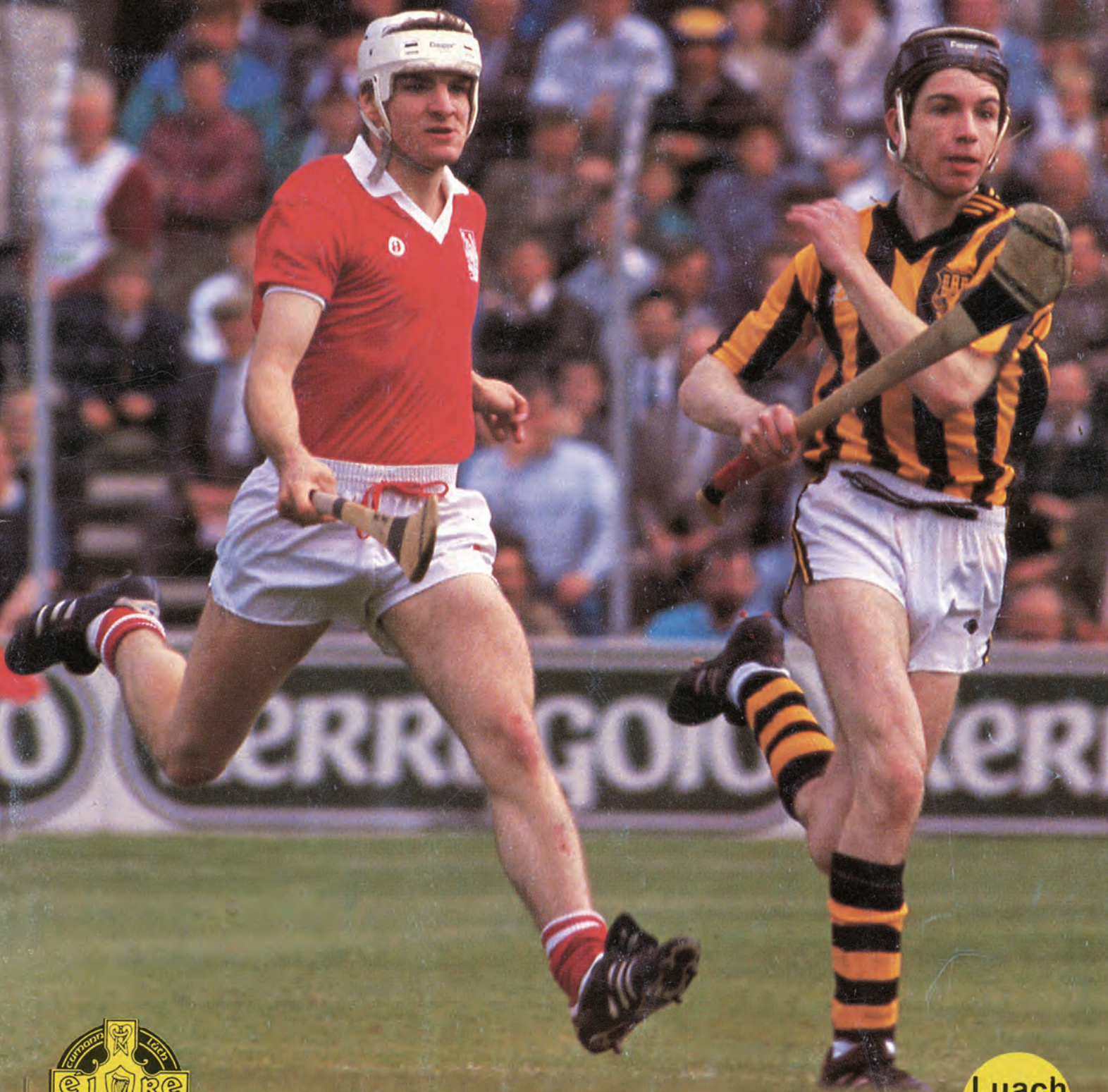


KILKENNY

G.A.A. YEARBOOK 1988

No. 17



Luach
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PICTURE — FRONT COVER:

D. J. Carey of the Young Irelands (Gowran) club heads towards the Cork goal during the minor hurling all-Ireland final. The year was one full of good tidings for D.J. He helped St. Kieran's College win the colleges senior championship, and also won a handful of handball honours.

editorial

Plenty of thought needed if there is to be change



John Knox, Editor

YOU COULD say 1988 was like many another year, really. There were some good happenings. There were some bad. And there was a fair sprinkling of ordinary happenings, too. Some will never forget the wind-up in the senior hurling championship. Shamrocks were beaten in the last preliminary round game by Thomastown, and then turned around and hammered the 'Town in the county final. The huge gulf in the Shamrocks' performances made people suspicious, and particularly so as the defeat ended the championship aspirations of the in-form defending champions, Glenmore.

The claim that Shamrocks took a 'dive' and made things easier on themselves in the long run is not an outlandish one. But who is to say 99 of any 100 clubs would not have done exactly the same, given the same set of circumstances?

The explanation as to how the Shamrocks got into a position to influence the shape of the semi-finals of the past two years is not an easy one. It happened, and it shouldn't be allowed to happen again.

But people calling for change now should be careful not to dismantle completely a basically solid championship that has served the ordinary hurling man in Kilkenny well for the best part of the last decade. The knock-out championship caters best for the needs of the inter-county player, not your average Joe Soap, the person in the majority.

On the inter-county scene Kilkenny reaped a good harvest. Again, those stupendous camogie ladies won all before them — another League/Championship double. St. Kieran's college, Castlecomer Community School and Callan C.B.S. all won hurling all-Irelands. The county vocational school and under-21 teams were beaten in all-Ireland finals. Not bad going.

And that is to leave out the wonderful victory of the Kilkenny minor hurlers. A team that carried high hopes from the very beginning came through. It was a win Kilkenny badly needed at a level that has given rise for more than mild concern in recent years.

Good and all as that minor success was, people should not get carried away and get complacent about the future. If those players can survive the ordinary tests of life and make it through as a successful under-21 team, then the prospects in future years would be much better. The years between 18 and 21 are trying ones for young people, and especially those involved in sport at a high level.

The biggest let-down of the 12 months was the crash of the Kilkenny senior hurlers in the Leinster championship. High hopes of impending victories after the all-Ireland defeat of '87 were dashed. We know the county will rise again. Hurling is alive and well and flourishing in the Noreside county.

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YOU ALL know the story, behind every successful man there is a good woman! Most relate that to the business world, and think it ends there, but what about the women behind our top sports men?

A hurler's wife - the joys outnumber the ills

THESSE are the unsung heroes who put up with the long, often lonely, hours their husbands are away either preparing for, or involved in, their chosen sport. Often they are the back-up to the coaches, offering their partners support and encouragement during the bad times, and, naturally, they share in the good times, if there are any.

Cheerful Ann Power is the woman-behind-the-man, Richard Power, the Kilkenny senior hurler. For the greater part of the last decade the Carrickshock clubman has given his all for the county. There have been good times, there have been bad, but the Powers have come through smiling.

Ann threw the woman's perspective on it: "It is as simple as this, if I had no interest in hurling I would say Richard would have no use playing. It would be the same for any married couple. I have great interest in the game and I enjoy the social scene attached to it".

Ann's interest spills out on to the field and this lively mother of three — Jamie (8), Stephanie (7) and Richard (3) — plays camogie herself. This year she was on the Carrickshock camogie team that reached the junior semi-final, only to be beaten by Piltown. She is also vice-chairperson of the club.

"The week-end of an All Ireland can be as good as two weeks' holidays", Ann recalled with great enthusiasm.

There was a time it had to be those "two weeks of holidays". During Kilkenny's most successful times of the current era, when they won the League/Championship doubles in 1982 and '83, the Powers simply had no time for holidays. For three years the Sunday after Sunday commitment was to hurling.

NO ONE ON BEACH

"That can be the one disadvantage", Ann recalled.

"Would you believe it, for three years we didn't get a chance to go anywhere for a day with the children!"

Then she laughed, and recalled the Monday the family decided to go to Tramore. The weather wasn't the best. There were about 10 other people on the beach.

"It was a bit of a laugh", Ann said. "At least we could say we were in Tramore that year".

were victories in 1982 and '83, and a defeat in 1987.

"When he is training for an All Ireland I get a night-by-night account of how things are going", Ann disclosed. "I did well. I was brutal, and so forth. He knows when he is playing well, and so do I. If he did well he will come out smiling after a match, but if he didn't the head would be hanging".

around them. Then in 1982 and 1986 her husband was picked on the All-Star teams. She didn't elaborate, but you could see she was thrilled.

"He has had to make his sacrifices, and drinking and socialising are out in the lead-up to important games", she revealed. "Still, we can't complain. The life is good and we in Kilkenny are lucky.



PORTRAIT OF A HURLER AND FAMILY . . .

Kilkenny star, Richard Power and his wife Ann with their children, Jamie (8), Stephanie (7) and Richard (3).

Mrs. Power admitted small sacrifices — and adjustments — have to be made. In the lead up to, and on the day of, big matches she tries to make sure nothing interfere's with Richard's preparations. Simple things like getting his gear ready is no problem, but often she has loaded the van — he is a salesman for Barry's Tea — when he has been rushing to training. Then there are the children, but obliging family and friends have never been found wanting when the Powers needed someone to look after Jamie, Stephanie and Richard (junior).

Richard Power has been involved in three senior All Irelands with Kilkenny. There

It hung this year after the Leinster semi-final defeat by Wexford, the "worst championship", to use Ann's words. They both felt he had been picked out of position on the wing. He hadn't played well. Kilkenny had been beaten. There was no chance to redeem himself. The All Ireland dream was dead for another long 12 months.

"I never saw him as disappointed after a match", Mrs. Power admitted. "You just do your best to ease the pain, that's all".

Her eyes lit up when she threw her mind back to the joyous days of '82 and '83 when Kilkenny were winning all

There are wives in other counties who never get a chance to enjoy the victories we have, and still they make as many sacrifices".

She readily admits the wives in Kilkenny are "well looked after by the Co. Board". And when Ann decided to travel on the U.S. All-Star trip with Richard in 1986, the Carrickshock club, like all good outfits, saw to it they wouldn't be short. There was also a trip to the Canaries with the Kilkenny hurlers and their wives in early 1984.

"You always remember the good times and, you know, the memories last longer than the bad", Ann assured.

Shadow of greats hang over star Ann

NOT ONLY in Kilkenny terms, but on a national reckoning, the Downeys are Ireland's best known twins. The person who hasn't heard of their achievements on the camogie field is a rarity.

And like with most things, people have put an order on their lives. In Hollywood parlance, Angela would be the star, and her sister, Ann, the co-star.

Ann laughingly sums up the mood: "I am either Angela's sister, or Shem's daughter". Her dad is none other than Shem Downey, one of the heroes of Kilkenny's 1947 all-Ireland senior hurling championship success. The woman toils in the shadow of greats, and things won't ever change.

It has always been the same. When the girls were growing up, visitors to the family shop in Ballyragget would often point to one or the other and enquire: "Is she the good one or the bad one?" In time it became a family joke.

"There was a time it used to get to me, but as I grew up I realised I simply wasn't as good at camogie as Angela", softly spoken Ann declared. "She was always miles ahead of me".

And still, this dynamic duo marched every step of the way together through the camogie world. They have both won eight all-Ireland senior medals. They have the same number of National League and Gael Linn (inter-pro) medals, and in 1986 they even shared the B&I. camogie player of the year award.

SECOND CHAPTER

One major honour they missed was a colleges all-Ireland senior medal. They went close even then, and their team, St. Brigid's convent, Callan was only beaten after a replayed final by Athenry. There was controversy the first day when Angela shot what appeared to be the winning score, but it was not allowed. The replay was one-sided. The second chapter in remarkable careers. The first was written when Shem's girls won a junior All-Ireland with the Presentation convent, Castlecomer.

But outside camogie, Ann Downey has also enjoyed success in another sporting world . . . squash. She has won three caps for Ireland against England, Scotland and Wales, and has represented Munster and Leinster at every level. Twelve months of the year she is on the go fulfilling her commitments. The seasons, camogie and squash, often overlap.

At every turn there are expenses, and to play both games costs Ann. Because of financial constraints, the camogie players travel to training at their own expense. Squash activities also cost, and if Ann is playing in England or anywhere else, she invariably has to take time off work . . .



Together . . . another win, another cause for celebration. The Downey twins, Angela (left) and Ann embrace after another famous Kilkenny camogie victory.

time out of her annual holidays. Success doesn't come easy.

But she doesn't care, because she enjoys the involvement. "I don't know what I am going to do when I give up", she conceded. "I try not to think about that". And although she has scaled the loftier peaks in squash, her first love is camogie.

"The involvement with a team, or group, makes all the difference", the International Skin and Hide employee explained. "In squash you often have to work alone, and you can lose some of the fun. The atmosphere can be much better with a group training together".

Preparing for the gruelling demands of camogie was something that never bothered the twins. Ann conceded she always found it hard to get fit, but Angela never appeared to have a problem. Now with 16 years senior inter-county involvement behind them, they feel they must work that bit harder. For the past two years this has meant 7 a.m. sessions — earlier in the O'Loughlins complex and now in the Hotel Kilkenny gym — apart altogether from the training with coach Tom Ryan.

DISLIKE BEING BEATEN

"When you clock up the years, it never gets any easier", Ann felt. They call it

commitment. Ann's competitiveness is said to be something else.

Her opinion: "Simply, I don't like being beaten. I can cope with it if I know I have played well and done my best. But if I know I could have done better it's a different story".

A tale from the squash circuit illustrates the point. Sometime last year Ann played a Northern girl by the name of June McCaughey. She lost and the game was over in 20 minutes. A few weeks ago they met again. The game dragged on for an hour, before Ann lost 3-1. She was satisfied.

"At least I made her work before she beat me", she explained. "I had achieved something".

Even her preferred midfield position on the camogie team tells something of her fighting spirit. Centrefield keeps her more involved in the action. She won all-Irelands as a defender, but wasn't totally satisfied with her involvement during the game.

"In midfield I play a more satisfying rôle, and I get a greater pleasure out of my personal contribution", Ann explained. She has been long enough around to know when she has done well, but in any event,

dad usually gives a constructive breakdown, with no punches pulled.

Ann is always excited by the next match, the next challenge and the expectations of victory.

"The present Kilkenny team doesn't celebrate that much after winning", she disclosed. "Perhaps we have gotten used to it? We like winning, but we don't get carried away".

And then her thoughts turned to something dear to her heart: "Much of our success of recent years must be put down to trainer, Tom Ryan. We have had some great trainers like Pierce Malone, who brought us our first all-Ireland, and then Brendan O'Sullivan. But Tom Ryan is something special. When you go out on the

field after he has given a dressing-room talk you feel like jumping over the moon for Kilkenny. He deserves enormous credit".

ONLY ONE ANGELA

Indeed, during our chat Ann heaped praise on everyone, including Breda Holmes and Bridie McGarry for winning St. Paul's most recent club all-Ireland, her two parents for encouraging them every step of the way, and even Tommy Robbins, who introduced them to the game on the streets of Ballyragget. And Angela, what about Angela her sister?

"There will never be another Angela Downey, especially when you think of the amount of support, the amount of people she attracts just to see her play", Ann said.

"Even for our club all-Ireland final in Galway there were a lot of people who were disappointed because she wasn't playing. This would be particularly true of the generation who would have seen my father play. They would have liked to see Angela playing too.

"If Angela retires, or doesn't play with Kilkenny next year, they will have an awful job to win an all-Ireland".

But what does the future hold for Ann, the co-star in this particular family picture?

"If I am fit enough and can avoid injury, I could see myself going for another six or seven years", she assured. "If you are fit enough and can take the knocks, you can keep going".

So you know your Gaelic Games . . . right then, try these few questions . . .

- Q. 1:** Who played at full-back for St. Kieran's college when they won their first All-Ireland senior hurling title in 1948?
- Q. 2:** Two members of this year's Kilkenny All-Ireland winning junior hurling team had previously won All-Ireland senior hurling medals. Who are the players, and in what years did they win senior medals?
- Q. 3:** In 1960, '61 and 1962 Kilkenny won the all-Ireland minor hurling championship, which was the county's last three in-a-row. Can you remember the goalkeepers in those finals?
- Q. 4:** The Kilkenny intermediate hurling championship was reintroduced in 1973 after a lapse of over 30 years. Who won that 1973 final, and who did they beat?
- Q. 5:** What unique distinction do Jim Lynch, Pa Dillon and Brian Cody share in the annals of hurling?
- Q. 6:** At what venue did the late Jim Langton make his championship debut for the Kilkenny senior hurling team?
- Q. 7:** Name the Slieverue man who captained Kilkenny to victory in the 1951 All-Ireland junior hurling final?
- Q. 8:** Kilkenny completed the four-in-a-row of All-Ireland senior camogie victories in September. Can you remember the year they won their first title, and who was the team captain?
- Q. 9:** Who was the Kilkenny player who won an All-Ireland minor hurling medal as a corner-back in 1975, and went on to win under-21 and senior All-Irelands as a half-forward?
- Q. 10:** A Kilkenny player scored 4-2 in the 1973 All-Ireland minor final against Galway. Who was he?
- Q. 11:** Name the two men from St. Lactain's (Freshford) who played on the winning Kilkenny minor hurling team of 1977?
- Q. 12:** Seven Kilkenny hurlers won All-Star honours when the scheme was sponsored by Carrolls, and later by the Bank of Ireland. Do you know who they are?
- Q. 13:** Who was the Kilkenny player who won the Texaco hurler of the year award in 1969?
- Q. 14:** Kilkenny won their first All-Ireland senior hurling title in 1904 by defeating Cork. Where was the final played?
- Q. 15:** In what year did Bobby Brannigan come on as a sub for Kilkenny in an All-Ireland senior hurling final?
- Q. 16:** Carrickshock are the only club in the county to win the senior hurling championship four times on-the-trot. Can you remember who they beat in the four finals?

- Q. 17:** A Gowran youngster won the Féile na nGael hurling skills competition in 1975 and '76. Who is he?
- Q. 18:** A Kilkenny father and his son led Leinster to victory in the Railway Cup hurling competition. Who are they?
- Q. 19:** In what year was Seamus Delaney elected secretary of the Kilkenny Football Board?
- Q. 20:** Who defeated Shamrocks (Ballyhale) in the 1978-'79 All-Ireland club senior hurling final?

Well, how did you get on?

- A. 20:** Blackrock (Cork).
- A. 19:** In 1969.
- A. 18:** Paddy Larkin in 1936 and Phil 'Fan' Larkin in 1979.
- A. 17:** Pat Ryan.
- A. 16:** In 1940 Mullinavat (1-4 to 1-2); in 1941 Eire Óg (4-5 to 3-7); 1942 Threecastles (3-2 to 2-3) and 1943 Mullinavat (3-6 to 1-3).
- A. 15:** In 1939.
- A. 14:** Carrick-on-Suir.
- A. 13:** Ted Carroll.
- A. 12:** Noel Skehan, Frank Cummins, Ger Henderson, Joe Hennessy, Liam O'Brien, Brian Cody and Mick Brennan.
- A. 11:** Gordon Ryan and Tom Lennon.
- A. 10:** Seanie O'Brien.
- A. 9:** Richard Power.
- A. 8:** In 1974 and Teresa O'Neill was skipper.
- A. 7:** John Hokey.
- A. 6:** Tullamore in the Leinster senior hurling final replay against Dublin.
- A. 5:** The three played at full-back and full-forward in All-Ireland senior hurling finals.
- A. 4:** Coon beat Craignamagh (4-8 to 3-6).
- A. 3:** Paddy Dempsey (1960), Patsy Foley (1961) and Noel Skehan (1962).
- A. 2:** John Marnell, Dicksboro (1970) and Gordon Ryan, St. Lactain's (1983).
- A. 1:** Kieran Croty.

Out with the old, in with the new and Healy carries our hopes



IT'S GOING on six years since Kilkenny's last all-Ireland senior hurling victory. Now the county managerial set-up has been changed and custom broken with, and Diarmuid Healy faces the task of guiding "the lads", not alone into the 1989 championship, but for the following two years as well. ENDA McEVOY takes a look back at the success, and otherwise, of the traditional selector system here and wonders. . . .

"WHY should we change it", was the usual line. "The five-selector system has always served Kilkenny well. Okay, we mightn't have done so well recently, but we can't expect to be winning all the time". Let's take it nice and handy, keep the boat unrocked and things will come right eventually . . . Thus went officialdom's stock answer to the occasional call urging drastic changes to the way the Kilkenny senior hurling team is run.

Sometime towards the end of October, and possibly with a glance over the shoulder and the county border at Tipperary's 17 years of famine, those lines suffered a peaceful demise and quiet burial in an unmarked grave. "The system" is overhauled, the 'Cats' are on the prowl again. **Diarmuid Healy** is back in the fold, with three years to restore past glories. Happy days and blue skies await on the horizon. St. Patrick's brass and reed band can start practising for September nights. A county waits and hopes. And expects.

Healy's appointment comes at the end of an auspicious year for Kilkenny hurling. Two colleges' crowns, the all-Ireland minor title won in great style by the most promising young team in ages, a junior all-Ireland victory showing the depth of talent by the Nore, and the under-21 side reaching their final and throwing up a couple of senior prospects in the process. Not for a long time, public opinion smirks, has the game been in such a good state here.

It isn't all so clear-cut, of course. The Co. Board's decision to follow its selectorial sub-committee's "strong recommendation" — at the instigation of new champions Ballyhale Shamrocks — and hand Diarmuid Healy a three-year term as trainer/coach contains an amount of fine print. Though the S.O.S. chief executive will also be a selector for that spell, his current sideline colleagues, **Eddie Keher** and Shamrocks' representative **Ollie Harrington**, are just that — current. The 1989 and '90 county champions will be entitled to replace either or both of the pair, and increase the number of selectors if they wish. But Healy is supremo for three years.

REASONABLE START

Two wins from the opening four National League games, plus the emergence of **Adrian Ronan**, constitute a reasonable start for the new management. And while a Leinster title and all-Ireland appearance in 1989 look distinct possibilities, the latter would definitely be classed a bonus. A three-year panel-building programme is the aim, as Diarmuid Healy has been at pains to point out. Local followers mustn't be impatient.

So, though a 12-month honeymoon period for the Conahyman is a certainty ("blessed are those who expect little, for they will not be disappointed"), the team will have to start looking likely to produce the goods soon after that. Three years is usually the most that Kilkenny people are prepared to wait between all-Irelands, and the 1983 victory seems very far away now. For a county spoiled by success in the 'seventies, and in a decade where the standard of hurling is generally agreed to be distinctly moderate, two senior titles since 1980 is regarded as not good enough. Most of the Kilkenny players would be as good, if not better, than any in the country. The management of the county team over the past few years has to be questioned, therefore.

Selectors, of course, can never win. Success is regarded as something that "with players as good as these any oul' eejit could have achieved", a match winning move as a change so obvious a blind man

could have seen it. Defeat invariably brings the I-could-do-better-myself reaction. Referees are supposed to be never appreciated; selectors can only be a short head behind.

Back in the early days of Kilkenny G.A.A., prominent players picked the teams. Later each of the five or six senior teams in the county had a selector. Then, in the 1940's, the five-selector system, with the county champions calling the shots, was introduced. Obviously, it would be as wrong to blame the famine years between 1947 and 1957 on this method of choosing the team as it would be to claim that the 1967-'83 glory years were a direct result of the same system. Good players, and the influence of someone like the then **Fr. Tommy Maher**, make all the difference. And it's equally true, as one Co. Board official wryly notes, that only comparatively "barren" periods like this do such questions arise. But the question is valid nonetheless. Has the right of the county champions to nominate the county team's selectors prevented Kilkenny winning more than two all-Ireland senior crowns in the 'eighties?

The immediate evidence — Kilkenny's championship record in the past eight years — is worth a look:

- 1980 — beaten by Diarmuid Healy's Offaly in Leinster final;
- 1981 — beaten by Wexford in semi-final;
- 1982 — League and all-Ireland champions;
- 1983 — League and all-Ireland champions;
- 1984 — beaten by Wexford in semi-final;
- 1985 — beaten by Offaly in replayed semi-final;
- 1986 — League champs. beaten by Galway in all-Ireland semi-final;
- 1987 — beaten by Galway in all-Ireland final;
- 1988 — beaten by Wexford in semi-final.

SCUTTLED BY INCOMPETENCE

The occasional defeat by Wexford is inevitable, and must be allowed for. What supporters cannot accept so easily, however, is the fact that on a number of occasions Kilkenny's chances of glory have been scuttled by sideline incompetence.

- In the 1981 semi-final **Jim Moran** and **Maurice Mason** were given surprise big-time debuts in defence at the exclusion from those positions of **Brian Cody** and **Ger Henderson**; Kilkenny conceded two goals in the first seven minutes and never recovered.
- The 1984-'85 selectors, proposed by St. Martins, proved an unmitigated disaster; rumours of in-fighting and favouritism were rife, and the team flopped in the semi-final replay.
- In the following year's semi-final in Thurles, the backroom trio were totally unable to counter Galway's surprise two-man full-forward line and three-man midfield, although in fairness it must be admitted it would have taken an atomic bomb to stop the winners that day.
- Kilkenny had the 1987 final for the taking against the same opposition; failure to provide a good back-up free-taker and to move **Harry Ryan** away from **Sylvie Linnane**, added to the decision to play **Pat Walsh** completely out of position at number 13, hindered prospects.
- After the thrashing of Tipperary sent Kilkenny into the 1988 championship full of confidence, the full-back line collapsed

against Wexford and **George O'Connor** was allowed have a stormer at centre-back; Kilkenny seemed clueless on ways to improve the situation.

Now, of course, all the men guiding these teams were nice guys who were only doing their best, and had the good of the county at heart. And, of course, the selectors in other counties botch things up too. And yes, often the players were awful on the day, or sometimes maybe just weren't good enough. Of course, it wasn't all, or isn't always, the selectors' fault. In a way it isn't their fault at all. We come back, inevitably, to "the system".

SERIOUS IMPLICATIONS

In theory, at least, having five selectors ensures collective responsibility with the best men from the best club teams guiding the fortunes of the county. The practice is often different. 1988 version of "our way" of doing things featured the new phenomenon of sons of famous hurlers or current selectors getting their places on county under-age teams and James Stephens having eight players on the under-21 panel (the irony of this was that Stephens failed to get beyond the Northern semi-finals when it came to the local championship in the Autumn). According to one Kilkenny player, "the system" has also had serious implications at senior level.

"I honestly don't think that the best Kilkenny senior team has been picked for a number of years. Take someone like **Liam McCarthy**, who I don't think has hurled a bad game in the last three years, he's never had a fair chance since the 1987 final, or probably even before it. Or Pat Walsh, who's given exhibitions for Windgap and in tournament games all over the place. He's probably more a back than a forward, but nobody's ever given him a chance. I mean, they stuck him in corner-forward for the '87 final.

"The Galway forwards are very young and fast and hungry, but they're no worldbeaters. The hurlers are just a good in Kilkenny, I can't understand why the selectors can never pick the best team on merit alone. That's obviously the way it should be done, but it hasn't been the case always. A player should be able to say to himself, 'all I have to do is go out and play well and I'll be on the county team'. It doesn't matter what club he's from. But there's been too much of a club influence when it comes to picking Kilkenny teams — if you're not from one of the top clubs who have a selector, then no matter how well you're hurling, nobody cares.

"I honestly don't know how guys like Pat Walsh and Liam McCarthy put up with it. There's a lad from Barrow Rangers, **Paddy Murphy**. He's one of the best full-backs in the county, in my opinion, but is he ever going to get a fair crack of the whip? The problem is, there's one lad like that in every club in the county. There's always one lad who is going to be hurt, and probably turned



DIARMUID HEALY

off the idea of hurling for Kilkenny forever, because he's got no-one pulling for him.

"In Galway **Cyril Farrell** and his two selectors are not from the champions. They are simply there because they are the best men for the job. So too with **Conor Hayes**, who'll be captaining for the third year in-a-row in 1989 — on merit. Everyone knows there are men on the Kilkenny team who could sit in the corner and they'd still be picked. The bottom line is that the best men in the county should be picking the best men for the county team. Compared to Galway, you can't say our way of doing it has served us well in recent years".

INCREASE DANGERS

Whatever its most ardent apologist might say, Kilkenny's five-selector system is bound to increase the dangers of the it's-not-how-good-you-are club tie or frenetic sideline conferences during the heat of a match. Is there any significance that Kilkenny were guided by **Pat Henderson** and a three-man backroom team when capturing the League and Leinster titles in 1986, and Leinster the following year?

Continued on page 80 ▶



GLENMORE — Under-12 Hurling (Roinn B) Runners-up

Back (l. to r.): P. Mullally, J. Phelan (capt.), S. Aylward, D. Cody, C. Lynch, L. Doyle, B. O'Shea, W. Fitzgerald, R. Culelton, P. Fitzgerald. **Middle** (l. to r.): F. Walsh, M. Mullally, D. Cotterell, J. Duggan, N. Mackey, S. Hartley, D. Dowling. **Front** (l. to r.): T. Barry, D. Ryan, D. Barry, N. Doherty, T. Griffin, F. Freyne.

Croke Park – good and bad times to where we are today

By Paddy Buggy, former President of the G.A.A.



IT IS THE ambition of every budding hurler and footballer to play at inter-county level for his county at Croke Park. Paic an Crocaigh, with its unrivalled atmosphere on big match day, has provided tremendous excitement for players and supporter alike, and left us with happy memories, or at other times, regret that we as players didn't perform to standard, or that our county team didn't produce the goods on the day. We Kilkenny folk are privileged that we are one of the most successful of the hurling counties, and that most of our young men who don the black and amber will at some grade play inter-county hurling in Croke Park.

Apart from knowing that Croke Park is the G.A.A.'s national stadium and is named after Dr. Croke, Archbishop of Cashel and first Patron of the G.A.A., the overwhelming majority of young people know very little about the Croke Park story.

The site of the present Croke Park was opened in 1882, and named Butterly's

Amusement Park. The first G.A.A. events to be held there were the All-Ireland track and field championships of September 1892. The grounds were then known as the City and Suburban Racecourse and Amusement Grounds. The All-Ireland finals of 1895, both played in March 1896, were the first to be decided at Jones Road.

On the death of Maurice Butterly, and his company's bankruptcy in 1905, the ground was seldom used and became derelict. In December 1908, Frank Dineen, a native of Ballylanders, Co. Limerick — the only person to hold both major positions in the G.A.A., President 1895-1898 and General Secretary 1898-1901 — bought the grounds for £3,250. His intention was to retain it for the G.A.A. until the organisation got on a sound financial footing and was in a position to purchase the grounds.

However, in 1910 he had to sell more than 4 acres behind the present Cusack Stand to the Jesuits for use as a sports ground for Belvedere college. Those who have been in the Cusack Stand would

know that it is still a rugby grounds. In 1913 the G.A.A. organised a football tournament between Kerry and Louth for the Croke memorial cup, the intention being to raise money and erect a memorial to Dr. Croke in Thurles. The venture was such a financial success, that it was decided to purchase Jones' Road and rename it Croke Park. There was still enough funds to erect the memorial to Dr. Croke in Thurles. Dineen sold the grounds to the G.A.A. for £1,500 cash, and the acceptance of a liability of £2,000.

SIDELINE CHAIRS

Sideline seats (700 chairs) were used for the first time in Croke Park for the 1910 final. The overall attendance at the Limerick/Wexford final was 4,780. In 1917 rubble from O'Connell street, Dublin, following the 1916 Rebellion was used to bank up the terracing at the Railway end. The bank was originally named Hill 66, after a World War I battle site. Later came the more apt name after the War of Independence — Hill 16. There was only one athletics body in the world,



Croke Park, headquarters of the G.A.A., and one of the finest stadia in Ireland.

the English A.A.A. when the G.A.A. was founded in 1884 to become the second national athletics organisation. The Association managed athletics, field and track events until passing over control to the N.A.C.A. in 1922.

November 21, 1920 "Bloody Sunday" will always be associated with Croke Park. It was, undoubtedly, the saddest day in G.A.A. history, when the British forces, in retaliation for the events of the early morning, attacked players and patrons at Croke Park. A study of the War of Independence shows that Michael Collins was matching the Crown forces in their own tactics as he led the struggle against terror, and he was fighting back with a capacity his opponents could scarcely understand. Perhaps for the first time Ireland had produced a master tactician in countering the forces of occupation, setting-up his own spying ring to gain first hand knowledge of British plans.

Because of the failure of a campaign of raids, threats, imprisonment and death, to bring the desired effects, the British authorities decided at Dublin Castle to infiltrate and gain knowledge of I.R.A. activities and its campaign. Sixteen British officers were recruited from Crown forces in Cairo, Egypt, as a special task force, and travelled to Dublin in plain clothes, and set-up under assumed names as travellers, or whatever occupation suited conditions of the time, in various hotels and rented quarters. Their objective was to destroy Michael Collins, his leaders, and his secret service organisation. However, Collins learned of the plan and moved against the task force in the early hours of Sunday morning, November 21. The early strike resulted in 14 officers being shot dead.

That day Tipperary footballers had been invited to play Dublin in Croke Park, and the money raised was to help dependants of the I.R.A. who had been killed or imprisoned. The game was well organised, and advertised, and a large crowd turned up. Knowing that there was a strong possibility of retaliation by the British forces in Dublin, the then President of the G.A.A., Alderman James Nowlan, Kilkenny, consulted with the General Secretary Luke O'Toole, and Dan McCarthy, and agreed that the game should go on. To do anything else could result in the G.A.A., and Croke Park, being the prime target for counter measures. They could not have foreseen what happened. Although Frank O'Connor in his book on Collins, *The Big Fellow* claims that Collins told one of his men on Saturday evening to tell the G.A.A. to cancel the Croke Park programme for Sunday, November 21.

ENTER BLACK AND TANS

The football game commenced at 2.45 p.m. with Mick Sammon as referee, before 6,000 spectators. It was an exciting affair, and was in full swing for seven minutes when the dreaded Black and Tans entered Croke Park at the Canal end. As they burst



Part of the tradition of Gaelic games has been the number of hurling and footballing sons who followed in the steps of their fathers. In the 'thirties, with the cap reversed, is Paddy Larkin, whose son Phil 'Fan' Larkin followed in his footsteps as a staunch defender in the 'sixties and 'seventies for Kilkenny.

their way in, those spectators who could ran for cover. There was little or no escape. It was to Croke Park that the British forces turned to release their frustration for the happenings of the morning. The Black and Tans shot recklessly into the crowd, and at the players. John McDonnell, the Dublin goalkeeper, famous due to the fact that he used to wear a soft hat when playing, shouted to everyone to keep calm, because he thought the bullets were blanks. As men and women slumped to the ground seriously injured or dead, it became painfully obvious what was actually happening. This was "Bloody Sunday".

The Tipperary team was herded together, separated from the crowd trying to get to shelter, and one player, the right half-back back Michael Hogan, Currasilla, Nine Mile House, Grangemockler, lay dead on the pitch in his jersey and togs about 25 yards out from the Railway goal. Another Tipperary player, Jim Egan from Mullinahone was also lying face down on the ground. Egan got to his feet, covered in blood, and realising that his comrade was dead, he called out to a Fr. Crotty, also from Mullinahone: "Mick Hogan is dead, could you go to his assistance". As the British were still firing, Fr. Crotty took his life in his hands and bravely went onto the pitch to render the Last Rites to his old friend and neighbour.

Another man, Tommy Ryan, a native of Wexford, who had attempted to go to Mick Hogan's assistance, died beside Hogan. Fr. Crotty also administered to him. In all, 13 died in Croke Park on that fateful evening, and over 100 were seriously injured. All spectators were detained and searched before being allowed to leave the grounds. They had to hold their hands above their heads. Some

were detained for over 3 hours until the search was ended. Many, of course, did escape. Some made their way through the homes of Luke O'Toole, General Secretary of the G.A.A., situated at the Canal end of the long stand, and that of Bertie Donnelly, the well-known racing cyclist. The shock and horror of what happened on the playing field was added to when the players eventually got to their dressingrooms, a shed behind the short stand. Their personal belongings had been stolen by the Black and Tans.

Michael Hogan's remains remained in Jervis street hospital until they were removed by rail to Clonmel on Wednesday evening, and from there to his native Grangemockler. A massive crowd, including his team-mates, followed the coffin draped in the Tricolour. He was laid to rest, dressed in his football outfit, the following morning. Many verses and poems were compiled about the sad events. The following are two:

*And in memory of our martyr
Is the might Hogan Stand,
Where underneath they play the anthem
Them grand boys of the Artane Band.
It's not much that I am asking,
Just one pater and ave
For all those the British murdered
On that bleak November day.*

*In Croke Park on Sunday evening
Drunken forces of the crown
Turned their guns upon the Irish
Sure like dogs they slew them down,
A gallant Gael from Tipperary,
As he played his native game,
Was laid low by British bullets,
Michael Hogan was his name.
Take him home to Tipperary*

*To his silent lonely grave,
Take him home to old Grangemockler
There to rest among the brave
Men like Hogan love their country
It was proved that fatal day
When the mighty British Empire
Tried to smash the G.A.A.*

The full list of those killed in Croke Park on Bloody Sunday is — Jane Boyle, James Bourke, Michael Feeney, James Matthews, Joseph O'Dowd, Derry O'Leary, Willie Robinson, Tommy Ryan, John Scott, Jim Teehan, Joey Traynor, all resident in Dublin, Daniel Carroll, Templeberry as well as Michael Hogan. Today at Croke Park the only reminder of that terrible day is the Hogan stand, and a plaque bearing the names of the teams and those killed.

GAMES SUSPENDED

The G.A.A.'s response to the massacre was to suspend all major games in order to avoid the risk of a similar atrocity.

In 1924 the first revised Tailtean games, a week of hurling, football and other competition were held in Croke Park, and work commenced on the erection of the first Hogan stand. Tailtean games were also held in 1928 and 1932, and Croke Park was also used for Eucharistic Congress ceremonies. In 1936 work commenced on the construction of the double deck Cusack stand with 6,000 seats in the Upper deck, Hill 16 was improved by the introduction of concrete terracing.

In 1949 the terracing at the Canal end was completed, and the Nally stand was built in 1952 in memory of Patrick William Nally, Rochford House, Balla, one of the most talked about athletes of his period.

On his first appearance at an athletics meeting at Swinford, this young Mayo man astounded spectators by winning every event in which he completed, sprints and long distance races, hurdles race, shot putt and the long jump. He was one of the first to campaign for a national sports organisation, and he discussed the foundation of the G.A.A. with Cusack in 1882, but was in prison when the inaugural meeting was called by Michael Cusack for Hayes Hotel, Thurles in 1884.

In more modern times, 1959, the new cantilever Hogan stand, with a seating capacity of 16,000 was opened. Probably the largest attendance ever to grace Croke Park was at the Diamond Jubilee rally of the Pioneer Total Abstinence Association. The record attendances for All-Ireland finals watched Down and Offaly in 1961. The crowd was 90,556. The record for a hurling final (1954) watched Cork and Wexford (84,856).

In 1966 seating was installed underneath the Cusack stand, probably the G.A.A.'s most contentious development at headquarters, and brought the seating accommodation to 32,600. This development reduced the capacity of the grounds to 75,000. In recent times crowd restrictions further reduced the maximum attendance to under 65,000.

The Ceann Arus office block — Arus Daimhin in memory of Michael Davin, first President of the G.A.A. — was officially opened in 1984. Plans are already afoot to replace the present Cusack stand with a more modern, suitable and spacious structure, that would increase the capacity of the ground to over the 80,000 again.

The team that has made the most appearances at Croke Park, the Artane Boys band, "The Biggest Little Band in the World", has a remarkable association with the G.A.A. and headquarters. On June 14, 1886 the band gave its first G.A.A. performance. Ever since the band has become beloved all over Ireland and beyond, and is an integral part of all major G.A.A. occasions.

In recent years also, Croke Park has been the venue for outdoor concerts, the most successful being the first — the Neil Diamond show when over 40,000 delighted fans were entertained. Since then there were difficulties with ground problems and these interfered with games. Concerts of themselves are an added attraction at the venue, provided they don't interfere with the playing of hurling and football.

Croke Park today is a national stadium of which the G.A.A. can be proud. It is an honour for players to display their skills there, and it creates an atmosphere all of its own where supporters can thoroughly enjoy big matches and the wonderful spectacle that is All-Ireland day. It is a worthy memorial to the founding fathers of the G.A.A., to its officials and players, and to the thousands who supported Gaelic games for over 100 years.

From the humble friendly village or townlands, to the thousands at Croke Park, a national stadium built and maintained at a tremendous cost from its own resources, the G.A.A. is part of the Irish scene, and one is left without an answer to the question — where would Ireland be without it?

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Emigration - clubs carry on regardless

EMIGRATION IS A FACT OF LIFE IN IRELAND THESE PAST FEW YEARS AND, DESPITE WHAT GOVERNMENT AND SOME OTHERS MIGHT WANT THE ORDINARY MAN IN THE STREET TO BELIEVE, THE FLOW OF PEOPLE OUT OF THE COUNTRY HAS NOT STOPPED.

MOST HIT the emigration trail in search of work. Others go because they are disillusioned and see themselves heading nowhere fast in this country. Then there are others who just go, searching out greener pastures.

The 'in' phrase to describe it all is as a 'brain drain'. Whatever the sweet or tidy way people want to announce it, the problem is crippling, and many a G.A.A. club has felt the effects of the sad movement of people.

Kilkenny clubs are no different than any of the rest, although one can imagine this musn't be the worst hit county. Wherever unemployment is high, so too is emigration. They go hand-in-hand.

Clubs in this county have not escaped the ravages of this modern day scourge. A survey carried out this year among 20 clubs showed that 95% of Kilkenny outfits had been hit by emigration.

Rural and urban clubs alike were effected. Of the clubs surveyed, just Piltown reported 'all hands on deck'. They didn't know why they escaped. They were just happy they did. The 20 Kilkenny G.A.A. clubs reported that in all, 113 members had emigrated.

As could be expected, some were hit worse than others. Windgap, for example, had the whole future of their club cast in doubt. The Windgap team that won Division IV at the Féile na nGael (under-14) competitions in 1979 had virtually left the country. Gone were Seán Hegarty, Tom Kelly, Val Óg Murray, Matty Cronin,

Toddy Purcell, Enda Walsh and Dermot Holohan. All

things being equal, those players would be coming through for an under-21 team this year. The losses meant Windgap had to pull out of that particular championship, for the simple reason they hadn't enough players.

What the future holds for the club no one knows. No doubt, a few dedicated souls will keep Windgap going. But as things stand, it will be an awful struggle. Officials watch helplessly as the future of the parish sails, or flies, away.

Mooncoin, once one of Kilkenny's finest hurling clubs, has lost its senior status, and officials believe this is directly linked to emigration. In recent years they have lost top class talent. Away went former under-21 winning captain, Seamus Delahunty, and former county minors, John

Joe Hennebry, Larry Delahunty, George O'Neill and David Grace, among others.

It all prompted one official to suggest: "Between those who gave up hurling early, and those who have gone away, we reckon we would get a team that would beat the one we have at home at present". That would be funny if it wasn't all so sad.

The biggest city club, James Stephens, have had their progress interrupted too. In recent years Stephens have been introducing young players to their senior hurling team, but the talent drain has been such that they have been losing good players almost as quickly as they have been able to 'blood' them. For the past three years a team that should be maturing has remained young, all because of the turnover of players

forced on the club by emigration.

Among the good ones Stephens lost are Billy Ayres, Eddie O'Neill (former county minors), John Scott (county under-21 and a great prospect for senior), Martin Forristal and Seamie and Eddie O'Leary.

The same sad story can be heard all over the county — in Castlecomer, Callan, Slieverue, Dunnamaggin; Tullaroan, Glenmore, Bennettsbridge. Very, very few parishes have escaped.

There are two strange things about the whole emigration story. While games at home have been adversely effected, they are currently thriving in places like London and New York. In New York this Summer one was surprised to learn a Westmeath inter-county hurler couldn't make a local club side, for the simple reason competition for places was too keen.

The other striking thing is that a cure for the scourge of emigration is out of the hands of the G.A.A. There is only a limited amount the Association can do by employing people through Government sponsored schemes and so on. This current sad episode in the history of the nation looks like continuing, so G.A.A. clubs can only soldier on and hope for the best.

The clubs surveyed were: James Stephens, Glenmore, Erin's Own, Shamrocks, Fenians, Mooncoin, Mullinavat, Bennettsbridge, Thomastown, John Lockes, Tullaroan, including one camogie player, Threecastles, Emeralds, Dunnamaggin, Galmoy, Slieverue, Clara, Dicksboro, Windgap and Piltown (no losses).



