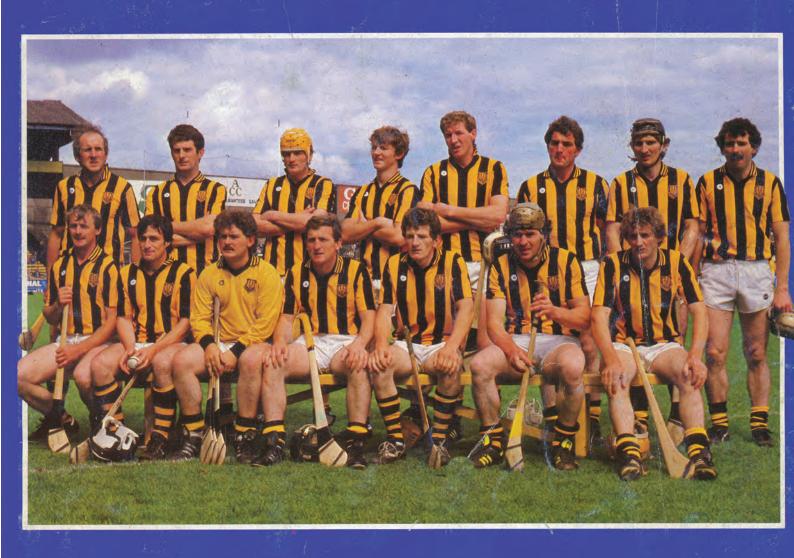


G.A.A. YEARBOOK 1985

No. 14

PRICE: £1.50 (inc. tax)



Read about:

- THE STAR
 WHO QUIETENED
 CHRISTY RING
- SEE HOW

 CAMOGIE QUEENS
 COMPLETED DOUBLE



- AND SEE HOW THE CAMERA PROVED THE REFEREE WRONG
- AND ABOUT THE HANDBALL BOY WONDER

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Picture - Front Cover:

The Kilkenny senior hurling team who opened a few eyes and played an exciting draw with Offaly in the Leinster semi-final.

editorial

Cinderella groups brightened up the year



John Knox, Editor

MEMBERS of Cinderella groups of the G.A.A. in Kilkenny rescued the county from oblivion during the Gaelic season just ended.

The unique National League and open All-Ireland championship victories of the camogie girls, coupled with the dazzling displays of the handballers, saved what would otherwise have been a disastrous year.

All the county hurling teams flopped. The only Leinster hurling title at adult level landed was by the under-21 team, and that in a provincial championship that was so inept it made one wonder where the players of the future will come from.

It would be pompous of one to suggest Kilkenny must figure among the honours each year. But there was more to the county's bad year than the poor harvest of hurling trophies.

Some years ago when Kilkenny won the senior hurling double of National League and All-Ireland championship we warned that unless the county was careful it could slip into a downward trend. That has happened, and it's not all because of a lack of success on the field of play.

So much has been taken for granted in Kilkenny down through the years that standards have dropped. This county badly needs an uplift right now. Something to shake it out of a dull and passive groove.

Famous hurling victories in the past generated enthusiasm. They sparked off a chain reaction that lifted every club officer in the county. Those victories and sparks are not there now, and the 'Association in Kilkenny is just plodding along.

A decline can happen so easily, and quickly. And it can be dreadfully hard to pull out of it. Just look at Tipperary, for example, who despite their success at under-21 level, are finding it extremely difficult to break back into the big time.

The dedication of the camogie girls, some of whom used to thumb into training in years past, was an example to all.

They battled away in the absence of lavish attention or praise. The handballers did likewise. They hauled Kilkenny out a dark year. And for that we thank them all sincerely.

Photos: Main black and white picture content by Tom Brett, Waterford Road, Kilkenny, Freelance and Official Photographer for the Kilkenny People newspaper. Advertising: Peter Seaver and Donie Butler.

Layout and Design: Pat Stapleton.

The Editor also gratefully acknowledges the support of advertisers and contributors and all who helped with the production.

The Yearbook was published and printed by Kilkenny People Printing Limited.



NEW STAND ON THE WAY AT NOWLAN PARK



Michael O'Neill, Chairman Kilkenny Co. Board

MORE covered accommodation could be on the way for Kilkenny G.A.A. headquarters, Nowlan Park. The availability of finances will dictate when this might come about, and what form it will take.

Plans are at the embryo stage just at the moment, but if the money can be acquired, a modest stand will be provided on the bank side.

"Some additional covered accommodation is definitely in the pipeline for Nowlan Park", Co. Board chairman, Michael O'Neill revealed. "It won't be a massive undertaking that will be financially draining on the Co. Board. We have in mind something like Clare have at their Ennis grounds".

The bank side at the Ennis grounds has covered accommodation without seating. The plans for Kilkenny are exactly the same.



"We could go ahead and do a major job at Nowlan Park, but what would be the use", the chairman asked. "There is no real need. We don't get many big games, apart from our own National League matches. We intend to keep the 'Park in good shape, without plunging into debt. A covered section on the bank side would be the extent of what we would be talking about".

The chairman said the whole undertaking, including finances, would have to be examined fully before anything was started. And he wouldn't put a time limit on when the work might be likely to be completed.

Nowlan Park was first acquired by Kilkenny Co. Board in 1927. The buying price then was a hefty £700. At one time the grounds accommodated 40,000 at a match, but the capacity has since been reduced. Nowlan Park was officially opened on August 26, 1928 by Mr. Sean Ryan, the then President of the G.A.A.

"Ground development at any level is something that needs an awful lot of consideration", the chairman went on. "It is the same at club level. Most clubs don't need massive buildings and so on. A grounds with comfortable dressing-rooms and a meeting room would suffice in most cases".

The St. Senan's (Kilmacow) official said he was all behind clubs buying their own grounds, and developing them in a carefully planned manner.

"But everyone should remember the field is the most important thing", he added quickly. "Everything should revolve around the games. Other facilities are all very fine, but clubs should not burden themselves unduly putting up huge buildings that are not really needed. This is particularly so for rural clubs, who just don't have to cater for large numbers."

"Small is beautiful certainly applies to the majority of G.A.A. clubs", he added.



GAMES NEGLECTED

Mr. O'Neill sounded his warning because he had seen too many once prospering clubs jump in over their heads putting up huge buildings. Then they found all their energies were directed towards finances, and how to raise it to pay off the debt incurred. In such cases there was always a danger that the games, hurling, football, handball and camogie would be neglected.

"By all means clubs should be interested in acquiring their own grounds", the chairman said. "But the top priority must always be the games."

Standard medal and new cups helped towards memorable year

A STANDARD medal was introduced for all the championships run by the Kilkenny Primary Schools Board during 1985. This proved a popular innovation, and will be continued every year from now on. Southern affair. Kilmacow won their first title by beating Mullinavat by 3-5 to 2-1.

UNDER-14

At under 14 level, all the

championships were completed. Gowran won their second championship in a very closely contested final against Mooncoin (3-6 to 2-7).

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The medals were presented to the victorious teams after each final, and this added to the atmosphere of the occasions. This year the 'Board received two cups for the under-12 championships. The Ulster Bank presented the cup for Roinn C, and Clara club presented the Liam Ryan memorial cup for Roinn D competition. In Roinn A, the teams compete for the Castle Hurley Cup, and the Hennessy family presented the Paddy Hennessy Cup for the Roinn B competition.

HURLING CHAMPIONSHIPS

The Roinn A championship saw St. Patrick's De La Salle defeat Kilmanagh in a thrilling final (3-5 to 3-3). Kilmanagh failed for the second year in-a-row in the final, and they must be wondering what they have to do to win their first Roinn A title.

St. John's De La Salle made the breakthrough in Roinn B, when they defeated Galmoy by 2-8 to 4-0. The city side were relegated in 1984, and lost no time making a return to the higher grade.

This was their first success since 1975, when they won the Roinn A championship.

In Roinn C, Ballyragget had a titanic tussle with the Rower/Inistioge before they emerged victorious by 0-4 to 0-2. The Roinn D decider was an all Page 6

TRIC SHOPELECTRIC CATERELECTR
WASHELECTRIC PLANELECTRIC WIN
RIC FREEZEELECTRIC BUILDELECTR
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ELECTRICITY

It's here for good!

Get players to wear helmets, Ted says

Kilkenny Co. Board secretary, Ted Carroll, has been knocking around the hurling arena for a long time now. For over 30 years the Lisdowney club man has been involved, and has sampled the action from national school standard right up to the elevated All-Ireland stage.



Ted Carroll, Secretary, Kilkenny Co. Board.

So when he talks about hurling, the game he loves above all other sporting activity, you know you are listening to the voice of experience.

Now 46-years-old, Ted Carroll, continues to play, and enjoy hurling. In fact, this season he held down the full-back berth on the Lisdowney team in the junior championship, and he is looking forward to being involved for as long as is possible.

He has seen many developments in the game, some good, some bad. Now he would like to see another – the wearing of helmets on an even wider scale.

"The wearing of helmets during hurling games should be obligatory at schoolboys level", the secretary of 18 months declared. "In future I would like to see helmets being classed as basic hurling equipment, as important as the camán itself".

Ted wasn't sold on the helmet idea for any particular reason. He just felt wearing one had more advantages than disadvantages.

"I was a has-been before I was converted to the idea", he joked, and explained he had finished his intercounty career before helmets were introduced to the game. Now he wears one all the time when playing, and he encourages his two sons, Pat (18) and Donal (16) to wear a helmet when hurling.

IN THICK OF ACTION

During a long and distinguished career, Ted Carroll won an all-Ireland colleges senior hurling championship (1957), three all-Ireland inter-county senior hurling medals (1963, '67 and 1969), plus National League (1966), Oireachtas

(3), Fitzgibbon Cup (3) and Railway Cup (1965) honours.

He won his first inter-county all-Ireland as a centre-back, the same position he filled with Leinster in the inter-provincial series, before he moved to corner-back. So he was always in the thick of the action, yet in all that time he only had to leave the field twice because of injury. Once was when he suffered a broken thumb, and the other was when he received a cut under the eye.

"I don't regard hurling as being any more dangerous than any other physical contact sport", Ted argued. "But still I would push for the wearing of helmets. Wearing one is no guarantee against injury, but I believe if young boys and indeed girls for camogie, are encouraged to wear them and coached properly on how to tackle, then the risk factory, that is there in every game, has got to be reduced".

Ted felt coaching was an essential part of the overall development of the game. Youngsters had to be taught the rudiments of hurling, and knowing how to tackle in a safe and proper manner was as important as being able to strike the sliothar.

When I floated the idea that special championships might be run for under-age teams, during which players must wear helmets, the secretary was all for it. This has been tried in the past, but the idea was always let die.

"Anything to get youngsters used to the idea would be a help", he went on. "It must be remembered that helmets themselves won't eliminate injuries. The addition of coaching will help even further".

He agreed wearing a helmet got a bit of getting used to. There was the heat factor to be considered, and also the burden on the head. Still, he felt these were matters that could be got over in time.

STOCK OF HELMETS

"I know clubs have heavy commitments these days, but some might be able to give the lead and buy in a stock of helmets for their under-age teams", he suggested. "You would be surprised how quickly the idea would take off if just one club set the ball rolling. It should be possible to buy helmets in bulk and get them at a competitive price".

Helmets can be adjusted rather easily to meet different requirements, so the once off purchase could last for years. Indeed, the idea could even be taken up by schools, who might be able to come to some agreement with their local G.A.A. club.

"There is no reason why parents should be afraid to let their children play hurling", the. secretary remarked. "As regards serious injuries, the game has a good record. There was a sad incident this year when a Dublin played died following a hurling accident. But if you look back at the game down through the years, you will see the incidence of injury has been small in proportion to the amount of matches played".

"Anything to make any game that bit safer must be encouraged", Ted went on. "I look forward to the day when every player makes his way out onto the hurling field wearing a helmet".

Page 7

The day quiet Jim held mighty Christy in check he became a star

JIM HOGAN is rare among hurling men. Oh sure, he is as modest as any man could be about his own skill with the camán. He likes nothing better than to have a good chat about games, past and present. But what many people probably don't know, is that Jim Hogan, the quiet hurling man from the famed Tullaroan club, has made his own mark in the annals of the ancient Irish game.

Today Jim Hogan pursues a relaxed life style from the comfort of his pleasant home at Lacken, Rathmoyle. Here and there hang reminders of the years that have passed, and pictures of the weddings of Jim's children adorn the walls.

In another place, not sufficiently prominent to catch the eye, but in a place of honour nonetheless, stands a display of hurling medals. Nice prizes to mark the career of a man who played the game during the tough times, and against the tough men. It was different then alright, he would admit, but would give nothing else away.

You won't find a gold all-Ireland senior medal there. You will, however, see two Kilkenny senior hurling championship awards. And the one that made Jim Hogan special among hurling folk – a Railway Cup winners medal.

It wasn't that medal alone that singled Jim out. Rather the manner in which he made it his own. And the human hurling storm he quelled to get his hands on it.

The date reads 1954. The Tullaroan man won it with Leinster, and against Connacht, when his team mates included former President of the G.A.A., Paddy Buggy, Jim Langton, Johnny McGovern, and Diamond Hayden, to name but a few.

TERROR OF THE GLEN

You see, to get his hands on that precious medal Jim Hogan had to contend with the best known of all hurling men, the legendary Christy Ring from Cork. The terror of Glen Rovers. The very finest from the Leeside. Call him what you will, Jim Hogan had to mark him on that historic day in 1954.

The daily newspapers of March 18, 1954 brought the news to the world. Kilkenny's Jim Hogan had played a star role as Leinster Christy Ring scoreless from play and was nominated as the newspapers of March 18, 1954 brought the news to the beat Munster in the Railway Cup linal. Jim held the tamous Christy Ring scoreless from play and was nominated as the

"The short striding and long striking Jim Hogan was truly great", R.T.E. commentator, Michael O'Hehir was moved to remark after the battle had been fought and Leinster won by 0-9 to 0-5. Jim had done his job against Ringy. Indeed, he had done it magnificently, and

held the mighty Christy scoreless from play.

The next day the newspapers told the story to the waiting world. Jim Hogan was the star. In the national press he was 'Sports Star Of The Week', the second Tullaroan man

(Seán Clohosey in 1958 was the other) to be thus honoured.

Today the memory of that St. Patrick's day success is as vivid as ever for Jim. He enjoyed it. It brought a smile to his thin face when he recalled it.

"I will never forget that day for the rest of my life", Jim vowed. "For me, that is one of my great memories of hurling. It was a day when I could do no wrong. Everything I tried worked".

Jim was honest enough to remind me that he played on Ringy later on, but without the same success. Still, being nominated as sports star of the week after playing on the Glen Rovers man was something to cherish.

"For the week leading up to the match everyone was telling me what to do", Jim recalled. "Going out of the dressingroom I was told just to get to the ball before Christy, and that worked.

HE WAS GOOD

"He was a hard man to play on", he added. "He could tell you what he thought of you in rather colourful language too, and he didn't go back from anyone or anything. If he hit you, you knew it".

Jim was apologetic when he praised Christy Ring, a man he admired as a hurler. He didn't want the praise to be tied in with his own performance in the Railway Cup.

"Ring was as good as everyone suggests he was", Jim told a man who had never seen the Cork ace. "He had exceptional skill and ball control. He was well built and hard to knock off the ball. There was no way you could 'mix' it with him. He was a bad loser, so you didn't push him too far".

What a way for a man to win his one and only Railway Cup medal. A truly great memory indeed.

Otherwise hurling honours didn't exactly fall into Jim Hogan's lap. He played in the Kilkenny senior championship with Tullaroan for over a dozen years, and figured in six county finals. Yet he only



Hurling brothers Tullaroan hurling stars of the past, Jim Hogan (left) and his brother, the late Tom Hogan, the former chairman of Kilkenny Co. Council.

managed to win two medals, in 1948 and '58, which were the last occasions the club won the main event in Kilkenny.

In 1949 he broke onto the Kilkenny team, and his first match was during a Whit week-end trip to London. He filled the right full-back berth, the same position he played against Ringy. And he played on Seamus Bannon against Tipperary.

"It was good, hard hurling in those days", Jim recalled. "There was no real dirt. It was shoulder to shoulder stuff with a good spattering of hard pulling".

That is where the inter-county story began for the Tullaroan man, but it wasn't until the all-Ireland semifinal defeat of 1953 by Galway that he caught the eye of the provincial selectors. That day he plyed on Inky Flaherty, who later was a successful manager of the Galway team. A record crowd of 38,960 turned up for that match, and it was one Kilkenny should have won easily. Instead, they lost by 3-5 to 1-10.

"That was a familiar story in my day", Jim recalled. He collected three Leinster championship senior medals (1950, '53, and 1957), but figured in only one all-Ireland as a player (he was a sub in '57).

LET ONE GET AWAY

"Really, we should have won in 1950 against Tipperary", he thought. That was the middle one in Tipp's three in-a-row. "We let that one get away on us".

That day the Noresiders fell away in

the second half. And in Tom Ryall's history of the G.A.A. in the county we are told that "were it not for the full-back line of Jim Hogan, Paddy Hayden and Mark Marnell, aided by the goalkeeping of Ramie Dowling, Tipperary would have been more ahead than the one point they led by for most of the second half"

Playing against the breeze in the first half Kilkenny led by 0-7 to 0-5 at half time. With lost time being played Tipp led by 0-9 to 0-8. They eventually won by 1-9 to 1-8.

"We let that one get away right enough", Jim said again. "The Kilkenny team of that time was good enough to win more than two all-Irelands in 10 years (1947 to '57), but something always appeared to go wrong".

On St. Patrick's day of 1954 everything clicked into place for one Jim Hogan in the Railway Cup hurling final. And the "short striding and long striking" Jim created his own piece of hurling history. It couldn't have happened to a nicer guy.

The Leinster Railway Cup team of '54 was: K. Matthews (Dublin), J. Hogan (Kilkenny), P. Hayden (Kilkenny), M. Hanlon (Wexford), P. Buggy (Kilkenny), E. Wheeler (Wexford), J. McGovern, capt. (Kilkenny), N. Allen (Dublin), J. Sutton (Kilkenny), M. Ryan (Dublin), D. Carroll (Kilkenny), T. Flood (Wexford), J. Langton (Kilkenny), P. Fitzgerald (Kilkenny), M. Kelly (Kilkenny). Subs: J. Morrissey (Wexford), W. Rackard (Wexford).



Long serving officials of the Northern Board pictured at the G.A.A. awards social (from left) Jim Farrell, Freshford; Martin McEvoy, Lisdowney; Johnny Ivory, Lisdowney; Paddy Cahill, Graigue/Ballycallan; Seán Tyrrell, James Stephens and Jim Rice, O'Loughlin's.

"True Blue" Johnny called

it a day

KILKENNY G.A.A. people bade a sad farewell to a 'true blue' when Johnny Ivory (Lisdowney) retired as secretary of the Northern Board.

This popular official was the longest serving officer in the county, and many a county besides. He took over the pen work from Joe Young (Tullaroan) in 1947 and completed 38 years of dedicated work before he called it a day.

The Northern Board was Johnny Ivory's palace. He never held another post in Kilkenny, but in the North he did everything in his time. After finishing as a player he became secretary, and for Johnny the duties meant doing everything – cutting the grass, marking the pitches, collecting at the gates, acting as umpire and referee. You name it, he did it.

When he decided to finish up he was showered with compliments by delegates who appreciated the work he did for the G.A.A. He was a man of the common people, and his love for Gaelic games, and the people who played them, was all consuming.

Northern Board delegates in turn remembered a 'true blue', one who was a 'grass roots man' and a 'reliable, trustworthy and honest man', when they paid tribute to the Lisdowney official.

'Board chairman, Ted Carroll spoke about the end of an era, and classed Mr. Ivory as one of "nature's gentlemen", who was always in a good humour, and who was ever courteous.



Mr. John Ivory (centre), who retired as secretary of the Northern G.A.A. Board after 38 years service, receives a crystal vase from Mr. Tommy Murphy, Chairman, Northern G.A.A. Board. Also in the picture are Mrs. Margaret Ivory and Mr. John Lyng, new secretary, Northern Board.

"To me he was to the Northern Board what the late secretary, Paddy Grace was to the Co. Board", Mr. Carroll went on. "One of Johnny's greatest attributes was his ability to tell a story. He enlivened many a dull committee meeting.

LABOUR OF LOVE

"To Johnny, all his efforts like cycling in the depths of Winter to notify clubs of fixtures were all a labour of love. It was those unselfish efforts which epitomised the attitude of the man towards the ideals and aspirations of the G.A.A."

One of the men who soldiered with the secretary for years was Paddy Cahill (Graigue-Ballycallan). He described Johnny as reliable, trustworthy and honest.

"He loved the games and helped and encouraged everyone", Paddy recalled. "His sole interest was to keep the games going."
Another man who knew Mr. Ivory for many, many years was Jim Farrell (St. Lactain's).

Of the man, he said: "Johnny served the G.A.A. through hard times. He did a lot of slave labour, but it was nothing to him because he loved the games so much. He was a true blue."

Newly elected chairman of the Northern Board, Tommy Murphy (Danesfort) saw Mr. Ivory as a 'grass-roots' man who looked after clubs, and who loved to see new faces and young people at meetings.

Indeed, each year in his annual address Mr. Ivory had encouraging words, and plenty of advice for young people. He always called on them to be loyal to their parish and club, and be diligent in all their undertakings.

Johnny Ivory, one of the unselfish people who helped make the G.A.A. the strong association it is today, bowed out in style. He said the 'Association was in a very healthy state as he made his exit. And dedicated people like himself can take an awful lot of credit for that.

Skehan – would he have made difference against Offaly?

AFTER 22 success laden years association with the Kilkenny senior hurling team, Noel Skehan retired this Spring.

The great Bennettsbridge goalkeeper called it a day in early April, following Kilkenny's exist from the National Hurling League.

"I think the time is right for me to make the break", the 40-year-old was reported as saying at the time. But thousands of Kilkenny fans to this day believe Noel Skehan stepped down one championship, not a year mind you, too soon.

Subsequently, on June 20 at Croke Park, the black and amber wearers faced reigning Leinster champions, Offaly, in the provincial semi-final. Kilkenny surprised everyone that day, and twice during the second half were nine points ahead of the unsure champions.

Then in the 45th minute, with Kilkenny 3-13 to 1-10 in front, Offaly were awarded a free nearly 50 yards out from the Canal End goal on the Cusack Stand side. The badly struck free by Paddy Corrigan went all the way to the Kilkenny net. Offaly gained inspiration and eventually got away with a 3-18 draw. They went on to win the replay, and then the all-Ireland.

Many supporters in Kilkenny will never be convinced other than Noel Skehan would have stopped that Corrigan free, and Kilkenny would have gone on to victory. After that, who knows.

When asked for his views on the incident, Noel remarked: "I am happy I made the right decision when I did. I don't think I would have made the difference. This was a year when Kilkenny weren't going well. My presence would not have changed all that".

All the same, months afterwards



fans still spoke about what might have been had Skehan been wearing the No. 1 jersey that day. In a way that was a great compliment to Noel, and showed the high esteem he was held in by Kilkenny followers, and indeed thousands further afield.

This goalkeeping genius has and had fans all over the country. Just one was a little girl from Tipperary town who thought Noel was the greatest. She came to Kilkenny to have her picture taken with him before an all-Ireland final one time. She missed him at training, and had to return home early the next day.

Eventually special arrangements were made to get the pair together – at 7 o'clock in the morning. The young girl went home happy. Noel

was on his way to Dublin by 7.15. It was all achieved through Noel's generous disposition towards followers of the game he loved. Such events were not uncommon for Noel. They were practically every day occurrences.

Noel Skehan was one of the most dedicated hurlers ever to perform at inter-county level. He was always first into training in Kilkenny, and when in all-Ireland finals, he took his holidays so he could prepare properly. And he played plenty of squash – he always had a game on the Saturday evening before a big match – to keep the reactions sharp.

"I would say that without squash I might not have lasted as long", Noel conceded. "I might have missed out on one or two all-Irelands."

He always regarded himself as lucky to have been born in Kilkenny.

"I played with and against some outstanding individuals and on some outstanding teams", he said. "I had a good innings. I enjoyed it all, and I picked up a few medals along the way. The game was certainly good to me".

Noel is son of Mr. Dick and the late Mrs. May Skehan. His uncle was the late Mr. Dan Kennedy of Bennettsbridge and Kilkenny fame, and his second cousin, Ollie Walsh, filled the Kilkenny goal before him.

OUTFIELD PLAYER

When he first started to play with Bennettsbridge Noel was picked as a wing-forward, and this year in the intermediate championship he was a free scoring corner-forward for his club. He won a senior championship with the 'Bridge in 1964 while playing in attack, and when he won a minor all-Ireland

with Kilkenny in 1962 he was also an out-field player with his club. For eight years he was understudy to Ollie Walsh on the Kilkenny senior team. Then in the National League of 1971 he got his chance against Limerick, and never looked back.

"It wasn't easy then taking over from the most famous goalkeeper in Ireland", Noel recalled. "However, I received a lot of help and encouragement from a good number of people, especially Fr. Tom Maher, now Monsignor"

For 14 years, complete with that wide 'stick' he made fashionable among hurling goalkeepers, Noel Skehan dazzled people with displays of skill, courage and enthusiasm, and he often made us wonder was he a mere mortal.

Noel Skehan was one of the all time greats in hurling. He was proud of Kilkenny, and he earned the respect and admiration of Kilkenny people, and many other places besides

His wife Mary and children Niall (12), Noelle (8) and Brian (14) were ever supportive of this most dedicated of athletes. Noel Skehan we salute you as one of the best.

WHAT A COLLECTION OF HONOURS!



Two greats meet . . . Olympic Games gold medal winner Ronnie Delany of B+I presenting Noel Skehan with one of the three awards he won under this scheme.

"THAT lad Skehan will have to build an extension to his house to fit in all those medals and trophies", was the light-hearted way one wag viewed Noel Skehan's valuable collection of hurling awards.

The Smithwick's brewery supervisor has probably the biggest collection of top hurling awards in the country. Gaelic games records were never safe while he was around, because he just kept on

setting new marks.

In all this non-drinker, nonsmoker won over 50 major awards following a minor hurling all-Ireland victory in 1962.

His collection of nine all-Ireland senior medals is a record. He won three as a substitute to his first cousin, Ollie Walsh.

He set another record in the Bank of Ireland All-Star hurling awards scheme. His seven awards is the biggest in Ireland. He didn't leave it at that. In the B+I awards scheme, granted to the outstanding personality of the month, he became the first man to win two trophies inside 12 months.

He collected the April and September awards in 1982. This was his third win overall in the scheme, as he had already won one for November 1976. He thus became the first player to win three B+I awards.

The following is a list of the top awards he has won:

Leinster S.C.H. (11) – 1967, 1969, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1974, 1975, 1978, 1979, 1982 and 1983.

All-Ireland S.H.C. (9) – 1963, 1967, 1969 (all as sub), 1972 (as captain), 1974, 1975, 1979, 1982, 1983.

Bank of Ireland All-Stars (7) – 1972, 1973, 1974, 1975, 1976, 1982, 1983.

Kilkenny S.H.C. (5) – 1962, 1964, 1966, 1967, 1971.

Railway Cup hurling (4) – 1973, 1974, 1975, 1979.

National Hurling League (3) – 1976, 1982 and 1983.

Oireachtas tournament (3) – 1967, 1969 and 1984.

B+1 awards (3) – November 1976; April and September 1982.

Man of the match in all-Ireland final (2) – 1972 (capt.) and 1982.

Texaco award (1) – 1982, the year he equalled the then record of eight all-Ireland medals held by John Doyle (Tipperary) and the late Christy Ring (Cork).

All-Ireland M.H.C. (1) - 1962.

Gaelic star of year (1) – 1982 (this was jointly sponsored by O'Neills and Gaelic Stars yearbook and was administered on an individual county basis. It was only introduced in '82).

Family Building Society award (1) – 1974 (this was a monthly award to G.A.A. players before the B+I scheme).

Injuries all in a day's work

– Camogie Captain



BRIDIE McGARRY, THE KILKENNY CAPTAIN.

ST. PAUL'S defender, Bridie McGarry, captained the Kilkenny senior camogie team to a unique double of National League and all-Ireland championship this year. In the process she suffered two broken teeth and a broken finger. The latter didn't set properly, for the simple reason she had to go back into action before it was given time to heal properly.

A high price for any woman to pay for medals that no longer contain the amount of gold they once did, you might think. But you won't hear any complaints from this commanding centre-back, or, indeed, any of her dedicated team mates.

You see the camogie ladies in Kilkenny are a durable breed. Hardship is nothing new to them. They have become accustomed to battling against the odds.

"What a lot of people fail to realise is that we enjoy our camogie as much as the men do their hurling", was Bridie's down to earth response to the question why they bother. "You get knocks in the course of any physical contact sport, but they are just part of the game".

Bridie's acceptance of her apparent misfortune is typical of all the ladies loyalty to camogie duty. For years it was regular for county players Jo Dunne and Ann Holden to thumb into training from Stoneyford and Ballyhale Page 14

respectively. Ann Whelan did the same from Castlecomer.

Because their game is regarded as a minor one, it attracts little attention and consequently little sponsorship, and the ladies generally supply their own hurleys, boots, socks, indeed everything but the county shirts. And expenses for the use of their own cars are at a minimum.

GIRLS DIDN'T MIND

"We play camogie and we enjoy it. It's not all about what you get out of it", the captain explained. "So many people gave out about the reception we received when we returned to Kilkenny after winning the all-Ireland, but the girls didn't mind how many did or did not turn up. They would have liked to have seen the streets thronged, but it wasn't a terrible let-down when they weren't.".

Despite the trials and tribulations of the game, the former Miss Martin, who hails from Inchbeg, Freshford, is as keen as ever after 13 years of ac-

tivity at inter-county level. Along the way she has collected five all-Ireland medals (1974, '76, 1977, '81 and 1985) and has gained inter-provincial success with Leinster, not to mention individual honours like the B+I award in 1976. Add in eight Kilkenny senior championships won with St. Paul's, and you get an insight into the massive collection she has amassed.



"This year, compared with any year, I put in much more training and enjoyed the game more", she revealed. "A lot of credit for our success must be given to trainer, Tom Ryan (the former Shamrocks trainer). He joined us in March and

laid down the law. Everything worked out really well, and the squad worked like one big happy family".

And when it came to preparing for big matches and the numbers were not sufficient to make up two teams at training, there were always a few willing hands like Breda Ryan, Carmel Savage, Annette Stapleton and Kathleen Whitehead ready to help out

"I have a poor child and he never saw as many matches as he did this year", Bridie joked. "But Benny (her husband) who plays with Dicksboro) has always been helpful and we try to arrange our matches to suit each other".

So son Shane (21 months) is never neglected, even if he has often shared a camogie sideline creche with another child or two while mum has been training or playing.

LUCK WITH US

Obviously dedication was the not so secret

weapon of the dynamic Kilkenny Camogie ladies. They flew through the National League, and then took the all-Ireland by over powering Dublin in the final.

"The luck went with us in the open draw in the all-Ireland series", Bridie explained. "We could have got Dublin or Cork in the first round and the whole thing could have been different. On reflection it was a great year for Kilkenny camogie, and everything worked out well".

Bridie McGarry has come a long way since she first played junior camogie with Thornback, in the days when Patsy Trait and Billy Carroll did a lot of work. Later she played with her parish team of Lisdowney, and then joined St. Paul's, where she received great encouragement from the likes of Shem Downey, Ann Carroll and Jimmy Morrissey, to name but a few.

However, she would like to see the game played more widely in Kilkenny, and particularly in the city.

"In some parishes people are not interested just because it's girls who are involved", Bridie thought. "You could reel off the number of hurling clubs who have no camogie team. St. Paul's is based in the city, but still most of the girls are originally from the country.

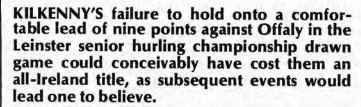
GET GIRLS PLAYING

She pointed to Cork, where there is a thriving hurling / camogie relationship within clubs. Likewise in Dublin.

"I don't see any reason why this should not happen in Kilkenny. If young girls could be attracted into the game around 12 or 14 years of age the county could do even better", she declared. "All that would be needed would be a pitch, and transport to games. Perhaps some day". Indeed, perhaps.

We have tradition, and that must help

By PETER HOLOHAN



Kilkenny's failure in 1984 and 1985 shows that the side has lost some of the character and determination that won two all-Ireland and two National League titles in the two previous years.

The question on everyone's minds now is — when will Kilkenny be back? It is impossible to say, though it is almost inevitable that they will be back sooner or later.

We have been in similar situations in the past, and we often had to wait for long periods between winning one all-Ireland title and the next.

Like Kilkenny, Cork and Tipperary have had their lean periods, but always came back. The three counties between them have won almost three quarters of the 100 all-Ireland finals played, and it is unlikely that these counties would ever face oblivion.

It is true that Tipperary are 14 years in the wilderness, but Cork had even a longer spell — from 1903 to 1919, without winning a title. And this year Tipperary showed signs of returning when they won the Ford open draw championship.

Kilkenny had to wait from 1887 until 1904 to win their first title, though they were beaten finalists in 1893, 1895, 1897, 1898 and 1903.

10 YEAR WAIT

Having won seven between 1904 and 1913, Kilkenny then had to wait until 1922 to get the next. It was another 10 years (1932) before they again made a breakthrough, and there was another spell of 10 years between their 1947 and 1957 titles.

Unlike football — certainly not to the same extent anyway — hurling has developed mainly in the traditional hurling areas, notably Cork, Tipperary and Kilkenny.

Only 12 of the 32 counties have won senior hurling titles, and while none of the nine Ulster counties has been successful, Galway is the only Connacht county to succeed, and they have only won two.

Clare, Kerry, Laois have won only one title with Offaly winning two and, strange as it may seem, London winning one in 1901 when they beat Cork.

In winning six, Dublin were assisted by players from other counties, including Kilkenny. But since players from other counties domiciled in Dublin were allowed to play for their native county, Dublin hurling lost all its power.

The obvious conclusion to emerge from the history of hurling is it is based primarily on tradition and flourishes, mainly in the traditional counties. Hurling skill is what might be described as a natural inheritance. The basic skills come naturally to the young boys in those

areas; they adapt instinctively to the rudiments of the game.

YOUNG BOYS ENCOURAGED

One of the reasons why Kilkenny has been so successful is that the inherent hurling skills shown by the boys at primary school level is nurtured by people who, if not hurlers themselves, certainly know what it is all about.

That we have been so successful is all the more creditable since in terms of population we are at a fairly big disadvantage compared with Cork and Tipperary.

It may well be that Kilkenny paid more attention to the boys at primary school level than was done in other counties, but it is in the primary schools where the basic foundation of the future senior side lay.

While this situation is maintained it is almost certain that Kilkenny will be back. We don't know when. We can be somewhat unpredictable at times. We have risen from the doldrums several times in the past, sometimes unexpectedly.

There are times when we may feel despondent. Before the 1982 final there was little room for optimism. Certainly even the most ardent supporter could hardly visualise that in two successive years we could win two all-Ireland and two National League titles.

At present we can only speculate about what the future may hold. Anyway, we have tradition on our side, and tradition dies hard.

'Ducksie' – a Boy Wonder in the handball world

THEY call him 'Ducksie', a kind of affectionate term that has attached itself to male members of the family. Michael Walsh made the name famous as he gained notoriety himself. And why wouldn't he become well-known, because he is a world champion handballer twice over, and entitled to the same acclaim as people like McGuigan, Treacy and Coghlan.

Michael Walsh was 19 on his last birthday on May 3. He stands just 5'8" high, and weighs-in at $9\frac{1}{2}$ stone. But already the reputation of this handball Boy Wonder has stretched to all corners of the world where this ancient game is played.

In the under-15 grade Michael won a world title when he beat Billy Lopez (Arizona) in the 40 x 20 alley. In 1983 he gave an encore at under-17 level. Both victories were scored in far away America, and on December 19 he jets to the 'States again, this time to battle over two weeks against the best in the world at under-19 level.

"It is hard to know what to expect in this kind of competition", Michael explained. "Games are played at odd hours because of the need to keep to a schedule, so it's practically impossible to predict how they might go."

But he promised one thing: "There is no great secret about my game. I love handball. I play to win all the time. That is the simple approach I have to the game."

That desire to succeed has made him the senior singles champion of all-Ireland this year, when he became the youngest man ever to capture the Coca Cola title. And you know, he might have done it earlier only he experienced a bit of bad luck.

That was in the Coca Cola senior

singles semi-final when Michael met with Tony Ryan (Tipperary) last year.

"He beat me in the third game of our semi-final", Michael recalled with a touch of sadness in his voice. "I feel I should have won that game. I slipped going for one ball when I was leading 17-16. That cost me the match, and Tony got in to serve and won eventually 21-17".



BIT OF HISTORY

Had Michael succeeded that night he would have created another bit of history, by appearing in the minor and senior finals the same year. As it is, he shares the record for minor all-Ireland championships won. He captured six and equalled the all-time best held by his cousin, Billy Bourke. By the way, Michael avenged that defeat of 1984 by Tony Ryan by beating the Tipperary man in this year's singles decider.

Michael Walsh is a member of the Talbot's Inch club, but he learned the trade in the unglamorous surrounds of the Waterbarracks alley, where great champions like Ollie Harold, Paddy Reilly and Willie Pratt have been spawned.

