

KILKENNY G.A.A.

YEAR BOOK 1977



EDDIE – end of an era

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CREDITS

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editorial



**Editor:
Peter
Holohan**

The Motivating Factor

Kilkenny have appeared in so many All-Ireland senior hurling finals over the past decade — and, indeed, all down through the years — that defeat in the Leinster final in two successive years might give rise to the belief that all is not well with the game here. Nothing could be further from the truth. It must be remembered that though we did not appear in the senior final we succeeded in winning four All-Ireland titles — the camogie, under-21, minor and vocational schools.

And it must be remembered that this comes after a year in which the camogie team won All-Ireland honours; the Vocational Schools won All-Ireland honours; James Stephens broke new ground by winning the All-Ireland club championship and the senior hurling team won the National League.

This year marks the 90th anniversary of the 1st All-Ireland hurling championship and Kilkenny hurlers have been prominent throughout that period. We have built up a proud tradition. We have played an important role in the development of the G.A.A. The people who formulated that tradition — officials as well as players — and those who are helping to maintain it have done and are doing very valuable work.

With this in mind it is satisfactory to note that the strength of the Association has not diminished with the passing years. It has, in fact, grown significantly and there is more support for the games now than at any other time in our history.

Over the past decade Kilkenny has appeared in more All-Ireland finals than any other county and has reaped significant successes. While winning must always be a motivating factor, there is more to it than that. We must never lose sight of the ideals which inspired the founders of this great movement.

FOREWORD

By the Mayor of Kilkenny, Miss Margaret Tynan

AS MAYOR of Kilkenny, a city which has one of the proudest traditions in the country for hurling, I feel honoured to be invited to write a few words in such a splendid production at this G.A.A. Year Book.

Since its inception it has filled a very great void in the sporting life of our city and county and I congratulate, most sincerely, all those whose foresight made such a production a reality.

Our tradition for sportsmanship, skill and craft has few equals and certainly no superior. Of that reputation we can feel justifiably proud. Good sportsmanship is good citizenship.

My congratulations also to our hurlers and camogie players who brought such honour to us during the past 12 months. To Eddie Keher my wish that he may continue for many years to delight us at local level in the game to which he gave so much.

This book is undoubtedly one of the finest records we have of some of Kilkenny's greatest sons and daughters. Long may it continue.



THE RAILWAY SHIELD

— It cost us an All-Ireland

By Moondharrig

ONLY once did I lay eyes on the Railway Shield. As a small boy I was left sitting in a room in the Tholsel while my father attended a Teachers' meeting somewhere else in the building, and the only thing in the room worth looking at was this big silver shield which intrigued me because of the railway engine portrayed somewhere around the centre. My father told me afterwards that it had been won by the Kilkenny hurlers. But nobody told me at the time that winning possession of the Railway Shield almost certainly cost the county an All-Ireland title.

Kilkenny, after losing to Dublin in the Leinster final of 1906, played in July 1907, were not seen in action again until they defeated Offaly by 3-10 to 1-6 at Tullamore in the Leinster semi-final of the 1907 championship on May 10, 1908. Just a fortnight later, at Athy, the Noresiders recaptured the Leinster title by decisively defeating Dublin by 4-14 to 1-9 after leading by 2-5 to 0-4 at half time. Owing to an internal difference, Dublin fielded without their Faughs contingent, which must have eased Kilkenny's task.

The Kilkenny team that day at Athy was Droog Walsh (captain), Dick Doyle, Ned Doyle, Mick Doyle, Jimmy Kelly (Mooncoin), Dan Stapleton, Paddy Lanigan, Matt Gargan, Tom Kenny, Dan Kennedy (Erins Own), Jack Rochford, John Lawlor (Threecastles), Jack Keogh, Sim Walton, Jack Hoyne (Tullaroan), John Power, Jack Anthony (Piltown). So it was once again to Dan Fraher's Shandon Park in Dungarvan for the All-Ireland final against old rivals Cork on June 21, 1908 and all the old-timers were unanimous in their agreement that this was the greatest of all hurling finals played under the old rules, with seventeen aside and points-posts at the side of the goalposts. Mons. James B. Dollard, the poet-priest of Gaeldom as the writers of the time loved to call him, was home on holidays from Toronto to cheer on his native county and it was he who threw in the ball. Mick Crowe, the Dublin based Limerick man was referee, and a record crowd for the time, estimated at 15,000 were treated to a wonderful game of swaying fortunes and almost intolerable excitement in the closing stages. Cork led by four points at the interval but it was score for score through the second half.

Kilkenny edged ahead in the closing stages, but Cork equalised with a point in the last minute. According to subsequent legend, referee Crowe intended to blow full time on the puck-out, but dropped his whistle. John Power's long puck-out was doubled over-head by his Piltown clubmate Jack Anthony, and whipped on the drop, high between the Cork posts, by Jimmy Kelly from Mooncoin. So, by the time Crowe had the whistle back in his mouth again, Kilkenny had snatched victory by a point, 3-12 to 4-8.

So the All-Ireland title was back in Kilkenny and further triumphs lay ahead.

The Railway hurling shield had first been won by Leinster and victories had then alternated between themselves and Munster. At the start of 1908, Leinster were leading by two victories to Munster's one, and the trophy was to go to any province who could win three times in all or twice in succession. The belated 1907 series was staged at Thurles in March 1908 and Munster won very easily.

Therefore all depended on the 1908 final which was staged at St. James's Park, Kilkenny on July 19, 1908.

Tipperary, having won in Thurles with their own players elected to represent Munster again, unaided. Kilkenny, probably conscious of the fact that team-work would be needed to beat Tipperary, only called in one outsider, that great Wexfordman, Mike Cummins from Ballymurrin, but they did include a man who, though a Kilkennyman, had never played for the county. He was Bob O'Keeffe, a native of Mooncoin and at this time a teacher in Dunboyne in County Meath. As Meath had not played in the championship, O'Keeffe was included in the Leinster side as a member of the Mooncoin club.

Another fifteen thousand crowd turned up at James's Park, and again the Munster side led at the interval by a goal, 2-3 to 0-6, but the homesters dominated the second half to win by 0-14 to 2-5.

That Leinster team which finally won the Shield was Droog Walsh (captain), Mick Doyle, Ned Doyle, Dick Doyle, Jimmy Kelly, Dick Doherty, Tom Kenny, Dan Kennedy, Dan Stapleton, Matt Gargan, Sim Walton, Jack Keogh, Jack Rochford, John Power, Jack Anthony (Kilkenny), Mike Cummins (Wexford), Bob O'Keeffe (Mooncoin).

Bob O'Keeffe never did play for Kilkenny. He subsequently took up a teaching post in Borris-in-Ossory, and though by then in the veteran stages, played a major part in helping Laois win their only senior All-Ireland title in 1915. He then became a prominent figure in the G.A.A. Councils, and was President of the Association from 1935 to 1938. On August 15, 1908, there was a gala night for the Kilkenny hurlers in Kilkenny Theatre where they were guests of honour at a banquet over which the Mayor, the Hon. Otway Wheeler Cuffe, presided, and several sets of medals were presented.

But there were shocks ahead. On October 25 Kilkenny turned up to face Wexford in the Leinster senior hurling championship, and were beaten 1-8 to 0-10 after Wexford had led 1-6 to 0-8 at half-time. The Wexford win was all the more meritorious when one considers that their great Wexford stalwart, Sean O'Kennedy, had been sent off in the first half. Kilkenny subsequently objected to another Wexford star, Sim Donohoe, who had been sent off in the Croke Park curtain-raiser, a junior football game, but who had fielded out regardless in the subsequent senior hurling match.

At the next meeting of Leinster Council, the objection was upheld and Kilkenny were awarded the game, but asked for a replay instead. The matter was then referred to Central Council who, in January of 1909, decreed that the game must be awarded to Kilkenny.

But further trouble was brewing. The Leinster Convention was held in Dublin on February 21. Dan McCarthy (Dublin) and Watt Hanrahan (Wexford) were re-elected Chairman and Secretary respectively and then the question of the custody of the Railway Shield came up, although the trophy itself had not yet been handed over by Tipperary. John Lalor proposed that the Shield be awarded to Kilkenny, in the same way as Munster had already handed over the football Shield to Kerry. The chairman stated that the Shield, as of now, was the property of Leinster Council, and as three counties had supplied players to the teams that had helped to win it, Kilkenny, Dublin and Wexford should play-off to decide ownership.

Kilkenny then held a meeting and decided because, of the crux over the Shield, they would not play Dublin in the Leinster final which was scheduled for March 7.

They notified Leinster Council that they were withdrawing from the final and a special meeting of that Council here was called on St. Patrick's Day at which Kilkenny were asked to show cause why they should not be suspended for refusing to play in the provincial final.

At the meeting, Chairman McCarthy said most of the Kilkenny clubs had been represented at the meeting in the Town Hall at which the decision was taken not to play, so the question was — should they suspend the whole county, or just the clubs with players on the team? Leinster Convention, he said, had decided Kilkenny, Dublin and Wexford should play off the the Shield, and he could not see what the Leinster final had to do with the Shield situation.

The end of an era?

By MICK O'NEILL
Chairman, Kilkenny County Board

KILKENNY have come to the end of an era? I put that in the form of a question rather than an assertion. I want to be practical about Kilkenny hurling at the moment. We have been beaten in the Leinster final by Wexford in 1976 and 1977 and after winning the National League in 1976 we lost this title in 1977.

If it is the end of an era, the era has been a historic one. Probably the most historic in our whole history if not in the history of any county.

From 1967 to 1975 we reaped more All-Ireland titles than any others did in the space of nine years. We got great satisfaction from the performances of our hurlers in all grades and our camogie players, apart from the honours won by our handballers.

But don't get me wrong. I don't want the title of this article to be misconstrued. We have had it so good for so long that two successive defeats in the Leinster final came in the nature of an anticlimax. We probably weren't

prepared for it. We almost couldn't understand it. We had won the Leinster final five years in succession and defeat not only once, but twice, was probably a bitter pill to have to swallow.

What I really want to convey is that it is the end of an era for some members of a side that blazed a trail of glory over the last decade. I refer, particularly, to the senior side that won All-Ireland titles in 1967, 1969, 1972, 1974 and 1975.

During that period we won all the honours the game had to offer. Apart from All-Ireland, Leinster and National League titles, we won Oireachtas honours and our hurlers figured on successful Railway Cup and All Stars sides. As All-Ireland champions we beat the All-Stars in America.

Looking back on the years since 1967, even we, as Kilkenny people, can claim to have made a tremendous impact on the game. Apart from winning five national titles we

figured in two more and could be considered a little unlucky not to have won them.

Our task now is to forget about the past — the failures of the past — and look to the future. And I think the future for Kilkenny is bright. We won minor and under-21 All-Ireland titles this year and that is proof enough that we have young talent in abundance. All that is required is to harness that talent in the right way. They have the ingrained Kilkenny skill; all they need is to gain the experience that is so vital in the development of young players to their full potential.

But, while looking to the future, we must not forget the past. We must not forget, especially, the men who fashioned a golden era. Eddie Keher has bowed out after a truly remarkable hurling career. Men like Ollie Walsh, Noel Skehan, Phil Larkin, Pat Henderson, Frank Cummins, Pat Delaney, Kieran Purcell, Liam O'Brien, Pat Lawlor and before them Ted Carroll,



Martin Coogan and Pa Dillon blazed Kilkenny's name in glory.

We must remember the great work done by those who foster hurlers in the under-age grades. They sow the seeds from which our future players grow and while they continue the good work the future of Kilkenny hurling is assured and the end of one era will mark the beginning of another.

CUMANN LUITH-CHLEAS GAEL

Kilkenny County Board

The Board would like to express its sincere thanks to the many firms and individuals who contributed large and small amounts and to their loyal followers for their kind patronage during 1977.

Their kind support is deeply appreciated.

P. de Grás, Runaí

Féile na nGael – a significant event

I AM glad that Féile na nGael 1978 will take place in Kilkenny. The main theme of Féile na nGael is hurling and the involvement of the thirty-two counties in a programme in each of the counties culminating in all counties being represented in a series of competitions and events coupled with a great social involvement over Féile na nGael weekend.

This is the spirit of Féile which makes it the significant event which it is and what better place to stage it than in Kilkenny which has contributed so much to the Gaelic Athletic Association and particularly to hurling down through the years.

Mentioning hurling and Kilkenny brings to mind some of the game's greatest players and indeed many of its greatest games and now why not the greatest Féile.

Having attended the launching of Féile in Kilkenny recently, I am satisfied that the scene is set for a very successful event. This meeting was attended by a very large gathering — the largest gathering which I have seen at a launching — of a dedicated people of standing in the county committed to hurling and to youth.

As I have said, this great national event involves youth and hurling, a combination so much a part of the plans and programming of the Association and so vital to the very future of the Association and from the youth point of view the very key to the stability and moral fibre of the whole country.

Each year it must be our aim to have the end results of Féile prove our capacity to organise, give a further uplift to hurling, be of benefit to the general character building of the young participants and earn respect for the Association in its efforts to fulfil its purpose to our national games and highlight the great force for good in society which the Association is.

Bearing in mind the force for good which the Association is and can be and its acknowledged influence on society, I am satisfied that while the important role of Féile is hurling it must now be used to a far greater extent in the overall education and character building of youth. No organisation has a better opportunity to do this having regard to its intimate involvement on the local and community scene.

This is a serious challenge

to the organisers. The responsibility is great and calls for tremendous co-operation from all units in Kilkenny. Féile na nGael will not happen. Nothing can be left to chance if it is to achieve its purpose and make the impact on all concerned particularly the youth.

There must be a total involvement of the local clubs who are expected to make the event a joyous, social and cultural occasion on the local scene both for their own people and the visiting teams and officials for whom they will be acting as hosts. May I make a special appeal to the great inter county hurlers of Kilkenny to play a significant role in meeting the young players and being involved in a committed way in the total programme. Nothing will go further to creating lasting impressions for the youth than meeting with their hurling heroes. Knowing the involvement of the great hurlers of Kilkenny — past and present — in working for the Association, hurling and youth, I have every confidence in them to make a valuable contribution to the success of the Féile.

Féile na nGael has a spirit of togetherness about it which makes it a great occa-



By
Conchur Ó Murchú
President of the
G.A.A.

sion and by virtue of the All-Ireland participation confirms the oneness of the Association and our people. It is a great vehicle for motivating our youth and cultivating a sense of good citizenship which is so important today.

The welcome sponsorship by Messrs Coca-Cola is an acknowledgment of this. Let us all ensure that the maximum enjoyment and benefits will be derived from Féile 1978.

Ní neart go cur le ceile agus na dhein dearmad ar an sean-fhocal — Mol an oige agus tiocfhaidh si.

An Muísaem Iomána

CEANN des na feachtais atá beartaithe d'Fhéile na nGael i gCill Chainnigh ar an 7ú, 8ú, 9ú Iúil, 1978 is ea an Muísaem Iomána.

Níl aon áit in Éirinn is oiriúnaí dó ná An Chathair Álainn agus tá coiste ag saothrú go dian chun féachaint chuige go n-eireoidh go geal leis.

Tá cáipéis curtha amach chuig gach club sa chontae ag iarraidh air a dhícheall a dhéanamh chun eolas faoi shean-chamáin, liathróidí, pictiúir, scéala as nuachtáin agus a leithéidí a sheoladh chuig an coiste.

Tá súil ag an gcoiste go gcabhróidh na clubanna leis an mbeartas le lán-chroí.

Feile na nGael — what it is all about

FEILE NA nGAEL will be held in Kilkenny at the end of July and 2,000 boys from all over Ireland will assemble here to take part in a three-day G.A.A. festival. While the emphasis will be primarily on hurling other activities will lend colour to what was expected to be a very attractive and colourful event.

A local organisation has been set up and already committees have been formed to look after the details. It is a big job.

It is hoped to extend the Feile over a week and have

all kinds of functions with a Gaelic flavour.

One of the most important features will be a G.A.A. museum and a special committee are already working on this. Anyone with a memento of G.A.A. interest — and there are quite a number of them in Kilkenny city and county — is asked to get in touch with any member of the organising committee.

Feile na nGael is only a few years old but so far it has been an outstanding success. It is hoped that the proud record already established will be upheld here in July.

Peil so Chontae

LE BLIANTA anuas tá stáid na peile sa chontae go dona amach 's amach cé go bhfuil tréan-iarracht á déanamh ag lucht a stiúrtha chun feabhas a chur ar an scéal.

Caileann na peileadóirí cluiche in ndiaidh cluiche, lasmuigh den bhua a bhí acu i gcoinne Ceatharlocha i gCalainn anuraidh.

Is deacair méar a leagaint ar an locht ach deir sean-anndúir liom, fear a bhfuil taithí ar an gluiche, gurab é an locht is mó ná gur leasc le peileadóir Chill Chainnigh léimt san aer chun breith ar an pheil ina dhá lámh.

Má fhágann sé an talamh ar aon chor, is le lámh amháin ináirde chun an pheil a chnagadh síos. Grá don talamh is cionntach, is dócha!

MEDAL RECALLS 1888 'INVASION'

FOR anyone interested in hurling history Tullaroan is as good a place as anywhere in Ireland to go and when I arranged to meet local man Chris Walsh there, Pete Dowling's pub was a natural berth. The photographic 'window' of the past and the present which adorns Pete Dowling's premises is unique.

My objective was to meet Mrs. Lena Kennedy who lives a couple of hundred yards from the village. Mrs. Kennedy freely admits that she was not one for going to matches but she was interested enough to collect quite an amount of information about the game.

This was, perhaps, only natural. Her father, Jim Grace of Brabstown was one of three Kilkennymen who were on the American Invasion team of 1888 and her most prized reminder of those early days in hurling history is a star-shaped gold medal which

her father brought back from the tour.



This photo of Jim Grace of Brabstown was kindly loaned by his grand-daughter, Mrs. John Teehan, Brabstown. It is a historic link with the American 'Invasion'.

Mrs. Kennedy's brother, Tom Grace played with Kilkenny and many of her relatives also figured on Kilkenny teams.

Much more would have been known about the early history of hurling had not a Tullaroan man, Jackie Walsh who started writing about the late 1880's discontinued the good work even he continued to play for many years later.

Chris Walsh recalls him well past his hurling prime still being able to hit the ball straight up in the air and let it drop at his feet.

Jackie Walsh was a man apart. Not only did he devote much of his time to writing the early history but he was an avid reader and had a remarkable library.

He had, in addition, a hurley to represent every county in Ireland.

He mentions the founders of the Tullaroan club - Jim Grace, captain; M. Robinson, W. Walsh, T. Martin, J. Walton, W. Gaffney, J. Robinson and H. J. Meagher.

The 1898 Kilkenny team was: J. Walsh (captain); J. Doherty, J. Lawlor, P. (Fox) Maher, E. Teehan, J. Grace, P. Malone, E. Dunne, M. Malone, P. Hoyne, P. Young (Tullaroan), E. Hennessy, M.

Fear mór taighde

CHOMH maith le bheith ina rúnaí ar an gCoiste fé 16 so chontae, agus an ndó, tar-éis blianta a chaitheamh, ag freastal ar na cluichí mar iománaí agus mar mholtóir, lá obair mhór eile fé lámha ag Tom Ryall.

Tá sé ag obair go dian ar stair an chluiche sa chontae a, bhailiú agus a eagrú. Conas a chaith an fear mór taighde seo laetha saoire ant Samhraidh?

Chuaigh sé anonn go Lonn-dain chuig Leabharlann Náisiúnta na Breataine chun cunntaisí ar na cluichí a bhailiú as sean-pháipéirí Chill Chainnigh agus tháinig sé anall le carn mór eolais. Rath Dé ar a chuid oibre.

Dalton, J. Lalor (Three-castles), T. Quinn, J. Quinn, R. Walsh (Mooncoin).

The Tullaroan names are still prominent in the area. It is interesting to recall that the 1898 captain was Jackie Walsh and Mick Dalton was grandfather of former St. Lactain's and Kilkenny hurler, John Teehan.