What do the people who emigrate do? This is David Hoyne from Thomastown and currently he is night manager of The Dubliner, a popular singing pub on Capitol Hill, Washington D.C. He is pictured with Alice Murphy-Johnson, another Kilkenny 'Cat'. Fenton Galway, who is also from Thomastown, is night manager of Kelly's Irish Times, a neighbouring bar. Just two of the Kilkenny people who are making a life for themselves in far off places.

Down under, but still top of the world

EMIGRATION may be crippling clubs on the home front but the arrival of Irish men in far-off places has sparked a boom in Gaelic games.

The Irish may be heading to distant lands in search of work, and they may be doing well, but they are not forgetting things that were dear to them in the homeland. Games is one of those things.

Downunder in Australia, for example, Irish people — and a good number of them from Kilkenny — have made a big impact on sporting fields, and have helped foster Gaelic games.

Would you believe, 10 Kilkenny people were part of the New South Wales hurling panel that won the Australasia championship this year? That is true, and another Kilkenny man, Eamon Morrissey, from Fatima Place in the city, was a selector with the team that won the championship for the 11th time. Records for this championship go back to 1971, so N.S.W. teams have done very well.

Those who follow Gaelic games closely will remember Eamon Morrissey as a James Stephens' player who won a senior All Ireland with Kilkenny in 1972. He partnered Pat Lawlor and Pat Henderson on the half-back line.

People in these parts may not give a second thought to games in places like America and Australia, but they are bigger than most realise. The Australian Gaelic football and hurling championships were played in Sydney between Thursday, September 29, and Sunday, October 2.

5,000 AT FINALS

A total of 26 games were played to decide the hurling and senior and minor football championships. As well, exhibition games for over 35's and under-age teams were played, and people from every ethnic background in New Zealand and Australia joined in the fun. The finals were attended by over 5,000 people.

The New South Wales G.A.A. staged the championships and produced a very informative 50-page programme that wasn't lacking in advertising support. So obviously the Irish are well thought of in those parts.

The New South Wales club had a 25-strong panel. It proved a good one, and beat Victoria, who were chasing their 5th title, by 2-10 to 0-7 in the final.

The New South Wales team was: Peter Murphy (Rower-Inistioge), Seamus Clancy (Clare), Tony Henderson (James Stephens), Eddie O'Neill (James Stephens), Paul Flood (Wexford), Willie Fleming (Slieverue), Tom Hogan (James Stephens), Bill Ayres (James Stephens), J.J. Mahony (Cork), Aidan O'Driscoll (Cork), John Flannery (Galway), Seán Sheehan (Cork), Eddie Maloney (Limerick), Patrick Bourke (Galway), Jimmy Queally (Emeralds). Kilkenny reserves: J. Walsh (Mooncoin), P. Cullen (club not given), J. Hogan (Graigue-Ballycallan).



THE JAMES STEPHENS CONNECTION . . .

(From left): Bill Ayres, Eddie O'Neill, Eamon Morrissey (selector), Tony Henderson and Tom Hogan who helped New South Wales to victory in the Australasia hurling championship in Sydney this year.

Meet the Co. Board Treasurer

Name: Pat Dunphy.
Birthplace: Kilkenny.
Birth date: November 26, 1955.
Height: 6'.
Weight: 12st. 2lbs.
Occupation: Branch manager Educational Building Society.
Married: In 1979 to Ella.
Children: Eoin (8), Conor (5½), Ciaran (3), Orla (18 months).
Car: Sierra Sapphire.
Hurling Heroes of childhood: Eddie Keher, Ollie Walsh, Phil Grimes (Waterford).
Football Hero of childhood: Jim McCartan (Down).
Favourite sports: All outdoor sports.
Active in other sports: Play a bit of golf and tennis.
Other sports people you admire: Stephen Roche, Kevin Moran, Willie Duggan.
Most memorable match played in: All-Ireland minor hurling final of 1973; senior county final of 1976.
Biggest disappointments: Losing 1972 colleges' S.H. final with St. Kieran's College; being relegated down to intermediate grade with the Rower-Inistioge this year.
Best stadium played in: Croke Park.

Miscellaneous likes and dislikes: Dislike hearing people complaining about people who do voluntary work, whether it be assisting a local charity or sporting organisations.
Favourite holiday resort: Algarve (abroad), Dollar Bay, Duncannon (in Ireland).
Favourite singers: Kris Kristofferson and Ray Charles.
Favourite actor/actress: Dustin Hoffman and Ali McGraw.
Favourite activity on day off: Gardening.
Favourite T.V. show: Cheers.
Biggest influence on hurling career: My parents; Tommy Hayes, national school teacher in Inistioge, and Fr. Liam Cassin at St. Kieran's College.
Personal ambition: To see more of the world.
What person in the world would you most like to, or have met: John F. Kennedy.
Honours won: County - Leinster and M.H. All-Ireland medals 1973; All-Ireland under-21 medal 1974/75 and runner-up 1976; club-county championship medals under-12 (1966), 14 (1968) and under-21 (1975), runners-up under-16 (1971), minor (1972) and senior (1976); colleges - Leinster and all-Ireland S.H. runners-up in 1972; Leinster junior colleges 1970; Leinster juvenile 1969.

Time for 'Board to move in different direction financially

THE G.A.A. has been growing for over 100 years, and currently has nationwide assets worth many millions of pounds. In recent times the rate of club development has been phenomenal, and now the outfit without its won field and/or complex is a rarity. The G.A.A. is big business and has come a long way since the 'strip by the ditch' days.

This massive growth has, naturally, brought with it additional responsibilities and pressures. Clubs trying to pay back heavy loans know all about it. The light to make ends meet is constant.

Likewise with Co. Boards all over the country. Expenses are growing at such a rate it is impossible to keep up. Kilkenny Co. Board is no different from the rest. Three years ago this January Convention set up a new position on the 'Board, that of Treasurer. A positive response to a need.

The man on whose shoulders the responsibility for money matters was thrust was Pat Dunphy, the current manager of the E.B.S., Patrick street. His task was not an easy one. It is getting no easier.

"The G.A.A. is much more than games now, it is big business", Pat explained. "There is a lot of money involved, be it belonged to



the 'Board, clubs or other units of the 'Association. The day when the Co. Board's main concern was to get games fixed and played and pay the expenses of a few teams has long gone".

A measure of this growth can be gauged from the fact that in the region of £250,000 was handled by the Co. Board last year. Of course, that wasn't all Kilkenny money. Up against £70,000 was forwarded to Croke Park for all-Ireland tickets. There was also National League money sent on to headquarters.

HEARD TALK

Still, after monies for all other bodies within the Association were handled, it took up against £100,000 to finance Kilkenny Co. Board. That is a lot of money.

"Everyone has heard the talk

about what the G.A.A. does with its money", the treasurer conceded: "The simple fact is, those who are talking don't know the facts. It takes a lot of money to run the 'Board, and we do well to break even".

Team expenses can be crippling. For example, if the Kilkenny senior team was to have a good run in the hurling league and then reach the all-Ireland final, the 'Board could write-off £20,000, and that's just for meals alone. A senior hurling championship winner's medal costs up against £30, and the 'Board has to buy the medals for all the championships.

"It is getting to the day when the 'Board must find new means of financing itself", Mr. Dunphy said. "Our biggest revenue is still 'gate' money, be that from local championships or the Naional Leagues. We cannot depend on that source of revenue indefinitely because that will stay more or less static, while expenses are going up all the time.

"It is a simple fact, the 'Board won't survive unless it learns to generate its own finance", he went on. "Funds from the Leagues can be very good, depending on how the hurlers are going, but the 'Board must aim at financing itself without having to depend on a windfall from the Leagues".

The Kilkenny problem reflects the national picture. Consequently sponsorship is becoming more and more a part of the 'Association. Even Kilkenny Co. Board have now sold advertising space around the Nowlan Park pitch.

"This is the beginning of another way of financing ourselves", the treasurer pointed out. "There could a drift into more such ventures in the future".

DO WELL

Right now the big money is made at county semi-finals and finals. Would you believe in the region of £45,000 annually? By the national average, Kilkenny do well at the turnstiles. But now it has got to the point where reserves built up during three hurling league victories during the 'eighties have been eaten into. A £20,000 development at Nowlan Park last year made a big hole in reserve funds.

"If the Co. Board ever has extra money, it gives it out to clubs in the form of grants for development work", Pat Dunphy said. "The 'Board is not there to make money, although it would be nice to have some in reserve. Right now we are facing a break-even situation. Every year it gets harder to make ends meet, so the 'Board must get away from depending on gate money".

THERE ARE not many people still around who attended any of the three great games it took to decide the 1931 all-Ireland senior hurling final between Kilkenny and Cork. Fewer still would have the will or freshness of mind to sit down and write about it.

Johnny Ivory, a sprightly 75-year-old from Ballyconra, Ballyragget, has put pen to paper for the Yearbook. He was at the first game in 1931. It was his first all-Ireland. It was also his first trip to Dublin. The fare was 4s.6d., and those were the days when 7s. or 8s. would do you for the week. In those times the train journey went from Kilkenny to Ballyragget, Attanagh, Abbeyleix and Portlaoise before reaching Dublin.

Mr. Ivory's particular all-Ireland special was late leaving. Someone "tipped" the driver to go faster and make up lost time. One engine gave up. Read on:

Hardship and worry on way to '31 Final, but it was all great fun

"IT WAS the first Sunday of September, 1931, at Ballyragget railway station. A huge crowd had assembled, heading to the all-Ireland senior hurling final between Kilkenny and Cork at Croke Park. There was great confidence in this Kilkenny team, as was evident by the large number of people present from all over North Kilkenny — from Ballyragget, Castlecomer, Conahy, Lisdowney, Freshford, Threecastles, Tullaroan and Johnstown.

"It was the first all-Ireland for many of us. It was my first visit to Dublin. Our elders who had travelled in previous years were always collected on trains from Waterford and Kilkenny.

"The first of the 'specials' passed early, but they were already full to the brim. By about 10.30 a.m. all of the trains from Kilkenny had passed, and all were full. Everyone at Ballyragget was very disappointed. Questions were asked of the Stationmaster. How are the rest of us going to get to Dublin? He explained he was trying to get a special train from Portlaoise.

"At about 11.30 a.m. we were informed that a train was on its way from Portlaoise to collect us. It arrived, the engine travelling in reverse and pulling a good number of carriages. Everyone got on board, and it then went on to Kilkenny for about 30 more people who were stranded there. There was a delay while the engine was hooked on to the front of the train. A few men on the platform near the engine were speaking to the driver and the guard. When they returned to the carriages they told us that the driver was going to go as fast as he could. It was about 12.20 p.m. Men were looking at their watches, hoping to get to Kingsbridge 15 minutes or so before the start of the match.

"Fair play to the driver, he did very well, non-stop! Outside Portlaoise in good time, and everyone was hoping we would make it. We got a shock when the train began to lose speed a few miles from Kildare. We just free-wheeled into Kildare.

"There was a loud cheer, as big as any for a score in a match, when we saw a big



Johnny Ivory

engine in full steam pulling in to replace the disabled one. It wasn't long until we made Kingsbridge. The excitement was terrific.

TRAVELLING SLOWLY

"There was a great rush for the trams. I was on one which was travelling rather slowly down the Quays. Some were suggesting we should jump off and run along the footpaths. However, we got to O'Connell Bridge and ran to Nelson's Pillar where we got a tram to within sight of Croke Park. A good many got off at the first available stop. I well remember running along the pathway by the edge of the Canal, up on to the bridge at the Hogan Stand side and in through the 'stiles to the Canal End. One shilling was the admission price. A few of us paid an extra shilling and got into the Long Stand. This was a large covered area of concrete terracing — now the Hogan Stand. We had a good view and were about 40 yards out from the Canal goal.

"The backs had gone to their positions and the referee was just going to throw in the ball. Paddy Phelan put Kilkenny on the attack after the start. He tapped the ball on the ground down the right and sent a cut across the centre. I remember Martin White sending a great left-handed shot in the Cork goalmouth. The ball hit Coughlan, the goalie, on the chest and he cleared over the sideline.

"There was great hurling during this first half — mighty overhead clashes at centre-

field, and play swung from one end to the other. Cork led at half-time by 1-3 to 0-2. Cork's goal was scored by Gah Ahearne. Lory Meagher had one of Kilkenny's points, and Matty Power scored the other.

IN GREAT FORM

"The second half was a real thriller. Cork stretched their lead with two more points. During the last quarter it was all Kilkenny. They added four points in succession to lead by one. Dan Dunne had a good goal for Kilkenny before those last four points, which came from Dan Dunne, Lory Meagher (2) and Mick Larkin.

"Kilkenny supporters were in great form with their team leading by a point into the last minute of the game. Then a long ball from a Cork defender was collected by left-half forward O'Grady. He was shouldered to the ground by Podge Byrne, but O'Grady, on one knee, managed a one-handed tap that barely went over the bar for the levelling score (1-6 each). We were all very excited when the final whistle sounded, after Kilkenny sent wide at the other end.

"I was happy, and so were many others, with the result considering Cork were a powerful team. They had beaten Kilkenny by 4-6 to 2-0 in the all-Ireland final of 1926, and beat Dublin in the semi-final of 1928 by 5-3 to 0-2 and they scored an easy win over Galway in the all-Ireland final.

"However, we didn't realise fully the great enthusiasm created all over the country for this wonderful game. I wasn't at the replay. I listened to the broadcast of the game outside the sitting-room window of Mr. Wall's house in Freshford. A good gathering listened to the broadcast and there was a good reception. Level scoring again at 2-5 each. Another great, fast game. Cork appeared, according to the wireless, to be the best team, but they could not score on Jim Dermody, the Kilkenny goalie, who was a hero. It was Cork who had to get the last score to draw the game.

"There were almost 27,000 present at that first game, and all were thrilled. The replay was on October 11 and such was the

interest in the game that the attendance increased to over 33,000. Cork won the second replay by 5-8 to 3-4.

"Kilkenny won four all-Irelands in this decade — 1932 against Clare; '33 against Limerick; '35 against Limerick and 1939 against Cork. While the success rate in the 'Thirties was satisfactory, things were not as good all the time. There were defeats in 1936, '37 and '38 but, as has happened during the past 60 years, Kilkenny always came back.

"I forgot to mention that after that first game in 1931 there was always a special train from Ballyragget on all-Ireland hurling final day".

Mr. Ivory served as Secretary of the Northern Board for 38 years — a record for an officer in this country.

Breda the star



KILKENNY players have made their own of the B + I camogie player of the year award in recent times, and another of the all conquering ladies swept the trophy for 1987.

The talented winner this time was star forward, Breda Holmes, who enjoyed a smashing season when the Noresiders completed a second National League/Championship double.

Breda also helped her club, St. Paul's to victory in the All-Ireland championship. All in all a very active and rewarding year for Breda and her colleagues.

The stylish attacker really turned on the power in the All-Ireland final against Cork. The Leesiders had no answer to her daring runs, and she helped herself to 2-2 of Kilkenny's total of 3-10.

Following that stunning show, she was chosen as the Hotel Kilkenny and Kilkenny People sports personality of the month in September 1987.

Breda's win brings to seven the number of Kilkenny B + I award winners since 1975. The previous year those dynamic twins, Angela and Ann Downey were joint winners of the annual award.

Eugene — a dynamic leader with the 'Boro

HARD WORKING Dicksboro chairman Eugene Begley was the Kilkenny winner of the Giba-Geigy G.A.A. Club man of the year award.

Eugene, a Garda by profession, has been chairman of the famous city club for the past five years, which is a record run for anyone.

He came to live and work in Kilkenny ten years ago and immediately became involved in the running of club street leagues. That was the beginning, today he can look back on a decade of progress for the club during which grounds were acquired and a huge clubhouse was built.

In Eugene's early days the club concentrated on organising under-12 and under-14 hurling leagues, but he recognised the need to reach out to other sectors and helped establish leagues for under-8, 10, 12 and 14-year-olds, both hurling and football.

Under his dynamic leadership Dicksboro now fields two under-14 hurling teams and two under-16 hurling teams.

"The young players must always be looked after. They are the future of the club and the game", Eugene insisted.

He was instrumental in getting a Juvenile Committee going in the Dicksboro club, and encouraged this group to elect their own chairman and secretary. This idea proved a good one, and underage games in the club are among the best organised in the country.

Of course, Mr. Begley doesn't confine his interest to the Dicksboro club. He also lends a helping hand with Kilkenny C.B.S. teams, which is recognised as the club's main well for young talent. Like many a G.A.A. official up and down the county, he used his car hundreds of times a year to ferry players to and from matches.

FORKED OUT MONEY

He was never slow to put his hand in his pocket to help Dicksboro. In 1981 when



the club formed a Development Committee to oversee the purchase and development of new grounds, he was one of the first to fork out money to become a life member. Knowing it to be for the good of the old 'Boro, Eugene paid up.

When the club grounds were bought at Bonnettstown and back-breaking tasks like digging drains and picking stones to be done, he was one of the first to volunteer for duty. Everything the Dicksboro club got involved in, he threw himself wholeheartedly into it.

When he first became chairman, Dicksboro had just bought 9.1 acres of land at a cost of nearly £50,000. This debt had been cleared, but then money was needed to level and sow the land and build a clubhouse. Eugene gave solid leadership and led by example in this second big fund-raising effort.

During his time in the chair, four successful Super Raffles were run. Today, the 'Boro has two playing pitches at their grounds, and a spacious clubhouse that includes four dressing-rooms, referees' and games room, committee room and bar.

Eugene Begley has done a lot for Dicksboro since he took the chair, and he has helped set up the club for life.

Now two stands at club grounds

JOHAN LOCKES (Callan), have arguably, the best developed club grounds in Co. Kilkenny, bearing in mind their fine dressing-rooms, car parking facilities and stand.

Piltown have a terrific complex also, and they are ploughing thousands more into ground development and improvements.

However, up to this year John Lockes were the only club with a stand at their grounds.

This year a second appeared at the fine

Hugginstown grounds of Carrickshock. This very active club always have the grounds in top order for games, and the addition of a Stand is a very welcome development.

When you consider you can kiss goodbye to at least £10,000 when building modest but functional stands like those in Callan and Hugginstown, you realise a lot of people must be working hard in the background to help finance clubs. Well done both John Lockes and Carrickshock!

Heroes had a great reunion

FOR a week it was like old times! The clock was turned back to days when times were good, when there was a lot to celebrate. Thirty years on the memories were as vivid as ever. It was a nice feeling to be able to look back and say "we did it".

And so it was this year when the Erin's Own (Castlecomer) junior hurling team of 1958 had a rare but pleasant get-together. Some showed a few extra pounds here and there, maybe even a few grey hairs, but on the 30th anniversary of the 1958 victory over Knocktopher in the county final everyone was in high spirits.

That 1958 junior hurling championship success remains the lone victory at adult level for the Erin's Own club! Fair play to those brave and true men of '58.

The idea to come together was a wonderful one, and the former players responded willingly, just like they had on the field of play so many years ago. Andy Joe Baylon, who had not been home for 25 years, jetted in from the U.S. Michael Dormer also flew the Atlantic. Michael Baylon and Paddy Brennan came home from England, and the rest came from the four corners of Ireland.

There was a special 'Comer welcome for

all the heroes, and no matter where they went during the week long celebrations, they were greeted with warmth and enthusiasm. 'Comer took pride in that win all those years ago, and today the efforts of those men still ranks high among the sporting achievements of a proud parish.

A GOOD ONE

That 'Comer team of 1958 was a good one. In the county final, Knocktopher were beaten by 3-10 to 2-4. Twelve months later Erin's Own qualified for the senior final, but against a crack Bennettsbridge team lost by 4-6 to 1-4.

The Northerners soldiered on regardless, and for the next few years were always a team to be reckoned with. The big win, at senior level, eluded them but it was no mean achievement to win senior status. 'Comer have remained in the top flight ever since.

Memories came flooding back when the entire '58 panel attended a special mass in Castlecomer church. Team captain, Paddy McEvoy looked fit and well. Martin Meally didn't show the years. Phil O'Meara looked to be enjoying it all. Old friends renewed acquaintances.

Former hurler, Fr. Paddy Comerford, who was home from Los Angeles, was the chief celebrant of the mass. The readings were taken by Dick and Tom Brennan, and the offertory gifts were brought to the altar by Martin Mealy, Phil O'Meara, Andy Joe Baylon, Michael Baylon, Dr. Seán Dunne and Michael Dormer.

The Castlecomer male choir, joined by Graiguecullen choir under the direction of Tommy Alcock, performed majestically and earned a standing ovation. Paddy Delaney was the organist.

Tears were shed afterwards when the party visited the grave of the dearly departed, Canon John Kearns, the team trainer in 1958. He loved, and was loved, by all. A wreath was laid on the grave by team captain, Paddy McEvoy.

The same evening a social was held in the Avalon Inn, and that sparked off a round of celebrations that continued unabated throughout the week. O'Shea's, Bollard's and Coogan's all hosted reunion functions.

The men of '58 brought great joy to the people of 'Comer when they won that championship, and the people of 'Comer enjoyed having them back . . . even if it was 30 years later.



THE STARS IN THEIR PRIME

Back Row (l. to r.): Bobby Brennan (secretary), Tom Coogan, Pat Brennan, Michael Baylon, Phil O'Meara, Martin Meally, Michael Rowe, Edward Holland, Paddy McEvoy (Capt.), Seamus Farrell, Michael Sherwood, Ger Moran (trainer), Michael Holden, Lar Devlin. **Front Row** (l. to r.): Tommy Delaney, Tommy O'Neill, Larry O'Keefe, Dick Brennan, Kieran Meally, Mick Byrne, Michael Dormer, Tom Shalloe, Martin Coogan, Seamus Coogan, Tom Brennan.

SATURDAY, August 6 was one of the warmest days of the year, and thousands of shoppers and tourists crammed the streets of Kilkenny. Just a half a mile from the city centre in the quiet surrounds of St. Kieran's college, the Kilkenny minor camogie team, Co. Board officials, some parents and a few supporters gathered for the first leg of a trip into the pages of history.

Odyssey of fun into history



KILKENNY — 1988 All-Ireland Minor Camogie Champions

Back Row (l. to r.): Margaret Dalton, Sinead Millea, Eithne Keoghan, Siobhán Dermody, Bridget Morrissey, Tracy Millea, Deirdre Lennon, Orla Ryall, Ashling Cullen, Ciara Holmes, Mary McGrath. **Front Row** (l. to r.): Geraldine Ryan, Mary Ryall, Esther Kennedy, Gillian Dillon, Una Murphy, Patricia Treacy, Veronica Wall, Margaret Hanley, Bridget Barnaville, Bridget Mullally, Esther Dermody.

AT 3.55 p.m. twenty-five minutes behind schedule Hehir's bus, with Johnny Campion at the wheel pulled out on the first stage of a 180 mile journey to Portmore, Co. Armagh.

As the sun blazed down, good time was made and the first stop was the Skylon hotel, Dublin. Here there was a break of about 40 minutes, during which everyone enjoyed the sunshine after buying minerals and sweets in a nearby shop. Some of the adults had something stronger in the bar of the Skylon and others had a cup of tea. The next stop was Dunleer, Co. Louth, where it was decided to attend Mass.

The priest saying mass was in the church early and seeing all the strangers enquired who they were. Upon being informed that they were the Kilkenny minor camogie team on their way to play in the all-Ireland final he extended a warm welcome. Twice he prayed for a Kilkenny win, and at the finish he again wished the visitors well. The following day, never were his prayers more needed as Armagh threw everything at the Noresiders in the big match. A meal had been arranged for the Hazel hotel after Mass. The officers of the Armagh and Louth camogie Co. Boards dropped in to welcome the Kilkenny team and officials.

EARLY RISE

After the meal it was back on the road to travel the seven miles to Dundalk, which was the stop-over centre for the night. Thirty-five of the travelling party, including the panel of 24, were accommodated in the "Fáilte" guest house. The others went to another guest house. Richard Mullally, his wife and two children, who travelled by car, met up with the bus group and eventually all the adults proceeded to the Central Hotel, where a great time was had by all and there was many a rousing song.

It was an early rise the following morning as arrangements had been made to work out the panel in nearby St. Brigid's Park. As the players were put through their paces by trainer Ted Browne and his wife, Angela, while the supporters lapped up the sunshine. After about 40 minutes it was back to the guesthouse, where tea and sandwiches had been laid on.

The second leg of the journey was on to Castleblancy. Into view came signposts for Crossmaglen, Cullaville, Cullyhana and Forkhill, all places often seen on television screens, often for the wrong reasons. The party was in and out of the Border before they hit Castleblaney. The first man seen on the street was Tommy Hickey of Freshford. When the official group came around the corner, the bus that had left that morning at 7.30 a.m. with a load of supporters came into view. A big cheer rent the air!

Across the border everyone felt they would be stopped by the military or the police. However, the journey continued without interruption.

Arrangements had been made for a car to meet the bus in Armagh and guide it to its destination. The road to Dungannon was taken, as Portmore is right on the Tyrone border. If you are travelling in Co. Armagh, you will not see Portmore on a signpost. The nationalist community call it by its Irish name, while the official English name is Blackwatertown. Immediately one hit Portmore it was obvious that something big was on. The place is no bigger than a village, but bunting hung across all the streets. There was a big "Fáilte" sign painted. The Armagh flags of saffron hung from every window, and the children were waving flags. When the crowd began to arrive before the game, it was reminiscent of Armagh at the All-Ireland football final of 1977. The colours were everywhere. The flags carried all the usual slogans and even little dogs on leads were decked out in the saffron of Armagh.

GOOD NEWS

The Kilkenny team bus hit Portmore at 1.20 p.m., and the first question asked was: "How are the Kilkenny minors doing in Croke Park?" A little girl ran to her house and came back with good news: "Kilkenny are stuffing them, 13 points to 3". The Kilkenny team and officials then walked the field, and were well satisfied with the venue. Considering it was only a club ground it would put most venues in Ireland to shame. It was perfectly level, was fully enclosed with good banking on both sides. One side had been laid out in such a way that people could sit down on the cement.

The changing rooms were first class. The venue was in the mould of Piltown or Callan, or even better.

The Armagh team arrived and went out for a warm-up. The Kilkenny girls were interested spectators. A consensus of opinion was that the goalie was not good. Armagh seemed worried, and took her to the other side of the field away from the visiting players. Events during the game confirmed the speculation.

His Eminence Cardinal Tomás Fiach arrived and chatted freely with supporters of both counties. The local pipe band provided the entertainment.

The Kilkenny team came out early and had their puck about. Armagh arrived shortly afterwards and received a rousing reception. The preliminaries would have done justice to the All-Ireland senior hurling final!

The teams were introduced to the Cardinal, and were then paraded around the field. A few minutes after the scheduled starting time of 3 o'clock, the game was underway with Fionnula McGrady (Down) in charge of the whistle.

An account of the game can be found in the section on camogie. The black and amber girls eventually came through in the closing stages to win by 5-6 to 2-5 and took their first ever All-Ireland minor camogie title. There was great jubilation among the hundred or so Kilkenny followers as the cup was presented to Mary McGrath by Mary O'Callaghan, President of the Camogie Association, who had made the long journey from Cork.

SAD — NOTHING FOR RUNNERS-UP

The official reception for both teams was held in the Downhill hotel. The other people travelling on the team bus were accommodated here also. Food was a welcome sight after all the excitement. Most only had a cup of tea since breakfast in Dundalk. After the meal, the All-Ireland medals were presented. Indeed, it was sad that for the first time there was no runners-up medals. Armagh, who were also making their first appearance in the All-Ireland final, deserved some memento of this great occasion.

After the presentation it was back to the bus for the long journey home. The party left the hotel at 6.45 p.m. and drove as far as Ashbourne, Co. Meath, 25 miles from Dublin. The girls were in great voice as we sped through Armagh, Monaghan, Louth and into the Royal County. Everyone was "hung from the sour apple tree". It was difficult to believe this was the same crowd who had been so quiet all day Saturday, and on Sunday morning. Ashbourne was reached shortly after 9 o'clock. The place was taken by storm. The adults thirst was quenched and the "take away" joints did a roaring trade. The "Sunday Game" was watched on a large screen in the Ashbourne House hotel, and when Michael Lester read out the results there was no word of the All-Ireland minor camogie final, he wasn't exactly a favourite son. B.B.C. Northern Ireland radio had given great coverage to the final, and even had a person in the hotel to interview Mary McGrath about the game. It was near 12.30 a.m. before the stragglers got back on the bus.

After that it was full steam ahead towards Kilkenny. The singing started to wane as weariness set-in and all was quiet by the time the bus reached Naas. Kilkenny was reached at 2.45 a.m.

The only people who greeted the All-Ireland champions were parents waiting to take the players to the different parts of the county. Everyone was tired, but happy. It had been an historic journey!



MOONCOIN — Winners of the Kilkenny Under-16 Camogie Roinn B Championship

Back Row (l. to r.): Pat Conway (trainer), Geraldine Falconer, Rose Walsh, Susan Walsh, Patricia Morahan, Linda Walsh, Esther Murphy, Valerie Conway, Rebecca Keane, Louise Walsh, Ed O'Keefe (selector). **Front Row** (l. to r.): Ann Walsh (secretary), Marie Browner, Debbie Coffey, Claire Fewer, Marie Comerford, Mary Foley, Norma Rothwell, Elema O'Shea, Trina Dunphy, Marie Rowe, Myra Doyle, Margo Fripps (selector).

KILMOGANNY — Winners of the Special Junior Football Championship

Back Row (l. to r.): Malachy Hogan, John Phelan, Owen Dunne, Seamus Kennedy, John Murphy, Richard O'Neill, Martin O'Shea, Michael Carroll, Jody Reid, Johnny Murray, John Carroll, Noel McDonald, Michael Kelly, Michael Davis, Willie Kearney, Seamus Moore. **Front Row** (l. to r.): Seamus Power, Tommy Fitzpatrick (Capt.), Gerry Brett, Liam Brett, Johnny Ryan, Gerry Ryan, Peter Moran, Jimmy Dunne, Christy Whelan.



MIGHTY RANGERS!

THERE WAS something familiar about the territory Barrow Rangers (Paulstown/-Goresbridge) passed through this year. They had been over it all before. And you know, the experience was sweeter second time round.

THE 'Rangers won the junior hurling championship in impressive fashion this year to take their second title of the decade. They were also crowned junior champions in 1982 when they beat John Lockes (0-12 to 0-6). Promotion to the intermediate grade is no new experience for most of the wearers of the blue and white, but this time they have made tougher by experience and the feeling in the camp is that they are better prepared to handle the demands of the higher division now.

It is fair to say after joining the intermediate ranks in 1983, Barrow Rangers found life difficult and it was generally a tough struggle. Hard knocks taken then, and since, have shaped 'Rangers into a much more formidable force, and if ever they are to make an impact, the time would appear to be ripe now.

Certainly, 'Rangers county final performance against a full-of-hurling Slieverue had the hallmarks of a team with a lot of self belief. There was a time during the second quarter when things went against the winners, but then they got a chance and a goal from county senior panellist Charlie Purcell pulled them out of a trough. After 30 minutes of hurling that didn't always go their way, they found themselves just 2-3 to 0-10 down at the break, after playing against the wind.

Trainer-coach, George Leahy, a man who has done a lot for club and county hurling in his day, delivered a down-to-earth pep-talk during the interval. The players got the message and within minutes of the re-start, Syl Hennessy, Charlie Purcell and David Holmes (65) all threw over points to signal an authoritative take-over that concluded with Barrow Rangers winning by 4-12 to 0-11.

Putting that much space between

themselves and their opponents, the 'Rangers produced hurling that was as good as anything they displayed during the past five years. The Leahy influence had them much more organised, self assured and, dare one say, willing to do what they were told. The Gospel according to 'Georgie' was listened to, and a team that could have been hung-over after a Northern semi-final defeat in 1987 bounced back to top the lot in '88.

The experience from all their up-and-down and now up-again days should stand to Barrow Rangers. They have the ammunition to make an impact in the intermediate grade, but they may have to do it on their own because George Leahy has affiliations with another team in this section, John Lockes, and he cannot serve two masters.

'Rangers should have the experience at this stage to be able to deal with the challenge, but they should remember, nothing good will come their way without hard work. The players put in the effort this season, and they got the rewards.

In the Northern championship 'Rangers were flying and they capped off everything by sweeping St. Patrick's (Ballyragget) aside in the divisional final (2-13 to 0-2). That was some performance!

A five point input from full-forward Michael Doyle singled him out as one of the best that evening and he continued on his scoring way in the county final when he hit 1-2. Doyle enjoyed a good season and he had lively front line partners in Charlie Purcell, whose explosive bursts of speed broke the heart of many a defender; team captain Pat Purcell and Joe English.

Syl. Hennessy has been producing the goods for a good number of years at midfield for 'Rangers, and again he fit the high spots. He never lost the flair that made him a county minor some years back. But perhaps 'Rangers most improved player this year was corner-back Paddy Murphy, a 23-year-old who should have a bright future in the game, if he so desires. He has the hurling, strength and spirit to scale higher peaks. The season also had many happy memories for Seamus Brennan, Larry Gittens, David Holmes and Gerry Purcell, who contributed handsomely to one of the best hurling seasons ever for the club.

The big question now is, can Barrow rangers build on what they have started? They have a team with a liberal amount of hurling and a lot of experience. That is not a bad starting point. Further glory beckons, if they really want it.

The county final teams were: *Barrow Rangers* - Michael Staunton, Paddy Murphy, Seamus Brennan, Larry Gittens, Gerry Purcell, David Holmes, Ger Lawlor, Syl. Hennessy, Tom Brennan, Patrick Purcell (Capt.), Charlie Purcell, Joe English, Michael Whitely, Michael Doyle, Jimmy Morrissey. *Subs:* Andrew Whelan, Martin Hanlon, John Gavin, Noel Kelly, Philip Maher, Seamus Gittens, Ollie O'Neill, John Hanlon, John Curran, Jimmy Meaney, Pat Drea, Tom Staunton.

Slieverue - Ray Power, James Walsh, Richard Walsh, Michael Frisby, Patrick Phelan, Pat Power, Marty Connolly, Larry O'Brien, Laurence Walsh, Brian McGovern, Michael Walsh, Eamon Dowling (Capt.), Kevin Phelan, Michael Sutton, Billy O'Dwyer. *Subs:* Ger Frisby, Paul Murphy (used), John Forristal, Enda Walsh, James Kennedy, James Walsh, Timmy Holden, Tommy Doran, Billy Halpin, John O'Brien, Joe Fleming, Garrett Irish.



BARROW RANGERS (Paulstown) - Kilkenny Junior Hurling Champions 1988

Slick Slieverue didn't do themselves justice

LOSING ANY final can be bad enough, but knowing you blew a great chance — and at the same time didn't do yourself justice — makes it all the harder to accept. That was the way it was with Slieverue on the afternoon of September 25 after they had been beaten by a neat Barrow Rangers (Paulstown) in the junior hurling final.

FOR a good bit of the way Slieverue had looked the part and had played hurling of a very high standard. Then in a three-minute black patch approaching the break they surrendered valuable ground via a mistake, and thereafter they fell asunder.

Defeat was hard enough but when the Southerners look back on this one they will have every reason to ask what went wrong. For, in the one match, they were very good, and very bad. A single point during the second half — and that from a free — wasn't the true form of a team that had set the scene alight in a very competitive Southern championship.

Experience was on the side of 'Rangers and they made it pay. Slieverue ran into the difficulties faced by most teams trying to make the breakthrough. Success never comes gift-wrapped, and the Slieverue wins of 1950 (junior) and 1954 (senior) — on both occasions former G.A.A. President Paddy Buggy wore the colours — and 1936 (intermediate) remain the only major hurling honours the club has won. Who could argue but Slieverue are due another visit to the winners' enclosure?

During the opening 27 minutes in the county final it looked as if they were heading there. Their beginning was modest, but then all of a sudden they clicked and reeled off five unanswered points to open out a lead of 0-10 to 1-3. That was more like Slieverue's Southern championship form. Alas, it was the best they were to do all afternoon, and when they conceded a goal before the break, true form seemed to depart the whole team. It was hard to explain. For the players it was painful.

FINANCE MADE AVAILABLE

All credit to Slieverue officials and supporters, who didn't let finance stand in the way of their attempt to win the championship. Seven times during the year Michael Sutton, Michael Walsh and Michael Frisby flew in from England, where they work, for games. This was a costly undertaking for the club — the best part of £2,000 for flights alone — and sometimes the players lost money when missing work on Mondays, but the willingness all round to do it for the parish made it worthwhile. The county final defeat didn't change things.

Slieverue must be wondering what happened to them, because in the Southern final win over Tullogher-Rosbercon they played with the style and zest of a mistakenly cast senior side. The form that evening of Larry O'Brien, Michaels Sutton and Walsh, Ray Power, Pat Power, Laurence Walsh and Brian McGovern suggested they were in line for great things. They should be positive and remember that game, and that level of performance, when they plan the campaign next year.

Defeated Southern finalists, Tullogher-Rosbercon promised more than they were able to deliver. Going into the divisional decider they looked a good bet. They never got going and didn't show an awful lot of heart when things went against them. They were run off the pitch. Could it be that the team needs an injection of youth?

Losers in the Northern final were St. Patrick's (Ballyragget), who were literally taken asunder by Barrow Rangers. Nothing went right for poor Pat's, who were taken to a replay in the semi-final by Black and Whites. Not so many years ago 'Whites were content

to win a match, or maybe two, a year. During the past four years they have made enormous progress and with the likes of county minor Pat O'Grady and under-21 panellist, Ned Kelly, they hope to assemble a team that will eventually bring the big victory they crave.

HAVE MATERIAL

Danesfort were the other Northern semi-finalists, but their dream of glory was destroyed 10 minutes into the match against 'Rangers. They conceded two goals and after that the hill to victory was too steep to climb. All credit, they tried, but those early setbacks proved killers. Martin 'Goggy' Brennan (Castlecomer) was an inspiring trainer here and it wasn't for the want of work in the field that things didn't work out. Whether the players believe it or not, the material to win the championship is as good, if not better, in this parish than in any other.

In the South, 'old hands' Eddie Keher, Willie Murphy and Billy Kennedy nearly inspired the Rower-Inistioge to great things. The Rower qualified for the semis and gave Slieverue a heck of a fright before fading in the dying stages. The Rower looked out of it at half-time but the 'Dad's Army' brigade took charge of the match and very nearly the ticket into the divisional final.

In the other semi, the losing side was St. Senan's (Kilmacow) against Tullogher. Senan's gave their opponents a 2-8 to 0-4 and 45 minutes' head start before they began to play. The ground they tried to make up during the last quarter was simply too much. They kissed the championship goodbye with just 15 minutes of profitable hurling.



SLIEVERUE - Defeated Kilkenny Hurling Finalists 1988.

CLONEEN WIN SPARKED GROWTH

SUCCESS has a knock-on effect and this was never more evident than in the good times currently being enjoyed by Cloneen G.A.A. club.

Last year Cloneen won the special junior hurling (Roinn B) championship. So what? you might ask. This year they built on that success, and won the special junior hurling (Roinn A) title and qualified to participate in the junior hurling championship proper in 1989. Impressed?

The new season is one Cloneen folk are eagerly awaiting because they believe they have a great chance of building on the advances made to date.

Victories have not been easy to come by for this small Northern outfit. Before last year, their previous success was way back in May 1930 when they beat Tullagher by 5-4 to 1-2 in the junior football championship final.

The '87 victory sparked a major growth in interest in hurling in the area, and Cloneen have developed from being a one-team outfit to the point where they now field four teams. The youngsters have proved very enthusiastic, and the under-12 (Roinn D) team reached the county semi-final, while the under-14 side got into a play-off in the Northern championship. For the first time, Cloneen fielded an under-16 team, and while it didn't blaze a trail of glory, it made a respectable beginning and could look back with pride on wins over Danesfort and Conahy Shamrocks.

Cloneen are certainly on the move and officials feel they are not finished yet, and next year hope to add another string to their bow and field a second junior team in the Roinn B division. That is growth for you!

ANOTHER WIN

Along with the championship success, Cloneen also won the Erin's Own (Castlecomer) tournament for the Michael Kelly memorial trophy. Up to 1987 they had just one win in 56 years to cherish, but now 24 months further up the road they have three more to savour.

The championship final against Glenmore went to a replay and Cloneen won the second match handsomely by 2-10 to 0-4. After an even first half the Northerners had victory in sight when they led by 0-5 to 0-3 at the break after playing against the breeze.

Nine minutes into the closing half Tom O'Dwyer slammed home a goal for Cloneen and Glenmore merely crumbled after that. Before the finish, Brendan Smith had a moment he will remember for a long time, when he saw a shot from nearly 100 yards go all the way to the net to open up a 2-8 to 0-4 lead.

While Cloneen had many top performers during the year, their most consistent were goalkeeper Eddie Mahon, Brendan Smith, Tommy Dwyer, John Delaney, Sean Lawlor, Eamon Cahill, Thomas Brennan and Dom Lawlor.

While the replay was an easy touch, the campaign in general was tough and demanding. Cloneen started with a win over Fenians (Johnstown) but then lost to Young Irelands (Gowran). Their next match against Clara was called off with six minutes remaining but Cloneen won the second fixture, and in a play-off for a semi-final spot got revenge on Young Irelands.

The semi-final against Dicksboro was the best match of the season. The Northerners won by 1-7 to 0-8, and Tommy Dwyer with 1-2 was a particularly good performer. St. Martin's were downed in the Northern final.

Cloneen members have every good reason to look back on 1988 and smile. They moved another step up the hurling ladder, and that can't be bad.

The Cloneen team in the final was: Eddie Mahon, Michael Delaney, John Cahill, Tommy Brennan, Thomas Brennan, Eamon Cahill (capt.), Seán Lawlor, Brendan Smith, John Delaney, Martin Dowd, Michael Rowe, Dom Lawlor, John Bolger, Paul Browne, Tommy Dwyer. *Subs:* Seán Meally (in draw), Patsy Wilson (in replay), Denis Brennan, Paddy Phelan, Tom Comerford, Florence Brennan, Tom Brennan, Jimmy Brennan, Willie Brennan, Tim Wilson. The selectors were Tom Brennan, Tom Comerford and Willie Brennan.

The people behind the scene at the club are: Tom Brennan (president), Martin Meally (chairman), Donal Brennan (vice-chairman), Charlie McCarthy (secretary), Dom Kennedy and Timmy Wilson (treasurers). Committee: Larry Brennan, Joe Coogan, Paddy Phelan, John Cahill, Henry O'Neill, Gerry Meally.



CLONEEN — Winners of the Roinn B Junior Hurling Championship

Back Row (l. to r.): T. O'Reilly, Tim Winson (treasurer), Larry Buggy, Sean Lawlor, Michael Delaney, Don Lawlor, Brendan Smith, John Cahill, Ted Cahill (Capt.), Tim Wilson jr., Martin Dowd, Larry Brennan, Thomas Brennan (Roel), Patsy Wilson, Sean Meally, Ollie Kearns, Tom Brennan (Cloney) manager, Charlie McCarthy (secretary). **Front Row** (l. to r.): Tom Comerford (selector), Florence Brennan (C), Michael Rowe, John Bolger, Eddie Mahon, Tommy Brennan (C), Tommy Dwyer, John Delaney, Paul Browne, Dinny Brennan, Paddy Whelan, Willie Brennan (Jackie), selector.

After '37 defeat, fans feared slump, but county bounced back

The hurling team that wins a senior all-Ireland lives on in the memory of all Kilkenny folk, whilst teams beaten early in the championship or all-Irelands finals are often forgotten. We can all name the winning teams, but how many of us can remember the players and team of 1937 when Tipperary scored a comprehensive win over Kilkenny, in Killarney?

THIS was the end of the Lory Meagher era in Kilkenny hurling; the end of a five year purple patch which began with the 1931 series of games, when it took a second replay to separate Cork and Kilkenny in the all-Ireland final, when the Noresiders eventually lost because of injuries to several key players. Such was the interest in these finals that the central Council considered naming the teams joint champions after the second game, but a motion to this effect was defeated by 10 votes to 5. When Cork eventually defeated Kilkenny by 5-8 to 3-4 on the third day, the G.A.A., realising the impact of the games, and recognising that both teams by their great skills and enthusiasm had set the all-Ireland hurling final up as the great national sporting occasion that it remains ever since, presented both teams with gold watches. During the next four years Kilkenny won three all-Irelands — 1923, 1933 and 1935 — and completed the double in 1933 by winning the National League as well.

