contract with Limerick and will be seen at the Market's Field for another year and a half much to the delight of players, supporters and all connected with the club.

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JUNIOR SOCCER

MICK AHERNE

Undoubtedly the greatest achievement for any ambitious junior soccer player is to don the Irish jersey in the representation of his country. Mick Ahern has done so. And although the Junior Soccer Personality is now in the veteran stages of his career he played a major part in helping Janesboro to victory last year in the newly formed Premier League.

Mick Ahern who plays so competently and reliably between the Janesboro posts embarked on his junior soccer career a little over seventeen years ago. He was always interested, as he is today, however with Gaelic Games where he has accumulated no fewer than two Railway Cup Football medals with Munster and three County Championship medals with Treaty Sarsfield.

For the most part however, the name Mick Ahern is generally associated with junior soccer. When the Limerick District League won the prestigious national Oscar Traynor Trophy in the seasons of '67/'68, '73/'74, '76/'77 and '77/'78 Mick had the incredible distinction of figuring on all four winning teams. The latter of the four was probably his most memorable as Mick stopped a late penalty in normal time before going on to halt a further three spot kicks in the penalty shoot out.

Although Mick is currently a 'Boro' man whose sympathies, up until four and a half years ago, lay with Hyde Rangers with whom he played for thirteen years. Decidedly one of Mick's most successful years with "Hyde" was in 1975 when they collected no fewer than three trophies.

As a footballer Mick always figured prominently as a spirited and intelligent player with Treaty Sarsfields. As centre back with Treaty Sarsfields, Mick's secret ambition was to lift Limerick to success in Gaelic football.

In December of 1973 Mick captained Treaty Sarsfields to their tenth senior football title in 27 years. That's not saying that Mick was on the team those twenty seven years but there is no doubt that during his time with Sarsfields he was always a figure to be reckoned with from the opposition's point of view.

In the same year at a dinner dance at the Glentworth Hotel Mick Ahern was voted Footballer Of The Year by the Treaty Sarsfield Club. This was an honour which Mick deeply appreciated.

Mick was shortly to be congratulated on his appointment as Captain of the Limerick Gaelic Football Team. At the time Mick had several pokers in the fire as the ex-Weston Rangers man often fulfilled two to three fixtures in a single day. One such example is when he turned out on a Sunday morning to aid "Hyde" in a 3-1 victory over Pike Rovers in the F.A.I. Junior Cup. Three hours later he was seen starring for the County's Gaelic Football team in Askeaton.

In 1974 Mick figured on the team which helped themselves to the title of Limerick County Gaelic Football Champions. Mick attributed much of his success to Limerick A.F.C. for both he and Mick O'Donnell were reserve goalkeepers for Limerick at the time. "I owe a lot to Limerick who provided me with the groundwork and rudiments of Gaelic Football", Mick states.

In the season of 1973/'74 Mick Ahern played twelve matches for Limerick when regular keeper Kevin Fitzpatrick was ruled out through injury. Because of his involvement with the Limerick County team Mick was unable to turn out for Limerick later that season when Kevin Fitzpatrick was again ruled out through a back injury.

In all Mick Ahern figured on twelve Junior Oscar Traynor teams. In the final analysis he accumulated four trophies over



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Mick Ahern (4th left-back row) pictured with the Irish Junior Team which played Scotland in 1979.

four seasons to add to his enormous collection of medals, plaques and cups.

Without a doubt the pinnacle of Mick's junior soccer career was his cap for Ireland in October of '79. Lining up with fellow Limerickman Sean Callaghan, who played with Rovers United, Mick states that the feeling of playing for Ireland is an experience surpassed by no other. And, although Ireland lost to Scotland on that occasion by one goal to nil, it is a game that Mick will never forget. "It's got to be one of the greatest honours to play for your country. I got real enjoyment from the game and it is indeed something that I will always remember".

Mick still retains his 'cap' jersey and togs from that game although he will admit himself that he does not take the best of care of the items. For the past two years the gear has occupied a dark corner of a wardrobe wrapped in a plastic bag to protect the clothing from dust and moths.

Amazingly Mick has very little respect for his much coveted trophies. On moving house some years back, neighbours in the area were surprised to see Mick emerging from the house with a bag stacked to the brim with trophies of all sorts.

Admittedly however, not all of the trophies are owned by Mick. His wife, Aileen, has collected quite a few cups of her own from her days as a table tennis player and Irish Dancing.

Mick has great hope for his two boys who he hopes will follow in what can only be described as his gigantic footsteps.

Another feather in Mick's cap came only five months ago

when Al. Finucane of the Waterford team stepped in and offered Mick terms.

Mick declined the offer surprisingly enough. This was due for the most part, to the fact that Janesboro were going very well at the time of the proposition and to leave at such a crucial time could have spelt disaster for 'Boro'. In addition to this Mick was reluctant to leave his wife and children, which he would have to do every week-end as most of his games would be away from home.

Mick currently trains two nights a week at Plassey and continues as one of Janesboro's much acclaimed stalwarts.

Mick has spent exactly half of his entire lifetime playing one sort of sport or another. After seventeen years he has absolutely no regrets.

The beginning of his career in junior soccer was somewhat of a windfall. "I used to play for Hyde Rangers and it was during my time there that I discovered how useful I could be in goals. I was at a game one Saturday morning. Hyde's regular keeper Gerry McCormack was on trial for Tottenham Hotspur at the time and I was asked to stand in as temporary keeper for Hyde. I suppose I didn't play too badly because I'm still playing goal today", Mick said.

To junior soccer circles the name of Mick Ahern is as well known as it is revered. A model sportsman is Mick, and a very deserving winner of the Junior Soccer Personality Award for 1980.

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MOST ENTERTAINING SPORTS PERSONALITY

LIAM O'DONOGHUE

Liam O'Donoghue confesses that his real ambition as a young boy was to become a member of the Limerick county senior hurling team. That his ambition has been realised is attributable as much to the family background as to his own interest and talent as a wielder of the camán.

Due to the home influence, undoubtedly, he was trotting around with a hurley at the impressionable age of 4 years and as a youthful supporter he watched them training and playing at every opportunity.

The family involvement had a lot to do with this interest, as the name of O'Donoghue and Mungret hurling are synonymous. His father Joe after winning a well merited "Limerick Leader" cup medal with Mungret N.S., was a member of the great Mungret team of the "forties" with whom he won many major trophies.

Other members of the O'Donoghue clan have carved their names in hurling history. The late Bill played in one of the most colourful of All-Ireland finals - that of 1933, when the only major score of the game - Johnny Dunne's goal - gave Kilkenny a rather lucky win. Bill was later to figure as a noted referee with Munster and All-Ireland final successes to his name.

Of like vintage we had Arthur and Johnsie as members of the Limerick team that won the All-Ireland junior hurling title in 1941, whilst Kevin, a year earlier helped Limerick to win its first ever All-Ireland minor hurling crown. Uncle Paddy, too, must get honourable mention in any reference to that period.