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TULLAROAN didn't need Lory Meagher! Could anyone believe it? Well it actually happened that the man who even in his own day became a hurling legend could not find a place on the Tullaroan team. The 'rejection' if you could call it a rejection was understandable.

In the early 1920's when Lory and his three brothers, Willie, Frank and Henry were at the beginning of their hurling careers Tullaroan had such an abundance of hurling talent that the biggest problem was who should be left off the team rather than who should be put on.

Frank emigrated to Australia after his ordination and at the time of his death some years ago was Dean of a diocese there. Willie died some years ago while Lory passed away in 1974. Henry, the only Meagher brother remaining, lives in New York.

The Meaghers inherited their hurling skills from their father, Henry J. Meagher, a former member and — if my recollection of local government staff is correct — a former chairman of Kilkenny County Council who was a founder member of the Tullaroan club.

When Tullaroan didn't need Lory Meagher

Henry Meagher and Jack Hoyne travelled from Tullaroan in a horse and cart to the abortive inaugural meeting of the Gaelic Athletic Association in Hayes's Hotel in Thurles in 1884.

Not finding a place on the Tullaroan team Lory and Frank played with Corstown club which is within a 'stone's throw' of Tullaroan village and with Clomantagh, made famous by the Tobins and the Glendons. They both played football, too, and were quite good at it.

Even today, Lory Meagher is remembered as one of hurling's most dominant personalities. Lory's life long friend and contemporary Paddy Fitzpatrick recalls Lory being out of the game for a period through illness. "We used to drive around together in an ass and cart", Paddy said. Paddy and Lory eventually played together on the Tullaroan team, Paddy being a goalie of more than ordinary merit.

Three Meaghers, Lory,

Henry and Willie played on the Kilkenny team beaten by Cork in the 1926 all-Ireland final. Incidentally, Kilkenny could have got a walk over in this final. The date for the final had been fixed but the Munster championship was delayed and Cork County Board sent a delegation to Kilkenny, pleading for a postponement. Kilkenny agreed to this. They lost the match.

A lot of the great Kilkenny-Cork tradition was built around the sides of those days. There were famous names like Sean Og Murphy, Dr. Jim Hurley, Denny Barry Murphy, Eudie Coghlan, Paddy Delea and Balty Ahearne of Cork who figured in the 1926, 1927 and 1929 finals, winning in 1926, 1928 and 1929.

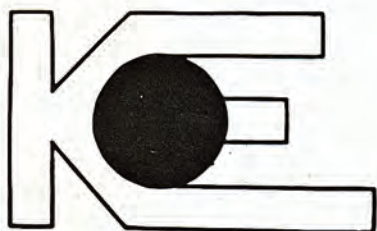
Then came the famous finals of 1931 when Lory captained Kilkenny in the first draw but was off through injury for the second draw and the final. Lory was captain again in 1935 when Kilkenny

beat Limerick.

Lory's great skill is still fresh in the minds of older followers. He was one of the greatest and most accurate strikers the game has known. But not everyone in Tullaroan would agree that he was the best of the four Meagher brothers. Paddy Fitzpatrick rates Father Frank as the best while the late Paddy Phelan always held that Henry was the best forward he ever saw — even better than Mick Mackey.

But there was something unique about Lory Meagher. A quiet shy and unassuming personality he was unaffected by the blaze of publicity which surrounded him at the time when hurlers were not glamourised to the same extent as now.

Former Cork County Board chairman, Jack Barrett who travelled all the way from Kinsale to Tullaroan to attend Lory's funeral, summed it up succinctly: 'there was something special about this man'.



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THE SPORTS STARS OF 1977



Sports Stars winners for Gaelic games pictured after the presentation of prizes in Springhill Hotel with Mayor Margaret Tynan, Mr. Howard Dunne (who presented the awards on behalf of Smithwicks Brewery) and Mr. John Joe Gilmartin, the famous Kilkenny handballer who won the first Hall of Fame award. In the picture are (from left): Paddy O'Reilly (handball), Mary Fennelly (camogie), Dick O'Hara (Gaelic football), Mayor Tynan, Ger Henderson (hurling), Mr. Howard Dunne and Mr. John Joe Gilmartin.

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GRAIGNAMANAGH — a success story

ONE OF the great success stories in schools hurling over the past few years has been the rise of Graignamanagh to prominence. Hurling has always been strong in the parish but nothing was won until the junior hurlers took the county title in 1972 and this team followed up by winning the intermediate title in 1976.

As a result, Graignamanagh entered senior ranks for the first time in 1977. In truth, however, Graignamanagh will have to procure a number of young players to make them a success in the senior grade.

Players like Paddy Grace, Jack Bolger, Liam Ryan and Liam Walsh, the backbone of the side are not getting younger and while they have been to the fore in recent successes the fact remains that they cannot go on for ever and it is here that the recent juvenile successes are of importance to Graignamanagh.

In a few years these boys will be the material upon whom Graignamanagh will be calling to keep the side in senior ranks.

Coached by teacher, Eamonn Lennon, Graignamanagh have appeared in a school final every year since 1970 except one year — 1974. Losing three under 12 Roinn B county finals, all to Gowran, it looked as if the big break-through would never come but perseverance has its own reward and great was the rejoicing when the under 12 and under 14 Roinn B county titles were won in 1975.

Castlecomer were the victims in under 12 and Urlingford had to bow the knee in the under 14 grade.

The under 12 side, though now playing in the top grade followed up in 1976 by taking the county title and the crowning glory came this year when they beat Urlingford to bring home the under 14 Roinn A title.

Great things will now be expected of Graignamanagh at under 16 and minor level and as they have never won at these levels success, if it does

come will be all the sweeter.

Although the recent upsurge stems from 1971, Graignamanagh has always been strong in schools hurling and they contested their first ever schools final when they lost to Freshford in the 1951 Roinn B final.

In 1960 Graignamanagh almost made the break-through when they qualified for the A final and played a draw with Castlecomer but went down heavily in the replay.

The Graignamanagh almost made the break-through when they qualified for the A final and played a draw with Castlecomer but went down heavily in the replay.

The Graignamanagh side which lost on that occasion was: S. Kinsella, P. Bolger, J. McDonnell, W. Malone, P. Cushen, N. Kinsella, J. Burke, J. Gahan, B. Crowley, J. O'Connor, J. Farrell, M. Cullen, W. Butler, J. O'Brien, P. Barcoe. Subs: Carroll and Doran.

Included in that side were Sean and Noel Kinsella both of whom afterwards played with Dublin seniors. Noel Kinsella also won a Railway Cup medal.

The team which finally crashed the under 14 Roinn A barrier was: Richard Dunne, Jim Doyle, Martin Kelly, Pat Nolan, John McDonald, Michael Morrissey (captain), Arthur Hennessy, Denis O'Carroll, Michael Purcell, Niall Walsh, Pat Morrissey, John Moylan, Jim Whelan, Michael Doyle, Johnny Prendergast. Sub: Richard Butler.

On the way to the final Graignamanagh beat Kilkenny C.B.S.; St. John's, Mooncoin and Urlingford. Captain of the side, Michael Morrissey played with Kilkenny in the Leinster under 14 final and is a nephew of former Wexford star, Mick Morrissey who won all-Ireland medals in 1955, 1956 and 1960 and is now president of the New York G.A.A. Board.

Young Mick bids fair to emulate the deeds of his uncle.

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One era has ended for Kilkenny — and now for another



By **RAYMOND SMITH** (*Irish Independent*)

THERE will be those by the Noreside who will say that the men in the Black and Amber were unlucky not to have taken Wexford in the 1977 Leinster final.

Eddie Keher could so easily have won it near the close — and then they would have been through to another All-Ireland final and Cork would not have stopped them this time either — just as the Leesiders had failed in 1969 and again in that thrilling final of 1972. Pipe dreams! I will bring the wrath of many Kilkenny supporters on my head for saying that — but I am convinced that they would not have beaten Cork this time. Why?

The decline had set in on the great Kilkenny side of 1972-75 when they were overwhelmed by Wexford in the Leinster final of 1976. True, it can be argued now in hindsight that they were a tired side entering the Leinster championship tilt after being brought to an extra match by Clare in winning the League. Maybe in adding another League crown, they threw away their chance of the third-in-a-row.

But I had written after the All-Ireland final of 1975 that some of the veterans of the Kilkenny team seemed to me to have reached the end of the line. There were moments in that game when Galway left men in key positions floundering for pace — but they just didn't have the confidence in themselves or the tradition to go through with the effort and pull it off. All was forgotten and forgiven in Kilkenny in the hour of victory and when I mentioned a few names afterwards as having come to the moment of truth — to call it a day — I received irate letters suggesting that I needed an eye test!

On paper they still looked good. You had confidence in the array of talent, irrespective of the weight of hurling years, that had contributed to that shattering defeat of Wexford in the 1973 Leinster Final — a day when they put it all together in a manner that made us sit up and marvel at their skill, natural hurling ability and the combined power of their team-work. Injuries had shattered that smooth machine before the All-Ireland final. Kilkennymen will say they would not have been stopped if the full team had gone in against Limerick — judging by the way they reversed the 1973 decision in 1974.

But Limerick in 1974 had not the hunger, the fierce commitment they displayed in 1973. Nothing that season was going to halt Eamon Cregan or Eamonn Grimes, Pat Hartigan or the others having come this far — and after surviving the cauldron that was Semple Stadium when they beat Tipperary in a Munster Final, the climax of which still remains etched in the mind.

Forget the 1973 All-Ireland final then. The rally that brought victory against Cork in 1972, that sweeping victory — so conclusive in the way it was forged — against Wexford in 1973 and the All-Ireland successes of 1974 and '75, despite the calibre of the opposition at the final hurdle in '75, all added up to proving that at their peak the Kilkenny 1972-75 combination were a team with an immense amount of talent.

And, as I have written before, Pat Henderson was a rock-like pivot at centre-back at his peak and the trio of Eddie Keher, Paddy Delaney and Kieran Purcell up front provided the kind of fire-power that few defences could match when they really got moving. And, of course, Noel Skehan never in those four years made one error in a championship game that could be said to have given the opposition a crucial goal. Frank Cummins could be so dominant at midfield.

Time catches up on the best of players. Just as the collapse of the Tipperary team in 1967 was rather sad, considering the record of the veterans who reached the end of the line that day (do you recall the picture of John Doyle and Kieran Carey leaving the pitch?), so there were Kilkenny supporters who found it hard to believe that Paddy Delaney, Kieran Purcell, Pat Henderson and even Eddie Keher — yes, Eddie Keher — were human after all. The edge of speed gone, the reflexes less sharp, the inability to cut off the ball that meant disaster at your own end or to take the half-chance which a few years before would have been turned into a golden goal. Great teams break up and in the breaking up, as Sean Purcell of Galway once said to me, they can still in the twilight come so close to victory in crucial tests, maybe be just pipped in a Provincial final, as Kilkenny were this year, or even winning that so-near in an All-Ireland, as Tipperary reached the 1967 and '68 finals and yet failed in both.

One era has ended for Kilkenny – and now for another

In the end you must face the salutary truth. Coming through Kilkenny in the late summer of 1977, I dropped into a few of my favourite haunts — to touch again the pulse of Kilkenny hurling as it were — and happily I met men who admitted that one era had ended, that preparation must now begin for another. Shem Lawlor wasn't crying.

No good going back to the veterans now — even if the youngsters do not immediately bring the glory that was savoured in the heady seasons between 1972 and '76. Kilkenny must be ready to persevere — to give youth its chance, to be patient in team-building. I believe too, however, that it will not be sufficient to merely put some experienced hurler at centre-forward or full-forward, who may not have the build or drive for these positions. Recall those seasons in the 'fifties when Tipperary seemed to be able to beat them at will. Why? Because, even though Kilkenny could out-match Tipperary in stick-work, they lacked the "killer" instinct front.

It came in 1967 — and they never looked back through the golden seasons. Because in Paddy Delaney they had a man who typified for me the very dynamism that Kilkenny hurling had always wanted up front. And Eddie Keher, so brilliant against Cork in 1969 and '72, was greater because he was playing to Delaney and Delaney to him and because the triumverate was completed by Kieran Purcell.

So that kind of balance must be looked for again — and must be found, if a combination to match the 1972-'75 side is to be built. I am glad that against Tipperary and Offaly in the current League campaign, youth has been given its fling. I did not see those games, so I cannot pass judgement on the newcomers — but for Kilkennymen, despite a narrow defeat, the promise was heartening against Tipperary.

I have seen fine minors wearing the Black and Amber on All-Ireland Day in recent seasons and the under-21 teams from Kilkenny are still right up there at the top. How can Kilkenny be down for long with so much talent about? It's a matter of getting the right mould and not putting all the emphasis on stick-work alone.

Just on twenty years ago now a stripling young lad made his mark as a Kilkenny minor and was then grafted into the senior team. His name was Eddie Keher. The autumn colours are golden and the leaves fall away — and in the dying season, you see the breaking of one of the proudest links with the Kilkenny All-Ireland teams of '63 and '67 and of this decade. Yes, with the announcement of Eddie Keher's retirement, we know that Kilkenny hurling enters a new phase. . .

I am glad in a way that he has called it a day. I do not like to see players of his calibre — of the supremacy of the stickwork, the sheer class, the ability to turn on the proverbial sixpence and find the posts radar-like almost without looking with angled shots from the sideline, the deadly accuracy from frees — growing slow like a heavyweight champion depending on experience when "them legs don't move so fast anymore". He was to the seventies — a forward apart.

It will not be easy for Kilkenny to find another like him.

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CAMOGIE - A MOST NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENT

By
Una Bean Uí Phuirseil
*President, National
Camogie Association*

ONCE again it is both a privilege and a pleasure to be asked to contribute to the Kilkenny G.A.A. Yearbook, a privilege to be asked to do so as President of the Camogie Association, a pleasure once again to be able to pay tribute to the achievements of the Kilkenny Camogie players.

Certainly 1977 has been an outstanding year for the county with St. Paul's regaining the All-Ireland club title and the county senior side retaining the premier crown. St. Paul's have now won the club championship five times, a really amazing record that is never likely to be equalled and which can only be surpassed by the St. Paul's girls themselves.

Taking the senior All-Ireland title for a second successive year was also a most notable achievement and already at the dinner after that victory several of the players expressed their determination to go on to try and achieve the three-in-a-row in 1978.

It was a great year for Angela Downey who as well as winning that club title with St. Paul's and captaining the county to All-Ireland honours. In addition she was the star of Maynooth's victory in the C.C.I.A. (Higher Institutes League), and was the outstanding scoring machine of the entire season. Moreover she and her twin sister Anne have now set an all-time national record by twice winning All-Ireland senior medals together on the same team.

But I think what gives me the greatest pleasure of all in Kilkenny's progress is that so many of the players are girls whom I have seen come up through the Leinster Colleges competitions from the years when I was closely associated with the Leinster Colleges Council. Indeed, I had the privilege of presenting Leinster Colleges Cups at one stage or another to Liz Neary, Helena O'Neill and both

Angela and Anne Downey during their schooldays, and they have all since more than justified their youthful promise.

But then the entire Kilkenny team has through the past four seasons helped to add greatly to the credit and the prestige of the Camogie game and indeed of the Association. Their stylish play with the emphasis entirely on skill and not on strength is an object lesson as to how we want to see the game being played and their sportsmanship has been exemplary.

But Kilkenny have been setting an example in other ways. For instance through the past few years I have admired intensely the dedication of Liz Neary who, because resident in Dublin and a member of the nursing profession which means exacting hours of duty make a normal round of training impossible, still maintains her magnificent standard of play, and gave a classic exhibition of full-back play in the recent final. As President of the Association I must also pay tribute to several of the Kilkenny players for the readiness they have shown in playing their part in helping the Association out off the playing fields.

In this respect a special word of praise is due to Helena O'Neill, one of the most trusted of all our referees, and who set a record of her own by participating in two All-Ireland finals at Croke Park inside four weeks. She faced what must have been a daunting task in refereeing the minor final between Galway and Dublin, which was played before the Armagh v Roscommon football semi-final replay, and took the occasion in her stride combining efficiency with authority while never seeming to intrude unnecessarily on the run of the game.

In addition the umpires that came with her to every match at which she officiated with Kilkenny were Kilkenny senior players, and they too must merit their meed of praise. In addition Angela

Downey at very short notice travelled to Limerick to referee an important inter-county game there.

Mary Fennelly who was secretary of the Fixtures Committee of Central Council, is now secretary of Leinster Council as well as of Kilkenny County Board, while County Chairman Mrs. Beatrice Treacy has also done great work for the Association.

Have I any counsels of perfection? Well I would like to see the good work that has already been done in the schools being intensified both at primary and post-primary level.

I would like to see greater co-operation with the G.A.A. and in this regard I know we will not lack for help from Leinster hurling officer

Brendan O'Sullivan who has already contributed so much to Camogie in Kilkenny. I wonder will we ever see the day when every hurling club in Kilkenny can also boast of an associated Camogie club?

I also hope to see the Kilkenny girls, when the county hosts Feile na Gael next July, make the Camogie side an outstanding feature. I can assure them of every co-operation that Central Council can give. Finally, can anyone tell me how we are going to get the crowds at our All-Ireland finals that these great games deserve? I know our good friend and former player Mayor Margaret Tynan has some ideas about it but it is a problem we have to tackle really not at local level but on a nation-wide scale.

The Railway Shield cost us an All-Ireland

Continued from page 6

John Lalor, who represented Kilkenny, said the entire county was not represented at the Town Hall meeting, although it was representative of general opinion throughout the county. If the four clubs mentioned, Tullaroan, Mooncoin, Threecastles and Erin's Own were suspended it would mean the end of hurling in Kilkenny. He believed Kilkenny were entitled to the Shield, but he also felt it would have been better had they turned up to play Dublin.

Still, they had given seven days' notice, and therefore he felt suspension was unwarranted.

Dan McCarthy replied that no county should be allowed to flout the decisions of the Council, and not only had they sustained a substantial loss, but disappointment had been caused to the public, and it was essential in the interests of the Association that a stop should be put to such conduct. The four clubs were suspended on a vote, 8 to 4. Kilkenny promptly appealed about the award of the Shield to Central Council which referred the matter back to Leinster Council on the grounds that a special Convention could not deal with the matter, as it had not been on the agenda.

Kilkenny also appealed against the suspension imposed on their clubs and it was ruled that this suspension could not stand as Leinster Council had not power to suspend clubs, though it could have suspended the county. Thus ended the suspension and Kilkenny then offered to play Dublin who were agreeable to play, but Leinster Council did not agree, although eventually by eight votes to six they awarded the Shield to Kilkenny.

Dublin went on to play a draw with Tipperary in the All-Ireland final at Jones's Road, only to lose the replay at Athy on June 27, 1909. But, on all known form in 1908 and 1909, Kilkenny would have had the beating of Tipperary, so it can be well argued that, in order to gain the Railway Shield, an All-Ireland title was let slip away.



COUNTY SENIOR HURLING FINAL ACTION

ABOVE:

Determination . . . an action shot of The Rower-Inistioge goalkeeper Pat Dunphy making a clearance in the county senior hurling final.



RIGHT:

Tommy Malone is locked between John Henderson and Eddie Keher while Michael Lyng and Sylvie Lester stand by.