"I was about 9 when I received my introduction to the game through my cousin Billy Bourke", Michael recalled. "I was just passing the alley one day and he asked me to play. At that time I would play all day and would only break for meals".

That chance introduction to the game has led to the record books being rewritten several times. And it has people the world over singing the praises of this quiet, softly spoken young man.

I suggested he had the potential to be the best handballer the world has ever known. Some people were already comparing him to the legendary John Joe Gilmartin, another Kilkenny player.

HIGHEST COMPLIMENT

"I never saw John Joe Gilmartin play, but the stories I have heard suggest he was truly great. I never compare myself to anyone, but to be spoken about in the same context as Gilmartin, well that is something", Michael beamed. "I



Another award . . . handball super-star, Michael 'Ducksie' Walsh really made his mark during 1985. Here he is pictured winning yet another award. In this case it was the Hotel Kilkenny/Kilkenny People sports personality of the month award for October. Michael is seen receiving a Callan crystal trophy from Hotel Kilkenny manager, Mr. Richard Butler (second left). Also pictured are Mr. John Walsh and Mrs. Vera Walsh.

would regard that as the highest compliment anyone could pay".

"I look on my talent as something I was born with", he went on. "I work hard at handball, and I am going to make the best of what talent I have".

He was positive he would continue playing the game, so perhaps his current array of honours is only the tip of an even bigger iceberg. Already storage space is a problem, and he has been forced to pack some trophies in boxes and he keeps them under his bed. The major prizes are attractively displayed in the cosy sitting room of his parents home at the Butts Green.

Michael gets great support from his parents, Mr. John and Mrs. Vera Walsh, and his brother Billy, who often drives him to away games. All-Ireland Handball Association President, Tommy O'Brien is another who has had a major influence on his career.

According to Michael, the President is "more or less my tactician".

The first major title Michael 'Ducksie' Walsh won was the under-12 all-Ireland doubles with Joe Walsh (Mullinavat), who was a member of the Kilkenny under-21 hurling team this year. He also collected the under-12 singles title, and again teamed up with Walsh to capture the under-14 doubles crown. For good measure he added the singles title in the same grade.

Community Games medals were collected on the way, and he took his greatest haul in any one grade when he won six minor titles, singles and doubles (2 soft ball; 2 hard ball and 2 for 40 x 20 with a special blue ball).

HANDY ENOUGH

"I play with the three different type balls and in both sized alleys (40 x 20 and 60 x 40)," Michael explained. "The game is all the one to me really, but if I had to decide, I would go for the soft ball and the 60 x 30 alley, the one I started off in."

"As a player I regard myself as being handy enough. I like to win all the time. I always feel good on the big occasion. I wouldn't be strong enough to belt it out with some players, so every time I get a chance I go for the kill."

That same "kill shot" helped him a lot this season when he partnered Eugene Downey to victory in the Coca Cola doubles final against all-Ireland and world champions, Tom and John Quish (Limerick).

"Everything I hit that night I killed", Michael said. "That was the most enjoyable doubles game of my career. Eugene and I were in the best of form." So he completed the singles/double success on a high note.

Despite his huge array of honours, there is one thing Michael Walsh has not won – the R.T.E. Top Ace title.

"I would like to win the Top Ace now, and then hopefully the Coca Cola singles again next year", he disclosed.

And almost apologetically he added: "Of course I didn't play in the Top Ace yet". Sure there had to be a rational explanation. Roll on Top Ace.

Eachtra Chamánachda in Albain

SA BHLIAIN 1982, thárla go raibh mé im' thoscaire ó Chumann Muuiteoirí Eireann go dtí Comhdháil Institiúd Oideachais na hAlbain in Oban. Bhuail mé le priomhoide na hArdscoile ann, fear a raibh suim mhór agie sa chamánachd (shinty) agus in iomáint na hÉireann chomh maith agus a bhí go minic i bPáirc an Chrócaigh do na Cluichí Ceannais. Ba bhreá leis dá bhféadfadh foireann as Scoil Lachtain in Achadh Ur cuairt a thabhairt ar Oban d'fhonn sraith chluichí iomána — camánachda a imirt i

gcoinne Ardscoil Oban.

Ar ndó, bhí mór-chuid eagraoichta le déanamh sar a raibh an bus a thug anonn sinn go hAlbain or an mbóthar go hOban ach deineadh an obair le fonn. Ochtar 's caoga ar fad a bhí sa chomhluadar idir buachaillí, tuismitheoiri agus múuiteoirí, faoi threoir an Athar Uí Dhuinn atá anois i Muileann an Bhata. Trí Latharna trasna na dtonnta go Stranraer, ó thuaidh trí Ghlascú, chois bruacha Loch Lomond agus ar aghaidh trí ghleannta doimhne, faoi shléibhte agur mór-chnoic, le hais sruthán gléineacha meara agus easa cunhracha, thiomáineamar sa bhus gur bhaineamar amach ár gceann scribe roimh dul f'aoi na gréine. Turas millteach fada ba ea é ach b'fhiú linn go mór é nuair a chuir lucht camánachda Oban fáilte fial fairsing romhainn. Bí deimhin de gur chodail gach éinne go sámh go maidin.

Tar-éis turas a thabhairt ar an gceanntar álainn máguaird, bhíomar réidh do'n chéad chluiche sa tráthnóna i bPáirc na Camánachda. Ní raibh taithi dá laghad ag ár mbuachaillí ar chumáin na hAlban ach bhí railacha an chluiche iomána – camánachda ar eolas acu.



le Tomás de Bháldraithe

Chailleamar an cluiche 5-1 ach do réir a cheile bhí na garsúin ag teacht i dtaithí na h-imeartha. Ba bhreá le muintir Oban a gheabhas 's a bhí na hEireannaigh chun an sliotar a thabhairt leo ar bhais an chamáin. Bhain an lucht féachana sult agus taitneamh as an gcluiche agus mholadar na buachaillí go spéartha.

Leathadh togha gach bidh agus rogha gach dí os ár gcomhair i ndiaidh an chluiche. An Chomhairle Dhúiche Argyll agus Bute a dhíol as go léir. Bhí cathaoirleach na Comhairle ann chun fáilte a fhearadh romhainn, mór-uaisle an bhaile ann chun dreas cainte a dhéanamh linn agus chun sinn a chur ar ár suaimhneas.

Lean Féile agus flaithiúlacht na hAlbanach go teacht na h-oiche. Bhí carn óráidí le clos agus sa tráthnóna thiar, tháinig píobaire óg ar an láthair a sheinn ceol traidisiúnta na hAlban dúinn. Measfá an ndéanfadh Comhairle Chontae Cill Chainnigh an gaisce céanna i gcás dá leithéid?

Bhí an tarna cluiche againn an lá dár gcionn faoi scáth Ben Nevis ag Fort William. Bhí ár bhfoireann taréis teacht chomh mór san i dtaithí an chluiche gur bhuadar glan ar na hAlbanaigh an babhta so. Sa tráthnóna chuamar ag feachaint ar Chluiche Ceannais Camánachda Sinnsear na hAlban. Fir mhóra aicillí as Strachur agus Kyles a bhí san iomaiocht. Bhuaigh Kyles Athletic i ndeire báire ach anchluiche ba ea é a shásaigh an sé mhíle duine sa lucht féachana. Lá ar na mhárach, ghluaiseamar siar ó thuaidh tríd an Gleann Mór ag féachaint ar Ghleann Fionáin mar ar tháinig Bonny Prince Charlie i dtír san '45, ar Loch Ness ar lorg na h-ollphéiste, ar Mhainistir Benectineach Fort Augustus mar ar chuir na manaigh fáilte romhainn.

Ar ár slí abhaile an lá ina dhiaidh sin, thugamar cuairt ar Ghleann an Chumha (Glenroe) agus ar ais linn go hEirinn agus go hAchadh Ur.

Ní dhéanfaigh éinne a dhein an turas dearmad air go deo. Cuimhneoidh siad ar an gcaradas, ar an gcroíúlacht, ar an bhflaithiúlacht, ar an gceangal cultúrtha. Buachaill ón séú rang sa scoil a ríomhaigh an bhéarsa so mar gheall ar an gcuairt:

"Is iontach Alba, is álainn an tír, Dá raghainn arís ann, ní thiocfainn aniar.

Ar bhruacha na locha is breá liom siúl

Tá a muintir go lách, cneasta, cáir-diúil".

IN FINANCIAL terms, this was a bonanza year for the G.A.A. in general. As big matches ended in stalemate, the money rolled in as patrons poured through the turnstiles for replays. The clicking of the 'stiles was sweet music to the ears of those whose job it is to distribute finances nationwide to every vein of the Gaelic Athletic Association.

A bonanza year, but the battle for support and players hots up

The G.A.A. is big business now. If stock was taken of the number of grounds throughout Ireland that are vested in the 'Association, and that translated into hard currency, it is likely that the G.A.A. would be one of if not THE richest bodies in the entire country.

Look at Kilkenny alone and the number of clubs who own their own grounds. They may not all be completely paid for, but O'Loughlin/Gaels, James Stephens, Bennettsbridge, Carrigeen, John Lockes (Callan), Carrickshock, Thomastown, Dicksboro, Piltown, Glenmore, to name but a few, between them have property that would be worth in excess of £1,500,000, and that would be a very, very conservative estimate.

By any yardstick, that is big money, and big business. Some years ago the 'Association encouraged clubs everywhere to 'go out and buy'. Loyal and dedicated followers answered the call, and more and more join in every year. The 'Association must be well on the way towards the goal of having a grounds for every club.

By comparison with other sports, the G.A.A. is well off, however strenuously some might deny it. All you have to do to see living proof of this is to look around you in Kilkenny. Apart from Kilkenny rugby club, there are few others in the various codes who can boast they have their own grounds or premises, be they paid for or not.

This progress is great entirely, and long may it continue, once clubs

don't lose sight of the things that really matter – the games.

To the man who throws his £1 or fiver or tenner out for a ticket in a G.A.A. draw to pay for this or that, the basic things he has in mind are the games. Nothing stirs the majority of sports fans in Kilkenny better than a rousing good hurling match.

This county is steeped in the traditions of Gaelic games. The support is there. Just look back on Kilkenny's last home match in the National Hurling League against Galway. Weeks before that, interest in the county had waned somewhat. Then with the change in county hurling selectors interest was renewed, and over 6,000 people turned out. That was a big crowd in a small place like this, particularly as the county hasn't won either of the two big prizes for a few years.

That level of support should not be taken for granted, however. Just like when there was a fall-off when things went wrong with the Kilkenny senior team, so too could there be a falling away for other reasons.

Remember, the G.A.A. is business now, and like all businesses, the Association should all the time be out and selling itself, improving its image, doing everything to keep ahead of its competitors. For competitors there are, and appealing ones, too.

This task should not be tackled in a 'they versus us' frame of mind. Far better if it's 'us versus ourselves'.

The motivation must be from within. Then, and only then, will the best be brought forth in everyone.

Like it or not, youngsters are not taking to Gaelic games as readily as they did in the past. Teachers in the schools and colleges will tell you pupils don't instantly go for hurling, football, camogie or handball anymore. Just look at the number of teams involved in the Leinster schools' championships. They have slipped back, and the standard of play has dropped alarmingly.

In the cities and large urban areas, Gaelic games are losing out heavily, a fact recognised by former Kilkenny G.A.A. President Paddy Buggy.

OTHER SPORTS

The battle for supporters and players is not exclusively a Croke Park problem. Neither is it the sole burden of Kilkenny Co. Board at this level. It goes deeper, right down to the clubs who are looking for the same people as the other sports to fill their jersies and support their raffles.

Another new dimension has been added in Kilkenny this year. With the rise of Emfa into the ranks of senior soccer in the League of Ireland First Division, has come a new challenge. They will have regular games, big names at their Buckley Park grounds. Don't think they won't get the crowds if the product they are selling is appealing. For their first big match of the League against Derry City they topped the £6,000 mark on the 'gate'.

Their game is one that has been glamorised, sold and packaged well, and has a strong overseas' influence. In other counties soccer has been hit by falling attendances and they have moved into the selling business.

Rugby, too, has made great strides in Ireland, even in Kilkenny. The Foulkstown club field five teams, whereas a few years ago they only managed one. Four of those sides play weekly in South East Leagues. The game has taken off, and it will continue to flourish.

By highlighting those other codes one does not mean to put down the G.A.A. or suggest they are losing out while others make gains. Far from it. This wasn't a bumper year because people stayed away from matches or players didn't play them.

The Association is strong. That is the time to redouble the efforts to make things better. Simple things like starting local games on time, having teams properly kitted out with jersies, togs and socks are all important in the eyes of impressionable youngsters. Discipline, from players and officials, is also vitally important.

Recently I was at a Leinster colleges junior hurling match between Birr Community School and St. Peter's College (Wexford) at Nowlan Park. A youngster received a blow from a hurley and lost a tooth as well as receiving a cut under his chin. Totally absorbed in the match, team handlers left the youngster standing around in his misery. He regularly spat out blood. He was cold because there was a harsh wind blowing. He shed a tear or two. The best part of 10 minutes passed before a regular supporter of the team, whom I recognised, attended the lad.

Again, that is not a 'dig' at the G.A.A. or, indeed, the officials involved. The facts are true as related. But imagine what other

youngsters looking at that chap must have thought? The die-hards would dismiss it and say knocks are all part of growing up.

No, the story was related to highlight how easy it can be to get things wrong. That chap was not left alone deliberately. The officials were engrossed in the on-the-field happenings.

Priorities must always be right, however. The G.A.A. has a good product to sell. Attractive, exciting games sell themselves anyway. Just look around you on All-Ireland hurling final day and see the kids out playing with sticks in hands. It's all about creating impressions, and making the best of the good breaks. The G.A.A. should work that little bit harder at it.



The Kilkenny minor hurling team were unlucky losers against Wexford in the Leinster final.

Back row (l. to r.): Alan McCormack, Declan Mullen, Philip Cullen, Eddie Brennan, Joe Murphy, Michael Phelan, Tony Byrne. Front row (l. to r.): Liam Dowling, John Feehan, Liam Keoghan, Willie O'Connor, Frankie Morgan, Liam Egan, Pat Walsh.



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RESIGNATIONS TOLD SOMETHING OF THE FOOTBALL STORY

DRAMATIC developments towards the end of the year when the chairman and vice-chairman of the Football Board resigned epitomised the goings-on in the game generally in Kilkenny. Not much good happening, mostly bad.

Perhaps chairman Barry Henriques (John Lockes) and Kieran Meally (Railyard) had good reasons at the time for getting out, but when questioned neither was particularly forthcoming with a direct answer. A combination of matters, including the raw deal the big ball game was getting in the county, finally got to the pair and they got out.

It cannot be easy for football people in Kilkenny to put up with the treatment they, and the game they serve, receive. This is a hurling county and the attention is apportioned thus – hurling first and second and the rest somewhere afterwards. Some may try and deny that but, like it or not, that is the way things are.

The resignation of Mr. Henriques and Mr. Meally wasn't surprising The most surprising thing was that they put up with so much for so long. They just had to be interested to have carried on. Both have been striving for years to get a fair deal for football in Kilkenny, but their pleas have fallen on deaf ears.

The football championships rarely get going until the hurling competitions are out of the way. In 1984, for example, the senior football final was not played until December 16 when Thomastown beat the Railyard by 1-9 to 0-4.

The fact the championship ran so late meant Kilkenny had to nominate a team for the Leinster club football championship. They had to do likewise this year, and more than likely, barring a miracle, it will be the same in 12 months' time. And the main reason for such delays is that hurling comes first, with virtually everyone.

The optimists in the county

thought things might change somewhat this year when the Co. Board chairman Michael O'Neill acted as a county football selector for the first time. He had been a hurling county selector since he took office in 1969. But the football problems run much deeper and such an involvement of Mr. O'Neill wasn't going to put things right just like that.

His direct participation did generate a better response from players with regard to turning up for Kilkenny's games. But it didn't succeed in changing the attitude in clubs which deems players must be kept to get the best out of them for hurling.



Martin Walsh . . . always gives his best for the Kilkenny football team.

TERRIBLE EVENING

With Mr. O'Neill involved, together with Henriques, Meally and Football Board secretary Seamus Delaney, not to mention Thomastown's Tom Walsh, Kilkenny mustered a very praiseworthy effort in the Leinster junior championship. They fell in their first match against Meath (1-4 to 1-3), but a small thing would have turned that result around.

It was a terrible evening in Skryne, Co. Meath, and the home side got the fright of their lives from spirited opponents. With the breeze behind them in the first half



Martin Meally . . . he resigned as vicechairman of the Football Board. No explanation was given.

Meath only managed a lead of 1-3 to 1-2. They got off lightly at that, because Kilkenny missed several good chances and kicked eight wides during that period.

With the wind behind them in the second moiety the Noresiders attacked and attacked. They put in a good, honest and determined effort, but enjoyed absolutely no breaks. As has often happened in the past, it was a fine effort but a losing one.

The losers may not have set the world alight had they won there, but the game locally would have received a big boost. And they had the potential to get better. The best player by far that evening was David Hoyne. His catching; fielding and kicking gained him repeated praise from Meath followers and the form of Bill O'Hara, Mick Delaney, Eamon Maher, Jimmy Coyne, Pierce Phelan and Mick 'Cloney' Brennan also made a few wonder why Kilkenny fared so badly so often in the National League.



The Kilkenny team that evening was: J. Brennan (Thomastown), T. Brennan (Railyard), M. Galway (Thomastown), J. Lannon (Bennettsbridge), M. Delaney (Railyard), B. O'Hara (Thomastown), G. Power (St. Patrick's), D. Hoyne (Thomastown), E. Maher (Freshford), P. Phelan (Freshford), J. Coyne (James Stephens), D. McBride (James Stephens), G. Walsh (Thomastown), A. Hoyne (Thomastown), M. 'Cloney' Brennan (Railyard). Sub.: M. Morrissey (Graignamanagh). Scorers were D. Hoyne (1-0); J. Coyne (0-2) and D. McBride (0-1).

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Dismal end in

League left fans

unhappy



ON THE face of it the run Kilkenny had in the National Hurling League wasn't too bad. They made it through to the quarter-finals, which meant they must have scored a couple of wins, and getting that far also boosted the county's share of the 'gate' money at the end of the day.

So there was reason for some good feelings, for both followers and the financially pressed Co. Board. Or was there? Not really. The end to the campaign came too abruptly for supporters, particularly for those with an eye on the Leinster and All-Ireland championships.

Kilkenny were kicked out of the competition by the Division II champions, Clare, after a replay. That wasn't the real sore point. It was that when the end came the Noresiders were left with nothing. The team played badly. It had been handled badly. And there wasn't a sign of the side taking on a settled look with the championship just around the corner.

That aspect of the League exit was the thorn that hurt most. The League of 1983/84 had seen Kilkenny struggle to find form after the demanding exertions of the previous two years. That was acceptable, because everyone knew the players were not machines and they needed a rest sometime. When they were eventually caught by Laois on a dreary March day at

Croke Park it wasn't easy to take at the time, but acceptance was helped by a realisation that the players needed a break.

The Leinster championship followed and the Noresiders failed to reach the final. So from early that Summer local fans had their eyes on the National League as a 'blooding' ground for a new combination.

For some reason, or maybe a variety of reasons, the selectors never came to grips with the problems they faced. When the mentors – Michael O'Neill (Co. Board chairman), Dick Nolan (St. Martin's), Paul Fitzgerald (Glenmore), Patrick Holden (Shamrocks), Mick Crotty (James Stephens) – met the rumours were rife afterwards.

WHAT WAS TRUTH

"They were fighting among themselves again", the stories went. "Your man was pounding the table wanting his own way", it was often suggested. There was even talk of one of the men wanting out. It was hard to know where truth

ended and invention commenced. One thing was certain, all was not right among the backroom team, and some players knew it and it had an adverse effect on their form. Some will deny that. Not all the players will.

Even that most steady of people, Pat Henderson (trainer-coach) seemed powerless to halt the slide, and was unable to inject new enthusiasm into a crop of players who slowly but surely were drained of what had been one of their strong points – character. It wasn't their fault. They were victims of circumstances.

In the initial quarter-final meeting with Clare the teams drew 0-13 (C) to 1-10. The Noresiders were lacking commitment, fluency and sharpness. In the opening 20 minutes Clare raced 0-8 to 0-1 clear. From a Kilkenny point of view things were better at half-time, but they were still 0-4 to 0-9 behind. In the second half Kieran Brennan and Richard Power turned on the style, and the Leinster men got away with a draw thanks to a late Brennan point.

Everyone expected the Noresiders to be better the next day. They had a good track record in replays. But there was no hint of an improvement, and Clare sailed through to a semi-final meeting

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THE KILKENNY TEAM THAT OPENED THE NATIONAL HURLING LEAGUE CAMPAIGN AGAINST LIMERICK.

Back row (l. to r.): Ned Aylward, John Henderson, Michael Galway, John Marnell, John Lawlor, David Hoyne, Ger Henderson, Kieran

Brennan. Front row (l. to r.): Kevin Fennelly, Liam McCarthy, Harry Ryan, Frank Cummins, Nickey Brennan, Pat Walsh, Mick
O'Connor.

◀ Continued from previous page

with Galway thanks to a 1-12 to 1-7 win. Indeed, the losers were flattered by the margin of defeat, because Ger Henderson scored a late goal and after that Billy Fitzpatrick had a point. So they could have been beaten by a lot more.

Those performances, back-to-back, approaching the end of a national competition alarmed local followers. At a time when the team should have been getting better, it was actually going in the opposite direction. The letters of complaint flooded into the *Kilkenny People* newspaper from concerned followers.

Everyone had accepted up-and-down form during the League. No one really cared whether Kilkenny won it or not, but they did care about the general level of performances.

For example, when Kilkenny opened in the competition against Limerick at Nowlan Park they fielded a largely experimental side and lost by 5-8 to 1-18. The losers had been too generous as hosts, and gift goals left them empty-handed at the finish.

The next time out the players showed real pride in their work and got the better of Wexford in Callan. Eight times in 50 minutes the teams had been level. Then a Richard Power goal gave Kilkenny the upperhand and they gained the verdict on a 2-14 to 0-13 scoreline.

Afterwards they proved too strong for Laois away and then went to Galway where they forced a draw. And a good one at that, because the Connacht champions had a 100% record up to that. People were generally happy, and didn't lose faith even when old rivals Tipperary hammered Kilkenny to the tune of 0-14 to 0-7 in the last match before Christmas. No one could explain the Kilkenny collapse after doing well enough before that.

Into the new year All-Ireland finalists Offaly were beaten, rather luckily, at Callan. And then All-Ireland champions Cork arrived and went away with a 2-14 to 4-5 win. They actually held their opponents scoreless during the first half, and three second-half points against a gale force wind were enough to get them through. Again nobody minded because Kilkenny had tried hard. Anyway, Cork had strong reason for winning that one because they needed the points to avoid relegation.

The result didn't really matter to Kilkenny, because they already had a quarter-final place wrapped up. People had modest hopes going out to face Clare. Even they proved too grand. In the month between the Cork and Clare matches the whole thing fell down locally. It had been dangling precariously all season.

STREET TALK

In the absence of good leadership the players' interest waned. The attendances at training were not what they should have been. That must have been a unique problem in this sports-mad county. And the players heard the 'street talk' and that, too, influenced their thinking.

So when team spirit should have been on the up-and-up, it was actually deteriorating. And that was a pity, because it wouldn't have taken a lot to have qualified for the League final. Limerick once again proved tops in the Winter competition, but a few simple things would have opened the doors for Kilkenny to get a crack at them.

Thinking about it afterwards, it was hard to fathom how Kilkenny did badly against Clare, and then fared worse in the replay. But it happened!

Players like Ger Henderson, Joe Hennessy, even veterans Nicky Brennan and Frank Cummins, not to mention Richard Power, Ger Fennelly and Kieran Brennan did well during the campaign. They don't suddenly become bad players. But like everyone they need proper guidance. They have responded to it in the past, and they will respond to it in the future.

Let's just say the National League was a bad experience. Let us look to the future, but remember the mistakes of yesterday.

Brennan moves to the top

THERE WAS a change at the head of the scorers' list for Kilkenny during the 1984/85 National Hurling League.

For the previous two years reliable free-taker Billy Fitzpatrick (Fenians) proved the most lethal finisher. This time he was surpassed by new free-taker Kieran Brennan (Conahy Shamrocks).

The Army Captain finished on top of the scoring charts with 1-29 to his credit, which was small enough by comparison with Fitzpatrick's 4-55 the previous year when he played one game less.

Brennan finished well ahead of his nearest rival, Christy Heffernan, who was runner-up for the second year. The giant Glenmore attacker hit 2-9, the exact total he scored the previous season.

In all, the Noresiders scored 13 goals and 96 points, with 15 players figuring on the list.

Billy Fitzpatrick did take the honours in one area. He cracked home the single highest score in one match. This he did against defeated All-Ireland finalists Offaly on February 3 when he struck 1-5, with four points coming from frees.

Three players were together in second place here. They were Kieran Brennan, who twice hit six points, Ray Heffernan, who did

the same once, and Liam Fennelly who rattled home two goals again when Cork beat Kilkenny at Callan.

By comparison with the previous year when they played exactly the same number of National League games, Kilkenny scored just six points less the previous year's overall total was 13-102 against 13-96 last season.

The men who helped themselves to all those scores were: Kieran Brennan (1-29, or 32 points); Christy Heffernan (2-9, or 15 points); Richard Power (2-7, or 13 points); Ray Heffernan (1-10 or 13 points); Billy Fitzpatrick (1-9, or 12 points); Liam Fennelly (3-2, or 11 points); Johnny Brennan (0-8); Harry Ryan (0-8); Ger Henderson (1-4); Liam McCarthy (1-2); Frank Cummins (1-1); Pat Walsh (0-3); Nickey Brennan (0-2); John Lawlor, Ger Fennelly (0-1 each).



WHEN AND WHERE THE SCORES CAME...

October 7 at Nowlan Park

Scorers: K. Brennan (0-5, three frees); F. Cummins (1-1); P. Walsh (0-3); G. Henderson (0-3, one '65', two frees); H. Ryan (0-2); N. Brennan, L. McCarthy, J. Lawlor, J. Brennan (0-1 each).

October 28 at John Lockes Park

 Kilkenny
 2-14

 Wexford
 0-13

Scorers: K. Brennan (0-6, four frees); R. Power (1-1); R. Heffernan (1-0); H. Ryan (0-3); J. Brennan (0-2); L. McCarthy, N. Brennan (0-1 each).

November 4 at Rathdowney

Laois	 	1-8
Kilkenny	 	. 1-15

Scorers: C. Heffernan (0-4); K. Brennan (0-4, two frees); L, McCarthy (1-0); J. Brennan (0-3); G. Henderson (0-1, '65'); R. Heffernan, R. Power, G. Fennelly (0-1 each).

November 18 at Pearse Stadium

Scorers: K. Brennan (0-3, two frees); R. Power (1-0); R. Heffernan (0-2, one free, one '65').

December 9 at Semple Stadium

Scorers: R. Heffernan (0-6, frees); C. Heffernan (0-1).

February 3 at John Lockes Park

 Kilkenny
 2-15

 Offaly
 1-11

Scorers: B. Fitzpatrick (1-5, four points frees); L. Fennelly (1-2); R. Power, C. Heffernan (0-3 each); J. Brennan (0-2).

February 10 at John Lockes Park

Kilkenny 4-5 (17 pts) Cork 2-14 (20 pts)

Scorers: L. Fennelly (2-0); K. Brennan (1-1); C. Heffernan (1-1); B. Fitzpatrick (0-3, two frees).

March 10 at Semple Stadium

Scorers: K. Brennan (0-6, one free); H. Ryan, R. Power (0-2 each); C. Heffernan (1-0).

March 24 at Semple Stadium

Scorers: K. Brennan (0-4, three frees); G. Henderson (1-0); H. Ryan, R. Heffernan, B. Fitzpatrick (0-1 each).

OIREACHTAS WIN A SIGN OF THE TIMES?

WAS KILKENNY'S victory in the Oireachtas senior hurling tournament a sign of the times? Not that the standard of the game was going up or down, but a pointer to the then state of health of the Kilkenny team.

It was no great secret that a bit of surgery needed to be done on the Noreside team that had served the county so well during 1982 and '83. Not an awful lot, mind you, but enough to ensure that 'leg power' would be there come championship

The Oireachtas could be a misleading venture. Here was a four-team competition that could be won with just two good bursts. Kilkenny got those from the players, and scored success No. 8 in the competition.

In the final, on a day when the weather was not too inviting, the sun shone on driving midfielder Frank Cum-mins, who carried off the handsome Callan Crystal 'man of the match' award. He showed great cunning and drive - as he always does against Cork - and celebrated a personal Centenary triumph. It was an honour well deserved by a man who has served Kilkenny far beyond all reasonable limits.

Another player who had a smashing two games in the Oireachtas was wing-back Nicky Brennan, who proved himself a useful score-getter in the semi-final win over Laois when he scored three points.

many ways Page 26



draw in the semi-final was a fortunate one. And then in the final there was a big incentive to beat Cork, the reigning All-Ireland champions and make up for the disappointment of the previous year.

Although it was late in the season when Kilkenny opened in the competition against Laois, they showed unusual sparkle and freshness. This turned out to be a great game that Laois only lost by two points: 3-12 to 3-14.

MADE DIFFERENCE

Before the throw-in Kilkenny received a big boost when giant fullforward Christy Heffernan declared himself fit to play. He had been out of the game for months with a skin ailment, but against the advice of his doctors he resumed hurling. And what a difference he made. He slammed home two goals, and had a hand in most of the winners' scores. Kilkenny led by 2-7 to 1-9 at half-time.

Because of a shortage of dates, and because the final was washed-out the first day by heavy rain, the Oireachtas decider and Leinster club hurling final, featuring St. Martin's (Muckalee-Ballyfoyle-

Coon) were played the same day. This led to Kilkenny having to make changes. Team captain Johnny Brennan was on duty with his club and so, too was Jim Moran. In all, Kilkenny showed six changes from the semifinal side.

Supporters who made their way to the John Lockes grounds, Callan -Nowlan Park was closed for repairs - were treated to a pulsating final. This game, in anything but good weather, had it all open hurling, good scores, near misses, rousing individual tussles - the

Cork were going for the clean sweep during the Centenary year, having already won the All-

RECORDS

KILKENNY'S Centenary Oireachtas senior hurling scored in: tournament win squared the records for the coun- 1940 ty. The Noresiders have now contested 16 finals, 1947 and have won and lost an equal number of times.

The competition com- 1957 menced in 1939, and Kilkenny got off on the ford 2-5. wrong foot when they lost **1959** by 4-4 to 2-5 against Limerick in the decider.

The other defeats were: V. Wexford by 4-7 to 3-7 in 1951; v. Wexford by 3-11 1-7. to 3-4 in 1955; v. Wexford 1967 by 0-16 to 1-9 in 1956; v. Tipperary by 5-7 to 4-8 in 1969 1964; v. Tipperary by 2-12 to 2-7 in 1965; v. Cork by 10. 1-8 to 1-6 in 1973; v. Clare 1984 by 1-12 to 1-11 in 1983.

The victories were

Kilkenny 7-11; Cork 1-6. Kilkenny 2-12; Galway

Kilkenny 4-10; Water-

Kilkenny 6-6; Galway 5-8.

1966

Kilkenny 4-7; Wexford

Kilkenny 4-4; Clare 1-8.

Kilkenny 4-14; Cork 3-

Kilkenny 1-11; Cork 1-7.

Pat Walsh, Johnny Brennan (capt.), Kieran Brennan, Christy Heffernan, Harry Ryan, Liam McCarthy, David Burke, Frank Holohan, Ray Heffernan, Ger Fennelly, Richard Power, Michael Walsh.

THE SCORES THAT DID IT October 14 at Rathdowney

Laois 3-12 Kilkenny 3-14

Scorers: C. Heffernan (2-2, goal penalty); H. Ryan (1-2); K. Brennan (0-4, two frees); N. Brennan (0-3, one free); T. Phelan, J. Brennan, L. McCarthy (0-1 each).

December 2 at John Lockes Park

Kilkenny 1-11 Cork 1-7

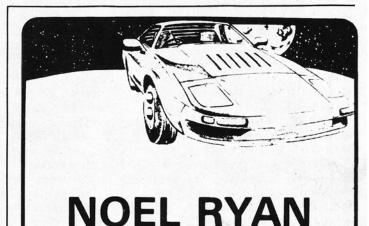
Scorers: H. Ryan (1-1); K. Brennan (0-2, one free); R. Heffernan (0-2, one free); C. Heffernan, G. Fennelly (0-2 each); G. Henderson (0-1, free); F.Cummins (0-1).

Ireland title and the special open draw championship.

The action was fast and furious from the throw-in, and three times during the opening 12 minutes the sides were level. A Cork goal gave them the upper-hand at the break when they led by 1-5 to 0-

A 33rd minute goal from Harry Ryan put Kilkenny in front, but the Leesiders hit back to get level one more time. It was touch-and-go all the way to the finish, but the home side held out, thanks only to terrific displays from Cummins, Brennan, John and Ger Henderson, David Burke, Ger Fennelly, Harry Ryan and Christy Heffernan.

During the two games Kilkenny used the following players: Noel Skehan, Jim Moran, John Henderson, Dick O'Hara, Joe Hennessy, Ger Henderson, Nickey Brennan, Frank Cummins, David Hoyne, Tommy Phelan,



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Camera proved minors were robbed



ERRORS by umpires robbed Kilkenny of a second bite of the cherry, or even victory, in the Leinster minor hurling final against Wexford at Croke Park.

On July 21 when three provincial finals – under-21, minor and senior – were played at headquarters, Kilkenny had every reason to feel bitter about missing out on a good double. The under-21 team proved much too skilful for Wexford, but then the Noreside minors were the victims of bad decisions by umpires at opposite ends of the field against the same opposition.

Our picture on the opposite page by official Kilkenny People photographer, Tom Brett, proves beyond doubt that the Kilkenny goal scored by Pat Hoban four minutes from time was a legitimate effort. He did not encroach on the square, as the umpires told the referee. So the 'man in the middle' was wrong to scrub the goal that would have levelled the scores at the time.

In the concluding stages Wexford, who had been under considerable pressure, burst up the field and hit a point by Vincent Hogan that left them winners by 0-12 to 0-8.

Even that margin of victory was incorrect, because in the third minute Liam Dowling had a perfectly good point from a Kilkenny free ruled out. The umpire in this case said the ball had gone wide, but he was the only one in Croke Park that afternoon who read the situation like that. Dowling's effort was as good as Hoban's goal.

Those two scores stopped Kilkenny taking unsteady Wexford to a replay at least, but the scratching of Pat Hoban's goal probably cost Kilkenny victory, because its highly unlikely if Wexford would have been able to contain the bubbling Noresiders with so little time remaining.

FEEL SICK

"You can feel sick in Kilkenny after that one", a colleague from a Wexford newspaper said when the final verdict was reached. "All our players must be carrying a lucky rabbit's foot out there".

Kilkenny officials voiced their annoyance with the referee at the conclusion, but there was nothing that could be done. The match was over and that was it. The result stood.

Anyway, it was a tussle that went all wrong for the Noresiders. They had opened in the championship against Laois, and had looked good when scoring a 2-14 to 1-3 win. It wasn't the size of the victory that impressed, rather the way the players went about their business.

At times this one got a bit nasty, particularly when Kilkenny turned over with a lead of 1-7 to 0-2 and didn't ever look like losing their grip on proceedings. There were one or two 'testing incidents', but the boys in black and amber stood up to them, and were prepared to give as good as they got.

That can be a good quality in any side, if it is not carried to an extreme, which it wasn't in this case.

However, in the eight weeks between the Leinster semi-final and final, Kilkenny appeared to go off the boil, despite the best efforts of diligent trainer-coach, Noel Skehan (Bennettsbridge). It was hard to keep the players in peak condition, and when they faced Wexford they appeared to have lost the bite that had been such an encouraging aspect of their game against Laois.

The Noresiders looked cumberisome at times as they defended
their provincial title. They were in
trouble at midfield and on the halfback line, and apart from the
dynamic work of Michael Phelan in
this area they struggled. Still the
Slaneysiders were nothing wonderful, and after playing with the
breeze in the first half they only
had an interval lead of 0-7 to 0-2.

GOAL WITH FIRST TOUCH

With 10 minutes remaining the losers had the arrears back to three points. The Kilkenny selectors, James Delahunty (chairman Bordna-nOg), Barry Hickey (John Lockes), Kieran Meally (Erin's Own) and Jim Walsh (Slieverue) dug into their reserve talent for the third time and plucked out the towering Pat Hoban and threw him into the fray with time ticking away.

With his first touch of the ball Hoban palmed what would have been the equalising goal after fielding well. But on the word of the umpires, the referee J. F. Bailey (Dublin) disallowed the score.

That error of judgement by the officials stunned Kilkenny followers. Wexford made good their escape and burst up the field for a clinching point. The winners eventually made their way through to the all-Ireland final, so who knows what Kilkenny might have achieved had they experienced a bit more luck.

It must be conceded Kilkenny were not great that day, and they had performed better against Laois. It's a known fact that minor teams get better with every outing. Just look at the Noreside team of 1984 that struggled before playing a draw with Limerick in the all-Ireland final, and then gave a super show in the replay. Small things mean a lot at that level.

Kilkenny looked to have potential, because they had proven good players in Alan McCormack, Liam Keoghan, James Brennan, Liam Egan, Frank Morgan, Tony Byrne, Liam Dowling and Michael Phelan. A setback such as this year's could retard the development of that potential.