Liam has two brothers - Gerard and Joe. The former won Dr. Harty Cup and All-Ireland colleges hurling medals with Limerick CBS in 1966, while the latter collecting an under 15½ award and Dean Ryan Cup junior hurling medal in the same colours the following year.

Liam himself played both hurling and football with Sexton St. CBS but his only trophy won with the famed nursery was a coveted Dr. Whyte Cup Under 15½ hurling medal.

With Mungret Liam figured on three county championships winning combinations - juvenile hurling 1968, Junior hurling 1969, and the now defunct Intermediate grade in 1975.

In that 1968 series, playing in the semi-final against Rathkeale, Liam scored a personal tally of 6 goals and 5 points, and that must be a Limerick championship record for any individual player.

A member of the County Under 21 side in the three years - 1971 to 1973, Liams first appearance in the Limerick senior jersey was in that year of glory - 1973 when a thrilling Munster triumph was followed by the recovery of the All-Ireland Blue Riband after the long lapse of 33 years. One of the youngest members of that historic panel, Liam gave a scintillating performance and every promise of a lengthy spell in top grade hurling.

His displays during 1980 graphically illustrated that he has more than maintained that early promise.

Whether as a tenacious defender, or a crafty and elusive forward Liam was the bulwark of a Limerick side that gave its supporters great mileage in 1980. Who can forget those two



memorable clashes with the "auld enemy" Cork to decide the destination of the League pennant, or that halycon day in sunny Semple Stadium when the Shannonsiders laid that Cork bogey.

Even when succumbing to the Galway challenge in the final at Croke Park the one shining beacon was that the live-wire O'Donoghue, who refused to accept the inevitable and hurled defiance in the face of adversity.

The one black mark of an otherwise impeccable season was being sidelined for a very minor indiscretion against Tipperary in a National Hurling League at the Gaelic Grounds, and this extremely harsh decision, cost Liam a Bank of Ireland All-Stars award, for there can be no doubt but that the talented Cement Ltd. wages clerk would have been an automatic choice.

And so Liam O'Donoghue's name must go into the record books as the most worthy player never to receive an All-Star award.

Liams trophy collection with Limerick include three Munster championship medals 1973/74/80, All-Ireland medal 1973, Runners-up 1974/80 and Two Division II National Hurling League Medals plus numerous tournament plaques in Counties Cork, Tipperary, Limerick and Galway.

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He has figured with Munster hurlers in the Railway Cup in 1974, 1976, 1977 and 1979 and won a medal in 1976.

Liam has encountered many worthy opponents and classy hurlers during his inter-county careers and he rates Jimmy Barry Murphy, Tom Cashman, Ger Henderson, Pat Henderson, Lew Gaynor, Noel O'Dwyer, Tim Crowley, Colm Honan, Paraic Horan, Joe Connolly and Iggy Clarke, as the most accomplished hurlers he has played on.

Asked about his most memorable game to date Liam unhesitatingly answered - the 1980 Munster final - "It was fantastic to break the Cork bogey and give our supporters something to cheer about" said the genial O'Donoghue.

As regards an amusing incident, Liam likes to recall a National League game against Wexford when he hit a high ball over the bar, but it came down through a hole in the net and to his amazement and delight the umpire waved the green flag for a goal!

Liam travelled to America with the Limerick team in 1974, and also played in Wembley Stadium in London. He regrets the termination of the Wembley games and opines strongly that the American tours should continue.

Liam is a great man to train, and apart from training two nights each week with the county squad, he likes to indulge in the odd game of Squash.

He was a sprinter of note in his schooldays, and is now an avid supporter of Rugby and Soccer, often lining-out in the latter code with Mungret.

Although most of his earlier years on the Limerick team were spent as a forward Liam now shows a profound preference for a defensive role, and hopes that the selectors will allot him berth in the County citadel.

"I like to be approaching the ball, and I think my style is best suited to defence" said Liam.

Was he sore with the referee who ordered him off against Tipperary? "Not really" said Liam "I appreciate referees have a tough assignment, but I think that several worse incidents took place in that game and went unnoticed. Therefore I couldn't understand how I got "marching orders", but such is life, you've got to accept the ref's decision."

Liam is quite happy with the present GAA structure and set-up and sees no reason whatsoever for continuous changing of rules.

Liam is loud in his praise for City Bord na n-Og and the tremendous work they are doing in promoting games amongst the youth. "They are the real unsung heroes of the GAA" he said.

Liam himself is deeply involved in juvenile affairs in the Mungret club, and he was charmed when the Under 12 footballers won the 1980 county championship, to bring the first football title to the parish. He feels that this could be the launching pad for a major breakthrough, and with the wealth of

The Limerick hurling team pictured before the All-Ireland Final in 1980, with Liam O'Donoghue seated at the extremem right-front row.

talent now apparent in Ballykeefe, Dooradoyle, Gouldavoher, Raheen Heights and the sprawling parish, Mungret could be on the threshold of former greatness.

"There is a great GAA tradition in Mungret parish" exclaims Liam and this is most important.

What about senior hurling in Mungret?

Well Liam is very optimistic for the future. "We were very unlucky against Patrickswell in last years City championship, and with a few new additions to our panel, and with proper dedication to training and preparation I think we will be a match for the best" he quipped.

And so back to the inter-county scene. "Of course we were downhearted when we lost to Galway. Our failure is hard to explain, I think too much was read into our Munster final success over Cork. But we have no alibis, on the day Galway were the superior team".

Will the present Limerick team rise again from their present barren spell? "I think so" said Liam "but it could be a slow process. It was extremely hard to pick up the pieces in the aftermath of that All-Ireland final beating, we were unlucky to be beaten in our three-opening games and that defeat by Waterford was a major disaster".

What of the pressures on inter-county players at present?

"Yes indeed its tough, what with training, matches every week-end for club and county, you have very little time for your family. Thats why its so important to have a wife who is addicted to the GAA. A player must also enjoy his hurling."

What do you think of supporters?

"I can honestly say that the followers of the Limerick team are the best in the land. Travelling is now a costly item, so the fans are entitled to good fare and good enjoyment. I feel sorry for the followers when we are beaten in an important game. I think it effects them worse than the players".

Is Liam in favour of coaching?

"Most certainly. It is very important to teach young players the basics of hurling properly. After that it is up to the individual, with practice, practice, and more practice the key to becoming a skillful hurler.

What are Liam's ambitions now?

"I hope to win another All-Ireland title with Limerick, perhaps qualify for a coveted Bank of Ireland All-Stars Award, and would like to see Mungret a real force in senior hurling."

Hurling followers everywhere certainly hope that the 28 year old Mungret hurler supreme will achieve his aspirations and continue to serve Limerick so majestically as he has done during the past 8 years.