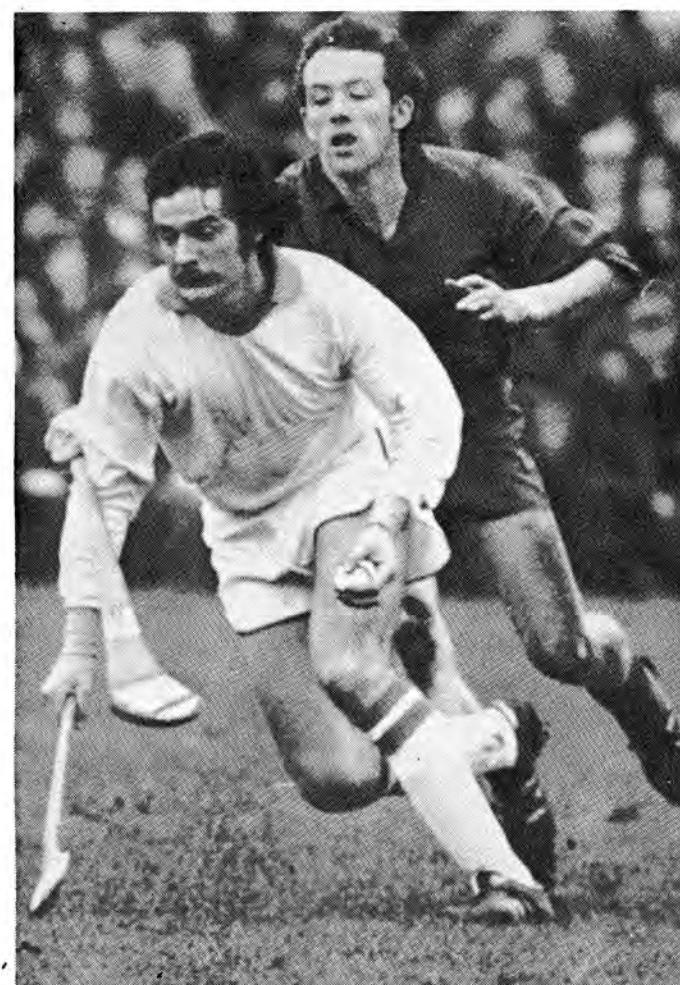


LEFT:

John Moriarty (The Fenians) is out-numbered by Pat Grace and Pat Walsh in this action shot from the county hurling final.



Martin Fitzpatrick in golf style clears his lines, supported by The Fenians team mates, Pat Henderson (left), and Mick Garrett. The Rower-Inistioge players in this action photo of the county final are: Jim Prendergast (left), Noel Cottrell and Gee Murphy.



Billy Fitzpatrick (The Fenians) gets away from Pat Grace (The Rower-Inistioge), an action shot from the county hurling final.



DOWN FOR IT . . . Johnstown's Johnny Moriarty goes low for a ball as Pat Grace comes in to tackle.

COUNTY FINALISTS



THE FENIANS — County final winners. Front (l. to r.): Joe Ryan, Nickey Orr, Frankie Hawkes, Mick Garrett (capt.), Pat Henderson, John Moriarty, John Power. Back (l. to r.): Billy Fitzpatrick, Dick Dowling, Ger Henderson, Billy Watson, P. J. Ryan, Martin Fitzpatrick, John Henderson, Pat Delaney.



Losing county senior hurling finalists — **THE ROWER-INISTIIGE**. Front (l. to r.): Willie Murphy, Sylvie Lester, Noel Cottrell, Liam Galavan, Eddie Keher (capt.), Michael Lyng, Pat Walsh. Back (l. to r.): Pat Grace, Jim Prendergast, Tommy Waters, Pat Dunphy, Fintan Murphy, Tommy Malone, Michael Tierney, Gee Murphy.

A GOOD many of the 61,500 who paid £6,483:7:6 to see the 1947 all-Ireland final can still recall many of the thrilling moments of what was for most of them the greatest final they ever saw. Older people might say the second draw between Cork and Kilkenny in 1931 was the greatest.

It was Cork and Kilkenny again in the 1947 epic and while Cork came out best in the 1931 marathon it was Kilkenny's turn this time. This was a game that those who saw it will never forget. It provided a remarkably high standard of the best skills in the game and ended in a point win for Kilkenny, 0-14 to 2-7, the winning point coming from Terry Leahy's stick seconds before the end.

Kilkenny were bent on a retrieving mission. Cork had routed them to the tune of nine points, 7-5 to 3-8 in the 1946 final and the black and ambers were fully bent on reversing the decision.

The greatest ever final?

But they nearly did not get there at all. In the semi final against Galway at Birr Galway were leading by a point when the referee blew the whistle. The Galway supporters thinking it was the end stormed on to the Birr pitch wild with delight. But the whistle was for a Kilkenny free and in the twinkling of an eye Terry Leahy and Jim Langton put over the two points that put Kilkenny in the final.

The Birr game caused a storm of controversy. Kilkenny Corporation debated the rights and wrongs at length (the discussion occupied two columns in the *Kilkenny People*) and naturally came down heavily in favour of the Kilkenny men.

But it was all water under the Bridge at that stage. Cork had hammered Antrim to the tune of 26 points, 7-10 to 0-5 in the other semi-final. Cork had only one change from the 1946 side while Kilkenny did not have Mick Butler, Bill Walsh (off due to a finger injury), Jack Gargan and Paddy O'Brien, the newcomers being Mark Marnell, Pat ('Diamond') Hayden, Jimmy Heffernan and Willie Cahill.

If there was ever a game to underwrite Kilkenny's craft, particularly as exemplified by Terry Leahy and Jim Langton, this was surely it. Their combination was positively perfect and they accounted for 10 of Kilkenny's 14 points (Terry scoring six and Jim four).

But it was the manner of their scoring that made them the more remarkable.

One of Terry Leahy's points was a strategic gem. Jim Langton ran away from a cluster of players (Cork and Kilkenny) ostensibly with the ball to be followed by Corkmen, but he had left the ball at Terry Leahy's feet and Terry tapped it over the bar.

But there were other incidents in the game that were equally remarkable. Late in the second half Jimmy Kelly hooked Jack Lynch (the present Taoiseach) three times as he scurried towards the Kilkenny goal for what could have been the decisive score and the Carricks shock man eventually got possession and sent a long relieving clearance into the Cork area.

Jack Mulcahy's point from a '70' against a stiff wind was another memorable feat.

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If you were a pessimist

By PADRAIG PURSEAL
of the "Irish Press"

IF YOU were a pessimist you could say that 1977 was not a distinguished year for Kilkenny, and you would immediately be attacked by the nearest optimist who would quickly point out that no year in which a county won four All-Irelands could possibly be reckoned a bad year, especially when you reach the National League final as well.

So obviously there was a good news and bad news during the year past. Let us get rid of the bad news first. Kilkenny got to the final of the National League only to lose to Clare in Thurles. Very little went right for the Kilkenny-men that day, but the one must remember that Kilkenny may have had what luck was going against the Claremen in the previous year's drawn final and replay. Anyway, Kilkenny lost, and to make it worse Mick Brennan received a knock that put him out of action for six months.

So the next hurdle to be crossed was provided by the championship. Dublin did not prove any real problem in the semi-final at Wexford Park and hopes were high for the Leinster final that the previous year's defeat by Wexford would be amply avenged. Those hopes were not realised, exactly why I am not in a position to express a first-hand opinion as I was, of necessity, elsewhere that day. Maybe it was because Kilkenny's senior hurlers are not yet hungry enough for fresh successes.

But that was really all the bad news, and when one remembers the way Kilkenny played against Tipperary in the League semi-final, it is obvious that the potential is still there.

From the 'good news' point of view, there was the pleasant fact that Kilkenny did win four All-Irelands. What is more I saw them win all four.

What must be even more pleasing to Kilkenny followers is that all four titles were hard won. The Vocational Schools team softened the blow of that League final defeat at Thurles by winning the curtain-raiser, their third successive victory in this event, and they had some promising lads in their line-up.

The minors were not particularly highly-rated this

The good news and the bad news

year, but I felt they were hard done by in the final at Croke Park — by the Clerk of the weather.

They had to face the brunt of wind and rain through the first half, and the elements were by no means as hostile to the Cork lads in the second half.

Even so, it was a game I thought Kilkenny should have won at that first time of asking. In the replay at Thurles these lads had, I thought, a tremendous first half and that was when they really laid the foundations of victory, but they made heavy weather of clinching that victory when they in turn had the wind.

But, as Cork were to learn to their cost in the subsequent Under-21 final, that wind when in your favour could prove a handicap as well as an asset.

However, when the need was greatest, those points that won the match came, and what great points they were when they did come!

So that was one title won, and then we had the Under-21 final in which Kilkenny were very much the underdogs against a fancied Cork side that included half a dozen of the senior panel.

This time Kilkenny began with the wind advantage, which meant the backs had to

bear the brunt of the battle in the closing stages, and so they did, magnificently. I was very much impressed, not for the first time, by the excellence of Joe Hennessey and Dick O'Hara.

What I was not anticipating, because I had not seen them in action previously during the campaign, was the defensive brilliance of Paddy Prendergast and Richard Reid. Nor was I expecting such a power-packed display as Murty Kennedy and Brian Waldron provided in the second half.

This victory was all the sweeter for being as hard earned as it was unexpected, and as the Kilkenny followers dribbled out of Semple Stadium, still savouring their county's dual success, I heard the comment more than once, "this makes up for the League Final."

The fourth All-Ireland victory was, of course, in the Camogie Final. One recalls the scoring power and leadership of Angela Downey, and the hard outfield work of her twin sister Ann, Mary Fennelly and Helena O'Neill.

Bridie Martin, too, turned on the style in the second half, but there was another important component in Kilkenny's victory as I saw it, the superb defensive skills of Liz Neary at full-back, especially in the first half, when Wexford looked most dangerous. Liz that day reminded me of Nick O'Donnell in his hey-day. I have only been able to speak of Kilkenny on the inter-county fields. Unfortunately, nowadays I only get to see club games very very rarely, but I follow the local games as closely as ever in the 'People' and, as the Americans say, you had quite a championship going for you down there this year.

Finally, a flash-back to the American tour last May. Again the Kilkenny players on the trip were excellent ambassadors for their county, for Ireland and for the hurling game, and one still remembers with pleasure before that finger infection hit him, 'Cloney' Brennan's live and lively commentary on the game in Los Angeles.



Continued from page 22

But the most daredevil feat of the game was at the most vital juncture. With little more than a minute to go Paddy Grace raced away from Cork's sprint champion Joe Kelly to meet the lengthy puck out by Cork's Bill Murphy and having gathered sent a long drive to Terry Leahy who scored the winning point.

This was one of the big talking points of the game. The question was asked again and again: Did Paddy take a gamble? Paddy's version was: 'there was no gamble; I knew exactly what I was doing'. It made the difference between a win for Kilkenny and a draw.

While some players caught the eye more than others, perhaps, it took the unflagging efforts of the whole 15 to carve this dramatic win; and it also took the best of every man on the Cork side to stay in it until the end.

Jim Donegan from Troyswood who had done most of his hurling in Dublin had a capital game in goal and fears Kilkenny supporters might have had that Paddy Grace would be unable to cope with Joe Kelly's speed were effectively dispelled.

Pat ('Diamond') Hayden excelled himself at full back and there was no Cork goal during the time he manned this onerous post. Mark Marnell who like Diamond Hayden, Jimmy Heffernan, Peter Prendergast and Willie Cahill was playing in his first all-Ireland, gave an excellent account of

Continued on page 61

Minor title for St. Lactain's

TWO POINTS separated St. Lactain's and Mooncoin in the minor hurling championship final, a goal four minutes from the end giving the Freshford side victory by 1-13 to 2-8 at Nowland Park on October 2. St. Lactain's also won the junior football title.

Mooncoin led by 0-8 to 1-4 at half time. With five minutes left it looked very like a southern win but Martin Walsh got the all-important goal and though Mooncoin still had a chance when John Mahon dropped a free in the Freshford goalmouth just before full time, nothing came of it.

It was a highly entertaining and closely contested game with the scores level six times during the hour. Tom Lennon was a dominating influence in the first half and contributed half of the Freshford tally.

Mooncoin regrouped for the second half: John Joe Hennebry moving to full back;

Liam O'Keeffe to right full; Jimmy Holden to right half and Noel Walsh took on Tom Lennon and achieved quite a degree of success, Lennon's first half brilliance being somewhat blunted in the second period. But it was Lennon and Gordon Ryan who always looked the likely match winners.

The southern standard bearers had well their share of the play in the second half and after Martin Walsh had brought them level Eddie Crowley put them ahead for the second time. But St. Lactain's had last say with Martin Walsh's goal.

Mooncoin had very sound defenders in John Joe Hennebry and Liam O'Keeffe, though Gordon Ryan for St. Lactain's was the biggest threat to the southerners, with Lennon playing a big part in reviving Freshford when the title looked to be destined for the south.

Gordon Ryan switched to midfield to partner Tom Lennon while Martin Campion moved to centreforward and the moves had positive results.

Michael Walsh was presented with an easy chance which he gladly grasped to score a Mooncoin goal but at the other end a long delivery by Ger Rafter was flicked over the bar. Tom Lennon added two points, one from a '70' and he also finished a Pierce Phelan centre for a point. Eddie Crowley had a point just before Martin Walsh's winning goal.

Nickey Morrissey, Ned Lennon and Ger Rafter were sound St. Lactain's defenders; Gordon Ryan, Michael Campion and Pierce Phelan gave Tom Lennon very valuable assistance.

Tom Walsh caught the eye in the Mooncoin attack with Eddie Crowley, Noel Walsh,

John Mahon and Sean Crowley also figuring prominently.

Scorers for **St. Lactain's**: Tom Lennon (0-7, 0-5 from frees); M. Walsh (1-0); Gordon Ryan and Michael Campion (0-2 each); Ger Rafter and Pierce Phelan (0-1 each).

St. Lactain's: E. Maher, T. Minogue, N. Morrissey, J. J. Campion, G. Rafter, N. Lennon, P. Doheny, T. Lennon, G. Mullan, M. Walsh, G. Ryan, P. Phelan, S. Doheny, M. Campion, E. Fortune. Sub.: Hickey for Fortune.

Mooncoin: M. Coleman, N. Walsh, J. Mahon, L. O'Keeffe, J. Holden, P. Crowley, B. Talbot, J. J. Hennebry, S. Crowley, E. Crowley, M. Walsh, J. Cleary, M. Corcoran, T. Walsh. Sub.: L. McCarthy for J. Cleary. Referee: Mr. D. Noonan.

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PAT HENDERSON – TOWERING FIGURE IN IRISH SPORT

ONE of the towering figures in modern Irish sport, Pat Henderson attaches special importance to the victory of his club, The Fenians in this year's Kilkenny senior hurling championship. It brought his county senior titles to five; he has also five all-Ireland and five Railway Cup medals.

He has also won nine Leinster, two National League and three Oireachtas medals; he has won a Texaco award, a hurler of the year award and has been twice chosen on the Carrolls All Stars team. But medals are not the only yardstick by which his contribution to Kilkenny hurling and the impact he made in a national sense should be measured. His dedication on and off the field was always inspiring.

While Pat Henderson had all the skills and artistry associated with Kilkenny hurling he was also, in a sense, a departure from established practice in that he showed strength to a degree not too often found in Kilkenny hurlers in recent times.

It was his ability to combine strength and skill effectively that ranked him among the great centre half backs in the game. Another attribute that won him universal respect was that he used his strength judiciously; he was scrupulously fair; he played the game as it should be played.

Pat started his hurling career with the Johnstown under 14 team and graduated to Thurles C.B.S., with whom he won Croke Cup and Sean Ryan cup medals in Munster colleges hurling. He was also on the Thurles C.B.S. side that lost in the Dr. Harty (senior) cup final.

It was back to his native heath for the Johnstown star in 1961 when he was on the Kilkenny team that won the all-Ireland minor final. He played under 21 and intermediate hurling with the black and amber starting in senior in a Walsh cup game in 1964.

His brother, Ger, was slow reaching greatness

From then on Pat Henderson was a regular on the county senior side but the full power of his hurling did not come to light all that quickly. His brother Ger, too, was somewhat slow reaching his present greatness while the third Henderson brother, John, winner of all-Ireland minor and under 21 medals is also only now coming to his full potential.

For several reasons Pat Henderson will have cause to look back on the 1967 all-Ireland final. This was his first

all-Ireland senior success and it was the first success for Kilkenny over Tipperary in an all-Ireland final since 1922.

He was on Kilkenny all-Ireland winning sides again in 1969, 1972, 1974 and 1975. It would be hard to choose between any of these games for his best all-Ireland final performance. They were all brilliant. But it is perhaps worth mentioning that in 1969, 1972, 1974 and 1975 his brilliant hurling had a lot to do with Kilkenny's success.

In 1969 Kilkenny had to come from behind to beat Cork; Pat Henderson and Martin Coogan stood out very prominently in the revival, helped enormously by the sheer brilliance of Ted Carroll's defence work. In 1972 when Cork went eight points ahead Pat Henderson was one of the few — Liam O'Brien, playing in his first all-Ireland was another — who sparkled during the period when Cork were in the ascendancy.

It was a somewhat similar situation in 1974 against Limerick. The Shannonsiders jumped into an early six points lead but during that early period Pat Henderson stood out.

All this does not mean that his colleagues did not play a significant part. Pat Henderson would be the first to say this and the last to claim any particular credit for himself but he seemed to triumph in adversity. He never flustered and his hurling often had an inspiring influence.

"I will continue to play for my club and for my county as long as I am able".

Pat won Leinster senior hurling medals with Kilkenny in 1966, 1967, 1969, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1974, and 1975 as well as a Leinster minor medal in 1961, and a Leinster club championship medal with The Fenians.

"After the all-Ireland the medal I prized most was the first county senior championship medal in 1970" Pat said. "We had won the junior championship two years before but up to that time Johnstown did not make a very great impact.

"Johnstown are credited with winning a senior hurling championship in 1914 but at that time the team was made up largely of Tullaroan hurlers with just a few Johnstown men".

Of the best Kilkenny team he played with he was slow to make any comparison and would not go beyond stating that the 1972 side had matured whilst most of the players were still young.

He was also reluctant to draw comparison between forwards he played on but he rated Mick Bermingham of Dublin; Mick ('Babs') Keating of Tipperary and Tony Doran of Wexford very difficult to handle.

And Pat does not look on his hurling career as at an end. "I will continue to play for my club and for the county as long as I am able.

What's the future for Kilkenny hurling? Pat Henderson feels it is bright and he sees no reason why the coming decade should not be as good as the past 10 years.

"Particular attention is paid to the juvenile in all grades in this county" he says "and while this continues there will always be hurlers".

An executive in the Kilkenny Design Workshops where he meets people from all over the world Pat's hobby is squash. He has played handball and football and won a county junior football title with Johnstown, a success he shared with another outstanding Fenians star, Pat Delaney.

Hurling means an awful lot to Pat Henderson; he has given a lot to it and reaped his rewards. He has certainly left an imprint on the game.

HOW OFTEN is it said around the county by hurling followers that there is nothing to match a senior championship win? No matter how many National Leagues, Walsh Cups or Oireachtas wins or anything else, there is nothing like the charm attached to the victory celebrations following a win on the first Sunday of September.

For the past two years, Noreside followers have been deprived of even a hint of the excitement of that day because the seniors have failed in the two Leinster finals against Wexford.

As always, when deprived of something dear to us, we change our aim and search for satisfaction in other areas. This year the victory of the under-21 side in the All-Ireland final against Cork made up immensely for the starvation in the senior grade.

People immediately after that Thurles test spoke in laudable terms about the great feats of the under-21 players. There were 15,000 witnesses that day to testify that even though the seniors were experiencing lean times, meatier days were just over the horizon.

Some went as wild as to suggest, "send out the under-21 team in the National League". It was a suggestion, but a rather rash one. A man with 18 years of inter-county senior hurling experience behind him warned of the folly of this move. And we in Kilkenny have great respect for Eddie Keher. He knows what hurling is all about.

The brilliant Rower-Inistogie forward said that the players should be let in gradually. Slip them in rather than march them in.

*When needed,
the under-21
players made
the
breakthrough*

That is what the senior selectors have done and Joe Hennessy, Richard Reid and Dick O'Hara from that 2-9 to 1-9 winning team have

already made a mark in the higher bracket. Brian Waldron, Martin Kennedy and John Henderson are not too far behind and the future looks very bright for them. Brendan Fennelly has also proved that he has the makings of a future inter-county senior players.

Perhaps it was ironic that this year, when we needed them most, under-21 players really made the breakthrough. From other under-21 winning teams in recent years only Ger Henderson, already a

The backs never gave a thing away and the midfield never did worse than share the spoils 50-50. And up front the forwards showed plenty of ideas and fell back to help the midfielders when necessary.