Kilkenny used the following players during the championship: T. Phelan (Fenians), J. Murphy (Mooncoin), W. O'Connor (Glenmore), F. Morgan (James Stephens), L. Keoghan (Tullaroan), T. Byrne (Young Irelands), J. Delaney (Galmoy), M. Phelan (Glenmore), L. Egan (John Lockes), L. Dowling (St. Martin's), J. Feehan (Conahy Shamrocks), E. Brennan (Erin's Own), J. Brennan (Erin's Own), P. Hoban (Mullinavat), P. Walsh (Thomastown), P. Grace (Rower-Inistioge), P. Cullen (Bennettsbridge), A. McCormack (James Stephens), D. Mullen (James Stephens), L. O'Neill (Dunnamaggin). Panelists not used were: T. O'Keeffe (Thomastown), P. Foley (Windgap), D. Purcell (Tullaroan), D. Kennedy (O'Loughlin's), M. Holden (John Lockes), K. O'Dwyer (John Lockes).





We had so many greats but Peter picks out a few

By Peter Holohan, who for nearly 40 years covered Gaelic games for the Kilkenny People



TO BE asked by the editor to name the players that gave me most pleasure is a fairly daunting one, and made no less easy by being confined to Kilkenny players. Lying second to Cork in the number of all-Ireland senior titles won means that we have had a plethora of top class hurlers down the years.

For that reason it is certainly very difficult to narrow the number down to half a dozen or so, and exclude others who would be, so to speak, on the perimeter.

For one thing, standards have to be set at a very high level and the principal criteria by which I think a player should be assessed are skill and

sportsmanship.

Sportsmanship is vital, because anything that is unsporting is not hurling, and regrettably we have far too many examples of unsporting behaviour. The perverse notion that a good hurler must be stopped by fair means or foul is not a recent phenonemon. It has been with us for so long as to have become almost a cult.

Some of our best players find themselves at a disadvantage when they come up against players who rely mainly on brute force - the 'hatchet men' - and the sad feature of it all is that the 'hatchet men' often get more praise than those who never resort to rough tactics.

The growing volume of violence is not confined to hurling; it is fairly common to most field games, but it is particularly dangerous in hurling, as a hurley stick is potentially a lethal weapon.

BELONG TO SAME ERA

Having said all that, I will now get down to the task of naming my list of greats. The first two I name belong to the same era – Paddy Phefan and Jimmy Walsh.

Paddy Phelan was regarded by many as the greatest hurler of all time. As a half back he had few equals. His fluent style, his sense of judgement, his sense of positioning won the unstinted admiration of Kilkenny followers over

a decade or so. He was probably one of the finest strikers, and scoring points from frees from the Kilkenny half back line was no trouble to him.

Like Phelan, Jimmy Walsh was also a resourceful hurler with few equals. He was also a fine striker. He had a style all his own. He was an astute tactician, and he had his own little tricks which were very effective.

I think I would have to say that Jim Langton was the greatest stylist I have seen. Even in Kilkenny where there have always been stylish hurlers, Jim Langton brought a new dimension to the game. An accurate free taker, his body swerve was uncanny.



Though differing somewhat from Jim Langton, Terry Leahy and Eddie Keher would be in much the same mould. And they were equally effective when it came to scoring. All three deserve to rank among the best forwards in the history of the game.

It would be hard to

differentiate between Ollie Walsh and his kinsman, Noel Skehan when it comes to naming the goalie of my choice. Both did wonderful things during their careers. What I remember most vividly were Ollie's performance in the 1957 all-Ireland final against Waterford and Noel Skehan's display against Cork in the 1982 all-Ireland final. Beautiful memories.

Peter Blanchfield and Paddy, who were both contemporaries of Paddy Phelan, Jimmy Walsh, Jim Langton and Terry Leahy would be in line for the honours on the full back line, while the oscar for the best left hander – we don't have many left handers in this county – goes to Martin Coogan, who is put slightly ahead of Paddy Moran and John Sutton.

Another player who deserves to rank among the great stylists is Sean Clohosey, who on his best day was a brilliant performer. He was a bit like Jim Langton in his approach, and in his comparatively short career gave Kilkenny followers immense pleasure.

In addition to all those, we had quite a number of great players, probably equally as good, but my terms of reference con-

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◆ Continued from page 31 fines me to those whom I feel gave me the greatest pleasure. Bobby Hincks, who played with Carrickshock and Kilkenny, was probably one of the best minors we ever had, while a Connolly boy from Slieverue who, as far as memory serves me played with St. Kieran's college and Kilkenny minors, was in the best Kilkenny tradi-

tion.

The fact that this list is limited does not take away from a great many other hurlers who have left us enduring memories, each of whom carved a niche of his own in Kilkenny's hurling glory.

This piece does not by any means include all those who gave pleasure, but working within limitations the list had to be somewhat restricted.

If I was asked to hand out special awards, two names that come automatically to mind are Frank Cummins and Pat Henderson, who qualify not only on the grounds of skill and sportsmanship, but also for their overall contribution to

Kilkenny hurling.

Pat Delanev, Kieran Purcell, Mick Brennan, Liam O'Brien and Mick Crotty were part of a Kilkenny attacking combination that did not get the full rewards it deserved. But I shall remember them always as the type of players who could entertain in the best possible manner. *

Ask yourself a question

- 1. This man won an intermediate all-Ireland hurling medal at right half-back with Kilkenny in 1973, and an under-21 medal at left full-back in 1974. Who was he?
- 2. Glenmore lost this year's senior hurling final to Shamrocks. They also lost two during the sixties. In what years?
- 3. Who preceded the late Mr. Paddy Grace as secretary of Kilkenny Co. Board?
- 4. Who were the four Kilkenny men picked on the 'Team of the Century' hurling team in 1984?
- 5. Where was the 1904 all-Ireland senior hurling final between Kilkenny (Tullaroan) and Cork played?
- 6. Who was the youngest man to captain a Kilkenny all-Ireland senior hurling winning team?
- 7. Give the year Kilkenny failed to score in the second half of an all-Ireland senior hurling final?
- 8. Only on one occasion did Leinster teams win the all-Ireland senior hurling title five times in-a-row. What were those years?
- 9. He won a county senior hurling championship medal with Mount Sion in Waterford in 1981. He captained the Shamrocks when they won their first Kilkenny senior title in 1978. Who was he?
- How many National Hurling League titles have Kilkenny won? Name the years.
- 11. Who replaced Frank Cummins in the 1973 all-Ireland senior hurling final against Limerick?
- 12. When did Kilkenny last play in a Leinster senior football final?
- 13. Who was the Kilkenny man who refereed the 1954 all-Ireland senior hurling final between Cork and Wexford?
- 14. Kilkenny defeated Wexford to win the 1982 National Hurling League final. Who scored the two Kilkenny goals?
- 15. Name the three Kilkenny men who helped Blackrock (Cork) defeat Rathnure (Wexford) in the 1974 all-Ireland club senior hurling final?
- 16. Where was the first football game under G.A.A. rules played?

- 17. Who was the Kilkenny man who won five all-Ireland senior medals with Wexford?
- 18. Can you remember the name of the person who captained the Kilkenny junior hurling all-Ireland winning team of 1956?
- 19. In what year did Kilkenny win their first all-Ireland senior camogie title?
- 20. Six Kilkenny men have refereed all-Ireland senior hurling finals. Name them?
- 21. When Kilkenny beat Cork to take their second National Hurling League title in 1962, their centreback was captain. Who was he?
- 22. Who was the James Stephens man who played at right half-forward on the 1969 Kilkenny Oireachtas winning team?
- 23. In what year did Eddie Keher captain St. Kieran's college to victory in the all-Ireland senior colleges championship?
- 24. Kilkenny C.B.S. won their only all-Ireland senior hurling colleges title in 1981. Who was the team captain?
- 25. Who played at full forward for Kilkenny in the 1974 all-Ireland under-21 hurling final against Waterford?
- 26. Kilkenny had three representatives on the first Carrolls All-Star hurling team in 1971. Who were they?
- 27. Kilkenny's last meeting with Tipperary in an all-Ireland senior hurling final was in 1971. They lost by 5-17 to 5-14. Can you name the men who scored Kilkenny's goals?
- 28. Bennettsbridge last won the county senior hurling title in 1971. Who captained the team?
- 29. The Wembley Games were once important fixtures on the G.A.A. calendar. Kilkenny played Clare in the first Wembley Games. What was the year?
- 30. Kilkenny defeated Cork in the 1972 all-Ireland minor hurling final. Full forward on the Cork team was Jimmy Barry-Murphy. Who was full-back on the Kilkenny team?

St. Martin's achievements were magnificent

EVEN if St. Martin's (Ballyfoyle-Coon-Muckalee) do not contest, never mind win a hurling final again, they can look back on the Centenary year of the G.A.A., and the one after it, as magnificent times. For during that period the club scaled dizzy hurling heights, that must have far out-stripped even the wildest dreams of their most ardent supporters.

In the Kilkenny senior hurling championship of 1984 this relatively young club, founded in 1982 by the amalgamation of Muckalee-Ballyfoyle Rangers and Coon, scored an historic first victory at this level of competition. But not at all satisfied with that, the Northerners zoomed to the top in the whole country and carried off the all-Ireland club title too.

That spectacular spell in the history of Gaelic games in the parish stretched from late

September '84 to late March '85. It will forever remain a gem in the history of the club, when they pocketed the Kilkenny, Leinster and all-Ireland crowns.

Never again can the men from Muckalee be regarded as second class hurling citizens. Because those victories, the manner in which they were achieved, and the pride of the men who made them possible, have started something great. The big breakthrough has been made, the first daunting hill

has been conquered, and future generations in the parish need only look for inspiration to the period September '84 to March '85 to see what can be achieved if the spirit is willing.

In '84 too St. Martin's overcame another obstacle. In the semi-final of the local championship they beat their bogey team, James Stephens. Then they put in a smashing performance in the county final and downed the then all-Ireland champions, Shamrocks

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Following up their first victory in the Kilkenny Senior Hurling Championship, St. Martin's (Ballyfoyle-Coon-Muckalee) put one victory after another together and eventually won the All-Ireland title. The players who achieved this were (back row, I. to r.): Richard Maloney, John Moran, Michael Maher, Jim Moran, Patsy Moran, John Morrissey, Tom Moran, Tony Maher. Front row (I. to r.): Jack Morrissey, Bobby Shore, J. J. Dowling, Paddy Lawlor, Johnny Brennan, Jimmy Kelly, Danny Coonan, Tom Walsh.

A NEAR AMAZING FEAT

THE success of St. Martin's (Bally-foyle - Coon - Muckalee) in the Leinster and all-Ireland club senior hurling championships was a near amazing feat, bearing in mind they did it after capturing their first Kilkenny title.

Not many clubs will score their first championship victory in their own county, and then go straight to the top of the all-Ireland ladder. Unless I am greatly mistaken, St. Martin's are the first team to do so.

In all, nine clubs have now won the all-Ireland title. They in-

clude great Cork outfits like Blackrock, St. Finbarr's and Glen Rovers. Others who have won it are Roscrea (Tipperary), Castlegar (Galway) and Loughgiel (Antrim).

St. Martin's became the third-Kilkenny club to lift the Tommy Moore Cup. They followed in the footsteps of James Stephens and Shamrocks (Knocktopher -Ballyhale), who both won it on two occasions.

The roll of honour in the championship reads:

1971 – Roscrea (Tipperary).

1972 - Blackrock (Cork).

1973 - Glen Rovers (Cork).

1974 - Blackrock.

1975 - St. Finbarr's (Cork).

1976 – James Stephens.

1977 – Glen Rovers. 1978 – St. Finbarr's.

1979 – Blackrock.

1980 - Castlegar (Galway).

1981 – Shamrocks.

1982 - James Stephens.

1983 - Loughgiel (Antrim).

1984 - Shamrocks.

1985 – St. Martin's.

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(Knocktopher - Ballyhale) by 1-14 to 1-7. That was just the beginning, because far better was to follow. And what did come after has secured the future of the club, and supporters can look forward to seeing their favourites in many a final in years to come.

DEDICATION

Many thought St. Martin's had reached their peak when they beat the Shamrocks. That was only the start, because during the run through the club championship they added an invaluable asset called maturity to their other distinguishing qualities like enthusiasm and dedication.

They opened in the Leinster championship against O'Toole's (Dublin) on a tight pitch in Crumlin. After the prolonged celebrations that marked the first success in Kilkenny, the Northerners were a bit unsteady initially, and the tight pitch didn't help. They survived, however, and 14 minutes from time they made an important breakthrough when Richard Maloney netted. That score made all the difference, and they got through on a 2-13 to 0-13 decision.

Their next outing against Buffers Alley (Wexford) was a significant one. They put in a tip-top performance and won by 4-12 to 2-8. Suddenly there was an amazing assurance about St. Martin's. Gone completely was the physical approach that had been the hallmark of teams from the area. For the first time they looked capable of going all the way and winning the all-Ireland title.

This view was re-inforced in the Leinster final against Kinnity (Of-Page 34 faly). Two minutes from the break the midlanders showed 0-6 to 0-2 in front. Then a well taken goal by Tom Moran, followed by points from Jim Moran and Johnny Brennan, turned the tables and gave Martin's a half-time lead of 1-4 to 0-6. Within five minutes of the restart Tom Moran netted again, and after that pre-match favourites, Kinnity never looked like winning.

The last two matches in Leinster made everyone sit up and take notice of St. Martin's, who were robbed of support for the provincial final because of a clash with the Oireachtas decider involving Kilkenny. The trojan efforts of coach, Tom Neville, the former Wexford great, were at last reaping their just rewards. St. Martin's were simply a better all round hurling team, with a single minded mission in every match – to win.

Ballycastle (Antrim) were sent packing in the all-Ireland semi-final on a rain lashed day in Callan. The score here was 3-15 to 2-7, after the winners led by 2-7 to 1-3 at half-time.

SECOND CHANCE

The all-Ireland final against Galway champions, Castlegar, was something else. With Tom Moran in top class form the sides drew 2-9 (M) to 3-6 the first day. The tearaway Muckalee full-forward hammered home 2-3, but a late point from Kilkenny and Claraman, Martin O'Shea, earned the Connacht champions a second chance. A team mate of O'Shea's that day was Tom McCormack, who had won all-Ireland club championships with James Stephens in 1976 and '82.

Looking back on it, the fact that

St. Martin's won the final in a replay was all the more praiseworthy. I remember talking to team mentors before the first game at Croke Park and they were afraid some of the players might suffer 'stage fright' on the big day. In the replay it was all a matter of who learned most from the drawn tie.

This replay was an absolutely absorbing tie. Castlegar were chasing their second title. They opened backed by the stiff breeze and worked-up a half-time lead of 1-7 to 1-5. The teams were still going stride-for-stride past the third quarter. Then lively wing-forward, Johnny Brennan scored frees after fouls on himself and Danny Coonan. St. Martin's at last got a bit of breathing room, and after being hauled back the first day, they weren't going to let that happen again. They held out for a 1-13 to 1-10 win that was a victory for passion, desire and raw courage.

It had been a magnificent championship for the St. Martin's club, who never spared the expense. Midfield Paddy Lawlor, who was working in England, was flown home for games. And for the final, team masseur Mick Behan, was flown home from Spain at the request of the players.

During the campaign players like Tom, Jim and Patsy Moran played the hurling of their lives. Goal-keeper, Bobby Shore did so well he was being spoken about in terms of the county team. Tony Maher looked more authoritative with every outing. Tom Walsh and Michael Maher improved as players. And sure what about Richard Maloney, the man who developed a goal poaching instinct in early '84 and never lost it.

HOW THEY MADE THEIR WAY TO VICTORY

November 10 at O'Toole Park, Dublin

O'Toole's		 		0-13
St. Martin's		 		2-13
•	T		14 4	. 1

Scorers – T. Moran (1-4, three points frees); R. Maloney (1-0); Jim Moran (0-3, frees); J. Brennan (0-3); J. Morrissey (0-2); E. Morrissey (0-1).

November 25 at Athy

St. Martin's	4-12
Buffers Alley	2-8

Scorers - J. Brennan (1-7, six points frees); R. Maloney (2-2); T.

Moran (1-0); P. Lawlor (0-2); P. Moran (0-1).

December 2 at Athy, Leinster final

St. Martin's	2-11
St. Martin's	0-12

Scorers – T. Moran (2-4); J. Brennan (0-4); J. Morrissey (0-2); Jim Moran (0-1).

March 3 at John Lockes Park, all-Ireland semi-final

St. Martin's	 3-15
Ballycastle	 2-7

Scorers – R. Maloney (1-3); T. Moran (1-3, two points frees, one penalty); E. Morrissey (1-1); J. Brennan (0-4, two frees, one 65); Jim

Moran (0-1, 65); P. Lawlor, D. Coonan, J. Morrissey (0-1 each).

March 17 at Croke Park, all-Ireland

Scorers – T. Moran (2-3, two points frees); Jim Moran (0-2, frees); P. Moran, R. Maloney, J. Brennan, D. Coonan (0-1 each).

March 24 at Semple Stadium, replay St. Martin's 1-13 Castlegar 1-10

Scorers – J. Brennan (0-5, four frees); D. Coonan (1-1); T. Moran (0-3, one free); P. Moran (0-2); Jim Moran (0-1, 65); E. Morrissey (0-1).

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One could heap praise on the entire team, panel and mentors, because on different days different men were able to come up with the goods when most needed. Trainer Billy Brett always had his charges in peak condition, and team selectors Paul Kinsella, Dick Nolan and club chairman, Billy Costigan planned well for every outing.

AN EXAMPLE TO ALL

"What St. Martin's achieved was

an example to all small clubs in the country of what could be achieved with the right approach", declared former G.A.A. President, Paddy Buggy after the club's all-Ireland triumph.

He said it all there. St. Martin's had the will, and they made the way for themselves with a lot of hard work.

The St. Martin's panel was - Bobby Shore, Jimmy Kelly, Tony Maher, J. J. Dowling, Tom Walsh, Jim Moran, Michael Maher, Pat Lawlor, John Moran, John Morrissey, Patsy Moran, Johnny Brennan, Danny Coonan, Tom Moran, Richard Maloney, Eamon Morrissey, Tom Kinsella, Jimmy Kinsella, Joe Kelly, Jimmy Maher, Raymond Teehan, Nicky Morrissey, Martin Morrissey, Eamon Breen, Jack Morrissey.

JIM ACCLAIMED AS ONE OF THE BEST

KILKENNY hurling great of yesteryear, Jim Langton, was honoured with the All-Stars this year.

Reckoned one of the all-time great stylists, Jim Langton, was honoured at the Bank of Ireland all-Star banquet in the Burlington hotel, Dublin.

Jim, a fleet-footed wing-forward with the renowned Eire Og club, was feted as a former star. Each year the Bank of Ireland single out a hurler and footballer from the past, and honour them at the glittering all-star function.

Jim Langton, a retired Kilkenny Co. Council rate



JIM LANGTON

collector, was the hurler chosen.

Indeed, the Centenary year was a memorable one for Mr. Langton, who picked up the hurling honours almost as freely as he did in his heyday. He was one of the select 15 picked on the Irish Nationwide Building Society/Sunday Independent hurling team of the century.

Not finished at that, he was surprised by his fellow members on the Smithwick's/Kilkenny Sports Star committee, when he was selected as the Hall Of Fame award

winner.
Jim Langton won all-Ireland senior hurling medals with Kilkenny in 1939 and 1947, and among his team mates were the late secretary of the Co. Board, Paddy Grace, the

incomparable Paddy Phelan, Jack Mulcahy, Seanie O'Brien, Shem Downey and Pat 'Diamond' Hayden, to name but a few.

He hit the headlines in 1938 when he played with the Kilkenny junior and senior teams the same afternoon. That day he helped the seniors in a Leinster final, after already playing with the juniors.

With Eire Og he won Kilkenny senior hurling championships in 1939, 1944, 1945 and 1947. With the black and amber he collected eight provincial senior championships, and in 1941 and 1954 he helped Leinster to Railway Cup successes.

INADEQUATE advance planning saw Kilkenny literally hand back a hurling all-Ireland title this year that had been hard earned in a Centenary championship. The competition only lasted one hour for the Noresiders, and it was an unhappy hour at that.

In the Leinster junior championship, Kilkenny were dumped out in the first round by a lively Dublin side at O'Toole Park. The winners performed well, nothing great mind you, and downed their opponents in the first defence of their title that had been won in a real dog-fight final against Galway in '84

The score was 3-8 to 1-5 in favour of the Dubs., who had led at half-time by 1-6 to 1-5. Not once during the hour did the defending champions get on par, never mind in front, and this was certainly one occasion when the Cats were sent home with their tails between their legs.

The previous year the selectors with this team had worked really hard, and in their efforts to get a winning blend tried an astronomical 32 players. Despite strenuous claims that umpteen trials and training sessions had been held this year, the facts are that very little preparatory work was done with this team that was supposedly defending an all-Ireland title.

The team was made up by eight players from intermediate clubs, five from senior clubs, and just two from the junior championship. It would be interesting to know how the selectors came upon this mix, that saw some clubs do very well in the representative stakes.

Bad and all as the performance of the team was, the attitude of Kilkenny Co. Board towards the whole affair was even worse. Nobody seemed to care. Perhaps this county can afford to throw all-Irelands away. Only one question was asked about the composition of the team at Co. Board level.

HALF HEARTED ANSWER

"I have been asked to question where the selectors of the junior team got the players", a delegate from a subsidiary 'board inquired. He was given a half-hearted answer complete with coughing and shuffling about. That was it. There was no more about it.

What an insult that was to the efforts of the players and mentors of 1984, who had put in so much work winning the title.

"Cats" sent home with tails between their legs



Gordon Ryan . . . one of the few successes on the junior team.

The players cannot be blamed. But the people behind the team can. The whole approach to the match was so laid back, it was unbelievable. The approach was like this. We have a match to play lads. It's up in Dublin. No problem. Easy meat. Even when the players went out on the field this same casual approach was evident.

But the visitors were in for a rude awakening. Within two minutes Damien Murphy had banged home 1-2 for the Dubs. They were off to a flying start. They had Kilkenny in trouble right in front of their goal, and in serious trouble at midfield. The visitors in all tried five players at centrefield. The Dubs. still won the tussle there.

The Noresiders played like a bunch of strangers – so much for preparatory work – and never came to grips with fast opponents, or a tight pitch. Sure, they had goals by Philip Brennan (52nd. minute) and Gerry Kenny (57th. minute) disallowed. Brennan's was a bad decision, but overall they got no more than they deserve from the outing.

The only Kilkenny players who looked up to the task were Dan Power and Gordan Ryan, and to a

lesser extent Paudie Lannon and Matty Byrne, although goalkeeper, Michael Walsh could be excused, because the cover for him was appalling.

DEFEATIST ATTITUDE

It has been argued that because Kilkenny won the all-Ireland the previous year they might find it difficult to get another reasonable side together immediately. A defeatist attitude like that doesn't belong in a county like Kilkenny. This Dublin team was made to look good by an inept team that was put on the field by inept selectors.

The Dubs weren't even good enough to win out in Leinster. They were beaten by an average Wexford combination that enjoyed a lot of luck in the all-Ireland final when they beat Tipperary at Nowlan Park. It wouldn't have taken an awful lot to have brought that title back here again, judging by subsequent happenings.

Too often Kilkenny teams commence competitions when they are only half ready. Teams are hastily picked, and the natural talent of players pull the county through. This is not a recent development, but has been happening for years.



Dan Power . . . he gave a good, whole-hearted display.

It's about time now the Co. Board put the boot in. When county champions nominate selectors the 'Board automatically sanctions them. Their duty should not end



St. Paul's, who won the Kilkenny senior camogie championship. Back row (left to right): Ann McGettigan, Liz Neary, Elaine McGuinness, Ann Downey, Annette Stapleton, Angela Downey, Mary Canavan, Catherine Neary. Front (left to right): Marie Lawlor, Kathleen Holohan, Nellie Coakley, Ursula Mulcahy, Bridie McGarry, Breda Ryan, Julie Fry.



St. Brigid's (Ballycallan), the losing Kilkenny senior camogie finalists.



Inomastown won the Leinster senior vocational schools camogie championship and the team is pictured receiving the Shield from Mr. Richard Hamilton of Hamilton Developments, Thomastown (sponsor of the Shield). Seated are (from left): Denis Kelly (coach), Claire Cullen, Elizabeth Whelan, Siobhan Delaney, Ann Tyrrell, Alice Delaney, Chrissie Grace, Michelle O'Neill, Margaret O'Keeffe, Patricia O'Neill, Pat Cronin (Principal). Behind – Julie Dunne, Teresa O'Neill, Brid Donnelly, Josephine Dalton, Richard Hamilton, Nora Whelan (captain), Mary Whelan, Joan Dack, Patricia Kelly, Catherine Begley.

IT TOOK 36 YEARS, BUT VICTORY WAS WORTH

THE LONG WAIT

THEY SAY when you have to wait and wait for something, and then you earn it the hard way, that it means all the more in the end. Certainly, there is always more reason to rejoice on such occasions because all the patience and long and arduous labours earn their just rewards.

There was such an example of perseverance finally earning its just rewards in Kilkenny this year. The victory of Graigue-Ballycallan in the junior hurling championship saw dedication, at official and player level, finally rewarded. Thirty-six years had passed and many a player from the parish had tried in vain to attain the glory, but where all others had failed, the men of '85 succeeded.

This year's players had every reason to bask in the enjoyable warmth of victory that was deservedly theirs, but the Graigue-Ballycallan men of times past had reason to feel satisfied too that they had made their contribution. John Lockes (Callan) were defeated in the county final this time, but many a side was downed in the past as the club hauled itself through times that were not always good. Getting through such testing periods can take as much work as anything else, and no doubt a few of the 'old boys' gained as much joy in this victory as the players themselves did. And rightly so.

The most recent success of Graigue-Ballycallan was in the Centenary minor hurling (Roinn B) championship, when they proved too good for Glenmore. The same day one of the county's hottest hurling prospects, Tom'as McCluskey, had no equal as 'man of the match'. He was one of the top three performers in the junior victory this time, and along with another from that minor side, Michael Murphy, who was also one of the leading lights this year, can help lay the foundations for even Page 40

greater things in the future for the

One has to search as far back as 1949 for the last adult success of a parish side. On that occasion Graigue beat near neighbours and fierce rivals Tullaroan by 3-12 to 2-14 in the senior hurling decider. Three years earlier Graigue had won the junior hurling title by beating St. Kieran's (Clogga) by 8-5 to 3-0.

CAME NEAR

In 1969 the present club came into being when the Graigue and Ballycallan ends of the parish united and, instead of two teams, one was fielded. Since then they came near on a couple of occasions, as team selectors of this year, Liam Byrne, Kieran Hoyne and Pat Brennan well remember. That trio were in the colours in 1979 when Carrickshock beat them in the junior final.

Hoyne had just retired from playing this season, so after all his years of on-the-field work he missed that precious medal. But at least he had the satisfaction of having full involvement with the team when the breakthrough was made. There were many proud men who grew at least six inches on the night of October 13, including diplomatic chairman Kieran Brennan, Tom Ryall, Michael Dermody, Nicholas Teehan and Paddy Byrne, all of whom have given great service to the club. Indeed, another who would have been over the moon with the joyous event would have been the late Phil Cahill, who died last year, and who was a trojan

worker for Scór competitions in Kilkenny.

No one could have been anything but proud of the players when they beat John Lockes. They gave it their all when scoring a 1-12 to 3-4 win. Their performance was one full of pride, and people of the parish showed their appreciation the following evening when the team was paraded through the village of Kilmanagh and over 3,000 turned out to cheer their heroes.

And heroes they were because things didn't always go right for them during the game. Ballycallan were always in control, but two defensive errors which gave John Lockes goals left them in interval arrears of 2-3 to 0-5. The break was only 30 seconds away when the second goal was conceded, so that was a real body blow.

Like an aeroplane zooming up the runway, Graigue-Ballycallan took off in the second half. There was no holding them. Milo Hennessy threw over three points, and another from the fine-striking Michael Murphy in the 40th minute had the teams level at 2-3 (J.L.) to 0-9. The sweet striking Hennessy rose another pair of white flags as his side shot into top gear and pinned John Lockes in their own half.

WAIT OVER

The champions were motoring at midfield where the lion-hearted Kevin Hennessy, the eventual 'man of the match' award winner, won them a major share of possession. His cute overhead hand-pass set up two vital scores. He was involved at the start and John Caldbeck and Johnny Ronan afterwards, in the build-up to Pat Hayes' clinching goal in the closing quarter. The experienced corner-forward flicked the ball into the net between hesitant defenders, and in the seconds it took that ball to cross



GRAIGUE-BALLYCALLAN - JUNIOR HURLING CHAMPIONS OF 1985.

Back row (l. to r.): James Hogan, Mick Kenny, Johnny Ronan, John Caldbeck, Michael Murphy, Billy Ronan, Ger Hennessy, Joe Brennan. **Front row** (l. to r.): Jim Maher, Milo Hennessy, Kevin Butler, John Ryan (captain), Kevin Hennessy (man of the match award winner), Tomás McCluskey, Pat Hayes, Martin Burke.

the line the 36-year wait for hurling glory was bridged.

Graigue-Ballycallan didn't just win. They did it in style, and the hurling in the final was the best in decades. The play was open. The striking on a lovely calm day was first class. There were beautiful scores. And the will to succeed was there in abundance.

The stars of the afternoon were Kevin Hennessy, Tomás McCluskey and Milo Hennessy, who between them tortured John Lockes. Not far behind were Michael Murphy, Pat Hayes and strong and driving centre-back Billy Ronan, who had a thundering second half. On the day everyone rose to the occasion and the final performance was the best one of the year.

The win earned the club promotion to the intermediate grade, which will be the first time for them to operate at this level. They have the ability to do well, because they are far better equipped now to cope than if they had won the junior finals of 1970 (when Windgap took a walk-over) or 1979. Not just because they won this championship, but this side is better balanced than the ones that have gone before.

The under-age section of the club is in good shape, and a couple

more from that minor winning team of 1984 should be ready to battle for positions now. This competition for places can make the team even before. The Graigue-Ballycallan club can look to the future with confidence, and if things go right, the wait for another adult hurling title should be a lot shorter than 36 years.

The Graigue-Ballycallan team in the final was: J. Hogan, J. Brennan, M. Kenny, M. Burke, J. Ryan (capt.), B. Ronan, T. McCluskey, K. Hennessy, J. Caldbeck, M. Murphy, J. Ronan, K. Butler, P. Hayes, G.

Hennessy, M. Hennessy. Subs.: J. Maher (used), P. Egan, N. Hoyne, L. Comerford, M. Dunne, E. Teehan, T. Teehan, P. Dunphy, N. Butler.

John Lockes: B. Henriques, B. Bryan, T. Ryan, E. J. Ryan, P. Comerford, M. Power, J. Bergin, M. Wall, J. Donovan, J. Condon (capt), J. Lynch, J. Power, L. Egan, J. O'Dwyer, J. Murphy. Subs: P. Comerford (used); S. Hogan, M. O'Shea, P. Power, M. Lynch, M. Holden, J. Quigley, K. O'Dwyer, J. Murphy, R. Townsend, M. Maher, B. Bourke, J. Walker.

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Winner of the Leinster Poc Fada competition was St. Martin's (Muckalee-Ballyfoyle-Coon) goalkeeper, Bobby Shore. He is is pictured receiving his trophy from George Leahy.

Paddy did his job, up to others to judge

IN HIS own estimation, history will decide whether or not Paddy Buggy was a good, bad or indifferent President of the G.A.A.

The hard-working Slieverue official stepped down at the last G.A.A. Congress, having served a four year term that encompassed the 100th. birthday of the 'Association.

"Despite the demands, the work was enjoyable and worthwhile", the Kilkenny Co. Council official said in a single sentence summary of his reign as the boss of the biggest amateur sports organisation in the coun-



There was no summit meeting when these two Presidents met. Instead G.A.A. President, Paddy Buggy (right) and Camogie Association President, Mary Fennelly, both of whom were in office during the Centenary celebrations in 1984, met to cut a cake to mark the 100th birthday of the 'Association.

now whether or not I was a good President", he added.

A typical devaluation of his own work given by a man who set himself extraordinary goals during a term that brought him the length and breadth of the country, not just once, but a couple of times.

Paddy Buggy became the 27th. President of the G.A.A. on March 28, 1982 at St. Kieran's college, Kilkenny, when he took over from Paddy MacFlynn (Down). He was the third Kilkenny native to fill the post, and followed in the footsteps of Ald James Nowlan (1901 to

"History will decide 1921) and Bob O'Keeffe (1935 - '38), who was from Mooncoin but held office as a Laois official because he was teaching in Borrisin-Ossory at the time.

"The G.A.A. reasonably sound at the moment", Paddy Buggy reckoned. "Games wise there are more people than ever involved, but in common with other organisations, we have a big fall-off in the age group between 17 and

VISITED SCHOOLS

Perhaps it was in an effort to stem this fall away that Paddy Buggy undertook a mission to visit second level schools all over

Ireland during his term. In all, he visited 16 counties in full and met with students and spoke to them about the G.A.A. and listened to their suggestions. Another six counties he covered by making contact with representative groups.

Involved at all times were Co. Board, Development Committee, Schools Board and club officials from the particular areas concerned. So the President got in contact with people from top to bottom, and was able to gauge the feelings of everyone.

"I saw this as recognising school and club work, and it helped build up good relations and break down barriers, imaginary and otherwise".

Of all the jobs Mr. Buggy took upon himself, this was easily the most taxing, but the response nationwide was terrific. Even in Kilkenny, both city and county, the President's visit aroused great enthusiasm, even at Kilkenny college, where Gaelic games are rarely played.

It would be impossible to put a value on such a tour by the President. Let's just say it could end up bearing fruit for

decades.

"It is generally accepted the G.A.A. is not reaching anything like its true potential at senior and adult level", Mr. Buggy conceded.

"While the 'Association is improving immensely in the area of facilities and so on, there are still problems in the towns and cities. The G.A.A. is not as strong in these centres as it might be. No one can put a finger on why this is so, but it is a fact".

WANT GAMES

He said it was vitally important that G.A.A. players got games. He mentioned a figure like 26 a year, which was roughly one a fortnight and wasn't too much to expect. If players didn't get such competition they would go elsewhere to get it.

Paddy was mindful that the G.A.A. had areas where improvements could readily be made, like at starting times for games, but there was more good than bad within the 'Association and he was confident about the future.

We in the G.A.A. realise our house is not completely in order, but we are working on it, and we will continue to offer ourselves and our games and pastimes to anyone interested", he concluded.

FRANKIE AND LARRY WERE TOPS

TWO players from the Kilkenny minor hurling team that played a draw, but then lost the replay to Limerick in the Centenary all-Ireland final shared one of the special Sports Star awards granted by Kilkenny Co. Board.

On both days the Noreside defence was in top class form, so it was only fitting that two backs should vie for the honours in the under-age section.

For the first time the selection committee couldn't decide between two candidates, so the award was given jointly to Larry O'Brien (Slieverue) and Frankie Morgan (James Stephens).

This year O'Brien had a very successful campaign with the Kilkenny under-



Mossy Murphy

21 team. He played as a wing-back, and on at least two occasions he was in the running for man of the match honours.

Morgan has been one of the most gifted players to come through the ranks at James Stephens. He was corner-back on the Kilkenny minor team

again this year, but was beset by injuries later and missed most of the championship with his club.

Kilkenny and all-Ireland hurling champions, St. Martin's (Ballyfoyle-Coon-Muckalee) carried off the club of the year award. The club completed a double when bustling full-forward, Tom Moran was selected as the senior player of the year.

The other winners were: David Hoyne, Thomastown (senior football); Malachy Hogan, Dunnamaggin (Junior football); Pat Walsh, Windgap (intermediate hurler); Mossy Murphy, Mullinavat (junior hurler); Fr. Liam Dunne, C.C., Mullinavat (clubman of year).

Lockes can be happy

THRIVING junior club, John Lockes (Callan) can look back with pride on the year just ended.

Apart from their wonderful exploits on the actual field of play, they also scored handsomely off it.

When Nowlan Park was closed down during the winter and spring while repairs were carried out to the pitch, the Co. Board had no hesitation in switching inter-county matches to John Lockes Park.

Among the big games the Callan club hosted was the Oireachtas hurling final between Kilkenny and Cork, and the all-Ireland club semi-final between St. Martin's and Ballycastle (Antrim).

Every occasion was handled expertly by the John Lockes officials. And for the comfort of spectators, the club erected a stand during the Winter, and later in the year dug an underground entrance from the dressing-rooms onto the field.

There wasn't much more any club could have done. The John Lockes club is to be congratulated on the way everything was handled.

Kilkenny clubs continued their onward march as regards buying and developing grounds. Piltown continued their excellent work, and they were joined by Clara and Thomastown, who both purchased their own grounds.

Clara bought 5½ acres at Clifden on the main Kilkenny/Carlow road. They estimated their first stage of development would cost £25,000. And they in-

tend to have everything completed quickly, and started by collecting nearly £10,000 in a few months.



Thomastown sold ground they owned on the Dublin road and bought Grennan, for a sum in the region of £80,000. Visitors to the venue this year saw they weren't wasting any time getting stuck in, and they were well on the way to completing a £50,000 Phase I development.