The 1937 final was played in Killarney to coincide with the official opening of Fitzgerald stadium, which was capable of holding 70,000 supporters. The final was played on Sunday, September 5. It was the first time since 1909 that the hurling final was played outside of Croke Park. Part of the reason for the switch to Killarney was that the Cusack stand, which was in the course of erection, was behind schedule because of a builders strike.

Kilkenny, who had been beaten by Mick Mackey's Limerick in the 1936 final, began the championship campaign with a victory over Dublin in Tullamore. Westmeath, who had won the junior hurling all-Ireland in 1936, overcame Laois in the Leinster semi-final and met Kilkenny in the decider. It was the first and only time Westmeath reached the Leinster senior hurling final, and they gave a right good account of themselves.

At half-time Kilkenny seemed to be coasting, and led by two clear goals, 2-3 to 0-3. For next 20 minutes Westmeath were completely on top, and only Jimmy O'Connell in the Kilkenny goal stood between them and victory. With 10 minutes to go, the midlanders led by 2-4 to 2-3. Kilkenny had been held scoreless during that time. However, Kilkenny kept their cool and weathered the Westmeath storm. Martin White, who had an outstanding game, scored three goals to see Kilkenny

safely through to the semi-final on a score of 5-3 to 2-4. The Noresiders were unimpressive in the all-Ireland semi-final against Galway at Birr, and failed to score a goal. They won by just two points, 0-8 to 0-6.



Jack Duggan (Mullinavat)

ONLY SURVIVOR

Surprisingly, Tipperary defeated the outstanding Limerick team of the 30's in the other semi-final. So in the final we had the first meeting of neighbours and great rivals, Kilkenny and Tipperary in a decider since 1922, when the Kilkenny team led by Watty Dunphy (Mooncoin) defeated Tipp. by two points. Matty Power was the only Kilkenny survivor of the 1922 final. The referee was Jim Regan (Cork) and 43,638 spectators attended the game.

A remarkable thing about the game is that only 9 frees were awarded, five to Kilkenny and four to Tipperary. What a contrast to the modern game! Evidently the maxim at that time was that it didn't pay to foul.

The injured Lory Meagher had been unavailable most of the year, and he did not start. He was given a great ovation when he replaced Tommy Leahy during the match. He played well and scored a point. Jimmy Walsh (Carrickshock), captain in 1932 was also unavailable, and a team which was changed for every round of the championship had a new centrefield pairing, as well as positional changes from the semi-final. Tommy Leahy and Paddy Obbins replaced Michael Tyrrell and Paddy Dowling. Kilkenny were captained by Jack Duggan of Farnogue, Mullinavat, and Tipperary had a runaway victory on the score 3-11 to 0-3, after leading by 2-8 to 0-2 at half-time. The backs played well, but

the forwards could make no headway against the stern Tipperary defence.

Kilkenny's points were scored by Morrissey, Meagher and Phelan. The game marked the last appearance in a final by Lory Meagher, Podge and Eddie Byrne, Tommy Leahy, Martin White, Matty Power and Jack Duggan. Many of the players of 1937 were among the greatest ever to play for Kilkenny. Lory Meagher, a legend in his own time, Paddy Phelan, generally acknowledged as the greatest wing back of all time, Paddy Larkin, the great small man with the cap, the Byrnes, Blanchfield, Burke and O'Connell were outstanding defenders at a time when every county player was a complete performer. Martin White and Matty Power, two regular goal scorers, had all the skill and craft of the complete forward, and captain, Jack Duggan was a strong and vigorous leader in the Pat Delaney mould.

These men deserve recognition. We honour them, even in defeat. Like many another great team, they failed to his form on the day. The general opinion in Kilkenny after the game was one of sadness, it was the end of this great band of hurlers as a force on the inter-county stage, and some felt it might be a long time before the county would have the likes again. Two years later Kilkenny were again victorious in a final, with a team built on the star studded minor teams of 1935 and 1936.



Jimmy O'Connell - the Kilkenny goalie.

The Kilkenny minor team of 1937 won the county's third Leinster championship in-a-row, having a comprehensive victory over Dublin in the Leinster final, and overcoming Galway at the semi-final stage. Like the seniors, they did not find Killarney to their liking, eventually being beaten by Cork, the score — Cork 8-5, Kilkenny 2-7.

Kilkenny senior team in Killarney in 1937: Jimmy O'Connell, Paddy Larkin, Podge Byrne, Peter Blanchfield, Eddie Byrne, Willie Burke, Paddy Phelan, Tommy Leahy, Paddy Obbins, Val (Yank) Madigan, Jack Duggan (capt.), Martin White, Larry Duggan, Jimmy Morrissey, Mattie Power. Sub: Lory Meagher.

No manager – not great; and only three 'Stars – not great either!–

THE Bank of Ireland All-Star hurling team, and events surrounding it, caused considerable disappointment and disillusionment in Kilkenny.

Unusually, this time the biggest disappointment didn't surround who did or did not make the select 15. The county had three 'Stars chosen: Ger Henderson, Joe Hennessy and Liam Fennelly, which wasn't a great number bearing in mind the county had contested the 1987 All Ireland final, but greatest resentment was felt because Kilkenny was overlooked when it came to appointing the All-Star team manager.

Now people can look at this job whatever way they like, but it is a major honour to manage the elite 15 hurlers in Ireland. Kilkenny, as losing All Ireland finalists, had every reason to expect someone from the county would get the job.

The usual rule was that the Central Council delegate from the losing All Ireland finalists would be given the plum job, which, after all, had the built-in present of an all-expenses-paid trip to the U.S. with the 'Stars.

Through a strange and as yet unsatisfactorily explained series of events, Kilkenny's Tom Ryall (Graigue-Ballycallan) didn't get the job that should have been his. He wasn't even offered it, which was very sad indeed.

Now anyone who knows Tom Ryall in this county, or further beyond, knows he is one of the hardest working G.A.A. officials in the whole country. The fact it was he who was overlooked made the whole thing worse. A man who has given — and continues to give — his all for the good of the Association was treated shabbily.

VIEWS SOUGHT

It couldn't be that Mr. Ryall was not qualified for the job. He is more in touch with hurling, and knows more about the game, than many masquerading as 'senior officials' these days. With Kilkenny he was a selector with senior All Ireland winning teams of 1967 and '69, and to this day his views on hurling matters are eagerly sought and are always given careful consideration.

Kilkenny should have had the manager of the All-Stars team this year, and that man should have been Tom Ryall. Shame on those who deprived the man, and the county, of the appointment.



JOE HENNESSY



LIAM FENNELLY



GER HENDERSON

In all, seven Kilkenny players were nominated for places on the All-Star team — Joe Hennessy (right full-back), Paddy Prendergast (full-back), John Henderson (left full-back), Ger Henderson (centre-back), Sean Fennelly (left half-back), Ger Fennelly (midfield), and Liam Fennelly (full or right full-forward).

The trio who made it were Henderson, Hennessy and Liam Fennelly. It must have

been a close thing with Paddy Prendergast, but the fact he was against the winning All Ireland captain, Conor Hayes (Galway), probably went against him.

The team selectors made a big boob when they omitted Ger Fennelly. The Shamrocks' man had an outstanding year and even in the All Ireland final, when his free-taking let him down, he still turned in a star performance. But his claim for a place wasn't based on just one match. Throughout the year he had pulled Kilkenny through in several tight situations, including the Leinster final against Offaly, when his free-taking kept the Noresiders in touch for long spells.

NOT IN STEP

Ger Fennelly has been playing consistently well for Kilkenny over a good number of years but for some strange reason his haul of All-Star awards hasn't kept step with his high level of performance.

Joe Hennessy (James Stephens) won his fifth All-Star award; Ger Henderson did likewise while Liam Fennelly collected his third.

Hennessy won his awards at right half-back in 1978, '83 and '84 and at midfield in 1979. His latest honour means he has been picked in three different positions. This year he also captained the All-Stars in the U.S.

Henderson won all his awards as a centre-back. He was previously honoured in 1978, 1979, 1982 and 1983. The '87 win was his fifth.

Liam Fennelly was chosen at left full-forward in 1983, '85 and 1987.

The total county representation over the 17 years since the inauguration of the scheme reads: Kilkenny 64, Cork 57, Galway 37, Limerick 25, Tipperary 19, Offaly 18, Wexford 15, Clare 13, Waterford 4, and Dublin, Laois and Westmeath 1 each.

The 1987 team was: Ken Hogan (Tipperary), Joe Hennessy (K), Conor Hayes (Galway), Ollie Kilkenny (do.), Peter Finnerty (Galway), Ger Henderson (K), John Conroy (Wexford), Steve Mahon (Galway), John Fenton (Cork), Michael McGrath (Galway), Joe Cooney (Galway), Aidan Ryan (Tipperary), Pat Fox (Tipperary), Nicholas English (Tipperary), Liam Fennelly (K).

John Henderson later made the trip to the States with the party as an All-Star replacement.

Really, games are all about winning!



By Tom Ryall, Central Council Representative

THE dream of most Kilkenny youngsters is that one day they will play in Croke Park in an All-Ireland senior hurling final. Some go on to realise that ambition. However, it can turn out to be the biggest disappointment of their lives. Picture the scene. A player enters Croke Park on the morning of the game full of confidence and hope. There is no thought of defeat. Just a few hours later, he may want to slip quietly away, avoiding supporters, particularly if things have not gone well for him in the game itself.

HAS anyone ever stopped to think of what it is like for the immediate family of a player taking part in an All-Ireland final? They will be hoping, also, that things go well for their son, or brother, as the case may be. A poor display can bring great disappointment to them.

As well, they must listen during the game to the criticism of supporters sitting near them. It must test their patience hearing their particular favourite being called all kinds of names. So, while victory brings joy and happiness, defeat can be a sobering affair.

What about selectors on All-Ireland final day? Like the players, they too will feel tense and uptight as the big game approaches. For weeks before the final they will be offered all kinds of opinions as to what should be done, and who should be playing. Then comes the announcement of the team, and usually a surprise or two.

These changes are highlighted on the papers, on the radio and television, and all kinds of questions are raised. If the team clicks on the day and victory is secured, the selectors are heroes. If things go wrong, then everyone knew those changes would not work and the selectors take the brunt of the blame. Everyone will have his or her own opinion as to what should have been done. However, all those opinions are useless, and no one will ever know whether or not the changes suggested would have worked.

WHAT ABOUT THIS YEAR?

Take the Kilkenny situation this year. No one argued with the selection of Ger Henderson at full-back before the Leinster semi-final against Wexford. Afterwards, the cry was why was Paddy Prendergast not played at full back, Ger Henderson at centre-back and Michael Cleere at midfield.

Would these changes have made the difference? Maybe they would and maybe they would not. No one will ever know.

Twice I was involved with Kilkenny teams in All-Ireland finals. Thankfully, things went right and victory was secured on both occasions. The first time was in 1967. The biggest talking point before that final regarding the selection of the team was the choice of Tom Walsh at centre-forward.

Previously Tom had played all his inter-county hurling at corner-forward. On the Friday night before the game, I was one of the Kilkenny people invited to take part in a Radio Éireann discussion on the final. The interviewer was Liam Campbell, then a well-known broadcaster. Of course, he wondered about Tom Walsh playing at centre-forward. I justified the selection on the basis that his ground hurling and speed would cause problems for Tony Wall, and prise open the Tipperary defence. This was how things worked out on the day, so the judgement of the selectors was vindicated. The other selectors on that happy occasion were Nicholas Purcell, then chairman of the County Board, Paddy Buggy, later to become President of the G.A.A., Johnny McGovern (Bennettsbridge) and Tom Nolan (Mooncoin).

CONTROVERSY

That was the first year Kilkenny decided to go to Dublin on the morning of the game. This followed the controversy of the previous year when Kilkenny, odds on favourites to take the title, crashed to Cork by 3-9 to 1-10. Afterwards there was allegations of the Kilkenny players taking pills to help them sleep, and this was put forward as a reason for the defeat.

The full team and management of '67 went to 9 o'clock Mass in St. John's church and then boarded a special train for the trip to Dublin. This proved so successful that the system has been operated by Kilkenny ever since.

The train journey was an eventful one. Goalkeeper, Ollie Walsh got a bad cut on the wrist. At first the players in our carriage did not believe the story, but shortly afterwards Nicky Purcell came into the carriage and confirmed the bad news. He told us not to tell anyone, particularly when we arrived at Kingsbridge station, which is now known as Houston.

The editor asked me to convey my thoughts on what it was like, to be a selector in an All-Ireland final. Well, on the train journey it was much the same feeling, I would think, as being a player. One tended to be quiet and all the time wondering how things would go.

While all the papers were available, all you could do was read the newspaper headlines. You could not concentrate on reading.

COLOURS EVERYWHERE

Once Dublin was reached the signs of the final were everywhere. The station was thronged with supporters, all wishing you luck. As you moved across the city to the Hollybrook hotel, then the headquarters for Kilkenny teams for All-Ireland finals, the cars were flying by waving the black and amber of Kilkenny and the blue and gold of Tipperary. The flag and hat sellers were everywhere shouting "get your colours of the game". You looked out at the masses of people walking the street, and wondered "can we do it".

The Hollybrook hotel was nice and quiet, except for a few supporters looking to see if there was any hope of getting a stand ticket. Even if there was no luck, who cared, because they could make their way to Hill 16 or the Canal End. That was before the all ticket final of recent years. Brendan Bowyer, a great friend of Eddie Keher's, was a regular to meet Kilkenny teams in the hotel before All-Ireland finals.

Tea and sandwiches were the order before games, but most people found it hard to eat. Then into a room for the final pep talk from Monsignor Tommy Maher, the team trainer. Onto the bus — off to Croke Park. The first thing that strikes you is the crowds. At that time the dressingrooms were under the Cusack Stand. Usually the players and selectors would go out to see some of the minor match. At that time they were allowed sit around the sideline. No worry about obstructing the advertisements, which are now so

much a part of headquarters. Back into the dressingroom. Hardly a word is spoken. Monsignor Maher and Mick Lanigan were having individual chats with players. Nothing much for the selectors to do. Team was playing as selected.

RADIO CONTACT

The year 1967 was the one in which Monsignor Maher introduced the idea of using walkie talkies . . . He felt that a better view of how the game was going could be had from the front row of the Cusack stand. I was assigned to accompany him to the Cusack stand. The other selectors were in the dug-out. Kilkenny were playing against a gale force wind in the first half, and things looked good at the interval, although we were six points behind.

We had radio contact with the other selectors during the game. Everything worked out well. Victory eventually came by 3-5 to 2-7, but I could not relax until the closing minutes when Dick Blanchfield, who had gone on as a sub, scored the "insurance" point. The full time whistle brought great relief.

The fact that Tipperary had been beaten after 45 years in an All-Ireland was a sense of great satisfaction. It was down onto the field for the presentation of the McCarthy Cup. However the celebrations became very muted when we arrived back in the dressingroom and heard the bad news about Tom Walsh. it was a terrible tragedy.

Nevertheless, being a selector had been a worthwhile experience, and a rewarding one. Indeed, it boils down to the fact that winning is everything.

After the success of 1967, the team performed well and reached the National League final in 1968. Here they were beaten by Tipperary (3-9 to 1-13) after a tempestuous game. Following an investigation into unsavoury incidents Ollie Walsh was suspended for six months. He missed the championship. The Noresiders lost to Wexford by one point.

The following year there was great determination among the Kilkenny players, officials and selectors to win the All-Ireland, if only for Ollie Walsh's sake. Also, Eddie Keher was captain. Carried on this wave of enthusiasm, the team qualified for the All-Ireland.

Most people consider the selectors number a cushy one, but the happenings on the morning of that final showed the strain that can be attached to the job. On the last night of training, which was the Thursday before the final. Paddy Moran went down with the 'Flu. Everyone expected him to be fit by Sunday. The previous night the selectors, who had picked the team earlier in the week, had a meeting to discuss what changes would be made if things were going badly in defence, attack and at midfield.

BAD NEWS

It was decided that if Frank Cummins was injured, he would be replaced by Mick Lawlor, a player in his own mould. On the other hand, if Paddy Moran was injured, then the move stylish Pat

Kavanagh would come into the team. On the morning of the game, as I was going up the Railway station yard in Kilkenny, I met team doctor Kieran Cuddihy, who gave me the startling news that Paddy Moran was only fit enough to last 20 minutes. the doctor said it was up to the selectors to decide if this would be the first 20 minutes for the final 20 minutes.

Considering what had been decided the previous Wednesday night, this was a problem. I felt Mick Lawlor should come into the team, but the whole thing worried me all the way to Dublin.

When the selectors assembled in the Hollybrook hotel, some felt the matter had already been decided. I was supported by one other selector, and after half an hour's debate, a vote was taken. Pat Kavanagh got the nod 3-2.

The late Co. Board secretary, Paddy Grace was informed of the decision. He did not agree with it. He met me and said: "I am going to recall the selectors, because this is too serious. An All-Ireland final is at stake".

The selectors were brought together again, and after 20 minutes of deliberation, the vote was reversed, and Mick Lawlor was in the team. Never before, or since in my life, did I feel such pressure. I was standing on the steps of the hotel as the minors departed for Croke Park, and Georgie Leahy, who was a selector with the minors, came over and asked me if I was sick. He thought I was the colour of a ghost.

I can tell you, this final was one game I did not enjoy. Victory brought a cure.

Things worked out perfectly. Mick Lawlor had the game of his life and justified his selection. On the other hand, Pat Kavanagh had to be introduced after 20 minutes because Claus Dunne was off form. Pat, too, played a great match and was involved in Kilkenny's second goal. He also scored a point. Kilkenny won by 2-15 to 2-9. Everyone was happy.

TOUGH AND THANKLESS JOB

What I have tried to do in this article is show that being a county selector is a tough and generally thankless task. As well, it can be a demanding and pressurising job when tough decisions have to be taken. One other aspect of being a selector is the fact that you cannot enjoy any game. You must concentrate on your own team, and watch individual performances. A selector will rarely even know if it has been a good or bad game. It is only after watching the match later on television that a selector can appreciate it all.

The new selectors appointed by Kilkenny have a tough task! They are inheriting a very unsettled team, and there will be much trial and error before things come right. Kilkenny supporters can be impatient and expect instant success.

The next time you wish you could be a senior selector don't imagine its all fun and glamour. Of course, if the All-Ireland is won, it is great. There is also a sense of personal satisfaction if you bring someone into the panel and they turn out to be a success. Overall, I would have to say that it is a thankless task.



TULLAROAN — Under-21 Roinn A Hurling Finalists

Back Row (l. to r.): Bobby Sweeney (trainer), Derek Gaffney, Jimmy Norton, Edward Holland, Brendan Dooley, Diarmuid Purcell, Seamus Dunne, Paul Hennessy, Paul Norton, Aidan Clohosey, Michael Dooley, John Walton (Chairman). **Front Row** (l. to r.): Thomas Hennessy, Jimmy Walton, Ger Dunne, Richard Walsh, Bill Hennessy (Capt.), Joe Norton, Larry Cummins, Liam Keoghan, Philip Doheny.



Pictured after an exciting handball all-Ireland senior doubles final at Croke Park are Tom O'Beirne, Marketing Director, Coca-Cola Bottlers; Michael 'Ducksie' Walsh and Eugene Downey, Kilkenny; and Mick Tyrrell, President Irish Handball Council. "Ducksie" Walsh and Eugene Downey beat the brothers Tom and John Quish from Limerick 21-4, 9-21, 21-20. "Ducksie" also won the all-Ireland senior singles final.

HANDBALL

Plenty of titles, and development at club level

With no less than 11 all-Ireland titles won in 1988, new stars appearing on the horizon and with 5 clubs adding considerably to the facilities for members, the past year must rank as another successful one on the handball front.

INVARIABLY the spotlight turns to a player now being rated as possibly the best ever — Michael 'Ducksie' Walsh — and his insatiable urge to win all-Irelands. He won three senior titles to bring his grand total to 10, a marvellous achievement for a player so young. Indeed, at 22 he would normally be seen as still far from his peak!

He won the two senior championships he contested in singles, 40 x 20 and softball. His win in the smaller court must have been particularly pleasing, as he defeated the player who won last year's title when ducksie defaulted through no fault of his own, Mickey Walsh, Roscommon. His championship victory in softball was over Tom O'Rourke, and provided one of the best finals for years in the grade.

His third senior title came when he partnered that great warrior, Eugene Downey, to victory in the Coca Cola senior doubles final. This was especially significant as it confirmed the superiority of the Kilkennymen over the Quish brothers, hitherto seen as unbeatable, but losers in three of the last four finals to the Kilkenny duo.

This fine victory meant that they have lost only one senior championship game in the past four years, and this won for them

the Smithwick's sports star of the year award, and the Kilkenny People/Hotel Kilkenny endeavour award.

NEWCOMER

Eddie Leahy, O'Loughlin's is no newcomer to the sporting scene. A fine hurler, it is not so long since he won a county hurling title, and he was selector for one of the great all-Ireland hurling victories.

Now, however, he is one of the leading handballers. He won two all-Irelands this year in partnership with the evergreen Pat O'Keefe. This was in the Golden Masters doubles grade. This was especially pleasing for Eddie, who did not take up the game until the O'Loughlin's court was built.

Now he can match the best in his age group in the country. That is no mean achievement. He found the 40 x 20 title incredibly difficult to win. He and Pat had to play Roscommon in their home court, with a home referee, and apparently many of the decisions were difficult to comprehend. All went against Kilkenny! However, Leahy and O'Keefe got through.

Seamus Reade is no newcomer to all-Ireland victory. He is, however, a newcomer to the Masters grade, and he was

thrilled to reach the 40 x 20 final, although it pitched him against Mayo star, Tom Derrig. His chances against Derrig slimmed considerably when the Talbot's Inch player injured his knee badly, and had to have special strapping and pain killers before taking the court.

Showing typical spirit, Seamus did not allow this to deter him. He won his first title at this grade. Hopefully the first of many in a grade he could dominate.

D.J. AND EAMON

Eamon Law, Mullinavat often looked as if he would have a bagful of all-Ireland titles. D. J. Carey, Goresbridge won at under-12, but hurling took over and he was not seen in top flight handball since. That was all rectified this year.

The pair teamed up for the 40 x 20 minor championship and, although there was a very high standard in this grade, they won their way past a formidable Clare pairing in particular to win a place in the all-Ireland final. Here a magnificent display by both saw them land a richly deserved title.

This was only the start for D. J. He went on to win the corresponding singles crown, and added two senior colleges handball titles to that collection when he won the

40x20 County Champions 1988

JUVENILE:

Under-11 S.: J. Power (Talbots Inch); **Under-11 D.:** Niall Kenny/Enda Hawe (Windgap). **Under-12 S.:** Alan Hawe (Windgap); **Under-12 D.:** Willie Murphy/Adrian Warpole (Kilfane). **Under-13 S.:** Alan Hearne (Windgap); **Under-13 D.:** Conor Moore/Kieran Brett (O'Loughlins). **Under-14 S.:** Dominic Fitzgerald (Glen); **Under-14 D.:** Ken Cottrell/T. Hanrahan (Glenmore). **Under-15 S.:** Paul Geoghegan (T/Inch); **Under-15 D.:** Joe Daly/Willie O'Neill (O'Loughlins). **Under-16 S.:** Seamie Phelan (T/Inch); **Under-16 D.:** John Valentine/Niall Tyrrell (T/Inch). **M.Singles:** D. J. Carey (Goresbridge); **M. Doubles:** Brian Aldridge/Eamon Law (Mullinavat). **N.S.:** O. Falsey (T/Inch); **N.D.:** J. Neary/O. Falsey (T/Inch). **J. Singles:** Pat O'Keeffe (Mullinavat); **J. Doubles:** Gerry Murphy/Jim O'Neill (O'Loughlins). **Senior Singles:** Michael Walsh (T/Inch); **Senior Doubles:** M. Walsh/M. Reade (T/Inch). **Sp. N.S.:** Paddy Sweeney (Galway); **Sp. N.D.:** Pat Ward/Shane Hayes (O'Loughlins). **S.S. (B):** Pat Gardiner (Goresbridge); **S.D. (B):** P. Walsh/D. Hennessy (T/Inch). **Mas. S. (B):** Sam Kirwin (T/Inch); **Mas. D (B):** Jimmy Barcoe/Ned Cantwell (Mothel). **G.M.S.:** Pat O'Keeffe (Mullinavat). **G.M.S. (B):** Jim Tyrrell (Goresbridge). **Junior Team of Four:** (O'Loughlins) B. Walsh, P. Parsons, G. Murphy, J. O'Neill. **Novice Team of Four:** (Kells) — S. Martin, M. Butler, Jim Power, Jim Murphy.

60x30 County Champions 1988

Under-11 S.: Brian Reade (T/Inch); **Under-11 D.:** Enda Hawe/Niall Kenny (Windgap). **Under-12 S.:** Willie Murphy (Kilfane); **Under-12 D.:** Alan Hawe/Ray Brawders (Windgap). **Under-13 S.:** Alan Hearne (Windgap); **Under-13 D.:** Tom Hanrahan/Brendan Warpole (Kilfane). **Under-14 S.:** D. Fitzgerald (Glenmore); **Under-14 D.:** Clinton Maher/Brian Hennessy (T/Inch). **Under-16 S.:** Seamie Phelan (T/Inch); **Under-16 D.:** John Valentine/Niall Tyrrell (T/Inch). **M.S.:** D. J. Carey (Goresbridge); **M.D.:** Eamon Law/Graham O'Brien (Mullinavat). **Under-21 S.:** Tom O'Keeffe (Kilfane); **Under-21 D.:** O. Falsey/Canice Quigley (T/Inch). **N.S.:** Ollie Falsey (T/Inch); **N.D.:** Con Moore/Philly Parsons (O'Loughlins). **Junior Singles:** Canice Quigley (T/Inch); **Junior Doubles:** T. Reade/Canice Quigley (T/Inch). **Senior Singles:** M. Walsh (T/Inch); **Senior Doubles:** M. Walsh/M. Reade (T/Inch). **Sp. N.S.:** John Curran (Goresbridge); **Sp. N.D.:** John Curran/Tom O'Neill (Goresbridge). **S.S. (B):** Seamus Reade (T/Inch); **S.D. (B):** P. Walsh/D. Hennessy (T/Inch). **Mas. S.:** Willie Pratt (G/Bridge); **Mas. D.:** A. Greene/S. Reade (T/Inch). **Mas. S. (B):** E. Leahy (O'Loughlins); **Mas D. (B):** Tommy O'Brien/Eamon Hayes (T/Inch). **G.M.S.:** Eddie Leahy (O'Loughlins); **G.M.S. (B):** Jimmy Caulfield (Kilfane). **G.M.D.:** Pat O'Keeffe (Mullinavat) and Willie O'Keeffe (Kilfane). **Novice Team of Four:** (Kilfane) — Liam Ryan, Noel Holden, Sean Kiely, Jimmy Shanahan. **Nov. Team of Six:** (O'Lough.), P. Ward, M. O'Neill, D. O'Keeffe, J. Bourke, J. McGarry, S. Hayes. **Jun. Team of Six:** (T/Inch), S. Reade, M. Reade, P.J. Taylor, M. Blanch, S. Fitzgerald, D. Hennessy.

senior singles and partnered Frank Gowan in the doubles championship.

This did not satisfy the extremely popular Gowran (for hurling) and Goresbridge (handball) player. He went on to win a senior colleges hurling title, and all-Ireland minor hurling title to emerge as one of Kilkenny's top sportsman (or woman) in 1988.

D. J. is getting his just rewards for the glory he has brought on club and county. He will represent Ireland in San Francisco in late December in the United States handball championships. His chances of success? With D.J. they are always high.

O'LOUGHLIN'S AGAIN

O'Loughlin's must have one of the best

WINDGAP SCHOOL TEAM — Winners of the National Schools county handball championships (from left): Alan Hawe, Niall Kenny (individual award), Alan Hearne, Enda Hawe.



records in inter-club championships in Ireland. They were only in their infancy when they won a novice all-Ireland championship. This year they won the premier title when their junior team beat all before them to take all-Ireland honours.

Billy Walsh and Phil Parsons, who have shared in all the club's successes, were delighted at the win. Their joy paled into insignificance when compared to that of Jim O'Neill and Ger. Murphy.

This much travelled duo, who have given their all to many clubs in Kilkenny, never fail to give less than 100%. They have been so close to success on so many occasions that they must have felt that an all-Ireland victory would never be achieved.

This long wait came to an end with the

junior title of O'Loughlin's, and where better to win with their long-awaited medal than at Croke Park, Handball's headquarters.

Their success was made even sweeter with their success at Leinster level in minor masters doubles. Other Leinster successes were scored by Pat O'Keeffe/Eddie Leahy (Golden Masters doubles), D. J. Carey (minor Singles) D. J. Carey/Eamon Law (minor doubles), Michael Walsh (senior singles), Pat O'Keeffe (Golden Masters singles and silver masters singles), Ollie Faley and John Curran (under-21 doubles), Dominic Fitzgerald (under-14 singles) and Joey Daly/Willie O'Neill (under-15 doubles) as well as the O'Loughlin's junior team of Billy Walsh, Phil Parsons, Jim O'Neill, Ger Murphy and Con Moore.

In minor doubles 60 x 30, John Connolly and Graham O'Brien proved the best in Leinster while Ollie Falsey, Eamon Hayes, Canice Quigley and Pat Savage won the Leinster novice inter-club title for Talbot's Inch. The juveniles showed their skill by retaining the Leinster league with N. Kenny, Enda Hawe, Alan Hearne, Ken Cottrell, Seamie Phelan and Tony Bolger in the side.

The final Leinster title deserves special mention. Anthony Greene won the Leinster Masters singles but, although he had been cleared to play in this grade, he was later disqualified from playing in the all-Ireland final. This was particularly galling for Greene, who had such a marvellous victory over John Kirby in last year's decider.

DEVELOPMENT

It is gratifying to learn that some clubs are adding to the facilities for their members. Kilfane recently renovated their court and provided a new floor, lights and painted the walls to make vision of the ball easier.

Muckalee put a new maple floor in their 40 x 20 court to bring it up to the standard of the best in the country. Talbot's Inch have put a new roof on their historic court, and added new showers. Mullinavat did some major renovations to their floor and front wall, while Goresbridge also added new lighting and a new front wall.

Altogether a very healthy state for handball in Kilkenny going into 1989. You may see local players earlier than you think. Michael Walsh will feature in a Millennium television tournament with Dominic Fitzgerald in the juvenile version.

TALBOT'S INCH handballers who won county championships (from left): Brian Power, Connolly Street (under-11 singles); Michael Clifford, Connolly Street and Brian reade, McDonough Street (doubles under-11).



Activity Galore

THE SEASON 1988 saw an upsurge in activity by the Kilkenny Primary Schools Board. The usual championships in hurling and football and the schools' inter-class league were organised. The Board renewed activity on the inter-county scene when hurling and football teams visited Thurles and a county under-12 hurling team travelled to Dublin to participate in the Millennium celebration tournament.

The Board also organised the I.N.T.O. Sevens hurling and camogie competitions and they hosted the Leinster finals of these competitions in Kilkenny.

SOUTHERN TEAMS DOMINATE

In the under-12 hurling championships, five of the finalists in the four divisions were from the South. Two titles went to the South. Kilkenny C.B.S. won their fourth under-12 title (Roinn A) and denied Kilmanagh a second three-in-a-row. The Graigue/Ballycallan boys gave a great display in their fifth successive appearance in this final.

Piltown captured the Roinn B title from

neighbours Mooncoin and they completed a double when they retained their under-17 football crown. In Roinn C, Urlingford were unbeaten throughout the season and were too strong for Ballyhale.

Mullinavat caused a major upset when they beat Glenmore, who had beaten them in the league in the Roinn D final.

The high standard of games at juvenile level was seen when Freshford won the Leinster section of the I.N.T.O. Sevens and Ballyhale won the camogie.

FOOTBALL

The under-13 football league/championship has contributed to the improvement in the game in the county and has proved very popular with the players. In Roinn A, Kilkenny C.B.S. were unbeaten in the league section and topped the table. Piltown, the defending champions, experienced varying fortunes in the league section, and were somewhat lucky to qualify for the play-offs.

In the semi-finals, when these two sides met in a repeat of the 1988 final, Piltown caused a major upset when they beat the

C.B.S. by 1-5 to 1-3. In the other semi-final, St. Patrick's defeated Gowran by 3-4 to 1-2 to qualify for their first final in recent years.

The final was an exciting and absorbing affair, with both sides finding scores hard to come by. The first score came nine minutes into the second half, when Raymond Burke pointed a free for Piltown. Five minutes later Alan Walsh extended this lead with another point. This completed the scoring. But the excitement never waned to the final whistle, with the city boys constantly attacking. This gave Piltown an historic victory to give them their second title at this level: Piltown 0-2; St. Patrick's 0-0.

Piltown: L. O'Shea, R. Lynch, B. Farrell, D. O'Shea, J. Malone, J. Falconer, A. Storey, Brian Walsh, Barry Walsh, T. Grace, R. Lynch, A. Walsh (0-1), J. Malone, R. Burke (0-1), S. Bourke, M. Gordon, S. Gordon.

St. Patrick's: P. Cummins, N. McGuire, M. Phelan, M. Dowd, J. Kelly, E. Campbell, D. Grogan, M. Leahy, L. O'Brien, K. Canavan, J. Mulcahy, D. Mulcahy, I. Scott, D. Ryan, P. Power.



KILKENNY C.B.S. — Roinn A Under-12 County Hurling Champions 1988

Front Row (l. to r.): Niall Lanigan, Nevil Scanton, Pat Delaney, Patrick Kealy, Dermot Beirne, Niall Hoyne. **Middle Row** (l. to r.): Brendan Kennedy, Anthony Fitzgerald, Michael Ryan, Michael Gannon, Marc Champion, Pdraig Butler, Eoghan Delaney, David Carroll, Philip O'Hara. **Back Row** (l. to r.): James Maher, Mark Champion, Keith Geoghegan, Eoin Gibbons, Mr. T. O'Brien (School Principal), Aidan Begley (Capt.), J. J. Cummins, Canice Coogan, Shane Myles, Bryan Whelan.



MULLINAVAT — Under-12 Roinn D Hurling Champions

Back Row (l. to r.): Pat Dungan, George Frisby, Michael Aylward, John O'Keefe, Raymond Carroll, Richard Kenneally, Brian Prendergast, Oliver Aylward. **Middle Row** (l. to r.): Pat Raftice, Tom Cleere, Niall Kenneally, Maurice Murphy, Willie Atkins, Mark Cass, Martin Dungan, Patrick Aylward, Seamus Holden. **Front Row** (l. to r.): Tom Walsh, Declan Duggan, Declan Wall, Patrick Delahunty, Brendan Conway, Paul Conway.



URLINGFORD — Under-12 Roinn C Hurling Champions

Back Row (l. to r.): Jim Tobin, Jimmy d'Arcy, John Ryan, Shane Ahearne, P. Coffey (teacher), Damien Tobin, Michael Tobin, James Bourke, Kenneth Hughes, Michael Byron, John Power, Denis Tobin, Martin Costello. **Middle** (l. to r.): Paddy Doyle, John Guilfoyle, Michael Purcell, Ted Clohosey, Niall Minogue, Brendan Joyce, James Kellaghan, David Guilfoyle, Mark Moore. **Front** (l. to r.): Liam Hennessy, Thomas Manton, Adrian Cleere, Brendan Coady, Ronan Stanley, Pat Tobin, Eamon Brett.

PILTOWN — Under-12 Roinn B Hurling Champions

Standing (l. to r.): Michael Brennan, Jonathan Cleary, Joseph Malone, Liam Kearns, James Connolly (Capt.), James Farrell, Michael O'Dwyer, Eamon Costello, Brian Farrell. **Front Row** (l. to r.): Nicky Ryan, Alan Walsh, John Falconer, Robert Walsh, Brian Walsh, Neil O'Shea, Barry Walsh, Denis Lawlor, Shay Reid, Trevor Grace, Larry O'Shea, Leo Commins, Donagh O'Shea.





ST. CANICE'S CO-ED NATIONAL SCHOOL — Under-13 Roinn B County Football Champions 1988

In Front: P. O'Leary, P. Doran, D. Brennan, D. Deegan. **Centre:** S. Campbell, E. Massey, P. Trait, M. Clifford (Capt.), A. Webster, S. Geraghty, B. Reade, P. Skehan. **Behind:** J. Costello, J. Dowling, B. Jenkinson, A. Trait, B. Morkan, W. Egan, T. O'Dowd, P. Mulhearn, A. Egan. The teacher-trainers are Jim Fennelly and Martin Handrick (left).

TITLE FOR ST. CANICE'S

St. Canice's made history in their first year in the competition when they won the under-13 Roinn B title by defeating Castlecomer 1-2 to 0-0. As the scoreline suggests, this was a tense, exciting affair. W. Egan gave the city boys the lead with a point from a free in the first half.

In the second half Castlecomer won more possession but could find no way through the St. Canice's defence. J. Dowling had a great goal from 20 yards to extend his side's lead, and he added a point two minutes from time to clinch a first schools' title for St. Canice's.

St. Canice's: A. Webster, B. Morcambe, A. Trait, P. Trait, J. Costelloe, M. Clifford (capt.), T. Dowd, P. Doran, J. Dowling (1-1), P. Skehan, W. Egan (0-1), D. Brennan, S. Campbell, B. Reid, S. Geraghty and P. O'Leary.

Castlecomer: G. Wallace, R. Mulcahy, P. Wallace, D. Power, T. Gleeson, F. Young, S. Kennedy, M. Coogan, M. Walsh, M. Phelan, J. Dunne, D. Dunne, S. Purcell, M. Buggy, M. Owens.

HURLING

In a close and exciting match, Kilkenny C.B.S. defeated Kilmanagh by 1-3 to 1-2 to take the Roinn A hurling title. The city side just about deserved their victory but Kilmanagh, who were going for a hat-trick, did not relinquish their crown without a gigantic struggle. An unusual feature of the match was that neither side scored in the second half.

Aidan Begley opened the scoring with a point from a '65' for the C.B.S. Brendan Kennedy added another 10 minutes later.

Kilmanagh replied with a point from Damien Cleere, who was appearing in his third final. Against the run of play, Sean Millea put Kilmanagh ahead and Cleere added another point from a free. The city boys stormed back when Pat Delaney goaled and J. J. Cummins gave them the lead with a point, to leave the score at half-time 1-3 to 1-2.

In the second half Brendan Kennedy dominated midfield for the C.B.S. and launched numerous assaults on the Kilmanagh goal. Damien Cleere at centre-back was outstanding and proved almost impassable. With time running out, the Graigue-Ballycallan side almost sneaked victory when the ball crashed against the cross-bar.

C.B.S.: Mark Campion, James Maher, Brian Whelan, Pdraig Butler, Patrick Kealy, Aidan Begley (0-1), Keith Geoghegan, Brendan Kennedy (0-1), Eoin Gibbons, Michael Gannon, J. J. Cummins (0-1), Eoghan Delaney, Dermot Beirne, Michael Ryan, Pat Delaney (1-0).

Kilmanagh: Michael Hoyne, Alan Trayer, Patrick O'Dwyer, Kieran O'Halloran, Seán Dermody, Damien Cleere, Alan Hoyne, Tommy Minogue, John Hoyne, Brendan Comerford, Michael Quirke, Joseph Young, James O'Connor, Paul Hoyne, Seán Millea. **Subs.:** David Maher, John Comerford, Jamie Gormley, Philip Butler, Edward Brennan, Pat Byrne, Joseph Cody, Paul Dermody, Niall Egan.

PILTOWN WIN TITLE

The under-12 Roinn B hurling final proved a fascinating contest when Mooncoin and Piltown met at Nowlan Park. When these sides met in the league,

Piltown won. Mooncoin applied the early pressure and took the lead with a fine point from Ian Murray. Piltown soon settled, and Liam Kearns had two quick points. Trevor Grace added another, and Kearns pointed a free, all in the space of three minutes.

Mooncoin levelled the scores when Murray scored a goal. Leo Cummins restored Piltown's lead with another goal. However, before half-time Michael Purcell hand-passed a goal to leave the sides level at half-time: Piltown 1-4; Mooncoin 2-1.

In the second half, Piltown gradually got on top. Michael Brennan gave them the lead after 38 minutes with a point. Within seconds he added a goal. Shay Reade added another goal, and again Brennan had a point. Mooncoin narrowed the gap with a goal from Ian Nolan midway through the half. However, James Connolly added a goal for the winners to complete the scoring: Piltown 4-6; Mooncoin 3-1.

Piltown: B. Farrell, L. Shea, J. Cleary, D. Lawlor, T. Grace, B. Walsh, R. Walsh, L. Kearns (0-4), J. Connolly, A. Walsh, J. Farrell, L. Cummins (1-0), B. Walsh, S. Reade (1-0), M. Brennan (1-2). **Subs.:** M. O'Dwyer, D. O'Shea, T. Falconer, E. Costello, J. Malone, N. O'Shea, N. Ryan, J. Farrell.

Mooncoin: R. Kelly, A. Conway, B. Quinn, J. Conway, D. Cody, E. Delahunty, W. Walsh, L. Sutton, S. Phelan, B. Tobin, O. Power, I. Nolan (1-0), G. Kirwan, M. Purcell (1-0), I. Murray (1-1). **Subs.:** T. Mackey, M. Haley, C. Doyle, P. Walsh, W. Synott, B. Purcell, J. Rothwell, P. J. Brennan, T. Walsh, J. Power, A. Henebry, R. Delahunty.



BALLYHALE — Under-12 Hurling (Roinn B) Runners-up.

Back Row (l. to r.): J. Dunphy, R. Grant, F. Holohan, E. A. Moloney, A. Murphy, J. Drennan, P. Rice, P. O'Farrell, B. Cummins, G. Connors. **Front Row** (l. to r.): L. O'Farrell, L. Fitzpatrick, D. Ryan, T. Kelly, P. Fitzsimons (Capt.), M. O'Sullivan, E. Holohan, M. Kennedy, M. Dermody.

DESERVED WIN

Urlingford won the Roinn C title when they defeated Ballyhale by 3-7 to 1-0. The match was a more closely contested affair than the scoreline suggests. The Southerners, particularly in the first half, enjoyed an equal amount of possession but failed to turn it into scores against a tight-marking Urlingford defence. The winners led 0-4 to nil at half-time.

Ballyhale got off to a great start in the second half. Michael O'Sullivan had a goal within three minutes. Urlingford gradually got on top and were worthy winners in the end.

Urlingford: J. Guilfoyle, M. Costelloe, D. Tobin, M. Byrne, K. Hughes, T. Clohosey, M. Purcell, J. Ryan, P. Doyle (0-1), M. Tobin, B. Joyce (1-4), D. Guilfoyle, J. Burke (0-2), S. Ahearne (2-0), R. Stanley. *Subs.:* J. Power, N. Minogue, A. Cleere, D. Tobin, D. Lyng, J. Tobin, M. Moore, T. Manton, B. Cody.

Ballyhale: T. Kelly, A. Murphy, P. Rice, P. Fitzsimons, L. Fitzgerald, B. Cummins, L. O'Farrell, D. Ryan, M. Kennedy, G. Connors, J. Drennan, P. O'Farrell, M. O'Sullivan, R. Grant, E. Holohan. *Subs.:* E. A. Moloney, F. Holohan, M. Dermody.

VICTORY FOR MULLINAVAT

The under-12 Roinn D final was an all-Southern affair, and Mullinavat emerged worthy 5-0 to 1-2 winners over neighbours and rivals Glenmore. Mullinavat, having been defeated finalists in 1987, made no mistake on this occasion. They led at half-time by 3-0 to nil.

In the second half Glenmore tried hard, but Mullinavat were equal to all demands made on them and Mossie Murphy was excellent.

Scorers — Mullinavat: Raymond Carroll (2-0), Declan Duggan (1-0), George Frisby (1-0), Michael Aylward (1-0). **Glenmore:** Fintan Walsh (1-1), John Phelan (0-1).

Mullinavat — P. Conway, T. Cleere, M. Raftice, M. Murphy, D. Wall, O. Aylward, P. Delahunty, J. O'Keefe, R. Carroll (C), N. Kenneally, G. Frisby, B. Conway, W. Atkins, M. Aylward, R. Kenneally. *Subs.:* T. Walsh, P. Dungan, D. Duggan, M. Dungan.