Cork had sturdy performers that day in Tom Cashman, John Crowley and Dermot McCurtain, all of whom played in the defeat of Wexford in the senior final. In fact, in the opening stages the Leesiders kept their cool even though playing into a near gale-force wind.

deserved by the under-21 players.

One Cork official claimed after the match that referee Jimmy Rankin had not completed 60 minutes. By our reckoning he was bang on time.

The losers could also seek solace and point to the disallowing of substitute Ger McEvoy's goal four minutes from time, that in hindsight would have given the Leesiders their second successive title.

On cold reflection, it would have been a tragedy had Kilkenny been robbed at that late state. They hurled fast and furiously, particularly in the closing 30 minutes, to gain the verdict. They deserved their triumph.

The team was very strong and well balanced. Even though the minor side also won the All-Ireland title, it was significant that no one from that team made in onto the under-21 panel. The right crop of players came along at the right time and those who feared for the future of the seniors have only to look back to this match to be reassured.

Joe Hennessy, who seems to produce his best at Thurles, played himself onto the senior team that day. On the other flank, Richard Reid, who played with a pain-killing injection to numb a nasty foot injury, did likewise.

Paddy Prendergast and those already mentioned have also made the jump up and have not been found wanting. It would be unfair to single out any more from that splendid team. Suffice to say they played nearly as good as the '76 League-winning team.

Coming out of Semple Stadium, a Corkman was overheard to say: "We were lucky. We got two soft senior All-Irelands against Wexford".

The skill and finesse of the 1977 Kilkenny under-21 team scared him and, at the same time, delighted us. And nine of them will again be under-age next year.

The Kilkenny team that day was: E. Mahon, J. Lennon, J. Henderson, P. Prendergast, J. Hennessy, D. O'Hara, R. Reid, P. Lannon, M. Kennedy, B. Waldron, M. Lyng (capt.), R. Power, J. Wall, G. Tyrrell, B. Fennelly. Sub.: K. Brennan.

senior; Billy Fitzpatrick and Terry Brennan stood up to the test of upgrading. The 1977 winners, who were carrying off the third title in four years in this grade for the county, provided more seniors than any other Kilkenny winners in the past four years.

And now, with some of the long servers on the senior team contemplating calling it a day, the under-21 players can be blooded-in before the All-Ireland championships.

Certainly, against Cork, who had three players from the senior All-Ireland winning side and four subs. on duty — Kilkenny proved that the material for further McCarthy Cup success is there. And in the not-too-distant future.

But Kilkenny then got over their sluggish period and by the end of 19 minutes were 2-2 to no score ahead. It all looked very rosy. But a minor set-back left them but 2-4 to 1-2 in front at half-time.

With the advantage of the elements for the closing half, Cork looked home and dry. How wrong were the forecast makers! The Noresiders played the proverbial blinder in the second half.

They played nearly as good in that second half as when the seniors gave the best team performance of the year in the 1976 League final against Clare. That is a big compliment to pay any side, but it is one thoroughly

EDDIE KEHER BOWS OUT

EDDIE KEHER'S decision to retire from the inter county scene comes in the Silver Jubilee year of his hurling career. He won his first medal in the primary schools hurling championship with Inistioge 25 years ago – in 1952. He followed that up with another medal in 1953.

Even at this early stage he was obviously destined for stardom. He showed exceptional potential. The first time I saw him playing was in the colleges senior hurling all-Ireland final at Thurles in 1957 when St. Kieran's beat St. Flannan's, Ennis.

In the years since then he has written an unique chapter in hurling history – one that may stand the test of time.

Born in Inistioge where his mother runs a business he inherited his Gaelic instincts from his late father, Sergeant Stephen Keher, a Roscommon man who played senior inter county football for Roscommon. He inherited, too, his father's sterling qualities. As a peace officer in Ballyhale where he was stationed before going to Inistioge Stephen Keher combined efficiency, kindness and common sense – qualities that won him universal respect.

Though his six all-Ireland senior hurling medals fails two short of the eight won by Cork's Christy Ring and Tipperary's John Doyle and one short of the seven won by four Kilkennymen (Sim Walton, Dick Doyle, Dick ('Droog') Walsh and Jack Rochford) he made a greater impact than, perhaps any other man in the game and his scoring record will hardly ever be equalled.

Continued on page 30

On 13 occasions he has been top scorer of the year (tying for the honour twice, once with Pat Cronin, Clare, and again with Jimmy Doyle, Tipperary). In addition to his six all-Irelands he has won 10 Leinster medals; nine Railway Cup medals; three National League medals and three Oireachtas medals. He played in 50 championship games, including 10 all-Ireland finals.

During his 18 years in senior hurling he scored 211 goals and 1,426 points for Kilkenny, giving him a grand total of 2,059 points.

He scored the highest total ever – 2 goals and 11 points – in an all-Ireland final – the 1971 final in which Tipperary beat Kilkenny by three points. He has scored the highest total in a championship series (six goals and 45 points) and the highest

score in any one year, 20 goals and 134 points.

He has honoured on five occasions by being chosen on the Carrolls All Stars side.

Apart from an all-Ireland medal what senior county hurlers cherish dearly is a county championship title. Eddie won his one and only with The Rower – Inistioge in 1969 and he captained the Kilkenny side that beat Cork in the 1969 all-Ireland final – the only time he captained an all-Ireland team.

Despite his early promise and the part he played on the St. Kieran's team he never won a minor title, though he played in minor ranks in 1957, 1958 and 1959. By a strange turn of fate Kilkenny won minor all-Irelands in the three years following – 1960, 1961 and 1962.

He was still a minor when he graduated to

senior status and had his "baptism of fire" in the 1959 all-Ireland final when Waterford beat Kilkenny in a replay. He came on as a sub in that game.

Those of us who can look back on the 1959 minor final in which Tipperary beat Kilkenny by 2-8 to 2-7 can recall the bad luck that dogged the Kilkenny boys. This was one of Eddie's great games in minor ranks.

The "Kilkenny People" report of the game stated: Eddie Keher was in a class of his own. Easily the outstanding individual performer of the 30 he delighted the vast crowd with his jinking solo runs, deceptive swerves and beautifully executed points. His display was representative of Kilkenny hurling at its best.

Kilkenny followers were hardly ever more captivated than in 1963



Eddie Keher in action in the 1975 all-Ireland final.

EDDIE BOWS OUT

Continued from p. 29

when Kilkenny beat Waterford in the all-Ireland final. Eddie hit 14 points in that game and never once over the hour did he strike the ball wide. This game will also be remembered for the superlative hurling of Seamus Cleere.

He had by this time clearly established himself. He had reached the peak of greatness. His scoring feats became so common-

place that they lost their "news value". Even when he hit two goals and 11 points in the 1971 final there was little or no sensation. It was something that had come to be expected of him.

Having accomplished all that he did and made himself a legend in his own time Eddie Keher was completely unaffected by all the attendant publicity.

Apart from his skill, Eddie had another quality admired by all true sportsmen. He was dedicated, so much so that every January he started playing a ball around to get the feel of his hurley for the tasks ahead.

Assistant Manager of the Kilkenny branch of Allied Irish Banks the decision to doff the black and amber jersey came after considerable thought, Eddie told me when I spoke to him recently. It

was a decision that was not taken lightly by a man who was, probably the greatest marksman of them all.

Incidentally Eddie's wife, Mrs. Keher is also a keen enthusiast. Her brother Brendan Phelan who played with Young Irelands (Gowran) also played for Kilkenny.

His eldest son, Eamonn who plays with St. John's under 10 side has been at every all-Ireland final since he was two years old. Clodiagh (8), Deirdre (7) and Colm (3) are also keen enthusiasts.

Though retiring from inter county activity Eddie says the decision will enable him to give more attention to his own club, The Rower - Inistioge with whom he will continue to play.

Having had so much enjoyment from the game he is anxious to give some-

thing back. He would very much like to be given an opportunity to train young hurlers. I will certainly be hoping to keep up my association with the game in some sphere or other.

"I enjoyed every minute of my hurling career and now that I have to adjust to being a spectator I know it will not be easy for a while. I will miss the game a lot; it has been so much a part of my life".

We will all miss Eddie from the inter county scene but we will always remember him as a man who adorned hurling by his skill and his sportsmanship.

Apart from medals Eddie has two souvenirs to remind him of his hurling days that are of particular interest to him. One is a Jack Dempsey autograph and the other is a hurley autographed by Mahommad Ali.



Eddie Keher at home in Newpark Lawn, Kilkenny, with his wife Kathleen and family (from left) — Clodiagh, Eamonn, Colm and Deirdre. In the background are his five Carrolls All-Star awards.

ON A sunny September afternoon while thousands flocked to Nowlan Park to watch the senior hurling championship semi finals, Kilkenny girls in Croke Park were adding lustre to a proud record by winning the all-Ireland senior camogie title, their third in four years.

In beating Wexford by seven points, 3-4 to 1-3 they left no room in anyone's mind for doubt about the merit of the victory and the destination of the O'Duffy cup was clearly mapped out long before the end of an entertaining and sporting game.

Kilkenny in the past few years have all-Ireland final victories to their credit over Cork, Dublin and Wexford and the recent resurgence points the way to a bright future.

The resurgence did not spring up overnight. Over the past decade or so a lot of people, some of them gone to their eternal reward and more of them still with us, put a lot of work into the effort to win for the black and ambers their rightful place in the

the expertise of a man and she and her colleagues did much to foster the game.

But the latent talent which the Kilkenny girls displayed then and at other

lead to 7 points by virtue of a goal and a point by Angela Downey and for the remainder of the game, Wexford were fighting against impossible odds.

CAMOGIE IS ON THE CREST OF THE WAVE

times in the intervening years never surfaced until the 70's. Judging by the work that is being done at present success has come to stay.

Even without financial and at times moral support camogie has taken firm root and good work is being done in the schools. St. Paul's might be said to have been fostered in the Presentation Convent and their phenomenal run of successes in the all-Ireland club championships laid the foundation for the more spectacular Kilkenny successes of the past four years.

This all-Ireland title was won as easily as the winning margin indicates. Wexford fought valiantly and never gave up the struggle completely though Kilkenny's superior technique and first class team work put them in a commanding position and they had laid the foundation for success at the interval when they led by 2-2 to 0-1.

Both sides added a goal and two points each in the second half but shortly after play had resumed Kilkenny had increased their

Angela Downey who must be the best camogie player in the country gave an inspiring display and she picked off vital scores with remarkable skill. She contributed two goals and three points. Her tally would have been greater but for the splendid goal-keeping of Kathleen Tonks, a very talented Wexford net minder.

Angela was not the only Kilkenny star. This was a well balanced side and all contributed handsomely to the victory.

Teresa O'Neill maintained her great reputation as a top class goalie. She was only beaten once, at a stage when Kilkenny had the issue sewn up, by a pile driver from Brigid Doyle.

Liz Neary, Anne Holden (making her first appearance in an all-Ireland final), Helena O'Neill, Mary Canavan and Bridie Martin were all very sound defenders while Anne Downey, Mary Fennelly, Mary Purcell, Jo Dunne and Carmel Savage showed splendid form all through.

Mary Lacey and Brigid Doyle were outstanding in the Wexford defence and the Kilkenny forwards earned their scores hard. Margaret Hearne, Bridie Doran and Eileen O'Gorman were also in top gear while Kathleen Codd also played her part very well.

Wexford started well and Margaret Hearne had them a point up after four minutes. But Kilkenny settled down quickly and Jo Dunne shook the Wexford net with a fine shot. Angela Downey had a point to put Kilkenny three points clear.

Angela Downey had a goal and Helena O'Neill a point before the interval. In the second half Angela Downey put on a goal and two points and Brigid Doyle had a goal and a point and Kathleen Codd a point for Wexford.

Scorers for Kilkenny: Angela Downey (2-3); Jo Dunne (1-0) Helena O'Neill (0-1). **For Wexford:** Brigid Doyle (1-1); Kathleen Codd (0-1); Margaret Hearne (0-1).

Kilkenny: Teresa O'Neill, Liz Neary, Anne Holden, Bridie Martin, Mary



Una Bhean Ni Puirseal, president Camogie Association of Ireland.

camogie scene and it is due to a very great extent to these praiseworthy efforts that the game is now flourishing.

The fact that Kilkenny waited until 1973 to win their first senior all-Ireland title should not be taken to mean that Kilkenny is without a camogie tradition. It is many years ago since Alice McCormack of Walkin street showed she could handle a hurley with

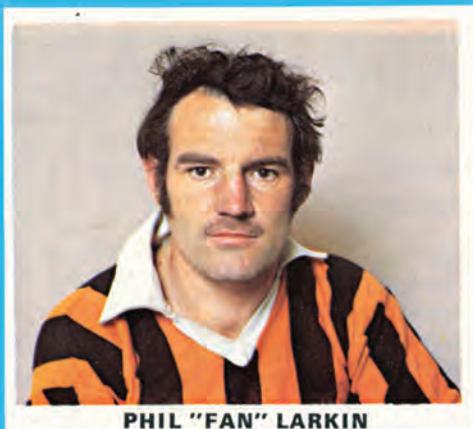


Beatrice Treacy, chairperson, Kilkenny County Camogie Board.

Canavan, Helena O'Neill, Anne Downey, Mary Fennelly, Mary Purcell, Carmel Savage, Angela Downey (captain), Jo Dunne.

Wexford: K. Tonks, M. Lacey, (captain), M. Darcy, B. Doyle, D. Walsh, B. Murphy, E. Walsh, M. Hearne, K. Codd, B. Doran, Bernie Murphy, E. O'Gorman. Sub: A. Kennedy for B. Doran.

Referee: M. Lynch, Monaghan.



PHIL "FAN" LARKIN

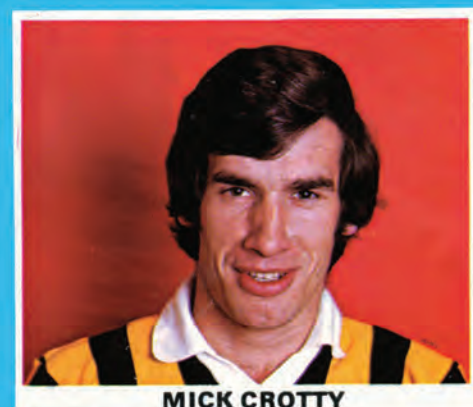
THE ARCHITECTS OF THE GOLDEN ERA



PAT HENDERSON



PAT DELANEY



MICK CROTTY

IT IS FAIRLY generally accepted that the end of an era has come for Kilkenny hurling. We are now at a transition stage. And the question that is being asked is – what does the future hold?

But before answering or attempting to answer that question it is right that we should look back on what has been for Kilkenny a golden era and the architects who moulded it. In the years from 1967 to 1975 Kilkenny won five senior all-Irelands in addition to minor, under 21, intermediate, camogie and handball titles.

No other county has amassed so much honours in a nine-year period as Kilkenny did. We waited from 1947 to 1957 to take home the McCarthy cup and again from 1957 to 1963 for our next success. How long we will wait for our next victory is anybody's guess. But we are moving in the right direction.

The 1967 success was of special significance. We had beaten Tipperary in an all-Ireland final for the first time in over 40 years. The team that won that game formed the basis from which the subsequent successes flowed.

Phil Larkin and Eddie Keher survived from the 1963 side to 1975, Phil Larkin missing two of the six, 1967 and 1969. Pat Henderson, Frank Cummins, Pat Delaney shared in the 1969 victory while Phil Larkin, Pat Lawlor, Pat Henderson, Frank Cummins, Liam O'Brien, Mick Brennan, Mick Crotty and Kieran Purcell were drafted into the side in 1972. The side had been more or less static from then on.

The 1957 victory was sweet for Kilkenny followers. It ended a 10 year wait.

From 1967 onwards

Kilkenny supporters never had it so good. With luck we might have done even better than five senior all-Irelands.

It is perhaps natural in the circumstances in which we now find ourselves, particularly in the light of Eddie Keher's decision that the questions of others retiring from the game should arise.

This is a decision that the men themselves should be allowed to make of their own free will. There should be no paltry comment about whether any player or players should retire. It shows not only a lack of appreciation, which is bad, but a lack of sportsmanship which is worse.

Whatever happens in the coming year Kilkenny has a wealth of young talent. They have the ingrained Kilkenny skill; all they require is experience. They will be given the opportunity to follow the trail set by the previous generations of Kilkenny hurlers.

There was some encouragement to be taken from their last appearance this year when they beat the all-Ireland champions Cork in the National League.

Kilkenny have made a very big impact over the past 20 years or so when we brought our tally of all-Ireland titles from 13 to 20.

The teams that won those titles are:

1957: Ollie Walsh, Tom Walsh, Jim Walsh, John Maher, Paddy Buggy, Mickey Walsh, John McGovern, Mick Brophy, John Sutton, Denis Heaslip, Mick Kenny, Mickey Kelly (captain), Dick Rockett, Billy O'Dwyer, Sean Clohosey, Sub: Bill Walsh.

1963: Ollie Walsh, Phil Larkin, Cha Whelan, Martin Treacy, Seamus Cleere (captain), Ted Carroll, Martin Coogan, Paddy Moran, Sean Clohosey, Denis Heaslip, John McGovern, Eddie Keher, Tom Walsh, Billy O'Dwyer, Tom Murphy, Sub: Oliver Gough.

1967: Ollie Walsh, Ted Carroll, Pa Dillon, Jim Treacy (captain), Seamus Cleere, Pat Henderson, Martin Coogan, Paddy Moran, John Teehan, Eddie Keher, Tom Walsh, Claus Dunne, Jim Bennett, Jimmy Lynch, Martin Brennan. Subs: John Kinsella, Pat Carroll, Dick Blanchfield.

1969: Ollie Walsh, Ted Carroll, Pa Dillon, Jim Treacy, Willie Murphy, Pat Henderson, Martin Coogan, Mick Lalor, Frank Cummins, Claus Dunne, Pat Delaney, Eddie Keher (captain), Joe Millea, Martin Brennan, Tom Murphy. Subs: Pat Kavanagh, Paddy Moran, Sean Buckley.

1972: Noel Skehan (captain), Phil Larkin, Pa Dillon, Jim Treacy, Pat Lalor, Pat Henderson, Eamonn Morrissey, Liam O'Brien, Frank Cummins, Mick Crotty, Pat Delaney, John Kinsella, Eddie Byrne, Kieran Purcell, Eddie Keher. Subs: Mossy Murphy, Paddy Moran, Martin Coogan.

1974: Noel Skehan, Phil Larkin, Nicky Orr, Jim Treacy, Pat Lawlor, Pat Henderson, Tom McCormack, Frank Cummins, Liam O'Brien, Mick Crotty, Pat Delaney, Billy Fitzpatrick, Mick Brennan, Kieran Purcell, Eddie Keher.

1975: Noel Skehan, Phil Larkin, Nicky Orr, Brian Cody, Pat Lawlor, Pat Henderson, Tom McCormack, Liam O'Brien, Frank Cummins, Mick Crotty, Pat Delaney, Billy Fitzpatrick (captain), Mick Brennan, Kieran Purcell, Eddie Keher.

Three in a row – only once

THOUGH Kilkenny are lying third to Cork and Tipperary in the roll of all-Ireland senior hurling titles won unlike the two Munster counties they only won three-in-a-row once and on this one occasion one of their all-Ireland final triumphs was a walk over.

Kilkenny won in 1911, 1912 and 1913 but in the 1911 final they got a walk over from Limerick.

They did have the satisfaction of beating Tipperary, nominated by the Munster Council, in a substitute all-Ireland final.

Kilkenny won two in a row in 1904 and 1905; 1932 and 1933 and 1974 and 1975.



LIAM O'BRIEN

Titles won

Titles won by Kilkenny in the period from 1967 to 1975 were:
Senior hurling: 1967, 1969, 1972, 1974, 1975;
under-21 hurling: 1974, 1975;
minor hurling: 1972, 1973, 1975;
intermediate hurling: 1973.

Kilkenny won four Vocational Schools all-Ireland titles and two camogie all-Irelands in the same period. Since then Kilkenny have won the 1977 under-21 and minor all-Ireland finals; the 1977 minor and the 1977 camogie titles. St. Kieran's won three all-Ireland senior colleges hurling titles to add to the impressive list.