LIMERICK DEFEAT MARKED THE BEGINNING OF THE END

IT MAY only have been April 28, but even so early in the year the most knowledgeable among Kilkenny hurling followers got a strong hint the county was going to have a short championship. That inside knowledge came via the Ford open draw championship, when the Noresiders bowed out unceremoniously at the semi-final stage.

Dick O'Hara . . . hopefully he will make a return to hurling during 1986.

On a bleak day at the Ennis road grounds, Limerick, no more than a couple of hundred loyal Kilkenny followers saw their favourites sink to a 0-13 to 0-7 defeat at the hands of Galway, a side the county always had a good record against.

But it wasn't the defeat itself that was the most worrying thing, but the manner in which it happened. It was a hollow performance from the losers, and lacked anything that would give even a morsel of hope for the upcoming Leinster championship.

The result followed hot on the heels of a similar collapse in a replayed National League quarter-final against Clare. And it left even those who still clung to the view that Kilkenny 'can be a different proposition on the firm sod in the championship' more than just a little worried.

One cannot say with absolute sincerity what exactly was wrong with the team. Let's just say there was an awful lot. The players Page 44

weren't over-worked. Yet they had lost the killer instinct and a basic quality like heart. Attendances at training were rock bottom.

I spoke to one of the players after that Limerick game, and he put it thus: "You go out and you try, and it just won't happen. There didn't seem to be a response coming from anyone else on the field, yet the players were trying. The whole atmosphere surrounding the team was eerie, and lacking in genuine fellowship".

LAST CHANCE

The Ford competition was seen as Kilkenny's last chance to get a team together for a good assault on the championship. The selectors had failed to come up with a plan to mould a team together during the National League, and after that the Ford event was seen as the last hope. The same thing happened – the team drifted through the competition and no positive steps were

taken to cure a side that was actually dying before our eyes.

When it came to the Leinster championship Kilkenny beat Westmeath and then played a rousing semi-final draw against eventual all-Ireland champions, Offaly, before losing the replay. But that big effort in the drawn tie was like the last kick from a dying horse, because much earlier Kilkenny had suggested they were on their last legs. There was too much wrong with the team to get it right with a couple of challenge games before the championship, as the selectors tried to do.

I remember the day Kilkenny opened in the Ford championship against Westmeath. That night in the Marble City everyone was worried, the 'lads' had only won by 1-15 to 2-8. On the face of it that looked bad. What had happened was that Westmeath scored two late goals that made it look poor from their opponents point of view, who were expected to win looking back.

That mood in the city gave away a lot, however. People had lost confidence in the team, bearing in mind the flop in the National League. That lack of confidence was carried on into the championship by some, who had said they wouldn't go to a match until the players proved they could win a decent one.

In the second round Kilkenny visited Waterford. At last the selectors tried something here. They picked Paudie Brennan, brother of Nickey and Kieran, at full-back. Since injury had knocked out Brian Cody, the Noresiders had been unable to fill this vital position. Brennan was under a lot of pressure to do well. The Conahy Shamrocks man was steady that day, and after leading by 1-5 to 0-7 at half-time, Kilkenny eventually won by 2-12 to 0-10.

ENCOURAGING PERFORMANCE

Supporters had looked for an encouraging performance there, and they got it, although Waterford were very average. The following week the semi-final was in Limerick against Galway. The result went the Connacht champions way, but they lost the final to Tipperary. Kilkenny's form in that semi-final was dreadful. Galway played with the breeze in the first half and led by just 0-6 to 0-4. Their opponents were just not able to mount any sort of a respectable challenge in the closing period, and said goodbye to the competition, and at the same time undermined hopes for the championship.

And if things were not bad enough that day, forceful cornerback Dick O'Hara received a serious eye injury in the closing two minutes of that match. He spent weeks in hospitals in Limerick and Waterford afterwards, and didn't take a hurley in his hand for the rest of the year. He was really badly missed when the championship came round, because he always had a great rallying influence on the team.



Sure enough, it was a bad day in Limerick. It marked the end for Kilkenny in the Ford competition, and the beginning of the end for them in the championship.

Players used in the competition were – David Burke, John Hender-

son, Jim Moran, Dick O'Hara, Eddie Wall, Ger Henderson, Paddy Prendergast, Joe Hennessy, Ger Fennelly, Kieran Brennan, Pat Walsh, Ray Heffernan, Christy Heffernan, Tom Moran, Liam Fennelly, Bill O'Hara, Paudie Brennan, Harry Ryan, Michael Walsh, Frank Cummins, Billy Fitzpatrick.

SCORES – WHEN

AND WHERE
March 31 at Cusack Park, Mullingar
Westmeath 2-8
Kilkenny 1-15
Scorers - K. Brennan (0-5); C.
Heffernan (1-2); R. Heffernan (0-4);
P. Walsh (0-2); T. Moran, J.
Hennessy (0-1 each).
April 21 at Walsh Park, Waterford
Waterford 0-10
Kilkenny 2-12
Scorers - C. Heffernan (2-0); M.
Walsh (0-4); L. Fennelly (0-3); H.
Ryan, J. Hennessy (0-2 each); G.
Fennelly (0-1).
April 28 at Limerick (semi-final)
Galway 0-13
Kilkenny 0-7
Scorers - K, Brennan (0-4); J.
Hennessy, R. Heffernan, P. Walsh (0-1 each).

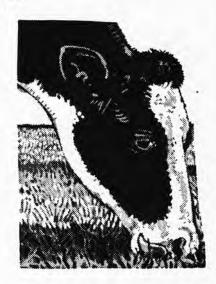
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THE twists-and-turns of sport throw up many imponderables, the things that might have occurred if this or that had gone one way and not the other. Kilkenny hurling supporters know the deep and dark meaning of such turns of fate following the Leinster senior championship of 1985.

PLANNING IS THE NAME OF THE GAME NOW

There have been times in the past when followers talked about 'what might have been' after a big match, more particularly when their favourites were beaten. Many a discussion up-and-down the county was thrashed out in that vein this season when Kilkenny bowed out of the championship, and a second airing was given when Offaly won the all-Ireland title by defeating Galway in the final.

"What would have happened if Offaly hadn't got a lucky goal that sparked off their revival that earned them a draw with Kilkenny in the Leinster semi-final", was a question that was often asked on the Noreside after the teams battled to a

hectic 3-18 each draw on June 23 at Croke Park.

At two separate stages during the second half of that match Kilkenny held a nine point advantage. That was against all the odds, and when the Noresiders let that advantage go, many felt they had blown their chance of slipping one over Offaly, the reigning provincial champions.



That was hard enough to accept at the time, but when the midlanders went on and won the all-Ireland, and did so by giving probably their worst performance of the championship, then the chatter of what 'we missed' started all over again.

THE SCORES AS THEY CAME

Iviay 20 at I dilatiloic
Kilkenny 1-30
Westmeath 1-10
Scorers - K. Brennan (1-9, five
points frees); G. Fennelly (0-6); B.
Fitzpatrick, H. Ryan (0-4 each); R.
Heffernan (0-3, two 65s); J. Murphy
(0-2); G. Henderson (0-1, free); R.
Power (0-1).
June 23 at Corke Park Leinster S.H.

semi-final Kilkenny 3-18 Offaly 3-18 Scorers – L. Fennelly (2-0); H. Ryan (0-5); K. Brennan (0-4, two frees); C. Heffernan (1-0); G. Fennelly, P. Walsh (0-3 each); R.

Power (0-2); R. Heffernan (0-1). July 14 at Croke Park: Leinster S.H. semi-final replay

semi-tinai repiay
Offaly 1-20
Kilkenny 0-17
Scorers - K. Brennan (0-7, two
frees); L. Fennelly, H. Ryan (0-2
each); G. Henderson (0-1, 65); J.
Hennessy, G. Fennelly, R. Heffer-
nan, P. Walsh, R. Power (0-1 each).

JOINED IN PITY BY OTHERS

At least Kilkenny hurling fans were not alone with their feelings of self pity. They must have been joined by many a Cork fan, who watched their classy hurlers ditched during an all-Ireland championship that looked theirs for the taking for a long time.

The Leesiders looked the best team in the championship, but they came unstuck against Galway in the all-Ireland semi-final on a day the heavens opened. Talk about what might have been. There was a typical example, and Galway didn't make things any better when they failed to bring home the McCarthy Cup.

So after an all-Ireland series that took many an unexpected twist and turn, three counties were left with room to make a case why they should have won.

The Kilkenny case centred around one match, one particular incident, and very little else. The Noresiders opened in the Leinster championship by scoring a facile 1-30 to 1-10 win over Westmeath, who were so far out of their depth it was pitiful. About 5,000 spectators felt it worth their while to attend this mis-match,

That was all so easy it was useless as a fact finding mission for the Noreside selectors, Michael O'Neill (Co. Board chairman), Dick Nolan (St. Martin's), Mick Crotty (James Stephens), Paul Fitzgerald (Glenmore) and Patrick Holden (Shamrocks).

The selectors had failed in their efforts to mould a settled team during the National League and Ford open draw championship. Up to a fortnight before the semi-final against Offaly the mentors were still searching for players to plug gaps. Challenge games provided the last testing ground. Some made it into the team via this avenue. Others lost favour.

ELEVENTH HOUR TEAM

So at the eleventh hour Kilkenny got a team to face Offaly, the champions of the province and the defeated all-Ireland finalists of the previous year. There was no Dick O'Hara. He had been injured during the Ford championship. There was no Brian Cody. He had been dropped after the Westmeath match. And another great favourite, Billy Fitzpatrick was also



Kilkenny, who were beaten by eventual all-Ireland champions, Offaly, in a replayed Leinster senior hurling semi-final.

Back Row (l. to r.): Paddy Prendergast, John Marnell, Richard Power, Ray Heffernan, Christy Heffernan, Paudie Brennan, Liam Fennelly, John Henderson. Front (l. to r.): Joe Hennessy, Harry Ryan, David Bourke, Kieran Brennan, Pat Walsh, Ger Henderson, Ger Fennelly.

dumped, along with young hopefuls David Hoyne and Johnny Murphy. Veteran midfielder, Frank Cummins also found himself looking at the action from the substitutes bench.

Nearly 30,000 people flocked to Croke Park for the do-or-die tussle with Offaly. They were not disappointed by the fare provided. The champions were having their first taste of championship action, and as it transpired, were a bit rusty and still had some tightening up to do.

The Kilkenny form was a real eye opener, the best of the year, as the players gave it everything they had. Thanks to a pair of goals from Liam Fennelly, achieved on a scant supply of the ball, the challengers went in for the rest 2-9 to 1-8 in front.

By» the 38th minute Offaly had slipped nine points behind. They hauled back two, but in the 42nd minute they were nine points down again. Then they got a break. A ball from way out on the Cusack Stand side somehow ended up in the Kilkenny net at the Canal end. Some said the sun dazzled the defenders and goalkeeper. Others put it down to an error of judgement.

Whatever, there and then commenced the midlanders all action revival, and twice during the closing 13 minutes they got in front.

Despite their absence of background together, the Kilkenny players showed praiseworthy character and forced a 3-18 each draw. This had been a trial of strength, character and stamina, and the Noresiders had survived. Was it possible, here in the championship they were going to get it together?



Novices to this level of competition, Pat Walsh (Windgap) and Paudie Brennan (Conahy Shamrocks) really made people sit up and take note. Walsh was a revelation. His striking and deft use of the hand pass set a standard that

was going to be hard to follow. Paddy Prendergast, who had battled back after a serious injury suffered the previous year, also surprised many people. And then there was Ger Fennelly ... hurling elegance personified. Ger Henderson, Liam Fennelly and Richard Power had also passed a severe test with honours.

HAD HOMEWORK DONE

The replay was a fortnight later, and this time Kilkenny picked the same team. Offaly were more aggressive. They showed one or two shrewd team changes. The combination made all the difference, and from the fourth minute they held the lead. At half-time they were 1-13 to 0-9 in front, but they were chased all the way to the line and eventually won by 1-20 to 0-17.

Offaly had proved the better team on the day. The Kilkenny players had given it their best shot. Sure, the losers registered 15 wides against their opponents 5, and also missed two penalties, one in each half. But Offaly had that bit more

Continued on page 49 >

cohesion, that was enough to withstand their opponents zeal.

Again Ger Henderson, Richard Power, Liam Fennelly, Harry Ryan and particularly Ger Fennelly had been to the fore. It was the end, and supporters wondered where to from here, because on a glance back over the year, there was nothing but the drawn match to get excited about.

One match a year, not enough to satisfy the success spoiled Kilkenny supporters. There must be more. And there shall be more.

It would be too complacent to say wait until next year. That could become the meaningless annual battle cry. The message of '85 should always be remembered in these times of ever improving standards. The days when Kilkenny could 'turn it on' in the championship have passed. Planning is the name of the game now.

The following players

The following players were used by Kilkenny during the champion-ship – David Burke, John Henderson, Paudie Brennan, Joe Hennessy, Ger Henderson, Ray Heffernan, Richard Power, Ger Fennelly, Kieran Brennan, Harry Ryan (in all three games); Paddy Prendergast, Liam Fennelly, John Marnell, Johnny Murphy, Pat Walsh, Lester Ryan (twice as sub), Christy Heffernan, Frank Cummins, Billy Fitzpatrick (in two games); Brian Cody, Nickey Brennan, David Hoyne (one game).

A double miss was most unusual

KILKENNY have had their ups-anddowns in the Leinster senior hurling championship, but 1985 marked a particularly bad year.

The defeat by Offaly in the provincial semi-final replay followed on a reverse against Wexford at the same stage the

previous year.

That meant the proud Noresiders missed out on successive provincial finals, something that one had to dig as far back as 1951 and 1952 in the records to find the previous occasion it happened.

In the intervening 33 years they missed out on the Leinster final a few times, but never in successive years, and actually took home the Bob O'Keeffe Cup a magnificent

18 times.

Indeed, prior to '51 and '52 one had to drift into the last century to find another double miss. It occurred in 1889, 1890 and 1891.

In '89 Dublin got a walk-over from Laois. The following year Wexford beat Laois by 2-9 to 0-3, and when the same counties met 12 months later the Slaneysiders received a walk-over.

MISSED OUT 14 TIMES

Moving on a year to 1892 Dublin were unopposed in the Leinster final, and they took the title in similar circumstances in 1894. The Dubs were also awarded the title in 1908, but on all other occasions the final was contested, Kilkenny only missed out 14 times, not including the three-in-a-row above or 1951 and '52.

In 1951 Wexford beat Laois by 3-12 to 4-3, and the following year Dublin won by 7-2 to 3-6 against

the Slaneysiders,

During the seventies Kilkenny clocked up a fantastic five-in-a-row in Leinster. Such events in the not too distant past, and a double-double of National League and all-Ireland championship in 1982 and '83, made current development more difficult for supporters to accept.

This year's Leinster final was the sixth since the turn of the decade, and Kilkenny missed out on three. That stands in sharp contrast to the seventies when they contested all 10 deciders, and won the crowd

seven times.

QUESTIONS ON PAGE 32

Well, how many did you get right?

- 1. Jimmy Dunne of Dunnamaggin.
- 2. In 1960 and 1964.
- 3. Joe Young (Tullaroan).
- 4. Lowry Meagher, Paddy Phelan, Jim Langton, Eddie Keher.
- 5. Deerpark, Carrick-on-Suir, Co. Tipperary.
- 6. Dan Stapleton in 1905. He was 19-years-old.
- 7. In 1926 against Cork.
- 8. Kilkenny in 1909, 1911, 1912 and 1913 and Wexford > in 1910.
- 9. Denis Sheflin.
- 10. Six, in 1933, 1962, 1966, 1976, 1982 and 1983.
- 11. Willie Harte of Galmoy.
- 12. In 1922. They were beaten by 1-7 to 0-2 by Dublin.
- 13. Jack Mulcahy.
- 14. Mick 'Cloney' Brennan and Matt Ruth.
- 15. Frank Cummins, Conor O'Brien and Davy Prendergast.
- 16. The Fair Green, Callan, on Feb. 15, 1885.

- 17. Paddy Mackey senior hurling in 1910 and senior football in 1915, 1916, 1917, and 1918. He was from the Rower.
- 18. Seán Tyrrell.
- 19. In 1974.
- 20. Jack McCarthy, John Roberts, Jack Mulcahy, John Lalor, Paddy Johnston and Paschal Long.
- 21. Alfie Hickey (St. Lactain's).
- 22. Mick Taylor.
- 23. In 1959
- 24. Paul Cleere (O'Loughlin's).
- 25. Tony Teehan (Coon).
- 26. Jim Treacy, Frank Cummins and Eddie Keher.
- Eddie Keher (2), Mossie Murphy, Kieran Purcell and Ned Byrne.
- 28. Paddy Kealy.
- 29. In 1958.
- 30. Joe Burke (Graigue/Ballycallan).

Queens of camogie kept county flag flying





Kilkenny, who completed the National Camogie League and open all-Ireland senior championship double

Back Row (l. to r.): Rita Wemyss, Breda Holmes, Deirdre Malone, Jo Dunne, Biddy O'Sullivan, Margaret Farrell, Ann Downey, Angela Downey. Front (l. to r.): Ann-Marie Brennan, Siobhan Ryan, Marie Fitaparick, Bridie McGarry (Capt.). Ann Holden, Anna Whelan, Liz Neary, Nora Whelan.

KILKENNY provided the First Ladies of camogie this season. The determined and very talented local ladies won all before them and registered the never before achieved double of National League and open All-Ireland senior championship.

It was hard, but enjoyable, as the camogie stars battled through the Winter and Summer unbeater. And in a year when all the hurling titles eluded the county, the dynamic ladies kept the black anl amber flag flying very high.

As with any thrilling win, there was a bit of luck involved. Wexford provided nail-biting opposition in the all-Ireland semi-final, but on the day it matters, Kilkenny downed the kingpins in the code, Dublin, in an absorbing final that

was crammed with exciting action. Experienced skipper Bridie

McGarry led by example and enjoyed one of her best seasons ever. Behind her she had a willing and able crew, and none could hold such as Angela Downey, Margaret Farrell, Liz Neary, Anna Whelan, Biddy O'Sullivan or any of the rest of them when in full flight.

Selectors Carmel Savage, Tom Ryan (he was also trainer), Billy Malone and Kathleen Whitehead recognised they had problems early in the season and worked to eliminate them. They came up with a devastating blend of youth and experience, and the side they sent out for duty in the all-Ireland contained just two who had not won gold before - 17-year-old goalkeeper Marie Fitzpatrick (St. Brigid's) and Breda Holmes (St. Brigid's).

Young the latter pair may have been, but they grew up quickly in the special atmosphere of all-Ireland day, and Miss Holmes helped herself to three good points, while the guardian Fitzpatrick never set a foot wrong.

NEVER COMPLAINED

But, really, the Kilkenny girls got nothing more than they deserved from a year in which no sacrifice was beyond them. Like hurlers in the county, they had players travelling long distances for games and training. Anne Holden drove all the way from Galway for the gruelling sessions supervised by trainer Ryan, while Margaret Farrell never complained about having to journey from Cork. Such commitment to the cause gained its just rewards.

For a change, the open draw wasn't too hard on Kilkenny. They had a relatively easy start against Clare. They were never troubled, and at the finish had 25 points to spare. The second round was even easier. Louth gave them a walkover.

After that the story was different. Old rivals Wexford were the opponents in the semi-final, and the Slaneysiders had home advantage. The Noresiders were lucky to escape here.

The Slaneysiders were able to win possession in all sectors of the field, and at half-time were 1-2 to 0-3 ahead. With time running out they were still in front. Then in the dying moments the versatile Jo Dunne slammed home a goal that shattered Wexford and gained Kilkenny a very lucky 2-6 to 2-4 win.

"We had the man above on our side that day", a prominent member of the team recalled some time afterwards. "Wexford were good, perhaps good enough to win the all-Ireland had they beaten us".

The pressure was on the Noresiders as they faced Dublin. They were going for the first double, and they were facing the all-Ireland champions. The Dubs were also looking for revenge for the National League final defeat suffered at the hands of Kilkenny,

THEY BEAT TRADITION

THE Kilkenny ladies beat tradition when they lifted the Sean O'Duffy cup, the glittering prize for the open all-Ireland senior camogie champions, in September.

When they downed Dublin they beat the side with a staggering 26 senior titles to their credit. What a haul by comparison with Kilkenny's five successes.

The Dubs' camogie record is second to none, and they also have a massive 41 Leinster titles to their credit.

Of course, their background in the game goes back much further than Kilkenny's. Camogie had an up-and-down existence in this county until it became firmly established in 1958.

Kilkenny took part in the inaugural all-Ireland championship in 1932. After they bowed out of the championship of 1933 an

internal dispute erupted and the game died out.

Kilkenny returned to the intercounty area in 1947. But it took another 11 years before the sport was firmly established. The all-Ireland victories were registered in:

Kilkenny 3-3; Cork 1-5 (replay). Kilkenny 3-8; Cork 4-5 (draw). 1976

Kilkenny 0-6; Dublin 1-2. 1977 Kilkenny 3-4, Wexford 1-3. Kilkenny 1-9, Cork 0-7 (replay)

Kilkenny 3-9, Cork 3-9 (draw) 1985

Kilkenny 0-13; Dublin 1-5.



on a day the Dubs were not at full

strength:

This was Kilkenny's seventh final in all to contest, and their record wasn't all that good, as they were only successful on four previous occasions. On the big day none of those things worried the supercharged girls. They went out and got stuck in. They chased and chased. They made mistakes, but so too did their opponents, and they punished them when they did.

HUNGRY FOR SUCCESS

There was experience aplenty on Kilkenny side, including three former winners of the B+I camogie player of the year award - Bridie McGarry (1976), Angela Downey (1977) and Liz Nearly (1981). The hunger for another success was also there.

The Dubs produced some exciting play and appeared to have their opponents in trouble when they led by 1-4 to 0-4 at the break. But it took just four minutes of sheer magic during the second mojety for Kilkenny to change all that.

The challengers picked off four points and got in front. Angela

Downey, who had been troubled with injuries during the season, exploded into life and her speed, accuracy and power had her opponents at panic stations each time she gained possession. Margaret Farrell and Breda Holmes were bundles of mischief too, and they ran the Dublin defence ragged. Midfield was tied up by the Neary - Malone - Whelan combination, and at the back skipper McGarry kept things ticking over nice and steady.

Ten minutes of the half had barely passed when Kilkenny were 0-10 to 1-4 in front. Their confidence was so high then there was no holding them. Dublin put in a last ditch effort to save their crown, but it was a futile effort against ladies who wanted to be remembered as the Queens of '85.

The Kilkenny team on that historic day was: Marie Fitzpatrick (St. Brigid's), Anne Downey (St. Paul's), Anne Holden (St. Thomas's, Galway); Bridie McGarry (St. Paul's); Biddy O'Sullivan (Tullogher), Liz Neary (St. Paul's), Deirdre Malone (St. Brigid's), Anna Whelan (Castlecomer), Margaret Farrell (St. Finbarr's, Cork), Angela Downey (St. Paul's), Jo Dunne (Carrickshock), Breda Holmes (St. Brigid's). Subs.: Ann-Marie Brennan (Thomastown), Rita Wemyss (Bennettsbridge), Siobhan Ryan (Shamrocks), Nora Whelan (Blacks and Whites).

Experience of losing could make the difference

DEFEAT is never easy for any team to accept, but very often the ones who have experienced a tough ride to the top turn out to be the most rounded in the long run. So it can be with John Lockes (Callan), the defeated junior hurling finalists of this season.

Off the field this get up and go Callan outfit have a grounds and vibrant committee second to none. With the same positive attitude that has seen the club make remarkable strides forward in recent years, this basically young side of theirs can go all the way to the top, and that's not just in the junior grade.

There was no shame in defeat against Graigue-Ballycallan, a team with players who have been around a long time and have taken a few knocks themselves. Only last year John Lockes won the minor hurling (Roinn A) championship, and from that side Bosco Bryan, Paddy Comerford, Jimmy Donovan, John Power and Liam Egan gained instant promotion to the junior team, although Power had been there the previous year.

That was a big jump for a third of any team to make, and no matter how good the players may have been at under-age level, time to adjust to the adult championships was needed. Add in reserves, Philip Comerford, Michael Holden, James Quigley and Kieran O'Dwyer, all of whom were on the 1984 minor team, and you get a better picture of how young the John Lockes panel really was.

A couple of the Callan players, namely John O'Dwyer, Tom and E. J. Ryan and 42-year-old goal-keeper, Barry Henriques have plenty of experience, but not enough to make up for the lack of it in other quarters. Yes, Callan can be happy with their lot. Winning the Southern title with such a young team was an achievement in itself. Their day at county honours will come, sooner rather than later.

In the Southern final Dunnamaggin were beaten for the second successive year. Little went right for them that afternoon, and after only 10 minutes they lost midfielder, John Murphy, through injury. They would appear to need an injection of new blood if they are to make a serious assault in the immediate future on divisional or county honours.

NEED NEW FACES

John Ryan, Canice Mackey, Malachy Hogan and Jimmy Dunne have been great servants of Dunnamaggin. They still have something to offer in the future, but the club could do with a few new faces to improve their chances.

In the North, Danesfort lost the divisional final for the second time in three years. They were beaten in '83 by Tullaroan, and again this time by the eventual champions. Three and four points respectively were the losing margins, so they cannot be dismissed as no hopers in future either.

The Dunnes, Richard, Anthony and Des were in sparkling form this season, as were Paddy Fennelly, Pat Davis and free taker Michael Kiely. Danesfort have something positive

to offer, but they would appear in need of someone to harness their efforts and channel them in the right direction.

Emeralds (Urlingford), the Centenary losing finalists, with good players like David Burke, Pat Ryan, Michael Rafter, Jackie Hughes, Liam Cody, Jimmy Queally and Johnny Moriarty have the makings of a winning team. On paper they would probably look the best team man-for-man in the division, but things don't always go well for them. Now that Barrow Rangers (Paulstown) have been relegated from the intermediate grade, the competition will really be hot in the North.

This season Windgap contested the Southern championship after being relegated from the intermediate section. With their county star Pat Walsh always to the fore, they did well to qualify for the semi-final. They lost out that day, but hinted they are heading back to former glory days after going off the rails some years ago.

WHERE THE TITLES WENT

Mooncoin (4) – 1920, 1937, 1942, 1961.

Mullinavat (4) – 1915, 1916, 1939, 1984.

James Stephens (3) – 1924, 1929, 1955.

Dicksboro (3) – 1910, 1914, 1919.

Thomastown (3) – 1927, 1945, 1962.

Glenmore (3) – 1923, 1953, 1980.

Carrickshock (3) – 1929, 1954, 1979.

John Lockes (2) – 1911, 1952.

Knocktopher (2) – 1931, 1965.

North Selection (2) – 1932, 1934.

Bennettsbridge (2) – 1948, 1951.

Danesfort (2) – 1925, 1930.

Galmoy (2) – 1949, 1966.

Clara (2) – 1969, 1977.

One each — 1905: Owen Roes (Urlingford), 1906: Erin's Own (City); 1908: Suir Side Rovers (Mooncoin); 1913: Mong; 1922: Clonmore; 1926: Knockmoylan; 1933: South Selection; 1935:

Bonnettstown; 1936: Eire Og; 1938; Ballyline; 1940: Threecastles; 1941: Hugginstown; 1943: Stoneyford; 1944: The Rower; 1946: Graigue; 1947: Johnstown/ Urlingford; 1950: Slieverue; 1956: St. Senan's (Kilmacow); 1957: Tullogher; 1958: Erin's Own (Castlecomer); 1959: St. Lactain's (Freshford); 1960: Lisdowney; 1963: Rower-Inistioge; 1964: Young Irelands (Gowran); 1967: Coon; 1968: Fenians (Johnstown); 1970: Windgap; 1971: Newpark Sarsfields; 1972: Graignamanagh; 1973: Shamrocks (Ballyhale/Knocktopher); 1974: Muckalee-Ballyfoyle Rangers; 1975: O'Loughlins; 1976: Conahy Shamrocks; 1978: Piltown: St. Patrick's (Ballyragget); 1981: Piltown; 1982: Barrow Rangers (Paulstown/ Goresbridge); 1983: Tullaroan; 1985: Graigue-Ballycallan.

Many called, two chosen Joe Hennessy . . . the James Stephens man turned in a fine season for Kilkenny and was selected at right half-back on the Bank of Ireland All-Star team.

IT WAS a case of many called but only two chosen when the Bank of Ireland hurling All-Star team was announced.

In all, ten Kilkenny players were nominated for positions among the elite 15. But there was joy only for Kieran Brennan and Joe Hennessy, who were picked at centre-forward and right half-back respectively.

Army Captain Kieran Brennan really had a tremendous year. The All-Star nominators thought so too, and he was put forward for the three half-forward positions.

This was Kieran's first All-Star award, as it was for his family and club, Conahy Shamrocks. Strange as it may seem, despite all his good games for Kilkenny down through the years, Nicky Brennan, brother of Kieran, never won an All-Star

Joe Hennessy, who has perfected the art of quick delivery from defence, was honoured for his consistent high standard of play. The James Stephens man collected his fourth award, and joined fellow county men Frank Cummins (Blackrock), Ger Henderson (Fenians), Phil 'Fan' Larkin (James Stephens) and Liam 'Chunkey' O'Brien (James Stephens and later O'Loughlin/Gaels) on that mark.

Overall, Kilkenny players have now won 59 hurling All-Star awards. Centenary all-Ireland champions, Cork, who had six men picked on the team, closed the gap in second place and now have 47 awards to their credit.

Kilkenny made an early exit from the National League, and then failed to make the Leinster championship final. So winning two awards wasn't too bad.

The other eight Kilkenny players nominated were Noel Skehan (Bennettsbridge), John Henderson O'Hara (Fenians), Dick (Thomastown), Ger Henderson (Fenians), Christy Heffernan (Glenmore) and Liam Fennelly (Shamrocks).

The All-Star team was: G. Cunningham (Cork); P. Fitzmaurice (Limerick); E. Coughlan (Offaly); P. Fleury (Offaly); J. Hennessy (K); J. Crowley (Cork); D. McCurtain (Cork); J. Kelly (Offaly); J. Fenton (Cork); N. English (Tipperary); K. Brennan (K); P. Kelly (Limerick); T. Mulcahy (Cork); N. Lane (Galway); S. O'Leary (Cork).

KILKENNY teams won the Leinster colleges' senior hurling championship in 1983 and '84, but this year the crown was taken to Offaly by a good Birr Community School side.

That great hurling nursery, St. Kieran's College, won the Centenary title, and their great rivals just down the road, Kilkenny C.B.S., proved best in the province

the previous year.

Both local schools had reasonable sides again this season, but they had to give best to a Birr team which was brimful of confidence and determination. In the Leinster final the Offaly boys proved their class when with 14 players they fought back from arrears to beat St. Kieran's who, on the day, produced their best hurling of the entire campaign.

For the first time the Leinster championship was run on a league basis, and while a couple of extra games proved more costly for schools, all agreed at the finish the idea had worked. Each team was guaranteed three games, so the weak as well as the strong were

kept involved longer.

The Presentation Convent (Castlecomer) also participated in Division A after winning out Division B last year. They had lost a good number of the players from that championship winning side, so they found the going demanding. But the experience will have done the players no harm, and in a few years time the Convent could be a real threat in Kilkenny to the dominance of the city sides.



St. Kieran's and the Presentation were in the same group with Birr C.S. When the Kilkenny teams met on a dreadfully cold afternoon in Ballyragget, the more experienced College boys won easily by 3-16 to 1-3.

The 'Comer team that day was: J. Brennan, P. Brennan, S. Dooley, M. Brophy, P. Nolan, P. Brennan, J. Kennedy, J. Breen, B. Hennessy, B. Melody, C. Brennan, D. Buggy, T. Hurley, A. Ryan, E. Connery. Subs.: J. Donovan, P. Brophy.

College boys lost

their crown

ROUSING FARE

In the other group the C.B.S. were lumped with Wexford pair St. Peter's College and Good Counsel. The Noresiders got through to the knock-out stages where they were pitted against St. Kieran's in the semi-final.

This tie was in Callan and it produced typical rousing fare. The exchanges were hard but fair. The pace was fast and the result was in the balance until the final whistle.

St. Kieran's eventually won by 1-5 to 0-6, after the sides had been level at 0-3 each at the break. Four minutes of brilliance from full-forward, Diarmuid Purcell nearing the end of the third quarter hauled the College through. The C.B.S. had the fresh breeze behind them and had their opponents struggling. Then up popped Purcell to drive home 1-2 and that injected new life into the winners.

Even at that, St. Kieran's had to thank their lucky stars that goalkeeper Pat Bergin was in top form. He brought off a couple of super stops before the finish, and gutsy centre-back Tony Byrne also played the proverbial blinder. The C.B.S. had class performers in Richard Minogue, Michael Kennedy, Donal Kennedy, Keith McCormack and Robert Dalton but they were held at bay, mainly due to the efforts of Bergin and Byrne.

to the efforts of Bergin and Byrne.

The C.B.S. team was: N.

Morrissey, M. Kennedy, D.

Kennedy, T. Cleere, R. Minogue, K.

McCormack, S. Maguire, J. Walton,
R. Dalton, S. Moore, J. McEvoy, L.

Byrne, R. Walsh, J. Dalton, A.

McCormack. Subs.: P. Knox, V.

Bolger.

So, having already lost by 2-11 (17) to 3-6 (15) in a preliminary round tie against Birr Community School, the College faced them again in the Leinster final. In that first clash Birr once had a lead of seven points, but Kieran's finished well and so had room for optimism going into the decider.

Two well-trained and disciplined teams produced a breath-taking final. Birr had their captain dismissed at a vital stage during the second

half, more for excessive high spirits than anything else, and looked in deep trouble. But they ducked St. Kieran's best efforts to land a knock-out punch and went on to collect their second Leinster championship. (Presentation College, Birr, won the crown in 1979 and 1980).

St. Kieran's went to Rathdowney in search of their 35th crown. They just failed to get it (3-5 to 2-7) against a team which showed amazing defiance. At half-time Birr led by 2-3 to 2-2. Then in the 46th minute the winners had a man dismissed, and after that they fell into arrears of 2-4 to 2-5.

Everything seemed to be falling into place for a St. Kieran's win. But Birr were having none of it. Each player redoubled his efforts and in an enthralling conclusion they got home by the minimum margin. The teams were level with four minutes remaining thanks to a point from Lorcan O'Neill. But the score that mattered most was one from Brian Guinan in the closing moments.

There was no shame in defeat here for St. Kieran's, who had quality players in Denis Carroll, John Feehan, Shane O'Neill and Lorcan O'Neill.

St. Kieran's College: P. Bergin (Galmoy), D. Carroll (Conahy Shamrocks), P. Carroll (Dicksboro), P. Carroll (Dicksboro), P. Carroll (Dicksboro), D. Phelan (Mooncoin), T. Byrne (Young Irelands), J. Langton (Clara), L. Egan (John Lockes), S. O'Neill (Young Irelands), C. O'Dwyer (Carrickshock), E. Keher (O'Loughlin's), L. O'Neill (Dunnamaggin), J. Feehan (Conahy Shamrocks), D. Purcell (Tullaroan), J. Millea (James Stephens).

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Subs.: A Ronan (Graigue-Bally-callan), T. Hayes (Danesfort), P. Murphy (Clara), N. Comerford (James Stephens), R. O'Neill (Dunnamaggin), P. Dalton (Three-castles), J. Teehan (Graigue-Bally-callan), S. Lonergan (Carrick-on-Suir), C. Fitzgerald (Thomastown), M. Kehoe (Young Irelands), J. Crosbie (St. Lactain's), T. O'Sullivan (Thurles Sarsfields).

NO LUCK

Kilkenny had no luck either in the Leinster vocational schools senior hurling championship. The Noresiders scored a facile 7-9 to 2-2 win over Wexford in the semi-final,



but once again Offaly downed them in the Leinster final:

The score on this occasion was 3-12 to 0-5, which only slightly flattered the victors. Offaly were skilful and sharp, and at half-time had built up a commanding 2-10 to 0-1 lead. Pick of the losers were Joe Murphy, Ray Kirwan, Willie O'Gorman, John Delaney, Richard Aylward and Pat Heffernan.

Kilkenny: T. Phelan (Johnstown), B. Foskin (Mooncoin), W. O'Gorman (Johnstown), J. Murphy (Mooncoin), R. Kirwan (Thomastown), J. Delaney (Johnstown), M. Wall (Johnstown), R. Aylward (Ballyhale), J. O'Dwyer (Kilkenny), T. Murphy (Mooncoin), P. Cullen (Thomastown), D. Phelan (Thomastown), P. Heffernan (Kilkenny), M. Henderson (Johnstown), J. Byrne (Graignamanagh). Subs.: B. Maher (Thomastown), C. Cullen (Kilkenny).

Threecastles accepted at last

A 12-MONTH battle to be given the status of an affiliated hurling club in Kilkenny ended successfully for Threecastles early in the year when they were accepted into the fold by the Co. Board.

In early 1984 Threecastles, who were described as one of the four original teams in the county, along with Tullaroan, Mooncoin and Erin's Own, had an application for entry into the Kilkenny championship turned down on a 32-30 vote. Early in '85 a second application was 'put on ice' because it was felt it was made prematurely.

Threecastles wanted to break away from the parish team of St. Lactain's (Freshford), a part of which they had been since 1961. They were granted their wish in February, when a simple Yes/No ballot vote earned them a favourable 34-21 vote from delegates.