Glenmore: N. Mackey, R. Mullally, L. Doyle, R. Mullally, L. Doyle, R. Culleton, F. Walsh, B. O'Shea, M. Mulally, J. Phelan, P. Mulally, T. Griffin, C. Lynch, W. Fitzgerald, P. Fitzgerald, T. Barry, F. Freyne, S. Hartley. *Subs.:* D. Dowling.

INTER-COUNTY GAMES

Double for Kilkenny

IN THE inter-county games played at Semple Stadium, Thurles, Kilkenny scored a double over Tipperary. In the under-13 hurling match the visitors won by 6-6 to 1-4, and in the under-12 football they won by 1-7 to 1-5.

The first half of the hurling was close. The home side took an early lead when they scored a point. They continued to apply the pressure. The Kilkenny defence was equal to all the demands, with Damien Cleere at centre-back and Eoghan Farrell and James Kelly all prominent.

Kilkenny took the lead with a goal from Liam Kearns. A Kevin Lonergan goal extended this advantage a minute later.

Tipperary replied with a point and the sides exchanged goals with Kearns again the scorer. Jason Brennan improved the Kilkenny lead with a point, and both sides added two points each in the closing stages of the half, with Brennan and Eoin Maher scoring for Kilkenny. The half-time score was Kilkenny 3-3; Tipperary 1-4.

The second half was dominated by the visitors. Their defence was always in control, but goalkeeper Joe Ryan did make one brilliant save. The Kilkenny forwards took their chances, and such was Kilkenny's dominance that they were able to introduce several substitutes.

Kilkenny scorers: Eoin Maher (2-1), Liam Kearns (2-0), Ian Murray (1-1), Kevin Lonergan (1-0), James Brennan (0-2), Ray Carroll (0-1), Eamon Phelan (0-1).

Kilkenny — Joe Ryan (Freshford), Eoghan Farrell (Gowran), Finbar Delaney (Johnstown), Aidan Begley (CBS), James Kelly (Rower-Inistioge), Damien Cleere (Kilmanagh), Rory Moore (Clara), Liam Kearns (Piltown), John Ryan (Urlingford), Mervyn Healy (Gowran), Kevin Lonergan (Galmoy), Eoin Maher (Muckalee), Jason Brennan (Castlecomer), Enda Cummins (Tullagher), Pat Comerford (Kilmanagh). *Subs.:* Ian Murray (Mooncoin), Eamon Phelan (Gowran), Ray Carroll (Mullinavat).

Another football boost

KILKENNY football is gradually earning respect countrywide, and the display of the county under-12 team against Tipperary can only give reason for further optimism, when they defeated Tipperary 1-7 to 1-5.

The game was a personal triumph for Brendan Kennedy of the C.B.S. who scored 1-4 of his side's total and proved too hot for Tipperary to handle.

The home side settled earlier and dominated the opening stages and took a two-point lead in the first six minutes, and would have been further ahead but for the sterling work of Jonathan Cleary, Padraig Fitzsimons and Alan Hoyne.

Kilkenny found scores hard to come by but Kennedy opened their account with a point after 12 minutes. The Kilkenny lads settled after this and came more into the match.

However, Tipp had a well deserved goal in the 15th minute and added a point soon afterwards. On the stroke of half-time Owen Gibbons had a point to leave the sides level at the interval: Tipperary 1-3, Kilkenny 0-2.

The second half saw Kilkenny dominate with centre-forward Brendan Kennedy giving a great display. He had a point after

three minutes, added a goal from a penalty and gave Kilkenny the lead with a point.

Eoin Gibbons extended this lead with a point. Tipp came back with a point but Kennedy again put two points between the sides.

Once again Tipp narrowed the gap with a point, but Kilkenny completed the scoring with a point from Alan O'Neill.

Best for Kilkenny in defence were Jonathan Cleary, Padraig Fitzsimons and Alan Hoyne. At midfield Eoin Gibbons did well.

Brendan Kennedy was player of the match while up front Trevor Grace, Alan O'Neill, Michael Purcell and substitute Michael Leahy did best.

Kilkenny scorers: Brendan Kennedy (1-4), Eoin Gibbons (0-1), Alan O'Neill (0-1).

Kilkenny — Billy Quinn (Mooncoin), Jonathan Cleary (Piltown), Michael Phelan (Mooncoin), Padraig Fitzsimons (Ballyhale), Michael Gannon (C.B.S.), Alan Hoyne (Kilmanagh), Brian Walsh (Piltown), Eoin Gibbons (C.B.S.), Michael Brennan (Piltown), Richard Walsh (Piltown), Brendan Kennedy (C.B.S.), Alan O'Neill (Gowran), Liam Sutton (Mooncoin), Michael Purcell (Mooncoin), Trevor Grace (Piltown). *Sub.:* Michael Leahy (St. Patrick's).

Millennium

KILKENNY fielded an under-12 hurling team in the Dublin Primary Schools' Board Millennium celebrations. This tournament was held in the Commercial Grounds, Rathcoole. A squad of nine from the Kilkenny panel played in the finals at Croke Park, where they won their section.

Kilkenny squad: Joe Ryan (Freshford), Aidan Begley (Kilkenny C.B.S.), Bill Quinn (Mooncoin), Padraig Fitzsimons (Ballyhale), Nigel Owens (St. John's), Damien Cleary (Kilmanagh), Jonathan Cleere (Piltown), Brendan Kennedy (Kilkenny C.B.S.), James Connolly (Piltown), Adrian Walsh (Ballyragget), Michael Brennan (Piltown), Alan O'Neill (Gowran), Gerry Connors (Ballyhale), Pat Doyle (Urlingford), Lory Holland (Tullaroan), Neil O'Connor (Freshford), Ger Bourke (Freshford), Ger Bourke (Freshford), Eoin Delaney (Kilkenny C.B.S.), William Walsh (Mooncoin), Brendan Cummins (Ballyhale), Martin Dowling (Clara).

I.N.T.O. SEVENS

Leinster double

KILKENNY Primary Schools' Board hosted the Leinster finals of the I.N.T.O. all-Ireland seven-a-side tournaments in hurling and camogie. The good standard of games locally shone through when Freshford won the hurling and Ballyhale the camogie.

From all the participants, ten players were selected in each code to play in Croke Park. The camogie selection included Ethel Ann Moloney, Mairéad O'Sullivan, Eleanor Walsh, Linda Murphy, Frances Holohan and Aileen Dunphy, all from Ballyhale. The hurling selection included Joe Ryan, Richard Dawson and Oliver O'Connor from Freshford.

Ballyhale were all-conquering in the camogie and such was the superiority of the

girls that they only conceded 1-1 in their four matches.

In camogie, five teams from Kilkenny, Kildare, Laois, Dublin and Wexford participated. In the first match Ballyhale defeated Kildare by 9-1 to 1-0.

They then beat Wexford (8-0 to nil), Dublin (4-0 to nil) and Laois (4-1 to 0-1). Ballyhale topped the group with full points. Runners-up were Laois with five points. Referees for the afternoon were Deirdre Malone, Kilmanagh, Breda Holmes (Tullaroan).

Ballyhale: Ethel Ann Moloney, Mairéad O'Sullivan, Eleanor Walsh, Linda Murphy, Frances Holohan, Aileen Dunphy, Marie Fitzpatrick Triona Aylward, Aisling Aylward, Ann Davis.

VICTORY FOR FRESHFORD

In the hurling section, eight teams travelled from Wicklow, Dublin, Louth, Offaly, Laois, Kildare, Wexford and Kilkenny to participate. After the preliminary rounds, Kilkenny, Dublin, Offaly and Wexford went forward to the finals.

In the first round Kilkenny, represented by Freshford, defeated Dublin 3-4 to 1-2. Wexford beat Offaly by 2-6 to 2-1. In the second round Wexford defeated Dublin 2-5 to 1-0 and Kilkenny downed Offaly 5-8 to 2-2.

In the final round, the locals beat Wexford (4-6 to 2-3), and Offaly toppled Dublin (3-0 to 1-3). Referees: were Paschal Long and Liam Dewberry.

Freshford: Joe Ryan, Pat Hickey, Ruairi Carroll, Denis Butler, Niall O'Connor, Richard Dawson, Oliver O'Connor, Ger Burke, John Darcy, Richard Norton.



ST. LACTAIN'S, FRESHFORD — Leinster I.N.T.O. SEVENS HURLING CHAMPIONS

Back Row (l. to r.): Neil O'Connor, Richard Norton, Ruairi Carroll, Richard Dawson, Gerard Burke. **Front Row** (l. to r.): Patrick Hickey, Oliver O'Connor, Joe Ryan, John Darcy, Denis Butler.



KILMANAGH — Under-12 Roinn A Hurling Championship Runners-Up

Back Row (l. to r.): Niall Egan, Alan Trayer, James O'Connor, Jamie Gormley, Alan Hoyne, Damien Cleere, Kieran O'Halloran, John Comerford, Sean Dermody. **Middle Row** (l. to r.): Patrick O'Dwyer, Michael Quirke, Pat Byrne, Edward Brennan, Michael Hoyne, Paul Hoyne, David Maher, John Hoyne. **Front Row** (l. to r.): Paul Dermody, Sean Millea, Brendan Comerford, Joseph Cody, Philip Butler, Joseph Young, Tommy Mariogue.

SHOCK FOR MEATH

In the football sevens in Navan, Piltown proved worthy representatives. In their section they held Meath, the eventual winners, to a draw. There were three teams in the Kilkenny section — Meath, Wexford and Kilkenny.

Meath defeated Wexford in their first match and then took on Kilkenny. Piltown took an early lead, and at one stage were 2-1 to no score ahead. Meath came back and with time running out were leading by seven points.

However, Piltown finished with a flourish and forced a draw in the closing

minutes.

In their second outing Wexford defeated Kilkenny by four points. Meath emerged from the group to defeat Offaly in the final.

Piltown panel: Leo Cummins, Brian Walsh, James Connolly, Liam Kearins, Robert Walsh, Michael Brennan, Trevor Grace, Eamon Costelloe, Barry Walsh, Jonathan Cleary.

Sliothar in helmet?

THE USE of the new Mayco safety helmet may prevent injury problems, but it may

pose a new problem for referees and G.A.A. legislators.

During a juvenile match a sliothar got stuck in the wire face-guard of one of these helmets. The match was stopped momentarily as players and officials laughed at the unusual occurrence.

The question it poses for the rule-makers is: how many steps can the player take with the ball in such a position? The usual four steps, less steps, or more steps? Interesting!

Referee Podge Butler restarted the game with a hop ball when this happened in one of the county finals.



BALLYHALE — Leinster I.N.T.O. Sevens Camogie Champions

Back Row (l. to r.): E. Walsh, A. Davis, E. A. Moloney, M. O'Sullivan, L. Murphy. **Front Row** (l. to r.): A. Dunphy, A. Aylward, F. Holohan (Capt.), M. Fitzpatrick, T. Aylward.

KILKENNY may have taken their share of national Gaelic honours in recent years but without hesitation one would single out the win of the county minor hurling team in this year's All Ireland final as THE most important one of the lot. It was a win at a level the county badly needed!

Minor win *the* most important one of the year

One does not mean to take from the glorious exploits of the camogie team, the handballers or even the senior, under-21 or junior hurlers. But winning the minor championship this season was vitally important, because it halted a slide in the grade that had threatened to erode the basis on which teams of the future can, and must, be based.

Prior to '88, Kilkenny's last minor All Ireland victory was in 1981 when Eddie Kennedy (O'Loughlin/Gaels) led the county to a hard-earned 1-20 to 3-9 win over Galway. By Kilkenny standards seven years was a long time to wait, and there was always the danger, however slight, that a drop in standards locally would come to be accepted, and that would make it even harder to climb back up to the top.

During the 'sixties the Nonesiders won three minor All Irelands and they

went one better during the 'seventies. It wasn't any coincidence that, particularly during the second era and a little beyond, the county did well on the senior scene. Good players went through the system at under-age level and while not all of them made it to the top, enough gradually made their way through to make the difference. One depends on the other, and — unless in an extraordinary set of circumstances — the crop won't be good at senior level unless it has been cultivated properly further back the line.

By that, one doesn't want to suggest the county is assured senior success some time in the future because a minor team won an All Ireland. Not so, but at least the under-18 win won't have done any harm. In fact, it has done an awful lot of good, and if ever a team looked like producing senior

talent in future years then it was this year's Kilkenny minors.

GOOD TALENT AROUND

"One could not speak highly enough about the players", said trainer-coach Brendan O'Sullivan, the man who moulded the squad into a fine hurling machine. "They were as good a bunch as anyone could expect to work with, and were a credit to their parents. On and off the field they conducted themselves very well".

For another reason it was vitally important that Kilkenny won this year — there was good talent around.

Sometimes that may not always be enough, but with Brendan O'Sullivan, the selectors (James Delahunty, Jim Neary, Larry O'Neill, John Comerford, Billy O'Keefe) handled team affairs nicely and put a lot of thought into everything they did.

After the All Ireland colleges' victories of St. Kieran's and Castlecomer Community School, the word was around that the crop of players was good. And so it was, but if it hadn't been handled properly, the county would be waiting a long time for as good a bunch to come along together again.

For example, players of the calibre of Adrian Ronan, D.J. Carey, Pat O'Neill, Patsy Brophy and Briain Ryan don't come by every year. When they do, you must get the best out of them. Kilkenny did just that this time. In the short term the win could make a big difference at minor level, because there are a number of players eligible again next season, and in the long term who knows what it might lead to!

The 3-13 to 0-12 All Ireland final win over Cork highlighted more than anything the sheer class in the Kilkenny team. Cork had a good side, one they firmly believed was good enough to win. Still they were beaten by 10 points.

The Leesiders opened with the fresh breeze but the elements didn't help them and at half-time they were held to level pegging (1-5(K) to 0-8. Twice they hit the front early in the second half but a cleverly put-away goal in

The scoring trail to the top

FIRST ROUND AT PORTLAOISE:

Kilkenny 1-18 **Dublin** 2-7

Scorers: A. Ronan (0-9); D. J. Carey (1-3); P. O'Neill (0-2); P. McCluskey, P. O'Grady, W. O'Keefe, C. Carter (0-1 each).

LEINSTER SEMI-FINAL AT CARLOW:

Kilkenny 5-24 **Laois** 1-3

Scorers: A. Ronan (0-8); P. Treacy (2-1); P. O'Grady, D. J. Carey (1-3 each); D. Dooley (1-2); B. Ryan (0-4); P. O'Neill, B. O'Keefe, D. Bradley (0-1 each).

LEINSTER FINAL AT CROKE PARK:

Kilkenny 2-16 **Offaly** 0-6

Scorers: A. Ronan (0-11); P. O'Grady (1-2); D. Dooley (1-0); P. O'Neill (0-2); B. Ryan (0-1).

ALL-IRELAND SEMI-FINAL AT CROKE PARK:

Kilkenny 3-15 **Galway** 1-6

Scorers: A. Ronan, D. J. Carey (1-3 each); C. Carter, P. O'Grady (0-4 each); B. Ryan (1-0); P. Treacy (0-1).

ALL-IRELAND FINAL AT CROKE PARK:

Kilkenny 3-13 **Cork** 0-12

Scorers: A. Ronan (0-6); D. J. Carey (1-2); P. Treacy (1-1); C. Carter (1-0); D. Dooley (0-2); P. O'Grady, W. O'Keefe (0-1 each).

the 39th minute by D.J. Carey (2-6 to 0-10) sparked Kilkenny into life.

GASPED IN WONDER

Patsy Brophy and Pat O'Neill put up 'no pass' signs on the half-back line and the delightful Dick Dooley beat all before him at midfield and turned in the match of the year. Up front Adrian Ronan — what a special player he is — put on a display of point-scoring that mesmerised Cork and had Galway and Tipperary supporters there for the senior final gasping in wonder at this young genius. Kilkenny folk had seen it before, but perhaps not in such glorious splendour. The cunning Briain Ryan at centre-forward dug holes through the Leeside defence and threw the ball around with great purpose, and in such company D.J. Carey blossomed. The late substitution of Paul Treacy — to add height and strength to the attack — worked a treat and hastened the demise of failing opponents.

Going into the closing 10 minutes, Kilkenny were at full pace, and their stick-work, quick movement of the ball and attitude to the game generally were all too much for good but outclassed opponents. One recalled a banner from the 1983 senior All Ireland that proclaimed, 'The Cats Are Purr-fect'. And so they were.

Yet, for all their undoubted class, this team had to be handled carefully. Approaching the opening game against Dublin, trainer O'Sullivan gave the players a break. There was little or no training because most of the panel had been involved in All Irelands at colleges or vocational schools' level. Imagine, needing a break before starting. But it was necessary after prolonged school activities. Dublin were beaten by 1-18 to 2-7, although the Noresiders didn't always look comfortable.

The Leinster semi-final against Laois was no contest, and in the provincial decider Kilkenny dethroned the all Ireland champions of the previous two years, Offaly. The losers never took the lead. They trailed by 0-6 to 0-4 at half-time and a 36th minute goal from Pat O'Grady ended their hopes.

RECORD

Again Ronan was in dynamic form and he finished with 11 points to his credit. Good and all as that was, it wasn't a record — not even for a Kilkenny player. The record for a Leinster minor final is held by John Moran, Meath (6-0), while Paddy Johnston (3-5 in 1951) and Tom Walsh (3-4 in 1982) head the Kilkenny scoring chart.

In the All Ireland semi-final, Galway were prone to errors and they were punished every time. The three Kilkenny goals (3-15 to 1-6) were all relatively easy scores. Besides, the Leinster champions had a huge advantage in sheer skill.

The success of this year's Kilkenny minor team was very important. These young thoroughbreds have started something, and don't be surprised if it leads to even greater things in the not too distant future.

The All Ireland team was: Jimmy Conroy (James Stephens), Ger Henderson (Dicksboro), P.J. O'Connor (Glenmore), Declan Roche (John Lockes), Pat O'Neill (Young Irelands), Patsy Brophy (Erin's Own), John Conlon (Bennettsbridge), Dick Dooley (St. Martin's), Dominic Bradley (James Stephens), Billy O'Keefe (Thomastown), Briain Ryan (Fenians), Pat O'Grady (Black and Whites), Adrian Ronan (Graigue-Ballycallan), Charlie Carter (Young Irelands), D.H. Carey (Young Irelands). Subs: Paul Treacy (Thomastown), John Buggy (Erin's Own) used; Conor Minogue (Graigue-Ballycallan), Joe Norton (Tullaroan), Noel Maher (Graigue-Ballycallan), Richard Bolger (Rower-Inistioge), Sean Reid (Piltown), Cathal Fitzpatrick (Young Irelands), Tommy Shefflin (Shamrocks), Sean Doherty (Glenmore). Johnny Holohan (O'Loughlin Gaels) failed a fitness test on an injured hip minutes before the final, and his place was taken by Ger Henderson.



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KILKENNY

1988 All-Ireland Minor Hurling Champions



After a few lean years, since 1981 in fact, Kilkenny bridged the gap and won the All-Ireland Minor Hurling Championship. The conquering heroes were — **BACK ROW** (l. to r.): Pat O'Grady, Ger Henderson, John Conlon, Aidan Roche, Dominic Bradley, Jimmy Conroy, Briain Ryan, Pat O'Neill. **FRONT ROW** (l. to r.): Adrian Ronan, D. J. Carey, Charlie Carter, Patsy Brophy (Capt.), Willie O'Keefe, Dick Dooley, P. J. O'Connor.

THE REST IN THE GAELIC WORLD CAN CLAIM WHAT THEY WILL, BUT THERE IS ONE THING THAT IS BEYOND DISPUTE, AND THAT IS THAT KILKENNY HAVE THE MOST SUCCESSFUL TEAM OPERATING ON THE G.A.A. FRONT THESE TIMES. TAKE A BOW, MEMBERS OF THE KILKENNY SENIOR CAMOGIE SQUAD, ALL IN THE ASSOCIATION ACCLAIM YOUR GREATNESS

Kilkenny heroines simply have no equals

CAMOGIE



THERE have been top class Kilkenny teams in the past. Of the modern era one immediately thinks of the double-double winning senior hurling team of 1982 and '83. That all-Ireland and National League winning panel gave the county many a good day. The wonderfully talented and dedicated camogie squad has done even better.

There was another National League/Championship double this term. The all-Ireland win was the county's eighth and fourth in a row, that equalled the best of modern times set by defeated finalists, Cork.

These fabulous wins came hot on the heels of another double in 1987, and when stock is taken of all of them, the tally comes to an incredible seven national titles won during the last four years. By any yardstick, that is some going. And don't for one minute think it is all over yet.

"This is the greatest day in my camogie career", enthused Kilkenny captain Angela Downey (now, of course, Mrs. Browne) after the gruelling final win over Cork. There was no talk of retirements. On the contrary, next season should see the reappearance of one of the giants of the game, Bridie McGarry, who was pregnant this year and was forced to

take a break. She was discharged from hospital only hours before the final at Croke Park, but a quick dash by car got her to the venue in plenty of time. She shared the joy of her team-mates. The final whistle had barely sounded when her thoughts turned to next year, when she would be back as a player.

LIKE VAUNTED POSITION

Such commitment, and downright love for the game, got Kilkenny where they are, and it can keep them there. These women are made of the "Right Stuff", and given any sort of even break, it will take some crew to shift them. They like the vaunted position they occupy in sport, not just in Kilkenny, but in Ireland.

While the women have devoted themselves to the game, they were pushed and cajoled every step of the

way by chirpy trainer/coach Tom Ryan. He is more than a trainer by this stage. He is a friend to every member of the panel. In good weather and bad he punishes his charges, because he reckons they have not unfurled their true potential. More often than not, he races up and down the field with the women, doing every exercise and sprint he asks of them. Admiration goes in both directions.

While in the end Kilkenny won the final with a bit in hand, the closing scoreline made a lie of the match. Cork learned from the defeat of the previous year, and picked a team with specific emphasis on the most feared trouble spots. They covered some well, but then leaks appeared elsewhere. Typical when up against a side of the enormous talent of Kilkenny.

The game was fiercely competitive and, as a result, Kilkenny had to pull out something special on occasions. Cases in point were two early scores from Angela Downey; a smashing individual goal in the 12th minute from Claire Jones and a similar score from Breda Holmes in the 41st minute. These were crucial moments. This was a severe test. At half-time Kilkenny led by 3-3 to 1-5, and the fun was only beginning.

INDOMITABLE

During the third quarter Cork exerted most of the pressure, and but for a few relieving points from Ann Downey from frees, Kilkenny were forced into a defensive role. That suited Biddy O'Sullivan who, to use a Seán Kelly term, had a 'super game' at full-back. Deirdre Malone, too, was outstanding in this sector, and power-houses in midfield were Ann Downey and the indomitable Clare Jones.

Going into the closing 15 minutes — the final was 60 minutes long for the first time — the Leesiders were just 2-7 to 3-6 behind and were pressing hard.

Point from Clare Jones and Ann Downey helped relieve the ever-mounting pressure and a 41st minute goal from Breda Holmes opened up a big gap (4-8 to 2-7). Cork didn't

The scores that made champs

FIRST ROUND AT LISDOWNEY

Kilkenny 2-11; **Dublin** 1-11
Scorers: Angela Downey (2-3); Ann Downey (0-4); Jo Dunne, Clare Jones, Breda Holmes, Anna Whelan (0-1 each).

SECOND ROUND AT GLENAMADY

Kilkenny 3-19; **Galway** 1-4
Scorers: Angela Downey (2-6); Ann Downey (1-7); Marina Downey, Breda Holmes, Clare Jones (0-2 each).

ALL-IRELAND FINAL AT CROKE PARK

Kilkenny 4-11; **Cork** 3-8
Scorers: Breda Holmes (2-1); Angela Downey (1-3); Clare Jones (1-1); Ann Downey (0-4); Jo Dunne, Marina Downey (0-1 each).

appear to notice, and later got back to within three points of their opponents. A late glut of points for the winners from Marina Downey, Jo Dunne and Breda Holmes at last guaranteed the O'Duffy Cup was going back to the Noreside.

SELF-CONFIDENCE

The big Kilkenny finish was typical of a team with supreme self-confidence. When an extra effort was needed, everyone answered the call. The earlier rounds against Dublin and Galway were merely muscle flexing exercises. Cork in the final were the real thing.

It was interesting to note that during the three-match campaign Kilkenny scored a total of 9-41. The Downey twins, Angela (5-12) and Ann (1-15) contributed a combined total of 6-27. They made an invaluable contribution to the cause, but they had many willing and able helpers when the going got tough.

Kilkenny people take great pride in the achievements of their sporting folk. The camogie players have earned a special place in the hearts of the masses.

The All-Ireland team was: Marie Fitzpatrick (Ballycallan); Biddy O'Sullivan (Shamrocks); Helen Holmes (St. Paul's); Deirdre Malone (Ballycallan); Frances Rothwell (Mooncoin); Clare Jones (St. Paul's); Ann Downey (St. Paul's); Anna Whelan (Lisdowney); Breda Cahill (St. Brigid's); Breda Holmes (St. Paul's); Angela Downey (St. Paul's); Jo Dunne (Shamrocks). Subs.: Marina Downey (Lisdowney, used); Siobhán Ryan (Shamrocks); Margaret O'Keefe (Thomas-town); Rita Wemyss (Shamrocks).

What a haul!

THE Kilkenny senior camogie panelists have won a combined total of 63 all-Ireland medals. The awards are divided thus:

8 each: Angela and Ann Downey; **7:** Jo Dunne; **5 each:** Biddy O'Sullivan, Anna Whelan, Deirdre Malone; **4 each:** Marie Fitzpatrick, Breda Holmes, Siobhán Ryan, Rita Wemyss; **3:** Clare Jones; **2 each:** Helen Holmes, Frances Rothwell, Breda Cahill; **1 each:** Marina Downey, Margaret O'Keefe.

Clare Jones is also the holder of a junior all-Ireland medal. She won this with her native Clare, when she captained the team to victory in 1981.

A rest? – not for these talented ladies!

IT IS becoming a common occurrence among G.A.A. players (these days to take a break from games during the cold, wet and generally inhospitable Winter months. For that reason, some counties have difficulty fielding respectable teams, and they inevitably pay the consequences.

How often do you read or hear about players 'resting' during the hurling or football leagues because they claim they are drained after the double demands of work and sport?

Bearing that in mind, it was interesting to watch the progress of the Kilkenny team during the last, and yet another successful National Camogie League. The women didn't shy away from the competition, even though they had been in training from April until September of the previous year when they won a League/Championship double.

For the past five years the Kilkenny ladies have been going practically non-stop. Perhaps, you can argue, that they have been winning and that has helped keep them going. But winning also brings added pressure. Still, the women were well able to cope and for their unflinching efforts they have smashed old and created new records all over the place.

In June the camogie team took the A.I.B. trophy as League winners for the sixth time. For the third time they faced Dublin in the final, this time at O'Toole Park, and yet again they broke the hearts of the girls from the capital when winning by a comfortable 3-10 to 2-4.

Admittedly, Kilkenny didn't put too much into the League, but still the natural fitness of the girls and their eagerness not to be beaten, as much as wanting to win, led to the emergence of the 'killer' instinct as the games passed and the title became that bit closer. It came to the stage where there was no going back and it became a simple case of going for the League.

The Dubs were tipped to win because their preparations had been better than their opponents. The losers had a slight edge in fitness, and in the early stages looked threatening.

NICE PATTERN

Once the wily champions had weathered the early storm they settled into a nice pattern and took control of the game. The midfield trio of Deirdre

Malone — this girl can play anywhere — Anna Whelan and Marina Downey, a youngster with a very bright future, gained the upper-hand and, simply, it was curtains for Dublin after that.

At half-time, despite their slight early problem, Kilkenny showed a point in front. Three minutes into the closing half the elusive Angela Downey crashed home a terrific goal. The Dubs were badly shaken after that, but they recovered and hit back for a 42nd minute goal from Louise Lynch to keep them in contention.

As ever, Kilkenny kept their cool and somehow, despite limited fitness, pulled out a big finish. They threw over a couple of points and then Breda Holmes rifled home a goal, and it was all over — title number six for the Noresiders.

You have to hand it to Kilkenny, they are an exceptional bunch. At this stage winning comes naturally to them. People expect nothing less, because they have give rise to a state of mind that doesn't entertain thoughts of defeat.

Kilkenny League team: Marie Fitzpatrick, Rita Wemyss, Helen Holmes, Ann Downey (0-1), Biddy O'Sullivan, Clare Jones, Deirdre Malone, Anna Whelan, Marina Downey (0-2), Breda Holmes (1-1), Angela Downey (2-5), Jo Dunne (0-1).

They go further ahead

EVEN before the 1988 victory Kilkenny topped the honours list in the National Camogie League. Their latest success merely puts them further ahead of the chasing bunch. The county's wins were in:

1978:

Kilkenny 2-4; Limerick 1-5

1980:

Kilkenny 3-8; Tipperary 1-3

1982:

Kilkenny 2-5; Cork 1-4

1985:

Kilkenny 4-7; Dublin 2-13 (draw)

1987:

Kilkenny 4-8; Dublin 1-5

1988:

Kilkenny 3-10; Dublin 2-4

CLASSY 'CATS' ARE PURR-FECT



KILKENNY

1988 Winners of the National League and All-Ireland Open Draw Championship

BACK ROW (l. to r.): Jo Dunne, Rita Wemyss, Breda Holmes, Biddy O'Sullivan, Marie Fitzpatrick, Margaret O'Keefe, Anna Whelan, Deirdre Malone, Breda Cahill, Frances Rothwell. FRONT ROW (l. to r.): Siobhán Ryan, Marina Downey, Ann Downey, Helen Holmes, Clare Jones, Angela Downey (Capt.), Tom Ryan (Trainer).

Great memories from local and county scene

KILKENNY was the top camogie county in 1988! In addition to winning the All-Ireland senior camogie championship for the fourth year in succession, the girls also took the National League. The minor team created history by capturing the Corn Tailteann, the All-Ireland final, for the first time. In addition, the under-14 team won the Leinster title for the fourth successive year. Presentation Convent (Kilkenny) won the Leinster minor colleges' title by beating another Kilkenny school, Mercy Convent (Callan) in the final. All this goes to show that this county will be a camogie force in the years to come.

THE winning of the minor title was a long drawn-out affair that started in Rathnure, Co. Wexford, where the Model County was beaten by 5-8 to 0-1. The winners followed this with a facile victory over Carlow, in Myshall. Next stop was Lisdowney, where the stiffest opponents in Leinster, Dublin, were beaten. Kilkenny turned in a great second half to run out easy winners by 4-5 to 0-1.

The Leinster final at Nowlan Park was a one-sided affair. Westmeath were easy pickings. The Noresiders won by 10-8 to 0-2. Scorers were: Deirdre Lannon (3-2), Tracey Millea (2-0), Bridget Mullally (2-0), Mary McGrath (1-3), Bridget Morrissey (1-0), Patricia Treacy (1-0), Geraldine Ryan, Ashling Cullen, Gillian Dillon (0-1 each).

In the All-Ireland semi-final, Kilkenny snatched a dramatic victory over Cork in the closing stages. A nervous Kilkenny started poorly and were lucky not to be further down at the interval when the Leesiders led by 0-5 to 0-1. An interval dressing-down by county senior player, Angela Downey, had the desired effect and the team put in a storming second half. The introduction of the injured Geraldine Ryan also made a big difference. A great goal by Deirdre Lannon, after taking a pass from Bridget Mullally, reduced the deficit to a point (0-7 to 1-3). Cork looked likely winners when they came back for a goal by Patricia Murphy to jump 1-7 to 1-3 ahead. However, the Noresiders, urged

on by their supporters, remained in high spirits and Bridget Mullally pushed the ball through for Orla Ryall to finish to the net and leave Cork just 1-7 to 2-3 clear. A great goal by Bridget Mullally put Kilkenny ahead. While Cork narrowed the gap with a point from Edel Ryan, both of whose parents hail from Kilkenny, the Noresiders held out for a wonderful 3-3 to 1-8 victory. The Kilkenny scorers were Bridget Mullally (1-3), Orla Ryall (1-0), Deirdre Lannon (1-0).

THRILLING FINAL

The all-Ireland final against Armagh was another thrilling game. Played at the latter's home ground in Portmore, the Northern girls put up a great performance and were level (2-5 each) with 10 minutes remaining. A Deirdre Lannon goal put the Leinster champions ahead and another goal from Mary McGrath, followed by a third from Deirdre Lannon and a point from Bridget Mullally, gave Kilkenny a flattering 10 point winning margin (5-6 to 2-5).

Armagh started magnificently and it took great goalkeeping by Veronica Wall, plus powerful defensive play by Esther Kennedy, Gillian Dillon, Bridget Barnaville and Una Murphy, who was the heroine of the game, to hold their own and retire level at 0-3 each at half-time. Kilkenny brought on Sinéad Millea for the second half, and Bridget Mullally moved to centre-forward. Orla Ryall was shifted

into midfield in place of Ashling Cullen. These changes brought about an improvement and the Noresiders hit points by Bridget Mullally and Sinéad Millea.

The cheering of Armagh supporters reached a crescendo when they went ahead with a goal. The Noresiders battled back for another goal to kill these cheers. Sinéad Millea put Bridget Mullally through for a goal (2-5 to 2-3). Armagh rose to the challenge and looked likely winners when they got back level.

Then came that closing, clinching rally by Kilkenny that swept them to an historic first victory. Scorers for Kilkenny were: Deirdre Lannon (2-1), Bridget Mullally (1-4), Mary McGrath (2-0), Sinéad Millea (0-1).

Mary O'Callaghan (Cork), President of the Camogie Association, presented the cup to Mary McGrath, the winners' captain, amid scenes of great jubilation.

The victorious team was: Veronica Wall, Bridget Barnaville (Lisdowney), Una Murphy (Tullagher), Esther Kennedy, Gillian Dillon (St. Lactain's), Tracy Millea (St. Brigid's), Ashling Cullen (Thomastown), Geraldine Ryan (St. Paul's), Bridget Mullally (Tullagher), Orla Ryall, Mary McGrath, capt. (St. Brigid's), Deirdre Lannon (Thomastown). *Subs:* Sinéad Millea (St. Brigid's). *Subs not used:* Mary Ryall, Margaret Dalton, Margaret Hanley (St. Brigid's), Siobhán Dermody, Esther Dermody, Eithne Keoghán (St. Lactain's), Bridget Morrissey, Anita White (Thomastown), Patricia Tracy (Dicksboro), Ciara Holmes (Tullaroan), Marie Whitehead (Black & Whites).



MOONCOIN — Runners-up in the Under-14 (Roinn C) Camogie Championship and winners of the Dicksboro Blitz (losers section)

Back Row (l. to r.): Claire Walsh, Josephine Kinsella, Nicola Fewer, Vicki Kelly, Catherine Walsh, Marie Walsh, Cathy Dobbyn, Sinead Frisby, Deirdre Kirwan, Yvonne Mackey. **Front** (l. to r.): Sinead Holden, Tina Lacey, Claire O'Hanlon, Nicola Dunphy, Eithne Dunphy, Wendy Synnott (capt.), Colette Doyle, Susan Walsh, Esther Delahunty, Lizzie Monahan, Cathriona Purcell.



KILKENNY VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS — Leinster Post-Primary Schools Intermediate Camogie Champions 1988

This is the first camogie title ever won by the school. In front (from left): Jane Lacey, Emily Coyne, Marina Downey (captain), Angela Ireland, Margaret Matthews, Margaret Ireland. Behind: Angela Hennessy, Mr. Sean Dignan (Principal), Susan Hennessy, Joanne Cleere, Miriam Prendergast, Jane Duffy, Caroline Byrne, Hazel Mullen, Aileen Begley, Claire Meany, Joanne Tallis (coach), Mr. Nicky McGrath (PE teacher), Miss Moyra McCarthy (vice-principal).

FOURTH WIN

The under-14 camogie team swept to their fourth successive Leinster final victory. They beat Wexford in the first round (2-6 to 2-2) in Rathnure. Their next game against Dublin was at Nowlan Park, where they won by 7-9 to 0-2. This was the heaviest defeat ever inflicted on a Dublin team. Wexford were downed next at Nowlan park by 4-12 to 2-1 — a game in which Sinéad Millea scored 4-6.

In their away game to Dublin, played in Blanchardstown, the Noresiders won by 4-5 to 0-4. That set them up for a third meeting with Wexford in the Leinster final. The game was played in Bunclody, and again Kilkenny came out on top by 2-13 to 0-2. Great displays were turned in by Bridget Mullally (the captain), Bridget Wall, Marie Maher, Vanessa Butler, Sinéad Millea and Janet Sweeney. Scorers for Kilkenny were: Bridget Mullally (0-6), Sinéad Millea (0-5), Imelda Kennedy (1-0), Páticia O’Keeffe (1-0), Vanessa Butler (0-1), Orla Ryall (0-1).

Kilkenny: Siobhán Holden (St. Scuiithin’s), Paula Dowling, Margaret Hickey (St. Lactain’s), Bridget Wall (Lisdowney), Marie Maher, Janet Sweeney (Tullaroan), Orla Ryall (St. Brigid’s), Vanessa Butler (Thomastown), Sinéad Mijllea (St. Brigid’s), Bridget Mullally (Tullagher) capt., Elizabeth Dermody (St. Lactain’s), Elaine Nolan (Tullagher). *Subs:* Patricia O’Keeffe (Thomastown), Imelda Kennedy (St. Lactain’s), Mary Brennan (Lisdowney).

Both Kilkenny victories followed a lot of hard training. Ted Browne looked after the minor team and Adrian Byrne had charge of the under-14 side.

Kilkenny retained the National Camogie League when they beat Dublin in the final at O’Toole Park. The final score was: Kilkenny 3-10, Dublin 2-4 (see special report).

Presentation Convent (Kilkenny) won the Leinster minor camogie title when they beat Mercy Convent (Callan) in the final at Nowlan Park. The score was 3-5 to 1-3. Mercy (Callan), thanks to a goal by Tracy Millea, led at the interval by 1-2 to 0-4. A

five-minute scoring blitz in the second half, when they had goals from Mary Fry, Siobhán Dermody and Shirley Morrissey, set the Kilkenny school up for victory. They never lost control.

Best for the winners were Siobhán Holden, who made some great saves in the goal; Fiona Dalton, who kept a close watch on Sinéad Millea; Siobhán Dooley, Orla Ryall, who captained the team, and

Galmoy also won their first title when they beat St. Scuiithin’s (Clara) by 4-3 to 0-0 in the primary schools’ Roinn C county final. Fionnuala Grey played a captain’s part in the victory and got good support from Noeleen O’Hanrahan and Belinda Doyle. A lot of credit must go to teacher Maeve Connolly, who put in a lot of work with the team.

The winning team and scorers: Marie Harte, Olivia Phelan, Belinda Doyle, Sinéad Delaney, Leanne Phelan, Mary Ryan, Fionnuala Grey (1-2) capt., Noeleen O’Hanrahan (0-1), Anne Fogarty, Catherine Hawkes, Olivia Ryan (3-0), Sarah Daly.



PRESENTATION, KILKENNY — Leinster Minor Camogie Champions 1988

In front (from left): Shirley Morrissey, Patricia Treacy, Siobhan Dooley, Siobhan Dermody, Orla Ryan (captain), Mary Fry, Marie Meany, Joanne O’Neill, Siobhan Holden. Behind: Catherine Dowling, Lisa O’Dwyer, Ann Power, Siobhan O’Dwyer, Jerry O’Dwyer (teacher), Fiona Dalton, Mary Sunderland, Audrey O’Dwyer, Padraic Carroll (coach), Maria Tallis, Lisa Carroll, Elizabeth Dowling, Natalie Owens.



***Champions Old and
Champions New, and the
Leader of the Pack . . .***

Do you recognise this Shamrocks team that won the Senior Hurling Championship?; a team on the way up is the Fenians (Johnstown), who won this year's Minor Hurling Championship; and Kilkenny Minor Captain, Patsy Brophy puts his best foot forward, just like he did when leading the county to victory in the All-Ireland Championship.



Harsh treatment of Angela inspired Paul's

ONE OF the saddest happenings of the year, not only from a Kilkenny point of view but from a sporting point of view, was the heavy suspension imposed on camogie heroine Angela Downey.

The peerless St. Paul's and Kilkenny star was suspended for six months by the Central Council of the Camogie Association following incidents in the all-Ireland club semi-final between St. Paul's and Killeagh. The local star and a Killeagh player apparently exchanged blows during the course of what was a nasty game at times, and they were both booked.

The girls were not sent-off, but the camogie powers that be in their wisdom suspended them for six months.

"I admit I did wrong, but the suspension was savage", a disgusted Angela Downey commented afterwards. "In relation to what happened a suspension of that length was unwarranted.

"I felt sick about the whole thing, and my initial reaction was to pack in the game altogether, but I would hate to leave on a bad note like that. If I am to give up the game I will not let this be the determining factor".

Angela, always given special attention by opponents on the field, was apparently the subject of a lot of vicious, even dirty,

abuse from the sideline during that semi-final. At one stage she even asked an umpire to bring the matter to the attention of the referee.

"The names I was called during the game were beyond belief, and I broke down and cried in the dressing-room after the match", Angela disclosed.

CHEESED OFF

This story broke during the week prior to St. Paul's all-Ireland final against St. Mary's (Glenamaddy). It would have been understandable if it had cheesed off the Paul's girls, but trainer-coach George Leahy didn't let that happen, and he used it to coax a bit more effort from his charges and they pulled off a terrific 4-5 to 3-7 win.

Indeed, it would appear Angela's twin, Ann was very put out over the suspension, but she reacted positively and turned in a stirring performance against St. Mary's and played a major rôle in their downfall. The Galway girls had home advantage, and they were looking good with four minutes remaining. Then Paul's won a 20-yards free, and Ann Downey blasted the ball into the net and upended Mary's.

The losers started well and showed 1-2 to 0-3 in front after the first quarter. Points from Breda Holmes and Geraldine Ryan, and then a goal from Miriam Holland left Paul's 1-4 to 1-3 up at half-time.

During the closing moiety the winners stretched their lead to six points, but then lost their concentration and into the last five minutes were behind. Then up popped Ann Downey, and she blasted the ball into the net that took the cup from St. Mary's, just as they were about to put their hands on it.

All credit to Paul's for the way they reacted after the rough treatment doled out of their friend and colleague. It would have been easy to lie down under that setback, but the determined girls reacted in superb fashion and added another trophy to their immense haul.

Outstanding performers in the final were driving captain, Clare Jones, Bridie McGarry, Ann Downey, Breda Ryan and Miriam Holland.

On the way to the final, St. Paul's beat Celtic (Dublin), Buffers Alley (Wexford) in the Leinster final and Killeagh (Cork).

The team in the final was: Marie Lawlor, Catherine Neary, Sarah Russell, Bridie McGarry, Helen Holmes, Clare Jones (capt.), Ann Downey, Caroline Holmes, Breda Ryan, Breda Holmes, Geraldine Ryan, Miriam Holland. Subs: Julia Fry, Annette Stapleton, Tina Walsh.



Husband and wife are winners . . . during the year Kilkenny won the All-Ireland senior and minor camogie all-Ireland championships. Angela Downey-Browne captained the senior team. Her husband, Ted Browne, trained the minors. Their combined effort earned the county a lot of glory. The pair were chosen as the Supreme Award winners in the Hotel Kilkenny and 'Kilkenny People' sports personality scheme. Here they are being presented with their Kilkenny marble trophy by 'People editor-proprietor, John Kerry Keane.



JOHNSTOWN VOCATIONAL SCHOOL CAMOGIE TEAM
Winners of the Kilkenny County Senior Schools Championship

Front Row (from left): Ann Ryan, Bridget Barnaville, Ashling Delaney, Martina Ryan, Kay Grace, Mary Skehan (Coach). **Behind:** Veronica Wall, Caroline Bourke, Bernie Grace, Ailis Holohan, Bridget Sharkey, Bridgie Wall, Geraldine Cooney.

St. Lactain's (Freshford) also took the honours in the under-14 Roinn A grade. They scored a good 4-3 to 1-1 win over neighbours Lisdowney.

St. Lactain's represented the county at Féile na nGael in Offaly/Laois. They gave a good account of themselves.

Their panel was: P. Dalton, S. Hughes, S. Costelloe, Karen Ronan, A. Bergin, K. Dooley, Margaret Hickey, Imelda Kennedy, B. Webster, Elizabeth Dermody, L. Connolly, Paula Dowling, M. Kavanagh, S. Anderson, M. Marnell, A. Burke, M. Bergin, J. Murphy, T. Doyle.