NOEL SKEHAN

Football flourish – future looks good

THE difference in standard and of support between hurling and Gaelic football in this county may be the main reason why so many bricks have been thrown at hurling's 'cinderella' sister over the years. The question has even been asked – should we bother at all about football.

Nicholas (Nick) McGrath came on as chairman of the Kilkenny Football Board a couple of years ago with one mission in mind – to do something positive about the game. Having had time to 'find his feet' so to speak we asked Mr. McGrath to set down what he thinks are the most pressing problems; how to solve them and what progress has the game made. Here is what he says.

There are signs at the moment that football is on the move in the county. The Football Board after having had several seminars and meetings and seeking the best available advice from outside the county took some positive measures to improve football here.

Fixture lists were drawn up and strictly adhered to and postponements for any reason were not tolerated. As a result the backlog of fixtures and the 1977 fixtures were completed in the present year.

Says NICKY McGRATH Football Chairman

Over 30 games were played in the junior championship which were a tremendous success. The final was won by Freshford. It was played on September 12.

The senior final resulted in an unsatisfactory situation where one team with a player on holidays refused to play. The result was that Muckalee had a walk-over in the final which had been fixed for August 20.

At present the minor final is waiting to be played and the under 21 championship is nearing completion. The remaining teams in this championship were involved in the final stages of the hurling championships – hence the delay.

On the inter county scene we had not had much success as far as winning is concerned but our senior side ended the season with a win over Carlow in the O'Byrne Cup. In the championship against Kildare they put up a tremendous performance.

Our minors were very disappointing due to many reasons. It was not possible to have all our players properly

trained before the championships as the Vocational schools and St. Kieran's college were involved in all-Irelands.

The best performance came from our under 21 team. If ever a team is going to win a championship it is the under 21 side. They drew with Meath at Nowlan Park and were very unlucky to lose the replay. With most of last year's team, available and particularly men like Dick O'Hara who, incidentally has been honoured with a Sports Star Award and who I expect in the near future to catch the eyes of the Leinster selectors

The schools continue to do wonderful work and the contribution they are making is beginning to bear fruit. The Under 16 Board must also be complimented on continuing the good work of the Schools Board. Perhaps a Minor Board would be the answer to an improvement in minor and under 21 grades.

Four years ago our under 14 team beat Laois and Kildare and were unlucky to be beaten by Wexford in the

Leinster semi-final. That should mean that with plenty of hard work we should get a good run in the minor championship.

At senior level we have lots of problems to solve. We played our first round in the 1977 League with 20 of our best players club-tied. If we are to make any breakthrough in this grade, all fixtures will have to be called off when the county is engaged.

If the championships were started earlier and finished in the summer time this could be achieved.

The County Board has backed the football Board all the way. There are still many problems to be sorted out. I would like to see a one-parish rule in operation. This, I think would help. Surely if every parish can field a hurling team they must be able to field a football team?

I would like to see clubs being more positive in their approach. If only they decide to set aside one night of the week solely for football then we would be moving in the right direction.

I am prepared to go to every club and talk to them on football. I am confident that football will regain the status it deserves in this county as one of our national games.

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THE BLACK AND AMBER

WHEN did Kilkenny first wear the black and amber jerseys? Many people are of the opinion that it was when they were presented with a set by the late John F. Drennan of Conway Hall, Kells. However research which I have made proves otherwise.

A calendar produced by a soft drinks company of county colours says: The familiar black and amber striped jerseys originated in 1910 with the presentation of new jerseys to Kilkenny by John F. Drennan. This settled a dispute which had arisen about the colours to be worn.

Kilkenny wore black and amber jerseys in the very first all-Ireland final in which they played, the final of 1893, played in June, 1894. The jerseys belonged to a football club called the Thomas Larkins which had gone out of existence and they were then used by the Confederation Club (Kilkenny city) who had the selection for the all-Ireland final.

Kilkenny also wore black and amber jerseys for the replay of the 1905 all-Ireland

final in which they beat Cork by 7-7 to 2-9 at Dungarvan on June 30, 1907. The report in the "Kilkenny Journal" following the game which they lost by 5-10 to 3-13 in a disputed game some time previously criticised the appearance of the Kilkenny team which lined out in a variety of jerseys.

It seems all the players wore their club colours. This was in mark contrast to the Cork team who lined out in blue jerseys. In the replay, ordered following an objection and counter objection, Kilkenny were praised by the same writer for turning out in their black and amber jerseys.

A big dispute arose in 1907 as to what jerseys should be worn and for a long time it looked as if the impasse would not be resolved. The 1906 county final ended in the referee declaring it a draw - Tullaroan 1-12, Mooncoin 3-6. However, it seems he missed a point during the game which would have left

Mooncoin the winners. At a subsequent County Board meeting Mooncoin were awarded the same by seven votes to five.

As a result of this we had both Mooncoin and Tullaroan claiming the right to use their jerseys for the all-Ireland. Luckily for Kilkenny, Monsignor J. B. Dollard, the poet priest from Mooncoin eventually got a compromise worked out which saw the Tullaroan jerseys being used and Mooncoin supplying the captain in the version of Dick ('Droog') Walsh.

After Kilkenny had beaten Cork by a point to win a thrilling final, the futurity of the dispute was seen when the team was brought together in St. James's Park for a photograph. The players from the other clubs insisted that the team be photographed in the Mooncoin jerseys as a tribute to Monsignor Dollard who occupied a place in the centre of the front row.

Possibly fed up over the petty disputes which divided

Kilkenny on many occasions in those years, John F. Drennan presented a set of black and amber jerseys to Kilkenny in December 1911 to be worn for the All-Ireland final against Limerick which was fixed for Cork in February 1912.

Heavy rain at the weekend of the game made the Cork pitch unplayable and the match was re-fixed for Thurles. Limerick refused to play in Thurles so Kilkenny were declared the all-Ireland champions. Kilkenny did win the game played against Tipperary in lieu of the all-Ireland final.

Kilkenny retained the all-Ireland finals of 1912 and 1913 to complete their one and only 'hat trick' and as they never suffered a defeat in the championship since getting the jerseys from John F. Drennan the Kilkenny County Board presented Mr. Drennan with a gold medal and a large photograph of the 1913 team in appreciation.

The presentation took place early in 1914. Since then Kilkenny have worn the black and amber.

The golden eras

A RECENT report by 'Uncle Pat' in the *Kilkenny People* that the past decade was the most glorious in Kilkenny's history — glorious though it was — is open to scrutiny. From 1967 to 1976 Kilkenny won five All-Ireland senior titles.

But from 1904 to 1913 Kilkenny won seven All-Ireland senior titles and this period can be narrowed down to seven years because the 1904 final, the first of the seven won, was not played until 1906.

But in the past decade Kilkenny won three under-21 finals, minor and intermediate titles. These competitions did not exist in the early 1900's.

Between 1931 and 1935 Kilkenny played in five All-Ireland finals, winning three and drawing two.

In the matter of senior titles, the 1904 to 1913 period might be regarded as the more spectacular though Kilkenny won more titles in all grades over the past decade.



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Now for the three-in-a-row

By BEATRICE TREACY Chairperson, County Camogie Board

TWO IN a row ! Now for three in a row ! The third Sunday in September saw our camogie team annex the O'Duffy Cup for the third time and the second time in succession . Now we must aim for the third in a row.

In the opening round, the Kilkenny team accounted for a very young Tipperary team convincingly and a hard match with Dublin in the semi-final Kilkenny emerged winners to meet our bogey team, Wexford in the final decider for national honours.

Leading up to the final there was an air of quiet confidence tinged with caution among our players for in previous years the Wexford ladies gave nothing away.

However Angela Downey and her team were fully determined to win this game and we won it so easily that we surprised even our more optimistic supporters. Angela, played a real captain's part in this game, notching scores that many old time supporters of hurling said were reminiscent of her father, Shem in his heyday.

Shem also had a hand in fashioning victory as he was a selector with myself and his knowledge of hurling cum camogie was a great asset to us in our task.

Brendan O'Sullivan our trainer had the most difficult task in moulding our selections together into a team. This he did with his unique technique and talents which I feel should be put to use in other counties.

This was not Brendan's only task as he is also our treasurer and is as dedicated to this post as he is to coaching the team.

Our secretary, Mary Fennelly must surely deserve special mention for the manner in which she combined her work as secretary of the Leinster Council; secretary of the Kilkenny Camogie Board and training for and playing the game as well.

Some measure of compensation for Mary's dedication comes by way of her being nominated as a Sports Star for 1977 – a most popular choice with all supporters of the game in the county.

While all these officers, plus the dedication of the players, fashioned victory for us, our game at county level would be below its present standard but for the splendid efforts put in by the clubs on the domestic front. In 1972 we had three clubs (four teams) affiliated; now we have 11 clubs and 33 teams at five levels – senior, junior, minor, under 14 and under 12.

St. Paul's: With Shem Downey and Mary Conway at the head of affairs, St. Paul's still dominate our senior championships, as they have done since 1964. Despite this dominance which on the face of it would appear to have ill effects on the game here, the opposite has been the case and other teams have thrived on the challenge to overthrow them from their pedestal and, thereby, raising their own standards. This can only be good for the game. St. Paul's also field a junior side.

Carrickshock: The only club with teams in all five grades of camogie in the county Carrickshock can be described as the most progressive club. They use the experience of former prominent hurler, Dick Roche and his wife, Maura (a former camogie player) to good advantage in training. They also have a most capable secretary in Lena O'Dwyer who plays with the team.

Young Irelands (Gowran): Young Irelands field teams in minor, under 14 and under 12 grades and it is hoped to field a junior team next year. This club has got the youngest administrators guided by the capable hands of Jim Fitzgerald, chairman of both the hurling and camogie clubs, and the secretary, Bernadette Ryan, just 14 years old.

This is also Peig Muldowney's (formerly Peig Carey) club, our county registrar and county player.

Shamrocks (Ballyhale): Shamrocks field senior, minor, under 14 and under 12 sides and have Pat Holden doing fine work for the game there with his young secretary, Bernadette Doyle who is playing at senior level for the first time. This club is only three years affiliated.

Thomastown: Thomastown are winners of this year's junior championship and should be a force in senior ranks next year. They also field teams at minor, under 14 and under 12 level. P. J. Monahan and Carol Caulfield with Brendan O'Sullivan are the main people involved in the success of this club.

Pat Cronin does a fine job in keeping the schools going and therefore, enabling the club to reach its heights.

Johnstown: Bridget Fitzpatrick, sister of county hurler, Billy Fitzpatrick along with her sister-in-law, Mrs. Irene Fitzpatrick (incidentally a sister of Pat Delaney) are all doing tremendous work for the game in this region and making steady progress.

They field, junior, minor, under 14 and under 12 sides. This club was only formed two years ago.

Emeralds: A new team affiliated for the first time this year, Emeralds have Peter Doyle and Vera Reid managing in this parish and given a couple of years they should be a very capable team.

Mooncoin: Mooncoin also affiliated this year with four teams, junior, minor, under 14 and under 12. The club is guided by the hard-working Margaret Coady and Mary Phelan, both with all-Ireland medals and putting something back into the game. Mooncoin had a very good time in the 1960's and it is nice to see them to the fore again.

Piltown: Piltown is a club looking to the future; they believe in starting at the roots and at present have only one team at under 14 level. But Sean O'Shea and his officers will not be waiting too long for success.

Tullagher: Tullagher only started 13 months ago but they had a team in the 1950's. They have about 80 players and field teams in junior, minor and under 14. The club is looked after by young players, Breda Ryan and Mary O'Sullivan.

Blacks and Whites: Although affiliated to the County Board Blacks and Whites have not fielded any team this year but I am sure next year, Owen Ryan and company will right this and they will be with us.

Callan: Another new club fielded in minor, under 14 and under 12 grades under the capable direction of Bernie O'Dwyer and Father Dunne. This is another club that believes in starting at the right end. The Convent of Mercy there plays a big part in fostering the game.

Further to these clubs, Ann Downey, Bridie Martin and Nickey Brennan are lending a hand to form teams in Ballyragget, Freshford and Clinstown while Mary Fennelly has taken charge of training in the Presentation Convent, Kilkenny. Michael Hester and Mary Murphy are trying hard to raise to the high standard they have always achieved in the Presentation Convent, Castlecomer.

At this stage may I state quite clearly that the Camogie Board has no animosity whatever towards our G.A.A. friends for keeping their fixtures on September 18, the third Sunday which is 'ladies day' at Croke Park.

I know every person in Nowlan Park and the G.A.A. Board in general were with us in spirit. Only for the G.A.A. Board I am afraid our chances of reaching an all-Ireland final would be very slim as finance is always a factor we have to face.

May I congratulate Peig Carey, Carmel Dwyer, Lena O'Dwyer on their marriages this year. To all those who got engaged my sincere good wishes.

To our supporters – they are few but very loyal – my thanks; my thanks for your trust and confidence in our game, my sincere thanks to Father Maher, St. Kieran's college for the use of the pitch.

Last but not least may I thank the editor for giving me this privilege of writing in his Year Book. I wish him every luck in this year's edition. It has been an inside view of our games throughout the year.



KILKENNY – CAMOGIE CHAMPS AGAIN

THIRD TIME WINNERS . . . Kilkeny Senior Camogie Champions who won the O'Duffy Cup for the second successive year by beating Wexford in the All-Ireland final. It was the third time the girls won the title. Back row (l. to r.): Mary Canavan, Majella O'Neill, Margaret Farrell, Helena O'Neill, Liz Neary, Carmel Savage, Mary Conway, Ann Downey. Front (l. to r.): Mary Purcell, Mary Fennelly, Breda Coonan, Anne Holden, Angela Downey (capt.), Bridie Martin, Jo Dunne, Teresa O'Neill, Peggy Muldowney.

This is the 90th year of the all-Ireland senior hurling championships. They were won as follows.

1887: At Birr, April 1, 1888 (21 aside): Tipperary 1-1, Galway 0-0. The actual score was: Tipperary, one goal, one point and one forfeit point.

1888: The championship was unfinished because of the American 'invasion'.

1889: At Inchicore, Dublin, November 3, 1889: Dublin 5-1, Clare 1-6.

1890: At Clonturk, Dublin, November 16, 1890: Cork 1-6, Wexford 2-2. The game was unfinished but the match was awarded to Cork.

1891: At Clonturk, February 28, 1892: Kerry 2-3, Wexford 1-5. An extra hour was played in this final.

1892: At Clonturk, March 26, 1893: Cork 2-4, Dublin 1-1. The game was unfinished, Dublin withdrawing after 50 minutes.

1893: At Phoenix Park, June 24, 1894: Cork 6-8, Kilkenny 0-2.

1894: At Clonturk, March 26, 1895: Cork 5-20, Dublin 2-0.

Where the hurling titles have gone

1895: At Jones's Road, Dublin, March 15, 1896: Tipperary 6-8, Kilkenny 1-0.

1896: At Jones's Road, March 27, 1898: Tipperary 8-14, Dublin 0-4.

1897: At Tipperary, November 20, 1898: Limerick 3-4, Kilkenny 2-4.

1898: At Jones's Road, March 25, 1900: Tipperary 7-13, Kilkenny 3-10.

1899: At Jones's Road, March 24, 1901: Tipperary 3-12, Wexford 1-4.

1900: At Jones's Road, August 26, 1902: Tipperary

2-5, London Desmonds 0-6. Home final at Terenure, Dublin, September 21, 1902: Tipperary 5-7, Galway 0-1.

1901: At Jones's Road, August 2, 1903: London 1-5, Cork 0-4. Home final at Carrick on Suir, June 14, 1903: Cork 2-8, Wexford 0-6.

1902: At Cork, September 11, 1903: Cork 3-13, London, 0-0. Home final at Tipperary, July 17, 1904: Cork 2-4, Dublin 0-1. The teams played a draw, 1-7 each at Tipperary on July 3.

1903: At Jones's Road,

November 12, 1905: Cork 3-14, London 1-1. Home final at Dungarvan, July 16, 1905: Cork 8-9, Kilkenny 0-8.

1904: At Carrick on Suir, June 24, 1906: Kilkenny 1-9, Cork 1-8.

1905: At Dungarvan, June 30, 1907: Kilkenny 7-7, Cork 2-9. In a game at Tipperary on April 14, 1907 Cork won by 5-10 to 3-13 but a dispute arose and a replay was ordered.

1906: At Kilkenny, October 27, 1907: Tipperary 3-16, Dublin 3-8.

1907: At Dungarvan, June 21, 1908: Kilkenny 3-12, Cork 4-8.

1908: At Athy, June 27, 1909, Tipperary 3-15, Dublin 1-5. The sides played a draw (Tipperary 2-5, Dublin 1-8) at Jones's Road, on April 25.

1909: At Cork, December 12, 1909: Kilkenny 4-6, Tipperary 0-12.

1910: At Jones's Road, November 20, 1910: Wexford 7-0, Limerick 6-2.

1911: Kilkenny got a walk over from Limerick who refused to replay the match at

Continued on page 41

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Where the hurling medals have gone

1912: At Croke Park, November 17, 1912: Kilkenny 2-1, Cork 1-3.

1913: At Croke Park, November 2, 1913: Kilkenny 2-4, Tipperary 1-2. Teams were reduced to 15 a-side and Kilkenny wore the official black and amber jerseys for the first time.

1914: At Croke Park, October 18, 1914: Clare 5-1, Laois 1-0.

1915: At Croke Park, October 24, 1915: Laois 6-2, Cork 4-1.

1916: At Croke Park, January 21, 1917: Tipperary 5-4, Kilkenny 3-2.

1917: At Croke Park, October 28, 1917: Dublin 5-4, Tipperary 4-2.

1918: At Croke Park, January 26, 1919: Limerick 3-5, Wexford 1-3.

1919: At Croke Park, September 21, 1919: Cork 6-4, Dublin 2-4.

1920: At Croke Park, May 14, 1922: Dublin 4-9, Cork 4-3.

1921: At Croke Park, May 4, 1923: Limerick 8-5, Dublin 3-2.

1922: At Croke Park, September 9, 1923: Kilkenny 4-2, Tipperary 2-6.

1923: At Croke Park, April 27, 1924: Limerick 7-4, Donegal 0-1.

1924: At Croke Park, December 14, 1924: Dublin 5-3, Galway 2-6.

1925: At Croke Park, September 6, Tipperary 5-6, Galway 1-5.

1926: At Croke Park, October 24: Cork 4-6, Kilkenny 2-0.

1927: At Croke Park, September 4: Dublin 4-8, Cork 1-3.

1928: At Croke Park, September 4: Cork 6-12, Galway 1-0.

1929: At Croke Park, September 1: Cork 4-9, Galway 1-3.

1930: At Croke Park, September 7, Tipperary 2-7, Dublin 1-3.

1931: At Croke Park, November 1, Cork 5-8, Kilkenny 3-4. On September 6 the teams played a draw 1-6 each and they played another draw 2-5 each on October 11.

1932: At Croke Park, September 14: Kilkenny 3-3, Clare 2-3.

1933: At Croke Park, September 3: Kilkenny 1-7, Limerick 0-6.

1934: At Croke Park, September 30: Limerick 5-2, Dublin 2-6. The teams played a draw (Limerick 2-7, Dublin 3-4) on September 2.

1935: At Croke Park, September 1, Kilkenny 2-5, Limerick 2-4.

1936: At Croke Park, September 6: Limerick 5-6, Kilkenny 1-5.

1937: At Killarney, September 5: Tipperary 3-11, Kilkenny 0-3.

1938: At Croke Park, September 4: Dublin 2-5, Waterford 1-6.

1939: At Croke Park, September 3: Kilkenny 2-7, Cork 3-3.

1940: At Croke Park, September 1: Limerick 3-7, Kilkenny 1-7.

1941: At Croke Park, September 28: Cork 5-11, Dublin 0-6.

1942: At Croke Park, September 6: Cork 2-14, Dublin 3-4.

1943: At Croke Park, September 5: Cork 5-16, Antrim 0-4.

1944: At Croke Park, September 3: Cork 5-3, Dublin 2-11.