The application early in '85 was not dealt with because Threecastles jumped the gun. They put it before the same 'Board as had heard and rejected it initially, so it was suspended until after the County Convention, when they got the 'all clear' to field in the championship.

"We were very disappointed when we didn't get in last year and we went out to prove to the Co. Board that we could operate properly as a club," a Threecastles officer explained. "The long wait and all the work has been worthwhile".

For a year Threecastles operated in a sort of hurling limbo. Although not a properly affiliated G.A.A.



Dinny Butler...he could not be involved in G.A.A. affairs until Threecastles were recognised as a club.

club, they continued to play matches whenever and wherever they could get them. In all, their players togged-out for 28 games during the Centenary year. This was the deliberate policy the club pursued in a bid to improve their case for an application they promised they would make in '85 after their first request for membership was rejected.

Long history

Threecastles fielded in the junior hurling and football championships in Kilkenny — and did reasonably well. They scored a couple of victories, and with a bit of luck could have made the shake-up in the Northern championship. They continued to draw good crowds, and through the efforts of hard working club member, Nicky Grace, made sure their matches were publicised, something all clubs should do.

Threecastles have a long history of involvement in Gaelic games in Kilkenny. The club won the senior hurling championship in 1898 and 1903, and the junior hurling title in 1940. One of their most famous

sons, John Lalor, refereed the senior hurling finals in 1914, '15 and 1916. He was selected again in 1919, but the final was declared null and void.

Subsequently, Mr. Lalor officiated at three more finals, and then another man, James Lawlor, took charge of the 1927 senior hurling showdown. Two other men, John Roberts (Dicksboro) and Sean Hogan (Waterford) are also credited with involvement in this final.

The club also provided referees for intermediate hurling finals. The honours here were taken by Martin Egan in 1932 and Dinny Butler, then a member of St. Lactain's but from the Threecastles end of the parish, in 1981 and '82. The same quartet also took charge of junior finals.

The club has also provided players for Kilkenny all-Ireland winning teams, including Jack Rochford, who won seven senior; Jim and Martin Lalor and Tom Murphy. John Teehan, who was actually born in Ballycallan but moved to the Threecastles area when he was a boy, played with the club until they folded in the 'sixties. As a St. Lactain's player he captured all-Ireland honours.

Winner of all-Ireland medals in 1932 and '33, Jim Darmody was also from the Threecastles area, but he played his club hurling with Tullaroan. Jack Egan, a substitute on the 1947 winning team, was also a native of the area. And his father, Martin Egan, was the longest serving chairman of the Northern Board, a post he filled from 1942 to 1967.



GOWRAN, who won the Under-14 Hurling Championship and were losing Féile na nGael finalists.

Back row (I. to r.): John O'Neill (committee), James Bryan, John Knox (coach), Pat Brennan, Martin Treacy, Vincent Keogh (juvenile committee), Colm Curran, James McDermott, Tom Fenlon, Charlie Carter, Pat O'Neill, Robert Middleton, Jack Carey, John Cleary, Brendan Lennon, Richard O'Neill (coach). Front row (I. to r.): David O'Neill, Kieran Phelan, Patrick Farrell, John Knox, Aidan Roche, Eamon Concannon, Kieran Carey, Joe Walsh, John Drennan, Tommy Lennon, Joe Farrell, Joe Lennon. Kneeling: Garry Farrell, Martin Carey, Dennis Dunphy.



St. Kieran's College, who won the Leinster juvenile hurling championship (1984/85). **Back row** (l. to r.): Fr. F. Farrell, Declan Dundon, Paul Brennan, Charlie Meagher, Tim Finlay, Tom Lalor, Billy Whelan, Sean Morrissey, Brian McGrath, Robert Dillon, Dick Dooley, Jim Cashin, John Carey, David Stapleton, Seamus Brennan. **Front row** (l. to r.): Tadhg O'Donoghoe, Noel Brennan, Kieran Conroy, Pat O'Dowd, Pat O'Neill (capt.), Tomás Nolan, Charlie Carter, Ciaran Phelan, Nigel Leydon, John O'Dowd.



JAMES STEPHENS – completed a fine treble and won the Minor Hurling Championship and League, and also the Minor Football Championship (Roinn A).

Back row (l. to r.): Alan McCormack, Paul Thornton, Frankie Morgan, Keith McCormack, Pat Heffernan, Jimmy Walton, Niall Brophy, Joe Dalton, Anthony Smith, Declan Forristal, Paul O'Sullivan, Declan Mullen, Michael Morrissey. Front row (l. to r.): J. Morgan, Jody O'Dwyer, Peter Stone, Richard Minogue, Kevin Conroy, Ray Kennedy, Jimmy Conroy, Seamus McGuire, Nicky Comerford, Jim Smith, John Millea, John Larkin.

What can we expect from Shamrocks now?

CAN Kilkenny followers expect more exciting happenings from senior hurling champions, Shamrocks (Ballyhale/Knocktopher)? Bearing in mind their track record, and the thrilling way the Shamrocks bounced back to win championship '85 — supporters could expect anything from these gifted competitors.



SHAMROCKS (Knocktopher-Ballyhale) - who won the Kilkenny Senior Hurling Championship for the sixth time. Back row (I. to r.): Richard Keneally; Dick Walsh, Watty Phelan, Kevin Fennelly, Michael Fennelly, Liam Long, Maurice Mason, Sean Fennelly, Dermot Fennelly, Liam Fennelly, Ollie Harrington. Front row (l. to r.): Michael Kearney, John Phelan, Ger Fennelly, Brendan Fennelly, Michael Kelly, Tommy Phelan, Frank Holohan (capt.), Paul Phelan, Sean Reid, Declan Connolly, Pat Phelan, Seamus Grace.

on the scene when they won the none of that, and following a steady junior championship of 1973, and then the intermediate title immediately afterwards, the more, the stylish Shamrocks won Southerners have delighted their their sixth Kilkenny senior crown. followers by racing from one exciting victory to another.

to be down the field finishers for a senior title has brought the club in stakes, the Shamrocks have passed

Since the Shamrocks exploded few years. But they were having line in the overall winners stakes campaign, and an explosive performance in the final against Glen-

The club has scored many a memorable win in the past, even at This year was a typical example. all-Ireland level, but this year's final The Shamrocks, having lost last operformance must rank among the year's county final, were expected best. And the addition of another

with James Stephens, an outfit founded over seven times longer than the Shamrocks.

The Ballyhale-Knocktopher outfit was founded in 1972, and to date have taken 16 Kilkenny championships at various grades. That is an amazing haul by any yardstick. And as well as catching up with 'Stephens in the senior hurling

out the famed Fenians (Johnstown) who have five titles to their credit.

Shed players
The Southerners put three senior wins together in 1978, '79 and 1980. Then they took a break of a year and put two victories together. Then they took another break, so are they back for another two together, or maybe even three ina-row. Who knows with this outfit who shed players, but seem to find good replacements instantly.

"We thought we were slipping this year", Shamrocks goalkeeper and selector, Kevin Fennelly (junior) conceded after the tremendous 4-18 to 3-13 success over Glenmore. "The feeling of satisfaction after winning was as good as when we won our first title".

The on-the-field happenings would suggest the spirit within the club is as good as ever also. Glenmore, young and fast, but lacking the experience of their opponents, played as good as they ever did during the first half of the county final. The sides were evenly matched and then two minutes off the break Glenmore exploded and hit the Shamrocks what appeared two crippling blows.

First Christy Heffernan slammed home a good goal. Within seconds Johnny Murphy fired home another, and with their confidence sky high, Glenmore went in for the rest 2-10 to 1-6 ahead. It looked all over for the Shamrocks.

Far from it, the experienced campaigners in green and white came out for the second half as if it was they who had got the lift before the interval. They took the game to their opponents, and first Brendan Fennelly fired over a point. Then Brendan did so again. Then his brother Liam did it. Then another brother Ger did likewise, and all of a sudden the arrears were back to 1-10 to 2-10.

A goal from Michael Kelly in the 43rd minute squared the match at 2-12 each. After that the teams exchanged points, but in the 48th minute Brendan Fennelly booted a goal that put the Shamrocks on the

high road to another win. They that was against Glenmore in pounded their opponents to the Mullinavat. It was victories all the finish and were not at all flattered by their margin of victory.

It was hurling to compare favourably with anything they produced during the past 10 years, and the final was regarded as the best in at least that period.



BEST OF THE LOT

"I would regard this year's win as the best of the lot", a delighted club chairman, Patrick Holden enthused. "At half-time I wasn't at all sure we would do it, but the players turned in an incredible second half".

They sure did, and the hurling of Liam, Brendan and Ger Fennelly had to be seen to be believed. Veteran centre-back Maurice Mason finished in sterling fashion, and Frank Holohan, Sean Fennelly and Dermot Fennelly also played extremely well.

For a team that was supposed to be failing, the county final was some swan-song. So good was it in fact that an encore cannot be discounted in 1986.

The team selectors, Patrick Holden, Kevin Fennelly (junior) and Michael Hoyne, not to mention trainer-coach, Martin Og Morrissey had every reason to be proud, and optimistic, even if a few key players are pushing on a bit. Any side that performed the way the Shamrocks did in the second half against Glenmore cannot be

It was a steady path the champions took through the campaign. They were not in a mood for messing when they opened against intermediate champions, St. Lactain's They only dropped one point, and Phelan.

way after that, although they had a near thing against Erin's Own (Castlecomer) in the semi-finals.

That afternoon they had to use the old and dependable ploy of taking goalkeeper, Kevin Fennelly from between the posts for outthe-field duty. The player/selector made all the difference, because the 'Comer men were 1-12 to 1-9 ahead at the time. That reliable hand, Ollie Harrington (46) took over from Fennelly in goal with 13 minutes remaining.

COMEBACK

Out the field Kevin engineered a goal for his brother Dermot that sparked off a Shamrocks comeback. That fightback ended with them pulling off a narrow 2-11 to 1-12 win. They knew they had a bit of work to do after that. Perhaps it was there and then the "slipping thoughts" began. Come county final time the Shamrocks had everything right, and they weren't going to be beaten.

Experience can be a tremendous advantage to any team, but coupled with the terrific will to win of the Shamrocks, it becomes an unbeatable mix.

Shamrocks panel: Kevin Fennelly, Liam Long, Frank Holohan (captain), Wattie Phelan, Paul Phelan, Maurice Mason, Sean Fennelly, Ger Fennelly, Tommy Phelan, Sean Reid, Michael Fennelly, Dermot Fennelly, Brendan Fennelly, Liam Fennelly, Michael Kelly, Ollie Harrington, Declan Connolly, Johnny Phelan, Seamus Grace, Pat Phelan, Dick Walsh, Michael Kearney, Richard Keneally.

Glenmore panel: Michael Deady, John Phelan, Paddy Murphy (captain), Eddie O'Connor, Paddy O'Connor, Eddie Aylward, Des Ennett, Ray Heffernan, Bill Doherty, Pat Barron. Mick O'Connor, John Flynn, Johnny Murphy, Christy Heffernan, John Heffernan, John Kirwan, Seamus Boyle, Francis Ennett, Mickey Phelan, Tom Murphy, Pat Phelan, Dick Hennessy, Frank Kirwan. Tom (Freshford) who they beat well. Phelan, Michael Phelan, Seamus

Good to see Glenmore and 'Comer in the hunt

THE appearance of Glenmore in the Kilkenny senior hurling final was a welcome development. Not just because of the Southerners 'pure hurling' style, but because their presence represented a breakthrough.

It would be a mundane championship, and not very attractive for the casual supporters, if the same four or five clubs were the real contenders for honours year after year.

A new face always generates excitement, just like St. Martin's did last season. A team like Glenmore, or St. Martin's, or any other for that matter, can liven up the competition

Overall, the senior championship wasn't bad during 1985. The semi-finals were rather disappointing for the fare they provided, but the final made amends.

Glenmore were well beaten in the end, but they had plenty to be happy about. It is never easy to accept defeat in a final, but the secret to success is to turn such disappointments to your advantage. Some of the great sides, at club and county level, became 'great' for the simple reason they tasted defeat at the start and that made them strong.

Glenmore have oodles of hurling ability, and now they have gained in experience, so if they really want to, they could make '86 their year.

"If Glenmore have character they could come back and win the championship next year", was the opinion expressed by Shamrocks' selector Kevin Fennelly (junior) after the county final. He should know what having character means, because the Shamrocks showed plenty of it this season, and most especially in the showdown.

NOT BAD PLAYERS

Paddy Murphy, Eddie Aylward, Eddie and Michael O'Connor, Johnny Murphy, Ray and Christy Heffernan and Bill Doherty are good players who enjoyed a fine season for Glenmore. The final result didn't suddenly make them bad players. Glenmore were the Page 60

biggest scorers in the senior championship. That must stand for something. No, the defeated finalists should not be downhearted.

They failed in the decider where the Glenmore teams of 1960 and 1964 failed before them. But they are basically a young side, and have the potential to bounce back if they really make up their mind to do so.

Teams wondering what they have to do to break the monopoly of the big guns should take example from the defeated semi-finalists, St. Martin's and Erin's Own (Castle-comer).



Mick 'Cloney' Brennan . . . he played the proverbial blinder for Erin's Own in the senior hurling semi-final.

Just look at what the Muckalee parish team achieved last year after scoring their first victory in Kilkenny. The demands of the long All-Ireland club campaign drained their enthusiasm and they found it hard work all year. They were b'éaten by 2-15 to 2-10 by Glenmore in the semi-finals, but watch out for a backlash here next season.

Off all the teams, including the champions, Erin's Own could claim they enjoyed the best year. They just avoided relegation in 1984, but through long and hard preparations they made the semi's this time and a small thing would have earned them victory over Shamrocks there.

The 'Comer men also got through to the semi-finals of the open draw championship, so manager Kieran Meally and his charges can be pleased with their lot. When did former All-Star Mick 'Cloney' Brennan do as well in the Kilkenny championship? He had a fantastic season and had people talking about him making a return to the county side at one stage.

'Comer's best player was defender Tom Brennan, who turned in a constant good level of performance that was matched by few in the whole county.

Not far behind were Martin Fogarty, Eamon Wallace, Eamon Brennan, Peadar Healy, John Kelly and Seamus Brennan. Remember, they were forced to play the semifinal without the injured Peter Boran and Michael Nash, so who knows what they are capable of at full strength?

NEED MORE TIME

James Stephens are still building for the future. They have a young side, and it is taking a bit longer to mature than mentors initially thought. They would appear to need more than another year to get it together, but they are heading in the right direction.

St. Lactain's were not favoured by the draw, and never recovered from a demanding start against Shamrocks and Fenians (Johnstown) who proved too experienced for them. Later they were hit by a glut of injuries, so their chances of making an impression after winning the intermediate championship the previous year were killed before they even began.

The Fenians are in the process of reshaping their team, but they are still able to pull out a good perfor-

mance here and there. They enjoyed a lot of luck, and the blessing of the referee in their opening match against the Rower-Inistioge. Victory there helped the Fenians, but upset the Rower so badly they never recovered and so went through a tough campaign.



Thomastown gained victory in the open draw championship, so they had something to be happy about. They were less than pleased about the manner in which they let a place in the semi-finals slip away. They have potential. It is up to themselves in the future.

Clara were expected to do better than they actually did. They got involved in at least three very, very physical battles, and they suffered as a result. They have plenty of hurling in them, but they won't realise their true potential until they shake off the 'hard man' image.

Mooncoin played a couple of really good games, but luck never went with them. Injuries turned

Roll of honour

Tullaroan (19) - 1887, 1889, 1895, 1897, 1899, 1901, 1902, 1904, 1907, 1910, 1911, 1915, 1924, 1925, 1930, 1933, 1934, 1948, 1958.

Mooncoin (12) - 1888, 1900, 1906, 1908, 1913, 1916, 1927, 1928, 1929, 1932, 1936, 1965.

Bennettsbridge (12) - 1890, 1952, 1953, 1955, 1956, 1959, 1960, 1962, 1964, 1966, 1967, 1971.

Carrickshock (7) - 1931, 1938, 1940, 1941, 1942, 1943, 1951.

James Stephens (6 - 1935, 1937,

1969, 1975, 1976, 1981. Shamrocks (6) – 1978, 1979, 1980, 1982, 1983, 1985.

Fenians (Johnstown) (5) - 1970, 1972, 1973, 1974, 1977.

Eire Og (4) – 1939, 1944, 1945, 1947. Dicksboro (3) - 1923, 1926, 1950.

Confederation (3) - 1893, 1894, 1896.

Erin's Own (City) (2) - 1905, 1909. Threecastes (2) - 1898, 1903. St. Lactain's (Freshford) (2) - 1961, 1963. Johnstown (1) – 1914. Thomastown (1) - 1946.

Graigue (1) - 1949. Slieverue (1) - 1954. John Lockes (Callan) (1) – 1957. Rower-Inistioge (1) – 1968.

what could have been a good season into a hard slog. Don't be misled by their lowly position in the league table. They played well, in adverse circumstances. Watch them zoom up the table next season.

Poor St. Patrick's (Ballyragget)! They never got a break and once the early results went against them a couple of players accepted the inevitable. They have good players but a lack of confidence after early setbacks rocked them.



Glenmore, the defeated senior hurling finalists. Back row (left to right): Des Ennett, Michael Deady, Christy Heffernan, Bill Doherty, Johnny Murphy, Pat Barron, John Heffernan, Ray Heffernan. Front (left to right): John Phelan, Ned Aylward, Mick O'Connor, Paddy Murphy (capt.), Eddie O'Connor, John Flynn, Paddy O'Connor.



Ladies take up where Pa left off

By Diarmuid Healy

Offaly Senior Hurling Team Coach/Trainer

PA DILLON'S extraordinary career has ranged from one of being Kilkenny's spectacular hurling full-back of the 'sixties, to being the husband of a modern day team manager.

The chore of decorating the trophy cabinet in the Dillon household in the 'sixties belonged to Pa, but today it's the turn of his wife and their two

children.

Pa Dillon was both feared and respected by every forward as he played a key role in smashing the Tipperary hoodoo over Kilkenny twenty years ago.

And last summer the same Mr. Dillon got similar satisfaction out of watching his wife, Teresa and daughter, Gilian create history in Kilkenny

camogie circles.

The extraordinary Dillon story began away back in 1967 when Pa earned a place in the annals of hurling folklore while at the same time blocking another stalwart defender from creating a record.

The scene was all-Ireland final day. Kilkenny were ahead of their old rivals and bogey team, Tipperary in the closing quarter. But suddenly Kilkenny seemed destined for the same old fate and that stalwart Tipperary defender, John Doyle appeared geared to take his record ninth all-

Pa Dillon, he helped smash the Tipperary hoodoo.

Ireland medal, when Donie Nealon drew the Kilkenny defence.

CONTEMPLATING SUICIDE

But just as numerous Kilkenny supporters were seriously contemplating suicide, in stepped the bold and fearless Pa Dillon to intercept a Nealon pass to the unmarked Liam Devaney in front of the Kilkenny goalmouth. He thus ensured an historic Noreside victory.

The life long ambition of a regular place on the Kilkenny team had now been realised for Pa Dillon, while for John Doyle, that much dreamed of ninth medal was now never to become a reality.

Today the 47-year-old farmer allows himself a little smug smile as he still cherishes that moment. Now he farms 140 acres on the outskirts of his native Freshford, but thoughts of that glorious moment often spring to mind.

Regarded as the terror of every forward during his playing days, Pa Dillon is very much the gentle giant off the field of play.

And he is the first to admit that his rise to the top of the hurling world wasn't easy. From finding it difficult to secure a regular spot on the Kilkenny team, he went on to become one of the county's outstanding fullbacks and won three all-Ireland senior medals in the process.

Thrown in at the deep end, his first experience at full-back in the black and amber was in a tournament game against Waterford in 1960. The prize for the winners was a trip to

London.

DIZZY

Behind him in goal was the brilliant Ollie Walsh, and outside in the Waterford attack were such stars as Seamus Power and Philly Grimes.

"I was dizzy looking at Power and Grimes dashing in and Ollie darting out", he recalls jokingly. But Kilkenny won their trip to London.

When Kilkenny lost the Leinster final later that year he was dropped from the team. And on his return as a substitute three years later, Kilkenny won the all-Ireland final and another trip—this time to New York.

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◆ Continued from page 22

The Kilkenny under-21 team also fared reasonably well in the Leinster championship, in this case against Wexford in New Ross. The home side won by 2-11 to 1-5, but were flattered by the result. Wexford took a lot for granted in the first half, yet turned over with a lead of 1-7 to 0-3.

In the closing period Kilkenny didn't spare the effort. By the three-quarter mark they had pulled back the arrears to 1-5 to 1-8, and had Wexford panicking. In the end the superior class of the Slaney-siders got them through, but they got a bit of a fright.

COULD HOLD THEIR OWN

On this occasion Richard Dunne, Tom Brennan, Liam Simpson, Tom Phelan, Mick Delaney and Jimmy Prendergast looked capable of holding their own in any company.

Kilkenny – J. Walsh (Lisdowney), J. Fogarty (Lisdowney), T. Brennan (Railyard), L. Simpson (Bennettsbridge), T. Phelan (Shamrocks), M. Delaney (Railyard), P. Barron (Glenmore), J. Prendergast (Graignamanagh), P. O'Dwyer (Kilmoganny), T. Devlin (James Stephens), G. Walsh (Thomastown), P. Hennebry (Dicksboro), R. Dunne (Graignamanagh), J. Whelan (Graignamanagh), T. Morrissey (Tullogher-Rosbercon). Subs.: F. Kirwan (Glenmore), J. Caldbeck (Graigue-Ballycallan). Scorers here were G. Walsh (1-0), R. Dunne (0-2), J. Prendergast, J. Whelan, F. Kirwan (0-1 each).

As usual, there was little encouragement from the National League. Kilkenny lost all their games, and apart from a spirited performance against Sligo, had little to shout about. It has become an annual cry now but, who knows, maybe next year.

Calendar not full, so make way for more games

SOME may be of the opinion that the hurling and football calendars locally are packed enough already, but if this season's activities are anything to go by, then clubs can make way for more competition.

During the Centenary Year the Co. Board decided to run special open hurling and football championships as a local addition to the host of events to mark the time that was in it. The competitions proved smash hits, and the 'Board decided to try them again this year.

Well, this time they proved even more popular, and in the case of the football anyway, the event was run far more efficiently than the established championships. The success all round has virtually assured these competitions will be run on an annual basis now.

In these particular cases clubs will hardly mind the extra matches which will prolong the season. Both are run before the established championships and for clubs adopting the right approach and attitude, can prove invaluable for getting teams into shape for the big events.

The hurling event this time, known as the Byrne Cup, was won by Thomastown, who in the two years of these competitions have taken both titles. In the hurling final they beat the Rower-Inistioge, while last year in the football showdown they proved too good for Muckalee after extra-time.

Tradition would favour the Railyard in any football event in Kilkenny. True to form, the Northerners came through to win, but only in a replay against Bennettsbridge, in an event known as the Moremiles Cup.

Looked like winning

Thomastown enjoyed a mixed campaign on their way to the decider. They opened against Young Irelands (Gowran) and won by 3-4 to 1-9. Then they beat Barrow Rangers (5-8 to 1-6), Emeralds after a replay (4-9 to 1-7), before taking on Erin's Own in the semi-final. This was a match the 'Comer men looked like winning at half-time, but Thomastown hit them hard in the second half and got away with a 4-6 to 2-7 victory.

The Rower-Inistioge won through the other half of the draw by beating Shamrocks (9-18 to 0-2), Conahy Shamrocks (3-11 to 2-5), Danesfort (1-9 to 1-4) before downing Clara by 1-8 to 0-7 in the semi-final

The decider didn't produce great fare, as the 'Town won by 1-13 to 0-12. The Rower, hit by injuries and in the middle of an unlucky championship run, were neck-and-neck for 45 minutes. They led by 0-4 to 0-3 after 19 minutes, but then a Thomastown goal by Philip 'Pippy' Brennan helped them into a half-time lead of 1-4 to 0-6.

Scores from Sylvie Lester had the Rower 0-9 to 1-5 ahead after 42 minutes. A point from Philip Brennan levelled the scores, and then three like scores from John Donnelly broke the losers' heart. From there on it was easy for Thomastown.

Thomastown team — J. Brennan, D. Breen, M. Galway, L. O'Neill, S. Kiely, M. Donnelly, B. O'Hara, D. Hoyne, J. Prendergast, P. Lannon, R. Murphy, J. Donnelly, G. Maher, P. Brennan, G. Walsh. Subs: J. O'Hara, M. Farrell.

Rower-Inistioge — H. Murphy, A. Galavan, M. Tierney, J. Murphy, M. Cullen, P. Treacy, J. Watters, T. Lyng, D. Meaney, T. Malone, J. Prendergast, S. Kelly, S. Lester, M. Lyng, N. Cotterell.

FOOTBALL

The football final was played the same day, and a point from John Brennan, followed by a Richard Comerford goal in the last four minutes, earned Bennettsbridge a 1-9 each draw against Railyard. The 'Bridge led by 0-7 to 0-5 at half-time.

The replay was at Nowlan Park nearly a month later, and this time the Railyard took the title (1-14 to 1-6). The match came to life during the third quarter when the 'Bridge reduced the difference to 1-6 to 1-9. But the more seasoned campaigners from the North were equal to the task and ended with points from Paddy O'Dowd, Michael Brennan (2) and M. Buggy (2) to run out comfortable winners. The winners were 1-2 to no score ahead after seven minutes, and at the break were 1-6 to 1-2 clear.

Railyard team — N. Kerr, M. O'Dowd, M. Rowe, L. Mooney, T. Brennan, M. Delaney, M. Buggy, A. Daly, N. Power, M. Buggy, M. Brennan, P. O'Dowd, S. Coogan, M. Fitzgerald, J. O'Donnell. Sub: J. Murtagh.

Bennettsbridge — M. Burke, E. Lawlor, Jim Lannon, Jack Lannon, L. Simpson, T. Cashin, T. Lannon, R. Comerford, B. Crowe, T. Drea, G. Cleere, L. Walsh, T. Cullen, S. Cleere, P. Lannon. Subs: O. Lawlor, J. Lawlor.



Galmoy, who were defeated in the final of the Roinn B primary schools hurling championship



Kilmacow, who were runners-up in the under-14 hurling championship (Roinn D).



Billy Was Tops . . . Billy Gaffney (right) of Tullaroan was the Kilkenny winner in the Clubman of the Year competition. Here he is being presented with a scroll to mark his victory by by G.A.A. President of that time, Paddy Buggy. Billy's club, Tullaroan, won the club of the year award in the A.I.B. promoted scheme.

there. The 'Board should ensure that all team officials do the job they are nominated to do. If they don't they should never be considered for duty again. It's short and simple.

The Kilkenny scorers in the match against Dublin were – M. Kennedy (1-1); P. Phelan (0-2, frees); P. Lannon, G. Kenny (0-1 each).

The Kilkenny team was: M. Walsh (Dicksboro); J. Cody (Graignamanagh); P. Holden (Mullinavat); E. Wall (Lisdowney); C. Hickey (St. Lactain's); G. Ryan (St. Lactain's); D. Power (Mullinavat); P. Ryan (Emeralds); S. Norris (Piltown); P. Phelan (St. Lactain's); M. Byrne (Young Irelands); P. Lannon (Thomastown); M. Kennedy (St. Lactain's); R.

McCarthy (Bennettsbridge); L. McCarthy (Piltown). Subs – P. Brennan (Thomastown); G. Kenny (Piltown); J. Dunphy (Mullinavat). Reserves not used – M. Walsh (St. Lactain's); B. Grace (Graignamanagh); T. Dowling (Graignamanagh); J. Lannon (Bennettsbridge); N. Culleton (Piltown); L. Cody (Emeralds); J. Dunne (Mullinavat).

NICKY – A LOYAL AND FAITHFUL SERVANT



Thank you Nicky . . . Kilkenny Central Council representative, Nicky Purcell, stepped down this year after 19 years service. By way of a 'thank you' from the Co. Board, he was made a presentation by chairman, Michael O'Neill. Also in picture is Tom Ryall, like Nicky a member of the Graigue-Ballycallan club, who took over as Central Council representative.

A NEW life President of Kilkenny Co. Board was elected in late January.

Popular Central Council representative, Nicky Purcell, was accorded the honour in recognition of the great service he has given the county.

Nicky, a member of the Graigue club, served as chairman of Kilkenny Co. Board from 1959 until 1968, when he was succeeded by the present chairman, Michael O'Neill (St. Senan's).

Nický was first elected to the Central Council in 1966 and was Kilkenny's representative on that body ever since. In 1963 he represented the county at Leinster Council level.

Mr. Purcell, an employee of Avonmore Creameries (Ballyragget), did not seek reelection at Co. Board Convention. At Convention, a member of the Graigue-Ballycallan club, Tom Ryall, author of *Kilkenny - The G.A.A. Story (1884-1984)*, was elected to succeed Mr. Purcell at Central Council level.

The Co. Board honoured Nicky Purcell for his loyal and faithful service.

"He always pushed the Kilkenny cause in a loyal and careful manner", chairman Michael O'Neill reckoned. "He never let the county down, and it is only fitting that he should be honoured by Kilkenny".

Excellent efforts

Eamon Kelly (St. Lactain's) proposed that Mr. Purcell be made a Life President of the Co. Board in recognition of "his excellent efforts for Gaelic games in the county"... Jim McCarthy (James Stephens) seconded.

Replying, Nicky Purcell thanked delegates for "this signal honour". He said it was always a pleasure to serve Kilkenny.

He said through his work he got an excellent opportunity to see how much the 'Association meant to everyone in the county, and what Kilkenny teams at all levels meant to people everywhere. "I was always struck by the fervour of people who wished to see Kilkenny teams successful", he remarked.

Mr. Purcell said he never received anything but co-operation and encouragement in Kilkenny, and this helped make his work easy and enjoyable. He assured the 'Board he would always be willing to help the G.A.A., and he would do everything for it with the best will in the world.

To mark the end of his 19-year reign on the Central Council, Mr. Purcell was presented with a Kilkenny crystal decanter by the Co. Board.



Kilkenny hurling greats, Noel Skehan (left) and Frank Cummins have plenty to smile about as they hold the McCarthy Cup, the trophy for the All-Ireland senior hurling championship. Between them they won 17 senior medals. Noel Skehan won a record nine, including three as a substitute, and one as captain. Frank Cummins won eight, one as a reserve in 1967, but he played in all the rest (1969, '72, '74, '75, '79, '82 and '83) and in the one midfield position at that, which is a unique achievement. Cummins lies seconds in the overall winners list with John Doyle (Tipperary) and the late Christy Ring (Cork).

LESS TITLES, BUT JUST AS MUCH GLORY

By Tommy O'Brien

President, Handball Association

WITH 'only' seven national titles to compare to last year's 14, Kilkenny's handball may appear to have taken a tumble in 1985. But a closer examination of the facts proves otherwise.

Michael 'Ducksie' Walsh proved himself the top handballer in Ireland at the tender age of 19. He attracted huge crowds to all his games, and became the most popular player in the country. Eugene Downey won a deserved senior title, and was as loudly acclaimed as any player in recent times.

Billy Bourke was narrowly beaten in another senior singles final, this time in 40 x 20.

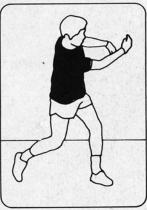
Pat O'Keeffe continued to demonstrate his ageless qualities with a dual win in Golden Masters. Johnny O'Meara had to wait until he passed the half-century mark before winning a national event. The wait was well worthwhile. Martin Lalor, underdog in almost every round he played, showed tremendous skill, guts, and sportsmanship in winning his way to junior ranks.

The Talbot's Inch senior team and the O'Loughlin's junior team did us proud as well. We had some near misses also. Pat Maher and John Doyle in under-21 doubles; the St. Canice's Community Games under-13 team and top juvenile players Sean Kelly, Jim Delaney, James Bryan, Seamie Phelan and Clinton Maher almost made it.

Ducksie — the dimunitive dynamo

Just one year out of the minor ranks, Michael 'Ducksie' Walsh turned all the seasoned seniors upside down with a series of devastating displays, particularly in Coca-Cola senior singles. His season began slowly, with a Leinster final loss in junior doubles. He compensated with victory at all-Ireland level in junior singles, where he recovered from the loss of the second game in the final against Mayo's Gus Sweeney to win the other two before a packed gallery.

This 'packed gallery' was something which played a major part in the rest of the season for Walsh. He captured all the national headlines and attracted all the crowds. He was opposed by Wexford hurling star, John Fleming, in the first round of the Coca-Cola senior singles championship. He accounted for the Wexford player in straigh games. The pace was raised for the next round when he met the then current champion — the World champion to boot — Tom O'Rourke. This game, at Clonmel, attracted such attention that a minibus load from Belfast travelld for the tie. The game disappointed. O'Rourke succumbed fairly easily to the wiles of Walsh and the way was clear for an all-Kilkenny semifinal between 'Ducksie' and his first cousin, Billy Bourke.



The natural venue was Talbot's Inch, but interest in the game was such that the Freshford Road venue was unable to take the crowd, and many disappointed people were turned away. Once more, the game was a disappointment. A magnificent start soon gave way to a procession of aces by Walsh as all form left Bourke. The latter was soundly beaten and Walsh earned a final spot against Tipperary's Tony Ryan.

Once more, the media attention was turned on 'Ducksie'. Once more the crowds flocked to his game, this time at spacious Croke Park. The 'full house' signs were up once more. Yet again it was a straight games victory for Walsh. There was drama before the match when it was learned the Kilkenny star had stitches inserted into the palm of his left hand only days before following an accident at work. But even this did not upset the Kilkenny superstar, and he motored on to victory.

Eugene — dependable and brilliant

There was controversy before a ball was struck in the Coca-Cola doubles, when the partner for Ducksie Walsh was debated. Eventually, it was Eugene Downey who partnered him, the same partnership which had won the corresponding junior event two years previously.

Strangely, while Ducksie was putting on great shows in singles, this form deserted him in doubles. First round opposition was provided by Sligo, and this was summarily dis-

missed.

Downey was called very much into the action in the next round when the Tipperary partnership,

Tony Ryan and Tom Morrissey — who had seen Paddy Reilly and Ollie Harold on their way earlier in the championship — looked certain to win. Then the Talbot's Inch villager, Eugene Downey, came to the rescue. He gave an exhibition of ball-playing in Croke Park to get Kilkenny into the semi-finals.

It looked an easy semi against North Tipperary pair Noel O'Brien and Billy Mullins. O'Brien had a heavy cold before the game. Still he partnered Mullins in a fine exhibition, which almost saw off the Kilkenny hopes. Indeed, it was a real last-ditch effort which got the

black and amber men through.

The final opponents were the virtually unbeatable Quish brothers, Tom and John. Once more Eugene Downey was in unbeatable form. Just when the chips were really down, Ducksie Walsh came back to his very best to outwit and outstay his Limerick rivals.

This game was postponed on the night before the senior football final because of court condensation, but the disappointment of the huge Kilkenny gathering turned to elation a week later when their extra night's travelling was not in vain and Kilkenny won the premier doubles title.



Billy Bourke who was beaten in the final of the senior singles championship (40 x 20), a competition that has never been won by a Kilkenny man.



Eugene Downey who proved the ideal partner for Michael 'Ducksie' Walsh, and they carried off the Coca-Cola senior doubles championship.

Billy Barely Beaten

The path of Billy Bourke in the senior singles championship (40 x 20) was no less dramatic than that of Walsh and Downey. The only difference was that he failed at the final hurdle. This title has never been won by a Kilkennyman. In fact, it has never been won by a Leinsterman.

Billy Bourke's first round opponent was also Wexford's John Fleming. Bourke beat him in a magnificent game at O'Loughlin's. The enforced absence of Tom O'Rourke (Kildare) through injury took from the Leinster championship. But Billy's final opponent, Billy Mullins (Offaly), gave the Kilkenny ace a tough enough time. In the semifinal, Bourke was under-dog against three-times champion, Tony Ryan. He beat Ryan in straight games, at Garryhill, to qualify to meet the reigning champion,

Mayo's Martin Hennegan, at Galway.

Bourke led 13-8 in this game, but failed to maintain the pace, and was well beaten in the end. He had a good run at the doubles in partnership with Michael Reade. The defeated the three-in-a-row champions, John Fleming and Pat Cleary (Wexford) in the first round, but found Offaly too good in the final.

MARTIN LAWLOR, JUNIOR ASPIRTANT

While every first round entrant must harbour some hope of ultimate success, the aspirations of Martin Lalor when he entered the Talbot's Inch novice trials hardly went much further than qualifying to represent the club in the Kilkenny championships. Whatever his aspirations, the reality was that he did qualify to represent his club,

won through the tough Kilkenny trials to represent his county, and went on to collect a provincial title win with some great displays in Croke Park. He was under-dog on every occasion, but raised his game to go on to victory.

He met Limerick in the all-Ireland semi-final of the novice singles championship. He left the Munster champion wondering how he got through the province, as Lalor took him apart. The final was against Mayo opposition, at a Connacht venue, Loughrea. Conceding venue to an opponent was nothing to Martin. He had beaten Dublin in Dublin, Wicklow in Wicklow, Munster in Munster and now he won an all-Ireland by beating Connacht in Connacht:

This disqualifies him from ever again playing in novice, and rightly so. The form shown by the Talbot's

Inch man proved he is much too good to play under such a banner. So next year he will be a junior aspirant. His hopes of success? Not any higher than his novice hopes were when he began that campaign!