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OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TO SPORT

AL FINUCANE

For twenty illustrious years Al. Finucane has been an outstanding player and personality in Irish soccer circles. In this time he has achieved every conceivable honour, played with and against many famous players and only last year became the first Limerickman to win two F.A.I. cup medals.

At the age of nine, Al. Finucane began his career. He joined the famous Limerick Club, Reds United, which drew on youngsters from the Prospect and Rosbrien areas of the city. At school, the Christian Brothers of Sexton Street looked with disfavour on young soccer players. The G.A.A. ban was in vogue and the school games were hurling and football, anyone caught playing soccer on the school premises was liable to be expelled. So, Al. turned to the streets and to Reds Utd. where he grew up with such notable prodigies as Kevin Fitzpatrick and Mick Doyle.

During his final years at C.B.S. Al's leadership potential came to the fore. He captained the school hurling team at centre half back. His first love, however, was soccer, and at 16, when Al. Finucane left Reds Utd., he had won every possible schoolboy cup and league medal. And had been in two Evans Cup Finals, the equivalent of today's soccer schoolboy's All Ireland Final, before going on to play minor soccer with Limerick C. team.

In his first year, along with Mick Doyle and Kevin Fitzpatrick, Limerick 'C' won the Munster Minor Cup. During this time Al. Finucane specialised in the half-back position but because of injury trouble on the Limerick 'B' team he found himself, at 17, playing at outside-right. In this position, Al. went on to win a Munster 'B' league medal and was moved to inside forward for the coveted Munster Junior Lawson Cup. Al. scored in every round, including the final when Limerick 'B' team beat Ballynanty Rovers by two goals to nil.

PICKED

Around that time Limerick won the league title and Ewan Fenton joined the Limerick team. Ewan saw Al. playing at inside-forward for the Lawson Cup squad and was impressed enough to pick him in that position for the Limerick senior team.

Although Al. was unused to this position, he played there for three seasons before returning to half-back and picked up some of his 25 inter-league caps. He was then picked for Ireland's first international Under 23 team to play France and played beside notable cross-channel players like Ray Tracey, Pat Dunne, Eamonn Dumphy, Eamonn Rodgers and Tommy Carroll. The following year Al. gained the first of his eleven full Irish caps.

He will be remembered as Limerick's stylish wing half of the sixties along with his colleagues Ewan Fenton, Kevin Fitzpatrick, and Mick Doyle. During which time he was elected Irish "Soccer Personality of the Year" in 1967 and became the first Limerickman to be honoured with such a treasured award.

Then in 1971, an unbelievable and unforgettable year in the Al. Finucane saga, he first of all captained Limerick's winning



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A jubilant Al. Finucane shows the F.A.I. Cup to the fans after Waterford had won the trophy in 1980.

F.A.I. cup team; captained the League of Ireland side in their centenary year and finally, the ultimate honour, captained his country against Austria, to become the only Limerickman to captain an international side.

EXPERIENCE

Al. Finucane finds he owes a great deal to soccer and to the players he has met during his career. He has played with and against many household names. With Ireland, he lined up beside such notables as Charlie Hurley, Noel Cantwell, Johnny Giles, Alan Kelly, Eoin Hand, Steve Heighway, Don Givens and the list goes on.

He has lined out against such brilliant British players as Billy Bremner, Jimmy Johnstone, Peter Osgood, Jack Charlton, Alan Ball, Norman Hunter, and many, many more. He has played against Argentina's World Cup winning side and defended against Italy's feared and dynamic trio, Mazzola, Riva and Riverra. His other internationals were against Hungary, Denmark, Sweden, Turkey and Czechoslovakia. Soccer has taken him all over the globe; to America, South America, Malta, Bulgaria, Portugal where he visited both on club tours and in European Cup Competitions.

One of Al Finucane's idols was the stalwart Manchester United and England defender, Bobby Charlton. And some time ago Al. had the pleasure of playing beside him when he was invited and accepted to line out with Waterford.

Charlton and Finucane are alike in many ways. Both have enjoyed widespread popularity as sporting opponents who shun the unnecessary physical aspect of the game but are always

tough and fair, and both have reached the highest levels of achievement possible in their countries.

REGRETS

One of Al. Finucane's few soccer regrets is that he failed to win a coveted League of Ireland medal but he is consoled by the fact that he is the only Limerickman ever to win two F.A.I. cup medals, thus adding to his other unique achievement as being the only Limerickman to be honoured as sports personality of the year, and the only one to captain an international side, an F.A.I. cup winning team and a League of Ireland side in the same year.

Another regret Al. has is never being able to try his hand at the game of rugby which he loves to watch but never had the time to play. He also likes to play a round of golf and is looking forward to the future when he can spend some time knocking down his handicap.

When he retires, "in twenty years time", Al. would like to try his hand at coaching or managing a soccer team. At present he travels to Waterford every Sunday and spends his spare time training in N.I.H.E. As with his boyhood colleague, Kevin Fitzpatrick, Al. Finucane retains his ability as well as ever.

Although he has left the Market's Field for some time he still retains a love for the club his talents matured in and asked if he will ever return, Al. said:

"At my age it is unlikely that I will play for Limerick again but it is nice to think that I might finish up my career there".

Most Limerick fans, I'm sure would echo that sentiment and welcome him back before he ends his playing days.

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COMMUNITY AWARD

SR. MARY CARMEL O'DONOGHUE

Nobody has done more for the plight of itinerants in Limerick than Rev. Sr. Mary Carmel O'Donoghue. She has also gone a long way towards getting society to recognise the extent and the nature of the problem, and she has been singlehandedly responsible for the bridging of the great gulf which existed until recently between the two groups. And now she has ambitious plans to complete the rehabilitation of Limerick's itinerants, so that the "problem" will be no more.

Sr. Mary Carmel was born at O'Connell Avenue, Limerick, in the house still occupied by her mother. One of her four brothers also live locally. She has one sister.

She was educated at the Model School, and later, by the Salesian Sisters. While at school, she recognised that she had a vocation, and was greatly attracted by the work done by the Salesian order. She saw the work done with young people, deprived families, old folk, as well as the effort put into organising social activities for teenagers. She decided to join the order.

She spent her novitiate at Henley-on-Thames, and has fond recollections of the Henley Royal Regatta. After her profession, she returned to Limerick to train as a teacher at Mary Immaculate College.

Her special love was the teaching of travelling people. The Salesian Sisters, who number more than fifty in four convents in the City, had been engaged in this work since 1961. At Fernbank, for example, a special class had been provided for itinerant children. This class is still going strong, and now caters for upward of forty youngsters. The sisters felt that these children would be quite unable to fit into the ordinary primary school system.

From 1971 to 1976, Sr. Mary Carmel was attached to this class, but she, and her colleagues, knew that something more should, and could be done. There was a need for a broader follow-up for teenagers.