1945: At Croke Park, September 2: Tipperary 5-6, Kilkenny 3-6.

1946: At Croke Park, September 1: Cork 7-5, Kilkenny 3-8.

1947: At Croke Park, September 7: Kilkenny 0-14, Cork 2-7.

1948: At Croke Park, September 5: Waterford 6-7, Dublin 4-2.

1949: At Croke Park, September 4: Tipperary 3-11, Laois 0-3.

1950: At Croke Park, September 3: Tipperary 1-9, Kilkenny 1-8.

1951: At Croke Park, September 2: Tipperary 7-7, Wexford 3-9.

1952: At Croke Park, September 2: Cork 2-14, Dublin 0-7.

1953: At Croke Park, September 4: Wexford 3-13, Galway 2-8.

1954: At Croke Park, September 5: Cork 1-9, Wexford 1-6.

1955: At Croke Park, September 4: Wexford 3-13, Galway 2-8.

1956: At Croke Park, September 2: Wexford 2-14, Cork 2-8.

1957: September 1: Kilkenny 4-10, Waterford 3-12.

1958: At Croke Park, September 7: Tipperary 4-9, Galway 2-5.

1959: At Croke Park, October 4: Waterford 3-12, Kilkenny 1-10. The teams played a draw (Waterford 1-17, Kilkenny 5-5) on September 6.

1960: At Croke Park, September 4: Wexford 2-15, Tipperary 0-11.

1962: At Croke Park, September 2: Tipperary 3-10, Wexford 2-11.

1963: At Croke Park, September 1: Kilkenny 4-17, Waterford 6-8.

1964: At Croke Park, September 6: Tipperary 5-13, Kilkenny 2-8.

1965: At Croke Park, September 5: Tipperary 2-16, Wexford 0-10.

1966: At Croke Park, September 4: Cork 3-9, Kilkenny 1-10.

1967: At Croke Park, September 3: Kilkenny 3-8, Tipperary 2-7.

1968: At Croke Park, September 1: Wexford 5-8, Tipperary 3-12.

1969: At Croke Park, September 7: Kilkenny 2-15, Cork 2-9.

1970: At Croke Park, September 6: Cork 6-21, Wexford 5-10. This was the first 80 minutes game.

1971: At Croke Park, September 5: Tipperary 5-17, Kilkenny 5-14.

1972: At Croke Park, September 3, Kilkenny 3-24, Cork 5-11.

1973: At Croke Park, September 2: Limerick 1-21, Kilkenny 1-14.

1974: At Croke Park, September 2: Kilkenny 3-19, Limerick 1-13.

1975: At Croke Park, September 3: Kilkenny 2-22, Galway 2-10.

1976: At Croke Park, September 5, Cork 2-21, Wexford 4-11.

1977: At Croke Park, September 4, Cork 1-17, Wexford 3-8.

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Clara – the mistakes and the lessons

ON FIRST thoughts one could hardly say that this small club – Clara – winners of this year's junior hurling title had anything special to say about themselves and their history; the people involved in the past and at present but at a second glance it can be seen that the club's story is about the lessons that failure teaches and the success that comes from dedication.

At the moment Clara hurling club is a thriving unit. Their junior championship win has added fuel to the burning ambitions of all its players and members to strive for continuing success on the playing field.

Founded in 1954 Clara's first championship win was in the under 14 grade in 1963. This laid the basis for success in the under 21 championship five years later and in the junior championship in 1969.

Internal friction ruined the club's chances of making any impact in the 1970 senior campaign. Club membership dropped from 70 to 15; the senior team was relegated junior and the future looked bleak.

However, undaunted, club officials concentrated on the young teams and this policy paid rich dividends. Since 1970 Clara have won the 1971 under 12 title and the 1972 under 14 title. They won the minor with Bennettsbridge in 1974; were runners-up to Shamrocks in the 1976 minor hurling final and were

runners-up to Thomastown in the 1975 minor football final.

Clara club has a current membership of 40. Each member sees his role as playing and enjoying hurling, if not playing, promoting the game in the locality. They are G.A.A. men in the true sense of the term.

county champions

Clara had an easy win, 3-12 to 1-4 over Tullogher in the county junior hurling final, having led by 2-5 to 1-3 when playing against a strong wind in the first half.

Clara's scorers were Dave Prendergast (1-8); Domo Connolly (1-2); Jim Connolly (1-1), John Ryan (0-1) while Jim Mullally (1-2); Pat Meaney (0-1); John Heffernan (0-1) scored for Tullogher.

In a very workmanlike Clara side Harry Ryan excelled while Jim Mullally was Tullogher's best man.

Clara: L. Ryan, John Prendergast, J. O'Shea, S. Cody, H. Ryan, P. Prendergast, T. Lennon, E. Cahill, T. O'Shea, M. O'Shea, J. Ryan, D. Connolly, Jim Prendergast, J. Connolly.

Tullogher: E. Walsh, S. Hendrick, J. Cody, J. Crennan, P. Gaule, J. Mullally, P. Heffernan, P. Meaney, P. Croke, D. Lyng, T. Heffernan, P. Croke, S. Murphy, M. Rellis. Sub: J. Healy for P. Meaney.

Referee: Gus Hennessy.

They realise the complete folly of mixing religion or politics with sport; they are indifferent to what they regard as the outmoded fallacies of those who look upon hurling as anything but a game and they don't want to be regarded as the tools of the die-hards.

Clara club members are now, also, part of a very hard-working soccer club. Several members of the club play soccer with East End and Domo Connolly, county minor hurling star, is the only Kilkenny boy to wear an international soccer jersey.

Clara, the home of famed Kilkenny hurler, Jim Langton, can boast a fine hurling tradition. Jim Langton's brother, Ned was a Kilkenny minor star; Wexford's Tom Ryan is also a Clara man and his nephews Harry and Lester have now established themselves as stars in their grades in Kilkenny. Pat Foley played with Kilkenny in three all-Ireland minor hurling winning sides and was unlucky, because of illness not to have

made his debut in senior ranks. Harry Ryan, Tom's brother, was also a Kilkenny minor for three successive years.

It would seem incongruous to talk of Clara without mentioning the Prendergasts who this year must surely have established a record. Between them they have no less than nine junior county medals.

David and Frank Cummins became the first two Kilkennymen to win all-Ireland club medals. The man behind the Prendergast brothers is their father, John, who dedicated many years of unselfishness work to the game.

As well as the Prendergasts there are the O'Sheas, Ryans, Boyles, McDonalds, Coadys, Langtons, Treacys, Cassins, Knoxes, Cahill, Connollys, O'Whearts, Hayeses, Brennans, Griffiths, Barrys, Campions and Mulrooneys. These people have made Clara club what it is to-day – thriving and virile and looking to the future with confidence.

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Facile finish by The Fenians

THE FENIANS recorded their fifth county senior hurling championship success since moving up from junior grade nine years ago by beating The Rower-Inistioge 3-11 to 1-10 at Nowlan Park on November 6. It was a facile finish which turned the game right round and won the day for the North Kilkenny club.

Battling into a stiff wind in the second half, The Rower-Inistioge went five points ahead 14 minutes from full time but in the space of four minutes Johnstown had levelled and when Pat Delaney rammed home a goal five minutes from the end of the game, to all intents and purposes the championship had been effectively sewn up.

There was a sparkle about the Johnstown rally typical of many of their devastating displays over the years. In that mood Johnstown are invincible. But it was only in the later stages of the game that they really left their mark on this final and The Rower-Inistioge were there with a chance, and a good chance, for three-quarters of the hour.

Due to circumstances over which nobody had any control, the final was rather late and November is not the time for hurlers to be at their best. In spite of this it was a highly entertaining game.

Things did not look too good for The Rower-Inistioge when they had only two points more than their opponents after being helped by the strong wind in the first half, but they fought valiantly in the second half and did not surrender the initiative until Joe Ryan got through for a goal to be followed by another goal by Pat Delaney both forwards slipping through The Rower-Inistioge defence.

Good work

The Fenians' revival was sparked off by two quickly points by Billy Fitzpatrick, a morale-booster which came at the right time.

The Rower-Inistioge went three points clear, 0-4 to 0-1, after nine minutes but a clever Johnstown move gave John Power a good chance and he shot past Pat Dunphy in The Rower-Inistioge goal after good work by Billy Watson.

Then Eddie Keher blasted a penalty to the net in the 12th minute but the losers found themselves in a rather serious situation with a meagre two points' lead at the break.

There was quite a flourish about the losers' second half hurling and they dominated the early stages, but faltered after getting in front by five points — 1-10 to 1-5 — with 14 minutes remaining.

In the second time in vital games, The Fenians' goalie, P. J. Ryan, left his mark. As against James Stephens, when he foiled Mick Taylor for what looked like a certain goal, he dived across the line to save from Tommy Malone from close range. Had that shot reached the net it could have done a lot for the losers.

Johnstown were slightly the better balanced side and captain Mick Garrett and his partner, Frank Hawkes, gave them a measure of control at midfield, which was more pronounced in the second half.

Very effective

Pat Henderson got considerable length into his clearances in the second half and Ger Henderson left his imprint on the game; Dick Dowling and the inside line of defence — John Henderson, Nickey Orr and Martin Fitzpatrick — were very effective.

Billy Fitzpatrick was their outstanding forward, contributing eight points, six from frees. Joe Ryan and John Power continue to improve and both have shown up effectively in recent games with Pat Delaney contributing what might be regarded as the vital goal five minutes from the end. Billy Watson worked hard in the attack and Johnny Moriarty put on two important points.

Pat Dunphy had little chance with the Johnstown goals while Mick Tierney was outstanding at right full-back but he was not at home to the same extent when he moved out to the half line.

Michael Lyng put in a very hard hour's work at midfield while in addition to Eddie Keher, Pat Grace, G. Murphy, S. Lester and Tommy Malone contributed to the scoring.

Billy Murphy also played a fine game in the defence and Tommy Waters was prominent in stages.

It is fair to say that The Fenians fully deserved to win. They made a wise decision by playing into the wind in the first half. It was the second defeat in successive years for The Rower-Inistioge who have been battling hard since they won their first senior title in 1968.

Figures of the game

In the first half The Fenians had eight frees, eight wides and no "70", while The Rower-Inistioge had six wides, seven frees and no "70". In the second half The Fenians again had eight frees, five wides and four "70s" while The Rower-Inistioge had four frees, three wides and one "70".

The totals were: The Fenians — 16 frees, 13 wides and four "70s". The Rower-Inistioge — 11 frees, seven wides and one "70".

● THE SCORERS

The Fenians: Billy Fitzpatrick (0-8, six points from frees), Pat Delaney (1-1), John Power (1-0), Joe Ryan (1-0), Johnny Moriarty (0-2).

The Rower-Inistioge: Eddie Keher (1-5, the goal from a penalty, five points from frees), Pat Grace, Mick Lyng, Gee Murphy, S. Lester and Tommy Malone (0-1 each).

● THE TEAMS

THE FENIANS — P. J. Ryan, J. Henderson, N. Orr, M. Fitzpatrick, D. Dowling, P. Henderson, G. Henderson, M. Garrett, F. Hawkes, B. Fitzpatrick, B. Watson, J. Moriarty, J. Ryan, P. Delaney, J. Power.

THE ROWER-INISTIOGE — P. Dunphy, M. Tierney, F. Murphy, L. Galavan, P. Grace, B. Murphy, P. Walsh, M. Lyng, J. Prendergast, T. Waters, G. Murphy, E. Keher, S. Lyster, T. Malone, N. Cottrell. Sub.: J. Lyng for T. Waters.

Mr. Martin Meally refereed.

Sixth title

This was the sixth title for Johnstown but the present generation of Johnstown hurlers are not very enamoured about the first won in 1914. At that time the Johnstown team was composed mainly of Tullaroan players with men like Sim Walton helping to bring the title to the northern village. It was the fifth title won by Johnstown as The Fenians.

Under-16s keep up the good work

AT THE time of going to press the under 16 competitions are not as far advanced as in other years but nevertheless the standard has been well up to former years and victories going to places like Goresbridge and Mullinavat sees the first ever successes for these parishes in under 16 competitions.

The Roinn A championship saw O'Loughlin's gain a measure of compensation for their ill-luck last year when they scored a great win over a fancied Mooncoin team by 4-7 to 1-6. Man of the match was goalie, Paul Cleere for O'Loughlin's who brought off a series of brilliant saves.

Others to play well were Declan Byrne, Ger Fitzpatrick, Liam Tyrrell, Seanie Tyrrell, Tommy Moylan, Donal Johnson and Eamonn Leahy.

Mooncoin's best players were John Mahon, Declan O'Keeffe, Jimmy Holden and Seamus Corcoran.

Mooncoin had some compensation when they took the league title against Urlingford whom they beat by 3-11 to 3-5 in a game that produced a real thriller.

With 10 minutes to go Mooncoin led by 2-11 to 1-4 and looked easy winners but Urlingford staged a great rally powered by a wonderful display by John Moriarty. It was only a late goal by Michael Collins that sealed victory for Mooncoin in a game that had the spectators on tender hooks.

The Roinn B championship has not yet been played but Glenmore and the city

side, St. Mary's will, contest the final. Glenmore also reached the league final when after a game that was a disgrace to the Under 16 Board, they played a draw with Castlecomer.

This replay was to have been played on a couple of occasions but was postponed. However it is expected that both the league and the championship will be finished before Christmas.

The Roinn C competitions were the highlight of the year with Goresbridge defeating Mullinavat in the league and Mullinavat coming back to take the championship by beating Graigue - Ballycallan.

The Goresbridge / Graigue / Ballycallan game was another thriller and after Mullinavat had led by 2-2 to 1-4 at half time, Goresbridge came back to lead by 2-5 to 2-2. Excitement was intense as Mullinavat went ahead again to lead by 3-4 to 2-5 with 12 minutes to go but two great goals by Pat Purcell sent Goresbridge away to a great 5-6 to 3-4 win.

In addition to Purcell, others to play well for Goresbridge were Tony Davitt, who scored three goals and Joe English who scored some wonderful points.

Matt Reid had a stormer for Mullinavat and he again starred in the championship final, when Mullinavat came back from being eight points down against Graigue / Ballycallan to win by 5-5 to 5-0 after another fine game.

In addition to Matt Reid

others to play well for Mullinavat were Leo Carroll, John and Peter McDonald and Steve Foskin who had a great first half.

Jim Walsh did all he could for the losers, scoring three fine goals while Matty Dunne, Billy Ronan and Paddy Teehan also held their end up well.

Football league

The football league has also been finished and the B champions of the previous year, St. Mary's - St. Canice's went all the way and won the A league with a 0-11 to 1-1 win over St. Patrick's in the final.

Star of the side was Liam Hennessy who formed a great half back line with Stephen Coyne and Niall Fahy. Others to play well were Paul Geoghegan, P. J. Martin and Michael Walsh.

Best for St. Patrick's were John Leahy, Billy Walton, Dominic Bolger, Nicky Boyd and Tom Hogan.

The Roinn B football league was a one-sided affair with Castlecomer scoring easy victories over Graigue - Ballycallan and Clara - Bennettsbridge, qualifying for the final in which they routed Piltown by 14-10 to 1-0.

Players like Ian Renwick, Ian Conway, Richie Boland and Robert Holden, Castlecomer, had one of their easiest-ever wins.

The championship has now reached the concluding stages and Castlecomer are again in the B final in which their opponents will be Graigue - Ballycallan - Danesfort combined who beat Moneenroe and Blacks and Whites on their way to the decider.

The A championship has reached the semi-final stages with The Gaels meeting local city rivals, St. Patrick's and league champions - St. Mary's - St. Canice's opposing St. David's (Glenmore - Tullogher). Some good games should be witnessed before the eventual champions are known.

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Canice Mackey won Vocational Schools and minor all-Ireland medals.

Vocational schools dominate



Bill O'Hara, Vocational schools and minor all-Ireland medallist.

VOCATIONAL schools competitions have never been able to grab the imagination of the public like the senior colleges championships. Even when the Kilkenny county Vocational schools won their sixth All-Ireland senior hurling title this year by toppling North Tipperary, the after match furore was tame in comparison to what might have been had the came crown been annexed in another championship.

Sadly, although through no malice intent, the Vocational schools competitions are regarded as the Cinderella events in all the schools calendar. A lot of the time the success goes unnoticed.

For the past four years the Kilkenny vocational schools carried off the All-Ireland title each time and players have later made their mark with county sides. When the county scored a double – minor and under-21 – over Cork this year, half the players had at one time or another represented the county Vocational schools side.

In recent years the Kilkenny schools have taken over this competition and in its 16 year history the best times for the county have been in the past five to 6 years. Once kingpins, North Tipperary have had to move over as the Noreside lads stamped their mark on the championship.

This year's 2-12 to 1-10 success over the Munster boys is perhaps a good pointer to the future! That day in Thurles the Kilkenny lads had to pull out all the stops to retain the crown they also won the year before by toppling the same opposition.

In each half they opened with great drive and urgency – the exact same qualities later shown by the inter-county

minor side which beat Cork in the all-Ireland final.

CALLED BACK

Kilkenny needed to be at their sharpest to keep the Tipperary boys down. The losers had opened with the wind behind them but retired with one point to make up (0-6 to 0-5) at the interval. Although the winners later ran five points clear they were called back to 1-6 to 0-10 late into the hour. Two goals by John Moriarty, who was a late call-up due to injury, sent the Premier County boys reeling.

That day Tipperary were chasing their ninth title. Michael Healy, Sean King, Phil Kearney, Des Kelly and Eamon Cunningham did everything to halt the Kilkenny march.

Later some of the winners went on to wear the county colours with the minor and under-21 teams. Billy O'Hara and Canice Mackey won representative honours with the under-18 side and John Power was part of the under-21 panel which carried off the pot of gold.

In years gone by, Dick O'Hara, John Henderson, Jimmy and Paudie Lannon, Eddie Mahon, Martin Kennedy and Joe Wall, all of whom figured on the 1977 under-21 county team, have worn the colours of the Vocational schools.

Three of those are part of the senior panel for the National Hurling League. So the Vocational schools' championship seems a pretty good breeding ground for future inter-county players.

It is hard to put a finger on the reason why Kilkenny has suddenly come good in this competition. The Vocational schools never had it so good when speaking in terms of success.

This year big parts were played by Ned Lennon, Bill O'Hara, John Power, John Moriarty and Tony Thornton is achieving the win over old foes, North Tipperary.

TENDER YEARS

It is reasonable to say the Kilkenny Vocational schools' team has played its part in the county's success on the inter-county front. After all, what a youngster learns during the tender years will remain with him forever.

Hopefully, the players from the most recent Vocational schools success will continue to mature and go on to harvest greater crops in more

fertile pastures. They showed they have something solid to build on. Their brand of hurling was crisp and decisive in the strongest Kilkenny tradition.

Perhaps we are too presumptuous to take for granted the great deeds of the Vocational schools players. That in itself, is indeed, a fitting compliment.

The Kilkenny team that day was – T. Stapleton, D. Moore, W. Lennon, J. Mahon, C. Mackey, B. O'Hara, V. Shiels, J. Power, E. Crowe, J. Murphy, M. Keogh, T. Thornton, J. Murphy, J. Coyne, J. Moriarty.

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Minors win 11th title in splendid fashion

KILKENNY and Cork teams have had gigantic struggles in various competition since hurling was first played in Ireland. The heroes of one side have often been cursed by the opposing supporters.

This year was a case in point. The minor All-Ireland final was the match in question. And Middleton's lanky wing forward, John Hartnett was the Cork hero who was not thought too much about down Kilkenny way after the drawn final.

Later, however, a lot of people from the Noreside would have shook his hand in friendly gesture because he gave them something of a bonus when they thought they were being robbed.

When John Hartnett drove over the equalising point with just 30 seconds remaining in the Croke Park decider he made more than a few people in Kilkenny hopping mad. But after the replay, when Kilkenny won a capital game, those same people must have been ever so thankful to John Hartnett that he gave them an opportunity to see two wonderful teams battle in a final twice in the one year.

Kilkenny won the 1977 All-Ireland minor championship in a replay, but those who watched both ties will remember Cork as equally as Kilkenny.