O'KEEFFE AND O'MEARA – SOUTHERN GIANTKILLERS

Pat O'Keeffe has been the leading medal winner in Mullinavat, indeed in South Kilkenny, for quite some years now. He was joined on the victory rostrum this year by the ageless John O'Meara. They combined to win the Golden Masters doubles all-Ireland title. To win your first all-Ireland at 50 years of age plus is a great compliment to the tenacity and dedication of O'Meara. They encountered tough opposition on the way, but out-played and outstayed all.

Pat O'Keeffe also won the singles title (40 x 20), simply waltzing his way through all opposition to stamp his own class on this grade.

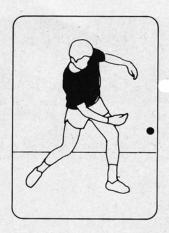
INTER-CLUB FOR THE 'INCH'

It had been some years since Talbot's Inch took the all-Ireland novice inter-club title. This gap was bridged when a very accomplished team of Jimmy Neary, Bobby Falsey, Martin Lalor and Jim McEvoy were much too good for all opposition. Having outclassed all Leinster opposition, they went on to defeat Tipperary Town, a very strong outfit indeed, in a thrilling semi-final at Talbot's Inch. They found their final opponents from Monaghan no match for their skill.

Elsewhere in inter-club, Talbot's Inch lost their 40 x 20 senior crown to Loughrea when injury forced out Michael Walsh. They lost the corresponding senior title when they were short players and failed to show against Kells.

O'Loughlin's followed their great novice all-Ireland win of last year with a fine effort at junior level. They won the provincial title, but fell to the Munster champions in the semi-final of the all-Ireland series. Success at this level appears certain for such players as Billy Walsh, Phil Parsons, John Atkinson, Con Moore, Ger Murphy and Jim O'Neill.

Pat Maher and John Doyle were provincial champions. They showed magnificent form to take the Leinster under-21 doubles title. They wilted when faced by the eventual winners, Tipperary, in the latter's home court.



JUVENILES FAIL – JUST ABOUT

It was another year when Kilkenny failed to win a juvenile all-Ireland title – only the second year since 1968 – but we did have some near-misses. Clinton Maher and Seamie Phelan won the Leinster titles in both courts, but failed to Munster opposition in the semis. James Bryan looked good enough to win the under-14 singles title, but failed at the penultimate hurdle. Sean Kelly and Jim Delaney looked equally certain to win through the doubles, but they also failed at the semi-final stage.

St. Canice's Community Games under-13 squad incredibly failed at exactly the same stage as all Kilkenny's other hitherto successful juveniles.

DEVELOPMENT

All the handball success over the year was not confined to on-court activities. Two newly built courts were opened at Kells and Windgap, and added further to the great facilities now available. Both communities involved deserve, and no doubt will receive, the full support of all Kilkenny clubs in their efforts to promote this ancient game.

AND IT STILL GOES ON

The victory saga still goes on. Michael Walsh and Billy Bourke qualified for the semi-finals of the world championship trials, with the winner qualifying for a trip to Canada next year. Walsh will have met Mayo's Martin Hennegan and Bourke will have encountered Ned Ryan by the time this is ready. One of them may well have qualified to represent Ireland in 1986.

No matter what results come between the writing of this article and the reading, Kilkenny handball looks set for a hugely successful time for many years to come.



Camogie star, Angela Downey, who was the first winner of the Hotel Kilkenny/Kilkenny People sports personality of the month award. Here she is pictured receiving the award for September from Hotel Kilkenny manager, Mr. Richard Butler.

Victory in Leinster League was misleading

IN 1981 the Leinster minor hurling league was inaugurated. The first final was contested by the North and South Kilkenny teams, with the Northerners running out convincing winners. Later that year Kilkenny took the all-Ireland minor

hurling title.

When the North and South Kilkenny teams qualified for this year's Leinster minor hurling league final, expectations were high that the all-Ireland title, last won in 1981, could be recaptured. It was not to be. Kilkenny, after beating Laois, went down to Wexford in the Leinster final by 0-12 to 0-8. Controversy surrounded the closing minutes of that game when the umpires ruled that Pat Hoban was in the square when he caught a high ball and cracked home a goal. Had that score been allowed, Kilkenny would probably have pulled through.

Kilkenny supporters were adamant that Hoban was not in the square, and a photograph of the incident proved this. It has since been learned that the umpire involved was a native of Wexford, but was living in Dublin. Perhaps in future when Dublin referees are in charge of important games, it will be made sure their umpires are not from any of the competing coun-

ties!

In the first round of the minor hurling league, South Kilkenny beat Offaly by 2-11 to 0-8. North Kilkenny drew with Antrim, 1-7 to 2-4. Scorers for the South were Kieran O'Dwyer (2-1), Ritchie Aylward (0-3).

Pat Grace (0-3), Ray Power (0-2), Michael Phelan (0-2). The North scorers were Liam Dowling (0-4), Matt O'Neill (1-0), Declan Mullen

(0-2), Joe O'Dwyer (0-1).

In the second round, South Kilkenny beat Wexford B by 2-12 to 0-5. The scorers were Kieran O'Dwyer (2-2), Pat Grace (0-2), Ritchie Aylward (0-2), Ray Power (0-5), Padraig Crowley (0-1). North Kilkenny beat Wexford A by 1-10 to 1-5, and scorers here were Liam Dowling (0-4), Jimmy Walton (1-0), Eddie Brennan (0-3), Phil Cullen,

Ned Kelly and Declan Killeen (0-1 each).

The third round was played in St. John's Park. South Kilkenny played a draw with Dublin B (1-9 to 2-6). As a result, they went through to the semi finals, by virtue of a better scoring average. The Dubs led by 1-5 to 0-2 at the interval. Good work by Liam Egan and Michael Phelan at midfield brought Kilkenny back into the game. A switch in the closing stages which brought Pat Hoban to centre-forward from centre-back had the desired result, and he scored 1-1 to level the scores.

North Kilkenny had a very convincing win. They beat Dublin A by 2-17 to 0-6. This victory qualified them for the Leinster semi-final. Scorers were Eddie Brennan (0-4), Liam Dowling (0-4), Matt O'Neill (1-1), Phil Cullen (1-1), James Brennan (0-3), Enda Morrissey (0-2), John Feehan, Jimmy Walton (0-1 each).



BEAT DUBLIN

In the semi-finals, South Kilkenny beat Dublin A by 3-5 to 0-6, while the North beat Roscommon by 0-15 to 1-2. Scorers for the North were James Brennan (0-5), Matt O'Neill (0-4).

Phil Cullen (0-2), Tony Byrne, Richard Minogue, Jimmy Walton,

Eddie Brennan (0-1 each).

The final proved a big disappointment. North Kilkenny, who were favourites flopped. The game was played in Callan. South ran out

convincing winners by 0-14 to 1-4. Michael Phelan (Glenmore) dominated the game from centreback. This gave the South forwards plenty of the ball. Joe Murphy and Willie O'Connor stood out in defence. Pat Moylan stuck closely to the North's best forward, Liam Dowling. Liam Egan had a fine game at midfield, while up front Pat Grace, Pat Hoban and Ray Power did best.

Donal Kennedy was the North's

best player.

Alan McCormack made two superb saves in goal. Frankie Morgan had a good second half, while Declan Mullen started well. Liam Dowling was best of the others.

Scorers: South Kilkenny: Kieran O'Dwyer (0-4), Pat Hoban (0-3), Pat Grace (0-3), Liam Egan (0-3), Ray Power (0-1). North Kilkenny: Matt O'Neill (1-1), Liam Dowling (0-2), Eddie Brennan (0-1).

South Kilkenny: Tom O'Keeffe (Thomastown), Joe Murphy (Mooncoin), Willie O'Connor (Glenmore), Michael Holden (John Lockes), Ger Finan (Thomastown), Michael Phelan (Glenmore), Pat Moylan (Dunnamaggin), Liam Egan (captain), (John Lockes), Michael Walsh (Graignamanagh), Pat Hoban (Mullinavat), Lorcan O'Neill (Dunnamaggin), Pat Walsh (Thomastown), Pat Grace (Rower-Inistioge), Kieran O'Dwyer (John Lockes), Ray Power (Slieverue). Subs: Ritchie Aylward (Shamrocks), Pat Foley (Windgap).

North Kilkenny: Alan McCormack (James Stephens), Frank Morgan (James Stephens), Willie O'Gorman (Fenians), Donal Kennedy (O'Loughlin's), Liam Keoghan (Tullaroan), Tony Byrne (Young Irelands), John Delaney (Galmoy), Declan Mullen (James Stephens), Diarmuid Purcell (Tullaroan), Liam Dowling (St. Martin's), Phil Cullen (Bennettsbridge), Eddie Brennan, captain (Erin's Own), James Brennan (Erin's Own), Matt O'Neill (Young Irelands), Jimmy Walton (Tullaroan). Subs: Enda Morrissey (Dicksboro), Richard

Minogue (James Stephens).

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St. Patrick's De La Salle (Kilkenny) who defeated Kilmanagh in the final of the under-12 (Roinn A) schools hurling championship.



Conahy Shamrocks who won the under-14 hurling championship (Roinn D).



St. John's De La Salle, who won the primary schools' under-12 hurling championship (Roinn B). Back row (left to right): John Cooney (coach), David Fahy, Jason Drennan, Michael Kinchella, Mark Bolger, Niall Kelly, Pat Healy, Michael Meagher, Noel Bourke, Rory Power, Pat Geoghegan, John McDonald, David Ronan, Padraig O'Neill (coach). Front (left to right): Seamus Trehy, John Morrissey, Richard McEvoy, Philip Holohan, Barry Power (capt.), Paul Geoghegan, Patrick O'Hara, Declan Morrissey, Shane Phelan, Rory Moore.



GRAIGNAMANAGH – the Intermediate Hurling Champions who will play in the senior grade next year.

Back row (I. to r.): Johnny Prendergast, Jim Cody, Tom Foley, John Meaney, John Moylan, Pat Nolan, Michael Morrissey, Jim Whelan, Pat Kavanagh. Front row (I. to r.): Kevin Fennelly (coach), Philip Cahill, Tommy Dowling, Tom Whelan, Richard Dunne, Michael Dunne, Robert Grace, Jack Dunne (selector).

Graig showed real character during tough campaign

IT TAKES courage, commitment and character to be successful in any sphere in life, including sport. Just ask the men from Graignamanagh, the newly-crowned Kilkenny intermediate hurling champions.

The Barrow boys had those three qualities in abundance this season, and their victory in the final over a dogged Piltown was one of the greatest the club is every likely to record. Not many will have realised that at the time, but it was true.

In the Centenary championship Graignamanagh reached the final, only to be beaten by St. Lactain's (Freshford). It is always hard to pick up the pieces after such a setback. Page 72

The Southerners did it in style, but not without a setback or two.

The character of the Graignamanagh players, the real stuff they are made of, if you like, was always under scrutiny after last year's final defeat. It can often happen that a team can suffer from a county final 'hang-over', but not Graig, who started well, encountered a slight hitch before finishing in great style.

Character was the outstanding quality, with courage thrown in, in large measure, and a commitment to training never before seen in the parish. It must have been a pleasure for new coach-trainer Kevin Fennelly (Shamrocks) to be working with the team and, judging by the performances on the field, there was a happy mood running right through the club.

This year's success was the club's

third in the grade, which makes them the most honoured at this level along with Conahy Shamrocks. However, they have encountered their rough times too, and lost three finals in a row in 1973, '74 and 1975. The last time they won it was in 1980 when they defeated Thomastown by 4-12 to 1-16.

BETTER CHANCE

Each occasion Graignamanagh attained senior status they found it difficult to adjust to the demands of the higher division. With all due respect to the men who served the club well in the past, this year's string would appear to have a better chance of making the adjustment, simply because they have a greater spattering of youth on their side.

Graig didn't look winners all the way in the championship, but when they clashed with and downed favourites Bennettsbridge in the semi-final they were then expected

to lift the Hanrahan Cup.

You see, Graignamanagh got into the semi-finals via a play-off against O'Loughlin's and rather unconvincing winners they were there, too. In the semi-final they improved beyond all expectations and thanks to magnificent work at midfield by Michael Morrissey and John Moylan, and equally good work on the half-forward line by Johnny Prendergast, Robert Grace and Pat Nolan, they upset the 'Bridge who had been the popular choice to win the championship.

The 2-12 to 2-6 win there made people open their eyes to the potential of Graig. Some had misgivings about them after they made a near fatal slip against Galmoy who beat them by 3-7 to 3-6 in their fourth match. That upset meant they had to go through a play-off to get to the semis, but once there, they were a different team com-

pletely.

They finished in a blaze of glory against the 'Bridge and then did exactly the same when cracking home 2-1 in a blistering 90-second spell at the end of the final against Piltown

They go to top

THEIR third victory in the intermediate hurling championship has moved Graignamanagh to the head of the overall winners' list along with Conahy Shamrocks.

The pair are ahead of 15 other clubs who have registered one win each.

Roll of honour

Conahy (3) - 1930, 1932, 1977. Graignamanagh (3) – 1976, 1980, 1985. Urlingford (1) - 1929. Danesfort (1) - 1931. St. Fiacre's (1) - 1934. John Lockes (Callan) (1) - 1935. Slieverue (1) – 1936. Eire Og (1) – 1937. Coon (1) - 1973.

Shamrocks (Ballyhale-Knicktopher) (1) – 1974. Muckalee-Ballyfoyle Rangers (1) – 1975. O'Loughlin's (1) - 1978.

St. Patrick's (Ballyragget) (1) – 1979.

Glenmore (1) - 1981. Clara (1) - 1982.

Thomastown (1) - 1983.

St. Lactain's (1) - 1984.

to run out winners by 4-11 to 2-10. It was one of the most devastating finishes ever to a county final, because only minutes earlier the sides had been level.

Piltown had found it tough going against Conahy Shamrocks in their semi-final, and only a last minute point by their star player, Liam McCarthy, got them through. In the decider they kept the game tight, and although their opponents looked better than them, Graig were unable to open up the play as they would have liked.

It was touch-and-go all the way. It was score-for-score until the 23rd minute when the teams stood at 0-4 each. Then a goal from Pat Nolan helped the winners into a half-time lead of 1-5 to 0-5.

UNBELIEVABLE RESPONSE

The second half was somewhat similar. The winners moved clear, but then late goals from John Joe Long and the experienced Jim Power drew the match at 2-10 each with a little over a minute to play. All of a sudden the initiative lay with Piltown.

The Graignamanagh response was unbelievable. Johnny Prendergast flashed over a point. The puckout was won and from the ensuing play a ground shot from Pat Nolan went all the way to the net. A super win was wrapped up with another goal from Richard Dunne, so a match and title that only seconds earlier looked to be slipping from the Barrow boys was instantly retrieved.

Graignamanagh supporters, players and team mentors - John Gahan, Jack Dunne and Pat Cahill had every reason to rejoice. And there was that something special attached to it all for Tom Foley, Pat.

Kavanagh and reserve Paul Hickey, who helped the club to victory in the junior championship of 1972 and were still involved this time.

This win, and the hard path through the championship, should stand to the younger players like Michael Morrissey, Richard and Michael Dunne, John Meaney, Johnny Prendergast and Jim Whelan. They are all fine hurlers, who can get even better. Is it any wonder then that club officials are hopeful that they can at last stand up to the demands of the senior grade, and can make an impact.

Overall, the club had a good year, and teams qualified for finals in the following grades - minor hurling (Roinn B); intermediate hurling; minor hurling league; under-21 hurling (Roinn A). Not bad for any outfit, and if this talent can be guided along the right path, the future of Graignamanagh must be secure. Their hard work deserves further glory.

The Graignamanagh team in the intermediate final was: R. Dunne, T. Whelan, J. Cody, P. Kavanagh, P. Cahill, T. Foley, T. Dowling, M. Morrissey, J. Moylan, J. Prendergast, P. Nolan, R. Grace, M. Dunne, J. Meaney, J. Whelan. Subs.: J. Dowling, W. Blanchfield, T. Prendergast, N. Lyng, M. J. Doherty, M. Walsh, J. Byrne, J. Carroll, D.

Coady, J. Doyle, P. Hickey. Piltown: Jim Power, P. Brophy, D. Power, E. Brennan, M. Long, S. Norris, P. Long, G. Kenny, J. Norris, D. McCarthy, G. Culleton, J. J. Long, L. McCarthy, Jimmy Power, N. Culleton. Subs.: M. Burchill, T. O'Shea (used), P. Dunne, J. Walsh, P. Brophy, P. Dunne, J. Fitzgerald, D. O'Brien, J. Malone, J. Falconer,

M. Grace.



PILTOWN – the losing Intermediate hurling finalists.

Back row (I. to r.): Jim Norris, Gerry Kenny, Nicky Culleton, Jim Power, George Culleton, Dinny Power, Pat Brophy. Front row (I. to r.): Sean Norris, Denis McCarthy, Michael Long, Liam McCarthy, J. J. Long, Jim Power, Eugene Brennan, Pat Long.

WHERE to from here? could well be the question Piltown officials were asking after their charges fell to Graignamanagh in the intermediate hurling county final? Hopefully, there will be a positive response to the question because the club has a bright future following their first appearance in the intermediate showdown.

Piltown haven't an awful lot of Kilkenny titles to their credit, apart from the junior hurling crown of 1981. Off the field they have one of the finest clubhouses of any outfit in the country, and if they work as diligently towards on-the-field conquests, they can bounce back and maybe '86 will be their year.

Early in the campaign and, indeed, up to the half-way mark, few would have put money on Piltown making the shakeup in the intermediate championship. Yet, when they got a break or two they slipped through to the concluding stages, and their semi-final and final form was nothing to be ashamed of.

sion.

<u>Piltown must</u> be positive in their attitude

The semi-final victory over Conahy Shamrocks was one of sheer effort. This was a contest that could have gone either way. The exchanges were hard and close, but the Southerners held their heads in the closing seconds and got through by the slimmest of margins (1-10 to 2-6).

Fine performers that day were Jim Norris, Denis McCarthy, Gerry Kenny, Pat Long, Liam McCarthy and Sean Norris. In the final a few weeks later John Joe Long helped himself to 1-7 (six points frees) and proved himself a man for the big occa-

AMAZING BURST Despite their lack of ex-

perience in the big time, Piltown were still there 90 seconds from the finish. In an amazing burst to the line Graignamanagh hit two goals, but Piltown shouldn't put any heed in the size of the losing margin, rather, they should reflect on the overall exchanges. They may not have the players capable of producing fast, open hurling, but if they concentrate on their own strength, which is to keep the game tight, then they can go on to greater things. They have the

Many fancied Bennettsbridge to lift the cup, and with All-Ireland medal record holder Noel Skehan proving an able score-getter at corner-

players to do so.

forward, they looked the part for a long time. In the semi-final against Graignamanagh they never got into their stride, and some players showed an alarming lack of discipline that could be fatal to the club's chances of ever getting back senior.

They have good prospects in Tommy Lannon, Larry Cleere, Jimmy Doran, John Brennan, Richard Moran, Gerry Cleere and Owen Lawlor, but there are one or two rough edges that need

attending to.

Conahy Shamrocks were unlucky in the semifinal because their star player, Kieran Brennan, hit an off-day. The Army Captain would usually be worth a few scores, but things just didn't happen for him. All the same, they did well to get that far, and gained inspiration to continue for the likes of Nicky Brennan, Paudie Mulhall and Marty Buggy, while Paudie and Gearoid Brennan, not to mention youngster John Feehan, Kevin Mulhall and Eamon Delaney surely have a lot to offer in future.

O'Loughlin's, although

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never as impressive as the previous season, were still very near the cut-off mark. They are slowly getting back as real contenders and with players like John Mulcahy, Eddie Kennedy, Michael and Benny Cleere, Paul Cleere, Richard Delaney and Anthony O'Driscoll they must surely get there in the not-too-distant future.

UNEXPECTED WIN

In the same group, Dicksboro and Mullinavat managed to avoid relegation while Galmoy, who had just come down from the senior section, didn't-make much of an impact apart from one unexpected win over Graignamanagh.

Group I provided the relegation candidates Barrow Rangers (Paulstown), who never got a break. Early on they promised a lot, but the breaks didn't come, and they lost heart.

Carrickshock promised a lot but failed once again to deliver the goods, while Tullaroan and Young Irelands (Gowran) never looked like getting among the runners in the upper half of the table.

George stepped down

FEELING he had achieved as much as he could and that he had given his all, Sean 'George' Leahy retired as chairman of Bord-na-nOg at the annual Convention.

George, who was a former Kilkenny senior hurling selector, single handedly guided James Stephens to their first all-Ireland club final triumph in 1976. The city club became the first side in Leinster to capture that title.

But P+T foreman George was not only interested in the seniors. He had a deep involvement with under-age games, and from 1973 to 1980 he was chairman of the Under-16 Board, the forerunner of Bord-nanOg

When the Under-16 Board was dismantled he was immediately elected chairman of Bord-na-nOg in 1981. On the earlier Board he served as vice-chairman in 1971-72.

At Co. Board Convention, George was nominated to stand for election as representative to the Leinster and Central Councils. He was unable to do so, because he was suspended at the time following criticism he voiced about a referee after a National Hurling League game involving



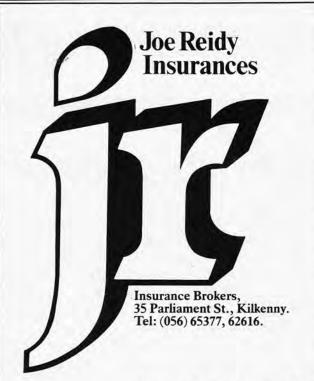
Sean 'George' Leahy, retired as chairman.

Laois, the team he managed at the time.

He represented Kilkenny on the provincial council from 1977 to '84, while at the same time helping to spread the hurling gospel in Laois.

George Leahy is one of the most committed men involved in Gaelic games in Kilkenny. At different times he has acted as coach to several clubs including Graigue-Ballycallan, Barrow Rangers (Paulstown) and Moon-

He is still deeply involved in under-age games, and he can take a large slice of the credit for getting affairs in the county at that level into a very healthy state.



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The changing face of sport – amateur to professional

ONE WOULD have to do a considerable amount of research to get exact details regarding the change of status from amateur to professional in Irish sport over the past 50 years. But it is safe to say, that with the exception of games under the auspices of the G.A.A. and the Rugby Union, all the major sports commonly played in this country are participated in on a professional basis.



By Paddy Buggy, former President of the G.A.A.

In the case of most games or sports, there is a professional and an amateur form. However, once the professional outlet exists, the top performers or athletes generally move to the paid ranks. Even where this doesn't exist, there is, invariably, an acceptance of bonus payments or appearance money.

Two of the most recent examples of change in sport from amateur to professional are tennis and athletics. In both cases, the change came about not by a planned development on the part of participants or administrators, but by a process of gradual erosion of amateur rules, and a failure by the governing bodies to take appropriate action. Suddenly it was too late. During discussions with the Australian rules officials, whose players made such an impact here during 1984, the Aussies acknowledged that their game of "footie" had become professional, almost without the administrative body, the Australian Football League, noticing.

This same erosion or gradual process of change may well have started in G.A.A. circles some years ago, by way of incentives to better known players, the more successful teams and their officials, to wear certain types of footwear or a particular brand of sportswear. Such developments were brought about as a result of cut throat competitiveness by companies manufacturing, or supplying, such goods or equipment.

While sufficient evidence to substantiate such allegations could not be found in G.A.A. circles, alleged Page 76

payments to rugby players in England, Wales and Ireland have been well documented. It happened, for example, an Irish athletic club based in the midlands some time ago when they contacted an international athlete seeking his attendance at an amateur meeting. They felt his presence would be of immeasurable value as a promotional exercise, and by way of encouragement to the younger members of the club. The appearance fee demanded by the athlete was such, that the club had no hope of meeting it. What do you



The whole system of endorsement of products is yet another area that needs careful attention by amateur associations. It is a very delicate one, and while amateur athletes or players must have the freedom to do as they wish in a private capacity, there is a very fine balance in relation to any involvement which would bring about a change in the amateur status of the player, or the association.

PAYMENTS COMMON

Prior to the formation of the G.A.A. to organise as an amateur

association, Irish games and athletics, payments or incentives were common in Irish sport. The local landlord would organise hurling teams. History shows that the servants of the gentry were almost as much the property of the landlord as the land they worked so they did what they were told. Games were played for large stakes.

The following are self explanatory: an English version of a newspaper notice in 1708 read: St. Swithen's day, the 15th July, about three in the afternoon will be a hurling match on the Curragh of Kildare between 30 men from each side of the Liffey for 30 shillings. A barrel of ale, tobacco, and pipes will be given to the hurlers.

"Playing hurling for a wife" — Arthur Maolfábhail in his book, "An Cáman", gives an interesting account of an old Irish custom – Cailín Báire – Buachaill Báire. Taken from the Irish folklore commission Arthur Young's Tourism – Ireland 1776 – 1779 – writing of Co. Tipperary on the shores of Lough Derg in the 18th century, Arthur gives a secondhand, somewhat confusing, account of this custom.

confusing, account of this custom.

''A number of country'
neighbours among the poor people fix upon some woman that
ought to be married. They also
agree upon a young fellow as a
proper husband for her. This determined, they send to the fair ones
cabin to inform her that on the
Sunday following she is to be horsed, i.e. carried on mens backs. She
must then provide whiskey and
cider for a treat, as all will pay her a
visit after mass for a hurling match.

As soon as she is horsed the hurling match begins, in which the young man appointed for her husband has the eyes of all the company fixed upon him. If he comes off conqueror, he is certainly married to the girl. But if another is victorious. he as certainly loses her, for she is the prize of the victor. These trials are not always finished in one Sunday, they take sometimes two or three. The common expression when they are over is "Such a Girl was goaled". Sometimes one Barony hurls against another, but a marriageable girl is always the prize".

Yet another news item appeared in the *Dublin Courant*, Tuesday, May 17th to Saturday May 21st, 1748: "On Thursday last there was a grand hurling match on The Commons of Cromlin between the provinces of Leinster and Munster for a considerable wager. Twenty men played on a side, and the dispute was very hot for three quarters of an hour when the Leinster party goaled".

There is yet another example from 1768: "The grandest match that ever was hurled in Ireland, will be played on Thursday the 8th day of September between the provinces of Leinster and Munster for 60 guineas at the noted green of Lisduff near Urlingford".

BARREL OF ALE A PRIZE

To mark the opening of the brewery at Rathdowney, a hurling match was played between local teams. The prize was a barrel of ale.

In Ireland today certain trends are very obvious. There is growing materialism, an erosion of traditional values, a questioning of nationalism, a weakening of official interest in the Irish language and a growing pessimism in relation to the future work prospects for a great deal of Ireland's young people. These trends are bound to affect the G.A.A., and influence its members.

The G.A.A. was founded on idealism. It always depended on the generosity of its amateur players, and voluntary workers, for its success. It is an organisation which believes in the encouragement of a community spirit. Through its parish based units it emphasises county pride, and highlights all that is best in Irish traditions and cultures. It can and must play its part in giving the modern Irish nation a new pride, a sense of belonging, a feeling of hope, and a lifeline for the future.

The G.A.A. is a highly respected association in Ireland. This respect owes something to its statute as a body with a very large membership, clubs in every parish. It owes more, however, to the record of the G.A.A., which has been one of steadfastly furthering its original aims, its feeling for Irish life and ordinary people, the enjoyment and recreation given by amateur players Sunday after Sunday, and the unselfish service which it has given in the promotion of Irish pastimes and culture with substantial social benefits.

What a contrast to the commercialism of professional sport! As I write, I notice the Irish cross country team was excluded from the groups invited to the Gateshead International for the first time in 10 years. It was felt the Irish team was probably the victims of the new I.T.V. - Alan Pascoe Promotions, a five year deal that was signed towards the end of last year. A member of the Gateshead club admitted that while they still organise the event, the actual issuing of invitations has been taken out of their hands.



MIGHT NEVER RECOVER

B.B.C. athletics commentator Ron Pickering recently said: "The payment of £90,000 to Zola Budd for running fourth in a bad race had in the space of 24 hours created a quantum leap backwards from which sport might never recover. Profit had taken over from ethics, and sport was now a free for all with athletes able to name their price. The Budd affair simply showed that sport was big business, and subject to market forces as entrepreneurs and agents take over from philosphers and coaches. So the ethics of sport are sacrificed on the altar of profit"

The British Shadow Sports Minister also said recently that "commercial sponsorship is justified if its funds are being used for the development of sport as a whole. But when the sponsors or the media, as a means of selling their own commercial interests, dominate or distort the true purpose of sport, then it will eventually destroy sport".

There has been very little debate with in the G.A.A. with regard to amateur status, for the simple reason the vast majority of members were unanimous in their dedication to keeping the association, and the games, amateur. This situation does not seem to have changed, but because of the lack of debate within the G.A.A. it is difficult to be certain.

The amateur status of G.A.A. players is one of which we can be rightly proud. The level of fitness of the top county players, or club players for that matter, is exceedingly high, and is only achieved through tremendous sacrifices of free time and extraordinary commitment. Such players deserve to be fairly treated by the association in terms of reimbursement of legimitate out of pocket expenses within the rules of the Gaelic Athletic Association.

One of the most interesting letters I received while President of the G.A.A. came from an Englishman who had seen Gaelic games on television. He marvelled at the skills and fitness of the amateur players. He appealed to the G.A.A. to remain amateur, and claimed that professionalism and commercialism had ruined English football and athletics.

OBLIGATION

The warning signals are clearly flashing. The trend is towards professionalism in all forms of sport. Materialism is smothering idealism and generosity. It should be clearly understood, particularly by those connected with intercounty teams, that commercial pressures do exist. The more successful a county team is, the more likely such inducements will be offered. There is an obligation on all county officials to ensure that Rule 6 governing amateur status is not breached.

On a personal basis, I feel the G.A.A. would lose all its appeal for me if it ever became a professional sports organisation. I hope I will never see the day when a Kilkenny man will have to be paid to wear the black and amber. I sincerely hope the players always give of their best, for the honour of the little village, or the glory of the county.



Johnny Walsh



Pat Delaney



Eddie Keher

Sweeping changes made when selectors appointed

A NEW hurling era dawned in Kilkenny towards the latter end of the season. When senior champions, Shamrocks (Knocktopher-Ballyhale) nominated the county selectors for the coming year they broke with tradition and put forward just three candidates.

In many quarters this was seen as going against the grain, because for as long as any of us can remember, there were always five selectors behind the senior side.

"We are down right now and something drastic must be done to get things moving again", was the cold truth, and part explanation, offered by Shamrocks delegate, Kevin Fennelly (senior) when he lifted the lid on the new moves at a Co. Board meeting.

The Shamrocks sounded out public opinion before picking the selectors and found the general feeling was a five man committee was too large and inefficient. All agreed the large committee had served the county well in the past, but new demands called for a new approach.

"If you agree changes must be made, then I believe we will go on to win the Leinster championship

in 1986, and go from there and win the all-Ireland", Mr. Fennelly enthused.

The Shamrocks plans prompted the longest debate in 10 years on the appointment of the senior selectors. And after a very fruitful discussion, the three nominees were appointed.



So back into the fold came that hurling artist, Eddie Keher. The Rower-Inistioge man won six all-Ireland senior medals between 1963 and '75 including one as captain in 1969. He was a senior selector before in 1979 and '80, and was involved with the minor all-Ireland winning side of 1981.

NEWCOMER

He was joined by former Kilkenny team mate, Pat Delaney (Fenians). Pat won senior all-Ireland medals in 1969, '72, 1974 and 1975. He was a selector with three all-Ireland winning teams.

The trio was completed by newcomer to this level of duty, Johnny Walsh (Shamrocks). He won five senior championships with his club, and two all-Ireland club titles as well.

Later Pat Henderson (Fenians) was reappointed trainer-coach by a special sub-committee of the Co. Board.

Sweeping changes were demanded by concerned supporters following the county's collapse in the Leinster championship. For the second year running, Kilkenny failed to reach the provincial final. The last occasion the county missed two finals together was way back in 1951 and '52, so something was badly needed to inject new life into things.

The new backroom boys lost no time getting down to business, and within 48 hours of being appointed had two teams picked for a trial match. Later a second trial was

arranged. This proved a costly outing when fearless attacker, Harry Ryan (Clara) broke a leg. He will be out of hurling for at least three months.



The new men enjoyed mixed fortunes in their two National League matches before the Christmas break. In the first, Kilkenny clashed with losing all-Ireland finalists, Galway, at Nowlan Park. The clean-out of the backroom boys – all the selectors from last year were axed – seemed to have done the trick. The players showed great enthusiasm and passion and worked a 2-9 to 0-9 win. There was one disappointing aspect about it all – only one forward, Billy Fitzpatrick, scored.

Two weeks later Kilkenny travelled to Croke Park to play Dublin. A goal 90 seconds from time earned the Dubs a draw (0-13 (K) to 1-10) against indifferent opponents. The refreshing approach that had been so encouraging against Galway was missing. But at least the run of results elsewhere helped the Noresiders, and with five points out of a possible 8, they stood fourth in the table behind Offaly, Cork and Galway, all of whom collected six points.

HENDERSON INJURED

Ironically, Kilkenny also flopped in their last match before Christmas the previous season. Then they were hammered 0-14 to 0-7 by Tipperary, who were having considerable problems themselves at the time.

Twenty-six minutes into that Dublin tie inspiring centre-back Ger Henderson, had to go off injured. It was the first time in his career he had to leave the field because of injury. He damaged the ligaments of his left knee and there were also fears he might have damaged tendons.

Luck certainly wasn't with the new selectors during the start of their reign. In the new year we look forward to better fortunes.





YOUNG IRELANDS (Gowran) – won the Under-21 Hurling Championship (Roinn B). Back row (I. to r.): Michael Hayes (trainer), Andrew Comerford, T. J. Byrne, Pat Drea, Mick O'Neill, Matt O'Neill, Brendan Kehoe, Jim Comerford, Shane O'Neill, Brendan Lennon, Patrick Mackey, Thomas Dowling. Front row (I. to r.): John Hickey, Vincent Byrne, Michael Kehoe, Thomas Farrell, Pat Treacy, Michael Fitzgerald, Tony Byrne, Pat Farrell, Brian Farrell.

What a delightful discovery at Special Games

For a variety of reasons one never got around to the Special Junior hurling finals before. But after watching and enjoying the action in the Roinn A and B finals, and seeing the passionate way the competitors all round got stuck in, one was converted to the true value of these grades.

For a few years I thought these competitions were unnecessary additions to an already overloaded programme. But having seen both finals this year, well, what better endorsement could I give than say I will go back every time

Finalists in the Roinn A competition were Erin's Own (Castlecomer) who beat Glenmore, and Young Irelands (Gowran) beat Mullinavat in Roinn B. The whlehearted effort all round sold these championships to me, and winners and losers deserve the highest praise for producing rousing games.

Erin's Own and Glenmore produced a thrill-aONE MUST admit to making a hurling discovery in Kilkenny during late September and early October. One stumbled across something and, you know, the experience was one of the lasting memories of the year.

minute, high-scoring decider. The Northerners won by 4-11 to 3-10, after trailing by 3-2 to 2-6 at the interval The hurling was of a surprisingly high standard, but what was most striking was the fitness of the players. Some of the 'Comer men were like greyhounds, while their opponents were as fit as any senior side in a county final.

This was Erin's Own first adult hurling title since they won their one and only junior crown in 1958. After 45 minutes the best strike afield, 'Comer's James Brennan, pointed his side 4-7 to 2-8 clear. Glenmore looked down and out, but a goal by Seamus Phelan revived their spirits, and they were there with a chance right to the finish.

HIT SENIOR SCENE

This win could be the breakthrough Ein's Own need to finally hit the senior scene with a bang. A couple of players from this team, plus the men who did so well in nearly shifting Shamrocks from the senior competition, could produce a winning blend in '86.

Certainly, good junior players like James Brennan, Seamus Coogan, Eamon Holland, Martin Walsh and David O'Rourke, and there are others, will be pushing for places on the senior team next season.

This Glenmore team has every reason to be as proud as their seniors. They put in the effort on the training field, and it showed during the final. Their best were Frank and

John Kirwan, Seamus and Tom Phelan and Tom Roche.

The Erin's Own team was – J. Brennan, V. O'Dwyer, M. Owens, M. Daly, S. Boland, E. Holland, T. Coogan, T. O'Dwyer, S. Coogan, S. Holden, D. O'Rourke, J. Brennan, J. Dillon, W. O'Brien, M. Walsh. Subs.: B. Brennan, J. Coogan.

Glenmore – J. Kirwan, S. Hennessy, P. Phelan, J. O'Connor, V. O'Connor, W. O'Connor, T. Roche, T. Phelan, D. Hennessy, M. Phelan, R. Ryan, J. Phelan, J. Ryan, F. Kirwan, S. Phelan, Subs.: N. Phelan, R. O'Connor.

This competition was inaugurated in 1959, but lapsed between 1962 and 1976. It has been won by the Rower-Inistioge (3), Bennettsbridge (2), O'Loughlin's (2), Shamrocks (2), Glenmore and Fenians (Johnstown).

The Roinn B final provided Young Irelands (Gowran) with their first adult hurling success in 21 years. Their previous victory was at junior level in



Back row (l. to r.): John Fitzgerald, Seamus Aldridge, Tom Anthony, W. Gahan, Joe Anthony, Pat Hoban, William Haberlin, Liam Law, Michael Dunphy, John Joe Gaule. **Front row** (l. to r.): Adrian Walsh, Ned Firsby, Mick Fitzgerald, Seam Kelly, Liam Aldridge, Patsy Brennan, John Haberlin, Paddy Fitzpatrick.