ST. MARTIN'S

And so it was that, in 1976, the Salesian Sisters and the City St. Vincent de Paul Society devised an outline scheme to provide a centre which would help itinerant children to adapt to everyday life, and to break away from the difficult social and moral standards of their environment. St. Martin's centre was born.

In a small hall at Francis Street, paid for by Mr. Michael Keane, the project began on a modest scale in November '76. AnCo and the City V.E.C. gave help in the form of grants and instructors, but the brunt of the problem lay on the shoulders of Sr. Mary Carmel. She wanted the project to develop to become a "door to life" to youngsters from deprived families.

Because she felt that these youngsters had been deprived, through no fault of their own, of education and of job opportunities, she decided that the course should not confine itself merely to handicraft training, but should extend to teaching literacy, home economics, social graces, moral and religious



principles. She decided to teach these teenagers those things which, to a child of half their age from an "ordinary" family, would come naturally.

The crafts being taught at the centre include dressmaking and machine knitting for girls, and woodwork, metalwork and souvenir making for boys. These programmes are aided by the European Communities' Social Fund for the past two years.

But the centre, as at present constituted, can only cater for two dozen young people. This is hopelessly inadequate, as the number of itinerant children in the City has more than doubled since 1973. This is due to young marriages and large families.

DYING CIVILISATION

The itinerant "civilisation" is dying, and descending into a terrible state, says Sr. Mary Carmel. Gone are the crafts of the

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tinsmith and the handyman which gave them dignity and employment in previous generations. The invention of the cheap plastic bucket put paid to the last trade which they, as "tinkers" could call their own.

The romantic idea of the free jolly tinker is, and always has been a myth. Life was always hard, infant mortality was high, and life expectancy short. Even when they had a social acceptability through their work as tinsmiths, they were without roots, and without the basic things which ordinary society cherished.

They had not then, nor have they now, any idea of what constitutes a balanced diet. They tend to drink too much, which adds to poor nutrition and ruins their health.

Itinerant women have a terrible time. Culturally, the men have to prove their virility by fathering many children, without giving the slightest thought to how, and in what conditions, the children will be reared. The health of the mother is destroyed by this kind of life.

Since they lost their place in society, and their traditional means of earning a scant living, their pride has been wiped out. The dole, which in their terms is money for doing nothing, has greatly exacerbated this. They now have no scruples whatever about taking money from the State. The world, in their minds, owes them a living.

FIDDLING DOLE

It is hardly surprising, therefore, that their resentment of established society, has led them to have little respect for public or private property. They themselves live from day to day. They will spend every penny, without a care for tomorrow, leaving the wretched mother to scrape enough together to feed her family.

Dole "fiddling" and thievery became common. By rejecting society, they themselves were rejected, and the gap grew wider. They now fear society, and have, in many cases, degenerated to a sub-culture which exists parallel to, but not coming in contact with the settled community.

Sr. Mary Carmel is dedicated to getting rid of these attitudes, and is working both to educate the itinerant children and to get society to accept them.

There is an awareness of the need to provide proper caravan sites, and for proper housing among the people, but there is a lack of enthusiasm to put this into effect, she says.

Everyone is in favour of housing itinerant families, but only as long as they are housed somewhere else. Nobody looks at the individual traveller — they tar them all with the same brush.

"Of course we have had setbacks. There is a certain amount of regression for a short period, when they get back to their own people. But we usually feel that we have set the seeds of values. These seeds, once planted, can never really be killed. Young people who have been with us look forward to becoming part of the community, and take pride when they make some step toward integration".

WORK

"We firstly try to get them to appreciate work, and to break down the something-for-nothing mentality. They all work at the centre, and get a small amount of money for their efforts. But we go even further than that".

"When we took a few of them to the seaside for a few days during the summer, they had to do their few hours work before they were allowed to go to the beach. They appreciated it, and felt that they were paying their way".

"Sometimes they will slip back, but they usually come back to us. We always make the point that we will help them at any time, no matter how long they have been away from us. They tend to get very little help from their families or their associates. They have to be adult at a very early age".

"Even in their own culture, they are forced to fend for themselves at a very early age. Their parents don't care very much for them, and do little to protect them. It is not unusual to see an eight year-old girl being left at home to mind three or four of her young brothers and sisters".



"Not only is there no great caring for the children, but there is no element of authority exercised over them. Often a mother will come to me and say: "She doesn't want to come to class. What can I do if she doesn't want to come?"

"In established society, parental control is taken for granted, particularly over young children, not much more than babies. But in travelling society, this is missing, and we must try to exercise control by example. We must get the youngsters we deal with to become interested in their work and their courses. Only in that way will they keep coming. There is very little backup".

"On the other hand, when a youngster gets a job, the parents take great pride in this, as it is another hurdle overcome in their desperate struggle for acceptance as human beings. The lack of acceptance is as much due to their attitude to established society as it is due to the attitude of society toward them".

"We encourage our youngsters to join clubs and societies, and we have yet to hear of any club which would not take one of our people as members. But we had one girl whose mother would not let her join a prayer group, simply because she felt that her daughter would not be good enough for the other people in the group".

"We eventually got the girl to go, but only because she wanted to, and she was later able to tell her mother that she had been completely accepted".

ADVISE EMPLOYERS

"As well as training the youngsters, we will also advise any employer of the situation with any individual. We don't believe in bluffing, because, if there is to be a problem, we would like to try to sort it out in advance".

"If an employer asks for a young person, we will send only the person or persons who are suitable".

"We have a problem teaching the youngsters about such simple things as punctual timekeeping and honestly returning work for their pay. But once we have got these principles through to them, they never look back".

Sr. Mary Carmel is now seeking £500,000 to build a new centre which could cater for all of the travelling youngsters in Limerick. She has a professional fundraiser engaged to advise on the best methods of collecting her share of the cash. This, she said, became necessary because of opposition from a local politician to her previous scheme.

There are many people in Limerick who are working for the betterment of the travelling community. But nobody is doing more or doing it as well as Sr. Mary Carmel O'Donoghue. Without her efforts, the problem would be many times worse.

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COMMUNITY AWARD

TOMMY DRENNAN

If Limerick singer Tommy Drennan had not embarked upon a career of showbusiness the chances are that he might have opted to be an airline pilot.

Today, although his secret ambition is as yet unfulfilled, Tommy Drennan is still flying high as one of Limerick's leading figures in the world of entertainment. His talents are sought at cabaret and band spots throughout the length and breadth of Ireland as he heads for his silver jubilee in the world of music.

Incredibly enough, Tommy began his career as a boy soprano with the Redemptorist choir. There he was able to expand and improve on his expertise as a singer. Musicals also played a major role in putting him on the high plain that he now occupies. Tommy explains that he was always deeply impressed by musical films and stage shows. Nothing gave him more pleasure than to attend a stage musical and just soak in the music.