Thomastown, inspired by county players Vanessa Butler and Patricia O'Keeffe, collected the under-14 Roinn B honours when they beat Tullaroan after a replay. The sides ended level in their first game: Thomastown 3-1, Tullaroan 3-1. Thomastown won the replay by 3-2 to 2-1.

St. Scúithin's (Clara) scored an historic first victory when they beat Mooncoin in the under-14 Roinn C county final. The final score was 2-1 to 0-2. St. Scúithin's had under-14 county players Siobhán Holden and Siobhán Dooley on duty.

THE GOOD GAMES

The minor county final (roinn A) produced two games of exceptional quality between St. Brigid's (Ballycallan) and St. Lactain's (Freshford). With 12 of the Kilkenny minor team involved, two cracking matches resulted. The first, in Callan, ended all square: St. Brigid's 1-2, St. Lactain's 0-5.

Scorers: St. Brigid's — Sinéad Millea (1-2), Margaret Quirke (1-0), Tracy Millea (1-0). **St. Lactain's:** Gillian Dillon (1-0), Siobhán Dermody (1-0), Imelda Kennedy (0-1).

St. Brigid's — Áine Comerford, Rita Ronan (capt.), Mary Ryall, Margaret Dalton, Clare Butler, Tracy Millea, Orla Ryall, Margaret Quirke, Mary McGrath, Patricia Cleere, Fiona Dalton, Sinéad Millea. Catherine went on as a sub in the drawn game.

St. Lactain's: Helen McGrath, Monica Cahill, Esther Dermody, Esther Kennedy (capt.), Eighne Keogh, Deirdre Ryan, Gillian Dillon, Margaret Hickey, Siobhán Dermody, Mary Claire Hickey, Imelda Kennedy, Paula Dowling. Elizabeth Dermody went on as a sub in both ties.

St. Lactain's gained revenge when they won the under-18 crown by beating St. Brigid's by 4-2 to 1-6. Played in terrible conditions, the winners led by 2-0 to 0-4 at the interval. Two further goals in the second half helped the winners to their first title in this grade.

Scorers: St. Lactain's — Gillian Dillon (2-0), Siobhán Dermody (1-0), Sinéad Carroll (1-0), Esther Kennedy (0-1), Eleanor O'Hara (0-1). **St. Brigid's:** Breda Cahill (0-3), Sinéad Millea (0-2), Chriona O'Sullivan (1-0), Geraldine Brennan (0-1).

St. Lactain's — Helen McGrath, Monica Cahill, Esther Dermody, Miriam Butler, Eithne Keogh, Sinéad Carroll, Elaine Butler, Gráinne Carroll, Siobhán Dermody, Esther Kennedy, Eleanor O'Hara, Gillian Dillon.

St. Brigid's — Áine Comerford, Rita Ronan, Margaret Dalton, Breda Dalton, Mary Ryall, Tracy Millea, Chriona O'Sullivan, Mary McGrath, Breda Cahill, Orla Ryall, Sinéad Millea, Geraldine Brennan.

At the time of writing the under-21 grade has not been finished. Siobhán Dermody, Tracy and Sinéad Millea, Ann Marie Cleere and Catherine Keogh stood out for the losers.

Scorers: Presentation (Kilkenny): Siobhán Dermody (1-5), Shirley Morrissey (1-0), Mary Fry (1-0). **Mercy** (Callan): Tracy Millea (1-0), Sinéad Millea (0-2), Margaret Hanley (0-1).

Presentation Convent: Siobhán Holden, Anne Power, Catherine Dowling, Lisa Carroll, Fiona Dalton, Mary Sutherland, Orla Ryall (capt.), Siobhán Dooley, Siobhán Dermody, Shirley Morrissey, Mary Fry, Patricia Treacy. **Subs** (not used) Marian Tallis, Marian O'Neill, Joanne O'Neill, Audrey O'Dwyer, Siobhán O'Dwyer, Natalie Owens, Elizabeth Dowling, Marie Meany, Lisa O'Dwyer.

Mercy (Callan): Áine Comerford, Clodagh Purcell, Catherine Keogh, Margaret O'Neill, Tracy Millea, Terese Blanchfield, Róisín Cleere, Marie Ann Cleere, Sinéad Millea, Mary Brennan, Margaret Hanley, Liz Holohan. **Subs:** Breda Kelly, Carmel Walsh, Hilary Quim, Lorraine Kennedy, Olive O'Sullivan.

SCHOOLS' CHAMPS

St. Lactain's (Freshford) won the primary schools' Roinn A county final. They beat Mullinavat in the decider by 4-2 to 1-1.

Their panel of players was: K. Ryan, P. Dalton, S. Costelloe, Imelda Kennedy, M. Bergin, E. Short, M. Maxwell, C. Delaney, J. Murphy, Elizabeth Dermody, T. Doyle, A. Byrne, M. Kavanagh, A. Wall, M. Ronan, S. Campion, D. Byrne, M. Dooley, Sinéad Butler, D. Ryan.

Tullaroan followed their Roinn C primary schools' county final win of 1987 when they beat Shamrocks by 1-5 to 0-0 in the Roinn B county final. Powered by Kilkenny under-14 players, Marie Maher and Janet Sweeney, they proved too strong for Ballyhale.

TO THE FORE

Mooncoin won the junior county championship. All-Ireland senior medallist, Frances Rothwell, was the girl. They beat St. Lactain's (Freshford) in the final by 1-5 to 1-3.

In the junior championship (Roinn B), Tullagher, with Bridget Mullally and Una Murphy from the Kilkenny All-Ireland minor team, recorded an easy victory over Piltown in the final (6-6 to 0-3).

This competition was confined to the two beaten semi-finalists, Thomastown and St. Brigid's (Ballycallan), as well as the two teams that did not make the semi-finals, Lisdowney and Black and Whites. Lisdowney beat Black and Whites, while St. Brigid's knocked out Thomastown. The final at Nowlan Park saw Lisdowney run

out winners by 1-8 to 1-0. The North Kilkenny girls led by 0-4 to 1-0 at the break. Led by county star, Marina Downey, the winners pulled ahead in the second half to run out clear winners.

Scorers: Lisdowney — Marina Downey (1-3), Bridget Shawrkey, Ber Brennan, Marie Tobin, Catherine Dunne, Geraldine Cuddihy (0-1 each). **St. Brigid's** — Mary McGrath (1-0).

Lisdowney — Veronica Wall, U. Dowling, Bernie Dunne, Anne Whelan, Lizzie Fogarty, Bridget Sharkey, Marina Downey, Geraldine Cuddihy, Marguerite McDonald, Claire Farrell (capt.), Ber Brennan, Marie Tobin. *Subs:* C. Glendon, Catherine Dunne.

St. Brigid's — Marie Fitzpatrick, Philomena Byrne, Rita Ronan, Deirdre Malone Breda Dalton, Kay Dunphy, Ann Delaney, Angela Cleere, Mary McGrath, Joan Brennan, Marie Cleere, Geraldine Brennan.

DISAPPOINTMENT

The only disappointment on the local scene was the non-playing of the senior county final between St. Paul's and Shamrocks. Bearing in mind the great game between the sides the previous year, when St. Paul's won by a point (2-7 to 0-12), everyone looked forward to a repeat. It was not to be. Shamrocks gave a walk-over when the final was fixed for a time when

they were short a number of their team who were away on holidays.

Surely another date could have been found? What was wrong with playing the game in the last week of August? The All-Ireland semi-final against Galway had been played the previous week and the All-Ireland was still a month away. No matter what anyone says, there is only one place to decide a county final, and that is on the field of play.

Dicksboro contested their first county camogie final when they lost to Mooncoin in the minor championship (Roinn B). The Southerners won by 2-5 to 1-3. Patricia Treacy from the county minor team was a member of the city side.



MOONCOIN — Kilkenny Junior Camogie (Roinn A) Champions

Back Row (l. to r.): Pilot Conway (Chairman), Kathleen Comerford, Hilary Grant, Ann Morahan, Ann Walsh, Bernie Croke, Angela O'Hanlon, Ann Marie Purcell, Noreen Morahan, Caroline Fitzpatrick, Minnie Walsh, Frances Rothwell, Michael Lannon (trainer). **Front Row** (l. to r.): Carol Rothwell, Helen Doyle, Elaine Kirwan, Patricia Morahan, Margo Fripps (Capt.), Denise McCarthy, Jane Dunphy, Dina O'Keefe, Eilish Comerford, Cait Barden. **Insets** (from left): Joan Fripps (now in Australia), Helen Holden and Ann Dunne.



Jim Langton remembered . . . one of Kilkenny's greatest hurlers, the late Jim Langton has been remembered with a perpetual trophy which will be competed for annually by the Kilkenny Hurlers Golling Society. The trophy was presented by Jim's nephews Jim and Eamonn Langton of John Street and picture shows the winner Tommy O'Connell receiving the trophy from Trish and Martha Langton with society officers Paddy Buggy, Captain (left) and Nicky Purcell, Secretary-Treasurer (right). Included behind are (from left): P. J. Garvan, Seamus Cleere, Paddy Brett, Paddy Johnston, Ned Doyle, Mick Carroll, Milo Carey, Eddie Keher, Paddy Grant, Willie Murphy, Pat Kavanagh, Eamonn Langton, Eddie Carew, Billy Harte, Jim Langton (son), Dinny McCormack, Mick Fleming, Timmy Kelly, Pat Brennan, Jim Langton, Mick Brophy, Mickie Kelly, Jimmy Murphy, Joe Doherty, Joe Walsh, J. Butler, Tommy Murphy, Peter McBride, Gus Carey, Liam Brett, Jim McCarthy, Billy Ronan.

Heffo loss was devastating blow in run up to championship



KILKENNY SENIOR HURLING TEAM — Beaten by Wexford in the Leinster Semi-Final

Back Row (l. to r.): John Henderson, Kevin Fennelly, Richard Power, Michael Phelan, Sean Fennelly, John Power, Ger Fennelly. Front Row (l. to r.): Joe Hennessy, Lester Ryan, Ray Heffernan, Liam Walsh, Harry Ryan, Michael Cleere, Ger Henderson, Liam Fennelly.

CHRISTY HEFFERNAN must have been one sick and sore man in Croke Park on Sunday, June 19, when his beloved Kilkenny crashed out of what had promised to be a fulfilling Leinster senior hurling championship.

ONCE AGAIN those most unpredictable opponents, Wexford, produced a performance of storm-like proportions and swept the defending provincial champions out of the competition and, of course, the hunt for all-Ireland honours. It was a match that had few moments of joy for Kilkenny and Heffernan the injured captain who looked on from the sideline, and it was something of a nightmare for the Noresiders.

For championship '88 had looked like being a good if difficult one for Kilkenny for much of the year. After Glenmore won their first Kilkenny senior title in 1987 they nominated the enormously popular Christy Heffernan as county captain. The appointment was very special for players and supporters and thoughts turned towards a happy county squad, and there was a feeling that after the near misses of '86 and '87, when Kilkenny contested the all-Ireland semi-final and final respectively, that the big one could be taken home at last. It has been a long wait since 1983!

Heffernan took the captaincy to heart and during the Winter months attained probably the best condition of his life since he first exploded on the scene in that never-to-be-forgotten all-Ireland final of 1982. The Glenmore giant was leaner and meaner than he had been for years, and his

bubbling enthusiasm had a good effect on his colleagues on the run-in to the League when great wins were scored over Cork (away) and Tipperary, who were taken asunder at Nowlan Park before a crowd in excess of 24,000. Remember, Tipp later went on to win the League and contest the all-Ireland final!

There were further happy pre-match tidings when Kilkenny won the Walsh Cup without any difficulty. Things were shaping up well and newcomers like



Michael Cleere, Michael Phelan and John Power were showing good form, while older hands like Liam Fennelly, Joe Hennessy and Ger Fennelly were performing as good if not better than ever.

SEVERE BLOW

And so things went well, that was until three weeks before the scheduled opener against Wexford when Christy Heffernan was nearly killed in a road accident. The unlucky Heffernan escaped with his life, but his injuries were such that he hadn't a hope of making the June 19 deadline. The main ball winner in attack, and the one who helped new centre-forward Michael Phelan settle at inter-county level, was gone.

Bearing in mind Heffernan's form all season, his loss was a severe blow to Kilkenny, who tried to shrug it off. But at the back of all minds was the realisation that with Heffernan involved the Noresiders would be 20 times better off. Wexford knew that, too, and so did the rest of the country.

It is history now that Kilkenny never performed in that semi-final against Wexford, and were beaten by 4-12 (24 pts.) to 2-16 (22 pts.). It wasn't a bad beating, bearing in mind the battering the losers took on occasions. And, naturally, afterwards questions were asked what

might have happened had *Hellernan* been involved? If only... if only...

As expected, *Wexford* viewed this one as their little all-Ireland and their game was played at 100 m.p.h. and lacked direction. But they had the will, and they pounded their opponents' defence with such ferocity that *Kilkenny* made mistake after mistake, and were always punished. Over 30,000 witnessed the destruction of the provincial champions.

After just eight minutes *Wexford* blazed 1-3 to 0-1 ahead. It was a calm day, and the only storm brewing was created by *Wexford*. By the 14th minute the rising *Kilkenny* deficit was 0-2 to 2-4. The *Slaneysiders* at one stage were 12 points clear (4-4 to 0-4). For the record, the half-time score was 4-5 to 0-7, and the *Kilkenny* championship dream was as good as over.

The losers' defence, which in the previous year's all-Ireland had performed heroically, was never at ease. *Ger Henderson* never found his feet in a new full-back role, and others around him seemed jittery. *Michael Cleere* played a powerful match at centre-back and another new boy, *John Power*, also survived the *Wexford* championship heat, which more or less proves he has what it takes for hurling at this high level.

It was only in the dying stages when *Wexford* ran out of steam that their opponents gobbled up lost ground. One of

the *Kilkenny* goals came three minutes into 'lost time' so, really, there was never a realistic chance of pulling the match out of the fire and going through to the final against *Offaly*.

A 70-MINUTE CHAMPIONSHIP

The dream that was given body in the absolute destruction of *Tipperary* at *Nowlan Park* months earlier was smashed. It was hard to take — a championship that lasted just 70 minutes for *Kilkenny*.

The enthusiasm of all, players and supporters, was so high at the finish of the League that no one could wait the 13 weeks until the start of the *Leinster* championship. In that time things went wrong. And when you think about it, *Kilkenny* probably weren't meant to win the championship anyway. At the *Leinster* championship draw the Man above turned his back on us.

Look at it like this. There was the start against *Wexford*. An almighty task. Then it would have been *Offaly* in the *Leinster* final. Nothing easy there. And then *Galway* in the All-Ireland semi-final. Virtually three all-Irelands before the final itself. No one else had a programme like that stretching out in front of them! As they say, some things are not meant to be. Certain events would suggest '88 wasn't to be *Kilkenny's* year.

For up-and-coming players *Michael Cleere*, *John Power* and *Michael Phelan*

(whose arm was broken in the first half against *Wexford*) this championship could be the start of many to come. They looked the part, as did *Harry Ryan*, the only attacker who posed a serious threat to a largely untested *Wexford* rearguard. *Kevin Fennelly* in goal stopped some bullets, but too often he was left exposed to face advancing attackers and could do nothing to stem the tide flowing against *Kilkenny*.

THE CHAMPIONSHIP SCORERS

June 19 — *Leinster* semi-final at *Nowlan Park*:

Kilkenny — *Harry Ryan* (0-4); *Ray Hellernan* (0-4, two frees); *John Mulcahy*, *Lester Ryan* (1-1 each); *Michael Cleere* (0-4, two '65s'); *Liam Fennelly*, *Michael Fennelly* (1 each).

THE TEAM

Kilkenny: *Kevin Fennelly* (*Shamrocks*); *Joe Hennessy* (*James Stephens*); *Ger Henderson* (*Fenians*); *John Henderson* (*Fenians*); *Liam Walsh*, *Capt. (Glenmore)*, *Michael Cleere* (*O'Loughlin Gaels*), *Sean Fennelly* (*Shamrocks*); *Ger Fennelly* (*Shamrocks*); *John Power* (*John Lockes*); *Richard Power* (*Carrickshock*); *Michael Phelan* (*Glenmore*), *Lester Ryan* (*Clara*); *Ray Hellernan* (*Glenmore*); *Liam Fennelly* (*Shamrocks*); *Harry Ryan* (*Clara*). Subs: *Tommy Lennon* (*Bennettsbridge*), *John Mulcahy* (*O'Loughlin Gaels*), both used; *David Bourke* (*Mooncoin*), *Paddy Prendergast* (*Clara*), *Pat Walsh* (*Windgap*), *Liam McCarthy* (*Piltown*).

Des creates new son for 'Sam'

POSSIBLY the most famous Gaelic games trophy on offer, the *Sam Maguire Cup*, was put into retirement this year and the sparkling new replacement was made by a *Kilkenny* craftsman.

The 60-year-old original *Sam* was retired to a special G.A.A. museum and the new son of *Sam* was presented to the All-Ireland football champions.

The glittering *Sam Maguire* that *Meath* captain *Joe Cassells* raised in victory salute in the *Hogan Stand* was the work of silversmith, *Des Byrne*, a former employee of *Kilkenny Design Workshops* who now has his own craft shop in the grounds behind the *Workshops*.

"Even if I do say so myself, the new *Sam* looked good on All-Ireland day", *Des Byrne* remarked.

The *Sam Maguire Mark II* was the same in every detail as the original trophy. The entire cup had to be hand wrought because of the delicate nature of some pieces.

Mr. Byrne had to make it in sections — bowl, base with 17" circle, handles, stem and 20 Gaelic mounts, including one

with an engraving of *Sam Maguire*.

"Making the new trophy was a great challenge", *Des Byrne* said. "It was the biggest single piece in silver I had worked on".

Everything about making the cup to replace the original one that was first played for in 1928

was challenging. Getting a piece of silver big enough to do the job was even difficult, but *Dublin* suppliers *Johnson* and *Matthews* eventually filled the order.

TEDIOUS WORK

The upper bowl section of the



cup alone measures 17" x 9", and this took over 100 hours of slow and tedious work to complete. In all, 400 to 500 man hours were spent in the new creation.

After 60 years of doing the rounds, old *Sam* had taken a bit of a battering, and it was decided the cup had taken enough punishment. So it was renovated and put into retirement.

Sam stands 16" high and 17" wide, and on top of the wooden base stands an imposing 22" tall. It weighs a hefty 7½ kilograms, so the All-Ireland captains would need to be strong as well as fit.

The original trophy was first won by *Kildare*. The only difference between the old and new trophy is that the 1988 version carries the special *Millennium* hall-mark.

Sam Maguire was born in *Dunmanway*, *West Cork*. He lived for many years in *London*, where he worked in the *British* civil service. When he died in 1927 a group of his friends in *London* presented the *Sam Maguire* memorial cup to the G.A.A.

KILKENNY soared to the heights and plunged to the depths during a most inconsistent National Hurling League campaign. They started terribly, and suffered three defeats in-a-row. Much, much better was to follow, and the Noresiders won the balance of their matches, but failed to make the quarter-finals.

Win over Tipp. the highlight in up-and-down league

THE opening tie at Walsh Park was the low point of the up-and-down run. Because of a clash with major local championship games, Kilkenny travelled to face Waterford with what could best be described as a shadow side. As could only be expected, they were beaten.

At the other end of the programme, the Noresiders had Tipperary as visitors to Nowlan Park for the last match. This one was special, for teams and supporters. In the region of 23,000 people packed the venue. The atmosphere was like old times, with the clash of the newly crowned Munster champions — for the first time in 17 years — and the then Leinster champions really grabbing the imagination of supporters.

Every eating and ale house in the city was thronged. Parked cars stretched out as far as St. Luke's hospital at one side of the city, and right across the ring-road at the other. Interest suggested this was much more than an ordinary League tie. For Tipp. it wasn't, because they had already wrapped-up a place in the shake-up. With Kilkenny things were more urgent, and they needed a win to keep their slim hopes alive. The latter got the win, but still missed the quarter-final boat.

Yet, you ask any Kilkenny hurling fan now what he/she thought of that League campaign and he/she will tell you it was a good one. Not bad or indifferent, but good. The conclusion satisfied. The three losses at the beginning, and even the missing out on a place in the latter stages, didn't worry the majority. The defeat, no annihilation of Tipp., — 2-12 to 0-4 — left everyone on such a high they didn't care about the hurling tomorrow.

That win sent the confidence of the players soaring too. Had the opening of the Leinster championship against Wexford been the following week the Noresiders would have swept their opponents aside. It wasn't, in fact, the championship was 14 weeks away and in the interim the enthusiasm generated by the smashing finish in the League waned. The Noresiders were beaten by Wexford.

It was hard to credit the interest the Kilkenny/Tipp. match aroused. Certainly, Kilkenny Co. Bord was taken by surprise, and fans who had difficulty getting into the grounds eventually knocked down a gate on the bank side to gain entry. No one wanted to miss this one.



Kevin Ryan (left) and Stephen Whearty, two members of the Clara club, who played during the last hurling league.

The match was a big letdown. To a man, Kilkenny excelled. The opposite was the case with the Munster champions, who scored a miserable two points from play. Even against a stiff wind in the opening half the home side dominated, and led by 0-7 to 0-2 at half-way. Tipp. supporters prayed for better things after the change around, but they didn't get it and they had to endure an agonising closing 20 minutes during which their favourites failed to score. Eventually a 50th minute goal from Michael Phelan, which pushed Kilkenny 1-10 to 0-4 clear, ended it all as a contest, if it had ever been such.

The Fennelly/Power midfield combination did as it pleased, and in a watertight defence, Joe Hennessey gave an immaculate display against

When and Where The Scores Came

OCTOBER 11, AT WALSH PARK:

Waterford 2-14 **Kilkenny** 1-10
Scorers: T. Bawle (0-3, frees); L. McCarthy (1-0); R. Power (0-2); T. Lennon, S. Whearty, L. Ryan, H. Ryan (0-1 each); B. Young (0-1, free).

OCTOBER 25, AT NOWLAN PARK:

Galway 0-15 **Kilkenny** 0-13
Scorers: T. Leahy (0-7, frees); H. Ryan (0-2); L. Ryan, S. Whearty, R. Power, E. Morrissey (0-1 each).

NOVEMBER 8, AT WEXFORD PARK:

Wexford 0-11 **Kilkenny** 0-7
Scorers: T. Leahy (0-5, frees); H. Ryan, L. Fennelly (0-1 each).

NOVEMBER 15, AT NOWLAN PARK:

Kilkenny 2-7 **Clare** 1-8
Scorers: L. Ryan (1-1); T. Leahy (0-3, frees); M. Phelan (1-0); J. Power, C. Heffernan, S. Whearty (0-1 each).

NOVEMBER 30, AT NOWLAN PARK:

Kilkenny 3-12 **Limerick** 1-14
Scorers: C. Heffernan, L. Fennelly (1-1 each); M. Phelan (0-4); L. Ryan (1-0); T. Leahy (0-2, one free); J. Power, M. Cleere, R. Power (0-1 each); R. Heffernan (0-1, free).

FEBRUARY 21, AT PAIRC UI CHAOIMH:

Kilkenny 4-7 **Cork** 2-6
Scorers: L. Fennelly (2-1); M. Phelan (1-2); C. Heffernan (1-0); M. Cleere, S. Whearty (0-2 each).

MARCH 6, AT NOWLAN PARK:

Kilkenny 2-12 **Tipperary** 0-4
Scorers: M. Phelan (2-1); R. Heffernan (0-4, two frees); M. Cleere (0-2, one free, one 65); J. Brennan (0-1, free, one 65); J. Brennan (0-1, free); S. Fennelly, R. Power, L. Fennelly, J. Mulcahy (0-1 each).

Nicholas English. Stephen Whearty, Christy Heffernan, Ger. Fennelly and Michael Cleere were others who chose this day to put in extra special displays. Under the rule of new selectors, Brian Cody (James Stephens), Johnny Walsh (Shamrocks), Fintan Murphy (Rower-Inistioge), Martin Cass (Glenmore) and Matt Ruth (St. Patrick's), along with trainer-coach, Eddie Keher (Rower-Inistioge) it looked so promising for the championship.

PULLED AWAY

Kilkenny had also shown great promise in their opening match of the new year (1988) when they beat Cork in Páirc Uí Chaoimh. This was the first day Ger. Henderson was moved to full-back. As the visitors rang up 10 wides during the opening half, Cork slipped into a 2-6 to 0-4 interval lead. The home side didn't score again, and with two goals from Liam Fennelly, and one each from Christy Heffernan

and Michael Phelan, the promising Noresiders pulled away for a 4-7 to 2-6 victory. Defeat meant relegation for Cork.

The latter two displays were Kilkenny's brightest during the campaign. The defeat by Waterford was painful. All-Ireland champions, Galway simply proved too strong, although it took three late points from reserve, Pat Nolan to earn them a 0-15 to 0-13 win. However, overall that day Kilkenny had to fight a lot harder for scores than Galway did.

The match against Wexford was the famous, or infamous, occasion when one Kilkenny player struck another. Poor Harry Ryan was suspended afterwards for punching Liam Fennelly. That was big news for a week. Then it was history when the next story broke.

The Noresiders eventually halted the slide when they bettered Clare at Nowlan Park. This was a dour struggle, and wasn't the most

convincing of wins, but it stopped the rot. Points in the closing five minutes from Stephen Whearty and Tom Leahy (free) upended the Banner men (2-7 to 1-8).

SWUNG THINGS

Limerick nearly beat the Leinster champions in their next outing, and were in front entering the closing 10 minutes. Then a palmed goal from Liam Fennelly, it was only awarded after the referee consulted with his umpire, swung things in Kilkenny's favour (3-9 to 1-13) and they went on to win by 3-12 to 1-14. Newcomers John Power, Michael Cleere and Michael Phelan were the brightest stars that cold November day.

It was only after the Christmas break that the League warmed-up as far as Kilkenny were concerned. Then they produced their best hurling, and got two fine victories. The sparkling finish helped erase the memories of what had gone before.

Experiments led to 35 players being used

THE NEED to change and experiment and try out new players was never more evident than during the last National Hurling League campaign.

Kilkenny certainly chopped and changed, and in all used a massive 35 players during the seven match programme.

Fringe players Tom Leahy, Eddie O'Connor, Liam McCarthy, Stephen Whearty, Denis McCarthy and Kevin Ryan were all tried, with varying degrees of success.

The old guard soldiered on, and Ger. Henderson and Richard Power were the only ones who turned out in every game. The Shamrocks, Glenmore and James Stephens contingent didn't get the opportunity to make every game (for the first match against Waterford), because they were involved in the latter stages of the local championship. That unfortunate clash proved costly in the long run, because if Kilkenny had done any way well there, they could have made the final stages of the League.

Ger. Henderson started at centre-back, but ended up at full-back for the closing two games against Cork and

Tipperary. He also filled the latter position in the Leinster championship. Richard Power played in a variety of positions during the League, but looked at his best when playing at midfield.

The application to duty shown by both during the League was typical of a pair who have given a lot in the cause of Kilkenny hurling for a good number of years.

Phelan was the top scorer

UNDER-21 player of the year, Michael Phelan took the scoring honours for Kilkenny during the League.

The powerfully built Glenmore attacker scored in four games, and ended with 4-7 (19 pts) to his credit. He only left the field once without scoring.

Another youngster, Tom Leahy was a close second with 0-17 to his credit. He was the free taker each time he was picked, so that helped boost his tally. Phelan got all his scores from play.

Highest scorer among the more established players was Liam Fennelly, who grabbed

The players, and the number of games they played, were as follows: Ger Henderson, Richard Power (7 each); Kevin Fennelly, Joe Hennessy, Tom Lyng (6 each); John Power, Lester Ryan, Stephen Whearty (6 each); Michael Phelan, Liam Fennelly (5 each); Sean Fennelly, Michael Cleere, Tom Leahy, Christy Heffernan, Brian Young,

Harry Ryan (4 each); Eddie O'Connor, Ray Heffernan, Liam McCarthy, Denis McCarthy, Tommy Lennon, John Henderson (3 each); Liam Walsh, Tommy Phelan, Tom Ryan, Michael Morrissey, Kevin Ryan, Ger Fennelly, Johnny Brennan (2 each); John Meaney, Eamon Morrissey, Tommy Bawle, Pat McCormack, Pat Walsh, John Mulcahy (1 each).

Jim - a loyal and faithful servant

PROLONGED commitment and dedication was rewarded by the St. Lactain's (Freshford) club this year when they honoured one of the county's longest-serving officials.

One of the leading lights on the Northern Bord for years, Jim Farrell, was presented with the specially commissioned *Lámh Lactáin* in recognition of his outstanding contribution to St. Lactain's and the G.A.A. down through the years.

The presentation was made by club chairman Bill Ryan, who reminded the huge attendance that Jim was the longest serving delegation to the Northern Board.

Mr. Farrell joined a distinguished list of winners of this special award, which included Greig Anderson and Dave Cargil from Scotland; Fr. Liam Dunne, Tom Waldron, Donncha Ó Dúlaing, Liam Hinchy, Fr. Jerry Joyce and camogie heroine Bridie McGarry.

Jim is uncle of former Kilkenny players Pa Dillon (St. Lactain's) and Billy Fitzpatrick (Fenians).

Shamrocks asked for, and granted no favours as they took seventh title

THE Kilkenny senior hurling championship was a funny old competition this year. From the moment it started it threw up shocks and surprises, and incidents that sent tongues wagging. Oh yes, there were moments of controversy, and at the end of the day the stylish Shamrocks (Ballyhale) took the honours following consecutive defeats in the county final.

WHILE the championship itself was not one of the most memorable, from the point of view of the number of good games it produced, the county final between Shamrocks and Thomastown was a total letdown. The Shamrocks won by a whopping 2-15 to 0-4 to claim their seventh senior title.

However, no one can take from Shamrock's performance in the final. They were good most of the time, and here and there were excellent. Now and then they gave a glimpse of the brilliance most long since thought had departed them. If championship '88 proved one thing, it was that the Shamrocks are far from the fading side some people would like to believe. Don't write them off in '89.

In the county final the Shamrocks were all over Thomastown, who looked nothing like the team that had caused the shock of the year when beating Glenmore in the opening round of the championship, or who had beaten Clara convincingly in a later round. The slick moving Ballyhale boys always had their opponents in trouble in front of their goal, and were it not for 'keeper, John Brennan, the losers would have been buried under an avalanche of goals.

The elusive Liam Fennelly had the Thomastown defence in a dither every time he contested a ball, and his flankers Michael Kelly and Brendan Fennelly were always on the move, and dragged the full line defenders all over the place. Further afield Ger. Fennelly took charge of midfield, and with terrified back-up from Tommy Phelan, Paul Phelan, John Lawlor and commanding full-back, Frank Holohan the losers were never given a moment's respite.

DEFIANT

Thanks to the defiant Brennan, Thomastown hung in there, although under considerable pressure for about 20 minutes. The teams were level at 0-2 and 0-3 each, but as Shamrocks kept pouring forward the losers wilted under the pressure and inside a few minutes conceded points to Tommy Phelan, Ger. Fennelly (2) and Jimmy Lawlor. A palmed effort for a goal from Brendan Fennelly was kept out by Brennan, but the in-form Tommy Phelan followed-up and finished to the net to extend Shamrocks lead to 1-7 to 0-3 by the 25th. minute. At half-time the game was as good as over when Thomastown trailed by 0-4 to 1-9. No team, at any time, could give Shamrocks a headstart like that and expect to beat them.

Five minutes into the second period Shamrocks had the Tom Walsh Cup wrapped-up, and made another entry in the history books to go with those of 1978, '79, 1980, '82, 1983 and '85. Brendan Fennelly finished to the 'Town net in the 33rd. minute. Two quick points from Ger. Fennelly finished the game as a contest, and left Shamrocks 2-11 to 0-4 clear. After that it was all a matter of playing out time, and thousands of the 5,500 attendance had left Nowlan Park before the concluding whistle.

No matter what anyone might want to think about the championship, you have to hand it to the Shamrocks. For the past few years a lot of people have been expecting them to crumble, to slip back. After all, they have contested 10 county finals since they won their first senior title in 1978. That is some record. One thing they haven't lost... the will to go for something when the chips are down. Remember, it took supreme efforts, and late scores, from both Clara and Glenmore to beat the Shamrocks in

the county finals of 1986 and 1987.

Indeed, early in this year's competition the Shamrocks proved they had lost none of their enthusiasm or class. In the second round they clashed with defending champions, Glenmore at Mullinavat. With 15 points from the deadly accurate Ger. Fennelly, the Shamrocks fashioned an impressive 0-20 to 1-15 win. One would suggest that was the high point of their season.

There was a lot point too, and that was at Hugginstown on July 24 when Shamrocks lost to Thomastown by 5-10 to 2-14. Really, that game meant nothing to the eventual champions, because they had already secured a semi-final place. The win put Thomastown through to the last four as well, and at the same time dumped Glenmore out of the competition.

ALLEGATIONS

Now there was all sorts of talk, and allegations made, after that match. The Shamrocks didn't try. They wanted to get rid of Glenmore. It would be an easier championship win without Glenmore. Whatever the truth behind the goings on at Hugginstown on July 24, at least the Shamrocks did one thing — when they needed to achieve things for themselves they did. They didn't rely on favours from anyone, and they didn't at any time during their seven championship successes.

This year, more than any year, they had to do the business for themselves, bearing in mind the champions of 1984 (St. Martin's), 1985 (Shamrocks themselves), 1986 (Clara) and 1987 (Glenmore) were all thrown together in a lopsided group. The draw turned out to be cruel, and the real contenders for honours were considered to be in the one hot group.

So all credit to the Shamrocks, they went about their business in a

professional manner and got the results they needed. Their one defeat was suffered against Thomastown, but by that time Shamrocks had a semi-final spot wrapped up.

It should also be remembered, there was a delay of over a month between the fourth and fifth rounds (Shamrocks v. Thomastown). In between, the Ballyhale side took it easy, while their opponents had been building-up for the month, intent on getting the win that would have earned them a semi-final ticket. In this instance, Thomastown's efforts were rewarded. That is a point that should be remembered.

Shamrocks proved themselves from the throw-in, and in a tense opening match, beat Clara. After that they downed Glenmore. What tougher opening could they have had? Then followed wins over the Rower-Inistioge and St. Martin's, so that before the last round was reached Shamrocks had a place in the last four guaranteed. They more-or-less took the next four weeks off, and didn't start their build-up to the semis until after the defeat by Thomastown.

WERE WORRIED

In the semis the Shamrocks looked anything but impressive against a young, and as it turned out, very inexperienced James Stephens. One knows the Shamrocks were worried about this one, because they feared their younger and faster opponents might 'out run' them.

The wily Shamrocks didn't make any mistake, and they hit their opponents for two goals in the opening three minutes. Afterwards 'Stephens performed like a rudderless ship, and their performance was totally lacking in direction. With All-Star Joe Hennessy out injured, 'Stephens lacked enough experience to help give proper direction to youthful enthusiasm.

Yet again the Shamrocks proved their class when the chips were down. Give them a challenge and they will always rise to it! That was exactly what the battle hardened Shamrocks did in championship '88. From day one it was going to be a tough competition. Their older performers

like Michael, Ger and Kevin Fennelly knew the score. The younger ones like Paul and Tommy Phelan and the Lawlors were warned. Shamrocks got down to business from day one, worked for their seventh success.

Shamrocks: Kevin Fennelly, Paul Phelan, Frank Holohan, Watty Phelan, Dick Walsh, Michael Fennelly, Sean Fennelly, John Lawlor, Ger Fennelly, Jimmy Lawlor, Tommy Phelan, Dermot Fennelly, Brendan Fennelly, Liam Fennelly, Michael Kelly. Subs (not used) Sean Reid, Seamus Grace, Pat Phelan, John Kenealy, Seamus Mason, Tommy Shefflin, Brendan Mason, Seamus Ryan, Michael Dempsey, Bob Aylward.

Thomastown: John Brennan, Richard Moore, Liam O'Neill, Seamus O'Hara, Martin Walsh, Michael Donnelly, Michael O'Keefe, Brendan Treacy, John Prendergast, Cathal Fitzgerald, Ger. Maher, Martin Farrell, Dick O'Hara, Ger. Walsh, Tom O'Keefe. Subs — Kevin Treacy, Sean Kiely (used), John Whelan, John Prendergast, Billy O'Keefe, John Galway, Paul Treacy, Damien Walsh, Richard Galway, Robert Maher, Adrian Finan, Richard Murphy.



SHAMROCKS — KILKENNY SENIOR HURLING CHAMPIONS 1988

Back Row (l. to r.): Kevin Fennelly, Watty Phelan, Michael Fennelly, Frank Holohan, John Lawlor, Pat Phelan, Ger Fennelly, Brendan Fennelly.
Front Row (l. to r.): Dermot Fennelly, Michael Kelly, Paul Phelan, Sean Fennelly (Capt.), Tommy Phelan, Jimmy Lawlor, Liam Fennelly.



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A nightmare finish, but still Thomastown can feel proud



THOMASTOWN — Defeated Kilkenny Senior Hurling finalists 1988

*Back Row (l. to r.): Cathal Fitzgerald, Michael O'Keeffe, Richard Moore, Dick O'Hara, John Brennan, Ger Maher, Brendan Treacy, Liam O'Neill.
Front Row (l. to r.): Ger Walsh, Shem O'Hara, Michael Donnelly, Martin Walsh, Tom O'Keeffe, John Prendergast, Martin Farrell.*

A DREAM with a nightmarish ending was what the senior hurling championship was for defeated county finalists, Thomastown, this year. A team that had been expected to struggle throughout showed a bit of character and ended up in the blue riband event. Then they flopped.

POOOR Thomastown must have been wondering what to make of the season after the 17 points' hammering by Shamrocks in the county final. Earlier in the campaign they had beaten the Shamrocks. They had also got the better of Glenmore and Fenians (Johnstown) in the semi-final, so their credentials looked reasonable.

But on county final day everything went wrong for Thomastown. For about 20 minutes they were pulled and dragged all over the place, by finely tuned opponents, and still managed to hang in there, but by half-time they were in deep trouble. Five minutes after the break, they were so far behind they were beyond redemption.

And so a season that had brought great joy to the town by the Nore ended badly. The players, who had worked so unselfishly for coach-trainer Joe Mackey, were stunned. So, too, were club officials. It was all hard to take in, and even harder still to fathom.

Still, Thomastown had reason to be

happy after the championship. They had won through to the closing stages against all the odds and had left a few 'big names' behind them. That was an achievement in itself. Further to that, they won a semi-final tussle with Fenians, which must be ranked as an achievement.

MUST BE PRAISED

No matter what happened in the end, Thomastown must be praised for making the season for themselves. When the championship draw was made they were thrown in with the hottest of company, and with the Rower-Inistioge were expected to prop up the table.

In the opening round against Glenmore, the rank outsiders pulled off the shock of the campaign. Thomastown's 4-5 to 2-8 win was the outstanding result of the championship, for the simple reason it was totally unexpected. That win made the season

for Thomastown. It gave them a belief in themselves that changed a campaign that had looked like being one constant struggle into one that eventually brought many happy memories.

It made all the difference to the form of players like goalkeeper John Brennan, who had an exceptional season; Ger Walsh, Brendan Treacy, Liam O'Neill, Tom O'Keeffe, Martin Walsh and team captain Martin Walsh. The closing day of the competition went horribly wrong for Thomastown, but, still, they had good memories, like the day they beat Glenmore, Clara (1-7 to 0-8) and then Fenians in the semi-final.

Thomastown have nothing to be ashamed about after championship '88, because they gave it their best shot and, against all expectations, made it through to the last hour of the competition.

Beaten semi-finalists, James Stephens, and Fenians were disgusted when they lost to Shamrocks and Thomastown, respectively.

NEED EXPERIENCE

'Stephens once again learned that a young team, for all its speed and energy, doesn't necessarily bring success. Of course, in the semi-final

they were without the injured Joe Hennessy, but after being hit for two goals in the opening three minutes, they had no positive direction on their play. They could have used a few more experienced players like Paddy Neary and Ned Kelly to help them settle and get over those early body blows. Declan Mullan, Tommy Fogarty, Frank Morgan and Jody O'Dwyer showed commendable spirit in trying circumstances, but too many lost their form when those early scores were conceded.

'Stephens' best game of the year was when they played a right old tussle with Fenians, at Ballyragget, and won by 1-11 (14) to 2-5 (11). That was as wholesome a tie as one could expect to see, and was no place for the fainthearted.

The Fenians were kicking themselves after their semi-final defeat by Thomastown. They felt they 'blew it', and with some justification, too. Billy Purcell, with three points, was the only forward who scored and made any impression, while the rest of the scoring honours were taken by centre-back Pat McCormack (9 points). After a promising season, the Fenians learned you cannot win matches without forwards. And you know, they reckoned they would have done better in the county final against Shamrocks than most others. They missed a golden opportunity.

It was a season full of shocks for

defending champions Glenmore. They suffered a shock defeat by Thomastown in the opening round. Their attitude was suspect that evening. Another shock was the next round defeat by Shamrocks. The loss to Thomastown was the one that really killed them and they had no one to blame for that other than themselves. What a pity, because at the end of their championship they looked the best team around.

Champions of 1986, Clara, never showed at all, and just couldn't come to grips with things. Their form was up-and-down and was a far cry from what it had been the previous two years.

St. Martin's (Muckalee) supporters could have been witnessing the break-up of the team that captured county and all-Ireland honours for the proud parish in recent times. Father Time has caught up with a few of their long-servers and they have to undergo considerable change for next season. Martin's cannot say they didn't get the best out of their men, because they did, and a lot more besides.

NEW LIFE

Conahy Shamrocks and Erin's Own (Castlecomer) — the latter with Noel Skehan and Martin Coogan injecting new life into things — enjoyed limited success. Conahy's young players like Feehan, Mahony, Brennan and Dooley looked more at ease, and the team built on the progress of the previous season.

They are heading in the right direction.

Erin's Own qualified for the Byrne Cup final, but a two minutes' lapse in concentration near the end cost them the title against the Rower-Inistioge. That said a lot about their season. They often did a lot of nice things during games, but then messed things up.

The Rower got a great lift when they won the Byrne Cup in dramatic fashion but a short time afterwards they lost a relegation tussle with Graigue-Ballycallan. It was a surprise the Rower weren't able to build on that success. Their reverse against Ballycallan ended their 21-year reign in the senior championship.

Graigue-Ballycallan started very well and almost beat the Fenians in their opening match. However, they fell back after that and just avoided relegation. The one saving thing about their season was their promising form in that do-or-die tussle. Graigue have the ability, with good young players coming through to figure in the closing stages of the competition. Watch them.

Graignamanagh, badly hit by injuries and emigration, struggled through the season and did well to stay up. With a more dedicated approach to training, they have the ability to do an awful lot better. Who knows, if they enjoyed a good start like Thomastown did this year they could achieve anything.



O'LOUGHLIN'S

All-Ireland Handball Junior Club Championship Winners against St. Paul's, Belfast (108 aces to 105)

From left: Billy Walsh, Gerry Murphy, Philly Parsons and Jim O'Neill.

Walsh Cup some consolation in year that promised a lot more

AT the beginning of the 1988 hurling season, prospects looked promising for Kilkenny. There were two good wins in the National League against Cork and Tipperary and things appeared to be shaping-up nicely approaching the Leinster championship.

Between the League and Championship came the Walsh Cup, a competition aimed at boosting the players accident fund for the Leinster Council.

The Noresiders won this competition out, and in the process heightened expectations for the championship. Alas, the hurling story didn't have the happy ending the beginning had suggested. At least the Walsh Cup was a consolation, an award of some kind for the players who had worked so hard to put the name of Kilkenny hurling back at the very top.

The Walsh Cup didn't exactly stretch Kilkenny to the limit, and all things considered, the opposition provided by Westmeath, Dublin and Laois in the final wasn't all that great. However, in the decider in Rathdowney, the Noresiders put on a hurling show that deserved some sort of special recognition.

Okay, it was not the best performance of the year. How could it be, with the drubbing of Tipperary in the League at Nowlan Park to be considered? Yet, the Kilkenny performance in the Walsh Cup final was way above the ordinary.

The winners played like a well oiled machine. They were quick and decisive, and effortlessly brushed Laois aside. During one devastating spell, the

The scores that did the trick

QUARTER-FINAL AT NOWLAN PARK:

Kilkenny 1-11 **Dublin** 0-9
Scorers for Kilkenny: R. Heffernan (1-8); H. Ryan (0-5); C. Heffernan (1-1); J. Brennan (1-0); M. Cleere, L. Ryan, R. Power, S. Whearty, L. Fennelly, T. Lennon (0-1 each).