1964 against the now defunct Thomastown Rangers.

Tough opposition here was provided by Mullinavat, who were beaten by 1-9 to 2-4. They dominated the opening half, and despite hitting 12 wides, led by 1-3 to 0-3 at the break. However, they half for not taking those chances when the new half commenced.

Young Irelands were a ransformed team whatever happened in heir dressingroom during he break. They put life and limb at risk in pursuit of victory. They took over, and if they lifted their game, so too did their opponents, and spectators coming to the Kilkenny—aois—National Hurling—eague tie afterwards enoyed the best action of the afternoon here.

Three points from '65s' by Pat Hutchinson and a goal from Sonny Delaney did the trick for 'Irelands. In the dying moments the losers pulled back a smashing goal when Watt Gahan doubled a sideline cut from Michael Fitzgerald to the net, so they were right in contention to the finish.

Best for the winners were Thomas Dowling, Pat Loughlin, Pat Hutchinson, Toddy Farrell and Brian Farrell, while John Fitzpatrick, Patsy Brennan, John Haberlin, Liam Law and Michael Dunphy stood out for the losers.

Young Irelands — T. Dowling, J. Comerford, P. Loughlin, S. Quinlan, P. Lennon, P. Hutchinson, M. Phelan, P. Farrell, T. Farrell, P. Tierney, J. Connolly, B. Farrell, B. Quinlan, P. Brennan, S.

Delaney. Subs.: B. Kehoe, P. Twomey.

Mullinavat – P. Fitzpatrick, S. Kelly, T. Anthony, J. Haberlin, P. Brennan, P. Hoban, M. Dunphy, M. Fitzgerald, W. Haberlin, N. Frisby, L. Law, L. Aldridge, W. Gahan, J. Anthony, J. Fitzpatrick. Sub.: R. Aylward.

DID THE DOUBLE

The rising fortunes in the Young Irelands club was added to when they completed a hurling double by taking the under-21 (Roinn B) title. Again this was a smashing effort. Piltown were beaten by 5-6 to 4-2 and again the sheer will to win of 'Irelands had to be admired.

Piltown were stubborn opponents and each score they conceded was earned. A great goal by Michael O'Neill after a determined run wrapped up the title for 'Irelands, who had stars in Brendan Kehoe, Michael Kehoe, Thomas Farrell, Michael O'Neill and Tony Byrne. Piltown had their heroes in Denis McCarthy, Philip Kenny, Jimmy Walsh and Patrick Dunne.

Young Irelands – T. Dowling, J. Comerford, P. J. Byrne, P. Drea, B. Farrell, T. Byrne, P. Farrell, T. Farrell, B. Kehoe, P. Treacy, M. O'Neill, S. O'Neill, M. Kehoe, M. O'Neill, M. Fitzgerald. Sub.: A. Comerford.

Piltown – M. Carroll, J. Phelan, P. J. McCarthy, J. O'Brien, L. Kelly, P. Brophy, P. Kenny, J. Walsh, P. Dunne, D. O'Brien, F. Cummins, A. McCarthy, C. Delaney, D. McCarthy, E. Keegan. Sub.: E. Fitzpatrick.



YOUNG IRELANDS (Gowran) – won the Special Junior Hurling Championship (Roinn B)
Back row (I. to r.): Brendan Lennon, Michael Whelan, Jim Comerford, Pat Drea, John Connolly, Pat Lennon, Pat Byrne, Paddy
Brennan, Pat Treacy, Shane O'Neill, Shem Quinlan, Michael Mackey, Brendan Kehoe, Ben Quinlan. Front row (I. to r.): Ned Power,
Paul Farrell, Philip Twomey, Toddy Farrell, Pat Hutchinson, Sonny Delaney, John Comerford, Tom Dowling, Brian Farrell, Bob
Middleton, Pat Loughlin.

TOM – HOW HE SAW THE PROMISING **YOUNGSTERS** STARTING OUT

By Tom Ryall, Co. Board P.R.O., and author of the History of the G.A.A. in Kilkenny.



I became secretary of the Under-16 Board in 1973, so when the editor asked me to write about the players who made it to the top having passed through that grade, and when I first spotted them as possible stars of the future, I just then realised the huge number of young hurlers I had actually seen starting out. Oh, what wonderful memories.

When I took up the post, there was a backlog of games from 1972. Thomastown and St. Lactain's (Freshford) eventually qualifying for the Roinn A final. It was a riproaring tussle, with Thomastown getting through by 4-7 to 4-6. On that Thomastown side was that Thomastown side was the burly Dick O'Hara, who even at that stage, looked a star in the mak-ing. So it turned out. O'Hara went on to win all-Ireland senior medals in 1979, 1982 and 1983. Hopefully the eye injury he received last April will not cut short his intercounty career.

Also on that Thomas-town side was Paudie Lannon, who also made the Kilkenny senior side, and went on as a substitute in the 1983 victory over Cork.

The star of the St. Lactains side was Murty Kennedy, who was on the Kilkenny panel for the 1979 all-Ireland.

Joe Hennessy was the diminutive star of the St. Mary's side just before this. I remember well his late father, Mr. Paddy Hennessy, telling me: "I have a good one here". Paddy's words were spot

on, but unfortunately Paddy himself had passed to his eternal reward before Joe became one of the greats of hurling. How Paddy would have delighted in the exploits of the son he held in such high esteem when only a

mere boy. Johnstown were to the fore at this time, and they took the B championships in 1972 and 1974. Playing centre-back for them was one John Henderson, who has since developed into one of the best cornerbacks in the game. Willie Purcell was another member of the side. Small in stature, he was gifted with a hurley, and won all-treland senior medals in Ireland senior medals in 1982 and 1983 as a sub-

SOME WENT **FURTHER**

Writing about the Under-16 championships in the 1973 yearbook I picked out players likely to figure on future county minor teams and included Paddy Prendergast, Henry Ryan and Kieran Brennan. All three have made it much further, and are among those Kilkenny will be looking to to regain premier position in

Leinster and at all-Ireland

level during 1986.

Another player I listed at the time was Mooncoin's Joe Wall. Although he played in the 1981 championship, it is only now he is again in contention for a place on the tion for a place on the county senior team. A spell out of the country has not helped his career.



In 1975 Sean Fennelly's name was appearing in the under-16 grade. Although he has never commanded a regular place on the Kilkenny team, he has been a member of the county panel for a number of years. Gordon Ryan was an the St. Lactain's team on the St. Lactain's team that took the under-16 title that same year. He won an all-Ireland senior medal as a substitute in 1983.

Ray Heffernan and Johnny Murphy, who figured in this year's championship games against Offaly, were members of the 1976 Glenmore team that unsuccessfully contested both the league and championship finals against Gowran. Both were brilliant players at under-16 level. Both can still be vital to Kilkenny's hurling future. Ray Heffernan and

hurling future.
In 1979 players like
David Hoyne and Joe
O'Hara were starring in under-16 competitions. Both helped Thomastown win the Roinn A final. Although Hoyne, after winning minor, under-21 and junior all-Ireland medals has lost his place on the Kilkenny panel, I believe that he still has a lot to offer. Joe O'Hara is on the fringe of the senior team at the moment, and has done well whenever he was called

David Burke, who kept goal for Kilkenny in the 1985 championship, was starring at under-16 level for Emeralds (Urlingford) in 1979. David was at that time showing the reflexes time showing the reflexes that made him a star in the 1981 minor and 1984

Page 82

under-21 all-Ireland triumphs.

Tom Lennon was figuring prominently on the Bennettsbridge team at under-16 level in 1981. A substitute in some recent games with Kilkenny, he captained last year's county minor hurling team that lost the all-Ireland on a replay against Limerick. He was one of the few players who came out of Waterford in this year's under-21 hurling final with his reputation enhanced. Another bright prospect for the future.

NEVER IN FINAL

Other players who have impressed in the under-16 grade, but who were never lucky enough to appear in finals, were Liam Fennelly and Ritchie Power. Indeed, one could say that all those who will wear the black and amber in future will have figured with their clubs at under-16 level during the last few years.

One thing that struck me forcibly looking through the names of the winning teams was the amount of players who never appear again with their clubs at the top level. Some give up the game. Some opt for other sports, and some just never make the grade. A case in point was the St. Patrick's team that took the hurling title in 1974. Most of those players would be only 27 years old now, but only one, Ned Kelly is playing senior hurling with James Stephens now. One more player or possibly two, are playing special junior hurling.

On the other hand, Glenmore began to make progress at under-16 level in the mid-seventies. They followed through and collected junior and intermediate county titles, and appeared in this year's senior county final.

Kilmanagh and Gowran also made their mark around the same time. Many of those players helped Graigue-Bally-callan and Young Irelands (Gowran) to their county championship triumphs in 1985.

Yes, the under-16 grade helps players on their way. The stars are there in abundance to prove it.

<u>Tom and</u> <u>Michael</u> honoured

SERVICE over a long number of years was not forgotten when two teachers retired.

Tom Waldron (Freshford) and Michael Moore (Tullogher) were made honorary life Presidents of the Primary Schools Board in recognition of their outstanding work for that body.

Both were founder members of the board and gave service stretching back over 40 years.



Tom and Michael were loudly praised at the Primary Schools convention, as were other long servers Tom Comber (Thomastown) and Bro. Norbert (St. John's De La Salle).



Mr. Tom Waldron (Freshford), who was a founder member of the Kilkenny Primary Schools Board and secretary from 1943 to 1970, receiving a long service medal from present chairman, Mr. Jim Neary (Kilmanagh).



Long and faithful service was rewarded when the Primary Schools Board made presentations to Bro. Norbert, St. John's De La Salle (left), Michael Moore, Tullogher (second right) and Billy Phelan, Mooncoin by Mr. Jim Neary.

A bit of luck could easily have changed things

THE nearest Kilkenny came to winning an all-Ireland hurling title this season was when the under-21 team lost a final to Tipperary. It was a brave effort by a young and light side, and could easily have ended in victory.

The Munster champions scored their sixth success in the series on a 1-10 (13 pts) to 2-6 (12 pts) scoreline. Yet had luck gone with their opponents in the dying minute, they could have got away with at least a draw.

There can be no denying Tipperary were the better team on the day — bigger and stronger, but a mite unsure. And it was because of this latter weakness that the Noresiders nearly caught them.

With the minimum margin between them with 59 minutes played, the Leinster champions threw everything into attack in a bid to save the crown they had taken by downing the same opposition 12 months earlier. Determined defender that day, Tommy Lannon, sent a mighty clearance from his own 30-yard line which was gathered just to the right of the town end goal by Joe Walsh.

The Mullinavat attacker had two real options — one was to play for a free, the other was to have a go for the equaliser. He decided on the latter and sent the ball wide. From a spectator's point of view Walsh seemed to make the wrong decision, but he was surrounded by three Tipperary players and had to make up his mind in a flash. He was brave in his choice, but on this occasion fortune did not favour the brave

That was how near 8,000 saw Kilkenny get to an all-Ireland victory. This wasn't a bad match. The Kilkenny defence was wonderful Page 84

throughout, with centre-back Larry Cleere, the brightest star of the lot. The Bennettsbridge lad would appear to have a big hurling future ahead of him if he continues the progress he made during the past two years as an under-21 player. Others who excelled that afternoon were Tommy Lannon, Eddie O'Connor, team captain Kevin Ryan, John Scott, Tommy Phelan (until he was forced to retire injured) and Richard Moran in patches.

Accepted

With the breeze in their backs, Tipperary found progress difficult against a sharp tackling losers' defence. At half-time the winners showed just 1-5 to 0-2 ahead, after shooting 13 wides. Some of those misses were of their own doing, but in other cases the excuse of heavy

We stay

TIPPERARY'S victory in the under-21 hurling all-Ireland final helped them close the gap on Cork.

The Leesiders head the overall winners list here with eight wins to their credit. Tipperary are second with six.

Kilkenny come next with four wins. They were recorded in:

1974
Kilkenny 3-8, Waterford 3-7.
1975
Kilkenny 5-13, Cork 2-19.
1977
Kilkenny 2-9, Cork 1-9.
1984
Kilkenny 1-12, Tipperary 0-11.

pressure from a tight defence would be acceptable.

Things looked good enough for Kilkenny, even if they had lost their liveliest forward, Michael Rafter, through injury, after just four minutes. As it turned out, the Emeralds (Urlingford) full-forward was sorely missed from a front line that lacked punch.

The winners weren't prepared to surrender just yet, and after 43 minutes they looked all set for a handy win when they opened up a 1-8 to 0-3 lead. Later, goals from Joe Walsh, and a cracking effort from Paul Cleere brought Kilkenny right back into contention; but their late, late effort to hold on to the title just failed.

There was no shame in defeat here. Kilkenny had enjoyed a soft campaign in Leinster and in the all-Ireland semi-final against Down, so their only real test was against Tipperary.

"Finding out your faults in an all-Ireland final doesn't leave you with much hope", a prominent Cork coach was once quoted as saying. So it was with Kilkenny this year. They suspected they were weak in one or two places, but they couldn't be sure until the pressure was applied.

The under-21 team opened by scoring a comfortable 6-9 to 2-7 win over Offaly, after leading 3-4 to 2-5 at half-time after playing against the breeze. Wexford in the Leinster final were no test. The Slaneysiders found themselves 2-4 to no score behind after 10 minutes, and 3-7 to 1-1 down at the break. Wexford were eventually beaten by 4-18 to 1-4.

Little to offer

The only thoughts one had after



KILKENNY – the defeated under-21 hurling championship All-Ireland finalists.

Back row (I. to r.): Seamus Delahunty, Peadar Healy, Larry Cleere, Michael Rafter, Eamon Morrissey, John Scott, Joe Walsh, Richard Moran. Front row (I. to r.): Larry O'Brien, Tommy Lannon, Eddie O'Connor, Kevin Ryan (capt.), Richard Dunne, Michael Dunne, Tommy Phelan.

this match was how low the game had deteriorated in Wexford. The previous year they had a team that was unlucky to lose against Kilkenny when at minor level. But in the two intervening years the Slaneysiders had gone back to such a degree that they were easily disposed of. This year again they had little to offer at a time when their seniors made an early exit from the Leinster championship. Where will the future senior players in that county come from?

In the all-Ireland semi-final the opposition was provided by Down, who had just completed the three-in-a-row in Ulster. They fancied their chances... of making a game of it. At the interval the Northerners were 0-2 to 1-6 down, and lost in the end by 2-12 to 0-4.

So the Kilkenny selectors, Michael O'Neill (Co. Board chairman), Maurice Ryan (Clara), Mick Duggan (Glenmore), Paddy Moran (Bennettsbridge) and Jack Dunne (Graignamanagh) sat down to pick a team for the Tipperary match with uneasy feelings about the true worth of their charges. Trainercoach, Martin Fitzpatrick (Fenians) had engendered great spirit into the players and, really, it was mainly through his work that they managed to mount such stiff opposition against bigger opponents, who wanted to avoid defeat in the final for the third consecutive year.

Against considerable odds, Kilkenny gave a good account of themselves and a small thing could have seen them sneak a win.



It was interesting to take note of the Kilkenny team in the final. Two selectors, Jack Dunne and Paddy Moran, had sons on the team. They were goalkeeper Richard Dunne and corner-forward Michal Dunne, as well as wing-forward Richard Moran. Then captain, Kevin Ryan, was nephew of another selector, Maurice Ryan. So all in all, a nice, closely knit unit.

Players Kilkenny used during the campaign were: Richard Dunne, Tommy Lannon, Eddie O'Connor, Peadar Healy, Kevin Ryan, Larry Cleere, Larry O'Brien, Brian Barcoe, Tommy Phelan, Eamon Morrissey, Seamus Delahunty, Joe Walsh, Paul Cleere, Michael Rafter, Pat Nolan, Tommy Bawle, Michael Dunne, Richard Moran, John Scott, Brian Young, Pat Barron, John Power. Other panelists were: John Dunphy, P.J. Greene, Thomas Leahy, Jim Whelan.

Scores — but not enough

June 26, at Rathdowney

Kilkenny 6-9
Offaly 2-7
Scorers: M. Rafter (2-2); E. Morri-
ssey (1-3); J. Walsh (2-0); P. Cleere
(1-0); S. Delahunty (0-2, one
penalty); B. Barcoe, T. Phelan (0-1
each).
July 21, at Croke Park, Leinster Final
Kilkenny 4-18
Wexford 1-4
Scorers: M. Dunne (2-2); T.
Phelan (1-3); J. Walsh (1-1); M.
Rafter (0-4); E. Morrissey (0-3, fr-
ees); T. Bawle (0-2); L. Cleere (0-1,
free); T. Lannon, R. Moran (0-1
each).
August 11, at Navan, all-Ireland

Young, J. Walsh (0-1 each).

August 25, at Walsh Park, all-

 Ireland final

 Tipperary
 1-10 (13 pts)

 Kilkenny
 2-6 (12 pts)

 Scorers:
 P. Cleere, J. Walsh (1-0

each); E. Morrissey (0-3, two frees); L. Cleere (0-1, '65'); R. Moran, T. Bawle (0-1 each). Continued from page 62

At this stage he wondered if his role was that of a lucky omen when foreign trips were up for grabs. But within months he secured a regular position and four years later he established himself as the prince of full-backs in that all-Ireland victory over Tipperary. He went on to play in another five all-Ireland finals and added another two medals to his collection before his retirement in 1972.

While Pa Dillon spent many years making it to ton he is in no

the top, he is in no hurry as he descends from those dizzy heights. And last year, far from the maddening crowds of Croke Park on all-Ireland final day, he lined out with the local club's special junior team.

HISTORIC VICTORY

He is also very active in the administrative area of the Freshford based St. Lactain's club. Having been chairman for a number of years, he returned to the post in Centenary year and paved the way for the club's historic intermediate championship victory of that same year.

But while Pa Dillon is

still highly involved in GAA affairs, there is an ironic twist to events in the Dillon household. His 12-year-old daughter, Gilian was a member of the Freshford camogie team which won this year's Community Games all-Ireland final. And the manager of that team was Pa's wife Teresa.

The other member of the family, 14-year-old Bobby won a Leinster juvenile medal with St. Kieran's college this year



ST. KIERAN'S COLLEGE, who won the Leinster Junior Hurling Championship (1984/85).

Back row (I. to r.): Pat Kehoe, John Teehan, John Fitzpatrick, Fran Whelan, Jim O'Neill, Dominic Bradley, Eamon Waters, John Gavin, Padraic Larkin, Adrian Connick, Richard O'Neill, Mr. Nicholas Cashin. Front row (I. to r.): Paul Fahy, John O'Carroll, Kevin Conroy, Jimmy Conroy, Donal Carroll (capt.), John Crosby, Adrian Ronan, D. J. Carey, Padraic Dalton, Damien Rafter. Absent: Anthony Smith.

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Camogie girls not appreciated as they should be

THREE fruitless years passed since Kilkenny got among the camogie honours. The county's last success was in the National League of 1982 when they bettered Cork. However, the ladies returned to the winning enclosure in style this time.

First they snapped up the National League title. And they did it the hard way, in a replay. Later they added the open All-Ireland championship for good measure.

Much acclaim was given the Kilkenny senior hurlers when they performed doubles in 1982 and '83. the fantastic Somehow achievements of the ladies didn't appear to strike home as much. Yet it took the same amount of effort, perhaps even more from the married camogie players, to fashion the two memorable victories.

In the early stages of the National League Kilkenny didn't always field at full-strength for one reason or another. They had a handy opening against Down in Tullaroan, which was a milestone in itself, because this was the first inter-county camogie match played at the

Down hardly had much to celebrate, because they were hammered by 6-3 to 0-7. This tie marked the senior debut of Nora Whelan (Blacks and Whites), and right well she did, too, and much more could be heard of her in the

Galway were visitors to the Noreside in the second round, this time at Danesfort. The visitors opened, backed by a strong wind. They found Kilkenny in great form and with team captain Bridie McGarry hitting one of her good days, and with a brace of goals from Breda Holmes, the Connacht girls were beaten by 3-2 to 0-2.

NOT AT RACES

The strength-in-depth of this year's Kilkenny squad was never more apparent than when Antrim were beaten next time out. The inexperienced Northerners were just not at the races, and were left 24 points behind. Seven Kilkenny girls shared in the scoring. Breda Holmes helped herself to a hattrick of goals, to bring her total in three games to a very impressive

Lead the rest

KILKENNY now head the honours list with four National Senior League victories to their credit.

They skipped ahead of Dublin, the side they beat in this year's

Kilkenny wins were scored in:

Kilkenny 2-4; Limerick 1-5.

Kilkenny 3-8; Tipperary 1-3.

Kilkenny 2-5, Cork 1-4.

Kilkenny 4-7; Dublin 2-13 (draw). Kilkenny 4-7; Dublin 3-6 (replay).

Louth were dispatched without much fuss or bother next, and then it was through to the final to play the side everyone feared - Dublin. To make matters worse, Kilkenny had to travel to Parnell Park.

The day was a real scorcher, and was more fitting for the seaside than dashing around a field. But this pair produced a real cracker. The Noresiders enjoyed the better of the opening half and made good use of their chances. After 20 minutes they had worked up a lead

The proud Dubliners, who appeared to have a slight edge in fitness, put in a bit of a burst before the break and reduced the arrears to 1-7 to 3-4. During the interval Kilkenny sorted out a problem or two, and when they resumed Margaret Farrell and Angela Downey rose white flags to really put it up to the home side.



Dublin didn't earn the respect they have in the game for nothing, and they powered their way back. Slowly they knocked down the difference, and into the last five minutes a point from Edel Murphy earned them a dramatic draw. In the dying stages the camogie produced was of the highest order. There was no room for fancy play. It was first time camogie all the

The replay was staged 20 days later at Nowlan Park. Dublin suffered the loss of a couple of their first team players who had booked passage to America, where they were to work for the Summer.

Kilkenny used the time between matches very well. They sharpened up their fitness. They realised they had the beatings of this respected Dublin team because, after all, it was the Dubs who had come from behind to get the draw.

PERSONAL SUCCESS

The mood could hardly have been better in the Noreside camp. And if at the end Kilkenny carried the day, the match proved a per-

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KILKENNY—the National Camogie League Champions

March 10 at Tullaroan

On the winning team were – Back row (from left): Angela Downey, Biddy O'Sullivan, Jo Dunne, Breda Holmes, Liz Neary, Ann Downey. Front row (from left): Anna Whelan, Deirdre Malone, Siobhan Fitzpatrick, Bridie McGarry, Ann Holden, Margaret Farrell.

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sonal success for the long-serving Liz Neary. The St. Paul's star, who has won practically every honour in the game, crashed home a first-half hat-trick to give Kilkenny a 3-2 to 0-4 interval lead.

She wasn't finished at that. The St. Luke's hospital matron hit the net for the fourth time in the closing half. This remarkable display of strength and skill from one player alone proved too much for the Dubs who were downed by 4-7 to 3-6.

The Kilkenny girls had every reason to celebrate that night. The Dublin monopoly was broken, and the winners had completed a job they felt they should have finished the first day.

Liz Neary stole the show with her remarkable performance. She had a host of competent team mates, including Bridie McGarry, Ann Downey, her sister Angela, Ann Holden, Jo Dunne, Breda Holmes and ever-improving goalkeeper Marie Fitzpatrick.

The first bit of silverware for the year was collected. And how the girls made people in the county oh so proud when they went on to capture the All-Ireland as well. A great year for a great bunch of girls.

Camogie League panel: Marie Fitzpatrick (St. Brigid's); Anne Downey (St. Paul's); Anne Holden (St. Thomas's, Galway); Bridie McGarry, capt. (St. Paul's); Biddy O'Sullivan (Tullogher); Liz Neary (St. Paul's); Deirdre Malone (St. Brigid's); Anna Whelan (Castlecomer); Margaret Farrell (St. Finbarr's, Cork); Angela Downey (St. Paul's); Jo Dunne (Carrickshock); Breda Holmes (St. Brigid's); Siobhan Ryan (Shamrocks); Anne Cahill (Shamrocks); Nora Whelan

Kilkenny 6-3

Down 0-7

Breda Holmes (2-0); Anna Whelan

Scorers: Angela Downey (3-0);

(Blacks and Whites); Rita Wemyss (Bennettsbridge); Ann Marie Brennan (Thomastown); Claire Cullen (Bennettsbridge); Catherine Dunphy (St. Brigid's).

Also used during the campaign were Geraldine Skehan (Bennettsbridge), A. Malone (St. Brigid's), A. Hennessy (St. Brigid's) and A. Stapleton (St. Paul's).

The scoring road to victory

M. Fitzpatrick (1-0); J. Dunne (0-5); A. Phelan (0-2); B. McGarry (0-1).

May 12 in Louth
Kilkenny 5-9
Louth 1-2
Scorers: R. Wemyss (2-1); B.
Holmes (1-2); M. Farrell (1-2); J.
Dunne (1-1); N. Phelan (1-0); A.
Phelan, D. Malone, A. Downey (0-1 each).
June 2 in Parnell Park
League final
Kilkenny 4- 7 (19 pts)
Dublin 2-13 (19 pts)
Scorers: M. Farrell (1-2); J.
Dunne (1-1); B. Holmes (1-1); A.
Whelan (1-0); A. Downey (0-3).
June 22 at Nowlan Park
League final replay
Kilkenny 4-7
Dublin 3-6

Scorers: L. Neary (4-0); A.

Downey (0-4); A. Whelan (0-2); B.

Holmes (0-1).

Avonmore -They just keep on winning

THE inter-firm competitions within the county have been brought to a successful conclusion, and at the time of writing, the Avonmore Creameries (Ballyragget) hurlers have qualified for the All-Ireland senior hurling final where they will be seeking their sixth title. They meet the Connacht champions.

P.N./Uniform took part for the first time and won the juniors at Leinster level. They will take on Kerry Co-op in the All-Ireland semi-final.

Avonmore footballers completed a double when they won the junior county honours. They also did well in the Leinster championship and beat the Wexford champions, Inch Co-op, in the first round. They then went out to Carlow champions Cosets in the Leinster semi-final by 2-7 to 2-5. Cosets went on to win the Leinster title by beating Purcell Meats (Kildare) in the final by 3-6 to 1-5. Had John Mulcahy been available for the game against Cosets, Avonmore could have taken the provincial title.

Avonmore Creameries collected the Kilkenny senior hurling crown for the seventh time in 10 years. They are the most successful team in the history of the G.A.A. Interfirm competitions, and won a fabulous four All-Irelands on the trot from 1976 to '79. After losing the 1981 final by one point to Golden Vale, they bounced back to take the 1983 crown and are now back in the final again.

Avonmore dropped just one point in the league section of the championship. That was against Mahon & McPhillips in the first round. The sides finishing level -Avonmore Creameries 1-15; Mahon & McPhillips 3-9. Their next game was against the All-Ireland junior champions of the previous year – Runtalrad-Tierneys. Avon-more travelled to Thomastown where they won by 2-15 to 3-10. In their third game Avonmore beat the previous year's champions, Public Services, by 0-17 to 1-8.

As a result of this defeat Public Services went out of the championship.



SEEKING FIRST TITLE

The county final was played in Nowlan Park and it brought together Avonmore Creameries and Runtalrad-Tierneys. The newcomers were seeking their first title and made the early running. But inaccuracy in the forwards lost them their chance. Two goals by John Hall in the closing five minutes of the first half gave the North Kil-kenny side a lead of 2-6 to 0-4 at the interval. Two goals by Dermot

Fennelly within a minute of the restart brought the Thomastown side back. The greater experience of the winners stood to them and they weathered the storm to run out convincing winners by 4-16 to 3-7. Best for the winners were Mick Bolger, Nicky Brennan, Mick Walsh, John Mulcahy, Johnny Brennan and John Hall. The losers' best were John Brennan, Mick Tierney, Tom Lyng, Dermot Fennelly, Paddy Fennelly and Brendan Fennelly.

The scorers in the final were: Avonmore Creameries: Mick Walsh (1-6), John Mulcahy (0-5), John Hall (2-1), Dick Walsh (1)1, Johnny Brennan (0-2), Billy Fitzpatrick (0-1). Runtalrad-Tierneys: Dermot Fennelly (3-3), Tom Lyng, Brendan Fennelly, Michael Fennel-

ly, Noel Cottrell (0-1 each).

The winning team was: Morgan Kelly (capt.), Benny Cleere, Mick Bolger, Joe Tierney, Jimmy Ruth, Nickey Brennan, Jimmy O'Brien, Johnny Brennan, Michael Lanigan, Dick Walsh, John Hall, John Mulcahy, Mick Walsh, John Byrne, Billy Fitzpatrick.

Avonmore followed this success with victory in the Leinster final against Aer Lingus (Dublin). They travelled to the latter's home ground and won by 0-20 to 2-9.

The Kilkenny side led by double scores at the interval, 0-12 to 0-6. Despite conceding two goals in the second half they had a comfortable

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five points' victory and never look-

ed like losing.

Scorers for Avonmore were: John Mulcahy (0-7), Billy Fitzpatrick (0-4), Dick Walsh (0-3), Mick Walsh (0-2), Nickey Brennan, Johnny Brennan, Michael Lanigan and: Kevin Mulhall (0-1 each).

In the All-Ireland semi-final in Cashel, Avonmore qualified for the final by beating Limerick Co. Council by 0-12 to 0-8. They were in a good position at the interval when the score was 0-4 each, after they had played against the strong breeze. In the second half the Noresiders found it hard to pull ahead. It took two late points by John Mulcahy to give them breathing space. Their best players were Mick Bolger, Brendan Cleere, Jimmy Ruth, Nicky Brennan, Johnny Brennan and Billy Fitzpatrick.

Scorers for Avonmore were: Billy Fitzpatrick (0-3), Mick Walsh (0-2), Johnny Brennan (0-2), John Mulcahy (0-2), Dick Walsh (0-2),

John Hall (0-1).

FIRST YEAR, FIRST TITLE

P.N.-Uniform, in their first year in the competition, won the junior county title. At the time of writing they were due to play Kerry Co-op. in the All-Ireland semi-final. They had an easy passage into the county final. They got walk-overs from St. Canice's-Smithwicks and Threecastles Farm Services. In their only game in the league section they played a draw with Tallis Bros: 0-12 (P.N.) to 3-3.

The county final was played at St. John's Park. The opposition was provided by St. Canice's-Smithwicks, who were in their second successive final. Smithwicks had lost to Runtalrad-Tierneys in the 1984 final. P.N.-Uniform led by 1-9 to 1-4 at the interval, and ran out winners by 4-15 to 2-9. Two late goals gave the winners a flattering

margin.

The winners' best players were James O'Connor, Martin Butler, Larry Cleere, Billy Ronan in the second half, Mick "Cloney" Brennan, Tommy Lennon and Richard McCarthy. Best for the losers were John Marnell, Pat Hickey, Malachy Hogan, John McCormack, Eugene

Deegan and Paddy Grace. The scorers were: P.N.-Uniform: Mick Brennan (2-4), Richard McCarthy (1-3), Johnny Ronan (1-2), Tom Lennon (0-4), Larry Cleere (0-1), Andy Egan (0-1). St. Canice's+ Smithwicks: John McCormack (0-5), Liam O'Brien (1-0), Paddy Grace (1-0), Jimmy Dunne (0-2), Billy Ayres (0-1), Eugene Deegan (0-1).

The winning team was Pat Dat Davis, Sean Lawless, Martin Burke, Noel Long, Larry Cleere, James O'Connor, Pat Kiely, Billy Ronan, Jackie Bolger, Tom Lennon, Johnny Ronan, Eddie O'Neill, Mick Brennan, Andy Egan (capt.), Richard McCarthy.



P.N.-Uniform followed up by winning the Leinster title. They had a close call against Donoghoes-Roadstone (Wexford) in the semifinal and won by two points - 0-17 to 3-6. The Kilkenny side went into an early six-point lead but then conceded two soft goals and found themselves a point behind at halftime. In the second half the accuracy of Johnny Ronan from placed balls was decisive. P.N. edged through by two points.

Scorers for P.N.-Uniform were Johnny Ronan (0-10), Mick Brennan (0-3), Billy Ronan (0-2), Tom Lennon, Richard McCarthy (0-1 each). The winners' best players were Billy Ronan, who dominated at midfield, Martin Burke, James O'Connor, Pat Kiely, Mick Brennan

and Johnny Ronan.

Keenans (Carlow) were overcome in the Leinster final in dreadful conditions at Gowran. The Carlow side led by 0-4 to 0-3 after playing with the strong breeze. They failed to score in the second period as the Kilkenny side pulled ahead to win by six points. The best players for the winners were Mick Brennan, Martin Burke, Eddie O'Neill, Larry Cleere, Tommy Lennon and Richard McCarthy.

The winners' scorers were: Mick Brennan (0-4), Richard McCarthy (0-3), Tommy Lennon, Larry Cleere,

Johnny Ronan (0-1 each).

WON DOUBLE

Avonmore Creameries won the double when they took the junior football title. They beat Public Services in the first round by 1-6 to 1-5. In the final they overcame St. Canice's-P.N. after a replay. The first game finished all square at 2-9 each. Avonmore dominated the first half but a Brendan McPartland goal just before the interval left St. Canice's behind by 1-7 to 1-2.

They got completely on top in the second half and five minutes from time they looked home and dried when they led by four points. The Ballyragget boys staged a great

A point by Michael Walsh (Lisdowney) followed by a last-gasp goal by Jimmy Ruth gave them a sensational draw. Best for Avonmore were Paddy Kavanagh, Gerry Luttrell, Vincent Cleere, Loe Tierney, Nicky Brennan, Johnny Brennan, Michael Walsh (Lisdowney) and Morgan Kelly.

St. Canice's-P.N. were best served by Liam Lanigan, Ray Dowling, Malachy Hogan, Ger Tyrrell, Tommy Gaffney, Jimmy Coyne Billy Ayres and Brendan McPartland.

Scorers: Avonmore Creameries – Morgan Kelly (0-4), Joe Casey (1-0), Jimmy Ruth (1-0), Kevin Mulhall (0-2), Mick Walsh (Lisdowney) (0-2), Mick Walsh (Ballinakill) (0-1). St. Canice's-P.N. Brendan McPartland (1-2), Andy Egan (1-1), John McCormack (0-3), Jimmy Coyne (0-2), Pat Hennessy (0-1).

The replay was one-sided. Avonmore ran out winners by 1-11 to 1-4. With Johnny Brennan and Jimmy O'Brien on top at midfield, the winners' attack picked off their scores at will and were never in

danger.

Scorers: Avonmore Creameries: Kevin Mulhall (0-4), Johnny Brennan (0-3), Mick Walsh (1-0), Joe Casey (0-2), Johnny Buckley, Jimmy Ruth (0-1 each). St. Canice's-P.N.: Jimmy Coyne (0-2), John McCormack (0-2).

The winning team was: Paddy Kavanagh, Kieran Leonard, Vincent Cleere, Joe Tierney, Gary Luttrell, Nicky Brennan, Liam Phelan, Jimmy O'Brien, Johnny Brennan, Joe Casey, Kieran Mulhall, Mick Walsh, Johnny Buckley, Jimmy Ruth, Morgan Kelly. Sub.: John Mulcahy.

Avonmore did well in Leinster by beating Inch Co-op (Wexford) by 1-12 to 1-5. They failed in the Leinster semi-final to the eventual champions, Cosets (Carlow) by 2-7 to 2-5. The Carlow side led by 2-3 to 1-4 at the interval, but in the closing minutes their net had a charmed life as Avonmore tried desperately for a winning goal.

Avonmore had star players in Paddy Kavanagh, Nicky Brennan, Vincent Cleere, Willie Phelan, Johnny Brennan, Morgan Kelly, Joe

Casey and Kevin Mulhall.

Scorers for Avonmore: Morgan Kelly (1-2), Jimmy Ruth (1-0), Dick Walsh, Johnny Brennan, Mick Walsh (0-1 each).

Hard times, and the 'Board knows it

OPERATING costs everywhere have soared, and in common with most sporting bodies, Kilkenny Co. Board is finding it more difficult each year to make ends meet.

County Convention was told that the total expenditure for the year was a massive £114,114, a considerable increase from £105,367 for

"The present trends cannot be allowed to continue" warned

secretary, Ted Carroll.

And 'Board auditor, Raymond Anthony added: "While profit making is not the primary objective, the activities of the Co. Board could be seriously hampered by further loss".

Delegates were told that the Co. Board incurred a deficit of £18,815 for the year. This didn't plunge the 'Board into debt, but the loss made

a big hole in reserves.

The 'Board carried deficits in 1983 and '84 by running down reserves which had been built up in 1982 and earlier. But it couldn't continue to carry on business in this yein.

"With a fall off in income, it is not possible to afford a level of expenditure that was sustainable in the good years", secretary Carroll told the huge attendance in Piltown

During a year when Kilkenny captured two all-Ireland hurling titles, junior and under-21, and the minors also got through to the national final, the team expenses amounted to a staggering £56,534. Delegates were told corners would have to be cut, and additional sources of revenue found.

LEAVE GAME ALONE

Away from frightening money matters, this was an ordinary Convention, without fuss or bother. In his report, chairman Michael O'Neill issued a stern warning to the upcoming rule changing Congress that the game of hurling was fine and should be left alone. He didn't see why a perfectly good, attractive game should be interfered with.