At the tender age of ten Tommy had his first real break with one of the major radio slots of the time. On "Newcomers To The Mike" Radio Eireann's most celebrated programme at that time, Tommy Drennan went to the studios and did his thing live to a listenership that would have totalled over half the population of Ireland — T.V. had not been introduced to Ireland.

After that Tommy became somewhat of a town celebrity and by the age of eleven he was more or less a household name.

By the age of fourteen, he was singing in competitive concerts and was collecting quite an amount of trophies, cups and medals to adorn the fireside mantelpiece.

Among his achievements was that at Feiseanna Ceoil which he won quite easily at the age of fourteen.

Despite Tommy's tremendous success on radio and in competitions, the youth remained for the most part unperturbed. Attending C.B.S. at the time, he was more interested in getting away for a swim at the Corbally baths where he could relax and enjoy himself with friends.

On leaving the C.B.S. Tommy got a job with Shannon Travel. He worked there for a while for three pounds and four shillings a week. It wasn't long before he realised what he really wanted however, and after a few short months he left for Dublin to attend the Academy of Music.

SHOWBANDS

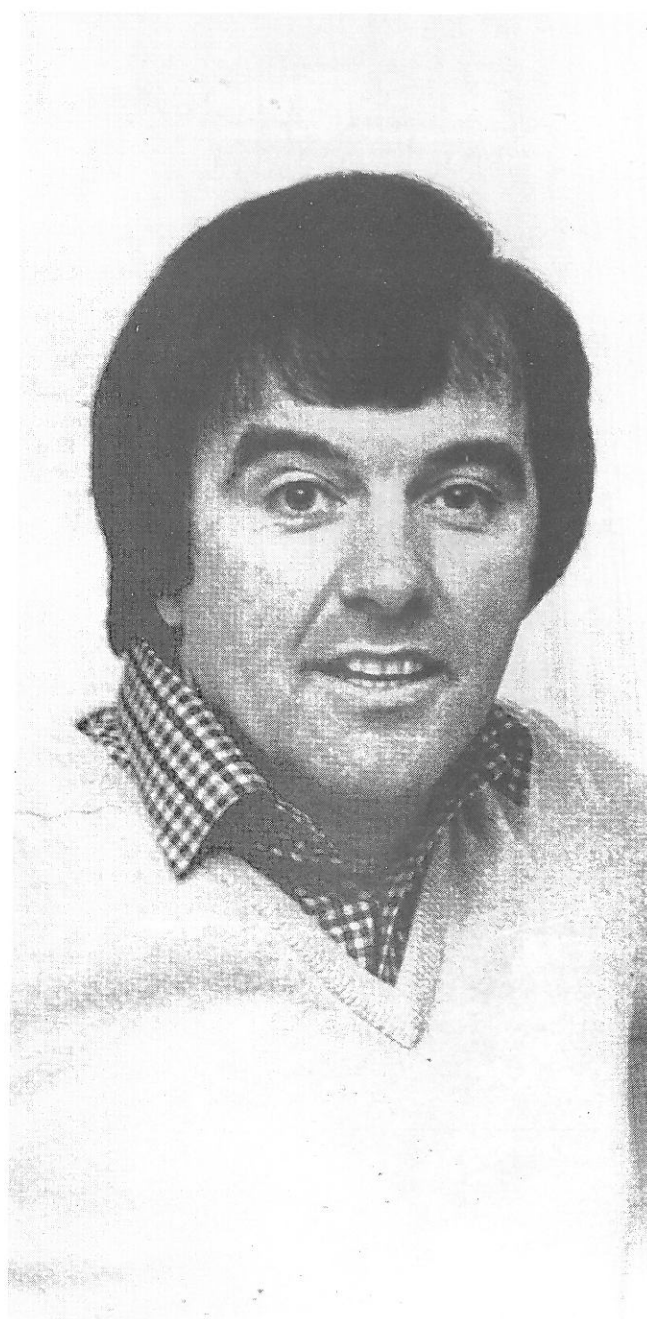
At the time Tommy Drennan left school, the showbands in Ireland were just coming into their own.

"Their music attracted me a lot" said Tommy, "it was the modern and 'poppy' sound that really grabbed me. It was a vibrant sort of sound that would make one want to get stuck in along with them. I did".

It was while Tommy was at Shannon Travel that he experienced television cameras for the first time. Paul Russell approached him and asked him if he would be interested in doing a T.V. slot with UTV. "It scared me to hell but I went on anyway and really enjoyed it".

The Freshmen of Ballymena in the North of Ireland were looking for a vocalist and after the television show they asked Tommy if he would do them the honour. He accepted and so his career on the road had really begun.

He stayed with the Freshmen for one very enjoyable year and with the experience gathered there, he returned to his native city where he based himself.



His reputation had travelled with him and it wasn't long before he was singing with the Monarchs — that was in 1964.

Tommy was delighted to be back with his own people. It was because of this that he rapidly matured and came more and more into his own.

Basically Tommy loved entertaining and found total satisfaction in being in a position in which he was able to bring enjoyment to those around him.

The Monarchs were into a jive beat as well as the much soughtafter waltzing and foxtrot sounds.

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The secret of success Tommy feels is the personal satisfaction that must be there if you're to make it as a performer. "Everything has to be right when you're out on the night. You can always tell after the first few minutes of going on stage whether or not everything is going O.K. You'd be surprised what equipment can do for a group. Not necessarily the amount of equipment but the positioning of it. Microphones and speakers have to be right.

On a good night, I'm feeling great, the band is feeling great and the crowd is also feeling great. It's an absolutely fantastic feeling when everything is just brilliant and going your way".

Tommy does not remember a night when everything was a complete and total flop. He does recollect times however when he has said to himself "they don't like". When this happens he does his utmost to reverse the opinion as fast as possible. A change in the programme can often do this.

The main thing about cabaret and showbusiness, in Tommy's opinion, is that every night must be considered a new ball game.

On the local scene Tommy can sometimes be very self-conscious. "It's probably because the neighbours and friends are listening to you and in a way I suppose you would be seeking approval".

FAMILY

Tommy, though some might think he works unsociable hours, has a very good family life. He works four nights a week and is home, without fail, on the other three. He could work more but that he feels, would affect his family life.

"A guy could be married to this game. I suppose it's up to the person in question really. I believe in a home life. I mean without it where would you be. You can be the best performer in the world earning the biggest money in the world but it's all for nothing if you have no-one to share it with. It's just not

worth a damn. I love my wife and kids very much".

It is very seldom that Tommy will stay away overnight. From a gig in Cork or Dublin he would always drive home that night even if it meant that he wouldn't get home until five or six o'clock in the morning. He will sleep until about 3.30 p.m. As he wouldn't be going to work until about nine o'clock that night he would have an entire afternoon to devote to his children and wife. Tommy feels certain that if he was working a nine to five job he wouldn't have such luxuries. "When you're working to a definite time-table, say 9 to 5 you're up and out to work before you're children get up. When you come home in the evening at about six, you're children are going to bed at about that time and so you don't really see them at all from day to day".