SEMI-FINAL AT NOWLAN PARK:

Kilkenny 4-20 **Dublin** 0-9
Scorers for Kilkenny: L. Mullan (1-1); J. Mulcahy (0-4); M. Phelan, T. Leahy (0-2 each); L. Ryan, R. Power (0-1 each).

FINAL AT RATHDOWNEY:

Kilkenny 4-20 **Laois** 2-8
Scorers for Kilkenny: R. Heffernan (1-6); L. Fennelly (1-3); B. Young (1-2); M. Phelan (1-1); G. Fennelly, H. Ryan (0-3 each); S. Whearty, J. Brennan (0-1 each).

Noresiders picked off six consecutive points in as many minutes (between 16th and 22nd minutes). For one team to take another asunder at inter-county level in the clinical fashion Kilkenny dealt with Laois was worthy of the highest praise. But in Kilkenny hurling terms a Walsh Cup win doesn't rate that highly. Other counties would be glad of it.

INTRODUCE PLAYERS

In the end Laois were beaten by 4-20 to 2-8, after trailing by 0-2 to 1-11 at the break. The closing scoreline could have been worse, had the losers not grabbed 1-1 in the dying moments. Such was Kilkenny's dominance.

The Noresiders had used the competition to introduce new players, or those who were trying to get back after a break. In the opening match against Westmeath, the locals lacked urgency, apart from that shown by

Harry Ryan and Pat Walsh, both of whom were trying to win back first team places. Ryan had missed part of the League because of suspension, while Walsh was sidelined for a while after a serious eye injury. They had every reason to push it, and they did, and stood out in the 3-20 to 1-5 victory.

Dublin gave Kilkenny a bit of a fright in the semi-final. The eventual winners

led by 1-5 to 0-5 at half-time, but the Dubs got within a point of them with four minutes remaining. It took two late points from frees by John Mulcahy to make it safe for the then Leinster championship (1-11 to 0-9).

Again new players were given their head, and Liam Mullan and Tom Leahy didn't fare too badly. The then selectors, Martin Cass (Glenmore), Matt Ruth (St. Patrick's), Brian Cody (James Stephens), Johnny Walsh (Shamrocks) and Fintan Murphy (Rower-Inistioge) were true to their word and gave new players a chance.

The Walsh Cup may not be the greatest competition in the world to win, but at least it gave Kilkenny something in a hurling year that one time promised an awful lot.

The Kilkenny team in the final was: Kevin Fennelly, Eddie O'Connor, Ger Henderson, John Henderson, John Power, Michael Cleere, Seán Fennelly, Lester Ryan, Ger Fennelly, Brian Young, Michael Phelan, Harry Ryan, Ray Heffernan, Liam Fennelly, Stephen Whearty. *Subs:* Pat Walsh, Johnny Brennan, Tom Lyng.

Walsh a Former 'Board Officer

THE Walsh Cup commemorates the memory of the late Mr. Tom Walsh from Courtnaboughala, Goresbridge, who was a founder member of the Black and Whites club.

Mr. Walsh was chairman of Kilkenny Co. Board from 1944 until his death in 1956. The cup for the winners of the Kilkenny senior hurling championship also bears his name.

He was a Fianna Fáil T.D., and held the Minister for Agriculture portfolio on at least two occasions.



KILKENNY — All-Ireland Junior Hurling Champions 1988

Back Row (l. to r.): John Power, Kevin Hennessy, Joe Walsh, Denis Carroll, Pat Ryan, Stephen Foskin, Dick Walsh, Barry Henriques (selector). **Middle Row** (l. to r.): Jim Bergin, John O'Dwyer, Pat Dwyer, Tommy Bawle, Paudie Holden, Tomás McCluskey, Nicky Grace, John Marnell, Eddie Wall, Pat Gannon, Billy Ronan. **Front Row** (l. to r.): Gordon Ryan, Tommy Murphy (Co. Board Chairman and selector), Johnny Ronan (Capt.), Sean Caulfield, Michael Rafter, Ollie Walsh (Manager).

Manner of Junior win left a glorious memory

AN ALL-IRELAND victory would be an abiding memory in any season, but the 1988 all-Ireland junior hurling win by Kilkenny was one that made such an impression it will last for years and years, long after many other fond memories have faded into oblivion.

There was satisfaction and pride in that the final was a truly great one. And let's be honest about it, the fact the old enemy Tipperary, were the victims in the decider added to the achievement.

This championship, and the games it produces, can be a bundle of contradictions. The crowds attending games this year weren't always that great, but then for the final a respectable 5,000 turned up. A Kilkenny/Tipperary hurling clash still has very special appeal, in both counties.

On top of that, it could not be said Kilkenny set the world alight during the championship, but yet in the final their play was laced with skill, style, speed and passion, and the hurling was right out of the top drawer. At the end of a pulsating match, Kilkenny finished at the right end of a 1-12 to 0-10 winning margin, and although thousands of supporters had difficulties



Members of the junior panel, Jimmy Lennon (left) and David Bourke.

getting to Portlaois, and into the grounds that July evening, those on the Kilkenny side had forgotten the hassle, they were on such a high going home.

The Noresiders turned in an ordinary opening half, and were it not for deadly 'keeper, David Burke they could have been in a spot of bother at the break. Bourke pulled off two wonder saves to deprive the Premier County of goals. Those important stops kept Kilkenny together, and kept the interval arrears to the minimum (0-6 to 0-5).

During the break, team trainer, Ollie Walsh, veteran of many a hard tussle against Tipperary himself, spelt things out in no uncertain

manner for his charges, and obviously he hit the right cord, because in the second period Kilkenny produced their best hurling of the entire campaign.

Coming back onto the field it was as if the players had grown a foot taller, they felt so high within themselves. Their hurling showed this new belief in themselves. They kept in step with Tipperary, and then in the 43rd minute Pat Gannon, who was sprung from the bench and making a huge impact, was hauled down in the square, resulting in a penalty. Tommy Bawle rifled the ball into the net, and Kilkenny were in front for the first time (1-8 to 0-8). The 'Cats' tails were up, and afterwards they consolidated their position and took the **Independent Cup** for the seventh time.

Older followers of the game really enjoyed this one, because it had so much in common with great Kilkenny/Tipperary clashes of the past. Passion and pride were to the fore. Months later supporters were still gleefully recalling the 'match in Portlaoise'. The praise of heroes David Bourke, John Marnell, Pat Ryan, Sean Caulfield, Tommy Bawle, Tomás McCluskey, Pat Dwyer and Pat

Gannon was still being sung.

And the selectors, too, were given their share of credit. They had handled the team well, particularly in the final when a player arrived late and they were forced to change the selected team. Switches made in the course of the match also paid dividends.

It was a great climax to what had been an up-and-down campaign. It took Kilkenny a long time to get it together properly, and only after the rethink forced after the elevation of John Power and John Mulcahy to the senior team, did some important good talent like Pat Ryan and Denis Carroll emerge.

WOKE UP

The opener against Kildare was nothing to get excited about. The Lily Whites had a goal in the 18th. minute that put them in front. That was to be their downfall. Their opponents woke up, and during the next eight minutes pounded their opponents so hard they won the match and took a half-time lead of 2-8 to 1-1. It was all a formality after that.

The semi-final against defending Leinster champions, Wexford, was a personal triumph for John Mulcahy. His 10-point performance pulled the Noresiders through for a none to impressive 0-15 to 0-8 win.

The Leinster final, played in terrible wind and rain in and against Carlow was the low point of the Championship. With a bit of luck, Carlow could have sneaked a win. A lucky goal from a 51st minute free by John Mulcahy tilted the balance. The final score (4-6 to 3-3) flattered the winners.

The all-Ireland semi-final against Monaghan was a mere formality. It was good the final turned out so well, because they had not done themselves justice earlier. Perhaps it was lack of incentive or something else, but when a big effort was called for, the players responded magnificently and left people with a great memory.

The all-Ireland team was: David Bourke (Mooncoin); John Marnell (Dicksboro); Paudie Holden (Mullinavat); Jimmy Lennon (Bennettsbridge); Sean Caulfield (St. Senan's); Pat Dwyer (Carrickshock); Tomás McCluskey (Graigue-Ballycallan); Gordon Ryan (O'Loughlins); Pat Ryan (Emeralds); Tommy Bawle (Dicksboro); Joe Walsh (Mullinavat); Denis Carroll (Blacks and Whites); Michael Rafter (Emeralds); John O'Dwyer (John Lockes); Johnny Ronan (Graigue-Ballycallan). Subs: Pat Gannon (St. Patrick's); Denis McCarthy (Piltown) both used; Eddie Wall (Bennettsbridge); John Dunphy (Mullinavat); Kevin Hennessy (Graigue-Ballycallan); Billy Ronan (Graigue-Ballycallan); Nicky Grace (Galmoy); Jim Bergin (Galmoy); Steve Foskin (Mullinavat); Dick Walsh (Tullaroan); John Ryan (Dunnamaggin).

Five Steps To The Top

FIRST ROUND IN ATHY:

Kilkenny 5-18 **Kildare** 1-4
Scorers: John Mulcahy (0-8); Johnny Ronan (2-1); John O'Dwyer (2-0); Michael Rafter (1-2); Pat Gannon (0-5); Tommy Bawle, Joe Walsh (0-1 each).

LEINSTER SEMI-FINAL AT NOWLAN PARK:

Kilkenny 0-15 **Wexford** 0-8
Scorers: John Ronan (2-1); John Mulcahy (1-2); Denis McCarthy (1-1); Michael Rafter (0-2).

LEINSTER FINAL IN CARLOW:

Kilkenny 4-6 **Carlow** 3-3
Scorers: Johnny Ronan (2-1); John Mulcahy (1-2); Denis McCarthy (1-1); Michael Rafter (0-2).

ALL-IRELAND SEMI-FINAL AT CARRICKMACROSS:

Kilkenny 8-23 **Monaghan** 1-5
Scorers: John O'Dwyer (2-3); Tommy Bawle (1-6); Pat Gannon (2-0); Joe Walsh (0-6); Michael Rafter (1-2); Pat Ryan, Johnny Ronan (1-1 each); Denis Carroll (0-3); Gordon Ryan (0-1).

ALL-IRELAND FINAL IN PORTLAOIS:

Kilkenny 1-12 **Tipperary** 0-10
Scorers: Tommy Bawle (1-5); Pat Ryan, Denis Carroll, Pat Gannon (0-2 each); Michael Rafter (0-1).

Ollie has done well

TRAINER of the Kilkenny junior team, Ollie Walsh, has put an impressive run together. The former goalkeeping great guided the county to three all-Ireland victories — 1984, '86 and 1988.

Could one suggest the next one is scheduled for 1990? Wins seem to come in a two year cycle.

John O'Dwyer (John Lockes) and Dick Walsh (Tullaroan) collected their third all-Ireland junior medal this year, which is a record. O'Dwyer played in 1984 and '88 and was a sub in '86, while Walsh made the team in 1984 and '86 and was a sub this time.

Only four of the 17 players used in the final were winning their first all-Ireland. They were Paudie Holden, Sean Caulfield, Pat Dwyer and Tomás McCluskey.

Panelists who collected their first

medal were John Ryan, Stephen Foskin, Nicky Grace and Jim Bergin.

And team captain, Johnny Ronan, will have been glad to have broken a losing sequence of skippers from the Ballycallan parish.

The late Jim Walton (Cappahayden) was captain in Kilkenny's first appearance in the junior final in 1913. Tipperary won by 2-2 to 0-0.

Mick Coonan (Ballyline) had no better luck when captain in 1939 when the Noresiders lost a replay against Galway.

But spare a thought for poor Kevin Hennessy, the skipper at the start of the year. He injured his wrist against Wexford, and only resumed training a week before the all-Ireland final. It was too late for the selectors to take a chance on him, but at least he joined the squad for the build-up.

Bad start to the season

THE YEAR didn't get off all that promisingly for Kilkenny senior hurlers, and in their first competition of 1988 they lost the annual A.I.B. tournament against Waterford.

This was played in wet, dreary and uninviting Walsh Park and the home side won thanks to a goal in the closing five minutes from Pat Murphy (1-16 to 1-12).

Kilkenny: K. Fennelly, F. Holohan, T. Lyng, J. Henderson, J. Power, P. Walsh, S. Fennelly, M.

Cleere, R. Power, R. Heltzman, M. Phelan, J. Brennan, T. Lennon, C. Heltzman (Capt.), L. Ryan.

Patsy wins

CONAHY SHAMROCKS pick a club personality of the year at the end of each season, and the winner for 1987 was Patsy Lacey. He received the handsome Kieran Brennan memorial trophy.

Talk about up-and-down form!



KILKENNY — Defeated All-Ireland Under-21 Hurling Finalists

Back Row (l. to r.): John Feehan, John Larkin, Liam Egan, Liam Drennan, Michael Phelan, Tommy Fogarty, Pat Hoban, Liam Keoghan. **Front** (l. to r.): Richard Manogue, Willie O'Connor, Frankie Morgan (capt), Tommy Phelan, Sean O'Mahony, Bill Hennessy, Tom O'Keefe.

KILKENNY hurling fans had their emotions tossed about. One day they were sent soaring to dizzy heights while another they were sent crashing to the depths when following the fortunes of the county under-21 team during the championship.

A real high was experienced when the Noresiders literally wiped the floor with Offaly in the Leinster final. But on the day that really mattered, the All Ireland final, the black and amber wearers were themselves taken apart by a classy Cork team that had to much hurling and strength for lightweight opponents.

The conclusion was a real anticlimax and the thousands of Kilkenny supporters who journeyed to the final in Birr — the official attendance was over 5,000 — in anticipation of seeing the county complete an All Ireland hat-trick (the other wins were by the juniors and minors) — returned home disappointed, even disillusioned.

Defeat is one thing, but the 4-11 to 1-5 win by Cork was a rout. There was a lot to admire about Cork, but the main thing that occupied the minds of Kilkenny followers on the way home was 'where will senior inter-county players of the immediate future come from?'

The Leinster champions were contesting their 10th under-21 hurling final, and it is one they will want to forget. The Leesiders had a huge team, and so Kilkenny needed a good start. They didn't get it. The opposite happened. The winners had the ball in the net after just 16 seconds, and if things were not bad enough for the Noresiders, they lost one of their best defenders, Liam Drennan, through injury before the end of the first quarter.

MADE IMPRESSION

Powerful Cork piled up the scores and the game was over at half-time when they led by 3-7 to 0-3. The only

Kilkenny players who survived in such hot company were Willie O'Connor, Bill Hennessy and captain, Frank Morgan (in defence), and substitute Tom Murphy made a bit of an impression in attack.

Better times, thankfully, were experienced by Kilkenny in the course of the Leinster championship and All Ireland semi-final. The opening match was against Wexford and was, as expected, a tough and demanding affair. The Slaneysiders were the defending provincial champions but were beaten 0-12 to 0-4 after trailing by 0-2 to 0-8 at the break. This was a good team performance from the winners.

Better was to come in the Leinster final against Offaly, who, in retrospect, weren't up to much. Still, the Noresiders did the business, not only in style, but in a showy fashion. This was arguably the team performance of the year, a coach's delight.

Trainer Martin Fitzpatrick (Fenians) must have been over the moon as 'his boys' thundered to a 3-13 to 2-5 win. The striking was first class. So too was the support play and general use of the ball.

Going home, supporters must have been dreaming of great things to come, like another All Ireland victory. The hurling of the likes of Richard Manogue, Liam Keoghan, Tom O'Keefe and Liam Egan promised more than it was to deliver.

The All Ireland semi-final against a physical Galway team produced form some way behind that of the provincial decider. Tom O'Keefe (4) and John Feehan (3) shared the Kilkenny scores as they kept in touch during the opening half (H.T. 2-3 to 0-7). Going into the closing 10 minutes, the teams were level (0-12 to 2-6), but a late surge by Kilkenny, which yielded points from Liam Egan and Pat Hoban, helped put away the Tribesmen.

DOUBTS

That form, although a good lighting spirit was shown, made some question the real strength of Kilkenny. Those who had doubts had their worst fears realised when Cork walked away with the final. The Leesiders had spent a lot of money preparing their team and it turned out to be money well spent.

The Kilkenny team in the All Ireland

was: Tommy Phelan (Fenians), Frank Morgan (James Stephens), Willie O'Connor (Glenmore), Liam Drennan (Galmoy), Richard Manogue (James Stephens), Liam Keoghan (Tullaroan), Bill Hennessy (Tullaroan), Tommy Fogarty (James Stephens), Liam Egan (John Lockes), Tom O'Keefe (Thomastown), Michael Phelan (Glenmore), John Feehan (Conahy Shamrocks), Pat Hoban (Mullinavat), Sean O'Mahony (Conahy Shamrocks), John Larkin (James

Stephens). **Subs:** Pat Carroll (Dicksboro), Liam Dowling (St. Martin's), Tom Murphy (Mooncoin) used; Declan Killeen (St. Lactain's), John Teehan (Graigue/-Ballycallan), Donal Kennedy (O'Loughlin-Gaels), James Brennan (Erin's Own), Seamus McGuire (James Stephens), John Millea (James Stephens), Ned Kelly (Black & Whites), Pat Drea (Young Irelands), Jody O'Dwyer (James Stephens), Declan Mullin (James Stephens).

Scores, but not enough of them

LEINSTER SEMI-FINAL IN CARLOW

Kilkenny 0-12 **Wexford** 1-4

Scorers: John Larkin (0-5), John Feehan (0-3), Liam Egan (0-2), Richard Manogue (0-2).

LEINSTER FINAL IN PORTLAOISE

Kilkenny 3-13 **Offaly** 2-5

Scorers: Pat Hoban, Tom O'Keefe, Sean O'Mahon (1-1 each), Richard Manogue (0-4), John Feehan (0-3), John Larkin (0-2), Liam Egan (0-1).

ALL IRELAND SEMI-FINAL AT THURLES

Kilkenny 0-19 **Galway** 2-9 (15 pts.)

Scorers: Tom O'Keefe, John Feehan (0-7 each), Liam Egan (0-3), Michael Phelan, Pat Hoban (0-1 each).

ALL IRELAND FINAL IN BIRR

Cork 4-11 **Kilkenny** 1-5

Scorers: John Feehan (1-0), Tom O'Keefe (0-2), Liam Egan, Pat Hoban, Tom Murphy (0-1 each).




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25 years on, and stars still remembered

KILKENNY, the all-Ireland senior hurling champions of 1963, were feted like conquering heroes at a special celebration dinner in the city hosted by the Irish Nationwide/G.A.A.

This is the 25th anniversary of that great victory over Waterford in the 75th final, and as usual the Irish Nationwide marked the occasion in a memorable fashion. Each year Irish Nationwide honour the silver jubilee hurling and football all-Ireland champions, and this time it was the turn of Noreside heroes of the past.

That final stands out in the memory of those lucky enough to have seen it for the big number of scores it produced, the changing fortunes as the advantage swung to-and-fro and the brilliance of some individual performers.

In a nail-biting finish, Kilkenny won by 4-17 to 6-8 to take their 15th senior title.

The huge number of scores by both sides must constitute all kinds of records — highest scoring final, highest score by a losing team, highest number of scores by

one man in an all-Ireland (14 points by Eddie Keher) and six goals scored against one of the greatest net minders of all time, Ollie Walsh.

Rarely has a final provided so many transformations. Trailing by 1-4 to 0-2 after 13 minutes, Kilkenny turned the tables and had a seemingly comfortable 3-4 to 1-5 lead at the break. Within two minutes of the restart they were 1-1 better off.

DYNAMIC EFFORTS

All of a sudden their advantage was hauled back, and a spate of Waterford goals left them just two points ahead with minutes remaining. However, Waterford's dynamic efforts took their toll and their neighbours got on top again in the finishing straight.

Each member of the panel was presented with beautiful cut glass to mark the 25th anniversary of the win by Mr. Michael Fingleton, managing-director

Irish Nationwide Building Society and Mr John Dowling, President of the G.A.A.

The Kilkenny team on that famous day was Ollie Walsh, Phil 'Fan' Larkin, Cha Whelan, Martin Treacy, Seamus Cleere (capt.), Ted Carroll, Martin Coogan, Paddy Moran, Sean Clohosey, Denis Heaslip, Johnny McGovern, Eddie Keher, Tom Walsh (Thomastown), Billy O'Dwyer, Tommy Murphy. Subs: Oliver Gough, Willie Murphy (Carrickshock), Tony Kelly, Pa Dillon, Sean Buckley, Noel Skehan, Jim Treacy, Alfie Hickey, Timmy Kelly.

Incidentally, five members of the team were also on the 1957 all-Ireland winning side. They were Clohosey, Heaslip, Walsh, McGovern and Dwyer.

A nice touch, the Kilkenny players were joined by Waterford captain of 1963, Joe Condon and also match referee, Jimmy Hatton.



1963 TEAM — THIS IS JUBILEE YEAR

The Kilkenny hurling team which defeated Waterford in the 1963 All-Ireland senior final were guests of honour at the Irish Nationwide G.A.A. Jubilee Awards Dinner in the Newpark Hotel, Kilkenny on August 24th 1988. **Back Row** (from left): Billy Dwyer, Tom Walsh, Eddie Keher, Jarlath Phelan, Fr. Tom Murphy C.C., Martin Coogan, Ted Carroll, Alfie Hickey, Tim Kelly, Noel Skehan, Pa Dillon, Ollie Walsh. **Front Row** (from left): Phil 'Fan' Larkin, Oliver Gough, Denis Heaslip, Paddy Moran, Martin Treacy, Sean Clohosey, Seamus Cleere (Capt.), Johnny McGovern, Willie Murphy, Sean Buckley, Tony Kelly, Jim Treacy.

Boys of '88 a talented lot!

GOING ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT IN SPORT YOU LEARN FROM MISTAKES AND BAD KNOCKS, THEN ST. KIERAN'S COLLEGE MUST HAVE HAD A FAIR IDEA THEY WOULD TAKE BEATING IN THIS YEAR'S ALL-IRELAND COLLEGES SENIOR HURLING (ROINN A) CHAMPIONSHIP.

AFTERALL, Kieran's had contested, unsuccessfully, the all-Ireland of 1987. From that side hammered by St. Flannan's (Ennis) ten players were eligible for the following championship, so there was a good possibility the famed Kilkenny school had the makings of a respectable side this season.

Having the 'makings of something' and getting the best out of it do not always go hand-in-hand, but even after an uneventful and far from testing Leinster championship, St. Kieran's conjured up a magnificent all-Ireland final performance that earned them what could only be described as a brilliant win over a very handy Midleton C.B.S.

Victory brought Kieran's their eighth title, to go with previous wins scored in 1948, 1957, 1959, 1961, 1965, 1971 and 1975. The success brought to an end a run of three defeats in all-Irelands — 1977, '84 and 1987 — and justified the high, but secretly held, opinion St. Kieran's officials had of the team.

"You couldn't go telling the players they were great", a team official explained. "It was all a matter of keep everyone on the ground and getting them to play to their potential. Had we not done that in the final we would have lost".

True for him, because in the all-Ireland St. Kieran's got as searching a test from Midleton as could be imagined. In the build-up to the match star central defender, Pat O'Neill tore ligaments and was doubtful. He turned out in an unfamiliar full-forward rôle, and put in a respectable show. His commitment and willingness to punish himself for the good of the team highlighted the quality which made the college boys of '88 winners.

NEW EXPERIENCE

Midleton C.B.S. went to the all-Ireland final in Walsh Park only weeks after winning their first Munster championship. The all-Ireland was a whole new experience for them, but they didn't lack the will to win.



ST. KIERAN'S COLLEGE — All-Ireland Colleges "A" Senior Hurling Champions 1988

In Front (from left): Briain Ryan, Bob Coady, Paul Brennan, Jimmy Conroy (Captain), Pdraig Larkin, D. J. Carey, Dick Dooley. **Behind:** Adrian Ronan, Pdraig McCluskey, Declan Forristal, Dominic Bradley, Noel Maher, John Holohan, Tommy Shefflin, Pat O'Neill.

The Noresiders didn't look too badly off when 1-5 to 1-2 in front at half-way. However, after the change around the Leesiders played with immense enthusiasm, and four times hit the front. With just six minutes remaining, and Midleton 2-7 to 1-9 ahead, a win for the Corkonians looked on the cards.

Then enter Kilkenny wizard, Adrian Ronan, to turn impending defeat into glorious victory. The lively Graigue-Ballycallan lad first burrowed a hole through the Midleton defence that led to a goal for Brian Ryan in the 56th. minute. Kieran's were back in front — 2-9 to 2-7 — but the Leesiders hadn't given up.

Act two from Ronan saw him pick out Eddie Teehan with an inch perfect 28 yards pass, and the latter had the simple task of goaling from close range. That second blast buried Midleton, and Kieran's won their eighth title on a scoreline (3-10 to 2-7) that flattered somewhat.

Flattered or not, his was a good final for Kieran's, or any team, to win. It was close, competitive and rich in moments of individual brilliance. Ronan's blistering finish was a case in point. When something really special was needed from him, he came through. Manager Nicky Cashin had every reason to be delighted with his charges.

This was no one man show, however. There were others who punished Midleton. Stand-in centre-back, Johnny Holohan — he filled O'Neill's position — was rock solid, and if anything, his game improved with the extra responsibility thrown on his shoulders. Behind him Pdraig Larkin played with the assurance of a person twice his age and with twice his experience, and Declan Forristal stood firmly at full-back. Dominic Bradley turned in a star performance too, and Dick Dooley and D. J. Carey also looked players of special talents.

SO DIFFERENT

The St. Kieran's conclusion was all so different to what had gone before. Simply, in Leinster the college experience no serious opposition. In the opening round they sent Birr Community School packing, and next time out the Cistercian College did their best, but that still left them 14 points behind.

Kieran's had a leisurely stroll to their 36th. win in Leinster. Enniscorthy C.B.S. were willing opponents, but it was like a run between a race-horse and an ass. Kieran's won by 8-17 to 1-6, which was just short of record wins scored over Patrician College, Mountrath, in 1929 (10-3 to 0-0) and over Knockbeg College in 1940 (10-4 to 0-1). This year's team was one point short of equalling the record.

Pat O'Neill was injured for the semi-final against St. Mary's (Galway), and although the winners played below par, they were never in danger of losing.

The quality of the St. Kieran's players, and the importance of their victory, later made all the difference to Kilkenny hurling. Because with a backbone from the college team, the county went on to win the all-Ireland minor championship.

The St. Kieran's team in the all-Ireland was: Jimmy Conroy, capt. (James Stephens); Pdraig Larkin (James Stephens); Declan Forristal (James Stephens); B. Coady (James Stephens); Pdraig McCluskey (Graigue-Ballycallan); Johnny Holohan (O'Loughlins); Dick Dooley (St. Martin's); N. Maher (Graigue-Ballycallan); Dominic Bradley (James Stephens); Adrian Ronan (Graigue-Ballycallan); Briain Ryan (Fenians); Paul Brennan (James Stephens); D. J. Carey (Young Irelands); Pat O'Neill (Young Irelands); Tommy Shefflin (Shamrocks). Subs: E. Teehan (Graigue-Ballycallan); B. Power (O'Loughlins); S. Lawlor (O'Loughlins); B. McEvoy (Ballacolla); B. Whelan (James Stephens); R. Dillon (St. Lactain's); C. Brennan (Conahy Shamrocks); J. Carey (Young Irelands); M. Holt (Danesfort).

THE PATH TO VICTORY

QUARTER FINAL IN RATHDOWNEY:

St. Kieran's Coll. 3-12 Birr C.S. 1-4

Scorers: Adrian Ronan (0-5); Brian Ryan, Paul Brennan (1-1 each); D. J. Carey (1-0); B. Maher (0-2); P. O'Neill, E. Teehan, S. Lawlor (0-1 each).

SEMI-FINAL IN ATHY.

St. Kieran's Coll. 1-14 Cistercian College 0-3

Scorers: A. Ronan (1-2); B. Ryan (0-3); D. J. Carey, D. Dooley (0-2 each); P. O'Neill, N. Maher, D. Bradley, P. Brennan, S. Lawlor (0-1 each).

LEINSTER FINAL IN ATHY:

St. Kieran's Coll. 8-17 Enniscorthy C.B.S. 1-6

Scorers: A. Ronan (4-9); D. J. Carey (2-5); P. O'Neill (2-0); N. Maher, P. Brennan, S. Lawlor (0-1 each).

ALL-IRELAND SEMI-FINAL IN PORTUMNA:

St. Kieran's Coll. 3-8 St. Mary's (Galway) 0-4

Scorers: A. Ronan (1-5); D. J. Carey (1-1); S. Lawlor (1-0); T. Shefflin (0-2 each).

ALL-IRELAND FINAL IN WALSH PARK:

St. Kieran's Coll. 3-10 Midleton 2-7

Scorers: A. Ronan (1-3); B. Ryan (1-1); E. Teehan (1-0); D. J. Carey (0-2); D. Bradley, T. Shefflin, P. Brennan, P. O'Neill (0-1 each).



DANESFORT — who won their first Minor Hurling title this year. The club was founded in 1922, and the victory in the Roinn C Championship was the first at Under-18 level.

Back Row (l. to r.): Brendan Mullins, Larry Mahony, Brian Hanrahan, Michael Corr, Ted Walsh, Marcus Hatt, John Hurley, J. J. Brennan, Shane Synnott, Vincent Doyle, Peter Davis, Bartley Reddy, Bill Carroll. **Front Row** (l. to r.): Maurice Woodcock, David Walsh, Niall Butler, Raymond Walsh, Tom Mahony, Derek Dooley, Michael Slattery, Niall Hughes, Brian Hurley, Gerard Power.

Youngsters epitomised fighting 'Comer spirit

LIFE HASN'T always followed the easy path the people of Castlecomer would like it to, and they have had to fight many a battle in their time to get, or hold on to, what was rightly theirs. The fight, just won, to get the much delayed Community School for the North Kilkenny town was a case in point. The persistence of the people finally triumphed.

AND you know, there was a lot of that 'Comer spirit' evident this year when Castlecomer Community School won the all-Ireland colleges senior hurling (Roinn B) championship. The campaign generally ran smoothly, but in the final the Mercy School, Kanturk put up full blooded opposition.

The final at Walsh Park, Waterford was as tough a sporting test as the youngsters might expect to encounter, but they survived and stylish captain, James 'Shiner' Brennan took the winners trophy back to the school for the second time. 'Comer, then as the Presentation Convent, also won the Roinn B all-Ireland in 1984.

Supporters in Walsh Park who were watching this grade for the first time must have been very surprised, maybe even shocked, at the high standard of play. As B finals go, this was a bit of an exception, and the richness of talent on both teams put it among the best of the last decade or so.

On the 'Comer team there was loads of talent. Centre-back, Patsy Brophy, who later filled the same position with Kilkenny, has the potential to go to the very top in the game if he so desires; James Brennan, who only played in the closing minutes of the final because of

injury, is a rare talent and much will be heard of him during the next few years; Diarmuid Lawlor is a real ball player with a deadly scoring touch; Sean Kelly, Aidan Morrissey and Cormac Young are others who should graduate to a high level in the game some time in the future.

TAKEN BY SURPRISE

On the day, Kanturk had their heroes too, and one will never forget the unyielding resistance, even when staring defeat in the face, put up by John O'Mahony, Frank Healy, Michael Doyle and Kieran Hudner. Their unwillingness to accept defeat until the final whistle pushed 'Comer to produce a high level of performance that must have even taken their mentors by surprise.

There was little evidence during the Leinster championship that 'Comer Community School could whip up such a hurling storm. Then again, they were never asked to. Early on they whipped F.C.J. Bunclody by 7-10 to 1-2. Later in the Leinster final Donahies C.S. (Dublin) were hammered to the tune of 5-15 to 1-5. James 'Shiner' Brennan did his stuff that day, and cracked home 2-5, while Diarmuid Lawlor helped himself to five points.

'Shiner' a dazzler

Castlecomer Community school captain, James 'Shiner' Brennan was a special hurling talent, even when he was 14.

That was the age he was when he helped the Presentation Convent, Castlecomer, the forerunner of the Community School, to victory in the all-Ireland (Roinn B) colleges senior hurling championship in 1984.

The 'Comer panel in 1984 was: James 'Shiner' Brennan, Tom Cody, Seamus Dooley, Barry Rice, Kevin Bergin, Tommy Buggy, Martin Carroll, Tomas Coogan, Martin O'Neill, Paul Brennan, Brendan Smith, Liam Dowling, James Brennan, David O'Rourke, Billy Hennessy, Paddy Brennan, Martin Holohan, Michael Boylan, Tom Hurley, John Kennedy, Eamon Connery, Liam Young, Paul Nolan, Michael Brophy, David Buggy.

In the all-Ireland semi-final at Portumna, St. Jarlath's did their best, but were unable to live with the North Kilkenny side. It was tough going early on, and after 20 minutes the sides were level at 0-1 each. Then Diarmuid



CASTLECOMER — All Ireland Champions
Community School - All Ireland senior hurling (Roinn B) champions.

Lawlor went to town on the opposition, and in a dazzling six minute spell he cracked home three goals to help the Noresiders into a half-time lead of 3-4 to 0-3.

Jarlath's fought back in the second half, but they lacked penetration in attack. Eventually they were beaten by 4-8 to 1-6. The 'Comer scorers were: D. Lawlor (3-3); J. Brennan (0-3); J. Farrell (1-0); J. Meagher, S. Kelly (0-1 each).

The final against Kanturk was an intense battle, and the exchanges were a lot tougher than expected on occasions. 'Comer led from start to finish, but even when in heavy arrears, the Leesiders wouldn't give up.

REFUSED TO DIE

The winners got off to an exciting start when Diarmuid Comerford burst an opening for Diarmuid Lawlor to goal. Anthony McDonnell had a like score later, and that helped the winners into an interval lead of 2-3 to 0-3. Fifty seconds into the new half Sean Kelly fired home another goal, and later he had a second to open up a 4-3 to 0-3 lead.

Even when that far behind, Kanturk refused to give in, and the finishing scoreline of 4-8 to 3-4 highlights their determined late efforts.

All things taken into consideration, this was some win for Castlecomer Community School, who, on their final

form, suggested they would not have been out of place in the higher grade.

The 'Comer team in the final was: C. Moloney (St. Martin's); A. Morrissey (Ballyragget); P. O'Neill (St. Martin's); C. Young (Erin's Own); L. Buggy (Cloncen); P. Brophy (Erin's Own); N. Shortall (St. Martin's); B. Judge (Erin's Own); J. Meagher (Erin's Own); S. Kelly (Erin's Own); J. Buggy (Erin's Own); J. Farrell (Erin's Own); A. McDonnell (Erin's Own); D. Comerford (St. Martin's); D. Lawlor (St. Martin's). **Subs:** J. Brennan, capt (Erin's Own) used; A. Ryan (St. Martin's); P. Healy (Conahy Shamrocks); S. Meally (Cloncen); G. Buggy (St. Martin's); C. Meagher (St. Martin's); J. Boland (Erin's Own); P. Moore (St. Martin's).



CALLAN C.B.S. — All-Ireland Under-14½ Champions (Roinn B)

Back Row (l. to r.): Denis Lahart, Tony Dalton, Eddie O'Dwyer, Frank McKenna, Philip Butler, Tom Cody, Eamon Marnell, Shane Synnott, Martin Molloy, Richard Grace, Jim Hickey, David Meaney, Jarab Gorman, Thomas Doran, Tom Walsh, Paul Kearney, Pat Ryan, John Manogue. **Front** (l. to r.): Denis Kenny, Michael Corcoran, Ger Ronan, Denis Byrne, Pat O'Brien, Shane Kirwan, David Cahill, John Roche.

Third time lucky for Callan

CALLAN C.B.S., for a good number of years now trying hard to get back into the hurling big time, made a breakthrough this year when they won an all-Ireland title.

The enthusiastic youngsters from the C.B.S. hit one of those days when everything went right for them and they scored a huge 7-21 to 0-2 win over Cross and Passion (Ballycastle) in the Under-14½ (Roinn B) hurling final in Dundalk.

The display in the final was nothing short of magic. The game was only six minutes old then the elusive John Roche had helped

himself to 1-3. Poor Ballycastle didn't know what hit them, and the Noresiders kept up the relentless pounding.

Janad Gormley was another attacker who couldn't be nailed down, and with Denis Byrne completing a troublesome trio the C.B.S. had the title wrapped-up by half-time when they led by 3-10 to 0-2. The Northerners were fair and honest opponents, but against finely tuned opponents they were never given a chance.

This was third time lucky for Callan C.B.S. because in 1982 and '83 they contested all-Ireland

finals without success.

In the Leinster final the Kilkenny school had to fight hard all the way before beating Árd Scoil Ris (Dublin) by double scores, 4-8 to 2-4. The winners were nervous initially, and made unforced errors.

Scores from Denis Byrne and John Roche helped calm the nerves, but they had a narrow escape on one occasion when full-back, Michael Corcoran saved on the line. Slowly Callan imposed their will on proceedings, but it was a hard slog all the way.

The Callan C.B.S. team in the final was: D. Meaney (Dunnamaggin); P. O'Brien

(John Lockes); M. Corcoran (do); S. Kirwan (Dunnamaggin); S. Synnott (Danesfort); J. Hickey (Dunnamaggin); T. Doran (Graigue-Ballycallan); E. O'Dwyer (do); G. Ronan, capt. (do) 0-1; J. Roche (John Lockes) 1-3; D. Byrne (Graigue-Ballycallan) 2-9; T. Dalton (Mullinahone) 0-1; P. Butler (Graigue-Ballycallan) 2-0; J. Gormley (do) 2-4; E. Marnell (do) 0-2. Subs used: D. Cahill (John Lockes) 0-1; D. Lahart (Dunnamaggin); D. Kenny (Graigue-Ballycallan); not used, R. Grace (John Lockes); M. Molloy (do); T. Cody (Graigue-Ballycallan); J. Minogue (do); P. Kearney (Dunnamaggin).



The Kilkenny Vocational Schools senior hurling team that was beaten by a late Tipperary goal in the All-Ireland final.

Goal rush killed All-Ireland Bid

KILKENNY went within seconds of winning an unusual All-Ireland hurling championship this year. It was the vocational schools senior championship, and it was unusual in that less than six teams participated.

The number of counties taking part was supposed to be far greater, but for one reason or another, teams just opted out. Kilkenny got through to the All-Ireland final by playing just one match.

That was very strange for a competition that has been extremely competitive down through the years. And the competition has proved its worth, and Kilkenny county hurlers who have come to the fore via this championship include John Henderson, Dick O'Hara and Liam Fennelly, not to mention Noel Skehan, Pat Lawlor and Eamon Morrissey of years past.

What a pity this championship has sunk so low, because it is an important one in schools hurling. Hopefully the mistakes of this year will not be repeated, and the championship will be returned to its former glory.

Certainly there is scope for it, and as more teams than ever are participating in the individual schools competitions, the players must be there to make up county sides.

Kilkenny's opening game against Offaly told a lot about the championship. Originally this tie was to be played on a Saturday afternoon in Lisdowney. For some reason or another, Offaly didn't arrive. Neither did the official referee.

The match was refixed for Nowlan Park the following Wednesday, and this time there was a needless 40 minute delay before the throw-in. It was a bitterly cold and generally miserable afternoon, and small wonder after all the hanging around the match turned out to be a tame affair.

As is generally the case with teams in their first match, there was indecision. On the positive side, Kilkenny got better as the game progressed, and players like Paul Hennessy and Seán Doherty finished very well, while Joe Walsh, Seamus Carroll and Matt Walsh also caught the eye.

STRONG EFFORT

The winners had to wait 15 minutes before they opened their account, but afterwards they did a bit better, and at half-way led by 1-2 to 0-1. Four minutes into the new half Michael Phelan cracked home another goal, and while Offaly made a strong effort to rescue the game, they had to be content with second best. The final score was 2-6 to 1-2.

In the All-Ireland final the opposition was provided by Tipperary. The Noresiders were seeking their seventh title in all, and their first since 1977. Indifferent as they had been in their only other game, Kilkenny made a brave bid for victory.

Some awful defensive play cost them the title (5-3 to 2-9). Tipp. could hardly believe their luck. They had their first goal after just 35 seconds. That set an unhappy trend for the losers, who would still have taken the title, but for another soft goal in the dying minutes. At half-time Kilkenny led by 0-6 to 1-1.

John Conlon, later to play a leading rôle when Kilkenny won the minor All-Ireland, was supreme at centreback, and gave a polished display. In so far as was possible he kept the Noresiders together, and he received solid support from Eoghan Meade, Kevin Maher, Stephen Reid, Matty Walsh and Tom Curran.

It was one of those occasions when Kilkenny had every reason to feel disappointed. They scored more times than their opponents — 11 to 8 — but still lost.

Kilkenny: Joe Walsh (Thomastown); Alan Nolan (Mooncoin); Gerry Quinlan (Johnstown); Eoghan Meade (Mooncoin); Seán Doherty (Sliverue); John Conlon (Thomastown); Paul Hennessy (Kilkenny); Kevin Maher (Thomastown); Owen Fleming (Ballyhale); Stephen Reid (Ballyhale); Matty Walsh (Johnstown); Tom Curran (Kilkenny); Philip Treacy (Thomastown); Michael Phelan (Johnstown). *Subs:* James Carroll (Johnstown); used; Brendan O'Neill (Ballyhale); Patrick Farrell (Ballyhale); Cyril Cleere (Johnstown); Niall Mullan (Kilkenny); Brendan Rothwell (Mooncoin); Dermot Walsh (Slieverue); Seamus Hayes (Thomastown).

Johnstown do it again

THE ability to respond positively in a crisis and hit back for scores at vital times was crucial when Johnstown vocational school retained the All-Ireland under-15 vocational schools hurling championship.

JOHNSTOWN beat a handy New Inn (Galway) to put wins in the final back-to-back and their ability to grab scores when most needed was never more obvious than in their 2-13 to 1-9 win.

New Inn were full of running in the early stages and threatened to undermine their opponents confidence when they took the lead. But Johnstown were not to be put off that easily, and corner-forward, Alan Behan snatched a goal out of nothing and in a moment undid all New Inn's good work and levelled the match at 1-1 to 0-4. The Noresiders were playing against the wind at the time.

The Connacht champions slipped away again as the half progresses, but just as they looked set to take a useful lead into the break, Johnstown struck again. This time Behan was the man of the moment, and he was put through for a goal by David Moriarty, that sliced the New Inn half-time lead to the minimum, 1-7 to 2-3.

The shifting of David Moriarty to midfield for the new half was a master stroke by the Johnstown officials. He proceeded to loosen New Inn's grip in a vital sector, and the improved supply of ball to the forwards made all the difference.

With the better service up front, Austin Cleere and Adrian Behan caused all sorts of problems to the opposing defence. After New Inn hit the first score of the half, a pair of points from Moriarty levelled the game after 35 minutes.

ESTABLISHED LEAD

It took Johnstown 10 minutes to establish a match winning lead, but once they put a bit of space between themselves and their opponents they never looked like being caught. Points from Cleere and Moriarty (3) gave the Noresiders a match winning advantage.

Along with those already mentioned, Johnstown had stars in Derek Behan, James Carroll and captain, Alan Bartley.

In the all-Ireland semi-final it was touch-and-go against ressureive Scoil Ruain (Killenaule V.S.) The Kilkenny side got through by 2-10 to 0-7, but it wasn't until Alan Behan goaled in the 50th minute that the heat was taken off.

The winners solid team play was important on this occasion, and the best performers were Paul Phelan, Declan O'Neill, Alan Bartley, Brian Lonergan and A. Cleere.

Kilcormac (Offaly) made brave bid to unseat Johnstown in the Leinster final, but they failed narrowly (0-9 to 0-7). This was the losers first final, and they had their more experienced opponents troubled all the way. The winners led by 0-6 to 0-3 at half-time and Kilcormac had use of the breeze to come.

Johnstown were hauled back to terms in the 46th minute, but strong defenders Damien Anderson and James Carroll rallied their team, and put a halt to Kilcormac's gallop. Two points during the closing five minutes earned the Noresiders victory.

The Johnstown team in the All-Ireland was: D. Tobin, D. Anderson, D. Behan, P. Phelan, D. O'Neill, J. Carroll, A. Bartley (captain), D. Moriarty, A. McEvoy, J. Ryan, A. Cleere, B. Lonergan, Alan Behan, Adrian Behan, K. Behan.