Bishop Laurence Forristal of Ossory congratulated the G.A.A. on its continued progress, and thanked the association for doing so much good work for young people

And he added a bit of advice: "The young people you are looking for are being sought by others. You have to go out and fight for their

interest and attention. Do that, and help them in every way you can".

Main interest during the election of officers surrounded the representative to take over from the retiring Nicky Purcell (Graigue-Ballycallan) on the Central Council. After a second count, a member of the same club, Tom Ryall was elected.

Members of the Boards



Co Board officers: Michael O'Neill, St. Senan's (chairman); Ted Carroll, Lisdowney (Secretary); Jim Brophy, Piltown, Jim Rice, O'Loughlin/Gaels (trustees); Raymond Anthony (auditor); Eamon Hennessy (registrar); Tom Doheny, St. Lactain's (youth officer); Tom Ryall (Graigue-Ballycallan (P.R.O.); Paul Kinsella, St. Martin's (Bord Iomana); Tom Waldron, St. Lactain's (Gaelic officer); T. Ryall (Central Council representative); K. Fennelly (Senior), Shamrocks, M. O'Neill (Leinster Council representatives).

SOUTHERN Board Officers: Joe Mackey, Dunnamaggin (chairman); Andy Aylward, Mullinavat (vice-chairman); Joe Walsh, Thomastown (secretary/treasurer); Ed. Conway, Mullinavat, J. Mackey (Fixtures Committee representatives); Ed. Conway, J. Healy, Tullogher/Rosbercon, J. Phelan, P. J. Rohan, Carrickshock (Co. Board reprsentatives); James Conway, Mullinavat, Thomas Hoyne, Carrickshock, E. Quinn, Mooncoin, Joe Conway, Tullogher-Rosbercon (representatives to Referees Sub-Committee).

Northern Board Officers: Tommy Murphy, Danesfort (chairman); John Lyng, Emeralds (Secretary); Ned Moran, Black and Whites (vice-chairman); Paddy Cahill, Graigue-Ballycallan; Ger Doheny, Tullaroan; John Lyng, Ned Moran (Co. Board representatives); T. Murphy, J. Lyng (Fixtures Committee representatives).

Football Board officers: Barry Henriques, John Lockes (chairman); Kieran Meally, Railyard (vice-chairman); Seamus Delaney (secretary); S. Delaney, M. Neary, T. Holden, J. McGrath (delegates to Co. Board).

Less than 24 hours after offering himself as a selector for the Kilkenny junior football team, Kilkenny Co. Board chairman, Michael O'Neill was given the job. He was made a mentor by senior football champions, Thomastown, along with Kieran Meally, Barry Henriques, Tom Walsh (Thomastown) and Seamus Delaney.

The minor football team selectors were: Bob Shortall (Clara); Gay Teehan (Dicksboro); Tom Duggan (Bigwood); John Murphy (St.

Patrick's).

Bord-na-nOg officers: James Delahunty, Mooncoin (chairman); Eddie Blackmore, Piltown (vice-chairman); Tom Ryall, Graigue-Ballycallan (secretary); Pat Dunphy, Rower-Inistioge (Co. Board delegate); J. Delahunty, E. Blackmore, P. Dunphy, T. Ryall, J. Walton, Tullaroan, S. Grace, Fenians, M. O'Neill, Slieverue, M. Byrne, Graignamanagh (Grading committee).

Primary Schools Board officers: Jim Neary, Kilmanagh (chairman); Joe Dunphy, Ballyhale (vicechairman); Paul Kinsella, St. Patrick's (Secretary); John Knox, Gowran (Treasurer and P.R.O.).

Handball Baord officers: Eamon Hanrahan, Kilfane (chairman); Seamus Reade, Talbot's Inch (vicechairman); Con Moore. O'Loughlin's (secretary-treasurer); Johnny Brennan, Muckalee (registrar), Tommy O'Brien, Talbot's Inch (P.R.O.); Con Moore (assistant P.R.O.); Con Moore, Pat O'Keeffe, Mullinavat, Michael Reade, Talbot's Inch with the chairman as reserve (senior selectors); Bobby Falsey, Don Bosco, Pat O'Keeffe, Mick King, Goresbridge, D. Hennessy, Talbot's Inch, Tommy O'Brien (juvenile selectors).

Camogie Board — Billy Malone, St. Brigid's (Chairman); Breda Holmes, St. Brigid's (Secretary); Annette Stapleton, St. Paul's (Treasurer); Carmel Savage, St. Paul's (Vice-Chairperson); Angela Downey, St. Paul's (Registrar); Phil Cashin, St. Brigid's (P.R.O.).

Players from three grades used

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PLAYERS from the three major grades – junior, intermediate and senior – were used by Kilkenny during the National Hurling League.

There flying the flag for the junior clubs were goalkeeper David Burke (Emeralds) and Pat Walsh (Windgap), who had his involvement curtailed because of injury. Young hopefuls battling away in this division could take encouragement from the inclusion of this pair who proved as good as anyone around them.

The intermediate grade was well represented, with eight players getting a run at one time or another. The rest of the players were all from senior clubs.

The unsettled nature of the team was represented in the big number of players used by the selectors. In all 29 were tried, two more than the previous year.

The same team never fielded for

consecutive matches, but injuries to key men contributed to this. Liam Fennelly, for example, took a break at one time and Paddy Prendergast made a bid for a place near the finish after battling to regain fitness for nearly nine months after breaking a leg in the previous championship against Laois.

There was an attempt to make a full-back out of John Henderson, and at various times Michael Galway (Thomastown) and Frank Holohan (Shamrocks) were tried in this position.

Only five players took the field against Limerick at the start of the campaign and turned out in each subsequent match. The everpresents were John Henderson (Fenians), Ger Henderson (Fenians), Nickey Brennan (Conahy Shamrocks), Frank Cummins (Blackrock) and Kieran Brennan (Conahy Shamrocks).

The year before Frank Cummins also played in every match. At that time he was joined by another long server, Noel Skehan. This time the Bennettsbridge net-minder was also an ever-present, but on this occasion as a reserve.

The men who played during the League were (number of games in brackets): John Henderson, Ger Henderson, Nickey Brennan, Frank Cummins, Kieran Brennan (9 each); David Burke, Frank Holohan, Joe Hennessy, Christy Heffernan (8 each); Harry Ryan, Johnny Brennan, Richard Power, Ger Fennelly (7 each); Billy Fitzpatrick, David Hoyne (6 each); Liam McCarthy, Dick O'Hara, Ray Heffernan (5 each); Sean Fennelly, Liam Fennelly (4 each); Michael Galway, Pat Walsh, John Lawlor, Bill O'Hara (2 each); Kevin Fennelly, Eddie Aylward, John Marnell, Mick O'Connor, Paddy Prendergast (one



Piltown, who lost the Under-21 Hurling Championship final (Roinn B) against Young Irelands (Gowran).

Fantastic year for under-16 games

What the minor competitions lacked in excitement and quality, there was in abundance in the under-16 champion-ships. The two ties in the Roinn A championship between Castlecomer and Thomastown were the games of the year at under-age level, while the Roinn B Championship final between Piltown and Ballyragget produced hurling of the highest order.

Remarkably, just as happened in 1983 and 1984, a club took four titles in the under-16 grade. James Stephens became the first club to accomplish this magical feat when they took all four Roinn A crowns in 1983 – league and championship in both hurling and football. Mooncoin performed an encore in 1984, the two hurling titles in Roinn A and the two football titles in Roinn B. Piltown captured all four titles in the B grade.

Castlecomer completed the double in Roinn A hurling. The previous year they did the double in Roinn B. It was the North Kilkenny side's second title. The previous victory was 20 years ago in 1965.

Castlecomer and Thomastown served up a thriller, and the sides finished all square at 3-9 each. It was the first draw in an under-16 final since 1955. 'Comer led by 1-6 to 1-4 at the interval, after playing with the breeze. A brilliant five minutes after the restart saw Castlecomer shoot 2-2 to go 10 points clear. Thomastown then showed their mettle and staged a great rally. In the end they levelled the scores and would have snatched victory but for the fact a shot by Martin Donnolly hit the upright and fell wide.

Michael Brophy, Kevin Wallace, John O'Donovan, Christy Brennan, Jamesy Brennan, John Buggy, Eamon Connery and Willie Holden did best for the Northerners. No lesser heroes for Thomastown were Willie Holden, Willie Murphy, Michael Lannon, Adrian Finan, Joe Bourke, who did a great job of containing county minor Jamesy Brennan, Kevin Maher, Shane O'Brien, Eoin O'Neill and Martin Donnolly.

Scorers: Castlecomer: Eamon Connery (1-2), Willie Breen (1-0), Pat Walsh (1-0), Jamesy Brennan (0-3, two frees), Christy Brennan (0-4). Thomastown – Martin Donnolly (2-0), Willie O'Keeffe (1-1), Shane O'Brien (0-3, two frees), Kevin Maher (0-2, two 65s), Damien Walsh (0-2), Michael Lannon (0-1).

WHAT A REPLAY

The replay even surpassed the drawn tie. It was brilliant, and the standard of hurling was of the highest order. Five times in the second half, the sides were level. In the last five minutes, points by John Buggy and Jamesy Brennan (2), gave Castlecomer the honours on a 1-11 to 1-8 scoreline. Thomastown almost snatched a levelling goal in the last seconds. But Liam Slevin in the Castlecomer goal made a great save at the expense of a 65. This was beaten off and the full time whistle left 'Comer winners.

Jamesy Brennan, who had been quite by his own high standards in the drawn game, was a man apart in the replay. He scored eight wonderful points, five from play. Others who did well were Liam Slevin, Michael Brophy, John O'Donovan, Christy Brennan, John Buggy, who shot three marvellous points, Cormac Young and Willie Holden. Thomastown's best were Martin Donnelly, Damien Walsh, Eoin O'Neill, Michael Lannon and Matty Grace.

Scorers: Castlecomer – James Brennan (0-8, three frees); Willie Holden (1-0), John Buggy (0-3). Thomastown – Martin Donnolly (1-0), Damien Walsh, Eoin O'Neill, Willie O'Keeffe (0-2 each), Kevin Maher, Shane O'Brien (0-1 each).

The winning team was – Liam Slevin, P. Breen, Michael Brophy, Patsy Brophy, Cormac Young, John O'Donovan, Victor Smith, James Brennan, Christy Brennan, John Buggy, Eamon Connory, Cathal Phillips, Willie Holden, Pat Walsh, Tom Nolan. Kevin Wallace played in the drawn game. Pat Walsh, who went on as a substitute in the drawn tie, kept his place for the replay.

Castlecomer won the league when they beat Thomastown in the semi-final and James Stephens in the final. It was an easy win for 'Comer, who beat 'Stephens by 3-12 to 0-3. The game was played in

dreadful conditions.



Scorers for Castlecomer were Jamesy Brennan (0-9), Victor Smith (1-1), Willie Holden (1-0), John Buggy (1-0), Christy Brennan (0-2). James Stephens – Kevin Conroy (0-1, free), A. Connick, Brian Whelan (0-1 each).

The winning team was Liam Slevin, Tom Nolan, Michael Brophy, Patsy Brophy, Kevin Wallace, John O'Donovan, Cormac Young, Jamesy Brennan, Christy Brennan, Victor Smith, Eamon Connery, John Buggy, Cathal Phillips, Pat Walsh, Willie Holden.

Piltown carried off the Roinn B hurling championship when they beat Ballyragget in a goalless final by 0-8 to 0-6. It was another terrific decider. It took a great save by Ger Talbot, and a bit of luck when a shot by John Shiels looked bound for the net but struck a defender, before Piltown got through. Piltown led by 0-5 to 0-1 at the interval, but they played well in the second half, and had they taken their chances they would surely have been much further ahead when Ballyragget came at them in the closing 10 minutes.

Piltown's best players were Liam Kelly, Michael O'Shea, Darrel Cummins, Robert Blackmore, Andrew McCarthy, Enda Keegan and Mark Walsh. Ballyragget's best players were Paul Roberts, Thomas Thornton, John Phelan, Pat Morrissey, Mark Kennedy, one of

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the best players on view, John Shiels and J. Ryan.

Scorers: Piltown - Andrew McCarthy (0-4, two frees), Enda Keegan (0-2), Robert Blackmore, Mark Walsh (0-1 each). Ballyragget - John Shiels (0-4, two frees), Jim Ryan (0-2).

The winning team was Ger Talbot, Liam Kelly, David Phelan, S. Kiely, C. Knox, Michael O'Shea, David Cummins, Des O'Dea, Robert Blackmore, Mark Walsh, Andrew McCarthy, Tom Anthony, Pat Butler, Enda Keegan, Tommy Cuddihy. Subs: Owen Meade, S. Reid.

LEAGUE WENT TO PILTOWN

Piltown won the league when they beat St. Lactains in the final by 4-6 to 2-2. Playing with the breeze, Piltown built up an interval lead of 3-5 to 1-1. A goal by Mark Walsh midway through the second half

wrapped up the game.
The winners' best players were Liam Kelly, David Phelan, Darrel Cummins, Robert Blackmore, Andrew McCarthy, Enda Keegan and Pat Butler. St. Lactain's best were John Dermody, John Crosby, Jason Turner, Damien Rafter and Brian Dermody.

Scorers: Piltown - Robert Blackmore (1-2), Mark Walsh (1-1), Andrew McCarthy (1-1), Pat Butler (1-0), Tom Anthony, Enda Keegan (0-1 each). St. Lactains - Brian Dermody (2-1), John Crosby (0-1, free).

The victorious team was Tommy Cuddihy, Liam Kelly, Damien Phelan, S. Kiely, C. Knox, Michael O'Shea, David Cummins, D. O'Dea, Robert Blackmore, Tom Anthony, Andrew McCarthy, Mark Walsh, Pat Butler, Enda Keegan, Owen Meade.

Johnstown, like Castlecomer and Piltown, pulled off the double when they took the Roinn C league and championship. In the championship final they beat Dunnamaggin by 2-17 to 4-0. It was all one way traffic in the first half as Johnstown pulled ahead to lead by 2-10 to no score at the interval. Johnstown were hit for four goals in the first 10 minutes of the second half and the leeway was reduced to six points (2-12 to 4-0). Inspired by Jimmy Brennan at midfield, the winners again took up the running to score five points and ran out deserving winners. In addition to Brennan, others who did well were Jim Dollard, Tom Henderson, Anthony McEvoy, James Carroll, Michael Phelan, Brian Ryan and Matty Walsh. Dunamaggin's most Page 94

impressive performers were Brian Mackey, Richard Fleming, John Whelan, Joe Sheridan, Eamon Kennedy and Ritchie O'Neill.

Scorers: Johnstown - Michael Phelan (1-5), Jimmy Brennan (0-7, four frees), Paul Ryan (1-0), Jim Dollard (0-2, one 65), Brian Ryan, Matty Walsh, Eugene Ryan (0-1 each). Dunnamaggin - Eamon Kennedy (2-0), Joey Sheridan, Richard O'Neill (1-0 each).

The winning team was Melvyn Moriarty, Anthony McEvoy, Tom Henderson, Michael Quinlan, Dan Costigan, Jim Dollard, M. O'Grady, James Carroll, Jijmy Brennan, Ger Brennan, Brian Ryan, Matty Walsh, Eugene Ryan, Paul Ryan, Michael Phelan.

DOUBLE SCORE WIN

Johnstown took the league title by beating Goresbridge/-Paulstown by double scores, 2-8 to 1-4. The winners led by 2-0 to 0-3 at the interval. Despite conceding a goal to Christy Cass, the Johnstown boys picked off the points for a good victory.

Jim Dollard was the outstanding player on view. Jimmy Brennan starred at midfield. Anthony McEvoy, Dan Costigan, Brian Ryan, their best forward, and Michael Phelan were others who did well

for Johnstown.

The losers most prominent players were Brian Keyes, John Gavin, their best player, Tom Murphy, Christy Cass, Willie Hanlon and Paul Fleming.

Scorers: Johnstown - Paul Ryan (1-1), Brian Ryan (0-3), Michael Phelan (1-0), Jim Dollard, Matty Walsh, Eugene Ryan, Ger Brennan (0-1 each). Goresbridge/-Paulstown - Christy Cass (1-0), John Gavin (0-2 frees), Paul Fleming (0-

The victorious team was Melvyn Moriarty, Anthony McEvoy, Tom Henderson, Michael Quinlan, Dan Costigan, Jim Dollard, Michael O'Grady, Jimmy Brennan, James Carroll, Eugene Ryan, Brian Ryan, Matty Walsh, Michael Phelan, Paul Ryan, Ger Brennan.

The Roinn A championship football final has not been played at the time of writing. The contestants are the city sides, Dicksboro, and James Stephens. 'Stephens are seeking their third title in-a-row. They beat Dicksboro in the 1984 final by 2-8 to

Stephens lost the league title (Roinn A) to Thomastown on a score of 1-6 to 1-4. Thomastown took the lead with two points by John Challoner. At the interval the city side led by 1-1 to 0-3. 'Stephens, trailing by two points, tried for a goal from three frees in the closing stages, but these were cleared by the Thomastown defence.

Thomastown's best players were Adrian Finan, Michael Lannon, Damien Walsh, Eoin O'Neill and John Challoner. The losers best were Anthony Smith, Declan Forristal and Kevin Conroy.

The winning team was Willie Grace, Matty Grace, John Skehan, O'Keeffe, Damien Walsh, Michael Lannon, S. Og O'Sullivan, Kevin Maher, Adrian Finan, Martin Donnolly, Eoin O'Neill, Shane

O'Brien, John Challoner, Willie Murphy, Colm Mullins.

NO OPINION

Piltown took the league Roinn B football title when they scored an easy win over Slieverue by 4-9 to 0-5. As there was no report of this game, we cannot offer any opinion on it.

In the Roinn B championship, Piltown beat Graigue/Ballycallan by 3-1 to 2-2. The match was spoiled by a high wind, which made conditions difficult. Piltown set themselves up for victory when they raced into a 1-2 to no score lead, although playing against the strong breeze.

Graigue/Ballycallan recovered, and goals by Adrian Ronan and Adrian Butler gave them an interval lead of 2-2 to 1-2. It took Piltown a long time to get on top in the second half. They only wrapped up the issue one minute from time when Mark Walsh scored a goal.

Best for the winners were Robert Cox, Michael O'Shea, David Phelan, Aengus Healy, Mark Walsh, Robert Blackmore, Tom Cuddihy, Andrew McCarthy and Enda Keegan. The losers best were Adrian Ronan, the hardiest player on view. John Teehan, Mark O'Brien, Padraig McCluskey, Pat Neary, Eamon Egan and Conor Minogue.

Scorers: Piltown - Tommy Cuddihy (1-2), Mark Walsh, Ger Giles (1-0 each), Tony Geffries, Enda Keegan (0-1 each). Graigue/Ballycallan: Adrian Ronan (1-2, goal penalty), Adrian Butler (1-

The winning team was Robert Cox, Aengue Healy, David Phelan, Andrew McCarthy, C. Knox, Michael O'Shea, S. Kiely, Robert Blackmore, Mark Walsh, Ger Talbot, Enda Keegan, David Cummins, Ger Giles, Tony Jeffries, Tommy Cuddihy.

IN A year that was not a flattering one for the county minor hurlers they lost the Leinster final to Wexford by 0-12 to 0-8 — the standard at local level left a lot to be desired. At least all the hurling competitions have been finished, in both league

and championship.

The football has reached the closing stages. In the football championship (Roinn A), James Stephens and Thomastown will contest the final. Thomastown have already won six minor titles. Not bad going for a side that scored their first victory in 1973. James Stephens will be seeking their fifth title. They won three when known as the Village, while they won the 1983 title when called James Stephens.

In the minor football B championship, Railyard Graigue/Ballycallan will meet in the Northern final. There are three teams remaining in the south, Mooncoin play Glenmore and the winners taking on Carrickshock.

James Stephens brought off the double in the minor hurling Roinn A and are now top of the roll of honour with 8 titles. Their win was all the more praiseworthy when it is remembered a broken leg kept star player, Frank Morgan out of action for the whole campaign. The city side accounted for Dicksboro, Bennettsbridge and Tullaroan to win the Northern championship.

Thomastown qualified for the championship final by beating Shamrocks, Mooncoin and Glen-

Thomastown had the better of the first half in the county final, and led by 2-3 to 1-2 at the interval. A steady second half saw the city boys move ahead and they eventually won by 1-11 to 2-4. A brilliant display by Declan Mullen, who took the man of the match award, played a huge part in 'Stephens victory. He got most assistance from Alan McCormack, Jimmy Walton, Jodie O'Dwyer when he moved to midfield, Paul Thornton, John Larum and Iim Smith.

Tom O'Keeffe in goal was the hero of the losing side. Others who did well were John Whelan, who had a great game until he tired near the end, Pat Woods, Pat Walsh and

Brendan Maher.

Scorers: James Stephens - Paul Thornton (1-2), John Larkin (0-4, 0-3 frees), Jimmy Walton (0-2), Declan Mullen (0-2, one free, one '65), Niall Brophy (0-1). Thomastown: Matt Bookle (1-1), Eoin O'Neill (1-0), Pat Walsh (0-2 frees), Kieran Treacy (0-1).

Not a great year, but 'Stephens had reason to celebrate

The winning team was Alan McCormack, Nicky Comerford, Seamus McGuire, Paul O'Sullivan, Jim Smith, Declan Mullen (captain), Keith McCormack, Richard Minogue, Jimmy Walton, John Larkin, John Millea, Paul Thornton, Kevin Conroy, Niall Brophy, Jodie O'Dwyer. The referee was Tommy Duggan (Mullinavat).

James Stephens collected the league title and John Tobin memorial trophy for the second time when they beat Tullaroan by 2-6 to 1-6 on the Saturday following

the championship variety.

WON THE LOT

As a result of this win, this James Stephens side has come through under-12, 14, 16 and minor grades and won the lot. As well, they took the Feile na nGael title in 1981. The city side led by 1-4 to 1-2 at the interval, and had to withstand a great rally by Tullaroan before coming out on top. Best for the winners were Alan McCormack, Declan Mullen, Jim Smith and Niall Brophy, Tullaroan's best were Liam Keoghan, Bill Hennessy and Jimmy

Scorers: James Stephens: Niall Brophy (1-2), Kevin Conroy (1-0), Jimmy Walton (0-2), John Larkin (0-

Tullaroan: Jimmy Walton (1-3), Diarmuid Purcell (0-2), Ritchie Walsh (0-1). James Stephens fielded the same side as won the cham-

pionship.

Clara took the minor hurling B Championship when they beat Graignamanagh in the final in Callan. Clara beat Fenians (replay), St. Lactains and Conahy Shamrocks, while Graignamanagh accounted for Dunnamaggin, Rower-Inistioge and Mullinavat.

Clara went ahead in the first half to lead by 1-7 to 1-2 at the interval. Graig came back and reduced the deficit, to one point, 1-8 to 2-4. Goals by Michael Casey and John Shortall sent Clara seven points clear, and despite beint reduced to 14 players, they held out to win by 3-12 to 3-8.

Clara had impressive displays from James Langton, Philip Murphy, J. J. Ward, when he moved to midfield, Liam Byrne, John Shortall, Nicholas Carrigan and Michael Casey. Best for the losers were Liam Bolger, Alan Foley, John Maher, John Byrne and Liam

Scorers: Clara: John Shortall (1-6, points frees); Michael Casey (2-0), Liam Byrne (0-3, two 65's); J. J. Ward, Nicholas Carrigan, Andrew

Carroll (0-1 each).

Graignamanagh: John Byrne (1-3, two points frees), Liam Delaney (1-1), Edward Bolger (1-1), Syl Ryan (0-2, one free), Michael Walsh (0-1).

The winning Clara team was Diarmuid Shortall, Martin Treacy, James Langton, Pat Ryan, Martin Whearty, Phil Murphy, Martin Casey, Edmond Mulrooney, Liam Byrne, Nicholas Carrigan, J. J. Ward, Danny Hoyne, John Shortall, Michael Casey, Andrew Carroll, Sub: Pat Brennan.

MADE AMENDS

Graignamanagh made amends in the league final when they beat St. Lactain's (Freshford.) The deciding score was 3-6 to 2-6. The Barrow boys led by 2-3 to 0-3 at the interval. St. Lactain's came very much into the game in the second half, and looked likely winners when they went two points ahead with seven minutes left. The introduction of John Maher by Graignamanagh helped them gain more of the play at midfield, and he was on hand scoring the vital deciding goal three minutes for time. Best for the winners were Paul Ryan, Alan Foley, John Maher, John Byrne and Edward Bolger. The losers best were Declan Killeen, Anthony Dawson, John Crosby, Paul Dalton, Vincent Bolger and Tommy Maher.

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Scorers - **Graignamanagh:** Edward Bolger (1-1), John Byrne (0-4, three frees), Damien Bolger (1-0), John Maher (1-0), Michael Fenlon (0-1).

St. Lactain's: Tommy Maher (2-2), Damien Rafter (0-2, one free), Paul Dalton, Vincent Bolger (0-1 each).

The winning team was Paul Ryan, Willie Bolger, Ian Ryan, Edward Cahill, D. Fenlon, Brendan Corbett, Alan Foley, Michael Walsh, Syl Ryan, Edward Bolger, John Byrne, Michael Fenlon, Liam Delaney, Damien Bolger, Pierce Grace. Subs: John Maher, Seamus Canning.

BIT OF HISTORY

Blacks and Whites created hurling history when they took the minor hurling C championship to bring the first ever hurling title to the club. They beat Tullogher-Rosbercon by 2-13 to 1-6 in the county final played in Thomastown. Two goals by Ned Kelly midway through the first half put the winners 2-5 to 0-3 ahead at the interval. The winners picked off eight points in the second half, while the losers added one goal and three points. The Tullogher-Rosbercon goal came near the end, by which stage the result was a foregone conclusion.

J. J. Whitty in goal, John Farrell, Dan Cleere, John Lalor, Pat O'Grady, Martin Farrell, Ned Kelly and Martin O'Grady were best for the winners. Tullogher-Rosbercon had stars in Seamus Kennedy, Tom Murphy and Seamus Bookle.

Scorers: Blacks and Whites: Ned Kelly (2-1), Martin O'Grady (0-6, three frees), Tommy Doyle (0-3), Martin Farrell (0-2), Pat O'Grady (0-

Tullogher/Rosbercon: Tom Murphy (0-6, five frees), Seamus Kennedy (1-0).

The winning team was J. J. Whitty, Ken Morris, John Farrell, David Savage, Richard Dowling, Dan Cleere, John Lalor, Martin Farrell, Pat O'Grady, Martin O'Grady, Ned Kelly, Tommy Doyle, Pat O'Grady, Paud Whitty, Bobby Doyle. Subs: John Ryan, George O'Grady.

AND 'SHOCK TOOK CROWN

Carrickshock created history also when they took the minor C hurling league. It was the first minor hurling title for Carrickshock. They beat Barrow Rangers (Paulstown) by 2-12 to 2-7. Things did not look good at the interval as they led by just one point, 1-7 to 2-3 after playing with the breeze.

Carrickshock produced their best hurling in the last quarter, during which they recorded 1-3 to win by five points.

Anthony Aylward thundered into the game in the last quarter and he got great assistance from Padraig Crowley. They dominated midfield in the closing stages. Others who did well for the winners were 14-year-old, Tom Nolan in goal, Tommy Murphy, Ken Dunphy, Pat Cantwell, Christy O'Dwyer, Paul Foran and Pat McEntee. Barrow Rangers best were Fergus Fleming, Seamus Gittens, Willie Holmes, Tom Brennan and Declan Mahon.

Scorers - Carrickshock: Padraig Crowley (0-6, five frees), Christy O'Dwyer (1-1), Pat McEntee (1-0), Anthony Aylward (0-2), Pat Cantwell, Michael Conway, Paul Foran (0-1 each).

Barrow Rangers: Fergus Fleming (1-6, five frees), Paul Fleming (1-0), Declan Mahon (0-1).

The winning team was Tom Nolan, Donal Ryan, Tom Murphy, T. Cassin, P. Landers, Ken Dunphy, Pat Kenneally, Padraig Crowley, Anthony Aylward, Christy O'Dwyer, Pat Cantwell, Mick Dowling, Michael Connolly, Paul Foran, Michael Conway. Subs: Pat McEntee, Fred Malzard.

CUMANN LUTH-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 1985.

Their kind support is deeply appreciated.

TED CARROLL, Runaí

Goresbridge/Paulstown won Roinn B for the first time by toppling Johnstown (3-6 to 0-6). Coon/Muckalee were one of the finest teams in the county this season, and they captured the Roinn C title with a fine victory over Urlingford. In Roinn D, Conahy defeated Kilmacow by 2-3 to 0-3.

LEINSTER FEILE

This year the Leinster Council organised a Feile for the province and Kilkenny hosted it. Twenty-seven teams travelled to take on the locals in championships that were divided into 7 groups. In all, over 77 matches were played over the weekend.

The winners were — Group 1 (Rathneska (Laois) 3-9, Mullinavat 1-2; 2. St. Martins 7-5; Castlecomer 2-3; 3. Goresbridge/Paulstown 2-6; Graignamanagh 1-4; 4. Mooncoin 3-4; Ballyhale 1-0; 5. Gowran 3-10; Portlaoise 2-2; 6. Bennettsbridge 5-2; Clara 1-3; 7. Galmoy 3-6; Wicklow 3-0.

INTER CITIES GAMES

Kilkenny travelled to Pairc Uí Chaoimh to play Cork in under-12 hurling and under-13 football. The footballers gave a good account of themselves but lost, while the hurler proved successful. Limerick visited Kilkenny, and once again the hurlers proved too strong and the footballers were narrowly defeated.

Football panel: M. Barcoe, I. O'Brien, B. Comerford (Thomastown); D. Dowling, B. Kenny (Ballyragget); J. Murphy, J. Frisby (Tullogher); M. Murphy, M. Culleton (C.B.S.); P. Farrell, M. Phelan (Gowran); J. Phelan, P. Atkinson (Kilmacow); R. Cuddihy, B. Commins (Piltown); F. Cantwell, B. Smith, B. Leahy (St. Patrick's); L. Heffernan, W. O'Malley, J. Kelly (Kilkenny).

Hurling panel: N. Lacey, B. Delaney (C.B.S.); P. G. Delaney, A. McEvoy (Johnstown); N. Delahunty (Piltown); B. Anderson (Freshford); G. Nugent, C. Minogue, T. Comerford (Kilmanagh); D. O'Neill, D. Lawlor (Coon-Muckalee); N. Skehan (Bennettsbridge); E. Kennedy (Dunnamaggin); B. Barcoe (Clara); P. Drea (Goresbridge - Paulstown); A. O'Hara (Thomastown); P. Larkin (St. Patrick-s De La Salle); M. Brennan (Galmoy); C. Byrne (Graignamanagh); K. Carey, G. Carroll (Gowran).

WATERFORD GLASS TOURNEY

The under-14 county panel played in the annual Waterford Glass tournament. In the first round the Noresiders scored an easy victory over Co. Down. In the second round they took on Tipperary. The first half was closely contested and at the interval the sides were level at 0-3 each. The second half saw Tipperary race on to a 1-8 to 1-6 win.

Panel: J. Dermody (Freshford), A. McEvoy, M. Walsh (Johnstown); B. Keyes (Paulstown-Goresbridge); Ciaran Phelan, Pat O'Neill, R. Middleton, C. Carter (Gowran); C. Moloney, D. Dooley, P. O'Neilll (St. Martin's); P. Gahan (Graignamanagh); M. Quirke, P. Hogan (Moooncoin); M. Mackey (Rower-Inistioge); Billy Phelan (St. Patrick's); D. Bergin (Callan); K. Wall (Lisdowney); T. McGrath (Kilmanagh); P. Comerford (Thomastown); S. Reade (Piltown).

FOOTBALL

In the under-14 grade St. Patrick's De La Salle defeated Kilkenny C.B.S. by 4-6 to 2-1 in the final.

In Roinn B, Mooncoin made the breakthrough when they defeated Dunnamaggia by 2-8 to 0-1. In the under-13 B championship, Dunnamaggin turned the tables and also

captured their first title when they defeated Mooncoin by 1-1 to 0-1. The winning goal came in the dying minutes.

In the Roinn A championship, St. Patrick's will defend the title they captured on seven occasions in the last eight years when they take on the C.B.S. in the final.

FÉILE NA nGAEL

Gowran represented Kilkenny in the Féile na nGael finals in Wexford. They did well to win their way through to the premier division final. But they had to give best to a stronger St. Finbarr's (Cork).

The local lads did well and scored victories over their hosts, Oylegate (7-19 to 0-0); Sixmilebridge (Clare) by 3-8 to 1-2; Faythe Harriers (Wexford) by 3-8 to 0-2. In the semifinal they beat Craobh

Chiarán (Dublin) by 2-4 to

The final proved a one-sided affair. St. Finbarr's won by 8-10 to 1-2. Gowran represented Kilkenny in Galway in 1980 and in Limerick in 1974 when they were beaten by Cork in the semi-final. So far Cork's monopoly of the Féile has been broken by Kilkenny's St. Patrick's De La Salle (1981, 1983) and Limerick (1972 and 1984).

The annual coaching course for teachers was again organised at St. Kieran's college. Since its introduction in 1975 almost 800 teachers have received coaching certificates in hurling, football and handball. This year's coaches were Michael Kinsella and Angela Downey (hurling), Liam Fardy (football) and Enda Timoney (handball).

Where the titles went

Roinn A U12 H.C. (Castle Hurley Cup): St. Patrick's 3-5, Kilmanagh 3-3.

Roinn B U-12 H.C. (Hennessy Cup): St. John's 2-8; Galmoy 4-0.

Roinn C U-12 H.C. (Úlster Bank Cup): Ballyragget 0-4, Rower-Inistioge 0-2.

Roinn D U-12 H.C. (Liam Ryan Memorial Cup): Kilmacow 3-5, Mullinavat 2-1,

Roinn A U-14 H.C.: Gowran 3-6; Mooncoin 2-7.

Roinn B U-14 H.C.: Goresbridge/Paulstown 3-6; Johnstown 0-6.

Roinn C U-14 H.C.: Coon-Muckalee 7-10; Urlingford -13.

Roinn D U-14 H.C.: Conahy 2-3, Kilmacow 0-3.

Roinn B U-13 F.C.: Dunnamaggin 1-1, Mooncoin 0-1.

Roinn A U-13 F.C. Final: St. Patrick's De La Salle v. Kilkenny C.B.S.

Roinn A U-14 F.C.: St. Patrick's 4-6; C.B.S. 2-1.

Roinn B U-14 F.C.: Mooncoin 2-8; Dunnamaggin 0-1.

The winning teams

St. Patrick's (Roinn A U-12) — F. Cantwell, D. Kearney, D. Barry, D. Lawlor, A. Ryan, P. Larkin (capt.), T. White, B. Smith, E. Daly, B. McEvoy, C. Kenny, B. Leahy, B. Dooley, L. Heffernan, F. Purcell. Sub.: D. Hogan.

St. John's (Roinn B) - N. Bourke, P. Holohan, M. Bolger, R. McEvoy, J. Bourke, B. Power (capt.), J. McDonald, D. Morrissey, R. Moore, P. Healy, D. Ronan, M. Kinchella, P. O'Hara, M. Meagher, G. Morrissey. Sub.: P. Geoghegan.

Ballyragget (Roinn C) – C. Kilkenny, L. Roberts, T. Phelan, A. Stone, M. Gleeson, B. Kenny, S. Liston, J. Dowling, S. Foley, D. Walsh, D. Dowling, J. Dowling, K. Doheny, D. Butler, M. Mullins. Sub.: P. Comerford.

Kilmacow (Roinn D) – D. Long, S. Ragett, M. Kennedy, L. Daly, P. Ryan, R. Dalton, D. Scully, J. Phelan, T. Sutton, G. O'Neill, P. Gahan, B. O'Callaghan, E. Reddy, I. O'Callaghan, D. Murphy.

THE UNDER-14 TEAMS

Gowran (Roinn A) – E. Concannon, D. Dunphy, K. Phelan, T. Fenlon, P. Farrell, P. O'Neill (capt.), J. Lennon, R. Middleton, J. McDermott, K. Carey, J. Carey, A. Roche, C. Carter, J. Bryan, D. O'Neill. Sub.: J. Walsh.

Coresbridge/Paulstown (Roinn B) – M. Medlar, P. Doyle, B. Keyes, J. Hennessy, T. Nolan, E. Gavin, W. Hanlon, S. Curran, P. Maher, A. Condon, J. Lawlor, D. Cronin, G. Nolan, P. Drea, D. Maher, Sub.: M. Brennan.

Coon-Muckalee (Roinn C) – J. Ryan, C. Daly, P. Doyle, M. Lawlor, D. O'Neill, P. O'Neill, C. Moloney, D. Dooley, S. Kelly, P. Stapleton, D. Comerford, A. Lawlor (capt)., R. Healy, J. Dooley, D. Lawlor. Subs.: N. Purcell, D. McCormack, G. Carrigan, T. O'Neill, G. O'Reilly, M. Ryan, M. Murphy, T. Agar, O. Stapleton, P. Doyle.

Conahy (Roinn D) – P. Downey, B. Lacey, E. Kirwan, K. Conroy, V. Gunner, T. Lawlor, C. Brennan, P. Carroll, P. Nolan, K. Muldowney, M. Healy, E. McEvoy, G. Brennan, M. Nolan. Subs.: J. Mulhall, J. Lawless, K. Dooley, P. Dunne, T. Brennan.

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