LIFESTYLE

Two laws to which Tommy strictly adheres are, no drinking and no smoking. He believes that his career is a profession and therefore has to be treated professionally.

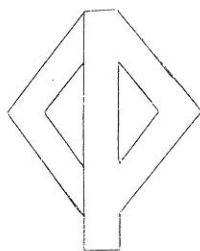
Tommy Drennan doesn't need stimulants to give him a "high". He can achieve this through his music, and in particular his singing.

On the business side of things Tommy & Band are confined to ten. Seven on stage, a road manager and two roadies (road crew).

The band incorporates guitar, bass, drums, organ, trumpet and trombone and the most vital ingredient of all, singer Tommy Drennan.

It is with such a mixture that Tommy continues to beat a red hot trail around the cabaret circles of Ireland.

Tommy has no regrets about his career as a musician and it is indeed a fitting tribute that he should be honoured with the Limerick Weekly Echo Community Award for many years of outstanding contributions to the world of showbusiness.



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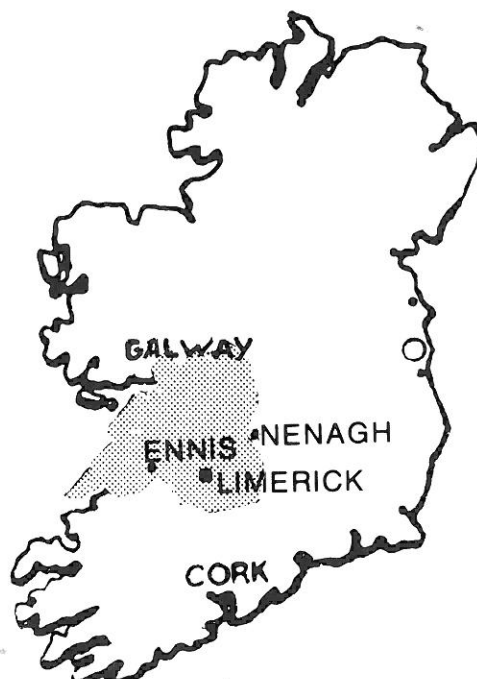
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COMMUNITY AWARD

PATRICK KELLY

When Patrick Kelly from Ballynanty runs around the Plassey track, he must be guided by voice by another athlete. Because Patrick, international sportsman and sporting administrator, is blind.

At 26, Patrick has won medals at several international meetings, holds bodybuilding trophies, and was defeated at last year's Special Olympics in Holland only because he insisted in competing against people with near perfect vision.

He is also Sports Officer of the Sports and Social Club of the Blind in Ireland, and is principal organiser of this country's first ever international sports meeting for the blind later in the year.

He is a Civil Servant, a trained telephonist, photographic technician, and sports coach. He is a self-trained carpenter, electrician and he loves travelling whenever possible.

Patrick was born on March 6 1954 to Michael and Christina Kelly of Shanabooly Road, Ballynanty Beg. He is fourth youngest of a family of nine. Two of his brothers have severely impaired vision.

Because of his handicap, Patrick was sent to St. Joseph's School in Drumcondra, one of only two schools for the blind in Ireland. The other, that for girls, is also in Dublin. It was while there that he quickly realised that he had a natural aptitude for athletics and an interest in sport in general. Without undue modesty, he admits that he was one of the top athletes at St. Joseph's.

But Patrick's interest and aptitude could not be surprising, as his father had always been an avid swimmer, and his elder brother was already an accomplished weightlifter.

When, at sixteen, Patrick transferred to Sligo to attend a special secretarial course, run by the Rehabilitation Board, his sporting aspirations hit their first hitch. He was refused membership of the weightlifting club as the coach felt that his blindness would be an impediment, and that a weight might fall on him.

When he had completed the course, Patrick spent two demoralising years back in Limerick trying to find a job. It was not until 1972 that he managed to get work as a telephonist with Dundalk Urban Council. And it was there that his ability to train was restored, as he was readily accepted by Dundalk Harriers.

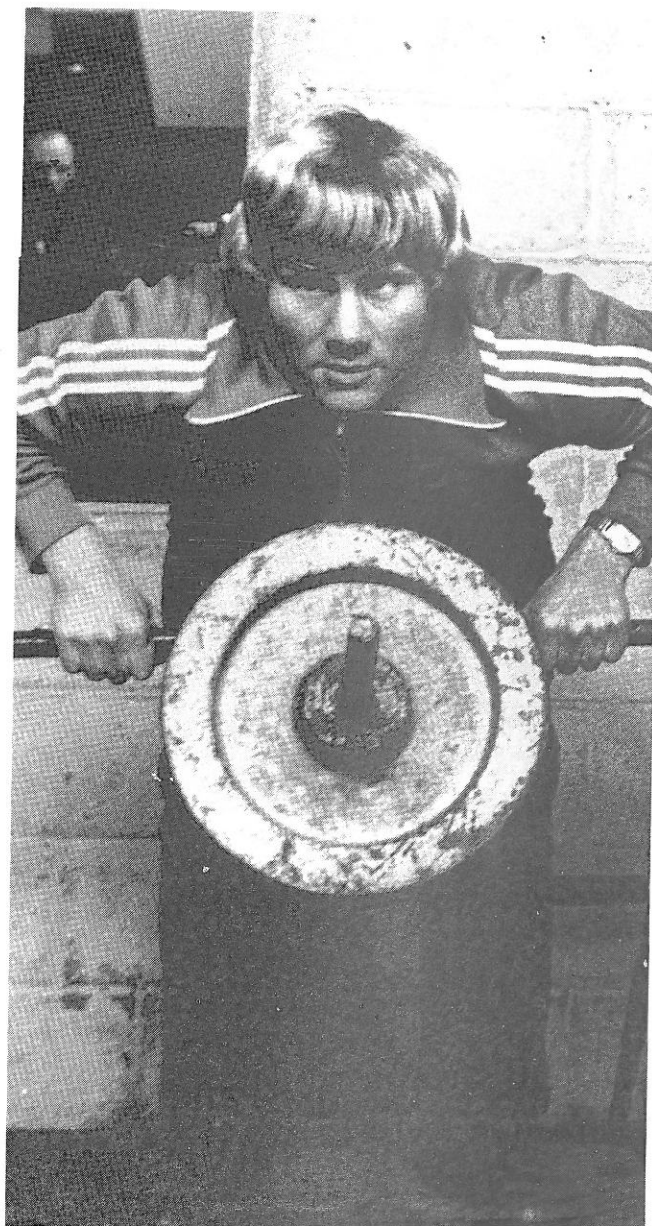
He later worked in Britain, Dublin, again in Dundalk, and now in Limerick Tax Office, but it was his first contacts with Dundalk Harriers which set him on a course from which he has never varied.