JOHNSTOWN — All-Ireland Vocational Schools (Under-15) Hurling Champions 1988

Front Row (l. to r.): Alan Grey, Paul Phelan, Paul Bowe, Mervyn Queally. **Centre Row:** Declan Tobin, Brian Lonergan, Thomas Dowling, Declan O'Neill, Alan Bartley (Capt.), James Ryan, Brendan McEvoy, Adrian Behan. **Behind:** Anthony McEvoy, James Carrol, Pat Doyle, Keith Behan, Alan Behan, Austin Cleere, Damien Anderson, David Moriarty. Missing from photograph: Liam Corcoran.

Tullaroan win restored old order of things

IT WAS A day when older followers had every right to glow with pride. To them it meant more. The younger, still maturing ones, shared the joy, but it was an occasion when years on the clock gave people a decided advantage, a better perspective on things.

TULLAROAN'S emphatic win in the intermediate hurling championship final was indeed a proud day for the North Kilkenny parish. One of Ireland's most famous hurling strongholds had got back to the top — the senior grade — at local level and the joy felt among followers of the ancient game stretched far beyond the boundaries of the county by the Nore.

To older Tullaroan followers the drop down to the junior grade nearly 20 years ago must have brought more than heartache. There was immense pain involved. Hurling and Tullaroan went hand-in-hand on a national scale. The fall from once lofty heights was not easy to take in, or accept. Tullaroan, 19 times winners of the Kilkenny senior hurling title, a mere junior side! It didn't look or sound right.

Back in 1983 when Tullaroan won the junior championship and earned intermediate status, hurling folk in the parish perked up. Still, to the older ones who had enjoyed successes and the last one in 1958, the rehabilitation was only half complete. The full recovery was accepted in September when Tullaroan beat Piltown by 4-14 to 2-13 in the intermediate final to earn the right to rub shoulders with the likes of James Stephens, Shamrocks and Fenians next season in the surrounds more in keeping with Tullaroan's tradition — in the senior grade.

Glory days like those enjoyed as far back as 1887 and even in 1904, 1924 and 1948 may not be just around the corner. But they are a damn sight closer than they were 20 or even 10 years ago, in hurling days which must be regarded as the darkest in the annals of Tullaroan sporting history.

NEW BEGINNING

Just getting back among the 'big guns' will have restored the old order of things for many in the community. A new beginning can be made in the top flight, and, who knows, the likes of Sweeney, Walshe, Walton, Keoghan, Hennessy and company could yet add to those yet unequalled 19 senior successes. Tradition can count for a lot in the hurling world, and what parish had more tradition on its side than Tullaroan? Meagher, Walton *et al* left a legacy. Others must live up to it.

The Tullaroan bunch of today have the will to make a serious bid to emulate their forefathers. You could say, their season of 1988 reflected hurling the parish over the last decade. The beginning was slow and the wind-up was last and efficient.

The eventual intermediate champions got off to a non-inspiring start when they lost their opening match against Carrickshock. To some degree, they were authors of their own misfortune that afternoon in Callan when someone got the 'time left' in

the match wrong and there was a bad call on a close-in free.

If anything, that setback inspired Tullaroan and gave coach Martin Fitzpatrick (Fenians) the ideal opening to spell out the difficulties that lay ahead for his players. Victories followed, and the likes of Windgap, Dicksboro and Young Irelands were left behind as ever improving Tullaroan slipped into the semi-finals.

In the penultimate match, another team with a glorious past, Mooncoin, provided the opposition. Thanks to a more useful set of forwards, the Northerners got through to their second adult final in five years. Senior status beckoned.

In the lead-up to the big match, the whole parish was wrapped-up in the excitement. Prayers were offered, candles were lit in churches, children were reminded yet again of the proud hurling tradition of the parish. The players carried a big burden on their shoulders.

EXCITED

Half an hour into the final against Piltown prospects looked good for Tullaroan. At the break the teams were level at 1-11 (P) to 3-5, and Tullaroan were against the breeze. Goals by Jimmy Walton (6th minute), Tom Gaffney (9th) and Derek Gaffney (14th) all but destroyed the Piltown dream. It took only 90 seconds of the new half — and this time a goal from



TULLAROAN — Winners of the Kilkenny Intermediate Hurling Championship 1988

Front Row (l. to r.): Liam Keoghan, Ger Doherty, Jimmy Walton, Martin Fitzpatrick (trainer), Simon Walton, Derek Holmes, Pat Fennelly, Pat Doherty, Michael Walsh, Richard Walsh, John Hall, Diarmuid Purcell, Brendan Dooley, Edward Holland, Willie Maher, Aidan Clohosey, Bill Hennessy, Paul Hennessy, John Walton (chairman), Dick Walsh (selector), Eugene Walsh (selector). **Front Row** (l. to r.): Bobby Sweeney (assistant-trainer and player), Joe Walsh, Ger Dunne, Joe Norton, Tom Gaffney (capt.), Dick Walsh, Seamus Dunne, Jimmy Maher (selector), James Moore. **Inset:** Derek Gaffney.

Jimmy Walton — to kill off the last lingering Piltown hopes. A succession of Tullaroan points followed. The silverware was going North.

Going back into the senior grade probably meant more to the older ones than it did some of the young people; maybe even more than some of the players. Many a hard tussle of years past was recalled during the lively after-match celebrations. People were excited about the future. The spirits of a parish was lifted more by this hurling win than any act of Government could ever achieve.

For long and faithful servant, Bobby Sweeney, the achievement had to be special. He has laboured long and hard in the Tullaroan colours and had taken many a knock in the cause of the parish. Surely he was an inspiration to ever improving younger players around him like Liam Keoghan, Bill Hennessy, Jimmy Walton, Derek Gaffney and Joe Norton. And John Hall and Dick Walsh were never found wanting either during a year which will forever be remembered by Tullaroan hurling folk.

The winning Tullaroan team was: E. Holland, J.

Walsh, M. Walsh, J. Norton, D. Holmes, L. Keoghan, R. Walsh, B. Hennessy, P. Fennelly, D. Gaffney, J. Hall, D. Walsh, J. Walton, B. Sweeney, T. Gaffney (capt.), Subs: S. Dunne, D. Purcell, P. Hennessy, S. Walton, G. Dunne, P. Doheny, W. Maher, A. Clohosey, G. Doheny, J. Moore, B. Dooley.

Piltown: Jim Power, P. Brophy, J. Walsh, M. Burchill, M. Long, G. Kenny, S. Borris, L. McCarthy, P. Long, D. O'Brien, N. Culleton, J.J. Long, V. Dooley, J. Norris, P. Dunne. Subs: D. McCarthy, M. Walsh, M. O'Shea, P. Kenny, T. Anthony, J. Malone, Pat Dunne, S. Reid, J. Kelly, D. Power, D. Phelan, M. Long, Jimmy Power, J. Norris, N. Culleton.

Piltown problem not an easy one to solve

WHAT consolation can anyone offer Piltown, losers yet again of the intermediate hurling final? Indeed, since the sad event in September, the 4-14 to 2-13 defeat by Tullaroan has been the subject of many debates and post mortems. Some have definite ideas about what went wrong, but coming up with solutions to the problem of losing is no easy job.

PILTOWN have no use in being negative about the whole thing. That sort of 'easy option' is too simple a route to take. Far better if they approached the problem, for problem it is, in a calm and relaxed manner than trying to apportion blame or root out scapegoats.

The intermediate championship is not an easy one to win and for Piltown it has become an obstacle of mountain-like proportions. A few years ago there was achievement in reaching the final. Now after three appearances in the big showdown in recent years expectations are, naturally, higher. Who wants to be the nearly men of the county, the perennial runners-up?

City side Dicksboro had a somewhat similar run of bad results in intermediate finals during the seventies, and have since faded into mediocrity. Players can put a certain number of such setbacks behind them, but advancing years on top of sickening results can be fatal.

The time may have come for Piltown officials to be ruthless, and perform major surgery on their team. Remember, along with the county final results, there was also a defeat at the hands of O'Loughlins in an intermediate semi-final in recent times.

PASSED EARLY TESTS

Piltown's misfortune is not easy to make out, because in earlier rounds they passed all the tests. In their second match against Dicksboro they came from 10 points down at one stage to win. In the semi-final they then beat the form team of the championship, Bennettsbridge. General season form would suggest 'final day pressure' gets to them.

In any contest there has to be a winner and a loser, but Piltown's loyal servants like Liam McCarthy, J.J. Long, Denis McCarthy, Peter Brophy, Sean Norris and 1988 captain Gerry Kenny have suffered

more than their share of adverse results. There is a possibility that their chance of intermediate glory has passed. They have certainly faded by comparison with a few years ago.

Many tipped Bennettsbridge to gain promotion to the senior grade this season. Not for the first time in recent years, the 'Bridge failed to live up to expectations, even despite the obvious advantage of having Paddy Johnston as trainer/coach. Mr. Johnston certainly had the team flying and they came out of a very competitive group. But on semi-final day the forwards simply left their form behind them and their dream of glory was destroyed by Piltown. The 'Bridge forward line simply refused to function that fateful afternoon in Callan, although it must be admitted the loss of the injured Tommy Lennon was a cruel blow.

Again, it won't be any easier in future years for Bennettsbridge to win this trophy. They have promised a lot and failed to deliver, despite the obvious talent of Richards Moran and McCarthy, Tommy Lennon, Jimmy Lennon, Liam Simpson, Tim Drea and new addition from Lisdowry, Eddie Wall.

The other defeated semi-finalists were Mooncoin, who finished their match against Tullaroan with 14 men. Lack of scoring power killed them on the day, although they hadn't set the championship alight at any stage. The southerners were physically strong and that swayed the balance in a few tests. Players who could look back on a season that brought an improvement — they did reach the semis remember — were Dominic Connolly, John Mahon, David Bourke, Jimmy Holden, Joe Wall and Tom Hennebery. Perhaps that list tells the story. Where are the forwards?

CLOSE CALLS

O'Loughlin/Gaels, with the addition of

the elegant Gordon Ryan from St. Lactain's (Freshford), had a few close calls early on, but were still expected to figure in the shake-up. Those early scares told more about the losing 1987 finalists than most appreciated. The St. John's Park crew had lost the dash and cutting that brought them so near to success the previous year. That was despite the best efforts of John Mulcahy, Eugene Deegan, Derek Shelly, Eddie Kennedy, Michael Cleere, Gordon Ryan and Sean Tyrrell. Failure to make the last four had to be a big disappointment.

Junior champions of '87, John Lockes had a right old tussle to start the campaign against Bennettsbridge. The Callan boys lost by 1-15 (18) to 0-13, and yet managed to build on the promise shown there. This was a settling-in season for them and must be regarded as a good beginning. Players like John Power, Bosco Bryan, Jim Donovan, John O'Dwyer, John McCormack and company know exactly what is ahead of them next term. They have reason for hope.

Dicksboro and Carrickshock could be said to have had an indifferent season, with a few good memories, but mainly poor ones. There was comfort for Young Irelands (Gowran) in that they introduced promising youngsters like Pat O'Neill, Charlie Carter and D.J. Carey, who could provide the inspiration for a real championship assault in the very near future. The good form of the youngsters had to be pleasing for 'Irelands.

Mullinavat had the type of season they would like to forget, and it was an achievement that they managed to stay up. Enough said. St. Lactain's (Freshford) were surely one of the unluckiest teams in Ireland, and lost most of their games by a point or two. They ended up in a relegation battle but at least their luck changed on the last day of competition — and they won a game they shouldn't have. Prayers were answered at last.

Windgap made the drop back to the junior grade after, it must be admitted, an unlucky season. A shortage of players will always make life difficult for Windgap, but credit to those involved, the spirit was good all year. Now they are back to where they were in 1986 — in the junior division.

Football - something good to report at last

INITIATIVE, both by players and mentors, helped drag the image of Kilkenny football up from the mire during the season just ended. There is a possibility things might slip right down the scale again now, but at least 1988 can be recalled as the year Kilkenny football enjoyed success — by our standards.

Here, top performers were 'keeper Liam Purcell, John Mahon, Eamon Mansfield, Ciaran Hayes, Domo Connolly, Liam Cassin and Eamon Kelly. The scores were M. Kennedy (1-1), B. Smith (0-3), D. Connolly, L. Cassin, E. Kelly, M. Morrissey, M. O'Dowd (0-1 each).

That was the end of the good run, but at least the Kilkenny footballers made some good news for a change. Later in the Byrne Cup semi-final they were beaten by a stylish Laois team (1-11 to 0-6). And in the Leinster championship a young but promising Dublin won by 1-14 to 0-4, after leading by 0-8 to 0-2 at the interval.

The Kilkenny team here was L. Purcell, J. Mahon, N. Geoghegan, M. Delaney, E. Mansfield, T. Brennan, E. Breen, D. Connolly, L. Cassin, L. Bird, M. Morrissey, M. Manogue, M. Kennedy, T. Maher, M. O'Dowd. Subs.: E. Maher, E. Kelly, J. Maher.

PLAYERS WON ADMIRATION

Earlier credit was apportioned to the officials who did the spadework that made it all happen. During the good run a couple of players won the admiration of surprised onlookers, who didn't expect Kilkenny to produce footballers of such quality.

Numbered among those was agile 'keeper Liam Purcell, who was as good as any of his opposite numbers; John Mahon, who epitomised the new spirit in the game in the county; Noel Geoghegan, who played the game intelligently; midfielders Domo Connolly and Liam Cassin, who were a match for any pair they encountered; Richard Manogue, a rising star, and Ciaran Hayes, the former Dub who kept the team together at centre-back before injury finished his season.

Altogether, '88 was a good one for the Kilkenny adult football team on the inter-county stage. A sponsor, the Killford Arms, even came in behind the team to help spur things on. Hopefully, the pleasing events of this season were only the start, and there are better things to come.

Unfortunately, there was a sad old reminder of times past when the Kilkenny under-21 team lost in the Leinster championship against defending provincial champions Laois (2-20 to 1-3). Local officials just couldn't get a response to training from the players. Lack of effort got its just reward. A reminder for the future!

The Kilkenny minor footballers lost to Louth in the championship (0-15 to 0-5).

'By our standards' is the important little bit, because in Kilkenny football terms success means winning a few games, not titles. Others can look realistically towards the silverware. Kilkenny football sights during '88 were aimed somewhat lower on the inter-county scene and, by golly, they were realised.

The county won its first National League game in seven years. The dismal Leinster championship record that saw 17 years pass without a win was brought to an end, and at one stage Kilkenny put five wins in a row together. Now that was progress.

Of course, these happy happenings didn't occur by chance. No, they were the result of hard work and good planning by the players and county trainer-coach Nicky Brennan and Football Board chairman Pat Mulrooney and Joe Fox (secretary). All had a valuable contribution to make, and all three threw themselves wholeheartedly into the effort.

There was a whole change of attitude towards the game at inter-county level, and this was as a direct result of the promptings of Messrs. Brennan, Mulrooney and Fox. Together they conspired to bring famed Kerry footballer Jack O'Shea to the city for a week-end of coaching with the county senior and under-21 squads. The visit of Jacko in itself was a success, but more important was the fact that it proved to the players that the Football Board officials were very serious about trying to do something to improve the image of the game locally.

TOUGH GOING

Nicky Brennan worked closely with Jack and the players in the wind and rain one miserable week-end. On Saturday and Sunday the sessions went on. It was tough going. The weather was terrible. During those dreary days the fire that had long gone out of Kilkenny football was rekindled. There was a new beginning.

The county didn't go out immediately and thrash everyone around them. There was another defeat or two. In a bid to put the Jacko football philosophy into action, things went wrong, but every continued steadfastly.

Then one February day in Dungarvan the big breakthrough was made. Kilkenny won their first National League match since 1981 by beating Waterford by 2-10 to 2-8 (see piece elsewhere). There was great celebrating. And with good reason.

Inter-county football results in Kilkenny had gone beyond being an embarrassment. Adverse results had come to be expected. It was a state of mind. That Dungarvan result was a welcome change.

The next result was an insignificant one, maybe, but at least it was a win. In a challenge that is to become an annual fixture, Kilkenny beat an all-Army selection by 2-20 to 2-6 (half-time 2-8 to 0-2). Who would believe a Kilkenny football team would score 20 points in any match?

The third win was more important. It was the 1-6 to 1-5 success over Carlow in the Byrne Cup. This wasn't a great match. A point from 21 yards by Eamon Kelly with only seconds remaining completed the Noreside hat-trick. The scores were shared by Kelly (1-1), Brendan Smith (0-3), Mark Kennedy and Domo Connolly (0-1 each).

NO FLUKE

The fourth win made people sit up and take notice. Again it was in the Byrne Cup, and the victims this time were Kildare (0-8 to 0-5). This was no fluke. The winners were intelligent and disciplined in their play, and defended their precarious lead with incredible heart in the dying stages. Stars were Tom Brennan, Eamon Breen, Domo Connolly, Liam Cassin, Michael Morrissey and Brendan Smith. Kildare were held scoreless during the closing 26 minutes. Not bad going.

The fifth consecutive victory was in the first round of the Leinster junior championship. That 1-9 to 1-8 win over Carlow was important, in that it brought to an end a losing championship run — a mainly in the senior grade — that had stretched back to 1971.

The deciding score this time was a nicely tucked away goal in the 56th minute by Mark Kennedy. Carlow led by 1-6 to 0-3 at half-time, and there was a possibility their opponents might blow it because they were very nervous. Just in time they got things right.



THE KILKENNY FOOTBALL PANEL for the Leinster Junior Championship game against Dublin

Back Row (l. to r.): Jimmy Maher, Michael Maher, Eamon Maher, Pat Drea, Michael Delaney, Tony Maher, Liam Cassin, Michael Morrissey, Domo Connolly, Eamon Breen, Tom Brennan, Michael O'Hanlon, Eamon Kelly, Joe Murphy, Michael Walsh. **Front Row** (l. to r.): Michael Corcoran, Noel Geoghegan, Michael Dowd, Eamon Mansfield, Liam Purcell, John Mahon, Luke Bird, Mark Kennedy, Richard Manogue.

First League win after seven years

THE much-maligned Kilkenny footballers enjoyed one of their best seasons in a long, long time during 1988. The team put a few wins together, and made people sit up and take notice.

Things changed for the better in late February when the Noresiders beat Waterford by 2-10 to 2-8 in the National Football League in Dungarvan. The previous League win was scored way back in 1981, and by a strange co-incidence it

was over the same opposition.

This success came only weeks after Kerry star Jack O'Shea had been in Kilkenny for a week-end of coaching with the Noreside panel. This ambitious undertaking was the brainchild of Football Board chairman Pat Mulrooney and secretary Joe Fox. It was a costly undertaking, but one that brought its reward.

In Dungarvan, there was great

excitement after the win, which was only secured after a tough struggle. At half-time Waterford led by 2-3 to 1-4 after playing with the breeze.

The Kilkenny team was:

L. Purcell, J. Mahon, N. Geoghegan, T. Brennan, T. Brennan, M. O'Hanlon, C. Hayes, E. Kelly, D. Connolly, L. Cassin, J. Conlon, M. Morrissey, R. Manogue, M. Kennedy, T. Maher, B. Smith. Sub.: B. Maguire.

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JAMES STEPHENS — Kilkenny Senior Football Champions 1988

Back Row (l. to r.): Michael Moore, Nicky Boyd, Jimmy O'Brien, Eddie Connery, Tom Leahy, Paddy Neary, Liam Mullan, Anthony Smith. **Front Row** (l. to r.): Richard Manogue, Jody O'Dwyer, Tommy Fogarty, Joe Hennessy (Capt.), Seamus McGuire, Ned Kelly, John Larkin.

'Stephens at second attempt and Graigue bridge 28 year gap

THE improvement on the inter-county scene would appear to have had a knock-on effect, and interest, and the standard of competition, in the local football championships was better than for a long time.

Unfortunately, because of the dominance of hurling, football was pushed into the latter end of the year again, but luckily the weather wasn't too unkind and some good games were witnessed.

In the senior grade the honours were taken by James Stephens, but only after a replay with the Railyard and Graigue-Ballycallan had plenty to celebrate when they won the junior championship, their first victory in the grade in 28 years.

The Railyard, who have been near and yet so far so often in recent years, blew their big chance the first day when the teams played a 1-6 each draw. The Northerners were so much on top that the starved

'Stephens forwards were held to one point in the closing half. At half time the city side led by 1-5 to 1-3.

In contrast, 'Stephens put together an exciting second half in the replay that ultimately earned them a 0-7 to 0-3 win. The Railyard were unfortunate to lose Angus Daly and Bernard Maguire, both of whom were injured, but generally they were out of sorts.

'Stephens did well to go in at the break level (0-3 each), and then in the 42nd minute Richard Manogue made a piercing run that led to the lead point for Seamus McGuire. The city side never looked back after that.

The sponsored man of the match award went to 'Stephens player, Richard Manogue, and others who attained star ratings for the winners were Tommy Fogarty, Paddy Neary, John Larkin, Ned Kelly and Anthony Smith. The losers had fine performers in John Murtagh,

Martin Dowd, Eamon Mansfield and Tommy O'Dwyer.

James Stephens: M Moore, A. Smith, J. O'Brien, J. Hennessy, S. McGuire, P. Neary, E. Kelly, T. Fogarty, R. Manogue, E. Connery, L. Mullan, T. Leahy, J. Larkin, N. Boyd, J. O'Dwyer. *Subs:* J. Smith.

Railyard: M. Walsh, A. Daly, N. Geoghegan, M. O'Dowd, M. Delaney, J. Murtagh, E. Mansfield, B. Smith, M. Buggy, J. Delaney, J. Brennan, B. Maguire, P. Browne, M. O'Dwyer, T. O'Dwyer. *Subs:* P. Fitzgerald, M. Buggy, M. Doyle.

11th WIN

Graigue-Ballycallan's win was the club's 11th since 1984, and they completed the round dozen later when their minor hurlers won the League (Roinn A). The honours were evenly divided — hurling and football.

Mullinavat were the opponents in the final, and they were well beaten by 2-6 to 0-4 at Danesfort. Excellent mid-fielded, Johnny Ronan and Bill Ryan won the lion's share of possession, and this gave the

Graigue forwards ample opportunity to bring the long drought to an end. They did just that.

Johnny Ronan and Tomás McCluskey hit the goals that made all the difference and others who made valuable contributions to the winners cause were John Teehan, Bill Ryan, Adrian Ronan, Michael Murphy and John Caldbeck.

Mullinavat's best were Pat McEvoy, Seán Kelly, Donal Harney, John Fitzgerald, Joe Walsh, Liam Aldridge and Billy Walsh.

Graigue-Ballycallan: J. Kenny, C. Doheny, V. Cleere, M. Dunne (capt.), N. Butler, J. Teehan, D. Butler, J. Ronan, B. Ryan, M. Murphy, T. McCluskey, R. Ronan, A. Ronan, J. Caldbeck, L. Phelan. *Subs:* M. Bourke, J. Maher.

Mullinavat: P. Lahart, S. Kelly, P. McEvoy, T. Frisby, P. Frisby, P. Hoban, D. Harney, J. Walsh, J. Fitzgerald, B. Walsh, L. Aldridge, E. Kelly, B. Power, P. Holden, M. Fitzgerald. *Subs:* N. Harney, W. Haberlin.

GRAIGUE-BALLYCALLAN — 1988 County Junior Football Champions

Back Row (l. to r.): Billy Ronan, Tommy Egan, Jim Maher, Michael Murphy, John Caldbeck, Denis Butler, John Teehan, Johnny Ronan, Bill Ryan, Vincent Cleere. **Front Row** (l. to r.): Martin Bourke, Adrian Ronan, Jimmy Kenny, Matty Dunne (Capt.), Chris Doheny, Tomás McCluskey, Laurence Phelan, Nicky Butler. **Mascot:** Alan Doheny.





THE ROWER-INISTIOGE — Byrne Cup Open Draw Hurling Champions 1988

Back Row (l. to r.): Michael Tierney, Jack Lyng, Dick Meaney, Tom Lyng, James Murphy, John Prendergast, John Galavan, Eddie Prendergast, Richard Bolger. **Front Row** (l. to r.): John Ryan, Pat Dunphy, Jimmy Prendergast, Michael Lyng, Pat Ryan, Willie Meaney, Seamus Kelly, Michael Mackey.

Rower enjoy win, and feel pain of defeat

IN every way, it was an up-and-down season for the Rower-Inistioge club, who at different times saw Lady Luck smile and then turn her back on them.

They got the breaks in the Byrne Cup open draw hurling final and pulled off an amazing victory after staring defeat in the face. Around a month later things weren't as good when they lost a senior hurling championship relegation match, and their 25-year reign in the top flight was brought to an end.

Barely has a club experienced such extremes of fortune, because definitely there was luck involved in the win, and misfortune when they were relegated.

The Rower's 3-11 to 2-12 Byrne Cup win over Erin's Own (Castlecomer) was the first major trophy the senior team won since the championship

victory in 1968. And they can thank last substitute Michael Mackey, who got two touches of the ball and two goals that robbed the 'Comer men of a win that had looked theirs for most of the way.

With four minutes remaining the losers looked in line for a win when 2-12 to 1-11 ahead. Then in came Mackey, and in the 59th minute he knocked home a goal. The puck-out was returned immediately, and when a shot from Seamus Kelly was fumbled by the 'keeper, the alert Mackey flicked the ball into the net. The Rower won thanks to their amazing finish.

Up to the 58th minute Erin's Own had done enough to win. Sure they trailed by 0-6 to 1-6 at half-time but they looked to have things right entering the dying stages. Then Michael Mackey conjured up magic for the Rower.

While Mackey stole the show

because of his late efforts, the winners had other good performers in Tom Lyng, John Galavan, Michael Tierney, Dick Meaney, Pat Ryan and Edward Prendergast.

Rower-Inistioge team: P. Dunphy, J. Lyng, M. Tierney, J. Murphy, J. Galavan, T. Lyng, J. Ryan, S. Kelly, R. Bolger, D. Meaney, E. Prendergast, Jimmy Prendergast, P. Ryan, M. Lyng, W. Meaney. *Subs:* M. Mackey, John Prendergast.

Erin's Own: J. Brennan, M. Brophy, P. Healy, D. Dunne, T. Brennan, E. Holland, K. Bergin, M. O'Neill, J. Kelly, B. Rice, J. Breen, B. Young, M. Brennan, D. O'Rourke, P. Brennan. *Subs:* M. Nash, P. Brophy, E. Coogan.

The relegation match against Graigue/Ballycallan was a completely different story for the Rower. They lost by double scores (1-6 to 2-12). Graigue were unable to open up a lead when backed by the wind in the opening half, and at the break

the teams were level at 1-5 each. It looked good for the Southerners, particularly as Jimmy Prendergast was doing well in attack and was causing Graigue all sorts of trouble.

A shower of rain during the opening half took the strength out of the wind, and when Graigue gambled in the new half — they introduced a 16-years-old in goal and made many changes — everything worked for them. It simply wasn't the losers day.

Within 80 seconds of the restart things began to turn sour on the Rower when Jim Maher pointed the winners in front. Unanswered scores followed from John Teehan and Michael Murphy before the deadly Adrian Ronan goaled (2-8 to 1-5). It was all downhill for the Southerners afterwards. What a year for them!

The county champions nominate their own and the other two or four selectors — perhaps on geographical grounds, or depending on which other clubs did well in the grade that year. The Co. Board always rubberstamps these proposals as a matter of form.

Why?

Is there some weird and wonderful fountain of wisdom, sprung from the depths of black and amber mythology, that inevitably follows every new county kingpins? Or does it follow that having led their club to autumn glory, team mentors are automatically fit to manage the county side the following year?

Some of the best brains in the county may well come from an obscure little junior club... is it fair that they never get the chance of being senior selectors? Or why, come to that, should the men in peaked caps who spend their Sundays on the bank in Nowlan Park, and who probably know more about the merits of every hurler in Kilkenny short of the Almighty, not be allowed guide the county team?

Because of tradition, *a mhic*. That's the way it's been done for the past 40 years here, and that's the way we're going to keep it. A closed shop for the chosen few.

In a nutshell, the flaw in the Kilkenny system is this — not that the best men can't or often don't get through, but that by leaving it up to the judgement of the county champs, the Co. Board and its selectorial sub-committee don't specifically set out to select the best mentors. Ensuring the teams have the best guidance should be one of the 'Board's most crucial tasks; by delegating it to a club, they apparently don't see it that way.

Of course, when Kilkenny are winning, nobody has reservations (although as a current player observes, "you wouldn't have needed geniuses for mentors when **Keher, Purcell, Delaney** and the lads were around during the 'seventies"). It's at a time like this that good backroom boys are needed. The county has won three senior, two minor and one under-21 national title in the past 10 years, compared with four, four and three respectively in the previous 10. The drying up of the Kilkenny talent well will no doubt be cited as the main reason for this, but is it too much to suggest that less-than-inspired sideline squads have also cost us the odd all-Ireland or two?

That, at any rate, was the kind of conclusion Tipperary came to before making **Babs Keating** supreme commander two seasons ago. There the selectors were made up of a man from the county champions, with one coming from each of the four divisional boards. According to **Michael Lowry**, Fine Gael T.D. and former Tipp. county chairman, "the problem was that they normally tended to divide up on a geographical basis and to represent their own areas, with the result that we were getting people coming forward who were not particularly qualified for the job.

"The important issue is whether you **elect** or **select** your selectors. When you get to an election, there's no doubt you don't get the best people — they're elected on the club they come from or on a personality basis, and in many cases the last thing they considered is their suitability for the job. Selectors picked from clubs or geographical areas inevitably come under pressure to get their 'own man' on the side.

UNITY OF PURPOSE

"It's very difficult to achieve unity of purpose among five selectors, we found, or to get on-the-spot decisions — having five men on the sideline is a very cumbersome process. Among three selectors you can get a greater camaraderie and they can make collective decisions, but you must have an individual in charge with full power. **Tony Wall**, the Tipperary trainer when Clare beat us in 1986, felt very strongly that the old system was inoperable. That's why we went for one man and gave him the power to choose his own selectors".

Brother Michael O'Grady, former Limerick and Wexford manager, agrees on the problems associated with five selectors. "The ideal set-up would be to have one man, provided he was good enough, in charge on match days. Against that, hurling is such a fast

game that he might not be able to see everything, so you could possibly have a couple of advisors to help him and he could take their advice or not as he wished. You have no problems with five selectors where one is dominant and they all agree. But when you have five different trains of thought you have more problems on the sideline than on the pitch! That leads to sideline conferences, and by the time the team mentors have the move discussed the match may be lost. You have to have a dominant man on the line, and to me that's the trainer or the coach".

In Kerry they'd agree. Though four of their five football selectors are elected by postal ballot among the clubs, only two, drawn from a hat, operate with **Mick O'Dwyer** during the actual game. Cyril Farrell had the authority to decide on his two fellow selectors, plus the captain, in Galway. Both those counties haven't done too badly. Though winning the 1986 and '87 Leinster titles with these selectors Kilkenny, in appointing Diarmuid Healy, are just beginning to scratch the surface of the superno cult. A cult, that, undeniably, has its drawbacks as well as its good points ("sack the manager", etc.).

Diarmuid Healy's biggest advantage according to past and present county stars, is the fact that he has three years with the team. This represents a genuinely new and valuable departure for the county. One former Kilkenny player feels that lack of time was the biggest problem for Pat Henderson trainer from 1981 to 1987.

"We were beaten in 1984 and everyone said, 'ah well, typical Wexford, Kilkenny were tired after the past two years. That was alright, but from then on it was always, 'this is it, lads, we have to give it our best shot this year'. Henderson was training us from year to year. He never had time, never had the chance to build a team for the future, or put a long-term plan into action. That's why it's great that Diarmuid has three years. You need that long to get the best out of new players".

ARE THE PLAYERS THERE?

"Adrian Ronan has impressed since making his senior debut, but what about all the lads two or three years older than him? When a player has potential he should be put into the team, assured he'll get a good long run to prove himself so that he needn't worry about making mistakes, and be coached properly. He mightn't make it this year, but he'll make it the following year. Kilkenny haven't done it for years now, and a lot of the older players on the team are reaching the end of the road. And remember, Galway had to lose two finals before they won in 1987 and 1988".

But are the players there? "Oh Lord yes", says another Kilkenny stalwart of late. "Three years is certainly a good idea, because not only will Healy need time to acclimatise, he also might not be too sure of the talent around at intermediate and junior levels. He has a great eye for the fine details of hurling, whereas Pat Henderson was a great motivator and would probably be regarded as a stronger personality, more voiciferous.

"While I wouldn't be happy with the county champions having the right to pick the selectors — that's something that should be done by County Convention — I do think the thing about lads getting on the team because of what club they came from, and now how good they were, has been overstated. Anyway, in the end it's going to be down to the players. If they are prepared to make the sacrifices, if they're as hungry as the likes of **Richie Power, Liam Fennelly** and **Christy Heffernan** were when making the team in 1982, then we'll be alright".

The final word goes to one of the current team's elder statesmen. "The talent is always there in Kilkenny, and I'm confident about the future. Appointing Diarmuid Healy for three years is a brilliant idea, and credit must go to the Shamrocks for initiating it. He has a great track record and hurling brain, and has been highly impressive in the job so far. The B team is a marvellous idea, the selectors are taking as much interest in that. The Co. Board are spending the money and no stone is being left unturned in the effort to build a team for the future. The nucleus is definitely there. You'd have to be optimistic about the next few years for Kilkenny hurling".

Good Going, Railyard

FOOTBALL may be very much the poor relation of Gaelic games in Kilkenny, but one club doing a heck of a job to keep the flag flying is the Railyard, the county's only exclusively football outfit.

The Railyard are investing heavily in the future, and this year opened a plush new clubhouse at their grounds. The cost — a cool £40,000. Good going by such a small outfit.

What a servant!

ONE of the longest serving treasurers in the annals of Kilkenny G.A.A. is Paddy Brennan, Neigham. He has looked after the money for Young Irelands (Gowran) for 36 consecutive years. Some going!

Joyous happenings at minor level augur well for future

THIS YEAR was a great one for minor hurling in the county. Those looking to the future of Kilkenny as a hurling force need have no worries. It was only last year that we were worried about the standard in the minor championship. All that changed this year with a series of great games in both the Roinn A championship and league.



THOMASTOWN — Minor Hurling Finalists

Back Row (l. to r.): Matty Grace, Michael Allen, Paul Treacy, Eoin Comerford, Joe Bookle, Kevin Maher, Willie Murphy, Robert Allen, Tony Keogh, Brian Comerford, Robert Finan, Hugh Mullins. **Front** (l. to r.): Donal Challoner, Barry Doyle, Robert Bolger, Marty Donnelly, Willie Holden, Adrian Bourke, Billy O'Keefe, Terry Mahony, Declan Lannon, Melvin Holden, Derek Cuddihy.

GAMES that spring to mind are Fenians v. Young Irelands; 'Irelands v. James Stephens; Dicksboro v. O'Loughlin Gaels; O'Loughlin Gaels v. Graigue-Ballycallan; Fenians v. O'Loughlin Gaels in the championship and Graigue-Ballycallan v. 'Irelands and Fenians in the league.

It will be noted that all those games involved Northern teams. The standard in the South continues to be a cause of worry. While Thomastown were easily beaten in the county final, their display was much better than the scoreline of 4-16 to 1-8 suggests.

Fenians were bringing the minor title to Johnstown for the first time since 1943. They played with the breeze in the first half and after twelve minutes were ahead by 0-6 to 0-1. With the aid of one lucky goal, and another good one, they were ahead by 2-9 to 0-5 at the interval.

Thomastown put in a big effort after the interval and had the winners in trouble. The North Kilkenny boys recovered to win easing up. Briain Ryan ripped the heart out of the Thomastown defence in the early stages. After Paul Treacy had opened the scoring, Ryan shot three points for the winners, to which Pat Murphy and Stephen Grehan added points. After Ryan had scored a point Fenians had a very lucky goal when Matty Walsh's drive from 35 metres went all the way to the net. P. J. Delaney shot the Fenians' second goal when he took a Stephen Grehan cross and crashed the ball high into the net.

Thomastown brought their county player, Billy O'Keefe, to midfield for the second half and this earned them more of the play. However, they found Mervyn Moriarty in great form in the winners' goal. He deprived them of a couple of goals. When a Michael Phelan shot was deflected by a Thomastown defender into his own net, the winners were ahead by 3-11 to 0-7. After that it was a case of how big the winning margin would be.

GOOD PLAYERS

In addition to Briain Ryan and Mervyn Moriarty, the winners had good players in Ger Brennan, in the second half James Carroll, Anthony McEvoy in the first half, Matty Walsh, Patrick Murphy and P. J. Delaney.

The losers' best were Willie O'Keefe, Paul Treacy, Declan Lannon, Kevin Maher and Billy Murphy.

Scorers: Fenians — Briain Ryan (1-5), Stephen Grehan (0-7), Matty Walsh (1-2), P. J. Delaney (1-0), Michael Phelan (1-0), Patrick Murphy (0-2). **Thomastown** — Martin Donnelly (1-1), Paul Treacy (0-3), Willie O'Keefe (0-3), Kevin Maher (0-1).

Fenians — Mervyn Moriarty, Dan Costigan, Gerry Quinlan, Eugene Ryan, Gerald Brennan, James Carroll, Anthony McEvoy, Matty Walsh, Patrick Murphy, Stephen Grehan, Briain Ryan, P. J. Delaney, Kieran McEvoy, Paul Ryan, Michael Phelan.

Thomastown — Willie Hogan, M. Holden, Willie Murphy, T. Kehoe, Declan Lannon, Owen Comerford, M. Allen, Kevin Maher, R. Bolger, Willie O'Keefe, Joe Bookle, Adrian Bourke, Martin Donnelly, Paul Treacy, T. Mahony. *Subs.:* Robert Finan, Barry Doyle.

Fenians and Graigue-Ballycallan served up a thriller in the minor hurling league final (Roinn A) for the John Teehan Cup. At the end of a wonderful 60 minutes the sides finished all square — Graigue-Ballycallan 2-7; Fenians 1-10. The game saw a great fight-back by the championship winners who found themselves six points in arrears after 22 minutes (1-6 to 0-3). At this stage they were playing against the strong breeze, and were reduced to 14 men. By the interval the Fenians had reduced the lead to 1-6 to 0-5.

The Fenians' half-back line of Ger Brennan, James Carroll and Anthony McEvoy, along with midfielders Patrick Murphy and Matty Walsh, took control in the second half. By the 50th minute they had drawn level (0-10 to 1-7). Then Graigue-Ballycallan brought Adrian Ronan, who had a brilliant first half at full-forward, outfield in an effort to stop the slide. This proved a master stroke. There was no further score for eight minutes until Graigue-Ballycallan took a shock lead with a goal by Joseph Brennan. His speculative shot from 35 metres ended in the net.

Fenians came back to force a penalty in the last minute. Briain Ryan's effort was saved by Conor Manogue, but the inrushing Ryan buried the rebound in the net for a dramatic equaliser.

OUTSTANDING

In addition to their half-back line and midfielders, the Fenians had outstanding players in Dan Costigan, Briain Ryan, P. J. Delaney and Michael Phelan. Adrian Ryan



ST. MARTIN'S (Ballyfoyle-Coon-Muckalee) — Minor Hurling (Roinn B) Champions

BACK (l. to r.): Noel Shortall, Conor Moloney, Paul O'Neill, Tommy Kehoe, Aidan Lawlor, Ivan Lawlor, John Dooley, Dermot Comerford. **FRONT** (l. to r.): Shem Hanlon, Nicholas Purcell, Dermot Lawlor, Dick Dooley, P.J. Shore, Sean Kelly, Paddy Kehoe (capt.).

was the Graigue-Ballycallan star. He got most assistance from Mark O'Brien, who had a great game at full-back, Pdraig McCluskey, Pat Purcell, Tomás Comerford and in the first half Noel Maher and Edward Teehan.

Scorers: Fenians — Briain Ryan (1-3), P. J. Delaney (0-4), Stephen Grehan, Keith Behan, Michael Phelan (0-1 each). **Graigue-Ballycallan** — Adrian Ronan (1-7), Joseph Brennan (1-0).

Fenians: Mervyn Moriarty, Dan Costigan, Gerry Quinlan, Eugene Ryan, Ger Brennan, James Carroll, Anthony McEvoy, Patrick Murphy, Matty Walsh, Stephen Grehan, Briain Ryan, P. J. Delaney, Kieran McEvoy, Paul Ryan, Michael Phelan. Sub.: Keith Behan.

Graigue-Ballycallan: Coñor Manogue, Edward Hally, Mark O'Brien, Michael Comerford, Pdraig McCluskey, Pat Purcell, Tomás Comerford, Joe Delaney, Noel Maher, Joseph Brennan, Edward Teehan, Tom McGrath, Willie Egan, Adrian Ronan, Maurice Ronan.

The Roinn B minor competitions were dominated by St. Martin's, who won both the championship and league. In the championship they beat Shamrocks by 1-11 to 2-4. Shamrocks, true to their great tradition, put up a great fight, and it was only a goal and a point scored in the last minute that gave the Muckalee-Ballyfoyle-Coon boys a four-point victory.

Shamrocks had first use of the breeze and their lead of 1-4 to 0-3 at the interval did not look sufficient. When St. Martin's belted over three points in the first two minutes of the second half, they looked certain of going on to an easy victory. They lost numerous chances and the opportunity to seal victory.

St. Martin's were reduced to 14 men midway through the half. Points by Sean Kelly in the 47th and 48th minutes had his side ahead by 0-9 to 1-4. The game was back in the melting pot when Niall Mason had a Shamrocks goal to put his side ahead. Dick Dooley levelled the scores with nine minutes left. With the extra man in defence, Shamrocks soaked up the pressure until Dermot Lawlor got through for the late goal and point to give St. Martin's the honours.

The winners' best players were Aidan Lawlor, a safe goalkeeper; Paul O'Neill, a tower of strength at full-back; Tom Kehoe, Noel Shortall, Dick Dooley, Sean Kelly and Dermot Lawlor.

Shamrocks had the finest player on view in Tony Shefflin, who had a wonderful game until a heavy tackle affected him. He got most support from Conor Harrington, Seamus Ryan, Seamus Mason, Michael Dempsey, John Shefflin and Damien Mason.

St. Martin's — Aidan Lawlor, Tony Kehoe, Conor Moloney, Ivan Lawlor, Shem Hanlon, Paul O'Neill, Noel Shortall, Paddy Kehoe, Dick Dooley (0-4), Sean Kelly (0-4), Dermot Comerford, Nicholas Purcell (0-1), P. J. Shore, John Dooley, Dermot Lawlor (1-2). Sub.: Michael Lawlor, Peter Moore.

Shamrocks: Conor Harrington, Edmond Mason, Seamus Mason, Willie Dempsey, Eddie Reid, Seamus Ryan, Brendan O'Neill, Tommy Shefflin (0-2), James Devereux, Paschal Walsh, John Shefflin (0-1), Noel O'Keefe (0-1), Damien Mason, Brendan Mason (1-0), Pdraig Farrell. Sub.: Niall Mason, Adrian Cotterell.

GOOD WIN

When winning the league final, St. Martin's again scored 1-11 against Tullaroan's 0-5. This was a good win for the North Kilkenny boys, as they were without their best forward, Sean Kelly. With Dick Dooley and Paddy Kehoe on top at midfield, they were ahead by 1-6 to 0-1 at the interval.

Tullaroan, with county minor panelist Joe Norton operating at midfield in the second half, had more of the play. but their forwards could not break down the physically strong St. Martin's defence. Whenever Tullaroan got a score, St. Martin's were always able to get a reply. Tullaroan could never get a goal which might have brought the game alive.

In addition to Dick Dooley and Paddy Kehoe, the winners had good players — Aidan Lawlor, Paul O'Neill, Conor Moloney, John Dooley — who scored the vital goal — Dermot Lawlor and Michael Lawlor.

Tullaroan's best were Michael Dooley, who had a great game in goal, Laurence Cummins, Philip Doheny, Noel Treacy, Seoirse Butler, John Delaney in the second half, Joe Norton, when he moved to midfield, and Paul Hennessy.

Scorers: St. Martin's — Dick Dooley (0-5), John Dooley (1-1), Paddy Kehoe (0-2), Dermot Lawlor (0-2), Michael Lawlor (0-1). **Tullaroan** — Paul Hennessy (0-2), Noel Treacy, Ger Dunne, Thomas Hennessy (0-1 each).

St. Martin's — Aidan Lawlor, Tom Kehoe, Paul O'Neill, Ivan Lawlor, Shem Hanlon, Conor Moloney, Noel Shortall, Dick Dooley, Paddy Kehoe, Dermot Comerford, Michael Lawlor, Nicholas Purcell, Peter Moore, John Dowling, Dermot Lawlor.