In driving wind and rain the teams ended all square at 4-8 (K) to 3-11 (C) the first time out. That was a match both side could have won, but in the long run many people were glad it went to a second hour. At half-time in that tussle Cork led by nine points. At the three-quarter stage

the Noresiders had dashed back and were 4-7 to 2-8 in front. At the end they were level.

For the first time since 1966 the minor final ended in a draw. Cork were involved in that game 11 years ago and in the replay they lost to Wexford by 4-1 to 1-8.

The battle for the Irish Press Cup was renewed at Thurles five weeks later. The lineouts were the same but one - Richard Murphy came in for Kilkenny in place of the injured Jimmy Heffernan - but the clash was of greatly improved status. The hurling was excellent in the replay.

Both sides bettered their feats of the first Sunday of September, much to the delight of the 15,000 or so in attendance. Kilkenny won because they were determined in the extreme. That was something that was drilled into them by their trainer/coach, Fr. Dermot Healy who has guided the fortunes of our under-18 squads for a number of years.

The winning score was 1-8 to 0-9 and at the interval the winners were 1-7 to 1-1 behind. Cork were urged on by their gutsy captain, Sean Hayes and Sean O'Mahony, Rory O'Connor, Ted McCarthy and of course, John Hartnett displayed all the finer points of Leaside hurling in an effort to bring the trophy back to Munster again. Tipperary had beaten Kilkenny the previous year.

In the early stages of the closing half Cork had that fortunate run of the ball with them. The Noresiders pounded away at their defence but got little change until late in the hour.

Cork held the lead and Kilkenny had to wait until the 44th minute for John Mulcahy to win the initiative. Even at that there was nothing soft for the winners and the two points winning margin was a true indication of just how hard the battle was fought. It was the type of game one hopes there would not be a winner or loser in.

SPLendid

President of the G.A.A., Con Murphy when making the presentation, said Kilkenny were the better side and were splendid winners. He was slightly wrong there, because without gallant losers there can be no sort of winners.

True, Eugene Deegan and debutant Richard Murphy along with captain Sean Fennelly reached that 'splendid' bracket for the winners. But those Cork players mentioned also attained that status and there was no mention of them.

Lisdowney's William McEvoy was another Noreside star. His final performance was slightly below that of his earlier games but nonetheless he grabbed a very important goal in the early stages of the first half.

In that period Kilkenny ran and chased everything. In fact, they displayed the same hunger for the ball as if their whole existence depended on them winning. They managed to do the real damage in the opening moiety by not allowing Cork get too far in front.

When they had the wind everything was expected to slip into place. As it worked out, it wasn't as easy as that. Sean Hayes and company had worked hard to build up an

early lead and they were not going to surrender it just like that.

PRESSURE TOLD

Kilkenny could have got into trouble in the third quarter when scores were very slow in coming. The players showed tremendous maturity, and despite the lack of the odd score to boost the morale and keep pushing forward, they held their heads.

Gradually, the pressure told. John Mulcahy shot them in front and having been deprived in the dying stages the first time, they were in no mood to let the same thing happen again.

The county's 11th minor crown was hard earned. The minor hurlers of Cork and Kilkenny did a lot to enhance the reputation of the game at this grade.

Perhaps the Kilkenny minors helped bring two All-Ireland titles home. The under-21 final was played immediately after this pulsating tie. Again Kilkenny proved successful over Cork.

The minors had shown the way. They gave the right lead. And it was a very impressive one. And one that was very hard to match. No doubt their success was a spur to those following after them.

The Kilkenny team that day was: L. Ryan, C. Mackey, M. Meagher, B. O'Hara, T. Lannon, S. Fennelly (capt.), D. Donnelly, G. Ryan, J. Mulcahy, E. Deegan, R. Murphy, E. Crowley, M. Nash, E. Wallace, W. McEvoy. Subs.: P. Heffernan for Nash; Nash for Wallace.



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Conahy clinch classical contest

FOLLOWING their first junior championship success last year, Conahy Shamrocks put on record their second intermediate win by beating Dicksboro 3-9 (18) to 1-14 (17 points) in a thundering game at Nowlan Park on November 6. They won their first intermediate title in 1930.

This was probably the best intermediate final since the intermediate grade was re-introduced five years ago and it was a frustrating experience for Dicksboro to have to taste defeat after losing the previous final.

They may have been a little unlucky and they may have been tactically at fault for letting an opportunity of having another bite at the cherry slip from their grasp.

Conahy is the third side to graduate from junior to senior grade in successive years; they are following in the footsteps of Shamrocks (Ballyhale) and Muckalee/Ballyfoyle and it is worth noting that both these teams made a big impact in the senior grade. As a matter of interest both had two draws at vital stages of the senior campaign, Shamrocks taking James Stephens to three games and Muckalee/Ballyfoyle having three with The Rower-Inistioge. Can Conahy follow the same path?

Five years ago there were some misgivings about the efficiency of an intermediate championship and there was quite a volume of opinion opposed to it. But it has worked well and games like this should enhance its popularity.

Despite difficult conditions Conahy and The Boro served up a very high standard of hurling and a tremendous struggle held the interest of the crowd right up to the last puck. It was fitting that it should end with only a point separating the sides.

Though having to give way Dicksboro lost no kudos in this game and they should not take defeat too much to heart since they are a young side with plenty of winning potential. Their turn cannot be too long delayed.

Conahy won largely because their strategic approach paved the way for scores at the most crucial stages. They moved Shem Muldowney from right corner forward to centre half and brought Kevin Mulhall to top of the right and the way was opened up for Kieran Brennan to blunt the effectiveness of a Dicksboro defence that had coped quite adequately up to then.

The big talking point after the game was the decision by Pat Mulcahy to go for a goal from a free when he could have had a point. Was he prompted by a Dicksboro official in making the decision. The point, had it been taken would have left Dicksboro a point in arrears and Joe Foley had a point later that would have levelled the scoring. It would almost inevitably have ended in a draw.

Dicksboro were only a goal behind (1-4 to 0-4) after battling against the breeze in the first half and their defence, with Paddy Grace covering off splendidly in the middle had done a magnificent job. The Conahy goal, a fine effort by Paudie Mulhall, came in the 27th minute.

SCORES LEVEL

Good work by Ben McGarry, Seanie McGarry and Joe Foley helped The Boro to draw level at one stage in the first half before Paudie Mulhall's goal and they had the arrears cut down to one point two minutes after the re-start.

This was the time Dicksboro should have thrown themselves completely into the fray but Conahy regained the initiative when Shem Muldowney set up Kevin Mulhall for a goal. Kieran Brennan added a point from a free.

An inspired spell by Pat Mulcahy looked like turning the tide in Dicksboro's favour but Conahy reacted coolly and after Paddy Grace had pointed from 90 yards Kieran Brennan replied and in another minute he had stretched Conahy's lead to 2-8 to 0-9.

Sam Dunlop came on as a sub and celebrated his entry with a quick point. Paddy Grace had another long range point and

after withstanding severe pressure Conahy broke away for a Paudie Brennan point.

It looked good for the city side when Pat Hickey forced the ball over the line into the Conahy net and Pat Mulcahy levelled the scores. The Boro then went ahead but Conahy broke loose and Shem Muldowney slammed home the winning goal.

The Conahy side had the same personnel as that which won last year's junior title though the placings were different. They were a well balanced side and showed the mettle of champions by the manner in which they resisted severe Dicksboro pressure in the second half.

Nicky Brennan was a splendid centre half back and did tremendous work when it was most needed. The full back line with Pat Lacey in goal also rendered sterling service while Michael Cuddihy and Larry Butler teamed up quite well with Nickey Brennan. Shem Muldowney, Kieran Brennan and Marty Buggy were most prominent in attack.

Paddy Grace for the Boro had a good game in the defence with Tom Gaffney, Ger Devane and Pat Mulcahy who had a dazzling quarter of an hour during which he almost won the game on his own, Seanie McGarry and Ben McGarry also performed in great style.

SCORERS

Conahy: K. Brennan (0-6, 0-5 from frees); K. Mulhall, S. Muldowney, P. Brennan (1-0 each); P. Brennan, E. Conway, M. Buggy (0-1 each).

Dicksboro: P. Grace (0-4, 0-2 from frees); P. Mulcahy (0-4, 0-3 from frees); P. Hickey (1-0); S. McGarry and J. Foley (0-2 each); B. McGarry, S. Dunlop (0-1 each).

Conahy Shamrocks: P. Lacey, P. Healy, J. Muldowney, S. Nolan (captain), M. Cuddihy, N. Brennan, L. Butler, E. Conway, M. Buggy, K. Brennan, K. Mulhall, P. Mulhall, S. Muldowney, N. Mulhall, P. Brennan.

Dicksboro: S. Fitzpatrick, J. McGarry, S. Knox, J. Dowling, P. Phelan, P. Grace, G. Devane, B. McGarry, T. Gaffney, P. Mulcahy, P. Hickey, T. Owens, J. Devane, S. McGarry, J. Foley. Subs: G. Stapleton and S. Dunlop.

Mr. James Murphy, Tullogher, refereed.

CONAHY'S LOSS

Conahy have lost the services of the man who trained two county championship winning teams in the past two years, Father Dermot Healy, now ministering in Tullogher. Father Healy has been training Kilkenny minor and St. Kieran's college teams for a few years.

Local man Mick Brennan has taken over from Father Healy and he will be at the helm when Conahy take their place in next year's senior campaign.

The years of Kilkenny's greatness

A LIMITED number of copies corporates the view of the of Raymond Smith's *Book of* player himself, especially on *Hurling*, the 1974 edition that the 1973 All-Ireland and recalls Kilkenny's great All-Ireland triumphs over Cork in 1969 and '72, are still with a full team.

Some copies can be had available. through Kilkenny bookshops or from the G.A.A. Shop at Croke Park, Dublin. It is more valuable as it traces the career of Eddie Keher and in- standing value at only 90p.

JUST A WEE SCOTCH

Shinty success in Scotland

YE FAIRE CITIE may be one of the youngest units in the Kilkenny G.A.A. organisation but they set a headline at the November holiday week-end which may be followed by many clubs in the near future. At the invitation of the Tayforth Comanachd (Shinty) Club, they spent the holiday week-end in Perth, Scotland where they packed a hurling-shinty game, a football match, and a number of social engagements into a three-day trip.

The idea was first mooted when Kilkenny born, Perth-based Fr. Eugene O'Sullivan met Ye Faire Citie hurling captain, Johnny Byrne, earlier in the year. He spoke enthusiastically of his efforts in resurrecting Comanachd in an area in which it had been dormant for 90 years.

Perth, known in Scotland as the 'Fair City', looked ready-made for a visit from Ye Faire City. The suggestion was acclaimed by members of the Kilkenny club and the task of organising the tour was left to club officials Bill Wilkinson (secretary) and Paddy Neary (treasurer). Eventually, a 35-strong party – including players, officials, and supporters – made the memorable trip.

On arrival in Perth late on Friday night, Fr. O'Sullivan displayed the magnificent cup presented for the games by Glasgow businessman, Peter Hutchinson, while Ye Faire Citie showed trophies for the shinty-hurling. They also had a set of G.A.A. ties and the Belleek G.A.A. Plate, presented by Smithwicks Brewery.

Both sides discussed the agreed set of rules which leaned heavily towards Shinty. So was a semi-circular off-side area near goal, with handling of the ball prohibited. The only concessions to hurling were permission to use hurleys and to rise without catching.

The games were played on the splendidly-kept Local Council pitch, South Inch. Perth was formerly the capital of Scotland and South Inch was the scene of many horse-racing epics. Indeed, it was a racing track until recently when a new track was bought and the Local Council turned the area into a huge collection of playing pitches for virtually every game. Showers, changing rooms and a caretaker are available for 50p per game!

Both sides were naturally apprehensive about the game. Neither knew what to expect from the opposition. The height of the crossbar (12 feet) was viewed with dismay by Citie goalie, Sammy Kirwan, while the width of the goal (10 ft) was greeted with an equal lack of enthusiasm by the forwards. For the first few minutes, the visitors were dumbfounded by the tremendous length of delivery of the Scots. Their ground shots were longer than Irish shots in the air. Their lofted golf-style sticks lent themselves to brilliant ground shots and their overhead play with such narrow sticks were highly commendable.

When Citie set their minds to the task on hand, however, they got on top and at the break were 3-1 ahead (no points were allowed, another Shinty law). This impetus was carried into the second half when a further 3-1 scoreline emerged to leave the final score:

YE FAIRE CITIE	6
TAYFORTH	2

The local Borough Council gave a civic reception to the sides at which Bill Wilkinson presented a letter of felicitation from Mayor Margaret Tynan to her counterpart, the Lord Provost. Mr. Wilkinson also made a presentation from his club to the

Provost who asked the Citie secretary to bring back a plaque containing the local coat of arms to the Kilkenny Mayor. The cup and trophies were presented at a Céili organised by Tayforth club.

On Sunday afternoon, the Kilkenny side played Glasgow G.A.A. club in Gaelic football. This game was played in atrocious conditions on the same pitch (and with the same goalposts!) as on Saturday. A combination of wind, rain, aftermath of celebrations, and of course, a superior Scottish side, left the Scots 7 points clear at the finish.

Tayforth Comanachd club entertained Ye Faire Citie and Glasgow for the evening. Monday's highlight was a tour of Dewar's distillery with a generous sampling of the end product after the tour. In fact, Perth is a city (pop. 40,000) of few factories and many distilleries. Tayforth promised to come to Kilkenny next year in an effort to win back the "Fair Citie's Cup".

A trip like this could well be in vogue in the near future. As well as being interesting, entertaining, and not too expensive, it could be a great help in bridging the social gaps now being lamented in G.A.A. clubs.

The party which travelled was: B. Wilkinson, P. Neary, S. Kirwan, J. Byrne, (hurling captain), J. Laffan, N. Costigan, M. Burke, P. Cody, C. Neary (Football captain); J. Neary, E. Croke, M. Meagher, P. Mulrooney, N. Ryan, T. O'Brien, T. Kelly, L. Burke, R. Walsh, P. Buckley, G. O'Hara, C. Moore, John Costigan, Jimmy Costigan, S. Shortiss, P. Wall, M. Buckley, J. Brennan, T. Bergin, B. Comerford, S. Lanigan, O. Harold, M. Barry, F. Corcoran, J. Foley and J. Maher.

YE FAIRE CITIE CLUB

The Ye Faire Citie G.A.A. Club was founded in February 1976 when some 20 G.A.A. minded people who had no connection with any of the existing city clubs, came together and decided there was room for another club. As the club was claiming from all the city parishes for its membership, the name Ye Faire Citie was chosen as being most appropriate and universal.

The biggest problem faced initially by the club was in acquiring a playing pitch and, having commenced operations in the Waterbarracks, the club later moved to James' Park after it had been vacated by the Rugby Club. Early in 1977, there was another move, this time to the C.B.S. grounds which is the club's present headquarters.

The club is deeply indebted to the Christian Brothers for making their facilities available to them. They feel that it is this generosity which has helped the club flourish.

To date, it has only been possible to enter teams in the junior championships but it is hoped that 1978 will see the emergence of an under age team from Y.F.C. Although the team has yet to figure in the K.O. stages of the championships, performances to date have been very satisfactory with victories over more established teams being gained and all fixtures being fulfilled.

A big disappointment in 1977 was in the football championship when what was considered a good side after victories over Dicksboro and Lisdowney had to field an understrength side against Johnstown and went down narrowly.

Officers of the club are: chairman, J. Ryan; Vice-chairman, L. Britton; Secretary, W. Wilkinson; Treasurer, P. Neary.

B.W.



THEY WON KILKENNY'S THIRD UNDER-21 TITLE

UNDER-21 HURLING CHAMPIONS . . . Back (l. to r.): Joe Hennessy, Martin Kennedy, Ger Tyrrell, Dick O'Hara, Richard Reid, Richie Power, Paddy Prendergast, John Henderson. Front (l. to r.): Eddie Mahon, Jimmy Lannon, Brendan Fennelly, Brian Waldron, Michael Lyng (capt.), Paudie Lannon, Joe Wall.



MINOR HURLING CHAMPIONS . . . Back (l. to r.): Jimmy Heffernan, Michael Meagher, John Mulcahy, Gordan Ryan, Dominic Connolly, Eddie Wallace, Tom Lennon. Front (l. to r.): Michael Nash, Bill O'Hara, Eugene Deegan, Sean Fennelly (capt.), Canice Mackey, Eddie Crowley, William McEvoy, Lester Ryan.

The Rower-Inistioge pip Muckalee-Ballyfoyle Rangers

AFTER 180 minutes and 99 points — 50 for the winners and 49 for the losers — a dramatic senior hurling championship saga ended at Nowland Park on October 23 in The Rower-Inistioge outwitting Muckalee-Ballyfoyle Rangers' bid for a historic place in the county final. The deciding game was won by The Rower-Inistioge by a single point, 2-5 to 1-7 in conditions that made good hurling utterly impossible.

This was the third meeting of the sides and so evenly matched were they that after two drawn games only a point divided them in the end.

Muckalee-Ballyfoyle could well have carved out a place in history for themselves in either of the drawn games or even indeed in the third meeting. Having won the intermediate title the previous year, they set their sights high and could well have achieved a big ambition.

On September 19 the scores were: The Rower-Inistioge 3-12, Muckalee-Ballyfoyle 4-9.

Better known as a football area, Muckalee-Ballyfoyle surprised many by their style which showed a remarkable improvement. The game had many nerve-tingling moments and the northern side had a setback when a Dick Nolan goal was not chalked up, as the whistle had gone for a penalty and Murty Coonan's shot was cleared. This would have put Muckalee-Ballyfoyle ahead by 5-4 to 2-8.

The Rower-Inistioge were in front by 2-4 to 1-2 after 17 minutes. Only minutes before this the scores stood at 0-2 each. After 10 minutes of the second half Muckalee-Ballyfoyle led by 4-9 to 2-9 and were playing some splendid hurling.

A great rally by The Rower-Inistioge brought the sides on terms again. A point by Jack Morrissey and a goal by Brendan Morrissey gave a good spurt to Muckalee-Ballyfoyle and when Dick Nolan crashed to the net Muckalee-Ballyfoyle led by 4-4 to 2-7 at half-time.

Pat Walsh started the second half, scoring with a point for The Rower-Inistioge but their opponents replied with a point by Murty Coonan, Brendan Morrissey and Tom Moran. A Tommy Malone goal and a point by Gee Murphy again levelled matters.

In a dramatic finish, Muckalee-Ballyfoyle went in front with points by Brendan Morrissey and Tom Moran but Pat Grace and Eddie Keher had points before the end.

The hurling, though uncompromising, was highly entertaining and the big crowd got good value for their money. Either side could have won and had Muckalee-Ballyfoyle won their way to their first senior hurling final they would have got there on merit.

Pat Dunphy, in goal, Willie Kennedy, Pat Grace, Tommy Malone and Eddie Keher were the stars in The Rower-Inistioge side while Jim Moran, Jack Morrissey, Jimmy Kelly, Patsy Moran, Dick Nolan, Tom Moran and Brendan Morrissey were outstanding in a well-balanced Muckalee-Ballyfoyle side.

Scorers for The Rower-Inistioge: Eddie Keher (0-6, 0-4 from frees); Tommy Waters (1-1); Tommy Malone and Syl Lester (1-0 each); Pat Grace (0-3, 0-2 from '70's'); Gee Murphy and Pat Walsh (0-1 each).

For Muckalee-Ballyfoyle: Brendan Morrissey (1-4); Dick Nolan (2-0); J. Brennan (1-0); Murty Coonan (0-2), 0-1 from a free; Tom Moran (0-2); Jim Moran (0-1).

The Rower-Inistioge: P. Dunphy, P. Galavan, F. Murphy, W. Kennedy, M. Tierney, B. Murphy, P. Walsh, P. Grace, J. Prendergast, S. Lester, G. Murphy, E. Keher, M. Lyng, T. Malone, T. Waters. Subs.: P. Tierney for S. Lester.