"The trainer, Jim O'Donoghue drove me into the ground, almost until I could hardly walk. He knew all about injuries and fitness, and he gave me lots of his time. I owe him a lot," says Patrick.

NORTHSIDE

But Patrick's interest in weightlifting was also continuing. He had already established, with three friends, the Northside Body Building Club in Ballynanty. Their first gym was nothing more than a small shed, but they soon added an extra thirty feet. One of the lads, Raymond Slattery, a welder, made nearly all of their equipment, including bench press, squatting rack, rowing machine, leg press, sit-up board, weights and dumbbells. Patrick wired the gym, including the lights and the slimming machine.

Patrick's abilities as a handyman also manifested themselves



in other areas, such as the front and back fences of his Ballynanty home, which he built himself.

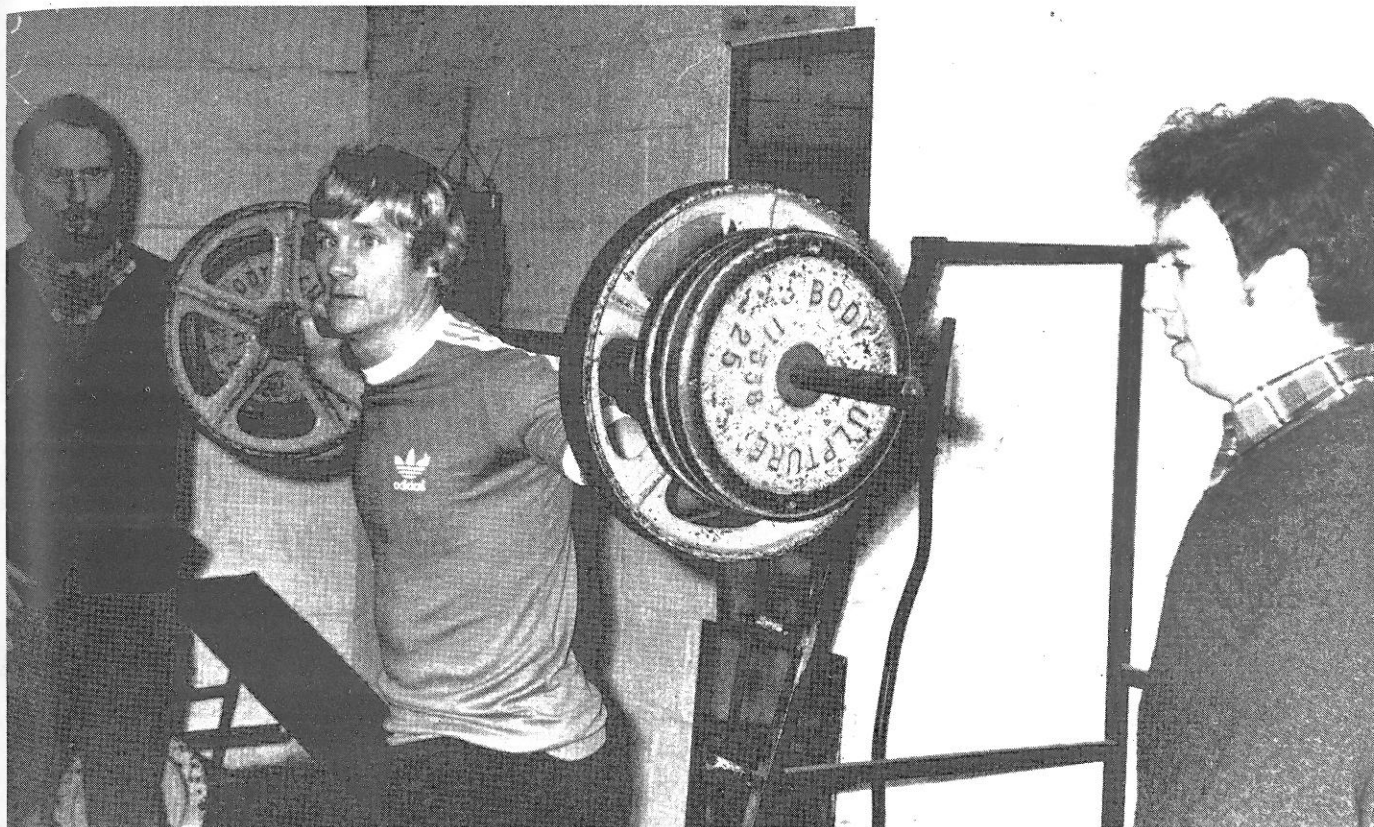
He has also built doghouses and garden-chairs for neighbours.

But Patrick takes bodybuilding seriously. He won his division in the Mr. Adonis title, against competition all of whom were completely sighted. Even today, as he concentrates on his running, he will still do several hundred press exercises to keep his muscles strong.

Nowadays, however, it is running that is Patrick's real love. He can run around Plassey track in all conditions, provided that he has someone running alongside to guide him by voice. However, as Patrick's idea of a light evening's training is at

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SPORTS
PERSONALITIES**

Dermot Morris



least seven miles, there are not enough helpers around.

"I can't run on a Tuesday or at weekends, as I would keep running into other people by accident", he said. "There are too many people around at those times".

Comparing Limerick to Dundalk, Patrick says that Limerick athletics lacks a good club spirit, although he acknowledges that the Limerick A.C. coach, Declan O'Donoghue, is always ready to give him his time.

INTERNATIONAL

While he was still in Dundalk, Patrick took an opportunity to do something which is still changing his life. In response to a suggestion by Jim Sherwin of the Listen and See programme, Patrick and a few friends travelled to Scotland to compete in an athletic meeting for the blind. Amazingly, after only a few weeks in training, they came away with a number of firsts, seconds and thirds - Patrick being the chief medal-winner.

"If we could gain such honours after only a little training against well-organised clubs in Britain, we knew that we would have to develop athletics for the blind in this country," says Patrick.

Later the little team travelled to London and Manchester with equal success.

Patrick never failed to take a medal in any of the three British meetings, and he competed in the 100m, 200m and 1,500m events.

At the Special Olympics in Arnheim in Holland last year, Patrick insisted on competing against those who are described as "partially sighted", Grade B. "Some of the athletes have almost perfect sight in one eye", he said.

Despite this, however, he still managed to win his heats in the 100m and 400m. His times in these heats were faster than the eventual winners in the class to which he properly belonged.

ADMINISTRATOR

Now, while still a superb athlete, Patrick has other things to occupy his mind. As Sports Officer of the Sports and Social Club of the Blind of Ireland, he is the person principally responsible for organising the first ever competitive event for the blind in this country. And if that were not enough, he has decided to make it an international affair, and has invited teams from

Scotland and both London and Manchester to compete. The meeting will be held at Santry Stadium on May 2nd.

His problems are multiplied as there are only a dozen or so Irish blind athletes, and, of these, only six are of competitive standard.