Tullaroan — Michael Dooley, Philip Doheny, Laurence Cummins, Paddy Cleere, Raymond Kehoe, Noel Treacy, Seoirse Butler, Paul Hennessy, John Delaney, Thomas Hennessy, Joe Norton, Sean Teehan, Paul Norton, Ger Dunne, John Cummins.

HISTORY

Tullagher-Rosbercon created history by winning their first minor hurling championship when they beat Danesfort in a great final (1-7 to 0-7). The second half was fantastic. Tullagher-Rosbercon led at the interval by 1-2 to 0-4, thanks mainly to a goal by Tom Murphy in the 23rd minute. Danesfort were on top in the third quarter, and went ahead by two points (0-7 to 1-2). The losers had opportunities of increasing their lead, but their forwards were unable to find the target.

The Southerners then made their match-winning move. John Murphy, who had been well contained by Tom Mahony while at centreforward, was switched to midfield. Murphy began to dominate from his new position and the winners scored five unanswered points to run out deserving winners.

In addition to John Murphy, the winners had good players Martin Fitzgerald, John Murphy, Eamon Mullally, Eamon Bookle, Jamie Doyle and Vincent Glennon who improved matters when he came on.

Danesfort's finest players were Tom



GRAIGUE-BALLYCALLAN — 1988 Minor Hurling League Champions

Back Row: Joe Delaney, Padraig McCluskey, Eddie Teehan, Mark O'Brien, Noel Maher, Tomás Comerford, Willie Egan. **Front Row:** Michael Comerford, Joseph Brennan, Adrian Ronan (Capt.), Conor Manogue, Tom McGrath, Maurice Ronan, Edward Hally.

O'Mahoney, Michael Slattery, Brian Hurley, Michael Corr and Niall Butler.

Scorers: Tullogher-Rosbercon — John Murphy (0-4), Tom Murphy (1-0), Eamon Bookle (0-3). **Danesfort** — Niall Butler (0-4), Michael Corr, Derek Dooley, Brian O'Hanrahan (0-1 each).

Tullogher-Rosbercon — Martin Fitzgerald, Tom Doherty, John Murphy, B. Hennessy, L. Doyle, Eamon Mullally, Martin Bookle, S. Cummins, J. O'Driscoll, Eamon Bookle, John Murphy, Jamie Doyle, J. Murphy, T. Mullally, Tom Murphy. *Subs.:* Basil Glennon, L. Walsh.

Danesfort — Michael Slattery, Brian Mullins, Gerry Power, Larry Mahony, Brian Hurley, Tom Mahony, David Walsh, Michael Corr, Ted Walsh, Marcus Hatt, Niall Hughes, Derek Dooley, Ray Walsh, Brian O'Hanrahan, Niall Butler.

MADE AMENDS

Danesfort made amends for their championship defeat by making history when they won the league. It was Danesfort's first ever victory in minor hurling. They reversed the championship result against Tullogher-Rosbercon in the semi-final by beating them 2-6 to 2-5. In the final they beat Barrow Rangers by 2-6 to 2-3. The losers had the breeze in the first

half, but goals by Brian O'Hanrahan and Niall Butler, just on the interval, put the winners ahead by 2-3 to 1-3 at the break.

Ted Walsh improved the Danesfort position after the interval when he pointed two frees. When Ian Keyes got a goal for Barrow Rangers, the winners' lead was reduced to two points (2-5 to 2-3). Peter Davis restored the Danesfort lead to a goal and 'Rangers could not get the equaliser.

Michael Slattery was steady in the Danesfort goal, and Gerry Power showed great determination in defence. Tom Mahony was a strong and powerful back. Niall Hughes got through some good hurling at midfield, while up front Niall Butler, Brian O'Hanrahan and Ray Walsh did best.

The losers' best players were John Gavin, Dermot Maher, Willie O'Hanlon and Philip Maher.

Scorers: Danesfort — Ted Walsh (0-4), Niall Butler (1-0), Brian O'Hanrahan (1-0), Peter Davis (0-1), Ray Walsh (0-1). **Barrow Rangers** — Willie O'Hanlon (1-0), Ian Keyes (1-0), Dermot Maher (0-2), Philip Maher (0-1).

Danesfort — Michael Slattery, Brian Mullins, Gerry Power, Larry Mahony, Brian Hurley, Tom Mahony, David Walsh, Michael

Corr, Niall Hughes, Marcus Hatt, Ted Walsh, Peter Davis, Ray Walsh, Brian O'Hanrahan, Niall Butler. *Sub.:* Derek Dooley.

Barrow Rangers: M. Medlar, P. Doyle, Pat Drea, J. Doyle, W. Murphy, John Gavin, O. Gavin, J. Hennessy, Philip Maher, T. Curran, Willie O'Hanlon, Dermot Maher, C. Hogan, Brian Keyes, Ian Keyes. *Sub.:* E. Drea.

In the replay of the minor hurling league (Roinn A) final mentioned earlier, between Graigue-Ballycallan and Fenians, Adrian Ronan turned in his best performance of the year to end his under-18 hurling days, and earned a 3-4 to 2-6 win for Graigue.

Ronan, showing all the skills of the game, grabbed all the winners' scores. It was a smashing match, but the Fenians had reason to feel sorry for themselves because they hit an incredible 20 wides.

After hitting 12 wides in the opening half, the Fenians still led by 2-3 to 1-2 at the break. For a long time they looked like hanging on for victory, but in the dying minutes the deadly Ronan crashed a great free from 25 yards into the Fenians net to give Graigue the honours. It was a great end to the season for the club, and young Ronan himself.

Wise words from Monsgr. Tom

HOPEFULLY the wise words of former Kilkenny trainer-coach, Monsignor Tommy Maher, as reported at the Mullinavat annual meeting, did not fall on deaf ears.

Monsignor Maher, for 21 years 'the brains' behind the Kilkenny senior team, warned that if the G.A.A. did not change their attitude to training there would be a lowering of standards and a decline in skills.

How often now do we hear people saying the average player is not as skilful or as

dedicated as his counterpart of 15 or 20 years ago?

Monsignor Maher felt young players were being put out onto playing fields without being taught the basic rules of the game.

He suggested that instead of being put into competitive action, young hurlers should be broken into groups so that they could be taught the skills of ball control and how to defend themselves in the course of hurling action.

Well done Ann

GOOD to see more women getting actively involved in G.A.A. clubs, and not confining their activities to the odd day as 'tea or sandwich' maker.

This year Thomastown G.A.A. club struck a blow for equal rights when they elected their first woman to their committee.

Mrs. Ann Minogue, Clogregg, took over as secretary of this very active outfit. Ann stepped into the breach when long standing official, Tom Walsh did not seek re-election.



AVONMORE — 1988 All-Ireland Inter Firms' Champions

Back Row: Billy Fitzpatrick, John Bourke, Mick Walsh, Jimmy O'Brien, Eamon Holland, John Mulcahy, John Hall, Bill Hennessy, Mick Bolger, John Brennan.

Front Row: Martin Brennan, Dick Walsh, Liam Dowling, Nicky Brennan, Donal Dunne, Jimmy Ruth, Johnny Brennan, Morgan Kelly.

Avonmore did it, 'Comer went close

THE CURTAIN has rung down on another successful year in inter-firm games, and Avonmore Creameries, for the ninth time, did the county proud by annexing the all-Ireland senior hurling title. A new team, Castlecomer Wood-Mills-Brick, took part in the League for the first time and won county and Leinster honours, but failed narrowly in the junior all-Ireland final, going down to Roher-Carey's (Nenagh) by 3-10 to 2-8.

AVONMORE Creameries won a double at local level. They captured the football title on a 1-8 to 1-2 scoreline against 'Comer International. In the final in Jenkinstown, Avonmore won their fifth consecutive crown. The 'Comer side led at the interval by two points, but the Ballyragget based side swept to an easy victory.

In the Leinster championship, the Noresiders beat Navan Carpets (Meath) by 5-13 to 1-1.

Scorers for Avonmore were: Brendan Smith (1-8), Martin Stapleton (1-2), Joe Casey (1-1), Morgan Kelly (1-1), Denis Keogh (1-0), Stephen Matthews (0-1).

Avonmore thus got into their first Leinster final. Here they met Cosets (Carlow), in Athy.

After playing well in the first quarter, Avonmore conceded goals in the 19th and 23rd minutes and trailed by 2-5 to 0-3 at the break. Avonmore put in a great second half and goals by Morgan Kelly and Denis Keogh narrowed the gap to two points. It was a great second half, and two late points gave the Carlow boys victory by 2-12 to 2-7. The losers' best players were Tom Miller, Jimmy Ruth, Eamon Holland, Ritchie Manogue, Dan Twomey, Denis Keogh,

Martin Stapleton, Brendan Smith and Morgan Kelly.

The victorious team in the county final was: Paddy Kavanagh, Ciarán Leonard, Tom Miller, Mick Condran, Jimmy Ruth, Eamon Holland, Donald McDonagh, Dan Twomey, Ritchie Manogue, Denis Keogh, Liam Phelan, Brendan Smith, Morgan Kelly, Joe Casey, John Brennan. *Subs:* Martin Stapleton, Tom O'Gorman.

REVENGE

The Castlecomer Wood-Mills-Brick team lost out in an earlier round to the St. Canice's Hospital-Army-Smithwick's combination. Victories over Mahon & McPhillips, and a great two points' win over Public Services put them in the county final against their earlier conquerors. On this occasion the North Kilkenny team reversed the result in a thriller by 2-12 to 3-8. They followed this win with victories over Slaney Meats (Wexford) by 0-12 to 1-3, and Coolrain Industries (Laois) by 1-13 to 2-2, to win the Leinster Championship.

Scorers in the Leinster final were: Brian Young (0-5), Michael O'Neill (1-2), Pierce Phelan (0-2), Pat Maher (0-1), David O'Rourke (0-1), James Brennan (0-2).

They had a facile 4-14 to 0-4 victory over

Sweeney's-E.T. Electric (Galway) in the all-Ireland semi-final. Scorers here were Brian Young (0-5), Pierce Phelan (2-3), James Brennan (0-4), John Kelly (1-0), Pat Maher (0-1), David O'Rourke (1-1).

The final was played in atrocious conditions in Callan. Heavy overnight and early morning rain left the pitch in a bad state. The Tipperary side, favoured by the gale-force wind, went into an interval lead of 2-7 to 0-3. In the second half the Noresiders put in a stirring performance. When Brian Young goaled from a free, with 10 minutes remaining, there were only three points between the sides. A defensive mistake let in Nenagh for a goal, and after that there was no way back for the losers, although a John Kelly goal in the last minute left only five points between the sides at the finish. The final score was 3-10 to 2-8.

The Castlecomer based outfit had great performers in Eamon Coogan, who played the proverbial blinder in defence; Thomas Brennan, John Delaney (in the first half), Ger Brennan, James 'Shiner' Brennan, Brian Young and Pierce Phelan.

Scorers for the losers in the final were: Brian Young (1-3), John Kelly (1-1), James Brennan (0-2), John Buggy (0-1), Sean O'Mahon (0-1).

The team was: Michael Brennan, Thomas Brennan, Pat Gunner, Christy Brennan, John Delaney, Eamon Coogan, Ger Brennan, James Brennan, John Kelly (capt.), John Buggy, Sean O'Mahon, Brian Young, Michael O'Neill, Pat Maher, Pierce Phelan. *Sub:* David O'Rourke.

Avonmore Creameries, the most successful team in the history of inter-firm competitions, collected their ninth all-Ireland senior title with a 0-13 to 0-10

victory over St. Joseph's (Limerick) in a final that boosted the image of the competition. The Ballyragget side — every one of them work in the same complex — equalled their own record of four titles in succession, a feat achieved also between 1976-'79. In the county final they saw off the challenge of the south Kilkenny based Suir Electric-Dawn Meats-Iverk Produce. The losers led by 0-5 to no score after the first quarter, but a Billy Fitzpatrick goal helped Avonmore to get level at the interval, 1-3 (A) to 0-6. The sides were still locked together at the end of the third quarter (1-5 to 0-8). The introduction of Ritchie Manogue helped the Ballyragget side, and goals by Mick Brennan and Mick Walsh gave them a flattering 3-10 to 0-9 win.

The Leinster final against Aer Lingus (Dublin) provided an easy 4-13 to 1-3 win. Incidentally, the goal by Pat Morey two minutes before the interval was the only major score registered against Avonmore in this year's championship. At the interval the Noresiders led by 1-6 to 1-1, after losing a number of scores through over-elaboration.

A dressing-down at the interval had the desired effect and they ran out comfortable winners. Scorers in this victory were John Hall (2-1), Mick Walsh (2-1), John Mulcahy (0-5), Billy Fitzpatrick (0-2), Johnny Brennan, Liam Dowling, Dick Walsh, Eamon Holland (0-1).

The semi-final was played in Callan, where conditions were terrible following a previous game. But Avonmore showed their class as they marched to a 1-12 to 0-2 victory. Favoured by the strong breeze, the Ballyragget side built up a 10-point interval lead (1-8 to 0-1). It was expected that Bards (Galway) would make a greater effort in the second half but the winners, with Bill Hennessy and Liam Dowling in great form, easily contained their efforts. Scorers for Avonmore were John Mulcahy (1-7), Dick Walsh (0-2), Billy Fitzpatrick (0-2), John Hall (0-1).

The all-Ireland final was a hectic affair, which enhanced the status of inter-firm hurling. It took a magnificent diving save by Morgan Kelly to deny St. Joseph's Hospital a share of the spoils. The sides were locked together on four occasions during the first half, but a Martin Baker point had

the Thomond men ahead at the interval (0-5 to 0-4).

Twice more the sides were level in the second period before John Mulcahy gave the winners the lead for the first time. It was a lead they never lost. Twice Avonmore went two points ahead but St. Joseph's hauled them back to the minimum margin.

Two pointed frees by Johnny Brennan and a wonderful effort by Dick Walsh pushed Avonmore four points in front. Ger Hegarty then left one score between the sides, and it was only Morgan Kelly's terrific save that kept the title in Avonmore.

The winners' best players were Nicky Brennan, Mick Bolger, Bill Hennessy, Jimmy O'Brien, an inspiring captain Johnny Brennan, Dick Walsh (what a great second half he had), John Mulcahy, who retired injured 10 minutes from the finish, and Billy Fitzpatrick.

The team and scorers were: Morgan Kelly, Mick Bolger, Nicky Brennan, Donal Dunne, Bill Hennessy, Jimmy Ruth, Jimmy O'Brien (capt.), Johnny Brennan (0-3), Liam Dowling, Dick Walsh (0-3), Eamon Holland, John Mulcahy (0-6), John Hall, Mick Brennan, Billy Fitzpatrick (0-1). *Sub:* Ritchie Manogue.



Now qualified to referee in all grades of hurling and football after the course in Carlow and Croke Park are: Liam Dewberry, Dicksboro; Paddy Neary, James Stephens; John Guinan, Freshford Club, and Eamon Walsh, Railyard. Also pictured are past president of the G.A.A., Dr. Mick Loftus, and present president, John Dowling.

CONAHY SHAMROCKS — Under-21 Roinn B Hurling Champions

Back Row (l. to r.): Kevin Dooley, Michael Kealy, John Feehan, Paul Brennan, Canice Brennan, Oliver Dunne, Timmy Mahony, Tommy Lawlor, Seamus Dooley, Philip Carroll, Declan Downey, Larry Deevy. **Front** (l. to r.) Peter Mulhall, Val Gunner, Martin Nolan, Sean Smith, Philip Dunne, Seanie Mahony, Pat Nolan, Sean Cahill, John Gunner. Mascot: Paul Downey.



New Grace tourney proved big hit

A NEW competition was added to the under-14 hurling programme this year. It was the Paddy Grace memorial tournament, and the winners represented Kilkenny in the Feile-na-nGael competitions which were held in Laois/Offaly. The tournament was sponsored by Michael Brophy, a Kilkenny exile living in London. Mr. Brophy, who is in the landscaping business, presented a magnificent oak shield and valuable medals for the winners and runners-up. This will now be an annual event.

Every team in the county took place in the Grace competition. Two teams qualified from Roinn A, while the last two teams in Roinn B and Roinn C played-off to make up the other two semi-finalists. James Stephens beat St. Patrick's (Ballyragget), while Dicksboro beat Goresbridge/Paulstown in the semi-finals. The all city final produced a thriller, with Stephens running out winners by 2-6 to 1-6. Clive Kenny drilled home a penalty nine minutes from time, to put his side ahead (2-5 to 0-6). A David Gaffney goal for Dicksboro put the game back into the melting pot. A magnificent save by Francis Cantwell in the dying moments kept Stephens ahead. Scorers for the winners were Clive Kenny (1-4), Lee O'Sullivan (1-0), B. Dooley, Eugene Somers (0-1 each). Dicksboro — James Phelan (0-4), David Gaffney (1-0), Fergal Cantwell (0-2).

Michael Brophy, the sponsor, flew in from London for the game, and Maureen Grace, widow of the late Paddy Grace, presented the trophy to Clive Kenny, the James Stephens captain.

James Stephens: Francis Cantwell, C. O'Dwyer, Barry Henderson, Liam Smith, Michael Hoban, Adrian Ryan, C. Cleere, Eugene Somers, Shane Doyle, B. Dooley, Clive Kenny, Robert Kearney, Lee O'Sullivan, P. Wall, M. Kennedy. Subs: Francis Malone, V. Morrissey.

Dicksboro: Rory Deevy, J. Kerwick, Declan Phelan, Adrian Trait, Pat Henderson, James Phelan, David Farragher, James Cunniffe, B. Kennedy, Fergal Cantwell, Sean Morrissey, B. Dalton, Joe Philpott, T. Wall, Finbarr Casey. Subs: R. Webster, David Gaffney.

GOT TO SEMIS

Stephens qualified for the semi-finals of Feile-na-nGael where they were beaten by the eventual champions, Shannon Wolfe Tones (Clare). The city boys came back to take the county under-14 Roinn A title. Having lost to Graigue-Ballycallan in the league section, they almost bowed out of the championship when Mooncoin ran them to one point in another round of the championships. A defeat in that game would have put them out of the competition. They best Dicksboro in a controversial semi-final, when a late Boro goal, which would have given them victory, was disallowed for a square infringement.

Stephens scored an easy win in the final against Graigue-Ballycallan (6-7 to 1-9). The losers led at the interval by 0-8 to 2-1. Considering the strength of the breeze, this lead was not sufficient. Had Graigue-Ballycallan not conceded those two first half goals they might have made a fight of it. The city side took the lead in the 34th minute with a Brian McEvoy goal (3-2 to 0-8) and then went on the rampage.

A late goal by Ger Ronan put a more respectable look on the scoreboard. Michael Power, a late replacement in goal for the injured Francis Cantwell, did well for Stephens. Vinny O'Brien was the winners best defender. Adrian Ryan, Liam Smith and Conor Cleere also did well in defence. Eugene Somers was the top midfielder, while in attack Clive Kenny, Wayne O'Driscoll, who got a hat trick of goals, and Brian McEvoy, who ran riot in the second half, were best. The losers had good players in Denis Byrne, Damien Cleere, John Minogue, James Young, Ger Ronan and Eddie O'Dwyer.

Scorers: James Stephens — Wayne O'Driscoll (3-0), Brian McEvoy (2-1), R. Kearney (1-0), Clive Kenny (0-3); Eugene Somers (0-2). Graigue-Ballycallan: Ger Ronan (1-4), Denis Byrne (0-4), Thomas Dermody (0-1).

James Stephens: Michael Power, Michael Hoban, Barry Henderson, Liam Smith, Adrian Ryan, Vincent O'Brien, Conor Cleere, Eugene Somers, Brian Dooley; Brian McEvoy, Clive Kenny (capt.), Robert Kearney, Wayne O'Driscoll, Shane Doyle, Kevin Grogan. Sub: M. Kennedy.

Graigue-Ballycallan: John Hoyne, Nicholas Teehan, Damien Cleere, John Manogue, John Butler, Denis Byrne (capt.), Pat Comerford; James Young, Eamon Marnell, Philip Butler, Ger Ronan, Paul Ronan, Thomas Dermody, Eddie O'Dwyer, Alan Hoyne. Sub: Sean Dermody.

VICTORY AFTER 23 YEARS

St. Patrick's (Ballyragget) regained the under-14 Roinn B championship after a lapse of 23 years when they beat St. Senan's (Kilmacow) in the final by 6-7 to 1-2. The winners were in control throughout and led by 4-3 to 0-0 at the interval after playing with the breeze. St. Senans looked as if they might make a game of it when Patrick Gahan carried through for a goal. However, St. Patrick's came back and a Keith Doheny goal finished the game as a contest.

The winners had outstanding players in defence with Adrian Stone the star. James and Tomás Dowling also showed to effect. Joe Dowling dominated midfield. Declan Walsh was the star in attack, and scored a hat-trick of goals in the first half. He got most support from Sean Foley and Raymond Breen.

Eamon Gahan did well in the St. Senan's goal and saved his side from a heavier defeat. Peter Ryan was magnificent in defence. Patrick Gahan was one of the best players on view. Others who tried hard were Ian O'Callaghan, Derek Egan, Niall Walsh and Brian Walsh.

St. Patrick's: Stuart Liston, Liam Roberts, Adrian Stone (capt.), John Glendon, Peter Dooley, James Dowling, Tomás Dowling, Joe Dowling (0-4), Derek Butler, Sean Foley (1-0), Raymond Breen (0-1), Joe Kelly, Damien Walsh, Declan Walsh (4-2), Keith Doheny (1-0). Subs: Adrian Walsh, Oliver Culleton.

St. Senans (Kilmacow) — Eamon Gahan, D. Kennecally, Ian O'Callaghan, T. Reddy, Derek Egan, Peter Ryan, A. Phelan, B. O'Callaghan, T. Sutton (capt.), Niall Walsh, Patrick Gahan (1-2), M. Sweeney, D. Turney, D. Laffan, B. Walsh. Sub: K. Dollard.

TOOK CHANCES

Conahy Shamrocks won their first Roinn C under-14 hurling title when they took their goaling chances to beat Tullaroan by 4-1 to 1-7. Conahy had previously won titles in this grade in 1980, 1981 and 1985 in Roinn D. Tullaroan were on top during the first 20 minutes when Tommy Crosby and Vincent Norton were in great form at midfield. Their forwards, except for a point by Adrian O'Dea, could not score. The game took a complete turn about when the winners had goals in the 19th and 21st minutes to put them ahead at the interval (2-0 to 0-2). Tullaroan again had the better of the third quarter, and 1-1 by Anthony Dooley put them in front (1-5 to 2-1). The introduction of Thomas Buggy paid dividends for Conahy, and Kenny Dooley got through for a goal. From the puck out they were back for another goal by William Flynn, who was completing his hat-trick. After that there was no way back for Tullaroan.

Padraig Downey had a fine game in the winners goal. Ciarán Muldowney was best in defence and got most support from Ciarán Connery and Edward Comerford. Liam Dooley and Willie Lawless had their moments at midfield. William Flynn took his goals in style. Thomas Brennan, Thomas Buggy and Kenny Dooley did best in attack.

Best for the losers were Michael Maher, Danny Hogan, Tommy Crosby, Vincent Norton and Anthony Dooley.

Conahy Shamrocks: Padraig Downey, Edward Comerford, Ciarán Connery, Willie Connery, John Hurley, Ciarán Muldowney, Damien Lawlor, Liam Dooley (0-1), Noel Burke, Brian Buggy, Shane Mulhall, William Flynn (3-0), Subs: Thomas Buggy, Thomas Welher.

Tullaroan: Barry Teehan, J. Glennon, Michael Maher, S. Delaney, Danny Hogan, Fergal Moore, D. O'Dea, Vincent Norton (0-1), Thomas Crosby, Peter Butler, P. Breen (0-1), D. Doheny, Adrian O'Dea (0-1), Anthony Dooley (1-4), J. Hennessy. Subs: Lory Holland, B. Maher, M. Kennedy.

The Kilkenny under-14 hurling team did well in the Tony Forristal memorial tournament. They lost against Cork (2-6 to 2-5). In their other games they beat Clare by 2-6 to 1-3 and Limerick by 4-7 to 0-5.

Kilkenny Panel: Sam Morrissey (Dicksboro); Adrian Stone (St. Patrick's, Ballyragget); Philip Holohan (O'Loughlin/Gaels), Michael Owens (Erii's Own, Castlecomer), Vincent O'Brien (James Stephens), James Phelan (Dicksboro), Trevor Dunphy (Mooncoin), Willie Kinsella (Mooncoin), Peter Ryan (St. Senans, Kilmacow); Eugene Somers (James Stephens) capt., Martin Carey (Young Irelands, Gowran), Joseph Dowling (St. Patrick's, Ballyragget), Denis Byrne (Graigue-Ballycallan), Ger Walsh (Graignamanagh), Dermot Maher (Barrow Rangers), Liam Smith (James Stephens), Ned Drea (Barrow Rangers), Pat Davins (Piltown), Patrick Gahan (St. Senans, Kilmacow), David Cullen (Bennettsbridge), David Buggy (Erins Own, Castlecomer). Coach: Tommy Lanigan (James Stephens). Selectors: Eamon Ronan (Mooncoin), John Carey (Young Irelands), Richard Stone (St. Patrick's, Ballyragget).



THOMASTOWN — Leinster Under-13 Vocational Schools Hurling Champions 1988

Front Row (l. to r.): Jimmy Doyle, Rory Bourke, Barry Challoner, Michael Wall, Mark doyle, Larry O'Neill. **Centre:** Mr. Pat Cronin (Principal), Martinn Bookle, Michael Cullen, Richard Kelly, David Cullen (capt.), Brendan Grace, John Lanigan, Richard Doyle, Mr. Peter Hurley (Depute Manager Allied Irish Banks, Kilkenny - sponsors). **Behind:** Mr. Ned Byrne (joint trainer), Canice Bolger, Vincent Maher, Jimmy Madigan, Barry Morrissey, Danny Kenny, Dermot Malone, Kieran Kennedy, Mark Malone, Mr. Joe Mackey (joint trainer).



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Two doubles and rest of honours well spread

THE 10 competitions at under-16 level were brought to a successful conclusion. Doubles were recorded in football when Dicksboro took the Roinn A championship and league, while Kilmoganny won the championship and league in Roinn B.



KILMOGANNY — Under-16 Football League and Championship (Roinn B) Winners

BACK (l. to r.): Malachy Hogan (trainer), Sean Ryan, Pat Fleming, John Doherty, Patrick Holden, Dermot Reid (capt.), Jim Hickey, Eamon Kennedy. **Middle** (l. to r.): Matthew O'Shea, Brian Mackey, Paul Phelan, Ger Carroll, Bill Comerford, Denis Lahart, Shane Kirwan, Brendan Doherty. **Front** (l. to r.): Alan Mackey, David Meaney, John Enright, Paul Kearney, James Barry, Paul Cahill, Adrian Moran, Tom Hickey, Dermot O'Shea.

THE hurling titles were distributed between six teams. Dicksboro completed a great year when they took their third under-16 title of the year by winning the Roinn A hurling league. Fenians (Johnstown) annexed the championship. John Lockes (Callan) won the Roinn B league, but St. Martin's took the championship in this grade. Clara grabbed the Roinn C championship, while Conahy Shamrocks took the league crown.

Fenians (Johnstown) won the Roinn A championship when they over-ran Graignamanagh in the final (4-14 to 3-5). Two years previously Graig beat Fenians after three games in the under-14 championship decided. So this win was sweet revenge for Johnstown. The Fenians were in a good position at the interval when they trailed by just three points (1-5 to 0-5) after playing against the strong breeze.

The Fenians levelled four minutes into the second half, and Alan Behan gave them a lead they never lost when he goaled. The winners had the best player on view in Anthony McEvoy, who gave a great display at left half-back. Little if anything behind was James Carroll at centre-back. Paul Phelan was also sound in defence. Others who did well were James Dowling, Alan Behan, Keith Behan and the deadly accurate P. J. Delaney. Best for the losers were Paul KIELTY, Rory Bolger, Donal Murphy, Alan Byrne and Martin Barcoe.

Fenians: Vincent O'Brien, Liam McEvoy, Paul Phelan, John Maher, Brendan McEvoy, James Carroll, Anthony McEvoy, James Dowling, Keith Behan (0-1), Paul Bowe, P. J. Delaney (1-8), Adrian Behan (1-5), Raymond Behan, Tom Garrett (1-0), Alan Behan (1-0).

Graignamanagh: Paul KIELTY, S. Byrne, RORY BOLGER, Ivan Morrissey, D. Reddy, James Kinsella, Charlie Byrne, Donal Murphy, Peter Byrne (0-1), John O'Shea (0-1), John Canning, Alan Byrne (2-2), Leo Bolger (1-0), Martin Barcoe (0-1), G. Walsh.

FIRST WIN

Dicksboro recorded their first under-16 hurling final victory when they beat great city rivals, James Stephens in the league by 1-8 to 2-4. The 'Boro were the better team, but were almost pipped in the closing minute. When two points ahead they conceded a penalty. Clive Kenny's shot flew over the bar and Dicksboro sneaked through by a point. The winners led by 0-4 to 0-1 at the interval. A Shane Gannon goal six minutes into second half sent Dicksboro into a 1-5 to 0-2 lead. Stephens introduced Clive Kenny and Daithi Kearney at the interval, and they made an impact. They came very much into the game in the last 10 minutes, and almost grabbed victory against the run of play.

David Beirne was the winners outstanding player. Dan O'Neill also showed to good effect. Thomas Bergin and Seán Fitzpatrick controlled midfield in the first half. Niall Lacey was the most dangerous forward. James Phelan played well in the second half. Best for Stephens were Francis Cantwell, Niall Lahart, Philip Larkin, Noel Brennan and Brian Delaney.

Dicksboro: Michael Trait, Eoin Begley, David Beirne, Vincent Byrne, John O'Dwyer, Dan O'Neill, Cyril Keegan, Seán Fitzpatrick, Tom Bergin, James Phelan, Shane Gannon (1-0), Mark Dowling (0-2), Michael Beatty, Niall Lacey (0-4), Michael Ryan (0-2). *Sub:* John Peters.

James Stephens: Francis Cantwell, Tobias White, J. Larkin, R. O'Shea, Philip Larkin, Niall Lahart, D. Dooley, Noel Brennan, Liam Hennessy, Brian Delaney, P. Cody, John Canning (0-1), Malcolm Murphy, A. Grogan, Dean Smithwick. *Subs:* Clive Kenny (2-2), Daithi Kearney (0-1), Brian Leahy.

POWERFUL FINISH

John Lockes turned in a powerful closing few minutes to win the Roinn B hurling league final against neighbours



DICKSBORO — Under-16 Hurling and Football League and Championship Winners

Back (l. to r.): Eoin Begley, John O'Dwyer, Pat Murphy, Michael Beatty, Sean Fitzpatrick, Anthony Teehan, Vincent Byrne, Cyril Keegan, Tom Bergin. **Middle** (l. to r.): P.J. Trait, Michael Ryan, Mark Dowling, Shane Gannon, Joe Philpott, James Cunniffe, Dan O'Neill, Des Price, John Peters, Michael Davin. **Front** (l. to r.): Rory Knox, James Phelan, Martin Greene, Sam Morrissey, Niall Lacey (Football Captain), David Beirne (Hurling Captain), Michael Trait, Corabh Wise. **Inset:** Brian Galvin (top left), Ted Carroll (top right).

Dunnamaggin (3-8 to 3-5). Dunnamaggin led by 2-3 to 0-5 at the interval. Favoured by the breeze, John Lockes levelled the scores at 2-3 to 1-6 after 35 minutes. Inspired by some great hurling from Jim Hickey and Seán Ryan, Dunnamaggin, pulled ahead to lead by a goal with two minutes remaining. Michael Brennan levelled the scores when he forced the ball over the line. From the puck-out John Lockes came back and Brendan Power shot the winning goal.

The winners had top class players in James O'Donovan, P. J. Holohan, Peter Kearney, Adrian O'Sullivan, Michael Brennan, who was their man of the match, Stuart O'Donovan and David Lynch. The losers best players were David Meaney, Brian Mackey, Jim Hickey, one of the best on view, Matthew O'Shea, Seán Ryan and Eamon Kennedy.

John Lockes: Nicky Roche, Paddy O'Brien, P. J. Holohan, J. Corcoran, James O'Donovan (0-2), J. Dunne, Peter Kearney (0-3), Adrian O'Sullivan, D. Maher (0-1), Michael Brennan (2-1), David Lynch (0-1), Stuart O'Donovan, Brendan Power (1-0), D. Carey. **Subs:** J. Roche, D. Leahy, C. Nolan.

Dunnamaggin: David Meaney, D. Lahart, Brian Mackey, S. Kirwan, Matthew O'Shea, Jim Hickey, B. Doherty, Eamon Kennedy (1-1), Pat Fleming (0-1), Dermot Reid, Seán Ryan (0-3), B. Comerford, P. Kearney, P. Holden, Paul Whelan (2-0). **Sub:** W. Carroll.

NARROW WIN

St. Martin's won the Roinn B hurling championship when they scored a narrow 3-7 to 2-7 victory over Carrickshock. The winners got off to a tonic start and had three points from John Dooley. Two goals by Diarmuid Lawlor before the interval put St. Martin's six points ahead. Carrickshock came out more determined after the break, and Pádraig Farrell hit 1-2 to narrow the gap to a single point. Martin's had two points from Diarmuid Lawlor before Liam Coogan hit the all important goal. The Southerners battled back for another goal, which left a single score between the sides. St. Martin's held on for victory.

Best for Martin's were Niall Moloney in goal, Ger O'Reilly who had a stormer at full-back, Seamus Byrne, John Ryan, Diarmuid Lawlor, who scored 2-5, John Dooley and Liam Coogan. The losers best players were Brian Hudson, Benny Hudson, G. Frisby, E. O'Dwyer, Pádraig Farrell, Liam Duggan and Pat Mulcahy.

St. Martin's: Niall Moloney, Pat Doyle, Ger O'Reilly, Seamus Byrne, M. Ryan, Tom Kehoe, Ger Buggy, John Ryan, P. Doyle, P. Keating, John Dooley, M. Hahessy, L. Brennan, Diarmuid Lawlor, Liam Coogan.

Carrickshock: Brian Hudson, W. Duggan, Barry Hudson, Ger Frisby, P. O'Dwyer, E. O'Dwyer, P. Nolan, Pádraig Farrell, W. Duggan, S. Long, Noel Delahunty, J. O'Dwyer, N. Murphy, Pádraig Roughan, Pat Mulcahy. **Sub:** R. Nolan.

Clara, after suffering a heavy defeat in the Roinn C League final, bounced back to win the championship. A late rally gave them victory over Tullogher-Rosbercon (3-7 to 4-3). It was Clara's second title, as they had also won this one in 1984.

Tullogher-Rosbercon led at the interval by 2-3 to 0-4, thanks to goals by James Lyng and Thomas Doherty. Robert Shortall levelled the scores in the second half when he had a goal and two points. Tullogher again went two goals ahead with scores from Thomas Doherty and James Lyng. Clara were not to be denied. Robert Shortall pointed and the game was in the melting pot when Brendan Barcoe grabbed a Clara goal. The winning goal was crashed home by Michael Langton.

Most prominent for the winners were Brendan Barcoe, the best player afield, Brian Hanrahan, Robert Shortall, Pat Manning, Mark Galvin and Michael Langton. Tullogher-Rosbercon had stars in Martin Fitzgerald, Eamon Mullally, Joe Murphy, Thomas Murphy and James Lyng.

Clara: Martin Malone, Frank Hoyne, Richard Kealy, Michael Fitzgerald, Justin Hanrahan, Victor Dowling, P. Dowling, Brian Hanrahan, Brendan Barcoe (1-0), Robert Shortall (1-5), D. Murphy, Pat Manning (0-1), N. Corr, Michael Langton (1-0), Mark Galvin. **Sub:** Martin Óg Carrigan.

Tullogher-Rosbercon: Martin Fitzgerald, Mark Malone, Eamon Mullally, D. Doyle, J. Lawlor, Michael Bookle, R. Barron, Liam Walsh, Joe Murphy (0-1), Martin Bookle, Basil Glennon, Eamon Hanrahan (0-1), E. Ryan (0-1), Thomas Doherty (2-0), James Lyng (2-0).

WINNING ACT

Conahy Shamrocks got in on the winning act when they took the Roinn C League by beating Clara by 4-9 to 0-5. Clara reversed the result in the championship when they won by a point. Conahy led by 1-7 to 0-2 at the interval.

A Ciarán Muldowney goal at the end of the third quarter sealed the issue. Late goals by Eoin Murphy and Kenny Dooley gave the North Kilkenny boys a flattering victory. Good for the winners were Pádraig Downey, Canice Brennan, Philip Carroll, Martin Nolan, all three of whom helped the club to win the under-21 hurling championship later in the year, Kenny Dooley and Michael Healy. Those who caught the eye for the losers were Martin Malone,

Michael Fitzgerald, Victor Dowling, Brendan Barcoe and Robert Shortall.

Conahy Shamrocks: Pádraig Downey, Damien Lawlor, Canice Brennan (0-1), Ciarán Connery, James Lawless, Philip Carroll, Philip Dunne, Martin Nolan, James Burke (0-1), Brian Lacey, Michael Healy (0-2), Eoin Murphy (1-2), Kenny Dooley (2-1), Kevin Healy, Tom Brennan (0-1). *Sub:* Ciarán Muldowney (1-1).

Clara: Martin Malone, Justin Hanrahan, Richard Kealy, Michael Fitzgerald, Victor Dowling, P. Dowling, Francis Hoyne, Brendan Barcoe (0-1), Pat Manning (0-1), Mark Galvin (0-1), Brian Hanrahan, S. Byrne, Robert Shortall (0-1), Michael Langton (0-1), Martin Óg Carrigan. *Sub:* S. Casey.

DOUBLE

Dicksboro brought off the football double at under-16 level. They had five points to spare in both finals. In the league they beat Piltown (2-8 to 1-6). The losers had beaten the holders, James Stephens in the semi-final by 1-7 to 0-7.

Dicksboro beat Thomastown in the championship final. The score was 3-8 to 2-6. The 'Boro had to line out without David Beirne and Vincent Byrne, who were injured. Thomastown fielded without their best player, Brian Comerford.

A goal by Niall Lacey gave Dicksboro the initiative. A second goal by Thomas Bergin helped the city boys into an interval lead of 2-5 to 1-3. Thomastown narrowed the gap to a point when they rallied in the second half. Barry Doyle shot a goal. Awarded a penalty, Niall Lacey took his point for the 'Boro and put his team ahead (2-8 to 2-6). Cyril Keegan wrapped up victory when he goaled in the closing minutes.

Dicksboro: Anthony Teehan, John Peters, Eoin Begley, Michael Trait, Dan O'Neill, Shane Gannon, M. Davin, Seán Fitzpatrick, Cyril Keegan (1-1), John O'Dwyer, Thomas Bergin (1-4), Mark Dowling (0-1), Niall Lacey (1-2), James Phelan, Michael Beatty.

Sub: Joseph Philpott.

Thomastown: R. Murphy, D. Challoner, M. Coonan, M. McGrath, J. Murray, D. Roche, D. Lannon, R. Bolger, J. Dunne, J. Lonergan, E. Kelly, Barry Doyle, A. O'Hara, B. Doyle, I. O'Brien.

Kilmoganny completed the football double in Roinn B. They had a clear cut victory in the league final when beating St. Patrick's (Kilmacow) by 2-11 to 1-0. The championship was much closer. Here they beat another St. Patrick's side, this time from Ballyragget. The final scored was 0-11 to 2-2.

Kilmoganny led by 0-5 to 0-2 at the interval. A late goal for St. Patrick's by Joseph Dowling put a more respectable look on the scoreboard. Pick of the winners were Brian Mackey, Jim Hickey, Matthew O'Shea, Pat Fleming, Dermot Reid, Paul Whelan, Eamon Kennedy, the most stylish player on the field, and Seán Ryan. The losers best were Declan Walsh, Tom Kelly, their finest player, Andy Phelan, Brian Kennedy, Dermot O'Sullivan, Paul Swan and Joseph Dowling.

Kilmoganny: Alan Mackey, Pat Holden, Brian Mackey, Shane Kirwan, David Meany, Dermot Reid, Matthew O'Shea, Jim Hickey (0-2), Pat Fleming, Denis Lahart (0-1), Eamon Kennedy

(0-3), Seán Ryan (0-2), Paul Whelan (0-2), John Doherty, Gerry Carroll (0-1). *Sub:* Brendan Doherty.

St. Patrick's (Ballyragget) Tomás Healy, Alan Culleton, Tom Kelly, Tom Phelan, John Stapleton, Andrew Phelan, Declan Walsh, Brian Kenny (0-1), Dermot O'Sullivan, Aidan Morrissey, John Kavanagh, Brendan Kenny, Paul Swan (0-1), Chris Richardson (1-0), Davy Dowling. *Subs:* Joe Dowling, Raymond Breen, Michael Ryan.

WON IN LEINSTER

The North Kilkenny under-16 hurlers won the Leinster championship, and regained the title they last held in 1986. On the way to the final they beat South Dublin by 7-14 to 0-2, and Wexford by 4-6 to 3-4. They beat South Kilkenny in the semi-final by 2-9 to 0-5.

In the final they reversed last year's result by beating Offaly by 1-3 to 0-3.

Scorers against South Dublin were Niall Lacey (2-3), Barry Power (2-2), Pat Drea (1-0), Michael Beatty (1-0), Diarmuid Lawlor (0-3). Against Wexford the scorers were Niall Lacey (2-2), Adrian Behan (2-0), Diarmuid Lawlor (0-3), Pat Drea (0-1). Against South Kilkenny the scorers were Adrian Behan (1-1), Diarmuid Lawlor (1-3), Austin Cleere (0-3), Niall Lacey (0-1), Canice Brennan (0-1).

The final against Offaly was a tremendous game. Offaly got off to a flying start and went three points clear early on. The Noresiders bounced back and were a point ahead at the interval. Two points in the second half, the only scores of this period, gave the black and amber boys a three points victory.

North Kilkenny panel: Joe Dermody (St. Lactain's), Barry Power (O'Loughlin's), David Beirne (Dicksboro), Philip Doherty (Tullaroan), Dan O'Neill (Dicksboro), James Carroll (Fenians), Anthony McEvoy (Fenians), Philip Carroll (Conahy Shamrocks), Canice Brennan (Conahy Shamrocks), Seán Fitzpatrick (Dicksboro), Austin Cleere (Emeralds), Conor Minogue (Graigue-Ballycallan), Diarmuid Lawlor (St. Martin's), Adrian Behan (Fenians), Niall Lacey (Dicksboro), Pat Drea (Barrow Rangers), Thomas Bergin (Dicksboro), David Walsh (Danesfort), Niall Lahart (James Stephens), Michael Beatty (Dicksboro).

The under-16 county footballers participated in the South East four county league. They were beaten by Wexford (2-14 to 2-3). Kilkenny were behind at the interval, 0-3 to 0-5. Goals by Brian Comerford and Niall Lacey in the closing half had Kilkenny just three points behind with 12 minutes remaining. Wexford finished well and scored 1-5 to run out convincing winners.

Kilkenny: Canice Brennan (Conahy Shamrocks), Shane Gannon (Dicksboro), James McDermott (Young Irelands) 0-1, Michael Walsh (Piltown), Philip Larkin (James Stephens), Thomas Doherty (Tullagher-Rosbercon), Cyril Keegan (Dicksboro), Seán Fitzpatrick (Dicksboro), Jim Hickey (Kilmoganny), Conor Manogue (Graigue-Ballycallan), Brian Comerford (Thomastown) (1-0), John O'Grady (Black and Whites), Niall Lacey (Dicksboro) (1-2), Eamon Kennedy (Kilmoganny), Pakie Cunningham (Piltown). *Sub:* Pat Purcell (Graigue-Ballycallan). Other panel members were Niall O'Brien (Piltown), Dermot Reid (Kilmoganny), Niall Lahart (James Stephens).



RAILYARD – Under-21 Football (Roinn B) Champions

Back Row (l. to r.): Kieran Meally (Chairman), Michael Dowd (trainer), Don Lawlor, Brendan Smith, Eamon Doyle, Larry Buggy, Michael Walsh, Jason Walsh, Henry Booth, Joe Coogan (selector), Sean Barron. **Front Row** (l. to r.): John Delaney, Thomas Brennan, Nigel Dowd, Florence Brennan, Richard Brennan, David Buggy, Tommy Dwyer, Tom Brennan (Cloney), Ber Maguire, John Buggy, J. Dormer, Brendan Brennan.