Muckalee-Ballyfoyle: G. Nolan, P. Moran, N. Morrissey, A. Maher, J. Kelly, J. Moran, J. Morrissey, John Moran, P. Comerford, M. Coonan, T. Moran, J. Brennan, B. Morrissey, D. Coonan, D. Nolan.

Referee: Gus Hennessy.

WITH 14 minutes left, The Rower-Inistioge were nine points down and a big surprise seemed in store. Like their approach in the first meeting, The Rower-Inistioge started the second half in somewhat similar fashion to the first draw and were relegated to a back seat.

But a Gee Murphy goal, which was cleverly engineered by Eddie Keher, in the 46th minute challenged the whole tenor of the game and in an inspired spell got completely on top of their work. Pat Grace contributed significantly to the rally. But good as it was it was not enough to foil the Muckalee-Ballyfoyle men who club tenaciously to their task to come out on level terms.

In the 18th minute Muckalee-Ballyfoyle were seven points clear, 2-3 to 0-2, but in a four-minute scoring spree the eventual winners of this exciting 'derby' had equalised.

Jim Moran, victim of an injury in a challenge against O'Loughlin's, was seriously handicapped and it is impossible to measure the full implications the injury meant to the outcome. Lining out in his customary place on the half-back line, he moved to right full back but he was never at anything like his best.

Muckalee-Ballyfoyle were also without Murty Coonan. Tommy Malone (The Rower-Inistioge) was rendered unconscious in an accident the day before but elected to play. His hurling, too, was seriously impaired and he had to call it a day before the end.

The 180 minutes', 99 points' saga

The Rower-Inistioge flustered a bit in the early stages and had four wides from within scoring range before Eddie Keher and Brendan Morrissey set the scoring in motion with a point each. Then Muckalee-Ballyfoyle went seven points in front with goals by Tom Nolan and a point by Jack Nolan.

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A long delivery by Pat Grace reached Noel Cottrell who chipped a point off the lead and when Grace set up another attack Eddie Keher placed Gee Murphy for a goal. Noel Cottrell then had two goals in three minutes and after 22 minutes the sides were level. A Dick Nolan point gave Muckalee-Ballyfoyle a point lead (2-4 to 2-3) at half time.

There was plenty of excitement in the second half and both sides had winning chances which were not taken.

Patsy Moran, who took Jim's place at centre-back in the second half; Jack Morrissey, Tom Moran, Brendan Morrissey, Nickey Morrissey and Dick Nolan gave a good account of themselves while for The Rower-Inistioge Willie Kennedy, Billy Murphy, Pat Grace, Noel Cottrell, Mick Lyng and Gerry Prendergast were prominent.

The Rower-Inistioge: P. Dunphy, W. Kennedy, L. Galavan, P. Walsh, M. Tierney, B. Murphy, P. Grace, T. Waters, G. Prendergast, S. Lester, G. Murphy, E. Keher, M. Lyng, T. Malone, N. Cottrell. Sub.: P. Tierney for T. Waters.

Muckalee-Ballyfoyle: G. Nolan, A. Maher, N. Morrissey, P. Moran, J. Kelly, Jim Moran, J. Morrissey, P. Comerford, John Moran, J. Brennan, Jack Nolan, D. Coonan, D. Nolan, T. Moran, B. Morrissey. Sub.: M. Nolan for P. Comerford.

Referee: Gus Hennessy.

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Provide hurleys for young boys, says County Secretary

FOR Paddy Grace the switch from prominence on the hurling field to administrative responsibility was quick. And it happened just 30 years ago. Three months after he had helped Kilkenny to beat Cork in the 1947 All-Ireland final he was put forward for the secretaryship of the County Board and he was elected.

The late Liam MacOda died in 1946 and Joe Young, then Northern Board secretary, stepped into the breach.

County secretaryship did not end Paddy Grace's hurling career. He later won a county senior title with Dicksboro and another with Carrickshock. And he continued to wear the black and amber jersey and played with Leinster in the Railway Cup.

His 1947 All-Ireland medal — his second, he won another in 1939 when Kilkenny again beat Cork — came about 12 years after he had led Kilkenny minors to an All-Ireland final triumph.

Thirty years is a long time at the helm and administering County Board affairs is second nature to him. It must not be taken, however, that it is any easier for him because of his long experience. Time brings changes and County Boards must keep abreast of the times.

One feature of Paddy Grace's work that hasn't changed and never will change is his complete dedication to the game. He is totally committed to the promotion of the national games.

That is, perhaps, the reason why he is so keenly interested in helping the young people and making it possible for them to play the game that is

so much a part of the Kilkenny tradition.

It is a long time ago since he strongly advocated providing funds to enable young boys to have hurleys.

"It is as important now or even more important that we should help in every way we can to provide hurleys for boys, particularly young boys whose family circumstances would make it rather difficult for them to do so.

"Prices have gone up over the years and hurleys are not getting any cheaper. I think we have a responsibility to ensure that any young boys wishing to take up hurling should be in a position to do so even if that means subsidising the cost of hurleys.

"Hurling is a fairly expensive sport; it is more expensive than many other sports. But we have got to maintain it; that is our responsibility; we must not allow ourselves to be deterred by financial considerations. That is why I am again advocating that where necessary every consideration should be given to subsidising hurleys for young boys.

"Young people who are employed do not find it so much of a problem. But it can be a problem for families in certain circumstances.

"The future of the game depends on the young boys starting in the primary schools. The teachers will do their part; they have been doing it and doing it very well for many years. We must also do our part."

Turning to the position of the games generally in the county, Paddy Grace said: "I don't think we were ever as

strong. Our seniors were beaten in the Leinster final but we won the minor and under-21 All-Ireland finals. That shows we have an abundant of young talent and I have no doubt Kilkenny will be back again on top in the near future.

"While our position is strong we must not become complacent. We must keep up the good work. We have a glorious tradition and it is our privilege as well as our responsibility to carry it on and hand it down to future generations of Kilkenny hurlers.

"The high standard of our

the great progress that has been made is in a large measure due to the untiring efforts of the primary teachers and a number of willing and dedicated people in the parishes.

Football has also made progress in the primary schools in recent years.

A major factor in the progress that has been made is a decision taken a few years ago to grade the schools and this has resulted in parishes hitherto very much out of the reckoning winning county titles.

The end result of all this good work is that we have young players progressing from under 12 to under 14, to under 16 and so on to minor, under 21 and ultimately senior status.

The foundation for the future is solidly laid in this county and while this continues Kilkenny will continue to have a good senior inter county side.



Paddy Grace

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Wanted to see 'Fox' Maher in action

Jim Farrell remembers



Jim Farrell, Freshford (centre) who has almost 60 years' service with the G.A.A., with Councillor Tom Waldron and Pa Dillon (Jim Farrell's nephew).

LONGEST remembrance Jim Farrell of Freshford has of his life long association with the G.A.A. was when as a very young boy he stole out of his home and manipulated himself through a henhouse window to see 'Fox' Maher hurling. He got back the same way undetected by his parents.

With 50 or more years in the G.A.A. to look back on Jim Farrell may not even at that be the longest serving member and it might appear invidious to single him out. But an amusing incident he tells against himself is worth recalling.

Soon after the Mill Hill college in Freshford was opened Jim and his brother Bill were hedge cutting close to the playing field. They wore old coats, Bill's being in better shape than Jim's. Jim was asked to mark the ground for a football game which he did. He was then called on to umpire. He swapped coats with Bill. The swap cost him

£1. The priest in charge gave Bill £1 for marking their ground thinking it was Jim.

The brothers were so much alike that Jim played with Kilkenny in the final of the 1930 Junior all-Ireland when it was Bill who should have been on the team. The selectors had earmarked Bill to play but the notice was sent to Jim.

"We have a lot of good days to look back on down the years", Jim said. "We had our bad days too, of course. One day that stands out in my mind was the first Sunday in September 1972. I had the pleasure of seeing two nephews win all-Ireland medals, Billy Fitzpatrick with the minors and Pa Dillon with the seniors.

"I think we will continue to have good days. We have plenty of top class hurlers. Replacing Eddie Keher won't be easy but I am confident we will go on keeping up the good work".

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Greatest ever final

Continued from Page 23

himself at left full. He moved in there because of Bill Walsh's defection through injury, having been originally chosen for the half line.

The Kilkenny half backs, Jimmy Kelly, Peter Prendergast and Jack Mulcahy were tremendous but Peter Prendergast retired injured just after the re-start. He was replaced by Eddie (now Right Rev. Monsignor) Kavanagh who came on at full back, Diamond moving to centre half.

Dan Kennedy and Jimmy Heffernan well held their own against Jack Lynch and Con Cottrell at midfield.

While Terry Leahy and Jim Langton dominated in the attack Liam Reidy, Tom Walton, Shem Downey and Willie Cahill were also prominent.

Cork had their stars too. Bill Murphy, the long striking full back, and D. J. Buckley in the full back

line were not easy to get round and only three of Kilkenny's 14 points came from the full forward line.

Alan Lotty who was by no means robust or physically strong was a delightful hurler to watch and was a great centre half back. Paddy Donovan and the fair haired Dr. Jim Young, a very resourceful player, were good flankers while Jack Lynch and Con Cottrell held Cork's end up at midfield.

One of the strange things about this game was that Christy Ring who had devastated Kilkenny in the previous year's final was out of it and his contribution was a single point. The big danger man was Sean Condon who got most of the Cork scores and Gerry O'Riordan, Mossy O'Riordan and Joe Kelly who was so highly rated in Cork.

The Referee, Phil Purcell of Tipperary had barely thrown in the ball when Tom Walton raced

away from Jim Young and gathering and striking while at full speed sent a grand shot over the bar. Three minutes later Joe Kelly had a Cork point but between the 5th and the 12th minutes, Kilkenny struck with four points, three by Jim Langton and the other by Jack Mulcahy from a '70'.

Cork then had a spell. Sean Condon had two good points in the 15th and 18th minutes. Shem Downey and Terry Leahy followed with points for Kilkenny but in the 27th minute Jack Lynch pointed for Cork and Sean Condon had another a minute later to leave the half time scores: Kilkenny 0-7, Cork 0-5.

The first score in the second half came in the 6th minute, a point by Sean Condon. Terry Leahy and Christy Ring exchanged points and after Liam Reidy had pointed for Kilkenny in the 18th minute but when Gerry O'Riordan sent to the net Cork were ahead by 0-8 to 1-7 after 23 minutes.

Shem Downey had a point in the 26th minute. Terry Leahy had another but a Cork goal by Kelly in the 30th minute put the Munster champions a point in front.

Terry Leahy had two all important points in the 36th and 37th minutes.

The fact that points were scored in the 36th and 37th minutes might appear strange to young followers but in those days time was allowed for delays because of injuries.

THE TEAMS

Kilkenny: J. Donegan, P. Grace, P. Hayden, M. Marnell, J. Kelly, P. Prendergast, J. Mulcahy, D. Kennedy (captain), J. Heffernan, T. Waldron, T. Leahy, J. Langton, S. Downey, W. Cahill, L. Reidy. Sub: E. Kavanagh for P. Prendergast.

Cork: T. Mulcahy, T. Murphy, W. Murphy, D. J. Buckley, P. Donovan, A. Lotty, Dr. J. Young, J. Lynch, C. Cottrell, S. Condon, C. Ring, C. Murphy, M. O'Riordan, G. O'Riordan, J. Kelly.

Pairc Ui Chaoimh Stamp Scheme

THE Cork County Board G.A.A. stamp scheme designed to help pay off the debt on Pairc Ui Chaoimh has been launched in Dublin and Cork and is now well under way. The scheme is operated in a simple way. By saving stamps one can either cash in the fully completed book or use it to purchase further goods. The booklets can be used to raise money for local clubs, associations, charities or indeed any cause. The G.A.A. stamp scheme while providing money for Cork's wonderful G.A.A. stadium can be of immense value to local organisations and as well to local traders.

The president of the G.A.A., Conchur O Murchu; Sean O Siochain, Director General; John Garner, A.T.S. (Ireland) Ltd.; Donal O Suilleabhain, Chairman, Cork County Board and Frank Murphy, secretary attended the Dublin launching.

They played 21 a side

HURLING and football teams consisted of 21 players when the championships started in 1887. The number was reduced to 17 a side in 1892 and to 15 a side in 1913.

Tipperary were successful in the first 21 a side all-

Ireland hurling final of 1887 and Cork won when the teams consisted of 17 players in the 1892 final.

When the team were of 15 players in 1913, Kilkenny were victorious, beating Tipperary by 2-4 to 1-2.

Donegal in a final

STRANGE as it may seem Donegal appeared in one all-Ireland hurling final. In the 1923 final they were beaten by Limerick by 7-4 to 0-1. Antrim also appeared in an all-Ireland final in 1943 when

they lost to Cork by 5-16 to 0-4.

Kerry also appeared in an all-Ireland hurling final in 1891 and they won. They beat Wexford by 2-3 to 1-5. An extra half hour was played in this game.

Kilkenny's First final

KILKENNY appeared in their first final in 1893 when they lost to Cork. They lost again to Tipperary in 1895, to Limerick in 1897, to Tipperary in 1898;

they lost the home final to Cork in 1893 before they scored their first success in 1904.

THE PAST year was the year of the 'near miss' in the Kilkenny handball world. Paddy Reilly, Ollie Harold, and Peadar Hughes nearly reached an all-Ireland senior final. Jim Bourke, Seamus Reade, and Willie Pratt nearly won a Leinster junior title. Talbot's Inch nearly won the novice Inter Club title.

The year began, however, on a very high note when Paddy Reilly became only the second Kilkennyman ever to win the Gael Linn title. This championship is open to players of all grades and is played on a time basis. Prior to this year, Joe Delaney was the only Kilkennyman to win the title in the 23 years of Gael Linn competition. Having battled his way out of Talbot's Inch, Paddy Reilly beat moderate group area competition to reach the last 8 in Ireland.

Mickey Walsh (Roscommon) was his quarter final opponent and Reilly conceded 10 aces in the first hand of this 20-minute game — seeming suicide. He recovered to win and hammer Dan Kirby (Clare) and Murty McEilistrum (Kerry) to win his first senior title. It looked as if it would be Reilly's year as he romped through Leinster in singles and with Ollie Harold in doubles to qualify both for next year's Leinster side. Both he and Harold reached the semi-finals of the Coca Cola open singles only to lose to Dick Lyng (21-20 in the third game) and Pat Kirby (2 straight games).

Their expected success in Coca Cola doubles failed to materialise as they crashed to Dick Lyng and Seamus Buggy (2-1 in games) in the second round. Anthony Greene also had a successful Coca Cola run, beating Joe Howlin on home ground to reach the quarter final, where he lost to Ollie Harold.

Another senior to do well was Peadar Hughes who won the Leinster senior hardball singles title. He lost the semi-final to Peadar McGee despite a great third game when he looked like taking the Mayo champion. Peadar looks set for a senior handball all-Ireland in the near future as Bourke won his 4th title on the trot — an unprecedented event in singles at juvenile

level. Joe and Michael Walsh won under 12 doubles in equally impressive manner. Michael Walsh, cousin of Billy Bourke, is under 12 again next year while Joe Walsh became the first Mullinavat player to win an All Ireland handball title.

The class and courage of he beat such as Cecil Winders to win the title.

JUNIORS GO WELL

Three of the juniors did very well. Jim Bourke and Seamus Reade beat hot favourites, Carlow, in the first round and then defeated Wexford in the Leinster semi-final. They faced eventual all-Ireland champions, Tom O'Rourke and Pius Winders in the Leinster final. They were in the hunt all the way but the greater inter-county experience of the Kildaremen told in the end.

Willie Pratt also reached a Leinster final — Junior Hardball Singles. He had to account for formidable opposition on the way to a Kells encounter with Pius Winders. Winders eventually reached the all-Ireland final but it went to three games before Pratt bowed to the Kildare player who had much more hardball experience.

No doubt, all three players will be making an even bigger impression next year.

MINORS FAIL BADLY

In spite of Kilkenny's dominance in juvenile handball in recent years, the minors did not do too well in 1977. Eugene and John Downey lost to Wexford in the 40 x 20 Leinster final and to Meath in the softball semi-final. Eugene lost to Meath in softball singles while Davie Hanlon lost to Meath in both 40 x 20 and hardball.

DOUBLE JUVENILE SUCCESS

Once again, the juveniles did Kilkenny proud. They won two titles in fine fashion. Billy

Bourke won his 4th title on the trot — an unprecedented event in singles at juvenile level. Joe and Michael Walsh won under 12 doubles in equally impressive manner. Michael Walsh, cousin of Billy Bourke, is under 12 again next year while Joe Walsh became the first Mullinavat player to win an All Ireland handball title.

COMMUNITY GAMES

Kilkenny also upheld their lofty position in Community Games handball. Billy Bourke, Liam Hickey, Michael Lawlor, Michael Hennessy and Martin O'Hara won the under 15 gold medals; while Michael Walsh, Gerry Buckley, James Buckley, Tom Hennessy and Dermot Hennessy won the gold medals in Under 13.

For Billy Bourke (3 gold), Liam Hickey (3 gold); Michael Lawlor (1 gold, 1 silver), Michael Hennessy (1 gold, 1 silver); Michael Walsh (1 gold, 1 silver), and Gerry Buckley (2 gold, 1 silver) it was an action replay.

For the Buckley and Hennessy families, it has now become a family tradition. Gerry, James, Tim and Bridget Buckley now hold Community Games medals, while Michael, Dermot and Tom Hennessy are also medal holders.

Ray Lennon was manager of both teams.

TEAM EVENTS

Last year was highlighted by great team successes — but this is sadly absent this year. The county lost the senior inter-club title when Talbot's Inch (minus Ollie Harold) lost their way against St. Mary's (Wexford). The novice title went by the wayside when, having again won the Leinster title with a side of Michael Reade, Tommy O'Brien, Sammy Kirwan, Paddy Walsh and Jimmy Neary were beaten 118-109 by Galway.

The National League side,

which won through last year, are almost out of contention after losing to Wexford.

COUNTY CHAMPIONS

SSBS — P. Reilly (Talbot's Inch).

SSBD — P. Reilly and O. Harold (Talbot's Inch).

ISBS — W. Pratt (St. Canice's).

ISBD — J. Bourke and S. Reade (Talbot's Inch).

JSBS — M. Murphy (Mullinavat).

JSBD — T. O'Brien and P. Walsh (Talbot's Inch).

MSBS — E. Downey (Talbot's Inch).

MSBD — E. and J. Downey (Talbot's Inch).

JSBS — W. Pratt (St. Canice's).

MHBS — D. O'Hanlon (St. Canice's).

NOVICE TEAM OF 6

Kilfane (E. Hanrahan, T. Reddy, M. Holden, L. Ryan, J. Barcoe, E. Holohan).

Under 12 Singles — M. Walsh (Talbot's Inch). Doubles — J. Walsh and J. J. Aldridge (Mullinavat).

Under 13 Singles — G. Buckley (T.I.); Doubles — M. and D. Hennessy (T.I.).

Under 14 singles — B. Bourke (T.I.); doubles L. Law and S. Murray (M'vat).

Under 15 singles — S. Foskin (M'vat), doubles — S. Walsh and T. Duggan (M'vat).

Under 16 singles — M. Cantwell (T.I.), doubles L. Carroll and M. Duggan (M'vat).

Pat Holden, (Kilfane); Pat Maher (Clogh) and Michael Power (Mullinavat) also represented in juvenile inter county fare.

COUNTY OFFICERS

Senior Board — Chairman, Seamus Murphy (Mullinavat); vice chairman, Eamon Hanrahan (Kilfane); Sec.-Treas. — Con Moore (Urlingford); Registrar, S. Fitzgerald (Talbot's Inch); P.R.O., T. O'Brien (Talbot's Inch). Juvenile Board — Chairman, T. O'Brien; Sec., R. Lennon (Talbot's Inch).

GOOD START

After a disappointing year, however, the new seasons begins well. There are healthy signs that Callan may well be in the limelight when next year's report is written and the Top Ace lineup for 1978 will show two Kilkennyman to the nation — Ollie Harold and Paddy Reilly.