"I would encourage any blind person to join a sporting club," says Patrick. "Too often, blind people stick together, and do not mix with sighted people. All of my friends are sighted people, and this has been a great help. No club or group will refuse a blind person membership. All it takes is confidence on the part of the person themselves."

PROBLEMS

Patrick has to overcome a few problems that the vast majority of the sighted community would never think of. Road training, for example is impossible. Not, surprisingly, because of danger from traffic and other pedestrians, but rather because of the amount of what he calls "street furniture" which is built into footpaths.

Electricity and telephone poles, traffic signs, phone boxes, and the like make life difficult for non-athletic blind people. Cracked footpaths, road works, and car-ramps add to the confusion.

In the ordinary course of events, Patrick's guide dog, Sadie, the Alsatian, sees him through.

"I'd feel much more independent if beepers could be installed as part of traffic light systems," said Patrick, adding that they are in use in nearly every country in the civilised world, except here.

Another unusual problem is that Patrick depends greatly on his hearing. He is more conscious of sound as a result. For that reason, he doesn't like going to discos. There is only one at which he can enjoy himself. There, he says, the noise level is acceptable.

But there is a final aspect of Patrick which strikes the casual observer. He loves to chat. Conversation is, to him, an inexhaustible source of pleasure. And even though he has never actually seen any games, he will talk, as he says, until the cows come home about boxing, judo, bodybuilding, athletics, swimming or even soccer.

With an unbendable will, Patrick has come a very long way. Perhaps the same iron will will bring him to the fulfilment of his dream - to be coach in his own gymnasium.

CONGRATULATIONS
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PERSONALITIES

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To give me my due, I learned the Cardinal Rule of Limerick Sport fairly quickly — and painfully. The Rule is simply stated:-
"Unless you know what you're talking about, shut up!"

I'm a Limerickman, but a County Limerickman. And until I moved to work in the City six years ago, I had had very little contact with real City folk. So I had never experienced the Rule in action.

In the County, people discuss sport — mostly Hurling — quite freely. In the county towns, Soccer and Rugby are also subjects of general interest. But other sports are only discussed by those who participate in them; they excite no interest among the population in general. So with such a limited range of topics, sports chat tends to be predictable, and anyone with a fairly good memory for facts can create a good impression.

And having later spent a few years in Cork, the home of the world's greatest bluffers, I discovered that a thick neck and a handful of facts are usually sufficient to build a reputation as something of an authority on matters sporting.

Then I came to Limerick.

LEADING

If university degrees were to be awarded for knowledge of sport, Limerick would lead the world in graduates.

It's not just the encyclopaedic knowledge that most people (women included) have of the major sports; it's the fact that most people also know nearly everything there is to be known about the minority sports as well. And I'm not talking only of the octogenarians in the corners of pubs who can remember dandling Mick Mackey on their knee, or the old boys who were on the first ever Young Munster side. I'm talking about the legions of ordinary people of all ages who just happen to be immersed in sport of all types from the cradle.

When a self-opinionated brat, as I must have seemed, appears on the scene, and attempts to tell the Masters about their pet discipline, he is in for a painful death. In the middle of a discussion about, say, Rugby, someone will invariably nonplus the outsider with a question like this:-

"Of course, his brother plays handball. Do you remember by how much he was beaten when he played against McGarry last year?"

And if the newcomer doesn't know, his fledgeling reputation as a sporting pundit is up the Swanee.

CLASSLESS

I think that I've figured out why Limerick City people know so much about everything. Firstly, and most importantly, Limerick is a nearly classless place. Unique to anywhere, the only qualification for participation in Limerick sport of any code is ability. If you're good enough, you get on the team. This means that there are rugby players, tennis players, squash players, oarsmen, track athletes, soccer players, golfers and the rest in every street in the City.

Secondly, Limerick is a compact city, with many old inter-related families. This means that, within a few blocks, or a couple of marriages, there is always someone who has distinguished himself or herself at some sporting endeavour. In turn, this tends to promote both knowledge and enthusiasm in many sports.

But to get back to The Rule. Limerick City people instinctively respect it. The couple of people who know their subject are given an uninterrupted, almost reverential hearing in any group conversation. Other people's contributions are usually confined to questions to the acknowledged experts. Once the Masters have reached a consensus on any given point, it passes into history as the definitive and unquestionable version. It is gospel to be challenged only by heretics. And heretics get little latitude in Limerick sporting circles.

Parallel to this is the need in every young man to emulate his mentors. A look at the sporting shelves of the City bookshops will demonstrate how seriously the young people take their homework. Only through intensive study, mixed with the wisdom of the established Masters, will a young man rise from

THERE IS A RULE A BONNY RULE...

A Personal Look at Limerick Sport and Sportsmen

by Martin Byrnes.

wallah to mullah (to mix metaphors).

Even from within the ECHO itself, we feel it. I can scarcely count the number of times I have been told that our sporting reports and comment have been avidly read:- "I always read it, but I never agree with it. I was talking to a man the other night who said ..."

"The man" is the expert, the infalible one who speaks ex-cathedra from his throne in the local cathedral pub.

GENEROSITY

Unique to Limerick, too, is the generosity of the people toward opponents. Supporters of any team or individual sportsmen will never try to bring anyone down by personal attack. Success in any field of sporting endeavour is worthy of respect. This, too, is part of "The Rule", I have seen many an outsider being silenced by the steely stares of those who would, anywhere else, join in the invective against a common enemy. The term "sportsman" in Limerick still carries the moral and ethical attributes which it once held universally.

This extends to a general sympathy with any Limerick sportsman who fails. Many of Limerick's sports have lapsed into the doldrums for prolonged periods, but the City still stood by them. Criticism, when it comes, is helpful and well motivated, not, as is so often the case in even my own part of the County, dismissive and negative.

If Limerick sport has a general fault, it is simply that it has failed to make its mark in the national organisation boardrooms. The City is looked on as being downmarket, because everyone is encouraged to participate. It is looked on as being unimportant, because it is a small city, despite the concentration of sporting endeavour. It is looked on as being unenthusiastic, because it treats its sports with seriousness rather than sporadic manic fanaticism.

But Limerick will be recognised. As the standards of real sportsmanship tumble elsewhere, Limerick, with its unwritten "Rule", will be where the inevitable renaissance will begin. Limerick has been the cradle of Irish sport before, and will be again.

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Tony Ward, three-time Echo Sports Personality, with the seven other replacements who joined the Lions party during the tour.



Des McDoMcDonogh (left) receiving the Trainer of the Year Award from the then EEC Commissioner, Richard Bourke. In the centre is Sean Graham, sponsor. Des won the ECHO Horse Racing accolade in '78 and '79.




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Ecstasy as Tony Meaney drops to the ground having scored the equalising penalty against Athlone to give Limerick United the League.

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EIGHTY FOUR YEARS YOUNG

**A look at
the Limerick
Weekly 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, the 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



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